



THE SANDMAN™

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FOR MATURE
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MASTER • of • DREAMS

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NEW FORMAT



GAIMAN • KIETH • DRINGENBERG





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DR. HATHAWAY!
WHAT AN UNEXPECTED
PLEASURE!

PLEASE TAKE
A SEAT.

COMPTON,
SOME TEA FOR
OUR GUEST.

SO. I TAKE IT
THAT YOU HAVE...
RECONSIDERED?

AFTER OUR
MEETING AT THE
MUSEUM... I--I
KNOW WHAT I
SAID, BUT...

MY SON, EDMUND.
I GOT A TELEGRAM
THIS MORNING. HIS
DESTROYER WAS
SUNK LAST WEEK.
OFF JUTLAND.

"HE'S DEAD."

I BROUGHT YOU
THE BOOK. I HAD TO. IF
WHAT YOU WERE TELLING
ME WAS TRUE... AND IT IS
TRUE, ISN'T IT?

ABOUT
DEATH?

QUITE TRUE,
DR. HATHAWAY.

THE MAGDALENE GRIMOIRE
WAS ALL THAT THE ORDER
NEEDED. WE CAN HOLD THE
CEREMONY AT THE NEXT
FULL MOON...

AND THEN... NO
ONE NEED EVER
DIE AGAIN.

JUNE 10th, 1916.

TORONTO, CANADA. ELLIE MARSTEN LISTENS TO HER BED TIME STORY.



...SAID TWEEDLEDUM, "WHEN YOU'RE ONLY ONE OF THE THINGS IN HIS DREAM.

"YOU KNOW VERY WELL YOU'RE NOT REAL."

SHE KNOWS IT IS ONLY MEANT TO ENTERTAIN HER.

IT TERRIFIES HER.

KINGSTON, JAMAICA. IN HIS FATHER'S INN DANIEL BLUSTAMONTE SLEEPS. THE SHOUTS AND SONGS OF DRUNKEN ADULTS DO NOT SHAKE HIS SLUMBER.



HE DREAMS OF A CASTLE IN THE AIR. ABOVE THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

A CASTLE MADE OF CLOUDS.

VERDUN, FRANCE. STEFAN WASSERMAN GOES OVER THE TOP AGAIN TONIGHT. AS SOON AS IT'S DARK. HE NEVER DREAMED IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS. NOBODY TOLD HIM.



HE LIED ABOUT HIS AGE TO ENLIST. HE'S ALMOST 14.

LONDON, ENGLAND. UNITY KINKAID TOGGES BETWEEN LINEN SHEETS. SHE DREAMS OF A TALL, DARK MAN. HIS EYES BURN LIKE TWIN STARS IN HER HEAD.



SHE MUTTERS AND WHIMPERS, LOST IN A WORLD BEYOND HER UNDERSTANDING, UNITY DREAMS.

WYCH CROSS, ENGLAND. RODERICK BURGESS'S WAKING DREAMS ARE OF THE POWER AND THE GLORY.



AND OF DEATH, OF COURSE.

ESPECIALLY DEATH.

IT'S MIDNIGHT.
IT'S TIME.



AFTER TONIGHT
I'D LIKE TO SEE ALEISTER
AND HIS FRIENDS TRY
TO MAKE FUN OF ME!

THEY WILL
MAKE NO MORE
JOKES, ALEX, WHEN
DEATH IS AT MY
COMMAND...

AND I HAVE THE
MAGDALENE GRIMOIRE.
POOR PROFESSOR
HATHAWAY... EVEN IF WE
FAIL TONIGHT, MY SON,
HATHAWAY GAVE
US THE BOOK.



HE'LL BE IN OUR
SWAY FOREVER. THE
ROYAL MUSEUM WILL BE
OURS TO PLUNDER.

TIME, AHH... NO
ONE HAS EVEN ATTEMPTED
WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE
TONIGHT, ALEX. TO
SUMMON AND IMPRISON
DEATH...

THIS WILL BE
A TRIUMPH FOR
THE ORDER. EH,
ALEX?

YES,
FATHER.

FATHER?



... MAGUS.



POOR
OLD FOOL...



EVERYTHING IS READY FOR THE CEREMONY, MAGUS.

GOOD.

TO YOUR PLACES, THEN.

LET US BEGIN.



FOR A MOMENT RODERICK BURGESS IS SCARED. HE THINKS OF THE EFFRONTERY OF HIS ACTION: TO CAPTURE DEATH... TO BIND THE REAPER...

FOR A MOMENT HE HESITATES. BUT ONLY FOR A MOMENT.



I GIVE YOU COIN I MADE FROM A STONE.

I GIVE YOU A SONG I STOLE FROM THE DIRT.



I GIVE YOU A KNIFE FROM UNDER THE HILLS. AND A STICK THAT I STUCK THROUGH A DEAD MAN'S EYE.



I GIVE YOU A CLAW I RIPPED FROM A RAT. I GIVE YOU A NAME, AND THE NAME IS LOST. I GIVE YOU THE BLOOD...



... FROM OUT OF MY VEIN, AND A FEATHER I PULLED FROM AN ANGEL'S WING.

THE WORDS OF THE SPELL
TOLL INSIDE HIS HEAD.
BURGESS REALIZES THAT
HE COULDN'T STOP NOW.
NOT EVEN IF HE WANTED
TO...

I CALL YOU
WITH NAMES,
OH MY LORD,
OH MY LORD.

I SUMMON
WITH POISON AND
SUMMON WITH PAIN.
I OPEN THE WAY
AND I OPEN THE
GATES.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

I SUMMON YOU IN THE NAMES
OF THE OLD LORDS.

NAMTAR. ALLATU.
MORAX. NABERILUS.
KLESH. VEPAR.
MAYMON.

WE SUMMON.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

COME.

ASHEMA-DEVA
CALLS YOU.

MABORYM
CALLS YOU.

HORVENDILE
CALLS YOU.

"FROM THE DARK THEY CALL YOU... INTO
THE DARK THEY CALL YOU."

COIN AND
SONG, KNIFE
AND STICK...

"CLAW AND NAME,
BLOOD AND FEATHER."

"HERE IN THE
DARKNESS..."

HERE IN THE
DARKNESS...

"WE SUMMON YOU,
TOGETHER."

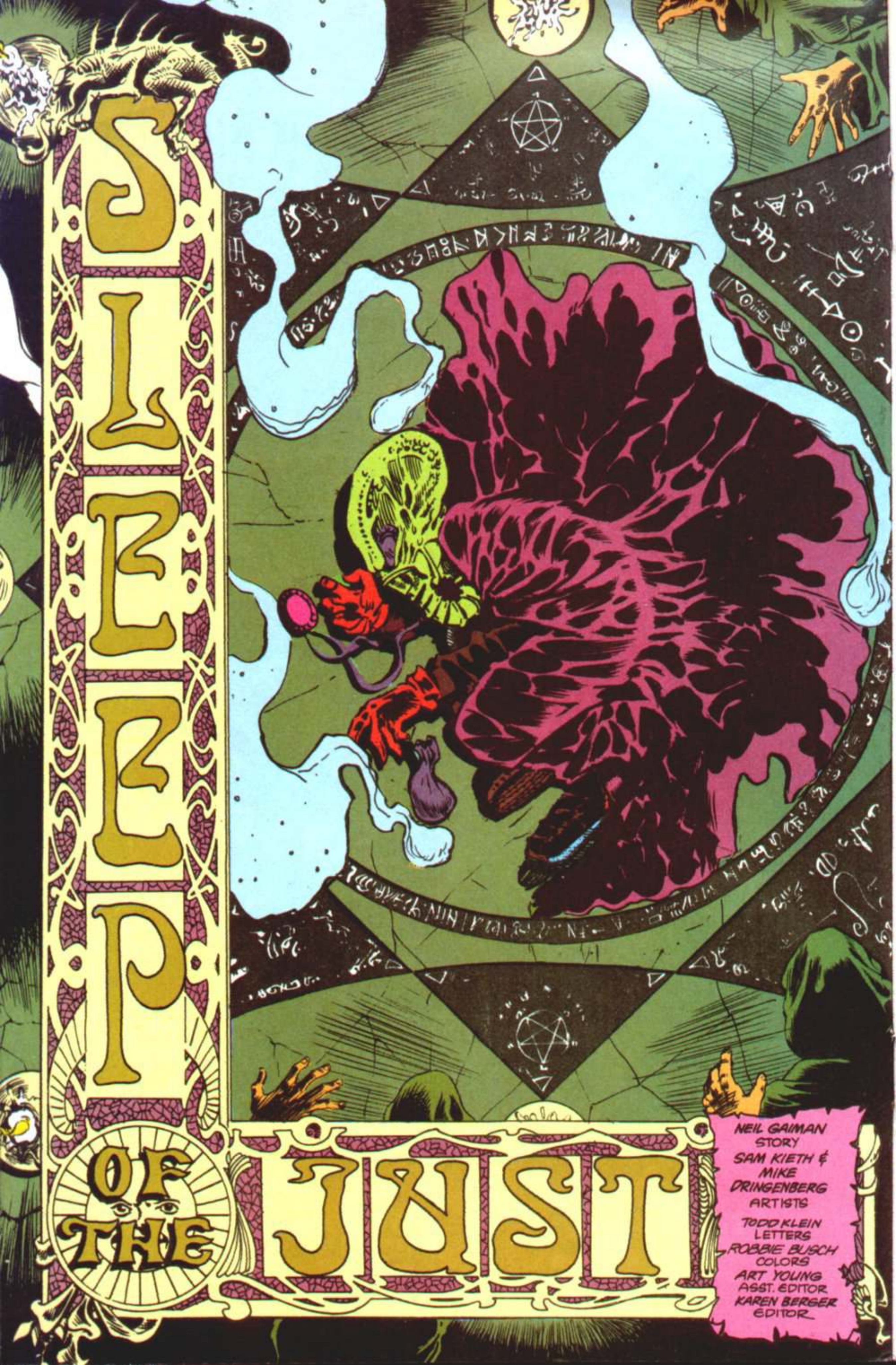
HERE IN THE
DARKNESS...

HERE IN THE
DARKNESS...

"COME!"

HERE IN THE
DARKNESS...





S

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L

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R

E

OF
THE

JUST

NEIL GAIMAN
STORY
SAM KIETH &
MIKE
DRINGENBERG
ARTISTS
TODD KLEIN
LETTERS
ROBBIE BUSCH
COLORS
ART YOUNG
ASST. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER
EDITOR



WE DID IT.
I DON'T BELIEVE
IT. WE DID IT.



NO. WE
FAILED.

THIS ISN'T DEATH.
DAMN IT TO HELL.



EVEN SO...



"...I THINK -- AT THE END OF THE
DAY -- THIS WILL HAVE BEEN A VERY
PROFITABLE EVENING'S WORK."



ELLIE. ELLIE!
DRAT THE GIRL!
CAN YOU BELIEVE
IT, ARTHUR?
SHE'S FALLEN
ASLEEP
AGAIN!



HER FATHER CARRIED
HER TO HER BED.



SHE NEVER
WOKE UP.



DANIEL BUSTAMONTE
RETURNS TO HIS
BEST DREAM.



BUT THIS TIME THE CLOUDS
ARE FLIMSY, FRAIL, LESS REAL...



AND THEN THE
CLOUDS AREN'T
THERE AT ALL.



TOO SCARED TO SLEEP,
HE SOBS TO KEEP HIMSELF
AWAKE UNTIL DAWN.

STEFAN'S CASE IS NEW TO THE DOCTORS. THEY THOUGHT THEY'D SEEN EVERY FORM OF SHELL-SHOCK.



HOW LONG CAN A BOY GO WITHOUT SLEEPING? WHEN DO THE NIGHTMARES SNEAK OUT INTO THE DAYLIGHT?



THE MORPHINE IS PROVING USELESS.

IT'S SAD.



STEFAN WASSERMAN WENT OVER THE TOP.

LINITY KINKAID FINDS IT HARDER AND HARDER TO STAY AWAKE.

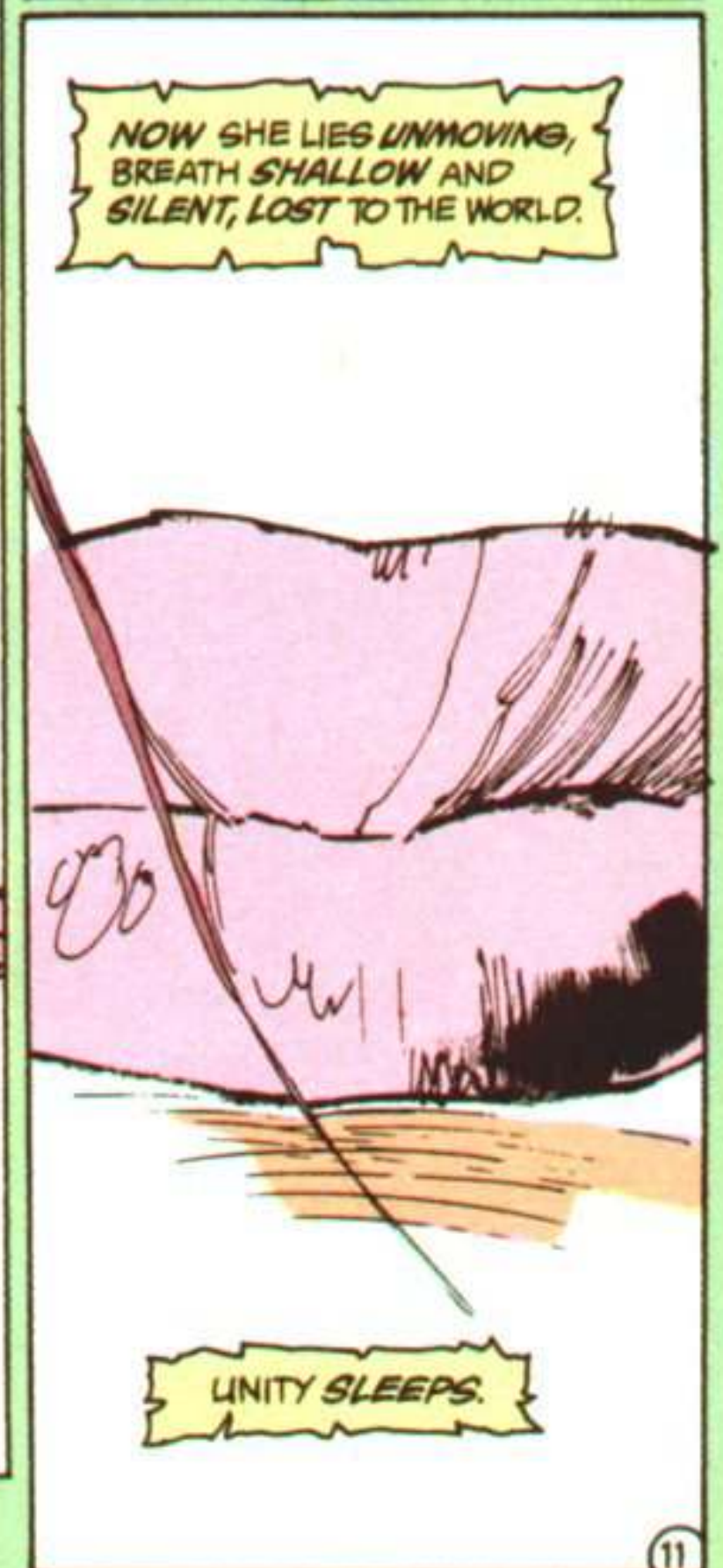


SHE NOW SLEEPS FOR ALMOST TWENTY HOURS A DAY.

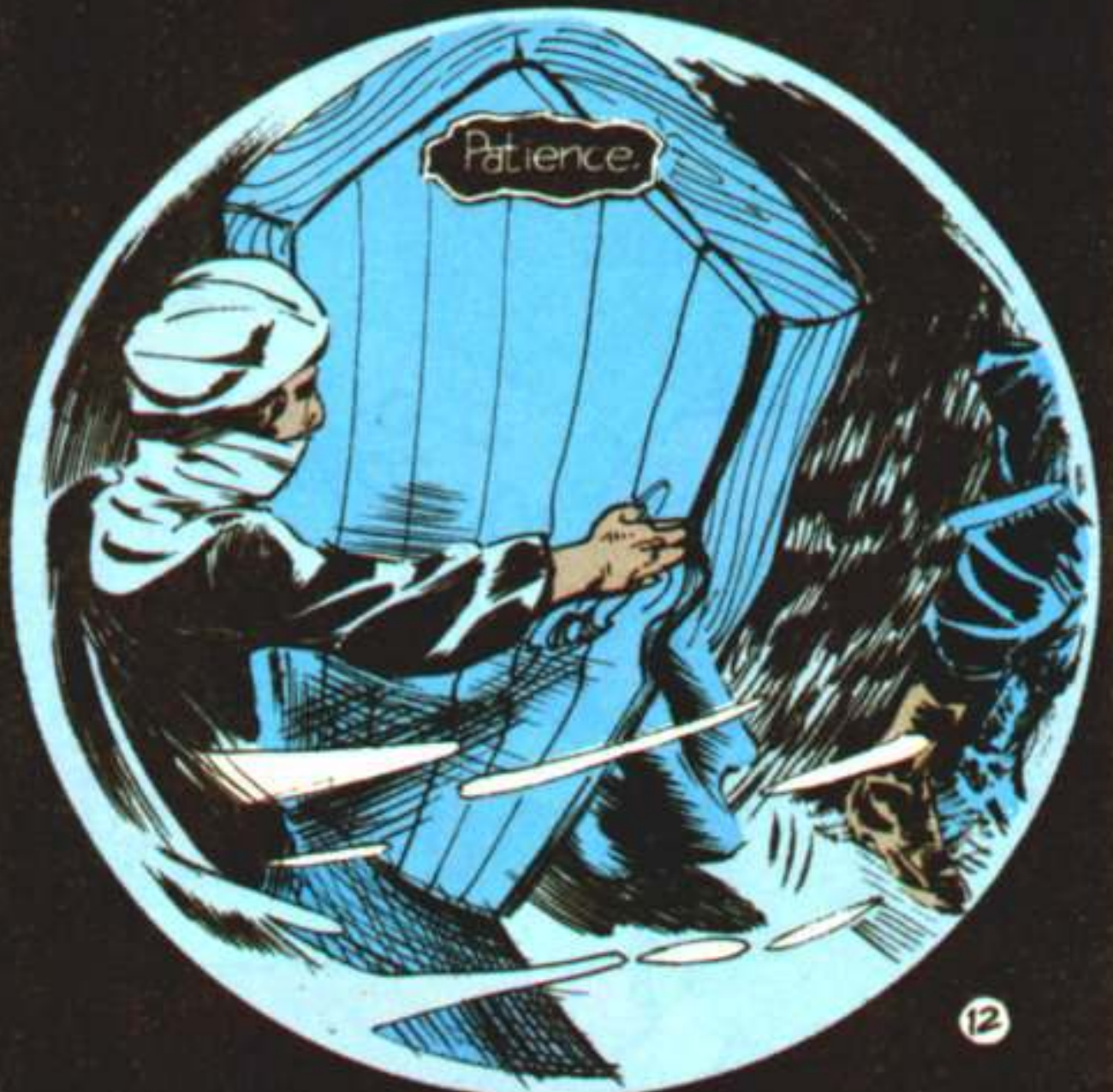


SHE USED TO DREAM; TO SHIFT IN HER SLEEP, MUTTERING AND SIGHING, LOCKED IN HALF-REMEMBERED FANTASIES...

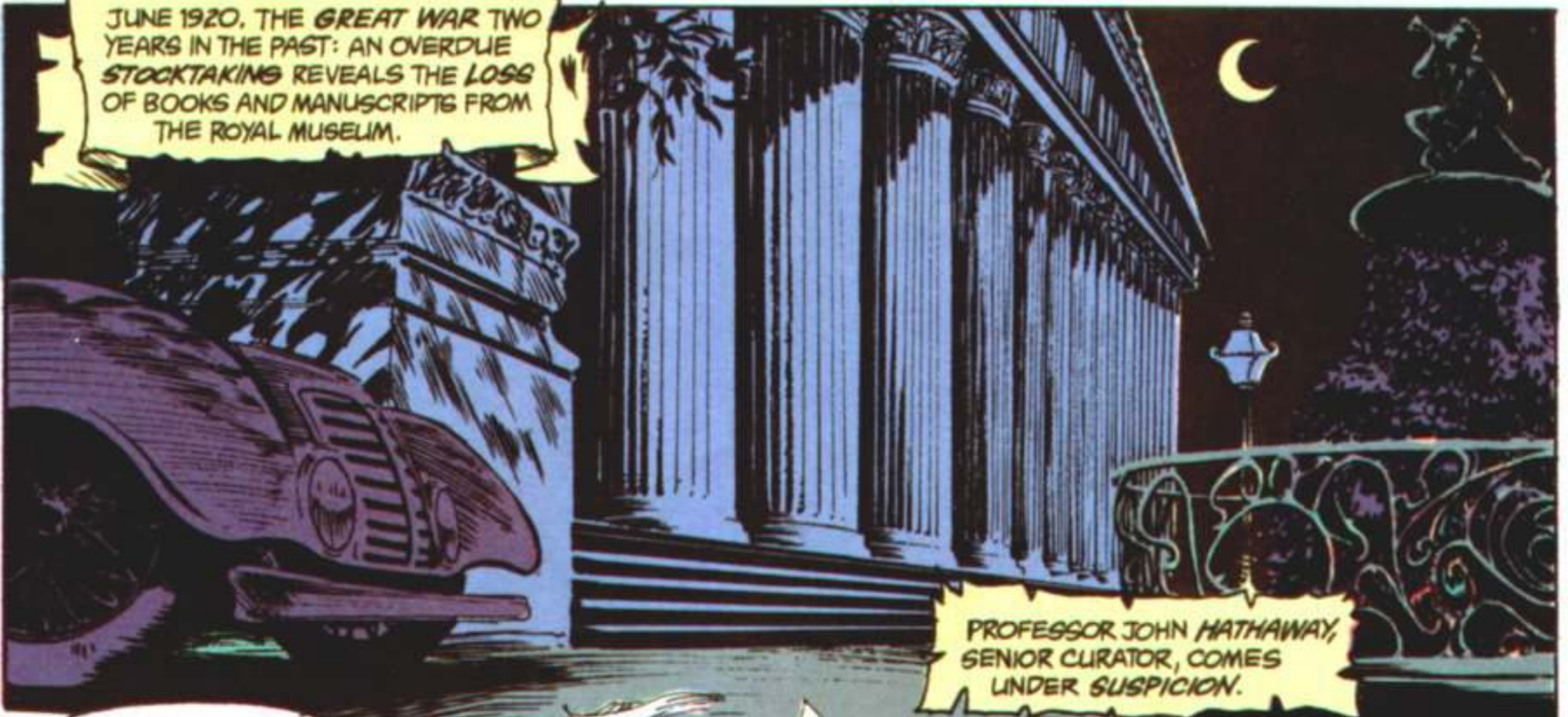
NOW SHE LIES UNMOVING, BREATH SHALLOW AND SILENT, LOST TO THE WORLD.



LINITY SLEEPS.



JUNE 1920, THE GREAT WAR TWO YEARS IN THE PAST: AN OVERDUE STOCKTAKING REVEALS THE LOSS OF BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE ROYAL MUSEUM.



PROFESSOR JOHN HATHAWAY, SENIOR CURATOR, COMES UNDER SUSPICION.

YOU'RE A BASTARD, RODERICK BURGESS. AND I WAS A FOOL.

I WAS A FOOL TO THINK YOU COULD REPLACE EDMUND. I WAS A FOOL TO HAVE GIVEN YOU THAT DAMNED BOOK.

