

CHAPTER VII





OLD GHOSTS







EXCUSE ME? MY NAME'S DETECTIVE STEVEN FINE, I'M LOOKING FOR A DANIEL DREIBERG.

I'M DAN DREIBERG.

UH, YOU BETTER COME IN...



ALMOST THROUGH HERE, MR. DREIBERG. THIS BABY'LL HOLD OFF AN ARMY. SORRY WE KEPT YOU WAITING FOR THE INSTALLATION.

THAT'S OKAY, WELL, DETECTIVE, HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

EDWARD BLAKE, HOMICIDE VICTIM. YOU KNEW HIM.



UH, YES, VAGUELY.

YOU KNEW HIM WELL ENOUGH TO ATTEND HIS FUNERAL. I SAW THE PHOTOGRAPHS: YOU, ADRIAN VEIDT, DOC MANHATTAN.

YOU KEEP HEAVY COMPANY, MR. DREIBERG.



I MET BLAKE THROUGH VEIDT. I, UH, ONCE DONATED SOME MONEY TO ONE OF VEIDT'S CHARITIES.

BIG GUY, THAT BLAKE, FOR A DIPLOMAT. QUITE A HEROIC FIGURE. MAYBE HE WORKED OUT, HUH?

UH-HUH.



FUNNY... THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF "HEROIC FIGURES" IN THE NEWS LATELY: RORSCHACH CAPTURED, VEIDT SHOT AT, DOC MANHATTAN LEAVES EARTH, DAMN NEAR SICKING OFF WORLD WAR THREE...

CIGARETTE, MR. DREIBERG?

NO, THANKS, I DON'T.



VERY WISE.

... AND THEN THERE WAS THAT THING LAST WEEK-END. YOU READ ABOUT THAT? THAT TENEMENT FIRE?

ALL FINISHED, MR. DREIBERG. YOU GOT MAXIMUM SECURITY.



UH, RIGHT, THANKS! I'LL SETTLE BY CHECK...

CRAZIEST STORY... THIS AIRSHIP RESCUES ALL THESE PEOPLE, HOVERING DOWN BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS. AIN'T MANY AIRSHIPS CAN DO THAT.

NO?



NO, INTERVIEWED SOME WITNESSES, BUT THE DETAILS WERE GARBLED: PILOT WORE GOGGLES; HAD A FEMALE ACCOMPlice; PLAYED MUSIC; SERVED COFFEE...

HEY... "SWEET CHARIOT" SUGAR CUBES! ONLY COME IN CATERING PACKS, RIGHT?

UH, YES, I BELIEVE SO. WHY?



NO REASON.

Y'KNOW, THE ONLY SHIP I EVER HEARD OF COULD MANUEVER BETWEEN BUILDINGS BELONGED TO ONE OF THOSE MASKED ADVENTURERS THEY OUTLAWED IN '77.

COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HIM, NATURALLY... HE'D BE IN HIS FORTIES NOW.



I MEAN, GUYS THAT AGE LIKE US, WE'RE UNHEALTHY. WE GET UP IN THE MORNING AND COUGH OUR LUNGS UP, WE...

NO, LISTEN, WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

... OH, BUT THEN I FORGOT, YOU DON'T SMOKE, DO YOU?



AIN'T ABOUT NOTHING. I'M NOT EVEN ON DUTY. JUST CALLED TO SEE IF YOU KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT BLAKE.

I'M AFRAID NOT. WE WEREN'T CLOSE.

UH, THAT LEADS TO THE LUMBER ROOM. KEYS LOST, I'M AFRAID.



NO SWEAT. I GOTTA GO, ANYWAY. GAY, I NOTICED THIS CALENDAR EARLIER. NICE OWL.

Y'KNOW, TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE HAVE CALENDARS: PEOPLE WHO PEEK AT NEXT MONTH'S PICTURE IN ADVANCE AND PEOPLE WHO DON'T. WHICH ARE YOU?

I DON'T.



YOU OUGHTTA. IT PAYS TO LOOK AHEAD.

HMM, NOVEMBER'S A HAWK TAKING A SPARROW IN FLIGHT. OMINOUS KINDA PICTURE, HUH?

AW, HELL... I HOPE I DIDN'T SPOIL THE SURPRISE FOR YOU?



OH, DON'T WORRY. LIFE HAS ENOUGH SURPRISES.

I'LL BET, INCIDENTALLY, I'M SORRY FOR BORING YOU WITH THAT TALK ABOUT ADVENTURERS. IT'S A KINDA HOBBY HORSE OF MINE.

SINCE I ARRESTED RORSCHACH, THEY'VE BEEN PREYING ON MY MIND.



I MEAN, RESCUING FIRE VICTIMS, NOBODY CONDEMSNS THAT, BUT IF IT WENT ANY FURTHER... IT'S LIKE NOVA EXPRESS SAYS: "SPIRIT OF '77". BRRR.

THOSE CHARACTERS: THAT DAME, THE SILK SPECTRE; WHERE'S SHE NOW, I WONDER?



... AND RORSCHACH, HEH! KNOW WHAT HE HAD IN HIS POCKETS WHEN WE COLLARED HIM?

SUGAR CUBES. WEIRD SHIT, HUH?

I'LL BE SEEING YOU, MR. DREIBERG. YOU TAKE CARE, NOW.

I WILL GOOD EVENING, DETECTIVE.



DAN? WHO WAS THAT? I WAS JUST IN THE BATH BUT I HEARD THE LAST OF IT.

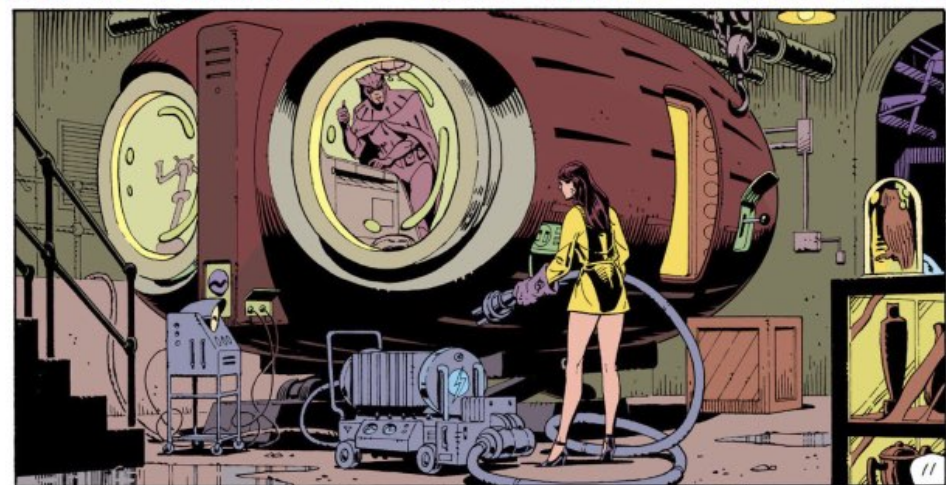
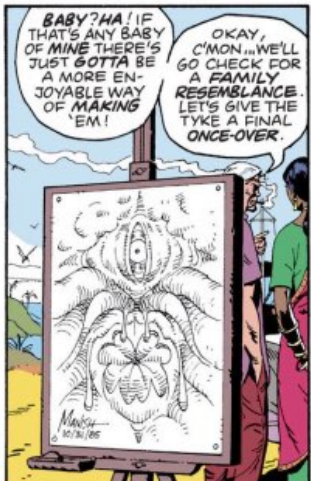
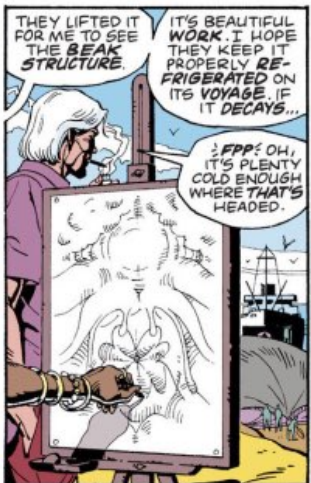
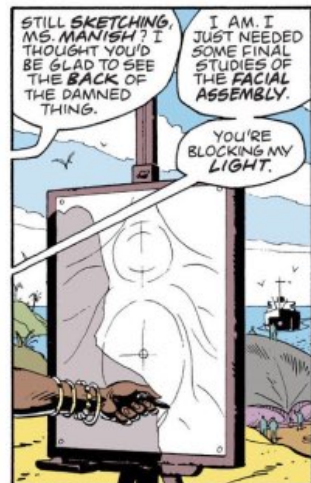
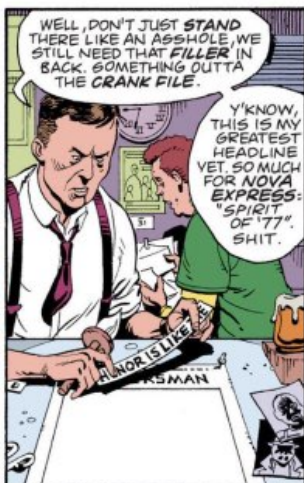
WHAT HE SAID ABOUT 1977...

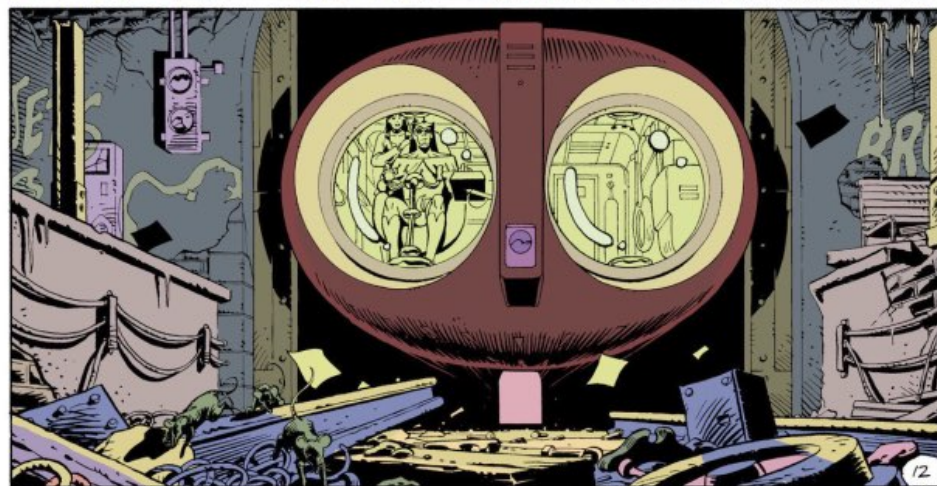
WHAT DID IT MEAN?

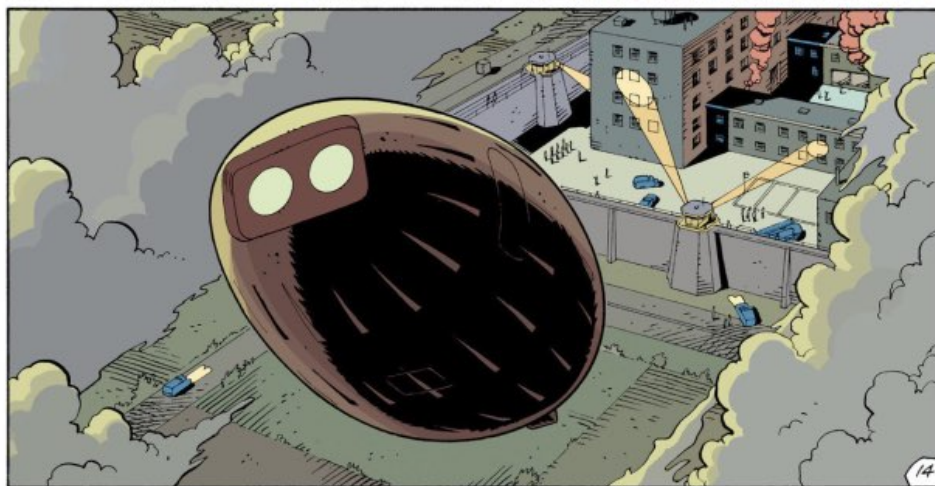


IT MEANS TIME'S RUNNING OUT. MAYBE HE'S ALREADY CALLED ROCKEFELLER BAGE. MAYBE HE ALREADY KNOWS YOU'RE HERE. SPRINGING RORSCHACH ANY LATER THAN TOMORROW ISN'T SAFE.

SUDDENLY, WE HAVE A DEADLINE.











...EXTINGUISHED! ALL THE LIGHTS, THEY JUST WENT OUT...

SPEAK UP, I CAN HARDLY HEAR YOU.

IT'S SOME SORT OF POWER FAILURE, OBVIOUSLY. EMERGENCY LIGHTS SHOULD KICK IN SOON, PROVIDING NOBODY'S BEEN TOO ROUGH WITH THE ELECTRICALS.



DAN, THIS IS HORRIBLE. WHEN WE HEARD ABOUT THE RIOT, I THOUGHT IT WOULD JUST PROVIDE COVER FOR THE ESCAPE. I HADN'T IMAGINED THIS...

OLD GRUDGES GET WORKED OUT IN THESE THINGS.

OLD GRUDGES AND BAD BLOOD.



BUT THIS IS PANDEMONIUM! EVEN ASSUMING THAT NOBODY KILLED HIM ALREADY, THAT HE'S STILL ALIVE; HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND HIM?

HE'S SUPPOSEDLY IN THE SOLITARY SECTION. HE SHOULDN'T BE TOO DIFFICULT TO TRACK DOWN...



I STILL DON'T SEE YOU NEED HIM. WHAT DID HE DO FOR YOU LATELY?

NOTHING BUT MEETING HIM RECENTLY, IT'S LIKE HE WANTS TO MAKE FRIENDS WITHOUT KNOWING HOW.

AS IF THE GAP BETWEEN US WERE NARROWING.



IT'S JUST SO HARD, REACHING HIM. I MEAN, ALL THIS STUFF, THIS HORROR AND MADNESS, HE ATTRACTS IT. IT'S HIS WORLD. THIS IS WHERE HE LIVES...

...IN THIS SORDID, VIOLENT TWILIGHT ZONE...

UNDER THIS SHADOW.



WELL? DID WE FIND THE RIGHT CELL? IS HE THERE?

FROM THE SMELL THIS WHOLE PLACE HAS HIS STAMP ON IT.



NO, NO, HE ISN'T HERE...

...BUT I THINK HE'S BEEN HERE.

COME ON. IF WE DON'T FIND HIM SOON, OUR WHOLE PLAN IS IN THE TOILET.



ALONG HERE, MAYBE?

I DON'T KNOW. IF ONLY THERE WAS SOME SIGN...



HEY! IS THAT HIM ALONG THERE? THERE WAS THAT PICTURE IN THE PAPERS, HIM WITHOUT HIS MASK...

I-I'M NOT SURE. IT LOOKS LIKE HIS POSTURE...

HEY, RORSCHACH?



RORSCHACH? IS THAT...? YES, YES, IT'S YOU.

COME ON, MAN. WE CAME TO BUST YOU OUT AND WE BETTER HURRY BEFORE, UH...

UH, WE'RE NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING?



NO.

EXCUSE ME, HAVE TO VISIT MEN'S ROOM.



OH, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...

UH, LOOK, IT'S OKAY. I MEAN, IT HAPPENS TO EVERYBODY, RIGHT?

I REMEMBER ONCE I LOST A BIG ARREST LIKE THAT...



I WAS CLOSING ON THIS DOPE DEALER AND I NEEDED TO TAKE A LEAK. BY THE TIME I'D GOT IN AND OUT OF MY COSTUME, HE'D VANISHED.

I RE-DESIGNED IT SINCE THEN.

OH, SURE, EVERYBODY'S DONE THAT...



WHAT PISSES ME OFF, WE CAME TO RESCUE HIM, HE DOESN'T EVEN THANK US! DOESN'T EVEN SAY HELLO!

HELL, WHAT'S HE DOING IN THERE? THAT BUMPING...

IT'S OKAY... I THINK I JUST HEARD HIM FLUSH...



AT LAST!

SHHH.



THERE. DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. CAN LEAVE NOW.

REALLY? I MEAN, ARE YOU SURE? WE DON'T WANT TO GET TOO RECKLESS AND GO DIVING HEAD-FIRST INTO THINGS!



HURM.

GOOD ADVICE.

SURE THERE ARE MANY WHO'D AGREE WITH YOU.



INCIDENTALLY, GOOD SEEING YOU IN UNIFORM, DANIEL. LIKE OLD TIMES.

AND MISS JUSPECZYK. ALTHOUGH NEVER LIKED YOUR UNIFORM. NOTHING PERSONAL.

UH, MAYBE I BETTER KILL THE SCREECHERS SO ARCHIE DOESN'T DEAFEN YOU WHEN I BRING HIM UP.



HURRM. OWLSHIP. SCREECHERS. BELT CONSOLE. ALL THE OLD TOYS. I REMEMBER.

WELL...

WHAT BROUGHT YOU OUT OF RETIREMENT? TAKING MASK KILLER SERIOUSLY AT LAST?

NO. LEAST-WAYS, I'M NOT.



NO? BUT THEN YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ATTACKED YET. FUNNY, MOST EVERYONE ELSE HAS.

RORSCHACH, FOR GOD'S SAKE, MAN, DON'T YOU EVER LET UP? SHE JUST RESCUED YOU...

WHAT'S HE IMPLYING? I JUST DON'T BUY THIS CONSPIRACY IS ALL!



I MEAN, TO ME, THIS WHOLE SITUATION'S GROTESQUE. DAN THOUGHT SPRINGING YOU MIGHT HELP; I PLAYED ALONG.

FRANKLY, I WISH I HADN'T. I WISH JON WAS HERE TO STRAIGHTEN EVERYTHING AND...

OH, DAN, I'M SORRY.

FORGET IT. HERE'S ARCHIE...



HURRY. WITHOUT THE SCREECHERS KEEPING FOLK AWAY WE'LL SOON START DRAWING FIRE.

ALSO, I WANT TO VISIT MY PLACE ONE LAST TIME BEFORE THIS CAPER BRINGS THE POLICE DOWN ON IT. THERE'S EQUIPMENT TO COLLECT.



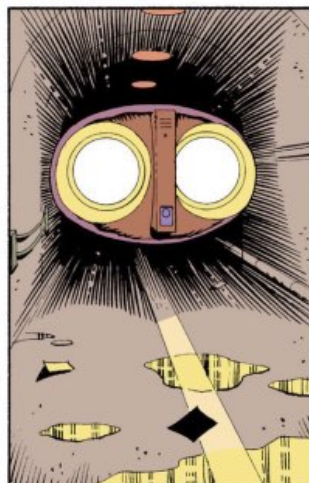
Y'KNOW, THIS IS GETTING HEAVY. AS DAN DREIBERG, YOU'LL BE WANTED.

THE WORLD SHOULD LAST SO LONG. NO, IT'S OKAY. I SET UP EMERGENCY IDENTITIES YEARS AGO. THEY'LL CONCEAL US.

HOLD TIGHT. WE'RE GOING HOME TO ROOST...

