

JUDGE DEATH



YOUNG DEATH - BOYHOOD OF A SUPERFIEND

JOHN WAGNER ★ PETER DOHERTY



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JUDGE DEATH CREATED BY JOHN WAGNER AND BRIAN BOLLAND

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Published by Rebellion, The Studio, Brewer Street, Oxford OX1 1QN.
www.rebellion.co.uk

ISBN: 978-1-905437-65-8

Printed in Malta by Gutenberg Press

Manufactured in the EU by LPPS Ltd., Wellingborough, NN8 3PJ, UK.

First Printing: May 2008

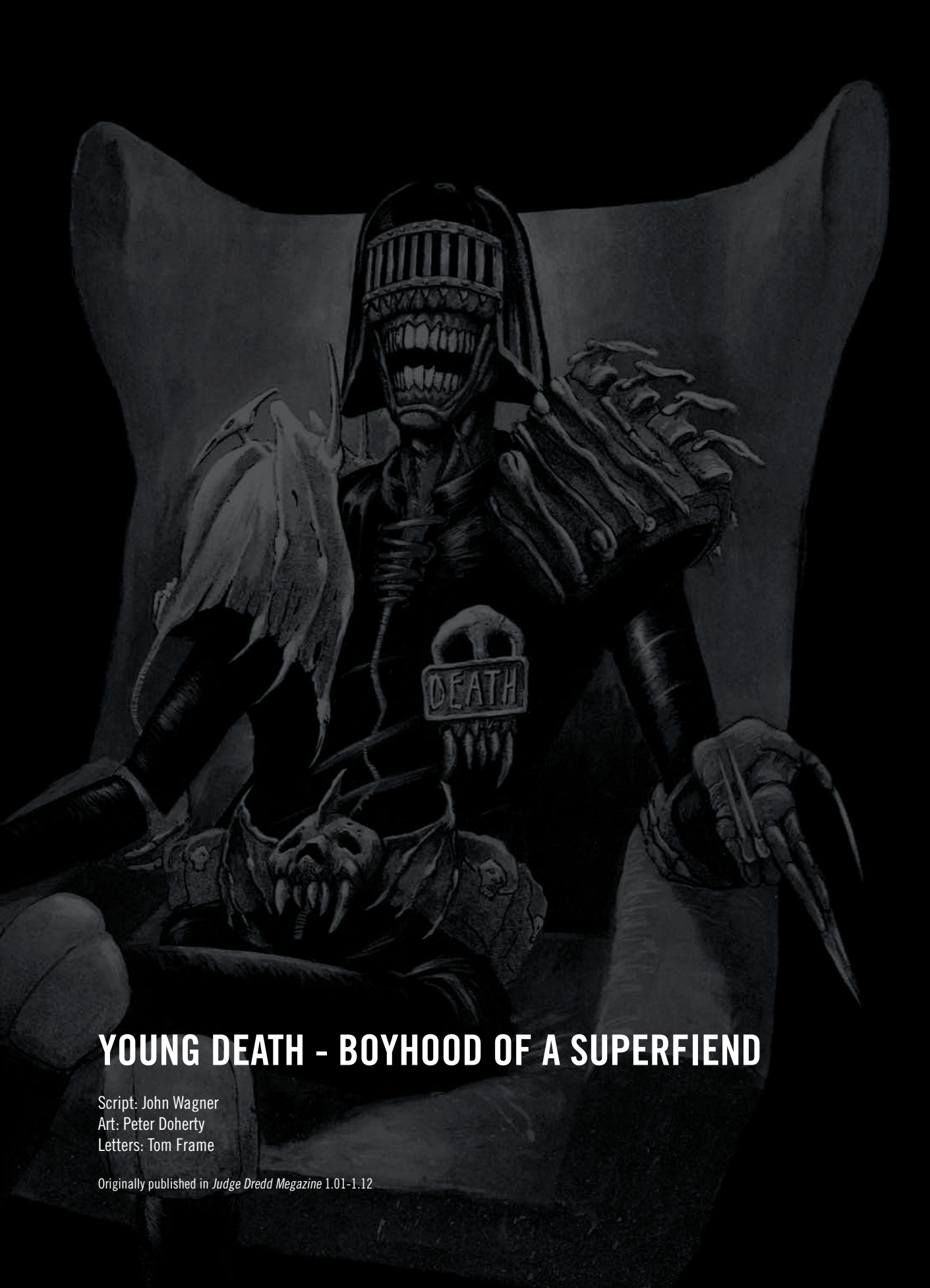
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed on FSC Accredited Paper

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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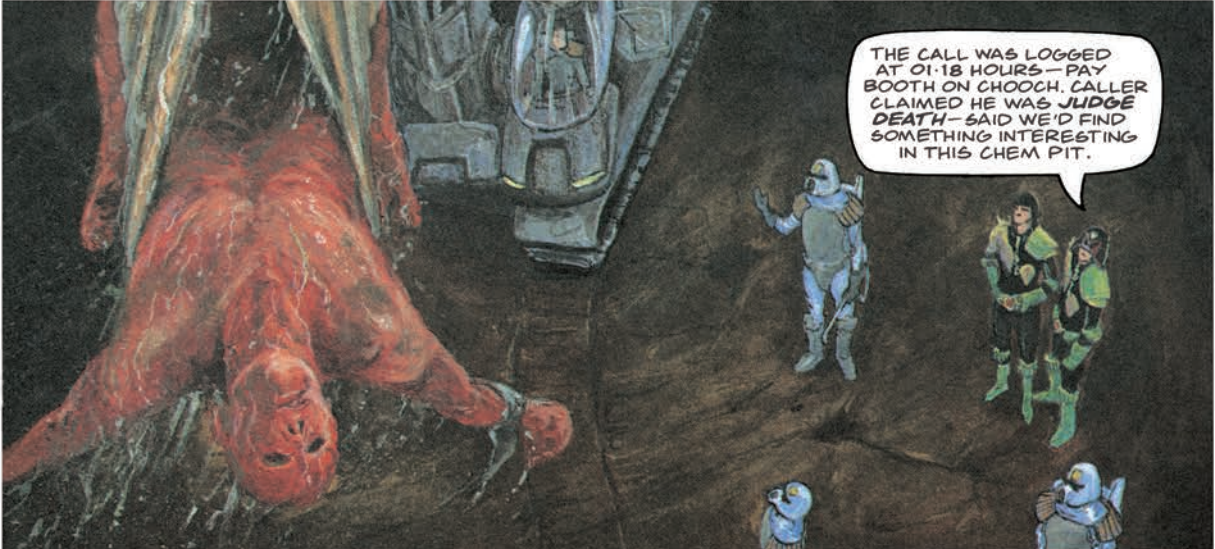
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Originally published in *Judge Dredd Magazine* 1.01-1.12

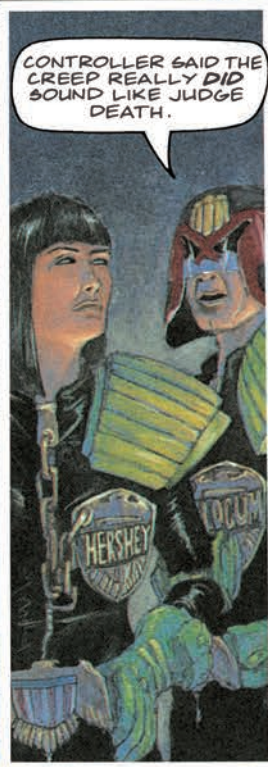


THE CALL WAS LOGGED AT 01:18 HOURS - PAY BOOTH ON CHOOCH. CALLER CLAIMED HE WAS JUDGE DEATH - SAID WE'D FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING IN THIS CHEM PIT.




THEY RUN A VOICE PRINT ON THE CALLER?

YEAH - CAME UP BLANK. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT A MESS THEY'VE BEEN IN SINCE NECROPOLIS.



CONTROLLER SAID THE CREEP REALLY DID SOUND LIKE JUDGE DEATH.



STIFF'S MALE, MID-THIRTIES, PROBABLY WHITE - HARD TO TELL. THE WAY RECORDS ARE, IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY TO PUT A NAME TO THIS ONE.

NO ID ON HIM?

MOST OF IT WAS BURNT BEYOND RECOGNITION. ONE THING, THOUGH -



FOUND THE REMAINS OF SOMETHING METALLIC IN HIS HAND. LOOKS LIKE A HACKER'S LICENCE...

THAT'S A BREAK.



'KAY, STAY WITH IT. ID ON THE VICTIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THERE'S JUST A CHANCE THIS COULD BE FOR REAL...

THE WORLD SHOULD
KNOW YOUR STORY

Licensed hacker Brian Skuter
will help you tell all!

Call Mega-City 910 9411 72

IT WAS A TYPICAL CITYBLOCK, MUCH
LIKE A THOUSAND OTHERS IN THE CITY.
SOLID, RESPECTABLE - SOMEHOW WARM
AND WELCOMING AS IT BASKED IN THE
GLOW OF THE SETTING SUN.

CERTAINLY THERE WAS NOTHING
TO SUGGEST THAT ANYTHING...
LINTOWARD MIGHT EXIST WITHIN.

AND YET, AS I STOOD
BENEATH ITS VAST
BULK, IT WAS HARD
TO SUPPRESS A
SHIVER OF
APPREHENSION.



IT COULD HAVE BEEN A HOAX,
OF COURSE. IN MY LINE THAT
HAPPENS A LOT. BUT THERE
HAD BEEN A QUALITY IN THAT
VOICE THAT HAD SENT ARROWS
OF ICE SHOOTING INTO ME...

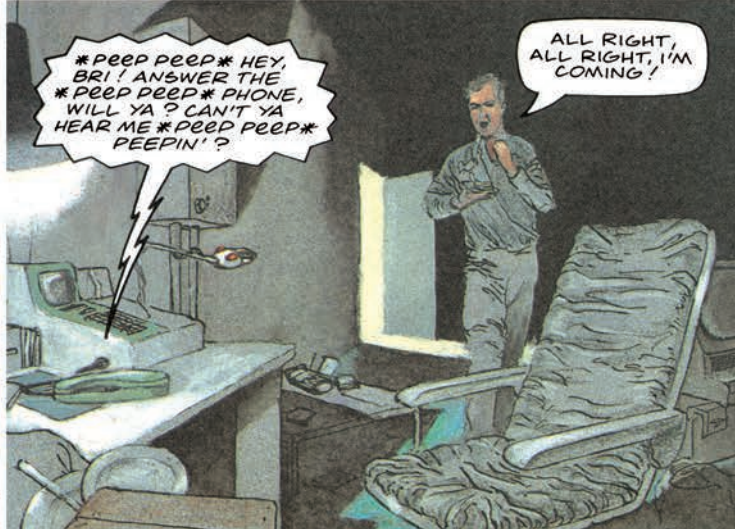
I CAN ONLY
DESCRIBE IT
AS...EVIL.



*peep
peep*
*peep
peep*

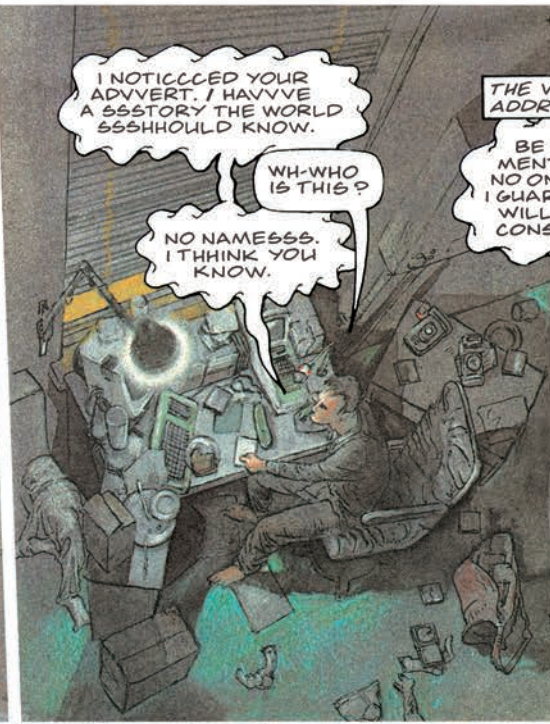
PEEP PEEP HEY,
BRI! ANSWER THE
PEEP PEEP PHONE,
WILL YA? CAN'T YA
HEAR ME *PEEP PEEP*
PEEPIN'?

ALL RIGHT,
ALL RIGHT, I'M
COMING!



BRIAN
SKUTER!
SPEAK
TO ME!







RIGHT THIS WAY—
OW! OH DEAR!

Bonk!

I'M SURE
IT WAS—

DEAR
ME—

AHH!
HERE WE
ARE!

RIGHT THIS
WAY, MR
SKUTER.



IT SEEMED A PERFECTLY NORMAL
HABHOLD, NO HINT THAT ANYTHING
MIGHT BE AMISS.

THE LANDLADY WAS A TRIFLE
SHORTSIGHTED ADMITTEDLY—
BUT SURELY IT WAS INCONCEIV-
ABLE THAT SHE COULD FAIL TO
NOTICE THE PRESENCE OF A
MALEVOLENT ALIEN BEING
WITHIN HER WALLS.



THIS IS IT,
I THINK!

Rap! Rap!



AND YET...

Crash!

MR
De'ATH—
IT'S YOUR
VISITOR.

I'LL LEAVE
YOU. CUP OF
SYNTHI-CAF
PERHAPS?

NO...NO
THANKS.

AND YET, AS THE COLD
BLAST FROM THE ROOM
HIT ME, I KNEW...



ER, HI.
I'M BRIAN
SKUTER.

Bonk!

OH
DEAR!

I WAS IN THE PRESENCE
OF EVIL...PURE,
UNADULTERATED EVIL.

GREETINGSSSSS,
MR SSSSKUTER.

PLEASSSSSE
...TAKE A
SSSEAT.





COME CLOSSER. DON'T BE AFFRAID. I WON'T HURT YOU. I HAVVE GROWN SSSICK OF KILLINGGG. THESE DAYSSSS... I WOULDN'T HURT A FLY.



"PSYCHO" RIGHT ?

SSSOME MIGHT SSSAAAY THAT, MR SSSKUTER.



NO, I MEAN, THE OLD 2-D FLIK. THAT'S LIKE WHAT NORMAN BATES SAID, IN "PSYCHO". YOU A HITCHCOCK FAN ?

HITCCHHCOCK... ISSS THAT A DISSSEASSSE ?



NO, HE'S A-- OH! I SEE!

HA HA, VERY DROLL.

SO, YOU'VE GOT A STORY TO TELL--

SILLY ME! HA HA! OF COURSE YOU DO!



I'LL BE TAKING NOTES, BUT I'D LIKE TO RECORD THIS INTERVIEW AS WELL, SO IF YOU DON'T MIND, FIRST WE'LL DO A SOUND CHECK.

COULD YOU... HISS INTO THIS ?

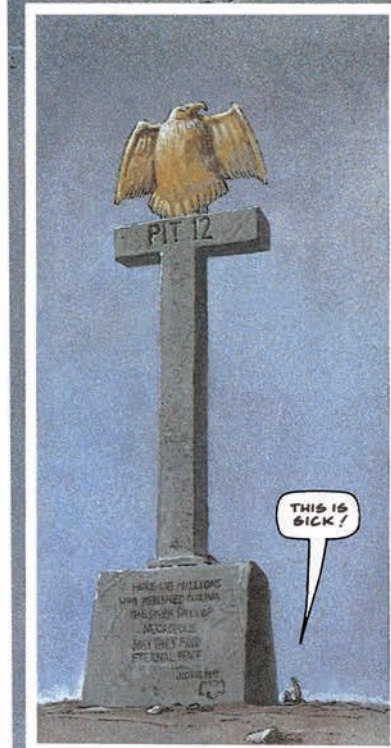


I HAVVE CUT YOU A LOT OF SSSLACK ALREADY, MR SSSKUTER. I WARN YOU, DO NOT ABUSSSE MY TOLERANCCE.

FINE! COMING THROUGH LOUD AND PROUD!



AS HE SPOKE I NOTICED A CERTAIN SADNESS IN HIS VOICE, AS IF THE PAIN OF DEFEAT HAD NOT LEFT HIM UNSCARRED. DID JUDGE DEATH, KILLER OF MILLIONS, HAVE A HUMAN SIDE?



THIS IS SICK!



GRUD! THE STENCH-!

THAT'S THE SMELL OF MONEY, PAL!



AFTER THE BIG NEC THERE WAS SO MANY BODIES THEY DIDN'T BOTHER TO SEARCH 'EM OR NOTHIN'- JUST SCOOPED 'EM UP AN' DUMPED 'EM ALL IN THE CURSED EARTH.

