

Monster Gallery



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The Fly

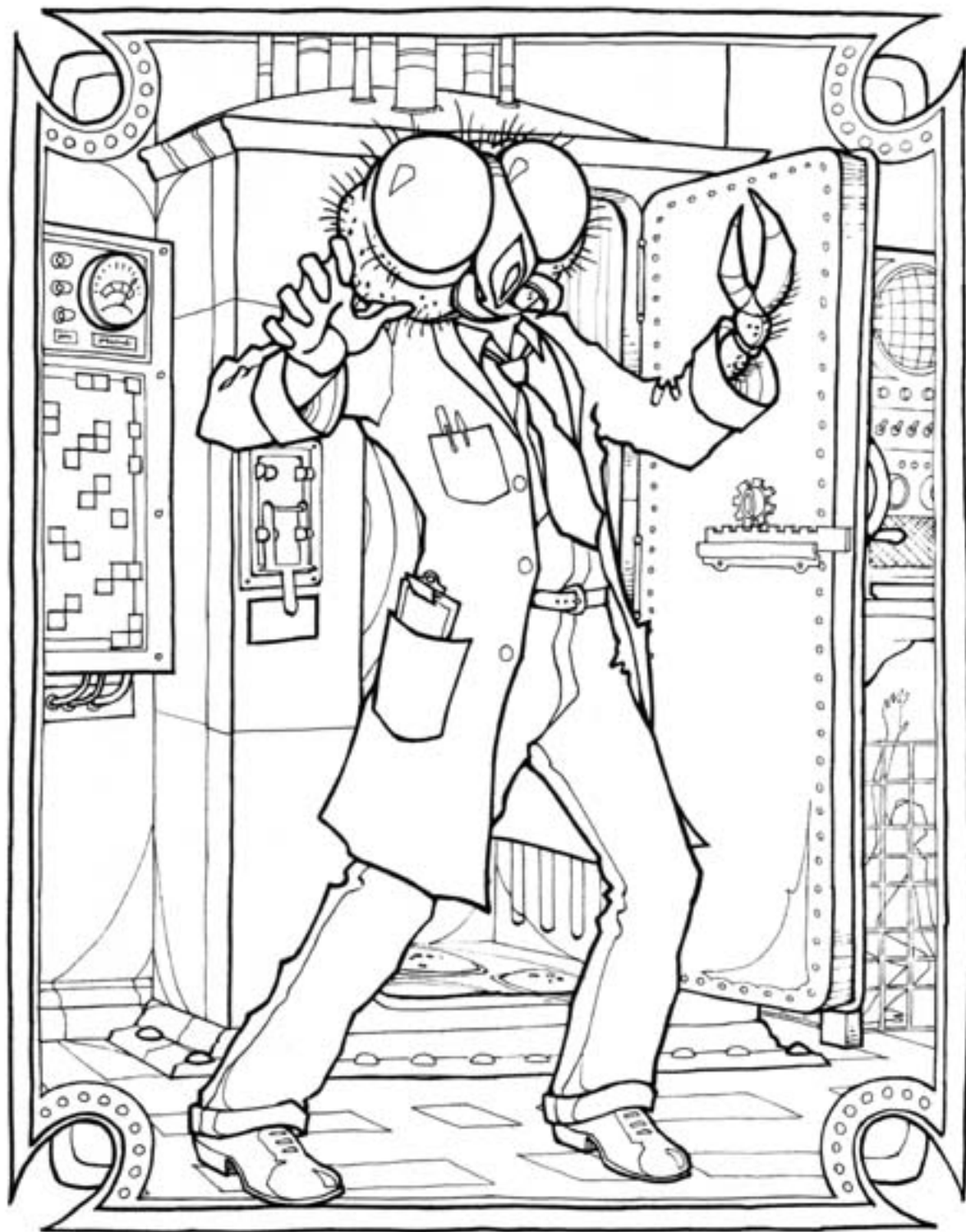
Until I am totally extinct, nothing will ever make me forget...the eyes! Or, rather where the eyes should have been were two brown bumps...instead of a mouth...there was only a...slit...from which hung a black quivering trunk...

The Fly (1957)
George Langelaan

In *The Fly* by George Langelaan, a brilliant scientist perfects a matter transmitter. This amazing machine can break down matter to its molecular state, transport it instantaneously and reassemble it at a distant point. The doctor experiments, beginning with objects and small animals. First an ashtray, then a cat (which scatters but does not reappear). Then the family dog. Convinced of the machine's proficiency, he decides to attempt his experiment on a human being, himself. He is confident of success, unaware that a housefly has been closed into the machine with him. The transmitter whirs to life. As before, the molecules reassemble in the receiver, but their order has been changed. Two monsters have been created in a ghastly mistake.

The head and one foreclaw of the fly are on the body of the man. The man's head and arm are on the body of the fly. The scientist cannot rectify his misbegotten experiment and decides he must die. With the horrified, unwilling help of his wife, the fly's head and arm are obliterated beyond recognition under a huge hydraulic press. His wife, admitting to murder, is committed to a hospital for the criminally insane. The clue to the mystery of murder and death is found in the strange preoccupation of the woman. She constantly catches and examines flies, looking for one with a strange white head. Finally, she divulges the horrifying circumstances of her husband's death to his brother, and kills herself.

Sometime later, the brother is seen at the scientist's grave, burying a matchbox.



