

VERTIGO
DC COMICS

WARREN ELLIS • DARICK ROBERTSON • RODNEY RAMOS

NO. 51
JAN 02

*** LATE EDITION ***

TRANSMETROPOLITAN

SUGGESTED FOR
MATURE READERS



dccomics.com

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WARREN ELLIS writes and DARICK ROBERTSON & RODNEY RAMOS draw

TWO-FISTED EDITOR

CLEM ROBINS, letterer NATHAN EYRING, color & separations
ZACHARY RAU, assistant editor
HEIDI MacDONALD, editor

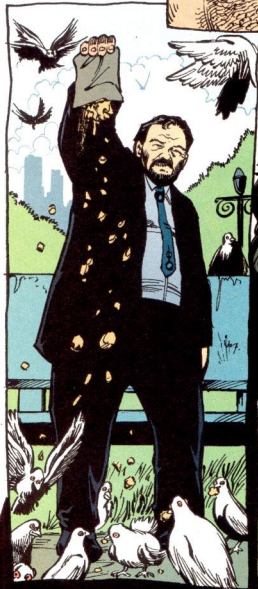
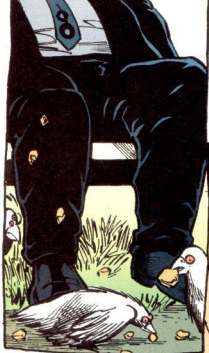


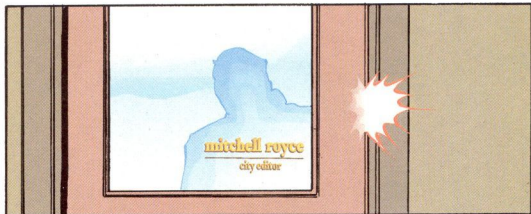
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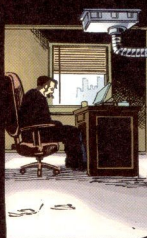
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5.8% DATA
RECOVERY AS OF
THIS DATE.

BEST ESTIMATE SHOWS 21
EVENTUAL TOTAL DATA
RECOVERY OF 87%.



ANYTHING
PERTINENT TO MY
SEARCH PARAMETERS
LOCATED?



110.



COMPUTER.





ACTIVATE
STEALTH SUITE
ROYCE-1.

ENGAGED.



ACCESS
PRIVATE EVIDENCE
CACHE.

OUR PRIVATE
EVIDENCE
CACHE ACCESSED.
CACHE SECURITY
REMAINS INViolATE.

ALL CONNECTIONS
ARE STEALTHED;
NO RECORD
OF YOU CONNECTING
REMOTELY
TO CACHE FROM
WORD SYSTEMS.

DO YOU WANT
TO ADD TO
YOUR STORE OF
EVIDENCE?



MOO HOO
HA HA.



I NEED THE REST OF THOSE PHONE RECORDS.

THE RECORDS YOU'RE REQUESTING ARE OUT OF BOUNDS, ROYCE.

REALLY?

REALLY. CONFIDENTIAL CALL TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

I GET THREE CALLS ON A SECURED LINE EVERY DAY, AND MY PHONE LOGS AREN'T OUT OF BOUNDS.

--AND I'M CITY EDITOR OF A MAJOR METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER. YOU THINK I DON'T HANDLE SENSITIVE STUFF?

DID IT COME IN THROUGH A SECURED LINE?

YEP.

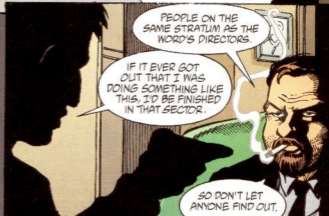
THIS IS THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS--

WELL, NO--

YOU THINK I'M NOT CLEARED FOR SENSITIVE STUFF? YOU THINK I DON'T HAVE THE CLOUT TO LISTEN TO MY OWN DAMN PHONE CALLS?

OF COURSE NOT--

SO GIVE ME THE FUCKING LOG!



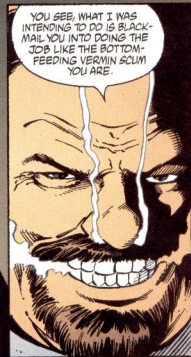


THAT'S NOT AN ISSUE. I'M NOT TAKING THE JOB.

