

HELLBOY™



SEED *of* DESTRUCTION

MIKE MIGNOLA * JOHN BYRNE

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SEED of DESTRUCTION

by

MIKE MIGNOLA

Script by

JOHN BYRNE

Miniseries colors by

MARK CHIARELLO

Cover colors by

DAVE STEWART

Short-story colors by

MATTHEW HOLLINGSWORTH



Introduction by

ROBERT BLOCH

Series and collection edited by

BARBARA KESEL with SCOTT ALLIE

Hellboy logo designed by

KEVIN NOWLAN

Collection designed by

MIKE MIGNOLA & CARY GRAZZINI

Published by

MIKE RICHARDSON



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Published by Dark Horse Comics
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

First edition: October 1994
Second edition: June 1997
ISBN: 1-56971-316-2

HELLBOY™: SEED OF DESTRUCTION

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This book is collected from issues 1-4 of the Dark Horse comic-book miniseries *Hellboy™: Seed of Destruction*.

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PRINTED IN SINGAPORE

INTRODUCTION

by ROBERT BLOCH



IF SOME-
ONE HAD
TOLD ME
FIFTY YEARS AGO THAT

I'd ever write the introduction to a collection of comics, I'd have told him he was crazy, and that I would have to be crazy in order to do so.

Back then I was writing short stories for the pulp magazines. Neither the publications nor the material I sent them was a major contribution to the status of American literature, but by virtue of it I could at least call myself a writer. Today I probably could have made the same claim — and gotten more critical and media attention — if I'd just gone around spraying out *graffiti*. Nevertheless, even though I lacked such opportunities, I was a published writer. Some of my colleagues, equally proud of their status, were less satisfied with their incomes. Under various pseudonyms they moonlighted, turning out scripts and story lines for the comic books. But this was not something one talked about in polite society, nor spoke of in private. Even in those days there were limits to admitting one's indiscretions; anyone might proclaim himself a born-again Christian, but few would admit to being a burn-again Satanist.

And comic books, to some, were satanic. They were gross, sleazy vehicles of violence, and their creators were the kind of people who gave child-molesting a bad name.

So thought Dr. Frederick Wertham, a psychiatrist who launched an attack on these dime-store demons. The odd thing is that this same Dr. Wertham, a few years thereafter, was quite critically impressed by my first novel, *The Scarf*, and in ensuing correspondence the good doctor and I traded opinions about comic violence, just as though neither of us was aware of the murder and mayhem I perpetrated on the printed page.

But things have changed over the past half-century — things like comics, and myself. And at least some of them — the comics — have improved.

Back then it was easy to trace the roots of the story comics to the pulp magazines, from which many series characters were transported and transplanted to the paneled pages. Artwork showed the influence of newspaper comic strips, cartoons, pulp magazine illustration, and the films of the era. Much of what

those early comics offered was derivative, and some of it did, at least in part, justify the criticism of well-meaning do-gooders who feared their children would become read-badders.

And the comics were an influence, no doubt about it. Youngsters who came under that influence grew up to become influential themselves, as writers, artists, filmmakers.

Today, the influenced have become the influential, so that cause and effect have done a flip-flop. Now the comics are the innovators; newspaper art copies *their* style, and other forms of graphic art and illustration frequently adopt their techniques. And the whole "language" of modern film and television seems quite obviously translated from comics in the form of jump-cuts, enormous head shots, rapidly changing POV, and a dozen other innovations which determine emphasis and pacing — and careful editing.

All of this has been generally accepted under the convenient label of "pop art," but there are indications that talented artists, writers, and editors are starting to stretch that label. Not satisfied with endless (and frequently, mindless) repetitions of the mixture as before, they are reaching out to broader concepts, bolder methods of reaching a more adult readership, new ways to tell old tales.

Hellboy is a brilliant example of how to elevate the comic of the future to a higher literary level while achieving a higher pitch of excitement. Its story line combines traditional concepts with modern frames of reference, the whole being swept along by a *virtuoso* treatment of dazzling artistic effects.

As in any experimental venture there are, of course, minor flaws. "Yeah, right" was not a sarcastic phrase used in 1944, nor was anyone or anything characterized as "Looney Tunes."

But these are quibbles — mere flyspecks on the dome of the Sistine Chapel. The total effect of *Hellboy* is that of a true work of art — original and innovative and exciting. Again and again you'll find panels and pages which display a sophisticated and sometimes deliberately satirized awareness of classic modes and content. The product of superb talents, they could be framed and stand forth on their own. Striking use of color enhances their effect and complements the impact of plot and scripting.

This is far from the "pop art" of the Andy Warhol world or the inane imagery of the drug culture. The creative approach found in *Hellboy* is a newly evolving art form of its own, addressed and attuned to today.

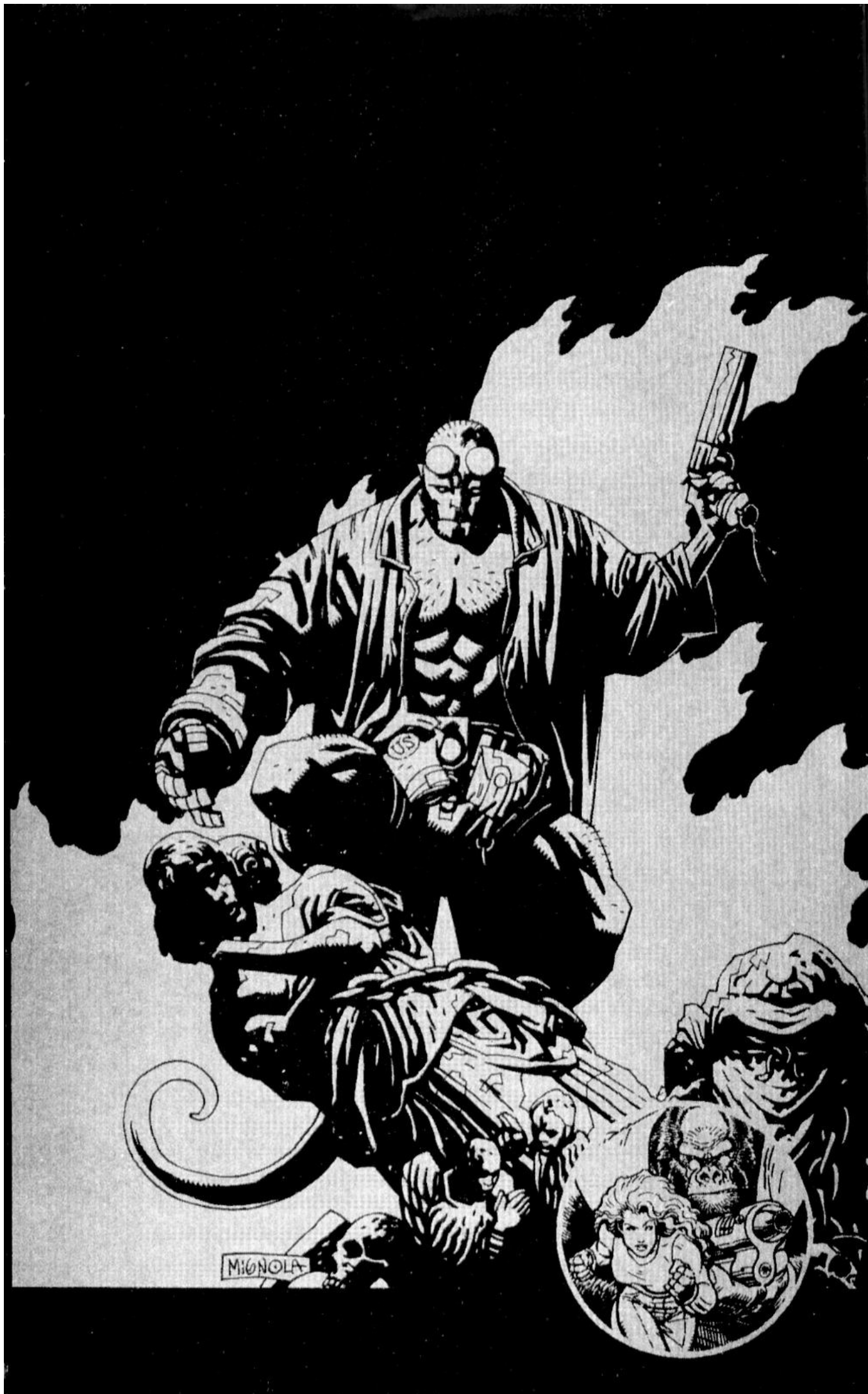
Besides, it's a killer read!



For Jack Kirby, H. P. Lovecraft,
my lovely wife Christine, and
the amazing Elmer Newton.



CHAPTER ONE



Journal of 1st Sgt.
George Whitman, USA
12/23/44
East Bromwich, England.

We've been here for two days now and it isn't getting any better. All of the men are jittery in this place. Maybe if it had a name. Maybe if the people in the village would even talk about it. But they won't.



Not even telling them there could be a crack team of Nazi commandos lurking about somewhere gets anything out of them. They just look at you like Nazis are maybe the last thing in the world they need to worry about.

If that were true, we wouldn't be here.

Okay--this is what we think we know: Hitler has sent some kind of team to England. I called them commandos, but there's a trio of people from the British Paranormal Society who say they're more than that. They say the Germans are some kind of spook squad. That the krauts are here to perform some kind of spell or something. Summon monsters. Raise the dead.

Yeah, right.



But whatever it is, it's got the top brass worried enough to send a special Ranger unit to look into it. And the Torch of Liberty is here with us. Funny to see him standing there, having a cup of joe with the rest of the guys. I'm more used to seeing him jumping around in newsreels, fighting some cockamamie Nazi menace.

Seems like an O.K. guy, though. And he believes this whole business. He says his own sources confirm the Nazis are in the final stages of something called "Project Ragna Rok".

I don't think our Limey friends were too thrilled to learn it took the Torch's word to make us believe them.



There's three of them: Professor Malcolm Frost, from Blackfriar's College, stateside.

Trevor Bruttonholm (pronounced "Broom") who's some kind of paranormal Whiz Kid.

And Lady Cynthia Eden-Jones, who's supposed to be England's top medium.



And in charge of this whole Looney Toon party is me, a guy who'd never even heard the word "paranormal" before a week ago.

Anyway, two days camped out in this holiday camp and so far nothing. No spooks. No monsters. No Nazis.

But Lady Cynthia says it's going to happen here. And it's going to happen tonight.



Only thing is, she can't say just what "it" is.

WELL, "BROOM"? YOUR REPUTATION GOT US HERE, BUT SO FAR ALL WE'RE DOING IS FREEZING OUR DAINTY LITTLE BUTTS OFF.

SERGEANT, I HAVE SPENT THE LAST NINE YEARS STUDYING THIS PLACE, TRYING TO DISCOVER WHAT HAPPENED HERE LONG AGO THAT WAS SO HORRIBLE IT ERASED ALL WILLINGNESS OF THE LOCALS TO EVEN DISCUSS THE MATTER.

"WHEN LADY CYNTHIA TOLD ME THE DISTURBANCE SHE HAD SENSED IN THE ETHER WAS CENTERED HERE..."

NO. WAIT.

THERE IS... ANOTHER... A SECOND CENTER.

"BUT IT IS NORTH OF HERE. FAR NORTH..."

"I SENSE... COLD, AND WATER. IT IS A TINY ISLAND JUST OFF THE SCOTTISH COAST..."

CHAINED IN HEAVEN ARE THEY. SEVEN IS THEIR NUMBER. BRED IN DEPTHS OF OCEAN, NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE ARE THEY. THEY ARE AS THE HOWLING WIND, WHICH KNOWETH NOT MERCY, WHICH KNOWETH NOT PITY.





HEEDLESS ARE THEY TO PRAY AND SUPPLICATION. THEY ARE THE SERPENT. THEY ARE THE FURIOUS BEAST. THE WINDSTORM.



EVIL WINDS THEY ARE. THE EVIL BREATH THAT HERALDETH THE BANEFUL STORM. THEY ARE MIGHTY CHILDREN. HERALDS OF PESTILENCE. THRONE BEARERS OF ERESHIGAL.

INCREASE THE POWER. DON'T LET THE LEVEL DROP.

I SHALL NOT.

BUT IF THIS CONTINUES MUCH LONGER..

"...WE SHALL BE IN GREAT DANGER OF BURNING OUT THE PRIMARY COILS!"

THEY ARE THE FLOOD WHICH RUSHETH THROUGH THE LAND. SEVEN GODS OF MIGHT. SEVEN DEMONS OF OPPRESSION. SEVEN IN HEAVEN AND SEVEN ON EARTH.

OF GIANT STRENGTH AND GIANT TREAD ARE THEY. KNOWING NO CARE THEY GRIND THE LAND LIKE CORN.

KNOWING NO MERCY THEY RAGE AGAINST MANKIND, TO SPILL BLOOD LIKE RAIN AND DEVOUR FLESH.

LET THEM SEVEN NOW RISE FROM THE ABYSS. AWAY BE CAST ALL CHAINS. FREEDOM IS TO THEM. POWER IS TO THEM.



OH!

I FEEL IT. PAIN. TERRIBLE ANGLISH, AS OF A GREAT TRAGEDY.

A TRAGEDY FROM MANY YEARS AGO. IT IS THIS I SENSED. THIS WHICH BROUGHT ME HERE. IT IS THIS OLDER SORROW WHICH NOW DRAWS UPON THE EVIL FORCES LET LOOSE INTO THE WORLD TONIGHT.



THE FOCUS! THE FOCUS IS DRIFTING!!

MORE POWER!

IF WE LOSE IT NOW...



WE ARE NOT ALONE HERE. THERE ARE TROUBLED SPIRITS. HOLY SPIRITS. A PRIEST. A NUN. THEIR SHADES ARE WITH US. IT IS THEIR PAIN WHICH HAUNTS THIS PLACE. THEIR SECRET WHICH STAINS THESE ANCIENT STONES.



"THEY HAVE... A MESSAGE.

"THEY SAY..."



THEY SAY... SOMETHING IS COMING...



WHAT THE..?

CYNTHIA...



YOUR LADY-SHIP!!

GET DOWN!!



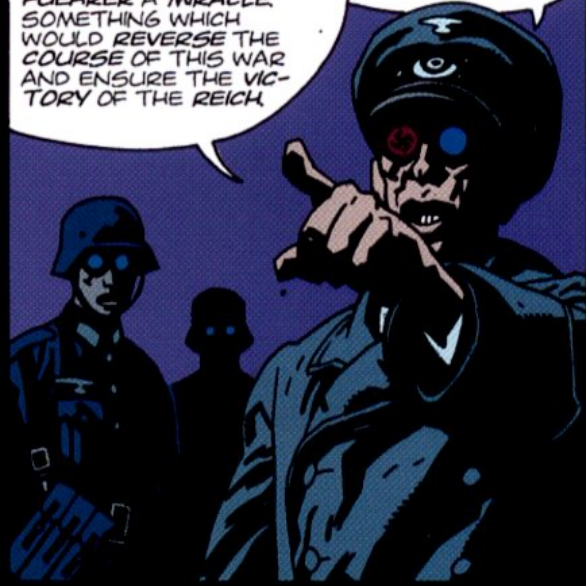


WELL?
THIS BLEAK PLACE SEEMS REMARKABLY UNCHANGED FOR A MIRACLE TO HAVE OCCURRED HERE.

SPARE ME YOUR SARCASM, VON KRUIPT.

SARCASM? MY SARCASM IS THE VERY LEAST OF YOUR WORRIES, SORCERER. YOU PROMISED THE FUEHRER A MIRACLE, SOMETHING WHICH WOULD REVERSE THE COURSE OF THIS WAR AND ENSURE THE VICTORY OF THE REICH.

HERR HITLER DOES NOT TAKE KINDLY TO FAILURE.

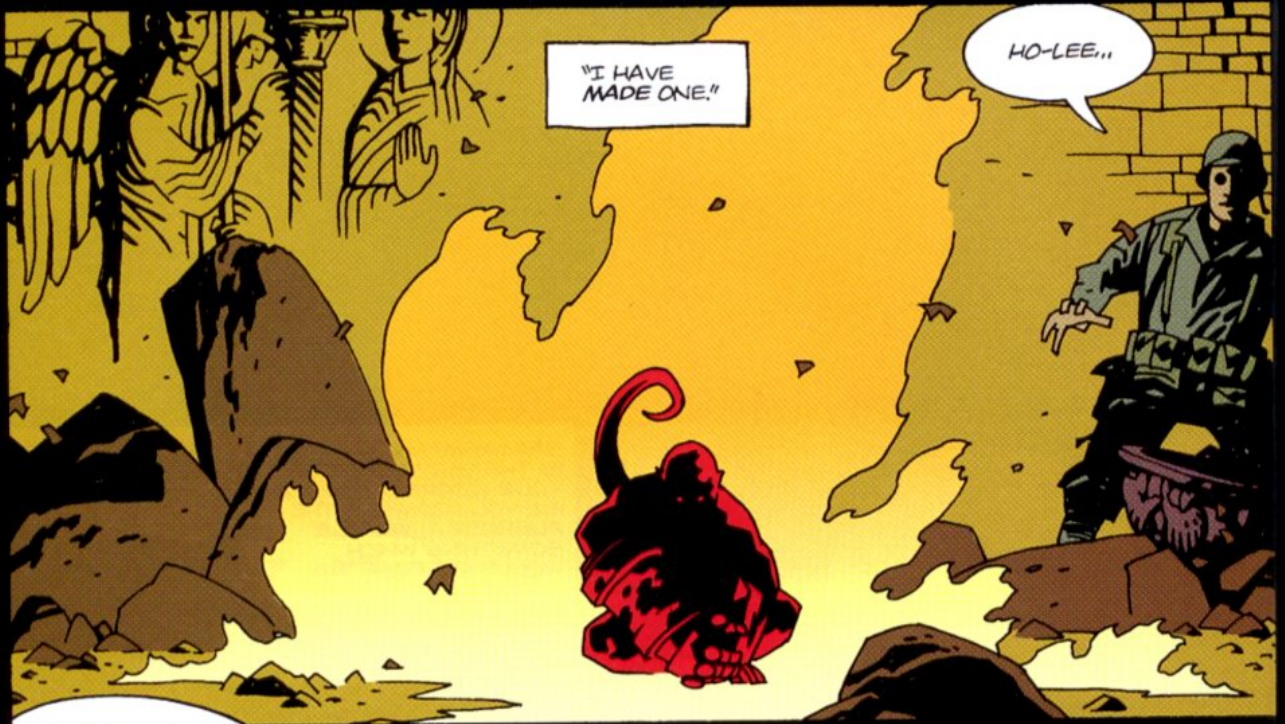


I HAVE NOT FAILED, VON KRUIPT.



I HAVE SET IN MOTION EVENTS WHICH CANNOT NOW BE REVERSED OR UNDONE.

I PROMISED HERR HITLER A MIRACLE.



"I HAVE MADE ONE."

HO-LEE...

SHOOT IT! KILL IT!
IT'S A DEMON COME
FROM HELL TO
DESTROY US ALL!

IT... DOESN'T
LOOK TOO
DANGEROUS
TO ME,
PROFESSOR.

IT LOOKS...
LIKE A
LITTLE
BOY...!



...HELLBOY...





HELLBOY.
I COULD NOT GUESS THEN THAT I WAS NAMING HIM..



„BUT "THE HELLBOY INCIDENT" IT BECAME, AND THE HELLBOY INCIDENT IT HAS REMAINED, ALL THROUGH THE YEARS.

