

JUDGE DREDD

MEGAZINE



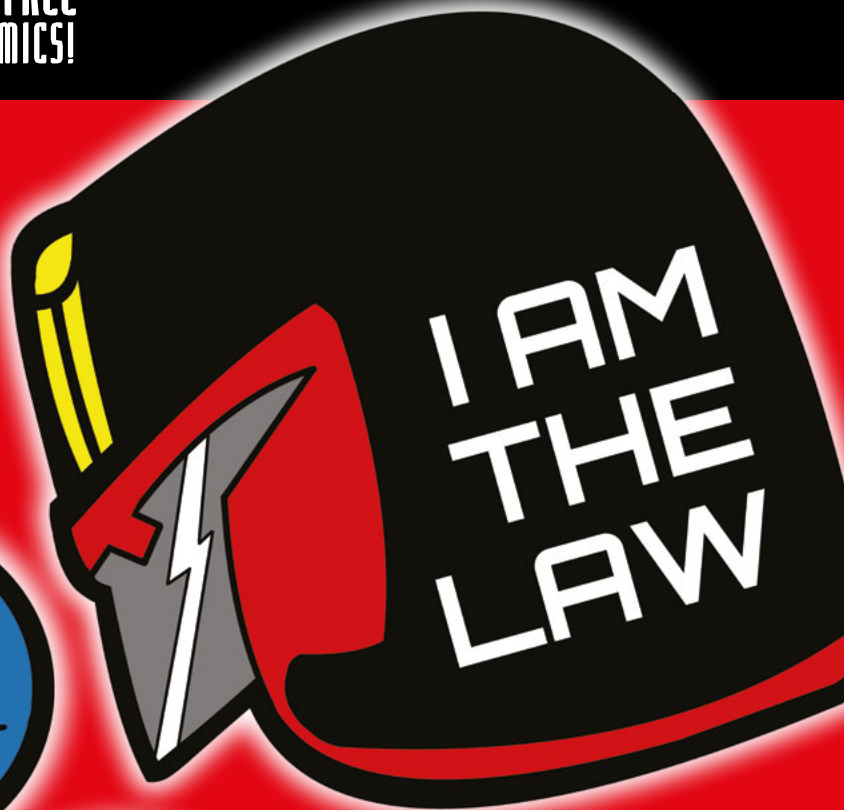
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ISSUE 430

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SECTOR CONTROL

IN THIS ISSUE



JUDGE DREDD ONE FOR THE AGES

Mega-City One, 2143 AD. This vast urban hell on the east coast of post-apocalyptic North America is home to over 160 million citizens. With unemployment at ninety per cent and boredom universal, crime is rampant. Stemming the tide of chaos are the Judges, future law-enforcers empowered to dispense instant justice. Toughest of them all is Judge Dredd – he is the Law!

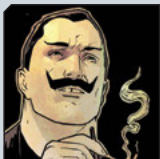
Judge Dredd created by John Wagner & Carlos Ezquerro



MEGATROPOLIS PART SEVEN

Imagine a Mega-City One from an alternate timeline – less the gleaming metropolis of the twenty-second century but instead an art deco retro-future variation. Joe Rico is the one good cop in a police department riddled with corruption, and he's just been joined by a new partner in the shape of Amy Jara. Together they're investigating a series of vigilante killings...

Megatropolis created by Kenneth Niemand & Dave Taylor



DEVLIN WAUGH A QUESTION OF TRUST

Brit-Cit, 2142 AD. A freelance paranormal troubleshooter and exorcist for the Vatican, Devlin Vaughn is the world's foremost supernatural investigator. Despite becoming a vampire after getting bitten tackling an outbreak in an underwater prison, Devlin continues to enjoy the finer things in life. Recently, he trapped the spirit of the demon Titivillus in a dildo...

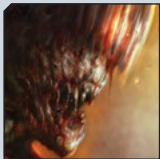
Devlin Vaughn created by John Smith & Sean Phillips



THE RETURNERS HEARTSWOOD

Brit-Cit, 2142 AD. Four different people in Ciudad Barranquilla – academic Barrancourt, ex-Judge Mineiro, gangbanger Correia, and transgender street-walker Chavez – all awoke from near-death experiences, and as a consequence encounter supernatural entities. Now, they've fled to Brit-Cit, hoping to find a way to escape their curse, and entered a strange house...

The Returners created by Si Spencer & Nicolò Assirelli



DELIVERANCE PART SEVEN

After the events on the Mayflower, the cargo ship the Solips discovered the Dark Judges Death, Fire and Mortis floating in space, and the alien superfiends murdered the crew. They subsequently also decimated a colony, Dominion, before Mega-City marines destroyed the planet. Death was trapped in a Boing® bubble, and has been recovered by the Mortarian cult...

The Dark Judges created by John Wagner, Alan Grant & Brian Bolland

EDITOR'S LETTER

THIS MONTH WE REACH THE FINAL EPISODE OF *THE RETURNERS: HEARTSWOOD*, AND WE WERE VERY SAD to hear of the sudden death of writer Si Spencer in February. Si had been a part of the creative line-up of the *Meg* during its formative years in the nineties, creating *Harke & Burr* with Dean Ormston, and *The Creep* with Kevin Cullen, and had a parallel career working in TV, script-editing the likes of *Eastenders*, *The Bill* and *Grange Hill*. He'd returned to the *Meg* in the last four years, writing *HAVN* and *The Returners*, the last arc of which, *Amazonia*, he'd just about completed. That series will commence in a couple of issues' time, but in the meantime inside you'll find an obituary from Karl Stock as creators such as Ormston, Gordon Rennie, Garth Ennis and David Bishop warmly recollect the memories of their friend.

Elsewhere, we have the latest episodes of *Megatropolis* and *Deliverance*, a complete *Dredd* thriller, and the first of two *Devlin Vaughn* single-parters by Aleš Kot and Mike Dowling that will lead into a major storyline, *The Reckoning*, starting in *Meg* 432!



NICK PERCIVAL
COVER ART

MATT SMITH
EDITOR

OZ OSBORNE, SAM GRETTON
& GEMMA SHELDRAKE
GRAPHIC DESIGN

FEATURES

PAGES 38-39

COMICANA

2000 AD PENGUIN AUDIOBOOKS

PAGES 40-41

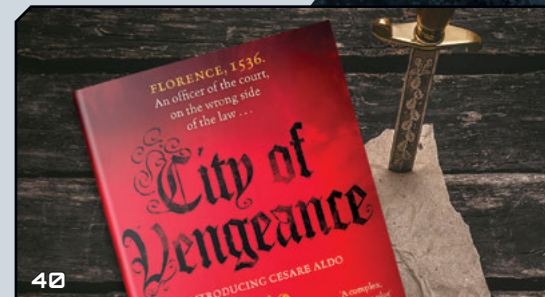
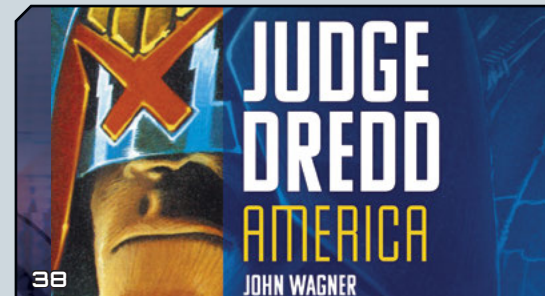
NEW BOOKS

CITY OF VENGEANCE & EDGE OF THE GRAVE

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OBITUARY

SI SPENCER



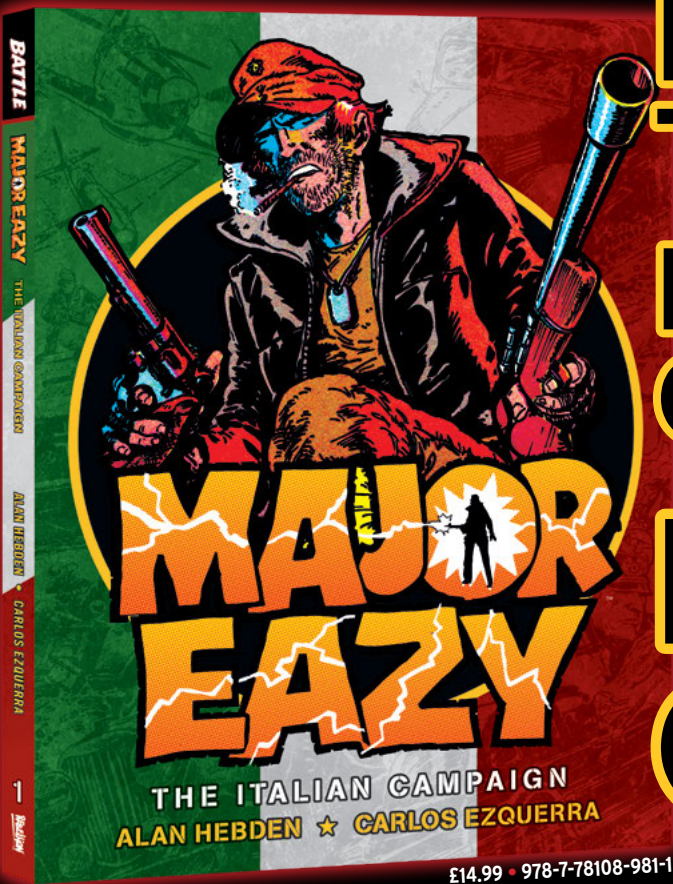
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TOUGH ...

HE'S
COOL ...

HE'S
CRAZY!

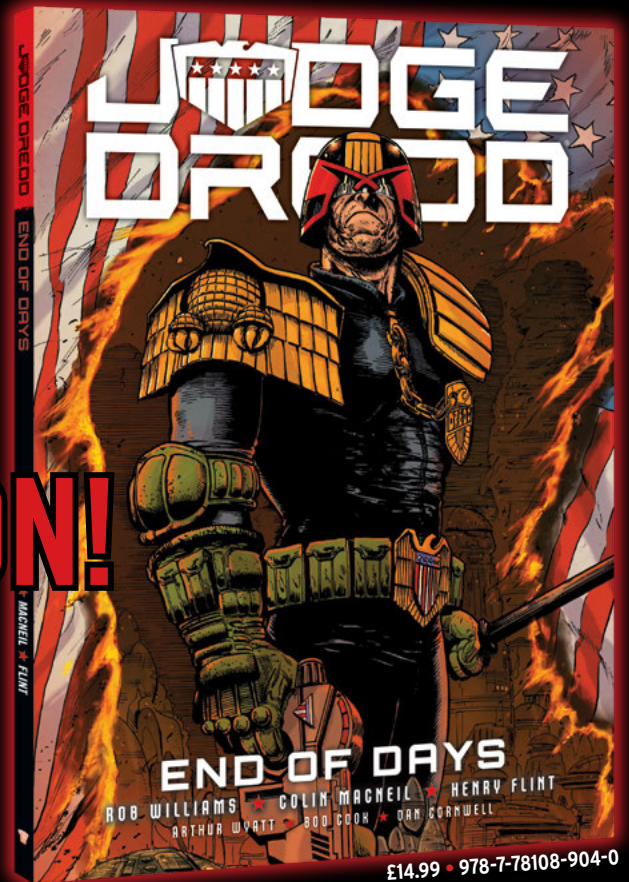


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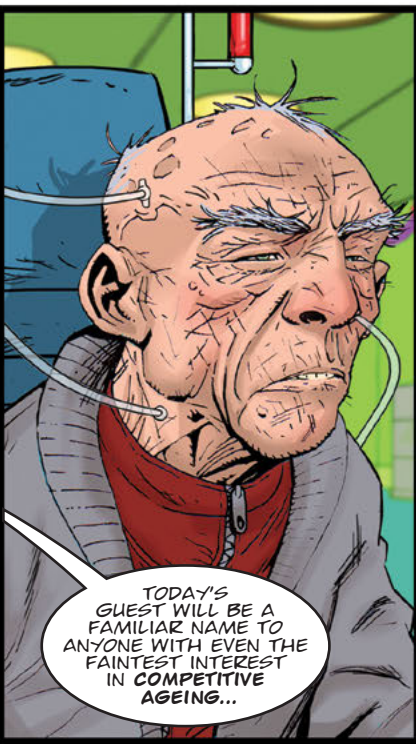
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TODAY'S GUEST WILL BE A FAMILIAR NAME TO ANYONE WITH EVEN THE FAINTEST INTEREST IN COMPETITIVE AGEING...



OTTO BRINE BURST ONTO THE SCENE AT THE 2120 CHAMPIONSHIPS, MARKING HIMSELF OUT AS A RISING STAR.

SINCE THEN HE'S CONTINUED TO BUILD ON THAT EARLY PROMISE, FINALLY SECURING THE TITLE OF MEGA-CITY ONE'S OLDEST CITIZEN NINE YEARS AGO AFTER THE DEATH OF HENRIETTA THORP.

JUDGE DREDD

ONE FOR THE AGES

AT 3.15PM THIS AFTERNOON, HE'LL TURN ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY, SETTING A NEW RECORD FOR ELDSTERS EVERYWHERE.



GIVEN OTTO CAN NO LONGER SPEAK, HIS GREAT-GREAT GRANDSON TOBIAS IS HERE TO SAY A FEW ON HIS BEHALF.

TOBIAS, HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

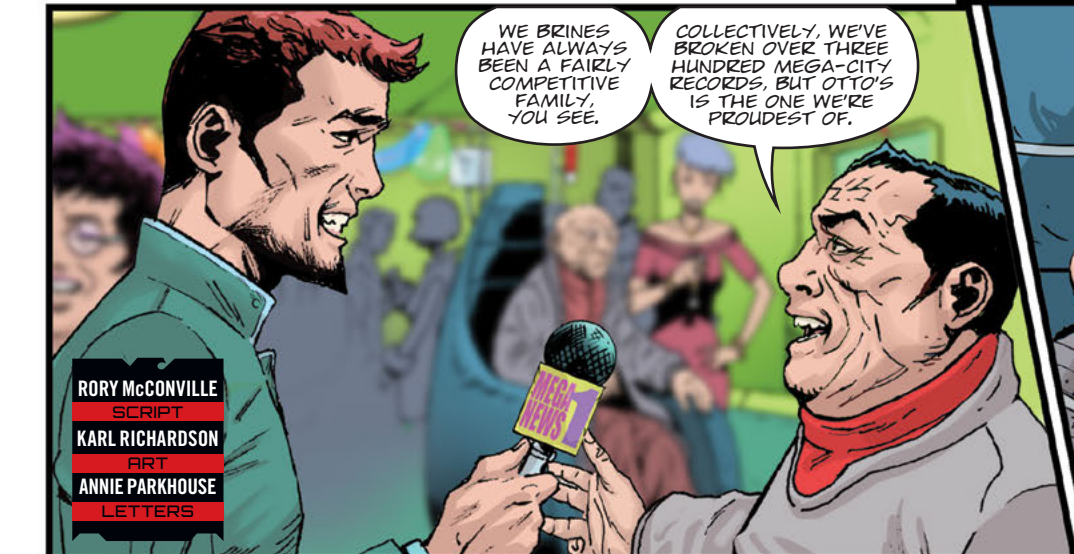
WE'RE ALL DELIGHTED TO HAVE HIT THIS NEW MILESTONE. IT'S OTTO'S RECORD, OF COURSE, BUT WE REALLY SEE IT AS A FAMILY EFFORT.



EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES IN THEIR OWN WAY.

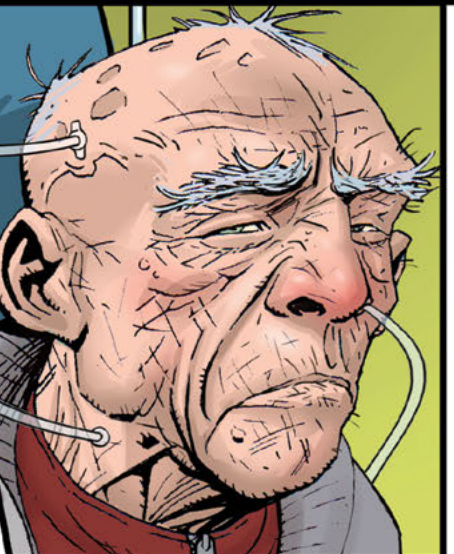
ALL OF THE GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN DONATE BLOOD TO HIM REGULARLY. MY COUSIN EDDIE - GRUD REST HIS SOUL - EVEN DONATED HIS HEART AFTER OTTO'S SEVENTH CARDIAC ARREST.

WASN'T AN EASY DECISION BUT I THINK THE FAMILY WOULD DO IT AGAIN IN AN INSTANT.



WE BRINES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A FAIRLY COMPETITIVE FAMILY, YOU SEE.

COLLECTIVELY, WE'VE BROKEN OVER THREE HUNDRED MEGA-CITY RECORDS, BUT OTTO'S IS THE ONE WE'RE PROUDEST OF.



RORY McCONVILLE
SCRIPT
KARL RICHARDSON
ART
ANNIE PARKHOUSE
LETTERS

OF COURSE, IT WOULD BE REMISS OF ME NOT TO ASK ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS THAT YOU'VE USED ILLICIT MEANS TO EXTEND OTTO'S LIFESPAN...?

FOR THE FINAL TIME, EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE HAS BEEN WITHIN THE GUIDELINES. THIS IS -

SKASSSHHH

MY GRUD - !

NO!

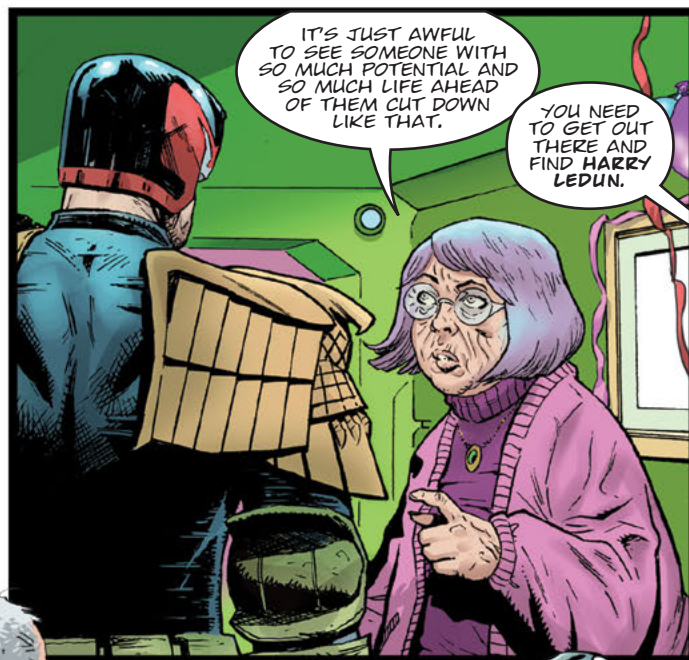
BDAMBDAM

STOP THAT MONSTER!

UNNF!

CALL A DOCTOR! FOR GRUD'S SAKE, SOMEONE CALL A DOCTOR!

IT'S THE UNFAIRNESS OF IT ALL THAT REALLY GETS ME...





HE'S DEAD. BLOCK CAMS SHOW THE SAME TYPE OF ROBOT ARRIVING HERE EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON.

SOMEONE'S WORKING THEIR WAY DOWN A LIST. TRACK DOWN ANY OTHER CITS BORN ON MARCH 22ND 1992 AND GET THEM INTO PROTECTION.



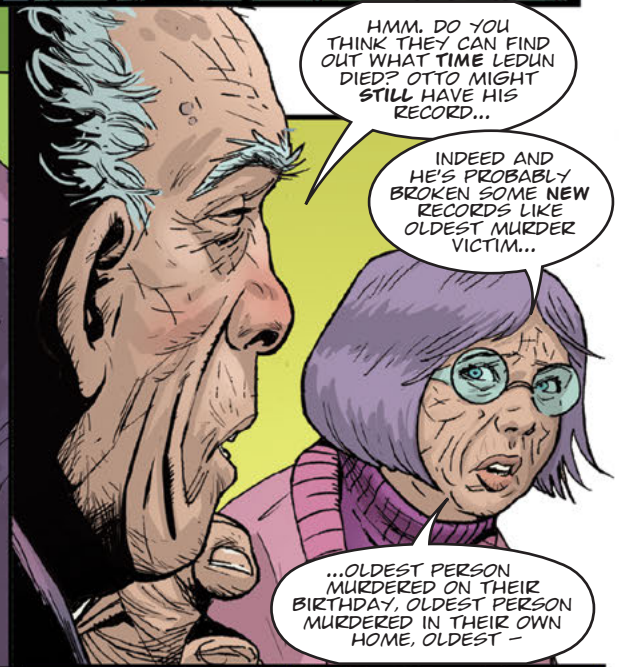
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN GET A TRACE ON THOSE ROBOTS AS WELL.

COPY THAT.



LEDUN DIDN'T DO IT. HE WAS KILLED EARLIER TODAY.

UNIFORMS WILL CALL AROUND THIS EVENING WITH FURTHER QUESTIONS BUT CONTACT YOUR SECTOR HOUSE IF YOU SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS.



HMM. DO YOU THINK THEY CAN FIND OUT WHAT TIME LEDUN DIED? OTTO MIGHT STILL HAVE HIS RECORD...

INDEED AND HE'S PROBABLY BROKEN SOME NEW RECORDS LIKE OLDEST MURDER VICTIM...

...OLDEST PERSON MURDERED ON THEIR BIRTHDAY, OLDEST PERSON MURDERED IN THEIR OWN HOME, OLDEST -

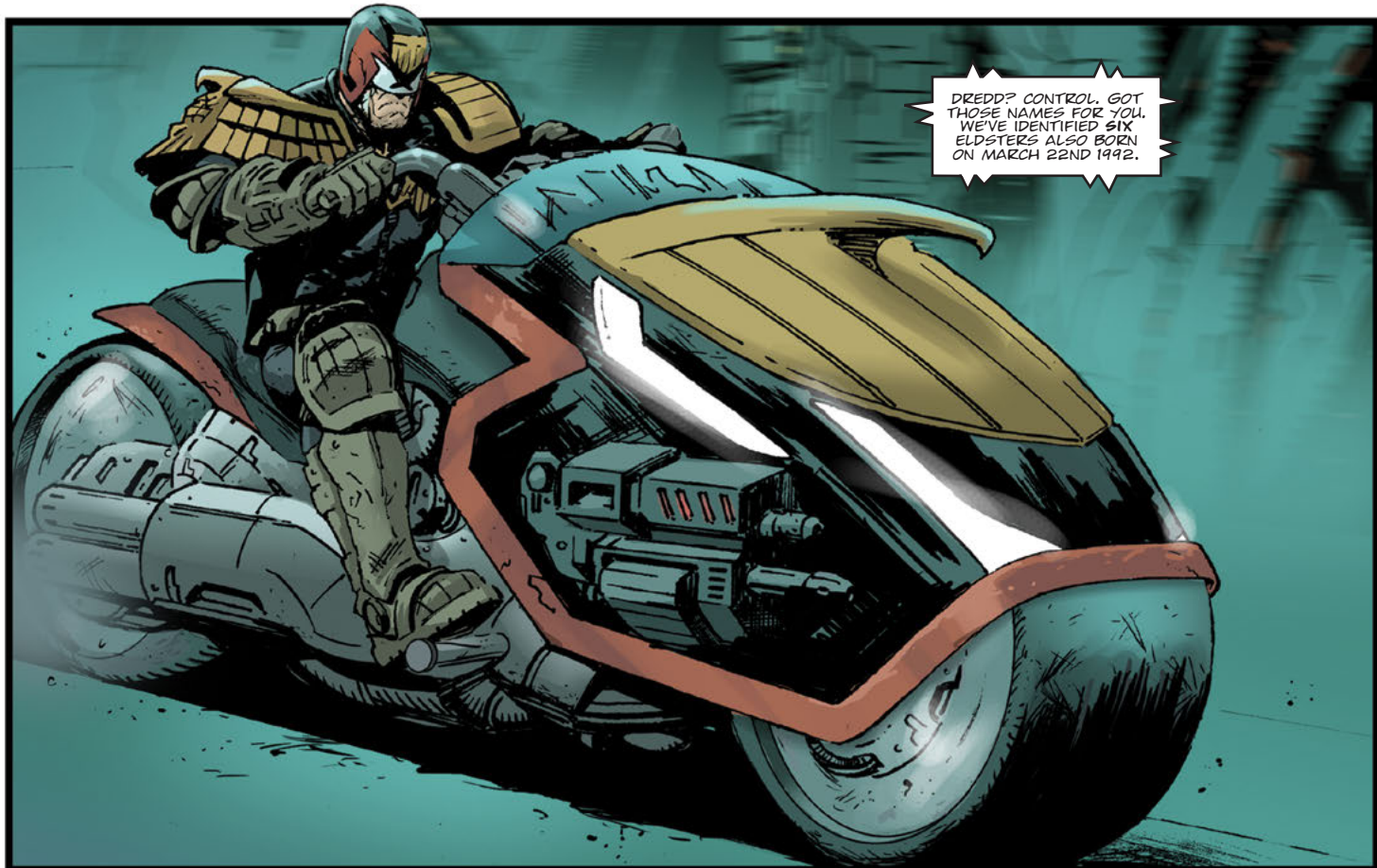


THERE'S TIME FOR THAT LATER BUT RIGHT NOW, WE NEED TO FIND OUT WHO'S RESPONSIBLE.

THIS WASN'T JUST AN ATTACK ON OTTO. IT WAS AN ATTACK ON ALL OF US.



WE'VE PUT YEARS OF OUR LIVES INTO ACHIEVING THIS RECORD AND WHOEVER DID THIS NEEDS TO PAY!



DREDD? CONTROL. GOT
THOSE NAMES FOR YOU.
WE'VE IDENTIFIED SIX
ELDSTERS ALSO BORN
ON MARCH 22ND 1992.



'SOPHIA
BRACKETT...



'JACKSON
JACKSON...



'MILES
LANDON...



'GRUMPY
CAT SMITH...



'GRACE
CALIBRE...



'...AND MUHAMMAD
MCARTHUR.'



WE'VE FOUND MCARTHUR, CONTROL. SAME STORY AS THE OTHERS.

EACH OF THE VICS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TARGETED A FEW HOURS BEFORE THEY TURNED HUNDRED AND FIFTY.



LOOKS LIKE MCARTHUR PUT UP A BIT MORE OF A FIGHT. GOT TRACE ELEMENTS OFF AN ANDROID CHASSIS. SEE IF THE SERIAL NUMBER X4-27581-A TURNS UP ANYTHING.

CHECKING NOW...



YOU EVER THINK OF GETTING INVOLVED IN COMPETITIVE AGEING, DREDD? MIGHT BE IN WITH A SHOT IF THIS KEEPS UP MUCH LONGER.



I-JUST A JOKE.

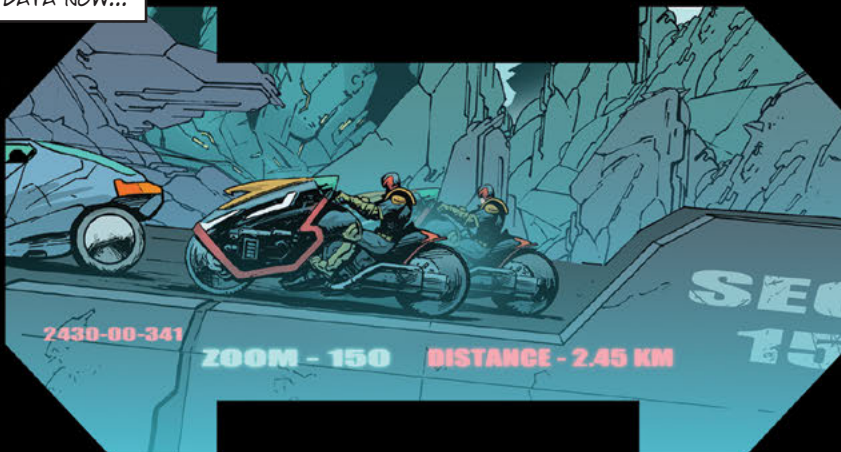
GOT A MATCH. IT'S LINKED TO A PLENTIS CORP CARE ROBOT.

THINK SOMEONE'S GIVEN THEM AN UPGRADE.

REGISTRATION DETAILS SHOW IT WAS ASSIGNED TO END OF DAYS, ONE OF THOSE LUXURY FLOATING RETIREMENT HOMES.



'SENDING THROUGH LOCATION DATA NOW...



2430-00-341

ZOOM - 150

DISTANCE - 2.45 KM





'EXPECT TROUBLE, DREDD. WE'RE GETTING NO RESPONSE AT END OF DAYS.'



ANY ELDSTERS STAYING HERE THAT STAND OUT?

ABIGAIL SNUB. SHE'S PRACTICALLY THE SAME AGE AS OUR VICS BUT DIDN'T SHOW UP ON THE ORIGINAL LIST BECAUSE SHE WAS BORN AT MIDNIGHT ON MARCH 23RD.

STRANGE... GOT NO RECORD OF ANY NEW TENANTS OR STAFF JOINING IN THE LAST YEAR.



DROKK - !



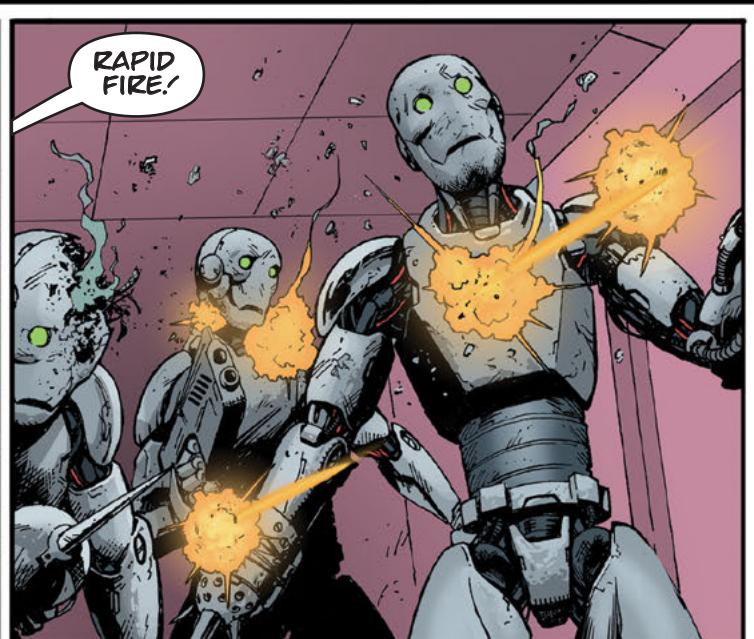
BRAKKA
BRAKKA



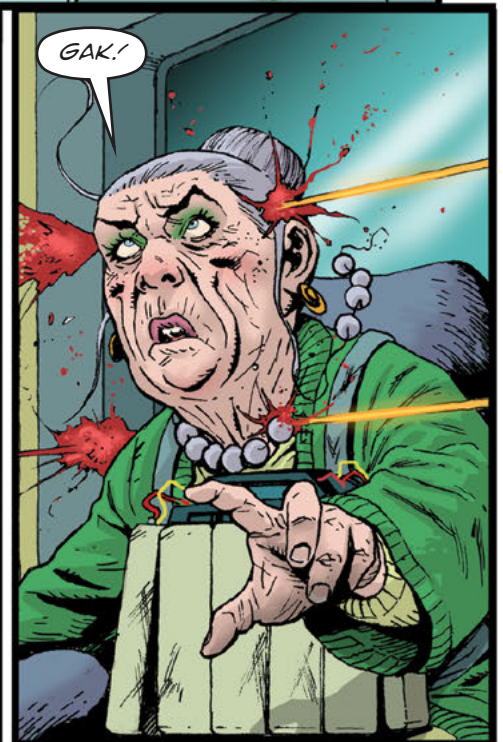
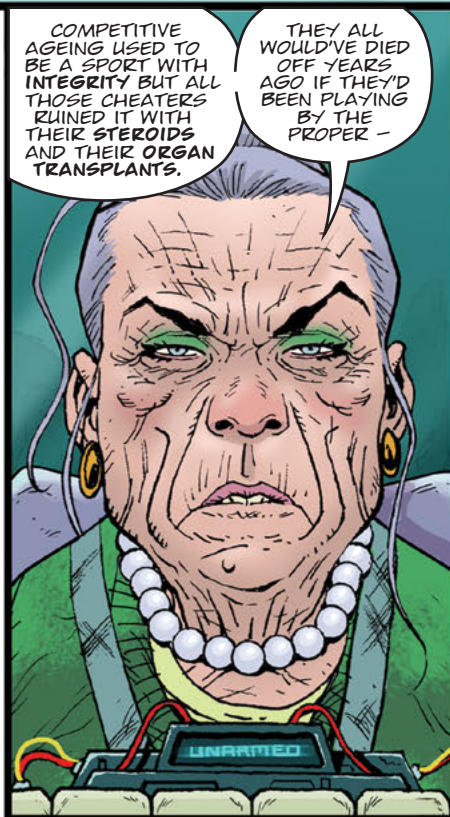
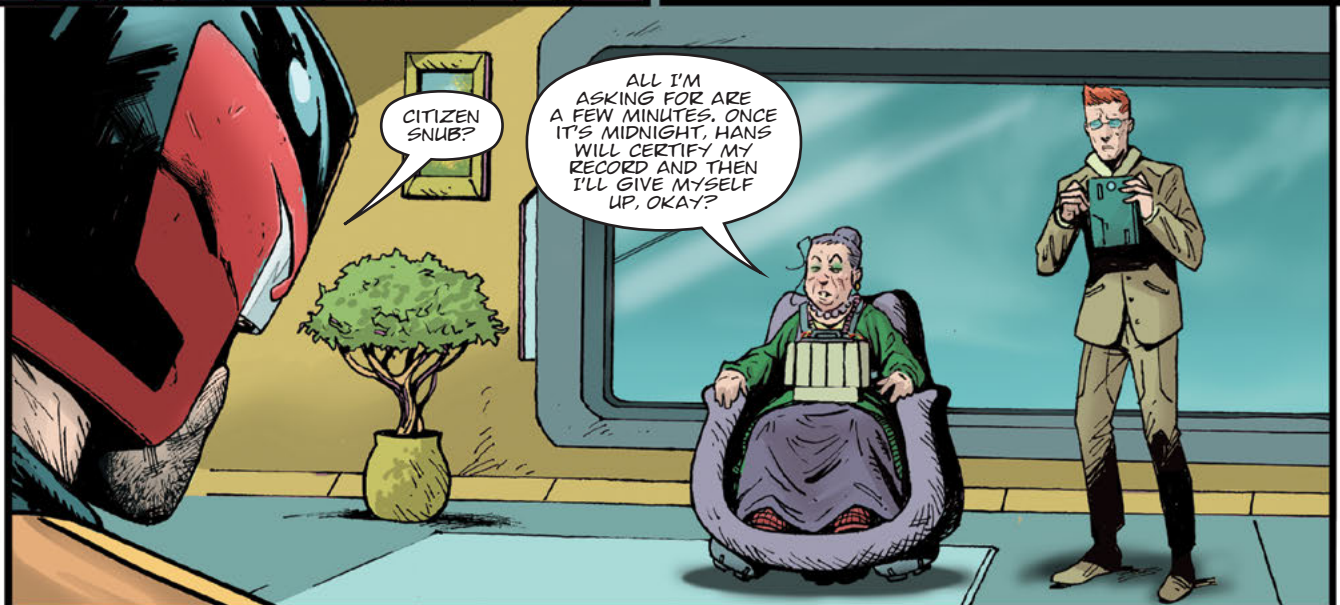
AAAAHH - !

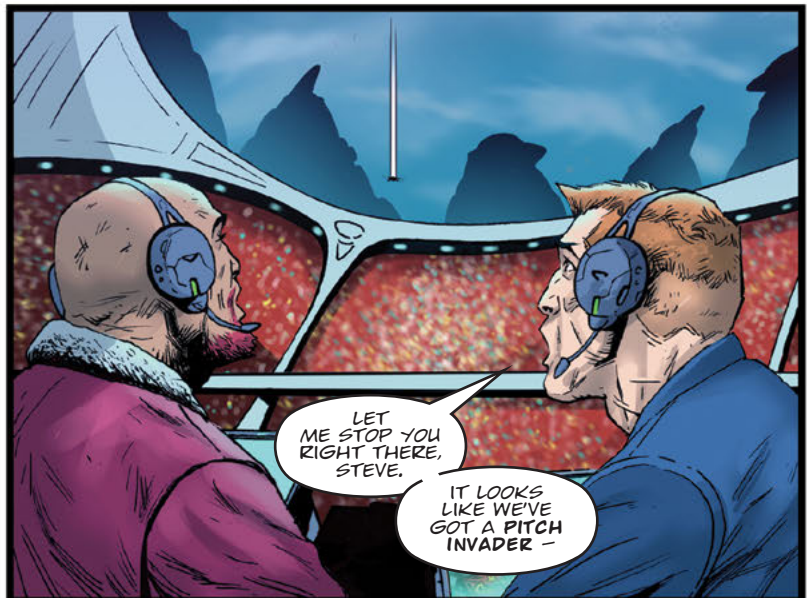
GOTTA CUT THIS SHORT -

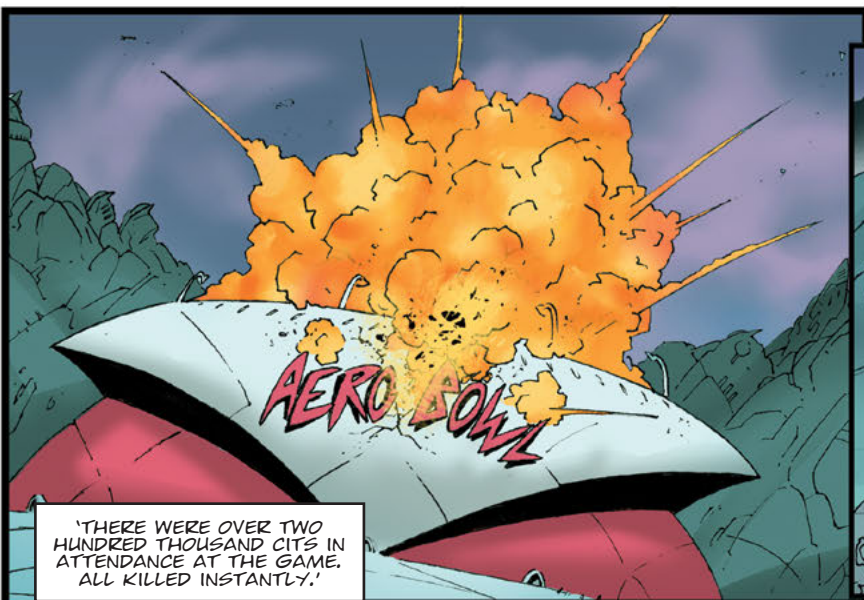
BOAM
BOAM
BOAM
BOAM
BOAM



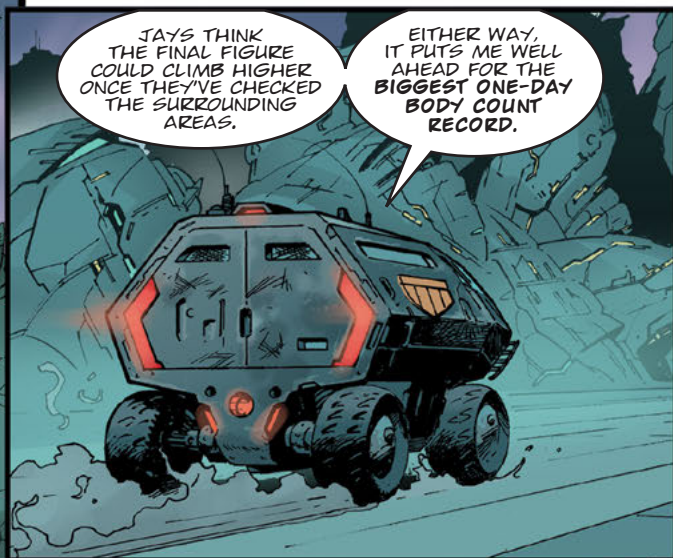
RAPID FIRE!







'THERE WERE OVER TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND CITS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE GAME. ALL KILLED INSTANTLY.'



JAYS THINK THE FINAL FIGURE COULD CLIMB HIGHER ONCE THEY'VE CHECKED THE SURROUNDING AREAS.

EITHER WAY, IT PUTS ME WELL AHEAD FOR THE BIGGEST ONE-DAY BODY COUNT RECORD.



REAL IMPRESSIVE, MAN. MAKES MY SEVENTY-FIVE LOOK PITIFUL IN COMPARISON.

WELL, KEEP AT IT AND MAYBE IN A FEW YEARS YOU MIGHT HAVE A SHOT.



NAH, DON'T THINK I'D EVER HAVE THE GUTS TO RISK PUTTING MYSELF IN THE PATH OF THE Pincer.

WHAT'S THAT?