THE MONSTER OF
Frankenstein

I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open...
Frankenstein (1818)
Mary Shelley

During a rainy summer in Switzerland, Mary Shelley, her husband, the poet Percy Shelley, Lord Byron and his companion John Polidori passed the time reading German ghost stories. One day Lord Byron suggested they each write a ghost story of their own. Mary Shelley was determined to write a tale as frightening as those they had been reading to each other. And so, in 1818, *Frankenstein*, one of the greatest gothic horror stories ever told, introduced the world to the Frankenstein monster.

One dark winter night, a being composed of human corpses was brought to life by the brilliant young student of natural sciences, Victor Frankenstein. Frankenstein had discovered the secret of giving life. He had invaded a realm of power reserved for the gods, bringing down on himself and those he loved their curse and unrelenting punishment. Frankenstein sees his creation come to life, and immediately realizes the depth of his sin and folly. He runs away. The monster survives, a new Adam, the first and only one of his kind. With the awakening emotions of a man in the body of a monster, he finds he has no place in the world. Wherever he turns he is met with fear and loathing. His pain at rejection changes into consuming hatred. His one reason for living is to avenge himself on his maker. Tormented becomes tormentor. The fate of these two entities, bound in the roles of creator and created, moves to a destiny of mutual destruction. Frankenstein's family is ravished, beginning with the death of his young cousin William, and ending with the murder of his bride, Elizabeth, on their wedding night. Realizing his fate, Frankenstein begins the pursuit of his monster, which takes them to the edge of the habitable world and into the Arctic Circle. Young Frankenstein dies. His monster bids a heartrending farewell to his now dead creator. Boarding a small ice-raft he disappears over the horizon of the barren wasteland, "soon...lost in darkness and distance."



Mummy

You will dissolve the Tana leaves...

Three leaves will keep him alive...

Nine will give him motivation...

The Mummy's Hand (1940)

Universal Pictures

A mummy is a preserved corpse, embalmed by the forgotten technique of the ancient Egyptians. As archeologists uncovered the tombs of this exotic civilization, an astounded world was able to view a body still whole after centuries of burial. As in most cultures, the burial places of the ancient Egyptians were sacred, protected by a curse. And it came to pass, whether by prophecy or chance, that the curse of the ancient gods did haunt the men who disturbed the tombs. The legend of the living dead began. The reanimated mummy of monster lore is an enormously powerful being swathed in moldy strips of burial cloth. With the help of the Scroll of Thoth (a supernatural incantation spoken by Isis to raise Osiris from the dead) and, the sacred Tana leaf, mummies disturbed in their graves returned to life to punish the sacrilege — grotesque instruments of their gods' wrath.

Through the 1932 film *The Mummy* and the inimitable presence of Boris Karloff, the mummified body of High Priest Im-ho-tep became a visual, horrible, indestructible reality. The 3700 year old Im-ho-tep, aroused from his long sleep, seeks his reincarnated love, Princess Anck-es-en-Amon. He finds her, living happily in a contemporary world and with no conscious memory of her past life. He kidnaps her and, through hypnosis, draws her back through the centuries to a vision of her previous life. In doing so, Im-ho-tep employs the powers of his priesthood. But in using his power for unholy ends, he offends the goddess Isis. Anck-es-en-Amon implores Isis to save her. Im-ho-tep turns to dust — only to return. For in a series of movies, the mummy is resurrected from his desert resting place to scourge the world of his defilers.



Creature

FROM THE BLACK LAGOON

God made all creatures and gave them our love and our fear.

Saul VI

In the Universal Pictures movie *The Creature From The Black Lagoon* (1954), a company of explorers penetrate deep into the jungles of Africa. The group travels by boat. In this lush tropical land many kinds of life flourish. On either side of them are seemingly impenetrable walls of vegetation. This is a place where evolution has taken many a strange turn. Taking shelter in a tranquil lagoon, they accidentally disturb one of evolution's freaks, the Creature. This strange being is shaped like a man, has human intelligence, but his body is covered with scales. His face is fish-like. His feet and hands are webbed and armed with vicious long nails. He lives under water and breathes through gills. At first he is interested in the scientists, particularly a beautiful woman. Then they become aware of him. He is captured in a fish net, caged and brought back to the United States to be studied.

Put on display in an aquarium, the fish/man is viewed by an amazed, curious and unsympathetic public. He is desperate in his captivity, but has been fascinated by the woman. Finally, he fights, escapes and makes his way to the ocean. He is seen along the beaches, a tormented, enraged, dangerous creature. Now his motivations are love as well as escape. He who has always been alone wants a mate and companion to take with him to his tranquil, watery home. In a terrifying scene, he quietly approaches a beach house where a lone woman sits brushing her hair before a mirror. Just before he reaches her, she sees his reflection in the mirror and faints in horror. He carries her off and, unintentionally, kills her. Because he endangers the lives of others, it is decided that this alien creature in an alien world must be destroyed. He is sighted by a hunting party rushing down a moonlit beach. The creature is immediately surrounded and mortally wounded. Dying, he returns to his home, the watery depths.



Hunchback

OF NOTRE DAME

His whole person was a grimace...He looked like a giant who had been broken and badly repaired... the expression...a mixture of malice, astonishment and sadness...

