

HELLBOY™



CONQUEROR WORM

MIKE MIGNOLA

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CONQUEROR WORM

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MIKE MIGNOLA IS A GENIUS

An unapologetically subjective introduction

by GUILLERMO DEL TORO

Yes, Mike Mignola is a genius.

Right off the bat, we can agree on it. That's what makes writing an intro like this so easy. Especially if you were—like me—a groveling fan already. After all, Mike Mignola conjured up a perfect character in Hellboy, and his latest adventure, *Conqueror Worm*, is compelling and beautiful.

Nosiree, Bob. No problem: this introduction—like all of its kind—will merely point the reader to a few more reasons for grovelling at the feet of a comic-book demi-God like Mr. Mignola, here.

As a naïve young geek, I was fascinated by Mignola's legendary inking and penciling. I leafed through the art and drooled over the sensuous lines, bathed in those deep pools of blackness that appear in most every vignette Mike creates. And, like many heathens, I thought for a few issues that Hellboy was wearing goggles on his forehead. Then, at the end of *Wake the Devil*—when his horns sprout out—I realized what they were. I hurried back and actually re-read every story, searching out those issues that I was missing.

I was hooked. Or rather, I fell in love. Truly, madly, deeply in love.

As a matter of fact, my rediscovery of *Hellboy* is one of the happiest memories I have of shooting *Mimic* in Toronto. In spite of a grueling schedule, I often found myself waiting patiently for Silver Snail Comics to open. Once inside, I would browse through the bins hoping for a *Dark Horse Presents* issue that I somehow had missed. I loved reading a newly-found issue at 5:00 A.M. while my family slept and I prepared to storyboard that day's scenes.

I humbly confess that many a time I have aspired to imitate Mignola's mysterious style in the design of my films, especially the cold, velvet back-drop of darkness from which his characters emerge. Alas, his hyper-expressionistic lighting is—I've found out—almost impossible to reproduce in a 3-D world.

And then there are the moments of quiet, almost elegiac horror juxtaposed with a kinetic energy only hinted at by the best of Kirby. And then—and then—above all!—an irritating simplicity.

A perfect, effortless line that reduces all us

amateur illustrators to nothing but salivating Salieris prostrate before a Mozart symphony.

A few years ago, I had the pleasure of developing a *Hellboy* screenplay. I tried to honor and expand upon the universe created by Mike in his series and in his masterful short stories.

Mike's body of work is firmly anchored in the comic-book and literary traditions of Machen, Lovecraft, Toth, and Kirby. Yet what has been emerging from them is a species all its own.

In discussing the characters with Mike, I suggested that their fascinating, comforting immutability would need to yield to a more three-dimensional dramatic approach. In addition, a complete, self-contained screen drama would need to tie things up a bit more in the end.

I say this without a hint of criticism, for we work in parallel but separate arenas. In the illustrated stories, Mike finds a way to give us a calm, unfazed Hellboy, a quiet, always dignified Abe (my favorite character), or a tormented, almost biblical Rasputin.

And now ... now ... *Conqueror Worm* gives us something new, something more subtle and complete. We finally get an explanation of those Kirbyesque aliens in *Seed of Destruction*. At last, Hellboy lashes out at his benign captors at the BPRD. Lobster Johnson's origin and feats are expanded upon. In my fevered reading, all the characters seem more nuanced and evocative. Hell, even Roger the Homunculus becomes a brooding, almost Miltonian figure, conflicted by his origins and searching for an identity and purpose in life. Kriegaffe aside, the only character who remains delightfully one-dimensional is Lobster Johnson, and with a crazy-ass name like that, we shouldn't ask for more.

So, move in and explore these pages. They draw us into a deeper, richer universe; they crown all past work and signal a new promising future for the character, all while still giving us the pulp beauty, cheap thrills, and cosmic horrors that have become Mignola's signature.

A work of genius.


(Did I already mention that Mike Mignola is a genius?)

For Doc Savage, the Shadow,
the Spider, G-8, and the men who wrote them.
And for the original 11 1/2-inch G.I. Joe.

CHAPTER ONE







LO! 'TIS A GALA NIGHT!
WITHIN THE LONESOME
LATTER YEARS!
AN ANGEL THROG, SEWINGED,
BEDIGHT
IN VEILS, AND DROWNED IN
TEARS,
SIT IN A THEATER TO SEE
A PLAY OF HOPES AND FEARS
WHILE THE ORCHESTRA
BREATHES FITFULLY
THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.



THAT MOTLEY DRAMA! --
OH, BE SURE ...



IT SHALL NOT BE FORGOT...



WITH ITS PHANTOM CHASED
FOREVERMORE...



BY A CROWD THAT SEIZE IT NOT...



THROUGH A CIRCLE THAT
EVER RETURNETH IN ...



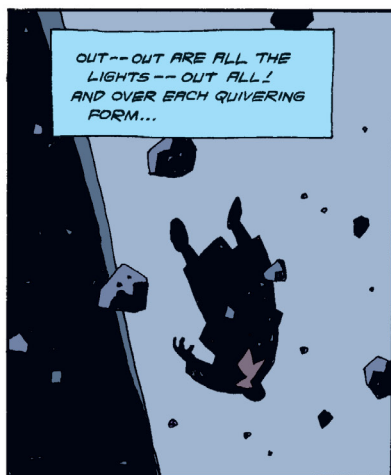
TO THE SELF-
SAME SPOT...



AND MUCH OF MADNESS
AND MORE OF SIN ...



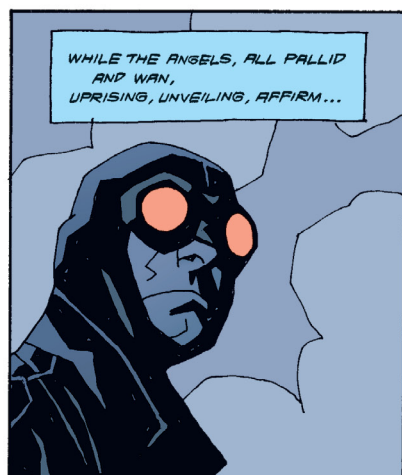
AND HORROR THE
SOUL OF THE
PLOT.



OUT--OUT ARE ALL THE
LIGHTS--OUT ALL!
AND OVER EACH QUIVERING
FORM...



THE CURTAIN, A FUNERAL
PALL,
COMES DOWN WITH THE RUSH
OF A STORM...



WHILE THE ANGELS, ALL PALLID
AND WAN,
UPRISING, UNVEILING, AFFIRM...