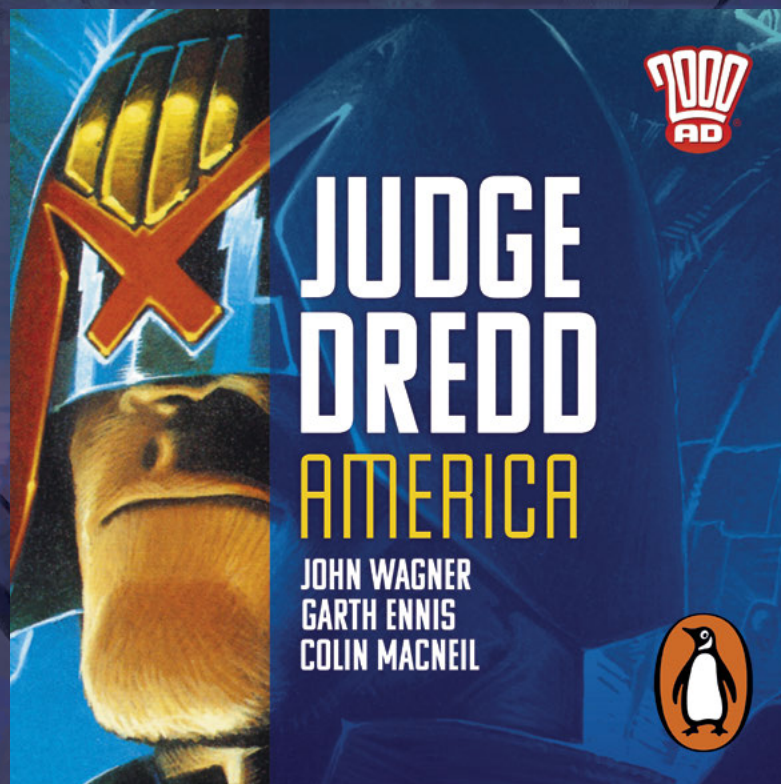
IVAN Pincer, HE'S HAD THE ONE-DAY BODY COUNT RECORD FOR YEARS AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN PRETTY PROTECTIVE OF IT.



MATTER OF FACT, I THINK WE'RE GOING TO BE IN THE SAME ISO-BLOCK AS HIM...

THE END

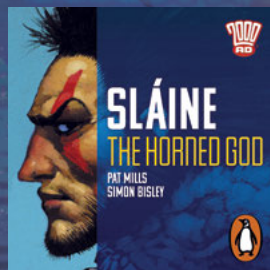
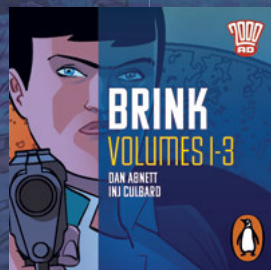
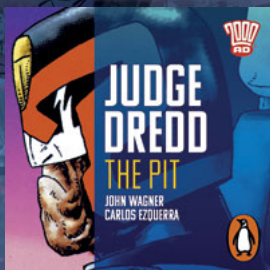
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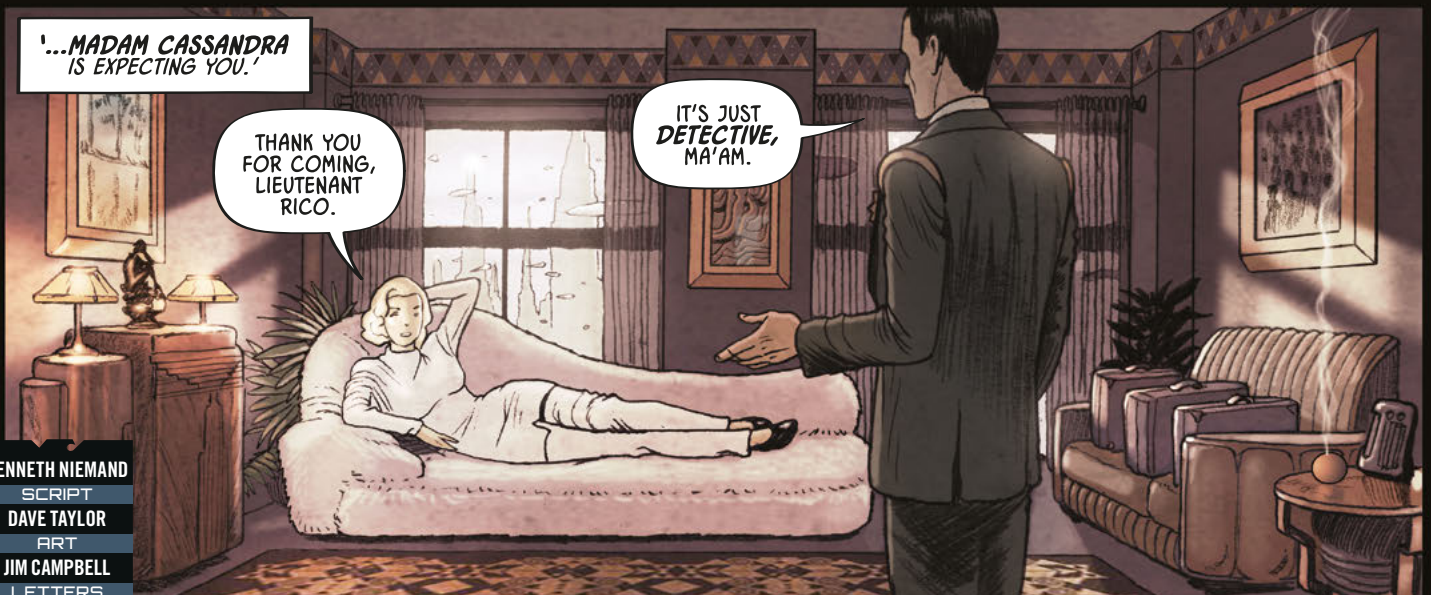
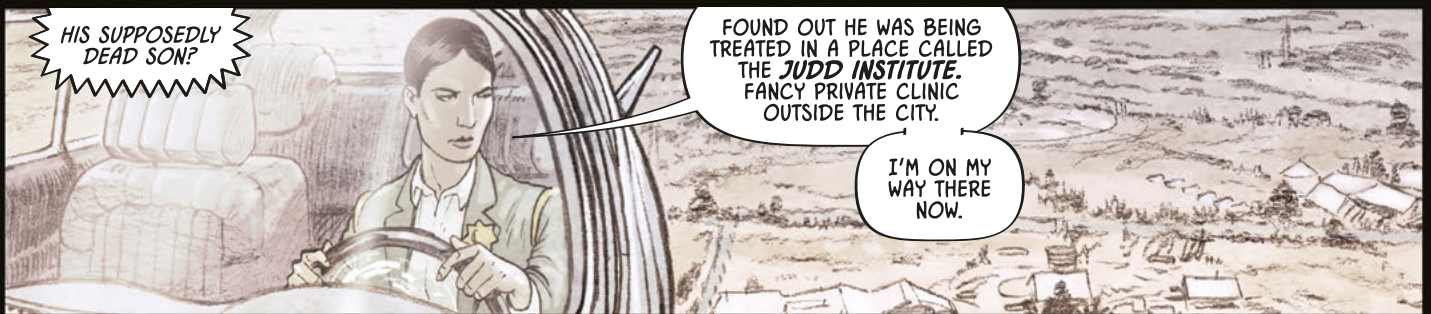
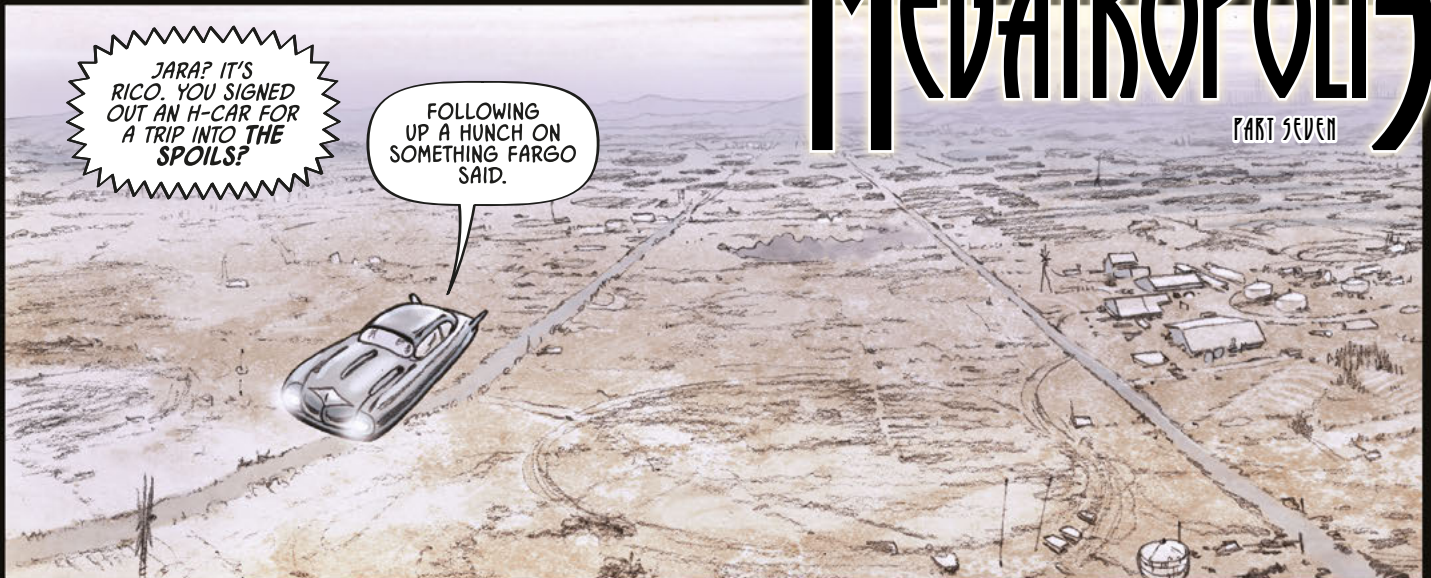
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MEGATROPOLIS

PART SEVEN





TRUST ME, IT'LL BE
LIEUTENANT SOON
ENOUGH.


I CAN SEE
THE FUTURE,
REMEMBER.



YOU DON'T
BELIEVE ME, OF
COURSE.

I'M A POLICEMAN.
WE'RE ONLY EXPERTS ON
SOMEONE'S *PAST*, NOT
THEIR FUTURE.

SUCH
AS...?



PLAIN CASSIE ANDERSON, BORN--WELL,
DATES VARY--IN SOME DUSTBOWL TOWN
IN THE SPOILS. ARRESTS FOR VAGRANCY,
SOLICITING AND GRIFTING. THEN SHE
DISAPPEARS FROM THE
RECORDS...

...AND A
COUPLE OF
YEARS LATER
MADAM CASSANDRA
MAKES HER HIGH
SOCIETY DEBUT.




I CAN'T DENY
MEGATROPOLIS HAS
BEEN GOOD TO ME,
BUT NOTHING LASTS
FOREVER.



YOU'RE
LEAVING
TOWN?

LIKE I SAID,
I CAN SEE THE
FUTURE...



THERE'S A *DARKNESS*
COMING, AND I DON'T
WANT TO BE HERE WHEN IT
ARRIVES. THIS *VIGILANTE*
IS JUST THE START
OF IT.

YOU
THINK I'M BEING
OVER-FANCIFUL?
THEN CALL IT A
WAR...

...BETWEEN THE CITY'S
TWO FOUNDING FATHERS.
EVERYONE'S GOING TO
HAVE TO CHOOSE
A SIDE.

INCLUDING YOU.
ESPECIALLY
YOU.



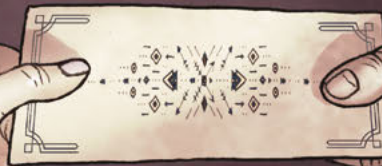
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING
TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT
HOW YOU COULD JUST HAVE
GONE TO A SHANTYTOWN
GYPSY IF YOU WANTED
SOME HOKEY FORTUNE-
TELLING ROUTINE.

YOU READ
MINDS TOO?
GOOD TO
KNOW.



I WANTED TO
MEET YOU FACE
TO FACE...AND
TO GIVE YOU
THIS--

I'M LEAVING
TONIGHT SO I WON'T
BE NEEDING THEM
NOW.



I RECOMMEND
YOU ATTEND,
LIEUTENANT. A LOT
MIGHT DEPEND
ON IT.

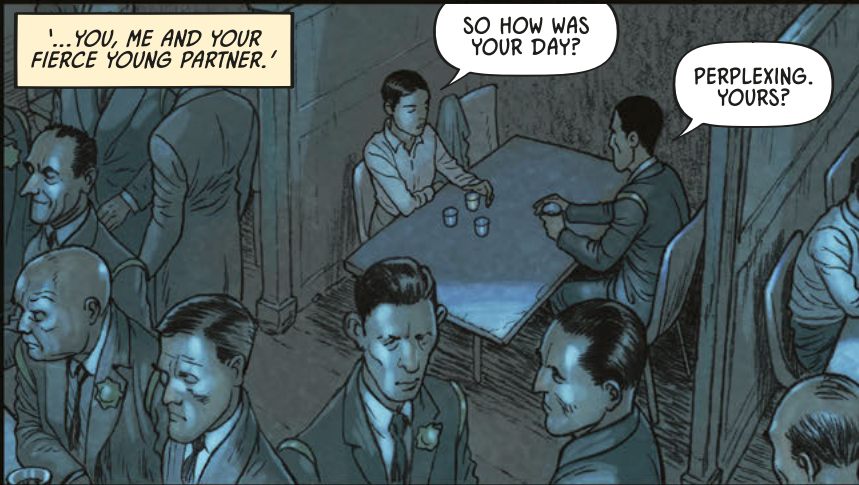


'TOLD YOU ALREADY, MA'AM.
IT'S JUST *DETECTIVE*.'

'AND I KEEP ON TELLING
YOU I CAN SEE THE FUTURE.'

'WE'LL MEET AGAIN,
LIEUTENANT RICO, BUT
UNDER VERY DIFFERENT
CIRCUMSTANCES...'





'...YOU, ME AND YOUR FIERCE YOUNG PARTNER.'

SO HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

PERPLEXING. YOURS?



LINE UP ANOTHER HALF DOZEN OF THESE, AND I'LL TELL YOU.



'SO I WENT TO THIS CLINIC, AND TALKED IN PERSON WITH THIS JUDD GUY...

...YOU'RE RIGHT, OFFICER JARA. CAPTAIN JOSEPH FARGO DIDN'T DIE IN THE WAR, AS WAS COMMONLY BELIEVED...



HIS INJURIES WERE **GRIEVOUS**, BUT HE SURVIVED AND WAS KEPT HERE. NATURALLY, WE RESPECTED HIS FATHER'S WISHES THAT HIS SON'S CONDITION BE KEPT PRIVATE.

ALAS, THE CAPTAIN NEVER RESPONDED TO TREATMENT AND FINALLY SUCCUMBED TO HIS WOUNDS SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WITHOUT HIM EVER REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS.



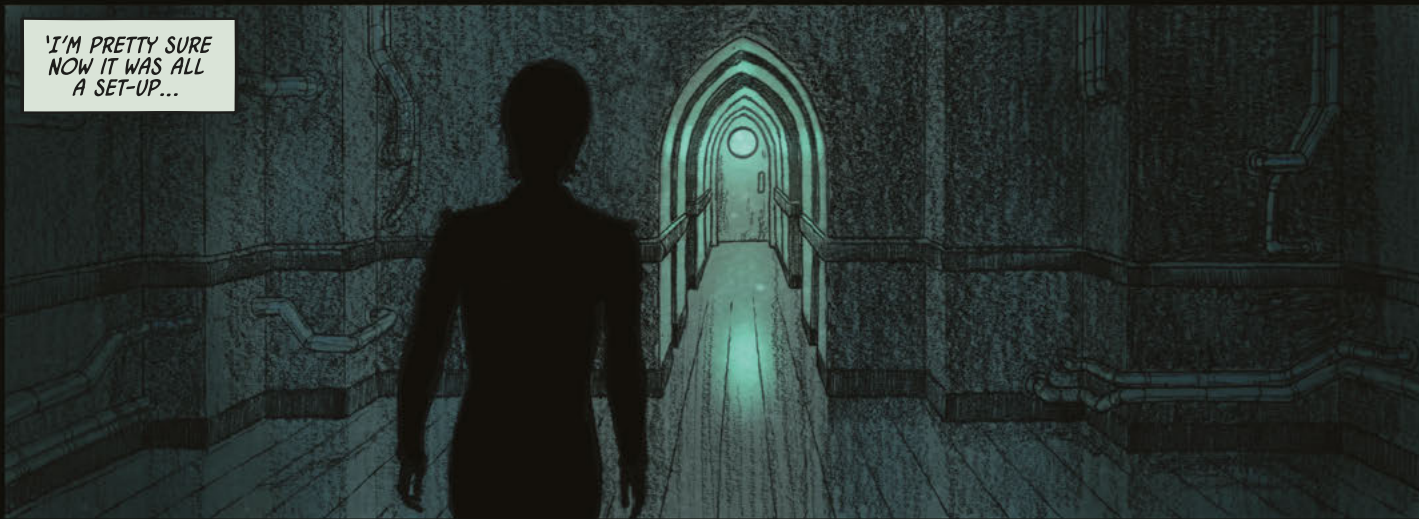
A FINE YOUNG MAN. HE REALLY COULD HAVE MADE SUCH A CONTRIBUTION TO--

EXCUSE ME. AN URGENT MEDICAL MATTER THAT REQUIRES MY ATTENTION.



PLEASE WAIT HERE. I SHALL RETURN MOMENTARILY WITH THE PAPERWORK ON CAPTAIN FARGO'S PASSING.

I'M PRETTY SURE
NOW IT WAS ALL
A SET-UP...



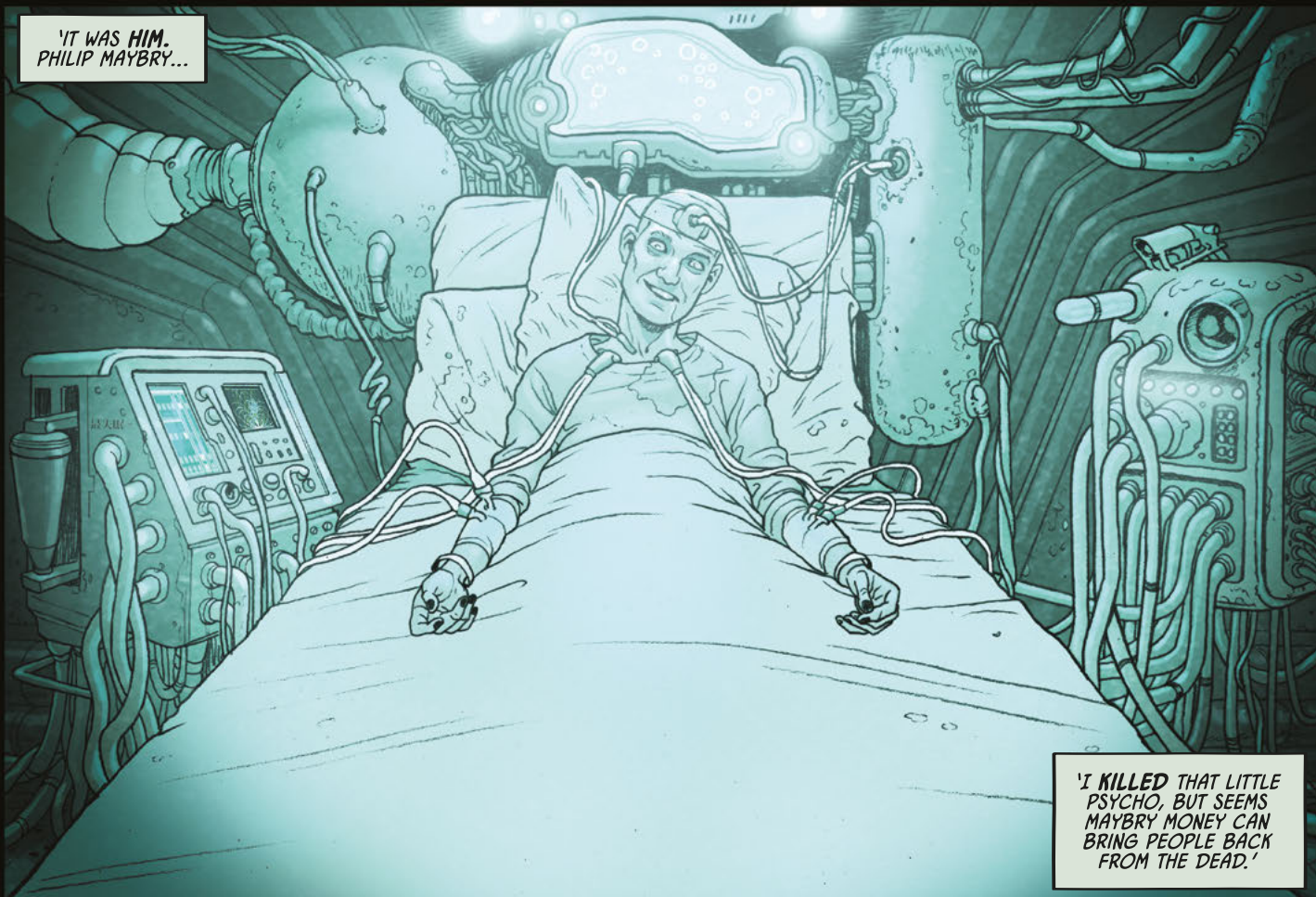
THEY WANTED ME
TO BE THERE...



...TO SEE WHAT THEY
COULD DO, AND HOW
LITTLE IT MATTERED IF
I KNEW ABOUT IT.



IT WAS HIM.
PHILIP MAYBRY...



'I KILLED THAT LITTLE
PSYCHO, BUT SEEMS
MAYBRY MONEY CAN
BRING PEOPLE BACK
FROM THE DEAD.'



ANYWAY, FOUND
THE FARGO FOLDER
LEFT AT THE CAR. IT
CHECKS OUT...

...SO GUESS WE'RE
BACK TO SQUARE
ONE ON VIGILANTE
SUSPECTS.



AND ALL IT
PROBABLY COST
ME WAS WAKING UP
SCREAMING FROM
NIGHTMARES FOR
THE NEXT COUPLA
YEARS.

OH WELL,
HERE'S TO
LIFE IN THE
BIG--



MAYBE YOU'VE HAD
ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT,
JARA. BIG NIGHT
TOMORROW...

'...WE'VE GOT A PARTY TO ATTEND.'

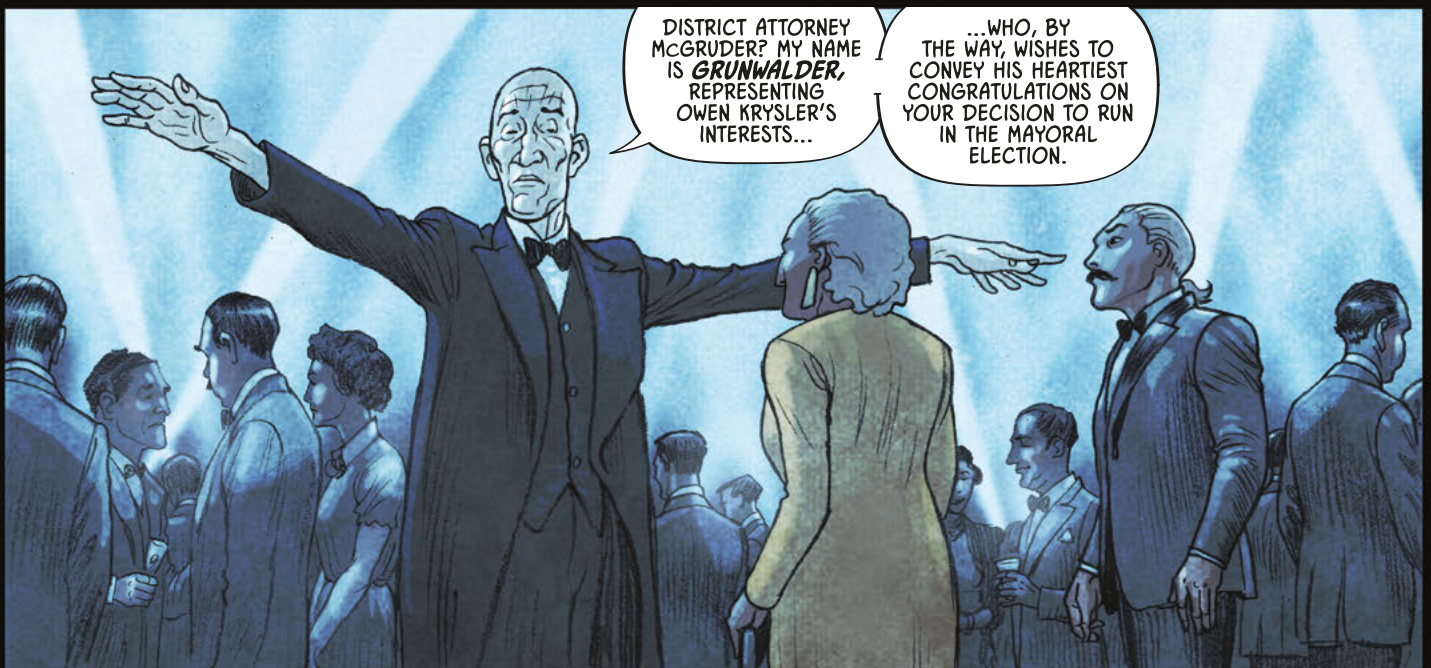
MAYOR BOOTH'S PARTY ABOVE THE CLOUDS CHARITY BALL!

EVERYONE WHO'S ANYONE IS HERE TONIGHT, AND NOT EVEN THE RECENT VIGILANTE KILLINGS IS GOING TO STOP THE GREAT AND THE GOOD OF MEGATROPOLIS FROM TURNING OUT FOR WHAT'S THE BIGGEST EVENT IN THE SOCIAL CALENDAR!

...ALL YOUR MOST CROOKED PALS AND CORRUPT CAMPAIGN DONORS TOGETHER ABOARD A FLOATING DEATH-TRAP?

WHAT ARE YOU, BOB? THE DREDD VIGILANTE'S SECRET ACCOMPLICE?

HILDA, YOU SANCTIMONIOUS OLD HAG! DELIGHTED YOU COULD MAKE IT!





WHAT DO YOU WANT, KRYSLER? BOOTH'S *YOUR CREATURE* AS MUCH AS THIS THING I'M TALKING TO.

POOR BOB. PUPPETS HAVE THEIR USES, BUT HE'S STARTING TO LOOK A LITTLE FRAYED AROUND THE EDGES.

THIS VIGILANTE BUSINESS, FOR EXAMPLE...



SPEAKING OF WHICH, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO. I'D HATE TO GET ANY BULLET HOLES IN THIS BODY.

PLEASE STAY SAFE, MS MCGRUDER. YOU HAVE AN ELECTION TO FIGHT.



NICE TUX. WHO'D YOU BORROW IT FROM? CONRAD CONN?



I HAVE FOUR SUITS. THIS IS THE ONE WITH THE FEWEST SOUP STAINS.

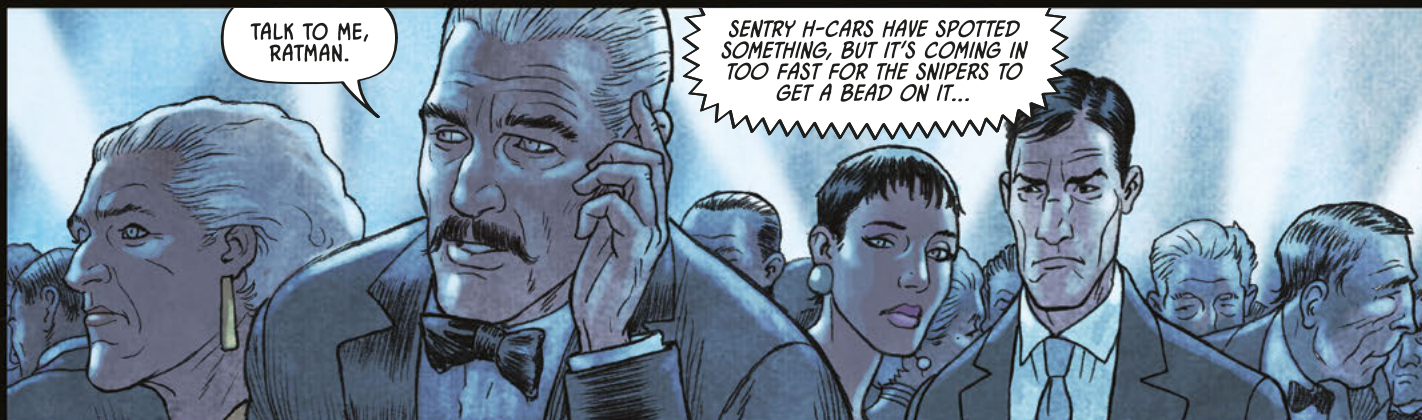


GUTHRIE.

YOU'RE HERE TOO? GOOD...



WE HAVE TO GET THE D.A. OUT OF HERE. SOMETHING BAD'S ABOUT TO GO DOWN!



NEXT ISSUE: CRASHING THE PARTY!

DEVLIN WAUGH

A QUESTION OF TRUST



ALES KOT
SCRIPT
MIKE DOWLING
ART
SIMON BOWLAND
LETTERS



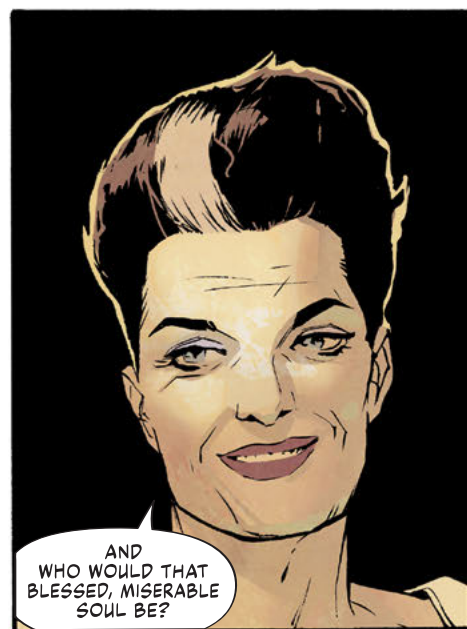
IT'S A QUESTION OF TRUST, REALLY...



HA! HAVE YOU EVER REALLY TRUSTED ANYONE, DEVLIN?



I MOST CERTAINLY HAVE...



AND WHO WOULD THAT BLESSED, MISERABLE SOUL BE?



OH, YOU KNOW...



...THERE'S ONLY ONE DEMON I TRULY TRUST WITH MY HEART.

GUESS I
MUST HAVE
EARNED IT.
SAVING YOUR
WORLD AND
ALL.

THIS WINE IS
EXCELLENT, BY THE WAY.
I PREFER THE TOULOUSE
REGION, ALWAYS FAVOURED
THE SOUTH AND REDS,
FRANKLY, BUT I COULD
GET USED TO ALSACE
WHITE...



HELPING.
HELPING SAVE THE
WORLD, TOGETHER.
BOTH OF US
DID THAT, MY
FRIEND.

AND HELL
REALLY HATES
ME NOW...SO IF I'M
DAMNED I MAY AS
WELL BE DAMNED WITH
MORE WINE DOWN
THE PIPES!



I HAVE
A HARD TIME
BELIEVING HELL
IS REAL.

I HAD A HARD
TIME BELIEVING HELL
IS NOT ALREADY HERE.
BUT AS AN ETERNAL
OPTIMIST, I'M STILL
WILLING TO BE
CONVINCED...

YOU LOST
MANY THERE.
IN ITALY.



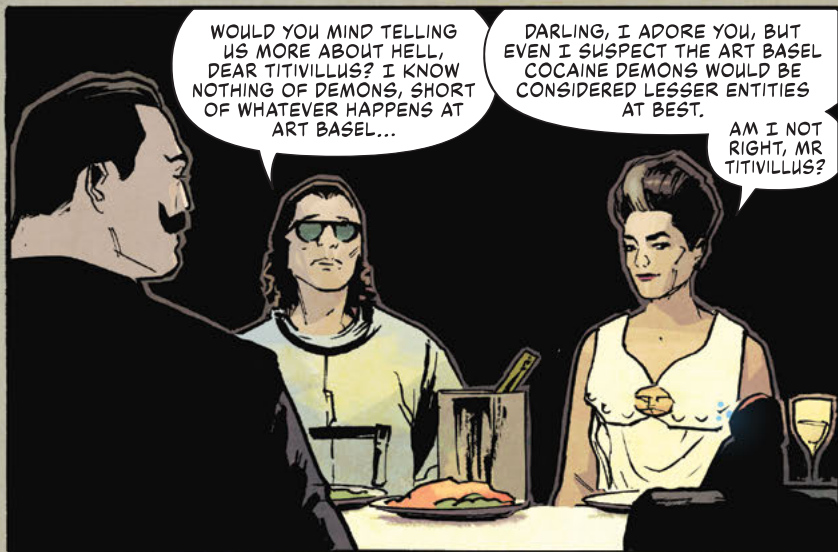
I DID
INDEED...

WHY AREN'T THE
SURVIVORS WITH
US, ANYWAY? IT'S
SOMETHING TO
CELEBRATE...

THEY, WELL...
THEY ARE NOT
EXACTLY FEELING
UP TO IT RIGHT
NOW.

NOT EVERYONE
CAN COMBINE
SURVIVAL AND
GLAM!





WOULD YOU MIND TELLING US MORE ABOUT HELL, DEAR TITIVILLUS? I KNOW NOTHING OF DEMONS, SHORT OF WHATEVER HAPPENS AT ART BASEL...

DARLING, I ADORE YOU, BUT EVEN I SUSPECT THE ART BASEL COCAINE DEMONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED LESSER ENTITIES AT BEST.

AM I NOT RIGHT, MR TITIVILLUS?



WELL, TECHNICALLY I'M NOT A MISTER... OR ANY SUCH GENDER.

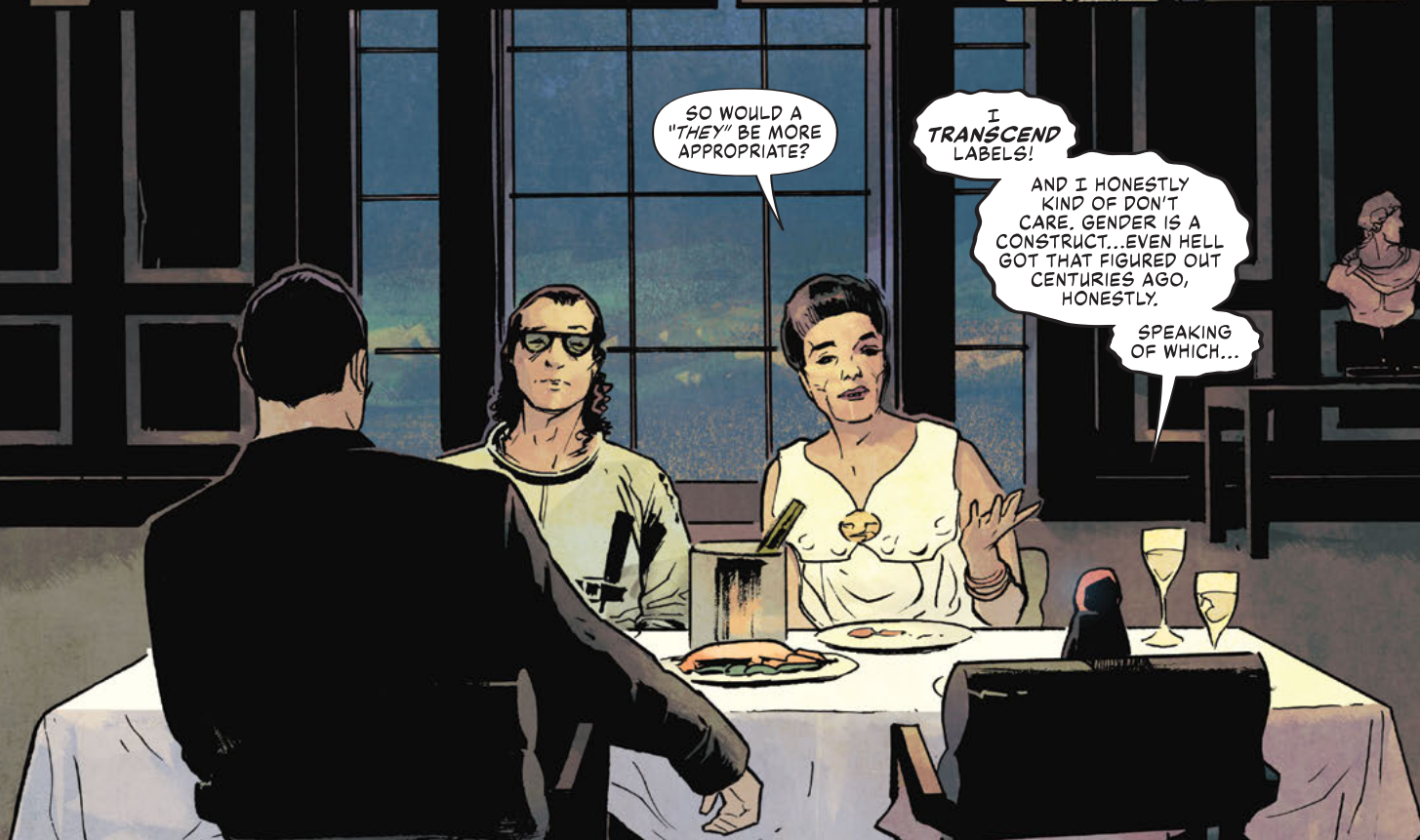
I'M A DEMON.



...oh.



WHAT, BECAUSE YOU CALLED ME A HE WITHOUT EVER QUESTIONING IT, AND PUT ME INSIDE A DILDO?

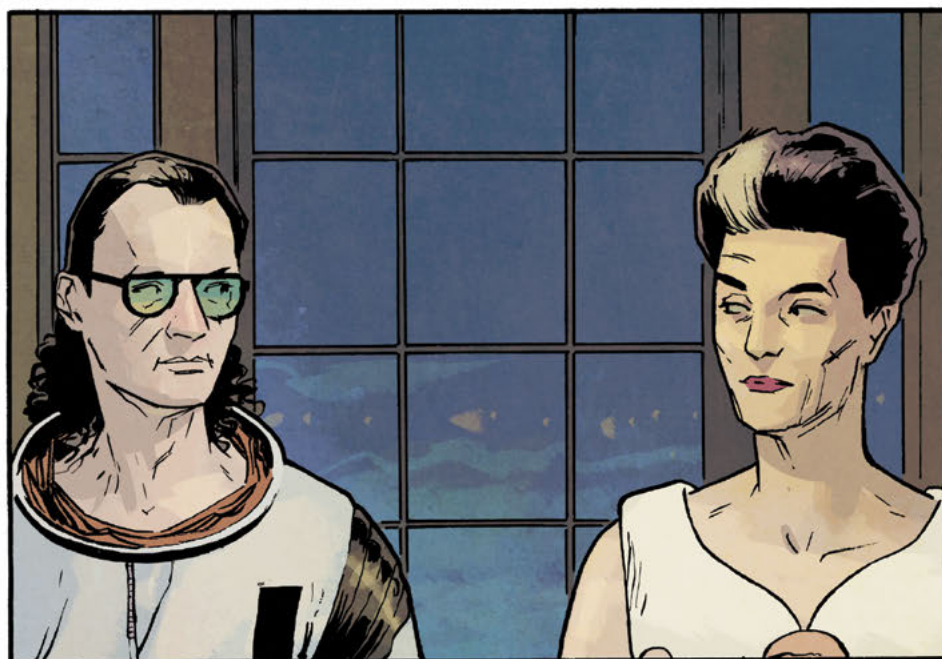
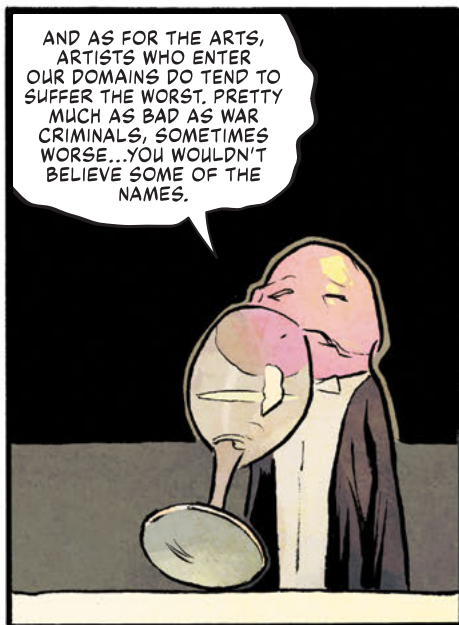


SO WOULD A "THEY" BE MORE APPROPRIATE?

I TRANSCEND LABELS!

AND I HONESTLY KIND OF DON'T CARE. GENDER IS A CONSTRUCT...EVEN HELL GOT THAT FIGURED OUT CENTURIES AGO, HONESTLY.

SPEAKING OF WHICH...





BUT YES,
SOCIALISM...WE TRIED
IT, EVEN REPEATEDLY.
STALIN TENDS TO BE REALLY
RIDICULOUS, DEMANDING AND
DEMANDING IT, OVER AND
OVER, BUT THE FUNNY THING
IS, HE NEVER REALISES
HE'S JUST ANOTHER
GREEDY, CAPITALIST
DICTATOR...

SOME PEOPLE
REALLY DO TEND TO
PUNISH THEMSELVES
FIRST AND FOREMOST,
YOU KNOW? HELL HAS
NOTHING ON THE
LAD!

IT'S ALL
LIES.



I MEAN,
NOT ALL OF
IT, JUST...
MOST.

SOMETIMES I
REALLY HATE--



...HOW
ABOUT CHARLES
BUKOWSKI?

THAT'S
EASY. GIVE ME
SOMETHING
HARDER.



...EMPEROR JUSTINIAN?



OH GOD...
DON'T GET
ME STARTED.
ALWAYS WANTED
TO REGULATE
THINGS.

WE KICKED
HIM OUT A FEW
CENTURIES LATER,
ACTUALLY.



KICKED
OUT...?

YEAH,
HE'S IN THE
LIMBO.

NOT
HEAVEN, NOT
HELL.

AN ETERNAL
WAITING PLACE
OF SORTS.



CONTROL
FREAKS GET
WHAT THEY
DESERVE.

