

**PAGE 1 - PANELS: 3 -HORIZONTAL PANELS
THE CHRONICLES OF HELLFIRE**

PANEL 1 - COMPLETE DARKNESS AND A CAPTION INDICATING SOMETHING BIG IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN. ROOM FOR TITLE AND CREDITS.

CAPTION: 1: IT'S HAPPENING

PANEL 2 - TWO BURNING ORANGE EYES WITH NO IRISES, PUPILS, OR WHITES, STARE RIGHT OUT OF THE DARKNESS OF THE PAGE AT THE READER. FURTHER CAPTION ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

CAPTION: 2: HE'S LOOSE IN TOWN AGAIN!

PANEL 3 - THE FIRST VISION OF THE RELUCTANT HERO WHO WILL ONE DAY TAKE THE NAME HELLFIRE FROM THE SHOULDERS UP. A BLACK HOODED CLOAK THAT COVERS HIS HEAD AND HAS A SILVER OAK TREE PIN THAT HOLDS THE HOOD OUT OF HIS EYES, WHICH BURN FROM HIS UNMARKED CAUCASIAN FACE. THE HANDLE OF A BROADSWORD STRAPPED TO HIS BACK STICKS OUT FROM UNDER THE CLOAK. STALACTITES AND STALAGMITES MAY BE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND INDICATING HE IS IN A CAVERN OF SOME KIND.

CAPTION: 3: I THOUGHT CAMPING OUT ON THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER WOULD PUT ME BETWEEN HIM AND THEM!

PAGE 2 - PANELS: 4 - ONE TALL VERTICAL PANEL, THREE STACKED

PANEL 1 - THE FIRST HEAD TO TOE VISION OF THE THE HOODED MAN TAKES UP THE ENTIRE LEFT SIDE OF THE PAGE AS HE STRIDES OUT OF THE PANEL TOWARD THE READER. HE WEARS BLACK COMBAT BOOTS WITH BUCKLES UP THE SIDE AND METAL PLATES ON THE TOES AND HEELS, BLACK PANTS GIRDED BY A BLACK LEATHER BELT JOINED BY A SILVER OAK TREE BUCKLE AND COVERED WITH LEATHER POUCHES, AND ON HIS LONG SLEEVED BLACK SHIRT IS A BURNING BLACK OAK TREE. BLACK FINGERLESS GAUNTLETS THAT REACH BACK TO MID-FOREARM COMPLETE THE LOOK. AGAIN, CAVERN FORMATIONS MAY BE SEEN BEHIND HIM.

CAPTION: 1: AND IT DOES...AT LEAST HALF THE TIME.

PANEL 2 - PROFILE OF THE HOODED MAN.

CAPTION: 2: I HATE WHEN HE GETS BY ME. IT MEANS SOME POOR PERSON WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH WHAT HE DOES TO THEM FOR YEARS TO COME.

PANEL 3 - HE LAYS DOWN ON THE CAVERN FLOOR.

CAPTION: 3: AS USUAL I HAVE TO PUT MYSELF TO SLEEP AND FIGHT HIM ON THE DREAM PLANE

PANEL 4 - HE FALLS RIGHT TO SLEEP, AND ARISES IN THE DREAM PLANE.

CAPTION: 4: TIME TO TAKE A NAP.

PAGE 3 - PANELS: 7 - TWO HORIZONTAL PANELS BY THREE VERTICAL ONES WITH ONE LONG ONE AT THE BOTTOM

PANEL 1 - THE TRANSPARENT HOODED MAN FLOATS ABOUT 100 FEET IN THE AIR ABOVE A ROAD SIGN THAT SAYS WELCOME TO RIVERBEND, MO.

CAPTION: 1: FORTUNATELY, HE SEEMS TO BE BOUND BY THE BORDERS OF THIS COUNTY. I CAN'T IMAGINE HAVING TO CHASE HIM ALL OVER THE PLANET.

PANEL 2 - HE FLOATS AT ABOUT THE SAME HEIGHT OVER A COLLEGE CAMPUS BUT SENSES NOTHING.

CAPTION: 2: HM. HE'S NOT ON THE CAMPUS...

PANEL 3 - HE DOES THE SAME OVER THE STATE PRISON WITH THE SAME RESULTS.

CAPTION: 3: ...NOR THE STATE PRISON...

PANEL 4 - SAME PROCEDURE AT THE STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL.

CAPTION: 4: ...NOT EVEN THE MENTAL HOSPITAL. THOSE ARE HIS USUAL TARGETS...

PANEL 5 - BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE HOODED MAN FLOATING ABOVE A COMMON SUBURBAN STREET.

CAPTION: 5: HE'S CLOSE. I CAN FEEL HIM.

PANEL 6 - HE POINTS TO A PARTICULAR HOME.

CAPTION: 6: THERE!

CAPTION: 7: OF COURSE! THAT KID LOST THE REGIONAL WRESTLING COMPETITION. HIS PARENTS PROBABLY HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO HIM SINCE.

PANEL 7 - HE PASSES THROUGH GATHERING WALL OF THE HOME WHERE HE FINDS A LOCAL STAR ATHLETE HAVING A NIGHTMARE ABOUT BEING SCOLDED BY HIS MOTHER WHILE BEING WHIPPED BY HIS FATHER. THE BELT THE FATHER USES CAUSES CUTS THAT BLEED ON THE BOYS BODY.

CAPTION: 8: OH GOD!

9 MOTHER:
YOU JUST CAN'T STOP EMBARRASSING US, CAN YOU.

SFX: 10. (SEE THROUGH): KRAK

PAGE 4 - PANELS: 5 - 2X2 PANEL GRID WITH ONE LONG ONE AT THE BOTTOM

PANEL 1 - THE HOODED MAN CATCHES THE FATHERS BELT IN HIS HAND.

CAPTION: 1: THIS ENDS NOW!

SFX: 2. SNAP

PANEL 2 - THE BOY AWAKENS SCREAMING IN BLOODSTAINED SHEETS.