YOU COULDN'T AFFORD ME ANYWAY.



OH, I WASN'T INTENDING TO PAY.



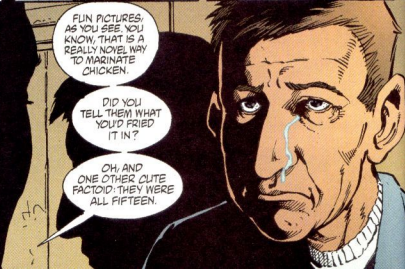
YOU SEE, WHAT I WAS INTENDING TO DO IS BLACK-MAIL YOU INTO DOING THE JOB LIKE THE BOTTOM-FEEDING VERMIN SCUM YOU ARE.



BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, YOU MAY WORK FOR PEOPLE ON A CERTAIN SOCIAL STRATUM...

...BUT YOU FORGET THAT THAT INEVITABLY MEANS PISSING ON PEOPLE ON LOWER SOCIAL STRATA.

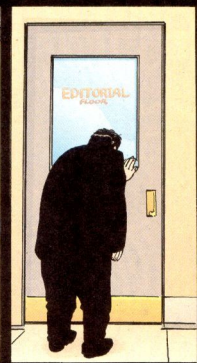
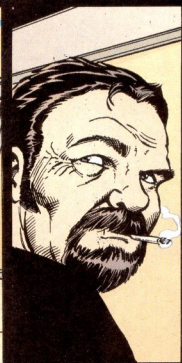
AND SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE OWN CAMERAS.

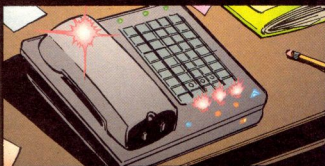


FUN PICTURES, AS YOU SEE, YOU KNOW, THAT IS A REALLY NOVEL WAY TO MARINATE CHICKEN.

DID YOU TELL THEM WHAT YOU'D FRIED IT IN?

OH, AND ONE OTHER CUTE FACTOID: THEY WERE ALL FIFTEEN.





IT'S ROUTED THROUGH HIS INFORMATION SERVICE PROVIDER'S MAIN COMPUTERS. THAT'S HOW IT WORKS.

CHECK YOUR PRIVATE LOCATION. I JUST PUT COPIES OF EVERYTHING HE EVER SENT IN THERE.





ROYCE.

DO YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS?

YES YOU'RE LATE.



COULDN'T GET AWAY. BOARD MEETING.

I'M AT THE USUAL PLACE STILL. WHEN CAN YOU BE HERE?

TEN MINUTES, BUT...



BUT?

LOOK, I KNOW THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, BUT...

I CAN'T GO ON THE RECORD. I CAN'T EVEN BE USED AS BACKGROUND. YOU UNDERSTAND. I'LL TALK, BUT THAT'S ALL. NO NOTES. NO NOTHING.

LISTEN, YOU CAN SCAN ME WHEN YOU ARRIVE. NO DEVICES. NO PHONE LINES OPEN ON ME, NOT EVEN A NOTEPAD.

...OKAY. BE RIGHT THERE.







I HAVE INFORMATION.

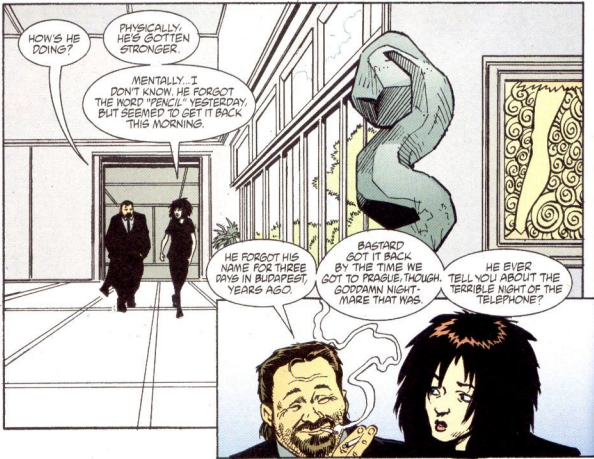


OH MY GOD.
UNCLE MITCH.



IS HE AROUND?

YEAH. HE SPENT THE MORNING COLLECTING FROGS IN THE GARDEN, AND NOW HE'S THROWING THEM AT THE TV.



