

No.  
5

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# CURSE OF THE

# SPAWN





# CURSE OF THE SPAWN

TODD McFARLANE &  
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## "SUTURE"



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HOW DOES  
A NIGHTMARE  
BEGIN?



IN DARKNESS?  
IN RAIN?



IN THE EYES OF A  
WOMAN BRIGHT  
WITH HOPE AND  
FUTURE.

EYES THAT  
KNOW DEATH  
AT ITS MOST  
HEINOUS.



ITS MOST  
PRIMEVAL.

AND AS EVIL  
UNRAVELS THE  
FABRIC OF  
OUR OH, SO  
TENUOUS  
EXISTENCE--



-- THERE ARE THOSE  
WHO STRUGGLE TO  
KEEP THE THREADS  
TAUT.



THE SEAMS  
CLOSED.

THE  
SUTURES  
TIGHT.



BY ANY MEANS  
NECESSARY.



NEW YORK CITY.

AWASH IN  
SHADOWS  
AND DREAD.

EYES STRAIGHT  
AHEAD. DON'T  
LOOK LEFT OR  
RIGHT. BECAUSE  
THERE, ON THE  
DARK PERIPHERY,  
LIE THOSE THINGS  
WE WISH NOT TO  
SEE. SO, MOVE  
QUICKLY THROUGH  
THE STORM. SLOW  
DOWN AND THE  
EVER-THREATEN-  
ING DARKNESS  
CLOSES IN.

SUCKING THE DOOR UNFORTUNATES  
INTO ALLEYWAYS AND RECESSES FROM  
WHICH THEY WILL NEVER ESCAPE.

BUT THE MIND HAS ITS  
OWN JAGGED TRAPS.  
ITS OWN BLEAK TRASH-  
CLOGGED BACK STREETS.

JOHN MAWBLEY  
KNOWS THOSE  
STREETS ALL  
TOO WELL.

BREAKFAST  
CONTINENTAL STYLE  
2.79  
COFFEE FREE

BETWEEN BITTER  
SIPS OF TEPID JAVA  
AND GUMMY BITES  
OF AGED WHEAT  
TOAST GONE SPONGY  
WITH MELTED  
ANIMAL FAT, HE  
CHRONICLES, IN  
INDECIPHERABLE  
SCRIPT, HIS DAILY  
TRIALS AND  
TRIBULATIONS.



JOHN MAWBLY VIEWS HIMSELF AS AN ALIEN STRANDED ON A HOSTILE WORLD. BUT HE UNDERSTANDS. HE KNOWS THE TRUTH. HE SEES WHERE OTHERS ARE BLIND.

THE ANGRY, HATE-FILLED WORLD EYES HIM WITH CONTEMPT. HE KNOWS. WRITES IT ALL DOWN. A TESTAMENT. A TREATISE ON THE NATURE OF THE ULTIMATE COMBATANT. THE ULTIMATE ADVERSARY.

THE ENEMY ABSOLUTE.

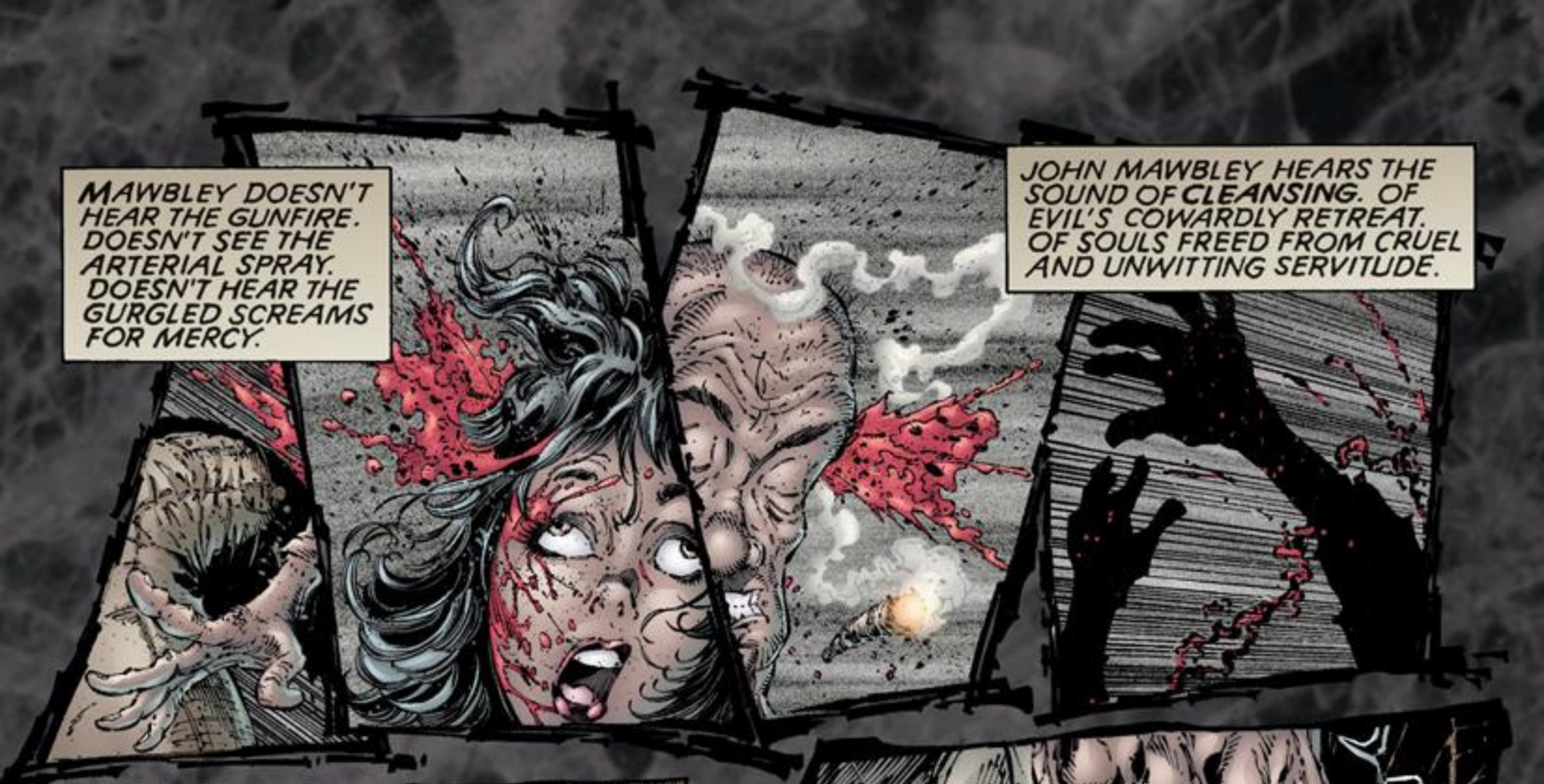
THE BEAST KNOWN AS LEGION.

