

Image
ISSUE 3

GILLEN

ROSSIGNOL

STOKELY

BONVILLAIN

COWLES

THE Ludocrats

3. IN WHICH INTERROGATION BECOMES TERRIBLE SEDUCTION.





STEAM-JUDGE
knows what
BADNESS *the*
HYPER-POPE
is UP TO.

WILL SHE TALK?

Let's FIND OUT.

THE INTERROGATION
ROOMS, HADES' TRANSLOCATED
CATACOMBS OF HYPER-MELODY.

TIGHTER!









SO...YOU'RE STUBBORN ENOUGH TO RESIST THE CRANIAL ENERGY CLASP...

...BUT CAN YOU DENY MY SONIC RETRACTION BORE?!



THIS IS TORTURE!

FOR ME, I MEAN.



STILL NOTHING?

LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE THE QUANTUM SINGULARITY FLAIL!

PLEASE, DON'T!

(BUT DO.)



LOOK AT HER, TRAPPED IN THERE LIKE SOME KIND OF SEXY...TRAPPED... BEAST.

IF I PUSH THIS BUTTON, YOUR BOWELS WILL CHANGE.

CHANGE FOREVER!

**HUMP
HUMP
HUMP**



**GODS!
IT'S TOO MUCH!**

CALM, OTTO, CALM! THE INTERROGATION **MUST** SUCCEED.

YOU MUST BE STRONG! AND LESS TUMESCENT!



PERHAPS
THE SECULAR
REARRANGER?

NO, NO!
PLEASE, NO!
NOT THE SECULAR
REARRANGER!

ESPECIALLY
NOT WITH WHATEVER
THE LOVELY SPIKEY
THING IS BESIDE
IT!

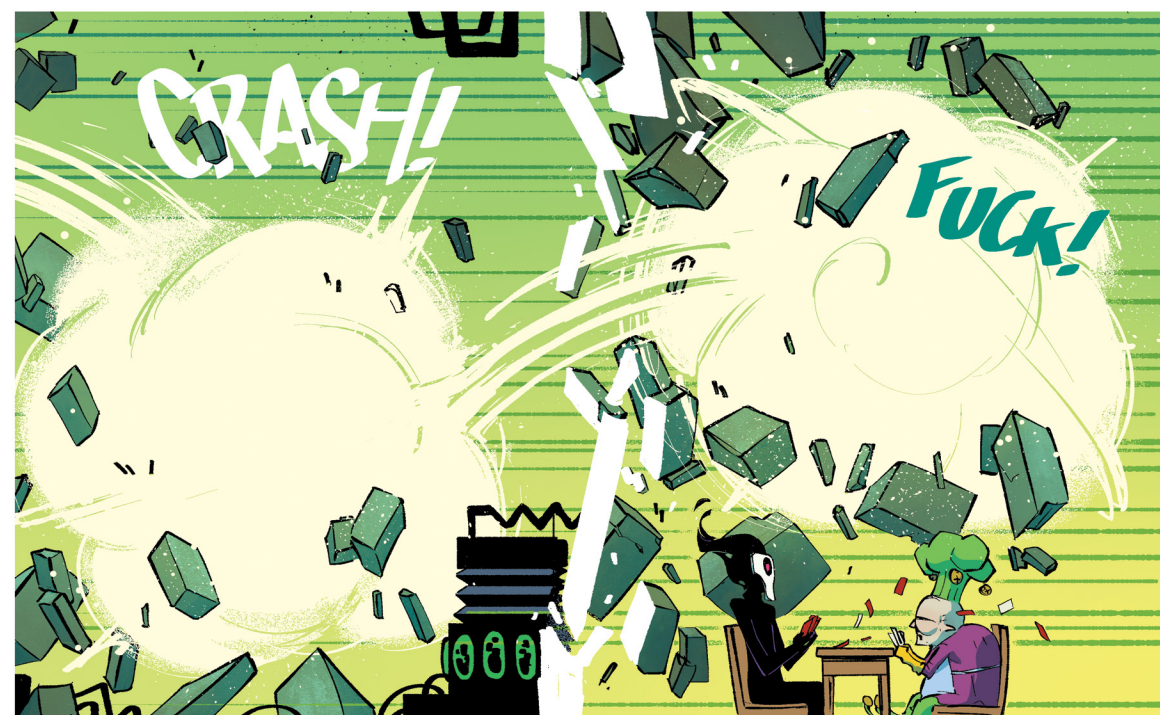
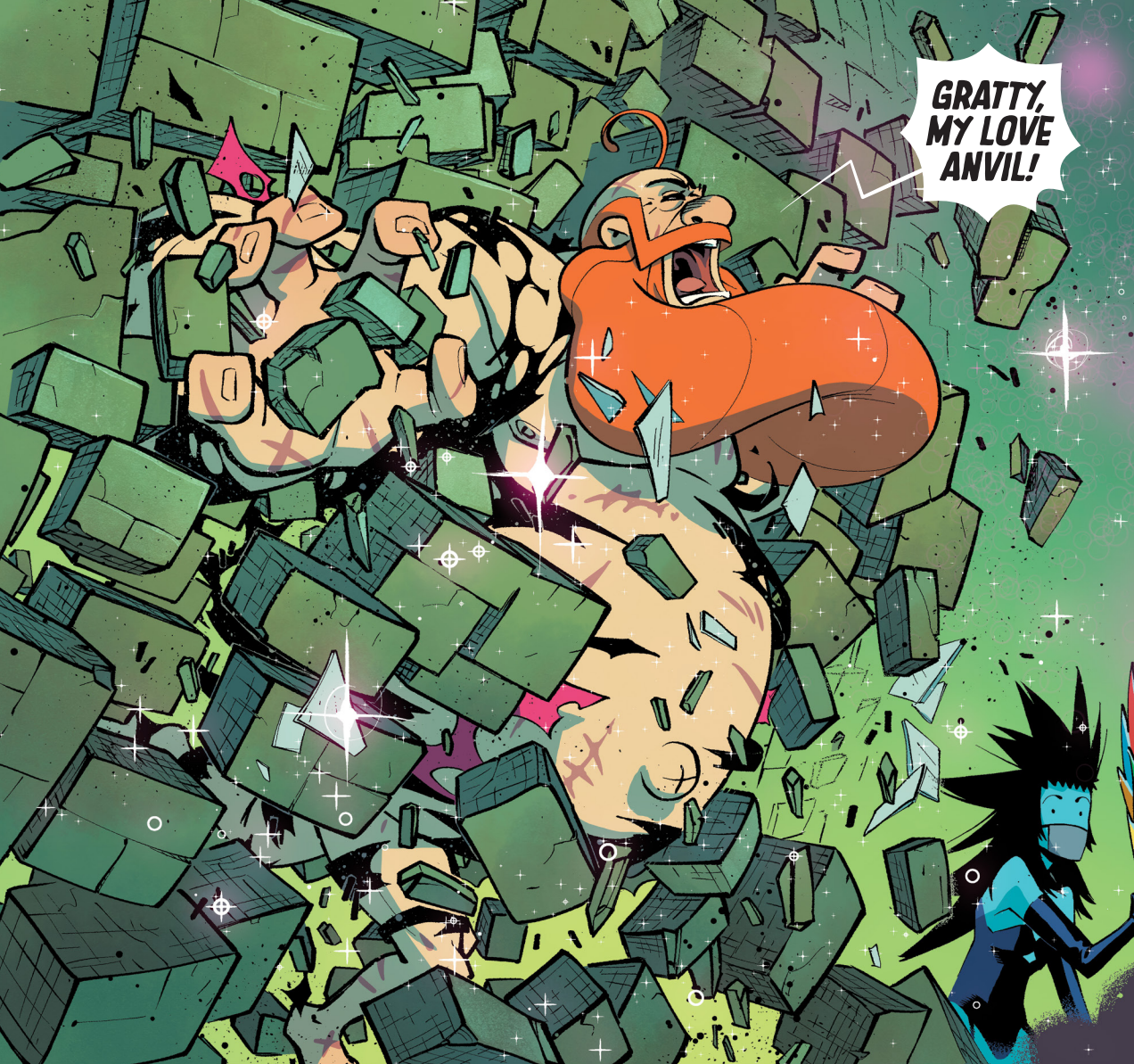


