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297
DIGITAL
EDITION

TODD
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SPAWN®



HISTORY
OF SPAWN
PART 2



TODD McFARLANE
SCRIPT

JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER
ART

TODD McFARLANE AND JON GOFF
PLOT

TOM ORZECOWSKI
LETTERING

FCO PLASCENCIA
COLORS

FRANCESCO MATTINA
COVER ARTIST

TODD McFARLANE AND FRANCESCO MATTINA
COVER ARTIST (C)

TODD McFARLANE
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

JON GOFF
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Publishing Coordinator
SHANNON BAILEY

Production Artist
JORDAN BUTLER

Publisher For Image Comics
ERIC STEPHENSON

SPAWN CREATED BY
TODD McFARLANE



PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

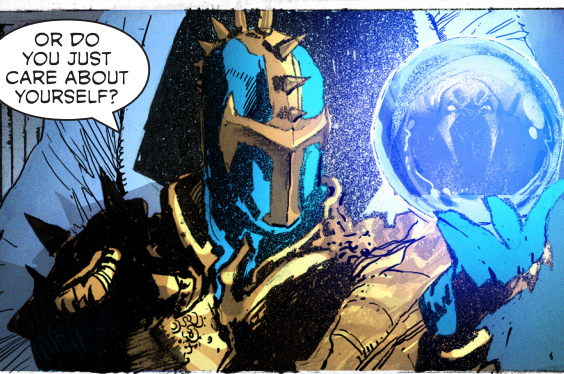
The Redeemer and Cogliostro look back on Al Simmons and Spawn's history. Both quickly realize Spawn is a bigger foe than they ever imagined. They prepare themselves for a battle to the death.

YOU HAVE OUR
ATTENTION, COGLIOSTRO.
ENLIGHTEN US WITH YOUR
INSIGHT. SINCE YOU WERE A
HELLSPAWN ONCE YOURSELF, TELL
US WHY THIS **AL SIMMONS** 'SPAWN'
IS SO DIFFERENT. PERHAPS IT WAS
ALL THAT MENTORING YOU GAVE
HIM? TEACHING HIM HOW TO
SURVIVE. HOW TO BEAT HELL
AT THEIR OWN GAME.

OR DO
YOU JUST
CARE ABOUT
YOURSELF?

I ALREADY
TOLD YOU.
I CARE ABOUT
SURVIVING...

DO YOU
REGRET THAT? THAT
YOU MAY BE PARTIALLY
RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS
WAR THAT'S ABOUT TO
ENGULF US ALL?



BUT I'M NOT
GOING TO--AND
NEITHER WILL YOU--
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN
ATTACK SIMMONS LIKE
HE'S JUST ANOTHER
SPAWN FROM THE PAST.
HE ISN'T!
AND HE HASN'T BEEN
FOR QUITE SOME
TIME!

YOU'RE
AMONG
ENEMIES, COG.
I'D TONE
DOWN THE
ATTITUDE.

THE SOONER
YOU WAKE UP TO
THAT FACT, THE BETTER
CHANCE HEAVEN WILL
HAVE OF SURVIVING
TOO.

I HAVEN'T
BEGUN TO SHOW MY
ATTITUDE, REDEEMER.
AND RIGHT NOW, I DON'T
GIVE A DAMN
WHAT YOU THINK!





"BECAUSE YOU AND YOUR ANGEL THUGS ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT FIGHTING THAN TRYING TO LEARN ANYTHING. YOU THINK SIMMONS AND WHAT HE'S BEEN DOING WITH HIS POWERS, IS A RECENT CHANGE?

NO! THIS HAS BEEN YEARS IN THE MAKING!

"AND SADLY, NONE OF US--INCLUDING ME!--HAVE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION. SO, HE'S NOT MERELY DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY. WHAT HE'S DOING HASN'T BEEN SEEN BEFORE.