3 BOY:
AAAAAAAAAAAAH

PANEL 3 - THE FATHER'S IMAGE TO MELT INTO AN OLD MAN DRESSED AS A FARMER WITH WORK BOOTS, OVERALLS, A RED SHIRT, AND STRAW HAT. ALL OF THESE AND AND HIS FACE ARE ALL CRISS-CROSSED WITH SLASHES THROUGH WHICH ARE VISIBLE THE UNDERLYING ORGANS AND MUSCLES. HIS GLOVES ARE COVERED WITH SPINES LIKE CACTI. HE ALSO HAS SOMETHING STRAPPED TO HIS BACK.

4 OLD MAN:
BOY?!

PANEL 4 - CLOSEUP OF THE HOODED MAN.

5 HOODED MAN:
OLD MAN.

PANEL 5 - THE TWO SIMULTANEOUSLY DRAW THEIR WEAPONS. THE OLD MAN PULLS OFF HIS BACK A SCYTHER WITH A LONG SAW BLADE ATTACHED TO THE SNATH AND A SECOND SCYTHER BLADE ATTACHED AT THE END GRIP. THE TWO SCYTHER BLADES SNAP OUT LIKE SWITCHBLADES AS THE HOODED MAN PULLS HIS BROADSWORD.

SFX: 6. SHHHK

SFX: 7. SNAP SNAP

PAGE 5 - PANELS: 9 - NINE PANEL (3X3) GRID WITHOUT BORDERS. SILHOUETTES OF THE TWO COMBATANTS CLASH OVER A BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE TOWN. THE MISSOURI RIVER FLOWS DOWN THE WESTERN SIDE AND DOCKS LINE THE BANK. THE STATE PRISON SQUATS AT THE CITY'S NORTHWEST CORNER BY THE RIVER. SUBURBS LINE THE CITY'S NORTHERN EDGE. THE INTERSTATE ENTERS THE TOWN HERE AND RUNS SOUTHWARD ALMOST BISECTING THE CITY. IT SPLITS IN TWO DIRECTIONS NEAR THE CENTER OF TOWN AND GOES WEST AND SOUTH. THE STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL LOOMS ON A CLIFF ABOVE THE TOWN ON THE CITY'S NORTHEASTERN CORNER. SUBURBS SURROUNDED BY FARM FIELDS DOMINATE THE EASTERN SIDE. THEY SEEM TO STOP JUST AS THEY REACH THE SOUTHEASTERN CORNER WHICH IS ALL FIELDS AND GRASSLANDS THROUGH WHICH A RAILROAD RUNS EAST TO WEST PAST AN OLD RUINED GRAIN ELEVATOR, THROUGH THE TOWN AND OVER THE RIVER. MORE SUBURBS FILL THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF TOWN AND END AT THE LOCAL COLLEGE CAMPUS WHICH STOPS AT THE RIVER. ALL THE SUBURBS HAVE LOCAL CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS. THE CENTRAL PART OF TOWN IS MARKED BY GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, A CENTRAL PARK, A BANK BUILDING AND SOME OFFICE BUILDINGS. NONE OF THESE BUILDINGS ARE HIGHER THAN SIX STORIES.

PANEL 1 - (UPPER LEFT)THE TWO CLASH MIGHTILY WITH THEIR WEAPONS.

SFX: 1. KRANG

PANEL 2 - (UPPER MIDDLE)THE HOODED MAN FRONT SNAP KICKS THE OLD MAN UNDER THE CHIN AND KNOCKS A HIM BACK INTO-

SFX: 2. WHAK

PANEL 3 - (UPPER RIGHT)THE HOODED MAN ATTACKS THE OLD MAN AND THEY FALL INTO THE PANEL BELOW.

PANEL 4 - (CENTRAL RIGHT) THEY LAND ON THEIR FEET READY TO STRIKE.

PANEL 5 - (CENTRAL MIDDLE)THE OLD MAN LET'S HIS WEAPON FLY OUT TO TAKE THE HOODED MAN'S HEAD OFF, BUT THE HOODED MAN DUCKS BENEATH IT AND ROLLS TOWARD THE OLD MAN.

SFX: 3. WHOOSH

PANEL 6 - (CENTRAL LEFT) THE HOODED MAN SEIZES THE OLD MAN BY THE WRIST AND PULLS HIM DOWN INTO A CORNER REVERSAL, FLIPPING THEM BOTH DOWN INTO-

PANEL 7 - (LOWER LEFT) THE HOODED MAN FALLS WITH HIS SWORD POINTED DOWN TOWARD THE SUPINE OLD MAN, BUT THE OLD MAN ROLLS OUT OF THE WAY.

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CONTINUED: (6)

PANEL 8 - (LOWER MIDDLE)THE TWO CLASH MIGHTILY WITH THEIR WEAPONS AGAIN.

SFX: 4. CLANK

PANEL 9 - (LOWER RIGHT)THE OLD MAN LET'S HIS WEAPON FLY OUT AGAIN BUT THIS TIME, THE HOODED MAN LEAPS OVER IT AND-

SFX: 5. WHOOSH

PAGE 6 - PANELS: 10 -A NINE PANEL (3X3) GRID. WITH ONE LONG TENTH ONE ON THE BOTTOM

PANEL 1 - THE HOODED MAN BRINGS HIS SWORD DOWN AND CLEAVES THE OLD MAN IN TWO FROM SKULL TO NAVEL.

SFX: 1. SHLAKK

PANEL 2 - HE THEN RELEASES HIS BROADSWORD WHICH HANGS FROM HIS WRIST BY A LINE SO HE WON'T LOSE IT, AND TEARS INTO THE OLD MAN WITH HIS BARE HANDS. THE OLD MAN'S WEAPON POKES THROUGH THE HOODED MAN'S SHIRT, SCRAPING AGAINST THE BREASTPLATE BENEATH.

SFX: 2. SHHHNK

PANEL 3 - HE TEARS OUT ORGANS, ENTRAILS, AND BONES FROM THE OLD MAN IN A FRENZY.

SFX: 3. RIP RIP RIP

PANEL 4 - THE OLD MAN IS NOTHING MORE THAN A GOREY MESS ON THE FLOOR

**4 HALF THE OLD MAN'S SKULL
SEE YOU NEXT TIME**

PANEL 5 - THE OLD MAN'S REMAINS DISSIPATE INTO THE ETHER LEAVING ONLY A RUSTY SICKLE BEHIND, WHICH HIS OPPONENT QUICKLY SEIZES.

