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DISCIPLES

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art

DISCIPLES

A.D.

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A STRANGE AND UNLIKELY STORM ENCROACHES UPON DISCIPLES' HEADQUARTERS.



THE WINGED WATCHER



SOCIETY OF THE ANCIENTS



FOOLS!



ARROGANCE WILL
HASTEN THEIR FATE.



I COMMAND THEE: OPEN!
RECEIVE THY MASTER.



AND SO, I SUMMON THEE. REVEAL THYSELF TO THIS MOST UNWORTHY EMISSARY.

AAAAAAHHH!

EEEE!



ARISE!



HAVE YOU SPOKEN TO THE 9?

YES, MASTER LUCIFER, BUT...

QUIET! THESE NEW DISCIPLES MUST NOT FLOURISH.... THE LORD OF LIGHT HAS UPPED THE STAKES... HA! NO MATTER!

FIND THESE FOUL MINIONS! UNVEIL THEIR PROWESS TO ME

YES, MY LORD.

THAT NUN AND HER PATHETIC LOYALISTS WILL PAY DEARLY.

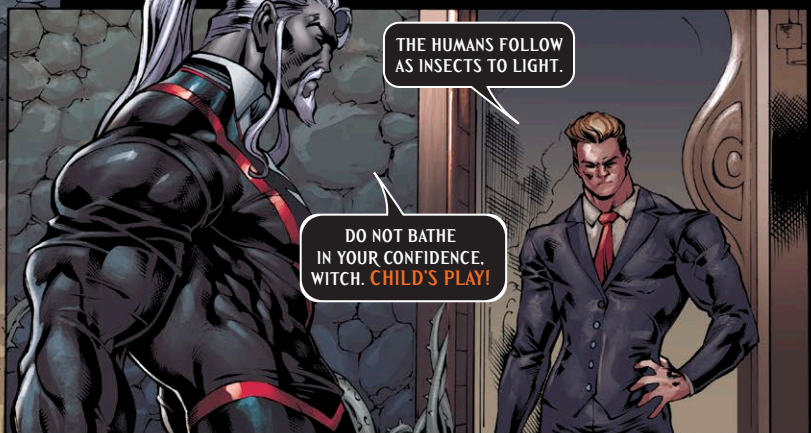


BUT HOW CAN THEY BE...?

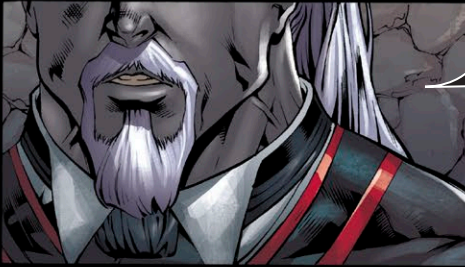
WHAT IS IT?!



THE HUMANS FOLLOW AS INSECTS TO LIGHT.



DO NOT BATHE IN YOUR CONFIDENCE, WITCH. **CHILD'S PLAY!**

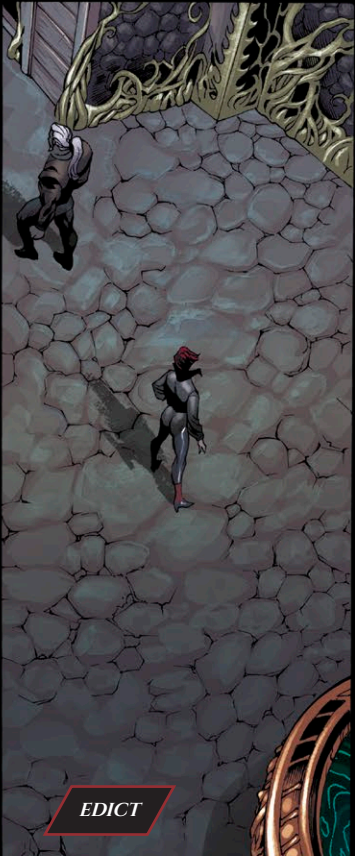


WE MUST NOT FAIL THE UNDERLORD KING.

FIND THESE PAWNS OF LIGHT!



OF COURSE. AS YOU COMMAND.



ERUZAKAH...
...PLIDINIA...
...MASAKAI...
...BERADATUSE...

EDICT




DISCIPLES, DISCIPLES,
WHERE ARE YOUUUU??

SSSSSTHHHH

EEEEHHHH!

SADISTIC SEER



IT HAS BEGUN.
THE UNHOLY ONE
HAS RELEASED
THE ANCIENTS.

ENGAGE AND VANQUISH
THIS ABOMINATION OF
THE 9.

THIS IS
THY TASK.

SERVE ME WELL.
MY DISCIPLES.

YOUR WISH
IS OUR WILL.
O GREAT ONE.

THE SKY DIRECTIVE

A SOLEMN OATH IS SPOKEN BY ALL.

"SANCTIFY US, O MERCIFUL AND PRODIGIOUS ONE.
PROTECT ALL WHO WE MAY SERVE AND DEFEND. WE ARE AT
YOUR RIGHT HAND AND WILL EXTEND YOUR BREADTH AND
PREMINENCE IN ERADICATING THE UNHOLY PLAGUE. OUR
LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER IS BOUNDLESS, AS IT IS FOR YOU.
YOU HAVE CHOSEN US, AND WE ARE EVERMORE GRATEFUL.
WITH HUMBLED GRACE, WE PRAISE THEE."

MEANWHILE: HOLLY LAMENTS...

FATHER, ARE YOU THERE? MOTHER?!

