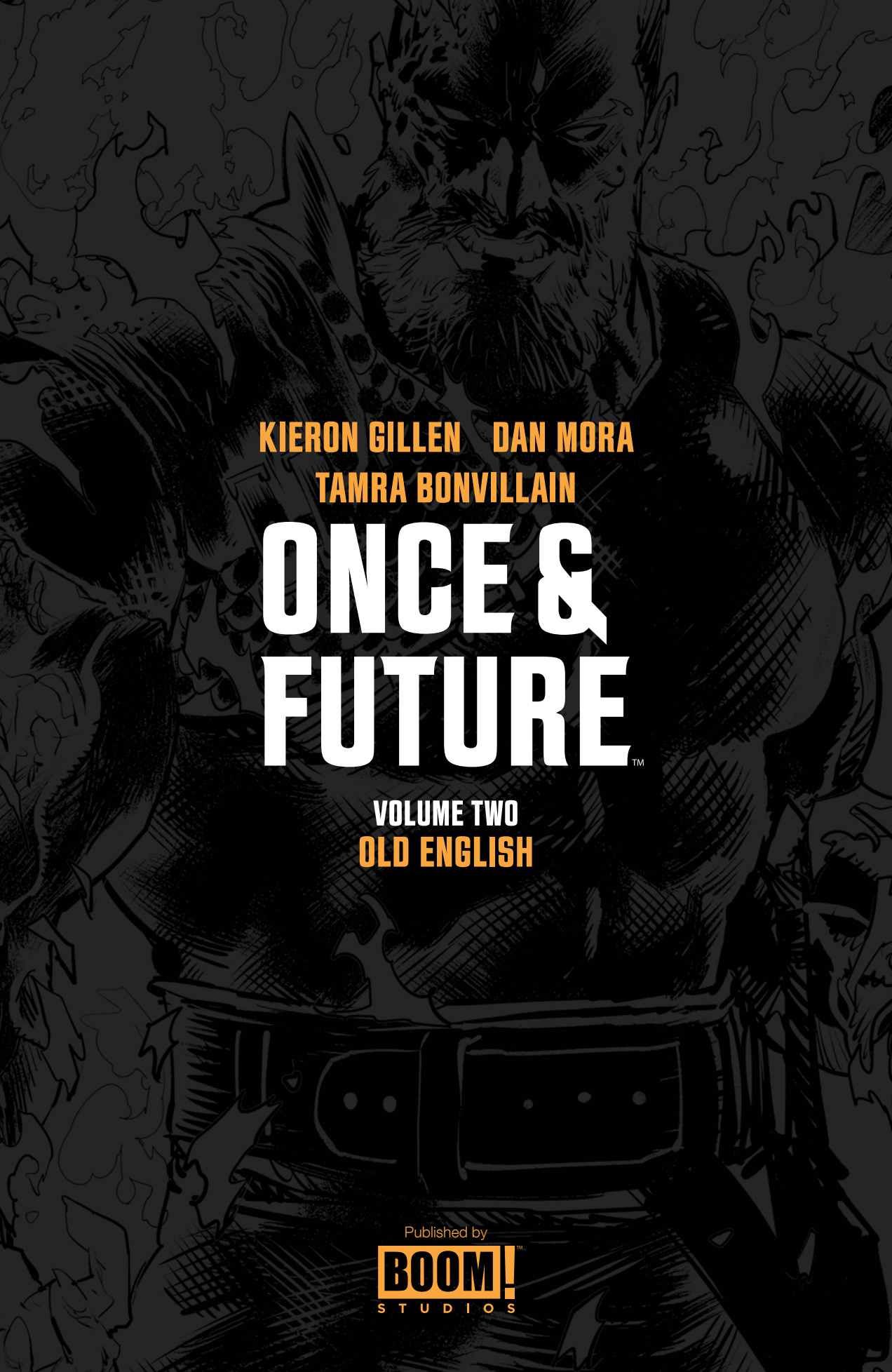


KIERON GILLEN DAN MORA
TAMRA BONVILLAIN

ONCE & FUTURE™

VOLUME TWO
OLD ENGLISH





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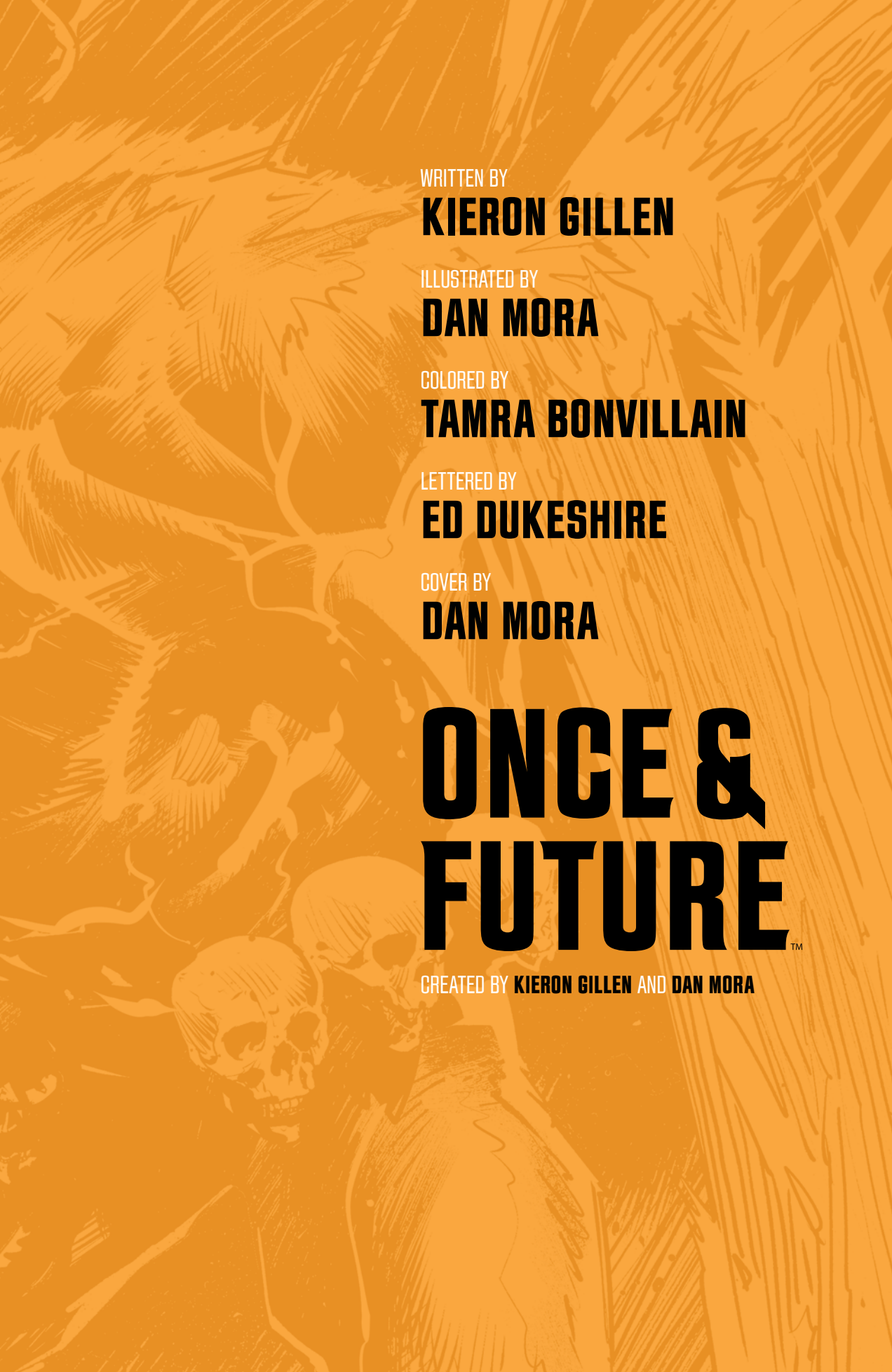
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The background is a solid orange color. Overlaid on this is a white line-art sketch of a skull, positioned in the lower-left quadrant. Several jagged, lightning-bolt-like lines radiate from the top-left towards the bottom-right, creating a sense of movement and energy.

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KIERON GILLEN

ILLUSTRATED BY

DAN MORA

COLORS BY

TAMRA BONVILLAIN

LETTERED BY

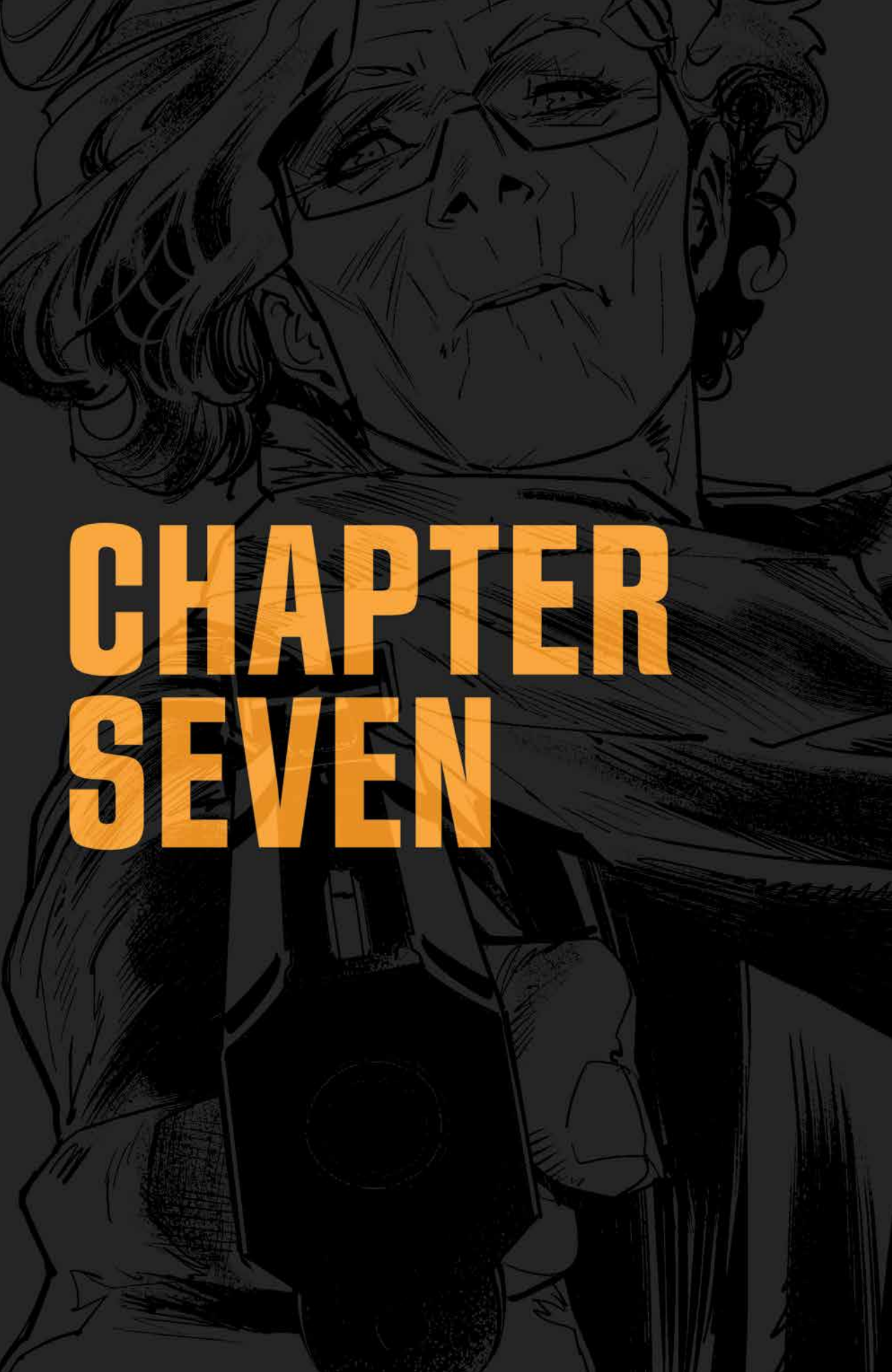
ED DUKESHIRE

COVER BY

DAN MORA

ONCE & FUTURE™

CREATED BY **KIERON GILLEN** AND **DAN MORA**



CHAPTER SEVEN

CAMELOT, OTHERWORLD



THE WARPING
TIME IS OVER. WE
HAVE REPELLED
THE CHANGE. MY
FORM IS TRUE.

BUT I HAVE
RECEIVED A
DARK
MESSAGE...



MY OLD
RIVAL WILL
SOON STALK THE
LAND. THE HOUND
OF THE SAXONS
MUST BE BURIED
DEEPER BEFORE
HE CAN RISE.

I HAVE A
QUEST FOR
A KNIGHTLY
MAN.

CHOOSE
ME, MY KING!
CHOOSE
GALAHAD!



I STOOD BESIDE YOU WHILE THE
WORLD WENT MAD! I AM THE BLADE
THAT HAS BEEN HONED MY WHOLE
LIFE TO BE WIELDED BY YOU! I EVEN
FOUND THE BELT THE HAG THREW
FROM YONDER WINDOW!

LET
ME PROVE
MYSELF!

HMM. MY
EMISSARY TO
THE HAUNTED
WORLD, YOU
MUST BE MY
GREATEST
KNIGHT...

...WOULD
YOU RISK
THE SIEGE
PERILOUS?



OH, THE
SIEGE
PERILOUS.
YES!

ONLY THE
GREATEST
KNIGHT CAN SIT
UPON IT AND
LIVE...







CORNWALL



I
KILLED
THE
PIXIE.

AVON



GOOD WORK,
DUNCAN. TRICKY
LITTLE BASTARDS,
PIXIES.

ANY
PROBLEMS?



I WILL NEVER
LOOK AT A
TOADSTOOL IN
THE SAME WAY
AGAIN.



BRISTOL





THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON THAT EVENING

RIGHT...

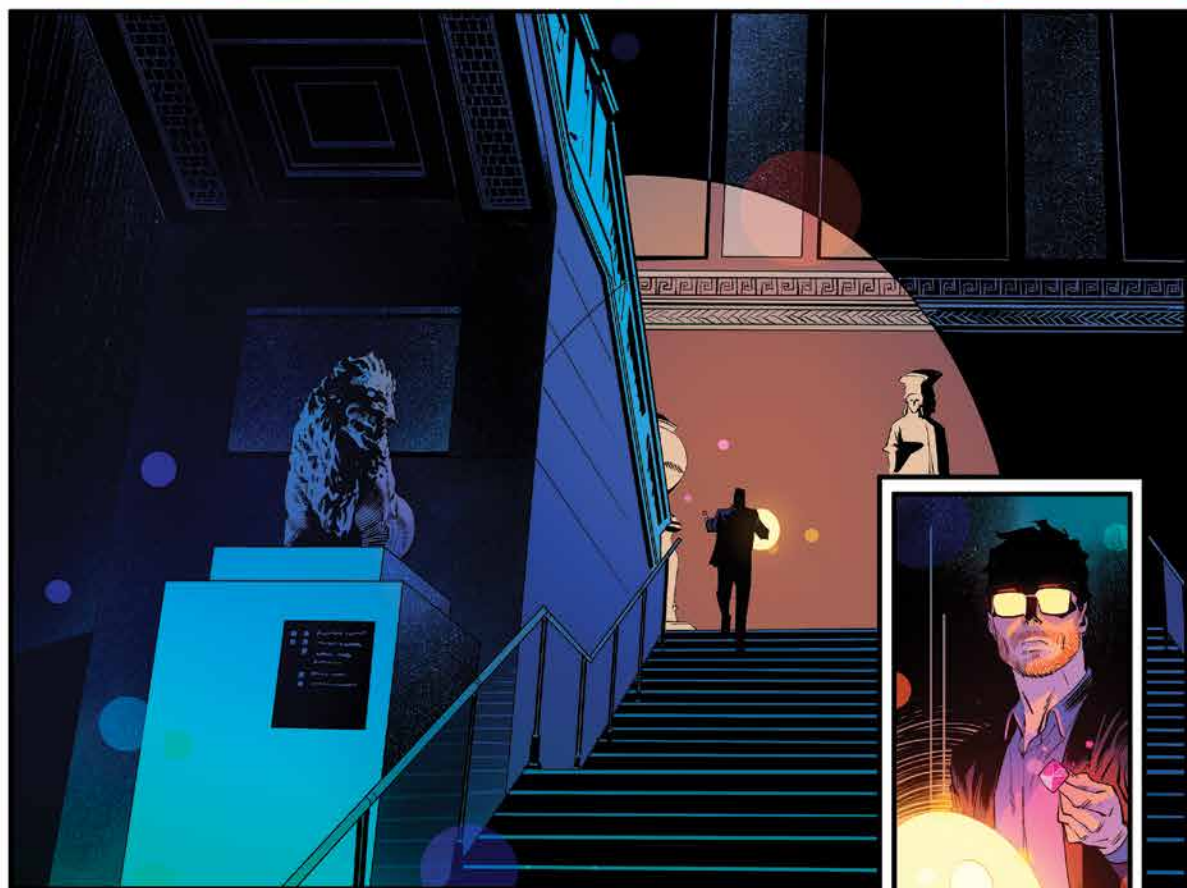
A FEW WEEKS AGO, I'D HAVE SAID I'D KILL TO BE ABLE TO WALK AROUND THIS PLACE BY MYSELF.

KNOWING I'LL LIKELY HAVE TO KILL WHEN I'M HERE REALLY DOES TAKE THE SHINE OFF IT ALL.

OH, WELL.

ER...
ARE YOU WORKING?

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND THE PROBLEM IF--





A WORTHY
KNIGHT WOULD
HAVE PREPARED
FOR BATTLE
BEFORE GAWPING
LIKE A MONK.



