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ISSUE
5
\$3.99

DEMATTEIS • GOGTZILAS • BADILLA

The Adventures of **AUGUSTA WIND**



The Adventures of AUGUSTA WIND

THE LAST STORY

STORY SO FAR:

*From the Cosmic Diary of
Miss Information:*

The Story Killer has triumphed, destroying the Fateway World and untelling every tale, erasing every character, in the Storiverse. Only Augusta Wind survives, adrift in an ocean of Infinite Nothing. Soon she, too, will dissolve forever.

Unless...

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WE END AS WE BEGAN (OR PERHAPS WE BEGIN AS WE ENDED?): WITH A TALE STRIPPED OF AUTHOR, PLOT, THEME, AND CHARACTERS. STRIPPED OF EVERYTHING...

...EXCEPT A LONELY GIRL, DRIFTING FROM NOTHING TO NOTHING. THE FINAL PLAYER IN THE FINAL DRAMA. THE HEARTBROKEN PROTAGONIST...

...OF THE LAST STORY EVER TOLD.

The Adventures of **AUGUSTA WIND**

BOOK TWO: THE LAST STORY
CHAPTER FIVE: THE FIRST STORY



MY NAME—AS YOU MUST SUPRELY KNOW BY NOW—IS **MISS INFORMATION**, AND I'VE BEEN CHARGED WITH RECORDING EVERY TALE, EVERY DREAM, EVERY TWIST AND TURN IN THE BOOK OF CREATION.

AND NOT EVEN DEATH (FOR I DID DIE, QUITE SPECTACULARLY, AT THE HANDS OF **THE STORY KILLER**) CAN STOP ME...

...FROM FULFILLING
MY APPOINTED TASK.

ONWARD AUGUSTA
SAILED, THROUGH
THE ENDLESS,
EMPTY NONIVERSE.

SHE HAD SPENT DAYS, PERHAPS
YEARS (IN AN OCEAN OF ETERNAL
OBLIVION, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE
TO TELL), WEeping: MOURNING
FAMILY AND FRIENDS. MOURNING
WORLDS AND TIME.

BUT NOW A NUMBNESS
WAS ENVELOPING HER:
SHE COULD FEEL THE
NONIVERSE SEEPING
INTO HER FLESH, HER
BLOOD AND BONES.
HER VERY BREATH. AND
SHE KNEW THAT SOON...

...SHE, TOO, WOULD
BE GONE, AND THERE
WOULD BE NO ONE
LEFT TO MOURN HER.

AH, BUT THEN...



...THE TALE TOOK A
SURPRISING TURN.

HOW COULD YOU
HAVE SURVIVED,
LITTLE ONE—
WHEN EVERYONE
ELSE IS GONE?

Not
everyone
else, my
sweet
umbrella
girl!

You're
still here!

And where
Augusta Wind
goes—

— Mr.
Snabbit
will always
follow!

MY DARLING
MR. SNABBIT—

— IS IT
REALLY
YOU?

BUT SHE KNEW IT WAS,
AND SHE REMEMBERED
THEN, HOW, IN HER LIFE
WITHIN THE ENCHANTED
JEWEL, SHE ALWAYS HAD
A RABBIT IN HER LIFE.

SHE'D NEVER QUESTIONED
HOW IT LIVED SO LONG, NOT
SEEMING TO AGE; HOW THE
PET SHE'D TREASURED AS
A CHILD LATER BECAME
THE ENERGETIC PLAYMATE
OF HER OWN CHILDREN.

"I'M THE FIRST ONE YOU WROTE,"
SNABBIT EXCLAIMED, AS THE HAPPY
PAIR DANCED AT THE HEART OF
THE VOID, "WHEN YOU ARRIVED ON
NOWHERE ISLAND! THE DEAREST,
CLOSEST FRIEND YOU'VE EVER KNOWN!

"SO OF COURSE YOU
WOVE ME INTO THE
TALE OF YOUR
WEBSTER WORLD—
ALWAYS KEEPING
ME BY YOUR SIDE.

"I ADMIT IT WAS
SOMEWHAT FRUSTRATING
BEING A DUMB BUNNY
INSTEAD OF A CHARMING
SNABBIT, BUT I HAD YOUR
LOVE AND YOU HAD MINE.
AND, IN THE END—"



—that's all that matters!

IS IT?

OH, SNABBIT— HOW CAN WE DANCE LIKE THIS? HOW CAN WE BE CHEERFUL—



—WHEN EVERYONE ELSE WE LOVE HAS BEEN SWEEPED OFF INTO NON-EXISTENCE BY THE STORY KILLER?

WHEN WE'LL BE SWEEPED AWAY— ALL TOO SOON?



Will we?

You're forgetting something, my windy child. Something very important that even *Omegus* forgot!

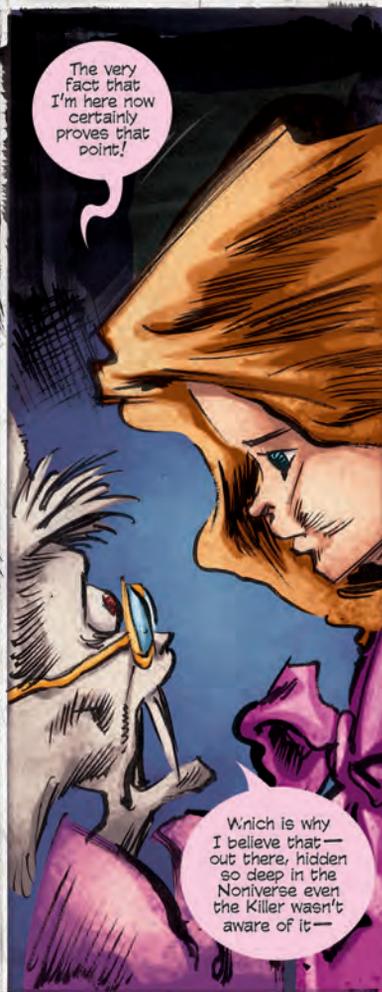
WHAT'S THAT?



Stories— have lives of their own.

No author—not you, not the other Tellers, not even the *Sleeper Hirsell*— has control of her tales.

The best stories always come alive! Rise up! Gallop off in unexpected directions—with will and determination!



The very fact that I'm here now certainly proves that point!

Which is why I believe that— out there, hidden so deep in the Noniverse even the Killer wasn't aware of it—



—every story ever told lives on in some form.

BUT IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE?

Think, Augusta! Perhaps someone could erase the memory of your beloved Mr. Snabbit from your *CONSCIOUS* mind—



—but the deepest waters of your unconscious would never forget!

There would always be an echo of me—a memory of a memory of a memory—drifting in the darkest depths.



Well, what's true of you is equally true of the Storiverse!

Dive deep beneath the surface of *The ZerOcean*—farther than even you could imagine—



—and you'll find him sleeping there

WHO?



The TaleWhale.

The echo... the memory... the very embodiment of every tale ever told—in the history of Telling!



BUT WHO CREATED THIS TALEWHALE? EVEN I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A CREATURE!

The whale was created by the living stories themselves! A place for them to harbor...to hide—

—while the Storiverse collapsed around them!



I MEAN NO OFFENSE, MR. SNABBIT, BUT YOU SEEM FAR MORE ELOQUENT AND INTELLIGENT—

—THAN YOU'VE EVER BEEN BEFORE.

That's because you need me to be this way, Augusta! And what the author requires—