



SAVAGE [®] 216

DRAGON



SAKAI

SAVAGE[®] DRAGON

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“
JOSH EICHHORN
reserves the right to refuse service to anyone.

Ant created by Mario Gully

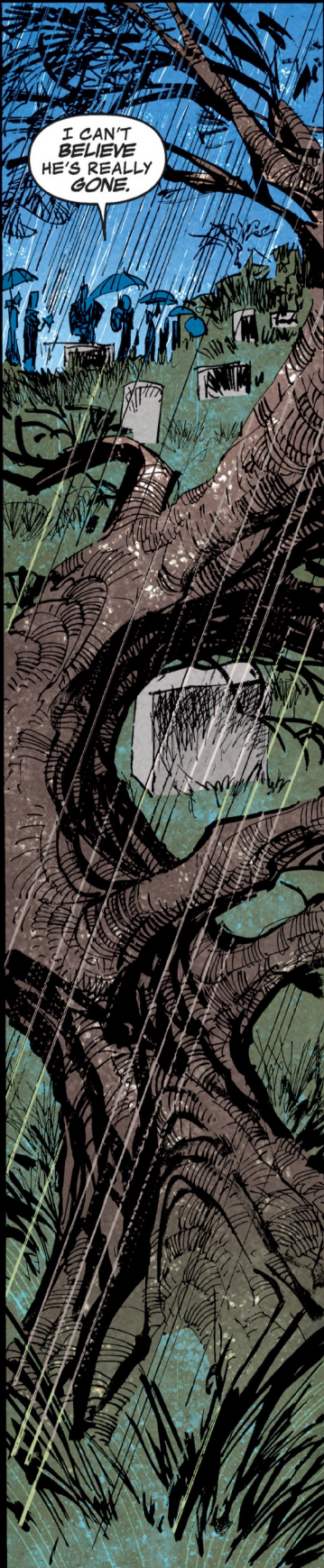


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I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S REALLY GONE.



POOR BARRY.

WHAT A TERRIBLE WAY TO DIE.

AT LEAST HE DIDN'T SUFFER.

THERE ARE WORSE WAYS TO GO.



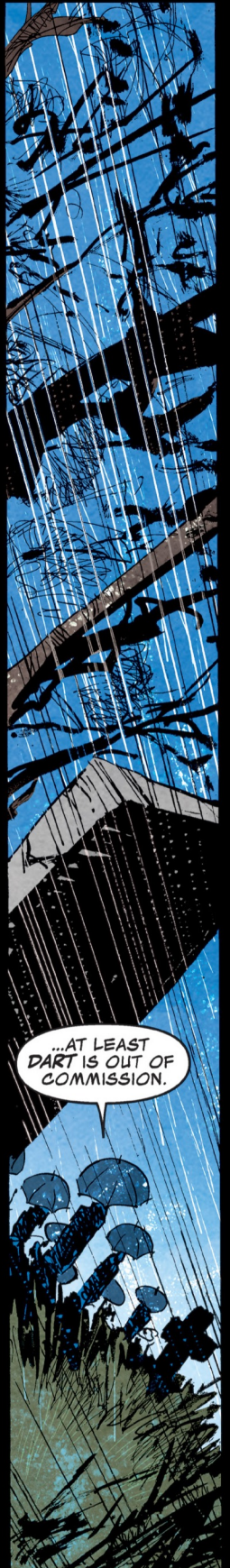
I GUESS.

BUT THEY'RE NOT AS GROSS.

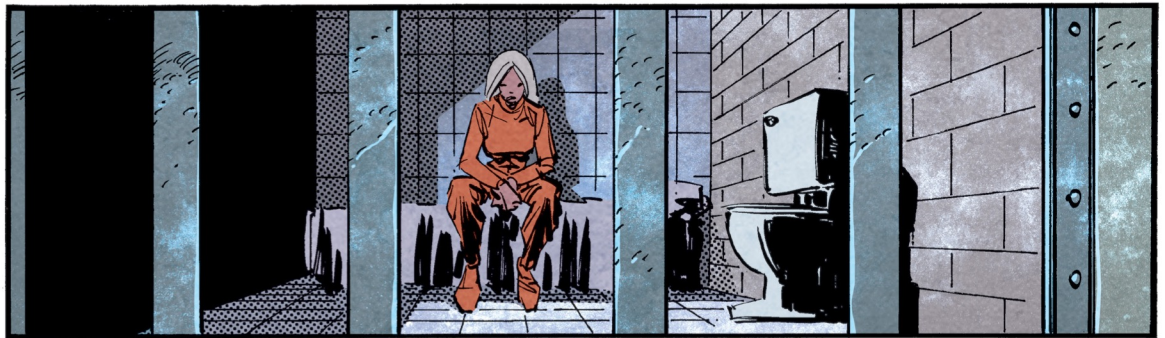
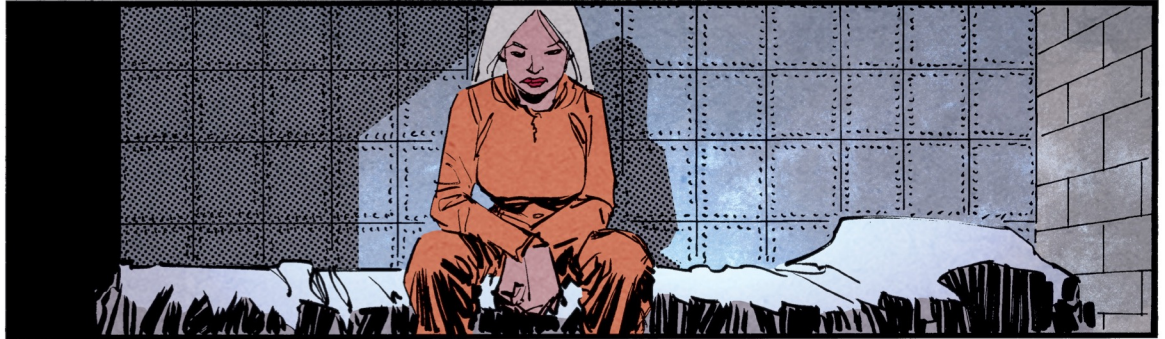
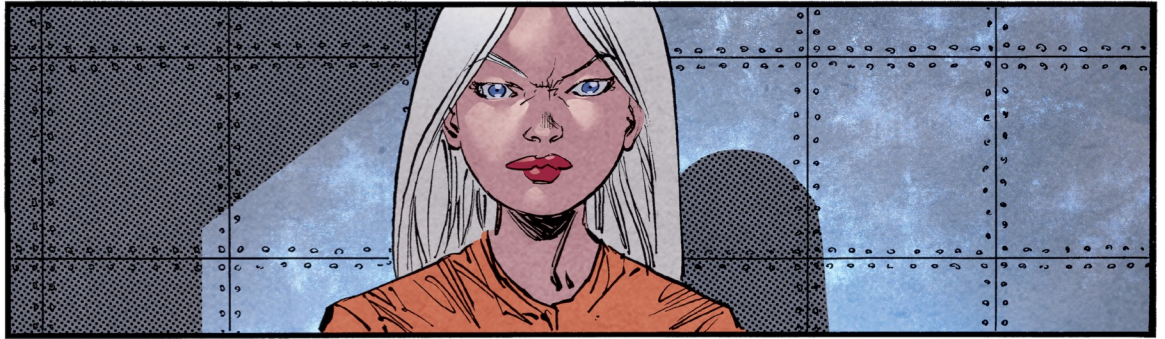
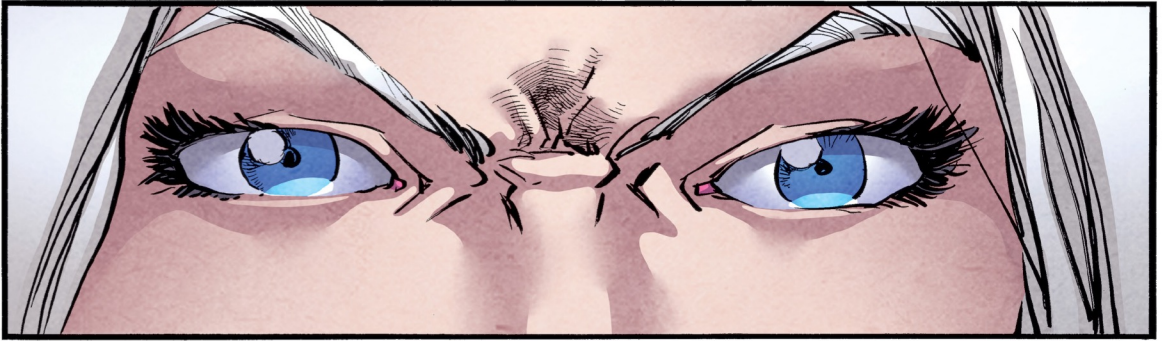
HE EXPLODED.

IT WASN'T PRETTY, THAT'S FOR SURE.

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...