YEARS IN WHICH OUR BEST EFFORTS TO UNCOVER HIS SECRETS ULTIMATELY LEFT US KNOWING LITTLE MORE THAN WE DID THAT FIRST DAY, THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS.



CLOSER TO FIFTY NOW... AND YET... AND YET... SO MUCH MORE. AS THOUGH IT BELONGED...



...TO ANOTHER LIFETIME. SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFETIME. NOT MINE ANYMORE.

I FEEL... CUT IN HALF. CUT OFF FROM MY PAST. SINCE... SINCE...

NO. CAN'T REMEMBER. TOO OLD. TOO OLD.



YOU LOOK JUST FINE TO ME, SIR.



IT'S BEEN TEN MONTHS SINCE THE CAVENDISH EXPEDITION WAS GIVEN UP FOR LOST. THE WHOLE WORLD THINKS YOU'RE DEAD.

AND YET... IT ISN'T. FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, TREVOR BRUTTONHOLM HAS BEEN LIKE A FATHER TO ME.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALIVE, SIR.

TO SEE HIM LIKE THIS, A SHADOW OF THE MAN HE WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM...

YOU CAME.

THANK YOU.

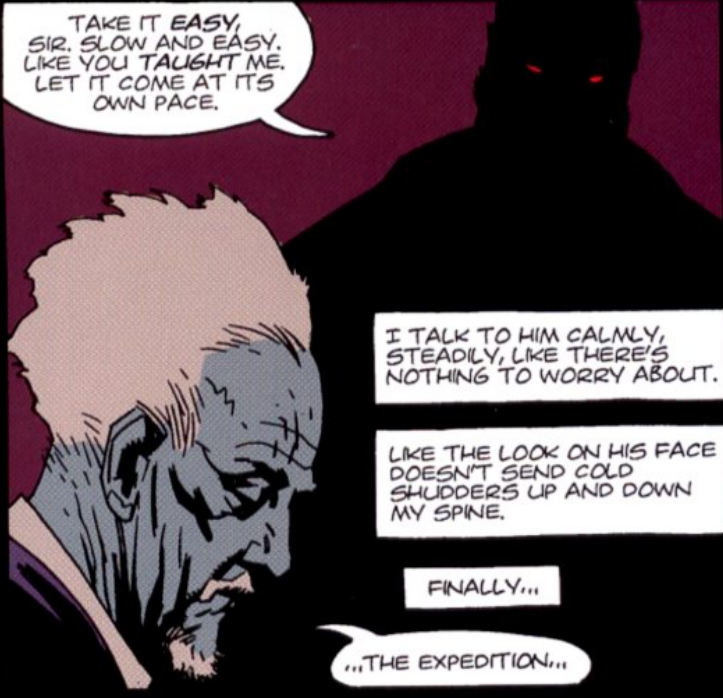
IT MAKES ME FEEL SOMEHOW LIKE IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER IF HE HAD DIED...



THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST TELL YOU, HELLBOY.

SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT.

BUT... I CAN'T REMEMBER. I CAN'T...



TAKE IT EASY, SIR. SLOW AND EASY. LIKE YOU TAUGHT ME. LET IT COME AT ITS OWN PACE.

I TALK TO HIM CALMLY, STEADILY, LIKE THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

LIKE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE DOESN'T SEND COLD SHUDDERS UP AND DOWN MY SPINE.

FINALLY...

...THE EXPEDITION...

"THE EXPEDITION. THE THREE
CAVENDISH BOYS. SVEN
OLAFSEN, THE RENOWNED
ARCTIC EXPLORER. ME.

"YES. I REMEMBER.
NINETEEN DAYS OUT OF
BULL HARBOR. FIFTEEN DAYS
BY ICEBREAKER. THEN BY
SNOW TRACTOR..."

"FINALLY... CROSSING THE
HEISENVALD RIDGE ON FOOT.


"THE TOP OF THE WORLD. SO
SILENT. SO EMPTY.

"AND THERE... RIGHT WHERE
THE CAVENDISH BOYS SAID
IT WOULD BE. RIGHT WHERE
NINE GENERATIONS OF
THEIR FAMILY WERE SURE IT
WOULD BE..."


"NINE GENERATIONS WHO
DIED TRYING TO REACH THE
SPOT ON WHICH WE STOOD..."

"THE RUINS. FROZEN. OLDER
THAN THE TEMPLE AT YANG
KOR..."

"INSIDE... DARK. SILENT. LIKE
THE AGE OF ALL THE WORLD
WAS CRAMMED INTO THAT
NARROW SPACE.




"AND THERE, SQUATTING IN THE DARKNESS, PART OF THE DARKNESS, PART OF THE SILENCE, THE AGE..."



"AND SEATED IN FRONT OF IT, SURROUNDED BY IT, ALMOST AS THOUGH IT WERE PART OF IT..."

"YOU REMEMBER... I SHOWED YOU PICTURES OF THE STATUES FOUND ON KOFU IN THE THIRTIES. IT WAS LIKE THEM, BUT BIGGER, A HUNDRED TIMES BIGGER."

"HUMAN IN FORM. COLD. FROZEN. SUCH EXQUISITE DETAIL IN THE CARVING."



"ALMOST LIKE SOMETHING..."



"...ALIVE..."



NO...
NO...

IT'S ALL A
BLUR. NOTHING
MAKES SENSE.
DETAILS... EVENTS
ALL OUT OF
ORDER.

SCREAMING.
I REMEMBER
THERE WAS
SCREAMING.

THEN THERE
WAS THE NEW
YORK SKYLINE. I
JUMPED OVERBOARD,
SWAM TO SHORE.
CAME HERE.

BUT... BEFORE
THAT... ON THE ICE-
BREAKER AGAIN.
NO IDEA HOW I
GOT THERE.

GOT HERE.
CALLED
YOU. YOU
CAME...

SHH...
SHH... DON'T
WORRY, SIR,
EVERYTHING IS
FINE NOW.

I'M HERE.
WE'LL WORK
EVERYTHING
OUT.

JUST TAKE
YOUR TIME.
DON'T PUSH
YOURSELF.

NO. PUSHED
MYSELF ENOUGH
IN THE LAST...
HOW LONG HAS
IT BEEN?

TEN MONTHS
YOU SAID? TEN
MONTHS OF MY
LIFE I JUST...

...CAN'T
REMEM-
BER...

...SIR...?

...SIR...
YOU'VE GOT
...FROGS...



AARUP

GAAA!



RUN! RUN!
IN GOD'S NAME
HELLBOY!

GET
AWAY!

?



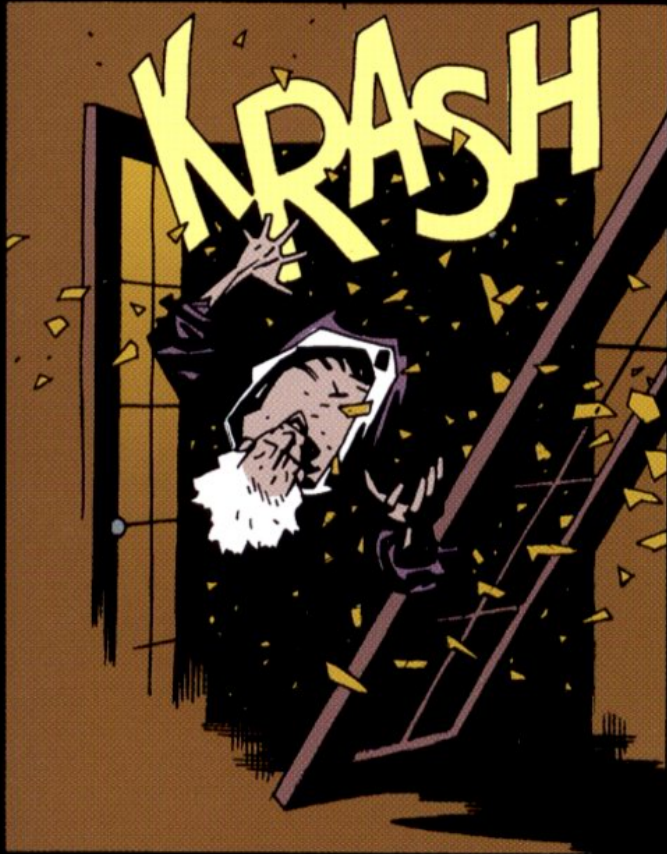
SAVE
YOUR-
SELF!!



...SIR..?



SIR...??



KRASH



WUNK



I'D BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT I HAVE NO SHORTAGE OF FAULTS.

BUT IF I HAD TO PICK ONE, THE ONE THAT'S GOTTEN ME INTO THE MOST TROUBLE OVER THE YEARS...

...IT WOULD BE THAT I SOMETIMES GET ANGRY.



AND WHEN I GET ANGRY I SOMETIMES DO STUPID THINGS.

THINGS LIKE CHARGING HEADLONGS INTO A PITCH BLACK ROOM.

I'M TOUGHER AND STRONGER THAN ANY HUMAN...

...BUT I CAN'T SEE ANY BETTER IN THE DARK.



I WISH I COULD.

OOF!



GACK!



CUT THAT OUT!



HE DID SOMETHING TO ME.

HIS TONGUE WAS WRAPPED AROUND MY ARM FOR ALL OF TWO SECONDS..



...BUT NOW EVERYTHING SOUTH OF MY ELBOW MIGHT AS WELL BE MADE OF WOOD.

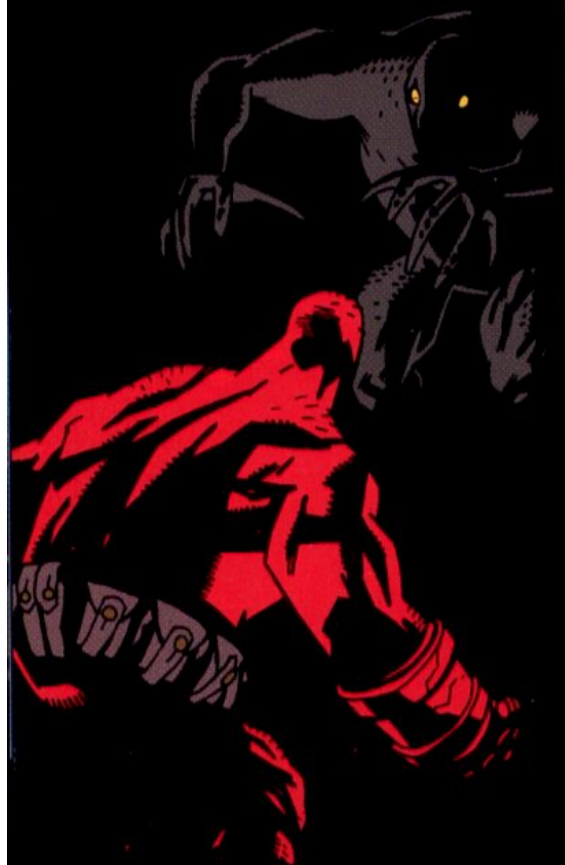
AND MY FROG-FACED FRIEND IS COMING BACK TO FINISH THE JOB!

HE'S FAST, BUT THIS TIME I'M FASTER.

I LET HIM GET A TASTE OF MY RIGHT HAND.

IT'S NOT MY FLESH AND BLOOD ARM HE GETS A HOLD ON.

THE HAND THE BEST SCIENTISTS OF THE LAST HALF CENTURY HAVE TRIED AND FAILED TO ANALYZE.



THEY COULDN'T FIND OUT ANYTHING...

...BUT AT LEAST I KNOW ONE THING ABOUT IT.

IT DOESN'T FEEL PAIN.



WONDER IF FROGGY DOES?

AT A GUESS,
I'D SAY YES.

AT LEAST, SOMETHING'S
MADE HIM CHANGE HIS
ATTITUDE ALL OF A SUDDEN.

HE STAGGERS AROUND A
BIT, LIKE HE'S TRYING TO
DECIDE WHAT TO DO NEXT.

I DECIDE TO HELP HIM
MAKE UP HIS MIND.



FEELING IS CREEPING BACK
INTO MY LEFT HAND.

MOSTLY IT'S THE WORST
PAIN I'VE EVER FELT--AND
I'VE BEEN HURT BY
EXPERTS--

--BUT FEELING THAT ALSO
LETS ME GRAB AND HOLD
THE PISTOL THE TORCH OF
LIBERTY GAVE ME.



I DON'T KNOW WHO FROGGY
IS, OR WHERE HE CAME
FROM..

...BUT HE OBVIOUSLY KNOWS
A GUN WHEN HE SEES ONE.

HE BOLTS FOR THE
CLOSEST WINDOW.

IT HAPPENS TO
BE THE BATHROOM.

AND I'M GOING TO LET
HIM GET OUTSIDE?

LIKE
HELL!!



BLAM



WELL...
...THAT'S ALL FOR YOU!



WHAT FALLS FROM THE TOP OF THE COMMODE IS A FROG MONSTER.



WHAT HITS THE FLOOR ISN'T.

SPLAK



I STUMBLE BACK DOWN THE HALL AND MAKE A CALL TO THE HEAD OFFICE.

TO THE BUREAU OF PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND DEFENSE.

DOCTOR MANNING, HELLBOY IS ON LINE SEVEN.

HELLBOY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YEAH, I'M OKAY. I'M STILL IN BROOKLYN.

NO, HE'S DEAD. SOMETHING WAS HERE. SOMETHING THAT WASN'T HUMAN.

NO, I CAN'T EVEN GUESS WHAT IT WAS.

YOU BETTER SEND IN SOME OF THE LAB GUYS. LET THEM FIGURE IT OUT.

RIGHT. YES. OF COURSE, YOU'RE FREE TO ASSEMBLE YOUR OWN TEAM, AS ALWAYS.

AND... HELLBOY...

I'M... SORRY ABOUT PROFESSOR BRITTENHOLM. I KNOW HOW CLOSE YOU WERE.

YES. GOOD-BYE.

WELL, GENTLEMEN...



"...IT WOULD APPEAR WE HAVE ANOTHER MESSY ONE ON OUR HANDS."

IT IS DONE.



HE IS DEAD.

WE ARE PROCEEDING.

THEN... YOU WILL... KEEP... YOUR PROMISE..?



YES, EMMA. SOON.



VERY SOON.

BUREAU FOR PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND DEFENSE

File #267999 (9/16/48)

Re: Nazi "Project Ragna Rok" (The Fatal Destiny)



VON KRUPPT, KLAUS WERNER
(Photo taken 12/2/45) Committed to Eisenvalt Sanitarium. Died 6 months later. Body discovered to be infested with beetles of unknown species. No explanation.

To the best determination of the assigned investigative team, "Ragna Rok" was one of Hitler's many "Doomsday" projects initiated in the closing days of World War Two.

Principally there were known to be five individuals (see photos below) involved at key steps of the project, and so far as has been determined all five were present in the final moments. The project was apparently headed by General Klaus Werner von Krupt (see addendum under photo.)

The culmination of several years' work by the individuals, the ritual performed on Tarmagant Island (see map, pg. 162) on 23 Dec. 1944 corresponds precisely with the manifestation of the creature now code named "Hellboy" (see File #25891), the so-called "HELLBOY INCIDENT."

Professor Trevor Bruttonholm and his staff have examined both "Hellboy" and the site on Tarmagant Island extensively, and although no physical evidence can be found to link the events it seems unlikely their temporal juxtaposition is merely a coincidence.



Leopold Kurtz
(b 10/11/15)
whereabouts unknown



Ilsa Hauptstein
(b 6/7/19)
whereabouts unknown



Professor Doctor Karl
Ruprect Kroenen
(b unknown)
whereabouts unknown



Name Unknown
(b unknown)
whereabouts unknown

FROGS



Frogs, like snakes, scorpions, ravens, and black cats, are traditionally considered harbingers of doom, witnessed by the following tale.

AN AFRICAN MYTH ABOUT A FROG

IN A DAY when little water was to be found, Man spent awhile in thought and realized that he might one day die, never to rise again. Man sent Dog to God to ask that he might come back to life again, like the flowering plant, after death.

Dog went off and followed his nose toward God. He was soon distracted by the smell of soup, and followed his hunger toward the source. Leaning close to watch it boil, Dog was content and forgot his mission.

Seeing that Dog was lost, Frog took it upon himself to go to God and tell him that Man did not want to live again. If Man were to be reborn, thought Frog, he would soon muddy the rivers and destroy the birthplaces of frogs.

Dog finally arrived to tell God Man's message. Leaning low, he crooned Man's need for rebirth in the song of his howl. God was touched by the devotion of Dog for Man.

But God granted the frog's wish, because he got there first.



CHAPTER TWO



I DID MY HOMEWORK
BEFORE WE CAME
OUT HERE.

THE HOUSE IS CALLED
CAVENDISH HALL. IT WAS
BUILT ABOUT A HUNDRED
AND FIFTY YEARS AGO BY
THE FIRST OF THE
CAVENDISH FAMILY TO
COME TO AMERICA.

BACK THEN IT STOOD ON A
HIGH PROMONTORY COM-
MANDING A WIDE VIEW OF
THE LAKE AND ALL THE LAND
AROUND AS FAR AS THE
HORIZON.

THESE DAYS IT'S WELL ON
ITS WAY TO HAVING A SWIM-
MING POOL FOR A BASEMENT.
IT'S BEEN SINKING SINCE THE
DAY IT WAS FINISHED.



OH, DID I MENTION THERE'S
SUPPOSED TO BE A CURSE
ON THE PLACE? NOT THE
HOUSE ITSELF, THE LAND,
THE LAKE.

THE LOCAL INDIANS KEPT
WELL CLEAR OF THIS AREA
FOR A COUPLE OF THOU-
SAND YEARS BEFORE THE
CAVENDISH FAMILY ARRIVED.

YOU MAY THINK CURSES
ARE JUST SO MUCH EYE-
WASH, BUT I DON'T. I'VE
SEEN TOO MUCH THAT
MAKES ME THINK OTHER-
WISE.

WAY TOO MUCH.

IF I HAVE A REAL NAME, I'VE NEVER KNOWN IT. I'M CALLED HELLBOY.

I'LL LET MY COMPANIONS INTRODUCE THEMSELVES...

MRS. CAVENDISH?
I'M SORRY WE'RE SO LATE.
WE'RE FROM THE BUREAU OF
PARANORMAL RESEARCH
AND DEFENSE.

HELLBOY
CALLED YOU
YESTERDAY..?

OH, YES.
AND YOU
ARE..?



ELIZABETH
SHERMAN,

AND THIS
IS DOCTOR
ABRAHAM
SAPIEN.

MA'AM.

I'M VERY PLEASED
TO MEET ALL OF
YOU. YOU'VE MISSED
DINNER, I'M AFRAID.

HERE, LET
MY MAN TAKE
YOUR BAGS TO
YOUR ROOMS.

I HOPE YOU HAVE
NOT HAD A
WASTED JOURNEY.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T
KNOW ANY MORE
NOW THAN WHAT I
TOLD MR. BOY
YESTERDAY ON
THE TELEPHONE.

THIS IS QUITE
THE PLACE, BUT
I GUESS YOU'D
NEED A SIZABLE
FAMILY FORTUNE TO
FINANCE THOSE
EXPEDITIONS...



THE EXPEDITIONS. NINE GENERATIONS OF THE CAVENDISH FAMILY BELIEVED THERE WAS SOMETHING AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD.

I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY OF THEM DIED TRYING TO FIND IT. BUT THE LAST TIME THEY TOOK TREVOR BRITTENHOLM WITH THEM.

THE MAN I CALLED MY FATHER.

AND NOW HE'S DEAD.

AND... YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT... FROGS...?

HELL-BOY...

