

VERTIGO
DC COMICS

WARREN ELLIS • DARICK ROBERTSON • RODNEY RAMOS

NO. 25
SEP 99

***** LATE EDITION *****

TRANSMETROPOLITAN

\$2.50 US
\$3.95 CAN

SUGGESTED FOR
MATURE READERS



DIRECT SALES
02511 >
7 61941 21042 1

**YEAR
THREE**

WARREN ELLIS writes &

DARICK ROBERTSON pencils

HERE TO GO

RODNEY RAMOS - inker CLEM ROBINS - letterer NATHAN EYRING - color & separations
JIM LEE - cover CLIFF CHIANG - assistant editor STUART MOORE - editor
TRANSMETROPOLITAN created by Warren Ellis & Darick Robertson



TRANSMETROPOLITAN 25, September, 1999. Published monthly by DC Comics, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to TRANSMETROPOLITAN, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate \$30.00. Canadian subscribers must add \$12.00 for postage and GST. GST # is R125621072. All foreign countries must add \$12.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1999 Warren Ellis and Darick Robertson. All Rights Reserved. All characters, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Warren Ellis and Darick Robertson. VERTIGO is a trademark of DC Comics. The stories, characters and incidents featured in this publication are entirely fictional. Printed on recyclable paper. Printed in Canada.

DC Comics, a division of Warner Bros. - A Time Warner Entertainment Company

- JENETTE KAHN, President & Editor-in-Chief • PAUL LEVITZ, Executive Vice President & Publisher • KAREN BERGER, Executive Editor •
- STUART MOORE, Editor • CLIFF CHIANG, Assistant Editor • RICHARD BRUNING, VP-Creative Director • PATRICK CALDON, VP-Finance & Operations •
- DOROTHY CROUCH, VP-Licensed Publishing • TERRI CUNNINGHAM, VP-Managing Editor • JOEL EHRLICH, Senior VP-Advertising & Promotions •
- ALISON GILL, Executive Director-Manufacturing • LILLIAN LASERSON, VP & General Counsel • JIM LEE, Editorial Director-WildStorm •
- JOHN NEE, VP & General Manager-WildStorm • BOB WAYNE, VP-Direct Sales •



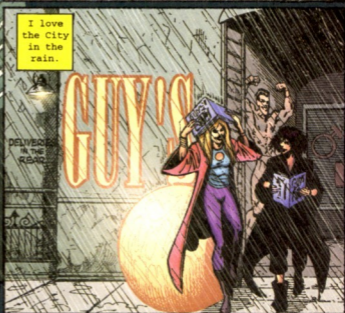
...ON CURRENT MOVEMENTS, THE RAIN FALLING ON CENTRAL AND WESTERN AREAS OF THE CITY IS PREDICTED TO CEASE IN NINE MINUTES...




...AN UNSETTLING MOMENT AT THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION WHEN THE NEW PRESIDENT APPEARED TO SPEAK IN TONGUES FOR A FULL MINUTE; "JUST A COUGH," SAYS ADVISOR SCHAFT...



...ENGLISH AUTHOR DECLARES U.S. "CULTURE OF VICTIMS"; BEATEN TO DEATH BY CROWD; PARTICIPANTS SUE AUTHOR'S FAMILY FOR DAMAGE INCURRED TO KNUCKLES, FINGERNAILS...




I love the City in the rain.



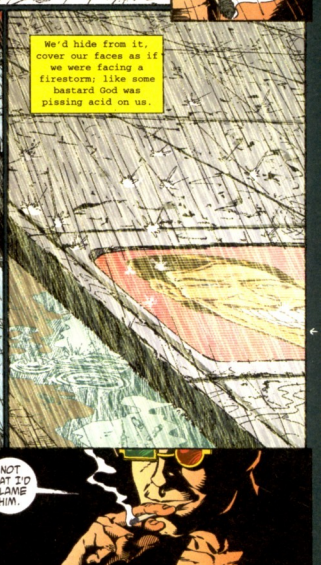
The last of the spring rains is here; soft, on light wind, the sort of spring breeze that ruffles your hair like a playful sister.



If you've got hair.



People on the streets stop, now, to open their mouths, drink it down, cold and clean and fresh.