SFX: SSSSSSS

PANEL 6 - THE HOODED MAN WAKES UP IN THE CAVERN FROM BEFORE WITH THE SICKLE IN ONE HAND AND HIS BROADSWORD IN THE OTHER.

PANEL 7 - THE HOODED MAN IS NEXT SEEN FLOATING HIGH ABOVE THE FIELDS JUST OUTSIDE OF TOWN. HE PASSES OVER AN AMBULANCE RACING TO THE HOSPITAL WITH SIRENS BLARING AND LIGHTS FLASHING, PRESUMABLY CARRYING THE OLD MAN'S VICTIM.

PANEL 8 - THE HOODED MAN LANDS ATOP A TALL BUILDING WALL WITH THE WORDS 'RIVERBEND IRON' PAINTED ON THEM.

PANEL 9 - INSIDE HE CASTS THE SICKLE INTO FURNACE TRIGGERING A TERRIBLE SCREAM ONLY HE CAN HEAR.

SFX: AAAAAAAAAAAAH

PANEL 10 - THE HOODED MAN WALKS AWAY FROM THE FURNACE.

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CONTINUED: (8)

CAPTION:

7: YEAH. NEXT TIME.

PAGE 7 - PANELS: 1 SPLASH PAGE

PANEL 1 - SPLASH: THE HOODED MAN HAS RETURNED TO THE CAVE. HE SITS AT A WOODEN DESK WITH HIS HOOD DOWN. HIS EYES STILL GLOW ORANGE AND HE WEARS HIS SHORT WHITE HAIR IN A SIMPLE PART. HE RECLINES WITH HIS RIGHT LEG CROSSED OVER HIS LEFT. HIS HOOD AND SWORD ARE THE ONLY THINGS HE HAS REMOVED. IN FRONT OF HIM, ON THE DESK IS A GIANT BOOK OPEN TO A PAGE IN IT'S MIDDLE. A FIREBALL ATTACHED TO NOTHING ABOUT THE SIZE OF AN APPLE FLOATS A FOOT ABOVE THE PAGE PROVIDING LIGHT. IT'S THE ONLY THING BRIGHTER THAN HIS GLOWING EYES. A PEN WITH NOTHING HOLDING IT SCRATCHES ACROSS THE PAGE.

SFX: 1. SCRTCH SCRTCH

CAPTION:

2:AND SO ENDED MY MOST RECENT CLASH WITH THE OLD MAN.

PAGE 8 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1 - VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE BOOK. THE PEN HAS MOVED TO THE SIDE AND THE PAGES HAVE ALL FLIPPED TO THE LEFT AND THE BLANK FIRST PAGE IS FACE UP. THE HOODED MAN MAY BE SEEN BEHIND.

CAPTION: 1. IT'S TIME I STARTED

PANEL 2 - VIEW FROM OVERHEAD. THE PEN SCRATCHES AS IT WRITES IN ELEGANT SCRIPT THE WORDS IN THE CAPTIONS. PICTURES MAGICALLY APPEAR OCCASIONALLY.

SFX: 2. SCRTCH SCRTCH

CAPTION: 3. THE TIME HAS COME TO BEGIN THE CHRONICLE OF THE LONG JOURNEY THAT BEGAN YEARS AGO AND MILES FROM HERE AND HAS CULMINATED HERE AND NOW.

PANEL 3 - HEAD SHOT OF THE MAN LOOKING GRIM FACED.

CAPTION: 4. WITH ME.

PANEL 4 - PAGE WIDE SHOT OF THE PEN WRITING ON THE PAGE THE TEXT BELOW IN ELEGANT SCRIPT

SFX: 5. SCRTCH SCRTCH

CAPTION: THE JOURNEY BEGAN WITH MY ... PREDECESSOR.

PANEL 5 - HEAD SHOT OF MAN WITH HIS HAND OVER HIS MOUTH THOUGHTFULLY.

CAPTION: 5. HE HAD A NAME BUT I HAVE DECIDED NOT TO RECORD IT AS NAMES HAVE POWER IN THE CIRCLES I MOVE IN. I SHALL REFER TO HIM HEREAFTER ONLY AS THE KID.

PAGE 9 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1 - SPLASH: VIEW FROM BEHIND THE MAN SITTING IN HIS CHAIR. HIS HOOD HANGS BACK OVER THE CHAIR. HIS SWORD LEANS AGAINST THE ARM OF THE CHAIR. OVER HIS SHOULDER MAY BE SEEN THE FLOATING PEN WRITING AT THE TOP OF THE RIGHT PAGE OF THE OPEN BOOK NEXT TO A PICTURE IN THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER.

PANEL 2 - UPPER LEFT CORNER - CLOSE UP PICTURE OF THE KID. 14 YEARS OLD, HAIR IN BANGS, BIG TOOTHY SMILE, CARTOON CHARACTER ON SHIRT. (SEE PICTURE)

**CAPTION:**

1. THE KID WAS BORN AND RAISED IN THE SUBURBS OF THE AMERICAN MIDWEST AND LED WHAT COULD BE CONSIDERED A FAIRLY PLEASANT LIFE.

PANEL 3 - UPPER RIGHT CORNER - SEARS GROUP PICTURE OF THE KID, HIS PARENTS, HIS OLDER SISTER, AND HIS YOUNGER SISTER HOLDING SHIH TZU

CAPTION:

2. HIS PARENTS WERE MIDDLE CLASS, COLLEGE EDUCATED, NO SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR CHILD ABUSE, HE COULD HAVE DONE MUCH WORSE.

PANEL 4 - MIDDLE RIGHT SIDE - CLOSEUP OF THE KID'S FACE

CAPTION:

3. STILL NO FAMILY DOES EVERYTHING RIGHT AND WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASILY FORGETTABLE CHILDHOOD MOMENTS BECAME INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE WHICH HAVE SCARRED THE SOULS OF BOTH HIM AND ME.