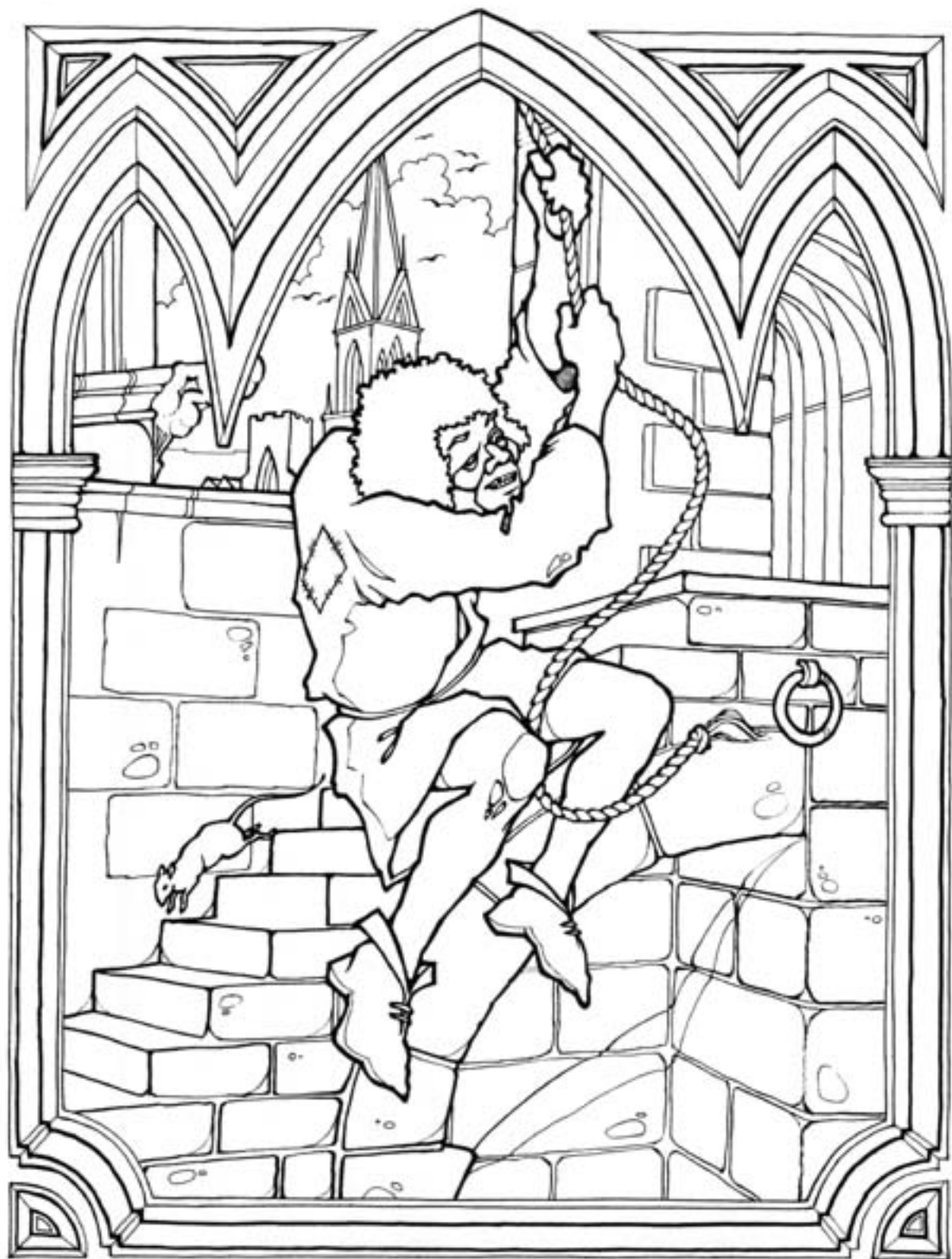
The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1830)

Victor Hugo

The bells of the Cathedral of Notre Dame summoned medieval Paris to celebration and dreadful reckoning. In Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, the cathedral serves as the stage for a confrontation between good and evil. Trapped between these two forces is Quasimodo, the hunchbacked bell ringer of Notre Dame. Deaf, thought to be dumb and horribly ugly, Quasimodo is ward to Claude Frollo, a severe priest and master. During a holiday festival, Claude Frollo sees Esmerelda, an incredibly lovely gypsy girl and is obsessed by her. At the priest's orders, Quasimodo becomes both kidnapper and jailer to Esmerelda. Quasimodo in turn becomes captive to Esmerelda's gentle goodness. He had known only jeers and repulsion. He had been the distorted shadow of Claude Frollo, a sinister figure moving through the alcoves of the cathedral, indistinguishable from the protecting stone gargoyles.

In a classic beauty and the beast situation, Esmerelda introduces Quasimodo to emotions he had never experienced—kindness and love. This awakening is followed quickly by the perception of evil. Frollo, incensed at the fascination he feels for Esmerelda and tortured by guilt, blames his confused state on witchcraft. Esmerelda is condemned to be hung as witch. Quasimodo finds Claude Frollo and throws him from the top of the cathedral. As Frollo falls, Quasimodo witnesses the death of Esmerelda below with stunned helplessness. He then disappears.

Years later, as men search the vaults of the dead, they come upon two skeletons, one clasping the other. The embracing skeleton was crippled. Victor Hugo writes: "When they tried to detach the skeleton from the one it embraced, it crumbled to dust."



