



WELCOME BACK™

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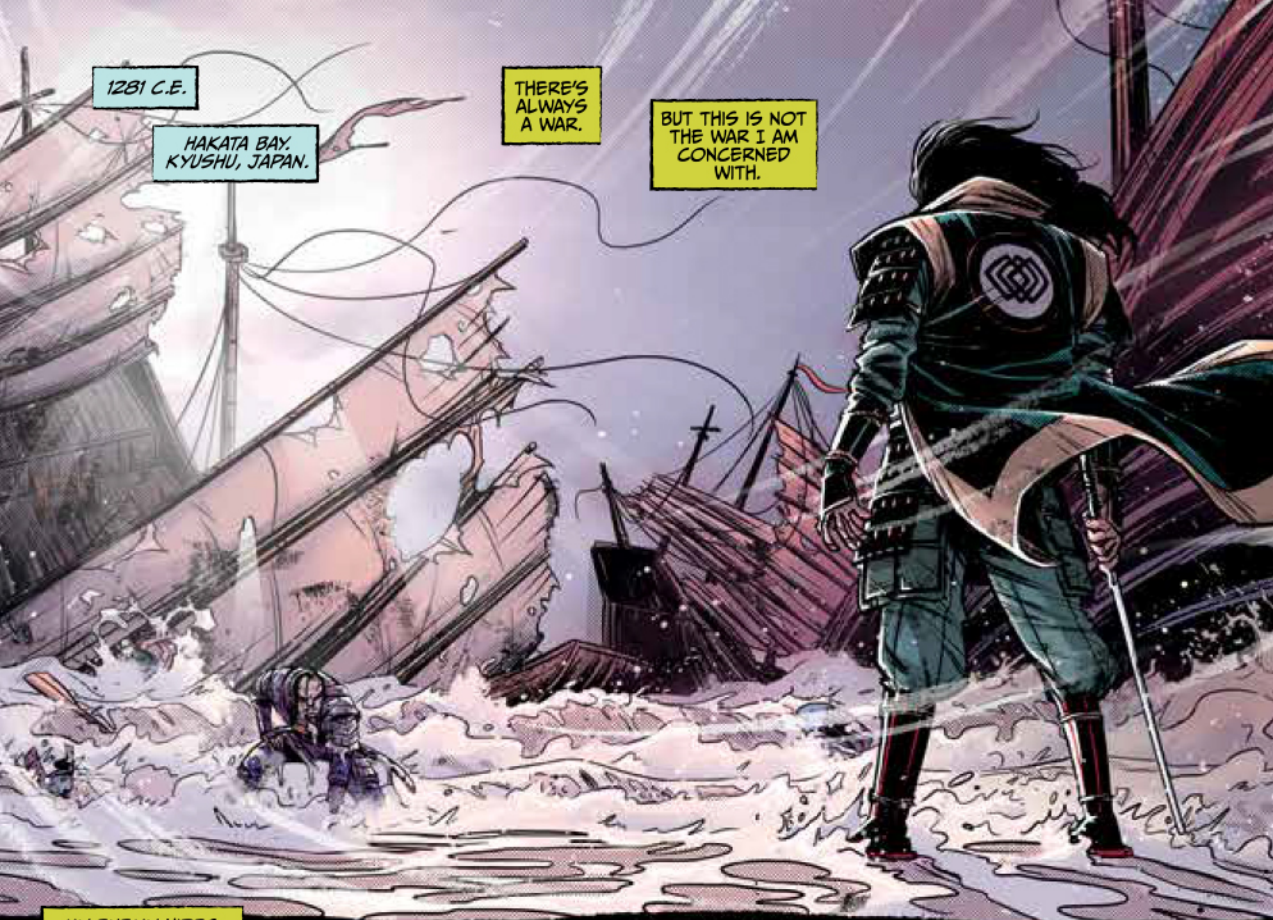
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1281 C.E.

HAKATA BAY,
KYUSHU, JAPAN.

THERE'S
ALWAYS
A WAR.

