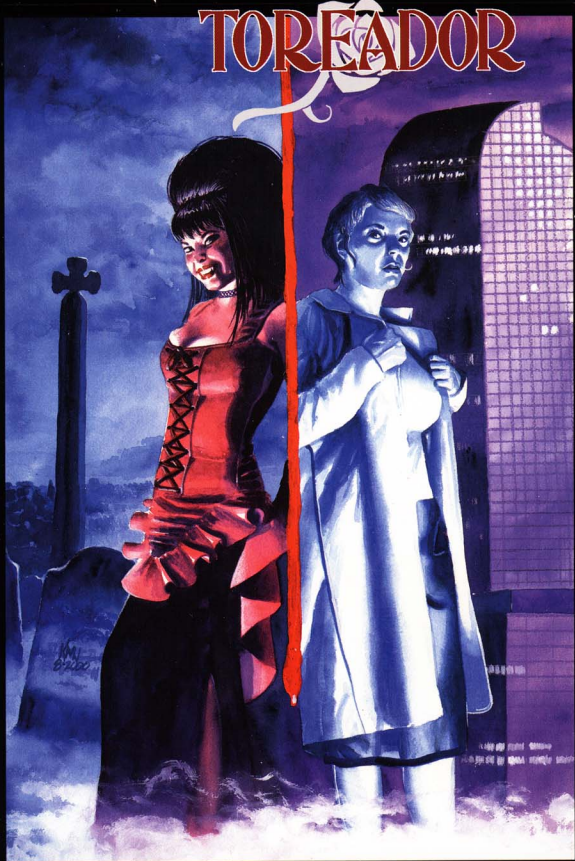




VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

TOREADOR



Rafael Nieves · Vince Locke

VAMPIRE[®]

THE MASQUERADE

TOREADOR[™]

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE"

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HISSSSS







AARGH!

BANG! BANG! BANG!



MARIO!

LET HER
GO, YOU **FIEND**,
OR, SO HELP
ME...



MARIO!
PLEASE, DON'T
KILL HIM!

YOU **CANNOT**
SAVE HER, **FOOL**!
SHE BELONGS TO
ME NOW!

NOT WHILE I
BREATHE, DON
ALEJANDRO. SHE
BELONGS TO **NO** MAN
OR MONSTER!



HA HA HA
HAAAAH!

EEEEEE...

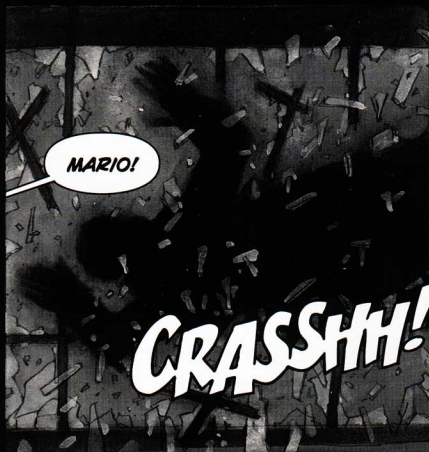
BANG! BANG! BANG!

CLICK!
CLICK!



YOUR **BULLETS**
CAN'T HURT ME. I'VE
KILLED ALL YOUR
MEN, CAPTAIN.

NOW I'LL KILL
YOU, AND THEN
YOUR PRETTY YOUNG
FIANCEE WILL BECOME
MY **BRIDE**...









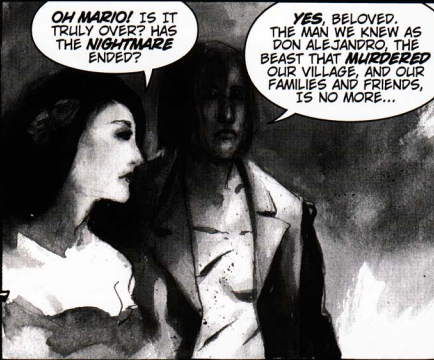
THE BEAST WAS SO PREOCCUPIED WITH TURNING YOU INTO A MONSTER, IT FORGOT WHAT TIME IT WAS...



THE *SUN* IS RISING...



OH MARIO! IS IT TRULY OVER? HAS THE NIGHTMARE ENDED?



YES, BELOVED. THE MAN WE KNEW AS DON ALEJANDRO, THE BEAST THAT **MURDERED** OUR VILLAGE, AND OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, IS NO MORE...

SKREEEEEEEE~



HIS *REIGN* OF EVIL IS NOW NO MORE...

**EL REY
DE LOS
VAMPIROS**

(KING OF THE VAMPIRES)

YES, HONEY, THE NIGHTMARE IS FINALLY OVER, FOR YOU AND US...

fin

... 'KING OF THE VAMPIRES' WAS, UNFORTUNATELY, THE BEST BLOODSUCKER FILM TO COME OUT OF ESTUDIO SOMBRA, MEXICO'S 'SHADOW STUDIO', IN THE MID '50'S, BUT IT WAS BY NO MEANS THE LAST...



IT SPAWNED TWO MORE FILMS STARRING THAT **YUMMY** LATIN HEARTTHROB ALBERTO ORTEGA AS CAPTAIN MARIO, THE VAMPIRE HUNTER, BOTH OF WHICH, WELL, SUCKED...



FAITHFUL VIEWERS OF MIDNIGHT THEATER WILL RECOGNIZE JUAN GOMEZ, WHO PLAYED DON ALEJANDRO, FROM LAST MONTH'S BROADCAST OF THAT CAMPY HORROR CLASSIC, 'THE CURSE OF THE SWAMP MONSTER KING', ALSO FROM ESTUDIO SOMBRA.




WELL, HERE'S SOMETHING INTERESTING...

...NO, NOT AS INTERESTING AS **THOSE**...




COME BACK HERE.





GOMEZ, A POPULAR, CLASSICALLY TRAINED ACTOR IN THE 30'S, CAME OUT OF RETIREMENT TO STAR IN A DOZEN SOMBRA CLUNKERS, MADE A FORTUNE, RETIRED AGAIN IN 1967 TO SANTE FE, NEW MEXICO.



HE LIVED ALONE UNTIL HIS DEATH IN '73, THE VICTIM OF A GUNSHOT TO THE HEAD. GOMEZ WAS APPARENTLY MURDERED BY HIS BUTLER...



...WHO ALSO HAPPENED TO BE HIS **LOVER** OF ALMOST 30 YEARS...


YES, SHE'S MARVELOUS, ISN'T SHE?



I **NEVER** MISS MIDNIGHT THEATER. IT'S MY **FAVORITE SHOW!** FANNIE FANG IS THE BEST THING TO HAPPEN TO VAMPIRES IN DECADES...