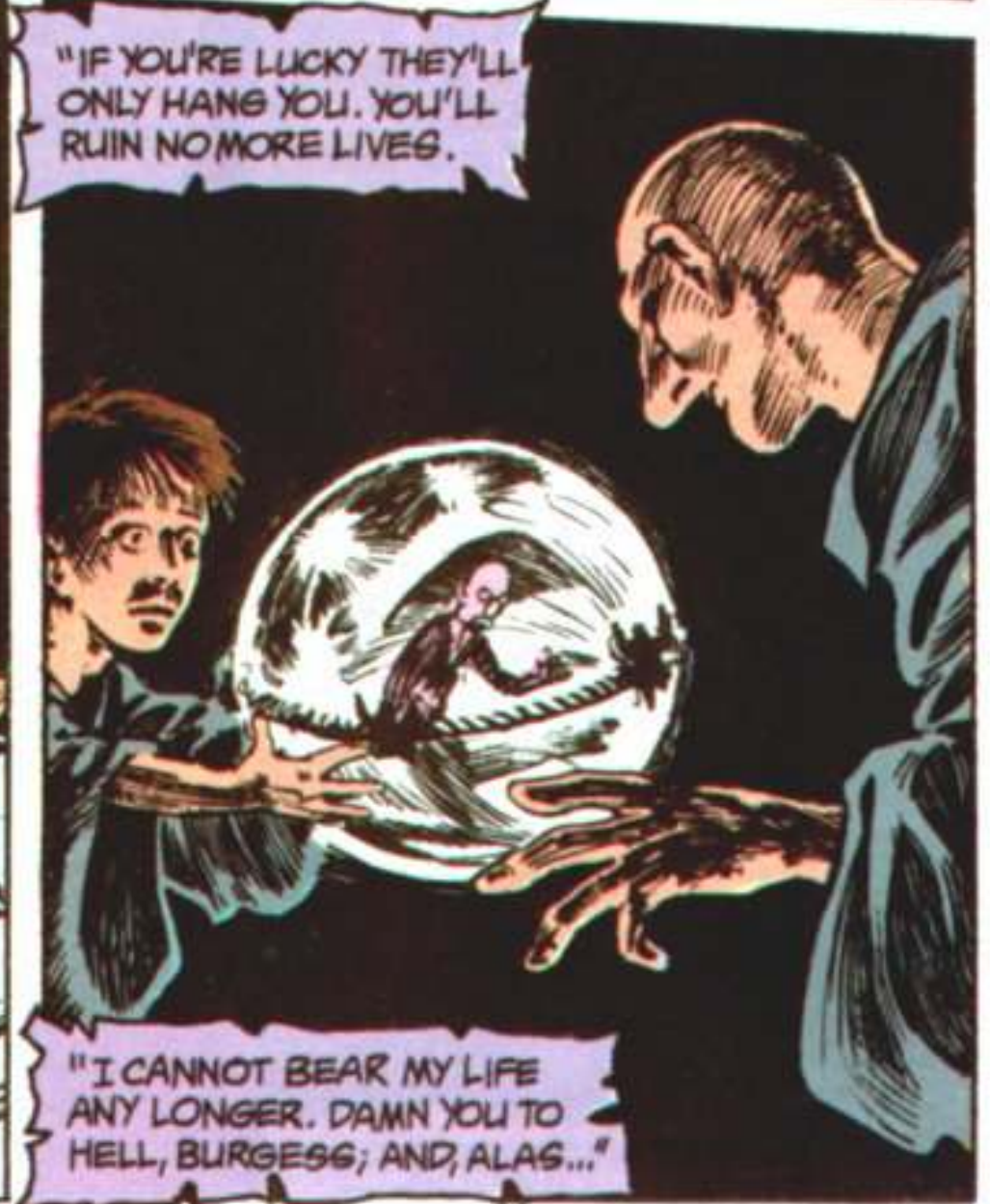


YOU'VE BLEED ME DRY. BUT YOU CAN'T BLACKMAIL ME ANY LONGER.

I'VE WRITTEN A SUICIDE NOTE. TO MY SHAME I KNOW TOO MUCH ABOUT YOU. IT'S ALL THERE--ALL I KNOW.



"IF YOU'RE LUCKY THEY'LL ONLY HANG YOU. YOU'LL RUIN NO MORE LIVES."



"I CANNOT BEAR MY LIFE ANY LONGER. DAMN YOU TO HELL, BURGESS; AND, ALAS..."

"...I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL MEET ME THERE."



CONFESSION
I, John Hathaway,
Wishing to die peacefully,
here state that the true
of my in

FOOL.



PROFESSOR HATHAWAY'S USE OF A MUSEUM ARTIFACT IN HIS SUICIDE CONFIRMED SPECULATION THAT HE WAS MENTALLY UNBALANCED.

NO SUICIDE NOTE WAS FOUND.

CURATOR'S MYSTERY SUICIDE POLICE BAFBLED



AT THE INQUEST, ACCUSATIONS WERE MADE LINKING HATHAWAY TO RODERICK BURGESS -- "THE LORD MAGUS" -- AND HIS ORDER OF ANCIENT MYSTERIES.

NOTHING COULD BE PROVEN.

THE SELF-STYLED "DAEMON KING" REFUSED TO COMMENT.



E DAILY MAIL

SCANDAL ROCKS OCCULT COMMUNITY "DAEMON KING" CLEARED DUE TO LACK OF EVIDENCE

The figure who was alleged to be at the centre of the scandal involving the bizarre suicide of museum curator John Hathaway is Roderick Burgess, born Morris Burgess Brocklesby in Preston, Lancashire in 1872. During the turn of the century, Mr. Burgess used his considerable inherited industrial wealth to set up his mystical organisation, The Order of Ancient Mysteries, based in "Fawney Rig," a Sussex Manor House.

In 1916 Mr. Burgess announced widely in occult circles that he would raise and imprison Death, proving himself as the greatest magician of his day. Whatever the truth of what occurred in Wych Cross in 1916—and it is doubtful anyone will ever know for sure—one thing is certain: it was a significant turning point for Burgess and his Order of Ancient Mysteries. Mr. Burgess' efforts to win himself a reputation in the early years of the century were scorned by the "serious"



TRAGEDIES OF SLEEPY SICKNESS. WARPED MINDS AND BROKEN BODIES.

Since The Daily Mail published the letter from Mr. E. W. Hore, of Manchester concerning the death of his daughter, who was a victim of the "sleepy sickness"

THE "SLEEPY SICKNESS", AS IT WAS CALLED, CONTINUED TO SPREAD. PEOPLE FELL ASLEEP, AND DID NOT WAKE UP...

THEY LIVED THEIR LIVES LIKE SLEEPWALKERS; EATING IF FED, SOMETIMES TALKING NONSENSE, DREAM-STUFF...



PSYCHIC RESIDUE FROM THE WORLD WAR, SOME SUGGESTED. OTHERS, DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS, MORE SENSIBLY ATTRIBUTED IT TO A VIRUS.

UNABLE TO SLEEP, STEFAN WASSERMAN KILLED HIMSELF A YEAR AFTER HIS DISCHARGE FROM THE ARMY.



HE WAS SIXTEEN.

AUGUST,
1926.

BUGGER AND
BLAST HIM!

I KNOW HE
UNDERSTANDS ME!

TEN YEARS
IN THAT GOLDFISH
BOWL AND HE HASN'T
SAID A WORD!

HE
HATES
US!

UH, FATHER, MAGUS. I'VE
FOUND SOMETHING THAT MAY
CAST SOME LIGHT ON OUR
GUEST. IN THE PAGINARUM
FULVARUM...

HERE, LOOK AT
THIS PICTURE...

WHY DO YOU THINK I ORDERED
THAT NONE OF THE GUARDS
WERE TO SLEEP?

HE HAD TO BE
ONE OF THE
ENDLESS... SO
WHICH ONE?

NOT DEATH. WE
KNEW THAT. DESTINY,
THEN? DESIRE?

JUST STARES
AT ME WITH THOSE
CREEPY EYES
OF HIS!

HMM. YES,
INDEED.



Here is
said the
Kings of
Dreams

DREAM WAS THE ONLY
ONE THAT FITTED THE BILL.
I WAS HOPING YOU'D WORK
IT OUT ON YOUR OWN ONE
DAY, THOUGH. AND YOU
HAVE.

WELL DONE,
ALEX.

I KNOW THAT THE ORDER
WILL BE SAFE IN YOUR HANDS.
IF EVER I FORSAKE THE
MATERIAL PLANE, HEHHH.
EH, MISTER SYKES?

INDUBITABLY,
MAGUS.

NOVEMBER, 1930.

A SCHISM BRINGS CHAOS TO THE ORDER.



RUTHVEN GYKES, SECOND-IN-COMMAND OF THE ORDER OF ANCIENT MYSTERIES, DISAPPEARS...

...IN COMPANY WITH ETHEL CRIPPS, THE MAGUSS'S MISTRESS



THEY TAKE WITH THEM MANY OF THE ORDER'S TREASURES, AND OVER £200,000 IN CASH.

MAGICAL WAR IS DECLARED.



SAN FRANCISCO. DECEMBER, 1930.

I BEG PROTECTION, LORD.

PROTECTIONSS COMES DEAR, MORTAL. THE THINGSZ YOU OFFERSS ISSS PALTRY TRIFLESS...

HAVE YOU NOSZSING ELSSSSE...?



PERHAPS THIS HELMET SIRE?

AAAH. YESSSSSSSS. FOR THISSS I WOULD GIVE YOU WHAT YOU ASKS... SSSZO SSPLENDID...



THISSS AMULET WILL MAKES SAFE FROM ANYSSZINGGGSS...



WYCH CROSS, ENGLAND.

PURRRRRRR

AS THIS BLOOD IS SHED, SO SPILLS YOUR BLOOD, RUTHVEN SYKES, ADEPT OF THE 33RD, WHOSE SECRET NAME IS ARARITA...

TRAITOR AND OATH-BREAKER.



THE RITUAL PROVED USELESS AGAIN, HE HAS PROTECTION, VERMINOUS OAF!

WHAT ABOUT OUR, UH, PRISONER?

COULDN'T WE MAKE HIM DO SOMETHING TO SYKES?



WE CAN'T MAKE HIM "DO" ANYTHING, ALEX. ALL WE CAN DO IS KEEP HIM THERE, AND HOPE.

WE COULD TRY TO RAISE DEATH AGAIN ...?

CRETIN.



"WE CAN GET SYKES IF WE JUST KEEP TRYING."

IN 1936 SHE WALKED OUT ON HIM. SHE TOOK THE DEMON'S GIFT WITH HER...


YES!

NO.

OH GOD, NO.


...WHEN HE STILL POSSESSED IT, IT WAS WORTH EVERYTHING.

...WHILE HE OWNED THE AMULET, IT KEPT HIM SAFE...




JULY 1939. ELLIE MARSTEN IS IN A CHARITY WARD. SHE'S STILL ASLEEP. SHE HAS WOKEN TWICE IN THE LAST DECADE...

EACH TIME SHE CRIED FOR HER MOTHER. SHE STILL THINKS SHE IS EIGHT.



DANIEL BUSTAMONTE WAS ONE OF THE LAST PEOPLE TO SUCCEMB TO SLEEPY SICKNESS, END OF 1926. HE'S NOW BEEN ASLEEP FOR THIRTEEN YEARS.


HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN MISS HIM.



UNITY KINKAID WAS RAPED, SEVEN YEARS AGO. SHE GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY GIRL.

THE SCANDAL WAS HUSHED UP.


THE BABY WAS ADOPTED. UNITY NEVER KNEW. SHE'D SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE THING.



THE UNIVERSE KNOWS SOMEONE IS MISSING, AND SLOWLY IT ATTEMPTS TO REPLACE HIM.

THE UNIVERSE KNOWS SOMEONE IS MISSING, AND SLOWLY IT ATTEMPTS TO REPLACE HIM.

WESLEY DODDS'S NIGHTMARES HAVE STOPPED SINCE HE STARTED GOING OUT AT NIGHT.



HE PUTS EVIL PEOPLE TO SLEEP WITH GAS, THEN SPRINKLES SAND ON THEM, LEAVES THEM FOR THE POLICE TO FIND IN THE MORNING...

THE IDEA CAME TO HIM IN HIS SLEEP.



HE DOESN'T DREAM ABOUT THE MAN IN THE STRANGE HELMET ANYMORE. NO MORE BURNING EYES.

EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT.

WESLEY DODDS SLEEPS THE SLEEP OF THE JUST.



FATHER, DO YOU THINK THIS IS WISE? AT YOUR AGE?

MY AGE? Khoff! DON'T BE SO BLOODY INSOLENT! OPEN THE DAMN DOOR!



YOU! IT'S YOUR FAULT! YOU!

DAMN YOU!



YOU AREN'T DEATH. BUT YOU LIVE FOREVER. YOU HAVEN'T AGED A DAY SINCE WE CAUGHT YOU.

YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN ME POWER BEYOND MY WILDEST DREAMS.



SNF.

I-ahhah-I DIDN'T HAVE TO GET SO OLD.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO GET OLD.

UKT



Watch my captor grow old and die. No satisfaction. Still here.



Waiting.

1955.



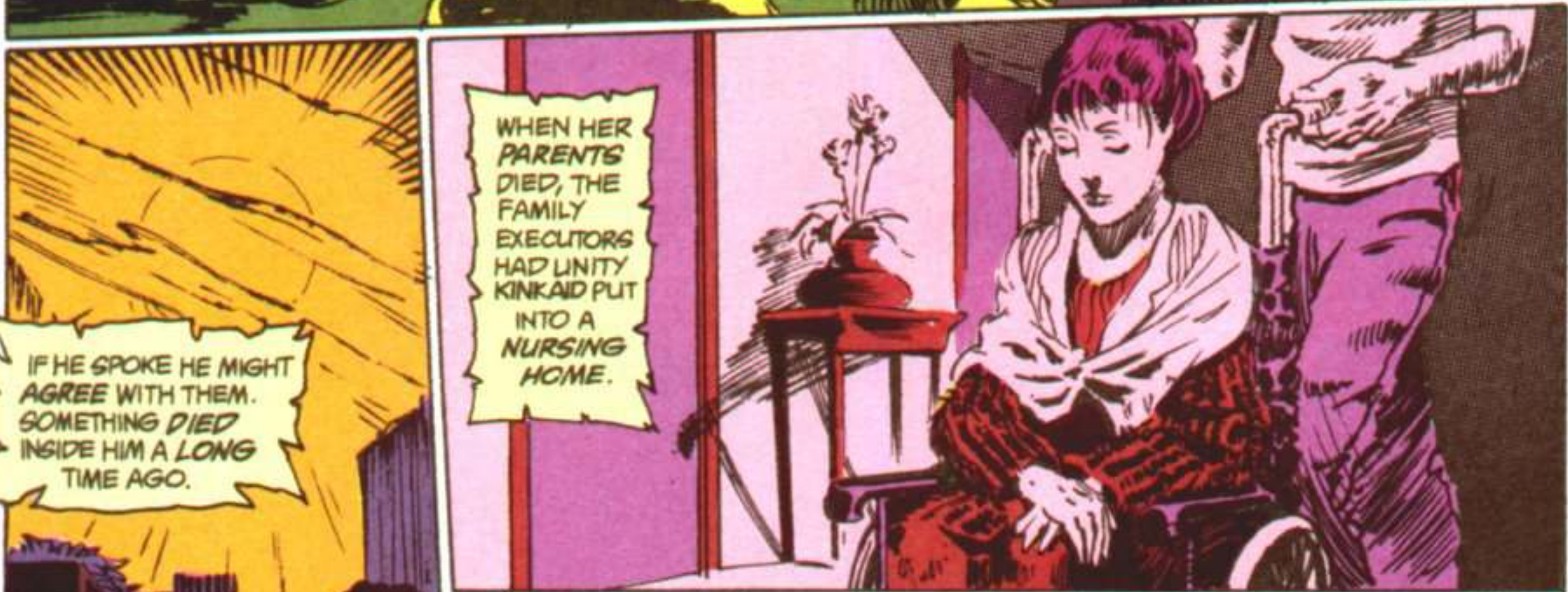
ELLIE MARSTEN IS DIAGNOSED AS SUFFERING FROM ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA. SHE NOW WAKES FOUR OR FIVE TIMES A YEAR...



DANIEL BUSTAMONTE IS AWAKE MUCH OF THE TIME. HE DOESN'T SPEAK, THOUGH.

SHE WANTS SOMEONE TO READ HER A STORY.

THE SUPERSTITIOUS SAY HE IS ZOMBIE, A WALKING DEAD MAN.



WHEN HER PARENTS DIED, THE FAMILY EXECUTORS HAD UNITY KINKAID PUT INTO A NURSING HOME.

IF HE SPOKE HE MIGHT AGREE WITH THEM. SOMETHING DIED INSIDE HIM A LONG TIME AGO.



THEY HAVE TO EXPLAIN WHERE SHE IS TO HER EVERY TIME SHE WAKES. SHE NEVER REMEMBERS...

AROUND HER THE ELDERLY WAIT FOR DEATH, AS THEY'D WAIT FOR AN OLD FRIEND.

A CASTLE MADE OF CLOUDS.

KILLING TIME.



"ALEX, DARLING, I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU KEEP HIM DOWN THERE..."

"WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?"




BUT WHAT IF THE POLICE FOUND OUT? IT'S KIDNAPPING!


DON'T BE FOOLISH, PAUL. I'VE TOLD YOU...

HE'S BEEN DOWN THERE FOR FORTY YEARS, WITHOUT EATING, WITHOUT... SLEEPING.

I DON'T THINK HE CAN EVEN BREATHE IN THAT GLASS CAGE.



HE'S A BEING OF LINKNOWABLE POWER. SO WHAT DO I DO?



SAY, "SORRY--IT WAS ALL FATHER'S FAULT. LOOK ME UP THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE INCARCERATED ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE"?




IF YOU SAY SO. YOU'VE BEEN AROUND A LOT LONGER THAN I HAVE. FANCY A GAME OF TENNIS?

THE ORDER ISN'T JUST A WAY TO MAKE MONEY AND GET LAID, PAUL. SOME OF IT'S FOR REAL.

I'VE SEEN STUFF YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE. THINGS THAT STILL SCARE ME. NIGHTMARE THINGS.

WE'RE SAFER JUST LEAVING HIM DOWN THERE. I'LL BE DEAD LONG BEFORE HE EVER GETS OUT. IT'LL BE SOMEBODY ELSE'S PROBLEM.



"NOT NOW. SORRY. I'M TOO TIRED."



HELLO.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE IN THERE, YOU KNOW. THE DEAL'S STILL THE SAME ONE THAT MY FATHER OFFERED YOU.

POWER. IMMORTALITY. A PROMISE THAT YOU WON'T SEEK REVENGE.

WELL? I KNOW YOU CAN UNDERSTAND ME! SAY SOMETHING!



No.

1968. THEY COME TO HIM SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT. ALEXANDER BURGESS TELLS THEM OF KLINDALINI YOGA, TANTRIC SEX, ASTRAL TRAVEL, ...

NOTHING IMPORTANT.

HE FORBIDS THEM TO USE PSYCHEDELICS IN THE HOUSE, WORRIED THAT THE WAKING DREAMS COULD SOMEHOW EMPOWER HIS PRISONER.

MOVED TO A HOSPITAL SPECIALIZING IN ENCEPHALITIS CASES, ELLIE CONTINUES TO SLEEP. THERE ARE MANY THERE LIKE HER. PEOPLE FOR WHOM THE SANDS OF TIME STOPPED FLOWING, SOMETIME HALF A CENTURY EARLIER.

DANIEL SLEEPWALKS UNSPEAKING THROUGH HIS WORLD.

HE WON'T LET THEM CALL HIM "MAGUS" TO HIS FACE IT'S ALEX. ALWAYS ALEX.

HE MOVES SLOWLY, LIKE A MAN WADING THROUGH QUICKSAND.

THE NURSING HOME STAFF PRETEND THAT UNITY IS AWAKE. THEY WHEEL HER FROM ROOM TO ROOM WITH THE OTHER PATIENTS.

ASLEEP, SHE WATCHES TELEVISION.

ASLEEP, SHE RELAXES IN THE SUN.

THERE ARE TWO GUARDS IN HIS ROOM AT ALL TIMES. COFFEE AND AMPHETAMINES ARE FREELY AVAILABLE. THE GUARDS NEVER SLEEP ON DUTY.



1970.



THE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE DRIFTED AWAY.

ALEX HANDS OVER THE REINS OF ORGANIZATION TO PAUL MCGUIRE, HIS LONGTIME PERSONAL ASSISTANT.



PAUL DOESN'T BELIEVE IN MAGIC.



HE SEES THE ORDER OF ANCIENT MYSTERIES AS AN EFFICIENT METHOD OF PARTING THE CREDULOUS FROM THEIR CASH.



ALEX SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME IN HIS STUDY. HE WROTE A MEMOIR ABOUT HIS FATHER; WRITES LETTERS TO NEWSPAPERS DEFENDING HIS FATHER'S REPUTATION; IS EDITING A VOLUME OF HIS FATHER'S LETTERS.



ONE NIGHT HE SLASHED HIS FATHER'S PORTRAIT WITH A KNIFE.



ALEX WILL NO LONGER READ BOOKS ON MAGIC. EXCEPT FOR ONE. THE LIBER FULVARUM PAGINARUM. AND HE ONLY READS ONE PAGE OF THAT BOOK...



OVER...

AND OVER...

1972.



WHY WON'T YOU TALK TO ME? YOU COULD TELL US SO MUCH. SO MANY THINGS...

1978.



I HAVEN'T HAD A DECENT NIGHT'S SLEEP FOR SIXTY YEARS. IS THAT YOUR FAULT? IS IT?

1982.



I COULD... UH... TORTURE YOU, YOU KNOW. I COULD. DON'T THINK THAT I COULDN'T...

I'VE KILLED PEOPLE BEFORE NOW...

1988.



I HATE YOU. I'M GLAD WE TRAPPED YOU.

YOU'RE... NOTHING SPECIAL. YOU KNOW THAT?

YOU'RE NOTHING AT ALL.



A NAKED MAN IN A GLASS BOX. THAT'S ALL YOU ARE.

YOU'RE NOTHING AT ALL.

Soon.



I DUNNO. I ONCE MET
THIS *BLONDE* BUYING A
CHOC ICE ...

HE'S THINKING ABOUT
HIS *HOLIDAY*...

AND THEN THE SPANISH
BEACH BECOMES A
TROPICAL PARADISE...

It begins.

ERNIE SEES ANY
CONVERSATION AS AN
INVITATION TO *CONCOCT*
TALES ABOUT HIS SEXUAL
PROWESS. FREDERICK
NO LONGER LISTENS.

STRAIGHT OUT OF A
HOLIDAY *BROCHURE*.

SUN... SEA...

...SAND...

...AND SURF...
AND...
...AND...

THUD

--UH! CHRIST!
WHAT WAS THAT?



LOOK AT HIM.

YOU DON'T THINK HE'S DEAD?



I DUNNO WHAT TO THINK. WHAT THE HELL DO WE DO NOW?

THEY WON'T THINK IT'S OUR FAULT, WILL THEY? WE DIDN'T DO NOTHING!



WAIT HERE--I'LL GET MCGUIRE!

DEAD. I BET HE'S DEAD.



HOW LONG'S HE BEEN LIKE THIS?

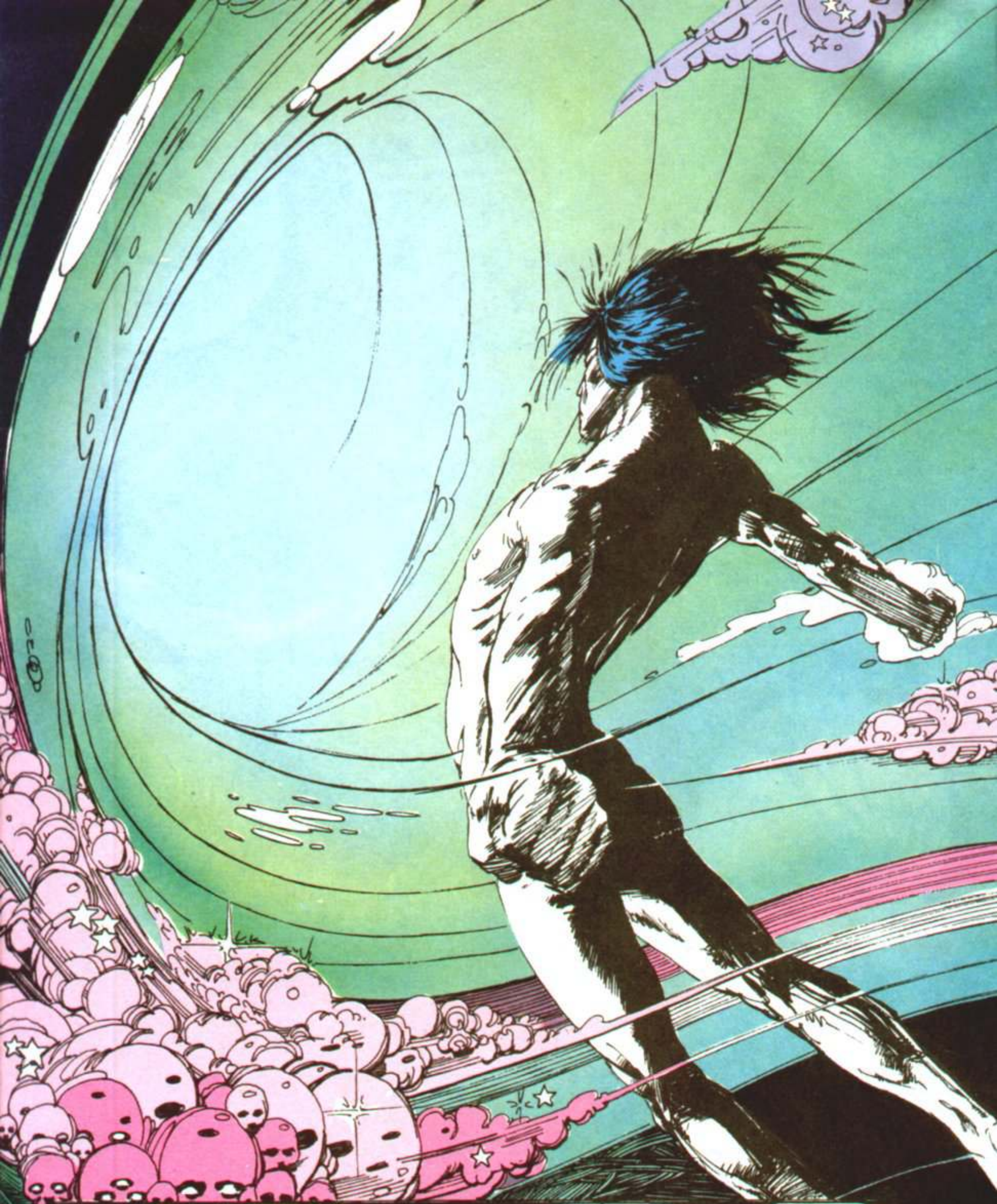


LINH. I SUPPOSE... I SUPPOSE WE OUGHT TO TAKE A LOOK AT HIM.

