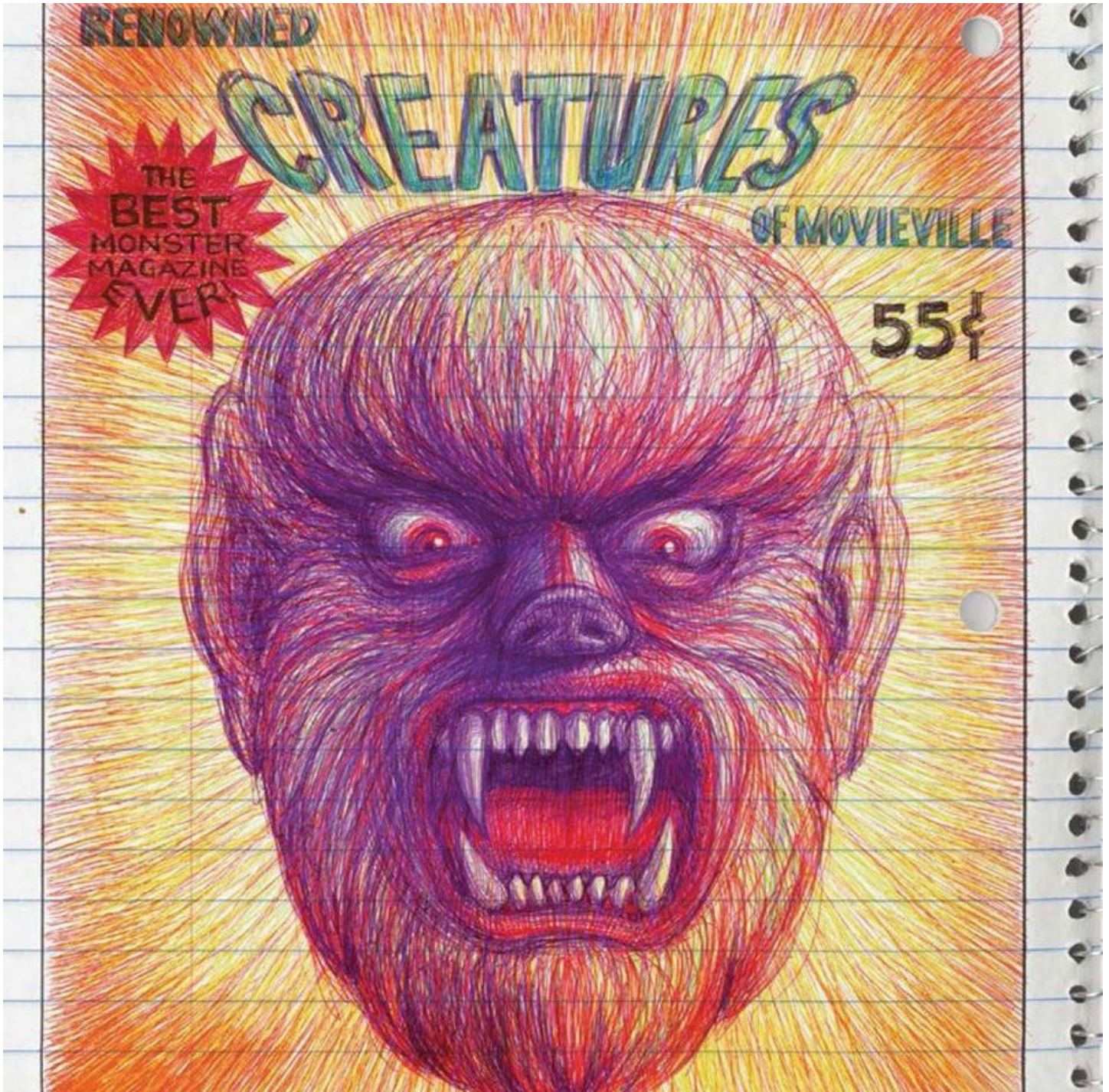


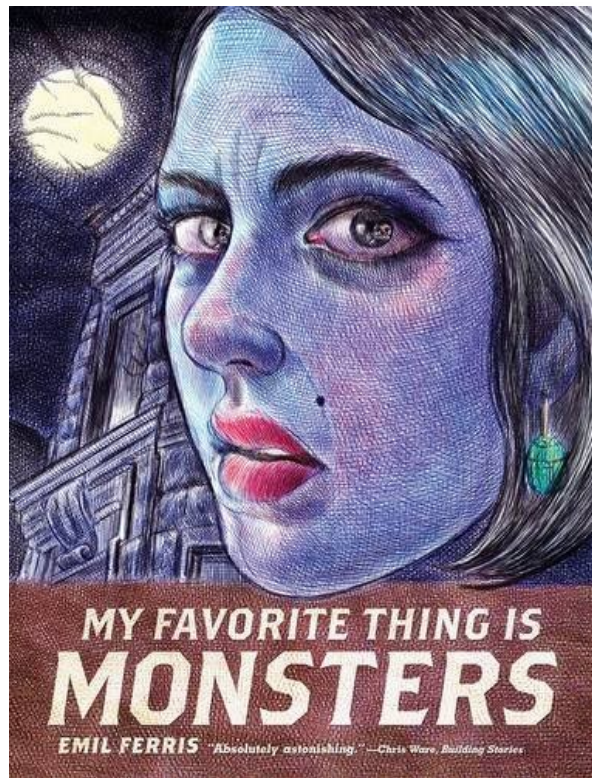
741.5

SPRINGTIME FOR SPOOKS:
EMIL FERRIS'
MY FAVORITE THING IS
MONSTERS

APRIL 2017— NO. FOUR

PLUS....E.C.'S CLASSIC CREEPERS!





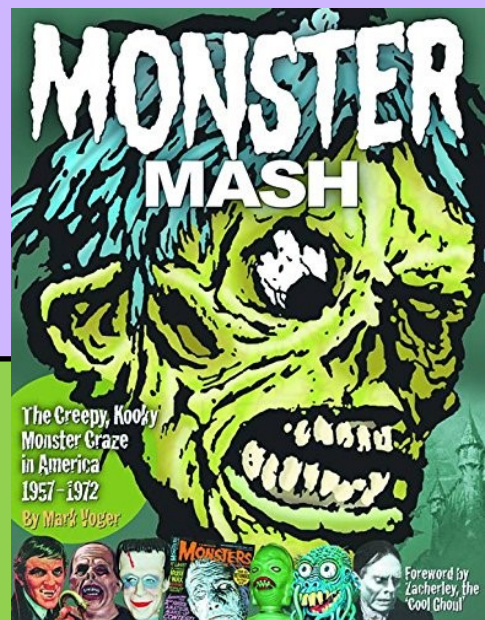
There were thousands of them. The creepy kids, the horror buffs, the monster fans. *Famous Monsters of Filmland* was their bible, black & white comics like *Weird* and *Vampirella* their catechism. Some of them have become household names—Spielberg, Landis, Carpenter, Savini. Most just grew up, out of fandom and into the obscurity of normality. But many others kept the fiendish fires burning into adulthood, using the power of fantasy to change themselves and their world, creating new subcultures—punk, metal, goth, the wild world of cosplay— that inform much of current popular art. Now Emil Ferris steps forward from those ranks with her mind-blowing opus, *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*. Set in Ferris' hometown of Chicago during the agitation of 1967, this graphic novel takes the form of notebooks, down to the blue lines, punch-holes and wire binding, filled with comics and drawings by 10-year-old Karen Reyes. The art switches sketchy pencils to raw-boned marker to fine detail rendered in colored pencil and ballpoint pen, depending on the subject and Karen's mood. Karen loves monsters. She draws herself as one, a wolfgirl who further rejects the standards of femininity by donning a trench coat and slouch brim hat to enact the role of detective. *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters* is a murder mystery, driven by the mysterious death of Karen's enigmatic neighbor, Anka Silverberg. So, in the tradition of *Encyclopedia Brown*, *Harriet the Spy* and all those snoopy tweens from Scholastic paperbacks, Karen endeavors to uncover the truth. But Anka's not the only



