

FEATHERTOP!

ART: ALAN

ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY:
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

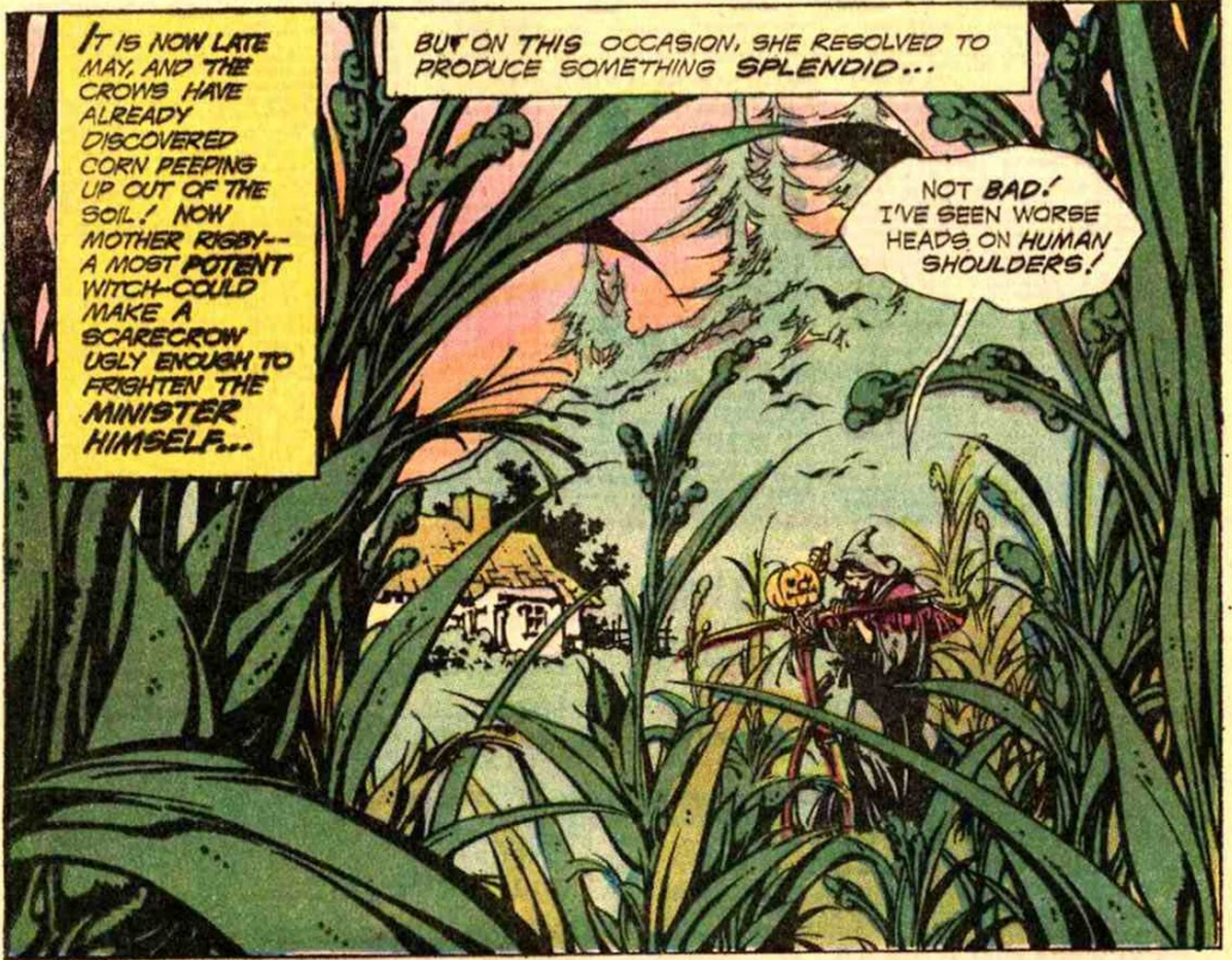
SCRIPT: GERRY BOUDREAU



IT IS NOW LATE MAY, AND THE CROWS HAVE ALREADY DISCOVERED CORN PEERING UP OUT OF THE SOIL! NOW MOTHER RIGBY-- A MOST POTENT WITCH-- COULD MAKE A SCARECROW UGLY ENOUGH TO FRIGHTEN THE MINISTER HIMSELF...

BUT ON THIS OCCASION, SHE RESOLVED TO PRODUCE SOMETHING SPLENDID...

