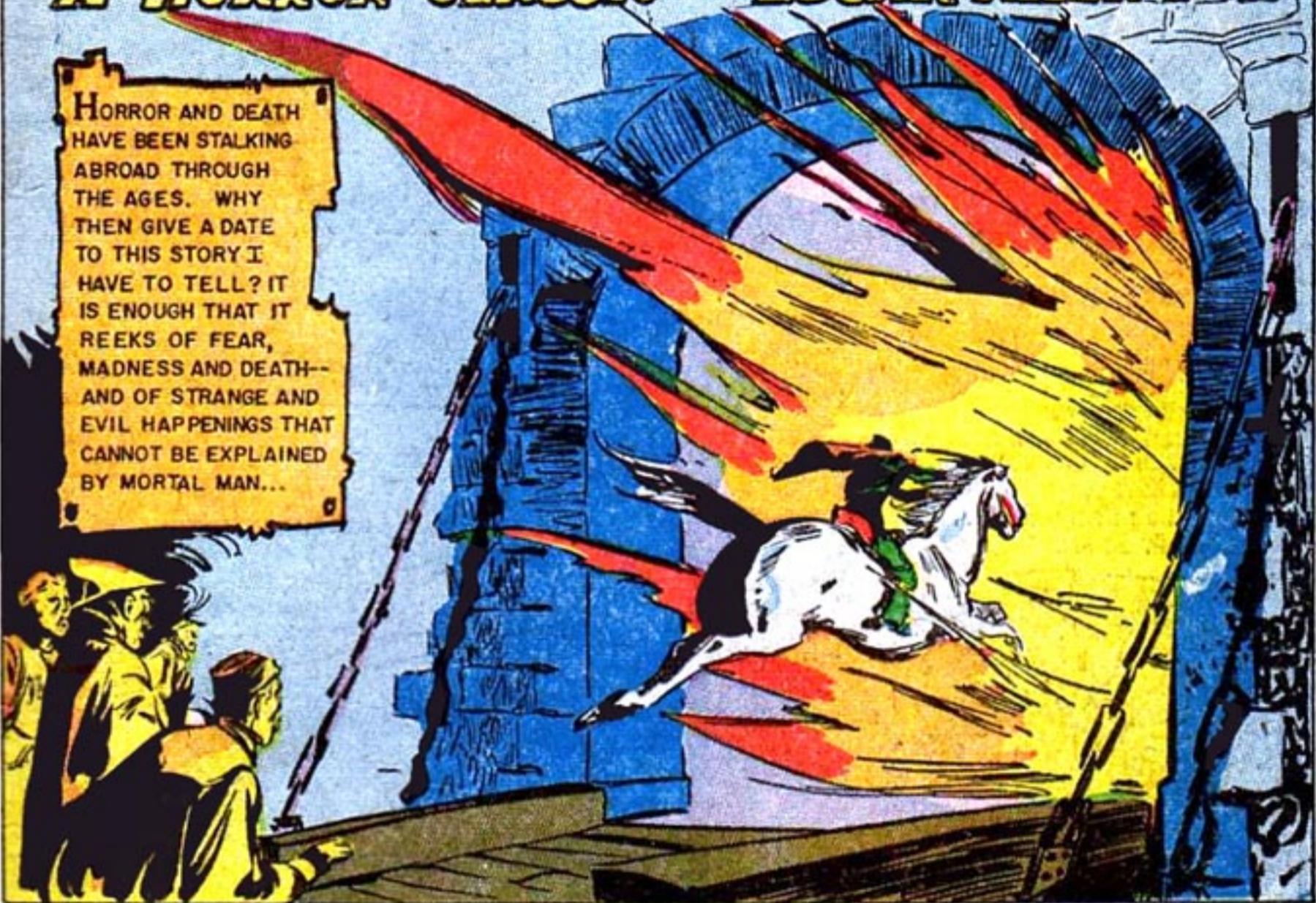


THE CURSE OF METZENGERSTEIN

A HORROR CLASSIC BY EDGAR ALLEN POE

HORROR AND DEATH HAVE BEEN STALKING ABROAD THROUGH THE AGES. WHY THEN GIVE A DATE TO THIS STORY I HAVE TO TELL? IT IS ENOUGH THAT IT REEKS OF FEAR, MADNESS AND DEATH-- AND OF STRANGE AND EVIL HAPPENINGS THAT CANNOT BE EXPLAINED BY MORTAL MAN...



