



NOW YOU BEGIN TO FALL... A RAPID DESCENT... PERHAPS TOO RAPID...



BUT... AND YOU'VE GONE TO THE CHAMPION... AND THE THICK MIST OF SUCCESS IS INDICATING BEYOND BELIEF...



THEN, AT YOUR HIGHEST EBB...

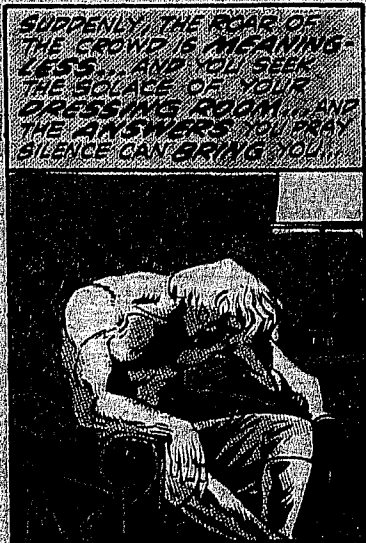
HOW WAS THAT... NOT BAD... FOR A COWARD, HUH?

HOW COULD YOU... AFTER DAD...?



I... I'M LEAVING! THE SHOW IS YOURS NOW... BUT I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

ROCKY... WAIT! I ONLY DID IT... FOR YOU!



SUPPENLY THE ROAR OF THE CROWD IS MEANINGLESS... AND YOU SEEK THE SOLACE OF YOUR DRESSING ROOM... AND THE ANSWERS YOU PRAY SILENCE CAN BRING YOU...



BUT THERE IS TO BE NO PEACE... NO SILENCE! FOR AS YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES... A HOT WIND ENGULFS YOU... A WIND YOU KNOW YOU HAVE FELT BEFORE...



YOU!

YOU DOUBLE-CROSS ME... THEN APPEAR AGAIN! YOU GOT A LOT OF GALL, DEVIL!

SILENCE, WEAKLING! I KEPT MY BARGAIN! THE MORTAL DID NOT DIE OF THE DISEASE! NOW I CLAIM MY REWARD... YOUR VERY SOUL!



FROM THIS DAY FORTH... YOU WILL WALK THE EARTH AS MY EMISSARY IN THE DARK HOURS... AND IN THE LIGHT... YOU WILL JOIN ME IN HADES!

NO...

NO!



JOHNNY... I WANTED TO... NO! NO!!

I SUSPECTED IT... BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT!



AND WHILE THE FIRE IN YOUR BRAIN RAGES OUT OF CONTROL... SHE FLINGS HERSELF ACROSS YOU!

BACK, O FOUL DENIZEN OF THE DEPTHS! AS THE CROSS IS TO A VAMPIRE... SO IS THE PRESENCE OF ONE PURE IN HEART TO YOU!

DISAPPEAR... I COMMAND YOU... OR THE FORGES OF GOOD WITHIN ME WILL DESTROY YOU!

I DEPART, CURSED WOMAN! BUT I SHALL RETURN... TO CLAIM WHAT IS OWED ME!



ONCE MORE THE WIND FADES... THE ODOR DISAPPEARS, AND THE FIERY PAIN DIES!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, DARLING... HE'S GONE... NEVER TO RETURN... AS LONG AS I STAY WITH YOU!

BUT... I DON'T UNDERSTAND! HOW DID YOU KNOW...?!



THOUGH YOU NEVER REALIZED IT... I READ YOUR BOOKS ON SATAN... WHEN YOU WEREN'T AROUND...

... AND WHEN I ENTERED THE ROOM... WELL, I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO!

THANK GOD! OH, ROCKY, I LOVE YOU!

DON'T TALK, DARLING! JUST HOLD ME!



YES... NESTLED IN HER ARMS, YOU FEEL SO SAFE... SO FREE... BUT THE FOLLOWING NIGHT... AS DARKNESS STEALS OVER THE CITY...

HEAD... THROBBING! FEEL LIKE... I'M BURNING WITH FEVER!

COULD IT BE? WHAT IN--? NO! LORD, DON'T LET IT HAPPEN!