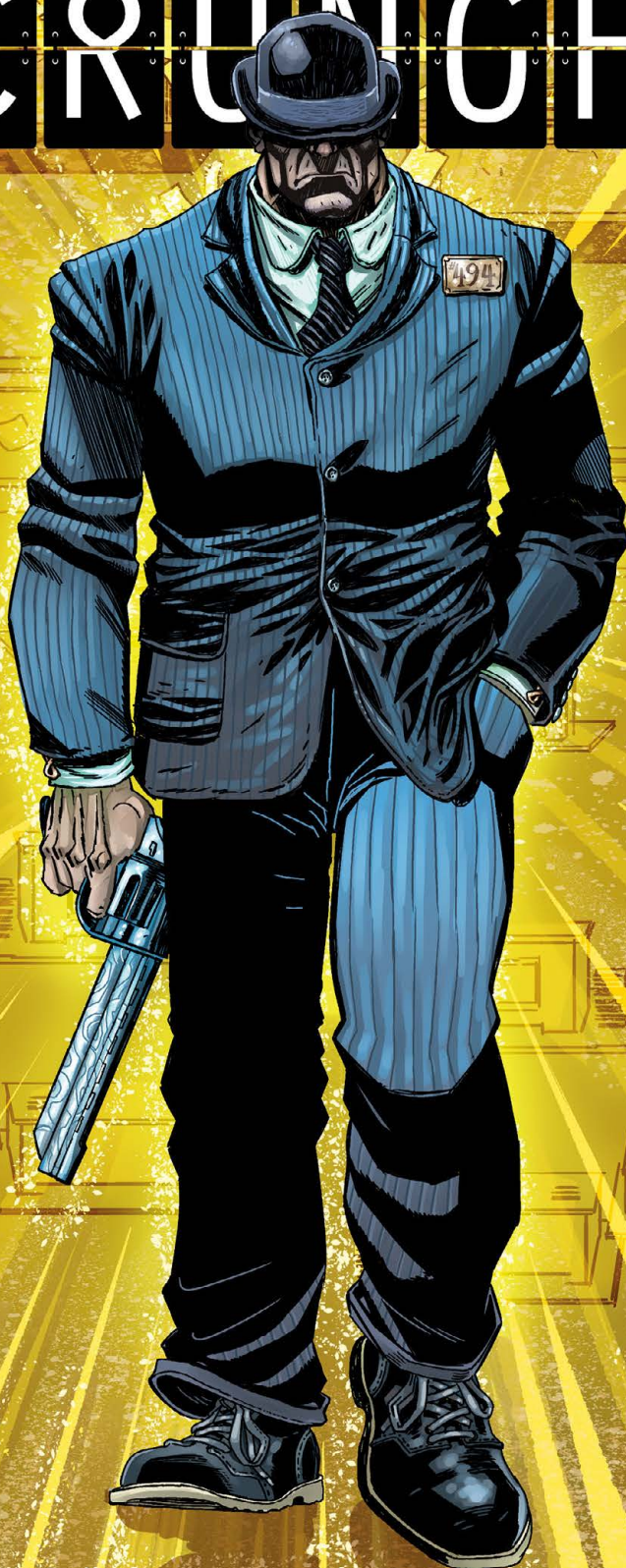


NUMBER CRUNCHER

SI SPURRIER
P.J. HOLDEN
JORDIE BELLAIRE



#1
OF 4


TITAN
COMICS

NUMBERCRUNCHER

THERE ARE GOLF CARTS IN THE AFTERLIFE.

'ORRIBLE LITTLE THINGS--SOUND LIKE A MOSQUITO FARTING DOWN A STRAW.

"TO ALLOW EMPLOYEES A HASTY TRANSFER BETWIXT DEPARTMENTS." S'WHAT THE HANDBOOK SAYS.