We'd hide from it, cover our faces as if we were facing a firestorm; like some bastard God was pissing acid on us.

Couldn't do that when I was a kid. The rain was poison.

NOT THAT I'D BLAME HIM.

Now, I watch it
running over
girls' chins,
making their
skin glisten
like pure and
elegantly worked
crystal..

..down on the street,
phoneports,
sidewalkscreens and
road control arches
are made new again by
the water..

..and children
lead wonderfully
unbelieving old
women by the hand
into the rain..

I REMEMBER
FIRST LEARNING
ABOUT DEATH
QUITE VIVIDLY.



I'M NOT SURE HOW OLD I WAS, BUT I REMEMBER THE CONVERSATION LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY.

MY GRAND-FATHER HAD DIED, AND MY MOTHER WAS TRYING TO EXPLAIN IT TO ME.

SOMETIMES, WHEN SOMEONE GETS ILL, AND THEY'RE VERY VERY OLD, THEY DON'T GET BETTER AGAIN.

THEY JUST GET ILLER AND ILLER AND THEN...THEN THEIR BODY STOPS WORKING.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

WHAT'S IN THEM JUST GOES AWAY, AND DOESN'T COME BACK.

GRANDPA ISN'T COMING BACK?



NO, SHE SAID NOT EVER AGAIN.



GRANDPA SAID HE WAS GOING AWAY AND NOT EVER COMING BACK AFTER HE HELD GRANDMA'S HEAD IN THAT CONDOM-DUMP OUTSIDE OF TOWN AND KICKED SKEETER SEVENTY-THREE TIMES.



GRANDPA WAS VERY DRUNK. THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS BEING DEAD.

GRANDPA'S DEAD, SON. HE'S NOT THERE ANY-MORE.



AND I REMEMBER SAYING, HOLD EVERYTHING RIGHT FUCKING THERE.

YOU WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF CONCEIVING ME, AND GIVING BIRTH TO ME, AND RAISING ME AND FEEDING ME AND CLOTHING ME AND ALL--

--AND, YEAH, WHIPPING ME FROM TIME TO TIME, AND MAKING ME LIVE IN A HOUSE THAT'S FREEZING FUCKING COLD ALL THE GODDAMN TIME--

--AND YOU MAKE ME CRY AND THINGS HURT SO MUCH AND DISAPPOINTMENTS CRUSH MY HEART EVERY DAY AND I CAN'T DO HALF THE THINGS I WANT TO DO AND SOMETIMES I JUST WANT TO SCREAM--



--AND WHAT I'VE GOT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IS MY BODY BREAKING AND SOMETHING FLIPPING OFF THE SWITCH IN MY HEAD--

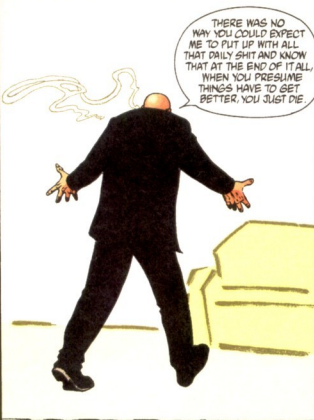
I GO THROUGH ALL THIS-- AND THEN THERE'S DEATH?



WHAT IS THE MOTHER-FUCKING DEAL HERE?

I WASN'T HAVING THIS. THIS WAS NOT FAIR.






THERE WAS NO WAY YOU COULD EXPECT ME TO PUT UP WITH ALL THAT DAILY SHIT AND KNOW THAT AT THE END OF IT ALL, WHEN YOU PRESUME THINGS HAVE TO GET BETTER, YOU JUST DIE.



IT WAS EXPLAINED TO ME THAT THIS WASN'T SO BAD.

I MEAN, I COULD EXPECT A CENTURY OR SO OF LIFE SPAN.



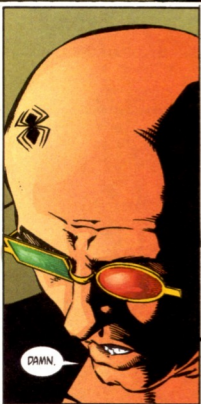
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN A GUY WHO DIED AT FORTY WAS REVERED AS THE TOUGHEST AND MOST DOGGEDLY ANCIENT SON OF A BITCH IN LOW ASS CLEARING, SHITOLESHIRE, ENGLAND, BACK IN THE YEAR DOT.