IS THAT...
ETERNAL?

NOT
TECHNICALLY.

MAYBE.



A
LITTLE
BIT.



IF YOU EXCUSE ME, I MUST...TAKE A MOMENT.

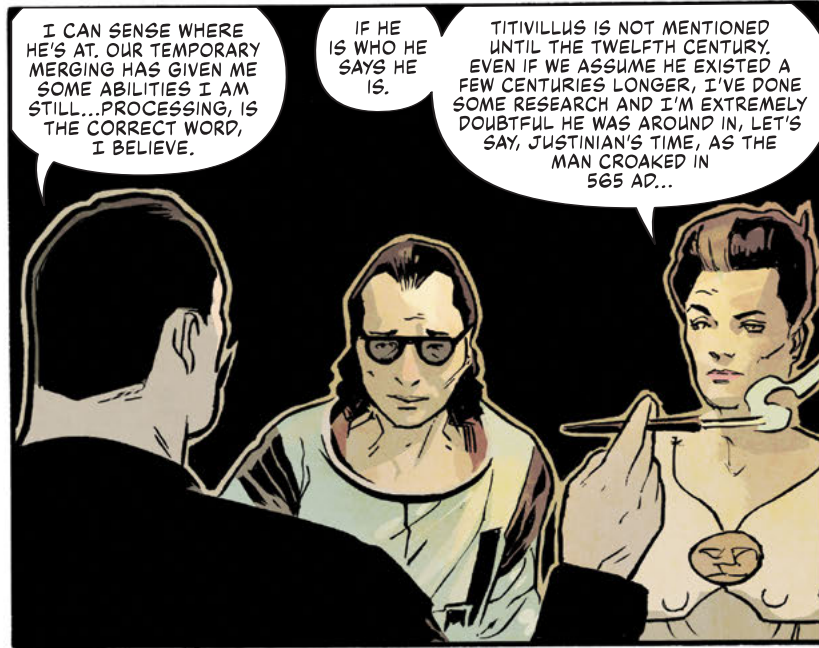
A MOMENT?



TITIVILLUS TELLS ME DEMONS OF HIS KIND EXCRETE ABOUT SIXTEEN DIFFERENT SUBSTANCES.

BUT THEN AGAIN, YOU WOULD BE THE **EXPERTS** ON THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?

I'D KEEP THE VOICE DOWN...



I CAN SENSE WHERE HE'S AT. OUR TEMPORARY MERGING HAS GIVEN ME SOME ABILITIES I AM STILL...PROCESSING, IS THE CORRECT WORD, I BELIEVE.

IF HE IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS.

TITIVILLUS IS NOT MENTIONED UNTIL THE TWELFTH CENTURY. EVEN IF WE ASSUME HE EXISTED A FEW CENTURIES LONGER, I'VE DONE SOME RESEARCH AND I'M EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL HE WAS AROUND IN, LET'S SAY, JUSTINIAN'S TIME, AS THE MAN CROAKED IN 565 AD...



Oh.
RATS.



SO...
WHAT MAY
IT BE?



I MEAN,
I CAN CERTAINLY BEGIN
PUTTING THINGS TOGETHER
NOW, BUT THIS IS RENDERING
ME SOMEWHAT PERPLEXED...
PERHAPS, WITH YOUR HELP
AND MY LIBRARY, AS WELL AS
THE VATICAN RESOURCES,
WE MAY--



WE
MAY DO
WHAT?



ART
PIECE, DEAR
TITIVILLUS!

WE'RE
SPEAKING OF AN
ART PIECE. WE'RE
THINKING WE'LL
MAKE ONE--AN ART
PIECE INSPIRED BY
THE HELL ITSELF.
WOULD YOU BE
INTERESTED IN
HELPING US?



HELPING YOU
SHOW WHAT I
TRY TO FORGET?
HELL ISN'T
FUNNY.

JUST JOSHING.
TERRIBLY FUNNY,
ACTUALLY. MAYBE
THE MOST HILARIOUS
PLACE NOT ON
EARTH.



I COULD HELP, I DON'T HAVE
MONEY, HELL DOESN'T REALLY BELIEVE
IN MONEY ANYMORE. **COULD** I HAVE
MONEY? I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A BANK
ACCOUNT. A NEW EXPERIENCE. I
LIKE THAT, YES, AN ART BASEL
TRIP, PERHAPS?

COULD
I?

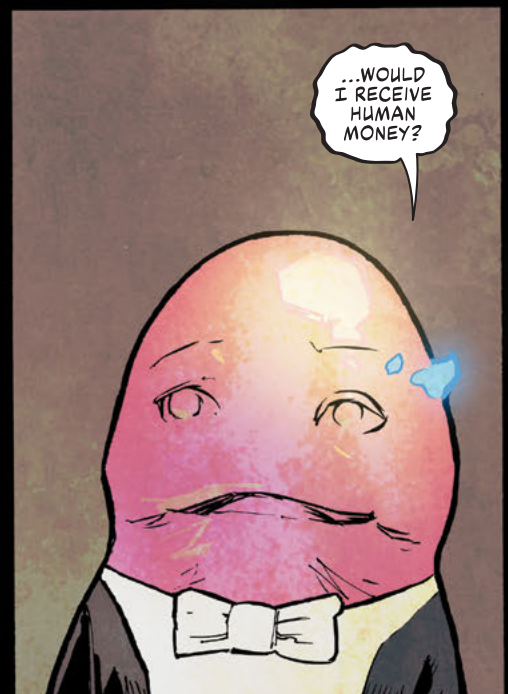


PERHAPS.
WHY NOT?

BUT IF YOU'D
LIKE A BANK ACCOUNT
THAT'S TRULY YOURS,
WE MAY HAVE TO HAVE
YOU POSSESS A HUMAN
BODY FIRST SO YOU
CAN ACTUALLY BE
MISTAKEN FOR A
PERSON...

JUST
GET ME A
NICE FRESH
CORPSE.

KRAAK BOOM



ART BASEL,
THREE MONTHS
LATER--



...GOOD
GOD, IT'S
TERRIBLE.

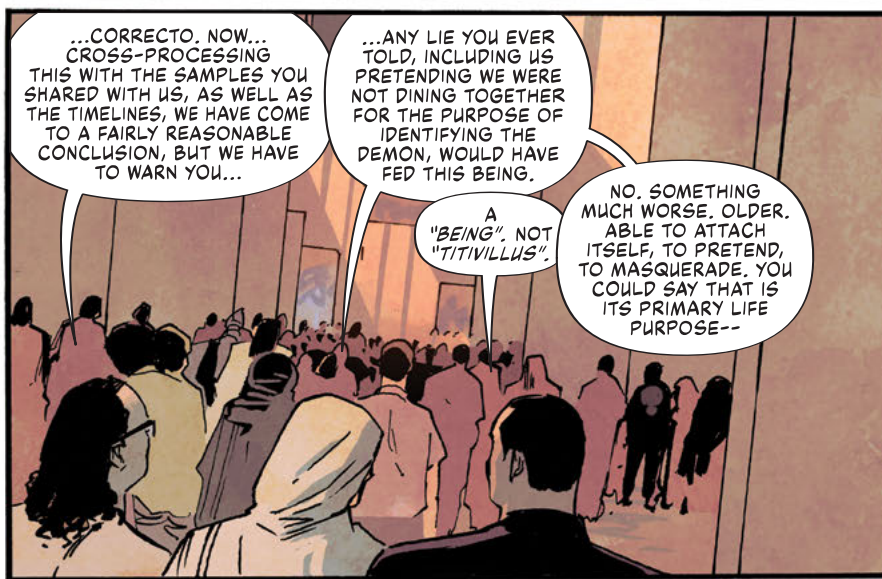
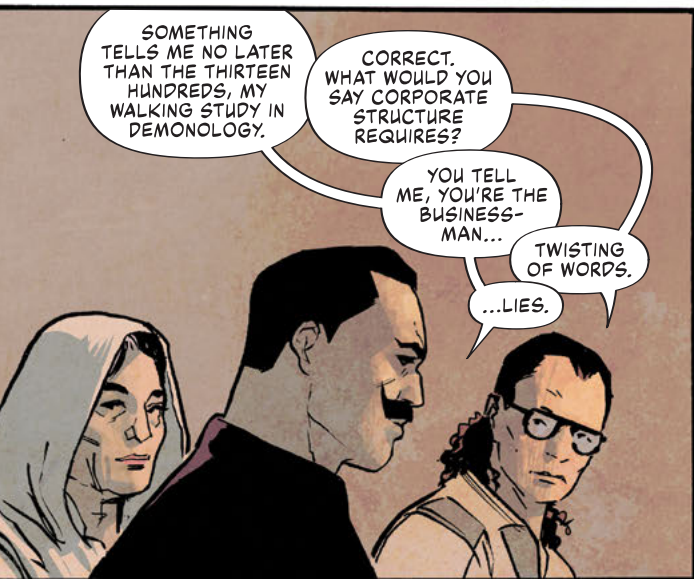
CORRECT,
BUT KASTNER
WILL SELL IT FOR
A FAIR AMOUNT
OF MONEY...

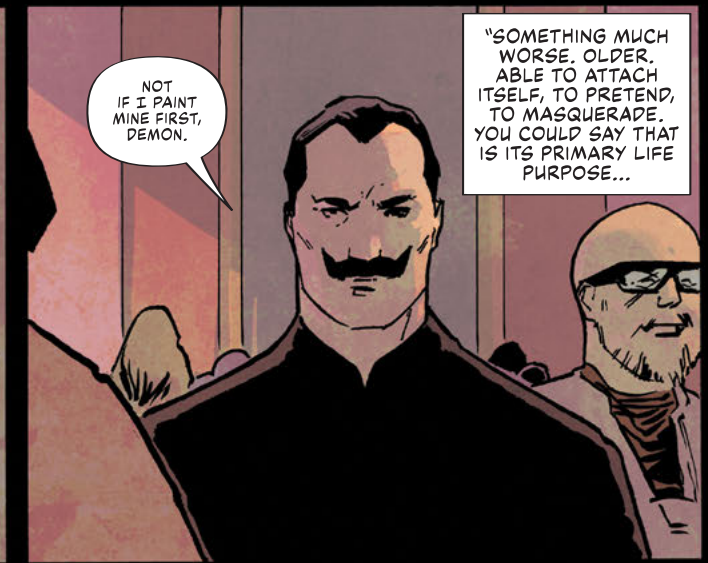
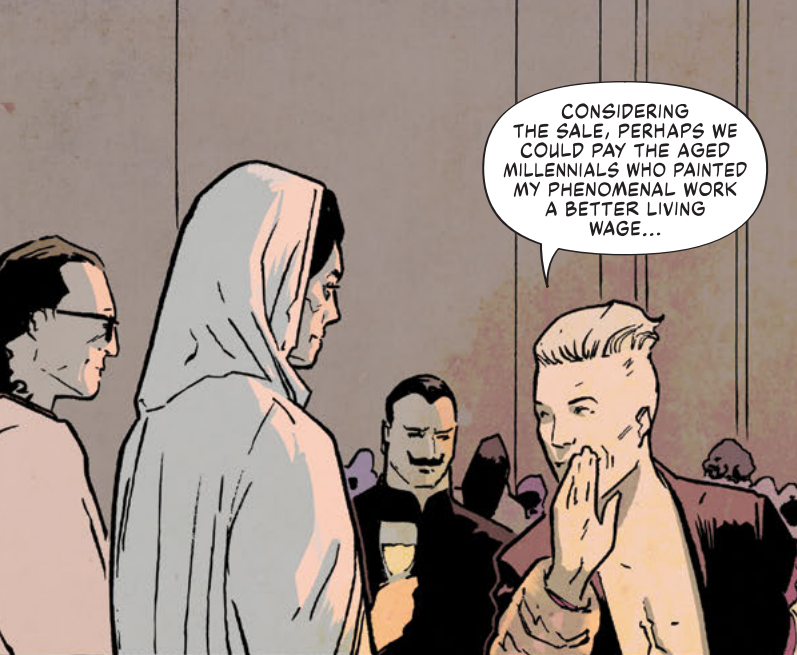
...AND LIANE HERE,
WITH MY HELP OF COURSE,
DID MANAGE TO ANALYSE
WHAT IT SEEMS TO
COMMUNICATE.

AS WELL
AS ALL WE HAVE
UNWITTINGLY
CONTRIBUTED
TO.

PARDON
ME...?

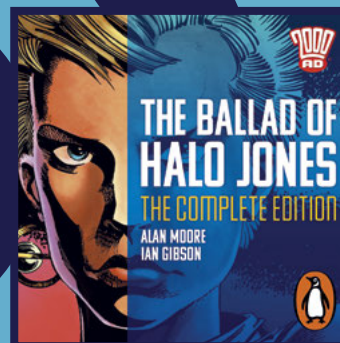
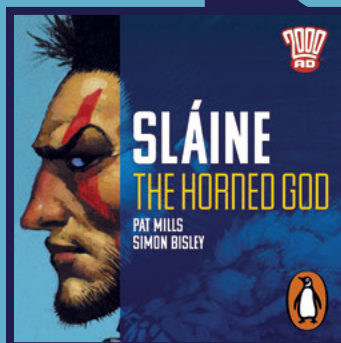
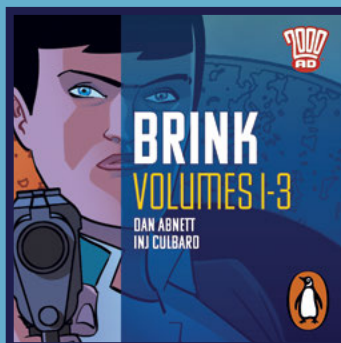
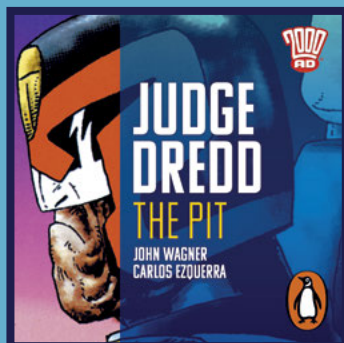






NEXT ISSUE: DEMONIC INTERVENTION!

LISTEN TO



THE LAW!

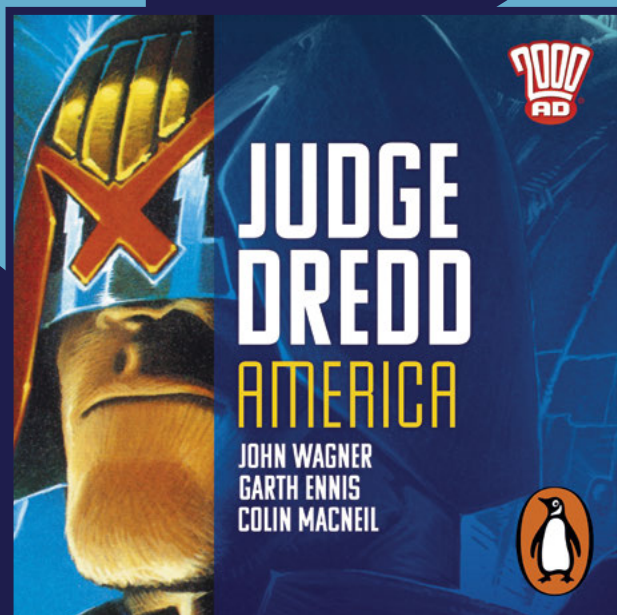
From the BBC's adaptations of classic *Judge Dredd* stories around the time of the first *Dredd* film in the 1990s, to the following decade's slate of Big Finish dramas starring the future cop, *2000 AD* has a long history with the audio format. Yet in 2021, with audio drama and podcasting enjoying a boom, this year has seen a step up in new versions of classic stories that have been specially adapted for the medium...

By Karl Stock

FIRST, PUBLISHER REBELLION'S OWN SERIES OF SELF-PRODUCED *FUTURE SHOCKS RADIO* shorts were given away to app subscribers to the title (see *Meg* 429 for the interview with producer Nat Tapley), and now come the first five full-cast audiobook adaptations of classic *2000 AD* series. These have been produced by the market leader in the UK, Penguin Random House — winner of the British Book Award for Audiobook of the Year for the past three years running, and producer of such big audiobook hits as *The Handmaid's Tale*, read by Elisabeth

Moss, and *Becoming*, read by its author Michelle Obama.

'There's a long history of *2000 AD* audio, so for us it was only a matter of when the next era would kick off,' says Rebellion's Ben Smith. 'When audio blew up with *Audible* and *iTunes*, we had lots of interesting and positive approaches, but we responded to Penguin Random House's efforts because they wanted to make the biggest and most ambitious versions of the stories.



'Moreover,' he continues, 'they wanted to make audiobooks of the graphic novels, not simply adaptations. That's actually very brave, given dramatists normally want to restructure a work in a new medium. Instead the commitment here was illustrating in sound the book we

normally read. That's what really makes this special – it's the creators' original text and the sonic landscape interpreting the artwork, which is crazy ambitious.'

The first five strips chosen for adaptation won't need any introduction to long-time **2000 AD** readers, although the **Judge Dredd** series *America* and *The Pit*, **The Ballad of Halo Jones**, **Sláine: The Horned God** and **Brink** Volumes 1-3 have been carefully picked to create the best listening experience to draw new listeners (and potential readers) into the world, as we'll hear.

Each of these audiobooks has roughly thirty-plus voices on it, with a core cast of six announced for each, including Joseph Fiennes as Judge Dredd, Paterson Joseph as the narrator of the **Dredd** books, rising star Sheila Atim as Halo Jones, and genre veterans including *Game of Thrones* Gemma Whelan and David Warner (*The Omen*, *Time Bandits*, *Tron*, *Star Trek* and many more).

'That's enormous, definitely the biggest cast we've worked with as a company,' says Penguin Random House Audio's Duncan Honeyman. 'Generally speaking we would usually have one voice, one narrator, reading a book, and then occasionally for novels with different perspectives, the average there is three narrators. So this really is something we've never done before, just the scale and the number of people, and it's been really exciting – audio is booming, and the creative possibilities are expanding as people try new things, so this has given us a lot of inspiration to try new things in the future.'

Honeyman – whose main roles were casting the actors and co-ordinating the music and sound effects for the books, working with directors Chris Thompson and Richard Hughes – points out that the company's publisher Richard Lennon is a big **2000 AD** fan, and it was he who instigated the deal with Rebellion, initially signing up rights to produce audio versions of their *Solaris* and *Abaddon* books a little over a year ago, before talks moved on to **2000 AD**. The aim in creating these first five audiobooks was to stay as true to the essence of the stories and the writing of John Wagner, Alan Moore, Pat Mills and Dan Abnett as possible.

'Our main thing that we were really keen to experiment with was not creating audio dramas but actually working with the existing writing,' says Honeyman. 'So rather than adapting, abridging or changing anything,

we've tried to keep them as true to the graphic novels as we can – although where some things are extremely visual, we may have added an approved line of text that gives the listener some context that perhaps isn't available otherwise. We wrote scripts from there, working with Chris and Richard to think about what sound and music could really give the atmosphere and set the scene that the illustrations do so well on the page.'

The selection of stories chosen for this first batch aren't just there because they involve characters, stories and writers whom the audience will know. 'It's the first time we've done anything like this, so they're all stories with strong characters,' says Honeyman. 'If you're familiar with them already, you know these are fan favourites, but for those who aren't, each of the stories gives a really strong character and explains their motivations and origins, and they also allow us to create characters that really sound different.'

'One of the things with something like this, where there are so many voices and characters appearing, is that there's a risk if it's all set in the same place with people of the same gender and age, then to a listener it can be difficult to differentiate between who's talking – because we're not dramatising it, we have to make each voice really distinct. It was felt these comics in particular really had those distinct characters, so we could have strong actors and narrators doing their thing.'

So these stories weren't chosen as much for their lead characters, as for the cast of characters around them? 'Yes, that's it,' he says. 'By having the ensemble casts, it enables you to have distinct characters you can really make stand out against one another, rather than all one faction or one group of people that might sound similar. Each one also takes place in a distinct world or universe, which allowed us to create a strong identity in the sound design, whether it's Mega-City One or in **Sláine's** Celtic mythology.'

Where possible, these audiobooks have been created without any amendments at all to the written text of the writer's scripts, so how are the visual elements, so important on the comic page, translated into settings the listener can feel themselves within? 'It's everything from the things you might expect – on **Brink**, for example, spaceship doors sliding closed,' says Honeyman, 'to music that Rebellion felt set a scene in the worlds their writers write in. It's across the board; in terms of the sound design, a day's work for our designers has created about five minutes of the audio, that's how heavily designed they

are, and I think it's really rich and detailed and even. Whilst we haven't gone full Dolby Surround Sound, there's even the sense of distance from the listener as things are taking place.'

He picks out the military scenes in **The Ballad of Halo Jones** as being a key example of this. 'You've got a flashback scene where she's under attack, where you have the bullets coming in from different angles and people calling out from different positions. You can almost sense that distance, that depth of where things are coming from, so it's not just a flat sound. We've worked really hard to make them as atmospheric as possible, and what we find is that it's quite rare with novels that we would do this level of sound design.'

The actors, meanwhile, have been chosen on one key criteria: 'It was really just that we knew they had great voices. Sheila, for example, as Halo... we've worked with her once before and we really view her as an up-and-coming star, we know how good she is and how well she prepares, and I think before long she'll be absolutely everywhere. Given the importance of **Halo Jones** as a piece of feminist comic-book writing, we wanted up-and-coming young female actors who are really going places to reflect those roles. Also, everybody that we've tried to cast has some link to fantasy or dystopia or science-fiction stories through their career, but we also wanted to find voices you might not automatically think of. It was quite a challenge, but I hope people think we've pulled it off.'

With each book coming in between four and six hours in length, there will be plenty of listening to be done before further instalments are hopefully issued. 'A decade ago the book industry was very down on audiobooks,' says Ben Smith. 'CDs weren't selling and the recording costs made it prohibitive to gamble on titles, but then bit-by-bit the infrastructure shifted. Audible entered the arena as a new player putting money up front, most likely to own the format in the way Amazon had with the Kindle and eBooks, but this time other publishers and tech companies didn't just sit back and let them have it to themselves. There are many ways the audio boom could evolve from here, but the focus after this first batch of **2000 AD** audiobooks will be to make sure the next build on what we've achieved here.'

Judge Dredd: America, Judge Dredd: The Pit, The Ballad of Halo Jones, Sláine: The Horned God and Brink Volumes 1-3 are available in audiobook form from Audible, Apple and all other good audiobook platforms, produced by Penguin Random House

PAST CRIMES

By Karl Stock

AS UNUSUAL AS IT MAY SEEM TO FIND AN ARTICLE TRAILING TWO HISTORICAL CRIME FICTION novels with no trace of sci-fi or fantasy within them on these pages, the writers behind both mean they're certainly worth bringing to the attention of a readership who enjoy the stories found in **2000 AD** and the **Megazine**.

Earlier this month came the publication of *Edge of the Grave*, a hard-boiled blend of crime drama and the popular Tartan Noir genre, set in Glasgow of the 1930s, the decade that gave the place its 'No Mean City' image. Its writer is a Scot himself, and technically a debut novelist, although **2000 AD** readers will be more than familiar with the name Robbie Morrison, whose co-creations for the titles include **Shakara** and, of course, the fifteen-year epic **Nikolai Dante**.

Last month, meanwhile, saw the publication – sharing both a publisher and an agent with Morrison's book through sheer coincidence – of *City of Vengeance* by D.V. Bishop, a tale set amid the brutal justice system of Renaissance Florence from a writer who counts as a debut novelist in the crime fiction milieu. Most **Meg** readers, however, will know him as David Bishop, editor of **2000 AD** and the **Megazine** in the 1990s, and a time-served contributor to their worlds in prose and comic form.

'As much as I love comics and writing comics, I think anyone who knows me will tell you crime fiction's always been my passion and love,' says Morrison. 'I had the idea to write a crime novel since way back before I ever sold any comic strips, but when I started off as a struggling writer, I was writing television, screenplays and the first few chapters of a novel that will fortunately never be seen. It was the comic strips that people started buying first, then you enjoy it and cheques are coming your way, so you follow that line.'

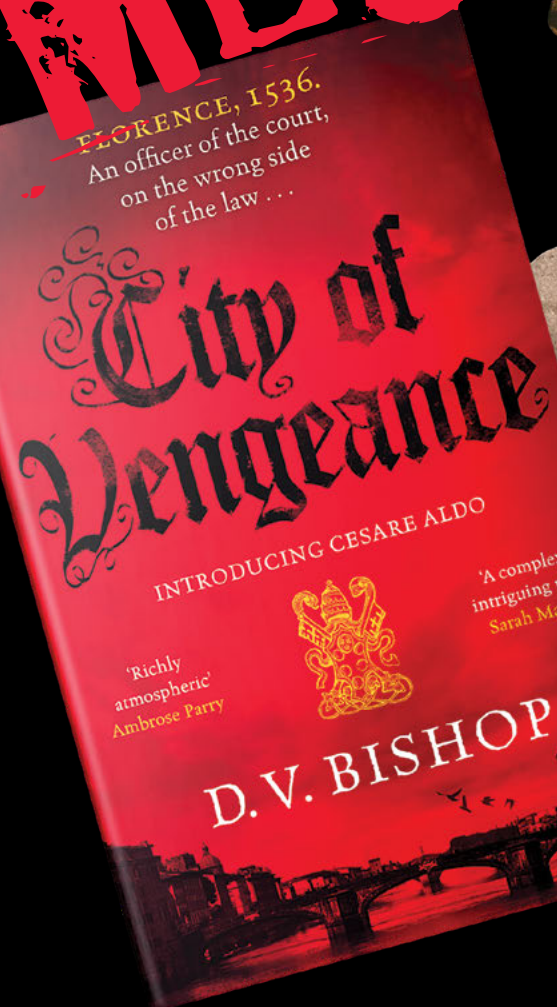
'Twenty years later,' he continues, 'you realise you fancy trying your hand at other stuff as well. It's always good to have a challenge or to

try something new, and a lot of the ideas I was coming up with weren't necessarily comic-book ideas, if that makes any sense. The industry is largely still based around superheroes or science fiction, so if you want to try to write a crime story or a historical adventure story then there's no guaranteed audience there for it.'

To anyone with an interest in a good yarn, the set-up for *Edge of the Grave* sounds a thrilling one. 'It's set in Glasgow in 1932, a city that was still recovering from the First World War and Spanish Flu, and is now in the grip of the Great Depression,' he says. 'It was a raucous, lawless metropolis, blighted by corruption and poverty, unemployment, extremist politics, sectarian division, and the streets are terrorised by razor gangs. So the Corporation of Glasgow, the council of the time, appointed Percy Sillitoe – shock horror, an Englishman! – as the new Chief Constable.'

'He shook up the entire force, finding the biggest, toughest officers in Scotland that he could find, most of them from the Highlands and Islands, and he formed Britain's first Flying Squad; plainclothes detectives broken up into pairs and patrolling the streets in high-speed radio cars. His message to criminals was basically: "The biggest gang in this city is the Glasgow police force".'

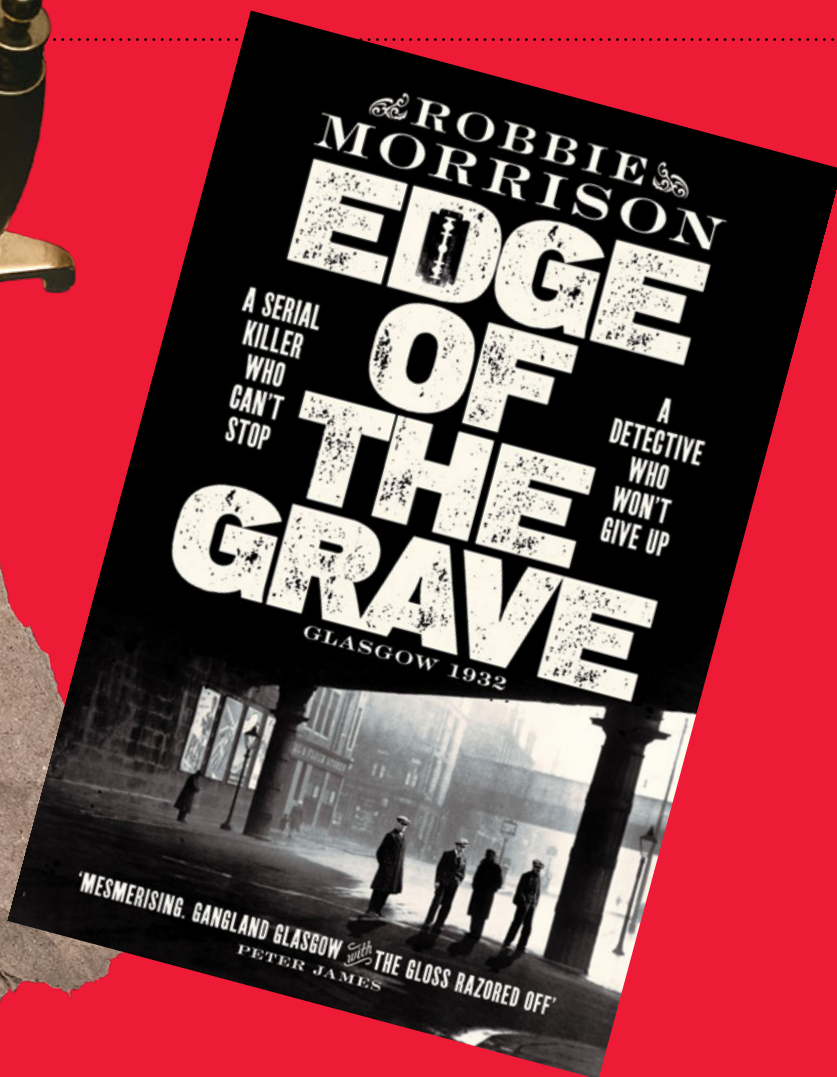
This real-life backdrop saw Sillitoe's police nicknamed 'the Untouchables', after the Chicago unit that brought down Al Capone the decade before, although Morrison has differentiated them by renaming them 'the Tartan Untouchables'. In a book already described as 'early gangland Glasgow with the gloss razored off' by crime writer Peter James and 'chilling and brutal, but also deeply moving and, most importantly, beautifully written... an astounding debut' by Mark Billingham, his protagonists are part of this force – Inspector Jimmy Dreghorn and his



partner 'Bonnie' Archie McDaid, so-called for his off-duty Highland regalia.

'Dreghorn's background is loosely inspired by my own grandfather, who worked in various shipyards along the River Clyde and boxed under the patronage of one of Scotland's wealthiest landowners back in the day,' says Morrison. 'Archie McDaid is based upon real policemen of the period – he's a larger than life fella who was an Olympic medal-winning wrestler, a police boxing champion, and he also played the bagpipes. They're out to clean up the streets of all the gangs, and their first case involves a murder investigation where the son-in-law of one of the biggest shipbuilders is pulled from the Clyde with his throat cut. They investigate, despite Dreghorn having a history with the dead man's widow.'

As with virtually every living Scottish crime novelist, William McIlvanney's 1977 novel *Laidlaw* is a key influence on Morrison – its title is even taken from a McIlvanney quote. 'I liked the idea



of going back to Glasgow in the 1930s because it was a fascinating city for dramatic storytelling,' he notes. 'The era also ties into the age of hard-boiled crime fiction in America... Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, all the Warner Bros gangster films with James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson and Humphrey Bogart. I'd always been amazed that no one had done something in that vein in 1930s Glasgow because it had the grand industry, the gangs, the crime, and I started to think, "It had better be me!"'

For Bishop, meanwhile, *City of Vengeance* was also a labour of love stretching back to his time in comics. 'I spent twenty years doing the research and not writing the book,' he says. 'When I was editing **2000 AD**, I discovered a non-fiction book about the criminal justice system in Renaissance Florence, and it had one sentence that stood out to me when I read it in the bookshop. It said, "Roughly comparable to a modern police force", and the lightbulb went off.'

'I thought, "There's a book in that – in fact, there's a series of novels in that, police procedurals, but set in Renaissance Florence".

Then I started doing the research, and I realised there's a lot to learn. Then eventually I got to a point, I guess around 2016, where I figured it was time to put up or shut up, having bored people for twenty years about this historical crime thriller I was planning to write.'

Bishop has been busy in the meantime. Already a writer of **Judge Dredd** tie-in novels while on staff in the 1990s, he continued to write prose books with the character, Morrison's **Nikolai Dante** and **Fiends of the Eastern Front** into the 2000s (he left the **Megazine's** editorial chair in 2002), as well as the **Fiends** strip *Stalingrad* in the **Megazine** in 2006 and various non-**2000 AD** audio dramas and videogames. He also retrained as a screenwriter at Edinburgh Napier University and wrote episodes of shows including BBC One's *Doctors*, and is now programme leader of the same institution's Creative Writing MA, which he helped to found.

'I've always been a huge reader of crime fiction, from Famous Five and Hardy Boys on,' says Bishop. 'I've written a lot of science fiction and fantasy over the years, but even while I was writing for *Doctors*, all my stories quickly turned into mysteries that just happened to

have a nurse wandering through. When I wrote a *Warhammer* novel for Games Workshop, even that was basically *Hill Street Blues* with elves.'

'[In the criminal justice system of *City of Vengeance*] there are fundamental differences to ours – they could torture witnesses or suspects, they could execute you in the cells as long as there was a priest present to give you the last rites, but they still had lawyers, they had courts, they had magistrates, investigating officers, constables that did the grunt work. Yet although they had this criminal justice system in the cradle of the Renaissance, with amazing artwork, beautiful buildings and incredible architecture, Renaissance Florence was the city which gave us Machiavelli's *The Prince*. It's about business and banking and merchants and "What can you do for me?", where the end always justifies the means. It's a city of great culture, but also completely cut-throat.'

It sounds like a large dose of Torquemada and a pinch of medieval Dredd. 'The lead character is Cesare Aldo, an officer of the most feared criminal court in Florence,' says Bishop. 'He's the illegitimate son of a rich merchant and a servant girl, who was kicked out at the age of twelve when his father died, and had to survive on the streets of Florence by his own wits and fists. He became a mercenary soldier, and then got injured and came back home to become a constable and an officer of the court.'

'He can operate in rich merchant society, but he's equally comfortable in the grubbiest, dirtiest taverns, and he's also a gay man in a time and place where that's a criminal offence. He's absolutely of his own moral code, as people will discover when they get to the last chapter – he demonstrates what he's capable of, let's leave it at that.'

Neither writer has left comics (Morrison has a personal project upcoming with artist Charlie Adlard, while Bishop still writes *The Phantom* for Egmont Sweden and is hoping to self-publish his own *Dani's Toys*), but both are writing the follow-ups to their respective books, and hope there's enough interest to turn them into ongoing series.

'I hope that people who fondly remember **Dante** will come along,' says Morrison. 'It's a very different genre, but I'd like to think that I must carry something over, some style of characterisation or storytelling, that even though these books are very different, there must be something there that's still appealing to readers who have enjoyed my stuff in **2000 AD**.'

***Edge of the Grave* by Robbie Morrison and *City of Vengeance* by D.V. Bishop are both out now, published by Pan Macmillan**



LET US OUT
OF HERE, YOU
THRIFT-STORE
BITCH!

CORREIA!

NO!

SI SPENCER

SCRIPT

NICOLO ASSIRELLI

ART

EVA DE LA CRUZ

COLOURS

SIMON BOWLAND

LETTERS



THE
RETURNERS
HEARTSWOOD PART 7

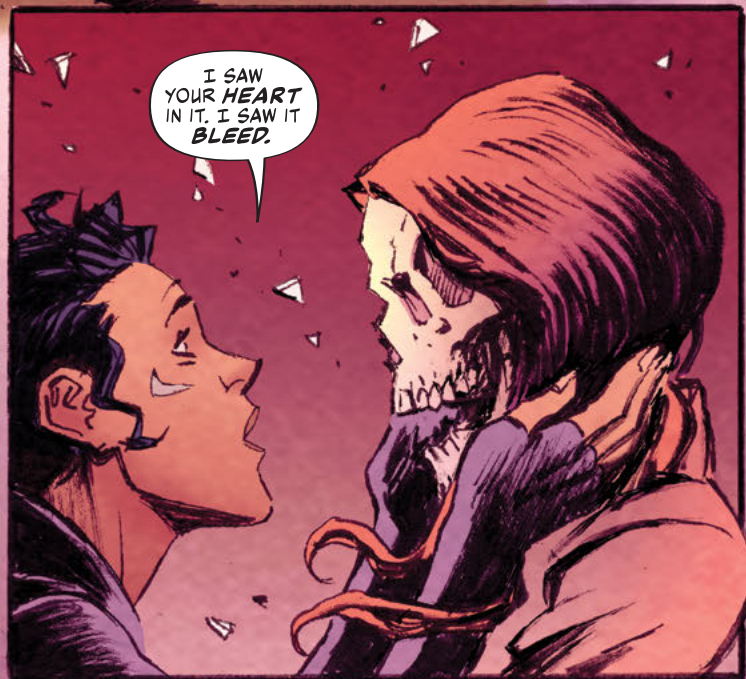


GET
DOWN, CHAVEZ!
YOU'LL BE CUT TO
RIBBONS!

NO.



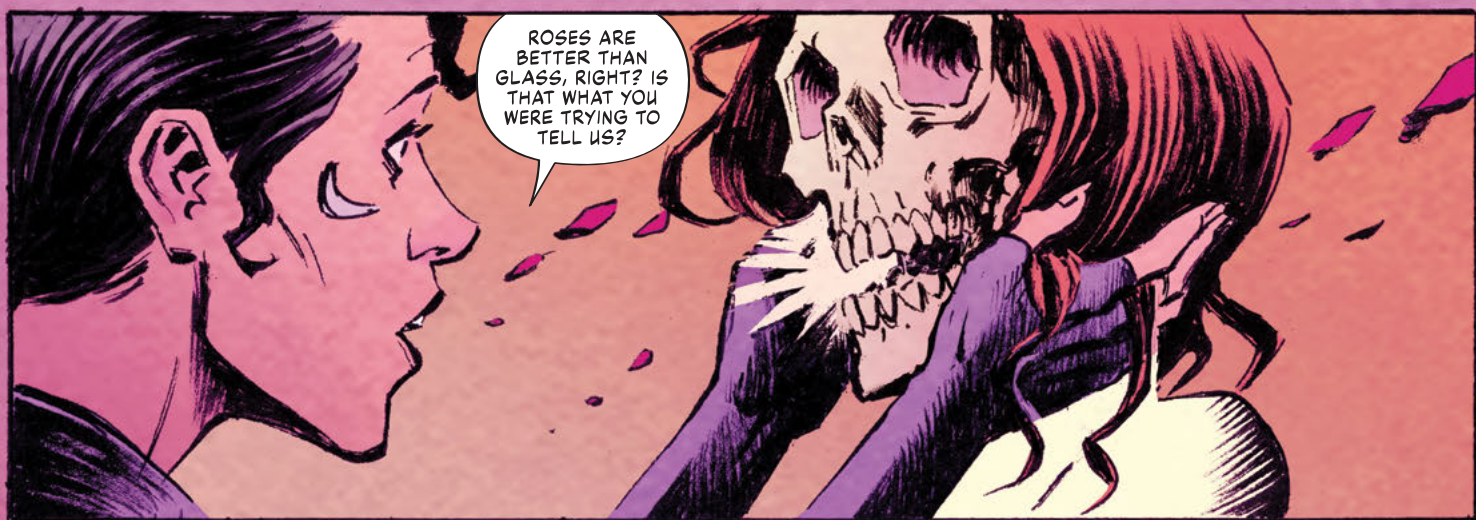
WHY ARE YOU
WEARING **THIS**,
HONEY? YOU HAVE
THAT BEAUTIFUL
WEDDING
GOWN.



I SAW
YOUR **HEART**
IN IT, I SAW IT
BLEED.



IT MADE ME
THINK OF MY
SISTER.
IF I'D
BOUGHT HER THAT
DRESS SHE'D HAVE
FORGIVEN ME
ANYTHING.



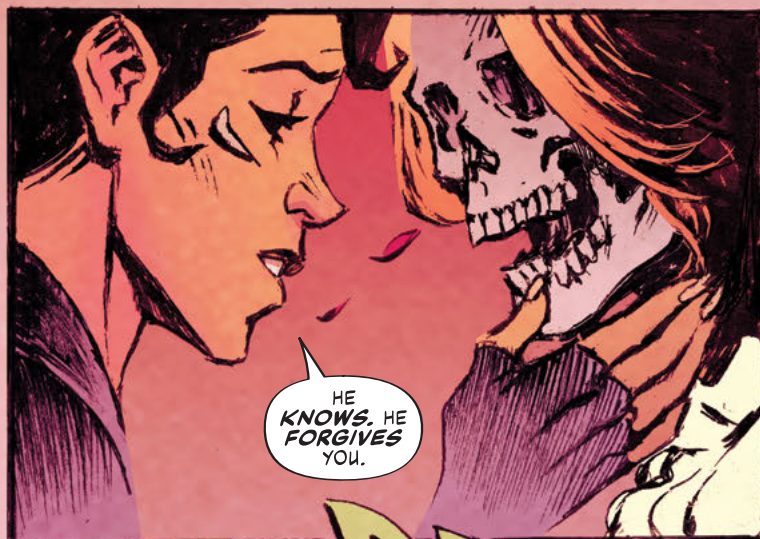
I SAW HIM.
HE WAS TRYING
TO SPEAK, HE WAS
TRYING TO SAY
"HE KNOWS".



