BLOOD & IRON



LES EDWARDS

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS





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BLOOD & IRON



Tiger, tiger

BLOOD & IRON



LES EDWARDS

GW BOOKS
1989

TO VALERIE



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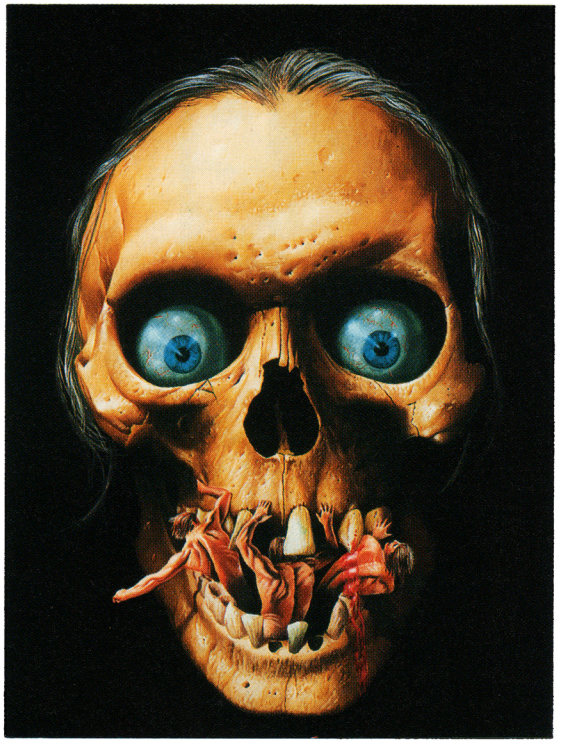


Caviar

Introduction



Imagine the situation: you're an illustrator, it's what you do for a living, you know you're good at it. There's a fresh white sheet of paper on your easel. You have enough red paint. A parcel arrives in the post. It's a manuscript, and you have to come up with a cover for the book. You have to find the one image that will present the package to the would-be reader. You open the parcel and glance at the title, the author's name and the blurb the publishers have decided on. This time, you've drawn...

SATAN'S SNOWDROP by Guy N. Smith: It's fragrance was the foul stench of evil...

THE CITY by Richard Haigh: The Horror-Pigs from THE FARM are back - Hungrier Than Ever For Human Prey...

THESE GREEN FOREIGN HILLS by Roland J. Green: Peace Force hits the jungle of Planet Greenhouse... to stop the Interspecies Bloodbath!

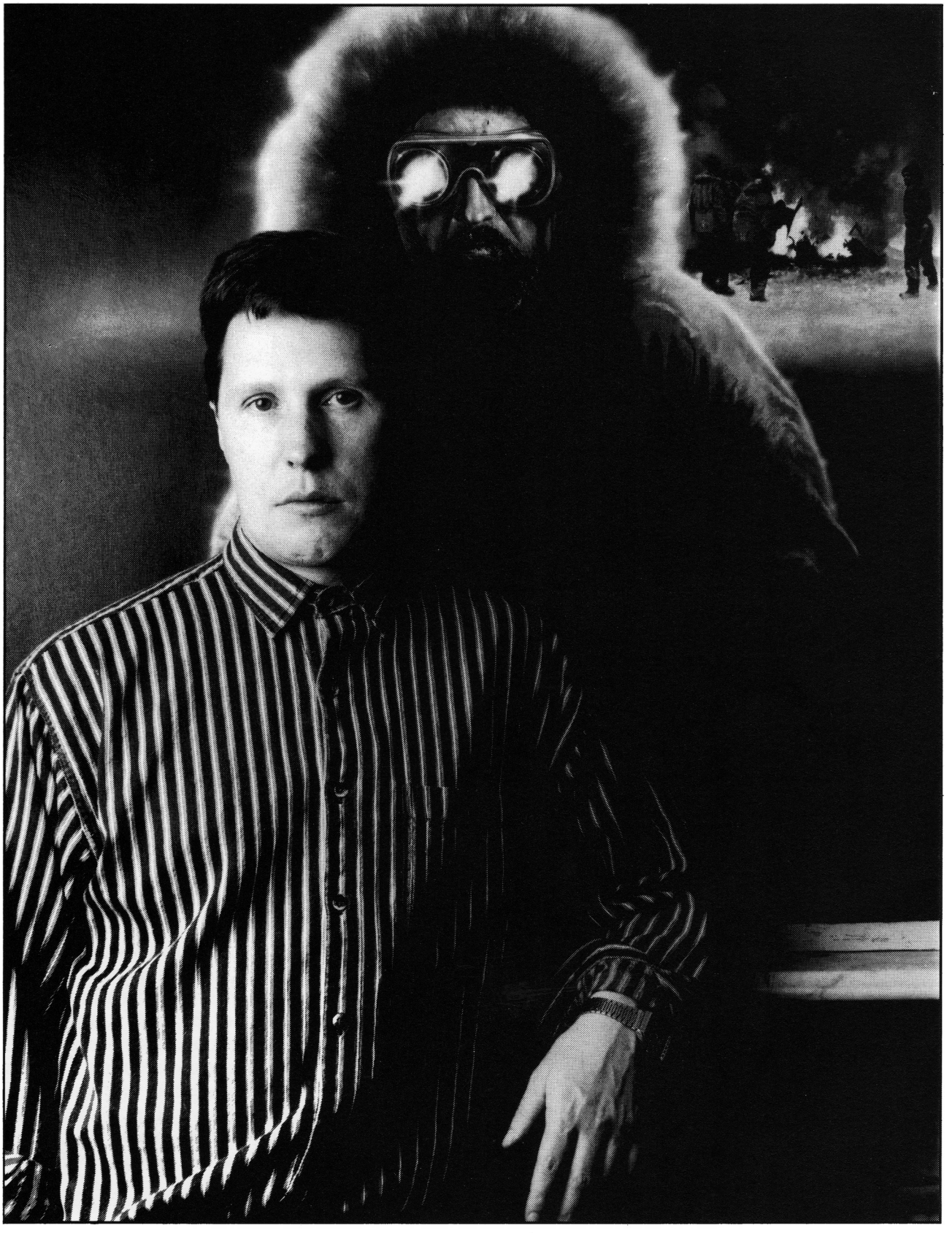
INHUMAN by John Russo: They had the bodies of men - and the zombie brains of murderous reptiles...

Les Edwards has faced these challenges, and more. He's illustrated several novels from the estimable and prolific Guy N. Smith, including the classically-titled *The Festering*; worse, he's had to come up with illustrations for the fevered prose and peculiar ideas of self-made guru T. Lobsang Rampa. Throughout it all, he's never looked down on his material. He'd prefer to do "horror that's suggestive rather than bloody. Blood and guts is a tool to be used. It's so easy to get into the habit of just getting out the red paint". And yet, whenever a jacket has called for a decomposing corpse or slobbering monstrosity, he has risen to the occasion. He's still sane. And, like the best of them, he's still overly modest. 'I do this stuff because I like it, but it disappears when it leaves my studio. I'm astonished that there are people out there who know my work, who like my work.'

Here is a man familiar with the many mansions of science fiction, fantasy and horror. Hard-boiled, semi-automated space-men (and women) facing perils on distant planets. Gaudy barbarians of the far future or the distant past. A succession of still-living skulls. The artistry of the work collected here speaks for itself. Maybe you've got some of it in your library already, on the covers of paperbacks. Here, at last, you get the imaginative splendour of Les Edwards' illustrations, without the drawback of lurid blurbs or unreadable prose.

Enjoy your nightmares. Les Edwards will. And so will I.

Kim Newman.



Les Edwards



Les Edwards

I was born in 1949 - in September, which for Astrologers makes me a Virgo. Virgos are neat, organised and tidy - so much for Astrology. For the first year of my life I lived in Walthamstow, East London. I was a noisy baby, I cried a lot - so much for Walthamstow.

From there to East Ham, also in East London, where I lived until I went to Art School in 1968. The local schools did their best with me. All I can remember of Junior School is being ill quite a lot, and the school plays, though what I was doing in school plays I cannot imagine, since nowadays nothing would entice me into any kind of public performance. I did put aside my dramatic career for long enough to pass the Eleven Plus exam which provided my passport to nearby East Ham Grammar School for Boys. At this quite ludicrous place short trousers and caps were compulsory in the first year, despite the fact that some twelve year olds were nearly six feet tall.

Apart from art, my main interests were English Lit. and Physics. Unfortunately the school's system did not permit the study of these three subjects to "A" Level. One had to choose either "Arts" or "Sciences", carefully preventing the acquisition of a truly balanced education. Although I was forced to drop Physics I have maintained an interest in the subject, and one of my more futile pastimes is trying to get my brain around Quantum Theory. As this is only really explicable in terms of advanced mathematics, of which I have absolutely no knowledge, this provides hours of harmless amusement. I'm quite convinced that they just make it up as they go along.

I had a fairly bright academic career, plenty of exams passed etc, but once in the Sixth Form, I spent most of my time either in the Art Room, or pondering what I'd do when I got there. The two Art teachers - Dave Waterhouse and Wayne Stephenson were encouraging, supportive and constructively critical, all the things that teachers are supposed to be and so often aren't. It was under their influence that I applied to Hornsey College of Art.

1968 was the year of the famous Student Riots in Paris and the less famous "sit-in" at Hornsey. When I arrived there in November - the term was late starting because of the "trouble" - the College was in a state of confusion, and, fairly quickly, so was I. However, if it was confusing, it was also exciting and new to me. Too much has been written about the late Sixties already for me to be able to add anything new, except perhaps to mention that the epithet "Ageing Hippy" is often hurled in my direction. One of my friends often refers to me as that "Commie-pinko-poofter-artist" so you can see the sort of people I hang around with.

After the one year Foundation course, I went on to the Graphic Design course which also offered illustration. The supposed "quality" of this course is one of my favourite hobby-horses, but I won't indulge it here. Suffice it to say that at the end of the three years I had very little more idea about illustration than I had at the start; my work and my confidence both suffered.

In 1973, at the end of the course Diploma Show, a character called John Spencer turned up, at the time he was running a small illustrators' agency, Young Artists, from his home. He sought me out in a nearby pub with an offer to represent me and two of the other students. I cannot imagine what he saw in my work, which was of nothing like a professional standard, but it was agreed that if I could provide some samples of sufficient quality he would try to get me work. It took me a long time to bring my work up to an acceptable level, but John was always both encouraging and critical, and in time work began to come my way. John left YA some time ago, and is now being a Rock 'n' Roll star among other things. When John left, YA was taken over by Alison Eldred, who quickly became the world's best agent. Her endless enthusiasm and energy are astonishing.

In 1978 I moved from Hornsey back to the East End of London. I now live in Ilford with Valerie, a Director and Partner in Young Artists, without whom all this would be pointless, and two Siberian Huskies - Myska and Zera, without whom life would be considerably less hectic, but also less fun.

Les Edwards

Nurgle

Nurgle is the Great Lord of Decay. He is also the Lord of All, because *all* things, no matter how solid and permanent they seem, are liable to physical corruption. Indeed, the very processes of construction and creation foreshadow destruction and decay.



Before the first paint tube is squeezed, the first brush dipped or the first shirt-cuff ruined, there is the rough. This is to give the Art Director or client an impression of what the final artwork will look like, and to ensure that the composition meets his requirements. In this case, the Art Director was Uncle John Blanche, who had a pretty clear idea of what he wanted and where the type would eventually go.

The first job is to collect as much reference material as possible. Actual photos of Nurgle are not easy to come by so I was supplied with a copy of Tony Ackland's definitive rendering of the Chaos Power. There were also some Citadel Miniatures to hand to give me details of costume and armour, and I had several photos of landscapes, which, although I did not refer to them directly, were there to keep my mind on the right track. After a series of brief and indecipherable thumbnail sketches, I was ready to start the rough proper.

I would normally spend some time on drawing the figures beforehand, to work out the pose, taking photographs if necessary. However, as most of the characters are encased in armour in this picture, I could dispense with this stage, but made sure that I had plenty of photographic references of armour.

As a Chaos Power, Nurgle can appear in any form so I thought it a good idea to give him a few more horns. He was to dominate the picture, but


LES EDWARDS.

be distant at the same time. So I decided he would be sitting on a pile of bodies (but as it will be seen, this idea got rather lost).

Having drawn the rough to the proportions required and allowed space for the type, I then had to await the client's approval and suggestions. These suggestions concerned Nurgle's symbol on the banners, and some changes to the foreground figures to ensure that they fit neatly into the Games Workshop Universe. With these changes in mind, and a photocopy of the rough in view, it was time to start the painting proper.



SLIDE ONE: Surrounded by a pile of reference material, sketches and pencil shavings, I now proceeded to draw. I usually use a smooth-faced illustration board, but any reasonably stiff board would do. In fact, my favourite surface to work on is hardboard, but this is heavy and requires more preparation, so it is not really practical. I also use a harder pencil than I would for drawing on paper, using a "B" when working on board. I always draw freehand because I am keen to keep the drawing as fresh as possible, the use of tracing paper tends to produce a rather mechanical and characterless effect. Also, I'm constantly making slight changes as I go along. It may be quicker to use something like a Grant Projector, but I feel the drawing would be rather lifeless as a result. A consequence of all this is that the artwork is seldom exactly the same as the rough, I just hope that no-one notices.

When the drawing was complete I masked the edges with tape, leaving an area for "bleed" all around. The next stage was to prime the board with two thin coats of acrylic "Gesso" primer, this is rather like a white emulsion paint, which brushes out fairly thinly. Its purpose is to prevent the oil paint from sinking into the board and leaving the pigment looking dull and flat. It dries quite quickly, and when dry is semi-transparent so that the drawing is still clearly visible.



SLIDE TWO: I pinched this next procedure from Boris! I'm not proud. In fact it's a technique often used by the Old Masters. Using washes of burnt umber acrylic, I painted everything in tones of brown. Although I used burnt umber, any dark and fairly neutral colour would do. The point of this is firstly to see how the painting might work in terms of light and shade, where shadows fall etc, and secondly to give some three-dimensional form to the main items. I don't always include this stage, but with a reasonably complex scene like this it is a help. It means that I can make one set of decisions at a time; I'm not thinking about colour yet. Some Old Masters would paint the entire picture in tones of grey, like a black-and-white photograph, and then lay thin glazes of colour over the top, allowing the underpainting to show through the transparent colours. In this way they solved the two problems separately. However in this case I did not take the brown underpainting to any degree of finish, I simply wanted an indication of where the major areas of darkness would be needed. Where possible it is best to leave an area of white board and put the colour straight onto this, the white gives the final colour an added luminosity. The brown underpainting can sometimes have a deadening effect on the successive layers of paint, which is why I sometimes leave this stage out entirely. However, in so doing, I lose the advantage, should I lose my way later in the painting, of being able to wipe off the oil paint leaving the acrylic underpainting intact.

When I had decided that the underpainting was sufficiently complete for my purposes , I painted a thin wash of pale green acrylic over everything



to give a kind of unity to the picture. It was at this point that my main problem, which I had suspected beforehand, made itself evident: the figure of Nurgle had to look distant - in order to appear huge - but at the same time had to be the main point of interest. When objects recede into the distance, they tend to undergo other changes, far away objects taking on a blue tinge due to the effect of the intervening atmosphere (think of distant mountains for example). More importantly, less detail is visible and the range of tones becomes smaller, there are no strong black shadows. Using a combination of these effects helps to give a depth and distance to a painting. This time, however, because Nurgle was the focal point, I felt that there should be plenty of detail and interest in this figure. This, I knew, would make him tend to leap forward in the painting and I could end up with a flat-looking picture. I had used the mass of receding figures at the bottom and left of the painting to suggest a sense of depth from the start, but I was concerned that this effect might be overwhelmed if Nurgle was too detailed. With this in mind I went onto the next step.

SLIDE THREE: Now came the messy part. I had used acrylics for the underpainting because they are quick-drying, and although I know illustrators who swear by acrylics, I much prefer oils and use them from this point onwards.

There are various makes and grades of oils, and although different manufacturers have diverging ideas about the names of colours, the other differences between paints are not usually that noticeable. Some colours are hideously expensive of course. I try to steer clear of them unless the use of a costly pigment is unavoidable. There is a good deal of Cadmium Green in this painting because I found that other greens were inclined to lose too much intensity when mixed with other colours. I mix the colours in the old-fashioned way, with palette knife, using a medium called Liquin, which cuts down the drying time of the oils.

I now use nylon brushes almost exclusively, they used to be appalling but have improved greatly in recent years. They do still have an unfortunate tendency to go curly at the ends, but they last reasonably well (even with the way I treat them), and they are much, much cheaper than sable. I have

found that bristle brushes, more traditionally used with oils, are not really suitable for painting on a relatively smooth surface.

Working fairly quickly, and using as big a brush as practical, I began to "block in" the colours. I would normally start with the sky, which as the largest area would probably do most to give the overall feel of the picture. In this case, however, I had a strong idea about the colour of the water in the lower part of the painting. I wanted a sickly yellow-green, but because I also needed a strong colour in this area, the final result tended to be more yellow than I had originally intended.

Then, with a large, flat brush, I thinly painted in the sky. This is where most of the Cadmium Green was used. I extended the sky colour right across the figure of Nurgle which had the effect of making him recede into the distance. Although I knew he would end up much darker, I felt that I now had a reasonable starting point. Leaving the foreground figures until last, I treated the whole painting in a similar way, paying little attention to details and dealing only with broad areas of colour.

The foreground figures were treated a little more carefully, but still in a fairly loose fashion, with the colours, particularly red-browns, chosen partly to help bring the figures forward in the picture.

I would normally have to complete this stage in a day, but naturally the more complex the picture, the longer it takes. Overnight the sky dried sufficiently for me to paint in Nurgle himself, taking care that the red parts were not too bright.



SLIDE FOUR: With all the colour blocked in with varying degrees of care, it was time to begin the process of finishing each area. I decided to leave Nurgle until last once again. I made the sky somewhat darker and then began to complete the foreground warriors. I tackled them more or less one at a time, although I would occasionally jump to something else for a change. This is pretty slow work, but there is no way round it. At this stage, I was at pains to refer to my photographs of armour and the miniature figures. I should mention that, in order to make the detail easier to see, I had given the models a very thin wash of dark oil paints.

I was trying to use strong colours, but at the same time to keep a feeling of rot and decay. Much of the rust on the central Chaos Warrior and the armour of the Space Marine is bright orange straight from the tube, applied in patches over the previous coat of reddy-brown. The left hand side of the painting I kept fairly shadowy and vague so that it would not draw the eye away from Nurgle. In repainting the water, I made sure to keep it a strong yellow, as I was beginning to feel that the lower part of the painting was becoming rather grey. There is not a great deal of colour in the figures, but I felt that bright blues or greens would be unsuitable for Nurgle's horde. Apart from a few minor details, I finished the rest of the picture before at last turning to Nurgle himself.

At this point I was reasonably happy with Nurgle's apparent distance and size. I felt that I would be able to keep these aspects unchanged if I kept his lower half a little vague and misty and put plenty of texture and detail in the top part. My natural urge was to make him very indistinct, but as he was to be the focus of the illustration, this was not appropriate. This half-and-half approach seemed a reasonable compromise, but it meant, of course, that what was intended as a pile of bodies at Nurgle's feet, became a vague mass.

In the end the compromise did not work as well as I had hoped, Nurgle certainly looks huge, but not as vast as I had imagined. He had to be rendered in sufficient detail to show the extent of his disgustingness, but at the same time this served to diminish the illusion of scale. If I were to do the job again I might do this a little differently, which is usually my feeling at the end of a painting: it could have been better.

After the addition of a few details, such as some tiny demons and rotting flesh, the completed illustration was sent off to Games Workshop. They asked for some minor alterations, so as to highlight the area surrounding Nurgle's head, and the addition of a few more banners. With these changes made and the artwork returned to them, the job was complete.



