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Fall of Othulhu



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WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

You've been to a comic book shop before I'd hazard a guess. Maybe even a few times. So you know what's on sale there. Me, I've got 90 long boxes full of stuff at home. I broke into comics in the late 1970s reading Fantastic Four and X-Men, my first true loves, and got into independent comics with Pacific and First and Comico in the 1980s.

Superheroes sell. But we don't really do superheroes here at BOOM!. Is it a grand political gesture? Do we hate superheroes? I've got a copy of X-MEN #2 signed by Stan "the Man" Lee that shows I don't hate superheroes. I love getting Joe Casey on the phone so we can nitpick over which issue of David Michelinie's IRON MAN we love more. I'd say it's not a political statement. It's just that it's been done.

But what the market needs is something new. In the way that Harvey Pekar's American Splendor in the 1970s arose out of the underground scene in the late 1960s that lead to modern motions like GHOSTWORLD and the AMERICAN SPLENDOR movie, you've got to keep moving forward in comics. You've got to do something new. Mike Mignola wowed the world by mixing equal parts Frankenstein Monster with Indiana Jones and Lovecraft to make HELLBOY. You've got to do the new.

That's what we have on-tap for next year. Crime in TWO GUNS. A secret agent teddy bear in MR. STUFFINS. Lovecraftian horror in THE FALL OF CTHULHU. Supervillains without the capes in my own co-creation, DOMINION. Action-comedy with COVER GIRL.

What's the big idea? BOOM!'s got a few. Hope you like 'em. And I hope you come along for the ride as we find the next big idea, and the next big evolution in comics...

Best,
-R

BOOM! STUDIOS UPCOMING



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STUDIOS

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?
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HARLOT

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SO WHICH ONE IS THAT FOR?

BETA ALPHA NU.

AND WHAT'S THEIR HOOK? LONGSTANDING TRADITION OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE? A HOST OF FORMER BROTHERS NOW IN THE FORTUNE 500?

NOPE. JELLO SHOTS!



CHARMING. AT LEAST THEY'RE UP FRONT ABOUT IT.

YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT INVITED.

I THINK MY EGO CAN HANDLE IT.

SOMEHOW I DOUBT THAT.

JORDAN, IF YOU WANT TO LEAVE ME FOR AN OVERSEXED FRESHMAN, I WILL HUMBLBY STAND BY AS THE LESSER MAN.

YOU TRULY ARE A PRINCE AMONG MEN.



THAT'S WHY YOU AGREED TO MARRY ME.

UH, DO YOU SEE A RING HERE, SWEETIE? WE CAN TALK HONEYMOONS AND CHINA PATTERNS TIL WE'RE BLUE IN THE FACE, BUT UNTIL I HAVE A GROSSLY EXPENSIVE DIAMOND ON THIS FINGER, THAT OVERSEXED FRESHMAN IS STILL IN THE RUNNING.

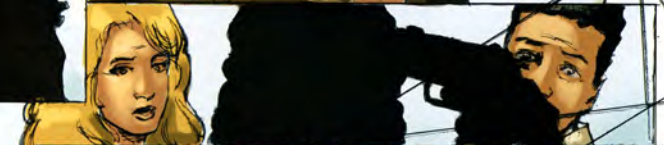
HOW ABOUT I WOO YOU WITH SOME JELLO SHOTS INSTEAD?



CY, I SWEAR IF YOU TRY TO GET ME DRUNK AND ELOPE I'LL--

THANK!







HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE STUDYING SIX MONTHS IN SOUTH AMERICA. WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING BACK?

I DON'T KNOW.

SIR? EXCUSE ME, SIR?





DAMMIT, SARAH, PICK UP.

YOUR SISTER STILL NOT HOME?

NO, SHE'S NOT ANSWERING HER CELL EITHER.

I CAN'T DO THIS, JORDAN. I JUST CAN'T.

OF COURSE YOU CAN, BABY. I KNOW IT'S TOUGH, BUT I KNOW YOU CAN HANDLE THIS.

THERE'S JUST SO MUCH TO DO, BETWEEN THE FUNERAL, THE UNIVERSITY... NOT TO MENTION I HAVE NO IDEA HOW I'M GOING TO PAY FOR IT ALL.

