



SAVAGE 260

DRAGON

THIS IS THE
MAD MENACE
CALLED

TORMENT!

HE WANTS TO
DESTROY
MALCOLM
DRAGON'S
LIFE--

--AND HE'S GOING TO START BY
DESTROYING MALCOLM DRAGON'S **WIFE!**



SAVAGE[®] DRAGON

BY

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RUS WOOTON

letters

NIKOS KOUTSIS

colors

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flats

GRAVIN HICCINBOTHAM

editor

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pulls his own pork

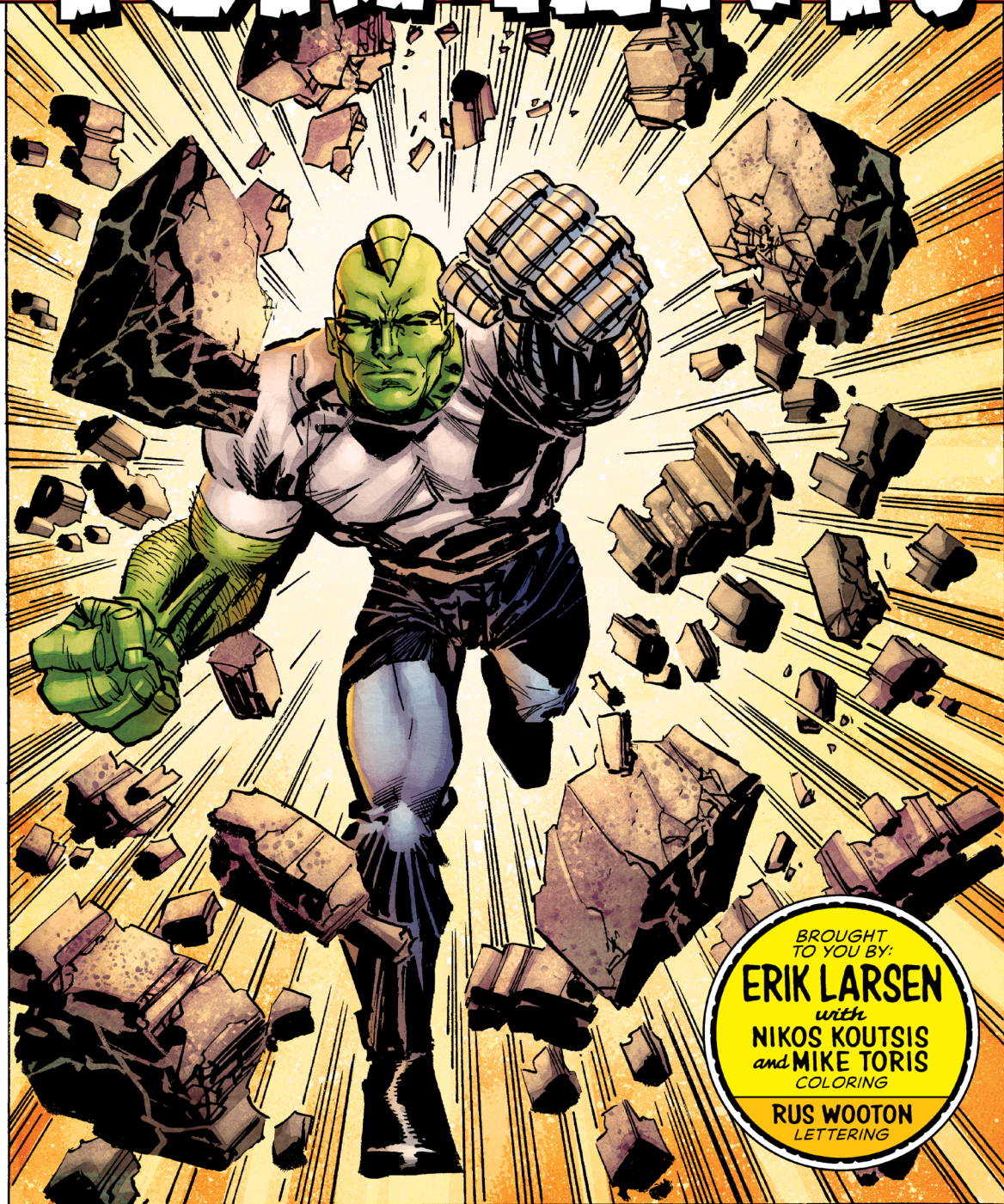


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SAVAGE DRAGON™

TORMENT!



BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:

ERIK LARSEN

with

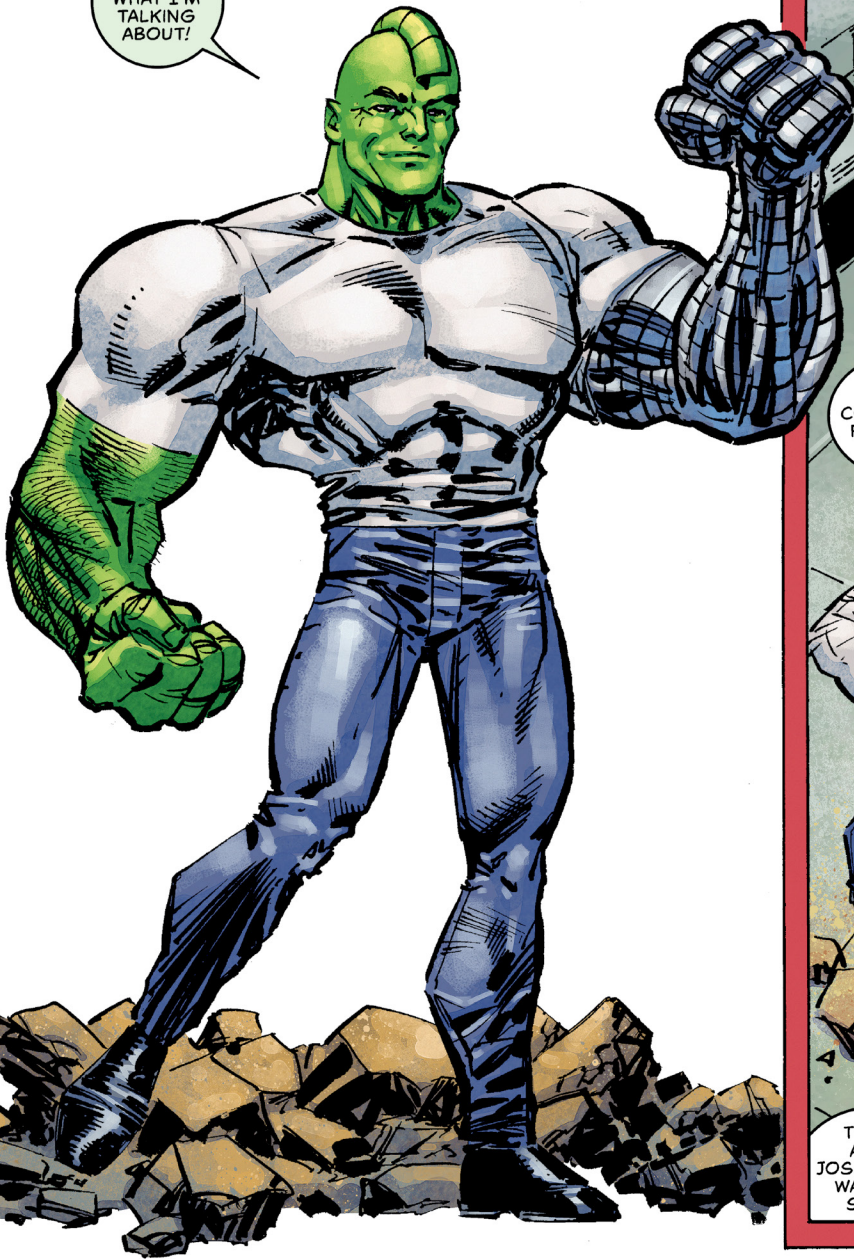
**NIKOS KOUTSIS
and MIKE TORIS**

COLORING

RUS WOOTON

LETTERING

NOW THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!



IT'S NOT AS LOADED WITH GADGETS AS ONE OF SUPERPATRIOT'S ARMS, BUT IT SHOULD DO WHAT YOU NEED IT TO DO.

YOU'LL HEAR NO COMPLAINTS FROM ME, JOSEPH!

THIS IS GREAT!



THANKS AGAIN, JOSEPH. THAT WAS VERY SWEET!



JOSEPH AND I GO BACK YEARS, ALEX.



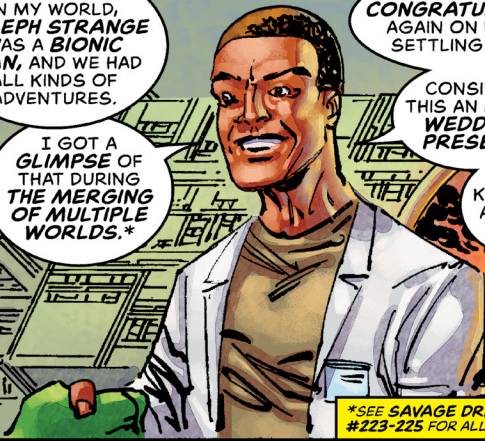
IN MY WORLD, JOSEPH STRANGE WAS A BIONIC MAN, AND WE HAD ALL KINDS OF ADVENTURES.

I GOT A GLIMPSE OF THAT DURING THE MERGING OF MULTIPLE WORLDS.*

CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN ON FINALLY SETTLING DOWN.

CONSIDER THIS AN EARLY WEDDING PRESENT.

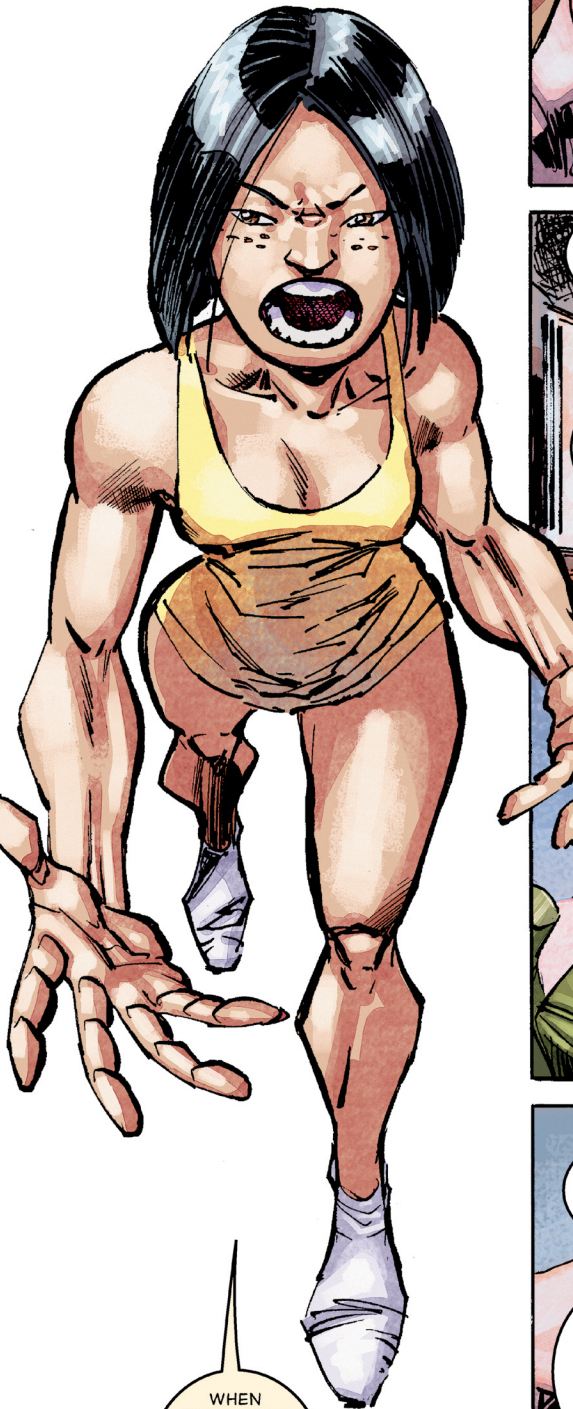
YOU KIDS SET A DATE YET?



*SEE SAVAGE DRAGON #223-225 FOR ALL THE DETAILS.

YOU SAID "NO"?

YOU DON'T GET TO SAY SAY "NO"!