The Punishment



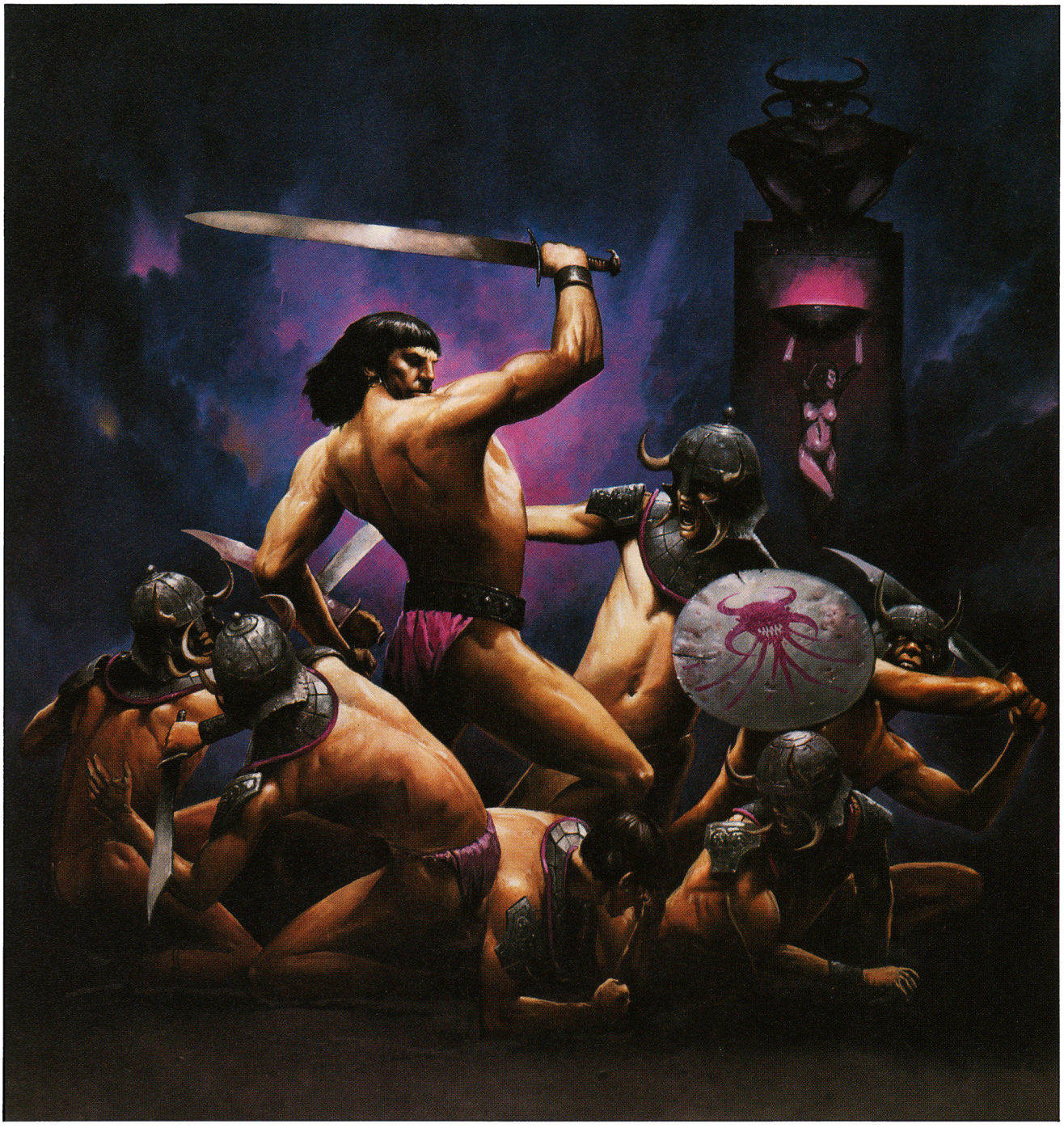
Berserker



Daggers of Darkness



Conan Road of Kings



Conan the Triumphant

When I was asked to do a cover for a Conan story for the first time I was extremely pleased. I had wanted to try my hand in this area for some time. My pleasure was soon diluted, however by the knowledge that I would be following in some giant footsteps. Unfortunately for me, the image of Conan had been epitomised in a single painting by none other than the great Frank Frazetta. It seemed to me that his version was, and indeed remains, the definitive one. I was acutely aware of this when I started work on my first attempt at the character. I was very anxious that my version should not appear to be too influenced by that of Frazetta.

In retrospect, of course, this seems extremely foolish. I should simply have got on with the job and not worried about any comparisons. I feel now that having this idea in the back of my mind led me to strive too hard to do something different, with the result that my first couple of efforts were rather poor in my view.



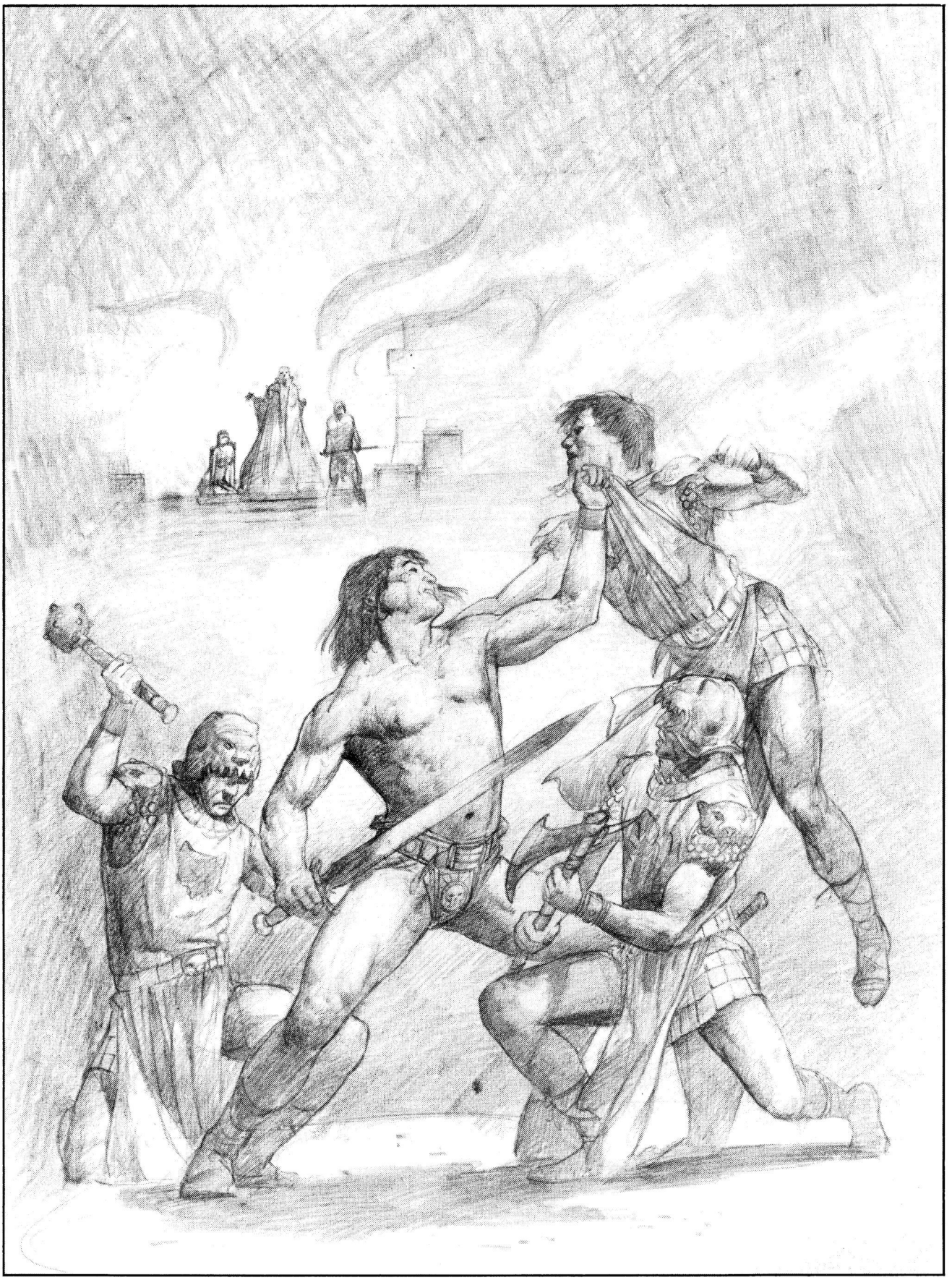
Conan the Invincible

They have been much reprinted, though. Indeed one was eventually used on an American publication of a Conan story. Compilers of anthologies of Fantasy Art seem to make a bee-line for them, much to my embarassment. Eventually the shadow of Frazetta receded and I settled to solving the problems of the particular bookjacket rather than being too concerned about influences and similarities. I would be very surprised to hear anyone who dealt with this sort of imagery say that they were not influenced by Frazetta's work. That would be rather like a modern rock guitarist saying that they were not influenced by Beck, Clapton or Hendrix, when their effect has become so pervasive that it's almost part of the furniture.

In the same way Frank Frazetta seems to be at the root of much modern fantasy painting and, whatever you think of him, you can't ignore him. I settled into a groove of doing one Conan book every six months. This lasted for several years until the publishers decided that it was time for a change.

I retain mixed feelings about my Barbarian paintings. I am not a fan, I have to say, of the stories themselves. Conan, and his imitators, seem rather uninteresting. Anyone who solves his problems







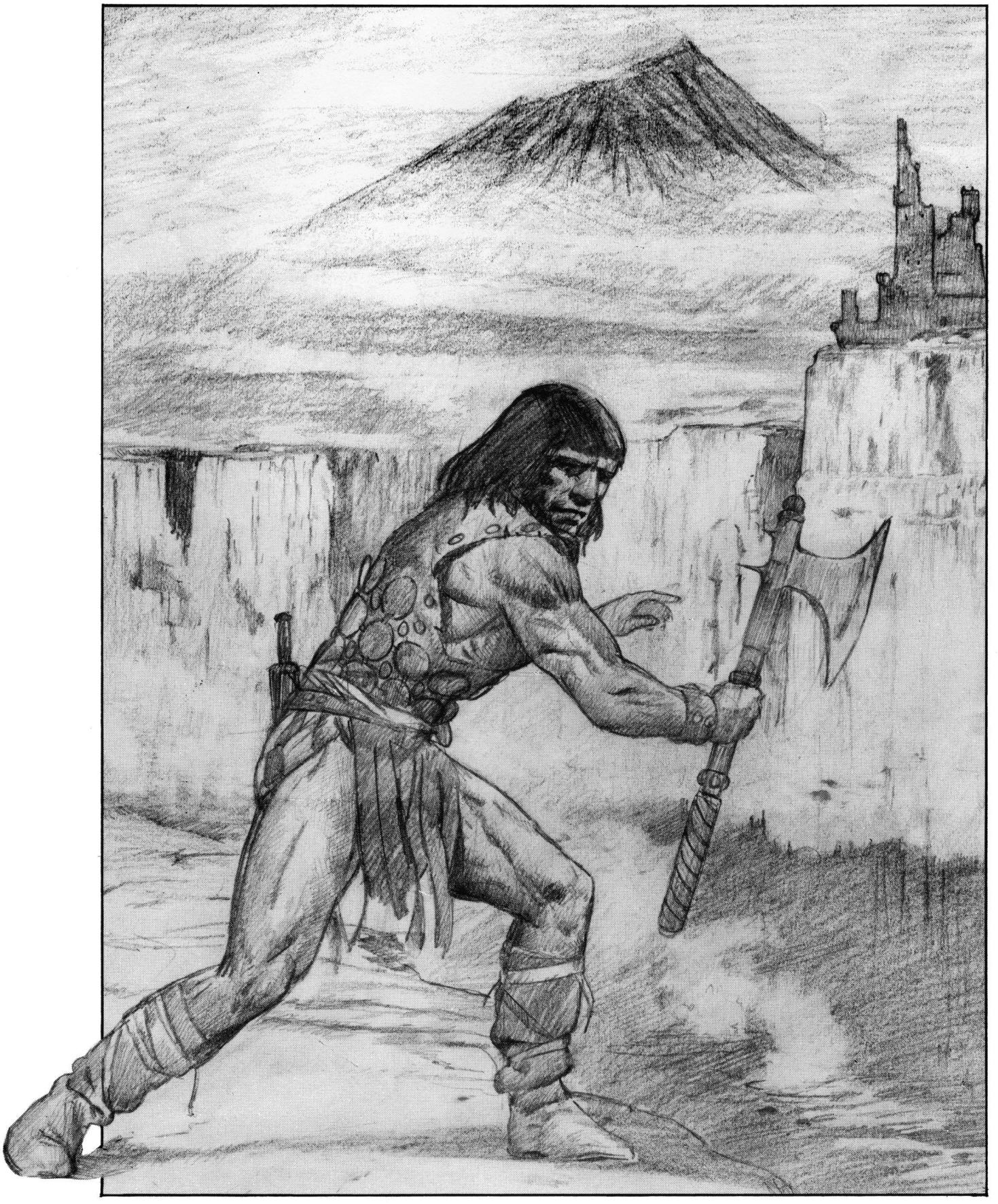
Conan the Rebel

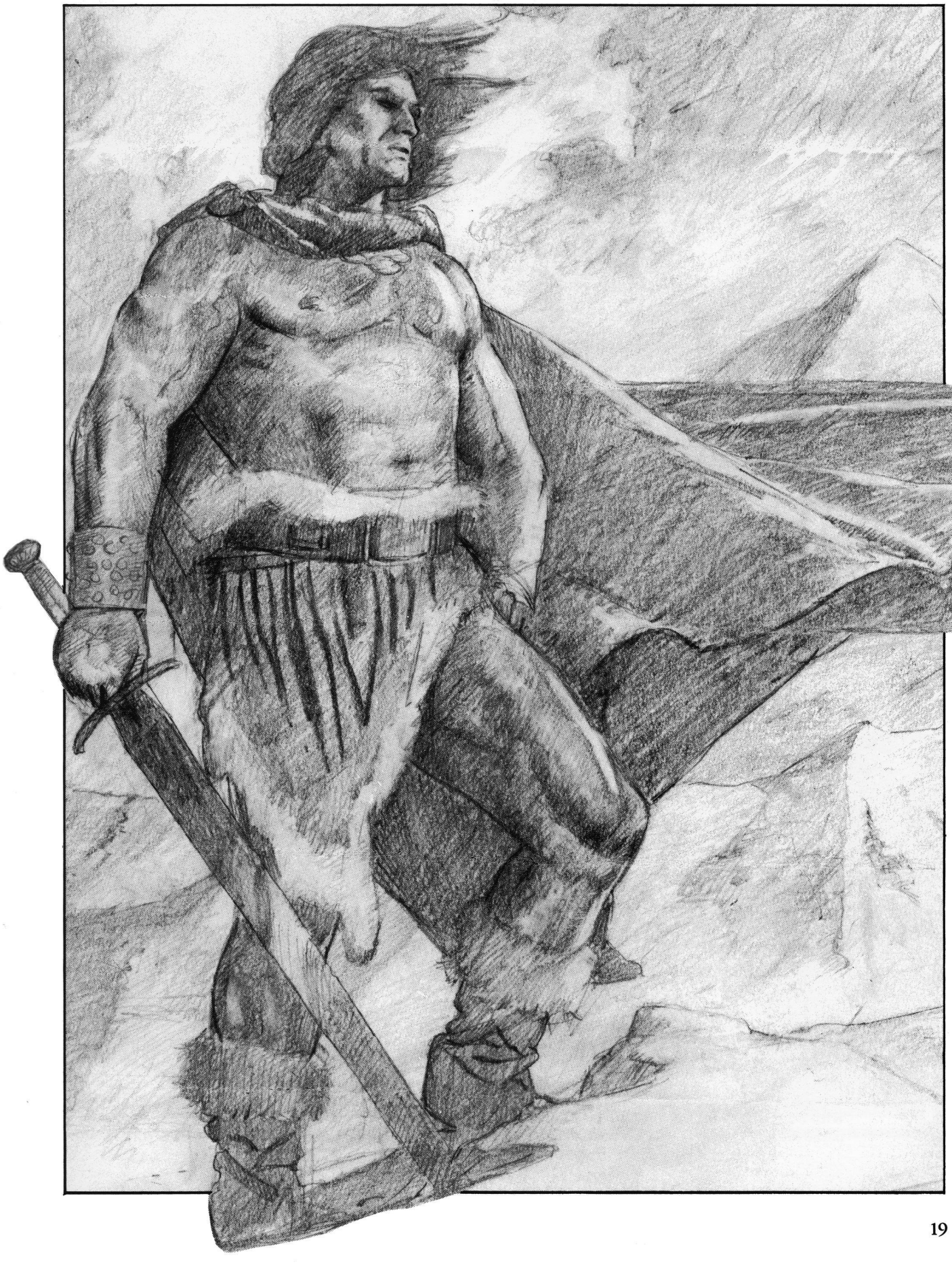
by cleaving someone's skull can get a bit tedious after a few chapters. Visually, however, I still enjoy the imagery and felt that something interesting could be created out of this collection of clichés.

I sometimes tinker with paintings when they are returned to me and *Conan the Invincible*, included here, has been extensively repainted in a rather looser style which I feel has improved it.

One of the difficulties of painting muscular warriors is that it's so hard to get someone who is built like a sack of half-inflated footballs to look as if he's actually moving. Publishers often ask for "more muscles;" it seems an increasing tendency in this kind of illustration to pile on slabs of muscle, distended veins and the rest with the result that the character ends up looking like a bodybuilder, but not much like a warrior.

Although I have often used bodybuilding photos for reference, I have always felt the need to "tone down" their great muscular excesses. *Conan the Triumphant* is one of the few times that I have managed to inject some movement into one of these pictures, and I think this is due, at least in part, to the fact that Conan is not what someone recently described to me as a "Steroid Barbarian".







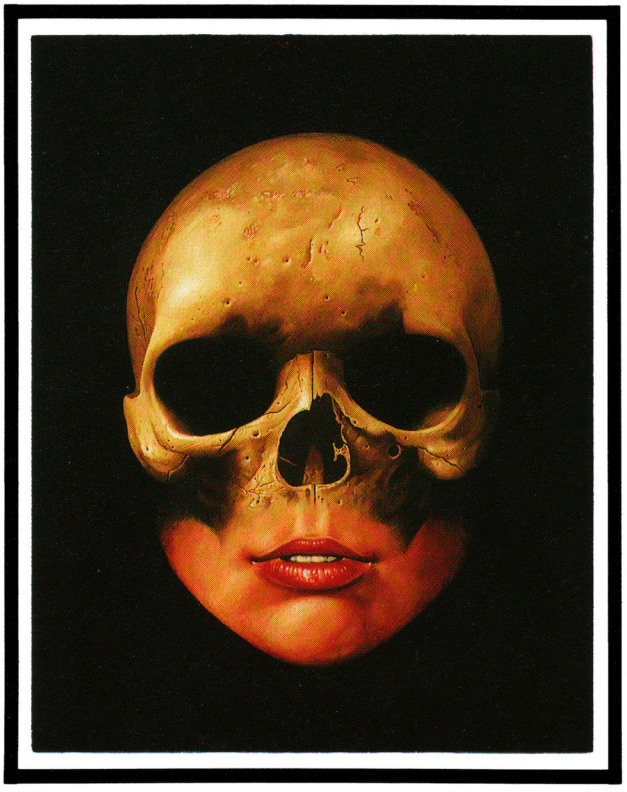
Conan the Raider

The drawing on page 19 is the final rough I did for the British publishers of Conan. I hoped to introduce a more atmospheric and romantic feel with this piece, but the idea was rejected with the remark that "more action" was required. The publishers decided to find another artist.

I was not terribly disappointed to give up Conan after all this time. Although I thoroughly enjoyed doing them I still feel that the paintings failed more than they succeeded. Indeed, there was one complete disaster when the publishers and I were clearly thinking along different lines. So, it was with only a little regret that Conan and I parted company, at least for a while. I'm still asked to paint the occasional barbarian however, *Heroquest* not least, so I'm keeping my hand in.



