

## Out of this World Adventures

Vol. 1, No. 1

### THE PLANET-SMASHERS

(Novelette) ..... Ray Cummings 6  
If that midnight air-liner was not stopped, Venus would never see another dawn.

LETTER FROM THE STARS ..... A. E. Van Vogt 25  
The destiny of the universe depended on their correspondence.

OMEGA AND THE WOLF-GIRL ..... Lester del Rey 30  
The last man had to choose between Martian monsters and Earthly beasts.

THE PUZZLE OF PRIPIIRII ..... William Tenn 42  
Their key to life lay in a problem that had gone unsolved for a quarter-million years.

### THE SHIPWRECKED BOGEY MAN

Lloyd Williams 83

There really was a spectre in Peter's room—but nobody would admit it.

### TERROR OF THE MIST-MAIDENS

(Novelette) ..... A. Bertram Chandler 88  
Only one lone man knew how to end the war of the women on that star-world.

THE DISCORD MAKERS ..... Mack Reynolds 102  
Are there interplanetary invaders walking the Earth today?

FORBIDDEN FRUIT ..... Kris Neville 111  
In the code of the stars, the murderer must be his own jailer.

Donald A. Wollheim  
Editor

OUT OF THIS WORLD ADVENTURES, published bi-monthly by Avon Periodicals, Inc., at 119 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Copyright, 1950, by Avon Periodicals, Inc. Single copies, 25¢. The publishers do not assume responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts. Names of all characters and persons appearing in the stories in this magazine are fictitious, and any resemblance to the names of actual persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. Printed in U.S.A.

### SPECIAL STORY SECTION, ILLUSTRATED IN FULL-COLOR

LUNAR STATION ..... John Michel  
*Illustrated by J. Kubert*

THE MAN-EATING LIZARDS ..... Edward Bellin  
*Illustrated by J. Kubert*

PALLAS REBELLION ..... W. Malcolm White  
*A short-short story*

CROM THE BARBARIAN ..... Gardner Fox  
*Illustrated by John Giunta*

# CROM

The  
BARBARIAN!



JOHN  
GIUNT

**I**N THE EARLY DAYS OF THE EARTH, THERE WERE MANY STRANGE RACES AND TRIBES MOVING ACROSS THE LAND, MANY CITIES AND COUNTRIES NOW FORGOTTEN, UNRECORDED BY ANY HISTORY. OCCASIONALLY VAGUE LEGEND OR UNINTELLIGIBLE PARCHMENTS IN SOME TIBETAN LAMASERY GIVE A HINT. VESTIGES OF THEIR EXISTENCE STILL REMAIN AT EASTER ISLAND, IN THE DAMP JUNGLES OF BRAZIL, UNDER THE HOT SANDS OF THE SAHARA AND THE GOBI. FROM ONE OF THOSE LONG-LOST PARCHMENTS RECOVERED IN AN UNDERWATER UPHEAVAL, TRANSLATED BY A LINGUAL EXPERT, WE BRING YOU THIS TALE OF THE EARTH'S MORNING, A DAY BORN IN THE MISTS OF EARTH'S BEGINNING...