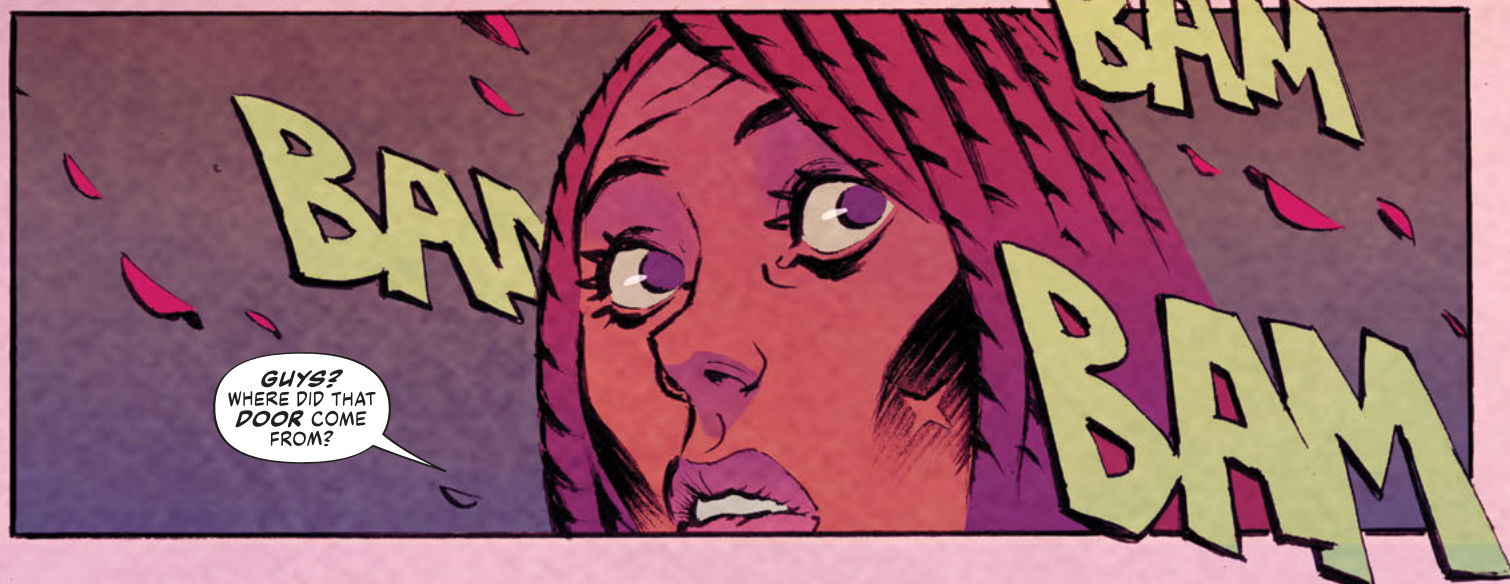
WE
ALL SAW
HIM.
HE MIMED
"FOUR" AND
"GIVE".



HE
KNOWS. HE
FORGIVES
YOU.



GUYS?
WHERE DID THAT
DOOR COME
FROM?





WHO CARES
WHERE IT CAME
FROM? IT'S OUR
WAY OUT!



BAM BAM BAM *



BRIAR.



GRANBY.



THEY'RE
FREE.

CAN IT,
QUEER! THEY
WERE OUR ONLY
WAY OUT OF
HERE--

DO
YOU GUYS
NOT HEAR
THAT?





HUH?

THE RETURNERS SAGA CONCLUDES WITH 'AMAZONIA' - COMING TO MEG 432!

THE BRITISH COMICS COMMUNITY WAS SHOCKED AND SADDENED TO HEAR OF THE SUDDEN DEATH of Si Spencer in February. A writer with over thirty years' experience, his name is indelibly associated with the **Judge Dredd Magazine**, both for the creation of Cursed Earth antique dealers **Harke & Burr** and the psychotic, invulnerable mutant **The Creep** during the title's formative years, and for more recently making a return with **HAVN** and **The Returners**.

As well as a couple of **Judge Dredd** one-offs and the series of Dreddworld-set **Plagues of Necropolis** shorts for the **Meg**, Spencer was also known for his comics work with DC's Vertigo line between 2004 and 2016, under the editorship of Shelly Bond, from his take on Neil Gaiman's **Books of Magic** universe in **Life During Wartime**, through **The Vinyl Underground**, **Bodies**, **Slash & Burn** and the **Hellblazer** mini-series *City of Demons*.

He also became a prolific television writer and editor on series including **Eastenders**, **The Bill**, **Grange Hill** and **Holby City** – on **The Bill**, he was one of a writing team that shared the 2008 Writers' Guild of Great Britain Award in the Soap and Continuing Drama category. His move into screen came via a win in a BBC New Voices competition with his play **Tracey and Lewis**.

Raised in Sheffield and inspired by UK humour titles, Marvel reprints and then the arrival of **2000 AD** ('I loved the Britishness, the total punk anarchy, the uniqueness of the art styles, the dynamism, the radical approach to old ideas,' he once said, listing traits later found in his own work), Spencer and his friend Adrian Dungworth started their own small-press comic anthology named **Sideshow** in the 1980s.

This led to work for the mature readers titles **Crisis** and **Revolver** (the latter sadly unpublished before the comic folded), a year as editor of the cult title **Deadline** from 1991, and into work with the **Megazine** between 1993 and 1995. One of a generation of exciting new talents, Spencer was also sociable and deeply hilarious comics-convention company for many enduring friends he made during this time.

Artist Dean Ormston, with whom Spencer worked on **Harke & Burr** and **Books of Magic**, was one of his longest-standing friends in comics, ever since the writer shopped in the Sheffield comics shop where Ormston worked in the 1980s (Nick Percival and Matt 'Disraeli' Brooker were also regulars). They first collaborated on a strip in **Sideshow**, and Ormston believes his career wouldn't have happened without Spencer's influence.

Of their many pub adventures over the years, Ormston remembers imagining 'an **Eastenders** plot where we had Robbie's dog Wellard on hallucinogenic drugs, getting into the sewers under the street and having adventures with Dirty Den,



who now lived there with his pet rat. It went on and on, getting more ridiculous, and by the end we couldn't sit up straight for laughing. He once told me he submitted the idea to the BBC – he seemed genuine, but I'll never know.

'He wrote a few plays for the Hen & Chickens Theatre in London, I know he really got a kick out of that. Outside of comics and films he had a love of music. He'd been in bands in the 1980s so he could play guitar and had an incredible singing voice – very soulful and raw, it was quite a shock to hear it. I will miss him beyond words.'

'He was a good pal, always excellent company, a true original,' says writer Garth Ennis. 'He was also a very fine writer who – at least in those days – rarely seemed to get the chance to shine as he might have. We used to correspond quite regularly, and along with some of his letters I still have an outline he sent me for an excellent haunted house story.'

'We lost touch after I moved to the States, but I saw him again at Steve Dillon's memorial drink-up in Luton a few years back. He was pretty much the same guy – the infectious giggle/cackle, the twinkle in the eye. He told me he'd recently taken up drinking Guinness after a lifelong aversion to its heavy consistency. *"It's the pint that comes with its own pie,"* he told me. That worked better in his accent.'

'I can't remember when I first met Si, but it would one hundred per cent have been in a bar,' says Gordon Rennie. 'Probably during one of the legendarily raucous nights after the old UKCAC comics cons. He stood out a mile – a big, solid, no-nonsense Yorkshireman in a scene then full of taciturn Scottish dwarfs and painfully fashionable London things. I really liked **Harke & Burr**, a whimsical Goth-tinged comedy and a refreshing turn away from the grim-faced "big man with a gun" Dreddverse stuff the rest of us were writing back then.'

The pair wrote a **Harke & Burr/Missionary Man** crossover named *Satanic Farces*, and Rennie says the best thing about it was getting to know Spencer better. 'He was incredibly smart and knowledgeable. Someone else said your IQ went up while you were around him, which sounds about right. He was also very, very funny; I remember

sitting with him in an Islington beer garden twenty years ago and hearing his – possibly unrepeatable – observation about the gay cult appeal of the Shake n' Vac advert. It was maybe the single funniest thing I've ever heard anyone say.

'He was also full of great stories about his time – sadly unmentioned in any bios – as an erotic novelist, or "writer of the books you read with one hand", and he took great pride in being the only one in his BBC department who hadn't been to public school.' Both Rennie and David Bishop, the **Megazine** editor who first commissioned Spencer (and passed him the news that **The Creep** was screenwriter Russell T. Davies' favourite Dreddworld series), tell the infamous story of Spencer's abortive hire to write an episode of **Doctor Who** spin-off **Torchwood**, a reportedly unpleasant experience that he satirised in the pseudonymous, self-published book **Torch, Wood and Peasants** (2009).

'Si wrote quirky, original series for the **Megazine**,' says Bishop. 'He wasn't an obvious fit for the **Dredd** universe, his writing had a different sensibility – he wasn't content to tell yet another story about a Judge from a different country, and that was why I loved his work. Si told tales set in the dark corners of Dredd's world, narratives about oddball outsiders. He was a big-hearted person... our paths mostly crossed in bars at conventions, but he always had a funny story and a twinkle in his eye.'

Spencer's two main comic homes – the **Megazine** (he never actually wrote for **2000 AD**, an ambition unfulfilled) and Vertigo – were both perfect fits for his own creative tastes. 'After I veered away into TV, Shelly and I would meet up occasionally and have long talks about narrative and character and music,' he told this writer in 2015. 'Then one day I got a call from her asking if I'd like to collaborate with Neil Gaiman on the **Books of Magic**. That's not the kind of request you turn down... it's more about attitude than content, irreverence and satire are hardwired into the British psyche. **2000 AD** has always been awash with that ethos, and Vertigo is one of the few mainstream US publishers that can find a home for that iconoclastic approach.'

'He had a genuinely unique imagination, and wrote his own kind of stories,' says the **Megazine's** current editor Matt Smith, who Spencer contacted about possible work prior to **HAVN's** arrival. 'They were never cookie-cutter, by-the-numbers series, but defiantly odd, often unsettling.'

Spencer, who lived in London and is survived by his wife Colleen, had written **The Returners'** planned final series *Amazonia*, which will run in the **Megazine** from this summer.

A fundraiser has been set up at: uk.gofundme.com/f/si-spencer-memorial-funeral-know-you-are-loved

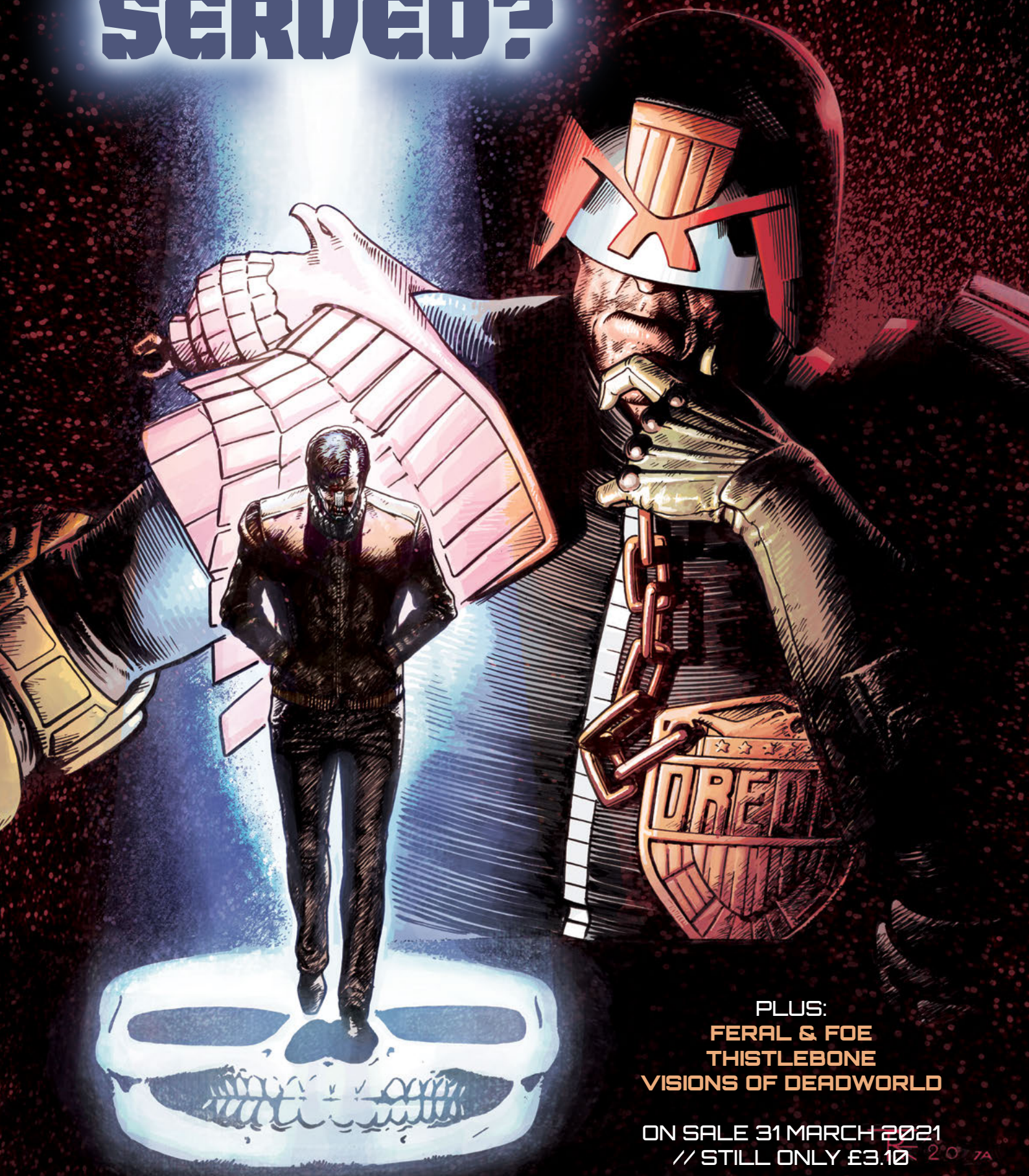
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DELIVERANCE

PART SEVEN

DAVID HINE
SCRIPT
NICK PERCIVAL
ART
ANNIE PARKHOUSE
LETTERS

FRRRRK?

SSSSSSND
USSSS MORE
PENITENTSSSS.

YOUR
UNHOLINESS,
HAVE THEY
NOT KILLED
ENOUGH FOR
NOW?

THE
CEREMONY
BEGINS AT THE
NEXT SUN'S
RISING.

BUT YOU'RE
RIGHT. WE MUSSST
NOT SSSPOIL OUR
APPETITESSSS.


YOU MAY
ENTERRR.

MY
BROTHER
JUDGESSSS ARE
LEARNING TO
ADAPT TO THEIR
NEW HOSSST
BODIESSSS.

RESURRECTION
DEMANDSSSS
SSSSLAUGHTER.


IMPRESSIVE.

FRRRRK!



CEASSSSSE
AND DESSSSIST,
BROTHER
JUDGESSSS.
WE MUSSST
PREPARE.

A GREATER
FEASSST
AWAITSSSS.



MY FOLLOWERS
ARE BECOMING AROUSED.
THEY KNOW THAT IN A FEW
HOURS THE PASSING
OVER WILL BEGIN.

WHAT
SSSSWEET
MUSIC THEY
MAKE.

AH,
SSSSISTERSSS.
WHAT NEWSSS DO
YOU HAVE OF JUDGE
WHISSPER?

HE
BETRAYSSSS
USSSS.

I
SUSPECTED
ASS MUCH.

WE WILL
DEAL WITH
WHISSPER
AND THE
YOUNGSSSTERSSS
LATERR.

HE HASSS
JOINED THE WILD
KIDSSSS.

AAAAHHHHHH



'WHISSPER ONLY
DELAYSSS THE HOURRR
OF THEIRRR DEATH...'

THE
DAY OF
DELIVERANCE
IS ALMOST
HERE.

WE HAVE
TO DECIDE WHAT
WE'RE GOING
TO DO.



RESCUE
MISSION?

GO BACK.
STOP MOMDAD
SELF-KILL.

EVEN IF WE
COULD PERSUADE
THE GROWN-UPS, UM
HAS SHOWN ME THAT
THERE ARE MORE DARK
JUDGES ON THANATOPIA,
AND THE OTHERS
ARE NOTHING LIKE
WHISPER.

WE
WOULDN'T
STAND A
CHANCE.



ONCE THE
CEREMONY IS
OVER DEATH AND
HIS GOONS WILL
BE COMING FOR
YOU TOO.

I
KNOW THEM.
THEY DON'T
STOP.

OH YEAH?
WE'LL BE
READY FOR
THEM.'



RIGHT,
GUYS?



...WHAT?



THERE ARE TUNNELS UNDER THE HILL.

I KNOW TUNNELS. WE COULD HIDE THERE.



GRUD, NO. NO MORE TUNNELS...



MAYBE UM COULD HELP US.

YOU KNOW UM DOESN'T REALLY DO STUFF... JUST SHOWS ME THINGS.

RIGHT, THINGS YOU CAN'T CHANGE AND UM DOESN'T WANT TO CHANGE.

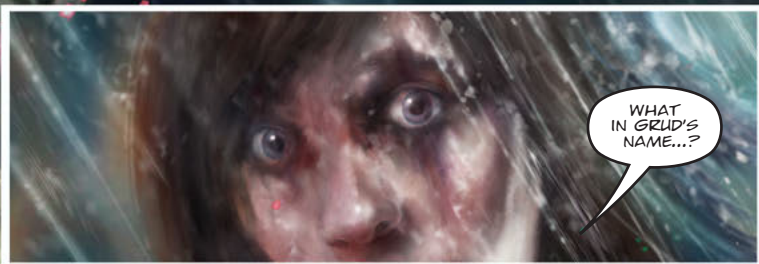


SO WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

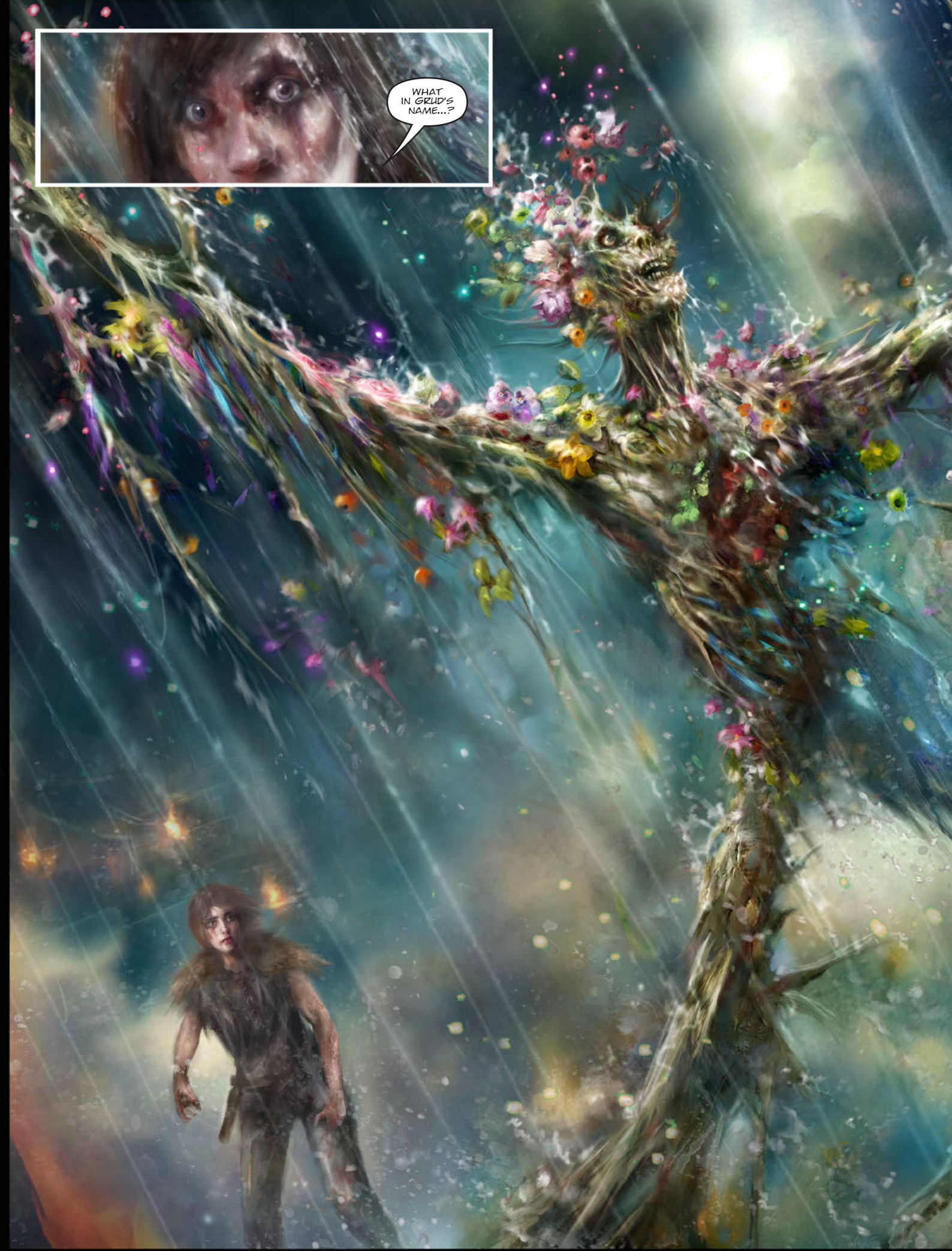
ME? I'M A GROWN-UP.

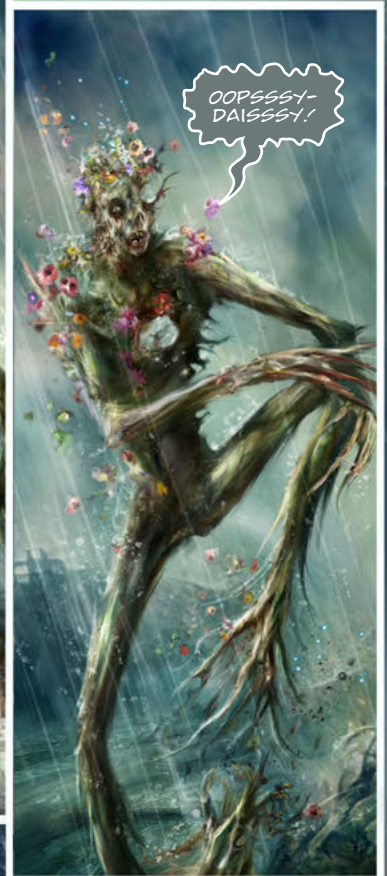
YOU KIDS ARE ON YOUR OWN.

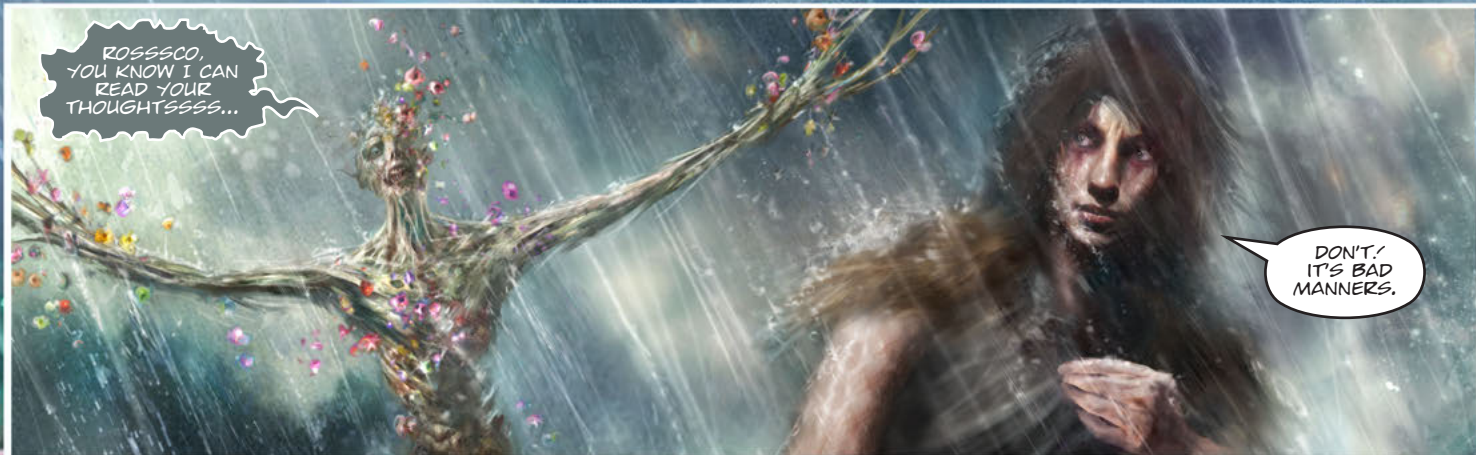




WHAT
IN GRUD'S
NAME...?







ROSSCO,
YOU KNOW I CAN
READ YOUR
THOUGHTSSSS...

DON'T!
IT'S BAD
MANNERS.



YOU
REMEMBERRR
WHAT YOU WERE
THINKING WHEN
POUSSSSAY
DESSSTROYED
DOMINION?

SSSHE
GAVE HER LIFE TO
SSSSAVE THE RESSST
OF YOU, AND YOU MADE
HERRR A PROMISSSE
THAT YOU WOULD MAKE
YOUR LIFE WORTH
SSSSOMETHING.



IT'SSS TIME
TO KEEP YOURRR
PROMISSSE.

THE MORTARIAN CITY, JUST BEFORE
THE DAWN -

WHAT
ARE WE
WAITING
FOR?

THEY
CAN'T START
UNTIL THE SUN
COMES UP.

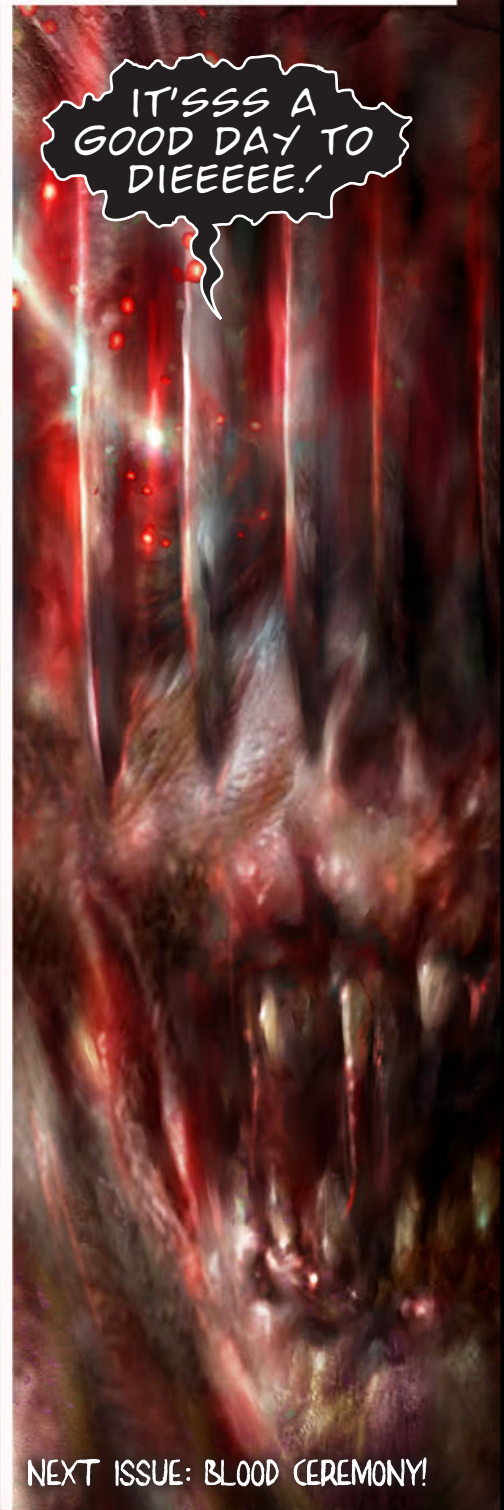
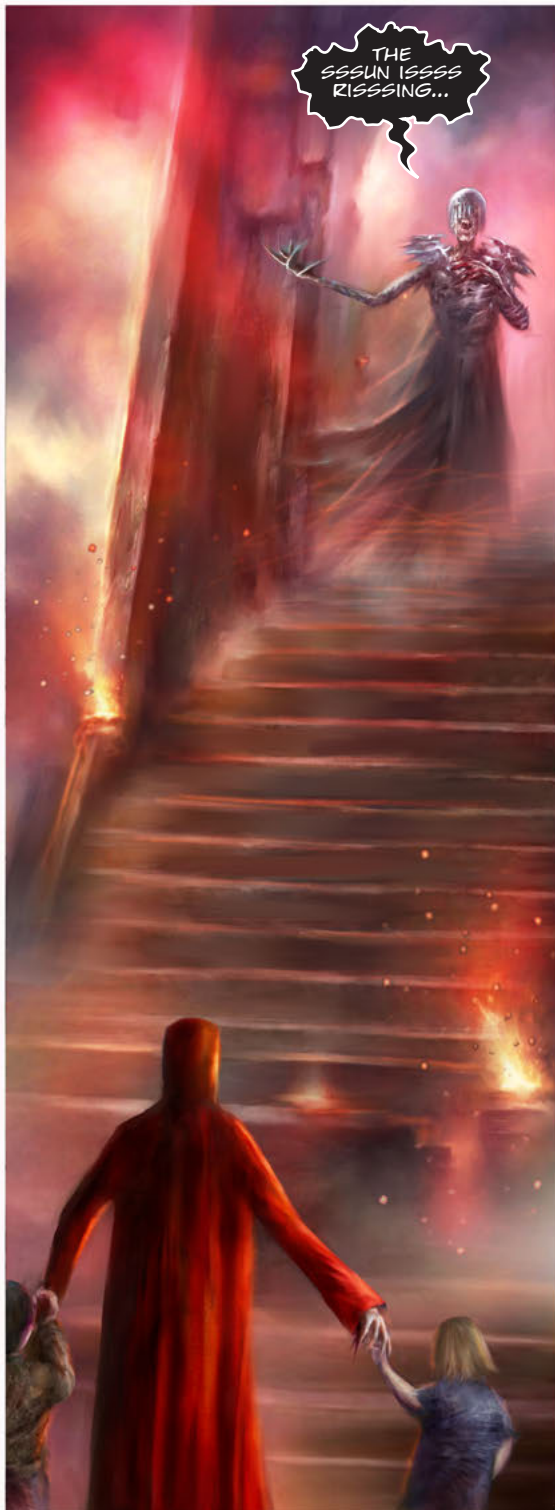
AND THEN
THEY START
KILLING
EVERYONE?

YEAH.

YOU
THINK
THEY'LL CHOP
OUR HEADS
OFF?

SHUT UP!
STOP TALKING
ABOUT IT!

IT'S HARD,
ISN'T IT?

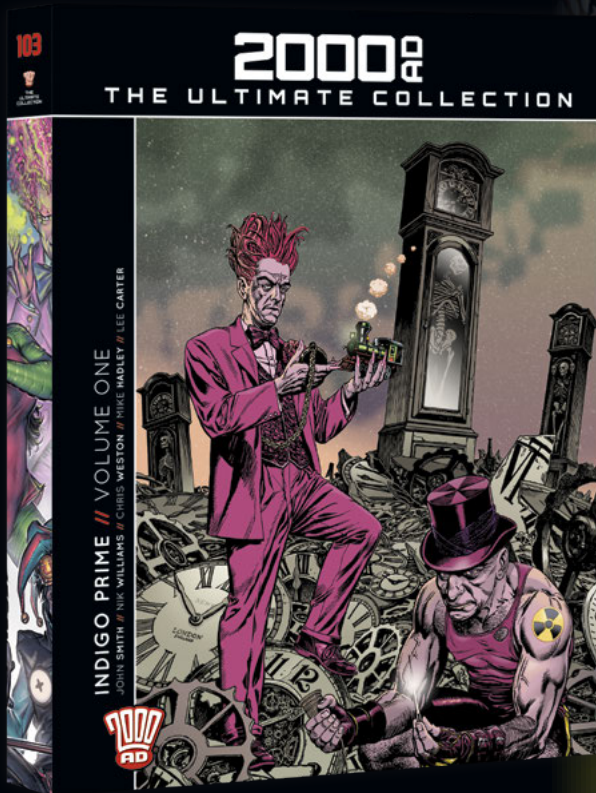


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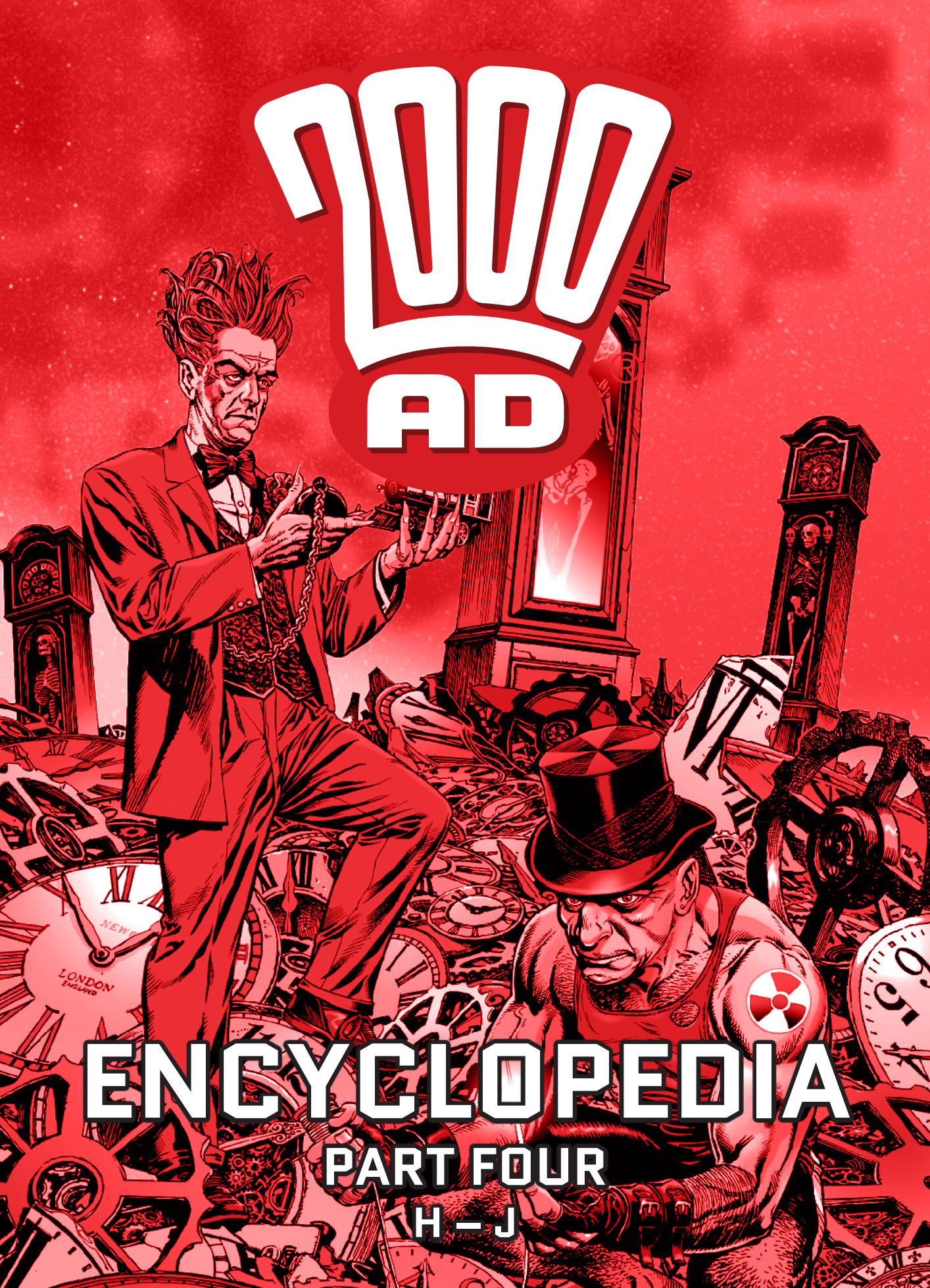


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AD**

ENCYCLOPEDIA
PART FOUR
H-J



WRITTEN BY SCOTT MONTGOMERY



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HAP HAZZARD

SITUATION REPORT:

Fred's Planet is 'in a downwardly mobile area of the galaxy' and named after its founder, a space pirate called Fredrik Stardancer, who did not have much in the way of imagination. It has become a spaceport where conmen, interstellar marines and undesirables always seem to end up.

Hap Hazzard is a slacker who was once a Merchant Spaceman and is currently unemployed – his long-suffering girlfriend, Sharon, would also argue (which they do constantly) that he is also unemployable.

Resident thugs Ron and Luigi Kango are the conjoined-at-the-head twins in charge of their own club and they sometimes get Hap to run errands for them.

Hap's best friend, Tricky, is more sensible but as equally useless – and is an avid watcher of long-running soap opera *Spaceways Motel*.

The loquacious Hap likes to regale people with tales about other enigmatic lowlifes like Joey the Neck and Wide Henry, who have never been seen. Perhaps one day Hap might get his act together and do something worthwhile – Sharon certainly hopes so.

First Appearance:

Prog 561

Essential Thrills:

Hap Hazzard (Prog 561),
Hap Hazzard 2 (Prog 567),
Hap Hazzard 3 (Prog 588),
Hap Hazzard 4 (Prog 609),
Hap Hazzard 5 (Prog 610) and
Another Epic of Love, Death and Dry Cleaning (Prog 1164)

Series created by:

Steve Dillon (writer and artist)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

These occasional tales featuring a likeable intergalactic layabout appeared in **2000 AD** in 1988 and 1989, bringing some light relief from the more bombastic, action-oriented contemporary thrills such as **STRONTIUM DOG**'s *The Stone Killers* or **JUDGE DREDD** in *Oz*.

Artist Steve Dillon was a regular fixture in the weekly progs, having worked on classic *Dredd* strips like *Block Mania* and *Cry of the Werewolf*. The talented Dillon turned his hand to writing and Hap Hazzard was the result. These little vignettes about life and unemployment bring to mind comparisons with the likes of the surreal dole-queue adventures of **SOONER OR LATER**, and they do not outstay their welcome.

Around the same time Dillon – alongside fellow **2000 AD** luminary Brett (**BAD COMPANY**) Ewins – was busy preparing the first issues of their own magazine, *Deadline*, which was, of course, home to post-punk sensation **TANK GIRL**.

A curious addendum to the Hap Hazzard story came ten years later, in 1999. While clearing out some cupboards in the Command Module, then-editor David Bishop found the final instalment, which had not been published but there was no script with which to sub-edit against the art. The enterprising Bishop used this as an opportunity to launch a competition for budding script-writers to come up with a storyline. The winning entry was by Hayden Nash and published in Prog 1164.



HARKE & BURR

First Appearance:

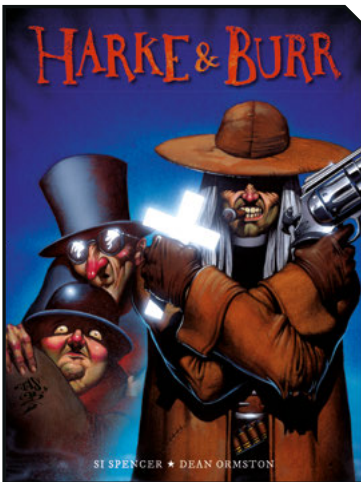
Meg 2.27

Essential Thrills:

Antique & Curious (Megs 2.27-2.28), *A Hamster Horror Production* (Megs 2.40-2.42), *Grief Encounter* (Megs 2.47-2.49), *Secret Origin* (Meg 2.83) and *Satanic Farces* (Megs 3.04-3.07)

Series created by:

Si Spencer (writer) and
Dean Ormston (artist)



Harke & Burr was collected as a bagged supplement issue with **Meg** 350 in August 2014

SITUATION REPORT:

Former travelling carny-conmen Mr Harke (tall, thin, pretentious) and Mr Burr (short, squat, fond of a drink) tire of hawking their patented wonder-cures and magic remedies (which don't work) and decide instead that there is money to be made in antiques.

Settling in the Cursed Earth town of Dunedin and opening a splendid emporium of curios (a junk shop), the antiques business is not exactly booming. Although one day Harke manages to offload a mummy sarcophagus to an Egyptian gentleman, Mr Karis Eel, for four thousand creds – and they have three other caskets to sell.

The caskets contain mummified remains of over-achieving twenty-first century businessmen, who kill Eel and plan a hostile takeover but are stopped by Burr, who blows up their base of operations, much to the disappointment of Harke, who had sensed a money-spinning deal.

Something is wiping out Dunedin's giant Cursed Earth hamster population and brave Mr Burr kindly offers to protect Hammy, the rodent pet of Mrs McLoopy – owner of the town's Ersatz Gin-House – the classy nightspot of which he is a regular patron.

Harke has a customer in the form of the town veterinarian, Janus Erryatt, who wishes to be rid of a large selection of antique mirrors. The vet is actually a vampire and has a psychological hatred of hamsters. Those that he cruelly disposed of now reside in a pet cemetery on his grounds. Fleeing an army of undead 'hampires', the villain accidentally falls to his death. Harke & Burr manage to return the hampires to their place of rest by luring them with a large exercise ball.

Another back-firing get-rich scheme involved Harke's attempt to win a large cash prize by sculpting a statue for a fine-arts competition. When a drunken Burr accidentally knocks over the statue, he does his best to rebuild it out of some old junk, which was in fact a Klangerian Death Droid, and it goes on a rampage. They manage to stop the machine by building its arch enemy – a Zippian War Robot – to destroy it.

Harke fancies setting up a sideline in spiritualism and the duo try some fake séances for the gullible townsfolk. Unknown to them, though, the ancient spell-book that they are using is the Malenomicon; a grimoire of all evil and they unleash an unholy trinity of evil horrors.

