

ERIK LARSEN TODD McFARLANE

# SPAWN<sup>®</sup>

image

263

DIGITAL EDITION

I'M  
**HUMAN**  
AGAIN?!



# SPAWN

## ERIK LARSEN & TODD McFARLANE

PLOT, SCRIPT, LAYOUTS, PENCILS & INKS

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Publisher For Image Comics  
ERIC STEPHENSON

SPAWN CREATED BY  
TODD McFARLANE

### PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

The two mightiest forces in the universe, God and Satan, clash in Hell in a battle for the souls of Wanda and her unborn child. As the fight rages on, Spawn uses their feud as a distraction to secure Wanda and the unborn child. Wanda then fuses the fetus with AI to give it life. Spawn makes a bargain with Satan offering up the Costume in exchange for Wanda's eternal salvation with God. After the deal is made and a final goodbye, Wanda makes her way to Heaven. AI departs, traveling towards the tunnel entrance to Earth, but close on his tail are Satan's minions who've been sent to kill him. Once AI reaches the tunnel entrance, the Costume acts as a bomb and blows up Satan. AI uses a sliver of what was left of his Costume to create a sword which he uses to lock out the influence of both Heaven and Hell to Earth. In the final scene, Wanda, now in Heaven, looks down on AI one last time.



HE'S BACK.

SOMEHOW AL SIMMONS MADE IT. THOUGH HE HAD MOMENTS OF DOUBT, HE HAS WALKED THROUGH TOTAL DARKNESS OUTSIDE HELL'S 'TUNNEL.' HAD IT BEEN A DAY? A WEEK? HE'D LOST ALL TRACK OF TIME.

WHAT HE DOES KNOW IS HE SEALED THE PORTAL THAT BOTH HEAVEN AND HELL HAD USED TO SEND THEIR SERVANTS ONTO EARTH. FOR NOW, NO MORE AGENTS FROM GOD OR SATAN WILL BE ALLOWED BACK, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAS A NEW MISSION, GIVEN TO HIM AS A LAST REQUEST FROM THE ONLY WOMAN HE HAD EVER LOVED.

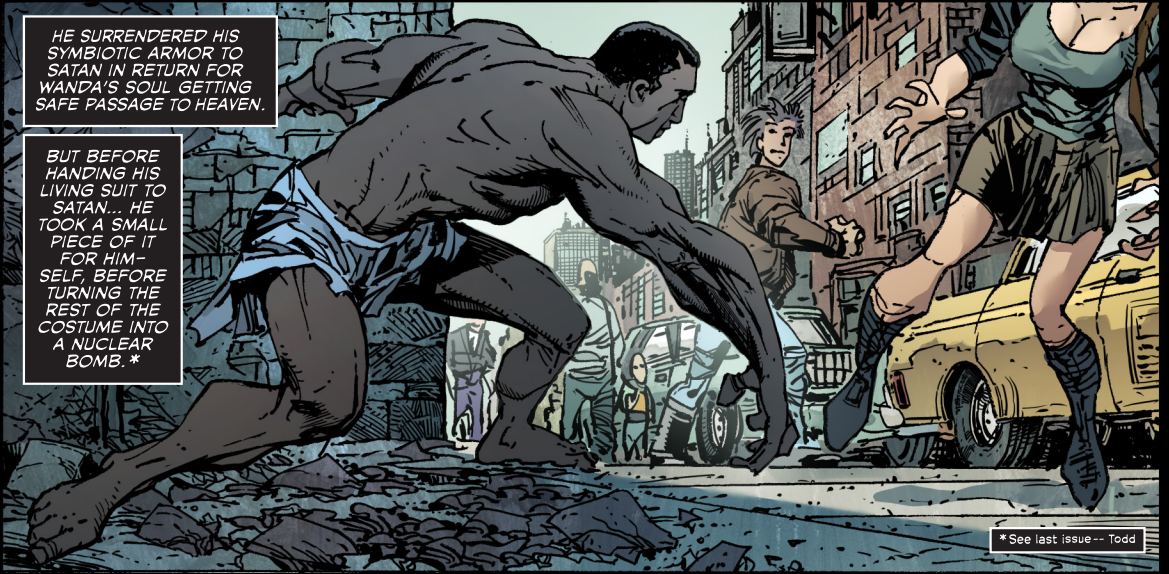
"PROTECT THEM. SAVE THEM. SAVE EVERYONE. AND BECOME THE HERO THEY NEED." THOSE WERE THE WORDS WANDA, HIS FORMER WIFE, SPOKE BEFORE LEAVING HIM FOREVER. AND NOW THAT HE'S BACK-- HE PLANS TO LIVE THE REST OF HIS LIFE HONORING HER REQUEST.



THOUGH HE'LL HAVE TO DO IT WITHOUT THE AID OF HIS SPAWN COSTUME.

HE SURRENDERED HIS SYMBIOTIC ARMOR TO SATAN IN RETURN FOR WANDA'S SOUL GETTING SAFE PASSAGE TO HEAVEN.

BUT BEFORE HANDING HIS LIVING SUIT TO SATAN... HE TOOK A SMALL PIECE OF IT FOR HIMSELF, BEFORE TURNING THE REST OF THE COSTUME INTO A NUCLEAR BOMB.\*



\*See last issue -- Todd



WHATEVER HIS PLANS NOW, AL SIMMONS UNDERSTANDS THE RULES HAVE CHANGED.