BUT THIS IS NOT
THE WAR I AM
CONCERNED
WITH.



MY ENEMY HIDES,
BUT I WOULD KNOW
THEM ANYWHERE.

NOS ITERUM
OCCURRET.

WE MEET
AGAIN.

ETIAM
ATQUE
ETIAM.

AGAIN AND
STILL AGAIN.



LIKE THE SCENT
OF A LOVER, THE
SINGULARITY OF
THEIR TOUCH.

UNTIL WE REMEMBER
WHY WE'RE HERE.

THE ENDING IS
ALWAYS THE SAME.
ALWAYS SAD.

WE WONDER, TOO LATE,
WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE
TO DO OTHERWISE.

VALE
INIMICA.

GOODBYE,
FRIEND.

WE DANCE
LIKE OLD
FRIENDS.

THEN IT'S TIME
TO BEGIN AGAIN.





DON'T KILL ME!

OH.

KKSSH

2015 C.E.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI.

EVER GET THE FEELING YOU'VE BEEN CHEATED?

LIKE YOU WERE BORN TOO EARLY OR TOO LATE?

YEAH. THAT'S NORMAL.

I GRADUATED COLLEGE. WENT INTO DEBT. AND I COULDN'T EVEN GET A JOB TEMPING.

HELLO? I'VE TOTALLY GOT A KNIFE ON ME.

NOT SURE WHAT SCARED ME MORE: BEING JOBLESS AND BROKE THE REST OF MY LIFE OR TEMPING THE REST OF MY LIFE.

OR WHATEVER WAS LEFT OF MY LIFE JUST THEN.

I DIDN'T HAVE A KNIFE, BY THE WAY. FORGOT IT AT HOME.



26 YEARS OLD AND ALL I HAD WAS A BARELY-THERE JOB, A DOG, AND A STALKER TO SHOW FOR IT.


I THOUGHT, IS THAT ALL THERE IS?



DID I MENTION I DON'T EVEN HAVE A CAR?

LOSER CITY.

POPULATION: ME.



I MOVED TO KANSAS CITY SIX YEARS AGO. I DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS OR FAMILY LEFT THAT WOULD SPEAK TO ME. I HAD A DOG AND A MINOR INHERITANCE.

I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A FRESH START. I THOUGHT THINGS LIKE THAT WERE ACTUALLY REAL.

A PLACE WHERE NOT EVERYONE KNEW ME OR MY MINOR ROLE IN HISTORY AS THE DAUGHTER OF THE DEVIL.



NO CAMERAS CAMPED ON MY DOORSTEP WANTING TO REHASH THE OLD TRAGEDIES.




FOR A WHILE, IT WAS BLISS. NOW IT FEELS LIKE EVERYONE KNOWS.

I GREW UP WITH IT. REPORTERS, SERIAL KILLER FANS, ASPIRING TRUE CRIME NOVELISTS, COMING AT ME FROM OUT OF THE BLUE. I KNEW THE SIGNS.

NO MORE HAVING TO THINK ABOUT MY STEPPAD OR WHAT HE DID. THE PEOPLE HE KILLED.

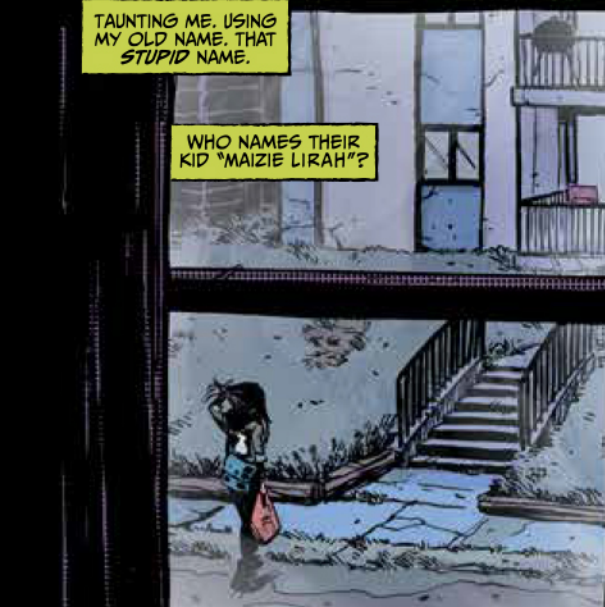
STRANGERS WATCHING ME A LITTLE TOO CLOSE.