Godzilla

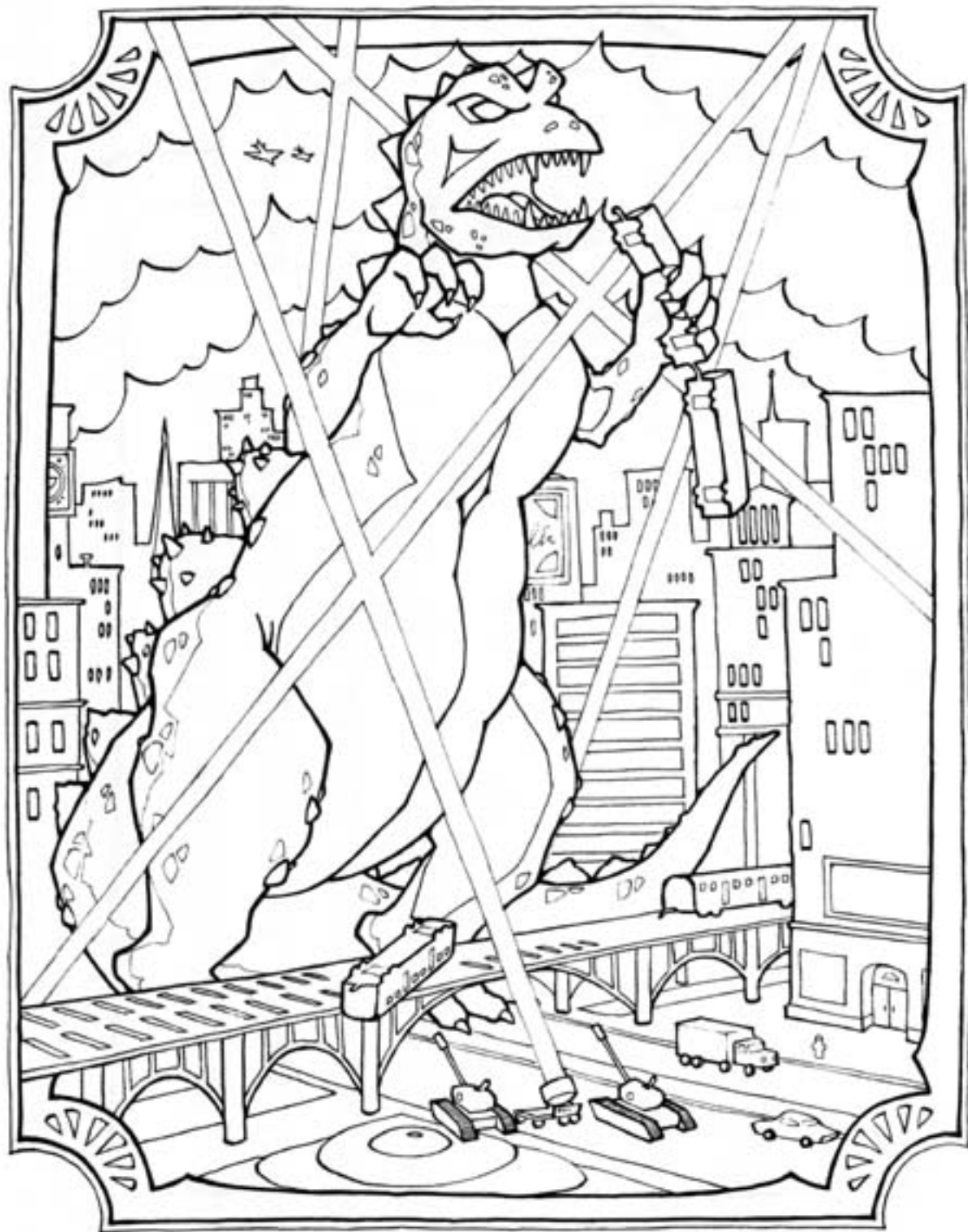
The release of atomic energy constitutes a new force too revolutionary to consider in the framework of old ideas.

Message to Congress on Atomic Energy,
October 3, 1945

With the invention of the atomic bomb, many felt that the human race had finally gone too far in its disturbance of the natural order. This bomb was destruction of the earth's most essential level of matter, the atom. Its immediate effects were horribly evident. What profound effects would take place in the animal and vegetable world? One frightening result was the monster Godzilla.

The ocean floor trembles with a huge explosion. A group of scientists, protected from the blinding flash by dark glasses, carefully record the results. A huge mushroom cloud temporarily blots out the sun, marking the end of the experiment. Another fantastic atomic blast has been inflicted on the world.

In the depths of the ocean a preserved prehistoric monster radiates with strange new life. Godzilla, awakened from a million years of sleep, enters life in the 20th century. He is an immense dinosaur, animated by atomic energy. He is born into a world in which he could never exist. This huge, powerful monster, created out of past and present, breathes atomic fire. Godzilla starts out on a killing rampage, culminating in the destruction of Tokyo. A frantic world watches his progress unable to stop him. Finally a possible solution is presented. He must be destroyed by the same power that gave him life. Another bomb is dropped and Godzilla is destroyed. The results of the second blast can only be speculated on...