BUT HE'S DETERMINED MORE THAN EVER TO BECOME A TRUE HERO.





AND TO NEVER BE 'ABSENT' FROM MANKIND'S NEEDS AGAIN. THAT'S HOW HIS ENEMIES WERE ABLE TO KILL WANDA-- BECAUSE HE WASN'T THERE. HE'D LEFT EARTH AND CREATED A VACUUM FOR EVIL TO THRIVE.\*

HE WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.



THERE HE IS. THAT'S THE GUY I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.



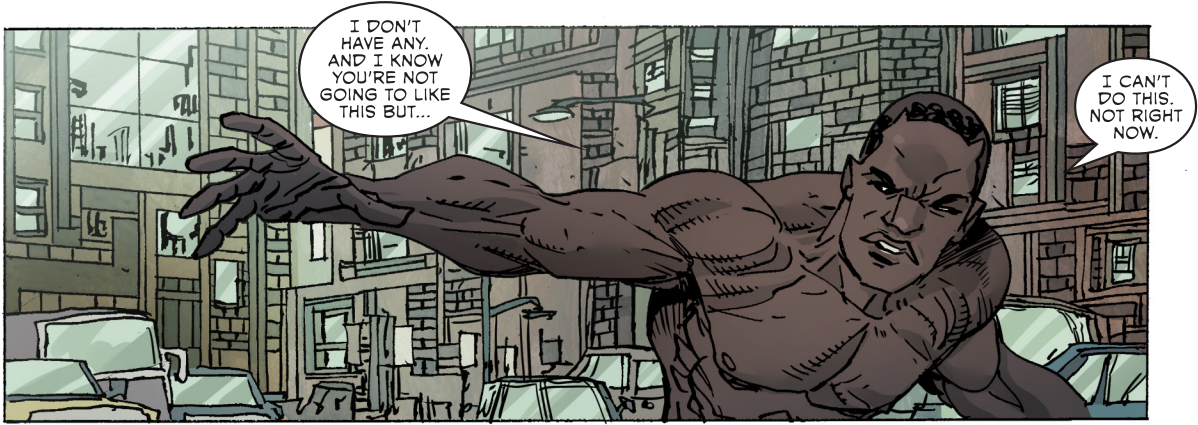
EXCUSE ME, SIR. I NEED TO ASK YOU A FEW THINGS.



LOOK, OFFICER, I'M SORRY ABOUT HOW I LOOK, BUT...

I NEED TO SEE SOME I.D.

\*He left earth in issues 185 thru 250 -- Todd



I DON'T HAVE ANY. AND I KNOW YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THIS BUT...

I CAN'T DO THIS. NOT RIGHT NOW.



THIS IS OFFICER THOMAS. A SUSPECT FLEEING QUESTIONING NEAR 78th AND YORK...



THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, SIR. WE NEED YOU TO STOP.



NOW WHAT? THIS CAN'T BE HOW HIS NEW ROLE STARTS.



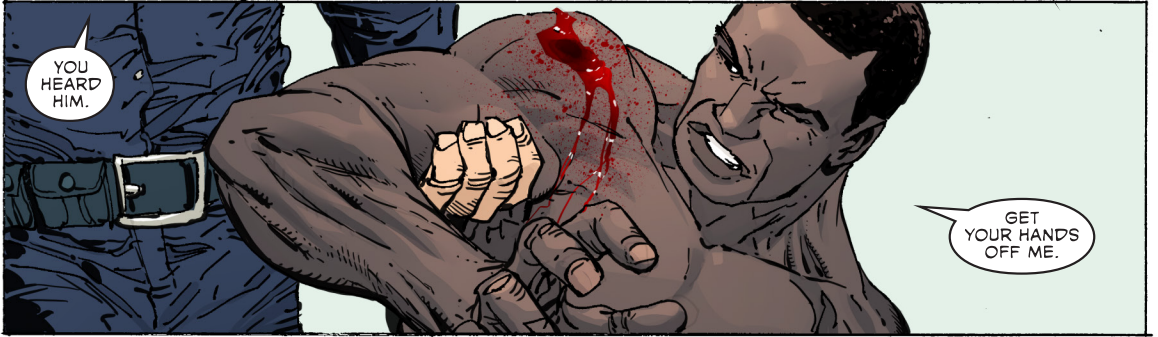




STAY DOWN!  
WE'LL CALL  
AN AMBULANCE--  
JUST STAY WHERE  
YOU ARE. EVERY-  
THING'S GOING TO  
BE OKAY.

WE  
DON'T WANT  
ANYMORE  
TROUBLE.  
STOP  
MOVING.

NO!

