

LISTEN, NOW.
HAVE YOU HEARD
THIS PIECE
BEFORE?

I have
no interest in
your hollow
notes.

DO YOU HEAR
BEAUTY IN ITS
DISSONANCE?

I seek you
out at last--you
speak of
this?

I may well have
arrived to slit
your throat.

IT IS
BY BACH. IT
WAS WRIT FOR A
KING. KNOWN AS
THE ENDLESSLY
RISING CANON.

...What
does that
mean?

THE TONE
MODULATES IN A
WAY THAT IT HAS
NO FINAL CADENCE.
IT CLIMBS BUT
THEN THE KEY
CHANGES,
RETURNS.

THUS, IT
SEEMS TO RISE
PERPETUALLY.

ONE COULD
PLAY IT UNTIL KEYS
OR FINGERS WORE DOWN
TO DUST. FOR IT
SOUNDS AS THOUGH IT
GOES UP, AND UP,
AND UP...

But it
does not.

no.

What
is your
point?

THAT ITS
ATTEMPTS AT
RISING ARE
HOPELESS. AS
ALL ATTEMPTS
ARE.

BEFORE.

ELSEWHERE.
NOW.



I AM HE. THE
DARK LORD,
LUCIFER.



EAT YOUR
BREAKFAST.



I AM THE
MORNING STAR,
THE LIGHT
BRINGER. THE
FIRST OF THE
DAMNED.

IT'S GOT A BIT
OF SALT IN IT.
HOW YOU
LIKE IT.



I AM HE WHO LED
THE FIRST WAR, THE
GREATEST WAR, OF
WHICH ALL OTHER
WARS ARE MERE
SHADES AND
REFLECTIONS.



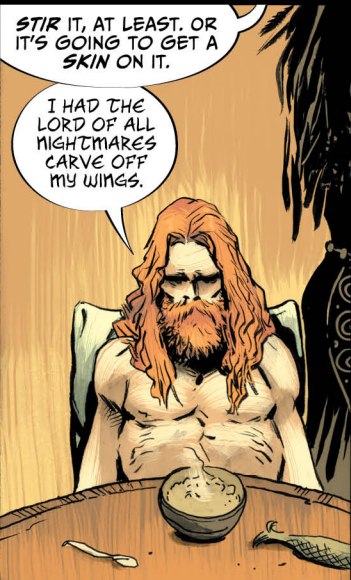
I AM HE WHO WAS
CAST DOWN FOR
SPITTING IN THE FACE
OF THE ALMIGHTY,
WHO REIGNED IN
HELL OVER MAN
AND DEMON AND
TORMENTED
ALL.



IT'S
GOING
TO GO
COLD...
...AND
OATS ARE
NO GOOD
COLD, ARE
THEY?

STIR IT, AT LEAST. OR
IT'S GOING TO GET A
SKIN ON IT.

I HAD THE
LORD OF ALL
NIGHTMARES
CARVE OFF
MY WINGS.



THE BLADE WAS SHARP, YET HE
STILL HAD TO SAW THROUGH THE
GRISTLE AND THE SINEW
AND THE BONE.

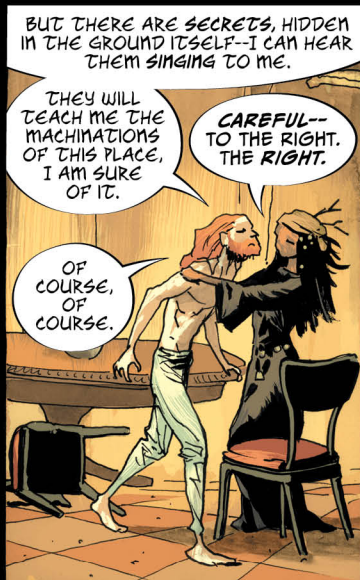
AND
NOW I
AM...





THERE IS NO FURTHER TIME FOR BREAKFAST!

I AM TRAPPED IN THIS PLACE, HELD PRISONER BY FORCES THAT HAVE OBSCURED THEMSELVES FROM ME.

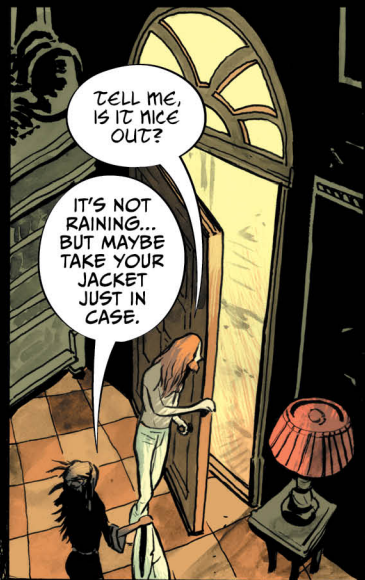


BUT THERE ARE SECRETS, HIDDEN IN THE GROUND ITSELF—I CAN HEAR THEM SINGING TO ME.

