

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

THE SINISTER SCARECROW!

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FINGERTIPS...
HAND...WRIST...

...EACH IN TURN
APPEARS...

...UNTIL FULL-BLOWN
GROTESQUERIES OF EVIL
STAND IN THE SOHO LOFT
OF JESS DUNCAN.

THREE NIGHT DEMONS
PLAY CHESS WITH WORLDS...
WORLDS NOT THEIR OWN...

FOR THOUGH THE CULT
OF KALUMAI IS DEAD--
ITS LORD, KALUMAI,
LIVES ON!

DEATH WATERS OF THE RIVER STYX

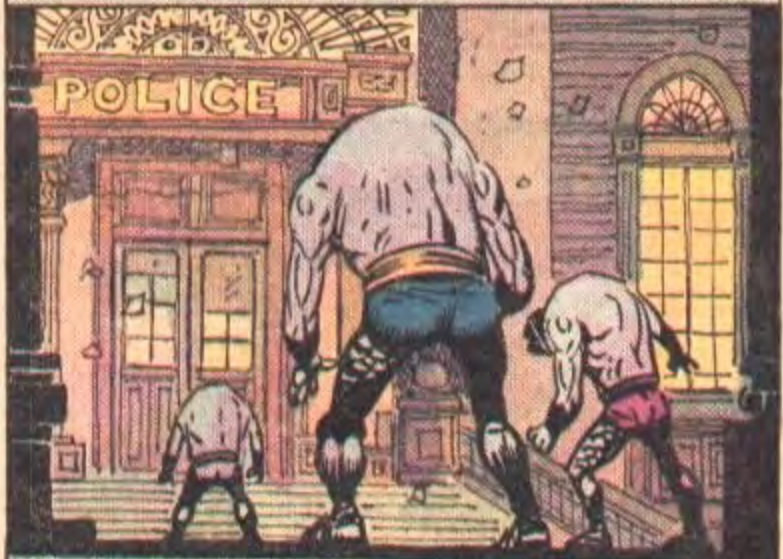
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THESE SUB-HUMAN CREATURES SHAMBLE SLOWLY ABOUT A ROOM IN A WORLD THEY HAVE NEVER BEFORE SEEN...



...A WORLD ALMOST BOUGHT WITH THE BLOOD OF HARMONY MAXWELL!

AND ALTHOUGH THAT PRICE WAS TOO DEAR FOR THE LIKES OF JESS DUNCAN...



...THE CULT OF KALUMAI THOUGHT IT A BARGAIN TO PAY FOR THEIR GOD.

A GOD WHO HAS WATCHED HIS MINIONS FAIL TO FREE HIM...*



* SEE DEAD OF NIGHT #11 -- MARV.

...A GOD WHO HAS DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION... FOR HIMSELF!



WHAT THE--! HEY, RILEY! GET YOUR ASPIRATIONS OVER HERE--

--BEFORE THESE HALLOWE'EN REFUGEES DECIDE TO END MINE!



BRAM POW

BUT RILEY DOES NOT ANSWER.

HE TURNS AND RUNS AS MOST MEN WOULD AT THE SIGHT OF A FEARFUL DEATH...



BRA-GAM

HEY! C'MON, GUYS, IT'S TIME FOR THE CAVALRY!

...SO RILEY LIVES OUT THIS DAY...



RILE--
AUKKKK!

WOOSH

BUT ANOTHER DOES NOT.

THESE FIENDS GECK THE HORN OF KALUMAI.



CRASH

A HORN WHICH WILL, WHEN USED IN BLOOD SACRIFICE, OPEN A DIMENSIONAL DOORWAY TO MORE THAN JUST A GOD'S UNDERLINGS...

ONE STAYS BEHIND AT THE BIDDING OF THE MUSICAL LURE...



...ONE TO WHOM THE LOSS OF COMRADES MEANS NOTHING...

...ONE TO WHOM ONLY ONE THING HAS VALUE--



--DEATH!



AND WHEN DEATH DOES NOT OCCUR...

