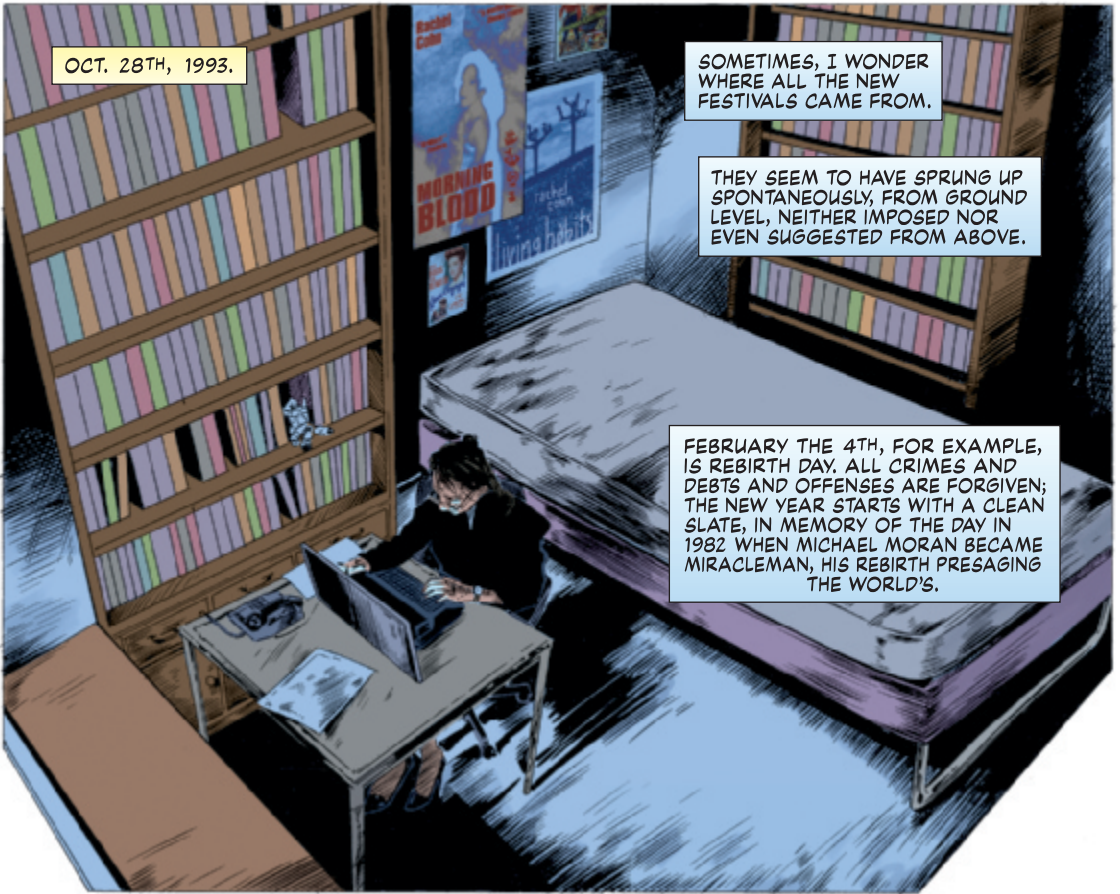


OCT. 28TH, 1993.

SOMETIMES, I WONDER WHERE ALL THE NEW FESTIVALS CAME FROM.

THEY SEEM TO HAVE SPRUNG UP SPONTANEOUSLY, FROM GROUND LEVEL, NEITHER IMPOSED NOR EVEN SUGGESTED FROM ABOVE.