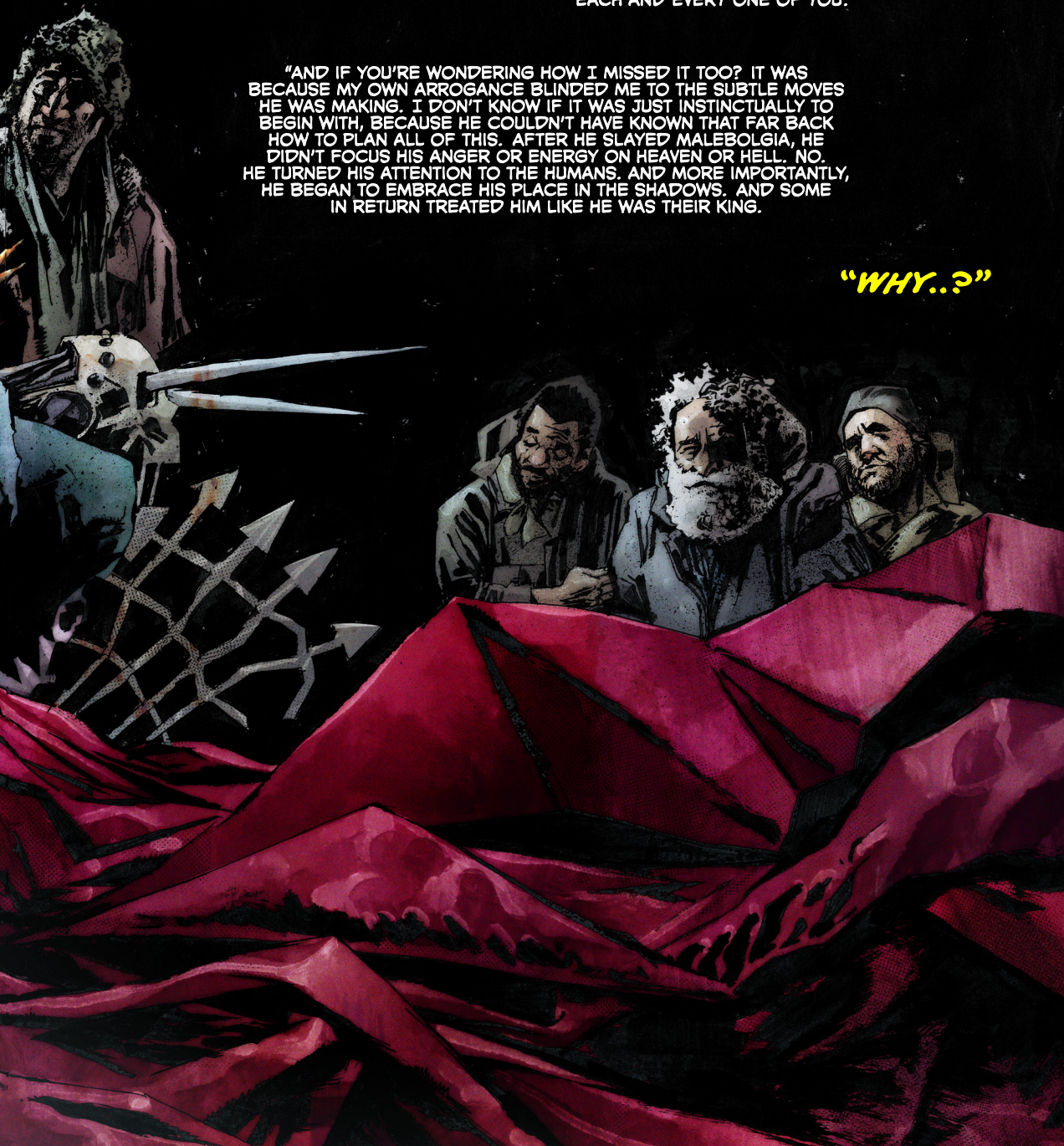
IT'S NEW!

AND HE'S BANKING ON THE FACT WE HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO COUNTER HIM.

"BECAUSE WE DON'T. AND THAT SHOULD SCARE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

"AND IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW I MISSED IT TOO? IT WAS BECAUSE MY OWN ARROGANCE BLINDED ME TO THE SUBTLE MOVES HE WAS MAKING. I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS JUST INSTINCTUALLY TO BEGIN WITH, BECAUSE HE COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN THAT FAR BACK HOW TO PLAN ALL OF THIS. AFTER HE SLAYED MALEBOLGIA, HE DIDN'T FOCUS HIS ANGER OR ENERGY ON HEAVEN OR HELL. NO, HE TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE HUMANS. AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE BEGAN TO EMBRACE HIS PLACE IN THE SHADOWS. AND SOME IN RETURN TREATED HIM LIKE HE WAS THEIR KING.

