

VERTIGO
DC COMICS

WARREN ELLIS • DARICK ROBERTSON • RODNEY RAMOS

NO. 54
MAY 07

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

TRANSMETROPOLITAN

Having... a new venue... 92

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MATURE READERS



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CLAY FRAY



DECLAMATION ZONE

WARREN ELLIS writes
and **DARICK ROBERTSON**
& **RODNEY RAMOS** draw

THE CURE

PART THREE OF THREE

**CJEM
ROBINS**
letterer

**NATHAN
EYRING**
color & seps

**GLENN
FABRY**
cover

**ZACHARY
RAU**
fifty assistant

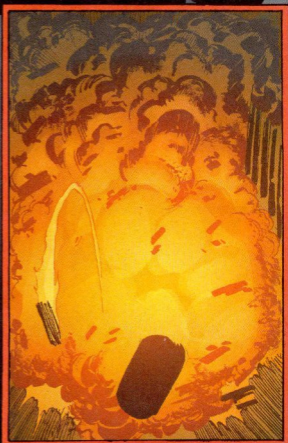
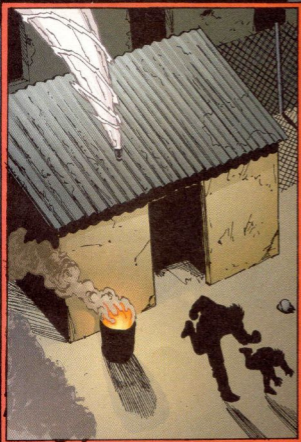
**HEIDI
MCDONALD**
editor

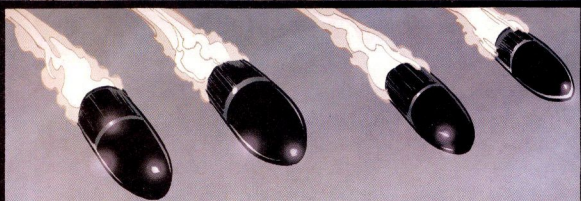
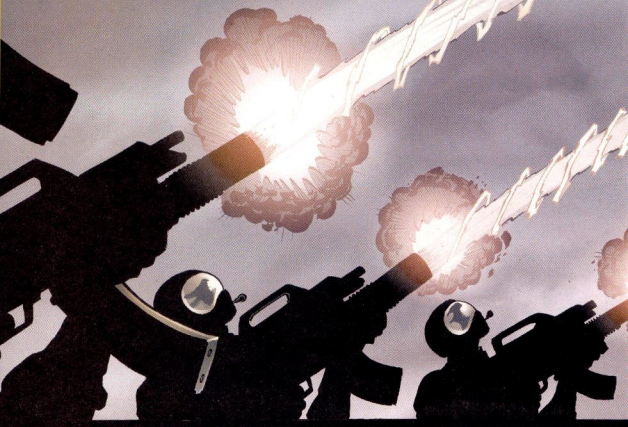
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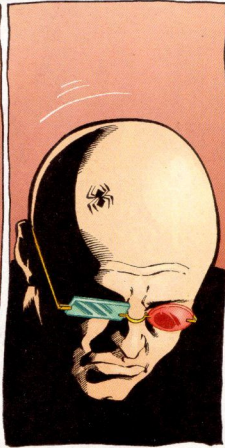
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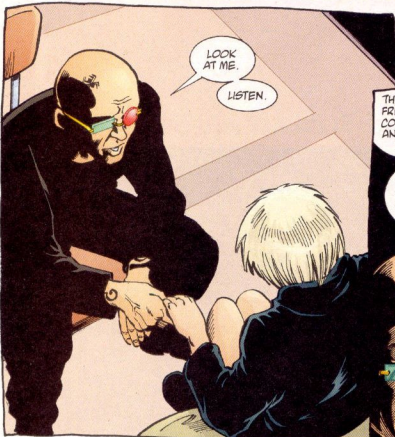
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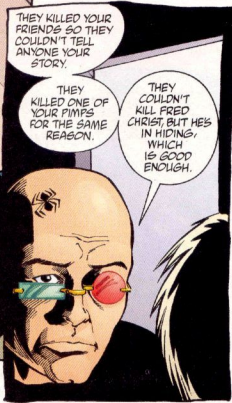








LOOK AT ME.
LISTEN.