1st Mayflower Book of Black Magic



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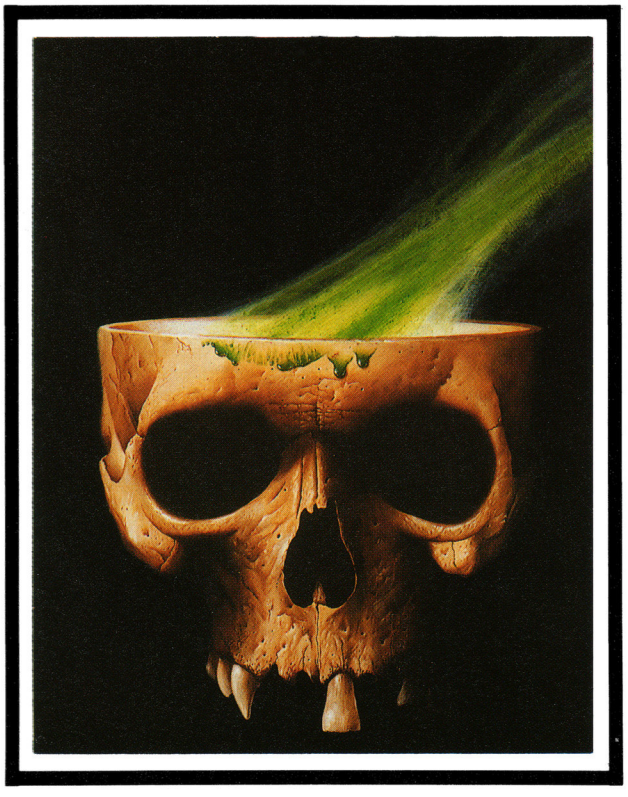

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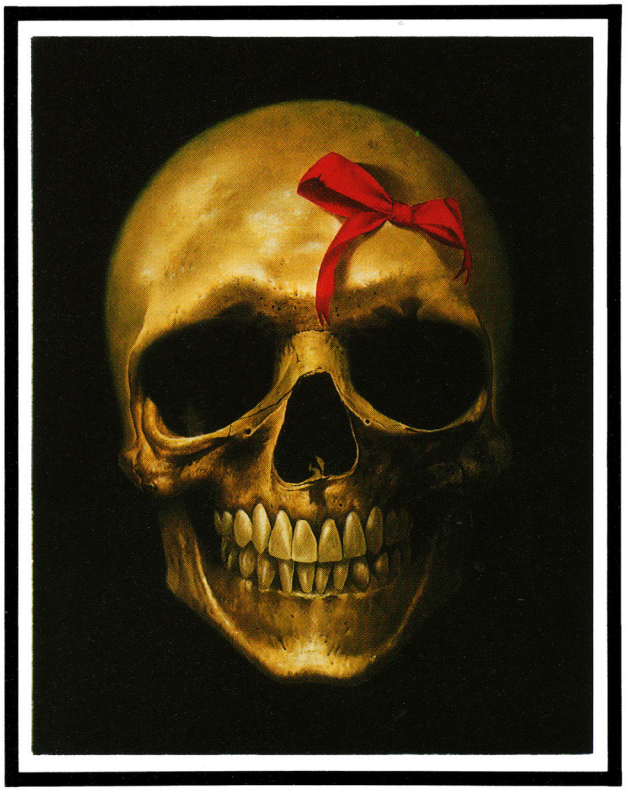

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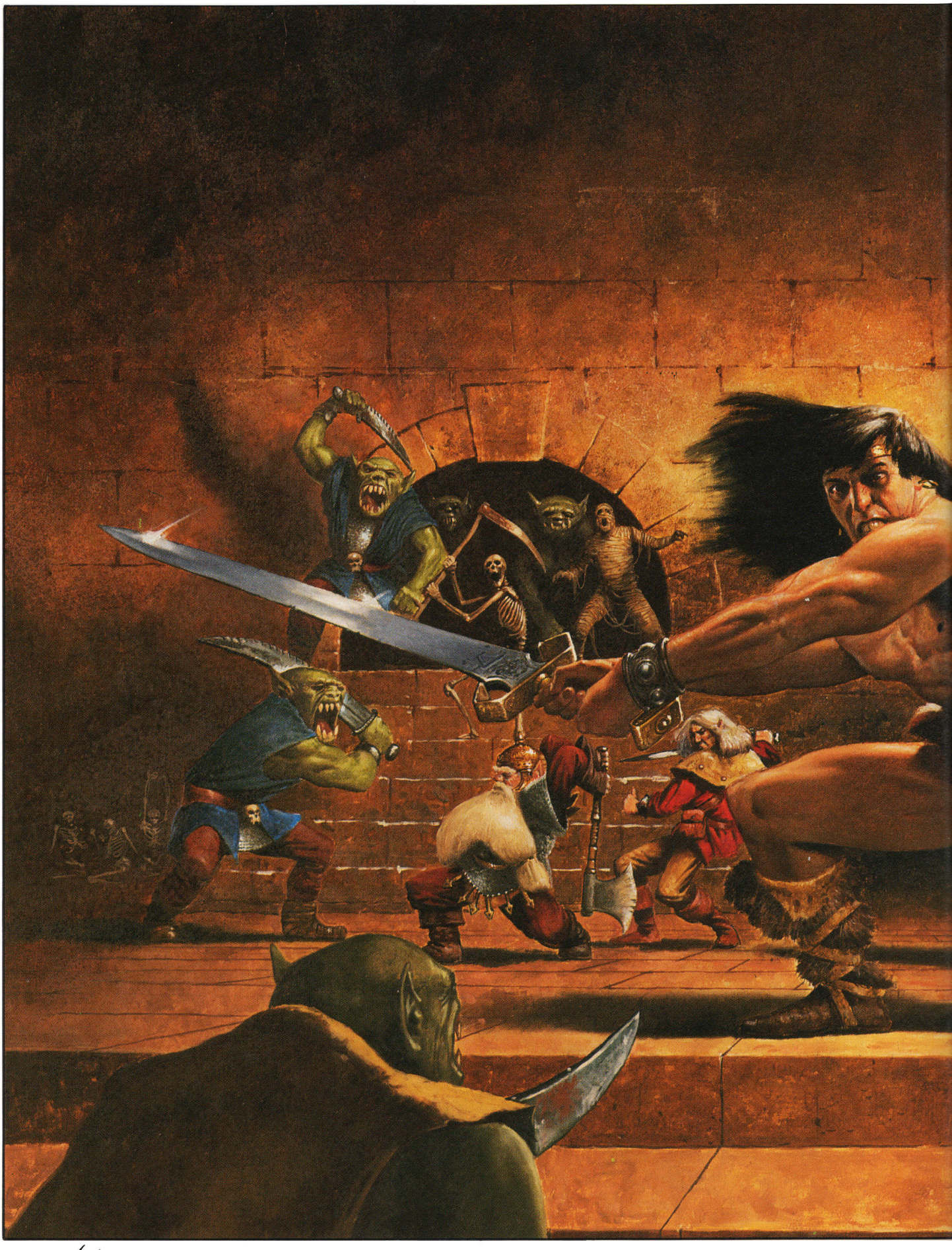
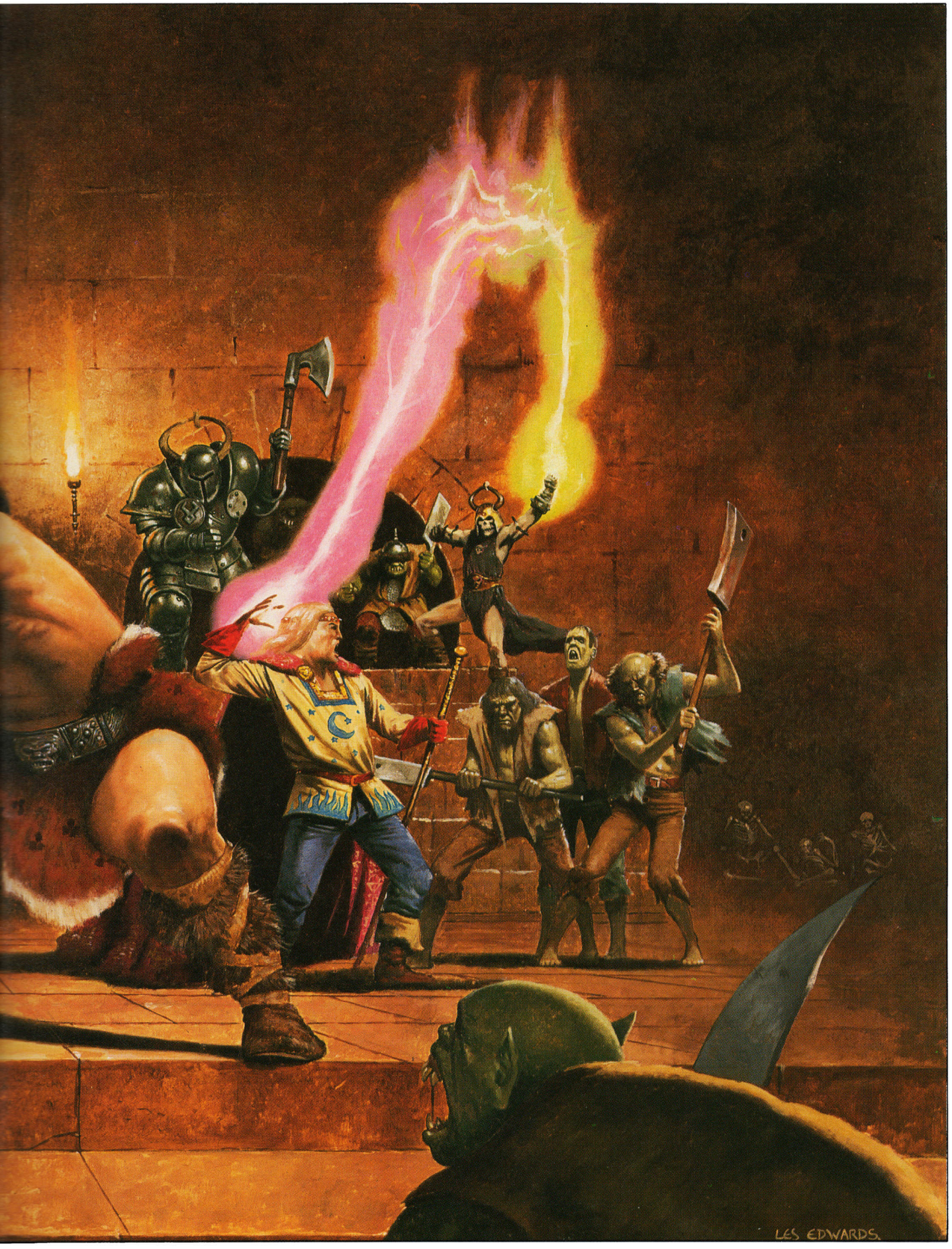



LES EDWARDS



Return of the Witch Lord

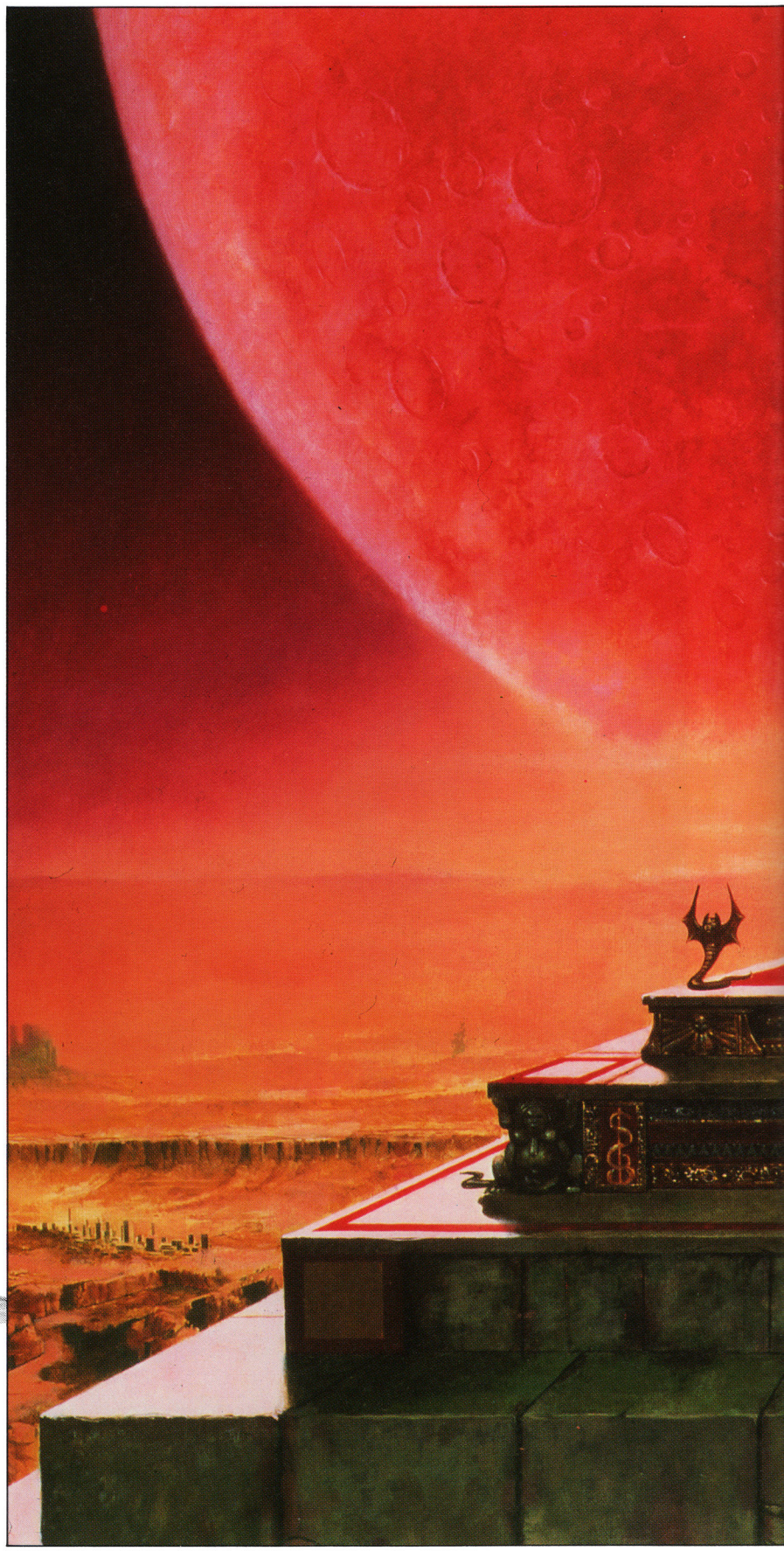


Kellar's Keep

LO! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in the theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Edgar Allan Poe