THEY WILL TEACH ME THE MACHINATIONS OF THIS PLACE, I AM SURE OF IT.

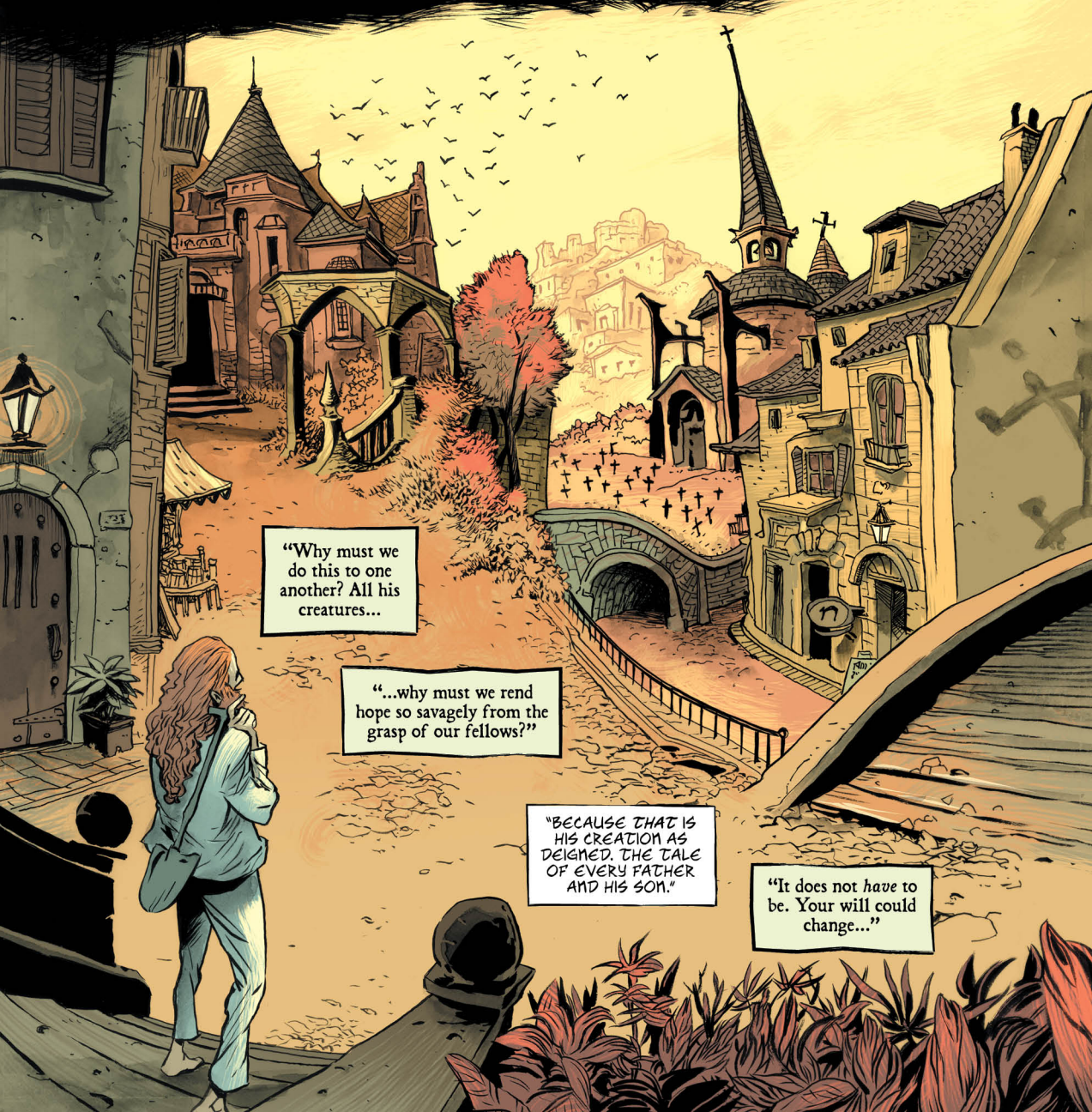
CAREFUL-- TO THE RIGHT. THE RIGHT.

