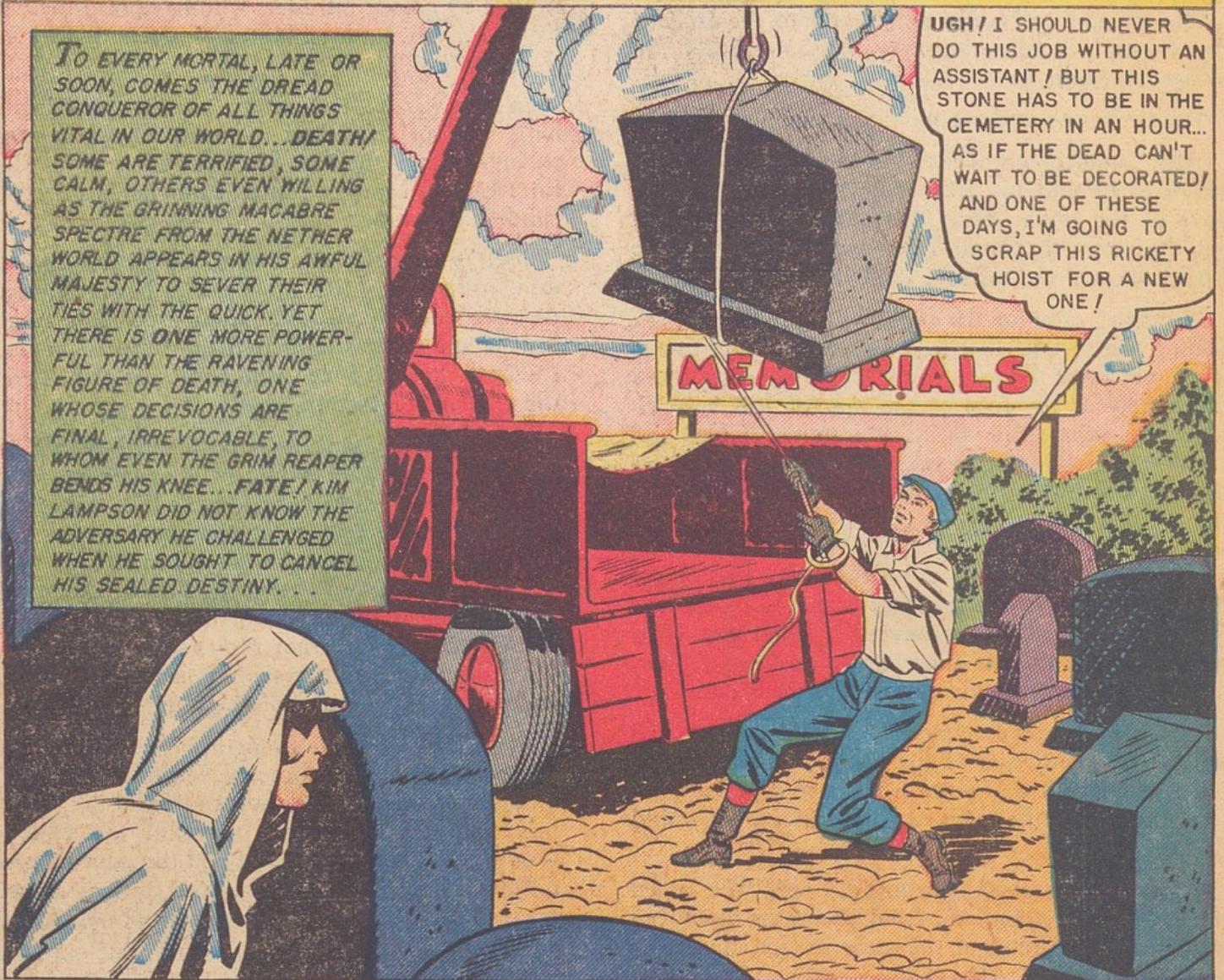


# THE GRAVE WILL NOT WAIT

TO EVERY MORTAL, LATE OR SOON, COMES THE DREAD CONQUEROR OF ALL THINGS VITAL IN OUR WORLD... DEATH! SOME ARE TERRIFIED, SOME CALM, OTHERS EVEN WILLING AS THE GRINNING MACABRE SPECTRE FROM THE NETHER WORLD APPEARS IN HIS AWFUL MAJESTY TO SEVER THEIR TIES WITH THE QUICK. YET THERE IS ONE MORE POWERFUL THAN THE RAVENING FIGURE OF DEATH, ONE WHOSE DECISIONS ARE FINAL, IRREVOCABLE, TO WHOM EVEN THE GRIM REAPER BENDS HIS KNEE... FATE! KIM LAMPSON DID NOT KNOW THE ADVERSARY HE CHALLENGED WHEN HE SOUGHT TO CANCEL HIS SEALED DESTINY...

