

Marge's Little Lulu Vol. 1 No. 46 — April 1952

Front Cover Observations

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Overall Scene & Composition

- The cover shows a light, neutral background with two illustrated characters in motion.
- One character in the foreground holds an open lace-trimmed candy box; a frog is leaping upward out of the box.
- A second character is moving quickly away from the scene, indicated by curved motion lines behind the feet.
- The title appears prominently at the top: **"Marge's Little Lulu"** in large blue script with a red angled banner for "Marge's."
- The Dell imprint appears in the upper-left corner.
- The month and price ("APRIL 10¢") appear in the upper-right.

Condition & Surface Characteristics

- A vertical crease runs down the middle of the cover, visible from top to bottom.
- Light surface soiling and scattered dark specks appear across the background.
- Corner rounding is present on all four corners, with the lower corners showing the most wear.
- Minor edge abrasions appear along the right and lower edges.
- A faint horizontal bend is visible across the lower third of the cover.

Ink, Linework & Color Quality

- The red dress, blue lettering, and yellow box retain strong saturation.
- The frog and surrounding motion lines are clearly defined.
- Slight fading appears in background areas but the main figures remain sharply outlined.
- No noticeable ink smearing or registration shifts.

Paper Condition

- Mild waviness suggests natural aging but no moisture exposure.
- Overall aging visible in the background tone.

Overall Impression

A structurally intact but visibly aged front cover with strong remaining color, moderate surface wear, a central vertical crease, and rounded corners. The artwork remains clean and readable, though paper aging and cover wear are clearly present.

Back Cover Observations
 Marge's Little Lulu Vol. 1 No. 46 — April 1952

FREE THIS BEAUTIFUL Gold-Plated KEY HOLDER

A special gold plated LITTLE LULU key holder is yours with every issue of MARGE'S LITTLE LULU. It's big, beautiful, and it's a fun gift to have! You can use it for keys to house, gym locker, lunch, dress, hat, coat, car, school, good luck charms -- tokos. Study chain will keep the key from falling about it unless...

"Everyone in the gang has a key holder exactly like this one. It's the most perfect gift you ever saw for girls and boys. And it's FREE with a year's subscription to MARGE'S LITTLE LULU!"



"Tubby and I have received thousands of letters from you asking for a key holder. So we are happy to offer it to you again. It's so beautiful that everyone who sees it will want one just like it!"

• MARGE'S LITTLE LULU is the most famous comics character in the whole world! Millions of youngsters and grown-ups too, follow her every month. And no wonder! She's the cutest, smartest little girl you ever saw. She is always thinking up a clever, new prank to play on the boys and she gets the last laugh every time. There will be oodles of fun for you in the months ahead when you subscribe to LITTLE LULU. Brand new, entirely different adventures in every issue. 12 Big Issues — only \$1.00!

Dear Pals,
 "Tubby and I are tickled pink to give you this lovely key holder. Won't you do something for us in return? Do your very best to help Mom and Dad and your teachers. I'll be seeing you every month when the postman brings you LITTLE LULU Comics!"

Little Lulu

F MEMBERSHIP DELL COMICS CLUB
 Subscribe to MARGE'S LITTLE LULU and receive this gorgeous certificate to the DELL COMICS CLUB. Comes in bright colors with pictures and signatures of all your friends. Also FREE Membership Card!

the whole family says!

DELL COMICS ARE GOOD COMICS!



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

DELL PUBLISHING CO., Inc. • 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. • Dept. 4-LL

(Please use this side for YOUR OWN SUBSCRIPTION)
 Please enter Subscription to LITTLE LULU Comics. Include FREE Gold-Plated Key Holder and Dell Comics Club Membership Certificate.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 1 year—12 issues \$1.00
 2 years—24 issues \$1.85 3 years—36 issues \$2.70

I am enclosing remittance for \$..... in full payment

Name Age

St. and No.

City Zone State

CANADA: 1 yr. \$1.20; 2 yrs. \$2.00; 3 yrs. \$3.00

(Please use this side for GIFT SUBSCRIPTION)
 Please enter Subscription to LITTLE LULU Comics. Include FREE Gold-Plated Key Holder and Dell Comics Club Membership Certificate.

Name Age

St. and No.

