

FROM THE PAGES OF HELLBOY

LOBSTER JOHNSON™



MIKE
MIGNOLA

JOHN
ARCUDI

TONCI
ZONJIC

DAVE
STEWART

The
**BURNING
HAND**



Created by
MIKE MIGNOLA



PA //

LOBSTER JOHNSON™

The **BURNING HAND**

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Special thanks to Jason Hvam

DarkHorse.com

Hellboy.com



Published by Dark Horse Books
A division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc.
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

First edition: November 2012

ISBN 978-1-61655-031-8

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Printed at Midas Printing International, Ltd., Huizhou, China

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This book collects the comic-book series *Lobster Johnson: The Burning Hand* #1–#5, originally published by Dark Horse Comics.

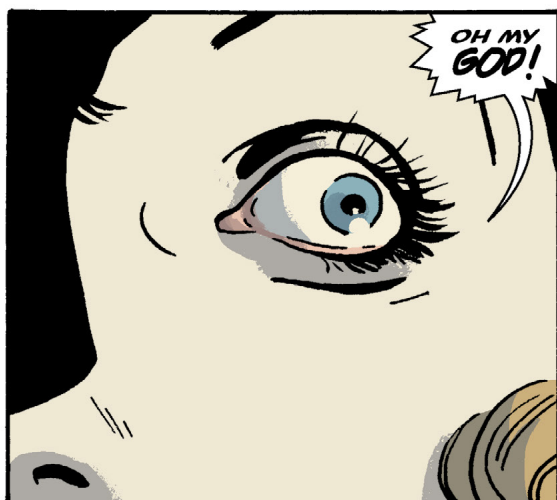
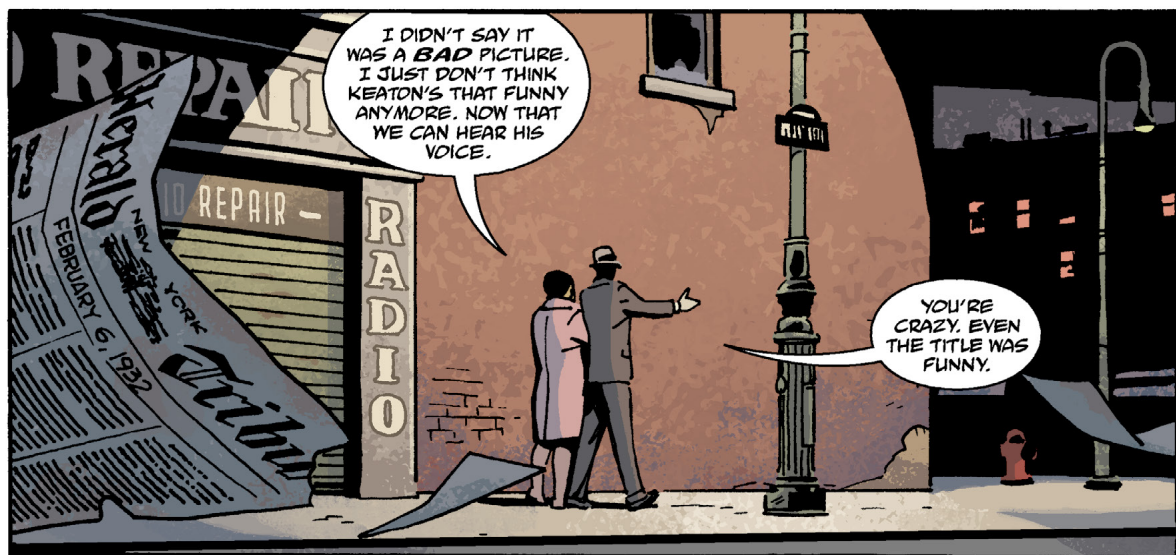


CHAPTER ONE



JOHNSON

THE BURNING HAND





HEY! HEY, BUDDY! HANG ON. WE'LL GET YOU SOME HELP.

SAM, STAY AWAY FROM HIM! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.



RACHEL, WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH YOU? WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM LIKE THIS.

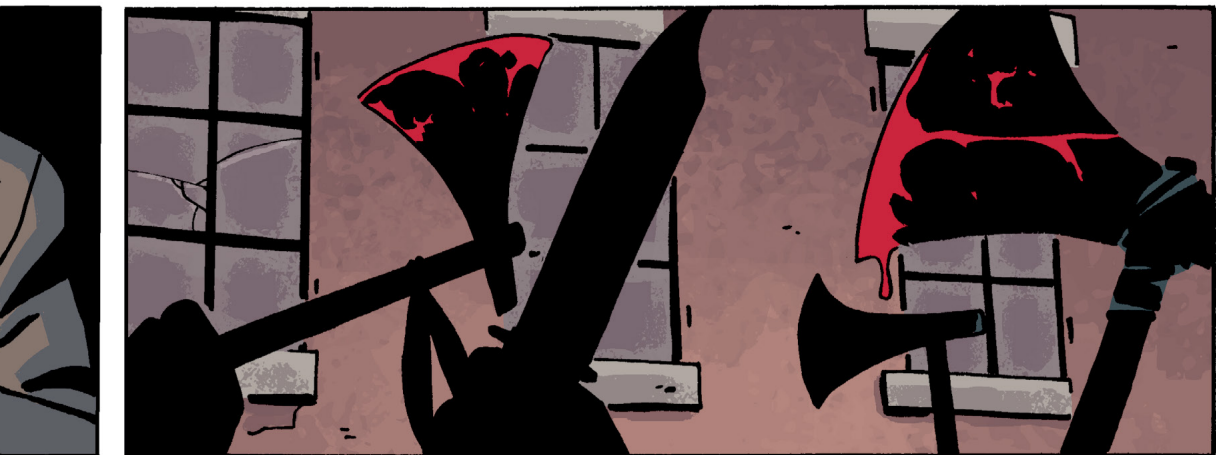
NO...



SH...SHE'S RIGHT. GET WAY FROM HERE...NOW.











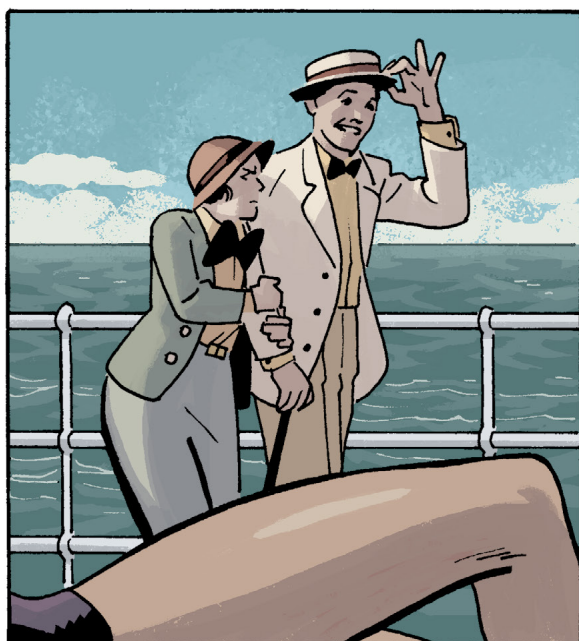
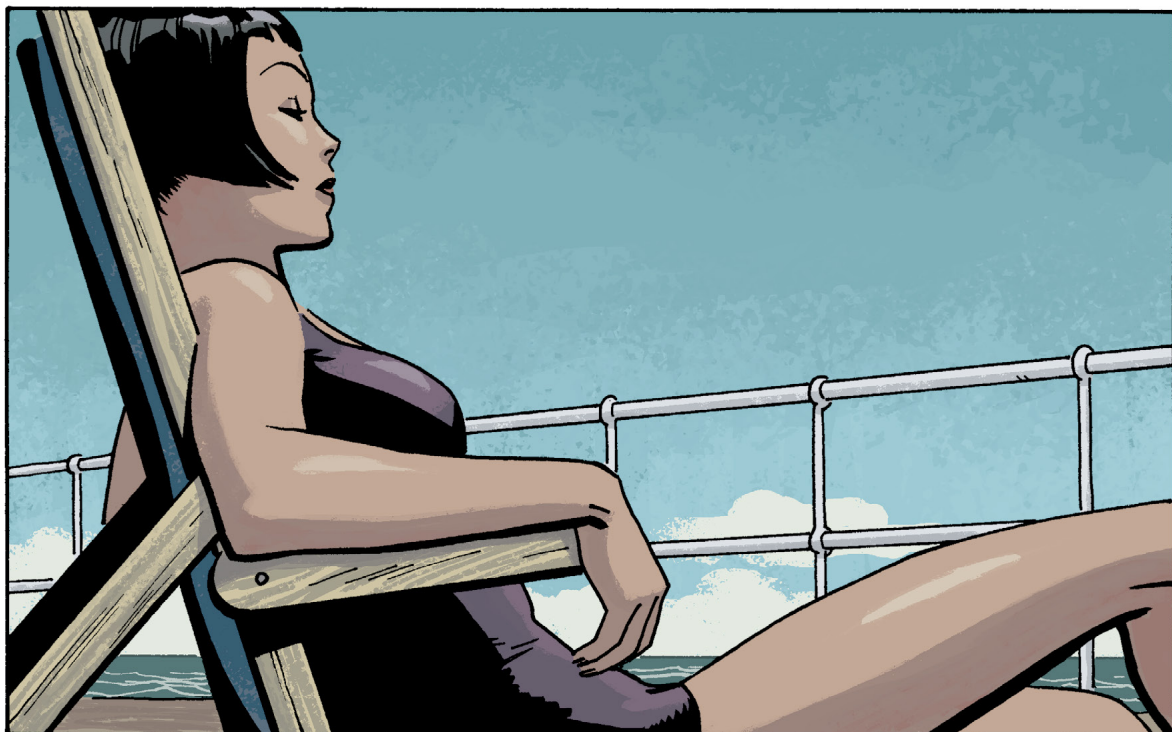
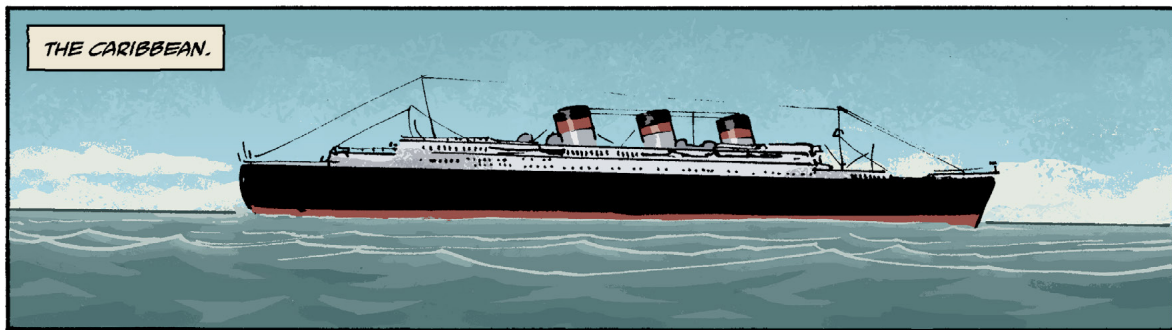


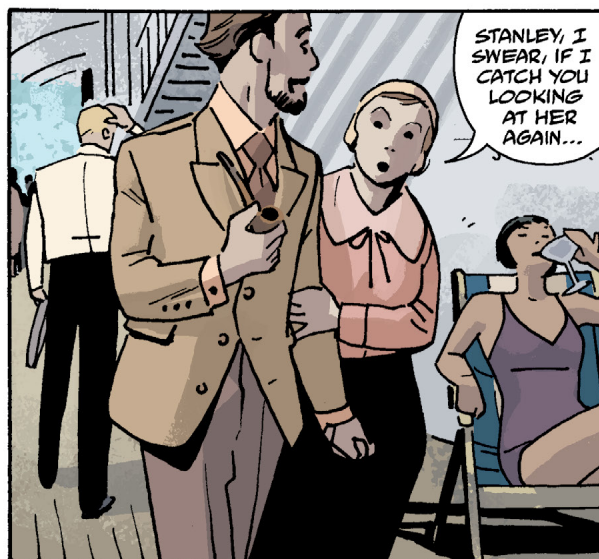
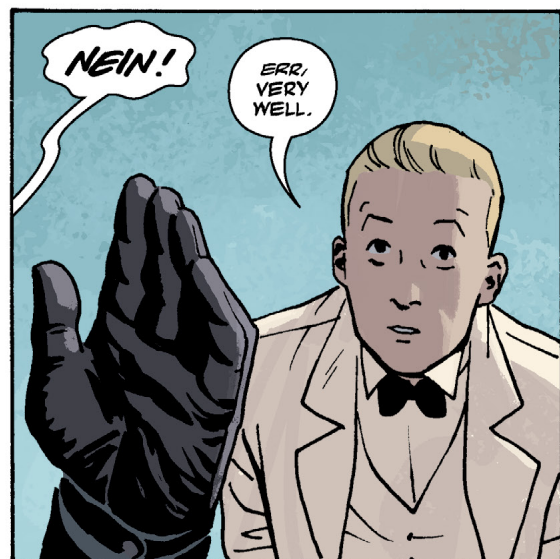






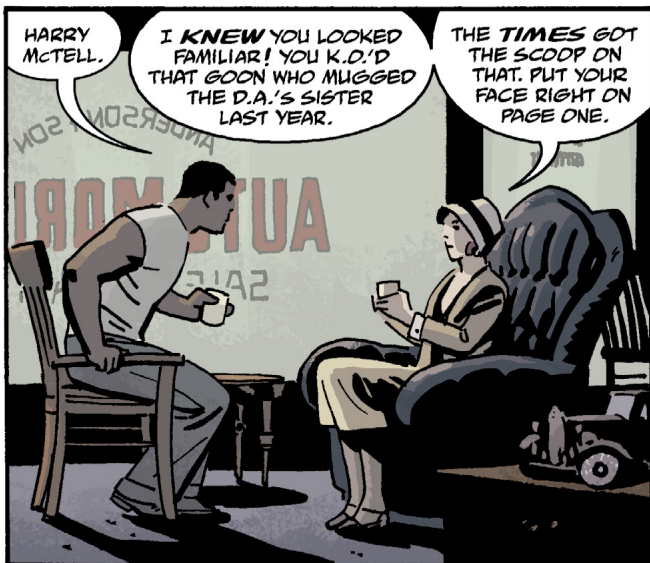
THE CARIBBEAN.







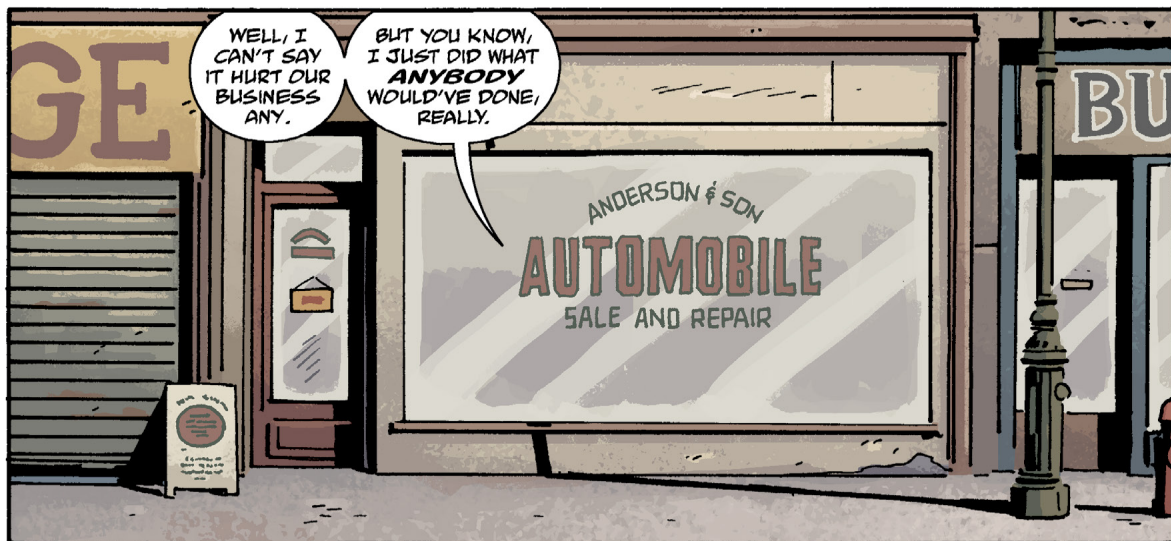
I'M CINDY
TYNAN, **HERALD
TRIBUNE**.



HARRY
McTELL.

I **KNEW** YOU LOOKED
FAMILIAR! YOU K.D.'D
THAT GOON WHO MUGGED
THE D.A.'S SISTER
LAST YEAR.

THE **TIMES** GOT
THE SCOOP ON
THAT. PUT YOUR
FACE RIGHT ON
PAGE ONE.



WELL, I
CAN'T SAY
IT HURT OUR
BUSINESS
ANY.

BUT YOU KNOW,
I JUST DID WHAT
ANYBODY
WOULD'VE DONE,
REALLY.