QUITE ALL RIGHT, MY DEAR. I DON'T MIND DIRECT QUESTIONS, EVEN WHEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND THEM.



YOUR SONS, THEN.

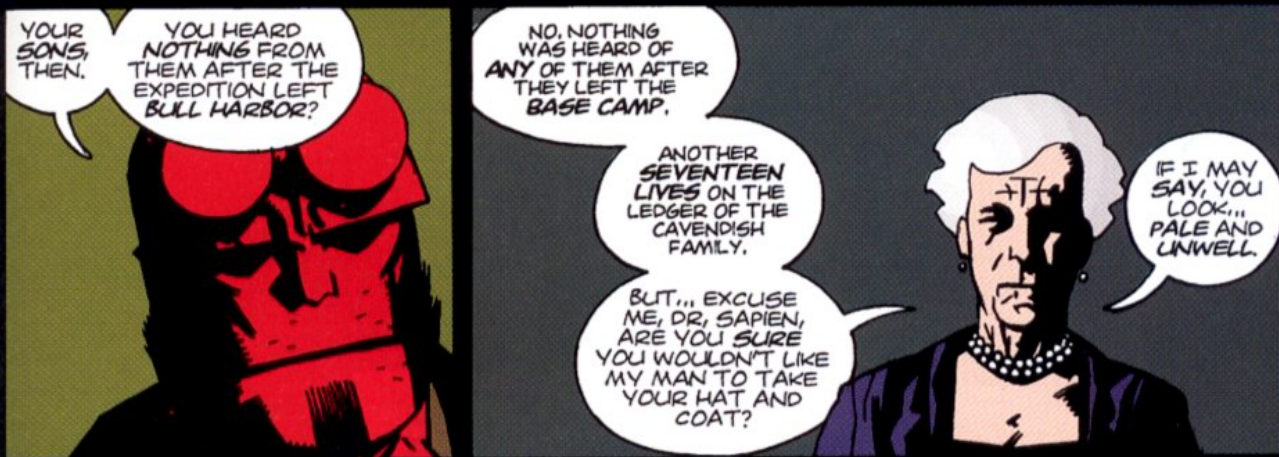
YOU HEARD NOTHING FROM THEM AFTER THE EXPEDITION LEFT BULL HARBOR?

NO, NOTHING WAS HEARD OF ANY OF THEM AFTER THEY LEFT THE BASE CAMP.

ANOTHER SEVENTEEN LIVES ON THE LEDGER OF THE CAVENDISH FAMILY.

BUT... EXCUSE ME, DR. SAPIEN, ARE YOU SURE YOU WOULDN'T LIKE MY MAN TO TAKE YOUR HAT AND COAT?

IF I MAY SAY, YOU LOOK... PALE AND UNWELL.



NO, MA'AM I'M FINE, THANK YOU.

DR. SAPIEN DOESN'T CARE MUCH FOR TRAVELING.

NOW, SINCE YOU SAY YOU DON'T MIND DIRECT QUESTIONS, I HAVE A COUPLE, SUCH AS, NINE GENERATIONS SEEMS AN AWFULLY LONG TIME FOR A FAMILY OBSESSION...



DOES IT?
I REALLY
WOULDN'T
KNOW.

IT HAS ALWAYS
SEEMED PERFECTLY
NATURAL TO ME.
IN ALL MY LIFE I
HAVE NEVER KNOWN
ANY OTHER WAY.

OUR FAMILY
FORTUNE WAS FOUND-
ED IN EUROPE, BY
ELIHU CAVENDISH. HE
BEGAN AS A SIMPLE
WHALER. BY THE TIME
HE DIED, HE HAD BEEN
MASTER OF MANY
GREAT SHIPS.



"BUT HE WAS NEVER
AT REST, NEVER
SATISFIED.

"HIS TRAVELS HAD TAKEN
HIM AROUND THE WORLD
AND BACK TWO DOZEN
TIMES.

"IN STRANGE PORTS
HE LEARNED...
STRANGE THINGS."

FINALLY HIS TRAVELS
BROUGHT HIM TO AMERICA,
AND HERE HE BUILT THIS
HOUSE. THIS CURSED
HOUSE.

HE CHOSE THIS
LOCATION WITH
GREAT CARE. NO
ONE KNOWS
WHY.

"WITH THE HOUSE COMPLET-
ED, HE SET ABOUT PREPAR-
ING AN EXPEDITION TO THE
FARTHEST REACHES OF THE
ARCTIC. TO SEARCH FOR
SOMETHING. SOMETHING HE
LEARNED OF FROM A SCRAP
OF ANCIENT PARCHMENT HE
HAD ACQUIRED IN SOME
LOST CORNER OF THE
WORLD.



"BEFORE HE COULD LEAVE HE
DIED OF TYPHUS. HE WAS
ONE OF THOUSANDS WHO
DIED THAT YEAR."

AS MUCH AS ANYWHERE ELSE, I SUPPOSE THAT IS WHERE OUR CURSE WAS BEGUN. ELIHU CAVENDISH'S UNFULFILLED QUEST HAS HAUNTED EVERY MALE OF THE FAMILY EVER SINCE.

FOR NINE GENERATIONS, ALMOST TWO HUNDRED YEARS, EACH PROUD YOUNG MAN HAS SAILED OFF TO FIND... I DON'T KNOW WHAT. A DREAM. A MYTH.



"NOW MY SONS HAVE GONE. MY THREE BOYS. I PRAYED THEY WOULD BE SPARED THIS, BUT MY PRAYERS WENT UNANSWERED.

"AND SO, PERHAPS, THE CURSE ENDS. MY SONS HAD NO SONS OF THEIR OWN. IF THEY ARE DEAD--AND I FEAR THEY MUST BE--THE CAVENDISH LINE DIES WITH THEM.

"AND SOON, VERY SOON, I WILL DIE, AND THIS HORRID OLD HOUSE WILL SINK AT LAST INTO THE BLACK WATERS OF THE LAKE..."

"...AND BE HIDDEN FOREVER FROM THE EYES OF GOD."

WE'RE...
VERY
SORRY,
MA'AM.



THANK YOU, MR. BOY.

I WAS SORRY MYSELF TO HEAR OF THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR BRUTTENHOLM. I KNOW YOU AND HE WERE VERY CLOSE.

IT IS MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT ANY OUTSIDER SHOULD HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY OUR PAIN.

THE PARCHMENT.

WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?

LOST...

MRS. CAVENDISH, THE ROOMS ARE READY FOR YOUR GUESTS.

THANK YOU.

I HOPE YOU WILL ALL FORGIVE ME. IT HAS BEEN A LONG DAY, AND I AM TIRED.

AND I'M SURE YOU MUST BE TIRED, TOO, AFTER YOUR JOURNEY.

YES. THANK YOU.

WE CAN CONTINUE OUR QUESTIONS TOMORROW MORNING.




YOU DID WELL, EMMA.



YOU DID VERY WELL.

I AM QUITE SURE THEY SUSPECTED NOTHING.



MY WORK CAN BE COMPLETED NOW EVEN SOONER THAN I HAD PLANNED.

THEN... YOUR PROMISE...

MY PROMISE IS KEPT, EMMA. I RETURN YOUR TWO OLDEST BOYS TO YOU.



CHILDREN... COME AND KISS YOUR MOTHER GOODNIGHT...

THIS IS YOUR ROOM, MISS SHERMAN. I TRUST YOU WILL FIND IT COMFORTABLE.

YOUR ROOM IS AT THE END OF THE HALL, GENTLEMEN.

GOOD NIGHT, BOYS.

DON'T HAVE ANY NIGHTMARES.

LIZ.

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT LIZ.

HERE'S WHAT IT SAYS IN HER DOSSIER..

"SHERMAN, ELIZABETH ANNE.
BORN KANSAS CITY,
KANSAS, APRIL 15, 1962.

"PYROTECHNIC ABILITIES
FIRST MANIFEST AT AGE 11.

"RESULTANT FIRE LEVELED
ONE CITY BLOCK. TOTAL
FATALITIES, 32, INCLUDING
THREE FIREFIGHTERS.

"MOTHER, FATHER AND ONLY
KNOWN SIBLING, A BROTHER,
AMONG DEAD.

"BECAME WARD OF B.P.R.D. IN
1974.

"HAS SINCE BEEN TRAINED
TO PROPERLY CONTROL HER
PYROTECHNIC ABILITIES.
LAST UNCONTROLLED MANI-
FESTATION, JULY 4, 1984."

PRETTY IMPERSONAL.

YOU'D HARDLY EVEN GUESS
THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT
A HUMAN BEING.

AS DISTINCT FROM THE GENTLEMAN I'M SHARING A ROOM WITH...

WHAT DO YOU THINK? WAS SHE TELLING THE TRUTH?

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF SHE HAS A REASON TO LIE.

DAMN, ABE! I HATE THIS! I WAS SURE WE'D LEARN SOMETHING IF WE CAME UP HERE.

I GUESS I COULD BE WRONG. SURE WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME.

AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T TURN OUT TO BE LIKE THE LAST TIME. CHINA, '79.

GOD... THAT WAS AWFUL...

DID YOU RECOGNIZE THE BUTLER?

YOU KNOW... HE DID LOOK SORT OF... FAMILIAR.

VERY, IN FACT HE LOOKS JUST LIKE THE MAN IN THIS PICTURE OF THE EXPEDITION.

JUST LIKE SVEN OLAFSON.

THIS MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL. WHY WOULD SHE LIE WITH OLAFSON PARADING AROUND IN FRONT OF US?

WE WON'T FIND OUT BY GUESSING, ABE.

THIS WINDOW HAS A CLEAR DROP TO THE LAKE.

TIME FOR A MORE DIRECT APPROACH.



TIME FOR YOU TO GET WET!

AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON! THIS BEARD WAS STARTING TO MAKE ME FEEL CLAUSTROPHOBIC.

I COULD REALLY USE A SWIM!

ABE.

I WISH I COULD TELL YOU ABOUT ABE. THAT'S NOT HIS REAL NAME, OF COURSE. "ABRAHAM SAPIEN" IS A BIT OF A BAD JOKE.

HE WAS DISCOVERED WHEN PLUMBERS WORKING IN THE BASEMENT OF ST. TRINIAN'S HOSPITAL IN WASHINGTON, DC, BROKE OPEN A SEALED DOOR AND DISCOVERED A LONG-FORGOTTEN CHAMBER.

ICHTHO
SAPIEN

APRIL 14
1865

THE BUREAU TOOK HIS NAME FROM THE INSCRIPTION ON A SCRAP OF PAPER PINNED UP NEAR THE TUBE. THE DAY PRESIDENT LINCOLN DIED.

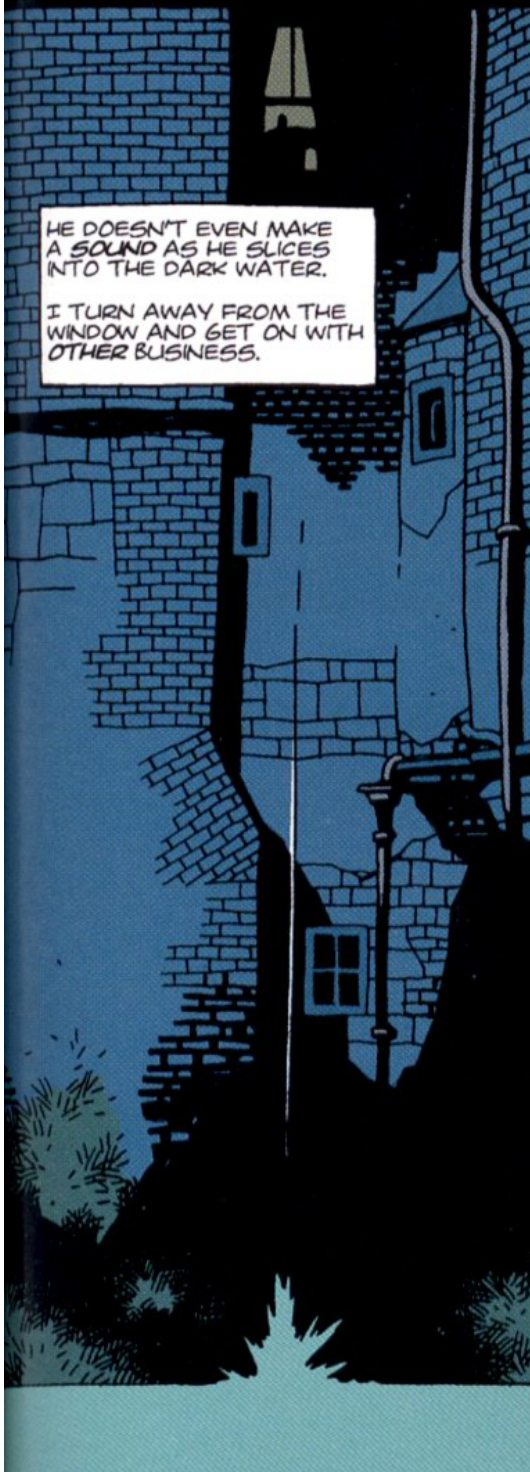


FROM WHAT I SAW AS WE CAME IN, THE FOUNDATION LOOKS PRETTY WELL RUINED ON THE EAST SIDE.

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND A SPACE TO SQUEEZE IN.

YES. WISH ME LUCK, OLD FRIEND.

I HAVE A NASTY FEELING WE'RE ALL GOING TO NEED IT.



HE DOESN'T EVEN MAKE A SOUND AS HE SLICES INTO THE DARK WATER.
I TURN AWAY FROM THE WINDOW AND GET ON WITH OTHER BUSINESS.



LIZ? ME. ABE'S IN THE WATER.

DID YOU RECOGNIZE THE BUTLER?

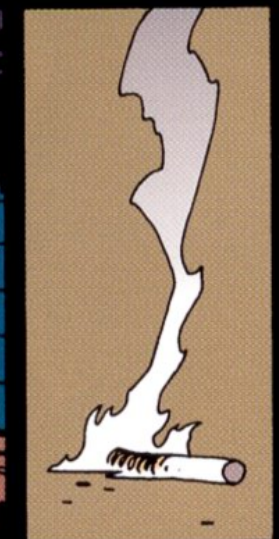


OF COURSE. ODD THAT THEY DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO DISGUISE HIM.

ARE WE OUT OF OUR DEPTH ON THIS ONE, HELLBOY? THAT KIND OF CONFIDENCE...



OH... HANG ON A SECOND...





IS THERE A PROBLEM, SIR?

YOU!



WHERE IS SHE?
WHERE'S MISS SHERMAN?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE??

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, SIR.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.



WAM

WRONG ANSWER.
YOU GOT THREE SECONDS TO START TALKING...



...ONE...



...TWO...



...THREE...

A three-panel comic strip showing a fight between Hellboy and the Green Goblin. In the first panel, Hellboy is on the left, wearing his signature red horned helmet and a tan trench coat over a black shirt. He has a red, clawed hand on his right arm. The Green Goblin is on the right, wearing a green suit with a white mask and a long, thin, pointed nose. He is being thrown back by Hellboy. In the second panel, the Green Goblin is in mid-air, having bounced back from Hellboy's attack. In the third panel, Hellboy is in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, ready for his next move. The Green Goblin is in the foreground, looking up at Hellboy. The background is a simple brownish-tan color with some small white specks.

OH NO
YOU
DON'T!

I HIT HIM AS HARD AS I CAN
WITH MY FLESH AND BLOOD
HAND.

THE WAY HE BOUNCES BACK
I MIGHT AS WELL HAVE HIT
HIM WITH A LILY PAD.

SO FOR MY SECOND SWING,
I GO STRAIGHT TO THE BIG
GUNS.

NOBODY KNOWS WHERE MY
STONE HAND CAME FROM,
OR HOW IT GOT GRAFTED
ONTO MY ARM.

BUT IN A FIGHT IT'S BETTER
THAN A SLEDGEHAMMER.



UNFORTUNATELY, IT SEEMS MY FROGGY FRIEND IS TOUGH ENOUGH TO TAKE WHATEVER I HAND OUT.



I BOUNCE OFF THE VAULTED CEILING LIKE A SACK OF WET CEMENT.

A PIECE OF MY BRAIN REGISTERS THE DAMAGE TO THE FINE OLD ARCHITECTURE.



IT'S MY LAST CALM THOUGHT FOR A WHILE.

I LAND ON MY FEET.




AND I LAND MAD.





KRAK





AND JUST ABOUT THEN I
REALIZE ABE HAS BEEN GONE
WAY TOO LONG...

HELLBOY WAS RIGHT ABOUT
THE FOUNDATION. I FOUND A
WAY THROUGH EASILY. IT'S
AMAZING THE OLD HOUSE IS
STILL STANDING, THE LOWER
WALLS ARE SO FULL OF
HOLES.


THE WATER IS DARKER THAN
ANY I'VE EVER SWUM IN BE-
FORE. IT SEEMS ALMOST TO
CLING TO MY SKIN, LIKE INK,
LIKE OIL.

AND THERE IS NOTHING AT
ALL ALIVE DOWN HERE. NO
ANIMALS. NO FISH. NOT
EVEN ALGAE.

A PLACE OF
DEATH.



OLD DEATH.



AND AS I REACH THE
SURFACE, I BEGIN TO
THINK...

...A PLACE OF NEW DEATH, TOO...



MRS. CAVEN-DISH..?




MA'AM..?




DAMN!

THE MARKS ARE THE SAME AS ON THE BODY OF MY ADOPTIVE FATHER.



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

I SHOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO PROTECT YOU...



DO NOT DISTRESS YOURSELF, CREATURE.

WHO THE...??

YOU NEED SHED NO TEARS FOR EMMA.

SHE DIED AS SHE WANTED TO DIE.

SHE MET HER END AT LAST IN THE LOVING EMBRACE OF HER CHILDREN. TWO OF THEM, AT LEAST. YOU KILLED THE THIRD.

THAT VOICE...?!

I KNOW THAT VOICE...

OF COURSE YOU
KNOW MY VOICE,
CREATURE. I AM
YOUR MASTER, YOUR
TRUE FATHER UPON
THIS PLANE.

FIFTY YEARS
AGO I SUMMONED
YOU FORTH FROM
SHADOW.

KNEEL BEFORE
ME, CREATURE.
SURRENDER UNTO
ME, AND YOU SHALL
LIVE TO SEE THE
NEW DAWN OF THIS
WORLD.




I DON'T
THINK
SO...






WHAT N...?!



THE TENTACLES ARE LIKE
THE FROG THING'S TONGUE.

AT THEIR TOUCH I GO
NUMB ALL OVER.

NNNGG



AND THE OLD WIZARD SEEMS
TO DRONE ON FROM A
THOUSAND MILES AWAY.


BE NOT TOO
QUICK TO
REFUSE YOUR
DESTINY,
CREATURE.

I ALONE
KNOW THE
SECRET YOU
HAVE SOUGHT
SO LONG.

WHENCE
YOU CAME,
AND
WHY.

SO THINK
AWHILE,
CREATURE.

CONSIDER
THE ROLE YOU
WERE
SUMMONED TO
PLAY.



STAND BESIDE ME. LET ME
HARNESS THE POWER YOU
HOLD UNKNOWING IN YOUR
RIGHT HAND,.

...OR
DIE.



CHAPTER THREE



WHEN I LOOK BACK ON ALL THE YEARS OF MY CAREER AS THE WORLD'S GREATEST PARANORMAL INVESTIGATOR, IT SEEMS AS THOUGH I'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH BOTH FEET OFF THE GROUND.

LEAPING, FALLING, SOMETIMES BEING PICKED UP AND HURLED, I'VE SORT OF GOTTEN USED TO IT, IN FACT.

BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT. I WAS PULLED DOWN THROUGH THE FLOOR OF THE OLD **CAVENDISH** MANSION, AND IT SEEMS NOW LIKE THAT WAS HOURS AGO, DAYS AGO.



I HIT WATER AND THE PIECE OF MY BRAIN THAT'S STILL WORKING TELLS ME THAT MEANS I CAN'T HAVE FALLEN NEARLY AS FAR AS IT SEEMED.

THE CAVENDISH HOUSE SITS ON A SHALLOW SPIT OF LAND STICKING OUT INTO A LAKE, IT'S ALMOST AT THE SAME LEVEL AS THE WATER.



THE LAKE IS ONLY A FEW DOZEN FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL, AND SINCE NO WATER CAN BE LOWER THAN SEA LEVEL...

...THIS BIG, DARK, COLD POOL
CAN'T BE MORE THAN FIFTY OR
SIXTY FEET BELOW THE HOUSE.

AS ALL THIS RUNS THROUGH MY
MIND I CAN ALMOST HEAR LIZ
CHIDING ME.

"COME ON, MR. WIZARD," SHE'D
SAY. "THERE'S WORK TO BE
DONE."

BUT I DON'T REALLY HEAR HER.
LIZ IS GONE, SNATCHED FROM
HER ROOM BY SOME UNKNOWN
FORCE.

THE SAME FORCE, I'D BET,
THAT PULLED ME DOWN HERE.

IT FEELS BAD DOWN HERE. ALL
OVER MY BODY COARSE, BLACK
LITTLE HAIRS RISE AND BRISTLE
AT THE TOUCH OF EVIL.

AND THEN I HEAR THE
VOICE, THE STRANGE,
FAMILIAR VOICE...

WHAT YOU FEEL,
CREATURE, IS THE
LONG AND BLOODY
HISTORY OF THIS
PLACE.

OPEN YOUR SMALL
MIND TO IT. CAN YOU
HEAR THE SCREAMS
OF FUTILE SACRIFICE?
CAN YOU SMELL THE
HOT BLOOD ON THESE
COLD STONES?

EIGHT HUNDRED
YEARS AGO MEN STILL
WORSHIPPED THE
SERPENT AND SOUGHT
TO APPEASE HIM WITH
THE BLOOD OF
INNOCENTS.

FOOLS!



THE SERPENT CARES
NOT FOR THE BLOOD
OF MEN. HE CRAVES BUT
ONE THING, AND THAT
IS FREEDOM.



EIGHT CENTURIES
AGO MORTALS LACKED
THE POWER TO
FREE THE BEAST.

BUT THAT
POWER
EXISTS NOW,
HERE.

IN
ME!



LOOK AROUND, CREATURE, FEEL FEAR AND WONDER AT WHAT YOU SEE.

THE SERPENT, THE OGDRU-JAHAD, THE SEVEN BEASTS, THEY SPOKE TO MEN IN THIS PLACE.

WHISPERS IN DREAMS.

AND THEY SPEAK TO ME.

FIFTY YEARS AGO YOU WERE BROUGHT ACROSS INTO THIS WORLD FOR A REASON, CREATURE.

YOU WERE CALLED TO STAND BESIDE ME AT RAGNA ROK-- TO COMMAND THE POWER I SHALL UNLEASH UPON THE WORLD.

HERE IS YOUR PURPOSE.

HERE IS YOUR DESTINY.

DO TELL.



...I THINK I'LL PASS.



YOU DO NOT SEEM TO FULLY UNDERSTAND, CREATURE.

BY THESE WORDS I DO NOT OFFER. BY THESE WORDS I DO COMMAND.



...I...

...DON'T...

...THINK...

...SO...



GET STUFFED!



BLAM

HEY, FALL DOWN, MAN!

THE TORCH OF LIBERTY SAID I WAS THE WORST SHOT HE EVER TRIED TO TRAIN...

...BUT I KNOW WHEN I'VE HIT SOMETHING, AND I HIT YOU! HOW COME YOU'RE STILL STANDING?



WTF

HE DOESN'T LITTER SO MUCH AS A SQUEAK, BUT THE AIR RINGS LIKE SOME GREAT FROZEN BELL...

...AND I FEEL FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE SOMEBODY JUST SWATTED ME WITH A SUBMARINE.



I HIT HARD, HARD ENOUGH TO KNOCK THE WIND OUT OF EVEN ME.



NEVER AGAIN RAISE A HAND TO ME, CREATURE.

I CONJURED YOU INTO THIS WORLD, AND I CAN WIPE YOU FROM IT.



I'M BEGINNING TO BELIEVE HIM.

I'VE BEEN A PARANORMAL INVESTIGATOR GETTING ON FORTY YEARS NOW. I'VE SEEN A LOT OF THINGS, LEARNED A LOT OF THINGS.

THE POCKETS OF MY OLD COAT ARE FULL OF CHARMS AND TALISMANS I'VE COLLECTED FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD.



BY RIGHTS ANY ONE OF THEM SHOULD HAVE PROTECTED ME FROM JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.

BUT EITHER HE'S NEUTRALIZED ALL OF THEM SOMEHOW OR--WORSE--HE'S JUST TOO DAMN POWERFUL FOR THEM TO WORK AGAINST HIM.

UNTIL I KNOW WHICH, I DECIDE TO STALL THINGS A LITTLE BIT.

NICE TRICK, PUTTING YOUR HEAD BACK TOGETHER.



YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST WHO HAS TRIED TO DESTROY ME, CREATURE.

EIGHTY YEARS AGO IN MY MOTHER RUSSIA, AT THE PALACE OF PRINCE YUSSUPOV, I WAS POISONED, SHOT, HURLED INTO THE FROZEN NEVA.

BUT IN THOSE ICY WATERS THE SERPENT CALLED TO ME.

HE BADE ME RISE, BADE ME FULFILL MY PURPOSE.

AND IN VISIONS OF A WORLD TRANSFORMED BY HOLOCAUST AND FIRE..

...HE SHOWED ME WHAT THAT PURPOSE IS.

IT IS MY DESTINY TO PRESIDE OVER THE FALL OF HUMANKIND.

AND YOU'RE OFFERING ME WHAT? THE CHANCE TO BE YOUR JUNIOR PARTNER IN THIS LITTLE FUNFEST?

THANKS, BUT I HAVE OTHER PLANS FOR THE APOCALYPSE...

FOOL.

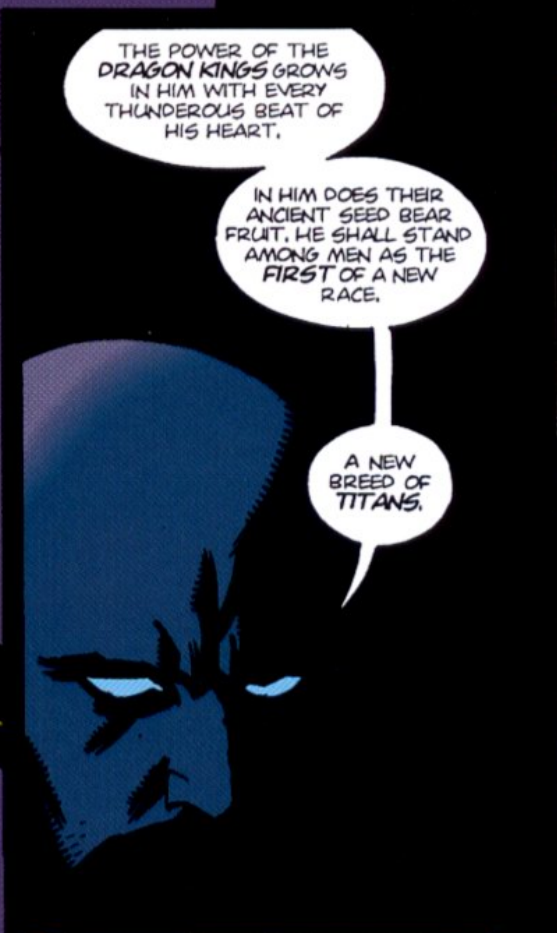
STILL YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NO CHOICE I OFFER YOU.

WHAT THE..?



I'M NOT SURPRISED YOU DO NOT RECOGNIZE HIM, CREATURE.

HE IS MUCH CHANGED EVEN IN THE SHORT TIME SINCE LAST YOU MET.



THE POWER OF THE DRAGON KINGS GROWS IN HIM WITH EVERY THUNDEROUS BEAT OF HIS HEART.

IN HIM DOES THEIR ANCIENT SEED BEAR FRUIT, HE SHALL STAND AMONG MEN AS THE FIRST OF A NEW RACE.

A NEW BREED OF TITANS.



OF SVEN OLAFSEN, OF FRAIL HUMAN FLESH...

...THERE IS NO MORE.



WITH THE THREE CAVENDISH BROTHERS I WILL CONFESS I HAD CONSIDERABLY LESS SUCCESS.

TRANSFORMED THEY WERE, AS OLAFSEN HAS BEEN.

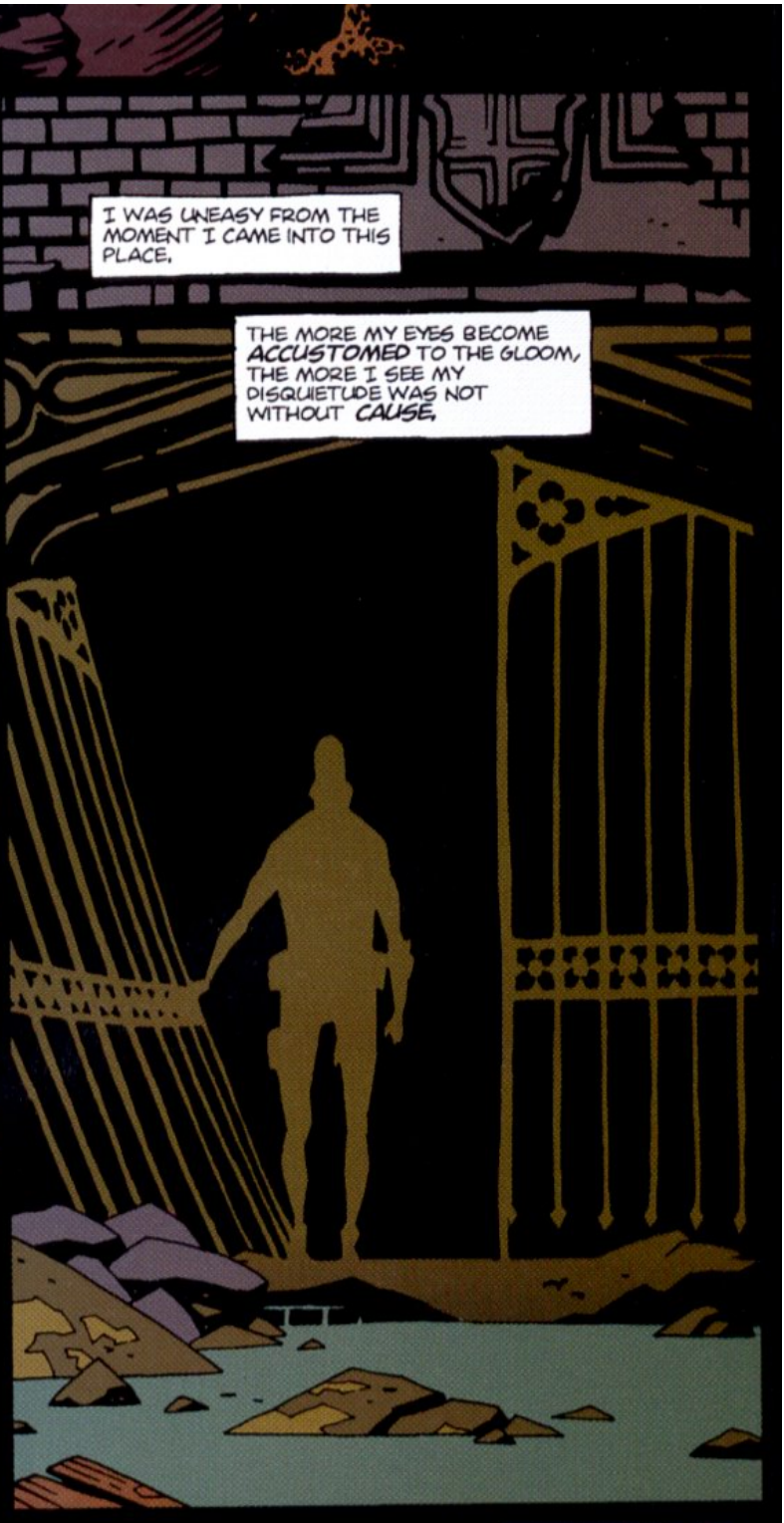


BUT IN THEIR HEART OF HEARTS A FLICKER OF THEIR HUMAN FRILTIES REMAINED.

HAVING SLAIN THEIR MOTHER THEY HAVE GONE.



FLED INTO DARKNESS TO WALLOW IN THE DRY DUST OF THEIR LOST GENERATIONS.

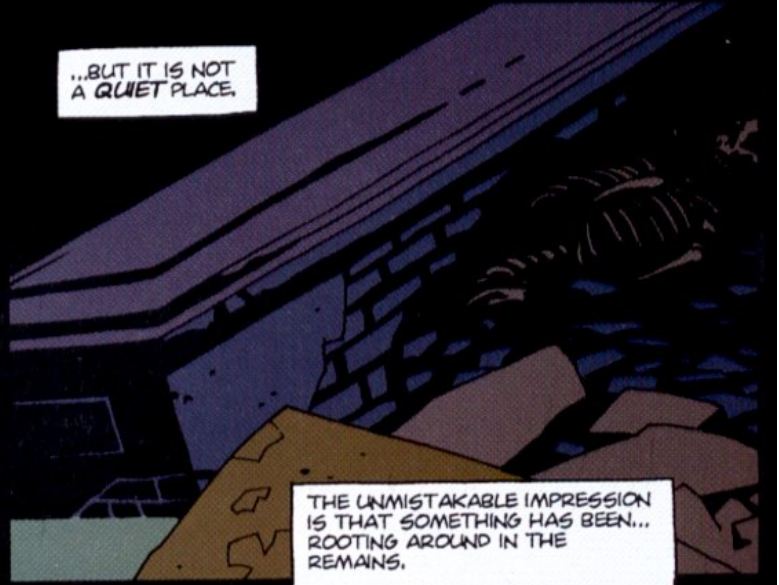


I WAS UNEASY FROM THE MOMENT I CAME INTO THIS PLACE.

THE MORE MY EYES BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO THE GLOOM, THE MORE I SEE MY DISQUIETUDE WAS NOT WITHOUT CAUSE.



THIS IS A PLACE OF THE DEAD...



...BUT IT IS NOT A QUIET PLACE.

THE UNMISTAKABLE IMPRESSION IS THAT SOMETHING HAS BEEN... ROOTING AROUND IN THE REMAINS.



... AND IF GOD CHOOSE,
I SHALL BUT LOVE THEE BETTER
AFTER DEATH

AND HERE, PERHAPS, I'VE
FOUND THE *CULPRITS*.

THIS PLACE OF DEATH IS NOT
ENTIRELY WITHOUT LIFE.



BUT...



...WHAT SORT OF LIFE?




I SENSE A KIND OF KINSHIP WITH THE STRANGE AMPHIBIANS.

BUT NOT ENOUGH THAT IT KEEPS ME FROM TAKING THREE CAUTIOUS STEPS BACKWARD...

...AWAY FROM THE SILVERY RINGS THAT RIPPLE OUT FROM THE SPOT THEY WENT UNDER.

FEARFUL TO TAKE MY EYES FROM THE WATER I PROBE BEHIND ME WITH AN OUTSTRETCHED HAND.

AND ROTTEN WOOD REVEALS ITSELF TOO WEAK TO TOLERATE EVEN MY GENTLE TOUCH.




DARKNESS GIVES WAY TO
GREATER DARKNESS, SHADOW
ON SHADOW.

BUT ONE OF THOSE
SHADOWS HAS A *SHAPE*

AND, I THINK,
A NAME.

ELIHU CAVENDISH...



THE OLD WIZARD
WASN'T KIDDING.


THE THING THAT USED TO BE
SVEN OLAFSEN IS ABOUT AS
TOUGH AS ANYTHING I'VE
COME ACROSS.

A PIECE OF ME WANTS TO THINK
THAT'S MAYBE BECAUSE I
KNOW THIS IS ALL THAT
REMAINS OF A MAN.

MAYBE AN
INNOCENT
MAN.

SO MAYBE I'M
HOLDING BACK
A BIT.

MAYBE.



BUT PROBABLY
NOT.

I FEEL MYSELF
STARTING TO GET
ANGRY.




GOOD.



SOMETIMES I CAN ACCOMPLISH
MORE
THAT WAY.


SOMETIMES
NOT.





THE PART OF MY BRAIN THAT'S STILL WORKING ON SOMETHING LIKE A RATIONAL LEVEL TELLS ME I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO CALL A HALT TO THIS FRACAS PRETTY SOON.

EVEN IF IT'S JUST A SHORT HALT, I NEED TIME TO CATCH MY SECOND WIND BEFORE FROGGY REACHES DOWN MY THROAT AND PULLS MY LUNGS OUT.



FROGGY, HOWEVER, HAS NO INTENTION OF GIVING ME THE SPACE I NEED.

I CLING TO THE SMALL HOPE THAT HE'S OPERATING SOLELY ON SOME KIND OF AMPHIBIOUS ADRENALINE.

THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE A REALLY CLEAR IDEA OF JUST HOW CLOSE HE IS TO WINNING.



SOME HOPE.



ENOUGH, OLAFSEN. WE DO NOT WANT THE CREATURE DEAD.

HE WOULD BE OF LITTLE USE THAT WAY.

YES? YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

....



...WHO..?

...HOW..?



YES... PERHAPS IT IS TIME I TOLD YOU SOMETHING MORE OF MYSELF.

FOLLOWING THE... EXAGGERATED REPORTS OF MY DEATH, I LEFT THE BLESSED SOIL OF RUSSIA.



I KNEW A TOWN IN ITALY, SMALL, SECLUDED, A PLACE I COULD REST. A PLACE I COULD REGATHER MY POWER.



FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS I LIVED IN ISOLATION, PREACHING ON OCCASION TO THOSE BRAVE SOULS WHO DARED APPROACH ME.

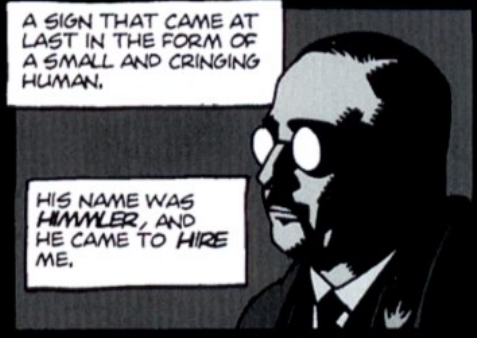
TELLING OF THE COMING RAGNA ROK, THE NEW AGE OF THE SERPENT, SPEAKING AS THE PROPHET OF THE APOCALYPSE.

BUT MOSTLY, MOSTLY WRAPPED IN SILENCE AS I LISTEN FOR THE VOICES THAT HAD SPOKEN TO ME UNDER THE RIVER.

LISTENED...

..AND HEARD NOTHING.

SO I WAITED INSTEAD FOR SOME OTHER KIND OF COMMUNICATION. I WAITED FOR A SIGN.



A SIGN THAT CAME AT LAST IN THE FORM OF A SMALL AND CRINGING HUMAN.