OF COURSE, OF COURSE.



TELL ME, IS IT NICE OUT?

IT'S NOT RAINING... BUT MAYBE TAKE YOUR JACKET JUST IN CASE.



"Why must we do this to one another? All his creatures..."

"...why must we rend hope so savagely from the grasp of our fellows?"

"BECAUSE THAT IS HIS CREATION AS DESIGNED. THE TALE OF EVERY FATHER AND HIS SON."

"It does not have to be. Your will could change..."

"...and yet you bestow suffering freely."

AFTER STUBBING OUT HIS CIGARETTE IN THE CAR, LAPD DETECTIVE JOHN DECKER GARGLED MOUTHWASH AND SPAT ONTO THE CURB HE'D PARKED BESIDE.



HE'S RUBBED HIS HANDS VIGOROUSLY WITH AN ANTIBACTERIAL HAND WASH.

OVER THE DECADE SINCE HIS WIFE THINKS HE QUIT, HE'S TRIED THREE OR FOUR BRANDS TO FIND THE ONE THAT MASKS THE SMELL OF TOBACCO BEST.



IT'S ONLY A SMALL LIE, BUT HE HATES HIMSELF FOR IT. PENNY AND HE DON'T KEEP SECRETS.

HE'S CUT DOWN, AT LEAST.

FUCKING THING, JUST OPEN. ALWAYS DOES THIS. ALWAYS--

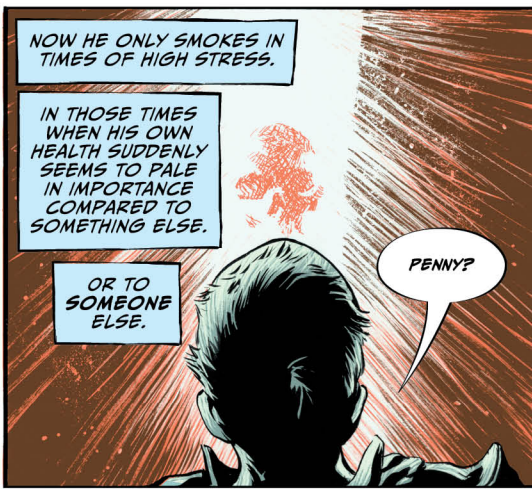


NOW HE ONLY SMOKES IN TIMES OF HIGH STRESS.

IN THOSE TIMES WHEN HIS OWN HEALTH SUDDENLY SEEMS TO PALE IN IMPORTANCE COMPARED TO SOMETHING ELSE.

OR TO SOMEONE ELSE.

PENNY?



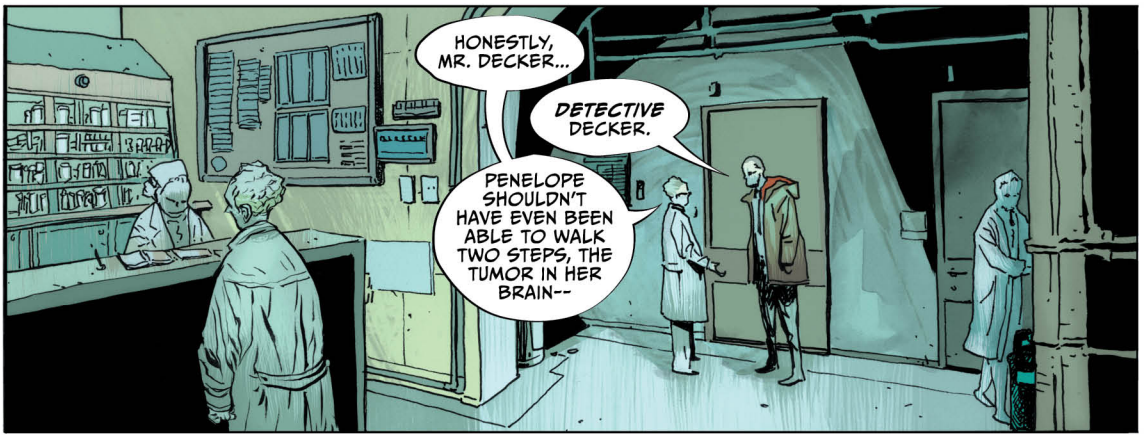
OH GOD, HOW--?

GET OFF ME, HOW DARE YOU!

SHE WON'T STOP CALLING TO ME. IT HURTS IN MY HEAD, BUILDING AND BUILDING...

PENNY!





