

THE EMPTY MAN™

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THE EMPTY MAN Ongoing No. 1, November 2018. Published by BOOM! Studios, a division of Boom! Entertainment Inc., 5670 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90048-5679. The Empty Man's ® & © 2018 Cullen Bunn. All rights reserved. BOOM! Studios and the BOOM! logo are trademarks of Boom! Entertainment, Inc., registered in various countries and all other marks between any of the names, characters, persons, events and/or institutions depicted herein are fictional. Any similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, events and/or institutions in this publication to actual names, characters, persons, events and/or institutions living or dead, events and/or institutions is unintended and purely coincidental. BOOM! Studios does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories or artwork, for information regarding the CFSIA on this printed material, call (206) 599-3636 and provide reference #RICH - 823133. **PRINTED IN USA.**

BOOM!
STUDIOS



SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH ME.

BUT I THINK THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ALL OF US.



YOU CAN'T ALWAYS TELL...NOT BY LOOKING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN.

ON THE SURFACE...ALL IS WELL.



UNTIL IT ISN'T.

BECAUSE IT'S ALL JUST A LIE...ALL OF IT... A FAÇADE SPLASHED LIKE PAINT OVER WHAT'S REAL.



YE AAAAAARRGH

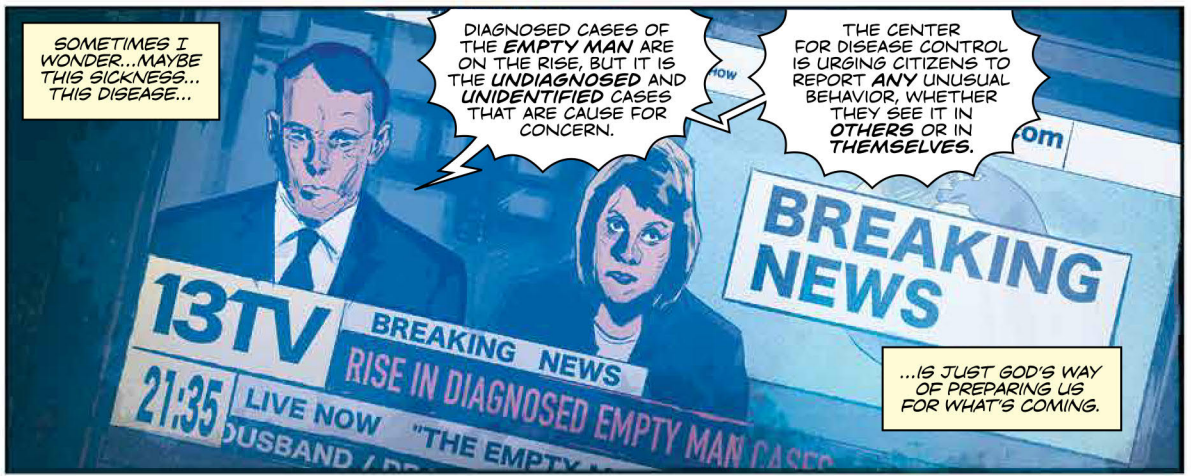
SOONER OR LATER, SOMETHING WILL WASH THE PAINT AWAY.

DAD--

STAY HERE.

I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.

AND...OH GOD... SO MANY OF US WON'T BE ABLE TO SURVIVE THE TRUTH THAT IS REVEALED.



SOMETIMES I WONDER...MAYBE THIS SICKNESS... THIS DISEASE...

DIAGNOSED CASES OF THE EMPTY MAN ARE ON THE RISE, BUT IT IS THE UNDIAGNOSED AND UNIDENTIFIED CASES THAT ARE CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL IS URGING CITIZENS TO REPORT ANY UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR, WHETHER THEY SEE IT IN OTHERS OR IN THEMSELVES.

...IS JUST GOD'S WAY OF PREPARING US FOR WHAT'S COMING.



BUT IF GOD'S BEHIND THIS...THEN HE'S MAD, TOO.

MELISSA?

HONEY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT UP THERE?

OR MAYBE...THE DISEASE IS GOD.



THAT'S WHAT MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE.

AND IT CONTROLS THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM IT... MAKES THEM ACT OUT IN STRANGE WAYS.



AND WHAT'S GOD IF NOT A PUPPETEER...

...ONE WHO MAKES US DANCE...

...ONE WHO CRAVES AND DEMANDS ATTENTION?



NOT LONG AFTER THE EMPTY MAN STARTED TO SPREAD, DOZENS OF FRINGE RELIGIOUS GROUPS STARTED POPPING UP.

THEY WORSHIPPED THE SICKNESS...AND WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO TELL THEM THEY'RE WRONG?



IF THE WHOLE WORLD'S SWIRLING DOWN THE TOILET...

...THEY ONLY WANT TO BE WORSHIPFUL LITTLE SPECKS OF FECEES.



WE ALL WORSHIP AT THE ALTAR OF THE EMPTY MAN...

THE TWO CHILDREN HAVE FOUND THEMSELVES AT THE CENTER OF A MEDIA FRENZY...

...BECAUSE THEY CLAIM TO HAVE MET THE EMPTY MAN FIRSTHAND...

...BRINGING HIS MESSAGE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

...WHETHER WE ADMIT IT OR NOT.



THE EMPTY MAN'S IDOLS TAKE MANY SHAPES.

MEL? YOU ALL RIGHT IN THERE?

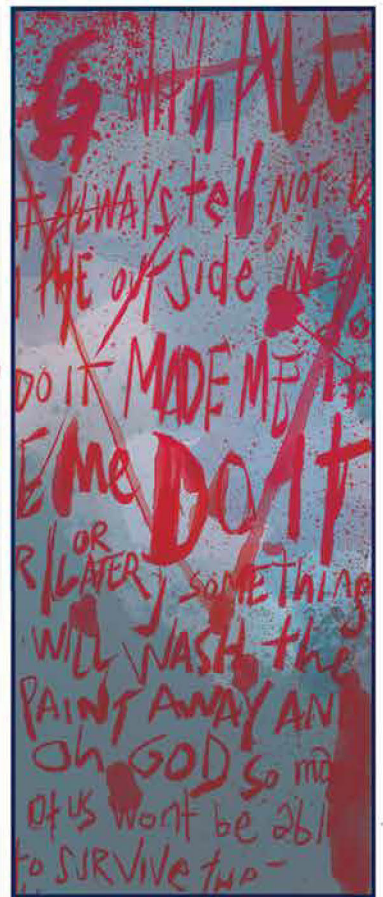
HIS AGENTS ARE LEGION.



GOD!
MELISSA!
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?
WHAT
HAVE YOU
DONE?



NO
CUTS.
NO
SCRATCHES.
WHERE--



ANDREW...
IT'S OKAY.
I'M ALL
RIGHT.
IT'S
NOT MY
BLOOD.



THEN...
...WHERE
DID IT COME
FROM?