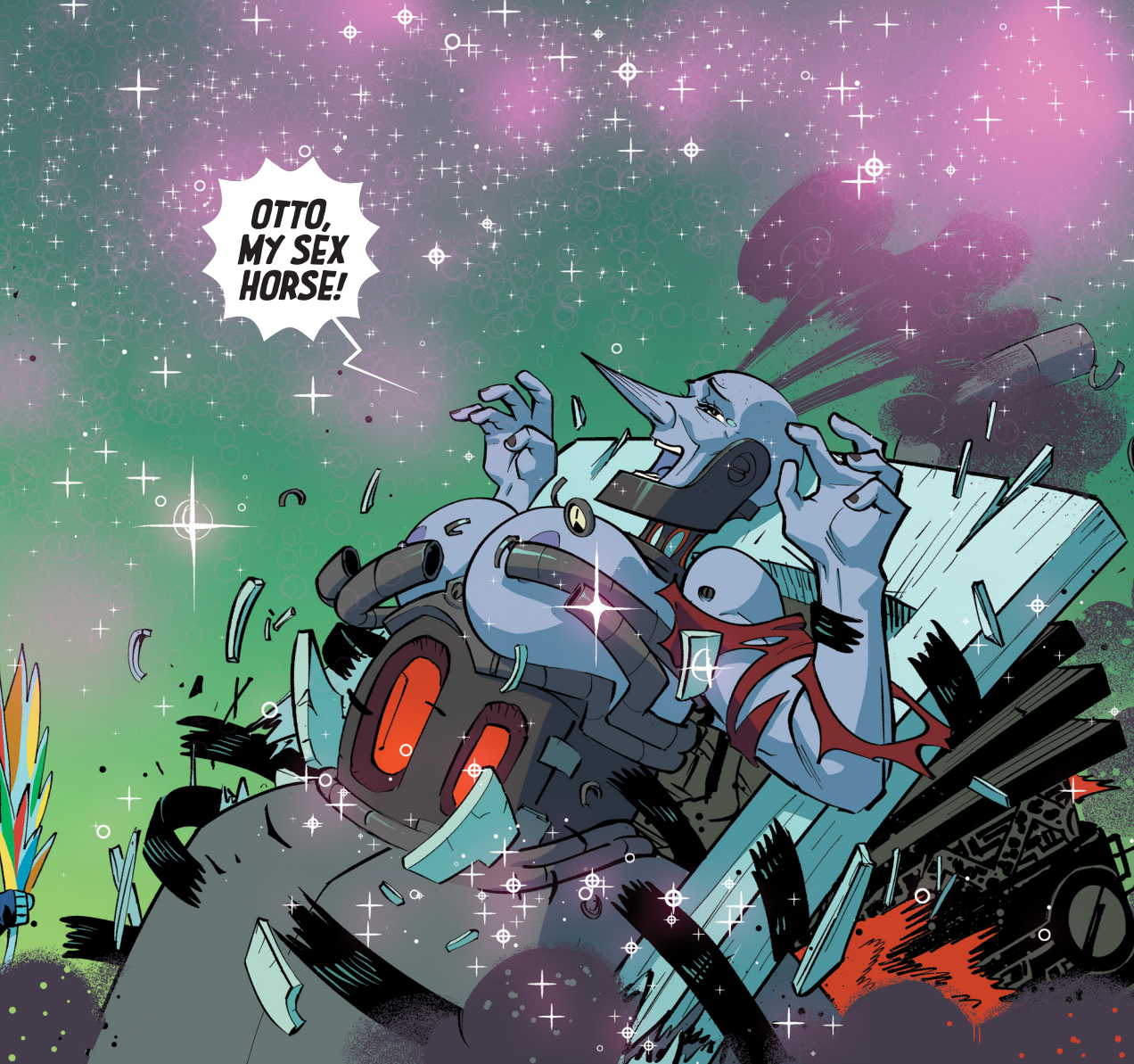
WHAT IS THE
HYPER-POPE
DOING?

WHAT DO
YOU KNOW?



HNNNGH!







SEVERAL
NEAR-SATINGS
LATER.

FINE!
POST-COITAL
ADMISSION
TIME...

UH-OOO.

I **DO**
KNOW WHAT
PARDIUS HAS
BEEN UP
TO.

THE TRUTH
IS THAT HE'S
SPENT YEARS GATHERING
THE MOST EXTREME
EXAMPLES OF
LUDOCRACY.

HE CONFISCATED
THE HAPPENING
ACCELERATORS I DUG
UP FROM THE TEMPLE OF
EVERYTHING, BACK WHEN
I WAS AN ARCHAEOLOGY
MAJOR.

HE CLAIMED
PROFESSOR ENDWHORL'S
ZLOTAL PROPHECY
RHOMBOID FOR
HIMSELF.

HE EVEN
STOLE YOUR
MEAT AMPLIFIER,
OTTO.

WHAT?! I'VE
BEEN LOOKING
FOR THAT. WHY
WOULD PARDY
DO SUCH A
THING?