THE THING WE SO SIMPLY DEFINE AS EVIL.

THE ENEMY SEES HIM THROUGH HIS SHACKLED MINIONS. REALIZES HIS KNOWLEDGE. AND HENCE, MUST BE EXPUNGED.


ALL REVOLUTIONS BEGIN WITH A SINGULAR VISION. A PURITY OF COMMITMENT.






MAWBLEY DOESN'T  
HEAR THE GUNFIRE.  
DOESN'T SEE THE  
ARTERIAL SPRAY.  
DOESN'T HEAR THE  
GURGLED SCREAMS  
FOR MERCY.

JOHN MAWBLEY HEARS THE  
SOUND OF CLEANSING. OF  
EVIL'S COWARDLY RETREAT.  
OF SOULS FREED FROM CRUEL  
AND UNWITTING SERVITUDE.




MAWBLEY IS METHODICAL.  
A SURGEON EXCISING A  
MALIGNANT, MULTI-  
TENDRILED CANCER.

RESTROOM




THE BLIGHT  
MUST BE  
CRUSHED.

IT'S  
NECESSARY.



THE INNOCENT  
MUST BE SPARED  
THEIR PAIN.



AND NOW,  
THE WINDOWS  
MUST BE  
COLLECTED.



HELL'S KITCHEN.  
AN ISLAND OF  
LOWER MIDDLE  
CLASS PEOPLE  
HANGING ONTO  
DIGNITY BY  
THEIR SPLINTERED  
FINGERNAILS.



THE STINK  
OF A HOMICIDE  
CRIME SCENE.  
NEVER FORGET  
THAT, eh,  
TWITCH?

NO, SIR.  
THE HEADY  
FRAGRANCE  
OF DEATH  
HAS BEEN  
PERMANENTLY  
TATTOOED  
ALONG MY  
NASAL  
PASSAGES.

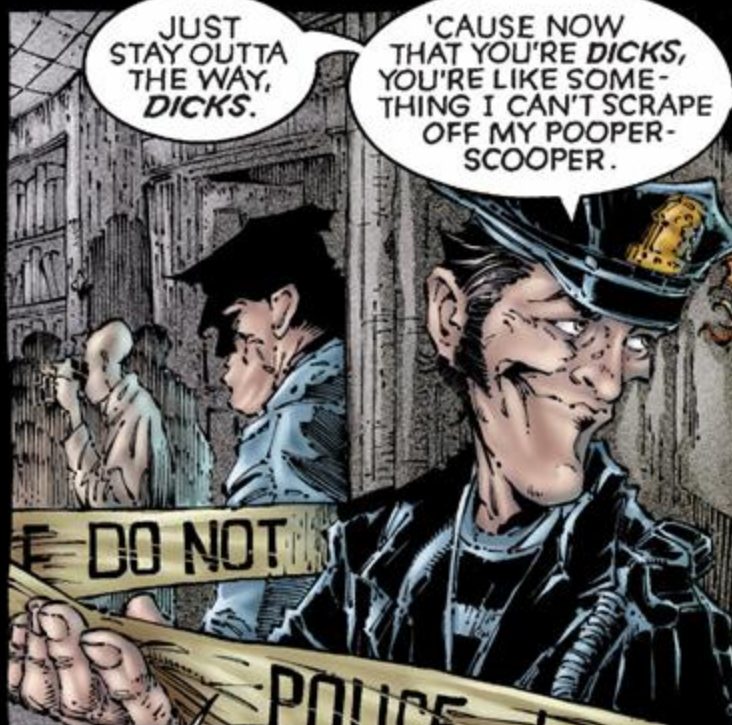
WHAT-  
EVER.



JUST  
STAY OUTTA  
THE WAY,  
**DICKS.**

'CAUSE NOW  
THAT YOU'RE **DICKS**,  
YOU'RE LIKE SOME-  
THING I CAN'T SCRAPE  
OFF MY POOPER-  
SCOOPER.

