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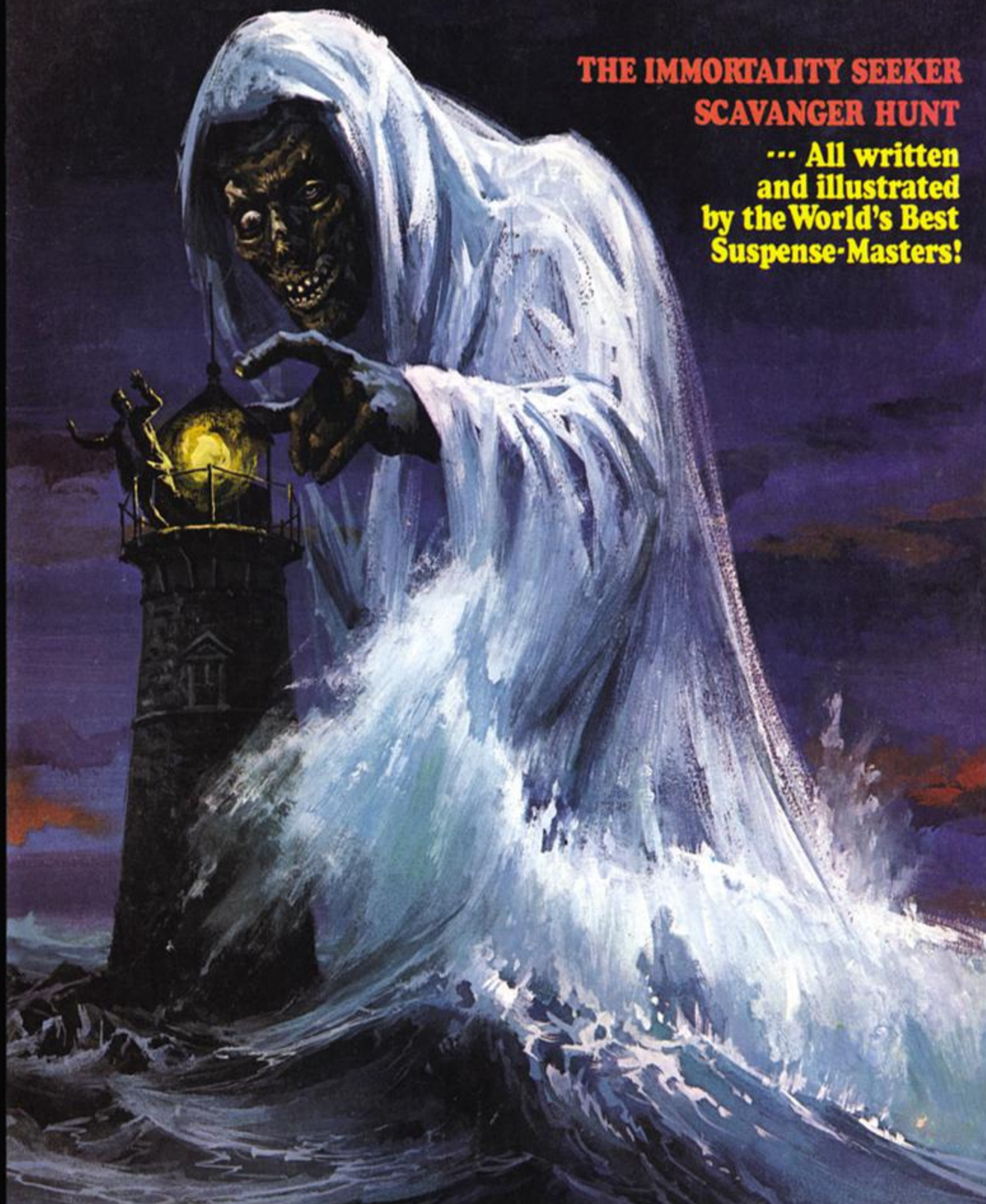
FEAR

A WARREN MAGAZINE

FOR A BLOOD CHILLING SURPRISE...HEAD FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE!