HIS NAME WAS HUNTLER, AND HE CAME TO HIRE ME.



TO TAKE ME TO THAT LAND WHICH WAS THE ANCIENT ENEMY OF MY BELOVED RUSSIA...

TO TAKE ME TO GERMANY.

THERE I WAS INTRODUCED TO A SMALL, DOOMED MADMAN.

BUT A MADMAN IN WHOSE DOOM I SAW A CHANCE TO HARNESS UNLIMITED RESOURCES,

I PERMITTED MYSELF TO BE JOINED WITH THOSE PUNY MINDS THE REICH HAD ASSEMBLED FOR ITSELF, BELIEVING THEM UNEQUALED IN THE WORLD, UNEQUALED IN THEIR TALENTS FOR CREATING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.

THEY WERE FOOLS, OF COURSE, COMPARED TO ME, BUT I SAW IN THEM ROUGH GEMS I MIGHT SHAPE AND POLISH. CRUDE THEIR THOUGHTS AND MINDS MIGHT BE...

...BUT ALSO UTTERLY UNTARNISHED BY THE LIMITATIONS OF CONSCIENCE AND MORALITY,

I WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE THREE I DEEMED MOST RATIONAL AMONG THEM. I GUIDED THEM, SO THAT IN TIME THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD THEMSELVES CONCEIVED THE PROJECT THEY NAMED RAGNA ROK,

HAD THEMSELVES IMAGINED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAGNA ROK ENGINE,

BEHIND THEIR BACKS I LAUGHED AT THEIR RIDICULOUS CONCEITS. NO MERE HUMAN MIND COULD EVEN HAVE CONCEIVED SUCH A WONDROUS DEVICE, AS NO MERE HUMAN FORM COULD EVEN CONTAIN THE FORCES WHICH THE ENGINE WOULD SUMMON, MAGNIFY AND DIRECT.

DIRECT INTO ME, SO THAT I MIGHT BECOME THE KEY BY WHICH THE BEAST WOULD BE AT LAST RELEASED FROM THEIR PRIMEVAL PRISON.



AS THE THOUSAND-YEAR REICH
GROUND DOWN TO ITS LAST,
BITTER, BLOODY DAYS, THE
PROJECT NEARED ITS
CULMINATION.

ASTROLOGY GUIDED
ME TO THE PLACE,

NUMEROLOGY GUIDED
ME TO THE TIME.

THERE WAS NO MEANS BY
WHICH THE RESULT OF THE
EXPERIMENT COULD BE
ACCURATELY PREDICTED.

THE NAZIS THOUGHT
IT FAILED.

I KNEW
BETTER.

I DID NOT KNOW PRECISELY
WHAT, BUT I KNEW
SOMETHING HAD BEEN
CONJURED FORTH FROM THE
WORLDS BEYOND.

YOU

BUT BEFORE I COULD PRESS MY
INVESTIGATION FURTHER, THE
TIDE OF WAR TURNED
IRREVOCABLY.

GERMANY WAS DESTROYED.
HITLER, HIMMLER, ALL THE REST
WERE DEAD.

AS TRIUMPHANT FOREIGN
ARMIES MARCHED OVER THE
ASHES OF THE FATHERLAND, MY
BRAVE ASSOCIATES FLED TO
PREARRANGED HIDING PLACES.

I WAS
ALONE

AND
FOR THE
FIRST
TIME...

I WAS
UNSURE.

AND IT WAS THEN,
AS IF MY MOMENT-
ARY WEAKNESS HAD
SOMEHOW REKINDLED
THEM...

...THAT I
HEARD ONCE
MORE THE LONG
SILENT VOICES.

THEY SPOKE,
AND THEY
BADE ME GO,

THEY BADE ME
GO NORTH.

NORTH, TO THE
ARCTIC WASTES.

TO THE VERY TOP
OF THE WORLD.

WITH A HANDFUL OF PAID COMPANIONS, I MARCHED UP OVER THE BROAD SHOULDER OF THE WORLD, NORTH AND EVER NORTH.

THOSE WHO MARCHED WITH ME HAD NO INTEREST IN MY MISSION. THEY CAME ONLY FOR THE GOLD I PROMISED.

SO IT WAS ALONE THAT I ARRIVED AT LAST AT MY DESTINATION.

SO IT WAS MY EYES ALONE WHICH LOOKED UPON THE FABLED TEMPLE OF THE OGDRI-JAHAD, BUILT UNCOUNTED EONS PAST BY THE FIRST RACE OF MEN.

AND WITHIN ITS FROZEN WALLS, SOMETHING OLDER STILL, FOR THE TEMPLE WAS BUILT TO CONTAIN IT.

THEIR SOULS WERE SMALL, BUT THEY WERE SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN ME.



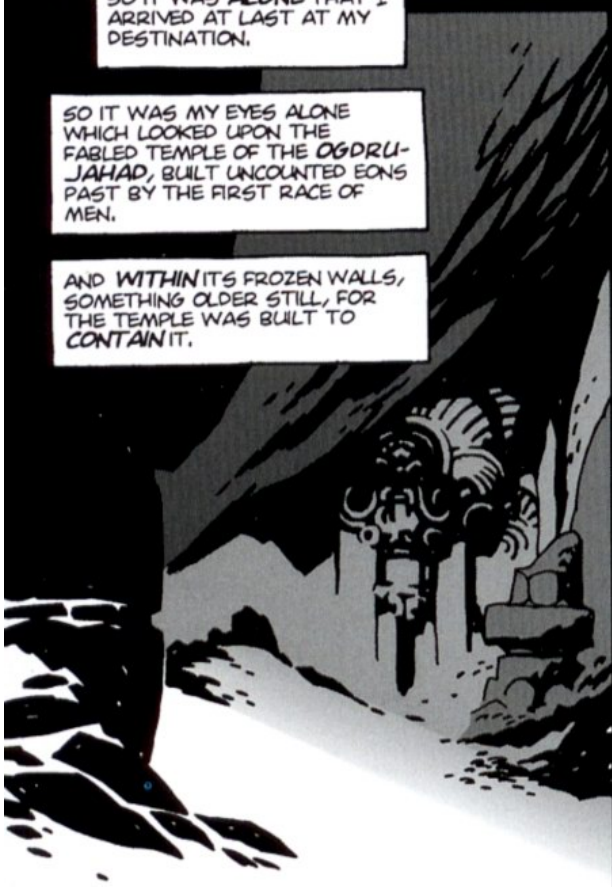
THE SADU-HEM, LEFT BY THE OGDRI-JAHAD THAT THEY MIGHT ALWAYS HAVE A FOOTHOLD IN THE WORLD FROM WHICH THEY WERE FOREVER BANISHED.

HIDDEN FROM THE EYES OF GOD, DEAD AND FOSSILIZED, TO ANOTHER IT WOULD HAVE SEEMED BUT A GROTESQUE STATUE.

BUT NOT TO ME.

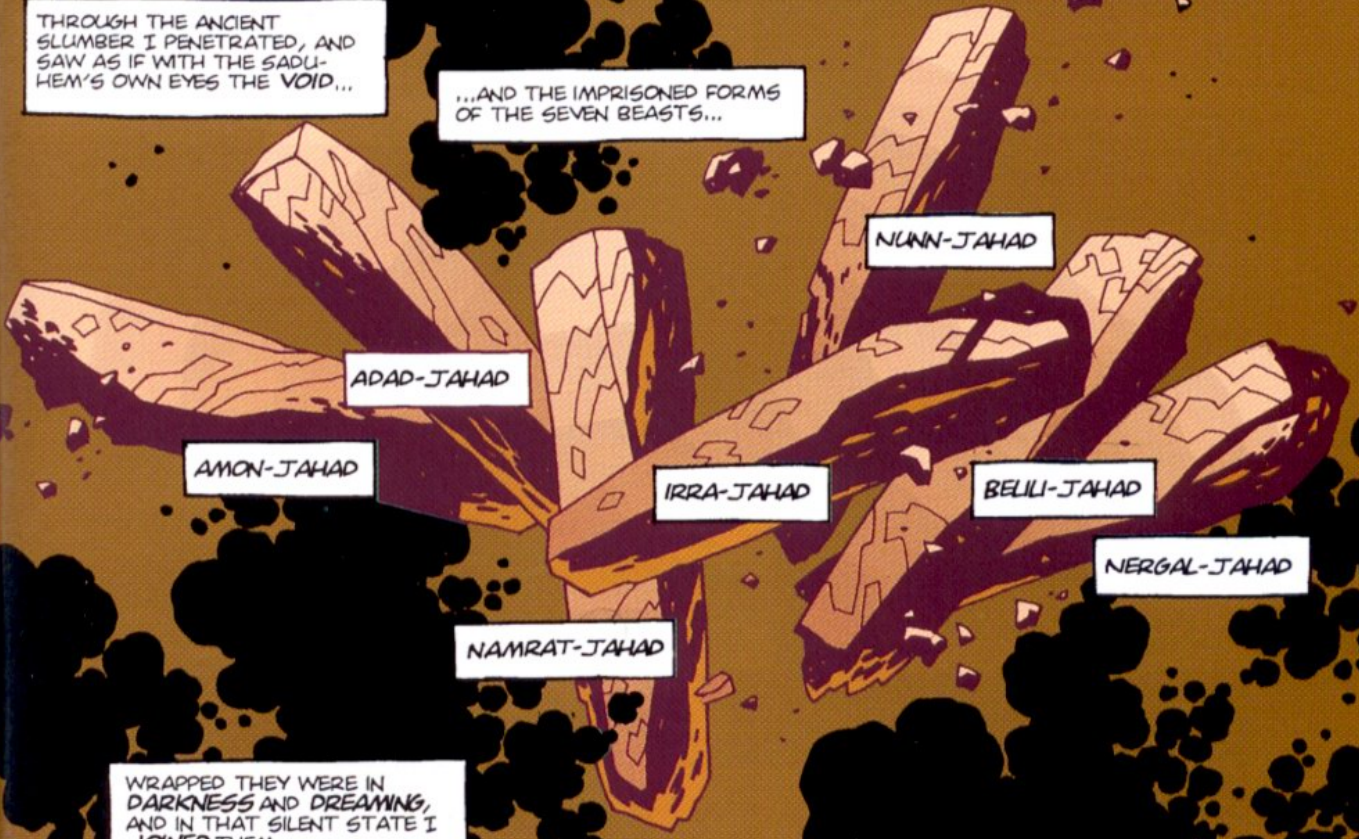
I FELT ITS MIND, ALIVE AND WAITING.

SEATING MYSELF AT THE FOOT OF THE LIVING STATUE, I SENT MY BODY INTO A TRANCE, THAT MY MIND MIGHT REACH OUT TO THE SHADOW OF LIFE DEEP WITHIN ITS STONY COILS.



THROUGH THE ANCIENT
SLUMBER I PENETRATED, AND
SAW AS IF WITH THE SADU-
HEM'S OWN EYES THE VOID...

...AND THE IMPRISONED FORMS
OF THE SEVEN BEASTS...



ADAD-JAHAD

NUNN-JAHAD

AMON-JAHAD

IRRA-JAHAD

BELILI-JAHAD

NERGAL-JAHAD

NAMRAT-JAHAD

WRAPPED THEY WERE IN
DARKNESS AND DREAMING,
AND IN THAT SILENT STATE I
JOINED THEM.

SO DID THE LONG YEARS PASS,
TIMELESS, ETERNAL, SEEMING
AS A MOMENT, SEEMING AS A
CENTURY.



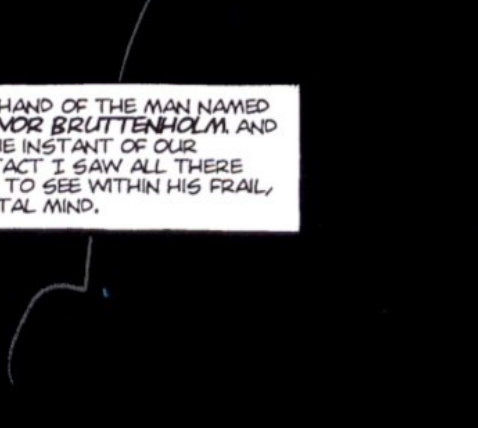
UNTIL THE TOUCH OF A HUMAN
HAND AWAKENED ME.



I SAW YOU,
CREATURE, AND
KNEW YOU CALLED
THIS MAN YOUR
"FATHER."



THE HAND OF THE MAN NAMED
TREVOR BRITTENHOLM, AND
IN THE INSTANT OF OUR
CONTACT I SAW ALL THERE
WAS TO SEE WITHIN HIS FRAIL,
MORTAL MIND.



AFTER HIS LONG SLEEP
SADU-HEM WAS HUNGRY,
BUT I BADE HIM SPARE
THESE MORTALS FOR
A WHILE.

I SAW IN THEM A GREATER
USE AS NEW DISCIPLES TO
MY PLAN, THAN AS A
QUICK RESPITE OF HUNGER
TO AN ANCIENT GOOLING.

YOU WILL APPRECIATE HOW IMPORTANT IS MY PLAN, WHEN I TELL YOU SADU-HEM AGREED.

BUT THEY WERE NOT ENOUGH, WITH THE POWER THAT HAD GROWN IN ME DURING MY LONG STILLNESS I REACHED OUT.

I SOUGHT WITH MY MIND THE OTHER HUMANS, THE BASE CAMP I HAD SEEN IN THE MEMORIES OF BRITTENHOLM.



HE LET THE HUMANS LIVE, TO BE VESSELS FOR THE SEED OF THE GREAT SERPENT.

I TOUCHED THE OTHERS, AND I SUMMONED THEM TO ME.

I NEEDED THEM, YOU SEE, AS SLAVE LABOR, TO LIFT AND BEAR SADU-HEM ACROSS THE ICE, DOWN THE SLOPE OF THE WORLD TO THE BOAT.



ONCE HE WAS ENSCONCED WITHIN THAT METAL WOMB I LET HIM FEED AT LAST ON THE MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION.

ALL SAVE BRITTENHOLM, WHOM I ALLOWED TO ESCAPE, ONCE WE REACHED NEW YORK.

I KNEW HIS FIRST CONSCIOUS ACTION WOULD BE TO CONTACT YOU, THE ONE HE CALLED "HELLBOY."

IN THE MEANTIME, I WAITED, WAITED WHILE THE POWER WITHIN ME GREW AND STRENGTHENED.

AT LAST MY PATIENCE WAS DOUBLY REWARDED, YOU ARRIVED...

...AND WITH YOU CAME AN UNANTICIPATED BONUS.



AN EXTRA SOURCE OF POWER WITH WHICH I NOW EXPLUNGE ALL FURTHER DELAY. THE TIME OF RAGNA ROK IS HERE




LIZ!



LET... HER
ALONE,
WIZARD.


SHE HAS NO...
CONNECTION TO ME...
TO WHERE I
CAME FROM... HOW
I GOT HERE...



TRUE, AND YOU
MAY PUT YOUR
SMALL MIND AT
REST, CREATURE.

I HAVE NO INTENTION
OF HARMING HER. MORE
DAMAGE WAS DONE, IN
FACT, BY THE HAM-HANDED
DOCTORS AND SO-CALLED
"SCIENTISTS" WHO HAVE
PROBED AND PRODDED
HER OVER THE YEARS.


AND YET WITH ALL
THAT THE FOOLS CAME
NOT SO MUCH AS ONE
STEP CLOSER TO UNDER-
STANDING THE NATURE
OF HER GIFT.



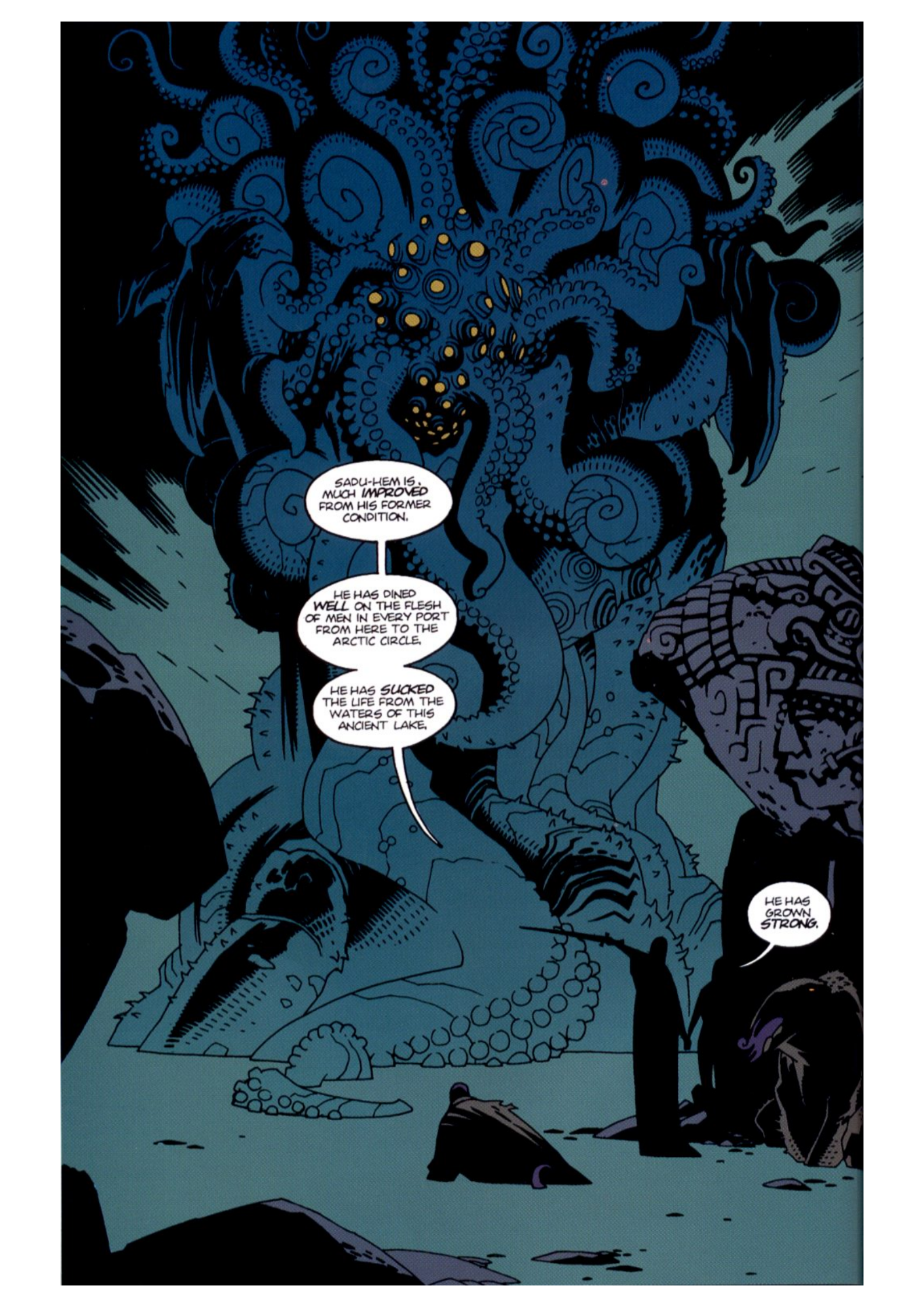
HER POWER IS A LIVING THING,
CREATURE, EVERY BIT AS MUCH
ALIVE AS YOU OR I.

AND AS A LIVING THING IT NEEDS
ROOM. ROOM TO BREATHE,
ROOM TO GROW.

THAT ROOM I SHALL NOW
PROVIDE, AND IN SO DOING
HARNESS THE POWER TO MY
PURPOSE.