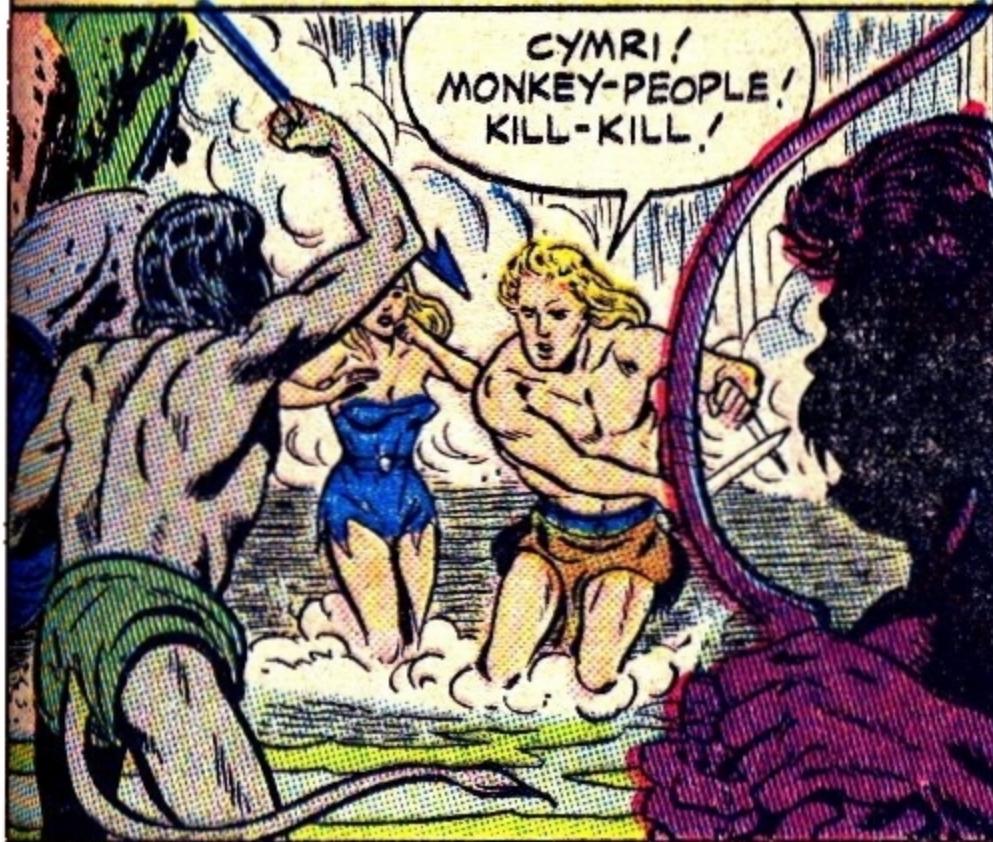
**C**ROM WAS A BARBARIAN-A MAN BORN OF THE YELLOW-HAIRED AESIR WHO MIGRATED FROM ASIA INTO EUROPE, A MAN STRONG WITH MUSCLE, HIS BRAIN KEEN IN THOSE DAYS OF BRUTE-LIKE SUPERSTITION AND SAVAGERY. HIS SWORD WAS MADE OF IRON, AND HE LIVED AND SLEPT WITH IT ALWAYS AT HIS SIDE.

BUT CROM WAS TO BE SWEPT FROM THE CARAVANS OF HIS PEOPLE, AWAY FROM THE BIG VANS AND THE SHAGGY PONIES, INTO A WORLD WHERE GREED AND BLACK MAGIC HELD SWAY, WHERE ONLY HIS SWORD AND HIS WITS STOOD TO HELP HIM WHEN HE FACED THE HORRIBLE FATE OF...

**A**S THE WOODEN-WHEELED VANS OF THE AESIR STOPPED AT A MISTED WATERSIDE TO FRESHEN WARRIORS AND BEASTS ALIKE, A CYMRI BOWSTRING TWANGED...



**T**OO CROM, ALL MEN WHO WERE NOT AESIR, WERE ENEMIES. THEY MUST BE KILLED, THAT HIS TRIBE MIGHT BECOME RICH AND PROSPEROUS...



**W**ITH SHOUTS OF DELIGHT SEEING BUT ONE YOUTH FACING THEM, THE CYMRI SPRANG FORWARD. BUT THEY HAD NEVER FACED A SWORD THAT WAS LIKE A DART OF LIGHT, IT MOVED SO SWIFTLY!



**F**ROM THE BROAD VANS OF THE AESIR, THE YEW LONGBOWS WERE TWANGING. LONG SHAFTS HURTLED THROUGH THE AIR TO SPLIT THE SMALLER CYMRI BOWMEN...



**I**N THEIR LITTLE BULLHIDE BOAT, THE CYMRI SWEPT THROUGH THE MISTS. HAIRY ARMS LIFTED CROM'S SISTER LALLA...



**S**LOWLY, INCH BY INCH, CROM FOUGHT HIS WAY TO A FOOTING IN THE BOAT. UNNOTICED, IT DRIFTED FARTHER AND FARTHER FROM SHORE, UNTIL IT FLOATED ALONE ON THE VAST SEA...



**A**SHRILL WAIL OF AGONY FROM THE LAST OF THE CYMRI... AN AXE-HEAD SLAMMING DOWN ON CROM... AND LALLA SCREAMED IN FEAR...