**THE IMMORTALITY SEEKER
SCAVANGER HUNT**

**... All written
and illustrated
by the World's Best
Suspense Masters!**

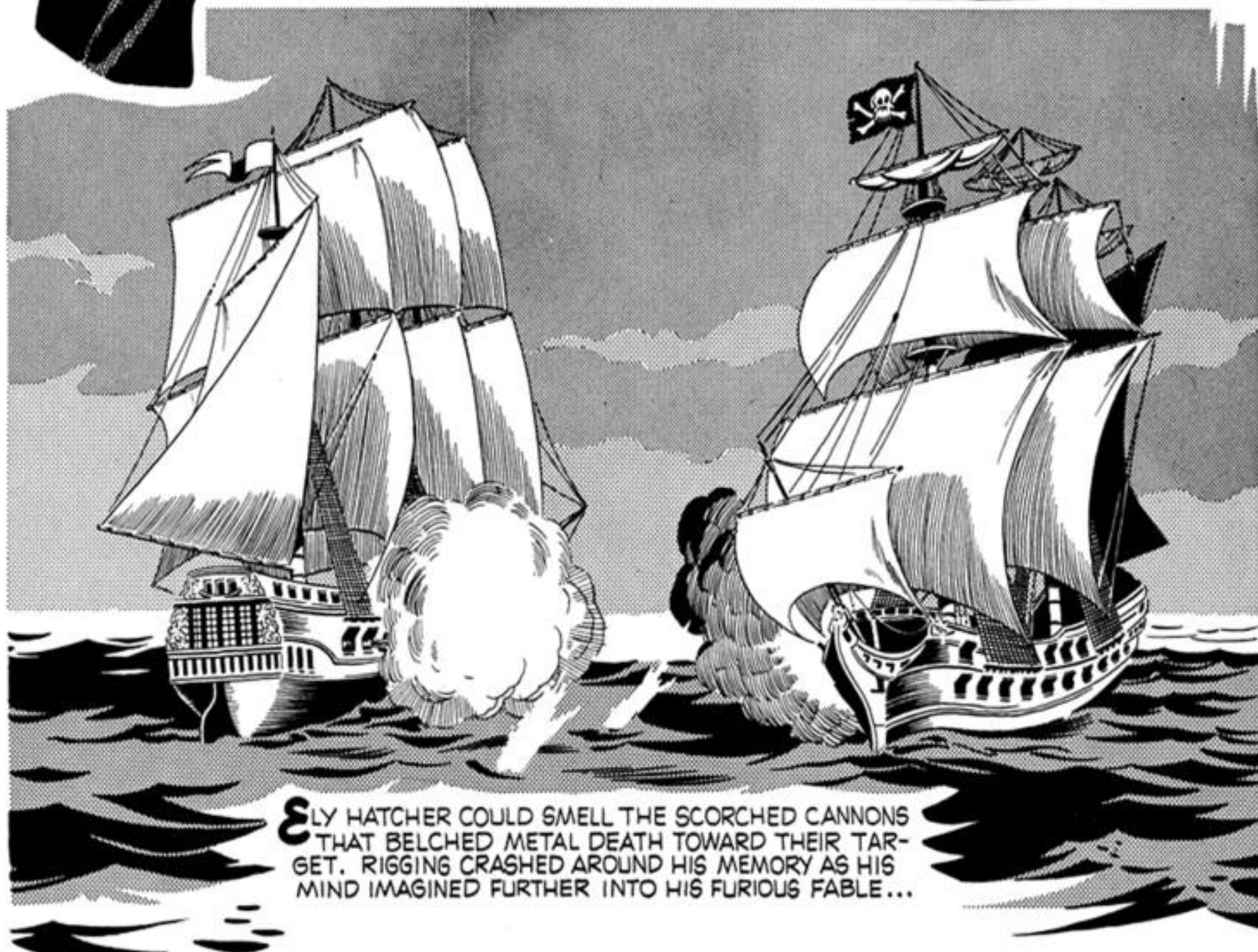


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LASH DOWN THE WAIL SAILS AND WEIGH RANCOR ... RIFMATES! WE'RE CASTING OFF FOR A SEAFARING SCARING THAT'LL LINE YOUR SPINE WITH SOME BRISTLING BRINE ... SO TAKE CARE, MATES, DON'T LET THE FOG GRON YOUR NOGGIN' AS WE...