HE'S NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE...

HELL...





UHN... URRHH...
WHAT HAPPENED?

WHERE DID
HE GO?



Home.

It feels so good to be back...

Weakened, I clutch a passing dream...
First, food...

I left a monarch
Yet I return
naked, alone...

Hungry.

IN MORT NOTKIN'S RECURRING DREAM, HE GOES TO THIS SWELL PARTY, BUT HE'S DRESSED AS A CLOWN...

HE THOUGHT IT WAS A COSTUME PARTY.

HE DIDN'T KNOW.

EVERYONE LAUGHS AT HIM: MARILYN, ELVIS, EVEN THE DUKE...

WEIRD! THAT'S THE FIRST TIME A NAKED MAN HAS EVER TURNED UP TO RAID THE BLUFFET.

My first FOOD in seventy years... I'm so hungry I don't even TASTE it.

First, food;

then clothing...

DREAMS. GO FIGURE THEM.

THEN RON AND NANCY TURN UP, AND MORT'S BACK ON FAMILIAR GROUND.



I am weak, lacking my tools. Still...



I imagine the texture of fabric against my skin; sculpt it from dream-space...

It has been so long.



There.

That's two of three.

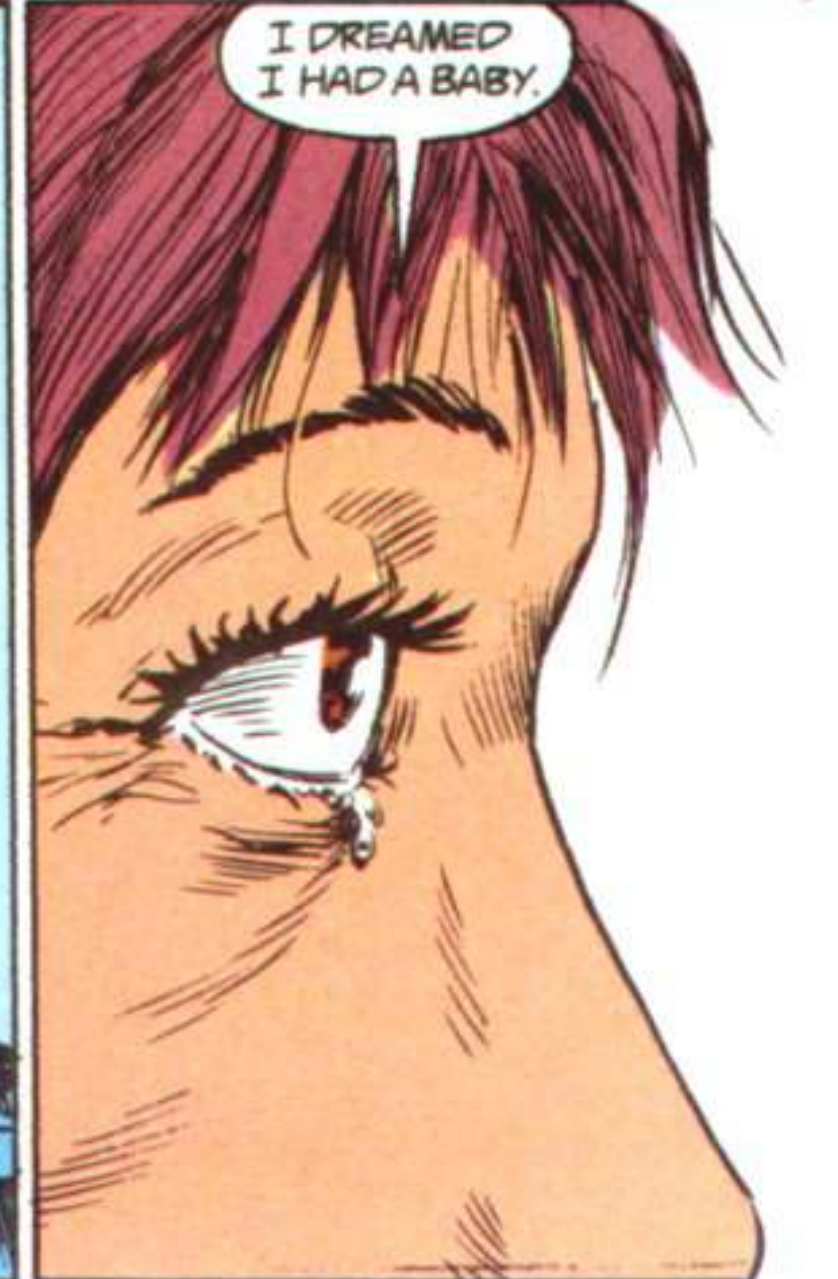


I have food and raiment. I need the tools stolen from me by my former captor. He will give them to me.



And he will give me the other thing I crave...

REVENGE.









YOU. IT'S YOU.

That's right. It's ME.



I'M, GOD, I'M SORRY, IT, IT WASN'T ME, MY FATHER, HE DID IT, I, I NEVER KNEW, I WOULDN'T HAVE, I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T--



Shusshhh... Enough.



There are offenses that are UNPARDONABLE.

Can YOU have any idea what it was LIKE? Can you have ANY IDEA?



CONFINED in a glass box for three score years and ten. A human LIFETIME

TIME moves no FASTER for my kind than it does for humanity, and in PRISON it CRAWLED at a snail's pace...

I was... I am... the LORD of this REALM of DREAM and NIGHTMARE.



YOU--your FATHER--PIPED me DOWN with his PETTY hedge-magicking, his twopenny spell...

ME. You did THAT to ME.



You barred me from my realm with your foolish circle...

You threatened, cajoled and pleaded for gifts are neither mankind's to receive nor mine to give.

You had no thought for the harm you must have brought to your world...

Lord, what fools these mortals be.

WHAT? You wanted DEATH? Then count yourself lucky for the sake of your species and your petty planet that you did NOT succeed...

WELL? Have you no EXCUSE? No EXPLANATION? Some reason I should not take REPRISAL?

WE DIDN'T WANT YOU. IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE. WE WEREN'T TRYING TO CAPTURE YOU.

WE WANTED TO CAPTURE DEATH.

...that instead you snared Death's younger BROTHER...

You'll never know how LUCKY you were

Where are my TOOLS?

...SORRY?

A POUCH, a HELM, a RUBY. Your people STOLE them from me. Where ARE they?

I DON'T KNOW... THAT WAS PART OF THE STUFF SYKES PINCHED, FIFTY YEARS AGO. WE NEVER SAW ANY OF IT AGAIN...

I SEE

So. Your PUNISHMENT, then. I will grant you a GIFT...

To reward you for your years of HOSPITALITY

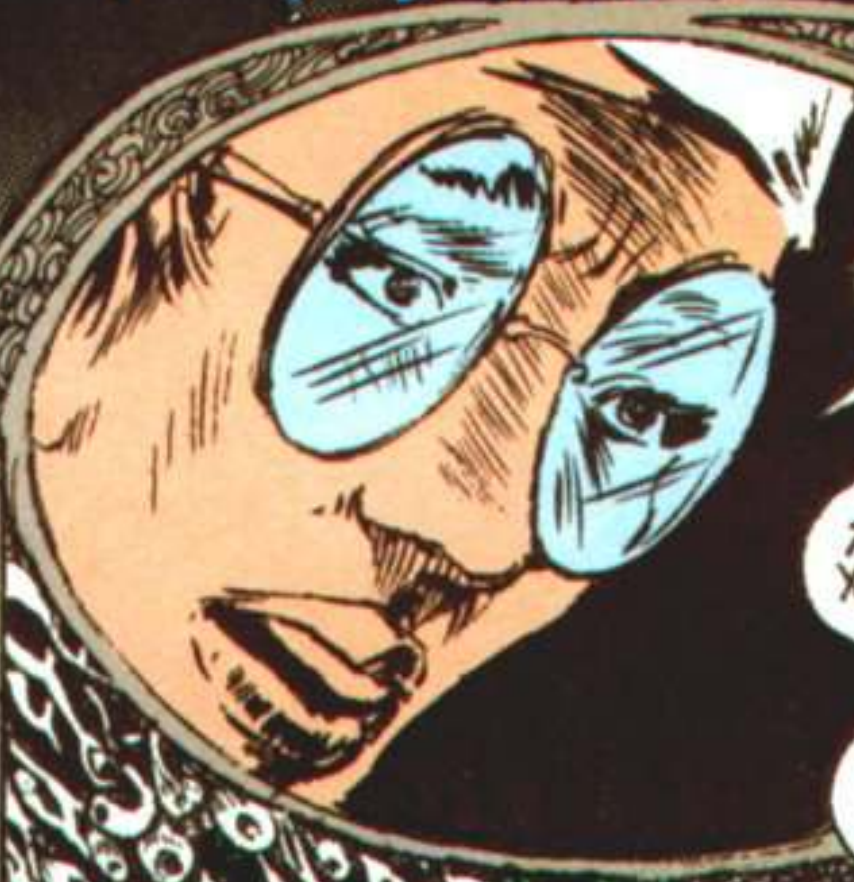
I give you this...

ETERNAL WAKING





KEEP AWAY FROM ME!



NOW, THEN, MISTER BURGESS, CALM DOWN. YOU'VE HAD A BAD DREAM, THAT'S ALL. NO POINT GETTING ALL WORKED UP ABOUT IT.

GOD. OH GOD. IT WAS TERRIFYING. SO REAL. HA-HAVE YOU EVER HAD ONE OF THOSE DREAMS, YOU KNOW...

...WHERE YOU THINK YOU'VE WOKEN UP, BUT YOU HAVEN'T? IT'S JUST PART OF THE NIGHTMARE AND YOU'RE STILL IN IT...

I CAN'T SAY I HAVE, DEAR. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?



BTHUMP!



... I THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE HAVING QUITE A LOT OF THEM FROM NOW ON.

HAWAHA-HA-HA...



It was more tiring than I had expected, But he will never return to the life he knew.

His is the nightmare everlasting...

Eternal Waking...



HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN LIKE THIS?



HE'S ONLY BEEN ASLEEP A FEW MINUTES, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU MEAN. FUNNY--HE'S NORMALLY SUCH A LIGHT SLEEPER.



SNUR. NO. NO...NO... PLEASE. URF. SHUT. JM.

And I have showed him fear...

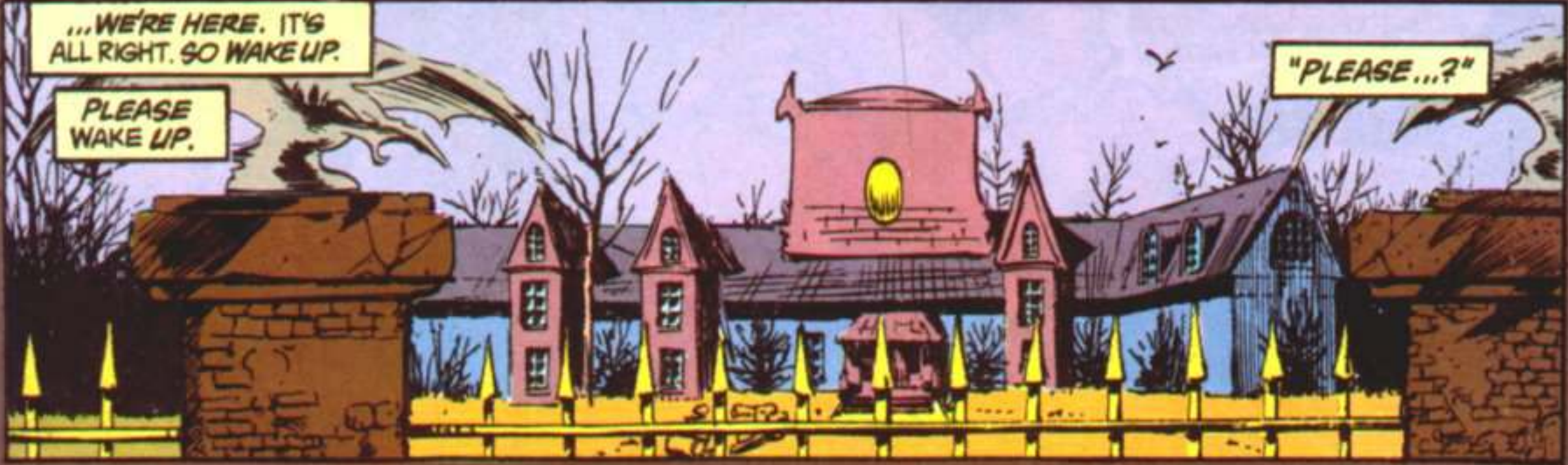
ALEX? ALEX, IT'S ME. PAUL. COME ON, ALEX. COME ON, OLD FELLOW.

ME AND NURSE EDMUNDS...

...WE'RE HERE. IT'S ALL RIGHT. SO WAKE UP.

PLEASE WAKE UP.

"PLEASE...?"



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OBI

DON'T BE A MORONIC LUMP OF BLURRING, QUAKING, PATHETIC LARD! OPEN THE BOX! UNWRAP IT!

UH, B-BUT IT ISN'T MY BIRTHDAY...

OF COURSE IT ISN'T YOUR BIRTHDAY, POWDERBRAIN! YOU DON'T HAVE A BIRTHDAY!

UHM, NO, I, UH... DON'T, DO I?

NOW, WHY WOULD I GIVE YOU AN EXPLODING PRESENT?

WHAT KIND OF A BROTHER WOULD I BE IF I DID THAT?

MY KIND OF B-BROTHER.

THE, UH, THE KIND WHO KILLS ME WHENEVER HE'S, UH... MAD AT ME, OR BORED, OR JUST IN A LOUSY M-MOOD.

HEHH. LET'S LET FRATERNAL BYGONES BE BYGONES, EH, PUDGY? NOW...

...JUST OPEN YOUR BLASTED PRESENT!

YOU, UH, P-PROMISE IT ISN'T GOING TO, HMMM, EXPLODE? PROMISE?

WHAT WAS THAT?

BDUNK THOK! THOK!

I, UH, I THINK IT'S SOMEONE AT THE DOOR. WELL, SOMETHING AT THE DOOR, ANYWAY...



D-DON'T YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO, E-UH, HMMM, WAIT FOR A WHILE? I-UH-I, MM, WELL...

I MEAN... MAYBE IT'LL GO AWAY ON IT'S OWN...?

WHO'S THERE? WHO IS IT?



AAWURCK!



IT'S GREGORY.

M-MAYBE IT'S RUH-REALLY SOMETHING-ABSTRACTING TO BE GREGORY... SOMETHING BIG AND NUH-NASTY!

DON'T BE PATHETIC.

WHY WOULD SOMETHING BIG AND NASTY "PRETEND" TO BE GREGORY?

BUT JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, YOU CAN OPEN THE DOOR.

NOW COME TO THINK
OF IT, GREGORY IS
EXTRAORDINARILY BIG AND
NASTY IN HIS OWN RIGHT,
ANYWAY.

IT IS
GREGORY, ISN'T
IT?

SPIT IT OUT,
GULLY-GUTS!
WHAT IS IT?

IT'S HIM,
BROTHER.

HE'S BACK...

YES, B-BUT
AWUH UH I-PUH
I-UH AWUH
UR...

...THE P-PRINCE
OF STORIES.

AURGK!

...help me...

...please...

IMPERFECT HOSTS


NEIL GAIMAN: WRITER
SAM KIETH & MIKE DRINGENBERG: ARTISTS
TODD KLEIN: LETTERER
ROBBIE BUSCH: COLORIST
ART YOUNG: ASST. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER: EDITOR



REMEMBERING



It was a DARK
and STORMY
NIGHTMARE...




Before my IMPRISONMENT,
I knew, the journey would
have meant NOTHING to me.


I would NOT
even have
NEEDED to
TRAVEL.



BUT WEAKENED and
EXHAUSTED, I
tumbled through
the FRINGES of
the DREAMTIME...



The dream I
used to bind Burgess
in eternal waking used
up the last of my
strength...



And I
was far too
WEAK.

I do not know
how long I
remained there.

I had to reach the GATES
of HORN and IVORY... to
reach my castle...

But the way was HARD.

I remember the
WIND on my FACE...
staring down at the
DREAMSCAPE below
me...

And then... I was here.

AHEM!



GOOD EVENING, YOUR HIGHNESS, PRINCE MORPHEUS...

I'VE MADE YOU SOME FOOD.

WE'LL SOON HAVE YOU BACK ON YOUR FEET AGAIN.



You are CAIN, aren't you?

THAT'S ME, YER WORSHIP. PURVEYOR OF PENNY DREADFULS, SHILLING SHOCKERS, BLOOD AND THUNDER AND FAST-RATE NIGHTMARES.



OR I WAS.

THINGS HAVE BEEN STRANGE SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE.

Tell me, Cain... do you POSSESS anything of MINE?



Anything I CREATED?



ANYTHING OF YOURS...? I WOULDN'T THINK SO... NO... NO...



YES YOU DO! UHHH BOTH OF US DO. OUR LETTERS OF, HMM, COMMISSION, REMEMBER?

THEY, UH, THEY, UH, HAVE HIS SIGNATURE ON THEM. HE MADE THEM.

YOU... **BUTTON BURSTER!** YOU LOW-DOWN, SPYING, PEEKING, PRYING, BUTTERFINGERED--

Fetch me these letters. Fetch me ANYTHING of mine.



I, UH, HAVE M-MINE ON ME, SIRE. AND CAIN HAS HIS, TOO.



I release something I
CREATED before the dawn of
TIME; re-absorb that fragment
of MYSELF I placed inside It...

NOW, CAIN.
Your turn.

HERE,
TJH- TAKE
IT.



"LHHH, MU-MY LORD, UH,
IF IT'S NOT A UHH, F-FOOLISH
QUESTION... HMMM HMM, UH..."

WHAT MY BRAIN-DEAD BROTHER
IS SO SPECTACULARLY FAILING
TO ENUNCIATE IS THIS!

"WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN
FOR SO LONG, LORD?
WHAT WERE YOU DOING?"

"WHERE HAVE I BEEN?..."

"I have been imprisoned."

YOUNG MAN, PLEASE DO NOT PREVARICATE. I WISH TO SEE MY SON, AND I WISH TO SEE HIM NOW.

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, MRS., ER--

DEE
ETHEL
DEE

YES, WELL, THIS IS MOST IRREGULAR, MRS. DEE. ARKHAM DOES NOT ENCOURAGE VISITORS.

THIS IS MY SON, JOHN DEE. I BELIEVE HE'S IMPRISONED UNDER HIS "NOM-DE-CRIME" OF DOCTOR DESTINY.

A FOOLISH BOY. I HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR HIM FOR ALMOST A DECADE.

WE DO HAVE A PATIENT OF THAT NAME, MRS. DEE, BUT THIS IS MOST IRREGULAR, AND I'M AFRAID--

WHAAT? YOUNG FELLOW, I AM 90 YEARS OF AGE. I HAVEN'T SEEN MY SON IN TEN YEARS, AND I HAVE TRAVELLED OVER 8000 MILES TO SEE HIM TODAY.

ARKHAM
ASYLUM
FOR THE
CRIMINALLY
INSANE

AND I WILL SEE HIM, OR MY ATTORNEYS WILL KNOW WHY.

WATCH THE STEPS! THEY CAN BE SLIPPERY.

I'M FLABBERGASTED YOU COULDN'T BRING JOHN UP TO SEE ME, MISTER HUNTOON.

IT'S DOC-TOR, DR. HUNTOON. WE CAN'T RISK LETTING HIM OUT, HE'S TOO DANGEROUS.

HE NO LONGER SLEEPS, OR DREAMS-- IN THE NORMAL SENSE OF THE WORD...

AND PHYSICALLY, HE'S QUITE DEBILITATED...

JOHN?
IS THAT YOU?

JOHN!

MOTHER...?

I WOULD HAVE DREAMED OF YOU...

IF I COULD DREAM.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

MOTHER? YOU LOOK SO OLD. THINGS ARE SO STRANGE THESE DAYS.

MOTHER? THEY TOOK MY DREAMS AWAY FROM ME!

MRS. DEE? I'M AFRAID HE'S GETTING OVER-EXCITED, WE SHOULD GO.

MRS. DEE, SAY GOODBYE.



GUH-GOODBYE.
I-UH-I-UH FEEL I
OUGHT TO GIVE YOU
GUH-GOOD ADVICE,
AND I-UH-I-UH--

OH, SHUT UP SPONGE-WIT-
CAN'T YOU? GOODBYE, SURE!

AARRWRUK!



WHY?
HE'LL FIND
OUT SOON
ENOUGH.



YOU, AH,
AREN'T MUH-MAD
AT ME, ARE YOU?

MAD? WHY
SHOULD I BE MAD? I
DON'T OWN YOU... YOU
REFUGEE FROM A BLOODY
SHAMBLEG.

NOW...
OPEN YOUR
PRESENT!

UHHH, THERE HE
GOES. SHUH-SHOULDN'T
WE HAVE TOLD HIM? ABOUT
THE CASTLE? ABOUT
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO
THE DREAMTIME?

BEYOND outside my dreamworld there is INFINITE dust, infinite dark

And the DREAMWORLD is infinite, although it is bounded on every side.

The way to the CENTER, is a slow spiral. One passes the houses of mystery and secrets -- old WAY STATIONS on the frontiers of NIGHTMARE --

From THERE one charts a course NIGHTWARD until one reaches the GATES of HORN and IVORY. I carved them MYSELF, when the world was YOUNGER, and ORDER was NEEDED.

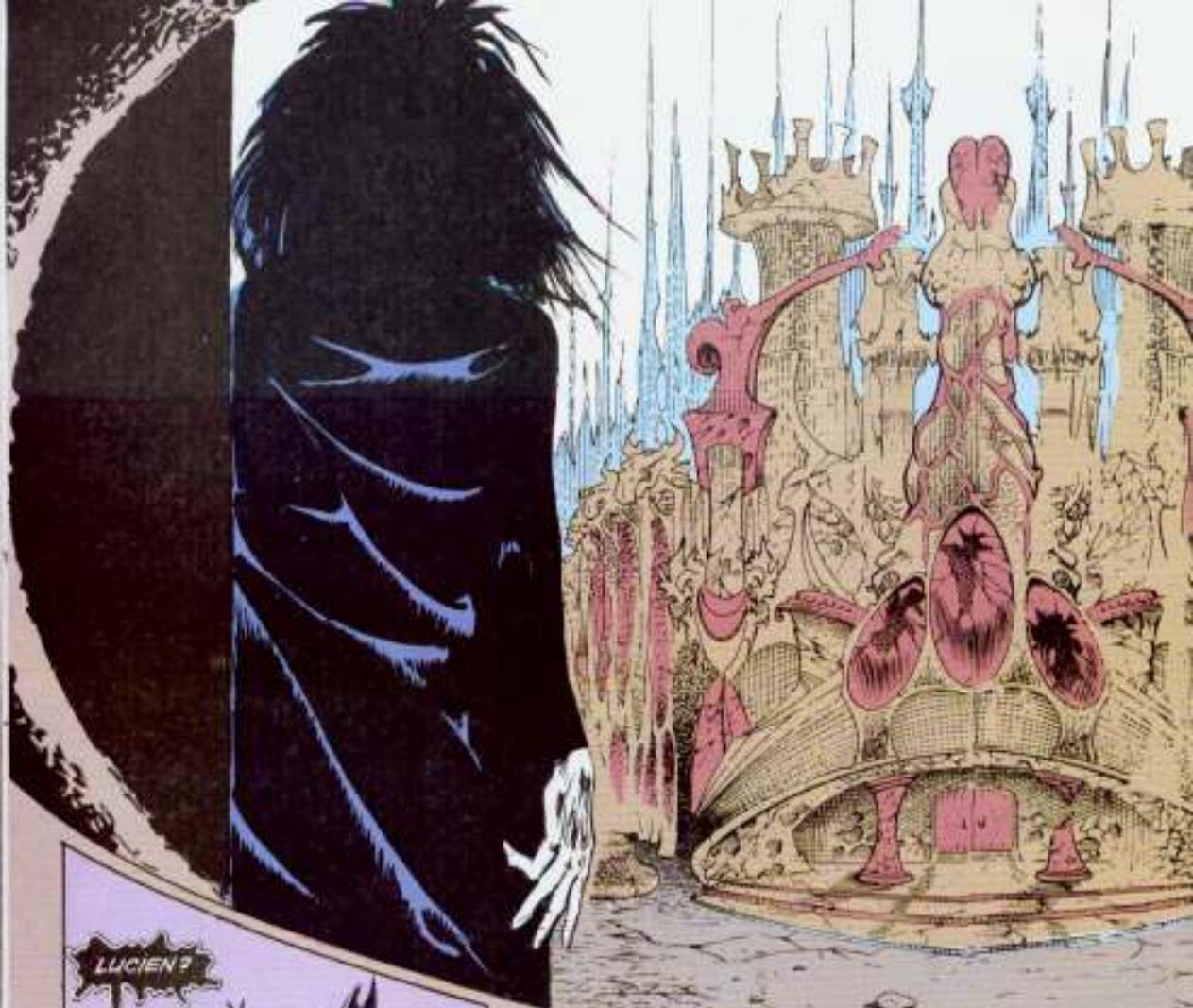
I HASTEN to the GATES

The DREAMS that pass through the gates of IVORY are LIES, FIGMENTS, and DECEPTIONS. The OTHER admits the TRUTH. NO ONE guards the horned gate anymore. I remember the way of OLD.