HOW'S HE DOING?

PHYSICALLY, HE'S GOTTEN STRONGER.

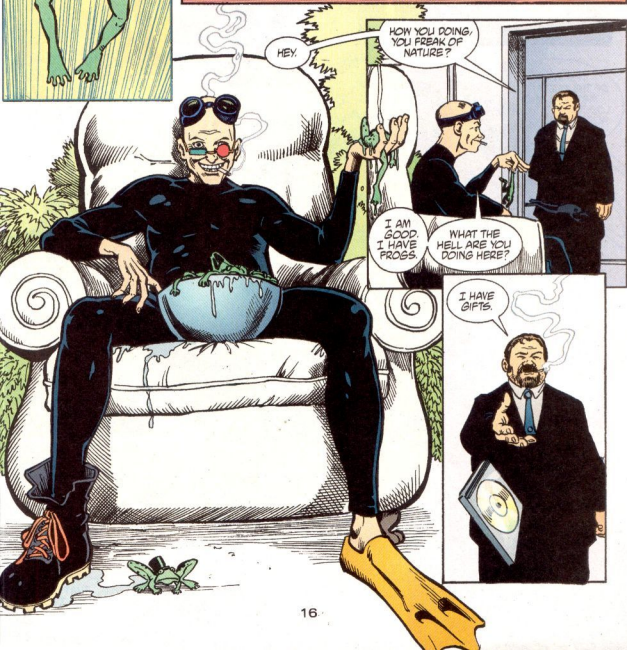
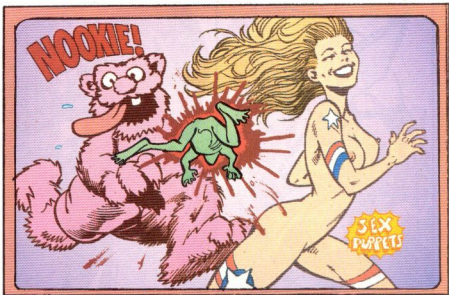
MENTALLY... I DON'T KNOW. HE FORGOT THE WORD "PENCIL" YESTERDAY, BUT SEEMED TO GET IT BACK THIS MORNING.

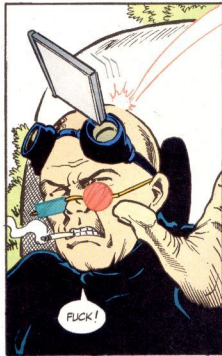
HE FORGOT HIS NAME FOR THREE DAYS IN BUDAPEST, YEARS AGO.

BASTARD GOT IT BACK BY THE TIME WE GOT TO PRAGUE, THOUGH. GODDAMN NIGHTMARE THAT WAS.

HE EVER TELL YOU ABOUT THE TERRIBLE NIGHT OF THE TELEPHONE?





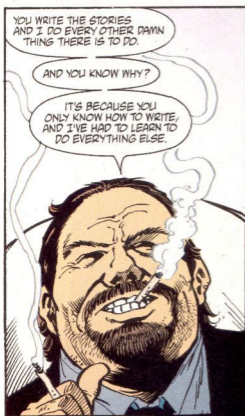




I GET YOU PAID.
I MOVE YOUR WORK
TO ALL THE PLACES IT
NEEDS TO BE.

I RUIN YOUR
INSURANCE. I USED
TO PAY YOUR RENT. I DEAL
WITH THE COMPLAINTS AND
THE EDICTS FROM ABOVE AND
KEEP YOU MOLLIFIED AND
ALL THE OTHER
BULLSHIT.

I GET THE
WORK OUT OF YOU
AND I WIPE YOUR
ASS AND KEEP
YOUR NOSE
CLEAN.



YOU WRITE THE STORIES
AND I DO EVERY OTHER DAMN
THING THERE IS TO DO.

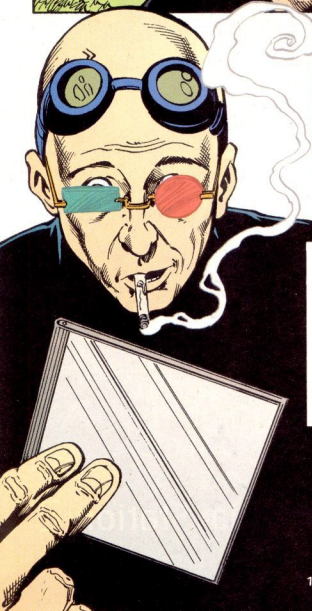
AND YOU KNOW WHY?