BUT I SEE NOW
THAT THE TIME
HAS COME TO END
THIS PLEASANT
LITTLE CHAT,



SADU-HEM IS,
MUCH IMPROVED
FROM HIS FORMER
CONDITION.

HE HAS DINED
WELL ON THE FLESH
OF MEN IN EVERY PORT
FROM HERE TO THE
ARCTIC CIRCLE.

HE HAS SUCKED
THE LIFE FROM THE
WATERS OF THIS
ANCIENT LAKE.

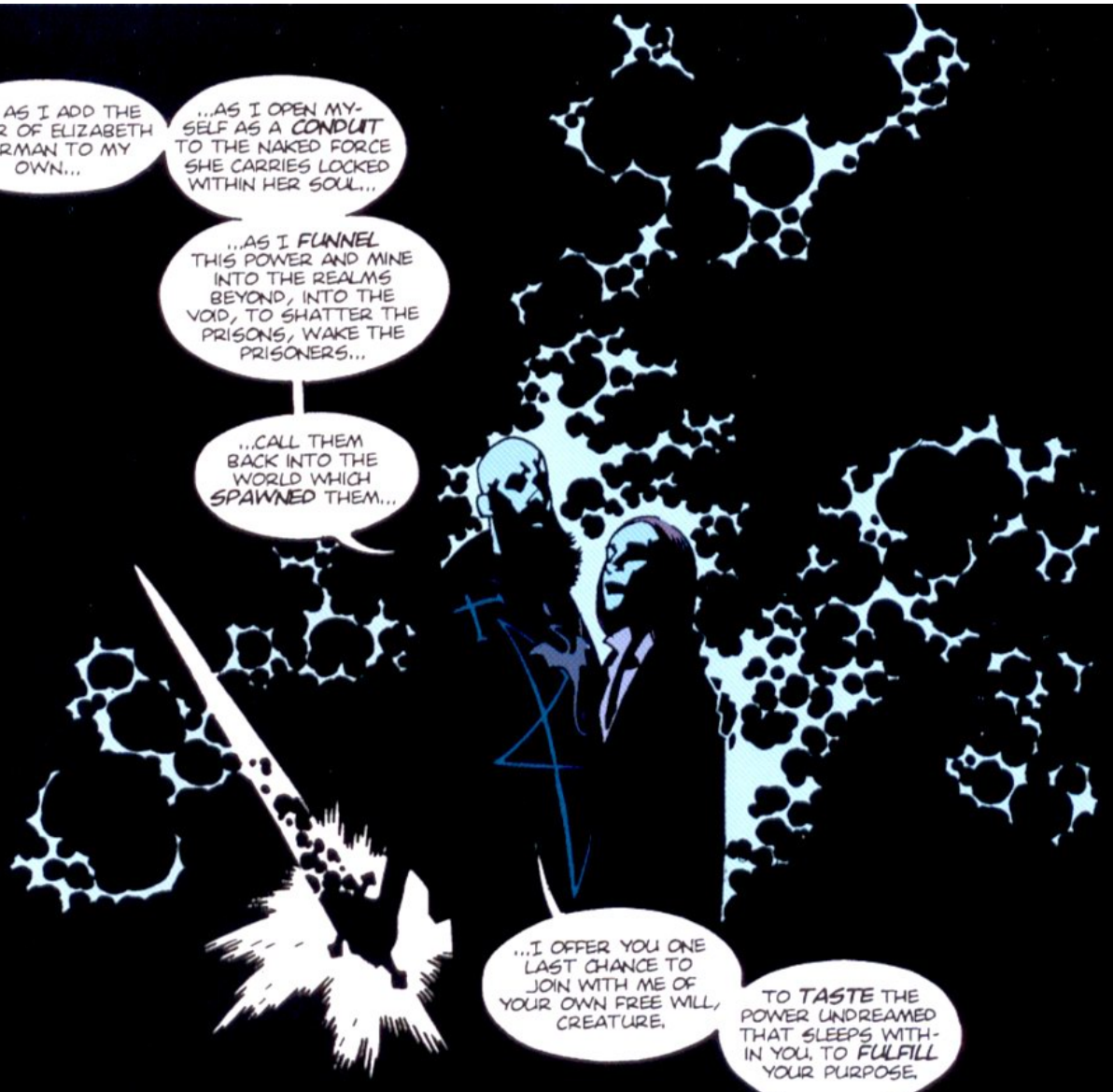
HE HAS
GROWN
STRONG.

NOW AS I ADD THE
POWER OF ELIZABETH
SHERMAN TO MY
OWN...

...AS I OPEN MY-
SELF AS A CONDUIT
TO THE NAKED FORCE
SHE CARRIES LOCKED
WITHIN HER SOUL...

...AS I FUNNEL
THIS POWER AND MINE
INTO THE REALMS
BEYOND, INTO THE
VOID, TO SHATTER THE
PRISONS, WAKE THE
PRISONERS...

...CALL THEM
BACK INTO THE
WORLD WHICH
SPAWNED THEM...



...I OFFER YOU ONE
LAST CHANCE TO
JOIN WITH ME OF
YOUR OWN FREE WILL,
CREATURE.

TO TASTE THE
POWER UNDREAMED
THAT SLEEPS WITH-
IN YOU, TO FULFILL
YOUR PURPOSE.



GO...
TO...
HELL...




NO NEED,
CREATURE.




HELL IS COMING
HERE!!





I KNOW WITH UNSHAKABLE CLARITY THAT I AM IN *SERIOUS* TROUBLE HERE. I NEED *HELP*.



AND I WONDER WHERE *ABE* IS...



CHAPTER FOUR




THEY CALL ME "HELLBOY," AND
MAYBE IT'S APPROPRIATE--BUT
IF I AM FROM HELL I HAVE NO
MEMORY OF IT, I DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.

BUT OFFHAND I'D SAY
THIS IS A PRETTY GOOD
GUESS.

FEEL THE
POWER, CREATURE!
THE LIFE FORCE OF THE
FEMALE YOU CALL
ELIZABETH SHERMAN
NOW FLOWS INTO
ME!






IT MULTIPLIES
MY OWN POWER,
AND THUS LINKED
BOTH FLOW INTO
SADU-HEM.

AND OUT OF
HIM IT WILL GO
INTO THE ETERNAL
VOID, THE ABYSS,
THERE TO SMITE
THE ANCIENT PRISON
OF SERPENT.

THE BINDING
PLACE SHALL BE
FOREVER
BROKEN.

THE
OGDRU-JAHAD
ONCE MORE
SHALL RULE
THE WORLD!



WHAT A PITY YOU
CHOSE TO STAND
AGAINST ME,
CREATURE.

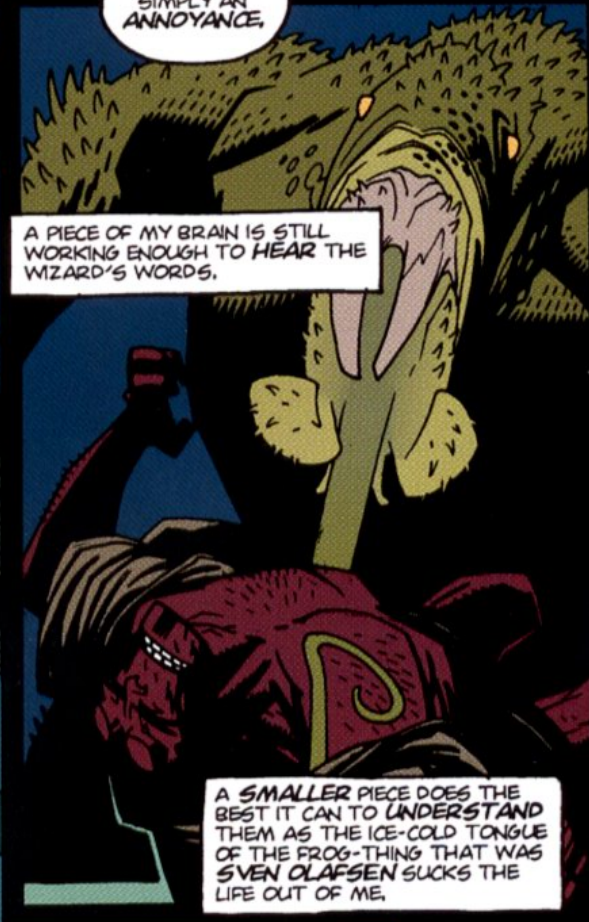
MY CONJURER'S
SKILL SUMMONED
YOU INTO THIS WORLD
HALF A CENTURY AGO,
SOLELY THAT YOU
MIGHT BE A PART OF
THIS GREAT MOMENT.

THAT YOU MIGHT
BE THE CONDUIT
INTO THE EVERLAST-
ING DARKNESS.




BUT NOW I
HAVE THE UNMATCHED
POWER OF THE
WOMAN.

YOU BECOME
SIMPLY AN
ANNOYANCE.




A PIECE OF MY BRAIN IS STILL
WORKING ENOUGH TO HEAR THE
WIZARD'S WORDS.


A SMALLER PIECE DOES THE
BEST IT CAN TO UNDERSTAND
THEM AS THE ICE-COLD TONGUE
OF THE FROG-THING THAT WAS
SVEN OLAFSEN SUCKS THE
LIFE OUT OF ME.



IN FIFTY YEARS I'VE NEVER FELT LIKE THIS. NUMB, DEAD, EMPTY.



AND FILLING THAT EMPTINESS I HEAR THE WIZARD DRONE ON AND ON...



STRANGE, MAD WORDS, YET WORDS I FIND SOMEHOW FAMILIAR.

WORDS THAT ARE MINGLED WITH MY FIRST MEMORIES ON EARTH...

CHAINED IN HEAVEN ARE THEY, SEVEN IS THEIR NUMBER, BRED IN THE DEPTHS OF OCEAN, NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE ARE THEY, THEY ARE AS THE HOWLING WIND, WHICH KNOWETH NOT MERCY, WHICH KNOWETH NOT PITY.

NUNN-JAHAD!

HEEDLESS ARE THEY TO PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, THEY ARE THE SERPENT, THEY ARE THE FURIOUS BEAST, THE WINDSTORM,

ADAD-JAHAD!

EVIL WINDS THEY ARE, THE EVIL BREATH THAT HERALDETH THE BANEFUL STORM... THEY ARE MIGHTY CHILDREN, HERALDS OF PESTILENCE, THRONE BEARERS OF ERESHIGAL, WHO IS QUEEN AND LORD OVER THE GREAT DARKNESS BETWEEN WORLDS!

AMON-JAHAD!

THEY ARE THE FLOOD WHICH RUSHETH THROUGH THE LAND, SEVEN GODS OF MIGHT, SEVEN DEMONS OF OPPRESSION, SEVEN IN HEAVEN AND SEVEN ON EARTH,

IRRA-JAHAD!





HELPLESS
I HANG,

POWERLESS,
I PRAY,



ONE CHANCE,
THAT'S ALL I
NEED,



ONE
CHANCE,

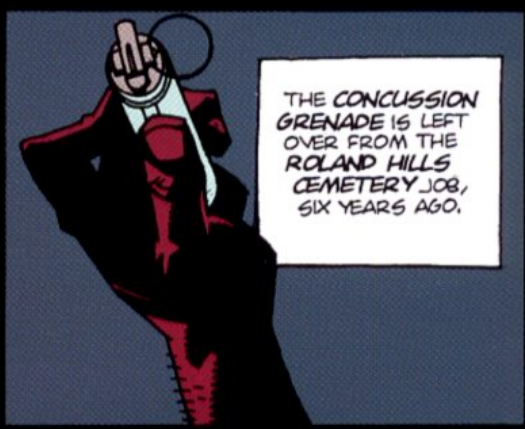


AND AS THE COLD, HARD
FINGERS DIG INTO THE THE
UNRESISTING FLESH OF MY
CHEST...

I FEEL
PAIN,



I GAIN
FOCUS,



THE CONCUSSION
GRENADE IS LEFT
OVER FROM THE
ROLAND HILLS
CEMETERY JOB,
SIX YEARS AGO,



I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF
IT'S STILL GOOD,

SPRING



DON'T... KNOW... IF... YOU'RE... STILL... IN... THERE... OLAFSEN.



IF... YOU... ARE...



I'M... SORRY...

THE GRENADE WORKS.



OF GIANT STRENGTH AND GIANT TREAD ARE THEY, KNOWING NO CARE THEY GRIND THE LAND LIKE CORN.

BELLI-JAHAD!



KNOWING NO MERCY
THEY RAGE AGAINST MAN-
KIND, TO SPILL BLOOD LIKE
RAIN AND DEVOUR
FLESH.



NERGAL-
JAHAD!

LET THE SEVEN NOW
RISE FROM THE ABYSS,
AWAY BE CAST ALL CHAINS,
FREEDOM IS TO THEM,
POWER IS TO THEM.



NAMRAT-
JAHAD!

BOOM

ENORMOUS SERPENTS,
MERCILESS IN SLAUGHTER,
SEVEN DRAGONS WITH
GLITTERING SCALES.

BOOM

TEMPEST MONSTERS,
THEY ARE THE RISING
WIND WHICH CASTETH
DARKNESS OVER THE
BLIGHTED LAND.

BOOM

SQUEEE

MOVEMENT IN ALL SEVEN COCOONS, CAPTAIN!

EEEEEE

POWER READINGS GROWING STRONGER. LIFE-FORCE READINGS ALREADY OFF MY SCALE.

WHO WOULD BE MAD ENOUGH TO... SOURCE?

A POWER BEAM IS EMANATING FROM THE CORE-WORLD, CAPTAIN.

AB-JUDA EARTH.

FOOLS! DON'T THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING!?

ONLY ONE POWER CAN STOP THEM, THE POWER THAT IMPRISONED THEM. THE POWER THAT CREATED THEM.

THE SEVEN WILL SMASH THEIR WORLD TO CINDERS! AND WHEN THAT'S DONE, THEY'LL SPREAD THEIR EVIL OVER ALL THE KNOWN DIMENSIONS!

NO ONE WILL BE SPARED!



BUT WHERE IS THAT POWER??

I BEGIN TO FEEL AGAIN.

SENSATION SEEMS TO BEGIN IN MY GREAT STONE RIGHT HAND, IT PULSES THROUGH MY ARM, MY CHEST, MY LEGS.

MY BRAIN STARTS WORKING AT SOMETHING MORE THAN ITS MOST FUNDAMENTAL LEVELS.

FOR A MOMENT I ALMOST WISH IT WASN'T.

WITH THE RETURN OF SENSATION COMES THE RETURN OF AWARENESS.

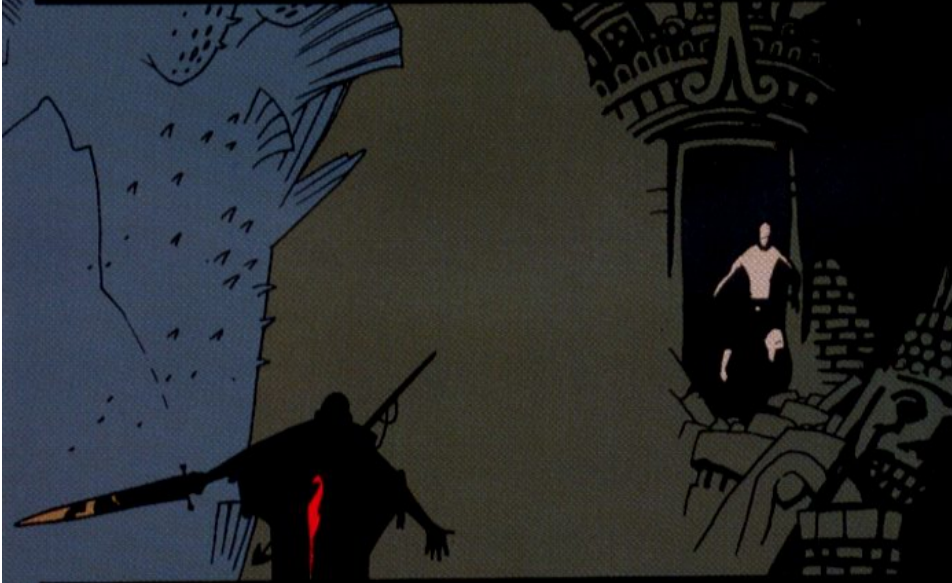
KRACK

IT DOESN'T FEEL GOOD.

YES! YES!
RISE THE BLACK WINDS!
HOWL THE DEMON SCREAM OF BIRTH AND TRIUMPH!

TREMBLE ALL BEFORE THE COMING OF THE END OF...

...END...



ABE!
BUT...



...NOT ALONE

IN SOME KIND OF TRANCE,




AND BEHIND HIM...

...THE SHADOWS SPEAK...

WAKE UP, GIRL








AND THEN THINGS
START TO HAPPEN
VERY FAST.

ABE IS A
BLUE BLUR.



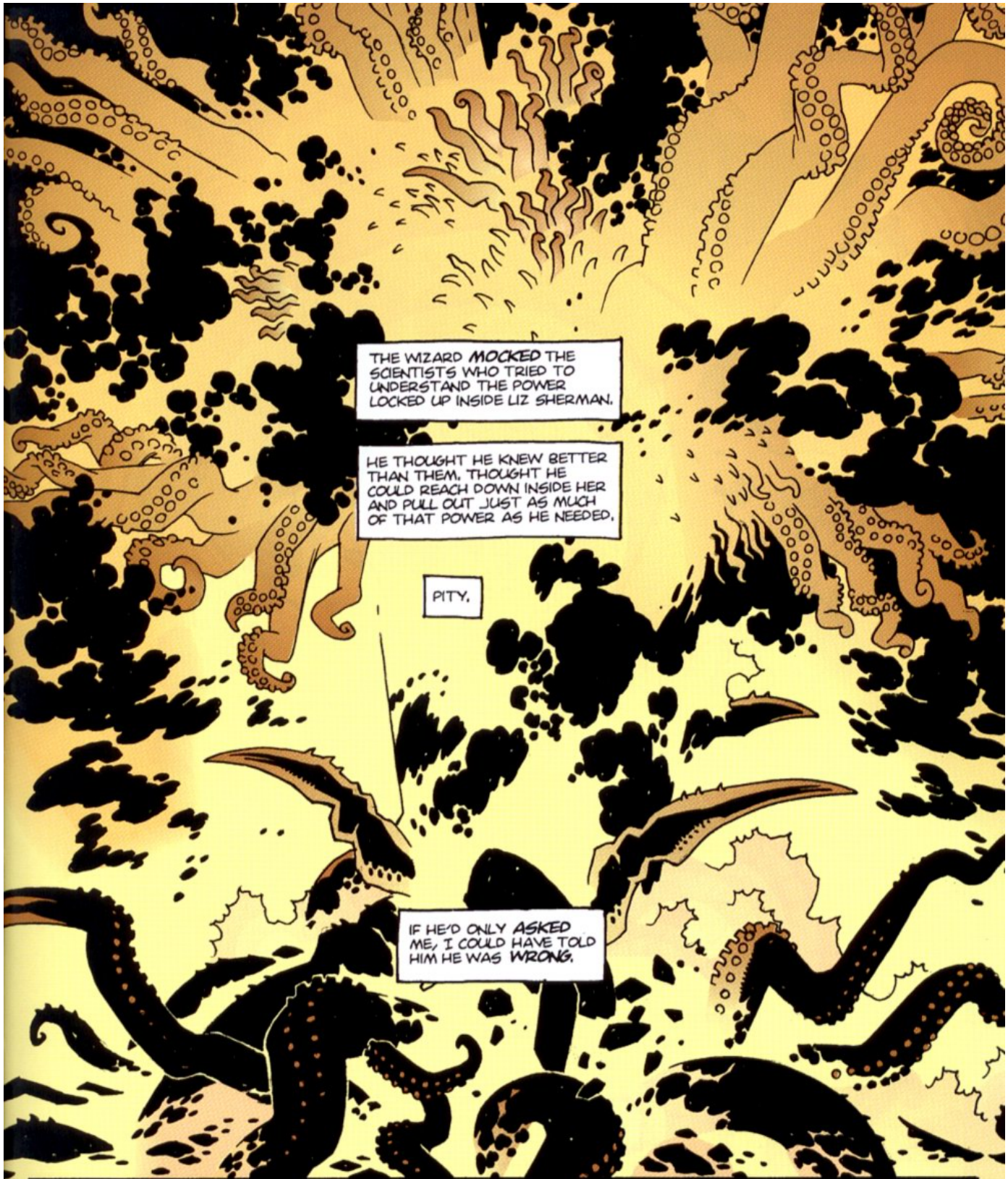
SADU-HEM'S SCREAM IS LIKE
TALONS SCRAPING THE INSIDE
OF MY SKULL.