NOT BAD!
I'VE SEEN WORSE HEADS ON HUMAN SHOULDERS!



BUT THE CLOTHES WERE TO BE THE MAKING OF THE MAN, AND...

I'VE MADE MANY A PUPPET SINCE I'VE BEEN A WITCH, BUT THIS IS THE FINEST OF THEM ALL! 'TIS ALMOST TOO GOOD FOR A SCARECROW!



AYE, IT'S TOO GOOD A PIECE OF WORK TO STAND ALL SUMMER IN A CORN PATCH! WHY, I'VE DANCED WITH WORSE ONES WHEN PARTNERS WERE SCARCE AT OUR WITCH MEETINGS IN THE FOREST!





WELL, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DABBLE IN WITCHCRAFT TODAY, BUT I'LL MAKE A MAN OF MY SCARECROW IF ONLY FOR THE JOKE'S SAKE!

PUFF AWAY, MY FINE FELLOW! YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!



MIRACULOUSLY, THE SCARECROW APPLIED ITSELF LUSTILY TO THE PIPE AND SENT FORTH SUCH ABUNDANT VOLLEYS OF SMOKE THAT THE ENTIRE VALLEY SEEMED TO VANISH IN THE VAPOR!



UNTIL, FINALLY--

HAH! THOU HAST A MAN'S ASPECT! HAST THOU ALSO A VOICE? I BID THEE SPEAK!

I WOULD SPEAK, BUT BEING WITHOUT WITS, WHAT CAN I SAY?



THOU SHALT SAY A THOUSAND THINGS, AND SAYING THEM A THOUSAND TIMES OVER, THOU WILT STILL HAVE SAID NOTHING!

WITH THAT ALONE, THOU CANST PAY THY WAY ALL OVER THE EARTH!



THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER GOOKIN HATH A COMELY MAIDEN FOR A DAUGHTER! WITH THY APPEARANCE AND THY WIT, THOU SHALT MAKE HER THINE OWN!



MY WIT, MOTHER RIGBY?

AYE, THOU WILL THINK BETTER OF THINE OWN, WHEN THOU HAST SEEN THE WITS OF OTHERS! REMEMBER- KEEP PUFFING THE PIPE OR THOU WILST TURN INTO A BAG OF STRAW!



NOW FAREWELL, AND IF ANY SHOULD ASK, THY NAME IS FEATHER-TOP!

