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GUILLERMO DEL TORO & CHUCK HOGAN'S

THE STRAIN™

VOLUME 1



DAVID LAPHAM MIKE HUDDLESTON DAN JACKSON





THE STRAIN™

VOLUME 1

STORY BY **GUILLERMO DEL TORO** AND **CHUCK HOGAN**

SCRIPT BY **DAVID LAPHAM**

ART BY **MIKE HUDDLESTON**

COLORS BY **DAN JACKSON**

LETTERS BY **CLEM ROBINS**

CHAPTER ART BY **MIKE HUDDLESTON & E. M. GIST**

COVER ART BY **E. M. GIST**



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First edition: November 2012 | ISBN 978-1-61655-032-5 | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed at Midas Printing International, Ltd., Huizhou, China



BECAUSE, AS A RULE, WE MUCH PREFER DESSERT TO APPETIZERS, THIS IS A THANK-YOU DISGUISED AS AN INTRODUCTION.

How gratifying it is to see these excellent comic books collected in a single edition! Having our story retold in a different medium—especially one so near and dear to our hearts—is, first and foremost, a tremendous compliment.

We wanted the very best for the Strain Trilogy as it made the jump from written word to visual narrative, and we carefully selected the best publisher, editorial team, cover artist, and storytelling team.

What we did not want was a rote regurgitation of character and plot. This is not an illustrated version of our novels. This is a graphic retelling: a visual translation, and a definitive one. As such, we asked only for the application of fresh energy and bold thinking. Other than that, we granted David Lapham and Mike Huddleston free reign and embraced them as true partners in this enterprise.

What an enormous leap of faith this was! You must understand that, as novelists, we were classic helicopter parents, fretting over details large and small and everything in between. We drove our wonderful editor crazy with our obsessiveness—but these were our babies, after all. Our very strange, very beautiful, very dangerous babies . . .

Now, at Dark Horse's generous invitation, it was time to send our red-eyed offspring away to art camp.

So, like any good, caring parents, we said goodbye . . . and anxiously held our breath. As we approved plot lines, rough pencils, coloring schemes, and finished art, our excitement grew. The transition into comic-book pages felt powerful and new. Other than a few nitpicky notes, most of our words were spent in praise of the creative team and how attuned, how alert, and how smart they were.

As a courtesy, each edition was forwarded to us for our approval. They arrived in our inboxes, one by one, like letters from camp. Now, that new-comic excitement with which all of us, as fans, are well acquainted . . . whether it is the feel of the glossy cover of a book fresh off the rack, or the instant gratification of digital delivery on your reader . . . imagine multiplying that by a factor of seven hundred and seventy-seven, and then you may imagine the level of anticipation we felt upon reading these installments, as the story's originators. Every time we encountered E. M. Gist's lush, hyperrealistic covers, every time we read Lapham's words or saw Huddleston's drawings, our hearts leapt. This was not an echo of another work—this was a brilliant riff, an expansion, a retelling of the tale.

Needless to say—we love it.

We know you do too. We are proud and honored of the spirited work done by Messrs. Lapham, Huddleston, Gist, and Jackson, and this is our opportunity to offer them a hearty thank-you for their fine efforts—as well as a profound thank-you to you, the reader.

Enjoy! And always keep a blade of silver handy . . .

—GUILLERMO DEL TORO
AND CHUCK HOGAN

They have always been here.

VAMPIRES.

In secret and in darkness.

WAITING.

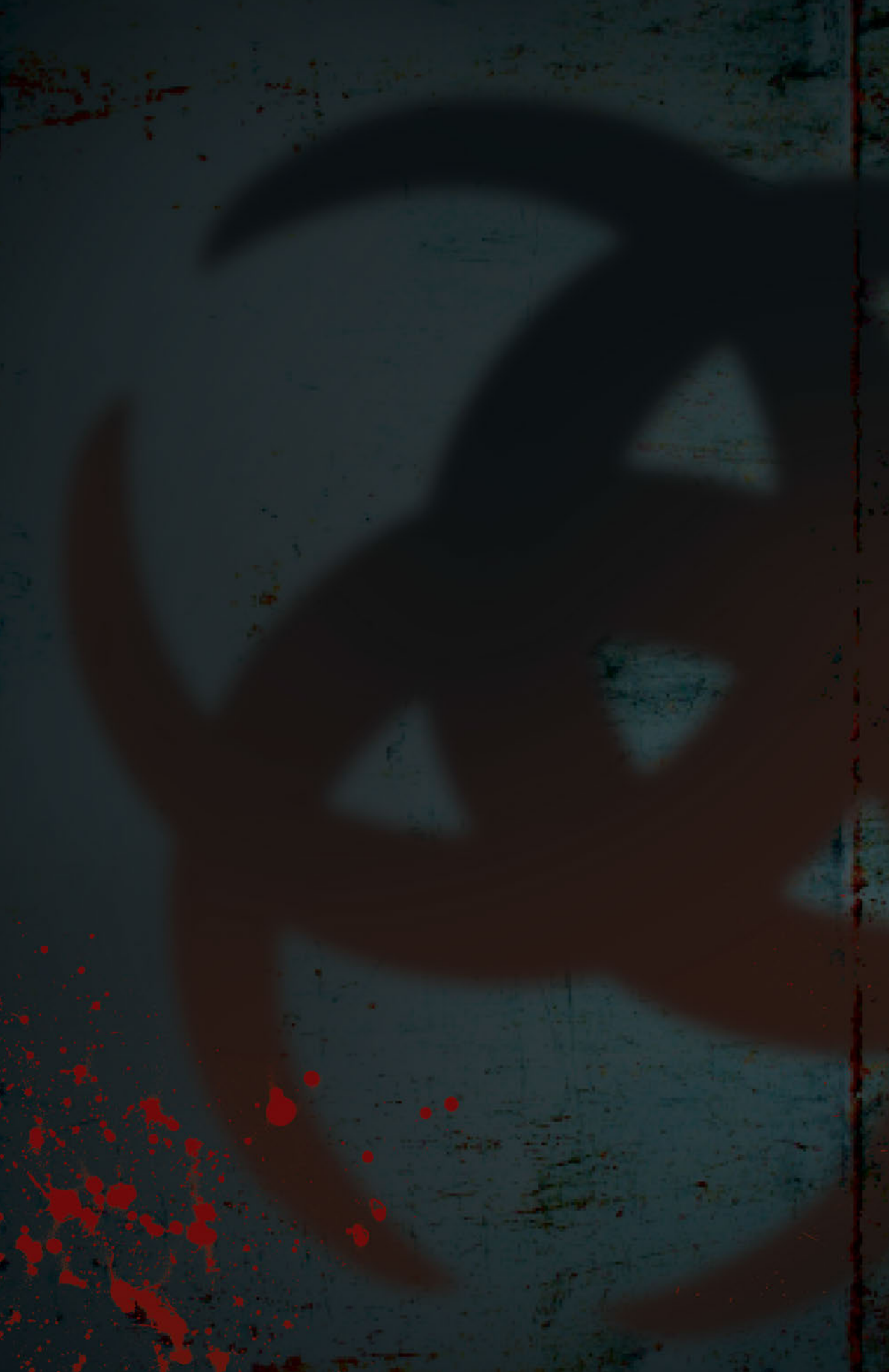
Now their time has come.

In one week, Manhattan will be gone.

In one month, the country.

In two months—the world.







ROMANIA,
1927...



ONCE UPON A TIME...



THERE WAS A GIANT.

A GIANT, BUBBEH?

YES, BUBBEH.

EAT, ABRAHAM, EAT. BUBBEH WILL TALK.



HIS NAME WAS **JUSEF SARDU**. THE SON OF A POLISH NOBLEMAN. HE STOOD TALLER THAN ANY ROOF IN THE VILLAGE.

BUT HIS GREAT HEIGHT WAS A BURDEN, A DISEASE OF BIRTH.



IT WAS HIS LOT IN LIFE AND IT TAUGHT HIM HUMILITY, WHICH IS A RARE THING INDEED FOR A NOBLEMAN.

AT TIMES HE STRUGGLED JUST TO WALK. HE USED A CANE TALLER THAN YOU, ABRAHAM.



"WITH A SILVER HANDLE CARVED INTO A WOLF'S HEAD, WHICH WAS HIS FAMILY CREST.

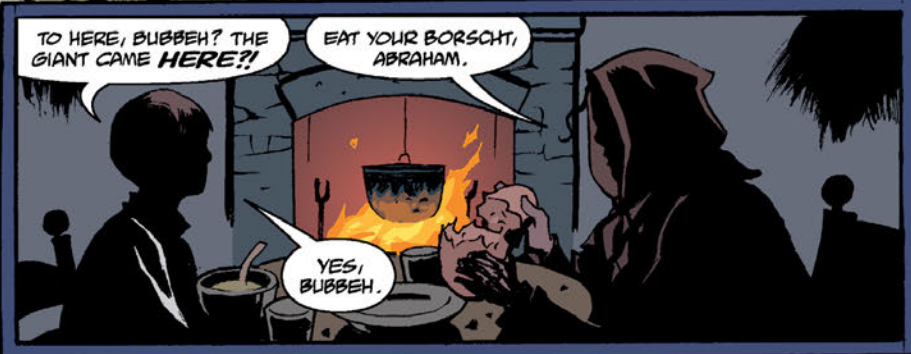
"HE WAS ESPECIALLY DEAR TO THE CHILDREN, AND HIS GREAT, DEEP POCKETS, THE SIZE OF TURNIP SACKS, BULGED WITH TRINKETS AND SWEETS.

"IT WAS SAID THAT MASTER SARDU LOOKED DOWN ON EVERYONE, YET LOOKED DOWN ON NO ONE.



"HIS AFFLICTION WAS A SOURCE OF SECRET SHAME FOR HIS FATHER.


"AT FIFTEEN, HIS FATHER AND UNCLES MADE HIM ACCOMPANY THEM ON A SIX-WEEK HUNTING EXPEDITION TO ROMANIA."



TO HERE, BUBBEH? THE GIANT CAME **HERE**??


EAT YOUR BORSCHT, ABRAHAM.

YES, BUBBEH.




"TO THE NORTH COUNTRY--THE DARK FOREST. THEY CAME TO HUNT THE WOLF, A **HUNTING** ANIMAL.

"YOUNG SARDU'S FATHER BELIEVED WOLF MEAT WOULD CURE HIS SON'S WEAK MUSCLES.




"THE DARK FOREST WAS FILLED WITH ALL MANNER OF BEAST.

"THEY ROAMED THE NIGHT AS IF DISPLACED FROM THEIR DENS, NESTS, AND LAIRS.



"CRAZY THE CREATURES WERE WITH THEIR CRIES AND WAILS, AND THE MEN COULD NOT SLEEP.

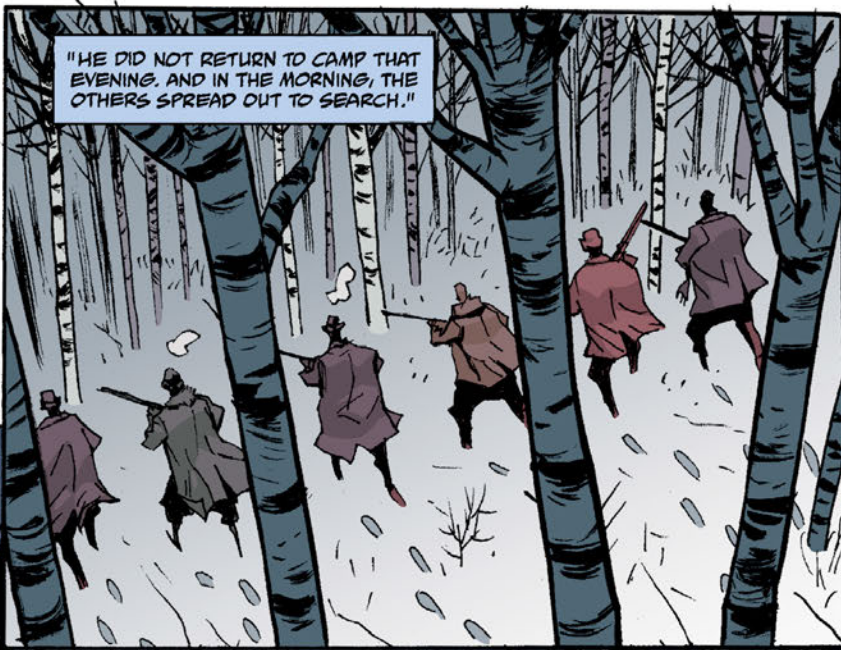
"MANY WANTED TO LEAVE.



"BUT THE ELDER SARDU WAS OBSESSED WITH OBTAINING THE WOLF, AND CURING HIS SON OF THE POX UPON HIS LINE.



"AND SO IT WAS THAT THE GREAT NOBLEMAN WAS THE FIRST TO BECOME SEPARATED FROM THE OTHERS.



"HE DID NOT RETURN TO CAMP THAT EVENING, AND IN THE MORNING, THE OTHERS SPREAD OUT TO SEARCH."



THAT EVENING, ONE OF JUSEF'S COUSINS FAILED TO RETURN, AND SO ON, YOU SEE?

YES, BUBBEH.

BEFORE MANY NIGHTS HAD PASSED THE YOUNG GIANT WAS THE ONLY ONE LEFT.

"THAT DAY, IN AN AREA PREVIOUSLY SEARCHED, HE DISCOVERED THE BODIES LAID OUT AT THE ENTRANCE TO A CAVE."

"THEIR HEADS WERE CRUSHED BUT THEIR BODIES UNEATEN."



"WHAT MANNER OF ANIMAL WOULD KILL LIKE THIS? NOT FOR FOOD BUT FOR SPORT?"



"SARDU COULD FEEL HE WAS BEING WATCHED-- STUDIED, FROM WITHIN THE CAVE."



"HE CARRIED EACH BODY AWAY AND BURIED THEM DEEP, THEN RETURNED TO FACE WHATEVER WAS IN THE CAVE."





WHAT HAPPENED, BUBBEH?

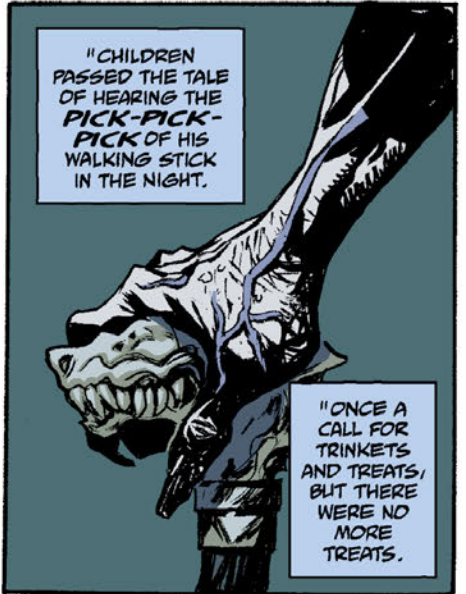
NO ONE KNOWS.

MANY MONTHS LATER SARDU RETURNED TO HIS CASTLE, ALONE.



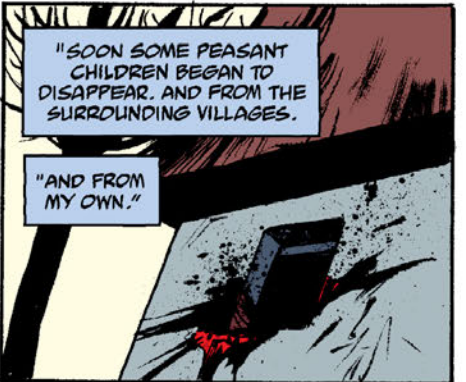
"HE SECLUDED HIMSELF WITHIN, CHASED OFF THE SERVANTS, AND WAS RARELY SEEN AGAIN.

"THERE WERE RUMORS HE HAD RETURNED WITH GREAT STRENGTH MATCHING HIS SIZE.



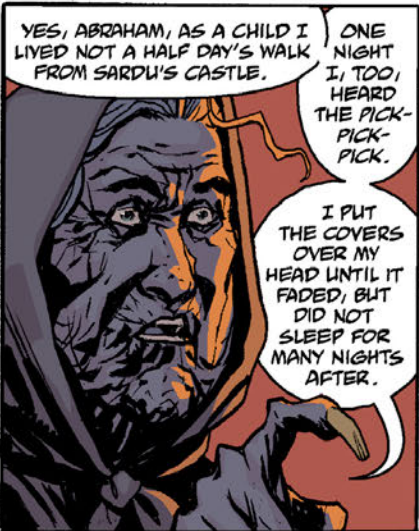
"CHILDREN PASSED THE TALE OF HEARING THE PICK-PICK-PICK OF HIS WALKING STICK IN THE NIGHT.

"ONCE A CALL FOR TRINKETS AND TREATS, BUT THERE WERE NO MORE TREATS.



"SOON SOME PEASANT CHILDREN BEGAN TO DISAPPEAR. AND FROM THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES.

"AND FROM MY OWN."



YES, ABRAHAM, AS A CHILD I LIVED NOT A HALF DAY'S WALK FROM SARDU'S CASTLE.

ONE NIGHT I, TOO, HEARD THE PICK-PICK-PICK.

I PUT THE COVERS OVER MY HEAD UNTIL IT FADED, BUT DID NOT SLEEP FOR MANY NIGHTS AFTER.



"TWO SISTERS DISAPPEARED THAT NIGHT."

THEY WERE FOUND MANY DAYS LATER. THEIR SKIN AS PALE AS THE SNOW AROUND THEM.

PICK
PICK
PICK

THE GYPSIES HAD A SAYING, "EAT AND GROW STRONG, OR SARDU WILL CATCH YOU..."

NOW EAT. SCRAPE THAT BOWL, ABRAHAM.

OR HE WILL COME.





WELL, ZACK, NOW I KNOW WHY YOUR MOTHER WON'T LET YOU HAVE ONE OF THESE THINGS.

BECAUSE IT MAKES ME HYPER AND ANTI-SOCIAL--

OH, YEAH! DEAD AGAIN, DAD!

**BZZZZZT
BZZZZZT
BZZZZZT**



HEY, BUDDY, I THINK YANKS/SOX TICKETS WOULD EARN ME AT LEAST ONE THROWN GAME.

WHAT'S THAT? IS THAT WORK?

BZZZZT



IT'S NOTHING.

718-555-2848
JFK QUARANTINE.



I'VE
CLEARED MY
SCHEDULE ALL
WEEKEND. IT'S
JUST YOU AND
ME.

HERE,
CHECK
THESE
OUT.

THEY'RE FOR
THE OCCULTATION
TOMORROW.



YOU
MEAN THE
ECLIPSE?



IF WE'RE NOT INTO
BEING TECHNICAL
AND LEARNING
THE PROPER NAMES
FOR THINGS, THEN
YES, I MEAN THE
ECLIPSE.

YOU
HAVE
TO GET
THAT?

NAH, KIDDO.
THEY'LL JUST HAVE TO
GET BY WITHOUT ME.
THE WORLD'S NOT
ENDING.

BZZZZT



AT LEAST
NOT MY
WORLD!

RAHHH--

AHHHH!



STOP!

STOP!

STOP!