PANEL 5 - LOWER RIGHT CORNER - CLOSEUP OF THE MAN'S BURNING ORANGE EYES

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CONTINUED: (12)

CAPTION:

4. IT BEGAN WHEN HE WAS FOURTEEN, AFTER HIS FRESHMAN YEAR.

PAGE 10 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1 - A VOLVO 240 SEDAN (SEE PICTURE) DRIVES THROUGH THE GATES OF A COA (KOA) CAMPGROUND. THE KID IS VISIBLE IN THE PASSENGER SIDE BACK SEAT. IT BLOWS UP GRAVEL DUST IN FRONT OF A SIGN THAT READS 'RIVERBEND COA' (SEE 2ND PICTURE)

**CAPTION:**

1. ON ONE OF THE FAMILY'S USUAL SUMMERTIME TRIPS, THEY HEADED SOUTH FROM THEIR IOWA HOME INTO THE STATE OF MISSOURI TOWARD AN AMUSEMENT PARK CALLED PLANET FUN AND CAMPED FOR A NIGHT IN THE TOWN OF RIVERBEND.

PANEL 2 - THE KID WALKS AWAY FROM HIS FAMILY CAMPSITE. BEHIND HIM, THE VOLVO IS PARKED NEXT TO THE END OF A PICNIC TABLE, A LARGE TENT (SEE PICTURE) IS PITCHED AT THE OTHER END. DAD IS READING THE PAPER, BIG SIS IS READING A BOOK, MOM IS REARRANGING THE COOLER AND LITTLE SIS CHASES SHIH TZU PANEL RIGHT SMILING.

CAPTION:

2. AFTER CAMP WAS SET UP, THE KID DID WHAT HE USUALLY DID AT CAMPGROUNDS IN OTHER STATES.

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CONTINUED: (14)

PANEL 3 - FROM BEHIND, THE KID WALKS TOWARD THE COA CAMP STORE (SEE PICTURE)



CAPTION:

3. HE WENT TO THE CAMP STORE.

PANEL 4 - THE KID STANDS NEXT TO A ROTATING COMIC RACK IN AN AISLE IN THE STORE (SEE PICTURE)

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CAPTION:

4. ONE OF THE SMALLER PLEASURES HE GOT WHILE CAMPING WITH HIS FAMILY WAS GOING TO THE CAMP'S STORE. HE WOULD OFTEN FIND THINGS THERE THAT HE COULDN'T GET AT HOME. SNACKS, CANDY, COMIC BOOKS, AND MORE, MANY OF WHICH WOULD BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE THEY WERE IN A DIFFERENT STATE.

PANEL 5 - CLOSE UP OF THE KID'S EYES WHICH ARE WIDE.

CAPTION:

5. THIS TIME THOUGH, HE FOUND SOMETHING HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE WAS LOOKING FOR.

PAGE 11 - PANELS: 6

PANEL 1 - HEAVY METAL ROCKER/GOTH CHICK WITH BIG GREEN KNOWLEDGE BUMP HAIRSTYLE (SEE PICTURES) REACHES FOR SOMETHING ON THE TOP SHELF.



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CAPTION:

1. HE WOULD NOT LEARN THE GIRL'S NAME UNTIL MUCH LATER.

PANEL 2 - CLOSE UP OF THE GIRL'S HEAD. SHE HAS WICKED CLOSE MOUTH SMILE AND HER EYES ARE POINTED IN THE DIRECTION OF THE KID WHO CAN BE SEEN ACROSS THE STORE BEHIND HER. SHE KNOWS HE'S LOOKING.

CAPTION:

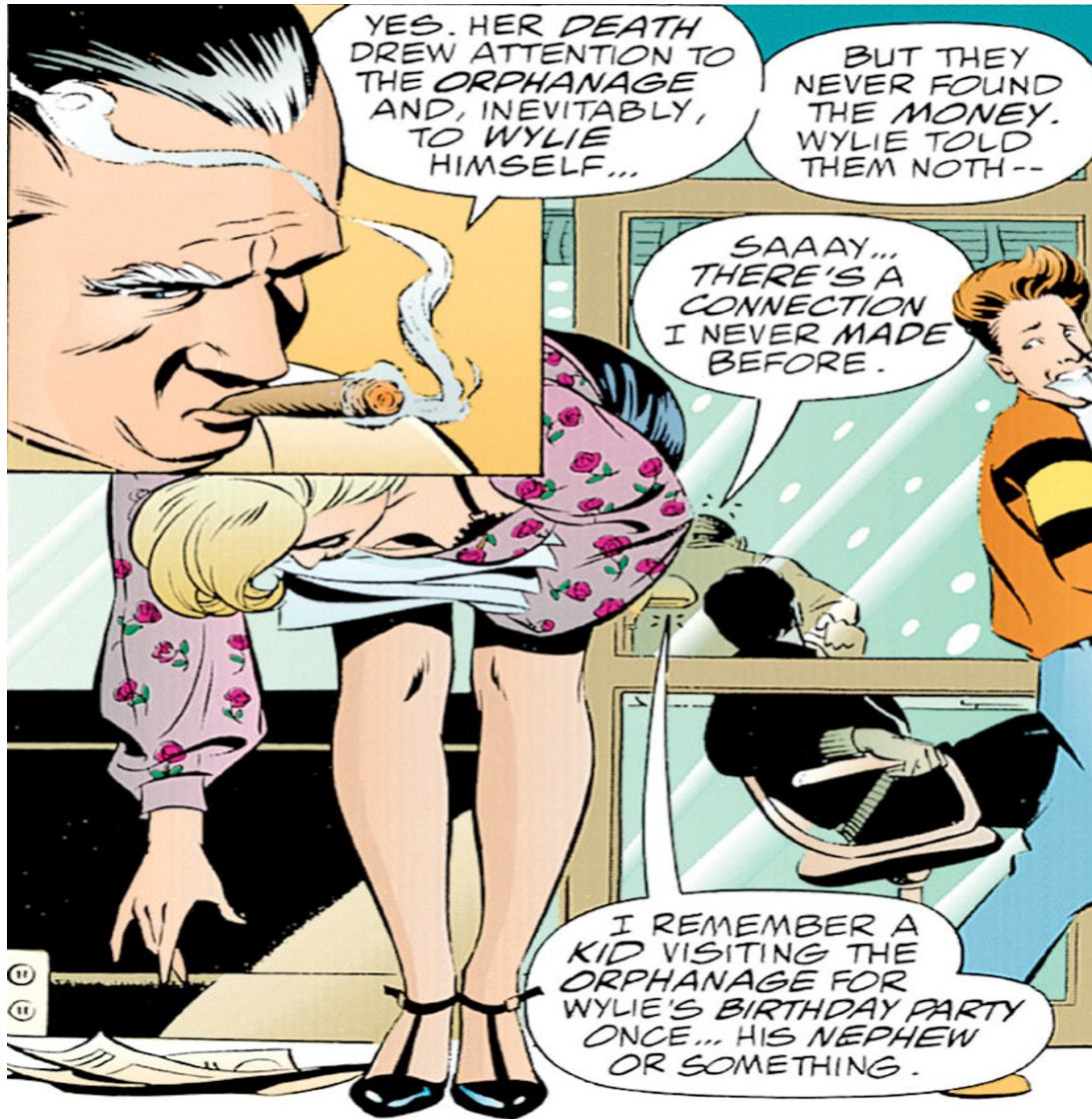
2. SHE WAS A TYPICAL HIGH SCHOOL BAD GIRL.