UGH! I SHOULD NEVER DO THIS JOB WITHOUT AN ASSISTANT! BUT THIS STONE HAS TO BE IN THE CEMETERY IN AN HOUR... AS IF THE DEAD CAN'T WAIT TO BE DECORATED! AND ONE OF THESE DAYS, I'M GOING TO SCRAP THIS RICKETY HOIST FOR A NEW ONE!



"WHAT WAS TO COME HAD ALREADY BEEN DECREED. AND SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING..."

THE CHAIN IS BREAKING! I'LL BE CRUSHED! YAAAARRR!

OWW! (GASP) I CAN'T GO OUT LIKE THIS, WITHOUT A FIGHTING CHANCE-- KILLED BY A STONE I CUT FOR ANOTHER MAN'S GRAVE! OHHH!





"AS KIM HOVERED ON THE BORDERLINE OF CONSCIOUSNESS..."

HELP ME, WHOEVER YOU ARE!

I'VE COME FOR YOU, KIM LAMPSON, AT THE APPOINTED HOUR! THE GRAVE AWAITS YOU!



NO, NO! I'M TOO YOUNG TO DIE! GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE! I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR YOU!

DOESN'T HE KNOW THERE ARE NO MORE CHANCES? HIS LIFE HAS RUN ITS COURSE!



WHAT CAN YOU POSSIBLY DO FOR ME, TO WHOM ALL FINALLY COME? WHAT BARGAIN CAN YOU STRIKE?

I'LL RECRUIT FOR YOU! I'LL BRING YOU NEW VICTIMS FOR YOUR UNDERGROUND REALM OF DARKNESS, MORE THAN ENOUGH TO MAKE UP FOR MY LOSS TO YOU! LET ME LIVE, SO LONG AS I BRING DEATH TO OTHERS!



ACCEPT THIS HOLLOW MOCKERY OF A BARGAIN! I WILL NOT CANCEL HALF A LINE IN MY BOOK! LET HIM STRUGGLE FOR A WHILE AND BE TAUGHT A LESSON!

VERY WELL THEN, I AM AGREED! BUT REMEMBER, KIM LAMPSON-- FATE IS THE FINAL JUDGE, AND I FEAR HE WILL NEVER ACCEPT THIS BARGAIN!



"AS THE CRUSHING WEIGHT WAS REMOVED FROM LAMPSON'S BACK, A FALSE SENSE OF POWER SURGED THROUGH HIM..."

I WON! DEATH HAS GRANTED ME A REPRIEVE, AND IF I KEEP MY END OF THE BARGAIN, I'LL LIVE ON AND ON! LET FATE DO HIS WORST! I CARVE OUT MY OWN DESTINY!



"WHEN KIM REACHED THE CEMETERY..."