Cyclops

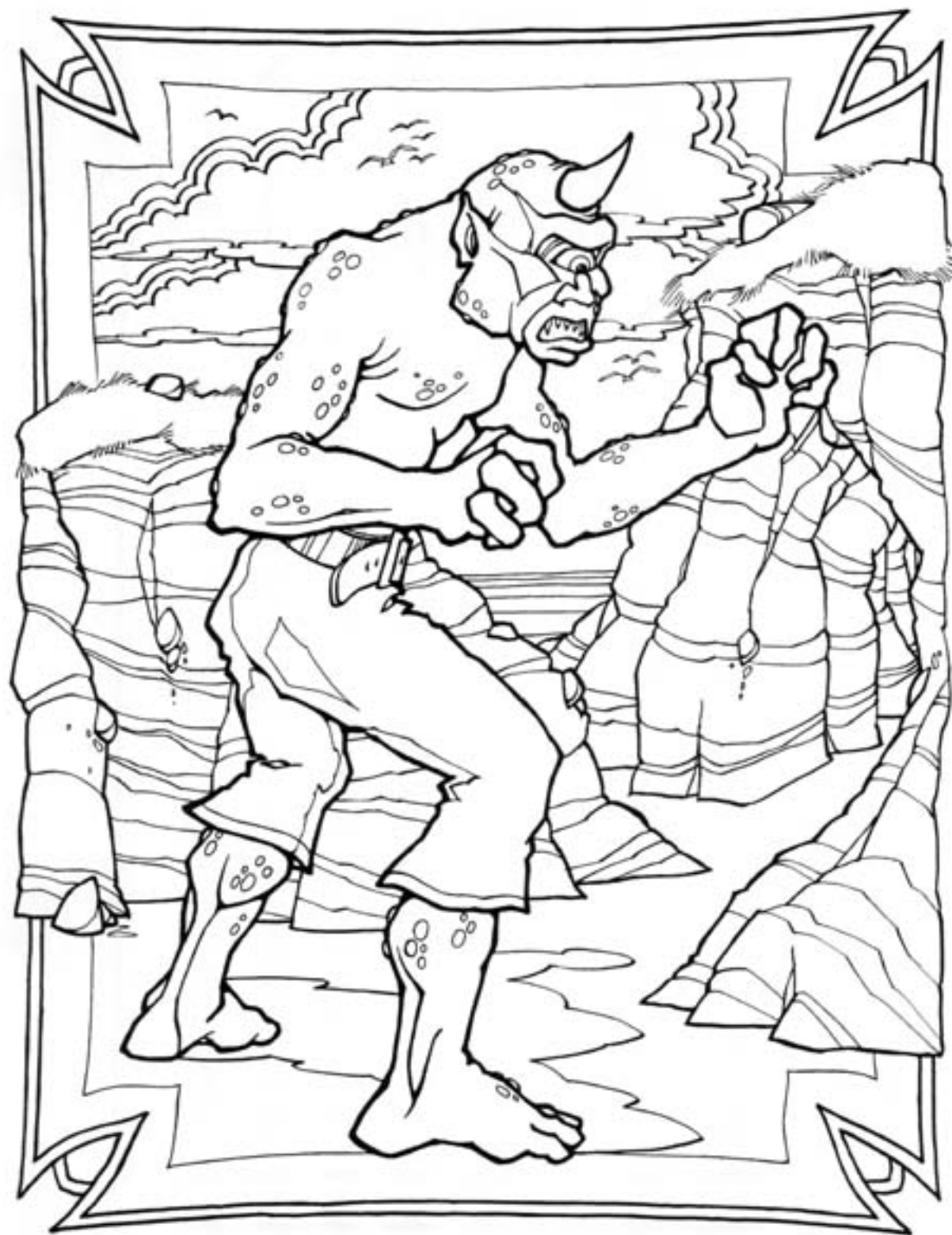
*Then the omnipotent Father with his thunder made
Olympus tremble...*

*Metamorphoses. I, 154
Ovid*

The Cyclops is another monster born in ancient myth. Coming out of both eastern and western legend, he is described by Hesiod as one of the earth's primal beings. The Cyclops of Hesiodic legend, 8th century B.C., is a Titan. Titans preceded the gods of Olympus as rulers of the earth. The Cyclops has only one eye, located in the middle of his forehead. In a huge battle waged for control of the world, the Titans were defeated by the Olympian gods. The Cyclopes became slaves of Zeus and manufacturers of his thunder bolts.

In the epic poetry of Homer, which relates the history of the Trojan War (*The Illiad*) and the Greek warriors' return to their homeland under the guidance of Odysseus (*The Odyssey*), the Cyclops again enters Greek legend. The monster is encountered by Odysseus during his tortuous nine year journey back to Ithaca. This time the Cyclops is a shepherd on the island of Sicily. The Greeks are captured by him as potential meals. But through the cunning of Odysseus, the Cyclops is made to drink wine. Falling into a drunken stupor, the monster is unable to defend himself. Odysseus thrusts a burning torch into his eye. Meanwhile, the men have covered themselves with the wool of the Cyclops' sheep. In great pain and nearly blinded, the Cyclops is incapable of stopping the escaping Greeks.

In *Seven Voyages of Sindbad*, Sindbad, a merchant of the ancient city of Bagdad, embarks on seven fantastic voyages. One of these adventures is the battle and defeat of a Cyclops. The Cyclops is an often recurring monster in the history of man's imagination.



Werewolf

*Even he who is pure of heart and says his prayers
by night, can become a wolf when the wolfbane
blooms and the autumn moon is bright.*

The Wolfman (1941)
Universal Studios

The werewolf has existed in the folklore of civilization longer than recorded history. The phenomena of a man transforming into the body of a beast is established in the legends of ancient China and Greece. The term lycanthropy (the power of turning one's self or another into a wolf) is derived from the legend of Lycanon, an ancient king of Arcadia. Lycanon was turned into a wolf by Zeus because he sinned against the divinity of the god. A Navajo version combines lycanthropy with reincarnation and revenge. The werewolf is a victim, cursed and wretched. He has no control over his transformations, and continually suffers with the knowledge that he is an inhuman killer, a monster.