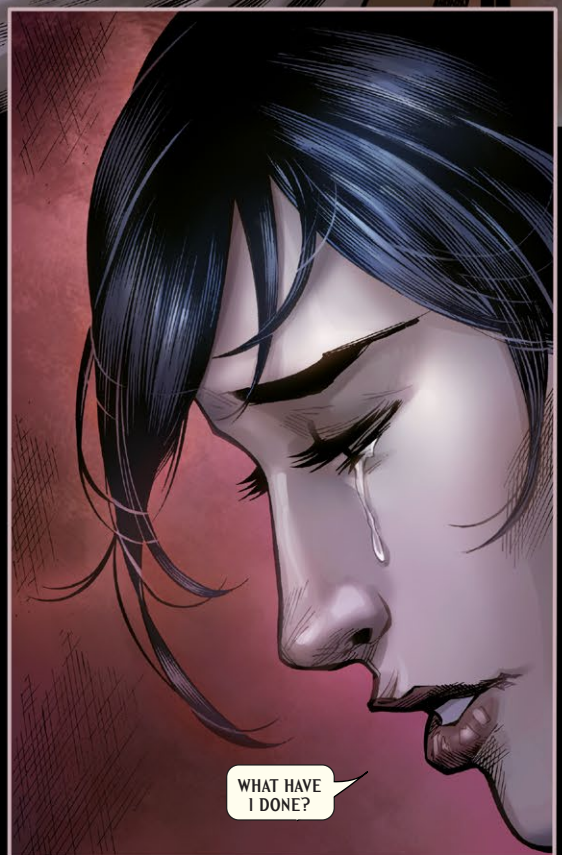
I MISS YOU BOTH SO MUCH.



WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH ME?

I CAN'T DO THIS.

REFLECTION FROM THE PAST



WHAT HAVE I DONE?

I HAVEN'T BEEN CHOSEN IN A WHILE.

A LESSON IN DELIBERATION

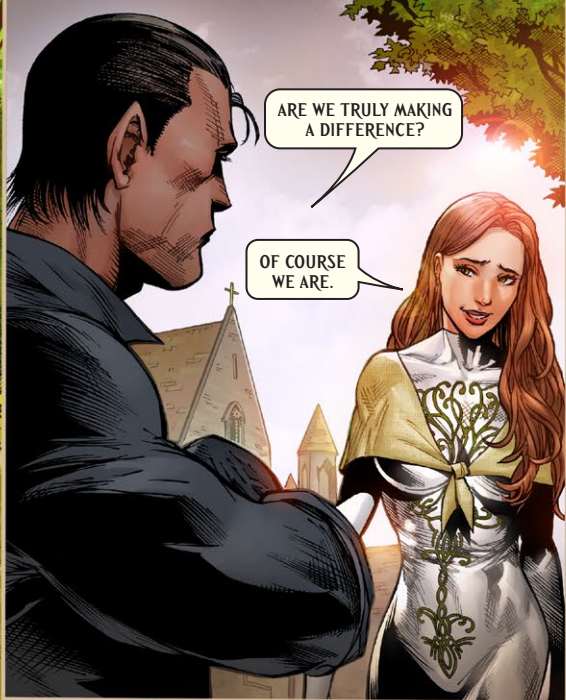
I'M A BIGGIE AND THE TOUGHEST, TOO! WELL. I MEAN... ALMOST.

WHATEVER IT WAS... WAS DEAD ANYWAY.

WHATEVER "IT" WAS. MY SIZEABLE FELLOW. IT EMANATED FROM YOU KNOW WHO.

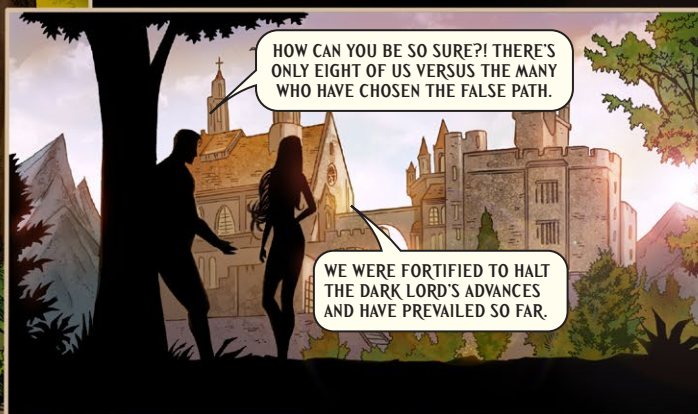
THE UNHOLY ONE IS MOST POWERFUL. OUR IMMEDIATE FUTURE LOOKS TO BE QUITE EVENTFUL.

RE-BORN OF FRUSTRATION



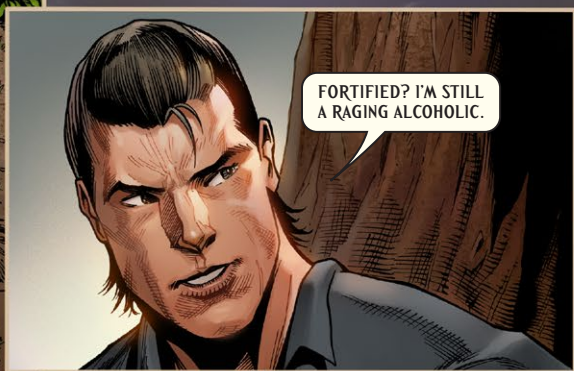
ARE WE TRULY MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

OF COURSE WE ARE.



HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE?! THERE'S ONLY EIGHT OF US VERSUS THE MANY WHO HAVE CHOSEN THE FALSE PATH.

WE WERE FORTIFIED TO HALT THE DARK LORD'S ADVANCES AND HAVE PREVAILED SO FAR.