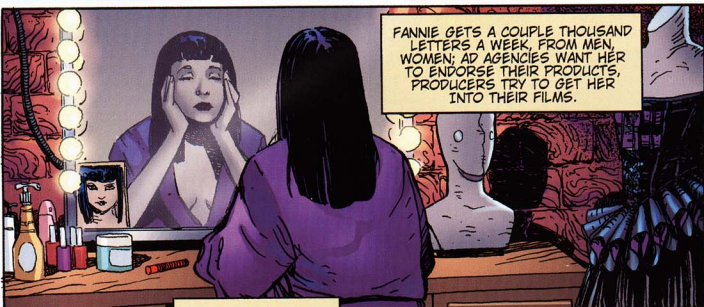
IT SEEMS THE MAN WHO MADE HIS FORTUNE PLAYING **KINGS** WAS, IN FACT, QUITE THE **QUEEN!**



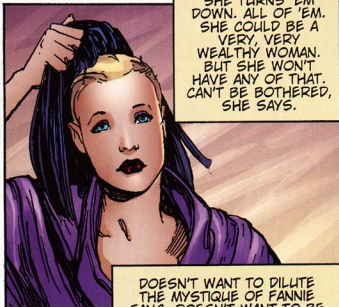
WELL, BABIES, THAT'S ALL FOR THIS EPISODE OF MIDNIGHT THEATER. NEXT WEEK I'LL BE SHOWING YOU THAT CULT CLASSIC FROM 1984, 'THE SLIME OF YOUR LIFE', STARRING PAUL DWYER AND JOSIE ALLEN. AND WE'LL HAVE SOME VIEWER MAIL, TOO.



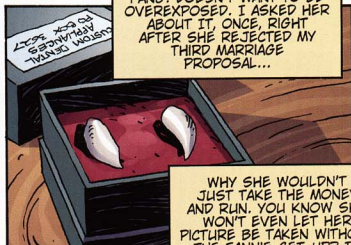




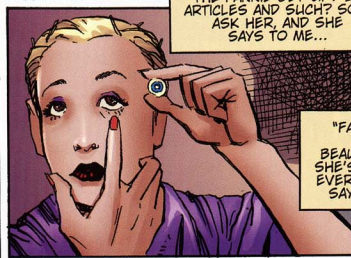
FANNIE GETS A COUPLE THOUSAND LETTERS A WEEK, FROM MEN, WOMEN; AD AGENCIES WANT HER TO ENDORSE THEIR PRODUCTS, PRODUCERS TRY TO GET HER INTO THEIR FILMS.



SHE TURNS 'EM DOWN. ALL OF 'EM. SHE COULD BE A VERY, VERY WEALTHY WOMAN. BUT SHE WON'T HAVE ANY OF THAT. CAN'T BE BOTHERED, SHE SAYS.

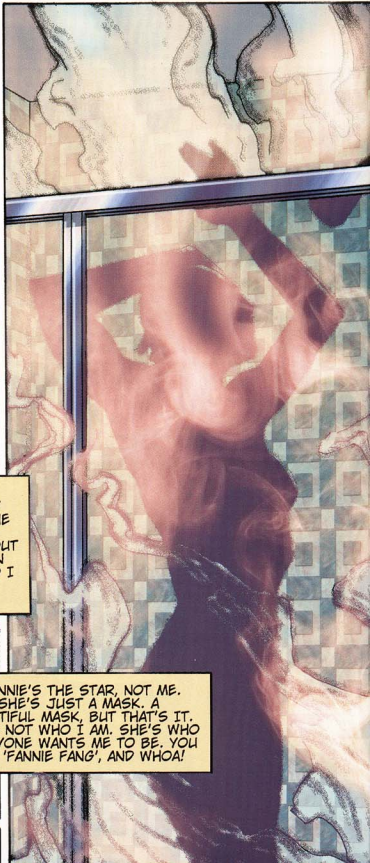


DOESN'T WANT TO DILUTE THE MYSTIQUE OF FANNIE FANG. DOESN'T WANT TO BE OVEREXPOSED. I ASKED HER ABOUT IT, ONCE, RIGHT AFTER SHE REJECTED MY THIRD MARRIAGE PROPOSAL...



WHY SHE WOULDN'T JUST TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN. YOU KNOW SHE WON'T EVEN LET HER PICTURE BE TAKEN WITHOUT THE FANNIE GET-UP? IN ARTICLES AND SUCH? SO I ASK HER, AND SHE SAYS TO ME...

"FANNIE'S THE STAR, NOT ME. SHE'S JUST A MASK. A BEAUTIFUL MASK, BUT THAT'S IT. SHE'S NOT WHO I AM. SHE'S WHO EVERYONE WANTS ME TO BE. YOU SAY 'FANNIE FANG', AND WHOA!





"YOU SAY 'JANE FORDHAM,' AND PEOPLE SAY 'HUH?'"

EXCUSE ME, LADY...

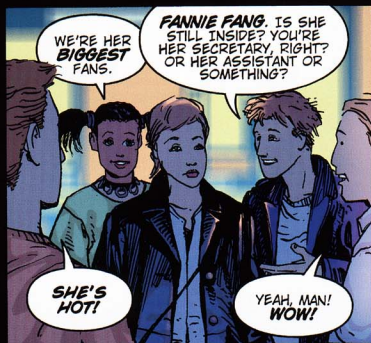


ARE YOU?

...YEAH...
I AM...

COOL!
IS SHE STILL
INSIDE?

...WHAT?...



WE'RE HER
BIGGEST
FANS.

FANNIE FANG. IS SHE
STILL INSIDE? YOU'RE
HER SECRETARY, RIGHT?
OR HER ASSISTANT OR
SOMETHING?

SHE'S
HOT!

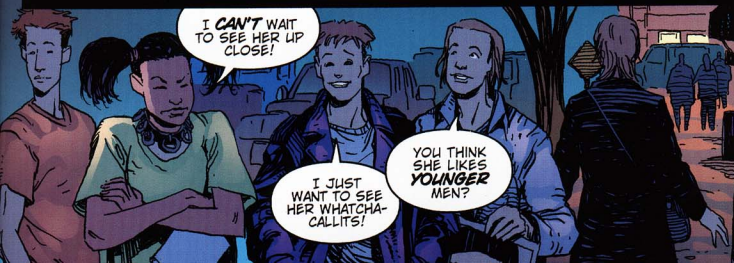
YEAH, MAN!
WOW!



WE BEEN
WAITING LIKE
THREE HOURS
TO GET HER
AUTOGRAPH.

OH YEAH.
SHE'S IN THERE,
I JUST LEFT HER
IN HER DRESSING
ROOM.

THANKS,
LADY. MAN...



I **CAN'T**
WAIT
TO SEE HER UP
CLOSE!

I JUST
WANT TO SEE
HER WHATCHA-
CALLITS!