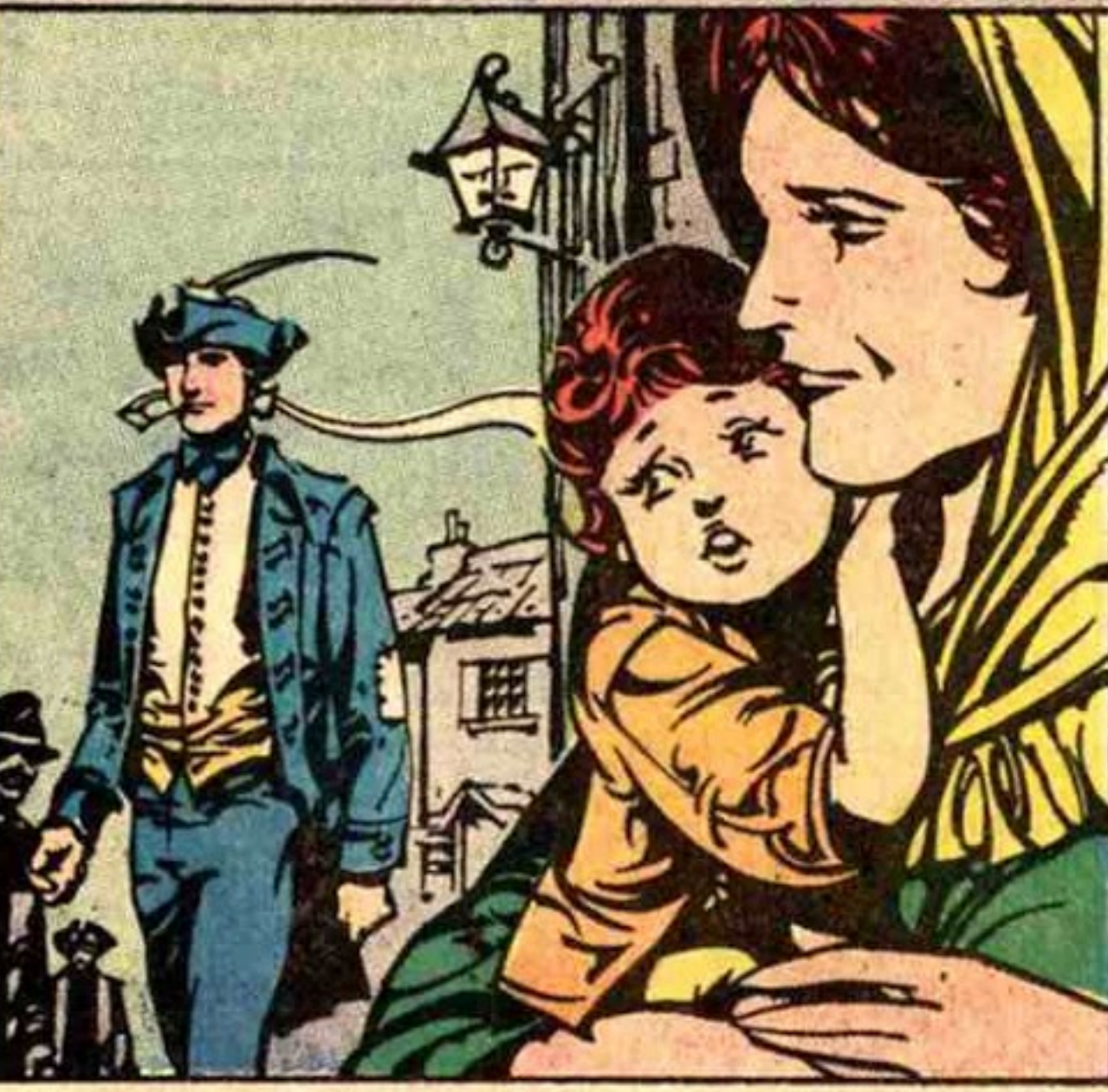
AS FEATHERTOP APPROACHED THE VILLAGE, THE TOWNSPEOPLE STARED IN AWE AND ADMIRATION...



AMID THE GENERAL ADMIRATION, THERE WERE ONLY TWO DISSIDENT VOICES. ONE WAS THAT OF A MANGY DOG, WHICH PUT ITS TAIL BETWEEN ITS LEG AND RAN OFF WITH A HOWL-



THE OTHER DISSIDENT WAS A YOUNG CHILD WHO SQUALLED AT THE FULLEST STRETCH OF HIS LUNGS AND BABBLERD SOME NONSENSE ABOUT A PUMPKIN...



FINALLY, HE ARRIVED AT THE MANSION HOUSE OF JUSTICE GOOKIN AND KNOCKED BOLDLY UPON THE FRONT DOOR...