My Favorite Thing Is Monsters by Emil Ferris

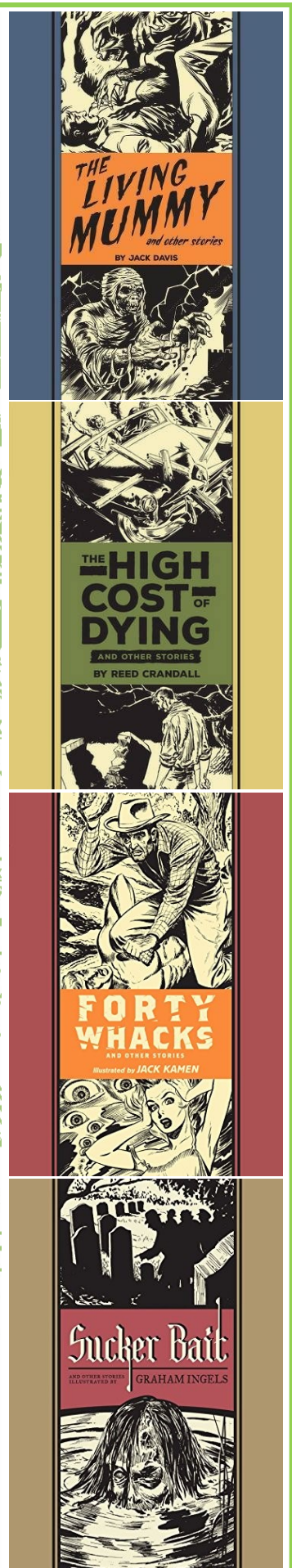
(Fantagraphics) 741.5 F417m

Beaumont, Central, Tates Creek one with secrets. The more Karen digs into Anka's haunted past, the nearer she comes to another killing much closer to home. But the plot doesn't begin to describe the incredible depth of this book, the first volume of two. It's a meditation on the relationship between high culture and low, a lament for the cruelty inflicted by societal expectations, a love letter to monsters and struggle with the burdens of humanity they represent. *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters* is the best graphic novel of the year. Read it now!



The monster mags and horror comics read so avidly by the heroine of *My Favorite Thing*... were but a part of a nationwide trend, as lovingly detailed in Mark Voger's *Monster Mash: The Creepy, Kooky Monster Craze in America 1957-1972* (Two Morrows). This book, available from Central, features the history of the horror hoopla that swept the US once the syndicated TV package *Shock Theatre* re-introduced Universal icons such as Frankenstein and the Wolfman to a new generation, along with interviews of monster stars like John "Gomez Adams" Astin, Jonathan "Barnabas Collins" Frid, Ed "Rat Fink" Roth and, yes, Bobby "Monster Mash" Pickett!

The template for modern American horror was cut by a short-lived comics publisher that began as Educational Comics, became Entertaining Comics, but is known by its legions of fans as simply EC. Beginning in 1950, the company's "New Trend" titles set a new standard for both writing and artwork in the comics industry. Though admittedly formulaic in their reliance on twist endings and shock effects, EC's tales of murderous spouses, suburban vampires and vengeful revenants recast the Gothic tropes of horror fiction in a contemporary form that influenced every major maker of horror culture from King to Kirkman, Romero to Del Toro. The latest in Fantagraphics' "EC Artists Series", *The Living Mummy* focuses on Jack Davis. Davis became world-famous for his hysterical movie posters, LP covers and art for *MAD*, *Time*, *TV Guide* and other mainstream magazines. But the gentle Georgian made his bones with some of the grisliest, gnarliest comics ever. His werewolves are the wolfiest, his maniacs the most maniacal, his zombies the chunkiest, with great gobbets of flesh rotting from their bodies, as best displayed by this splash panel of "Graft in Concrete". Garnered from the prolific artist's secondary stories for *Vault of Horror*, *Crime Suspensstories* and others, *The Living Mummy* includes my favorite of his "industrial" stories, "What's Cookin'", where a roadside chicken franchise becomes both motive and method for mayhem. The other Fantagraphics tome devoted to Davis, *Tain't the Meat, It's the Humanity*, showcases his lead stories for EC's best-selling *Tales From the Crypt*, many of which were adapted for the HBO cult classic. Horror hounds should also check out *Sucker Bait* and *Grave Business*, featuring the aptly nicknamed "Ghastly" Graham Ingels with his drooling loonies and putrescent undead; the slick, suave mid-century menace of Jack Kamen's *Forty Whacks*; and the prettiest horror comics ever drawn in *The High Cost of Dying* by the great Reed Crandall. Get 'em all @ lexpublib.org! EC FOR ME, SEE?