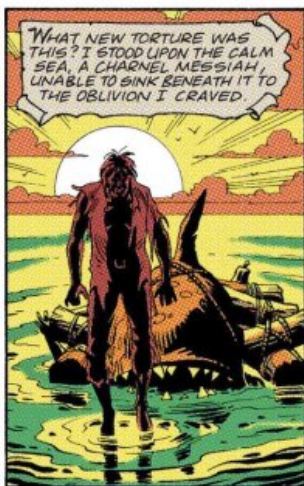








... BUT THE WATER'S SURFACE SEEMED AS STONE BENEATH MY TIMBER-BLISTERED SOLES, AND THE OCEAN'S DEPTHS REFUSED TO SWALLOW ME.

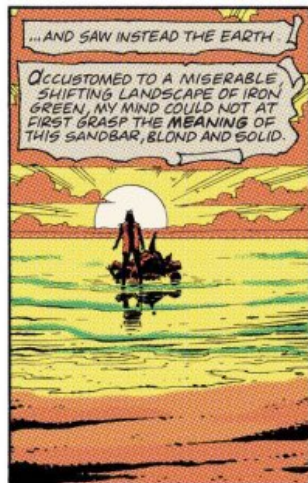


WHAT NEW TORTURE WAS THIS? I STOOD UPON THE CALM SEA, A CHARNEL MESSIAH, UNABLE TO SINK BENEATH IT TO THE OBLIVION I CRAVED.



WHEN WOULD MY SUFFERING CEASE? WHEN WOULD DEATH DEIGN TO CALL UPON ME? HAD HIS TERRIBLE SHADOW PASSED ME BY?

I LIFTED MY UNCOMPREHENDING EYES TO THE HEAVENS...



...AND SAW INSTEAD THE EARTH.

ACCUSTOMED TO A MISERABLE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF IRON GREEN, MY MIND COULD NOT AT FIRST GRASP THE MEANING OF THIS SANDBAR, BLOND AND SOLID.



IT MEANT THAT MY LURCHING JOURNEY THROUGH DARKNESS WAS ENDED.

IT MEANT THAT I HAD REACHED MY DESTINATION.



THEY'D LEFT ME FOR DEAD, THE FIENDS WHO'D DOUBTLESS BUTCHERED MY KIN, BUT NOW I WAS RETURNED, UPON MY CORPSE BOAT...

A TERROR THEY'D IMAGINED THEMSELVES SAFE FROM...

A SPECTRE OF REVENGE, RIDING THE FLOW TIDE HOME



MASON'S AUTO REPAIRS

WHO & WATCHES



HEH.

OKAY, OKAY, I HEAR YA... YOU CAN QUIT BANGING.



JUST GIVE ME A MOMENT HERE. LEMME SEE... APPLES, CANDY... THAT'S IT, I GUESS.

ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT, I HEAR YA, I'M COMING.



THERE, HAPPY HALLOWEEN, KIDS. I...



"AAK! YOU OLD SON OF A BITCH, YOU HIT ME! YOU..."

"GET THE DOG! SOMEBODY GET THE DOG!"

"WATCH OUT, HE'S TRYING TO GET UP..."



"DERF, JESUS, LOOK, THIS IS AN OLD GUY, WE OUGHTTA SPLIT BEFORE..."

"SPLIT? WHATSA-MATTER, CAN'T YOU JERKS DO ANYTHIN' WITHOUT I SHOW YOU HOW? GIMME SOMETHIN' HEAVY..."



"HEY! HEY, GRANPA! HEADS UP!"

"TRY AN' PUT A BRAVE FACE ON THIS..."



Thursday, October 31st, 1985

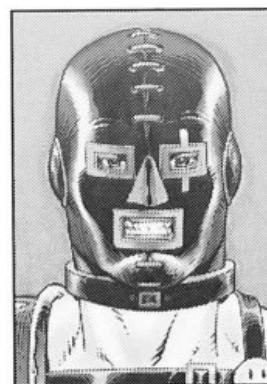
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Issue IVII
No. 21

NEW FRONTIERSMAN

★★★★

HONOR IS LIKE THE HAWK: SOMETIMES IT MUST GO HOODED



Hector Godfrey, Editor

RED ARMAGEDDON!

In this, the eleventh hour, with the world poised on the brink of Red Armageddon, it is vital that we, as a nation, should rally around those symbols that are closest to the great, warm, red-white-and-blue beating heart of this beleaguered country. They are our hope and our inspiration, the legends that urge our people onward even in times of deepest crisis.

Would our sense of national identity, our

pride, our sense of honor; would these things be so enduring were it not for such great symbols of freedom as Paul Revere's midnight ride, or the Alamo, or the Gettysburg address? I think not. And yet, it seems there are those who, even in the dire adversity that besets us, see fit to ridicule and deride the very notions that have made America what she is today!

Honor is like . . . (cont.)

WHO THE HELL DO THEY THINK THEY ARE?

For any citizen who has been watching the newsstands over this last, unbearable month, there can be little doubt who I am referring to. In the current edition of pseudo-intellectual Marxist-brat rock-star monthly *Nova Express*, cocaine-advocating editor DOUGLAS ROTH makes a vitriolic and unfounded attack upon the tradition of the masked lawman in our culture and attempts to stir up old prejudices and hatreds into a bloody wave of civil disorder.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind readers that in a previous edition of his inflammatory publication, Roth had spearheaded the cancer-smear character assassination of Dr. Manhattan. This wild and hysterical attack led to our country's greatest tactical asset leaving this world for self-imposed exile upon another. Ultimately, it may lead to searing nuclear apocalypse or our subjugation as a nation beneath the cossack boot of the U.S.S.R.

Nova Express, heaping libel upon libel, has followed up this potentially catastrophic feature with an article in its current edition that attempts to draw tenuous links between recent news items involving former masked adventurers and work them into some wild-eyed conspiracy theory, apparently forgetting that most of the "news items" involved were generated as a direct result of *Nova Express* and its irresponsible scaremongering! Roth refers gloatingly in his article to the fact that back copies of the *New Frontiersman* were found in the rented apartment of captured vigilante Rorschach after his arrest, citing this as "proof" of the aforementioned hero's poor character. He seems to suggest, with typical pothead disregard for logic, that Rorschach must be bad if he reads the *New Frontiersman*, while simultaneously implying that the *New Frontiersman* must be slightly disreputable if someone like Rorschach reads it! The overall effect of the piece is that of a snotty-nosed and unsubstantiated attack not only upon this paper and upon the individual costumed adventurers themselves, but also upon a whole American institution! Who the hell do Roth and his cringing staff of pinko sycophants think they are???

RIPPED OUT GUTS

The institution that Roth and his cronies are so casually ripping the guts out of is that of hooded justice, of a force for righteousness that

dares to tread where the wimpy and useless laws laid down by the spineless dupes and fellow travellers in our judiciary forbid it to.

What about the Boston Tea Party? What about the spirit of the Lone Ranger? What about all those occasions when men have found it necessary to go masked in order to preserve justice above the letter of the law? *Nova Express* makes many sneering references to costumed heroes as direct descendants of the Ku Klux Klan, but might I point out that despite what some might view as their later excesses, the Klan originally came into being because decent people had perfectly reasonable fears for the safety of their persons and belongings when forced into proximity with people from a culture far less morally advanced.

No, the Klan were not strictly legal, but they did work voluntarily to preserve American culture in areas where there were very real dangers of that culture being overrun and mongrelized. Similarly, during our perfectly justified retaliatory bombing of Beirut in 1979, there were many of our so-called fair-weather-friend European allies who were bleating about supposed infringements of international law. Yet what are laws made for, if not to serve mankind? And if those laws through unforeseen circumstance become no longer applicable, is it not more noble to follow the course of right and justice; to serve the spirit of the law rather than its every dot and comma? In my book, anyone answering that question in the negative is someone without the moral backbone necessary to call himself an American. In the case of the *Nova Express* articles and their perpetrators, I would go so far as to call such a denial of time-tested patriotic virtues as being most definitely ANTI-American.

COKED-OUT COMMIE COWARDS

I've had it up to here with those coked-out commie cowards, and I think it's time we started to ask ourselves just who stands to benefit most from *Nova Express*' ridiculing of American legends and the subsequent subversion and undermining of our national morale? Can there be any doubt that the only beneficiary is the cause of international communism? Should we not perhaps call upon our authorities to take a closer look at exactly who is funding this pernicious piece of propaganda in pop star's

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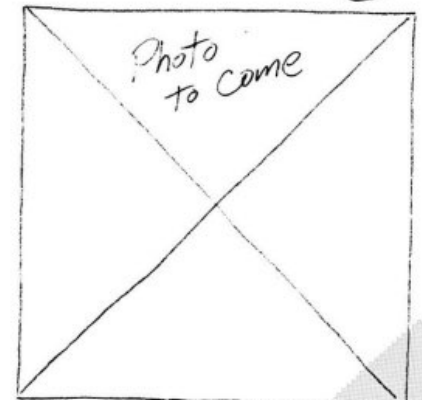
As we see it . . .



Honor is like . . . (cont.)

clothing that finds its way onto our newsstands each week? Regular readers will know that I have already voiced my suspicions concerning a red hand in the denunciation and subsequent exile of Dr. Manhattan (see *N.F.*, Sunday 20th October: "Our country's protector smeared by the Kremlin") and will no doubt join me in perceiving this renewed assault by *Nova Express* upon our traditions and values as further proof of where that magazine's interests lie: Due East, and don't you forget it.

Hector Godfrey, Editor



MISSING WRITER VANISHED PERSONS LIST GROWS AS HUNT CALLED OFF

Earlier this week, police called off their inquiry into the mysterious disappearance of author Max Shea, citing lack of evidence as a principal contributing factor in their decision. *New Frontiersman* would like to remind both the authorities concerned and our readers of the overwhelming evidence already tabulated by this paper to suggest that Shea's disappearance was part of a carefully orchestrated conspiracy, the roots of which may yet be traced back to sinister Cuban interests.

Although it is true to say that Shea did indeed vanish without trace, leaving no clue whatsoever as to his destination, by considering the extraordinary amount of similar disappearances reported at approximately the same time, it is possible to glimpse a larger and more frightening picture as it emerges. In the two months leading up to Shea's disappearance, no less than four prominent creative figures also seemingly dropped from the face of the earth. These included radical architect Norman Leith, surrealist painter Hira Manish, and respected "hard" science fiction author James Trafford March. Admittedly, the circumstances in each case are wildly different and seem to allow for a simple, meaningless coincidence of human destinies . . . Manish was apparently suffering profound difficulties with her marriage, making her apparent abandonment of her husband and two sons somewhat less than surprising. March owed massive debts to the IRS, who had frozen his earnings. Leith was reportedly depressed and even suicidal during the run-up to his disappearance, as was fellow missing person, avant-garde composer Linette Paley. As reasons for disappearance, these each seem individually credible enough to make any notion of conspiracy unnecessary, and yet a doubt still remains: Can *four* such prominent people simply dematerialize in the space of half as many months, leaving such bright and promising

careers and reputations behind them?

Added to this, we must consider those prominent people in other fields, who, although less prominent and thus less easy to gauge numerically, have also apparently melted into thin air during this period. I have on record an unusually high number of disappearances from amongst the scientific community, which, although consisting largely of semi-skilled menial workers, does include such notable names as that of Dr. Whittaker Furnesse, the brilliant eugenics specialist who according to his wife left the family home one evening to walk the family dog and quite simply never returned.

Odder still, and quite probably entirely unconnected, there is the disappearance of *part* of a person after his death, recorded on the same week Shea's vanishing act reached the public awareness. Parents and relatives of so-called psychic and clairvoyant Robert Deschaines, attending his funeral following the young medium's fatal stroke, were horrified to learn that ghoulish vandals or practical jokers had stolen the corpse's head from its body while it lay unattended upon a mortuary slab. Police voiced a few tenuous opinions concerning possible involvement by black magic cultists, but since then no further evidence has come to light.

Even discounting this last curiosity, is there nobody who is prepared to look into this bizarre glut of disappearances and see what emerges? Can it be that our increasingly shrill and nervous judiciary are actually afraid to look too far under this particular rug for fear of what they might find hidden there? The *New Frontiersman* repeats it warning: Talented and prominent Americans are being spirited away from under our noses.

Isn't it time somebody found out just where they are going?

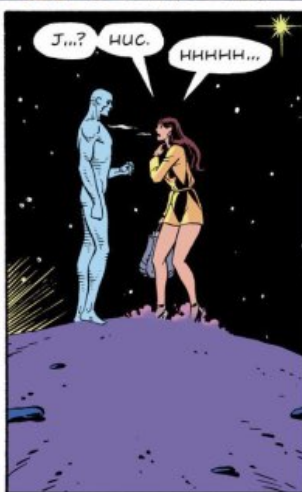
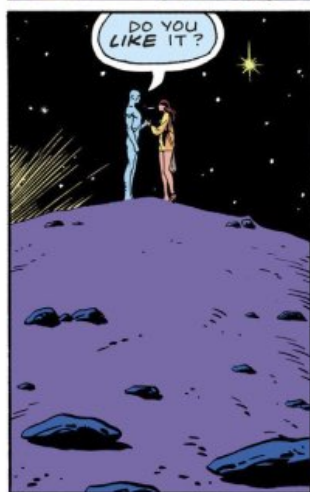
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CHAPTER IX



THE DARKNESS OF MERE BEING







THIS IS WHERE WE HOLD OUR CONVERSATION.

IT COMMENCES WHEN YOU SURPRISE ME WITH THE INFORMATION THAT YOU AND DREISBERG HAVE BEEN SLEEPING TOGETHER.



Y-YOU KNOW ABOUT ME AND DAN?

NO. NOT YET. BUT IN A FEW MOMENTS YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME.



AAAAAGH!

JON, WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO TO ME? WHEN YOU'RE LIKE THIS I CAN'T EVEN TALK TO YOU, LET ALONE DEBATE THE WHAT WAS IT...

DESTINY OF THE WORLD.



I MEAN, THIS IS RIDICULOUS. WHY HOLD A DEBATE WHEN YOU ALREADY KNOW THE GODDAMNED OUTCOME?

BECAUSE...

"BECAUSE THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENS!" I KNOW, I KNOW...

OH GOD...



LISTEN, JON, OKAY, I'LL PLAY IT YOUR WAY... BUT YOU HAVE TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND. I MEAN, I CAN'T TELL THE FUTURE...

THERE IS NO FUTURE. THERE IS NO PAST. DO YOU SEE?



TIME IS SIMULTANEOUS, AN INTRICATELY STRUCTURED JEWEL THAT HUMANS INSIST ON VIEWING ONE EDGE AT A TIME. WHEN THE WHOLE DESIGN IS VISIBLE IN EVERY FACET.

WHAT IS YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY?

HUH? MY EARLIEST MEMORY?



I... I DUNNO. AROUND WHEN MY FOLKS SPLIT UP, I GUESS...

I CAN REMEMBER A TOY, ONE OF THOSE SNOWSTORM BALLS, BUT...

NO. NO. IT'S GONE.

ISN'T IT GONE. IT'S STILL HERE. LET YOURSELF SEE IT.



"WELL, I... I WAS FIVE, SOMETHING LIKE THAT. I MUST HAVE GOT WOKEN UP... THERE WAS SHOUTING DOWNSTAIRS..."

"MY MOM AND DAD. GOD, I CAN HEAR THEM NOW."



"... SHOUTED AT HIM, HE LOOKED SURPRISED, COULDN'T IMAGINE WHY I'D BEAR A GRUDGE. SEE, IT'S DIFFERENT FOR HIM, AND I JUST COULDN'T SUSTAIN IT, THE ANGER..."

GOD, YOU KNOW, REALLY, YOU NEED ANALYSIS, I'M SERIOUS...



HOW WOULD YOU KNOW HOW A WOMAN FEELS? SHIT, HOW A MAN FEELS, FOR THAT MATTER?

OH, THAT'S CHEAP, EVEN FOR YOU, THAT IS CHEAP!

WELL, C'MON, LET'S HEAR THE REST...



WHY? SO YOU CAN PUT IT IN A LETTER TO ONE OF THOSE MAGAZINES YOU READ? "MY WIFE DESCRIBED HOW HIS ROUGH HANDS SQUEEZED..."

STOP THAT!



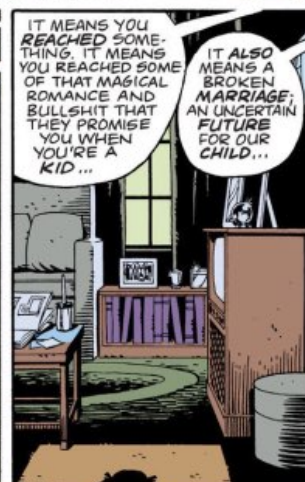
YOU WANTED TO HEAR, SO OKAY, YOU LISTEN:



FIRST OFF, HE WAS THERE, RIGHT?

OH SPARE ME.

PLUS, HE WAS GENTLE. YOU KNOW WHAT GENTLENESS MEANS IN A GUY LIKE THAT? EVEN A GLIMMER OF IT?



IT MEANS YOU REACHED SOMETHING. IT MEANS YOU REACHED SOME OF THAT MAGICAL ROMANCE AND BULLSHIT THAT THEY PROMISE YOU WHEN YOU'RE A KID...

IT ALSO MEANS A BROKEN MARRIAGE; AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR OUR CHILD...



MY CHILD. THAT'S WHAT ALL THIS IS ABOUT, REMEMBER?

ANYWAY, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT HER FUTURE. THAT'S TAKEN CARE OF.



"I TIPTOED DOWNSTAIRS TO THE TV ROOM. IT WAS DARK AND NEXT DOOR THEY WERE SHOUTING..."

"NOBODY KNEW I WAS THERE. THESE MOMENTS WERE JUST MINE. EVERYTHING FELT SECRET AND ENCHANTED..."



"... AND THERE WAS THIS TOY, THIS SNOWSTORM BALL, WITH A TINY CASTLE INSIDE, EXCEPT IT WAS LIKE A WHOLE WORLD; A WORLD INSIDE THE BALL..."