HEAD FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE!



ELY HATCHER COULD SMELL THE SCORCHED CANNONS THAT BELCHED METAL DEATH TOWARD THEIR TARGET. RIGGING CRASHED AROUND HIS MEMORY AS HIS MIND IMAGINED FURTHER INTO HIS FURIOUS FABLE...

BELOW THEM IN SWIRLING SCARLET, BATTLE CARNAGE THAT HAD SLIPPED FROM THE SPLINTERED DECKS SANK BENEATH THE GRAVE OF A WATERY DEATH.



BOARD 'ER, YOU SCURVY SONS OF SEA WENCHES!

WE'LL TAKE 'ER CARGO FOR TREASURE!



THE BILGE RATS ARE TURNIN' MEN... GIVE IT TO 'EM!

AT 'EM, MATES ... WE'LL BLOW 'EM FROM THE WATER!

BARKING MUSKETS RAKED THE DECKS WITH MURDER, SHATTERING THE HIGH NOON WITH EACH VOLLEY. ABOVE THE SAILORS THE BLACK SKULLED BANNER HUNG IN TATTERS FROM THE MAST... FOR THIS TIME NO GOLDEN BOOTY WOULD BE WON!

ART BY MIKE ROYER/STORY BY BILL PARENTE

ELY WATCHED THE FLAMING VESSEL EXPLODE IN ONE FINAL THUNDERCLAP... BITS OF HUMAN WRECKAGE SPEWED ALL OVER THE BUBBLING OCEAN.



WE WON 'EM,
WE DID...
WE WON!

GEE CAPTAIN ELY,
WAS IT REALLY
LIKE THAT BACK
IN THOSE DAYS?
ALL THAT FIGHTIN'
AND STUFF...

DID YOU
EVER KILL
A PIRATE,
CAPTAIN
ELY...



... MAYBE FIND A
BURIED TREASURE,
HUH, CAPTAIN!

DID I EVER... WHY
MATES, I SLIPPED MY
OLD SWORD THROUGH
SO MANY OF THEM
BEGGARS I CAN
HARDLY COUNT
THEM ALL!

GEE WHIZ!... THAT
MUST'VE BEEN SOMETHIN'!



AND TREASURE... WHY
THERE'S SO MUCH BURIED
RIGHT AROUND HERE, WE
COULDN'T CARRY IT ALL
IN A HUNDRED YEARS!

WE'LL HELP
YOU DIG IT
UP CAPTAIN,
WON'T WE
FELLAS?

YOU BET...
PARTNERS,
RIGHT
CAPTAIN
ELY?

WHEN CAN WE FIND
IT, CAPTAIN ELY...
YOU GONNA TELL US
WHERE IT IS?

HEAR THOSE
GULLS MATEYS...?
THEY'RE TELLIN'
ME I BETTER
GET THE LIGHT
READY...
TOMORROW'S
ANOTHER DAY
TO HUNT FOR
TREASURE!

AWWW... YOU
MEAN WE
HAVE TO
WAIT ALL
THE WAY
'TILL THEN?



DON'T FORGET
TO WATCH
FOR MY
SIGNAL BOYS!
TWO FLICKERS
IF EVERY-
THING'S WELL...

...AND **THREE**
IF THERE'S
TROUBLE!
WE WON'T
FORGET...
SEE YA
TOMORROW
CAPTAIN!





THESE WERE HAPPY MOMENTS OF DAY DREAMING FOR ELY... AND HE LOVED FILLING THEIR MINDS WITH THE SALTY WONDERS OF THE SEA.

THOSE KIDS... HEH... LOVE THE SEA ALMOST AS MUCH AS I DO!



NOT ONLY IS THE OLD LIGHTHOUSE BEACON OUTDATED, IT COULD BE A HAZARD TO THE HARBOR!

WHAT IF IT BREAKS DOWN...?

BUT ELY HATCHER'S BEEN THE KEEPER FOR ALMOST THIRTY YEARS... HE'D NEVER LET THAT HAPPEN!