Once through it I can SEE my CASTLE.

Through it I will be able to see...

... My Home...





BREAKS YOUR HEART, MY LORD, DOESN'T IT?

WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU ARE THE INCARNATION
OF THIS DREAMTIME,
LORD.



AND WITH YOU
GONE, THE PLACE BEGAN
TO DECAY, BEGAN TO
CRUMBLE ...

THE PROCESS
WAS SLOW AT FIRST,
MY LORD. THINGS IN THE
DREAMWORLD BEGAN TO
TRANSMUTE. I WAS
AWARE OF IT IN MY
LIBRARY ...

SLOWLY,
THE WORDS
BEGAN TO
FADE.

SOME TIME
AFTER YOU VANISHED,
MY BOOKS BECAME
BOUND VOLUMES OF
BLANK PAPER. THE NEXT
DAY THE WHOLE
LIBRARY WAS
GONE.

I NEVER
FOUND IT
AGAIN ...

IT'S BEEN A STRANGE CENTURY FOR ALL OF US, MY LORD.

"THE RAVEN WOMAN HAS DECAYED BADLY."

MANY OF THE PALACE SERVANTS DISPERSED BACK INTO THE DREAM STUFF THAT FORMED THEM...

BRUTE AND GLOB VANISHED TWO SCORE YEARS AGO.

I DO NOT KNOW WHERE.

"SHE LIVES ONLY IN NIGHTMARES..."

"THE WEIRDNESS HAS BEEN GETTING WORSE."

UH. AN EGG...?

UH, CLUH-CAIN, IT, UH, SOMETHING'S UH... THE EGG...

IT... IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

SOMETHING HAS GONE SO WRONG, AND IT'S BEEN GETTING SLOWLY STRANGER... I'VE TRIED NOT TO... DO IT TO YOU, SO MUCH.

IT'S NOT JUST ANY EGG, YOU UNDERSTAND?

"THE FASHION THING HAS BEEN MANY THINGS: FLAPPER...MOD...PLUNK...SHE WAS A 'MAD MADONNA WITCH' FOR A WHILE."

BLOOD AND PERRIER, GODDAMNIT!

"LAST TIME I SAW HER SHE WAS THE 'MAD YUPPIE WITCH' BUT THAT WAS A YEAR AGO."

I have ENCOUNTERED Cain and Abel ALREADY.

AH.

YES THOSE TWO... DISTURB ME I MEAN, THEY'VE ALWAYS BEEN WEIRD.

BUT SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE ...

HURRM. I, MM, I THINK I'LL CALL HIM... IRVING.

YOU... CAN'T CALL IT IRVING.

NAMES FOR GARÇONS ALWAYS BEGIN WITH A 'G'.

B-B-BUT I, UH, LIKE IRVING!

I-UH- NO. NO, PLEASE. CAN.

IRVING???

LIKE GAZPACHO-- OR GORMAGON-- OR GLADSTONE-- OR GANYMEDE-- OR-- OR -- :pfah!

STOP IT, CAIN. PLEASE. NO!

SPUNK?



YES. Yes... I
WILL call them.



Leave me,
Lucien.

The DREAMWORLD, the
DREAMTIME, the UNCONSCIOUS--
call it what you WILL -- is as
much part of ME as I am part
of IT.



And for the first time
since my RETURN, for the
first time in 70 years, I
REACH out my substance...

...and I SHAPE
the WORLD...



The CROSSROADS comes
from a Cambodian farmer from
his dreams of a new OX CART.

The GALLOWS comes
from a young Japanese
MOVIE BUFF, her head
ROILING from a surfait
of old Hammer horror
films...



The HONEY, the
SNAKES, the
CRESCENT MOON
all these are easy
to find.



— BLACK SHE-LAMB is
more difficult but one
DANCES in the dreams of
a child in ADELAIDE,
Australia. I take it to
set the SCENE...

Still the set is incomplete,
CLOTHO LACHESIS and
ATROPIS would come for
LESS than this, but I need
a BOON, and the THREE
are fickle...

Dully the church bells
ECHO and CLANG in
the lonely darkness
TWELVE times...



DONG DONG DONG
DONG DONG
DONG DONG
DONG DONG
DONG DONG
DONG DONG




THERE

It's MIDNIGHT



The
WITCHING
Hour

And they
COME



The ONE
who IS
THREE

The WE who
are THEY



The
HECATEAE



Welcome, ladies



YOU LOOK SO THIN, MY DARLINGS. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING PROPERLY, HAVE YOU NOW?

MORPHEUS, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

HEHHH. HE WANTS SOMETHING!



Lady, ATROPOS, you have found me out. I DO want something



ATROPOS? NO. NOT NOW. YOU MIGHT AS WELL CALL ME THE MORRIGAN!

SHE'S RIGHT, MY DUCKS. MIGHT AS WELL CALL US TISYPHONE, ALECTO, AND MASAERA--AND THAT TAKES US BACK, EH?

MIGHT AS WELL CALL US DIANA, MARY, FLORENCE AND CANDY. HA HA! UH, SORRY.



For me, you will always be the three graces, ladies.

FLATTERER!



I'M CYNTHIA.

SHE'S MILDRED. I'M MORDRED. STUPID NAME. I OUGHT TO BE MORGANE.

IT WASN'T MY FAULT. I JUST GOT THEM CONFUSED, WAS ALL!

OOH, HE'S THE CLEVER ONE!



Down
Dweller

WITCH QUEEN, you know of my imprisonment, of my TRAVAIL, of the TIME that was STOLEN from me--

THEY HAVE STOLEN TIME FROM YOU? WHAT OF THAT? YOU HAVE ALL THE TIME THERE EVER WAS!



SQUEE

They stole MORE than time.

When I established this REALM I created TOOLS to administer it. My tools are LOST.

I need HELP.

HELP? HEE-- LISTEN TO HIM! DID YOU HELP US AGAINST CIRCE?



BRP

It doesn't matter. This is MY realm. It has LAWS. OLD laws. And the BEINGS in the world conform to the laws.

Just as you THREE obey your OWN laws. Could one of you exist apart from the other TWO?

I need THREE ANSWERS. You are bound by the LAWS to give me them.

AYE, ME DEARIE. ONE ANSWER THEN. ONE ANSWER FROM EACH OF US.

"MAIDEN, there was a POUCH of SAND. It was stolen from me."



"AN ENGLISHMAN, JOHN CONSTANTINE. HE WAS THE LAST TO PURCHASE YOUR ROUGH."

"He has it STILL?"

"ONE QUESTION, ONE ANSWER. THE RULES, MY LORD."



"I SEE. Then your question ALL MOTHER. My HELM-- what happened to it?"



"TRADED WITH A DEMON, MY DAVE, MANY YEARS AGO. LONG GONE FROM THE MORTAL PLANE."



"WHICH demon?"

"ONE QUESTION, MY HONEYSUCKLE, AND ONE ANSWER."



"CRONE. A Final question for you. My STONE. my DREAMSTONE, my RUBY MOONSTONE. Who has THAT now?"



"HEE! YOUR GEM PASSED THROUGH A MOTHER TO A SON WHO TAPPED ITS DREAM MAGICKS FOR HIS OWN ENDS."

"UNTIL IT--AND HIS DREAMS-- WERE TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM, BY THE SUPERHUMANS."

"ASK THE LEAGUE OF JUSTICE ABOUT ITS PRESENT WHEREABOUTS."



"But where--? No, one answer only. I know."

"Thank you weird sisters!"





HA-HA HAH HA HA!
DID YOU HEAR THAT,
MY SISTER-SELF?

OOO HOO HOOH HOOO!
"THANK YOU," HE SAYS! YOU
DON'T THANK THE FATES,
DREAMKIN!

AMAHAMAHAMAH!
HEEEE! WE HAVEN'T
HELPED YOU!



YOUR TROUBLES
ARE ONLY JUST
BEGINNING!



Exhaustion BITES at my
soul. I have answers of
a SORT.

This will be an
LIPHILL quest...



ABEL HAD BEEN DEAD
FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS
NOW.

BUT HE WAS
STARTING TO
FEEL BETTER.



UHHN.



HE FEELS SPLINTERED VERTEBRAE
GRIND AS HE CLIMBS, EVEN THE
PAIN FEELS BETTER THAN THE
COLD OF DEATH.

IT'S A LONG WAY BACK UP.



So.

Much has CHANGED,
much is STRANGE on
Earth since I was
ripped from my
dream home.

What first?



I DOUBT I am STRONG
enough to go up against
the HORDES of HELL.

Not YET.



To EARTH then.
The ruby first?
Or the pouch?

There are things I do not
KNOW about this JUSTICE
LEAGUE. MORE than mere
humans, eh...?



The ENGLISHMAN, then,
John CONSTANTINE. He
has the POUCH--or he
knows where it is.

And he is
JUST a MAN.



I will visit Constantine,
Regain my POUCH,
and with the POWER I
will have the GATES of
Hell itself...

He is, after all,
just a HUMAN.
Just ONE human.



What could
POSSIBLY
go WRONG?



UHH... I'LL, UM, TELL YOU A STORY, GOLDIE.



I'M, AH, CALLING YOU GOLDIE AFTER A F-FRIEND OF MINE WHO WENT AWAY. BUT I'LL THINK OF YOU AS IRVING REALLY.

arrrk!

IN MY HEART.



IT'S A SECRET STORY.

IT'S A STORY OF TWO BROTHERS. AND THEY, UH... THEY LOVED EACH OTHER VERY MUCH. AND THEY WERE ALWAYS NICE TO EACH OTHER.

NICE AND KIND AND B-BROTHERLY.



AND THE ELDER BROTHER WOULD NEVER HURT THE YOUNGER BROTHER. NEVER. AND THEY LIVED TOGETHER IN THE SAME HOUSE.



AND THEY WERE ...

HHH. UHAAH. TH-THEY WERE, UH, V-VERY HAPPY.

I'M SORRY. I WASN'T-- I'M N-NOT CRYING. I'M REALLY NOT CRYING.



"IT'S ONLY BLOOD, LITTLE BROTHER."

"ONLY BLOOD."

N-E-E-K-I-T-I
"DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME..."

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ONE. TWO.
THREE. FOUR...

HER NIPPLES ARE HARD AND
DARK AND SHRINKEN ON
BREASTS LIKE EMPTY POUCHES.



HER HAIR COMES OUT IN
CLUMPS WHEN SHE MOVES.
SHE TRIES NOT TO MOVE
TOO MUCH.

RADIO 1



HER SKIN IS FLAKING,
INFECTED AND INFLAMED.
BESORES COVER HER
BACK AND LEGS.

TWENTY-EIGHT.
TWENTY-NINE.
THIRTY...



HER FINGERNAILS GREW LONG
AND BRITTLE; THEN THEY BROKE
OFF. THE RAGGED NAILS RIP HER
SKIN WHEN SHE SCRATCHES.

HER STOMACH SHRANK, THEN
BLOATED. THEN IT SHRANK
AGAIN. HUNGER SUBSIDED TO A
LOW MIRRORS IN THE BACK OF
HER MIND.

IT'S OK. IT
GOES AWAY.



LIKE THE PAIN GOES AWAY. LIKE
EVERYTHING GOES AWAY WHEN
THE DREAMS COME.

...SHE FEELS REALITY
EBBING BACK.

SIXTY-FIVE.
SIXTY-SIX...

SHE'LL
WAIT.



DELAY THE
PLEASURE.

DELAY THE
DREAMS.

WILL SHE DISSOLVE IT IN HER
MOUTH? BREATHE IT? RUB
IT INTO HER SKIN?

IT DOESN'T
MATTER.

SHE'S COUNTING
TO A HUNDRED.

NINETY-SIX. NINETY-SEVEN.
NINETY-EIGHT...



BZZZZZZZZZZZZZ *click*



...FOR ALL YOU
CRIMBLIES OUT THERE,
HERE'S ONE FROM THE
VAULTS. A REAL RAVE
FROM THE GRAVE...

COUNT NINETY-NINE
AND KISS ME. ♪
JUST HOLD ME TIGHT AND
TELL ME YOU'LL MISS ME.
BIRDS SINGING IN THE
SYCAMORE TREE...

...DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME.



NEIL
GAIMAN
WRITER

SAM KIEH
& MIKE
BRONBERG
ARTISTS

TODD
KLEIN
LETTERER

ROBBIE
BUSCH
COLORIST

ART YOUNG
ASST. EDITOR

KAREN BERGER
EDITOR

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHEN SOMETHING JUST SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMEBODY?

THERE WAS A SMELL OF MAGIC SOMEWHERE, LIKE THE BLUE-SPARKS SMELL OF CIGARETTES AT A FUNFAIR.

I'D JUST HAD THIS NIGHTMARE.

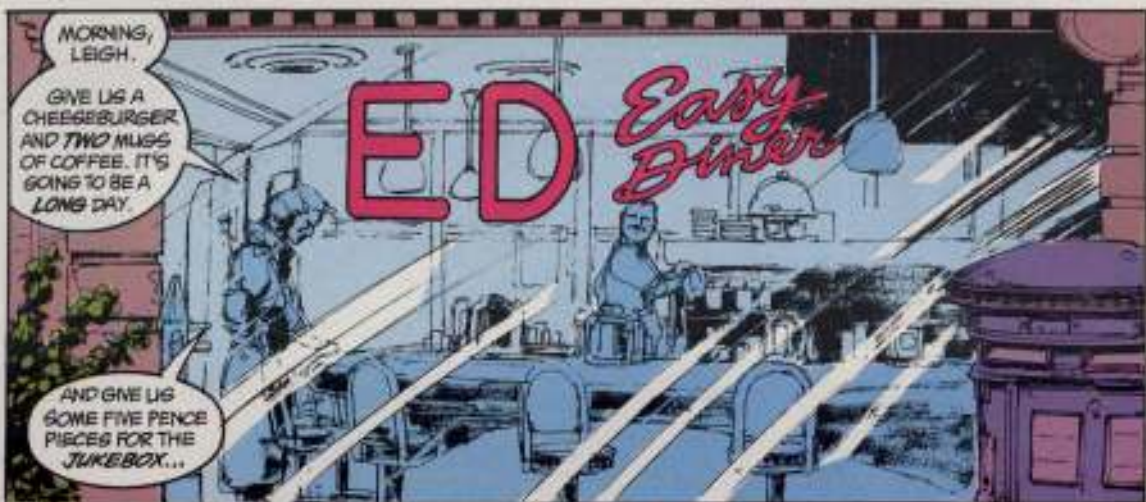
THESE THINGS WITH FACES LIKE APPENDECTOMY SCARS WERE CROUCHING MY INTESTINES INTO BODY BAGS FOR THE BLIND AND DEAD.

...BLAST FROM THE PAST OLDE BUT GOODIE THE MAN WITH THE MAGIC...

I TOLD MYSELF IT WAS ONLY A DREAM, BUT IT DIDN'T MATTER. THE BASTARDS' JUST KEPT ON BLOODY KNITTING.

MYS-TER SANDMAN I'M SO ALONE, AIN'T GOT NO BODY-CLICK





MORNING,
LEIGH.

GIVE US A
CHEESEBURGER
AND TWO MUGS
OF COFFEE. IT'S
GOING TO BE A
LONG DAY.

AND GIVE US
SOME FIVE PENCE
PIECES FOR THE
JUKEBOX...

ED *Easy Diner*



WHAT ARE YOU
PUTTING ON?

"I HEARD IT THROUGH
THE GRAPEVINE", USED TO
SING IT WITH MUCOUS MEMBRANE
AGES AGO. PRACTICALLY MY
THEME SONG...



♪ SWEET DREAMS
OF YOU... EVERY
N-I-I-NIGHT I ♪
GO THROUGH...

YOU GOTTA
LEARN TO PRESS
THE RIGHT
BUTTONS,
JOHN.



♪...THE WHO-OLE NIGHT ♪
THROUGH INSTEAD OF HAVING
SWEET DREAMS ALL
ABOUT YOU...

...SOMETHING TRYING TO
TELL ME SOMEBODY...?



SOMEBODY
TRYING TO TELL
YOU SOMETHING?
YUP.

I THINK IT'S
YOUR GIRLFRIEND,
OUTSIDE. HEHE.



WHUMP WHUMP

JESUS!
MAD
HETTIE...



'E'S BACK,
JOHN.

WHO'S
BACK, MAD
HETTIE?



YOU ORT TER
KNOW, SMART BOY,
MORPHEUS, THE
ONEIRMANCER.
YOU KNOW...

...THE
SANDMAN.

'E'S
BACK.

THE SANDMAN?
MAD HETTIE, YOU'VE
GOT TO BE PULLING
MY LEG.



CHEEKY YOUNG
JACKANAPES!

LOOK, THE
SANDMAN'S A FAIRY
STORY YOU TELL KIDS
TO GET THEM OFF TO
SLEEP. SPRINKLES
MAGIC DUST IN YOUR
EYES AND BRINGS
YOU...

...SWEET
DREAMS.

I'M TRYING TO
SAVE THE WORLD,
MAD HETTIE, AND
YOU WANT TO TELL
ME FAIRY
STORIES!



NOW YOU LISSEN
TER ME, JOHN CONSTAN-
TEEN, YOU LITTEL
PRICK!

I SED THE SANDMAN,
AN' I MEANT THE BLEEDIN'
SANDMAN! 'E'S BACK, JOHN.
AND 'E WANTS 'IS OWN.

I KNOW.

I'M TWO
'UNDRID AND
FORTY-SEVIN
YEARS OLD AND
I KNOW!

'E'S
BACK!

FUNNY THING IS, SHE
IS TWO HUNDRED AND
FORTY SEVEN.

THE SANDMAN, EH?

I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE
TO LOOK INTO IT.

HE LEFT THE PORSCHE HALF A MILE BACK DOWN THE ROAD. HOPES IT WON'T GET STOLEN. THERE ARE SOME REAL THIEVES AROUND THESE DAYS.

THEY CALL THEMSELVES CREEPERS. IT'S A SPORT. BREAKING INTO PEOPLE'S HOUSES WHILE THEY'RE STILL AT HOME.

DURING THE DAY HE'S AN INVESTMENT COUNSELOR.

CHECKBOOKS. CREDIT CARDS. CD'S. VIDEO TAPES.

HE THINKS OF IT AS HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FREE MARKET ECONOMY.

AND HE... HE... HE...

HE MUST BE DREAMING.

HE CAN FEEL THE WARM TIGHTNESS OF HER SKIN, THE SCENT OF SEX IS HEAVY IN THE AIR.

HER LIPS TASTE OF ROSES AND PASSION, AND SHE HOLDS HIM LIKE HER LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

THIS IS TOO GOOD.

TOO GOOD
TO BE TRUE.

HE'S HITTING A HUNDRED
AND FIFTY IN THE
LAMBORGHINI OF
HIS DREAMS.

EVERYBODY'S GREEN WITH
ENVY. THE ACCELERATION
GOES ON FOREVER.

JESUS.

HE'S DYING FOR THEM
AND THEY LOVE HIM.

HE'S PURE AND PERFECT
AND HE'S DYING FOR THEIR SINS.

HE CAN SEE HIS PARENTS, HIS
BOSS, HIS LOVERS IN THE
CROWD BELOW HIM.

THEY'RE SORRY NOW, SORRY THEY
TREATED HIM SO BADLY. BECAUSE
HE'S THE SON.

LAST SON OF A
DEAD PLANET.

STRONGEST
MAN IN THE
WORLD.

HE CAN DO
ANYTHING.

ANYTHING.

ABSOLUTELY
ANYTHING.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS I KEEP MEANING TO INVESTIGATE THIS GANDMAN STUFF. I JUST NEVER QUITE GET ROUND TO IT.

MY OWN RESEARCHES KEEP ME BUSY ENOUGH.

OOOO-OOOH... ♪
SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS... WHO AM I TO DISAGREE?...



ONE THING I'VE LEARNED YOU CAN KNOW ANYTHING. IT'S ALL THERE. YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND IT.



...TO CALL MY OWN... I WANT A GF DREAM LOVER, SO I DON'T HAVE TO DREAM ALONE...

DREAMS ARE LIKE ANGELS... THEY KEEP BAD AT BAY... ♪♪

I DREAM A MESS OF LEY-LINES AND LEPTONS, PLASMA FIELDS AND TURF GIANTS.

THEN THE DREAMS GET SCARY AND BAD.



AS PER USUAL.

IT WAS ON THE THIRD DAY THAT HE CAUGHT UP WITH ME.



John Constantine, I presume.







We have been looking for two hours. Constantine. Patience wears thin.

I do not believe it is here.



If it were here, I would be able to feel it.

WE'VE STILL GOT A LOAD OF STUFF TO GO THROUGH YET, BOSS.

KEEP SMILING. IT'LL TURN UP.



HOW DID YOU LOSE THIS POUCH, ANYWAY?

THE OLD "DAEMON KING" HIMSELF, EH?

It was stolen from me. By a man called Burgess.



DAMN!

I DON'T KNOW WHY I HANG ON TO ALL THIS STUFF.

IF THERE WAS A FIRE IT'D BE LIKE MY WHOLE LIFE WAS GOING UP IN FLAMES...

OH.

JESUS, OH JESUS.

BLOODY HELL.

UH, BOSS. I THINK I KNOW WHERE YOUR POUCH IS.

YOU MUST BE OLDER THAN YOU LOOK.

'ERE, JOHN, CAN WE STOP AT A SERVICE STATION? I'M PARCHED. I TOOK OFF WITHOUT ME TEA.

NO

YOU HEARD THE MAN, CHAS, OLD MATE. GORRY. I AIN'T NO MARK FOR THE WING OF THE HARSELL...

I KNOW I OWE YOU, JOHN. BUT THIS IS PUSHING IT.

Drive us, Mister Chas. You will be rewarded.

YOU DON'T CALL HIM.

HIS KIND JUST TURN UP OUT OF THE BLUE. THEY CALL YOU.

UH, IT'S JUST CHAS, MISTER... UH...

JOHN'S WHAT DO I CALL HIM?

EVERYONE SHUTS UP, AND CHAS JOLTS US UP THE MOTORWAY. OUR VISITOR 'MELTS' INTO THE BACK SEAT SHADOWS.

AND I REMEMBER RACHEL.

AMAZING RACHEL.

JUNKIE RACHEL.

WE WERE LIVING TOGETHER IN A HIGH-RISE FLAT IN EAST CROYDON. I WENT TO ALASKA FOR SIX MONTHS, OVER THE LUPUS AFFAIR.

WHEN I GOT BACK SHE WAS GONE. ALONG WITH ME STEREO, THE TELLY, THE SILVER SURFERS-- ANY OLD JUNK SHE COULD CONVERT TO MONEY.

AND SHE'D LONG SINCE CONVERTED THE MONEY INTO JUNK.

STUPID BITCH.

SOMETIMES I STILL MISS HER.

EITHER OF YOU GENTS MIND IF I PUT ON THE RADIO? NO?

I WISH I'D REALIZED THAT SHE'D NICKED THE POUCH AS WELL, THOUGH.

THE GANDY-COLORED CLOWN THEY CALL THE GANEMAN... TIP-TOES THROUGH MY ROOM EVERY NIGHT... JUST TO SPRINKLE STARDUST...

"CANDY-COLORED CLOWN"? YEAH, RIGHT.



RIGHT. THIS IS IT. "THE BRAMBLES."



WE'LL ASK HER DAD WHERE SHE'S LIVING THESE DAYS, AND GO FIND HER.

NO PROBLEMS, EH?

HER DAD'S ALL RIGHT. RETIRED AIR PILOT. NICE MAN. WE'LL GET YOUR BAG BACK.



The POUCH is HERE

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I KNOW



The POUCH is here. And MORE than the Pouch...

This house is DANGEROUS, Constantine.




CHAS, STAY IN THE CAR. ROLL UP THE WINDOWS, LOCK THE DOORS.

YOU TAKE OFF AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE, RIGHT?

BUT, JOHN--

NO BUTS, MATE. YOUR MISSUS HATES ME AS IT IS.


LET'S NOT GIVE HER A REASON TO, EH?




RACHEL WAS ALWAYS PLAYING WITH THE **POUCH**. KEPT GOING ON AT ME TO TRY TO OPEN IT.

SHE'D ASK ME, WHAT'S THE POINT OF HAVING SOMETHING **MAGIC** IF YOU DON'T **USE** IT?

I KNEW THE **ANSWER**. BUT I KNEW SHE'D **NEVER** UNDERSTAND.




WELL, THERE'S NO **ANSWER**, AND IT'S **LOCKED**, **BOLTED** AND **ALARMED**.