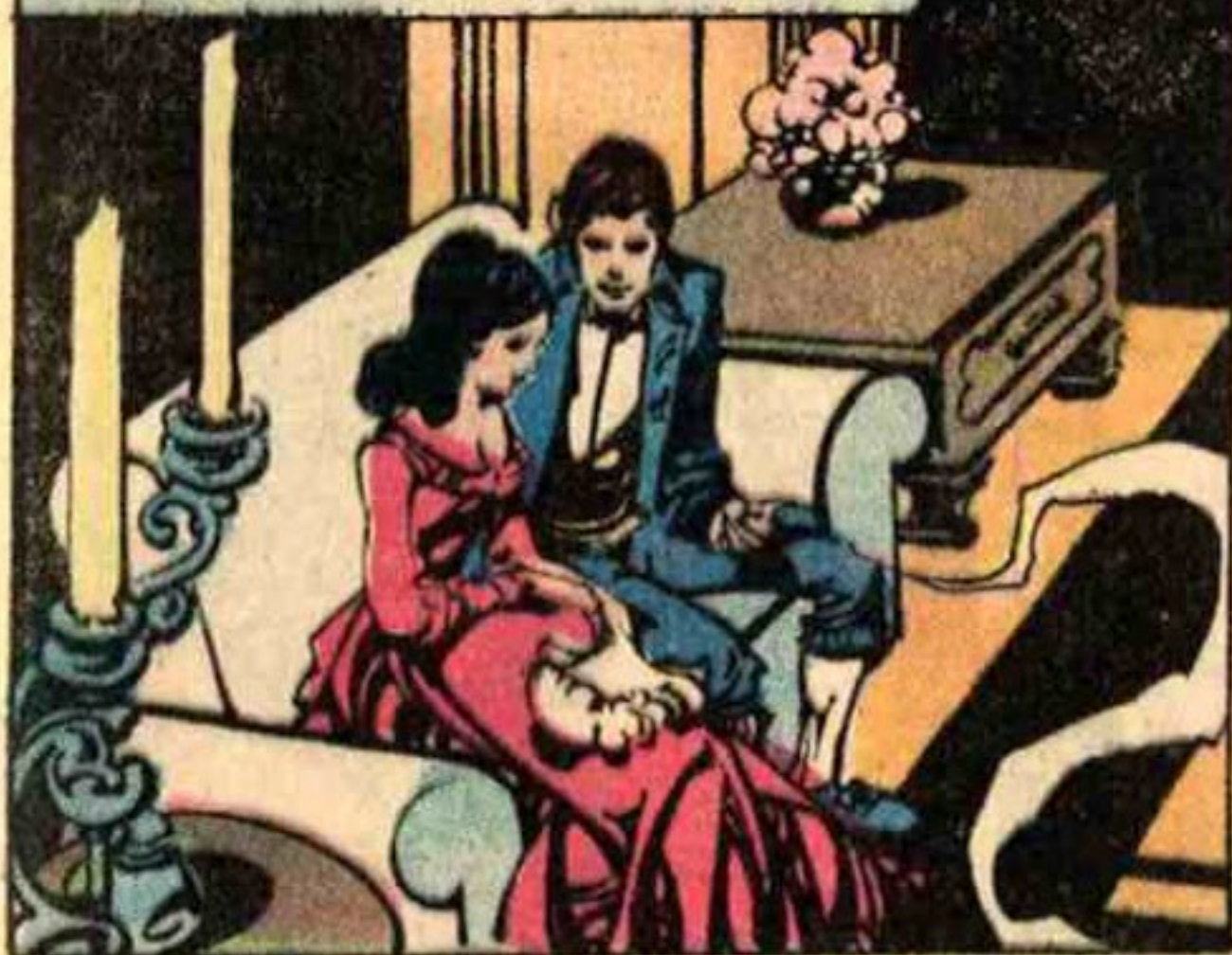


POLLY, THIS IS LORD FEATHERTOP! PAY YOUR DUTY TO HIS LORDSHIP, CHILD, AND HONOR HIM AS HIS TITLE DESERVES!

