Dr. Frederic Wertham led a legendary crusade against comic books that nearly led to the destruction of the medium. However, sometime in the mid-seventies, Dr. Wertham gave up his crusade and chose to focus on the positive aspects of fandom.

No one knows why.

Until now.

Story by JOE SERGI
Art by DAFU YU
Letters by E.T. DOLLMAN

An imaginary Christmas Eve several decades ago.

My new manuscript is finished. Once people read "Still More Seduction of the Innocent," Congress will finally stop these crime comics!

We hope you have enjoyed our presentation of classical music.

Coming up here is a dramatization of A Christmas Carol.

I had no idea it was so late.

I'll just rest my eyes for a second.

"Expect the first ghost when the bell tolls one."

"Bong"

I'm here to take you on a journey.

"What? Who are you?"

Freddie! Get up ya bum. I'm on deadline here.

I'm the ghost of comics past.
Hey, I know you.

You testified after me at the Senate hearing?

Don't remind me. It's taking all my self control not to punch you in the face.

Ouch!

You're so old that showing you the past could take a while.

We better get going!

I'm in my childhood home in Munich... but what am I doing?

You're looking at comic strips in the paper.

Don't look so insulted, a lot of kids learned to read like that.

Not everyone turned into a juvenile delinquent.

I don't believe you.

Apparently, some just become self-righteous windbags.

I'm outta here.

Wait, you're learning have I angered you spirit?

Nope, I'm just mad now.

Maybe the next guy can talk some sense into ya.

Next? But who...

Face front true believer...
I'M THE GHOST OF COMICS PRESENT.  TIME TO HIT THE ROAD. WHERE ARE WE GOING NOW?

WE'RE ALREADY HERE. THAT HANDSOME FELLOW THERE IS TRYING TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE AT THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST. BUT, THE COMICS CODE WON'T LET HIM PUBLISH IT.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, WHY NOT?

BECAUSE YOU STIRRED UP SUCH A HORNET'S NEST THAT PUBLISHERS WERE AFRAID OF THEIR SHADOWS. SO, THEY CREATED A CODE THAT STIFLED ALL CREATIVE EXPRESSION.

IT'S TOO BAD. THAT DRUG STORY COULD HAVE REALLY HELPED A LOT OF KIDS.

BUT, I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE COMICS CODE. TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE, SPIRIT.

I HOPE THE LAST SPIRIT CAN CONVINCE YOU. YOU'VE GOT ONE MORE SHOT.

EXCELSIOR!

WHAT THE DEVIL? ARE YOU THE GHOST OF COMIC'S FUTURE? WHAT MANNER OF CREATURE ARE YOU?
YOU happened. Your new book convinced everyone that comics were to blame for the problems of the world.

But, after all the books were destroyed, the problems remained.

So people looked for other things to blame, and they didn’t stop...

HING CHU  LILLIAN CHESTNEY
JACK COLLINS  JAMES CHRISTENSEN
JACK BYRNE  LEONIE CLAIRE
BILL BURKE  ROLLIN COE
MARY BLY  GLORIA BYE
CARL BUETTNER WILIAM CONGREVE

*For the complete list see The Ten Cent Plague.*
TAKE ME AWAY SPIRIT. TAKE ME AWAY. I DID THIS!

And that completes our radio dramatization of A Christmas Carol.

I'M BACK. IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, I WILL NOT WRITE ANOTHER NEGATIVE THING ABOUT COMICS.

INSTEAD, I WILL FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE EFFECT OF COMIC FANDOM.

I SHALL CALL MY NEW BOOK: "THE WORLD OF PANZINERS." YES, AN EXCELLENT TITLE.

AND THE REST IS, AS THEY SAY, HISTORY.

TOO BAD THIS WAS ONLY AN IMAGINARY STORY.

The best ones are.

"NUFF SAID, MY FRIEND," NUFF SAID.

I DON'T KNOW.

I WAS KIND OF HOPING FOR SOME KIND OF WEIRD MACABRE TWIST ENDING.