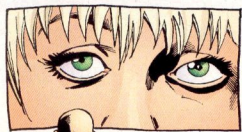
THEY KILLED YOUR FRIENDS SO THEY COULDN'T TELL ANYONE YOUR STORY.

THEY KILLED ONE OF YOUR PIMPS FOR THE SAME REASON.

THEY COULDN'T KILL FRED CHRIST, BUT HE'S IN HIDING, WHICH IS GOOD ENOUGH.



ONCE YOUR STORY'S OUT, THEY HAVE NO REASON TO HURT YOU ANYMORE, AND YOU CAN STOP HIDING.



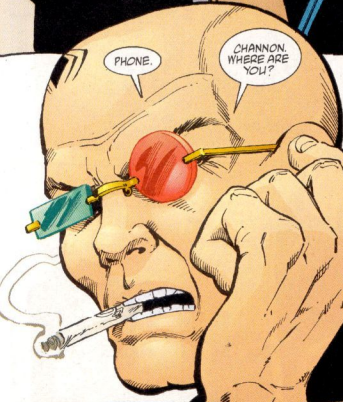
AND IF YOUR BRAIN WASN'T FRIED, YOU'D SEE IT.

AND IF MY BRAIN WASN'T FRIED, I WOULDN'T EVEN BE TRYING THIS.



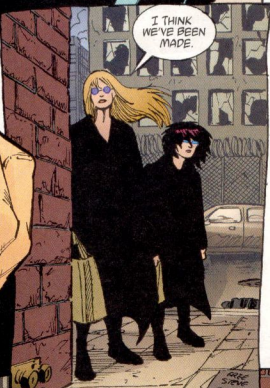
GET ME A KEYBOARD. WHERE ARE MY FILTHY ASSISTANTS?

NO IDEA.

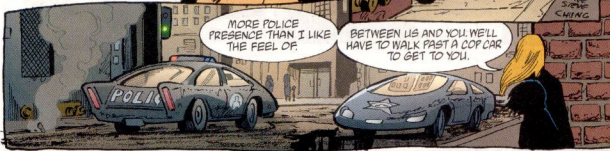


PHONE.

CHANNON, WHERE ARE YOU?



I THINK WE'VE BEEN MADE.



MORE POLICE PRESENCE THAN I LIKE THE FEEL OF.

BETWEEN US AND YOU, WE'LL HAVE TO WALK PAST A COP CAR TO GET TO YOU.

FUCK.
GIVE ME A
MINUTE.

Q1, GRAB
A MAP OF THE AREA.
SKETCH A ROUTE THAT
DOESN'T TAKE THEM
ACROSS.

CHANNON, YOU
GOT YOUR FEEDSITE
READER?
THE ONE YOU READ THE
HOLE ON.

SURE.

WHERE'S
THE CAR?

LIDDY,
BETWEEN
501ST AND
502ND.

Q1, FIND A ROUTE BACK
HERE THAT DOESN'T TAKE
THEM ACROSS LIDDY
BETWEEN 501 AND 502.

CHANNON,
STAND BY. WE'RE
GETTING YOU BACK
HERE, OKAY?

UHHH...
OKAY.
GOT IT.

PUT IT UP ON THE HOLE.
GIVE IT THE FEEDSITE
ADDRESS HOLE/FILTHY.

CHANNON,
PUT YOUR READER
ON HOLE/FILTHY.
FOLLOW THE
LINE.

Q1--KEYBOARD.