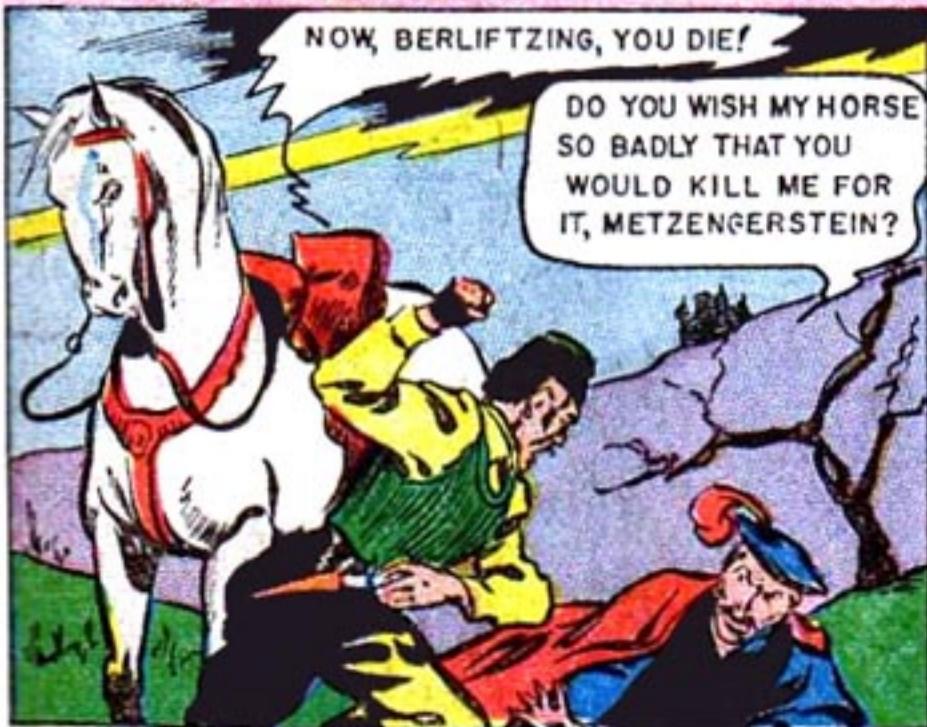
MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO IN THE WILD MOUNTAINS OF CARPATHIA DURING A HUNT...

NOW, BERLIFTZING, YOU DIE!

DO YOU WISH MY HORSE SO BADLY THAT YOU WOULD KILL ME FOR IT, METZENGERSTEIN?

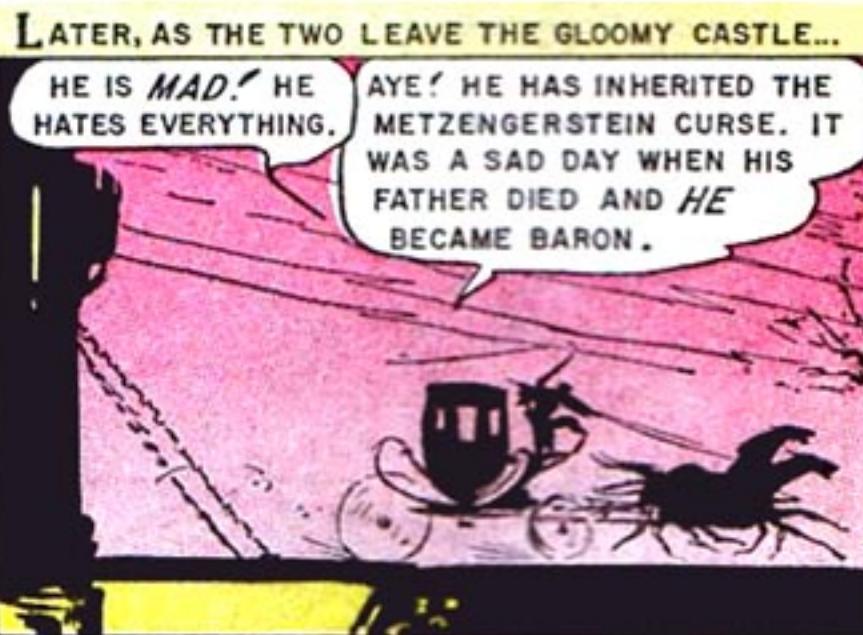
PERHAPS! AND PERHAPS I HATE YOU TOO MUCH TO LET YOU LIVE.