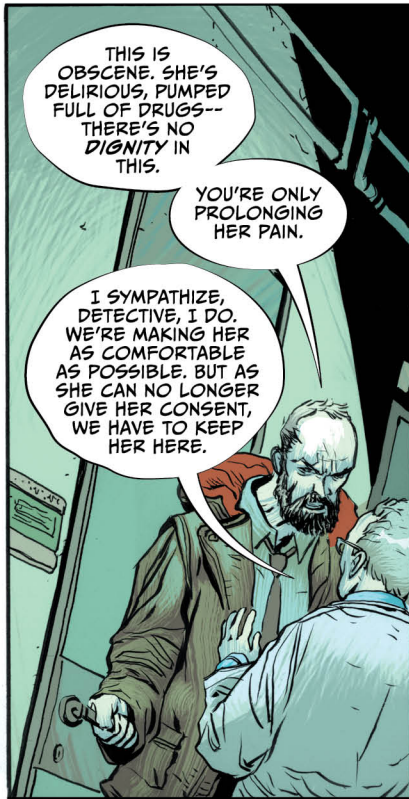
HONESTLY, MR. DECKER...

DETECTIVE DECKER.

PENELOPE SHOULDN'T HAVE EVEN BEEN ABLE TO WALK TWO STEPS, THE TUMOR IN HER BRAIN--



IT HURTS... I CAN'T ESCAPE HER. HOW DO YOU ESCAPE FLESH?



THIS IS OBSCENE. SHE'S DELIRIOUS, PUMPED FULL OF DRUGS-- THERE'S NO DIGNITY IN THIS.

YOU'RE ONLY PROLONGING HER PAIN.

I SYMPATHIZE, DETECTIVE, I DO. WE'RE MAKING HER AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE. BUT AS SHE CAN NO LONGER GIVE HER CONSENT, WE HAVE TO KEEP HER HERE.



MY GUARDIAN APPLICATION...

IS STILL PENDING.

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, BY THE TIME IT GOES THROUGH, SHE'LL BE GONE...



...I DON'T WANT HER TO SPEND HER LAST DAYS IN THIS STERILE HOLE.



WHERE ARE WE GOING?

DRIVING. LIKE I SAID. THE WAY WE USED TO, REMEMBER? THAT'S IT. COME ON, PENNY. WE NEED TO BE QUICK.



WHEN WE WERE KIDS. JUST MARRIED.

WE USED TO DRIVE DOWN THE HIGHWAY. WE'D GO SOUTH, OUT OF L.A. YOU'D DRIVE SO FAST. AWAY FROM WORK AND STRESS AND EVERYTHING THAT WASN'T YOU AND ME.



THOSE WERE THE ONLY TIMES I EVER SAW YOU BREAK THE LAW. EVER AT ALL.

YOU PUSHED THROUGH THE SPEED LIMIT AS THOUGH THE DEVIL WAS AT OUR BACK.

BUT WE WERE LAUGHING, AND THE SUN WAS SHINING...



AND FOR A MOMENT A SMILE LIGHTS UP HER FACE. HER SMILE. THE ONE SHE'D HAD BACK THEN.



AND IN A FLICKER IT'S GONE.

HE WAS AT OUR BACK. OH, JOHN... ALL THIS FOR ROBERT'S SINS...

ALL THIS FOR GATELY HOUSE.



ROBERT...? YOU MEAN YOUR COUSIN?

YOU'VE BEEN SMOKING IN HERE, HAVEN'T YOU, JOHN?

I'VE LIED TO YOU, TOO. AND NOW I CAN'T EXPLAIN. IT HURTS SO MUCH.

JOHN'S FOOT ON THE ACCELERATOR SLOWLY PLUMMETS...

...HE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO HEAR PENNY LAUGH AGAIN.

HAHAHAHA!

BUT...MY LORD LUCIFER, WE DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT AMUSES YOU SO.

WE HAVE PUT OUT OUR EYES TO BE MORE AS YOU ARE.

NOW WILL YOU NOT HELP US? WE STILL SEEK OUR THIRD SO OUR COVEN CAN BE COMPLETE.

"WHEN SHALL WE TWO MEET AGAIN" HAS NEVER HAD THE SAME RING TO IT.

BUT, MY DEAR GIRLS, I CAN RESTORE MY EYES JUST LIKE THIS, SEE?



CAN YOU DO THAT, TOO? IF NOT, IT WAS A FOOLISH THING TO DO, I'M AFRAID.

LUCIFER.
LADIES.

AH, GOOD MORNING, BILL. I CAN SEE YOU TODAY.