The werewolf is afflicted with this curse through the bite of a wolf or another werewolf. Surviving the attack, the innocent might proceed with a normal life. The first change is immediate. A pentagram appears in the palm of his hand. The pentagram is a figure composed of five straight lines forming a star, with a pentagon in the center. The werewolf also has the ability to perceive a pentagram in the palm of his next victim. With the next full moon, he who was bitten will transform into a monstrous combination of wolf and man, forced to hunt for human flesh. Stronger even than the curse is the werewolf's wish to be free of it. And his only freedom lies in his death. Unfortunately for himself and those he will attack, the werewolf is almost indestructible. The only way he can be destroyed is by the wound of a pure silver weapon. His grave should be planted with wolfbane to ensure his eternal rest.



THE ABOMINABLE
Snowman

I have never seen a greater monster or miracle in the world than myself.

Works, Book III, Chap. II
Montaigne

The legend of the abominable snowman centers in the highest reaches of the Himalayan Mountains. There, for centuries, the Sherpa people have fostered belief in the existence of these strange creatures, named by them the *yeti* or *yeh-teh*. But the snowman is not restricted to the Tibetan area. As close as northern California, snowmen, or something very similar, has been seen and even filmed. This version of the abominable snowman is called Big-foot, probably because the most common trace of his presence has been a large unclassifiable footprint. From a combination of story, sworn witness and film, a composite description of the snowman emerges. He is about the height of a tall man, but his width in proportion to his height is much greater. His body is covered with short hair, somewhat longer at the shoulder. His arms are long, giving him an ape-like appearance. The *yeti* is also reputed to have a very strong, disagreeable odor. Attempts to verify the existence of the abominable snowman have been undertaken by a very dignified company of men.

In 1954 the *London Mail* sponsored an expedition to the Himalayas. The group came back convinced of the reality of the *yeti*, but had no definite proof. Sir Edmund Hillary, leader of the first successful climb to the top of Mt. Everest, set out in 1960 on a search for indisputable evidence. His quest was almost a failure. He found only a few questionable footprints. The riddle of the abominable snowman remains unsolved. But the Sherpa do not doubt him. They have seen his shadowy figure in snowstorms. They have heard his almost silent, shy approach to study what must seem to him a very strange phenomena, man.



DR. JEKYLL AND
Mr. Hyde

*He put the glass to his lips, and drank at one gulp.
A cry followed; he reeled...staring with injected
eyes...the features seemed to melt and alter...I
sprang to my feet and leaped back against the wall...
my mind submerged in horror.*

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1885)
Robert Louis Stevenson

At three o'clock on a black winter's morning, Mr. Richard Enfield returns home through deserted London streets. He sees a strange, dwarfed figure in evening dress run into and trample over a child's body. The little girl is not seriously hurt but Enfield, outraged at such callous behavior, pursues and drags back her assailant. And so he meets the notorious human monster, Mr. Hyde. Though strange to look at, Enfield describes his sense of dread upon encountering Hyde as something infinitely more sinister than physical repulsion. Hyde disturbs Enfield's soul, for Hyde is the presence of pure evil.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson, recounts the tragic history of Dr. Jekyll, respected and beloved doctor of science, who turns his experiments on himself. Conscious of both good and evil in his personality, Dr. Jekyll succeeds in isolating the evil essence in his soul. Using a potion developed in his laboratory, Jekyll begins alternating between the two men who are one in his physical being. Evil takes the form of the physically and spiritually distorted Mr. Hyde. Previously, Hyde had been the beast in every man that is controlled by a sense of good. To the doctor's horror, however, with his unrestricted freedom, the evil side of Mr. Hyde grows stronger than the doctor's better self. Jekyll is left powerless to control the transformations. Finally Hyde commits murder for pleasure. At this ultimate offense against mankind and himself, Dr. Jekyll takes poison to destroy Hyde. Dying, he burns his notes and formulas, leaving only a diary with a warning to others: it is an unpardonable sin to tamper with the soul and destiny.



Phantom

OF THE OPERA

On horror's head, horrors accumulate.

Othello, Act III
Sheakespeare

The stage is a dazzling combination of light and costumes. But the visual beauty of the scene is secondary. It is a complement to the real beauty and power of the occasion, the music. As the opera proceeds with its compelling musical drama, the audience listens enraptured. But none is more absorbed than a shadowy masked and cloaked figure. Watching but not seen, always elusively present, he is the phantom of the opera.

The Phantom of the Opera, by Gaston Leroux, tells the story of an insane and terribly disfigured man who haunts the Paris opera house. Having escaped from Devil's Island, he roams freely through the huge old building, honeycombed with rooms and passages, making it his own. He plays his music in the underground cavern which is his home, filling those who hear with chilling horror. His passion for music becomes personified in an obsessive love for a beautiful young opera star with a magnificent voice. One evening, as she performs, this strange man releases a chandelier from the concert hall ceiling and sends it crashing down on the audience. During the ensuing horror and confusion, he kidnaps the singer, taking her to his secret quarters beneath the opera house. The Phantom is gentle with his captive, trying to win her confidence and affection. The masked madman begs the girl to sing for him. She complies and the Phantom accompanies her with hauntingly eerie organ music. The singer, almost as curious as she is frightened, furtively approaches her captor. As the aria rises to its climax, she snatches the mask from his face, to reveal the hideous face of a living skeleton.