THEN, REMEMBER THIS! YOU SHALL HAVE THE HORSE... BUT WITH IT GOES MY EVERLASTING CURSE... IT SHALL BE A STALLION THAT WILL BRING DOOM TO THE HOUSE OF METZENGERSTEIN!





SOME HUNDREDS OF YEARS LATER AS THE NEW BARON FREDERIK OF METZENGERSTEIN SHOWS SOME FRIENDS HIS CASTLE...



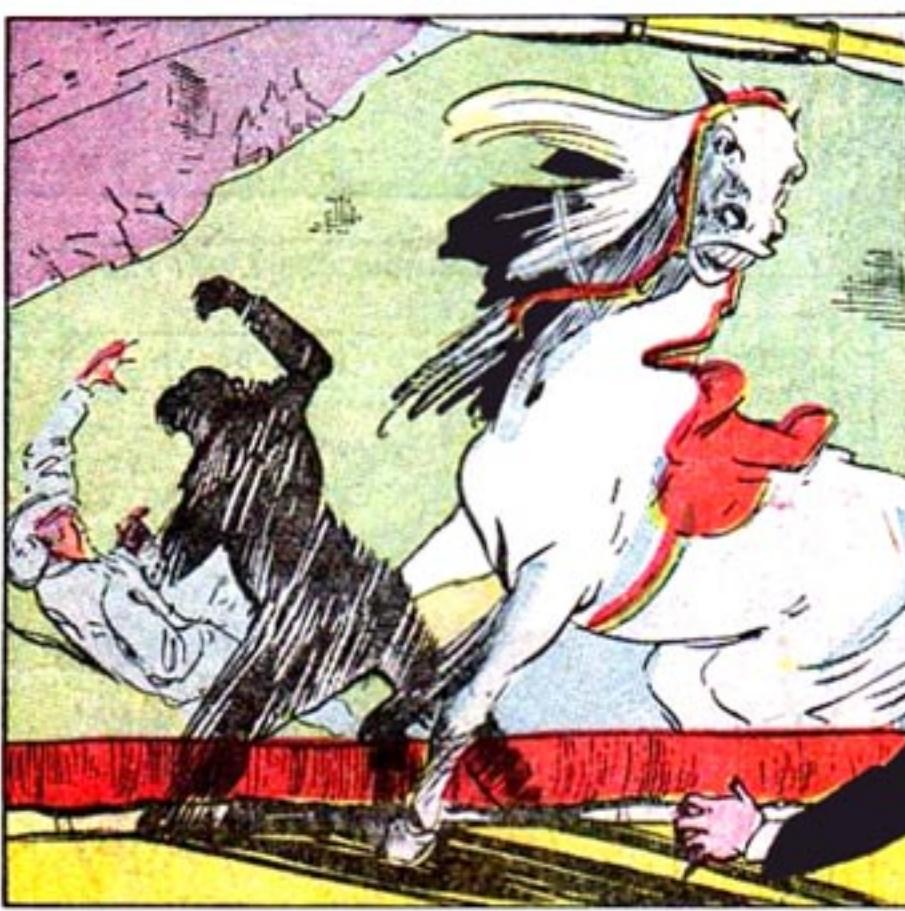
HURRYING BACK TO HIS CASTLE, FREDERIK WATCHES THE FLAMES...

IF THEY BUT KNEW WHOSE HAND HAD PUT THE TORCH TO THEIR STABLES. IF THEY BUT KNEW...



SUDDENLY, SOMETHING COMPELS FREDERIK TO TURN AND LOOK AT THE TAPESTRY...

THE HEAD! IT MOVED! IT TURNED TOWARD ME! AHH, THOSE TEETH! THE EYES! EEAAAHH!