YOU'RE LIKE  
THAT FLOATER THAT  
WON'T FLUSH. WHAT'S  
THAT SMELL? Oh,  
**DICKS.** SO DON'T  
MAKE A MESS IN  
THERE. GOT IT?!



SURE,  
PAL. I  
HEAR  
YA.



GOOD. GO ON  
IN. EDLAND AND  
BRAYDE ARE  
WAITIN'.

TWITCH WAITS UNTIL  
SAM BURKE IS OUT  
OF EARSHOT, THEN IS  
ON THE COP LIKE A  
MONGOOSE: SWIFT,  
SILENT AND FIERCE.

A WORD OF  
FRIENDLY ADVICE,  
OFFICER. TOO SWEEP-  
ING A JUDGMENT OF  
OTHERS CAN LEAD TO  
A FALSE, SOMETIMES  
INJURIOUS,  
CONCLUSION.

=Gulp=



MY  
MISTAKE...





THE STENCH OF DRIED BLOOD AND OFFAL, COMBINED WITH THE REEK OF RECENTLY HEAVED COP VOMIT, SMOGS THE CHEAP APARTMENT. HORROR PAINTS THE WALLS AND FURNITURE. HELL HAS TOUCHED THIS PLACE.

VIC'S BEEN STRUNG UP WITH MOTORCYCLE CHAIN, SLICED COMPLETELY IN HALF FROM CROTCH TO COLLAR BONE, AND WRAPPED WITH MEDICAL TAPE TO HOLD THE PIECES TOGETHER.

HEAD'S GONE, REPLACED WITH A ROSE. MURDER WEAPON'S A SURGICAL SAW, LEFT AT THE SCENE.

THE WORD "ROSE" IS WRITTEN ON THE VIC, IN THE VIC'S BLOOD. THIS IS NUMBER FOUR IN AS MANY WEEKS.

I AIN'T SLEPT SINCE NUMBER ONE.

YEAH. NICE LADY. PRETTY. WANTED TO KNOW IF HER EX WAS INTO THIS... uh, CRAP, WHAT WAS IT?

HUMILIATION SEX CULT, SIR.

YEAH. PISS AND TAKE DUMPS ON EACH OTHER, THAT SORTA THING.

THIS HERE'S HILLARY REECE, 'CCORDING TO FINGERPRINT I.D. YOU BRIGHT BOYS HAVE HER AS A P.I. CASE, OR WHAT?

ANYWAY, HE IS. WE SNEAK SOME PICS. SHE PAYS US OUR RATE AND WE'RE GONE. THAT'S A WEEK AGO TUESDAY.



WE GOT THE  
PICS. REAL KODAK  
MOMENTS. CAN YOU  
GIVE US ANYTHING  
ELSE? SOMETHING  
SHE MENTIONED? NEW  
GUY SHE MET? TROUBLE  
AT WORK? STALKER?  
PURSE-SNATCHER?  
ANYTHING?

NOPE.  
SORRY.

YOU KNOW, BURKE...  
YOU AND YOUR RODENT-  
FACED PARTNER WERE  
GOOD GOLD SHIELDS ONCE.  
NOW LOOK AT YOU!

YOU GUYS ARE A  
COUPLA MISTAKES,  
YOU KNOW THAT?  
PUNK DICKS SCRAPING  
UNDER WHAT THE  
BOTTOM OF THE  
BARREL'S SITTING  
ON.

MAGGOTS  
DON'T GO  
WHERE  
YOU ARE.

YOU DONE  
WITH US?

YEAH. GET  
OUT. I'M SURE  
THERE'S A CRACK-  
WHORE OUT  
THERE NEEDS A  
COUPLA PRIVATE  
EYES TO FIND  
HER NEXT  
"JOHN".

HAHAHA

SO. CHOW  
TIME. WHAT  
DO YOU FEEL  
LIKE?

I SEEM  
TO HAVE LOST  
MY APPETITE,  
SIR.

YOU  
LETTIN' THOSE  
JOKERS GET  
TO YOU?

THEY'RE JUST  
PISSED 'CAUSE THEY GOT  
FOUR STIFFS AND NO CLUES.  
I USED TO RIP A NEW ONE IN  
ANYBODY WHO LOOKED CROSS-  
EYED AT ME WHEN A CASE  
WAS DOING A HIGH-BOARD  
NOSE-DIVE.

FORGET  
ABOUT IT.

IT'S NOT  
THAT, SIR...  
IT'S--

YAA!

SCREEEE!



WOW.

Uh...

SORRY 'BOUT THAT, MISS. DIDN'T SEE THOSE LEGS-- I MEAN DIDN'T SEE YA UNTIL I WAS ALMOST ON TOP OF YOU...

Uh, WHAT I MEAN IS...

IT'S OKAY.

THE FACE WE'VE SEEN. EYES FULL OF HOPE. KEEP THEM STRAIGHT AHEAD. DON'T LOOK LEFT OR RIGHT.

HER NAME IS GRETCHEN CULVER.

OFFICE MANAGER FOR A BOUTIQUE PUBLISHING HOUSE. MCGREGOR ARNOLD. GRETCHEN TAKES GREAT CARE WHEN IT COMES TO HER CO-WORKERS. SHE KNOWS THEM ALL WELL. THEY ARE LIKE FAMILY.