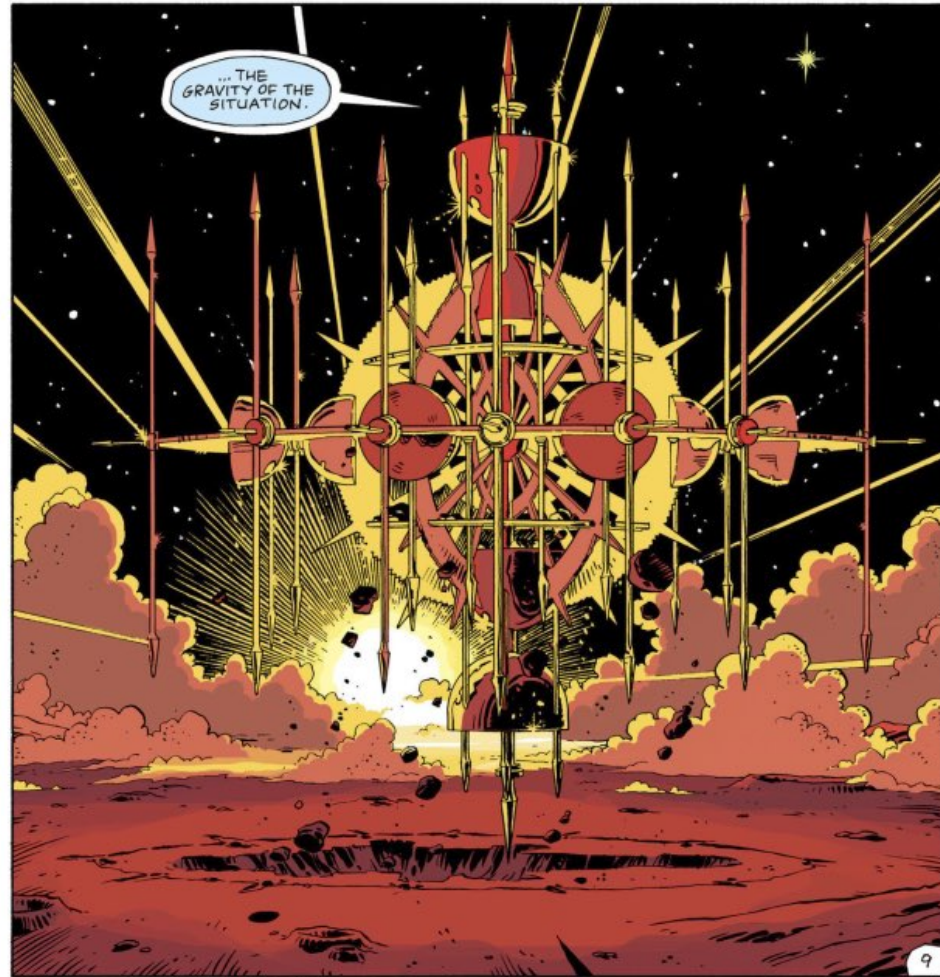
"IT WAS LIKE A LITTLE GLASS BUBBLE OF SOMEWHERE ELSE."

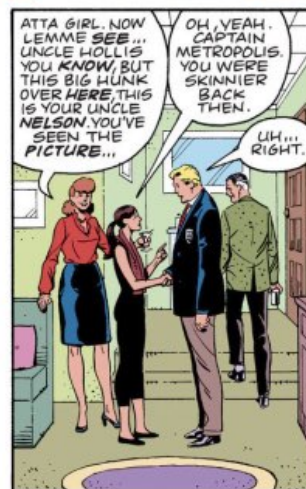


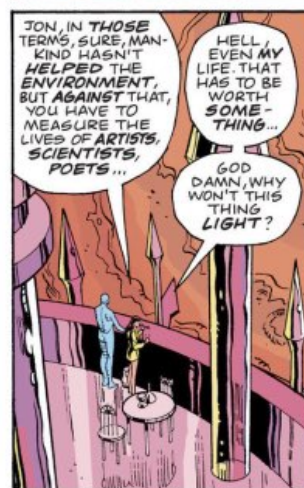
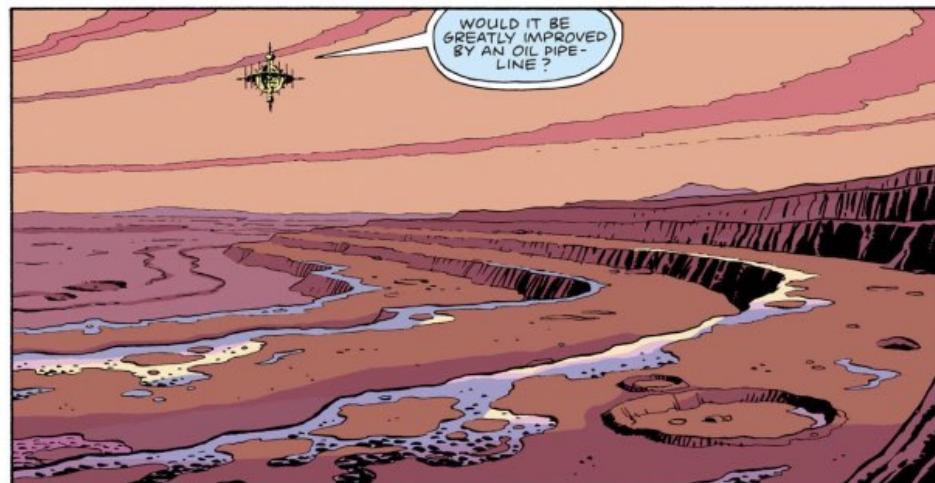
"I LIFTED IT, STARTING A BLIZZARD. I KNEW IT WASN'T REAL SNOW, BUT I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND HOW IT FELL SO SLOWLY."

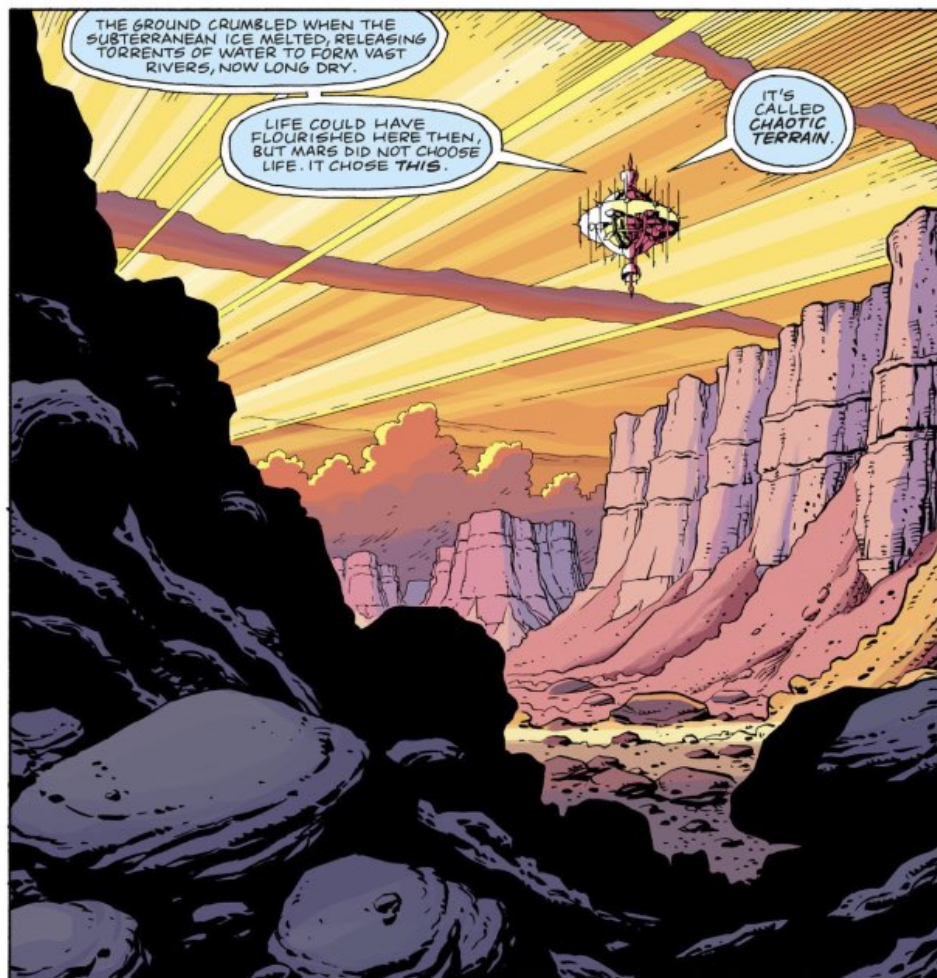
"I FIGURED INSIDE THE BALL WAS SOME DIFFERENT SORT OF TIME."

"SLOW TIME."









THE GROUND CRUMBED WHEN THE SUBTERRANEAN ICE MELTED, RELEASING TORRENTS OF WATER TO FORM VAST RIVERS, NOW LONG DRY.

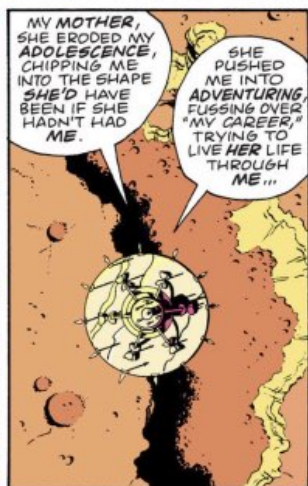
LIFE COULD HAVE FLOURISHED HERE THEN, BUT MARS DID NOT CHOOSE LIFE. IT CHOSE THIS.

IT'S CALLED CHAOTIC TERRAIN.



YEAH? WELL, ORDINARY LIFE, MY LIFE, THAT'S GOT "CHAOTIC TERRAIN" TOO... OR IS THAT TOO ABSTRACT, TOO UNQUANTIFIABLE?

I MEAN, YOU'RE SO FASCINATED BY ROCKS GETTING TWISTED INTO WEIRD SHAPES, JESUS CHRIST, YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME BEFORE I MET YOU!



MY MOTHER, SHE ERODED MY ADOLESCENCE, CHIPPING ME INTO THE SHAPE SHE'D HAVE BEEN IF SHE HADN'T HAD ME.

SHE PUSHED ME INTO ADVENTURING, FUSSING OVER "MY CAREER," TRYING TO LIVE HER LIFE THROUGH ME...



"REMEMBER THAT CRIME-BUSTERS THING IN THE SIXTIES? DID I TELL YOU SHE DROVE ME THERE IN A LIMO, AND WAITED OUTSIDE LIKE IT WAS MY FIRST SCREEN TEST OR SOMETHING?"

BLACK UNREST

"I WAS SIXTEEN. I FELT LIKE A JERK."



"I REMEMBER STARING AT YOU. I JUST COULDN'T GET USED TO YOU. I MEAN, YOU HAD A GREAT BODY, BUT, Y'KNOW, IT WAS BLUE."

"YOUR GIRLFRIEND, JANET, SHE GLARED AT ME ALL THE WAY THROUGH."



"THEN IT COLLAPSED: EVERYBODY LEAVING EXCEPT NELSON AND ADRIAN. BIG DISAPPOINTMENT..."

"I GUESS I SORTA WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE, SLEEPING WITH YOU, BUT YOU SEEMED KINDA SPOKEN FOR. NOBODY ELSE THERE INTERESTED ME."



"OUTSIDE, I WATCHED THEM GO: DAN IN HIS SHIP, RORSCHACH SNEAKING AWAY INTO THE BUSHES. HE GAVE ME THE CREEPS."

"I FELT LET DOWN, RESTLESS, HORNY AND I NEEDED A CIGARETTE. I WAS LEAVING NELSON'S MANSION..."



"...WHEN SOMEBODY CALLED MY NAME."

LAUREL? LAUREL JANE, IS THAT RIGHT?

SO YOU'RE SALLY'S KID?



UH, YEAH. YEAH, YOU'RE THE COMEDIAN. I CAUGHT YOUR ACT IN THERE. YOU WERE PRETTY COOL.

WELL YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU GREW UP TOO BAD YOURSELF. HERE...LEMME TAKE A LOOK...



HEH. YEAH, THERE'S HER EYES...EVEN GOT THAT FUNNY LITTLE MOLE...

YOU AIN'T GOT HER HAIR, BUT OTHERWISE, YOU'RE LIKE HER. YOU'RE A LOOKER.

WELL, UH, THANK YOU.



UH, SAY, I NEED A CIGARETTE, BUT I DON'T HAVE A LIGHT. DO YOU...

SURE, HEY, LISTEN, YOUR MOM: SHE TALK ABOUT ME MUCH?

NO. NOT MUCH.



HEH. IT FIGURES. HERE'S YOUR LIGHT. I...

HELL. GONE OUT. HERE, LEMME...

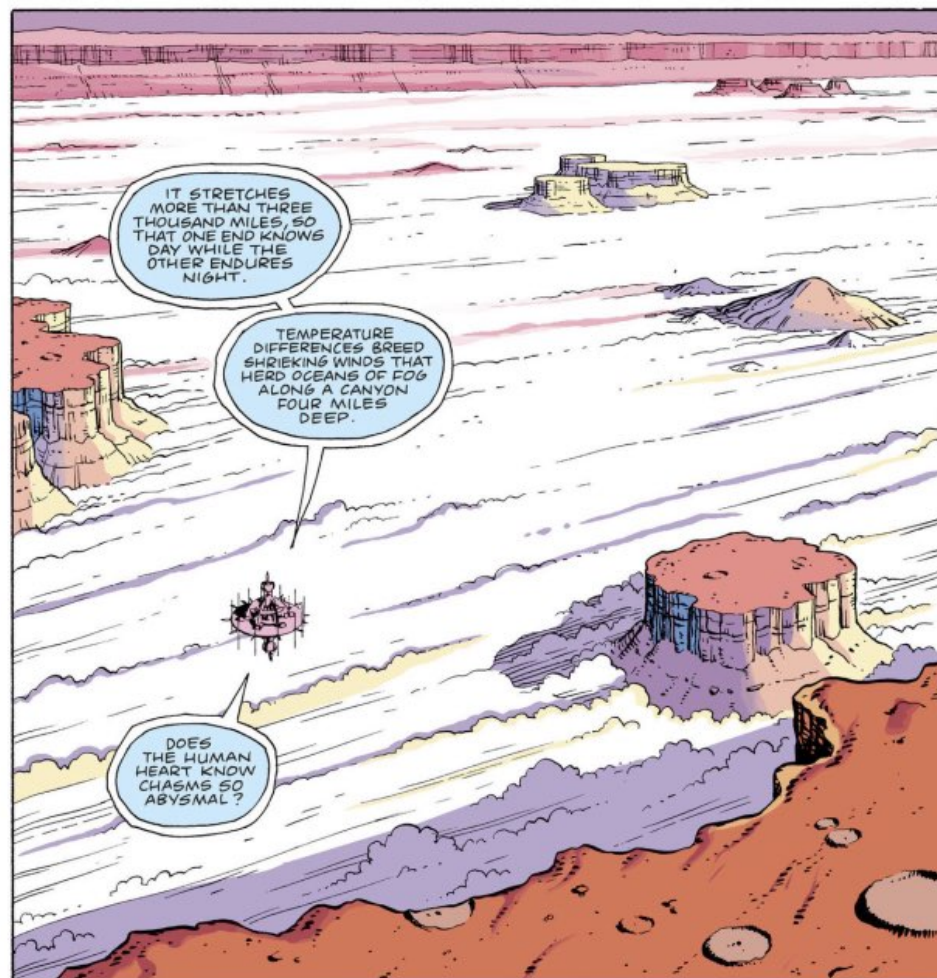
IT'S OKAY. I'LL STEADY IT.

THERE, THAT'S BETTER.



YOU TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HER!

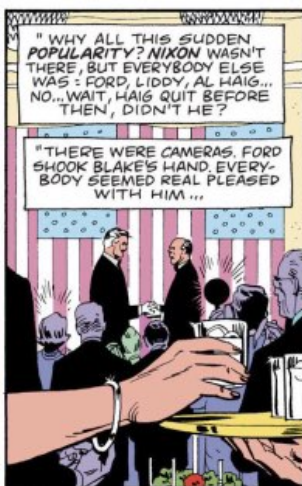






"THE FOG I WAS LOST IN THAT NIGHT WAS SCOTCH MIST. I MUST HAVE DRUNK HALF A BOTTLE."

"IT WAS A DINNER IN HONOR OF BLAKE. I REMEMBER THINKING, 'WHY? Y'KNOW? JUST 'WHY?'"



"WHY ALL THIS SUDDEN POPULARITY? NIXON WASN'T THERE, BUT EVERYBODY ELSE WAS: FORD, LIDDY, AL HAIG... NO... WAIT, HAIG QUIT BEFORE THEN, DIDN'T HE?"

"THERE WERE CAMERAS. FORD SHOOK BLAKE'S HAND. EVERYBODY SEEMED REAL PLEASED WITH HIM..."



"... BUT NOT ME."

"SEE, BY THEN I'D READ 'UNDER THE HOOD' ABOUT HIM ASSAULTING MY MOM. THAT BANQUET, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D SEEN HIM SINCE I FOUND OUT..."

"...AND I WAS MEAN DRUNK."



"EVERYBODY WAS TALKING..."

SEE THOSE POST REPORTERS THEY FOUND IN THAT GARAGE? WOODWARD AND WHAT'S HIS NAME? JEWISH NAME...

BERNSTEIN. YEAH, I UNDERSTAND THE UNDERGROUND PAPERS ARE ALREADY YELLING CONSPIRACY.

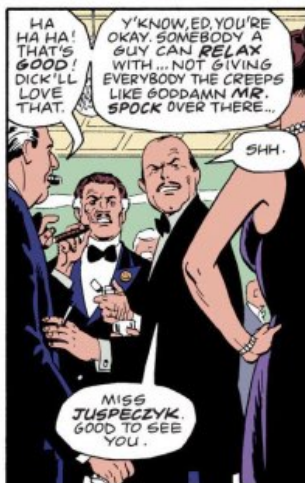
WELL, EDDIE? ANY OPINIONS?



THAT PIECE IN THE BERKELEY BARB? WELL, I GUESS YOU SMOKE ENOUGH WEED YOU CAN IMAGINE ALMOST ANYTHING.

NAH... I'M CLEAN, GUYS. JUST DON'T ASK WHERE I WAS WHEN I HEARD ABOUT J.F.K.

HA HA HA HA HA!



HA HA HA! THAT'S GOOD! THAT'S NOT GIVING EVERYBODY THE CREEPS LIKE GODDAMN MR. SPOCK OVER THERE...

SHH.

MISS JUSPEZYK. GOOD TO SEE YOU.



"JUSPEZYK." WHAT'S THAT? GRANDMOTHER'S NAME? DIDN'T LIKE JUPITER, HUH?

DIDN'T TAKE YOUR OLD MAN'S NAME EITHER...

WHAT'S MY NAME TO YOU?



NOTHING.

Y'KNOW, YOU'RE A PRETTY GIRL. I JUST GOTTA LOOK AT YOU, I SEE YOUR MOM. HEH...

Y'KNOW, YOUR MOTHER SHE WAS A PEACH...



IS THAT WHAT YOU TOLD HER BEFORE YOU TRIED TO RAPE HER?



BEFORE YOU HIT HER? BEFORE YOU KICKED HER? THAT ISN'T THE WAY YOU TREAT PEACHES?

UH, MISS JUSPEZYK... KID, ARE YOU SURE YOU WANNA TAKE THIS ALL THE WAY? SOMEBODY GET HER BOY-FRIEND.



DAMN STRAIGHT; DAMN STRAIGHT I DO! I MEAN, WHAT KIND OF MAN ARE YOU, YOU HAVE TO TAKE SOME WOMAN, YOU HAVE TO FORCE HER INTO HAVING SEX AGAINST HER WILL...