PANEL 3 - SHE BENDS OVER TO PICK SOMETHING UP AND LETS HIM ALMOST LOOK UP HER SKIRT. (SEE ATTACHED PAGE) THE KIDS EYES WIDEN EVEN MORE AND HE BITES HIS LIP.

CAPTION:

3. EVERY MOTHER'S NIGHTMARE, EVERY SCHOOLBOY'S DREAM, AND THE KID WAS VERY MUCH A SCHOOLBOY.

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PANEL 4 - CLOSEUP OF THE GIRL'S RIGHT PROFILE WHILE STILL BENT OVER. SMILES AND WINKS.

CONTINUED: (21)

CAPTION: 4. SHE'D KNOWN HE'D BEEN WATCHING ALL ALONG.

PANEL 5 - THE KID STILL STANDS NEXT TO THE COMIC RACK AS SHE EXITS THE STORE.

CAPTION: 5. SHE EVEN USED HIS DISTRACTION TO SNEAK A BOTTLE OF BOOZE OUT OF THE STORE.

PANEL 6 - THE KID STILL STANDS EXACTLY WHERE HE WAS BEFORE.

CAPTION: 6. THE KID HAD NO IDEA HOW LONG HE STOOD THERE STARING AT THE PLACE WHERE SHE LEFT THE STORE.

PAGE 12 - PANELS: 6

PANEL 1 - OUTSIDE. THE KID WALKS PANEL FORWARD, AWAY FROM THE CAMP STORE.

CAPTION: 1. THE KID DECIDED TO TRY AND FIND HER AGAIN.

PANEL 2 - THE KID LOOKS TO THE LEFT AND THE STORE IS SMALLER IN THE DISTANCE BEHIND HIM.

CAPTION: 2. HE WASN'T GOING TO TALK TO HER OR EVEN APPROACH HER. HE WAS TOO SHY.

PANEL 3 - THE KID IS FURTHER DOWN THE LANE NOW AND SURROUNDED BY CAMPSITES BUT THE STORE IS STILL FAR IN THE BACKGROUND. HE LOOKS TO THE RIGHT NOW.

CAPTION: 3. BUT HE WAS STILL ENOUGH OF A HORMONAL TEENAGER TO WANT ANOTHER LOOK.

PANEL 4 - IT'S AFTER DARK. THE KID IS STILL WALKING FORWARD DOWN THE LANE SURROUNDED BY CAMPSITES LIT BY LANTERNS.

CAPTION: 4. HE LOOKED UNTIL DARK BUT DIDN'T HAVE ANY LUCK.

PANEL 5 - THE KID RETURNS TO THE FAMILY CAMPSITE. EVERYONE'S PLAYING CARDS AROUND A LANTERN.

CAPTION: 5. HE RETURNED TO THE CAMPSITE IN TIME FOR BED. TIMES WERE DIFFERENT THEN. IT WASN'T SO STRANGE FOR A KID TO WANDER AROUND A CAMPGROUND.

PANEL 6 - THE FAMILY LAYS IN THEIR SLEEPING BAGS. R TO L - DAD BY THE DOOR, THEN MOM, BIG SIS, LITTLE SIS WITH THE DOG BY HER HEAD, THEN THE KID AT THE BACK BY THE WINDOW WITH EYES NOTICABLY OPEN.

CAPTION: 6. PUBERTY TENDED TO HIT THE KIDS IN HIS FAMILY RATHER HARD. THE KID ALWAYS FELT UNABLE TO GO TO THEM ABOUT GIRLS. THE SUBJECT RARELY CAME UP ANYWAY.

PAGE 13 - PANELS: 6

PANEL 1 - SHOT OF THE KID LYING IN HIS SLEEPING BAG FROM THE WAIST UP. HE'S STILL AWAKE.

CAPTION: 1. THIS WAS HARDLY THE KID'S FIRST CRUSH, SO HE DID WHAT HE ALWAYS DID, HE FANTASIZED ABOUT HER.

PANEL 2 - SAME SHOT BUT THE KID'S ASLEEP.

CAPTION: 2. AT LEAST UNTIL HE FELL ASLEEP.

PANEL 3 - THE KID LIES ON COMPLETE DARKNESS.

CAPTION: 3. AND THE DREAMS BEGAN.

PANEL 4 - THE KID WALKS THROUGH THE DARK CAMPGROUND AGAIN. THE SKY IS OVERCAST AND THE GROUND OBSCURED BY MIST. HE'S BACK IN HIS CLOTHES.

CAPTION: 4. THE KID FOUND HIMSELF WANDERING THROUGH THE CAMPGROUND AGAIN.

PANEL 5 - CLOSE UP OF THE KID LOOKING RIGHT.

CAPTION: 5. THERE WAS NO MOON OR STARS.

PANEL 6 - CLOSEUP OF THE KID LOOKING LEFT.

CAPTION: 6. AND THE WIND SEEMED TO CALL HIS NAME.

PAGE 14 - PANELS: 6**PANEL 1 - THE GIRL COMES OUT OF THE MIST LOOKING TERRIFIED.**

CAPTION: 1. THE GIRL CAME OUT OF THE MIST TERRIFIED AND BEGGING FOR HELP.