LET'S GO **ROUND** THE **BACK**, WE CAN **SMASH** A **WINDOW**, GET IN **THAT** WAY...




We go in by the **FRONT** door.



IT **SMELLS** **STRANGE**. PART OF IT REMINDS ME OF THE MONTH I WORKED FOR AN **UNPERTAKER**, ALL **FLESH** AND **FORMALDEHYDE**.

'S **WEIRD**: **SMELLS** ARE A **HOTLINE** TO **MEMORY**.



NAW, I'LL **STICK** **AROUND**, I'M **INTRIGUED**.

ANYWAY, I WAS **FOND** OF **RACHEL** ONCE. SHE WAS, YOU KNOW, THE **GIRL** OF MY **DREAMS**.

Constantine...

This place is not **SAFE** for you.

Things are free in this house that should NOT be loose on **Earth**.

You must not stay here.

FOR A **WHILE**.




THE
ELECTRICITY'S
CUT OFF. THERE'S
SIX MONTHS' WORTH
OF MAIL ON THE
DOORMAT.

WHAT'S BEEN
HAPPENING
HERE?



Watch out
for the
HUMAN.



WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, WATCH OUT
FOR--

AAAH!

THU-DUMP



HUMAN.

IS HE...?


YES.

He's
ALIVE.
After a
fashion.




He's
being
eaten by
dreams.

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO HIM?



You need light. Is
that better?



I'VE BEEN OUT OF MY
DEPTH BEFORE.
SOMETHING TELLS
ME THERE ARE SHARKS
IN THESE DEPTHS.

I OUGHT TO
BE RUNNING
AWAY. BUT.

RACHEL...

UH.
SURE, THANKS.

MOVIES. OLD DARK HOUSE.
HORRIBLE MENACE ON THE
LOOSE. "LET'S SPLIT UP."
MUFFLED SCREAMS IN
DARKNESS...



UH... WE'LL
STICK TOGETHER,
WON'T WE?



OF COURSE.

UNTHINKING, I REACH
FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH...



YECHH.

CHRIST.
THERE'S SOME-
THING ON THE
WALLS.



SOMETHING
WET.

AND

AND.

AND I CAN SEE THE
CLOUDS. THEY LOOK
KIND OF SOLID. AND
THE GROUND BELOW
THEM.

THAT LOOKS REALLY
SOLID. IT'S A LONG
WAY TO FALL.

AND I'M
FALLING.



HOW DID I
GET HERE?

I DON'T WANT
TO DIE. I DON'T
WANT TO FALL.

MEMORY FILLS IN:
THE PLANE ON
FIRE; I JUMPED...?

I WAS: THE PILOT?
NO. A PASSENGER,
THEN?

I TELL MYSELF IT'S
NOT THE FALL. FALLING
DOESN'T HURT...

...IT'S WHEN
YOU STOP.

CONSTANTINE!

John
You're HERE

UH.

...SO
REAL.

YAAAAH!

It IS
NEVER "only
a dream."
John Constantine
HERE less than
some other
places...

YOU WERE
THERE, TOO.

A DREAM.
IT WAS ONLY A
DREAM.

More
light.

JEEESUS!

WHAT IS THIS STUFF?

A human body. What's left of it. Your woman's father, I would surmise.

BUT IT- IT'S STILL ALIVE.

That's right.

I FEEL SICK. I CAN FEEL THE HOT DOG AND COFFEE I GRABBED FOR DINNER TRYING TO FIGHT THEIR WAY BACK UP FOR AIR ...

HOW?

The Pouch



LEAVE HER

LEAVE HERE

LEAVE THE WOMAN

SHE IS OURS

DO NOT DISTURB

DO NOT DISTURB US

DO NOT DISTURB HER

ALWAYS FROM HUNGRY

WE FROM HUNGRY

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU BLOODY ARE! WE WANT TO SEE RACHEL!

FOOLISH FOOLISH

VERY FOOLISH

FOOLISH MEAT THINGS

HEAR IT POSTURE?

HEAR IT THREATEN?

"THE WOMAN"? RACHEL! SHE'S THROUGH THERE.

Let us through.



WHO SAID?

WHO SPOKE?

NOT HIM

NEVER HIM

HE'S GONE

ALL GONE LONG GONE



This has gone far enough. You have exceeded your bounds.



MASTER...?



DREAM DREAM
DREESBAM...

WHENEVER
I WANT TO...

ALL I
HAVE TO DO...
IS...

...DREESBAM...



I have
the pouch.
The dreams
will return
to their
proper
location,
in time.

We can
GO NOW.



THE BAG? MY BAG, BUT IT'S NOT MY BAG...

YOU CAN'T LEAVE HER LIKE THIS.

IT HURTS...

Why NOT??

Her metabolism is obviously DESTROYED. The sand was the ONLY thing keeping her ALIVE. She will die soon.

Painfully, I would imagine.

...SEE THE SUN SET IN THE HAND OF THE MAN...



I SAID YOU CAN'T BLOODY LEAVE HER LIKE THIS!



OH. NH. OUGH.



Very well, Constantine. Go outside.



BUT-- YEAH, ALL RIGHT.

RACHEL.

SWEET DREAMS, LOVE.



THE VEIL TEARS, AND SHE FEELS THE FLESH FLOW BACK ONTO HER BONES AGAIN.

AND SHE KNOWS HE'S WAITING FOR HER.

JOHN.

HULLO, LOVE.

'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

DID YOU MISS ME, THEN?

NAH.

BASTARD, LOVE YOU.

I KNOW.

IT'S THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS.





DID SHE...?

she died peacefully. She died HAPPY.

YEAH. GREAT. THANKS.



YOU'VE GOT YOUR SODDING SANDBAG BACK, THEN.

SO. WHERE ARE YOU GOING NOW?

TO HELL.



HEHHH. AREN'T WE ALL, MATE? AREN'T WE ALL?

I'LL GO WAKE CHAS UP, AND TAKE OFF BACK TO THE SMOKE. THEN GOT WORK TO DO EH?

I'LL SEE YOU.



GOODBYE Constrictor



HEY!

HANG ON!
WAIT A
MINUTE!

...PLEASE?



YES...?



WELL, I... I DON'T LIKE TO ASK
FOR FAVORS. IF THEY DON'T CARE
/ME SOMETHING...

I MEAN... I
DON'T WANT TO BE
IN ANYONE'S DEBT.
IT'S JUST...



What are you ASKING,
John Constantine?



IT'S JUST-- EVER SINCE
NEWCASTLE, THE LAST
TEN YEARS...

EVER SINCE
NEWCASTLE I'VE BEEN
HAVING THESE
NIGHTMARES...

BAD ONES
MOST NIGHTS,
AND...

I WONDERED
IF YOU COULD...



"I understand

Very
well."

THANKS



♪

AH-ONE,
TWO, THREE,
FOUR...



♪ MISTER
SANDMAN,
BRING ME
A DREAM... ♪

MAKE HER
THE CUTEST
THAT I'VE
EVER SEEN... ♪

♪ GIVE HER THE WORD
THAT I'M NOT A ROVER...
THEY TELL ME THAT
MY LONESOME LIFE
IS OVER... ♪

NEXT:
GOING TO HELL

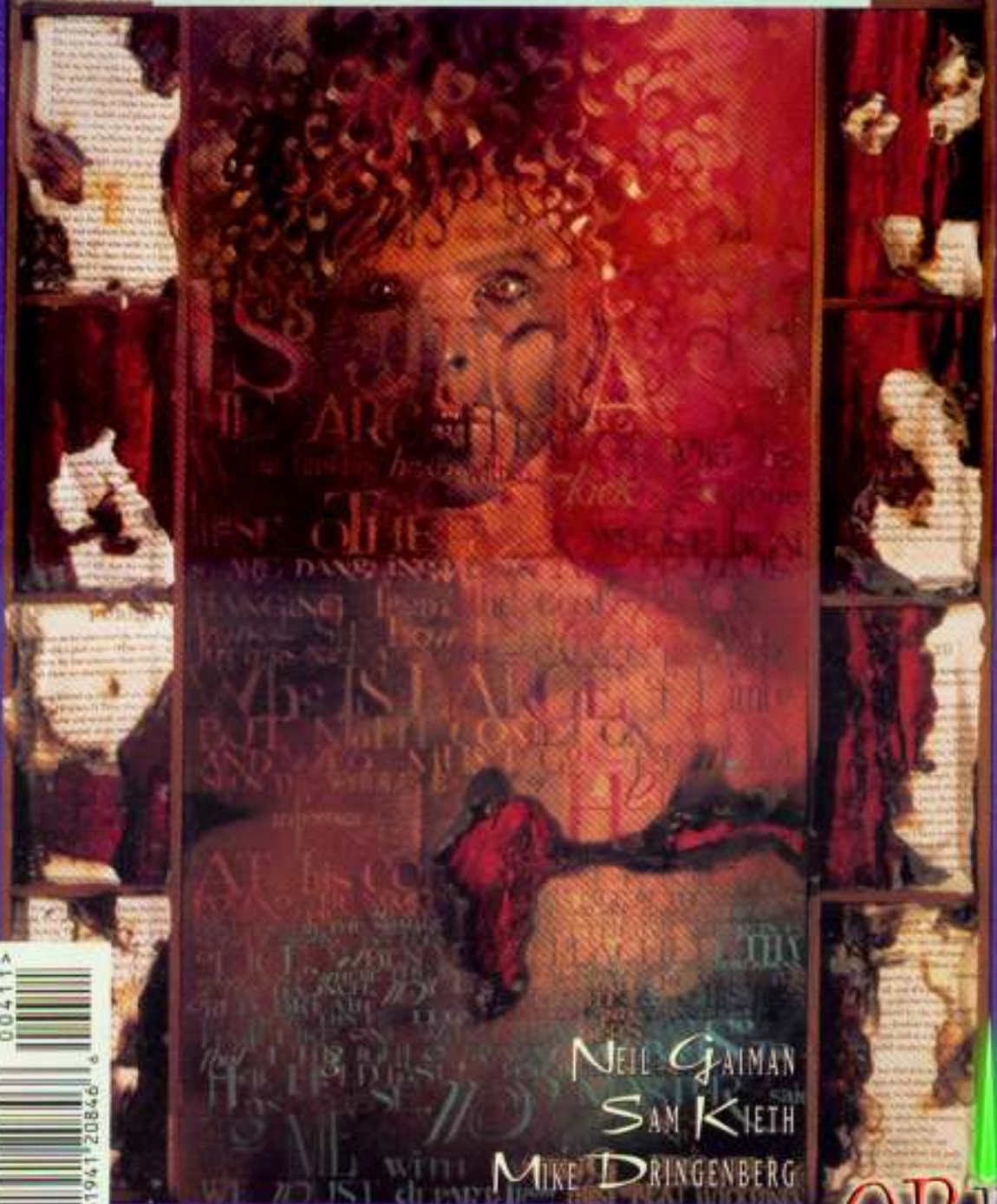
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OBI

For the hundredth time
since I regained it, I reach
into the pouch and I touch
the sand.

I sift it through
my fingers.

Like myself, like the few
others of my kind. ENDLESS

Tonight I
feel alone.

Feel each
grain of it,
inexhaustible
Endless.

I have always been
solitary, but here on
the nightward shores
of dream, loneliness
washes over me in waves,
lapping and pulling at
my spirit.

I watched him even then
as he fell, his face
undefeated, his eyes
still proud.

It is time for me
to walk the abyss.
Time to reclaim
my own.

I sprinkle sand into the waters
of night. The grains burn as
they fall, reminding me of another
in times long passed away.

I must talk to
the Morningstar.

I do not have
high hopes for
the meeting

TRAPPED IN

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The Wind that blows between
the Worlds chills me as I fall.

Suppose
I fail?

I cannot bluff Demons,
as I bluffed the errant
dreams with Constantine.

But I have the
pouch. I have a
modicum of
power.



I have
hope.

And I stand here,
alone and afraid, in
the Naked Space...

...at the gate
of Hell.



GON GO GGG

OOO WINGG



ALH! MASTER! THERE IS ONE AT THE DOOR! LORD SQUATTERBLOAT! MASTER!



THERE'S ONE AT THE DOOR, AT THE GATE TO DAMNATION...



IS IT THIEF, THUG OR WHORE? THERE'S ONE AT THE DOOR...

AND THERE'S ROOM FOR ONE MORE TILL THE END OF CREATION.



THERE'S ONE AT THE DOOR.

AT THE GATE TO DAMNATION. HHHUUUUHHH...

Greetings Squatterbloat I wish to talk to your master. Take me to him immediately.

OH YES, MY CLOWN? AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?



I have many names. But I am the King of Dreams, of the Nightmare Realms... I seek Lord Lucifer, The Lord of Hell.

SO WHERE'S YOUR CROWN?



Some demon has stolen it. I have come to Hell to get it back.

OH YES, MY CLOWN. YOU'RE NEW IN TOWN

SO WHERE'S YOUR RUBY?

I will take no insults from you, little demon! Guard your tongue!

Lucifer will not be kind to one who insults an honored quest-- and I AM a quest in this realm, as I am the monarch of my own.

LIHHN.

SPLOR!

CHUNNG!!

OH YES, MY CLOWN--AND WHO MIGHT YOU/ BE?

BACK TO YOUR GATE AND DUTY, SQUATTERBLOAT! I'LL TAKE THE DREAMLORD, PLAY HIS GUARDIAN...

...THAN ETRIGAN?

FOR INNOCENTS ABROAD NEED GUIDES OF NOTE-- AND WHO NOTES MORE THAN ME...?

Etrigan. Yes, Merlin's demon. The half-man. I remember you. So you're a rhymier now? You've risen in hell's hierarchy, I see.

THIS WAY.

THINGS CHANGE

TO RISE AMONG THE FALLEN? STRANGE AND TRUE. BUT AS THINGS CHANGE, LORD, THEY TRANSMUTE AS WELL...

AND IF I'VE CHANGED, O KING, THEN WHAT OF YOU?

I have been... absent... for some time. But changed...?

...ALL TOO MUCH. SANDRA KNEW EVERYTHING, AND THE PAPERS SO I HAD TO. PILLS. PLASTIC BAG.

HAD TO GET OUT. NEEDED A BREAK. HURTING. HURTING.

THINGS CHANGE... IN EARTH AND HELL...

The wood of suicides has changed since my last visit to hell. I remember it as a tiny grove.

Perhaps

...I THOUGHT THE HURTING WOULD STOP.

Now it resembles a forest

HURTING HURTING HURTING
HURT HURTING HURT
HURTING HURT

Hell is changing

Never trust a demon. He has a hundred motives for anything he does... Ninety-nine of them, at least, are malevolent.

KAI'CKUL! DREAMLORD! I HOPED ONE DAY YOU WOULD COME TO ME! FREE ME, MY LOVE! PLEASE?

I greet you, Nada. It... pains me to see you like this.

Etrigan...

Etrigan, WHY did you bring me here?...

KAI'CKUL! FREE ME, LORD! YOU ORDERED ME CONFINED HERE! YOUR FORGIVENESS CAN FREE ME!

I IMPORE YOU...


UPON YOUR RIGHT ARE SOULS, ENTOMBED, TO PITY, AN UGLY SIGHT...

DON'T YOU LOVE ME?

It has been ten thousand years, Nada... yes, I still love you.

"But I have not yet forgiven you."

NOW, ONWARD TO THE CITY! HAHHAHA HAHHA!



We do not talk for the rest of the journey to Dis, the hellcity.

Lucifer's palace. It too has changed. It echoes with loss and pain. The last time I came to this place it was as an honored guest, an envoy from my own Kingdom.

This time I lack power. I lack my symbols of office.

But I am still DREAM, and the doors of the palace open as we arrive.

We travel to the summit, past vasty halls that echo of screams and grunts and sighs and dust.

Up stairs that run with sweet blood. At the top of his mansion he waits for us, alone.

Greetings to you, Lucifer Morningstar.

FELLO.

FELLO,
DREAM.

SCRIBAN,
PLEASE LEAVE
US.

WE HEAR YOU
WERE CAUGHT BY
MORTALS, LIKE A NEWLY
FLEDGED DEMON, SWEET
MORPHEUS. WE
EXPECTED BETTER
OF YOU.

STILL, YOU
ARE HERE NOW.

HAVE YOU COME TO
JOIN FORDS? TO ALLY YOUR
REALM TO OURS? DO
YOU KNOWLEDGE THE
SOVEREIGNTY OF HELL?

You know
my views on that,
Lightbringer.

YES.

YES, WE DO. YOUR
FAMILY ARE WELL, I TRUST?
DESTINY, DEATH, DESPAIR
AND THE OTHERS? NO
MATTER. WE ASSUME
THAT THIS IS NO
SOCIAL CALL...

WHAT DO
YOU WANT?

My helm was
stolen from me. I
believe one of your
demons has it. I
would like it back

NOW.

BZZZT

YES, IF IT WERE ONLY THAT EASY. THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN HELL SINCE YOU WERE LAST HERE...

Things have changed? What are you trying to tell me, Lucifer Morningstar?

That you no longer rule hell? That the demons no longer follow your rule?

We have met so you spoke the truth, Proud Lord of Lies. Hell is now a diumvirate.

THIS IS OUR CO-MONARCH, **BEELZEBUB**, THE LORD OF FLIES.

Things do not change that much, proud one.

AH, BUT THEY DO, **ANNORPHEUS**

LUCIFER ISZZZ INDEED NO LONGER SOLE MONARCH OVVV THE HELLZZZZZ REGIOMZZZZZ...


BBBUT NO. IT'SZZZZZ A TRIUMMIVIRATE.

RAZEL WILL JOIN US SHORTLY. HE IS THE THIRD LORD OF HELL.


SOME YEARS AGO THE DARK, THE SHADOW CREATURE, CAME FORTH TO CHALLENGE HEAVEN. THE EPISODE ENDED IN... PERHAPS A SCHEMACE.

BUT THE CIVIL WAR IN HELL THAT ENSUED TIPPED THE PRECARIOUS BALANCE OF POWER.

WE RULE IN COALITION NOW, **RAZEL**, **BEELZEBUB** AND I.




THREE KINGS IN
DARKNESS. I AM AZAZEL.
WELL COME, DREAM KING.




Hell, a triumvirate?
Things change indeed.

Very well. I
seek a demon, who
has stolen my helm
of office. I wish
it back.




I do
not know
the demon's
name.



WHICH DEMON,
ZZEN? NAME IT AND
WE WILL BRING
IT HERE.

THERE ARE MORE
THAN A MILLION DEMONS
AFTER ALL.



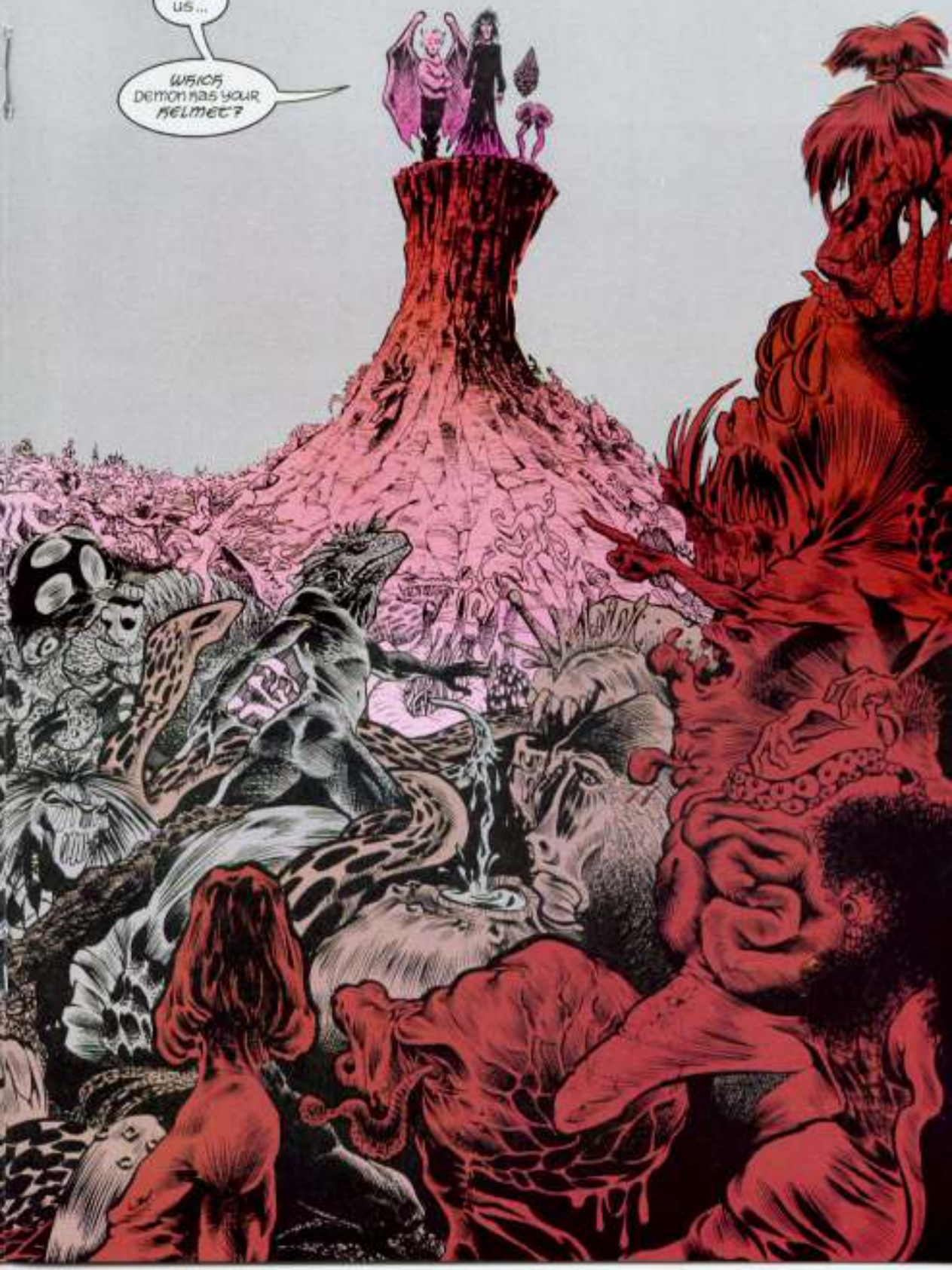
THEN LET
US SUMMON ALL
OF THEM TO BELL,
AND MEET THEM
ON THE VASTY
PLAINS OF HELL!



THERE.
NOW, DREAM
THING...

TELL
US...

WHICH
DEMON HAS YOUR
HELMET?



I look at the demons. Some I recognize from nightmares. Others have passed through the dreamworld in the past. But there are so many...

One of you has my helm, my mask of pure dream. I crafted it myself, from the bones of a dead god. It is one of my tools...

Ah.





CHORONZON, A DUKE OF HELL, ONE OF BEELZEBUS'S.

WELL, CHORONZON. DOES DREAM SPEAK TRUTH? DO YOU INDEED HAVE HIS MASK OF OFFICE?



SSSS. WHAT IF I HAVE?

YOU MAY NOT TALK TO US THAT WAY, CHORONZON.

HAVE YOU THE HELMET?



YES, LORDS.



Return it to me. Now.



SSSS. I TRADED IT FROM A MORTAL FOR A PALTRY THING, BUT IT WAS A FAIR TRADE.

I HAVE BROKEN NONE OF THE LAWS OF HELL. IF YOU WANT YOUR PRICIOUS BACK THEN YOU MUST FIGHT ME FOR IT. SSS.

SSS. SSS. AS THE CHALLENGED, I CHOOSE THE BATTLEFIELD.

A challenge? I do not know if I am strong enough. I truly do not know.

Very well. Yes, I challenge you, Choronzon.



I ASSEK REALITY.



666. WELCOME, LADIES 'N' GENTLEMEN, TO ANOTHER THRILL-PACKED EVENING OF FUN-FUN-FUN HERE AT THE HELLFIRE CLUB.

I AM YOUR HOST, **CHORINZOM**, HIGH DUKE OF THE EIGHTH CIRCLE, CAPTAIN OF THE HORDES OF LORD BEEILZEBUS.

TONIGHT, FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT AND—666—DELECTATION...

A FORMAL CHALLENGE.

AS THE CHALLENGED, I GET THE METER AND TAKE FIRST MOVE.

AND THE CHALLENGER IS **DREAM**, ONCE THE MASTER OF THE REALM OF GLEEP.

6660 LET'S HAVE A **BIG HAND** FOR—**MISTER SANDMAN!**

It has been long since I was forced to play such games with Demons.

I rise slowly, approach the stage.

Around me a soft susurrus of sound and a languorous, ironic applause.

"The Hellfire Club." It feels like a bad joke.

And like everything else in Hell, it is deadly serious.





...PLANET-CREATING.

I am the Universe--all things encompassing, all life embracing.

I AM ANTI-LIFE,
THE BEAST OF JUDGMENT.
I AM THE DARK AT THE
END OF EVERYTHING.
THE END OF UNIVERSES,
GODS, WORLDS...
...OF EVERYTHING.

I am hope.

SSS. AND
WHAT WILL YOU
BE THEN,
DREAMLORD?





ISZ. HERE,
DREAM MASTER.
THISZ ISZ YOUR
HELMET. YOU
HAVE WON IT
FAIRLY.

