

741.5

1970s CULT COMICS

APRIL 2024 NO. 116

KAMANDI THE LAST BOY ON EARTH
FAFHRD & THE GRAY MOUSER
AND...

KING FORNÉS STEWART

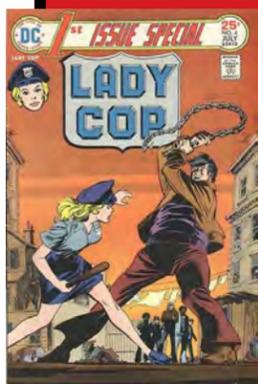
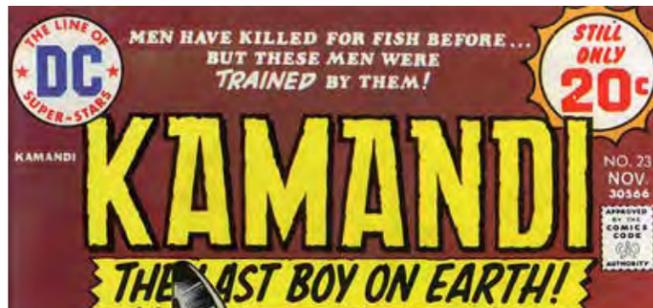
DANGER STREET

FORNÉS

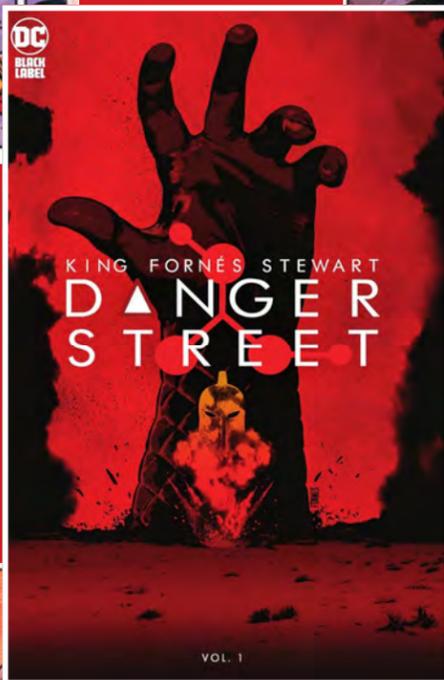
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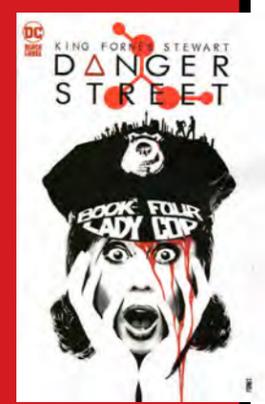
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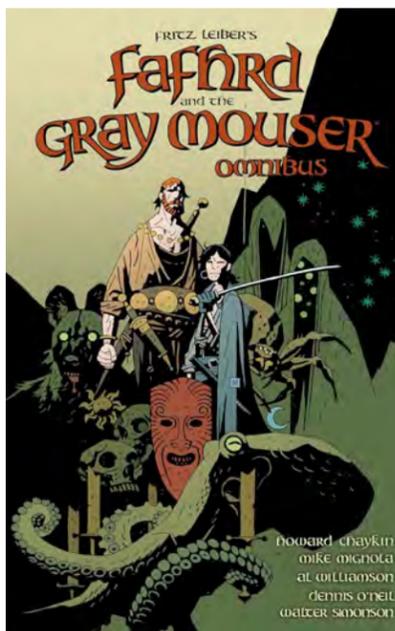
I would love to have been there when Tom King pitched DANGER STREET: "Hey, remember that collection we put out a coupla years ago of the obscure mid-Seventies title, *1st Issue Special*? Well, why not take all the characters that appeared in that series and throw 'em all into one big story?" As discussed in 741.5 #48 12/20, DC responded to the sad fact that the only guaranteed sellers were first issues by putting out a book that was nothing *but* first issues. Established but footloose characters Doctor Fate, Metamorpho and the Creeper appeared among brand new concepts like Lady Cop, Code Name: Assassin and an updated take on Starman. Most notable, however, were the contributions of former partners Joe Simon and Jack Kirby. The King created the heroic fantasy Atlas, a remade/remodeled Manhunter and a new riff on the kid gang, the Dingbats of Danger Street. Simon contributed his own kid gang, the super-rich Green Team, and a weirdo super-group called the