YOU THINK
SHE LIKES
YOUNGER
MEN?



"ANOTHER ONE?"

NO THANKS,
I'M STILL
WORKING ON
THIS.

SURE...?



...IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
PROBABLY WARM
BY NOW...

NO REALLY,
IT'S FINE. THANKS,
THOUGH. MAYBE
IN A MINUTE?

'KAY. GIMME
A SHOUT.



YOU'RE BAD
FOR BUSINESS
YOU KNOW...



SORRY?

YOU. BAD FOR
BUSINESS. YOU
DON'T BUY ANOTHER
DRINK, YOU DON'T
LEAVE A LARGER
TIP.



AND WITH THE SIZE OF THE CLIENTELE HE HAS TONIGHT, THE BARTENDER CAN USE ALL THE TIPS HE CAN GET. THUS THE QUICK, CONSIDERATE SERVICE.

WELL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN...



GOOD NIGHT.

YOU'RE NOT LEAVING...?



THANK YOU.

SURE. THAT GUY ISN'T CHASING YOU OUT, IS HE?



NO, I WAS GETTING BORED, ANYWAY. AND, KEEP THE CHANGE.

HEY, THANKS A LOT!



OH--

OH, DON'T LEAVE, PLEASE. I APOLOGIZE, I'M BEING A BOOR. LET ME MAKE IT UP TO YOU.



MY NAME IS VICTOR.



A PLEASURE. NO APOLOGY NECESSARY. BUT IT IS LATE AND I HAVE TO RUN--

PLEASE, ONE DRINK. I INSIST. THEN, IF YOU *WISH* TO LEAVE...

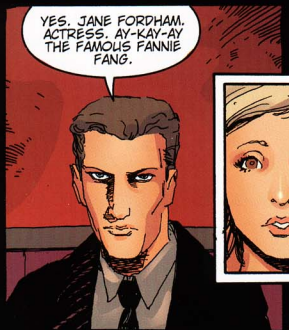


WELL, ALRIGHT, JUST *ONE*, THEN I REALLY DO HAVE TO LEAVE MR.--

VICTOR. VICTOR WILL DO.



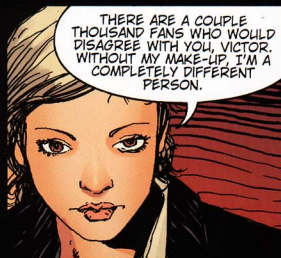
VICTOR. I'M JANE.



YES. JANE FORDHAM. ACTRESS. AY-KAY-AY THE FAMOUS FANNIE FANG.



OH, DON'T BE SURPRISED. YOU ARE, AFTER ALL, THE DARLING OF LATE NIGHT TELEVISION. QUITE RECOGNIZABLE.



THERE ARE A COUPLE THOUSAND FANS WHO WOULD DISAGREE WITH YOU, VICTOR. WITHOUT MY MAKE-UP, I'M A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON.



EXCUSE ME. DO YOU KNOW *WHO* I AM?

OF COURSE...

YOU DO?!



YOU'RE THE
BIG TIPPER
TONIGHT.

...UH...
THANK YOU...



YOU SEE?

NOT AT ALL.
NOT TO THE SHARP-
EYED VIEWER.
BENEATH THE
LUSH AND--



...THE LUSH AND --SHALL
WE SAY, LUSTY?--
TRAPPINGS YOU WEAR AS
FANNIE, YOUR BEAUTY
RADIATES...

QUITE
DISTINCTLY.

MM. LOOK, VICTOR, I
APPRECIATE THE DRINK,
BUT I **REALLY** HAVE
TO GET GOING,
SO...



NO, PLEASE DON'T,
MISS FORDHAM... JANE... I'M
SORRY. I'VE ONCE AGAIN
OFFENDED YOU, AND THAT
WAS CERTAINLY **NOT** MY
INTENT... PLEASE...



...**WHAT** IS IT YOU WANT,
VICTOR? YOU DON'T SEEM THE
TYPE TO COME IN TO BARS
TO HIT ON WOMEN...

THAT OLD WORLD
CHARM YOU OOZE MUST
PLAY BETTER AT THE
COUNTRY CLUB...

YOU
SLIMMING
OR SOMETHING?
WHAT'S YOUR
DEAL?



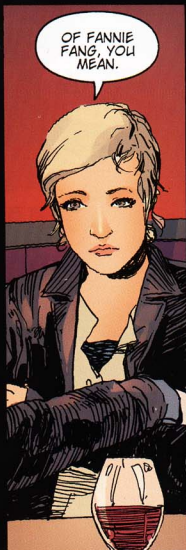
TOUCHÉ.

ALL RIGHT.
I'LL COME CLEAN.
BUT PLEASE, SIT.
MY NECK IS
STARTING TO
ACHE...

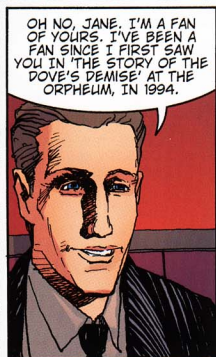


YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE.
SOMETIMES MY 'OLD WORLD
CHARM', AS YOU CALL IT, DOES
'OOZE' OVERLY MUCH. IT'S A
VAIN TRAIT, AND TERRIBLY
UNBECOMING, I
KNOW...

I SUPPOSE
I WAS TRYING TO
IMPRESS YOU. I'M
A HUGE FAN OF
YOUR WORK...



OF FANNIE
FANG, YOU
MEAN.



OH NO, JANE, I'M A FAN
OF YOURS. I'VE BEEN A
FAN SINCE I FIRST SAW
YOU IN 'THE STORY OF THE
DOVE'S DEMISE' AT THE
ORPHEUM, IN 1994.



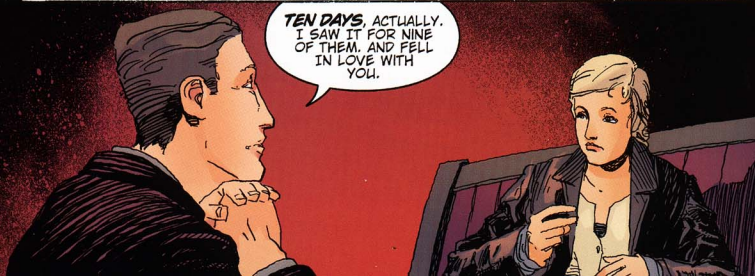
YOU **SAW**
THAT PLAY?!



ABSOLUTELY.
AND YOU WERE
BRILLIANT!



HUH. UH,
THANK YOU...
HUH. THAT PLAY
CLOSED AFTER
A WEEK.



TEN DAYS, ACTUALLY.
I SAW IT FOR NINE
OF THEM, AND FELL
IN LOVE WITH
YOU.