...PANIC SETS IN.



PANIC WHICH MAY ONLY BE DISPELLED BY THE NOTES OF AN OTHERWORLDLY INSTRUMENT...

...AND WHICH MAY LEAD TO OTHER--



--OVERSIGHTS!

THE GUSHUMAN CREATURE GROWS ANGRY... BUT DOES NOTHING...



...UNTIL THAT ANGER IS CHANNLED BY AN UNEARTHLY TUNE...

...AND DIRECTED AT THE SCARECROW!



BUT THE SCARECROW IS UNAFFECTED...



...THOUGH ONE MIGHT GUESS DIFFERENTLY--

...FROM HIS MANIACAL LAUGH--



--WHICH HAS INTRODUCED TERROR TO ONE WHO HAS NEVER KNOWN IT--

...AND IN A FEW MOMENTS WILL BE DEALING DEATH!

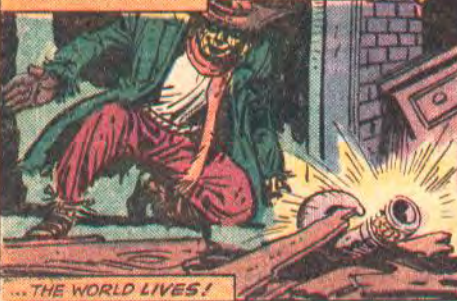


SILENCE.

THE MUSIC IS MUTED LIKE THE PULLING OF A CORD OF AN ETHERAL JUKE BOX.



AND WITH THAT DYING, FOR A FEW MORE MOMENTS...



THE PRIZE HAS BEEN WON... TO THE VICTOR FALLS THE SPOILS--

--THE SACRIFICIAL HORN OF KALUMAI, WREST FROM HIS OWN HEAD BY THE SCARECROW'S HANDS CENTURIES AGO IN A DEATH-BATTLE WHICH RESULTED IN THE ENTRAPMENT OF A GOD.



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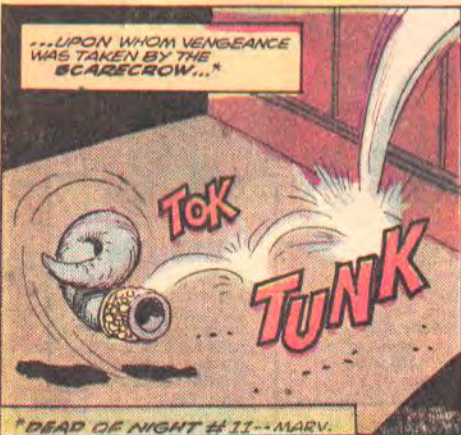
IT IS STILL THE DEAD OF NIGHT WHEN THE SCARECROW RETURNS TO JESS DUNCAN'S SONO LOFT. RETURNS...



FOR THE SCARECROW HAS BUT SECONDS UNTIL HE MUST RETURN TO HIS RESTING PLACE... HOME WITH HIS--

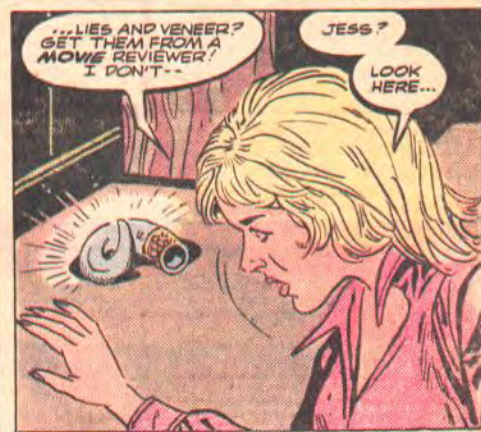


THE HORN OF KALUMAI, TAKEN FROM THE POLICE WHO HAD FOUND IT BESIDE THE MUTILATED BODY OF GREGOR ROWK...



...IS ONE STEP CLOSER HOME.







WITHIN THE HOUR,
HARMONY, JESS AND
DAVE ARRIVE AT THE
AQUARIUM...