IF MY SISTER WOULD JUST CALL ME BACK...

THAT SOUNDED PRETTY SELFISH DIDN'T IT?

YES, BUT YOU'RE ENTITLED.

I JUST DON'T GET IT, JORDAN. WHY WOULD HE DO HIS? HE WAS FINE BEFORE HE LEFT. NOT A PROBLEM IN THE WORLD. WHY DO THIS?



THINGS HAPPEN, CY. OBVIOUSLY YOUR UNCLE WAS HAVING PROBLEMS.

NO, I WOULD HAVE KNOWN.

MY MOTHER HID HER DRINKING FROM US FOR YEARS. WE HAD NO IDEA.





LOT OF BOOKS AND PAPERS. STUFF THAT CAN WAIT... WHAT THE?

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?



A KNIFE? HE MUST HAVE BROUGHT IT BACK FROM SOUTH AMERICA.

IT'S HIDEOUS. LOOKS OLD THOUGH, SO IT MIGHT BE WORTH SOMETHING. YOU SHOULD PROBABLY SELL IT. THAT COULD HELP WITH THE FUNERAL.

SELL IT? WHY WOULD I SELL IT? IT BELONGED TO HIM.



IF YOU WANT SOMETHING TO REMEMBER HIM BY, I'LL LET YOU KEEP THE STACK OF VINTAGE PLAYBOYS HE UNDOUBTEDLY HAS STASHED AWAY SOMEWHERE, BUT I'M NOT LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSE WITH THAT.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

WELL, IT'S LOOKING AT ME FOR ONE THING. AND I'D RATHER NOT BE OGGLED BY MY CUTLERY.



FINE.



I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HEAD OVER TO HIS PLACE, SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING ELSE I CAN SELL.



DON'T BE GONE LONG, OKAY SWEETIE. I NEED YOU CLOSE TO ME TODAY.

I LOVE YOU, YOU KNOW THAT?

I'VE HEARD THE RUMORS. NOW GO AND HURRY BACK. BE CAREFUL.

I WILL.



"YES, SARAH. OF COURSE I TRIED CALLING YOU BEFORE I PUT EVERYTHING UNCLE WALT EVER OWNED ON EBAY. NO, I DON'T HAVE A LAWYER. WHY DO YOU ASK?"

"I CAN SEE IT NOW. ONCE MY SISTER'S LAWYERS ARE THROUGH WITH ME, THE ONLY THING I'LL HAVE LEFT WILL BE A CAST-IRON LEMON JUICER THAT HASN'T WORKED IN THIRTY YEARS."



"I'LL BE LUCKY TO GET... ANYTHING..."



"...AT ALL."



"OKAY... WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?"



HONEY, I
TOLD YOU TO
PUT THIS
AWAY.

THOUGHT I
DID. SORRY.

CY, WHAT'S
WRONG?



SOMETHING'S
NOT RIGHT ABOUT
ALL OF THIS.

YEAH, I'M
KIND OF
GETTING
THAT.



HIS APARTMENT WAS
EMPTY, AND BY THE
AMOUNT OF DUST
THERE, I'D SAY IT'S
BEEN EMPTY FOR
A WHILE.

HE WAS
SUPPOSED TO BE IN
SOUTH AMERICA FOR
SIX MONTHS. MAYBE HE
PUT EVERYTHING IN
STORAGE.

HIGHLY
UNLIKELY.

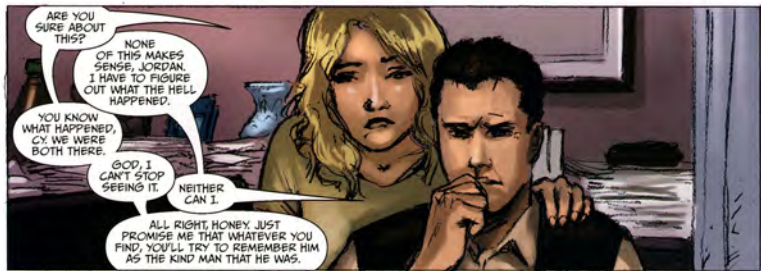
OKAY, LET'S THINK
ABOUT THIS. HE GOES
TO SOUTH AMERICA TO
DO RESEARCH, BUT HE
COMES BACK TWO
MONTHS EARLY AND
KILLS HIMSELF.