IT'S BECAUSE YOU
ONLY KNOW HOW TO WRITE,
AND I'VE HAD TO LEARN TO
DO EVERYTHING ELSE.

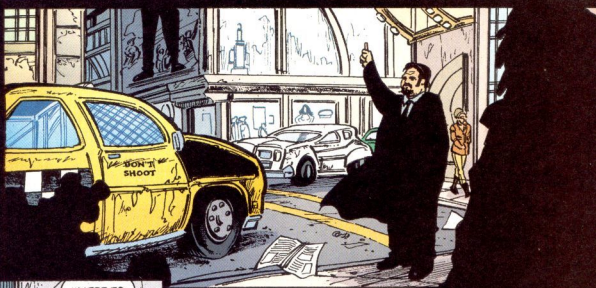


SO YOU LOOK AT
ME, YOU WEIRD LITTLE
FUCK, AND YOU TELL ME
YOU THOUGHT ALL
YOUR EVIDENCE
WAS WIPE.

AND I TELL
YOU, IT'S YOUR
ASS THAT'S JUST
BEEN WIPE. BIG
DADDY MITCH ROYCE
MAKES IT ALL
BETTER.







NOW THERE'S A QUESTION.

WHERE TO, BUDDY?

FIRST, I WANT TO WALK INTO A BAR AND DRINK IT.

AND THEN I'M GOING TO START A FIGHT WITH FIVE MEN AND WIN.

AND THEN I AM GOING TO MAKE USE OF A TRULY STAGGERING NUMBER OF PROSTITUTES.

SOME OF WHOM I MAY HAVE ONCE BEEN MARRIED TO.

FOLLOWING WHICH, I WILL BUY DRUGS. I WILL, IN FACT, SHOW THEM A LARGE PILLOWCASE, AND TELL THEM TO FILL IT WITH DRUGS.





AND I'M PUTTING IT ALL ON THE GOD-DAMN EXPENSE ACCOUNT.

MANKIEWICZ
St. Terrific!

Gaud Damn it
FROG

World CHILI

Monkey Burger

A ROK OF SKY'S

\$\$\$
😊

BARED ROD

FREE STAY ZHUNG

TAXI
DON'T SHOOT

I came to on the sidewalk of a busy street. Now and again a passerby would recognize me but I couldn't recognize myself. I had amnesia! What a great way to start a story, I thought! But what to do with such a story? I then borrowed some change from a friendly cop and walked up to the nearest payphone. I dialed randomly with only instinct to guide me and Vertigo editor extraordinaire Shelly Bond answered. Upon hearing her voice, my memory came rushing back to me and I was hurled into the street where I was crushed by a runaway steamroller.

I came to in a hospital bed, barely clinging to life. I was as flat as a blueberry pancake, yet my mind was filled to the brim with ideas for a new comic book. Something a little nostalgic,

but mostly something very new, with no Hollywood pinheads in suits telling me what is and what isn't a good story; no condescending attitude toward my potential audience. The phone rang and it was

editor Bond. Shelly Bond. She said the idea was a go. I got excited. Now all the doctors had to do was safely inflate my body back to its sumptuous 200-pound frame and I'd be ready to rock. Well,

something went wrong in the translation and I was pumped up to the size of my old drinking buddy Chuck Taine (a.k.a. Bouncing Boy) and was out of the window and into the sky faster than a speeding bullet. The moment I hit the ionosphere I exploded into a billion little Betos and thus my comic-book career was over.

Or was it? I woke up and I was ready to begin. The title? GRIP: THE STRANGE WORLD OF MEN. It sure says a lot, maybe too much for one measly five-issue series. What does make men so strange? It's got amnesia, sexy dwarves, betrayal, lifelong devotion, lunatic gun battles, and a man whose skin has a mind of its own. A good combination to start with.