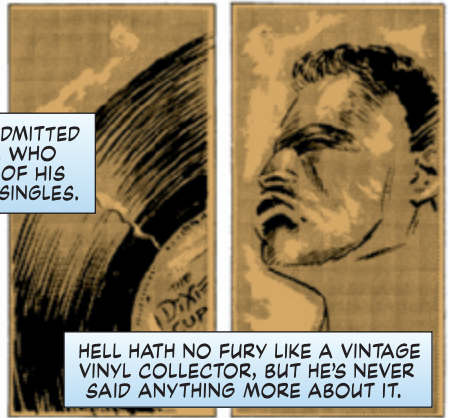
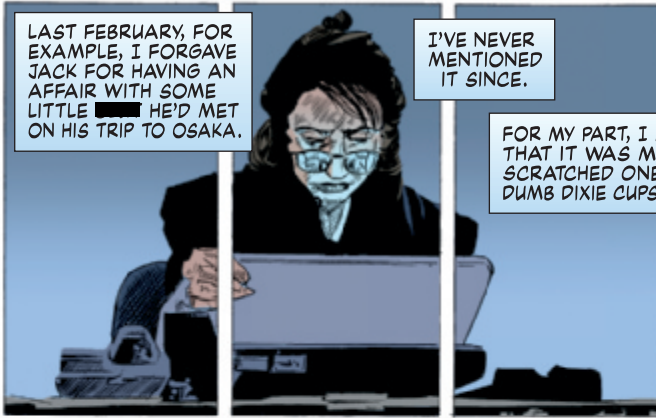
FEBRUARY THE 4TH, FOR EXAMPLE, IS REBIRTH DAY. ALL CRIMES AND DEBTS AND OFFENSES ARE FORGIVEN; THE NEW YEAR STARTS WITH A CLEAN SLATE, IN MEMORY OF THE DAY IN 1982 WHEN MICHAEL MORAN BECAME MIRACLEMAN, HIS REBIRTH PRESAGING THE WORLD'S.



LAST FEBRUARY, FOR EXAMPLE, I FORGAVE JACK FOR HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH SOME LITTLE █████ HE'D MET ON HIS TRIP TO OSAKA.

I'VE NEVER MENTIONED IT SINCE.

FOR MY PART, I ADMITTED THAT IT WAS ME WHO SCRATCHED ONE OF HIS DUMB DIXIE CUPS SINGLES.

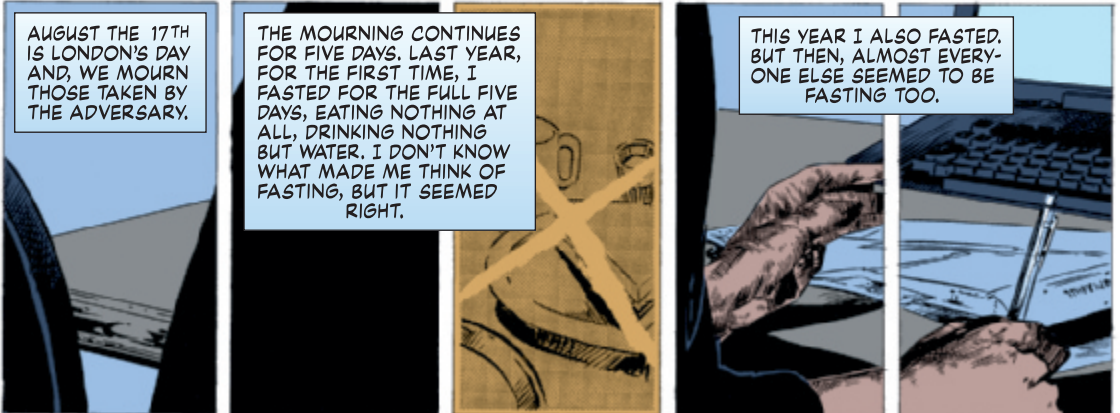


HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE A VINTAGE VINYL COLLECTOR, BUT HE'S NEVER SAID ANYTHING MORE ABOUT IT.

AUGUST THE 17TH IS LONDON'S DAY AND, WE MOURN THOSE TAKEN BY THE ADVERSARY.

THE MOURNING CONTINUES FOR FIVE DAYS. LAST YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FASTED FOR THE FULL FIVE DAYS, EATING NOTHING AT ALL, DRINKING NOTHING BUT WATER. I DON'T KNOW WHAT MADE ME THINK OF FASTING, BUT IT SEEMED RIGHT.

THIS YEAR I ALSO FASTED. BUT THEN, ALMOST EVERYONE ELSE SEEMED TO BE FASTING TOO.