I FEAR HE'S
DISCOVERED
SOMETHING,
OTTO.

SOMETHING
TERRIBLE.

GOOD OLD
PARDY!

NO,
TERRIBLE IN A
BAD WAY.

OH.



HADES!
OVER
HERE!

PARDY
IS BEING
NAUGHTY.



IN ADDITION
TO ACCUSING
GOOD LUDOCRATS
OF NORMALISATION,
OF COURSE...

HMM. WHAT
KIND OF NAUGHTY ARE
WE TALKING ABOUT,
GRATTINIA?

HE'S WORKING
ON SOMETHING. HE
WILL CONTINUE TO
APPROPRIATE LUDOCRATIC
RESOURCES UNTIL
HE SUCCEEDS.

NEW BILLS
ARE SET TO BE
PASSED IN THE PARLIAMENT
OF THE ABSURD. HE WILL BE
ABLE TO DO ANYTHING
HE WANTS.

YUM.
ANYTHING.



PERHAPS I
CAN SIMPLY WRESTLE
HIM?

THAT
USUALLY
WORKS.

THIS IS
BEYOND MAN-ON-MAN
GRAPPLING, OTTO. HE IS
CREATING SOMETHING
THAT WILL CHANGE
OUR WORLD...



WELL, WHATEVER IT IS,
IT'S HAPPENING DEEP **IN THE
OBSCENITARUM...**



I TAKE
IT BY THE SUDDEN
SILENCE EVERYONE
ELSE IS STARVING
TOO?

BEHOLD: **The Obscenitarium.**

5



HOW DO WE GET INSIDE? BATS? MAYBE WE COULD HAVE SMUGGLED OURSELVES INSIDE A SNAKE?

WELL WE COULD--

I'LL DISTRACT THE GUARDS BY HANDING MYSELF OVER. WITH ANY LUCK, I CAN TALK MY WAY BACK INTO THE JUDICIARY.

PARDY WILL WANT TO THINK HE HAS ME UNDER HIS THUMB. HE'LL WANT MY VOTE, AFTER ALL...



ACTUALLY I THINK MY PLAN W--

GOOD IDEA, GRATTY, AND GOOD LUCK.

WHY IS NO ONE--

GOOD LUCK, GRATTY. GLAD SOMEONE HAD A PLAN.



I'M A BEING MADE OF **PURE SOUND** AND **NO ONE** LISTENS TO A WORD I SAY. WHO WOULD IGNORE A SENSIBLE PLAN?

OH. LUDOCRATS, YES, MY MISTAKE.



"OH, POOR GRATTY, SUCH A SACRIFICE. HOW SHALL WE GET IN?"



AH! WE MUST EMPLOY STEALTH, OF WHICH I AM A MASTER.

NO, THERE'S A DOOR OVER THERE.



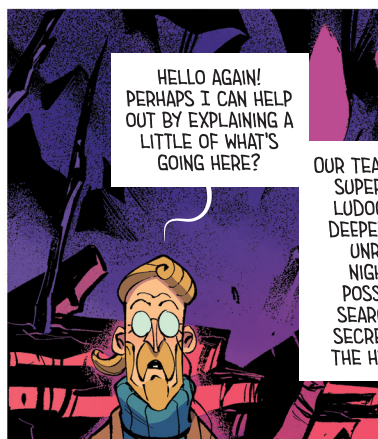
THE OBSCENITARIUM SEEMS SURPRISINGLY QUIET. LAST TIME I WAS HERE THERE WAS MORE SCREAMING.

PERHAPS PARDY HAS GONE ON HOLIDAY.



DON'T BE DIM, OTTO, OF COURSE HE NEEDS TO HIDE HIS WORK FROM ROVING EYES. HE'S NOT GOING TO BE THROWING PARTIES IF THERE'S EVIL AFOOT.

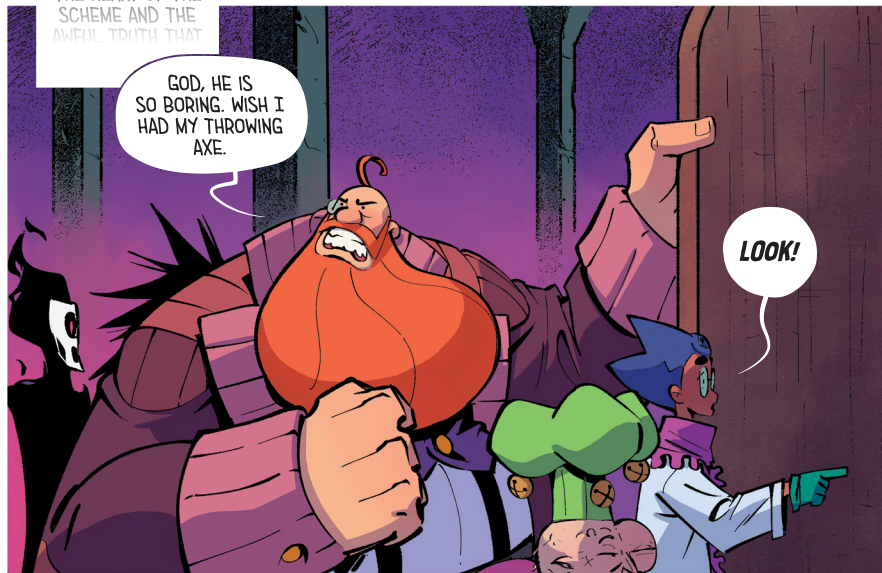
BUT THE BEST EVIL ALWAYS HAPPENS AT A PARTY!



HELLO AGAIN! PERHAPS I CAN HELP OUT BY EXPLAINING A LITTLE OF WHAT'S GOING HERE?

OUR TEAM OF PLUCKY SUPER-POWERED LUDOCRATS DIVE DEEPER INTO THIS UNREALM OF NIGHTMARISH POSSIBILITY IN SEARCH OF THE SECRET PLOT OF THE HYPER-POPE.