Morlock

It was so like a human spider.

The Time Machine (1895)

H. G. Wells

The Time Machine by H. G. Wells follows the Time Traveler, a 19th century scientist, into the world of the distant future. His first impression of this strange new world is that of an idyllic place, inhabited by slight and beautiful versions of humanity. These people, called the Eloi or overworlders, thrive in their sunlit surroundings. They are friendly, gentle and unusually placid. The Time Traveler initially accepts his surface impression of a carefree, happy existence. The Eloi eventually introduce with disdain another species of humanity that lives in their world. These creatures are called Morlocks. The Morlocks live underground. They are hairy, spider-like albinos, fully accustomed to a dark world. As his knowledge of the Eloi grows, the Time Traveler becomes aware of an unspoken undercurrent of fear. They hate the dark. When night falls they gather in large protective groups.

The Traveler, curious about what the Eloi refuse to acknowledge as fear, begins to investigate, with Weena, a lovely Eloi. Leaving Weena above the ground, he ventures down into the caverns which house the Morlocks. Enclosed in the chill dampness, he is suddenly aware of being surrounded. The Morlocks move in, touching and grasping, and the Traveler escapes, sensing impending doom.

The Eloi had come to harmony with nature in a secure world. The Morlocks had the power of machines in their underground caverns (which smelled somewhat like blood). The Eloi were becoming continually more passive and less intelligent in their 'friendly' world. The Morlocks, on the other hand, were desperate and vicious, having to contend with an underground food shortage. Horrible comprehension comes to the Time Traveler. He only hints at his answer to the riddle of the Eloi's fear, as he moves on to new adventures. The Morlock is strong and desperate; the Eloi, in their almost unthinking complacency, remind him of cattle.



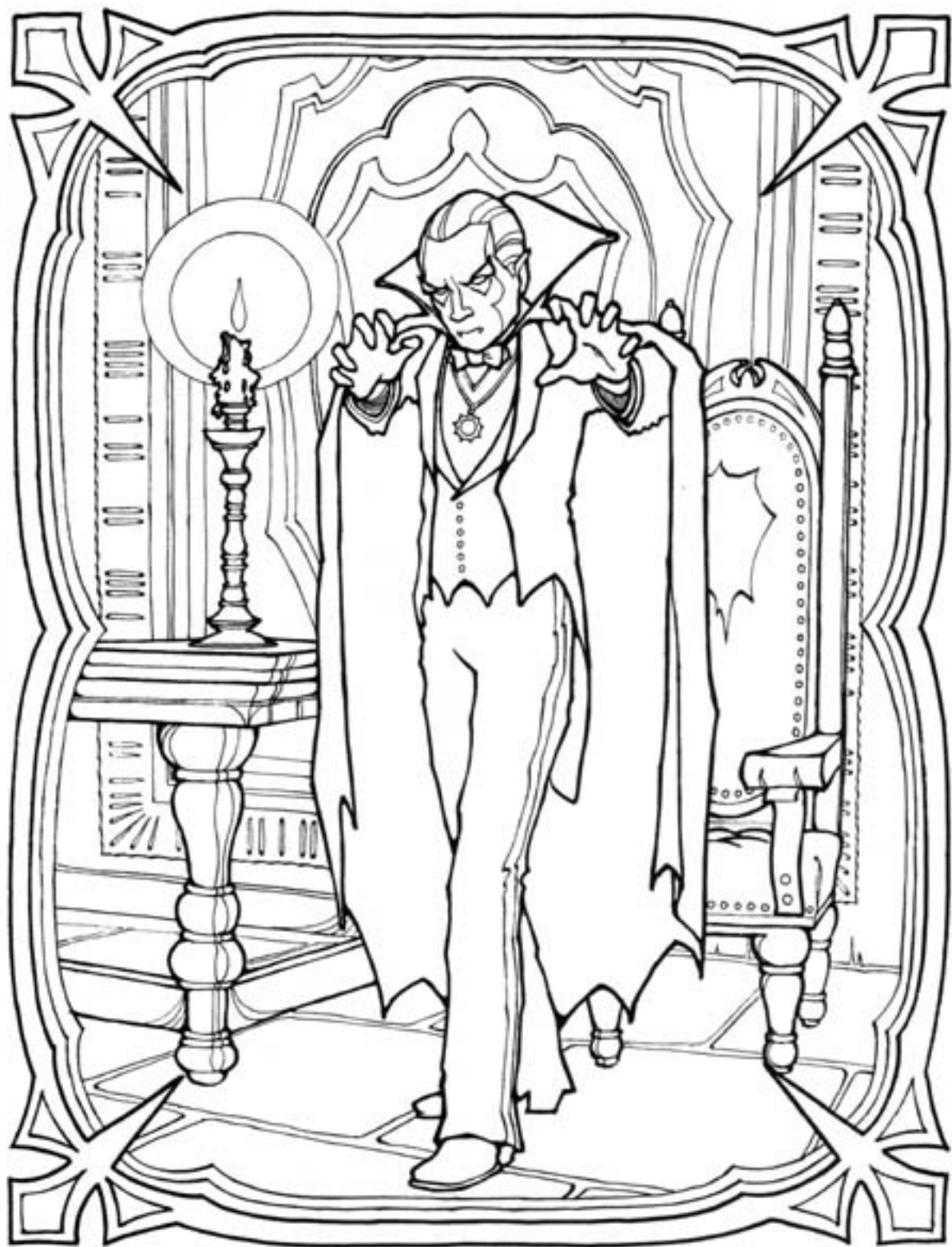
Vampire

*I saw the Count lying within the box upon the earth...
he was deathly pale, just like a waxen image, and
the red eyes glared with the horrible vindictive look...*