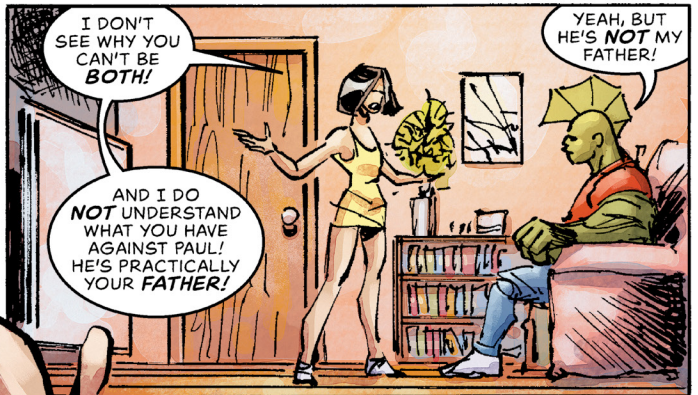


WHEN SOMEBODY ASKS YOU TO BE THEIR **BEST MAN**, THE ONLY POSSIBLE ANSWER IS "YES"!



I DON'T WANT TO BE PAUL'S **BEST MAN**, CARPET BAG.

BESIDES-- I'VE **ALREADY** AGREED TO BE **FRANK'S** BEST MAN-- AGAIN.



I DON'T SEE WHY YOU CAN'T BE **BOTH**!

YEAH, BUT HE'S **NOT** MY FATHER!

AND I DO **NOT** UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU HAVE AGAINST PAUL! HE'S PRACTICALLY YOUR **FATHER**!



AND I **RESENT** THE FACT THAT HE JUST POPPED IN HERE FROM ANOTHER **DIMENSION**, AND EVERYBODY JUST TREATS HIM LIKE HE **IS** MY FATHER.

HE'S **NOT** FAMILY-- OR AT LEAST NOT **MY** FAMILY!

HE'S SOME **STRANGER** WHO LOOKS LIKE MY DAD BUT HAS A GREEN **TURD** DRAPED OVER HIS FOREHEAD!



THE KIDS **LOVE** HIM, PICKLE JAR.

WHAT DO I NEED TO **DO** TO CONVINCE YOU TO GIVE HIM A **SECOND** CHANCE?

WELL, THAT IS AN **EXCELLENT** START--!



DON'T SHOOT!
PLEASE,
DON'T SHOOT!

TORMENT
WAS JUST
HUNGRY! HE
DIDN'T KILL
THESE
PEOPLE!

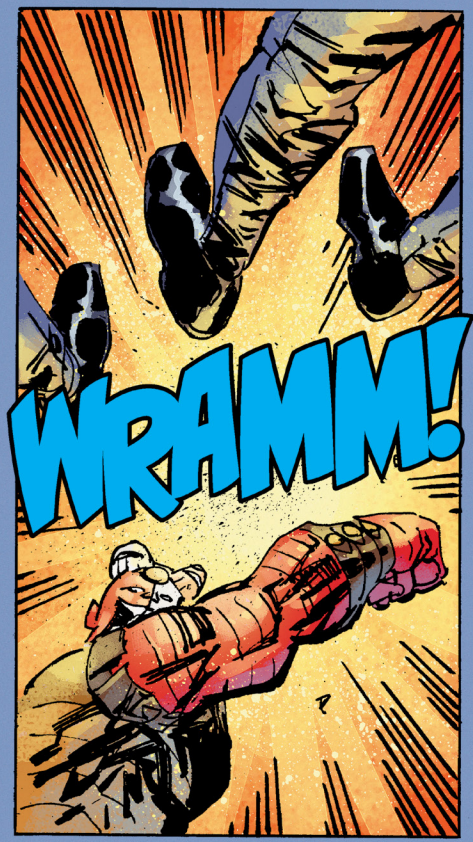
GO
PISS UP A
ROPE,
COPPERS!

YOU
DON'T
SCARE
ME!

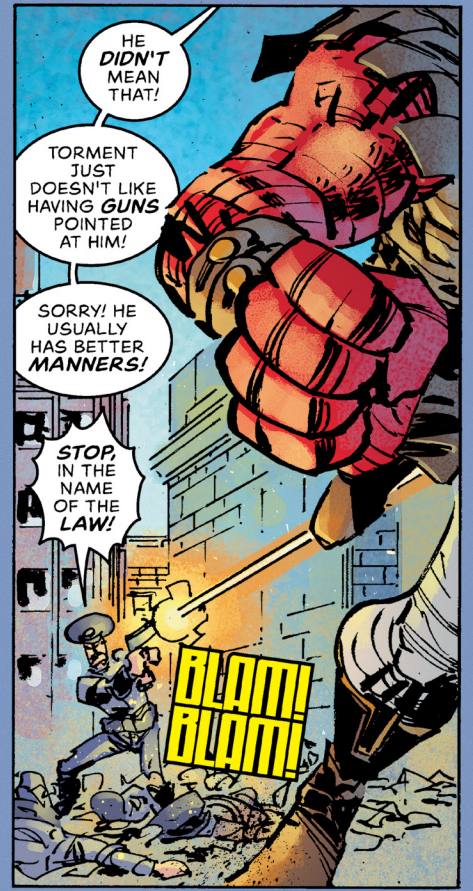
HIT
THEM,
TORMENT--

BREAK
THEM INTO
LITTLE
PIECES!

H-HOLD
IT RIGHT
THERE!



WRAMM!



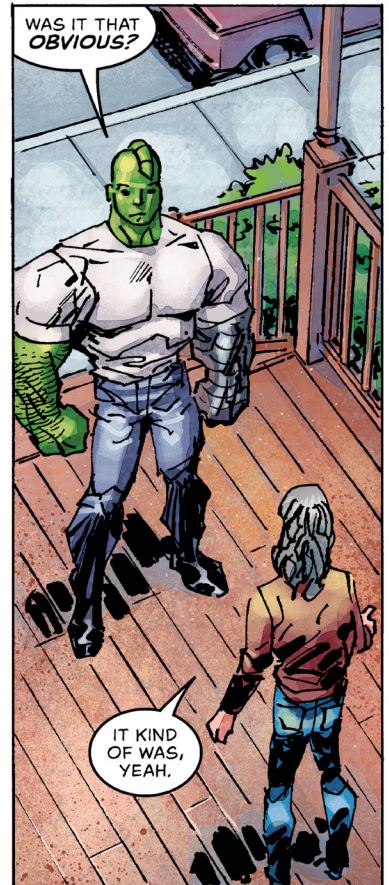
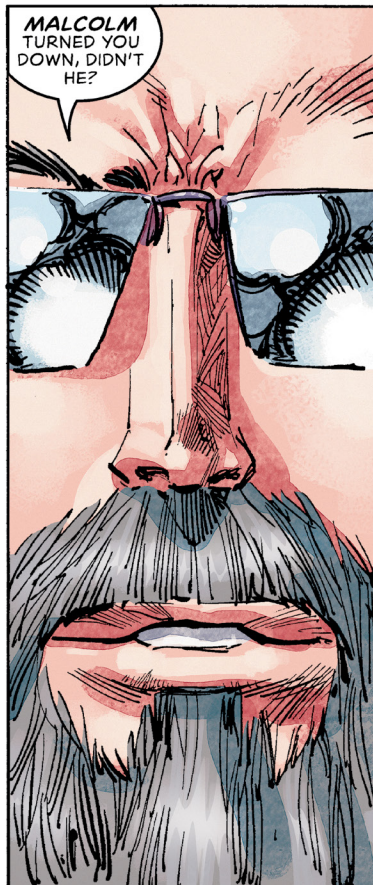
HE
DIDN'T
MEAN
THAT!

TORMENT
JUST
DOESN'T LIKE
HAVING GUNS
POINTED
AT HIM!

SORRY! HE
USUALLY
HAS BETTER
MANNERS!

STOP,
IN THE NAME
OF THE
LAW!

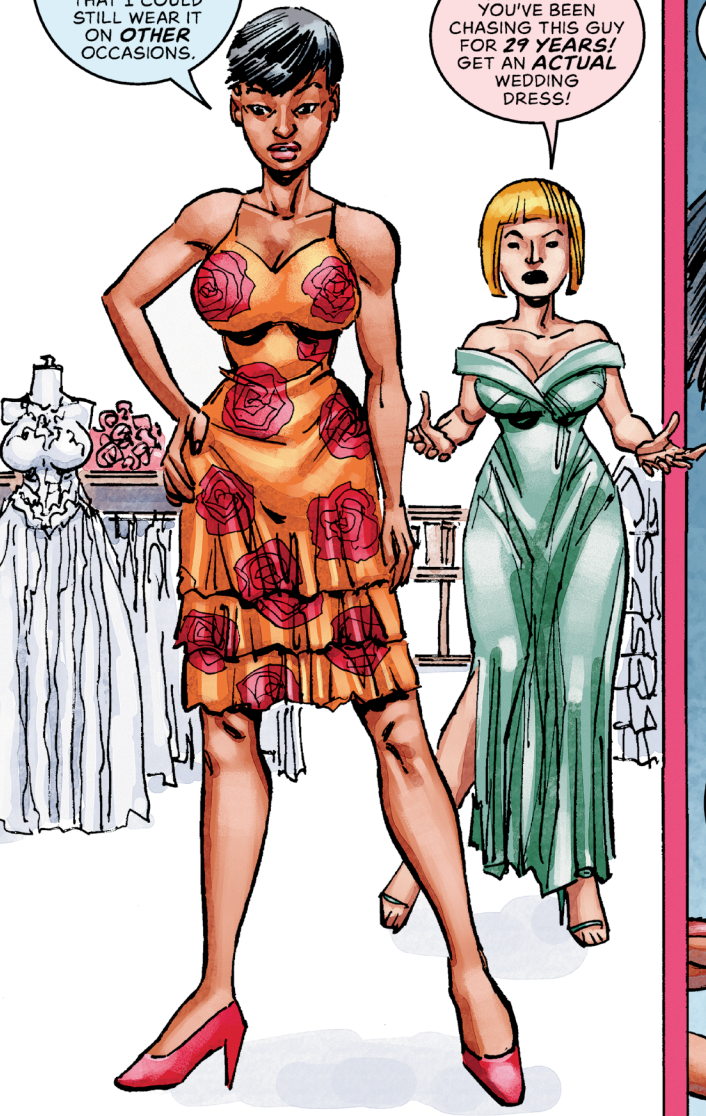
**BLAM!
BLAM!**



*IT HAPPENED IN SAVAGE DRAGON #223-225, REMEMBER?

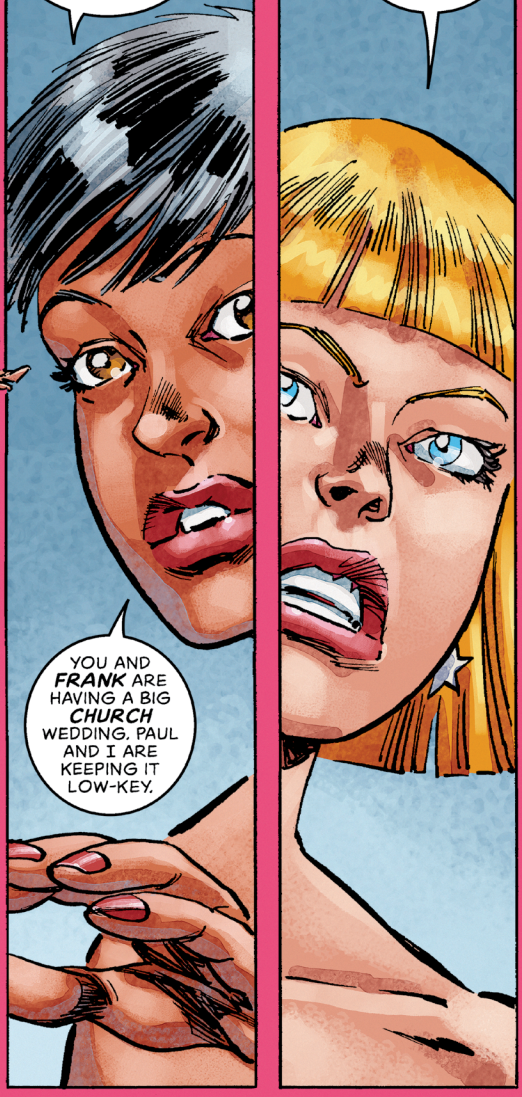
OKAY.
I LIKE THIS.
IT'LL WORK WELL ENOUGH AS A WEDDING DRESS, AND IT'S CASUAL ENOUGH THAT I COULD STILL WEAR IT ON OTHER OCCASIONS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, ANGEL?
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
IT'S YOUR WEDDING! YOU'VE BEEN CHASING THIS GUY FOR 29 YEARS! GET AN ACTUAL WEDDING DRESS!