SO, GREAT.

HAPPY HAPPY. AFTER COUNTLESS CENTURIES, THINGS HAD GOTTEN TO THE POINT WHERE I'D OUT-LIVE FRED OF NOSTRIL, OFFICIAL SHEEP-JERKER-OFFER TO THE KING IN THE DAYS WHEN DINOSAURS ROAMED THE EARTH.

TO SAY THE LEAST.

I WAS UNTHRILLED





COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.

IT WAS TERRIBLE, REALLY.

DAD WAS DRIVING A BUS FOR A LIVING. HE RUN FROM THE DOCKS TO THE FAR TERMINUS OF THE FOURTH CANAL.



MOO HOO HA HA.

HIS SHIFT FINISHED ABOUT THE SAME TIME SCHOOL GOT OUT, SO SOMETIMES I'D WALK DOWN TO THE BUS DEPOT TO MEET HIM FOR A RIDE HOME.

ONE DAY I GET THERE AND SEE MAD RADHU GUMBEER BEING LED OUT OF THE DEPOT IN TEARS.

Mad Radhu Gumbeer was the man who drove the Bedford-Handsworth run. The only man who drove the Bedford-Handsworth run.

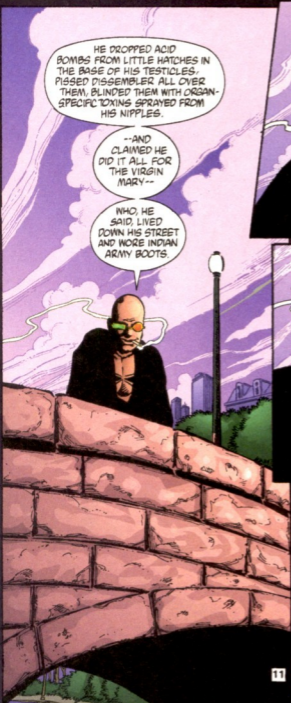


MAD RADHU GUMBEER WAS A ONE-MAN ARSENAL, THE MAN WHO COULD REDUCE YOU TO A SMEAR OF PROTEIN EVEN WHEN--HEY!

--EVEN WHEN STRIPPED NAKED AND MISSING HIS ENTIRE TOP THREE LAYERS OF SKIN.



Which was, indeed, how he killed the Butchers of Spring Corner when they ambushed his bus, robbed all the passengers, and tortured him for the code to the on-bus fare safe.



HE DROPPED ACID BOMBS FROM LITTLE HATCHES IN THE BASE OF HIS TESTICLES, PISSED DISSEMBLER ALL OVER THEM, BLINDED THEM WITH ORGAN-SPECIFIC TOXINS SPRAYED FROM HIS NIPPLES.

--AND CLAIMED HE DID IT ALL FOR THE VIRGIN MARY--

WHO, HE SAID, LIVED DOWN HIS STREET AND WORE INDIAN ARMY BOOTS.



HE WAS MY HERO.



AND HERE HE WAS, THE SINGLE HARDEST AND MOST FRIGHTENING MAN I'D EVER KNOWN--THE ONLY ADULT I TRULY RESPECTED--CRYING LIKE A BABY.

I COULDN'T HELP IT. I ASKED HIM WHAT WAS WRONG.



I SQUASHED A NUN.

HE TOOK THE CORNER AT SUSTER'S END, SMOOTH AND CONTROLLED AS USUAL, THINKING ABOUT THE GUN EMPLACEMENTS FACING HIM UP THE ROAD AT WILKES BOOTH FIELD, LOOKING AHEAD..

AND ON THE RIGHT, THIS GODDAMN NUN--

--PEDALING AWAY ON HER PUSH-BIKE, JUST BLISSFULLY SINGING AND FLAPPING AND OBVIOUSLY TRUSTING TO GOD TO KEEP HER SAFE SO'S SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO BOTHER LOOKING WHERE SHE'S FUCKING GOING--

--SHOTS STRAIGHT UNDER THE WHEELS OF THE BUS.