City Zone State

(Please list additional names on separate sheet)

1 year \$1.00 2 years \$1.85 3 years \$2.70

I am enclosing remittance for \$..... in full payment

ENCLOSE GIFT CARD TO READ FROM:

Donor's Name

Address

Relationship

Overall Layout & Design

- The back cover consists of a multi-panel Dell Comics promotional layout, divided into several boxed sections with vibrant red, yellow, blue, and white design elements.
- A large headline across the top reads “**FREE THIS BEAUTIFUL GOLD-PLATED KEY HOLDER**”, accompanied by illustrated character heads positioned near speech bubbles.
- The central image features a **gold-colored doghouse key holder** illustration, surrounded by rays to emphasize its promotional appeal.
- Multiple speech-bubble segments describe the Dell Comics Club membership and benefits, including references to readers and “the whole family.”
- The bottom half of the page contains subscription instructions, pricing tables, and a cut-along dotted-line coupon section.

Text & Visual Elements

- Several cartoon-style character faces appear, each rendered with simple linework and colored cheeks.
- The red vertical banner reads “**DELL COMICS ARE GOOD COMICS!**”
- A printed **Little Lulu** signature appears in a yellow block on the lower-left.
- The Dell Comics Club certificate illustration is displayed near the lower center of the page.
- Text throughout varies in size but remains legible despite age toning.

Condition & Aging

- The page shows uniform aging with a cream-to-light tan tone throughout the background.
- Light foxing is visible across multiple sections, especially near the top margin and right side.
- Minor stains and scattered darker flecks appear across the surface.
- Corners show light rounding; edges have small nicks and abrasions.
- Slight waviness is visible but no signs of water damage or tide marks.
- The coupon area at the bottom is intact and uncut.

Overall Impression

A well-preserved but naturally aged Dell promotional back cover with strong color retention in its red, yellow, and blue elements. Minor foxing, light surface wear, and corner rounding are present, but the structural integrity is fully intact, and all text and illustrations remain clear and vibrant.

Overall Layout & Structure

- The inside front cover features a full-page black-and-red cartoon sequence labeled “**LULU**” at the top center.
- The layout consists of **six rectangular panels**, arranged in two rows of three, each bordered with thin black lines.
- The panels follow a visual gag centered around crowds running toward signs promising “**FREE ICE-CREAM CONES.**”
- A recurring character appears throughout the panels, shown running or directing crowds with large, simplified line-art expressions.

Panel Content & Visual Elements

- The first panel shows the main character running across an empty space, with a small puff of dust behind to emphasize movement.
- Subsequent panels show large crowds gathering around storefront windows marked “**FREE ICE-CREAM CONES.**”
- Crowds are drawn in tightly packed groups, with repeated simplified faces and clothing to create density and comedic exaggeration.
- One panel shows a crowd stampeding across the scene from left to right, emphasizing rapid motion through repeated leg and arm positions.
- A panel near the bottom-left shows a fenced lot with a sign reading “**FREE PARKING,**” where the crowd has now gathered.
- The final panel returns to the storefront, where the main character stands before a window sign reading “**FREE ICE-CREAM CONES,**” with only one other figure present.

Text & Indicia

- The bottom margin contains the publication indicia printed in small black text:
 - Confirms **Marge’s Little Lulu Vol. 1 No. 46, April 1952.**
 - Lists Dell Publishing Co. address and subscription instructions.
 - Provides change-of-address details and publication frequency.
- Linework is crisp but lightly blurred in areas due to aging of paper and ink absorption over time.

Condition & Aging

- The page exhibits **heavy edge toning**, transitioning from dark brown at the margins to lighter tan toward the center.
- The left margin shows the heaviest oxidation, with a nearly brown vertical strip along the edge.
- Mild warping appears along the inner gutter where the page meets the staples.
- Small foxing specks appear throughout the light areas of the page.

- No tears or chips are visible; the panel borders remain intact.
-

Overall Impression

A heavily aged but structurally sound inside front cover page with strong print clarity, fully legible indicia, and intact panel artwork. The oxidation and browning are advanced but consistent with early-1950s Dell paper stock. All artwork and text remain fully readable, and no mechanical damage is present.



Overall Layout & Structure

- The image shows a **two-page interior spread** containing full-color sequential panels printed using mid-century Dell dot-matrix color methods.
- Both pages are divided into multiple rectangular panels bordered by thin black lines, forming a standard Golden-Age story layout.
- The left page mainly features narrative action between two characters involving a **damaged hat**, an attempted fix, and a chase sequence.
- The right page transitions into a **story-within-a-story**, beginning with a simplified visual breakdown of a character (“two eyes,” “a nose,” “two legs,” “a body”) before shifting into a woodland setting.