TAKE
IT.



I thank you.
The kings of hell
are honorable. I
will remember
this.

HONORABLE?
YOU JUNE, SURELY.

LOOK
AROUND YOU,
MORPHEUS.




THE MILLION
LORDS OF HELL STAND
ARRAID ABOUT
YOU.

TELL US
WHY WE SHOULD
LET YOU LEAVE?



FELTIC OR NO,
YOU HAVE NO POWER
HERE - WHOSE POWER
HAVE DREAMS IN
HELL?



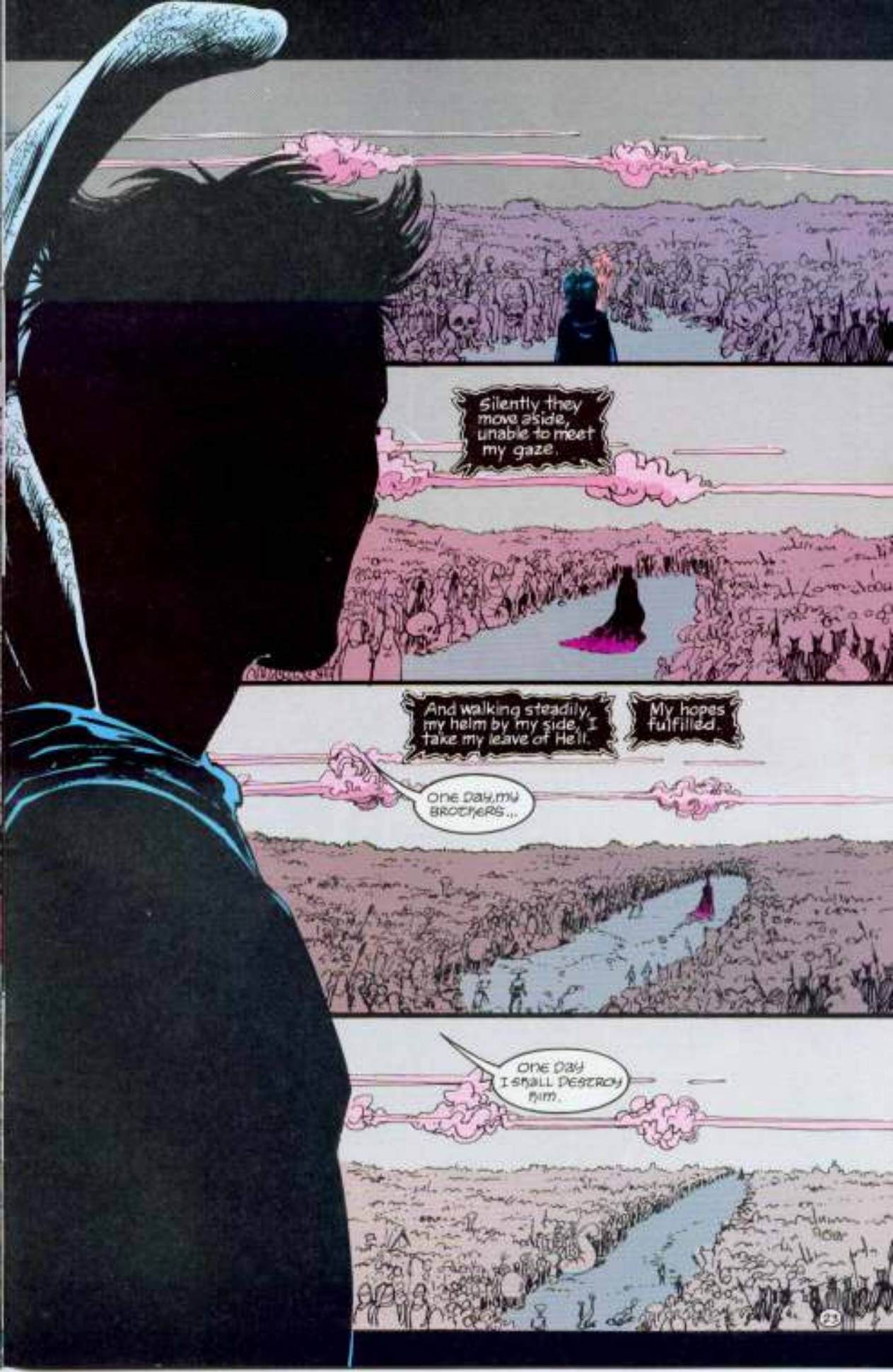
You say I have
no power? Perhaps
you speak truly...

Ask
yourselves,
all of you...

What power
would HELL have
if those here
imprisoned were
NOT able to DREAM
of HEAVEN?

But--you
say that DREAMS
have no power
here?

Tell me,
Lucifer
Morningstar...



Silently they
move aside,
unable to meet
my gaze.

And walking steadily,
my helm by my side, I
take my leave of Hell.

My hopes
fulfilled.

ONE DAY, MY
BROTHERS...

ONE DAY
I SHALL DESTROY
HIM.

EPILOGUE



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AND NOW IT'S 2:15 AM,
APRIL 161, AND THE "FUNERAL
MARCH FOR A MARIONETTE"
TELLS US THAT ALFRED HITCHCOCK
PRESENTS ANOTHER TWISTY
TALE FOR ALL YOU LATE NIGHT
GOTHAM VIEWERS...

J-POM-DA-
POPOPA-POM-
J-DA-POM...

...POM-ROMETTY
POM-POM-POM...

GOOD EVENING,
FELLOW TOURISTS...

I THINK THIS PROVES
THAT IN SOME WAYS THE
AIRPLANE CAN NEVER
REPLACE THE
TRAIN.

HEHH.

DINING
HALL



SURPRISE!
IT'S ONLY ME!

NOW - DON'T TELL
ANYBODY ELSE ABOUT
THIS! THERE'S NOTHING
LIKE A GOOD HANGING
TO SCARE PEOPLE
WITLESS...

YOU'RE THE DOCTOR, AREN'T YOU? SOME PEOPLE ARE AFRAID
OF DOCTORS. IT'S CALLED IATROPHOBIA. DR. DESTINY, AREN'T
YOU MEANT TO BE LOCKED UP DOWNSTAIRS?

GSHH. YOU MUSTN'T
TELL ANYONE I'M
ESCAPING. MY MOTHER
DIED.

SHE GAVE ME HER AMULET.
IT KEEPS PEOPLE SAFE FROM
THINGS. SHE TOLD ME THAT.
SHE GAVE ME MY RUBY TOO,
BUT NOW SHE'S DEAD.

SHALL I TELL YOU WHAT I'M
GOING TO DO?

TELL ME.
TELL ME.

I'LL STICK OUT
MY TONGUE, AND I'LL
BE WHITE AS A SHEET,
AND THEY'LL ALL
LOOK UP AT ME AND
THEN I'LL GO
"APRIL FOOL!"

FEAR OF PAIN
IS ALGOPHOBIA. I
DON'T KNOW WHAT
FEAR OF HANGING
IS CALLED.

I'M GOING TO GET THE RUBY
BACK. THE MAT. THE MAT. THE
MAT-ER-I-OF-TI-KON. AND THEN
I'LL DRIVE EVERYBODY IN THE
WHOLE WIDE WORLD MAD, AND
THEN THEY'LL MAKE ME KING.

IT SOUNDS SCARY. HAVE A NICE
TIME. AND YOU MUST PROMISE--
WHEN YOU GET BACK-- TO TELL
ME ALL ABOUT IT.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I'M
GOING TO RULE THE WORLD
OR DESTROY IT.

I'M NOT
COMING
BACK.

YES
YES...

BUT WE ALWAYS COME BACK HERE,
IT'S SO SCARY OUTSIDE. IF YOU GEE
THE JOKER, TELL HIM TO HURRY
BACK. IT ISN'T APRIL FOOL'S DAY
WITHOUT HIS LITTLE JOKE...

BUT I'M DOING
MY BEST. I LEFT
ANOTHER NEXT DOOR.



YES I SEE IT. IT'S VERY FUNNY.

BYE BYE.



HELL, I'M GOING TO FIND MY MAT... MY RUBY. YOU'RE GOING TO DRIVE ME. I'LL TELL YOU WHERE TO STOP.

TRUST ME. I'M A DOCTOR.





I FLEE PAST GREYBORDERERS, DOWN THE DARKLING ROAD TO LONGSHADOWS. I SKIRT THE FIRE PITS, AND LOGE MYSELF IN THE HEART OF THE ARMAGHETTO. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE I GO. ALL ROADS LEAD BACK TO GRANNY.

HAPPINESS IS THE HEART THAT'S GRANNY'S.

RIPOUT YOUR HEART FOR GRANNY.

GRANNY LOVES YOU.



GRANNY LOVES ME. SO SHE HAS THEM BIND ME IN CHAINS, ENCASE MY FEET IN CONCRETE.



SHE WRAPS ME TIGHT IN HER LOVE AND HER VOICE. TIES ME TIGHT WITH STEEL AND GRANITE.



I'VE BEEN A BAD LITTLE BOY, I SAID A BAD THING. I LEFT HER.

AND THIS IS WHAT THEY DO TO BAD LITTLE BOYS: THEY PUT THEM IN THE MURDER MACHINE.



I LEAVE THE COFFIN BEHIND ME.



I DISOBTAIN THE KNIVES, LEAP THROUGH THE FLAMES.



THE BOMB EXPLODES, BUT I AM NOT WHERE I WAS.



THE FLOOR VANISHES, I DO NOT FALL INTO THE ACID PIT.



I REACH THE WOMB, THE EXIT, THE BOX.

IT'S THE LAST TRAP-- SOMEHOW I KNOW THAT. THE LAST EXIT. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TYPE MY NAME. (MY REAL NAME, MY TRUE NAME.) AND THE DOOR WILL OPEN AND I WILL BE SCOTT FREE.

ZEP AND BRAID AND WELDUN HANG IN WARNING, LOWLIES WHO NEVER ESCAPED THE ARMAGHETTO, THE BLACK BLOOD OF A BYGONE DECADE CRUSTED ON THEIR NECKS.

YOUR NAME, THEY SAY, TELL US YOUR NAME AND WE'LL LET YOU GO.



AURALIE HANGS THERE. SWEET AURALIE, MY FIRST LOVE, HER FEET BURNED AWAY AND HER EYES CHURNING WITH MAGGOTS. WHAT DO I CALL YOU? SHE ASKS ME. NOT SCOTT FREE. SCOTT FREE WAS JUST GAINNY'S JOKE.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME, MY LOVE?

I DON'T KNOW

I'M GOING TO DIE



It's over, child.
You can wake
up now.



I OPEN MY EYES ON A STRANGE
ROOM AND FOR A MOMENT I
DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM.

THE DISORIENTATION PASSES:
A BEDROOM IN THE J.I.I.
EMBASSY IN MANHATTAN. A
LONG WAY FROM APOKOLIPS.

IT WAS ONLY A DREAM.



BUT IF IT WAS ONLY A DREAM...

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

AND
WHO ARE
YOU?



You want a name, "Scott
Free"? I am a friend.

I have come
to reclaim something
of mine. A ruby...



TWEN
LEFT
HERE



LISTEN BUSTER, I'M
WARNING YOU YOU LAYA
FINGER ON ME I'LL SO
HELP ME YOU TRY ANY-
THING MY HUSBAND'S A
MAFIA HITMAN - HE'LL
KILL YOU SO DON'T
EVEN THINK IT DON'T...



O GOD.
DON'T
KILL ME.



I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN
TO SCARE YOU. IT'S JUST
THAT...

SORRY.



AH, HH, YOU ESCAPING
FROM PRISON 2

NO, FROM
ARKHAM, THE
MADHOUSE.

OH.

JERUSA

MY MOTHER DIED LAST WEEK. SHE WAS VERY OLD. THAT WAS WHEN I KNEW I HAD TO GET AWAY FROM THAT PLACE.

SAY, WHY AREN'T YOU, Y'KNOW, WEARING ANYTHING?

AREN'T YOU COLD?

THEY TOOK MY CLOTHES AWAY. THEY WERE SCARED I WOULD KILL MYSELF. HANG MYSELF WITH A SHIRT, PERHAPS.

OH, I'M SORRY.

YES, VERY COLD.

WELL...

THERE'S AN OLD COAT OF HARRY'S-- MY HUSBAND'S-- IN THE BACK. WHY DON'T YOU PUT IT ON? YOU MUST BE FREEZING.

A COAT? THAT'S VERY NICE OF YOU. I'D LIKE TO WEAR A COAT.

THANK YOU.

PASSENGERS

NEIL GAIMAN,
WRITER
SAM KIETH &
MALCOLM JONES III
ARTISTS
ROBBIE BUSCH,
COLORS
TODD KLEIN,
LETTERS
ART YOUNG,
ASST. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER
EDITOR
MR. MIRACLE
CREATED BY
JACK KIRBY



OK, I'VE SEARCHED THE OLD JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA FILES, AND I THINK WE'VE FOUND IT.

SHOULD BE UP ON THE SCREENS ANY SECOND.

THERE YOU GO. TAKEN FROM SOME PSYCHO CALLING HIMSELF "DOCTOR DESTINY." HE WAS USING IT TO AFFECT PEOPLE'S DREAMS -- MAKE NIGHTMARES REAL, THAT KIND OF THING.

IT WAS KEPT IN THE TROPHY ROOM ON THE SATELLITE.

SPACE JUNK, DESTROYED!

And my ruby?

Where is this satellite?

COULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, COULD HAVE BEEN MOVED TO THE DETROIT FORTRESS, OR THE SECRET SANCTUARY, OR...

You don't know.

YEAH... IS THIS KIND OF THING GOING TO HAPPEN EVERY TIME I STAY HERE OVERNIGHT? DON'T ANSWER THAT...

LEAVE ME SEE BATMAN? NOPE, IT'S 3:30 AM. HE'LL BE AT WORK...

WHO ELSE WAS IN THE OLD JLA...?

GOT IT!

HMM. LET'S GO WAKE HIM UP.

NOT A CLUE.

Somebody must know.





**KNOCK
KNOCK**

SCOTT...

DO YOU KNOW
WHAT TIME IT IS?
I HOPE THIS IS
IMPORTANT...


YEAH, SORRY, I
KNOW IT'S NEARLY
FOUR, JONN. BUT
YOU'RE THE ONLY
MEMBER OF THE
OLD JLA WHO'S
STILL AROUND.
WE'VE GOT A
VISITOR...

you!


LORD L'ZORIL, I GREET
YOU HUMBLLY: MAY YOU GUARD
US IN THE DARKNESS AND ON
THE PATHWAY BETWEEN WAKING
HOURS, AND PROTECT US IN
DREAMS FROM THE FLAME
OF YOUR WRATH.

A Martian?
I thought your
kind were
eons-gone.


I AM THE LAST
OF MY RACE.



I seek a ruby,
Last Martian. It was
known to your kind as
D'orilar, the Stone of
Binding. It was taken
from a human, kept
as a souvenir: where
is it now?



WHAT HAPPENED
TO THE OLD JLA'S
TROPHIES, JONN?



Where?

A WAREHOUSE.
UPSTATE GOTHAM. LITTLE
TOWN CALLED MAYHEW.
I CAN GET YOU THE
EXACT ADDRESS ...

THAT STUFF?
IT'S IN STORAGE. I
THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE
KIND OF NICE TO PUT
IT ON DISPLAY SOME-
WHERE, BUT IT'S
KIND OF HOKEY...

There is no need.
I thank you, last
Martian. If you wish,
you may dream of the
City of Focative
Mirrors ...

WHO
WAS
THAT?

I thank
you both. I hope
you find your
name, Scott
Free.
Goodnight.



AN OLD GOD.
A VERY OLD GOD.
COME, SCOTT FREE; LET
US HIT THE KITCHEN. I
HAVE A SECRET STASH
OF OREOS OF WHICH
YOU ARE WELCOME
TO PARTAKE.

...MOTHER SAID, IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE A CRIMINAL, JOHN, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BRING SHAME ON THE FAMILY NAME. I HAD TO CHANGE IT. I CALLED MYSELF DESTINY. DEE IS FOR DESTINY...

NOW MOTHER'S DEAD IT DOESN'T MATTER ANY MORE. NOW I CAN BE DEE AGAIN. DEE IS FOR LOTS OF THINGS. DEATH. DUST. DARKNESS. DEMONS...

YEAH. WELL, SPEAKING AS A MOTHER OF TWO LITTLE GIRLS, JOHN, IF EITHER OF THEM ANNOUNCED THEY WANTED TO BE MASTER CRIMINALS I'D TELL THEM TO CHANGE THEIR NAMES.

...MAKE A CHANGE FROM TELLING AIMEE AND JESSIE TO TIDY UP THEIR ROOMS, I SUPPOSE.

I'M NOT A BLACK MAGICIAN.

I DIDN'T SAY YOU WERE, JOHN.

I KNOW NOT YOU. THE OTHERS. SCIENTISTS. I'M AN HERMETIC PHILOSOPHER. AND A SCIENTIST, TOO. TRULY.

IF I WASN'T A SCIENTIST I COULDN'T HAVE DONE WHAT I DID TO THE RUBY.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF, ROSEMARY KELLY?

MADE OF? THEY'RE JUST DREAMS...

NO. THEY AREN'T. PEOPLE THINK DREAMS AREN'T REAL BECAUSE THEY AREN'T MADE OF MATTER, OF PARTICLES. DREAMS ARE REAL BUT THEY ARE MADE OF VIEWPOINTS, OF IMAGES, OF MEMORIES AND PUNS AND LOST HOPES...

THE RUBY SEEMS TO TURN THEM INTO MATTER. IT FORCES THEM TO TRANSLATE THEMSELVES INTO FORMS WE CAN RECOGNIZE IN THIS WORLD.

IT ALSO CONTROLS DREAMS IN THEIR RAW STATE. YOUR DREAMS. ANYBODY'S DREAMS.



I DON'T KNOW WHERE MOTHER GOT THE RUBY FROM. SHE HAD A LUCKY CHARM AS WELL. SHE WOULDN'T GIVE ME THAT... NOT WHILE SHE LIVED.

I BUILT MACHINES THAT THE RUBY POWERED. THEN I BUILT THE MACHINES IN MY DREAMS. BUT THEY STOPPED ME DREAMING. SO I HAD TO USE THE RUBY DIRECTLY...



I CODED CIRCUITRY INTO ITS CLASP. I CHANGED ITS RESONANCE; I IRRADIATED IT; I FORCED FLAMES; I ISOLATED IT FROM ITS ORIGINAL POWER SOURCE, WHATEVER -- OR WHOEVER -- THAT WAS.

I MADE IT MORE REAL. I... CHANGED IT.



IT ISN'T A RUBY, REALLY. IT'S A SOLID DREAM. IT'S THE ONLY DREAM I HAVE. NOBODY ELSE CAN USE IT ANYMORE. NOBODY BUT ME.




AND WE'RE CLOSE TO IT, NOW. I WANT TO DRINK ITS LIGHT. TO DRINK THE LIGHT OF MY RUBY.



MAYHEW
5 MILES





I am a passenger.
I am moving through
your dreams. I am
riding in your dreams.

I ride on dragonback
from Manhattan; the
dragon is made of riveted
iron and smells of cotton
• candy.

I travel briefly by bus; in
the back the dreamer copulates
desperately, not noticing his
autonomous passenger. I sit
at the front and talk to the
driver.

Approaching the state of
Delaware, the dreamer is a
small dog, dreaming impatiently
of a past life, long forgotten,
when he sailed tall ships across
uncharted.

The salt spray of
the ocean stings
my face.

I am moving through
dreams, pulling toward
Mayhew, feeling for
the jewel.

Through your dreams, my
sleeping children, you had
a passenger, and you
never knew.





At last...







YES, I'M SURE
THIS IS THE PLACE.

OKAY, JOHN.
LISTEN, I UH, I
HOPE IT ALL GOES
OKAY. YOU
KNOW?



JOHN--KEEP THE
COAT. HARRY WON'T MIND,
AND I'D HATE TO THINK
OF YOU WANDERING
AROUND, FREEZING.
AND GET HELP,
OKAY?

THANK YOU,
ROSEMARY.



ROSEMARY...

YOUR HUSBAND,
HARRY, IS HE REALLY
A MAFIA HIT MAN?



HARRY? (GOD) NO-- IT WAS JUST
SOMETHING I SAID, WHEN I WAS, YOU
KNOW, SCARED YOU WERE A DANGEROUS
CRAZY OR SOMETHING.

HARRY'S A
HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHER.

OH.



...WELL, I DON'T SUPPOSE IT
WOULD HAVE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE
EITHER WAY.





HOURS

SO GO MY LITTLE LOVE. TOUCH THE WORLD.
EAT THEIR HEARTS AND POISON THEIR DREAMS. RIP THEIR NIGHTMARES INTO THE DAYLIGHT AND SCUM THEIR SLEEP WITH CREEPING FEAR.

YES.



HELLO, MISS. I WOULD LIKE A CUP OF COFFEE WHILE I WAIT.



SURE, HON. THAT'LL BE FIFTY CENTS.

UH... WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



OH, YOU KNOW, THE USUAL.
THE END OF THE WORLD.

NEXT: WAITING FOR THE END OF THE WORLD...

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HOUR 1: THE FLIES WALKED INTO THE WEB.



BETTE-- CAN I HAVE A COFFEE REFILL? AND A TUNA ON RYE?

SURE, HON.

ON HER DAYS OFF, AFTER SHE'S TYPED THE HOUSE, BETTE MUNROE WRITES STORIES. SHE WRITES THEM IN LONGHAND ON YELLOW LEGAL PADS.



SOMETIMES SHE WRITES ABOUT HER EX-HUSBAND, BERNARD, AND ABOUT HER SON, BERNARD JR., WHO WENT OFF TO COLLEGE AND NEVER CAME BACK TO HER.



SHE MAKES THESE STORIES END HAPPILY.

MOST OF HER STORIES, HOWEVER, ARE ABOUT HER CUSTOMERS.



THEY LOOK AT HER AND THEY JUST SEE A WAITRESS; THEY DON'T KNOW SHE'S NURSING A SECRET.

A SECRET THAT KEEPS HER ACHING CALF MUSCLES AND HER COFFEE-SOFTENED FINGERS AND HER WEARINESS FROM DRAGGING HER DOWN...

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IT'S HER SECRET.

SHE'S NEVER SHOWN ANYONE HER STORIES.

COMING RIGHT UP!

ONE TUNA ON RYE ...

ONE DAY SHE KNOWS SHE'LL PACKAGE THE PAPS UP, BIND THEM IN BROWN PAPER, SEND THEM TO DEAR ABBY, OR EARL WILSON, OR JACKIE COLLINS.

AND A COFFEE, THERE.

"BUT YOU'RE A WRITER," JOHNNY CARSON WILL SAY TO HER, "HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A WAITRESS?"

SHE'LL SMILE.

SHE WON'T TELL HIM.

THEY'LL READ THEM, AND THEY'LL PUBLISH THEM AND EVERYONE WILL MARVEL AT HER DEPICTION OF HAPPY, HAPPY SMALL-TOWN LIFE.

IT'LL BE HER SECRET.

BETTE - I'M GOING TO USE THE BATHROOM. IF DONNA COMES BY, TELL HER TO WAIT, OK?

SURE, JUDY!

SHE ALREADY KNOWS JUDY'S STORY.

PEOPLE THINK BETTE TALKS TO THEM SO EASILY BECAUSE SHE'S A WAITRESS. THEY DON'T REALIZE SHE'S A WRITER GATHERING MATERIAL.

SHE ISN'T SMALL-MINDED; A WRITER CAN'T AFFORD TO BE. WHAT THOSE GIRLS DO IS A SIN AGAINST GOD, AND UNNATURAL, BUT STILL ...

BETTE FEELS SORRY FOR THEM. IN HER STORIES SHE'S ALREADY MARRIED BOTH OFF THEM OFF TO FINE YOUNG MEN.

MA'AM? MA'AM, COULD I TROUBLE YOU FOR MORE COFFEE OVER HERE, IF YOU PLEASE?

NO TROUBLE AT ALL, HON.

IT'S NOT YET ELEVEN. YOU'VE STILL GOT AN HOUR TO KILL.

YEAH. I KNOW.

THE YOUNG MAN, NOW, HE'D SPOKEN TO HER EASY AS ANYTHING, JUST AS IF HE WAS REALLY TALKING TO A WAITRESS.

TELL THEM YOU'RE A WRITER AND THEY SHUT UP TIGHTER THAN CLAMS.

HE'S GOING FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH THAT BIG CHEMICAL WORKS. MAYBE TONIGHT SHE'LL WRITE A STORY ABOUT HIM.

HE'LL GET THE JOB.

MARRY, THE BOSS' DAUGHTER.

...I SAID, IT'S ALL MERINGUE AND RAZOR BLADES, AND SHE SAID...

HI I'M BETTE

CHEESEBURGER, BLACK COFFEE, PLEASE, BETTE. YOU, KATE?

UH HUH. I'LL HAVE TO SEE.

LIKE LOVEBIRDS.

I'LL HAVE A SALAD, LOW CAL DRESSING. AND A SANKA WITH LOW-FAT MILK, IF YOU HAVE IT.