"HASTY," "BETWIXT," THIS ON A PLANE OF EXISTENCE CONCEPTUALLY UNTRUBLED BY THE LIKES OF TIME 'N SPACE.

STUPID, INNIT?

I POPPED ONE OPEN, ONCE.

NO ENGINE--ONLY THIS SWIRLY LIGHTSHOW BOLLOCKS MADE OF MANDELBROT PATTERNS AND BLOODY EIGHTH DIMENSIONAL COSMOHEDRONS--SAME AS EVERYTHING.

TELLS YOU A LOT ABOUT THE MIND THAT RUNS THIS PLACE, THAT.

I MEAN, THINK ABOUT IT--HE COULD'VE MADE BLEEDIN' FERRARIS, OR CHARIOTS, IF YOU LIKE.

LASER-SPAFFIN' NUKEOPTERS. FUCKIN' SERAPHIM MADE OF SMOKE 'N BILE.

HE CHOSE GOLF CARTS.

MY NAME'S BASTARD ZANE.

I HATE IT HERE.



--BUT I'M PRETTY SURE MOST OF IT WAS UNIFORMLY HORRIBLE.

--IT 'AD ITS MOMENTS.

NOT THAT ME REAL LIFE WAS MUCH TO CROW ABOUT NEITHER.

I MEAN, I AIN'T SAYIN' I RECALL MUCH OF IT--MEMORIES GET SORTA MUDDLED WHEN YA GOT NO BRAIN TO KEEP 'EM IN--

MIND YOU, EVEN THEN--

(SOME MOMENTS MORE TERMINAL THAN OTHERS, OF COURSE.)

TELL YOU THIS: THE ONE THING I DO REMEMBER WITH CRYSTAL-FUCKING-CLARITY, ON ACCOUNT OF IT BEIN' SO BLOODY EMBARRASSIN'--

--IS HOW I SUDDENLY CAME-OVER ALL SOFT IN THEM DYIN' MOMENTS.

PROMISED ME SOUL TO WHATEVER DEVIL OR DJINN WAS LISTENIN', JUST FOR ONE MORE YEAR WITH ME LADY LOVE.

(I KNOW, I KNOW. FUCKIN' UNAMBITIOUS, RIGHT?)

...SPECIALLY SINCE THE LASS IN QUESTION TURNED OUT TO BE A *SYPHILITIC SLAG* 'OO PRESENTED ME WITH A BLEEDIN' INVOICE THE MINUTE I GOT BACK.

YOU UNLIVE 'N LEARN.



S'POSE I WAS EXPECTING SOME SORTA *FIERY HELL*, COME THE YEAR'S END.

INSTEAD THIS GRINNING LITTLE GOITER IN A SUIT POPS UP 'N SAYS:

WELCOME TO THE TEAM.



THEN BRINGS ME HERE 'N *BUGGERS OFF* IN A PUFF OF *SMUG*.

I'VE HAD THE *BADGE* EVER SINCE.