THERE'S MILLIONS HERE FOR THE PICKIN'!



LOOKIT THAT! REAL STONES, MAN!



C'MON, SAL, LET'S GO, HUH? THIS PLACE SPOOKS ME.



YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GONNA FIND...

STOP GRIPIN', YA DILD! LEND A HAND!



GOT SOMETHIN' HERE-!



UNGGGG!



YOU DARE DISSTURB ME FROM MY RESSST?



OH J-J-J-J-
JEEEEZ!





YOU
KILLED
THEM?

I GAVE THEM
PEACCC...RESSPPITE
FROM THEIR
WICKEDNESSSS.

I-I THOUGHT
YOU SAID YOU
WOULDN'T HURT
A FLY?



THEY WEREN'T
FLIESSSS.



I SEE. SO...YOU HID THERE
AMONG THE CORPSES.
MUST'VE BEEN, UH...PRETTY
DISGUSTING, ALL DECOMPOSING
LIKE THAT...?

ON THE
CONTRARY, IT
WASSS MOSSST
COMFORTABLE.



ASSSLEEP WITH THE PURE
AND THE PURGGGGED...FOR
MONTHSSS IT WASSS MY
REFUGGGG, A SSSAFE
COMFORTING COCCOON...

...HIDDEN FROM THE PRYING
EYESSS OF THE MEGA-CITY,
THE PROBING TENDRILSSS
OF CURSSSED PSSSI-
DIVISION-

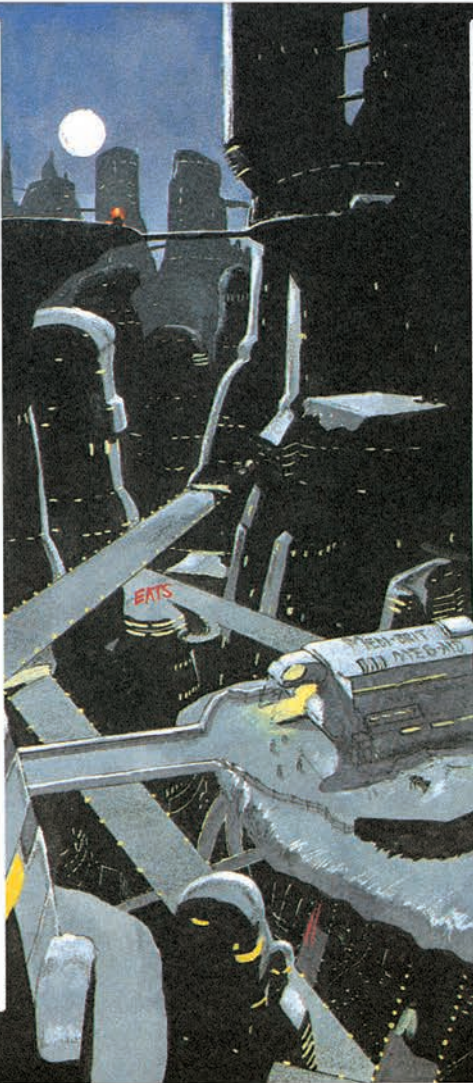
"-FOR WHICHHH OF THEM WOULD READILY ALLOW THEIR MINDSSS TO DELVE AMONG SSUCHHH DIVINE SSSSLAUGHTER?"



BUT PERHAPS BESSST THAT I DID WAKE THENNN, FOR I HAD LINGERED LONGGG ENOUGH.



"I HAD MUCHHH TO DO - A MISSION THAT WILL NEVER END."



1c/1st Keever
Box room, suit small dult

24K MRS DOOBLE
Lge B-hab. Tur. Sharing

91a GOLDFRAB Bedshare, Day ONLY

91f Mr. Quint
2 single B-habs / no empes

133b Mrs Gunderson
Own room, lge lux-apt.
Suit business gent.
Privacy guaranteed.

"I NEEDED A BASSSE..."



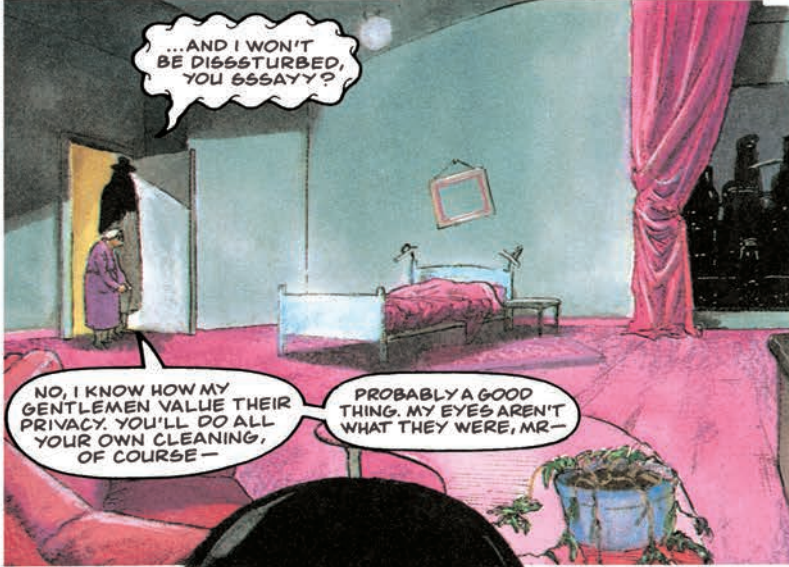
YES?



I'VE COME ABOUT THE ROOMM.

OH...YES...DO COME IN -

MY GOODNESS, YOU'RE A TALL ONE!



...AND I WON'T BE DISSTURBED, YOU BSSAY?

NO, I KNOW HOW MY GENTLEMEN VALIE THEIR PRIVACY. YOU'LL DO ALL YOUR OWN CLEANING, OF COURSE -

PROBABLY A GOOD THING. MY EYES AREN'T WHAT THEY WERE, MR -



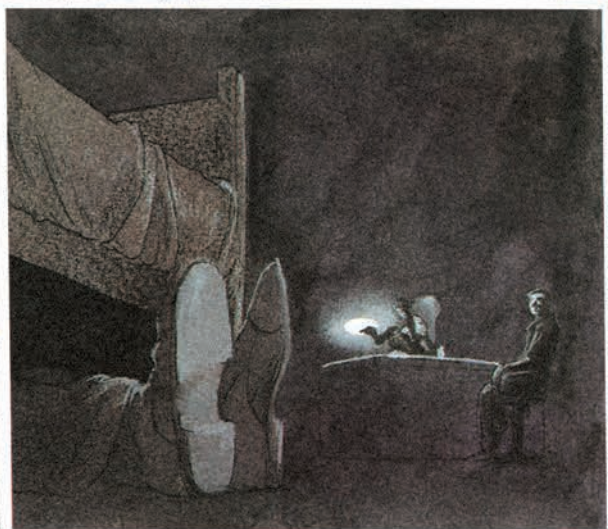
GOODNESS ME! I DON'T BELIEVE I'VE EVEN ASKED YOUR NAME - ?

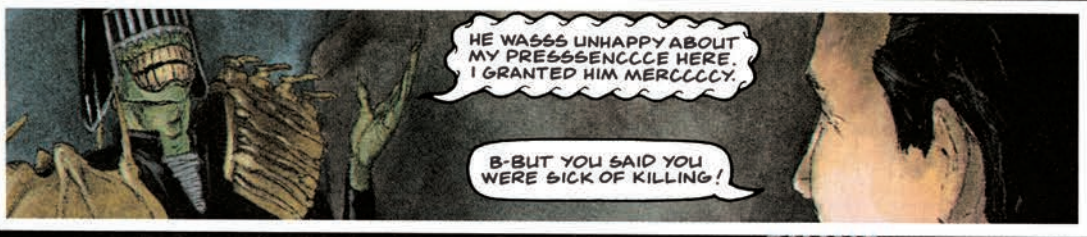


CALL ME DE'ATHHHH...

JAY DE'ATHHHH.







HE WASS UNHAPPY ABOUT MY PRESSENCCE HERE. I GRANTED HIM MERCCCCY.

B-BUT YOU SAID YOU WERE SICK OF KILLING!



SICK OF KILLINGGG AND NOT BEINGGG APRECCCIATED FOR IT!



YEAH, WELL -ULP!- I'M NOT REALLY HONESTLY ALL THAT SURE I CAN CONTINUE THIS INTERVIEW.



I mean, I-I'm committing a serious crime if I even fail to tell the judges what I've seen.



Not that I'd want to, of course, but you-you know how it is...



SSSSIT DOWN, MR SSSSKUTER!



I DON'T THINK YOU QUITE UNDERSSSTAND YOUR POSITTION.

Uh, yeah, well. I can see there might be a-ulp-slight conflict of interest...



WHOSSE WRATHHHH DO YOU FEAR MORRRR - MINE OR THE JUDGESSSS?'

G-g-good point!



RAISED VOICES, MR DE'ATH? I DO HOPE THERE'S NO TROUBLE?

JUSSST A MINOR ALTERCATTION, MRSSS GUNDERSSSSON. BUT I THHHINK MR SSSSKUTER ISS COMINGG ROUND TO MY WAY OF THHHINKINGGG. ISS THAT NOT SSSSO?'

uh...



GOOD, GOOD!

OH, BY THE WAY, WHAT DAY DID MR PEEL TELL YOU HE'D BE BACK?



HE DID NOT SSSPECIFFY.



OH DEAR. I SEE. ONLY...THE RENT IS DUE TOMORROW AND... YOURS TOO, OF COURSE, MR DE'ATH.

YESSSS, MRSSSS GUNDESSSSON.

I'M SURE YOU WON'T FORGET NOW, WILL YOU?

NNNNNO, MRSSSS GUNDESSSSON.



GOOD. FINE. SORRY TO INTERRUPT. DO CARRY ON, BOYS. TOODLE-BYE!

OW! OH DEAR!

UNDERSSSTAND THISSS, MR SSSKUTER! I HAVVVE BROUGHT YOU HERE TO DO MY BIDDINGGGGG, NOT YOURSSS!

YOU WILL DO EXXACTLY ASSS I INSTRUCT OR YOU WILL DIE. IT ISSS ASSS SSSSIMPLE ASSS THHAT!



P-put that way it w-would be-ulp-churlish to refuse..!



SO...SO WHY DID YOU CALL ME? WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

I CAMME TO THIS CCCITY ON AN ACT OF MERCCCY, MR SSSKUTER, TO BRINGGG JUSSSTICCCCE TO THE GUILTY - DEATHHHH TO THHE LIVVING... RELIEFFF FROM THE BURDEN OF THEIR MISSEERABLE LIVESSS...

...FOR ALL CRIME ISSS COMITTTED BY THE LIVVING - THEREFORE ALL LIFFFE MUSSST BE A CRIME.

I - I DON'T THINK IT NECESSARILY FOLLOWS...

SSSSILENCCCE! YOU UNDERSSSTAND NOTHHHINGGG!

YOU ARE LIKE THE RESSST OF THEM! UNGRATEFFUL RABBLE! TIME AND AGAIN THEY HAVE SSPURNED MY GENEROSSITY, TURNED AWAY MY HELPPINGGG HAND! WELL, NO MORE!

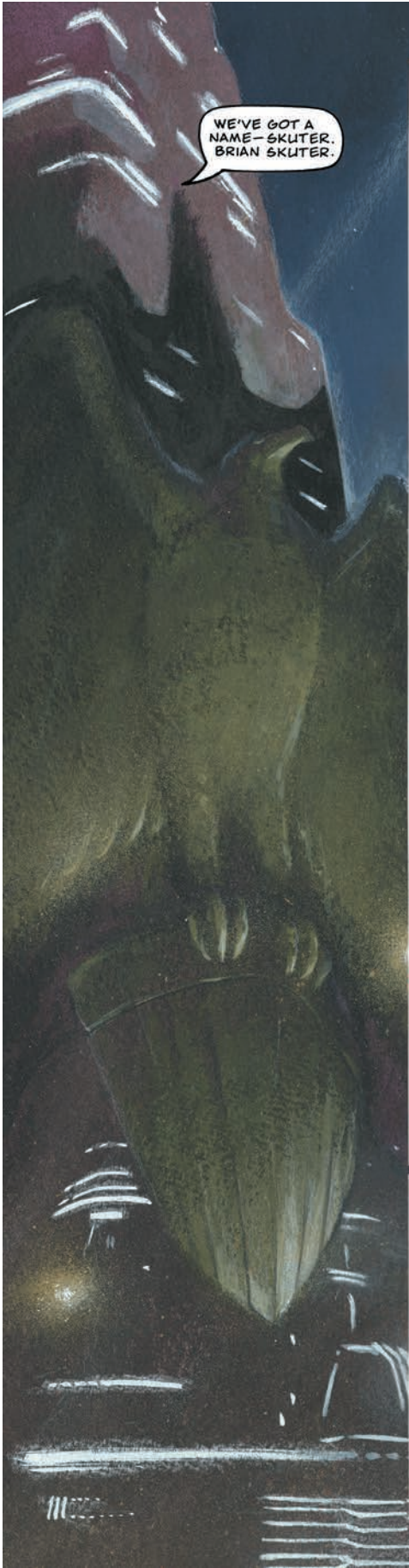
I INTEND TO LEAVE THISS CITY, MR SSSKUTER, TO TAKE MYSSSELF WHERE MY TALENTSSS WILL BE MORE... APPRECCIATED.

TO DO THAT THEY MUSSST KNOW ME - MUSSST KNOW WHAT HASS MADE ME WHAT I AM.

THE WORLD SSSHOULD KNOWWW MY SSSTORY, MR SSSKUTER. YOU WILL TELL IT.

BUT BEFFORE I GO THE PEOPLE MUSSST BE GIVEN ONE LASSST CHANCCCE TO REALISSSE THE FOLLY OF THEIR WAYSSS... TO UNDERSSSTAND WHY THEY MUSSST COME TO LOVVE DEATHHHH, ASSS I DO.

AN "ORIGINS". OH WOW.
Ulp!



WE'VE GOT A NAME—SKUTER. BRIAN SKUTER.



GUY HAD A CARBON FIBRE RENAL REPLACEMENT—A MICHELIN 494. ONLY THREE OF THEM WERE EVER IMPORTED. WE TRACED HIM FROM THAT.

BRIAN URWIN SKUTER, APARTMENT 19z, ANDREZ CONAPTS.



DEATH OCCURRED ABOUT AN HOUR BEFORE HE WAS DUMPED IN THE CHEM PIT.

THEN IT WAS MURDER?

NOT NECESSARILY. THERE'S NO SIGN OF A BLOW, NO MARKS ON THE BODY THAT WE CAN DETECT. DEATH BEARS ALL THE SIGNS OF A SUDDEN, MASSIVE HEART ATTACK.



THAT WOULDN'T EXCLUDE **JUDGE** DEATH AS THE CAUSE. YOU FIND ANY TRACES?



NEGATIVE, BUT I WOULDN'T EXPECT TO. THE BODY HAS BEEN BADLY EATEN AWAY.

BEFORE WE, UH,
GET STARTED,
JUST A, UH, FEW
MINOR
DETAILS...

NAME?

YOU KNOW MY NAME.

SURE, BUT YOU HAVEN'T
ALWAYS BEEN JUDGE
DEATH, HAVE YOU? I
MEAN, YOU WEREN'T
BORN THAT WAY. YOU
MUST HAVE A REAL
NAME.

ISSS THISSSS
NECESSARY?

THE READERS ARE GOING
TO WANT TO KNOW. C'MON,
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
IT'S JUST A NAME.

SSSIDNEY.

SSSIDNEY..?

SSSIDNEY.

IS THAT THREE
"S"'S OR FOUR?

ASSS YOU
LIKE.

UH-HUH...AND
WOULD THAT BE
SSSIDNEY, UH,
DEATH?

UH, RIGHT. I GUESS WE CAN
GO WITH THAT. AGE?

AGELESSSS.

CAN YOU GIVE
ME SOMETHING
APPROXIMATE?

YOU ARE
BEGINNINGGG
TO TRY MY
PATIENCCCCCE!
MR SSSKUTER!

THAT HARDLY
MATTERSSS, MR
SSSKUTER.
LET'SSSSS SSTICK
WITH SSSIDNEY,
SSHHHALL WE?

OKAY, OKAY! I
GUESS WE CAN
SKIP THE REST!



JEEZ! YOU SURE ARE A HARD GUY TO INTERVIEW!

LET'SSS GET SSSSTARTED, SSSHHALL WE?