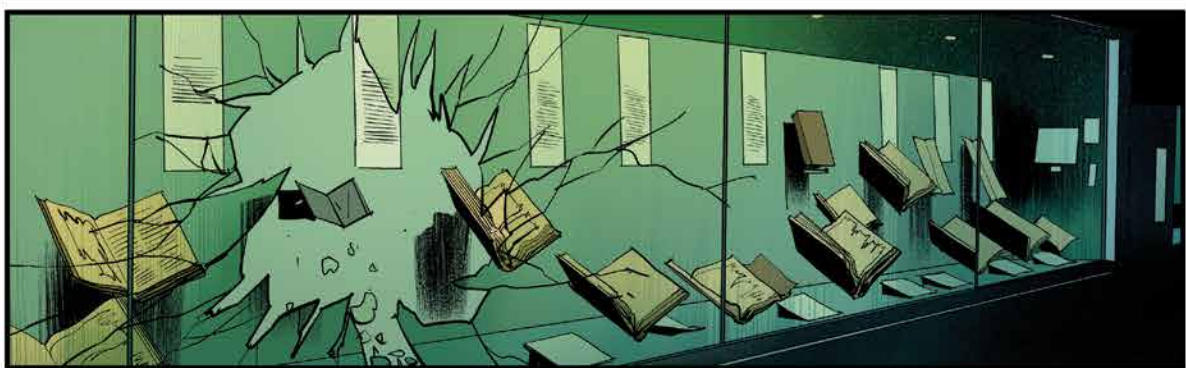
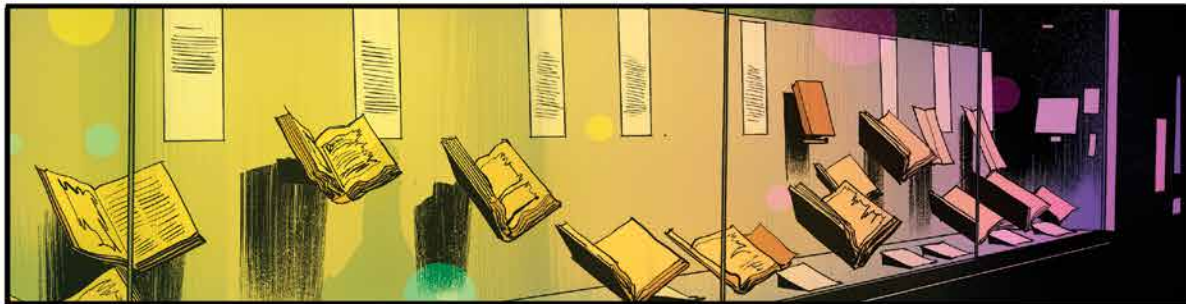
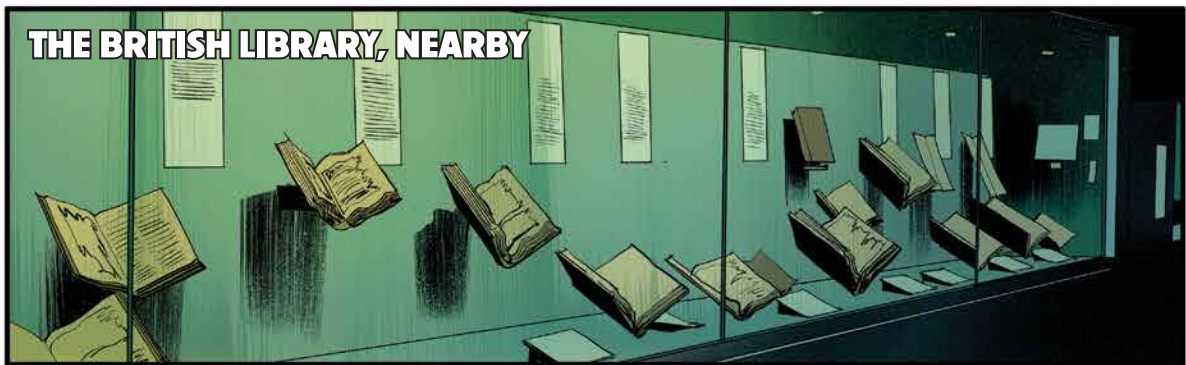
G...GALAHAD?
IS THAT YOU?

WHAT
ARE
YOU?





THE BRITISH LIBRARY, NEARBY



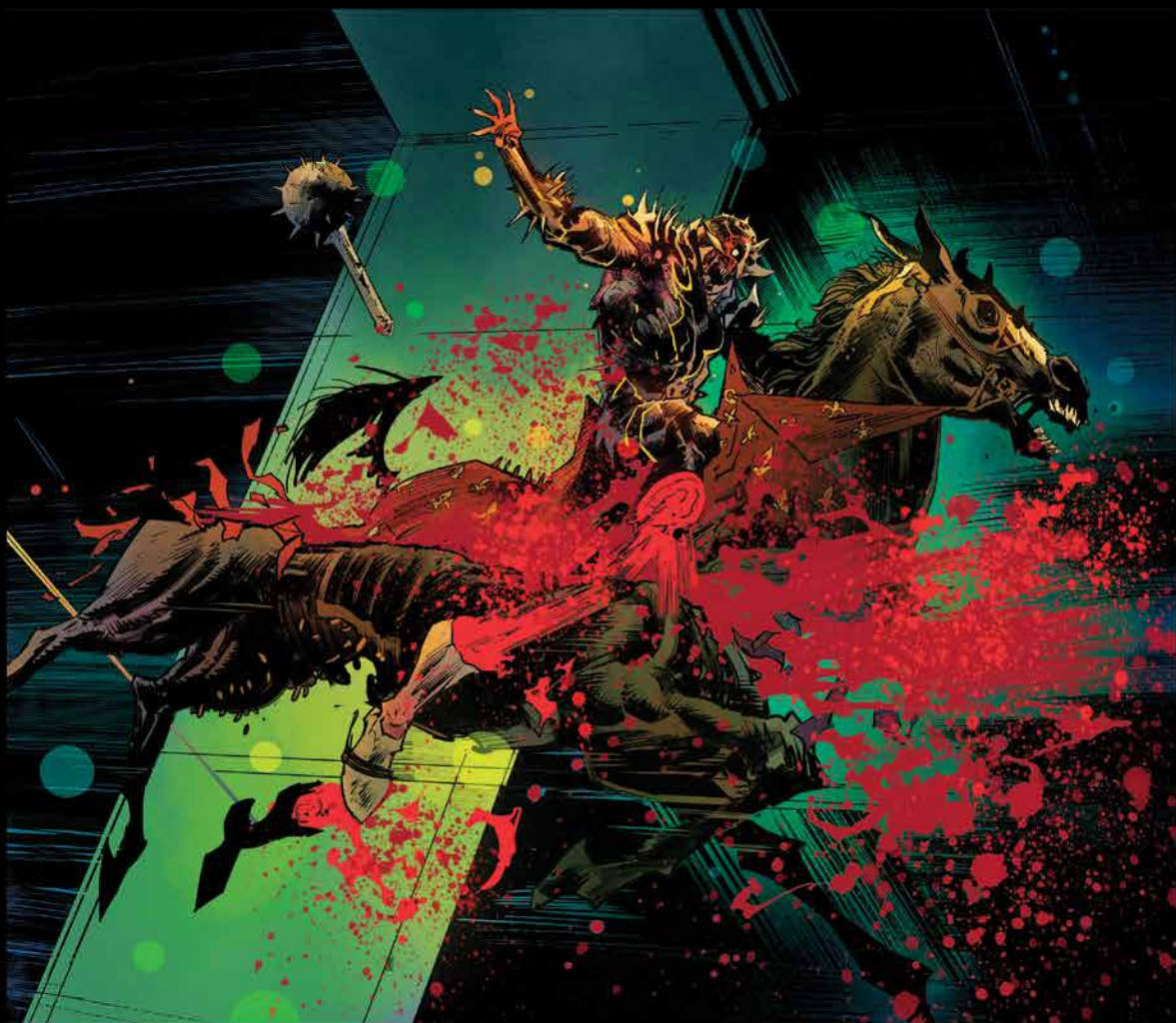


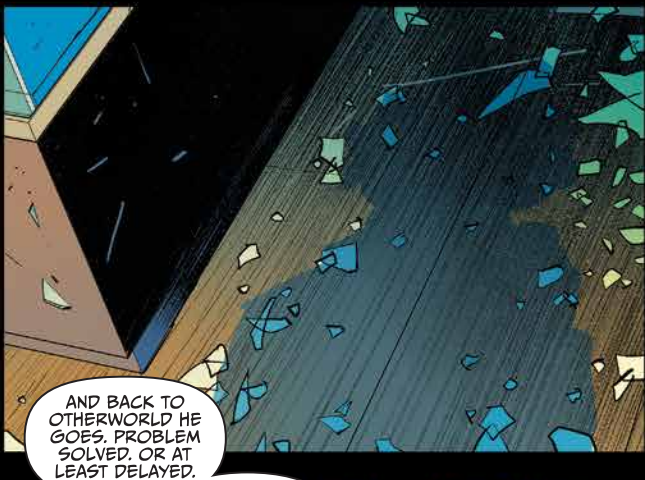
DON'T LET
YOURSELF GET
DISTRACTED,
YOU NINNY.



SEE, I
DID WARN YOU
NOT TO GET
DISTRACTED.









SAVING YOU. SORRY I CUT IT A BIT FINE.

MEGABUS TOOK A WHILE TO GET UP HERE.



THE OLD TRICK WITH THE BLESSED SILVER WIRE DID THE JOB. THE OLD ONES ARE THE BEST.

GRAN, I--

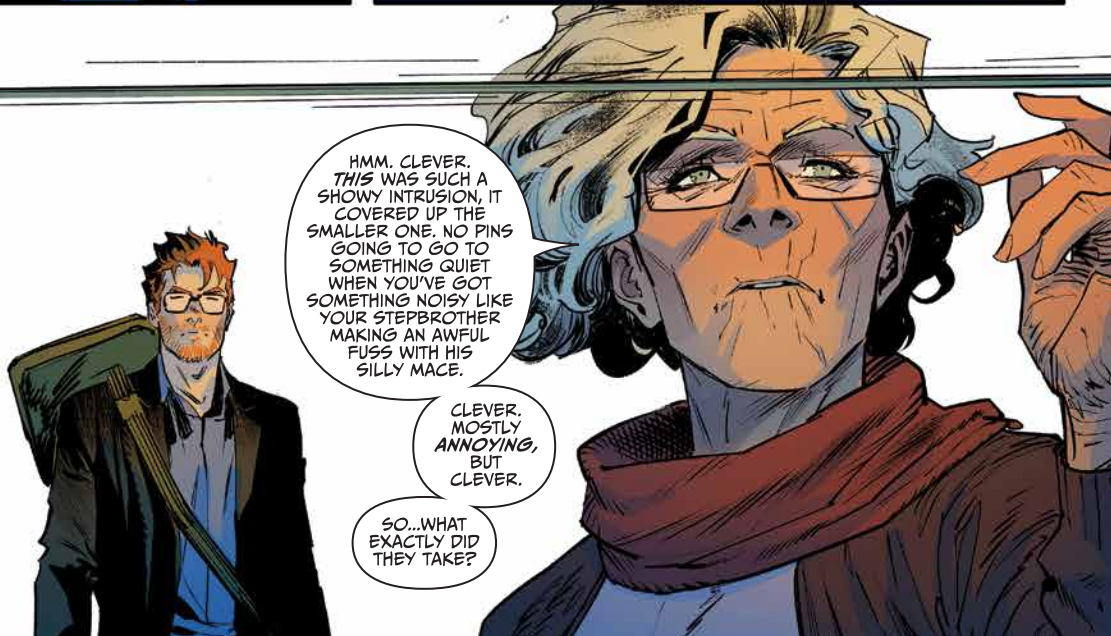


HEY ROSE. IT WAS MESSY, BUT I THINK WE'RE GOOD. THEY WERE TRYING TO STEAL AN ANGLO-SAXON HELMET AND--



I'M NOT SURE WE ARE. THERE'S A COMPLICATION.

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN THERE, THE BRITISH LIBRARY HAD A MYSTERIOUS BREAK-IN. THEY STOLE A MANUSCRIPT. I JUST SCRIED NOW, AND I'M GETTING A TRACE...



HMM. CLEVER. THIS WAS SUCH A SHOWY INTRUSION, IT COVERED UP THE SMALLER ONE. NO PINS GOING TO GO TO SOMETHING QUIET WHEN YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING NOISY LIKE YOUR STEPBROTHER MAKING AN AWFUL FUSS WITH HIS SILLY MACE.

CLEVER. MOSTLY ANNOYING, BUT CLEVER.

SO...WHAT EXACTLY DID THEY TAKE?

SUTTON HOO, LATER



HWÆT.
WE GARDENA IN
GEARDAGUM.

PEODCYNINGA,
PRYM GEFRUNON,



HU ÐA
ÆPELINGAS
ELLEN
FREMEDON.

OFT SCYLD
SCEFING
SCEAFENA
PREATUM,



MONEGUM
MÆGUM,
MEODOSETLA
OFTEAH,

EGGODE
EORLAS.
SYÐÐAN ÆREST
WEARD



FEASCRAFT
FUNDEN, HE
PÆS FROFRE
GEBAD,

WEOX UNDER
WOLCNUM,
WEORÐMYNDUM
PAH,



I
RETURN!

ALL
THE FOES OF
BEOWULF WILL BE
BLADE-KISSED
BEFORE DAWN.

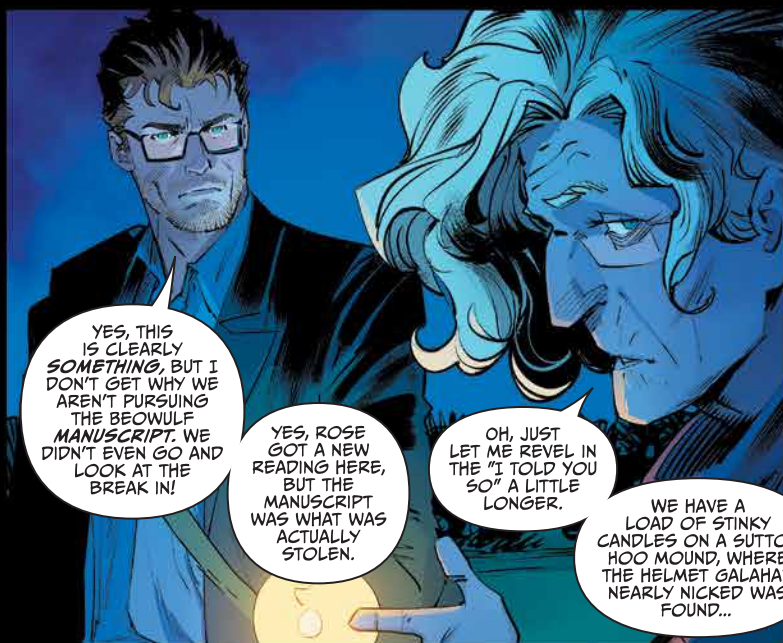






CHAPTER EIGHT

SUTTON HOO





WE'RE
STANDING ON A
MOUND IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE NIGHT IN WHAT
LOOKS LIKE SOME
KIND OF SATANIC
MASS AND IT'S
"STRANGE."

NAH. NOT
A SATANIC
MASS.

BETTER
CANDLES.



LOOK,
SMELL THIS!
LOVELY.

IS THAT
SANDALWOOD?



GRAN...THIS
IS NOT THE TIME
TO DISCUSS A
WELLNESS
REGIMEN!

IF WE CATCH UP
TO WHOEVER DID
THIS, WE'LL HAVE TO
ASK WHERE THEY
GOT THEM.



GOOD
CHRISTMAS
PRESENTS,
CANDLES.

ALL THE
GIRLS AT THE
HOME LIKE
CANDLES.

GRAN! WHY
IS THIS STRANGE
THING IN OUR LIFE
OF STRANGE THINGS
SPECIFICALLY
STRANGE?



I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
WE HAVE TO
DO NEXT.



YOU
DON'T KNOW
ANYTHING?

OH, NOT
NOTHING
NOTHING. NOT A
TRACE OF THIS
TURNED UP IN
ROSE'S **EARLIER**
DIVINATION.

TELLS
US TWO
THINGS...

ONE, THAT THE
RITUAL CAME FROM
THIS SIDE. WHOEVER
DID THIS DROVE HERE
AFTER GETTING OUT
OF THE BRITISH
LIBRARY. THAT MEANS
THEY'RE HUMAN, NOT
A STORY...



THEY
LIKELY
CAN'T BE
FAR
AWAY.

SO
WHAT'S THE
PROBLEM?



THAT HELMET. SUTTON
HOO. A MANUSCRIPT.
SHOULD BE ENOUGH
CLUES FOR US TO WORK
OUT WHICH BEASTIE IS IN
DESPERATE NEED OF A
SHOT IN THE FACE,
RIGHT?

CAN'T
WORK OUT
WHO IT'D
BE...



ER...
THEY STOLE
THE BEOWULF
MANUSCRIPT.

WHAT ABOUT
BEOWULF?

DON'T
BE DAFT,
DUNCAN.

BEOWULF'S
JUST A POEM.

CAMELOT, OTHERWORLD



AGGRRHHHHH!

AGGHHHHHH!

EVEN
YOUR HOWLS
ARE MIGHTY.
ARTHUR IS
IMPRESSED.

GREATEST
KNIGHT...
GREATEST
LUNGS.





A man with a beard and long hair, wearing a dark tunic and trousers, is engulfed in bright orange and yellow flames. He stands in a doorway with tall, narrow windows. The background is dark, and the floor is also covered in flames.

BEOWULF
COMES TO
YOUR HALL.

A dark, horned creature with glowing yellow eyes and a wide, toothy grin. It has a dark, spiky body and is holding a large, bloody, and severed head in its hands.

I AM
ARTHUR...

