

HEROES AND VILLAINS ENTERTAINMENT
presents

EPOCH



1
of 5



KEVIN MCCARTHY • PAOLO PANTALENA

HEROES AND VILLAINS ENTERTAINMENT

presents

EPOCH™

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I was always kind of a nervous kid. Nightmares. Something under the bed. I remember my father telling me there was nothing to be afraid of. That there's no such thing as MONSTERS.

I believed him then. But now I know better.

After ten years on the force, I've seen enough PROOF that they exist.



REAL monsters don't hide in our closets or under the bed. They're all AROUND us. Living normal lives. Pretending.

You can't always TELL a monster by its appearance. The REALLY dangerous ones look just like everybody else. They're our friends and neighbors.



And we usually don't learn the TRUTH about them until it's already too late.

WEEKS EARLIER
18TH PRECINCT
MIDTOWN NORTH, NYC.

My partner and I have been working a series of murders. So far, our only lead is an ATM video of a car leaving the latest crime scene-- registered to U.S. Congresswoman MYA TOKAGE.



DETECTIVE WRIGHT'S GOT A WHOLE OF A WITNESS IN THE BOX. WHY ISN'T MICHAEL WITH HIM, LIEUTENANT? THOUGHT HE WAS THE PRIMARY...

GOT HELD UP FOLLOWING ANOTHER LEAD DOWNTOWN. TOO BAD. I COULD USE HIM IN THERE... HIS PARTNER'S OFF HIS GAME TONIGHT.

She agrees to come in and answer some questions as long as there are no TV news crews waiting for her when she gets here. Smart lady.

Been sweating her almost four hours. She hasn't asked for a lawyer. Hasn't even asked to use the BATHROOM. A real tough customer.



SECURITY CAMERAS PUT YOU THERE AT AROUND MY VIK'S TIME OF DEATH, CONGRESSWOMAN.

THAT TIME OF NIGHT, IT'S PRETTY QUIET. SOMETHING LIKE THESE PHOTOS GOES DOWN? YOU HAD TO HAVE HEARD IT.



IT LOOKS LIKE HE WAS TORN APART BY A WILD ANIMAL!





She gets her deal, and I get my name. It's a shame Michael isn't here for this, but if I don't move on this intel, my guy's in the wind.





That's Glendon on the table. He won't be spilling his guts tonight, somebody beat him to it.



SERGEANT VERELLA, IS THE ROOM SECURE?



CLEARRRRGH!



SCRRRRIPPT!

WHAT THE F---?? FREEZE!

JONAH-- GET OUT OF THERE!

MICHAEL?





THEY'RE NOT JUST LOOKING
FOR BOMBS ANYMORE.



WHAT IF THE COMICS YOU TOOK ON A PLANE LANDED YOU IN JAIL?

THAT'S THE DANGER FACING ONE AMERICAN, WHO COULD SPEND A MINIMUM OF A YEAR IN A FOREIGN PRISON FOR DOING JUST THAT. TURNS OUT THAT ANYONE LEAVING OR ENTERING THE COUNTRY CAN BE STOPPED, SEARCHED OR DETAINED BY CUSTOMS AGENTS BECAUSE OF COMIC ART IN PRINT OR ON LAPTOPS, TABLETS OR CELL PHONES—EVEN WITHOUT SUSPICION OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. GET THE FACTS NOW AT CBLDF.ORG—AND JOIN THE FIGHT TO PROTECT YOUR FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS.

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THIS IS
RECKLESS, EVEN
FOR A DEMON. IF
SOMEONE WERE
TO SEE US—!

FOR YOU TO GO
AGAINST THE COUNCIL
LIKE THIS, IT DOESN'T
EVEN MAKE SENSE. YOU
KNOW I WON'T LET
YOU RUIN ALL THE
PROGRESS WE'VE
MADE.

YOU CALL THIS
PROGRESS? WE'RE ALL
DYING A SLOW DEATH
WHILE YOUR USELESS
COUNCIL PRETENDS
NOTHING'S WRONG. WELL,
I'M FINISHED PLAYING
THAT LOSING GAME.



WHAT'S USELESS
IS TRYING TO GET
THROUGH TO YOU. YOU'LL
NEVER UNDERSTAND. I
CAN SEE THAT NOW.



YOU WANTED ME TO VIOLATE MY OWN RULES AND DRAW ME OUT INTO OPEN COMBAT. WELL, YOU'VE GOT IT. LET'S FINISH THIS.



YOU COULDN'T BEAT ME ALL THOSE YEARS AGO, DEMON. AND YOU *STILL* AREN'T LIP TO THE TASK...



