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# Comic Book Villains

By James Robinson

You know comics?  
You know comics?  
Oh, please.  
I'm listening. I'm all ears.  
Please, please, tell me!  
It's not just comics.  
It's about cash.  
We could have split it.  
We could have split it? No!  
It's all mine!  
Why? Why? Why would  
I split it with you?  
Because we were  
in this together.  
No! I'm in this alone!  
My whole life!  
Every waking, sleeping,  
dreaming moment of my life,  
I spent for comics.  
What do you  
live for, my friend?  
You know comics?  
You know shit!  
You know comics?  
You know shit!  
Is that what it would  
have taken to share?  
I know comics, too.  
I--I grew up with them.  
Oh, yeah, you know comics.  
You're the oracle  
of delphi of comics.  
Yes, um, uh...  
First appearance  
of superman?  
Uh,  
action comics  
#1.  
Everyone knows that.  
Batman?  
Detective comics  
Spider-man?  
Spider-man  
#1.

Uh-uh!  
Oh, wait, wait. Uh...  
Amazing fantasy  
Amazing fantasy  
Golden age flash?  
Golden age flash...  
Uh,  
flash comics  
#1.  
Silver age flash?  
Showcase 4.  
Human torch?  
Uh,  
fantastic four  
#1.  
No! I'm taking about  
the 1940's torch!  
Oh, uh...  
Marvel mystery  
#1.  
Wonder woman?  
Wonder woman...  
Come on!  
Wonder woman...  
Wonder woman--  
sensation  
Wrong!  
No, no, wait.  
I'm right.  
It's definitely  
sensation  
I'm right.  
It's definitely  
sensation  
No!  
No!  
It's not  
wonder woman #1,  
if that's--  
what are you trying to do?  
What are you trying to do?  
Insult me?  
Are you patronizing me,  
or are you just trying

to get yourself killed?  
Because if  
you're doing that,  
you're doing  
a very... good... job.  
Our town?  
Um... it was normal.  
Walk down main street  
on a busy Saturday,  
and you knew  
almost everyone.  
Yep, a normal place.  
Normal stores  
and normal people.  
And if it was  
a little boring,  
no one seemed  
to notice but me.  
The thing is, looking back,  
I see it wasn't just normal.  
It was real, too--  
the real world,  
where parents paid bills  
and kids worried  
about football tryouts,  
and kids worried  
about football tryouts,  
where folks argued  
whether the president  
was a Saint or a sinner.  
Yep. Real.  
A little piece  
of the world  
that my friends and me  
didn't belong to.  
See, we had  
a world of our own.  
Why argue about  
the president  
when you could argue  
for the fate of earth  
with galactus,  
devourer of worlds?  
Why try out for football

when you could try out  
for the X-Men?  
Nah, we didn't  
do any of that.  
Nah, we didn't  
do any of that.  
But read enough comics,  
and it sure made  
you feel like you did.  
Pathetic? Yeah, maybe.  
But all you out there  
with your daytime soaps,  
as far as I'm concerned,  
you're in glass houses  
throwing stones.  
That's me.  
The name's Archie lake.  
I have to say  
that I'm a bit different  
from a lot of guys here.  
Not by choice,  
my parents dying and all.  
I was alone.  
I had a single room  
in a guesthouse.  
Me, a bed, and more comic  
boxes than I could count.  
Me, a bed, and more comic  
boxes than I could count.  
Most of these guys  
live at home.  
Why? No rent.  
And guess what that  
extra dough gets spent on.  
And not just  
new books every month,  
back issues, too,  
some costing  
some serious dough.  
Which is  
how and why things turned  
a little crazy last year.  
Ah, and this  
is Raymond macgillicuddy,

owner of this  
heaven on earth.  
Getting in with Raymond  
so he thought you were  
worth talking to...  
Now that was  
something to strive for.  
Now that was  
something to strive for.  
When he thought  
you were worth the effort,  
boy, those talks...  
Stimulating.  
About things  
that really matter.  
If you want to fuck  
a superheroine,  
the golden age canary  
wins hands-down over  
the modern version  
because of the fishnets.  
How about the valkyrie  
from the  
airboy  
comic?  
Normally,  
I'd agree with you, uh,  
except for  
the fact that she was  
in suspended animation.  
She started screwing  
the airboy in the 1940s,  
then she comes out  
of cold storage  
and starts  
screwing the new airboy  
in the present?  
So?  
So?  
Well,  
the new airboy  
in the present  
is the son  
of the original.

That means the valkyrie  
was doing  
the father and the son.  
That is fucked up.  
Ah, ah, gentlemen,  
she was lost.  
She was lonely.  
She was looking  
for love, ok?  
Which of us,  
under those conditions,  
wouldn't do the same?  
Yes.  
And this is conan.  
He calls himself that  
'cause he says  
he calls himself that  
'cause he says  
Robert e. Howard,  
the guy who created  
conan the barbarian,  
was his great uncle,  
which I know is a crock.  
He's my Dr. doom,  
my archfoe.  
Why?  
He has more money than me,  
and he snags  
the comics I can't.  
Plus, he's in  
with Raymond, too.  
In fact, it was him  
that started all  
the craziness.  
Though I admit it seemed  
innocent at the time  
when he opened his mouth,  
sweet as pie, and said...  
Raymond,  
do you know a guy  
named David cresswell?  
Do you know a guy  
named David cresswell?  
David cresswell...

No, no. Should--should I?  
The new books come in?  
Hellboy  
by mignola.  
Madman  
by allred.  
The others,  
they're the same old crap.  
Is that it, arch?  
Yeah, unless  
my poster came in.  
Nope.  
Well, what about my  
Alex Ross signed hardcover?  
Nope, again.  
You're not having  
much luck today.  
Ring me up.  
Ring me up.  
What's going on?  
You seem kind of down.  
You all right?  
I'm fine.  
You know, I just really  
don't want to talk about it.  
Why not?  
You're  
among friends.  
Um, do you remember  
my cousin Sam?  
I brought him in once  
when he was visiting.  
Well, it doesn't matter.  
Anyway, he got this job  
driving a cab in New York,  
and he saved up  
all this money,  
and now he's  
going to Europe.  
Big deal. What's so  
special about that?  
Europe isn't--isn't here.  
It's--  
it's there?

Yeah, it's there.  
It's somewhere.  
Yeah, it's there.  
It's somewhere.  
Why would you want  
to leave town?  
Everything worth  
having is right here.  
Raymond's store.  
Domino's pizza.  
Very true.  
Ah, conan, be careful  
of that, um, counter.  
The leg's broken.  
You going to fix it?  
I'll get  
around to it.  
This, um...  
Cresswell character.  
Should I know him?  
He died.  
My mom told me.  
She met his mom.  
Oh, really?  
He was on old guy.  
50, 55.  
He was on old guy.  
50, 55.  
Collected comic books  
his whole life.  
I find that  
hard to believe,  
seeing as I know every  
serious comic-book collector  
in the tri-county area,  
and I've never heard  
of this cresswell character.  
I meant he did until,  
like, 5 years ago.  
That was before  
you opened the store.  
But he started buying  
when he was 8 or 9.  
That's like 45 years

of collecting.  
It's cool, huh?  
And he's deceased, you say?  
Too many burgers.  
His heart.  
Makes you proud  
to be a comic fan.  
Where--where does  
this mother live?  
Where--where does  
this mother live?  
My mom met her  
at the doctor's.  
She's like 100  
or something,  
extremely old.  
Who, your mom?  
Mrs. cresswell.  
Oh.  
They met at the doctor's  
waiting room.  
They don't exchange  
numbers or anything.  
My mom's hot.  
She's trying to date  
the u. P. S. Guy,  
so I can't see her  
giving foot rubs  
to some old woman,  
you know?  
C-conan, have you told  
this to anyone else?  
Uh-uh, only you.  
Uh-uh, only you.  
Which wasn't exactly true.  
In fact,  
it wasn't true at all.  
You remember that conan  
was my archenemy?  
Well, Raymond had  
his own Lex Luthor.  
Norman link  
and his wife Judy  
had their own store