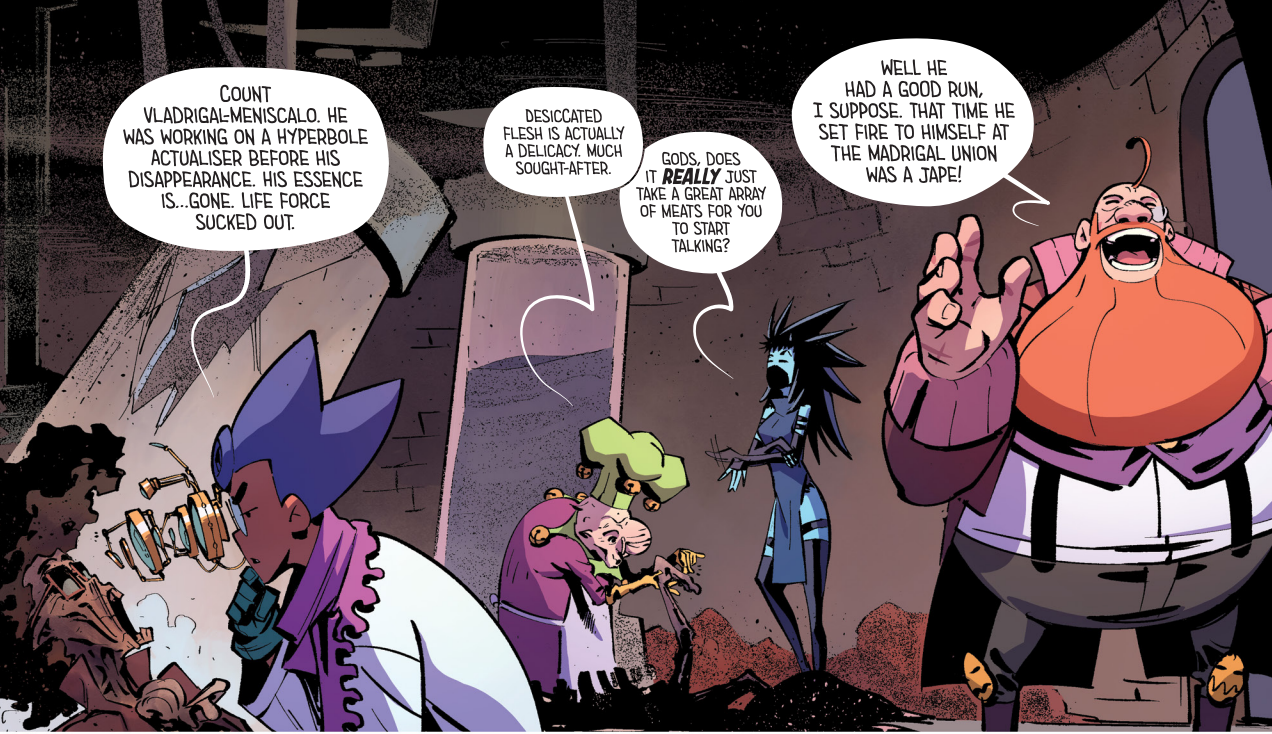
THEY DIDN'T REALISE THEY WERE APPROACHING THE HEART OF THE SCHEME AND THE AWFUL TRUTH THAT



GOD, HE IS SO BORING. WISH I HAD MY THROWING AXE.

LOOK!





COUNT VLADRIGAL-MENISCALO. HE WAS WORKING ON A HYPERBOLE ACTUALISER BEFORE HIS DISAPPEARANCE. HIS ESSENCE IS...GONE. LIFE FORCE SUCKED OUT.

DESSICATED FLESH IS ACTUALLY A DELICACY. MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER.

GODS. DOES IT **REALLY** JUST TAKE A GREAT ARRAY OF MEATS FOR YOU TO START TALKING?

WELL HE HAD A GOOD RUN, I SUPPOSE. THAT TIME HE SET FIRE TO HIMSELF AT THE MADRIGAL UNION WAS A JAPE!



OH, HERE'S ANOTHER ONE. IT'S OLD DENCILE! WHY ARE HIS ARMS MISSING?

OTTO, I DO BELIEVE THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN MURDERED.

HOW DREADFUL. PEOPLE WHO ARE MURDERED REALLY DO HAVE IT ROUGH...



FORTUNATE FOR THEM THAT DETECTIVE VON SUBERTAN HAS APPEARED TO SOLVE THE CASE!

OH, OTTO.



THEY'LL ALL BE CHEERING WHEN WE REVEAL WHO THE REAL KILLER IS. EVERYONE LOVES THAT PART, AND THEY DON'T CALL ME THE BLOODHOUND FOR NOTHING!

THEY CALL YOU THE BLOODHOUND BECAUSE OF ALL THE BLOOD AND YOUR LUPINE ODOR, OTTO, NOT THE DETECTIVE WORK.

STOP! FROM BEHIND US...

I CAN SENSE SOMETHING APPROACHING!



SOMETHING THAT SCREAMS ON MULTIPLE PLANES OF EXISTENCE.





OH,
SHOGGY!

I'M SORRY,
OTTO. IT IS
PARDIUS'
CREATURE
NOW.