**C**NNWARD DRIFTED THE BULLHIDE BOAT. A WIND SPRANG UP, CARRIED IT SWIFTLY THROUGH THE MISTS, WHILE A SOBBING GIRL LAY OVER A FALLEN CROM...



**C**ROM STIRRED. HE SAT UP, A HAND TO HIS HEAD. A GRIN TWISTED HIS FACE...A SAVAGE, TRIUMPHANT GRIN!

BY SET HIMSELF! IT WAS LUCKY MY FOOT SLIPPED IN A PUDDLE OF BLOOD, OR THAT AXE WOULD HAVE LIFTED THE TOP OF MY SKULL! NOW- WHERE ARE WE?

I DO NOT KNOW, A WIND HAS BEEN BLOWING, TAKING US FOWARD EVER SINCE YOU FELL!



**P**FOR THREE DAYS THE LITTLE BOAT SPED WESTWARD BEFORE THE WIND. AND THEN, ON THE MORNING OF THE FOURTH DAY THE MISTS CLEARED TO REVEAL A BLACK ISLAND, AND LOVELY WOMEN STANDING BEFORE IT...



BY THE HOOVES OF NESSUS! A GOOD WIND, SISTER! HOW ARE YOU NAMED, GIRL?

CROM- LOOK!



HA! OLD ONE- IS THIS YOUR ISLAND? ARE THESE YOUR WOMEN?

ALL MINE, CROM! AH, I KNOW YOU, BARBARIAN. IN THE SMOKE OF MY HERB FIRES I HAVE WATCHED YOU FIGHT. I SENT A WIND TO BRING YOU TO ME.

TELL OTHERS THAT MAGE! I BELIEVE NOT IN YOUR CHARMS AND MAGIC. THERE IS A TRICK TO IT. BUT NOW I'M HERE- WHAT WANT YOU OF ME?

ETERNAL YOUTH!



**T**O CROM'S BARBARIC MIND THE OLD MAGICIAN MEANT ONLY ONE THING - TO TAKE CROM'S YOUNG, POWERFUL BODY FOR HIS OWN, BY SOME SORCEROUS MEANS...

BACK, YOU OLD DEVIL! NO MAN TAKES MY STRENGTH FROM ME! I --



PUT DOWN YOUR BLADE, CROM. I MEAN TO DRINK OF WATER-STRANGE WATER- THAT WILL MAKE ME AS YOUNG AS YOU, AND EVEN YOUNGER. BUT YOU MUST BRING IT TO ME!

**T**HAT NIGHT BEFORE THE ROARING FIRE IN THE HEARTH OF HIS ANCIENT CASTLE, DWELF, THE MAGICIAN SPOKE EAGERLY TO CROM...

THE FOUNTAIN HAS BEEN THERE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE EARTH, WHEN PEOPLE CAME FROM THE STARS TO BUILD IT. SOME DAY IT WILL BE LOST-BURIED UNDER WHAT MEN WILL CALL THE SAHARA DESERT-BUT NOW IT IS THERE-FOR ME!



THERE IS A GREAT TOWER IN THE CITY OF OPHIR THAT SHELTERS THE FOUNTAIN. THERE ARE GOLD AND JEWELS ALL ABOUT IT. TAKE ALL THE JEWELS AND GOLD YOU WANT. JUST BRING ME THE WATER OF YOUTH, IN THIS JUG YOU WILL BRING WITH YOU!



**W**ITH A GROWL OF RAGE RUMBLING IN HIS MUSCLE-CORDED THROAT, CROM LEANED ACROSS THE BARE WOODEN TABLE. IN HIS HAND A DAGGER GLINTED RED IN THE FIRELIGHT...

IF YOU DO NOT AGREE-YOUR SISTER LALLA DIES BY TORTURE!

BY SET! THREATEN ME, WILL YOU, OLD MAN? I...



**C**ROM THE BARBARIAN STAGGERED AS HIS EYES LOCKED WITH THE BURNING ORBS OF OLD DWELF! CROM DID NOT KNOW WHAT HYPNOTISM WAS-BUT IT STOPPED HIM-DRIVEN HIM BACK...