UH, RIGHT. WELL, SSSIDNEY, TELL ME—HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN? TAKE ME RIGHT BACK TO THE START.



I WASSS BORN...ON A WORLD MUCHHH LIKE THIESS. NOT SSSO ADVANCCCCED, PERHAPSSS, BUT IN MANY WAYSSS SSSIMILAR. I HAD ALL THE THINGSSS EVERY NORMAL YOUNGGG BOY HASSS—

YESSSS, I TOO WASSS A BOY ONCCE—THOUGH OF COURSSSE I WASSS FAR FROM NORMAL, EVEN THEN...



I HAD A CCCYCLE, TOYSSSS—EVEN A DOG...

SEE THE PRETTY BALL, WOOFIE?

READY, BOY?

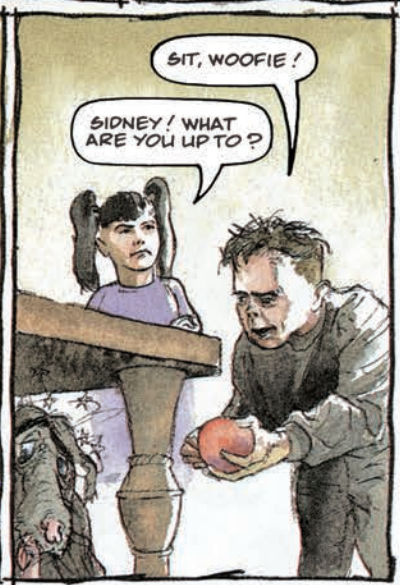


CATCH!

KLUNK!

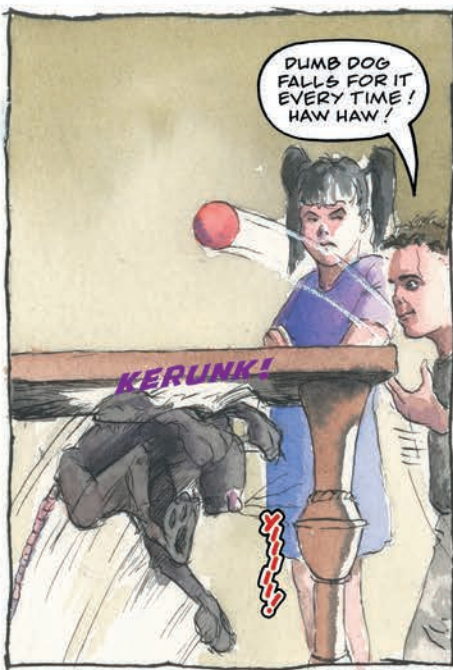


HAHAHAHAHA!



SIT, WOOFIE!

SIDNEY! WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?





"VERY GOOD BOY."

AS THE DARK JUDGE TALKED I FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO QUELL THE GROWING SUSPICION THAT THIS WAS ALL A DREAM—THAT I WOULD WAKE AND FIND MYSELF SAFE AND WELL, BACK IN MY OLD FAMILIAR APARTMENT AGAIN...

COULD I REALLY BE CALMLY SITTING THERE, LISTENING TO THE MOST EVIL BEING IN HISTORY RECOLLECTING TALES OF HIS BOYHOOD...

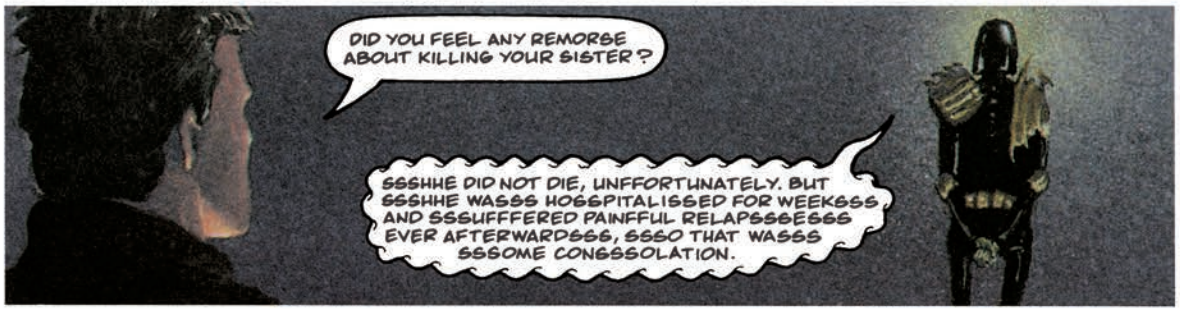
SO... YOU KILLED YOUR DOG. WAS WOOFIE YOUR FIRST KILLING ?

ON ANY SSSERIOUSSS LEVEL, YESSSS. I'D TORTURED MY SSSHARE OF SSSMALL ANIMALSS AND INSSSECTSS, OF COURSESS...

I GOT MY OWN BACK ON SSSISS ASS WELL...

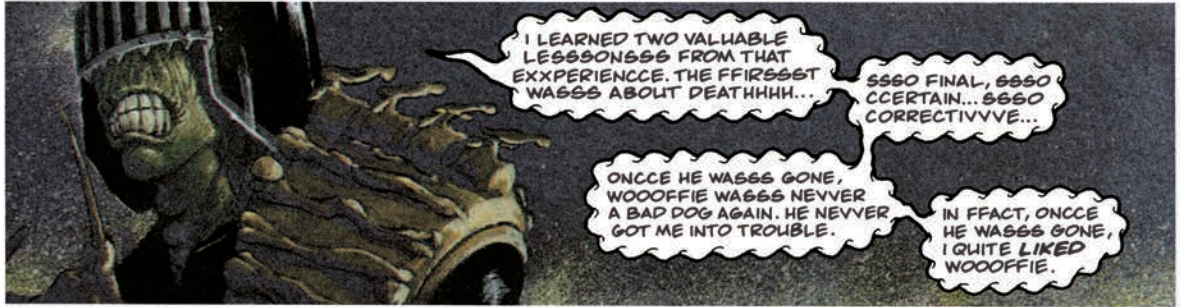






DID YOU FEEL ANY REMORSE ABOUT KILLING YOUR SISTER?

SSSHHE DID NOT DIE, UNFFORTUNATELY. BUT SSSHE WASSS HOSPITALISSSED FOR WEEKSSS AND SSSUFFERED PAINFFUL RELAPSSSSSESSS EVER AFTERWARDSSS, SSSO THAT WASSS SSSOME CONSSOLATION.



I LEARNED TWO VALUABLE LESSONSSSS FROM THAT EXPERIENCCE. THE FFIRSSST WASSS ABOUT DEATHHHH...

SSSO FINAL, SSSO CCERTAIN... SSSO CORRECTIVVE...

ONCC HE WASSS GONE, WOOFFIE WASSS NEVVVER A BAD DOG AGAIN. HE NEVVVER GOT ME INTO TROUBLE.

IN FFACCT, ONCC HE WASSS GONE, I QUITE LIKED WOOFFIE.



I SEE WHERE YOU'RE LEADING—THE "ALL LIFE IS A CRIME" BIT.

EXXACTLY. ONLY THE LIVVING HAVE THE POWER TO OFFEND.

AND THE SECOND LESSON?

DON'T GET CAUGHT.

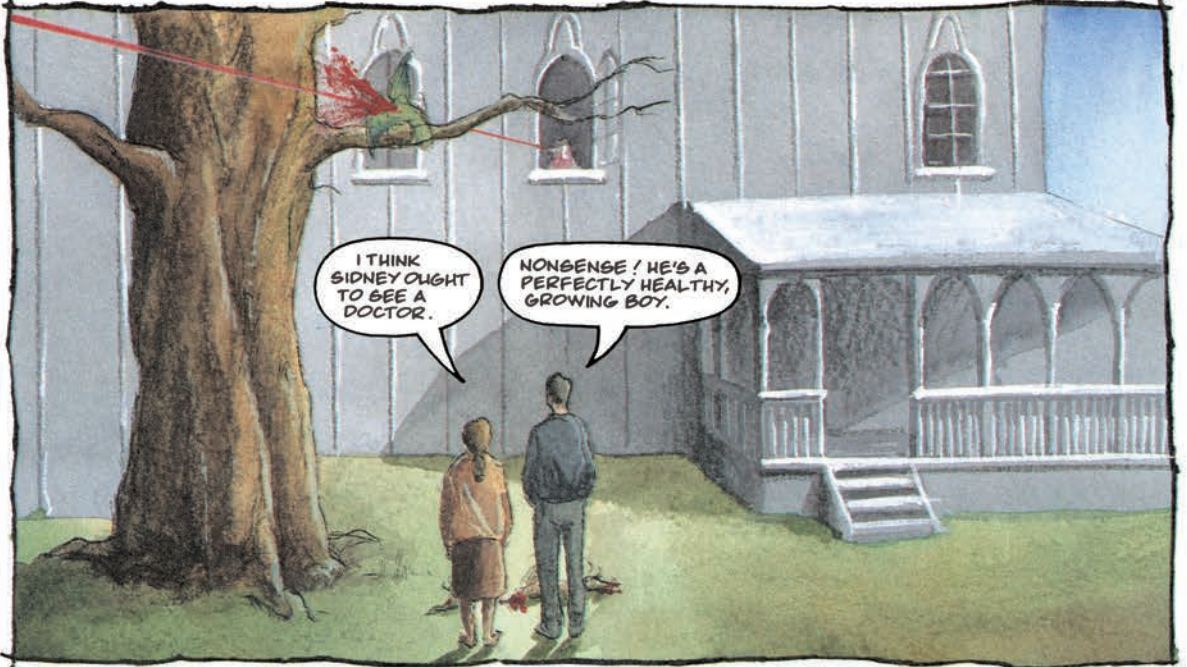


OTHHHER PEOPLE WERE NOT ASSS ENLIGHTENED ASSS I. I NEVVVER GOT PUNISSHHHED FOR WOOFFIE—MY MOTHER COULDN'T PROVVVE I'D KILLED HIM. BUT I WASSS PUNISSHHHED FOR SSSISSSSSS...

I WASSS CONFFINED TO MY ROOM. I SSSPENT THE TIME SSSHHHOOTING BIRDESSS.



"THEY CROAKED TOOO LOUDLY. THEY WOULD NOT SSSSTOP WHEN I TOLD THEM..."





I DON'T LIKE TO BE LEFT ALONE WITH HIM. I'VE GOT THIS TERRIBLE FEELING ONE DAY HE'S GOING TO KILL US ALL.

IF YOU'RE THAT WORRIED I'LL TAKE HIM TO WORK WITH ME.

WHEN HE REMEMBERED HIS FATHER I NOTICED AGAIN THAT SAD, WISTFUL QUALITY IN HIS VOICE, IN THE SET OF HIS FEATURES. ONCE MORE I WAS BEING PERMITTED A BRIEF, TANTALISING GLIMPSE OF THE SENSITIVE CREATURE THAT STILL LURKED BEHIND THE MASK OF DEATH...

IT ISS TO MY FFATHHHER I OWE MUCHHH OF MY DEVELOPINGGG PHILOSOPHHY. WE WERE KINDRED SSPIRITSS...



HE WASS CONSSUMED WITHH HATE AND LOATHHHINGG FOR PEOPLE. HE LOVED TO CAUSSSE THEM PAIN, TO TORTURE THEM SSSLOWLY AND HEAR THEIR SSSILENT SSSCREAMSS OF AGONY...



HE WASS A DENTISSSET.



NOW WE'LL JUST GIVE YOU A LITTLE INJECTION...



THERE WE ARE...



NOW YOU'LL START TO FEEL A...STRANGE, TINGLING SENSATION. GRADUALLY YOU'LL BEGIN TO NOTICE THAT YOU CAN NO LONGER SPEAK OR MAKE ANY SOUND WHATSOEVER. WHEN YOU TRY TO MOVE YOU'LL FIND THAT YOUR MUSCLES NO LONGER RESPOND.



THAT'S BECAUSE I'VE JUST PARALYSED YOU, YOU LITTLE LUMP OF EXCREMENT!



LOOK AT HIM, SON! DRESS OF THE EARTH!

WHAT GIVES HIM THE RIGHT TO THINK HE CAN INFLICT HIS ODIOSUS PRESENCE ON ME? HOW DARE HE COME MAKING MY LIFE A MISERY WITH HIS GARLIC BREATH AND HIS ROTTEN TEETH!

DON'T LET HIM UPSET YOU, DAD.



YES, YES. MUST REMEMBER MY PROFESSIONAL MANNER. COURTESY-COURTESY AT ALL TIMES...



TOOTHACHE, WAS IT, GIR? AND WHICH ONE'S GIVING YOU THE TROUBLE, HMMM?

NEVER MIND. WE'LL TRY THEM ALL. WE'LL GET TO IT IN TIME.





AND WHAT HAVE WE BEEN EATING TODAY, THEN? GARLIC? ROTTEN EGGS? DOG MESS?

ZZZZZZZZZZ



OF COURSE, WE DIDN'T THINK TO BRUSH OUR TEETH BEFORE COMING, DID WE, SIR? HMMM?

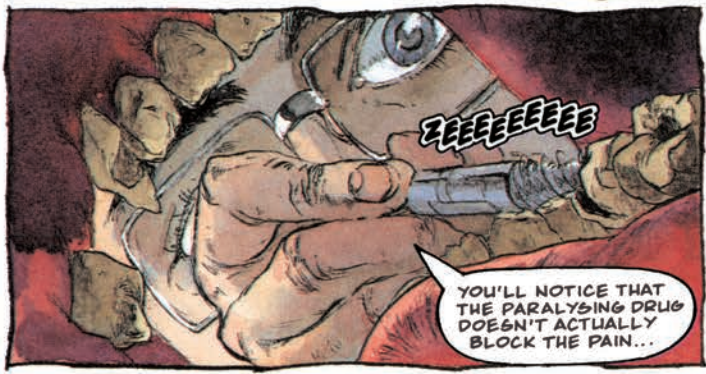
NO, SUCH A SENSIBLE PRECAUTION WOULD NEVER ENTER OUR WORM-RIDDLED BRAIN, WOULD IT, SIR?

ZZZZZZZZZZ



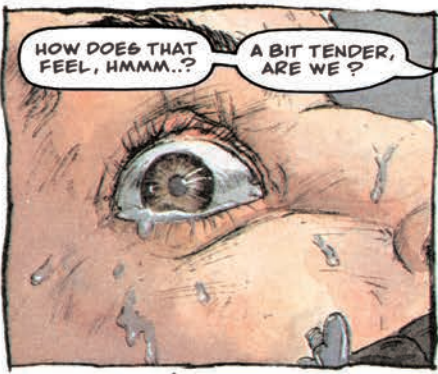
THERE WE ARE...RIGHT DOWN INTO THE PULP THERE...

ZZZZZZZZZZ



YOU'LL NOTICE THAT THE PARALYSING DRUG DOESN'T ACTUALLY BLOCK THE PAIN...

ZZZZZZZZZZ



HOW DOES THAT FEEL, HMMM..?

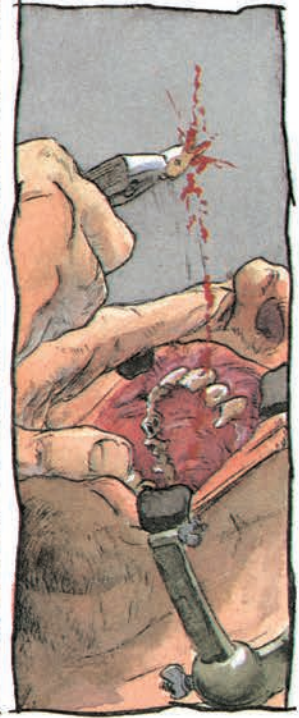
A BIT TENDER, ARE WE?



MIND YOU, IT TAKES ALL TYPES, DOESN'T IT? I HAD A WOMAN THE OTHER DAY WHINGING ABOUT HER DENTURES. THEY KEPT FALLING OUT, SHE SAID.



I DRILLED HER NEW SOCKETS THEN AND THERE AND BANGED THEM IN WITH A HAMMER. THAT STOPPED HER WHINGING.



ZZZZZZZZZZ





SURELY YOU AND YOUR FATHER COULDN'T GET AWAY WITH TREATING PATIENTS LIKE THAT FOR LONG?

ON THE CONTRARY.



PEOPLE SSSUFFER FROM A DEEP-ROOTED DREAD OF DENTISSTSS, ASS OF SSSERPENTSS AND CREEPINGG THINGGSS. NONE WERE IN A FFFIT SSTATE TO COMPLAIN WHEN THEY LEFFT - FEWW COMPLAINED AFTERWARDSS.

