Are you a weakling, a pale Mollycoddle? Well, you too can be a two-fisted human, have a physique packed with powerful muscles! That is, if you can rediscover the secret which turned a frail student into...

**The Mighty Bruno!**

**Story:** Jonathan Burns
**Art:** Mark Midnight

Look at him! Lift that truck! And only a month ago, he was a feeble milksop!

Our story begins in the cafeteria of Metropolitan University.

We got him red-handed! This is the student who's been pilfering all those condiments from the cafeteria tables!

Sugar, salt, ketchup, oil, mustard, salad dressing! Good grief! The man's a walking grocery store!

Wait! I can explain! I need all that stuff to mix the elixir... the *Magic Strength Stimulator*!

Tch, tch! The poor fellow's cracked!

It was his babble about magic potions and elixirs that landed poor Fenway Fingle in the psychiatric ward...

I've checked your university record. You were the best student in the psychology department, a popular athlete. And then, suddenly... your whole college career went to pot! How do you explain it?

It's all Bruno Burdick's fault. I tell you!
AND NOW YOUNG FENWAY TOLD HIS STORY...

IT ALL BEGAN TWO YEARS AGO, WHEN I AND SOME OTHERS BEGAN RAGGING A POOR WEAKLING NAMED BRUNO BURDICK...

BURDICK WAS A SPIRITLESS JELLY FISH WHO ACCEPTED THEIR JIBES AND CAME BACK FOR MORE...

GOSH, MR. FINGLE, I WISH I HAD YOUR PHYSIQUE! NO GIRL ON THE CAMPUS WOULD TAKE A SECOND LOOK AT ME THE WAY I AM.

SO YOU'D LIKE TO BE A HIT WITH THE GIRLS, HEY? MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU! I'LL FIGURE OUT SOMETHING AND LET YOU KNOW.

BRUNO WAS BORN TO BE A LAUGHING STOCK...

I TELL YOU, HE'S A RIOT! IMAGINE THAT WEAK SISTER THINKING HE COULD EVER ATTRACT A GIRL!

I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA FOR A GAG. LISTEN CLOSE, MEN...

IT WAS FENWAY'S BRAIN-CHILD FROM THE START. HE FILCHED AN ASSORTMENT OF CONDIMENTS FROM THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA, AND WITH THE HELP OF HIS GIRL FRIEND LOLA...

OIL, VINEGAR, SUGAR SALT, KETCHUP! THIS SHOULD BE PRETTY POWERFUL STUFF, LOLA!

I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL BRUNO TRIES IT!

IT WAS A GHASTLY CONCOCTION: YET TO POOR BRUNO, IT SEEMED THE ANSWER TO HIS PRAYERS...

A FRIEND OF MINE JUST DEVELOPED THE FORMULA. IT'S A LONG-LOST ELIXIR—THE STRENGTH-STIMULATOR THAT GAVE HERCULES, SAMSON AND THE OTHER STRONG MEN OF HISTORY THEIR MIGHTY POWER!

AND YOU'RE LETTING ME have SOME OF IT? GOSH!

IT'S ALL YOURS, BRUNO. GLORY BE! ISN'T SCIENCE WONDERFUL?

A TRUSTING SOUL, BRUNO FOLLOWED FENWAY'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER...

GAHGG! WHAT HORRIBLE-TASTING STUFF!
But strangely, the elixir seemed to have a potent affect on the scranny Bruno...

Gosh, I feel stronger already! Guess I'll hurry down to the gym and try out my muscles...

Isn't that rich, Lola? The poor shrimp swallowed our gas, hook, line and sinker!

Ugh! I'm lifting it... got one end off the floor...

They crowded around the windows of the gymnasium, but to their surprise...

It wasn't much of a feat, yet it perplexed them...

He got one half of that bar-bell off the ground. Fenway, not bad for a little shrimp like that.

I can't see how he managed it, Lola. It must have been the power of suggestion. Yes, that's it!

It was then that Fenway fingle got his second bright idea...

I've had a brainstorm, Lola. I'm going to write a term paper for my psychology class... on the power of suggestion! I'm going to use Bruno's case as an example!

Oh Fenway, you're so terribly clever!

So, in his cruel and cynical way, Fenway victimized poor Bruno, hoodwinked him into believing that the magic stimulator was working miracles, and... it seemed to work!

A three inch thick telephone book, and he tore it apart with a twist of his wrist. It's amazing!

My strength is growing every day, and I owe it all to that elixir Fenway gave me!

Is it my imagination? Seems to me Bruno is growing taller... filling out!

Looks like that power of suggestion idea I had is working on you too, Lola. Pardon me, while I take some notes for my term paper.

Yes, the power of that strange illusion seemed to transform Bruno. Within a few months, he was performing amazing feats of strength... fantastic! My term paper will shake the foundations of psychology. I'll be famous!
WITH HIS NEW-FOUND STRENGTH, BRUNO JOINED THE COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAM. BY THE END OF THE SEASON, HE WAS AN ALL-AMERICAN...

I TELL YOU, THAT BURDICK IS A ONE-MAN TEAM!