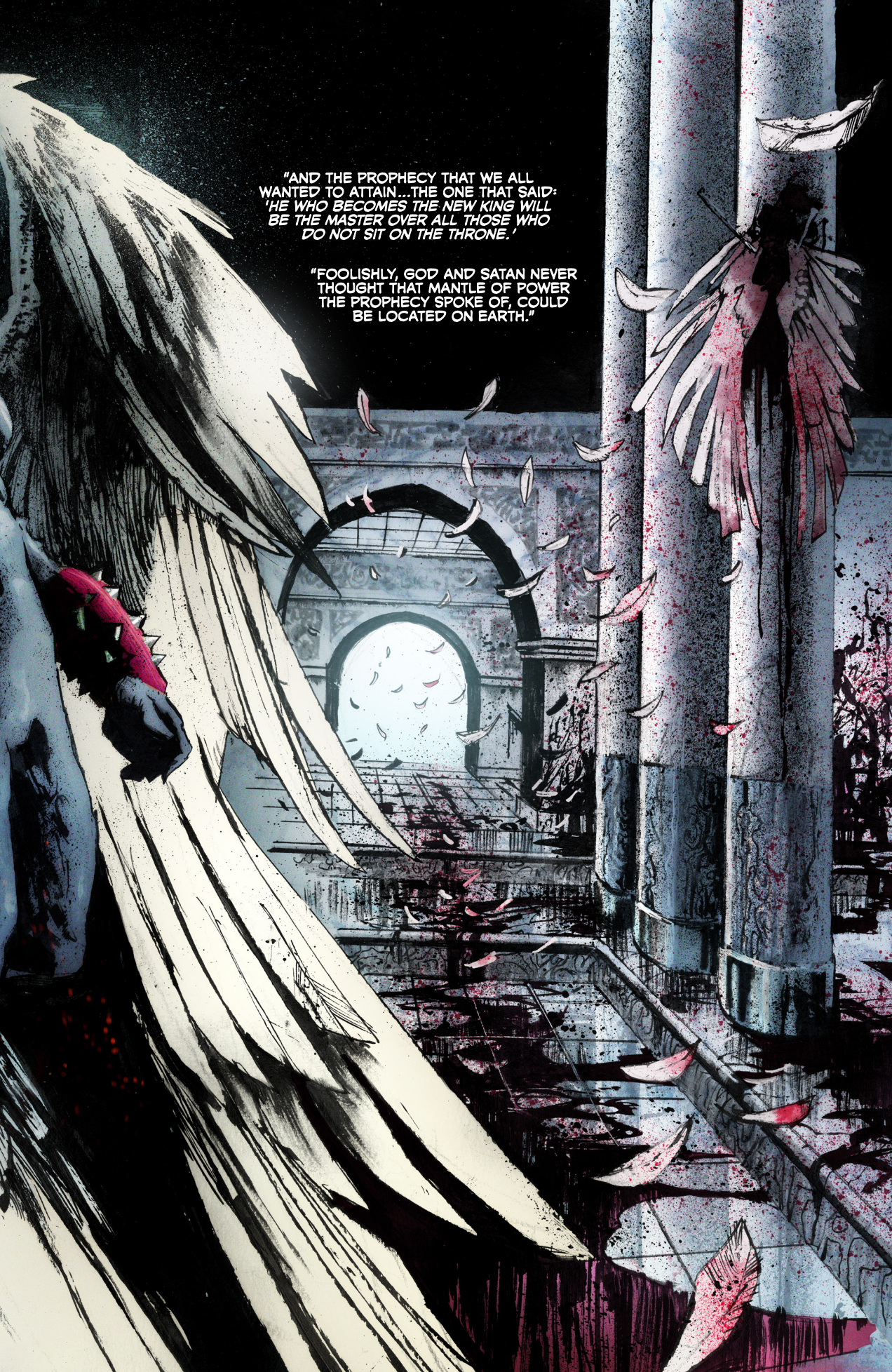
"WHY..?"



"WHY DIDN'T HE WANT
THE THRONE OF HELL?
I NEVER UNDERSTOOD
THAT UNTIL RECENTLY.
WHY WOULDN'T HE
WANT TO FILL THE
VOID HE CAUSED
BY KILLING
MALEBOLGIA?"

"INSTEAD HE LET
HEAVEN AND HELL
FALL INTO CHAOS
FIGHTING OVER THAT
EMPTY THRONE
OURSELVES.
WHILE WE ALL GOT
WEAKER, HE
BEGAN TO GROW."





"AND THE PROPHECY THAT WE ALL
WANTED TO ATTAIN...THE ONE THAT SAID:
'HE WHO BECOMES THE NEW KING WILL
BE THE MASTER OVER ALL THOSE WHO
DO NOT SIT ON THE THRONE.'

"FOOLISHLY, GOD AND SATAN NEVER
THOUGHT THAT MANTLE OF POWER
THE PROPHECY SPOKE OF, COULD
BE LOCATED ON EARTH."