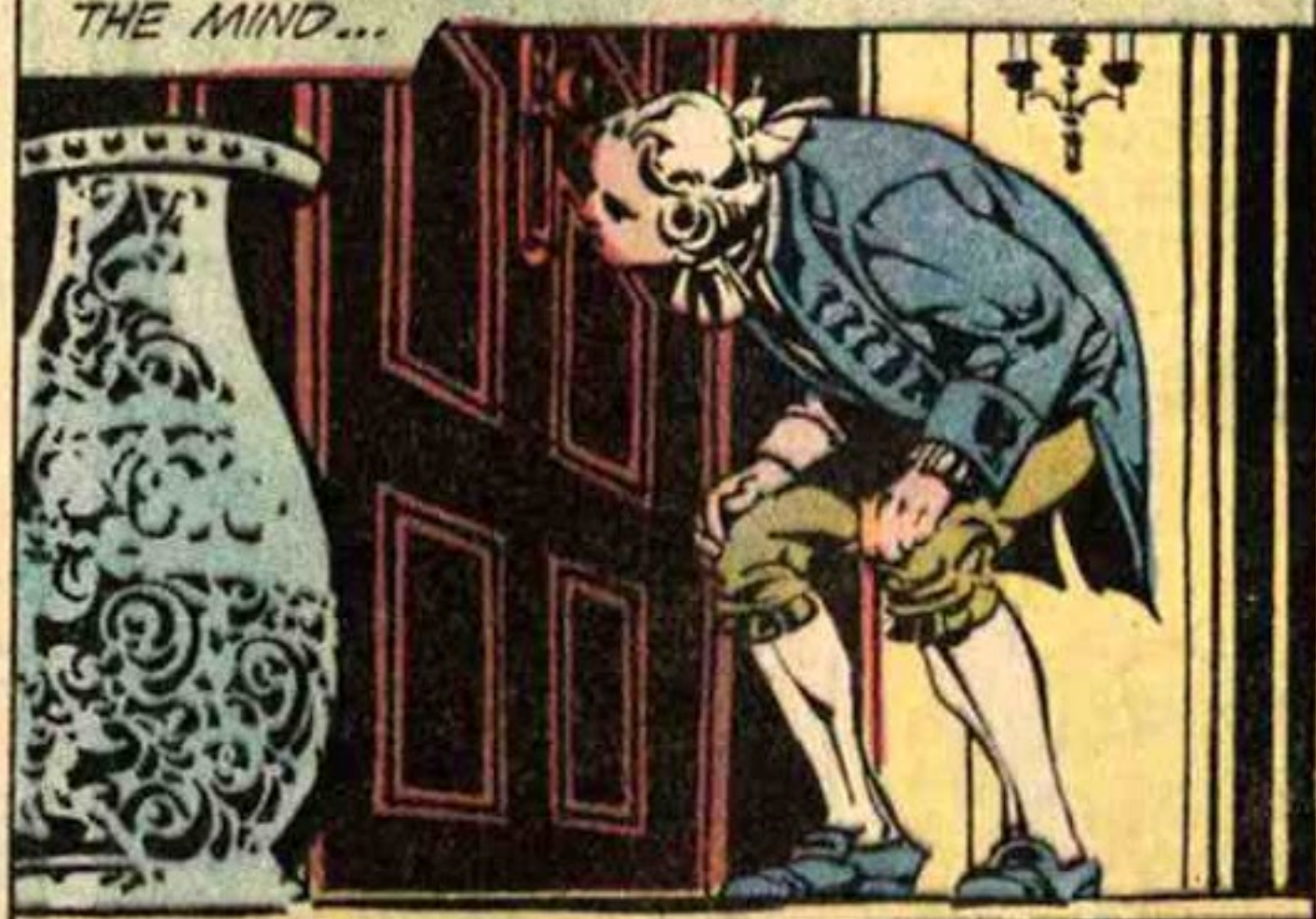


WITH THAT, THE WORSHIPFUL MAGISTRATE QUITTED THE ROOM!

THEN, POLLY AND FEATHERTOP EXCHANGED THE MOST CORDIAL AND BANAL OF CONVERSATION! BLAME PRETTY POLLY'S ABILITY RATHER THAN HER WILL IF SHE FAILED TO BE AS COMPLETE AN ARTIFICE AS FEATHERTOP HIMSELF...



YET THE JUSTICE COULD NOT REFRAIN FROM PEEKING INTO THE ROOM--FOR SOMETHING ABOUT FEATHERTOP FASCINATED HIM! PERHAPS THE EFFECT OF ANYTHING COMPLETELY ARTIFICIAL IN HUMAN SHAPE IMPRESSED EVEN THE DARK REACHES OF THE MIND...