OH NO. YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE STALKER GUYS, AREN'T YOU? AH, GEEZ, LISTEN, IF YOU TRY ANYTHING, I'LL **SCREAM**, I SWEAR--

NO! NO, NO, PLEASE, JANE, YOU MISUNDERSTAND...

I MEAN YOU NO HARM. LOOK AT ME... I WOULD **NEVER** HURT YOU... PLEASE, PLEASE, JUST... **LOOK** INTO MY EYES...



OKAY, I BELIEVE YOU. I'M SORRY, I JUST--

ENTIRELY MY FAULT, I GET CARRIED AWAY IN MY ENTHUSIASM, HORRENDOUS HABIT...

IT'S JUST, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND... FANNIE FANG IS A **CHARACTER** I PLAY. SHE'S NOT ME. WE DON'T **LOOK** ALIKE, DON'T **THINK** ALIKE. I KNEW GOING INTO THE ROLE THAT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO PROTECT MYSELF...






THAT'S WHY I
PUT UP ALL THESE
RESTRICTIONS
REGARDING HER.
I DON'T WANT TO
DESTROY THE
'REALITY' OF HER,
THE FANS LOVE
HER...



BUT I DON'T
WANT THERE TO BE
ANY CONFUSION ABOUT
LIS, FANNIE AND ME.
I'M NOT A LEATHER-
WEARING, DOUBLE
ENTRENDE SPOUTING,
SEX KITTEN
KIND OF...




...**VAMPIRE**.
YOU'RE NOT A
VAMPIRE.



AND YOU DON'T
WANT PEOPLE TO THINK
THAT JUST BECAUSE
FANNIE IS ALL THOSE
THINGS, THEY SHOULD
ASSUME THAT
YOU ARE?

EXACTLY!
YES!



FANNIE FANG IS
JUST A MASK YOU WEAR.
HER PERSONALITY, HER...
SEXUALITY. WHEN YOU'RE
DONE, **OFF** COMES
THE MASK.

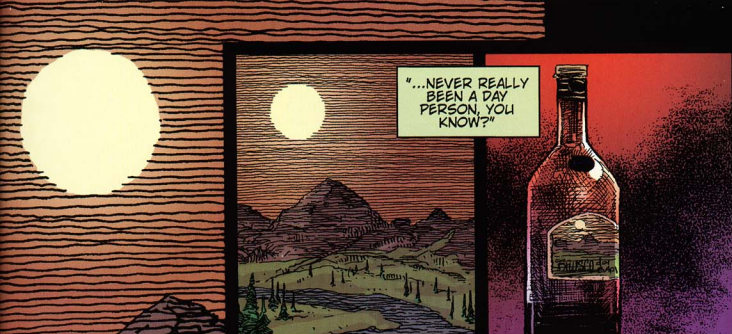
CORRECT...
WE'LL PUT...

YOU SEE,
JANE? I'M NOTHING
TO BE **FEARED**. I
UNDERSTAND...



**I'LL DRINK
TO THAT!**

INDEED.
DRINK UP, THEN
WE'LL HAVE
ANOTHER...



"...NEVER REALLY BEEN A DAY PERSON, YOU KNOW?"



...SO, WHEN I HEARD THAT CHANNEL 42 WAS PLANNING ON CUTTING BACK ON THE LATE NIGHT INFOMERCIALS, AIRING CHEAP 'B' MOVIE RERUNS INSTEAD TO TRY TO STEAL BACK SOME OF KRW'S AUDIENCE, I THOUGHT, WHY NOT? AND THE REST IS--

MYSTERY...

MYSTERY...
YEAH...

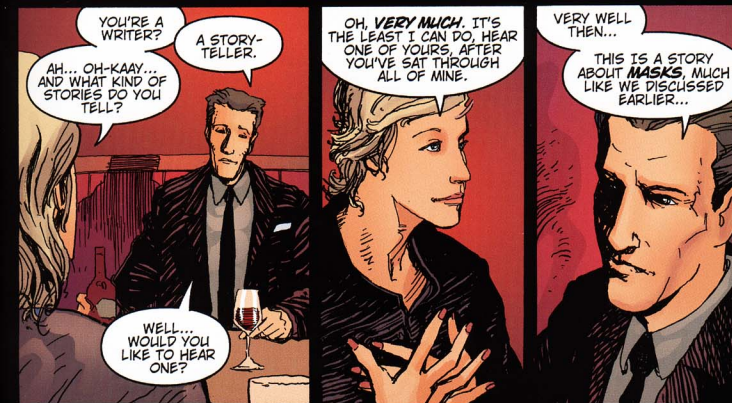


LISTEN TO ME TALK! YOU MUST BE GETTING BORED...

NOT AT ALL. I'M ENTHRALLED.

RUNNING OUT OF WINE HERE... AND YOU, VICTOR? WHAT IS IT THAT YOU DO?

ME? ...I TELL STORIES...



YOU'RE A WRITER?

A STORY-TELLER.


AH... OH-KAAY... AND WHAT KIND OF STORIES DO YOU TELL?

OH, *VERY MUCH*. IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO, HEAR ONE OF YOURS, AFTER YOU'VE SAT THROUGH ALL OF MINE.

VERY WELL THEN...

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT *MASKS*, MUCH LIKE WE DISCUSSED EARLIER...

WELL... WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ONE?

A close-up portrait of a man with a pale, mask-like face and dark, hollow eyes. He has short, dark hair and is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt and a dark tie. The background is a solid red color.


IT'S THE
STORY OF MASKS,
THE KIND WE ALL
WEAR, WHETHER
WE ADMIT TO IT
OR NOT...

A close-up of a woman's face, focusing on her eyes. She has dark hair and is looking directly at the viewer. The background is a solid orange color.


AND IT'S A
STORY OF DREAMS,
AND NIGHTMARES, OF
HORROR AND DARK,
DARK BEAUTY...

A close-up of a woman's eye, showing a detailed iris with a blue and green pattern. The eye is looking directly at the viewer. The background is a solid orange color.

IT BEGINS A BIT
PAST THE BEGINNING,
AFTER THE SNAKE
RESCUED THE
LOVERS FROM THE
GARDEN...

A circular frame with a dark, textured background. In the center, there is a small, bright blue circle containing a silhouette of a person standing. The frame is surrounded by a dark, textured background.


"AND IT
BEGINS WITH THE
SON OF ADAM.
HIS NAME WAS
CAINE..."

A circular frame showing two figures in a dark, textured environment. One figure is standing and holding a weapon, while the other is crouching or falling. The background is a solid blue color.

CAINE KILLED HIS BROTHER,
THE WEAKER OF THE TWO,
FOR THE WORLD WAS
HARSH AND CRUEL, AND
ONLY THE STRONG COULD
SURVIVE IN IT.