AND THE LAST THING HE SEES OF HER --I SWEAR IT'S TRUE--





WOULD I
LIE ABOUT
A THING
LIKE THAT?



I remember looking up at
Mad Radhu Gumbeer, the single
hardest man in my little
world, with nun juice on
his uniform and a broken soul
glittering in his eyes.



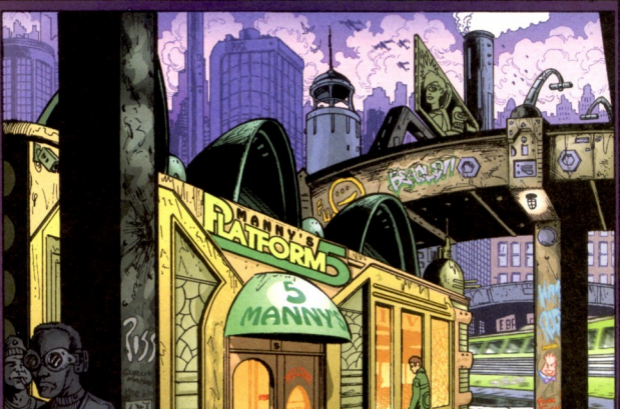
AND I
LAUGHED
MYSELF
SICK.



LISTEN, I'LL
CATCH UP WITH
YOU LATER.



THE OLDER I
GET, THE MORE I
LIKE IT OUT HERE
BY THE WATER...



WHAT? YOU WANT TO HEAR SOMETHING DISGUSTING?



FUCKING VULTURES.
ALL RIGHT, I'VE GOT ONE FOR YOU.



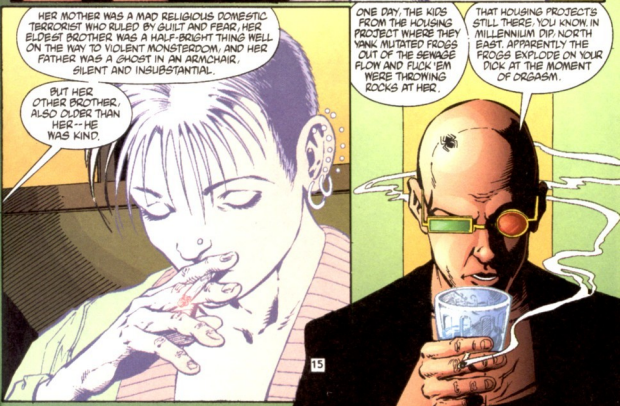
SHE'S EIGHT-
EEN YEARS OLD.
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, SHE'S
SMART, SHE'S A DANCER,
SHE'S ESSENTIALLY
GODDAMN PERFECT, AND
SHE SPENDS EVERY DAY
TRYING TO TAMP DOWN
HYSTERICAL TERROR.

EVERY
FLUCKING
DAY.



SHE
MISSES HER
BROTHER.

HER
BROTHER
WAS KIND
TO HER, YOU
SEE?



HER MOTHER WAS A MAD RELIGIOUS DOMESTIC
TERRORIST WHO RULED BY GUILT AND FEAR, HER
ELDEST BROTHER WAS A HALF-BRIGHT THING WELL
ON THE WAY TO VIOLENT MONSTERDOM, AND HER
FATHER WAS A GHOST IN AN ARMCHAIR,
SILENT AND INSUBSTANTIAL.

BUT HER
OTHER BROTHER,
ALSO OLDER THAN
HER-- HE
WAS KIND.

ONE DAY, THE KIDS
FROM THE HOUSING
PROJECT WHERE THEY
YANK MUTATED FROGS
OUT OF THE SEWAGE
FLOW AND FLUCK 'EM
WERE THROWING
ROCKS AT HER.

THAT HOUSING PROJECTS
STILL THERE, YOU KNOW, IN
MILLENNIUM DIP, NORTH
EAST. APPARENTLY THE
FROGS EXPLODE ON YOUR
DICK AT THE MOMENT
OF ORGASM.

ANYWAY.

SHE BUMPED INTO HER BROTHER, RUNNING HOME, AND SOBBED THAT THE BOYS WERE THROWING ROCKS.