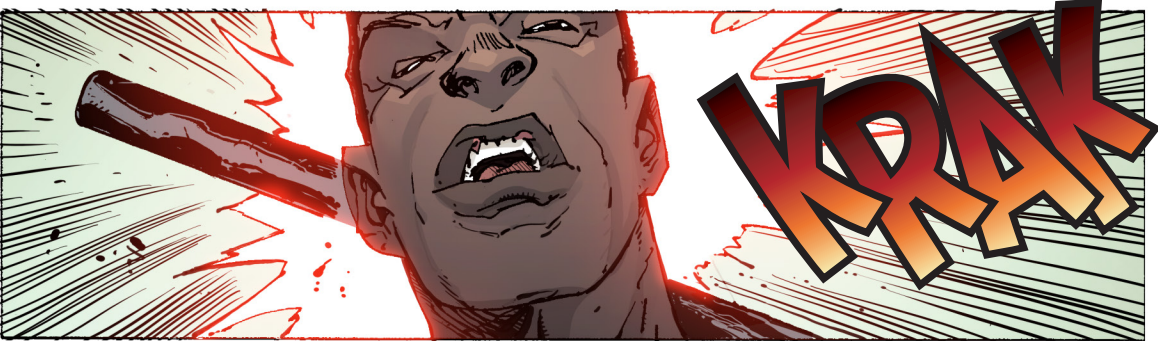


YOU  
HEARD  
HIM.

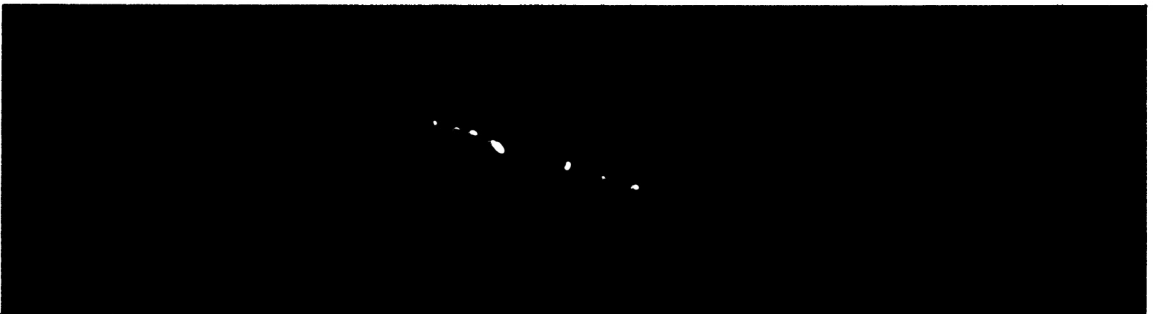
GET  
YOUR HANDS  
OFF ME.



**BAP**



**KRAK**





LATER.

UH?



SNAP

WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY THE HELL DO I HAVE CUFFS?

IT'S FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY. JUST... SETTLE DOWN.



YOU GUYS SHOOT ME FOR NOTHING AND YOU WANT ME 'TO SETTLE DOWN'? THAT'S BALLSY.

WE RAN YOUR PRINTS. NOTHING IS COMING UP ON YOU. SO UNTIL WE FIGURE OUT YOUR IDENTITY YOU'RE STUCK AT THIS HOSPITAL. AND YOUR WOUND WILL HEAL QUITE FINE, THE DOCTOR'S SAID.



IS THAT RIGHT. LUCKY FOR YOU GUYS.

WE JUST NEED SOME INFORMATION. YOU CAN EITHER GIVE IT TO US OR WE CAN CALL SOMEONE ON YOUR BEHALF. YOU HAVE A WIFE OR FRIEND WE CAN TALK TO?

YEAH...



HIS NAME IS TERRY FITZGERALD. HE WORKS FOR THE F.B.I. OR SOME OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY. HE'LL CLEAR THIS UP. UNTIL THEN I DON'T TALK.

IT TAKES 10 HOURS BUT THE AUTHORITIES TRACK TERRY DOWN. THEY ESCORT HIM TO AL'S HOSPITAL ROOM, HOPING THAT A PRIVATE CONVERSATION MAY LEAD TO THE INFORMATION THE POLICE SEEK.

YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE, AL. DRAGGING ME INTO THIS SHIT.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?



YOUR HELP.

HELP? YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO 'SAVE' WANDA AND THEN YOU JUST *DISAPPEARED*... VANISHED. NOW YOU WANT TO COME BACK AFTER ALL THIS TIME AND MESS UP MY LIFE?



DISAPPEARED? I DID SAVE WANDA... AND HER SOUL.

MAYBE, BUT THAT WAS A YEAR AGO. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN SINCE THEN?



ARE YOU SAYING THAT...

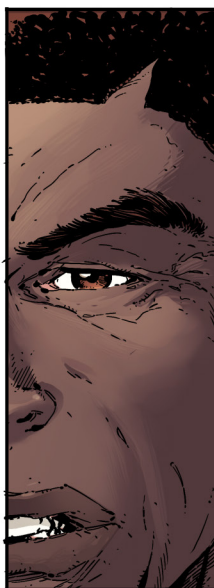
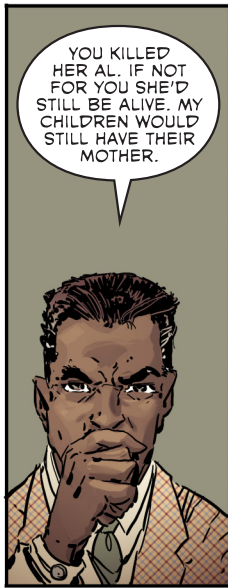
SHE'S BEEN DEAD FOR A YEAR.

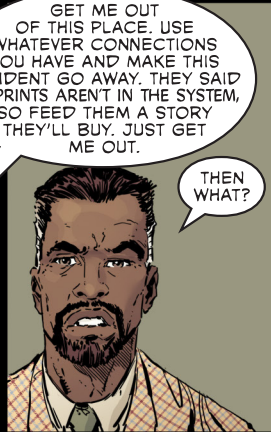


THEY DID IT TO ME AGAIN.