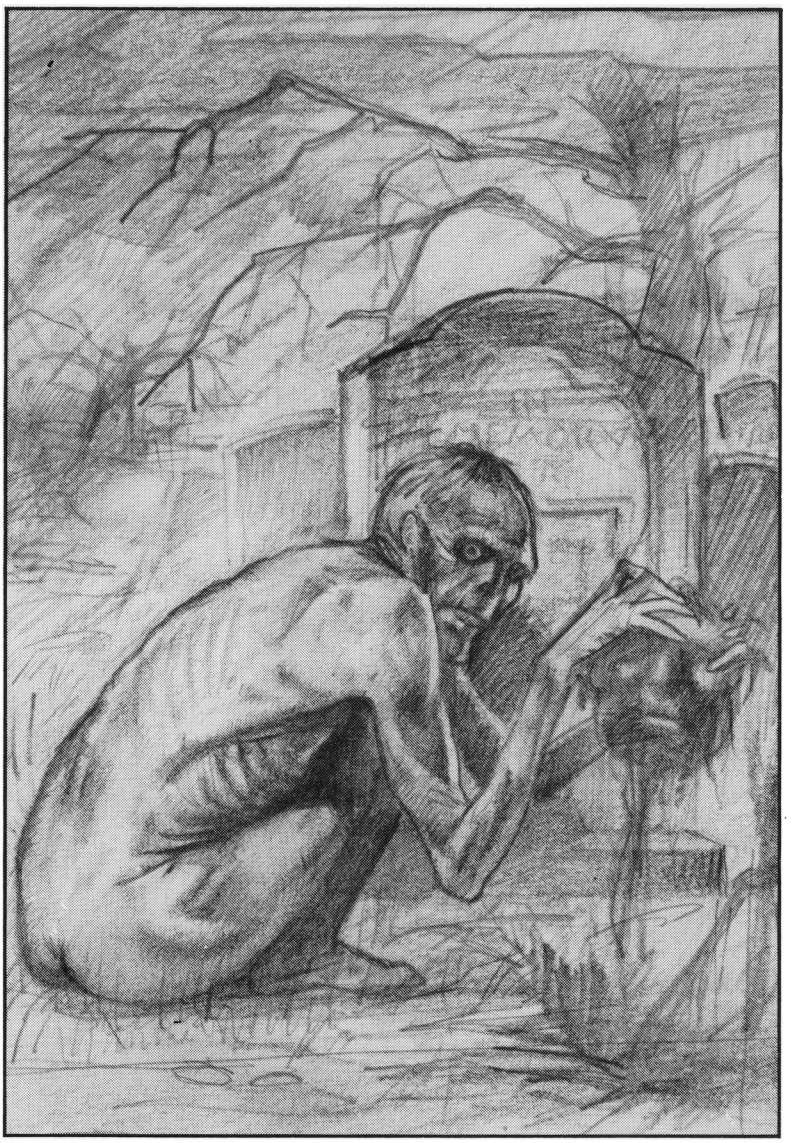
Snark





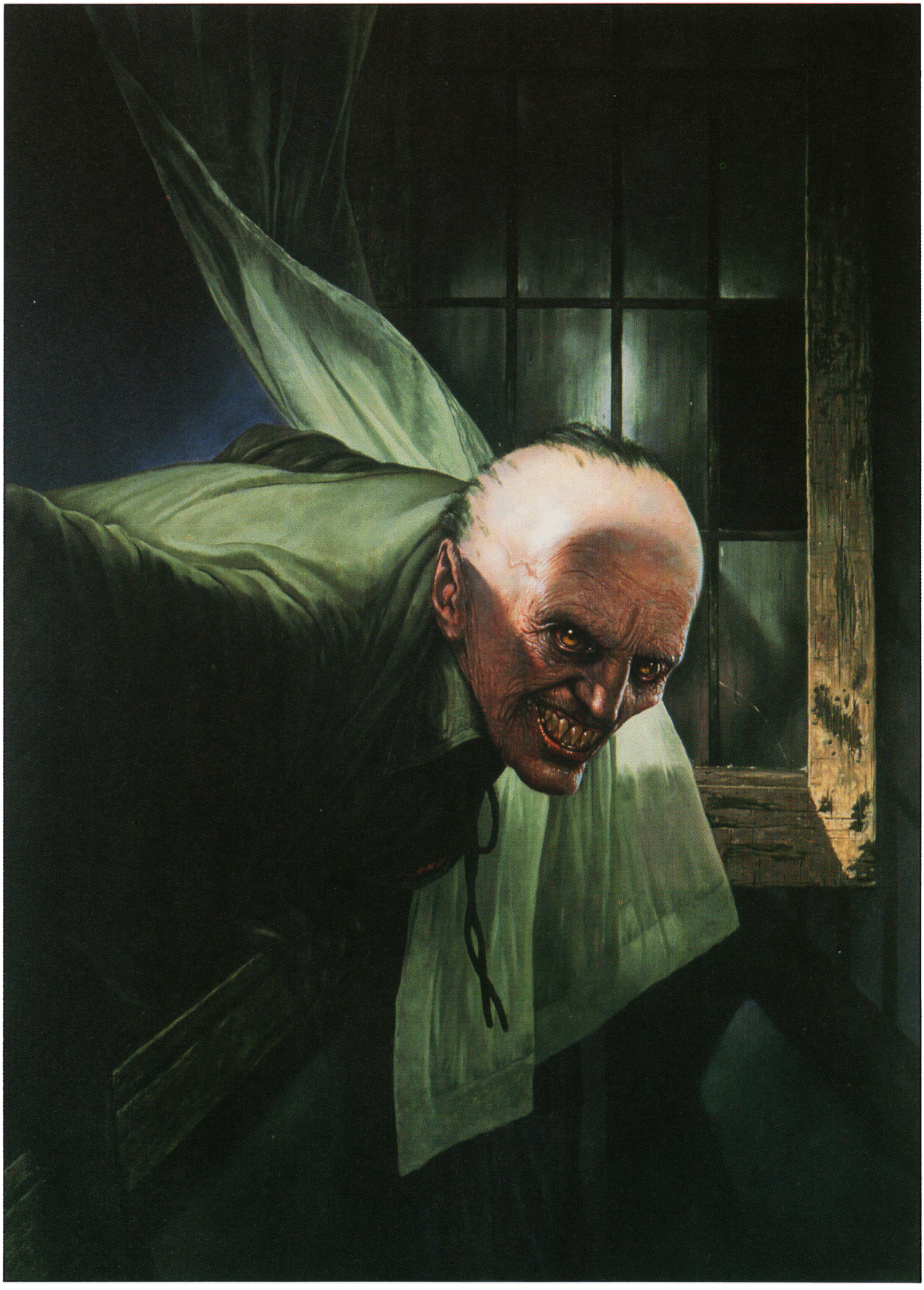
City Jitters

Darkness Binding

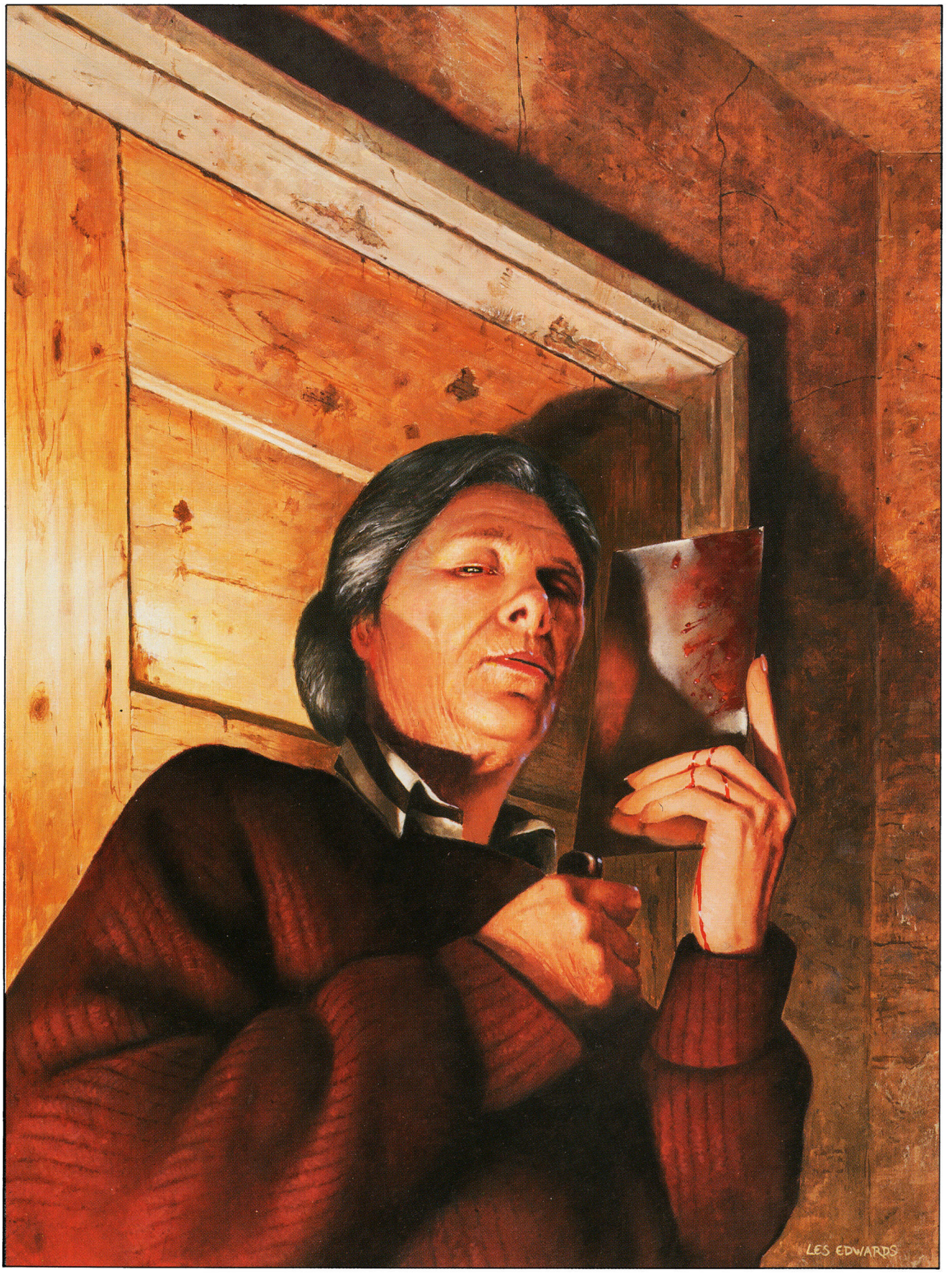


And the angels, all pallid and wan,
  Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy "Man",
  And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

Edgar Allan Poe



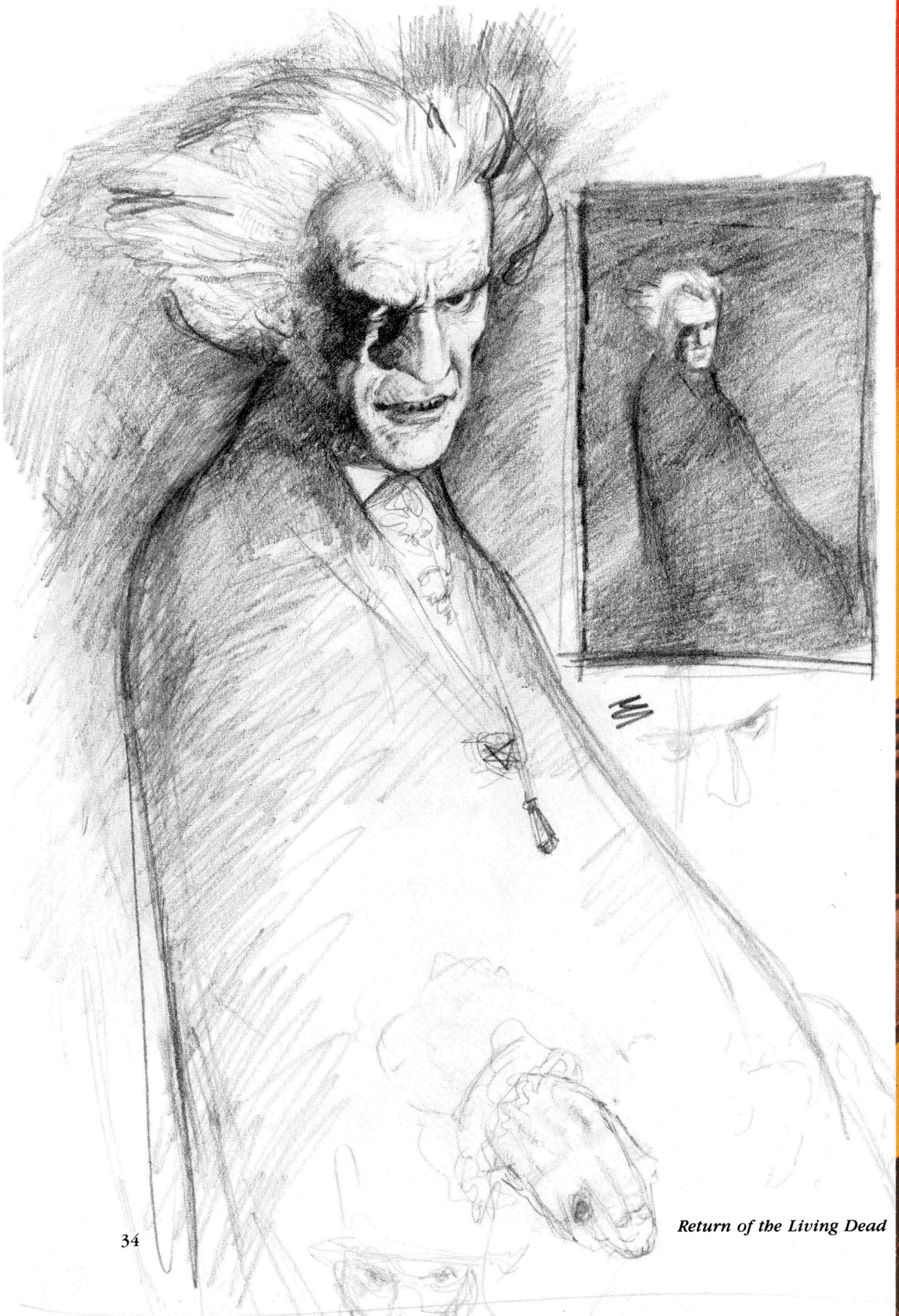
Croglin Vampire



Mania



The Amulet





A bit more



Cannibals

Red Meat

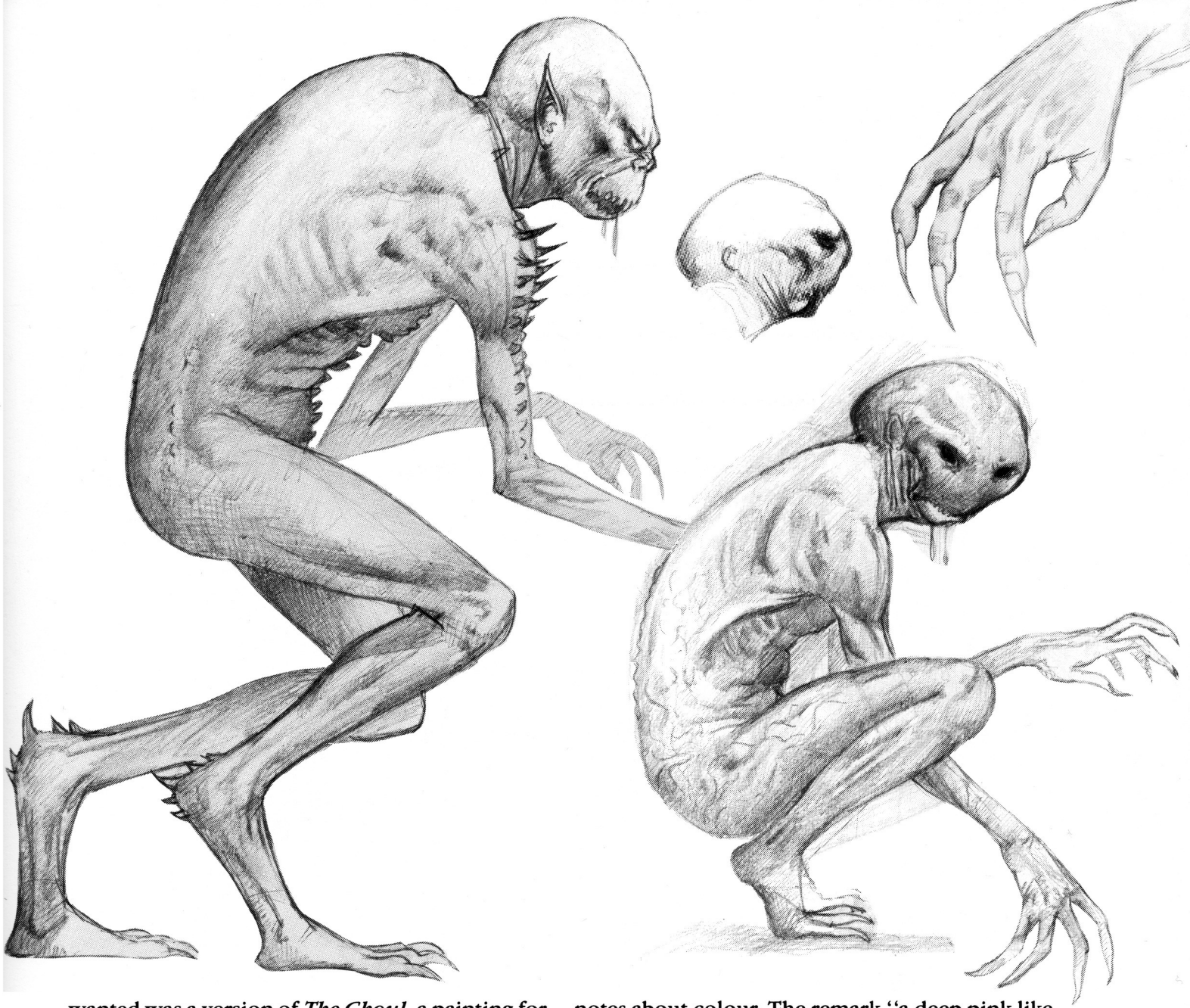
INCUBUS One of my rare excursions into the movie world was to work on a film called *Incubus*, based on a jolly tale by Ray Russell. The producers already had a design for the Incubus, itself, but as this bore an unfortunate resemblance to the Incredible Hulk wearing a sheep's head, they decided it was not quite right for their film. I spent little less than a week trying to design an alternative.

I naturally hoped that I could come up with something really spectacular, but I was told at the very beginning that nothing "too bizarre" was required, which cramped my style somewhat. Various people proffered suggestions (very creative, film people) which account for the odd parts of animals which appear in the drawings. The idea seemed to be: if a sheep's head doesn't work, then try a dog, or a pig, or a gerbil.

Then the Producer decided that what he really







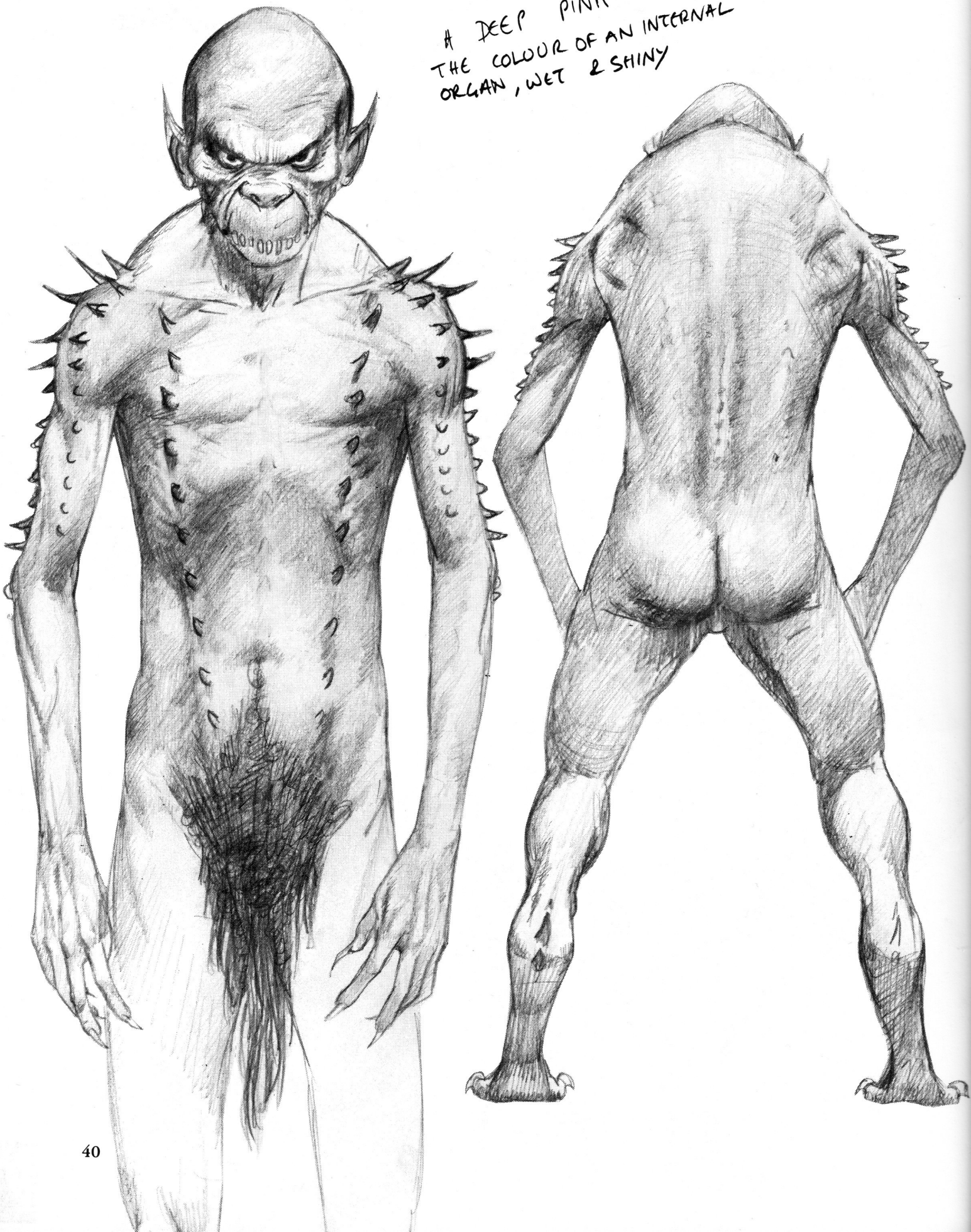
wanted was a version of *The Ghoul*, a painting for a bookjacket I had done some time previously. You may wonder why he didn't say this in the first place. The answer is that movie folks like to give outsiders the impression that they have no idea what they are doing and that all is confusion and chaos. It is only after a while that the newcomer realises that this is a mere front, and that behind the facade lies the fact that they have no idea what they are doing, and all is confusion and chaos.

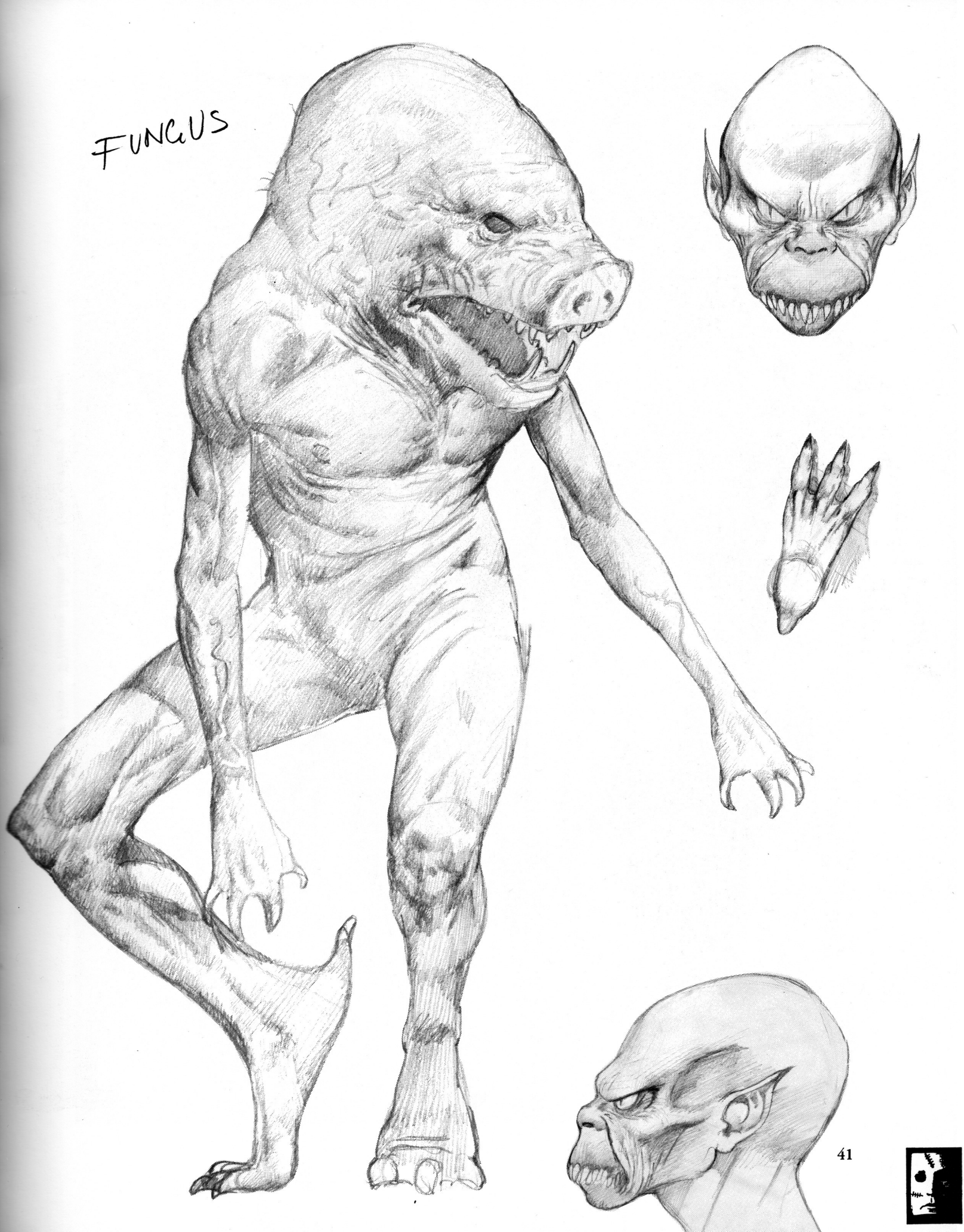
I spent some time redrawing *The Ghoul*, adding bits and taking bits off. It was during this time that I gained the decided impression that while the Producer was keen to have a monster in the movie, the Director didn't want one at all. This "Artistic Difference" is clearly apparent in the final version of the movie.

While making the drawings, I made occasional notes about colour. The remark "a deep pink like the colour of a internal organ,wet and shiny" was to remind me of a film I had recently seen where a tiny camera was used to photograph the inside of a human body. The internal organs had a particularly raw-looking, shiny pink appearance, which I thought might look very effective if transferred to the outside of the body. "Fungus" was an attempt to go to the opposite extreme. I had in mind the off-white, dry, slightly powdery, thin skin of a mushroom or puffball. I would have liked to have made the monster as a sculpture and to have had the opportunity to watch the make-up technicians bring it to life, but there was simply no time to do this.

To my surprise *Incubus* was actually completed and released: it is available on video, so if you watch it, please remember it's not my fault.




DEEP PINK LIKE
THE COLOUR OF AN INTERNAL
ORGAN, WET & SHINY


FUNGUS



The Ghost of a Flea - William Blake. The Tate Gallery, London.