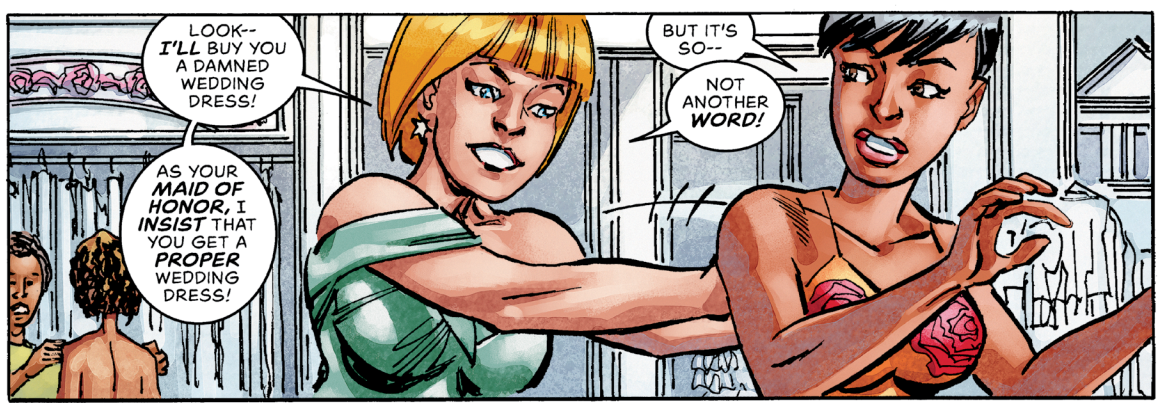
WE'RE GETTING MARRIED ON THE BEACH, ANGEL-- IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S A STUFFY CHURCH WEDDING!
IT'S JUST A QUIET AFFAIR WITH A FEW FRIENDS IN ATTENDANCE.

IT'S *STILL* YOUR WEDDING DAY, ALEX! YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO GET MARRIED ONCE!
IT SHOULD BE SPECIAL!
MAKE IT SPECIAL!



YOU AND FRANK ARE HAVING A BIG CHURCH WEDDING. PAUL AND I ARE KEEPING IT LOW-KEY.

LOOK-- I'LL BUY YOU A DAMNED WEDDING DRESS!
AS YOUR MAID OF HONOR, I INSIST THAT YOU GET A PROPER WEDDING DRESS!
BUT IT'S SO--
NOT ANOTHER WORD!

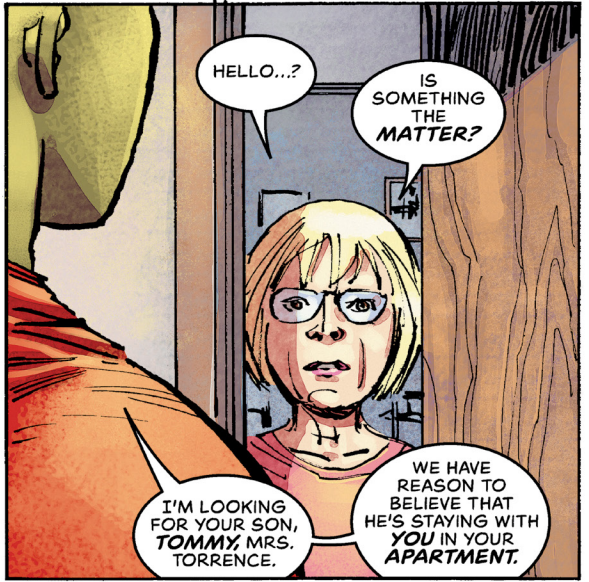




MRS. TORRENCE, ARE YOU IN THERE?

MRS. TORRENCE?

NO!
NO!



HELLO...?

IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

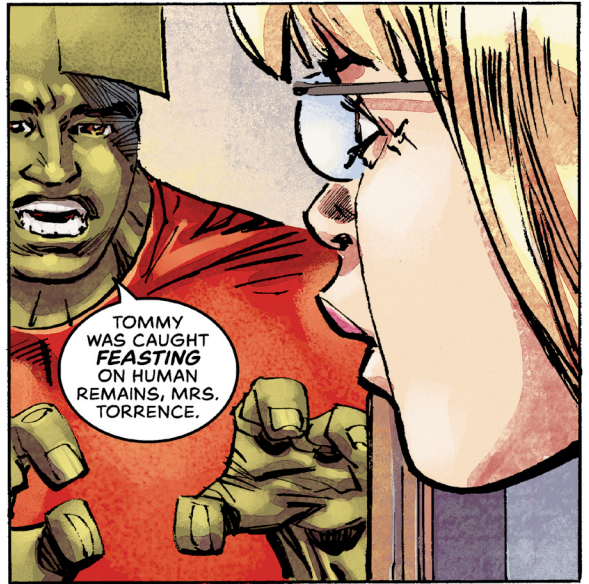
I'M LOOKING FOR YOUR SON, TOMMY, MRS. TORRENCE.

WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HE'S STAYING WITH YOU IN YOUR APARTMENT.

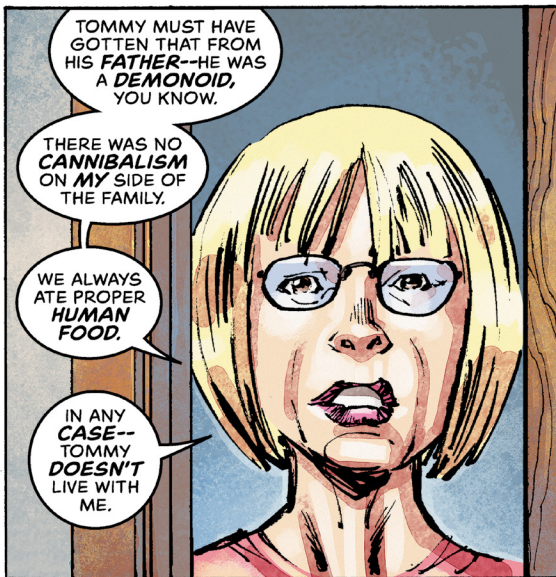


I'M AFRAID YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN.

TOMMY DOESN'T LIVE WITH ME.



TOMMY WAS CAUGHT FEASTING ON HUMAN REMAINS, MRS. TORRENCE.



TOMMY MUST HAVE GOTTEN THAT FROM HIS FATHER--HE WAS A DEMONOID, YOU KNOW.

THERE WAS NO CANNIBALISM ON MY SIDE OF THE FAMILY.

WE ALWAYS ATE PROPER HUMAN FOOD.

IN ANY CASE-- TOMMY DOESN'T LIVE WITH ME.



YOU MAY BE IN DANGER.

I DOUBT THAT VERY MUCH.

TOMMY IS PERFECTLY SWEET IF YOU DON'T GET ON HIS BAD SIDE.

IF I SEE HIM, I'LL LET HIM KNOW THAT YOU CALLED.

PLEASE DO.

A close-up illustration of a hand with orange-red skin, holding a single, glowing bubble. The hand is rendered with detailed shading and cross-hatching. The background is a textured, light green. Several other smaller bubbles are scattered in the air. On the right side, a portion of a white, metallic-looking face with a toothy grin is visible. Four speech bubbles contain text.

**DON'T
DO IT,
TORMENT!**

**PLEASE!
A BUBBLE'S
EXISTENCE IS SO
FRAGILE--SO
FLEETING!**

**DON'T
END ITS LIFE
PREMATURELY!**

**LET
IT *BE*,
TORMENT--
LET IT
*BE!***



OH, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE! IT'S A BUBBLE!

IT HAS NO FEELINGS! IT HAS NO LIFE! IT'S NOT A LIVING BEING! IT'S A BUBBLE!

POP THE GODDAMNED THING AND BE DONE WITH IT!

WHAT A GROWN-ASS MAN IS DOING SITTING IN A BATHTUB FULL OF BUBBLES IN THE FIRST PLACE IS BEYOND ME!



THAT WAS HIM!

I'D RECOGNIZE THAT VOICE-- THOSE VOICES-- ANYWHERE!

YOU CAN'T JUST BURST IN HERE LIKE--!



I'M AFRAID I MUST INSIST--!

YOU CAN'T HIDE HIM FOREVER, MRS. TORRENCE--!



SHIT.

GONE.



OUT THE WINDOW.

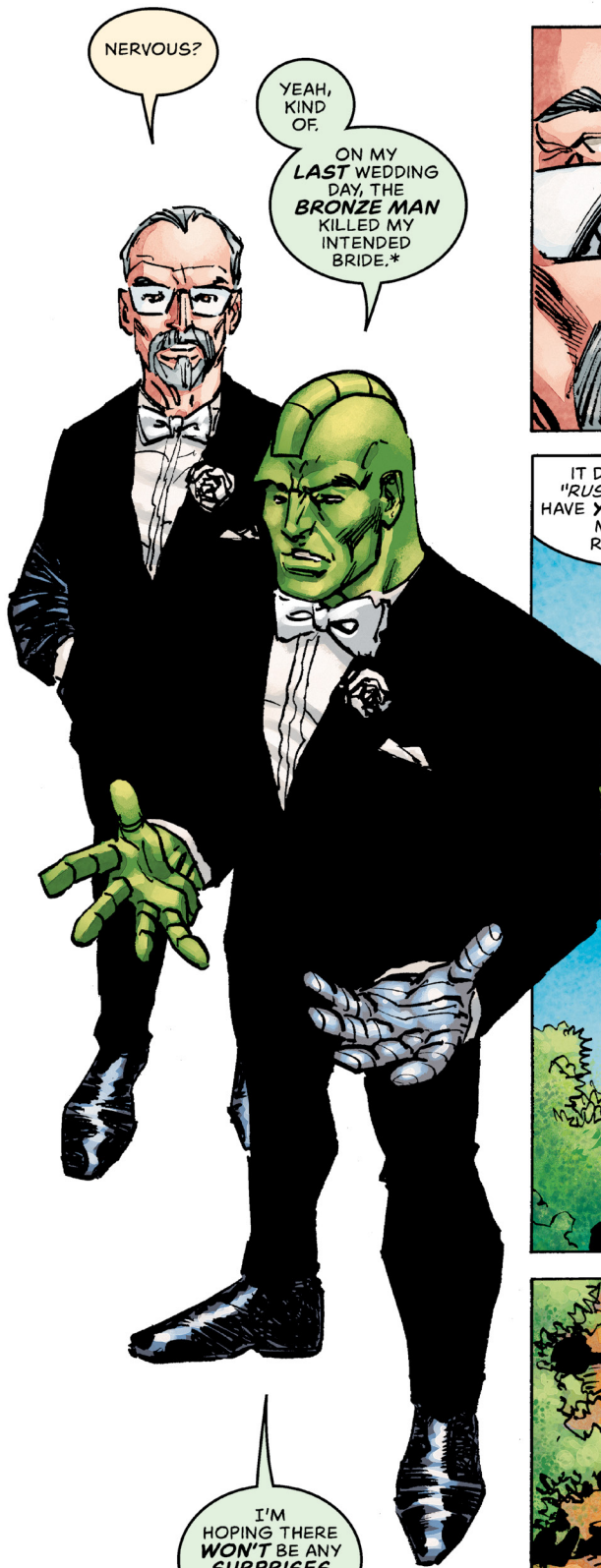
LOOSE IN THE WORLD.



THIS IS NOT GOOD.

OH, MY.

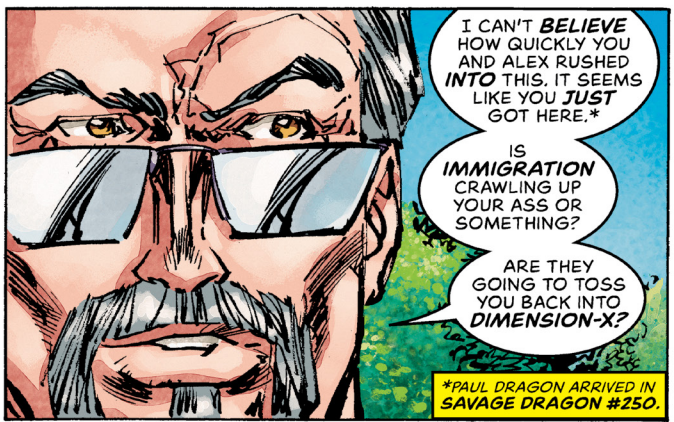
AND TOMMY WAS MAKING SUCH PROGRESS.