DID WHAT?

SHIFTED TIME ON ME.





**IT** DOESN'T TAKE LONG. THE AGENCY TERRY CURRENTLY WORKS FOR HAS HIDDEN INFLUENCE IN EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE. GETTING A HOSPITAL TO RELEASE SOMEONE WHO APPEARS TO BE 'NORMAL' IS RATHER ROUTINE.

TERRY, I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO ASK YOU... HOW ARE YOUR KIDS DOING?

I... THEY... SEEM TO BE OKAY. BUT I KNOW THEY'RE TRYING TO BE BRAVE. HIDING THE HOLE THAT IS THERE WITHOUT WANDA. THE TWINS SEEM TO BE DEALING WITH IT BETTER THAN CYAN.

IT'S BEEN TOUGH ON HER?

SHE'S IN DRUG REHAB. DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MAKING MUCH PROGRESS.

I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

IF YOU CAN HELP HER, HELP HER IN ANY WAY, I'D...

**CLAK**

THERE! FINALLY.

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU ABOUT THIS YEARS AGO.

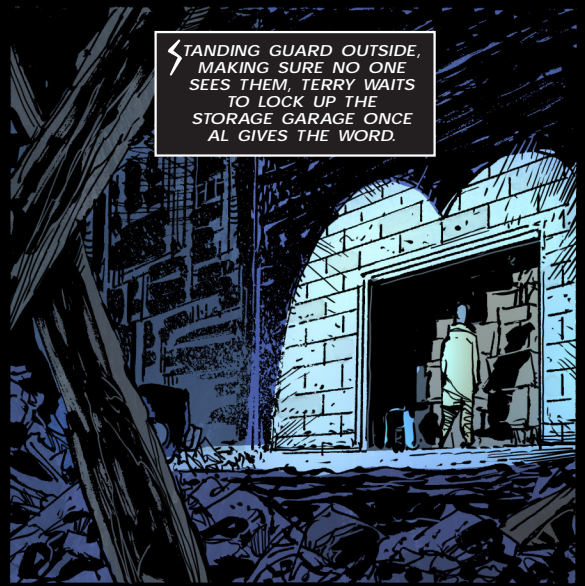
WHAT'S HERE?

EVERYTHING WANDA COULDN'T BEAR TO THROW AWAY AFTER YOU DIED. AFTER YOUR FUNERAL SHE HAD ME MOVE A BUNCH OF STUFF THAT, I'VE ALWAYS ASSUMED MEANT SOMETHING TO HER. DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S INSIDE THE BOXES AND CRATES.



MY GOD, IT'S ALL HERE.

CAN YOU GIVE ME A MINUTE?



STANDING GUARD OUTSIDE, MAKING SURE NO ONE SEES THEM, TERRY WAITS TO LOCK UP THE STORAGE GARAGE ONCE AL GIVES THE WORD.



TERRY, I THINK YOU SHOULD KNOW...

THAT IN ORDER FOR ME TO SAVE WANDA, I HAD TO SURRENDER MY COSTUME.



YOU CAN DO THAT?

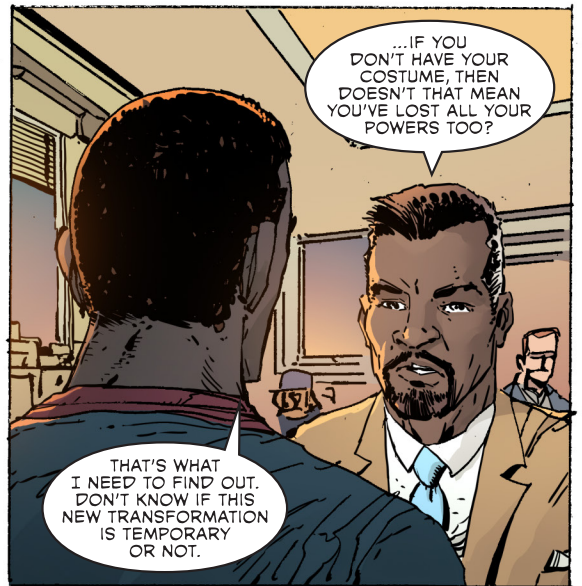
IN HELL-- I COULD, BUT SOMETHING SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED, BESIDES HAVING NO SYMBIOTE, I SEEM TO ALMOST BE HUMAN AGAIN.



SO, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?



IT MEANS I'M GOING TO NEED TO RELY ON PAST SKILLS TO SURVIVE.