Preacher Cain arrives in town to ensure that the dark forces of the 'Malapocalypse' are stopped. With Harke & Burr as his new 'deputies', Cain organises a last stand against the evil, from the barricaded fortress of Mrs McLoopy's ale house, much to the thirsty Burr's delight. The evil is eventually defeated but half of the town, including the ale house and the duo's antiques shop are destroyed in the chaos.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

The comedic antics of two sinister but bumbling antique collectors were a fun presence in the **Judge Dredd Magazine** for a few years in the early 1990s and featured some sumptuous painted art by Dean Ormston (**JUDGE DREDD**). After the scheming duo's debut, writer Si Spencer slotted their appearances in between series of his much more disturbing horror creation **THE CREEP**.

Years later, before coming back to the **Megazine** with new series such as **HAVN** and **THE RETURNERS**, Spencer admitted in a **Meg** 355 interview that on **Harke & Burr** he and artist Dean Ormston had wanted to produce a horror version of *Lovejoy* using Universal Pictures monsters and set in Victorian Edinburgh – hence the lead character names' spoonerism on the notorious real-life nineteenth-century grave-robbers Burke & Hare. The Scottish setting was swiftly changed to the weird Cursed Earth town of Dunedin to ensure a **Meg** slot.

Harke & Burr's connection to the Dreddverse was boosted by virtue of their team-up with **MISSIONARY MAN** in a story co-scripted by Preacher Cain's co-creator, Gordon Rennie.

HARLEM HEROES

SITUATION REPORT:

By the year 2050, the game of aeroball has swept the world. It is football, boxing, kung-fu and basketball all rolled into one. Players roar through the air wearing jetpacks, fighting off opponents to put the gas-powered steel ball in the 'score tank'.

One of the greatest teams is the Harlem Heroes. Led by John 'Giant' Clay these players are like no others in the exciting, thrill-packed sport of the future. They eschew the safety of protective body armour so that they can fly rings around their rivals.

Tragedy strikes when a hover-liner crash kills all of the team apart from Giant, Slim, Hairy and Louis – although the latter is so badly injured he is left as a disembodied brain in a jar. Nonetheless, Louis galvanises the survivors into rebuilding the team in an attempt to win the world championship. The squad is boosted by reserves, Chico and Sammy, veteran player Conrad King and a fiery youth, Zack Harper, who learnt aeroball on the Harlem streets and Giant takes under his wing.

Ulysses Cord, the affluent head of Trans-World Networks, has just paid one hundred million dollars for the world tri-vision rights on aeroball. He becomes the Heroes' self-appointed sponsor, much to the annoyance of Giant, who is wary of Cord's interference. At one point the businessman suggests that the Heroes adopt a more brutal style of playing, like some of their opponents.

Things take a sinister turn when it becomes apparent that the 'accident' was nothing of the kind and a former teammate, Artie Gruber – disfigured and brain-damaged in an earlier match and mistakenly blaming Giant – is out to kill him and the others.

However, after yet more deaths at Gruber's cybernetic hands – who escapes, his fate unknown – it soon becomes clear that a shadowy figure is controlling the deranged half-human. The Heroes' eventually unmask the villain as Ulysses Cord, who wanted them dead as he believed their skills and good sportsmanship were turning aeroball into a bloodless parlour game that no one would watch – not a good return on the millions he paid to televise aeroball exclusively.

The Heroes – although only Giant, Slim and Zack are left alive – win the world title. With nothing else to achieve, what will they do now? [For the answer, see **INFERNO**]

First Appearance:

Prog 1

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 1-27

Series created by:

Pat Mills & Tom Tully (writers) and Dave Gibbons (artist)



The complete Harlem Heroes trade paperback was released in 2016.
ISBN: 9781906735524

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

One of the stellar line-up of stories – alongside **FLESH, M.A.C.H. 1**, **INVASION!** and **DAN DARE** – that kicked off **2000 AD**'s very first issue in February 1977, the Harlem Heroes were, of course, inspired by legendary New York basketball team the Harlem Globetrotters, futuristically transformed in the Galaxy's Greatest Comic's own unique way.

Writer Tom Tully scripted two other sports-related strips for **2000 AD**, the Heroes' sequel, **Inferno** and another long-running street-football series, **THE MEAN ARENA** – and he also had a long run writing classic football character *Roy of the Rovers*.

Dave Gibbons' superb art graced other **2000 AD** stories such as **RO-BUSTERS** and **ROGUE TROOPER** before going on to the acclaimed *Watchmen* series with fellow **2000 AD** alumnus Alan Moore (**THE BALLAD OF HALO JONES**).

Aside from the bloodthirsty **Inferno**, *Harlem Heroes* – see **HARLEM HEROES (2)** – was revived in 1990 and ran intermittently for the next five years. This otherwise unrelated chapter is about a convict gang who take on the legendary sporting moniker – because of their aeroball prowess – in their fight to battle corrupt corporations.



HARLEM HEROES [2]

First Appearance:

Prog 671

Essential Thrills:

Harlem Heroes (Progs 671-676, 683-699 & 701-705), *Cyborg Death Trip* (Progs 889-899)

Series created by:

Pat Mills & Tom Tully (writers) and Dave Gibbons (artist)



Harlem Heroes episodes 1-28 were collected as five bagged supplement issues with **Megs** 357-360 & 362 from March to August 2015

SITUATION REPORT:

SPC-14 is the most infamous of the Subterranean Penal Colonies honeycombing North America's North-East quadrant in the early twenty-second century. Paul 'Deacon' Younger leads a group of inmates – Silver Weir, Slice D'Altroy, Trips Tasaday and Patrice Sharps – who play a mean game of the retro sport aeroball. They are even good enough to be nicknamed the **HARLEM HEROES** after the original world-famous team.

Their plans of escape are taken over by a mysterious government organisation called 'the Office', who have been given carte blanche to take on corrupt gigantic power-hungry corporations which have been influencing the economy and keeping the populace in a continued narcoleptic torpor by peddling an array of addictive illegal drugs, controlled by vicious street gangs. The Heroes will become the Office's own street gang and beat the so-called 'Mega-Corp' dealers at their own game. The newly sprung Heroes have no choice in the matter – death by execution is the only alternative.

However, the Office are themselves massively corrupt and seek to take control of the country for themselves. Using doubles of the Heroes, the five-piece gang is framed on live television for the murder of the US president and virtually the top echelon of the government. On the run from government troops and with reward money on their heads, the fugitives must fight to stay alive long to clear their names.

A presidential aide, Michael Laurence, survives the attack and realises that the assassins are impersonating the Heroes, and even has proof – a recording, secreted in an election badge, which he gives to his daughter Kathleen for safe-keeping should anything happen to him. Laurence's instincts prove correct and his killed by an Office assassin, who is after the Heroes.

Eventually, after a hard-fought battle against government forces – during which Trips dies – the Heroes manage to broadcast the evidence that exonerates them. Urged by the new, caretaker government to turn themselves in, Deacon and co prefer to do the exact opposite – taking on the Mega-Corps on their own terms.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Apart from the appropriation of the Harlem Heroes name, almost nothing else tied this 1990 reimagining to the original series, apart from an eventual encounter with the classic cyborg villain, Artie Gruber, several years later.

Scripted by prolific American author Michael Fleisher, who wrote **ROGUE TROOPER** (**FRIDAY**) and **JUNKER**, a large part of the run had wonderful pencils by Steve Dillon (**TYRANNY REX**) and inks by Kev Walker (**A.B.C. WARRIORS**).

Other artists thereafter included Geoff Senior (**THARG'S FUTURE SHOCKS**) and Siku (**DOWNLODE TALES**) & Kev Hopgood (**NIGHT ZERO**).



HARMONY

SITUATION REPORT:

In the frozen wastelands of what was once Alaska, Harmony Krieg grew up on the mean streets of Uranium City. She joined the vicious 'Hole in the Head' criminal gang – so-called because that was what you got if you dared to cross them – at the age of sixteen. Other members included Havoc, her lover; tech genius Lang; wheelman O'Neal; demolitions expert Jennings; and their leader, the manipulative, psychotic Dreen.

Dreen betrayed them, selling them out to Justice Department and Harmony found out that Havoc had cheated on her. She took her revenge on Havoc by sabotaging the glider-wings he used to escape a high-rise building and he plummeted to his apparent death.

Harmony retreated to the dangerous, snowy tundra beyond the city and became a ruthless gun-for-hire, taking on the dirtiest of jobs. The sheriff of the backwater town of Misery – which services the lucrative uranium mines – wants her out. She's bad for business, apart from that of the local undertaker.

After ten years, Harmony's past caught up with her. Havoc, alive but now more machine than man after experimental surgery, came after her. He failed to capture his former love but she could not escape a tough bounty-hunting couple called Carter and Jolinda Gacy.

They took her back to Uranium City and Harmony's memory was wiped at the behest of Dreen, and she became his unwitting puppet, killing contestants on a bloodthirsty TV show for high ratings. He has become the city's leading industrialist and controls the populace by using a mood-enhancing drug called Amok, despite the efforts of a resistance movement, the Emotional Liberation Army. Dreen also has the Justice Department, including Chief Judge Rigour, in his pocket. Only Detective Larry Lime, whom Harmony has always eluded, opposes the corruption.

Lang rescues Harmony and restores her memories. In return she reforms the old gang and with their help, brings down Dreen – but at a terrible price. All of her friends are wiped out, including Lime, who had come over to their side, sacrificing himself to kill his corrupt superior.

Escaping once again to the tundra, Harmony becomes an operative for the Pinkerton detective agency, nearly losing her life in the gun-slinging town of Hell Gate while bringing in a mark.

Another freelance job brings her to Mega-City One, hired to assassinate the heads of four crime families. Almost apprehended by top lawman **JUDGE DREDD**, she narrowly escaped his clutches and remains at large.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Writer Chris Standley came to **2000 AD**'s attention by co-scripting the first **TYRANNY REX** story, *Soft Bodies*, with John Smith in 1988. Several years later, the pair collaborated once more on the *Megazine*'s **HOLOCAUST 12** series, about a squad which takes on almost certain suicide missions.

Harmony was newcomer artist Trevor Hairsine's only co-creation for the *Megazine* in 1994 – although Hairsine moved on to drawing Dredd himself as well as other Thrills such as **STRONTIUM DOGS**, **MERCY HEIGHTS** and **DOWNLODE TALES**.

Jim Murray – who also drew **Holocaust 12** as well as **MEAN MACHINE** – took over on **Harmony**. However, his successor, Steve Sampson – **BRIT-CIT BABES**, **ANDERSON**, **PSI-DIVISION** – had the longest run, with four stories spread over two years.

First Appearance:

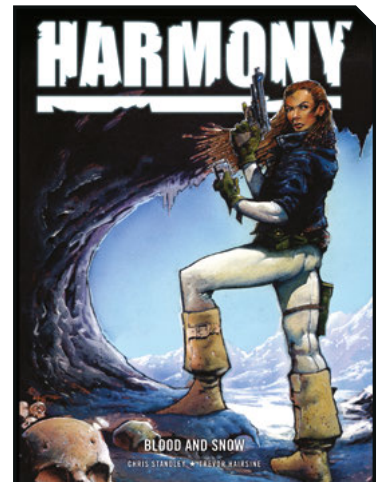
Meg 2.55

Essential Thrills:

Blood and Snow (Mags 2.55-2.60),
Transient 114 (Mags 2.73-2.76),
Genocide (Mags 3.01-3.06),
Headcase (Mags 3.08-3.10),
Hell Gate (Mags 3.18-3.19) and
Killer Instinct (Mags 3.24-3.25)

Series created by:

Chris Standley (writer) and
Trevor Hairsine (artist)



Harmony was collected as three bagged supplement issues with **Mags 288, 343 and 344** in September 2009, January 2014 and February 2014



SITUATION REPORT:

Far into the future, the universe is in a state of chaos following a complete reality breakdown. Formerly peaceful planets are ruled by insane deities from other dimensions, each demanding subservience from their subjects. However, one man will bring these alien bounders to heel, a man who still believes in the once-great empire of Neo-Britannia, a man who strictly speaking, is not even alive anymore – Harry Kipling, the fabled, gun-toting god-killer who, despite being dead, still has the time to appreciate a really good cup of Earl Grey.

Neesha, a former military sergeant, wakes to find herself on a stolen starwagon, which crash-lands on an unknown planet and then promptly self-destructs once she exits the craft, leaving her with no idea what has happened. The panicked natives accuse her of being a Shezmu demon in disguise. Their god is the gargantuan, lumbering Sebek, who has turned against his followers and needs them as sustenance to survive. He is about to crush Neesha for being a heretic when a laser blast unexpectedly blows his hand off, saving her.

After some top-class tea and crumpets rustled up by his servant, Willy, the undead Harry Kipling will help the natives by destroying Sebek, using his sophisticated hunting rifle and living nanotech weapons platform and transport, Klux – as long as they're willing to pay for the privilege, of course.

When Harry tells Neesha he is British, she shows him a holographic device she has in her possession, a Royal Brand Seal, and the undead Englishman wondered how she came by it. Willy is eaten by Sebek before Harry destroys the out-of-control god, who was revealed to be addicted to a 'godsnuff' drug called soma. Having proved herself in the fight and with Willy gone, Neesha offers to become Kipling's new assistant as she would like Harry to tackle a bad god on her planet – she could work up some credit to pay him.



HARRY KIPLING (DECEASED)

When Neesha proclaims that fate has brought them together – unknown to her – an unseen, sinister watcher from another dimension has heard her words. It appears she has unknowingly been manipulated into leaving behind her war-torn planet and finding Harry, who is unconvinced about having her on the team.

During a pit-stop at the orbiting Winged Helmet fuel and refreshment emporium, they encounter another deity – the Spider Queen of Teotihuacan – who paralyses Kipling. Neesha takes up Harry's god-killing gun but is unable to use it. This is because, simply put, it takes a god to kill another god. Three centuries previously, Harry had tried to dispose of an Eastern deity called Ama-Tsu-Mara but the god ripped his leg off. The errant appendage fell into a pot of some kind of 'nano-gunk' and absorbed his cellular nuclei, creating a semi-intelligent being, which became Klux. Because of the fiercely loyal Klux's belief in him – and the fact that Harry technically gave him life – Kipling is essentially a deity too; hence his god-smiting ability. Klux can also generate replacement body parts for his master. Using a duplicate hand, Neesha fires it through the head of the Spider Queen, killing her instantly. Now recovered, Kipling needs no more convincing that Neesha deserves a job.

When Klux is blasted down on to a planet where the local deity is the diminutive Ornumilia the Wise, Harry is separated from Neesha and Klux, who are taken in by the New Atheist Militia – who convince Neesha that they must save Harry from the violent worshippers of Ornumilia. The atheists' murder all in their path, and Neesha is appalled at her lack of judgement. Their leader presumes that Harry will approve of his actions but this is wrong – and Kipling shoots the murderer dead. Harry may destroy the deities but does not condone killing by those who do or do not believe in them.

After infiltrating the interstellar base of operation of the drug-pusher Mermoth – who had supplied stolen soma to many deities, including Bellin-Bellin, for his own profit – Harry is catapulted into space. Kipling discovers that there were once other god-killers like him but that he was the original, created by Mermoth's 'Boss'. The furious Harry is determined to track down his creator, who gloats, 'My darling puppet...come if you must. Come and find me...'

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Spiffing steampunk Thrills featuring another stiff-upper-lipped English hero – in this case *very* stiff, what with him being dead and all – in the tradition of **AMPNEY CRUCIS INVESTIGATES** and **DANDRIDGE**, **Harry Kipling (Deceased)** is rollicking, if occasionally bewildering, fun.

With an intriguing prologue episode published in February 2006 and then the first of several short serials following a month later, this surreal satire on the glory of Empire was dreamed up by the fertile imaginations of two individually prolific creatives – writer Simon Spurrier (**BEC & KAWL**, **LOBSTER RANDOM**) and artist Boo Cook (**ASYLUM**, **BLUNT**). Spurrier's mind-boggling ideas are majestically brought to life in pulsating visuals by Cook. Nonetheless, this reality-warping universe still has its own sense of weird internal logic and insane laws of physics.

Harry, Neesha and Klux bowed out on a joyfully seasonal tale in Prog 2007, where they came up against a host of solstice spirits and winter gods – including Saturn, Ullr, Cronos and Freyr – on the industrial planet Worktown 10. Using Klux as a sleigh, our heroes ensured a splendid Christmas for all by disposing of those party-pooing wallahs.

First Appearance:

Prog 1476

Essential Thrills:

Prologue (Prog 1476), *Mad Gods and Englishmen* (Progs 1481–1483), *Whetting the Whistle* (Progs 1492–1493), *Something for Nothing* (Progs 1497–1499), *The Hitman and Hermoth* (Progs 1509–1512) and *Winter Wonderbrand* (Prog 2007)

Series created by:

Simon Spurrier (writer) and
Boo Cook (artist)



Harry Kipling (Deceased) was collected as two bagged supplement issues with **Megs 323** and **324** in May and June 2012

HARRY TWENTY ON THE HIGH ROCK

First Appearance:

Prog 287

Essential Thrills:

 Self-contained serial in Progs
287-307

Series created by:

 Gerry Finley-Day (writer) and
Alan Davis (artist)


A collected digital version of **Harry Twenty on the High Rock** is available from the online **2000 AD** shop and was released in 2016.

SITUATION REPORT:

The year is 2060. One hundred miles above the Earth orbits the High Rock, a high-security prison housing ten thousand of the toughest, most dangerous criminals known to mankind.

Harry Thompson is given a twenty-year sentence on a trumped-up charge, his so-called 'crime' smuggling food to starving islanders in a zone where the government did not wish to be politically involved. The sentence means he is now stripped of his surname and henceforth will be known as Harry Twenty. All inmates are 'numbers', not individuals.

The sinister Warden Worldwide rules the nightmarish satellite penitentiary like a god and his thuggish guards (known to the convicts as 'slugs') are led by Chief Thrower, who has only two rules: obey his guards and do not try to escape.

Right away a returning inmate, Paco Fifty, panics and defies the second rule, and is shot dead. When Harry objects he is given a severe beating, already marked as a troublemaker.

The Warden assures the new arrivals that no one has ever escaped the High Rock, and no one ever will. A defiant Harry is determined to prove him wrong somehow.

Several escape attempts are mercilessly foiled, including number Swede Sixteen's bid for freedom dressed as a guard, or Paco Seven pretending to be mad – only to be sent to an even worse insane asylum on the moon.

Teamed with his cell-mates, the deranged Old Ben Ninety and a hot-headed Mongolian called Genghis Eighteen, Harry comes up with the ingenious idea to build their own capsule based on the old Apollo missions. They can use the High Rock's resources and escape from right under the slugs' noses. Nearly a year later, the risky plan pays off, and they miraculously make it back to Earth. However, Ben turns out to be an android spy of the Warden's – who wanted to break the spirit of the dangerous Harry and make an example of him – and Genghis is burned alive.

Back on the hated High Rock, Harry leads the numbers in a successful rebellion and they take over the orbiting platform. Wishing a peaceful solution with Earth's Penal Board, he lets their slug prisoners go free. However, the duplicitous board outwit him by putting a killer-satellite into their orbit to destroy them.

Worldwise has been hiding out and killing prisoners, including setting explosive traps with a tripwire. In a fight against Harry the warden electrocutes himself.

Harry's last-ditch idea is to make their own tripwire in space, using anything on the Rock that isn't nailed down to form a barrier for the killer-sat to detonate against.

The gambit pays off. The High Rock is intact but is blown out of Earth's orbit and into space. Harry informs the assembled masses that computer data estimates they have enough supplies to wander through space for twenty years and maybe reach the rebel colonies on Mars. Are they with him?

The ecstatic numbers' overwhelming response is: 'Yeah, Harry Twenty! We're with ya!'

Their new leader triumphantly replies, 'I ain't a number any longer. I'm a free man. An' the name's Thompson – Harry Thompson!'

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

This brilliant 1982 prison actioner had its roots in the 1979 Clint Eastwood movie *Escape from Alcatraz* and, of course, the notorious San Francisco Bay prison was also known as the 'Rock'. Another film connection was Harry Twenty's appearance being based on Harrison Ford in the then-newly released sci-fi classic *Blade Runner*.

Originally written by **ROGUE TROOPER** and **THE V.C.s'** Gerry Finley-Day, his scripts were given a page-one rewrite by sub-editor Alan Grant (who, of course, soon became one of **2000 AD's** finest scriptwriters in his own right).

Artist John Watkiss – who eventually worked on DC Comics' *Sandman* series and Disney animation – started on *Harry Twenty's* visuals with newcomer Alan Davis as a back-up. Watkiss moved on and Davis took over full-time, even though he was also working on Marvel UK's *Captain Britain* and *Marvelman* at the same time. His stunning work is a joy to behold, with the High Rock, for all its fanciful sci-fi trappings, resembling a very credible future penitentiary. Aside from the **JUDGE DREDD** fill-in story *Bat Mugger* (Prog 585) and a couple of **THARG'S FUTURE SHOCKS**, Davis's next – and final – major **2000 AD** job was riotous comedy **D.R. & QUINCH**, before embarking on a highly-lauded American comics' career on titles such as *Avengers*, *X-Men*, *ClanDestine*, *JLA* and *Star Wars*.

Although viewed as the star of a 'one-and-done' serial, resourceful convict Twenty has in fact made two further appearances. Like many other characters from **2000 AD's** formative years – including **ANGEL**, **SHAKO** and **HARLEM HEROES** – *Harry Twenty* had a humorous cameo in the **ARMoured GIDEON** story *The Collector* (Progs 889-899) in 1994.

More interestingly, **2000 AD's** 2015 Free Comic Book Day Special published *Death Rock* – the one-off tale of an obnoxious alien Frontiersman, Ajax Bloodthirsty (he changed his name by deed poll). In the year 2092 he lands on a hitherto undiscovered world, planet LV-42666, to assess its suitability for colonisation and to gleefully kill any native lifeforms that get in the way of securing this piece of prime real estate. Running amok with his energy weapons, Bloodthirsty is surprised to be subdued by members of a human colony. This is the resting place of the High Rock and in charge is a tough guy called Mr Twenty...



HAVN

First Appearance:

Meg 382

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Megs 382-387

Series created by:

Si Spencer (writer) and
Jake Lynch (artist)



HAVN was collected as a bagged supplement issue with **Meg** 423 in September 2020

SITUATION REPORT:

Nu-Iceland, 2139 AD. Nestled within the frozen tundra is the domed city of **HAVN**, a hermetically sealed community with an artificially sustained environment, all controlled by the bio-organic computer network **ASKJA**. There is little crime in **HAVN**, and those lucky enough to live within its walls want for nothing. Meanwhile, outside, the native **Alfar** scratch a living from the land.

One such **Alfar** is Abby, who, with the use of a **torc** that has the power to transform her appearance into a human, infiltrates the city, on a mission that she hopes will make her father proud. Normally, all **Alfar** can naturally alter their appearances using psychic power known as a 'glamma' but Abby lacks this ability so far.

However, once she is ensconced in **HAVN** and has been stealing some treasures to take back to her tribe, Abby's **Alfar** identity is discovered by the Judges. She is held as a suspect in a series of gruesome deaths, although it appears that the dead humans all committed suicide in a manner of horrible ways, including clawing their own eyes out.

The Chief Judge – who prefers to hold the title of Mayor – is called **Ulfarrson** and his liberal approach is not shared by Hoffman, a tough newcomer from **Mega-City One**. He is deeply cynical at the lenient deportation sentence that Abby will receive for fraud, theft and illegal immigration plus she will even be paid for the menial work that she undertook while in her human disguise.

As the deaths mount up, Hoffman reluctantly teams with Abby to uncover what seems to be an **Alfar** link to the mystery. Eventually they discover that **Ulfarrson** is also an **Alfar**: he has been using a powerful **glamma** to disguise the fact and to force anyone who saw the truth of what **HAVN** really is to kill themselves.

He was keeping the secret that the entire city of **HAVN** is a mass illusion – a decaying hell-hole, its brainwashed populace unaware of the harrowing reality of their situation. **Ulfarrson** kills Hoffman in a fight but Abby manages to overthrow him and use the **ASKJA** interface to break the spell, revealing her plan to become mayor of the first city of the **Alfar**. It will take a while but the deportation of foreign citizens has begun and her banished people will now be able to call this new **HAVN** their home. Abby reckons her father would indeed be proud of her.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

This mysterious **Dreddworld** thriller is a slow-burning delight – representing a uniquely **Meg**-flavoured twist on the popular 'Scandi-noir' crime phenomenon of novelists like Jo Nesbo and TV hits such as *The Killing*.

Scribe Si Spencer was a regular **Meg** contributor back in its early days of the 1990s, having co-created thrills such as **THE CREEP** and **HARKE & BURR**. Indeed, this was his first new series for the title since 1995, having been writing American comics such as DC/Vertigo's *The Books of Magic: Life During Wartime* and for British television's *The Bill* and *Eastenders*. After **HAVN** was published he quickly followed it up by co-creating another new **Megazine** series also set in the **Dredd** universe and with a supernatural theme – **THE RETURNERS**. Spencer sadly passed away suddenly in February 2021.

A recent **2000 AD** newcomer, Jake Lynch's atmospheric art graces the first two episodes before **JUDGE DREDD** veteran Henry Flint takes over, his familiar, gritty style ensures that we are in no doubt that **HAVN** takes place in a recognisable part of the **Dredd** universe.



HELIUM

First Appearance:

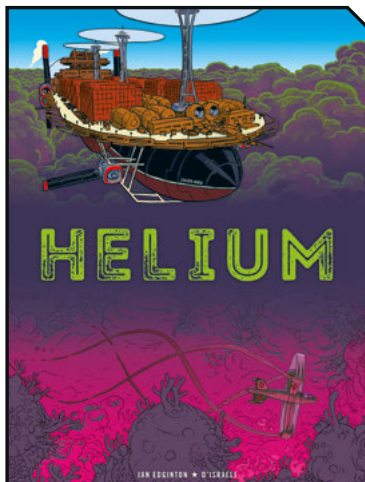
Prog 1934

Essential Thrills:

Helium (Progs 1934–1945)

Series created by:

Ian Edginton (writer) and D'Israeli (artist)



Helium was collected as a bagged supplement issue with **Meg** 390 in December 2017

SITUATION REPORT:

The far future. It has been over three hundred years since the Great War ended, but there were no victors. Eighty-five per cent of the Earth's surface now lies beneath a vast gaseous ocean known as the Poison Belt — a toxic, mutated cocktail of biological and chemical weapons designed by both sides to win the war. Instead, it almost spelt extinction for the human race. Those that survived cling to the High Lands, alpine valleys and mountaintop islands, safe from the noxious fog, and ply the clean air in ships of all description. Meanwhile, lurking beneath the Belt, rumours of life abound.

When the ship *Cinder Horse* becomes the eighteenth vessel mysteriously brought down from the skies, Steward Constable Foundling Hodge of the New Castle Police is held back in her investigations by the corrupt Lady Mayor, Margaret, who soon replaces Hodge with her own easier-to-control nephew, the useless Jago.

Hodge — as her given name, Foundling, implies — was discovered as an infant and raised by her adopted father, who was one of the town's guardians of the law for the past ten generations. Hodge is an outsider — with lightly green skin and hair — which has always made the Mayor wary of her.



Hodge and her hulking cybernetic partner, Solace ‘Sol’ Grimsby are astounded to discover there really are beings living under the Poison Belt when an ironclad vehicle – an old World War I tank – comes ashore and the lone occupant, Professor Pontius Bloom, whose green hair and skin resembles Hodge’s, seeks sanctuary from a ‘mutant’ enemy.

Bloom explains that while researching a process to harvest usable elements from the Poison Belt itself he inadvertently created a detoxifying agent, a way to neutralise the deadly elements and purify the air. His government – the Quorum – rushed to test it in the field and it worked better than expected. However, the substance wiped out a mutant village, suffocating men, women and children, much to his regret. Survivors spread word of the atrocity, slaughtering Quorum settlements in revenge.

Bloom’s ruthless government wished to exterminate the mutants but resources were not readily available. To manufacture the ‘reagent’ in large quantities required immense technologies – catalysing engines, processing plants and so on, which would have taken years. Impatient, they monitored the High Lands’ shipping lanes, preying and plundering the vessels for their valuable cargoes. Appalled at what has happened Bloom destroyed the majority of his research, retaining a small amount on data discs and fled from both the mutants and the Quorum.

With the knowledge that the scientist knows how to make the planet hospitable again, Hodge vows to protect him. Hodge, Sol and Bloom go on the run, taking to the skies in a stolen aircraft – mercenaries hired by the Mayor on their tail – as well as the mutants. Their plane is damaged by rocket fire and when a gigantic Quorum aircraft carrier, the *Ballerophon*, rises out of the mist, they have no choice but to land on board to survive.

Arresting the trio and charging Bloom with treason, the commander, Captain Torrin, seems to recognise Hodge and informs his unseen superior, who instructs him ‘to cast her overboard and let her die in the deep like the rest of her family’.

Defying his orders, Torrin frees the prisoners and impressing a mysterious puzzle box upon Hodge, reveals that her mother wanted her to have it. Wanting to ‘put things right’, Torrin helps them escape before shooting himself in the head, ensuring that he does not reveal Hodge’s whereabouts under torture from his masters. It transpires that Hodge’s family were butchered by assassins in the employ of what became the Quorum.

Collecting Bloom from his cell, the trio escape once again in a stolen aircraft. However, after a deadly sky battle, their stricken aircraft plummets towards the murk of the Poison Belt. A satisfied *Ballerophon* pursuer observes the rogue plane seemingly crash-land in a fireball...

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

With more steampunk intrigue from a creative team that had already scored big **2000 AD** hits in this genre such as **LEVIATHAN**, **STICKLEBACK** and **SCARLET TRACES**, writer Ian Edginton and artist D’Israeli’s (AKA Matt Brooker) **Helium**’s world-building and stunning vistas were a particular joy to behold when first glimpsed in June 2015.

A true comics’ polymath, co-creator D’Israeli has been a constant presence in both **2000 AD** and **Judge Dredd Magazine** for many years, whether as a colourist, artist, letterer or writer – or indeed as a mixture of all three on **THARG’S FUTURE SHOCKS** such as *The Petition* (Prog 1207), *Metamorphic Invaders!* (Prog 1229) and *The 29 Steps* (Prog 1231).

This tale itself has – to date – been left on a cliffhanger and there is clearly more story to unfold. However, with both creators busy on other series such as their aforementioned ongoing steampunk sagas – amongst others like Edginton’s **BRASS SUN** and **KINGMAKER** – even after a gap of at least five years, presumably **Helium** will be continued sometime in the future when scheduling allows.

HELLTREKKERS, THE

First Appearance:

Prog 387

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs
387-415

Series created by:

John Wagner & Alan Grant (writers,
under the pseudonym 'F. Martin
Candor') and José Ortiz (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Mega-City One, 2106. They were the new frontiersmen – twenty-second century pioneers. Led by Trekmaster Lucas Rudd – plus his wife Amber and son Bud – 108 other men and women who hated the city enough to brave the hell of the Cursed Earth radiation desert are poised to leave West Gate 13 at dawn. The duty Judge warns that two thousand miles of the most hostile terrain on Earth awaits them and their chances of reaching the New Territories are minimal.

Before leaving forever in their column of twenty-eight heavily armoured (and heavily armed) rad-wagons, Rudd's reply is: 'Better to die in Hell than live in Mega-City One.'

With the tough, grizzled Banjo Quint as Rudd's guide and second-in-command, the trekkers are driven by hope of a new life in 'the promised land' – far away from the oppression of MC-1.

One couple – Bish and Futura Glomp – are wishing that Crustacia, their adopted, mutant baby crab, will have a good life and not be seen as an outcast.

Some, however, have less noble reasons – the unsavoury Nebb family have used the convoy as a means of escaping the city before the Judges trace some stolen kneepads to them. They cause the first casualty within a matter of hours. Sauron Valley is the home of packs of dinosaurs that had been recreated by scientists for prehistoric theme parks but now roamed wild after the humans were killed during the Atomic Wars. Titus Nebb shoots one of the beasts for food but starts a stampede during which trekker Lanny Kelsey was killed, leaving his brother, Chuck, to carry on alone. Lucas punches out an unrepentant Titus – the Nebbs will bide their time to take revenge.

Later that night, while at camp, Bud escapes being eaten by a tyrannosaur but his young friend, Wayne Scargille, is not so lucky. Having tasted human flesh, the dinosaur pack want more and relentlessly hunt the trekkers, managing to kill the Hemmingway family (apart from the sleeping baby Ernesto, who is taken in by the Scargille family) when they stopped for repairs.

Rudd – an ex-leisure club counsellor with only six months' survival club training – has doubts about his ability to effectively lead the expedition. Amber reassures him that he will learn.

A lethal disease called Black Scab ravages the convoy – including Rudd. He survives but the Scab claims twenty-three lives, and a mass grave is dug at the aptly named Heartbreak Ridge. On day six the wagons roll into the Stinking Creek waystation where they are greeted by friendly mutants. It is a ruse, however. Plying the trekkers with drink, they plan to butcher the humans. The attack is averted but with several casualties. Quint is injured by gunfire and eventually dies from an infection caused by the wounds. Being without a guide is almost a death sentence in itself but Quint rasps out some last instructions and hands over his own handwritten map – Rudd must carry on.

By day eight, fifty Trekkers were dead. Just after the halfway mark, Titus Nebb kills a friendly Lake Omaha mutant. The tribe want justice, and Rudd hands Titus over to them or else the rest of the trek will die in a landslide. Now the remaining Nebb brothers – Judas and Otis – want revenge and plot to kill Rudd in a night-time ambush. Amber shoots Otis and Rudd kills Titus with a knife to the throat.

On the eleventh day, some of the wagons went their own way, against Rudd's wishes. He is following Quint's instructions, but as the depleted column moves on they are ambushed once more by mutants, and Bud is killed by a mutie sniper.

When those who took a detour rejoin the column, Rudd discovers their wagons were rolling on automatic and all the people within are dead – their bodies were unmarked but the faces had expressions of pure terror. Rudd will never find out what happened. Later that day, they trek finally reaches the New Territories. The toll is a heavy one – of

the 111 who set out, only sixteen survived to begin their new lives. Although Rudd and Amber were heartbroken at Bud's death, the trekmaster is delighted to hear that his wife is pregnant. Meanwhile, Crustacia Glemp took to the water one day and seemed to disappear. Perhaps one day Futura and Bish will find her.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Originally created for the aborted **JUDGE DREDD** fortnightly title in 1984, this series was instead swiftly published in the weekly **2000 AD** progs during the autumn of that year and running until April 1985. It could be seen as a taster for what the **Judge Dredd Megazine** would eventually become – showing that Mega-City One, or more specifically in this case the Cursed Earth, had enough scope to support stories set in the same world as Dredd while the eponymous lawman himself did not actually appear.

Using Rudd's Trekmaster journal is an effective narrative device and, as the story winds on, readers become more familiar with the ever-dwindling cast of characters. This is a pretty hard-edged tale for what was still basically an all-ages comic back in the mid-eighties. Some of the deaths are quite shocking, especially when children or young people are involved. Poor baby Ernesto Hemmingway dies from a shrapnel wound and teenager Gritchen Tosh meets her fate in an acid rainstorm.

The Helltrekkers could almost be viewed like a Dreddverse soap opera, with its emphasis on 'normal' people – by Mega-City one's standards at least. Scripted by the then-current Dredd writers, John Wagner and Alan Grant, artist José Ortiz [**ROGUE TROOPER**] drew the first episode and captured the design of the cast and vehicles. However, Argentinian Horacio Lalia – who had previously illustrated some very early **THARG'S FUTURE SHOCKS** – drew the rest of the large serial, delivering an impressive twenty-eight weekly instalments without any gaps in production.



The Helltrekkers was reprinted in **Megs** 218-223 (May to September 2004)



HESTON, HARRY

Trivia:

Harry was created for the first issue of **2000 AD** fanzine *Class of '79*, written and edited by the late Stewart Perkins under the pseudonym WR Logan. *Monkey Business* was dedicated to him, and **Dredd** writer John Wagner had already named the character **CHIEF JUDGE LOGAN** after Perkins' print alter-ego.



Appearances:

Monkey Business (Megs 376-377), *Ape Escape* (Meg 386) and *Krong Island* (Megs 392-395)

Abandoned as a chimp but adopted by a kindly bookstore owner and his wife, evolved ape Harry Heston was a resident of Municipality #227, a shanty town – more commonly known as 'Megilla' or the 'Burbs' – outside of Mega-City One's West Wall.

Bullied by fellow apes for his inherited love of books, Harry's father was murdered by criminals after borrowing money to keep his livelihood going. One book in particular inspired the idealistic Harry to seek justice and combat crime: *The Comportment of a Judge* – written by **JUDGE DREDD** – is a set text for all cadets at the Academy of Law.

The ape constructed a uniform and set about making the streets safe for decent citizens. Nonetheless, he is now a vigilante and 'Jimp' – Judge Impersonator – which is illegal. When Dredd himself investigates Harry's activities, the ape, although injured himself, saves his hero's life when going up against a heavily armed horde of perps.

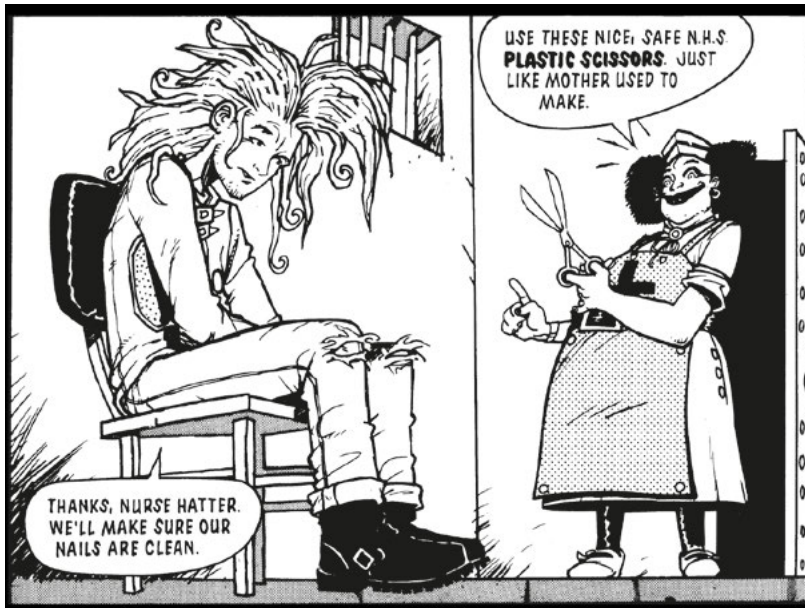
Accepting the consequences for breaking the law, however well-intentioned, Harry willingly does time afterwards on the chain gang in Justice Department's Cursed Earth Waystation 41. When mutant raiders attack the facility and steal weapons, instead of embracing an opportunity for escape like the other inmates, Harry sees it as his responsibility to protect the townsfolk of a nearby settlement. The ape's sterling efforts in averting a crisis compel **CHIEF JUDGE HERSHEY** to send the trustworthy simian on a special mission.

Krong Island – a former theme park in the **BLACK ATLANTIC** – is also a banana plantation with an all-ape population. There have been reports of civil unrest and Dudman, an undercover MC-1 operative, has been killed. Dredd, teamed with an undercover Harry, investigate. They eventually uncover a ploy by Harry's villainous twin brother, Serpico, to take over the island using the rampaging, towering movie robot Krong (Mark II, Dredd killed the original decades earlier).

The threat is eventually quelled and Harry arrests his twin, who now resides in the ape wing of a high-security office block, plotting his revenge. Harry Heston is then honoured to be given the badge and uniform of an auxiliary, becoming the official Justice Department Liaison on Krong Island.



HEWLIGAN'S HAIRCUT



First Appearance:

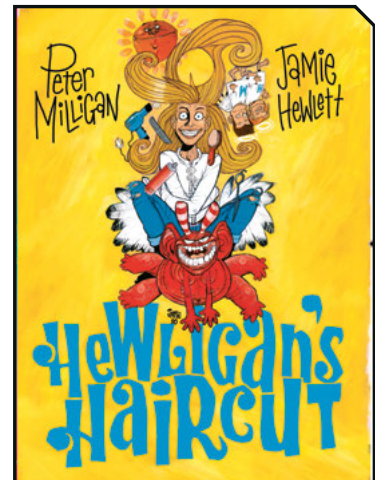
Prog 700

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 700-707

Series created by:

Peter Milligan (writer) and
Jamie Hewlett (artist)



SITUATION REPORT:

At the Five Seasons Mental Hospital, a young inmate called Hewligan – at the suggestion of kindly nurse Hatter – gives himself a haircut with a pair of plastic NHS scissors, hoping to make him look less insane and therefore be in with a better chance of release. Ending up with a curious hole in his hugely vertical hair, the surprised patient is nonetheless deemed sane by the utterly deranged Doctor Proctor and allowed to go free.

Unfortunately, Hewligan's barmy barnet turns out to be the exact shape of a sigil that sends the guardians of reality, the Zonal Frequency Modulators – who are, (un)naturally enough, the giant stone heads of Easter Island – to fall sleep. This unlikely event causes realities to blend into one another in the most unusual way possible – the outside world is an ever-changing, hallucinatory nightmare.

Mistaken for a bank robber by a squad of policemen forming a human triangle on a bicycle, Hewligan is surprised by a voice encouraging him to step through a brick wall and into another realm.

The bemused young man has been rescued by a mesmerising, reality-warping traveller called Scarlet O'Gasmeter. She (sort of) explains that there are many different worlds or dimensions and each one is tuned into a dimensional frequency like a radio stations along a dial. Everyone and everything must be 'tuned in' to that particular world's frequency. She – like Hewligan – is out of tune with reality and not in synch with time and space, and able to get lost between the dimensions. This is the reason for phenomena like UFOs and why people are always losing things like umbrellas, door keys and socks.