NOW THAT COUPLE, THE FLETCHERS. TOWN TALK HAD IT HE'D MARRIED HER FOR HER MONEY, BUT BETTE COULD SEE THEY DOTTED ON EACH OTHER.

TAKE ONE LOVEBIRD AWAY, THE OTHER HANKERS AND DIES.



ZIPPEDEEDOODAH...
ZIPPEDEEAY...

ALL BETTE'S STORIES HAVE
HAPPY ENDINGS. THAT'S
BECAUSE SHE KNOWS
WHERE TO STOP.

SHE'S REALIZED THE
REAL PROBLEM WITH
STORIES-- IF YOU KEEP
THEM GOING LONG
ENOUGH, THEY ALWAYS
END IN DEATH.

MISS SGO



HI, BETTE. WHEN
YOU'RE READY.

WITH
YOU GOON,
MARSH.

MARSH'S STORY SHE KNOWS ALREADY.



BETTE'S SORT OF LOOKED AFTER MARSH, SINCE
MARSHA DIED. (MARSH AND MARSHA, THE WRITER IN
HER WHISPERS, THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY MEANT FOR
EACH OTHER.)

BUT MARSHA DRANK HERSELF
TO DEATH, DIED YELLOW AND
WHISPERING IN A SANITARIUM.



OH... THANKS.

MARSH, HE WENT SORT OF CRAZY
AFTER THAT; A GOOD MAILMAN
GONE BAD. STATE PEN, STEALING
FROM THE MAIIS. FIVE YEARS.



HE'S A TRUCKER THESE DAYS, WORKING
OUT OF SOME UPSTATE TOWN THAT HAD
NEVER HEARD OF HIM. BUT HE STILL
LOOKS IN ON HER
EVERY FEW WEEKS...

...FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE.



WHEN DO YOU GET OFF, HONEY?

YOU KNOW, MARSH. NOT
UNTIL AFTER LUNCH.

S'OK.
I'LL
WAIT.



THEY WEREN'T JUST CUSTOMERS.

THEY WERE RAW MATERIAL.



EVEN THE QUIET LITTLE STRANGER IN THE CORNER SEAT.



HE'D BEEN HERE SINCE SHE CAME ON SHIFT THIS MORNING, NURSING COFFEE AFTER COFFEE, HARDLY DRINKING AT ALL, JUST WATCHING THEM COOL AWAY IN A DREAM-WORLD OF HIS OWN...



SHE WONDERS ABOUT HIM...



AND IN HER STORY...



SHE'LL TALK TO HIM WHEN THINGS GET QUIETER, DRAW HIM OUT, THEN TONIGHT, WHEN MARSH HAS CLIMBED IN HIS TRUCK AND HEADED BACK UPSTATE, SHE'LL WRITE A STORY ABOUT HIM.



...SHE'LL MAKE HIM HAPPY.





IN YESTERDAY'S PULSE-CHURNING EPISODE OF "SECRET HEARTS"...

YOU MEAN-- I MARRIED MY DENTIST?

BUT IF MY SIAMESE TWIN IS HIV POSITIVE, DOCTOR, DOESN'T THAT MEAN--

=GASP! ...?

I'M NOT JUST A CRAZY, CARA. I'M A CRAZY WITH A GUN. SAY YOUR PRAYERS.



HOUR 5: THE FLIBS GET RESTLESS



I'M SAYING IT'S WEIRD!



NOBODY'S COME IN-- IT SEEMS LIKE WE MUST HAVE BEEN HERE FOR HOURS.

BUT IT SEEMS LIKE WE JUST CAME IN...



SOMETHING'S VERY...



LIHHHH... I, MM...



I LOVE THIS PLACE.



ME TOO.

ANYWAY, I HAD THESE HORRIBLE DREAMS THIS MORNING. HORRIBLE.

HOUR 6:

Dear Donna,



I don't blame you for all you said about us last night. And I said I was sorry after I hit you. And I am sorry.



I'M SAYING IT'S WEIRD! NOBODY'S COME IN-- IT SEEMS LIKE WE MUST HAVE BEEN ... LIH...



Donna, I love you. I only hurt you because I was scared of losing you. I'm sorry.



HOUR 7: HE MAKES THEM
FEEL GOOD. HE MAKES
THEIR DREAMS COME TRUE.
GIVES THEM WHAT THEY WANT.

AND MARK SAYS, LET'S
DO LUNCH. HAVE YOUR
PEOPLE CALL MY
PEOPLE. MONEY. MONEY.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AND GARRY'S HAVING A \$20 HOOKER
IN THE CONVERTIBLE. THEN HE'LL
BEAT HER UP, THROW HER OUT OF
THE CAR, DRIVE OFF. HE GETS SUCH
A KICK OUT OF DOING THAT...

AND KATE KNOWS SHE'LL NEVER
HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GARRY'S
LITTLE INFIDELITIES AGAIN. NO
MORE LIPSTICK ON HIS COLLAR.
HE'S ALL HERS.

HOUR 8: HE MOVES AMONG THEM, EXPERIENCING THEIR LITTLE PLEASURES, THEIR MINOR JOYS.



THE JEWEL WHISPERS TO HIM OF ELSEWHERE PAINS AND FARAWAY MADNESSES, OF FAR-OFF DEATHS AND DISTANT TERRORS.

THIS COMFORTS HIM.

HE FEELS ECHOES OF THEIR DREAMS.

BETTE HAS DISLODGED STEPHEN KING FROM THE BESTSELLER LISTS.

IT DOES LITTLE FOR HIM. SIMPLE PLEASURES NO LONGER EXCITE HIM.



JUDY'S BITTER-SWEET RELINQUISHMENT WITH DONNA PROVIDES FRACTIONALLY MORE STIMULATION FOR HIM.

AND MARSH THINKS HE'S *DEAD*; DRANK HIMSELF TO HELL AND GONE; RIGID ON A SLAB -- HIS LIVER HAS FAILED; HIS SKIN IS SLOWLY GOING COLD.

DEE ALMOST GETS ENJOYMENT FROM THAT.




NEARLY AS MUCH ENJOYMENT AS HE GETS FROM WATCHING HIS JEWEL IN ACTION.



IS EVERYBODY GOING CRAZY? REPORTS ARE COMING IN FROM ACROSS THE STATE ABOUT A WAVE OF MADNESS, SUICIDE AND BAD DREAMS...

PLEASURE



HOUR 9: CONFLICT, HE DECIDES, REVEALS CHARACTER.

...FILTHY DYKE BITCH!

LHT!

HOUR 10: THEY LOVE HIM.

DEEE...

DEESE...

DEESE...

DEESE...

DEEE...WE LOVE YOU, DEEE...

BEAUTIFUL! YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL.

HOUR 11: HE CATCHES UP ON THE NEWS.

...NIGHTMARE, SLEEPLESSNESS AND INSANITY REPORTED EARLIER ON LOCAL NEWS IS SHAPING UP TO BE A PLANET-WIDE PHENOMENON.



REPORTS HAVE ALREADY COME IN FROM ASIA AND EUROPE OF...OF ACCIDENTS AND DISASTERS, F-FROM PEOPLE FALLING ASLEEP ON F-FREWAYS, PLANES CRASHING, BOTCHED SURGERY...

HERE WITH A F-FULL REPORT IS MARY GENTIAN. MARY?



LEADING FUNDAMENTALISTS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO PROCLAIM THE ARMAGEDDON.

INTERNATIONALLY, PEOPLE CAN'T SLEEP. OR THEY HAVE NIGHTMARES. AND ANYBODY EVEN MARGINALLY MENTALLY UNBALANCED IS GOING OVER THE EDGE.

MARGH, HONEY, PLEASE CALM DOWN, PLEASE. SHE'S JUST A KID.



FILTH, LESBO, FILTH.

YOU BASTARD!
I'LL KILL YOU -- LET GO OF ME!
I'LL KILL HIM!

ALL YOU NEED, ALL YOU NEED IS A PROPER MAN. A REAL MAN. I'LL SHOW YOU, BITCH. I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU...



DOCTOR DEE. DOCTOR DEE.

GREAT AND WIGE AND WONDERFUL...

DEE...



HE LICKS THE BLOOD FROM THE MAN'S FINGER. A GOD MUST NOT APPEAR UNGRACIOUS TOWARD A SACRIFICE; HOWEVER, HE DERIVES NO SATISFACTION FROM IT.

HE DOESN'T KNOW *WHAT* HE WANTS TO EAT. THERE MUST BE SOMETHING.



NO INTERNATIONAL SUPERHEROES WERE AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT, SO I SPOKE TO HERSCHEL OF LOCAL SUPER TEAM "THE AMAZING HERSCHEL AND BETTY":




HI, UH...AM I ON? IS THIS WORKING? YEAH...?



WELL, ME AND BETTY, WE FIGURE IT'S PROBABLY RAYS.



AND FINALLY, IN BALTIMORE, A WOMAN CLAIMS SHE'S TAUGHT HER DUCK TO TAP-DANCE. MORE ON THAT AFTER THE BREAK.



HOUR 12! IT IS TIME FOR THEM TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER.

...WORST, MOST SHAMEFUL THING I'VE EVER DONE? OH GEE. I CAN'T TELL YOU. I CAN'T, I...

I WAS 18. I WAS AT COLLEGE. I WAS DRUNK. TO BEGIN WITH I WAS DRUNK, ANYWAY.

NEXT DOOR TO MY APARTMENT WAS A FUNERAL HOME.

"MY BOYFRIEND HAD JUST SPLIT. THAT WAS WHY I GOT DRUNK, AND I WAS HORNY, AND CRAZY..."

... I JUST WALKED AND I FOUND MYSELF OUTSIDE THE FUNERAL HOME AND I JUST SORT OF TRIED THE DOOR.

"I THINK MAYBE I WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEPLACE TO PEE, Y'KNOW -- A LADIES' ROOM."

"AND THE DOOR OPENED, AND I WAS IN THE MORTUARY."

"THERE WAS A BODY ON THIS TABLE. YOUNG GUY. YOU COULD SEE HE'D BEEN, Y'KNOW, GOOD LOOKING."

"AND I THOUGHT I'D BE FREAKED OUT, BUT I WASN'T. I WAS KIND OF EXCITED..."

"I WENT OVER TO THE BODY AND I STARTED TO PLAY WITH IT."

"THEN I CLIMBED ON TOP OF HIM, AND STARTED, UH, I STARTED REALLY GOING."

IT WAS NEVER THE SAME.

AND ALL OF A SUDDEN BLOOD STARTED TO WELL UP IN HIS MOUTH, AND I PUT MY FACE DOWN AND I...

I DON'T WANT TO TELL YOU THIS. I DON'T WANT TO TELL ANYBODY THIS.

SOMETIMES WHEN I'D MAKE LOVE TO GARRY I'D ASK HIM TO LIE REAL STILL. I'D CLOSE MY EYES AND PRETEND BUT IT WAS NEVER --

HOUR 13: THEY GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER INTIMATELY...

THEIR HOUSE IS A MU-SE-LIM

WHEN PEOPLE COME TO SEE 'EM

THEY REALLY ARE A SCREE-LIM

AH. AH.

YESSS. OHH YESSSS. MNN.

EEEE. MMMM. EEEEE. JESUS.

OH DO IT. NOW. DO IT.

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

THE ADDAMS FAMILY.

♪♪♪

NEAT.

BASTARD. HH. ALL OF YOU. HHH. ARE. ALL. AHHH. SUCH. ALL. HHH. BASTARD...

YES. NOW. YESSSSS.

AH. AH. AH. AH. AH. AH. AHHHH HHHHH...



16
HOUR 14: MIDNIGHT, AND HE CONSULTED ORACLES.



TELL ME MY FUTURE.

YOU COME FROM DUST.

YOU WALK THE DUST.



YOU GO BACK TO DUST.



TELL ME MY FUTURE,

THERE IS NO FUTURE FOR YOU, JOHN DEE.

IT'S A FUTURE BOUNDED BY WALLS AND GUARDS AND THE SOUR SMELL OF MADNESS.

AND THEN THE GKEIN OF YOUR LIFE IS OUT, SON OF YOUR MOTHER.



TELL MY FUTURE!

YOU HAVE STOLEN SOME OF THE POWER OF DREAMS.

THAT'S GOOD. I LIKE THAT FUTURE. CLEVER FLIES, CLEVER LITTLE INSECTS.

YOU WILL TAKE ALL OF IT.

YOU WILL CRUSH OUT THE DREAM-LORD'S LIFE IN YOUR HANDS, JOHN DEE.



HOUR 16: PARTY GAMES.

MURDER IN THE DARK...

AAAAHH!

HE-HE-HE-HE-HEE!

9
8
HOUR 17:
CONFESSION
AND PENANCE.

BETTE, YOU
KNOW MARSHA *KNEW*
ABOUT US? THAT WAS
WHY SHE BEGAN
DRINKING.

I HATED
HER. I MEAN, SHE'S
THE *ONLY* WOMAN
I EVER LOVED, BUT
I HATED HER.

NEW YEAR'S EVE I BLEW
MY *WHOLE* PAYCHECK ON
A CRATE OF VODKA, LEFT
IT IN OUR BEDROOM,
WENT OUT OF TOWN
FOR A WEEK...

WHEN I
GOT BACK SHE
WAS IN THE
HOSPITAL. I AS
GOOD AS KILLED
HER.

I'LL TELL YOU
SOMETHING *ELSE*.
WHEN I WAS IN THE
PEN, I SAW YOUR
SON. LITTLE
BERNIE.

HE'D BEEN
HUSTLING HIS ASS
IN GOTHAM, GOT
PICKED UP FOR
KNIFING HIS
PIMP.


YOU COULD HAVE
HIM FOR A PACKET OF
CIGARETTES.

BAM


I DON'T. I
DON'T. I DON'T
WANT TO *HEAR*
THISIGHT!

BETTE...


...I
DID.




HOUR 18: THE
BRINGS OUT
THE BEAST
IN THEM.



THE FEMALES, NERVOUS OF THE
COMING CONFLICT, Huddle
TOGETHER FOR COMFORT.




THE PACK LEADER
IS SPOILING FOR
A FIGHT.



THE OLD MALE GNAWS AT ITS
TRAPPED FRONT LEG. IT HAS
FOLLOWED THE PACK AT A
DISTANCE FOR YEARS,
HUNTING FOR SCRAPS.



THE PACK LEADER
PAUSES, THEN SPRINGS.



EVEN A MAN WHO IS PURE IN
HEART AND SAYS HIS PRAYERS
EACH NIGHT...

THEY
GROWL.

THE YOUNG MALE
ADVANCES. SOON
THE FEMALES
WILL BE ALL HIS.

RRRODDAWRRR

RRRR



THE PACK LEADER'S TEETH ARE STRONG AND SHARP. HE IS A GOOD LEADER. THE CHALLENGE HAS BEEN MET.

THE SMELL OF BLOOD IS HEAVY ON THE AIR.

AAAAOOOOOOOO

THE VICTORY, LIKE THE BLOOD, IS SWEET.



HOUR 19: HE LIES TO THEM.

"...TO PROVE IT'S SAFE, I'LL HAVE THE GREEN SIDE, YOU HAVE THE RED HALF."

TRUSTING THE WICKED QUEEN, SNOW WHITE TOOK A BITE FROM THE ROSY RED APPLE, AND INSTANTLY FELL DOWN AS IF SHE WERE DEAD.

AH.

BUT SHE'S NOT REALLY DEAD, IS SHE, DOCTOR DEE? IS SHE..?

HOUR 20: IT WAS TIME FOR ENTERTAINMENT.

♪ EVEN WHEN THE DARKEST
♪ CLOUDS ARE IN THE SKY... ♪

♪ YOU MUSTN'T CRY ♪
♪ AND YOU MUSTN'T ♪
♪ SIGH... ♪ ♪ ♪

SPREAD A LITTLE
HAPPINESS AS YOU
GO BY... ♪ ♪ ♪



♪ PLEASE
♪ TRY... ♪ ♪

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP



HOUR 21: HE SHOWS THEM THE DELIGHTS OF BELIEF.

AHN. AH. GOR

I CAN SEE
IT! SWEET
LORD...

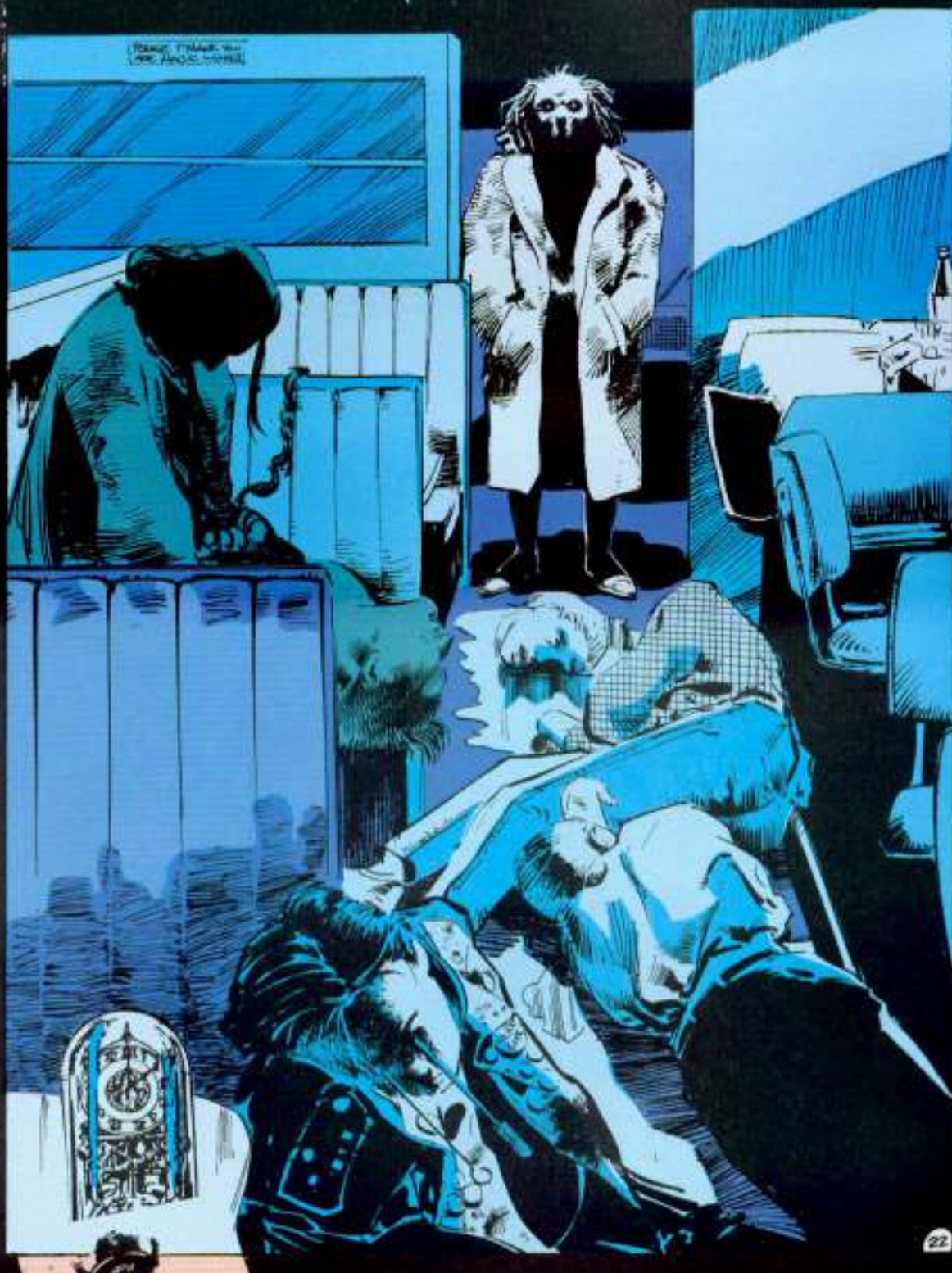
I CAN
SEE THE
GLORY!



I WANT TO SEE
IT, DOCTOR. I TRUST
YOU. I WILL SEE THE
GLORY...

HOUR 22.

FRANCESCO FRANKLIN, 40 ANNI, ANGIOSI, ROMA.



HOUR 23.



HOUR 24.



NEXT:
DREAM'S
END.

VERTIGO

ESSENTIAL VERTIGO

DC COMICS

THE
SANDMAN

PRELUDES & NOCTURNES

MEKEAN

NEIL GAIMAN
MIKE DRINGENBERG
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LISTEN: YOU
CAN HEAR THE
SCREAMING,

HAROLD SMITH PROWL
THE DOGS' HOME, A
TIRE IRON CLUTCHED
IN HIS BLOODED FIST.


THREE CHILDREN ARE
TRAPPED IN AN ELEVATOR
WITH BOBBY-JOE MCCANN.

MAUDE CARILLON
SCREAMS WITH
LAUGHTER AS THE
FLAME DEVOURS
THE GERIATRIC
WARD.

LISTEN.


LISTEN:

YOU CAN HEAR
SOBBING.




ON THE FREEWAY HELPLESS
WEEPING COMES FROM THE
CRASH-SCULPTURE OF
TWISTED, BLISTERED METAL,
BURNING RUBBER,
SHATTERED GLASS.

IN THE STREETS OF NEW YORK, A GROUP OF
FUNDAMENTALISTS KNOW THAT THIS IS THE
ARMAGEDDON, AND THEY ARE STILL HERE,
TRAPPED ON THE EARTH.




BEREFT OF THE RAPTURE
THEY WEEP FOR THEIR
ABANDONMENT BY A
SUDDENLY DISTANT GOD.



IN THE RADIO ROOM NAN FOWLER
KNOWS SHE HAS NO MORE AMBULANCES
TO SEND, AND THE CALLS JUST WON'T
STOP COMING IN ...

LISTEN.



LISTEN TO A
WORLD IN PAIN.

LISTEN.

YOU CAN HEAR IT.

S O U N D



AND F U R Y

NEIL GAIMAN, WRITER * MIKE DRINGENBERG AND
MALCOLM JONES III, ARTISTS * ROBBIE BUISCH, COLORIST
TODD KLEIN, LETTERER * ART YOUNG, ASSOC. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER, EDITOR



You are using the Dreamstone to do THAT?

WHY?





It was not made for THIS. You must stop.

If you reverse what you have done to the jewel -- then let me use its energies to repair the damage you have done to the world...



The ruby contains too much of me -- of my power -- in its fabric.

It stole more when I tried to use it.



You have robbed me of it. I cannot use it, and I am no longer strong enough to repair the havoc alone.

Can you not see what you are doing? You must LISTEN.

YOURS? OHHH. YOUR SOUL IS THE FIRE IN THE HEART OF MY JEWEL...



IT'S YOUR STOLEN POWER I'VE BEEN USING ALL THESE YEARS YES. I SEE.

VERY WELL.



You will repair it, then, give back control of it to me?

You will return it?



GIVE MY BABY TO YOU? NO. DON'T BE STUPID.



I'M GOING TO KILL YOU.



With the power of my own ruby ? Perhaps he could. It has absorbed too much of my soul-stuff already...



If you would
steal a dreamlord's
power...

...then you shall do
it in the dreamlord's
realm.

In
DREAMS.



COWARD!

COWARDY COWARDY CUSTARD
STICK YOUR HEAD IN THE MUSTARD
BREAK YOU. SLICE YOU UP.
SPIT YOU OUT.
BASTARD.



NOW, BELOVED,
FOLLOW HIM...TAKE
ME INTO DREAMS,
MY DARLING. DO
YOU HEAR ME?

NOW!

LISTEN!

TO THE SOUNDS BARBARA WONG MAKES AS SHE SLICES THE PRETTY PICTURES OUT OF HER FLESH.

TO THE NOISE JOEY CAMPBELL MAKES AS THE OVEN CLEANER CONSUMES HIS FACE, BURNING OUT HIS EYES, TO THE HAPPY LAUGHTER OF THE LITTLE CHILDREN.

LISTEN!

LISTEN TO THE RUSHING RIVERS OF BLOOD, FLOWING DOWNWARDS IN A WARM TORRENT.

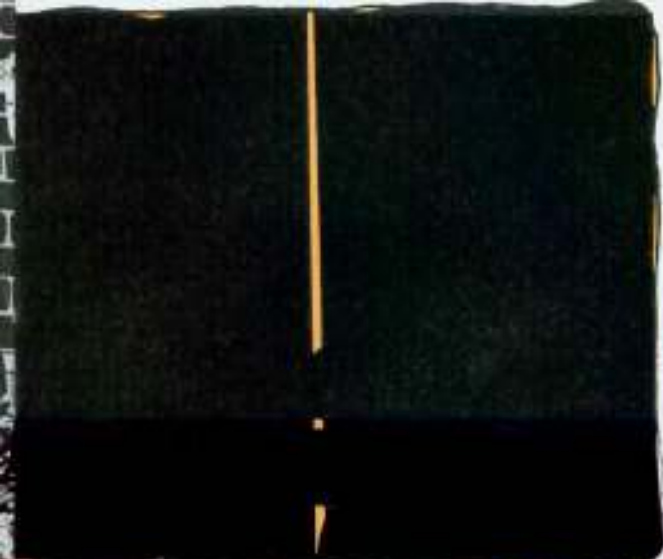
THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK.