INFLUENCES



In my Grandparents' house there was an old book of fairy tales, with heavy cream cloth-covered boards, coarsish paper and a characteristic smell. In it there were a number of full-colour plates, tipped-in in the style of early illustrated books. I can vaguely remember a bright gingerbread house from "Hansel and Gretel", but one image persists more clearly than any of the others. Glaring malevolently from the page, his face twisted into a dreadful sneer, was an evil genie, imprisoned in a glass bottle. This was long before I could read, so I have no idea what the accompanying story was, but in answer to my nervous query this malign creature was described simply, but tellingly,as an "evil spirit".

The figure fascinated and frightened me. He was trapped in a bottle, but he may escape: and then what? I was only too certain that I was the object of his malevolent gaze. My obsession with him was such that if I once opened the book, I was inexorably drawn to his page, perhaps to reassure myself that he was still safely in his glass cell. In fact the book itself seemed to exert some appalling magnetism on me so that I was constantly aware of its presence in the room. Even closed and out of sight, it was not safe. For me the book was the focal point of my Grandparents' rather gloomy and silent house. Whatever story the picture of the genie illustrated, the text could never have affected me as powerfully as the image of this squat and twisted devil with his hypnotic eye. This potent mixture of attraction and repulsion, of being irresistibly drawn to look on what frightened me, is among my earliest memories.

In my pre-school years I was taken to see a number of science fiction films. Whether these were my father's choice or whether I had established myself in early life as a fan of the genre, I have no idea. Certainly the cinema was, and remains, a major influence. I can recall some of the titles: *Satellite in the Sky*, about the testing of a huge bomb in outer space, which no-one else can remember seeing, *Riders to the Stars*, and above all, *Conquest of Space*, which made a great impression. It was made in 1954, which would make me about 4 or 5 years old when I saw it. I was convinced that I was able to remember entire scenes from it with considerable precision. However, a recent viewing on video showed that in the intervening years I had embroidered upon my memories and the "reality" differed subtly from my recollection. Perhaps it was just that I was now able to follow the story, such as it was.

When I first saw those movies, I was not old enough to follow the plot of a 90-minute film. In fact the plots were quite irrelevant. I was in love with the hardware. The shiny, smooth space-ships of the Fifties were interesting enough, but what really gripped me were the spacesuits. There was something mysterious and thrilling about these all-enclosing garments, they disguised the wearer, making him not quite human, and gave his appearance a decidedly sinister edge. This fascination was to grow and encompass diving suits, the robots from the Saturday-morning seriäls, and, later on, armour. All those impressions came out in drawings, every available sheet of paper being filled with sketches of spaceships and spacemen, and renderings in crude comic strip form of scenes from the latest space opera or Saturday serial.

Television was still a rarity, and the major source of entertainment was the Saturday matinee at the local cinema. Whatever cartoons or features were shown, I went for one thing only, and that was the serial. These were usually in twelve parts and most often particularly incredible science fiction. Once again, I was not interested in the story: whoever got to see all twelve episodes anyway? I wanted to see the hardware: rayguns that shot showers of sparks and spaceships that did the same, subterranean laboratories crammed with mysterious apparatus covered in dials and flashing lights.

In recent years the BBC has reshown some of these serials, and inevitably they look ridiculously crude, and may well be quite laughable to today's kids, but at the time they fed my hunger for the fantastic. Even when the serial had no SF content there would be a masked villain to interest me. When the bad guy is dressed as a cross between a robot and an Aztec God, the hero (Zorro in this case) inevitably comes off looking a little bland. The bad guys were always more fun.





Lon Chaney as Phantom of the Opera - Ronald Grant Archive.

At a time when the Russians were yet to launch *Sputnik*, and manned space flight was the stuff of high fantasy, I think my teachers were somewhat bemused when I began to paint rockets and robots with the awful powder paints and enormous stiff brushes provided at my first school. Although I am sure that science fiction and fantasy did not enjoy the kind of currency it does now, it would be wrong to suggest that there was no interest whatever. Indeed, the Fifties are often cited as the "Golden Age" of SF Films. The one movie which stands above all others in my memory, is Disney's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

This film had all the elements required to thrill me: elaborate diving suits, with lots of pipes and gleaming, misshapen helmets, a monster in the shape of a giant squid, an enigmatic and mysterious villain (or is he a hero), Kirk Douglas singing...but more exciting, even than this, was the Nautilus itself - Captain Nemo's submarine and engine of destruction. The Nautilus is wonderfully sinister and I must have drawn it thousands of times trying to capture its sleek lines and menacing character. It is a machine but possessed of its own malevolent personality, more fascinating by far than its human co-stars. It has an identity in a way that the featureless spaceships of the time did not. At the start of the film the Nautilus is referred to as "The Monster" and the feeling that it has a dark life of its own is never lost: the last scene shows its death throes, and it seems to salute as it sinks from sight for the last time. Although I can now see obvious elements of shark and alligator in the design, with its barbs, scales, rivets and glaring eyes, it still seems exactly suited to its period and purpose. It is the life and cruel spirit of the Nautilus that haunts me.

Of course, the cinema is an influence in more indirect ways. During my childhood, most films that I saw at the cinema or on TV, would have been in black and white. Black and white movies, particularly detective films or *films noirs* as they became known, were often photographed in a deliberately dramatic and atmospheric manner. The skilful use of lighting this required, and the shadowy, mysterious quality which results is something I enjoy enormously and try to incorporate into my paintings. Set designs of this period can also seem unreal and slightly fantastic to the modern eye. The sets for silent movies were quite often extremely elaborate and sophisticated, and I often turn to old film stills for inspiration.

In my early days my only access to horror films was through such stills, "X" films being strictly for rather strange grown-ups. When I was about nine a friend introduced me to *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, a magazine which consisted of page upon page of pictures from horror movies, linked together with bad jokes and worse puns, and a few token bits of editorial. The stills were generally innocuous, sometimes amusing, but occasionally there were gems amongst the dross: Lon Chaney as the *Phantom of the Opera* and in *London After*



Mekon by Les Edwards
©Fleetway Publications 1989



The Great Day of His Wrath - John Martin. The Tate Gallery, London.

Midnight comes easily to mind; Carol Borland in *Mark of the Vampires*, Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee as incarnations of *Dracula*, Elsa Lanchester *as The Bride of Frankenstein*. Above them all, stands out the face of Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster. This particular image has achieved the status of an icon, instantly recognised and untarnished by the often appalling additions to the Frankenstein myth. This simple image of a face, combining both horror and pathos, seems endlessly fascinating. Needless to say I drew and redrew these characters. *Famous Monsters* may have been a new source of ideas, but it was not easy to come by. I relied upon the friend who had first shown it to me. Equally, trips to the cinema were far from frequent, even my attendance of Saturday matinees was spasmodic. Constantly to hand, however, were comic strips.

There was *The Eagle*, hailed by its fans as the greatest comic ever produced, a grand claim, but it certainly had some remarkable features. For a start there was *Dan Dare - Pilot of the Future*. The Dare strip is often quoted as the main reason for *The Eagle's* success, indeed most of the rest of the comic can seem rather dull by comparison. Personally I came to *The Eagle* rather late and poor Dan was past his prime. Also I had become a connoisseur of spacesuits and the Space Fleet garb simply did not measure up to my exacting standards. However, there was another strip, running in the centre pages, which enthralled me from the day it started.

Heros the Spartan, drawn by Frank Bellamy, chronicled the adventures of a Roman Centurion. In a dark and grotesque landscape, Heros battled monsters, magicians, Picts and Celts, half-human creatures, ape-men and giants. In fact here were most of the elements which I later came to call "Sword and Sorcery". Printed in rich colours, it was the mood and atmosphere that caught my imagination. With its strange rock formations, creeping mists, gnarled trees and bottomless pools, the world of Heros could have been plucked straight from my own imagination. It was a world I recognised as my own, it was the first time that I had seen pictures that I consciously wanted to imitate, and it was the dark and sinister qualities of the strip that drew me.

Each week's copy of *The Eagle* was eagerly awaited, read, studied, obsessively pored over and frequently copied. I was not so much concerned with copying Bellamy's technique as with capturing the feeling of his drawing. Having said this, I must admit that his heavy use of shadow is something which transferred itself to my own work.



Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth - John Singer Sargent. The Tate Gallery, London; on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, London.

It was as a result of my interest in Heros that I became aware for the first time of the artist who had drawn it. Maybe it was because of Bellamy's distinctive style, or even the simple fact that his signature was often prominent, but, odd to relate, until this time it had never occurred to me that anyone actually drew comics. They just appeared each week by some magic. Some of the features of Frank Bellamy's wonderful work were absorbed into my own drawing in the same way as the spacemen and masked villains had been absorbed, but here was something a little different: by a conscious process I was trying to emulate a particular artist. This attempt at emulation did not exclude other comic strips from having an effect on me. Newspaper comics were available every day and, like many, I mourn the loss of *Jane*, although her influence on me may well have been of a different nature. There was also *Garth* which had a strong fantasy element. But the newspaper strip which stood head and shoulders above the others ran in the *Daily Express* and was called *Jeff Hawke*.

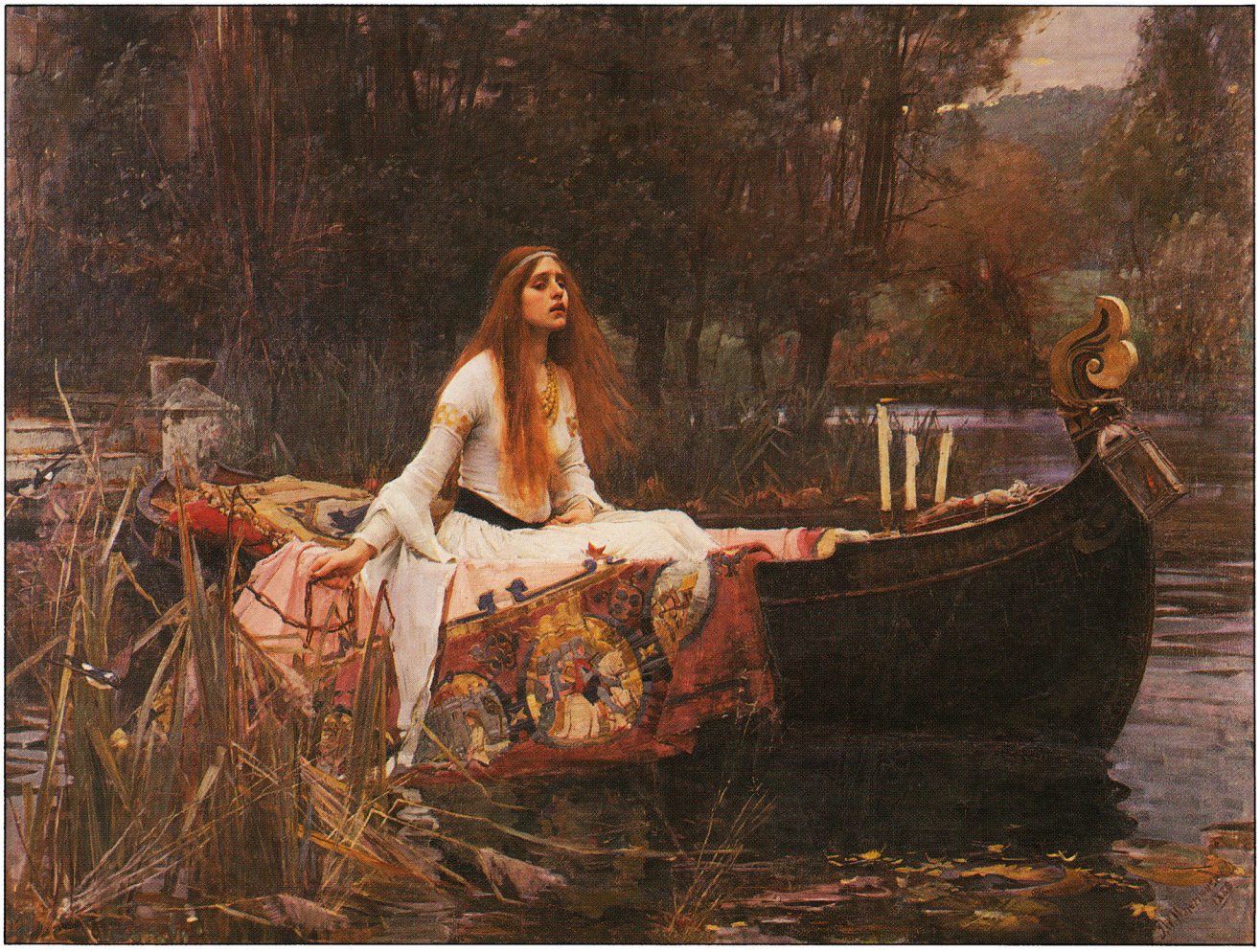
Exquisitely drawn by Sidney Jordan, it entailed a good deal of wry humour and an array of aliens whimsical and otherwise, who would have put *Star Wars* to shame. Jordan clearly used a great deal of photographic reference in his work, and the realistic quality this gave made his pictures particularly attractive to me. During the Sixties the strip ran side by side with the development of manned spaceflight. Jordan would cleverly "borrow" some piece of current space technology, alter and refine it to look a little more futuristic, and incorporate it into his drawing. In this way he gave the impression of allowing a glimpse into a not too-distant future, and I still prefer SF hardware that looks functional, used and faintly recognisable.

Jeff Hawke himself was really a rather dull character: events occurred around him, not because of him. It was only natural that I appreciated some of his co-stars, in particular Chalcedon, a galactic master criminal, who spent most of his time encased in a bulky armoured space-suit with only his slanted eyes remaining visible.

My interest in the macabre was reinforced when I discovered Edgar Allen Poe at the age of about ten, and still further when I spent the grand sum of half a crown on a paperback copy of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. I remember trying to copy the illustration on the cover: my first bookjacket.

I drew constantly, all the things that were in my head. Drawing seemed to be a purely functional thing. The whirl of images had to come out somehow and drawing was the natural way for this to happen. It did not seem unusual, although I knew not everyone shared my particular tastes, and I had little concept of "Art" as such. However, when I did begin to look at "legitimate" paintings as I grew older, I was surprised to find things that drew from me the same response of "recognition" that I had felt with *Heros the Spartan*.

My first view of Goya's painting *Saturn Devouring his Children* left me thunderstruck. To see a graphically macabre and violent image presented as "Art" came as a complete shock. I knew I would never approach Goya in terms of artistry, but at least here was someone whose mind ran along similar lines to mine. Apart from the feeling that I already knew this painting, it was also a kind of justification of the things at which I had



The Lady of Shalott - John William Waterhouse. The Tate Gallery, London.

been inexpertly scratching away. A list of all the paintings that made a similar impression on me would run for page after page. It became clear to me that the macabre and fantastic are legitimate themes that pop up throughout the history of Art. Visionary artists such as Bosch, Blake and Fuseli all came to my attention within a short time. John Martin's huge *The Great Day of His Wrath* made an immediate impression, and Arnold Bocklin's *Isle of the Dead* provided the inspiration for my painting *Tombworld*, which attempts to catch some of its feeling.

While I was always interested in the technical problems of painting, it was pictures with a romantic, melancholy or emotional quality that attracted me most. J.W. Waterhouse's *The Lady of Shallot* is an example of something that appeals because of its atmosphere and sense of doom, rather than its technical brilliance. It is, nonetheless, wonderfully executed, and as I came to appreciate the painterly expertise of some artists, so this interest brought me to portraits.

It seemed to me that a portrait is a true test of the artist's skill: not just to create a likeness but to breathe life and vigour into it. Van Dyck's portraits live - to the extent that you feel that you are in the presence of a real person. No photograph can possess this quality. John Singer Sargent's rich and glittering portrayals of Edwardian society have a sumptuous beauty. His technique is so fluent, so confident and assured that it succeeds in giving the impression that it must be easy, nothing to it. Further consideration makes me feel that I am wasting my time.

By the time I reached Art School, I was collecting influences in a more deliberate way, borrowing something from here, stealing a little from there. The cinema remains a key source of inspiration, as do a number of colleagues in the world of illustration whose brains I pick and whose work I constantly scrutinise. It could be said that almost everything is an influence on somebody. Always, in the back of my mind, is the thought "how would I render that scene or capture that certain effect?" Things might rattle around the brain for a while, but eventually they'll pop out in some form. It's rather like not throwing anything away in case it comes in handy one day.