GNNGH!



THAT'S WHY HE DIDN'T ACT ALONE.

AAARGGHH!



THIS WILL DESTROY EVERYTHING WE'VE WORKED FOR. AND FOR WHAT? POWER? CONTROL? HOW DISAPPOINTING...



SHUKKY



EVERYTHING'S
GOING
ACCORDING
TO PLAN.

A MAN
BURNING
BLUE.

HUNH?
WHUZZAT?!

ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL,
10TH AVENUE AND
59TH STREET, NYC.

Soon as I'm able to hold
a pen, the bosses got me
filling out paperwork
for whatever the hell
happened last night.

A lot of good police
died, I know that. Why
I'm not one of them
I really have no clue.

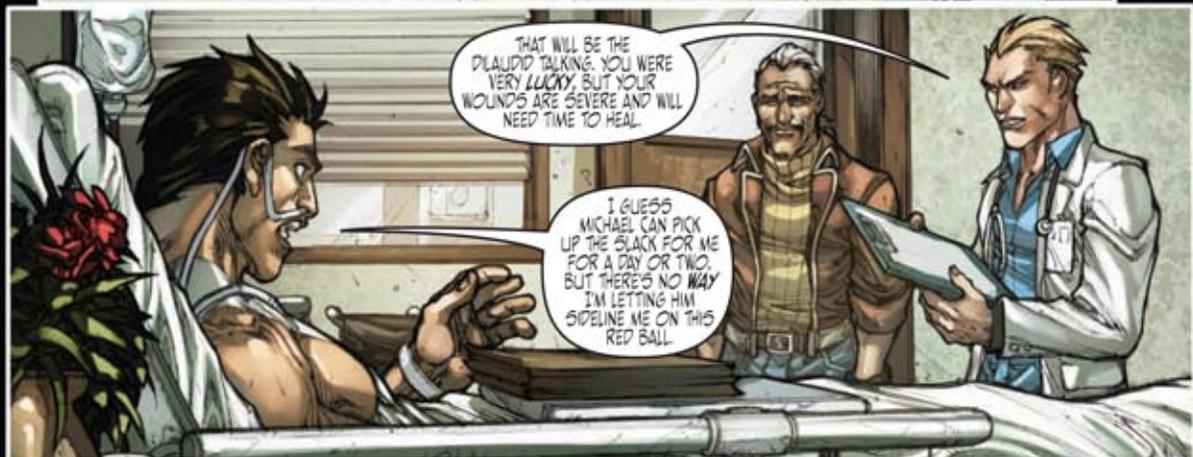




JESUS, JONAH,
YOU LOOK LIKE
HELL.

YOU
SHOULD SEE
THE OTHER
GUY, POP.

NOT FOR
NOTHING, POP, BUT
I FEEL PRETTY GOOD,
CONSIDERING HOW
SOON UNTIL YOU CAN
CUT ME LOOSE?



THAT WILL BE THE
DLAUIDO TALKING. YOU WERE
VERY LUCKY, BUT YOUR
WOUNDS ARE SEVERE AND WILL
NEED TIME TO HEAL.

I GUESS
MICHAEL CAN PICK
UP THE BLACK FOR ME
FOR A DAY OR TWO,
BUT THERE'S NO WAY
I'M LETTING HIM
SIDELINE ME ON THIS
RED BALL.



...JONAH...
MICHAEL IS...
I MEAN, HE
DIDN'T...

WHAT
ARE--



GET OUT.
VISITING
HOURS ARE
OVER.



It's my fault. I should've
BEEN there to back
Michael up, the way I
always do. Or DID. The
way he TAUGHT me.

It's my fault,
and I have to
make it RIGHT. For
the BOTH of us.



IT'S UNCANNY. HE'S JUST LIKE YOU WERE AT THAT AGE, GABRIEL.

NO, TOBIAS. HE IS A BETTER MAN THAN I'LL EVER BE, IN SPITE OF HIS... LIMITATIONS.



LIMITATIONS? JONAH'S MIRACULOUS RECOVERY WOULD SUGGEST HE'S MORE LIKE YOU THAN YOU'D CARE TO ADMIT.

HMM. MICHAEL ALWAYS SUSPECTED AS MUCH. IT'S WHY HE CHOSE TO PARTNER UP WITH JONAH... TO OBSERVE HIM AND TAKE STOCK OF HIS POTENTIAL. BUT NOW...

MICHAEL'S DEATH LEAVES THE COUNCIL WITHOUT A LEADER. I'M PRAYING TONIGHT'S EMERGENCY MEETING WILL HELP MAINTAIN STABILITY, ONLY...