across town.  
They weren't  
hard-core comic fans.  
Norman realized  
that there was money  
to be made in comics,  
especially if you  
stocked a variety of cards  
and games  
and stickers and crap  
that encouraged mothers  
to bring in their kids.  
And that's why  
Raymond hates them.  
And that's why  
Raymond hates them.  
He feels there's  
no real love for comics,  
neither Norman or his wife.  
Norman, in turn,  
hates Raymond as  
a professional rival.  
I think words  
were even exchanged once  
when they were  
at a stop sign  
and they both thought  
they had the right of way.  
I never go into the place.  
I have Raymond,  
so why would I?  
But little did  
ray and I know  
that conan...  
He liked to switch-hit.  
Which is why,  
earlier that same day...  
Do you know a guy  
named David cresswell?  
And that's our cast  
of four-color characters.  
No, wait.  
There's one more.  
The reason

I almost forgot him  
is that  
I didn't know this guy  
when it all started.  
None of us did  
except Raymond,  
and even his association  
was from a long time ago.  
And even his association  
was from a long time ago.  
Here he is...  
J. C. Carter.  
Though what  
the j and the c stand for  
though what  
the j and the c stand for  
are as mysterious  
as the shadow.  
And as you can see  
at this moment in time,  
the last thing  
on his mind is comic books.  
Hello?  
Archie, hey.  
Hey, what are you doing?  
Babylon 5  
is on.  
It's a repeat.  
It's a repeat.  
So?  
So don't you have  
the week off work?  
Yep, my boss  
is making me take it.  
So what are  
you going to do with it?  
I don't know.  
I'll probably re-bag  
part of my collection  
and practice  
how to make the perfect  
grilled-cheese sandwich.  
Hey, um, how'd you like  
to spend tomorrow

driving around with me?  
It's probably nothing.  
No, we can't afford it.  
Ok, well,  
it's probably nothing,  
so don't worry about it.  
Well, why are  
we bothering  
if it's nothing?  
Because maybe  
it is something.  
Because maybe  
it is something.  
Then we  
should worry.  
Can--  
Norman.  
Look, rumors like this one  
drip down from  
the clouds every few years.  
The big collection.  
You start hearing about  
30, 40, 50 years of comic books  
kept pristine  
in a basement or a warehouse.  
Usually it turns out  
to be bullcrap.  
50 years  
of so-called collecting  
turns out to be  
a year of  
Archie comics  
in a cardboard box.  
Turns out to be  
a year of  
Archie comics  
in a cardboard box.  
Or there's  
a few old comics,  
but the rats and the damp  
have gotten to them.  
So why bother?  
Because you never know.  
There was a collection once.

"The mile-high collection"  
they call it now.  
The man that found it  
built a mini-empire  
of comic-book stores  
in Colorado and abouts.  
Norman,  
we can't afford to be  
buying collections.  
Our quarterly taxes  
are due next week.  
I know it.  
Say, you want pizza tonight?  
I want a baby.  
Gee, I don't know  
if I can get that  
as a topping, honey.  
How about, uh, sausage?  
You bastard.  
Say, where's the phone book?  
The number for  
the pizza store  
is on the refrigerator.  
No, I'm thinking  
there can't be too many  
cresswells in town, right?  
Hey, I'm leaving.  
I want to take a bath.  
Ohh, nice.  
Can I watch?  
No, you can't.  
I want an hour  
to myself,  
I want an hour  
to myself,  
so don't come over yet.  
Ok.  
So what are  
you going to do?  
Finish up here.  
Oh, will you  
grab something  
on your way over?  
What?

I'm making you  
a meal tonight.  
Macaroni and cheese?  
No,  
I'm making a roasted  
vegetable omelette,  
and I got everything.  
I just need, uh...  
Red and yellow  
sweet peppers.  
Honey?  
Huh?  
Can you get them?  
Yeah, yeah.  
Green and yellow peppers.  
No, red.  
No, red.  
Red and yellow peppers.  
Ok, I'll get 'em.  
Thanks.  
Oh, and, uh,  
Cheryl said that she saw  
Tony here earlier,  
but I must have  
been backstage.  
I've been here hours.  
I haven't seen him.  
Just be careful,  
all right?  
Right.  
I love you, booby.  
Hey!  
don't you love me?  
You know it, honeysuckle.  
Mr. Carter?  
Been a while.  
Oh, hi, Tony.  
How you doing?  
How or who,  
which did you say?  
How.  
Ah...  
'Cause if you'd  
asked me who,

then I'd have to tell you  
that I'm not doing anyone.  
But you're doing  
someone, though.  
Come on, Tony.  
We've been  
through all this.  
Your ex-wife  
is just that--  
your ex.  
Your ex-wife  
is just that--  
your ex.  
I didn't  
break you guys up.  
You were around.  
Who are these guys?  
My friends.  
Didn't bring  
any of your buddies?  
No, I'm, uh...  
More of a loner.  
don't hurt me.  
Please, Carter.  
I'll leave you alone.  
I promise. I promise.  
Oh, yeah?  
Well, what makes you think  
I don't enjoy  
our time together, huh?  
Hmm?  
Hmm?  
You fuck!  
Now,  
the new day didn't begin  
with a glorious dawn  
marking the start  
of some grand adventure.  
There was one cresswell  
listed in the phone book,  
no Mr. or Mrs.  
alongside it,  
so we didn't know  
what we'd find

when we got there.  
Not me. Not Raymond...  
Not me. Not Raymond...  
Not Norman.  
M-m-Mrs. cresswell?  
They're around the back.  
What are?  
My bottles.  
It's about time the city  
came and got 'em.  
Your bottles?  
Yes, I've even  
sorted them into  
clear and colored.  
I've done all  
the work for you.  
A little  
old lady like me,  
you ought to be  
ashamed of yourselves.  
No, I'm--I'm not here  
for your bottles,  
Mrs. cresswell,  
no, I'm--I'm not here  
for your bottles,  
Mrs. cresswell,  
I'm not with the city.  
I--I had a, uh,  
a city job once, but...  
I was actually--  
I was wondering  
if I might have  
a word with you.  
Look, if you're  
a jehovah's witness,  
you're wasting  
your time,  
because I've made  
my peace with god,  
and I don't  
want to change  
the way I say  
good morning  
and good night to him

at this late date.  
No, no, no. I'm not here  
about god, either.  
Then what  
can I do for you?  
Well, you, um...  
Well, you, um...  
You had a son, right?  
He was 65  
and still living  
with his mom.  
He enjoyed  
his life, though.  
He never went out.  
Not after  
he left his job.  
Ah, a pleasant  
retirement nonetheless.  
No, disability.  
He slipped at work.  
He said there was  
grease on the floor.  
I think  
he was just so fat  
that he fell over.  
I think  
he was just so fat  
that he fell over.  
But don't get me wrong.  
don't get me wrong.  
I loved my boy.  
I know you did.  
So he--he stayed here?  
He watched videos,  
and he ate ribs  
and apple pie,  
and that was his life.  
Hmm.  
I came down one morning  
and found him dead  
from the night before.  
Tragic. What a shame.  
Yeah, I can see  
the tears in your eyes.