NERVOUS?

YEAH, KIND OF.
ON MY LAST WEDDING DAY, THE BRONZE MAN KILLED MY INTENDED BRIDE.*

I'M HOPING THERE WON'T BE ANY SURPRISES THIS TIME AROUND.



I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW QUICKLY YOU AND ALEX RUSHED INTO THIS. IT SEEMS LIKE YOU JUST GOT HERE.*

IS IMMIGRATION CRAWLING UP YOUR ASS OR SOMETHING?

ARE THEY GOING TO TOSS YOU BACK INTO DIMENSION-X?

*PAUL DRAGON ARRIVED IN SAVAGE DRAGON #250.



IT DOESN'T FEEL "RUSHED" TO ME. I HAVE YOUR DRAGON'S MEMORIES, REMEMBER?

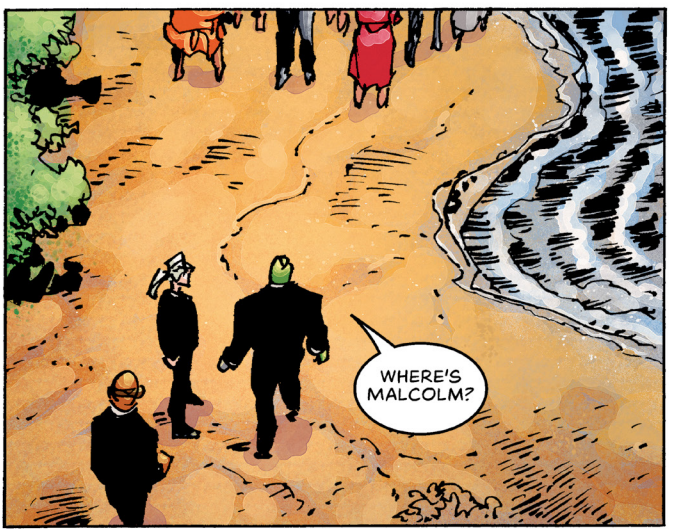
IT FEELS LIKE I'VE KNOWN ALEX WILDE HALF OF MY LIFE.



IT'S GETTING LATE, AND I DO HAVE OTHER COMMITMENTS TODAY.

CAN WE GET STARTED?

YOU READY TO DO THIS, PAUL?



WHERE'S MALCOLM?

*AS RECOUNTED IN GRAPHIC FANTASY #1.

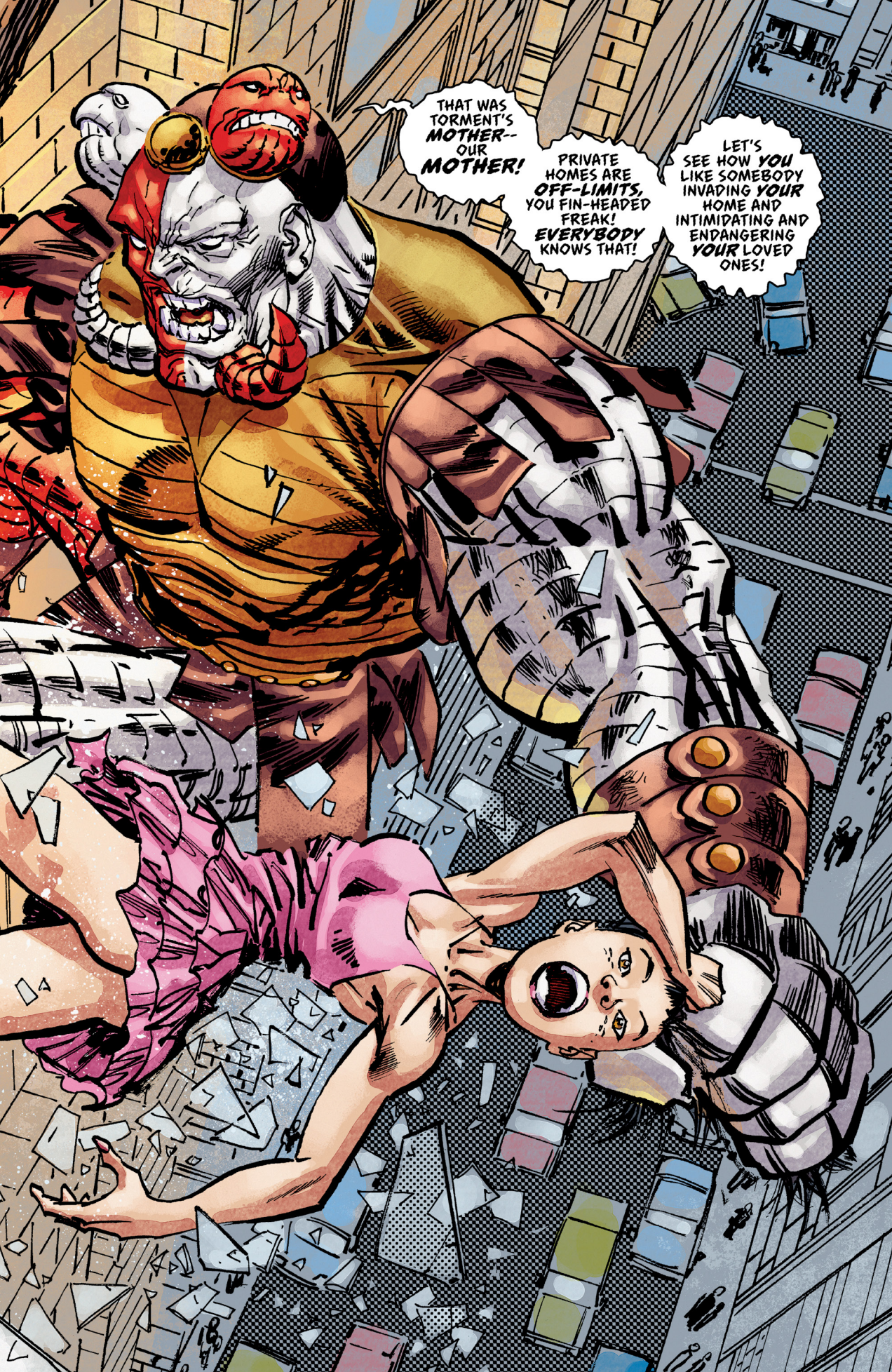


I'M SO SORRY!

TORMENT FOLLOWED YOU HOME!

I COULDN'T STOP HIM!

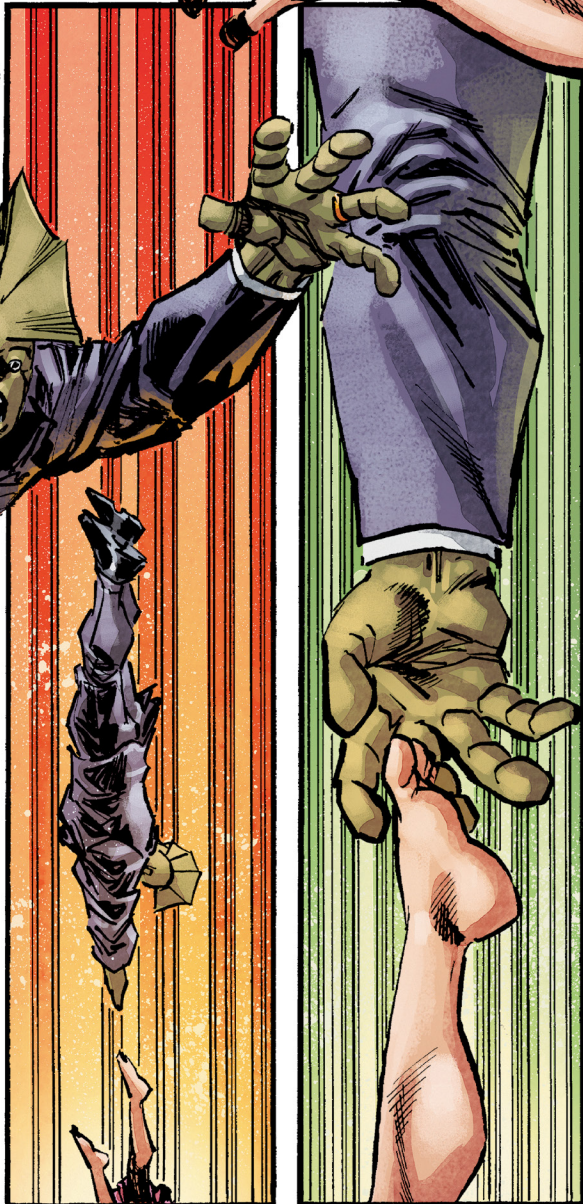
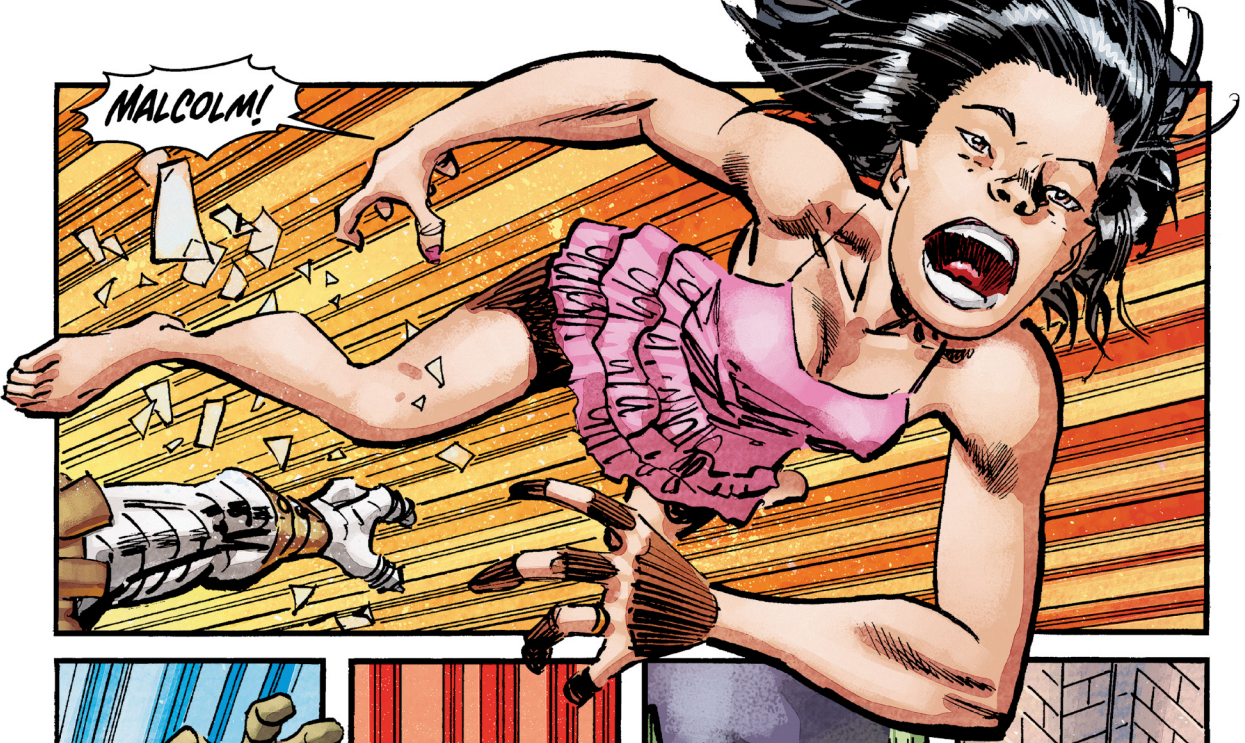
MAMA!