BZZZZT



GOOD
LORD.
I'M--

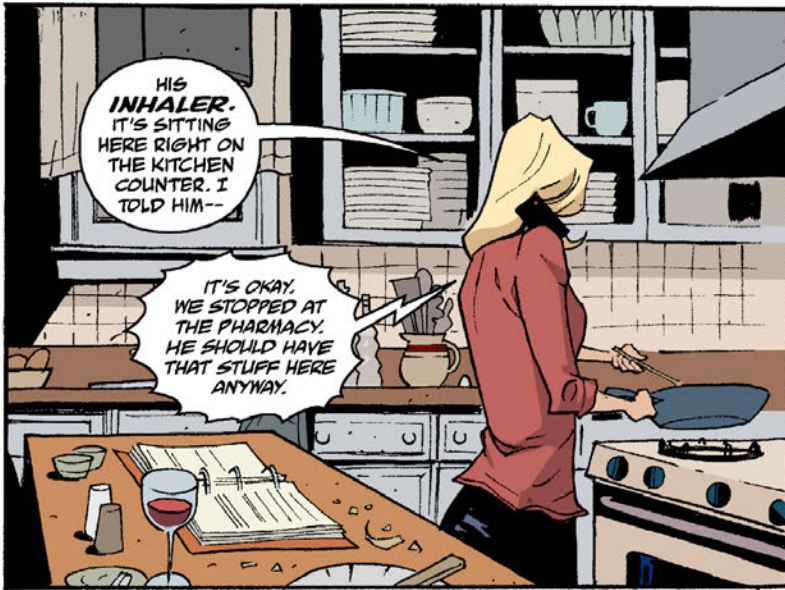
OH. IT'S YOUR
MOM.



HEY.

ZACK
FORGOT HIS
INHALER.

WHAT?



HIS INHALER. IT'S SITTING HERE RIGHT ON THE KITCHEN COUNTER. I TOLD HIM--

IT'S OKAY. WE STOPPED AT THE PHARMACY. HE SHOULD HAVE THAT STUFF HERE ANYWAY.



SO... MONDAY MORNING WE MEET WITH THE THERAPIST.

YOUR RINGER. YEAH, I KNOW.

MY WHAT?



YOU KNOW SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME SINCE YOU WENT ON FOR AN HOUR ABOUT HOW I USED TO DRINK.

DID I LIE, EPHRAIM?

HE'S MY SON.



AND YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HIS DAD AND YOU GET HIM EVERY OTHER WEEKEND. THAT'S MORE THAN GENEROUS VISITATION RIGHTS.

BUT WHAT'S BEST FOR ZACK IS TO HAVE ONE HOME HERE WITH ME.

YOU MEAN YOU AND MATT.



AND HIS FRIENDS AND SCHOOL AND HIS REAL, STABLE, SAFE LIFE. YOU AREN'T SAVING HIM, EPHRAIM. THIS ISN'T THE C.D.C. AND ZACK'S NOT A DISEASE--

--AAAHHHH MATT SAYS I'M LETTING YOU SUCK ME INTO YOUR EGO TRIP AGAIN.



WELL, FUCK MATT.

THIS IS WHY WE'RE GOING TO THE THERAPIST. SHE'LL MAKE A RECOMMENDATION AND THE COURT WILL DECIDE.

LOOK, KELLY, I'VE GOT A WEEKEND WITH MY SON TO GET BACK TO.

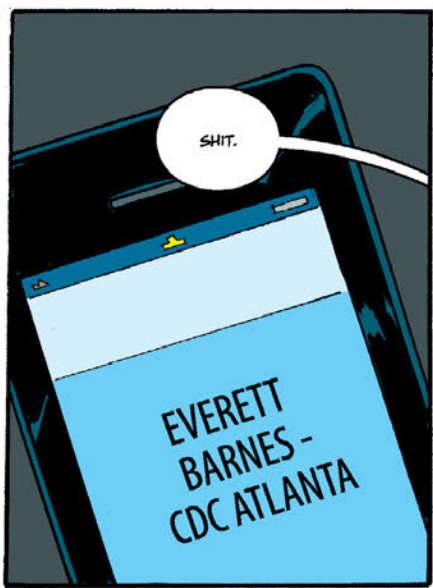


GODDAMMIT.

COME ON, DAD!

COMING!

BZZZZT



SHIT.

EVERETT
BARNES -
CDC ATLANTA



EPHRAIM? IT'S BARNES. I'VE GOT THE CALL FROM D.C. YOUR CANARY TEAM IS EN ROUTE TO J.F.K. NOW. HOW QUICKLY CAN YOU MEET THEM?

J.F.K.? WELL, ACTUALLY, DIRECTOR, THIS WEEKEND--



YOU SAW THE PLANE ON T.Y....?

THE PLANE? NO. I--



YOU'D BETTER TAKE A LOCK...

AWWW...



...**FOUR** HOURS PASSES WITH STILL NO COMMUNICATION WITH FLIGHT 753...

BOEING 777 MYSTERY. JFK in lockdown. Terrorist scare or simple power outage?



AIRPORT AUTHORITIES AREN'T SPEAKING YET, BUT A HAZMAT TEAM HAS ARRIVED ON SCENE, SO WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE...

SO WHAT IS IT, BARNES? SARS? BIRD FLU? DID SOMEONE DIE ON THE PLANE?

NEAR AS WE CAN TELL, EPHRAIM...

...THEY'RE ALL DEAD.

J.F.K. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...

THE PILOT WAS IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE TOWER UNTIL SIX MINUTES AFTER TOUCHDOWN, THEN EVERYTHING WENT DEAD.

NO COMMUNICATION, NO MOVEMENT. NO NOISE. THE TECHS TELL ME THEIR EQUIPMENT PICKS UP NOTHING. IT'S COMPLETELY SILENT INSIDE. THE SHADES ARE ALL DRAWN.

THE EXTERIOR EMERGENCY RELEASES APPEAR JAMMED SHUT FROM THE INSIDE. IT'S BEEN NEAR FIVE HOURS AND THE THING IS SEALED UP TIGHTER THAN A COFFIN.



POSSIBLY SOME KIND OF TOXIN. MAYBE TERRORISM. YOU HAVE NO SAMPLES YET?



NOTHING. BARNES WANTS ALL PRESS INFORMATION TO COME FROM US. HE WANTS YOU OUT IN FRONT OF REPORTERS IN AN HOUR.

BE RIGHT BUT NOT OVER-DRAMATIC. PLANES AND POSSIBLE TERRORISM ARE A HUGE PUBLIC ANXIETY.

CHRIST, JIM, CAN'T HE WAIT TILL WE SEE WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

NO COMMENT.



HOW LONG WAS IT FROM WHEN THE PLANE LANDED TILL IT WENT DARK, NORA?

ONLY SIX MINUTES.



WHATEVER IT WAS MUST HAVE OVERPOWERED THEM IMMEDIATELY.



ALL THE SHADES ARE DRAWN? WHY WOULD THEY ALL BE DRAWN?

DR. GOOD-WEATHER! I'M M--

YOU! WHY DID YOU WAIT SO LONG TO CALL US?



ANYTHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS YOU IMMEDIATELY CALL HAZMAT **FIRST** AND CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL **SECOND**, YOU GOT ME?

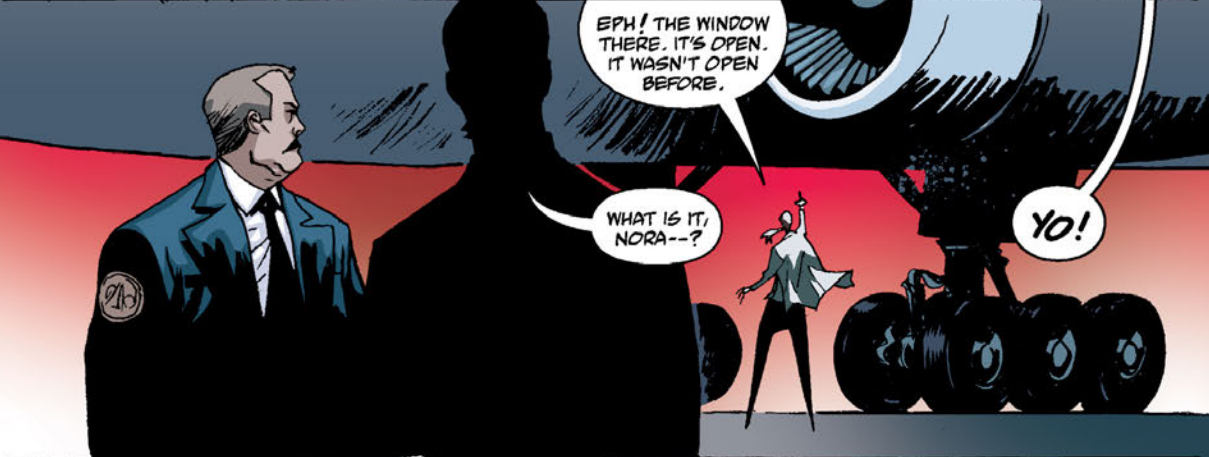


HAS ANYONE GONE IN THE PLANE YET, AND HAVE THEY BEEN QUARANTINED?

N-NO. NO ONE. WE STILL CAN'T EVEN GET THE DOORS OPEN...



...IT'S LIKE THEY'RE SEALED FROM THE INSIDE.



EPH! THE WINDOW THERE. IT'S OPEN. IT WASN'T OPEN BEFORE.

WHAT IS IT, NORA--?

YO!



WE'VE GOT ENTRY. WE WERE HAVING A HELL OF A TIME, THEN THE EMERGENCY DOOR... THE SEAL JUST POPPED.

ALL ON ITS OWN.



OR SOMEBODY INSIDE OPENED IT.

WELL...

LET'S SUIT UP AND SEE WHAT WE SEE...





ZACK MUST NOT HAVE BEEN HAPPY?

HE TOOK IT BETTER THAN ME, I THINK. HAD TO DROP HIM WITH KELLY.



NORA, I--

SAVE IT.



ONCE WE'RE CLEAR, YOU BACK OUT AND LET MY TEAM TAKE OVER.

AND NOBODY LEAVES THE SCENE WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE MEDICAL TENT.

GOT IT, DOC.



OKAY, ON THREE!

ONE... TWO...



...THREE!

PFFFFFF

THUMP





THEY'RE ALL DEAD HERE, EPH. NO SIGNS OF PANIC OR TRAUMA, THOUGH.

LIKE THEY ALL JUST FELL ASLEEP.

KEEP CHECKING, NORA. THIS MAKES NO SENSE.



GAS MAYBE?



POSSIBLY. THOUGH NO SIGNS OF STRUGGLE OR VOMITING...

EVERYONE'S STILL SEAT BELTED.



CHRIST.

NORA, GET JIMMY AND KATE UP HERE TO TAKE AIR, CARPET, AND SEAT SAMPLES FOR TESTING.

I'M GOING UP TO THE COCKPIT.

IT'S PROBABLY LOCKED. YOU'LL NEED A PASS CODE.



NO,
IT'S--
--OPEN?



GNNNUHH...



WHOA!
SHIT!



**JIM!
JIM!** GET
THE MEDICAL
TEAM UP
HERE.
WE HAVE A
SURVIVOR.

HUUUNNN...
HUUUNNN...

ALL TOLD,
THREE SURVIVORS
AND ONE HUNDRED
NINETY-EIGHT DEAD.
LOGISTICALLY THEY'RE
GOING TO SPREAD THEM
OUT. ABOUT FIFTY TO EACH
OF THE MORGUES--
QUEENS, BROOKLYN,
BRONX, AND THE M.E.
IN MANHATTAN.

THE
SURVIVORS
WILL BE TAKEN
TO THE ISOLATION
WARD AT JAMAICA
HOSPITAL.

ALSO, THE
PRELIM TESTS
ON THE CABIN AIR
CAME UP CLEAN.
NO TOXINS.

IT
COULD HAVE
DISSIPATED
WHEN WE OPENED
THE EXIT
DOOR.



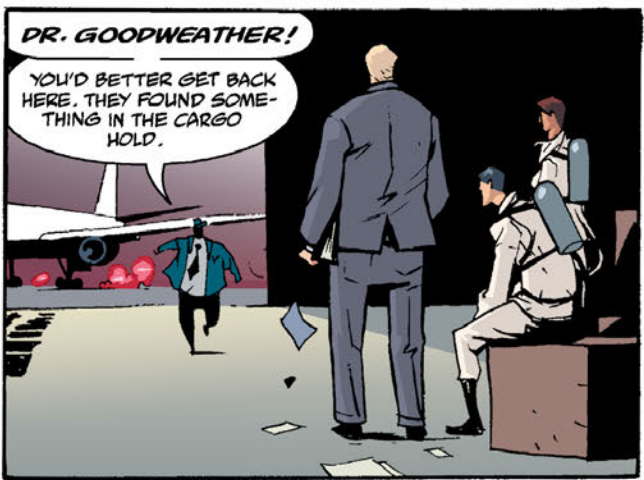
KEEP ME
POSTED ON
THE FIBER
TESTS.

EPH, THE
PRESS ARE
GOING NUTS.
BARNES IS
FLYING IN
BUT WANTS
YOU TO TALK
TO THEM
NOW.



I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO TELL
THEM, JIM. WE'VE
GOT SOMETHING
BRAND NEW HERE
AS FAR AS I CAN
SEE.

I MIGHT AS WELL
SAY THEY WERE
ALL HYPNOTIZED
BY THE AMAZING
KRESKIN.



DR. GOODWEATHER!

YOU'D BETTER GET
BACK
HERE. THEY FOUND SOME-
THING IN THE CARGO
HOLD.

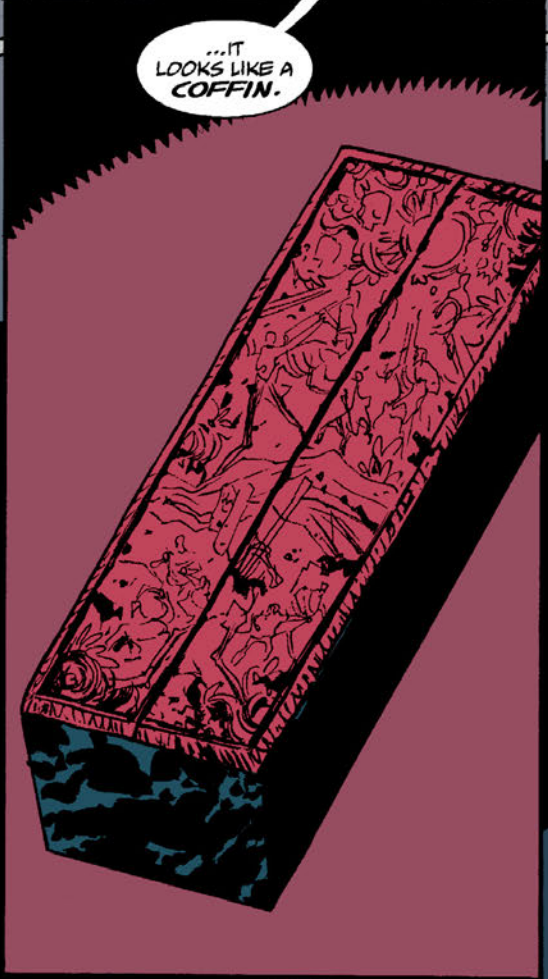


RIGHT THERE. IT'S NOT ON THE MANIFEST.

JESUS. THAT LOOKS LIKE A-- MAYBE IT'S A CABINET OR--

YOU CAN SAY IT, JIM. WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE...

...IT LOOKS LIKE A COFFIN.





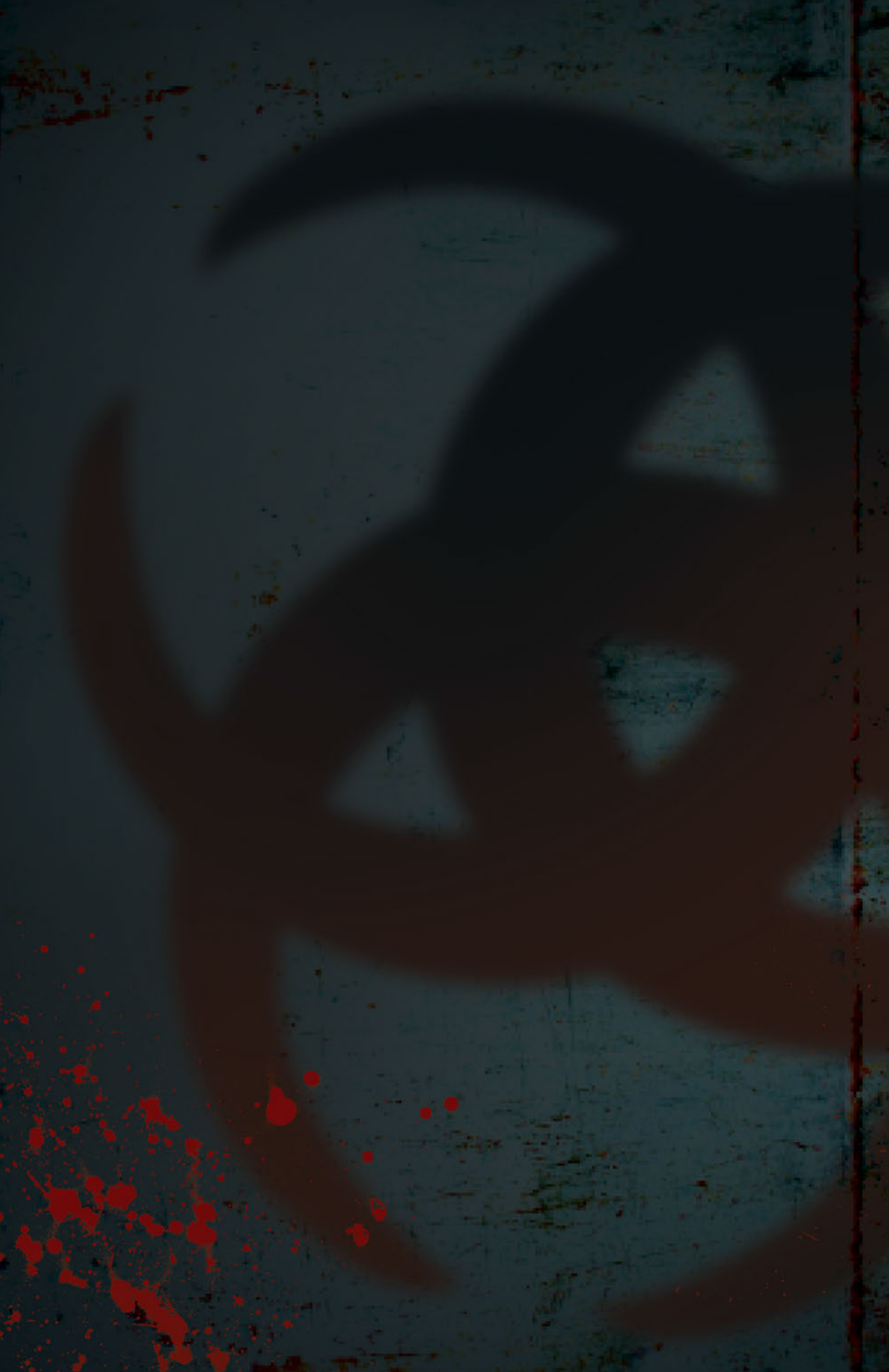
...THE C.D.C. AND PORT AUTHORITY HAZMAT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE ON SCENE. SPECULATION ABOUNDS AS TO JUST WHAT HAPPENED ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT 753 FROM BERLIN.

THIS ALL STARTED LAST NIGHT WHEN, A FEW MINUTES AFTER LANDING, ALL COMMUNICATION WITH FLIGHT 753 WAS LOST...

KLIK









ON THREE.
ONE...TWO...

...THREE!

THE
CONTAINER'S
NOT ON THE MANIFEST.
IT SHOULDN'T HAVE
BEEN IN THE PLANE
AT-- UHH!

GOOD
LORD. THAT
SMELL..

WHAT
DIED IN
THERE?

NOT DEAD. DANK.
DECOMPOSING...



...RICH...
ALIVE.

SOIL.