HE LEAVES
NOTHING BEHIND BUT AN
EMPTY APARTMENT AND A
BAG FULL OF...THIS. NO
EXPLANATION, NO SUICIDE
NOTE, NOTHING.

WHAT IS ALL
THIS STUFF?
PART OF HIS
RESEARCH?

LET'S
HAVE A
LOOK.







WHAT IS THAT?

I DON'T KNOW HIS THESIS I GUESS.

THE CALL

POLYTHEISTIC RITUAL AND PRIMITIVE CULT WORSHIP IN THE MODERN AGE.

By
Walter McKinley
(first draft)

CALL? CALL WHAT?

NO IDEA.

I ALMOST WISH IT WAS PORN. WELL, THIS MIGHT EXPLAIN THAT CREEPY SOUVENIR OF HIS.

Ever since our hominid ancestors climbed down from the safety of their arboreal hideaways we have been developing concepts of us from that which we do not see and do not understand. It is Humankind's instinctual fear of the unknown that has driven the genesis of our greatest triumphs as a species. It is indeed the mother of all invention, then,



I DON'T GET IT. IT STARTS OFF READING LIKE A NORMAL PAPER, THEN PARTS GO OFF INTO...

...I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF LANGUAGE THIS IS.

COULD IT BE PORTUGUESE? THAT'S COMMON IN PARTS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

NO, I'M PRETTY SURE PORTUGUESE USES VOWELS. BUT EVEN THE STUFF THAT'S IN ENGLISH DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.



LISTEN TO THIS...

"THE BLACK CHORUS WILL ANNOUNCE THE COMING OF THE FINAL CALL AND E'LYEH WILL KNOW DAYLIGHT ONCE MORE."

RALEIGH? NORTH CAROLINA? HELL, THEY GET MORE SUN THAN WE DO.

NO, NOT RALEIGH. I DON'T THINK I'M PRONOUNCING IT RIGHT.

THIS IS ALL JUST SO... BIZARRE.



C'MON. IT'S LATE AND YOU'VE BEEN STARING AT THAT SCREEN FOR TOO DAMN LONG.

WHAT TIME IS IT?

PAST MY BEDTIME, AND I DON'T FEEL LIKE GOING TO BED ALONE TONIGHT.

I WAS GOING TO RUN SOME DECRYPTION SOFTWARE, SEE IF I CAN GET INTO WHAT ELSE HE HAS ON THAT DRIVE. I HAVEN'T EVEN GONE THROUGH HIS BOOKS YET. THERE COULD BE--

CY, I KNOW YOU WANT TO SOLVE THIS, BUT I SAW IT HAPPEN AND I CAN'T STOP REMEMBERING IT. I NEED YOU TO HELP ME FORGET IT. AT LEAST FOR TONIGHT.

JORDAN, I--

FILL MY HEAD WITH STATIC, CY.

IN THAT WONDERFUL WAY YOU DO.

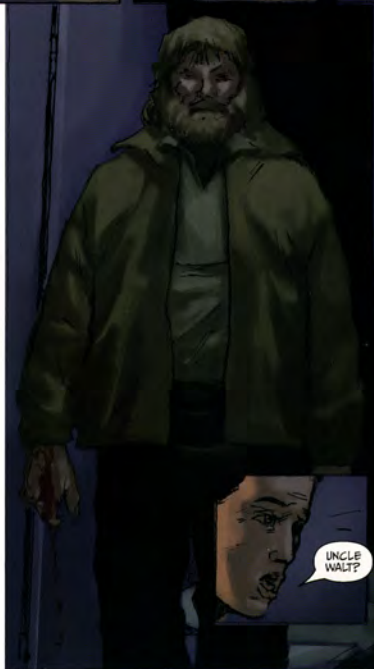




JORDAN?
HONEY IS
THAT YOU?



WHAT
THE
HELL?



UNCLE
WALT?

WAIT!
WHERE ARE
YOU GOING?
UNCLE WALT,
STOP!