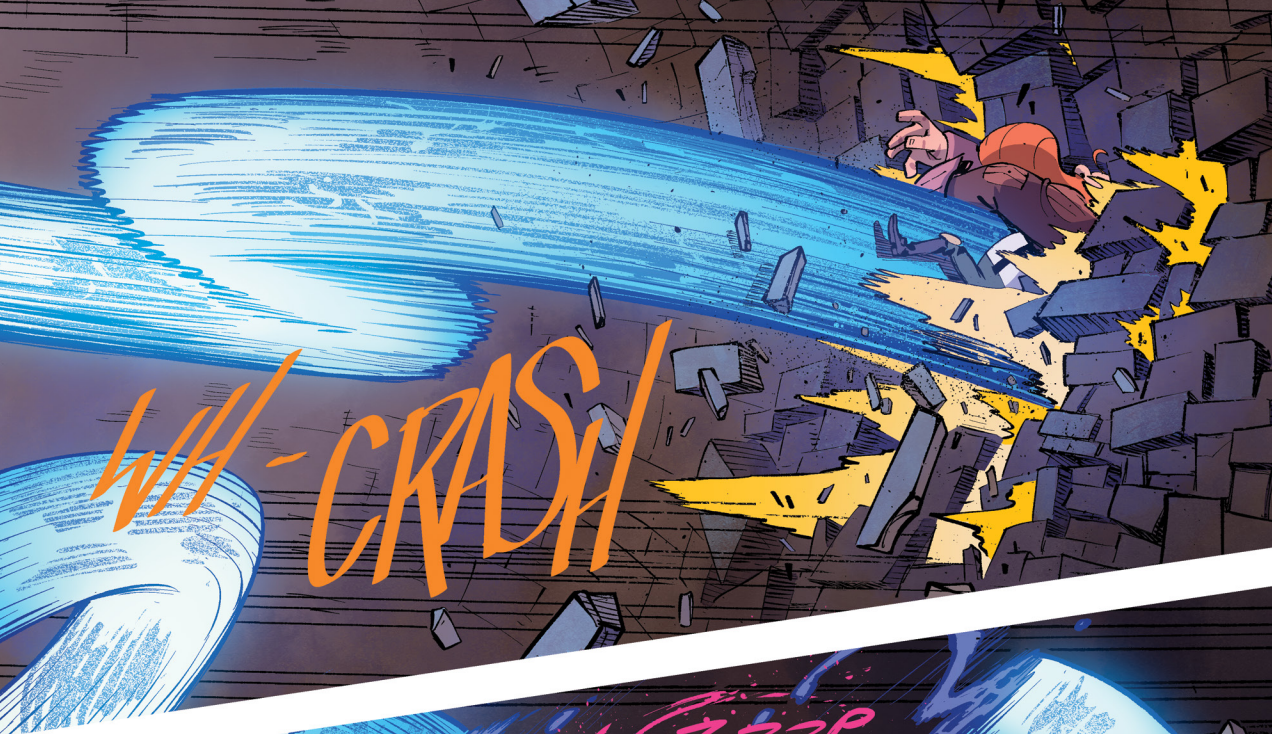


VERY WELL.
LUDOCRATS...



TODAY
WE FIGHT THE
HELLSPAWN OF
MY LOINS.





WH-CRASH!



WE CAN'T TAKE IT!

VV-ZZZP

POO



SHOGGY, YOU NEED A NAP!

SPIT OUT MY GASTRONAUT AT ONCE!

THE GREAT FRENCH CHEF BECOMES A MEAL!

THAT'S PROBABLY AN EXISTENTIALIST JOKE OF SOME KIND.



YES, BUT WE HAVEN'T TIME FOR A JOKE, LET ALONE ONE THAT'S TRYING TO CONSUME US.

ONWARDS! DEEPER!



IF WE
HAD BROUGHT
MY MOLE PEOPLE
WE COULD HAVE
TUNNELED OUR
WAY OUT.

WE CAN'T
ESCAPE YET,
OTTO. WE MUST FIND
EVIDENCE OF WHAT
PARDIUS IS
PLANNING...



...AND I SENSE
WE MAY SOON HAVE
IT. THE MINOR-KEY
VIBRATIONS IN EXISTENCE
ARE HINTING AT
SOMETHING?

YOU TOO?
DIMENSIONAL
ENERGIES ARE
HAYWIRE.

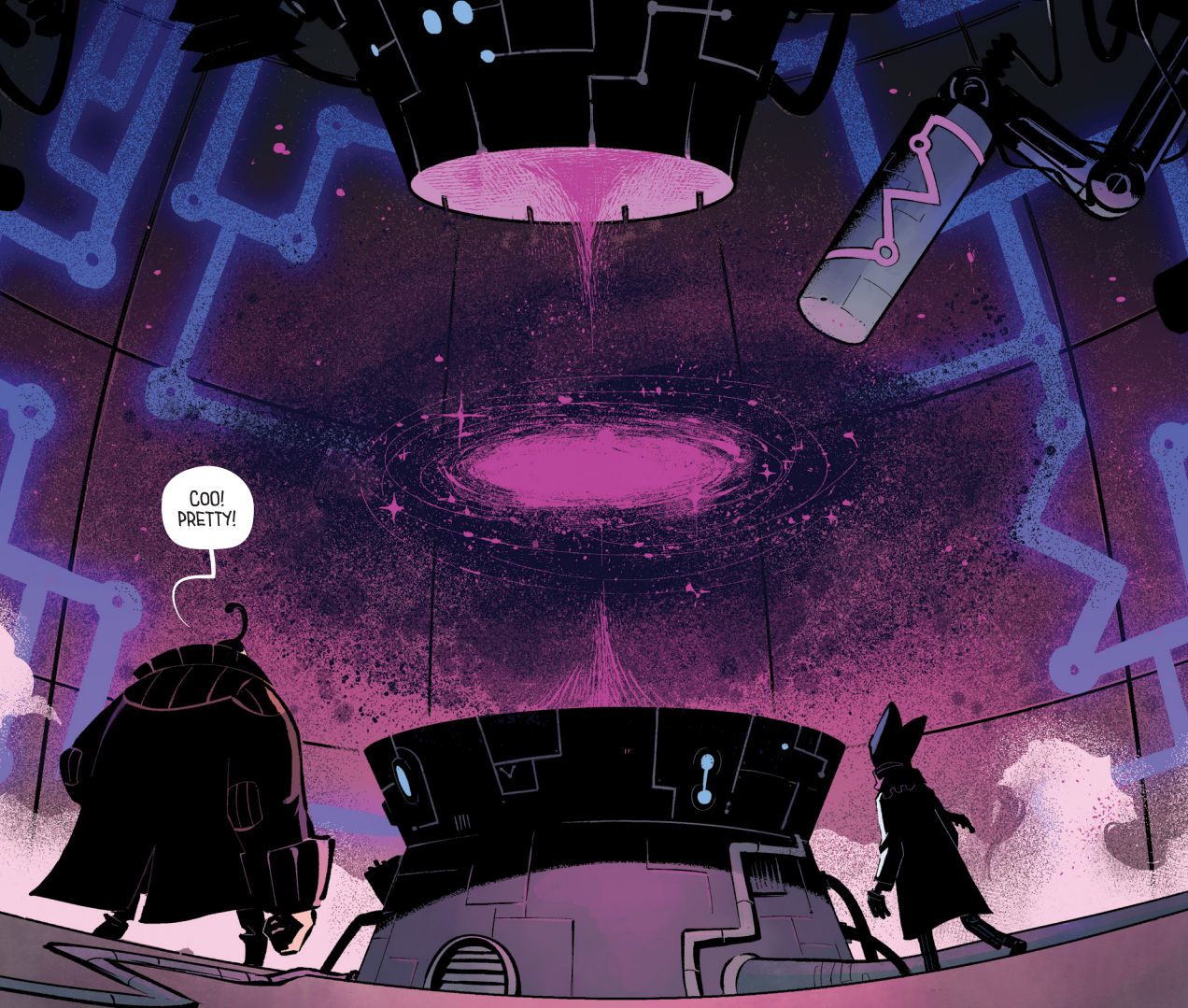
WE ARE
APPROACHING
THE HEART OF
THE MATTER...



SEAL
THE DOOR!
SWIFTLY!

SEE WHAT
THE HYPER-POPE'S
BEEN UP TO...

SLAM



COO!
PRETTY!



PRETTY,
YET MONSTROUS,
OTTO.