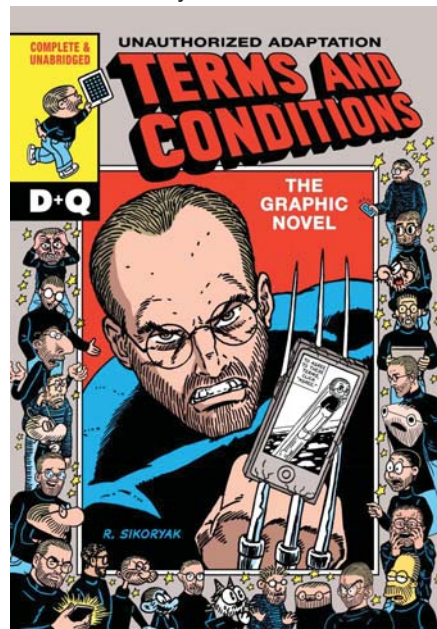


MEANWHILE

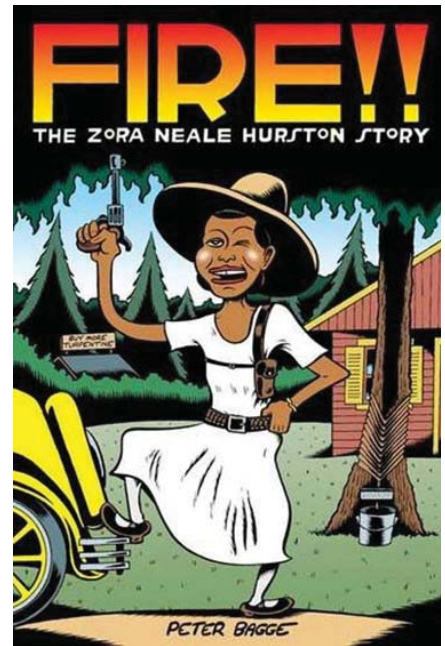
In real life, monsters usually don't come with fangs and claws. They come with guns. Two books newly arrived to LPL deal with the consequences of such monstrosity. A collaboration of publisher IDW and packager DC Comics and featuring work by many of the leading creators in comics, *Love Is Love* is a work of both tribute and mourning for the victims of the Pulse nightclub massacre in Orlando. Across the world and years, *The Best We Could Do* follows the family of cartoonist Thi Bui as they deal with the Viet Nam War, the remaking of society by the Communist victors, and life in the United States once her family has fled their unwelcoming homeland. Bui's spare brushwork captures the nervous



tension of a life under stress, while her subtle use of color and tone imparts a spectral quality, of history as an ever-present ghost. Already on many critics' list for Graphic Novel of the Year, this memoir is located in new Biography at Beaumont, Central and Eastside. On the other hand, if you like guys with guns, then party hearty with Frank Castle, better known as the Punisher. Written by Garth (*Preacher*) Ennis, the fourth volume of *Punisher MAX Complete Collection* features artwork by comics vets Howard Chaykin and John Severin. Published under Marvel's adult-oriented MAX imprint, these comics take Castle's war on crime into some dark and brutal places. A Punisher imitation, Killstrike, is unleashed on reality by a young father-to-be's crisis of confidence in *Oh, Killstrike!* Max Bemis and Logan Faerber pen a fierce and funny look at both the comic



book archetype of the jacked-up gun-crazy avenger and the dudes, most of them utter nebbishes who couldn't hurt a fly, that exalt such characters. Speaking of tough guys, that's not Wolverine you see on the cover above. It's actually the cartoonist R. Sikoryak, who in a fit of madness and inspiration has transposed the iTunes service agreement into comics. Sikoryak is an amazing mimic whose previous work, *Masterpiece Comics*, collected his literary parodies which redrew *The Scarlet Letter* as a Little Lulu comic and Dostoevsky in the mode of a 1950s Batman story. So every page of T&C is rendered in the style of a different cartoonist, from Mort Walker to Frank Miller, H.G. Peter to Peter



Bagge, Burne Hogarth to Matt Groening. It's a bravura act of pastiche that will leave you laughing...and actually reading what you're signing every time you click "I Agree". And speaking of Peter Bagge, his latest, *FIRE!*, can be found in new Biographies at Beaumont, Central and Northside. Following his comics memoir of Margaret Sanger, Bagge turns his squirrely spotlight on the author of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston, odd-woman-out of the Harlem Renaissance. For those good old-fashioned funnybook kicks, check out Jon Morris' latest collection of unlovable losers, *The Legion of Regrettable Super Villains*, from which we learn there's a right way to do a giant evil head—Marvel's bizarrely awesome M.O.D.O.K.—and a wrong way—DC's horrifically racist Egg Fu. Nefarious never-weres UNITE! **bw clcc**