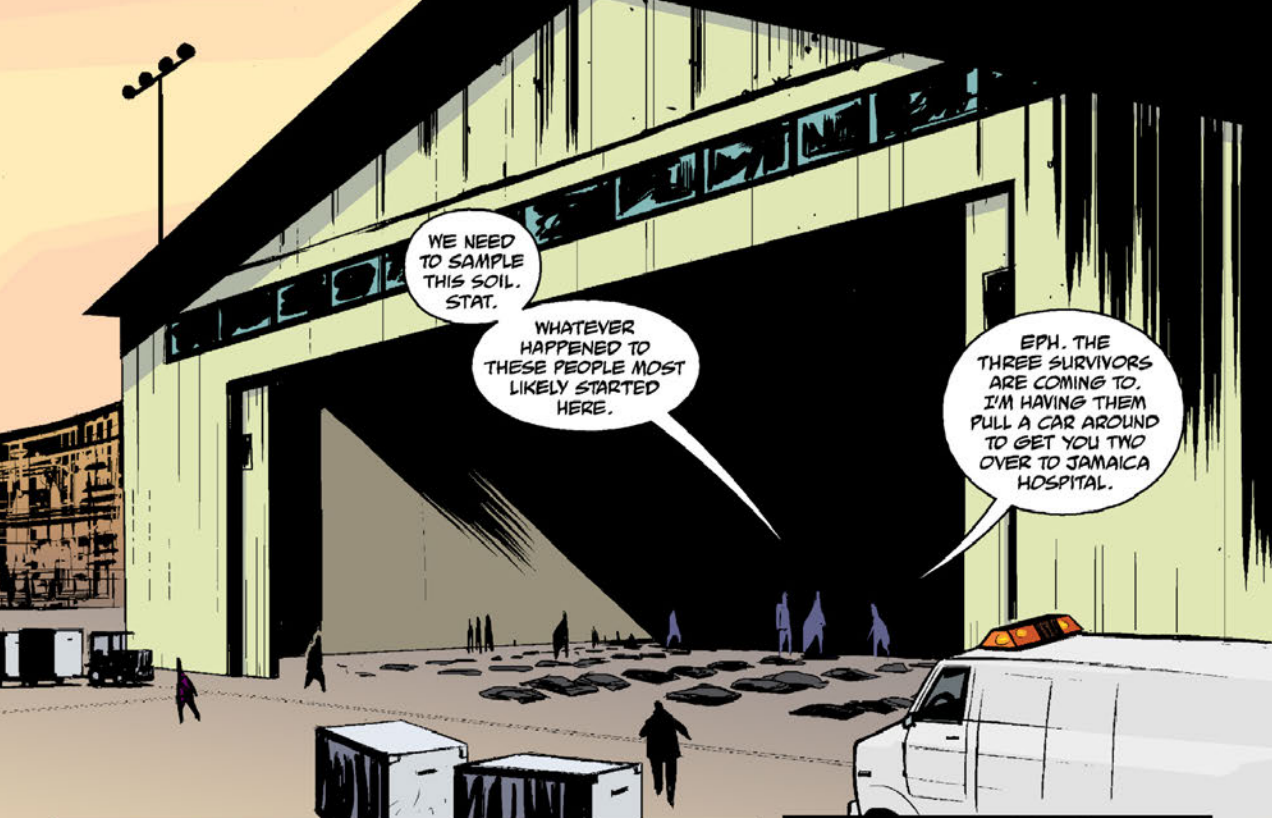
LOOK
AT THAT
COLOR. NEAR
BLACK.



WHY
WOULD
SOMEONE
SHIP A
BOX OF
DIRT?

THEY
WOULDN'T.
THERE HAD
TO BE SOMETHING
ELSE
INSIDE.

MAYBE
A WEAPON, OR
A CONTAMINANT
OF SOME
KIND?



WE NEED TO SAMPLE THIS SOIL. STAT.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THESE PEOPLE MOST LIKELY STARTED HERE.

EPH. THE THREE SURVIVORS ARE COMING TO. I'M HAVING THEM PULL A CAR AROUND TO GET YOU TWO OVER TO JAMAICA HOSPITAL.



NORA, THERE ARE TWO HUNDRED AND SIX MEALS SET OUT THERE AND NOT ONE FLY.

I COULD PUT A DEAD RAT OUT THERE AND THEY'D BE SWARMING IN MINUTES.

IT'S THE GODDAMNEDEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN.



STILL NO RIGOR EITHER. THE BODIES ARE JUST NOT DECOMPOSING.

EPH, THIS SCARES ME.

EVERY PIECE OF ME SREAMS WE'RE LOOKING AT AN EPIDEMIC...

"...I FEEL LIKE IF WE CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT IT IS AND **FAST**...

"...A LOT **MORE** PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DIE."

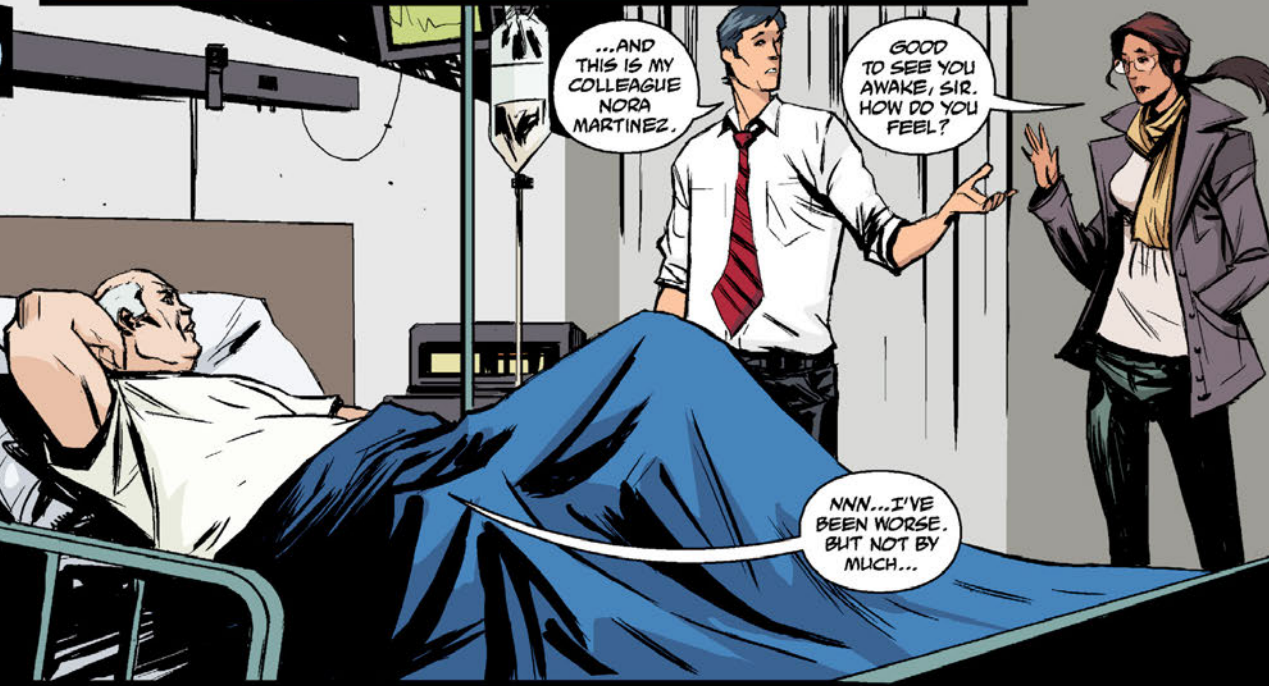


JAMAICA HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER...

CAPTAIN REDFERN...

DANGER
ISOLATION WARD
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY!!
QUARANTINE

CAPTAIN REDFERN, I'M DR. EPHRAIM GOODWEATHER, CHIEF EPIDEMIOLOGIST OF THE C.D.C.'S CANARY RAPID RESPONSE TEAM...



...AND THIS IS MY COLLEAGUE NORA MARTINEZ.

GOOD TO SEE YOU AWAKE, SIR. HOW DO YOU FEEL?

NNN...I'VE BEEN WORSE, BUT NOT BY MUCH...



WE'LL GET YOU SOMETHING FOR THAT.

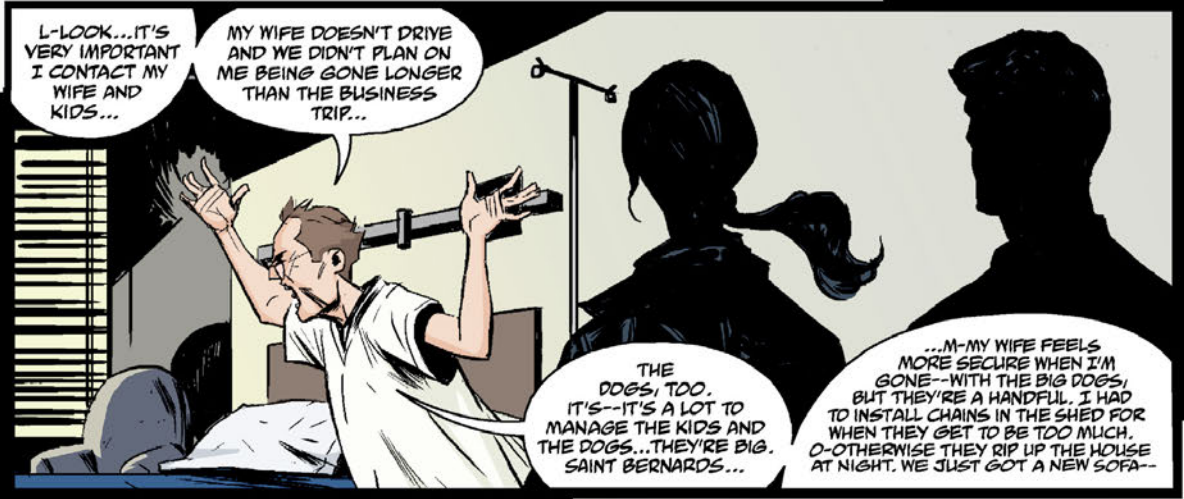
I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND YOU ALIVE ON THE PLANE.

WHAT... NNN...

...WHAT HAPPENED ON THE PLANE?



WE... WERE HOPING YOU COULD TELL US.



L-LOOK...IT'S VERY IMPORTANT I CONTACT MY WIFE AND KIDS...

MY WIFE DOESN'T DRIVE AND WE DIDN'T PLAN ON ME BEING GONE LONGER THAN THE BUSINESS TRIP...

THE DOGS, TOO. IT'S--IT'S A LOT TO MANAGE THE KIDS AND THE DOGS...THEY'RE BIG. SAINT BERNARDS...

...M-MY WIFE FEELS MORE SECURE WHEN I'M GONE--WITH THE BIG DOGS, BUT THEY'RE A HANDFUL. I HAD TO INSTALL CHAINS IN THE SHED FOR WHEN THEY GET TO BE TOO MUCH. O-OTHERWISE THEY RIP UP THE HOUSE AT NIGHT. WE JUST GOT A NEW SOFA--



MR. BARBOUR--
ANSEL--

--DO YOU REMEMBER THE LANDING ON THE PLANE? ANYTHING UNUSUAL? PEOPLE YELLING...ODD SMELLS...?



NO. NOTHING... MAYBE I HAVE AMNESIA... OH GOD...

WHAT IF I FORGET OUR ANNIVERSARY?



DUDE, CAN I GET SOME PAINKILLERS FOR MY NECK? DEMEROL? OXY? WHEN'S THE REFRESHMENT CART COME BY?



MR. BOLIVAR, ONBOARD THE PLANE WAS A LARGE CABINET. VERY GOTHIC LOOKING AND ORNATE.

SEEMED LIKE THE KIND OF THING SOMEONE LIKE YOU WOULD COLLECT.

ARE YOU KIDDING?
THAT SHIT'S AN ACT,
DUDE. GOTB PAINT AND
HARDCORE LYRICS
PACK ARENAS AND
SELL ALBUMS.

LOOK IT UP. MY FATHER
WAS A METHODIST
PREACHER AND THE
ONLY THING I COLLECT
IS **PUSSY**.

WELL, IT'S TRUE. COCKROACHES
SURVIVE ANYTHING.

JIM, I WANT
FULL QUARANTINE
ON THOSE THREE UNTIL
WE GET A COMPLETE
WORKUP. AS CLOSE AS
WE CAN GET TO A FULL
AUTOPSY WITHOUT
KILLING THEM.

TELL
THE NURSES TO
KEEP BOLIVAR'S CELL
PHONE AWAY FROM HIM.
A GUY LIKE THAT CAN
CAUSE PLENTY OF
PROBLEMS.

I'M
ON TOP
OF IT.

NOW WE
NEED TO GET
YOU BACK TO
J.F.K. DIRECTOR
BARNES, HE'S WAITING
WITH THE MAYOR AND
GOVERNOR FOR THE
PRESS BRIEFING.

YOU'RE
SHITTING
ME?

THEY
WANT TO GET IT
IN BEFORE THE
ECLIPSE.

THE...?

OH...
DAMN.

BZZZZZ

EPH.

IT'S
ZACK. AS
IF ON
CUE...

Caller: ZACK

YANKS 4 SUX 2.
Gr8 seats. Wish u
wer here. Z.

CHESAPEAKE BAY,
DARK HARBOR, VIRGINIA...

TODAY
ON "MONEY
ROUNDTABLE" WE'LL
BE DISCUSSING
THE STONEHEART
GROUP.

WHILE OTHERS,
LIKE BILL GATES AND
WARREN BUFFETT,
CONTINUALLY MAKE
THE NEWS...

...THE
STONEHEART GROUP
AND ITS ENIGMATIC
MASTERMIND, ELDRITCH
PALMER, HAVE QUIETLY
AMASSED A PORTFOLIO
PERHAPS GREATER THAN
BOTH THOSE MEN.

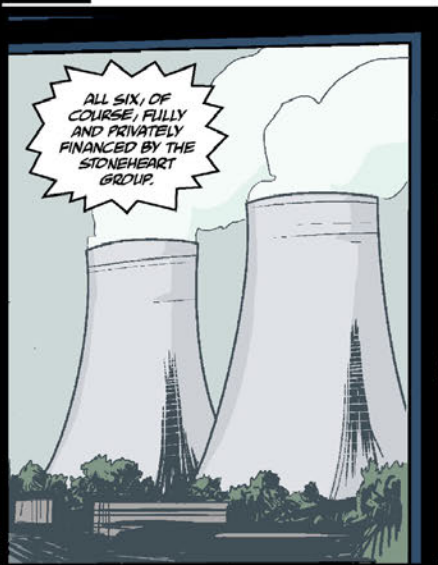
THEIR LATEST
COUP HAS THE
ENERGY-FUTURES
MARKET ABUZZ...



SWSHHH
SHOOOO
SWSHHH
SHOOOO

...AS WE'RE
LESS THAN A MONTH
AWAY FROM THE FIRST
OF SIX NUCLEAR
ENERGY PLANTS TO
COME ONLINE.





ALL SIX, OF COURSE, FULLY AND PRIVATELY FINANCED BY THE STONEHEART GROUP.



IT'S MOVES LIKE THESE THAT MAKE ELDRITCH PALMER ONE OF THE RICHEST MEN IN THE WORLD TODAY--

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "ONE OF," BOB?



HA, HA, HA, HA, HA...

--AND FOR A TWO-MILLION-DOLLAR BUY-IN HE'LL DO FOR YOU WHAT HE DOES FOR ALL HIS INVESTORS, AND THAT'S PREDICT THE FUTURE...



YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE'S STABILIZED, MR. PALMER. WHITE BLOOD CELL COUNT LOOKS EXCELLENT.

...ENERGY IS THE FUTURE, IT SEEMS.

LIFE!



IDIOTS.

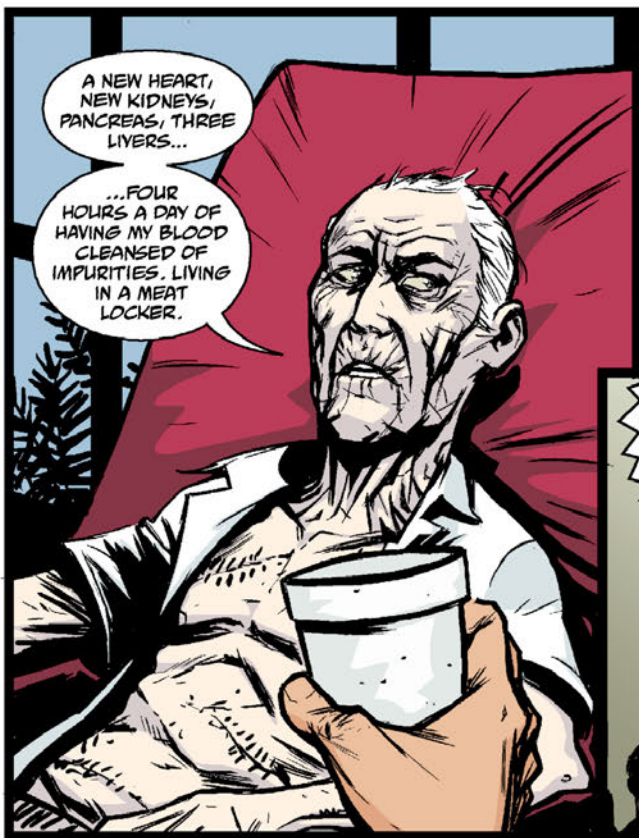
LIFE IS THE FUTURE, MR. FITZWILLIAM. THE REST IS... TRAPPINGS.



THEY TOLD ME I'D NEVER MAKE FORTY.

THIS IS WHAT WEALTH BUYS.

RAGEDY AT JFK. 206 dead, 3 survivors. TRAGEDY AT JFK. 206 dead, 3 survivors. TRAGEDY AT JFK. 206 3 sur

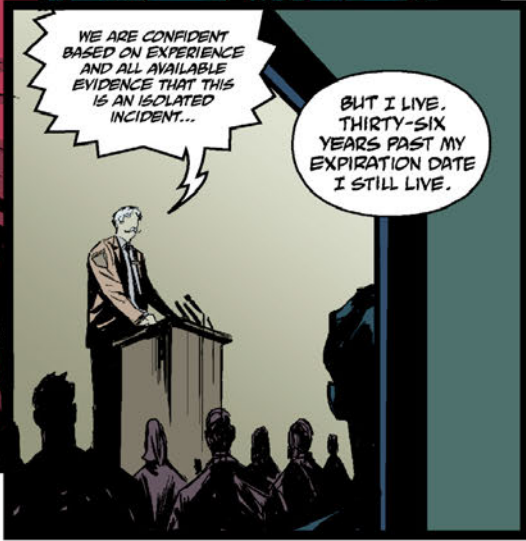


A NEW HEART,
NEW KIDNEYS,
PANCREAS, THREE
LIVERS...

...FOUR
HOURS A DAY OF
HAVING MY BLOOD
CLEANSED OF
IMPURITIES. LIVING
IN A MEAT
LOCKER.



WATCHING
PLASTIC FERNS
FADE IN THE
SUN.



WE ARE CONFIDENT
BASED ON EXPERIENCE
AND ALL AVAILABLE
EVIDENCE THAT THIS
IS AN ISOLATED
INCIDENT...

BUT I LIVE.
THIRTY-SIX
YEARS PAST MY
EXPIRATION DATE
I STILL LIVE.



SOON THAT
WILL BE THE
ONLY MEASURE
OF A MAN'S
WEALTH.



MR. FITZWILLIAM,
PLEASE SEE IF
THEY'RE READY WITH
THE HELICOPTER.

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE DR.
EPHRAIM GOODWEATHER,
THE C.D.C.'S LEAD
INVESTIGATOR. HE'LL BE
ABLE TO MORE FULLY ALLAY
YOUR CONCERNS...