I AM THE
ONE WHO
WHIPS THE
SAXON
DOGS.

A close-up of a man's face, which is partially engulfed in flames. He has a beard and long hair, and his mouth is open in a scream or shout. The background is dark with some greenish light.

NO SAXON
AM I, AND MY
BACK IS NOT
FOR SCOURGE-
BEARING.

COME IF YOU
THINK YOU CAN
CONVINCE ME
OTHERWISE.







BRAVE
BEOWULF,
HONEY
HERO.

BEAST-
WOUNDER!
LISTEN!



TRAGEDY
STALKS THE
HALL OF
CAMELOT!



SEE HOW
OUR HEROES
HAVE BEEN
BROUGHT
LOW.



WHO ARE YOU? HOW DO YOU COME HERE?

I AM YOUR SALVATION, LORD.

I AM SKILLED IN THE GUIDING OF THOSE WHOSE WITS HAVE DESERTED THEM...



WHAT... MONSTER DID THIS?



A MONSTER AND A MOTHER HUNT THIS HALL. OUR HEROES ARE FALLEN.

ALL ARE LOST. WILL BEOWULF SAVE US?



BEOWULF IS HERO-BORN, FOE-HAMMER.

THE MONSTER AND ITS FOUL MOTHER WILL FEEL MY FISTS.

I WILL BRING THEIR LIMBS TO MOUNT ABOVE THE FIRE!



MY LORD... PLEASE...

WE... THANK YOU, BEOWULF.



I FOUGHT HIM, I THINK. IN ANOTHER TIME. HE IS NOT A SAXON, THOUGH HE FIGHTS WITH THEM? I...

ALL IS CONFUSION.

IT WILL BECOME CLEAR.



WHO ARE YOU?

I AM THE ONE WHO WARNED YOU OF HIS RETURN.

THE ONE WHOSE ADVICE YOU FOLLOWED WHEN YOU SENT FORTH YOUR PERFECT KNIGHT TO TRY AND PREVENT HIS COMING...

HE FAILED, YES, BUT WE MAKE THE BEST OF THE SITUATION. WE CAN *USE* THIS, MY LORD...

I AM MERLIN.



HMMM.

MERLIN...



I KNOW YOU NOT.



I KNOW, LORD.

I KNOW.



I THINK
WE'VE GOT ALL
WE CAN. LET'S
MOVE.

IF THEY'RE
AROUND HERE,
SHOULDN'T
WE...



GO
WANDERING
AROUND IN THE
DARK?

NOW, MAYBE
IF I WAS YOUR
AGE, BUT I'M
GOING TO END UP
WITH A BROKEN
ANKLE IF I DO
THAT.

AND IF I WAS
YOUR AGE, I'D HAVE
FOUND SOD ALL ANYWAY
AND COME HOME WITH A
COLD. LAST THING YOU
WANT WHEN FIGHTING THE
ETERNAL FORCES OF THE
NIGHT IS SNIFFLES,
DUNCAN.



PLUS...THEY'RE
A HUMAN, NOT A
STORY. HUMANS ARE
TRICKIER THAN
MONSTERS.

YOU DON'T
GET ALL THE
COLORS GOING
STRANGE IF A
HUMAN CREEPS
UP ON YOU WITH
A GUN.

YOU JUST
GET A
BULLET.



I GUESS
YOU'RE THE
EXPERT IN
BULLETS.

OOH, THE
CHEEK. MIND YOUR
LIP, DUNCAN. YOU'RE
GETTING THAT REAL
UNLIKABLE BROODY
HERO SARCASM, AND
THAT GETS OLD
QUICK.

LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE.
ROSE WILL
NEED AN
UPDATE.



I HOPE SHE
HASN'T GONE
TO BED.

HEY, IF WE HAVE
TO TRAIPESE
AROUND IN THE
DARK, SHE CAN
SLIP OUT OF THE
DUVET ONCE IN
A WHILE.





NO, NO,
NO.



WHAT OF
GALAHAD?





COO-EE,
DEAR. IT'S
ME.

THE
BOY AND
I ARE JUST
LEAVING...



MU-HMM.
HMM.

HAVE
YOU TWO
MADE UP?



I'M VERY
ANNOYED YOU
TOLD HER WHERE
I WAS GOING,
ROSE. I'M SO
ANGRY--

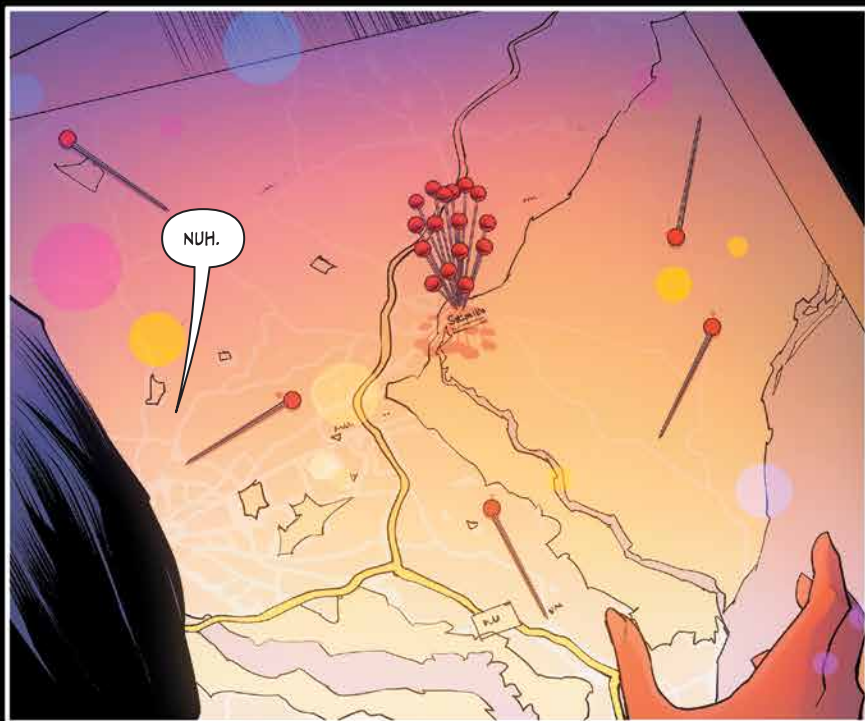
THAT HE
COULD EVEN
RAISE HIS
VOICE!

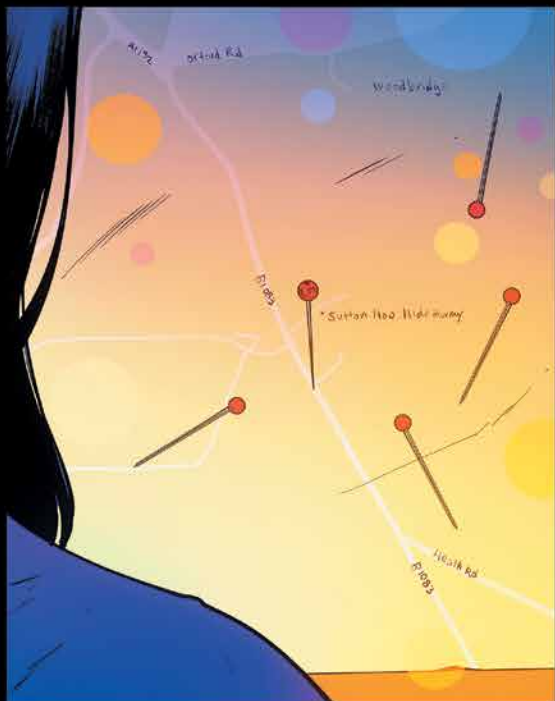
WE'LL BE
COMING BACK
TO NOSE AT THE
FILES TOMORROW.
WHATEVER CAME
THROUGH IS GONE
NOW. BEST HAVE A
QUICK CHECK WITH
THE OL' PINS
THOUGH...



GUH.
WILL DO.











GRAN!

KEEP
DRIVING.
I'LL...



HAH!



I SEE
YOU.

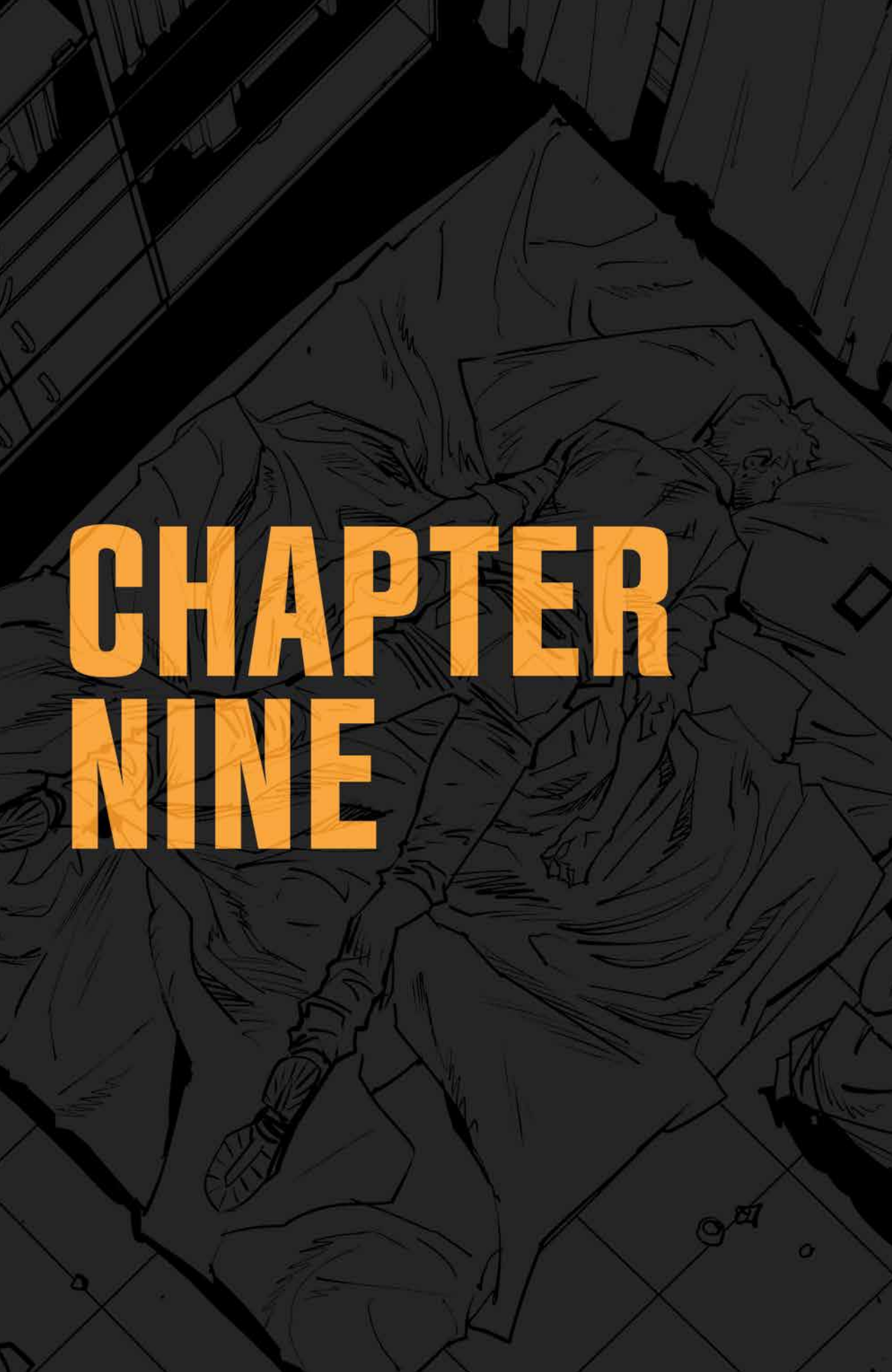


**BEOWULF
HAS YOU
NOW!**



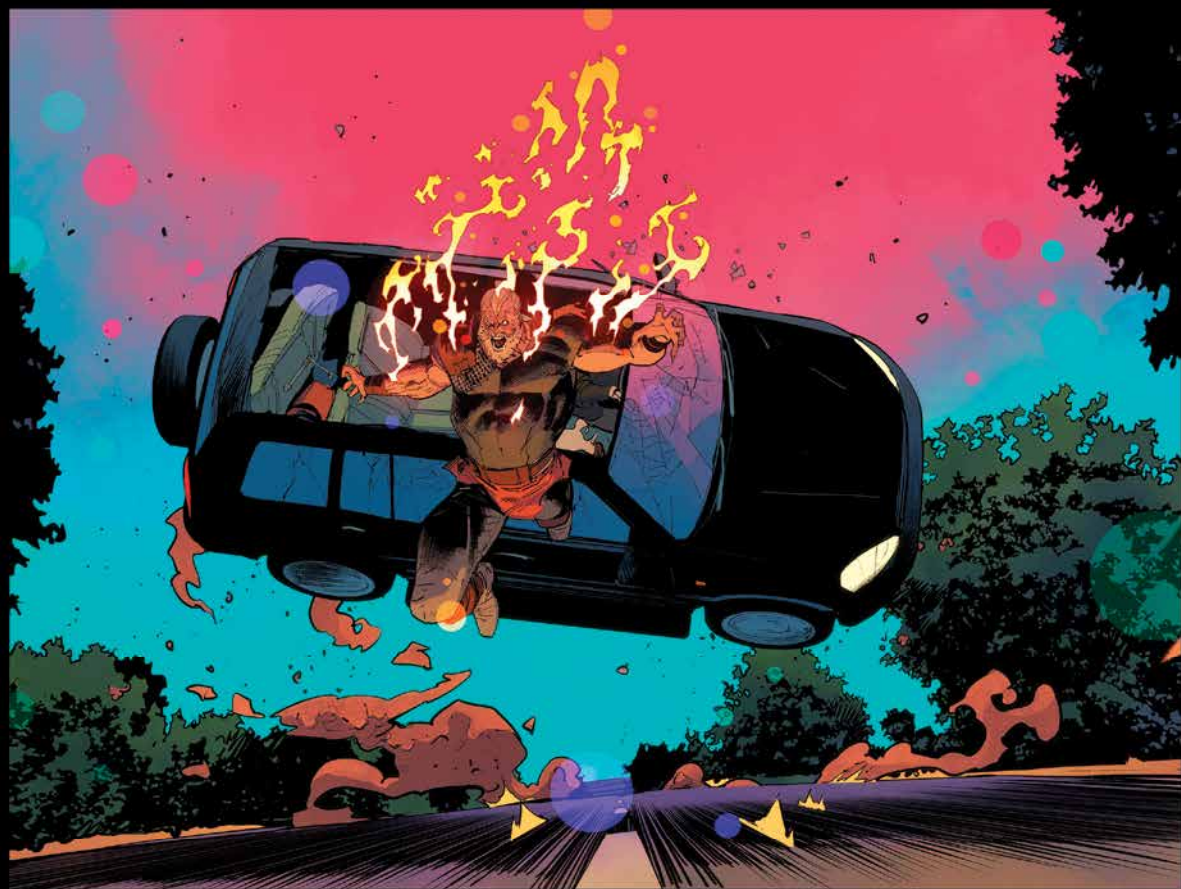
SEE--THIS IS
WHERE YOU SAY,
"YES, DUNCAN,
YOU WERE
RIGHT."



A dark, stylized illustration of a person lying on a tiled floor, possibly a victim of a crime, with a large orange chapter title overlaid. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The floor is made of large square tiles. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a crime scene or a hospital setting. The overall tone is somber and mysterious.

CHAPTER NINE























NEAR MIDSOMER NORTON, SOMERSET



BRIDGETTE!
BACK FROM
ANOTHER ONE
OF YOUR
ADVENTURES?

EVERYONE
WAS RUNNING
AROUND
TRYING TO
FIND YOU
AGAIN.



I'M FINE! AND
"ADVENTURES?"
DON'T BE SO
DRAMATIC, TONY.
JUST A LITTLE
DAY OUT.

AND I'M
ALWAYS
FINE!
EVERYONE
KNOWS
THAT.



I'M
ALWAYS FINE,
BUT I'VE HAD
PRACTICE.

WHAT
ABOUT
YOU?



I AM. I'VE GOT TO GO.
THEY'LL BE DROPPING OFF
THE REMAINS OF THE CAR AT
MINE AND I NEED TO PAY
THEM. PLUS, LAST BUS BACK
IN FIVE MINUTES AND...

I...AM JUST
UNCOMFORTABLE.
NOT EVEN BECAUSE
EXPLAINING WHY A
NATIONAL TREASURE
IS STILL MISSING,
BUT...

I'VE A
LOT TO
THINK
ABOUT.

WHAT ARE
YOU GOING
TO DO?



TO
START
WITH?

SPEND AS
MANY HOURS AS
I CAN MANAGE
FACE DOWN ON
A PILLOW.

BRISTOL



I BOOKED
THE ROOM.



GOOD--
IT'S ALL
SET UP.

I ONLY
NEED IT FOR
THE HOUR. YOU
CAN HAVE IT
BACK AFTER
THEN.

DON'T
DISTURB
ME.



NOT EVEN IF I
HEAR SCREAMING.
OLDEST PUB IN
BRISTOL.

THERE'S
GHOSTS, I
HEAR.

I KNOW
AND I KNOW,
RESPECTIVELY.



I'VE
HIDDEN THE
MANUSCRIPT,
BUT...

IS
THIS THE
PLAN?



IT IS, FIRST,
TRICK ARTHUR TO SEND
MEN TO THE MUSEUM AS A
DISTRACTION SO YOU CAN
STEAL THE MANUSCRIPT,
THEN USE IT TO RAISE
BEOWULF...THEN SEND *HIM*
AGAINST OUR ENEMIES. IT
IS ALL AS I PLANNED.
ARTHUR TRUSTS ME
NOW...

ARTHUR
WAS ONCE
MY KING.

HE
WILL BE
AGAIN.



BUT ONCE
MORE...HE
DOESN'T
REMEMBER
ME.