WHICH REMINDS HER THAT SHE OWES HER MOTHER A THANK-YOU CALL FOR THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT. BUT FIRST A CALL TO HER FIANCE, WAYNE.

THEY'RE SETTING A DATE. HIS FAMILY HAS TALKED ABOUT HELPING THEM BUY AN APARTMENT IN TRIBECA. SHE GETS THE MACHINE.

HI, SWEETIE. IT'S ME. YOU THERE?... OKAY. I WAS THINKING OF DINNER AT CAFE des ARTISTES TONIGHT. THERE'S ALSO THIS PLAY IN THE VILLAGE YOU MENTIONED ON SUNDAY? MAYBE?

ANYWAY, I'LL CALL AFTER MY MEETING. IT'S WITH A NEW WRITER AT SOME DIVE COFFEE SHOP. Oh, AND CALL YOUR FATHER. HE'S TERRORIZING REAL ESTATE AGENTS ALL OVER TOWN ON OUR BEHALF. I LOVE YOU.

GRETCHEN DOESN'T SEE THE "CLOSED" SIGN ON THE DOOR. HER EYES HAVE VEERED EVER SO SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT.

FAR ENOUGH TO SEE THE DARKNESS.



A SCENE FIT FOR DANTE. DENUDED BODIES LINED UP IN NEAT, TASTEFUL ROWS. FACE DOWN. SIDE BY SIDE. FALLEN SOLDIERS IN THE GREATEST WAR OF ALL.

AND MAWBLEY. TAKING STOCK. CAUTIOUS AS AN ACCOUNTANT. USES AN OPHTHALMOLOGIST'S EXTRACTOR TO PRY FREE THE WINDOWS OF THE SOUL.

THE EYES OF THE FALLEN.

GRETCHEN WATCHES, STRICKEN, NUMBED TO HER MARROW. MAWBLEY PLACES THE BLOOD-SMEARED EYES IN STERILE SPECIMAN VIALS AND LAYS THEM IN A CLEAN-TRAY WITH A DOZEN OTHERS INSIDE HIS BOOKBAG.

SO HORRIBLY PRECISE.

HELLO.

DON'T BE AFRAID. WHAT I'M DOING. MY WORK.

IT'S QUITE NECESSARY.

THE SLOW STEADINESS OF MAWBLEY'S VOICE CHILLS GRETCHEN. ENOUGH TO STARTLE HER RAW INSTINCT TO SURVIVE. GRETCHEN FLEES. BEYOND ANY COGNITIVE SENSE. SHE RUNS FROM A PREDATOR. SHE RUNS FOR HER LIFE.

WAIT. PLEASE. YOU HAVE SUCH BEAUTIFUL EYES.



THEY  
MUST BE  
FREED. YOU  
MUST BE  
FREED.

BLAM  
BLAM

Oh  
GOD--

FROM YOUR  
INFECTION.

SHE ROUNDS A CORNER. EYES OVER HER  
SHOULDER. DOESN'T SEE THE VEHICLES.  
DOESN'T SEE THE POLICE CRUISER.

WHAM!

HER MIND IS RE-  
DUCED TO STATIC  
AND SPARKS AS  
HER NERVOUS  
SYSTEM SWAMPS  
WITH PAIN.

GRETCHEN DOESN'T FEEL THE  
IMPACT, OR HEAR THE WET  
SCREECH OF TIRES AND SHOCKED  
GASPS OF BYSTANDERS.

DARKNESS  
DESCENDS LIKE  
A COMFORTING  
SHROUD.

SO  
SAD...

MAWBLEY MOVES ON.  
HE WILL RETRIEVE HIS  
WARES FROM THE  
COFFEE SHOP. HE WILL  
RELIVE THIS DAY IN HIS  
DREAMS AND NOTE IN  
HIS JOURNAL THE  
TRAGIC LOSS OF A PAIR  
OF GLISTENING  
WINDOWS.



IT TAKES TWENTY MINUTES FOR AN AMBULANCE TO WEAVE ITS WAY THROUGH THE TRAFFIC SNARL. THE STEADY DELUGE ONLY MAKES IT WORSE.

RIGHT THERE.  
**HOLD IT!**

JEEZ, YOU WANNA CRUSH HER, OR WHAT?