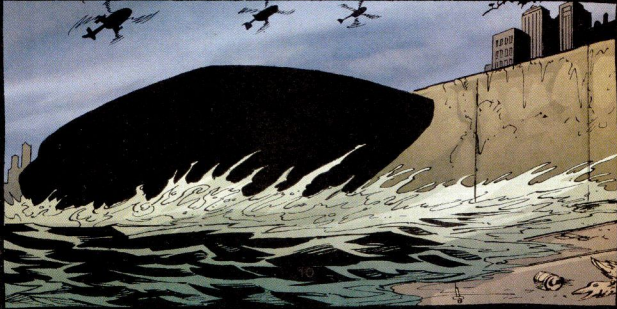
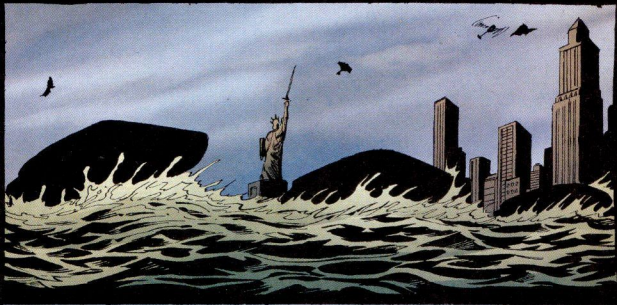
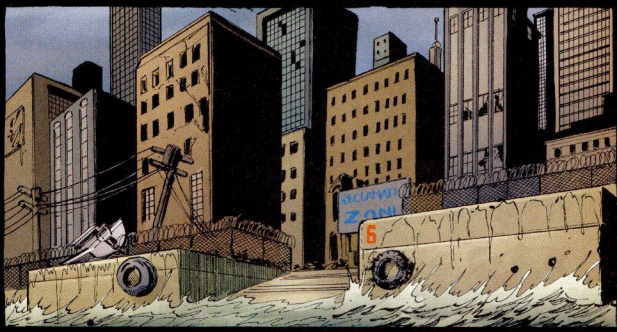
GO AND WATCH LIESL UNTIL MY FILTHIES RETURN.

I MUST WRITE NOW.

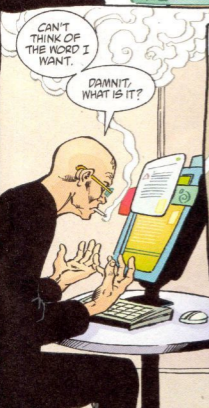
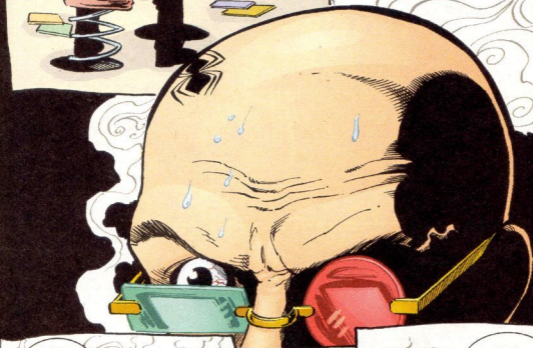
COME ON.

COME ON.

KEEP IT TOGETHER.

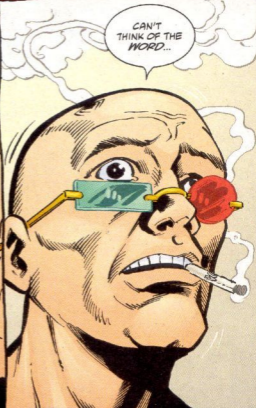




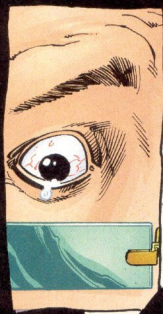
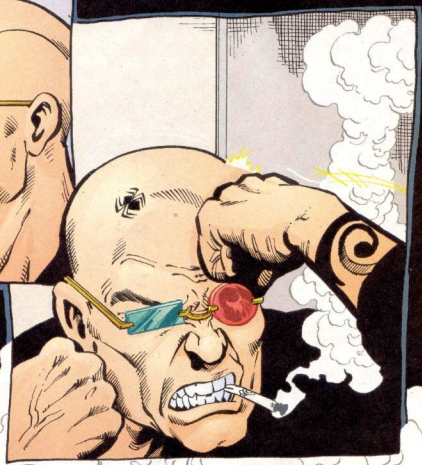
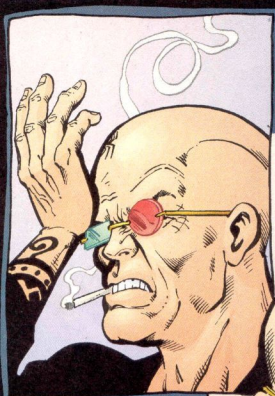


CAN'T THINK OF THE WORD I WANT.

DAMNIT, WHAT IS IT?

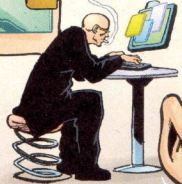


CAN'T THINK OF THE WORD...