the Outsiders. None of those series had legs except the Warlord, whose sword & sorcery series had a long run in the Eighties. It's the Warlord, Travis Morgan, who gets things going in *Danger Street*, as he teams up with the blue Starman and Metamorpho to take on none other than Darkseid of the New Gods. The boastful trio thinks if they take down the god-king of Apokalips, they'll get in the Justice League. Things don't go their way. Now Atlas the Great (top left) is dead, and Good Looks from the Dingbats is dead. The remaining Dingbats have sworn revenge while both Lady Cop and Orion of the New Gods (bottom left) hunt for the killers. Meanwhile, the Creeper's (top right) alter ego Jack Ryder is ginning up media hysteria against the Outsiders for his new bosses, the Green Team, who have their own problem: Manhunter (below right)! The machinations of men and gods flex fiercely in this fascinating series! Reserve Volume 1 with *DC's 1st Issue Specials* and Kirby's *Dingbat Love* at [lexpublib.org!](http://lexpublib.org/)



Your Editor would have gone for the above image to make the cover of the second volume of DC's *Kamandi The Last Boy on Earth*. Published in the fall of 1974, this issue pre-dated the release of *Jaws* and the subsequent shark-mania by a year. This point of Kamandi's wanderings through the ruined world left by the Great Disaster saw our tow-headed hellion and his post-human pal Ben Boxer and his crew heading north and getting their feet wet. As the teaser on issue #25 said, "Disaster changed the land...what did it hide in the SEVEN DEADLY SEAS?" Flying sharks, talking dolphins, leopard pirates who work for the cigar-smoking snake Mr. Sacker...that's what! Then Kamandi finds himself a soldier in a new world war fought by British bulldogs and Gallic wolves, while gorilla cultists try to leap tall buildings in a single bound in reverence to a long-gone hero! That's just the broad strokes of Jack "the King" Kirby's wildly imaginative epic of talking animals and mutated mankind, available now at Central and Tates Creek!



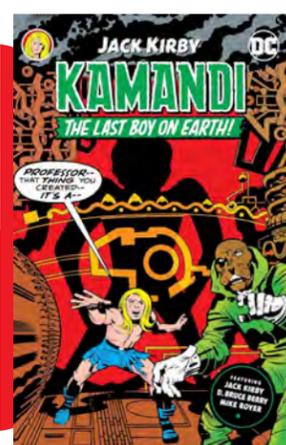
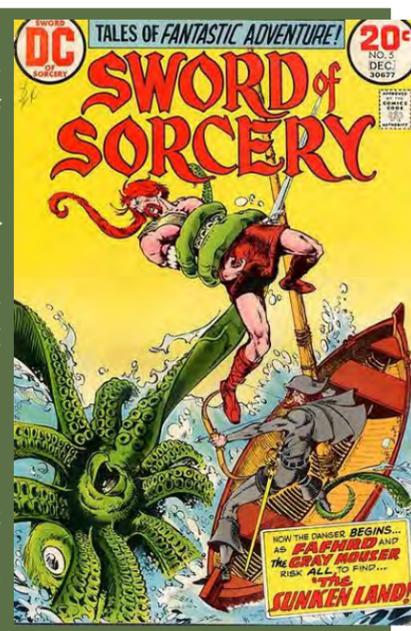
The fandom for sophisticated fantasist Fritz Leiber has always been smaller than that of Robert E. Howard or even Michael Moorcock. But it's a devoted bunch, including many of comics' true stylists, such as Mike Mignola and Howard Chaykin. These creators and more adapted the adventures of Leiber's sword & sorcery characters, Fafhrd & the Gray Mouser. I say "characters" rather than "heroes" because the duo