PH-NGWII
MSLW'NAFH
CTHULHU R'LEH
WGAH'NAGL
FHTAGN.



WILL YOU
WAIT A SECOND
ALREADY!



JORDAN'S
REALLY UPSET, YOU
KNOW. SHE SAW YOU
KILL YOURSELF AND IT
FRIGHTENED HER.
SHE'S TOSSEING WITH
NIGHTMARES RIGHT
NOW.

I CAN
FEEL
HER.



WHAT'S GOING ON, UNCLE
WALT? TELL ME! WHY DID YOU
COME BACK EARLY? WHY IS
YOUR HOUSE EMPTY? WHAT'S
WITH THOSE BOOKS AND THAT
KNIFE AND THE NONSENSE
ON THE COMPUTER?

AND FOR GOD'S
SAKES WHY DID
YOU KILL YOURSELF?
GODDAMIT, OLD MAN,
ANSWER ME!

WHAT WORDS
COULD THE DEAD
GIVE BUT WHAT THE
DEAD WILL
ALLOW?



COME, WALTER. PARADISE IS WAITING.



WHERE... WHERE IS HE?

HE IS HERE WHERE ALL MEN WISH TO BE. *INSIDE ME.*

PLEASE, I NEED ANSWERS.

YOUR UNCLE IS DEAD, DARLING. AND HERE IN THE DREAMLANDS HE CAN ONLY SPEAK THE WORDS THE DEAD WISH HIM TO.

OH, BUT THE SWEET NOTHINGS HE WHISPERS IN MY EARS...

THE DREAMLANDS? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

COME, DARLING. LET ME TAKE YOUR MIND OFF ALL OF THOSE TROUBLESOME QUESTIONS. AFTER I'VE FINISHED WITH YOU, YOU WON'T EVEN BE ABLE TO REMEMBER YOUR OWN NAME.

PARADISE IS WAITING.

NO... THANK YOU, NO. I NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING.

VERY WELL. THEN WALK WITH ME.



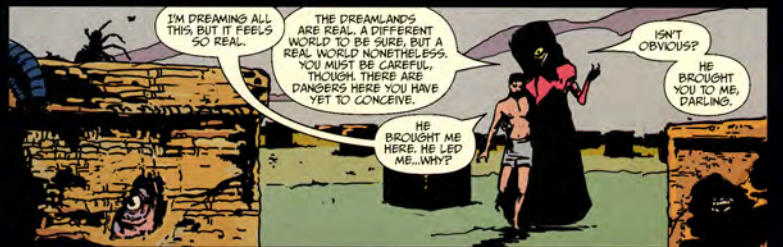
I'M DREAMING ALL THIS, BUT IT FEELS SO REAL.

THE DREAMLANDS ARE REAL. A DIFFERENT WORLD TO BE SURE, BUT A REAL WORLD NONETHELESS. YOU MUST BE CAREFUL, THOUGH. THERE ARE DANGERS HERE YOU HAVE YET TO CONCEIVE.

HE BROUGHT ME HERE. HE LED ME... WHY?

ISN'T OBVIOUS?

HE BROUGHT YOU TO ME, DARLING.





YOUR UNCLE CANNOT ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

BUT I CAN.

THEN DO IT. WHY DID HE KILL HIMSELF?

THAT'S THE QUESTION YOU WISH TO ASK?

TO START, NOW ANSWER ME, WHY?

QUITE SIMPLE, DARLING...



BECAUSE HE IS A COWARD.

PH-NGLUJ MGLW'NAFH CTHLUHU R'LEH WSAH'NAGLPHATGAN.

WHAT IS THAT? HE'S SAID IT BEFORE. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

YOU'VE ALREADY ASKED YOUR QUESTION.

AND YOU ANSWERED WITH A LIE!



OH NO, IT'S TRUE. HE WOULD MUCH RATHER LET HIS SOUL ROT AWAY IN MADNESS AS ONE OF MY MANY LITTLE TREASURES THAN LIVE IN THE WORLD THAT IS ABOUT TO COME.

HOW COULD YOU KNOW THAT?