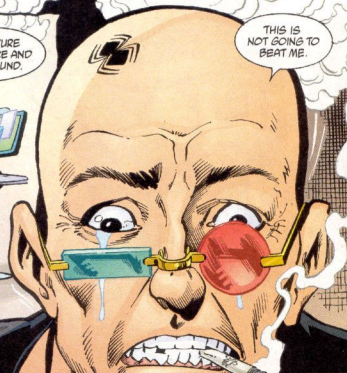


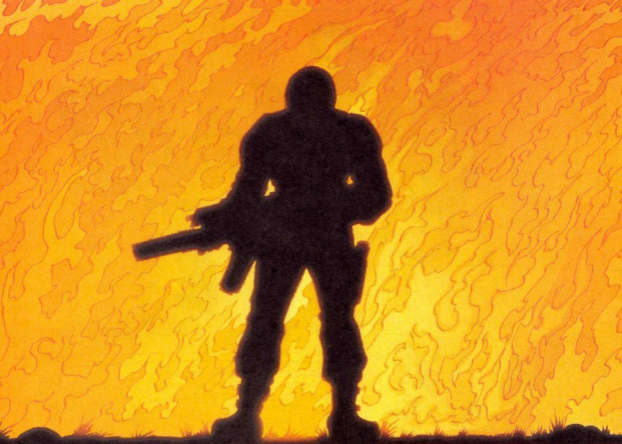
WORK AROUND IT.

RESTRUCTURE THE SENTENCE AND WORK AROUND.

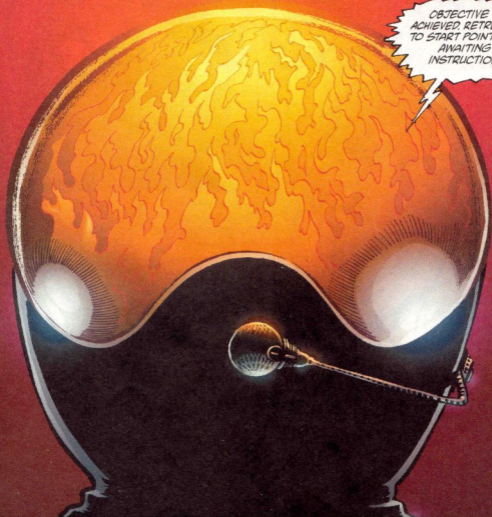


THIS IS NOT GOING TO BEAT ME.





OBJECTIVE
ACHIEVED. RETREATING
TO START POINT AND
AWAITING
INSTRUCTIONS.





MADE IT!

SHUT UP! I'M CREATING HERE!



LAST TIME HE SAID THAT, HE WAS ON THE TOILET.

SHE TALKED?

OH YEAH. SHE TALKED. SO DID HER CLOTHES.



OKAY. IT'S STARTED. HIS BRAIN IS WRONG. IF I EMPTY THIS BAG, WE CAN COLLECT IT AS IT RUNS OUT OF HIS EARS.

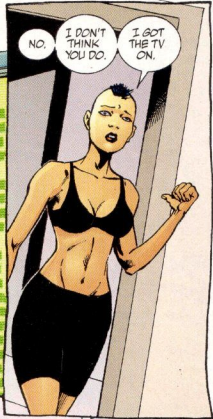
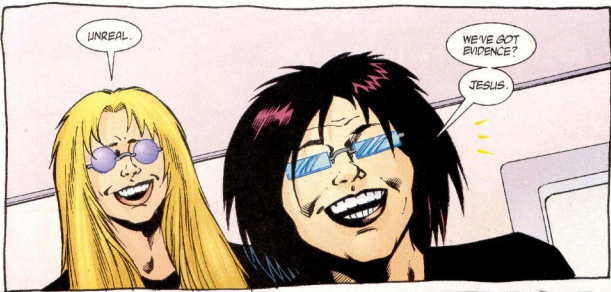
CLOTHES?

YOU'RE KIDDING ME. DID YOU...?



G-READER. NEVER LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT.

SHE FUCKED CALLAHAN.





LIVE

-- THE SCENE AT THE VITA SEVERN RECLAMATION ZONE, WHERE HOMELESS AND DISAFFECTED ELEMENTS HAVE PUT TEMPORARY HOUSING AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT BUILDINGS TO THE TORCH.