HE DID WHEN I
TALKED TO HIM. HE
SEEMED TO MISS
YOU.

YES, BUT HE
CHANGED IN THE
SAME MOMENT
WHEN I WAS
RELEASED.

THIS IS A
CAUSE FOR
BOTH HOPE AND
FEAR. THAT HE
CAN CHANGE
MEANS HE CAN
BE FOUND.

HE *MUST*
BE MY KING
AGAIN. I HAVE
TRIED SO
LONG. HE
WILL NOT BE
LOST.



HAVE
YOU BEEN
DRINKING?

I HAVE SPENT
MORE TIME WITH
A CUP IN MY HAND
THAN YOU HAVE
BEEN ALIVE,
GIRL.



DID YOU PASS
MY MESSAGE TO
GALAHAD?



I WOULD HAVE, BUT HE WAS SOMEWHAT... DISTRACTED. YOU KNOW THE YOUNG.

WHEN I AM SORCERESS OF A NEW ENGLAND, I'LL TEACH HIM TO SHOW MORE MANNERS. I JUST HOPE HE'S HAPPY...



...BUT THAT IS THEN AND THIS IS NOW.

HOW DID THE PLAN WORK? ARTHUR TRUSTS YOU, BUT BRINGING BEOWULF BACK JUST FOR MU...BRIDGETTE TO KILL HIM? IS THAT WHAT YOU HOPED?

YES.



THE WOMAN IS WISE IN WHAT HAS HAPPENED...BUT THE TALE THAT IS BEOWULF HAS NOT WALKED THE LAND FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.

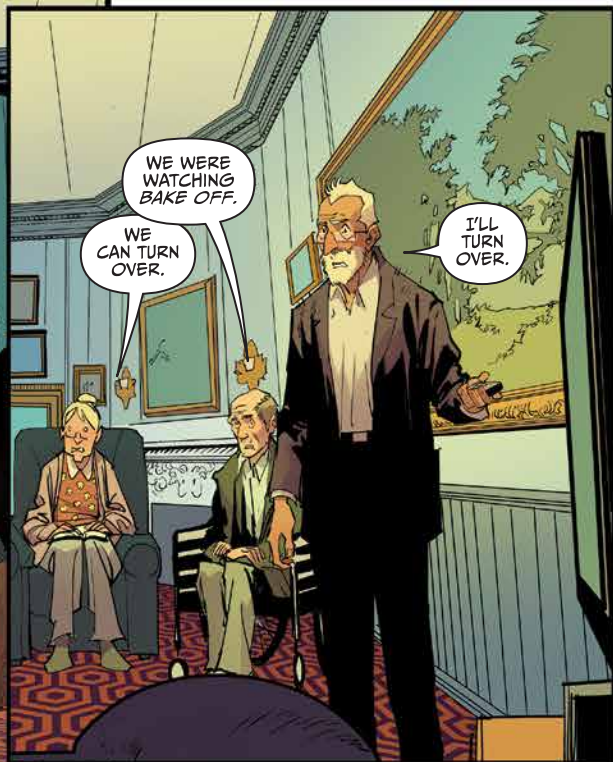
IF BEOWULF IS HERE, OTHERS ARE TOO. THE STORY IS IN MOTION...



...AND THEY HAVE KILLED THE HERO.



LOOK WHO'S DECIDED TO REJOIN US?



WE WERE WATCHING BAKE OFF.

WE CAN TURN OVER.

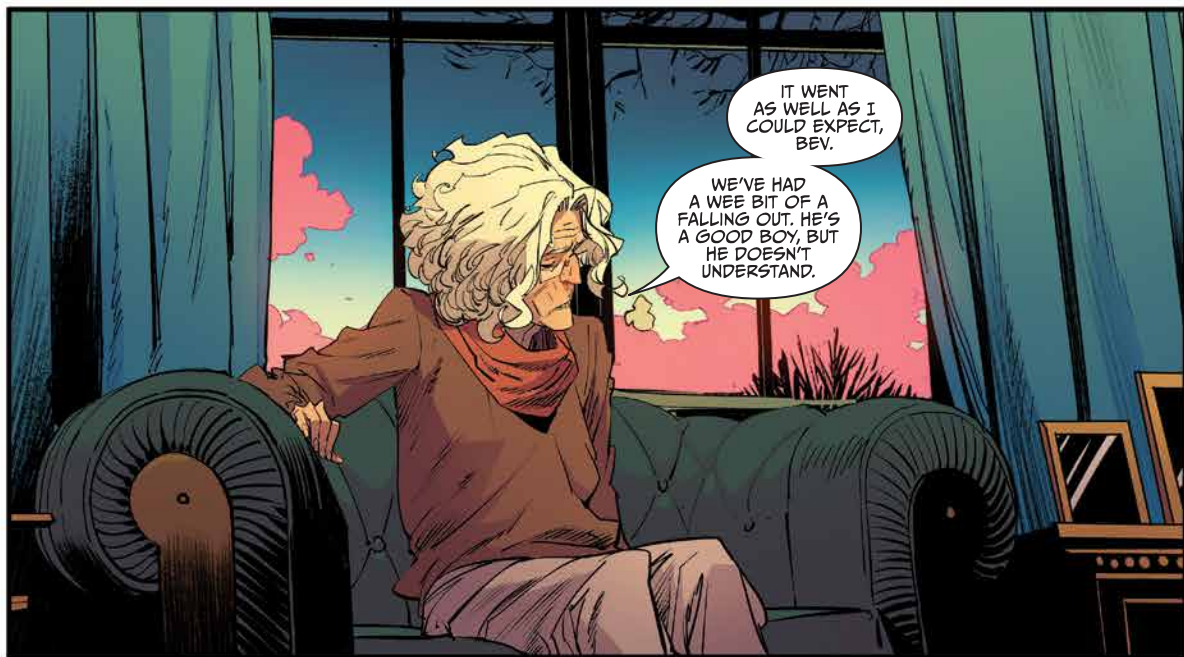
I'LL TURN OVER.



OH, IT'S FINE. I'M IN THE MOOD FOR A BIT OF NICENESS. NOTHING WRONG WITH NICENESS, ESPECIALLY COVERED IN DOLLOPS OF ICING.

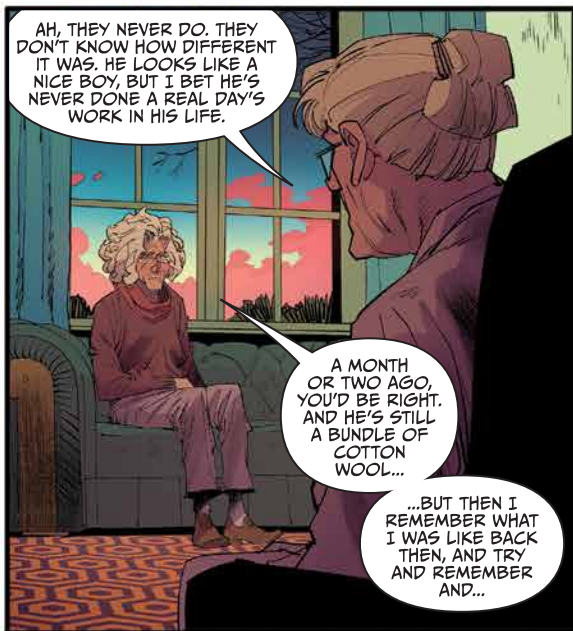
IF YOU SAY SO, BRIDGE. WE KNOW HOW YOU GET WHEN YOU'RE AGITATED.

THE TRIP WITH THE BOY WENT WELL?



IT WENT AS WELL AS I COULD EXPECT, BEV.

WE'VE HAD A WEE BIT OF A FALLING OUT. HE'S A GOOD BOY, BUT HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND.



AH, THEY NEVER DO. THEY DON'T KNOW HOW DIFFERENT IT WAS. HE LOOKS LIKE A NICE BOY, BUT I BET HE'S NEVER DONE A REAL DAY'S WORK IN HIS LIFE.

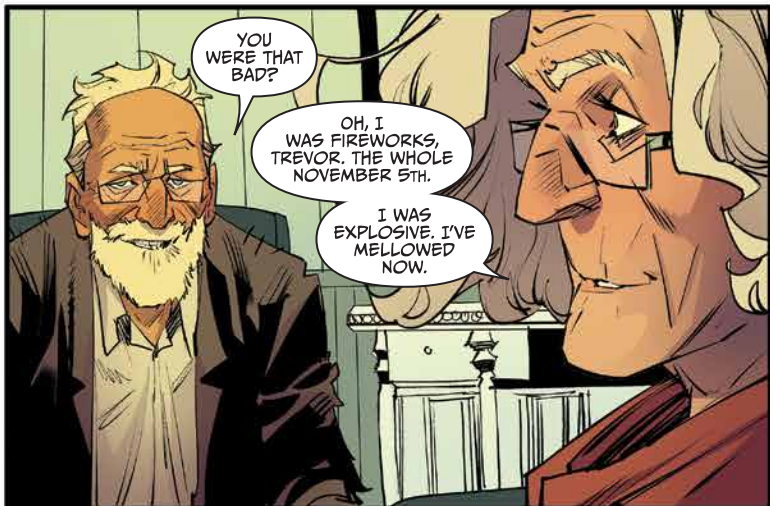
A MONTH OR TWO AGO, YOU'D BE RIGHT. AND HE'S STILL A BUNDLE OF COTTON WOOL...

...BUT THEN I REMEMBER WHAT I WAS LIKE BACK THEN, AND TRY AND REMEMBER AND...



I THINK IF I'D FOUND OUT WHAT HE HAS, I'D NEVER SPEAK TO ME AGAIN.

AT BEST.



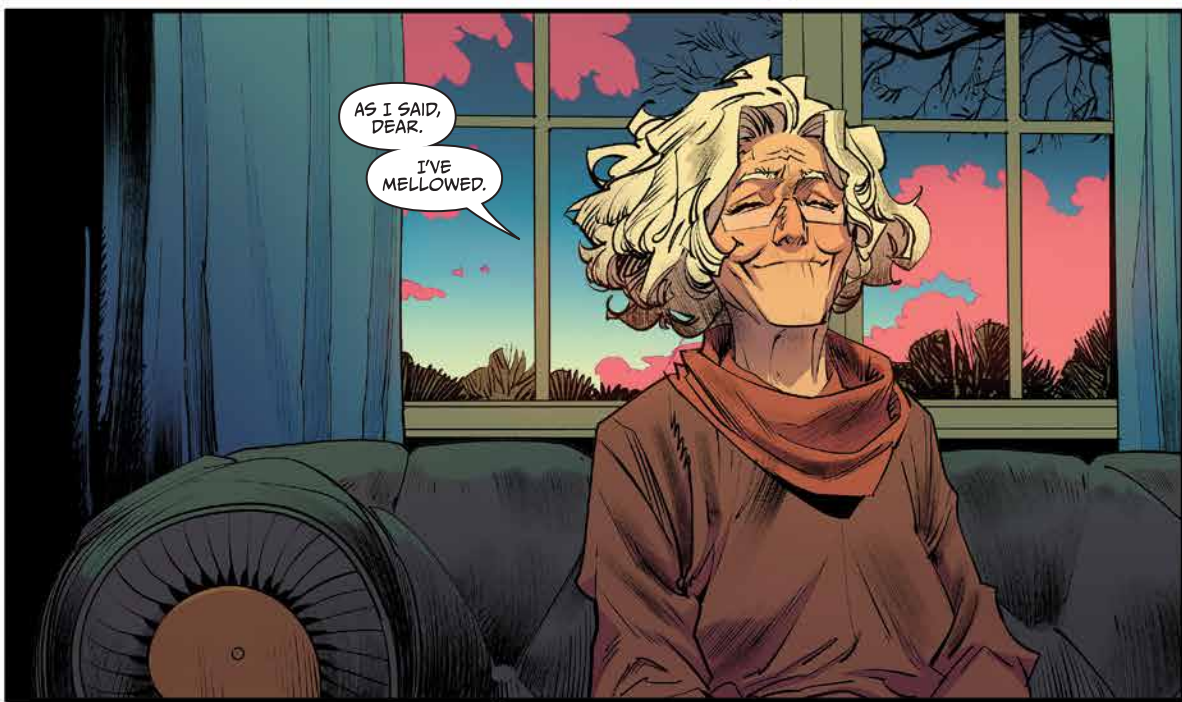
YOU WERE THAT BAD?

OH, I WAS FIREWORKS, TREVOR. THE WHOLE NOVEMBER 5TH.

I WAS EXPLOSIVE. I'VE MELLOWED NOW.



YOU THREATEN TO BREAK OUR FINGERS AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.



AS I SAID, DEAR.

I'VE MELLOWED.

CLIFTON, BRISTOL

BETTER
GET TO
IT...



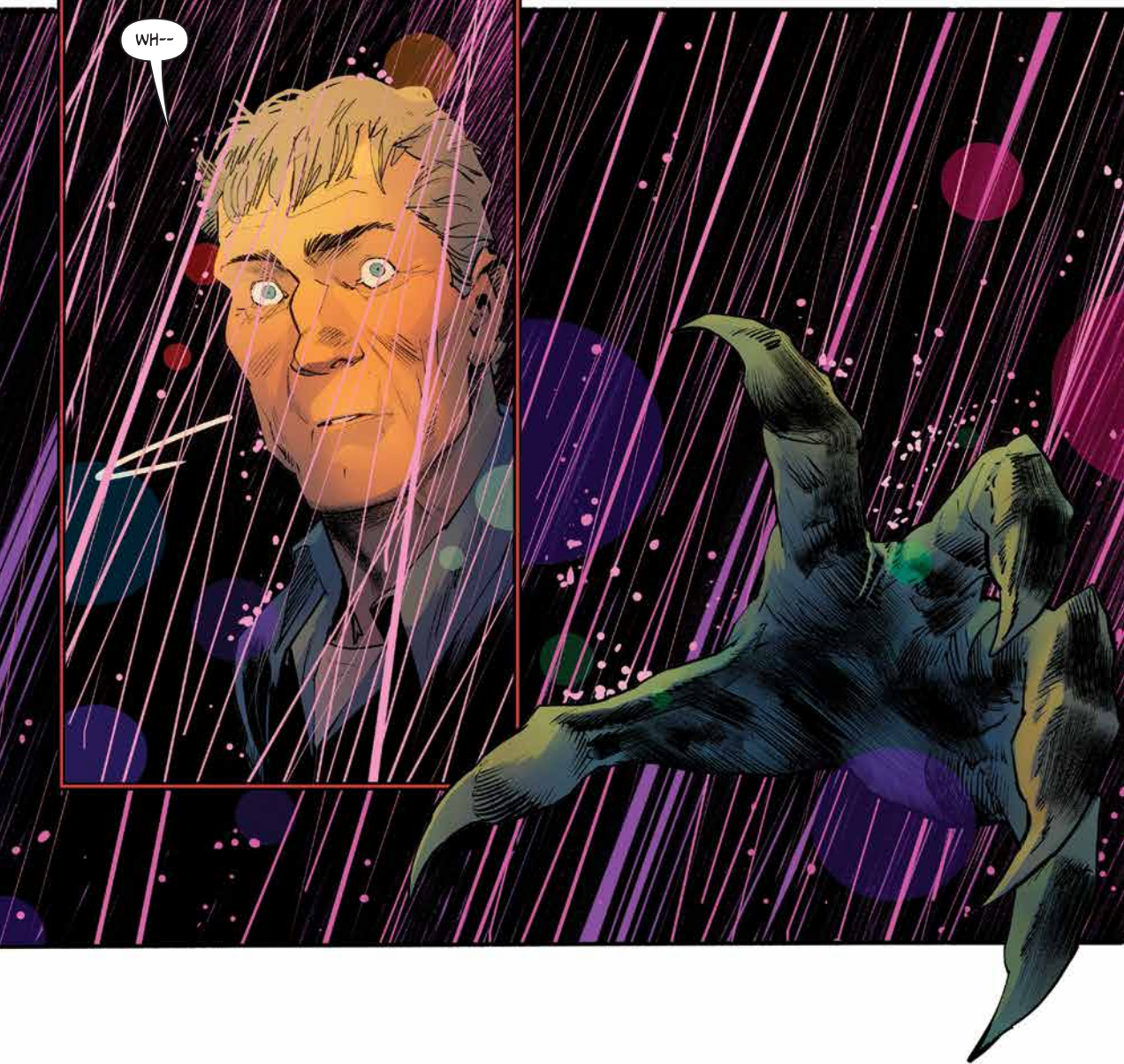
LET'S HOPE
DUNCAN CAN
HAVE A NIGHT
OFF.