BECAUSE I KNOW MEN. THEY SHARE EVERYTHING WITH ME. THAT'S WHY HE BROUGHT YOU HERE, DARLING. BECAUSE I KNOW HIS SECRETS.

AND WHAT DARK, DELICIOUS THINGS THEY ARE.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT SECRETS? WHAT "WORLD THAT IS ABOUT TO COME"? WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN? WHAT'S COMING?

THE CALL.

OKAY, I DON'T SPEAK SCARY HOOKER SO I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS. ARE YOU TALKING LONGER HOLD TIMES, HEAVY BREATHING, TELEMARETERS, WHAT?

I'LL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS. BUT MY SERVICES ARE NOT FREE. IT WILL COST YOU SOMETHING.

COST ME WHAT?



ETERNITY.



I TOLD YOU, THERE ARE DANGERS HERE YOU HAVE YET TO CONCEIVE.

LET ME INTRODUCE THEM TO YOU.

THAT BURNS! LET GO OF ME!

THE HUNTER. ANOTHER OF HIS QUARRY FALLS. HE IS CLOSE, I CAN FEEL IT.

AAAAAAGGGRRRHH!



I SAID GET OFF ME, YOU SYPHILITIC COW!

POOR, PRETTY THING. NOT LONG FROM NOW YOU'LL WISH YOU'D CHOSEN THE DISEASED ECSTASY OF MY BOX.



GO AHEAD AND RUIN, DARLING. IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD. YOUR UNCLE EVEN KNOWS THAT. HE KNOWS YOU'LL FAIL, JUST AS HE DID.

THE LAST THING EVER ASKED ME TO DO WAS TO "STOP HIM." NOW I DON'T KNOW WHO "HE" IS, BUT IF HE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY UNCLE'S DEATH, HE'S IN FOR A WORLD OF HURT.



"WORLD OF HURT?" LOOK TO THE HEAVENS, DARLING.



YOUR WORLD OF HURT IS COMING.



YOU'RE SPEAKING EARLY.

COULDN'T SLEEP.

ME NEITHER.

BABY, WHAT'D YOU DO TO YOUR ARM? IS THAT A BURN?

HUH? OH... MISUNDERSTANDING WITH THE COFFEE MAKER.



JORDAN, LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING. HOW SCARED WOULD YOU HAVE TO BE TO KILL YOURSELF?

EXCUSE ME?

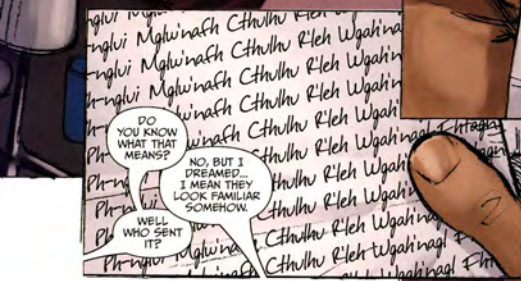
JUST HEAR ME OUT. I THINK UNCLE WALT KILLED HIMSELF BECAUSE OF THIS CALL. THING, WHATEVER IT IS. I THINK IT HAD HIM PRETTY FREAKED.

PLEASE, CY, CAN WE NOT DO THIS TODAY?



I'M JUST TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT...

...OH MY GOD.



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?

NO, BUT I DREAMED... I MEAN THEY LOOK FAMILIAR SOMEHOW.

WELL WHO SENT IT?



THERE'S NO RETURN ADDRESS, BUT THIS IS STRANGE. IT WAS SENT TO HIM NEARLY TWO MONTHS AGO.

AND IT WASN'T SENT TO HIS HOUSE.

THEN WHERE WAS IT SENT?

"THE ARKHAM BOARDING HOUSE."



I REALLY APPRECIATE THIS, MR. ARKHAM.

THINK NO MORE OF IT. YOUR UNCLE WAS AN IDEAL TENANT. I WAS SADDENED BY HIS PASSING.

AT THE LOSS OF HIS WINNING DISPOSITION, NOT HIS MONTHLY CHARTER.

OH, YEAH, OF COURSE.

HE SEEMED HAPPY TO YOU?