PANEL 2 - HER HANDS ARE ON THE KID'S SHOULDERS.

CAPTION: 2. 'HE'S AFTER ME!' SHE PLEADED, 'PLEASE HELP ME!'

PANEL 3 - THE KID TAKES HER HAND AND BEGINS LEADING HER THROUGH THE FOG. (SEE PICTURE ON LEFT)

CAPTION: 3. THE KID TOOK HER HAND AND BEGAN TO LEAD HER THROUGH THE FOG.

PANEL 4 - THE TWO RUN HAND IN HAND THROUGH THE FOG. (SEE PICTURE ON RIGHT)

CAPTION: 4. THE NOISES AND VOICES IN THE FOG GOT THEM RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES.

PANEL 5 - THEY RUN BENEATH A GNARLED DEAD TREE WITH A FACE THAT RESEMBLES THE OLD MAN ON THE TRUNK AND A BRANCH THAT RESEMBLES A CLAW.

CAPTION: 5. THEY RAN LIKE THERE WERE MONSTERS BEHIND THEM.

PANEL 6 - THE BRANCH-CLAW HAS AHOLD OF THE KID BY HIS SHIRT AND HAS LIFTED HIM OFF HIS FEET, UP TO FACE THE OLD MAN'S FACE ON THE TRUNK. THE KID'S IN HIS PAJAMAS AGAIN.

CAPTION: 6. THE MONSTER WAS IN FRONT OF THEM.

PAGE 15 - PANELS: 6

PANEL 1 - MEDIUM CLOSEUP OF THE OLD MAN/TREE HOLDING THE TERRIFIED KID. THE BRANCH/CLAW HAS SPROUTED THORNS THAT STAB INTO THE KID.

CAPTION: 1. 'NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY, BOY!' GROWLED THE OLD MAN, 'DIDN'T YER MAMA EVER TEACH YOU NOT TO STARE AT THE GIRLIES.'

PANEL 2 -MEDIUM SHOT OF THE GIRL, SMILING LUSTILY (SEE FIRST PICTURE OF HER).

CAPTION: 2. 'NOT HIM!' LAUGHED THE GIRL, 'HE'S A FAG!'

PANEL 3 - THE OLD MAN IS NO LONGER MERGED WITH THE TREE. HE HAS STEPPED OUT OF IT AND IS DRESSED AS HE WAS BEFORE. THE THORNS ON THE CLAW HAVE CHANGED INTO LONG NEEDLES THAT ARE STILL STABBING INTO THE KID.

CAPTION: 3. 'THAT TRUE, BOY?' ASKED THE OLD MAN, 'YOU NOTHING BUT A LITTLE PANSEY-ASS?'

PANEL 4 - THE KID THRASHES LIKE A FISH ON A HOOK.

CAPTION: 4. THE KID STARTED THRASHING LIKE FISH ON A HOOK.

PANEL 5 - DIFFERENT SHOT OF THE KID THRASHING.

CAPTION: 5. THEN THE KID DID SOMETHING THAT HE WOULD BE DOING FOR YEARS TO COME.

PANEL 6 - THE KID SHOOTS UP FROM HIS SLEEPING POSITION IN THE TENT WITH A TERRIFIED LOOK. (SEE PICTURE BUT KEEP HANDS DOWN) HIS PAJAMA TOP IS RIPPED OPEN.



SFX: 6. GASP

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CONTINUED: (26)

CAPTION:

7. HE BROKE THE OLD MAN'S HOLD ON HIM...IF
ONLY BRIEFLY.

PAGE 16 - PANELS: 6**PANEL 1 - CLOSEUP OF THE KID'S TERRIFIED FACE. (SEE PICTURE)**CAPTION: 1. IT DIDN'T LAST LONG THOUGH.**PANEL 2 - THE GIRL CRAWLS TOWARD HIM ACROSS HIS SLEEPING BAG WITH A HUNGRY SMILE ON HER FACE. (SEE FIRST PICTURE OF HER)**CAPTION: 2. THE GIRL WAS SOMEHOW AT THE FOOT OF HIS SLEEPING BAG CRAWLING TOWARD HIM.**PANEL 3 - CLOSEUP OF THE GIRL LICKING HER LIPS.**CAPTION: 3. 'COME ON.' SHE WHISPERED, 'DON'T YOU WANT SOME?'**PANEL 4 - SIDE VIEW OF BOTH. THE KID LOOKS DOWN AT THE GIRL 'S LEFT HAND ON HIS SLEEPING BAG RIGHT BETWEEN HIS LEGS.**CAPTION: 4. 'I WANT SOME. I WANT IT BAD.' SHE CONTINUED.**PANEL 5 - MEDIUM VIEW OF THE GIRL WITH HER RIGHT HAND RAISED. NEEDLES HAVE GROWN THROUGH HER HAND AND BLOOD DRIPS FROM THE HOLES IN HER HAND. HER FACE, THOUGH, IS EVILLY GLEEFUL AND HER TONGUE IS SUDDENLY TWO FEET LONG AND WAVING.**SFX: 5. HAW! HAW! HAW!

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CAPTION: 6. THEN THE KID HEARD THE OLD MAN'S TERRIBLE
LAUGH FOR THE FIRST TIME.

**PANEL 6- SIDE VIEW OF THE TWO. THE GIRL'S MOVING TOWARD THE KID
WITH THE NEEDLES ON HER HAND. THE KID'S TERRIFIED AND CRINGES AS
THE TONGUE LICKS HIS FACE.**

SFX: 7. RUFF! RUFF! RUFF!

CAPTION: 8. THEN SOMEHOW-

PAGE 17 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1 - THE KID WAKES UP IN HIS SLEEPING BAG TERRIFIED AGAIN. (SEE PICTURE) THE DOG LICKS HIS FACE AND HIS PAJAMA TOP IS STILL SHREDED.



CAPTION: THE KID WOKE UP. HIS DOG LICKIN HIS FACE AND BARKING IN HIS EAR HAD SNAPPED HIM OUT OF IT.