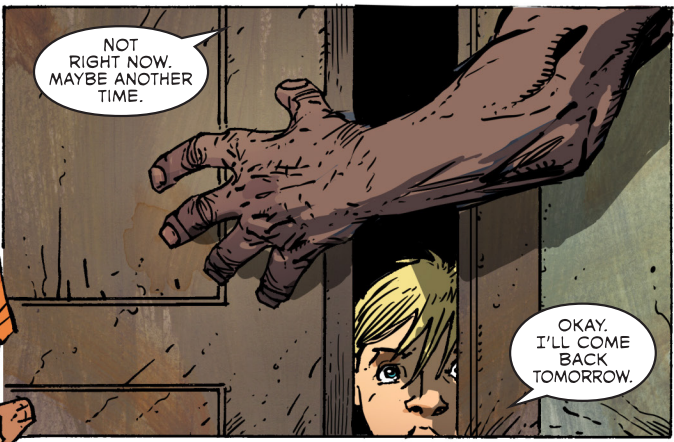
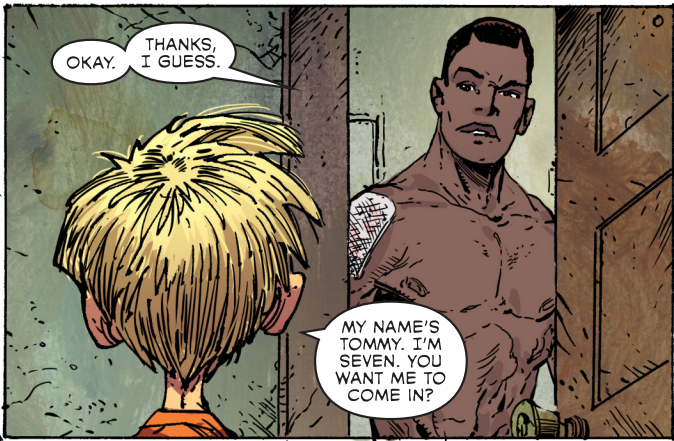


"...PLUS I HAVE A SECURED PHONE AND SOME MONEY TO GET YOU BY FOR NOW. BUT WHAT I NEED TO KNOW IS HOW CAPABLE YOU ARE. IF YOUR ENEMIES THINK YOU'VE WEAKENED, WHAT'S TO STOP THEM FROM DOING ANYTHING THEY WANT?"


YOU THE NEW GUY LIVING IN OLD MAN JACKSON'S APARTMENT?

FOR THE TIME BEING.

HE WAS KINDA WEIRD. THEY SAID HE KILLED HIMSELF. I THINK HIS PLACE IS HAUNTED NOW. JUST THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW.



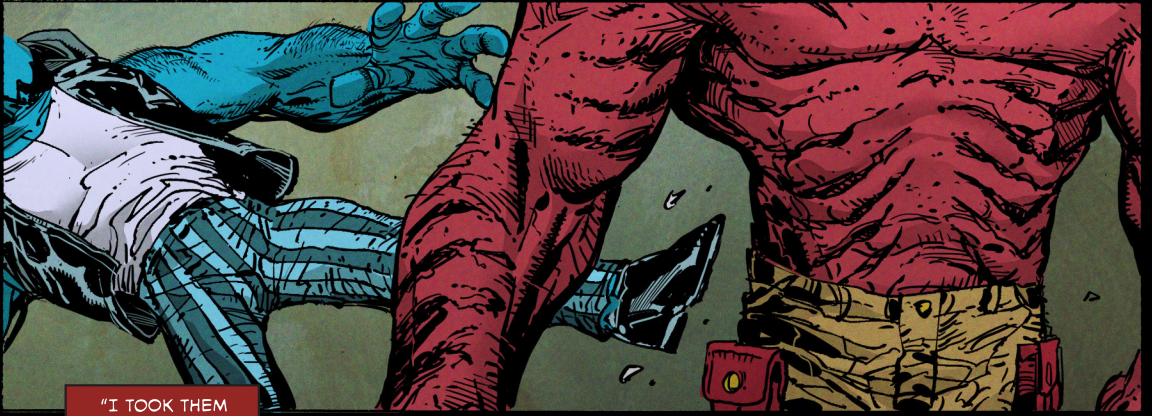
YES? CAN I HELP YOU?



"...I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT, BUT I HAD SOME BIZARRE DREAM THE CITY WAS GETTING OVERRUN BY A BUNCH OF MESSED UP BAD GUYS.

"I KEPT WAKING UP, BUT EVERY TIME I SHUT MY EYES AGAIN I KEPT GOING BACK TO THE SAME DREAM.

"AND GUESS WHAT HAPPENED?"



"I TOOK THEM  
OUT. ALL OF THEM.  
ONE BY ONE."



"THEY NEVER KNEW  
WHAT HIT THEM."



"BY THE TIME THEY  
REALIZED I WAS EVEN  
THERE, IT WAS TOO LATE.  
BUT THE THING I CAN'T  
GET OUT OF MY MIND IS  
THE LOOK IN THEIR EYES.  
THEY WERE TERRIFIED.  
I SWEAR I COULD  
FEEL THEIR FEAR."

"AND YOU KNOW WHAT  
SCARED THEM?"





"IT WAS  
**ME!**

"BECAUSE I WAS  
**SPAWN**  
AGAIN AND THAT SCARED THE  
SHIT OUT OF ALL OF THEM!

"WANDA WAS RIGHT.  
THE WORLD **NEEDS**  
SPAWN."



I ALREADY HAD PLANS WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO TO MY ENEMIES WHEN I RETURNED.\* BUT LAST NIGHT CONFIRMED ALL OF IT. SO WHETHER I HAVE POWERS OR NOT, I'M NOT GOING TO LET THE EVIL THAT'S LOCKED HERE ALREADY HAVE IT'S WAY.

