

WHAT'S A HERO,
REALLY?



SOMEONE WHO'S
STRONG?
WHO FIGHTS FOR
THE FORCES OF
GOOD?

A PERSON WHO
EXHIBITS
COURAGE, OR
PUTS THE BEST
INTEREST OF
OTHERS BEFORE
THEMSELVES?

CRASH



I'LL TELL
YOU THE
REAL
TRUTH
OF THE
MATTER--

WE'RE ALL
HEROES.

COUGH
...MY...MY KID IS
UP THERE! YOU
GOTTA GET
MY KID!





THE SUPERS HAVE CHANGED
OUR PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT THE
WORD HERO REALLY MEANS.



DAMMIT...
WHERE--

UHHNN...
WH-WHAT...

...DON'T
FEEL SO
GOOD...

BUT YOU
DON'T NEED
SUPERPOWERS
TO BE A HERO.



CHEMICAL...
GAS? WHY'S
THERE...
HUNTITE...



SOMETIMES, EVEN
THE SUPERS NEED A
HAND FROM US
LITTLE PEOPLE.



HOTSPOT
IS DOWN!
I REPEAT,
HOTSPOT IS
DOWN!



OCTOBER 2ND, 2013.

IN THE WAKE OF ALL THAT I'VE DONE, EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW FOR CERTAIN:

I'M NO HERO.



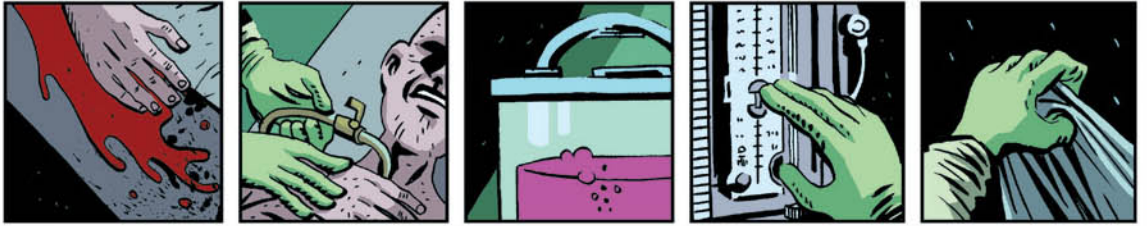
JUNE 14TH, 2013.

I'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN MY WAY
AROUND A
BODY.

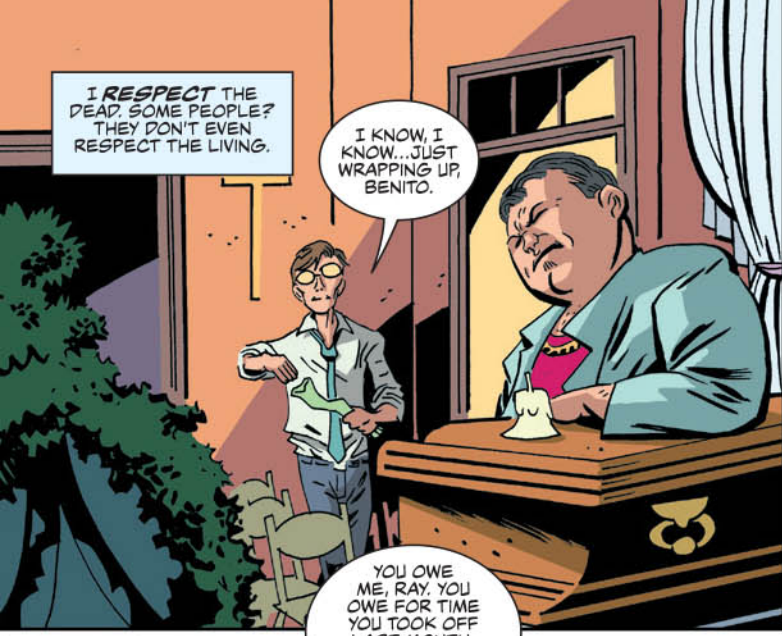
THERE'S AN ART TO
IT--AN INTIMACY AND
DELICATE TOUCH--



A SCIENCE.



RAYMOND!
THAT IS
ENOUGH--NO
OVERTIME!



I RESPECT THE DEAD, SOME PEOPLE? THEY DON'T EVEN RESPECT THE LIVING.