PERHAPSS THEY FFEARED THAT IFF THEY MADE A FUSSS THEN SSSOMEHOW MY FFFATHER WOULD COME FFOR THEM AGAIN...



YOU HAVE NICCE WHITE TEEETHHH, MR SSSKUTER. I COULD SSSILL DO A NICCC JJJOB ON YOU.

I-IF YOU DON'T MIND I'LL, UH, PASS ON THAT ONE... GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY, I KNOW...



IN THE END, ASS ISSS THE NATURE OF THINGGSS, MERE TORTURE DID NOT SSSUFFICCE. MY FFATHER TOOK TO DSSSPATCHHNG HISSS PATIENTSS WHENEVER POSSSIBLE...

...HE WHO SSSHOWED ME THE INHERENT CORRUPTION OF LIFFE... AND THE TRUE FORGIVVINGG NATURE OF DEATHHHH...

I SSSHALL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO HIM. ASS I SSSAY, MY PHHILOSSOPHHY OF LIFFE AND DEATHHH WASS DEVELOPINGG. IT WASS HE WHO HELPED ME PUT IT INTO WORDSS...

HEAVE HO, SIDNEY!



THANK YOU, MADAM, DON'T CALL AGAIN.



IF THOSE TEETH GIVE YOU ANY MORE TROUBLE YOU JUST LET ME KNOW, GIR.



PEOPLE!

THEIR BRAINS ARE FULL OF WORMS. DID YOU KNOW THAT, SIDNEY?

NO, DAD.



LITTLE WRIGGLING WORMS—BRAINS LIKE RIPE, WRITHING PUSTULES, JUST WAITING TO BURST, TO SPEW THEIR FOULNESS OVER US.

EVEN MUM AND SIS?

ALL OF THEM. WORMS.



THEY'RE BETTER OFF DEAD. THEY'RE AT PEACE NOW.

WE'VE DONE THEM A FAVOUR. WE'VE KILLED THE WORMS.



ONLY THE DEAD ARE TRULY WITHOUT WORMS. REMEMBER THAT, SIDNEY.

YES, DAD.



WORMS?

I DID NOT TAKE HIM LITERALLY. MY FFATHHHER WASS OBVIOUSSSLY SSSOME. WHAT FFANCIFFFUL.

BUT I UNDERSSSTOOD HIM WELL ENOUGHHH. I SSSAW IT ASS A METAPHHOR FFFOR SSSINFULLNESS...



ONLY THE DEAD ARE TRULY WITHOUT SSSIN. IT ISSS A TRUTHHH EVEN YOU CANNOT DENY, MR SSSKUTER.

Well, no, I guess not. We all do bad things...

LIFFE IS, BY ITSSS VERY NATURE, SSSINFULLL. ONLY DEATHHH CAN RELIEVE ITS BURDEN. ONLY IN DEATHHH CAN MAN'SSS TROUBLED SSSOUL FIND PEACCCCE.



TORTURING PATIENTSSSS WASSS ONE THINGGG, SSSYSSSTEMATIC SSSUSTAINED HOMICIDE BY DENTISSSTRY QUITE ANOTHER - FOR IN THOSSSE BENIGHTED TIMESSS SSSLICHHH ACTSSS OF MERCY WERE SSSSTILL CLASS-SSIFFIED ASS CRIMESSS.

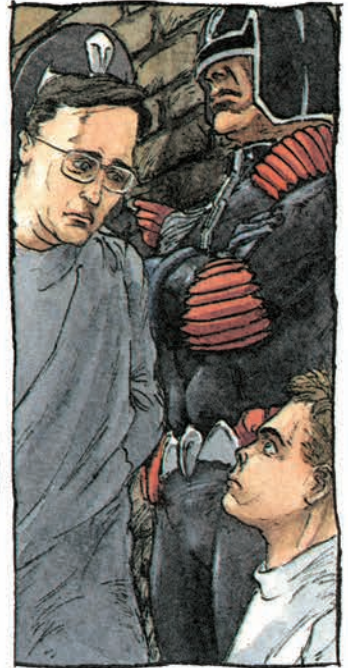
MY FFATHHHER'SSS ACTIVVITIESSS COULD NOT FOREVVVER REMAIN A SSSSECRET.

I MADE SSSSURE OF IT BY REPORTINGGG HIM MYSSSELF.

YOU STOOLED ON YOUR OWN DAD ?

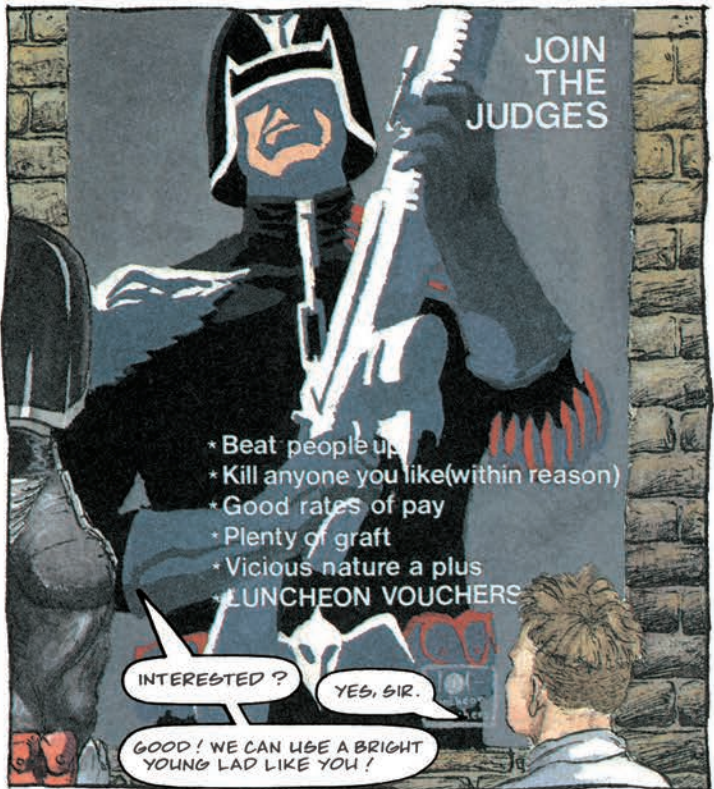


INDEED, I HAD BEEN GIVVINGGG SSSOME THOUGHT TO MY FFFUTURE. DENTISSSTRY HAD A CCERTAIN APPEAL, BUT PROSSSPECTSSS WERE LIMITED. I REQUIRED A CAREER WHERE I WOULD HAVE AMPLE SSSSCOPE TO APPLY MY IDEASSSS...



GOOD WORK, SON.

THANK YOU, SIR.



JOIN THE JUDGES

- * Beat people up
- * Kill anyone you like (within reason)
- * Good rates of pay
- * Plenty of graft
- * Vicious nature a plus
- * LUNCHEON VOUCHERS

INTERESTED ?

YES, SIR.

GOOD ! WE CAN USE A BRIGHT YOUNG LAD LIKE YOU !



I WASS ENROLLED ASS A TRAINEEE JUDGE THAT DAY. MY FFATHHER WASS SSENTENCED TO DEATHHH. ASS A SSSPECCIAL MARK OF FFAVOUR, I WASS PERMITTED TO CARRY OUT THE EXXECUTION.



MY BRAIN IS FULL OF WORMS TOO.

I KNOW, DAD.



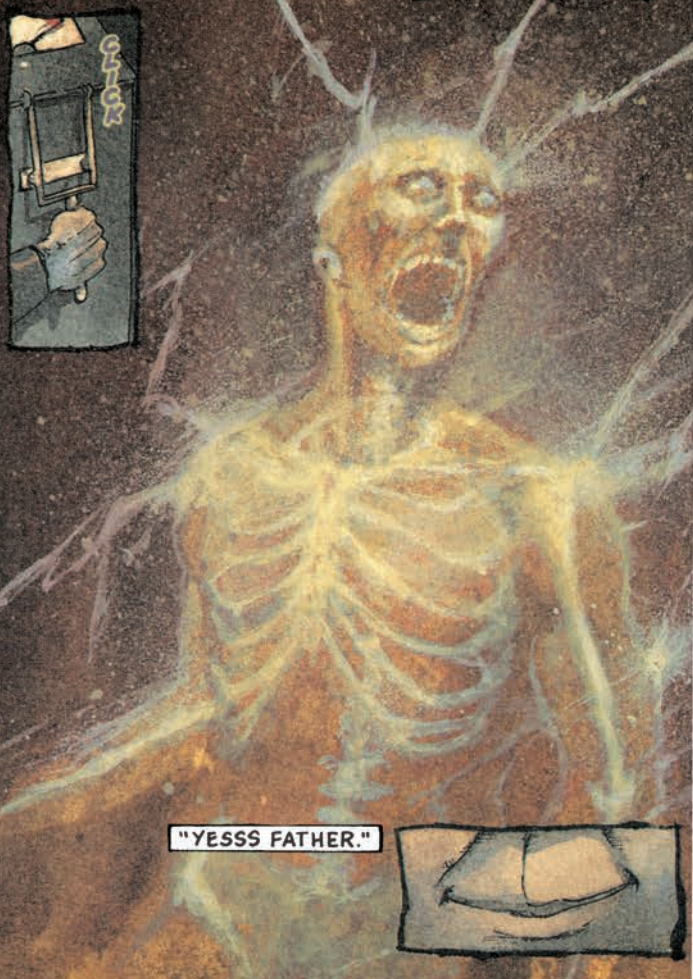
I'M DOING YOU A FAVOUR.

YESSS...



I SSSHHALL ALWAYSSS REMEMBER HISSS LASST WORDSSS TO ME...THE SSSAME WORDSSS I HAD USSSED TO WOOOFFIE...

GOOD BOY.



"YESSS FATHER."





SO... YOU EXECUTED YOUR OWN FATHER.

YESSS. A CHERISSHHED MEMORY.

I WASSS AN IMMEDIATE SSSUCCESS AT LAW SSSCHOOL. ASS WE CALLED IT. MY GRASSSP OF MATTERSS PHILOSSOPHICAL WAS GROWINGGG FASST. I WASSS ABLE TO ENGAGE MY TUTORSS IN LONGG DISCUSSIONSS, IMPRESSINGG MANY WITH THE SSMPLLE LOGIC OF MY ARGUMENT.

A FEWW, HOWEVER, THOUGHT ME SSSICK.

YOU DON'T SAY.

THEY WERE LIKE YOU, MR SSSKUTER - MINDSS LOCKED IN THE PASTT, IN THE OLD THINKINGGG. THE "WETSSS", I CALLED THEM.

THEY REGARDED ME ASS AN EXCCRESCENCE WHICHH MUSSST BE REMOVED.



THEY UNDERSSSTIMATED THEIR ENEMY!

HOWW WELL I REMEMBER THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'SSS TRAGIC SSSUICIDE IN THE FIFTH YEAR TORTURE LAB...



... AND THE FFIRE IN THE SSENIOR TUTORSSS' QUARTERSSS WHICHH CLAIMED FFOUR LIVESSS.



"I SSSUCCEEDED IN IMPLICATINGG A FELLOWN TRAINEE IN THAT ONE. HE HAD BEEN IRRITATINGGG ME WITH HIS HELPFULL ATTITUDE AND CHHHEERFFULL DISSPOSSION."

MORGY DID IT, SIR! CHECK HIS LOCKER!



I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!



THIS LOOKS BAD FOR YOU, BOY.



PERMISSION TO SPEAK, SIR?

YES, SIDNEY?

PLEASE, SIDNEY! TELL THEM IT'S NOT TRUE!



AS MORG'S GOING TO GET EXECUTED ANYWAY, MAY I SUGGEST WE BE ALLOWED TO HUNT HIM?



AS TRAINEE JUDGES, IT MIGHT BE GOOD EXPERIENCE FOR US TO KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HUNT SOMEONE DOWN AND KILL HIM IN COLD BLOOD.



JUST A SUGGESTION, SIR.



AND AN EXCELLENT ONE, SIDNEY!

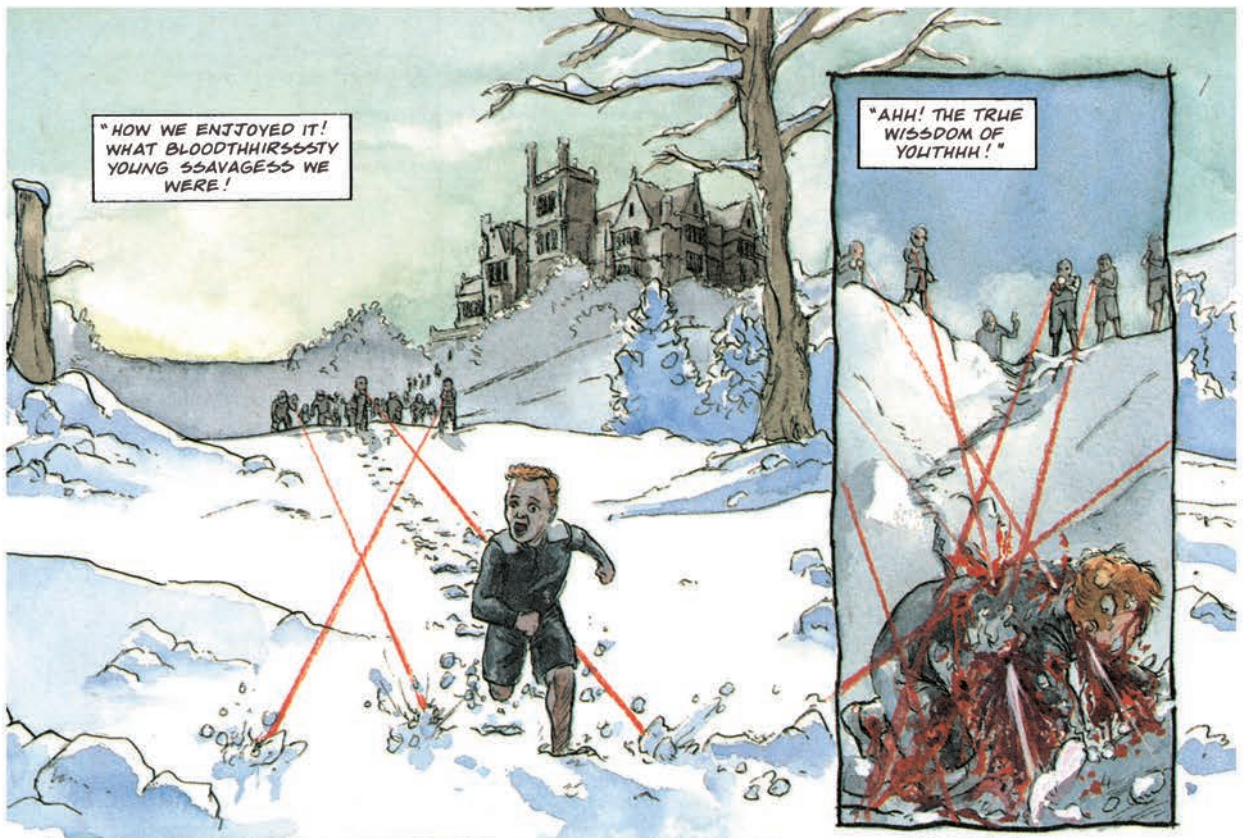
BOYS - WHO'D LIKE TO HUNT MORG?



YAAAAHHHHH



B-BUT I'M INNOCENT!



"HOW WE ENJOYED IT!
WHAT BLOODTHIRSTY
YOUNG SAVAGES WE
WERE!"

"AHH! THE TRUE
WISDOM OF
YOUTH!"



WHERE ARE THEY NOW,
MY OLD SCHOOL CHUMS?
DEAD... ALL DEAD.
PURGED OF THEIR SINS.

MANY OF THEM BY
MY OWN GOOD HANDS...

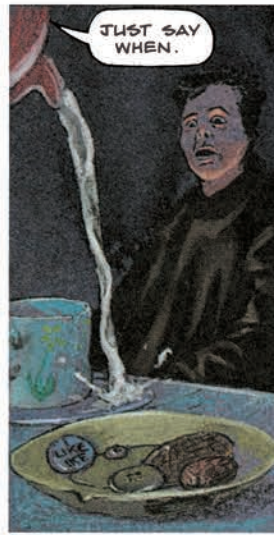


I GATHER LIFE
WAS, UH... FAIRLY
CHEAP ON YOUR
WORLD?

IT WAS NOT THE
SACRED INSTITUTION
IT IS HERE. IN THAT
WAY WE WERE MORE
ENLIGHTENED THAN
YOU...