Dracula (1897) Bram Stoker

A vampire is a monster conceived in man's fear of death and the dead. The vampire personifies the continuance of physical life after a spiritual and apparently physical death. He is a being without a soul. The legend of the undead has existed for centuries in many cultures, particularly those of eastern Europe. The ancient countries of Romania and Bohemia are crucial to the myth and definition of the vampire. Vampires are perhaps the least sympathetic of all the monsters. They are heartless creatures who not only kill, but can also condemn their victims to a similar existence of living death. These living dead can only move by night, in an endless quest for their only sustenance, human blood. The most notorious vampire is Count Dracula.

Historically, there did exist a medieval tyrant named Dracula, whose cruelties qualify him as a 'real life' monster. But the vampire of literature and film is based on a character brought to life in the gothic novel *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker. Written in the form of letters and diaries, this gothic style adds much to the veracity and controlled horror of the nightmare story. The book describes the lore of the vampire. He must sleep in his own coffin, which contains blessed earth from the place where he was first buried. He must have blood. He is immortal. His body gives no reflection in glass. He moves only by night, as the light of sun weakens him, making him helpless. The vampire can transform himself, usually into the body of a bat. As he prepares to attack, his eyeteeth extend into razor sharp fangs, with which he penetrates the jugular vein of his victim. The classic means by which he can be destroyed and laid to eternal rest with his lost soul are by driving a wooden stake through his heart, cutting off his head and filling his mouth with garlic. Charms to protect the innocent against the vampire include the Christian cross, garlic flowers and a strong will to do good.



King Kong

It was beauty killed the beast.

King Kong (1933)
RKO Pictures

King Kong astride a towering skyscraper, clutching a beautiful woman in one hand, and fighting off the Air Force with the other, is one of the classic images of monster lore.

The story of King Kong begins with Carl Denham, a movie producer, his company and crew, setting out on a voyage to an island inhabited by prehistoric monsters. Among the potential cast of Denham's movie is a beautiful woman. The group's arrival at Skull Island brings them into a world that they were not prepared for. A native tribe lives on one small corner of the island. The rest of the island is enclosed by a huge wall, protecting the natives from the monsters outside, particularly the mighty Kong. The young actress, blond and blue-eyed, is a phenomenon to the natives. Recognizing her as a perfect bridal sacrifice, the natives kidnap her off the ship in the dead of night to use in their religious ceremony. At the height of a hypnotic ritual, the actress is tied to the great wall. Through the jungle crashes an enormous ape, three stories tall. He frees her from her bondage and, rather than killing her, falls in love with her. After a series of harrowing adventures in the prehistoric world, she is finally rescued by the ship's captain, who also loves her. Then Denham decides to take the giant ape back to New York. Kong is put to sleep and the ship returns to the United States, towing the monster on a huge barge.

Thousands flock to view the colossal King Kong, chained and apparently helpless. Suddenly, thinking he sees danger for the woman he loves, the monster ape breaks his chains and escapes onto the streets of New York City. He climbs to the top of the Empire State Building, fighting off the Army and Air Force. After a valiant battle, King Kong is mortally wounded. He bids a gentle farewell to his lady, and plunges to his death on the crowded street below.



Bride

OF FRANKENSTEIN

We belong dead.

The Bride of Frankenstein (1935)

Universal Studios

Two men and one being, a nightmarish, misshapen thing, are gathered together in an isolated tower. The tower has been fitted as an elaborate laboratory. The two men work intensely over a shrouded, still figure stretched out on an operating table. The third being present, the monster, watches them unmoving, totally absorbed. His ugly face is even more distorted by the unaccustomed emotion of hope. The three are nearing the end of their frighteningly strange task. It is the middle of the night, and outside the tower, the heavens seem to protest what is occurring with a savage thunder and lightning storm. The atmosphere is tense with fear and premonition. Suddenly, the life source is sent coursing through the still figure on the table. It moves. It is alive. The Frankenstein monster has a bride.

Dr. Frankenstein does not go through with the creation of a mate for his monster in Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein*. The movies bring her to life, a monster Eve to the man-made Adam. In the film version, Dr. Frankenstein consents to make a companion for his monster, hoping for freedom from his self-inflicted curse. The monster's bride is a frightening combination of grotesqueness and beauty as she begins to move stiffly. She is another being pieced together from the dead and charged with unnatural life. Her hauntingly lovely face is modeled after the ancient Egyptian bust of Nefertiti. As the storm reaches a crescendo, she is led toward the monster in a mockery of a wedding ceremony.

The doctor has indeed compounded the horror of his first creation. As she views her prospective husband for the first time she hisses and screams. She is terrified at the sight of the monster and then of her own stitched body. And so the Frankenstein monster meets the ultimate rejection of his own kind. A single tear moves down his cheek as he tells her, "We belong dead." He presses a lever and he, his bride and the laboratory are destroyed in a fiery explosion.





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