"AND WE'VE ALL BEEN PAYING THE PRICE EVER SINCE."

"AND THOUGH SIMMONS KEPT SAYING HE WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH BEING A SPAWN, INSTEAD HIS PRESENCE HAD THE OPPOSITE EFFECT. HE ATTRACTED DOZENS OF ENEMIES WHOSE ONLY PURPOSE WAS TO TRY AND BEAT HIM IN BATTLE. BECAUSE HE WORE THE SYMBIOTE COSTUME THEY THOUGHT HE WAS SOME MODERN DAY SUPER HERO. A MAN THEY COULD SIMPLY BEAT AND TAKE AWAY HIS POWER.

"ONE BY ONE THEY FELL AND YET THEY STILL CAME. THEIR EXISTENCE COMPLICATED OUR PLANS BECAUSE THEY WERE GETTING IN THE WAY OF US BEING ABLE TO GET TO SPAWN IN THE FASHION WE NEEDED."

"THESE VILLAINS, INSTEAD OF BEING A DETRIMENT TO SPAWN ACTUALLY BECAME A 'HUMAN SHIELD' AROUND HIM... AND THEY HAD NO IDEA THEY WERE HELPING SIMMONS EVERY TIME THEY ATTACKED HIM.

"MAKING IT SO HEAVEN AND HELL HAD TO WAIT ON THE SIDELINES FOR THEIR CHANCE TO STRIKE."







"BUT WE COULDN'T CONTROL
OURSELVES, COULD WE? INSTEAD WE
HAD TO JUMP IN, HOPING A DISTRACTED
SPAWN WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR
ONE OF US TO STEAL HIS SYMBIOTE
MAMMON, THAMUZ THE INQUISITOR, AND
THE REST OF THEM...NOT ONLY FAILED
IN THEIR ATTEMPTS AGAINST SIMMONS,
THEY PREMATURELY TRIGGERED
ARMAGEDDON.

"THIS AGAIN MADE SPAWN STRONGER! PHYSICALLY
HE WAS ACCELERATING AT A PACE NO OTHER
SPAWN HAD EVER ACHIEVED.

"THERE ARE TWO PARTS TO SPAWN'S
GROWTH. THE FIRST PART WAS HIS
BODY. HE NEEDED TO BE
PHYSICALLY TUNED TO
HIS PEAK... AND WE
TOO EASILY GAVE HIM
REASONS TO PUSH
HIS BODY TO
THOSE LIMITS."



"DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M TELLING YOU? EVERY ONE OF US, WE THOUGHT WE KNEW HOW TO BEAT HIM. BUT WHAT WE DID WASN'T SLOWING HIM DOWN--IT WAS BUILDING HIM INTO A KILLING MACHINE/WE WERE **STRENGTHENING HIM!**"

"EVERY ATTACK BROUGHT HIM A STEP CLOSER TO HONORING HIMSELF AND HIS SYMBIOTE. AND THAT POWER EVENTUALLY TRIGGERED A CONNECTION TO EVERY SPAWN THROUGH TIME. THAT'S HOW I WAS DRAWN TO HIM. HE PULLED ME IN, WHILE I THOUGHT I WAS IN CONTROL THE WHOLE TIME.

"THERE'S SOMETHING IN HIS SOUL, SOME DESIGN FLAW THAT MALEBOGIA MISSED WHEN HE CHOSE SIMMONS. AND THAT FLAW HAS NOW MADE HIM ABLE TO TAP INTO THE SOULS OF ALL SPAWNS FROM THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE!"

"AND THE ONLY THING THAT'S KEEPING ANY OF US ALIVE, IS THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW HE HAS THAT ABILITY YET. MAY YOUR GOD HELP US ALL IF HE EVER DISCOVERS THAT FACT. BECAUSE IF HE CAN CALL UP HIS OWN ARMY AGAINST US **HE WINS. HE WINS EVERYTHING!**"





"EVEN THOUGH
WE THOUGHT WE'D
GRINDED HIM DOWN
MENTALLY...DOWN TO
THE POINT THAT HE
SEEMED DEFEATED
AND DIDN'T WANT
ANYTHING TO DO
WITH BEING SPAWN
ANYMORE. BUT THAT
WASN'T WHAT WAS
HAPPENING TO HIM. HE
WASN'T QUITTING...
HE WAS
PLANNING!