I THOUGHT I'D BRING YOU
A CUP OF SOMETHING ANYWAY,
MR SKUTER. YOU MUST BE PARCHED
WITH ALL THAT TALKING.







WHERE'S BRI?
HAS SOMETHING
HAPPENED?

WHEN DID YOU
LAST SEE SKUTER?

YESTERDAY, 22.35.
HE GOT A CALL - WENT
TO MEET SOMEONE.

WHO?

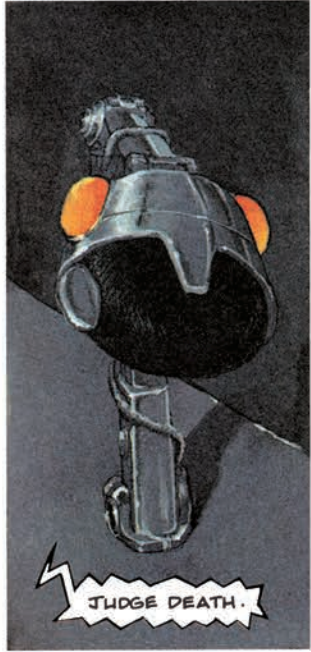
CAN'T SAY. BRIAN
WOULDN'T LIKE IT.



BRIAN IS DEAD.

NO!

WHO DID HE
MEET YESTERDAY?
WHO MADE THE
CALL?



JUDGE DEATH.

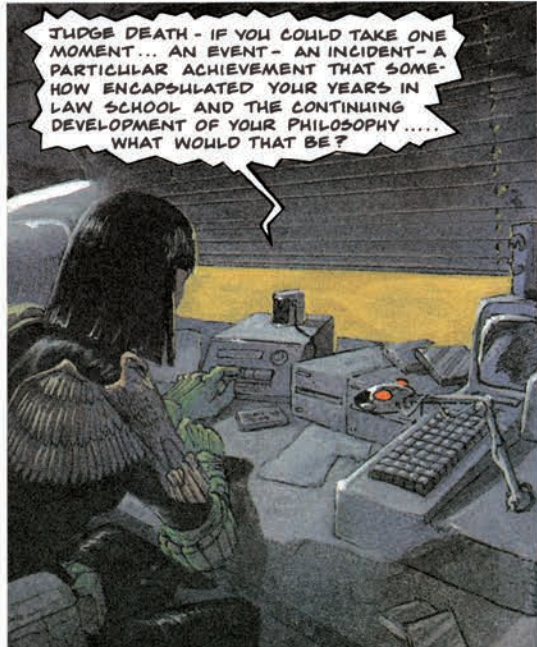


THAT'S WHAT BRI SAID, ANYWAY.
HE MET HIM BEFORE.

SEE FOR
YOURSELF. ALL
HIS NOTES AND
TAPES ARE IN
THE DRAWER.



Judge
Death



JUDGE DEATH - IF YOU COULD TAKE ONE
MOMENT... AN EVENT - AN INCIDENT - A
PARTICULAR ACHIEVEMENT THAT SOME-
HOW ENCAPSULATED YOUR YEARS IN
LAW SCHOOL AND THE CONTINUING
DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR PHILOSOPHY.....
WHAT WOULD THAT BE?



I'M GLAD YOU ASKED
ME THAT, BRIAN...

Judge
Death



THE HIGH POINT OF MY LAW SCHOOL DAYSS - MY CROWNINGGGG MOMENT - CAME IN MY SIXTHHH YEAR...



IT WAS THE CUSSTOM TO ALLOW EACHH TRAINEE JJUDGE THEIR DAY IN COURT - PRESSIDING OVER PETTY OFFFENCCESS AND CIVIL MATTERSSS, FOR THE MOST PART.



NO ONE WHO WITNESSSED MY DAY IN COURT WOULD EVER FORGET IT...

ALL RISE FOR TRAINEE JUDGE SIDNEY!



FIRST CASE!

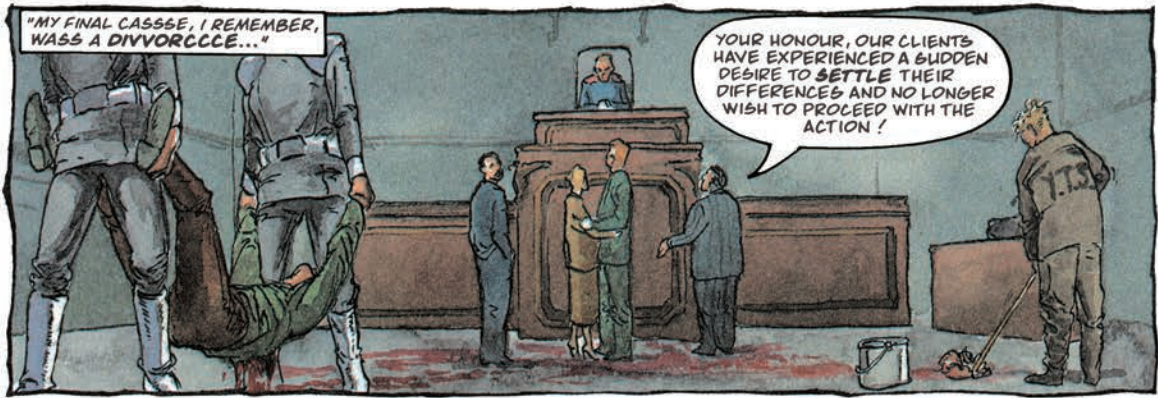
BAM!



THE DEFENDANT IS CHARGED WITH LOITERING IN A NO-LOITER ZONE.

HOW DO YOU PLEAD?

GUILTY, YOUR HONOUR.



"MY FINAL CASSE, I REMEMBER, WASS A DIVORCCCE..."

YOUR HONOUR, OUR CLIENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED A SUDDEN DESIRE TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND NO LONGER WISH TO PROCEED WITH THE ACTION!



AND THIS IS THE DECISION OF YOU BOTH?

Y-YES, YOUR HONOUR!

YOU-YOU GOTTA BELIEVE US! WE LOVE EACH OTHER VERY MUCH!



I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT. AND MAY I SAY IT DOES THIS COURT GOOD TO BE ABLE TO BRING TWO PEOPLE BACK TOGETHER AGAIN FOR A CHANGE. MY GOOD WISHES FOR A LONG AND HAPPY LIFE TOGETHER.



THANK MERCY!



BAM!



THUNK!

THUNK!

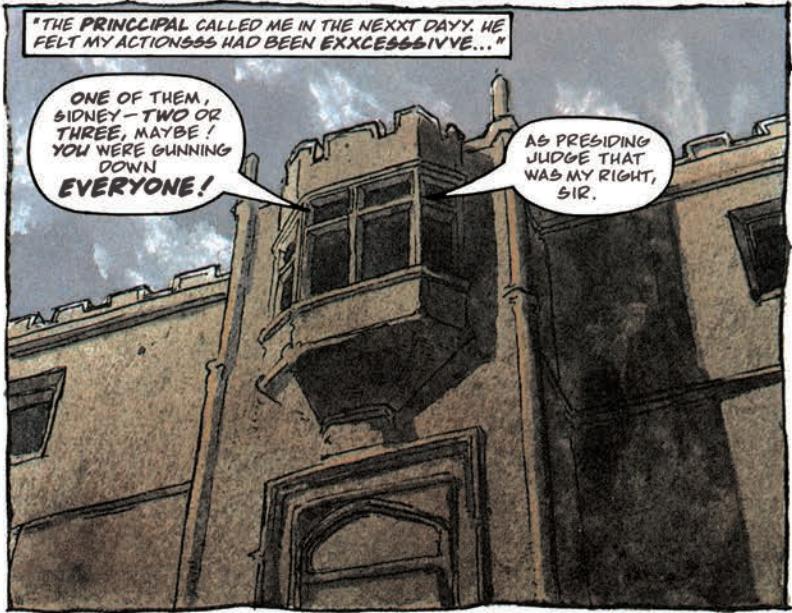


WASTING COURT TIME. SENTENCE IS DEATH.



MY DAY IN COURT CAUSED A FLOOD OF COMPLAINTS.

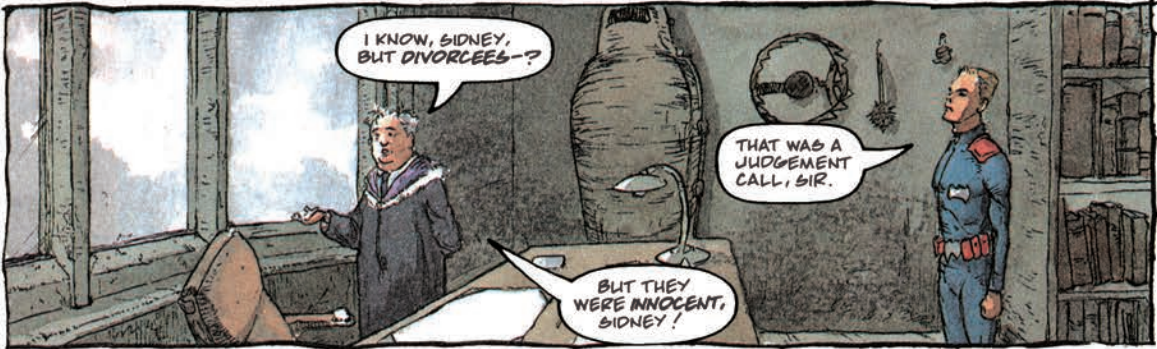
I CAN IMAGINE.



"THE PRINCIPAL CALLED ME IN THE NEXT DAY. HE FELT MY ACTIONS HAD BEEN EXCESSIVE..."

ONE OF THEM, SIDNEY - TWO OR THREE, MAYBE! YOU WERE GUNNING DOWN EVERYONE!

AS PRESIDING JUDGE THAT WAS MY RIGHT, SIR.



I KNOW, SIDNEY, BUT DIVORCES--?

THAT WAS A JUDGEMENT CALL, SIR.

BUT THEY WERE INNOCENT, SIDNEY!



NOBODY'S INNOCENT, SIR. ONLY THE DEAD.

I BELIEVE MY SENTENCING WAS ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE. IF YOU CHECK OUR OWN STATISTICS YOU'LL SEE THAT 87 PER CENT OF CONVICTED PERPETRATORS WILL COMMIT ANOTHER OFFENCE - AND THESE ARE JUST THE ONES WE KNOW ABOUT.



HOW MANY OF THE PEOPLE I SENTENCED WILL RE-OFFEND?

WHY, NONE, BUT--

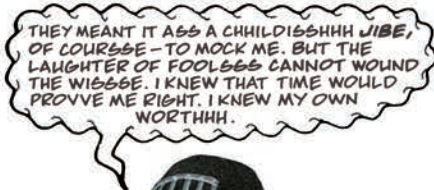
EXACTLY! EVEN YOU HAVE GOT TO ADMIT THOSE ARE GOOD FIGURES, SIR.



THEY ARE TOTALLY REHABILITATED. NOT ONE OF THEM WILL EVER COMMIT ANOTHER CRIME. AS FAR AS THEY ARE CONCERNED, I HAVE CURED THE CRIME PROBLEM.

YES, I SEE THAT, BUT--

NO, YOU DON'T SEE, SIR! WE'RE NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE IN A MINOR COURT. THERE'S A BROADER ISSUE AT STAKE.

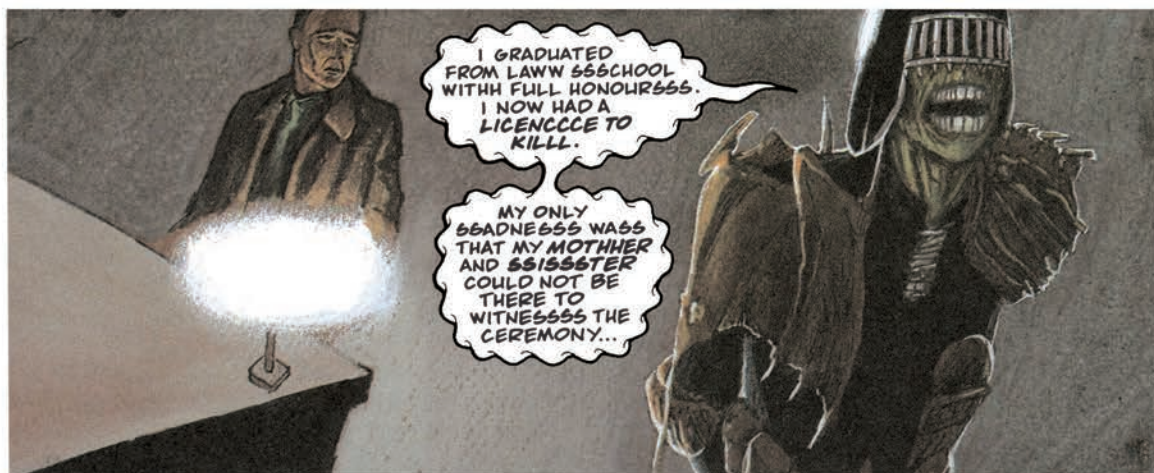


rectitude, proud of his achievements.

In any other world, possessed of a different set of goals a different moral code, who can say what pinnacles Judge Death would have reached?

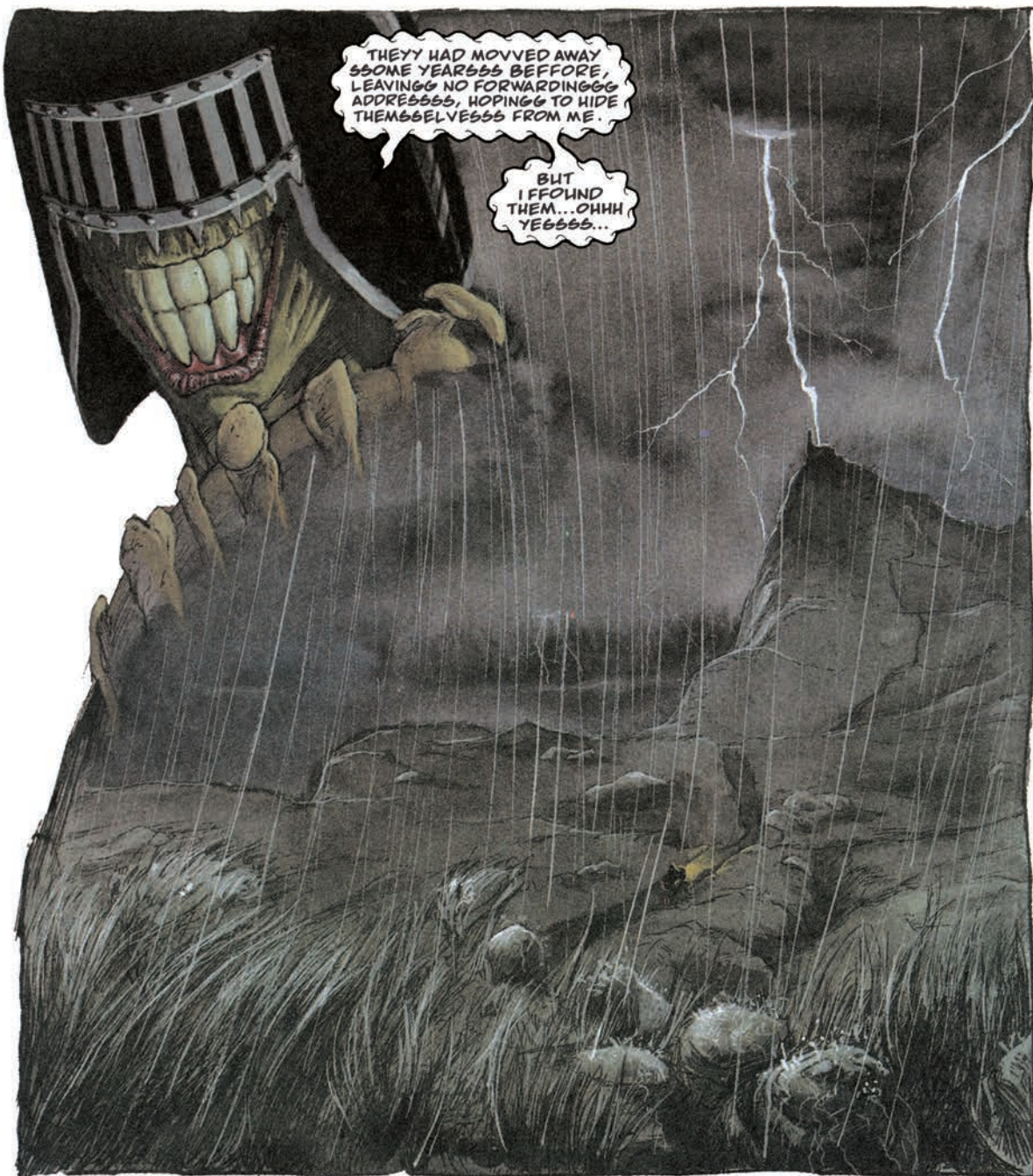
Yet there was something more - another quality that set him above the level of a mere high achiever. That vision and strength of purpose that makes men into leaders.