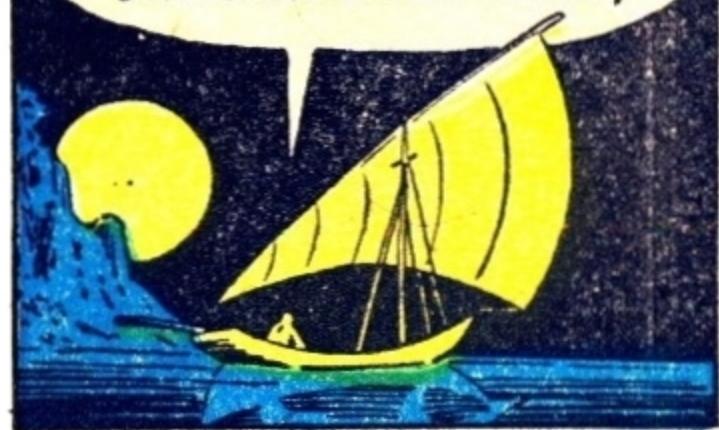
YOU...WILL...  
DO...AS...I  
SAY...

THOR SAVE ME!  
YOUR EYES...  
THEY BURN! I  
CANNOT MOVE...



**I**N A DAZE, CROM STAGGERED DOWN TO THE WATER'S EDGE AND CLAMBERED INTO THE BULLHIDE BOAT. MOMENTS LATER, IT WAS MOVING OUT TO SEA, TOWARD FABLED OPHIR...

HIS EYES! THEY KNOW SOME TRICK TO SAP A MAN'S WILL. WHEN I NEXT SEE DWELF, I SHALL NOT LOOK IN HIS EYES, BUT AT HIS NECK-AND AIM SKULL-CRACKER THERE!



**O**PHIR WAS THE RICHEST CITY ON THE SHORES OF THE INLAND SEA. ITS WOMEN WENT IN SILKS AND JEWELS. ITS MEN WORE MAIL FOXED IN SILVER, AND BORE SWORDS FITTED WITH GOLD. TOWARD OPHIR BY NIGHT CREEPT CROM, SAVAGE EYES ALERT AND EAGER...

DWELF SAID THERE WAS A TOWER..A GREAT BLACK TOWER! THAT IS WHERE THE FOUNTAIN IS!



**B**UT WHEN HE FOUND THE TOWER HIS HEART SANK WITHIN HIM IN AWE. HIS VOICE RASPED WITH ANNOYANCE-CROM KNEW NOT FEAR!

BY THE TEETH OF GARM THE HOUND-IT'S WELL GUARDED! IT WOULD TAKE AN ARMY TO STORM IT!



**N**EAR THE SQUARE OF THE TOWER STOOD A FLAT, LONG BUILDING. CROM STARED AT IT. HIS BRAIN BUSY. AND THEN, AS A PRETTY WATER-GIRL WALKED PAST, CROM CAUGHT HER WITH AN ARM...

WORKING SO LATE, MAIDEN? DON'T THE GIRLS OF OPHIR DANCE AND SING?

WHO HAS MONEY TO DANCE IN THE TAVERNS?

I HAVE MONEY! GOLDEN PITARS! BUT TELL ME... THAT BUILDING BEYOND US- WHAT IS IT?

THE CITY JAIL, STRANGER! BUT TALK NOT OF JAIL. THE NIGHT IS YOUNG, AND GWENNA IS THIRSTY...

THE CITY JAIL! I COULD ENTER THAT EASILY ENOUGH, BY THOR! FROM THERE TO THE TOWER.. BY A CORD... STRONG ENOUGH TO BEAR MY WEIGHT...

YOU ARE SILENT, STRANGER!

**W**ITH A CARELESS LAUGH, CROM DREW THE GIRL TO HIM, BUT HIS BRAIN WAS SCHEMING EVEN AS HE PUT HIS LIPS TO HERS...

I WILL BE ARRESTED! THROWN INTO JAIL! BUT FIRST- THE CORD AND A FILE!

**C**ROM USED A GOLDEN PITAR TO BUY THE CORD AND FILE. HE STRAPPED THEM ABOUT A LEG AND TWISTED A BANDAGE AROUND IT, TO HIDE THEM. AND THEN HE ROARED HIS GLEE, LIFTING GWENNA HIGH ON A SHOULDER...