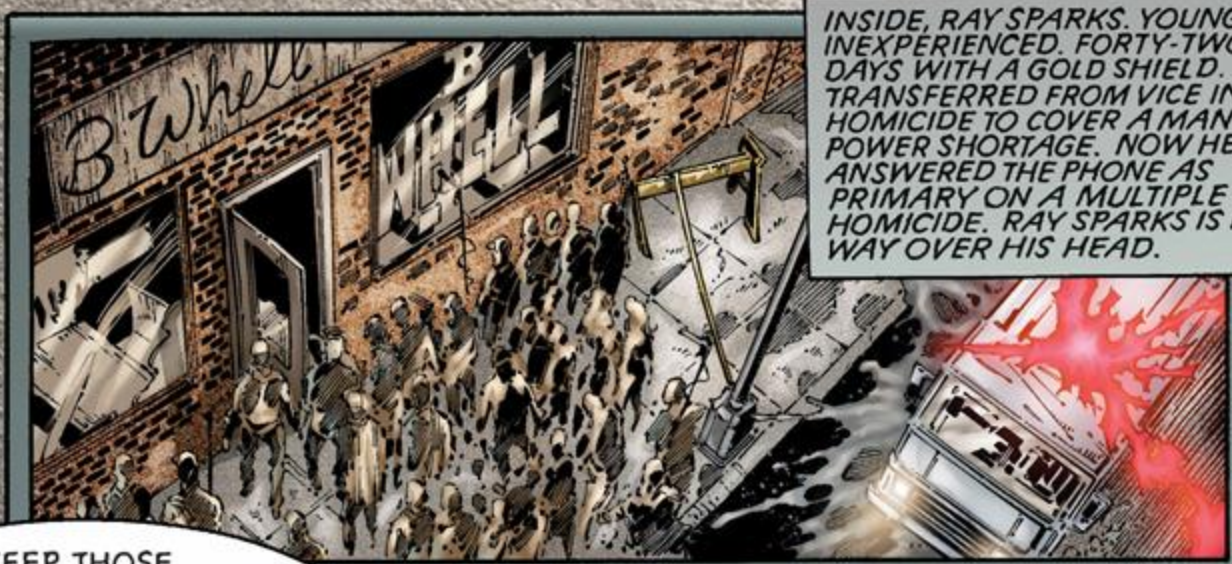
NICE JOB, OFFICERS. BACK OVER HER A COUPLA TIMES AND FINISH THE JOB, WHY DON'T'CHA.

HEY, SHE CAME TEAR-ASSING OUTTA NOWHERE. WHAT THE HELL WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? HUH?

A BLOCK AWAY, MORE BYSTANDERS AND POLICE GATHER AT A GHASTLY HORRORSHOW. BLUE AND WHITES ARRIVE FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS. NEWSCAMS ARE NOT FAR BEHIND.



MURMURS OF SHOCK AND ICY TRAUMA FROM BLEARY EYED CITIZENS USED TO THE TRAGEDIES BIRTHED IN THEIR DIRGE-THEMED METROPOLIS.



INSIDE, RAY SPARKS. YOUNG. INEXPERIENCED. FORTY-TWO DAYS WITH A GOLD SHIELD. TRANSFERRED FROM VICE INTO HOMICIDE TO COVER A MAN-POWER SHORTAGE. NOW HE'S ANSWERED THE PHONE AS PRIMARY ON A MULTIPLE HOMICIDE. RAY SPARKS IS IN WAY OVER HIS HEAD.

KEEP THOSE MEDIA SHARKS OUTTA CAMERA RANGE, 'KAY. DON'T NEED THIS SPLATTERFEST ON THE FIVE O'CLOCK. FOLKS SPITTIN' UP THEIR MICROWAVEABLES ALL OVER THEIR LINOLEUM.

OKAY.

WHAT ABOUT THAT CRACK-UP DOWN THE STREET? ANY RELATION?

NAH. SOME OFFICE-BIMBO GOT SIDESWIPE. TOTALLY UNRELATED.

OK.

SPARKS' MIND WORKS. DESPITE HIS INEXPERIENCE, RAY IS NO DUMMY. HIS GRANDFATHER HAD A MIND LIKE A STEEL TRAP. SPARKS TAKES AFTER HIM. RIGHT NOW HE KNOWS SOMETHING FEELS WRONG. OVERLOOKED. BUT, FOR NOW, HE DOESN'T PUSH IT.

HEY, ANYBODY SEEN THE M.E.? THESE FOLKS AREN'T GETTING ANY FRESHER.





A DANK DELI HAUNTED BY CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT VIOLATIONS. FAMOUS FOR THEIR BELLY-BUSTING, COLON-CRUNCHING, ALL-THE-MEAT-YOU-CAN-EAT SUB SANDWICHES.

TENTH ONE'S THE CHARM.

LUCKY ELEVEN.

SPLATCH

scrape  
scrape

scrape  
scrape

SURE YOU DON'T WANT SOME OF THIS CHOW, TWITCH? BEST SALAMI-SURPRISE IN THE FRIGGING CITY.

WHAT ARE WE DOING, SIR?

FUELING THE FURNACE. STOKING THE COALS.

NO, I MEAN HERE IN OUR LIVES. WORKING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM AS PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS.

THOSE REMARKS MADE BY DETECTIVE EDLAND WERE POIGNANT TO SAY THE LEAST. WHAT ARE WE ACCOMPLISHING BY PURSUING CASES OF MARITAL DISPUTE?



WE'RE BARELY MAKING OUR OFFICE RENT FROM MONTH TO MONTH. OUR PHONE IS TURNED ON AND OFF WITH THE REGULARITY OF A LIGHT SWITCH. I SHARE MY DESK WITH A COMMUTER HIGH-WAY OF COCKROACHES.

THIS JUST ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED FOR US, SIR.

LOOK, I KNOW IT'S HARD. HELL, YOU THINK I LIKE TRACKING DOWN JOE PERVO IN HIS RUBBER UNDERPANTS? HELL NO. BUT I DON'T TRUST ONE POLICE PLAZA AND I WON'T EVER AGAIN. THAT'S A FACT.

ALL I KNOW IS, IF ONE CASE, **JUST ONE**, MATTERS A SINGLE GOOD GODDAMN, THAT TO ME MAKES ALL THE TOILET DREDGING SCUT-WORK WORTHWHILE.