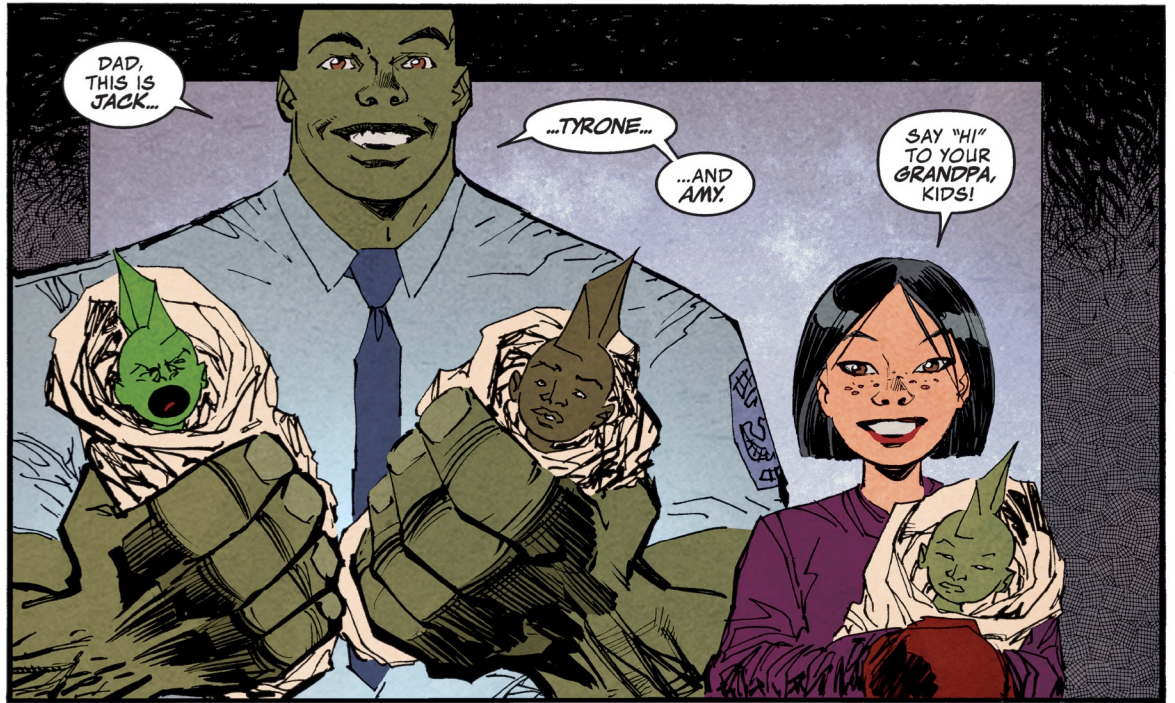
...AT LEAST DART IS OUT OF COMMISSION.





WOW!

THERE THEY ARE!



DAD, THIS IS JACK...

...TYRONE...

...AND AMY.

SAY "HI" TO YOUR GRANDPA, KIDS!

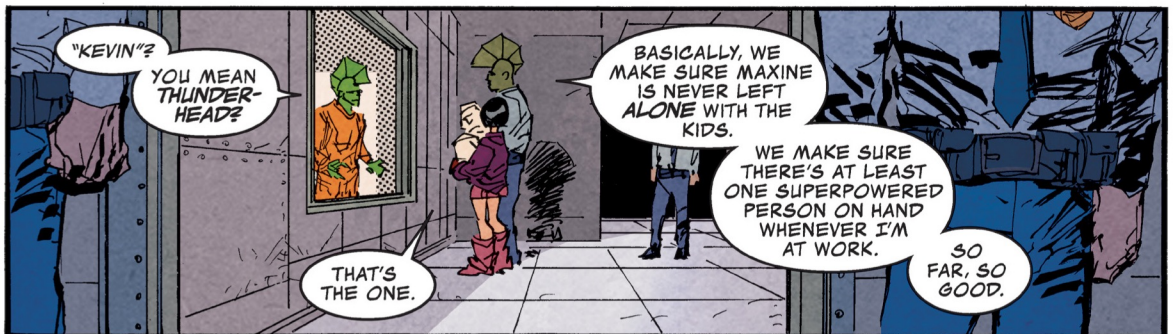


THEY'RE ADORABLE.

YOU TWO HAVE CERTAINLY OUTDONE YOURSELVES.

HOW ARE YOU GUYS HANDLING ALL OF THIS?

WE'RE GETTING HELP. ANGEL DROPS BY AN AWFUL LOT, AND WHEN SHE'S NOT AVAILABLE KEVIN HAS BEEN COMING OVER.



"KEVIN"?

YOU MEAN THUNDER-HEAD?

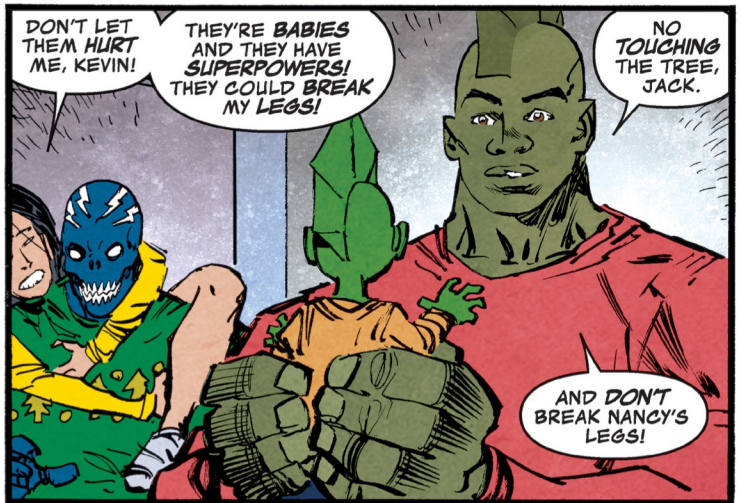
THAT'S THE ONE.

BASICALLY, WE MAKE SURE MAXINE IS NEVER LEFT ALONE WITH THE KIDS.

WE MAKE SURE THERE'S AT LEAST ONE SUPERPOWERED PERSON ON HAND WHENEVER I'M AT WORK.

SO FAR, SO GOOD.





WIROPP!

ALL RIGHT,
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!



NOW
DON'T YOU
START--!

OH!

PLEASE!



SORRY.

I REALLY
CAN'T DO
THAT.



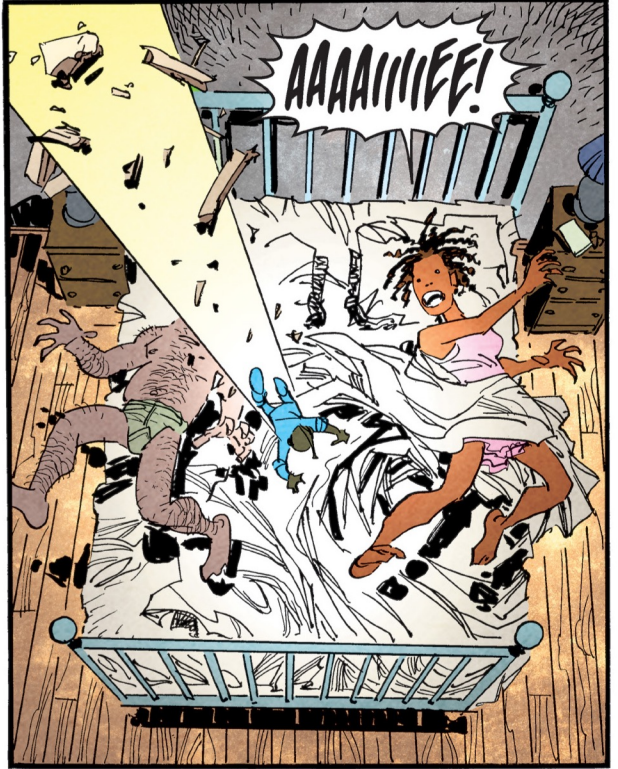
TONK!



AND THAT'S
HOW THAT'S
DONE.

LOOKS LIKE
I'LL BE HOME
IN TIME FOR
DINNER.





JUST--
DON'T,
OKAY?

LOOK, YOU'RE
UNDER ARREST--
AND THERE'S
JUST NO WAY
YOU'RE GOING
TO DEFEAT ME.