I GRADUATED FROM LAW SCHOOL WITH FULL HONOURS. I NOW HAVE A LICENCE TO KILL.

MY ONLY SADNESS WAS THAT MY MOTHER AND SISTER COULD NOT BE THERE TO WITNESS THE CEREMONY...



THEY HAD MOVED AWAY SOME YEARS BEFORE, LEAVING NO FORWARDING ADDRESS, HOPING TO HIDE THEMSELVES FROM ME.

BUT I FOUND THEM... OH H YESSS...







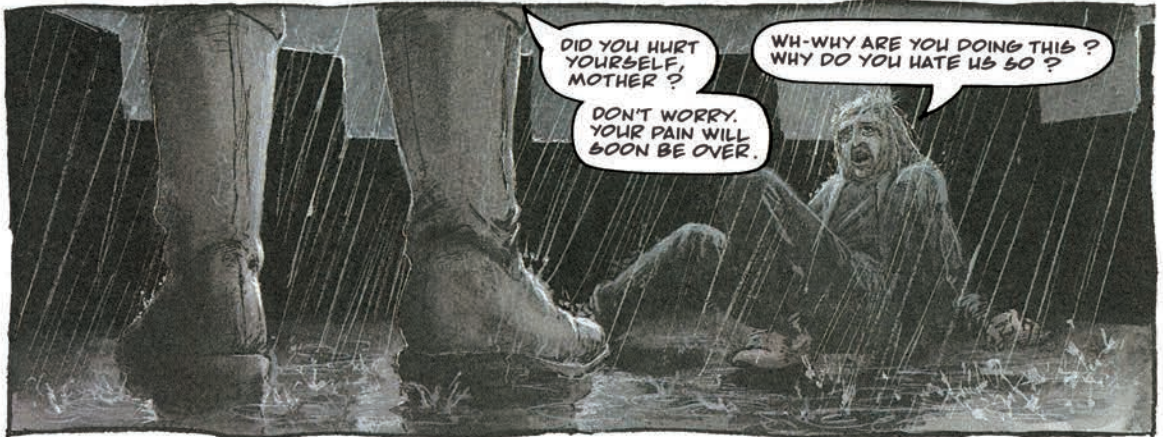


I'M COMING TO GET YOU!

IT'S YOUR LITTLE BOYEEE-!

OPEN THE DOOR, MOTHER!

CRASH!



DID YOU HURT YOURSELF, MOTHER?

WH-WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHY DO YOU HATE US SO?

DON'T WORRY. YOUR PAIN WILL SOON BE OVER.

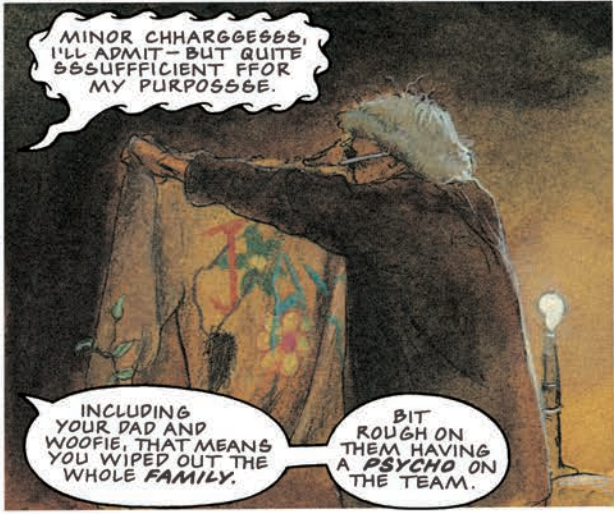






SO... YOU MURDERED YOUR MOTHER AND SISTER—

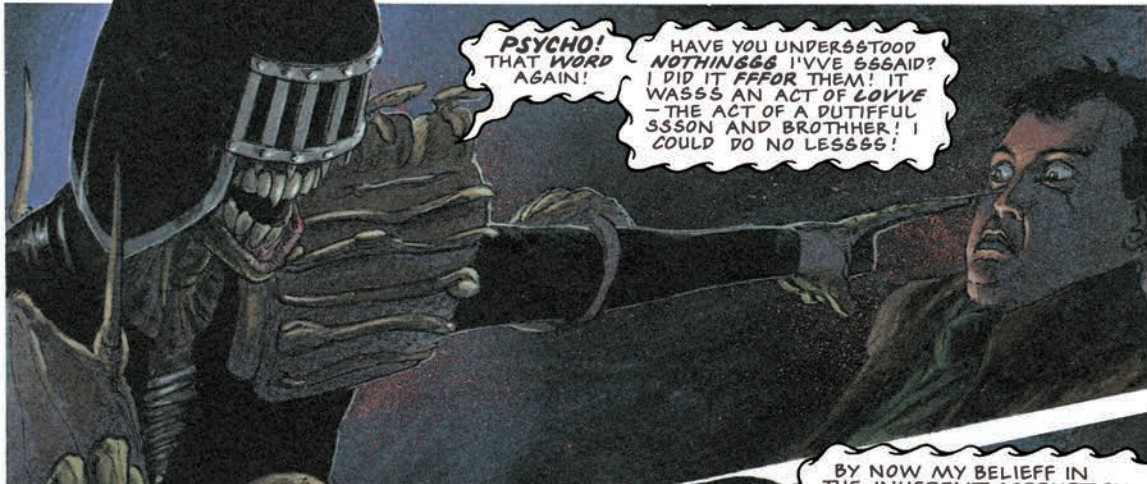
GRANTED THEM **MERCCY**, MR **SSSKUTER** — ACCORDING TO THE **LAWW**.



MINOR **CHHARGGESSS**, I'LL ADMIT— BUT QUITE **SSSUFFICIENT** FFOR MY **PURPOSSSE**.

INCLUDING YOUR DAD AND **WOOFIE**, THAT MEANS YOU WIPED OUT THE **WHOLE FAMILY**.

BIT ROUGH ON THEM HAVING A **PSYCHO** ON THE **TEAM**.



PSYCHO! THAT **WORD** AGAIN!

HAVE YOU UNDERSTOOD **NOTHINGSS** I'VE **SSSAID**? I DID IT **FFOR** THEM! IT WAS **SS** AN ACT OF **LOVVE** — THE ACT OF A DUTIFULL **SSON** AND **BROTHER**! I COULD DO **NO LESSSS**!



YOU HAVE A **SSARCASSSTIC** TONE AT TIMES THAT I FIND **INCREASSINGLY** **IRRITATINGSS**, MR **SSSKUTER**.

OF COURSE, SILLY ME. HOW COULD I MISS THAT.

HAVVVE A CARE. YOU ARE NOT OUT OF HERE YET.

SORRY! NO OFFENCE!



BY NOW MY BELIEFF IN THE INHERENT CORRUPTION OF LIFE HAD HARDENED INTO **ABSSSOLUTE** CONVICTION. I COULD **SSSEE** THE **FFUTURE** LAID OUT BEFORE ME — MY **GOAL** WAS **SS** CLEAR...

I **MUSSST** **DEBSTRY** THE **WORLD** — **EVVERY** **LIVVINGG** THHINGG! I **MUSSST** RETURN THE **WORLD** TO A **SSSTATE** OF **PERFECT** **INNOCENCCCE**!

QUITE AN AMBITION.



I WASS NOT ALONE. THERE WERE MANY WHO FOLLOWED MY LEAD, WHO SSSAW THE TRUTH OF MY MESSAGE, WHO RECOGNISED IN ME THE HAND OF DESSSTINY AT WORK.

"THERE WERE THHREE IN PARTICULAR - YOUNGGG JUDGESS WHO HAD GRADUATED BELOW ME. THEY HAD BEEN MY ADMIRERSS IN LAWV SSSCHOOL - THEY BECAME MY MOSS&T TRUSTED LIEUTENANT SSS."



"AHHH, WHAT HEADY DAYSS THEY WERE! WHAT TIMESS&& WE HAD, JUDGESS&& THE PEOPLE TO OUR YOUNG HEARTSS&& CONTENT!"



"IT WASS S&&TLL NECESSARY TO OFFER S&&OME PALTRY JU&&STIFICATION FOR OUR ACTIVIT&&SS&& LI&&FFE. IT S&&ELFF HAD NOT Y&&T BEEN DECLARED ILLEGAL."

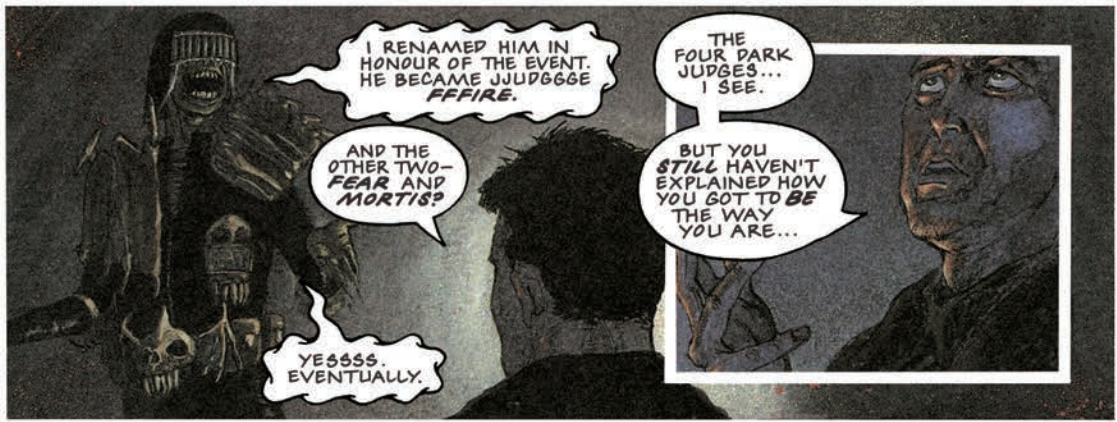


"BUT A CRIME COULD ALWAYS&& BE FOUND. THAT ISS THE NATURE OF LI&&FFE. ALLL ARE GUILTY."



"HOW WELL I REMEMBER THE DAY ONE OF MY YOUNG BUCKSS&& S&&SENTEN&&CED AN ENTIRE S&&SCHOOL TO DEATH&&H - BREACH&&H OF NOISS&& RE&&SS&& AT PLAYTIME! OVER EIGHTEEN HUNDRED YOUNGG&& S&&INNER&& ROASS&&TED TO A CRISS&&P."

"IT WASS RATHER A LARGE COMPREH&&SS&&SIVE, I RECALL..."



I RENAMED HIM IN HONOUR OF THE EVENT. HE BECAME JJJJGGGEE FFFIRE.

THE FOUR DARK JUDGES... I SEE.

AND THE OTHER TWO— FEAR AND MORTIS?

BUT YOU *STILL* HAVEN'T EXPLAINED HOW YOU GOT TO *BE* THE WAY YOU ARE...

YESSSS. EVENTUALLY.



I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT REALLY *ALIVE*, ARE YOU? YOU'RE ALWAYS COMING OUT WITH THAT "YOU CANNOT KILL WHAT DOES NOT LIVE" STUFF.

I WASSS COMING TO THAT.



IT WASSS A SSSTROKE OF GOOD FORTUNE. YOU SSEE, I FFELL IN LOVVE.

YOU? YOU'RE KIDDING ME.

TWO OF THE MOSSST RAVISSSHINGG CREATURESSS YOU CAN IMAGINE..!



TWO?

YOU ARE ON YOUR LASST WARNINGG, MR SSSKUTER.

QUITE THE LITTLE ROMEO, WEREN'T YOU?

SORRY! SORRY!



FFOR YEARSSS A
SSECTION OF THE TOWN
HAD HAD A FFEARFFUL
REPUTATION. PEOPLE
DISSAPPEARED AND WERE
NEVER Sseen AGAIN.
THERE WERE RUMOURSSS
OF DEMONSSS WHICH
DWELT IN CAYVE
SYSTEMSSS DEEP
BELOW GROUND...



"I DECIDED TO
INVESSSTIGATE..."



"WHAT I FFOUND WASSS
BEYOND MY WILDEBSST
EXXPECTATIONSSS — "

"A TEMPLE... A TEMPLE
DEVVOTED TO DEATHHH
IN ALL ITSS
WONDROUSSS FORMSSS!"





A JUDGE,
SISSTER...



I THINK
HE'S COME
TO KILL
US...

YESSS.



HEEHEEHEEHEEHEEHEEHEEHEE



"PHHOBIA AND NAUSSSEA
WERE THEIR NAMESS.
THEY WERE DEATHHH
CULTISSTSSS AND
DEVOTEESS OF THE DARK
ARTSSS. THEY DERIVED
THEIR POWER FFROM
HUMAN SSACRIFICCCCE..."

"IT WAGSS LOVVVE AT
FFIRSSST SSIGHT!"

YOU SEEM
SUCH PRECIOUS
CREATURES...

IT WOULD
BE A SHAME
TO HURT YOU...
JUST YET.



WHO CAN EXXPLAIN
LOVVVE? IT SSSTRIKESSS
WHEN WE LEASSST
EXXPECT!

ALL I
KNOW ISSS,
ASS I BEHELD
THEM THERE,
A PICTURE OF
DEMENTED
LOVELINESSS-

- ASS I GAZZED
UPON THE DIVINE
MADNESSSS IN
THEIR EYESSS -

- I FELT A
SSSTIRRINGG
IN MY BRASST
AND IN MY
LOINSSS SSUCHH
ASS I HAD
NEVER FFELT
BEFFORE...

FFROM THAT
MOMENT I WASSS
THEIRSSSS!



H-WAGONS
IN POSITION.
HOLDING OFF
AT FIVE-ZERO-
ZERO.



WHAT DO
YOU THINK,
ANPERSON?



BEATS
ME...

I'M PICKING
UP SOMETHING,
BUT IT'S FAINT
—LIKE A BAD
SMELL THAT
WON'T GO
AWAY...



BUT...
HELL! IF
DEATH WAS
IN TOWN I'M
SURE I'D HAVE
SENSED IT
LONG BEFORE
THIS...

WE
SHALL
SEE.



MOVE
IN!

PHOBIA AND NAUSEA, THE SISTERS OF DEATH— THOSE ETHEREAL DEMONS WHO WROUGHT SUCH APPALLING CARNAGE UPON OUR CITY... IT CAME AS A SHOCK TO REALISE THAT THEY TOO HAD ONCE BEEN HUMAN.

I FFELL TOTALLY UNDER THE SSSISSTERSSS' SSSPELL. I WOULD BRING THEM VICTIMSSS AND WE—

I WILL NOT GO INTO DETAIL. SSSOME OF THE THINGSSS WE DID MADE EVEN ME FFEEEL QUEASSSY.

BUT I WASSS YOUNGGG THEN. SSSOME ACTSSS OF UNSSPEAKABLE DEPRAVVVITY ARE AN... ACQUIRED TASSSTE.



IT WASSS THEY WHO REMINDED ME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL FFLAWW IN MY ARGUMENT.

I'D RECOGNISSED THE PROBLEM A LONGG TIME BEFFORE. I'D WRESSSTLED WITH IT MANY TIMESSS— TO NO AVAIL.

YOU GOT SOMETHING WRONGS—?



YOU SSSSEE, MR SSSKUTER, I TOO WASSS ALIVVE — I TOO WASSS A SSSINNER— PERHAPSS THE GREATESST SSSINNER OF ALL! WHAT RIGHT HAD I TO SSSSTAND IN JJUDGEMENT OVER OTTHERSSS?

IT WASSS THE SSSISSTERSSS WHO PROVIDED THE SSSOLUTION...

YOU'LL HAVE TO DIE. IT'S THE ONLY WAY.

ONLY THEN CAN YOU BE PURE TO JUDGE.





AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE, GIRLS, BUT RATHER TOO FINAL FOR MY LIKING.

IT WOULDN'T BE PERMANENT...

WE CAN RESURRECT YOU - BRING YOU BACK AS LIVING DEAD.



WE'LL DO A REALLY NICE JOB ON YOU! SIPDEYKINS...

LIVING DEATH, HUH...? SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!