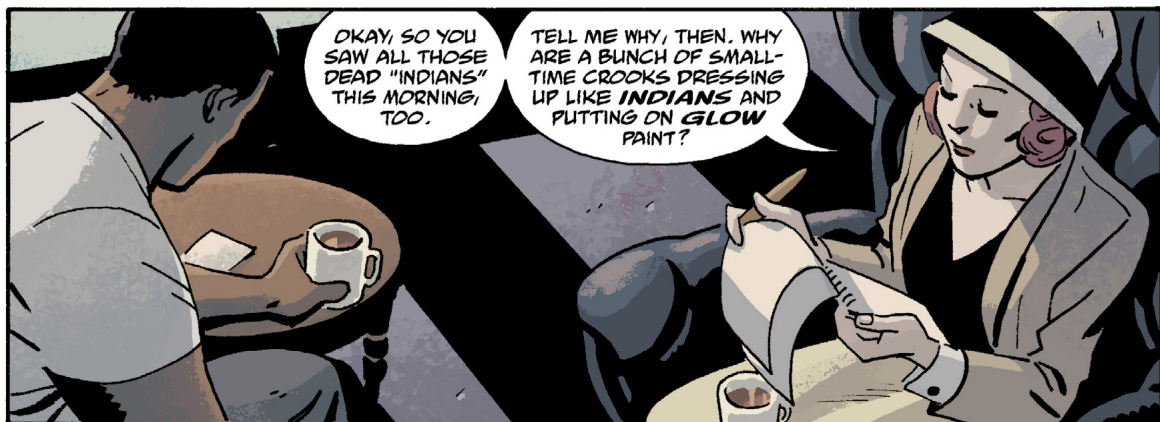


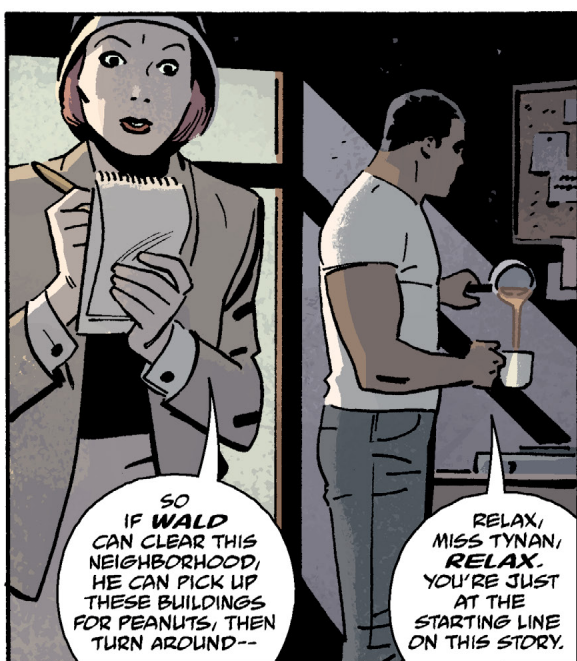
YOU
HAVEN'T
LIVED IN NEW
YORK LONG,
HAVE YOU,
HARRY?

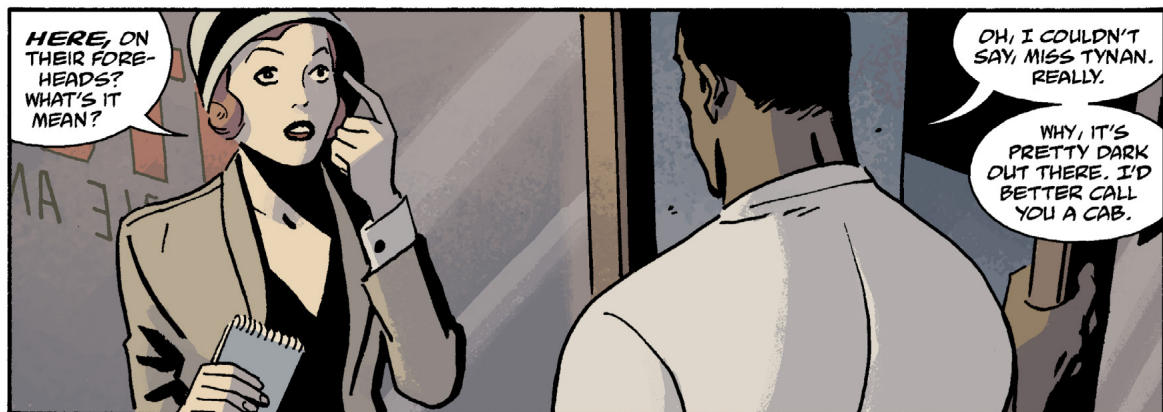
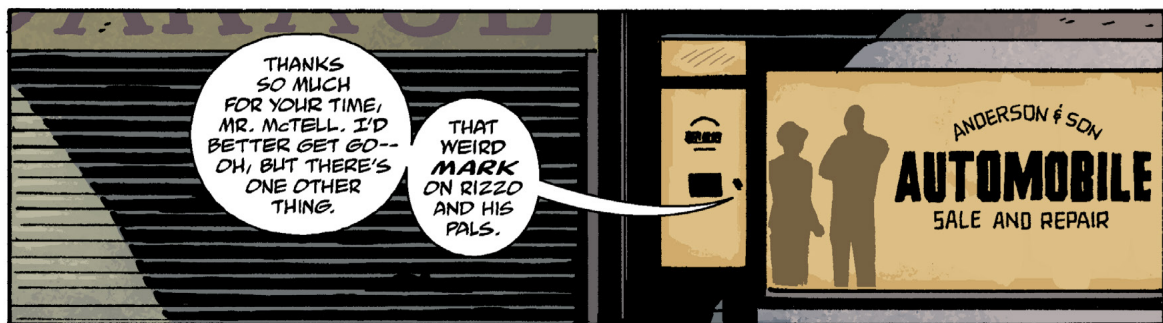


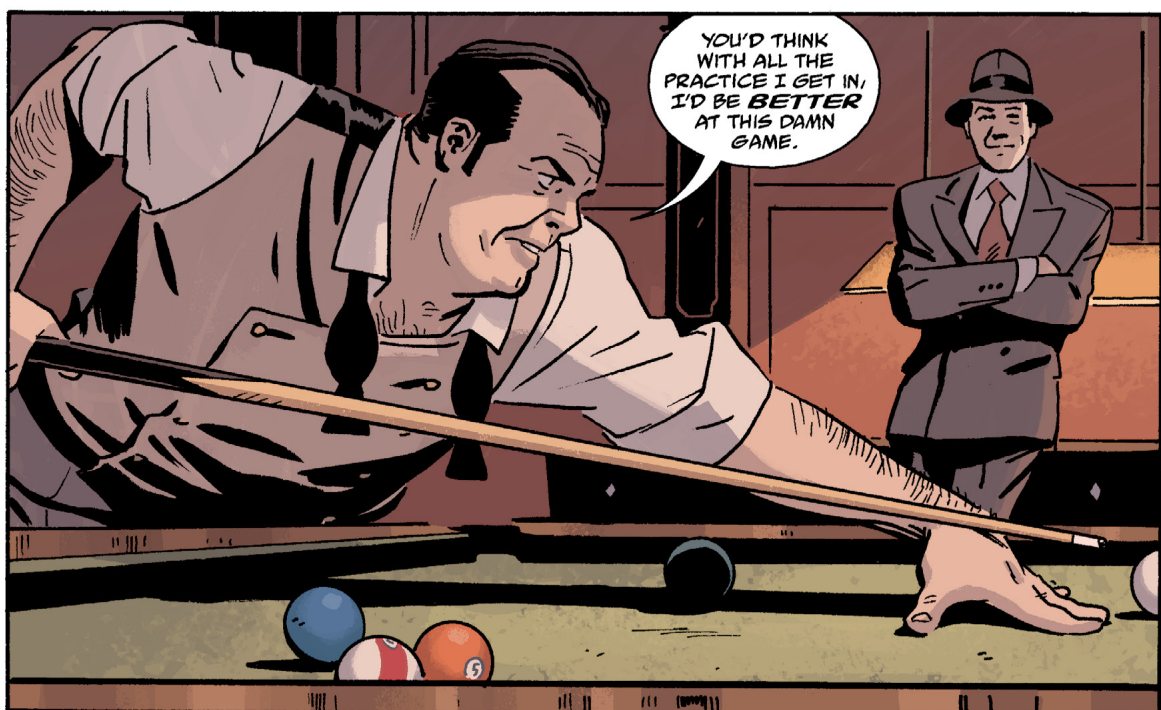
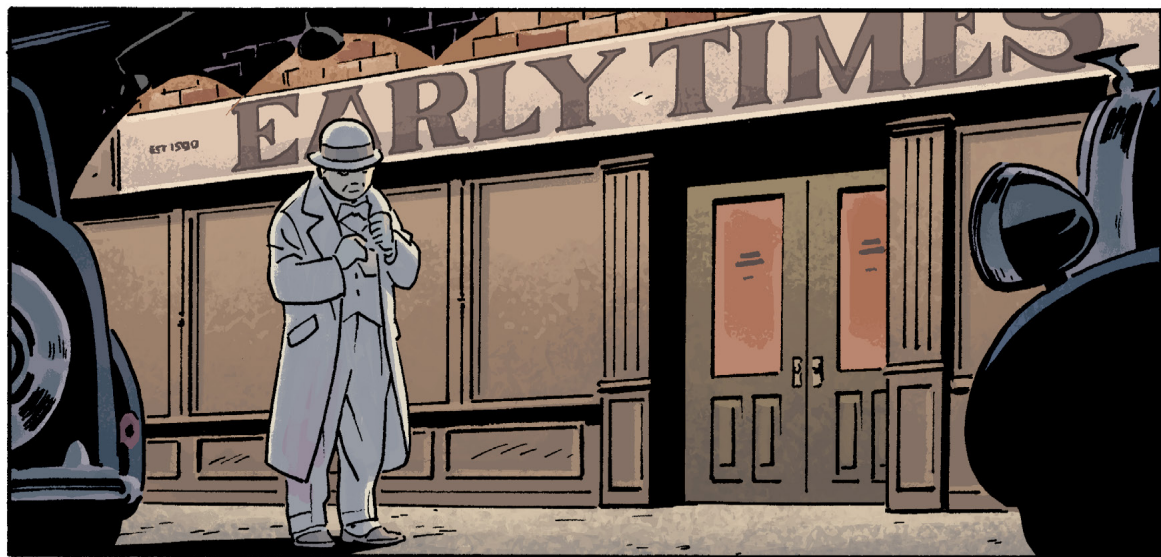
LONG ENOUGH
TO KNOW WHO
JILLIE RIZZO
IS, AND BUZZ
DAYER, TOO.
AND "CRAB"
GRESS.

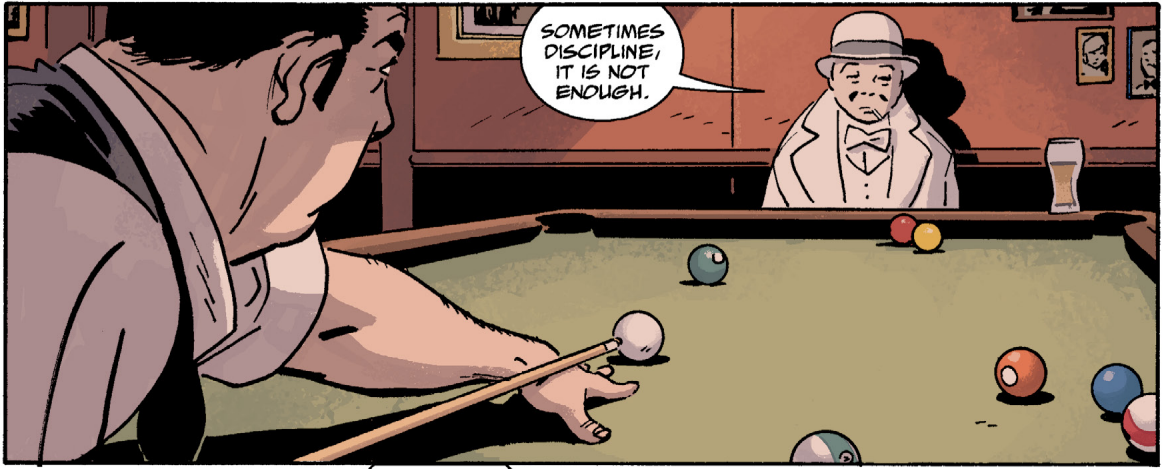
I KNOW
ABOUT
THEM.



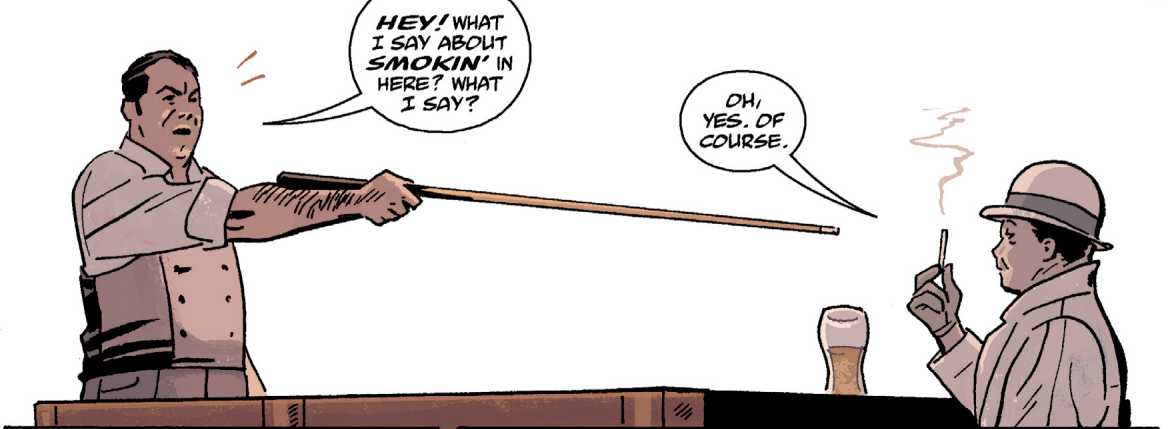








SOMETIMES
DISCIPLINE,
IT IS NOT
ENOUGH.

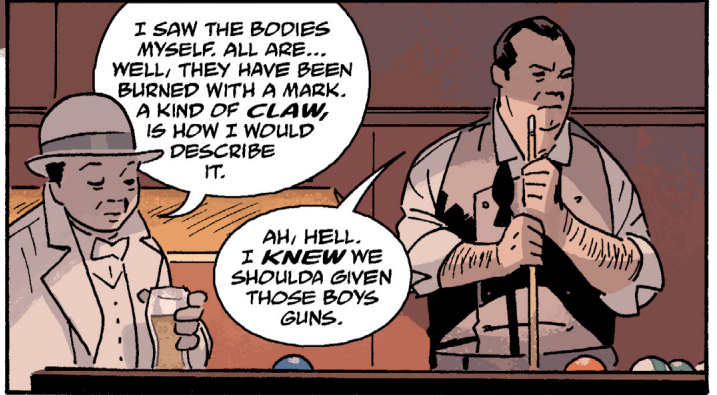


HEY! WHAT
I SAY ABOUT
SMOKIN' IN
HERE? WHAT
I SAY?

OH,
YES. OF
COURSE.



SO IT'S
TRUE.



I SAW THE BODIES
MYSELF. ALL ARE...
WELL, THEY HAVE BEEN
BURNED WITH A MARK.
A KIND OF **CLAW**,
IS HOW I WOULD
DESCRIBE
IT.

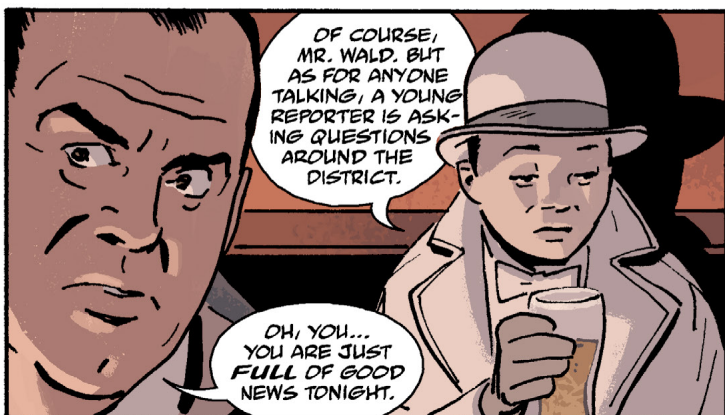
AH, HELL.
I **KNEW** WE
SHOULDA GIVEN
THOSE BOYS
GUNS.



WE DISCUSSED
THAT. IT WOULD
HAVE RUINED THE
ILLUSION.

YEAH. YOU
AND YOUR GOD
DAMNED
"ILLUSION."

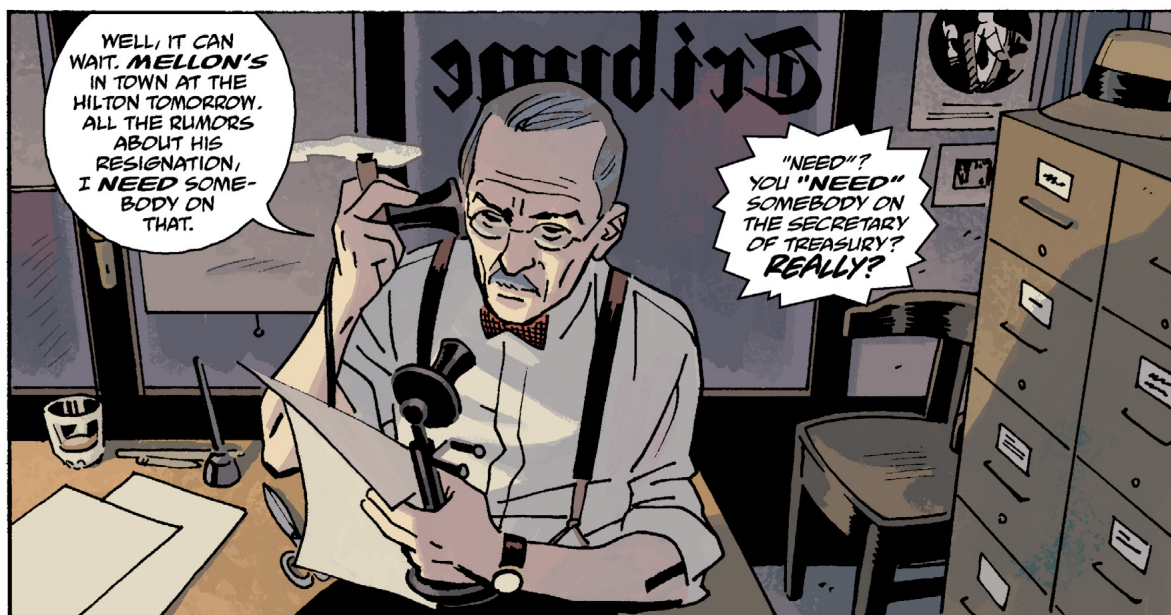
ANYWAY,
THEY'RE ALL
DEAD, RIGHT? SO,
NOBODY ALIVE
TO TALK, AT
LEAST.