I KNOW, I KNOW...JUST WRAPPING UP, BENITO.

YOU OWE ME, RAY. YOU OWE FOR TIME YOU TOOK OFF LAST MONTH. LET'S SAY--4 A.M. TOMORROW, YES?

YEAH, UM...YES, SIR. I'LL BE HERE.



LIFE'S ABOUT LEARNING TO SEE OPPORTUNITY IN THE BLEAK THINGS AROUND US.

MAKING THE MOST OUT OF WHAT YOU'RE HANDED.



ONE SEC... I KNOW THERE'S A FIVE IN HERE...



DAMMIT...!



SOME DAYS ARE HARDER THAN OTHERS.



IT STARTED WITH **PEOPLE IN COSTUMES**. THEY WERE TIRED OF SEEING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS GO TO HELL AND WERE ACTING OUT OF **CIVIC DUTY**.



THEY WERE OUR FRIENDS, POLICE, AND RELIEF WORKERS-- OUR NEIGHBORS. THEY WERE **US**.

THEY WERE **HEROES**.

BAD GUYS QUICKLY FOLLOWED SUIT. NO ONE KNEW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT, BUT AT LEAST IT SEEMED LIKE THE HEROES WERE HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT. CRIME WAS DOWN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS.

THEN, TEN YEARS AGO, **THE SUPERS** APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE.




EACH OF THEM HAD ENOUGH POWER TO LEVEL A **FOOTBALL STADIUM**.

THEY QUICKLY REPLACED THE OLD HEROES LIKE SHINY NEW CARS. THEY WERE JUST **BETTER**.

IN ONE FELL SWOOP THE SUPERS CLEANED UP CRIME AND PUT AWAY THE **LEGITIMATE THREATS**.

WE FINALLY LIVED AMONGST **REAL** HEROES.

NOW THEY FLY ABOVE US LIKE **GODS**. HALF OF HUMANITY WORSHIPS THEM, BUT THE OTHER HALF? THEY'RE NOT SO FORGIVING.



WE STILL DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO-- OR WHAT--THEY ARE. BUT THERE'S ONE THING FOR CERTAIN--

THINGS WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

ESPECIALLY NOT FOR ME.



DURING MY TIME AS A MEDICAL EXAMINER WORKING ALONGSIDE THE POLICE FORCE, SHANNON WAS DIAGNOSED WITH MS.

THE DIAGNOSIS WAS A SHOCK, BUT MY INSURANCE WAS GREAT AND WE WERE READY TO FACE THE DISEASE HEAD-ON.

I TOLD YOU--I'M FINE. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GIVE YOURSELF A HEART ATTACK RUSHING HOME.

SHAN, YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT IS FOR ME TO GET THIS STUFF. THE DOCTOR SAID YOU NEED TO BE KEEPING ON A SCHEDULE--

WHAT I NEED IS TO LIVE MY LIFE. SO DO YOU.

THAT WAS ALL BEFORE THINGS WENT TO HELL. BEFORE *ULTRA*.

YOU'RE BURNING YOURSELF OUT, BABY. YOU'VE GOTTA TAKE IT EASY--I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THE SICK ONE HERE.

I--I GOTTA CALL IT AN EARLY NIGHT. BENITO WANTS ME BACK IN AT FOUR IN THE MORNING FOR SOME PREP STUFF..

SINCE THEN, IT'S FELT LIKE I'VE JUST BEEN *PICKING UP THE PIECES*.

YOU SPEND ENOUGH TIME WITH CORPSES. YOU SHOULD BE HERE WITH ME--

I CAN'T ARGUE WITH HIM, SHAN. WE BOTH KNOW I NEED THIS JOB...I GOT US INTO THIS MESS SO THE LEAST I CAN DO--

DING-DONG

...THE HELL?

ENOUGH. SIT YOUR BUTT DOWN AND LET ME SERVE YOU DINNER. WHAT'S DONE IS DONE AND I'M NOT GOING TO WALLOW IN PAST MISTAKES--





I KNOW MY WAY AROUND A BODY...I'VE GOT A KNACK FOR UNEARTHING DETAILS FROM THE DEAD...



RAY!

...BUT SOME THINGS SHOULD STAY BURIED.

KRAK