Tombworld

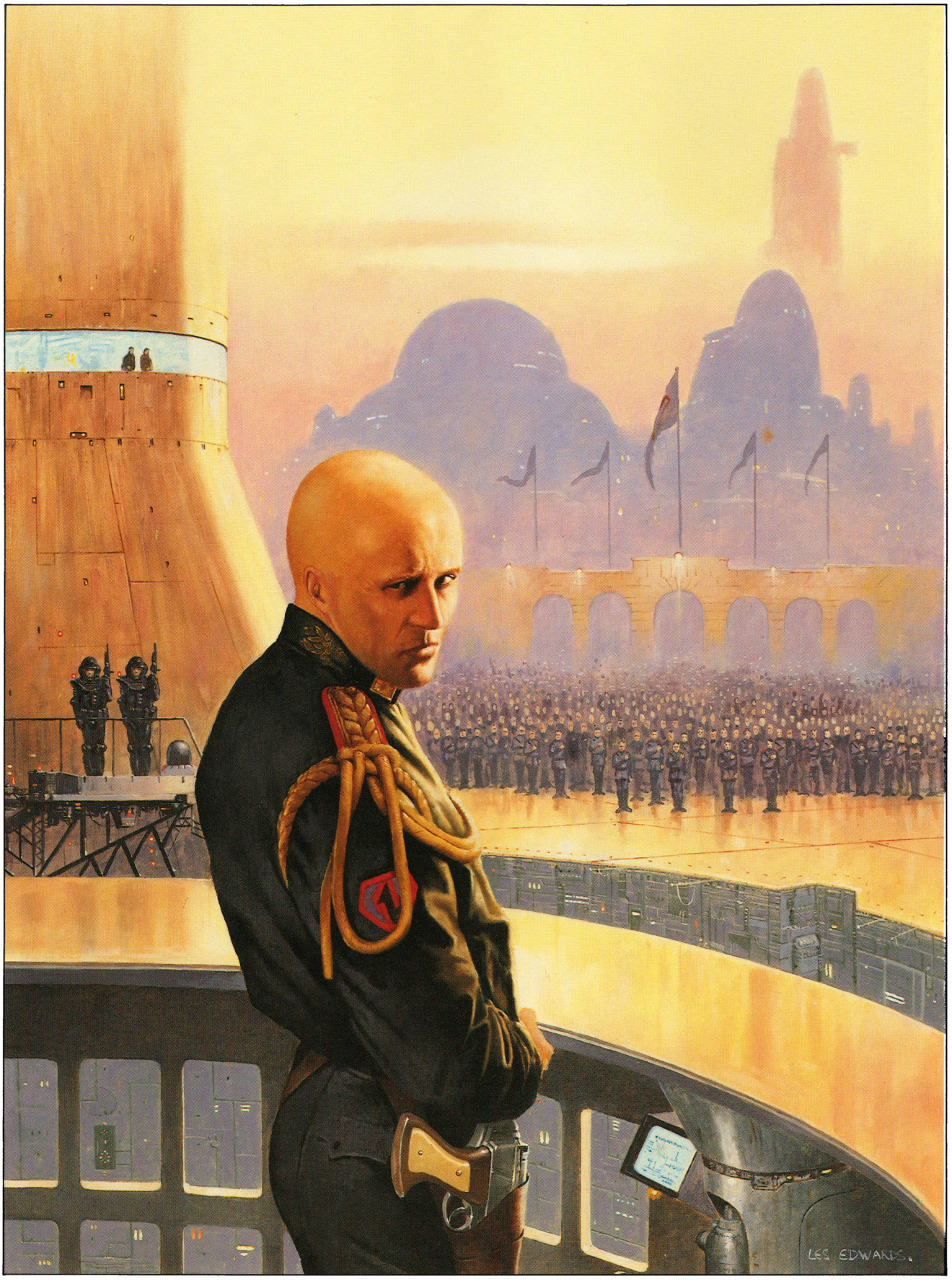




The Priestess



The Wizard



Cadre Messiah



The Lost Dorsai



Demons by Daylight

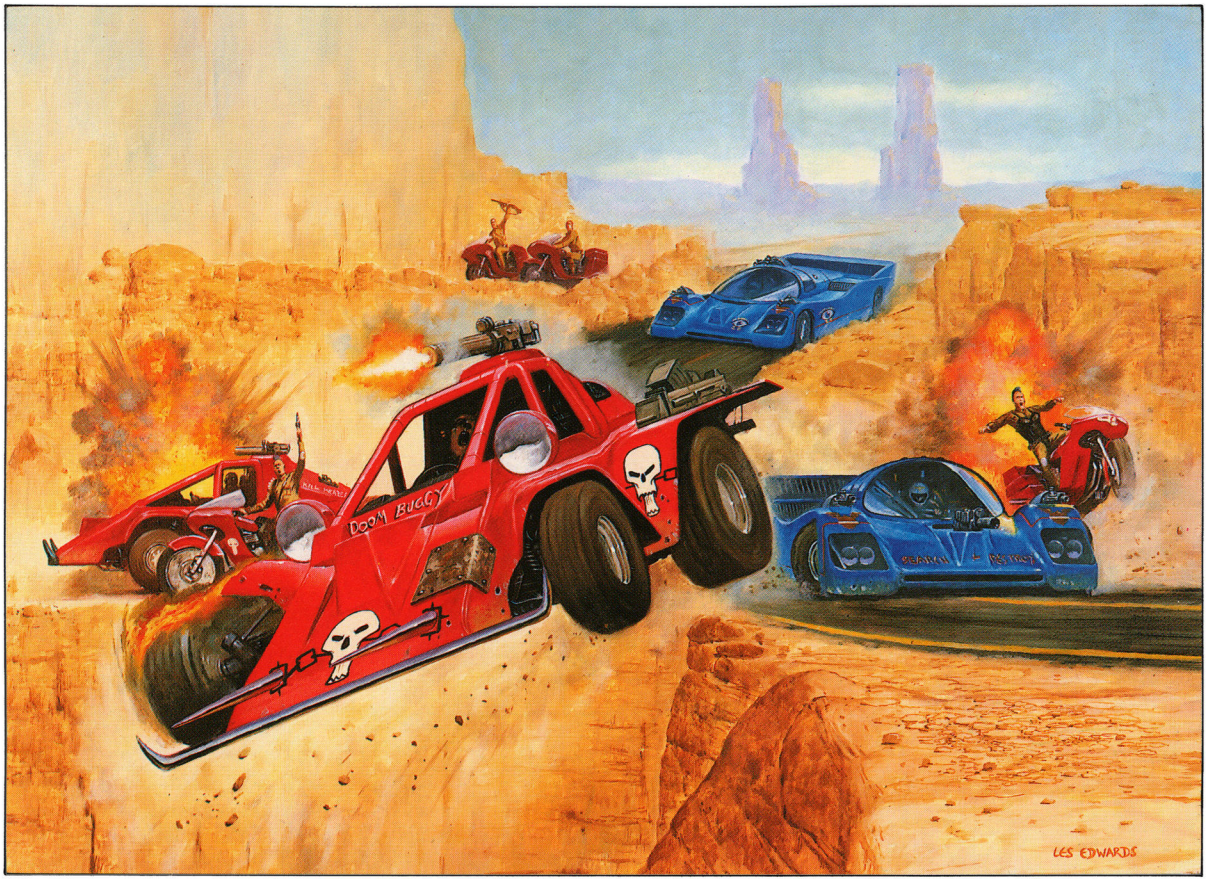


White Line Fever

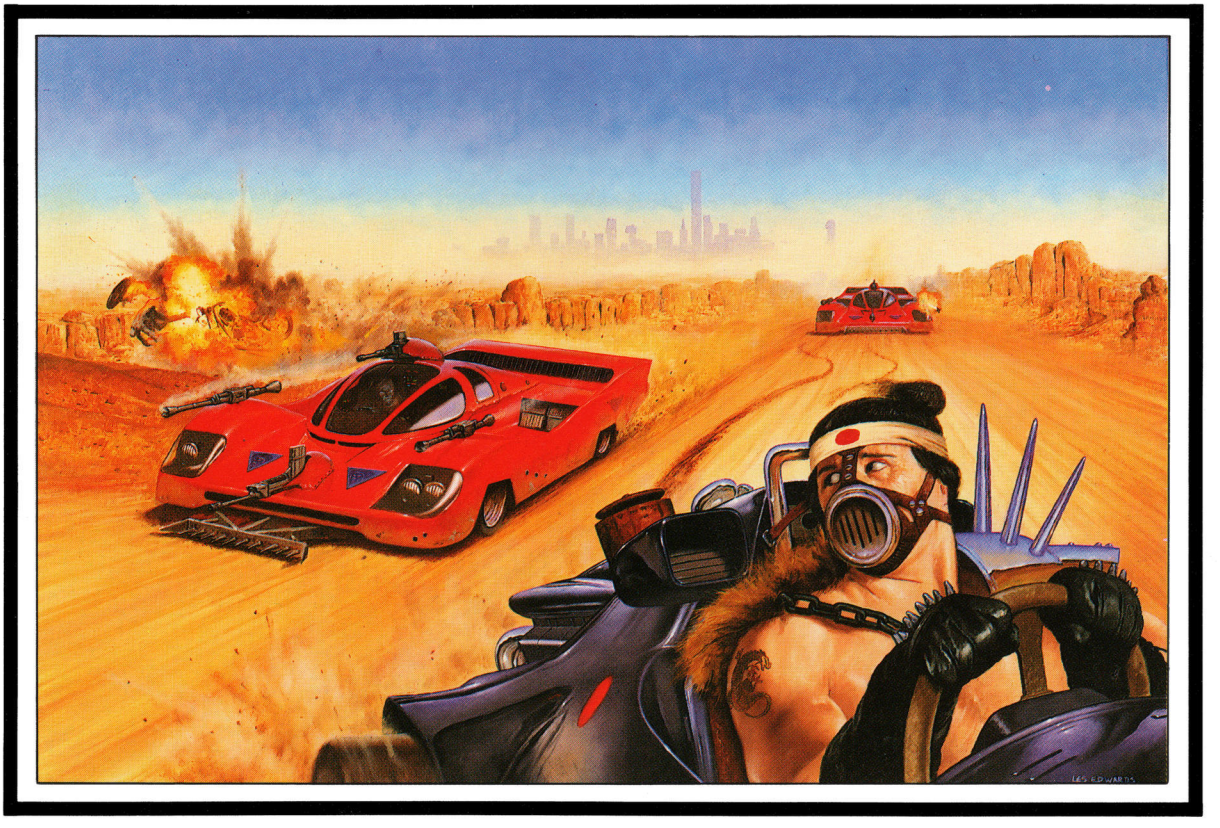


Dark Future Skirmish





Battlecars



Dark Future



Confrontation 40K



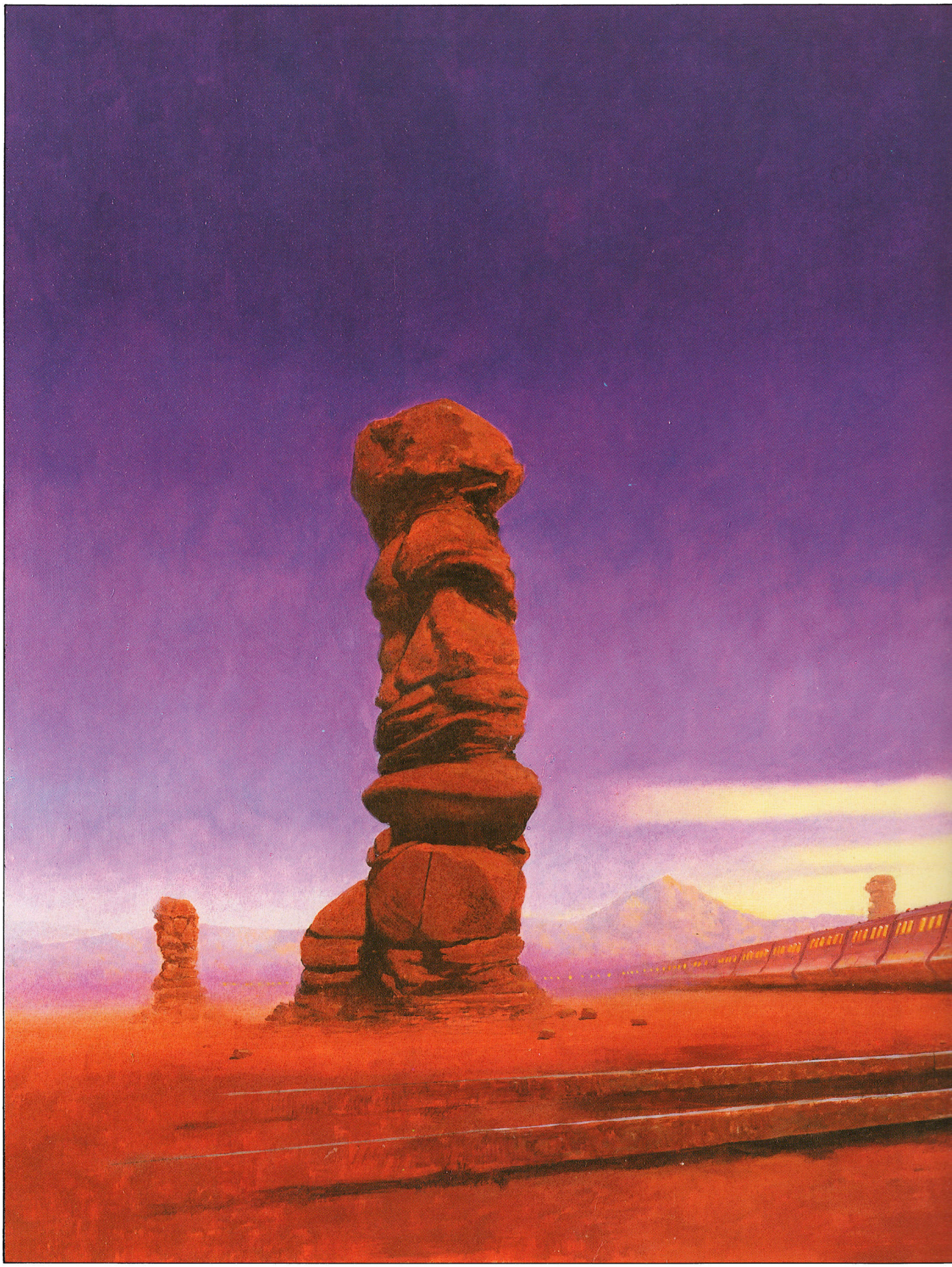
After the Zap



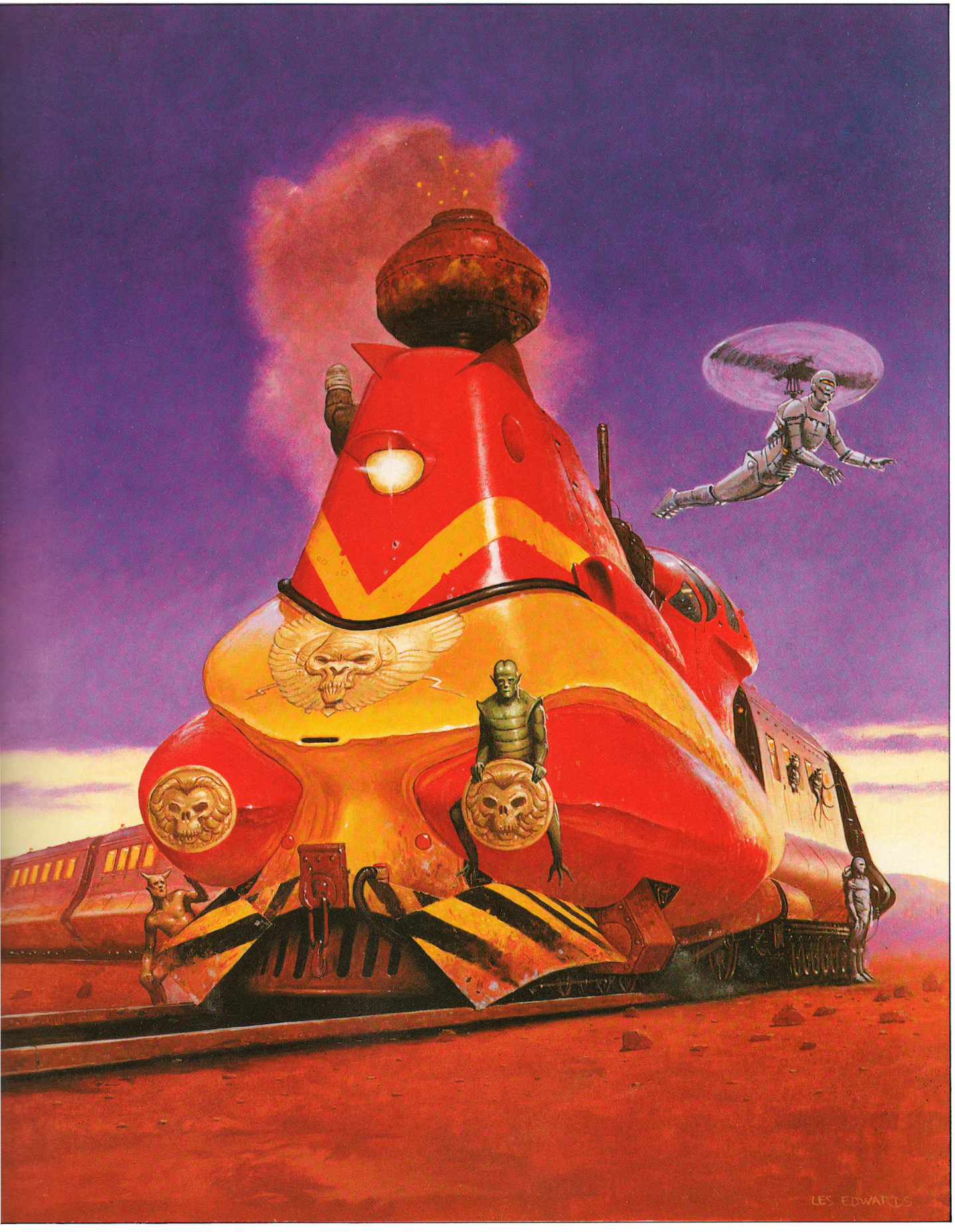
Crystal Planet



Man Plus

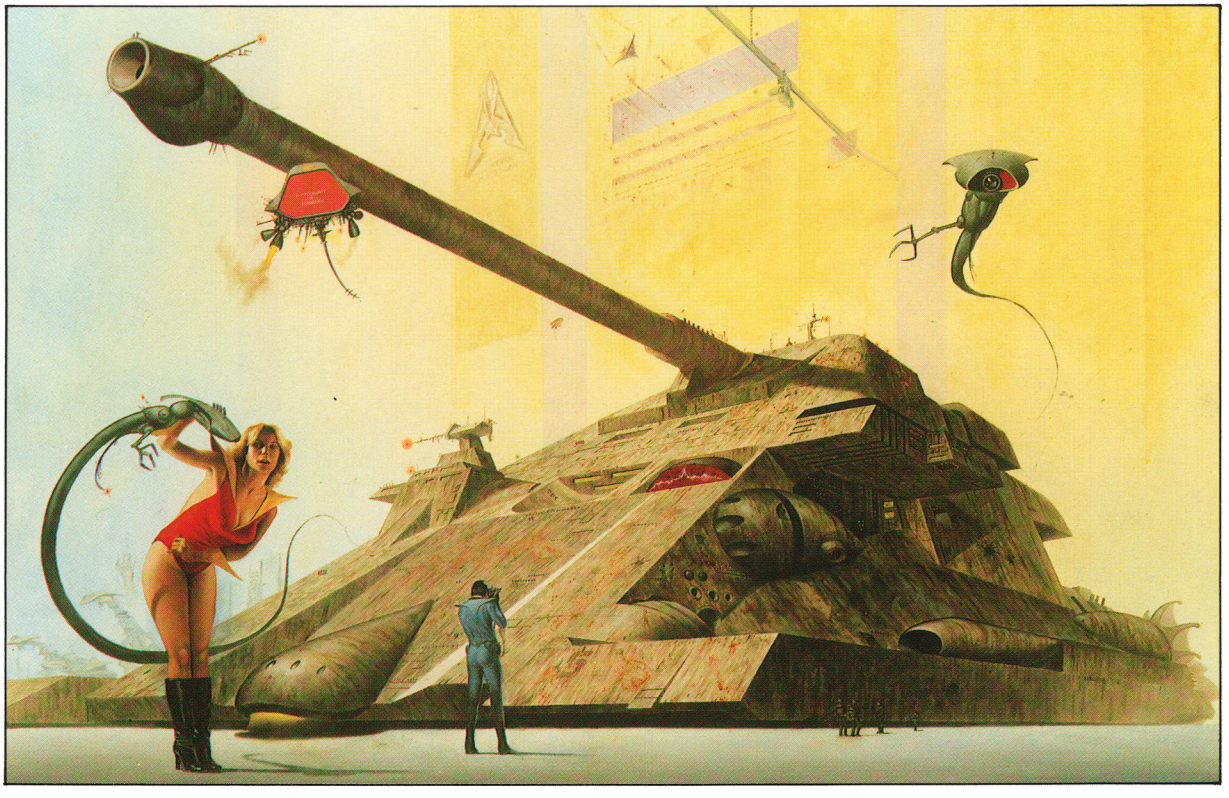


Desolation Road


LES EDWARDS



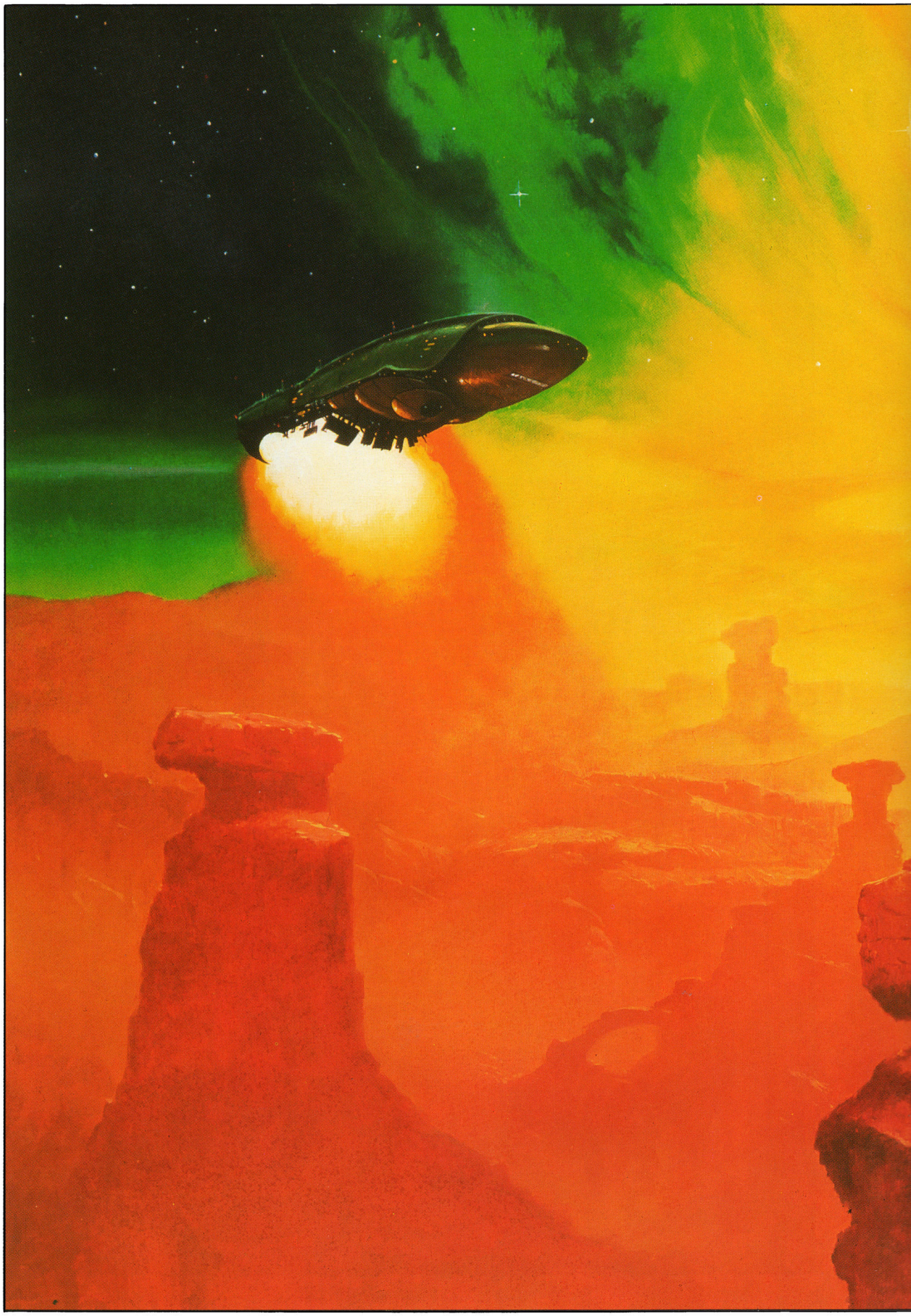
Final Encyclopaedia



Dread Hulk



The Karma Corps



Brightness Falls from the Air





H.G Wells Anthology



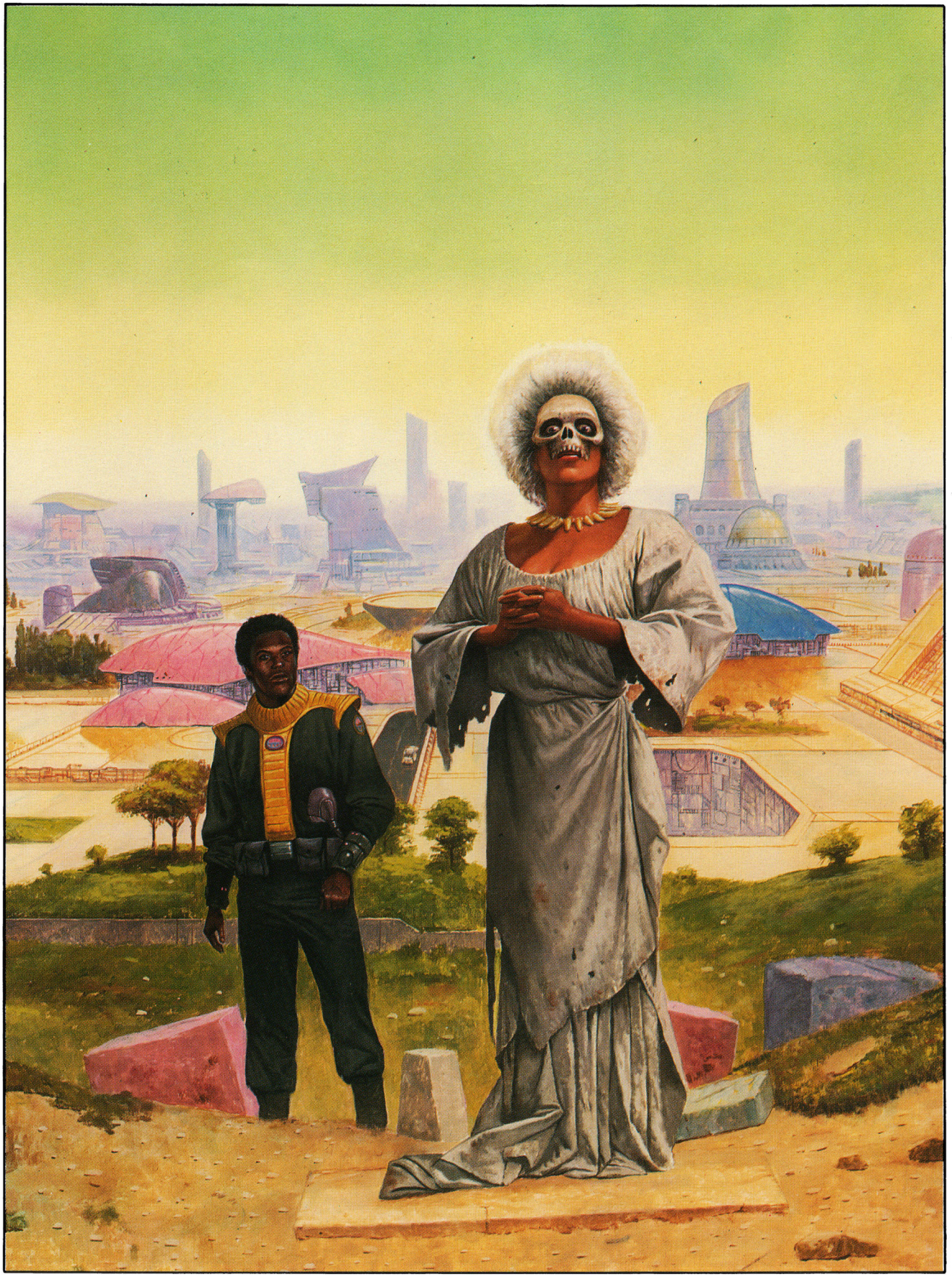
End as a Hero



Best of Frank Herbert I



Doomflight



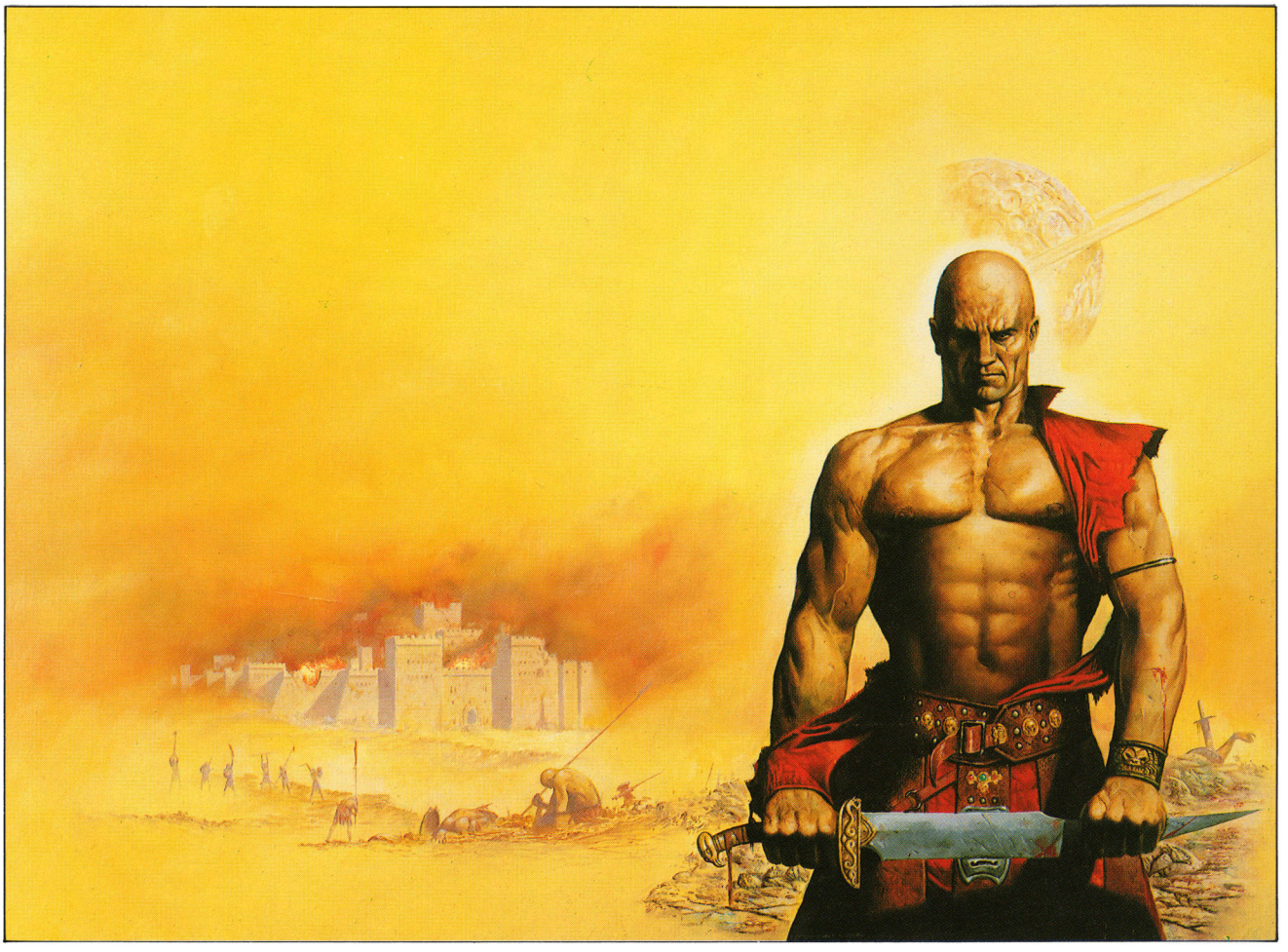