I'LL FIGHT ANY MAN IN THE PLACE! ANY MAN AT ALL! COME ONE-COME ALL!

**T**HE MEN OF OPHIR ROUSED UNDER HIS TAUNTS! THEY FLUNG THEMSELVES AT HIM. JOYOUSLY CROM LAUGHED, FOR THE LOVE OF FIGHTING FLOWED IN HIS VEINS...

WHAT A MAN! ZUES! HE'S MAD!

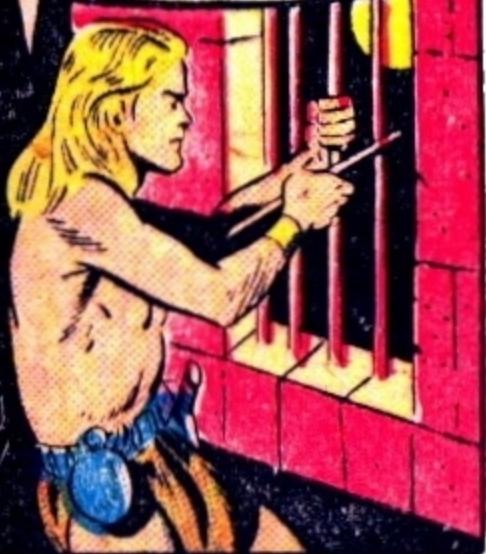
I'LL NOT HURT YOU! THERE... I'LL TAP WITH THE FLAT OF MY BLADE!

**B**UT WHEN THE CITY POLICE ARRIVED, CROM MEAKLY YIELDED, AND WALKED WITH THEM TOWARD THE JAIL...

I'LL BE OUT TOMORROW, WATER GIRL! TAKE THESE COINS UNTIL THEN...

**B**UT WHILE THE CITY OF OPHIR SLEPT, CROM WORKED WITH HIS FILE AT THE OLD, WORN BARS OF HIS CELL...

A GOOD LONG CORD... WITH THE FILE ATTACHED... WILL REACH THE ROOF OF THE TOWER YONDER...



**M**OMENTS LATER, A FILE CLANGED ON THE STONE ORNAMENTS OF THE BLACK TOWER... DRAGGED... THEN HELD! AND CROM SWUNG OUT INTO THE MOONLIGHT...

FREYA GUIDE ME! MAY THE CORD HOLD MY WEIGHT-



**A**T THAT INSTANT, TANIT, QUEEN OF OPHIR, STIRRED FROM HER COUCH AND WALKED TO THE WINDOW OF HER BEDROOM...

AM I DREAMING? OR IS THAT A MAN-SWINGING TOWARD THE BLACK TOWER?



**L**IKE A WEIGHTED PENDULUM, CROM CATAPOULTED THROUGH THE NIGHT!

THE GODS FAVOR ME! I'M GOING TO GET A HANDHOLD ON THE ORNAMENTS!



**F**OOT BY FOOT, CROM MOUNTED THE TOWER. AS HE PUT A HAND ON THE EDGE OF THE ROOF AND SWUNG UP, TWO BLACK, SNARLING PANTHERS LAUNCHED THEMSELVES AT HIM!

SET! THEY'LL TOPPLE ME BACK-OFF THE TOWER-TO FALL AND BREAK MY BACK!



**B**UT CROM WAS HALF ANIMAL HIMSELF! HIS GREAT MUSCLES TENSED FOR THE SHOCK OF THEIR LEAP! HIS LAUGHTER RANG LOUD IN THE NIGHT!

HA! COME YOU BLACK BEAUTIES! I'VE FOUGHT YOUR KIND BEFORE, IN THE JUNGLES OF IND! HA!



**S**NARLS AND GROWLS RUMBLED FROM FURRY THROATS AS MAN AND BEASTS ROLLED ACROSS THE TOWER ROOF. CLAWS AND FANGS SANK DEEP. BUT CROM FOUGHT SILENTLY, CLEVERLY...

GOT MY DAGGER! NOW I WILL RETURN THOSE SCRATCHES!