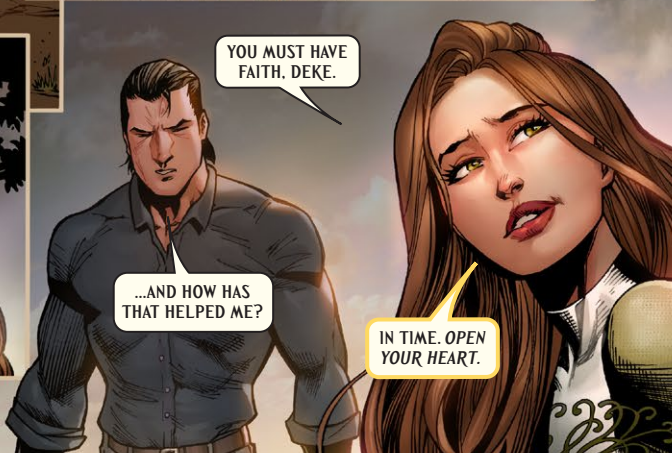


FORTIFIED? I'M STILL A RAGING ALCOHOLIC.



WHY DO I STILL BEAR THIS BURDEN?


THE ALMIGHTY'S METHODS ARE MYSTERIOUS.



YOU MUST HAVE FAITH, DEKE.

...AND HOW HAS THAT HELPED ME?

IN TIME. OPEN YOUR HEART.



WHAT DOES THE GREAT ONE WISH FROM ME?! I'M SO...

MUCH, MY CHILD... YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AND GRANTED EXTRAORDINARY POWERS.

BUT WHY... ME?!

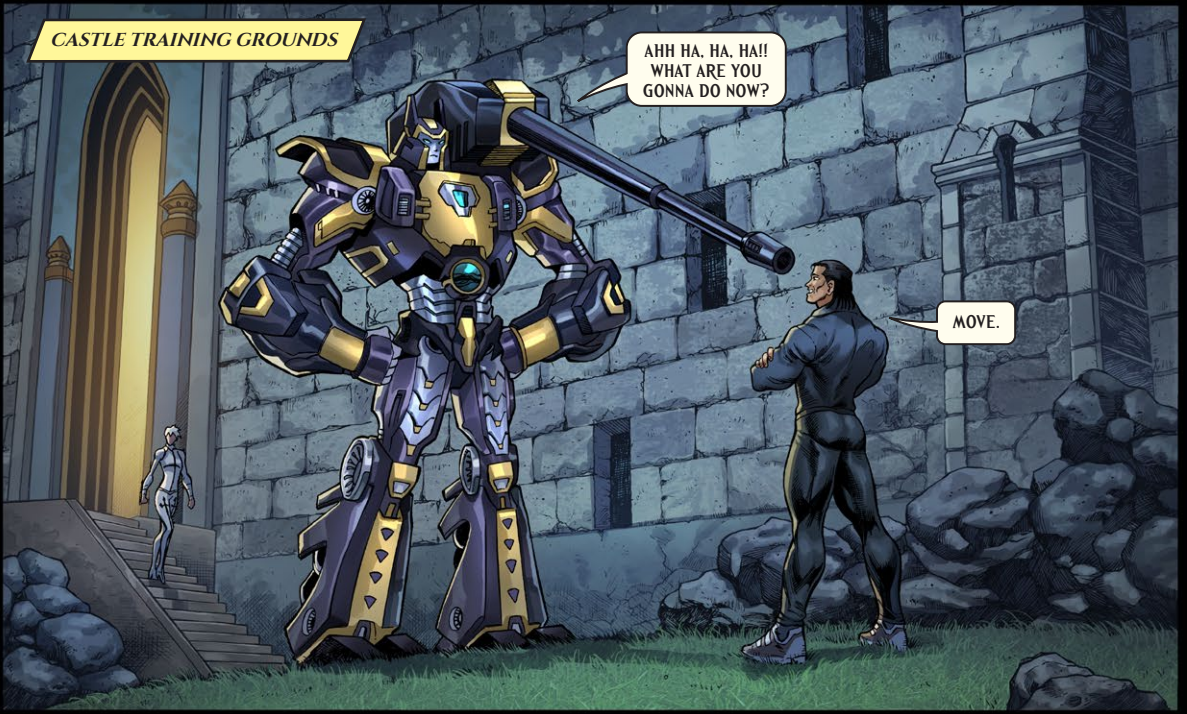
THEY NEED ME.

MY DEAR HOLLY, YOU ARE MUCH STRONGER THAN YOU REALIZE.

WE NEED YOU.

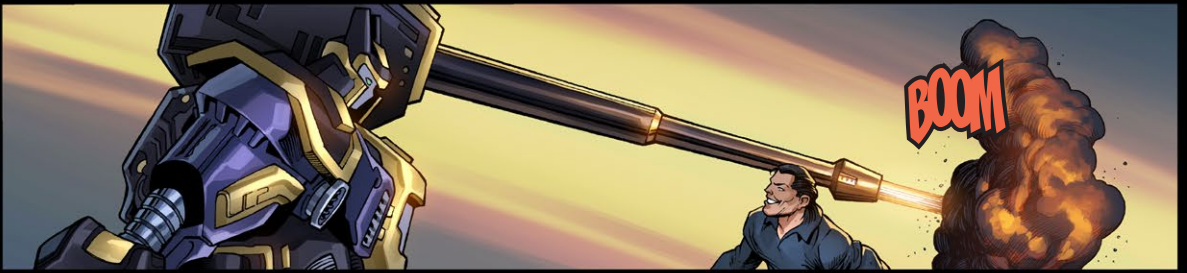
NOW THEN, LET US DISCUSS THOSE UNIQUE DEFENSES OF YOURS.

CASTLE TRAINING GROUNDS



AHH HA, HA, HA!!
WHAT ARE YOU
GONNA DO NOW?

MOVE.



BOOM



YOU DO REALIZE HE CAN
ALSO TRANSFORM INTO
A NEARLY OMNIPOTENT,
TWENTY-FOOT DRAGON?

I REQUIRE YOUR
ATTENTION.

AWW .MA...



NICE TRY, BOY.
MAYBE NEXT TIME.



YOU BOTH HAVE
BEEN SELECTED.



DO YOU
ACCEPT?

WHY NOT?