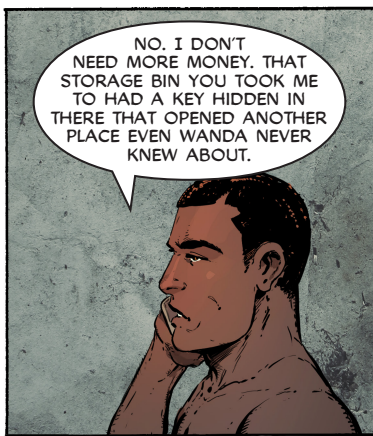
AND I MAY NEED YOUR HELP FROM TIME TO TIME, TERRY.

BUT I NEED TO KEEP YOU OUT OF TROUBLE. I CAN'T COMPROMISE YOU WITH YOUR BOSSES.

\*See Issue #250 -- Todd



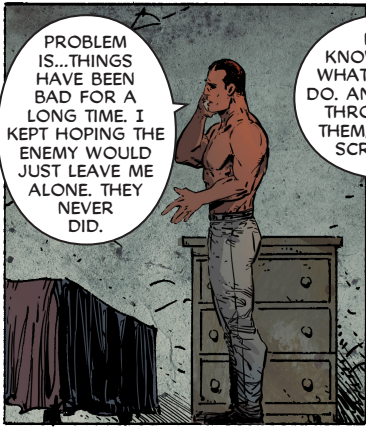
WHAT'S THAT?



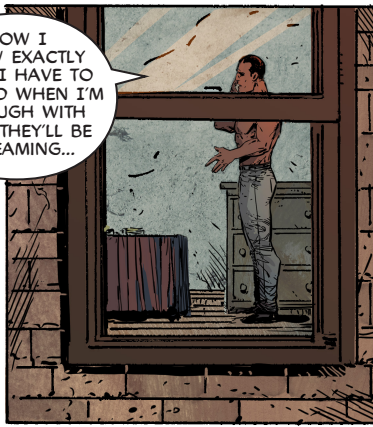
NO. I DON'T NEED MORE MONEY. THAT STORAGE BIN YOU TOOK ME TO HAD A KEY HIDDEN IN THERE THAT OPENED ANOTHER PLACE EVEN WANDA NEVER KNEW ABOUT.



I HID THINGS THERE--AWAY FROM HER--IN CASE THINGS GOT BAD.



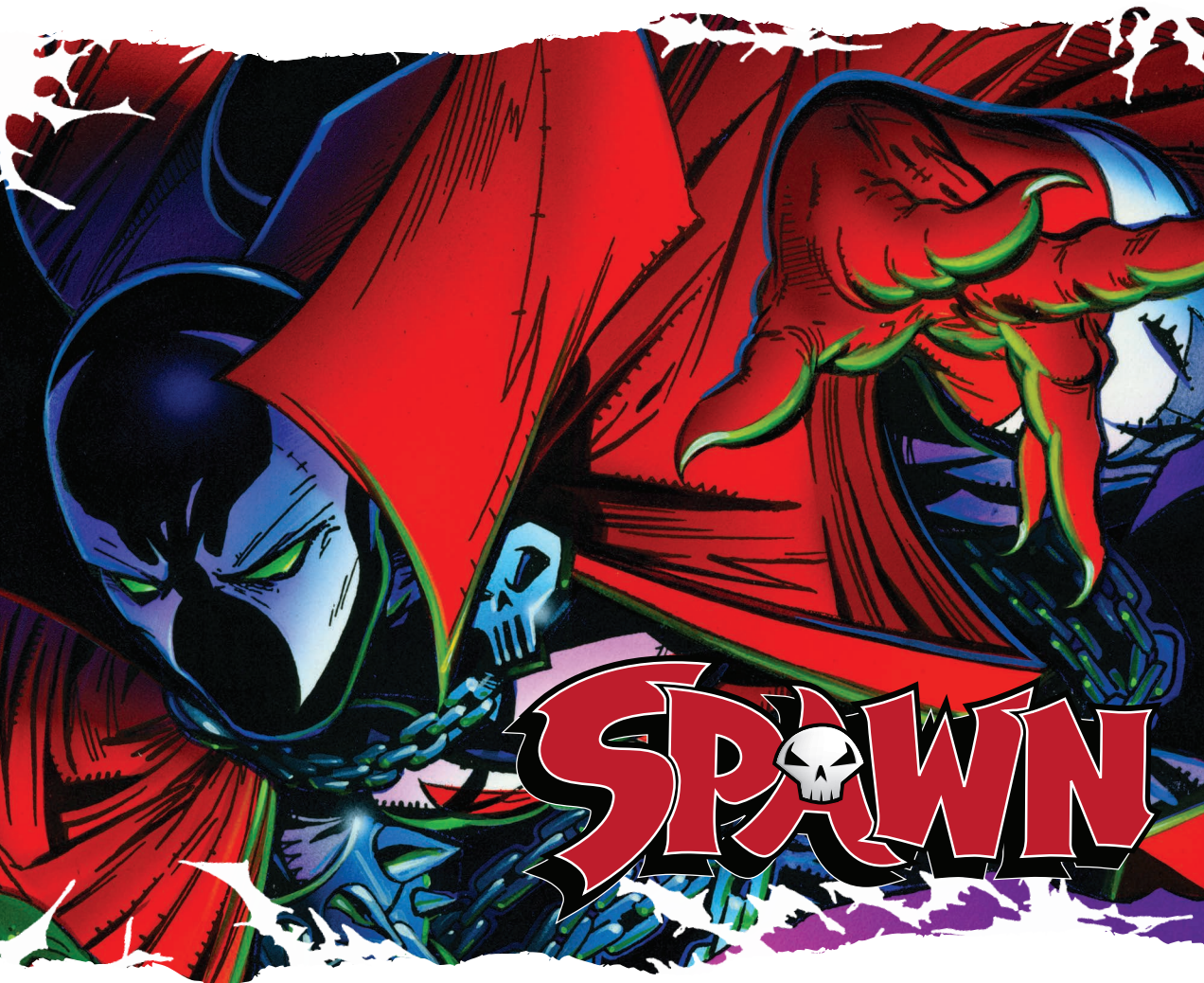
PROBLEM IS...THINGS HAVE BEEN BAD FOR A LONG TIME. I KEPT HOPING THE ENEMY WOULD JUST LEAVE ME ALONE. THEY NEVER DID.