...I FEAR THE WORST IS AHEAD. WE'RE GOING TO NEED YOU IN THESE DARK TIMES, OLD FRIEND.

I'VE BEEN AWAY FROM ALL THAT FOR SO LONG, BUT I... I'LL GO, OF COURSE.



MICHAEL MUST HAVE HAD HIS SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE MOTIVES BEHIND THE MURDERS HE WAS INVESTIGATING. ALL OF THE VICTIMS WERE CONNECTED TO THE COUNCIL.

AND NOW, WITH HIS DEATH, ONE THING BECOMES PAINFULLY OBVIOUS...

YES, THE SWORD OF MALAKHIM IS IN PLAY ONCE AGAIN. SOMEONE INTENDS TO DESTROY US, AND UNDO A THOUSAND YEARS OF PEACE.



IF JONAH IS INDEED ONE OF US, THEN HE IS IN GRAVE DANGER.

ONCE WHOEVER IS BEHIND THIS PLOT LEARNS THAT JONAH IS SPECIAL, MY SON WILL BECOME A TARGET.



YOU CAN'T PROTECT HIM FOREVER, GABRIEL.



BUT SIR, JUST NOW, THE DOCTOR HIMSELF SAID HOW LUCKY I WAS THAT MY WOUNDS ARE SUPERFICIAL AND WILL HEAL IN NO TIME--!

OF COURSE YOU'RE OFF THE GLENDON CASE, I'M PUTTING YOU ON AN EXTENDED MEDICAL LEAVE! GET SOME REST. AFTER A MONTH OR TWO, WE'LL SEE WHERE WE'RE AT.

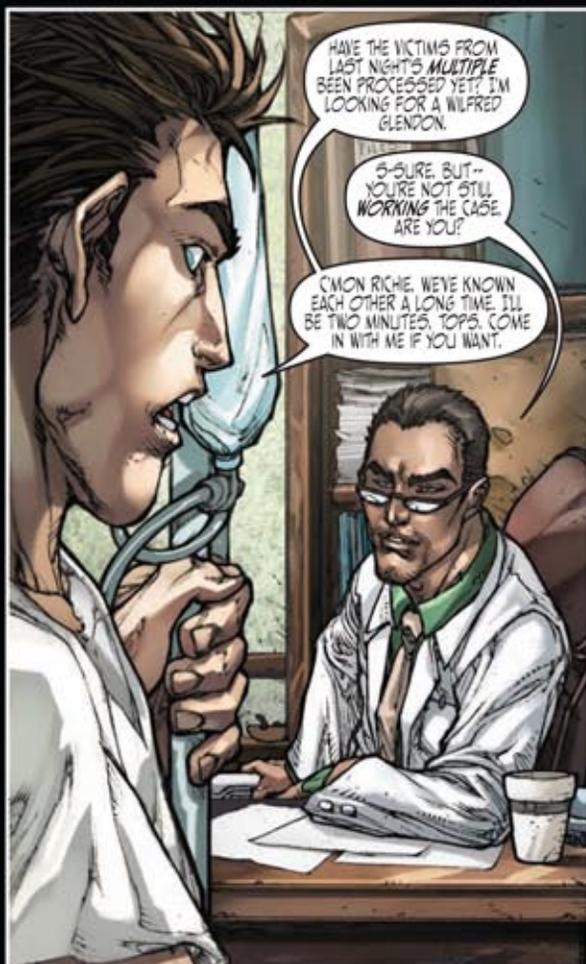


But I CAN'T rest. I won't be able to HEAL until I get to the BOTTOM of these murders. Then, maybe Michael can rest as well.



MORGUE
EXIT
4-21 ROOM PATIENT
HALL

JONAH? DAMN, I'D HEARD YOU WERE UPSTAIRS. WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT OF BED?



HAVE THE VICTIMS FROM LAST NIGHT'S **MULTIPLE** BEEN PROCESSED YET? I'M LOOKING FOR A WILFRED GLENDON.

S-SURE, BUT-- YOU'RE NOT STILL WORKING THE CASE, ARE YOU?

C'MON RICIE, WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME, I'LL BE TWO MINUTES, TOPS. COME IN WITH ME IF YOU WANT.