SICK WITH TERROR FREDERIK RUNS FROM THE SCENE OF HORROR. AS HE REACHES THE CASTLE ENTRANCE...

IT IS AN OMEN! AN OMEN! YET I HAVE KILLED NO ONE....

COUNT BERLIFTZING... IS DEAD!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT DO YOU WANT?



DEAD, YOU SAY? INDEED! SHOCKING-- SHOCKING.

HA HA HA HA HA!



AT THAT MOMENT...

IT-- IT'S THE SAME---
WHOSE HORSE IS THIS?

HE IS YOURS, SIR! AT
LEAST HE IS CLAIMED BY
NO OTHER OWNER...

MINE?

WE CAUGHT
HIM FLEEING, ALL
SMOKING AND FLAM-
ING, FROM THE BURN-
ING STABLES. WE LED
HIM BACK, BUT THE
GROOM DISCLAIMS
ANY TITLE TO HIM.

THE LETTERS 'W.V.B.' ARE
BRANDED ON HIM. IT COULD
STAND FOR WILLIAM VON
BERLIFTZING. BUT THEY
SAY NO.

THEN LET HIM BE MINE.
PERHAPS I MAY TAME
EVEN THAT DEVIL FROM
THE STABLES OF BER-
LIFTZING.

THEN FREDERIK RECEIVES EVEN MORE
STARTLING NEWS...

SIR, SOMEONE HAS CUT OUT PART OF THE
TAPESTRY IN THE TOWER CHAMBER... THE ONE
WITH THE HUGE HORSE!

TH--THE ONE
WITH THE
HORSE?

IT IS TRUE,
SIR!
LOCK THE CHAMBER IMMEDIATELY,
AND BRING THE KEY TO ME...!
HURRY!

FROM THAT DAY FORTH, FREDERIK WAS A CHANGED MAN.
MADNESS SEEMED TO HOLD HIM IN ITS GRIP...

WHAT IS THIS? I DIDN'T
ORDER WINE!

BUT YOU DID, SIR. I...
Y!!!!

OUTSIDE THE BARON'S ROOM...

HE--HE BEAT ME AGAIN.
HE EITHER SITS IN THAT
LOCKED ROOM OR RIDES
THAT WILD HORSE THEY
BROUGHT HIM.

AYE, HIS ATTACHMENT
FOR THAT BEAST IS
UNNATURAL. I FEAR
HE HAS GONE MAD.



AND IT WAS TRUE. IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, OR THE
HEAT OF SUN, HE COULD BE SEEN ASTRIDE THE MON-
STROUS ANIMAL...



IT IS THE BARON! HE HAS
INHERITED THE STREAK OF
MADNESS THAT INFESTS ALL
METZINGERSTEINS. MAY
GOD HELP HIM!

AND SO
MATTERS
WENT, UNTIL
ONE STORMY
NIGHT, WHEN
FREDERIK
WAS SEIZED
WITH THE
INSANE
DESIRE TO
RIDE HIS
WILD STEED...



NONSENSE! THERE IS NO HORSE
IN THIS WORLD THAT I CAN'T CONTROL!

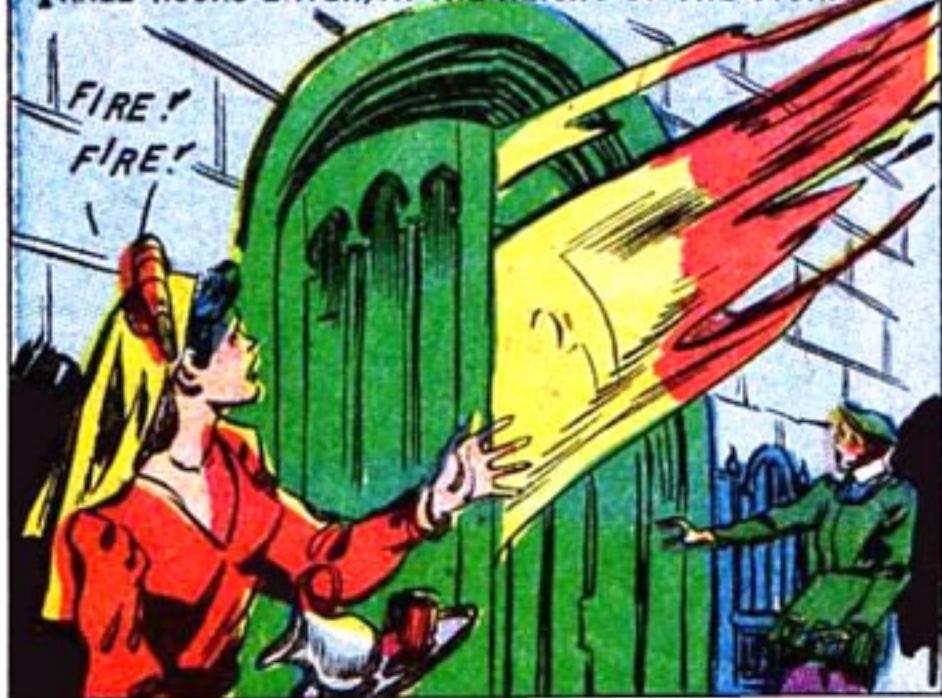
OUT OF MY WAY!