"BECAUSE HE MADE THE ONE MOVE I PRAYED HE
NEVER WOULD FIND AND THAT WAS TO FINALLY FOCUS
ON HIS MIND. HE DIDN'T WALK FOR DAYS IN PURGATORY
BECAUSE HE WAS BEATEN--THOUGH HE WANTED US TO
THINK THAT--NO, HE WAS SETTING THE STAGE. AND WE
FELL FOR HIS ACT. HE DIDN'T COMMIT SUICIDE
WHEN HE BLEW HIS HEAD OFF; HE

CREATED CHAOS!

WE'D ALL BEEN SO FOCUSED ON TRYING TO KILL HIM,
THAT WHEN HE TOOK HIMSELF OUT OF THE GAME,
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH OURSELVES.



"AND, JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED WHEN MALEBOIGIA WAS SLAUGHTERED, DEMONS
AND ANGELS ALIKE BEGAN TRIPPING OVER THEMSELVES TRYING TO PROVE
THEY SHOULD BE THE NEW 'MASTER' OF THIS UNHOLY WAR.



"SIMMONS HAD SET HIS TRAP
AND HE MUST HAVE LAUGHED
AT HOW EASILY WE ALL
FELL INTO IT!"

"THE NEW HOST HE FOUND FOR THE COSTUME WAS JIM DOWNING. HE WASN'T SOME RANDOM SELECTION BY SIMMONS. DOWNING WAS THE SAME SPIRIT SIMMONS INHABITED DURING HIS FIRST FEW DAYS OF BECOMING SPAWN. AND TO SCREW WITH US FURTHER, DOWNING WAS ALSO THE FIRST BEING TO EVERY WEAR A SYMBIOTE COSTUME WITHOUT BEING DEAD FIRST.

"THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN **ANOTHER CLUE** FOR US, BUT WE WERE BLIND TO THAT TOO, THINKING THAT A HUMAN WHO WASN'T DEAD, WHO HADN'T FELT THE HARSH TOUCH OF HELL, WOULD BE AN EASY TARGET.

"AND WHY NOT? THE SYMBIOTE ITSELF WAS STRUGGLING TO ADAPT TO ITS NEW HOST SO WHY WOULDN'T THIS BE A CHANCE TO FINALLY CAPTURE THE SYMBIOTE? THAT'S WHAT WE'VE ALL BEEN FIGHTING OVER, **ISN'T IT?** FOR ONE OF US TO LORD OVER THE SPAWN TO COSTUME. THAT'S WHERE THE POWER RESIDES.

"WHATEVER SIMMONS IS PLANNING WE CAN'T FORGET OUR GOAL.... TO STRIP HIM OF HIS COSTUME ONCE AND FOR ALL. AND TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NOT EVEN A SLIVER LEFT OF THE SYMBIOTE..."







"...BECAUSE THAT'S HOW HE RETURNED TO EARTH, BY KEEPING A PIECE OF HIS COSTUME. HE KNEW IT WOULD TRANSPORT HIM BACK WHEN HE WAS READY. BUT THE MOVE HE MADE, WHEN HE KILLED HIMSELF... WAS SO HE COULD LEARN OUR GAME! OF EVERYTHING HE IS DOING, THIS IS WHAT WE SHOULD BE MOST SCARED OF-- HE DIDN'T LEAVE EARTH OUT OF DESPAIR, HE LEFT TO STUDY, TO TRAIN HIS MIND.

"AND HE DIDN'T JUST LEARN THE RULES OF OUR GAME... HE'S **MASTERED** THEM! TO THE POINT HE'S TURNING OUR ATTACKS BACK ON US! FOR YEARS HE FOUGHT TO NOT BE INVOLVED IN THIS WAR. TO NOT BE SPAWN. NOW, HE THRIVES ON THE BATTLES. TRYING TO FLUSH US OUT, BECAUSE WE CAN'T HIDE FROM HIM ANYMORE.

"HE SAW TO THAT WHEN HE LOCKED THE GATES ON BOTH HEAVEN AND HELL. HE TRAPPED US HERE ON EARTH WHEN HE SEALED THE '**DEAD ZONES**.' THE ONLY WAY ANY OF US HAD OF GETTING BACK HOME IS BLOCKED!

"NOW HE'S GOING TO HUNT US ONE BY ONE UNTIL WE CAN'T BOTHER ANOTHER HUMAN EVER AGAIN. THAT'S WHAT HE LEARNED WHEN HE WAS GONE IN THE '**BLACKNESS**' FOR ALL THOSE MONTHS...HOW TO DEFEAT HIS ENEMIES AT THEIR OWN GAME."