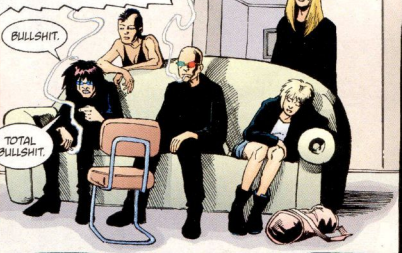
NO WARNING WAS GIVEN OF THIS APPARENT UPRISING AN HOUR AGO AMONG THOSE DESCRIBED BY CIVIC CENTER AS "CRIMINALS AND DISSIDENTS"--



LIVE

BULLSHIT.

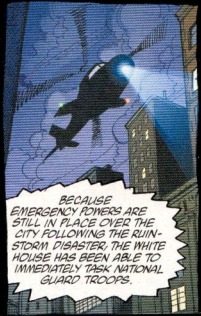
TOTAL BULLSHIT.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WE WALKED PAST A BIG SCREEN TRAINED ON THE RECLAMATION ZONE, JUST TWENTY MINUTES BACK. NOTHING WRONG.

EXCEPT... SOMETHING I THOUGHT I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF, AS WE PASSED IT...

ME TOO. IT WAS ALMOST LIKE A ...



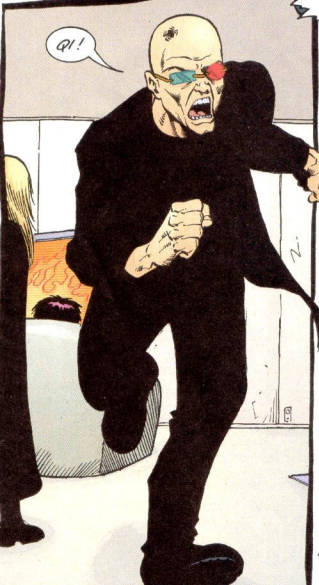
BECAUSE EMERGENCY POWERS ARE STILL IN PLACE OVER THE CITY FOLLOWING THE RUIN-STORM DISASTER, THE WHITE HOUSE HAS BEEN ABLE TO IMMEDIATELY TASK NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS.



...HELICOPTER

WE ARE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE STATE OF EMERGENCY OVER THE CITY IS NOW GOING TO BE ENFORCED--

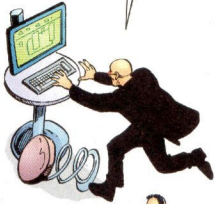
--A LIVE STATEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING CURFEWS AND CHECKPOINTS IS APPARENTLY FORTHCOMING--



Q1!

Q1, WE NEED THIS STORY OUT ON THE FEED NOW.

THAT'S NOW, NOT TOMORROW, NOT NEXT WEEK, FUCKING NOW.



IS IT WORTH IT? WHO'S GOING TO BE PAYING ATTENTION TODAY?



EMERGENCY POWERS, QI. THAT GIVES THEM CONTROL OVER EVERYTHING IN THIS CITY.

INCLUDING THE NET.

EVERY FEEDSITE. EVERY FEEDREADER PORTAL. ALL OF IT.

THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT MARTIAL LAW, QI.

SPIDER, YOU'RE, um... BLEEDING.

SHIT. THE DRUGS WERE SUPPOSED TO CONTROL THE DAMAGE.

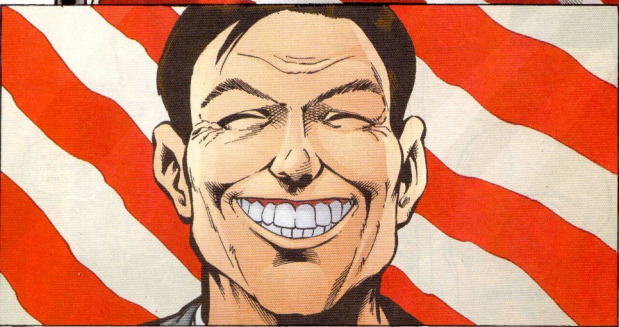
HELP ME GET THE STORY OUT.

WHILE WE STILL CAN.

IF THIS STORY DOESN'T GO OUT NOW, IT MAY NEVER GO OUT AT ALL.

FUCK IT ANYWAY.

IF WE STILL CAN.





THEREFORE THE NATIONAL GUARD, AND OTHER TROOPS AS REQUIRED, WILL REMAIN IN THE RECLAMATION ZONE, AND ON ALL MAIN ROUTES INTO THE ZONE.