A circular frame showing a figure in a dark, textured environment. The figure is standing and looking towards the viewer. The background is a solid blue color.

FOR HIS TRANSGRESSION,
HE WAS BANISHED,
FORCED TO WALK THE
EARTH FOREVER, ALWAYS
IN THE SHADOW.



WITH NO FAMILY, NO FRIENDS,
NOTHING BUT THE CLOTHES ON HIS
BACK, HE WANDERED, SLEEPING
DURING THE DAY, WHEN THOSE WHO
MIGHT RECOGNIZE HIM WERE ABOUT,
HE HID HIMSELF BENEATH THE TWIGS
AND LEAVES OF THE FOREST.

AND AFTER A TIME, SO
ACCUSTOMED WAS HE TO THE
CHILL OF NIGHT, THAT DURING THE
DAY, HE ESCAPED THE WARMTH OF
THE SUN BY BURROWING DEEP
INTO THE EARTH, SO THAT THE
GOLDEN RAYS COULD NOT HOPE
TO REACH HIM.



AND WHEN HE ROSE, WITH
ONLY THE MOON AS HIS
GUIDE, CAINE WOULD
VENTURE TO THE FRINGES
OF MAN'S DOMAIN...

AND HE WOULD MEET ONE, ON
OCCASION, A LONE TRAVELLER,
SOME WARY, SOME KIND...



AND CAINE WOULD
REMEMBER THAT,
ALONG WITH
IMMORTALITY, AND
IMMORTAL SHAME,
CAME SOMETHING
ELSE...

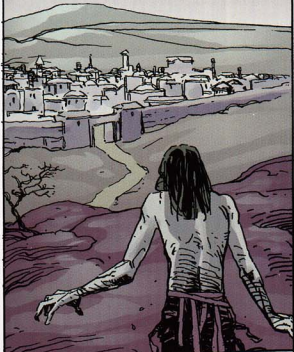


A TERRIBLE
CURSE...

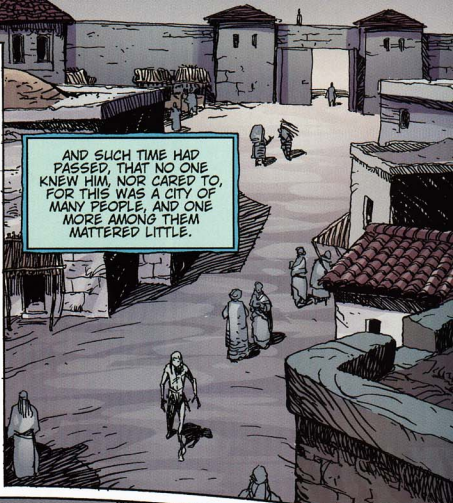


AN INSATIABLE
BLOODLUST...

AND THUS HE WANDERED FOR
UNTOLD AGES, UNTIL ONE
NIGHT HE CAME TO A CITY.



AND SUCH TIME HAD
PASSED, THAT NO ONE
KNEW HIM, NOR CARED TO,
FOR THIS WAS A CITY OF
MANY PEOPLE, AND ONE
MORE AMONG THEM
MATTERED LITTLE.



SO FILLED WERE THEY
WITH THE FAT OF LIFE,
THAT CAINE EASILY
OVERTOOK THEM.



AND THEIR KING,
INTELLIGENT MAN HE,
TOOK CAINE AS HIS
HEIR...



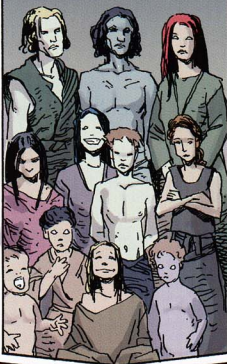
AND HE WAS
EVER AT
CAINE'S SIDE...



IT CAME TO PASS THAT CAINE BEGOT THREE CHILDREN, AND THEY WERE KNOWN AS THE PROGENY. THEY HAD TERRIBLE POWER, WHICH THEY USED AT THEIR OWN WHIM, FOR ILL OR GOOD.



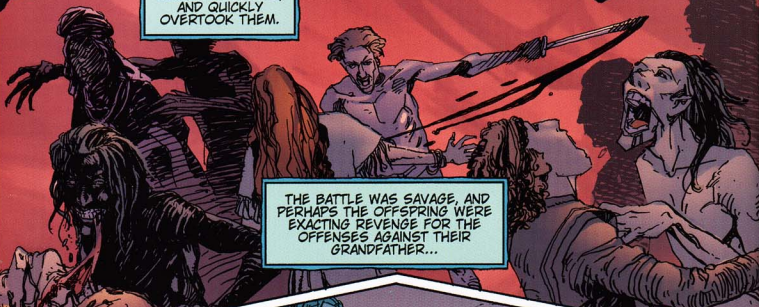
THE CHILDREN OF CAINE HAD CHILDREN OF THEIR OWN, THE THIRD GENERATION, AND THEIR STRENGTH MULTIPLIED. CAINE HAD LEFT THE KINGDOM, TO CONTINUE HIS WANDERING.



NOW, THE OFFSPRING OF THE PROGENY WERE NOT CONTENT TO LIVE IN THIS DARK WORLD OF THEIR FOREBEARERS, AND WISHED TO GO OUT AMONG THE LIGHT-DWELLERS. THE PROGENY FORBODE IT, AND THEIR CHILDREN KILLED THEM.



THEY FOUND THEIR COUSINS WANTING, AND QUICKLY OVERTOOK THEM.



THE BATTLE WAS SAVAGE, AND PERHAPS THE OFFSPRING WERE EXACTING REVENGE FOR THE OFFENSES AGAINST THEIR GRANDFATHER...


BUT THE OUTCOME WAS INEVITABLE, AND THE OFFSPRING RULED THE EARTH FOR MILLENIA, AND THERE WAS A RICH AND POWERFUL REIGN...





WAIT, SO THIS IS, WHAT, LIKE THE STORY OF ATLANTIS, OR POMPEII OR SOMETHING RIGHT?

SOMETHING LIKE THAT...



THIS WAS A WORLD OF GRACE AND POWER AND BEAUTY, WHEREIN THE CHILDREN OF CAINE RULED THE CHILDREN OF ADAM...

AND ATLANTIS FALLS INTO THE SEA, RIGHT?

THE WORLD GETS WEIGHTED DOWN IN ITS OWN GREED AND JUST... SINKS...




IN OUR STORY, THE WORLD WAS WELL, UNTIL THE CHILDREN OF ADAM RALLIED TOGETHER...



IN OUR STORY, THE WORLD BURNS...





THE THIRD GENERATION OF ADAM,
THE GRANDCHILDREN OF CAINE,
HAD GROWN FAT WITH THEIR
POWER. LAZY. THEY THOUGHT
THERE WAS NO LAND THEY
COULD NOT CLAIM, NO PEOPLE
THEY COULD NOT SUBJUGATE.