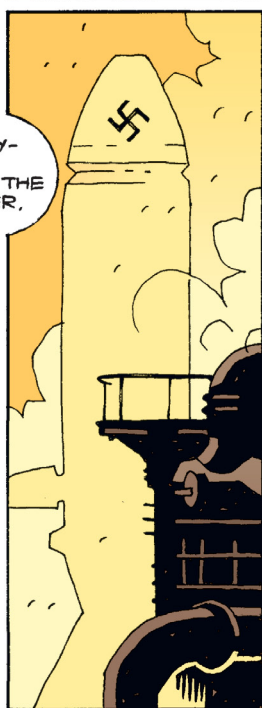


THAT THE PLAY IS THE
TRAGEDY, "MAN"...



AND ITS HERO THE
CONQUEROR WORM.*



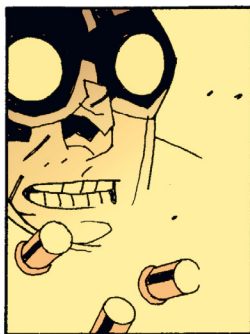
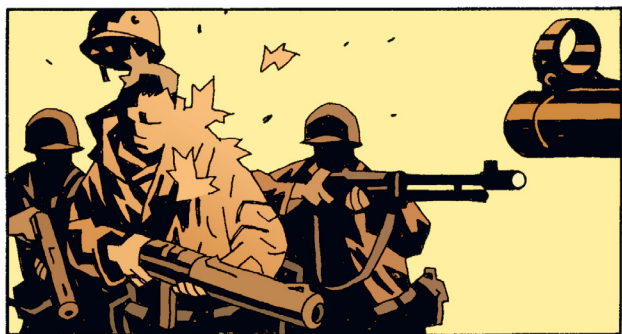
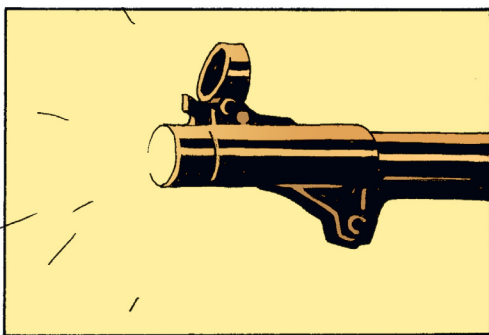




HERE
IS THE
CLAW!

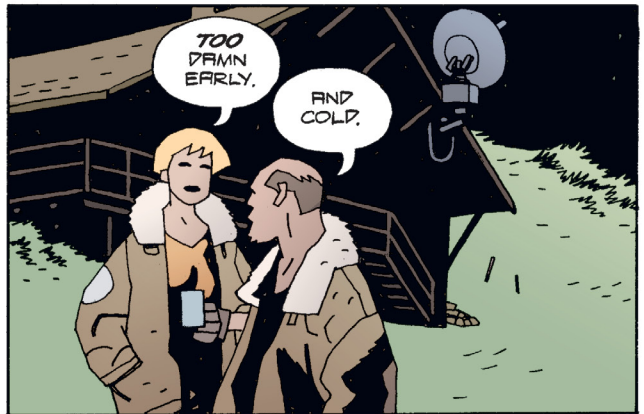


NEIN!
NEIN!



HUNTE
CASTLE,
AUSTRIA.
1939.



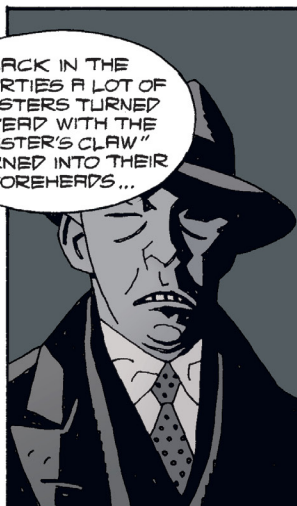






THEY WEREN'T
THAT BAD, AND
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN
FICTION?

BACK IN THE
THIRTIES A LOT OF
MOBSTERS TURNED
UP DEAD WITH THE
"LOBSTER'S CLAW"
BURNED INTO THEIR
FOREHEADS ...



VINNY THE STRING



SKINNY JOE LINCOLN



ZUKO BANANA



"...AND
THERE WERE
RUMORS
OF WEIRDER
STUFF,"

SON
OF A--

I'VE HEARD ALL
THE STORIES, BUT IT
IS THE OFFICIAL
POSITION OF THE
UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT THAT
THERE WAS NO
LOBSTER JOHNSON.
END OF STORY.



BACK TO HUNTE
CASTLE--NO ONE
KNOWS WHAT CAUSED
THE EXPLOSION AND
FIRE THERE. THE RUS-
SIANS FOUND PAPERS
IN BERLIN OUTLINING
A NAZI SPACE PRO-
GRAM, BUT NO ONE
EVER GAVE THE
THEORY ANY SERIOUS
CONSIDERATION...

...UNTIL
TWO DAYS
AGO.

NASA TOOK
THIS PICTURE OF
A COMET ON A COL-
LISION COURSE WITH
THE EARTH. IT'S NOT
ONE OF THOSE GIANT
END-OF-THE-WORLD
ONES, BUT...



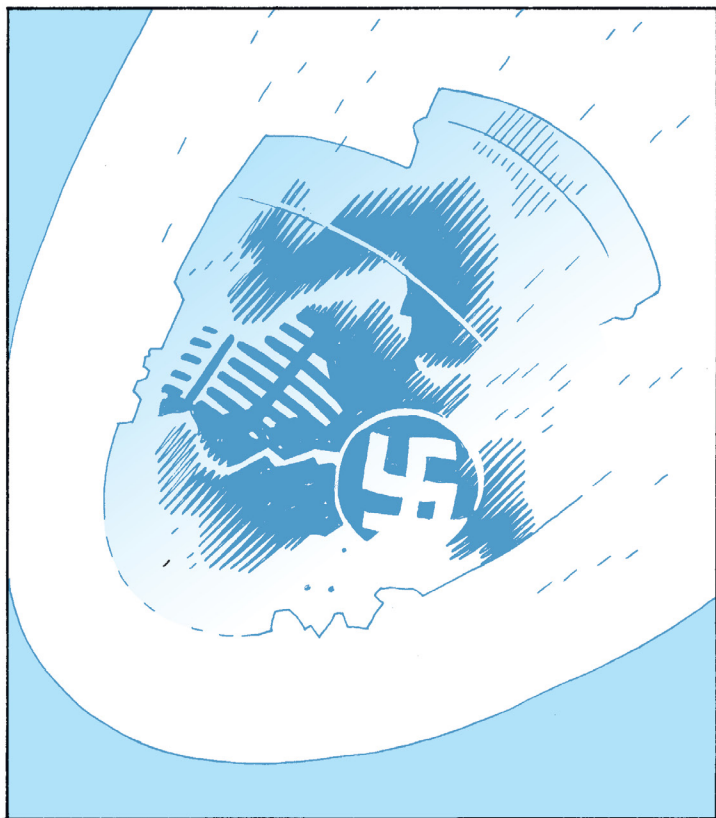
CLICK

...IF
YOU'LL
LOOK AT
THIS
ENLARGE-
MENT...