**W**

ILE CROM FOUGHT FOR HIS LIFE ON THE TOWER ROOF, TANIT RACED BY AN UNDERGROUND PASSAGE INTO THE TOWER...

NO NEED TO CALL THE GUARD! THE FOOL WILL BE KILLED BEFORE HE COMES TO THE TREASURE ROOM! I WANT TO SEE HIM DIE!



**H**

IGH ABOVE, ON THE ROOF, CROM'S GREAT MUSCLES CREAKED WITH STRAIN! A PANTHER SCREAMED AS ITS BACK BROKE! ANOTHER GURLED AS A DAGGER DRANK ITS LIFE-BLOOD!

BOTH DEAD! THE WAY LIES CLEAR FOR MY FEET!



**D**

OWN A FLIGHT OF STAIRS CROM MOVED, AND THEN ALONG A CORRIDOR. SUDDENLY A DOOR CRASHED OPEN, AND PALACE GUARDS POURED OUT...

HO! MORE BLOOD TO DRINK, SKULL-CRACKER!



NOW, SKULL-CRACKER! NOW!

HE LEAPS LIKE A DEER!



**C**

CROM'S GORILLA-LIKE STRENGTH, THE CUNNING OF HIS SWORD-HAND, SWEEPED THE SOFT, POLITICALLY APPOINTED GUARDS BEFORE HIM. ONE OF THEM SCREAMED, TOO LATE TO CALL FOR HELP...

THE PATH IS OPEN!

AAGG!



**C**

CHUCKLING HIS TRIUMPH, CROM WALKED FORWARD INTO THE CHAMBER OF THE FOUNTAIN...

I DID IT! I DID WHAT NO MAN LIVING OR DEAD COULD DO! I CAME UNAIDED TO THE FOUNTAIN OF ETERNAL YOUTH!



**A**

ND THEN-A CRY BROKE FROM HIS LIPS! A CRY OF HORROR AND REPULSION! HIS EYES WIDENED IN REALIZATION THAT HE WAS DOOMED-BUT WITH AN OATH, HE DRAGGED SKULL-CRACKER FROM HIS SCABBARD!

BY THOR'S HAMMER! IT IS THE EARTH-SPANNER! IORMUNGUN-DIR IT-SELF!



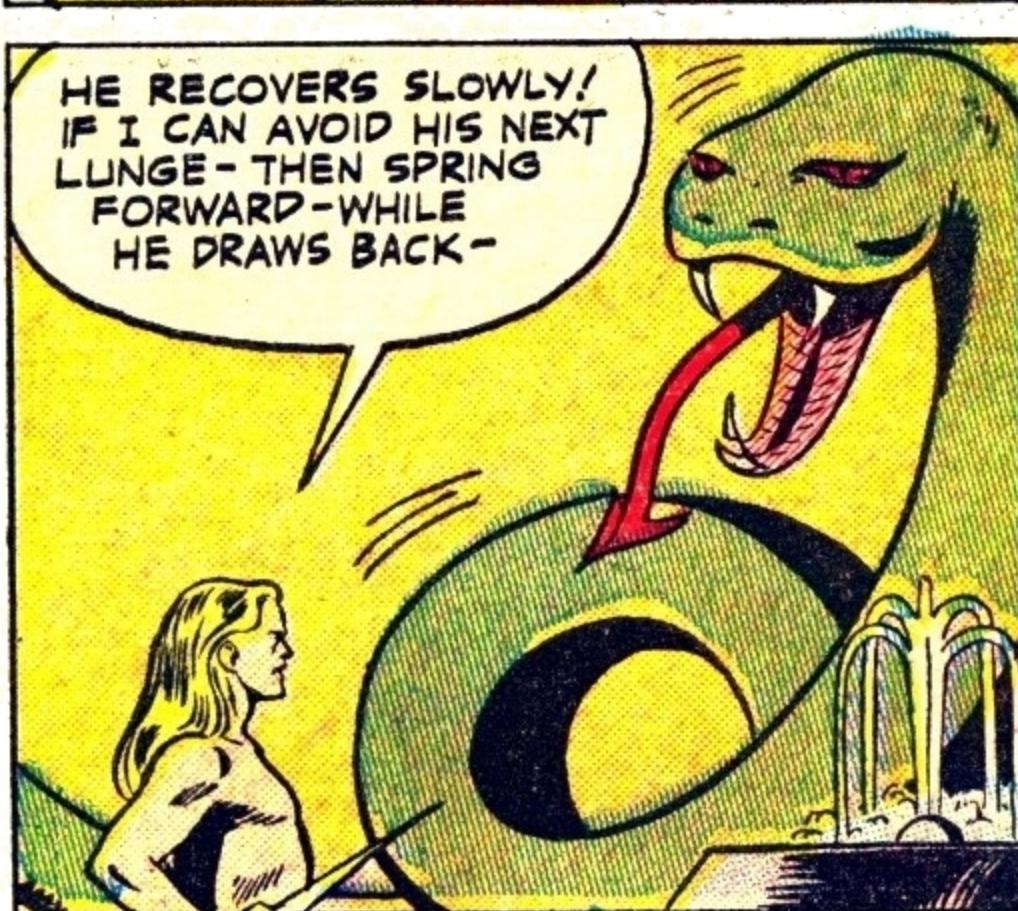
**W**ITH A SCRAPING OF HARD SCALES, WITH A HISS OF EXPelled BREATH AND DARTING TONGUE, A MONSTROUS SNAKE-FROM WHICH THE LEGENDS OF THE VIKING EARTH-CIRCLING SNAKE HAS ARisen- ROSE SLOWLY FROM ITS CIRCLED COILS ABOUT THE PLAYING FOUNTAIN. FLAT, BEADY EYES SOUGHT THE HUGE FORM OF THE BARBARIAN. ANGRILY THE MONSTER ROSE, HIGHER AND HIGHER...



