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OCT 86
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Elvira's **HOUSE OF MYSTERY**

**"GRUESOME
GRETCHEN"**

by **MIKE BARON &
BJORN OUSLAND**

**"MUMMY
DEAREST"**

by **KERRY
GAMMILL**

**PLUS!
LETTERS,
CONTEST INFO
AND MUCH
MUCH MORE!**

**Batman
fights
Swamp
Thing in
SWAMP
THING
#53!**



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Elvira's HOUSE OF MYSTERY



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DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

GRUESOME GRETCHEN

MIKE BARON

BJORN OUSLAND

IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE A 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL, JUST ARRIVED IN A STRANGE CITY, ABOUT TO ENTER HIGH SCHOOL. IMAGINE THAT YOUR MOTHER RELIES ON YOU HEAVILY. IMAGINE THAT YOU HAVE NOT SEEN YOUR FATHER SINCE YOU WERE FIVE, IMAGINE THAT, IN ADDITION TO THESE AND OTHER BURDENS, YOU HAVE BEEN SADDLED WITH THE NAME GRETCHEN...

GRETCHEN!



YEAH,
MA...

HERE, TAKE THIS TEN--GO
DOWN TO MACY'S LIQUORS AND
GET ME A FIFTH OF VODKA. GET
YOURSELF A SODAPOP.

BUT, MA,
YOU KNOW THEY
WON'T LET ME
BUY LIQUOR...

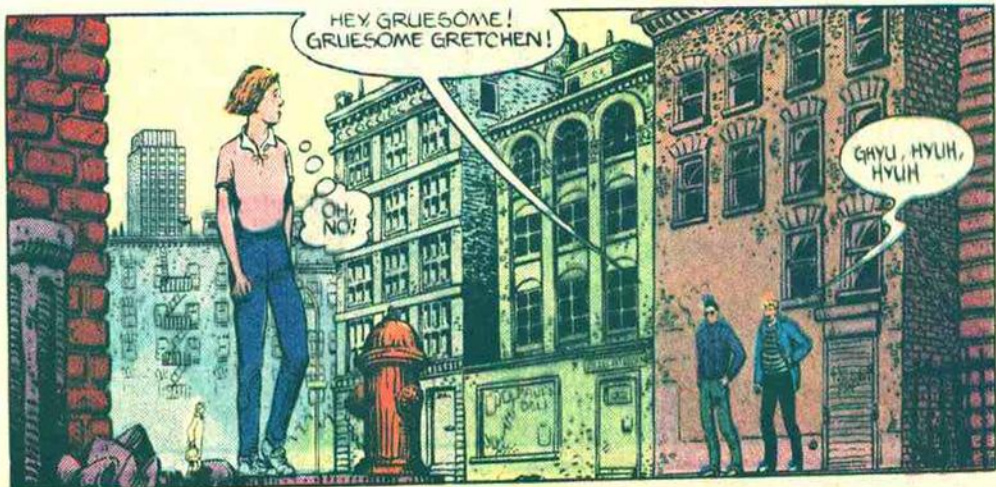
OH, COME ON, GRETCHEN.
DO LIKE YOU DID IN
LAKE MILLS. JUST BAT
YOUR EYE AND GET
SOME YOUNG GUY TO
GET IT FOR YOU. YOU
CAN TELL 'EM IT'S
FOR YOUR MA...

OKAY,
MA...

THAT'S
MY GIRL...
(COUGH!)

OH, GOD, I HOPE
I DON'T RUN INTO THAT
CREEP FRITZ...

IMAGINE THAT A YOUNG HOODLUM FINDS PARTICULAR JOY IN TORMENTING YOU....





THIS'LL BE MY
THIRD SCHOOL IN 2
YEARS. WE'VE
BEEN MOVING
AROUND A LOT...

THAT IS ALWAYS
DIFFICULT... AND YOU SAY
YOUR MOTHER COUNTS
ON YOU FOR CHORES
AND THINGS?

OH,
FOR
SURE.

I'M SUPPOSED
TO FIND SOME
ADULT TO BUY
A FIFTH OF
VODKA FOR
HER.

YOU COULD ALWAYS CLAIM
SOMEONE STOLE THE MONEY...

... THEN
YOU COULD
KEEP IT FOR
YOURSELF.

OH, NO! MY
MOM NEEDS HER
VODKA MORE
THAN I NEED,
TEN BUCKS!