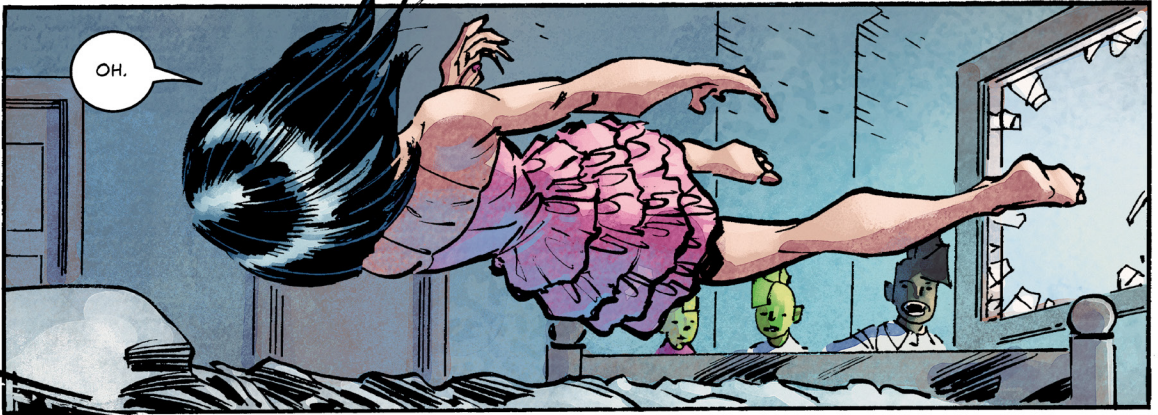


THAT WAS
TORMENT'S
MOTHER--
OUR
MOTHER!

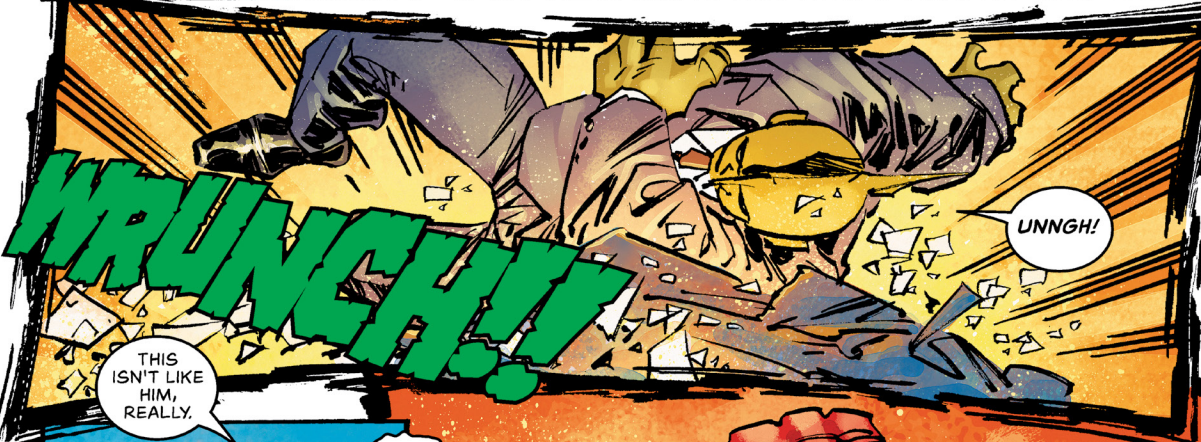
PRIVATE
HOMES ARE
OFF-LIMITS,
YOU FIN-HEADED
FREAK!
EVERYBODY
KNOWS THAT!

LET'S
SEE HOW YOU
LIKE SOMEBODY
INVADING YOUR
HOME AND
INTIMIDATING AND
ENDANGERING
YOUR LOVED
ONES!





OH.



UNNGH!

THIS ISN'T LIKE HIM, REALLY.

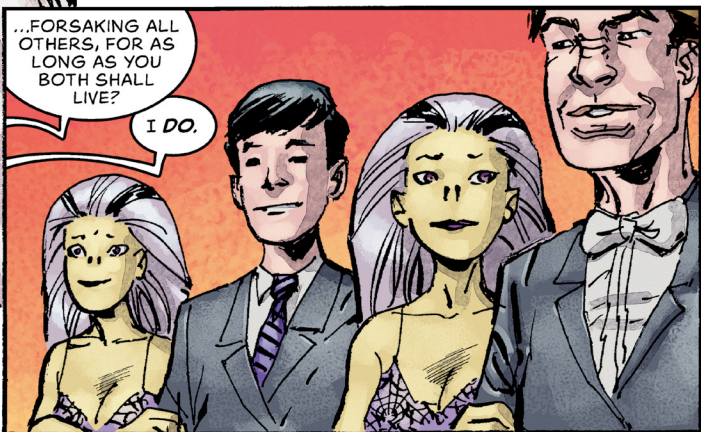
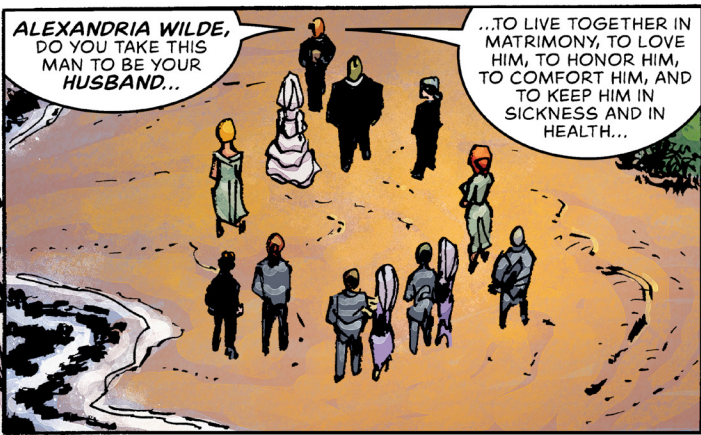
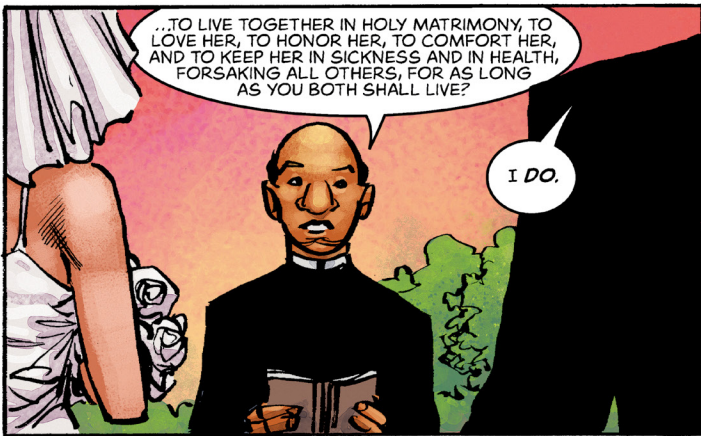
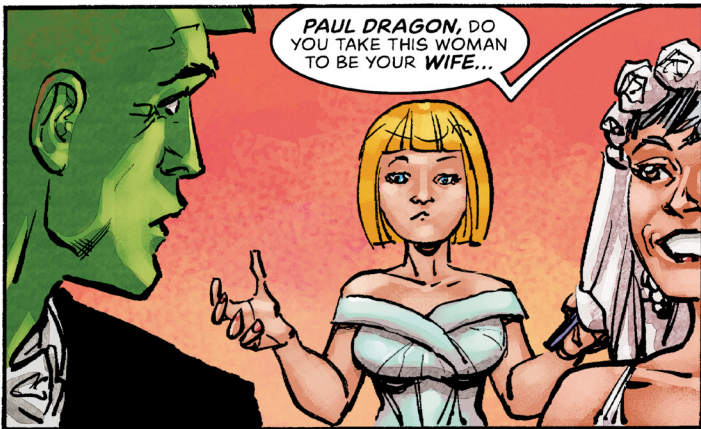


HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?



THAT ALL SOUNDS NICE UNTIL THE DAY YOU'RE FOUND FEASTING ON THE BLOODY REMAINS OF ONE OF YOUR MURDER VICTIMS!

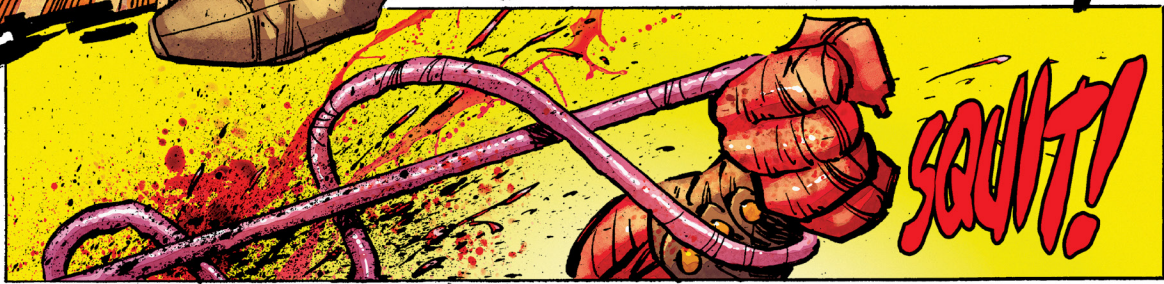
DEARLY BELOVED, WE ARE GATHERED HERE TODAY TO JOIN THIS MAN AND THIS WOMAN IN HOLY MATRIMONY.



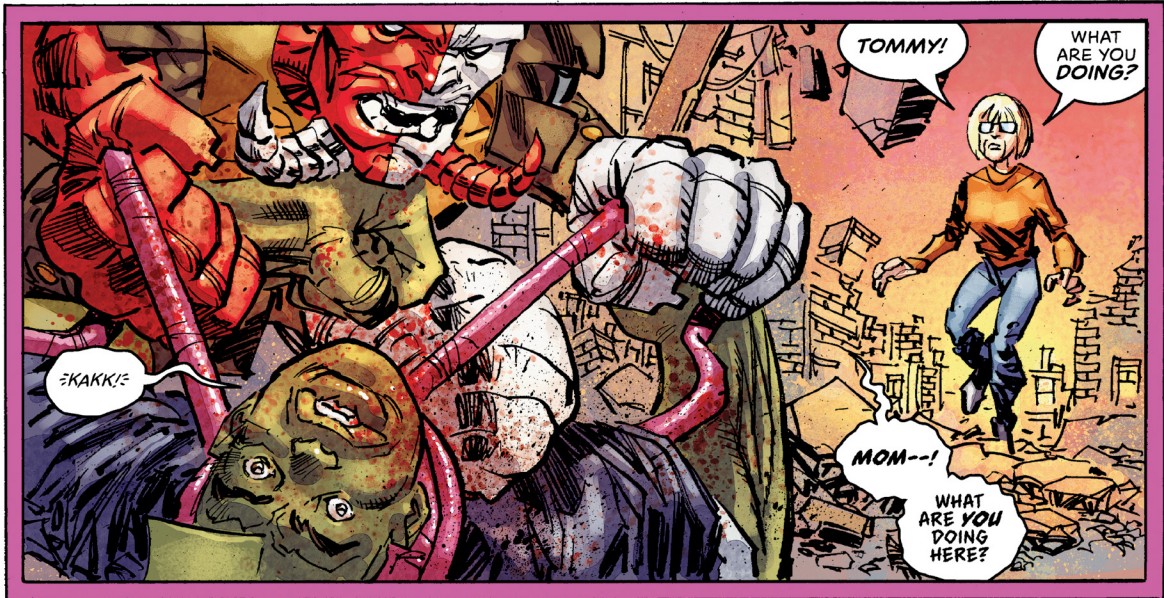


DOOM!

JUST DIE ALREADY!



SQUIT!



TOMMY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

KAKK!