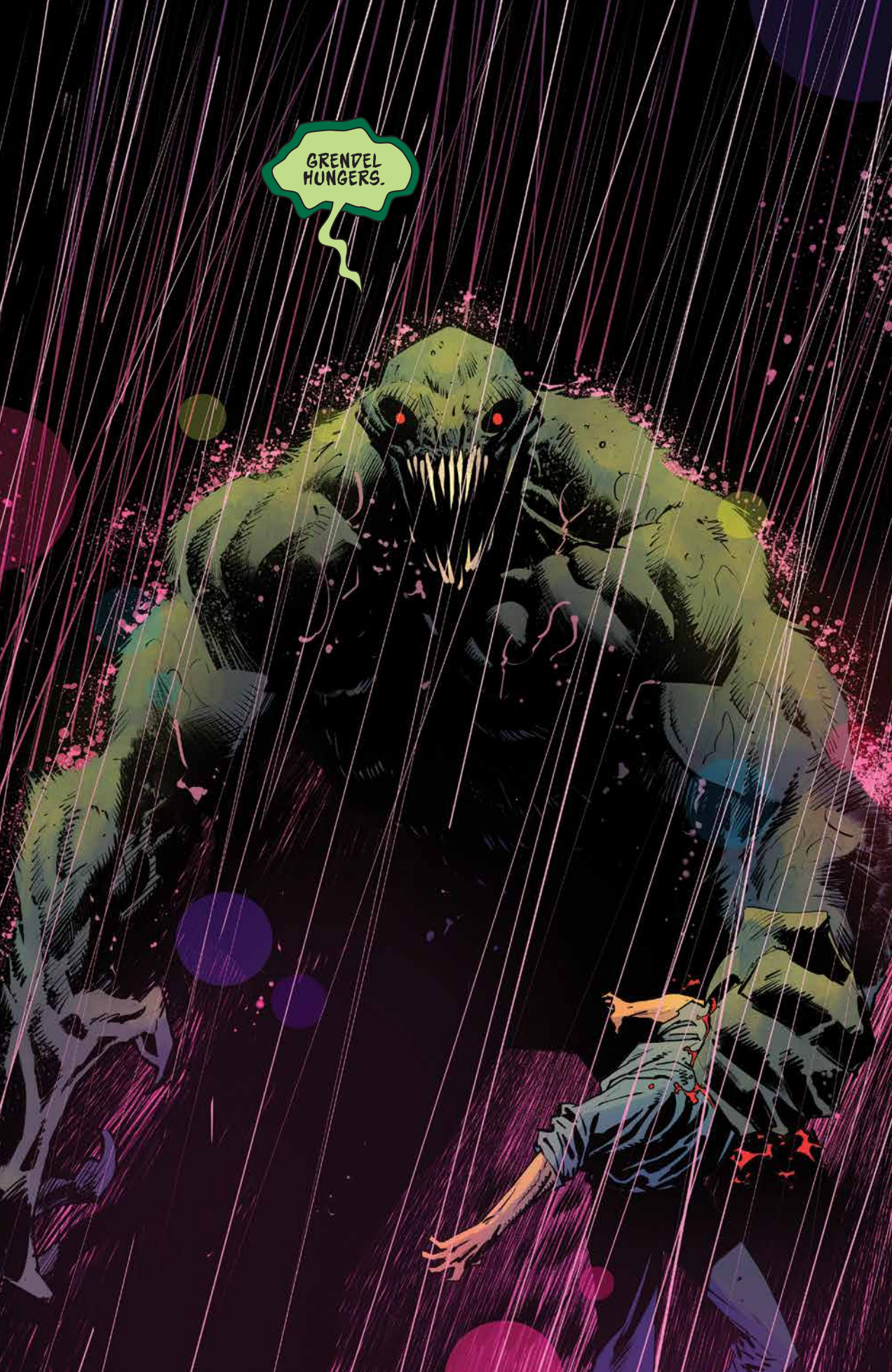
BEDMINSTER, BRISTOL



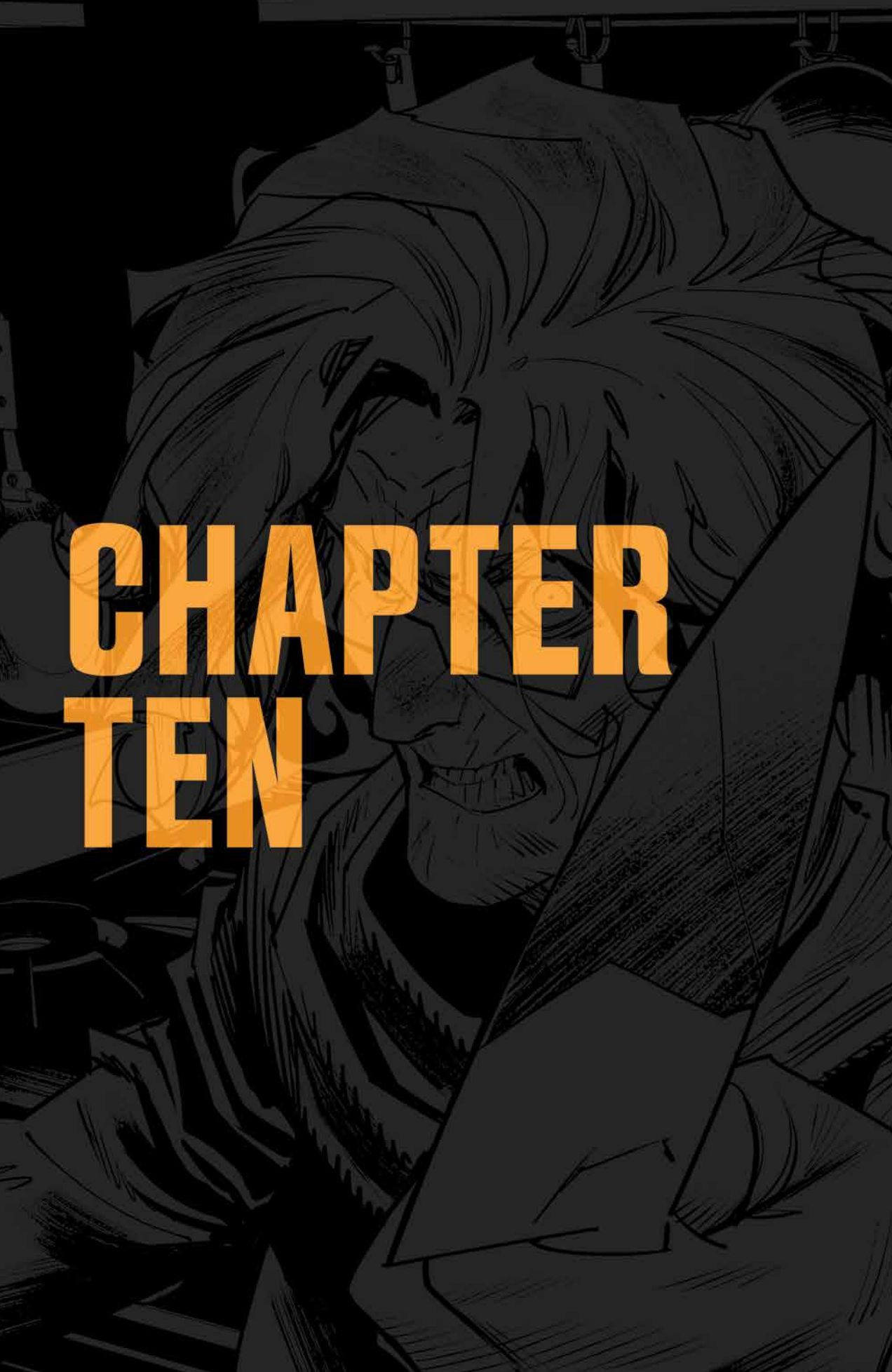




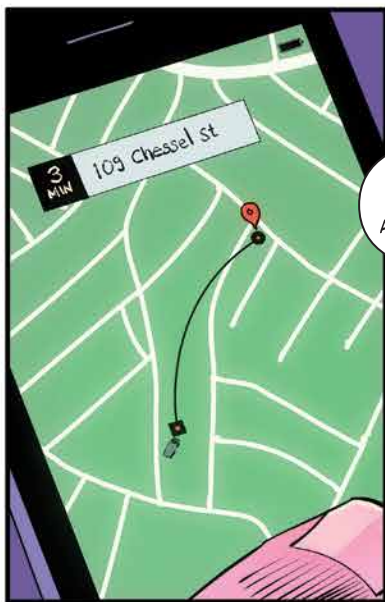
GREND
HUNGERS.





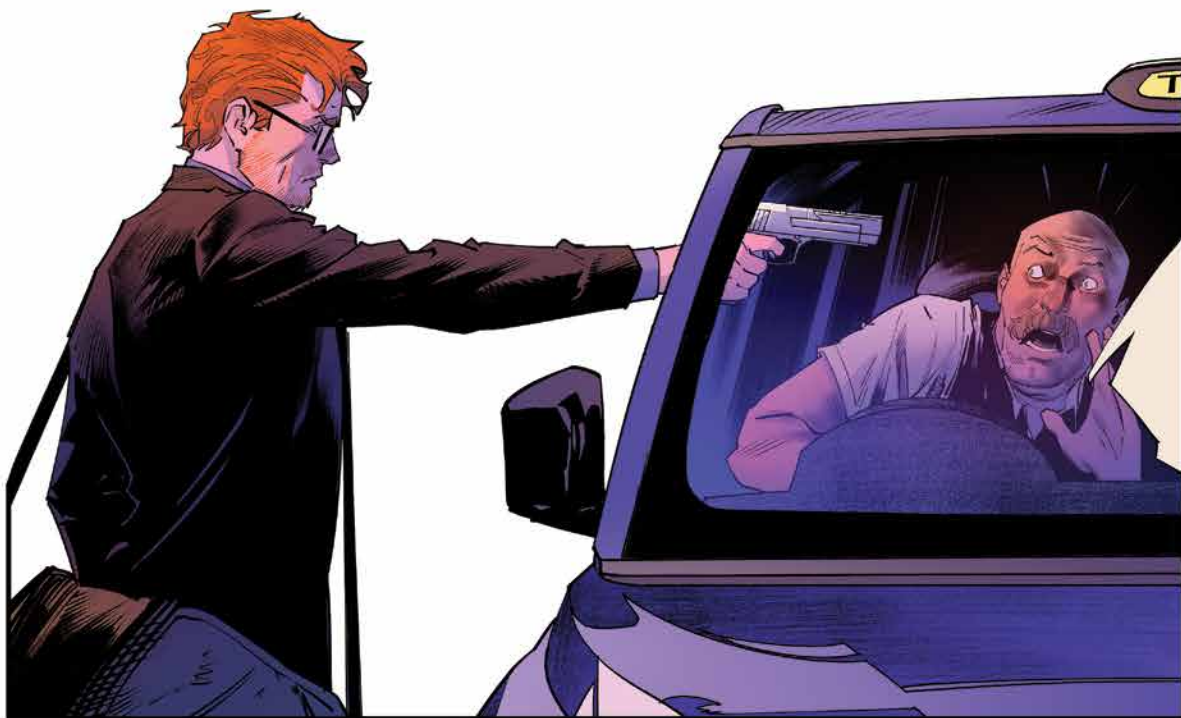


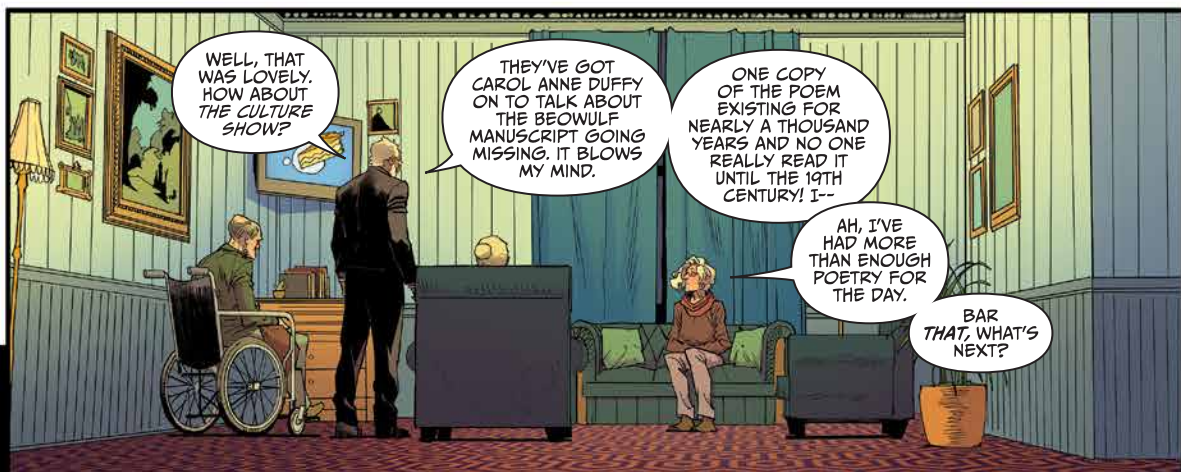
CHAPTER TEN











WELL, THAT WAS LOVELY. HOW ABOUT THE CULTURE SHOW?

THEY'VE GOT CAROL ANNE DUFFY ON TO TALK ABOUT THE BEOWULF MANUSCRIPT GOING MISSING. IT BLOWS MY MIND.

ONE COPY OF THE POEM EXISTING FOR NEARLY A THOUSAND YEARS AND NO ONE REALLY READ IT UNTIL THE 19TH CENTURY! I--

AH, I'VE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH POETRY FOR THE DAY.

BAR THAT, WHAT'S NEXT?



OH, THIS IS NEXT.

WHAT'S GOING ON? AM I HAVING A STROKE?

NAH. WE CAN ALL SEE IT. DON'T WORRY.

I'LL GO SORT IT OUT.

MISSED MESSAGES FROM THE BOY. THAT'S KIND, NICE TO BE THOUGHT OF.

OH, EVERYONE--IF YOU HEAR ANY RUCKUS?



SEE IF YOU CAN DRAG SOMETHING HEAVY BEHIND THE DOOR, HMM?

GOING
SOMEWHERE,
BRIDGETTE? DON'T
LET THE LIGHT SPOOK
YOU. IT'S JUST A
WEIRD SUNSET.
POLLUTION,
I BET.

AND I THOUGHT
YOU'D HAVE GOT
YOUR WANDERING
OUT OF YOU WITH
THE EXCURSION
EARLIER?



DON'T
SUPPOSE YOU
KEEP A GUN
AROUND HERE
ANYWHERE,
JACK?



BRIDGETTE!

AH...JUST
MY LITTLE
JOKE.

CAN WE POP
ALONG TO THE
KITCHEN?



WHAT FOR,
EXACTLY?



A
SNACK.





OH, YOU SWEET, WORRYING THING.
THE EXCURSION JUST LEFT ME
PECKISH, I MISSED DINNER.



DID
YOU THINK I'M
LOOKING AROUND
FOR A NICE BIG
KNIFE OR
SOMETHING?

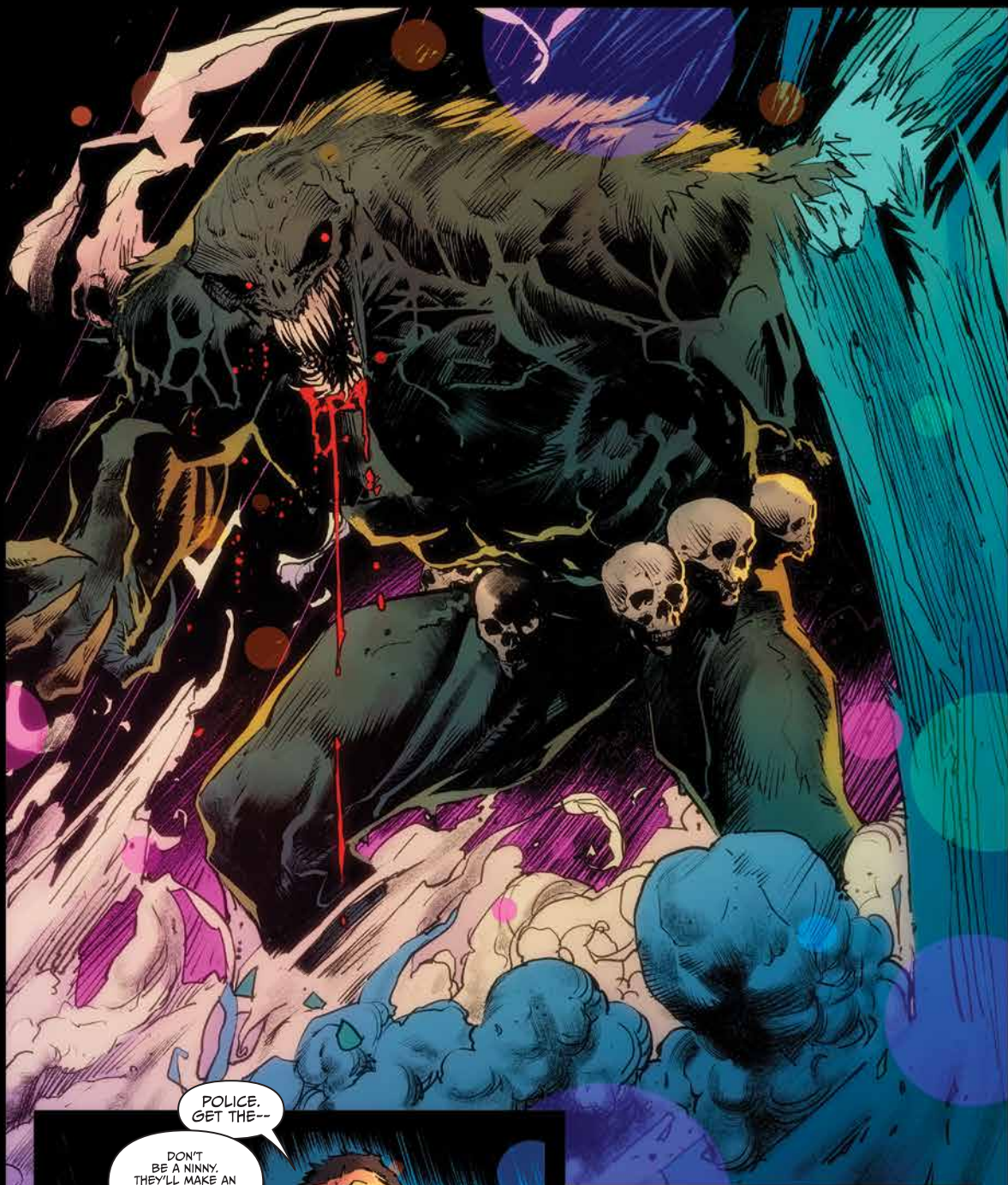
PERISH
THE THOUGHT.
LET'S GO...



I'LL FIX YOU A
SANDWICH. JUST
LET ME ANSWER
THIS AND--

RING
RING
RING





POLICE.
GET THE--

DON'T
BE A NINNY.
THEY'LL MAKE AN
AWFUL MESS OF
EVERYTHING.