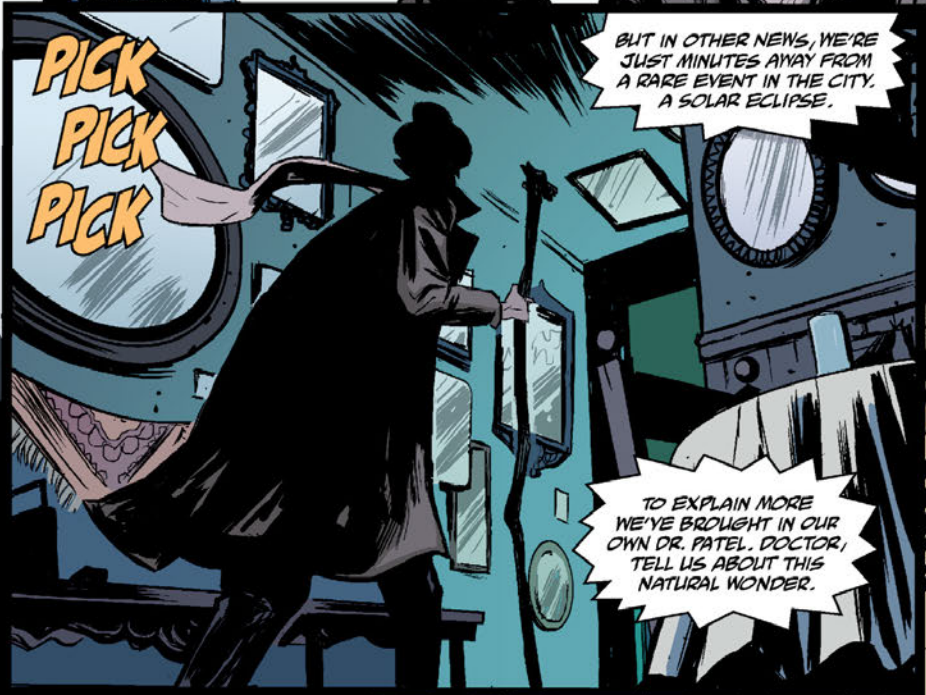
"IT'S TIME TO
RELOCATE TO
OUR MANHATTAN
OFFICES."

WELL, I--REALLY COULDN'T SPECULATE UNTIL ALL OUR TEST RESULTS ARE IN, BUT DIRECTOR BARNES IS CORRECT. NO OTHER SIMILAR OCCURRENCES HAVE BEEN REPORTED...

AT THIS TIME...

THAT'S REALLY ALL I HAVE. WE TAKE THESE MATTERS SERIOUSLY AND WILL REPORT MORE WHEN THE FACTS ARE KNOWN...UM...THANK YOU.

WELL, LOOKS LIKE ANSWERS ARE NOT FORTH-COMING FROM THE C.D.C. IN THE J.F.K. TRAGEDY.



BUT IN OTHER NEWS, WE'RE JUST MINUTES AWAY FROM A RARE EVENT IN THE CITY. A SOLAR ECLIPSE.

TO EXPLAIN MORE WE'VE BROUGHT IN OUR OWN DR. PATEL. DOCTOR, TELL US ABOUT THIS NATURAL WONDER.



WELL, JOAN, IT'S A FUNNY THING IN THAT WE CALL THE EVENT A SOLAR ECLIPSE--


--BUT THE TRUE SCIENTIFIC WORD FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING IS OCCULTATION.



THE MOON ACTUALLY "OCCULTS" THE SUN--IT BLOCKS OR HIDES IT BY PASSING IN FRONT OF IT, YOU SEE?



"--AND CASTS
ITS OWN SHADOW
ON THE EARTH.



"IT'S A VERY RARE OCCURRENCE IN
THE CITY, BECAUSE ONLY A SMALL PART
OF THE EARTH IS IN THE COMPLETE
SHADOW OF THE MOON..."



CHECK IT, MATT.
IT LOOKS LIKE AN
EYE. AN EVIL
ZOMBIE
EYE.

YOU'RE A
STRANGE BOY,
ZACK.



BRAIN-EATING
ZOMBIES FROM THE
MOOON!...

"ALSO REMEMBER, IT'S
VERY IMPORTANT TO WEAR
PROTECTIVE GLASSES.

"TO NOT DO SO COULD
CAUSE PERMANENT
HARM TO THE RETINA...

"...EVEN BLINDNESS."





WHAT--?!



SHIT...

HEY, HEY!



WHO THE HELL AUTHORIZED MOVING THE BOX? I HAVE A TEAM COMING HERE ANY MINUTE TO TAKE SAMPLES.



NO ONE, MA'AM.

I'VE BEEN HERE THE WHOLE TIME AND NO ONE'S SNUCK BY ME. NO WAY.



"HELL, YOU'D NEED A FORKLIFT TO MOVE THAT THING."

MROOOWWWW



OH, JESUS...

MRAWOWW MOWWRRR MEYOWW







STOP WITH THE QUESTIONS, BRO. JUST PULL YOUR FINGERS OUT OF YOUR SISTER'S CONCHA AND COME GET ME.



THE VAN IS AT J.F.K.'S LONG-TERM LOT. KEYS AND FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE IN THE GLOVE COMPARTMENT.

THIS IS JUST FOR DRIVING A TRUCK, MAN?

NO STOPS NOW, MR. ELIZALDE. WE KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. WE KNOW ABOUT YOUR SEALED JUVENILE MANSLAUGHTER CONVICTION--

--WE KNOW WHERE YOUR MOTHER LIVES.



YOU THREATEN MI MADRE, MAN?

FUCK YOU!

WHAT ARE YOU, SOME KIND OF TERRORIST?



"HEY, MAN. DON'T YOU WALK AWAY. DRIVE YOUR OWN FUCKIN' VAN. **FUCK YOU!**"

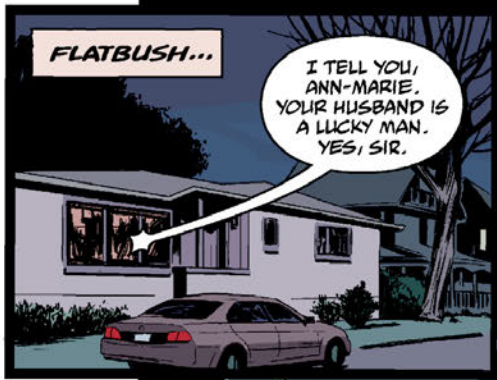
FUCKIN' A, MAN. YOU'RE FUCKIN' WRONG IN THE HEAD, MAN.



"DON' EVEN KNOW WHAT THE FUCK YOU'RE CARRYIN' BACK THERE..."







FLATBUSH...

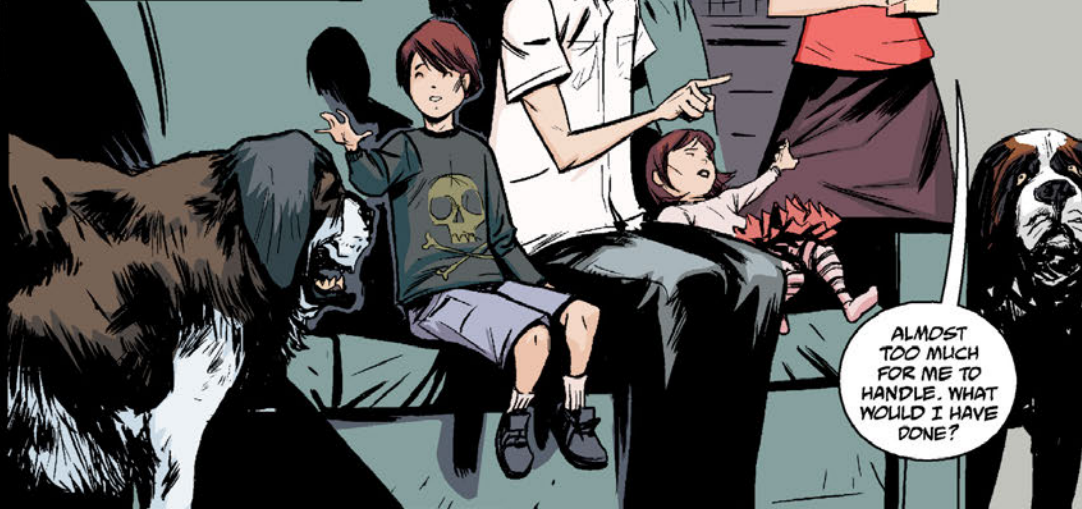
I TELL YOU, ANN-MARIE. YOUR HUSBAND IS A LUCKY MAN. YES, SIR.

ONE OF THE OTHER SURVIVORS WAS SOME BIG FAMOUS ROCK STAR. HIS LAWYERS CAME DOWN AND GOT US ALL RELEASED.

I THINK I COULD HAVE BEEN HELD THERE ALL WEEK!

OH, ANSEL, THE CHILDREN MISSED YOU SO MUCH.

THE DOGS, TOO. PAP AND GERTIE WERE VERY RESTLESS.



ALMOST TOO MUCH FOR ME TO HANDLE. WHAT WOULD I HAVE DONE?

ANSEL, EVEN BEFORE YOU TOOK OFF, I FELT GOD HAD ABANDONED THAT PLANE.



I TELL YOU, ANSEL, I'VE JUST BEEN PRAYING AND PRAYING NONSTOP...



...SNIFFE... NONSTOP...

YET HERE I AM, SWEETIE. REMEMBER, I'M ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES.



HON, COULD YOU GET ME SOME WATER FOR MY THROAT?

I THINK I'M COMING DOWN WITH SOMETHING.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER, MANHATTAN...

IT'S A CLEAN BREACH RIGHT INTO THE CAROTID.

IT'S ALMOST INVISIBLE.

DO YOU HAVE A THEORY?

WHAT MADE IT, I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE. NOTICE THE SCALPEL-LIKE PRECISION, LIKE FROM A CALIBRATED INSTRUMENT, BUT THE EDGES ARE ROUNDED, ORGANIC IN APPEARANCE.

ITS PURPOSE, THOUGH, WAS CLEARLY TO DRAIN THE BLOOD OUT OF THESE PEOPLE.

IF YOU'LL NOTICE THERE'S NOT A DROP OF BLOOD IN THIS ROOM. NOR IN ANY OF THESE BODIES.

NOT RED BLOOD, ANYWAY.

WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

WATCH.

SEE? THICK, LIKE SPOILED MILK.

AT FIRST I THOUGHT THEY WERE PROTEINS SEPARATING, BUT IT'S NOT THAT.

THESE BODIES ARE FILLED WITH IT. IT'S LIKE THEY'VE BEEN EMBALMED.

THE METHODOLOGY ON THIS IS WRONG. WE'RE CUTTING INTO THEM LIKE THEY ALL JUST DRANK POISON KOOL-AID.



I AGREE. THERE ARE REACTIONS STILL GOING ON INSIDE THESE CORPSES. MAYBE PARASITIC, MAYBE CHEMICAL...

THE BODIES ARE WARM. **VERY WARM**. SOMEHOW THEY'RE STILL GENERATING HEAT. AND THERE'S SPOTTING ON THE ORGANS--LIKE THEY'RE **BRUISING**.

WE NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL ON THIS ONE.



BRING IN A FRESH BATCH OF BODIES. RESTART FROM SQUARE ONE.



THESE PEOPLE WEREN'T KILLED OR POISONED OR GASED. THEY'RE **INFECTED**.

WHICH MEANS WE NEED TO LOCK THIS THING DOWN IMMEDIATELY.

BARBOUR WAS COMPLAINING ABOUT HIS NECK.



CALL KENT, TELL HIM TO GO TO A LEVEL FOUR. FULL CONTAINMENT. HAVE THEM CHECK FOR NECK INCISIONS ON THE THREE SURVIVORS--



DR. GOODWEATHER?



MY NAME IS ABRAHAM SETRAKIAN.

WHAT I HAVE TO SAY, DOCTOR, IS VERY IMPORTANT. CRITICAL.

IF ANY OF US ARE GOING TO SURVIVE THE COMING NIGHTS.



ANSEL? ANSEL?

ANSEL, I--IT'S BEEN AN HOUR.



ANSEL, I--HAVE MORE WATER. I DISSOLVED SOME ADVIL IN IT LIKE YOU ASKED...

FOR YOUR THROAT.



ANSEL?

ARE-- ARE PAP AND GERTIE IN THERE WITH YOU?

I THOUGHT I HEARD WHIMPERING.

CHHT--
CHHT--

ANSEL?...

ANSEL?...

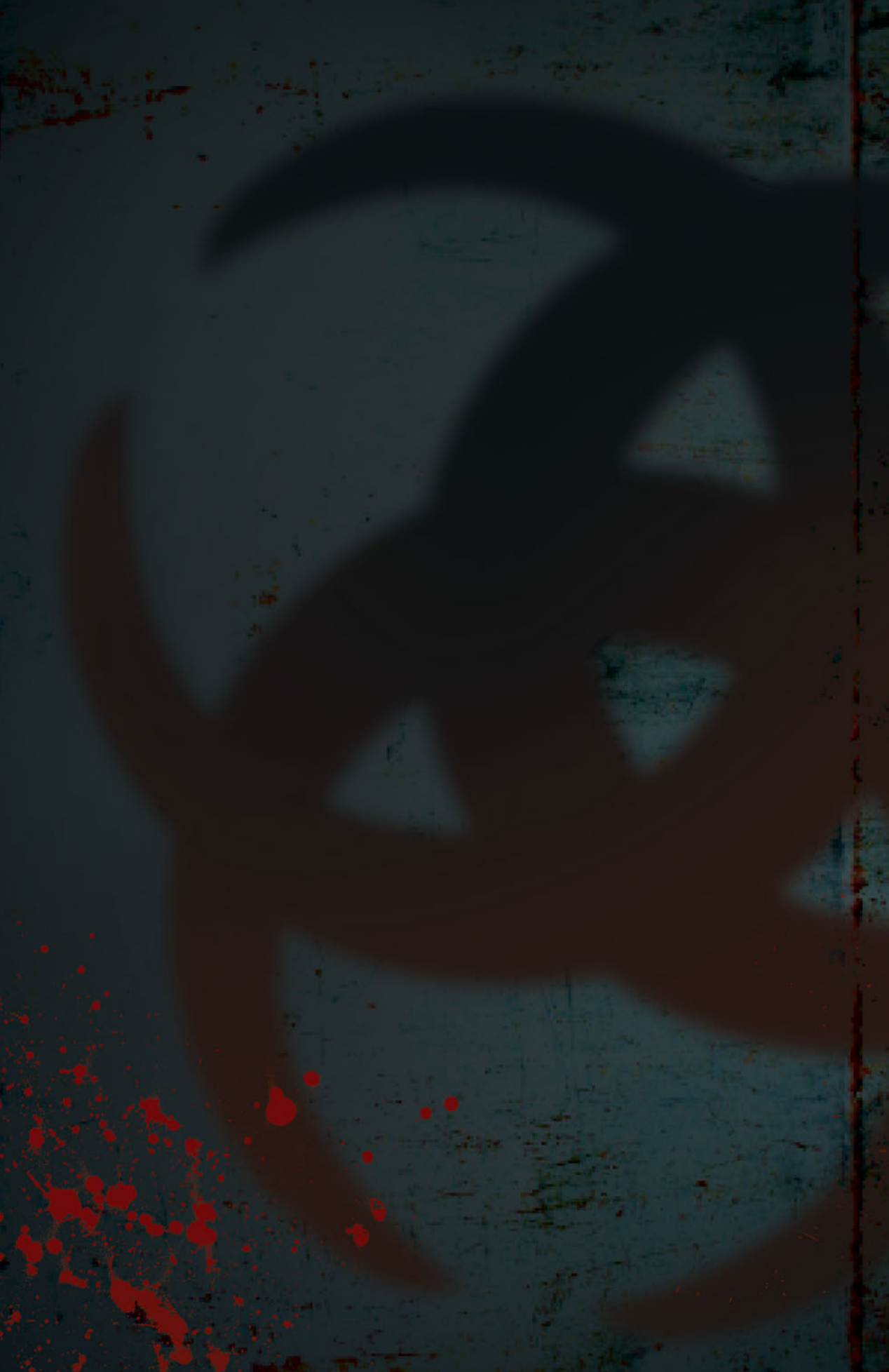
**CHHT--
CHHT--**



**GET
AWAY
FROM
THE DOOR!
WE'RE
FINE!**

**EVERY-
THING'S
FINE!**







YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME, DOCTOR. THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME.

HUH? YES... WELL, YOU CAN CALL MY OFFICE AND MAKE AN APPOINTMENT...

THE BODIES, YOU FOUND THEM NOT DECOMPOSING AS THEY SHOULD. CHANGING, YES?

WHITE BLOOD?



WHAT DID YOU SAY? WHERE ARE YOU HEARING THIS FROM?

AND A COFFIN. DID YOU FIND THE COFFIN? IF YOU STILL HAVE IT THEN YOU STILL HAVE HIM.

YOU MUST DESTROY IT RIGHT AWAY. **DISPERSE THE SOIL!**

SIR, PLEASE. SLOW DOWN. SLOW DOWN. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

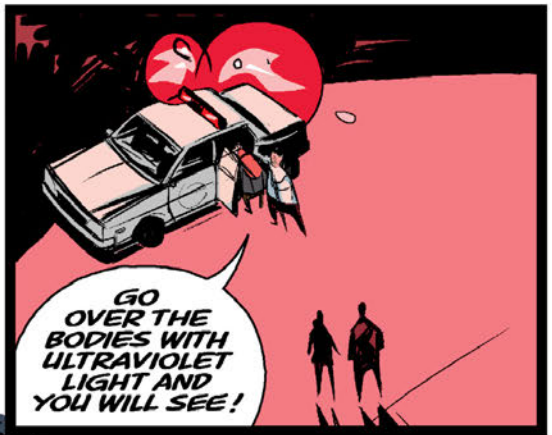


YOU! YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME, YES?

IT WILL BE DARK IN LESS THAN AN HOUR. THE BODIES... THEY MUST BE BURNED.

OKAY... YES, OKAY. PLEASE, JUST TELL ME WHY.

THAT'S HIM!



HURRY, DOCTOR, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



VESTRY STREET,
MANHATTAN...

GABRIEL,
BABY, IT'S BIG.
THIS IS GONNA BE
SO IMPRESSIVE
WHEN YOU'RE
DONE.

OH,
WOW...

I'VE BEEN
DREAMING
ABOUT THIS
MOMENT SINCE I
WAS IN NINTH
GRADE.

WHAT-
EVER, HONEY...
NNN...JUST GET
YOUR ASS
UPSTAIRS.

LOOK
AT THAT.

SO
BEAUTIFUL...

JEROME,
GET ME
SOME
GODDAMN
VICCIDDIN'...

...MY
FUCKING
STOMACH'S...
NNN...
KILLING
ME...



YOU'RE JUST TRIPPIN', BABY. I'LL FIX EVERYTHING.

WHAT'S THAT NOISE? CAN YOU STOP THAT FUCKING NOISE.

THRUM THRUM



WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?

GOD, I NEED IT.

THRUM THRUM THRUM

OH, GABRIEL...



THRUM THRUM THRUM

HAVE TO... HAVE IT...

HELP! HELP!

JESUS!

AHHH--AHH--
AHHHH!



HELP!

FUCKING PSYCHO.



HOLY SHIT...

WHAT'S HE ON?

I DON'T KNOW...