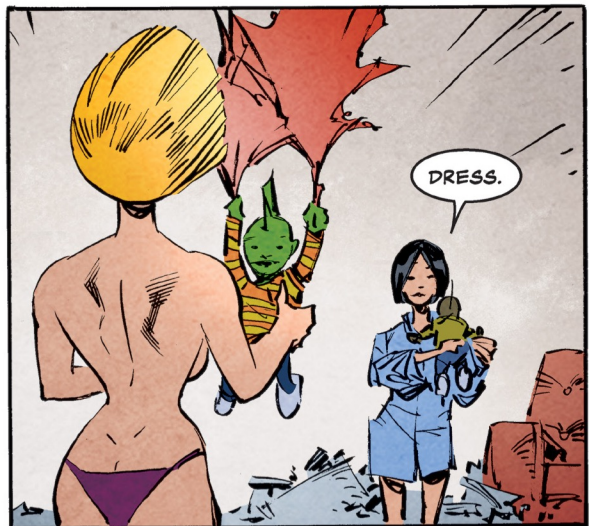
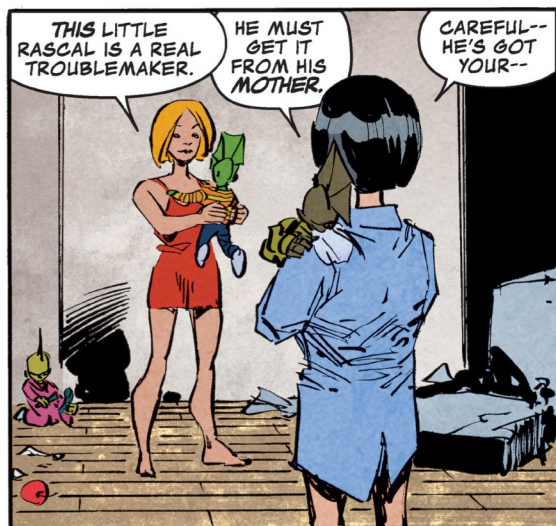
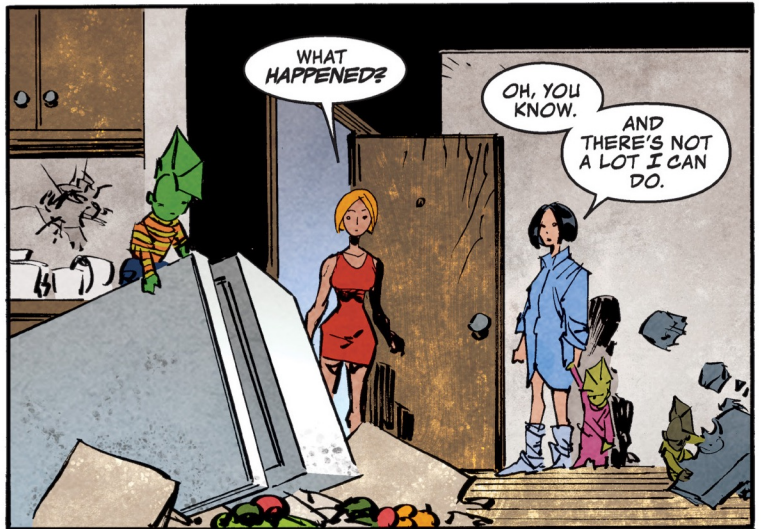
WRAMM!

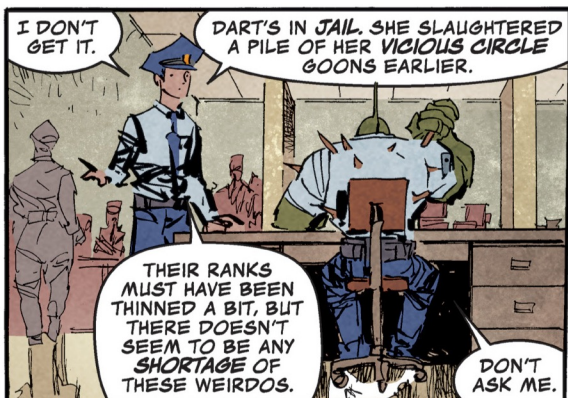
THUD!

I HONESTLY
DON'T KNOW
WHY YOU EVEN
TRY.

IT'S SAD,
REALLY.

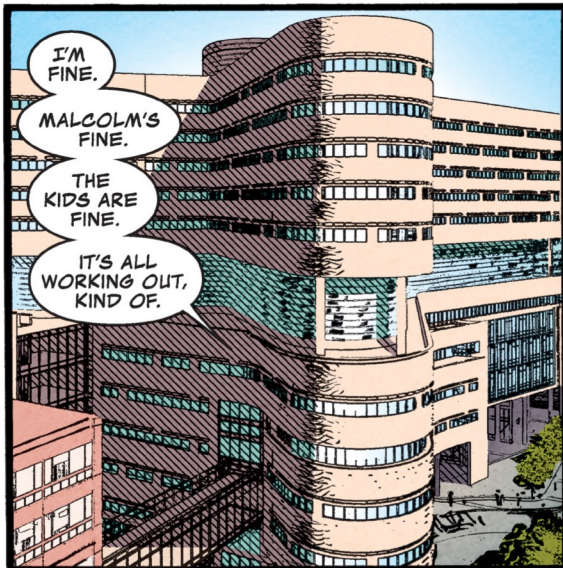
POW!





THEIR RANKS MUST HAVE BEEN THINNED A BIT, BUT THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY SHORTAGE OF THESE WEIRDOS.

DON'T ASK ME.

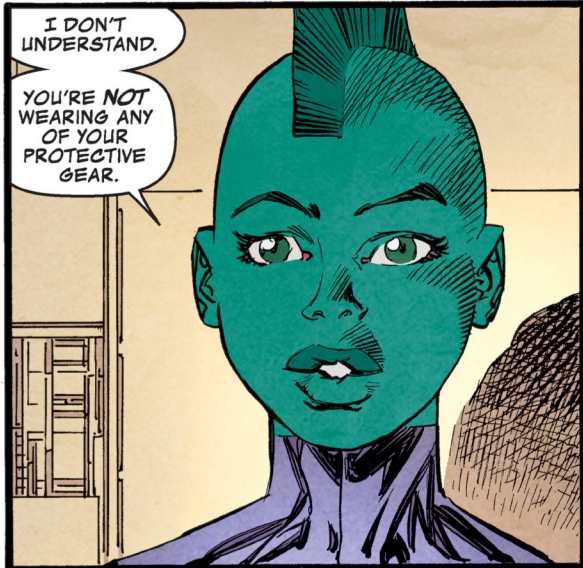


I'M FINE.

MALCOLM'S FINE.

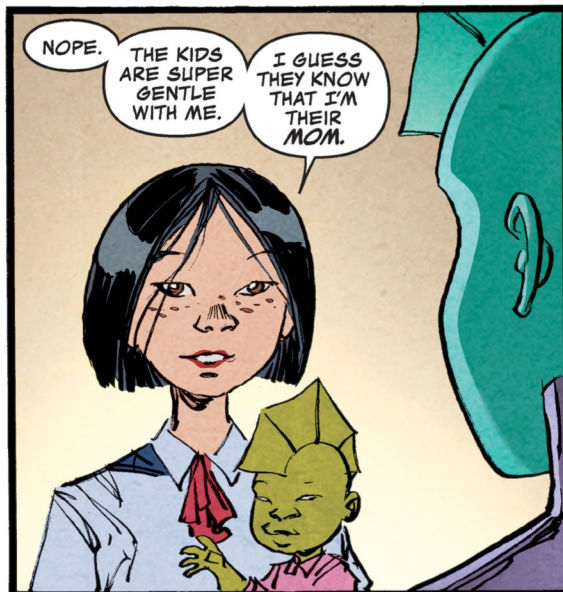
THE KIDS ARE FINE.

IT'S ALL WORKING OUT, KIND OF.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

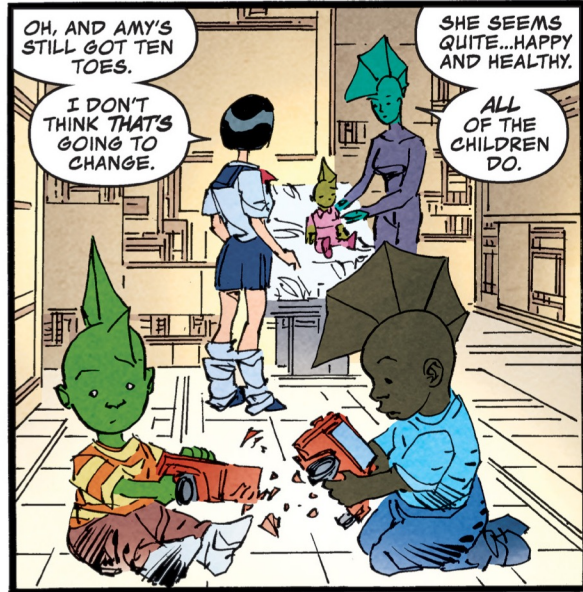
YOU'RE NOT WEARING ANY OF YOUR PROTECTIVE GEAR.



NOPE.

THE KIDS ARE SUPER GENTLE WITH ME.

I GUESS THEY KNOW THAT I'M THEIR MOM.