MOM--!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

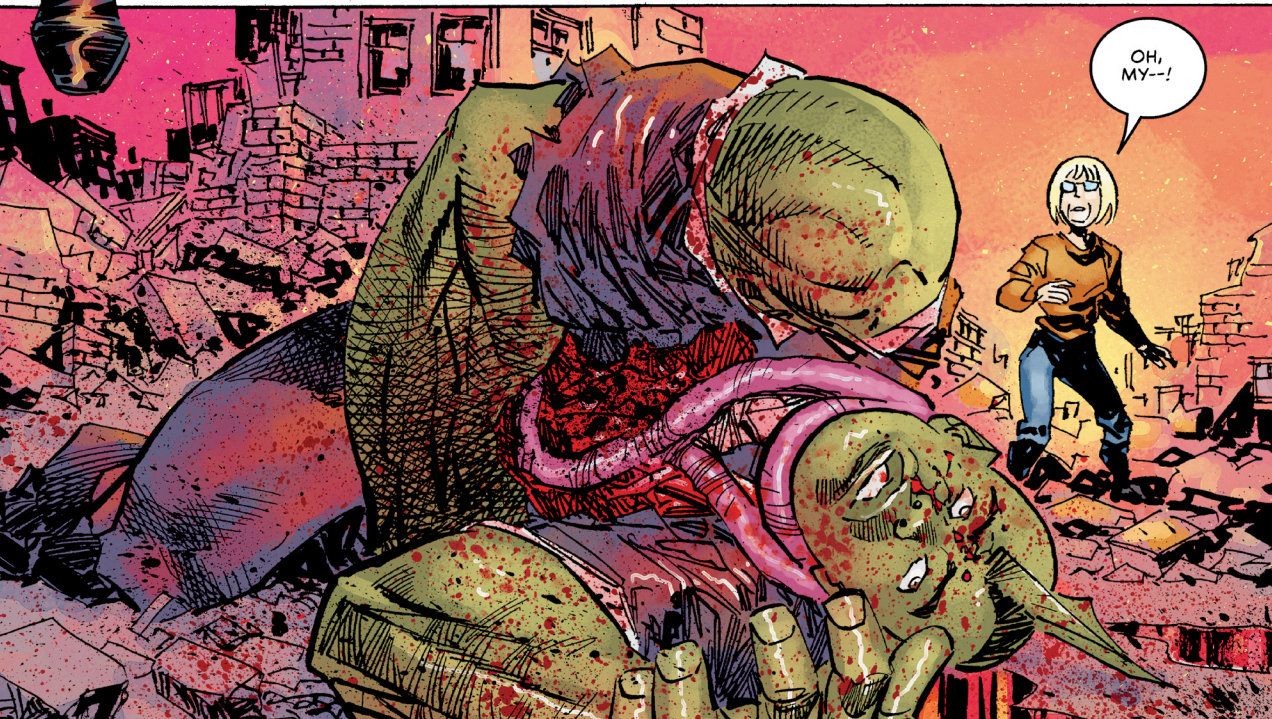


THIS...

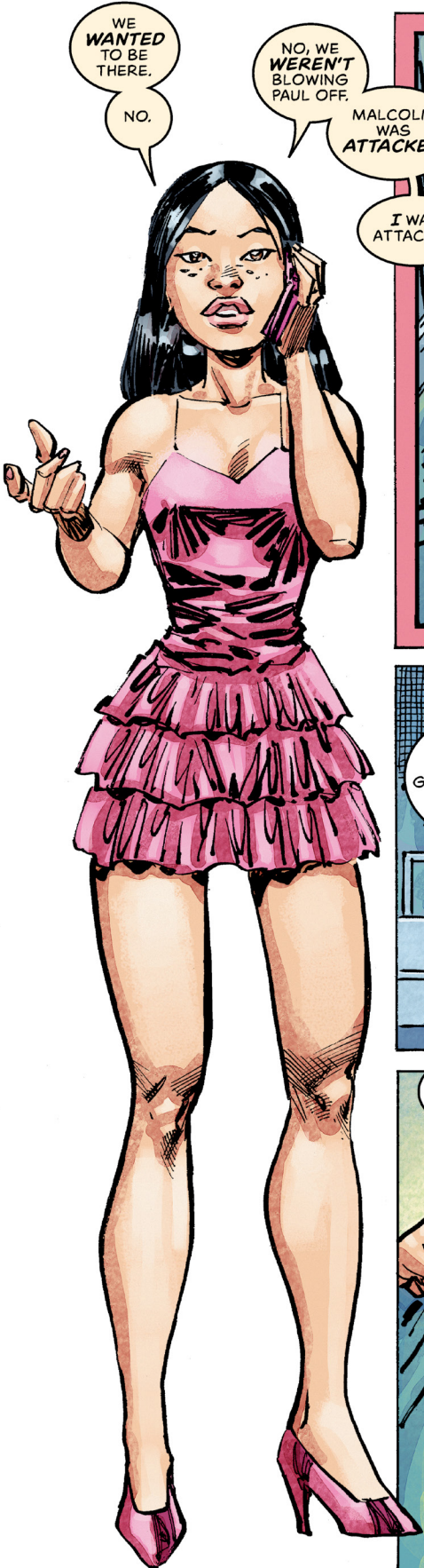
THIS
CAN'T BE
GOOD.



WHUMP!



OH,
MY--!



WE WANTED TO BE THERE.
NO.

NO, WE WEREN'T BLOWING PAUL OFF.

MALCOLM WAS ATTACKED.

I WAS ATTACKED.

MALCOLM WAS PRETTY BEAT UP, BUT I GUESS THE OTHER GUY GOT THE WORST OF IT.

HE'S DEAD, I THINK.

IT WAS IN THE NEWS, ANGEL. YOU CAN WATCH THE NEWS IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME.

TELL PAUL AND ALEX WE'RE SORRY THAT WE COULDN'T BE THERE.

I WOULD HAVE PICKED UP MY PHONE IF I WAS CONSCIOUS.

I WASN'T CONSCIOUS.



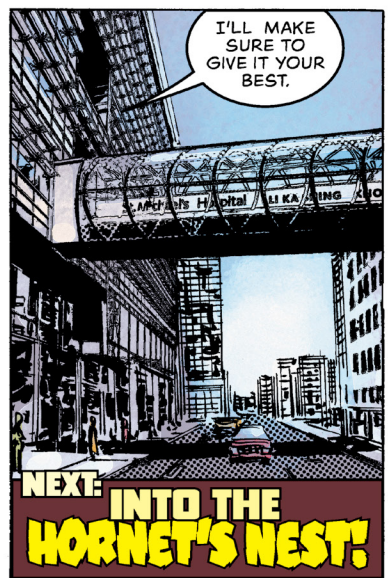
WE'RE IN THE HOSPITAL NOW. MALCOLM'S SLEEPING.



OH, YEAH--

IT'S STILL INTACT.

I'M LOOKING AT IT RIGHT NOW. IT'S BEAUTIFUL.



I'LL MAKE SURE TO GIVE IT YOUR BEST.

NEXT: INTO THE HORNET'S NEST!

Welcome to Savage Dragon #260.

Better late than never, eh? Not sure why this one gave me such grief but there we are.

In case word hasn't reached you yet--I'm writing and drawing a second ongoing title! ANT will be winging its way your direction any day now!

Dear Erik,

Savage Dragon #258 surprised me, although at this point I'm used to being surprised by you. With the build-up from the last few issues, I was expecting this battle with Thor to be an epic one, maybe even lasting a couple of issues. But nope, five pages in and it's over. You've pulled the rug out from under us before like this, but I still never see it coming.

But the rest of the issue turned out to be exactly what I needed. For a long time now, I've been waiting for Malcolm and Maxine's kids to develop their own personalities and stories. I know it takes time, as it does for real life children. But there's only so far you can go with the triplets existing as basically one entity, as just "the triplets." So a spotlight on Amy (and her weird-as-hell talking tiger) was a perfect first step towards her becoming her own character in this book. Savage Dragon has basically always been an ensemble book, even if the ensemble is always changing, and sometimes changing back when old characters return. But when Amy, Jackson, Tyrone and Maddy become true characters in the ensemble, this title will be richer and deeper than ever.

On an art note, I've really been enjoying the colours and letters lately, and they definitely looked good here. The art was good, even if some of the faces were a little wonky. And I think I saw you mention on Twitter that you had a Bill Sienkiewicz homage coming up, but I had forgotten until I saw it. That era of New Mutants wasn't the one I grew up with, and I've probably only read Demon Bear once, but that iconic image was still instantly recognizable.

Taylor Porter

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Excellent! I was hoping readers would catch the reference. I don't swipe a tremendous amount but I do like to slip in an occasional reference to something like that or have something look or feel familiar. The Demon Bear page was one of those times. Hats off to Bill Sienkiewicz!

Few readers caught the cover swipe. Walter's figure was based on John Lennon off of the cover to his album Rock 'N' Roll. When it comes to cool cats, fewer cats looked cooler than John Lennon!

Hey Erik,

Savage Dragon #258. It's become hard and harder to fathom how far long this book has come. That's no measly number. I've been reading this book since I was a kid, and now I'm a full fledged adult! That's scary I tell ya! Either way, it's truly astonishing to see how far this book has come along.

The issue wrapped up the battle with Thor quickly enough and he is once again captured. Only this time it's via the Canadian government. I do hope we get a Herakles Vs Thor battle soon as he was left in a state of serious damage when we last saw him. Anytime Thor shows up, the book becomes a scary place, as he's completely unpredictable. He's one of the books biggest menaces, that might spark a laugh one

moment, but a true tremble a moment later.

Walter and Amy's "adventure" was fun despite it mostly consisting of them being lost, tired, and hungry. However, once they found their energy source from the good Colonel things seemed to improve quickly for the pair. The Bill Sienkiewicz Grizzly page was a killer and I forgot that he's a hero for a second there.

Questions!

1. So, Mako II is supposed to be a mass murdering serial killer, but we haven't seen him at work yet. Should we expect to see the new Mako chomping away soon enough?

2. Any chance we might see the God Squad showing up soon? Now that Thor is captured it would be great to see them possibly tackle Thor. Anytime we get Thor in a fight scene, it's a real treat.

3. Dart is dead. Any chance of a gang war as it's been a long time since the VC has been at odds with each other.

4. At this point, what do you honestly prefer doing more of now? The big action scenes or the more intimate conversation between characters? You strive at both, but just wondering what your preference is and why.

Either way, you're getting there, Erik. 300 is within reach, and once you hit that magic number, you'll be on to something nobody has ever done before. The big 400. I'll be here as long as this book continues, because this is the comic that feels like it should matter.

Sincerely,

Benny Hasa

San Jose, CA

1: Yes, quite soon.

2: Not soon, no. This is where real time becomes an issue. Thor was defeated in #258 but we're on #260, which theoretically takes place two months later, which is a long time for characters to just sit around waiting for God Squad to drop by. Presumably--we missed their appearance when they dropped by to usher Thor back to prison.

3: That's on its way.

4: Drawing battles comes most easily to me. Characters in action to some degree is more fun to draw. But fights aren't very fun to write. There aren't a lot of words exchanged or many things for people to say to each other. So that's a conflict of sorts.

Hi Erik,

Issues 257 and 258 were fantastic. First off, I really enjoyed the return of Thor. He's such a cool villain. Just brutal. Seeing him in an all-out brawl with Malcolm and North Force was great. You had a lot of cool page designs in there and it seems like you had fun with the panel borders, too, with single-line borders, double-lined colored borders, and scraggly frantic borders. Both issues had phenomenal opening splash pages. Awesome work all around.

Amy and Walter's adventure was super fun. The characters played off each other really well and you made their dialogue seem effortless. The art was really dynamic in their scenes and your cartooning on their facial expressions was really enjoyable. I'm sure it was a lot of work making pages that good, but you make it look so easy.

And finally, any time you draw scenes in the snow, it's pretty much my favorite thing. The snow blowing, the

dead-looking trees, the black and white contrast, the winter clothes, the snowball fights, the snowy cityscape... So good it makes me turn into one of those chefs kissing his fingers saying, "Magnifique!" And so let's all of us readers raise our fingers to our lips, use our best stereotypical chef voices, and say to Erik, "Magnifique!"

Aaron Eppy
Lancaster, MA

Thanks much. I wish it was as effortless as it looks. I've been doing this all of my life and if anything it's gotten more difficult!

Erik,

Amy and Walter's adventure was a lot of fun! "Done in one"s are tough to come by these days so I love finding a good one. It caused me to have a couple questions so I'll just jump right to it.

1) Is Malcolm this muscular naturally? Meaning if he started lifting tons of weights (literally) would he get even bigger or is he pretty much just set the way he is?

2) What does Malcolm's shirt say? Sorry to make you spell out a joke if that is the case here but I couldn't figure it out.

3) What happens in issue #228 that Alex references? I don't have a copy on-hand to check -- if their copy is the same as ours.

4) In universe could Malcolm get hired for a KFC commercial and be the new temporary Colonel? Robocop was one in ours!

5) Did you watch Robert Kirkman's Invincible show on Amazon? A lot of us would really love to see Dragon on there in a future season!

Thanks for your time,
Dan

1: Yes, Malcolm is this muscular naturally. He cannot build more muscle through exercise, however. After you workout, your body repairs or replaces damaged muscle fibers through a cellular process where it fuses muscle fibers together to form new muscle protein strands or myofibrils. These repaired myofibrils increase in thickness and number to create muscle hypertrophy (growth). Since Malcolm has healing powers, there's no increase in mass. His muscles simply return back to the way they were previously.