PANEL 2 - THE KID LOOKS OVER AND SEES THE REST OF THE FAMILY ARE STILL ASLEEP.

CAPTION: SOMEHOW THE REST OF THE FAMILY HAD SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE THING. ONLY THE DOG HAD NOTICED WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO HIM.

PANEL 3 - THE KID LOOKS OUT THE SCREEN WINDOW AT THE BACK OF THE TENT.

CAPTION: THE KID UNZIPPED THE WINDOW AT THE BACK OF THE TENT AND LOOKED OUT INTO THE NIGHT.

PANEL 4 - THE AREA OUTSIDE THE WINDOW IS LIT BY MOONLIGHT AND COMPOSED OF GRASS AND FIREFLIES.

CAPTION: BUT THERE WAS ONLY GRASS AND FIREFLIES.

PANEL 5 - THE KID AND THE DOG LOOK AT EACH OTHER(SEE PICTURE) AT THE BACK OF THE TENT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (30)



CAPTION:

TOO AFRAID TO SLEEP ANYMORE, THE KID AND THE
DOG KEPT EACH OTHER AWAKE UNTIL SUNRISE.

PAGE 18 - PANELS: 6

PANEL 1 - EXTERIOR SHOT OF THE TENT. THE FAMILY SITS AT THE PICNIC TABLE EATING BREAKFAST. THE KIDS ALL EAT CEREAL WHILE THE PARENTS BREW COFFEE ON A SMALL PROPANE STOVE. THE DOG HAS HIS FRONT LEGS ON THE PICNIC TABLE BENCH HOPING FOR SOME BREAKFAST, TOO.

CAPTION: THE NEXT MORNING, EVERYTHING SEEMED THE SAME.

PANEL 2 - CLOSEUP OF THE KID SITTING AT THE TABLE, DRESSED, AND EATING HIS CEREAL.

CAPTION: THE KID DIDN'T EVEN FEEL PARTICULARLY TIRED.

PANEL 3 - MOM HOLDS UP THE SHREDDED PAJAMA TOP LIKE SHE'S ABOUT TO FOLD IT.

CAPTION: THE SHREDDED PAJAMA TOP WAS A TOPIC FOR INTERESTING CONVERSATION, THOUGH. MOM WAS VERY CONCERNED.

PANEL 4 - CLOSEUP OF THE KID SHRUGGING.

CAPTION: THE KID JUST SHRUGGED AND SAID HE WAS GLAD HE HADN'T SOILED HIS VERY EXPENSIVE DOWN SLEEPING BAG.

PANEL 5 - EVERYONE AT THE TABLE LAUGHS.

CAPTION: A SENTIMENT THE ENTIRE FAMILY ECHOED.

PANEL 6 - PICTURE OF DAD CHECKING THE OIL IN THE CAR USING THE SHREDDED TOP AS A RAG. THE KID WATCHES.

CAPTION: THE PAJAMAS HADN'T BEEN GIFT FROM ANYONE SO NO ONE GRIEVED THEIR LOSS.

PAGE 19 - PANELS: 6**PANEL 1 - THE VOLVO LEAVES THE EMPTY CAMPSITE.**

CAPTION: THE KID LEFT THE CAMPGROUND THINKING ONLY OF THE GOOD TIME HE'D HAVE AT PLANET FUN AND THE VISION OF THE GIRL. HE KNEW HE'D HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO SLEEP ON THE ROAD.

PANEL 2 - CLOSEUP OF THE KID IN THE PASSENGER SIDE BACKSEAT LOOKING DREAMILY OUT THE WINDOW.

CAPTION: SHE SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY PART OF HIS VISIT TO THIS CAMPGROUND HE WASN'T ABLE TO FORGET. HE WONDERED IF HE'D EVER SEE HER AGAIN.

PANEL 3 - THE REAR END OF THE VOLVO DRIVING OUT OF THE CAMPGROUND. THE DOG IS LOOKING OUT THE BACK WINDOW.

CAPTION: HE'D LEARN SOON ENOUGH.

PANEL 4 - THE VOLVO IS PARKED OUTSIDE A GENERIC LOOKING FAST FOOD PLACE NAMED HERBY'S.

CAPTION: IT HAPPENED WHEN THE FAMILY WAS ON IT'S WAY BACK HOME A FEW DAYS LATER. THEY STOPPED AGAIN IN RIVERBEND FOR LUNCH.

PANEL 5 - THE KID SIPS FROM A SODA CUP THROUGH A STRAW WHILE WALKING BETWEEN TABLES.

CAPTION: THE KID WAS LOOKING FOR A TABLE WHEN HE SAW IT.

PANEL 6 - OVER THE SHOULDER POV OF THE KID SEEING A NEWSPAPER LAID OUT ON A TABLE WITH THE GIRL'S PICTURE SMILING AT HIM.

CAPTION:

PAGE 20 - PANELS: 6**PANEL 1 - MEDIUM SHOT OF THE KID READING THE FRONT PAGE.**

CAPTION: 'LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL DIES OF BARBITURATE OVERDOSE' READ THE HEADLINE.

PANEL 2 - VIEW FROM ACROSS A BOOTH TABLE OF THE KID LOOKING UP FROM THE PAPER WHEN HIS FAMILY ARRIVES WITH THE FOOD.

CAPTION: THE KID NEARLY JUMPED OUT OF HIS SKIN WHEN HIS FAMILY ARRIVED.

PANEL 3 - THE FAMILY SITS AT THE TABLE EATING.

CAPTION: THE KID DIDN'T TASTE HIS FOOD THAT WHOLE MEAL.

PANEL 4 - VIEW OF THE VOLVO'S BACKSEAT. THE KID SITS IN THE PASSENGER SIDE, SILENT, STARING AT THE NEWSPAPER. LITTLE SISTER SITS IN THE MIDDLE PLAYING WITH THE DOG. BIG SISTER SITS ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE READING.

CAPTION: NOR DID HE SAY MUCH ON THE WAY HOME.

PANEL 5 - THE VOLVO IS PULLED UP INTO A DRIVEWAY BEFORE A RANCH STYLE HOUSE. THE TRUNK IS OPEN AND THE FAMILY IS UNLOADING. THE KID HAS THE NEWSPAPER UNDER HIS ARM.