CLICK

OH
CRAP,





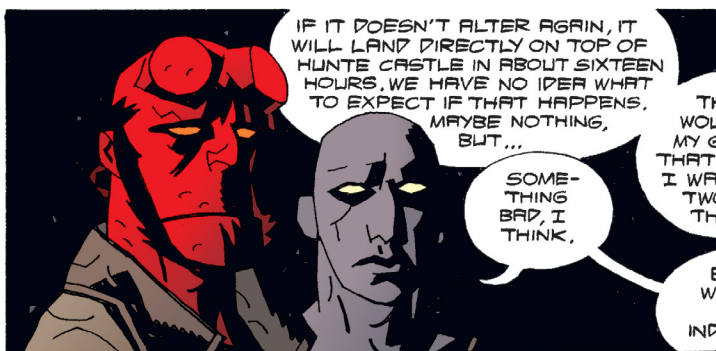
THAT'S JUST A PIECE OF JUNK, RIGHT?

THOSE IDIOTS MANAGED TO SHOOT SOMETHING INTO SPACE AND IT'S BEEN FLOATING AROUND ALL THESE YEARS, AND NOW IT'S FINALLY JUST CRASHING.

THE OBJECT HAS ALTERED COURSE THREE TIMES IN THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ...

RIGHT?

OOOH.



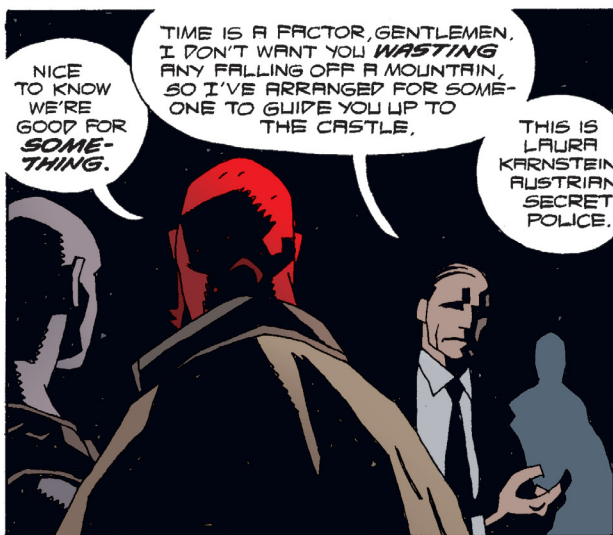
IF IT DOESN'T ALTER AGAIN, IT WILL LAND DIRECTLY ON TOP OF HUNTE CASTLE IN ABOUT SIXTEEN HOURS. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO EXPECT IF THAT HAPPENS. MAYBE NOTHING, BUT ...

SOME-THING BAD, I THINK.

THAT WOULD BE MY GUESS. THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TWO UP THERE.

BECAUSE WE ARE THE MOST... INDESTRUCTIBLE.

THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING.



NICE TO KNOW WE'RE GOOD FOR *SOME-THING*.

TIME IS A FACTOR, GENTLEMEN. I DON'T WANT YOU *WASTING* ANY FALLING OFF A MOUNTAIN, SO I'VE ARRANGED FOR SOMEONE TO GUIDE YOU UP TO THE CASTLE.

THIS IS LAURA KARNSTEIN, AUSTRIAN SECRET POLICE.



A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU BOTH.



RIGHT,

NOW, LAURA, TAKE ROGER OUTSIDE. I NEED TO TALK TO HELLBOY FOR A MINUTE. ALONE.

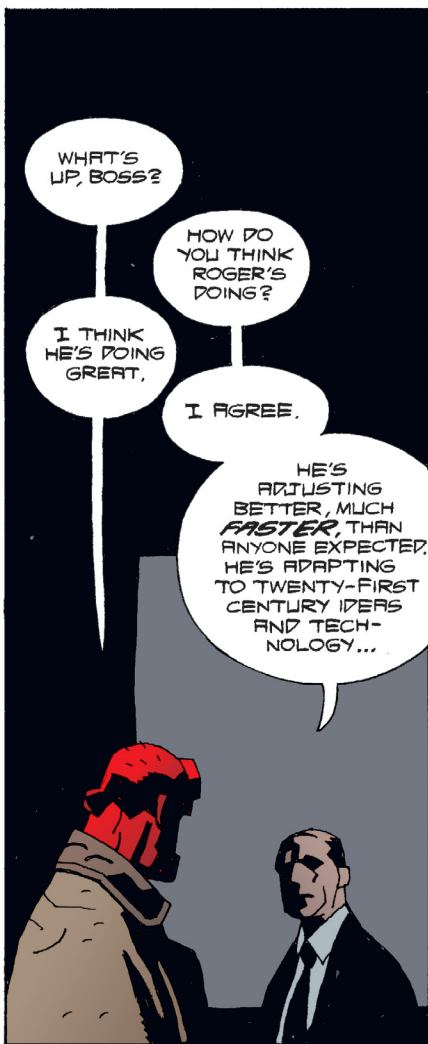


SO YOU ARE...
WHAT?
HOMUNCULUS?

CALL ME
ROGER,
PLEASE.

CUTE
COUPLE.

SOMETIMES
IT'S LIKE
WORKING FOR
THE GOD DAMN
CIRCUS.



WHAT'S
UP, BOSS?

HOW DO
YOU THINK
ROGER'S
DOING?

I THINK
HE'S DOING
GREAT.

I AGREE.

HE'S
ADJUSTING
BETTER, MUCH
FASTER, THAN
ANYONE EXPECTED.
HE'S ADAPTING
TO TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY IDEAS
AND TECH-
NOLOGY...



BUT...?



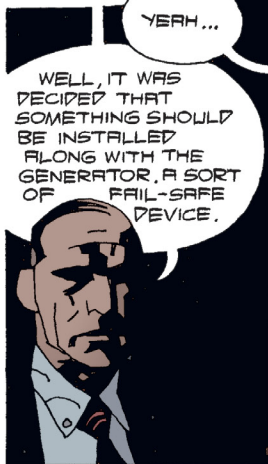
YOU KNOW THAT ABE
BURNED OUT THE SCIENCE
LAB SHOCKING ROGER BACK
TO LIFE.* YOU KNOW THAT
HIS POWER BEGAN TO FADE
AGAIN ALMOST IMMEDI-
ATELY...



* ABE SAPIEN VERSUS SCIENCE



YOU KNOW THAT HE WAS
FITTED WITH AN ELECTRONIC
GENERATOR.



YEAH...

WELL, IT WAS
DECIDED THAT
SOMETHING SHOULD
BE INSTALLED
ALONG WITH THE
GENERATOR, A SORT
OF FAIL-SAFE
DEVICE.