I SEE...

YOU COULD
BUY THAT
VODKA...

DO YOU
SEE THAT
DOOR?

WHAT ABOUT
IT?

THROUGH THAT DOOR LIE
WONDERS BEYOND ANYTHING
YOU HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED!
PEACE OF MIND AND THE
POWER OF KNOWLEDGE!
TREASURES BEYOND KEN!

DO YOU
BELIEVE
ME?

OH, FOR
S-S-SURE!

NO, YOU DON'T, YOU THINK I'M
LOONEY TUNES. YOU'RE JUST
TRYING TO HUMOR ME.

NO, I REALLY BELIEVE
YOU! I MEAN, I'M SURE
THERE'S SOMETHING
WONDERFUL ON THE
OTHER SIDE...

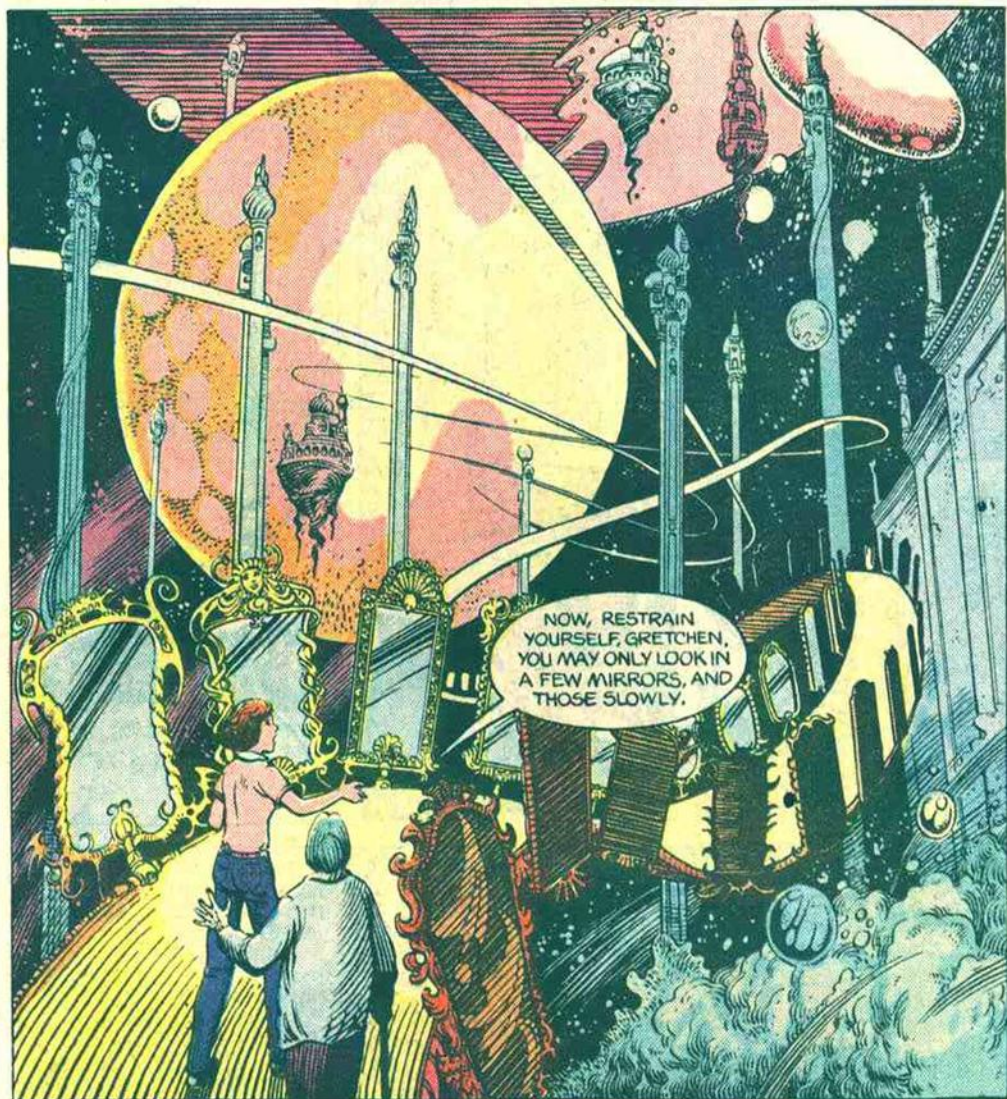


COME COME, GRETCHEN!
NOTHING WORTHWHILE IS FREE!
TANSTAAFL! THERE AIN'T NO
SUCH THING AS A FREE
LUNCH!