2: Objectivity. It's in reference to a science channel on YouTube.

3: Savage Dragon #228 contained a somewhat raunchy sex scene.

4: It's conceivable but unlikely.

5: I haven't seen it. I don't watch a lot of TV. I'll watch whatever my wife is watching because I like to spend time with her but that's almost never cartoons. I read the comic books and enjoyed those.

Hey Erik,

It's the Sunday afternoon after 258's release, so what better time to take a breather after dinner and write a letter? Overall, A Walk on the Wild Side, was a stellar issue. It's always surprising to me when I open up a new issue to see what you do with an opening title/splash page. The super closeup of Malcolm in full electric Kirby Krackle mode is a great one. That dramatic lighting in the inking down the center of his face with the blues got me revved up for the rest of the issue! Then the always impressive page 2 and 3 spread! BOOM! As much as I like your Thor, despicable as he is, it was satisfying to see Malcolm wrap up the fight rather handily.

Pretty funny Malcolm has Paul reading back issues to get caught up on life in this reality. 228 was indeed a good one, glad to see Paul thought so too. For most of the issue we were treated to Amy and Walter hijinks and adventure. With each page I was cringing in anticipation thinking something bad was going to happen to them, especially Amy. I guess it was instinctual for me having a five year old son. I'm always nervous thinking of his welfare, and seeing Amy essentially running away from home with an anthropomorphic tiger was giving me anxiety with each turn of the page. I was totally onboard with how Maxine was feeling. Once we got to the pool house and Walter spotted the KFC, I started to get a sense of relief. The anticipation of comfort food and eleven herbs and spices! Mmm-mmm-MMM!

Very clever homage/swipe page too! It's based on a pretty popular deep cut, and I was proud of myself figuring out right away that it was of a Bill Sienkiewicz page. I'm usually not that clever when it comes to being able to spot those sorts of things. Well done! With Amy pushing the boundaries like this it's going to be interesting to see if the other Dragon kids follow her lead. Hope to one day see them all as a team being the leads while Malcolm takes the backseat. That's probably years away, I'm in no rush for you to get there. I'm always content with each new issue and just enjoying the ever evolving ride!

Hey, you're vaccinated! I'm vaccinated! Can't wait to see you at a larger Con again someday! Best,

Nick Justus
(Nothin' Happenin') Cumberland, VA

It's been a rather grueling year and I'm looking forward to life getting back to semi-normal, conventions included. So, very much me too.

Thanks for checking in.

Hey Erik,

I finished "A Walk on the Wild Side" and thoroughly enjoyed this latest adventure centered mostly around Amy Dragon and the mysterious tiger, Walter.

First the opening, I loved seeing Malcolm pound Thor and dispatch the god relatively quickly.

The Amy and Walter adventure was the highlight though and seeing Amy growing up and starting to dare to venture outside the boundaries that her parents set up for her opens up so many plot possibilities. That tiger seems like he will be trouble. It was such a simple adventure but that is why the story was so much fun. Yourself and others have said this but these adventures do give me a nostalgia for reading Bill Watterson's "Calvin and Hobbes" as a boy. Issue #258 brought back some good memories of other good comics. Enjoyed the back up feature of the first time Amy and Walter met as well.

Finally, I really do want to thank Josh "hard as nails" Eichhorn for all of his contributions to this fine comic book!

Till next time,
Dave Lester
Seattle, WA

As do we all. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to Josh Eichhorn, that goes without saying.

Hello Erik,

I really enjoyed issue 258. Nice to see Thor get his ass kicked. He is a piece of crap. It would be great not see him again, at least for a while.

I'm curious to see what's up with Walter The Tiger. He seems friendly enough. I hope he doesn't have a sinister angle behind his actions.

I'm happy to see you include Malcolm and Amy's kids as much as you do in the comic. It helps me to identify with the lead characters more. Having kids is a full time job, and constant worry is a huge part of it.

I like seeing less violence this issue. It felt like a breather from all the craziness lately.

I love that you have Paul and Alex in the book. Their inclusion acts as an anchor to the old days of Savage Dragon and is very nostalgic for me. One question, will we see Powerhouse in the future? I miss that dude.

Thanks for another great read! It's very much appreciated. Until next time.

Sincerely,

Ricky D. Snyder
Greenwood, Indiana

Powerhouse will be back. I do try to keep popular characters in rotation. He last appeared in #250, which wasn't all that long ago.

The problem with a cast of thousands is that there's never enough space to include everybody. I do what I can.

Erik,

HOLY KIRBY KRACKLE! That opening scene--WOW! Malcolm made Thor look like a chump! Thor's no slouch either, as we've seen him hand Dragon Senior multiple ass kickings in the past. I'm pretty sure that after witnessing that take down, the Canadian is rethinking his views on Malcolm.

You gave us our fix of fisticuffs right in the beginning, and then eased us into a light hearted buddy adventure. Amy and Walter's adventure was a nice change of pace. I love that you have been populating Malcolm's supporting cast with fun and quirky characters like Greta Gearbox, Captain Tootsie, and Walter, I'm hoping we learn more about Walter's backstory and the other animal men created at Genetech. Who knows, maybe Jimbo Da Mighty Lobster was an early prototype! The Savage Dragon family cast has given you great possibilities to tell different types of stories with the different family members; whether it's young Malcolm, navigating his way through the superhero life; Maxine, as a normal human dealing with everything; the Dragon kids, growing up with powers, or Grandpa Dragon, adjusting to a new life. It seems that there are more possibilities to keep the book fresh and exciting than ever before. It's a great time to be a fan!

I can't wait until the next issue, in what appears to be the next era of this comic-- Malcolm as a member of a super-team! The Dragon/S.O.S. era was one of my favorites and so I'm really looking forward to what you do with Malcolm in a similar situation with North Force. I loved how Dragon didn't play with others and I'm hoping Malcolm has a little bit of his dad's stubbornness/antagonistic behavior.

Just a few questions before I close this one out:

1. The Vanguard: Ethereal Warriors back up looked terrific when reprinted in color. Is there any chance that the Vanguard: Strange Visitors mini-series can get the same treatment?

2. What happened to Greta Gearbox? She seems to be MIA when it comes to the family scenes as of late.

3. Dragon rarely used his super leaping ability, yet Malcolm does it on the regular. Why was/is that?

Thanks for putting out my favorite funny mag!

Craig Olsen
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1: Likely not. Vanguard: Ethereal Warriors was originally crafted as chapters and this backup restored it to its intended form (for the most part). Vanguard:

Strange Visitors wasn't broken into chapters and it doesn't split up as easily.

2: There's a story there but the artist drawing it is taking his sweet time drawing it.

3: I'm not sure what you're referring to as I can recall plenty of times when Dragon used it. That, or Dragon always had too much crap in his pockets.

Erik

I had a blast reading issue 258! Malcolm has really matured over the years and became quite the badass hero. I've truly enjoyed following his adventures as well as everyone else in the Dragonverse. I'm looking forward to see what's coming up next.

That being said, I would like to also say I am definitely interested in your relaunch of Ant. The cover art released for issues #12 and #1 look beautiful. I like Ant and always enjoyed her appearances in Savage Dragon. I'm just worried that this means that we won't see as many issues of Dragon this year. I'm such a huge fan of the book and I like it when it is released monthly. Do you expect delays with Dragon to happen more frequently now that Ant will be an ongoing project for you?

Ben Wade
Orlando, FL

We'll both have to wait and see how this all plays out. The honest truth is that it's not always predictable. Certain issues can take extraordinarily long to come together for any number of reasons. I had a great head of steam going a while back and was pulling ahead on my deadlines--and the Funnies issue came along and chewed up all of the ground I'd gained. It seems emulating numerous cartoonists' writing and drawing styles took a lot more time than just doing a normal issue of the book. Similarly, the North Force issue ended up taking longer than usual due to all of backstory and other nonsense I needed to get sorted out. If things are going along at a brisk clip and I'm hitting on all cylinders, I can go pretty quickly. If I'm struggling--it can take forever and, sadly, I have no way of knowing which way it's going to go beforehand. Savage Dragon is, and will continue to be, my first priority but ANT is a character I've been making plans for and thinking about for years and I feel compelled to tell her story as well.

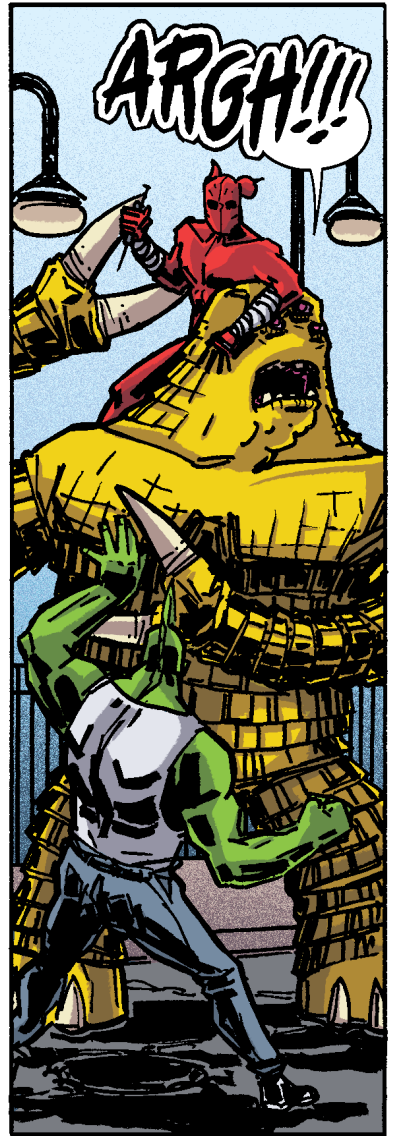
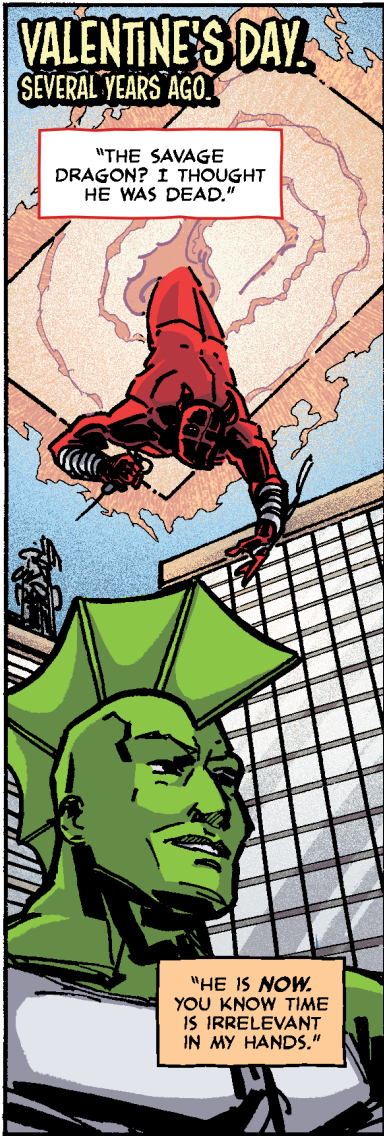
Here's hoping it all goes as planned.

Wish me luck!

-Erik Larsen

NEXT: Into the Hornet's Nest!

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

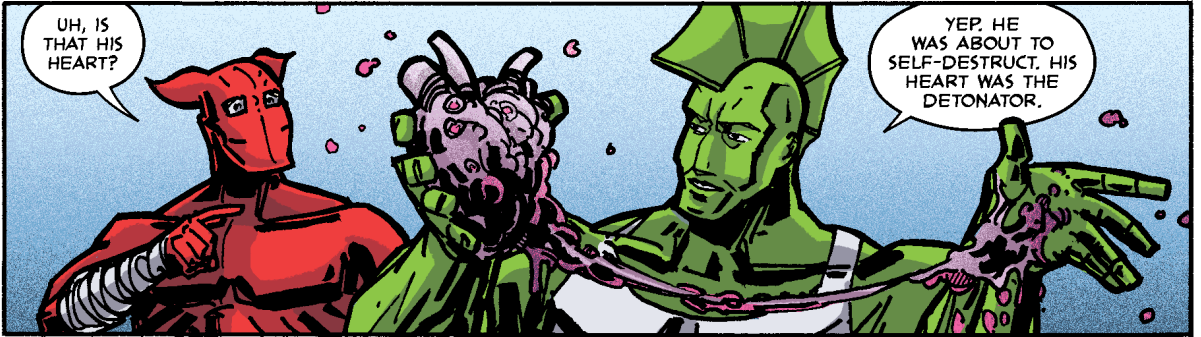




THANKS FOR THE ASSIST. YOU AND I JUST SAVED THE ENTIRE CITY OF CHICAGO FROM BLARGG. WHO ARE YOU, STRANGER?