EXCUSE
ME?



AN INCENDIARY
BOMB JUST LARGE
ENOUGH TO--



**EXCUSE
ME?!?**



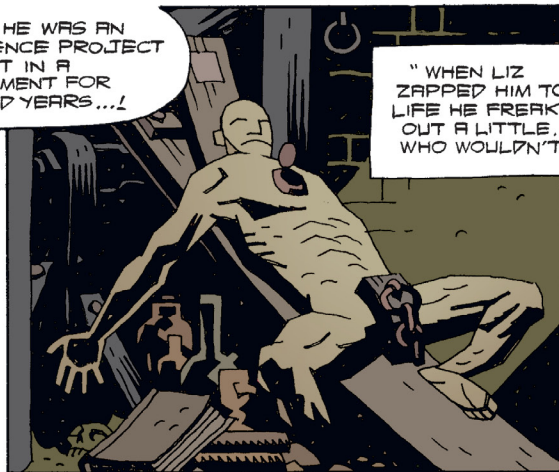
WE HAD NO
CHOICE! HE KILLED
BUD WALLER AND
SUCKED THE LIFE
OUT OF LIZ
SHERMAN.*



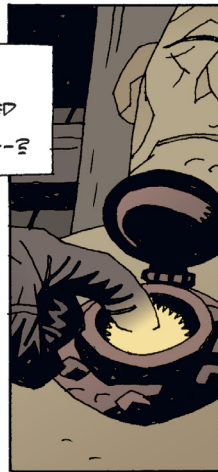
NO.

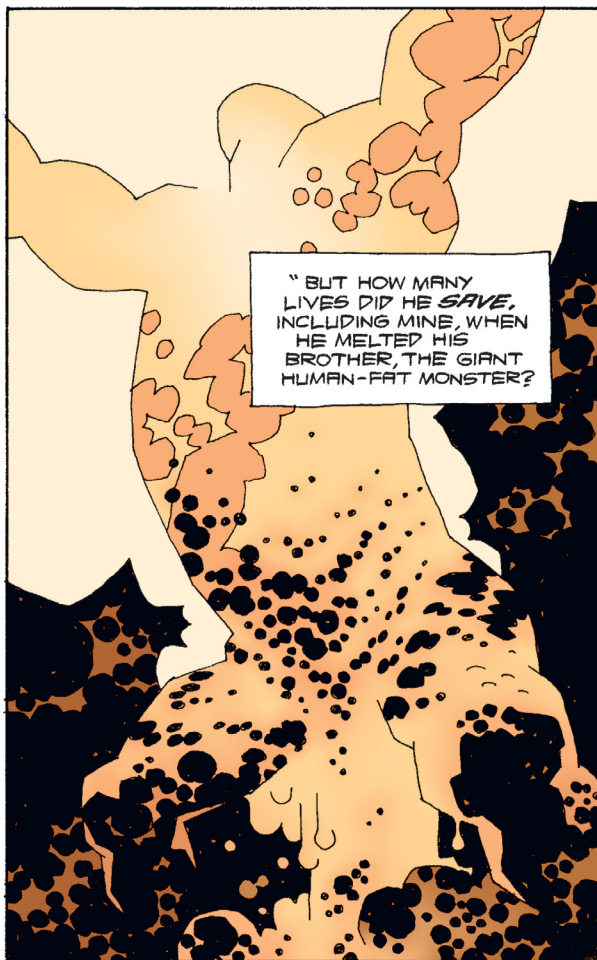


JESUS CHRIST, HE WAS AN
ABANDONED SCIENCE PROJECT
GATHERING DUST IN A
ROMANIAN BASEMENT FOR
FIVE HUNDRED YEARS...!



"WHEN LIZ
ZAPPED HIM TO
LIFE HE FREAKED
OUT A LITTLE.
WHO WOULDN'T--?"

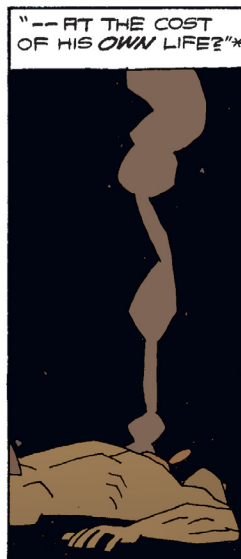




"BUT HOW MANY LIVES DID HE *SAVE*, INCLUDING MINE, WHEN HE MELTED HIS BROTHER, THE GIANT HUMAN-FAT MONSTER?"



"THEN DIDN'T HE *VOLUNTARILY* ZAP LIZ BACK TO LIFE--"



"--AT THE COST OF HIS *OWN* LIFE?"*



"I'M SICK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO BLVD, SO IS ROGER. I KNOW IT, BUT THIS SORT OF THING *HAPPENS* IN THIS LINE OF WORK."

"LIZ SHERMAN IS ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS..."



"...BUT WHEN SHE WAS ELEVEN YEARS OLD SHE BURNED THIRTY-TWO PEOPLE TO DEATH..."



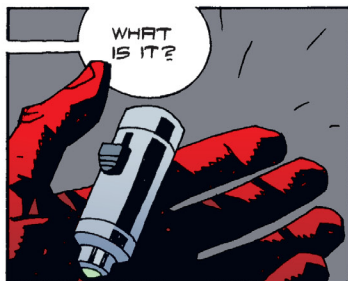
"WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO PUT A BOMB ON *HER*?"

"DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. LIZ SHERMAN IS HUMAN, ROGER IS NOT."