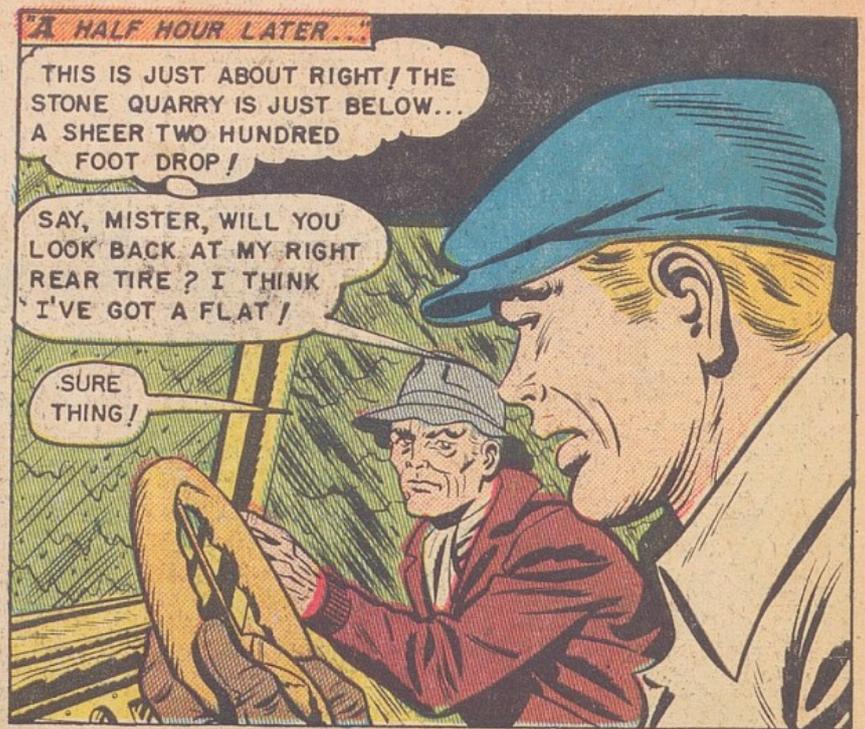
CURSE THIS RAIN! I HAVE NOTHING BUT MISERY ALL DAY LONG! NOW WHERE AM I GOING TO FIND A VICTIM TO KEEP MY BARGAIN?



"SUDDENLY, AS IF ARISING FROM THE GRAVE, A STRANGE VISITOR APPEARED..."

HEY, WHERE'D YOU COME FROM? I THOUGHT THE CEMETERY WAS SHUT HOURS AGO?

I HAD A LATE JOB AND THE TRUCK LET ME OFF HERE! MAYBE YOU CAN GIVE ME A LIFT?



WHAT AM I DOING? THAT'S MY OWN NAME I'VE BEEN WRITING! THIS SENTENCE HANGING OVER MY HEAD IS DRIVING ME MAD! I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY, FOR AWHILE... MAYBE HUNTING WILL HELP!

"AN HOUR LATER..."

THAT'S FUNNY! I'VE HUNTED IN THESE WOODS ALL MY LIFE AND NEVER SAW THIS CLEARING BEFORE! I FEEL AS IF MY FOOTSTEPS HAVE BEEN GUIDED HERE!

MUST HAVE BEEN SOME OLD HOBO'S FIRE! LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN DEAD FOR A WEEK! I NEVER SAW ANY TRAMPS AROUND HERE BEFORE!

"THERE WERE MORE SURPRISES FOR KIM..."

WILD DUCKS, HUNDREDS OF THEM! THEY NEVER PASSED THIS WAY BEFORE... BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET THAT STOP ME FROM BAGGING A FEW!

BANG!  
BANG!  
BANG!

"AS KIM RETURNED TO THE CLEARING..."

WH-WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? I PASSED HERE FIFTEEN MINUTES AGO, AND THERE WAS NOTHING BUT SOME CHARRED REMAINS OF A DEAD FIRE!

I DUNNO WHAT YOU SAW, MISTER, BUT I'VE BEEN HERE OVER TWO HOURS! I SEE YOU HAD SOME LUCK!

I'LL LET YOU IN ON A DUCK THIS IS DINNER, IF YOU DO THE COOKING! ANOTHER YOU CAN GET SOME WATER PERFECT FROM THE STREAM! CHANCE FOR ME TO RECRUIT FOR DEATH AND STRETCH MY TIME!

"THE HOBO OFFERED A PERFECT TARGET FOR KIM AS HE STOOPED OVER THE STREAM..."

I HIT HIM TWICE, B-BUT HE DIDN'T CRY OUT! HE'S FALLING INTO THE WATER!

BANG!  
BANG!

**"KIM RUSHED TO THE STREAM'S EDGE TO LOOK FOR HIS QUARRY..."**

HE'S GONE / VANISHED WITHOUT A SPLASH / IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! THE STREAM COULDN'T WASH HIM AWAY THAT FAST!

WHAT! I MUST BE GOING OUT OF MY MIND! THE FIRE IS DEAD AND THE DUCKS HAVE DISAPPEARED! I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM THIS HAUNTED PLACE!

IT IS NOT THE PLACE THAT IS HAUNTED ...IT IS YOU, KIM LAMPSON!

RUN, FOOL, RUN! THE VERY ENDS OF THE EARTH OFFER NO ESCAPE FROM YOUR INEXORABLE FATE!