OH YES, VERY. ALWAYS COMING AND GOING WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE, HUMMING AN INFECTIOUS LITTLE TUNE. WHICH IS WHY I WAS SO SURPRISED THAT HE TOOK HIS OWN LIFE. CERTAINLY DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THE WALTER MCKINLEY I KNEW.

NO, ME NEITHER.



HOW LONG HAVE YOU OWNED THIS PLACE?

THE BOARDING HOUSE HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN MY FAMILY. WE ARKHAM'S DID FOUND THIS LOVELY TOWN AFTER ALL.

SO YOU'VE LIVED HERE YOUR WHOLE LIFE?

NO, NO. I'VE ONLY RECENTLY STARTED CALLING ARKHAM HOME ONCE AGAIN. I'VE BEEN ABROAD MOST OF MY LIFE.



YOU SAY HE'S BEEN HERE THREE MONTHS, AND HE NEVER ACTED...STRANGELY TO YOU?

NO. HE WAS ALWAYS PLEASANT AND QUITE CHEERFUL.

MAYBE SOME OF YOUR OTHER TENANTS NOTICED SOMETHING.

I WOULD PREFER YOU NOT DISTURB ANY OF THE OTHER TENANTS. THEY ALL PAY HANDSOMELY FOR THEIR PRIVACY, JUST AS YOU UNCLE DID. SO I MUST ASK THAT YOU RESPECT THAT PRIVACY.

SURE, YEAH.

HERE YOU ARE, GOOD SIR. PLEASE KNOW THAT YOUR UNCLE HAS PAID SEVERAL MONTHS IN ADVANCE SO YOU MAY TAKE YOUR TIME IN DECIDING HOW YOU WISH TO DEAL WITH HIS AFFECTS.

IF THERE IS NOTHING ELSE, I WILL LEAVE YOU TO SEE TO YOUR FAMILY.

ALL RIGHT. THANKS, MR. ARKHAM.

DAMN,
WHAT IS THAT
FUNK?

**BREEET!
BREEET!**

HEY, JORDAN,
DID MY SISTER
CALL?

NOT YET, BUT THE
MORTICIAN DID. HE
NEEDS TO TALK TO YOU
ABOUT ARRANGEMENTS,
AND I NEED TO TALK TO
YOU ABOUT THAT DAMN
KNIFE. IT'S STILL
SITTING OUT.

I THOUGHT...
OKAY, I'LL TAKE
CARE OF IT
WHEN I GET
HOME.

LET ME PUT
IT TO YOU THIS
WAY: HERMAN
MUNSTER IS THE
CONCIERGE.

HOW'S IT GOING
OVER THERE? IS IT
JUST AS CREEPY
ON THE INSIDE?

SO YOUR
UNCLE DID
HAVE A ROOM
THERE.

YEAH, BUT
I CAN'T BELIEVE
HE LIVED HERE. HE
WOULD NEVER LIVE
LIKE THIS.

IS IT
DIRTY?

DIRTY DOESN'T COME
CLOSE. THIS ROOM
SMELLS LIKE A
HIGH SCHOOL.

A HIGH
SCHOOL?

YOU KNOW,
SANDUST AND
VOMIT.

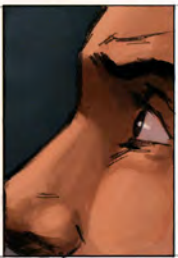
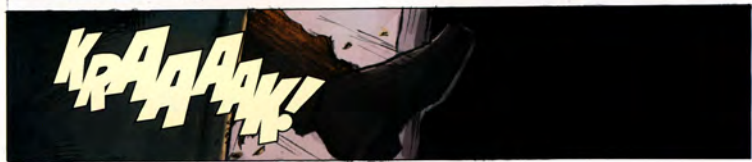
UGH...
AND I JUST
FOUND THE
VOMIT.

BABY,
COME HOME. JUST
KNOWING YOU'RE IN
THAT PLACE MAKES
ME NERVOUS.

I JUST
NEED TO CHECK
ONE MORE THING.
THERE'S ANOTHER
ROOM HERE, BUT
THE DOOR'S
LOCKED.

JUST
LEAVE IT AND
COME HOME,
OKAY, CY?

ALL
RIGHT, I'M
COMING HOME.
SEE YOU
SOON.





To be Continued...