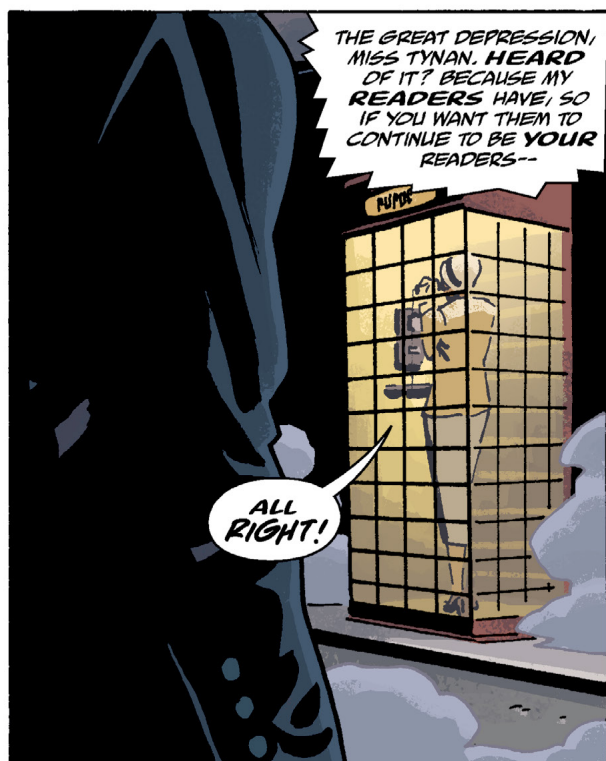
"JUST
HANDLE
IT THE
USUAL
WAY."

--NOT
A WHOLE
STORY, BUT
I'M WELL
ON THE
WAY.



WELL, IT CAN
WAIT. **MELLON'S**
IN TOWN AT THE
HILTON TOMORROW.
ALL THE RUMORS
ABOUT HIS
RESIGNATION,
I **NEED** SOME-
BODY ON
THAT.

"NEED"?
YOU "**NEED**"
SOMEBODY ON
THE SECRETARY
OF TREASURY?
REALLY?



THE GREAT DEPRESSION,
MISS **TYNAN**. HEARD
OF IT? BECAUSE MY
READERS HAVE, SO
IF YOU WANT THEM TO
CONTINUE TO BE **YOUR**
READERS--

**ALL
RIGHT!**



NUTS!
THIS IS A
GOOD
STORY.

I
SHOULD BE
WORKING ON
THIS!





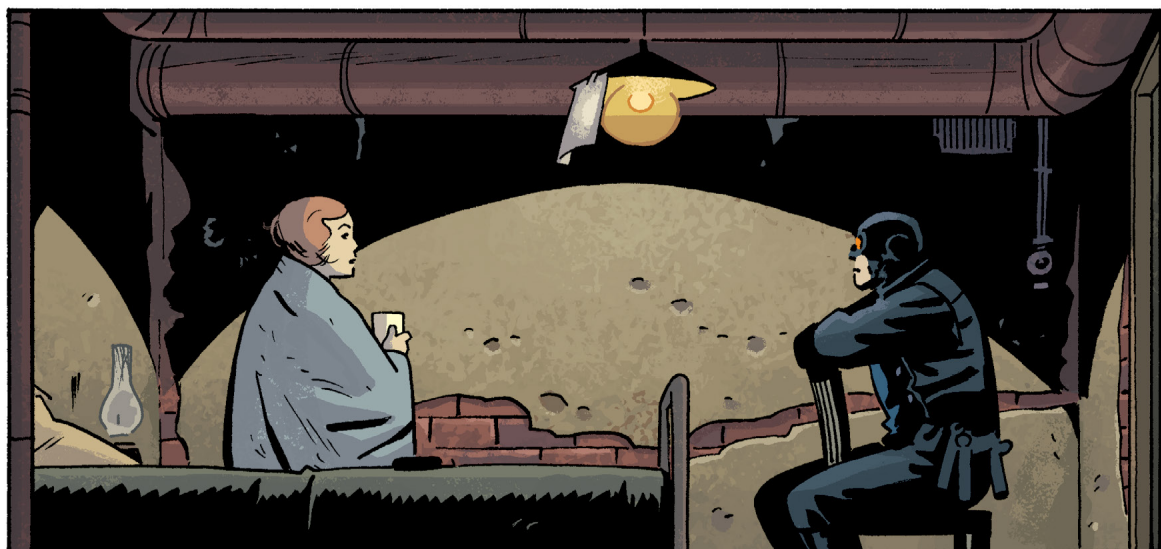
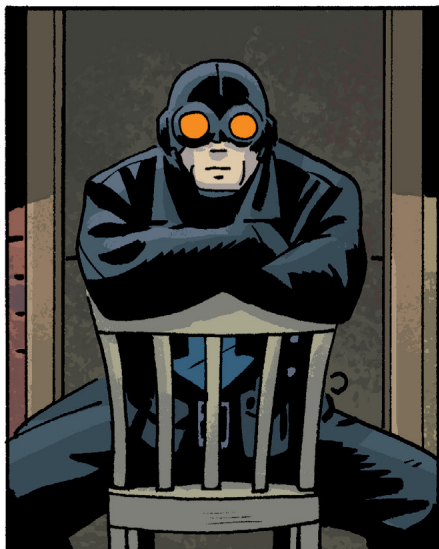
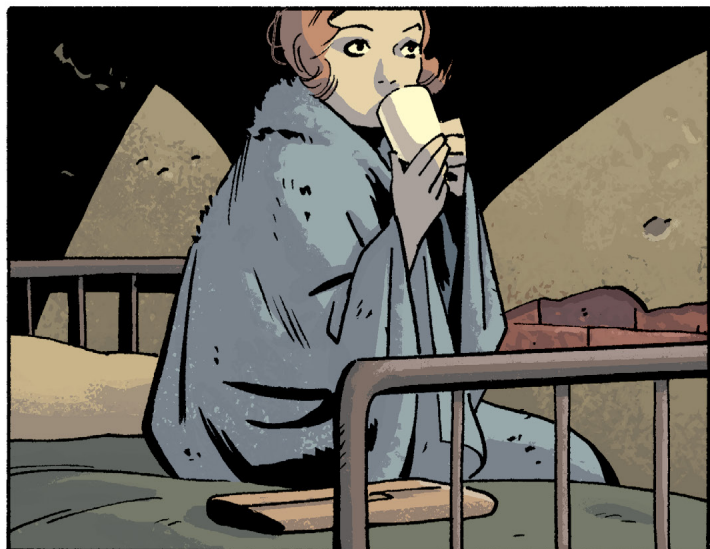
CHAPTER TWO

the BURNING HAND



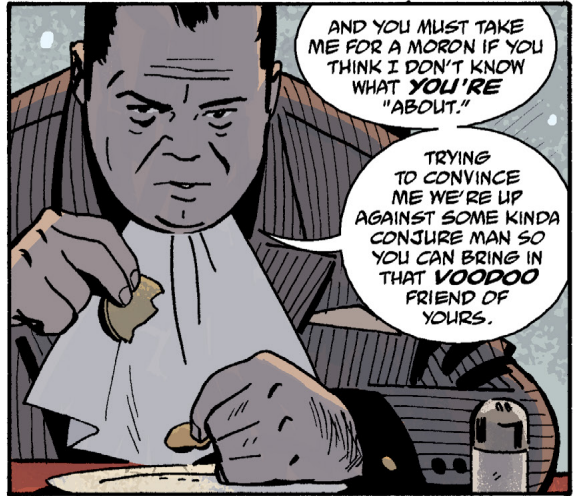
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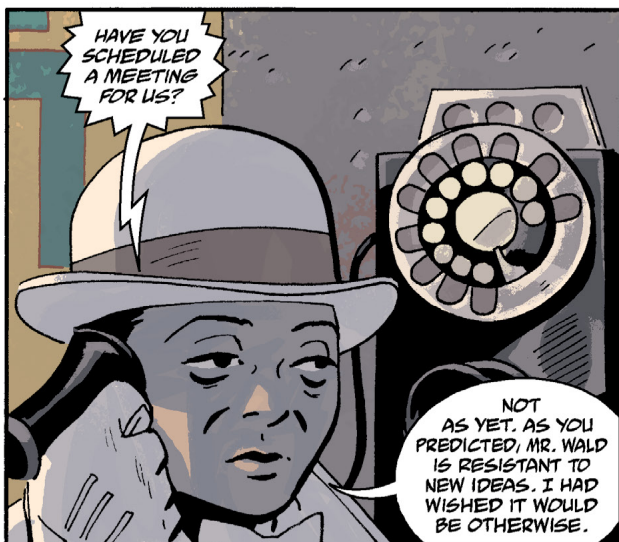


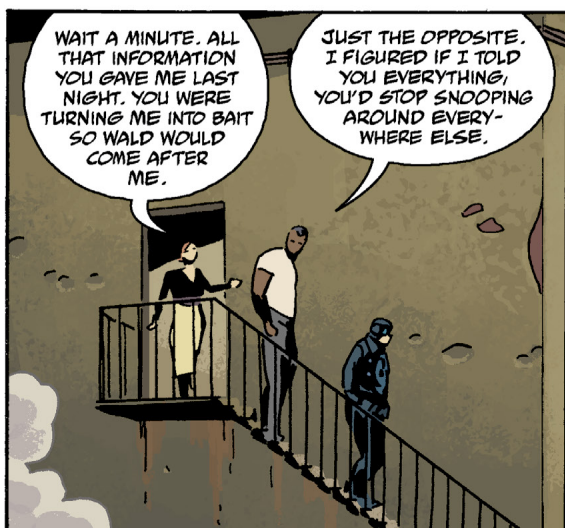


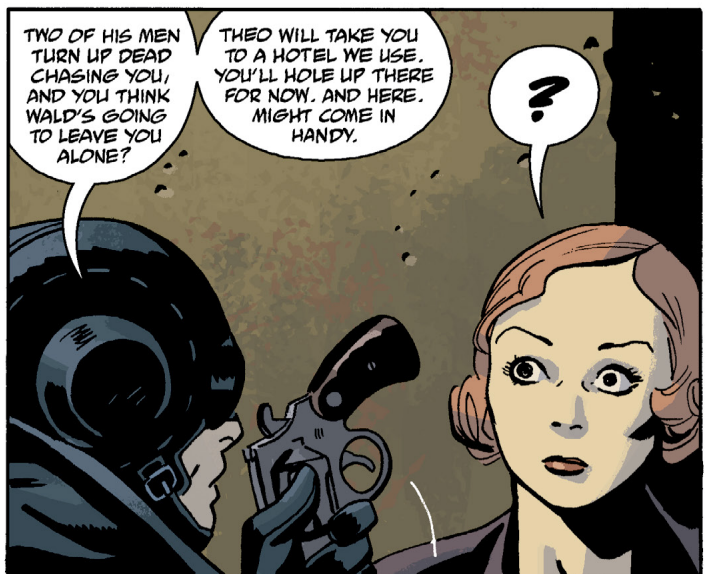








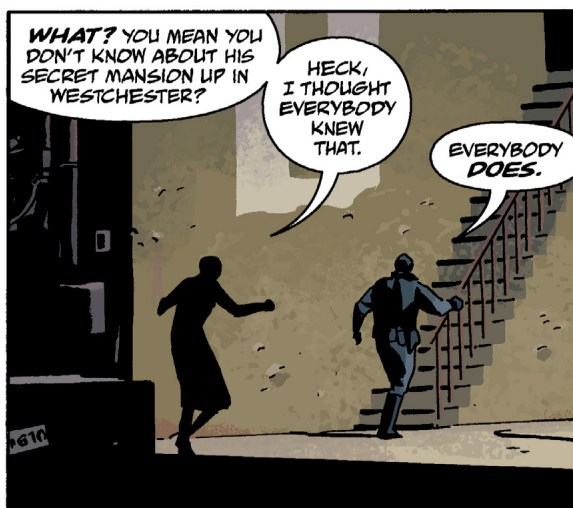






THIS IS ALL BACKWARDS!
I'M NOT THE CRIMINAL.
GO AFTER WALD!

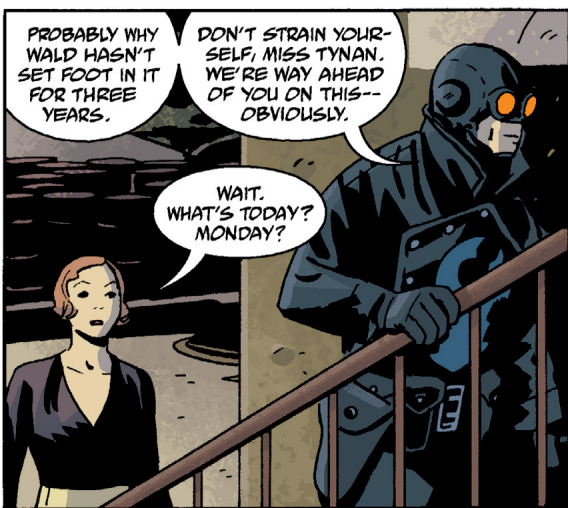
IF I COULD FIND HIM, I WOULD.



WHAT? YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT HIS SECRET MANSION UP IN WESTCHESTER?

HECK, I THOUGHT EVERYBODY KNEW THAT.

EVERYBODY DOES.



PROBABLY WHY WALD HASN'T SET FOOT IN IT FOR THREE YEARS.

DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF, MISS TYNAN. WE'RE WAY AHEAD OF YOU ON THIS-- OBVIOUSLY.

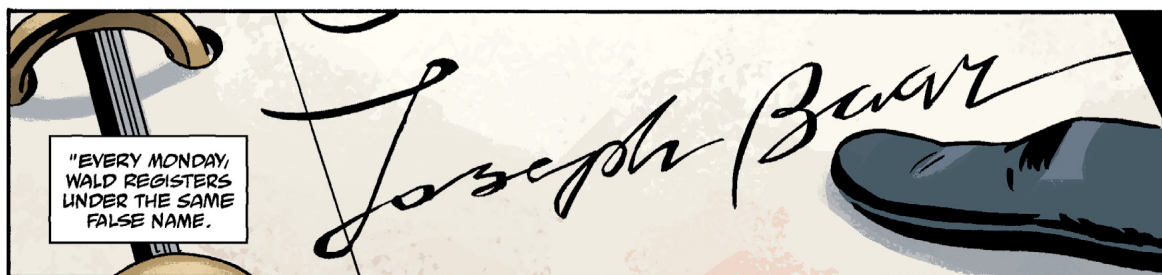
WAIT. WHAT'S TODAY? MONDAY?



THEN HE'S UP IN FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT, AT THE EMPEDRAD COUNTRY CLUB.

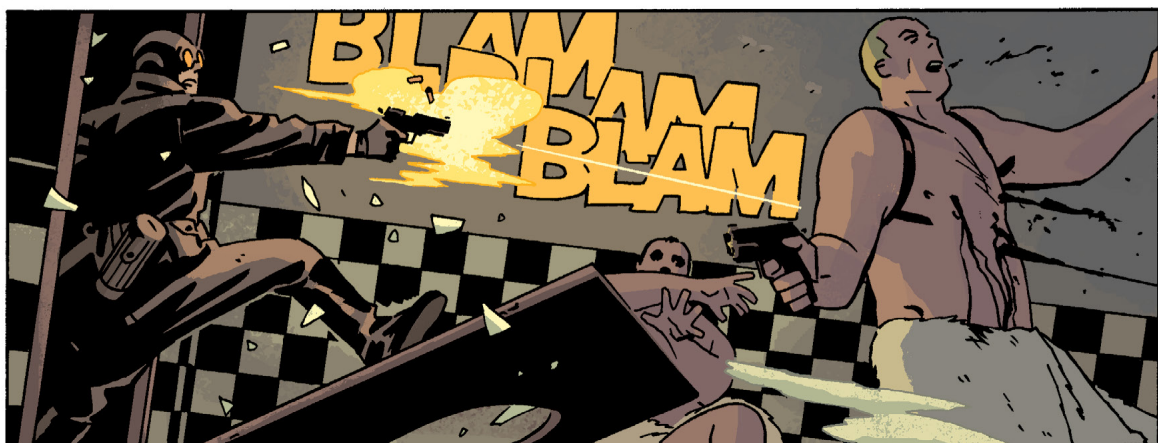
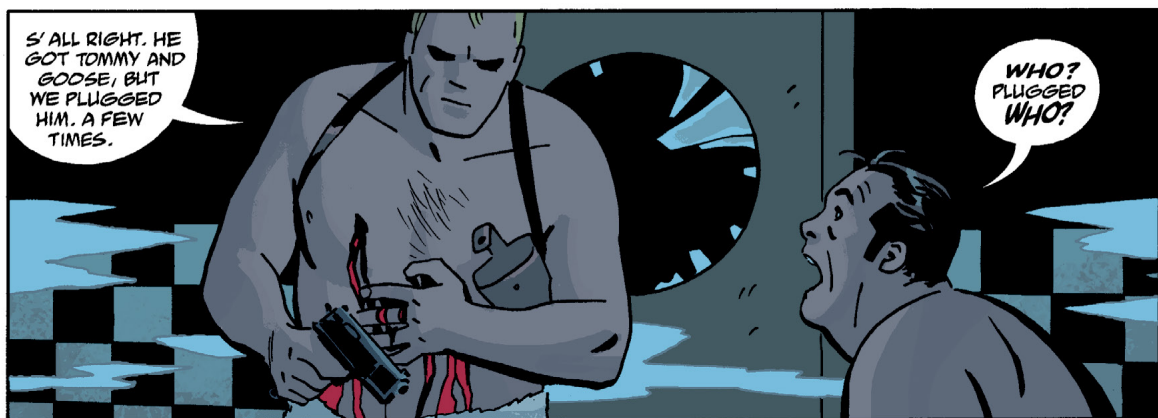


WHAT?