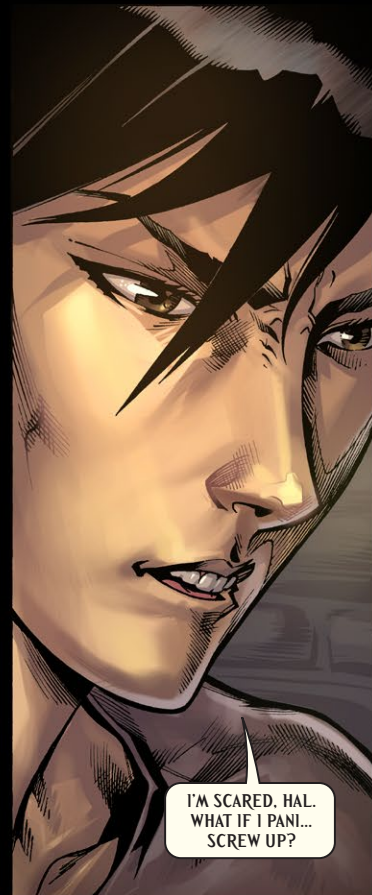
YES,
MOTHER.

HAL AND AB PONDER...



BUT IT'S MY FIRST MISSION. HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT TO DO?

YER A SHAPEY-SHIFTER, YE BE FINE, BOY.



I'M SCARED, HAL. WHAT IF I PANI... SCREW UP?



DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF, LADDIE. OL' MAMA'LL BE THERE WITH YE.

YEAH, I KNOW... STILL...

BIG BROTHER

BUSINESS MAGNATE AND PHILANTHROPIST JONATHAN STEELE ADDRESSES HIS DEVOTED FOLLOWERS.

FOLLOW ME, FRIENDS!

WE MUST ALL BAND TOGETHER NOW AND INCORPORATE A NEW AND ABSOLUTE BROTHERHOOD!

LET'S DO THIS!

ALL TOGETHER.

WHAT A SICK DISPLAY OF MACHIAVELLIAN AFFECTION.

ALL RIGHT!

YEAH!

C'MON!

HE IS SMOOTH. THOUGH...

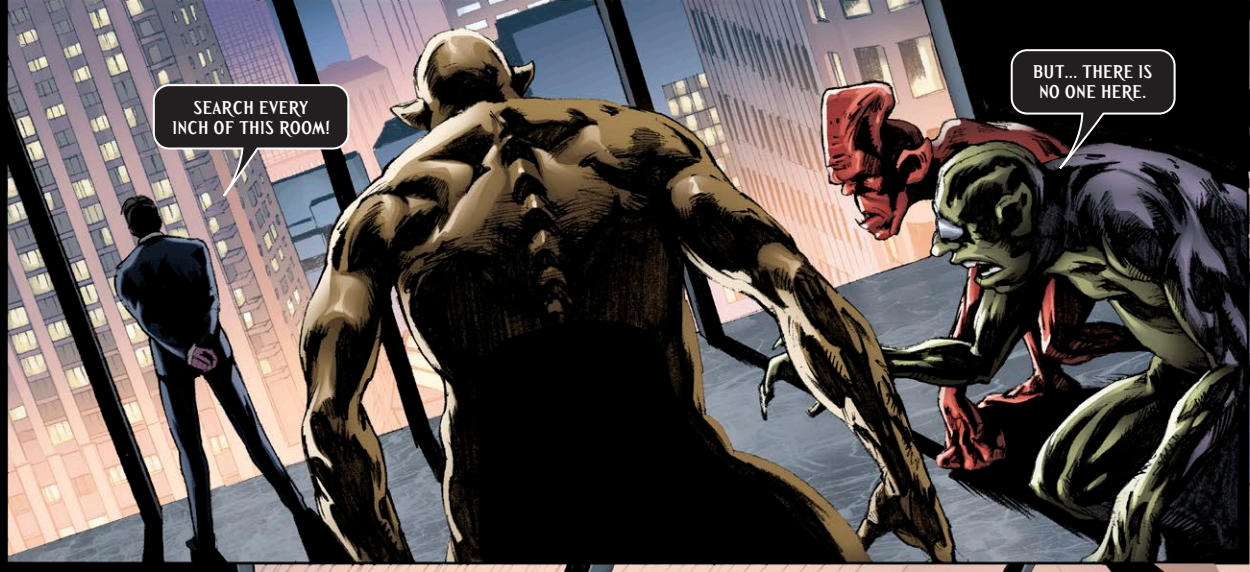
...AND QUITE DEADLY.

...LATER, IN STEELE'S LAVISH PENTHOUSE

SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT
HERE. THERE IS A PRESENCE.

THESE THREE IMBECILES
WILL DO FOR NOW.

WHAT DO YOU WISH
OF US, O GREAT ONE?