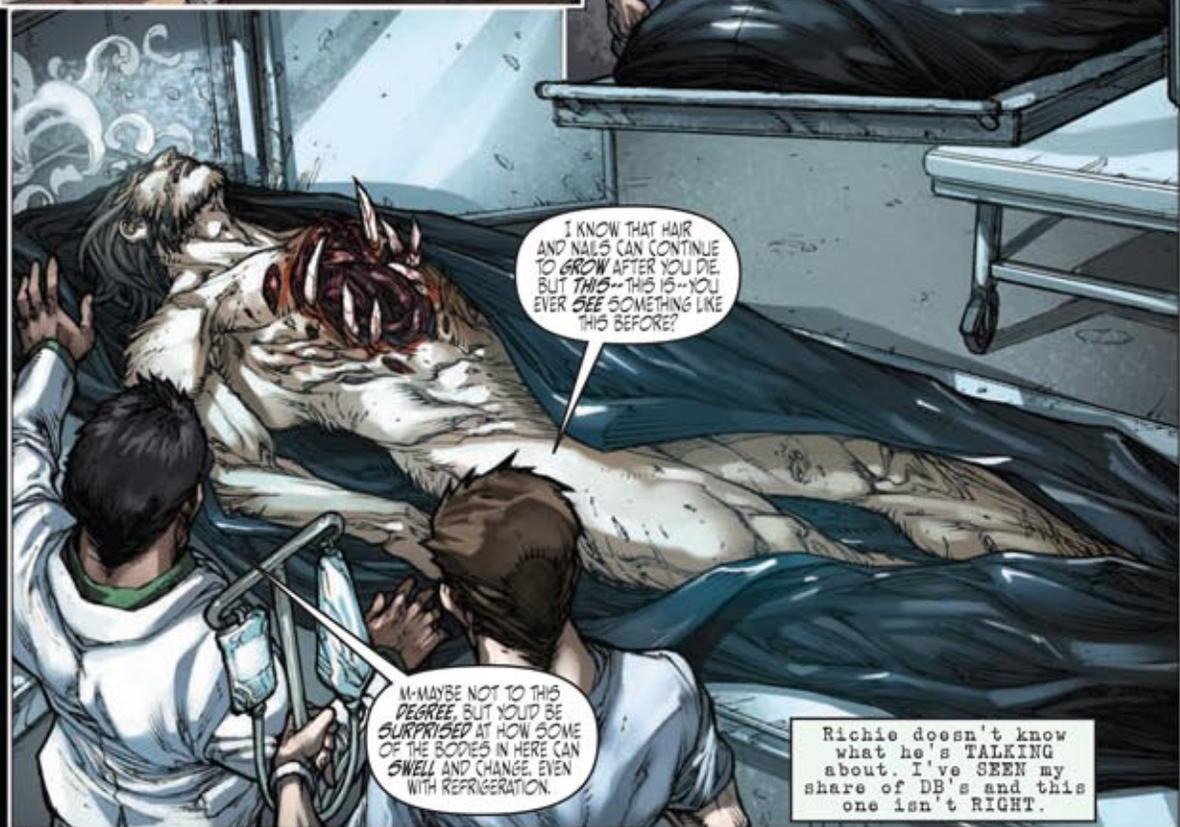
WHEN I THINK OF WHAT YOU MUST BE GOING THROUGH, WITH YOUR **PARTNER** AND ALL, I MEAN.

HE'S **HERE**, YOU KNOW. MICHAEL, IF YOU WANT TO...

CAN WE PLEASE JUST... STICK TO THE MATTER AT HAND?



I KNOW THAT HAIR AND NAILS CAN CONTINUE TO GROW AFTER YOU DIE, BUT **THIS**-- THIS IS-- YOU EVER SEE SOMETHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?



M-MAYBE NOT TO THIS DEGREE, BUT YOU'D BE SURPRISED AT HOW SOME OF THE BODIES IN HERE CAN SWELL AND CHANGE, EVEN WITH REFRIGERATION.

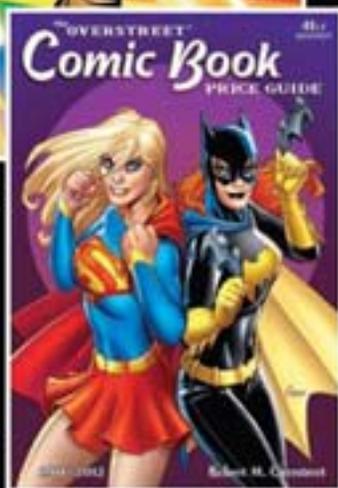
Richie doesn't know what he's TALKING about. I've SEEN my share of DB's and this one isn't RIGHT.

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by Amanda Conner



ON
SALE
JULY
2012







Figures the first time in five years I drop in on the old man, he's on his way out.