DANG SHOULDER'S ACTIN' UP AGIN... MUST BE A STORM COMIN'!

HE FELT THE WIND PINCHING HIS EARS AS IT WHISTLED IN PINWHEELS BEHIND HIM. ELY FILLED HIS MOUTH WITH THE SALT FLAVOR AND LISTENED TO THE MOANING SURF FAR BELOW THE STAIRCASE.



IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO THE NEW LIGHT, AN ELECTRIC WARNING LIGHT RIGHT IN CHIEF WILKE'S OFFICE, WILL ALERT HIM!

MAN MAKES SENSE MAYOR... OLD ELY ISN'T GETTING ANY YOUNGER, YOU KNOW!

WELL...I DON'T KNOW MERV...



ELY HAD LIT THE OLD LANTERN THREE HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE TIMES, TWENTY EIGHT YEARS LONG, WITHOUT EVER MISSING A NIGHT. HE WAS AS MUCH A PART OF THAT LAMP, AS THE LIGHT ITSELF...

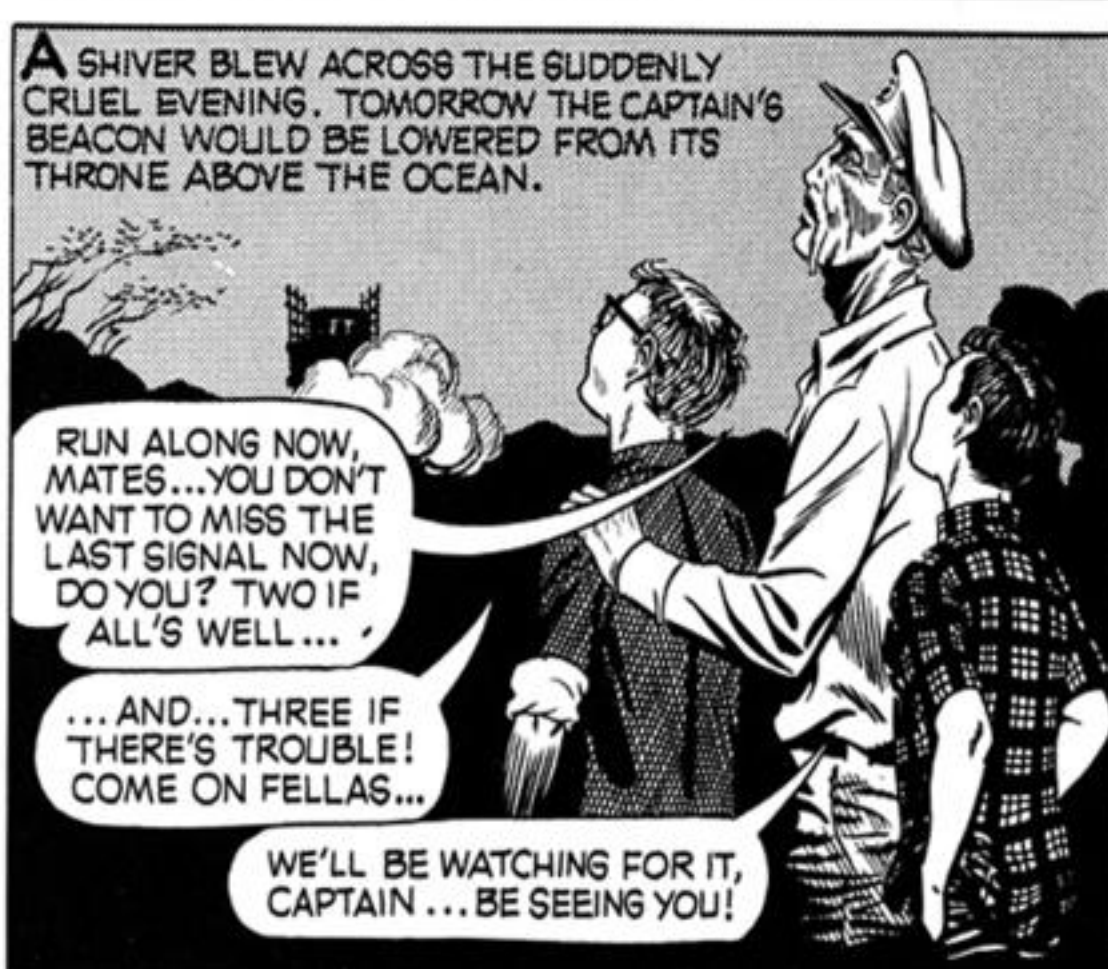
GENTLY MY FRIEND...NO FLICKERING IN THE WIND WHEN THE STORM HITS US! WAIT, I'LL TAKE OUT THE MATCHES...