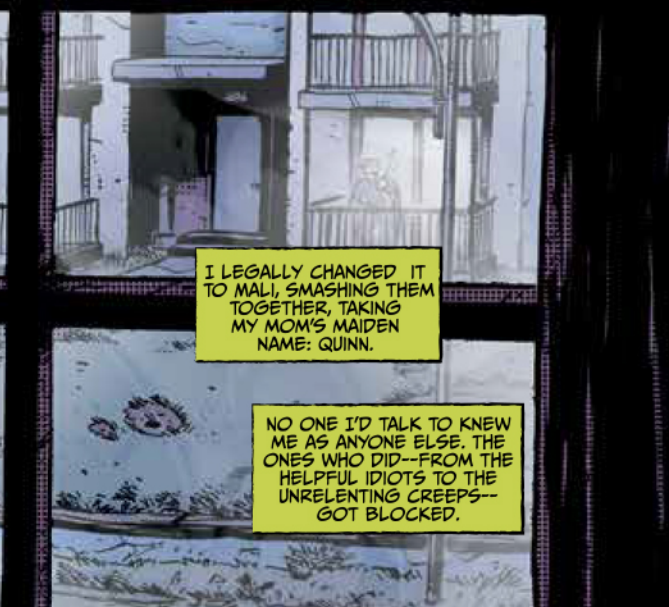
LIKE THE TEXTS. DIFFERENT NUMBERS EACH TIME, ALL TO DEAD PHONES.

TAUNTING ME. USING MY OLD NAME. THAT STUPID NAME.

WHO NAMES THEIR KID "MAIZIE LIRAH"?



I LEGALLY CHANGED IT TO MALI, SMASHING THEM TOGETHER, TAKING MY MOM'S MAIDEN NAME: QUINN.



NO ONE I'D TALK TO KNEW ME AS ANYONE ELSE. THE ONES WHO DID--FROM THE HELPFUL IDIOTS TO THE UNRELENTING CREEPS-- GOT BLOCKED.



AFTER MONTHS OF THEM CREEPING IN FROM THE EDGES, I STARTED WONDERING IF MAYBE IT WAS SOMETHING WORSE.

THE REAL WEIRDOS. THE FETISHISTS. THE SENTIENT FEDORAS WHO WANT TO RESCUE ME FROM MY BLOODY PAST. THE SCARY ONES.



THAT'S WHY I'M HAPPY TO HAVE THIS DOOFUS.

HEYYY, BUDDY. WHO'S THE BEST GUARD DOG IN THE WORLD? NOT YOUUUU.

SHOWTIME GOT INTO THE DOG FOOD, BY THE WAY!



AND THIS DOOFUS.

UGH, REALLY? HOW MUCH DID HE EAT, SHENA?

A LOT. SOMEONE LEFT THE LID OFF AND I HAD MY HEADPHONES ON AND...SORRY!



MAIL CAME. LET ME THROW IT OUT.

NO. I WANT TO SEE IT. THESE FREAKS WON'T EVER LEAVE ME ALONE. I MIGHT AS WELL GET USED TO IT.

I'M THE DAUGHTER OF THE OMAHA RIPPER. AFTER ALL. I SHOULD SUFFER FOR IT, RIGHT?



STEPPAUGHTER. AND STOP THAT. WHAT'S WRONG?

BEEN DOING A LOT OF THINKING.

MM. THAT'S NEVER GOOD.



HOW ABOUT I MAKE DRINKS AND WE TAKE TURNS READING YOUR FAN LETTERS?

I WISH. I STARTED TAKING MY MEDS AGAIN. NOT THAT IT'S HELPING.

FINE, I'LL DRINK, YOU READ.