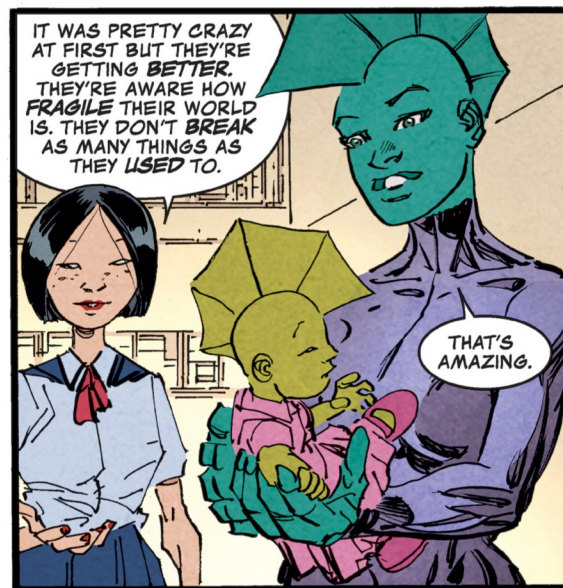


OH, AND AMY'S STILL GOT TEN TOES.

I DON'T THINK THAT'S GOING TO CHANGE.

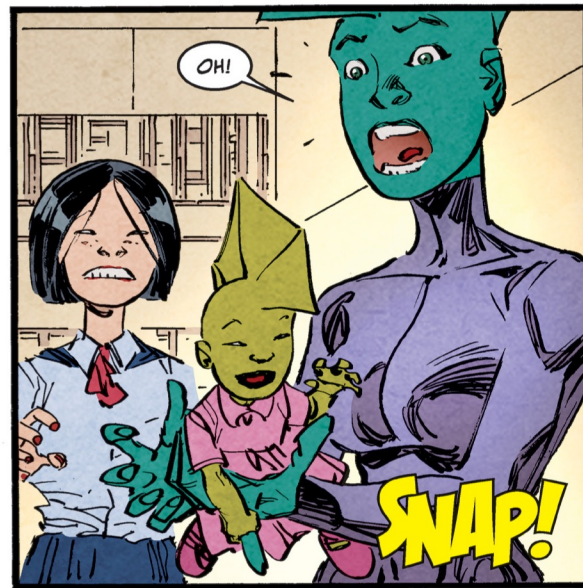
SHE SEEMS QUITE...HAPPY AND HEALTHY.

ALL OF THE CHILDREN DO.



IT WAS PRETTY CRAZY AT FIRST BUT THEY'RE GETTING BETTER. THEY'RE AWARE HOW FRAGILE THEIR WORLD IS. THEY DON'T BREAK AS MANY THINGS AS THEY USED TO.

THAT'S AMAZING.



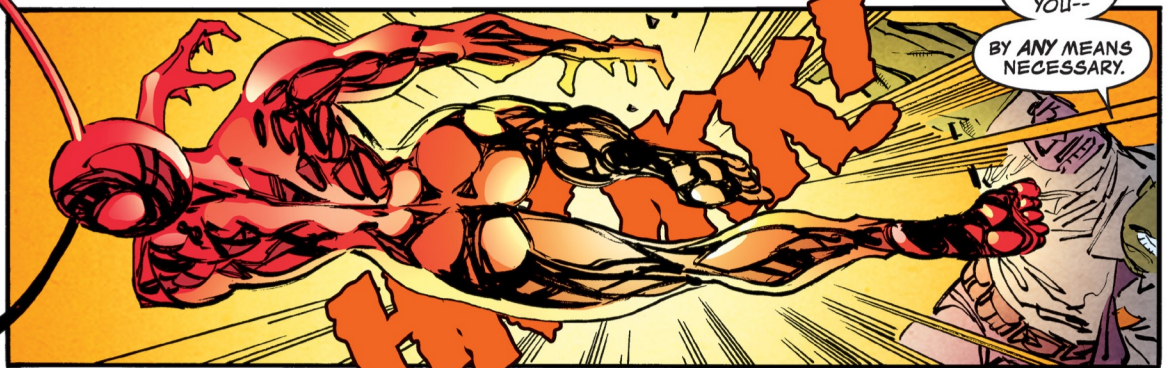
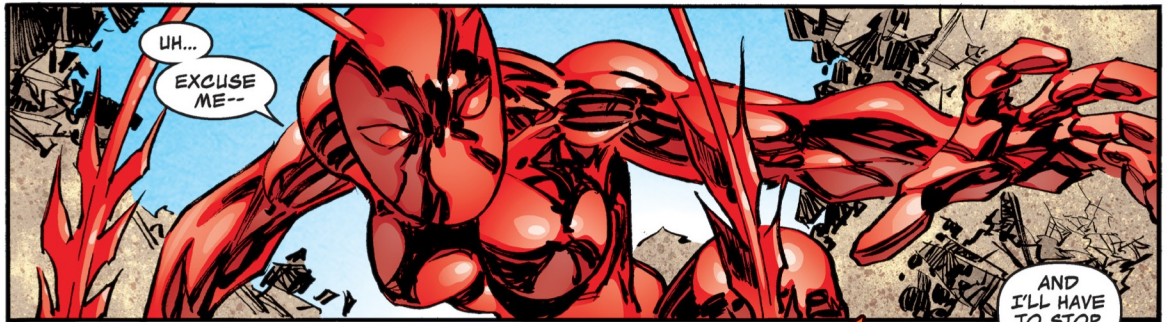
OH!

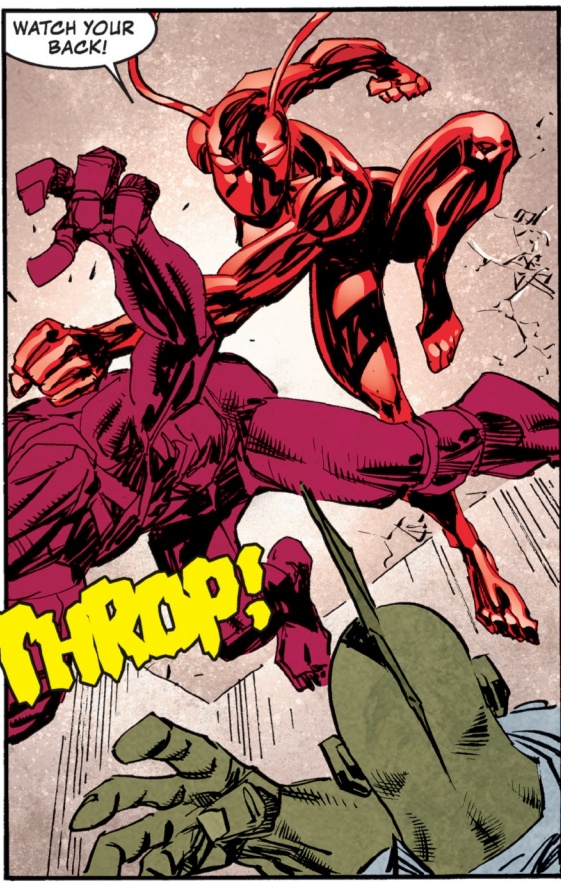
SNAP!





WRRAMM!





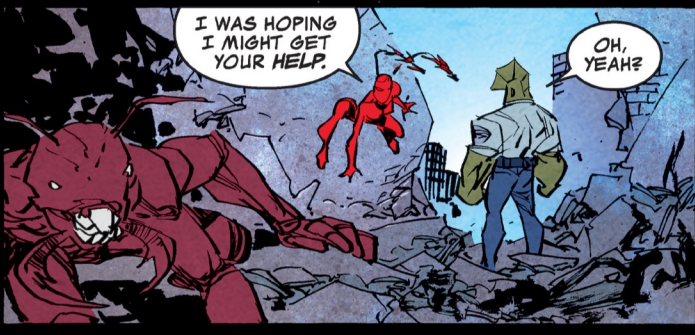


WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



I WAS HOPING I MIGHT GET YOUR HELP.

OH, YEAH?



OKAY. THAT SEEMED TO DO SOMETHING.



THERE'S A MAN NAMED ALZAYAH STONE WHO IS GIFTED WITH THE MUTANT ABILITY TO GIVE POWER TO OTHERS.

CRIMINALS, LOWLIFES, FANATICS ARE MAKING A PILGRIMAGE--SEEKING HIM OUT.

WELL, THAT MIGHT EXPLAIN A FEW THINGS.