CAPTION: THE KID RESCUED THE PAPER FROM THE TRASH WHEN THEY GOT HOME.

PANEL 6 - THE KID KNEELS NEXT TO HIS BED WITH A SHOE BOX OPEN IN FRONT OF HIM HOLDING A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING.

CAPTION: THE KID CUT THE ARTICLE OUT OF THE NEWSPAPER AND KEPT IT IN A BOX UNDER HIS BED.

PAGE 21 - PANELS: 2 - SPLASH. YELLOWISH PARCHMENT COLORED PAGE.
THE ARTICLE ABOUT THE GIRL'S DEATH IS IN THE UPPER LEFT CORNER AND AN AUTOPSY PHOTO IN THE LOWER RIGHT. THE REST IS COVERED WITH THE SAME ELEGANT SCRIPT AS BEFORE.

PANEL 1 - NEWSPAPER CLIPPING OF THE GIRL'S DEATH. HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK PICTURE OF THE GREEN HAIREED GIRL.

CAPTION: 1. LARGE TYPE: LOCAL GIRL FOUND DEAD OF BARBITURATE OVERDOSE. SMALL TYPE: BY PHILLIP KIERAN.

CAPTION: 2. SMALL TYPE: A LOCAL TEEN WAS FOUND DEAD OF WHAT WAS RULED AN OVERDOSE OF BARBITURATES. ACCORDING TO POLICE, WHO ARE STILL INVESTIGATING, HER DEATH MAY HAVE BEEN ACCIDENTAL. CAITLIN GREEN'S TOXICOLOGY REPORT SHOWED THE 15-YEAR-OLD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT DIED OF A DRUG OVERDOSE IN HER HOUSE ON OAK STREET, POLICE SAID. RIVER COUNTY COPS ARE STILL INVESTIGATING WHETHER GREEN'S DEATH MIGHT BE THE RESULT OF FOUL PLAY AS THERE WERE SEVERAL BLEEDING CUTS ON HER UPPER CHEST. GREEN'S PARENTS WERE UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT. POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR A SOMEONE NAMED BILLY, A NAME WHICH WAS MENTIONED IN SEVERAL PAPERS FOUND IN MS. GREEN'S POSSESSION, ALTHOUGH THIS MAY HAVE JUST BEEN A REFERENCE TO THE RIVERBEND RIPPER WHOM SHE HAD REPORTEDLY BEEN RESEARCHING. CAITLIN, WHO ATTENDED RIVERBEND HIGH, WAS FOUND UNCONSCIOUS IN THE BASEMENT OF HER HOME WHEN A CLASSMATE CAME TO CHECK ON HER.

PANEL 2 - AUTOPSY PHOTO OF THE GIRL. (SEE PHOTO) BUT CHANGE HAIR, CLOSE EYES AND MOUTH AND HAVE 'CAITLIN ♡ BILLY 4EVR' CARVED INTO HER CHEST.

(CONTINUED)



CAPTION:

MANY YEARS LATER, THE KID FOUND A COPY OF THE GIRL'S AUTOPSY PHOTOS AND HER CAUSE OF DEATH BECAME MUCH CLEARER.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPTION: (CONT'D)

IN THOSE DAYS, THE OLD MAN REMAINED ENOUGH IN THE SHADOWS THAT POLICE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES DIDN'T, INDEED COULDN'T, BELIEVE THAT HE EVEN EXISTED.

THE IDEA THAT A MAN WHO DIED IN 1969 SOMEHOW ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND MURDERED PEOPLE IN THEIR DREAMS COULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED ABSURD, AFTER ALL.

SO PEOPLE, MOSTLY YOUNG ONES, WOULD CONTINUE TO DIE SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE DEATHS WITH THEIR FAMILIES UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING BUT GRIEVE. SOME KNEW OF THE OLD MAN'S EXISTENCE, OR AT LEAST SUSPECTED SOMETHING UNNATURAL WAS HAPPENING, BUT THERE WAS NO ONE TO GET HELP FROM.

PAGE 22 - PANELS: 2 - LOOKS LIKE PHOTOS PASTED IN A SCRAPBOOK. ONE AT THE TOP, THE OTHER AT THE BOTTOM WITH WRITING ON THE PAGE BETWEEN THEM

PANEL 1 - SIDE VIEW OF THE HOODED MAN WATCHING THE PEN WRITE IN THE BOOK.

CAPTION:

AND SO BEGAN THE KID'S MANY TRIALS WITH THE OLD MAN.

IT WAS ALSO THE BEGINNING OF A LONG JOURNEY THAT WOULD FIRST TAKE HIM TO A WORLD OF DRAGONS, KNIGHTS, WIZARDS, MAGIC, AND IMMORTALS.

THEN TO A WORLD OF SORCERERS WHERE HE WOULD IMPOSSIBLY MERGE WITH MYSELF IN SOME WAY WE WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND.

THEN TO A CURSED WORLD WHERE THE DOOMED DOMINATE THE INNOCENT AND HE(I?) WOULD FIND HIMSELF TRAPPED WITH THE OLD MAN AND FORCED TO WORK WITH HIM, EVEN TRY TO REDEEM HIM, IN ORDER TO ESCAPE.

AND THEN FINALLY HOME AGAIN WHERE THERE WOULD BE A FINAL CONFRONTATION WITH THE DARK POWERS FROM THE DRAGON WORLD THAT WOULD CULMINATE IN WHAT HE AND I HAVE BECOME.

AND THEN THERE ARE THE CURSES...

...BUT THOSE STORIES MAY WAIT FOR ANOTHER DAY.

NOW IT IS TIME TO REST.

PANEL 2 - SIDE VIEW OF THE HOODED MAN LYING ON HIS BACK BUT FLOATING SIX INCHES ABOVE HIS BEDROLL. HIS HOOD IS STILL ON AND HIS CLOAK LAYS FLAT ON WHATEVER HOLDS HIM UP, HIS HANDS ARE CLASPED OVER HIS MIDSECTION AND HOLD THE HANDLE OF HIS SWORD WHICH POINTS DOWN TO HIS BOOTS. MOST NOTABLY HIS GLOWING EYES ARE CLOSED IN REPOSE.

END