ONLY ONCE.



"ONLY ONCE, AS IF, Y'KNOW, IT WAS BETTER THAN DOING IT TWICE OR FIFTY TIMES! AND HIS SCAR... IT ALWAYS LOOKED LIKE HE WAS SNEERING..."

"HAD SEVEN SCOTCHES INSIDE ME, ONE IN MY HAND..."



"I LET HIM HAVE IT."



...AND THEN YOU CAME, AND YOU WERE ANGRY, AND YOU TOOK ME HOME.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU EVER TELEPORTED ME ANYWHERE...

FIRST TIME I THREW UP.



... BUT, I MEAN, WHY BOTHER TELLING YOU ALL THIS? IT JUST CONFIRMS THINGS, RIGHT? ALL THESE WRETCHED, GRUBBY LITTLE HUMAN ENCOUNTERS: BETTER OFF WITHOUT 'EM!

NONE OF IT EVER MEANT A DAMN THING, ANYWAY.



I MEAN, THESE MY MOTHER'S CLIPPINGS; HER WHOLE LIFE, RIGHT THERE! WHAT'S IT MEAN?

LAURIE...

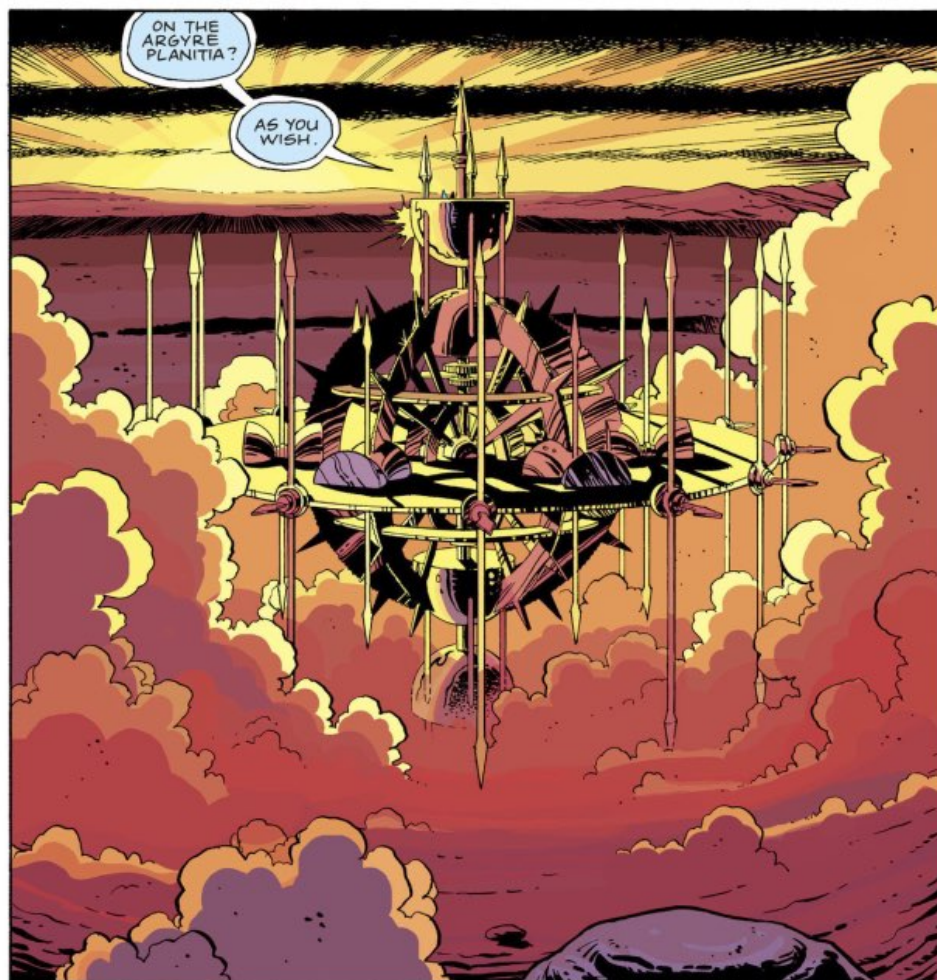
IN YOUR TERMS, NEXT TO A NEUTRINO, NEXT TO SOMETHING YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE FOR CHRIST'S SAKE? IT MEANS NOTHING!

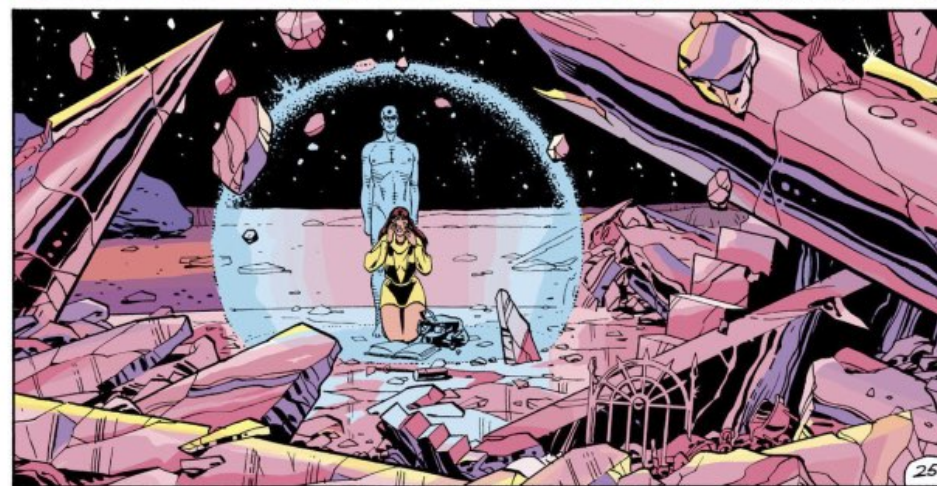


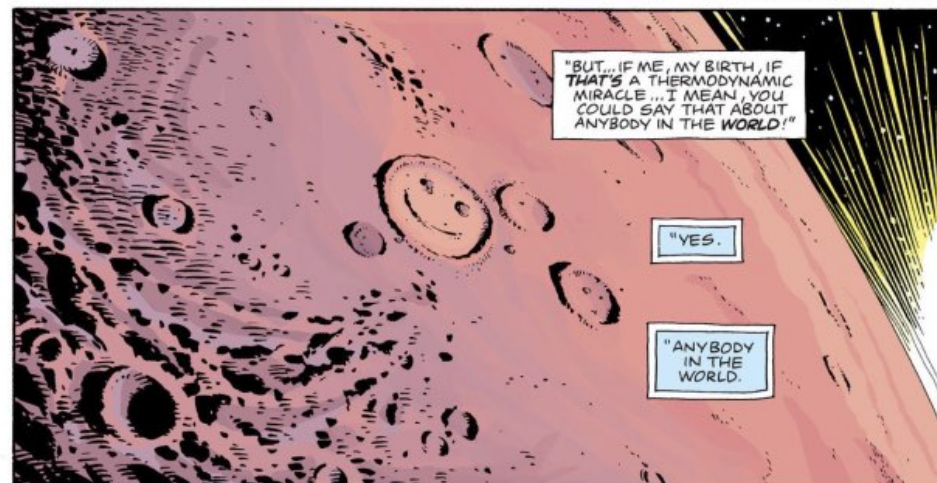
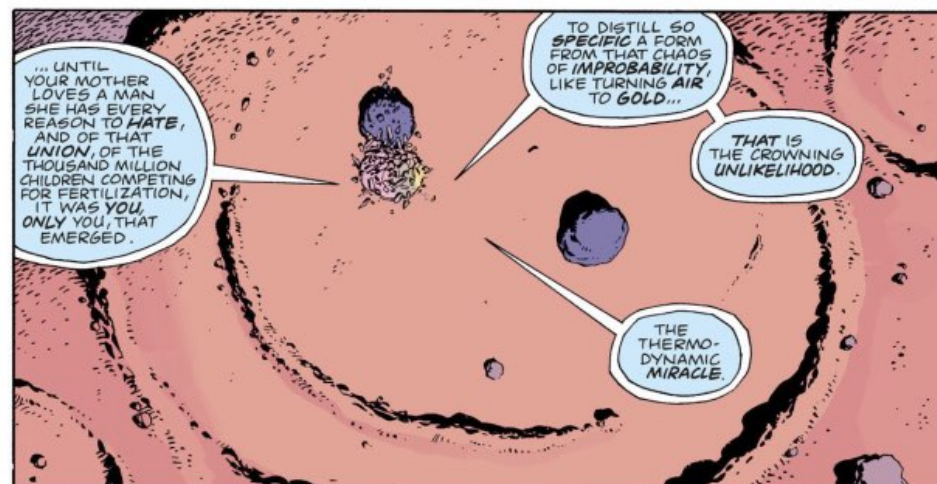
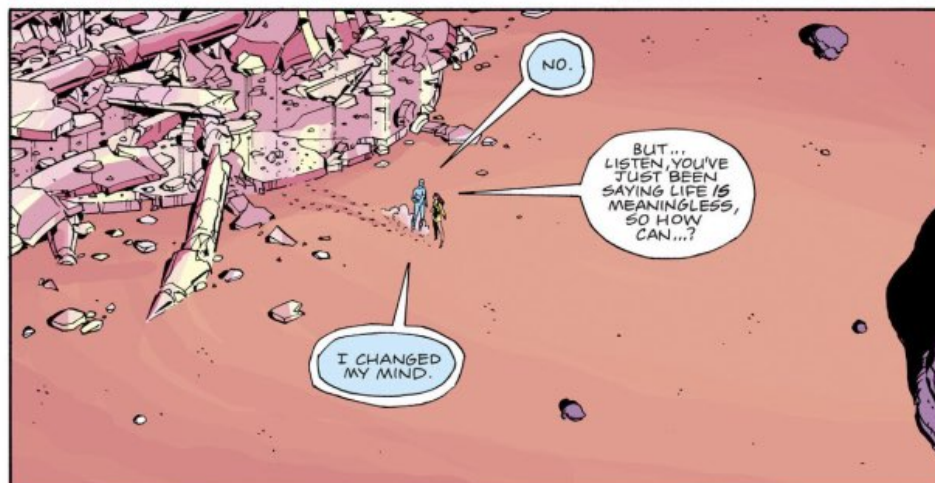
DON'T "LAURIE" ME! IT'S POINTLESS DEBATING WHEN YOU OBVIOUSLY DON'T SEE ANYTHING TERRIBLY MIRACULOUS IN LIFE. MAYBE QUANTUM PHYSICS DOESN'T ALLOW MIRACLES...

NO. "THERMODYNAMIC MIRACLES" ARE...

OH, FOR GOD'S SAKE, JON, JUST LAND THIS THING. NOW.







"COME... DRY YOUR EYES, FOR YOU ARE LIFE, RARER THAN A QUARK AND UNPREDICTABLE BEYOND THE DREAMS OF HEISENBERG; THE CLAY IN WHICH THE FORCES THAT SHAPE ALL THINGS LEAVE THEIR FINGERPRINTS MOST CLEARLY."

"DRY YOUR EYES..."

"...AND LET'S GO HOME."

As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light of meaning in the darkness of mere being.

—C. G. Jung
MEMORIES,
DREAMS,
REFLECTIONS

DAILY WORLD



Sal-thought you'd like this for your scrapbook

January 12, 1939

More than news!

5c

VILLAINS VIE FOR VOLUPTUOUS VIGILANTE

Goons are going ga-ga over the latest do-gooder to pull on a tight costume and jump aboard the masked vigilante bandwagon. Why? Well, maybe it's because this costumed cutie is a girl! Shapely 18-year-old redhead Sally Jupiter (36-24-36) has taken the alluring and mysterious monicker of "Silk Spectre" as she dons the shortest long underwear yet and becomes the first feisty female to join the fight against felony.

Miss Jupiter's agent, Mr. Larry Schexnayder, says that former waitress and burlesque dancer Sally is such a hit with the hoods that they're practically tripping over each other in the rush to get nabbed by her! In testimony, he produced Mr. Claude Boke of no fixed address, currently out on parole after Sally, who happened to be on hand, arrested him during an attempted liquor store robbery.

"She beat me fair and square, but I don't hold no grudges. She's a pretty-looking young woman and I'd rather have her take me in than two fat old cops anytime," says Claude, who received a light fine and has since quit drinking and taken a job pumping gasoline.

Sally, who eventually hopes to move on to modeling work or movies, tells us that there is already a movie about her life in the works.

"It's called 'Silk Spectre: The Sally Jupiter Story,'" enthuses Sally, "and it's already in the planning stages. Larry and I have met with Mr. King Taylor of Hollywood, and everybody's very excited about it all."

I'm sure we all wish spunky Sal luck in her future endeavors, and if the above movie gets made, who knows? Maybe Sally will have to organize a special premiere... just for the criminal fraternity!



reports are true, she certainly has some explaining to do to her hubby and two kids back home on the ranch.

Meanwhile, over with the cape-and-mask crowd, lips are buzzing and tongues are wagging about cheesecake crime-crusher **Sally Jupiter**, alias the **SILK SPECTRE**. It seems that she and veteran vigilante **HOODED JUSTICE** are something of an item, and seldom out of each other's company. Can wedding bells be too far away? If you want evidence, just look whose arm our Sal is hanging onto in the recently released publicity photographs of that tights-and-trunk-clad team, **The Minutemen**. Between you and me, your Zelda wonders: Does he keep that hood and noose on *all* the time?

Spotted dancing cheek to cheek at a certain

King Taylor Productions

6-22-45

Sal and Larry

Hi, kids! I know, I know, it's been ages, but I think things are finally moving with "She Devils In Silk." (That's the latest title, by the way. Maurie dreamed it up. Hope you like it. We decided that "Sally Jupiter: Saw In Its Lingerie" was too long after all.)

The latest version is looking good—we've retained a lot of the plot elements from the Saturday morning *Matinee* approach we adopted after junking the documentary idea, and we've kept a lot of the footage we shot with you way back then. This new version has some added material to make it accessible to a more adult market, and I think you'll find it kinda fun. We have a young discovery named Cherry Dean that I'm very excited about, and she stands in for you in the new scenes. From the back, she's a dead ringer! It's phenomenal!

Anyway, I'll keep touching base with you as things progress.

Hugs and kisses,
King

MARINE LIEUTENANT USMC
NELSON GARDNER

FREE-LANCE CONSULTANT

NLS-2204

Dear Miss Jupiter,

Having seen you in the news lately, I wished to introduce myself. My name is Captain Metropolis, and I too am a costumed adventurer, with a keen interest in stamping out crime and injustice wherever it should rear its ugly head. I am delighted to find that you share these inclinations.

I note also from my perusal of the press that there are several other people of our persuasion stepping forward to join the struggle across America, and, being a military man by nature and career it struck me that it might be a distinct strategic advantage if we were to organize ourselves into some sort of battalion, ready to do our country's bidding at a moment's notice.

I suggest that such a group might be called 'The New Minute Men of America', and I have already devised such things as codes and passwords and strategic exercises that would serve us well in our war on infamy.

If you are interested in this proposal, please contact me through my representative, former Marine Lieutenant Nelson Gardner, whose card is enclosed.

I look forward very much to hearing from you.

Your costumed Comrade in the campaign against crime,

Captain Metropolis

Larry -
Jesus Christ! Are
you kidding! -



Sally - thought there might
be mileage in this - P. R. Wise L.S.

February 3rd, 1948

Dear Sally,

Haven't been in touch lately because I thought you should have time to get over poor Bill's funeral. However, there's things that need talking over.

Nelly called last night, upset over yet another tiff with H.J. Those two are getting worse. The more they row and act like an old married couple in public, the harder they are to cover for. I know that you've provided a pretty steady alibi for H.J. up to now, and that the publicity we got from that hasn't exactly hurt you either, but it can't last much longer. Nelly says he's always out when Nelly calls, out with boys, and apparently there's a lot of rough stuff going on. One of these punks only has to go to the cops with a convincing story and some convincing bruises to back it up and it would be the Silhouette fiasco all over again.

I honestly wonder how long it can last. Lewis is drinking harder all the time, and has been very low since the thing with Bill. Mason is a big bouncy boy scout, same as ever, but with Nelly and H.J. acting up it's a pretty sorry spectacle at the meetings these days. Maybe now is the time to pull out and cut our losses. We've made quite a sum, you know, and I've often talked about a place out west somewhere; maybe now's the time we could take it on as a viable partnership proposition together? Anyways, at least think it over.

With fond regards,

nearest thing I ever
got to a proposal

SCREEN REVIEWS

SILK SWINGERS OF SUBURBIA

DIR: Edmund "King" Taylor

STARRING: Cherry Dean, Rod Donovan, Dana Young, Lola Booker, Harry J. Peters, Sally Juniper.

If you like tasteful and sensually artistic modern cinema, then I recommend that this film be avoided at all costs. Cheaply made even by "B"-movie standards, this appears to have started life as a children's adventure serial, complete with unconvincing and dated footage of a stuntwoman in an antique chorus girl costume engaging in poorly staged fights with stock heavies. Edited into this unpromising and juvenile scenario with astonishing clumsiness, we have scenes of Miss Dean—similarly attired and being tied up, whipped and fondled by "Rod Donovan," who must surely be a relative of well-known hack director "King" Taylor, so close is the resemblance between the two men. Too awful even to be dignified with the term "pornography," the only real act of sadism in this film lies in releasing it; the only masochism in watching it.

PROBE PROFILE: SALLY JUPITER

an interview with a forties glamour girl and the seamier side of her crimefighting career

PROBE: Sally, how much would you say that it's a sex thing, putting on a costume?

SALLY: No. I don't . . . Well, let me say this, for me, it was never a sex thing. It was a money thing. And I think for some people it was a fame thing, and for a tiny few, God bless 'em, I think it was a goodness thing. I mean, I'm not saying it wasn't a sex thing for some people, but, no, no, I wouldn't say that's what motivated the majority . . .

PROBE: There was Ursula Zandt, the Silhouette . . .

SALLY: Uh-huh. Well, sooner or later, okay, that's going to come up, so let me deal with that . . . First off, I didn't like her as a person. I mean, she was not an easy person to get along with. But, when the papers got hold of it, her being a—what is it—a gay woman they say nowadays, when that happened, I thought it was wrong. I mean, Laurence, who was my first husband, he got everybody to throw her out of the group to minimize the P.R. damage, but . . . I mean, I voted along with everybody else, but . . . well, it wasn't fair. It wasn't honest. I mean, she wasn't the only gay person in the Minutemen. Some professions, I don't know, they attract a certain type . . .

PROBE: Who else was gay?

SALLY: I'm not naming anybody. It was a couple of the guys, and they're both dead now. One died recently. I'm not saying who

it was, I'm just saying that we all knew, and we knew she wasn't the only one, and we slung her out just the same. When she got murdered like that . . . I mean, I never really liked her. Ursula. Was that her real name? I didn't know that. I didn't like her, but . . . throwing her out. We shouldn't have done that. I feel bad about that.

PROBE: On the subject of the Minutemen, in Hollis Mason's autobiography . . .