Now, what do you want?  
Dave--David was  
a collector, right?  
Yeah.  
Comic books?  
Yeah, most of his life.  
Do you still have them?  
Sure, sure. I have  
everything of David's.  
See, I'm a bit  
of a collector myself,  
and I'd actually  
might be interested  
in buying them from you.  
Well, I'm sorry,  
but you see,  
they're not for sale.  
Well, I'm sorry,  
but you see,  
they're not for sale.  
Oh, well, I'm sure  
we could come to some sort  
of  
understanding.  
Not unless  
you understand  
that I'm not interested.  
Well, could I at least  
just see what he had?  
No. I don't see  
the point of it,  
you know?  
I-I'd like to know...  
For my own peace of mind.  
Well...  
Never let it be said  
that I denied anybody  
his peace of mind.  
Come on.  
No humidity.  
No light.  
That's good.  
Oh, god.  
Goddamn it,

there he goes.  
Ohh, this  
doesn't look good.  
Oh, goddamn it.  
Shit!  
Shit!  
Fuck! Shit!  
Goddamn it!  
Jesus Christ!  
I bet you he found her!  
I see--  
look at his face!  
I bet you that  
son of a bitch  
found her!  
You know what  
this about, Archie?  
This is about that house  
being a quarter of a mile  
closer to his shop  
than my fucking shop!  
A quarter of a fucking mile!  
What are you  
going to do?  
I don't know!  
Mrs. cresswell?  
Yes.  
Hi. You just  
saw my colleague?  
Hi. You just  
saw my colleague?  
Your colleague?  
My--I mean  
my partner, um, Norman.  
He said I should,  
uh, introduce myself.  
I don't know why.  
I told him I wasn't  
interested in selling them.  
The comic books?  
Well, what else  
would I be talking about?  
Oh, well, um...  
See, Norman, uh, thought

I should--I should  
take a look at them.  
Look, I told him,  
and I'm telling you  
I don't want to sell  
my son's things.  
Oh, and I'm--  
I'm sorry for your loss,  
oh, and I'm--  
I'm sorry for your loss,  
but could I look at  
the comic books anyway?  
Your partner  
already saw them.  
I know, ok, but see,  
he--I'm--he's not me.  
And I'm...  
I'm a collector,  
and your son  
was a collector.  
And I have so much  
respect for...  
Uh... collecting.  
Please?  
Oh, well...  
It's nice to hear  
a gentleman say please.  
Come on in.  
Come on in.  
Did you see them?  
They're beautiful!  
They're beautiful.  
She won't sell,  
you said. The end.  
She won't sell,  
you said. The end.  
No.  
That's it, Norman.  
You had no right  
to offer her our life savings.  
We could offer her more.  
We could take out a loan.  
Are you high?  
Maybe we could sell

that car. Who needs it?  
Get something cheaper.  
This is fucking crazy.  
don't swear.  
I hate it when you swear.  
Oh, well, I swear I'll  
walk out that fucking door  
if you keep this up!  
These collections  
have pedigree.  
We could charge more,  
4, 5 times more  
than  
the comic book  
price guide  
says.  
Old lady cresswell  
is sitting on a gold mine.  
She don't even know it.  
She don't even know it.  
I saw the complete runs  
of marvel's and DC's,  
some of them going back  
to the golden age,  
and all of them perfect.  
All the ecs,  
all the early  
showcases  
with the origin  
of the flash,  
the green lantern,  
and the atom.  
Look...  
The guide says,  
"\$32, 000. \$5, 500.  
And \$1, 500."  
We could charge  
4 times that,  
and that's  
just 3 comic books, honey.  
The guy had thousands.  
I'm serious. Thousands.  
I'm serious. Thousands.  
Here.

Bedtime reading for you.

Yeah, I'll kill you  
with it in your sleep,  
or I'll hit you  
over the head.

Look, it's a gamble,  
I admit it.

But if it pays off,  
we can expand.

You can have a kid.

We could have it all.

Norman.

Norman,  
honey, wake up.

What?

We have to get  
those comics.

What happened?

Look,  
man driving bus,  
not funny.

Monkey driving bus,  
chuckles a-plenty.

Man icing cake,  
no laughs.

Monkey icing cake,  
big laughs.

Man walking dog...

Hey.

What's with you?

Why aren't you  
joining in?

You usually like  
to take part in  
this kind of stuff.

Provocative monkeys?

Yeah.

I don't know.

Excuse me  
if I'm wrong. Um...

Excuse me  
if I'm wrong. Um...

Weren't you the one who  
tried to start the campaign

to get linda Hamilton  
nominated for an Oscar  
for  
Terminator ii?  
No, that was me.  
I love that movie.  
Me, too.  
No, I was--  
I was just thinkin'.  
About the comics  
at Mrs. cresswell's?  
Um, no.  
Just, like,  
about the town.  
What about it?  
You know--nothin'.  
Yeah, you know, lately  
yeah, you know, lately  
a lotta stuff's  
been eatin' at me, too,  
drivin' me crazy.  
Booby.  
Oh, hey, honey.  
I was just thinkin'  
about you.  
Oh, yeah?  
Warm thoughts, I hope.  
Warm thoughts, I hope.  
Is there any other kind?  
Uh-uh.  
I brought you lunch.  
How's it goin' in here?  
Well...  
At least  
another 4 months.  
Really?  
Why that long?  
See that? It's damp.  
Wall's rotten  
with it.  
That's work  
I hadn't counted on.  
That's work  
I hadn't counted on.

Hmm.  
Still I, uh...  
Wish I didn't have  
to sell this place.  
You know, selling them  
when they're fixed up  
feels good, usually,  
but I don't know.  
This time...  
I kinda feel like  
I'm losin' somethin',  
you know?  
Really, baby?  
Why this place?  
Really, baby?  
Why this place?  
I don't know.  
It feels right, somehow.  
Is this room  
gonna be the den?  
If I have to sell it,  
sure.  
But I was figuring...  
That if I put insulation  
in the walls...  
It'd make a pretty cool  
studio for your music.  
It'd make a pretty cool  
studio for your music.  
What do you think?  
Well, I mean, you been  
bustin' your ass  
to afford  
recording equipment.  
I mean, at least now  
we have somewhere  
to put it, right?  
We?  
Mm-hmm.  
You and me, baby...  
Till death.  
Mrs. cresswell.  
Um... maybe.  
I'm Judy.

Well, I'm happy  
for you, darling.  
Oh, no. Judy.  
Norman's Judy?  
The guy interested  
in your comic books.  
You mean my son's.  
Mm-hmm. That's right.  
Your son's comic books.  
Mm-hmm. That's right.  
Your son's comic books.  
Um, I was wondering  
if we could talk  
about that.  
I wasn't very interested  
in talking to your  
husband about them.  
Right. And I was  
just thinking that  
maybe it was the way  
my Norman brought it up  
that you didn't like.  
You know,  
men.  
And then there was  
the real nervous one.  
He said he was  
with you, too.  
He's a liar,  
a terrible,  
terrible liar.  
A bit touched, too,  
if you ask me.  
So, listen, let's talk.  
I mean, surely  
there's a way  
I mean, surely  
there's a way  
we can come  
to an understanding.  
Just us girls, huh?  
That's right. Us girls.  
Ok.  
I--I love the garden.