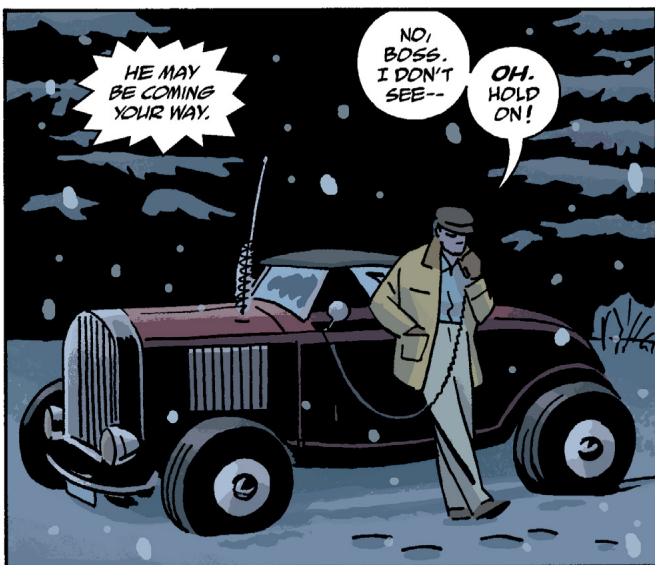




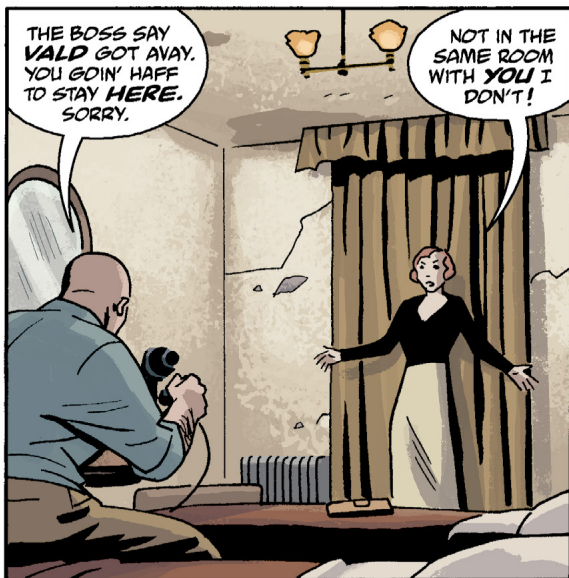
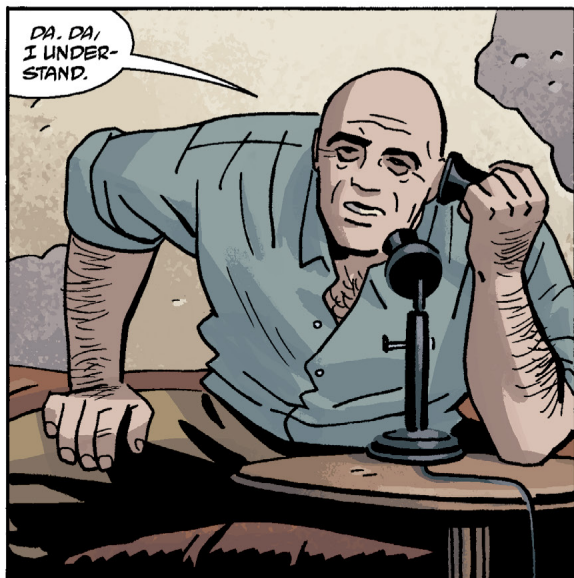






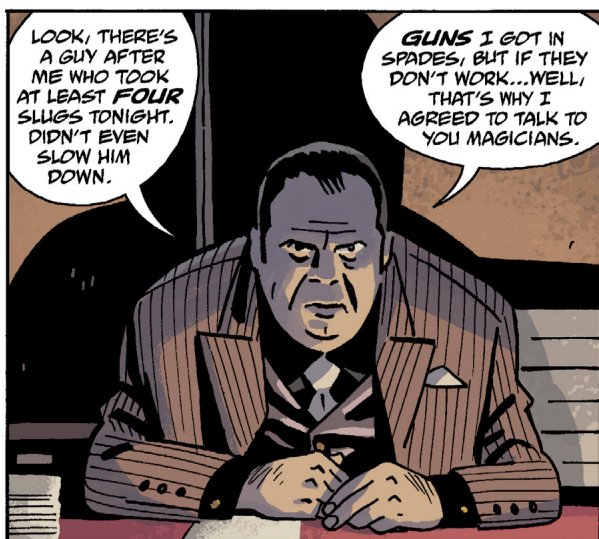


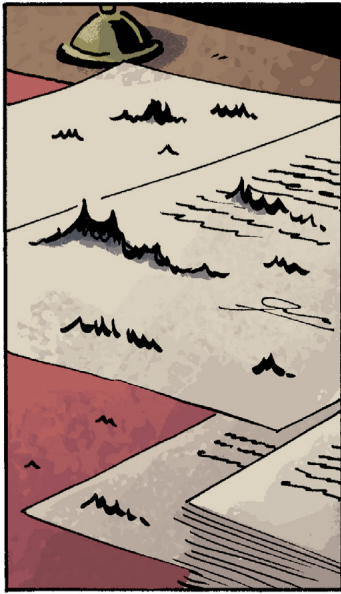












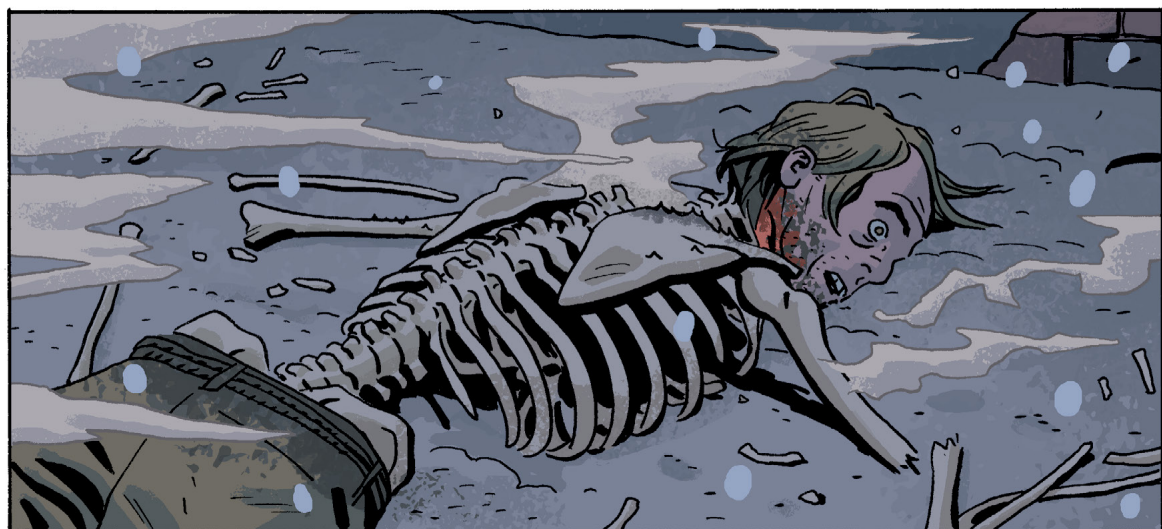


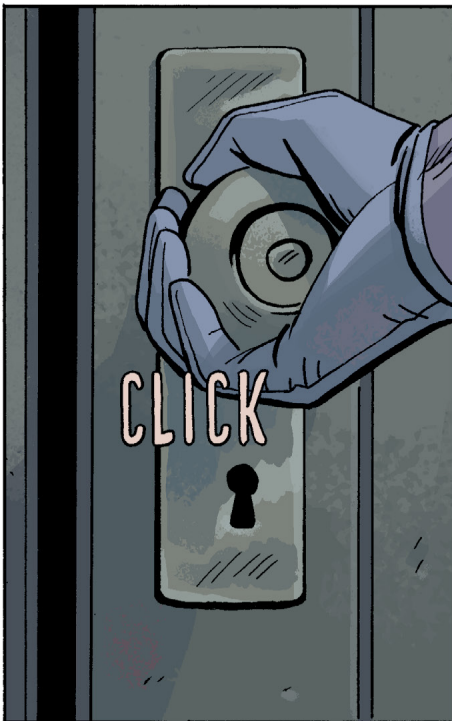
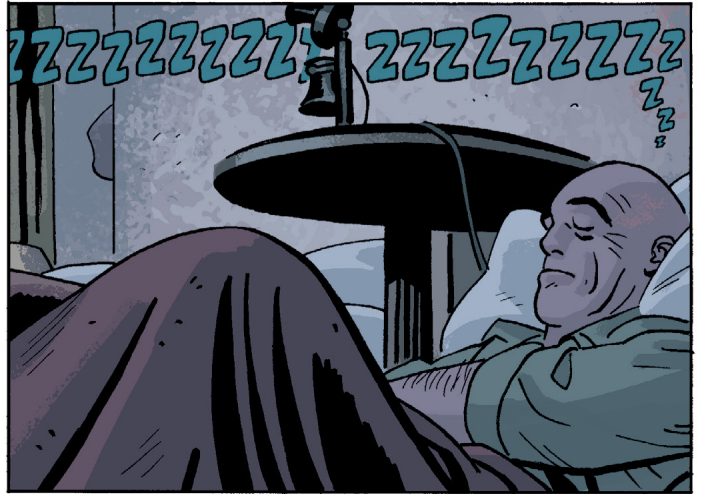
CHAPTER THREE

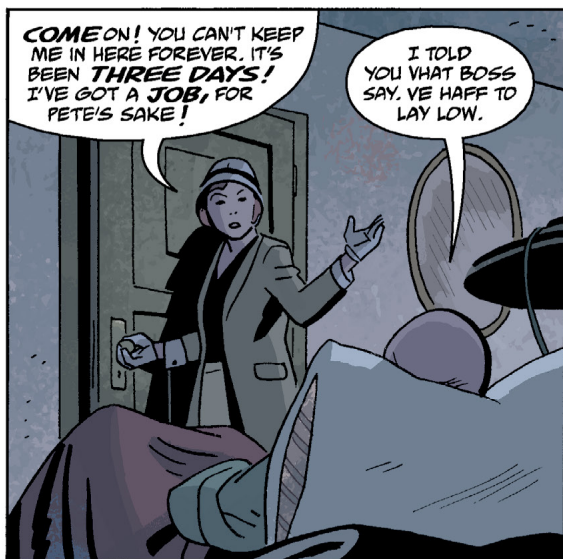












COME ON! YOU CAN'T KEEP ME IN HERE FOREVER. IT'S BEEN **THREE DAYS!** I'VE GOT A **JOB,** FOR PETE'S SAKE!

I TOLD YOU WHAT BOSS SAY. VE HAFF TO LAY LOW.



RIGHT, RIGHT, **YOU'VE GOT** A JOB, TOO. I GET IT. BUT WHAT IF YOU PRETEND YOU NEVER WOKE UP?

THAT GUY WITH THE **GOGGLES** CAN'T BLAME YOU **THEN,** CAN HE?



IS THAT HOW YOU DO YOUR JOB? YOU PRETEND?



FINE!

SLAM!



"WE HAVE TO **LIE LOW,**" BY THE WAY.

VHATEFFER YOU SAY.





OH MAN, THIS IS **RICH**. ARSON? **THAT** COULD'VE BIT ME IN THE BEHIND, BUT **THIS**?

WHO'S **EVER** GOING TO CONNECT THAT SPOOK SHOW WITH ME? I **LOVE** IT!



IF OUR CLAW-BRANDING FRIEND IS SO CONCERNED WITH THE TENEMENTS, THIS MOST CERTAINLY SHOULD DRAW HIM OUT.

AH, WHO CARES ABOUT HIM? WITH THOSE BUILDINGS BURN'T DOWN, I CAN ROUND UP THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR A SONG.



THE MAN MURDERED THOMAS, GOOSE, KENNETH...

HE ATTEMPTED TO KILL **YOU**. YOU DON'T IMAGINE THAT HE'LL STOP TRYING.

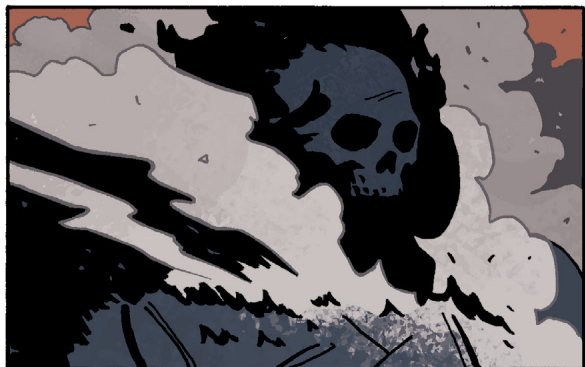
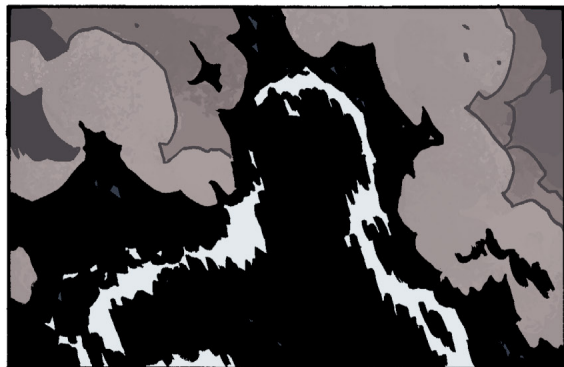
HELL, I CAN LEAVE TOWN NOW. THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS WAS TO MAKE MONEY, AND THIS RIGHT HERE'S THE WAY TO DO IT.



IF YOU PLEASE.

THERE IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD SEE.

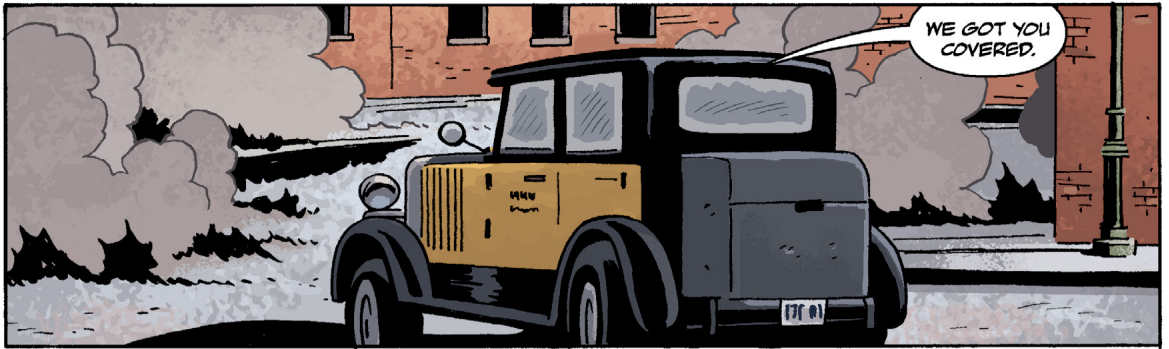
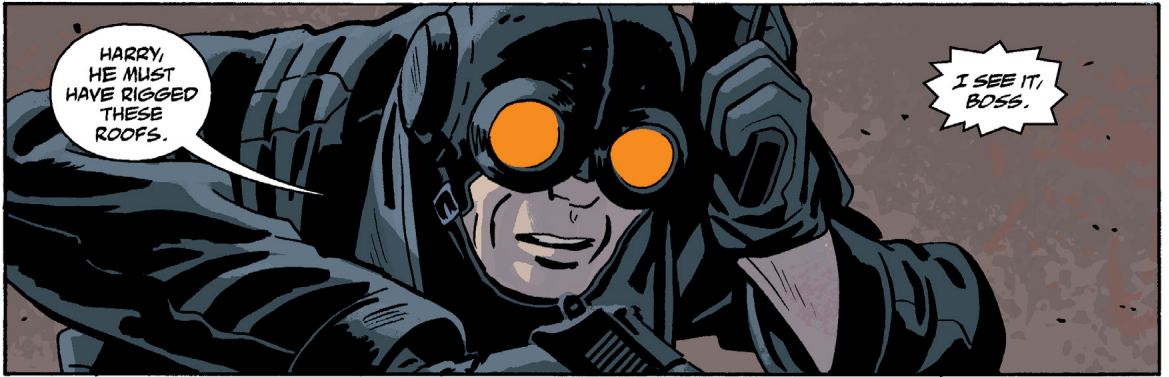
SURE THING, SWEETIE.