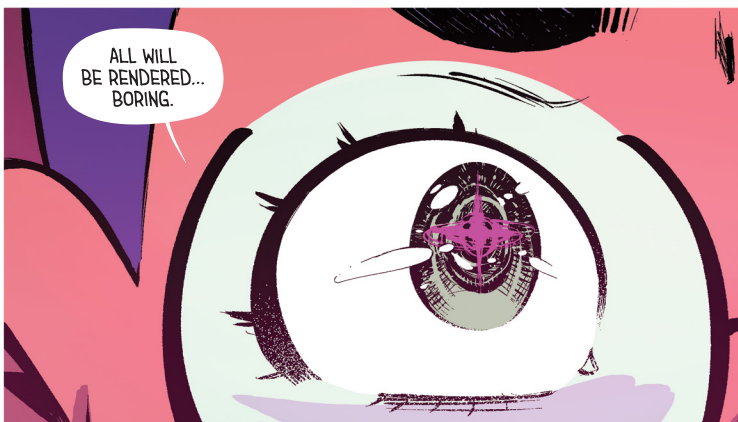
IT'S
A VOODOO
UNIVERSE.

WHATEVER IS DONE TO *THIS*
UNIVERSE HAPPENS TO
OUR REALITY...

THE PESTLE
AND MORTAR...
THEY'RE GOING TO
GRIND IT UP. IT'LL
HOMOGENISE
ALL
EXISTENCE.



ALL WILL
BE RENDERED...
BORING.





...BUT
WHAT CAN
WE DO?

WAIT...
I HAVE AN
IDEA.

OH, NO,
IT WAS AN
ITCH.



THE Ludocrats

was brought to you by



KIERON GILLEN

MORBID SCRIPTOMANCER

YOU CAN'T SPELL "SCRIPT" WITHOUT
"RIP", AND YOU CAN'T HAVE A KIERON
COMIC WITHOUT PEOPLE JUST DYING.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

NOT A GNOLL

A LOW-LEVEL HUMANOID DOG-
CREATURE WHICH PROVES THAT A USEFUL
ALTERNATIVES TO GOBLINS IN D&D IS
NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM.

JEFF STOKELY

DRAWING A LINE

JEFF IS LOOKING AT THE PREVIOUS
ENTRIES, DISAPPROVING, AND DRAWING A
LINE BENEATH THEM ALL. HE THEN DRAWS
THE REST OF THE COMIC, NATCH.

TAMRA BONVILLAIN

ARCHER OF THE RAINBOW

ARROWS OF SCARLET! ARROWS OF
GREEN! ARROWS OF OCHRE! ARROWS OF
AQUAMARINE! ARROWS OF PUCE! ARROWS
OF THE FINEST VERTIGO BROWN! ARROWS!

CLAYTON COWLES

THE DIVINE LOGOS

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD.
AND THEN THERE WAS ANOTHER WORD.
AND THEN NO MORE THAN TWENTY-THREE
MORE WORDS IN A BALLOON.

FERNANDO ARGÜELLO

FLATS FANATIC

FERNADO SWORE AN OATH
TO NEVER WEAR EVEN A KITTEN HEEL.
HIS SHOES ARE SENSIBLE FLATS.

CHRISSY WILLIAMS

TAMER OF THE UNTAMED

THERE ARE DAYS WHEN SHE THINKS THAT
SHE SHOULD HAVE GOT INTO LION TAMING.
AT LEAST LIONS ARE CUTE AND
HAVE FLUFFY MANES.

SERGIO SERRANO

GRAND DESIGN

IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM, WE'D BE REDUCED
TO POTATO PRINTS. WE DON'T KNOW
HOW HE DOES IT. WE PRESUME IT'S
NOT WITH POTATO PRINTS.

MARY PSEUD-DEMON

UNUSED EXTRA

PROFESSOR HADES' RIVAL,
THE PRETENTIOUS PERFECT PRINCESS,
WAS IN AN EARLY DRAFT OF THE FIRST ISSUE,
BUT THEN REMOVED. WE REMEMBER HER.



IMAGE COMICS, INC.
ROBERT KIRKMAN: Chief Operating Officer
ERIK LARSEN: Chief Financial Officer
TODD MCFARLANE: President
MARC SILVESTRI: Chief Executive Officer
JIM VALENTINO: Vice President
ERIC STEPHENSON: Publisher / Chief Creative Officer
JEFF BOISON: Director of Sales & Publishing Planning
JEFF STANG: Director of Direct Market Sales
KAT SALAZAR: Director of PR & Marketing
DREW GILL: Cover Editor
HEATHER DOORNINK: Production Director
NICOLE LAPALME: Controller
imagecomics.com

THE LUDOCRATS #3. JULY 2020

Published by Image Comics, Inc. Office of publication: 2701 NW Vaughn St., Ste. 780, Portland, OR 97210.
Copyright © 2020 Kieron Gillen Limited, Big Robot Ltd., and Jeff Stokely. All rights reserved. "The Ludocrats,"
The Ludocrats logos, and the likenesses of all characters herein or hereon are trademarks of Kieron Gillen Limited,
Big Robot Ltd., and Jeff Stokely, unless expressly indicated. "Image" and the Image Comics logos are registered
trademarks of Image Comics, Inc. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by
any means (except for short excerpts for journalistic or review purposes), without the express written permission
of Kieron Gillen Limited, Big Robot Ltd., Jeff Stokely, or Image Comics, Inc. All names, characters, events, and
locales herein are entirely fictional. Any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), events, or places, without
satiric intent, is coincidental. Digital edition. For rights inquiries, contact Law Offices of Harris M. Miller II, P.C.
(rights.inquiries@gmail.com).



LUDOBITUARIES

YOUR *handy catalogue* OF THE
lately late



BOGOL THEEN

BORN: *the past.* DIED: *the present.*

AMONG THE FRESHLY DEPARTED *this week* was the beloved Gastronomaut and prototypical chef, Bogol Theen. Famed for his descent into the Ululating Offal Vortex of Blunvud Gulch, from which he returned with thirty-seven varieties of unknown meat, Bogol was a humble character, best evidenced by his quiet service to aristocratic families such as the Von Subertans and the Eebeling-Wartonburys. It was in the employment of these families that his passion for and knowledge of the obscure parts of unimaginable animals was neatly sliced into a fathomless resource, and seeded in kitchens and cooking emplacements through the realm.

Bogol made little of his charitable work, but his meat golem piloted by five hundred orphans still roams the wastes of the Caspian Basin today, a century after its initial animation.

Perhaps even more obscure is the poetry written by this good and gentle soul: a genetic verse which was grown in the veins and muscle tissue of the creatures he cooked. Only those carnivorous enough could truly appreciate his clever syntax, or, indeed, the deep continental irony with which he seasoned his verbiage. Globalt, the Glutton King of Second Denmark, gave the gastronomaut the keys to his kingdom and described Bogol as "bulgy and weird", but later said: "He can cook! I like him."