Smitten by Scarlet's beauty and wisdom, Hewligan instantly falls in love. They both set out on a perilous interdimensional quest – on her not-very-fast-moving hobbyhorse Dada – to set things straight with the universe once and for all. However, the independent Scarlet has plans of her own. Will Hewligan's love be unrequited? And will he ever get another haircut?

Hewligan's Haircut was collected into a trade paperback in 2010.
ISBN: 9781906735982

HEWLIGAN'S HAIRCUT [CONTINUED]

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Debuting in October 1990, this absurdist comedy (in eight partings) is fondly remembered as a psychedelic tour de force from a creative team that had already worked together on **SWIFTY'S RETURN**, the sequel to political satire series **SOONER OR LATER**.

Writer Peter Milligan had scripted a big **2000 AD** hit in future-war saga **BAD COMPANY**, as well as the eerie **THE DEAD** and other successful comedies such as **FREAKS** and **BIX BARTON**.

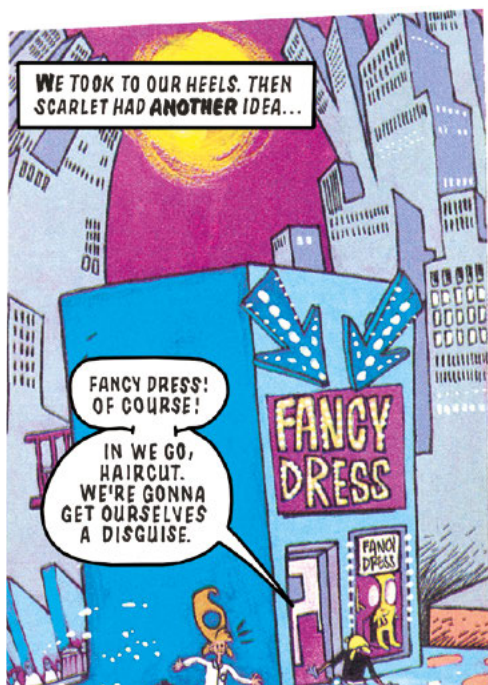
Artist Jamie Hewlett was well known as the hot co-creator of the anarchic punk comic strip **TANK GIRL** for *Deadline* magazine a couple of years previously. This strip's title comes from an amalgamation of both creators' surnames, and Milligan crafted a set of irreverent scripts that gave Hewlett's surreal art full scope for expression, sometimes with flagrant disregard for traditional comic storytelling.

The pages are jam-packed with bizarre images and especially memorable are Hewlett's journeys into visual techniques such as Dadaism, cubism and pop art, with Andy Warhol in particular on the receiving end of a technically accurate and affectionate, if vaguely scathing, parody of the repetition in his work.

After **Hewligan's Haircut**, Milligan would go on to work for Marvel and DC Comics in America but would return to **2000 AD** and his signature strip **Bad Company** on several occasions, most recently in 2017, as well as co-creating a lauded new cyberpunk Thrill, **COUNTERFEIT GIRL**.

Hewlett, of course, has since gone on to become a member of the bestselling 'virtual' band *Gorillaz* alongside Blur lead singer Damon Albarn.

Hewligan's Haircut is definitely a strip for people who are looking for something different from **2000 AD**'s trademark sci-fi and action fare. Quite rightly, however, Milligan and Hewlett's teaming for this short tale of hirsute hilarity is seen as a fun but bona-fide 1990s classic.



HOAGY

Although possessing a hapless, essentially kind nature for a robot, Hoagy is also incredibly idiotic. He was built from a kit by a childless, elderly couple. Eventually deciding that he wanted to become apprentice to Sam Slade, the veteran **ROBO-HUNTER** – a New York private investigator who specialises in robot cases – Hoagy hit upon the baffling idea of putting a job ad in a newspaper on the bewildered Sam's behalf and then applying for the job himself.

Hoagy's minimal 'assistance' in dealing with the Day of the Droids case somehow saw Slade keeping Hoagy on and partnered him with excitable robo-cigar, **STOGIE**. When the team relocated to Brit-Cit, Sam's silly sidekicks become more hindrances than helpers – Hoagy especially.

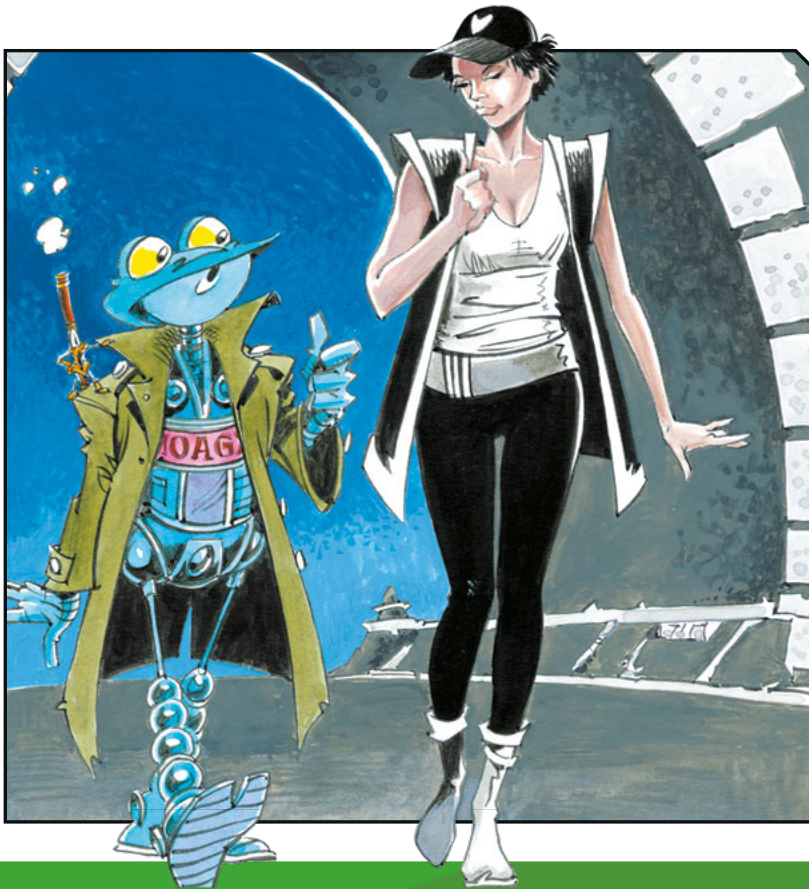
Although the long-suffering Sam was exasperated by Hoagy's constant stupidity, even more unbearable was the occasion – when investigating a rebel movement called the Human League – a shot to the head fried Hoagy's circuits, causing 'the demented tin frog' to become hyper-intelligent. Thankfully the situation was only temporary and the enthusiastic understudy reverted to his usual dumb self once again.

The highlight of Hoagy's burgeoning Robo-Hunting career came when he took on his first case one day when Sam was out. He managed to burn the office down but at least he called the fire brigade – luckily Stogie was on hand to point out that perhaps they should wait for the emergency services *outside* the burning building.

After faithfully serving Sam for over fifty years (and gladly working alongside Stogie to embezzle their master's vast fortune so that he would be forced to resume robo-hunting, although curiously Sam was not happy at that for some unfathomable reason) Hoagy was then delighted to join the service of Sam's down-on-her-luck granddaughter – **SAMANTHA SLADE** – for more robo-hunting adventures.

Notable appearances:

Day of the Droids (Progs 152-174), *Play it Again, Sam* (Progs 292-307), *The Slaying of Slade* (Progs 312-330), *Hoagy's First Case* (1984 2000 AD Annual), *Farewell, My Billions* (Progs 435-443), *Samantha Slade: Like a Virgin* (Prog 2004 & Progs 1371-1373) *Iron Sam* (2015 2000 AD Sci-Fi Special) and *The Droid Dilemma* (2016 2000 AD Sci-Fi Special)



HOLOCAUST 12

First Appearance:

Megs 3.20

Essential Thrills:

Skyfall (Megs 3.20-3.23) and *Storm Warning* (Megs 3.29-3.33)

Series created by:

John Smith & Chris Standley (writers) and Jim Murray (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Mega-City One's last line of defence, Holocaust Squads are called into action when all other remedies have failed. Each squad is a crack team of near-suicidal Justice Department misfits, trained to cope with the sort of emergencies that almost always mean certain death – whether nuclear meltdowns, terrorist jihads or natural disasters.

Holocaust 12 is the best of the squads, consisting of the toughest, most dangerous Judges in the city. Due to crippling high levels of stress and the job's low life expectancy, members are given special privileges under Section 49c of the Extreme Sanctions Charter. They can legally smoke, drink alcohol and indulge in even stronger, more illicit substances. However, the price for these unique privileges is high – the knowledge that they are on borrowed time, all the time.

Led by Buckminster, the team comprises the likes of mutie-hating one-man death squad, Ray Mondo; pilot Dakota Whyte; the deeply religious Luther Creed; demolitions expert Vic Doberman; and the psychologically disturbed Jinx.

The latest recruit, Chino, went undercover with the Wally Squad when straight out of the Academy of Law and years in deep cover as a sleeper broke his spirit. After months of psi-therapy, this – in Buckminster's own words – 'big clearing-house for all of Justice Department's failures' is the only place left for him.

Chino's first mission – which he observes on Overwatch with Buckminster – involves the use of chute suits to board a high-jacked industrial stratocraft, 8-Delta-39er, in mid-air. It is bringing in a consignment of biotek hot viruses from off-world biolabs, designed to attack human and computer systems and could wipe out half of Mega-City One. The terrorist operative explodes a bomb on board, killing Dakota Whyte, and Doberman guides the stricken craft down into a chem-pit where the virus is contained, the threat neutralised.

After Dakota's funeral the team go out on the town to let off some steam – but technical difficulties at Weather Control have resulted in severe tornadoes with many met-stations going offline and causing chaos.

In a freak hurricane a chem-fuel tanker crashes into the newly opened Chump Towers – the city's highest building, owned by eccentric billionaire businessman Ronald Chump, who is hosting a party full of dignitaries and celebrities. The building also has its own zoo with rare and deadly animal specimens. Chump and the majority of the guests are killed in the blast – and Holocaust 12 are called in – more as a PR exercise than a priority job. They deploy using spider-suits to scale and gain entry into the devastated structure.

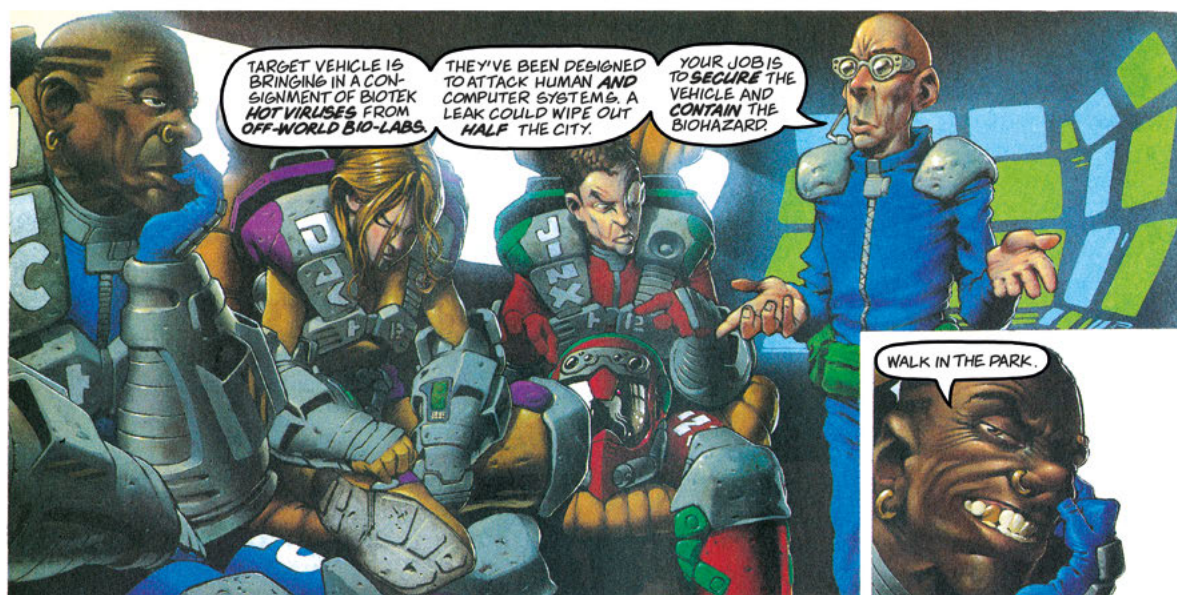
Several guests are killed by rampaging beasts before the squad rescue a handful of survivors. Holocaust 12 are once again the heroes of the hour – but as a Tri-D news anchor speculates, just for how long is anyone's guess.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

The Holocaust Squad concept had been established as far back as the **JUDGE DREDD** story *Father Earth* (Progs 122-125) in 1979 but was never revisited until this short-lived (much like the protagonists) **Megazine** series which began in August 1996 and ended prematurely the following year.

Scripted by Chris Standley (**HARMONY**) and John Smith (**DEVLIN WAUGH**), the first arc is a great introduction to the whacked-out world of the suicide squad, as seen through the eyes of the rookie, Chino, and features fully painted work by **Harmony/Dredd** illustrator Jim Murray.

The second story saw artist Clint Langley making his **Megazine** debut after having previously worked on **2000 AD** tales such as **DINOSTY** and **Judge Dredd**, and would go on to many **2000 AD** classics such as **A.B.C. WARRIORS**, **SLÁINE** and **FLESH** in collaboration with writer Pat Mills.



HONDO CITY JUSTICE

First Appearance:

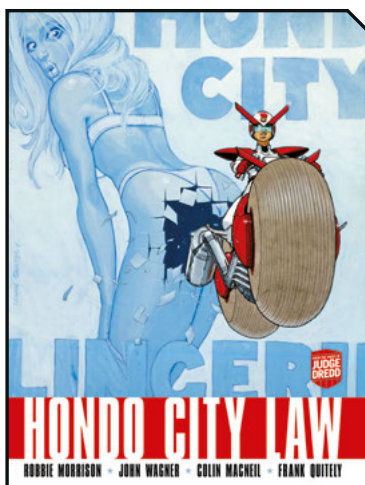
Meg 300

Essential Thrills:

Hondo City Justice (Megs 300–303),
Project Behemoth (Megs 324–326)
and *Revenge of the 47 Ronin* (Megs
332–334)

Series created by:

Robbie Morrison (writer) and
Frank Quitely (artist)



SITUATION REPORT:

Hondo City is the Japanese equivalent of Mega-City One – a large, sprawling urban mass policed by a Justice Department. Culturally, however, it is totally different. While on the forefront of modern technology, the Hondo citizens remain tied to the roots and customs of feudal Japan. Though the samurai-like Judge Inspectors – led by Shogun Judge Kobayashi – are seen to be in charge, the Yakuza crime syndicates still have a hold on power.

Fortunately, Judges like Aiko Inaba are upholding the law while questioning the authority of Justice Central. When she was a cadet, Inaba was partnered with and assessed by Judge-Inspector **SHIMURA**, who would go rogue after becoming disillusioned by the system's complicity with organised crime and big business. Before breaking Justice Department ties and becoming a ronin – a renegade warrior, answerable to no one – he promoted the highly capable and honourable Inaba, making her Hondo City's first ever female Judge Inspector. Overcoming centuries-old inherent sexism, she has quickly become a respected enforcer of the law.

Junko Asahara is Inaba's new cadet. A graduate of the Otomo Programme – the 'future of law enforcement' – the young rookie is a lethally powerful psychic and telekinetic. Pioneering scientist Gideon Otomo of the Otomo Institute for Human Advancement has been nurturing gifted youths and preparing them for leading roles in society. Asahara's psionic gifts have been developed alongside samurai discipline and Judicial training to create a literal living weapon – one with the crime-fighting ability of an entire squadron of ordinary Judges or emergency personnel.

When the eviscerated bodies of a Yakuza leader, Itto Tsukasa of the Sumiyishi-Kai, and his lieutenants turn up, Inaba and her precocious cadet's investigation leads back to Otomo himself. Years previously, while marooned on Okinawa after a tsunami, he found an alien spaceship on the island and his DNA was corrupted by extra-terrestrials and merged with his own, massive psychic power. Otomo's students are poised to take over key leading positions, including those of the Yakuza but Tsukasa was reluctant to agree and was killed as an example to others.

When her former mentor uses buried psi-commands to turn Asahara against Inaba, the cadet chooses the side of the Law, causing Otomo's head to explode after a pitched mind battle. The disgraced Otomo Programme is immediately closed down.

When another Yakuza leader, Oyabun Anada of the Igarashi-Kai, orders mercenaries to steal an experimental serum from a lab, the substance is inadvertently ingested by their leader, a Texan ex-Judge called Lucas Shrapnel. The serum causes him to grow into a rampaging behemoth, causing city-spread chaos. Inaba destroys the giant menace by dropping her hover-bike, laced with a cargo of mutagen sourced from the lab which developed the experiments, down the beast's throat. The resulting chain reaction tears the monster apart in a spectacular shower of blood and entrails.

Inaba and Asahara's most recent case saw them battle the undead spirits of the legendary 47 Ronin, who had been resurrected by deadly black chi and went on a killing spree. Unknown to Inaba, they had been conjured from beyond by her estranged, villainous sister.

Hondo City Justice was collected into two volumes in 2011 and 2014.

Vol 1: ISBN: 9781907519918

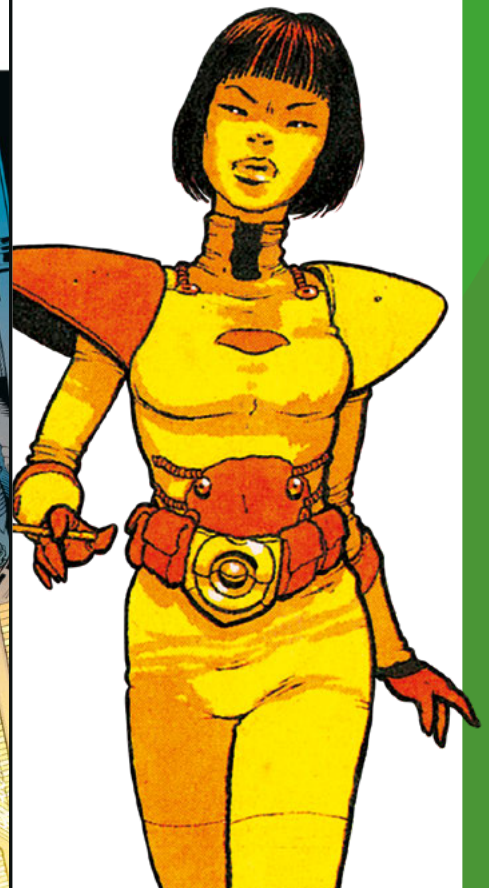
Vol 2: ISBN: 97811781082492

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

First seen in the 1989 **JUDGE DREDD** story, *Our Man in Hondo*, written by John Wagner, the dazzling look and dangerous atmosphere of Hondo City was established by the stunning art of Colin MacNeil (**CHOPPER, INSURRECTION**), laying the foundations for the classic **Megazine** series **Shimura** in 1993. In its earliest days writer Robbie Morrison's action-packed scripts were expertly visualised by soon-to-be-superstar artist Frank Quitely (**MISSIONARY MAN**) before he went on to work for Marvel and DC Comics.

When Shimura's appearances became less frequent – with Morrison focusing mainly on another of his co-creations, **NIKOLAI DANTE** – the emphasis switched to Inaba and this spin-off series rightly gives her a chance to shine, partnered with psi-cadet, Asahara.

Recent artist Neil Googe lent a manga-esque quality to the visuals, and yet more superb art came from **Dredd** veterans Mike Collins & Cliff Robinson.



HOPE

First Appearance:

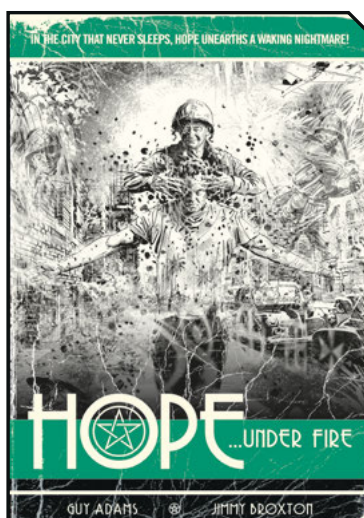
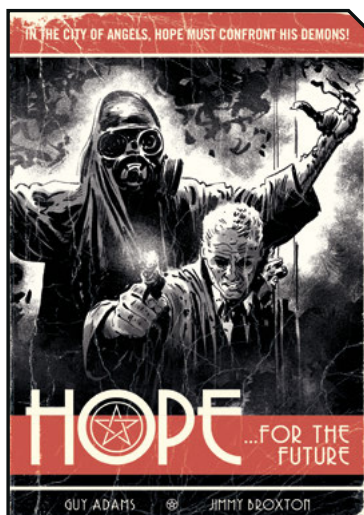
Prog 2011

Essential Thrills:

...*For the Future* (Progs 2011-2016 & 2044-2049) and ...*Under Fire* (Progs 2150-2161)

Series created by:

Guy Adams (writer) and Jimmy Broxton (artist)



The complete ongoing **Hope** was collected into two volumes in 2018 and 2020.

Vol 1: ISBN: 9781781086582

Vol 2: ISBN: 9781781087718

SITUATION REPORT:

In an alternate 1940s Los Angeles, World War II is over, the Allies victorious after using occult means. Now magic is a part of everyday life and its use is commonplace – but that usage comes with a heavy toll, draining life from the practitioner. For the inexperienced or the reckless, dealing with these dark arts can swallow them whole.

This happened to Mallory Hope, a private detective haunted by his past...and by the demon that has attached itself to his soul. It is called Cade and says nothing – but is always there, ready to manifest whenever blood is about to be spilled. Formerly a New York policeman, Mallory's wife and child disappeared when she was seduced by the glamour of the occult. Now Hope is a PI operating out of Los Angeles – but he still searches for his family, believing he will find them one day.

When a new case involving a missing Hollywood child star called Joey Fabrizzi – AKA Buster Ritz! – the boy reminds Hope of his own lost child and is determined to find him. However, the detective soon discovers all is not what it seems, with obsidian powers lurking behind the lights of Hollywood. A tip-off leads to a depraved sex club where Hope discovers that the boy has been murdered by the jealous teen movie star, Tommy Byrd; barely a few years older than Joey but already a has-been because of Hollywood's thirst for new blood.

The sinister Cole Lupus – Joey's producer, who supplied the tip-off – even reveals that he knows about Hope's missing family and could look into it... on a quid-pro-quo basis, of course.

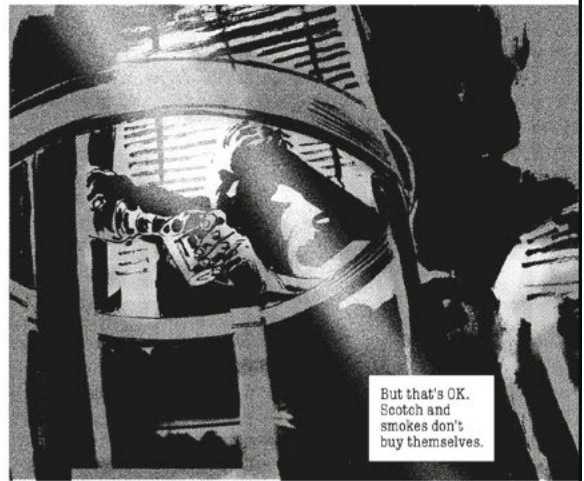
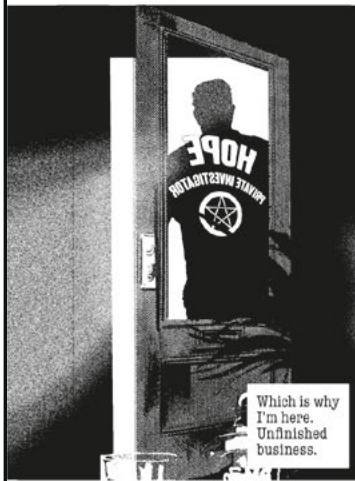
In his next case, Hope returns to New York, indebted to an old army colleague who once saved his life. Alberto Modi is now a gangster who deals in the magic drug, Crow. Hope is duped by the villainous Modi into investigating a non-existent theft so that the mobster can take control of Cade's terrible power and harness it for himself, becoming king of the underworld.

In the city that never sleeps, Hope unwittingly unleashes a waking nightmare. but defeats Modi by transporting them to Cade's plane of Hell where she takes her terrible revenge for this manipulation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

This marvellous mash-up of 1940s hard-boiled noir and the supernatural was a recipe for an instant modern **2000 AD** classic, debuting in late 2016. Writer Guy Adams had worked on **THARG'S 3RILLERS**, **ULYSSES SWEET** (originally written in the 1980s by Grant Morrison) and **MAX NORMAL** before co-creating his first original ongoing series.

Illustrated by newcomer Jimmy Broxton – who had previously drawn a **ROGUE TROOPER** one-off – his designs are simply stunning, the black and white artwork effortlessly bringing to life the bygone age of post-war Hollywood.



HUNTED

First Appearance:

Prog 2001

Essential Thrills:

Hunted (Progs 2001–2009), *Furies* (Progs 2034–2043)

Series created by:

Gerry Finley-Day (writer) and Dave Gibbons (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Nu Earth, just one planet among many caught up in a galactic war between the Norts and the Southerns. Strategically vital, both sides are desperate to secure it but use of chemical weapons has rendered the atmosphere poisonous.

A Souther general has turned traitor and sold information to the Norts, leading to the massacre of the Genetic Infantrymen. Now he is a wanted man and must stay one step ahead of his many enemies. The most dangerous is the surviving G.I., **ROGUE TROOPER**, who will never give up in his quest for revenge.

Hideously burned beyond recognition when an escape pod combusted in the atmosphere, the General blackmails Doctor Cochrane, a Souther medic, into treating him, promising that he will tell her the location of her husband, held in a Nort prison.

The Traitor plans to trap Rogue and, as an example of Earth's finest genetic engineering, hand him over to the Xianta – an alien criminal cartel that benefits from the buying and selling of anything to do with the Nort and Souther war – in return for a new face and riches to begin a new life.

This plan fails when Nort forces, including Atalia **JAEGIR**, track down the Traitor but engage in a firefight with the G.I. even though he was not the original target. Unexpectedly defeated, Jaegir and Mikka, the other surviving member of her team, beat a hasty retreat.

Another faction, a bounty hunter called Player and his partner Wire, who provides tech oversight, are also after a bounty on the Traitor – but he manages to thwart Player and puts a bullet through his head.

The Traitor reveals to Cochrane that her husband is long dead before puncturing her chem-suit with a blade, leaving her to die and escaping into orbit in a transport, although the G.I. saves the medic from the toxic air by patching up her suit.

Wire, out for revenge after Player's death, bribes Nu Earth body-looters **BRASS AND BLAND** to get a location for the Traitor, who has taken over an old Nordland Blacksun orbiting weapons platform. Calling himself 'Kestra' he has created his own army of Nort and Souther deserters who no longer wish to be a part of the war. Using fake comms avatars to hide his true identity, he broadcasts messages of dissent to both sides, urging them to unite against the Xianta enemy, who are controlling the conflict.

A Souther military intelligence operative called Trasker has been monitoring Nu Earth comms and teams up with Wire as they are both looking for the same target. Doctor Cochrane, now recovered, is also looking for vengeance and infiltrates the Blacksun facility around the same time as Wire and Trasker.

The Xianta have hired Rogue Trooper's fellow G.I. **VENUS BLUEGENES**, now working as an off-world mercenary, to assassinate the Traitor but he convinces her to let him live until his work is done.

Wire is poised to shoot the Traitor but Trasker executes her and greets the Traitor – his father. Trasker had manipulated the Xianta into sending a convoy to pick up his father's body, but, similar to the Traitor, anticipates Nort and Souther forces uniting to battle the alien threat. However, the Blacksun is soon attacked and crippled in the all-out skirmish.

Cochrane shoots at the Traitor but Trasker takes the bullet. The Traitor ensures the doctor dies this time with a coup de grace.

The Traitor callously sacrifices his son's life by bundling him into an escape pod and letting it burn in the atmosphere, akin to his own accident. Any DNA remnants may confuse a number of his enemies into thinking that he perished in the blaze.

The villain, along with Venus, decides it is time to establish another base elsewhere and evacuates the crumbling remains of the Blacksun in a sleek craft. The Traitor is done with Nu Earth for now. The answer to ending the war is somewhere else out there.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

After exploring the **Rogue Trooper** universe with spin-offs such as **THE 86ERS** and the ongoing **Jaegir**, **Hunted** focused on the original series' main antagonist – the amoral, scheming Traitor General, expanding on his motivations and Machiavellian cunning. The early inclusion of Rogue himself plus other fondly remembered supporting characters such as Brass and Bland and Venus Bluegenes are well-judged, 'crowd-pleasing' moments.

However, Rennie clearly prefers delving into the wider, murky realpolitik of the sprawling **Rogue Trooper** universe – mostly side-stepping the main protagonist – and his scripts pile on double-cross after double-cross of breath-taking ruthlessness that highlight the Traitor's willingness to survive and carry on his own personal mission.

Rennie's collaborator on **Rogue Trooper** and **The 86ers**, PJ Holden, is also a veteran of this universe and his dynamic art is expertly complemented by the atmospheric colours of Len O'Grady.



I WAS A TEENAGE TAX CONSULTANT

First Appearance:

Prog 1050

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 1050-1059

Series created by:

John Wagner (writer) and Ian Gibson (artist) [Creator-owned property]

SITUATION REPORT:

When eighteen-year-old biker Jimmy Root is bitten on the leg by a rabid tax consultant called Wiggins, every full moon the rebellious youth undergoes a terrifying transformation into a tidy, respectable, suit-wearing accountant.

Much to the rebellious Root's consternation – and that of his girlfriend, Lorraine – once he turns, there is no stopping the avalanches of tax-related jargon that come tumbling from the possessed youth's mouth.

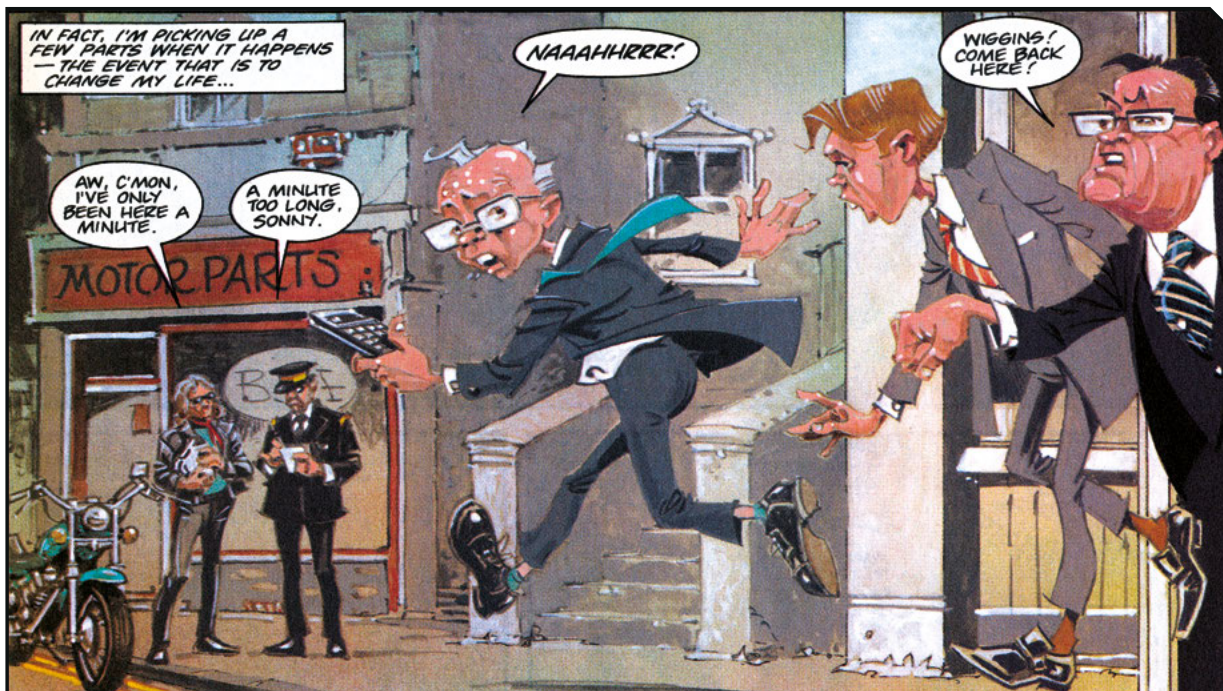
Seeking professional help at an institution for occupational disorders, Jimmy and Lorraine decide that the only way to combat the menace is to start a new life together on a remote island, where his obsessive alter ego cannot annoy anyone else.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Although the scripts were completed in 1991 this parody of 1950s cult B-Movie *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* did not see print until the summer of 1997.

Written by **JUDGE DREDD** co-creator John Wagner and drawn by Ian Gibson (**THE BALLAD OF HALO JONES**), the pair had already collaborated on **ROBO-HUNTER**, in addition to many **Dredd** strips such as *The Stookie Glanders*, *Rumble in the Jungle* and the *Love Story* trilogy featuring the disturbed **BELLA BAGLEY**.

Amongst the bizarre comedy there is actually a romantic tale somewhere at the core of Root's overwhelming urges to spout incoherently about the implications of failing to disclose assessable profits and gains and other financial infringements. This was a one-off oddity from two highly-respected **2000 AD** creatives.



LET'S START WITH
GROSS INCOME THIS YEAR,
SHALL WE? MARRIED OR
SINGLE? ANY DEPENDENT
RELATIVES? HOLD NOTHING
BACK FROM ME!

J-J-J-JIMMY,
WH-WHAT'S
HAPPENED
TO YOU?

WHAT ABOUT YOUR
ASSETS? ANY **FUNGIBLES**?
AND THOSE **UNAMORTISED**
INTANGIBLES? OH MY GOD,
YOU'RE IN A MESS! A MESS!
WE'LL HAVE TO PRIME PUMP
YOUR **EQUITY BASE** - TAKE
YOUR **GEARING** THROUGH THE
ROOF! NO! NO! WAIT! WE'LL
LIQUIDISE! FLOAT YOU ON
THE **USM**! THE AVOIDANCE
POTENTIAL IS ENDLESS,
ENDLESS!



INDIGO PRIME

First Appearance:

Prog 490

Essential Thrills:

Indigo Prime (Prog 678), *Winwood and Cord* (Progs 680-681), *Killing Time* (Progs 735-744), *Everything and More* (Progs 1750-1753), *Anthropocalypse* (Progs 1756-1763), *Perfect Day* (Progs 1880-1887) and *Fall of the House of Vista* (Progs 2139-2148)

Series created by:

John Smith (writer) and
Chris Weston (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

An elite troubleshooting organisation that exists out of time, Indigo Prime polices the multiverse of parallel dimensions and infinite realities, cleaning up the mess left by time travellers, meddlers and monsters...but for a price.

Run by director Clive Vista and his security chief, Major E. Kurtz Arcana, their operatives possess a rare genetic component called the Rembrandt Index, which is found in one in twelve million people.

Agents are recruited after death, and they maintain and repair breaks and distortions in the fabric of reality. There are three types of specialists: Sceneshifters manipulate the physical world; Seamsters deal with time; and Imagineers influence minds and dreams.

The organisation sometimes uses psilencers – psychic investigators – such as **FERVENT & LOBE** but these freelance ‘cowboys’ were taken off the books after causing a reality breakdown where Satan escaped from Hell.

Seamsters Max Winwood and Ishmael Cord undertake an assignment aboard a time-travelling Victorian train alongside Jack the Ripper. Much to Cord’s distaste (Winwood is more coolly pragmatic), they must allow the fiend to complete his last, gruesome murder in order to defeat the Iscarot – a creature that exists beyond time and space and was using the killer to ensure its own freedom.

When another reality breakdown occurs in England in 2008, former soldier Danny Redman [see **DEAD EYES**] is ‘reincorporated’ into a new body, as per standard operating procedure, and is partnered with deep cover agent Unthur Dak, a telepathic Neanderthal. It seems that Vista and Arcana have plans for Redman, who has exceptional latent abilities but needs orientation and training to control them.



The duo is tasked with giving dying Nazi Viktor Schröder a last tour through history. However, after witnessing the Crucifixion, Schröder dupes his guides and replaces Christ with the Christulhu, causing a massive disturbance in space/time that sends all of IPs imagineers into toxic psychic shock, including Redman. Operatives Dak, James Jinks and William Burroughs are sent into the psychosphere, wading through their haunted unconscious minds, to fight a supervillain called The Nihilist, who is eventually defeated.

With its unique, lucrative work, Indigo Prime has many enemies and rivals, and Arcana was on an off-the-books mission to double-cross Schröder to bring the Lanzer Corporation and Atheist Terrorist League moles into the open, who were seeking access to IP's data-core while building monsters for the highest bidder.

Although Vista shuts down the ATL attack, he is killed and Indigo Prime's HQ starts to come apart at the seams. Agents begin to abandon ship, using the recently removed universe skin – a portal to another reality, 'worn' by operative Jerry Foundation – as an escape route.

The Baron, CEO of the Lanzer group, is actually being controlled by a malevolent entity known as The Huictiigra – a lethal dream parasite – and in a final, desperate battle, Arcana manipulates Redman's powers. Unknown to Redman himself, he is a never-seen-before hybrid with Imagineer/Sceneshifter/Seamster abilities, which the Major exploits, urging Redman to banish the Huictiigra into the universe skin. There the hideous creature is destroyed by another mysterious organism – an Archetypologist.

The largest ever threat to IP's very existence has been averted but the organisation now has no base and many of its operators have perished. However, is Vista really dead and therefore Indigo Prime itself? Arcana does not know for sure but aims to find out.

A disillusioned Redman – who once had a wife and daughter – decides that he needs some space. In a million timelines there are so many different places that he can lose himself.

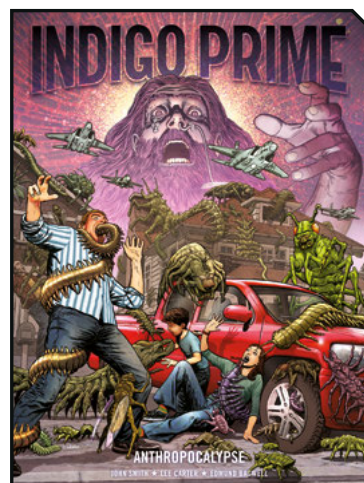
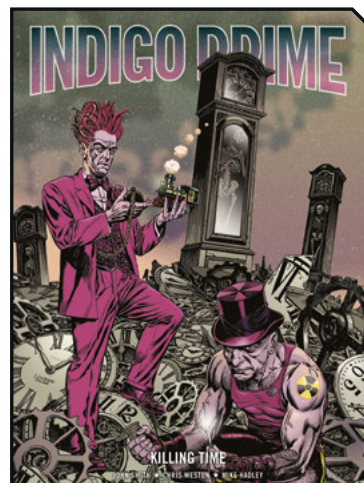
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Although vampiric Vatican exorcist **DEVLIN WAUGH** might be his most accessible creation, **Indigo Prime** is the ultimate expression of the immensely imaginative mind of writer John Smith. By turns baffling, esoteric and reality-warping, the scripts are bursting with bizarre ideas, matched by the superb work of artists such as Mike Hadley (**WIREHEADS**), Chris Weston (**CANON FODDER**), Edmund Bagwell and Lee Carter. The latter two had previously collaborated with Smith on his horror stories **CRADLEGRAVE** and **Dead Eyes** respectively.

After a **THARG'S FUTURE SHOCKS** debut in 1986, **Indigo Prime** became a popular if frustratingly intermittent series. 1991's *Killing Time*, in particular, is undoubtedly one of the finest ever serials in **2000 AD**'s history. Smith and Weston surpass themselves on this grisly sci-fi/horror hybrid, which is genuinely unsettling and sickeningly claustrophobic. The time-travelling gothic masterpiece was thought to be the series swansong as Smith was reticent to bring back **Indigo Prime**, despite being asked on several occasions, but 2008's **Dead Eyes** saw a quite unexpected return for the extra-dimensional agency.

Prolific scribe Kek-W – writer of **THE FALL OF DEADWORLD** and **THE ORDER** – took over scripting duties on *A Dying Art* and *Fall of the House of Vista*, and even brought about a surprise return for another John Smith creation, witch-boy **REVERE**, who had not been seen since 1994.

Perhaps a challenge at first, if one can get past the initial oddness and density of the concept, **Indigo Prime** is ultimately a hugely rewarding reading experience.



Indigo Prime was collected into two volumes in 2013.