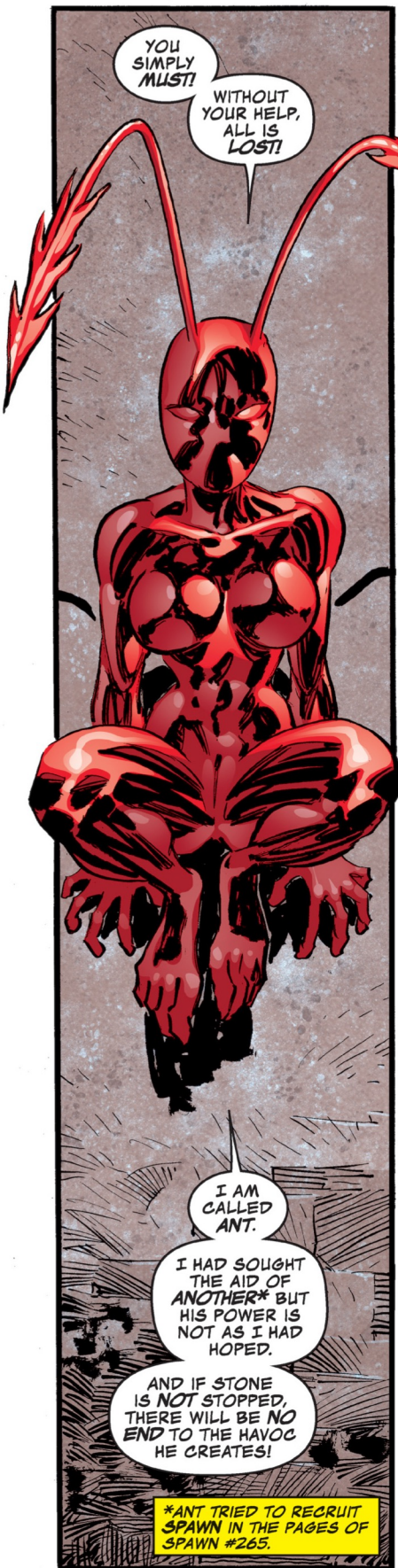


HOPEFULLY THIS TIME THEY'LL STAY PUT.

I WAS HOPING YOU MIGHT JOIN ME IN A QUEST TO PUT A STOP TO HIS MADNESS.

I'M NOT SO SURE I CAN DO THAT.





YOU SIMPLY MUST!

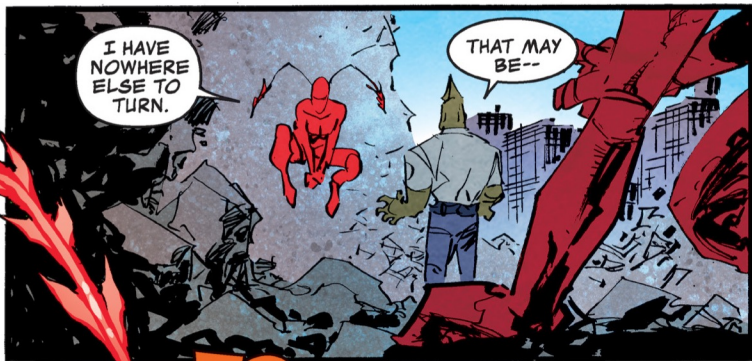
WITHOUT YOUR HELP, ALL IS LOST!

I AM CALLED ANT.

I HAD SOUGHT THE AID OF ANOTHER* BUT HIS POWER IS NOT AS I HAD HOPED.

AND IF STONE IS NOT STOPPED, THERE WILL BE NO END TO THE HAVOC HE CREATES!

*ANT TRIED TO RECRUIT SPAWN IN THE PAGES OF SPAWN #265.



I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO TURN.

THAT MAY BE--



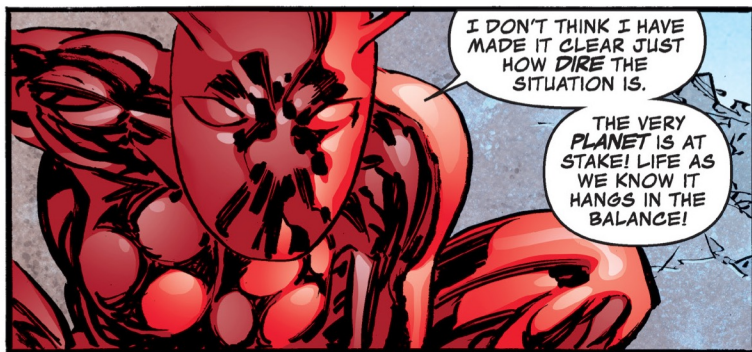
TOK!

BUT I HAVE OBLIGATIONS HERE.



I CAN'T GO RUNNING OFF TO-- WHEREVER, AND LEAVE CHICAGO UNPROTECTED.

I HAVE A JOB TO DO HERE--AND A FAMILY THAT DEPENDS ON ME.



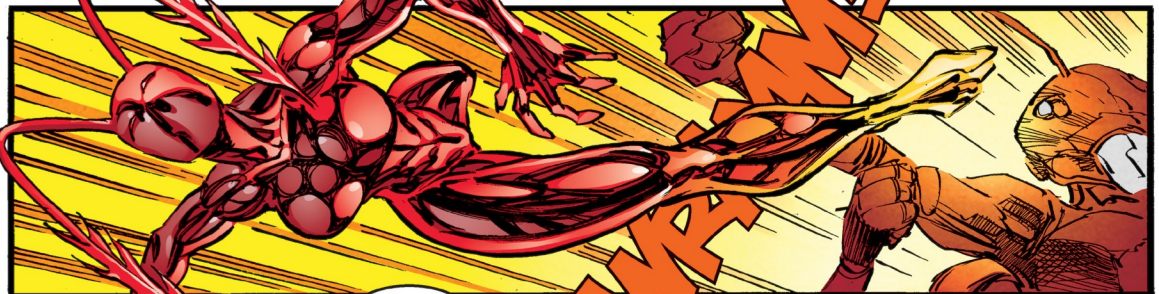
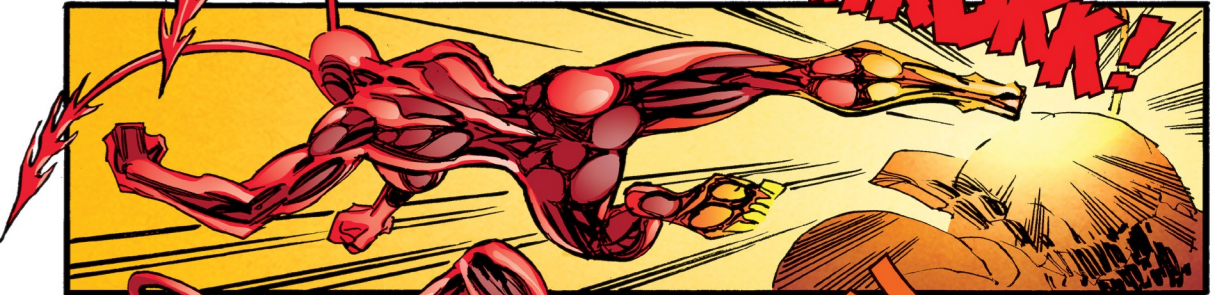
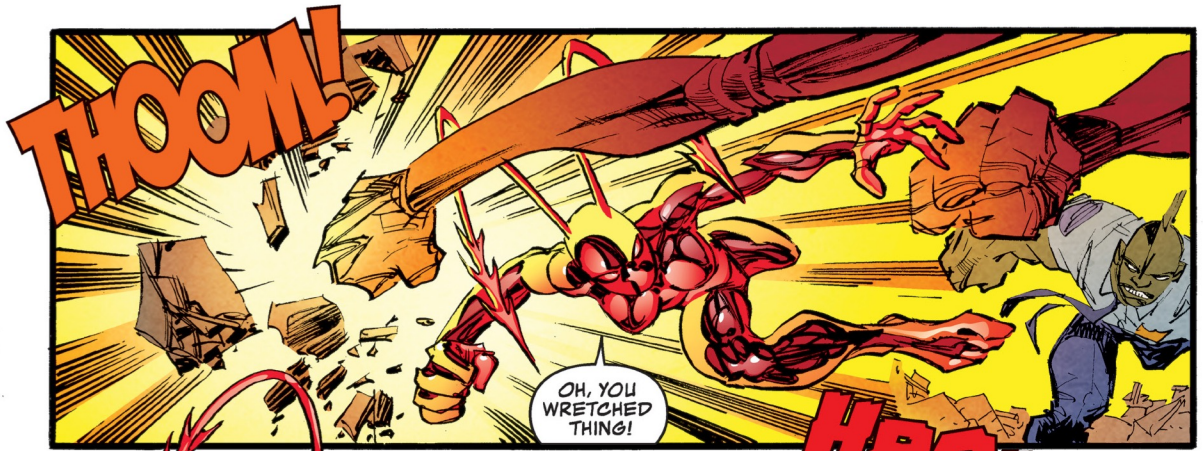
I DON'T THINK I HAVE MADE IT CLEAR JUST HOW DIRE THE SITUATION IS.

THE VERY PLANET IS AT STAKE! LIFE AS WE KNOW IT HANGS IN THE BALANCE!



OH, HELL--!

WHAT IS THAT?





ONLY ONE CHANCE--



SORRY IT HAD TO COME TO THIS--

BUT I DON'T SEE ANY OTHER WAY--!



FRANKA-ZANK!



OKAY, THEN.

NOW, WHERE WERE WE?
ANT?



e-mail: Erik@savagedragon.com

visit our website at www.savagedragon.com

Welcome to Savage Dragon #216! This issue picks up on stuff set in motion in Spawn #265 and it continues into Spawn #266, which continues into the epic conclusion which takes place here, next issue! I'll make every effort to fill you in on what you missed in these pages but--for those inclined to check things out--there are things to be checked out.