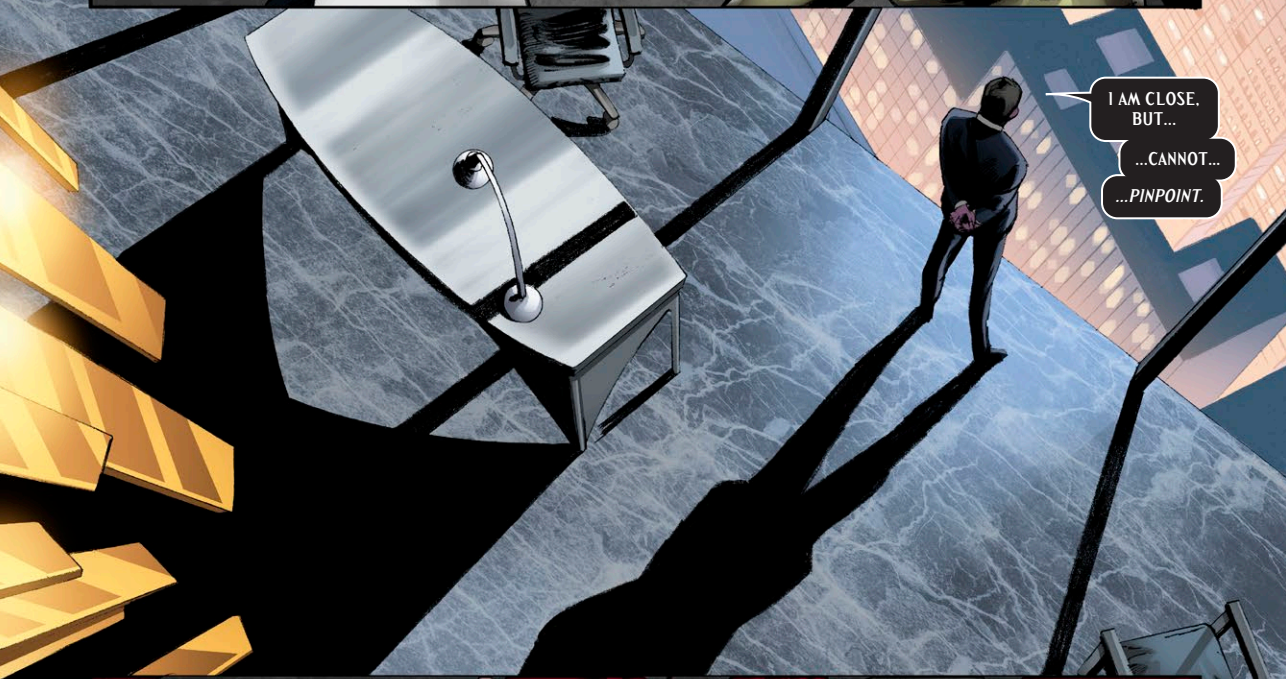
SEARCH EVERY INCH OF THIS ROOM!

BUT... THERE IS NO ONE HERE.



IDIOTS!

GRRRR



I AM CLOSE. BUT...
...CANNOT...
...PINPOINT.



LEAVE ME. AWAY WITH YOU!

I THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER LEAVE.

YOU KNOW WHO I AM. AS TO WHAT... YOU WILL SOON WITNESS.

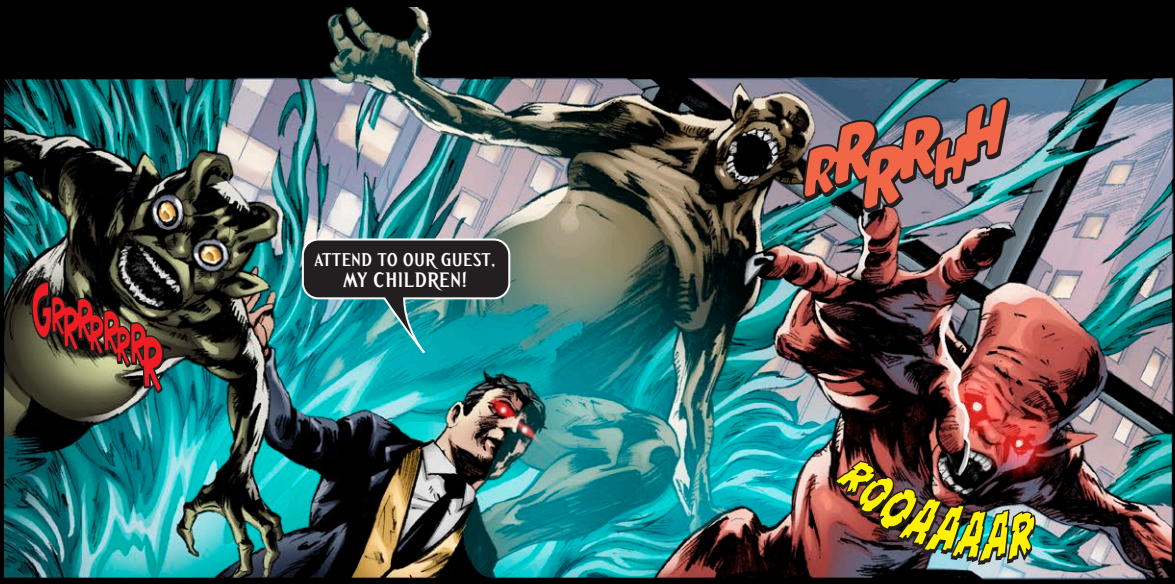
WHO!

WHAT...!

HA! YOU DARE APPROACH ME! SO BE IT.

HUMMMMMMMMM...

NOW WHAT?



ATTEND TO OUR GUEST.
MY CHILDREN!