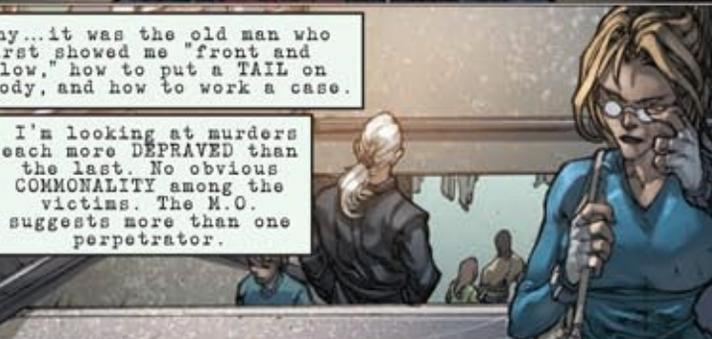


What DOESN'T figure, is why he'd be going downtown at this hour. Or at ALL. In his best suit.

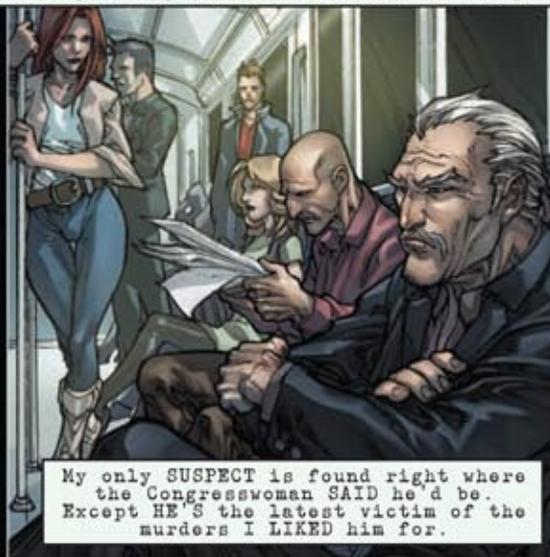


Funny...it was the old man who first showed me "front and follow," how to put a TAIL on somebody, and how to work a case.

I'm looking at murders each more DEPRAVED than the last. No obvious COMMONALITY among the victims. The M.O. suggests more than one perpetrator.

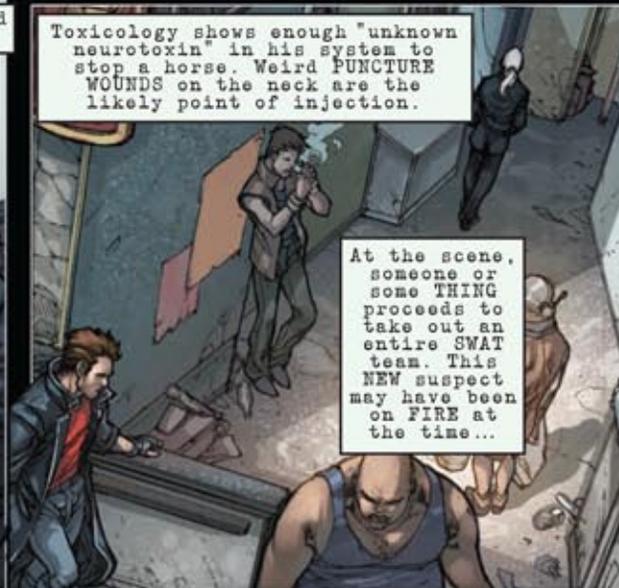


My only witness is a Congresswoman involved enough in my homicides to want immunity.



My only SUSPECT is found right where the Congresswoman SAID he'd be. Except HE'S the latest victim of the murders I LIKED him for.

Toxicology shows enough "unknown neurotoxin" in his system to stop a horse. Weird PUNCTURE WOUNDS on the neck are the likely point of injection.



At the scene, someone or some THING proceeds to take out an entire SWAT team. This NEW suspect may have been on FIRE at the time...



WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME POP?



PRIVATE PARTY.

THIS GUY'S DIFFERENT.



BEAT IT, PIG. WE DON'T RECOGNIZE YOUR AUTHORITY.

OOF!



Even if I DIDN'T just get out of the hospital, there's no way I could take on BOTH of these guys. So, it's the KITCHEN, then.



It takes serious balls to stand tough against a badge. That, or a lot of JUICE.



Either WAY, I really don't know what I'm walking INTO, here.

This place is a MAZE.
It's making me dizzy.
Feels like I've been
walking around for hours.

Wait...didn't I
just PASS this
crazy painting
a minute ago?

And now
I'VE gone
crazy.
too.

YOU SHOULD HAVE
STAYED AWAY. NOW
WE'LL HAVE TO KILL
YOU.

M-MOTHERF--!

DO YOU -- RRRAGH!--
RECOGNIZE THIS
AUTHORITY?!

HUNNF!