Erik,

I noticed they put up a Savage Dragon torrent collecting the first two hundred or so issues... Does this piss you off? I once heard someone say if you aren't bootlegged that you're not good enough... Are you happy that people want to read it that much or just pissed they won't buy the issues?

Bailey Oliver Moore

Yeah, it pisses me off.

There's no two ways around it--that's money out of my pocket. And, yeah, I've heard all of the excuses, from "I wasn't going to buy it anyway, so what's the harm?" to "Your comics are still there. It's not like I stole your physical comics. Your comics is still there." to "I'm just going to read it. If I really like it I'll buy the physical comic books." But the fact remains--if you can get something for free you're less likely to pay for it and month by month I lose another few readers who opt for the cost and convenience of free pirated comics.

Eventually, the thieves will take away enough sales that it will no longer be feasible to publish the book. So you can thank them on the day this book is cancelled and goes away forever.

And, yeah, I get it. It sucks having to buy stuff. Things cost money and that's a drag. If stuff is available for free...well, free is much more affordable.

But as a content provider--this is all I have. This is how I make my living. This is how I pay my bills and provide for my family. It's easy to forget that as you spend your life as a noncontributing entertainment sponge, sucking up everything around you. It's nice to have the world perform for your amusement and pay nothing for the privilege but the world isn't sustainable. That world can't survive long on happy face memes and Facebook likes. If nobody is paying for their content, eventually, that content dries up and goes away.

In the meantime--hey, free shit. Whoopee!

Mr. Larsen,

First congrats on your son's Graduation! It must be nice to see your son "make it."

I want to write you about Savage Dragon #214.

THIS is the issue I've been waiting for! The pacing was excellent in this issue. The scenes of Malcolm fighting Tantrum in a panic knowing the babies were being kidnapped juxtaposed with Dart fighting with Angel gave a frantic feel to the whole comic. You can sense the panic from both sides, and it established how serious the situation was.

And then just in case you forgot how bad Dart is, she slices Barry in half, a truly heartbreaking moment, especially as we see Barry coming to, and actually not being a bad dude after all.

This is what we call laying the groundwork, and I am really excited for the battle between Dart and Malcolm. Know you, it'll be bloody and unforgiving! I feel this could be the defining moment for Malcolm, and really establish the Malcolm character.

I also want to commend your work on Spawn, it's a fun book and I'm really curious where you guys take it. Just maybe Mr. McFarlane should get someone to edit him though, the dialogue sometimes seems repetitive and unnatural.

As a guy who's pull list shrinks every month, I am happy that Savage Dragon has always been there to entertain, one day your titles may be the only ones in the bin with my name on it!

Keep up the great work!

Eric Mallette

Thanks for the kind words.

Todd's never had a strong editor on Spawn or anything else. I don't see that changing any time soon. He has his way of doing things and his is the final word.

Erik,

My initial reaction to the solicitation for SD #214 was that Imposter (deceased) was somehow impersonating LummoX (also deceased) from beyond the grave. Turns out, it's actually the baby portion of the previous Tantrum incarnation (dead and buried) that's very much alive and kicking--and punching; pretty much living up to its name. I should have known, silly me. You definitely have baby on the brain as of late, Mr. Larsen. (Even Nick Justus is getting into all the baby action!)

Man alive! This issue was certainly humming. We find Malcolm foregoing the rank-and-file "long arm of the law" routine in favor of super-strong-arm tactics: street justice meted out with a big, heavy hand. When dealing with BIG Behemoths like Tantrum, it's often kill or be killed, with no room for diplomacy.

Which brings me to Dart offing her "love," Barry. (Too late for a blood transfusion from Malcolm, I'm guessing.) Maybe she wanted to permanently silence him so as not to stand trial for statutory rape.

This, of course, being the second instance where Angel is made to agonize over a dead body that's been split in two. At least Barry was able to redeem himself in the end. He "saw the light," as it were--his spirit moving towards an altogether different light. Truth be told, I always give you the benefit of the doubt, but sometimes I feel the way you kill characters--just when they're getting good, by having gone bad--is you shooting yourself in the foot.

Seeing that infant get rid of its remaining Phoenix-like Tantrum force was interesting. (Perchance what Malcolm dove through was more of an entity than just residual energy. Hmm...) While I dig Malcolm taking on brute beasts in the same vein as massive Kirby monsters--which is no small feat/feet--I am pushing for villains with a bigger wardrobe... waging war in more elaborate, colorful getups.

By the by, the "less is more" axiom should never apply to Rogue Warrior. More Rogue Warrior!

When it comes to Malcolm, I like seeing him attired in his snazzy cop uniform. Being saddled with the duty of law and order when you answer to the epithet of "The Savage Dragon," makes for an interesting juxtaposition/synecrism. Let's face it, Malcolm would rather super-villains be read the riot act via the talking points of his knuckles, rather than actual Miranda rights. Quite often, dead-to-rights baddies end up dead.

I couldn't help but notice how you and Todd explored the notion of police brutality in SPAWN #263, whereby Al Simmons was made to bear the brunt of being another powerless black man. (Mind you, he did assault those officers.)

I wonder if Maxine fears for her husband's safety all the more now, given that he's a cop. Interestingly enough, whereas most moms would gladly die for their kids, they typically don't fear matricide from their superpowered newborns. On the opposite end of that spectrum, Angel's baby was made to deal with the growing pains of having survived... ABORTION! Such are the tortuous, treacherous roads that your twisted, unbridled mind takes us readers. (Poor Tierra.) Fortunately, those abducted "Chosen One" kids aren't just helpless babes in the woods. Perhaps Dart will find that out the hard way.

Many Fin-Addicts will recall how SD #122 took 9 lamentable months to hit the stands. Now, with #222 "drawing" near (the same number as The Comics Journal interview featuring your lengthy interview)... each SD ish now comes out at a feverish, monthly-ish clip--with SPAWN in tow (not to mention that upcoming ANT #1 issue); all of which begs the question: workaholic much?! (That wasn't a rhetorical question.)

Sincerely,

Sotiris Gravas

P.S. I love Angel's stylish boots.

Tantrum in Savage Dragon #214 is not actually the baby from his previous appearance but another child altogether. Had that kid from #193 survived he would be a couple years older than the toddler seen in #214. The ghostly Tantrum entity had made the jump several times since he first appeared.

And, yeah, working away like a madman, but I'm not adding a third title to my schedule but rather moving on from Spawn. It was a fun little ride but I felt it was time to do something else.

Hey Erik,

Breath in, and breath out. Whew. Savage Dragon #214 had a lot to offer for an issue that was mostly two battles happening simultaneously. Not since Jack Kirby has any comic creator been able to handle comic book fights of destruction as elegantly as yourself. It never feels overcrowded and always has a grace of finesse that we the reader, know exactly what is going on.

Alright, enough with the kiss ass session. Yes, it was a good issue and this issue leaves us with a doozy of a cliff-hanger. Barry cut in half? Said it ain't so! He's so young and full of potential. I'm thinking he makes it somehow, but knowing you, that might not be the case. Still, what I really enjoyed this issue was the fights. Not one memorable fight, but two! Can't complain with two servings in one sitting! First Angel and Rogue Warrior... wait, did I just say Rogue Warrior?! You truly made me a happy man when I saw Rogue Warrior jump into action. I've been waiting for a full fledged fight dedicated to this character for over a decade at this point. Yeah, over an entire decade. Was it worth it? Pretty much. The Rogue Warrior fan in

me wanted him to win, but what kind of book would this be if the villains were the ones to win? Still, he does have a heart of gold as he seemed to show genuine concern about the babies safety. Then again, he was in the process of kidnapping them from their family, so maybe I spoke too soon. Hope he appears on a cover at some point as he just sparks cover material! Now to give Chaos & Control a similar fight, and I'd be pretty content with bad-ass villain fights for a little while.

The Tantrum fight could have gone down as any other fight, but this one really had a unique flavor to it. Seeing the two similar splash pages really resonated with me, and those tiny panels that focused on his ugly mug really seemed to pop. The fight itself was epic and the DPS of him throwing a building is hard to beat. I'm slightly concerned as to how Malcolm will be able to defeat such a foe, whose power seems to be in the world of magic and not of the physical nature.

A few questions if you don't mind me asking.

1. Even though we just had a Tantrum fight, will Malcolm look into ways to stopping this force of nature that is Tantrum? Having something that can't be beaten with fists and could cause random chaos and destruction, might be something he would invest in finding a solution to?

2. Will we see what's going on with Mr. Glum anytime soon? I'm assuming his trial should be happening in the near future, and I can't see him being too happy about that, on top of Angel dying as well.

3. You probably have one of the coolest jobs on Earth. No joke. Just wondering what makes it worthwhile for you in the long run?

Overall, the quality of the book has been as high as it's ever been and that's saying a lot. It's been interesting to see dynamic between the three main characters develop this past year and it's truly a refreshing read. I do miss a ton of other characters, but there is only so much room a month. Keep kicking ass Erik, and I hope the wait for 215 isn't a long one, as that cliffhanger is killing me with anticipation.