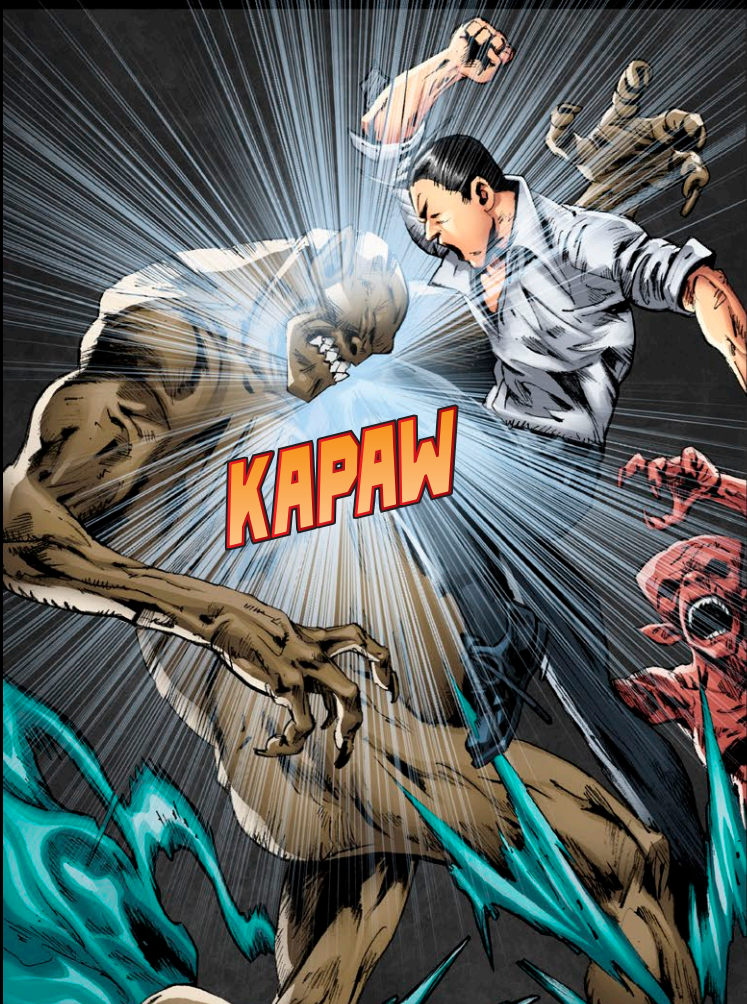


ONLY
THREE?

OK...

...LET'S GO!

MONSTER MAYHEM



KAPAW



GO BACK TO THE
HELL FROM WHICH
YOU CAME!

WRAMM

BYE
BYE

WHERE DID YOU
ESCAPE TO, DEMON?



AHHH-HAAA!!

HMMM. UNEXACTING
FOR SURE...

BUT WHY
SO?

I MUST WADE
THROUGH THIS
QUAGMIRE.



THAT ODOR,
SOMETHING BURNING...
BUT...IT'S SO COLD?



BEATDOWN

THE NEW TRIUMVIRATE

WHY HAS THIS
SIMPLE CHILD
BEEN ANOINTED?
IT ESCAPES
ME.

THE WINGED
ONE SPEAKS WITH
VIGILANCE.

...NOT SO SIMPLE.
HE WILL BE FINE.

CIRCUMSPECTION INTERVENES

YOU ARE CERTAIN
HE IS WILLING
AND COMPETENT?

OF COURSE.

THIS IS A LESSER
TASK, HOWEVER, HE MUST
LEARN TO OVERCOME THE
FAMILIARITY OF HIS PAST.

MEANWHILE: AB IS CLOAKED BY A BOOK...



I SENSE THIS ONE'S
TREPIDATION.

WE NEED
TO DEPART.

... I KNOW.



RURAL AMERICA

CIRCA 1975



WHY ARE WE...
HERE??

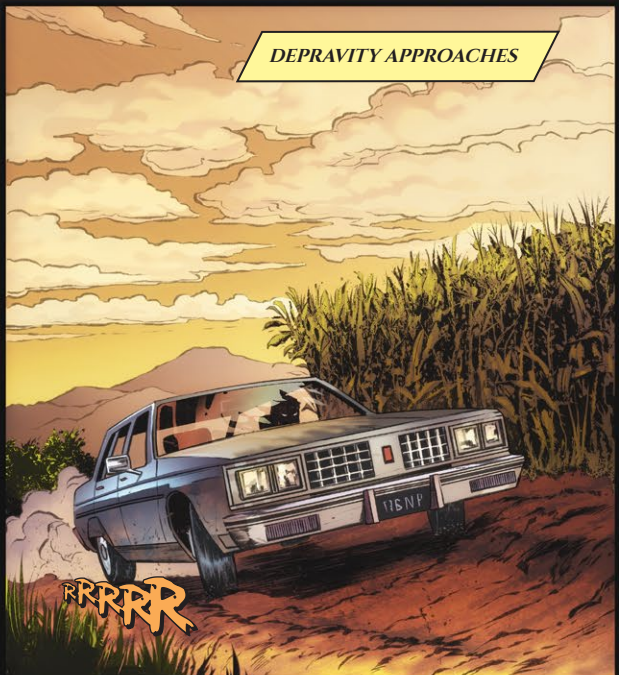
...TO MEET A MAN
AND A BOY.
YOUR CALLING
LIES JUST AHEAD.

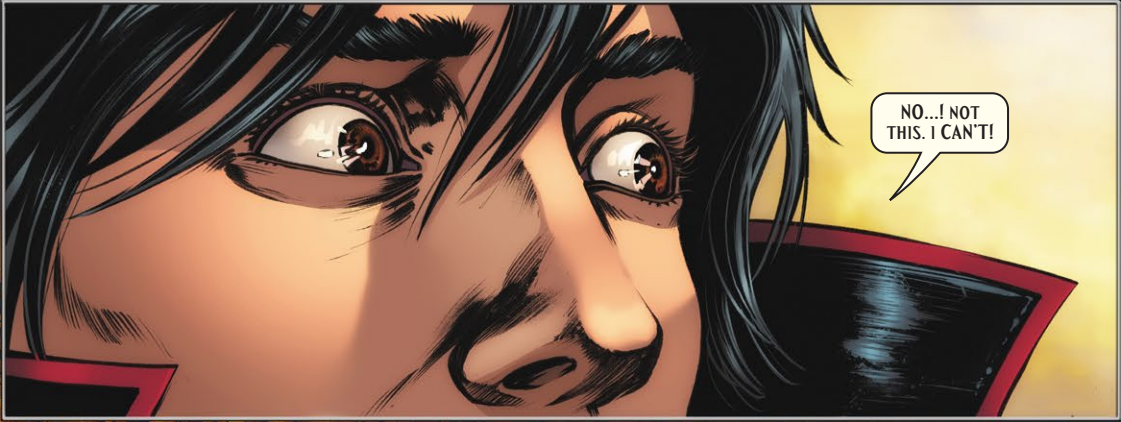


IT'S GROWING DARK...
AND GETTING LATE!



DEPRAVITY APPROACHES





NO...! NOT THIS. I CAN'T!



COLLISION COURSE!!

CRACKLE

MISTER VAAANDERWOOOOD?!



