Perhaps it's the weirdest coincidence--- or a lie! It was told by a shiftless character. But, isn't it strange -- How in countless tales of it's kind -- There is always the touch of truth -- and a



HE WAS CALLED "THE PROFESSOR" -- A
DIGNIFIED TITLE HE NEITHER CARED ABOUT
NOR DESERVED. HE WAS A BUM! HIS
COMPANIONS WERE BUMS. THEY CAUGHT
THE 9 O'CLOCK FREIGHT TRAIN BOUND FOR
THE WEST COAST.

UP WE GO,
LADS! I'LL
ASSIST YOU! PUFF - DON'T
FORGET ME,
PROF --

THERE WAS LITTLE LIGHT INSIDE THE BOXCAR.
AND THE PUNGENT AIR GAVE EVIDENCE THAT
THERE HAD BEEN A STOP MADE AT THE
CHICAGO STOCKYARDS. THE SEEDY TRAVELLERS
GAVE THESE FACTS SLIGHT ATTENTION AS THEY
SLUMPED IN VARIED ATTITUDES ON THE
VIBRATING FLOOR.



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GIVE US A SIGN, PADDY! IF YOU ARE WHAT YOU CLAIM YOU ARE.. SHOW US WHAT ONLY THE ELDER RACE CAN KNOW! YE'RE A LEARNED, AND A

YE'RE A
LEARNED AND A
SLY ONE BUT
BEIN' A WEE
BIT WISER, AS
I AM -- I KNOW
WHAT'S IN
YOUR BLACK
HEART--







MASSES

THE LITTLE EYES WRINKLED AT THE EDGES AND SUDDENLY WIDENED INTO LAUGHING POOLS OF FIRE .. IF THE DEVIL HAD A BROTHER IT WOULD BE THIS LITTLE MAN, WHO CALMLY REMOVED HIS GREEN, LITTLE HAT WHICH WAS NOW THE VESSEL FOR A MOUND OF SPARKLING GEMS!

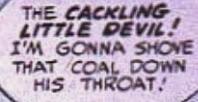












BEEFY! LET GO OF HIM! DON'T DO THAT, YOU FOOL!











BLAGS

PROF AND LANKY JUMPED IN TIME, BUT BEEFY WAS STILL IN THE FREIGHT CAR WHEN A MAMMOTH BOULDER SMASHED IT TO SPLINTERS. ALTHOUGH MANY CARS WERE DERAILED, ONLY THIS PARTICULAR CAR WAS STRUCK BY THE AVALANCHE.













ELEVERS WEIGHT

TERROR BEAT WILDLY AT THEM WITH GREAT BLACK WINGS. AND THE FOREST LAUGHED WITH THE VOICE OF THE DEVIL! BREATH CAME HARD -- BRUISED FEET BUCKLED IN PAIN -- BUT, PROF AND LANKY FLED IN ENDLESS FLIGHT FROM THE THING PURSUING THEM IN THE DARKNESS...



PROF NEVER SAW WHAT HAPRENED TO LANKY!
HE COULD ONLY REMEMBER HEARING THE
SCREAMS .. THE VIOLENT THRASHING IN THE SHRUBS.





IT SEEMED AS IF PROF HAD KEPT RUNNING ALL NIGHT... HIS MIND WAS A BURNING MAZE... HE FINALLY STUMBLED AND FELL - THE PAIN IN HIS HEAVING CHEST BECAME UNBEARABLE.





NOT EVEN THE CLAWING FEAR THAT DROVE HIM COULD HOLD BACK THE DESCENDING BLACK CURTAIN! WHEN THE PROF OPENED HIS EYES ONCE AGAIN - HE WAS SURPRISED TO FIND HE WAS NOT IN HADES ...











PROF MADE A WEAK ATTEMPT TO FORCE HIMSELF ERECT -- BUT, THERE WAS A STRANGE, FEELING OF NUMBNESS AND A THROBBING PAIN! PROF FELL BACK ON THE SWEATY SHEETS.



WHEN THE DOCTOR AND THE OLD WOMAN HAD SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND THEM, PROF SAVORED THE PEACEFUL SILENCE OF THE NEAT LITTLE ROOM ... DESPITE THE DULL PAIN INSIDE HIM, HE REMAINED RELAXED IN THE PILLOWS YIELDING SOFTNESS. AND WITH THE SUNLIGHT WARM ON HIS FACE, PROF DARED TO ALLOW HIMSELF TO REST -





ELAGES

MAGIS





THE GRINNING, LITTLE HORROR DREW
CLOSER -- AND ITS BEADY EYES WERE
ALIGHT WITH THINGS WHICH CHILLED THE
SPINE .. PROF SCREAMED WITH PANIC
AND LURCHED FROM THE BED!