I'm the gardener.  
Oh, yeah?  
I am the gardener.  
Yeah.  
I all but went down  
on the old bitch.  
Nice goin'.  
You know, I offered her  
15 grand?  
Yeah?  
And then I upped it  
to 20.  
20 grand? Do we--  
do we even have  
that much?  
20 grand? Do we--  
do we even have  
that much?  
I mean, by that point,  
I didn't care.  
20 grand will keep  
this rusted old woman  
until she dies,  
and she still  
turned it down.  
All right. It's ok.  
Good job, sweetie.  
Good try.  
Uhh!  
We'll figure  
somethin' out.  
Yeah.  
It's ok.  
Hey, it's ok.  
You did a good job.  
Mm-hmm.  
I mean,  
at least we're  
workin' together  
like a team.  
There was a time  
when I didn't even  
think  
our marriage was

gonna last anymore,  
because we didn't  
have anything  
in common.  
Hey...  
Hey...  
The way I feel  
about you now,  
I know that we're  
gonna make it.  
I do.  
You know what  
I feel like?  
Closin' early?  
That's it, tiger.  
Talk dirty.  
So,  
she wouldn't sell?  
Uh-uh.  
Not to me.  
Not to Norman.  
What are you  
gonna do?  
I don't know, arch.  
All right?  
I don't know, arch.  
All right?  
Norman and his wife  
are gonna come at her  
with more money.  
I know that.  
More money, and then  
more fuckin' money,  
'cause that's--  
that's their style.  
I know that much.  
Man, you gotta  
fight fire with fire.  
Fight fire with fire?  
Who are you,  
the punisher,  
all of a sudden?  
I don't have any money.  
I'm broke.

You know that.  
No, I don't.  
I guess you wouldn't.  
Arch, I don't have  
a nickel to my name.  
I'm hangin' on  
by the short hairs.  
I'm hangin' on  
by the short hairs.  
The day-to-day  
comic business  
is in recession.  
Last year was miserable.  
This year is gonna be worse.  
Thank god  
I don't have a house.  
I woulda lost it  
by now.  
But you have  
loyal customers.  
Yeah, so does  
McDonalds, ok?  
But they just got  
a couple billion more  
than I do.  
You know the counter?  
It's gonna cost  
400 bucks  
to replace  
or repair that.  
I can't--I--I--  
I don't have 400 bucks.  
You know how I was  
on the roof last week?  
The next heavy rain,  
buckets aplenty  
on the floor,  
my friend.  
Buckets aplenty.  
On the floor,  
my friend.  
Buckets aplenty.  
Well, why don't you  
just go to Norman,

and maybe you guys  
could work  
something out.  
No--uh--  
I don't know.  
Man, give it a shot.  
Hello.  
I'm Raymond macgillicuddy.  
Hello. Um...  
Um... total--  
um... total--  
hello, sworn enemy.  
That's a lovely dress  
that you're wearing.  
That--  
that's a lovely dress.  
How do you do?  
You're very lovely.  
And your name is?  
I'd like to do  
some business.  
Waa!  
Oh, baby,  
the thought  
of finding it--  
unh--this treasure--  
it's exciting.  
It makes me wet.  
It makes me wet.  
It turns me on.  
The bed!  
No, no, no, no, no.  
We don't need a bed.  
That's right.  
We don't need a bed.  
Up against the wall.  
I love it that way.  
You do?  
Oh, fuck me  
against the wall.  
I love being fucked  
up against the wall.  
We never did it  
against the wall before.

Shut up. You're  
thinking too much.  
Come on.  
Oh!  
Make me come.  
I know you can  
make me come.  
I can do it.  
You can make me  
come this time.  
You hang in there.  
You better hang in there!  
Hang in there!  
Who's my fucker?  
Who's my little fucker?  
I'm your fucker.  
You're my fucker!  
I wanna be  
your little fucker.  
Hi. I'm Raymond  
macgillicuddy.  
It was, uh, not easy.  
We've been across town  
for so long  
and never formally  
really--  
well,  
it was a long walk--  
just--just get  
to your proposal.  
Ok, ok.  
Well, I think I've  
thought of a way  
in which both of us  
can benefit  
in which both of us  
can benefit  
from the lady's  
collection--  
both?  
Uh, all 3 of us.  
Mm-hmm.  
Both parties is what  
I meant to say.

How?

Well, um...

I don't have  
any money,  
and I can't  
buy the books,  
whoa.

What'd you just say?

No money?

Yes, I'm coming  
to you honestly.

I'm com--I'm  
completely broke.

B-but what I--  
what I offer is  
a knowledge  
and an expertise  
in the books  
themselves.

I know comics.

I know the people.

I know comics.

I know the people.

I know the real  
value of the books.

And you--you can make  
a tremendous amount  
of money,  
and I'll help you,  
and I don't even want  
a penny.

Now I've heard  
everything.

Well, wait.

Have you ever been  
to San Diego?

Have you been  
to San Diego--  
to the convention?

I've been there.

It's the major  
convention, ok?

And if you go back  
into the dealers

room,  
there's a--there's  
a table on the left,  
and it's up  
against the wall,  
and that's where  
the major players  
sit.  
That's--that's--  
that's where  
the celebrity--  
that's--that's--  
that's where  
the celebrity--  
the--there's a name  
that you garner  
by sitting  
at that table,  
and I want  
to take my place  
among the men  
that found  
the white mountain  
collection,  
the mohawk collection,  
the winnipeg collection.  
I--I--we could  
do this tonight.  
Why, we could decide.  
We could have  
the macgillicuddy/link  
collection.  
I--look, I know--  
I know who I am,  
and I know  
how people look at me.  
I'm not stupid.  
But if I could just  
go to San Diego  
and sit down  
at the table  
and have Mike allred  
come up  
or Matt Wagner just

pat me on the back...  
Have--have  
gaston dominguez say,  
"you--you want  
the danger trails,  
1 through 5?  
Go to  
Raymond macgillicuddy.  
His are pristine."  
If I could just have  
that quip...  
It would all  
be worth it.  
If you allow me that,  
my services are yours.  
That's--  
that's the most pathetic  
thing I've ever heard.  
No money?  
Jeez. I mean,  
you haven't got  
the money,  
get out of dodge.  
Honey--  
my god, and here I am  
up all night worrying  
that he's gonna up the ante  
and blow us away.  
What I was hoping  
to offer was--  
you sleazy creep...  
Honey...  
Get away from my house.  
Honey, there--there's no--  
no, no, no, no.  
Honey?  
No.  
Excuse me, I--  
no.  
Excuse me, I--  
honey?  
No. No, no, no.  
This fly is gonna  
be in our ointment,

he gets involved.  
Get him outta here.  
I came in a spirit  
of kindness.  
I came in a spirit  
of fairness.  
I told you how hard  
it was for me  
to walk up here.  
You've been  
a gentleman.  
Your wife has been  
an animal.  
Excuse me?  
An animal?  
Yes, an animal!  
I think it's best  
if you--  
I offered an olive branch!  
I think it's best  
that you leave, Raymond.  
You know what?  
It's--I withdraw my offer,  
because you don't  
know comics!  
You're a dabbler.  
Why don't you go  
back to your store  
and sell your  
action figures  
and sell your  
action figures  
and your magic cards?!

Now. Now...

What's your--what's your--  
what's your favorite  
Mac rad boy  
run, huh?  
What's your favorite  
you can't tell me.  
You can't tell me,  
'cause you don't know!  
You know who knew?  
Elvis knew.