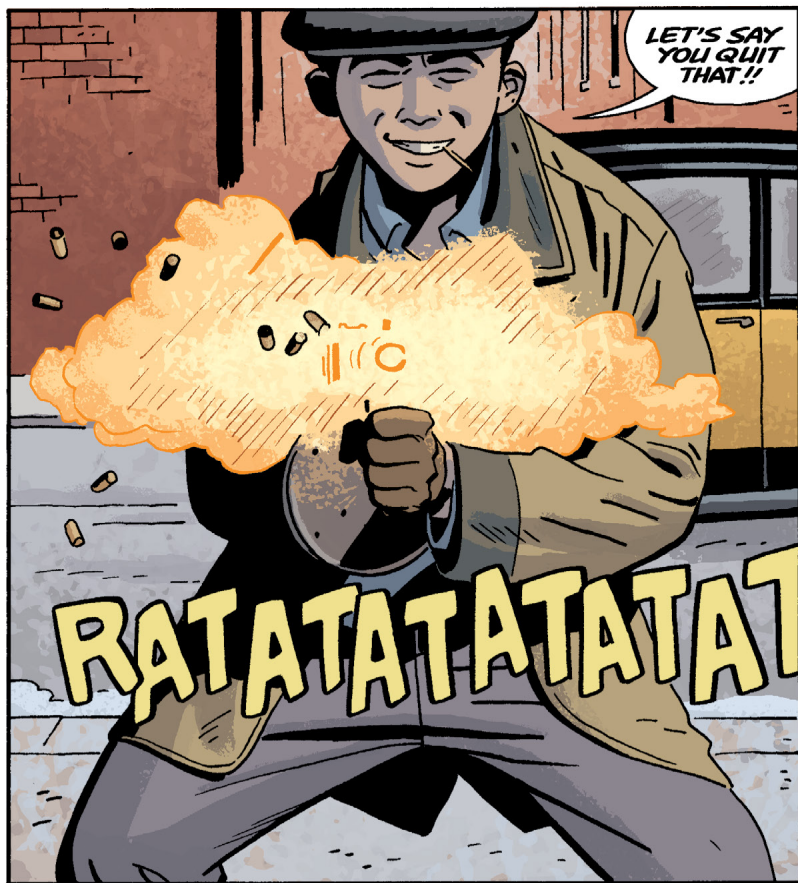


THAT'S IT,
SONNY
BOY. MAKE
YOUR
ENTRANCE
SO EVERY-
BODY
SEES.

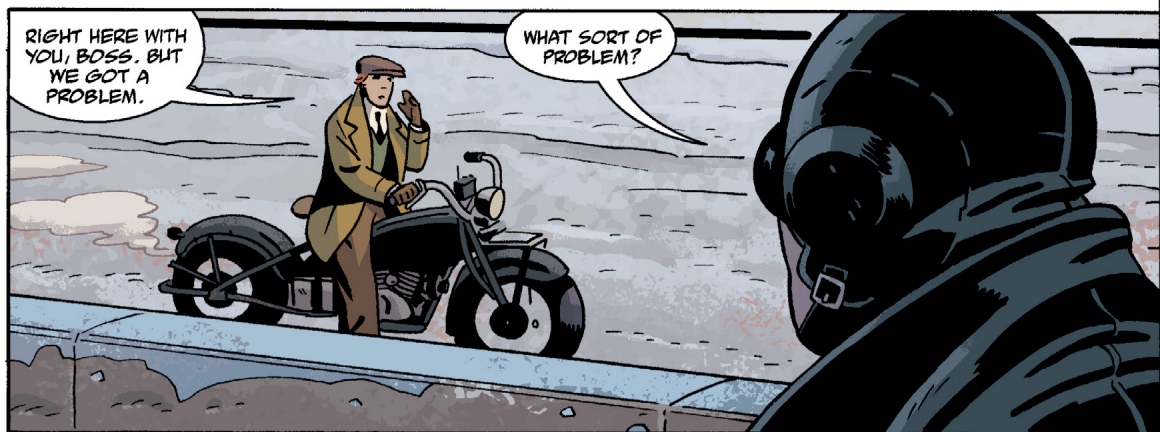
MAN, THAT
ASBESTOS
SUIT IS
AWFUL SCARY
LOOKING,
I HAVE TO
SAY.

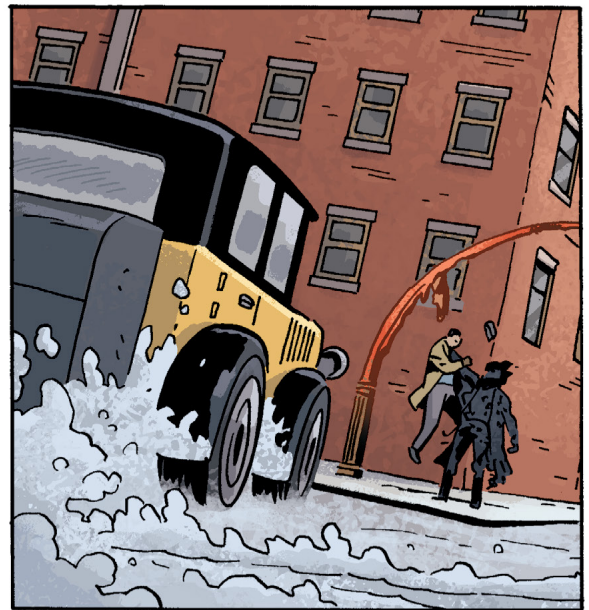


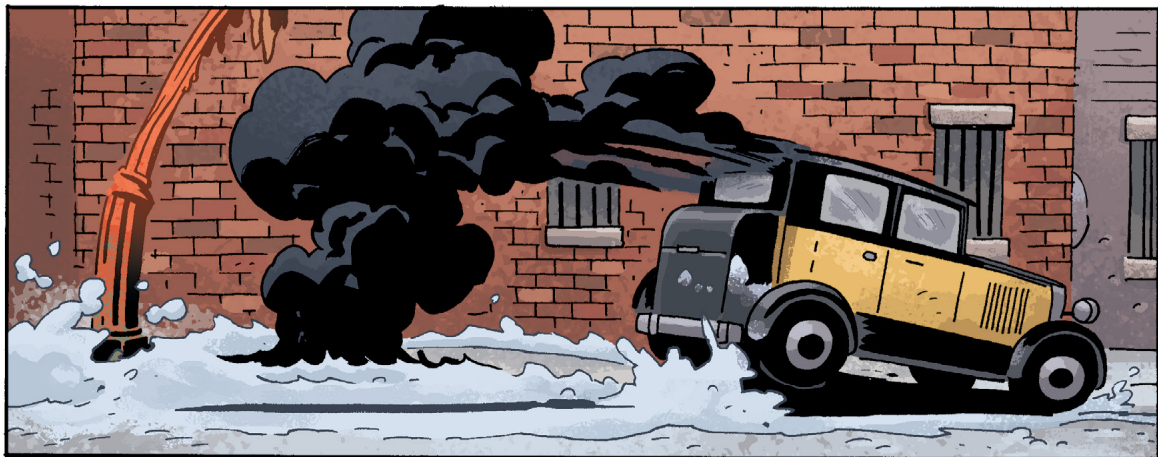


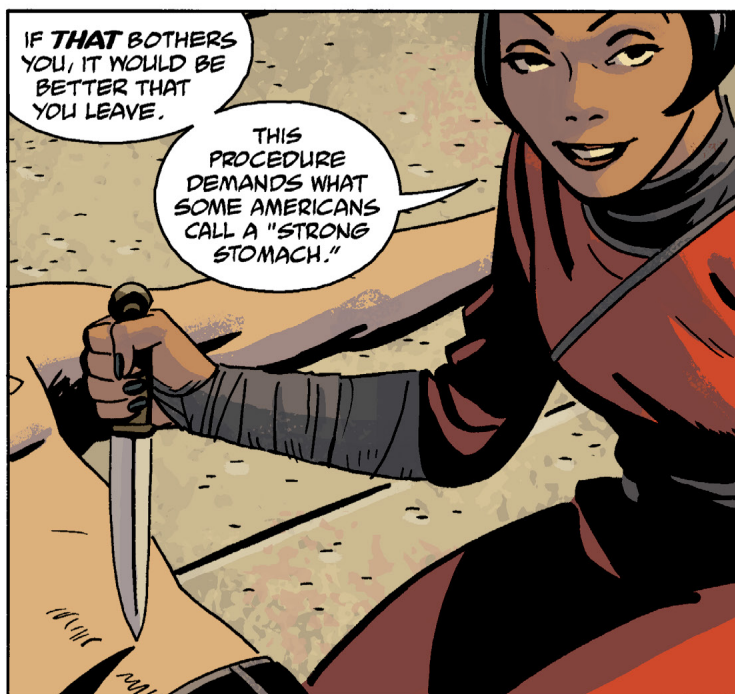














GOD,
WHAT A
SMELL.

I STILL DON'T GET
WHY THE LIVING
FIREBOMB DIDN'T
KILL THE GUY WITH THE
CLAW WHEN HE HAD
THE CHANCE.

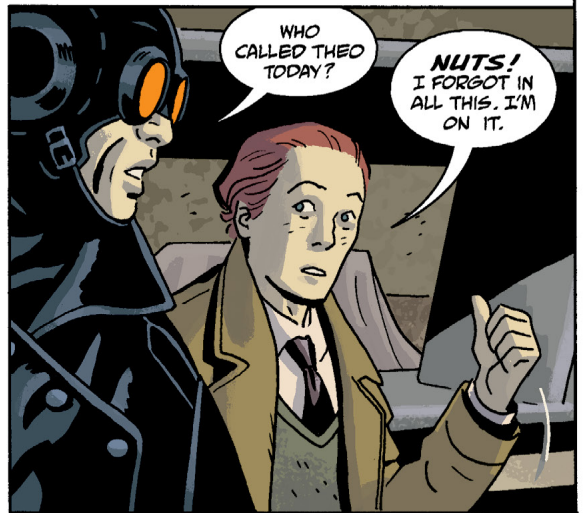
YOU SAW.
THAT MAN HAS
HELP. RIGHT NOW,
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO
KNOW HOW MANY
THERE ARE. IT MAY
BE AN ENTIRE
SOCIETY.

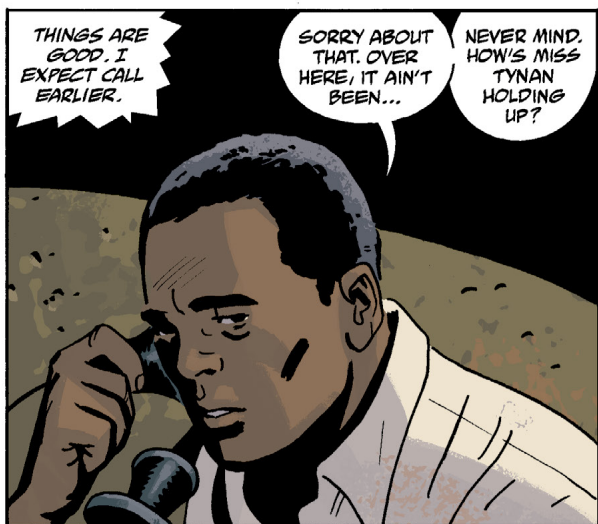
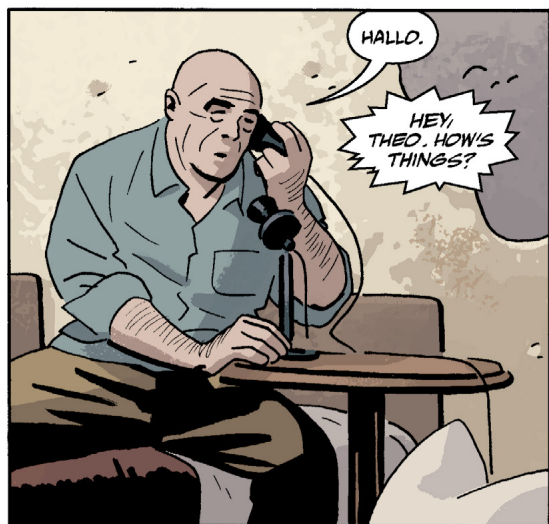
AND SPILLING
GUTS ON THE
FLOOR OF ONE
OF MY **WARE-**
HOUSES IS
SUPPOSED
TO HELP
US WITH
THAT?

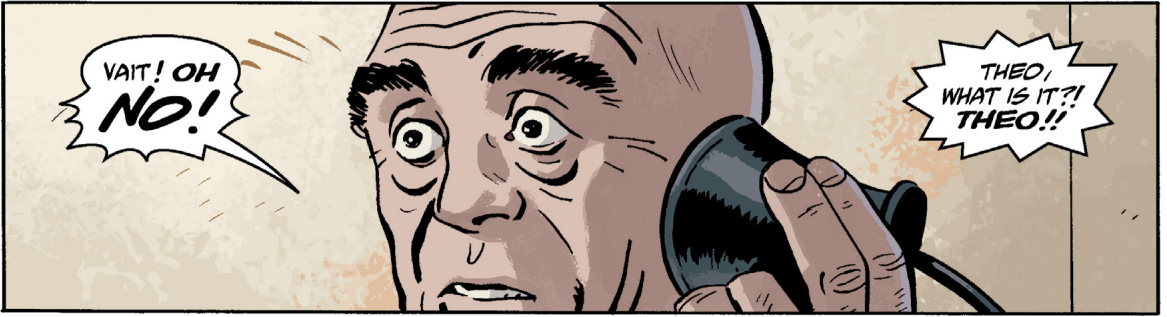
YOU WILL
SEE.

EVERY-
THING THIS
MAN KNEW,
I WILL
KNOW.









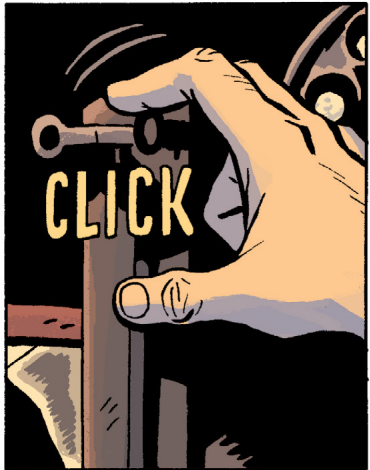


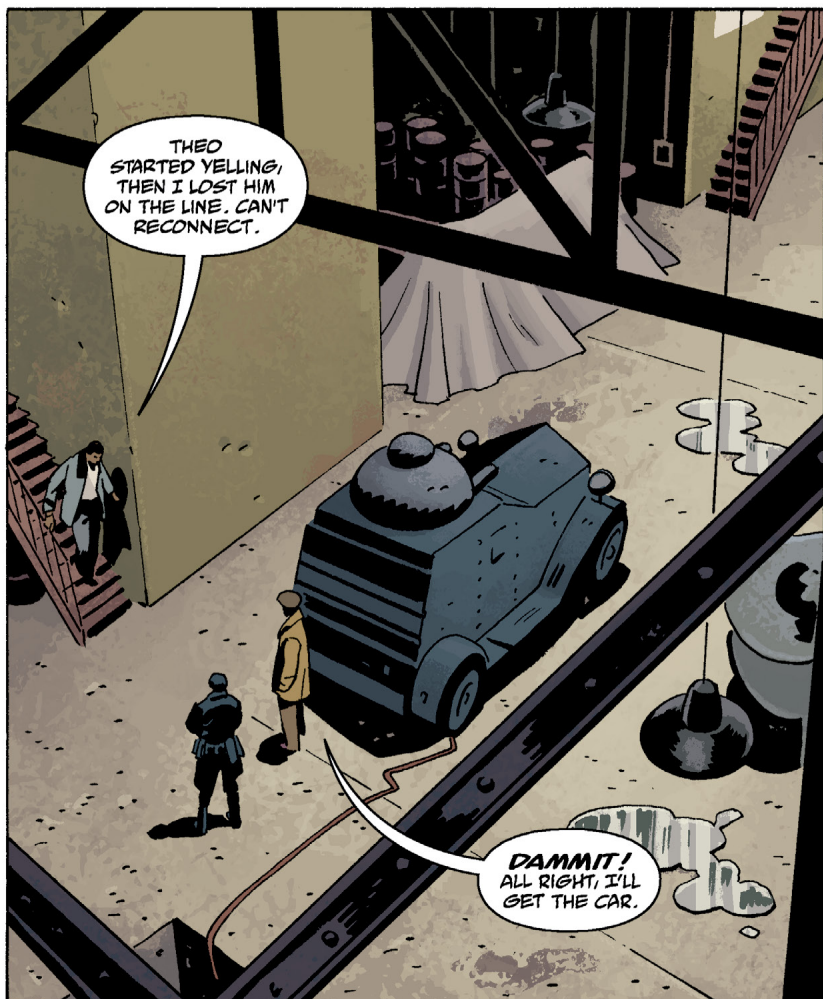
CHAPTER FOUR

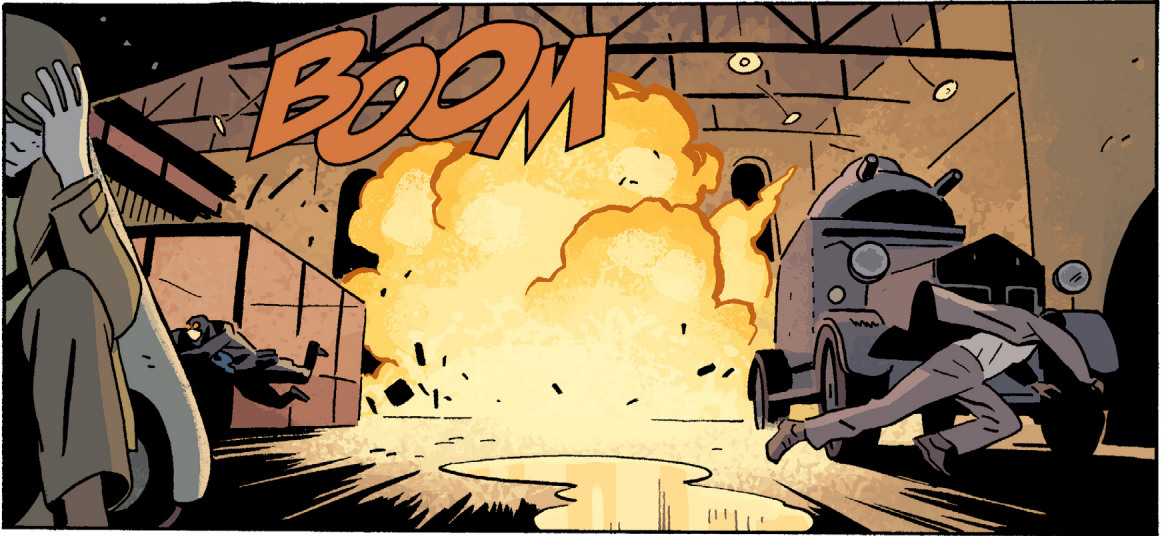
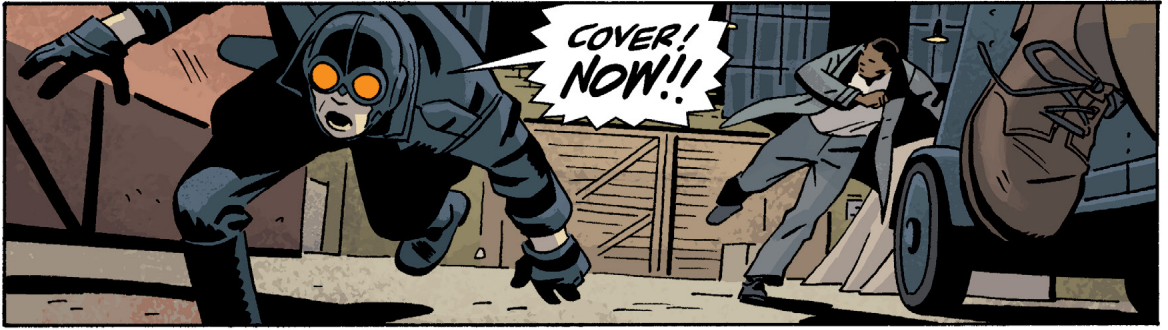