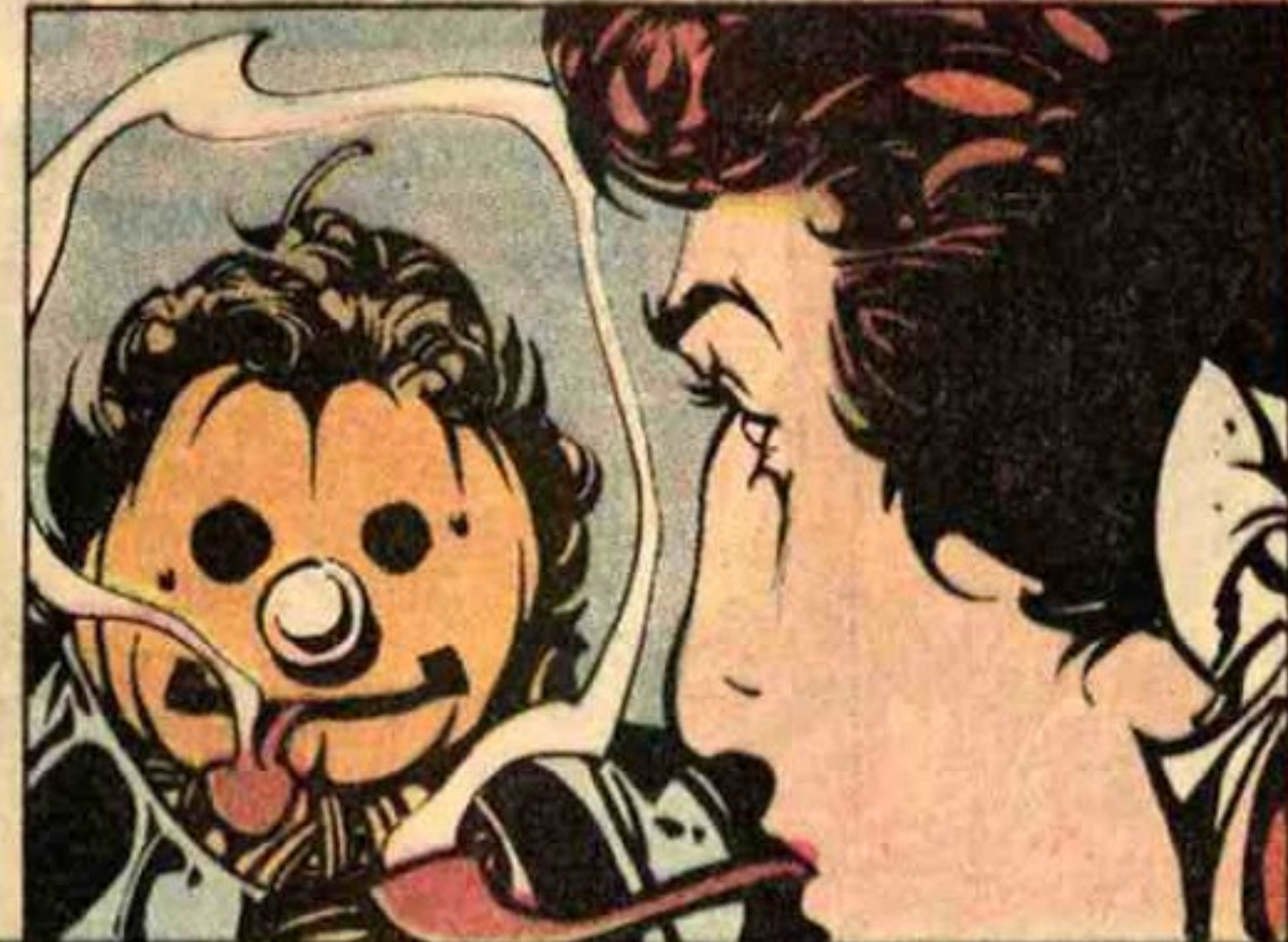
THE LONGER THE CONVERSATION CONTINUED, THE MORE CHARMED WAS PRETTY POLLY, UNTIL WITHIN THE FIRST QUARTER OF AN HOUR (AS JUSTICE GOOKIN NOTED BY HIS WATCH) SHE EVIDENTLY BEGAN TO BE IN LOVE--!



BY THE END OF THE HOUR, THE SILLY MAIDEN'S HEART WAS ABOUT TO BE GIVEN TO AN ILLUSION! YET IS IT SO UNUSUAL A MISFORTUNE?