TAKE THESE POISSONSS. TAKE THEM DAILY. THEY'LL GRADUALLY PREPARE YOUR BODY - ROT THE PLANT ON THE STALK.



WE TAKE POISSONS OURSELVES. SEE -

PHOBIA'S MORE ADVANCED THAN ME. SHE'S ALREADY HALFWAY TO THE SPIRIT WORLD.



SOON I'LL HARDLY BE HERE AT ALL.

INTERESTING...

I TOOK THE POISSONSSS ASS INSTRUCTED... AND SLOWLY, DAY BY DAY, MY FLESSHSSHH DECAYED...

AFFTER THIRTY DAYSSS I BECAME TOO WEAK TO SSSSTAND. THE SSSSISTERSSSS TENDED ME TIRELESSLY, ANOINTINGSS MY BODY WITHH FOUL-SSSMELLING UNGUENTSSS AND CORROSSIVE FLUIDSSS.



DONE TO A TURN!

"MY THREE TRUSTED
LIEUTENANTSSS WERE
INVITED TO WITNESS
MY DEMISSSE..."

THE HOUR HAS
COME TO DEPART
THISS MORTAL
LIFE!



I'M FREEEEEE

PURGGED
OF MY
SSSINSSS!
DEAD—
AND YET
UNDEADD!



WELL DONE,
THAT MAN!

LET
THE DEAD
FLUIDSS
FLOW!

LET THE
BODY
RIPEN!





ENTER NOW!



FILL THIS SOULLESS CARCASE!



ARISE, JUDGE DEATHHH!

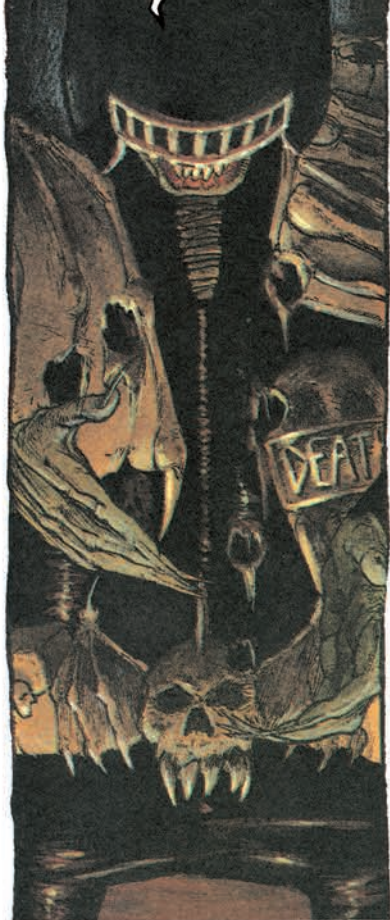


"THEY HAD PREPARED NEWW ROBESSS OF OFFICCE, IN KEEPING& WITH MY ELEVATED SSSTATURE -"

EXXCCELLENT!



IT... WORKSSSS!



YOU CANNOT
KILL WHAT
DOESSS NOT
LIVVVE!



PRETTY FINE
JOB YOU DID THERE,
LADIES! RECKON
YOU COULD DO
SOMETHING LIKE
THAT FOR US?

IT
WOULD BE
A PLEASURE,
BOYS!

SO IT WAS THE SISTERS OF DEATH WHO TURNED YOU INTO A ZOMBIE.

I DO NOT LIKE THAT TERM, MR SSSKUTER.

IT SUGGESTS MINDLESS SUBSERVANCE TO ANOTHER'S WILL. I CAN ASSURE YOU, I WAS NEVER ANYONE'S FOOL.

THOUGH I DO CONFESS I HAD BECOME SOMEWHAT DISTRACTED OF LATE...

IT CAN HAPPEN TO THE MOST FAR-SIGHTED OF US - WE BECOME BOGGED DOWN IN THE PRACTICAL, DAY-TO-DAY ASPECTS, LOSSE SIGHT OF THE BROADER PERSPECTIVE...

ONCE AGAIN THAT NOTE OF MISSIONARY ZEAL IN HIS VOICE... TO WRITE JUDGE DEATH OFF AS A MERE ALIEN FIEND WOULD BE UNWISE. HERE WAS THE VISIONARY, THE PROPHET, THE MAN WITH A MISSION AND A MESSAGE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

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DARE I SAY IT - IN HIS OWN TWISTED TERMS, A MESSIAH...



NOW I WASSS
FILLED WITHH
NEWW ENERGGY.
I COULD SSEE
SSUDDENLY THAT
DESSSTINY WASS
WITHHIN MY
GRASSSP—FFOR
WHO COULD
SSSTAND AGAINST
ME NOW?



WITHH MY FAITHHHFUL
LIEUTENANTSSS I PAID A
CALL ON OUR CHHIEFF
JJUDGE...

AHH,
DEATH,
YES... I'VE
BEEN MEANING
TO HAVE A
WORD WITH
YOU.



IT'S ALL
THIS KILLING...
KILLING, KILLING,
KILLING!

THE PEOPLE
ARE GUILTYYY.
THEY MUSSST
BE JJUDGEED.

YES, YES,
GRANTED, BUT
CAN'T YOU
OCCASIONALLY
JUST ARREST
SOMEONE?

THAT'S
A TERRIBLE
HISS YOU'RE
DEVELOPING, BY
THE WAY.



CORPSES, CORPSES,
EVERYWHERE YOU GO—
YOU AND THOSE BULLY
BOYS OF YOURS! AND IT'S
NOT JUST YOU—EVERY-
BODY'S AT IT NOW!

I JUST
DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO
WITH YOU, DEATH.
YOU ACT LIKE YOU
WON'T BE
SATISFIED TILL
THE WHOLE
WORLD'S
DEAD!



YESSS,
SSSIR!
THE CRIME
ISSS LIFFE,
SSSSIR—



THE SSENTENCE
ISSSS DEATHHH!



NOW THAT IS GOOD!



MY FFIRSSST ACT ASS CHIEFF JJUDGE WASSS TO DECLARE LIFFE OFFFICCIALLY ILLEGAL.

YOU TOOK OVER?

NATURALLY.



THERE WERE A FFEWW OBJECTORSSS, OF COURSE—SSSTILL A FFEWW IVETSSS AROUND—BUT THEY WERE SSSOON WEEDED OUT.

THE SSSISSSTERSSS WORKED THEIR SSORCCERY UPON MY LIEUTENANTSSS... AND THE RESST—ASS THEY SSSAY—ISS HISSSTORY.

"WE SSENT OUT OUR JJUDGESSS TO EVERY QUARTER TO JJUDGE THE PEOPLE—AND WHEN THEY HAD FFINISSHHED WE IN TURN JJUDGEED THEM.

"WE DESSSTROYED EVERY LIVVINGG THINGG! WE CREATED PARADISSSE, MR SSSKUTER—A WORLD TRULY FFIT FFOR THE INNOCENT!"



"THAT MAY SSEEEM HARSHHH, BUT BELIEVVE ME, IT WASS NECESSSARY."



GET BACK IN YOUR APARTMENT. LOCK THE DOOR.

"COMPARE OUR SSSTATISSSTICSSS—"



ON DEADWORLD THERE ISSS NO ROBBERY—NO MURDER—NO ARSSSON—NO LITTERINGGGG—NO NOISSY PARTIESSS TO DISSTURB THE NEIGHBOURSSS.

NO NEIGHBOURSSS.



NO EVVIL LURKINGGG IN THE HEARTSSS OF MEN. NO CRIME, MR SSSKUTER.

YOU CANNOT ARGUE WITHHH SSSTATISSSTICSSS. DEATHHH ISS THE SSSOLUTION. DEATHHHH CURESSS ALL.



THHANK YOU FFOR COMINGGG, MR SSSKUTER.

YOU MEAN— THAT'S IT? I... I CAN GO NOW?

YOU CAN GO NOWW.



LET THE PEOPLE KNOW MY SSSORY. I WANT THEM TO UNDERSSTAND ... THERE ISSS AN ALTERNATVVVE.



THEY HAVE REJECTED ME THISSS TIME, BUT SSSOME DAY THEY WILL COME TO RECOGNISSSE THE TRUE WICKEDNESSS OF THEIR LIVESSS.

TELL THEM... WHEN THEY DO— WHEN THEY ARE READY TO RECCEIIVVE MERCY— I WILL RETURN.

UH... RIGHT.

HIS BALEFUL GAZE NEVER LEFT ME AS I HASTILY PACKED. I COULDN'T ESCAPE THE TERRIBLE SUSPICION THAT HE WAS TOYING WITH ME, THAT I WOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THIS HOUSE...



MR SSSKUTER—

MY BROTHERSSS... THE PLACE WHERE THEY ARE BEINGG HELD— ANY CHANCCCE OF ... SSSPRINGGINGSS THEM?



I... I DON'T THINK SO. IT'S TRIPLE SECURITY. THEY'VE GOT SUCTION TRAPS AND A TEAM OF PSI JUDGES ON PERMANENT DUTY, JUST IN CASE YOU SHOW.

I THOUGHT ASS MUCHH. THANK YOU.



OH... MR SSSKUTER—



ONE FFINAL THHINGGG...

Y...YES..?



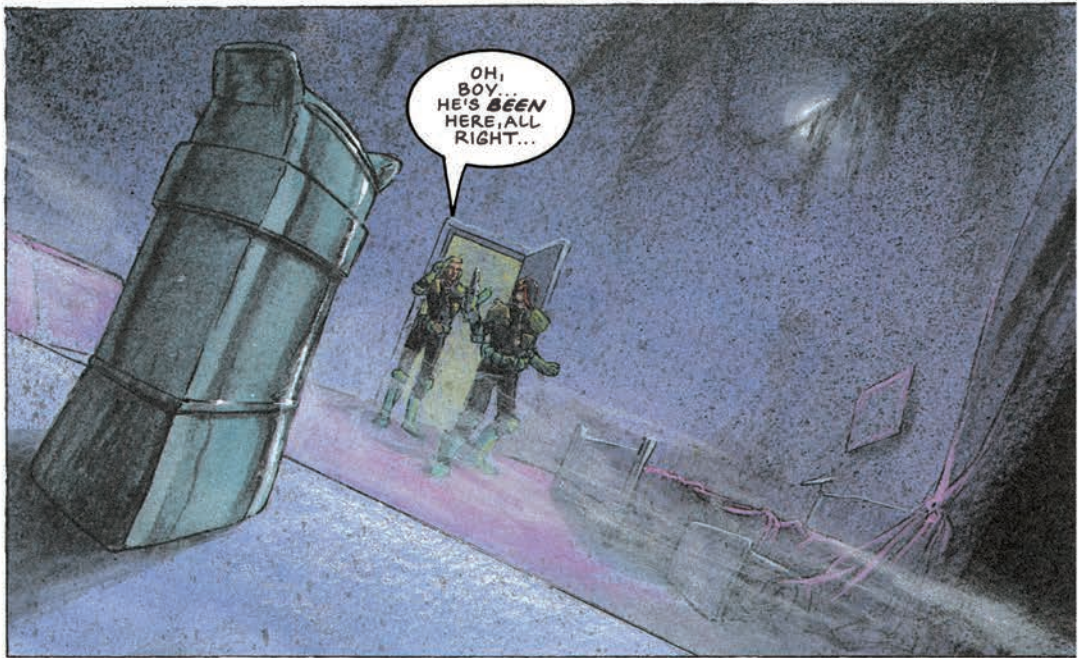
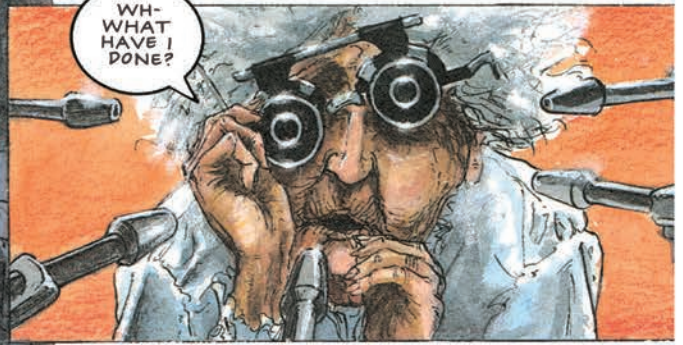
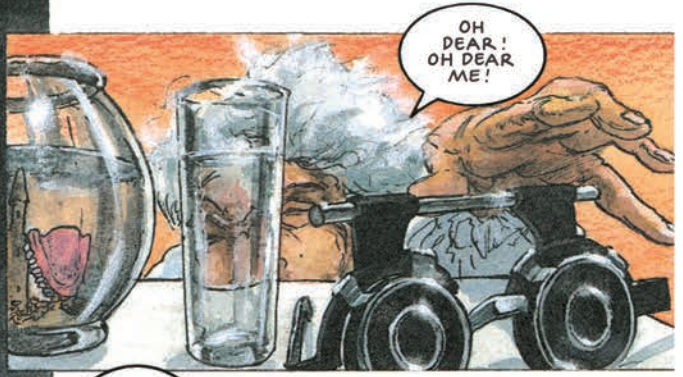
I'M A LITTLE SSSHORT AT THE MOMENT. I WONDER IF YOU COULD PERHAPSSS SSEE YOUR WAY...

JUSSST ENOUGH TO COVVER THE RENT.

UH, YEAH. I GUESS...



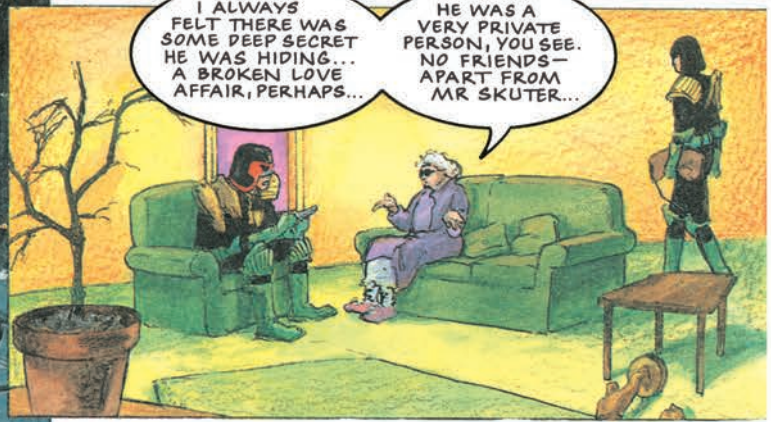




MR De'ATH... WELL, I NEVER-!

I ALWAYS FELT THERE WAS SOME DEEP SECRET HE WAS HIDING... A BROKEN LOVE AFFAIR, PERHAPS...

HE WAS A VERY PRIVATE PERSON, YOU SEE. NO FRIENDS - APART FROM MR SKUTER...



I DON'T KNOW IF YOU COULD CALL HIM A FRIEND, REALLY...



I BROUGHT SKUTER'S NOTES AND TAPES OVER. YOU WANT TO GET A LOAD OF THIS STUFF. PLEASANT BEDTIME READING IT AIN'T.



SKUTER GOT A SECOND CALL FROM DEATH LAST NIGHT. HE WAS ANGRY ABOUT SOMETHING - DON'T KNOW WHAT.

THE ANSWER'S HERE...



- GOING TO RECORD THIS, OKAY..? YESSS. GOOD IDEA, MR SSSKUTER.





NOW, UH, WHAT WAS IT YOU WANTED TO SEE ME ABOUT?



THISSS!