THE BURNING HAND

JOHNSON







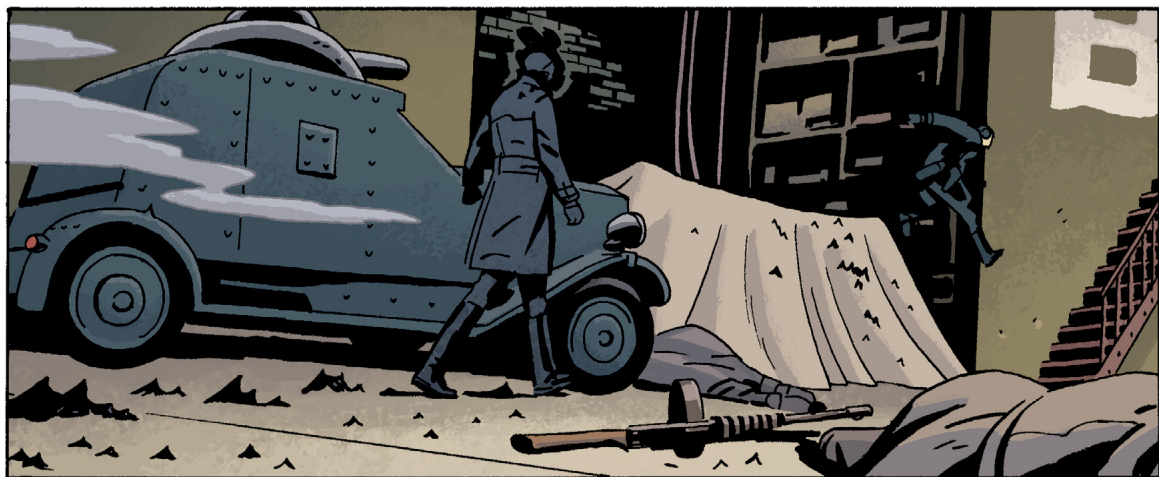


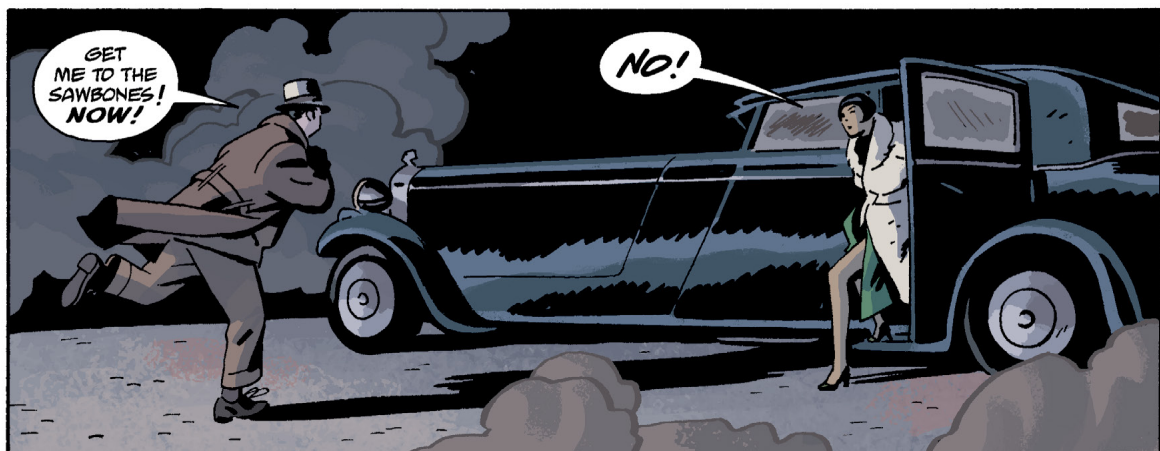




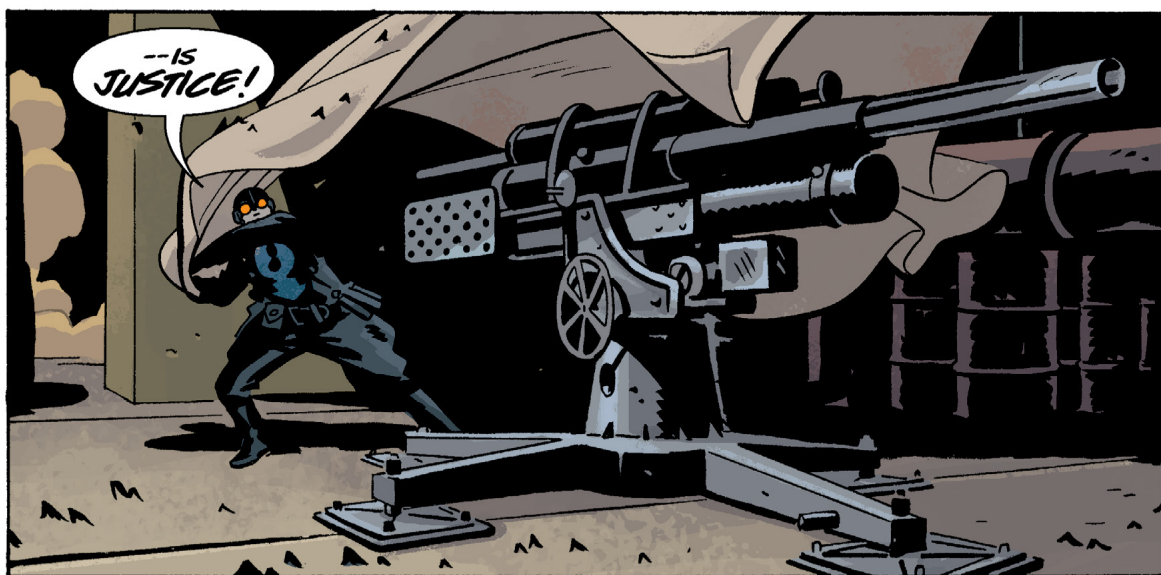
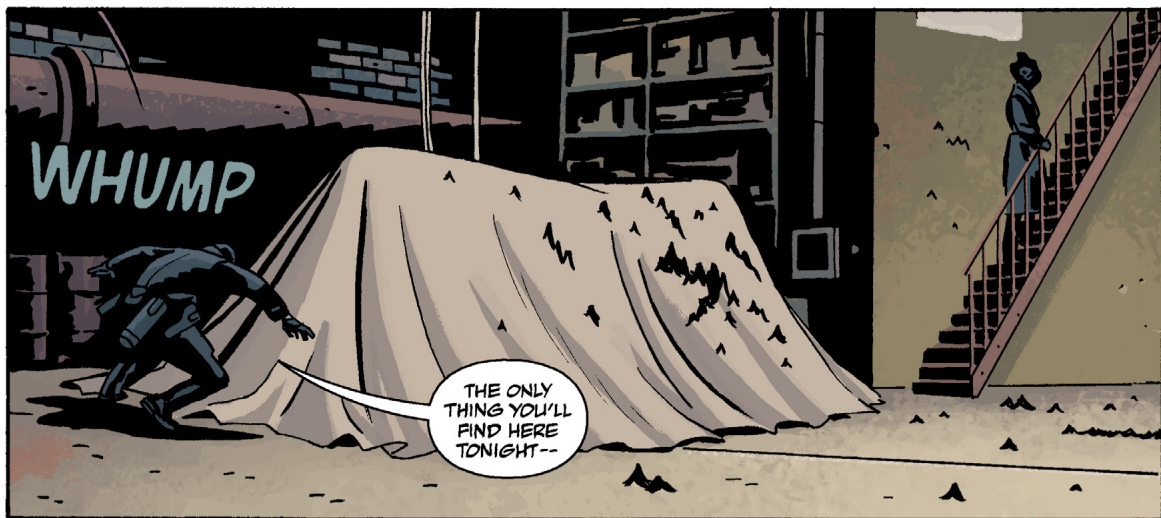


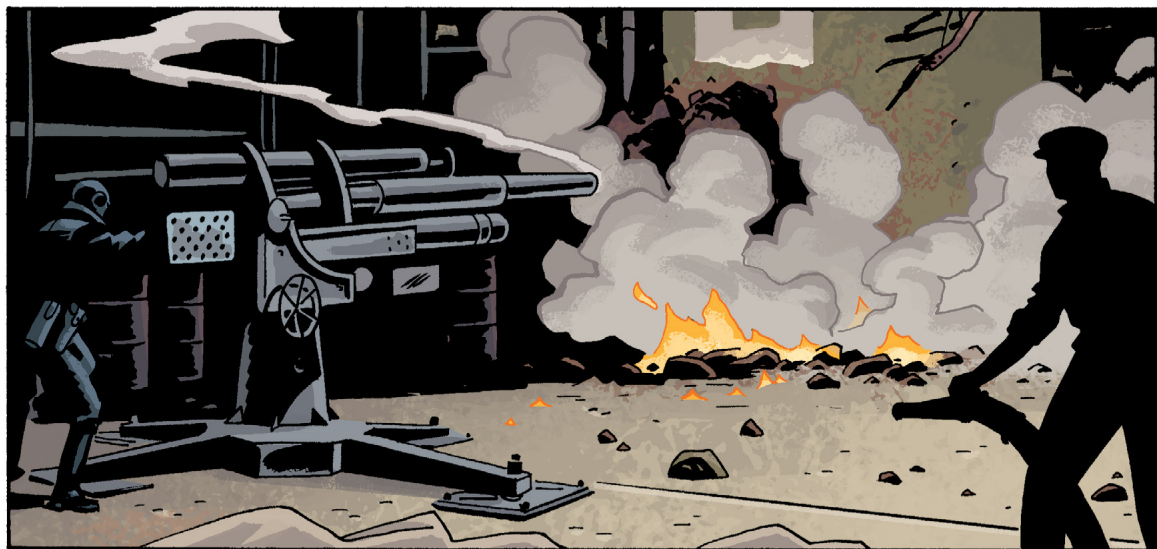








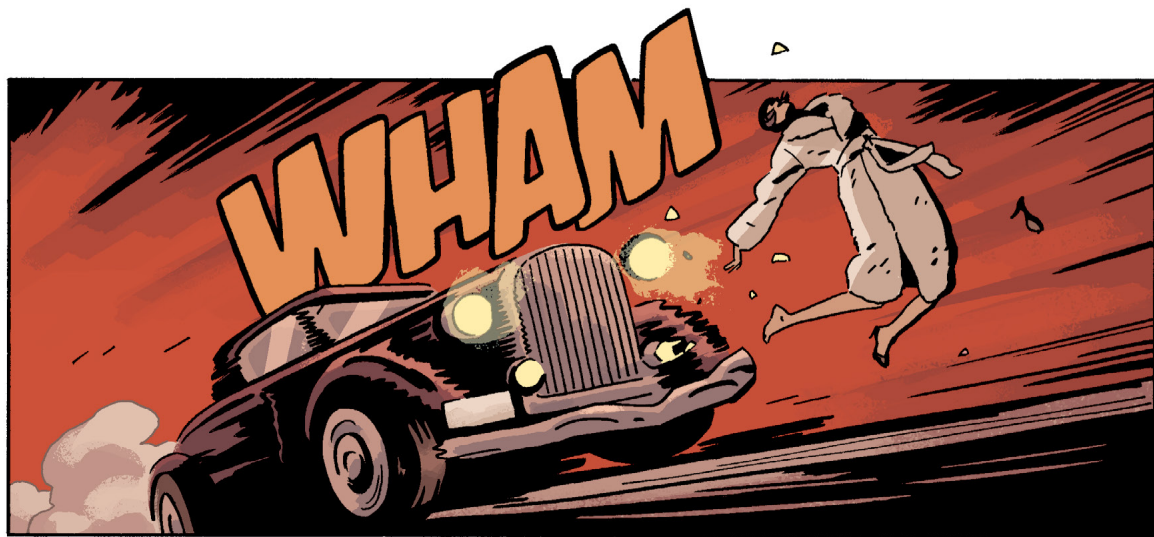


















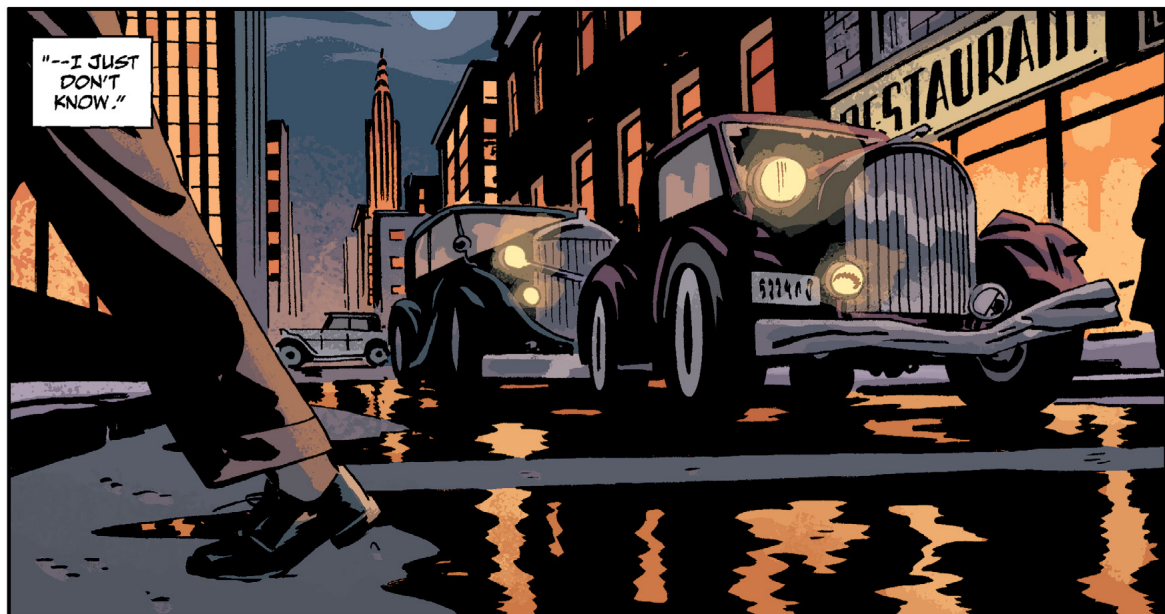
CHAPTER FIVE



THE BURNING HAND

JOHNSON





"--I JUST
DON'T
KNOW."



--RUNNING
ALL OVER,
BECAUSE WHO
WOULDN'T?
IT WAS
CHAOS.

AND THAT LITTLE GUY
JUST STOOD THERE,
WATCHING THE BUILDING
CRUMBLE AND THE
FIRE LIKE--WELL,
LIKE HE WASN'T
SURPRISED.



AND WHEN HE GOT
INTO HIS CAR, HIS
FACE JUST LOOKED
FAMILIAR. I'D SEEN
IT BEFORE, BUT
NOT SURE
WHERE.

SO I FOLLOWED
HIM--WELL, MY
CABBY DID--AT
GUNPOINT. NOT
REALLY PROUD
OF THAT...