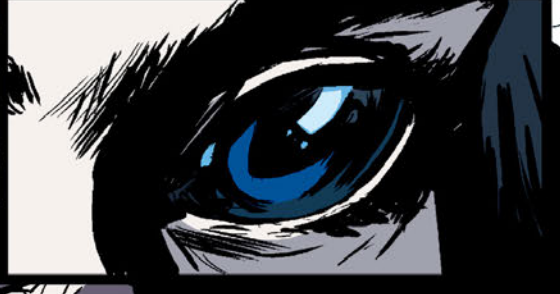


... BUT YOU'D BETTER CALL HIS MANAGER AGAIN...

FUCK'S WITH THIS MAKEUP?

FUCKING COME OFF!...

I'M FUCKING DYIN', MAN...





YOU
READY TO
SEE IF THE OLD
MAN WAS
CRAZY?

I
PRAY HE'S
CRAZY.



OH...
GOD.



JESUS
CHRIST, EPH.
WHAT MAKES
THIS?

I'LL BE
GODDAMNED IF
I KNOW.



THIS IS THE SEAT WHERE THAT LITTLE GIRL-- EMMA-- WAS.



YOU NEVER FORGET THE KIDS...

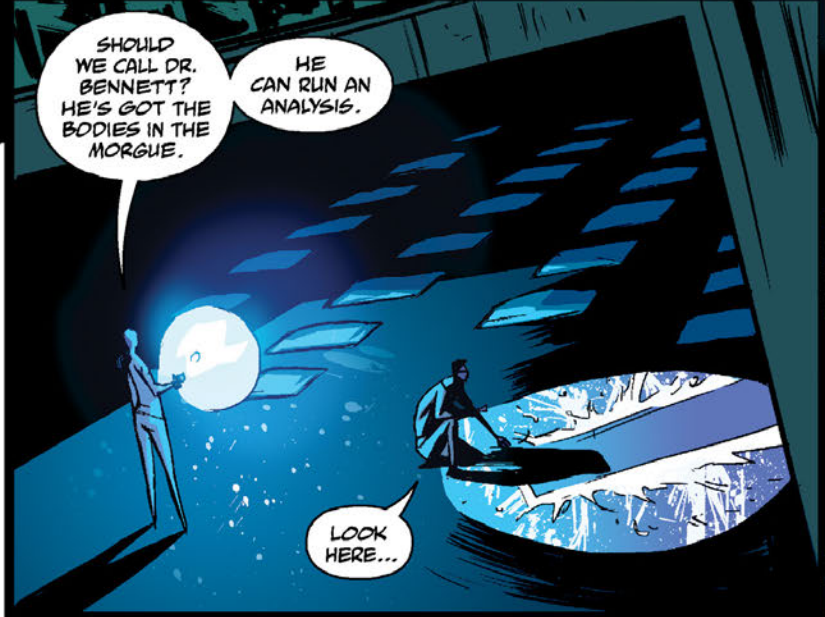
EPH, COME LOCK.

IT MUST BE ALL OVER THE BODIES.



SOME-THING CAME THROUGH HERE.

WE NEED TO FIND THAT OLD MAN.



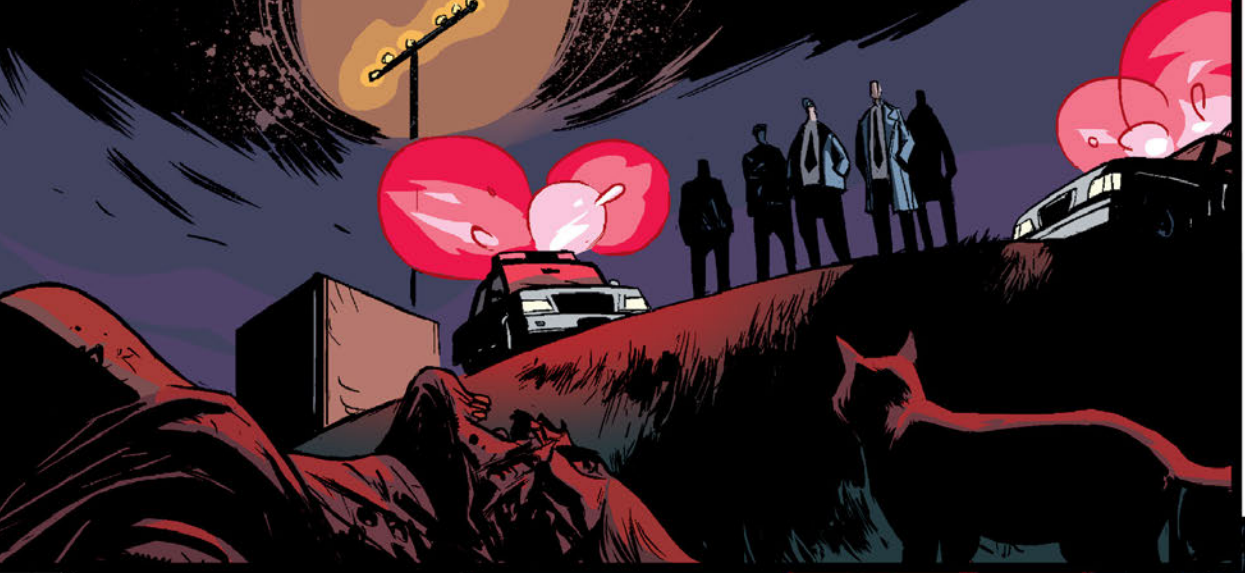
SHOULD WE CALL DR. BENNETT? HE'S GOT THE BODIES IN THE MORGUE.

HE CAN RUN AN ANALYSIS.

LOOK HERE...



NOT AS MUCH, BUT THIS IS WHERE THE CABINET-- OR I GUESS, COFFIN-- WAS.



DR. GOODWEATHER! I THOUGHT YOU GUYS ALL LEFT HOURS AGO.

WE CAME BACK TO TAKE MORE SAMPLES FROM THE PLANE. T.S.A. TOLD US THERE WAS ANOTHER ANOMALY OUT HERE.



MURDER. AT LEAST IT LOOKS THAT WAY. HARD TO TELL ANYTHING AFTER WHAT THE CATS DID TO THE BODY.

AN AIRPORT WORKER. NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PLANE, THOUGH.

NORA...



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
MEDICAL EXAMINER...



DR. GOSSETT BENNETT

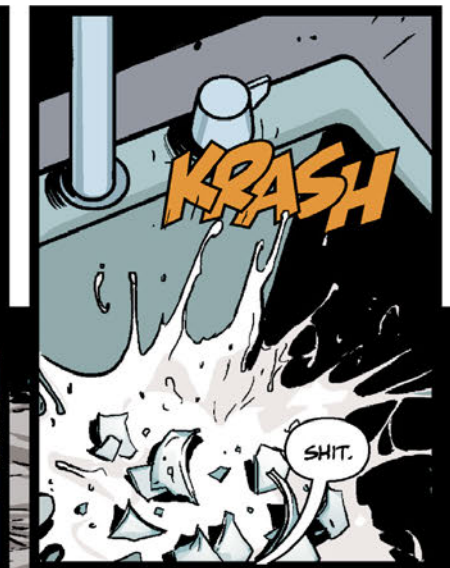
The opalescent medium is a dense homogenous solution, milky in color and viscous. Probably protein based. Awaiting lab results.

There appears to be something inside the medium. Visual inspection producing no result. Possible chemical reaction.

Separating the sample into two containers. It definitely appears to be an organism of some kind. Will attempt to isolate.



COME ON,
YOU LITTLE
BUGGER.





**SUBURBAN
NEW YORK...**

THE C.D.C. IS STILL
INVESTIGATING.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS MOURN THE DEATH OF EIGHT-YEAR-OLD
EMMA GILBARTON THIS EVENING. SCHOOL FRIENDS HELD
A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL FOR THEIR CLASSMATE.

YOUNGEST CASUALTY.

8-year-old Emma Gilberton
one of two hundred victims.

FAMILY MEMBERS
AND CLOSE FRIENDS
WERE AT THE HOME
OF EMMA'S FATHER,
GARY GILBARTON.

GARY WAS IN MOURNING
AFTER THE LOSS OF HIS WIFE
AND DAUGHTER AND UNDER-
STANDABLY WANTED THEIR
HOME TO REMAIN PRIVATE.

IT'S NOT YET TWENTY-FOUR HOURS SINCE THE
TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 753, BUT ITS IMPACT
HAS BEEN FELT FAR AND WIDE.

FLIGHT 753's YOUNGEST CASUALTY.

FLIGHT 753's YOUNGEST CASUALTY.

8-year-old Emma Gilberton
one of two hundred victims.

TRAGEDIES LIKE THIS
AFFECT NOT JUST
VICTIMS BUT FAMILY
MEMBERS, FRIENDS, AND
NEIGHBORS AS WELL.



LET'S BRING IN OUR TOWN GRIEF COUNCILLOR, DR. MACAULLAY SCHAFFER, DR. SCHAFF--

SHE WASN'T A GODDAMN SOUND BITE.



K-K-K'RR



MNN...

HUHH?



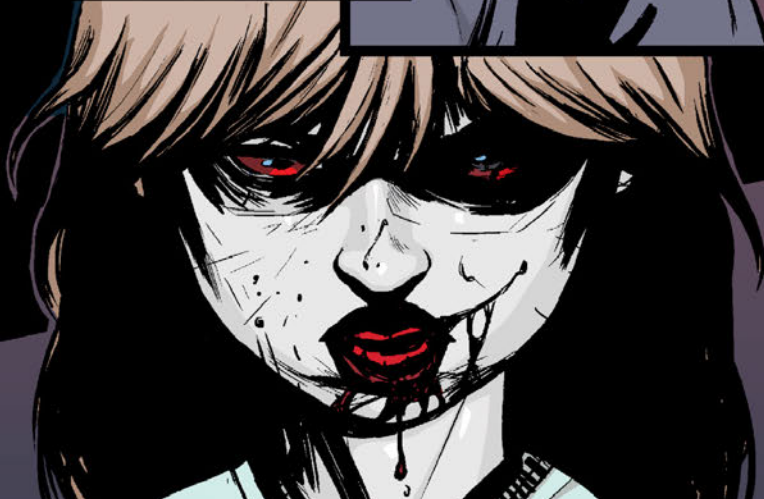
EH--
EMMA...?

EMMA?



WHAT IS IT,
SWEETHEART?
ARE YOU
HUNGRY?

DON'T
WORRY. DON'T
WORRY. WE'LL GET
YOU WHATEVER
YOU WANT.



EVERY-
THING'S GOING
TO BE ALL RIGHT
NOW.

TIMES SQUARE,
MANHATTAN...

Johnny
Jet!

PENNY
FOR YOUR
THOUGHTS,
GUSTO.

I'M MY OWN WORST ENEMY, 'MAND.
I'M LIKE A FUCKING MUTT SNIFFING
IN THE STREET WHO DON'T KNOW
WHAT TOMORROW MEANS.

FELIX, YOU EVER DO SOMETHING
YOU KNOW IN YOUR BONES WAS SO
WRONG THAT YOU JUST CAN'T GET
IT OUT OF YOUR HEAD?

YOU KILL
SOMEBODY,
COMPADRE?

NAH,
MAN...

I GOT A DARK
SIDE, AMIGO,
AND SOMETIMES
IT TAKES ME
OVER.

SO WHAT ARE WE
DOING IN THIS DUMP?
LET'S GO MEET SOME
YOUNG LADIES
TONIGHT.

GOTTA
PAY TO PLAY
RIGHT.



WE SHOULD HEAD UPTOWN, GUSTO. THERE'S A NEW CLUB ENRIQUE WAS TELLIN' ME ABOUT...

HOLY SHIT!



NNUGHAAH!

HA

HA

HA

HA



GUSTO, YOU SEE THAT SHIT?

WASTED OFF HIS ASS.



GUHHHH

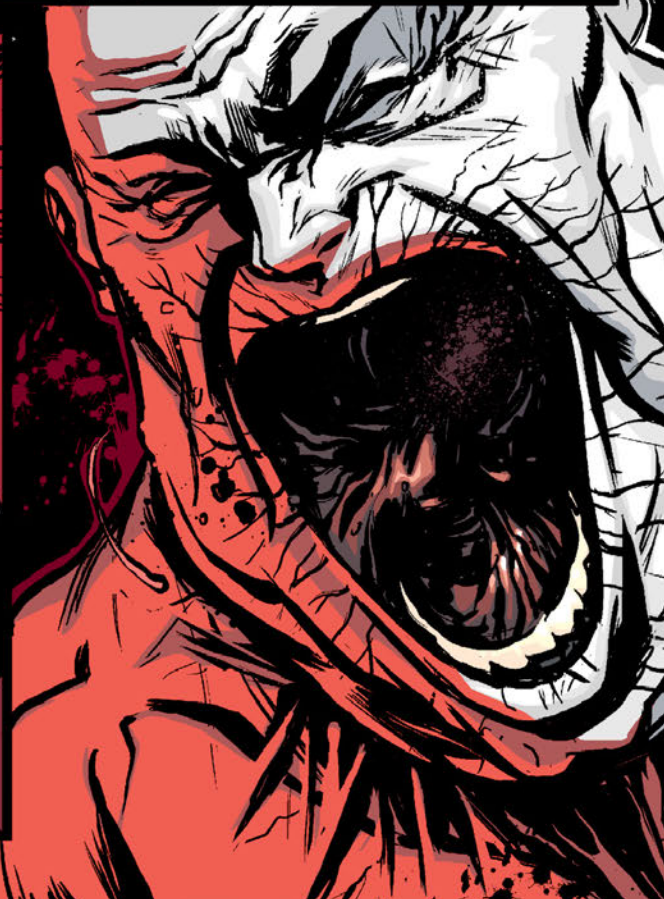


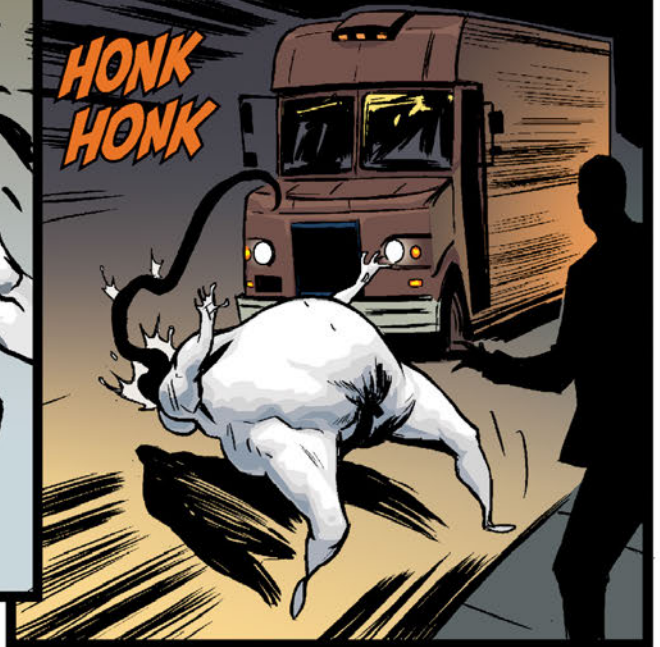
NUK--K--

OWWW! HEY!













HOLD STILL!

HAND BEHIND YOUR HEAD! ASSHOLE!

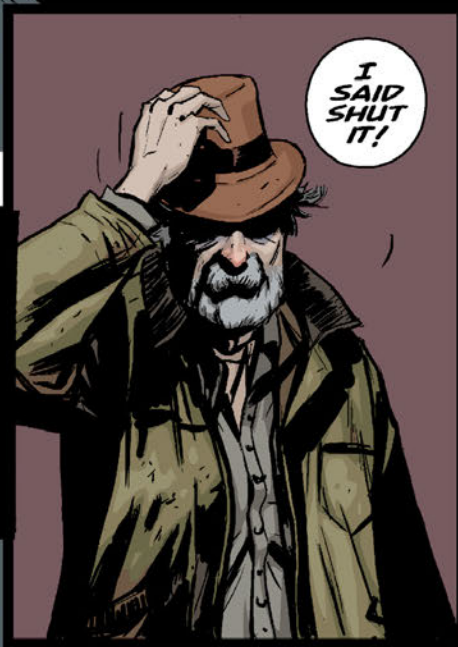
HERMAND?



SHUT UP!



MY FRIEND IS HURT, MAN. DON'T YOU SEE--



I SAID SHUT IT!



♪

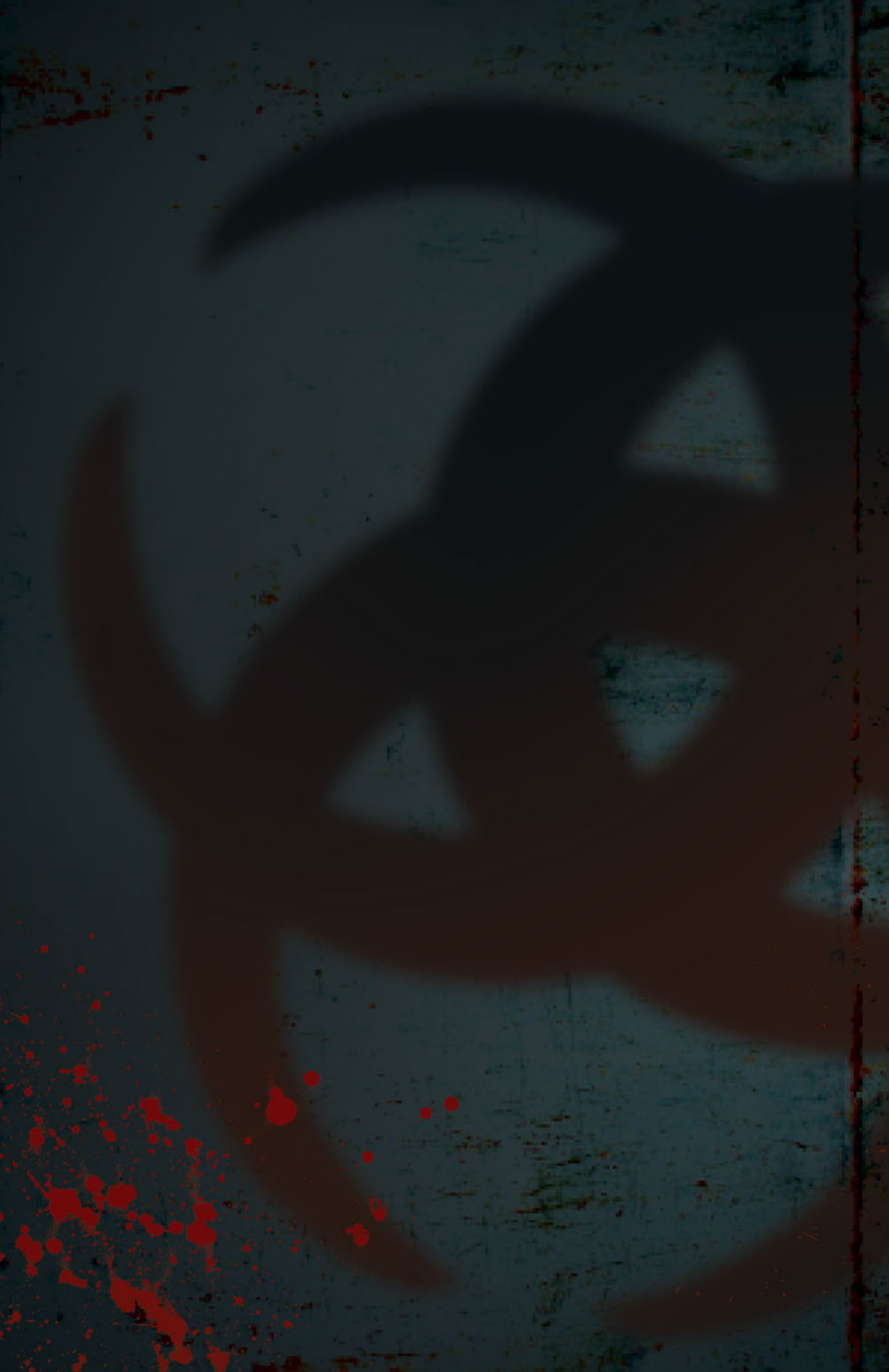
...BUST YOUR SKULL, SHITHEAD, I SWEAR...