**"KIM RAN ALL THE WAY BACK TO HIS GRIM WORKSHOP..."**

(GASP) AT LEAST I'VE STAVED OFF DEATH FOR A PERIOD! BUT HOW LONG CAN I KEEP UP THIS MAD PACE?

MEMORIALS  
KIM LAMPSON

**"AS HE ENTERED THE YARD AND SURVEYED HIS WORK..."**

WH-WHERE DID THIS COME FROM? I DIDN'T DO THIS WORK! SOME EVIL TRICK IS BEING PLAYED ON ME!

KIM LAMPSON  
BORN: MAY 2, 1928  
DIED: ?

**"KIM ATTACKED THE STONE IN A VIOLENT RAGE..."**

THIS WON'T COME TO PASS! I'LL WIPE OUT EVERY LAST TRACE OF IT!

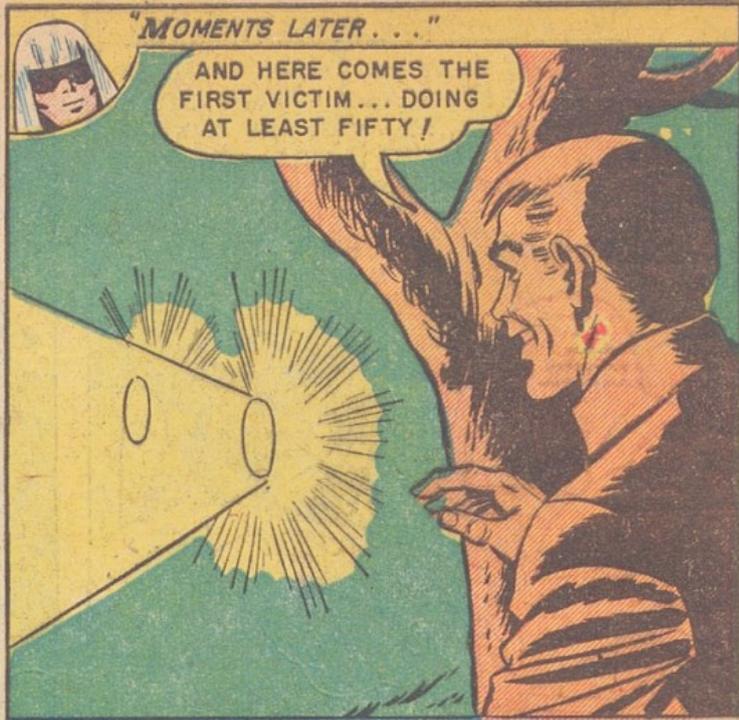
PERHAPS IT MEANS THAT ANOTHER VICTIM IS NEEDED! MAYBE I DIDN'T KILL THE HOBO AFTER ALL... THAT I JUST IMAGINED IT?

HE HAS NOT LEARNED THE BITTER LESSON YET! LIKE A RAT, HE SCURRIES TO EVERY POSSIBLE AVENUE OF ESCAPE!



"THAT NIGHT, KIM CONCEIVED OF ANOTHER VIOLENT IDEA TO SATISFY HIS STRANGE BARGAIN..."

WHEN I REMOVE THIS DANGER MARKER, ANY CAR COMING ROUND THIS CURVE WILL DROP INTO THE CANYON! DEATH WILL SURELY BE SATISFIED THIS TIME!



"MOMENTS LATER..."

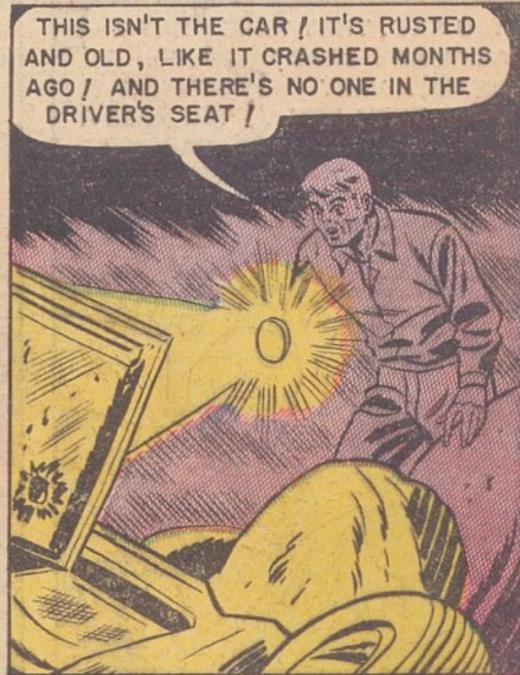
AND HERE COMES THE FIRST VICTIM... DOING AT LEAST FIFTY!