AT THIS TIME, THEY WILL BE DIRECTED TO SUPPORT THE CITY'S POLICE FORCE.

I DO NOT ENVISION HAVING TO EXTEND ACTUAL MARTIAL LAW FURTHER, BUT THE SITUATION REMAINS FLUID.



I WILL NOW DEAL WITH AS MANY OF YOUR QUESTIONS AS I CAN IN THE TIME REMAINING.



QUESTION, MR. PRESIDENT.

I'M ROBERT McX.



OF COURSE YOU ARE. GOOD TO SEE YOU, ROBERT.



MISTER PRESIDENT, TELL ME:

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A TRANSIENT PROSTITUTE?



I have a zillion ideas floating around in my head, and some of these are ideas for comic book stories.

Before I sit down and commit a story to paper, I consult my personal checklist to make sure my idea contains all of the elements I feel will make it commercially viable. For example, I may believe the tale of the time my baby threw up and pooped on me is hilarious, and recounting it may amuse my grandma, but when I consult my personal checklist for commercial viability, I quickly realize that nobody will shell out \$19.95 for a lavishly illustrated coffee-table edition of the poop saga. You can see how this checklist saves me a great deal of labor and embarrassment, not to mention keeping my creditors at bay.

The story checklist is as follows:

- 1) Is it interesting and unusual? "Man Bites Dog" rather than "Dog Bites Man"?
- 2) Is it something that can't be done better in other media?
- 3) Does the story offer spectacular visuals for me to illustrate, such as interesting locations, fancy costumes, fantasy creatures, or even funny-looking people?

4) Is there any action? Fights, chases, or at least arguments?

5) Is there any romance?

6) Pretty girls? (This isn't necessarily the same as #5)

7) Is the villain scary and powerful? (The villain is often more important than the hero. If the villain isn't sufficiently menacing, then how can your hero be heroic?)

- 8) Do I want to spend a year of my life drawing this thing? If not, would adding more pretty girls help?
- 9) Does the tale illustrate some larger, deeper truth about our human condition?

With the possible exception of #2, almost every tale in the Bible has the elements listed above (I mention #2 because although the Book works just fine without pictures, I think pictures would certainly help). One of my all-time favorites is the saga of King David. Since I was a child, I've loved the tale of the peasant boy who slays a monster, marries a princess and becomes king.

Dig the villains! You've got Goliath, the biggest, meanest, most murderous warrior on earth, who carries over a hundred pounds of weaponry and loves to use it. Then there's evil King Saul, the most powerful man in the land. Literally tormented by demons, he commands a fearsome army of thousands. Imagine enough swords, spears, arrows, horses, camels and men to turn a continent into a flaming graveyard.

All this and more as the combined might of two nations is pitted against... a six-year-old kid with a rock.

SPOILER ALERT: Bet on the kid.

Kyle Baker

Kyle Baker

ON THE ledge

IN STORES THIS MARCH

KING DAVID (TRADE PAPERBACK)

Eisner Award-winning cartoonist Kyle Baker delivers his latest VERTIGO instant classic! The familiar tale of young David's rise to unprecedented power and popularity while under the paranoid scrutiny of King Saul gets the irreverent — yet biblically accurate — treatment that has made Kyle Baker's work acclaimed by both fans and critics alike. *Written and illustrated by Kyle Baker.*

SWAMP THING: EARTH TO EARTH (TRADE PAPERBACK)

Reprinting THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING #51-56. In this volume, Abby seeks refuge on the shadowy streets of Gotham City, where her circumstances draw the attention of Gotham's Dark Knight... Batman! The ensuing battle breaks Swamp Thing's bond to the Earth and leaves him stranded on a mysterious blue planet, in the timeless tale "My Blue Heaven." *Written by Alan Moore; art by John Totleben, Rick Veitch and Alfredo Alcala. Painted cover by Totleben.*

100 BULLETS #34

There's a thin line between caution and paranoia, and Private Eye Milo Garrett's getting dangerously close to crossing it. He can't trust anyone — certainly not Agent Graves — and maybe not himself, either. *By Azzarello & Rizzo. Painted cover by Johnson.*

AMERICAN CENTURY #13

Part 4 of the 4-part "White Lightning." Hell hath no fury like a man betrayed, and Wallace Pitt's moonshine consortium explodes in high octane action and his daughter Lorelei meets a fiery fate on a hairpin turn. *By Chaykin, Tischman, Laming and Stokes. Painted cover by Orlik.*