COME ON, THEN,
GRETCHEN, COME
INTO LYDIA'S BACK
ROOM.





THE MIRRORS SHOW THE FUTURE, BUT THEY ALSO SHOW DISTORTIONS. SOMETIMES THEY ARE MALICIOUS...



DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE HIM?



"IT'S THE YOUNG HOOD WHO ASSAULTED YOU IN THE ALLEY. THERE HE IS IN 5 YEARS, SERVING TIME FOR ARMED ROBBERY..."



"AND HIM?"

"THAT'S MOE, THE HOOD'S SIDEKICK, ACCEPTING THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE. ODD, ISN'T IT?"



"THAT'S YOUR MOTHER, DEAR..."

"AND THAT'S YOU..."



THAT'S ME... REALLY?

OH, YES. IF YOU WISH, JUST REMEMBER IT'S ONLY THE OUTSIDE -- A PERSON HAS AN INSIDE TOO.

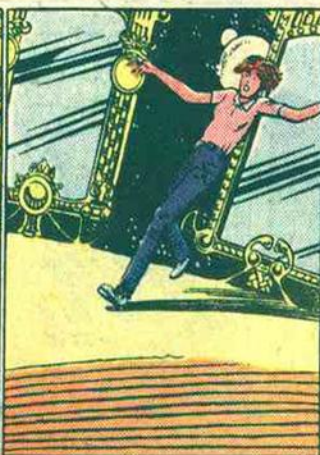


CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

WHAT'S IN
THE NEXT
MIRROR?



GRETCHEN,
DON'T!



GRETCHEN!





GAVE HIM A TASTE OF FIDO HERE



THAT THUG MUST HAVE TAKEN IT. I COULD LEND YOU \$5 IF YOU LIKE...



IF YOU'RE SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT...



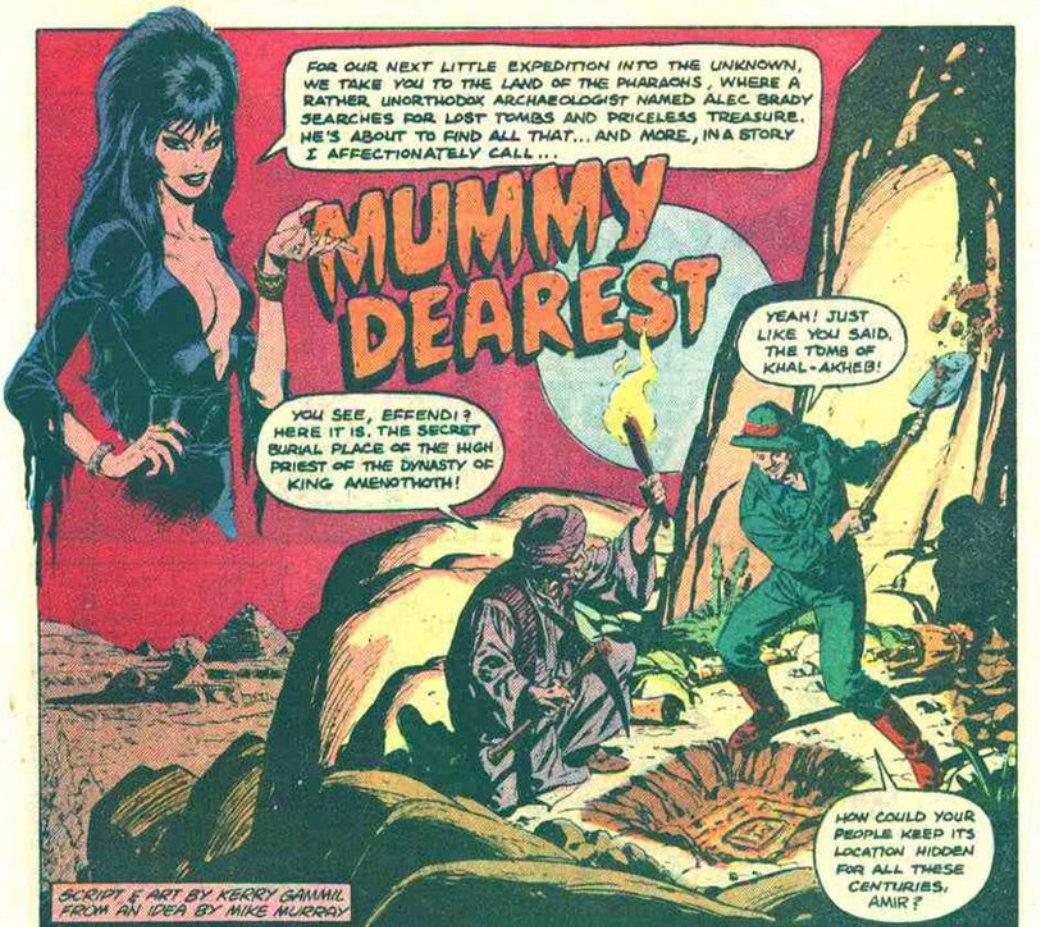
WHY OF COURSE IT IS, I RUN THE NEEDLES N' NOTIONS SHOP. COME DOWN AND TALK TO ME SOME TIME...