THE LOOK IN THAT BEAST'S
EYE GIVES ME THE SHUDDERS.

AYE, I WOULDN'T RIDE
HIM FOR ALL THE GOLD
IN CARPATHIA!



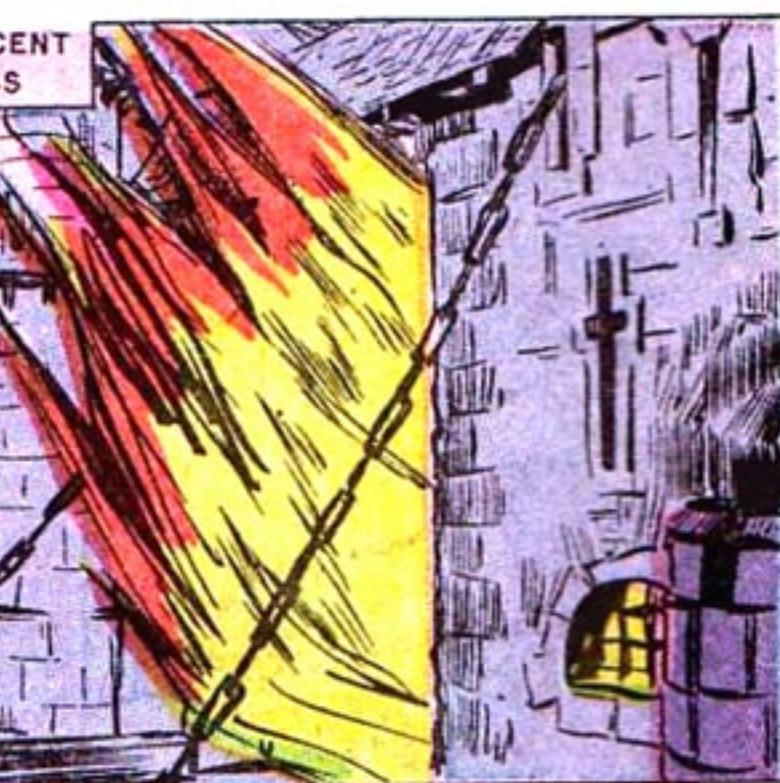
THREE HOURS LATER, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE STORM



THERE IS NAUGHT WE CAN DO... THE MASTER IS OUT RIDING... SOMEONE MUST FIND HIM!



IN WHAT SEEMED AN INSTANT THE STUPENDOUS AND MAGNIFICENT BATTLEMENT OF THE CASTLE METZENGERSTEIN WERE A MASS OF FLAMES...



THE MONSTER BEAST RACES INTO THE FLAMING CASTLE...