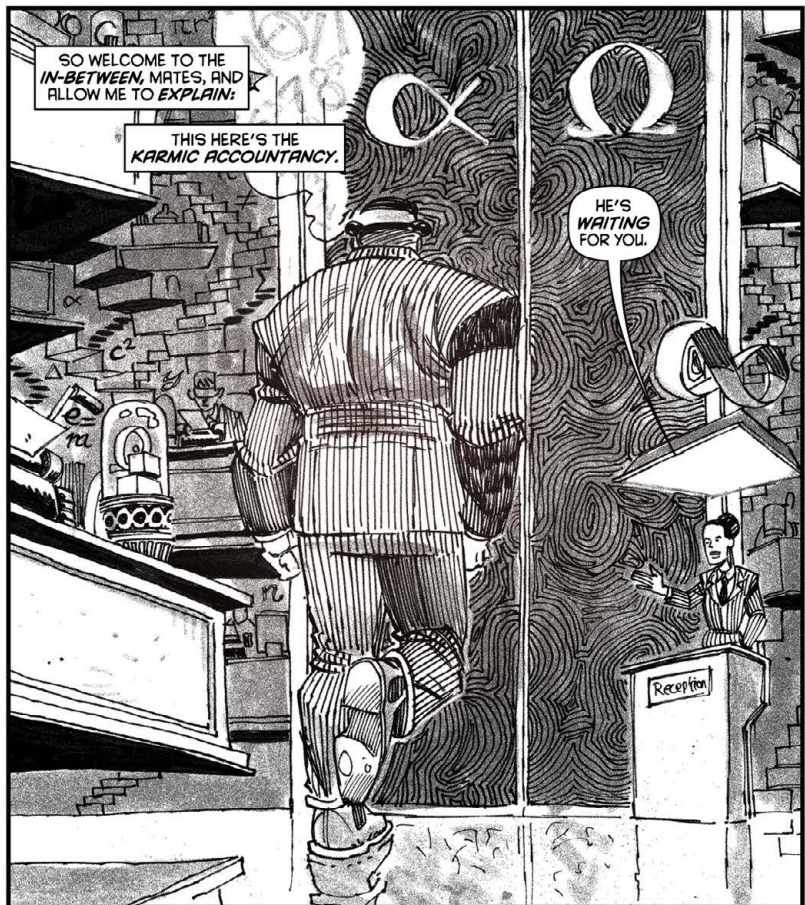
AND WHILE THAT MIGHT NOT SEEM SO LONG TO YOU, IT'S LIKE I SAID: *TIME'S* SORT OF *OPTIONAL* HERE.

TAKE MY WORD FOR IT: IT'S BEEN A BLEEDIN' *AEON*.

SO WELCOME TO THE *IN-BETWEEN*, MATES, AND ALLOW ME TO *EXPLAIN*:

THIS HERE'S THE *KARMIC ACCOUNTANCY*.

HE'S WAITING FOR YOU.



IT'S NOT ABOUT *FIRE 'N BRIMSTONE*, OR *PONCES* WITH *FROCKS 'N HARPS*, OR *CLOUDS* OR *VIRGINS* OR *ETERNAL-BLEEDIN'-'CAROUSIN'-'IN-THE-'YALLS-OF-YOUR-FOREFATHERS...*