Left Page — Scene & Panel Content

- Characters interact in an outdoor setting with trees, grass patches, and a wooden fence.
- Early panels show one character reacting to a flattened hat, illustrated with wide-opened oval eyes and open mouth.
- Several chase panels depict active movement, using repeated leg-positions and trailing motion lines.
- A mid-page vertical panel shows the characters standing beneath a tree; the red dress of one character remains the central color anchor.
- Dialogue balloons are clear with strong black ink and consistent lettering.
- Lower panels display interaction on a sidewalk beside a grass lawn and picket fence, setting up a transition into storytelling.

Right Page — Scene & Panel Content

- The right page begins with **four isolated facial/body-part panels**, each with a plain pastel background:
 - Panel for “two eyes”
 - Panel for “a nose”
 - Panel for “two legs”
 - Panel for “a body”
- These panels have thick black outlines and simplified cartoon geometry.
- Subsequent panels show a character entering a wooded area with large mushrooms, stylized tree trunks, and softly colored green foliage.
- The layout shifts from boxed parts to fully illustrated scenes, representing a narrative shift.

Color, Linework & Print Quality

- Strong saturation remains in reds, blues, greens, and skin-tone areas, though dot-matrix halftone patterns are prominent on close inspection.
- Outlines are crisp, with only minimal ink spread in denser color fields.

- Each panel maintains register alignment with very little color offset visible.

Condition & Aging

- Paper exhibits **heavy toning**, with the gutter and edges darkening significantly toward brown.
 - Right-side page margins show the greatest oxidation, consistent with exposure and Dell's mid-century pulp stock.
 - Light waviness is present along the inner spine fold.
 - No tears, chips, or missing paper are visible.
 - Staples are not visible in this specific photo but page curvature indicates they remain firmly attached.
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Overall Impression

A heavily toned but fully intact centerfold with strong color preservation, clean panel borders, and stable page structure. The artwork remains sharp, and no mechanical damage is visible. Despite advanced oxidation, the pages retain excellent readability and visual appeal for a 1952 Dell interior spread.

📄 Inside Page Set 1 (Rug Stain & "Pin the Blame" Sequence)



Panel Content & Artwork

- The page consists of **eight rectangular panels**, each outlined in thin black borders.
- The setting alternates between an interior living room (with sofa, curtains, lamp, and shelves) and an outdoor area with a sidewalk and a tree.
- Dialogue exchanges revolve around a spilled stain on a rug and attempts to shift blame, with active gesturing and dynamic posture changes.
- Background colors include muted greens, yellows, and blues, typical of Dell's early-1950s palette.
- Characters are expressive, using exaggerated poses and wide mouth shapes.

Color & Print Quality

- Colors remain reasonably strong, though slightly faded from age.
- Halftone dot patterns are visible, especially in blue and flesh-tone areas.
- Black linework remains intact with no major ink bleed.

Condition & Aging

- Heavy tan-brown toning dominates the margins, especially the right side.
- Minor foxing specks appear in lighter background regions.
- No tears, holes, or chips visible; the page edges remain structurally sound.
- Slight waviness present from oxidation-related paper contraction.

Overall Impression

A well-preserved but heavily toned interior page with strong structural integrity. The color remains appealing, the printed linework is stable, and the panels maintain full readability and clarity despite age-related darkening.

Inside Page Set 2 (Tubby — “Water, Water, Everywhere”)



Panel Content & Artwork

- This page begins with a bold masthead: **“Marge’s TUBBY — WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE.”**
- The art depicts a group discussing water scarcity, with scenes inside a clubhouse and outdoors near a wooden structure.
- Tubby is prominently featured, interacting with other characters through humorous dialogue.
- Characters’ poses shift from sitting, kneeling, walking, to gesturing, giving a strong sense of activity.
- Background elements include wooden floorboards, dirt patches, grass areas, and simple structures.

Color & Print Quality

- Color saturation is good, especially reds and greens.
- Slight misregistration shows in some outlines, typical of Dell’s 1950s printing.
- Speech balloons remain crisp and legible.

Condition & Aging

- Edges show notable browning, with darker oxidation near the right margin.
- Minor foxing visible across the first few panels.
- No tearing or missing sections; panel borders remain intact.
- Gutter shadow visible on the left side due to page curvature during the photo.

Overall Impression

A vivid and engaging page with clean storytelling flow and stable colors. Aging is significant but does not impair readability or artwork clarity. The page retains good visual quality for a 1952 interior.