Vol 1, *Killing Time*, is available digitally from the **2000 AD** webshop; Vol 2, *Anthropocalypse*, ISBN: 9781781081112

INFERNO

First Appearance:

Prog 36

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 36-75

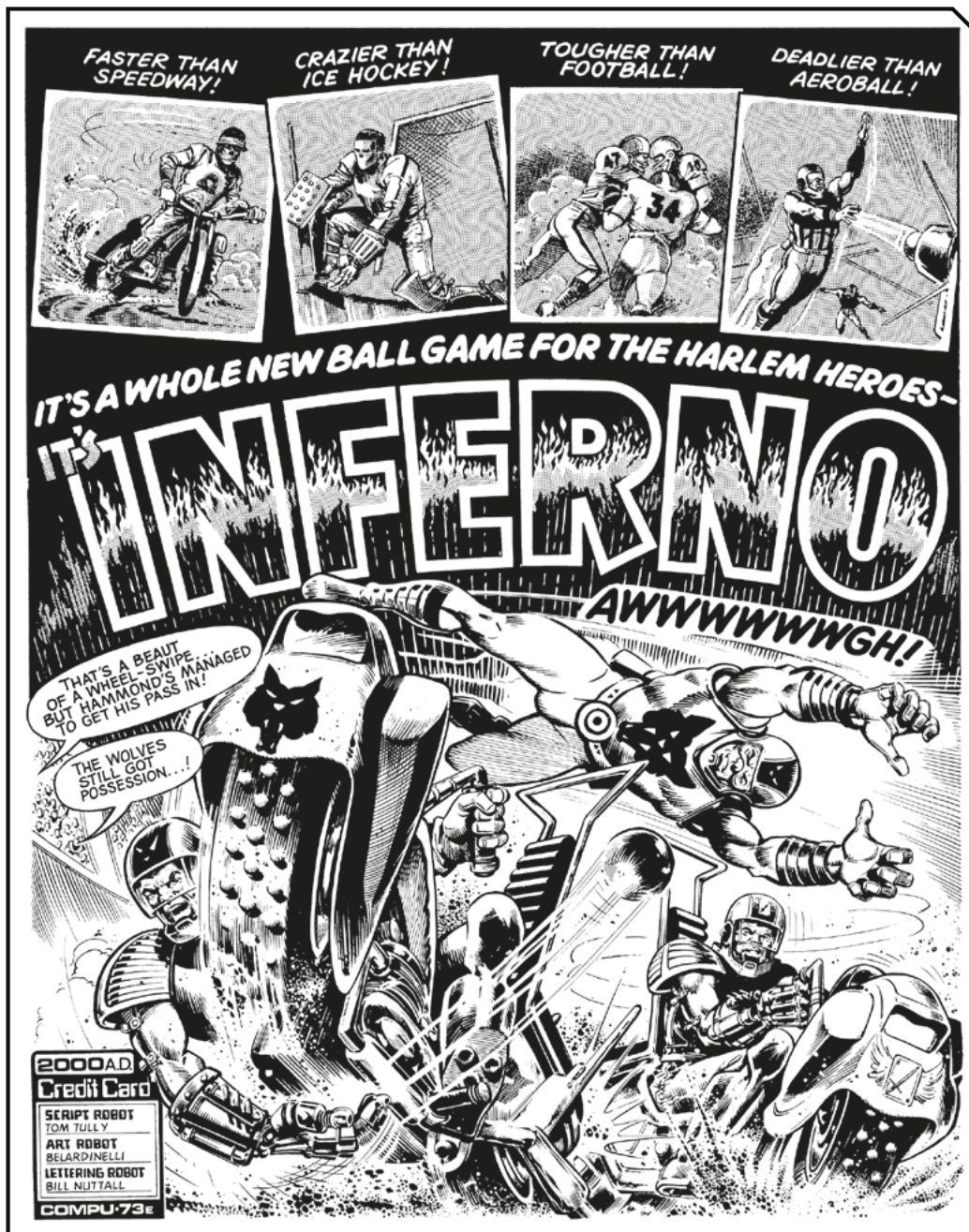
Series created by:

Tom Tully (writer) and

Massimo Belardinelli (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

In the twenty-first century, the dangerous sport of aeroball was supplanted by an even deadlier game – Inferno. While retaining some of the flying elements of aeroball, the new sport is mainly played on the ground with many of the players riding motorcycles. An eight-player team consists of four bikers, three flyers and one caveman, or goalkeeper, who can defend the goalmouth with a powerbat. There are very few rules in this fast, deadly sport where many competitors die. Indeed, the term ‘Inferno’ is used to denote any incident which involves players being killed during the match.



The three surviving members of the legendary **HARLEM HEROES** aeroball team – captain John ‘Giant Clay, Slim Shafto and Zack Harper – join the Washington Wolves as guest flyers. An attempt to frame them for murder and corruption leads them to form their own Inferno team – reborn as the Harlem Hellcats – and prove their innocence against a shadowy gambling syndicate that has been fixing the results of matches.

Their new squad, which includes hot-headed caveman Moody Bloo, Washington’s ‘Junk’ Jackson and retired stunt-rider Regal Egle, is boosted by the arrival of another former team-mate, Louis Mayer; his disembodied brain had lived on in a tank but now had an android body thanks to further advances in medical science.

Two syndicate members, Alphonse Torso and Ernest Chubb, track down the Harlem Heroes’ old enemy, the insane cyborg Artie Gruber – who had been thought dead but was in suspended animation – and set him against Giant once more, the man he blamed for the jetpack accident that left him disfigured and deranged. Gruber infiltrates a rival team, the Philadelphia Freaks, and causes the death of Egle. Egle’s girlfriend, cheerleader Cindy Lamont, comes on as a substitute to avenge the stunt-rider’s death but is seriously injured herself.

Gruber tries to kill Giant but Louis manages to scramble the cyborg’s brain and turn him against his controllers. Gruber kills Torso and Chubb but his jetpack explodes as he tries to escape – and he appears to die a fiery death, mirroring his original fate.

It was hoped the syndicate would be powerless after this incident but Giant is unconvinced. He is proved correct when the syndicate, represented by a faceless hologram, kidnaps him. The Hellcats must play a final battle against a team of android killers to rescue their captain. Although Louis manages to turn some of the androids against each other, the opposition is too much and the Hellcats lose, murdered one by one.

Eventually Giant is freed by the police. Alongside a recovered Cindy, he mourns the loss of the entire team, wiped out by the syndicate’s robotic pawns.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

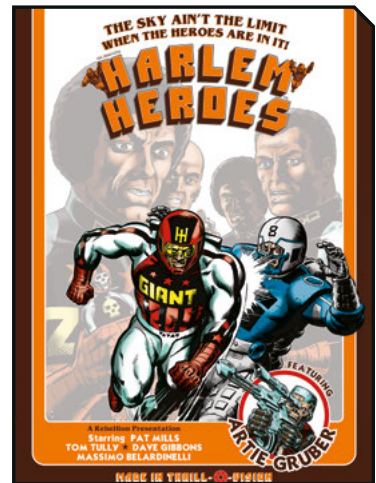
This controversial sequel to **Harlem Heroes** was notorious for its harder, more violent content than its popular predecessor. Only a handful of characters from the previous tale survived, although they would be stalked once more by returning cyborg nemesis Artie Gruber.

One episode in particular – when Giant was doused in petrol and about to be set alight by Gruber – was reportedly deemed so graphic that **2000 AD** was almost cancelled as a result of the wrath incurred by the comic’s management.

Inferno boasts some superb art by Massimo Bellardinelli, who went on to co-create other stories such as actioner **MELTDOWN MAN** and much-loved space comedy **ACE TRUCKING CO**. However, this tale will probably be remembered most for its astonishingly downbeat conclusion. Rare in **2000 AD**’s history, the protagonist Hellcats lost, victims of the literally faceless syndicate, who are not brought to justice.

As a character a much older Giant would appear again. Linked to **JUDGE DREDD** story continuity, his son, **JUDGE GIANT SNR**, was a good friend to Mega-City One’s toughest lawman, and the line would be continued with his illegitimate offspring, **JUDGE GIANT JNR**.

A final, fitting tribute to Harlem Heroes’ finest was **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?: John ‘Giant’ Clay** (**Meg** 214 [reprinted **Meg** 288]), where the elderly former sportsman met his grandson and passed on a family heirloom – his late son’s Judge’s badge.



Collected as part of the complete **Harlem Heroes** trade paperback released in 2016.

ISBN: 9781906735524



INSPECTRE, THE

SITUATION REPORT:

Before the Apocalypse War, Psi-Kop Viktor Zadek was among East-Meg One's most feared Judges for his part in crushing the Salyut uprising and ending the Siberian oil wars. He rebelled against War Marshal Kazan's regime and almost succeeded in assassinating the merciless tyrant.

Zadek was sentenced to Gulag 101 in the Siberian wastes, a self-sufficient facility for dissidents who had angered the Marshal. When East-Meg One was obliterated under **JUDGE DREDD**'s authority, Gulag 101 was forgotten. Direktor Eva Primakova carried on as if nothing had changed, making her prisoners' lives a living hell.

Over a decade later, the Sovs began building a new city on the ruins of East-Meg One. However, the site of the nuclear holocaust was haunted by millions of ghosts and a powerful psi was needed to lay them to rest.

Zadek had outlived his torturers and, augmented by cutting-edge psi-control technology, was taken back to his old home city, reinstated and ordered to exorcise the demons. However, the 'Inspectre' has his own demons to face.

Primakova was killed during the liberation of Gulag 101 but her spirit continued to torment Zadek. She had been in love with Kazan and wanted to punish Zadek for almost killing the Marshal. Zadek forced Primakova to confront her past. After being raped by brutal fellow Judges, she had been made Direktor of Gulag 101 as an outlet for her rage.

Zadek, in conjunction with Judge Chertnoy of the feared Black Guard, ensures that justice is done, starting with the summary execution of Selnik, one of Primakova's attackers. Her soul will now rest in peace but the Inspectre still has many other ghosts to help.

First Appearance:

Meg 3.23

Essential Thrills:

Requiem (Megs 2.23-3.25), *Baptism of Fire* (Megs 3.26-3.27), *Damn'd Spirits All* (Megs 3.28-3.29) and *Trial by Fury* (Megs 3.30-3.33)

Series created by:

Kev Walker (writer & art) and Jim Campbell (writer)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Based on an original idea by artist Kev Walker (**A.B.C. WARRIORS**), who wanted to create a **Megazine** character of his own, and co-written with letterer Jim Campbell, initially Walker was also on art duties before handing over to Charles Gillespie and Andrew Currie. Disappointingly short-lived, it's an interesting Sov spin on psychic Judges.



INSURRECTION

First Appearance:

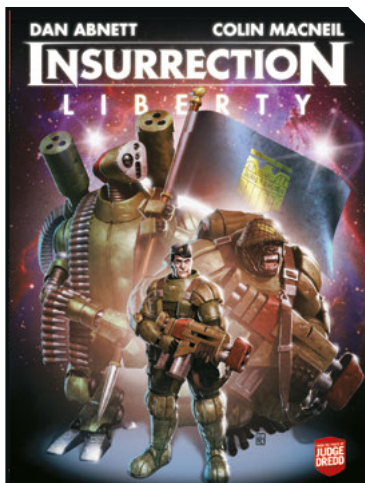
Meg 279

Essential Thrills:

Insurrection (Mags 279-284),
Insurrection II (Mags 305-310) and
Insurrection III (Mags 334-342)

Series created by:

Dan Abnett (writer) and
Colin MacNeil (artist)



The complete **Insurrection** was collected into two volumes in 2011 and 2015. Vol 1: ISBN: 9781907992490; Vol 2: ISBN: 9781781083406

SITUATION REPORT:

Mega-City One mining colony K-Alpha 61 has declared independence from the Mega-City One and renamed itself Liberty. This act of defiance angers the Justice Department's Special Judicial Squad and in a bid to stop further colonies from rebelling, war is inevitable.

This came about because Colonial Marshal Karel Luther had been at war with the occupying alien Zhind race. The enemy were eventually driven back after two years but the SJS offered no support in the conflict, despite desperate requests on twenty-three occasions. Luther succeeded only by granting citizenship to the underclass workforce comprised of mutants, droids and uplifts – genetically enhanced, sentient apes – and fighting shoulder to shoulder.

After hostilities ceased SJS ordered the citizenship to be revoked, which the principled Luther is unwilling to do. Aided by fellow Marshals Lomax and Freely and trusted delegates the uplift Simeon, the mutant Funx, and the robot Ramsses, Luther's forces do their best to repel the invading SJS army – led by Senior Judge Kulotte – whose two thousand drop-troops go in with extreme prejudice. Heavy weapons platforms such as CATT units – Combat All-Terrain Transports – obliterate the surface.

Lomax is killed and Freely gives herself up to the SJS. She urges Luther to surrender unconditionally for the sake of the civilian population, which has already taken heavy casualties. With thirty minutes to comply, Luther discovers that Freely's surrender was a ruse to get her on board the bridge of the SJS flagship and temporarily wipe out their network systems with an Electronic Countermeasures Disruption pattern, allowing a short window for Luther and his lieutenants to escape and take the idealism of Liberty to other colonial planets, of which there are eighteen.

Freely is held captive for two years at Justice Department detention and processing facility 'Elizabeth Fry', orbiting colony world J Beta 12, before she is sprung loose in an audacious escape plan facilitated by Simeon. However, SJS commander Laud and mutated Psi-Judge Syren seize the opportunity to follow Freely to their main target: Luther. His rebel forces are concentrating their efforts in getting the insurrection message to the other worlds and are stationed at Production Venue 33 – an entirely automated manufacturing colony with a population of 6.2 million robots. The planet supplies Mega-City One and its colonies with almost seventy per cent of its trilinear chips, the building blocks of technology. A blow struck there would seriously hurt Earth's economy. The planet is christened Fraternity at Freely's suggestion.

Laud's Judges attack and Luther is seriously injured, causing Freely to take command and engage in a guerrilla war against the SJS, hiding out in the vast factories where it is difficult to detect the rebels' heat signatures and hunt them down.

The planet's robot delegate, Handcog, can initiate a pulse virus that will not only cripple their trilinear stockpiles but also those that are currently in use on Earth and the colonies, crippling the advancement of the human race for decades. This gives the rebels the ultimate bargaining chip against Laud, who reveals to Luther in a face-to-face meeting that they did not intervene against the Zhind on Liberty because Mega-City One cannot afford to take on and lose an alien war.

As this is a direct threat to Mega-City security, Justice Department orders forces to redeploy from the idyllic colony world, Gateway, even though they were in a pitched battle with the Zhind. The insurrectionists manage to escape Fraternity in the confusion. Some Gateway troops rebelled and found their way to the rebels on their new base, the rocky moon of Oryx 18, which is renamed Equality.

The Zhind unexpectedly step up their attacks on the colony worlds causing an uneasy alliance to form between the SJS and the insurrectionists, and Luther is willing to work with Laud to end the alien threat.

The brutal war against the Zhind lasts for sixteen weeks and a decisive battle takes place on the planet 43 Rega. A Zhind command node on Hill 719 must be taken and Laud – knowing it is practically a suicide mission – orders rebel forces to spearhead the attack. Luther, leading from the front, is shot and killed in action.

Willard Gallows, a Gateway colonist, had been unwittingly brainwashed by the Zhind into trying to kill Luther, the only man ever to defeat the Zhind. With Luther dead by other means, the conditioning is broken and his unlocked knowledge of Zhind tactics enables a decisive human victory.

After the Zhind hordes are vanquished, in a shocking betrayal, the callous Laud orders the execution of all remaining insurrection troops. Freely, Simeon, Ramsses and the others are wiped out. The story is told many years later by Gallows, the only human survivor. However, the idea of Liberty shall live on in the telling.

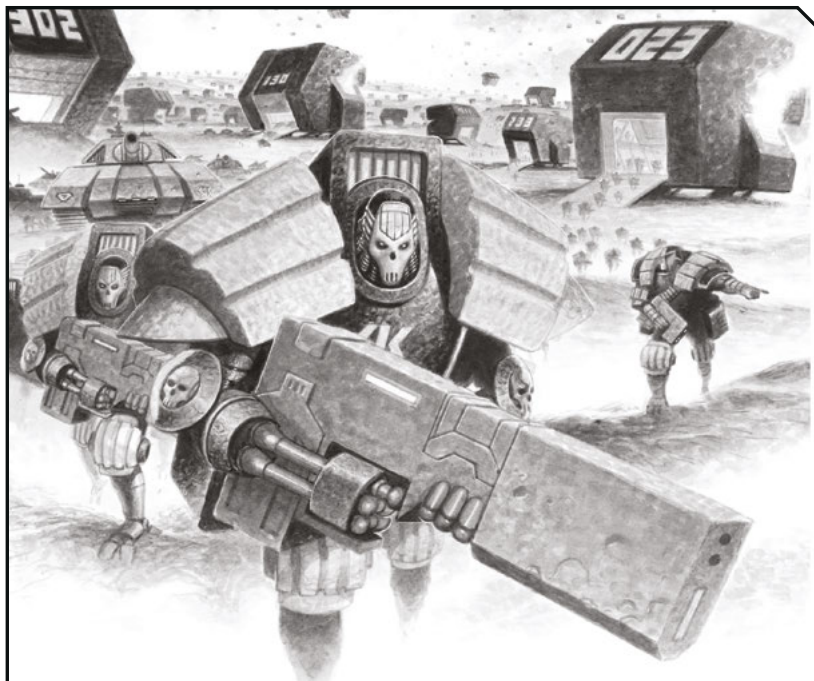
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

The ‘Space Judges’ concept had previously been explored on short-lived tales like **THE CORPS** and **MAELSTROM**, with variable results. **Insurrection**, with its perfect balance of high-octane space adventure and moralistic viewpoint, nailed the elusive premise once and for all.

The brief was to bring a flavour of some of the space war carnage of *Warhammer 40,000* to the **Megazine**. Veteran **2000 AD** writer – and best-selling *Warhammer 40K* author – Dan Abnett was the only choice for scripting. Another **2000 AD** stalwart, Colin MacNeil (**CHOPPER**, **JUDGE DREDD**) rendered this series in stunning monochrome, with every page clearly a labour of love.

The alien Zhind returned in another recent **Megazine Thrill**, **BLUNT**, featuring the eponymous uplift character in the mould of Simeon.

Although **Insurrection** did not gain another direct sequel after its third chapter, Abnett teamed up with artist Phil Winslade for another series set amongst the colonies, the highly popular **LAWLESS**.



INTERCEPTOR

First Appearance:

Prog 1337

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 1337-1345

Series created by:

Ian Edginton (writer) and
Steve Pugh (artist)



Interceptor was collected as a bagged supplement issue with **Meg** 360 in June 2015



SITUATION REPORT:

New York City, 2478. Former combat surgeon Doctor Lyra Darius is as passionate about saving lives at Guiliani General Hospital as she is about her boyfriend, District Attorney Marcus Cross. At the end of a gruelling forty-eight-hour rotation in Emergency, all she is looking forward to is a quiet, relaxing evening – but when a gunshot victim is wheeled in demanding attention, her life takes a very weird turn and sets in motion a chain of events that will uncover secrets that have been hidden from mankind for centuries.

The victim presses upon her a small sphere before he is killed by gun-wielding pursuers. The sphere enables Lyra to see this group in their true alien forms – the killers wear human disguises of an old woman and a Japanese schoolgirl. Barely escaping with her life thanks to her combat skills, Lyra is concerned that Marcus might be in danger from the aliens because of his connection to her. However, Marcus is also an alien and in fact the ringleader of the gang who attacked Lyra. As Marcus wrestles the sphere – the Orrery – from Lyra, two armed strangers called Rose and Carter arrive and engage Marcus in a gunfight. In the ensuing chaos, Lyra helps her 'boyfriend' escape – disappearing into thin air – not realising that the newcomers are there to help her.

Carter explains that he and Rose are part of an interstellar peacekeeping force called the Judiciary, which has been using the Earth as a penal facility, housing the most dangerous criminals in known space. An inmate's consciousness is downloaded into a non-scorpionic node and implanted into an unsuspecting human host. Each node would pass down the host's family bloodline until sentence is served. The inmate is then retrieved and 're-sleeved' into its original body.

Marcus's true identity is revealed as Proteus, a charismatic but psychopathic military leader, who orchestrated a coup when he was not treated like the god he thought he was, and was duly incarcerated for many years. Unfortunately, due to a technology breakdown because of a war where the Earth's 'keeper' – Escher, the alien who gave Lyra the Orrery



sphere – was prevented from looking after the planet for two centuries, the inmates could now control the hosts' bodies. The lunatics have taken over the asylum.

Rose describes the Orrery as a precinct house – an engineered bubble of quantum causality, where they house Judiciary equipment, databases and the bodies of nine million inmates, with Proteus poised to initiate the ultimate jailbreak.

Using technology stolen from Buddy Love, a scientist and undesirable former admirer of Lyra's, she, Rose and Carter manage to gain entry to the penitentiary in an attempt to stop Proteus's plans. They utilise a modified thorium reactor as a weapon to subdue the highly dangerous inmates who have managed to get their bodies back. In the final showdown, Lyra shoots Proteus in the head before he can kill her. Meanwhile, the sleazy real-life Marcus attempts to sell out humanity to be in with a chance of survival at Proteus's side. Instead he will now be incarcerated in a spare stasis booth.

Newly single, Lyra takes up Rose and Carter's offer to join the Judiciary as a field agent. However, Proteus' incognito spies – the old woman and schoolgirl duo – are still on the loose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Here prolific scribe Ian Edginton (**LEVIATHIAN**, **SCARLET TRACES**) was aiming for a fun, sexy science-fiction vibe akin to Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element*. **Interceptor** has a clever central premise and is packed with ideas, with Lyra Darius an appealing lead character.

Illustrated by Steve Pugh, a veteran of DC Comics' *Animal Man* and *Hellblazer*, Pugh's only previous **2000 AD** credit was on *Monsters*, a **STRONTIUM DOGS** story featuring the young mutant leader **FERAL**. Pugh does a great job of visualising **Interceptor**'s Earth of the future and especially the various alien lifeforms in the penal zone, as well as some dynamic set pieces in the story's fast-paced climax.



INVASION!

SITUATION REPORT:

A fifty-megaton bomb hits the Midlands, deadly paratroopers descend from the skies, the Prime Minister is executed, and other politicians are hung from lampposts in Parliament Square. This is the Volgan invasion of Britain and soon this once mighty land lies in anguish under the boot-heel of tyranny.

However, one man will make a stand. East-End lorry driver Bill Savage returns to London to find that a stray tank shell has destroyed his family home, killing his wife and kids. Grabbing his trusty double-barrelled shotgun, he swears vengeance against the hated Volgs. The war may be over for Britain but for Savage it has only just begun.

Recruited by Lieutenant Peter Silk, Savage was initially in charge of a resistance cell operating out of the Isle of Dogs but his fiery temperament and merciless direct action soon saw him taking part in or co-ordinating retaliation attacks and raids the length and breadth of Great Britain. Savage frequently found himself at odds with his commanders, whom he usually saw as ineffectual.

As the months of brutal guerrilla combat wore on, Savage and Silk were eventually tasked with taking Prince John, the heir to the throne, to safety in Canada. Smuggling the young but brave Royal on board a US cargo ship, Silk is murdered by a Volg spy called Georgia, who is in the employ of Savage's bitter enemy, Colonel Rosa Volgaska.

Savage manages to overcome his opponents and steers the vessel containing the grateful Prince into the safety of the neutral St Lawrence estuary. The resistance fighter is hopeful that someday soon American troops will join the fight against the Volgs. When the Yanks hit the beaches of Britain, 'Bill Savage'll be the first one ashore!'

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

When readers opened the pages of **2000 AD**'s inaugural issue, dated 26th February 1977, **Invasion!** was the first Thrill that overloaded their newly developed optical receptors. Working-class hero Bill Savage is a no-nonsense, hard-bitten tough guy in the mould of characters from other IPC comics like *Battle* and *Action*, or then-contemporary TV shows like *The Sweeney*. The violent, gritty action of **Invasion!** was relentless, even causing the *Guardian* to complain about its place in a children's title.

Created by **2000 AD**'s founding editor Pat Mills and artist Jesus Blasco, many other fine creatives grasped Savage's reins in order to keep the serial ticking over on a weekly basis. Acclaimed writers like Gerry Finley-Day (**ROGUE TROOPER**, **FIENDS OF THE EASTERN FRONT**) and Chris Lowder (**THARG'S TIME TWISTERS**) took over scripting, while art was supplied by the likes of Mike (**M.A.C.H. 1**) Dorey, Carlos (**ANGEL**) Pino and Ian Kennedy (**DAN DARE**).

After fifty-one instalments, not including one-offs in early annuals or specials, Bill hung up his shooter. However, he returned in a prequel series, **DISASTER 1990!**, which saw him fight to survive in a London flooded and submerged underwater.

However, in 2007, Mills was invited to create new adventures for the East End's finest. Now entitled **SAVAGE**, so far eleven books have been published in the revitalised, ongoing saga.

First Appearance:

Prog 1

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 1-51

Series created by:

Pat Mills (writer) and

Jesus Blasco (artist)



Invasion! was collected into a trade paperback in 2008.

ISBN: 9781905437269

SITUATION REPORT:

While war rages across the galaxy between the Great Nordland Republic and their Souther enemies on countless planets, scarred veteran Kapitän-Inspector Atalia Jaegir of the Nordland State Security Police investigates and tracks down war criminals. Aided by her loyal team – Klaur, Reesa and Heise – she also roots out corruption in the ranks.

Haunted by an incident on a Nu Earth battlefield where a decision she made caused over three hundred captured Souther POWs to burn to death, Atalia is tasked with investigating the ‘Strigoi taint’ – a genetic aberration deliberately introduced into the gene pool by her father, the much-feared high-ranking General Josef Jaegir, in an attempt to turn the Norts into a race of genetically enhanced super-soldiers.

Before his disgrace and exile, her emotionless father also infected Atalia herself with the taint, knowing that it could turn her into an uncontrollable and mindless subhuman killing machine. The monstrous general also killed Atalia’s Souther mother several years previously, poisoned in a gas chamber in front of his young daughter, whom he has always despised.



JAEGIR

Viewed with suspicion by the rank and file Nort troops, Jaegir is no stranger to conflict and betrayal but her fearsome reputation will not protect her from an inhuman quarry that she is tasked with finding.

She must bring down a former military academy classmate, Grigoru Kuttner, who has now transformed into a monster, before he can murder his own family. He would rather do this than see them turn out like him. She despatches Kuttner with ruthless efficiency even though they were once lovers, seeing it as a mercy killing.

Another mission saw Jaegir neutralise the rogue General Mabuse, known as the Dollmaker because of his penchant for ‘wearing’ different bodies by downloading his biochipped conscience into them. He was working on a secret project codenamed ‘Circe’ which involved a deadly pathogen.

Posted to Nu Earth for combat duties, Atalia’s team take on the responsibility of capturing a high-ranking Souther official, Facilitator Choi.

A further mission sees the squad sent to Forward Firebase Gogol – a location which contains vital mineral deposits underneath but is so steeped in death it is gruesomely known as Bonegrinder – to arrest the war criminal Commanding Officer. Atalia takes over command when an overwhelming Souther attack commences. Knowing she cannot win, in order to save her comrades, Atalia offers up herself – a high-value prisoner because of her father – in surrender to the Souther forces and ends up in the psychopathic hands of the deranged torturer, Colonel Raksha.

Jaegir’s ever-loyal team enlist the help of the ruthless Kashan legion to mount a daring attempt to extract her before Souther Secret Intelligence operatives – ‘S3’ – come to collect her, led by the mysterious **COLONEL** (now General) **KOVERT**.

Brutalised, tortured so badly that she had to be brought back on the operating table three times, Atalia had managed to fight back before the eventual rescue. She confides to Klaur that her father had set up a secret lab on Nu Earth to develop a new killer virus which would only destroy subjects from Souther bloodlines. She had thought she would destroy it if she discovered it – but now Atalia is poised to seek out the lab and use the weapon to end the war once and for all by wiping out every Souther man, woman and child in the galaxy.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

As far back as 2002, writer Gordon Rennie has penned superb stories of the original **ROGUE TROOPER** series, set in the classic continuity where the G.I. was still hunting his arch enemy, **THE TRAITOR GENERAL** [see **HUNTED**, in which Atalia Jaegir makes an appearance in the introductory tale].

After several years it gave way to a short-lived spin-off, **THE 86ERS**, set in deep space. **Jaegir** is a more successful off-shoot from the original. Neatly inverting the whole premise by focusing on the Nort, it shows that there is much life left in the **Rogue Trooper** universe, over forty years after its debut in 1981.

The strip’s popularity lies in the fact that Atalia is no clean-cut heroine. Scarred both inside and out, while working for such a cruel fascist regime, even she has encountered people on her own side who are so inherently evil that they must be brought to justice. Rennie’s assured action scripts also have a murky political edge and are tinged with a nihilistic sheen that does not glorify the horrors of war.

Artist Simon Coleby is also a **Rogue Trooper** veteran, having already drawn the original version in Rennie’s reboot. Before that he had also worked the second incarnation of the G.I. [see **ROGUE TROOPER (FRIDAY)**] and yet another spin-off, **VENUS BLUEGENES**. He knows this universe better than any other illustrator and his pages have a grotesque beauty.

First Appearance:

Prog 1874

Essential Thrills:

Strigoi (Progs 1874-1879), *Circe* (Progs 1893-1898), *Tartarus* (Progs 1937-1944), *Warchild* (Progs 1996-1999), *Hunted* (Progs 2001-2009), *Bonegrinder* (Progs 2117-2122) and *Valkyrie* (Progs 2144 -2149)

Series created by:

Gordon Rennie (writer) and Simon Coleby (artist)



Jaegir: Beasts Within trade

paperback was released in 2015.

ISBN: 9781781083963

JANUS, PSI-DIVISION

First Appearance:

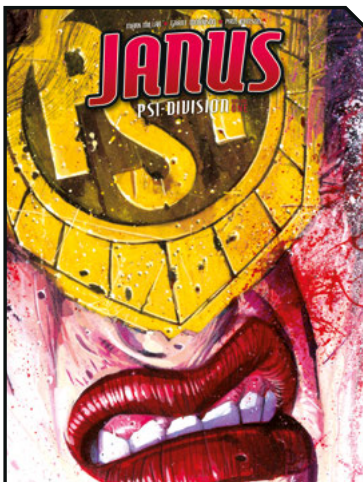
Prog 842

Essential Thrills:

Judge Dredd: Inferno (Progs 842–853), *Will O' The Wisp* (2000 AD Winter Special 1993), *Judge Dredd: The Big Sleet* (Prog 920), *House of Sighs* (Prog 953), *A New Star* (Progs 980–984) and *Faustus* (Progs 1024–1031)

Series created by:

Grant Morrison (writer) and Carlos Ezquerra (artist)



Judge Dredd: Inferno was collected in **The Complete Case Files 19** in 2012. ISBN: 9781907992964.

Judge Dredd: The Big Sleet was collected in **The Complete Case Files 22** in 2014. ISBN: 9781781082278.

Janus, Psi Division was collected as three bagged supplement issues with **Megs** 322, 347 and 348 in April 2012, May 2014 and June 2014

SITUATION REPORT:

Mega-City One, 2115. On the day of her nineteenth birthday, newly qualified Psi-Judge Judy Janus is summoned by her superior, **JUDGE SHENKER**, to take over the duties of **ANDERSON, PSI-DIVISION**, who is offworld on Mars.

Having had a vision of impending disaster, Janus assists **JUDGE DREDD** in the battle against disgraced **JUDGE GRICE**, who has taken over the city. The young precog serves with distinction, saving Dredd's life on two occasions by picking up his psi-profile and ensuring his survival.



Janus's next case involved the investigation of a major psychic disturbance at the Dreamadrome on Gysin block. She finds a supernatural being which steals the souls of some citizens performing a séance and then disappears through a portal called a Mobius Gate, through which the determined Janus follows. Confronting the 'Will o' the Wisp' creature, she discovers it has been created by the unconscious desires of a fellow Psi-Judge, Roerich, who is detained at Division headquarters.

Dredd used Janus's help once again at Christmas time when she has a vision of a catastrophe at Fargo Square instigated by a mysterious supernatural being who turns out to be a Norse goddess, Hella. The surly Dredd reluctantly partners with another Norse god, Odin, to restore order.

Now a confident and assured operative, Janus is called in to expel a routine poltergeist at the Academy of Law but is soon called to a much more serious incident. A malevolent entity at Sector Nine's med-unit is on the loose and killing Judges – Bryce and Stryker – with whom the Psi went through cadet training. Another victim was Kilmer, a failed cadet. Janus embarks on a perilous voyage into the afterlife to confront her former friend, the deceased psi Ashley, whose spirit was torn apart by hungry poltergeists which Psi-Division failed to stop. Managing to rebuild herself, Ashley is out for revenge. After defeating her former comrade, Janus used her psychic ability to guide the spirits of her fallen friends to a place of peace.

Janus's most dangerous mission to date saw her serving as an escort to a night-on indestructible Bri-Cit psi-criminal called Faustus on his deportation home. The criminal escapes, leaving Janus and a cadet called Mookie trapped on board the downed spacecraft Justice Five at the bottom of the **BLACK ATLANTIC** ocean.

A desperate Janus must utilise all of her psychic skills – including the use of her astral body to take a trip through time and change the future – and she is willing to sacrifice her own life to save the world from the clutches of the evil Faustus.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

When told that Judy Janus is filling Anderson's shoes, Dredd replies, 'Those are big shoes, Janus. Watch you don't trip.' It is certainly difficult to imagine another character taking the place of the Dreddverse's most popular telepath. Although Janus and her flame-haired compatriot **JUDGE KARYN** were credible candidates for her crown, Cassandra Anderson has steadfastly remained the Queen of Psi-Division.

Although named after the two-headed ancient Roman god of doorways or beginnings, Janus's distinctive shaved head, dizzy demeanour and teenage colloquialisms meant she was a character with a foot in contemporary 1990s culture. Quoted in *Thrill-Power Overload*, co-creator Grant Morrison said: 'Janus was a rave-era character, the kind I was meeting, so she felt more relevant to me than Judge Anderson, who had this kind of dated Debbie Harry vibe.'

Aside from her other co-creator, the legendary Carlos Ezquerra, the other main artist on Janus's brief run of adventures was Paul Johnson, who had previously worked on **THARG'S TERROR TALES** and **VECTOR 13**, bringing an impressive, dreamlike quality to the visuals.

Apart from **ARMITAGE** writer Dave Stone using Janus in two licensed spin-off projects – his 1995 prose novel *Wetworks* and Big Finish audio drama *The Killing Zone* (2002) – the Psi-Judge has quietly disappeared. A possible explanation for this comes from long-serving **2000 AD** editor Matt Smith: 'The readership failed to warm to her, her Valley Girl inflections possibly proving more grating than endearing, and she's never appeared in the strip since.'



JARA, AMERICA

Appearances:

Judge Dredd: America (Megs 1.01-1.07) and *Judge Dredd: America: Fading of the Light* (Megs 3.20-3.25).

Born in 2085 in Fred Nietzsche Block, Mega-City One, America was named by her immigrant Puerto Rican father, Tony, in honour of him and wife Alvira's new home – the country that was long ago founded on the three great principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Politicised at a very early age, even as a child the proud and strong America fiercely defended her belief in freedom, standing up for her best friend, Bennett 'Benny' Beeny, when he was bullied by other children or intimidated by the Judges when he had done no wrong.



Bennett's childhood friendship blossomed into an unrequited love for America, however. Time drew them apart – Bennett spent time in Mega-City Two and luckily avoided the Apocalypse War. When they were brought back together as adults Bennett had become a successful singer and America – still vehemently believing in rule by the people for the people – was involved with Total War, a violent terrorist organisation not averse to murdering Judges to further their pro-democratic cause.

America told Benny how, in the intervening years, she and her boyfriend and fellow pro-Democracy activist Dood had been on a peaceful protest march when it descended into violence, initiated by Justice Department infiltrators. Dood was killed and America was put into custody. Four months' pregnant at the time, she lost her baby son, who would have been named Tony after her own father, when the authorities terminated her pregnancy, claiming that the foetus was mutated and could not legally be brought to term. As a result she spent time in the psych cubes.

Benny sees America and her comrades' wipe out a squad of Judges – and to America's horror, her compatriot, Kurd, shoots Benny in the throat so there will be no witnesses. The singer survives but his career is over, although he can live comfortably off his royalties for the rest of his life. He does not mention America's name to **JUDGE DREDD** when the senior lawman interrogates him in hospital about the assailants.

America sleeps with Benny then asks him for 100,000 credits to fund Total War's attempt to blow up the Statue of Liberty, symbolic of the Justice Department's totalitarian rule. This time, out of love for America and not wishing his money to finance murder, Benny betrays America to Dredd, who will let America live after the incident is quashed. The Judge makes an example of the terrorists for anyone else with democratic sympathies, however, ensuring they are taken down with brutal, merciless efficiency. America is felled by a Judge's bullet – but not on Dredd's orders and the Judge who fired was reprimanded by his superior. America is left in a coma, brain-dead before she reached the hospital.

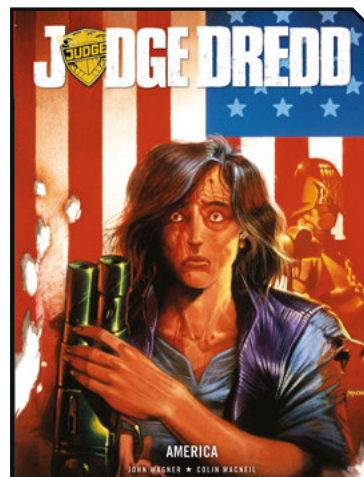
A heartbroken and guilt-ridden Benny has his own mind transferred into her body, a permanent reminder of his love – and a punishment for his betrayal of his beloved America.

A daughter, also called America but more commonly known as 'Ami', was born a year after Bennett had impregnated America's comatose form. Within a few more years, America's body unfortunately rejected the process, causing seizures, deterioration of motor skills and inevitably leading to terminal illness.

Total War activists – led by Benny's malicious showbiz rival, Victor Portnoy – want Benny to sacrifice his now-short life with a terrorist bomb and, when he eventually refuses, they kidnap his daughter, but young Ami is rescued unharmed by Dredd and his cohorts.

Before her father's final journey to the Fading of the Light Euthanasium (and, of course, the death of America's body), in order to protect Ami from further Total War danger, Bennett has her inducted into the Academy of Law. This was deemed as the safest option, and her father's loyal robo-butler Robert would still look out for the child.

Despite her unusual parentage and especially her mother's past links with terrorism, Ami grows up to become one of the finest in a new generation of Judges and is the youngest ever to join the ruling Council of Five, where she sees it as her duty to carefully reform the Judicial System from the inside and make it less oppressive for the citizens [see **BEENY, JUDGE**].



A collected digital version of **Judge Dredd: America** is available from the online **2000 AD** shop and was released in 2013.

JOE BLACK ADVENTURE, A

First Appearance:

Prog 204

Essential Thrills:

Trial and Error (Prog 204), *Bloomin' Cold* (Prog 215), *Joe Black's Tall Tale!* (Prog 241), *Horn of Plenty!* (Prog 248), *The Hume Factor* (Prog 252) and *Joe Black's Big Bunco* (Prog 256)

Series created by:

Kelvin Gosnell (writer) and Mike Dorey (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Joe Black of PEST – the Planetary Exploration and Survey Trust – would have you think that he is their finest operator. Although experienced, in reality he is rather lazy and always on the lookout for ways to make a fast buck to top up his meagre wages.

He is picked to conduct the trial run of a new automatic, independent robot surveyor and lands his spacecraft amidst the dense jungles of unexplored world PZ-492-02. As far as Joe is concerned, the robot turns the local primitive population against them by destroying trees and they must flee. Instructed by its human master to fire upon an a mutated giant spider creature, the droid inadvertently destroys their ship with a laser blast – meaning that Joe is stranded for six months until a regular inspection craft comes along to check on them. When his colleagues eventually arrive and enquire about the robot's surveyor's performance, Joe is quick to sing its praises – as a makeshift field stove.

Joe takes a detour to a great chemical factory orbiting the Earth, where he wishes to sell a large consignment of alien plants which can genuinely cure the common cold. If he presents the ground-breaking discovery to PEST, he will make no profit but now he plans to bag the exclusive rights. Stevens, the immoral owner of the facility, tries to kill Joe and keep the plant hidden forever in a vault, reasoning that his pharmaceutical business would disappear if the cure was to go on the market. Joe manages to escape but his craft is damaged. Forced to bail out in his gravchute, the spaceship disintegrates in the atmosphere and the plants fall to Earth and, Joe wistfully notes, will start curing the common cold for free.

The PEST operative's other schemes include trying to marry an intergalactic princess before realising that her species are over thirty feet tall; acquiring a machine that will replicate anything but using it only to reproduce a good cup of coffee; saving a planet of humans from robots who have become the dominant species and finally impressing his boss by bringing about a lucrative survey partnership with the Ypurian race – by sneakily working alongside a fellow Ypurian surveyor after a fistfight, the winner of which would claim an uncharted world for their company, resulted in a draw.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Joe Black's adventures are light-hearted fun and do not outstay their welcome. Although he is not averse to some ducking and diving – akin to then-contemporary, likeable television conmen Arthur Daley or Del Boy Trotter but with a spaceship at his disposal – he is a basically decent soul who will gladly help out others out if they are in a jam.

Written by **2000 AD**'s second editor Kelvin Gosnell, who worked closely with predecessor Pat Mills in crafting the fledgling title's formative issues, his scripts are neatly self-contained, with just the right amount of action and wit, side-stepping the grittiness of stories like **MELTDOWN MAN** and **STRONTIUM DOG**, which were published at the same time.

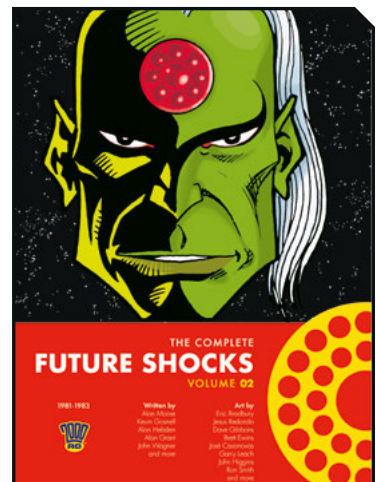
Although originally drawn by Mike Dorey (**M.A.C.H. ZERO**) in his debut outing, then by **THE V.C.s'** Garry Leach, it was when John Higgins (**JUDGE DREDD**) took over for the following four stories that these occasional adventures had cohesion and a lighter touch, which brought the comedic elements firmly to the fore.