AQUARIUM

... AND EACH
STARES IN AWE
AT WHAT, IF
SEEN IN LESS
CIVILIZED
TIMES, WOULD
BE CONSIDERED
A GOD.

THEY HALF EXPECT
SACRIFICES TO BE LAID
AT ITS FEET...

... SUCH AS THEY ARE.

THE CREATURE
RADIATES LIGHT,
HIS SERIE
PHOSPHORESCENCE
GAINED FROM THE
DARKNESS OF THE
DEPTH AND UNTOLD
YEARS OF LODD--
KNOWS--HOW-MANY
TONS OF AQUALIC
PRESSURE PER
SQUARE INCH.

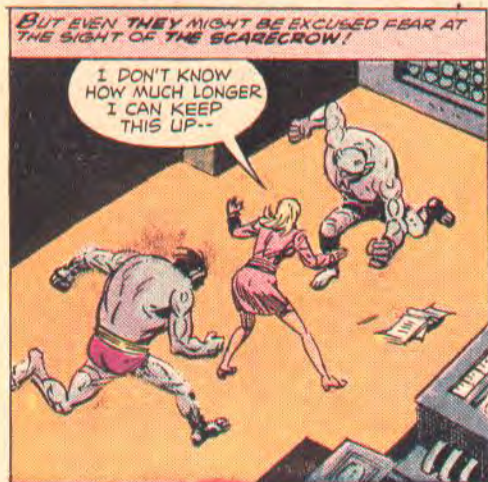
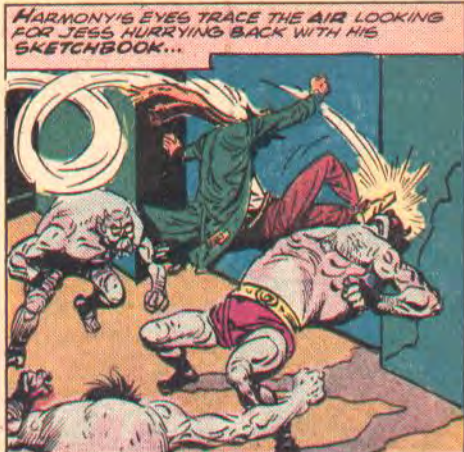
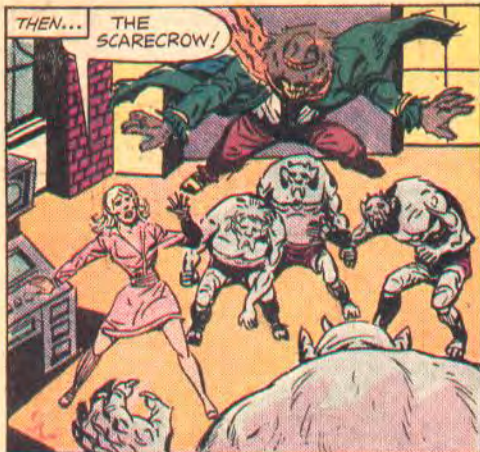
IT DOES NOT
LIKE BEING ON
DISPLAY.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
WHAT
HAPPENED...

WE SENT INVITATIONS
TO ALL THE MAJOR
MAGAZINES, RADIO
STATIONS-- EVERYONE
INVOLVED IN PUBLICITY
-- BUT YOU'RE THE
ONLY ONES WHO
SHOWED.

THAT'S
DAVE, I
GUESS!





WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EVERYONE IS FOLLOWING THE PIPER, AND THE PIPER'S CONFUSED? IT'S THEN WE MUST TURN TO THE BANDLEADER.

O GREAT KALLUMAI! HEAR ME AND HARKEN TO MY CALL! YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT, BARTOLOME, REQUIRES YOUR AID!

BY THE GLOW FROM THE SEA CREATURE, ANOTHER RADIANCE IS SEEN "GROWING"--FORMING INTO--

--KALLUMAI!

O MOST WISE AND BENEFICENT LEADER! WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?