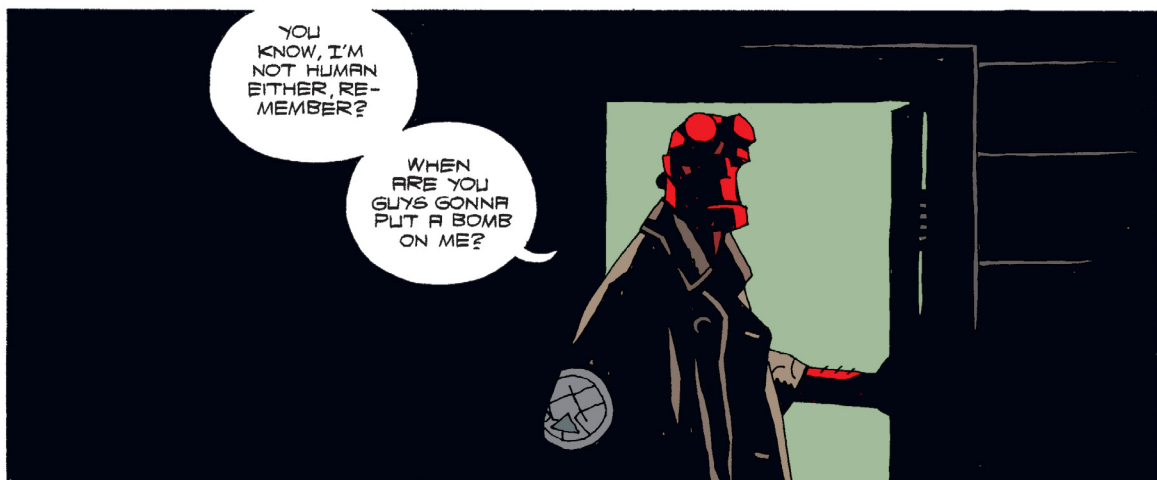
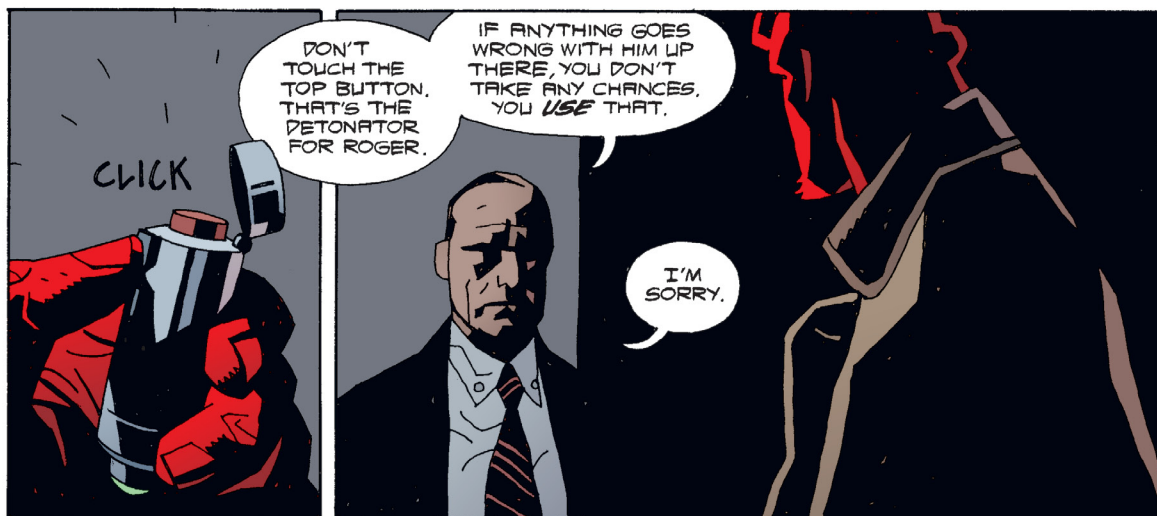
"I DON'T LIKE THIS ANY MORE THAN YOU DO, I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT *I'VE* BEEN TOLD-- ROGER CAN NOT BE ALLOWED TO JEOPARDIZE OTHER AGENTS. HE IS CONSIDERED EXPENDABLE."



"TAKE THIS."



"WHAT IS IT?"





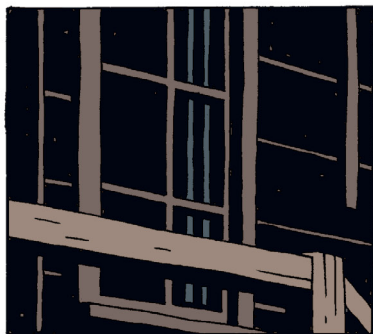
HOW
ARE YOU
GUYS
DOING?

OH,
WE'RE
GOOD. GOOD
FRIENDS.

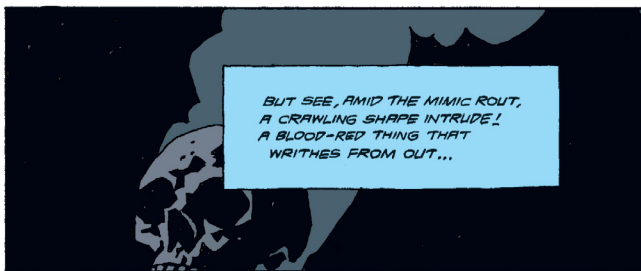
YOU
READY
TO CLIMB
NOW?



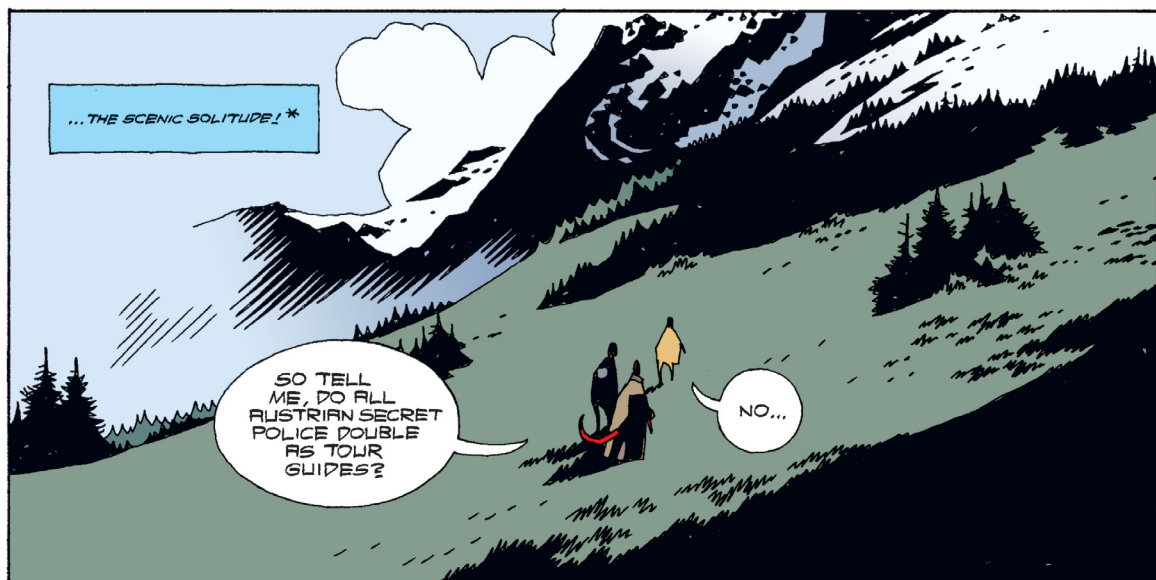
YEAH. LET'S
GET THE
HELL OUT OF
HERE.



WHAT
THE--?



BUT SEE, AMID THE MIMIC ROUT,
A CRAWLING SHAPE INTRUDE!
A BLOOD-RED THING THAT
WRITHES FROM OUT...