Elvis knew!  
Ok.  
You dabbler. You dabbler!  
You magic card seller!  
You action figure seller!  
There is no need  
for a commotion.  
Oh--oh, I'll make  
a commotion, all right.  
It's too late...  
Oh, it's not too late.  
It's not too late.  
It's just starting!  
For a commotion.  
Is this what you  
sell at your store?  
No, you stop!  
don't do it.  
No! No!  
don't do it.  
No! No!  
That's my--  
no! Hey!  
Then for a time,  
the great adventure  
became the great game,  
or so it seemed to me.  
Norman and Judy  
on one side,  
trying to win  
Mrs. cresswell's favor...  
Aah!  
Raymond on the other.  
Raymond on the other.  
Back and forth...  
Back and forth.  
Unh!  
Hi, Mrs. cresswell.  
Here are the groceries  
you wanted.  
Well, you're not Raymond.  
Where's Raymond?  
No, I'm Archie.  
Um, Raymond had his

weekly comic delivery.  
He had to be back  
at his store.  
You want the funny books,  
too, I suppose?  
I won't lie. If you're  
gonna get rid of 'em,  
I want Raymond to get them.  
Well, that's fair.  
What's in it  
for you?  
I'm Raymond's friend.  
That's it?  
Isn't that enough?  
You like funny books,  
don't you?  
Yeah. I guess.  
I buy them,  
and I read them.  
Not really as much  
anymore.  
Buy or read.  
Why's that?  
I don't know.  
Um, just lately I've  
been sorta thinking  
that comics aren't  
the real world.  
Like last night,  
I had on CNN for a while  
instead of  
the cartoon network.  
Instead of  
the cartoon network.  
I know that sounds stupid.  
Comics aren't  
the real world?  
Now, that's  
dangerous talk.  
That's a nice photo.  
That's me  
and my husband.  
We were  
on our honeymoon.

Spain, in '48.  
God, perfect!  
Right after  
world war ii.  
'48. Wow.  
Why, you interested?  
You're not just  
giving me lip service  
like Norman, right?  
No, I'm interested.  
Do you drink tea?  
Yeah, actually, I do.  
You remind me so much  
of my husband.  
Really?  
No, of course not.  
No, I guess not.  
But you--you have  
this real pale skin.  
It's--yeah, so does  
half of Sweden.  
It's--yeah, so does  
half of Sweden.  
Um, so Spain,  
was it nice?  
Mmm. It was  
the only time  
that I ever  
left America.  
It was--  
it was perfect.  
It was perfect.  
You talked about Spain?  
Yeah. And she told me  
about how her  
and her husband  
went on a trip  
there once  
and spent 2 weeks  
traveling around.  
He even ran  
with the bulls  
in Pamplona.  
Paloma.

What?

Paloma.

What?

That run with the bulls  
is in Paloma.

Uh, no, ray,  
I'm pretty sure  
it's Pamplona.

I mean, who's Paloma?

Isn't that  
somebody's daughter?

Mm-mmm.

So, when did you  
get around to talking  
about the comic books?

Well, it just--

I didn't feel right  
about it,

so it just  
didn't come up.

So, what'd you  
talk about?

Well, I told you, stuff.

You know, her life.

Stuff?!

Yeah, stuff.

So you never thought  
to ask her  
if she was comin' around  
to selling me the books?

If she was comin' around  
to selling me the books?

Oh, no, I did get around  
to asking her that much.

And?

No way.

I've been reading  
Hemingway.

"Papa" Hemingway.

It's all because  
of you, you know?

Oh, dear, what have  
I gone and done now?

It's all that talk

about Spain.  
The running  
of the bulls.  
You're not reading  
cliff notes now?  
No.  
Or comic versions?  
Or comic versions?  
Wasn't there a comic company  
that used to adapt books?  
Yeah, it was called  
classics illustrated.  
But they did  
mostly older books,  
like, um, h. G. Wells  
and  
3 musketeers.  
I bet they could not  
transport you like Hemingway.  
Now, hold on.  
There are good  
and bad writers  
in all mediums.  
Comics are just  
a different type  
of storytelling.  
You don't really  
internalize as much.  
Oh.  
Did you like that?  
Wow. Internalize.  
I think  
it's probably  
the first time  
I think  
it's probably  
the first time  
I've ever  
used that word.  
don't you go  
getting giddy on me.  
You know,  
I didn't realize  
that you needed help

gardening. I can do that.  
Oh, no,  
that's all right.  
Archie's doing great.  
He used to help  
his mother.  
Did you know that?  
No, I didn't.  
Yeah, um, back  
before she died.  
Hmm.  
How's Norman?  
How's Norman?  
Recovering.  
That was careless of him  
not to turn off  
that fuse box,  
wasn't it?  
Right.  
Well, I'll  
see you later.  
Bye-bye.  
She seems upset.  
Well, not to worry.  
What harm can it do?  
Chocolate?  
Isn't that boy toy  
you got her sweet enough?  
God, ray,  
I'm sorry.  
Broken.  
Broken in 3 places.  
The doctor says  
I might have  
permanent wrist  
mobility problems.  
God, that really sucks.  
She said her foot slipped  
on the accelerator.  
Like, yeah, yeah, yeah,  
yeah, sure--that happened.  
Well, why didn't you  
tell the police?  
I mean, they should

at least know about  
the comics.

No, ok?

I'm not talkin'  
to the police.

Yeah, but that's  
like motive--  
nah-uh-uh!

Ok, this is between  
me and Norman and Judy.

Ok, this is between  
me and Norman and Judy.

Now, I got  
my wrist fixed...

But now I'm gonna  
fix them!

No!

Yes. Who knows what  
Raymond'll try next?

Why was it  
that he didn't  
have me arrested?

I just want  
to feel safe.

Just tell me that,  
smarty-pants.

No!

Do you understand me?

I forbid you, ok? No.

Forbid me?

Yeah, right.

What can I do for you?

Deal me in.

I'm the one waving  
the plastic today.

You need a gun?

No, garden fertilizer.

I understand.

The streets  
aren't as safe  
as they used to be.

Yeah,

not with her drivin'.

Might I recommend

a derringer?  
Petite,  
for a woman's hand  
or clutch purse.  
I thought it was illegal  
for a guy like you  
to use words like petite  
or clutch purse.  
Let's talk high-caliber.  
The . 45.  
Damn it, no. Listen.  
If you're gonna  
get a gun,  
at least get  
a small gun.  
I mean, let's  
be realistic, right?  
Why don't you  
just take a look  
at this 9 millimeter?  
And bullets, of course?  
So, I forget  
which anthology  
it was in,  
but Larry never  
talks about  
how superman can never  
even marry Lois.  
How superman can never  
even marry Lois.  
At least,  
if he did, he could  
never screw her.  
'Cause he'd have  
supersperm,  
which would never die  
and be superstrong  
and would mess up  
her insides.  
Well,  
I gotta think about this.  
Why stop there?  
I mean, if supes had  
supersperm,

then he would come  
in a superspurt.  
Who's to say  
it wouldn't shoot  
right out the top  
of Lois' head?  
Yeah, I think  
he commented on that.  
In the book.  
The writer talks about  
how superman couldn't  
even jerk off,  
the writer talks about  
how superman couldn't  
even jerk off,  
because the sperm  
would have the ability  
to fly.  
'Cause they're  
tiny versions of him,  
and how they'd forever  
fly around the world  
looking for eggs  
to impregnate.  
And that was  
what it took.  
Heavy rain  
and buckets aplenty  
to make Raymond see...  
It was time  
for desperate measures...  
Seniors...  
And desperate men.  
What are we doin' here?  
Uh, I'm just gonna  
go see a friend of mine.  
Since when did you  
have friends west  
of third street?  
Never mind, ok? Just--  
no. Since when  
did you have friends  
west of third street,  
who hang out

in topless bars?  
He's an old friend of mine  
from high school.  
He's a good friend.  
So, why are you  
seeing him now?  
What's with  
all the questions, ok?!  
I thought you were  
my friend.  
I asked you to help me.  
I need some help  
right now, ok?  
Ok.  
Will you help me?  
Ok.  
Will you help me?  
Ok.  
I need help.  
Help. Help me!  
Fine. Ok.  
What do you want me  
to do?  
Here. I want you  
to hold this.  
What?!  
Are you  
shittin' me, man?!  
Look, it's dangerous  
in there, ok?  
And if I come out runnin',  
just, uh, fire a shot  
in the air--  
fire a shot  
in the air?!  
Yeah. Scare 'em.  
But what if they  
don't get scared?  
What if they  
shoot back at me?  
Just--just--  
I'll be back in a minute.  
Hey, Carter.  
It's--it's--it's me,