...THEREFORE, FOR THE SAFETY OF THE HARBOR... A MOTION HAS BEEN MADE THAT THE OLD BEACON LIGHT BE REPLACED, AND MR. McCALLISTER TAKE CHARGE UNTIL THE NEW ONE HAS BEEN INSTALLED!

ALL IN FAVOR...

FIN-TALLED KILLERS ALERTED IN THEIR HUNGER TO THE FATE OF THE PRISONER, NOW MOVED IN SPEEDY CIRCLES NEAR THE VESSEL. ALL EYES HELD STEADY ON THE GLEAMING SWORD AS IT WAS NEARED TO THE NAKED FLESH OF THE CAPTIVE'S BACK.





IN THE NOT QUITE MORNING MIST... SHRIEKING GULLS SCATTERED INSULTS INTO THE WIND. A STRANGE STILLNESS BROUGHT THEIR SCREAMS OF INSTINCT INTO THE GREY MORNING.



FAR BELOW THE TIMELESS SLAPPING OF THE TIDE, A GLINT OF SALT TARNISHED METAL FLASHED UP THROUGH THE FOAMING WAVES.



FIRST IN, AND THEN OUT, THE BATTERED SEA CAP FLOATED. CAPTAIN ELY HATCHER'S SEA CAP!

ONLY THE BOYS SEEMED TO SENSE THE TRUTH. WAS CAPTAIN ELY REALLY... DEAD... OR WAS HE WAITING FOR HIS MOMENT OF REVENGE, SOMEWHERE NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE? WAITING...



NO SIGN OF ELY, MAYOR... HIS BUNK HASN'T BEEN SLEPT IN! YOU DON'T THINK HE...

I DON'T THINK **ANYTHING**, SHERIFF! EXCEPT THIS IS BECOMING QUITE A NUISANCE!

I SEE NO REASON WHY WE CAN'T GO AHEAD, MAYOR COFFEY! I'M SURE THE CAPTAIN WILL SHOW UP SOONER OR LATER! IT'S **YOUR** FAULT MR. MCCALLISTER!!



EVERYTHING WAS FINE UNTIL YOU CAME ALONG! THAT STUPID LIGHT OF YOURS...

AND NOW THE CAPTAIN'S GONE! JUST WAIT...



...THE CAPTAIN WON'T LET YOU RUIN EVERYTHING! JUST WAIT!

"I TELL YOU MAYOR, EVER SINCE WE STARTED WORKING ON THAT BATTERED OLD BEACON, WE'VE BEEN HAVING TROUBLE!"



"TWO OF MY MEN KILLED, ACCIDENTALLY! THREE WEEKS WASTED ON A JOB THAT SHOULD'VE BEEN FINISHED IN THREE DAYS! WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE...?"



I'LL ADMIT IT'S STRANGE, MR. McCALLISTER, BUT WHAT CAN I DO? CAN'T HELP ACCIDENTS FROM HAPPENING, CAN I...?



WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HOOK UP THE NEW CIRCUIT UNTIL TOMORROW!

I'M SPENDING THE NIGHT IN THE TOWER, JUST IN CASE...



BESIDES, WITH NO SIGNAL TONIGHT, SOMEONE OUGHT TO KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR TROUBLE!

GOOD IDEA, MR. McCALLISTER! YOU MIND IF I COME ALONG? WE CAN TAKE TURNS!



LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR A STORMY NIGHT!