*TWITCH KNOWS THAT BENEATH A HUNDRED CRUSHING TENTACLES OF LIFE-CHOKING CHOLESTEROL, SAM BURKE'S HEART BEATS HARD FOR THE INNOCENT.*

YOU'RE CORRECT AS USUAL, SIR. BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, ALTRUISM IS NOT PUTTING FOOD ON MY FAMILY'S TABLE.

WELL STOP YOUR BELLY-ACHING, TWITCH. DINNER'S ON ME THIS WEEK.

TWO HUNDRED SMACKERS. COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK STATE LOTTERY COMMISSION. LUCKY THIRTEEN. THAT'S HOW IT GOES, PARTNER. THE NEXT CASE COULD BE OUR BIG TICKET.

*OUTSIDE, A FAMILIAR AMBULANCE PASSES. TWITCH DOESN'T KNOW WHY THE SIGHT OF IT BRINGS A SUDDEN CHILL. UNCONSCIOUSLY, HE CHECKS HIS SHOULDER-HOLSTERED .44 LONG BORE.*



THE AMBULANCE CARRYING GRETCHEN CULVER SLEWS THROUGH SLOW TRAFFIC ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE. TWO PATROL CARS ARE CLOSE BEHIND.

SERGEANT DOUG HALLIDAY, MOBILE SQUAD SUPERVISOR, A TWENTY YEAR STREET VET, AND HIS ROOKIE PARTNER KENNY OSBORNE, RIDE ESCORT IN THE AMBULANCE.

MAMA'S GOT A NICE LITTLE SQUEEZE BOX THERE, DON'T'CHA THINK, KENNY?

SIR?

SURE YA DO. WOULDN'T BE NO MAN IF THIS SWEET PIECE DIDN'T PUT A LITTLE LEAD IN "MR. HAPPY'S" PENCIL. SURE GETS YOUR PONY UP ON ITS HINDQUARTERS, DON'T SHE?

GO ON.

TAKE A LOOK.

HALLIDAY WINKS AT THE PARAMEDICS. OSBORNE IS CONFUSED THINKS IT'S A JOKE AT FIRST. THEN REALIZES SOMETHING IS GOING ON HERE. SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR A LONG TIME.

GAVE HER SOME PAIN-KILLERS. PUT HER OUT BUT GOOD, SARGE.

Tee hee, tee hee.

SHE MIGHT GO SEMI-CONSCIOUS AT MOST.

Tee hee, tee hee.

JUST ENOUGH TO ENJOY THE RIDE.



THE AMBULANCE AND  
TAILING BLUE AND WHITES  
KILL THEIR RESPECTIVE  
SIRENS AND VEER INTO AN  
ALLEYWAY THEY'VE  
USED BEFORE.



SERGEANT, uh, SIR...  
YOU'RE NOT PROPOSING  
THAT WE, uh, **RAPE** THIS  
WOMAN?!

HEY, YOU TAKE YOUR  
OPPORTUNITIES WHERE YOU  
CAN GET 'EM. YOU'LL NEVER  
SEE UPTOWN CREAM LIKE THIS  
IN YOUR COFFEE, OSBORNE,  
SO DRINK UP WHILE IT'S  
HOT. ANYWAY, SHE'LL  
NEVER KNOW.

WE'LL KNOW!  
AND I DON'T  
WANT ANY PART  
OF THIS! **IT'S  
SICK!**



Oh, YOU'RE  
**PART OF IT, BOY.**  
YOU'RE GOIN' FIRST!  
AND IF YOU DON'T, THE  
DAY'S GONNA COME  
WHEN BACK-UP'S A LITTLE  
SLOW TO COVER YOUR  
SQUEAKY-CLEAN ASS.  
OR YOU'RE CAUGHT IN A  
CROSSFIRE SITUATION  
AND GET FRAGGED  
"BY MISTAKE BY ONE  
OF YOUR BROTHERS  
IN BLUE."

OFFICERS DEKE AND MICHELLI.  
BOTH LONG TIME PARTICIPANTS  
IN THIS LITTLE "GAME".

WHAT A LUCKY BREAK,  
huh? RIGHT IN FRONT OF  
OUR UNIT. BAM. HELLOOO,  
**MAMA.**

HOPE WE DON'T GOTTA  
WAIT TOO DAMN LONG  
FOR OUR TURN. YOU SEE THE  
PERKY HEADLIGHTS ON THAT  
SLICE. **BADDA-BING,  
BADDA-BOOM!**



COP RULE  
NUMERO UNO:  
YOU CAN ONLY  
TRUST YOUR  
PARTNERS, KENNY.  
SCREW US OVER  
AND YOU'LL  
NEVER BE SAFE.  
**NEVER.**

NOW DROP  
TROU' AND GET  
IN THERE BE-  
FORE I GET  
PISSED OFF!



HEY,  
MOVE ALONG,  
SEWER-SLUGS,  
POLICE  
BUSINESS.

NOTHING  
TO SEE HERE,  
SKIDMARKS. SO  
BEAT IT.





CHECK  
OUT THE  
NEW MEAT.  
LOOKS A  
LITTLE GREEN  
AROUND THE  
GILLS.

HEY,  
KENNY,  
POPPED  
YOUR CHERRY,  
huh? A VIRGIN  
NO MORE, ek,  
BUDDY?

Wooff--

uh--

Oh  
YEAH!  
THAT'S A  
TEN!