OF THE HELPLESS.

LISTEN.

OF THE MAD.

YOU CAN HEAR IT.





NO, THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. NOTHING MORE THAN THIS!

YOU HAD A DREAM ABOUT RAPING YOUR MOTHER.

A TALE TOLD BY AN IDIOT, FULL OF SOUND AND FURY, SIGNIFYING NOTHING.



*caesar
I'm in Love,
Ebel 1987*

YOU HAD WHAT? JOHNNY DEE, I WISH TO GOD I'D STRANGLED YOU AT BIRTH!

DON'T SAY THAT, MOMMA. IT WAS ONLY A DREAM. I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN IT.



CAESAR...



CAESAR. BEWARE THE IDEAS OF MARCH!

NO! IT'S NOT THAT! WHAT IS IT?

BEWARE THE MARCH OF IDEAS?

NO...



BEWARE
THE BRIDES OF
FRANKENSTEIN

NO!
NO--STAY
BACK!

GO AWAY!



I... THEY'VE
GONE. YOU DID
THAT. MY RUBY.

I KNOW
YOU, GOD.
THIS IS A
DREAM...

I'M IN THE
DREAMWORLD.



AND I REMEMBER WHY I'M
HERE. I'M HERE TO KILL YOU,
DREAMLORD... TO TAKE THIS
KINGDOM AS MY OWN.

I HOLD YOUR STOLEN
POWER IN MY HANDS...



AND I WILL
TAKE ALL OF IT.

HEEE... ♪
I THINK I'M
GOING TO LIKE
IT HERE. ♪



WHERE ARE YOU?
SHOW YOURSELF! I'M
GOING TO SUCK YOUR
BLASTED LIFE OUT,
SWINE-SCUM!

YOU CAN'T
HIDE FROM ME
FOREVER!



AND A HUNDRED
MILLION SLEEPERS
STIRRED LINEASILY
IN THEIR GLUMBER.



CAN YOU SEE
ME, STINKARD
LORD OF PIGS
AND MIRE?

LOOK!


CAN YOU SEE
ME LICING YOUR
POWER TO RIP
YOUR RAGTAG
DREAMWORLD
APART?

CAN YOU
SEE ME?

HAHAHAHAHA

AND THE SLEEPING ALL OVER
THE WORLD SCREAMED AND
WHIMPERED AND MOANED. THEY
THRASHED AND CALLED OUT, AS
IF CAUGHT IN THE DARKEST OF
NIGHTMARES...


AND IN DREAMS JOHN
DEE SPEWED HIS HATE
AND LAUGHTER ONTO
THE EMERALD WINDS.




EVE STARES OUT FROM HER CAVE AT THE ERUPTING DREAM-SCAPE, HER RAVEN CAWS UNKINDLY AT THE HAVOC.



COME TO ME, YOU RAG-SHAG LORD OF NOWHERE AT ALL!




THE QUAKES AND LIGHTS SEND THE KEEPERS OF THE STORIES SCURRYING FOR COVER. THEIR MONSTERS HIDE WITH THEM, UNDER THE BED.




WATCH ME! I'LL RUPTURE YOUR RANSHACKLE LAND AND PISS IN THE RUINS!

COME TO ME, YOU SPINELESS, SPITTLE-ARSED, POLY-PALE WANKER!



IN THE GARDEN OF FORKING WAYS, DESTINY FINDS HIMSELF (PERHAPS FOR THE FIRST TIME) HESITANT TO TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE IN HIS BOOK...



OHMYGOD. THIS IS SO GOOD.

MOTHER... IF YOU COULD ONLY SEE ME NOW.

WATCH ME, DREAM-PUKER! DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT I'LL DO NEXT?



STOP!

Enough! I am here, Dee! Resist!



YES. YOU'RE HERE. HELLO.

HEEHEE HEE...

THIS LOVELY THING IS YOURS, ISN'T IT? IT CONTAINS YOUR LIFE. YOUR MAGIC. YOUR POWER. RIGHT?



...right.

AND THE LAST TIME YOU USED IT, IT SUCKED OUT MORE EYES!

YES???

...Dee Stop. You are.. hurting the dreamers.

You are tampering with the order of things...



SHUTUP! SHUTUPSHUTUPSHUTUP! I'M GOING TO TAKE ALL OF IT. ALL YOUR LIFE. EVERY BIT.

WATCH ME!



WHOOOMP!





I DID IT.



I... I KILLED HIM.
WHOEVER HE WAS.
WHATEVER IT WAS...
IT'S DEAD.

THE RUBY. THE RUBY'S GONE TOO.
I FEEL SO STRANGE... I FEEL DIFFERENT.



SO... NOW I RULE THE
DREAMWORLD. I WILL HIDE
IN DREAMS. I'LL NEVER GO BACK,
NEVER LEAVE HERE FOR THE REAL
WORLD WHERE PEOPLE HURT YOU,
WHERE THEY DON'T CARE...



WHERE THEY DIE WHEN
YOU STILL NEED THEM.

I WILL BE A
WISE AND TOLERANT
MONARCH, DISPENSING
JUSTICE FAIRLY, AND
ONLY GETTING
NIGHTMARES TO
RIP OUT THE MINDS
OF THE EVIL AND
THE WICKED.

OR JUST
ANYBODY I
DON'T LIKE.



IM THE KING.
OF DREAMS. OF
EVERYTHING.

BUT IT'S FUNNY.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT WHEN
I BECAME KING... I THOUGHT
THERE WOULD BE APPLAUSE.



I THOUGHT
SOMEBODY WOULD
SAY SOMETHING.

Thank you,
John Dee.

It has been so long. I had forgotten...

I had forgotten how much of my power I had placed in that jewel. How much of it was denied to me...

BUT I KILLED YOU...

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME?

I am not sure you have pretended to power not yours. Wreaked havoc in my realm inflicted pain upon my person.

For that you should be punished.

A-ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME?

I could. Perhaps I will.

But you destroyed the ruby. I doubt I would have thought of that.

Destroying it, you released the power stored in it. My control of the dreamworld. It's all mine again.

It feels good.

SKRASH
SKRASH





OH, MMM.
SORRY, HANG ON.
I'M AFRAID I CAN'T
SEE A THING WITHOUT MY
SPECTACLES.



GOOD LORD! IT IS YOU,
DOCTOR. I WAS SCARED
THAT YOU MIGHT NOT BE
COMING BACK, AND YOU'VE
BROUGHT A FRIEND!



I TOLD YOU THAT
YOU'D COME BACK. WE
ALWAYS COME BACK.



"IT IS A COMFORT IN
WRETCHEDNESS TO HAVE
COMPANIONS IN WOE."
(MARLOWE, FAUST.)

OF COURSE, HE WAS
TALKING ABOUT HELL,
BUT IT APPLIES EQUALLY
TO ARKHAM. HEHEH.



THERE'S NO
PLACE LIKE HOME,
PROFESSOR
CRANE.



GOODBYE. I THINK I'M SORRY ABOUT ABOUT WHAT I DID. YOU KNOW. SORRY.

Sleep well, John Dee.

I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP IN MY CELL. THERE'S A RAT IN THERE. I'M FRIGHTENED OF RATS.

I DON'T SLEEP.



Perhaps you will tonight.



LISTEN-- IT'S SO HORRIBLE HERE. ALL THE SCREAMING THE LAST FEW DAYS.

MISTER DENT TRIED TO STRANGLE HIMSELF.

IT'S BEEN SO MAD, QUITE TERRIFYING.



IT'S NEVER QUIET HERE, NOT EVEN AT NIGHT. THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE CRYING, SOMEONE CALLING OUT, SOMEONE IN THE NEXT CELL BANGING THEIR HEAD AGAINST THE WALL.

BANGING

AND

BANGING

AND

BANGING.



FEAR OF NOISE. LET ME SEE. LATIN. STREPTICUS. "NOISY"... STREPTORNOBIA. PERHAPS?

Go back to your bed, Jonathan Crane. Go to sleep.

I have a castle to rebuild, a world to reclaim. But tonight, at least...



"Tonight humanity will sleep in peace."

OH, MY SAINTED AUNT, HAVE I BECOME A VICTIM OF BRAIN FEVER, THE CURSE OF ACADEMIA...?

MISTER CRANE, I FEAR YOU HAVE BEEN HAVING AN HALLUCINATION.

YAWWWWWN...

AS FAST AS THEY DAWNED,
THE CRAZY TIMES ARE OVER.

NAN FOWLER IS ASLEEP
ON HER DESK. SHE IS
BREATHING SLOWLY,
DEEPLY.

AND THE PATIENTS BROUGHT IN
THAT DAY, CUT AND SMASHED
AND BROKEN, ALL SLEEP LIKE
ANGELS, NEEDING NO MORPHINE.

THEY BREATHE
IN, OUT, IN, OUT,
IN UNBROKEN
AND QUIET
RHYTHM.

SILENCE WASHES LIKE A RIVER
OVER ARKHAM. NO SOUNDS OF
SCREAMING, NO GOBBING, NO
NOISES OF PAIN OR MADNESS.

JUST PEACE.

AND IN BEDLAM JOHN DIE
SLEEPS WITHOUT DREAMING,
BUT HIS SLEEP IS SOUND
AND RESTFUL.

THE ONLY NOISE IS THE
GENTLE, EVEN CADENCE OF
PEOPLE ASLEEP.
IN, OUT, IN, OUT.

LISTEN.

YOU CAN HEAR IT.

ARKHAM
ASYLUM

NEXT:
**A DEATH
IN THE
FAMILY**

VERTIGO

ESSENTIAL VERTIGO

DC COMICS

THE
SANDMAN

THE SOUND OF HER WINGS



NEIL GAIMAN
MIKE DRINGENBERG
MALCOLM JONES III

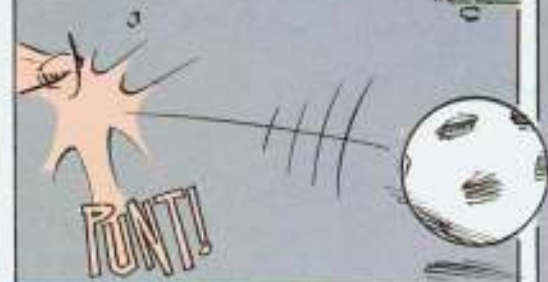


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"THE SOUND OF HER WINGS"

NEIL GAIMAN, WRITER
MIKE DRINGENBERG &
MALCOLM JONES III, ARTISTS
ROBBIE BUSCH, COLORS
TODD KLEIN, LETTERS
ART YOUNG, ASSOC. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER, EDITOR





PUNT!







I LOVE THAT MOVIE.
YOU EVER SEE IT?



No.



THERE'S THIS GUY
WHO'S LITTERLY A
BANKER, AND HE
DOESN'T HAVE TIME
FOR HIS FAMILY, OR
FOR LIVING, OR
ANYTHING.

AND MARY POPPINS,
SHE COMES DOWN FROM
THE CLOUDS, AND SHE
SHOWS HIM WHAT'S
IMPORTANT.

FUN. FLYING KITES,
ALL THAT STUFF.



SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS!



What?

SUPER-CALI-FRAGIL-ISTIC-EXPI-ALI-DOCIOUS.
LITTERLY FANTABULOUS WORD, HUH? IT MEANS,
Y'KNOW, GREAT.

WONDERFUL.

GINCHY.
GNARLY.



PEACHY KEEN!

WOOGA-WOOGA-
WOOGA! VROOOOOM!
YIIIIIIII!!!

Ah.

IT'S A CUTE MOVIE.
MAYBE NOT EVERYBODY'S
THING, BUT, Y'KNOW...



FLUT
FLUT



DICK VAN DYKE'S
BRITISH ACCENT DEPIES
BELIEF. "HOO HOO A
JOLLY LOLIDIE WIV
YEW, MAIRIE
PAWPINS!"

Y'KNOW.
CUTE.



No... perhaps it isn't.

I don't know what's wrong. But you're right. Something is... the matter.



When they captured me, imprisoned in their box, I had just one thought: Revenge.

By the time I freed myself, my original captor had gone the way of mortals, and I took my vengeance on his son.

It felt... fine, I suppose.



But it didn't feel as-- satisfying-- as I had expected.

In the interim, my dreamworld had fallen apart. I needed my tools, long since stolen and scattered.

One by one I found them.



The pouch was relatively easy.

Eventually I found them.



To regain the helmet I challenged a demon, dared the Hordes of Hell, faced down Lucifer himself.

Haah.

That left only the ruby.

The ruby was...

A human had been using it. I hate to think what toll it must have taken on his mind, on his soul...

We fought, in dreams. The stone, no longer mine, was sucking me into its fabric. It was...

...terrible.



And thinking it was my life he was crushing, he destroyed the ruby. HE DESTROYED IT. It freed me.

More than that. It freed everything of me that was in the stone. I got it ALL back...



I was more powerful than I had been in eons. I returned the human to the madhouse...

You see, until then I'd been driven. I'd had a true quest, a purpose beyond my function--and then, suddenly, the quest was over.



I felt...drained. Disappointed. Let down.

Does that make sense? I had been sure that as soon as I had everything back I'd feel good. But inside I felt worse than when I started.

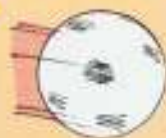


I feel like nothing.

There, you asked. I'm sorry. Maybe I don't have an answer.







DIDN'T IT OCCUR TO YOU THAT I'D BE WORRIED SILLY ABOUT YOU?

I didn't think--

THAT'S EXACTLY IT! YOU DIDN'T THINK! YOU LUMMOX, YOU OVERGROWN BUBBLE-HEADED--



WOW!

OOOOOOOOCHHH!

GIVE ME STRENGTH!



ANOTHER KILLER CATCH! YOU'RE AS MEAN A BALL-PLAYER AS YOUR FRIEND HERE.

HE'S NOT MY FRIEND.



HE'S MY BROTHER, AND HE'S AN IDIOT!



Just feeding the birds.



LOOK. I CAN'T STAY HERE ALL DAY. I GOT WORK TO DO.

YOU CAN COME WITH ME, OR YOU CAN STAY HERE AND GULK. I DON'T MIND EITHER WAY.



I'll come with you, I suppose.

DON'T DO ME ANY FAVORS.





Soundless, we travel
No heads turn to mark
our passing.

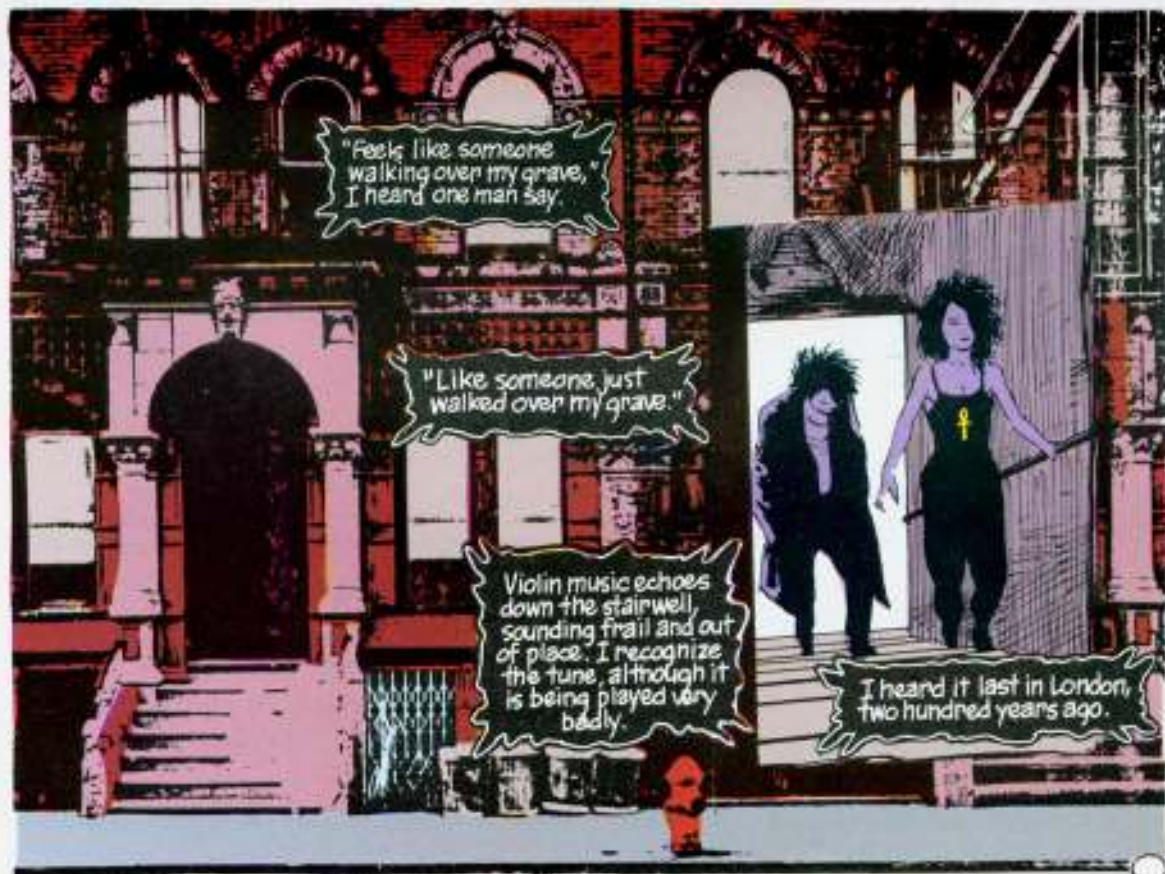


The churning crowd
parts as we walk
through it, looking
everywhere else,
but not at us.

In the world of the
waking, of the living,
we move silent as a
breath of cool wind.



As we pass them,
people shiver and
look away, mutter
to each other.



"Feels like someone
walking over my grave,
I heard one man say.

"Like someone just
walked over my grave."

Violin music echoes
down the stairwell,
sounding frail and out
of place. I recognize
the tune, although it
is being played very
badly.

I heard it last in London,
two hundred years ago.



CAN YOU ROCKER ROMANY?
CAN YOU PATTER FLASH?
♫ ♫ ♫ ♫

CAN YOU ROCKER ROMANY?
CAN YOU FAKE A BOSH?
♫ ♫ ♫ ♫



YES, I CAN
PATTER ROMANY, HARRY.
CAN YOU?

HUH? I
DIDN'T HEAR NOBODY
COME IN ...



CAN I PATTER
ROMANY?

NOT SO GOOD, BUT
I CAN FAKE A BOSH. MEANS
I' PLAY THE FIDDLE. I'M
NOT REAL ROMANY...



USED TO PLAY THE
RESTAURANTS AN' CLUBS,
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.

SCARF ROUND
MY HEAD. YOU PICK
UP STUFF ...



≡ HRRACK! ≡

NAW, I'M NO
GYPSY. I'M A YID. AN
OLD JEW DYING LONELY
IN NEW YORK, YOU KNOW?



YES, I KNOW WHO
YOU ARE, HARRY. DO YOU
KNOW WHO I AM?



YOU? YOU'RE ...
NO! NOT YET!
... PLEASE?



YEAH, I KNOW
WHO YOU ARE.





She draws him close.

From the darkness I hear the beating of mighty wings...



I THOUGHT HE WAS SWEET. DIDN'T YOU?

Sweet? I do not know. Perhaps.



My sister. When I was captured...

...it was not ME they wanted. It was you.



YEAH. I KNOW.

C'MON, I DON'T WANT TO MISS THE NEXT ONE.

AFTERNOON, NOBODY WANTS COMEDY. THEY WANT TO DRINK IN PEACE, MAKE ASSIGNATIONS, DO THEIR DEALS. EGMÉ HAS TO FIGHT FOR EVERY LAUGH SHE GETS.



IT BEATS WAITING TABLES.





THOSE ASSHOLES!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT - THAT
SCREWIN' MIKE WAS
LIVE! THOSE CHEAP,
NO GOOD...

WHO
ARE
YOU?



I'M SORRY, ESMÉ.
YOUR TIME WAS UP.
COME HERE, HONEY.



I JUST
REALIZED. THAT'S EVERY
COMEDIAN'S NIGHTMARE,
HUN? DYING ON STAGE. HEH.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE REALLY FUNNY!



NO. BUT I WOULD
HAVE BEEN...

WHY COULDN'T I
HAVE HAD A FEW MORE
LOUSY YEARS? I
WOULD HAVE MADE IT
TO THE TOP. WHY?



I hear the sound
of her wings.




...GETS ME DOWN,
TOO. MOSTLY THEY AREN'T
TOO KEEN TO SEE ME. THEY
FEAR THE GUNLESS LANDS.
BUT THEY ENTER YOUR
REALM EACH NIGHT
WITHOUT FEAR.

NO ONE
HERE
GETS OUT
ALIVE!


And I am far more
terrible than you,
my sister.





I find myself wondering about humanity. Their attitude to my sister's gift is so strange.

Why do they fear the sunless lands?




It is as natural to die as it is to be born.

But they fear her. Dread her. Fesby they attempt to placate her.

They do not love her.

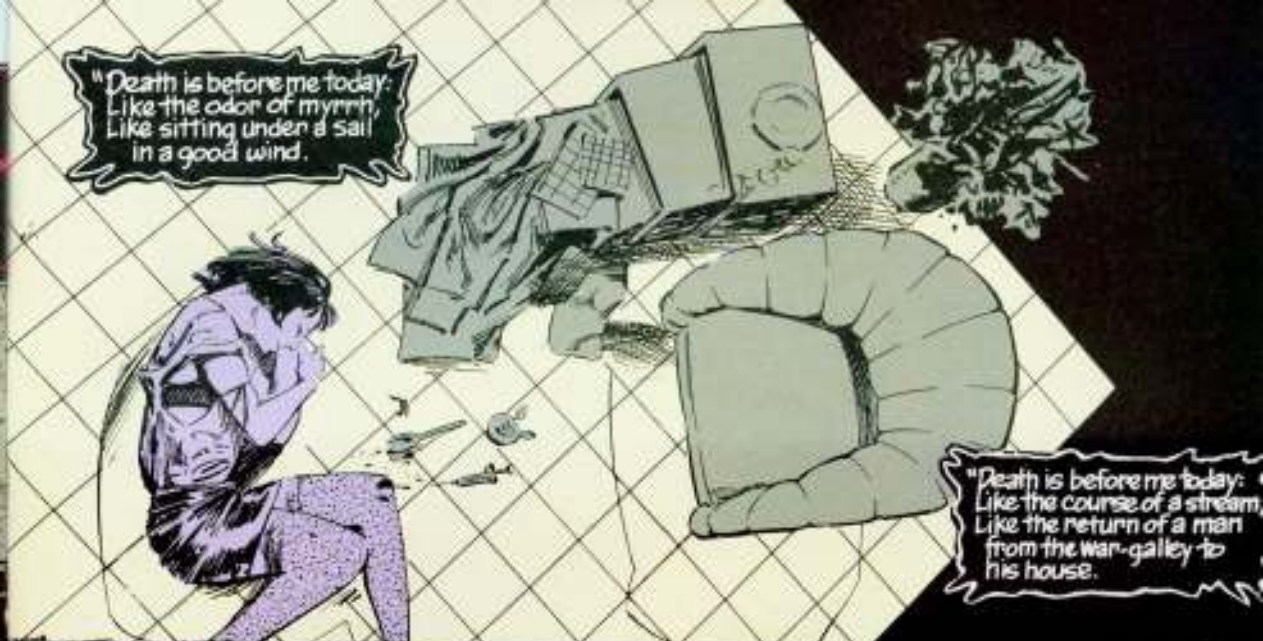
Many thousands of years ago I heard a song in a dream, a mortal song that celebrated her gift.

I still remember it.




Death is before me today: Like the recovery of a sick man, Like going forth into a garden after sickness."

DREAMS MAKE NO PROMISE



"Death is before me today:
Like the odor of myrrh,
Like sitting under a sail
in a good wind.

"Death is before me today:
Like the course of a stream,
Like the return of a man
from the war-galley to
his house.




"Death is before me today:
Like the home that a man longs to see,
After years spent as a captive."


That forgotten poet
understood her gifts.

My sister has a function to
perform, even as I do. The
Endless have their
responsibilities.

I have responsibilities.



I walk by her side, and
the darkness lifts from
my soul.



I walk with her, and I
hear the gentle beating
of mighty wings...



You have taught me something I had forgotten. I thank you, my sister.

TO ME, MAN! OVER HERE!

AW, THAT'S WHAT FAMILY'S ABOUT, LI'L BROTHER. LISTEN, I'VE GOT TO HEAD BACK SOON. IT WAS GOOD SEEING YOU.

JUST ONE LAST APPOINTMENT AND THEN I HAVE TO GO.

You have given me... much to think about...

YO! FRANKLIN!



I'M TELLIN' YOU MAN,
SHE SAID SHE'D SEE ME
AGAIN SOON. AND SHE
KNEW MY NAME. THAT'S
ONE BAAAD LADY...

GET THE BALL,
BUGBRAIN!

SKREEE

WHUMP

FRANKLIN!



Goodbye, sister.





I throw the grain
into the air.

And I hear it.

The sound
of wings...



ESSENTIAL VERTIGO Sandman

COVER ART AND
LOGO DESIGN:
DAVE MCKEAN

How would you
feel about life
if Death
was your
older
sister?

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