I'M THE RED HOOK FROM BROOKLYN, NY.

I'M DRAGON.



UH, IS THAT HIS HEART?

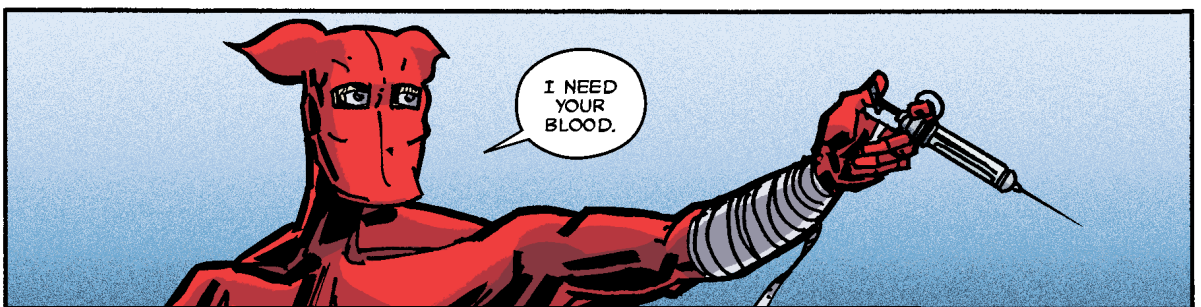
YEP. HE WAS ABOUT TO SELF-DESTRUCT. HIS HEART WAS THE DETONATOR.



WHERE'S HIS BRAIN?

MUCH LOWER.

SO WHAT BRINGS YOU TO TOWN, RED HOOK?



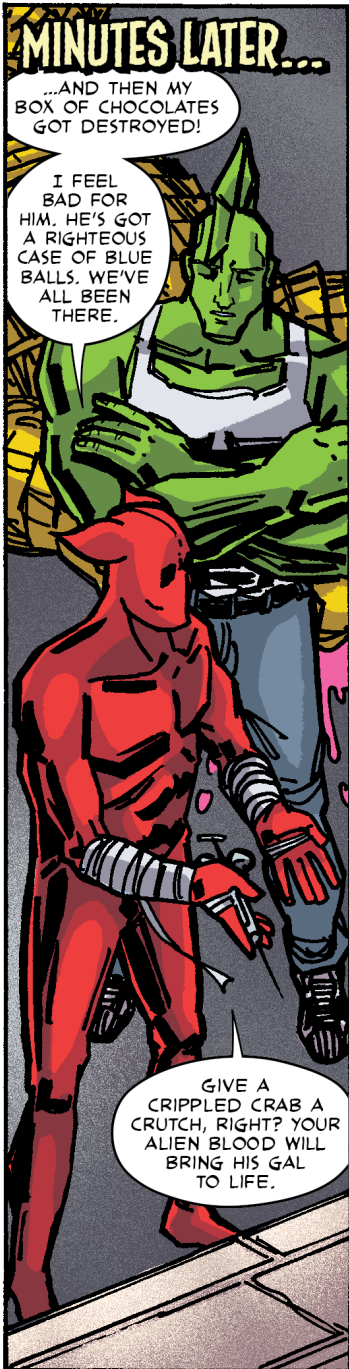
I NEED YOUR BLOOD.



FIRST OF ALL, THAT'S NOT GOING TO WORK. YOU CLEARLY DIDN'T DO YOUR HOMEWORK ON ME.

SECOND OF ALL, WHY?

WELL, THERE'S THIS GUY NAMED THE MANNEQUIN...



MINUTES LATER...

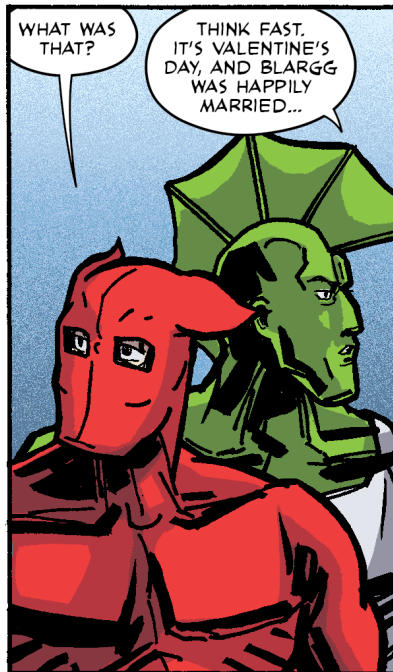
...AND THEN MY BOX OF CHOCOLATES GOT DESTROYED!

I FEEL BAD FOR HIM. HE'S GOT A RIGHTEOUS CASE OF BLUE BALLS. WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE.

GIVE A CRIPPLED CRAB A CRUTCH, RIGHT? YOUR ALIEN BLOOD WILL BRING HIS GAL TO LIFE.

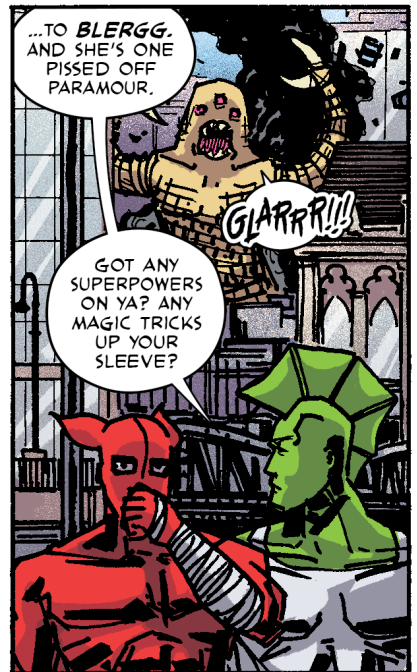


YOU'RE GOING TO NEED SOMETHING BETTER THAN THAT TO EXTRACT MY BLOOD, BUT I'M NOT SURE I WANT TO GIVE YOU ANY IDEAS.



WHAT WAS THAT?

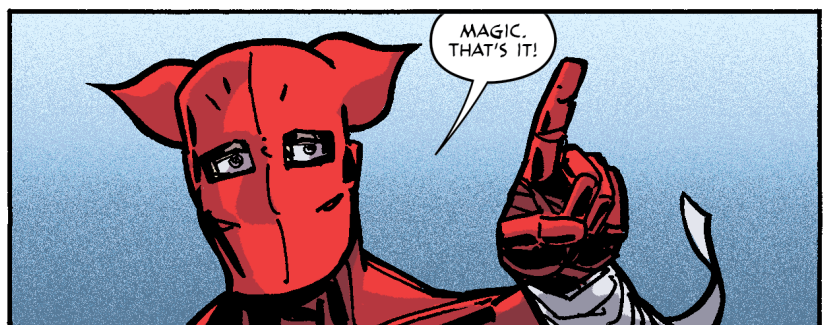
THINK FAST. IT'S VALENTINE'S DAY, AND BLARRG WAS HAPPILY MARRIED...



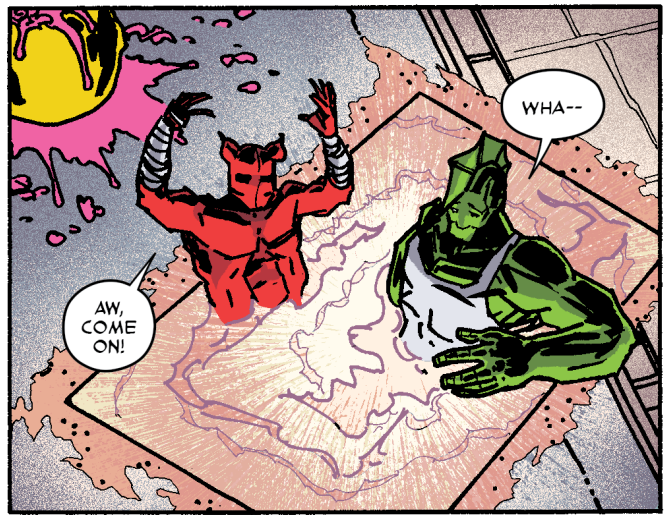
...TO BLERGG. AND SHE'S ONE PISSED OFF PARAMOUR.

GLARRR!!

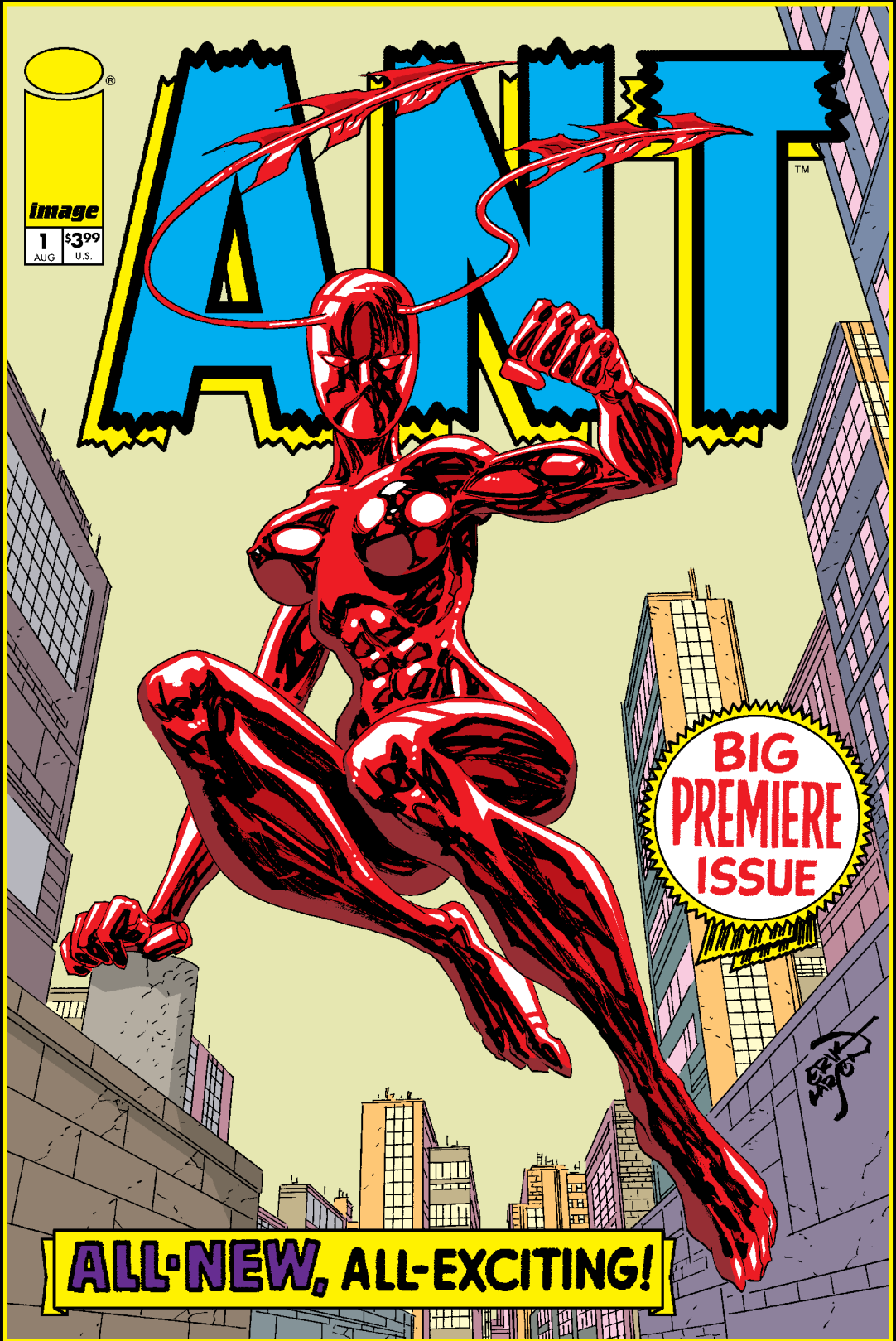
GOT ANY SUPERPOWERS ON YA? ANY MAGIC TRICKS UP YOUR SLEEVE?



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