HE KNELT DOWN IN FRONT OF HER, CLIPPED HER LITTLE FACE IN HIS HANDS, SMILED A QUIET SMILE, AND SAID:

"DON'T WORRY, SIS. ONE DAY THEY'LL BE THROWING FLOWERS."

HE STARTED HAVING SEX ON HER WHEN SHE WAS THIRTEEN.

NEVER PENETRATED. SHE WAS ACTUALLY A VIRGIN WHEN I MET HER.

VIRGIN. VIRR-JINN. I KNOW YOU'VE HEARD OF THEM.

ASSHOLE.

BOUGHT HER A 'DY AFTER EACH TIME. LITTLE PRESENT. OUR LITTLE SECRET, SIS.

IMAGINE SOMETHING WITH ME:



YOU'RE A THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL, AND YOU'VE GOT A ROW OF BEAUTIFUL CUDDLY TOYS ON YOUR SHELF. IMAGINE BEING GODDAMN THIRTEEN AND THINKING:



I GOT THAT BEAR FOR LETTING MY BROTHER COME ON MY BREASTS.



HE DOES THIS TO HER FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE DECIDING THAT HE'S A BAD BOY.

HE THROWS HIMSELF IN FRONT OF A TRAIN.



SPLAT.

TRAUMATIZES THE TRAIN DRIVER FOR LIFE--BECAUSE HE HASN'T LEFT ENOUGH FUCKING HUMAN WRECKAGE BEHIND--BLASTS THE FAMILY-- --DESTROYS HER HEART.



I FOUND ALL THIS OUT IN ONE NIGHT.

ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

SHE CRIED ALL NIGHT.

BECAUSE HE WAS HER BROTHER AND SHE LOVED HIM AND MISSED HIM AND WANTED HIM BACK.

HE SYSTEMATICALLY SEXUALLY ABUSED HER OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD AND SHE MISSED HIM BECAUSE HE WAS HER BROTHER AND SHE LOVED HIM.



FUCKING DISGUSTS ME EVERY TIME I THINK OF IT.





IT'S LIKE BEING ATTACKED BY MY UNCLE IDI. HE COULD FART IN COLOR.

YOUR INSTINCT IS ALWAYS TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE BUGS AND SHIT IN PURITAN MEWS, YOU KNOW?

AND THEN YOU CATCH YOURSELF AND THINK, HELL, AIN'T SO LONG SINCE WE THOUGHT WE'D SPRAYED AND STAMPED AND INFECTED THE LITTLE BASTARDS TO EXTINCTION.

WHY BE THAT STUPID AGAIN?

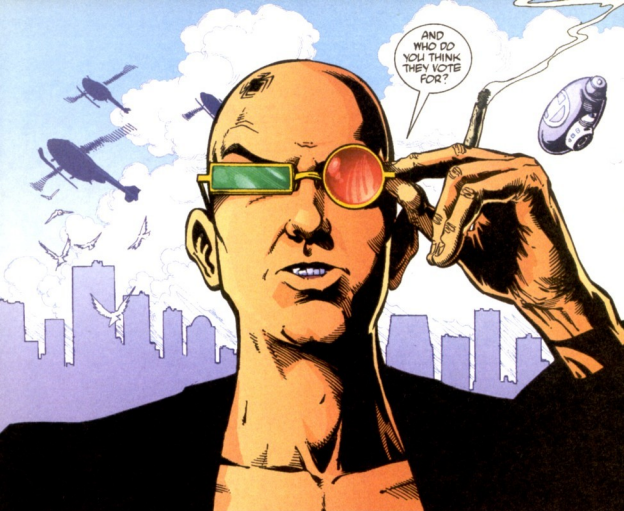
WHY BE THAT STUPID STILL?

I ALWAYS THOUGHT PEOPLE WERE ESSENTIALLY BRIGHT.

DISTRACTED, SURE, AND WEAK, AND BEATEN, BUT NEVER STUPID.

AND THEN YOU *SHOW* THEM, HERE'S THE TWO PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE PRESIDENT. ONE IS EVIL, BUT YOU CAN DEAL WITH HIM, BECAUSE HE ACTUALLY HARBORS BELIEFS.

