

GRENDEL vs THE Shadow



MATT WAGNER
BOOK ONE

"SO, OUR STORY BEGINS BACK IN THE 1930S..."

"WHEN A NOTORIOUS TONG BOSS...IMAGINES HIMSELF A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF GENGHIS KHAN!"

"ALSO...SOMETHING OF A SORCERER!"

"TO AUGMENT HIS POWERS, HE TRIES TO SMUGGLE A MYSTIC ARTIFACT INTO THE STATES...A SACRED BURIAL URN!"

"SOMETHING GOES WRONG. NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHAT..."

"BUT, IN THE SCUFFLE..."

"THE URN ENDS UP AT THE BOTTOM OF NEW YORK HARBOR."

A dreary September.

Via covert sources, I've been approached by a pair of professional treasure hunters.

WHICH IS WHERE YOU UNEARTHED IT.

The sort who imagine themselves as grand adventurers but are, in fact, little more than bipedal groundhogs. Burrowing through ages of muck for what the world has all but forgotten.

Wishing to avoid messy claims of international ownership, they've brought their latest relic to me.

YES, SIR. I ASSURE YOU, OUR CREDENTIALS ARE IMPECCABLE...

IF THEY WEREN'T... YOU'D HAVE BEEN DEAD THE MINUTE YOU WALKED THROUGH THAT DOOR.

Ah.
YES, WELL...
WE UNDERSTOOD
THAT YOU HAVE AN
APPRECIATION FOR
THIS SORT OF
ITEM.

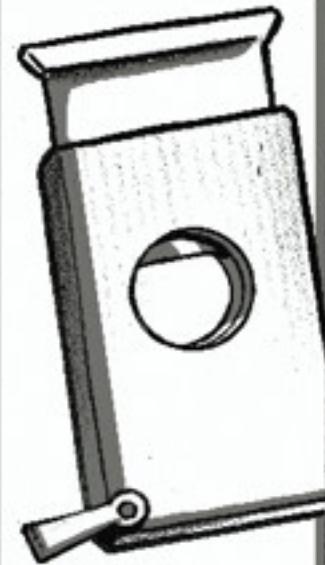


In fact, I do maintain
a collection of some
historical significance.

BONNIE PARKER
MACHINE GUN



ALDOUS HUXLEY
SPECTACLES



AL CAPONE
CIGAR TRIMMER



CHARLES DICKENS
QUILL AND INK



Objects that appeal to
my own private interests.

WILLIAM FAULKNER
HIP FLASK



SWEENEY TODD
SHAVING RAZOR



ERNEST HEMINGWAY
TYPEWRITER



JESSE JAMES
GUN BELT



And, yes...the urn
intrigued me. A
deal was struck.

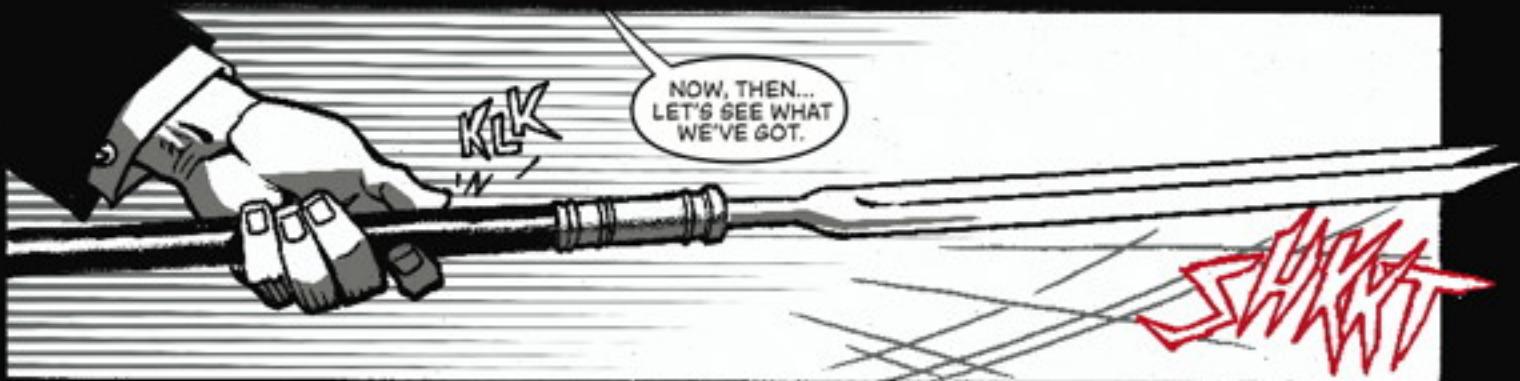
NED KELLY
ARMORED HELMET



The exchange made.



OSCAR WILDE
WALKING STICK





Perhaps I read it with the wrong dialect.

(THUS, I DISRUPT AND DISPLACE
THE LOCKS OF PERMANENCE,
WHERE MEMORY IS ONLY STARLIGHT.)

(UPON THE WHITE
SHORES...OF ETERNITY.)
EH-?!

But, suddenly...reality
began to fracture.

The rift...became turmoil.

And, in a moment,
"I" ceased...

Smitten by a void.

WHAT...
THE HELL IS
HAP--??!

Um...WELL,
THEN --

Just as suddenly...

Whole again. Cogent.

Falling.

Luckily... I tumble well!

But...where was
the office?

Where was the
building?

And then, the greater
shock, gazing south.

Where are the
other skyscrapers?

In the distance... where
are the Twin Towers?!





Camels
AMERICAN CIGARETTES
NEVER HARSH

AUTOMAT HOTEL ASTOR AUTOMAT

PLANTER'S PEANUTS
PLANter's PEANUTS
A BAG A DAY FOR MORE PEP

DRINK Coca-Cola

Compared to the neon nightmare that I know, this Times Square is as cozy as a Christmas tree.

The car engines rumble, gears grinding, their horns honking like geese.

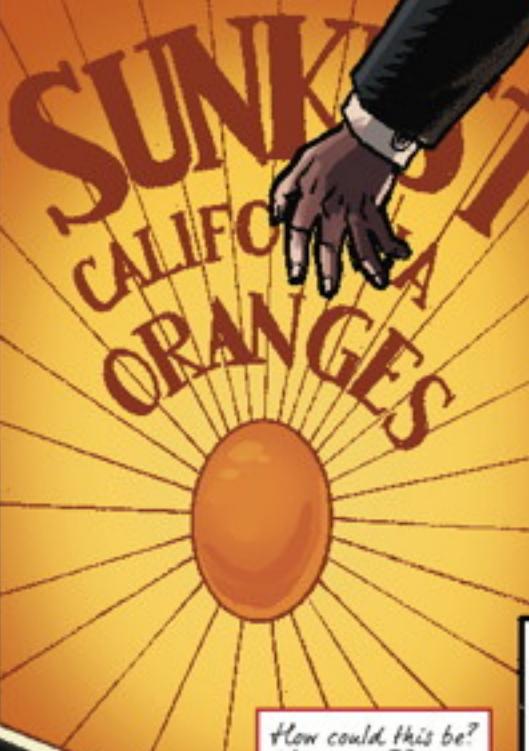
HOTEL ASTOR HOTEL ASTOR

The long-defunct Broadway cable line.

LOEWS STATE

The buildings.
The signs.
The shows...

The AUTOMAT...?!



CAR.



PALACE
THE MUMMY
BORIS
KARLOFF

CRAWFORD

MAXWELL HOUSE

Or...when am I?

THE OLD