Bogol Theen's ghost will be on display at the Spectre Centre at the Huberg Spook Analysis Facility at Whelyslong. He died horribly. He was born in France.





COUNT VLADRIGAL-MENISCALO

BORN: *the past*. DIED: *the present*.

THE CONVERSION OF AN ACTIVE VOLCANO into a rock stadium was only one footnote in the glittering career of musician and stylist Vladrigal-Meniscalo. Accelerated up through the classes to Count by virtue of his unnatural ability with (and faintly sexual interest in) instruments of all kinds, Meniscalo was deployed over Cordwalia in the war against the Puritanical Eel of St Fassimer, and his battle hymns were widely credited with bringing expressive dance back to specialist military operations. His disappearance earlier this year was initially assumed to be artistic, but has now been confirmed to be due to him being dead. He leaves behind his wife, Aggroxima Torshfang The Inscrutable, and his children, Mike and Susan.



DENCILE QUORTIGUS

BORN: *the past*. DIED: *the present*.

THE LOSS OF DENCILE QUORTIGUS, a well known Ludocrat and high-ranking librarian, will be intensely and melodramatically mourned by the Ludocratic algorithmic-literary sorcerer communities. Quortigus' ability to produce valid theories about cross-reality entanglements (the well-documented phenomenon of events in stories causally influencing those in real life) had made him something of a superstar among the fictive space cabals of Ludocratic academia. The ability to physically descend into fictional spaces was largely derived from Quortigus' work with the widely-loathed impresario-abjurationist, Carl Impostwaite, with whom he produced the Quortigus-Impostwaite equation: a mathematical incantation which made forced reality-extrusion possible, and which many commentators suggested would provide a pathway to more readily accessible forms of space travel than the standard gravity bending which is current taught in Ludocratic institutions.

Quortigus leaves behind his dog, Kyle, who is slowly learning to talk.



ELIZABETH MIRLE LA FONTAYNE

BORN: *the future*. DIED: *the present*.

ONE OF THE FEW non-violent deaths this season, Mirle La Fontayne died stylishly in her home at Mount Vermillion after a brief retirement and a long and distinguished service as one of the central managers with the Great Ludocratic Bureaucracy. Having started out her career as an inventor, producing such outlandish concepts as The Haircut and Underwater Dogs, she realised that the thing that was really holding back raising the experiential intensity threshold for all citizens was the supply chain. Having entered the bureaucracy, she spent countless centuries making sure that all whims were catered for and that any request for resources, no matter how boring, could be readily delivered, ideally on hot air balloons equipped with stilt legs. Mirle La Fontayne, queen of logistics, we salute you.



IMPORTANT, DANGEROUS, ~~AND~~ DELIGHTFUL LANDMARKS
TO LOOK OUT FOR ON YOUR VISIT TO

THE OBSCENITARIUM

1 THE AWFUL EYE-TOWER OF LONDINIUM. Watching, screaming, and then watching again: the Awful Eye-Tower of Londinium sees all, and reacts accordingly. The nightmare clocktower longs to return to its home city but, alas, since the catastrophe it must remain here.

2 PURLO'S EDIFICE OF CONSTRUCTION FUNGUS. Fungus went out of fashion as a construction material during the 14,670s, when it became clear that the tiny parasites living in it were in fact a culture of microscopic philosophers, each one more tedious than the last. Nevertheless, mycologist wrestler Flaming Purlo decided to install a grand testament to fungus during his time as arch-architect of the Obscenitarium.

3 GINGERBEARD SANITARIUM. Gingerbread house? Think again. That's orange human hair. *Gingerbeard* house. Sure, you can eat it and become enchanted by a witch, but choking down fistfuls of that stuff is actually worse than the curse. Instead, lay down on the bristling orange bed, and think about what you did.

4 GERRY SMITH. Gerry Smith probably shouldn't have volunteered for Egrod Minacious' cascading flesh trials, but he really needed to do something with his life, and so he did this. Gerry is now a perpetually descending berg of throbbing protoplasm and venous material which fills large parts of the Obscenitarium.



5 DOME OF THE INFINITE SERPENT. With no head and no tail, this one-step-beyond-ouroboros surges and slithers its way around the dome without rest, making things quite uncomfortable for visitors. Get naked and slather yourself in cooking oil for the best access to the classically-vaulted dome.

6 MEDIEVAL GALLEON. Authentic sailing ship from the discovery of the under-continent. Why not have your photo taken with a sailor? You know, if there's one around.

7 BOOZE TOWN. We've all been to Booze Town, but this particular instance of that figurative location contains the original booze from which all other drink was derived. The UrBooze is normally distilled in the skull of a mythological giant, Drunky, who was said to have invented drinking by fermenting stolen apricots in his bed pit.

The PERSONAL CYCLOPEDIA of LUDOCRACY,
by PARDIUS HAEMOGLANDULUM,
ELDRITCH HYPER-POPE and SUPREME HIGH LUDOCRAT



*On the
Guillo-Gate*

“...FOLLOWING
THAT, any
nominative
determinism was
outlawed in the

states of the Sanctus Manipuli. But the real issue was how to keep the meat-ghosts, once we had released them, out of our Ludocratic institutions. Their hunger for the emanations of raw science meant that once they had tasted speculative empiricism, they perpetually wanted more. It was down to myself, as Hyper-Pope, to produce a solution. That solution was the guillo-gate. Based on Hiraculon-Bestwick’s meat-recognition algorithms, we imbued the gate with an ability to detect genuinely haunted meat from the meat that people walk around in every day. There were a few teething problems, naturally, and our bone-glue serum provided us with a number of critical saves during the early deployment. Nevertheless, these gates now do great work in protecting science from those yawning abominations who would eat it. Furthermore, when it came to appetites of moth people...”

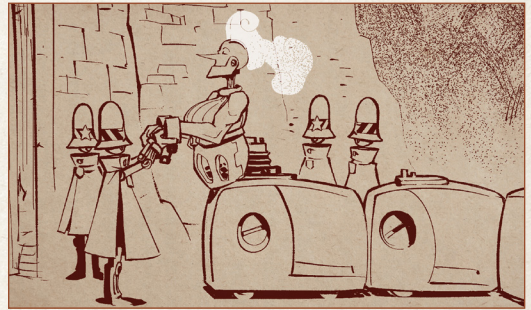


*On the
Mouthspeaker*

“...WHEN WE CAME
to ban the phrase
‘did the Earth

move for you?’ due to the over-literality of its usage, there was a realisation that the average citizen should not be expected to rebuild their lives after the Act Of God that came from Ludocratic coupling. Many solutions were proposed, from big nets to a

kind of foam which, on coagulation, froze the frenzied participants. However, it was the age-old semi-sentient mouthspeaker network that was finally used to simply raise the alarm that congress was imminent. Combined with a legacy network of bomb shelters throughout Ludocratic cities, these devices, which had spent the previous centuries irritably muttering to themselves, suddenly had new purpose and, I like to think, were finally happy.”