JUST
GET TO THE
KITCHEN.
NOW...

ARE YOU ABSOLUTELY
SURE ABOUT THAT "NOT
HAVING A GUN" THING,
HMM?







I THINK
WE MADE
IT.



HEH.
COME
OUT...



T--



SHUSH,
DEAR.



POOR SWEET TONY WON'T BE TRIMMING THE HEDGES NO MORE, BUT NO NEED TO GO JOINING HIM IN EARLY RETIREMENT.

THE BIG FELLA IS JUST TRYING TO SCARE FOLKS OUT OF HIDING.



WHAT IS IT?

DON'T KNOW EXACTLY, BUT I'LL BET IT DOESN'T WANT TO STOP AT TONY.

ANOTHER MONSTER RUNNING ABOUT SO SOON ISN'T NORMAL. ESPECIALLY ONE COMING STRAIGHT TO ME.

HMM. SOMEONE'S PLAYING ME. DOESN'T SEEM LIKE ARTHUR'S STYLE, BUT...



FORGET IT. WHAT ARE YOU?

PROBABLY BEST YOU DON'T KNOW.

PRETEND THIS IS ALL A BAD DREAM.



SO...IF IT GETS UPSTAIRS TO THE REAL OLD ONES, THERE'S GOING TO BE A RIGHT MESS. YOU'LL BE CLEANING IT UP WITH A MOP.

WE DON'T WANT THAT.



AH, THERE YOU ARE. YOU'LL DO.

SO, WHAT NOW?



YOU'RE GOING TO GO AND HIDE IN THE CLOSET UNTIL EVERYTHING'S CALMED DOWN.



MRS. MCGUIRE,
YOU CAN'T...

I CAN
AND I HAVE,
A THOUSAND
TIMES
OVER.



THIS ISN'T
THE FIRST TIME
I'VE BEEN TRAPPED
IN A BIG HOUSE WITH A
SCARY MONSTER, AND I
DON'T WANT ANOTHER
CORPSE ON MY
CONSCIENCE.

IT'S
CROWDED ON
MY CONSCIENCE,
JACK. NO ROOM
FOR YOU MESSING
UP THE PLACE.



YOU'VE
GOT A LOT
TO LIVE
FOR.

NOW SHUT
UP AND HIDE, AND
DON'T YOU DREAM
OF BEING A
HERO, HMM?









I HEAR THAT
ELECTRICITY IS
BETTER FOR
BAKING, BUT
THERE ARE SOME
TIMES ONLY GAS
WILL DO.







ARGHHHH!



GRAN?

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

NO! DON'T
YOU DARE!



WHAT'S
HAPPE--

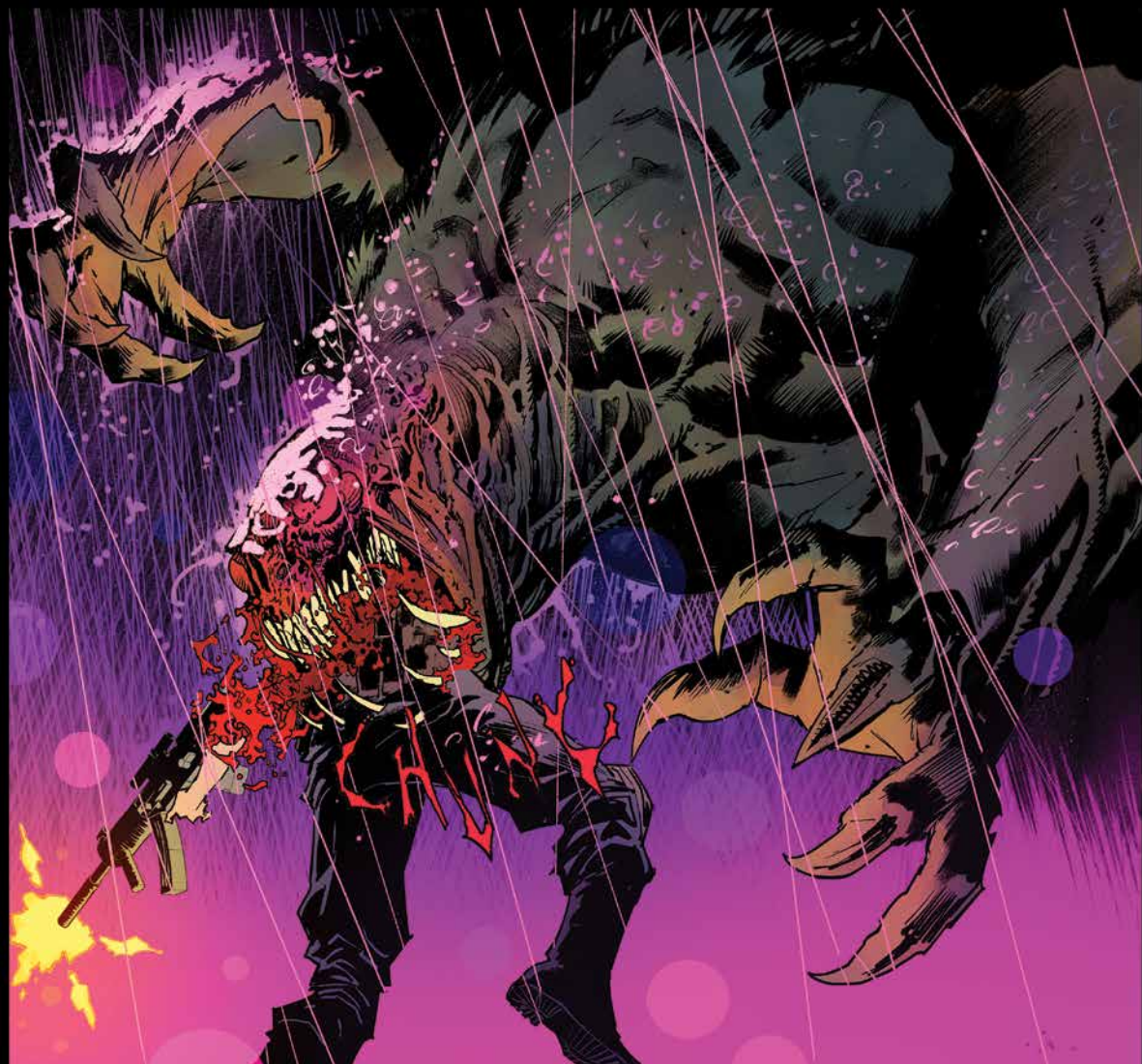


KLK



HEY!

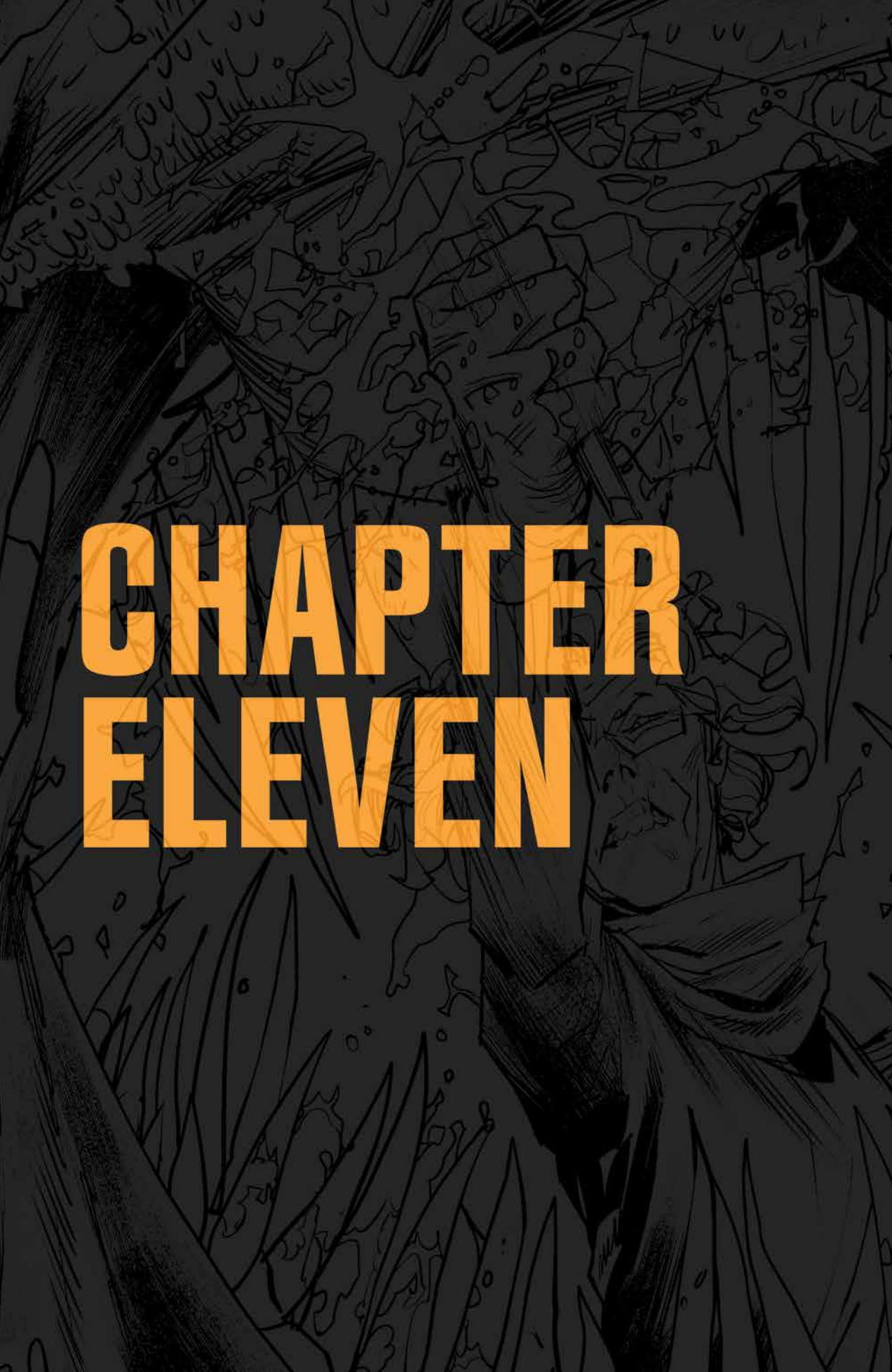












CHAPTER ELEVEN

OTHERWORLD

AGGG
GHHH!!



AVON



OH, JUST BLOODY WONDERFUL.

HOW'S AN OLD LADY LIKE ME GOING TO TEAR OFF THAT THING'S ARM?



KNIFE?

WELL, IT'S A START.

NOW, I'M GOING TO TRY SOMETHING STUPID.



WHEN YOU SEE ME MAKE MY MOVE, HEAD BACK TO THE KITCHEN.

JACK'S HIDING IN THE CUPBOARD. TRY NOT TO SLIP IN THE HOT OIL.





**GRENDEL!
YOU MUCKY
PUP!**

**LOOK AT
THE MESS
YOU'VE
MADE!**



**THE DEATH THAT
STALKS HEOROT
HALL DOES AS HE
WISHES!**

YES,
BUT DID YOU
HAVE TO DO IT
IN HERE?

WERE
YOU BORN IN
A PIGSTY?



**NO. A
POOL.**

WELL YOU'VE LEFT
POOLS OF BLOOD
EVERYWHERE. GROWING
UP IN A PLACE THAT
BASICALLY MOPS ITSELF
HAS SPOILED YOU
SOMETHING ROTTEN.

I MEAN,
DOES YOUR
MOTHER KNOW
YOU'RE OUT
LIKE THIS?



YES.

**YES, SHE
DOES.**



OH...

WAIT!
WHAT'S THAT
IN YOUR
MOUTH?



PEOPLE.

**SOON,
YOU.**



OH, NO.
I SEE WHAT
IT IS NOW!



A DIRTY
GREAT
KNIFE.



THAT
WAS MY
MOVE!



RUN!















LET'S
FINISH
IT.

BRGGG BRGGG

BRGGG BRGGG



AHHHHHH!



HARDER
THAN IT LOOKS,
CHAINSAWING A
MONSTER.

ALL THE
SINEWY
AND BONY
BITS.



THERE'S
A KNACK
TO IT.



HE RUNS
OFF AND
DIES IN THE
POEM,
RIGHT?

YES.

THAT'S
NICE.



OH, THERE
HE GOES
NOW. AND
YOU KNOW
WHAT?

BLEEDING
TO DEATH IN
PAIN COULDN'T
HAPPEN TO A
NICER
MONSTER.

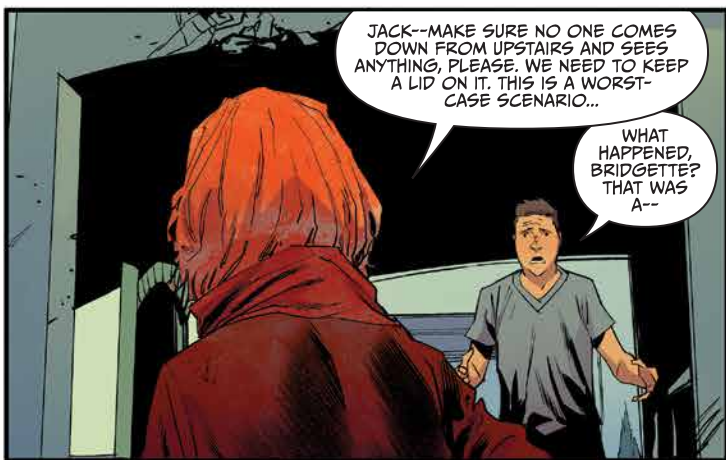
ER, YOU
TWO...



...WHATEVER
TIP YOU HAD IN
MIND, IT'S NOT
ENOUGH.









...AND IS THAT, LUKE?



I DON'T KNOW. I DIDN'T CATCH HIS NAME.

WHERE'S THE REST OF HIM?



YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO KNOW. YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THIS.

REMEMBER THE STRANGE CALLSIGN THAT TOLD YOU TO STAY CLEAR AND OBEY? IT'S IN EFFECT.

SKEDADDLE RIGHT OUT OF HERE, HMM?

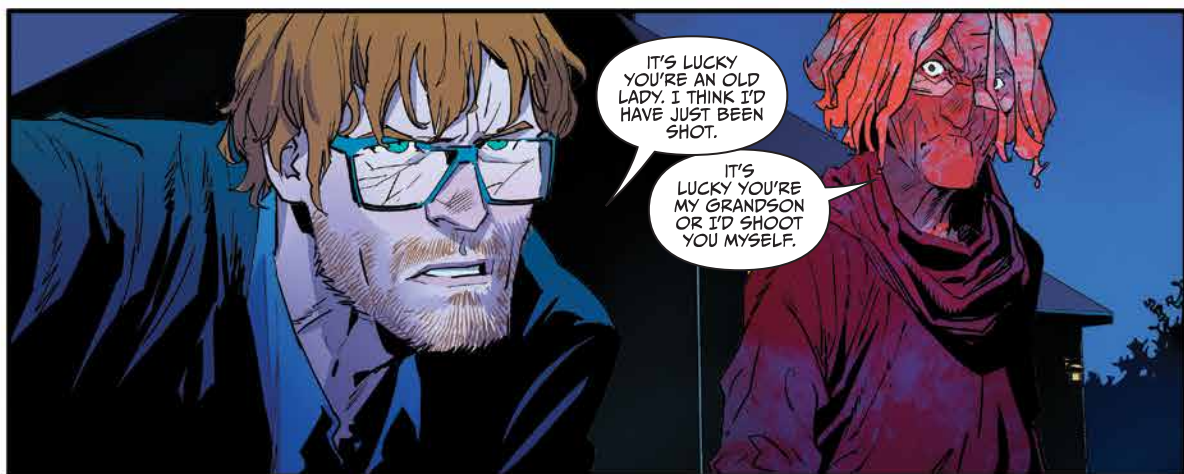


WHY DO YOU HAVE A BLOODY CHAINSAW?