WHATEVER YOUR WISHES BE, I SHALL HEED THEM! WE HAVE LOST THE HORN... BUT WHAT OF THE GIRL?

FOOL! FORGET THE GIRL! DESTROY THE SCARECROW!

KILL HIM!

WITH THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF DEATH, BARTOLOME CLOSSES HIS EYES...

...AND A DIFFERENT MUSIC SHATTERS THE AIR...

...AS EVERY SUB-HUMAN SLAVE FREEZES...

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

BUT THE SCARECROW DOES NOT ANSWER...HE RUSHES FORWARD TO CONTINUE HIS ATTACK...

...AS THE MONSTERS BURST INTO FLAME!

NO!
SCARECROW--
STAY BACK!

YOU'LL BURN
TO A CINDER!

NOW IT IS THE
SCARECROW'S
TURN TO STAND
STOCK STILL--
FOR THOUGH
THERE IS NOTHING
HE FEARS--

--THERE IS BUT ONE THING BY
WHICH HE CAN BE DESTROYED.

--FIRE!

DON'T KNOW
HOW YOU PLAN
ON FIGHTING
THESE GUYS--

--BUT I'VE
GOT A FEW
TRICKS OF MY
OWN!



WOULDN'T YA KNOW I BURRIED THE PAD BENEATH THAT ROLL OF CANVAS?

DAVE AND HARMONY ARE PROBABLY READY TO LEAVE ALREADY!

MUH? DOOR'S LOCKED!



WHAT! THE SCARECROW AND--

--HARMONY!



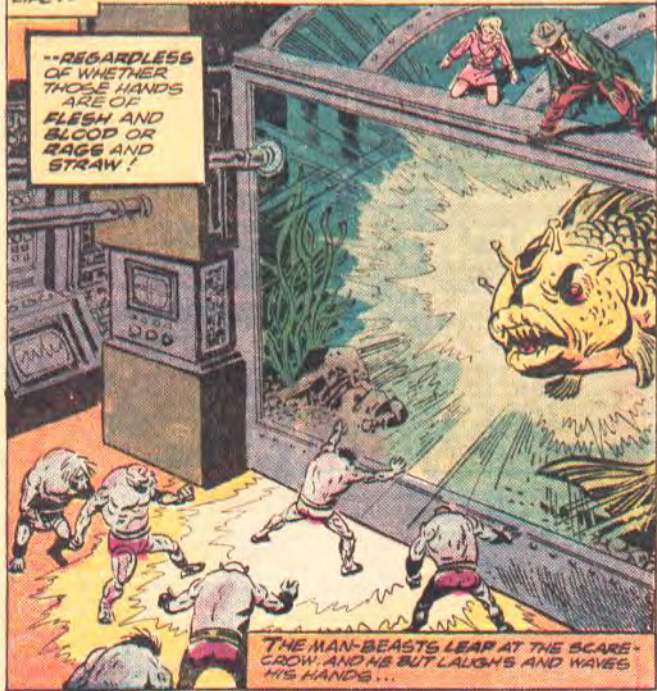
LEMME IN THERE! OPEN UP! HARMONY! HARMONY!

YOU'RE GONNA GET YOURSELF KILLED!

HARMONY!

TOK TOK TOK

BUT JESS DUNCAN HAS LITTLE TO FEAR, FOR HARMONY IS IN BETTER HANDS NOW THAN SHE HAS BEEN IN MOST OF HER LIFE--



--REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THOSE HANDS ARE OF FLESH AND BLOOD OR RAGE AND STRAW!

THE MAN-BEASTS LEAP AT THE SCARECROW AND HE BUT LAUGHS AND WAVES HIS HANDS...



...TO CALL HIS ALLIES!

TUNK

POK PRAK

THE FISH BANGS OVER INTO THE GLASS SIDES OF THE TANK, WHICH, DESPITE ITS INCREDIBLE THICKNESS, MUST EVENTUALLY--

--BREAK!

"APRÈS MOI LE DÉLUGE," SAID KING LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH.