A HUMAN POWER-HOUSE! HE COULD TAKE ON THAT OTHER TEAM SINGLE-HANDED... AND BEAT THEM!

BRUNO'S GROWING STRENGTH WORKED A STRANGE EFFECT ON HIS PERSONALITY, TOO. SOON EVERY GIRL ON THE CAMPUS WAS CLUSTERING AROUND HIM...

HOW ABOUT AN AUTOGRAPH, BRUNO?

CARE FOR A MILK-SHAKE DOWN AT THE DRUGSTORE, BRUNO? I'LL PAY.

NOW, NOW, GIRLS, DON'T CROWD ME.

AND WITH THE PASSING DAYS, A CHANGE HAD COME UPON FENWAY. FINGLE, TOO... AS HIS ARROGANT DISPAWN FOR BRUNO BECAME ENVY...

BLAST THAT BRUNO! HE'S GOT EVERY GIRL ON THE CAMPUS AFTER HIM... EVEN MY GIRL FRIEND LOLA!

YES, THE NEW BRUNO HAD A MAGNETISM THAT ATTRACTED EVERYONE, AND WHEN FENWAY TRIED TO REASON WITH LOLA...

WHAT, GO TO THE MOVIES WITH A PUNY RUNT LIKE YOU WHEN I'VE GOT A CHANCE FOR A DATE WITH A HAND-SOME SPECIMEN LIKE BRUNO? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!

HER TAUNTING CONTEMPT ENRAGED HIM. HIS LITTLE PLAN HAD BACKFIRED. THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY OUT...

YES, THAT'S IT! THE POWER OF SUGGESTION CAN WORK. BOTH WAYS! I'LL TELL HIM THE TRUTH ABOUT THOSE DROPS. WHEN HE LEARNS THEY WERE A FAKE, HIS STRENGTH WILL COLLAPSE LIKE A PUNCTURED BALLOON!

CLEVERLY, FENWAY BID TO HIS TIME. HE PICKED THE MOMENT WHEN BRUNO WAS DEMONSTRATING HIS GROWING STRENGTH TO AN AWE-STRUCK CROWD...

AND NOW FOR MY LATEST TRICK, FRIENDS. I'M GOING TO BEND THIS PIECE OF RAILROAD TRACK...

AND SO, CRUELLY AND CALLOUSLY, HE REVEALED THE SECRET TO BRUNO...

THAT'S RIGHT... IT WAS JUST A GAG! THAT ELIXIR WAS NOTHING BUT A LOT OF CONDIMENTS WE TOOK FROM THE COLLEGE CAFETERIA.

FENWAY, YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT! YOU COULDN'T DO THAT TO ME! I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY BEST FRIEND...
But instead of relapsing into weakness and timidity... of all the dirty tricks! Fenway, I ought to do this to your neck!

N-now wait a minute!

By all the theories of psychology, Bruno's self-confidence should have collapsed at that moment of truth. His illusion of strength should have vanished...

Grrrr! Try to make a fool of me! Why, you pip-squeak!

Something's wrong. He's still as strong as he ever was... and growing stronger!

Did you ever see anyone so manly? And to think that I once fancied Fenway fingle...

Lola! I've lost her... lost her forever... unless...

Unless I find the secret of his strength! It must lie in that fake elixir I made for him! If I could get a few drops of it and have them analyzed I could duplicate the mixture and use it myself!

Like the hypocrite he was, Fenway masked his feelings and visited Bruno's room.

Just a moment, Fenway. I'm taking my daily dose of that elixir!

Ah, yes... I was joking when I said it was a fake! You realize that of course, Bruno.

By the way, Bruno. I wanted to make up some more of it. If you could let me have a few drops as a sample...

Sorry, Fenway, but my own supply is running low. I haven't any to spare!
That next week, Fenway's despair reached its climax as he watched a nationally televised wrestling show, which featured...you guessed it...Bruno Burdick!

'I've never seen a man with such strength. If I could get my hands on that elixir, I could be the strongest man in the world! I could win back Lola...make a fortune!'

And now, with a magnificent cyclone kick, brutal Bruno slams his opponent to the mat!

For weeks he experimented with the stolen sauces and dressings. But to no avail...

'I've drunk gallons of the ghastly stuff and I still haven't found the formula. But I'll keep it up until I find the secret someday...'

As Fenway finished recounting his story to the hospital psychiatrist...

'It's a simple case. Really. The poor chap's suffering from delusions of persecution. He's quite harmless. Really. I would advise his release.'

But that night, as the psychiatrist turned on his television set...

'An elixir of strength! Can you imagine anything more ridiculous, doc? That poor guy's really cracked!'

And now, viewers, allow me to introduce the winner of our contest for the world's most powerfully developed body...

Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Bruno Burdick...winner of the title 'Mr. Universe!'

Great heavens! It's the man Fenway fingle told me about. I wonder if there can be any truth to that story about an elixir...a strength-stimulator?

Let's see, now. Suppose I start with some salt, ketchup and a little horse-radish...then afterward I can add some sugar and vinegar...then...