DON'T WORRY YOURSELF, MR. McCALLISTER! WE'LL BE SAFE ENOUGH UP THERE! FROM THE LOOKS OF THOSE CLOUDS...



...I'D GUESS IT'LL BE OVER BY MORNING!

SOFT PIECES OF SPONGY FLESH FELL FROM THE CREATURE'S BONES INTO THE SWIRLING WATER. ONLY AN AGONIZED SOBBING STIRRED FROM ITS SALT CAKED BODY... WOBBLING FROM THE PRISON OF THE SEA!



SLOWLY THE SEAWEED WRAPPED BODY STUMBLED TOWARD THE TOWER STAIRS... WITHERED ARMS REACHING TOWARD THE RAILING. IT KNEW THE LIGHT HAD TO BE READIED FOR THE STORM!

DID... DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, JUST THEN? SORT OF A MOAN!

PROBABLY JUST THE WIND... QUIT WORRYING, WILL YOU... AND MOVE!



PAINFULLY IT DRAGGED ITSELF, STEP UPON STEP, SHUFFLING TOWARD THE GLOWING LIGHT WHICH SLIPPED BENEATH THE CRACK OF THE DOORWAY. JUST BEYOND WAS THE BEACON... INCHES PAST THE WOOD THRESHOLD.



FAMILIAR VOICES STOPPED TELLING THEIR TERROR AS THE FLESHLESS FINGERS BEHIND THE DOOR REACHED FOR THE BOLT-ED LATCH! IT HAD TO GET TO THE LIGHT...

YOU GOT ONE MORE CHANCE TO SPEAK UP, WHOEVER YOU ARE! NEXT TIME I'LL BE SHOOTING THROUGH THAT DOOR!



MY GOD... THE BEACON... IT'S COME FOR THE BEACON!

MMMFFFHHHHMM!

GOD... NO... IT CAN'T BE... GGYAAAH!



PLEASE... SOB... PLEASE... GASP....

YAAAAAAA!





SEE... I TOLD YOU I SAW IT! CAPTAIN ELY'S SIGNAL! TWO FLICKERS FOR ALL'S WELL!

LET'S GET UP THERE AND FIND OUT WHAT IT IS!

HELPLESS GIGGLES FROM A TWISTED MIND REFLECTED THE DAZZLING BEACON THAT REVOLVED IN THE DEPUTY'S VISION. INSANITY SPITTED DOWN HIS SHAKING CHIN AS HE WATCHED THE LIGHT FLOOD HIM IN BRILLIANCE.

HHEH... EHE... EHEH... HEHEHE NICE LIGHT...

...HEH... PRETTY!



W...WHAT'S THAT?

SS..SOUNDS LIKE SOMEBODY... LAUGHING!

QUICK... IT'S COMING FROM THE TOWER!



LOOK...HEE... BET YOU CAN...SEE IT... TEN MILES... HEE... EEEYEEEE...

...GULP...

CHOKER...

SLOWLY THE HUMAN BEACON REVOLVED, LIGHT POURING FROM THE HOLLOW THAT ONCE WERE MCCALLISTER'S EYES! CAPTAIN ELY HAD HIS LANTERN BACK...TYKE AND ALLAN WERE SICK... AND NONE OF THE BOYS EVER RETURNED TO THE LIGHTHOUSE AGAIN.



NOR DID ANYONE ELSE...EVER! WORK ON THE NEW BEACON WAS NEVER COMPLETED, YET EACH NIGHT, A FAINT LIGHT WOULD APPEAR IN THE TOWER. BEFORE BURNING THROUGH THE NIGHT, IT WOULD FLICKER TWICE INTO THE DARKNESS. NO ONE KNEW HOW IT CAME TO BE THERE...AND NO ONE WENT TO FIND OUT!



OKAY **FRIGHTS**...IT'S LIGHTS OUT FOR NOW, BUT I WON'T EVEN **CHARGE** YOU FOR THAT LAST BLAST OF **A-SALT** AND **BATTERY**! JUST KEEP A CANDLE HANDY NEXT TIME YOU WANT TO PUT SOME SHIMMER INTO YOUR GLIMMERS! **GNERF GNERF**...