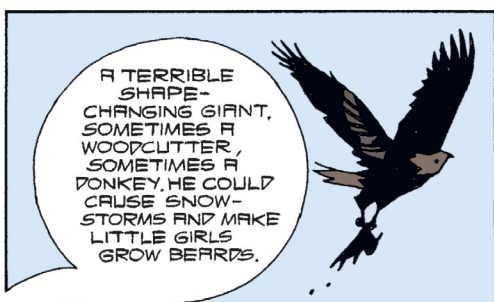
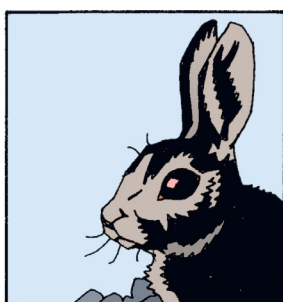
...THE SCENIC SOLITUDE! *

SO TELL ME, DO ALL AUSTRIAN SECRET POLICE DOUBLE AS TOUR GUIDES?

NO...



THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH POLICE.



A TERRIBLE SHAPE-CHANGING GIANT, SOMETIMES A WOODCUTTER, SOMETIMES A DONKEY, HE COULD CAUSE SNOW-STORMS AND MAKE LITTLE GIRLS GROW BEARDS.



I WAS BORN IN A LITTLE VILLAGE NEAR HERE.

ALL THE CHILDREN USED TO CLIMB IN THESE MOUNTAINS.

SO YOU'VE BEEN UP TO THE CASTLE?

WHEN I WAS LITTLE.

THE OTHERS WOULDN'T GO THERE BECAUSE OF THE RÜBEZAHN.

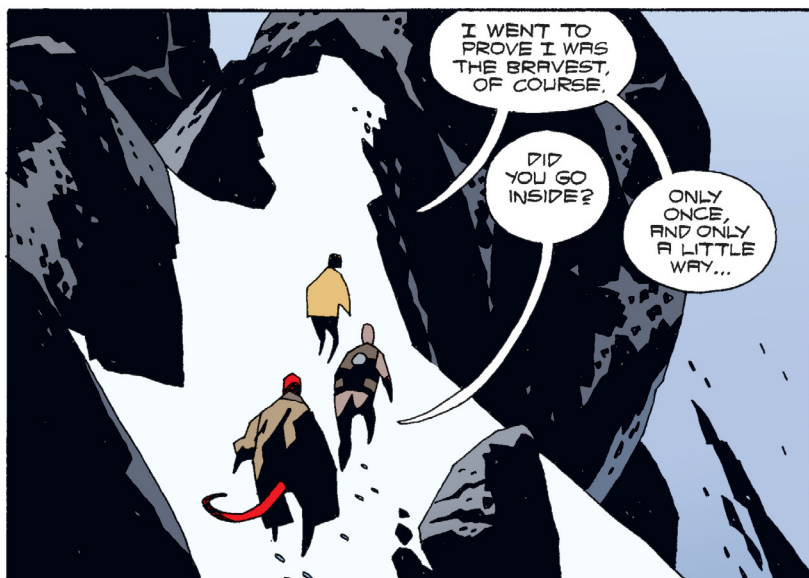
RÜBE-WHO?



WE THOUGHT THE CASTLE WAS *HIS* SO WE WERE AFRAID OF IT.

MY BROTHER WAS A GIANT.

LAURA, YOU WERE AFRAID, BUT YOU *DID* GO TO THE CASTLE, RIGHT?



I WENT TO
PROVE I WAS
THE BRAVEST,
OF COURSE.

DID
YOU GO
INSIDE?

ONLY
ONCE,
AND ONLY
A LITTLE
WAY...



I WASN'T
THAT
BRAVE.

AND IT WAS
DIFFICULT TO
FIND A WAY IN
BECAUSE OF
THE DAMAGE,
BUT I--

WAIT.



*YOU
THERE!*
COME OUT
WHERE I
CAN SEE
YOU!

WHO
ARE
YOU?

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

TURN
BACK.



RÜBEZAH!

?



TURN
BACK.

THE WAY
AHEAD IS
HAUNTED.

GHOSTS
COME DOWN
FROM THE
CASTLE. THEY
WILL PLUCK AT
YOU AND CAUSE YOU
TO FALL, AND WHEN
YOU ARE LYING
SMASHED IN THE
ROCKS THEY WILL
COME, *ALL* OF
THEM, AND DRINK
YOUR BLOOD.

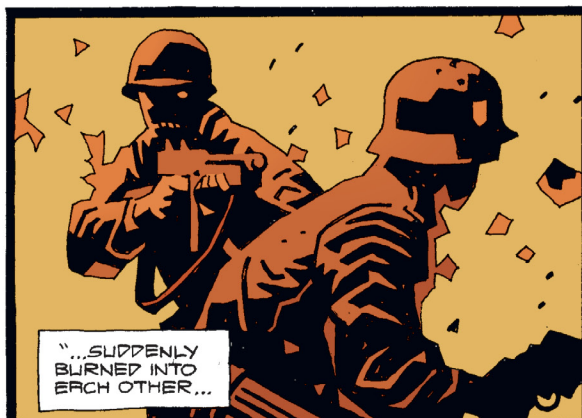


YOU
HEAR
THAT
WIND?

THEIR
VOICES ARE
IN THAT, ALL
RUN TOGETHER
IN A SINGLE
SCREAM.

BECAUSE
THEY DIED
THAT WAY.

ALL
THOSE
MEN IN THE
ACTION OF
WAR...



"...SUDDENLY
BURNED INTO
EACH OTHER..."



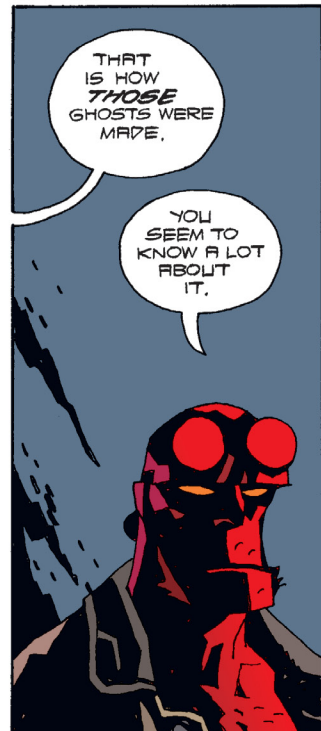
"THOSE NOT
BURNED,
CRUSHED BY
FALLING
WALLS, EN-
EMIES GROUND
TOGETHER..."

"...BLEEDING
ONE INTO THE
OTHER..."