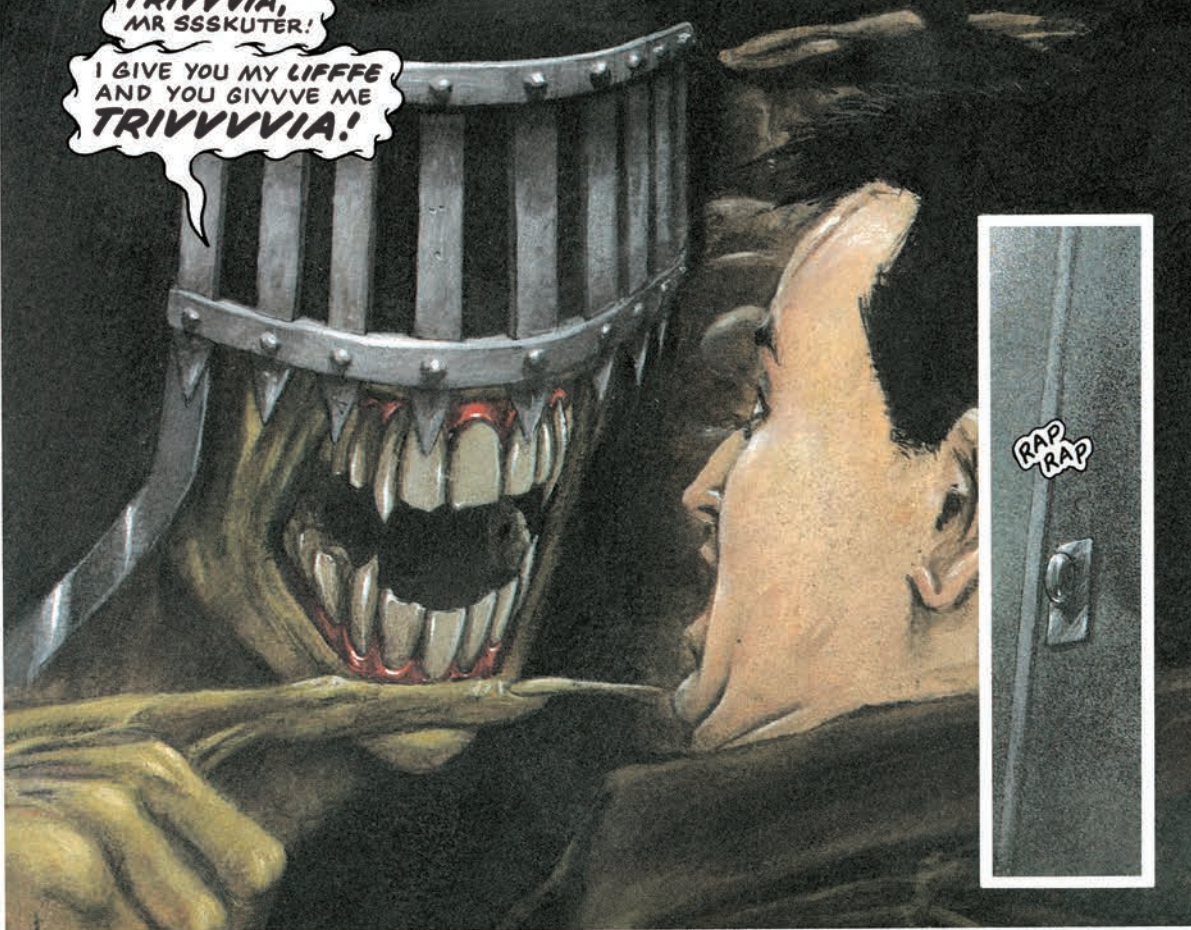
YOU'VE SEEN IT— UH... WH-WHAT DO YOU THINK...



I AM APPALLED, MR SSSKUTER!

"ISS JJUDGE DEATHHH YOUR NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOUR?"
AND HERE—LATER ON—
"20 THHHHHHHGSS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT THE DARK DESSSTROYER!"

TRIVVIA, MR SSSKUTER!
I GIVE YOU MY LIFFFE AND YOU GIVVE ME TRIVVVVIA!



RAP RAP



RAISED VOICES AGAIN, MR DE'ATH?

GOODNESS ME, YOU BOYS DO GET YOURSELVES HET UP ABOUT THINGS, DON'T YOU?

MY APOLOGGIESSS, MRS GUNDERSSON. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN. MR SSKUTER WILL BE LEAVINGGGG SSHHORTLY.



HE ISS ABOUT TO BE TAKEN UNWELL.

Oh jeez, please...



GOOD. FINE. SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

DO CARRY ON, BOYS.



LOOK, IT W-WASN'T MY FAULT! HONEST! I-I DID YOU A REALLY NICE PIECE— A PROPER IN-DEPTH PROFILE— B-BUT THEY WOULDN'T BUY IT!



THEY THOUGHT I WAS MAKING IT UP! THEY WOULDN'T BELIEVE YOU WERE HERE, IN THE CITY— TH-THEY FIGURED PSI-DIVISION WOULD HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT—



Oh jeez...



THEY WOULDN'T BELIEVVVE YOU—!

WE'LL GIVVVVE THEM SSSOMTHHINGGG TO BELIEVVVE IN, SSHHALL WE?





AFTERWORD

I've been asked to provide some reminiscences about *Young Death* but I don't actually remember an awful lot about doing the work itself. I do recall a certain youthful enthusiasm, the feeling of being very lucky to land such a job on my first attempt. But what is stronger in my memory is the chain of people and events that led up to my being given the job. It's an old cliché that it's not what you know but who you know, which is true to some degree. It is usually your network of acquaintances that provide the door of opportunity but, then, you do still have to deliver the goods.

In the mid to late 1980's most folks with any interest in comics attended the UK Comic Art Convention and I was no exception. These were the days when Alan Moore actually attended conventions and comics were taking over the world in the wake of *Dark Knight*, *Maus* and *Watchmen*. One year I was introduced, by a mutual acquaintance, to Duncan Fegredo. I'd actually seen Duncan's degree show at Leeds Polytechnic a year or two previously and had been impressed by the energy and quality of his work. At the time Duncan was still living in Leeds where he was starting to carve himself a niche in the comics business. After an initial meeting a few months after UKCAC we found we got on pretty well, so we began to meet up fairly regularly. One of Duncan's earliest jobs that actually paid any money was drawing two episodes of *New Statesmen*, one of the flagship strips in Fleetway's *Crisis* magazine written by John Smith. It turned out that John lived up the road from Leeds, in York. Unsurprisingly, he also began to visit Leeds more often and join us for a drink or three. Later on we also met one of John's old school friends, Chris Standley, who had been co-writing *Tyranny Rex* with John.

So while I was in my final couple of years of art college, a large percentage of my friends were working comics professionals. My first job out of college was at an animation company working short term on a kid's TV show. When that finished I seriously thought that my next move should be to get into comics. I knew to get any comics work I'd need to prove I could tell a story in pictures. It's surprising how many people's work I've seen over the years, trying to break into comics, who have portfolios with no pages of continuity contained within them. Anyhow to draw a story, one needs a script... I think you may be able to see where this is going. Who do you go to if you need a script?

Chris Standley was trying to establish himself individually and he had an idea for a five page story about an unemployed lad and his travails with the world, so I started on that. John then offered me the first part of a story he was trying to pitch to Richard Burton at *2000 AD* called *Static*, about a bloke who could receive hundreds of TV stations directly into his head.

The big thing at the time was painting comics. Simon Bisley had made a big splash with *Sláine* a year or two before and, consequently, everybody seemed to think that that style was the way forward. I've never been a painter so my stuff tended to be drawings coloured up with transparent inks or watercolour then beefed up with a bit of opaque acrylic or gouache. Looking back at my two sample stories I was probably trying to develop a certain look I felt might go down well with the editors of *2000 AD*, by fitting in with what they were commissioning.

I headed up to the 1990 Glasgow convention with two five page painted stories hoping they'd land me some sort of job. John said he'd put in a word for me with Fleetway's main man Steve MacManus. I finally managed to talk to Steve in a deserted corridor late on Sunday afternoon. He was very generous and encouraging. As we talked a bloke walked past and had a look at the open page of my portfolio. He made some comment to Steve and walked off. Steve then informed me that my work must be pretty good as John Wagner doesn't make such positive comments lightly. Anyhow Steve bought the story I'd done with Chris for *Crisis* and, to go with it, I got to do what turned out to be a spectacularly awful cover. Suddenly I was a paid and published comic book artist. How the hell did that happen?

I can't remember how much time passed before I received the first script for *Young Death*, but it can't have been long. Steve told me it was for a new tile they were launching, the *Judge Dredd Magazine*. If I'd have thought about it long enough I'd probably have been intimidated — a John Wagner story and I'd have my beginner's efforts printed in a magazine that included work by Cam Kennedy, Colin MacNeil, Jim Baike, Garth Ennis and John McCrea. I don't know if it was youthful arrogance or enthusiasm that led me to redesign Judge Death's costume, making it more elaborate with pseudo vertebrae along the top of his shoulder pad although that backfired on me when I realised what a pain in the arse it was to have to draw all that detail over and over again.

John Wagner was wonderfully generous to such a rank amateur as myself. John's scripts are clear and authoritative without being tyrannical on the artist. His storytelling, the pacing, the tone of the characters and the balance of emotional content, subtext, meaning and humour are second to none. The final product seemed to go down well with the audience so I must have done something right, although I do think John's story would have been a winner despite the artist.

Pete Doherty
April, 2008



BONUS STORY

MASQUE OF THE JUDGE DEATH

Script: Si Spencer
Art: John Mcrea
Letters: John McCrea

Originally published in *Judge Dredd Mega-Special 4*

THE DARK JUDGES HAD
DEVASTATED MEGA-
CITY. NO PESTILENCE HAD
EVER BEEN SO HIDEOUS
NOR SO FATAL...

..BUT VINCENTE
PROSPERO HAD NEVER
BEEN SO HAPPY,
THINKING HIMSELF THE
SAFEST OF MEN IN HIS
LUXURY, ULTRA-SECURITY
CONTROLLED APARTMENT.

Edgar
Allan
Poe
Block

HE GATHERED HIS
FRIENDS AROUND HIM,
SECURE IN THE
KNOWLEDGE THAT NOT
EVEN THE DARK JUDGES
COULD PENETRATE HIS
VAST AND EXPENSIVE
DEFENCES...

NONE COULD ENTER AND
NONE DEPART AND IN THE
MEANTIME IT WAS FOLLY
TO GRIEVE...

MASQUE OF THE JUDGE, DEATH



FROM AN IDEA BY
DEAN ORMSTON



VINCENTE HAD PROVIDED ALL THE APPLIANCES OF PLEASURE... THERE WAS TOBACCO, THERE WAS LIMPTY CANDY, THERE WAS SUGAR...

13.

MY FRIENDS, MY FRIENDS, FORGET THE DEATH THAT RAGES ALL AROUND... IN HERE WE ARE SAFE.

ANOTHER HIT OF THE SWEET STUFF, ROGER DEAR?

PARTY DOWN!

DON'T MIND IF I DO, MONTRESOR.

.. ALL THESE AND SECURITY WERE WITHIN - WITHOUT WAS DEATH.

VINCENTE WOULD BROOK NO DISSIDENTERS FROM THE REVEL...

ENJOY MY FRIENDS, YOU MUST ENJOY...

... AT LEAST READ AN OLD COMIC!

OH, WE'RE HAVING A FINE TIME, THANKS VINCE.

BESIDES, AREN'T THEY... WELL... ILLEGAL?



THE JUDGES ARE LOST, AND IN HERE WE ARE SAFE FROM THEIR FIENDISH COUNTERPARTS!

WITHIN THESE WALLS...



... I AM THE LAW.

PERHAPS SOME MENTION SHOULD HERE
BE MADE PERTAINING TO THE
PECULIARITIES OF THE APARTMENT
WHEREIN THE FEVER'D PARTY RAGED.



SEVEN ROOMS THERE WERE, IN ALL,
EACH RICHER THAN THE LAST AND
EACH A DIFFERENT HUE...



THESE SYNTH-GRAPES
ARE DVINE, VINCEY-POOS.

I AIM TO
PLEASE MY
DEAR... I AIM
TO PLEASE.

...EACH LIT BY
'GENU-FLAME
TORCHES'(TM)

IN EVERY ROOM THE
PEOPLE DANCED, THE
RICH SOUND OF 20TH
CENTURY CHAMBER
MUSIC FILLING ALL
WITH MERRIMENT...

♪ YOU'RE BENDING MY
CANTALOUPE MAN...
SOMEBODY CALL A
JUDGE... ♪

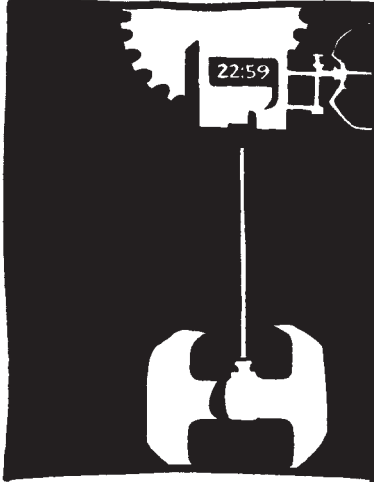
YO, I'M ON ONE,
VINCE, MAN!

I'M SO
THRILLED...

...IN EVERY
ROOM...

PORK

SAVE ONE, THE
SEVENTH CHAMBER.



A ROOM SO BLACK AND
GHASTLY THAT NONE WOULD
ENTER; VOID, EXCEPT FOR A
GIGANTIC CLOCK OF EBONY.



DOES NONE HERE
LIKE MY FINAL JEST?
THIS LAST EXQUISITE
CHAMBER OF
DARKNESS?

'S'NCT TH'ROOM
MAN... ITS THAT
CLOCK...

THE GIANT CLOCK, WHOSE TOLLING OF THE HOUR WAS SO DEEP AND LOUD AND CLEAR, SO MELANCHOLY...

BONG
BONG
BONG

LEAVE IT OUT LADS... THE HOURS UP.

THAT AT EACH LAPSE OF AN HOUR, A HIATUS WAS FORCED UPON THE MUSIC...



AND THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE GAY COMPANY, A SHUDDER RAN...

4 BONG
BONG
BONG

UNTIL THE FINAL ECHO FADED INTO SILENCE...



BONG
BONGGG



WHEREUPON THE COMPANY FELL ONCE
MORE TO REVELRY UNTIL THE HOUR
AT LEAST...



SOME JESTS OUSTRIP THE
WIT AND PROPRIETY OF EVEN
THOSE SOULS ALREADY LOST...

...TO REMIND THE
FEVER'D REVELLERS OF
THE PERILOUS OUTSIDE
WAS ONE SUCH IMPROPER
GESTURE.



"SEIZE HIM AND
UNMASK HIM.."

WHO DARES?? WHO
DARES INSULT US WITH
THIS BLASPHEMOUS
MOCKERY?
SEIZE HIM!



YESSSS....
SSSSEIZZZE
ME...



COME,
PROSSSPERO.

WITH EVEN, MEASURED
TREAD THE RUDE
INTRUDER PACED THE LENGTH
OF THE ASSEMBLY...



NOT ONE AMONGST THEM
WOULD OBEY THEIR HOST
AND CHECK HIS BALANCED
GAIT.



TILL SHAMED
AND ENRAGED,
PROSPERO TOOK
MATTERS INTO
HAND...



AND ADVANCED
UPON THE INTRUDER
WITH MURDEROUS
INTENT.



VINSSSENTE
PROSSSPERO....YOU HAVE
BEEN JUDGED...THE
CRIME ISSSS LIFE...

DEATH



THE
PUNISSHMENT
ISSSS DEATH!



SQUIT!



AND NOW AT LAST WAS
ACKNOWLEDGED THE
PRESENCE OF JUDGE
DEATH...

...AND DEATH STALKED
THE THROG LIKE
AN AVENGING ANGEL.

MY
DEAR!

GUESSSS
WHO?

SMEK

TILL NONE THEREIN
REMAINED ALIVE.

YESSSS

AND LIKE A THIEF
IN THE NIGHT...



HE VANISHED...



AND THE LIFE OF THE
EBONY CLOCK WAS DONE...

AND THE DARK
JUDGES HELD
DOMINION OVER
ALL
NECROPOLIS!

SI SPENCER

Si Spencer has worked on various strips for the *Judge Dredd Magazine* and was the co-creator behind the strips *The Creep* and *Harke and Burr*. More recently he has worked on *Books of Magick: Life During Wartime* for DC Publishing.

JOHN WAGNER

John Wagner has been scripting for *2000 AD* for more years than he cares to remember. His creations include *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Ace Trucking*, *Al's Baby*, *Button Man* and *Mean Machine*. Outside of *2000 AD* his credits include *Star Wars*, *Lobo*, *The Punisher* and the critically acclaimed *A History of Violence*.

PETER DOHERTY

Peter Doherty is primarily known to fans of the Galaxy's Greatest Comic as artist of the *Young Death* series, which opened *Judge Dredd: The Magazine's* first volume, but he has also contributed extensively to *Judge Dredd*, working on the epic 'Judgment Day' as well as many shorter stories, including John Wagner's classic 'Bury My Knee At Wounded Heart'. Outside of *2000 AD*, Doherty's comic work includes *The Dreaming*, *Superman/Batman: World's Finest* and a *Grendel Tales* series. Peter is currently working as a digital colourist and has recently returned to *2000 AD* with work on *Devlin Waugh* and *Judge Dredd*.

JOHN MCCREA

John McCrea's striking art has graced various *2000 AD* strips including *Judge Dredd*, *Sinister Dexter* and *Chopper*. Outside of the Galaxy's Greatest he is well known for his work on *Hitman* with celebrated writer Garth Ennis.

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