HOLD FUCKING STILL!

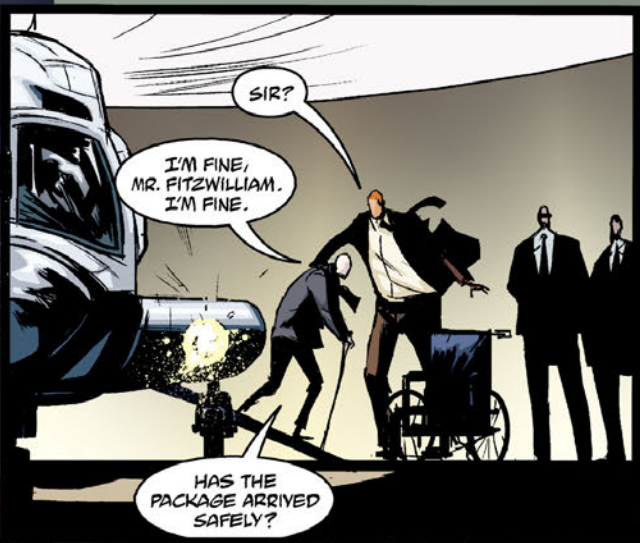


THAT'S AMERICA FOR YOU.





MANHATTAN...
THE
STONEHEART GROUP
HEADQUARTERS...





LOOK AT IT,
MR. FITZWILLIAM.
THE GREATEST
CITY IN THE
WORLD.



THEY HAVE
NO IDEA WHAT'S
COMING--



KSHH



HEY!
WATCH
THE FUCK
OUT!



WHAT'S
ALREADY
HAPPENING
IN THEIR
MIDST.

WOODSIDE,
QUEENS...

GUILTY?!

GUILTY, KELLY? REALLY? I DID **NOT** JUST HEAR YOU SAY THAT.

I DIDN'T SAY IT WASN'T THE **RIGHT THING**, MATT. THIS IS **MY BATTLE**, REMEMBER?

I'M THE ONE WHO WANTS ZACK TO HAVE THE STABILITY OF ONE PRIMARY HOME.

I JUST SAID I FEEL A LITTLE GUILTY ABOUT TAKING ZACK AWAY FROM EPH.

I'M NOT ARGUING...

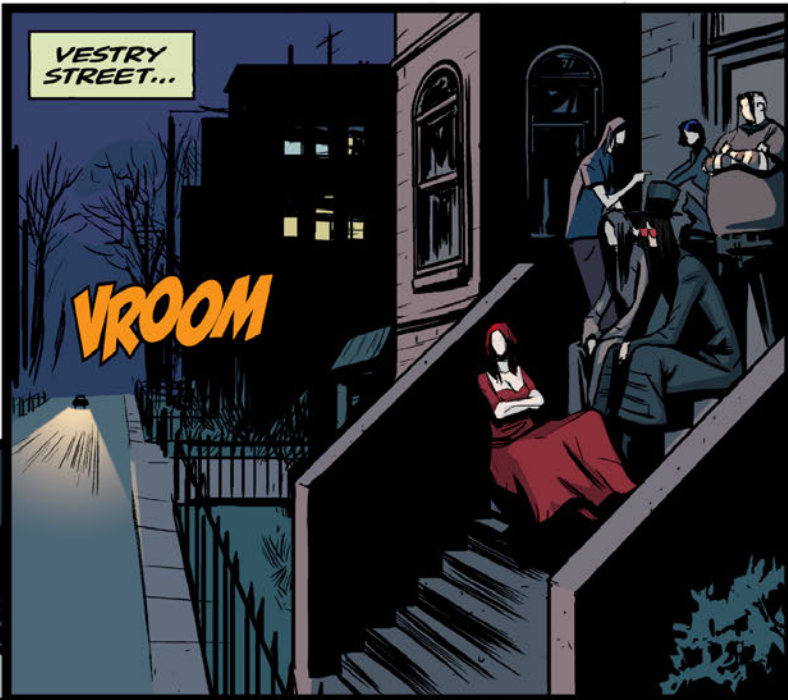
CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S JUST TRYING TO PLAY THE SYMPATHY CARD? GET HIS HOOKS INTO YOU?

CAN WE NOT ARGUE?

FLAP
FLAP
FLAP







VESTRY STREET...

VROOM



YO!



WHAT'S UP?



WE HEARD HE'S BEEN LETTING PEOPLE IN.



NAH, KID, YOU'VE BEEN HAD.

AS HIS MANAGER, I'LL TELL YOU A LITTLE SECRET. NO CAMERAS MEANS NO ONE'S HOME.



NAH, MAN.

HE LET THE PAPARAZZI IN, TOO.

YO!
GABE!



WHAT THE
FUCK?

GABE?



BREET
BREET

COME ON,
GABE.



BREET
BREET

BAD
KARMA TO
IGNORE YOUR
MANAGER--

BREET

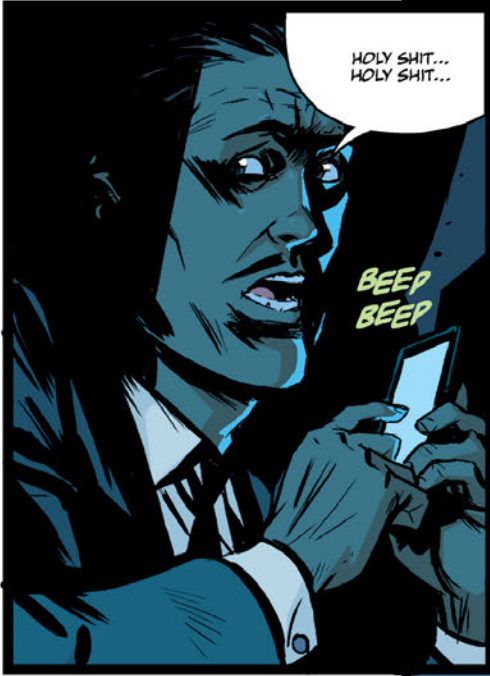
GABE?! IT'S
RUDY, MAN. DON'T
LET ME WALK IN ON
ANYTHING.





BREEEET

**OH
JESUS!**



HOLY SHIT...
HOLY SHIT...

**BEEP
BEEP**



BEEP

G-GABE?



WHAT THE
GODDAMN
FLUCK...?



GABE, MAN,
WE CAN WORK
THIS OUT.

Y-YOU
WERE
JUST IN AN
ACCIDENT, MAN.
Y-Y-YOU'VE
GOT--



--POST--



AHHH...



AHH,
CHRIST.



HUHUUH!

DAD?

ZACK!



GUAHHHHH!



ZACK.

JESUS. I CAN'T BELIEVE I FELL ASLEEP.

IT'S ONLY BEEN TWO HOURS. I'LL START COFFEE.



JIM? IT'S EPH. DID WE GET THE RESULTS ON THE SAMPLES FROM THE PLANE?

REALLY?

WHAT?



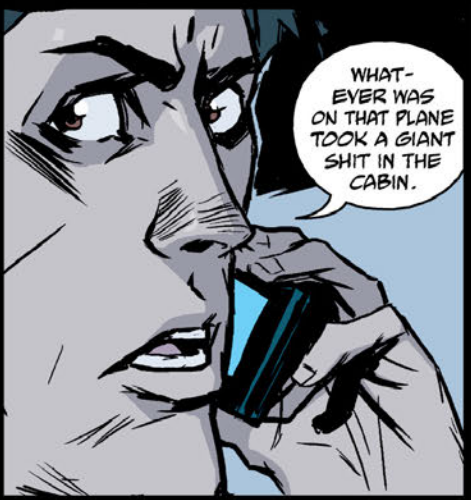
AMMONIA, PHOSPHORUS, OXALIC, IRON, AND URIC ACIDS.

RAW PLASMA AND ENZYMES.



DIGESTION EXCRETIONS.

LIKE BIRDS OR... BATS?



WHAT-EVER WAS ON THAT PLANE TOOK A GIANT SHIT IN THE CABIN.



OKAY, JIM,
LISTEN.

HAVE MARCUS
GO OVER THE
SURVIVORS
WITH THE
ULTRAVIOLET
LIGHT.

AND
WHAT ABOUT THE
NECK INCISIONS I
ASKED YOU TO--



WHAT THE
FUCK?!

YOU
GODDAMN
WHAT???



HE
FUCKING
LET THEM
GO, NORA.

EXCEPT
REDFERN, WHO
VOLUNTEERED
TO STAY, BUT
THE OTHER
SURVIVORS--

--HE
LET THEM
LOOSE.



YES,
MR. KENT.
I HEAR YOU. I
UNDERSTAND
PERFECTLY.



I AM NOT
UNAWARE OF
THE RISK. THAT IS
WHY YOU WERE
HIRED.

I JUDGED
YOU AS A MAN
WHO WORKS WELL
UNDER
PRESSURE...

...OF COURSE THIS IS AN EXTREME SITUATION, AND MY GRATITUDE WILL BE REFLECTED IN YOUR NEXT PAYMENT.

WE HAVE A TEN THIRTY-FOUR IN PROGRESS ON BLEECKER AND WEST ELEVENTH. A NUDE MALE AND FEMALE ARE ATTACKING...

YES. I'D LIKE TO REPORT MY UNCLE BERNIE AS MISSING. HE'S SUFFERING DEMENTIA AND...THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING...HAS TAKEN TO STRAYING OUT **STARK NAKED...**

AS A THERAPIST FOR TWENTY-TWO YEARS, I CAN'T DISAGREE MORE WITH YOUR LAST CALLER. "ECLIPSE FEVER," MERELY A FORM OF MASS HYSTERIA, IS VERY REAL...

FIRE REPORTED AT BODEGA ON AVENUE B?...
12-11-01

HELLO, POLICE?
I-I'M BEING ATTACKED!...
WHO?...

...BY **SPACE ALIENS**, OF COURSE! COME QUICK!...

PLEASE, CONTINUE WITH YOUR UPDATE, MR. KENT. YOU SAID DR. GOODWEATHER WAS VERY CROSS ABOUT THE SURVIVORS BEING RELEASED...

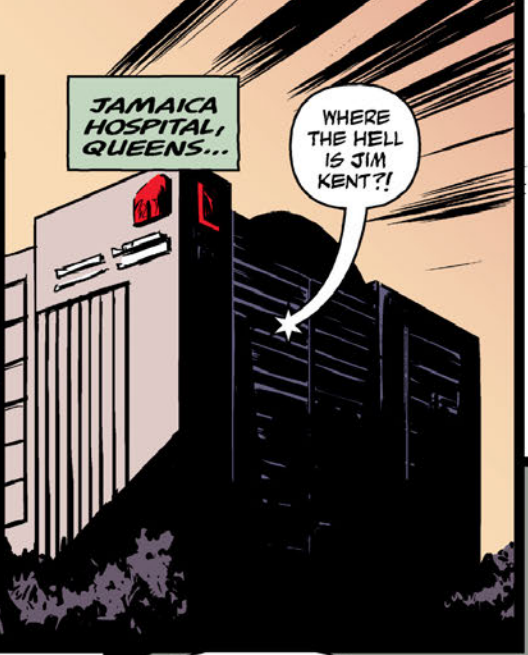
NOW...







BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.



JAMAICA HOSPITAL, QUEENS...

WHERE THE HELL IS JIM KENT?!



I-I'M NOT SURE, I--

WELL, GO FIND HIM!

WE HAVE A POSSIBLE FATAL PANDEMIC ON OUR HANDS, AND YOU'RE ALL TREATING THIS PLACE LIKE IT'S THE TURNSTILE AT AN AMUSEMENT PARK.



NOW THEY'VE LOST REDFERN? UNBELIEVABLE.

I THINK WE'D BETTER START LOOKING OURSELVES.



CAPTAIN REDFERN?

CAPTAIN?... HEFF?... HEFF!...

I'M SO SCREWED...



THANK GOD.

CAPTAIN REDFERN!



CAPTAIN REDFERN!

SIR, PLEASE WAIT!



HEFF! CAPTAIN!



HEFF! HEFF!



CAPTAIN?...





AHHHH!



LINGHH!



GLAHHUHH--



NORA,
RUN!

HAASS!



GRRRN...

EPH,
WATCH
OUT!







YOU FUCKING...
GO FIND SOME
WITNESSES.
DO YOUR
FUCKING
JOB!

TELL
IT TO THE
MARINES.



FUCKING
PENDEJO...

JUST
RELAX,
FELIX,
MAN.
YOU'LL
BE
OKAY.



SHIT.



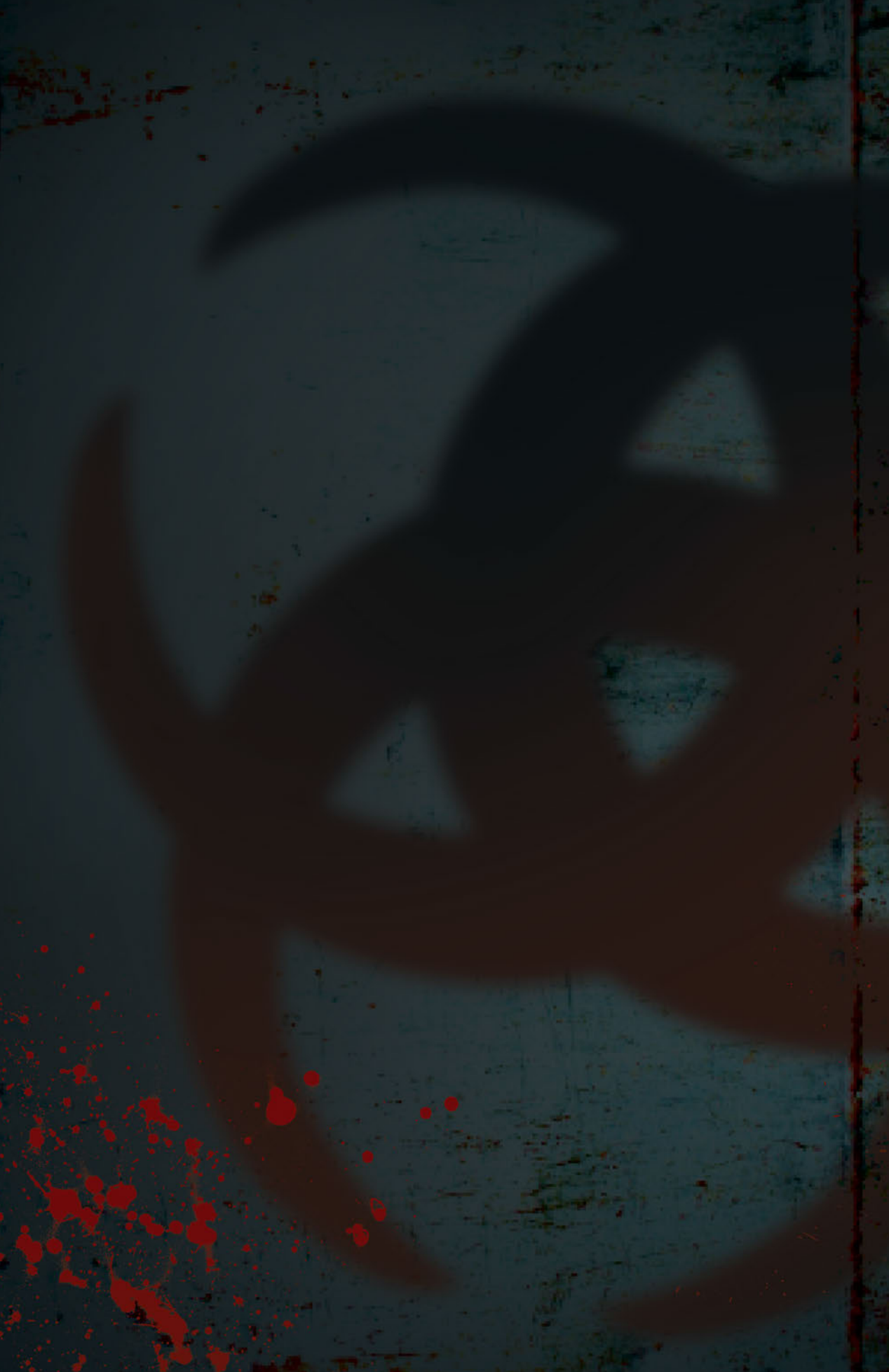
SO, WHAT THE FUCK
YOU
IN HERE FOR?



FOR BEING
AN INFORMED
CITIZEN.

RIGHT
ON.







YOUR FRIEND...

HE IS INJURED IN THE NECK?

THEY THINK HE'S TRIPPIN'. BUT HE AIN'T SICK. WE WERE ATTACKED, MAN.

BY A FUCKIN' NAKED DUDE.



THE MAN WHO HURT YOUR FRIEND. HIS TONGUE WAS VERY LONG?

POINTY ON THE END? LIKE A--A STINGER?



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT, OLD MAN?

QUITE A LOT, ACTUALLY...



ROMANIA,
1937...

AHHH!...
DELICIOUS AS
ALWAYS, FRAU
SETRAKIAN.

I
PARTICULARLY
LOVE THE LITTLE
PANCAKES. JUST
WONDERFUL. I REMEMBER
MY OWN MOTHER MADE
THESE FOR ME WHEN I WAS
A SMALL BOY. I DID NOT
KNOW I MISSED THEM
SO MUCH EXCEPT
UPON TASTING
YOURS.

YOUR
WONDERFUL
FAMILY, BLIBBEH,
HAVE ALL BEEN SO
GRACIOUS, GIVING UP
SO MUCH THESE MANY
MONTHS FOR THE
COMFORT OF A
FAT, OLD
OFFICER.

I WILL
MISS YOU ALL
TERRIBLY.



WILL YOU BE
LEAVING
US, COLONEL
SCHRODER?





MMM... I SHOULD NOT SAY THIS, BUT YOU HAVE TOUCHED ME. PERHAPS TOO MUCH FOR THE COMING DAYS.

TOMORROW I MUST PUT AWAY MANY THINGS, BUT TONIGHT I WILL TELL YOU THIS.



TOMORROW THERE WILL COME AN ORDER FOR THE VILLAGE TO ASSEMBLE AT THE TRAIN STATION FOR AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

WHAT KIND OF ANNOUNCEMENT?



I WOULD FORGET ABOUT THE ANNOUNCEMENT, YOUNG ABRAHAM.

