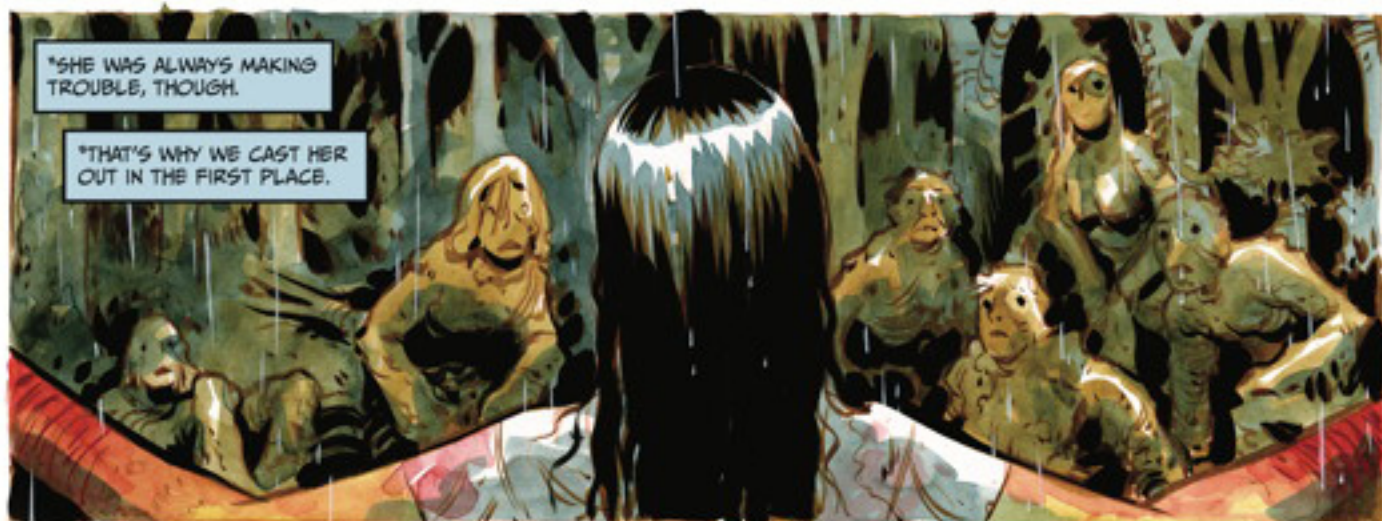


"IT WAS HESTER WHO
BROKE THE LAW...

"...WHO BROKE FROM
OUR TRADITIONS...

"... WHEN SHE TOOK IT UPON
HERSELF TO BECOME A GOD.



*SHE WAS ALWAYS MAKING TROUBLE, THOUGH.

*THAT'S WHY WE CAST HER OUT IN THE FIRST PLACE.



*THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WHERE WE WENT WRONG...

*...IN DISTANCING OURSELVES FROM OUR KIN.



*HESTER NEVER DID LIKE BEING ALONE...

*...AND IN LONBLINESS, HER THOUGHTS TURNED TO MISCHIEF.



*SHE CALLED FORTH OTHERS TO KEEP HER COMPANY...

*...SHAPED THEM OUT OF THE MUD...



*...AND HER BLOOD.



*HER BLOOD...

*...AND OURS.



*OH, HOW SHE TESTED US...

...EVEN IN THE EARLY DAYS OF HER EXILE...



*...CREATING UNNATURAL BEASTS, JUST TO SEE IF SHE COULD DO IT...

*...JUST TO SEE IF WE WERE A-WATCHING.



*AND WHEN WE DIDN'T REACT IN THE WAY SHE WANTED...

*...SHE ONCE MORE DONE WHAT WAS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN.



*WHERE SHE HAD ONCE COMMITTED MURDER IN DEFIANCE OF OUR WAYS...

*...NOW SHE BREATHED LIFE INTO THE LIFELESS.



*THAT, OF COURSE, SUMMONED US...

...BROUGHT US FROM THE FAR PLACES TO VISIT OUR ESTRANGED SISTER ONCE MORE.

LOOKIT WHAT YOU DONE, GIRL.



YOU
KNOW THIS IS
WRONG.

YOU KNOW
WE WON'T LET
THIS STAND.

AND YET
HERE WE
ARE.



DO YOU
HAVE ANYTHING
TO SAY?



WHAT ARE
YOU GOING TO
DO ABOUT IT?

"THERE WEREN'T MUCH
MORE WE COULD SAY..."

"... SEEING AS WE HAD
ALREADY LEARNED HER
THE EXTENT OF THE
PUNISHMENT WE COULD
METE OUT."



AFTER ALL, AS FAR AS HESTER WAS CONCERNED, WE HAD ALREADY DONE THE VERY WORST WE COULD TO HER.

IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING, ODESSA...

... WHY DIDN'T YOU DO SOMETHING MORE?



YOU AND YOUR FAMILY--
YOUR FAMILY, TOO, DEAR.

SO YOU SAY, BUT YOU ALL SEEM... MORE THAN HUMAN.

SO WHY DIDN'T YOU DO SOMETHING TO STOP HESTER ALL THOSE YEARS AGO?



AS I MENTIONED...
... THERE ARE TRADITIONS THAT EVEN WE MUST REVERSE.



BESIDES...

... IF WE HAD DONE AWAY WITH HESTER BACK THEN...

... YOU MIGHT NOT BE WITH US RIGHT NOW.



MAYBE...

... THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN FOR THE BEST.

DON'T TALK SUCH NONSENSE, GIRL.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT AND NEITHER DO YOU.