AH, GABRIEL--
AND JONAH!
WELCOME! THE MEETING
IS JUST ABOUT TO GET
UNDERWAY.

And just like
that, I'm that
nervous kid all
over again.

With a closet FULL
of every monster
imaginable...

And somewhere among
them, is the one who
killed my partner.

TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT ISSUE

EPOCH ^{#2}



-ANGELS-

The Truth (Yesterday and Today):

Once upon a time, there were millions of Angels, but a bloody civil war led to the near extinction of their species, leaving only a hundred Angels in the world. Cut off from God's guidance, they were forced to blend in with mankind.

Under Michael's leadership, Angels watched over man and the Earth, keeping both in balance for God. Blessed with immortality and dedicated to the protection of humanity, they became society's first responders and guardians (i.e., doctors, policemen, firemen, paramedics, etc.). Angels are not the Supernatural equivalent of priests. They are capable of sin and do not judge other species for their actions. Nevertheless, their collective duty is to serve humanity, keeping balance and harmony in the world.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Though immortal, Angels can be killed. To do so, their wings must first be cut off, thereby making them human. Once human, they become mortal. And, Angels are believed to be incapable of reproduction, but we come to find that this is not true. If an Angel takes human form and breeds with a human, the child born will carry the Angel DNA.

Traditionally, most Angels are not warriors; in fact, they are the last ones to involve themselves in a war. That being said, the Angel Warriors (Archangels) are supreme fighters able to defeat any species in one on one combat. Michael and Gabriel (before becoming human) are believed to be the last of their kind.

Archangels prefer the fighting styles of Jeet Kune Do and Aikido. They are balanced and cerebral fighters: strong, fast, and intelligent. They believe every attack exposes a weakness, thereby offering a perfect counter attack. When drawn into a fight, they quickly analyze an opponent, determine his/her weakness and attack it quickly and decisively. They are neither the fastest nor strongest, but they have few deficiencies. The irony of the Archangel's benevolent existence is that they, in fact, are the perfect fighters.

Angels can fly, but rarely do so to prevent drawing attention. An Angel's wings are his/her source of power. They remain hidden, so they can navigate our world without raising suspicion. But, in battle, Angels work their wings as extra limbs and utilize them as a shield because they are difficult to damage.



-DEMONS-

The Truth (Yesterday and Today):

Other than the Angels, Demons are the most mythical creatures around today. Eons ago, they fought the Great War against the Angels and were banned from heaven. In defeat, they secured their ill-fated fortune as lost Angels – the Demons. Today, they roam the earth and appear human. Yet, when they exert their Demon prowess, their bodies secrete a highly flammable gas that they're able to ignite with their own body heat.

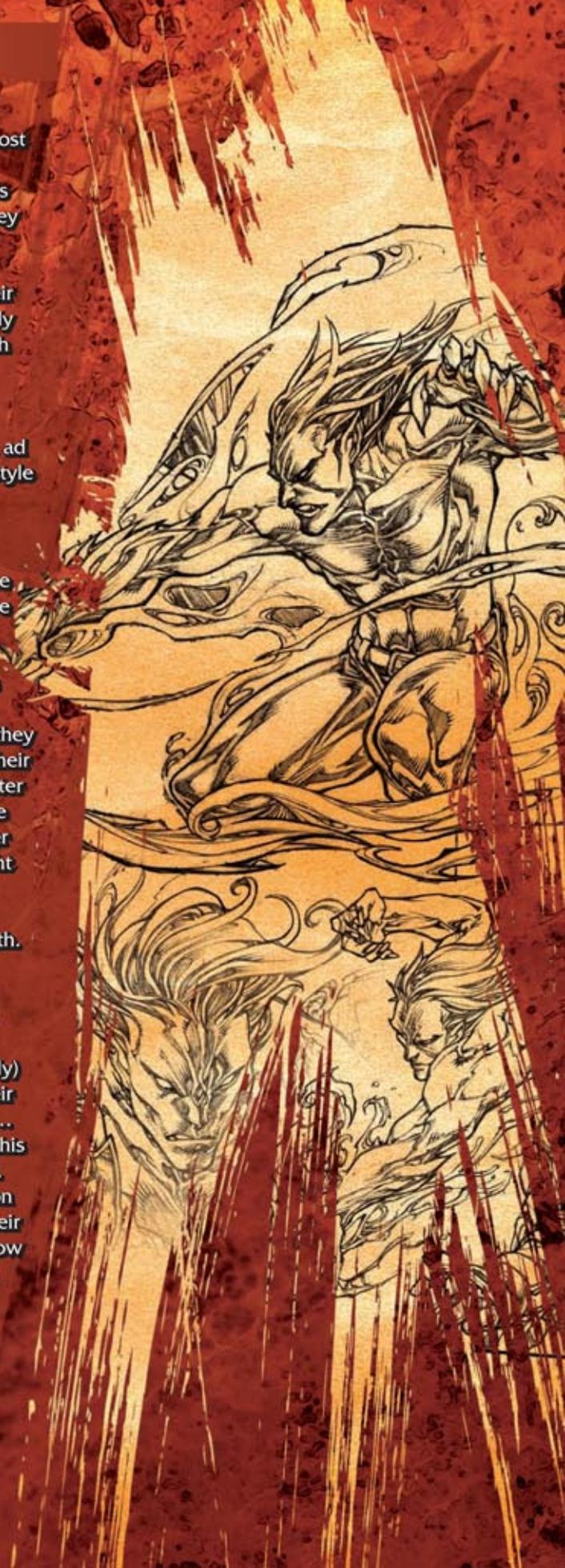
Demons are ambitious, powerful, and passionate. They're rife with lust and desire and excel as lawyers, athletes, stockbrokers, ad execs, etc. – any fast paced, high stakes lifestyle that gets the adrenaline pumping.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Demons can set themselves on fire and use the ability as both a defensive and offensive weapon. Burning incredibly hot with their proprietary color of flame (i.e., red, yellow, orange, blue, etc.), they're able to set things on fire and throw fiery projectiles at their opponents. In close, hand-to-hand combat, they use this ability to singe, burn, and torment their opponent until submission or death. The hotter they burn, the faster they get. And, the more agitated and excited they become, the hotter they burn. So, time is of the essence in a fight against a Demon.