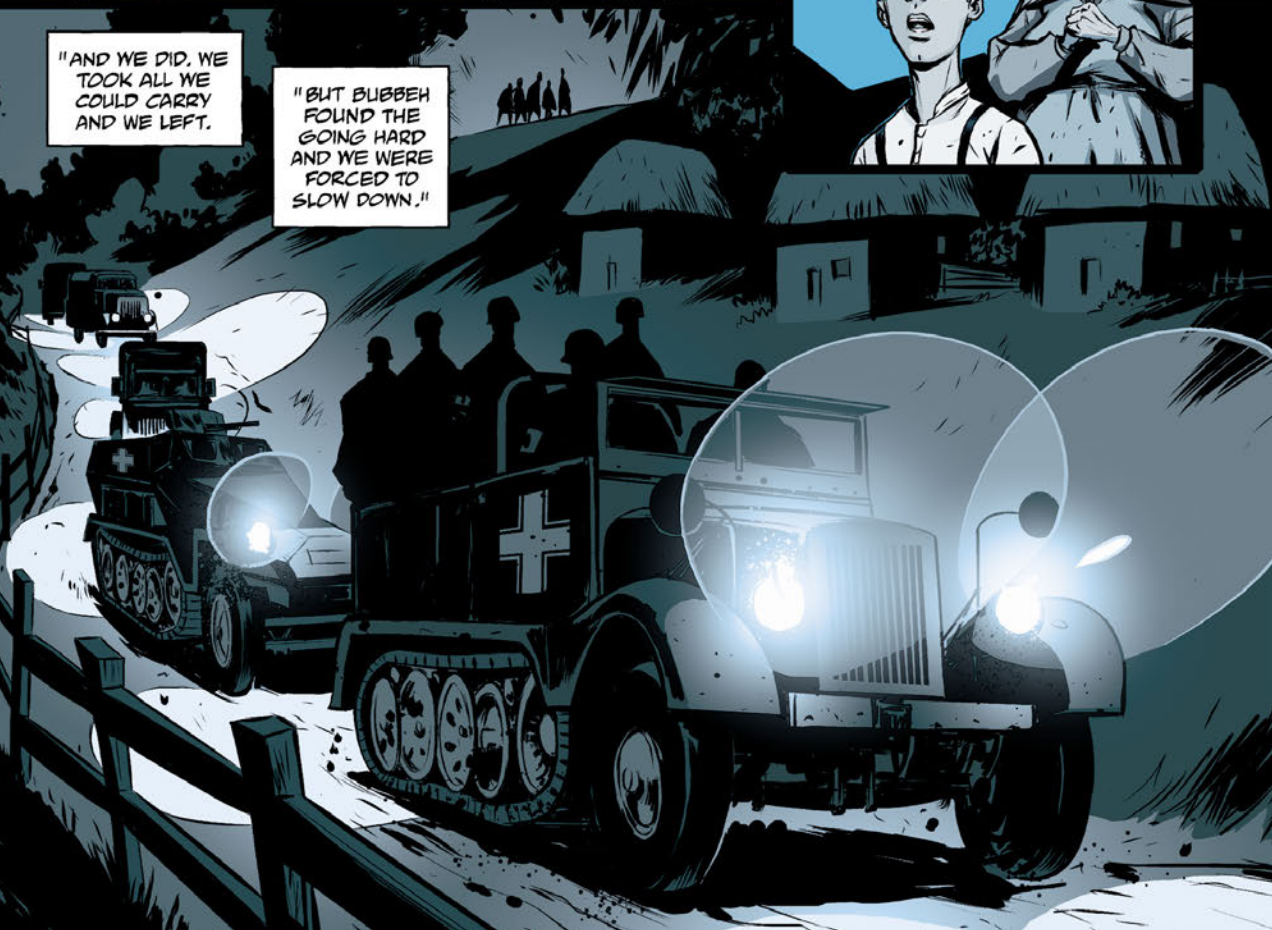
I WOULD FORGET THE TRAIN STATION, THE VILLAGE, YOUR WOODWORKER'S SHOP. I WOULD FORGET THESE WALLS.



I WOULD FORGET EVERYTHING AND I WOULD FLEE THIS VERY NIGHT.

"AND WE DID. WE TOOK ALL WE COULD CARRY AND WE LEFT.

"BUT BUBBEH FOUND THE GOING HARD AND WE WERE FORCED TO SLOW DOWN."





WE SENT THE OTHERS AHEAD TO CROSS OVER TO YARNA AND GET A SHIP OUT. I STAYED WITH HER TO REST.



I AM TOO OLD, ABRAHAM. BETTER TO LET ME TURN MYSELF IN.

WHAT WILL THEY DO TO AN OLD WOMAN? MAKE ME COOK THEM BORSCHT?

BUT YOU ARE STRONG AND THEY WILL NOT TREAT YOU WELL.



RUN, ABRAHAM. RUN FROM THE NAZI. AS FROM SARDU.

ESCAPE.



WHO IS SARDU?

AN OLD STORY BUBBEH USED TO TELL ME TO MAKE ME EAT MY BORSCHT.

SHE RAISED ME AFTER MY PARENTS DIED. I WOULD NOT LEAVE HER.

MY MISTAKE WAS LETTING HER KNOW IT.

"SHE FOUND A CONTAINER OF KEROSENE WHILE I SLEPT AND DRANK IT DOWN."

WHEN I GOT TO VARNA I FOUND THAT MY AUNT, HER HUSBAND, AND MY COUSIN WERE CAPTURED.

TREBLINKA DEATH CAMP, 1942...

I WAS ON MY OWN FOR A YEAR AND A HALF BEFORE THEY GOT ME.

NOW I FIX FENCES AND CARVE FANCY SMOKING PIPES FOR THE HAUPTMANN TO GIVE AWAY AS CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

DON'T SCOFF, ABRAHAM. THOSE CRAFTSMAN'S HANDS OF YOURS ARE MORE VALUABLE THAN GOLD. THEY KEEP YOU ALIVE.

THEY KEEP YOU OUT OF THE BURNING HOLE.

YOU ARE EACH JUDGED AS TOO SICK TO BE OF ANY USE TO THE FATHERLAND.

I--I NEVER EVEN SAW A DOCTOR.







PICK
PICK
PICK



PICK PICK PICK



SNIFFE
SNIFFE



PICK
PICK
PICK



SARDU...

"HE TOOK
THREE
THAT FIRST
NIGHT..."

...NOW HE COMES TWICE A WEEK. ALWAYS THE SICK OR THE WEAK, SO THE GUARDS WON'T INQUIRE TOO CLOSELY.

YES, IT'S THE SAME IN OUR BARRACKS, TOO.



I AM FROM PONIATOWO, NOT TWO MILES FROM HERE. SINCE I WAS A BOY THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN RUMORS OF THE DARK THINGS. THE STRIGOI.



THEY SAY HE LIVES IN AN ANCIENT ROMAN CRYPT DEEP IN THE OLD FOREST.

IT MUST BE DESTROYED.

DON'T BE A FOOL. YOU ARE THE SAFEST PERSON IN THE CAMP.



WHAT? BECAUSE I CAN DO THIS WITH THE DULL KNIFE THEY GIVE ME.

I WOULD STAB MYSELF WITH IT, BUT SGT. KRAUSE IS ALWAYS WATCHING AND I WOULD JUST END UP IN THE INFIRMARY.

I HAVE NO PURPOSE, BENJAMIN.

I LIVE ONLY BECAUSE I FEAR THE BURNING HOLE.

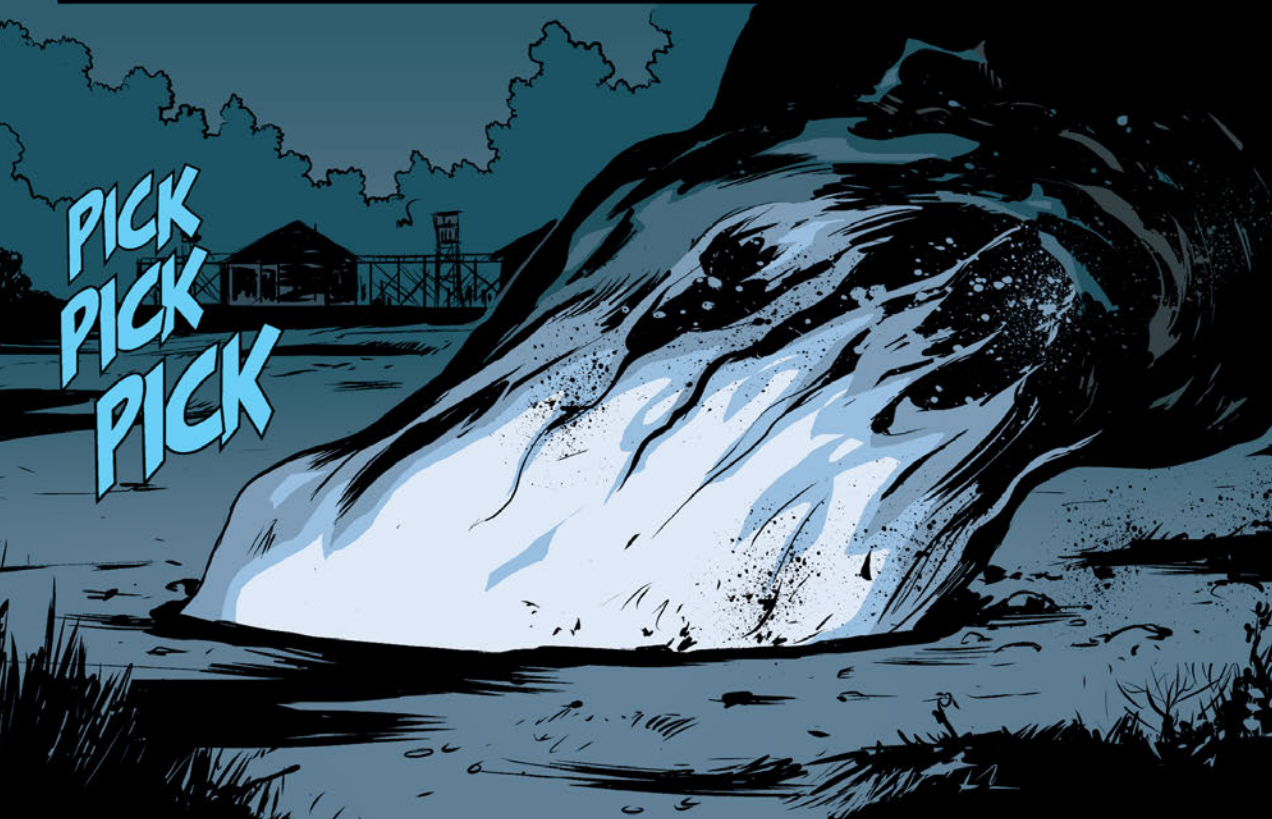
BUT IN THIS... IN THIS I SENSE A CALLING.

HOW CAN I KILL IT?

SILVER, ABRAHAM. THEY SAY SILVER IN THE HEART...









SLICH
SLICH



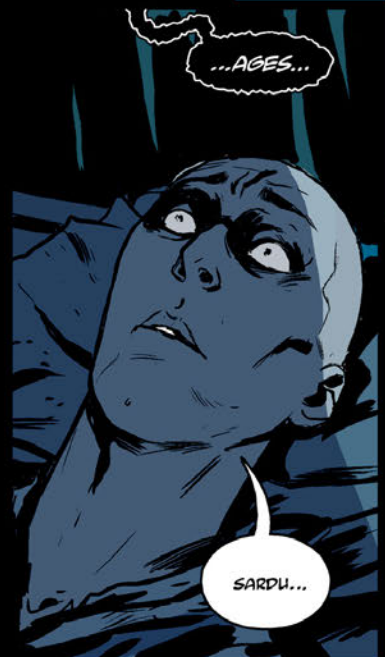
SLICH



AHHHH...

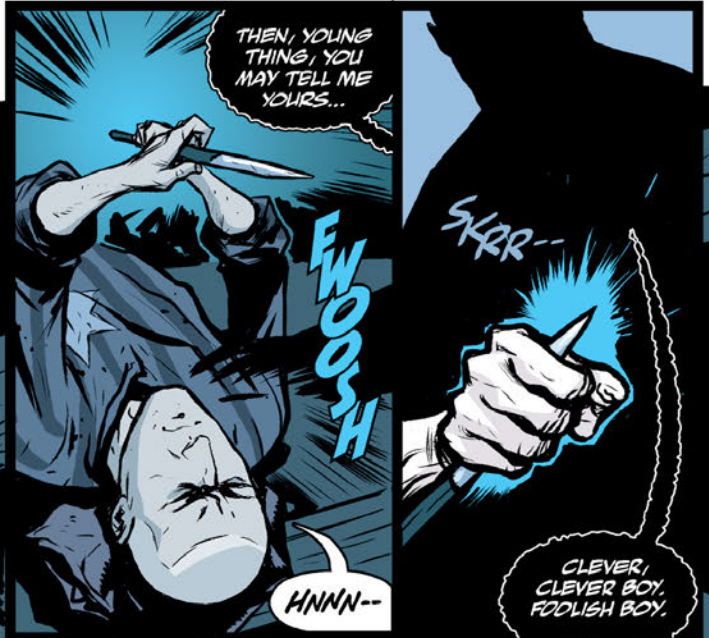


AGES...
SINCE WE
FED LOOKING
INTO LIVING
EYES...



...AGES...

SARDU...





...ABRAHAM... ABRAHAM
SETRAKIAN...

SUCH A
SWEET NAME
FOR ONE SO...
SPIRITED.



TELL ME...
WOODWORKER.
WITH ALL THIS
ATROCITY, WHY AM
I SO DESERVING
OF YOUR
WRATH?

WHY
DESTROY
ME? I AM NOT
THE MONSTER
HERE. IT IS YOUR
GOD, THE
ABSENT FATHER.



"I AM NOT EVEN
WHAT YOU FEAR
MOST. HMMM?..."

"...YOU FEAR THE
BURNING HOLE!!"



THE EMPTINESS.
THE UTTER
PURPOSELESS-
NESS.



SILLY BOY, THE
HOLE IS NOT
FOR SKILLED
HANDS AS
THESE...



NOW YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT YOUR GOD.

KRRRAKK

GUHNN--

--UHHNN!



HE WILL NOT SAVE YOU FROM THE HOLE.

KKRRAAAK



SETRAKIAN?... SUCH A WASTE OF HANDS, BUT WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THE JEW.

PITY THOUGH...



I SO WANTED ONE OF YOUR HAND-MADE PIPES THIS CHRISTMAS.



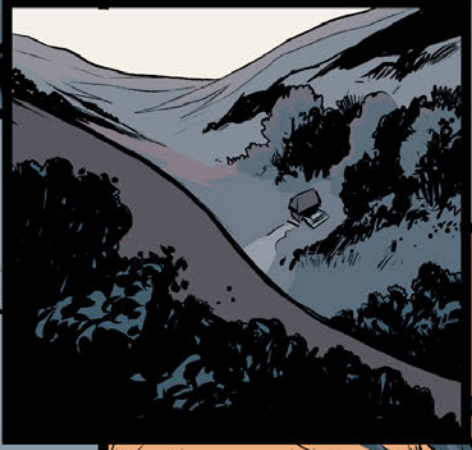
TWO WEEKS LATER...

АHHHHH!



MOVE, JEW.

UGNN!



SKRRAP
SKRRAP





HUHHH...
HUHHH...



YOU RUN,
SARDU?

AND
YOU TAKE MY
COFFIN WITH
YOU?

WOULD
THAT YOU
DESTROYED
MY HANDS
BEFORE I
MADE THAT
HATEFUL
THING--



IF GOD HAS ABANDONED
US, IT IS ONLY BECAUSE
WE HAVE ALLOWED
A THING LIKE YOU
TO LIVE AMONGST
US.

SKRR--



OBERLEUTNANT
ZIMMER. SO, THE
MASTER RACE HAS
COME TO FIND ITS
MASTER, EH?

KSSSSS!!



**DIE,
CREATURE!**

КААААА!



УУУУУУ!



ГУУ--
АААА--



NO!
NO!



СТАААА--
НННН--

БААААА!



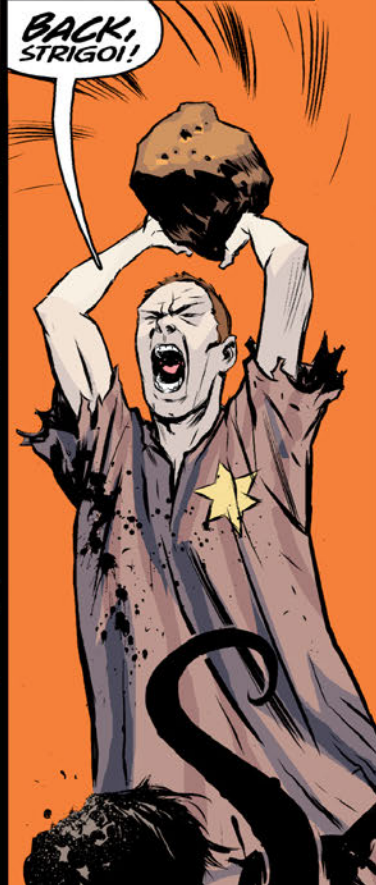
DIE!



КССССС--

НФФФ!

CHUNK





SKAFFE

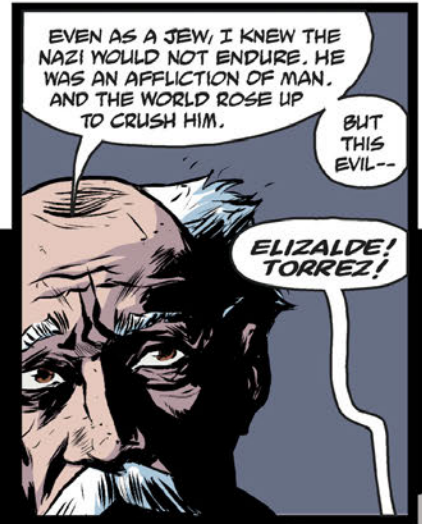


"I HAVE LEARNED MANY TRICKS SINCE THEN."

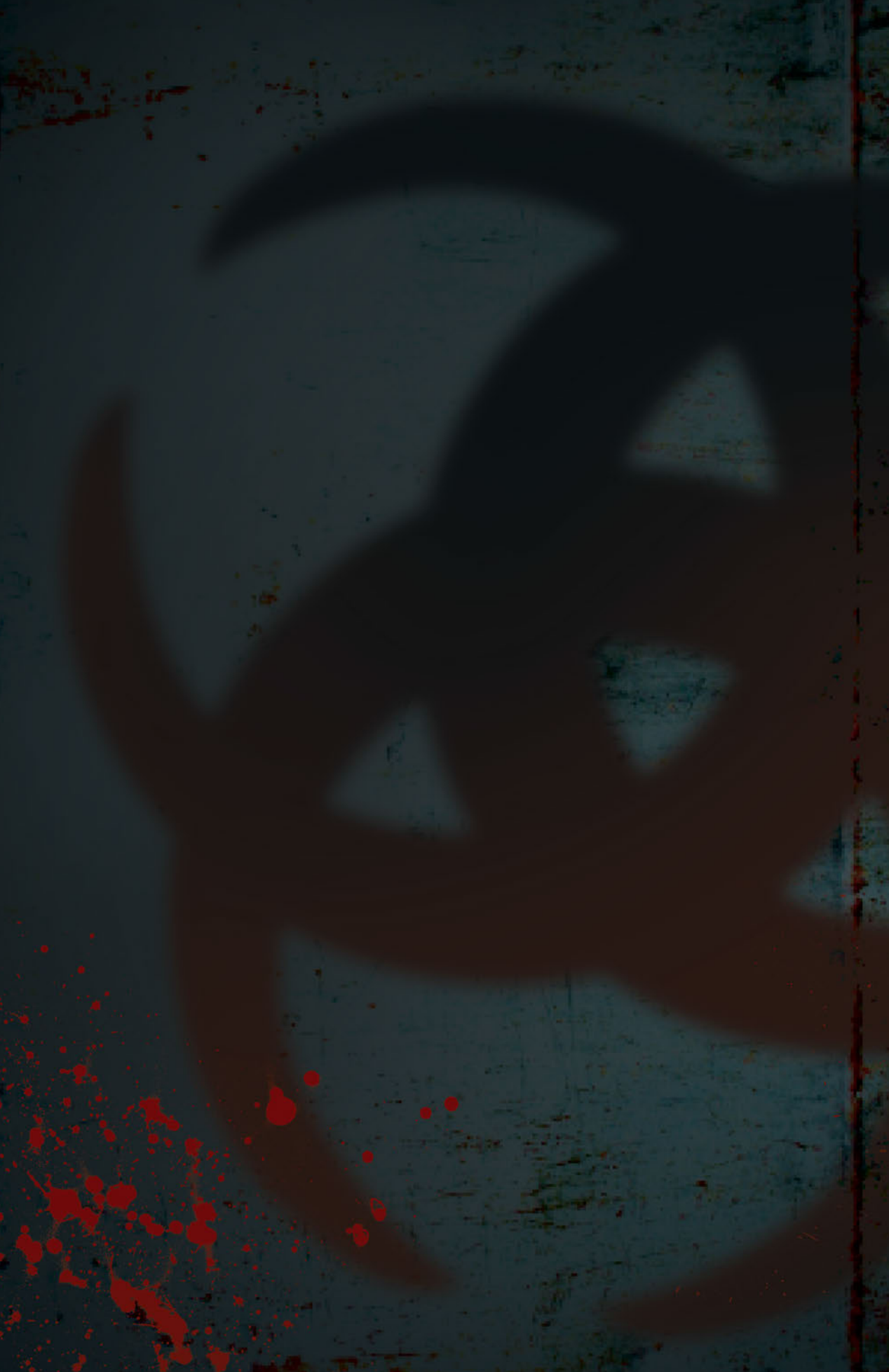


"I HAVE ARMED MYSELF WITH THE PROPER TOOLS AND I HAVE KILLED MANY ABOMINATIONS."