LIZ IS
OKAY.

HELLBOY!
LET'S GET
OUT OF
HERE!

YOU ALWAYS
WERE THE
PRACTICAL ONE,
ABRAHAM!



THE WIZARD MOCKED THE SCIENTISTS WHO TRIED TO UNDERSTAND THE POWER LOCKED UP INSIDE LIZ SHERMAN.

HE THOUGHT HE KNEW BETTER THAN THEM. THOUGHT HE COULD REACH DOWN INSIDE HER AND PULL OUT JUST AS MUCH OF THAT POWER AS HE NEEDED.

PITY.

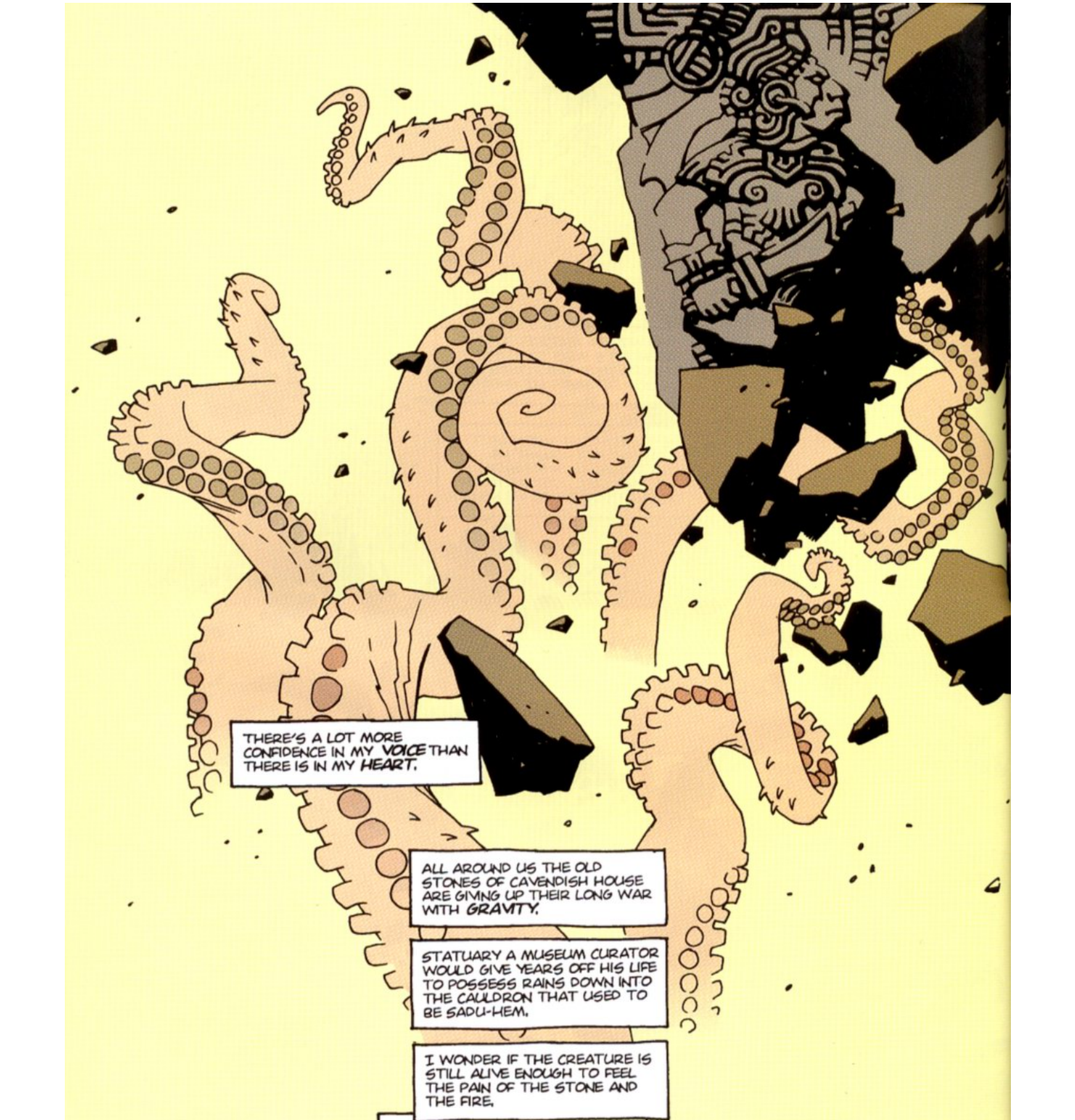
IF HE'D ONLY ASKED ME, I COULD HAVE TOLD HIM HE WAS WRONG.

WHAT A MESS!

YOU'LL HAVE TO LET ME READ YOUR REPORT ON THIS ONE, HELLBOY...

...ASSUMING WE GET OUT SO YOU CAN WRITE IT.

DEAL.



THERE'S A LOT MORE
CONFIDENCE IN MY VOICE THAN
THERE IS IN MY HEART.

ALL AROUND US THE OLD
STONES OF CAVENDISH HOUSE
ARE GIVING UP THEIR LONG WAR
WITH GRAVITY.

STATUARY A MUSEUM CURATOR
WOULD GIVE YEARS OFF HIS LIFE
TO POSSESS RAINS DOWN INTO
THE CAULDRON THAT USED TO
BE SADU-HEM.

I WONDER IF THE CREATURE IS
STILL ALIVE ENOUGH TO FEEL
THE PAIN OF THE STONE AND
THE FIRE.

I HOPE
SO.



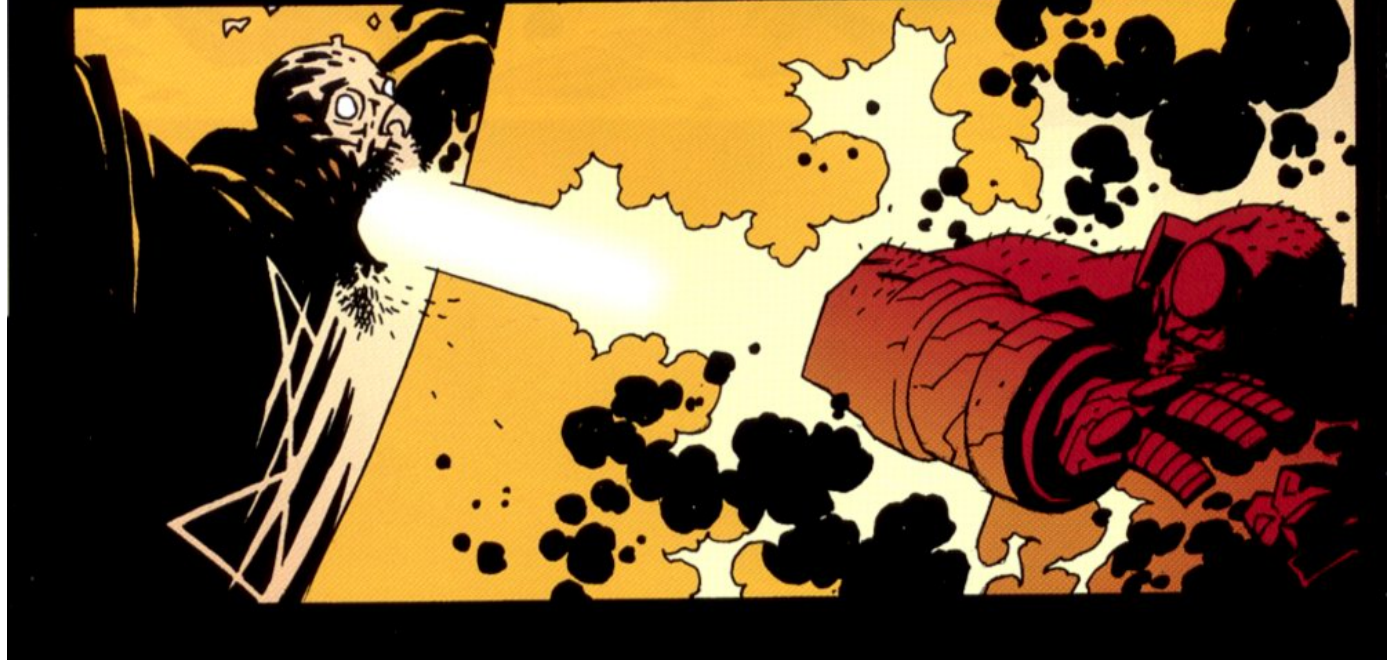
MOVE!
MOVE!!
MOVE!!!





I'M STILL
YOUR MASTER,
BOY!

IT IS PAST
TIME I
DESTROYED
YOU!!





I HAVE HAD IT WITH YOU!

MAYBE YOU WERE TELLING THE TRUTH, MAYBE IT WAS YOU WHO BROUGHT ME TO EARTH.

BUT I DIDN'T ASK TO COME, AND I DON'T OWE YOU FOR THE FAVOR!



THINK, CREATURE! THINK!

IF YOU KILL ME YOU WILL NEVER KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

YOU WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE POWER INSIDE YOU.



YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.

BUT I CAN LIVE WITH IT?



I WILL SEE YOU CRAWL BEFORE ME!
THIS IS NOT THE END!!



WELL...



...IT IS FOR YOU







I DON'T REMEMBER TOO MUCH OF IT, HELLBOY.



I WAS LOOKING AT WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A STATUE OF OLD ELIHU CAVENDISH...

...AND THEN THERE WAS A HARPOON STICKING THROUGH A GUY...

AND THERE WAS A REALLY BIG MONSTER...

IMAGINE MY CONFUSION.

AND WHEN EVERYTHING CAUGHT FIRE...

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL WAS GOING ON!



YES, YOUR "MR. RAGNA ROK" KILLED THE LAST OF ELIHU'S FAMILY, AN OLD FAMILY WITH A LOT OF PAIN ATTACHED TO ITS NAME.

ENOUGH TO ALLOW HIM TO REACH FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE TO EXTRACT HIS VENGEANCE.



SOUNDS TO ME LIKE OLD MAN CAVENDISH TOOK OVER YOUR BODY, ABE.

HE WAS THE ONE WHO DID THE HARPOONING.



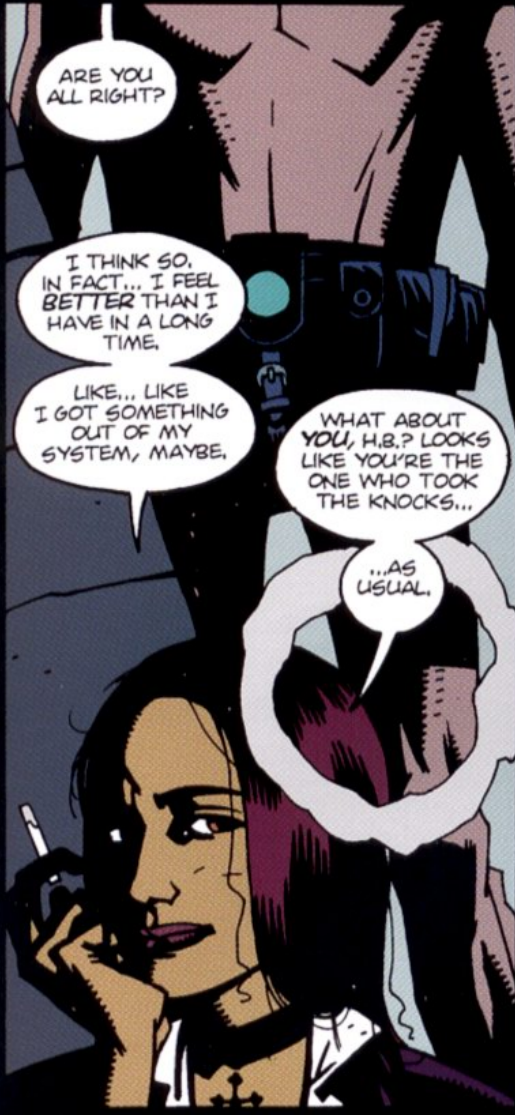
MM. OR MAYBE HE WAS JUST PISSED BECAUSE SOMEBODY ELSE FOUND THAT THING UP IN THE ARCTIC BEFORE HIS PEOPLE DID.

THEY SPENT A LONG TIME LOOKING. WE DON'T KNOW THINGS WOULD HAVE BEEN ANY DIFFERENT IF THEY'D FOUND SADU-HEM.



WHAT ABOUT YOU, LIZ? THAT OLD WIZARD HAD YOU ZONKED PRETTY GOOD, DO YOU REMEMBER ANY MORE THAN ABE DOES?

A LITTLE, NOT MUCH.



ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I THINK SO, IN FACT... I FEEL BETTER THAN I HAVE IN A LONG TIME.

LIKE... LIKE I GOT SOMETHING OUT OF MY SYSTEM, MAYBE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, H.B.? LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOOK THE KNOCKS...

...AS USUAL.



YEAH... I'M GONNA BE SORE IN THE MORNING.



YOU WERE ALONE WITH HIM AT THE END.

DID HE SAY ANYTHING?

H.B. ...?



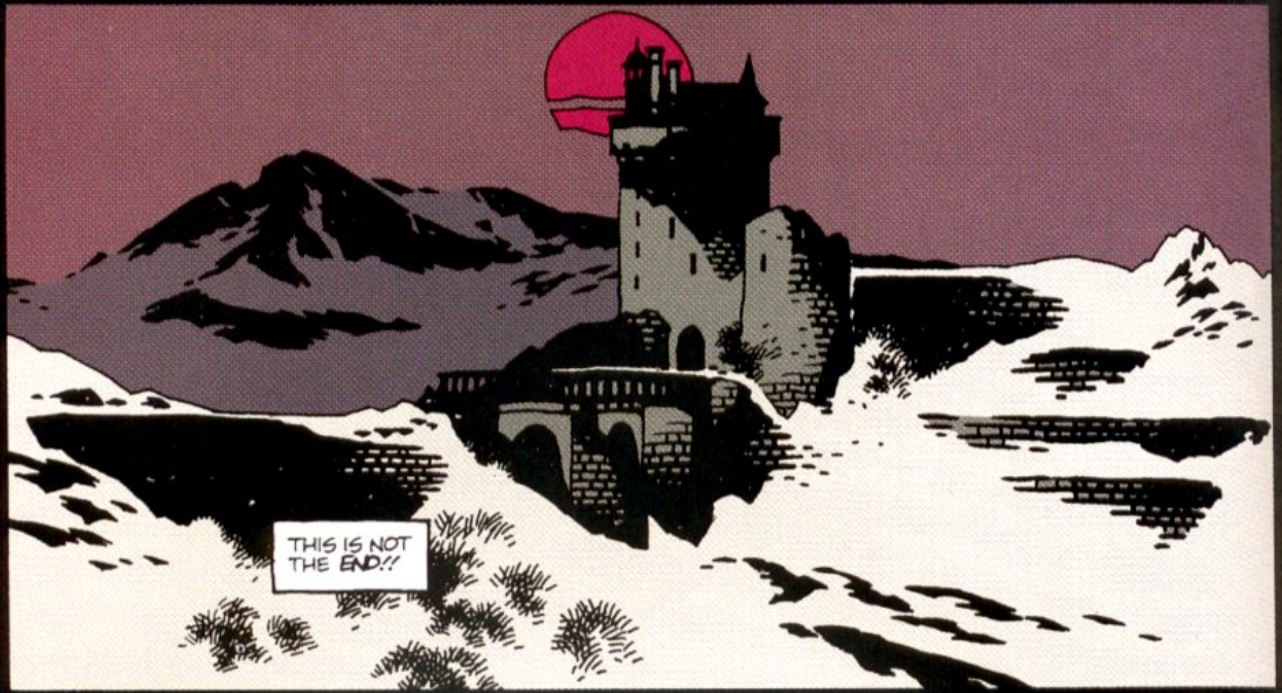
THINK, CREATURE! THINK!

IF YOU KILL ME YOU WILL NEVER KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

YOU WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE POWER INSIDE YOU.

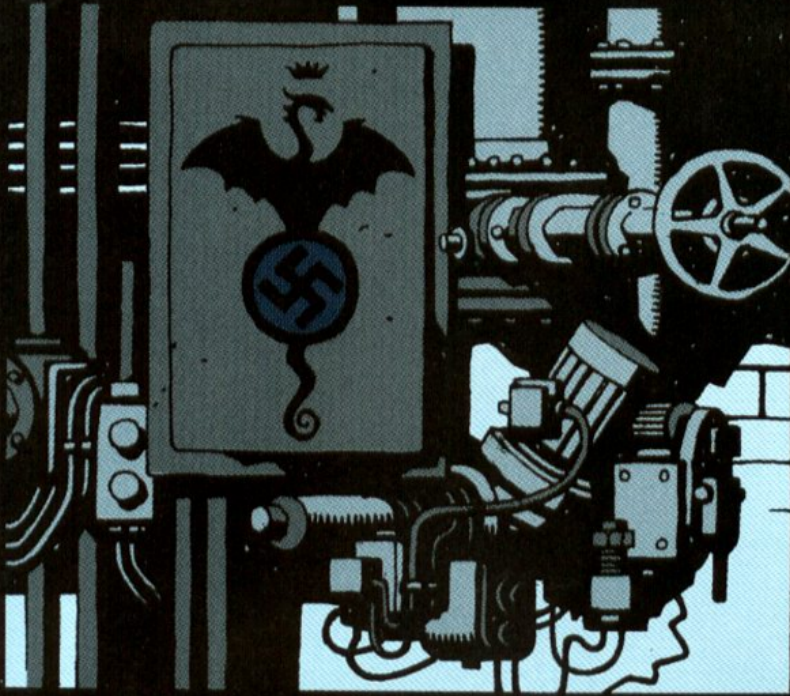


I WILL SEE YOU CRAWL BEFORE ME!



THIS IS NOT
THE END!!





BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE



WHERE THE HELL DID HE COME FROM?

*Personal reminiscences
by Mike Mignola.*

LEF T: This is a drawing done for a convention program book — I added the name Hellboy at the last minute and it made me laugh. The name stuck and the character started to take shape in my head.

BELOW: I first envisioned *Hellboy* as a team book, but I couldn't come up with a name for any of the other characters or the team. Hellboy's in the process of mutating from that first drawing into the guy we know and love today — look at the size of his neck!

RIGHT: Hellboy in his final form. I originally intended this piece to be a promotional poster for the first *Hellboy* miniseries but I wasn't happy with Hellboy's right hand.







MORE FIRST THINGS —

THE following stories are the first Hellboy stories ever produced, done to promote the miniseries and introduce the character. The first story ran in *San Diego Comic-Con Comics #2*, given away at the 1993 San Diego Comic Con. The second story was published in the *Comics Buyer's Guide*.