... IF YOU NEED A FRIEND.







FOR OUR NEXT LITTLE EXPEDITION INTO THE UNKNOWN, WE TAKE YOU TO THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS, WHERE A RATHER UNORTHODOX ARCHAEOLOGIST NAMED ALEC BRADY SEARCHES FOR LOST TOMBS AND PRICELESS TREASURE. HE'S ABOUT TO FIND ALL THAT... AND MORE, IN A STORY I AFFECTIONATELY CALL...

MUMMY DEAREST

YOU SEE, EFFENDI? HERE IT IS. THE SECRET BURIAL PLACE OF THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE DYNASTY OF KING ANENOTHOTH!

YEAH! JUST LIKE YOU SAID, THE TOMB OF KHAL-AKHED!

HOW COULD YOUR PEOPLE KEEP ITS LOCATION HIDDEN FOR ALL THESE CENTURIES, AMIR?

SCRIPT & ART BY KERRY GAMMIL
FROM AN IDEA BY MIKE MURRAY

FEAR, EFFENDI. THE SUPERSTITIONS OF MY PEOPLE STATE THAT DEATH WILL COME TO ANY WHO REVEAL THE RESTING PLACES OF OUR ROYAL DEAD. ACCORDING TO THIS SACRED PARCHMENT I STOLE, THERE IS A SECRET DOOR-WAY BENEATH THIS SYMBOL. I HAVE DONE AS I AGREED. PAY ME NOW.

SOON, AFTER DISLODGING THE STONE THAT HAS SEALED THE ENTRANCE FOR OVER THREE MILLENNIA...

ALMOST THERE. NOW TO SEE IF THIS IS REALLY AN UNSPOILED TOMB, OR IF ANCIENT GRAVEROBBERS PICKED IT CLEAN YEARS AGO.


I WON'T NEED THIS ANYMORE, AND WITH AMIR SILENCED, THERE'S NOTHING TO LEAD ANYONE TO THIS SPOT, EVER AGAIN.

BUT BRADY'S FEARS PROVE UNFOUNDED AS THE FLICKERING TORCHLIGHT REVEALS...



GOOD LORD!
IT'S BETTER THAN
I DARED DREAM!

THIS GUY MUST'A BEEN PRETTY
IMPORTANT. I WONDER WHY HE WAS
BURIED IN SUCH A REMOTE SPOT?



WELL, KHAL OL' PAL,
YOU JUST MADE ALEC
BRADY A RICH MAN.

NO MUSEUM IS EVER
GONNA GET ITS HANDS
ON THESE PRECIOUS
LITTLE ORNAMENTS.



THIS STUFF WILL BRING A
FORTUNE FROM COLLECTORS
ON THE BLACK MARKET.
IT'S LIKE HAVING MY OWN
PRIVATE GOLD MINE.

IT'LL BE MONTHS
BEFORE THIS BOOTY
RUNS OUT. AND I'LL
BE SET FOR LIFE.




I'VE GOT ALL
I CAN CARRY
THIS TIME.
MIGHT AS WELL
HAVE A LOOK
AT THE OLD
BOY BEFORE
I LEAVE.



WELL, YOU'RE NO
ROBERT REDFORD, BUT
I LIKE YOUR TASTE
IN NECKTIES.

I'VE NEVER SEEN
AN AMULET LIKE THAT
BEFORE. BET IT'LL BRING
A PRETTY PENNY.