"BUT ALWAYS SARDU-- THE MASTER-- HAS ELUDED ME."











NORA.

I KNEW YOU WOULD COME. IT HAS BEGUN.



WHAT'S BEGUN? I NEED YOU TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.

GLADLY, DOCTOR, BUT WE HAVE LOST SO MUCH TIME ALREADY.

HERE. GO TO MY SHOP. WE WILL BE SAFE THERE, AND I CAN **SHOW** YOU ALL. BUT HURRY. WE MUST ACT QUICKLY IF WE HAVE ANY HOPE OF CONTAINING THIS INSIDIOUS THING.



SEE? THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN. "INSIDIOUS."

IN MY WORLD, A DISEASE, EVEN A DEADLY ONE, IS NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD, YET YOU GO ON ABOUT THIS ONE LIKE...IT'S A PERSON.



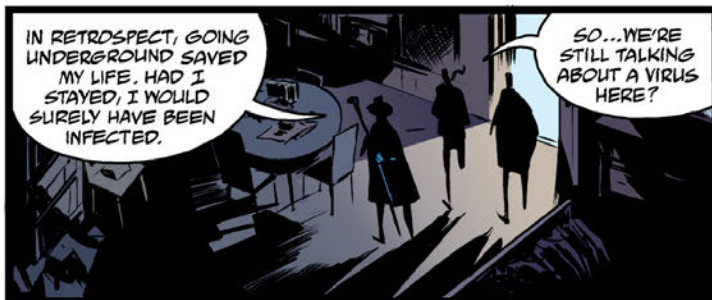
A PERSON? NO. BUT A WILL? YES. A CONSCIOUSNESS? YES.

AND EVIL? TAKE IT FROM ONE WHO HAS FACED FIRSTHAND THE ATROCITY OF THE NAZI.

YOU HAVE NEVER KNOWN EVIL BUT FOR **THE MASTER, DR. GOODWEATHER.**



HE IS THE REASON YOUR DEAD HAVE RISEN.





YOU THINK ME A CRAZY OLD MAN BY NOW, EH?

BUT YOU HAVE FOLLOWED, AND HERE I MAY FINALLY SHOW YOU THE TRUTH OF WHAT WE FACE.



JESUS.



SHLOTT



ADULT, FEMALE, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.

BUT WHAT'S INSIDE IT?

THE HEART IS BEATING?



NOT BEATING. THE WORM ANIMATES THE HEART WHENEVER BLOOD IS NEAR.



THEY LIVE IN THE WHITE BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE. I SUSPECT IT IS THE CONDUIT OF THE VIRUS.

THE WORMS COLONIZE AND TAKE OVER THE HOST BODY, YOU SEE?



IT LIVES ON BLOOD.

A FEW DROPS EVERY FEW DAYS IS ENOUGH.



I ACQUIRED IT IN THE SPRING OF '71.

FOR FORTY YEARS YOU'VE KEPT A HEART IN A JAR LIKE...LIKE SOME PET?



TO REMIND MYSELF OF WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST.



THERE ARE SEVEN ORIGINAL VAMPIRES KNOWN AS **THE ANCIENTS**.

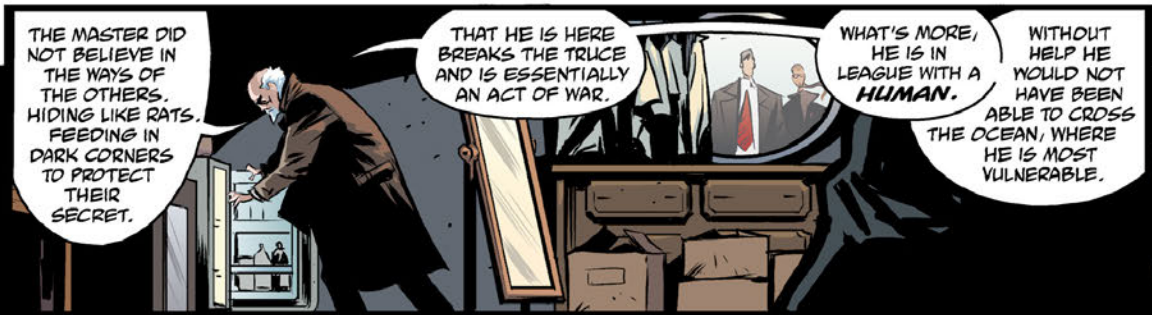
AS I SAID, I SUSPECT THEY HAVE BEEN HERE POSSIBLY LONGER THAN HISTORY HAS BEEN RECORDED.



THERE WAS A SCHISM. THREE ANCIENTS REMAINED IN THE OLD WORLD AND THREE CAME HERE TO THE NEW.

THEY HAD A TRUCE BETWEEN THEM AND FOR MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS THERE HAS BEEN CALM.

THEN THERE IS THE SEVENTH **ANCIENT**, WHOM I KNOW AS THE **MASTER**. HE IS A ROGUE.



THE MASTER DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE WAYS OF THE OTHERS. HIDING LIKE RATS. FEEDING IN DARK CORNERS TO PROTECT THEIR SECRET.

THAT HE IS HERE BREAKS THE TRUCE AND IS ESSENTIALLY AN ACT OF WAR.

WHAT'S MORE, HE IS IN LEAGUE WITH A HUMAN.

WITHOUT HELP HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CROSS THE OCEAN, WHERE HE IS MOST VULNERABLE.



THE BOX-- THE COFFIN WE FOUND ON THE PLANE.

HE WAS INSIDE. WHEN WE OPENED IT, HE WAS STILL INSIDE...

IN THE SOIL. YES. THE SOIL IS SACRED TO HIM.

IT IS FROM THIS THAT HE RENEWS HIMSELF.

I-IF THIS IS A VAMPIRE WAR, WHY IS HE RANDOMLY INFECTING ALL THESE PEOPLE?

THE MASTER WILL GO WHERE THE OTHER ANCIENTS WOULD NOT DARE.



IT WILL TAKE HIS STRAIN LESS THAN A WEEK TO OVERCOME MANHATTAN...

...IN A MONTH, THE COUNTRY. TWO MONTHS, THE WORLD.



OKAY, MR. SETRAKIAN. I THINK THERE'S MORE SCIENCE HERE THAN YOUR GHOST STORIES...

... BUT I'VE SEEN ENOUGH TO KNOW YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY CRAZY.

PLUS, I DON'T THINK WE HAVE MANY OPTIONS.

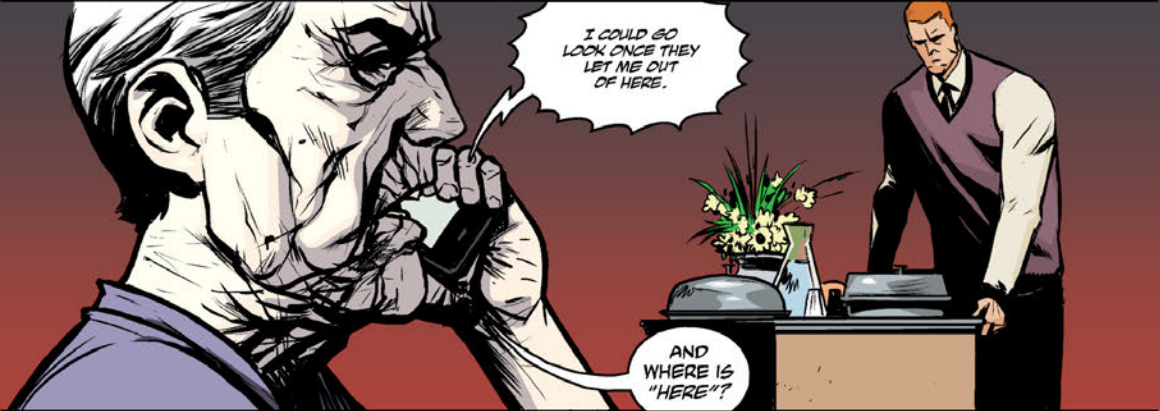
SO WHERE DO WE START?





WHERE IS REDFERN NOW?

DOCTORS GOODWEATHER AND MARTINEZ GOT TO HIM. EPHRAIM SAYS HE'S JUST IN ISOLATION, BUT THEY PUT HIM IN THE BASEMENT AND THE ONLY THING DOWN THERE IS THE MORGUE.



I COULD GO LOOK ONCE THEY LET ME OUT OF HERE.

AND WHERE IS "HERE"?



IN ISOLATION. BUT ONLY BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE WE'RE WORKING... I'M FINE.

YOU SOUND LIKE YOU HAVE A SORE THROAT, MR. KENT.

JUST A LITTLE BUG.



ONCE I'M OUT I CAN FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO REDFERN--

KLIK--

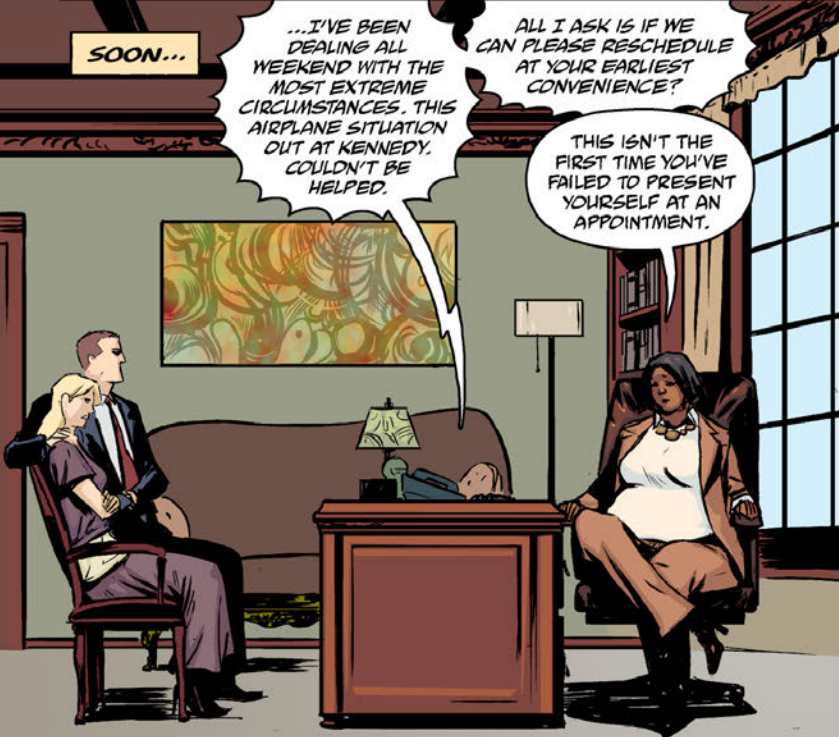
MR. FITZWILLIAM, WE HAVE LOST OUR CONTACT INSIDE THE CANARY PROJECT.

YOU WILL IGNORE ANY FURTHER CALLS FROM MR. KENT.

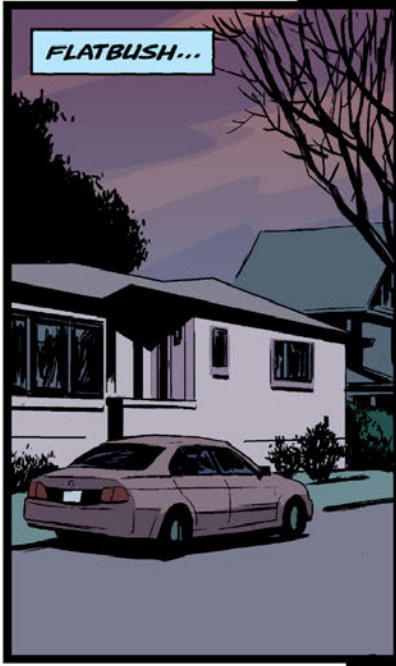


AND WE NEED TO DISPATCH A TEAM TO JAMAICA HOSPITAL.

THERE'RE A FEW LOOSE ENDS THAT NEED RETRIEVING.









FORGIVE ME, JESUS...

YOUR DOGS HAVE FOUND INCREASINGLY CREATIVE WAYS TO KEEP ME AWAKE AT NIGHT.



DOGS...? OH.

NNNNUUUUHHHH

IF YOU DO NOT DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE ANIMALS THIS MINUTE I AM GOING TO CALL THE POLICE.



NO!

I'LL--I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT SOMEHOW.

ANYONE WHO GREW UP ON A FARM WILL TELL YOU IT'S BETTER FOR A DOG TO KNOW THE STING OF THE SWITCH THAN THE PAT OF A HAND.



THE SWITCH?!

MR. OTISH, LAST SUMMER GERTIE RAN AWAY. WHEN WE GOT HER BACK THEY SAID SHE HAD BEEN HIT WITH A--A STICK OR A SWITCH OF SOME KIND.

IT WAS YOU. WASN'T IT?!



IF I DID, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOUR FAULT FOR ALLOWING SUCH OUT-OF-CONTROL ANIMALS LOOSE!



IS THE MAN OF THE HOUSE IN? I WOULD PREFER TO SPEAK TO HIM.



HE IS NOT.

YOU KNOW WHAT, MR. OTISH, I AM AT MY WITS' END WITH THESE DOGS.

IF YOU THINK YOU CAN CONTROL THEM, THEN HAVE AT THEM. Hmmm...? YOU HAVE AT THEM!

WELL, I--



HERE!



IF YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO, THEN DO IT.

OTHERWISE... GO BUY SOME EAR-PLUGS!



Y-YOU'RE AS CRAZY AS THEY SAY.



I'M DOING THIS FOR YOUR BENEFIT MORE THAN MINE.



SLAM

UNNFF!



GAAHHH--
UK--AH--

AGHLAAGH!

HAIL MARY,
FULL OF
GRACE. OUR
LORD IS WITH
THEE...



SO, YOU'RE
SAYING ALL
THOSE BODIES IN
THE MORGUE HAVE
JUST GOTTEN UP
AND GONE
HOME?

THE CREATURES
OPERATE ON INSTINCT AT
FIRST. THEY NEED TO SEEK
NOURISHMENT.

WHEN THEY WAKE, THE
VESTIGES OF WHO THEY WERE
DRIVE THEM TO SEEK OUT THOSE
THAT ARE CLOSEST TO THEM. THOSE
THAT ARE IMPRINTED ON THEIR
PSYCHE. THEIR "DEAR ONES."



I REMEMBERED
THIS GIRL FROM THE
PLANE. EMMA WAS HER
NAME. SHE COULDN'T
HAVE BEEN OLDER
THAN EIGHT.

HNNN...

COME.



HERE.
THE DEAD ARE NOT MUCH FOR CLOSING DOORS.



BLACK LIGHT?



BLACK LIGHT IS MERELY U.V.A. WAVES. REVEALING BUT HARMLESS. U.V.B. IS STRONGER AND CAN CAUSE SUNBURN OR CANCER.

THIS IS U.V.C. SHORT WAVE. USED FOR STERILIZATION. VERY HARMFUL TO HUMANS... BUT TO THE VAMPIRE... IT'S WEAPONS GRADE.



OH, CRAP.



HE IS TURNED.



SNKT



STAND
BACK, DOCTOR.
THIS MUST BE
DONE.

WAIT!

HE--HE'S
JUST LYING
THERE...



SHE IS
RETURNING.

QUICKLY.
SHE MUST NOT
ESCAPE US.



KREE
KREEE



Now!



BACK!



KSSSAHHH!



KSHHH--

NORA! THE DOORS!

I GOT THEM!



UHHH...



PROFESSOR!
LOOK OUT!



KSSSSS!

HNNFF!



SSAAHHH!



PROFESSOR!

PLEASE
HURRY!



NUURR!



IM SOURN
ARTSATI
MASIN E
ERGOUM!



KAH--EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!



BACK,
STRIGOI!



QUICKLY, DR.
GOODWEATHER,
HAND ME THE
LAMP.



IF THERE ARE TWO HUNDRED DEAD AND EACH ONE IS OUT CONVERTING HOW MANY OTHERS FOR THE SECOND NIGHT IN A ROW...THEY'RE SPREADING LIKE A VIRUS.

WE CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.

WHAT'S BARNES GOING TO SAY?

WELL, IF HE DOESN'T SAY, "LET'S CALL OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD," I THINK WE'RE ALL IN BIG TROUBLE.

DIRECTOR BARNES. IT'S EPH...

FINALLY, HE'S TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY.

EVERETT!

THANK GOD YOU'VE COME AROUND. WE HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE.



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE MISSING BODIES, EPHRAIM?

THAT'S WHAT I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU ON THE PHONE--

DR. GOODWEATHER, WE'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT A PATIENT OF YOURS.



CAPTAIN DOYLE REDDFERN...

EPH...

ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY JUST CALM DOWN.

WE HAVE AN EMERGENCY SITUATION HERE. I WILL ANSWER ALL OF YOUR QUESTIONS, BUT--



THEN MAYBE YOU CAN EXPLAIN THIS.



BECAUSE THE ONLY EXPLANATION I CAN COME UP WITH IS THAT YOU AND DR. MARTINEZ MURDERED AND DISPOSED OF CAPTAIN REDDFERN.

DR. GOODWEATHER, DR. MARTINEZ, I'M PLACING BOTH OF YOU UNDER ARREST. AT THIS TIME YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT...

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO... DON'T YOU GET IT? THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT.

THIS IS WHAT THEY WANT!



THE PLAGUE HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.

COMING SOON . . .

GUILLERMO DEL TORO & CHUCK HOGAN'S
THE STRAIN VOLUME 2

ON SALE AUGUST 2013

THE SERIES CONTINUES . . .

THE FALL

PART TWO OF THE STRAIN TRILOGY, PREMIERES 2013!

THE NIGHT ETERNAL

PART THREE OF THE STRAIN TRILOGY, PREMIERES 2014!

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GUILLERMO DEL TORO & CHUCK HOGAN'S
THE STRAIN™

DAVID LAPHAM | MIKE HUDDLESTON | DAN JACKSON | VOLUME 1



IN ONE WEEK, MANHATTAN WILL BE GONE. IN ONE MONTH, THE COUNTRY. IN TWO MONTHS—THE WORLD.

When a Boeing 777 lands at JFK International Airport and goes dark on the runway, the Centers for Disease Control, fearing a terrorist attack, calls in Dr. Ephraim Goodweather and his team of expert biological-threat first responders. Only an elderly pawnbroker from Spanish Harlem suspects a darker purpose behind the event—an ancient threat intent on covering mankind in darkness.

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