CODENAME: KNOCKOUT #11

On her own in Siberia, Angela must rescue herself and two dozen other women from being sold into sexual slavery. But how can she save them if they don't want to be saved? *By Rodi, Paquette & Lipka. Cover by Giorella.*

THE CRUSADES #13

After a year of questions, an avalanche of answers unfolds in the aftermath of the ultimate fate of The Knight. Who was he? Where did he come from? Why was he here? And how can the facts of his existence possibly be true? *By Seagle, Jones & Randall. Painted cover by Wiesenfeld.*

GRIP: THE STRANGE WORLD OF MEN #5

The arresting conclusion finds the Mystery Girls in full force, Joe Hook and Sammy making amends, two detectives and a stripper with one promotion, and Mrs. Gideon out of the closet. But what becomes of Mike Chang and his multiple body parts is the biggest shocker of all. *Written and illustrated by Gilbert Hernandez.*

LUCIFER #24

"The Writing on the Wall," a one-shot tale of adventure, begins in Lucifer's cosmos when a beautiful, teenaged centaur dreams about imminent danger that the Lightbringer will face. Deciding to warn him, she undertakes the long and perilous journey to the mythical land of Los Angeles. But her encounter with the denizens of Tinseltown — not to mention her Maker — are not at all what she was expecting. *By Carey & Ormston. Painted cover by Moeller.*

THE SANDMAN PRESENTS: THE THESSALIAID #3 (of 4)

The hilarious dark fantasy quest continues as Thess and Fetch hunt monsters while keeping a careful eye out for the 3rd Guardian. But before Thess can accept the challenge, she becomes just another statue in this giant topiary garden from Hell — not to mention the target for a nasty fire elemental. *By Williamson, McManus & Pepoy. Cover by McKean.*

HELLBLAZER #172

John Constantine is dead, and every clue as to who's to blame ends in leads just as dead. But as the old saying goes, the dead can't rest until they are avenged, meaning the investigators are about to get a little help from beyond the grave... *By Azzarello & Frusin. Painted cover by Bradstreet.*

HUNTER: THE AGE OF MAGIC #9

Everyone wants something from Tim Hunter. Dr. Tolstoy, collector of antiquities, wants Tim to go back in time and find out what Dr. John Dee was doing with an angel. Dr. Fabien, genetic experimenter, wants to find out if Tim's genes are good or evil. And Eden, the pretty shopgirl? She just wants Tim, and can't figure out why. *By Horrocks, Case & Bird. Painted cover by Foster.*

OUTLAW NATION #19

Final issue. The whirlwind has been reaped, the icons smashed, the slate cleaned, and the future is to be written by anyone with the vision for the job. Story Johnson has the vision, but does he have the guts to see the time and lead the Outlaw Nation back from the brink of extinction? *By Delama, Parlov & Sudzika. Painted cover by Fabry.*

S.C.I.-SPY #2 (of 6)

With the fate of the Arcturus system in peril from swarms of Nano-tech Hunger Bugs devouring everything in their path, Sebastian Starchild teams up with beautiful agent Isis Nile to find the Hunger Bugs' power source and (hopefully) save the universe. *By Moench, Galacy & Palmiotti.*

TRANSMETROPOLITAN #54

Spider and his Filthy Assistants are sheltering the last eyewitness and participant in the President's use of prostitutes, and if they can get her story out, she might live and the President might be politically dead. But he still holds emergency powers over the City... *By Ellis, Robertson & Ramos. Painted cover by Fabry.*

EVENTS NEXT MONTH...

MIDNIGHT, MASS.

Nothing says New England like ghosts, demons and horrors from beyond the beginning of time. It's up to Julia and Adam Kadmon, the world's best known and most glamorous paranormal investigators, to put the monsters away while maintaining their marriage and jet-setting lifestyle. *Written by John Rozum. Art by Jesus Saiz and Jimmy Palmiotti. Cover by Jamer Hanuka.*

AMERICAN CENTURY: HOLLYWOOD BABYLON (TRADE PAPERBACK)

Collecting issues #5-9, this critically acclaimed storyline exposes the sordid underbelly of Tinseltown and Harry's adventures with a sea kitten on Route 66. *By Howard Chaykin, David Tischman, Mark Laming & John Stokes. Cover by John van Fleet.*