**W**ITH A HISS AND A LIGHTNING-LIKE DART OF ITS FLAT HEAD, THE MONSTER STRUCK...



HE RECOVERS SLOWLY! IF I CAN AVOID HIS NEXT LUNGE- THEN SPRING FORWARD- WHILE HE DRAWS BACK-



**H**GAIN THE SNACK-THING STRUCK! THIS TIME, CROM JUMPED HIGH ON STEEL-THEWED LEGS!

NOW WHILE HE IS SLOW IN RECOVERING- I MUST STRIKE!



**S**KULL-CRACKER GLINTED RED IN THE TORCHLIGHT AS CROM SWUNG IT ONCE AROUND HIS HEAD, THEN BROUGHT IT DOWN...



**W**ITH A GRIN OF CONQUEST, CROM STEPPED FORWARD. BEHIND HIM, SLIM DAGGER UPLIFTED TO SPLIT HIS BACK, CAME TANIT, ON BARE FEET THAT MADE NO SOUND ON THE MARBLE FLOOR!







**D**AYS LATER, THE BOAT BLEW IN TO THE ROCKY SHORE OF DWELF'S ISLAND. CROM AND TANIT JUMPED ASHORE, CAME TO STAND BEFORE THE OLD MAGICIAN...



**H**ELD POWERLESS BY THE HYPNOTIC EYES OF DWELF, CROM WATCHED HIM DRAIN THE JUG... BEGIN TO CHANGE SHAPE... GROW YOUNGER... THINNER... HIS HAIR REGAIN COLOR... AND AS HE CHANGED, SO DID HIS HYPNOTIC GAZE...



**R**ELEASED FROM THE SPELL OF THOSE GLINTING EYES, CROM SHOOK HIMSELF AS A GREAT CAT MIGHT, FROM A LONG SLEEP...



**F**OR A HORRIFIED INSTANT CROM STARED. THE BABY BECAME SMALLER... SMALLER... AND THEN-WAS GONE!

AND NOW, CROM... NOW THAT YOU HAVE DONE ALL HE ASKED-WILL YOU RETURN WITH ME?

TO OPHIR? AYE! WHY NOT? TO RULE A KINGDOM!

GODS, BUT IT'S A NEW KIND OF ADVENTURE FOR ME. LEAD ON, PRETTY ONE!



**A**ND SO, WITH TANIT AND HIS SISTER LALLA, CROM SET FORTH FOR OPHIR, AND THE NEW ADVENTURES THAT WAITED HIM THERE. DO NOT MISS THE NEXT GRIPPING ADVENTURE OF CROM, THE BARBARIAN.

**THE END**