"AND WHOEVER KILLED HIS WIFE,
NOT ONLY TOOK AWAY THE ONLY
LEVERAGE WE HAD OVER HIM...THEY
ALSO **UNLEASHED HIS FURY!**
A FORCE SO POWERFUL HE SLAYED
SATAN AND SEALED OFF ANY HOPE OF
HELL BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE THE
HARVESTING OF HUMAN SOULS. KILLING
WANDA DIDN'T DETER HIM, IT
FREED HIM!

"THE ONE LAST PRISON WE
HAD LEFT TO CAGE HIM--
HIS LOVE FOR HIS WIFE--
INSTEAD HER DEATH FREED
HIM OF THAT BURDEN.

"AND NOW HE'S A MAN WITH NOTHING
ELSE LEFT TO LOSE. HE **DOESN'T CARE**
IF HE DIES ANYMORE. ALL HE WANTS IS

REVENGE!...

AND NOW HE'S GOT THE POWER
AND STRENGTH TO GET IT!"

"BUT HE HAS A
WEAKNESS. MORE
DANGEROUS THAN ANY
OF US, AND THAT'S
HIMSELF. I'VE SEEN IT
FIRSTHAND. HE'S NEVER
BEEN ABLE TO TAME
HIS EMOTIONS.
NOT ONCE WHEN
IT MATTERED.
SO, THAT'S WHERE
WE HAVE TO
STRIKE.



"SOMEONE HAS
TO THROW HIM OFF
HIS GAME. DISRUPT HIS
PLANS FOR A SINGLE
SECOND, THEN MAKE THEIR
'**DEATHBLOW**'!"

"YES. HIS COSTUME MAY BE
TRANSFORMING, SHOWING MORE
NEW ABILITIES THAN WE'VE EVER SEEN,
LIKE RESURRECTING DEAD VILLAINS
AND SHOWING ITS TRUE MONSTER
FORM... WELL, WHOEVER CAN TAKE
THAT FROM SIMMONS WILL BECOME
A **GOD** THEMSELVES. MORE
POWERFUL THAN THE GOD
YOU NOW BEND A
KNEE TO.

"BUT SINCE SIMMONS
EXPOSED HIMSELF TO
THE WORLD, ATTEMPTING
TO SHINE A LIGHT ON
OUR EXISTENCE..."





...THE MANTLE
OF WHO MIGHT
BECOME THAT
NEXT GOD JUST GOT
MORE COMPLICATED.
THE QUESTION IS, NOW
THAT YOU'VE HEARD WHAT
YOU'RE UP AGAINST--
HOW MANY OF YOU
ARE STILL **WILLING**
TO FACE SIMMONS
ALONE?

HEAVEN
DOESN'T CREATE
COWARDS LIKE THEY DO
IN HELL, DEAR COG. MY MEN
FEAR NO ONE AND THEY'D
SOONER DIE THAN LET ANY
DEMON SCUM BECOME
EARTH'S NEW MASTER
AND LORD!

AND THOUGH
WE APPRECIATE YOUR
WARNING, I THINK YOU'RE
OVERSELLING WHAT SIMMONS IS.
HE HAD A CHANCE TO KILL ME
RECENTLY, BUT NEITHER HE NOR
HIS SYMBIOTE COULD DO THAT.
SO, IF HE CAN'T KILL ME, A
SIMPLE WARRIOR, WHO
CAN HE KILL?

HE
MURDERED
MALEBOGLIA AND
SATAN.

I'M NOT TALKING
ABOUT HELL. YOUR SIDE
HAS ALWAYS BEEN WEAK.
I'M TALKING ABOUT US, GOD'S
HANDPICKED WARRIORS.
SPAWN HASN'T SHOWN HE CAN
DESTROY US...SO, I'M MORE
THAN WILLING TO GIVE HIM
ANOTHER CHANCE TO
PROVE ME WRONG.

THEN
YOU'RE
A DAMN
FOOL!

Next issue: HEAVEN ATTACKS!

SPAWNING GROUND

P.O. Box 12230
Tempe, AZ 85284-0038

twitter.com/Todd_McFarlane
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THE HISTORY OF AL SIMMONS – PART 2

The “History of Spawn” has set the stage. Everything that has come before is leading to what comes next. Is the world ready for Al Simmons’ next evolution? Is Al ready for the challenges he will face? The Road to #300 won’t be easy... but it’ll be FUN!!! For us, the readers, Todd continues to unravel Al’s game plan. Jason Shawn Alexander continues to deliver some of the best art in comics on a regular basis. We all hope you’re enjoying the ride and are ready for what comes next.

Like in issue 296, the list below is a “field guide” to this issue’s many character. Enjoy!

THE **ROAD TO #300** CANNOT BE STOPPED!!!