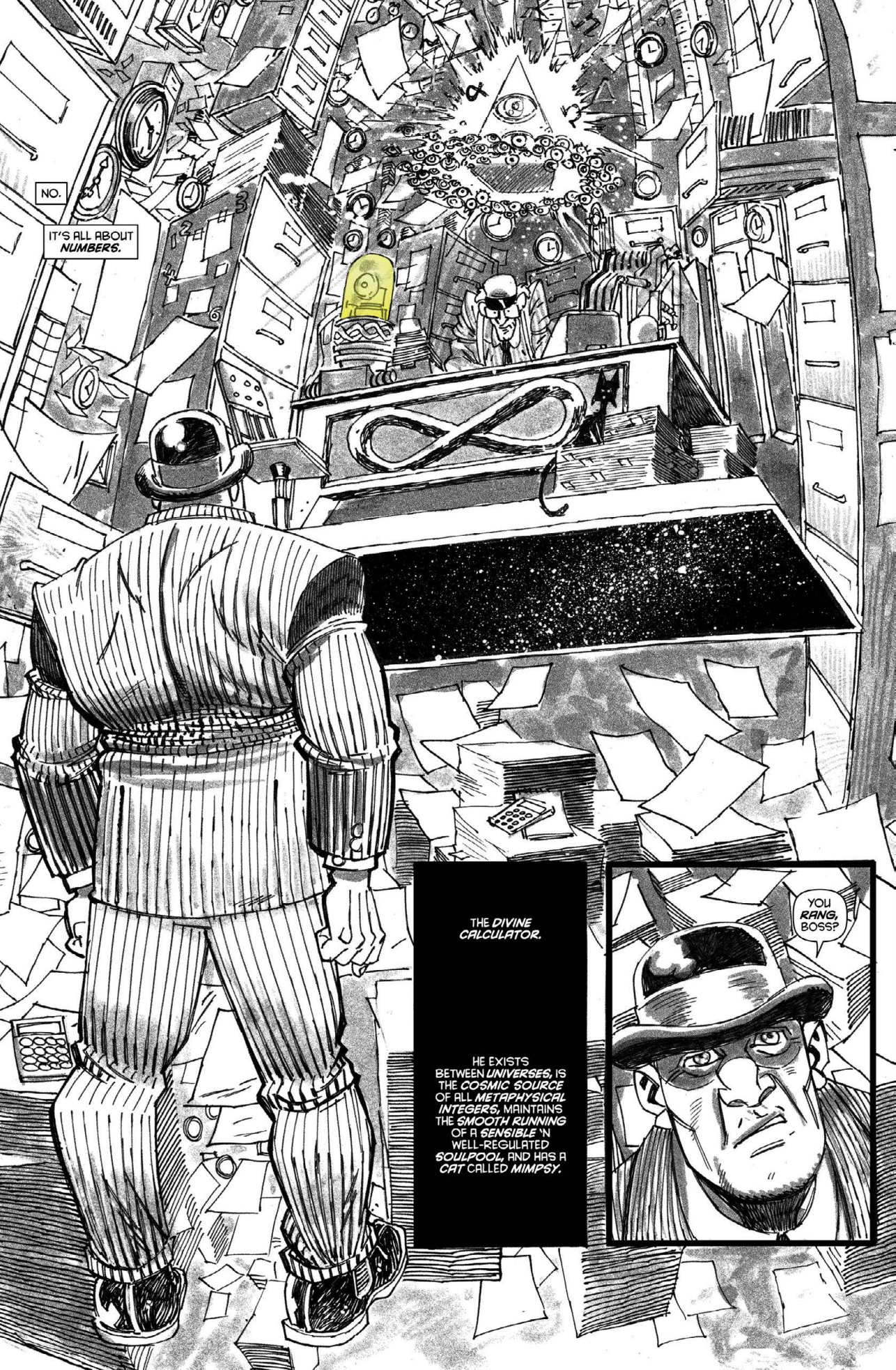
NO.

IT'S ALL ABOUT
NUMBERS.

THE DIVINE
CALCULATOR.

HE EXISTS
BETWEEN UNIVERSES, IS
THE COSMIC SOURCE
OF ALL METAPHYSICAL
INTEGERS, MAINTAINS
THE SMOOTH RUNNING
OF A SENSIBLE 'N
WELL-REGULATED
SOULPOOL, AND HAS A
CAT CALLED MIMPSY.

YOU
RANG,
BOSS?





AH, OPERATIVE #4194.
A NEW ASSIGNMENT. OBSERVE.



CUTE COUPLE.

PFF. FUNDAMENTALLY INDIVISIBLE, IRRESPECTIVE OF SECONDARY COMPLICATION.

(HE MEANS LOVE. HE TALKS ABOUT IT LIKE A SNAKE TALKS FOOTWEAR.)



THE YEAR: 1969.

SHE: JESSICA REED. A SPIRITUALIST. A FUZZY VALUE OF INDECIPHERABLE SUPERSTITION AND UNQUANTIFIABLE IDIOCY.

USELESS.



HE: RICHARD THYME. A MATHEMATICIAN.

BRILLIANT. INCISIVE. DYING.



AND AS HE DECAYS, OPERATIVE... YOU SEEP?

AN IDEA!

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA, JUST SO YOU KNOW, HAS HALITOSIS. PRAISE BE.

$\Sigma \chi \psi \rho$
 $\Sigma \eta \rho \alpha \Delta \Sigma \eta \alpha$
 $\Delta \chi \psi \rho \alpha \omega$