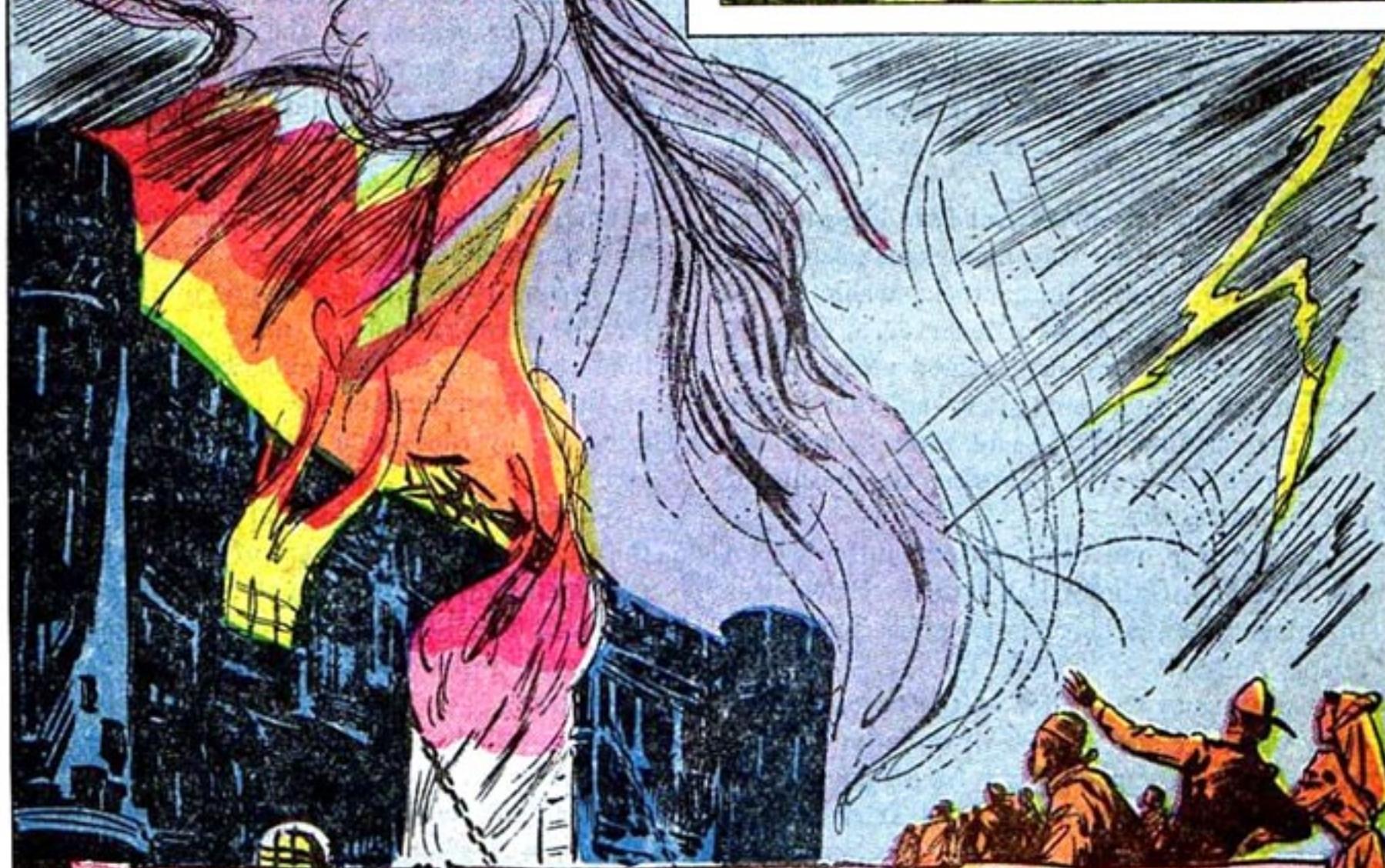
HE CANNOT STOP THE BEAST...



THE TERRIFIED FREDERIK TRYS TO STOP THE HEAD-LONG FLIGHT OF THE ACCURSED STALLION, BUT TO NO AVAIL ...



THEN WITH A LAST GIGANTIC BURST OF ENERGY, THE MONSTROUS HORSE CLATTERS UP THE TOTTERING STAIRCASE OF THE CASTLE TO DISAPPEAR IN THE AWFUL FLAMES...



AT THAT MOMENT THE FURY OF THE TEMPEST DIED AWAY AND IN THE SUPERNATURAL GLARE OF WHITE HOT FLAMES, THERE COULD BE SEEN OVER THE DYING BATTLEMENTS A DISTANT COLOSSAL FIGURE. THE CURSE OF METZINGERSTEIN HAD BEEN FULFILLED...

THE END...