CRAACKK
CRASH

WHOOSH

"WHILE I'M HERE, THE FLOOD!" DEMANDS THE SCARECROW.

AS THE TSUNAMI-STRENGTH SAVAGERY STARTS TO SUBSIDE, THE SCARECROW ADDS A MADNESS OF HIS OWN.

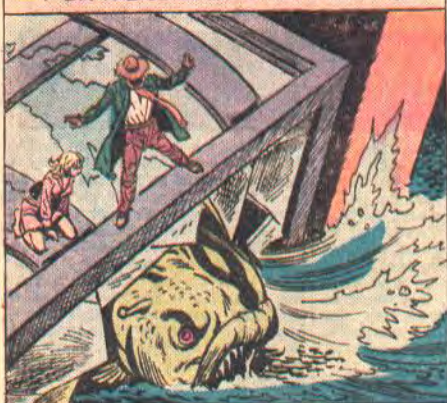
EYES BELONGING TO-- JESS DUNCAN...

EYES WHICH CAN SEE AND WHICH COME WITH HANDS THAT CAN DRAW...

HANDS WHICH MOVE ALMOST WITH A SENTIENCE OF THEIR OWN... AS JESS STARES, HYPNOTIZED BY THE SCENE--

AND ALL THE WHILE, A SINGLE SET OF EYES WATCHES FEVERISHLY.

--FOR THE CURTAIN IS NOT DOWN YET!



THE SCARECROW IS TIRED OF THIS CENTURIES-LONG WAR. IT MUST STOP--

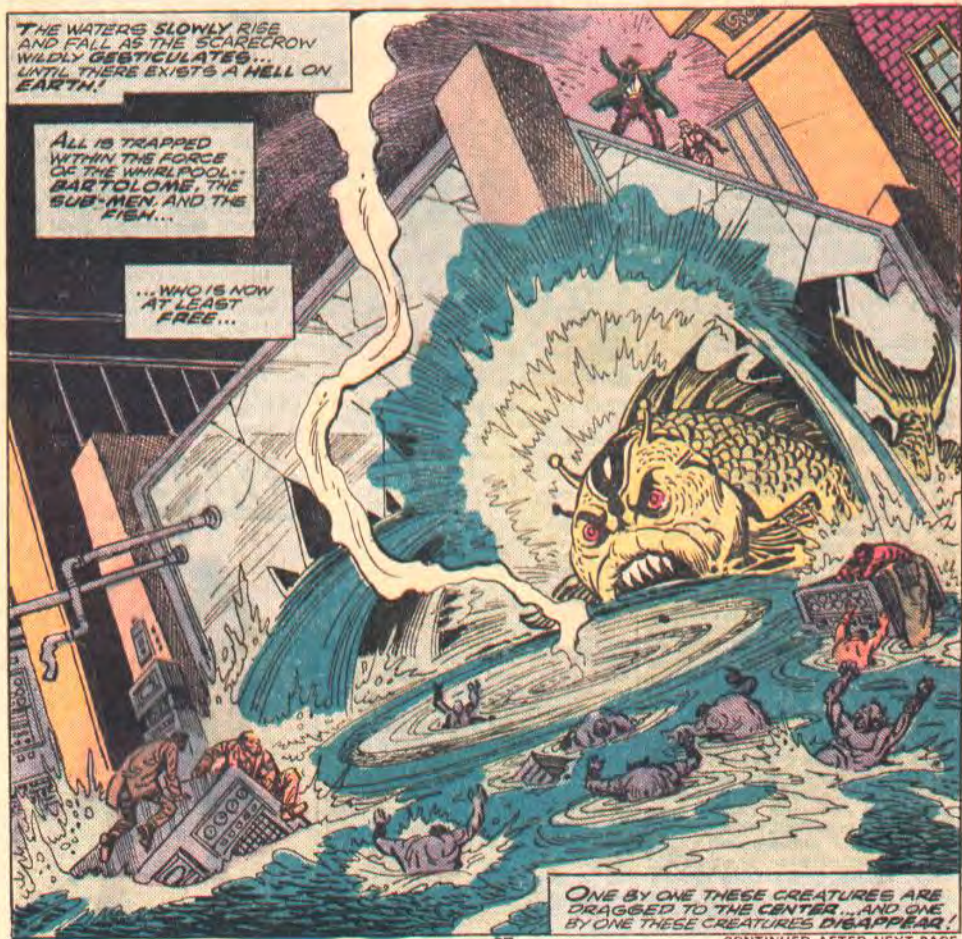
-- AND IT WILL STOP!