GUESS I'VE
GOT ENOUGH
ROOM TO TAKE
IT ALONG.

CHUNK



MMMM. THESE ARE
OCCULT SYMBOLS.
SOMETHING ABOUT
THE "LIFE FORCE."
THEY MUST HAVE
HOPED TO RESURRECT
HIM. I DON'T
THINK
HE'LL BE
NEEDING
THIS NOW.



AFTER ALL, IT HUNG
AROUND HIS NECK FOR
OVER THREE THOUSAND
YEARS, AND HE HASN'T
BUDGED YET. HEH HEH.



NOT BAD FOR THE
FIRST TRIP. NEXT TIME
I'LL BRING A BIGGER--

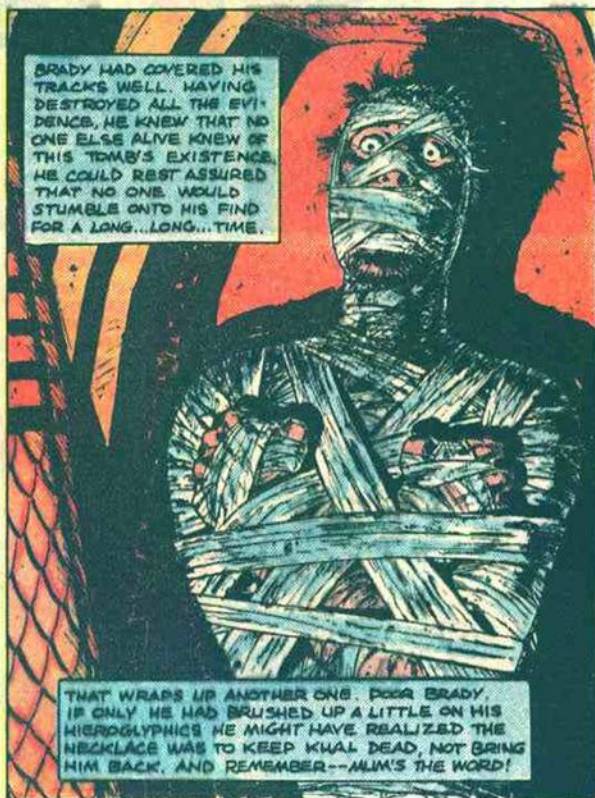
--WHA?!



THE SOUND OF CLANGING METAL
ECHOES THROUGH THE TOMBS AS
THE GOLDEN TREASURES OF
KHAL-AKHED ARE CARRIED OFF.

IN THE COMING
WEEKS, ALL OF
THE ANCIENT
HIGH PRIEST'S
BELONGINGS
ARE SECRETED
AWAY...

...ALL BUT HIS SARCOPHAGUS.



BRADY HAD COVERED HIS
TRACKS WELL, HAVING
DESTROYED ALL THE EVIDENCE.
HE KNEW THAT NO
ONE ELSE ALIVE KNEW OF
THIS TOMB'S EXISTENCE.
HE COULD REST ASSURED
THAT NO ONE WOULD
STUMBLE ONTO HIS FIND
FOR A LONG...LONG...TIME.

THAT WRAPS UP ANOTHER ONE. POOR BRADY.
IF ONLY HE HAD BRUSHED UP A LITTLE ON HIS
HIEROGLYPHICS HE MIGHT HAVE REALIZED THE
NECKLACE WAS TO KEEP KHAL DEAD, NOT BRING
HIM BACK. AND REMEMBER--MUM'S THE WORD!

WHERE DO YOU STAND IN THE AGE-OLD ARGUMENT OVER THE RATIONALITY OF THE SUPER-NATURAL? PRO? CON? IRRESOLUTE? PERHAPS A PERUSAL OF THE FOLLOWING TALE WILL HELP YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND. OUR CAST IS SMALL: THE BELIEVERS -- KAREN AND KEVIN, THE SCOFFERS -- HOMER AND THEODORE, AND -- THE OTHERS! FOUR FAST FRIENDS STUDENTS AT NEARBY GONZAGA UNIVERSITY, HAVE CHALLENGED EACH OTHER TO A TEST: SPEND 24 HOURS IN A HAUNTED HOUSE IN SEARCH OF THE SUPER-NATURAL. THE WINNER TO BE DECIDED BY WHOEVER OFFERS THE MOST CONVINCING PROOF! ONE WAY OR THE OTHER!