DASH

YOUR LIFE IS MINE, BOY.



SHOCKED ON A DIME



HELP! HELP ME! SOMEONE...
PLEASE HELP!!!

STOP...
SQUIRMING!!!



SHUT UP!

AAAAHHHHH...!!



WHAT...THE... F...!?

BARRICADE



YOU DAMN FREAKS!
I'LL RUN YOU DOWN?!

MY YOUNG APPRENTICE
BEGS TO DIFFER.



NAOOOO!

RAHHHHH!!!

A BIT OVER THE TOP. BUT THAT SHOULD SUFFICE



HHHHHHH



MANY LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST TO THIS ONE MAN.

NO MORE.

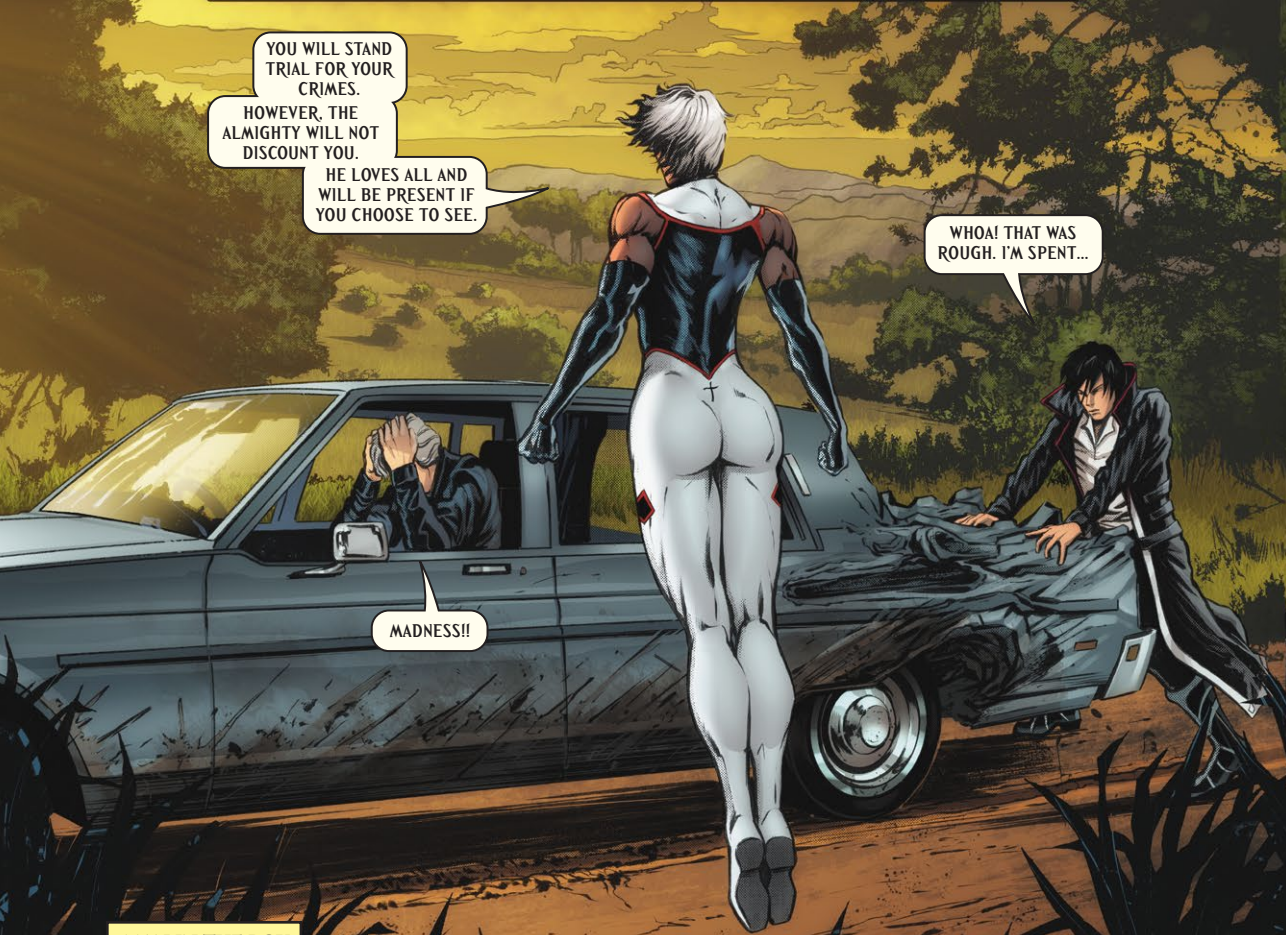


YOUR TIME IS NEAR, THE AUTHORITIES ARE UPON YOU.

YOU WILL STAND TRIAL FOR YOUR CRIMES. HOWEVER, THE ALMIGHTY WILL NOT DISCOUNT YOU.

HE LOVES ALL AND WILL BE PRESENT IF YOU CHOOSE TO SEE.

WHOA! THAT WAS ROUGH. I'M SPENT...



MADNESS!!