PAGE 1

- **Redeemer, The Rapture and Cogliostro:** As we saw last issue, these rival agents of Heaven and Hell have come together to assess the full threat presented by Al Simmons.

PAGES 2 & 3

- **Al Simmons, atop his throne of refuse and decay and the downtrodden citizens of Rat City:** Al has called the maze-like alleys of Rat City his home since Spawn #1. The homeless population of the alleys live under Al’s protection, though some say his presence is a danger, others view him as a savior.

PAGES 4 & 5

- **The Pits of Hell and the Gilded Halls of Heaven:** The mythical realms where Spawn’s greatest enemies plot and wage war-- even among themselves.
- **Wings of Redemption Spawn:** Al Simmons is a hero touched by both darkness and light. 1st Appearance, Spawn #77.

PAGE 6 & 7

- **Cogliostro with the Crown of Hell’s 8th Plane:** Following Al’s defeat of Malebolgia, Cogliostro betrayed Al and stole the Lord of the 8th Plane’s crown.
- **The Heap:** 1st appearance, Spawn #73.
- **Decay:** 1st appearance, Spawn #264.
- **Simon Pure and his legion of vampires:** 1st appearance, Spawn #107.
- **Soul Crusher:** 1st appearance Spawn #270.
- **Clown and his army of possessed civilian psychopaths:** from the Night of 1000 Clown story arc, Spawn #134-138.
- **King Spider:** 1st appearance, Spawn #265.
- **Pig boys:** corrupted youth possessed by Urizen, 1st appearance, Spawn #104.

PAGES 8 & 9

- **The agents of Armageddon:** #150-163 These issues show-case the various factions who helped usher in the end of days.



NEXT ISSUE

The Road to #300 becomes an all-out war.

PAGES 8 & 9

- **Jake Fitzgerald:** the youthful vessel of God: 1st appearance, Spawn #101.
- **Kate Fitzgerald:** the youthful vessel of Satan: 1st appearance, Spawn #101.
- **Thamuz, the Grand Inquisitor of Hell:** 1st appearance, Spawn #150.
- **Mother of Existence:** 1st appearance, Spawn #75.
- **The zombie horde:** An undead plague that rose up in the led up to Armageddon.
- **Mammon:** A constant thorn in Al's side, Mammon has long sought to gain control of Al's costume so he can rule the afterlife.
- **The Disciple:** One of Heaven's elite, 1st appearance, Spawn #150.

PAGE 10 & 11

- **She-Spawn (Nyx):** 1st appearance, Spawn #122.
- **Mandarin Spawn:** 1st appearance, Spawn Series 14 (toy line), Spawn #165.
- **Medieval Spawn:** 1st Appearance, Spawn #9.
- **War Spawn:** 1st appearance, Spawn #179.
- **Necro Cop:** 1st appearance, Spawn: Simony.
- **Gunslinger Spawn:** 1st appearance, Spawn #119.
- **Raven Spawn:** 1st appearance, Hellspawn #
- **Ninja Spawn:** 1st appearance Spawn Series 3 (toy line), Spawn.

PAGES 12 & 13

- Despite all of his victories, Al's constant struggles took a toll. Eventually, following Armageddon, though he'd saved the day and staved off the end of the world, Al give up, ending his own life in Spawn #185... or so his enemies thought.

PAGES 14 & 15

- **Jim Downing:** The mysterious stranger who took the mantle of Spawn after Al's "death", 1st appearance, Spawn #185 (Al Simmons appeared as Jim in Spawn #2).
- **The Old Guard:** Ancient demons, 1st appearance, Spawn #203.
- **The Curse:** 1st appearance, Spawn #27.
- **Tremor:** 1st appearance, Spawn #25.
- **Marc Rosen:** Jim's friend and confidant, 1st appearance, Spawn #187.
- **Sara Johnston:** A nurse obsessed with Jim who becomes more than his caretaker, 1st appearance, Spawn #185.

PAGE 16 & 17

- **Al Simmons, resurrected:** Al returned following his "death" and delivered a huge blow to Heaven and Hell when he first locked their gateways to Earth, Spawn: Resurrection #1.
- **The death of Wanda:** When unknown agents murdered Al's widow, he took his war to Hell to face Satan himself & free Wanda's soul from damnation. Spawn #256-252.

PAGES 18 & 19

- **New friends for a new war:** Al resurrected old enemies Overtkill, Cy-Gor, The Curse and The Freak to serve as his enforcers. He also revealed his true self to a world that thought he was long dead, Spawn #293.