Sincerely,

Benny Hasa
San Jose, CA

1: Certainly he would like to stop the Tantrum entity but I'm not sure Malcolm necessarily has what it takes to figure that out on his own.

2: It will be dealt with in an upcoming issue.

3: No joke--letters like this and enthusiastic fans like yourself. Writing and drawing comics can be a pretty lonely existence but feedback in its various forms can make it all worthwhile. Just starving for attention over here. The months where the ol' mailbag is all but empty can be brutal.

Greetings,

I just finished my second reading of issue 214. I absolutely love this issue. The currently storyline is chugging along at full steam and it looks like a collision course is set. I think Dart is one of the best villains you have created. Intelligent, cunning, a powerful fighter and easy on the eyes. On top of that, she is terrifying in her ferocity. She isn't going to let anyone or anything stand in her way, not even her love of Barry by the looks of it. Being that he is of Dragon origin, I'm not certain if he is really dead. I am wondering if he will regenerate and help Malcolm and Angel take Dart down for good. It will be interesting to see it develop.

Man, what was that baby with flames coming out of its eyes? That was pretty freakin' great! You never cease to come up with new and exciting foes for Malcolm to battle.

One other thing, I really liked how Angel just shined in this issue. She is getting closer to being able to handle the worst of the worst on her own. Not only is she being to take charge of her life and making the hard choices, but her powers seem to be developing along side of her overall character arc. Savage Dragon is one of the best of the best comics out there. Thanks again for another awesome issue Erik. Until next time...

Sincerely,

Rick Snyder
Greenwood, IN

Thanks for taking the time to write in. It's much appreciated.

Erik,

I forget, having read SD #214 last night, exactly how I felt about it--I Think I liked it, though! Lots of energy, action, and betrayal, come to think of it. Still, other than a bunch of fisticuffs in the street, what really is Savage Dragon, the series? Doesn't he ever Leave the damn City??! "Save the City, Save the World". This would make a great Dragon story arc, with all it implies! How about Malcolm becoming a Spy instead of a Cop? Just toss the idea around in your head for a bit; after all, it might make him Leave the City once in a while! Spawn, the issue that I read recently, was good, too, actually (for once); how exactly did you get the creative rights to do Ant, now, in an upcoming series?

Cheers,

Andrew J. Shaw

Malcolm Dragon would be the worst spy ever--primarily because of his inability to blend in. The last thing you'd want from a spy is green skin, an inhuman physique and a giant fin on their head.

As far as acquiring the creative rights to Ant--I simply bought the

character outright from her creator Mario Gully.

Happy First Days of Summer Erik (or close enough),

Issue 214 was pretty solid, I loved the cover (nice "Tantrum Smash" moment there) and the brawl taking place on the pages inside was just as good. This new Dart is one nasty character (poor, poor Barry) and I am looking forward to what you plan on doing with her. That God Sword sure seems handy, who will stop her? I can tell you are having fun with her so go to town, go to town!!!

I also read the latest Spawn here recently in the past week (the chapter AFTER the Satan Wars finale) and now that the first arc has wrapped up I can say I'm fairly intrigued! It is safe to say that I will stick around with Spawn for the immediate future - a book I had not thought I would ever pick up again... it has been YEARS since I read and enjoyed Spawn (every time I tried to read it I ended up lost).

It's strange to think about, I started reading these characters (Spawn and Dragon) when I was around the same age my step-daughter is today (12-13 yr old time frame) and here I am still reading Image books to beat the heat outside on hot ass summer days (this is the first real hot weekend here in Hampton Roads).

For me Summer will always go hand in hand with reading comic books while listening to awesome tunes (Live Phish all day today) and making great memories while relaxing between chores and such. Thanks for keeping Savage Dragon going all this time, not to mention bringing me back to books like Spawn. Like many others I jumped on board the new Spawn book as soon as it was announced that you were joining the book. So far, so good!!! I'm VERY much looking forward to the pending crossover - it was cool to see God in action once again, by the way (the original slug fest between God and Satan is one of my favorite all time moments in Savage Dragon history, to be sure).

Speaking of history - I see that early issues of Savage Dragon and Spawn (which I have read already, naturally) are now available on Comixology Unlimited... Not to bring the room down but I have to ask, as a creator were you aware of this/are you cool with it? Do you see this as something that will hurt the book in the long run OR as something that can possibly help it? You mentioned the numbers on the book as not being high for a few years now, is getting out there digitally something that can change that in your opinion? I do all I can to support this book (anyone who knows me knows how much I thump this book) and am curious how you feel about the shift to digital comics (I have mixed feelings about it).

I'm curious how folks like you and Todd feel about companies like Amazon doing something like this. Image set out initially to be all about creator owned characters and content unless I am mistaken (reading Spawn #10 as an adult really struck some chords with me, I had no idea what all that meant reading with a child's eye) so I'm curious if the latest trends on digital comics fit Image's mission - in your opinion.

Sorry to go off the rails, I do that when I type I guess. I'm looking forward to the books this summer so thanks again.

Cam Stylez

P.S. The next election is very, very close now - and current events (to include this farce of a Presidential Race and sadly last night's tragedy in Orlando) are sure to shape the American people's emotional affect in the coming months now that Obama's time is almost over... I'm surprised you haven't been more vocal in SD about the current political climate, to be honest. No Trump Androids? Not visits from Bernie? Is it all just too terrible to think about? Take it easy.

It's pretty much the latter--it's all just too terrible to think about. Added to that is that I've fallen quite a bit behind in the real-time department and since the election stuff wasn't in full swing in 2015 it wouldn't make a lot of sense to cover it. Maxine's baby, the last of the three Dragon "triplets" was born September 5th, 2015, after all. Somehow between everything I just lost a few months and then issues dovetailed into the next and off I went.

The other part is--it just feels like I've done that already. I don't really want to do the same thing over and over again. I did an election story, years ago, and mentioned candidates sometime later and that was enough. Unless I could find some radically different angle--it just seemed redundant to tackle another presidential election.

As far as Comixology goes--I've gotta plead ignorance on that front. I have no idea what goes on there and I just hope that those who are keeping tabs on it have more of a clue than I do. I don't read comics digitally and I've never downloaded so much as a single issue.

My Spawn run is almost over, sorry to tell you. I hung in there as long as I could but that wasn't as long as I had initially thought it would be.

NEXT: ANT! SPAWN! And Malcolm Dragon makes three! The greatest team in comics faces their deadliest challenge yet! It starts in Spawn #266 (my final issue of that title) and concludes in Savage Dragon #217! Don't you dare miss it!

Hey, don't stop reading now--there's plenty of additional funny-book fun to be had in the pages that follow--!

BROOKLYN WAS ALWAYS A WORLD APART-- BUT MY OWN LITTLE WORLD ISN'T AN OPTION ANYMORE.

FULL FATHOM FIVE THY FATHER LIES...

GLAD TO SEE YOU OUTSIDE OF A LIBRARY, MIRTA...

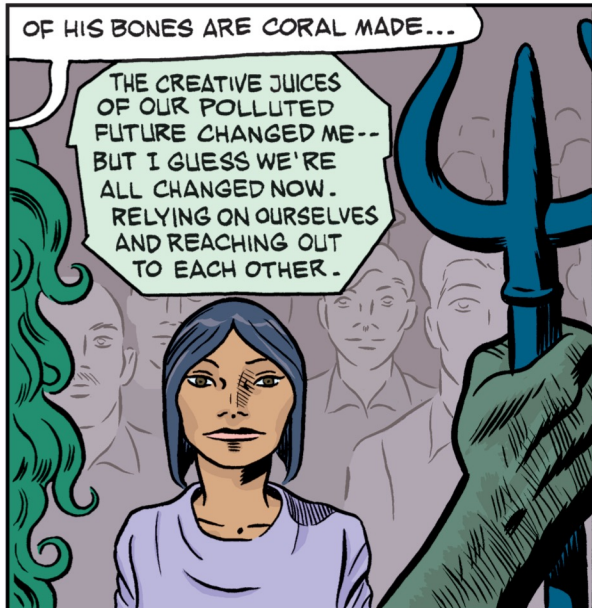
First annual POETRY-FREAK Festival

IF I GET TO KEEP MY GRADES UP WITH AN EXTRA-CREDIT CONEY DAY, I'M IN!



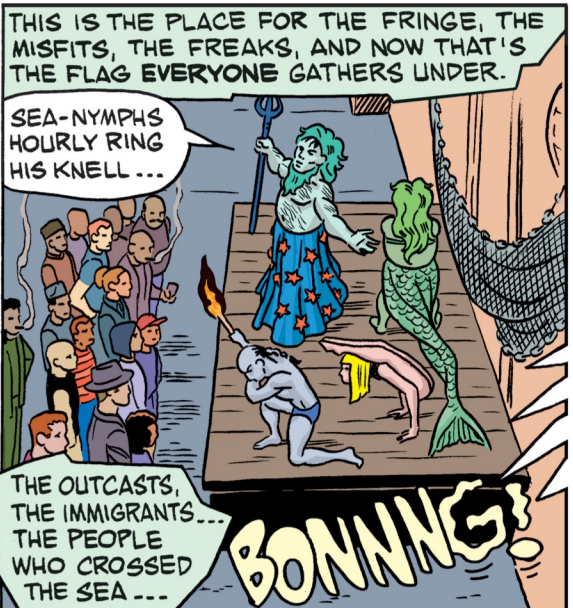
OF HIS BONES ARE CORAL MADE...