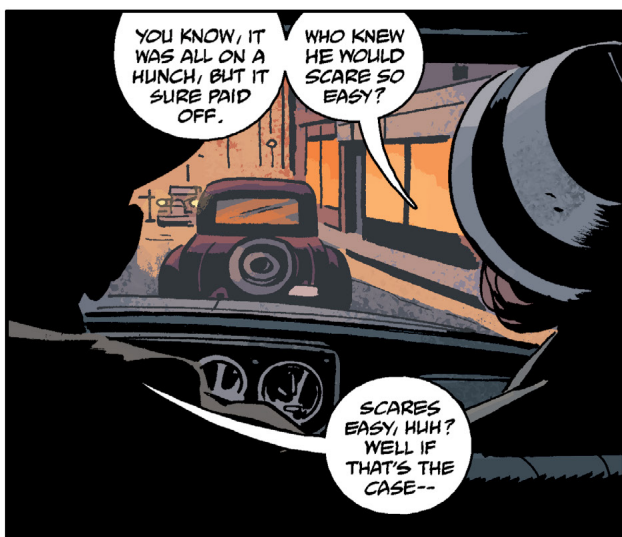
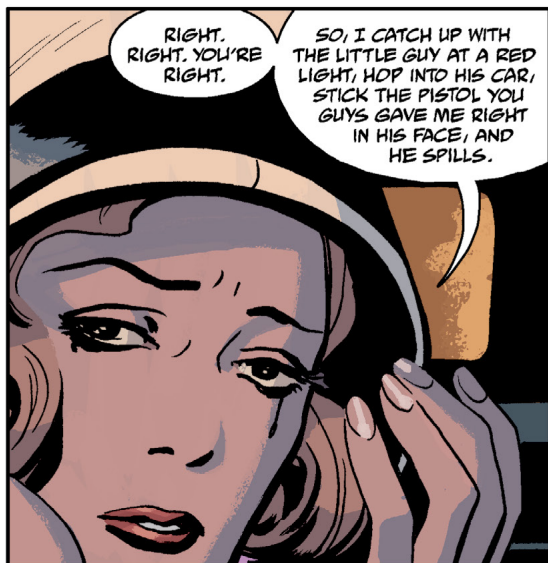
I **AM** SORRY ABOUT
THEO. I WAS RIGHT,
WASN'T I? NOBODY
IN THE HOTEL
MADE IT OUT.

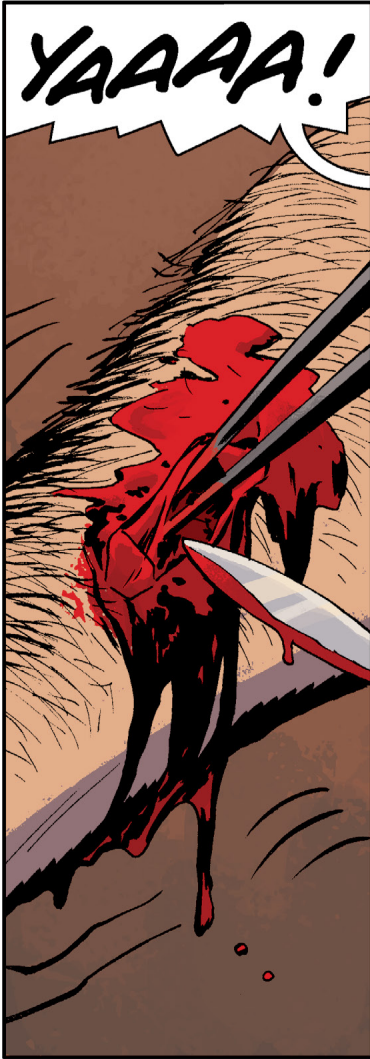
NOT A SOUL.
OUR MOLE IN
THE N.Y.P.D.
CONFIRMS
IT.



POOR THEO.
LEAST HE NEVER
KNEW WHAT HIT
HIM.

I KEEP
THINKING, IF I
HADN'T SLIPPED
OUT, OR HADN'T
MADE A DECOY
OUT OF
PILLOWS--









I DIDN'T KNOW THEY HAD PLACES LIKE THIS IN BROOKLYN.

AWFUL SHOWY FOR A HIDE-OUT.

WALD'S GOT PLACES LIKE THIS ALL OVER THE CITY, ACTUALLY--



--BUT **THIS** ONE'S "HOME SWEET HOME" TONIGHT, RIGHT?

TH-TH-THAT'S CORRECT.

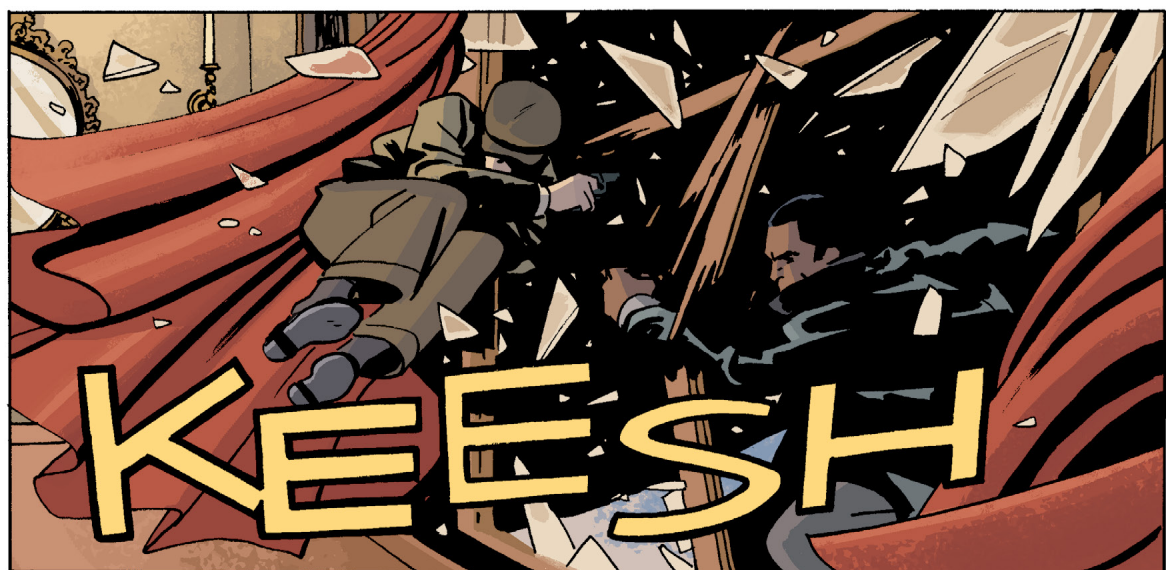


SOMEONE NEEDS TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU DON'T WANT ME IN THERE WITH YOU. FINE.



BUT THIS SILLY LITTLE IVER JOHNSON HAS GOT TO GO.





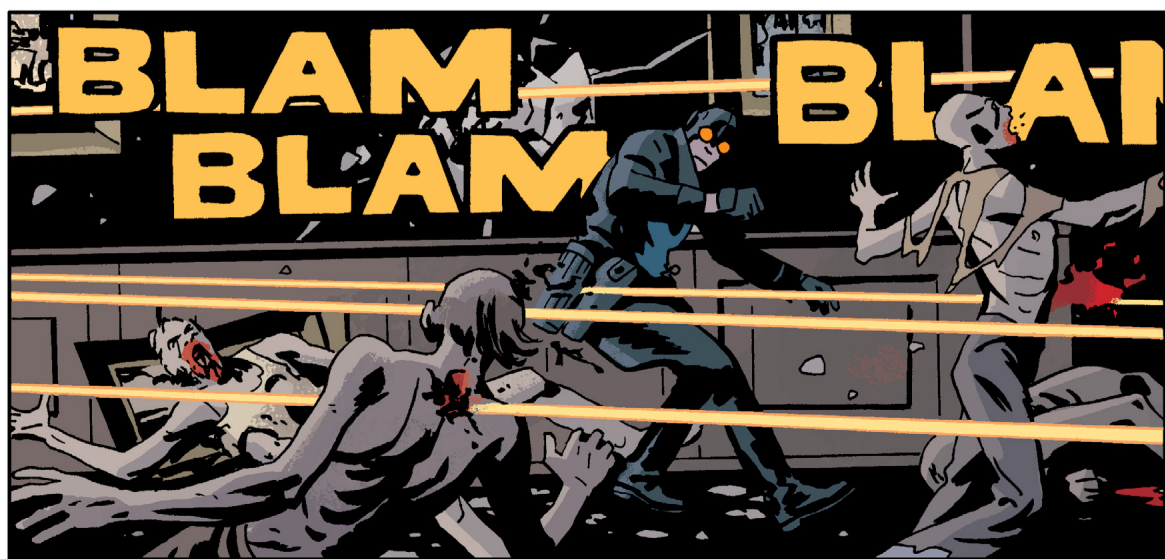


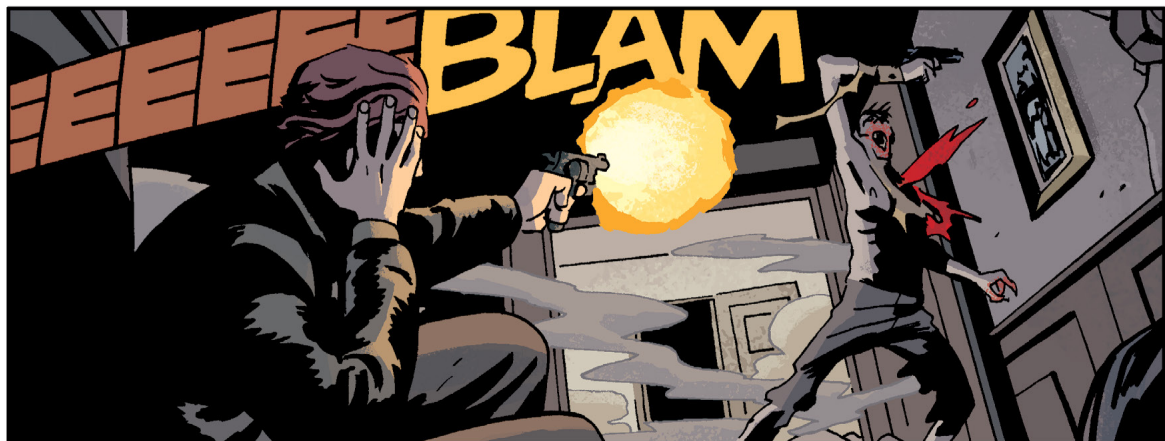












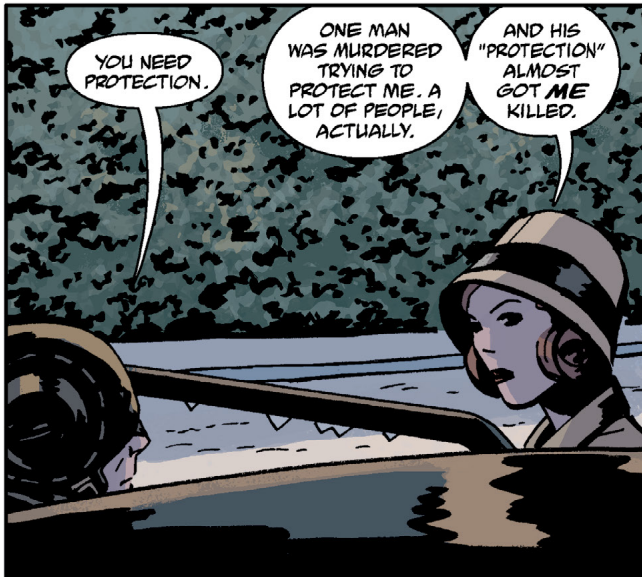




THEY KNOW THE HOTEL BOMB DIDN'T KILL YOU. YOU'RE IN MORE DANGER THAN EVER.

WE'LL FIND A PLACE FOR--

UH-UH!



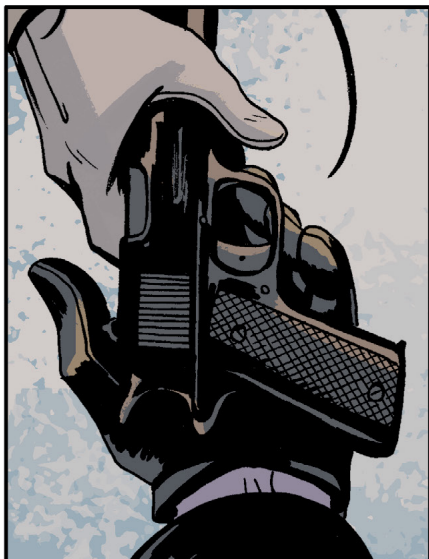
YOU NEED PROTECTION.

ONE MAN WAS MURDERED TRYING TO PROTECT ME. A LOT OF PEOPLE, ACTUALLY.

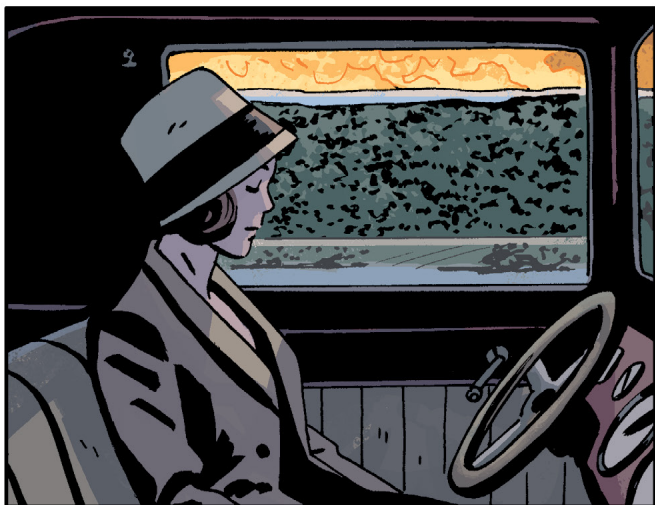
AND HIS "PROTECTION" ALMOST GOT ME KILLED.



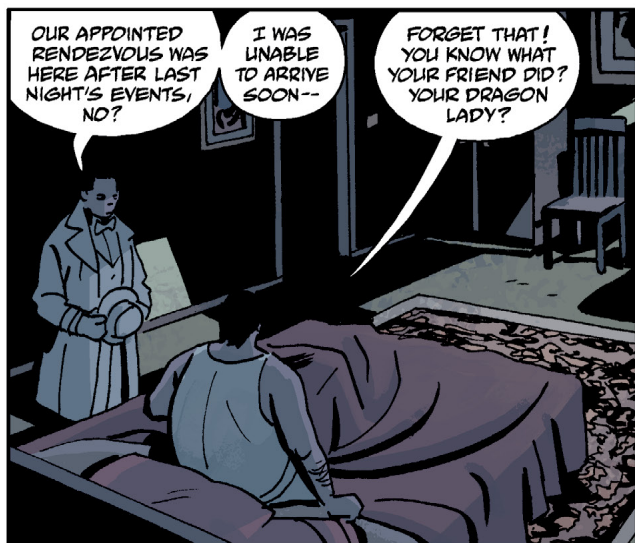
I LIKED THEO. A LOT. IT WASN'T HIS FAULT.



I JUST DON'T THINK YOU'RE AS GOOD AT THIS CRIME-FIGHTING THING AS YOU THINK YOU ARE.







OUR APPPOINTED RENDEZVOUS WAS HERE AFTER LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS, NO?

I WAS UNABLE TO ARRIVE SOON--

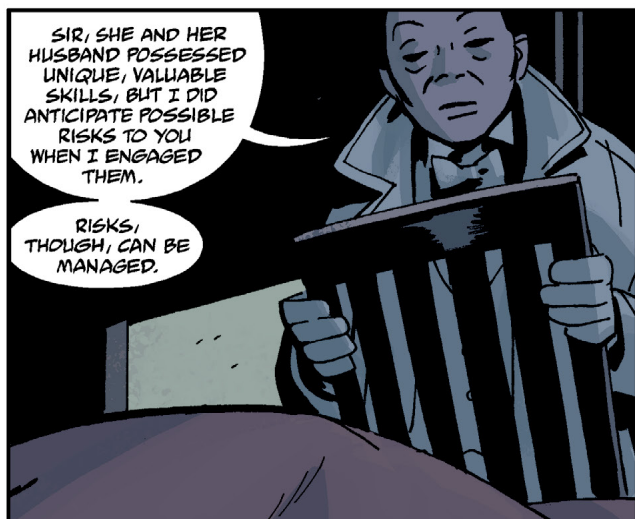
FORGET THAT! YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR FRIEND DID? YOUR DRAGON LADY?



I AM ALMOST CERTAIN SHE MADE SOME SORT OF ATTEMPT AT A COUP D'É--

--AT A POWER PLAY.

WHAT? YOU SAYING YOU **KNEW** WHAT SHE WAS UP TO?



SIR, SHE AND HER HUSBAND POSSESSED UNIQUE, VALUABLE SKILLS, BUT I DID ANTICIPATE POSSIBLE RISKS TO YOU WHEN I ENGAGED THEM.

RISKS, THOUGH, CAN BE MANAGED.



WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

MISS KAMALA IS DEAD.

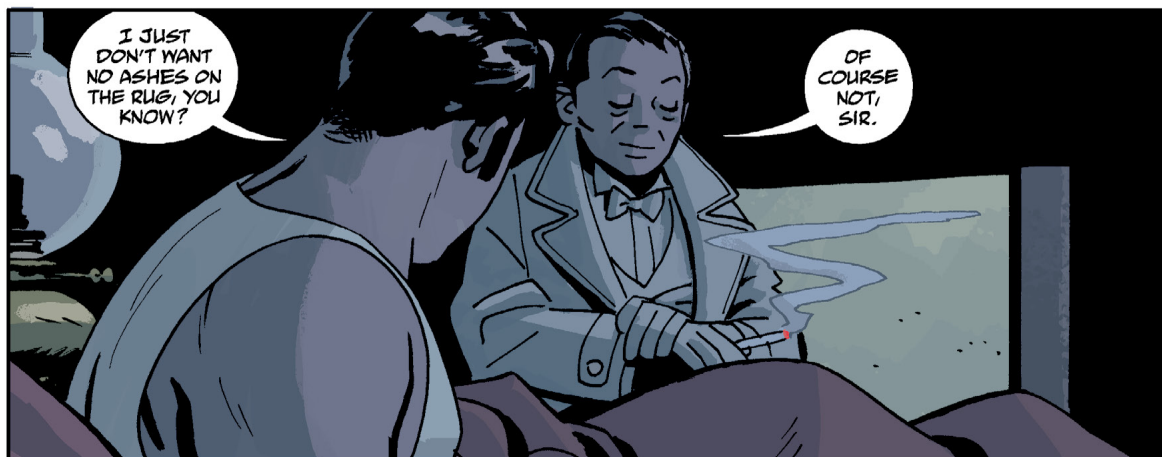


HER HUSBAND, "THE BLACK FLAME," ALSO IS NOT A THREAT TO US ANYMORE.