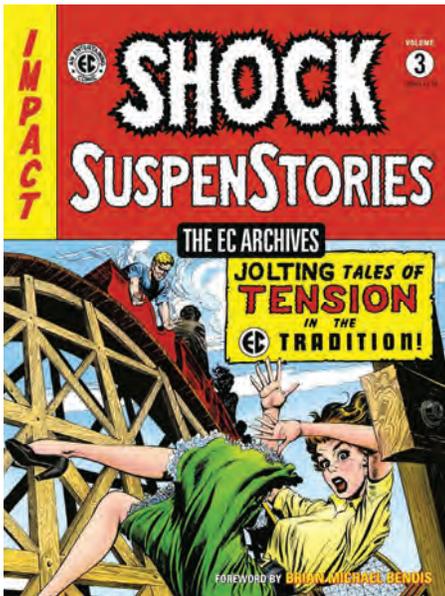


are classic antiheroes: thieves, sellswords, occasional muscle. The big Northerner and his suave, petite partner in crime were the craft beer to Conan the Barbarian's Budweiser, and the comics are no different. Hardly surprising, since they adapt such classic tales as their origin story "Ill Met in Lankmar", "Bazaar of the Bizarre" and the sharp-witted satire of religion "Lean Times in Lankmar." Available at Central and



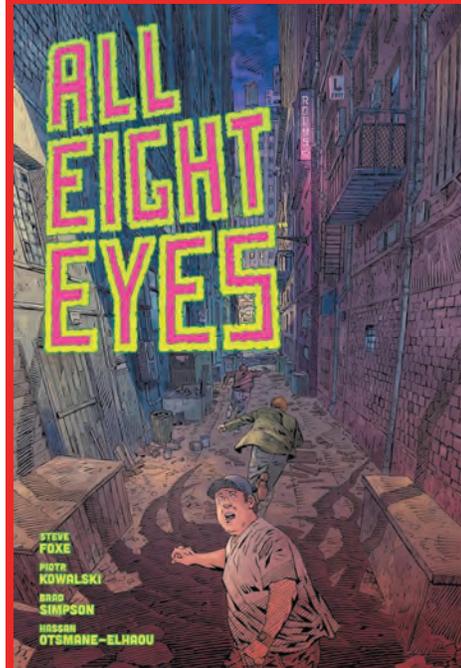
Tates Creek, this Dark Horse Omnibus includes not only the Epic Comics work of Mignola and friends from the mid-90s (far left), but the five issues of *Sword of Sorcery* published by DC in 1973. It was obviously a labor of love for the young artists involved; it's fascinating to see now-established icons like Walt Simonson working toward their ultimate style, like the manic quality Chaykin's art had (left) in his wayward youth!





Due to the frequency of release, the Dark Horse series of EC reprints are chronologically out of order. While most of the books are up to 1952-53, the final volume of *Shock Suspensstories* takes us to the end of the New Trend. In many ways, *Shock* is the ultimate EC title, in which social and individual pathologies were explored without the supernatural trappings of the horror titles or the fantastical effects of the science fiction books. Grimly realistic, *Shock* was a lightning rod for criticism, with issue #14 perhaps one of the ultimate EC comics, featuring the ultimate **Jack Kamen** "widdle kid" story,

A troika of terrifying graphic novels exemplify the new school of horror comics (see 741.5 #10). The short stories of the EC era have been replaced by multi-chapter novels. *All Eight Eyes* is about the giant spiders that infest the nooks and crannies of New York City and the homeless vigilante who hunts them alongside some fresh young recruits. **Piotr Kowalski's** art is intensely architectural and viscerally real. That the spiders are being