Raymond macgillicuddy.  
No bells.  
Come on,  
central high spartans,  
class of '84. Whoo!  
Still no bells.  
Still no bells.  
Ain't she sweet?  
Oh, yeah.  
That's one sweet piece  
of pussy pie  
right there, huh?  
That's my girlfriend.  
Uh, um...  
So, what do you want?  
I haven't seen you  
here before.  
Which is surprising,  
which is surprising,  
'cause I see your kind  
here all the time.  
Well, I don't have  
that many dollar bills  
to throw around,  
unfortunately.  
Which is why I came  
to see you.  
Uh, see, some  
of the guys and I  
from high school,  
you know, we get  
to talking and stuff,  
and your name pops up,  
and, uh, you know,  
no one really knows much  
about what's goin' on,  
but there are,  
you know--  
there are rumors  
about you.  
Oh, yeah?  
Who says what?  
Well, it's--  
ok, it's not important.

What is--whew. Whoo!  
Time out.  
What is--whew. Whoo!  
Time out.  
Oh, yeah,  
yeah, yeah, yeah.  
I'm remembering now.  
I used to beat  
the crap outta you.  
Mackill-a-kiddie.  
Yeah, yeah.  
Yeah, macgillicuddy.  
Cuddy.  
Yeah, you used to cry  
when I hit you.  
Kicked you  
in the balls once,  
and you fainted.  
No, I--I threw up  
in front of  
science class,  
but, um, hey,  
bygones be bygones, ok?  
But, um, hey,  
bygones be bygones, ok?  
'Cause, see, I, uh,  
think I've got  
some work for you.  
I want--I--  
I need you to steal  
something for me.  
What's in it for me?  
Well, I can't pay you.  
Good-bye.  
Listen, please.  
Just give me a moment.  
Uh, look--but I'll  
give you a half--  
a half of the profits  
after resale,  
and I'm talkin',  
like, a lot of cash.  
So what's to steal?  
Comic books.

Good-bye.  
No! No, listen!  
Just hear me out.  
Now, don't--  
don't think--  
forget I said comics.  
don't even think comics.  
Just think something  
worth a lot of money.  
Ok, just think--just  
think the mother lode,  
ok?  
The holy grail  
of comics.  
Just--it's just--  
it is worth--  
god knows  
what it's worth.  
Million dollars,  
maybe more.  
I used to like comics.  
So, are you interested?  
Do we have a deal,  
or can we partner  
on this thing?  
What's goin' on?  
What did you--  
I told you to wait  
in the car!  
Well, I called  
the bank about that,  
and they haven't  
called back yet.  
They haven't called back.  
You know, you can call again.  
Hello, norm. Judy.  
Hey.  
How's it goin'?  
Oh, I'm fine. Fine.  
Um, do you have  
the most recent  
Neil gaiman hardcover?  
Um, do you have  
the most recent

Neil gaiman hardcover?  
Uh, the British edition,  
not the American.  
Oh, well,  
we had that one,  
but we're out now.  
You're, uh,  
slow on the uptake.  
That's not like you.  
Well, I didn't think  
I wanted it,  
but I changed my mind.  
Well, change  
is good.  
Say, you take  
your collectin'  
pretty  
seriously,  
don't ya?  
You spend a lot  
every month.  
Every week,  
practically.  
Yeah, between here  
and Raymond's store,  
you must spend  
every single  
spare cent, huh?  
It's ok.  
We know about  
Raymond's store.  
It's ok.  
We know about  
Raymond's store.  
We don't  
really consider  
his store  
competition.  
We feel like  
we offer  
so much more.  
In fact, we like  
that you go there.  
Say, conan, how

would you like  
free comics?  
Every week.  
Gratis.  
What would I have to do?  
She said she wasn't  
going to sell.  
What was I supposed to do?  
Do nothing, man.  
You shrug  
your shoulders,  
you walk away,  
and get on with the  
rest of your life.  
Archie, this  
is my life, all right?  
This is my life.  
Archie, this  
is my life, all right?  
This is my life.  
And then I saw  
those beautiful books,  
and I saw a way  
I could finally  
improve things. Finally.  
When?  
Tonight.  
don't worry, ok?  
I told him to be careful  
and not hurt  
your little girlfriend.  
Oh. Hi, conan.  
Hi, guys.  
This is crazy.  
Those lunatics are  
gonna steal the books?  
That's right.  
This whole thing  
has turned into  
a sea of madness,  
and we're clinging  
to a buoy.  
A boy? You on about  
having a kid again?

Not a boy. A buoy.  
A life buoy.  
Oh! Oh.  
Now I've lost  
my train of thought.  
Sorry. Sorry.  
Clinging to a buoy  
in a sea of madness.  
Mm-hmm.  
We can make this  
simple again.  
We can make this  
simple again.  
Why, I--I don't think  
going in there with a gun  
is simple.  
I don't think so.  
We stop the crime.  
The old woman  
sees us do it,  
and she's grateful.  
How can she  
not be grateful?  
Then we offer her  
the money again.  
Why don't we just tell  
the cops what we know?  
Then she'll be  
grateful to them.  
Jeez, norm. God.  
It's whoever she sees  
doing her right.  
Oh.  
This is  
too dangerous,  
I think.  
If you do this for me,  
I'll let you smoke a cigarette.  
So began  
the long night of  
twists and turns.  
Though looking back,  
I still wonder about Carter,  
with his violent temper

and his damp walls,  
why he decided  
to do what he did...  
And how things  
might have been  
if he hadn't.  
And how things  
might have been  
if he hadn't.  
Is there anything  
I should know about?  
What?  
You know, is there  
anything I should know about  
about you  
and the old lady?  
Is there anything,  
like, Harold and maude  
goin' on or somethin'?  
Is there anything,  
like, Harold and maude  
goin' on or somethin'?  
Gross! No.  
We're just friends.  
Look, I--hey!  
I'm not saying, you know,  
it would be  
wrong if there was.  
It's just, uh...  
You know, far be it  
for me to judge.  
The heart wants  
what the heart wants.  
You're  
creeping me out.  
Oh, I'm creeping  
you  
out?  
I'm not the one  
doin' an old lady.  
I'm not doin'  
the old lady, ok?  
She's my friend.  
We hang out.

We talk about Spain.  
Whatever you say, Romeo.  
It's just...  
You don't seem happy  
about this whole thing.  
I'm ecstatic  
about it.  
Just remember,  
it's for the best.  
The best.  
The best  
for who, ray?  
Jesus. Do you  
give a shit  
what I think  
about anything?  
No, you don't!  
I'm like  
an accessory  
to you.  
Jesus!  
Carter is  
half an hour late.  
We got here  
15 minutes early.  
I am sick  
of this shit.  
I am sick  
of this shit.  
Look, ok. If you're  
so sick of this shit,  
why don't you just go home,  
back to your 4 walls  
and a microwave?!  
Is that what you want?  
Archie... come on.  
Ray.  
Did you say that  
Carter drove  
a blue truck?  
You did,  
right? Blue?  
Yeah.  
I think I see it

parked behind  
Mrs. cresswell's  
house.  
What?  
I completely understand.  
I'd be mad, too,  
if I was being robbed.  
But, uh... you know,  
it's kinda like  
a roller coaster ride.  
There's nothin'  
you can do,  
except hang on and hope.  
It's a nice house  
you got here,  
by the way.  
Are you going to kill me?  
I haven't decided yet.  
But I like this town.  
And, uh...  
You identifying me,  
you can imagine.  
I'm an old woman.  
I forget things.  
Oh, yeah. That's right.  
You're the, uh...  
You're the drooling,  
old, senile type,  
aren't you?  
Who you trying to fool?  
Your voice is clear,  
your eyes are sharp,  
your voice is clear,  
your eyes are sharp,  
and this house  
doesn't have that, uh,  
that stale piss smell  
most old folks'  
places do.  
Yeah, you're one  
smart little cookie,  
aren't you?  
I tell you  
what I'm gonna do.