NOT A CHANCE! THOSE BRAKES CAN'T HOLD! HA HA HA!



I DIDN'T HEAR ANY CRASH! THE CAR WENT OVER WITHOUT A SOUND! IT'S CRAZY--UNBELIEVABLE! I'VE GOT TO GO DOWN THERE!



THIS ISN'T THE CAR! IT'S RUSTED AND OLD, LIKE IT CRASHED MONTHS AGO! AND THERE'S NO ONE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT!



"KIM RACED MADLY UP THE CLIFF..."

NO! I CHOPPED IT DOWN! IT SHOULD NOT BE HERE! AND THAT RED DANGER SIGN WASN'T HERE BEFORE!



BACK TO MY SHOP... MY ONLY PLACE OF SAFETY! I MUST HIDE FROM ALL THESE PHANTOM SPECTRES!

THERE IS NO HOLE SMALL ENOUGH FOR YOU TO HIDE IN, KIM LAMPSON, EXCEPT THE GRAVE WHICH AWAITS YOU!



"AS KIM ARRIVED AT HIS WORKSHOP..."

Y-YOU! WHAT DO YOU WANT? I STUCK TO THE BARGAIN... I BROUGHT YOU VICTIMS IN MY STEAD! GO AWAY!

COME, THERE IS NO TIME LEFT! NO ARGUMENTS WILL AVAIL! YOUR LAST JOB REMAINS UNFINISHED! THE STONE MUST BE RAISED TO THE TRUCK!



"SUDDENLY, AS THE STONE DANGLED IN THE AIR..."

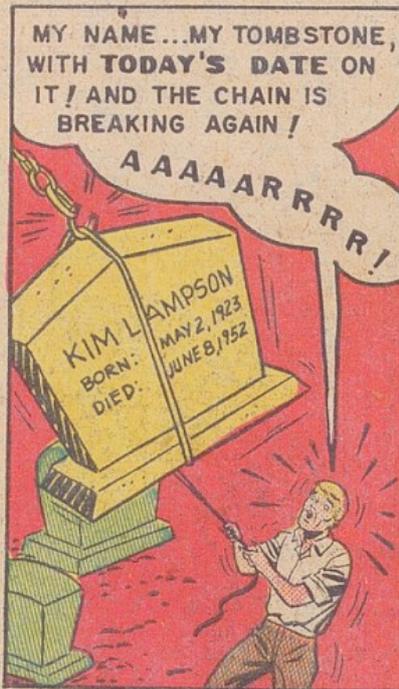
AIEEEE! THOSE MEN! THEY'RE DEAD... I KILLED THEM ALL!

NO, KIM! YOU REMEMBER, THEY SEEMED TO DIE SO SOUNDLESSLY? YOU DIDN'T KILL THEM!



YOU SEE, THEY WERE ALREADY DEAD! DEAD A VERY LONG TIME! NOW, LOOK AT THAT TOMBSTONE, YOU FOOLISH MORTAL!

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND! YOU MADE A BARGAIN WITH ME!



MY NAME...MY TOMBSTONE, WITH TODAY'S DATE ON IT! AND THE CHAIN IS BREAKING AGAIN!

AAAAARRRR!

KIM LAMPSON  
BORN: MAY 2, 1923  
DIED: JUNE 8, 1952



COME, OUR WORK HERE IS FINISHED! YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR ABODE OF ETERNAL REST!



FAREWELL, MASTER!

FAREWELL! HE DID NOT LEARN! NO, NOT EVEN IN THE LAST MOMENT DID HIS MIND SEE THE FUTILITY OF THE EMPTY BARGAIN HE MADE TO CHEAT DEATH!

KIM LAMPSON  
BORN: MAY 2, 1923  
DIED: JUNE 8, 1952



FOR FATE WILL ALWAYS CONQUER IN THE END, SINCE FATE MUST FOLLOW ITS PREDESTINED ROUTE AS DECREED IN THE GREAT BOOK OF FATE, FOR EACH AND EVERY MORTAL ON THIS EARTH!

THE END