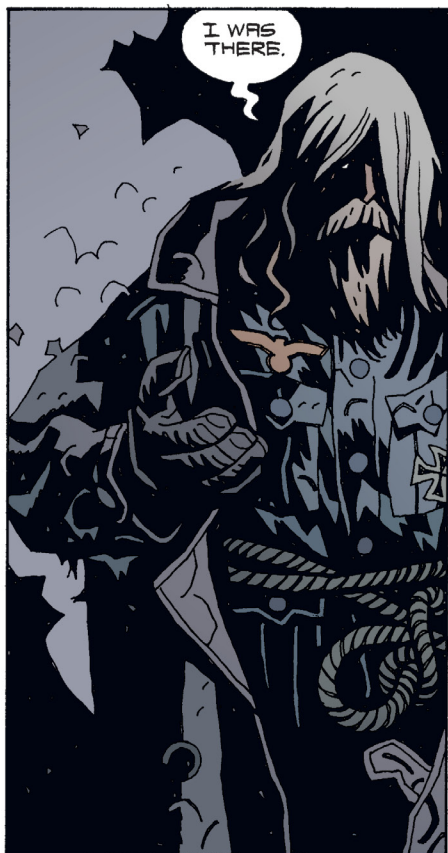
HORRIBLE.

HORRIBLE.

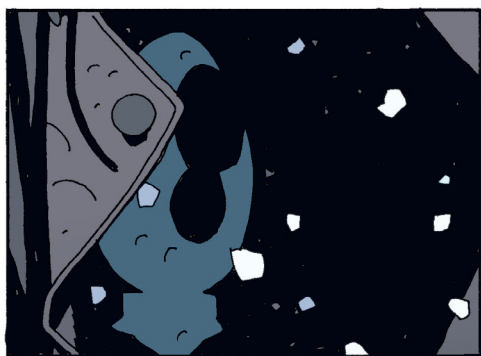


THAT
IS HOW
THOSE
GHOSTS WERE
MADE.

YOU
SEEM TO
KNOW A LOT
ABOUT
IT.



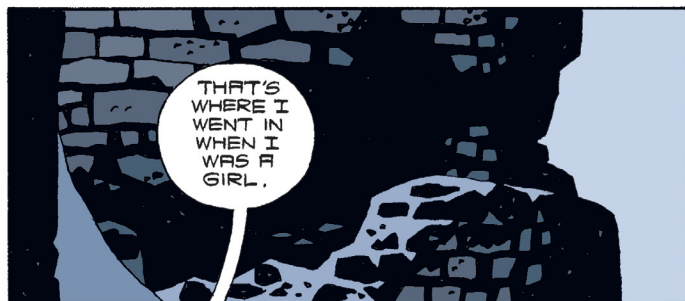






YOU
SEE THAT
PLACE
WHERE THE
WALL IS
BROKEN?

THERE,
ON THE
RIGHT...



THAT'S
WHERE I
WENT IN
WHEN I
WAS A
GIRL.



IT'S THE BEST
WAY.

JEEZ,
YOU MUST
HAVE BEEN
SOME KIND OF
MONKEY-
KID.

WE ARE
ALMOST
TO THE TOP
NOW.

THEN
YOU STOP
THERE.

ROGER
AND I GO
AHEAD
FROM HERE.
YOU GO
BACK.



NOT
YET.

HEY!

I HAVE TO
MAKE SURE THIS
WAY IS CLEAR...

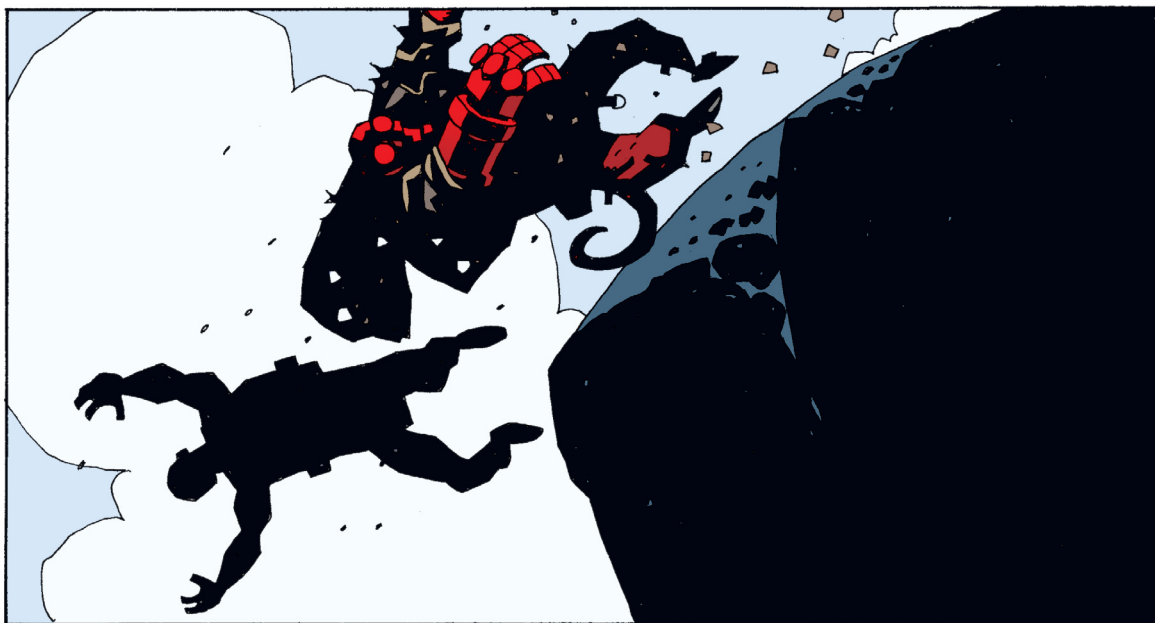
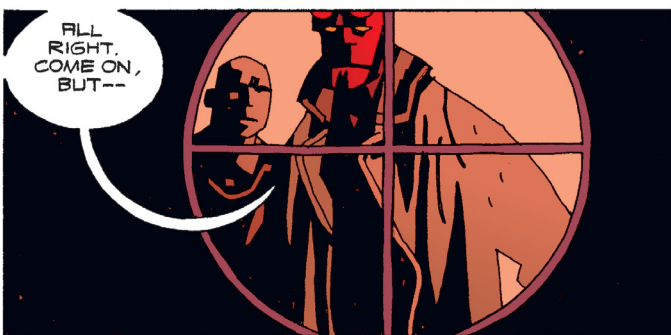


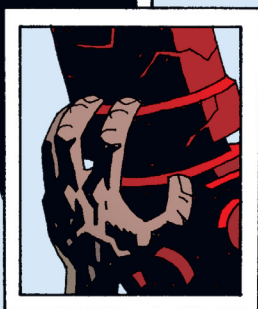
OR I
WILL HAVE
TO FIND
ANOTHER
WAY IN.