These are the last  
of the boxes.  
I'm gonna load 'em up  
into my truck,  
and, uh...  
And then I'll  
make up my mind.  
All right?  
Aah! Aah!  
Freeze!  
Mrs. cresswell,  
are you ok?  
Mrs. cresswell,  
are you ok?  
You're late.  
Oh, yeah? Well,  
look who's early.  
I figured  
you'd see my truck  
and follow me in.  
Oh.  
Thank you, god.  
I'm so relieved.  
I just--  
Raymond, did you hear  
what he just said?  
He might kill Mrs. cresswell.  
Yeah, I thought you--  
I thought you might  
wanna pull  
a double cross.  
Oh, I am.  
So you're gonna kill  
all 3 of us then?  
No, you two  
can walk.  
You'd be implicated  
if you talked,  
and, uh...  
Believe me,  
you and jail time  
would be  
an uneasy union.  
Would be

an uneasy union.  
Now you can  
turn around  
and go back out  
the way you came.  
Not without Mrs. cresswell.  
I'm not goin' anywhere  
without those comics.  
Because I--I--I would  
rather be dead  
than leave  
without those comics.  
Suit yourself.  
I've got the gun.  
So do I.  
Hold it!  
Drop your gun!  
Uh, uh, you,  
drop the gun!  
Drop the gun,  
you motherfucking asshole!  
Rawr!  
Finally...  
Someone here  
who speaks my lingo.  
Get away from  
the comic books!  
Now you! Drop your gun!  
Drop your fucking gun!  
No! No! No!  
Those are mine!  
Those are mine,  
goddamn it!  
They're not yours!  
And him, him I might  
have listened to.  
But not you, you bitch!  
Oh, what are you smiling at?  
Oh, what are you smiling at?  
Nothing. It's just  
that I thought  
I was dealing  
with fools.  
Well, now you see

differently, my friend.  
No, I don't.  
P-p-put the gun down.  
Come on, ray.  
What are you doin'?  
We're not gunmen.  
We're comic book  
collectors.  
Archie's right.  
This is  
my  
home.  
And I want you  
out of here.  
Mrs. cresswell.  
Put the--  
put the gun--oh!  
Put the--  
put the gun--oh!  
Baby!  
Baby, are you ok?  
You shot me!  
Are you ok?  
Here, Mrs. cresswell.  
Oh, god. Are you ok?  
Raymond, call  
an ambulance.  
I have to go after Carter.  
He's got most of the books.  
You coming?  
She is bleeding  
to death! Call 911!  
She's dying, Archie, all right?  
There's nothin' you can--  
she--she's done.  
You motherfucker.  
I'm goin'. Now,  
are you comin' with me?  
I'm goin'. Now,  
are you comin' with me?  
Are you with me?!

Aw, shoot.  
Baby, can you walk?  
Yeah.

Aah!  
You're such a big boy.  
Let's go, baby.  
Call 911.  
I can't leave her.  
I'm trying to stop  
the bleeding.  
You can walk,  
you think?  
I am begging you!  
It is not too late!  
It is for her.  
That bitch should have sold  
while she could.  
You ok?  
Do you know  
how to get to  
the hospital from here?  
Yeah, honey, but we're  
not goin' there,  
not yet. You're ok.  
No, I'm hurt!  
I know, but you're  
on your feet.  
You'll live,  
and if we  
get these comics,  
you'll live well.  
You and me.  
What?  
Mrs. cresswell,  
I need you to hold  
your own stomach.  
Mrs. cresswell,  
I need you to hold  
your own stomach.  
I've got to get  
to the phone.  
No. No. No.  
don't leave me.  
I'm...  
Done.  
Why didn't you  
just sell?

To one or the other.  
It would have  
been so simple.  
Oh, god.  
My son wasted...  
Himself collecting.  
He never truly  
lived his life.  
He never truly  
lived his life.  
But they were his things.  
And, uh...  
I miss him so much.  
Listen to me.  
I want you to take the...  
The funny books...  
That that...  
Motherfucker left behind.  
I want you to go to my...  
I want you to go to my...  
My son's room.  
And in the closet.  
He didn't just  
collect funny books.  
Mrs. cresswell,  
if only I would have  
just told ray--  
hush!  
I am... I was...  
I am... I was...  
Getting bored anyway.  
Hey, kiki.  
Hey, be quiet.  
It's a little  
late for that.  
Besides, who's around  
at this hour?  
Normal,  
careful of glass.  
Ow!  
Oh, shit.  
Are you ok?  
Now I'm bleeding  
in 2 places!

All right, honey. Well,  
look for a rolodex,  
anything that might  
have Carter's address,  
a phone number, even.  
What a palace.

Ow.

Come on, honey.

Found it.

This oughta do.

Yeah, this'll do.

It was hard, 'cause  
there was all the--  
the power tools  
and saws and...

I mean,

are you fucking  
the hardware guy?

Is it Carter's?

Yeah?

Yeah, I pretty much  
figured he was  
a handy kinda guy.

Where is he?

I don't know.

You have such  
a beautiful body.

I saw you  
at the club  
dancing that day.

You were  
so graceful.

But not when you  
spread your legs.

That was--  
that was obscene.

That was  
unnecessary.

don't like  
guys like me, do you?

What's it take?

Does it take money?

I've got money.

I've got some money.

You know what  
I could do to you  
with this hammer?  
You wouldn't  
dance anymore.  
Where's Carter?  
I don't know.  
You're lying.  
See, I wish  
I could have  
a girl like you--  
beautiful and loyal.  
I'd treat you good.  
Oh, god.  
I wouldn't let you  
dance naked for men.  
He's not worth it.  
If I was your man,  
I wouldn't let you  
be here all alone.  
Where is he?  
I don't know.  
I don't know.  
don't lie to me!  
don't fucking  
lie to me!  
don't fucking  
lie to me!  
I hate  
girls like you!  
Where is he?!  
I don't know!  
Anything yet?  
No.  
No.  
All right,  
keep looking.  
See, I'm startin'  
to feel dizzy.  
Listen, we'll go  
to the hospital soon,  
lover, ok?  
I feel tingly.  
Soon. Just search

the counter.  
It's the first place  
I looked.  
Keep looking!  
Maybe I'll...  
Look underneath.  
Maybe something fell underneath.  
Ow! Ow! Ow!  
What is it?!  
The counter! I think  
it broke my foot!  
Oh, aah! Honey!  
Come on, honey. Just try  
and wiggle it free.  
No! No--aah!  
No wiggling!  
Please,  
just wiggle.  
I'm pinned.  
Hey! Hey! Hey!  
Put that fire out.  
That could spread.  
I think I saw  
a fire extinguisher.  
Hurry up, honey!  
It's starting to spread!  
Ow!  
I'm coming, honey!  
Damn it! I'm stuck!  
Aah!  
Damn lazy bastard  
didn't keep  
the pressure up.  
Hey, I'm really  
stuck, Judy.  
Shit. Honey,  
the line is dead.  
All right, I'm gonna try  
freeing you again, baby.  
Come on.  
It's really starting  
to get hot, Judy. Hurry up.  
Ok. I have to find  
a pay phone, ok? Ok.