I wasn't much concerned with plot, but I did learn a couple of things — Hellboy looks better with a coat, and I like to draw gorillas with big bolts sticking out of them.

The art on this page is the first Hellboy promotional piece, and the first appearance of his coat.

CURIOUS JUXTAPOSITION. I'VE BEEN AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK A FEW TIMES IN MY DAY, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING QUITE LIKE THIS.

A BIG COWBOY BOOT. AND AN EGYPTIAN SCARAB BEETLE. AND A SWASTIKA.

TOO MANY IDIOMS, IF YOU ASK ME.



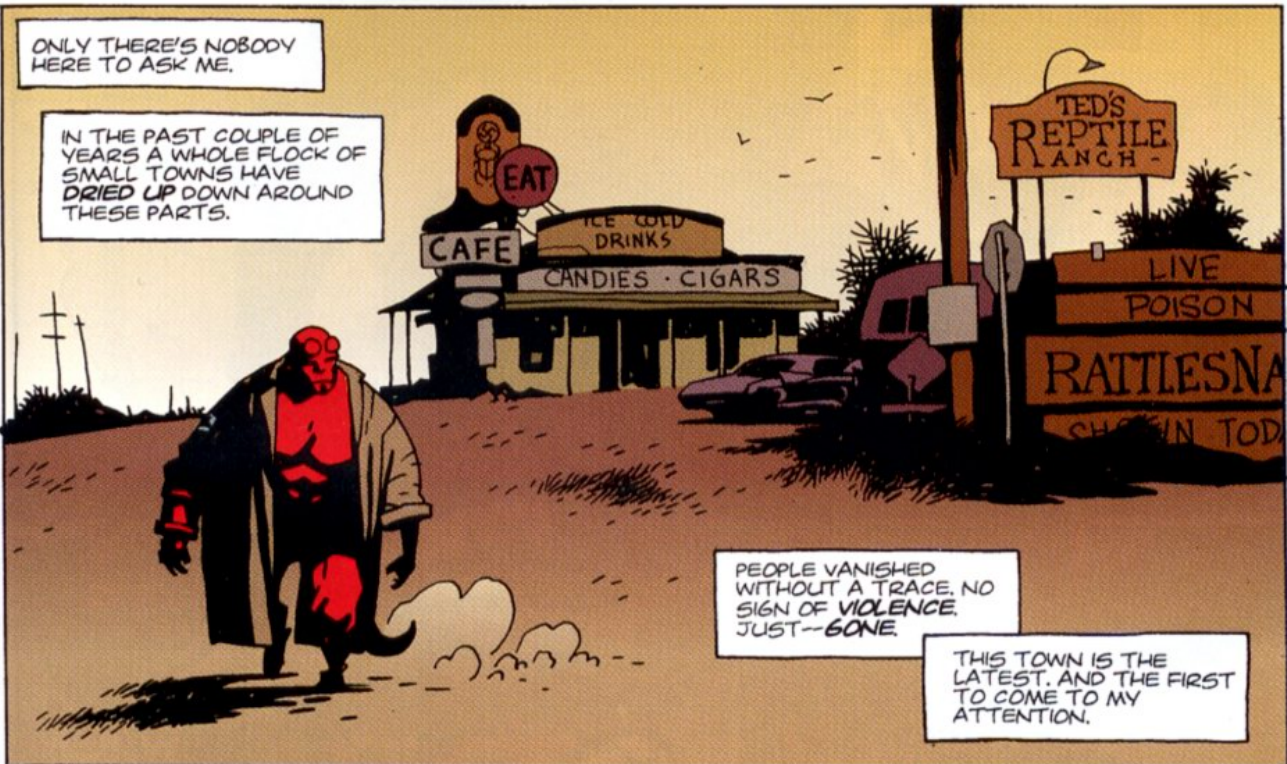
ONLY THERE'S NOBODY HERE TO ASK ME.

IN THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS A WHOLE FLOCK OF SMALL TOWNS HAVE DRIED UP DOWN AROUND THESE PARTS.

CAFE
ICE COLD DRINKS
CANDIES · CIGARS

TED'S REPTILE RANCH

LIVE POISON
RATTLESNAKE
SHOW IN TODAY



PEOPLE VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE. NO SIGN OF VIOLENCE. JUST--GONE.

THIS TOWN IS THE LATEST. AND THE FIRST TO COME TO MY ATTENTION.



HUH?
A DOG?

A DOG. KIND OF A MANGY LITTLE MUTT. LOOKS HUNGRY, TOO.

MUST HAVE BEEN HERE ON HIS OWN SINCE EVERYBODY VANISHED.



HEY, PUP! DON'T BE AFRAID.

I'M NOT NEARLY AS SCARY AS I...



...LOOK...



IT HAPPENED SO FAST I DIDN'T EVEN SEE HIM CHANGE.

ONE MOMENT, HARMLESS PUPPY DOG.

NEXT MOMENT, GIANT MONSTER DOG.



STILL HARMLESS?



NOPE.

HEY! I KNOW YOU!!

ANUBIS! THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN GOD OF MUMMIFICATION!

ALL OF A SUDDEN THAT CURIOUS JUXTAPOSITION MAKES A LITTLE BIT OF SENSE.



WACK



BUT THAT'S ALL THAT MAKES SENSE!

PUNY MORTAL!

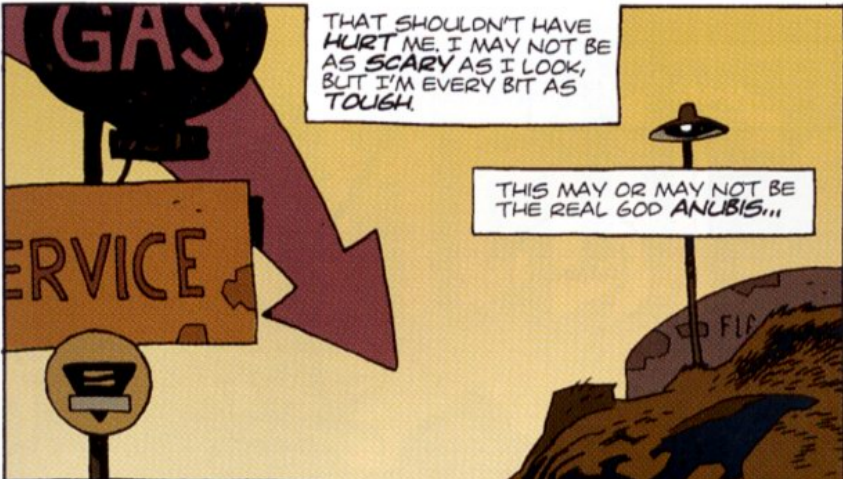
SWOCK

YOU DARE SPEAK THE NAME OF ANUBIS IN SUCH A TONE??



LEARN A LESSON OF PAIN FOR YOUR INSOLENCE!

WUNG OW!!



THAT SHOULDN'T HAVE HURT ME. I MAY NOT BE AS SCARY AS I LOOK, BUT I'M EVERY BIT AS TOUGH.

THIS MAY OR MAY NOT BE THE REAL GOD ANUBIS...

BUT WHOEVER HE IS, HE'S GOT A PRETTY GOOD CHANCE TO MAKE GOOD ON HIS THREATS.



UNLESS I DO SOMETHING FIRST.

MY ACCIDENTAL IMPACT WEAKENED THE NUTS AND BOLTS HOLDING THE GAS STATION SIGN TOGETHER.



LET'S SEE WHAT A COUPLE OF DELIBERATE HITS WILL DO...



YEAH... MAYBE HE'S REALLY ANUBIS, BUT THE ARROW GOES INTO HIM WITH A RED, WET NOISE LIKE ANY KIND OF FLESH GETTING SLICED.



AND HIS HOWL IS LIKE THE HOWL OF ANY INJURED ANIMAL.

HE'S BREATHING HARD AND RAGGED WHEN HE COMES AT ME AGAIN.



DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE CAN STAY ON HIS FEET MUCH LONGER.



I REALLY WISH HE HADN'T FALLEN ON THE PUMPS..



MIKE MIGNOLA'S

HELLBOY™

MIKE MIGNOLA
STORY AND ART

JOHN BYRNE
SCRIPT AND
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

WORLD'S GREATEST
PARANORMAL
INVESTIGATOR

coming in 1994

MIKE MIGNOLA'S

HELLBOY™

WORLD'S GREATEST
PARANORMAL
INVESTIGATOR

FREEZE!
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING...

...BUT I
DON'T LIKE
IT!

BRUTUS!
DESTROY THE
INTERLOPER!
NOTHING MUST
PREVENT THE
TRANSFERENCE
OF NUTRIENT
FLUIDS!

AR-ROO...

NO...
PLEASE...

THE BRAIN-IN-A-BOTTLE IS
HERMAN VON KLEMP.
PROFESSOR DOCTOR
HERMAN VON KLEMP, FOR
THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT
TITLES.

© MIGNOLA
73



AR-RAR-
RGH!!

SMASH
HIM! I HAVE
NO USE FOR
THE FLUIDS
SUCH AS HE
CONTAINS!



YOU HAVE
MY PERMISSION
TO EXERCISE
THE FULL EXTENT
OF YOUR INHUMAN
STRENGTH!

OW!

KRACK



AND A LOT
OF IT THERE
IS, TOO!

GUESS
THERE'S NO
POINT TRY-
ING TO REASON
WITH YOU, HUH
FURBALL?

NONE
WHATSO-
EVER.

I HAVE HEARD
OF YOU, HAVE I
NOT? YES... HELLBOY.
IT SEEMS YOU HAVE
BEEN AN ANNOYANCE
TO MY FUEHRER'S
LEGIONS IN THE
PAST.



AN
ANNOY-
ANCE?

WELL...
UH... YOUR
FUEHRER'S
DEADER THAN
YOU ARE,
HERMAN...



...AND I'M
HERE TO HELP
YOU JOIN
HIM.

BLAM

THE BEAST'S CRY OF PAIN
SURPRISES ME, I'M NOT
HERE TO HURT DUMB
ANIMALS--AND I KNOW
THAT'S ALL HE IS.

VON KLEMP T SPOLTS OR-
DERS 'CAUSE HE LOVES
THE SOUND OF HIS OWN
VOICE.

BRUTUS IS JUST
A PUPPET.

A VERY POWERFUL PUPPET.



I'M NOT SURE AT THIS POINT HOW MUCH OF THIS IS VON KLEMP'T'S DIRECTION...

...AND HOW MUCH IS HIS REACTION TO THE PAIN OF HIS SHATTERED HAND.



UNFORTUNATELY, EITHER WAY I DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE IN HOW TO DEAL WITH HIM.

SORRY FUZZY!

I KNOW THIS HURTS, SO I'LL TRY TO PUT YOU TO SLEEP AS FAST AS I CAN!

I KICK HIM AS HARD AS I CAN IN THE TWO MAIN NERVE JUNCTIONS JUST UNDER HIS BIG JAW.

IT'S A DANGEROUS MOVE. IF I'VE MISJUDGED HIS STRENGTH, AND HE DOESN'T GO DOWN...

FOOLS! INBECILES! STOP THIS SENSELESS FIGHTING!!

YOU'VE SMASHED THE LAB!

YOU'VE DESTROYED MY PRECIOUS EQUIPMENT.

HEY-- HATE TO BE THE ONE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, HERR HERMAN...

...BUT THAT'S WHY I'M HERE!



PLEASE!

PLEASE HELP ME!!

THE GIRL IS STILL ALIVE

THE TRANS-FUSION CAN STILL BE ACCOMPLISHED.



HUH??

YOU CAN TALK??



MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF NAZI VENTRILOQUISM, OR MAYBE I HADN'T BEEN GIVEN THE STRAIGHT DOPE ON BRUTUS.



SHOOMP

EITHER WAY, I KNOW RIGHT OFF I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT VOICE AGAIN...



BZZZZZ

YOU DID IT! YOU DESTROYED THEM BOTH!



YEAH, SURE, WELL, THAT WAS THE PLAN, RIGHT?

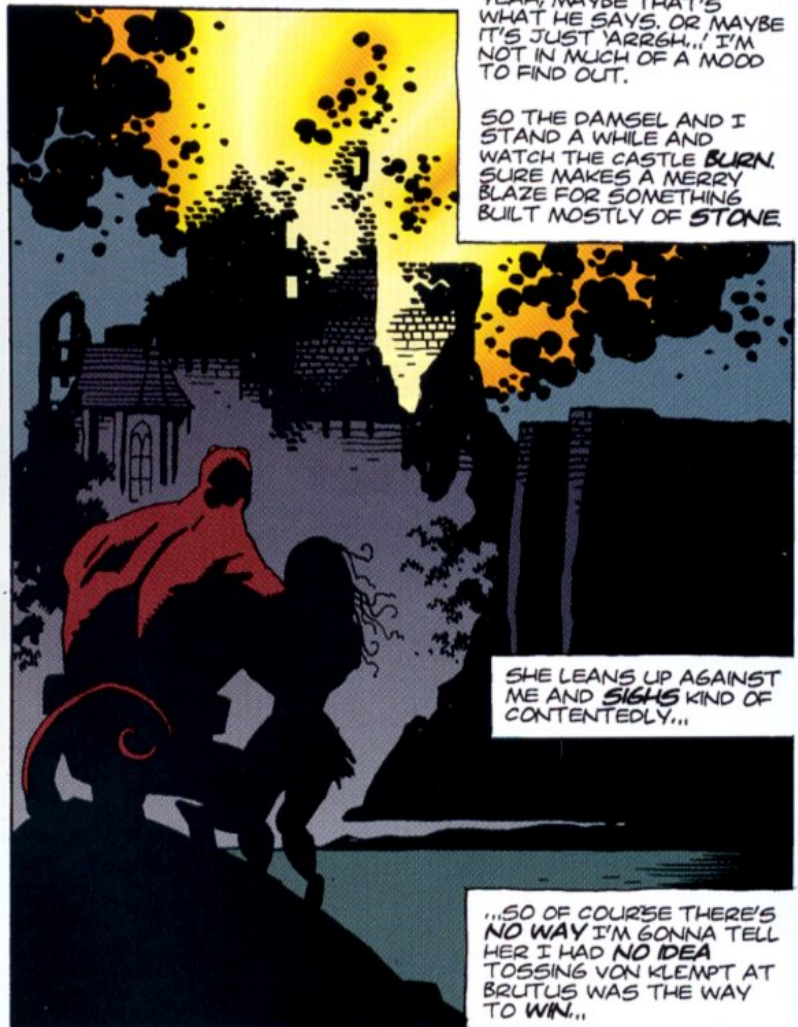


NEXT TIME, HELL-BOY!

NEXT TIME YOU DIE!!

YEAH, MAYBE THAT'S WHAT HE SAYS, OR MAYBE IT'S JUST 'ARRGH...' I'M NOT IN MUCH OF A MOOD TO FIND OUT.

SO THE DAMSEL AND I STAND A WHILE AND WATCH THE CASTLE BURN. SURE MAKES A MERRY BLAZE FOR SOMETHING BUILT MOSTLY OF STONE.



SHE LEANS UP AGAINST ME AND SIGHS KIND OF CONTENTEDLY...

MIKE MIGNOLA
IT WAS ALL HIS IDEA

JOHN BYRNE
ALONG FOR THE RIDE

...SO OF COURSE THERE'S NO WAY I'M GONNA TELL HER I HAD NO IDEA TOSSING VON KLEMPAT AT BRUTUS WAS THE WAY TO WIN...

HELLBOY™

GALLERY



featuring

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colored by Matthew Hollingsworth

MIKE ALLRED

ART ADAMS
colored by Matthew Hollingsworth

FRANK MILLER

FRED BLANCHARD

and

GARY GIANNI

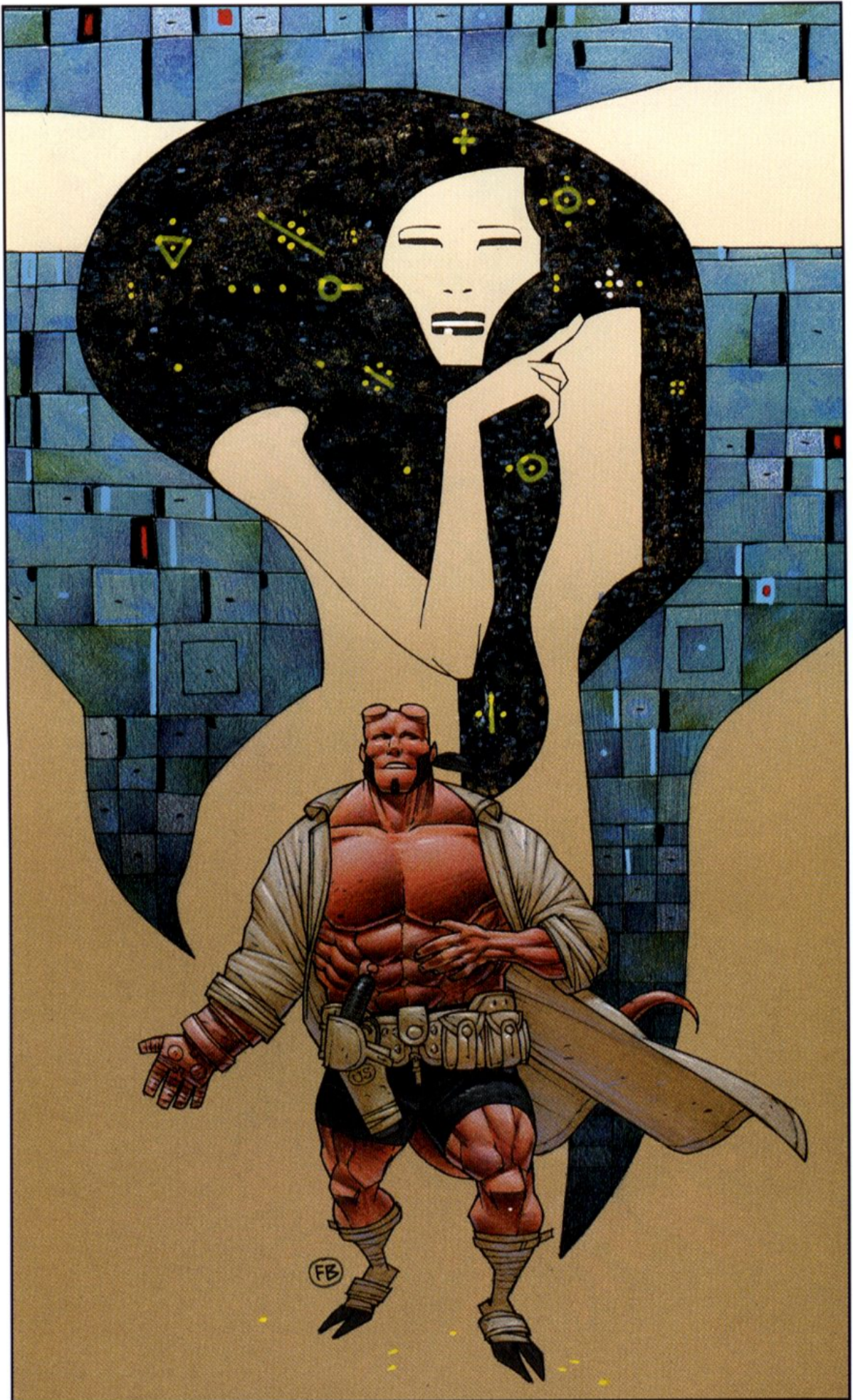




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