SALLY: Uh-oh! Here it comes.

PROBE: . . . he alleges that you were sexually assaulted by the Comedian, who, as you know, is still active. You've never said too much about this incident yourself . . .

SALLY: Well, why break a lifetime's habit?

PROBE: You won't comment upon that?

SALLY: I . . . Look, I don't bear any grudges. That's all. I know I should, everybody tells me I should but . . . look, I don't have to justify this, okay? It's just that nothing's that simple, not even things that are simply awful. You know, rape is rape and there's no excuses for it, absolutely none, but for me, I felt . . . I felt like I'd contributed in some way. Is that misplaced guilt, whatever my analyst said? I really felt that, that I was somehow as much to blame for letting myself be his victim not in a physical sense, but . . . but,

it's like what if, y'know? What if, just for a moment, maybe I really did want . . . I mean, that doesn't excuse him, doesn't excuse either of us, but with all that doubt, what it is to come to terms with it, I can't stay angry when I'm so uncertain about my own feelings . . .

PROBE: You're retired now, and it seems your daughter has been groomed to follow in your footsteps. Having seen the lifestyle for yourself, how do you feel about that?

SALLY: Mm. That's tough. I guess, in a lot of ways, it was me who pushed Laurie, that's my daughter, pushed her into this line of work . . . I know that when she's upset about something she always blames me for shoving her into such a weird career, but underneath somewhere, I think she secretly kinda likes it. She likes to bitch about it, but what else would she have done? Been a housewife? Got a job in a bank? So she didn't have a normal life! What's so great about normal life? Normal life stinks! You can ask anybody! No, no, of course, I'm her mother, I get worried about her. But in the end, I think she'll see what it was I gave her. I think she'll start to see her life next to the lives of other kids and she'll start thinking in terms of what I saved her from instead of what I condemned her to.

PROBE: You think so?

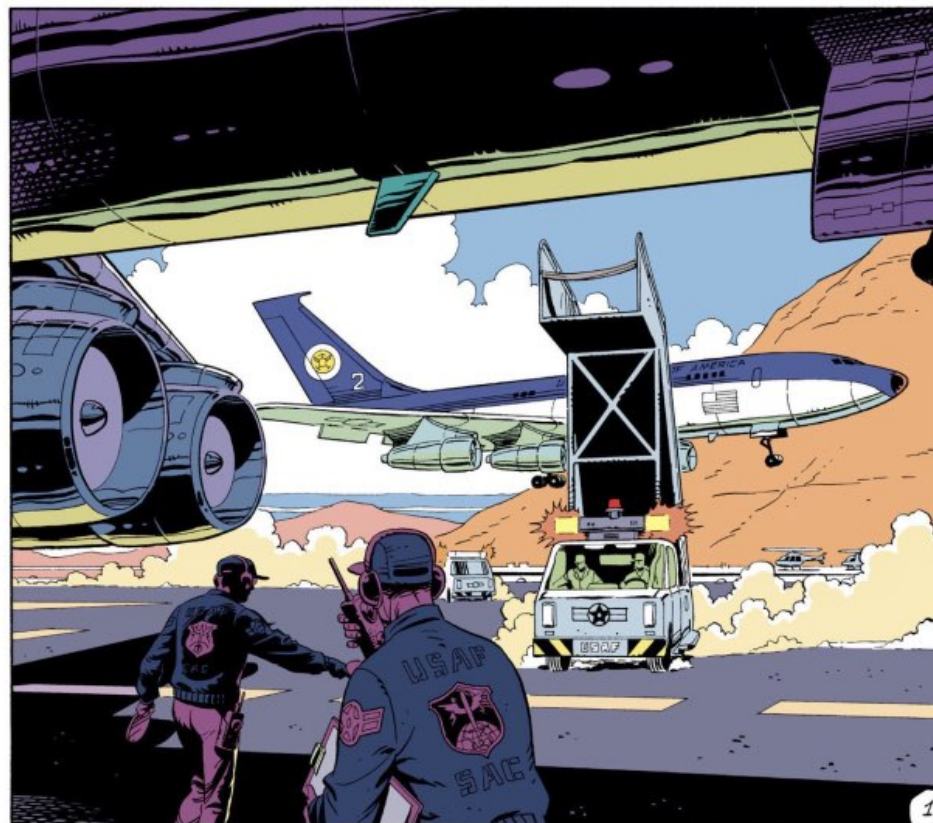
SALLY: I hope so.



"You know, rape is rape and there's no excuse for it, absolutely none, but for me, I felt . . . I felt like I'd contributed in some way."



CHAPTER X



TWO RIDERS WERE APPROACHING...





HOW MUCH LONGER? TIRED OF SKULKING DOWN HERE. IMPATIENT. WORK TO BE DONE.

RORSCHACH, WE JUST GOT YOU OUT OF PRISON. EVERYBODY'S LOOKING FOR US, AND UNLESS WE BOTH WANT TO GO BACK THERE WE'D BETTER BE CAREFUL.



DOWN HERE HOURS ALREADY. NEED TO COLLECT SPARE UNIFORM AND PERSONAL EFFECTS, SO THAT WE CAN PROCEED.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. THAT'S WHAT I'M DOING. WE'RE NEAR THE WHARVES BACKING ONTO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD RIGHT NOW.

I'M TAKING HER UP.



AT LAST.

IT FEELS GOOD TO BE WORKING WITH YOU AGAIN, DANIEL. PITY MISS JUSPEZYK COULDN'T STAY WITH US.

YES.

YES, IT'S A PITY.



SO, ASSUMING YOUR SPARE OUTFIT'S WHERE YOU LEFT IT, WHERE DO WE START?

MAKE INQUIRIES AMONGST UNDERWORLD. WHATEVER'S BEHIND ELIMINATION OF MASKED HEROES IS SOMETHING BIG. MAKES RIPPLES. OUT THERE, SOMEWHERE...

SOME-BODY KNOWS.



YEAH, I GUESS SO. ALSO, WITH THIS MASK KILLER THING, WE SHOULD CONTACT ADRIAN.

HURN. YES, PERHAPS HE'LL BE LESS DISMISSIVE OF IDEA AFTER ATTEMPT ON OWN LIFE...

DOWN THIS WAY, REAR FIRE ESCAPE.



THE THING IS, WE'VE GOT SO LITTLE TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHO'S DOING THIS. I MEAN, NEUTRALIZING JON, FRAMING YOU, WE'RE TALKING, SOMEBODY MAJOR.

YES. ALL ACCOMPLISHED SO EASILY. LESSON IN VULNERABILITY. MUST BE MORE CAREFUL IN FUTURE.



FUTURE?

WHAT FUTURE?



THAT'S MY WHOLE POINT: WE'RE LOOKING AT WORLD WAR THREE WITHIN THE WEEK!

I MEAN, WHAT DO WE DO? THE STAKES ARE SO HIGH AND HUMANITY IS SO CLOSE TO THE EDGE...



SOME OF US HAVE ALWAYS LIVED ON EDGE, DANIEL. IT IS POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE THERE IF YOU OBSERVE RULES!

JUST HANG ON BY FINGER-NAILS...

...AND NEVER LOOK DOWN.





HUNH! STILL HERE. GOOD. POLICE DIDN'T FIND IT.

!MPH?
EXACTLY WHAT, UH, PERSONAL EFFECTS WERE YOU LOOKING FOR?



SPARE CLOTHES. SPARE FACE. FINAL DRAFT OF JOURNAL. POLICE ONLY. FOUND ROUGH NOTES.

OH GOD!

GLOVES. HAT. SHOES. THERE. THINK THAT'S EVERYTHING. WE...



I--IT'S...OH GOD, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I... LOOK, PLEASE, I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE, OKAY? I...

MRS. SHAIRP.
LONG TIME NO SEE.



TOLD PRESS I'D MADE SEXUAL ADVANCES TO YOU. NOT TRUE.

NO! I NEVER SAID THAT! I GOT MISQUOTED! OH GOD, PLEASE, DON'T...

VERY BAD.

RORSCHACH? COME ON, MAN. LEAVE IT...



CAN'T. SERIOUS BUSINESS. SLUR ON REPUTATION.

HOW MUCH DID THEY PAY YOU TO LIE ABOUT ME, WHORE?

OH PLEASE, DON'T SAY THAT. NOT IN FRONT OF MY KIDS...



PLEASE. THEY...

THEY DON'T KNOW.



GOT WHAT WE CAME FOR. FINISHED HERE NOW.

LET'S GO.



WELCOME BACK, SIR. IT IS GOOD TO HAVE YOU SAFE WITH US. WE RECEIVED BULLETINS FROM NEW YORK...

THE ATTEMPTED SHOOTING? AH YES. YES, THESE ARE DANGEROUS TIMES...

HELLO, BUBASTIS. HELLO, OLD GIRL.



DO YOU STILL WISH TO STUDY THE MONITORS AND RECORD YOUR OBSERVATIONS BEFORE DINNER? IF YOU ARE HUNGRY...

NO, LET DINNER WAIT. THE WORK COMES FIRST, AS EVER. THERE ARE THINGS TO DO, PROBLEMS TO SOLVE...

IT'S THE SAME OLD STORY.



INCIDENTALLY, DID THE DELIVERY RUN SMOOTHLY IN MY ABSENCE?

OH YES. WE THREE SUPERVISED THE RECEPTION UN-AIDED, AS INSTRUCTED.

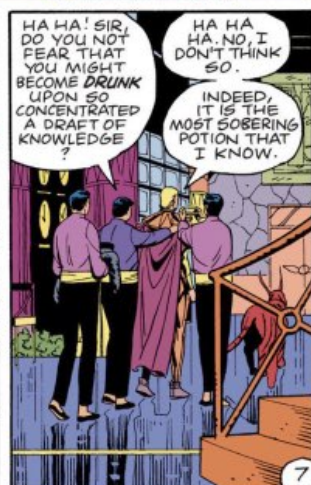
THE MONITORS HAVE BEEN PREPARED, SIR. HOW MANY SCREENS DID YOU WISH TO VIEW?



ALL OF THEM. RANDOM CHANNEL CHANGE EVERY HUNDRED SECONDS.

THE PLANET IS CURRENTLY SWARMING WITH EVENTS. IN SUCH TIMES, NONE OF THEM ARE INSIGNIFICANT.

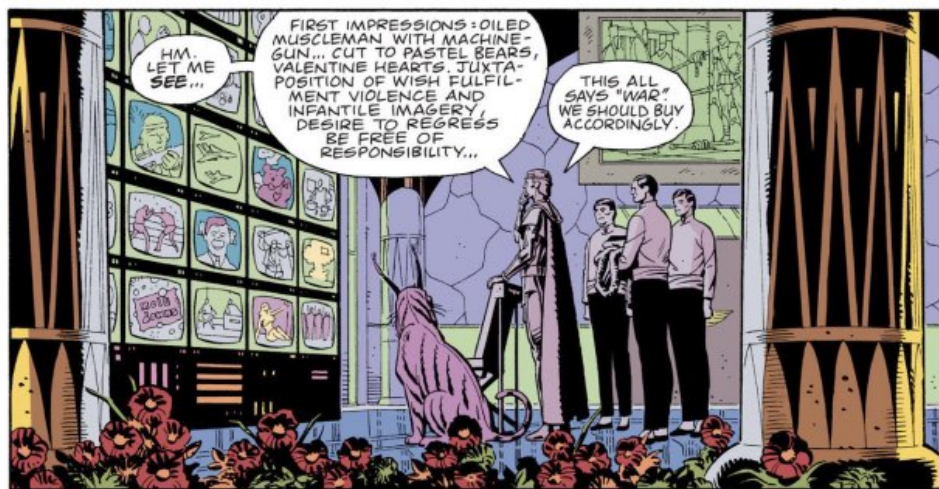
I NEED INFORMATION. INFORMATION IN ITS MOST CONCENTRATED FORM.



HA HA! SIR, DO YOU NOT FEAR THAT YOU MIGHT BECOME DRUNK UPON SO CONCENTRATED A DRAFT OF KNOWLEDGE?

HA HA. NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

INDEED, IT IS THE MOST SOBERING POTION THAT I KNOW.



HM.
LET ME
SEE...

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: OILED
MUSCLEMAN WITH MACHINE-
GUN... CUT TO PASTEL BEARS,
VALENTINE HEARTS. JUXTA-
POSITION OF WISH FULFIL-
MENT VIOLENCE AND
INFANTILE IMAGERY.
DESIRE TO REGRESS
BE FREE OF
RESPONSIBILITY...

THIS ALL
SAYS "WAR".
WE SHOULD BUY
ACCORDINGLY.



BUT...
SIR, WE
HAVE NEVER
BOUGHT INTO
MUNITIONS...

OF COURSE NOT.
YOU'RE IGNORING
THE SUBTEXT:
INCREASED
SEXUAL IMAGERY,
EVEN IN THE
CANDY ADS.

IT IMPLIES AN
EROTIC UNDER-
CURRENT NOT
UNCOMMON IN
TIMES OF WAR.
REMEMBER THE
BABY BOOM...



SO,
SHOULD
WE BUY
INTO...
UH...?

INTO THE MAJOR EROTIC
VIDEO COMPANIES. THAT'S
SHORT TERM. ALSO, WE
SHOULD NEGOTIATE
CONTROLLING SHARES IN
SELECTED BABY FOOD
AND MATERNITY GOODS
MANUFACTURERS.

I
THINK
I'M READY
TO BEGIN
RECORDING
NOW.



VERY GOOD. THE
EQUIPMENT IS READY.
SIR. WE SHALL RETIRE
AND LEAVE YOU TO
YOUR WORK. WE
KNOW THAT YOU
PREFER TO BE
ALONE DOWN
HERE.

YES, THAT'S
RIGHT. ALL
ALONE...



JUST
ME AND THE
WORLD.



HATE THIS
ALL DAY ON
RIVER BED.
DROWNED
CORPSES
MORE USE-
FUL. YOU
SAID WE
COULD
PROCEED.

THESE COMPUTER
SEARCHES I'VE
BEEN RUNNING
ARE PROCEDURE.
WHEN IT'S DARK
AGAIN, WE'LL
GO UP.

THIS IS
NO PICNIC
FOR ME,
EITHER.



IMPLYING
SOMETHING?

ABOUT COAT
PERHAPS? OLD.
SLIGHTLY MUSTY.
APOLOGIES.
CAN'T ALL BE
FASTIDIOUS.
CAN'T ALL
KEEP HANDS
CLEAN.

I WASN'T...
LOOK, I JUST
MEANT WE TOOK
ENOUGH
UNNECESSARY
RISKS
RETRIEVING
YOUR OUTFIT
THIS
MORNING...



UNNECESSARY?
COVERING DOWN
HERE IN SLUDGE
AND POLLUTION,
CONTURING NAMES
ON SCREENS,
LEARNING
NOTHING
THAT IS
UNNECESSARY!

GIVE ME
SMALLEST
FINGER ON
MAN'S HAND.
I'LL PRODUCE
INFORMATION.
COMPUTER
UNNECESSARY.

THIS
FACE ALL
THAT'S
NECESSARY
...



ALL I
NEED.



THAT'S BULLSHIT.
YOU NEED DARK-
NESS TO WORK
WITH, JUST LIKE
I DO. AND WE
BOTH NEEDED
THE SLEEP WE
GRABBED.

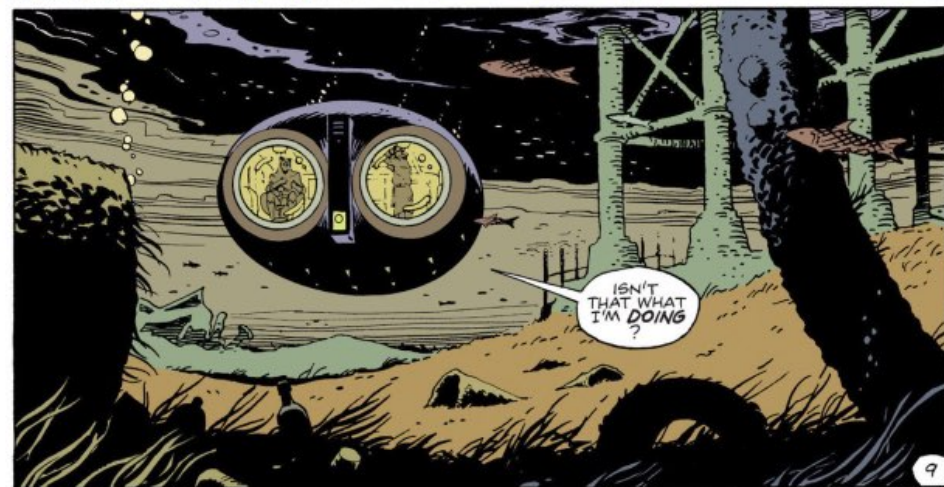
RIGHT
NOW, I
NEED SOME
PATTERN THAT
MAKES SENSE
OF THE DATA
WE HAVE...



THE COMEDIAN MENTIONED
AN ISLAND AND SOME PLOT
AGAINST JON. MY COMPUTERS
SUGGEST JON COULD HAVE
BEEN SET UP, POSSIBLY
BY THE COMPANY ALL
HIS SUPPOSED 'VICTIMS'
WORKED FOR...

"POSSIBLY."

WE SHOULD
ASK QUESTIONS
IN THE UNDER-
WORLD.



ISN'T
THAT WHAT
I'M
DOING?



DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME.

YOU WASTE TIME LOOKING FOR PATTERN WHEN PATTERN IS OBVIOUS. THE MASK KILLER...

IF YOU'D LISTEN, THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY! WHAT IF THERE IS NO MASK KILLER?



MM. ADRIAN'S A PROBLEM. THAT WAS A CLEAR-CUT ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, USING A HIRED KILLER...

EXACTLY SO TRACE KILLER. VISIT BARS, SQUEEZE PEOPLE.

BEEN LAZING AROUND A LONG TIME. MAYBE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN HOW WE DO THINGS.



DANIEL...



LOOK, THE COMEDIAN LEARNED, ACCIDENTALLY, ABOUT SOME ISLAND, SOME SCHEME AGAINST JON.

THE PLOT AGAINST JON COMES FIRST. BLAKE'S KILLED WHEN HE DISCOVERS IT.

WHO KNEW BLAKE SUSPECTED ANYTHING?



LAZING ...?

LISTEN, I'VE HAD IT! WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? YOU LIVE OFF PEOPLE WHILE INSULTING THEM, NOBODY COMPLAINS BECAUSE THEY THINK YOU'RE A GODDAMNED LUNATIC...

YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT IS, BEING YOUR FRIEND?



YOU ARE... A GOOD FRIEND.

I KNOW THAT.

I AM SORRY... THAT IT IS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT.



THIS DIMENSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS COMPANY EMPLOYED MOLOCH. MAYBE HIS PLACE WAS BUGGED WHEN BLAKE VISITED?

THAT'D ALSO EXPLAIN HOW THEY KNEW ABOUT YOUR INVESTIGATIONS AND WERE ABLE TO FRAME YOU... WITHOUT REQUIRING ANY 'MASK KILLER'.