NOW I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE TO DO. AND WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH THEM, THEY'LL BE SCREAMING...



"SPAWN, LEAVE US ALONE!"



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The ENTIRE *Spawn* comic library and *Spawn Origins Collection* Volumes 1 – 20 is now available in digital format from ComiXology, iBooks, Google Play, and imagecomics.com. Fans can immerse themselves with 23 years and 250+ issues of *Spawn* with the simple swipe of a fingertip. *Spawn* is one of the world's best-selling and longest-running independent monthly comic books, known for its hyper-detailed art from its creator, **Todd McFarlane**. Now you can read the entire series wherever you are.

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# SPAWNING GROUND

Hello all!

Before I turn it over to the Toddfather himself, I wanted to lead with a few things going on here at Todd McFarlane Productions.

First off, if you aren't following Todd on Facebook you are missing out! Todd has been doing a lot of cool LIVE videos that include things like drawing lessons, behind the scenes looks, announcements and his favorite thing, GIVEAWAYS! And, did you hear that Super-Fan Builds (on the Awe Me YouTube Channel) is going to be building a one-of-a-kind custom Spawn build for the ULTIMATE Spawn super-fan?! Make sure to follow Todd on Facebook for more Super-Fan Builds news and the big reveal!

Secondly, if you haven't see what's coming just in time for San Diego Comic-Con, *Spawn Kills Everyone* will be hitting shelves on Wednesday, July 20th. If the cover gives any clue to how awesome it will be, it's going to rock some socks off!

For this Spawning Ground, Todd wanted to share some reflections about the character of Wanda Blake now that she's officially gone. So without further ado, the Toddfather:

In *Spawn* issue one, I laid down the groundwork for the entire motivation as to WHY the Al Simmons character existed and he existed because of the love of his WIFE. This is something I know intimately and it's no coincidence that the Wanda character has the same first name as MY wife.

What changed along the way is that from the moment Al came back in issue one, the fantasy of what he thought his world and his wife was about, wasn't really true. So, not only has he been struggling against the enemy, but he's been struggling against dealing with the reality he will NEVER get his wife back. And for 250 plus issues, in the back of his mind, there was STILL that bit of wishful thinking that MAYBE somehow things

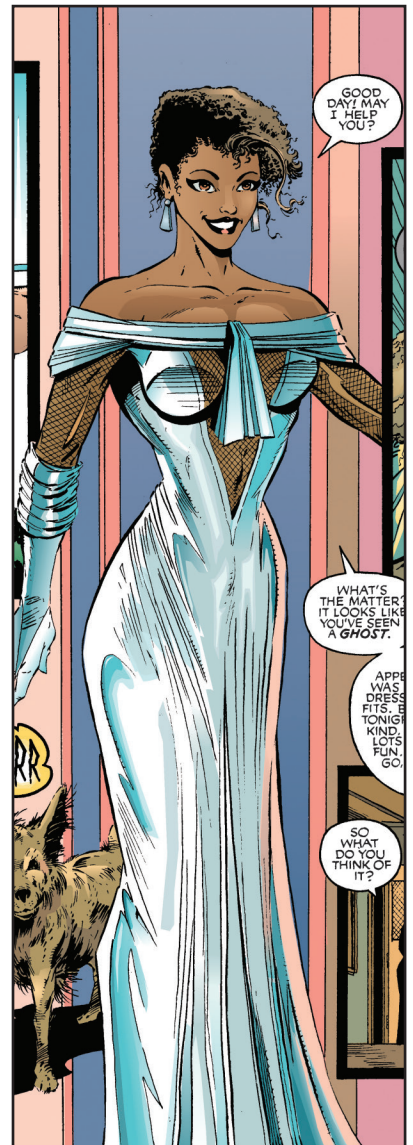
could go back the way they used to be.

But now, with issue #263, the driving force for him to be around is OFFICIALLY dead.

I know other comics like to resurrect people and I've never been a fan of that. So as far as I'm concerned, the character of Wanda Blake... the character who has been there since issue ONE, is FOREVER GONE.

What WON'T leave, is the Al Simmons/Spawn character. He's going to be living his life based on what his ex-wife told him with her last farewell... 'it's time to be a hero'!

For 260 issues, he has been sort of selfish in terms of how and why he



Wanda, Spawn issue #3



Wanda's untimely death, Spawn Resurrection.