No. No. No.  
don't leave me here!  
If you leave me, I'll burn.  
It's really  
getting hot, Judy!  
I don't wanna burn!  
I don't wanna burn, Judy!  
Oh, please.  
Oh, I'm sorry.  
Am I interrupting you?  
Reading by the fire?  
You fucking weirdo!  
Back in high school,  
you were so mean.  
Weren't you, lone wolf?  
You used to scare  
the jocks shitless.  
But you always  
liked comic books.  
See, that part,  
that part  
I should've remembered.  
Used to have  
quite a collection.  
Yeah. You used  
to take most of mine.  
So, how'd you find me?  
Oh, your  
girlfriend kiki.  
I went down by the club,  
and she gave me  
a little dance.  
We got to talking,  
and I asked,  
and she told me.  
What are you reading?  
Avengers  
#4.  
First modern appearance  
of captain America.  
I know.  
That's \$1, 000 book  
you got there.  
You better be careful.

The moisture  
from your fingertips  
is devaluing it  
as we speak.  
Where's the rest  
of the books?  
Still in the truck.  
Catch my breath.  
You know, as I was  
drivin' over here,  
I began remembering  
reading comic books  
back when, and, uh...  
All the facts  
and figures...  
About superpowers,  
secret identities  
we took the time  
to memorize.  
That some of us  
still do.  
Sometimes I think  
if I woulda spent  
just an eighth  
of the time studying,  
say, physics equations,  
rather than comic book trivia,  
I'd probably have won  
the nobel prize. Huh?  
Hmm.  
So, uh...  
Kiki just  
gave me up, huh?  
She didn't even lie.  
She said, "oh, Carter?  
Oh, yeah. I'll tell you  
where he is."  
Sorry.  
So...  
What now?  
What now?  
What now?  
I have a gun. Ok?  
And my hand's

not shaking anymore.  
Not now.  
And I want your gun.  
What gun?  
don't fuck with me!  
I see you have  
a gun right there!  
In the back  
of your pants, Carter.  
Aah! Ah! Ah! Ah ha ha!  
Ha! Slowly!  
Toss it.  
Ok, up. Let's go.  
Why don't you lead?  
Ok. You're the boss.  
Watch that cable.  
Motherfucker.  
Aah! Aah!  
Aah!  
Aah!  
Aw.  
Macgillicuddy  
fall down.  
Ungh!  
Ha!  
Aah!  
Aah! Aah!  
Son of a bitch!  
What the fuck  
are you doin'?!  
Son of a bitch! Aah!  
Aw, shit!  
Aw, shit!  
Jesus!  
Son of a bitch!  
You son of a bitch!  
If you'd only  
done as I asked,  
we'd both be rich.  
But no! No!  
See, I would have  
been somebody.  
But you...  
Who--who--who

were you gonna  
sell 'em to, huh?  
They're comics,  
you ass!  
I remember them  
from when I was a kid.  
I didn't need you.  
Oh! Ok! Oh, yeah!  
You're a fucking  
encyclopedia  
about comics.  
You're the oracle  
of delphi on comics!  
Please! Please!  
First appearance  
of superman.  
Uh,  
action comics  
#1.  
Uh,  
action comics  
#1.  
Everyone knows that.  
Batman.  
Uh...  
Detective comics  
Spider-man.  
Uh,  
spider man  
#1.  
Uh-uh.  
Oh, wait. Wait.  
Uh, uh...  
Amazing fantasy  
Golden age flash.  
Flash comics  
#1.  
Silver age flash.  
Showcase  
Uh, uh,  
the human torch.  
Uh, uh,  
the human torch.  
Human torch...

Fantastic four  
#1.  
No! I am  
talking about  
the 1940's torch.  
Oh. Oh. Uh...  
Marvel mystery  
#1.  
Wonder woman.  
Wonder woman.  
Wonder woman.  
Wonder woman.  
Sensation  
Ahh! Wrong!  
No. No. Wait.  
I'm right.  
It's definitely  
sensation  
Wrong! Wrong!  
Wrong! Wrong!  
Well, it's not  
wonder woman  
#1,  
if that's what  
you're thinking.  
What are you  
trying to do?  
Are you trying  
to insult me?  
Do you  
think I'm stupid?  
I'm standing here  
before you.  
You think I'm stupid?  
Wonder woman first  
appeared in  
all star  
8,  
a justice society  
backup story.  
So either you're  
trying to patronize me,  
or you're trying  
to fuck with me,

or you're trying  
to get yourself killed.  
And, by the way,  
you're doing  
a very good job.  
No, wait.  
And the bullets  
didn't even bounce  
off your chest.  
And the bullets  
didn't even bounce  
off your chest.  
Hi.  
Who is it?  
Who is it?  
It's me,  
ray macgillicuddy  
what do you want?  
Some polite  
conversation.  
Drink?  
Yeah.  
I don't drink.  
I don't smoke.  
Ok.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
My store's on fire.  
It was an accident.  
It's ok.  
It's ok.  
These things happen.  
I killed a man tonight.  
Me, too.  
Did yours  
deserve it?  
Yes. Yes, he did.  
Did yours?  
Remember that feeling?  
Remember that feeling?  
That feeling  
when the hunt

became everything.  
Just the comics  
and us hating you  
and you hating us.  
And food and sex  
and deep breaths,  
everything felt better.  
I remember food  
tasting really good.  
All because  
of comic books.  
It was rude  
to run you over.  
Yeah. I oughta...  
I oughta get ya  
for that one! Aah!  
Whoo!  
Oh!  
My ride's here.  
My ride's here.  
I gotta go.  
I've got nothing left,  
and I've got no reason to stay.  
Are you comin'?  
Ah, the store's  
open late.  
If they come in,  
maybe they'll  
buy something.  
It's a nice shop.  
Summer was  
a hot one that year.  
It came about  
a month later,  
hotter than hell.  
All the worse for  
the guys I knew.  
All the worse for  
the guys I knew.  
They had to make the trek  
to the next town  
for their comic books now,  
with Raymond dead  
and Judy in jail.

It made me sad so few  
of Raymond's customers  
came to his funeral.  
You'd have thought  
he mattered more to people,  
but I guess he knew better,  
especially at the end.  
When the town did get  
a new comic store,  
it made sense  
who'd run it.  
Conan's mom had money.  
I just never guessed  
how much.  
I just never guessed  
how much.  
Not that I cared by then.  
I had money, too.  
And I was long gone.  
I'd done what  
Mrs. cresswell had told me.  
I looked in her son's closet  
and found baseball cards.  
Robinson, koufax,  
mays, mantle,  
and a million other names  
I never even heard of--  
together worth more than  
even the comic books.  
The thing is,  
I don't like baseball...  
I don't like baseball...  
So I sold them.  
Does that make me  
as bad as the others?  
I don't know.  
I don't know.  
But at least  
I did something  
with the money,  
like I think Mrs. cresswell  
would have wanted.  
After all that had happened,  
life and the living of it

seemed too fleeting  
to waste in one place...  
To waste in one place...  
Or on arguing  
whether superman  
was stronger  
than the hulk.  
So I traveled.  
First America,  
then Europe...  
Really taking my time  
at each place  
learning and growing,  
but always knowing where  
I'd eventually settle down.  
Barcelona.  
They have comics here, too.  
They have comics here, too.  
But I can't understand them.