THEIR RULE WAS WEAK, AND IT
GAVE THEIR DAY-DWELLING
COUSINS TIME TO GATHER UP,
BAND TOGETHER. THEY FOUND
SOLACE AND POWER IN A NEW
LEADER, A MYSTICAL BEING.


THEY BELIEVED THAT THEIR
GOD WAS THE ONLY GOD,
AND SET ABOUT SHACKLING
THE WORLD WITH THEIR
FANATICAL BELIEF.

THOSE THEY COULD
NOT SHACKLE, THEY
DESTROYED.

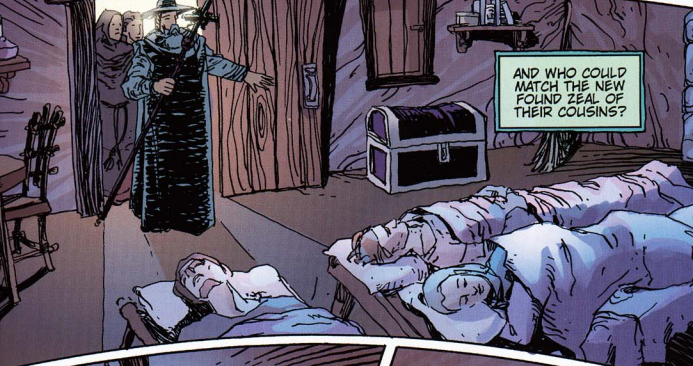
AND SO THEY BEGAN TO
DRIVE OUT THE CHILDREN
OF CAINE. THE ROLES OF
AGES EARLIER HAD
REVERSED ONCE AGAIN.




THE REVERSAL OF
FORTUNE WAS
FRIGHTENINGLY
SIMPLE...



FOR, THOUGH THE
OFFSPRING OF CAINE
WERE STRONG, THEY
WERE FEW...



AND WHO COULD
MATCH THE NEW
FOUND ZEAL OF
THEIR COUSINS?



THEY STRUCK DOWN
THE CHILDREN OF
CAINE, ONE, TWO AT A
TIME, WHEN THE SUN
WAS AT ITS
STRONGEST.



FOR THE OFFSPRING, LIKE
THEIR SIRE, WERE ALLERGIC
TO THE SUN, AND SLEPT THE
BETTER COURSE OF THE DAY,
NEVER VENTURING OUT UNTIL
AFTER DUSK.



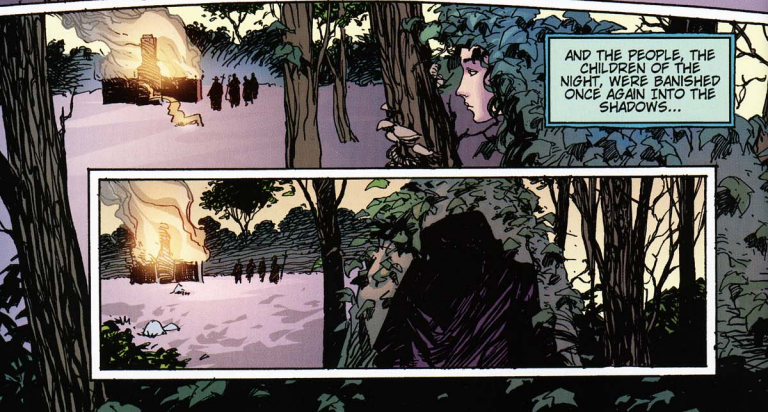
AND IN THE EVENT
THEY DID FIND
THEMSELVES OUT
IN THE DAY,
UNPROTECTED...



WELL, THEY HAD
LITTLE TIME FOR
WORRY...



AND SO, MORTAL MAN HAD A
STELLAR ALLY, WHO BATHED
HIM IN WARMTH, WHILE
BURNING HIS ENEMIES...



AND THE PEOPLE, THE
CHILDREN OF THE
NIGHT, WERE BANISHED
ONCE AGAIN INTO THE
SHADOWS...

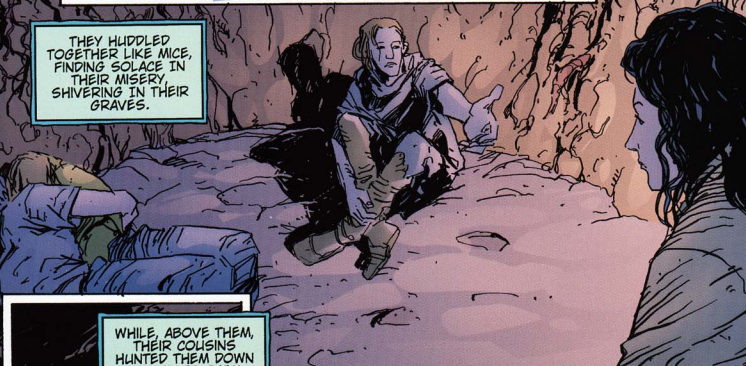




THEY TOOK ONCE MORE TO DWELLING IN THE FORESTS, LIKE ANIMALS.



THEY TOOK TO LYING IN THE COLD, DARK EARTH, LIKE THEIR SIRE.



THEY HUDDLED TOGETHER LIKE MICE, FINDING SOLACE IN THEIR MISERY, SHIVERING IN THEIR GRAVES.

WHILE, ABOVE THEM, THEIR COUSINS HUNTED THEM DOWN AND KILLED THEM.



DURING THE DAY, THEY SLEPT, AND IF THEY DREAMED, SURELY IT WAS A DREAM OF FORMER GLORY AND POWER...



BUT WHEN THE SUN SET,
AND WAS REPLACED BY
THE COOL LIGHT OF
MOON...



THEY ROSE UP, IN
UNISON, HEARTS HOT
WITH FURY...



AND THEY LEFT
THEIR BEDS OF
EARTH, TO SEEK
OUT THEIR
COUSINS.



AND THE MEN WHO SLEW
THEIR NUMBER WOULD THEY
THEMSELVES BE LAX, CONTENT
IN THEIR SUPERIOR FORCE...



AND, APPARENTLY,
IN THEIR SUPERIOR
LORD.







BUT BELIEF IS A
STRANGE THING...



IT WORKS ONLY
SO LONG AS
CONVENIENT...



AND AT THAT TIME,
IN THAT AGE, BELIEF
IN A GREATER
FORCE DEPENDED
SOLELY ON THE
FORCE...



THE LUST FOR
BLOOD WAS
GREATER STILL.



AND WHILE THE LUST
FOR AN INTANGIBLE
LORD WAS GREAT...



WAIT A SECOND, WAIT A SECOND...