📄 Inside Page Set 3 (Hat Story — Prelude to the Story Sequence)



Panel Content & Artwork

- Features the beginning of the hat-damage storyline also seen in the centerfold.
- Consists of **eight panels**, each showing dynamic character interaction involving a damaged hat, emotional reactions, and bargaining to avoid repercussions.
- Settings include a sidewalk, grassy areas, a tree, and a picket fence.
- Panel pacing is brisk, blending action (running, pointing, pleading) with expressive dialogue exchanges.

Color & Print Quality

- Reds, blues, and greens remain vivid, though slightly muted by paper darkening.
- Halftone patterns clearly visible in mid-tone areas.
- Linework retains sharp edges with minimal blurring.

Condition & Aging

- Strong edge toning is present, especially bottom-left and right margins.
- Small foxing dots appear along the lighter backgrounds.
- No physical tears or chips; panel borders are undamaged.
- Slight waviness suggests natural aging but no moisture exposure.

Overall Impression

A structurally sound and visually strong page with significant but typical Golden Age toning. Artwork remains fully intact, expressive, and high-clarity. No material degradation affecting narrative or art.

Spine Observations

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Overall Spine Visibility

- The spine is shown from a low, side-angle perspective with the comic resting on a white wire rack, allowing a clear view of the spine's curvature and alignment.
- The comic lies horizontally, with the spine oriented toward the camera along the lower edge of the wire grid.

Spine Alignment & Shape

- The spine appears mostly straight with only a slight natural rounding typical of mid-century saddle-stitched comics.
- No significant forward or backward roll is visible from this angle.
- The cover sits flush across the rack, suggesting the spine is still maintaining structural support.

Condition & Wear

- Multiple small color-breaking stress lines run along the spine's length, though they are less visible from this distance.
- Minor abrasion is present at the spine edge where the cover meets the fold.
- The lower portion of the spine appears slightly flatter than the upper portion, likely from past reading or storage compression.
- No visible spine splits, tears, or areas of detachment are apparent from this angle.

Staple Zone Visibility

- Staple heads are not visible in this orientation due to the angle and the rack obscuring the direct view.
- There are no outward bulges or distortions suggesting loose or misaligned staples.

Paper & Surface Condition

- The spine shows natural aging and slight dulling of the red titling area near the top-left corner.
 - The cover edges along the spine maintain moderate firmness despite age-related wear.
-

Overall Impression

A reasonably well-preserved spine for a 1952 Dell issue, showing typical age wear such as color-breaking stress lines and mild abrasion but no structural damage or detachment. The spine retains its alignment and continues to support the comic cleanly and evenly.

Staples Observations

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Upper Staple (First Image)