OUT OF SYNCh!



THERE
IT IS, GANG!
THE-- HA, HA--
HAUNTED
HOUSE!

BY THIS TIME TOMORROW
NIGHT YOU TWO WILL BE
TREATING THEODORE
AND I TO DINNER AND
DRINKS AT THE
RATHSKELLER!

JUST WAIT,
SMARTY! THIS
PLACE IS
HAUNTED AND
YOU'LL ADMIT
IT! PROBABLY
BEFORE
MORNING!

FEEL IT? COLD AND
THREATENING! THE
PSYCHIC VIBRATIONS
ARE MOST POWERFUL!

BUNK,
KEVIN!
BUNK!

WRITER
ROBIN SNYDER
ARTIST
RIC ESTRADA
COLORIST
HELEN VESIK

AFTER A CURSORY EXAMINATION OF THE FIRST LANDING, AND OBLIVIOUS TO THE MOANING GUSTS OF WIND FROM WITHOUT, THE FOUR THROW THEMSELVES INTO THE TASK AT HAND.

WHAT DO YOU SAY WE START WITH THE ATTIC TONIGHT, HOMER?

SOUNDS OK WITH ME, THEOPHORE? KAREN?

FINE!

LET'S GO, THEN!



STAY TOGETHER! DON'T WANT ANYONE GETTING LOST!

THERE! WHAT'S THAT?

JUST SOME OLD BONES, FRAIDY-CAT! PROBABLY SOME ANIMAL TRAPPED AND STARVED TO DEATH!

HORRIBLE!

AFTER A FRUITLESS SEARCH, THE FRIENDS BED DOWN. THEN -- A JOLTING YELL SCREAMS FROM THE SILENT GLOOM!

SHHH! LISTEN!

CREAK







WE'VE BEEN YELLING FOR FIVE MINUTES! WHERE WERE YOU GUYS?

GHOSTS! WE SAW 'EM. STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT! BUT WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES TO PROVE IT!

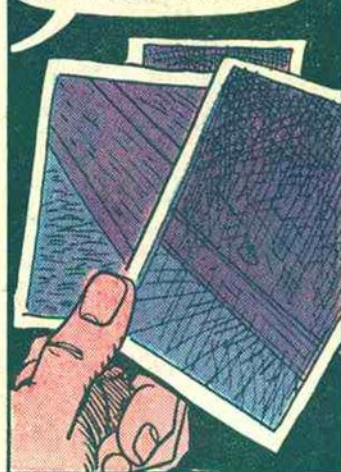


THIS IS YOUR PROOF? CUT THE COMEDY, GUYS!

A JOKE! THAT'S WHAT IT IS!



A BUNCH OF GRAINY PHOTOS SHOWING A BLANK WALL AND DUSTY FLOOR--HA HA HA!



BUT--BUT--

OH, COME ON! WE'RE READY TO ADMIT DEFEAT! DON'T BE SUCH SORE WINNERS!

NO! NO! WE WERE WRONG! I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PICTURES! YOU WIN! THERE ARE SUCH THINGS AS GHOSTS!



TURNABOUT! QUITE A SWITCH, EH? HUH? CORNY? WAIT, WISE-GUY; THERE'S MORE! TURN THE PAGE!



MOVE FORWARD NOW. IN TIME TO THE YEAR 2086. AND MEET THE GHOSTS!

WE DID IT!
I KNEW IT
WAS POSSIBLE!



YOU WERE GONE
SO LONG! WHAT
HAPPENED?

THE TRIP TO 1886 WAS
FINE! WITHOUT A HITCH!
BUT ON THE WAY BACK...



...WE SLOWED DOWN
FOR SOME REASON!
IN 1886! BECAME
STUCK IN A WALL! THE
ONLY FRIGHTENING
PART OF THE
JOURNEY!

BOTH OF US LET OUT
A SCREAM WHEN THAT
HAPPENED! MUST
HAVE REALLY
SCARED THE
INHABITANTS!



DID THEY
SEE YOU?

YOU BET! TWO FELLOWS
PROWLING ABOUT WITH
FLASHLIGHTS...

YOU WIN
THE WAGER,
THEN!
TIME
TRAVEL IS
POSSIBLE!

...LOOKED
LIKE
THEY'D
SEEN A
GHOST!

THE
END.