HAHAHAHA

SPLAK!

OFFICER KENNY OSBORNE FEELS  
A DEEP, DARK CREVICE FORMING  
IN HIS SOUL. MORALITY, ETHICS,  
UPBRINGING... ALL SHATTERED  
IN A FEW SHORT MINUTES. HE  
HATES HIMSELF. FOREVER  
WITHERED. FOREVER DIMINISHED.  
HE'LL NOT MEET THE REFLECTION  
OF HIS OWN EYES EVER AGAIN.

LET A MAN  
SHOW YOU  
HOW IT'S DONE,  
ROOK.

Wheee  
OH YEAH.  
HERE COMES  
YA DADDY.

COME ON,  
COME ON. LEAVE  
SOME FOR US  
ALREADY.

ME,  
THEN YOU,  
CHUCKLEHEAD.  
YOU WENT  
FIRST LAST  
TIME.

Tee  
hee.



THERE IS NO EVIL SO DARK, SO CRUEL, SO WHOLLY GODLESS AS THAT WHICH WE PERPETRATE ON EACH OTHER.

OPPORTUNITY--  
THE MOTHER  
OF ALL EVIL.

AND HERE, A LIFE, A SOUL, A PERSON FULL OF HOPE, AND FUTURE, FEELS HERSELF RENT ASUNDER IN PLACES FAR BEYOND THE PHYSICAL.

AND THOUGH WRAPPED DEEP IN PAIN, DRUGS AND DARKNESS, SOMETHING INSIDE HER FEELS COLD AND THREATENED-- AND IT REBELS. SCRABBLES TO BREATHE.

GRETCHEN  
CULVER  
FIGHTS  
BACK.

NOOOO!



GRETCHEN THRASHES, CLAWS, KICKS, FERAL AND ADRENALIZED FROM SOME PRIMAL PLACE. BATTLES TO PROTECT WHAT IS UNIQUE AND PRECIOUS. HER LIFE. HER SEX.

GET  
**AWAAY!**

**DAMMIT!**  
SOMEBODY  
**GRAB THIS**  
BITCH! GET HER  
LEGS. HOLD HER  
DOWN 'TIL I  
**FINISH!**

GRETCHEN'S HAND  
FALLS ON HALLIDAY'S  
SIG/SAUER P226  
WITHOUT KNOWING  
WHAT IT IS. PULLS THE  
TRIGGER BY SHEER  
CHANCE.

THE FULL METAL  
JACKETED SLUG  
EASILY SHREDS  
TWO OF MICHELLI'S  
FINGERS.

HEELLP..  
HEELLPP  
MEEE!

**SHUDDUP,**  
GODDAMN  
YOU!

GET  
DOWN,  
MAN!

**KAKOM!**

**SHUDDUP!**  
**SHUDDUP!**

**SHUDDUP!**

SILENCE SAVE FOR  
HALLIDAY'S HEAVY  
BREATHING AND  
MICHELLI'S  
MEWLING.

Aw  
MAN,

SHE'S  
DEAD?

HE KILLED HER.  
HE KILLED HER.  
WHAT'VE WE  
DONE, MAN? AW,  
GOD. WHAT'RE  
WE GONNA  
DO?!

SHUT  
THE HELL  
UP.

WE'RE  
OKAY.  
HEAR  
ME?  
WE'RE  
**FINE.**

WE JUST  
GOTTA GET  
RID OF THE  
BODY.

NO  
SWEAT.

**WHAP**  
**WHACK**  
**CRACK**  
**CRUNCH**



ALONG THE FETID,  
SEWAGE-STREWN  
BANKS OF THE EAST  
RIVER, A FORGOTTEN  
WHARF LANGUISHES  
AMID AGED, DISUSED  
WAREHOUSES.



SOMETHING EMERGES  
FROM INSIDE THE  
BUILDING. A HUGE,  
HULKING MASS THAT  
AT FIRST GLANCE  
APPEARS TO BE A  
SHAVED SILVER-BACK  
GORILLA. MASSIVE  
OF BONE AND BULK.



JEREMIAH "SHARPIE"  
EUDEN WAS ONCE A  
HEAVYWEIGHT BOXER.  
HE'S NOW SLIGHTLY  
RETARDED FROM THE  
THOUSANDS OF BLOWS  
HE'S SUFFERED, FROM  
HIS FATHER TO HIS  
LAST CHALLENGER  
IN THE RING--

-- THE ONE HE KILLED WITH A  
SINGLE UPPERCUT AND THEN  
POUNDED TO A TEXTURED  
PUDDLE OF GREY MATTER AND  
BLACK-RED BLOOD.