AND VEIDT?



I... LOOK, RORSCHACH, I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ALL THAT...

LISTEN, YOU'RE RIGHT. WE'VE BOTH BEEN DOWN HERE TOO LONG. IT MUST BE DARK ENOUGH TO SURFACE BY NOW. I'LL TAKE HIM UP.



UH... HEY...

HEY, FORGET IT. IT'S OKAY, MAN.

IT'S OKAY.



UHH...



WELL, ANYWAY, THERE'S...

...NG?

...THERE'S NO SENSE WAITING DOWN HERE ANY LONGER.



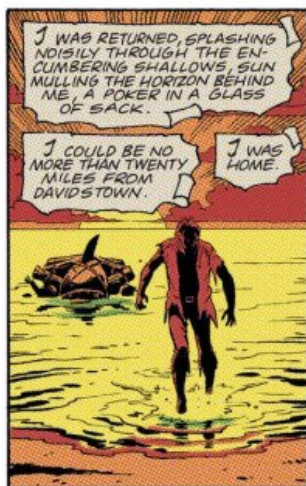
I MEAN, DOWN HERE IN THIS JUNK GARDEN, IS THIS ANY PLACE TO HOLD THE REUNION OF THE NITE OWL-RORSCHACH TEAM?

LET'S GO UP TO VISIT THE CRIMINAL FRATERNITY... AND REALLY START PLUMBING THE DEPTHS.



Y'KNOW, SOME NICE STRAIGHTFORWARD BRUTALITY, AFTER WADING KNEE-DEEP IN THIS CONSPIRACY WEIRDNESS FOR SO LONG...

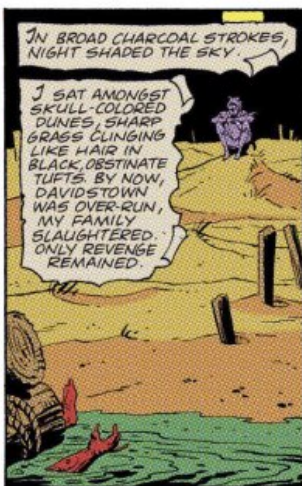
HELL, IT'LL BE LIKE COMING HOME.



I WAS RETURNED, SPLASHING NOISILY THROUGH THE ENCUMBERING SHALLOWS, SUN MULLING THE HORIZON BEHIND ME, A POKER IN A GLASS OF SACK.

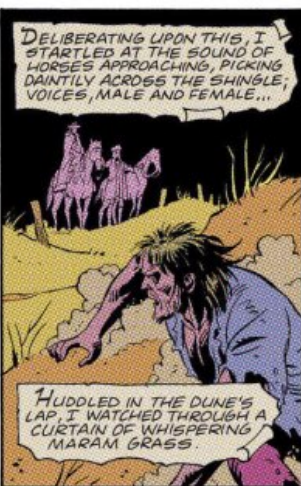
I COULD BE NO MORE THAN TWENTY MILES FROM DAVIDSTOWN.

I WAS HOME.



IN BROAD CHARCOAL STROKES, NIGHT SHADED THE SKY.

I SAT AMONGST SKULL-COLORED DUNES, SHARP GRASS CLINGING LIKE HAIR IN BLACK, OBSTINATE TUFTS. BY NOW, DAVIDSTOWN WAS OVER-RUN, MY FAMILY SLAUGHTERED. ONLY REVENGE REMAINED.



DELIBERATING UPON THIS, I STARTLED AT THE SOUND OF HORSES APPROACHING, PICKING DAINTILY ACROSS THE SHINGLE; VOICES, MALE AND FEMALE...

HUDDLED IN THE DUNE'S LAP, I WATCHED THROUGH A CURTAIN OF WHISPERING MARAM GRASS.



DISMOUNTING, THEY TETHERED THEIR STEEDS TO DARK WOODEN GROUNDS, TUTTING OUT LIKE CHARRED RIBS FROM THE BEACH.

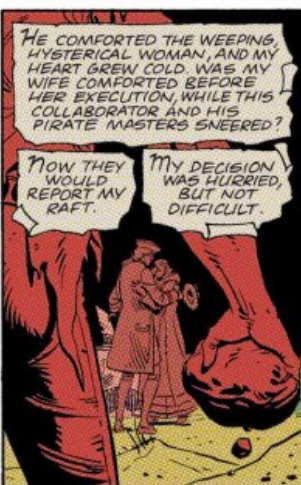
I RECOGNIZED THE MAN: A MONEYLENDER FROM DAVIDSTOWN. LAUGHING, HE WALKED HIS WOMAN OVER PEBBLES, DOWN TOWARDS THE SURF.



WITH DAVIDSTOWN CAPTURED, WHY WOULD BRIGANDS ALLOW THIS SCOUNDREL FREE PASSAGE FOR HIS MIDNIGHT TRYST? HAD HE COLLABORATED?

THE RISALD CHUCKLING REACHED THE WATER'S EDGE; CEASED; BECAME A SCREAM.

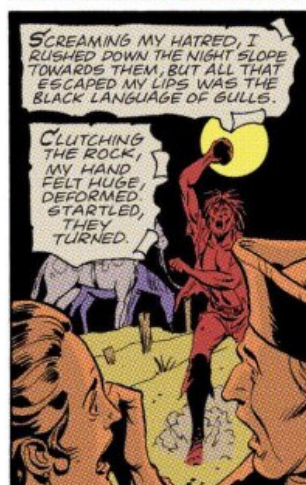
MY RAFT WAS DISCOVERED.



HE COMFORTED THE WEeping, HYSTERICAL WOMAN, AND MY HEART GREW COLD. WAS MY WIFE COMFORTED BEFORE HER EXECUTION, WHILE THIS COLLABORATOR AND HIS PIRATE MASTERS SNEERED?

NOW THEY WOULD REPORT MY RAFT.

MY DECISION WAS HURRIED, BUT NOT DIFFICULT.



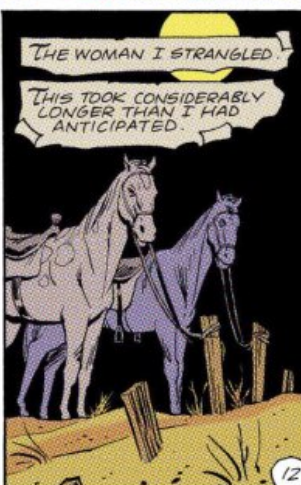
SCREAMING MY HATRED, I RUSHED DOWN THE NIGHT SLOPE TOWARDS THEM, BUT ALL THAT ESCAPED MY LIPS WAS THE BLACK LANGUAGE OF GULLS.

CLUTCHING THE ROCK, MY HAND FELT HUGE, DEFORMED, STARTLED, THEY TURNED.



OVER-RIPE, THE MONEYLENDER'S HEAD BURST WITH A SINGLE BLOW, EXPLODING AS IF PRESSURIZED BY THE GUILT WITHIN.

SUDDENLY SLICK, THE ROCK SHOT FROM BETWEEN MY RED FINGERS AND WAS LOST.



THE WOMAN I STRANGLD.

THIS TOOK CONSIDERABLY LONGER THAN I HAD ANTICIPATED.



Y'KNOW, I DIDN'T EXPECT ALL THIS TO TAKE SO LONG. DIDN'T EXPECT THIS WAITING...

LOOK: EVERYBODY'S SCARED THEY'LL DROP IT TONIGHT, GATHERIN' ON CORNERS, LOOKING FOR TROUBLE...

AT DEATH'S APPROACH, ALL CREATURES DISCOVER AN APPETITE FOR VIOLENCE.

THE VEIDT METHOD
I WILL GIVE YOU BODIES BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGINATION



FLAILING, SCRATCHING, SHE WAS A BRIAR ROSE IN THE WIND. THE WIND DROPPED. HER THRASHINGS BECAME WEAKER...

THE HORSES WATCHED, UNDERSTANDING ONLY A LITTLE.

LIKE, IT'S TOO BIG TO TAKE IN, BUT PEOPLE KNOW SOMETHING BAD'S HAPPENING...



PEOPLE KNOW SOMETHING'S COMING.

ASK ME, IT'S DOOMSDAY, LIKE IN THE BOOK O' REVOLUTIONS. I MEAN, TANKS IN EAST GERMANY, THERE'S NO MISTAKIN' IT...

WHEN DEATH WAS ASSURED, RESIGNATION LENT HER EYES A CERTAIN MATURITY.

THE VEIDT METHOD
I WILL GIVE YOU BODIES BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGINATION



THUMBS CROSSED, I CLOSED HER WINDPIPE, A BUCCANEER'S WHORE DESERVED NO PITY.

EVENUALLY I STOOD, LEGS TREMBLING, BARELY SUPPORTING ME. IN THE FOAM ABOUT MY ANKLES, TWO WORLDS LAY ENDED.

MAYBE TODAY, MAYBE TOMORROW, BUT SOON FOR SURE.



GOOD DAY, SIR. I'D LIKE TO PURCHASE A GAZETTE, IF I MAY.

UH, SURE THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR...

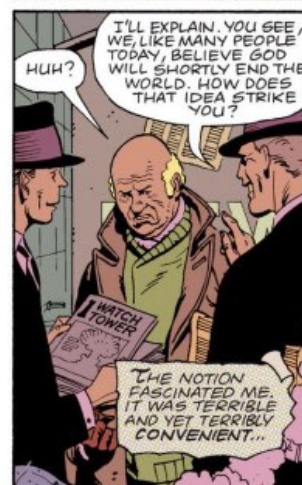
MY PURPOSE ALMOST FORGOTTEN IN THE GIDDY WHIRL OF MURDER ITSELF, I GAZED STUPIDLY AT THE HORSES.

THE VEIDT METHOD
I WILL GIVE YOU BODIES BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGINATION



RECOVERING, I BECAME MORE RATIONAL. SEEKING VENGEANCE, MIGHT I TURN THIS UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCE TO MY ADVANTAGE? AN IDEA BLOSSOMED, PLAUSIBLE, TEMPTING...

THERE, NOW, WE'VE BOUGHT ONE OF YOUR PAPERS. PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO TRY OURS?



I'LL EXPLAIN. YOU SEE, WE, LIKE MANY PEOPLE TODAY, BELIEVE GOD WILL SHORTLY END THE WORLD. HOW DOES THAT IDEA STRIKE YOU?

HUH?

THE NOTION FASCINATED ME. IT WAS TERRIBLE AND YET TERRIBLY CONVENIENT...



BALONEY! END THE WORLD? NO WAY, JOSE!

OH, I SEE. WELL, WE'RE JUST LEAVING...

THIS COUPLE LEFT DAVIDSTOWN UNHINDERED, DESPITE THE PIRATE SENTRIES THERE MUST BE. THEY'D BE ALLOWED BACK, ALSO...

TIED TO HER SADDLE, SHE LOOKED QUITE NATURAL.



GODDAMN FANATICS. ITCHIN' TO SAY "I TOLD YA SO!"

WOULDN'T GIVE 'EM THE SATISFACTION!

TWO FIGURES HAD RIDDEN HERE, NOW TWO RODE BACK. SOON, SOON I WOULD VENTURE AMONGST EVIL MEN, AND MAKE THEM FEAR ME...

New York Gazette
EASTERN EUROPE: TANKS MASS AS ONFLICT ESCALATE





WHO DID IT?
TELL ME WHO
DID IT, YOU
SLIME! WHO
MURDERED
HOLLIS?

KCUH...NO.
DON'T KNOW...
GHUCH...GANG...
KIDS SAW GANG
...RUNNING
AWAY...



YOU TELL THEM!
TELL THEM THEY'RE
DEAD! YOU KNOW
HOW MUCH FIRE
POWER I HAVE
FLOATING OUT
THERE?

I OUGHTTA
TAKE OUT THIS
ENTIRE
RAT-HOLE
NEIGHBORHOOD!
I OUGHTTA...
OUGHTTA BREAK
YOUR NECK,
YOU...YOU...



OH GOD
DAMN.

GOD DAMN
GOD DAMN
GOD
DAMN!

NOT IN FRONT
OF CIVILIANS. WE
HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE
THAT WE WANTED...



YEAH.
AND THEN SOME.

HELL,
LET'S
GET OUT
OF HERE.



HOLLIS.
OH
CHRIST,
MAN,
WHY?

W-WE MUST HAVE MISSED
IT ON THE NEWS. PROBABLY
NOT IMPORTANT ENOUGH
FOR REPEAT BULLETINS.
JUST SOME...SOME USE-
LESS OLD GUY...

OH
SHIT. TAKE
THIS AND
BRING ARCHIE
DOWN. I
CAN'T SEE.



UNIDENTIFIED GANG
MURDERS MASON. SUPPORTS
MASK-KILLER
THEORY...

LOOK, I DON'T
CARE! RIGHT NOW I
DON'T CARE ABOUT WHOSE
THEORY IS BEST! JUST
SHUT UP AND BRING THE
SHIP DOWN.



MERELY
SUGGESTING
THAT BY
FINDING MASK
KILLER, CAN
HAVE REVENGE
FOR MASON'S
DEATH.
MEANT TO
COMFORT
YOU.

COMFORT ME? WHO
IN THEIR RIGHT MIND
COULD TAKE COMFORT
FROM...UH...

YEAH, OKAY.
THANKS, RORSCHACH.
REALLY, THANK YOU.



YOU'RE WELCOME.

NOW KNOW WHO
PAID TO KILL
VEIDT. INFORMATION
SHOULD CONVINCE
HIM TO HELP
US.

SURE.

I
CAN'T BELIEVE
HE'S DEAD.
REMEMBER, ADRIAN
ONCE TELLING ME THAT
THE EGYPTIANS
REGARDED DEATH
AS A VOYAGE...



HURN.
NICE IDEA
IF YOU CAN
AFFORD TO GO
FIRST CLASS, WITH
PHARAOHS...

...BUT
JUDGING BY OUR
DEPARTURES, MOST
OF US TRAVEL
STEERAGE.



"OOPS, MR. SHEA, IT'S
VERY DARK DOWN HERE.
WHAT IF SOMEONE
SHOULD DISCOVER US?"

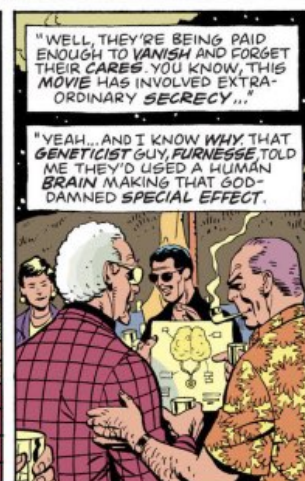
"RELAX. EVERYBODY'S
UP ON DECK FOR THE
EVACUATION PARTY.
ONCE THE LAST OF THE
EQUIPMENT'S ABOARD,
THE SHIP'S READY
TO PUT OUT.

"HOW ABOUT YOU?"



"WHAT...? MR. SHEA,
REALLY! HA HA HA HA!"

"HIRA, COME ON, WE'RE CELE-
BRATING. TONIGHT WE LEAVE
THIS PLACE AFTER ALL THESE
MONTHS. HELL, I SAW NORM
LEITH AND LIN PALEY UP ON
DECK. EVEN THEY WERE SMILING..."



"WELL, THEY'RE BEING PAID
ENOUGH TO VANISH AND FORGET
THEIR CARES. YOU KNOW, THIS
MOVIE HAS INVOLVED EXTRA-
ORDINARY SECRECY..."

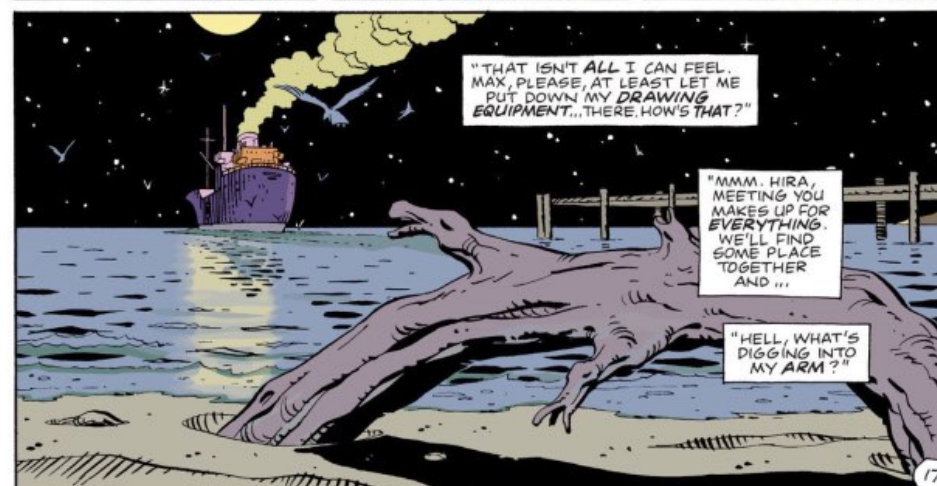
"YEAH... AND I KNOW WHY. THAT
GENETICIST GUY, FURNESSE, TOLD
ME THEY'D USED A HUMAN
BRAIN MAKING THAT GOD-
DAMNED SPECIAL EFFECT.



"PROBABLY ILLEGAL, BUT WHO
CARES? I'M CONTENT TO BE A
RICH MISSING PERSON AND
FINALLY OFF THAT ISLAND."

"LIKE YOUR SHIPWRECKED
VOYAGER? DID HE ESCAPE
HIS ISLAND?"

"WELL, YES, BUT...HEY! FEEL
THAT? WE'RE MOVING."



"THAT ISN'T ALL I CAN FEEL.
MAX, PLEASE, AT LEAST LET ME
PUT DOWN MY DRAWING
EQUIPMENT... THERE, HOW'S THAT?"

"MMM, HIRA,
MEETING YOU
MAKES UP FOR
EVERYTHING.
WE'LL FIND
SOME PLACE
TOGETHER
AND ..."

"HELL, WHAT'S
DIGGING INTO
MY ARM?"



FORGET IT, WHATEVER IT IS. I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL A HOTEL ON THE MAINLAND. AFTER YEARS WITH THAT SEXLESS OAF AND HIS SPOILED SONS, I'M IMPATIENT.

SOME KINDA BOX UNDER THE TARPAULIN. LET ME SWITCH THIS LIGHT ON...

MAX, PLEASE



WHAT'S THAT COUNTER? LET ME SEE THAT. IT'S...

MAX, FOR GOD'S SAKE, CONCENTRATE ON ME. THE CREW MUST VISIT THIS PART OF THE SHIP, AND I THINK WE MIGHT NOT HAVE VERY LONG.

MAX? YOU'RE SO PALE. WHAT'S WRONG?



NOTHING, LOVE. NOTHING'S WRONG.

HOLD ME.



GONE. VANISHED WITHOUT TRACE.



FUNNY. USUALLY WORKS HERE UNTIL EARLY IN MORNING.

THE WHOLE BUILDING LOOKED DESERTED AS WE CAME IN. MAYBE HE...

WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT'S THIS APPOINTMENT BOOK?



"NOVEMBER 1ST, 4:30 A.M.: LEAVE FOR KARNAK."

KARNAK...?

QUESTION IS, WHAT NEXT? VEIDT UNAVAILABLE. CAN'T COUNT ON HIS HELP. MUST REVIEW PLANS.



KNOW DELIVERY COMPANY BEHIND VEIDT MURDER BID. ACCORDING TO YOU, ALSO OWNERS OF DIMENSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS, THUS MAYBE BEHIND MANHATTAN FRAME.

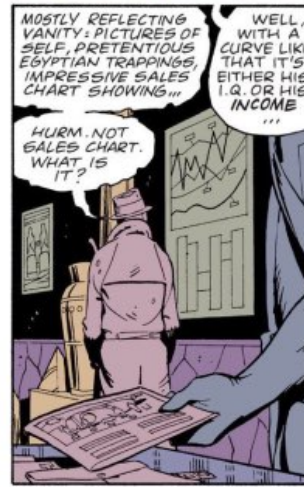


WHAT'S THEIR ANGLE?



I'D HOPED ADRIAN MIGHT HELP WITH THAT.

HEH. INCREDIBLE STUFF HE HAS HERE...



MOSTLY REFLECTING VANITY: PICTURES OF SELF, PRETENTIOUS EGYPTIAN TRAPPINGS, IMPRESSIVE SALES CHART SHOWING...

HURM. NOT SALES CHART. WHAT IS IT?



WELL, WITH A CURVE LIKE THAT IT'S EITHER HIS I.Q. OR HIS INCOME...

"GLOBAL POPULATION...NUCLEAR HAZARD ESCALATION INDEX... ENVIRONMENTAL DECLINE..."

MULTIPLE CRISIS GRAPH, LINES CONVERGING MID 1990S.

OPTIMISTIC. CRISIS ARRIVES DECADE EARLY UNLESS WE GET LEAD ON PYRAMID DELIVERIES.



COMPANY TRACEABLE PRESUMABLY, BUT OBVIOUSLY NOT AMATEURS. ENGINEERED MASK KILLER CAMPAIGN, MAYBE THIRD WORLD WAR INTO BARGAIN. VERY COMPETENT. VERY CAREFUL. DIFFICULT QUARRY.

NEED DIRECT ROUTE TO PEOPLE BEHIND PYRAMID, INDICATION WHERE TO START...



ALSO NEED MOTIVE. WHY SHOULD CORPORATION WISH TO KILL COSTUME HEROES? CONTROLLED BY SOME OLD ENEMY PERHAPS?

BUT THEN, WHO HAS REASON FOR TRIGGERING ARMAGEDDON?

WE HAVE SO FEW POINTERS.



INSANITY WOULD SEEM ONLY MOTIVE. SOMEONE WISHES TO DESTROY WORLD, REMOVES HEROES TO PREVENT THEIR INTERVENTION. SOMEONE TERMINALLY ILL, PERHAPS...

HUHN. MOLOCH BETTER SUSPECT THAN PREVIOUSLY APPARENT. PITY DECEASED...



...UNLESS PLOT FROM BEYOND GRAVE, PRE-ARRANGED... NO, TOO FANTASTIC. EGYPTIAN DECOR COLORING LOGIC...

RECOGNIZE DOG-HEADED BUST. ANUBIS, WATCHER OVER DEAD. WHOLE CULTURE DEATH-FIXATED, OBSESSIVELY SECURING THEIR TOMES AGAINST INTRUDERS...



DANIEL? FOUND SOMETHING?

OH GOD, YES. YES, I'VE FOUND SOMETHING...

RORSCHACH, I THINK WE'RE IN BAD TROUBLE. THE PERSON BEHIND THIS, THE PERSON WE'RE UP AGAINST...



I THINK IT'S ADRIAN.



HE RUNS IT, RORSCHACH! RUNS PYRAMID DELIVERIES, DIMENSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS, THE WHOLE SHOW!

BUT VEIDT WAS TARGET.



DIDN'T LIKE THOUGHT OF CORPSES INTERFERED WITH. CAN'T AFFORD TO BE SO SQUEAMISH. DISTURBING DEAD OUR JOB. NEED TO UNEARTH FACTS CONCERNING MURDERERS: BLAKE'S AND JACOBI'S.

IF THAT OFFENDS ANUBIS, TOO BAD.

HANDLED WATCHDOGS BEFORE.



HOWEVER, SEEMS INADVISABLE TO CONFRONT THIS ENEMY'S WATCHDOGS BEFORE CONSIDERING SITUATION CAREFULLY.

CASE IS LOGIC-PROBLEM. SIMPLY NEEDS APPLICATION OF INTELLIGENCE.



MUST ADMIT, DESPITE PERSONAL DISLIKE, VEIDT'S ABSENCE UNFORTUNATE.

ALLEGEDLY SMARTEST MAN ON EARTH. COULD NO DOUBT HAVE PROVIDED SOME ANSWERS.



I KNOW IT'S CRAZY, AND I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, BUT PERHAPS WE SHOULD FIND ADRIAN FAST.

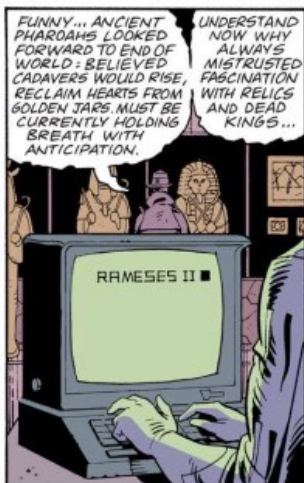
"KARNAK" RAMESES BUILT A GIGANTIC HALL THERE; A MONUMENT. KARNAK MUST BE VEIDT'S ANTARCTIC RETREAT.

BETTER GRAB THOSE PAPERS FROM HIS DESK...



NEED ANSWERS QUICKLY. WORLD ON VERGE OF APOCALYPSE. DEATH AND WAR ALREADY HERE.

OTHER HORSEMEN CAN'T BE FAR BEHIND.



FUNNY... ANCIENT PHAROAHS LOOKED FORWARD TO END OF WORLD: BELIEVED CADAVERS WOULD RISE, RECLAIM HEARTS FROM GOLDEN JARS. MUST BE CURRENTLY HOLDING BREATH WITH ANTICIPATION.

UNDERSTAND NOW WHY ALWAYS MISTRUSTED FASCINATION WITH RELICS AND DEAD KINGS...



...IN FINAL ANALYSIS, IT'S US OR THEM.

OH SHIT.



IT'S A LONG JOURNEY, AND THEY'LL MAKE BETTER READING THAN THE LIFEJACKET INSTRUCTIONS.

RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL.
NOVEMBER 1ST, 1985. :

FINAL ENTRY? LEFT
VEIDT'S OFFICE JUST
BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

DREIBERG, CONVINCED VEIDT'S
BEHIND EVERYTHING, IS
SERIOUS ABOUT VISITING
ANTARCTICA. OWLSHIP
CAPABLE, APPARENTLY,
BUT ARE WE?

ASSUMING JOURNEY POSSIBLE,
TRACKING HIM TO HIS LAIR
ONLY OPTION. STILL FEEL
UNEASY. UNFAMILIAR
TERRITORY...

HE COULD KILL US BOTH,
THERE IN SNOW. NOBODY
WOULD EVER KNOW...

FIRST NIGHT
IN NOVEMBER.

I AM COLD
TONIGHT.

OFFICES BELOW, HEADSTONES
MARKING DAILY GRAVES OF
THOUSANDS. INSIDE, ACROSS
CLOCK FACES, AS OBSERVED
AS THOSE OF CELEBRITIES,
HANDS COMMENCE FINAL LAPS.

OBLIVION GALLOPS
CLOSER,
FAVORING
THE SPUR,
SPARING
THE REIN.

I THINK
WE WILL
BE GONE
SOON.

NOVEMBER 2ND
PALE HORSE
IN CONCRETE
KRYSTALNAGH
WISDOM SQUARE

VEIDT IS FASTER THAN
DREIBERG. PERHAPS FASTER
THAN ME. RETURN FROM
MISSION SEEMS UNLIKELY.

THIS LAST ENTRY.
WILL SHORTLY MAIL.
JOURNAL TO ONLY
PEOPLE CAN TRUST.

VEIDT. CANNOT
IMAGINE MORE
DANGEROUS
OPPONENT.

TELL
DREIBERG
I NEED TO
CHECK MY
MAILDROP.
HE BELIEVES
ME.

IF READING THIS NOW,
WHETHER I AM ALIVE OR
DEAD, YOU WILL KNOW
TRUTH: WHATEVER PRECISE
NATURE OF THIS CONSPIRACY,
ADRIAN VEIDT RESPONSIBLE.

HAVE DONE
BEST TO
MAKE THIS
LEGIBLE.
BELIEVE
IT POINTS
DISTURBING
PICTURE.

APPRECIATE YOUR RECENT
SUPPORT AND HOPE WORLD
SURVIVES LONG ENOUGH FOR
THIS TO REACH YOU, BUT
TANKS ARE IN EAST BERLIN,
AND WRITING IS ON WALL.

FOR MY OWN
PART, REGRET
NOTHING HAVE
LIVED LIFE,
FREE FROM
COMPROMISE...

...AND STEP INTO
THE SHADOW NOW
WITHOUT COMPLAINT.

RORSCHACH,
NOVEMBER
1ST, 1985.

4F

IT AIN'T FAIR.
WE DIDN'T ASK FOR
NO WAR. THERE'S NO
GODDAMN JUSTICE IN
THIS WORLD!

UNRECOGNIZABLE IN
CORPSE'S CLOTHING,
I WAS THE CONCEALED
IMPLEMENT OF GOD'S
RETRIBUTION.

I MEAN,
THERE'S GOTTA
BE SOMEBODY
LOOKIN' OUT
FOR US,
RIGHT?

CANTERING
DOWN MOONLIT
LANES, I SPIED
THE DARK,
UNMOVING FORM
OF A PIRATE
SENTRY, WATCHING
SULLENLY
FROM ATOP AN
EMBANKMENT.
I HELD MY
BREATH...

THE WOMAN'S
HEAD LOLLED
STUPIDLY. NO
LIVING
COMPANION
WAS EVER SO
AGREEABLE.

HI,
JOEY. HOW'S
THINGS?

DUNNO.
ALINE'S
MEETING ME
FROM WORK
TONIGHT, TO
DISCUSS
THINGS. NOW
SHE'S PISSED
'CAUSE THAT
CLASHES WITH
PALE HORSE'S
MADISON
SQUARE
GIG!

ALL THIS
CRAZINESS
GOIN' DOWN,
THE ORDINARY
GUY GOT NO
PROTECTION. LIKE
A TURTLE WITH
NO SHELL. HE'S
ALL WASHED
UP!

ABANDONING
THE NAKED
MONEYLENDER
TO THE COLD
SURF, I LED
THE HORSES
FROM THE
SEACH.

...DREADING LEST HE SHOULD
ATTEMPT CONVERSATION.

HI THERE! BOY,
THIS WAR BUSINESS,
HUH? CRAZY! ME,
I ALWAYS BIN
AGAINST THAT
ATOMIC WEAPONS
STUFF.

UH,
JUST A
GAZETTE,
PLEASE. NO
OFFENSE,
MAN...

...BUT I'M
IN KIND OF
A RUSH.

LOTTING UNHURRIEDLY
TO AVOID SUSPICION, I
RODE PAST. IF HE NOTED
THE LOVERS' UNUSUALLY
EARLY RETURN FROM THEIR
ASSIGNATION, THE SENTINEL
SAID NOTHING, PERHAPS
ASSUMING WE'D ARGUED.

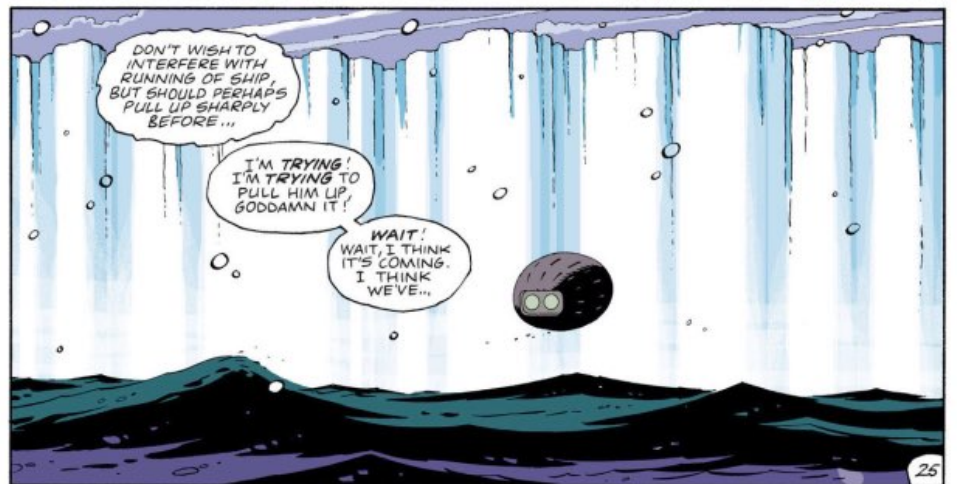
I SPURRED THE
HORSES ON,
WHINNYING,
UNNERVED BY
DEATH'S SCENT,
TOWARDS THAT
INEVITABLE
CONFRONTATION.

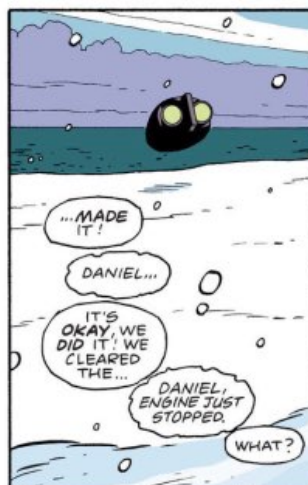
HEY,
LIGHTEN
UP. IT
AIN'T THE
END O'
THE
WORLD
...

DEAR GOD, LET ME
HAVE VENGEANCE, THEN
DIE SWIFTLY...

...I MEAN, AT LEAST,
Y'KNOW, FIGURATIVELY
SPEAKIN'.

...DELIVERED AT LAST
INTO THE HANDS OF A
HIGHER JUDGMENT.





...MADE IT!

DANIEL...

IT'S OKAY, WE DID IT! WE CLEARED THE...

DANIEL, ENGINE JUST STOPPED.

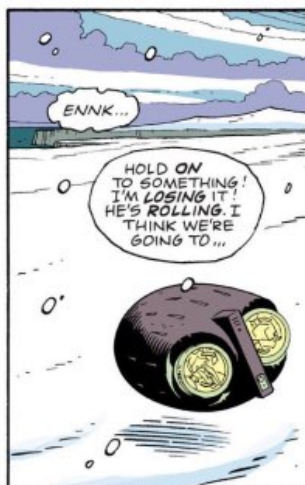
WHAT?



SAID ENGINE JUST...

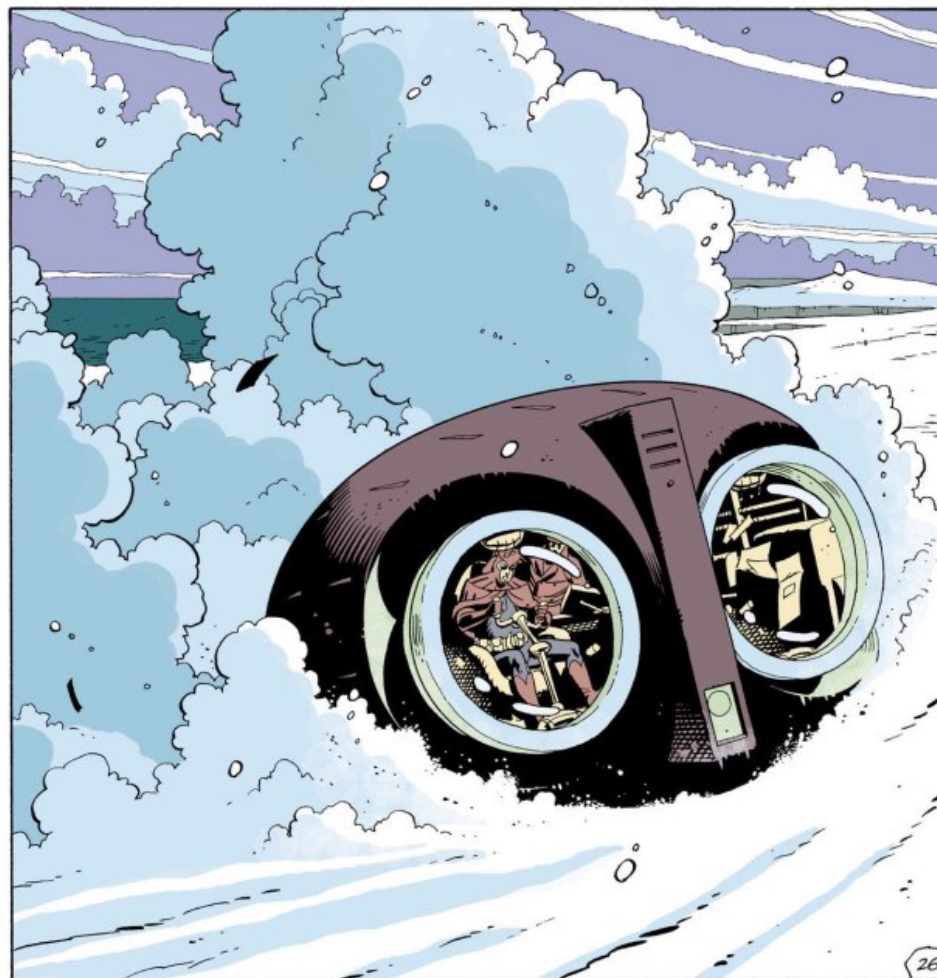
ALRIGHT, I KNOW! JESUS CHRIST...

LEMME TRY TO... WHOO-OOAH...



ENNK...

HOLD ON TO SOMETHING! I'M LOSING IT! HE'S ROLLING! I THINK WE'RE GOING TO...



26



OW.
YOU OKAY?

TWISTED ANKLE. NOTHING SERIOUS. LANDED ON IT BADLY NIGHT POLICE TOOK ME.

HOW BAD IS DAMAGE TO SHIP?



DIFFICULT TO SAY. PROBABLY NOTHING I COULDN'T FIX GIVEN A FEW HOURS...

IT'D BE QUICKER TO COVER THE REMAINING DISTANCE ON THE HOVERBIKES. THE INSTRUMENTS PUT US WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF VEIT'S FORTRESS.



YOU BREAK OUT THE BIKES WHILE I GET INTO MY SNOW SUIT.

FINE LIKE THIS.

UH... YOU'RE SURE I CAN'T FIT YOU OUT IN SOMETHING A LITTLE WARMER?



WELL, WHATEVER YOU WANT.

GIVE ME A SECOND AND I'LL OPEN THE REAR DOOR SO YOU CAN UNLOAD THOSE...