PAGE 20

- **Cogliostro:** 1st appearance, Spawn #9, "Cog" has been Al's mentor in the afterlife, as well as his friend and rival. His current motivations are unknown.

ONLY 2 MORE ISSUES TO SPAWN #300!

'Til next month. Give 'em Hell!

-Jon

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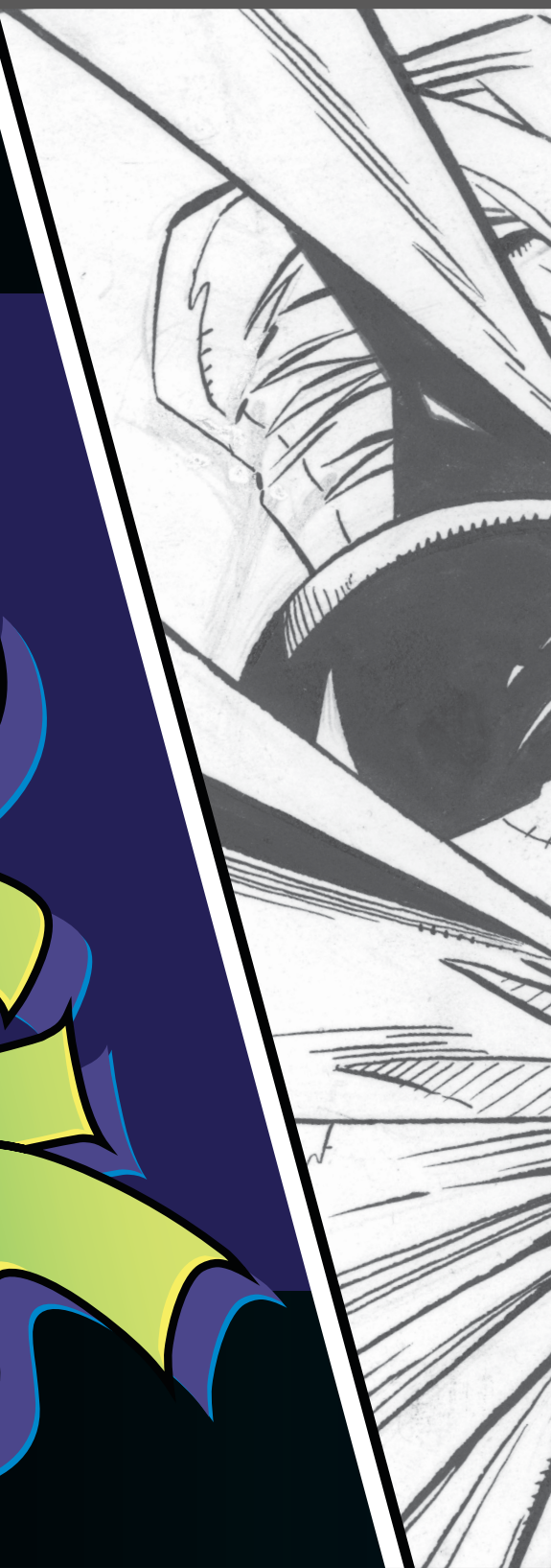
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JULY 2019



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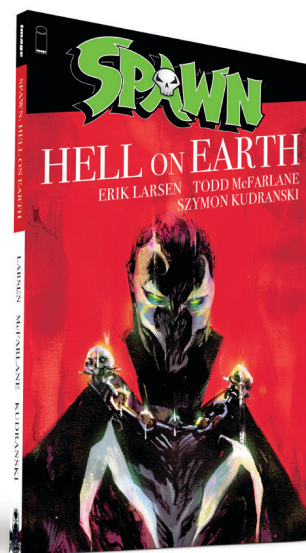


DEMON'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

Killed by his own men, Government Agent Al Simmons struck a deal with the devil, resurrecting him from the depths of hell. Returning to Earth he guards the forgotten alleys of New York City as the warrior Spawn, a hero unlike any other. Seeking answers about his past, Spawn grapples with the dark forces that returned him to earth, battling enemies and discovering unlikely allies.

Even though the doors of Heaven and Hell are now locked, there's enough evil on Earth to keep Spawn busy. But without his full powers, Spawn will have to find a way to fight his enemies without getting himself killed again in *Spawn: Hell on Earth*. Featuring the kinetic art and imaginative story-telling of Image Comics founders Todd McFarlane (*Spawn*, *Spider-Man*, *The Incredible Hulk*) and Erik Larsen (*Savage Dragon*, *Spider-Man*), as well as veteran *Spawn* artist Szymon Kudranski, this is one collection you don't want to miss!

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