Their weaknesses are few but substantial. First, they don't possess superhuman strength. Fire is their only true weapon, making them susceptible to quick strikes with melee weapons. It is hard to wound a Demon, but death is possible.

Demons use Jiu jitsu (Brazilian Gracie Family) as their primary fighting style. They keep their opponents at bay with their fiery projectiles... until the fight turns to close quarters. Once this happens, their fighting becomes methodical. They wear down their opponents and prey on their impatience. Once a Demon locks up their aggressor, they bring the wrath of hell – a slow excruciating torture that few opponents can escape.



JULY 2011

AVENGELYNE #1

The legendary fallen angel returns to comics. As New York City's sins are covered with a fresh blanket of snow, the psychotic serial killer, Torment, is hard at work creating new ones. Meanwhile, Avengelyne has her hands full with the Red Dragon who has taken a human vessel in search of a new apprentice. Who has the Dragon chosen as his vessel and does it have anything to do with Avengelyne's new look? All this plus the introduction of the stunning, Heaven Starr! AVENGELYNE is a new ongoing supernatural series written by MARK POULTON (Koi Waves) with art by OWEN GIENI and letters and color assists by DEXTER WEEKS.

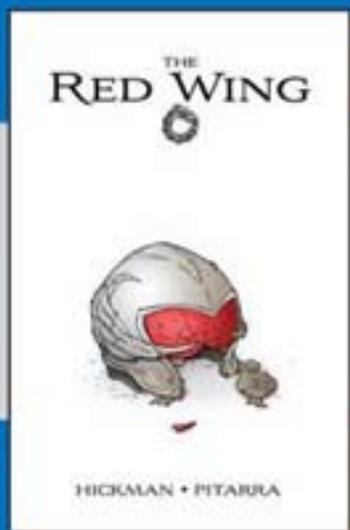


MARKSMEN #1

Sixty years ago the oil ran out and debts were called in. Civil war followed that splintered America into warring fiefdoms. New San Diego is a technocratic utopia that offers the last bastion of peace and prosperity, provided you live within its walls. Drake McCoy is its best protector. McCoy, an expert marksman, defends the city from the numerous threats in the wasteland outside the walls. But when the oil rich Lone Star state sends a powerful army to steal New San Diego's energy technology, even Drake's leadership and skill may not be enough to fend off the siege.

RED WING #1

To stay alive in the future, the best fighter pilots in the world not only have to perfect their skills and master their aircraft, they also have to know how to travel through time. Brought to you by award-winning writer JONATHAN HICKMAN and possibly the best new talent of the year, NICK PITARRA, the Red Wing is the story of the greatest battle in the history of the history of three worlds.



VAULT #1 (of 3)

A small team of treasure hunters struggles to excavate a dangerous and legendary treasure pit before a massive storm hits Sable Island, the "Graveyard of the North Atlantic". Equipped with all the latest technology, the scientists believe they are prepared against all of nature's fury, but nothing can prepare them for what they are about to unleash from The Vault. From the team that brought you CALIBER and the artist of SUPER.GOD.