VAMPIRES? WE'RE TALKING ABOUT **VAMPIRES?!**



OH, I GET IT NOW. YOU WANT TO DO SOME KIND OF DRACULA THING, RIGHT? THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, **NOT ME!** YOU WANT **FANNIE!**

NOW, JANE...



YOU WANT FANNIE FANG TO STAR IN SOME STUPID **BLOODSUCKER MOVIE!** YOU FIGURING TO CREATE SOME KIND OF FRANCHISE THING HERE, VICTOR? **GREAT.** WELL, YOU HAD **ME** FOOLED...



THOUGHT YOU WERE INTERESTED IN **ME!**

JANE...

WELL, GUESS WHAT, YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE STATION, 'CAUSE **THEY** OWN FANNIE, NOT ME. BUT THEY WON'T LET YOU, BECAUSE WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT...



WE HAVE TO BOTH AGREE ON FANNIE'S USAGE, HER APPEARANCE, HER NAME, AND I SURE AS HELL **WON'T** AGREE!

OH MAN, AND TO THINK, I THOUGHT YOU WERE **DIFFERENT...**

JANE, **PLEASE** LISTEN...



JANE, I WANT YOU.
YOU. NOT FANNIE FANG.
BECAUSE I THINK YOU
KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO
WEAR A MASK, TO HIDE
BEHIND A PERSONA...



...ALWAYS WANTING
TO REVEAL YOUR TRUE
SELF, BUT **AFRAID** TO.
AFRAID TO BE JUDGED
FOR **WHO** YOU REALLY
ARE, **WHAT** YOU
REALLY ARE...

AM I
WRONG?



DID I MAKE
A **MISTAKE** IN
CHOOSING
YOU?

...NOOO...



NO, I CAN
DO IT. I CAN
DO THE PART.
I MEAN, YOU'RE
RIGHT.

I DO KNOW
ABOUT MASKS.
I KNOW HOW
THAT FEELS...



GOOD.



BUT LISTEN, DON'T
GET ME WRONG HERE.
I'M A LITTLE LIGHTHEADED,
HAVEN'T EATEN YET.
WOULD YOU MIND IF WE
CONTINUED THIS AT
MY PLACE? IT'S
NOT FAR...

JUST
DON'T GET
ANY IDEAS...



I **PROMISE**. I WON'T
DO ANYTHING YOU
DON'T REALLY WANT
ME TO...





BUT IT WAS
BETTER KNOWN AS
THE PLAGUE...



DISEASE AND
PESTILENCE HAD
REPLACED WAR AS
THE KILLER OF MEN.

THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH THE
STENCH OF DEATH, AND FIRE,
AND THE FLOWERS WORN BY
PEOPLE TO STAVE OFF THOSE
OTHER SMELLS...



RING AROUND THE ROSIE, POCKET FULL OF POSIES,
ASHES, ASHES, THEY ALL FALL DOWN...



AND THE CHILDREN OF CAINE
WERE AT A LOSS, AS WELL,
BECAUSE AS LONG AS THE
MORTALS SUFFERED THE
DISEASE, THEIR BLOOD
WAS TAINTED...



AND TAINTED BLOOD
WAS FORBIDDEN
BLOOD. AND THE
CAINITES COULD NOT
FEED...

SO THE CAINITES, THOSE WHO HAD NOT BEEN VANQUISHED BY THE CHRISTIANS, WHO NEEDED HEALTHY BLOOD TO SURVIVE, MADE A PACT...

THEY WOULD HELP THEIR COUSINS, AND IN SO DOING, HELP THEMSELVES.

BUT HOW? WHY WOULD THEY DO THAT? IS SOMEONE GONNA DO A REWRITE ON THIS SCRIPT?

REMEMBER JANE, THAT THE CAINITES LIVED LONG, **LONGER** THAN THE MORTALS WHO HUNTED THEM. THEY HAD A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE CENTURIES OLD.

ONE OR TWO WOULD POSE AS SURGEONS, AND PASS ON METHODS OF CLEANING AND DISINFECTING THE PLACES WHERE DISEASE WAS RAMPANT.

THEY IMPARTED SECRETS OF HYGIENE THAT THEY THEMSELVES HAD NO USE FOR, AND SLOWLY, SLOWLY THE PLAGUE RECEDED.

AND ONE THING THEY LEARNED, THOSE KINDRED OF CAINE, ONE INVALUABLE LESSON...

"THEY LEARNED HOW TO PASS AS MORTALS..."




OH, IT DIDN'T HAPPEN RIGHT AWAY. AN APPEARANCE OR TWO HERE AND THERE...

ONLY LONG ENOUGH
TO 'TEST THE WATERS',
SO TO SPEAK.



AND THEN, IN THE
BLINK OF AN EYE,
THEY WERE GONE.




AS THE MORTALS HAD
GROWN HEALTHIER, MORE
PROSPEROUS, SO TOO
HAD THE KINDRED.



THE MORTALS' BLOOD
WAS THICK AND RICH,
LIQUID GOLD COURSEING
THROUGH THEIR LIMBS.

AND THE CHILDREN
OF CAINE WERE THE
MINERS, STRIKING
NEW VEINS.



THE HUNT HAD
BEGUN ANEW.



THE WORLD HAD CHANGED. MORTALS LOOKED NOT INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE COLD EARTH FOR THEIR ENEMIES...



THEY WERE BUSY HATING THEIR OWN NEIGHBORS.

AND THE KINDRED THRIVED, COMFORTABLE IN THE IDEA THAT MAN HAD LEARNED TO HATE HIMSELF, AND THUS, HAD NO TIME TO LOOK BEYOND THEIR OWN...

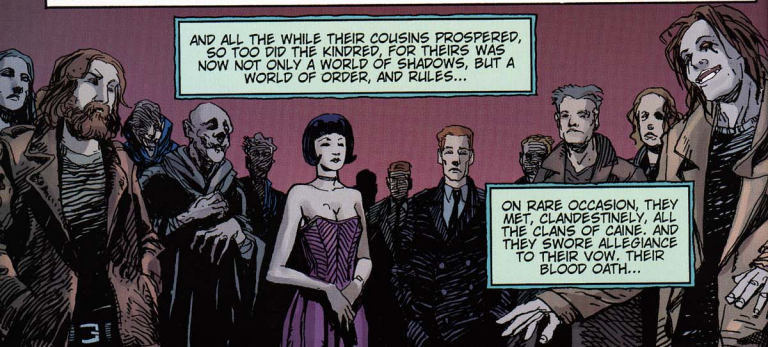
OH, THERE WERE DISCOVERIES. A FEW OF THE KINDRED WERE SLAIN, BUT FOR THE MOST PART, THEIR COUSINS IGNORED THEM.