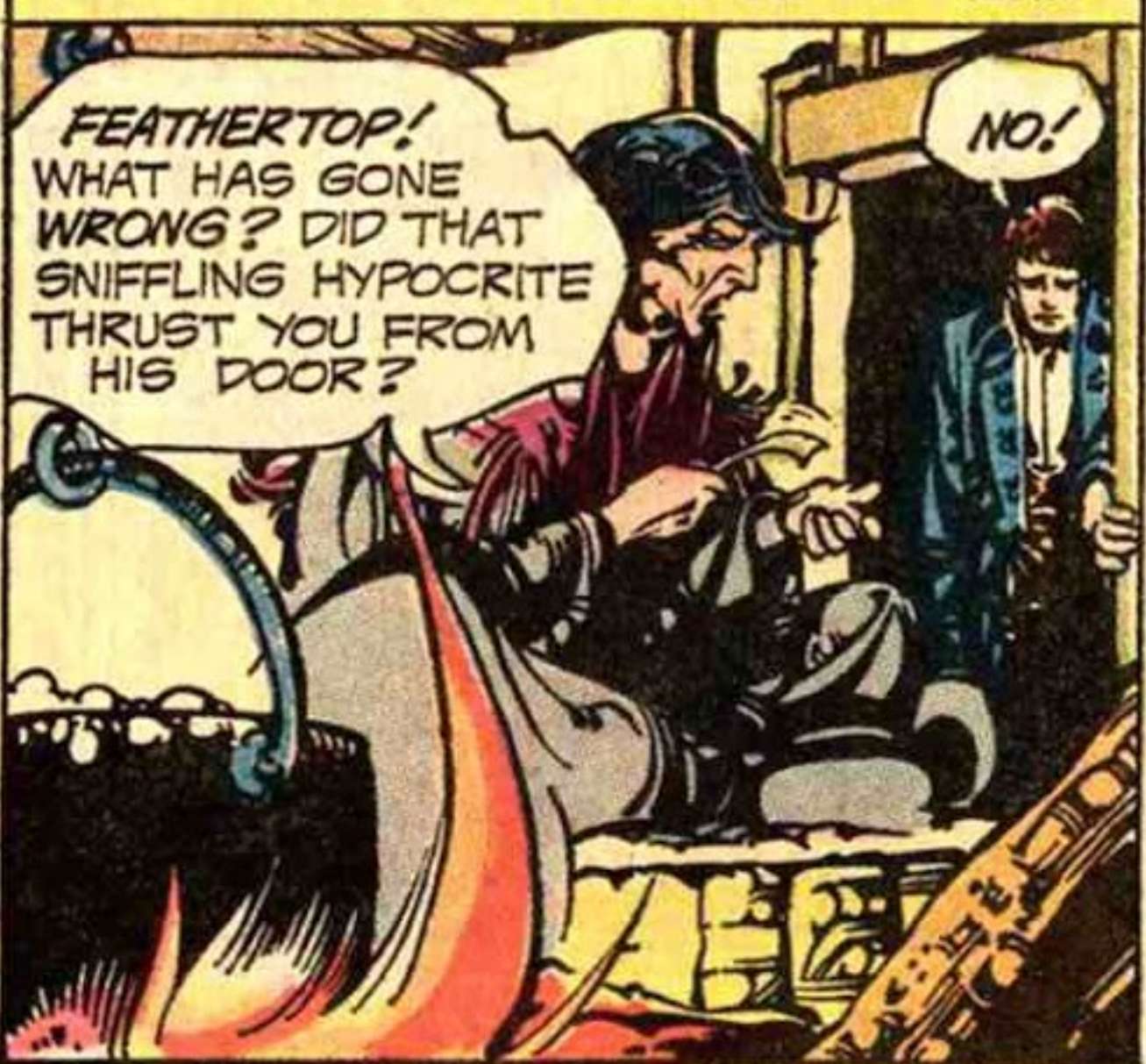


BUT AS THEY EXITED, THEY CHANCED TO PASS A FULL-LENGTH MIRROR WHICH OF COURSE WAS INCAPABLE OF FLATTERY...



AND FEATHERTOP TOO SAW THE SORDID PATCHWORK OF HIS REAL COMPOSITION, STRIPPED OF ALL WITCHCRAFT! FOR PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME IN ANY MORTAL EXISTENCE, AN ILLUSION HAD SEEN AND RECOGNIZED ITSELF!

MOTHER RIGBY WAS SEATED BY HER KITCHEN HEARTH IN THE TWILIGHT WHEN SHE HEARD THE CLATTER OF STICKS BEHIND HER...



FEATHERTOP!
WHAT HAS GONE
WRONG? DID THAT
SNIFFLING HYPOCRITE
THRUST YOU FROM
HIS DOOR?

NO!

THEN DID HIS DAUGHTER
SCORN YOU? I'LL COVER HER
FACE WITH PIMPLES! HER
NOSE SHALL BE AS RED AS
THE COAL IN THY PIPE!
HER FRONT TEETH SHALL
DROP OUT!



LET HER ALONE, MOTHER! IT
WAS NONE OF THAT! I'VE SEEN
MYSELF, MOTHER... SEEN MYSELF
FOR THE WRETCHED, RAGGED,
EMPTY THING I AM!



I'LL EXIST NO
LONGER! I WANT TO
GO BACK TO BEING A
SCARECROW! 'TIS
AN INNOCENT AND
USEFUL VOCATION
AND WOULD SUIT
ME WELL!



POOR FELLOW!
THERE ARE THOUSANDS
OF CHARLATANS IN THIS
WORLD MADE UP OF NO
MORE THAN HE WAS...
YET THEY LIVE IN FAIR
REPUTE AND NEVER SEE
THEMSELVES FOR
WHAT THEY ARE!

AYE, IT'S A SHAME MY POOR PUPPET
BE THE ONLY ONE TO KNOW HIMSELF
AND PERISH FOR IT! ALAS, I'LL
MAKE A SCARECROW OF HIM
AFTER ALL!



END.