THE CREATIVE JUICES OF OUR POLLUTED FUTURE CHANGED ME-- BUT I GUESS WE'RE ALL CHANGED NOW. RELYING ON OURSELVES AND REACHING OUT TO EACH OTHER.



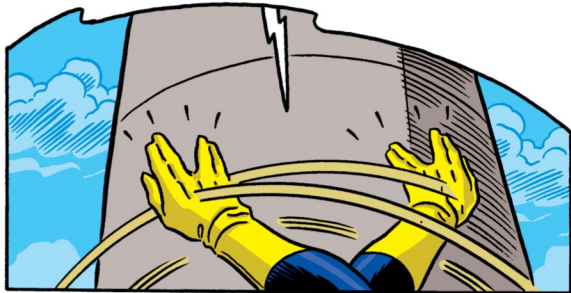
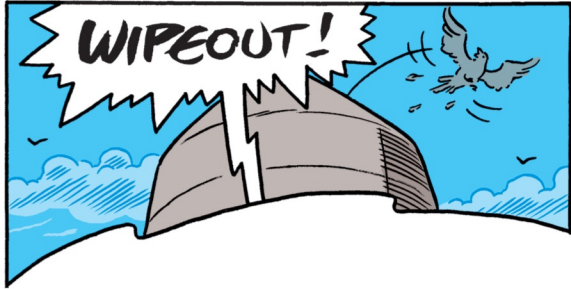
THIS IS THE PLACE FOR THE FRINGE, THE MISFITS, THE FREAKS, AND NOW THAT'S THE FLAG EVERYONE GATHERS UNDER.

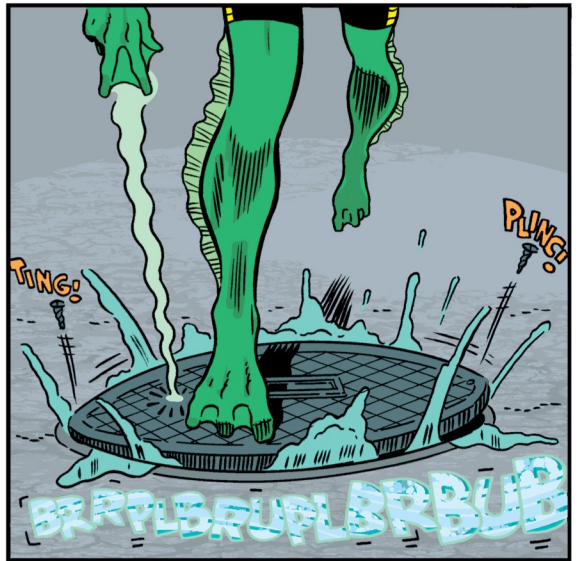
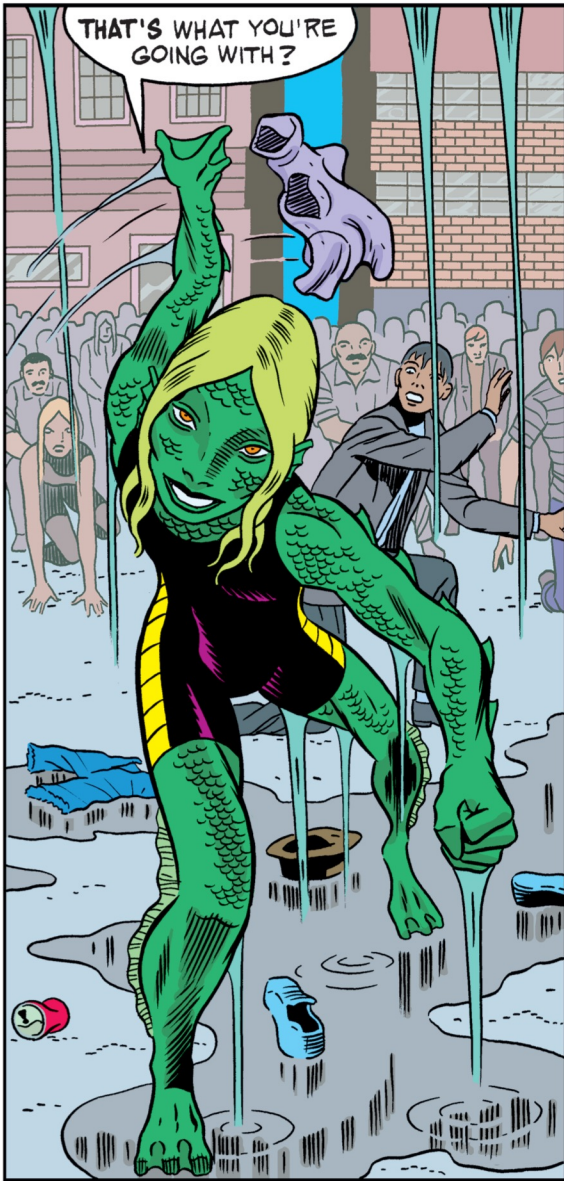
SEA-NYMPHS HOURLY RING HIS KNELL...

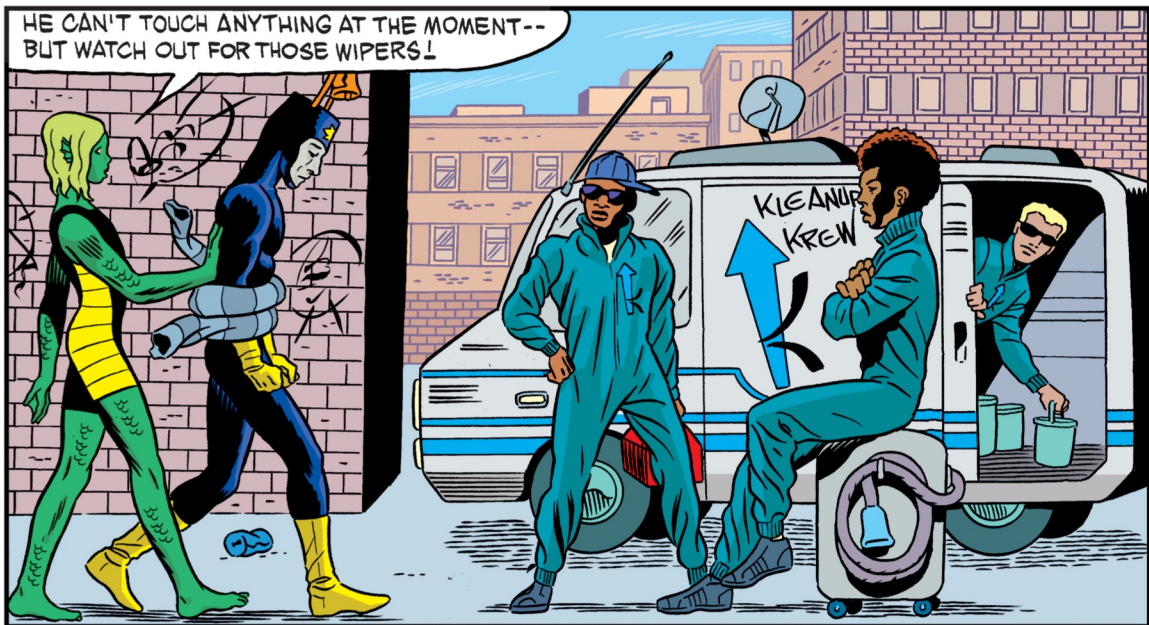


THE OUTCASTS, THE IMMIGRANTS... THE PEOPLE WHO CROSSED THE SEA ...

BONNING!







HE CAN'T TOUCH ANYTHING AT THE MOMENT-- BUT WATCH OUT FOR THOSE WIPERS!



I MEET MY DEATH W-WITH PRIDE...

NOT HOW IT WORKS, ERASER-HEAD-- HERE IN THE BK REPUBLIC WE FIND SOMETHING FOR THOSE IDLE HANDS TO DO!



YOUR TALENTS ARE A GOOD FIT FOR THAT DEBRIS WE'VE BEEN TRYIN' TO MAKE GO AWAY WHERE SOME OF THE BRIDGES BROKE OFF. LET'S GO GET YOU YOUR NEW ORANGE!



HEAR THAT EVERYONE? THE SHOW MUST GO ON!



AH, BACK TO CLASS THEN.

GLAD TO SHOW THAT GUY THERE'S ANOTHER WAY. JUST HAVE TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK.

SO, ASK NOT FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS...

NO ONE'S AN ISLAND, REALLY.

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—IGN

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