On the Unsecret Police

“...ULTIMATELY BESIDE HIMSELF with indignation. Worse, though, was the realisation for all of us that there was no real line between the Ludicrous and the villainous. The Hyper-Pope at the time, Kaidenite Aspidescrator, decided it was overdue the moment to formalise the improvisational law-enforcement of the previous decades with an emotionally neutral solution. Hence the Automated Enforcement Unit of The Unsecret Police was formed. I have made my own improvements in the years since, and I like to think that a liberal usage of logic-formatting and mind control will eventually provide us with a society which is Ludicrous, but which does not foul the papal mandates. My mandates are really not there to be fouled...”

* * * * *

To send letters to LUDOCRATS
please attach your words
to the back of a friendly vole
and instruct them to head to
OTTO'S CASTLE, LUDOVERSE.

LETTERS from LUDOCRATS



AFFAIR OF THE HEART

Dear Elaina,

As the esteemed Agony Aunt of the Ludocrats I was hoping for your advice in a most troubling affair of the heart. We must be together! I say it once! I say it twice! I say it thrice! I say it... fourice? See — my mind is love-addled and I can't even write a simple letter. The only good news is that I know my love is reciprocated. The problem for this affair of the heart is that the organ in question beats inside the chest of a forty-foot demi-ogre who has sworn to disturb the integrity of my cranium with its trusty mallet. I know aorta move on, but I can't bear it. Is my love in vein?

Yours,

Sniffy McCryingson the Third

McCryingson,

Ah, love. That poem spoken by the universe. But you know what? The thing about love is this: it is a shapeshifter. Not one of those cuddly fluffy ones which can take on any form of cartoon pet, no. This is the sort of horrible vicious polymorph that looks like your soulmate, but is in fact a flesh-wolf with mouths for eyes. And let me tell you: flesh-wolves can be fun to begin with it, but sooner or later they're going to chase a squirrel up a tree, and everyone is going to be watching. Look: I'll be straight with you, we're all just restless constructs of dirt with anxiety, and one day even the sun will be a cold ball of iron.

I hope that helps.

Elaina x

ASPIRING TO BE LUDICROUS

Dear Professor o-K,

I am an aspiring Ludocrat currently studying under Grandmouth Hugo Pretend at the University of the Unlikely in Pradenberg. I am writing to ask whether you have any internship opportunities, or advice for those aspiring to be ludicrous? I have attached my portfolio of our third-year work on Astonishment and Related Feelings of Hyperbolic Incongruity.

Regards,

Eddyberg Lastwash

Dear Lastwash,

Of course! And as is traditional for Ludocratic interns, you'll be fairly compensated for your time and efforts. I'm not sure why this simple and reasonable state of affairs is considered ludicrous, but apparently it is.

Yours,

Professor Hades Zero-K

IN THIS CURSED WORLD

Dear "The Ludocrats",

I loved issue two of your resplendent episodic adventure, and when I finally put it down (no mean feat!) I found myself reclined upon a throne of fungus in a world of palpable darkness. I have been made king in this cursed world, and the ghost crabs which reside here fear me, catering to my every whim. My question is this: how can I get my

mail-order copy redirected to my new address, when the postman has been consumed by the crustacean people of this prison dimension? PS my new address is "The Palace Of The Quadrolimb, Crabtown, Hell Plane Eukaryotia, Post Code 56-98-AHGH".

Thanks in advance!

Yours,

David Brimble

Dear Mr Brimble,

I'm afraid this has been a growing problem in our subscriber base. The standard postal staff have, for all their commendable efforts, proved incapable of bringing copies of Ludocrats to more difficult locales, at least without becoming terribly dog-eared. Where the dog-ears come from is a mystery we're trying to solve. We've upgraded your subscription to our premier postmodern service, which will deconstruct your package and reconstruct it safely inside your mailbox. There is a small danger of some extra meta self-indulgence being inserted in the comic in the process, but when our organ is what it is, we suspect you won't even notice.

We have also updated your mailing address.

Wulf the Slayer, Archmagus of the Quantum Froth, Bizarre-Czar, Seducer of Singularities, Chitinous Knight of the Fourfold Spleen, Image Comics' "The Ludocrats" subscription department



LUDOCRATS #4

(August 19th, 2020)

Will our heroes escape or will the last
two issues of the mini just be black pages?

It's not like Kieron's not done
something like that before.

OBSERVED FROM A DISTANCE, the untamed and erratic movements and behaviour of a Ludocrat might appear mysterious, upsetting, or delirious. But yet there is, of course, a logic which underpins it all. And it is a profound logic, a *ludicrous* logic, as unfathomable as that may be. Don't simply take my word for it: read and interpret with your own, powerful, beautiful mind. See for yourself how these luminous beings are receptacles of the squidlike flows of deep history: their actions are engines of an ideology which has been carved from the raw material of consciousness by the sharp edge of a genealogy of genius.

Bear witness, then (for you are their witness!) to the actions of these marvellous, brave souls, doomed as they are. See as they read the auguries of their desperate investigations and plunge, headlong, consigned to a near-inevitable

oblivion into The Obscenitarium. Oh, it is with trepidation that we track their travels: their encounters with a plan greater than they know; their brush with

a universe both smaller and larger than the one they inhabit; a looming calamity.

Reader, if I sound cryptic then it is because I am so very clever. But also it is because the reading of critical events contained within this journal, like the measure of the quantum waveform, cannot be gauged without being distorted. To precis is to reduce the reality, to summarise is to diminish in prelude, to abridge, encapsulate or outline risks a loss of intimacy with the truth which will, ultimately, deliver

a sub-optimal narratological climax. I am sure you understand what I mean.

There's a sexy bit at the start though. Perspiration inevitable. I'd get stuck in, if I were you. And that's not a euphemism. •

“THESE
LUMINOUS
BEINGS ARE
RECEPTACLES
OF THE
SQUIDLIKE
FLOWS
OF DEEP
HISTORY”

From the desk of
His EXCELLENCY PARDIUS HAEMOGLANDULUM,
GRAND and VEXATIOUS LUDOCRAT,
REGENT WARP-CZAR of the WEST,
and SEVENTY-NINTH
ELDRITCH
HYPER-
POPE



COVER A: JEFF STOKELY
RATED M/MATURE