THE WATERS SLOWLY RISE AND FALL AS THE SCARECROW WILDLY GEBTICULATES... UNTIL THERE EXISTS A HELL ON EARTH!

ALL IS TRAPPED WITHIN THE FORCE OF THE WHIRLPOOL-- BARTOLOME, THE SUB-MEN, AND THE FISH...

...WHO IS NOW AT LEAST FREE...



ONE BY ONE THESE CREATURES ARE DRAGGED TO THE CENTER... AND ONE BY ONE THESE CREATURES DISAPPEAR!

WHEN THE WATER IS PURIFIED OF ITS FILTH, THE SCARECROW LOWERS HIS ARMS AND GAZES UPON HIS WORK...

...AND SEES THE WATERS HAVE ALSO LOWERED...

...AND HE IS PLEASSED.

THE WATER'S EBB UNTIL THEY DISAPPEAR ENTIRELY... LEAVING TRACE OF NEITHER SUB-MEN...

...NOR PIPER...

...NOR FISH.

AND AS THE SCARECROW PLACES HARMONY ON DRY GROUND, SHE GAZES IN AWE UPON HIM...

...AND SEARCHES HER MIND FOR A CLUE AS TO WHY THIS HAS HAPPENED TWICE TO HER.

WAIT!
WHERE ARE YOU--?

SHE FINDS NO ANSWER.

THE WORK IS DONE.

THE SPELL IS BROKEN.

AND IT IS TIME FOR THE SCARECROW TO...

...LEAVE?

WHAT?
WHERE'S HE GO?

BUT JESS' CONCERN SOON TURNS ELSEWHERE...

HARMONY!

JESS RUNS TO HARMONY, REALIZING PERHAPS FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT HE TRULY CARES... NO, LOVES THIS WOMAN...

... LEAVING BEHIND HIS OWN DRAWING... WHICH HE WILL LATER FIND...



...AND NOT EVEN REMEMBER HAVING DONE!

HARMONY, WHAT'S BEEN GOING... NOW ...WHO WAS THAT...

HER STARE STOPS HIM. IT'S AS IF SHE'S SAYING, "ASK ME NO QUESTIONS, I KNOW NO MORE THAN YOU."



BUT THERE IS ONE QUESTION HE MUST ASK.

WHERE'S GAVE?

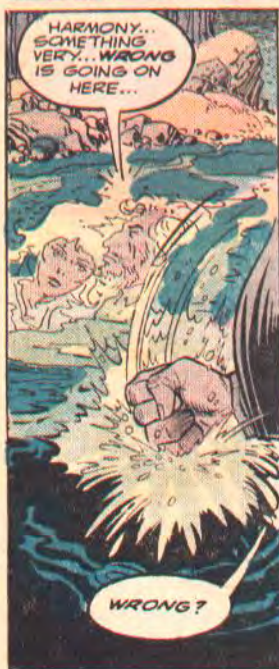


I...I DON'T KNOW...



THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER... AND IN THEIR GAZE THERE IS UNSPOKEN AGREEMENT...

...AGREEMENT IN THEIR OWN DOUBT.



HARMONY... SOMETHING VERY... WRONG IS GOING ON HERE...

WRONG?



MY FREEDOM HAS BEEN STOLEN AGAIN, THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG!

BUT THIS IS THE LAST TIME THE SCARECROW WILL SQUELCH MY PLANS. FOR WHEN NEXT WE MEET...

...THE SCARECROW DIES!

TO BE CONTINUED... SOMEDAY!