Country of the Dead



Alien Landscape



Hot Favourite



Messenger of Zhuvastou



Twala

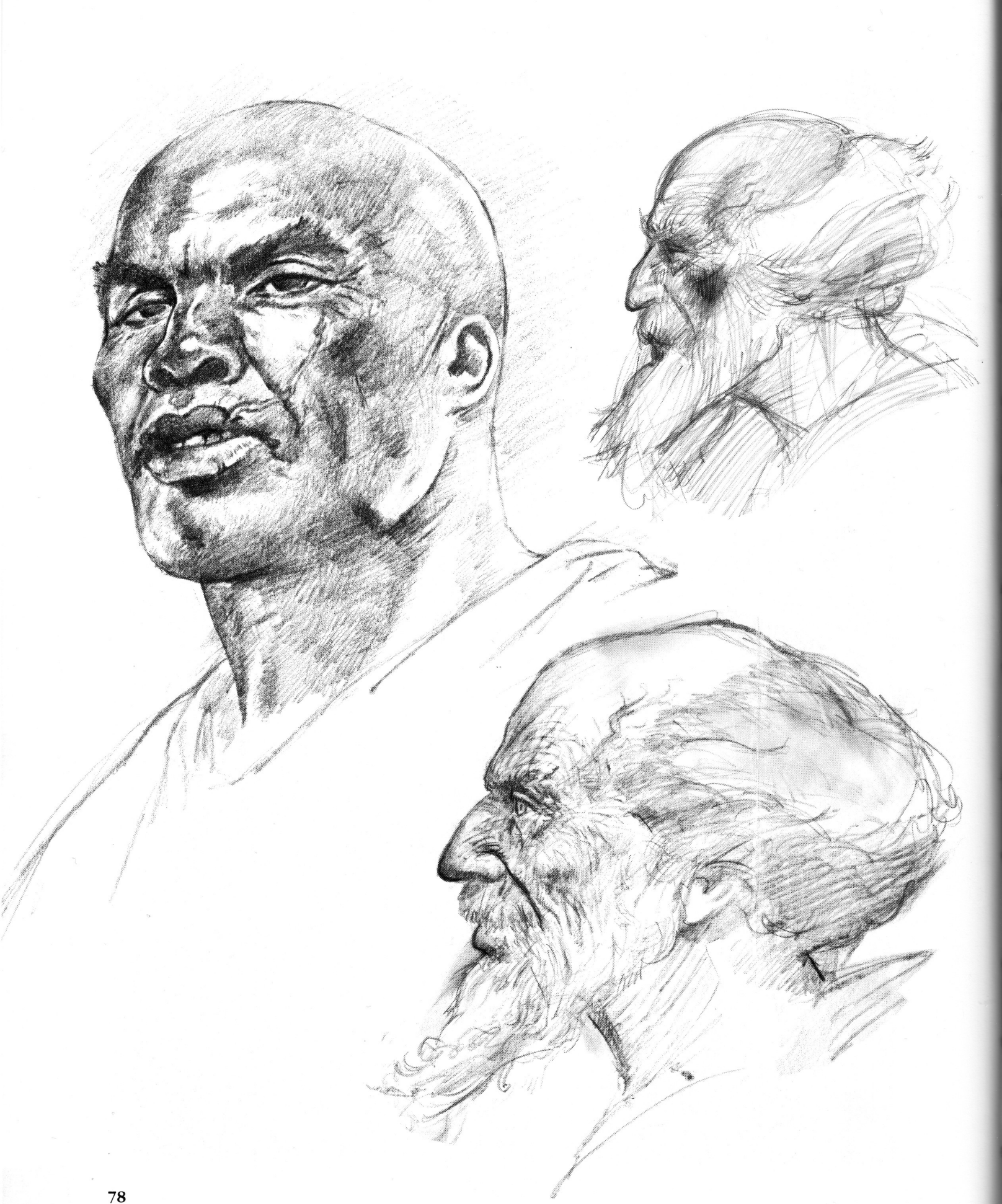


Bishop's Heir





Slazenger Gold

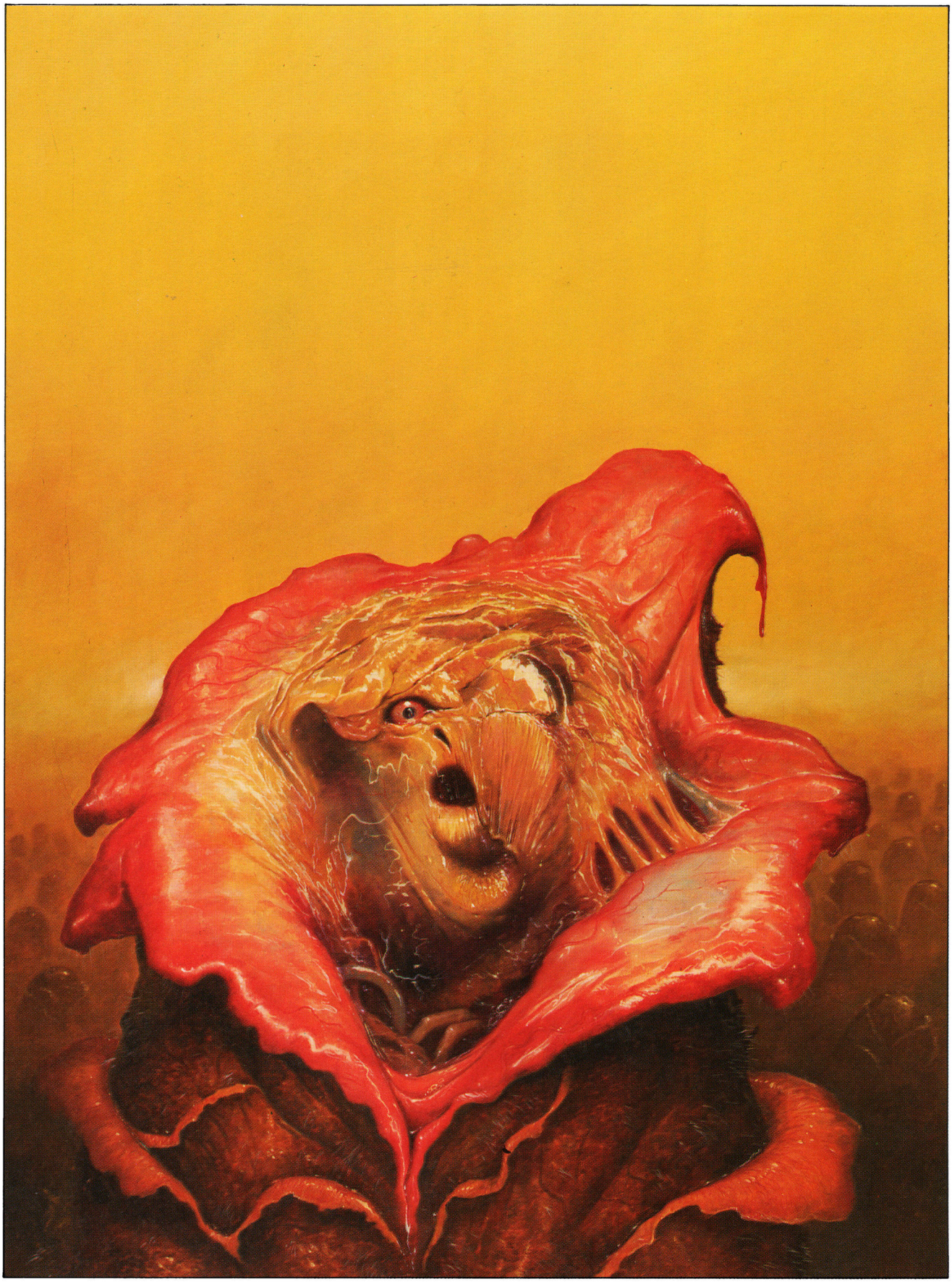




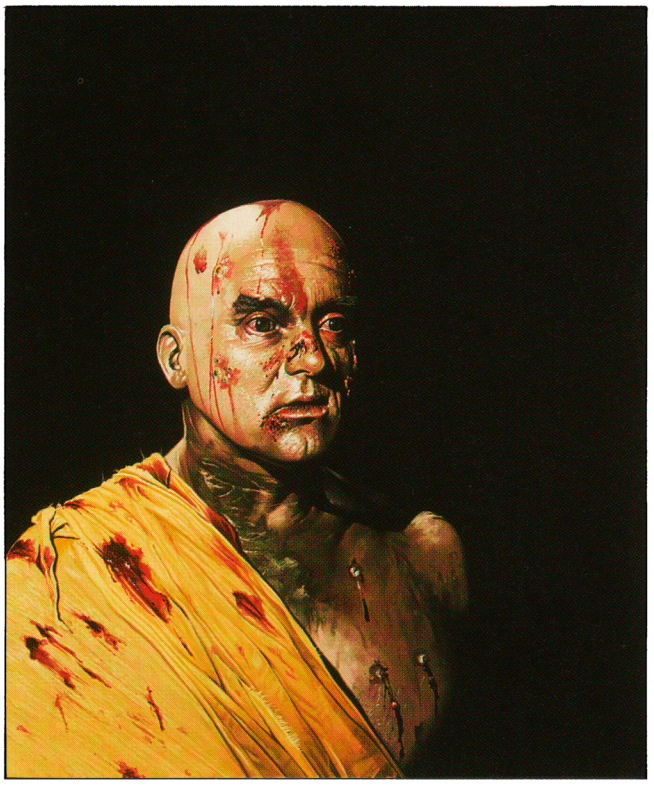
Crypt of the Sorcerer



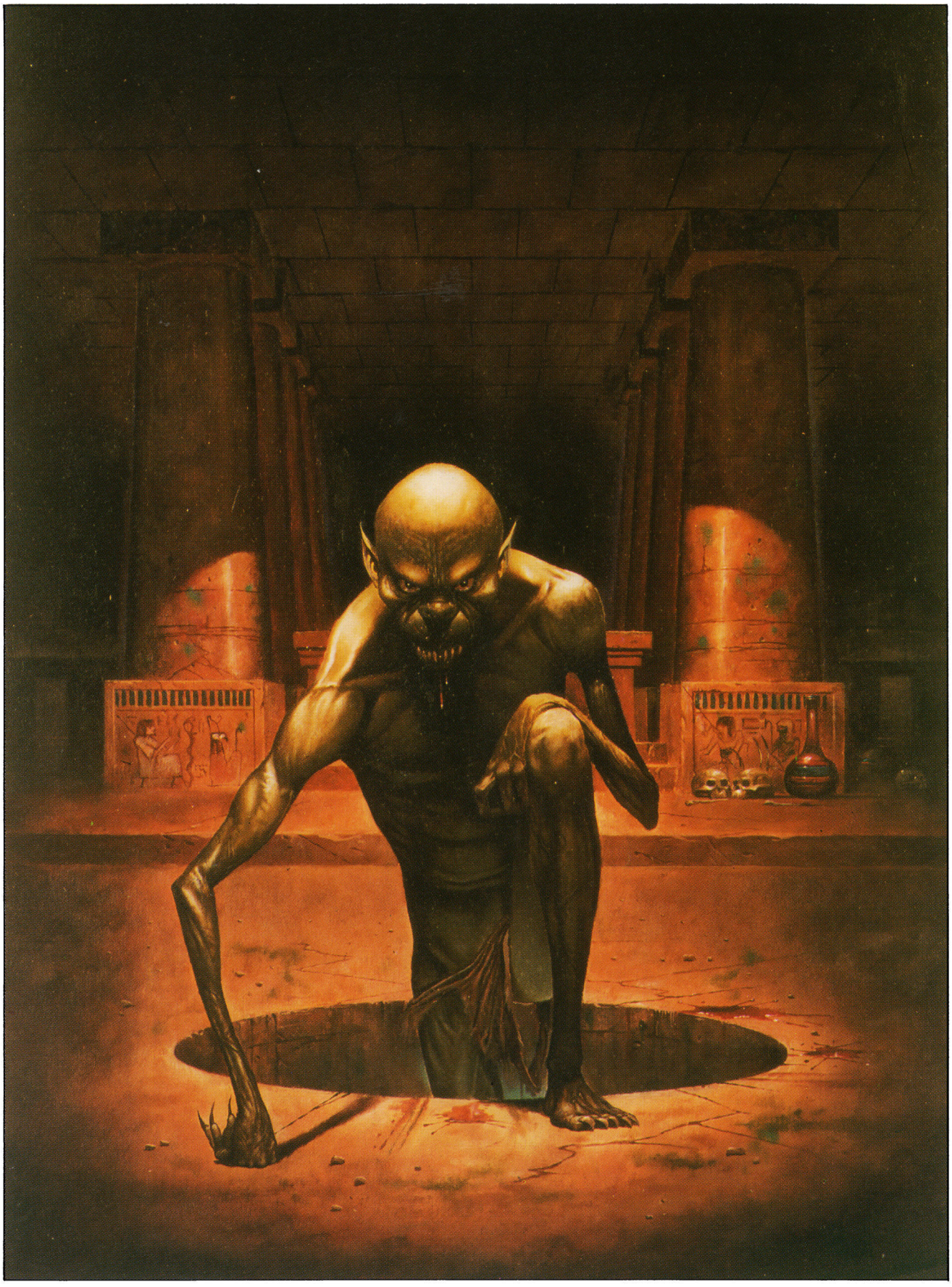
Best of Frank Herbert II



Invasion of the Body Snatchers



The Ghoul I



The Ghoul II



The Nameless

Out —out are the lights —out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,

Edgar Allan Poe



Vault of the Vampire



The Curse

But see, amid the mimic rout
  A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
  The scenic solitude!
It writhes! —it writhes! —with mortal pangs
  The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
  In human gore imbued.