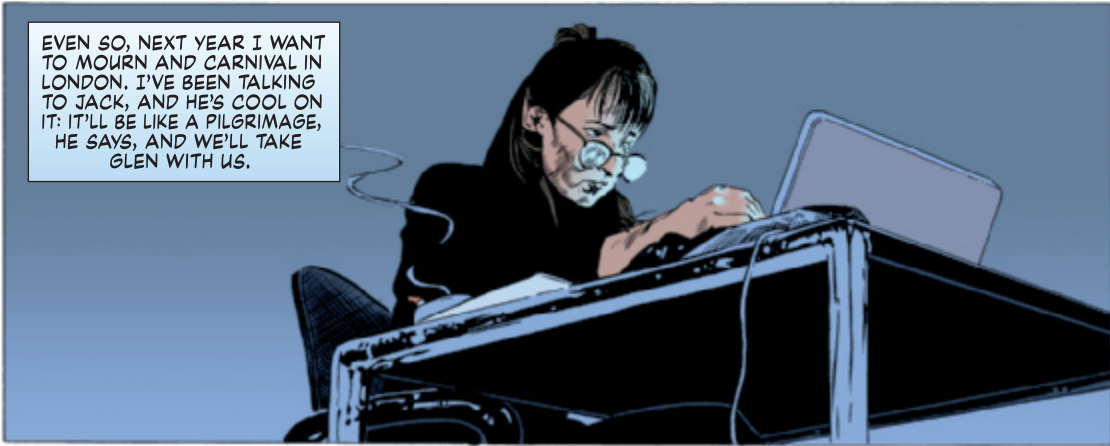
THEN, AT THE END OF THE FIVE DAYS OF SORROW, THERE IS A CELEBRATION. IT'S CALLED CARNIVAL. EACH YEAR IT SEEMS TO GET BIGGER. THIS YEAR WE CLOSED DOWN THE WHOLE OF HOLLYWOOD, FROM THE AZA CHORN MEMORIAL FREEWAY IN THE EAST ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE SAN DIEGO FREEWAY IN THE WEST, AND TURNED IT INTO ONE HUGE PARTY ZONE.

PEOPLE CAME FROM ALL OVER, AND THE PARTY LASTED FOR A WEEK.

IT WAS UNBELIEVABLE.



EVEN SO, NEXT YEAR I WANT TO MOURN AND CARNIVAL IN LONDON. I'VE BEEN TALKING TO JACK, AND HE'S COOL ON IT: IT'LL BE LIKE A PILGRIMAGE, HE SAYS, AND WE'LL TAKE GLEN WITH US.



MIST, OF COURSE, HAS BEEN TO CARNIVAL IN LONDON EVERY YEAR SINCE SHE WAS BORN.



IT WOULD BE NICE TO THINK THAT THE WHOLE FAMILY WOULD BE TOGETHER AT NEXT YEAR'S CARNIVAL: GLEN, JACK, ME, AND MIST. BUT SHE'S GOT HER OWN FRIENDS, AND I DOUBT WE'LL SEE HER MUCH.



FESTIVALS.



THERE'S STILL NEW YEAR'S, OF COURSE, AND VALENTINE'S--AND CHRISTMAS, WHEN WE REMEMBER ALL THE DEAD GODS AND LOST MYTHOLOGIES, AND EXCHANGE PRESENTS.

GLEN STILL BELIEVES IN SANTA CLAUS.

MIST SAYS SHE LOOKED ALL OVER THE NORTH POLE, AND COULDN'T FIND HIS HOUSE, BUT GLEN SAYS SHE JUST WASN'T LOOKING IN THE RIGHT PLACES.

HE'S SO CUTE.

AND SHE'S SO...



FESTIVALS.

TOMORROW, ALL OVER THE WORLD, CHILDREN WILL WAKE UP EXCITED AND PROUD: IT'S THEIR SPECIAL DAY. ADULTS WILL STEP BACK, AND, FOR ONE DAY, EVERYTHING WILL TURN UPSIDE-DOWN AS THE CHILDREN HELP DRIVE THE TRAINS AND FIRE TRUCKS, PRESENT THE NEWS, AND RAMPAGE THROUGH THE ADULTS-ONLY SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS NET. WE KEEP AN EYE ON THEM, PICK THEM UP WHEN THEY FALL OVER, AND TRY NOT TO ACT TOO OVERANXIOUS.



TOMORROW IS THEIR DAY. THEY PICKED IT, THEY CELEBRATE IT.

TOMORROW IS OCTOBER THE 29TH.

WINTERSDAY.