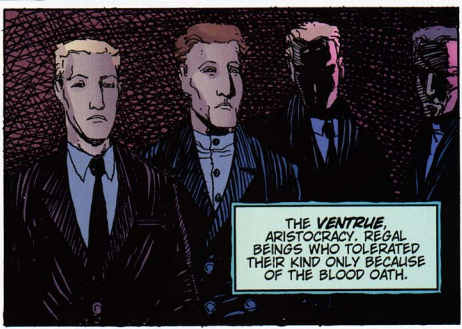
FOR THE AGE OF MACHINES AND REASON WERE UPON THEM, AND THE WORLD HAD NO TIME FOR FAIRY TALES, REGARDLESS THEIR ORIGIN IN TRUTH.



AND ALL THE WHILE THEIR COUSINS PROSPERED, SO TOO DID THE KINDRED, FOR THEIRS WAS NOW NOT ONLY A WORLD OF SHADOWS, BUT A WORLD OF ORDER, AND RULES...




ON RARE OCCASION, THEY MET, CLANDESTINELY, ALL THE CLANS OF CAINE. AND THEY SWORE ALLEGIANCE TO THEIR VOW. THEIR BLOOD OATH...



AMONG THEM WERE THE **NOSFERATH**. CREATURES WHOSE APPEARANCE HORRIFIED, AND WHO COULD NOT WALK AMONG MORTALS, BUT RATHER LIVED BENEATH THEM.

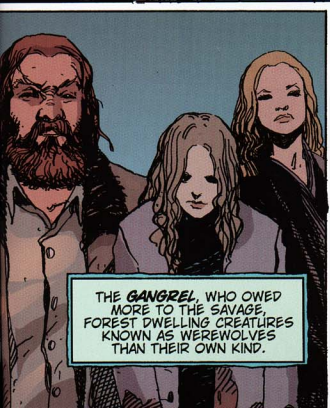
THE **VENTRUE**, ARISTOCRACY. REGAL BEINGS WHO TOLERATED THEIR KIND ONLY BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OATH.




...THE **BRUJAH**, FIERCE DESCENDENTS OF THE WARRING CLASS.



MALKAVIANS, THE LUNATICS, WHOSE RANTINGS AND RAVINGS EQUALED THE WORST OF THE PLAGUE-DISEASED.



THE **GANGREL**, WHO OWED MORE TO THE SAVAGE, FOREST DWELLING CREATURES KNOWN AS WEREWOLVES THAN THEIR OWN KIND.



THESE AND MORE SWORE AN OATH TO ONE ANOTHER, THAT THEY WOULD WALK AMONG THEIR COUSINS, HIDING THEIR TRUE SELVES, HUNTING THEIR PREY IN SECRET, AND NEVER—

"WAIT, VICTOR, WAIT..."



"BUT WHAT
ROLE WOULD
I PLAY?"



ROLE?

MY DEAR
SWEET JANE
FORDHAM...
WHY, YOU'LL BE
MY MATE, OF
COURSE.

YOUR MATE?
SO, WAIT...

ARE YOU
PRODUCING **AND**
STARRING IN
THIS FILM? DAMN,
NEED MORE
WINE...

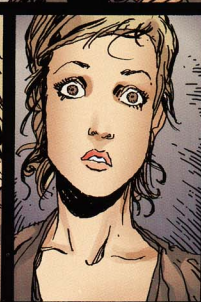


I MEAN, I DON'T
HAVE A **PROBLEM**
WITH IT...

JANE. SWEET SWEET
JANE. I **SAID** THIS
WAS THE ROLE OF
A LIFETIME...

...I **NEVER**
SAID IT WAS A
MOVIE...







JANE, DON'T
FIGHT IT. DON'T
YOU SEE? WE
BELONG
TOGETHER...



WE BOTH WEAR
MASKS, BOTH
HIDE OUR TRUE
SELVES.

OUR **TRUE**
NATURE.

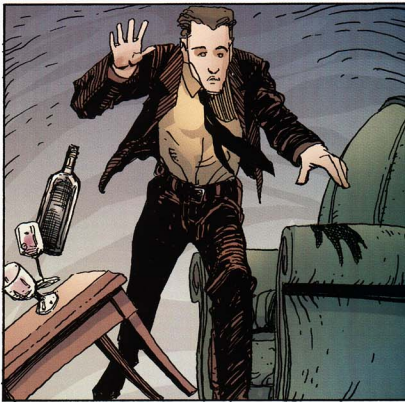
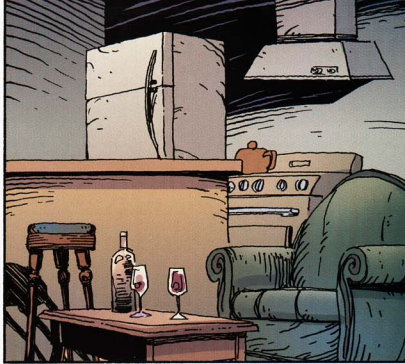


NOW IT'S TIME
TO **GIVE IN**
TO IT.

TEAR
OFF THE
MASKS...



...AND GIVE
INTO OUR
NATURE...





YOU COME ON
WITH THAT WHOLE
POWER TRIP...



YOU TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF
THE **WEAK**...



FEED
ON THEIR
DREAMS...



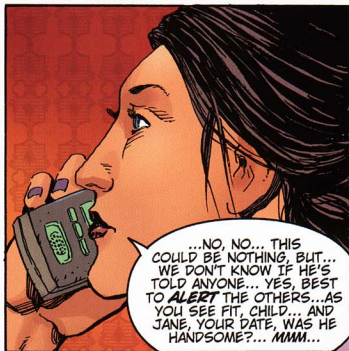
I DON'T KNOW
WHERE YOU GOT ALL
THE INFORMATION YOU DID.
YOU GOT A LOT OF IT
WRONG, BUT **ENOUGH**
WAS RIGHT.



YOU'RE SOME
KIND OF **FREAK**,
AREN'T YOU,
VICTOR?

...J-JANE...





what are we?

The damned
childer of caine?

The grotesque
lords of humanity?

The pitiful wretches
of eternal hell?

we are vampires, and that is enough.

we are that which
must be feared,
worshipped
and adored.

The world is ours —
now and forever.

no one holds
command over us.

no man.

no god.

no prince.



VAMPIRE

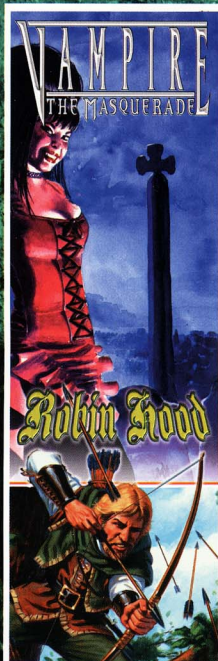
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ISBN 0-9710129-1-1

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