Edgar Allan Poe



When Evil Wakes

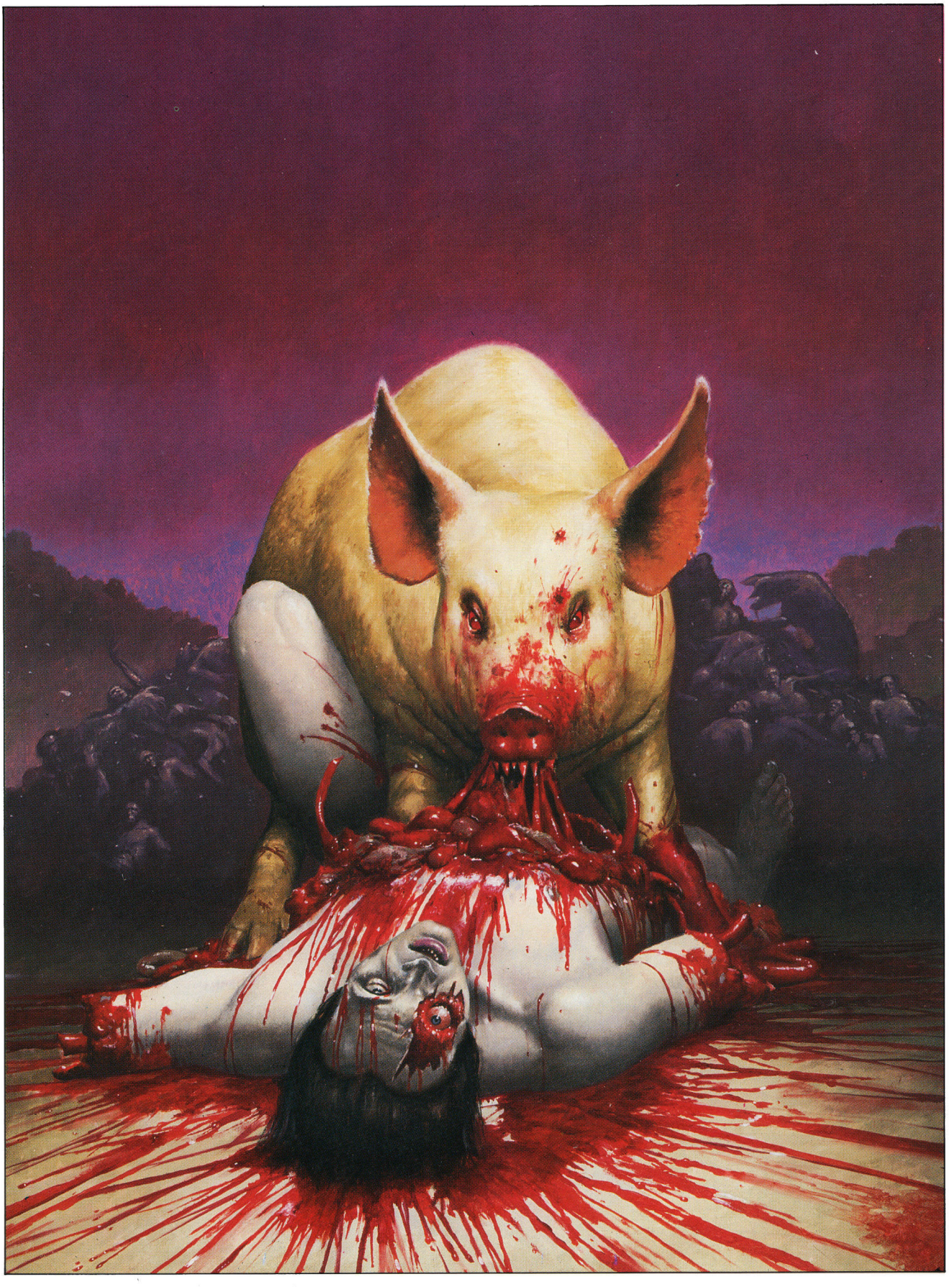


Terror by Night





Swamp



The Farm II



Fiend





THE CONQUEROR WORM.

LO! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in the theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly —
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Woe!

That motley drama — oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes! —it writhes! —with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out —out are the lights —out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy "Man",
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

Edgar Allan Poe

Some of the illustrations in this book have found their way into some strange places. Someone once phoned to ask if they could copy *The Ghoul* onto their car bonnet. This was fine by me, but alas they never sent me a photo of the result.

Cover: *The Devils of D-Day*

You might have seen this picture before. It was originally done as one of a series of covers for books by Graham Masterton. However, once a picture has been used for its initial purpose it might then be re-used for other purposes, for a much smaller fee. This takes considerable time and expertise to arrange and is one reason for having a good agent to act for you. As a matter of interest the artwork has been used on, among others, the following:

a German magazine cover.
the book *Fantastic People*
a French paperback
an Album cover for Uriah Heep
a German video cover
a Spanish paperback
a *White Dwarf* cover
a Japanese magazine cover.

The latest enquiry, from Sweden, was for it to be used on the packaging for throat pastilles.

Facing Page 1 - *Caviar*

Strictly the Art Director's idea, including the rolling eyeballs.

Page 9 - *The Punishment*

In some cases the book does not supply a "hook" to hang the illustration on. This story was more of a psychological horror tale than this painting suggests. Although no-one actually gets eaten, as I remember, cannibalism is at the root of the story. My agent delivered this piece to the Art Director while they were having lunch. Asked "What is he eating?" she replied "Oh, just somebody." You might recognize the house in the background.

Page 10 - *Berserker*

I'm usually not very happy with monsters that are human-animal combinations. They look contrived to me, but this transformation of man into ravening beast was a central feature of the book. It is frequently the case that the sense of action is lost in the journey from rough to artwork but some of it has survived here. The ground behind the beast was painted with a thin glaze of paint which was then textured with a stiffer brush, taking most of the pigment off again.

Page 11 - *Daggers of Darkness*

One of the Puffin *Fighting Fantasy* books. I enjoy doing these covers but in this case I had great trouble getting the tigers to pose.

Page 20 - *Conan the Raider*

I did this Conan for an American publisher who promptly rejected it on the grounds that it didn't look like a "Boris" - ho hum. While I feel the figure of Conan is one of my more convincing attempts, the crocodile-man doesn't really work; another uncomfortable man-beast combination.

Page 21 - *Skulls*

In my early days I seemed to paint a skull a week. When I started illustrating, horror stories were fewer then than now. Ramsey Campbell was just getting started, James Herbert and Stephen King were just around the corner, Lovecraft was being reprinted yet again but most horror stories seemed to be in anthologies. Most of the skulls were for the "Mayflower Black Magic Series" of which there were about six. They were painted in gouache.

Page 26 - *Aztec*

This is nothing to do with Aztecs at all, but it was a convenient title. O.K. I own up. I originally started this as a present for Val. Needless to say it languished, unfinished for several years before I had a final blitz on it. It was originally inspired by the theories of Immanuel Velikovsky. The delay between starting and finishing this piece means that some areas are handled in a more confident manner than others. I don't often get asked to paint women, sob.

Page 29 - *City Jitters*

This is an example of what can happen if you have a sympathetic Art Director. My original idea for this was the drawing on page 28. This was rejected and I presented this idea instead. I didn't think that the idea came across very well in the drawing and I felt that the Art Director still wasn't sure that it would work. In spite of this she let me go ahead with the artwork and this is the result. There's a good deal of artistic licence here. Obviously if you really squashed someone's head to this extent it would do a lot more damage than shown here. It was important, I felt, that the victim should be obviously alive and suffering rather than just crushed to death. Although it's a strong image I think that it is not very well painted from a technical point of view.

Page 31 - *Croglin Vampire*

I originally did this for inclusion in a book which, alas, never made it to publication. It is based on the description of a "true" event. It was done about the same time as Klaus Kinski was being *Nosferatu* in the cinema and some people have made the obvious comparisons. There really is no connection as this is based closely on the description of the vampire in the book. I had meant to make the background more elaborate but the strict deadline prevented this. It's another painting which has often been reused, notably by an American (German?) rock band called Krokus.

Page 32 - *Mania*

My agent is after her cut.

Page 33 - *The Amulet*

This is still one of my favourite pieces but it was never used by the publisher and I never found out why.

Page 35 - *Return of the Living Dead*

This is another painting which was never published as far as I know, on the book for which it was intended. My brother and sister-in-law have the original hanging in their dining room; a strange couple.

Page 36 - *Cannibals*

A bit more red meat. This is based fairly closely on a description in the book.

Page 48 - *Tombworld*

Tombworld was painted for inclusion in a book called *Tour of the Universe* written by Malcolm Edwards and the mega-famous writer Robert Holdstock. As described elsewhere this owes alot to Arnold Bocklin, but on viewing it recently it seems to have a Lovecraftian feel to it, like distant forbidden Yuggoth, despairing under the rule of its crazed high-priest Te-Rioak-es.

Page 50 - *The Priestess*

Prior to the '87 World Science Fiction Convention my friend and fellow illustrator Tony Roberts suggested that we should both do large paintings especially for the "Con". This was the eventual result of that conversation. Although I originally intended to do an elaborate portrait of Michael Moorcock's Elric I eventually settled on this idea, if only (actually mostly) to paint a woman for a change. I even took time off to work on it. Completed and hung in the art show at the Convention it drew no attention whatsoever. People seemed to glide past it without seeing it. The world's first invisible painting. I have vague plans for another two pictures along similar lines on the list of things to do one day. By the way, Tony is still working on his picture.

Page 51 - *The Wizard*

This was the cover for a proposed book with the Holdstock-Edwards team. For a variety of reasons we abandoned the project but I did the painting anyway. The book eventually saw the light of day illustrated by someone else. The picture was eventually used on Michael Moorcock's *Wizardry and Wild Romance.*

Page 52 - Cadre Messiah

Although the background looks a bit '*Star Wars*' to me now, I was pleased with the feel of this job when I completed it. As you may have gathered the story was set on a distant planet whose inhabitants have huge feet.

Page 53 - *The Lost Dorsai*

This is one of those rare jobs that worked from the moment I put pencil to paper. It's just a lucky accident really and shows that a background, however simple, can make or break a picture. I must remember that.....

Page 60 - *After the Zap*

This was the one and only occasion I've ever heard from an author whose book I've illustrated. Michael Armstrong was kind enough to send me a postcard saying how much he liked the painting. He was particularly pleased with the lighting and icy landscape. Unfortunately, during the time it took for the card to cross the Atlantic the publishers decided to reject this version and commisioned me to do a completely different one. The second cover was far inferior to this one and I only hope that Mr. Armstrong wasn't too disappointed. In general, I don't know why authors don't make more fuss about what goes on the front of their books. The bookjackets often seem unconnected with the contents of the book particularly in the Science Fiction field.

Page 60 - *Crystal Planet*

Another painting from the *Tour of the Universe.* Although Rob Holdstock and Malcolm Edwards were enormous fun to work with this book was the last of our collaborations.

Page 61 - *Man Plus*

Although I don't really think of myself as a "Science Fiction Artist" most of my work for America seems to be in this field. American S.F. jackets seem to be less hardware-orientated than their British counterparts. I like the atmosphere and the "feel" of this piece and the fact that the background seems as real as the main figure. I feel that this quality of "completeness" is something usually lacking in my pictures.

Page 62 - *Desolation Road*

This is another case of sympathetic art direction. Reading a book in manuscript is not a good way to enjoy it, but this was an exception. It is the story of a community set on a Bradbury-esque Mars. The tale has a rather dream-like, even whimsical, quality and the publishers did not know how to handle the cover. Nor did I. I eventually settled on the train as a linking factor in the various events in the book. I wanted to achieve a melancholy and romantic feel, a kind of "bluesy" effect for want of a better word, "I'm gonna grab me a train, ride that lonesome track," you know the sort of thing. Explaining this to the Art Director was one thing, but nowadays the publishers use the "design by committee" technique and a seemingly endless line of people have a say in what goes on the front of a book. It can't have been easy but the Art Director managed to persuade these people that the idea might work and I was given the go ahead. I think the finished artwork captures some of the feel I was after, but it seems a little "quiet" for a bookjacket. Nevertheless, it has drawn one or two favourable comments.

Page 64 - *Final Encyclopaedia*

In a reversal of the usual situation the background here seems more effective than the main figure in the front. All the tricks of the trade are used here to give depth and scale. The bright red really leaps forward. Now if only the central character was better.....

Page 64 - *Dread Hulk*

From *Tour of the Universe* and enjoyable enough at the time, but I would handle it differently now.

Page 65 - *The Karma Corps*

One of my sporadic jobs for an American publisher. This was hung in the art show at the World Science Fiction Convention in 1987. I am not a regular convention goer and am sufficiently anonymous to be able to eavesdrop on people's comments about my work. While I was mooching about, trying to fade into the woodwork, a young man, with two acolytes in tow, came up to this painting. As he had been broadcasting his opinion on the other works on display I naturally pricked up my ears. He peered closely at the painting, only inches away. He sighed and, pointing to something, said "He's certainly taken a short cut *there*." I have no idea what he meant and definitely didn't have the courage to ask him, but I've never looked at the painting in the same way since. Serves me right for listening I suppose. On another occasion I was near two people in front of Jim Burns' painting *The Lovers*, discussing it avidly. "Hah!" said one contemptuously, "I can see a brushmark!" and dismissively turned to the next picture. I'm only glad that Jim didn't hear this crushing remark. He might never have worked again!

Page 66 - *Brightness Falls from the Air*

One of my occasional British Science Fiction covers. I don't read much S.F. and it is only recently that I've become more interested in painting the "hardware". It's pretty clear from this picture that I was more concerned with the figure and landscape than with the spaceship.

Page 68 - *H.G. Wells Anthology*

Everyone has their idea of Wells' Martian Machines. I was trying to make this tripod look animated and alive in the way Wells describes them.

Page 69 - *End as a Hero*

This American cover is another of my attempts to make S.F. hardware look convincing and used. Although I think the pilot's helmet and suit work reasonably well the control panel looks clumsy and probably not futuristic enough. The spaceship in the background just sort of "grew".

Page 70 - *Best of Frank Herbert I*

This is an attempt to create a functional-looking space-suit. I would probably treat it differently now.

Page 71 - *Doomflight*

The cover for an old G.N. Smith book. The Art Director kept sending it back to me to make the face more repugnant. Then he complained that I'd gone too far.

Page 72 - *Country of the Dead*

I really feel that this job is let down by the poorly-rendered background; a shame as the book is an intelligent and haunting story.

Page 73 - *Alien Landscape - The End of the World*

This is from another collaboration with the Holdstock-Edwards team. I think this is a case where the idea is not matched by my technical ability. Which is another way of saying that although this is an effective image, it is pretty poorly painted. Some friends have this one on their wall. It is an inevitable rule that friends always choose the work that embarasses you most.

Page 73 - *Hot Favourites*

This was an advertising job. Although the slightly "jokey" feel seemed apropriate at the time this is not one of my favourites.

Page 74 - *Messenger of Zhuvastou*

This is actually my friend Henry who patiently posed while I photographed him. The muscles are not his however, and nor is the shirt which owes something to Doc Savage. As is frequently the case with my work, the background is rather poorly painted, a bad habit which I am trying to correct.

Page 74 - *Twala*

This was one of my contributions to a film proposed by David Wickes who is well-known for *Chandlertown* and the *Jack the Ripper* TV series with Michael Caine. This venture into the film world was the antithesis of my experience with *Incubus*, as David Wickes was enthusiastic and clear about what he wanted. It was great fun to be in on the early stages of planning a film with the feeling that I was genuinely contributing something along with the other artists, Terry Oakes and Julek Heller. Unfortunately, I don't think that the film, provisionally titled *Empire of the Lost Kings* ever made it onto the screen.

Page 75 - *Bishop's Heir*

Essentially a painting of me wearing my girlfriend's kaftan. This is the sort of simple composition that I like and feel is usually necessary for something as small as a bookjacket. I like to be able to see my pictures from the other side of the bookshop. In this respect I think strength often relies on simplicity. The bright red was achieved by glazing thin layers of paint over a white background on which the shadows had been previously painted in green; a useful, but time-consuming, technique to get a really strong colour.

Page 76 - *Classic Rock*

An album cover and another bad background.

Page 77 - *Slazenger Gold*

A proportion of my work falls outside the realms of S.F. or Fantasy. I suppose this advertising job just about qualifies for inclusion in this book. The clients wanted me to reproduce some of the atmosphere of *Tombworld* and although they seemed pleased, I think it is only partially successful in this respect. It's quite a large painting done on hardboard. Someone else did the lettering on the raquet. Hand lettering is not one of my strengths.

Page 79 - *Crypt of the Sorcerer*

Another Fighting Fantasy book for Puffin. We never had books like this when I was a kid.

Page 80 - *Best of Frank Herbert II*

I enjoyed this painting but I don't think the book was ever published with this cover.

Page 81 - *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*

The brief for this job was simply to be "disgusting". Obviously the opening pod recalls *Alien*, almost inevitable with this story. The creature is partly based on a photo of an oyster which I found. Yum, yum!

Page 82 - *The Ghoul I*

This is the artwork for a 'novelisation' of the film and was painted directly from a film still. The medium was designer's gouache. I did two tightly painted copies of photographs at this time. The other one was a portrait of Catherine Cookson.

Page 83 - *The Ghoul II*

Although this is a fairly old painting now, I am still quite fond of it because I felt at the time that it was something of a breakthrough. It was the first time I had achieved the effect I wanted almost exactly and had relied on the idea in my head rather than some external reference material. Also, while it is clearly not a 'realistic' subject I had managed to give it not a 'photographic' reality, but a sense of conviction which I had been aiming at for some time. Readers of the book may have been disappointed as the creature only makes the briefest of appearances right at the end. The picture has been much reprinted and *The Ghoul* eventually metamorphosed into *The Incubus*. I prefer this incarnation however.

Page 84 - *The Nameless*

I seem to be the only person who likes this picture. It was done for a Ramsey Campbell book and is an attempt to catch some of his atmospheric horror. It is probably not explicit enough for a book cover.

Page 85 - *Vault of the Vampire*

A rather traditional vampire perhaps, but great fun to do and probably appropriate for a Fighting Fantasy book.

Page 86 - *The Curse*

This was written by Daniel Farson who is apparently related to Bram Stoker.

Page 87 - *When Evil Wakes*

One of my earliest paintings in oils and one of the few that has survived from this time. In a number of cases I made the mistake of applying varnish over paint which was not properly dry. This means that the varnish stays tacky forever. You have been warned!

Page 88 - *Terror by Night*

Hmmmmmmm!

Page 89 - *Swamp*

This was a difficult job. The story concerns a surviving dinosaur trapped in a swamp. Now, I've nothing against dinosaurs but they always strike me as a bit "cute". I tried instead to give a feeling of mystery and violence. Another case of it seeming more appropriate to give the general impression of the book than illustrating a specific event or character.

Page 90 - *The Farm II*

I can be as subtle as the next man! The Art Director asked me to go "over the top" and this is what happened. I had a bet with Val that they would never use it. In fact they cropped the picture just to show the pig and the man's leg. Strange are the ways of publishers. In spite of the brief I feel now that this is a bit restrained; perhaps I could have gone even further overboard. The red of the blood is emphasised by placing a greeny background beneath it and keeping the body a greeny-grey colour. Someone asked me if I slashed my wrists to get the blood colour. Some time after this job I painted the cover for the Monty Python record *The Final Rip-Off* using pictures of real guts for reference. A detailed painting of *real* intestines sounds gruesome, but it was not as effective as this picture.

Page 91 - *Fiend*

This book is about a Kremlin leader who comes back from the dead and forgets all about *Glasnost*. I started trying to do something more laid-back and suggestive but the guts kept creeping in.

Page 92 - *Chiller*

Another attempt to be mysterious and disturbing rather than directly horrific. The publishers asked for the trickle of blood on the glove. This suggests to me that he is taking off the glove whereas my original idea was that he should be putting it on, somehow a more threatening gesture, I think. He's going to examine you next. Open wide.









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