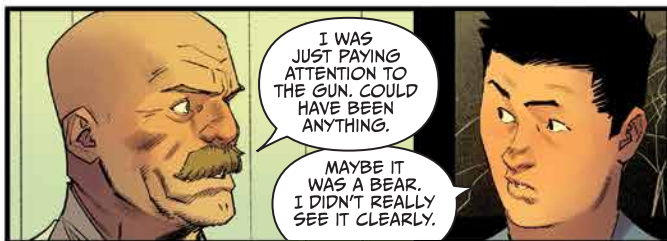


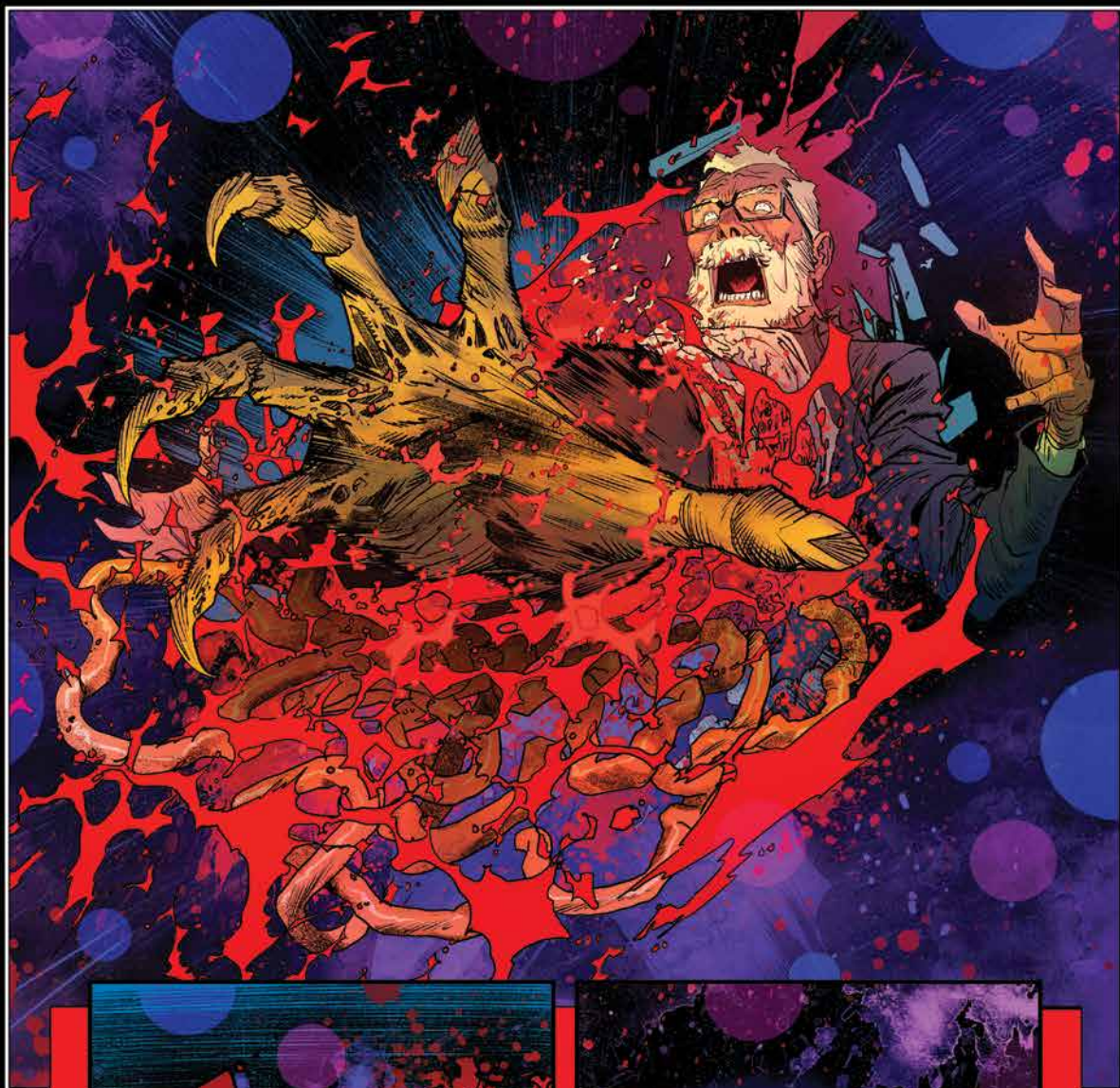
ER.











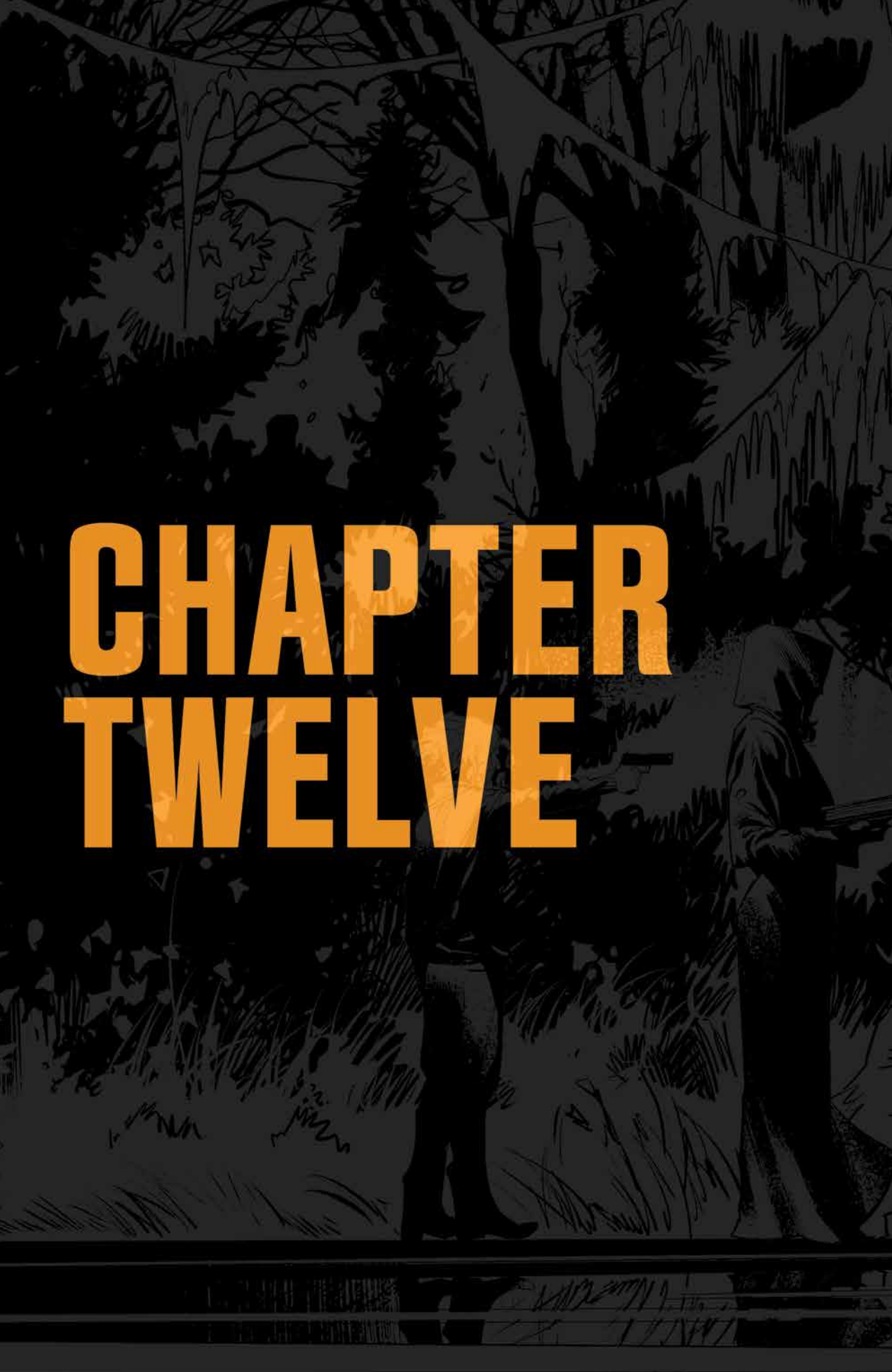


YOU
KILLED MY
BOY.

JOIN
HIM.

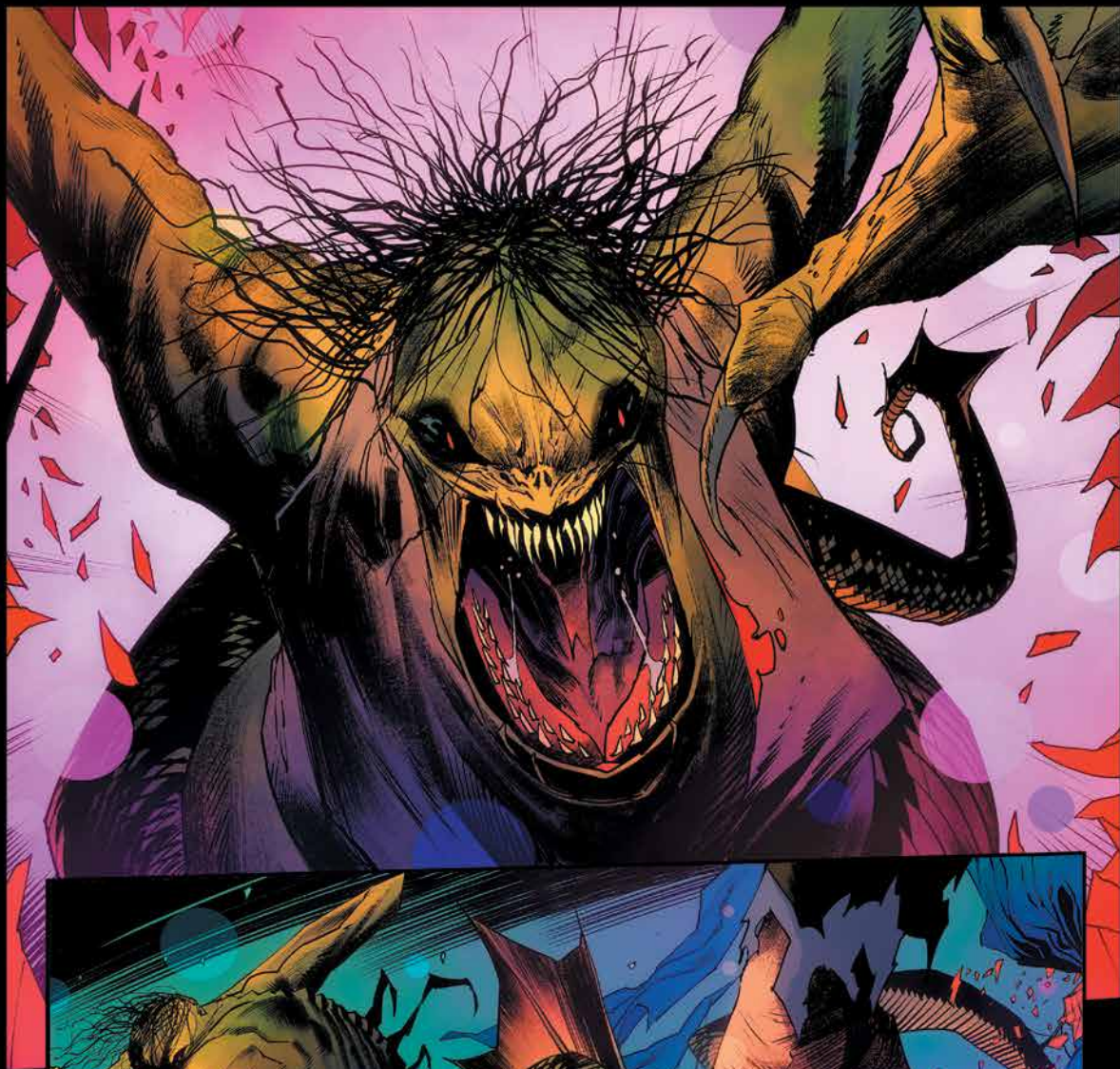




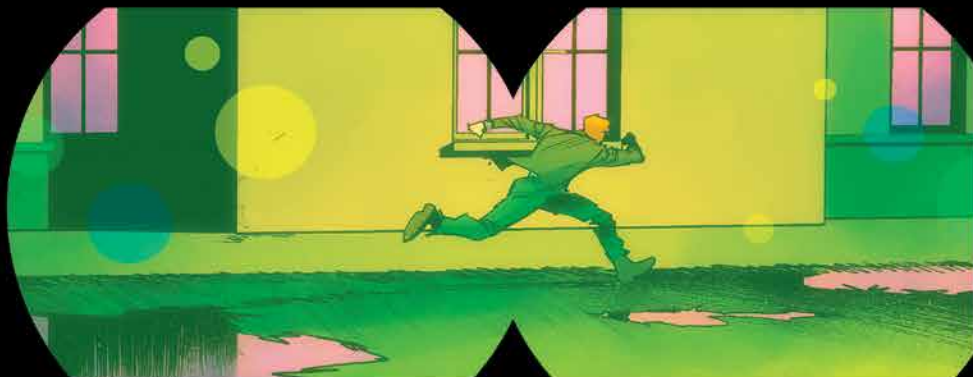


CHAPTER TWELVE

















DIVE IN.
I'LL READ.
YOU LISTEN.

I'M NOT
SURE I'LL
HEAR UNDER
WATER.



YOU WILL.
MAGIC
FINDS A
WAY.

BEOWULF ISN'T HERE, BUT
YOU CAN UNDERSTUDY HIM.
TAKE ON THE ROLE.

SO I'LL
BE PLAYING
TWO ROLES?
PERCIVAL AND
BEOWULF.



I'M
SURE THAT
WILL TURN
OUT JUST
FINE.



ÆFTER ðÆM WORDUM WEDERGEATA LEOD
EFSTE MID ELNE, NALAS ONDSWARE
BIDAN WOLDE; BRIMWYLM ONFENG
HILDERINCE. ÐA WÆS HWIL DÆGES...



AHEM.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING AT NOW, MARY?

I'M NOT MARY.



PLEASE, NONE OF "I AM SHE WHO IS ELAINE."

I KNOW TAKING ON THE ARTHURIAN ROLES WAS MY IDEA, BUT THIS ISN'T THE TIME.



NO. I MEAN I'M NOT ELAINE.

I'M NIMUE.



OH, MARY. YOU'RE IN BED WITH MERLIN IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER?

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING? YOU'RE BEING USED. YOU'LL BE DISCARDED.

MARY, ELAINE OR NIMUE...



...WHEN HAVE I EVER BEEN ANYTHING OTHER THAN USED AND DISCARDED?



OH, LUV. I'M SORRY...



I'M SORRY YOU ENDED UP LIKE THIS.



YOU
PULL THE
TRIGGER,
I STOP
READING
THIS.

I DON'T
KEEP READING
THIS, HE DIES.



WHAT HAPPENED, MARY?
EXPLAIN QUICKLY. I'M
LOST, AND I HATE THAT.
I HAVEN'T BEEN LOST
SINCE I WAS IN THE
BLOOD MAZE BENEATH
STONEHENGE BACK IN
THE SEVENTIES.

THAT WAS
A TERRIBLE
SOLSTICE.



MARY
DOESN'T
KNOW.

ONLY NIMUE
HAS BEEN TAKEN
INTO MERLIN'S
COUNCIL.



OKAY,
MADAM.
HAVE IT
YOUR WAY.

WHAT
HAPPENED,
NIMUE?



ONCE THERE
WAS A WAR OF
STORIES AND
THE KINGS WHO
LIVED THERE.

TALES FOR
THE SAXONS.
TALES FOR THE
BRITISH. TALES
FOR BOTH...

"...ONE OF THE MERLINS CAUGHT THE FERAL STORY OF BEOWULF IN A MANUSCRIPT FOR A THOUSAND YEARS. ARTHUR'S STORY LIVED AS FOLK MYTH. BEOWULF WAS TRAPPED IN PAPER..."

"HE WAS DUG OUT IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND STUCK IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY, AND ONLY REALLY STUDIED BY ACADEMICS."

WE SET HIM FREE...

...AND WE KILLED BEOWULF.

HMM. THE LINE ONLY GOES BACK TO NORMAN TIMES. IF HE WASN'T A THREAT SINCE THEN, NO WONDER I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE TROUBLESOME LITTLE BEOWULF. FRUSTRATING.

WITH BEOWULF DEAD, WE NEED A STAND IN.

THAT'S DUNCAN.

IF I READ THIS...

ARGGGHHH!!

DO IT!



"GRAP DA TOGEANES,
GUDRINC GEFENG
ATOLAN CLOMMUM. NO
PY AER IN GESCOD..."



"...ALDRE SCEPÐAN, AC
SEO ECG GESWAC..."

"...GESEAH ÐA ON SEARWUM
SIGEADIG BIL,
EALD SWEORD EOTENISC,
ECGUM PYHTIG..."



"...FÆGNE FLÆSCHOMAN;
HEO ON FLET GECRONG."

"SWEORD WAS
SWATIG, SECG
WEORCE GEFEH..."



...AND
DONE.

SO...WHAT
DID THAT
ACTUALLY
MEAN?

"IN SHORT?
BEOWULF GOES
INTO THE MERE
WHERE THE MOTHER
OF MONSTERS
LURKS."