Spawn rescues Wanda from Hell, Spawn issue #260

uses his powers. I want to move forward and turn that around. I want the Spawn character to have a reason to BE the classic, true superhero, and unfortunately it took something as impactful as his wife dying, to jolt him. From here on, his job will be to protect the world. Not

in the traditional classic American superhero fashion, but in a way that he knows the world NEEDS him and HE needs to step up. He needs to be the hero Wanda said that he SHOULD have been since issue one.

We are moving into uncharted territory.

Al is going to EMBRACE being Spawn instead of FIGHTING it... and he owes it all to his wife.

TODD



Wanda watching over Al from Heaven, Spawn issue #262.

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**NEXT ISSUE**

Spawn begins to test his limitations as a human.

THE MOST COMPLICATED MACHINE EVER MADE  
IS NOT FINISHED MAKING... ITSELF

# MECHANISM™

BY RAFFAELE IENCO



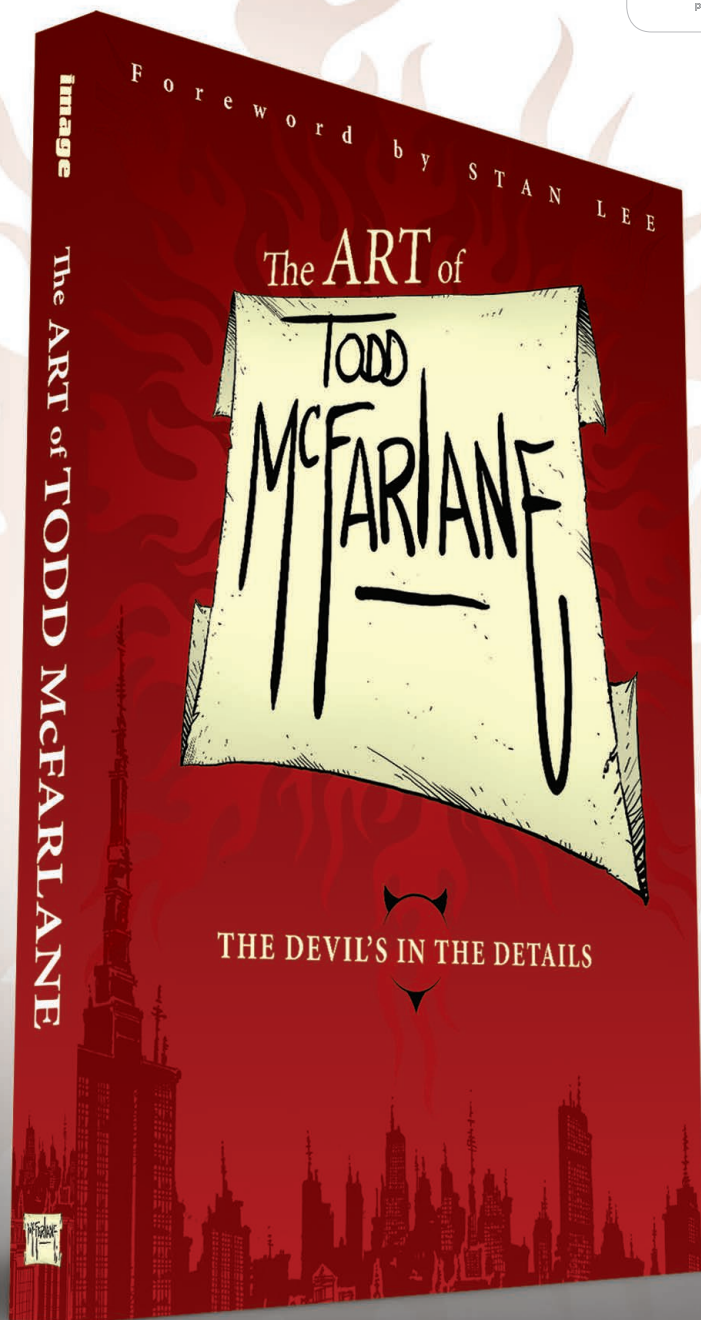
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COMING JULY 2016



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TODD MCFARLANE  
PRODUCTIONS



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**VELVET** DEADLY CLASS *THE FUSE*  
*LAZARUS* **EAST OF WEST** I KILL GIANTS  
**THE WALKING DEAD** I HATE FAIRYLAND  
KING CITY *SEX CRIMINALS*  
COPPERHEAD  
**THE HUMANS** RAT QUEENS

SOUTHERN BASTARDS **SPAWN ORIGINS** THE WICKED + THE DIVINE

**MONSTRESS CHEW** *SPREAD*  
**NOWHERE MEN**

**HOWTOONS** THEY'RE NOT LIKE US **SUNSTONE** MANIFEST DESTINY

DESCENDER *PAPER GIRLS*

**OCTOPUS PIE** WYTCHEs SHUTTER

TOKYO GHOST THE MANHATTAN PROJECTS **BITCH PLANET**

**SAGA** *CHRONONAUTS* **WAYWARD** *TREES*  
THE AUTUMNLANDS

CRIMINAL **PLUTONA** *LOW*

*REVIVAL* NAILBITER

CAMP MIDNIGHT

RUMBLE **ODDLY NORMAL**

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**BLACK SCIENCE**

PRETTY DEADLY

THE FADE OUT



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