BETO

Gilbert Hernandez

ON THE ledge

IN STORES THIS NOVEMBER

WAR STORY: SCREAMING EAGLES

In the third War Story special, a battle-weary sergeant and the remnants of his decimated squad find a treasure trove of Nazi plunder the likes of which they could only dream of. But they quickly find that sometimes having it easy can test a soldier's resolve as much as the worst firefight. *Written by Garth Ennis. Art by Dave Gibbons.*

GRIP: THE STRANGE WORLD OF MEN #1 (OF 5)

Indie comics legend Gilbert Hernandez makes his VERTIGO debut with this genre-bending mystery about a man named Mike Chang, whose worst fears about gender, identity and conspiracy theories are about to collide — and come true. *Written and illustrated by Gilbert Hernandez.*

ANGEL AND THE APE #4 (OF 4)

Who did it? Who killed Bambi? Angel and Sam have assembled all the suspects for a drawing room dénouement that is certain to be as absurd as it is shocking. *By Chaykin, Tischman & Bond.*

THE SANDMAN PRESENTS: THE CORINTHIAN #2 (OF 3)

Gunglary ensues in the decadent city of Venice, 1920 as Charles Constantine is confronted by his worst nightmare. *By Macan & Zazaeli.*

100 BULLETS: HANG UP ON THE HANG LOW (TRADE PAPERBACK)

The Eisner Award-winning storyline (reprinting issues #15-19 of the modern noir classic) brings us to the inner city, where the mysterious Agent Graves hands a young man called Loop one of his "special" briefcases, and things only get worse from there. *By Azzarello & Rissa.*

100 BULLETS #30

"Contrabandolero," Part 3. While getting closer to crossing the Mexican border, Wylie Times finds himself outclassed, outwitted, and out of time. His only hope: a certain femme fatale named Dizzy. *By Azzarello & Rissa.*

AMERICAN CENTURY #9

On his way out of L.A., Harry Kraft is an easy rider on Route 66 where he meets a hot blonde who'll do anything to escape her dead-end marriage. Harry loves her cherry pie, but is it enough to make him commit murder? *By Chaykin, Tischman and guest artist Warren Pleace.*

CODENAME: KNOCKOUT #7

After quarrelling with Angela, Go-Go tries to lose himself in New York's gay club scene. But after a night of revelry, a chance encounter results in his being bashed... by Angela! *By Rodi, Paquette & Farmer. Cover by Stelfreeze.*

THE CRUSADES #9

Is the new man in Venus Kostopikas's life a rakish reporter, a calculating cop, or a man named "Godfrey" who rides the night streets smashing skulls in the name of justice? *By Seagle, Jones & Randall. Cover by Ormston.*

HELLBLAZER #168

In this stand-alone issue, John Constantine finds himself craving something he's been missing for awhile: a night on the town. When he crosses paths with a group of lonely old ladies out to spend their social security checks and a prostitute willing to give him anything he wants, the real fun begins. *By Azzarello and guest artists Camuncoli & Stewart. Cover by Stewart.*

HUNTER: THE AGE OF MAGIC #5

Tim and Kalesh continue following the devastation that the Red Man has left behind. But in order to fight him, Tim must find his soul name and undergo a painful Lakeland ritual. *By Horrocks & Case.*

LUCIFER #20

In "The Thunder Sermon," two teenagers scale the harrowing, ever-changing architecture that is Lux, Lucifer's L.A. home, risking their lives and ultimately far more for a glimpse of The Morningstar's gate. *By Carey & Ormston.*

OUTLAW NATION #15

Martin "The Devil Kid" is sliding down the slippery slope to Hell in a welter of blood and gore, and it looks as if Lola is along for the ride. *By DeLano, Parlov & Sudzuka.*

TRANSMETROPOLITAN #51

Mitchell Royce is scared as hell because he's been reminded by Spider Jerusalem of what journalism means, and because Spider's been digging for dirt. And he's got it. *By Ellis, Robertson & Ramos.*

EVENTS NEXT MONTH...

WAR STORY: NIGHTINGALE

The fourth War Story special tells the story of the cursed crew of a British destroyer as they learn that the icy hand of fate is inescapable and redemption so often comes at the price of human life. *Written by Garth Ennis. Art by David Lloyd.*

LUCIFER: CHILDREN AND MONSTERS (TRADE PAPERBACK)

Collecting issues #5-13 of the Eisner Award-nominated series, this storyline chronicles Lucifer's quest to reclaim his wings and regain his power. *By Carey, Gross, Kelly and Ormston. Cover by Fegredo.*