- 50 GIRLS 50 #2 (of 4)
- AGE OF BRONZE #32
- BOMB QUEEN GANG BANG TP
- BUTCHER BAKER
THE RIGHTEOUS MAKER #5
- CHEW #20
- DARKNESS #92
- ELEPHANTMEN #33
- GLADSTONE'S SCHOOL
FOR WORLD CONQUERORS #3
- GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES #2
- GREEN WAKE #4 (of 5)
- HACK SLASH #6
- HAUNT #17
- INVINCIBLE #81
- LI'L DEPRESSED BOY #5
- META 4 THE COMPLETE SERIES TP
- MORNING GLORIES #11
- MYSTERIOUS WAYS #1 (of 6)
- REAPER #2
- REED GUNTHER #2
- REPULSE (one-shot)
- SCREAMLAND #2
- SHINKU #2
- SKULLKICKERS #9
- SPAWN #209
- TURF HC
- UNDYING LOVE #4
- VAULT #1 (of 3)
- THE WALKING DEAD #87
- WITCHBLADE #146
- WITCH DOCTOR #2 (of 4)

CHECKLIST

The Third Degree: JONATHAN HICKMAN

IMAGE COMICS'
MONTHLY Q&A
SESSION

Jonathan Hickman is the award-winning creator behind acclaimed Image Comics series' *TRANSHUMAN*, *PAX ROMANA*, and *A RED MASS FOR MARS*. Breaking into the industry in November of 2006, Jonathan garnered praise for his groundbreaking series *THE NIGHTLY NEWS*, which earned an Eisner nomination for Best Limited Series.

He also currently works with Marvel Comics, where he writes such fan favorite titles as *The Fantastic Four*, *S.H.I.E.L.D.*, and *The Ultimates*. Jonathan currently resides in South Carolina with his wife, two sons, and a stuffed bear named Aegri Somnia.

This month, he will be introducing a new series at Image called *THE RED WING* with newcomer artist Nick Pitarra.

What are you working on right now?

Right now I'm on a plane headed home from a book signing at Atomic Comics in Arizona. Just turned in a FF script for Marvel and getting ready to dive back into *The Red Wing*.

What's the best part of your job?

Working with extremely talented people. Getting new art in your email is always the highlight of the day/week/month.

What's the worst part of your job?

Easy. Deadlines.

How did you first discover comics?

From my father. He always bought me books as a kid.

If you weren't working in comics, what would you be doing?

I'd probably still be an art director in advertising and absolutely hating it.

What's the strangest thing a fan has ever said to you?

Uhhh, no idea. I haven't really had any weird interactions.

What are you most likely to complain to an editor about?

Coloring mistakes. Or other editors.

Who is the biggest influence on your work?

Grant Morrison or Warren Ellis.

What is the single work of which you're most proud?

I think *Pax Romana* remains the strongest thing I've done.

Own up to one of your guilty pleasures.

Ice cream.

What was the last comic book you bought?

I bought the latest copies of *Morning Glories*, *Batman Inc.*, and *X-Force* earlier today.

Who would play you in a movie about your life?

Tom Selleck or Sammy Hagar or Fernando Redondo.

Pick three things you couldn't live without.

I assume you mean stuff, so... Soccer, art books, my computer.

What's the strangest thing you have in your house?

I have two young boys so it's constantly changing. Last week I found a jar full of bugs under the couch.

When was the last time you laughed out loud?

Oh, sometime today I'm sure. I laugh a lot. Plenty of things to laugh at.

What music are you listening to these days?

I usually listen to folk music. Sometimes I listen to soundtracks.

What is your favorite film of all time?

Lynch's *Dune*.

Who is your best friend?

My wife.

What is the worst advice you've ever received?

"Well young man, you're good at art and excellent at math... You should go to architecture school."

When was the last time you were truly frightened?

I'm on a plane...

Name someone you really admire and explain why.

Anyone that overcomes adversity or takes a risk and gambles on themselves. I'm really proud of Charlie Davies right now.

What would you like to see happen in comics in the next 12 months?

I'd just like to see things stabilize a bit so people would stop being pessimistic and get excited about all the great books that are actually being produced.

What the world needs now is...

Better space programs.



In honor of Independence Day, Image Comics sincerely thanks all of the honorable men and women in the United States Armed Forces, like Image Comics fan First Sergeant Kenneth Gayford who was serving with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan when he sent us this awesome photo.

the  word

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ON SALE IN JULY

Story by RON MARZ
Art by JEREMY HAUN

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