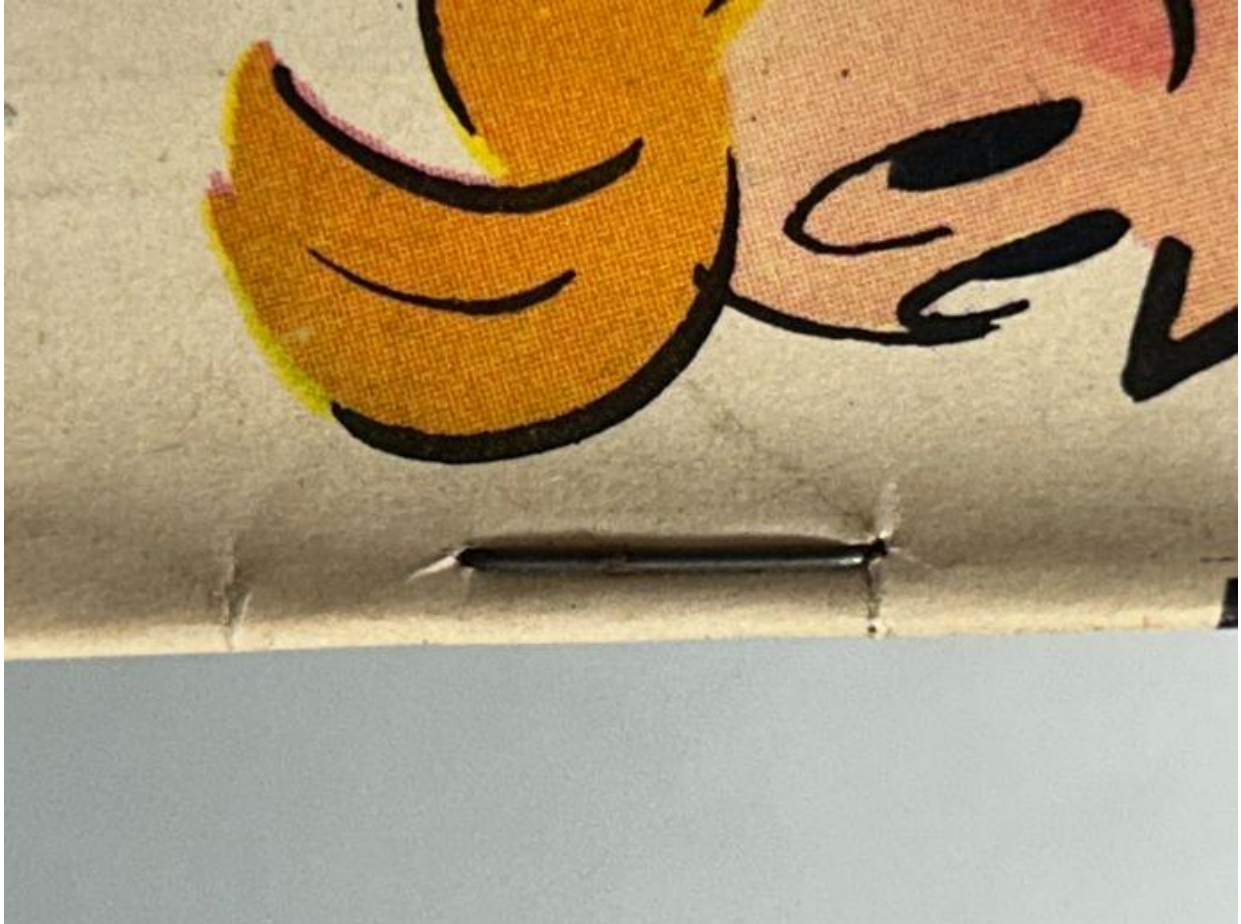
Staple Condition

- The metal staple appears **darkened**, indicating noticeable oxidation.
- The staple legs remain fully embedded, with no outward bending or lifting.

Surrounding Paper

- Small **stress tears** radiate from both insertion points.
- Fiber lift is visible along the entry slit, showing slight widening of the hole from age and handling.
- The spine paper adjacent to the staple shows **abrasion**, and the fold line has accumulated grime from long-term oxidation exposure.
- No full separation of paper layers is visible.

Lower Staple (Second Image)



Staple Condition

- The metal shows **heavier oxidation** than the upper staple, presenting a darker, almost browned appearance.
- The staple remains at a proper angle, not pulled outward or misaligned.

Surrounding Paper

- The lower staple hole exhibits **elongation**, indicating long-term tension at the fold.
- There are small **micro-tears** at both ends of the staple entry.
- A faint spine crease runs horizontally across the staple, likely associated with repeated opening of the comic.
- Ink along the character's hair area remains intact despite the structural movement in the paper.

Overall Impression

Both staples display typical Golden-Age oxidation with moderate structural wear. Paper around the staples shows tearing, friction wear, and hole widening—consistent with a well-handled but still structurally intact 1952 Dell comic. The staples remain firmly attached and secure, with no active detachment or splitting of the spine fold.

Brittleness Test Observations

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Paper Flex Behavior

- The lifted lower-corner of the interior page shows **stiff, resistant movement**, indicating advanced oxidation typical of early-1950s Dell pulp stock.
- The page does not fold or curve smoothly; instead, it forms a **firm, semi-rigid arc** while being lifted.
- The sheet shows **no natural suppleness**, suggesting the fibers have begun to lose elasticity.

Color & Tone Indicators

- The exposed underside of the page is a **deep tan-to-brown color**, showing extensive lignin breakdown.
- The tone is **uniform across the page**, which reflects long-term environmental exposure rather than isolated staining.
- Heavy darkening at the edges suggests **accelerated oxidation** at oxygen-exposed surfaces.

Surface Condition

- The visible inner surface has **slight granular texture**, which is consistent with paper fibers beginning to separate microscopically.
- No flaking is visible yet, but the fiber structure is visibly dry and compacted.
- No surface tears or chips occurred during lifting, but the rigidity indicates the page is nearing a threshold where cracking could occur.

Stress Response

- The lifted portion shows **sharp bend angles**, a sign that the paper resists smooth flexing.
- The point where the page transitions from flat to lifted shows a **hard crease edge**, suggesting that sharper flexing would likely produce cracking or splitting.

Overall Impression

The brittleness test indicates **advanced oxidation and decreased fiber flexibility**, placing this book firmly in the high-risk category for page cracking if handled roughly. While no tearing occurred during the light lift, the page shows the classic stiffness and darkened tone expected of heavily aged Golden Age newsprint. Careful handling is strongly recommended, as the paper is approaching brittle status.