"The Orphan", which was condemned during the Senate Subcommittee hearings, "The Whipping", the controversial "preachie" singled out by **Dr. Wertham**, who completely missed the point, as well as **Krigstein's** infamous "You, Murderer." Other stories dealt with mob justice, such as "The Confidant" and the scourging "A Kind of Justice". Drawn by **Reed Crandall**, "A Kind..." is included in the Fantagraphics compilation *The Bitter End*. One of the last artists to join the core EC staff, **Crandall's** work can be described aptly as drop-dead-gorgeous, exquisite draftsmanship used to express

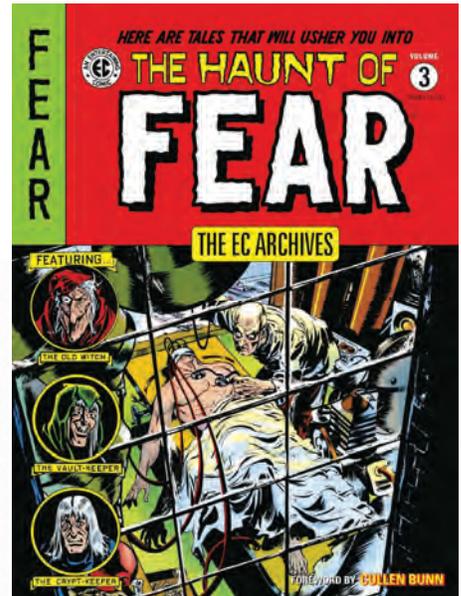
THE CHIEF STARES AT THE MATCH FLAME...ENTRANCED...ENTHRALLED...HYPNOTIZED...



MEANWHILE

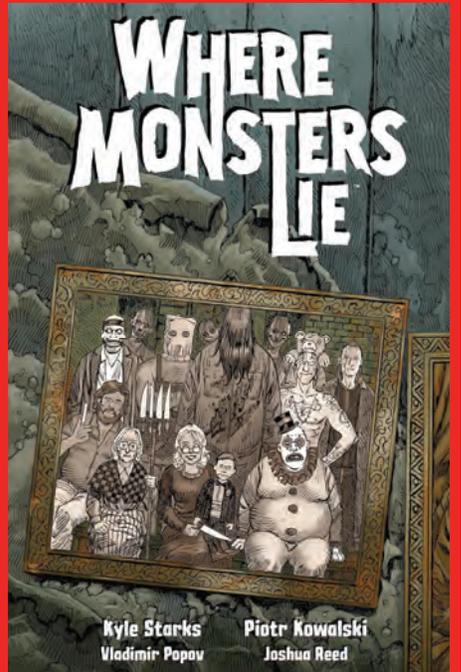


flushed out by gentrification is a bitter irony. Another abandoned property is the location for *Lamentation* (Oni Press), that is, the famed but faded Requiem Theatre. That's where Jennifer Sims finds herself cast as the lead of a new production, *Razide's Lament*. But if the play's the thing, then what's going on with the other cast members, and the weirdly quiet orchestra, and the hulking figure who



the most grotesque creatures and actions (see left) in some of the most hardcore EC stories ever, like "Swamped", "Dog Food" and "Rundown." Of course, when it comes to notoriety, hardly any EC story beats out "Horror We? How's Bayou." The lead feature of *Haunt of Fear* #17, that story was the apex of "Ghastly" **Graham Ingels'** career. But it's just one of many gruesome glories to be had in V3 of *Haunt*, including work by **Jack Davis**, **George Evans**, and the indefatigable **Jack Kamen**. Another fine mess of mid-century menace, *Haunt of Fear* V3 and *Shock* V3 are available at all LPL locations!

must be *Razide* himself? A surreal trial by terror awaits at lexpublib.org! *Where Monsters Lie*? The gated community of Wilmhurst, that's where; that's where maniac murderers like the Puzzleman, the living killer doll, and Grandpa Murder and his cannibal brood live during the off season. Former "final girl"/ current super-cop Connor Hayes finds the fiends he's been hunting all his life. And that's when things get messy!



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