AND... **YOU** DID THAT?



YES, SIR.





LOBSTER JOHNSON™

SKETCHBOOK

Notes by Tonci Zonjic



I'm not sure when I did this drawing, but I have this thought a lot. When you're drawing issue #5, the first one could've just as well been drawn by somebody else.

THE LOBSTER



Mike's model sheet for the character.

A detail of the pencils. For the most part, they were too precious—no need for so much detail when you're inking it yourself, really. As the series progressed, the pencils got a bit looser. It took me a long time to figure out how to draw this book.





Fake con sketches. Since I live too far away for any conventions (Croatia), these were done in my living room, for a few friends and fans. This is what I would do at a con (I hope)—and until then I provide a Polaroid of the top of my head for the full convention experience.



FR 11

Also a very early, rough drawing. It's getting a bit closer to the way Lobster Johnson looked in the book, but still very loose. This was also before I'd looked at what a Colt .45 1911 looks like.

Facing: Another fake con sketch, for a friend. This was drawn toward the end of the book, so you can see the changes in the Lobster's figure and in my approach. Also, that's a real gun there now.

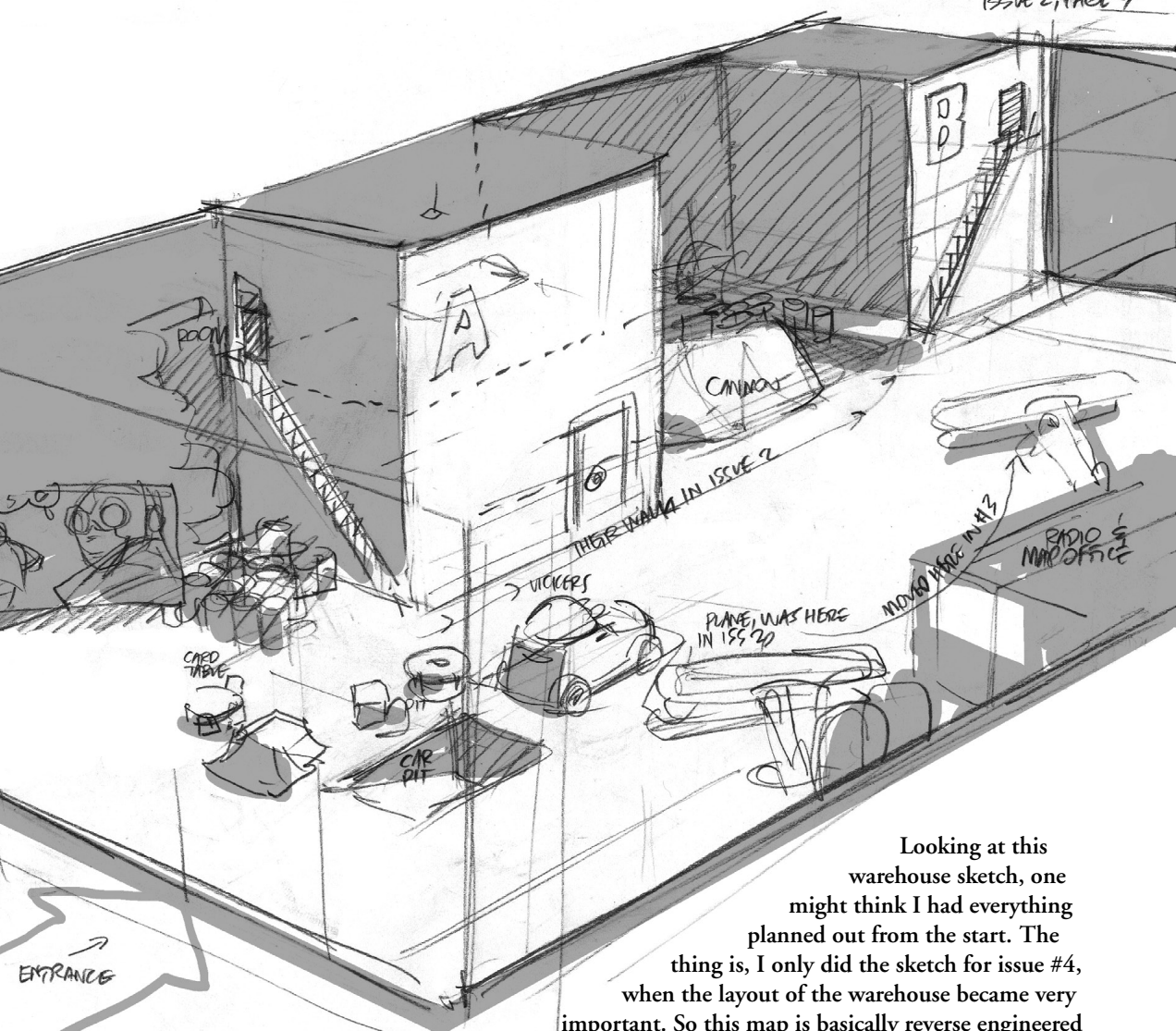


TO
2011



FE

HEI GUAN!



Looking at this warehouse sketch, one might think I had everything planned out from the start. The thing is, I only did the sketch for issue #4, when the layout of the warehouse became very important. So this map is basically reverse engineered from all the panels that came before it. For the most part, it matched up. Some things didn't, like the airplane (see note in the sketch). Lesson learned!



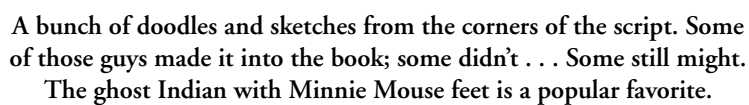
10

As pencils got looser, layouts got tighter. For issue #5 they became a bit too much, as you can see. Pretty, but a bit of a time waste. Ideally, I'd ink straight over these.

Funny fact: "BLAM" could read as "SHAME" in Croatian, which makes working on the sound effects a bit surreal at times. Better get it right!

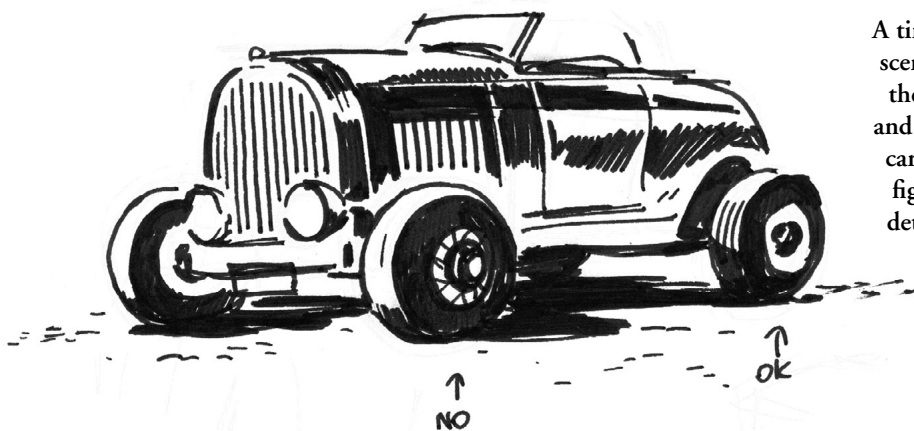
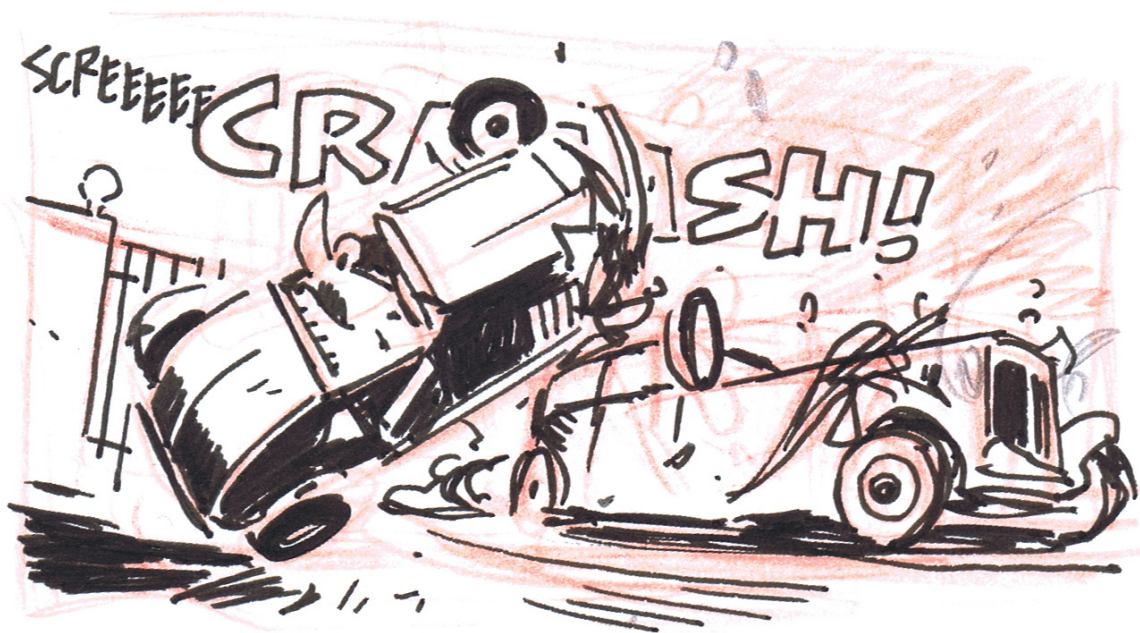
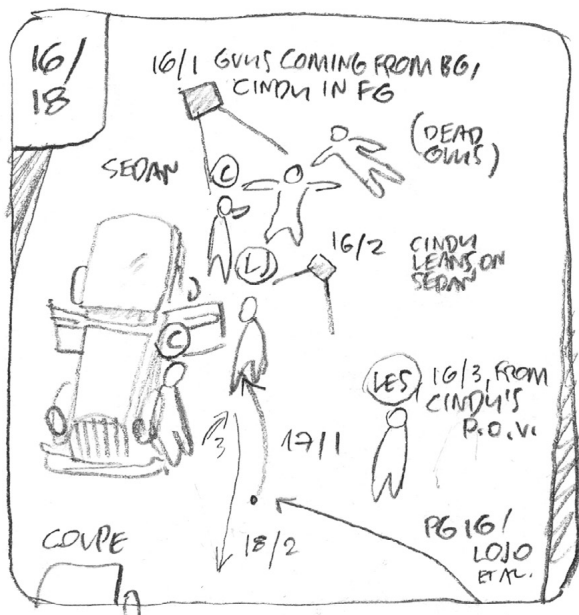


11



The ghost Indian with Minnie Mouse feet is a popular favorite.

More planning. Half the time I blithely wander into a scene and wing it, and the other half I overplan it—this was the latter case. I wanted it to be accurate and had problems holding it all in my head, so this was basically a “shooting” plan for three pages: who walks where and when, and where the “camera” is. It might seem nuts, but it really saved a lot of time, and while I had problems visualizing it, by the time I was done, I could see that John had a very clear scene in his mind while he was writing it.



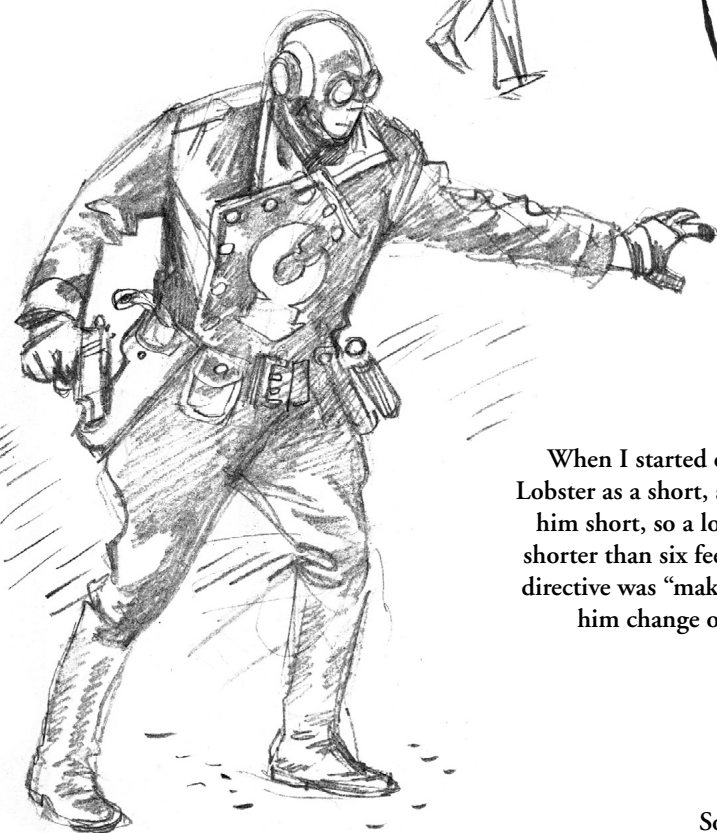
A tiny thumbnail car-crash scene, which made it into the final art unchanged, and a sketch for Massimo's car back when I was still figuring out how much detail to put in the inks.



PROBABLY
SHORT



The only sketch I ever did for Massimo. Didn't need any more. Some characters take dozens; some take one.



When I started on the book, I had an image of Lobster as a short, stocky fellow. I'd always imagined him short, so a lot of the early sketches have him shorter than six feet. During the series the constant directive was "make him a bit taller," so you can see him change over the course of five issues.

Some hats. Should've done more.





How do you draw black flame?
And how do you do it when it's
surrounded by darkness?



Another tiny early doodle, similar to
the scene at the end of issue #1.



I'm a huge fan of Roy Crane and Noel Sickles, both masters of Ben Day toning, both working during the time *The Burning Hand* takes place. This was a way to imagine how it might've looked if it'd been published back then.

Facing: A sketch of Cindy done on a piece of scrap paper. It turned out well, so I gave it the digital treatment. It's a strange blend of design from that era and from today.



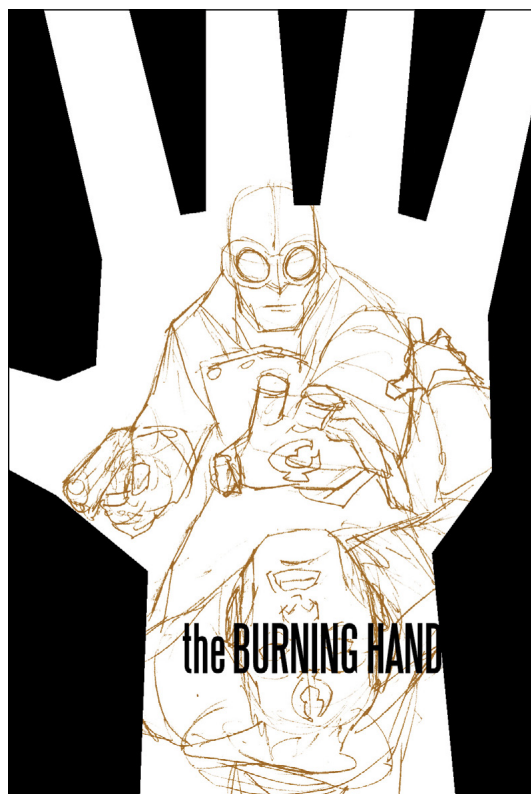


CINDY TYNAN

REPORTER,
HERALD TRIBUNE

(C) DARK HORSE COMICS

TO
11



Dave Johnson's first two cover sketches (top). Mike wanted to see Lobster Johnson on the cover, leading to the sketch on the bottom right, and the final issue #1 cover.



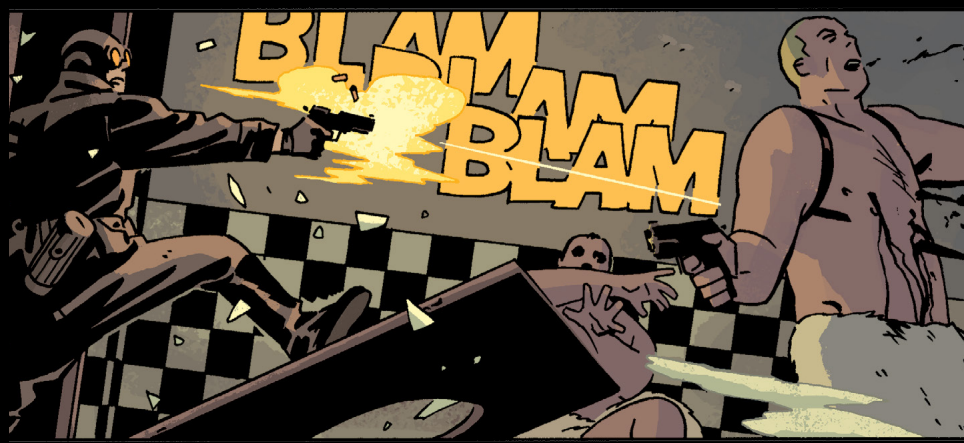


This page and following: Mike's variant covers for issues #1 and #4, part of the Year of Monsters cover series spanning all his various comics.



"Lobster Johnson seems like the sort of deus ex machina hero who will watch and wait and provide the necessary thrills to justify every cent spent on this comic. Old and new alike, step up to *Lobster Johnson: The Burning Hand* and enjoy yourself." —Comic Book Resources

"Zonjic knows how to draw crime comics with the best of them." —ComicsAlliance



When a tribe of ghostly Indians start scalping city policemen, *Hellboy's* crime-fighting hero Lobster Johnson and his allies arrive to take on these new foes and their gangster cronies!



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