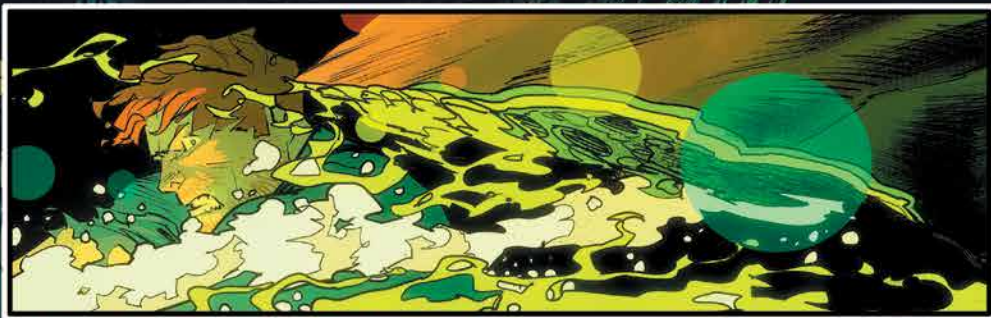
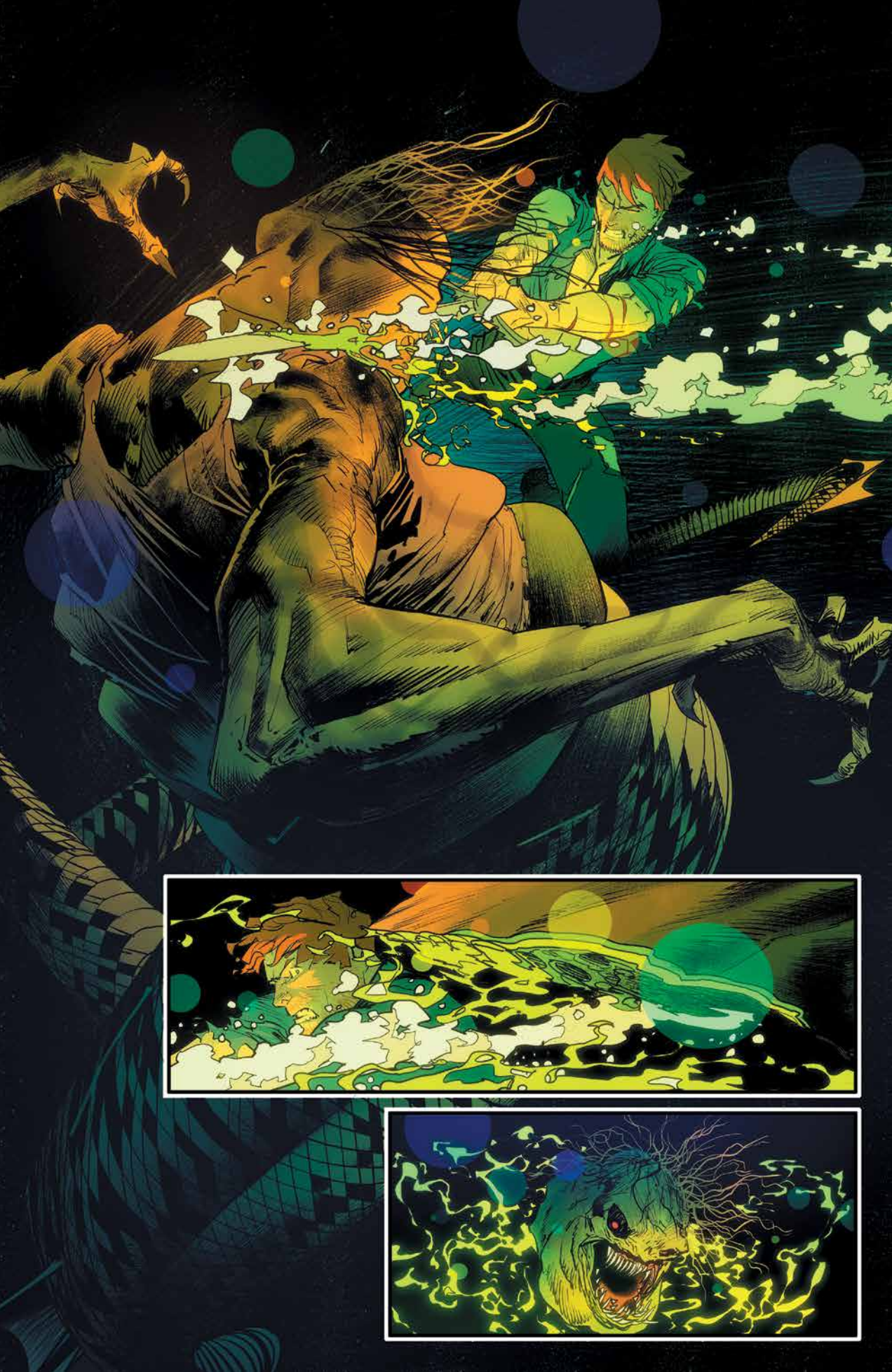
"ALL HIS
WEAPONS
FAIL."



"JUST AS HE'S
DYING..."

"...HE SEES
A SWORD."









OH, DEAR.
YOU KNOW NIMUE
BETRAYS MERLIN,
YES? YOU'RE JUST
TRAPPED IN THIS
ROLE NOW.

YES,
THAT'S WHAT
SHE IS.

AND YOU KNOW
THAT BEOWULF
KILLS THE MOTHER
OF MONSTERS.



ONE MOTHER
OF MONSTERS IS
DEAD IN THE LAKE.
ANOTHER IS STILL
UP HERE.

LET'S
SEE HOW
THAT ENDS
UP...



SO...YOU'VE GOT
BEOWULF WRAPPED UP
WITH YOU, BUT HOW
DOES IT ACTUALLY
END?

I REMEMBER
THE MONSTERS,
BUT NOT HOW IT
ENDS. FUNNY THAT.
FUNNY SOMETHING
YOU KNOW MORE
THAN ME.



HE KILLS A
DRAGON AS IT
KILLS HIM.

OH, I GUESS THAT
EXPLAINS WHY
BEOWULF WAS ON
FIRE. THAT WAS
BOTHERING ME.

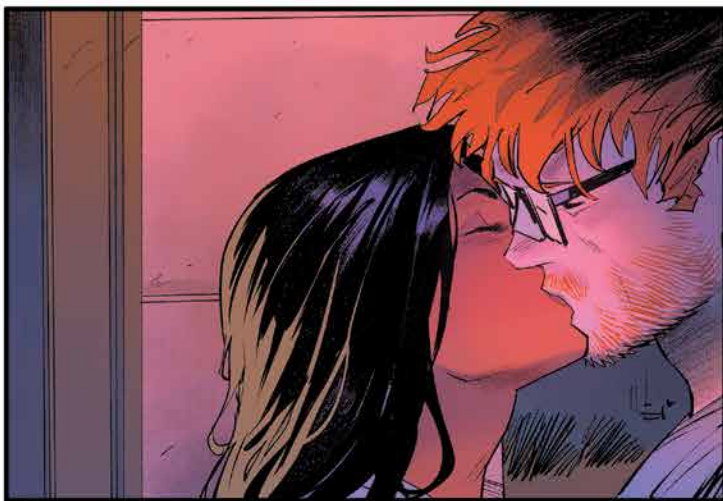
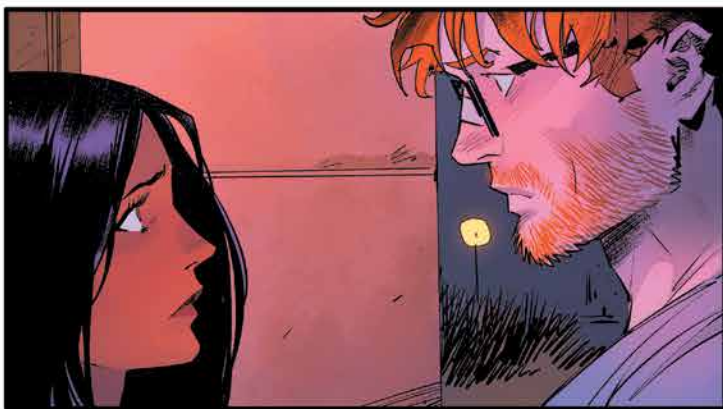
IN
THE SAME
NIGHT?



NO, MUCH
LATER.

OH, THAT'S
SOME GOOD
NEWS.

GOT TO
ADMIT, I DON'T
THINK I'VE GOT
ENOUGH PETROL IN
THE OL' TANK TO
FIGHT A DRAGON
TONIGHT, LUV.





THE ART OF LIGHT CAPTURED ON PARCHMENT IS FASCINATING...AS IS THE INFORMATION IT REVEALS.

THIS IS THE KNIGHT'S LOVER?



FOR NOW, AT LEAST. I'LL WORK OUT WHO SHE IS AND HOW SHE CONNECTS TO THEM.

AT LEAST WE HAVE SOMETHING FROM THIS MESS...



I'M SORRY. DUNCAN JUMPING ME AND TAKING THE MANUSCRIPT WAS NOT PART OF THE PLAN.

YOU TRIED. WHO WOULD DOUBT THE LOYALTY OF NIMUE?

WORRY LESS ABOUT PLANS. THE STORY WILL LEAD US ON. ALL BARDS MAKE THE STANDARDS THEIR OWN. WE KNOW HOW IT GOES, YET STILL IT DELIGHTS.

THE TALE OF BEOWULF IS IN MOTION. AS IS THE TALE OF ARTHUR, THE GRAIL. THE KNIGHTS ARE ASSEMBLED...



HOW IS GALAHAD? IS HE WELL?

TO TRUTH, HE HAD HIS LEGS CUT FROM UNDER HIM A LITTLE.



BUT DO NOT WORRY, FAITHFUL NIMUE.

WE'LL SOON HAVE HIM BACK ON HIS FEET.





WHAT
HAPPENED
HERE?



MUM?
THE PLACE
IS A TIP!

NOTHING
HAPPENED.

JUST...
RENOVATIONS.
PEOPLE HAVING
BAD DREAMS.
DOGS ON THE
LOOSE TOO.



AND...
AND...

WHAT'S
WRONG,
MUM?



WE'VE ALL
JUST HAD A
BAD FEW
DAYS, LUV.

YES.
BAD DAYS.
AND...

WHEN
YOU GO HOME,
DO KEEP THE
LIGHTS UP
BRIGHT.



THAT'S
A GOOD
IDEA.

IT'S ONLY
GOING TO GET
DARKER.

ONCE & FUTURE™

OLD ENGLISH

GILLEN

MORA

BONVILLAIN

DUKESHIRE



OTHERWORLD

I DREAM OF
ENGLAND'S
GREEN
FIELDS...

ICHO
COVERING THE
BEACHES,
FILLING THE
THROATS OF
ANGLO-SAXON
MEN.

I DO NOT
SEE HOW WE
ARE CLOSER
TO THE
GRAIL...

THE
PLAN IS IN
MOTION.

TO FIND
THE GRAIL WE
NEED PERCIVAL,
GALAHAD AND
BORS.

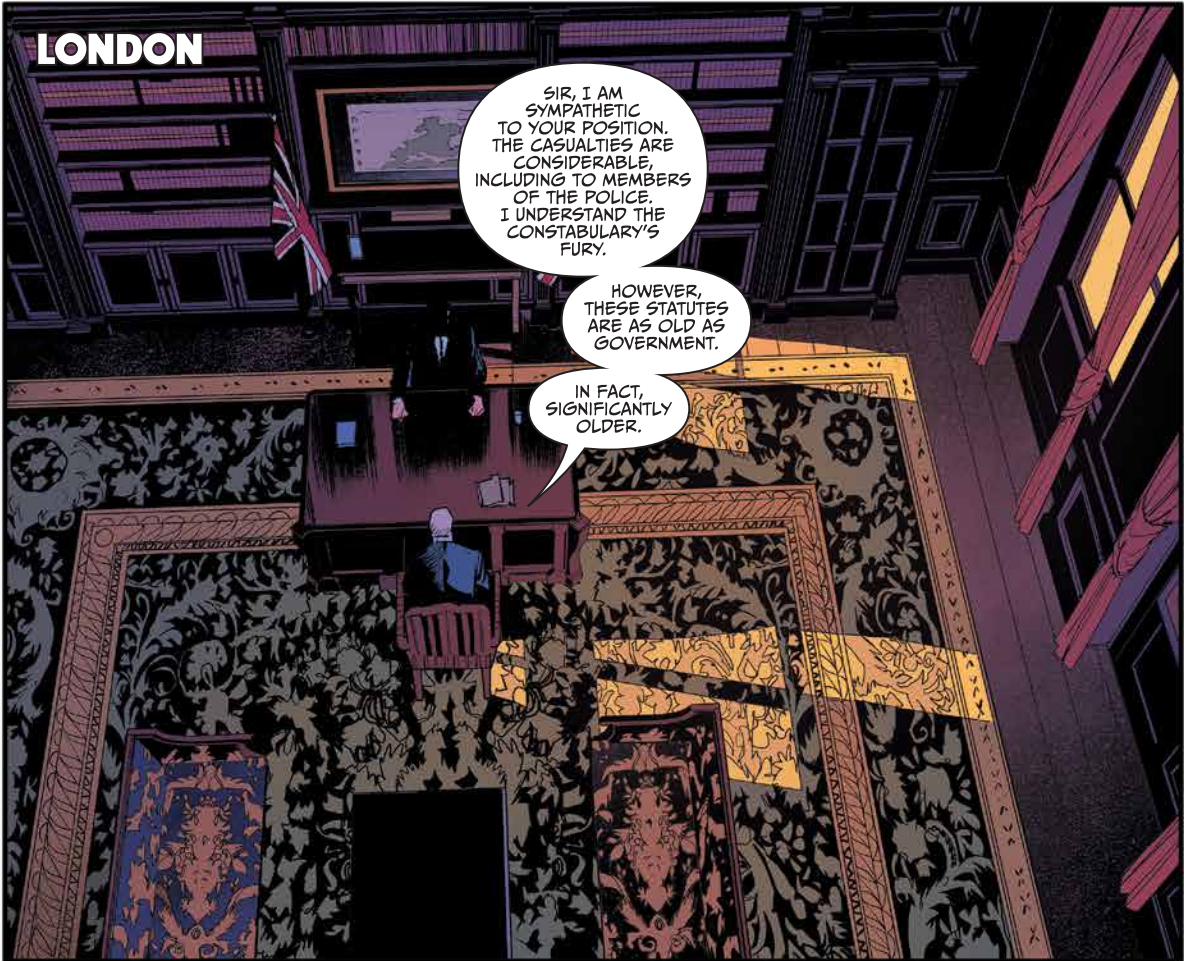
BETWEEN
THEM, THEY
WILL BRING
A NEW
ENGLAND.

PERCIVAL
AND
GALAHAD
ARE KNOWN.
BUT BORS?

HAVE YOU
FOUND THIS
KNIGHT?

NOT
EXACTLY, MY
LORD...

LONDON



SIR, I AM SYMPATHETIC TO YOUR POSITION. THE CASUALTIES ARE CONSIDERABLE, INCLUDING TO MEMBERS OF THE POLICE. I UNDERSTAND THE CONSTABULARY'S FURY.

HOWEVER, THESE STATUTES ARE AS OLD AS GOVERNMENT.

IN FACT, SIGNIFICANTLY OLDER.



WHEN INVOKED, THE SECRECY IS ABSOLUTE. THE INFORMATION IT COVERS IS DANGEROUS. THERE ARE SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO ENSURE IT IS NOT ABUSED, WHILE AVOIDING FURTHER CONTAMINATION. I CAN PUT THEM IN ACTION.

THIS IS AN UNWRITTEN PART OF OUR CONSTITUTION AND SHOULD NOT BE BYPASSED.



WE LITERALLY CANNOT PREDICT HOW SEVERE THE CONSEQUENCES COULD BE.



HMMM...
YES, I KNOW,
I KNOW. I
UNDERSTAND. BUT
I'M THE PRIME
MINISTER.

LET'S OPEN
UP THIS BOX AND
HAVE A GOOD
POKE AROUND,
EH?



NOT *BORS*,
BUT CLOSE
ENOUGH.

TO BE CONTINUED...

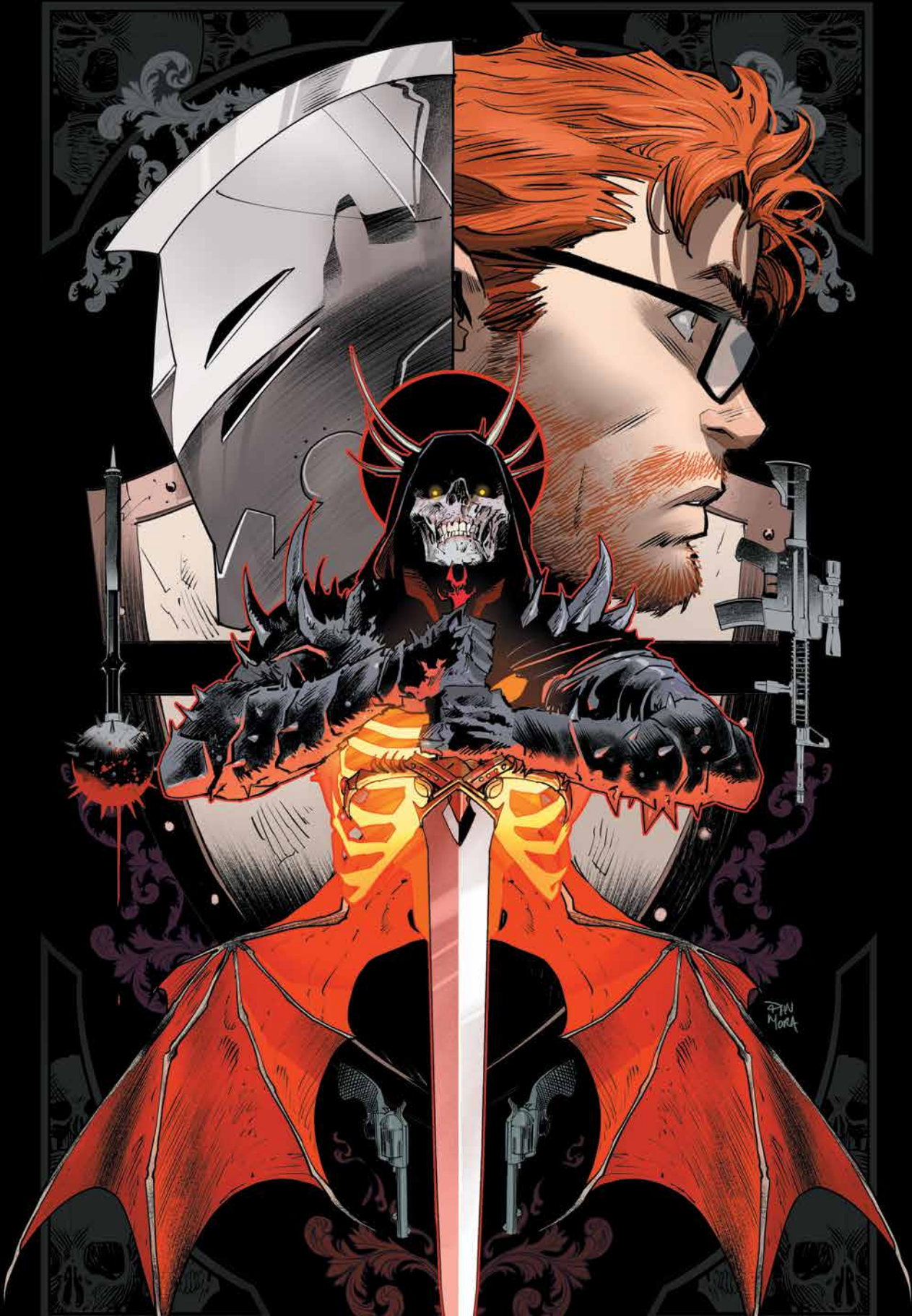




COVER GALLERY



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ISSUE SEVEN ONE-PER-STORE "THANK YOU" VARIANT COVER BY **DAN MORA**



ISSUE SEVEN VARIANT COVER BY **JENNY FRISON**



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