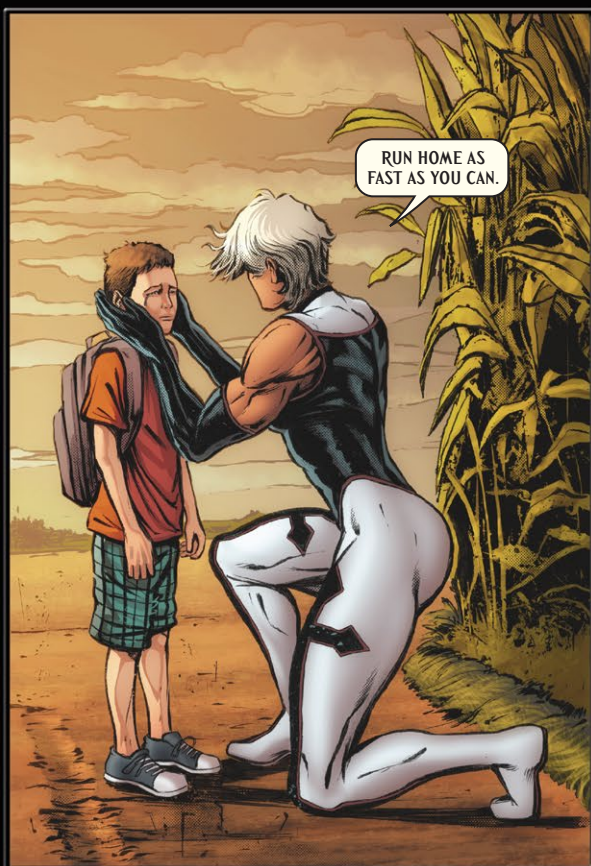
MAN IN THE BOX



THERE. THERE.
YOU ARE SAFE
NOW, LITTLE ONE.

Mmmmm

UGH!!



RUN HOME AS
FAST AS YOU CAN.

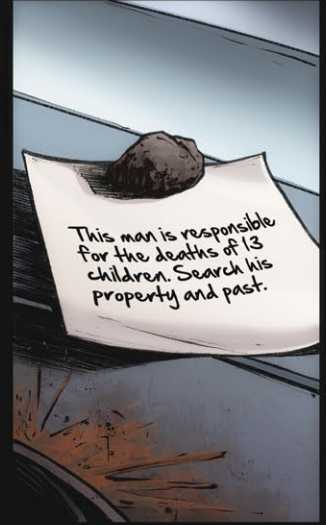


GO SWIFTLY...
AND FORGET.



THE BOY IS A RECREANT.
YET FORMIDABLE.
BUT THE WOMAN... I FEEL
THE ESSENCE INSIDE.
HER TRUE BEING IS
WELL CONCEALED.

WE WILL NOT BE
THREATENED BY THE
LIKES OF YOU!!!
I MUST FOREGO D'ANSAT
AND APPRISE MY SIRE
OF THIS WRETCHED
MATRON AT ONCE.



This man is responsible for the deaths of 13 children. Search his property and past.




YOU HANDLED YOURSELF WELL TODAY.

I DID?


YES. THE BOY WILL BE FINE.

LET'S GO HOME.





...I ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING... BUT TO FURTHER INCENSE THE OTHER SIDE.



THIS ONE
DETESTS
HIMSELF.
THAT IS GOOD.
FUEL TO OUR FIRE.



YOU DISPATCHED OF MY CHILDREN RATHER EASILY... DEKE-N!

OHHH...

...BUT NEXT TIME, YOU WILL WITNESS MY FULL DOMINION...



TA-TA.

ELEGANCE OF EVIL



THAT ODOR AGAIN... AND CHILL.

WHAT IS IT?!



...THIS GUY?

ALWAYS BRINGS HIS OWN LIQUOR.
WHAT'S IN THAT STUFF?!

GURGLE



LIKE CLOCKWORK.

AYE.



AT LEAST HE AIN'T NOZY DANITE, EH...

WHY HERE...
IN MUMBAI?

DID YOU ADHERE TO MY
EDICT, DEMON? WHAT
HAVE YOU COLLECTED?

THE BOY AND THE ONE
KNOWN AS DEKE-N ARE
POTENT ADVERSARIES...
MY MASTER.

THE ADOLESCENT IS A
METAMORPH: NAÏVE, BUT
SUBSTANTIAL. THE OTHER
IS WELL PRACTICED,
ALBEIT HAUGHTY.

IT IS TIME FOR THE
ANCIENTS. SUMMON THE
EMPEROR AT ONCE.

IT SHALL BE
DONE, MY LORD.

HMMM. SUCH A NAUGHTY
LITTLE ONE...SO DEADLY
AND DELECTABLE.

YOU FOOLISH AND
NAÏVE LITTLE MAN.

I AM THE TRUE
MASTER HERE.

SANCTUM OF THE SUCCUBUS



I ENVISION... ASSAILANTS
TO MY LORD'S TENET.

SLANDERERS!

THEY WILL NOT
BE SHADED FROM MY
PLUNDER. BEWARE THEE.

EMPEROR KORRO-SHI
IS AT HAND!

1 OF 9

LOCATION: OBLIVION

OH, BROTHERS, WHERE ART THOU?



PLEASE DO NOT
RESIGN ME TO...

...WALKING.

WE REQUIRE A MORE...
PANORAMIC VIEW.

INDEED.

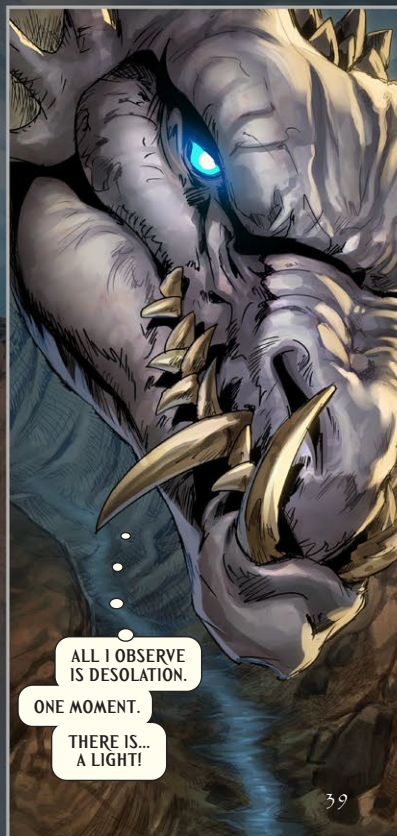


COUGH
COUGH

FREEDOM.
AT LAST.



ANYTHING
OUT THERE?



ALL I OBSERVE
IS DESOLATION.
ONE MOMENT.
THERE IS...
A LIGHT!

To Be Continued