THE OTHER ONE WILL TELL ANY LIE, WEAR ANY MASK, TO BECOME PRESIDENT, AND NOT ONLY THAT, HE FUCKING HATES YOU, AND HE'S DOING THIS JUST SO HE CAN MAKE YOUR LIVES HELL.



AND WHO DO YOU THINK THEY VOTE FOR?



STUPID.



TIME WAS I THOUGHT MAYBE PEOPLE WERE WORTH...

...I DUNNO.



HM?

HOW WOULD I LIKE TO DIE?

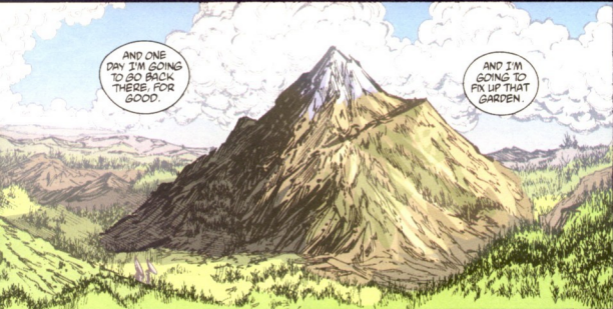
WELL, I WOULDN'T.



OKAY, OKAY.

I'VE GOT A PLACE UP IN THE MOUNTAINS. BIG COMPOUND.

AND BEHIND IT'S A BIG GARDEN.



AND ONE DAY I'M GOING TO GO BACK THERE, FOR GOOD.

AND I'M GOING TO FIX UP THAT GARDEN.



AND IF I'M GOING TO DIE ANYWHERE...

...IT'LL BE OUT THERE.

SOMEWHERE QUIET, WITH FLOWERS.

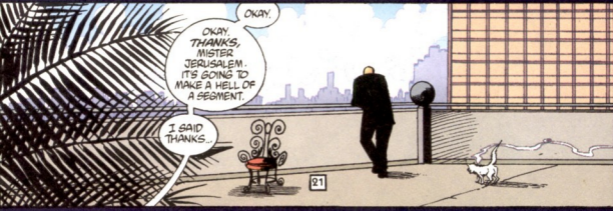


I THINK I'VE EARNED THAT.

SOME-THING QUIET.

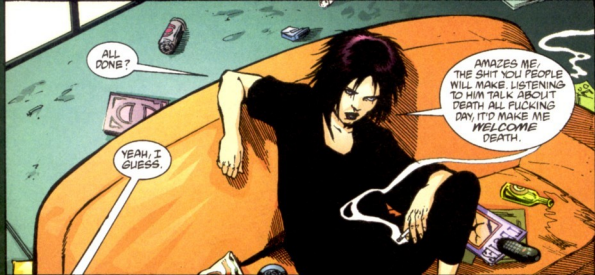


FUCK OFF NOW, WOULD YOU?



OKAY.
OKAY, THANKS, MISTER JERUSALEM. IT'S GOING TO MAKE A HELL OF A SEGMENT.

I SAID THANKS...



ALL DONE?

YEAH, I GUESS.

AMAZES ME, THE SHIT YOU PEOPLE WILL MAKE LISTENING TO HIM TALK ABOUT DEATH ALL FUCKING DAY, IT'D MAKE ME WELCOME DEATH.

HEY, PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT CELEBRITIES THINK ABOUT DEATH. THE LAST SERIES OF INTERVIEWS JUST DEVoured THAT SEASON'S NIELSENS.

YEAH, WELL, WHATEVER. FEE.

HUH?

THERE'S A FEE FOR MISTER JERUSALEM'S THOUGHTS, REMEMBER?

UM, YES, OF COURSE. JUST GIVE ME A SECOND HERE...

CHANNON.

GOD, HE'S NOT EVEN CUTE, IS HE?

I WANT TO SEE SOME FORM OF FINANCE OUT OF YOU RIGHT GODDAMN NOW OR I SHALL BE FORCED TO MODIFY YOUR HEAD AND SEVERAL VITAL ORGANS.

GO STRAIGHT TO THE HIDEOUS BEATING--WE CAN PILLAGE HIS BITS ONCE HE'S IN A COMA--