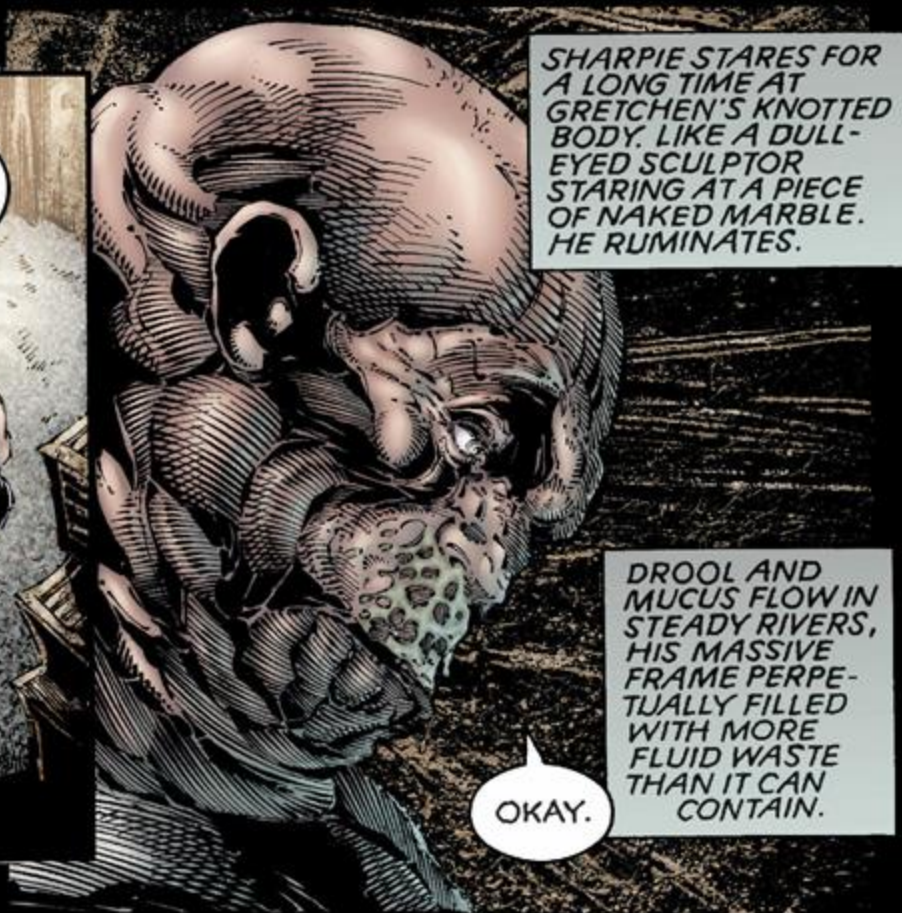


FOUR YEARS IN  
RIKER'S ONLY GAVE  
EDGE TO SHARPIE'S  
NATURAL SKILLS.  
AND FOCUSED HIS  
DIM, AMORAL  
MIND ON WHAT  
HAS BECOME HIS  
LIFE'S WORK.





HALLIDAY  
POPS THE  
TRUNK AS  
OSBORNE  
INSTINCTIVELY  
BACK-  
PEDALS.



SHARPIE STARES FOR  
A LONG TIME AT  
GRETCHEN'S KNOTTED  
BODY. LIKE A DULL-  
EYED SCULPTOR  
STARING AT A PIECE  
OF NAKED MARBLE.  
HE RUMINATES.

DROOL AND  
MUCUS FLOW IN  
STEADY RIVERS,  
HIS MASSIVE  
FRAME PERPE-  
TUALLY FILLED  
WITH MORE  
FLUID WASTE  
THAN IT CAN  
CONTAIN.



NO TRACES.  
LIKE  
ALWAYS.

OSBORNE WATCHES  
THE RETARDED  
BEHEMOTH LIFT  
AND CARRY AWAY  
THE WOMAN'S  
RUINED BODY.  
FEELS FRESH BILE  
RISE IN HIS THROAT.



WHAT'S HE  
GONNA DO WITH  
THE BODY?

TRUST  
ME-- YOU  
DON'T  
WANNA  
KNOW.

INSIDE, THE OLD WHARF  
BUILDING IS A DARK DEN  
OF RUSTED BOAT PARTS,  
ENGINES AND EQUIPMENT.  
SHARPIE CARRIES  
GRETCHEN'S BODY INTO  
HIS PRIVATE WARREN AND  
TOSSES HER ON AN OVER-  
USED WORK TABLE.





A RATTLE  
BREATH.

A GASP.

THEN A  
PAIN-  
FILLED  
COUGH.

SHARPIE'S DULL EYES  
BRIGHTEN SLIGHTLY.  
WHAT PASSES FOR JOY  
CREASES HIS SNOT-AND-  
SALIVA ENCRUSTED LIPS.

GRETCHEN STARES UP  
THROUGH BLURRED  
EYES INTO THE FACE OF  
HORROR MADE FLESH.

ALIVE?  
...huh-huh...  
EVEN  
BETTER.

GRETCHEN'S SCREAM IS LOST  
BENEATH THE BUZZ OF THE  
SURGICAL SAW. SHE STARES  
AT A CEILING NEATLY LINED  
WITH DECAPITATED HEADS.  
WOMENS' SKULLS. SMALL.  
DELICATE. SOME STILL  
BEARING FLESH, SCALP, AND  
HAIR. ALL SURROUNDED BY  
BOUQUETS OF LONG-STEM  
ROSES IN FULL BLOOM.

A SHATTERING  
SCREAM RISES  
ABOVE A CITY  
OF SCREAMS.

A SOUL IS IN  
TRANSITION.

BEING  
MURDERED  
AND REBORN  
OUT OF A  
WOMB OF  
ANGUISH.

BEAUTIFUL  
HORROR.

A SOUL THAT  
KNOWS THAT  
THEY WHO  
BORE IT  
SHALL REAP  
IN GREAT  
AGONY WHAT  
THEY HAVE SO  
CARELESSLY  
SOWN.

RRUMZZZ