

The New Criterion

Features

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Tales from the crypt

by [James Wolcott](#)

"The New Yorker," page by page.

When word arrived last autumn that *The New Yorker* was releasing a deluxe boxed CD set of every issue of the magazine published since its monocled dandy espied a butterfly on the cover of the February 21, 1925 debut, my first thought was: "Happy-doodle-day!"^[1] That may speak to a certain lack of excitement in my life, but for a magazine junkie, this was the mother lode, the treasure of the Sierra Madre. Never again would I haunt the flea markets for back issues from the 1930s and 1940s, hoping to luck into a John O'Hara story I hadn't read before, or a sporty Peter Arno cover. Professiona

James Wolcott

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