On a trivial note, intergalactic wheeler-dealer Joe is technically the first one-off character from **THARG'S FUTURE SHOCKS** to become a recurring – albeit fairly briefly – one for **2000 AD**. Although **ABELARD SNAZZ**'s Prog 189 debut predated Black by a mere three months back in December 1980, bungling brainiac Snazz's continuing development began under the similar **RO-JAWS' ROBO-TALES** short story banner. His co-creator, **Future**



WE SUSPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE A SIZE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE. WE TRUST IT WILL NOT CAUSE DIFFICULTIES...

AH, ER, NO— BUT I THINK WE MIGHT HAVE TO FIND SOME OTHER WAY OF CEMENTING OUR AGREEMENT. THIS MARRIAGE IDEA AIN'T GONNA WORK...!



All **A Joe Black Adventure** stories were collected among two trade paperback volumes of **The Complete Future Shocks** in 2018 and 2019.
Vol 1: ISBN: 97811781085592
Vol 2: ISBN: 97811781086834

JOKO-JARGO

Appearances:

Progs 2130, 2170, 2183, 2196, 2206 and 2220

Joko-Jargo is the nephew of all-powerful **2000 AD** editor **THARG THE MIGHTY**. In the spirit of embracing an Earthlet concept known as 'work experience', the illustrious Green One generously allows the boundlessly enthusiastic youngling to take over the Nerve Centre and indeed the weekly prog every now and then.

2000 AD Regened was a Free Comic Book Day issue in 2018 with classic stories such as **JUDGE DREDD**, **STRONTIUM DOG** and **D.R. & QUINCH** reimagined for an all-ages audience. With an emphasis on action and adventure rather than violence, the idea was to showcase **2000 AD** for younger readers and with a view to bringing in new ones.

A further Regened issue, Prog 2130, had a higher page count and was published in May 2019. The experiment was a huge success and was in fact the bestselling issue that year – and included the debuts of brand-new, continuing tales such as **FINDER & KEEPER** and **FULL TILT BOOGIE**. This led to four all-ages takeover specials in 2020.

Hugely popular, it is likely that these welcome Regened issues will keep their seasonal quarterly slots – meaning that Tharg's youthful ward will be around for a long time to come.



JOURNAL OF LUKE KIRBY, THE

SITUATION REPORT:

In the summer of 1962 young Luke Kirby is sent to stay with his Uncle Elias in a sleepy village called Lunstead, while his mother recuperates from an illness. Elias reveals himself to be a magician, well versed in the alchemical arts and eager to pass his skills on to his young nephew.

While Luke starts his apprenticeship, a bestial horror stalks those unfortunate enough to wander alone at night in the woods, including Elias' housekeeper, Mrs Birmingham. Will the burgeoning magician be powerful enough to confront the monster? To enter this world of wonder, childhood innocence must be sacrificed.

There are four ranks in the study of alchemy – all linked with control of the four corresponding elements. Apprentice level is linked with Earth; to qualify requires the ability to transmute metals. An Acolyte can achieve mastery over Air, and hence can control all weather. Control of Water brings the rank of Adept. Fire, the final element can be dominated only by a Master.

First Appearance:

Prog 571

Essential Thrills:

Summer Magic (Progs 571-577),
The Night Walker (Progs 800-812),
Sympathy for the Devil (Progs 873-888),
The Old Straight Track (Progs 954-963) and *The Price* (Prog 972)

Series created by:

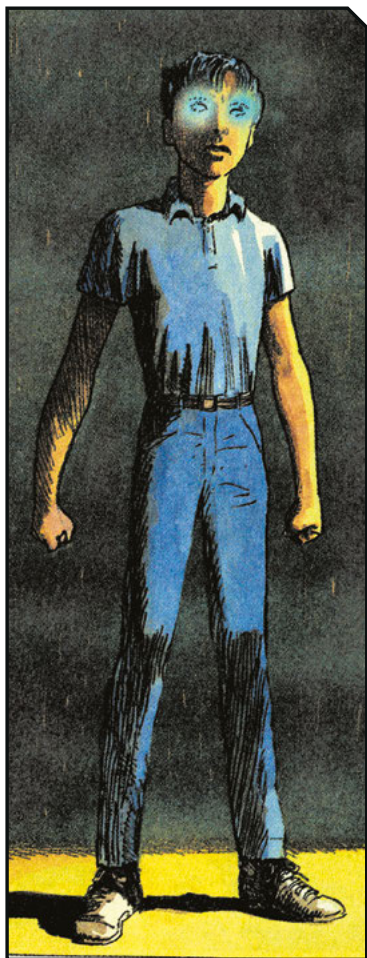
Alan McKenzie (writer) and
John Ridgway (artist)



JOURNAL OF LUKE KIRBY, THE [CONTINUED]



The complete **The Journal of Luke Kirby** was collected into a trade paperback in 2017. ISBN: 9781781085417



When Elias suffers from heart problems, Luke must face the Beast alone. Vanquishing it with a bullet, transmuted from lead to the pure element of silver, Luke discovers that the monster was Elias, now freed from a curse which will eventually find its way to the adult Luke. The boy realises that in the future he will find his own apprentice and the cycle will go round once again.

The following summer, at home in Westerham, Kent, another enigmatic Master, in the guise of a tramp called Zeke, enlists Luke's assistance in destroying an evil, vampiric entity known as The Night Walker which preyed on children.

Harnessing his extraordinary powers, Luke journeys to the depths of Hell to free the captured soul of his dead father, Ben. His unwanted guide is the Devil himself, in the guise of the cunning Jack Hobb, eager to claim Luke's soul for his own ends.

On the eve of May Day and Luke's tenth birthday – the time of his magical coming-of-age – he and Zeke embark on a quest: to walk the Old Straight Track following the mystical ley lines from Leytonstone to Lunstead to attend the Gathering, a meeting of the most revered magicians in the land. Along the way they encounter harmful beings such as a kelpie, a water spirit, and another vampire. Zeke is stabbed by a magical blade, forcing Luke to go on ahead. A demon mage, the flying serpent Nathair Nathrach, is also on the hunt. Luke vanquishes Nathrach by harnessing a huge amount of Earth power.

When the exhausted, drained boy finally reaches Lunstead, Zeke, alive and well, reveals that the hazardous journey was a test to see if he was up to the responsibilities that lie ahead. He is the inheritor of a great magical dynasty, a worthy successor to his father and has the potential to be the greatest alchemist of all.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Predating both Vertigo's *The Books of Magic* and JK Rowling's *Harry Potter* by several years, **The Journal of Luke's Kirby's** tales of a boy wizard were originally envisaged by writer Alan McKenzie as a story pitch for *Eagle* – but **2000 AD's** then-editor, Richard Burton, liked the idea and took it on.

Evoking the comics of the 1960s and with languid pacing and scenes of an idyllic English countryside – albeit one with a dark undercurrent of supernatural menace – Luke Kirby's adventures were like nothing else in the weekly prog in 1988, which still had a triumvirate of sci-fi action stalwarts at its core: **JUDGE DREDD**, **STRONTIUM DOG** and **ROGUE TROOPER**.

A coming-of-age series that dealt with awakening maturity, loss, grief and fear, this is a low-key gem. Co-creator John Ridgway (**THE DEAD MAN**, **ARMITAGE**) provided dense, atmospheric visuals, while his successor Steve Parkhouse (**BIG DAVE**, **TIGER SUN**, **DRAGON MOON**) had a pop-art sensibility that brought a different aesthetic, also relevant to the sixties period setting.

JUDDA, THE

Appearances:

Oz (Progs 545-570), *The Lost Cases*:
The Last Judda (Meg 333)

Morton Judd was Head of Genetics at the formation of the Justice Department by **CHIEF JUDGE EUSTACE FARGO** in the late twenty-first century. It had been Judd's idea to clone existing Judges – most notably Fargo himself – resulting in the 'birth' of **JUDGE Joe DREDD** and his clone brother, **RICO DREDD**.

After the Atomic Wars of 2070, the amoral Judd proposed to clone citizens as well as Judges – effectively creating a docile population that would be easy to police. Fargo vetoed this idea, reasoning that their duty is to serve citizens, not control them. The arrogant Judd had many followers and they attempted to assassinate Fargo and take over but were foiled. Scheduled for execution, they managed to escape Mega-City One with a batch of genetic material and were never seen for several decades.

A twisted army of alternate Judges – armed with killer trident weapons and protective shields – teleported in to Mega-City One in 2109 and inflicted heavy casualties at the Grand Hall of Justice. These renegades were the Judda – a tribe of brainwashed Judges, born out of the stolen race-bank and named after the despotic Judd, whom they worship like a god. Operating out of a base inside the caves of Ayers Rock in the Radback of Oz, the deranged Judd is poised to overrun Mega-City One, of which he sees himself as the rightful leader.

On the pretext of bringing **CHOPPER** back from Oz, where the former powerboard champion was illegally competing in Supersurf 10, Dredd – assisted by **JUDGE BRUCE** – fights the Judda and eventually destroys their base with a nuclear strike. Almost all of the Judda were wiped out. **CHIEF JUDGE SILVER** had hoped to recondition **JUDGE KRAKEN** for street duty as an eventual replacement for Dredd but with disastrous results.

After the failure of his teleporter technology, another Judda – Magnor – survived to go on a killing spree throughout the city before Dredd caught up with him. During brutal hand-to-hand combat, Dredd notices the renegade's teleporter is functioning again – resetting it, he sends Magnor back to the destroyed base at Ayers Rock where the perp perishes in the radioactive ruins.



JUDGE CHILD, THE

Appearances:

The Judge Child (Progs 156-181),
Destiny's Angels (Progs 281-288)
and *City of the Damned* (Progs
393-406)

In 2102, Judge Feyy, Mega-City One's oldest pre-cog, has a vision of the city being destroyed in the year 2120. **JUDGE DREDD** and a select group of other Judges (including future **CHIEF JUDGE HERSHEY**), are sent on a mission to find the Judge Child – so-called because he bears a distinctive eagle birthmark on his forehead.

A formidable psychic, young Owen Kryslar may have the power to stop the apocalyptic event from ever happening. With the fate of the city in the balance, Dredd travels through the irradiated wastelands of the Cursed Earth and ventures out into the depths of uncharted space to find the youth, who has been abducted by the vicious **ANGEL GANG**.

Tracking the boy to the planet Xanadu – ruled by the robot Grunwalder – and having despatched Pa, Link, Junior and **MEAN ANGEL**, Dredd rejects the Judge Child as evil (after witnessing the boy's callous glee at his captors' deaths) and returns to the city, leaving the youth on the Grunwalder's world.

Dredd's judgement is soon proved correct when, fuelled by revenge, Kryslar resurrects Mean with a 'regenerating elixir' and, using his psychic powers, frees the criminal's brother, **FINK ANGEL**, from prison – sending them against the veteran lawman. Dredd kills Fink and incarcerates Mean (who is almost indestructible after returning from the dead) before sending a missile strike to execute the Judge Child. The Grunwalder allows this to happen as he does not wish to incur MC-1's wrath.

In 2106, Tek Division produces Proteus, a prototype time machine. On the orders of **CHIEF JUDGE McGRUDER**, Dredd and **ANDERSON, PSI-DIVISION** use the machine to travel forward to 2120, to discover the truth of Feyy's final prediction. In 2120 they discover the ruined Mega-City, ruled over by the Mutant, a vastly powerful psionic being created from the cloned tissue of Owen Kryslar, who has turned the Judge force into vampires, preying on the citizen population. Far from being the city's saviour, Kryslar was in fact the very evil that Feyy predicted.

Dredd loses his eyes in combat and battles his undead future self. The Judges return to 2106 with 'Zombie Dredd' but Dredd has a plan – to travel to the time before the Grunwalder can create the clone and destroy the robot and his castle, therefore preventing the future catastrophe from taking place. The inactive Zombie Dredd is placed in the Black Museum, and Dredd is fitted with bionic eyes.

In 2120 the disaster predicted by Feyy does not come to pass. Nonetheless, there is still horror when the Zombie Dredd stored in the Black Museum spontaneously reanimates but the dark version of the lawman is finally destroyed by Dredd himself.



SITUATION REPORT:

Mega-City One, 2143 AD. Home to over 160 million citizens, this urban hell is situated along the east coast of post-apocalyptic North America. With unemployment rife and boredom universal, tensions run a knife-edge and crime is rampant. Only the Judges – zero-tolerance cops empowered to dispense instant justice – can stop total anarchy.

They are judge, jury and executioner, armed with Lawgiver handguns that fire six types of voice-activated ammunition, and riding powerful Lawmaster motorcycles with onboard artificial intelligence, side-cannon and Cyclops lasers, they speed the teeming skedways of this urban nightmare where every citizen is a potential criminal.

Toughest of them all is Judge Joe Dredd. Alongside his clone twin brother, **RICO** (the elder by twelve minutes), he was created from the genetic material of the 'Father of Justice', the first ever Chief Judge, Eustace **FARGO**, in 2066. Their growth is genetically manipulated and the brothers are 'born' with the physiological and mental development of five year olds. The clones were of such exceptional ability that they were fast-tracked through the Academy of Law and soon graduated with distinction in the Class of '79.

Although Rico eventually become corrupt, forcing Dredd to kill his own clone brother, Dredd has been the most revered guardian of the Law in the city's history. Early in his career, he defended the metropolis from the likes of **CALL-ME-KENNETH**, leader of the first robot uprising, and the tyrant **CHIEF JUDGE CAL**.

Dredd has policed Mega-City One for many decades, seeing it endure in the face of some of its darkest chapters, like the Apocalypse War of 2104. He fought a guerrilla war against the invading Sov forces led by **WAR MARSHAL KAZAN** and led a hand-picked squad to destroy the enemy by turning their own nuclear devices against the city of East-Meg One, ruthlessly killing millions. This action would come to have dire consequences decades later.

Although he is currently in his early seventies, long past the normal age for a retiring Judge to take the Long Walk – bringing Law to the lawless in the Undercity or the Cursed Earth – Dredd's name alone is synonymous with the very notion of Justice, and advanced rejuve treatments and techniques ensure that he has remained in what he sees as his rightful place – on the streets, in the front line against the never-ending fight against crime.

Although he eventually took a place on the ruling Council of Five so that he could have more of a direct say in matters concerned the running of the metropolis, he stayed for only two years before returning to the streets.

Nonetheless, that is not to say he has never had doubts in his beloved Judicial system. He did indeed take the Long Walk – plagued by concerns about oppressing the citizens – before the disaster known as Necropolis engulfed Mega-City One. Although hideously scarred and left for dead after an attack by **THE SISTERS OF DEATH**, Dredd saw it as his duty to return and save the city from the evil, supernatural grip of **JUDGE DEATH** and his fellow **DARK JUDGES**, **FEAR**, **FIRE** and **MORTIS**.

The senior lawman has several clone-brothers, their genetic material taken from the same stock, but it has not always proved successful – **KRAKEN** was manipulated by the Sisters of Death, and **NIMROD** was psychologically damaged. Another clone, **DOLMAN**, a former member of **THE Space CORPS**, has kept in touch with Dredd's niece, **VIENNA DREDD** (his clone brother Rico's daughter). Most successful is **JUDGE RICO**, an exceptional clone who could potentially take on the mighty Dredd's mantle should his time on the streets ever come to an end.

Dredd has served under every Chief Judge since 2099 – and counts **GOODMAN**, **McGRUDER** and **HERSHEY** among the best. Others fell by the wayside, like the weak **GRIFFIN**, **SILVER** and **VOLT**, all of whom failed the city in one way or another.

JUDGE DREDD

First Appearance:

Prog 2

Essential Thrills:

The Cursed Earth (Progs 61-85), *The Day the Law Died* (Progs 89-108), *The Judge Child* (Progs 156-181), *Judge Death Lives!* (Progs 224-228), *The Apocalypse War* (Progs 245-267 & 269-270), *Oz* (Progs 545-570), *Necropolis* (Progs 674-699), *America* (Megs 1.01-1.07), *Mechanismo* (Megs 2.12-2.17, 2.22-2.26 & 2.37-2.43), *The Pit* (Progs 970-999), *Doomsday* (Progs 1141-1164 & Megs 3.52-3.59), *Origins* (Progs 1505-1519 & 1529-1535), *Day of Chaos* (Progs 1743-1789) and *The Small House* (Progs 2100-2109)

Series created by:

John Wagner (writer) and Carlos Ezquerro (artist)



The ongoing **Judge Dredd: The Complete Case Files** – up to Volume 35 as of 2020 – were first collected into trade paperbacks in 2005.
Vol 1: ISBN: 9781904265795

JUDGE DREDD (CONTINUED)



Mega-City One's darkest hour came in the year 2134, when descendants of East-Meg One survivors decimated the city with the Chaos Bug, a biological weapon which wiped out 350 million citizens – eighty-seven per cent of the entire population. Dredd could not help but feel guilt that this was brought about by the consequences of his decisive action to end the Apocalypse War many years before. This disaster caused Chief

Judge Francisco [see **STREETS OF DAN FRANCISCO, THE**]

to step down in disgrace in favour of a former incumbent, Hershey, who took on a second term for the sake of the beleaguered city.

One of Dredd's more recent challenges has been to stop a leadership coup by Judge Bachmann, head of Justice Department's Black Ops division – and even more insidious was a long-running campaign of morally reprehensible black operations, headed up in secret by **JUDGE SMILEY**, whom Dredd sentenced to death for his crimes.

Although the Justice system is far from perfect and any corruption must be weeded out, Dredd still believes in the Law. Indeed, he – quite literally – wrote the book on the subject. His *The Comportment of a Judge*, about how a city guardian should carry his or her self at all times, remains a mandatory text at the Academy of Law.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Encompassing dystopian science fiction, political satire and black comedy, Judge Dredd smashed his way out of the early, cult comic-book success of **2000 AD** and became a mainstream British pop-culture icon who endures to this day.

Writer John Wagner was inspired by Clint Eastwood's tough movie cop *Dirty Harry* (as well as the poster for *Death Race 2000*) and Dredd's unforgettable, visually arresting look was designed by artist Carlos Ezquerro, with initial episodes drawn by Mick McMahon.

Thanks to an army of the finest comics creators throughout the decades, this totalitarian lawman's exploits can easily flit from gritty police procedurals, to humorous one-offs by way of breathtaking action epics such as *The Apocalypse War*, *Necropolis* or *Judgement Day*.

In addition to appearing in almost every edition of **2000 AD** since his Prog 2 debut – held back from the first issue by founding editor Pat Mills so that readers would be hooked enough to return the following week to meet this mysterious new character – such was Dredd's appeal that he of course got his own monthly title, the **Judge Dredd Magazine**, in 1990.

The first **Megazine** issues contained the groundbreaking, mature political insight of the instant classic, **America**. Indeed, democracy and freedom have been persistent themes throughout the strip's history. Although the main character is a faceless servant of a brutal police state, he somehow stands as a colossus who can be both hero and anti-hero, due in no small part to his incorruptible principles.

As a 'brand', **Dredd** has spun off into almost every kind of medium possible, from clothing, videogames, prose novels, audio dramas, newspaper strips, American comics (initially by DC comics, now IDW Publishing) to popular music – artists as varied as Anthrax, Madness, the Human League and members of Portishead have all written songs about him.

Twice, of course, the lawman has made the jump to the movies – Sylvester Stallone's flawed 1995 effort was a flop but Karl Urban's grittier, ultraviolent 2012 version was superb, a critically acclaimed triumph.

Back in the comics, as well as teaming up with fellow **2000 AD** characters such as **STRONTIUM DOG** and **ROGUE TROOPER**, Dredd has also crossed over with popular franchises such as *Batman*, *Lobo*, *Alien* and *Predator*.

After nearly forty-five years of weekly **2000 AD** exploits as well as thirty years of his own **Megazine**, resulting in thousands of printed adventures, Judge Dredd is still the law, creeps!



JUDGE HERSHEY

First Appearance:

Prog 162

Essential Thrills:

Judge Dredd: The Judge Child (Progs 156-181), *Judge Dredd: Day of Chaos* (Progs 1743-1789), *Judge Dredd: The Small House* (Progs 2100-2109), *Judge Dredd: Guatemala* (Progs 2150-2157), *Hershey: Disease* (Progs 2175-2182) and *Hershey: The Brutal* (Progs 2212-2219)

Series created by:

John Wagner (writer) and
Brian Bolland (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Barbara Hershey was newly-graduated from the Academy of Law when chosen by **JUDGE DREDD** to be part of his Justice 1 crew on the deep-space mission to find **THE JUDGE CHILD**. She served alongside him during the *Apocalypse War* and was always a street Judge he could rely on.

During the zombie war of *Judgement Day* – and a foreshadowing of things to come – she capably took on the duties of Acting Chief Judge from an absent **CHIEF JUDGE McGRUDER**. Soon after, Hershey became the youngest ever member of the ruling Council of Five.

She then became Chief Judge in her own right when **CHIEF JUDGE VOLT** committed suicide after the Second Robot War. Hershey's first term saw her deal with crises such as the Total War bombings and corruption by the head of the Public Surveillance Unit, **JUDGE EDGAR**, as well as the threat of the assassin **ARMON GILL**, brainwashed by Judge De Klerk into thinking he was acting on her orders.

After nine years, Hershey reformed the anti-mutant laws, at the urging of Dredd and this permission for outlawed mutants to become MC-1 citizens cost Hershey her leadership – as huge swathes of the Justice Department and citizenry violently opposed this radical move.

Voted out, in favour of Judge Dan Francisco [see **STREETS OF DAN FRANCISCO, THE**], her successor had Hershey removed to off-world duties and Dredd was sent to police new Cursed Earth settlements for the mutants who were now outlawed once more.

Possibly as a result of her off-world posting, Hershey had become infected with an incurable microbial infection but she carried on with her work as a street Judge.

After the devastation of the city's worst disaster in its history, when 350 million citizens perished because of the Sov-engineered Chaos plague, the disgraced Francisco stood down and appointed Hershey to take over once more.

During Hershey's second term of office came the revelation of a huge, insidious clandestine operation at the heart of Justice Department, run for decades by the elusive **JUDGE SMILEY**. Dredd heads a squad to combat this threat, unsure of Hershey's involvement. Their relationship is strained to the point where Dredd delivers the bombshell: 'I know longer recognise your authority.'

Although Dredd kills Smiley, Hershey knows that – however unwittingly – she had let the villain act with impunity during her reign.

The city bade a fond farewell to the respected Chief Judge – the third-longest serving of all time, with sixteen years in total – when the microbial virus takes hold, forcing her to resign her position, her health now failing.

Years previously, Hershey had a sister who could not have children and Hershey donated her eggs. Hershey's final wish is for Dredd to infiltrate Guatemala, which had suffered a robot coup, where Hershey's only known relatives lived. Dredd succeeds in rescuing Hershey's daughter, granddaughter and unborn great-granddaughter but her grandson died in the operation.

When her death was announced, Hershey's state funeral consisted of a remote Justice Department spaceship flying into the heart of the sun. However, known only to a select few – including Dredd and the new Chief, **JUDGE LOGAN** – the funeral was a cover so that Hershey could secretly head out into the world to right the wrongs committed by Smiley.

She will mercilessly remove his corrupt people from their positions of power. Taking powerful meds to keep the crippling virus at bay, her mission took her to Comuna 13, the former Colombia, where she succeeded in taking out a drug cartel founded by Smiley but lost one arm and also a leg in the process, necessitating bionic substitutes.

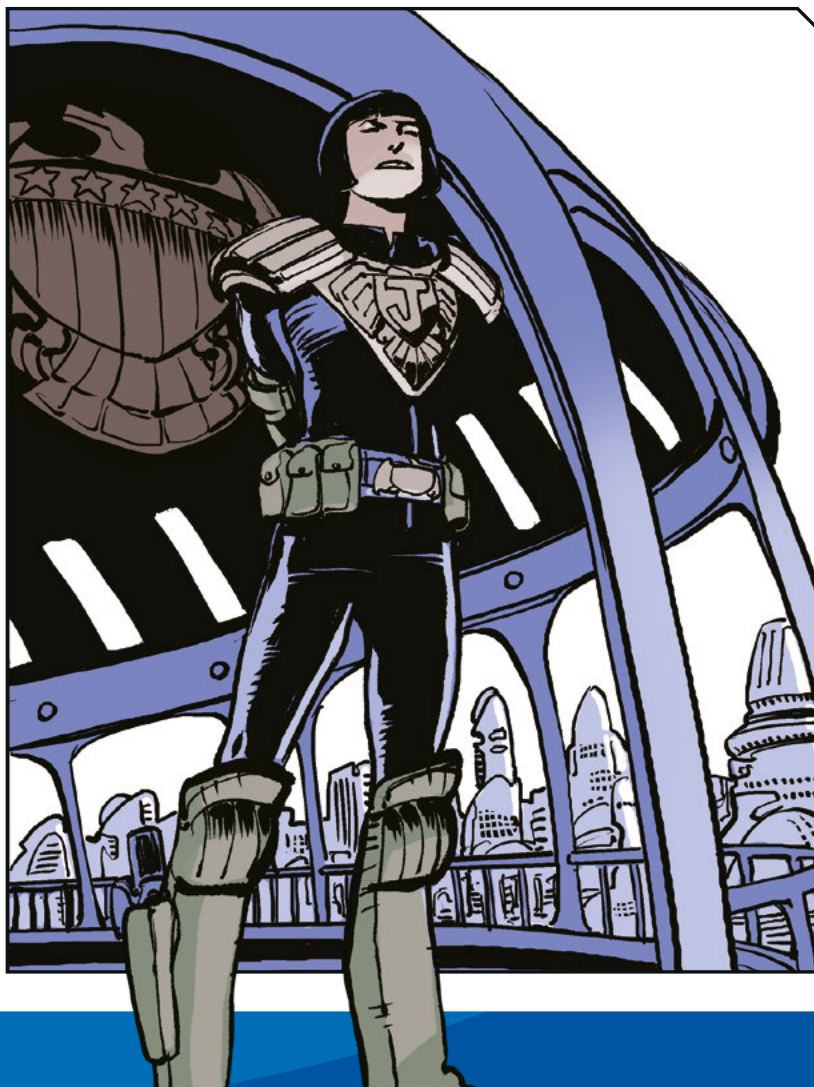
Death is the Longest Walk but for the determined Hershey it is the first step.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Co-created by artist Brian Bolland, Judge Hershey's distinctive, icy look set her apart from the illustrator's other key female law enforcer **ANDERSON, PSI-DIVISION**.

Strictly speaking, Hershey's debut solo outing was in a text story called *Sweet Justice*, written for the 1988 **2000 AD** annual by none other than future bestselling fantasy author Neil Gaiman. However, Hershey was an obvious choice as a supporting Dreddverse character who could be developed further in the fledgling **Judge Dredd Magazine**. Her first solo tale was *Downtime* in 1992, written by **ARMITAGE** scribe Dave Stone and drawn by Paul Peart (**SLAUGHTERBOWL**), a one-off where the off-duty Judge stops a rampaging maniac who is high on keesh, the illegal strength-boosting drug and on a killing spree in her local gym, tearing people apart with her bare hands. Other Hershey solo stories include *A Game of Dolls* and *The Harlequin's Dance*, scripted by Igor Goldkind and illustrated by Kevin Cullen. On a trivial note, at the height of this **Magazine** solo run, Hershey was portrayed by actress Diane Lane – but without the trademark bob hairstyle – in the 1995 *Judge Dredd* movie opposite Sylvester Stallone in the title role.

Ironically, when Hershey became Chief Judge, her promotion in rank superficially returned her to supporting character status. Nonetheless, it was then that she truly came into her own. Growing in real time, she became a fully rounded, genuinely iconic Dreddverse presence.





JUDGE JOYCE

Appearances:

Emerald Isle (Progs 727-732),
Judgement Day (Progs 786-799 and
Megs 2.04-2.09), *Innocents Abroad*
(Progs 804-807) and *When Irish
Pies Are Smiling* (2000 AD Yearbook
1993)

Judge-Sergeant Charlie Joyce was a laidback law enforcer born and bred in Murphyville, part of the Emerald Isle, which is twenty-second century Ireland. He first encountered **JUDGE DREDD** when the Mega-City One senior Judge came to the Isle to apprehend Bonny Staples, an MC-1 mob blitzer hired by a small-scale terror group called the Sons of Erin, who wish to free their native land from the humiliation of being a stereotypical theme park for tourists. Joyce, a married man who enjoys a drink at the pub, is amazed by the stern attitude of his counterpart. Dredd thinks likewise about the Irishman but is aghast at what he sees is a lack of discipline.

The two met again other soon after when both battled the zombies of **SABBAT THE NECROMAGUS** during *Judgement Day* and survived the worldwide carnage.

Joyce had always wanted to visit 'the Big Meg' and got his wish when he had to bring back two Irish fugitives – bank robber brothers Paddy and Francie O'Dilligan – who have come to MC-1 to lie low, hoping for protection from their other sibling, Mickah, a racketeer. Assisted by Dredd and **JUDGE HERSHEY**, the escaping perps died when they and Joyce were involved in a skedway accident. Unimpressed at his injuries, Joyce told Dredd and Hershey: 'As far as I'm concerned you can stick your Mega-City up your—'

Charlie was eventually disgraced and died in a shoot-out while drunk on duty. His son, Fintan, also became a Judge; one of his reasons was to bring back honour to the Joyce name. He joined the ranks of Mega-City Judges after their forces were severely depleted in the aftermath of Chaos Day, when millions became victims of a Sov bioweapon.

Teaming with Dredd and returning to Murphyville, Fintan found proof that Charlie was murdered by a shadowy cabal of Brit-Cit and Emerald Isle politicians, who thought Joyce Senior was about to expose their involvement in a cover-up of the deaths of over two hundred civilians many years previously.

Fintan, highly regarded by Dredd and Hershey, was glad to exonerate his father and continues to serve with distinction.



JULIET NOVEMBER

First Appearance:

Prog 1189

Essential Thrills:

Judge Dredd: Pyrokinetics (Prog 1189), *Phoenix Falling* (Megs 202-204) and *Anderson, Psi Division: Lock-In* (Megs 227-230)

Series created by:

John Wagner (writer) and
Arthur Ranson (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Psi-Division auxiliary Juliet November is a very special citizen – a pyrokinic, who can cause spontaneous fires purely by the power of her mind – and Mega-City One Judges want to utilise Juliet's abilities for their own ends. She has been hired for a mission but is very nervous, causing multiple fires to break out.

Justice Department are monitoring a syndicate meeting of four criminal organisations – the Borgs, the No-Facers, the Juve Alliance and the Ape Gang – and have an informer in the midst of one of the factions. In case their man has to rescued fast, **JUDGE DREDD** and two fellow Judges are waiting to burst in at a moment's notice.

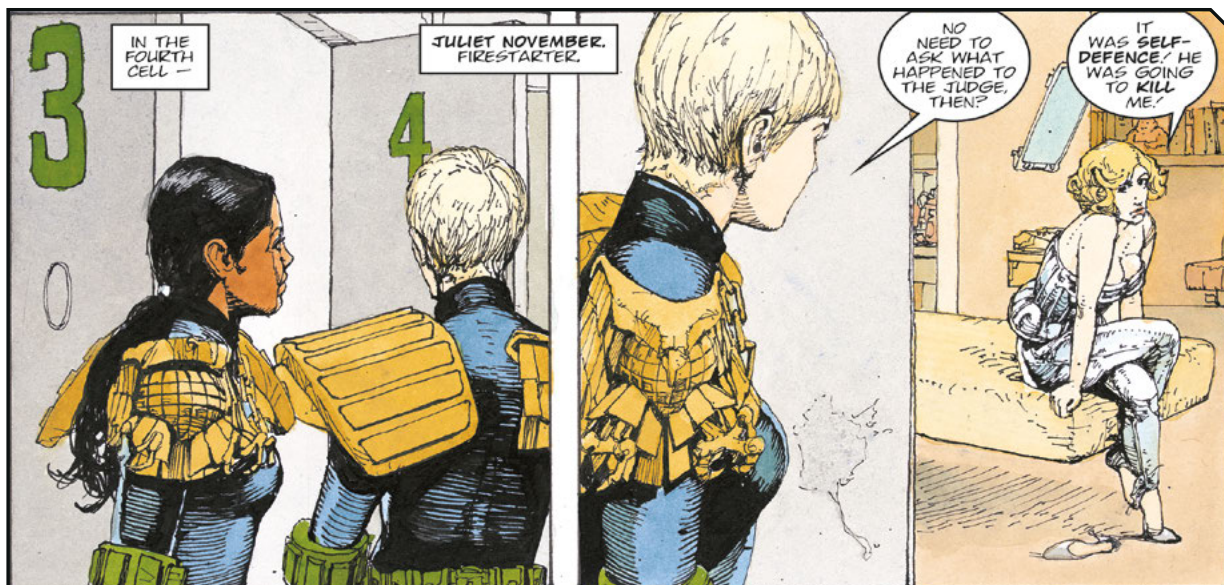
The meeting is chaired by the half-cybernetic AI 'Bugsy' Borg, who holds up a letter from his recently deceased Uncle Cy, revealing the identity of a traitor among them – and that it must be a joint action effort to kill him.

Juliet manages to focus and do her job – sparking the letter into flames before Bugsy reveals the name – but the cyborg inadvertently burns the ape leader, Itchy Appelino, with the smouldering piece of paper. A full-on gun-fight ensues and everyone in the room is wiped out before Dredd can intervene. Now that there is no syndicate the lawman grimly notes that this is a result of sorts.

Months later, encouraged by her robo-maid, Hettie, Juliet is doing her best to live a normal life despite her powers – which she can just about keep in check if her emotions do not get the upper hand – and can be controlled with breathing exercises and remaining calm and stress-free.

She is excited about an upcoming, Justice Department-approved date with the charming Tonio Gloop, whom she met at the block library. After a meal at Geeksy Pete's, the couple head to the Vox Theater's Drama Verite night, where ordinary citizens get up on stage to act out their life frustrations in return for cash.

Tonio and Juliet are getting on well and share a passionate kiss but the night takes a turn for the worse. Kung Fu acrobats the Van Family have been fired from a movie and vent their ire against the casting director, Jimbo Lint, killing him in the process. Panicked that the audience will alert the Judges, the family also kill anyone trying to flee, and are now in a hostage situation. The whole club could go up in flames if the stressed Juliet does not manage to rein in her fear and anxiety.



With unlucky timing, Juliet's Justice Department pager goes off. Wishing to protect her, Tonio valiantly says that the device is his. However, the unhinged perps – now joined by dim, armed bank-robbers who have broken in to the wrong building – beat up Tonio before one ruthlessly finishes him with a bullet to the head. Alerted to the scene by Juliet's Psi-Judge liaison officer, Rae, Dredd is too late to stop Juliet's terrible revenge against the murderers, burning them all alive.

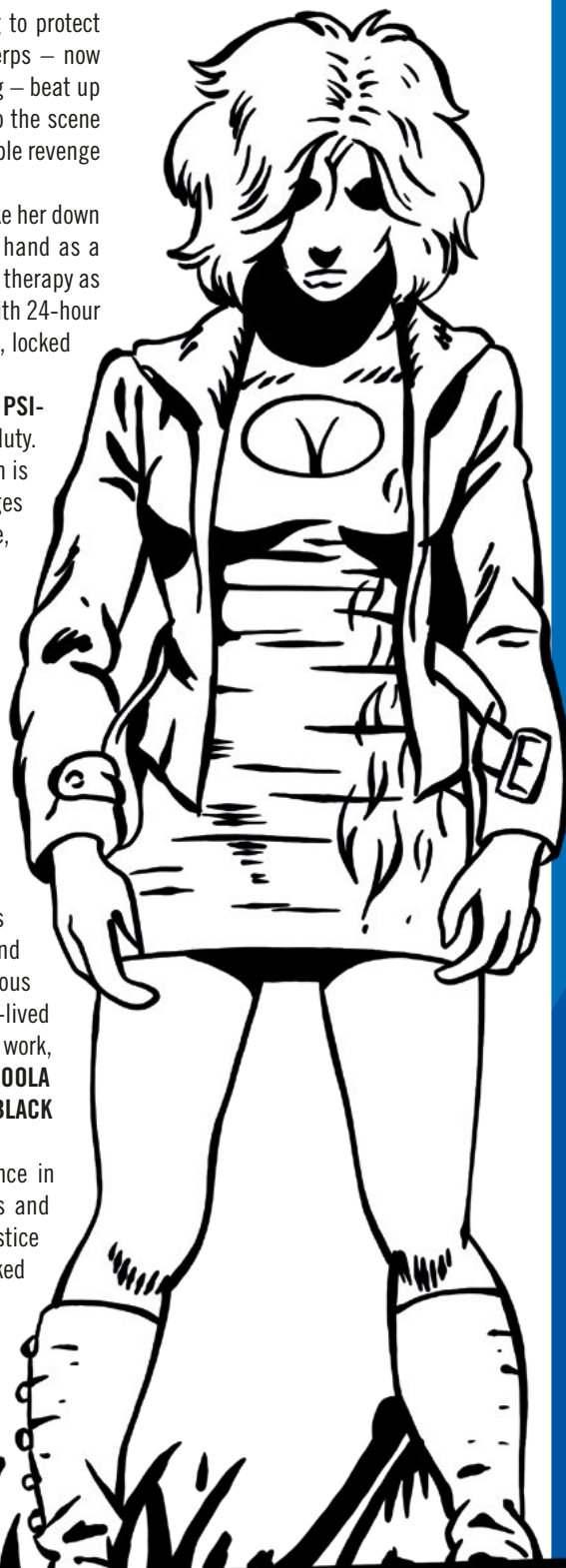
With Juliet's power completely out of control, Dredd has no choice but to take her down with a Lawgiver stun shot. Sustaining extensive burn damage to her right hand as a result of her own abilities, the heartbroken pyrokinetic refuses corrective nuSkin therapy as the scarring reminds her of Tonio. Her new 'home' is a nuBestsos-lined cell with 24-hour surveillance and power-sprinklers in the ceilings, deep beneath Psi-Division, locked away as she cannot control herself.

After emerging from a coma caused by the Half-Life virus, **ANDERSON, PSI-DIVISION** must undergo an evaluation to determine her fitness for return to duty. Psi-Division HQ is locked down after a man claiming to have visions of death is brought in. Prisoners violently turn against and kill each other, forcing Judges to destroy them. Even the dead prisoners are brought back to gruesome life, their brains 'rewired' and killing many Psi-Judges in their path. Anderson frees Juliet and urges her to use the destructive power of her pyrokinesis to rid them of this rampaging menace. Juliet succeeds, and the threat is later identified as a deadly nanobot swarm, used by someone within Justice Department. Although Anderson is cleared fit for duty, Juliet is returned to the loneliness of her cell.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

After her first appearance in the pithy **2000 AD** one-off tale, *Pyrokinetics* in April 2000, Juliet November was given her own story spin-off story three years later, hopping over to the **Judge Dredd Magazine**. Originally written by John Wagner and illustrated by Arthur Ranson, the likable firestarter's solo tale had a different creative team and was scripted by Alan Grant and drawn by Graham Manley. The artist had co-created Pat Mills' eponymous *Diceman* character – 1930s psychic investigator Rick Fortune – in the short-lived gaming spin-off title in 1986, and Manley went on to do more **Megazine** work, including *Shakedown* (**Megs** 207-208), featuring euthanistic serial killer **OOOLA BLINT, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?: Maria** (**Meg** 215) and **TALES FROM THE BLACK MUSEUM: Rudder's Cuddlers** (**Meg** 246).

Ranson was back on art duties for Juliet's final – to date – appearance in the gruesome *Lock-In*. Presumably the character – who had real emotions and understandably is far from happy at her imprisonment at the hands of the Justice Department, even if it for her safety and that of other people – is still locked away securely in the holding cells of Psi-Division.



JUNKER

First Appearance:

Prog 708

Essential Thrills:

Self-contained serial in Progs 708-716 & 724-730

Series created by:

Michael Fleisher (writer) and John Ridgway (artist)

SITUATION REPORT:

Dennehy used to be a space cop but a dereliction of duty saw him disgraced and he lost his badge. With barely any work open to him, the only way he can take to the stars once more is to become a licensed space-salvage operator, or 'Junker'.

He and his partner, sentient lizard Raz, roam the space-lanes, hauling garbage or looking for any wrecks that might bring in some cash but end up drowning their sorrows in seedy spaceports or in pitched battles against pirates out to steal their wares.

When the grizzled, cynical Dennehy becomes involved with an alien princess, Veejay, his troubles are only just beginning.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

American writer Michael Fleisher had come to the attention of **2000 AD** because of highly regarded work he had done on long-running pulp series *The Spectre*. For the Galaxy's Greatest Comic he worked on reboots of two strips – **HARLEM HEROES (2)** and **ROGUE TROOPER (FRIDAY)** before this original co-creation, in collaboration with artist John Ridgway (**THE JOURNAL OF LUKE KIRBY**), who provided some very evocative SF art.

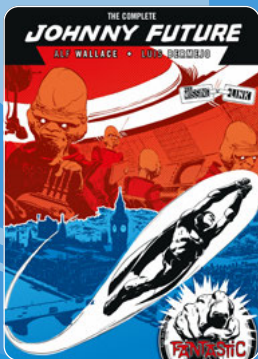




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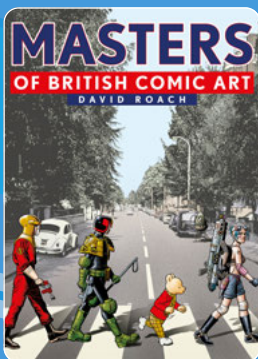
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