USED THESE WHEN WE TOOK UNDERBOSS. REMEMBER RIDING ALONG SEWER.



GOD, YES! THEY KNEW WE COULDN'T GET ARCHIE DOWN THERE AND FIGURED THEY WERE SAFE...

THEN YOU SHOOT OUT OF THAT TUNNEL WITH THE GAS CLOUD, ALL THE RATS RUNNING AHEAD OF YOU...

MAN, THEIR FACES!



YES. GOOD NIGHT. THINK OF IT OFTEN.

YOU GOT IT.

AS I RECALL, CONTROLS SIMPLE; JUST TWO PEDALS AND STEERING COLUMN.

TCH. LOOK AT THAT ICE. BETTER FIX IT SOON AS WE GET BACK...



IF WE GET BACK.

YEAH.

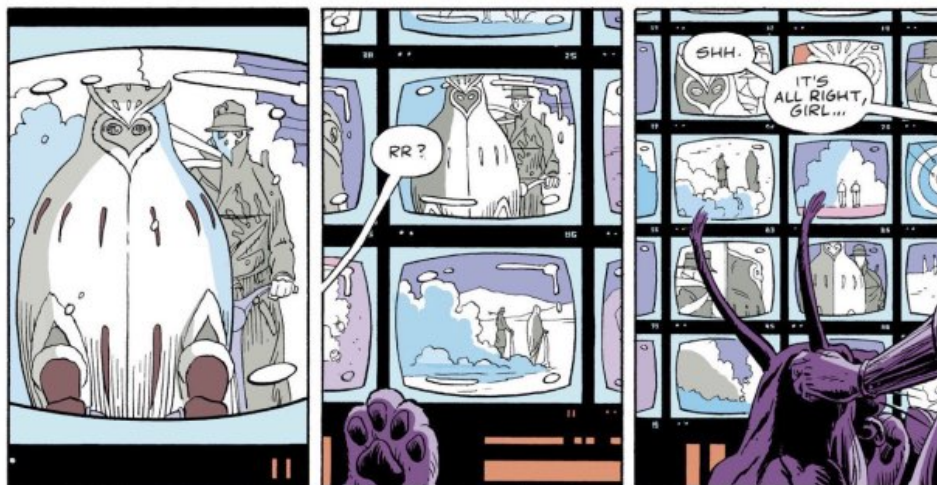
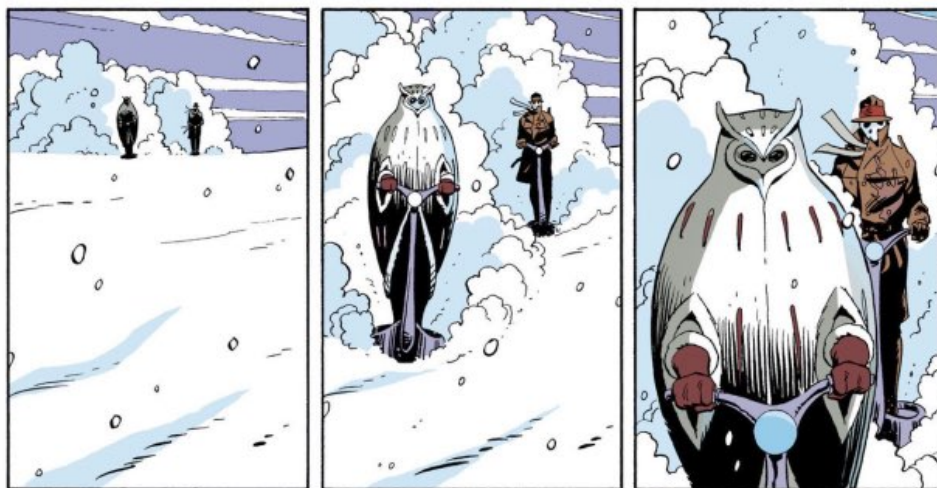
YEAH. IF WE GET BACK, I'M GOING TO SECURE THE SHIP ANYWAY.

THERE. OKAY, I GUESS THAT'S IT...



WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

27

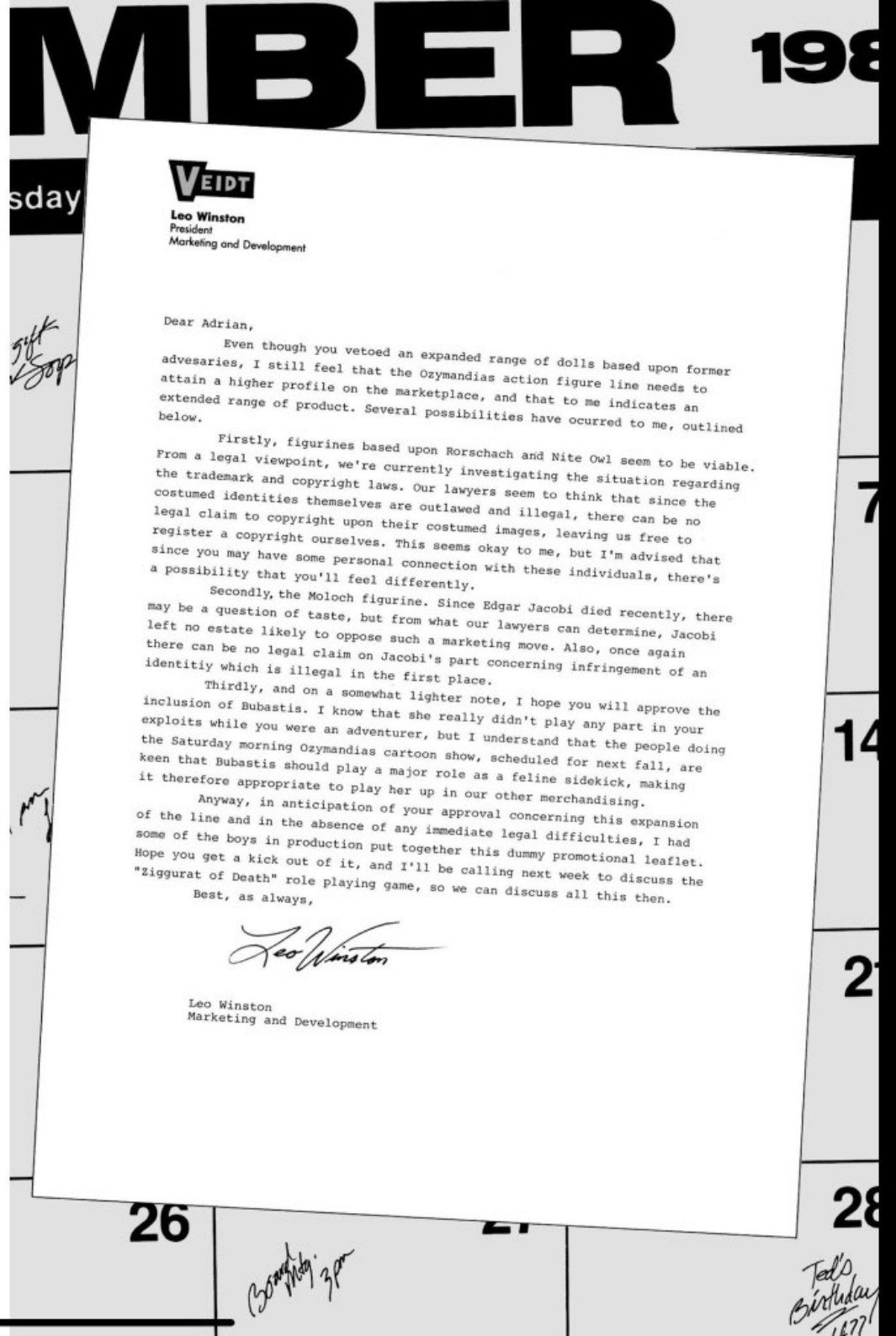


Outside in the distance a wild cat did growl, two riders were approaching, the wind began to howl.

— Bob Dylan



28



VEIDT

Leo Winston
President
Marketing and Development

Dear Adrian,

Even though you vetoed an expanded range of dolls based upon former adversaries, I still feel that the Ozymandias action figure line needs to attain a higher profile on the marketplace, and that to me indicates an extended range of product. Several possibilities have occurred to me, outlined below.

Firstly, figurines based upon Rorschach and Nite Owl seem to be viable. From a legal viewpoint, we're currently investigating the situation regarding the trademark and copyright laws. Our lawyers seem to think that since the costumed identities themselves are outlawed and illegal, there can be no legal claim to copyright upon their costumed images, leaving us free to register a copyright ourselves. This seems okay to me, but I'm advised that since you may have some personal connection with these individuals, there's a possibility that you'll feel differently.

Secondly, the Moloch figurine. Since Edgar Jacobi died recently, there may be a question of taste, but from what our lawyers can determine, Jacobi left no estate likely to oppose such a marketing move. Also, once again there can be no legal claim on Jacobi's part concerning infringement of an identity which is illegal in the first place.

Thirdly, and on a somewhat lighter note, I hope you will approve the inclusion of Bubastis. I know that she really didn't play any part in your exploits while you were an adventurer, but I understand that the people doing the Saturday morning Ozymandias cartoon show, scheduled for next fall, are keen that Bubastis should play a major role as a feline sidekick, making it therefore appropriate to play her up in our other merchandising.

Anyway, in anticipation of your approval concerning this expansion of the line and in the absence of any immediate legal difficulties, I had some of the boys in production put together this dummy promotional leaflet. Hope you get a kick out of it, and I'll be calling next week to discuss the "Ziggurat of Death" role playing game, so we can discuss all this then.

Best, as always,

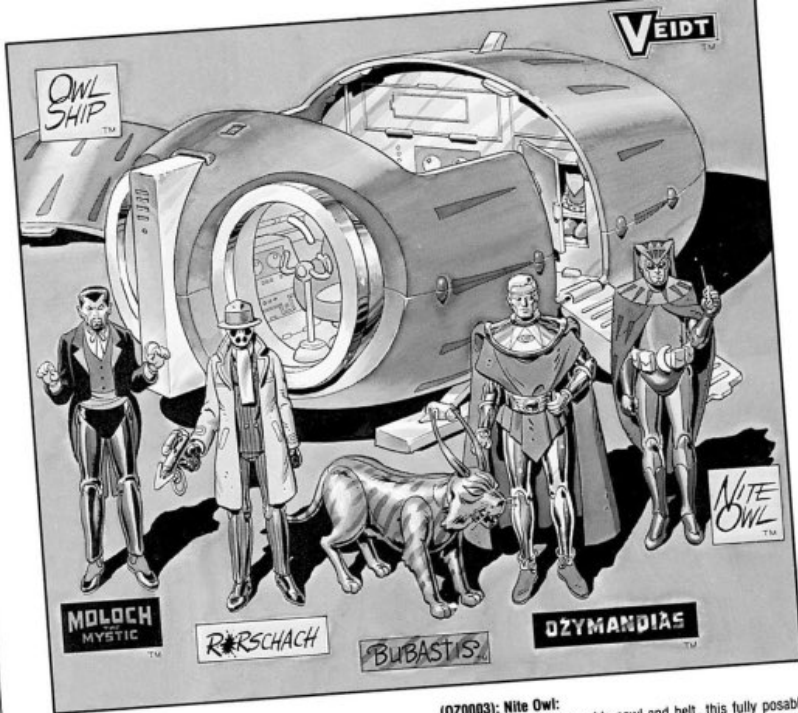
Leo Winston

Leo Winston
Marketing and Development

26

Boyd May 3pm

Ted's Birthday 1987



(OZ0001): Ozymandias:

This fully posable action doll, with removable cloak, tunic, and headband, is authentically molded to duplicate accurately the world-famous physique of athlete and former adventurer Adrian Veidt.

(OZ0002): Rorschach:

New Figure! Fully jointed and posable, this scale facsimile of the feared vigilante has a removable trenchcoat and hat.

(OZ0001): Rorschach's Grappling Gun:

New Accessory! This scale model of the famous gas-powered grappling gun is spring loaded, and will fire a miniature hook, along with a length of line. Safe for children over five.

(OZ0003): Nite Owl:

New Figure! With removable cowl and belt, this fully posable model of the former nocturnal adventurer offers hours of exciting fun.

(OZB002): The Owlship:

New Accessory! Painstakingly assembled from existing photographs of this famous craft, our Owlship has an accessible and fully detailed cabin area, built to scale with OZ0003. Fully lighted cabin! Batteries not included.

(OZ0004): Moloch:

New Figure! With detachable handgun and stage magician's jacket, now you can thrill to the misdeeds of the infamous crown prince of the underworld in the safety of your own home.

(OZB003): Bubastis:

New Accessory! Fully posable, see the giant mutant Lynx of Ozymandias. Now she can help Adrian Veidt fight evil and keep the innocent in your adventures, just like she does on TV.

VEIDT

Yes - Agree with you re: expansion of line. My study of recorded sales figures in a historical context suggests an increase in the sale of soldiers and action figures in times immediately prior to a period of anticipated war or bloodshed, and we should take advantage of this syndrome for as long as it lasts.

However, ethically very uncertain about Rorschach, Nite Owl and Moloch, plus accessories. Suggest instead we create costumed army of terrorists, introduce as main villains in Saturday cartoon, then duplicate here along with weapons, accessories and vehicles. More multicultural flavor will sell better. The American public has never really gone in for super-heroes in a big way. We'll discuss this next week.

Best, Adv Veidt

P.S. - loved Bubastis. As soon as they've made, I must have one to give to her. Regards to Josephine and your children.

VEIDT Adrian Veidt
President and C.E.O.

THE VEIDT METHOD

Hello. If you're reading THAT, it's because you think you're not and magnetism? Advanced mental we can offer you all these things YOU! More than just a bodybuilt capable young men and women difficult world that awaits in understand, and if you follow it as a whole

VEIDT Adrian Veidt
President and C.E.O.

Angela Neuberg
Director
Veidt Cosmetics & Toiletries

Dear Angela,

Enclosed you'll find a representative sample of our current magazine and billboard advertising, promoting Nostalgia.

The sexual imagery is obvious, the woman adjusting her stocking being overtly erotic, yet layered with enough romantic ambiance to avoid offense. In our choice of models for the Nostalgia ads I note that we have consistently chosen models with a slightly androgynous quality to their beauty, which I presume is to afford us a window into the gay marketplace, a tendency more pronounced in the ads for Nostalgia aftershave. This is all well and good, but it avoids the most significant element of the Nostalgia campaign:

In the soft focus imagery and romantic atmosphere, the advertisements conjure an idyllic picture of times past. It seems to me that the success of the campaign is directly linked to the state of global uncertainty that has endured for the past forty years or more. In an era of stress and anxiety, when the present seems unstable and the future unlikely, the natural response is to retreat and withdraw from reality, taking recourse either in fantasies of the future or in modified visions of a half-imagined past.

While this marketing strategy is certainly relevant and indeed successful in a context of social upheaval, I feel we must begin to take into account the fact that one way or another, such conditions cannot endure indefinitely. Simply put, the current circumstances out civilization finds itself immersed in will either lead to war, or they won't. If they lead to war, our best plans become irrelevant. If peace endures, I contend that a new surge of social optimism is likely, necessitating a new image for Veidt cosmetics, geared to a new consumer.

To this end, starting next year we will begin to phase out the Nostalgia line of ladies' and men's cosmetics, successful though they be, and replace them with a new line that better exemplifies the spirit of our anticipated target group. This new line is to be called the "Millenium" line. The imagery associated with it will be controversial and modern, projecting a vision of a technological Utopia, a whole new universe of sensations and pleasures that is just within reach.

I would like the new line to be ready for launch in the summer, and would appreciate it if some dummy ad copy and artwork could be assembled for my perusal and comment sometime before Christmas.

Anticipating your cooperation, and looking forward to working with you on this one. My fondest regards to Frank. We must have lunch soon.

Love,

Adv Veidt

Adrian Veidt



VEIDT Adrian Veidt
President and C.E.O.

Attached, manuscript for revised introduction,
updated "Veidt Method" self-improvement booklet.
Please forward to relevant department.
-V.

THE VEIDT METHOD: AN INTRODUCTION

Hello. If you're reading this, it's because you sent away for my course, and if you did THAT, it's because you think you need a change in your life. A better body? Increased confidence and magnetism? Advanced mental techniques that will help you at home or in business? Well, yes, we can offer you all these things... but in order to have and enjoy them, there's got to be a new YOU! More than just a bodybuilding course, the Veidt Method is designed to produce bright and capable young men and women who will be fit to inherit the challenging, promising, and often difficult world that awaits in our future. The course is designed to be easy to read and to understand, and if you follow it through, I can assure you that you and your friends will quickly notice the results as a whole new realm of ability and experience is opened up to you. Below is a brief summary of what you can expect to find in the later chapters of this volume.

UNDERSTANDING THE SELF

Both the body and the mind are parts of a biological robot that our immaterial souls inhabit. Like any machines, they can be tuned, improved and made to run more efficiently, as long as one understands the process for doing so. Through meditation and intellectual exercise, we may come to use our minds in ways that we never thought possible. In this first chapter of our manual we will discuss lateral thinking, Zen meditation, and the power of dreaming and the subconscious, along with other useful techniques for the advancement of the mind and intellect. Though not a religion, there are powerful spiritual disciplines behind the Veidt Method that must be understood if the student is to proceed.

HEALTH AND THE BODY

In our second chapter, we explore the connection between body and mind, and learn how this helps us to conquer pain and illness without recourse to drugs and medicines. We will show you, step by step, a number of techniques for focusing the mind's healing power upon any ailing part of the body. In relation to this, we also examine how the actions of the body can be used to aid and focus the mind, taking into account Yogic doctrines and martial training.

CREATING A NEW YOU

Our third and longest chapter presents a carefully coordinated series of physical and

So, in conclusion, welcome to the Veidt Method for physical fitness and self-improvement, a step by step guide to realizing exciting potentials latent within every one of us. I hope that you'll be intrigued by what you find within, and I know that if you persevere you'll walk away from this book a different person.

There's a bright new world just around the corner. It's going to need heroes just as badly as this one does, and one of them could be YOU!

All best wishes and encouragement,

Adrian Veidt

Adrian Veidt

intellectual exercise systems which, if followed correctly, can turn YOU into a superhuman, fully in charge of your own destiny. All that is required is the desire for perfection and the will to achieve it. No special equipment or other hidden cash extras are necessary. The Veidt Method paves the way for a bright and hopeful future in which anyone can be a hero.

YOU AND THE WORLD

Just as you are a whole organic being, complete unto yourself, so are you also part of a larger social organism consisting of the people around you, the people you work with, and ultimately the whole world. When you and yourself are strong and healthy in mind and body, you will want to react in a healthy and positive way to the world around you, changing it for the better if you are able, and improving the lot of both yourself and your fellow man. Our final chapter will help you to understand the organism that is the world, and your part in it. You will learn that one can either surrender responsibility for one's actions to the rest of the social organism, to be pulled this way and that by society's predominating tensions, or that one can take control by flexing the muscles of the will common to us all, affecting our environment positively and responsibly.