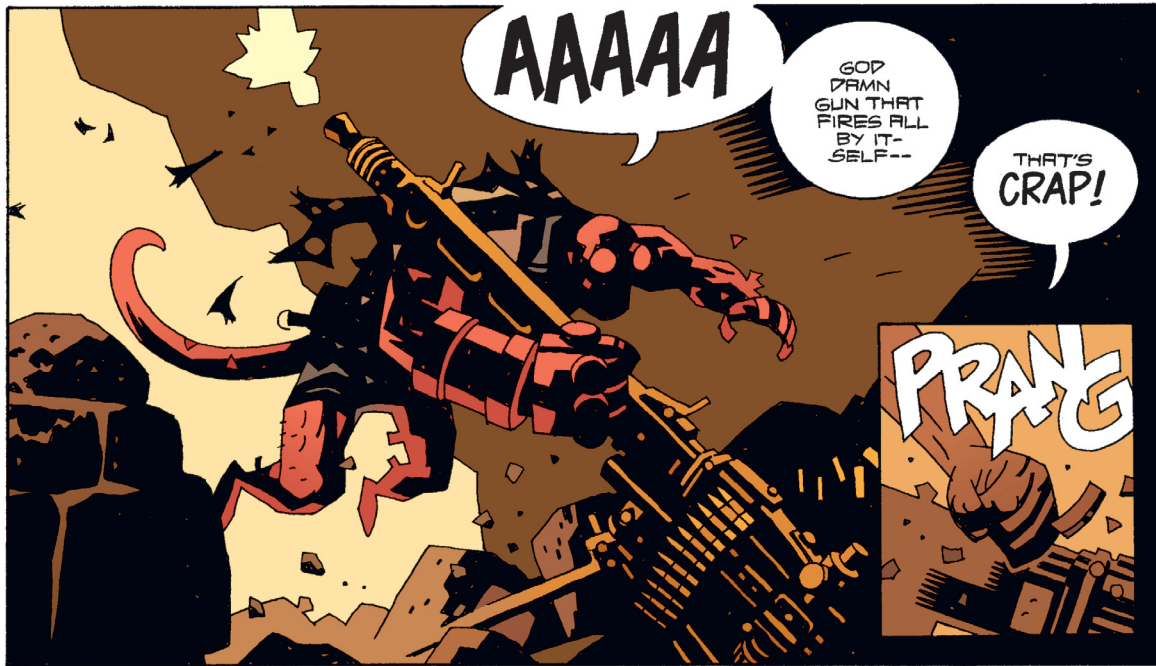


COME
BACK. *WE*
CAN DO
THAT.

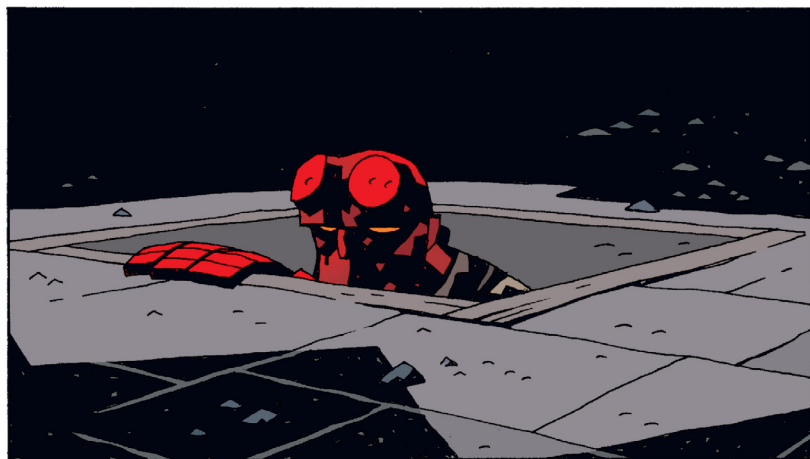
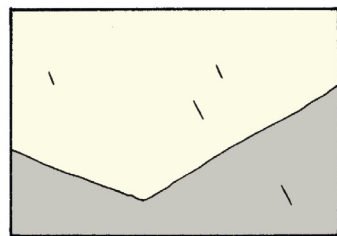
NO...

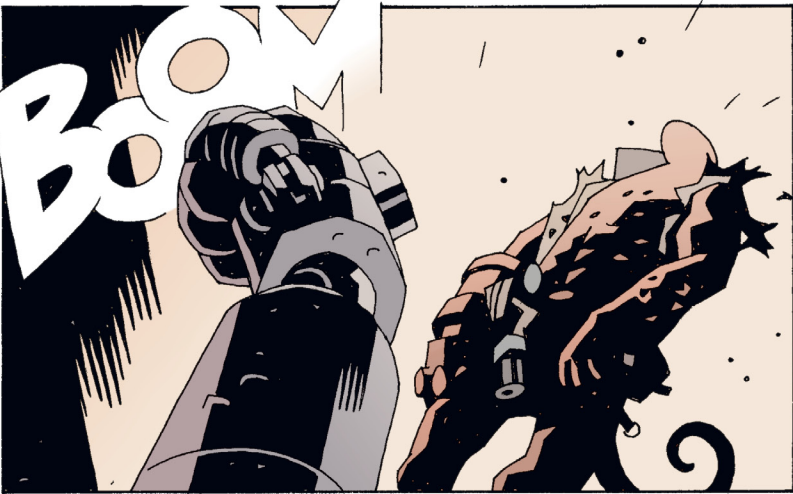
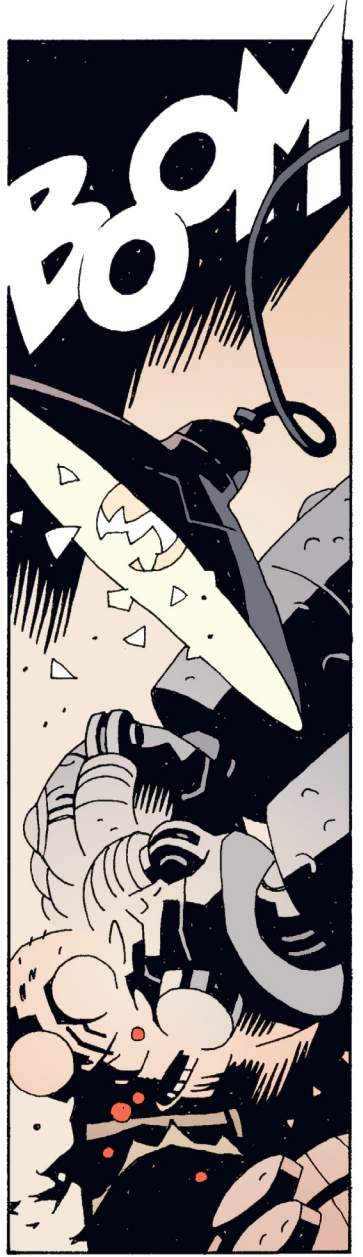














GRANDFATHER?

YES, GRAND-
DAUGHTER.

AT
LONG
LAST WE
MEET.



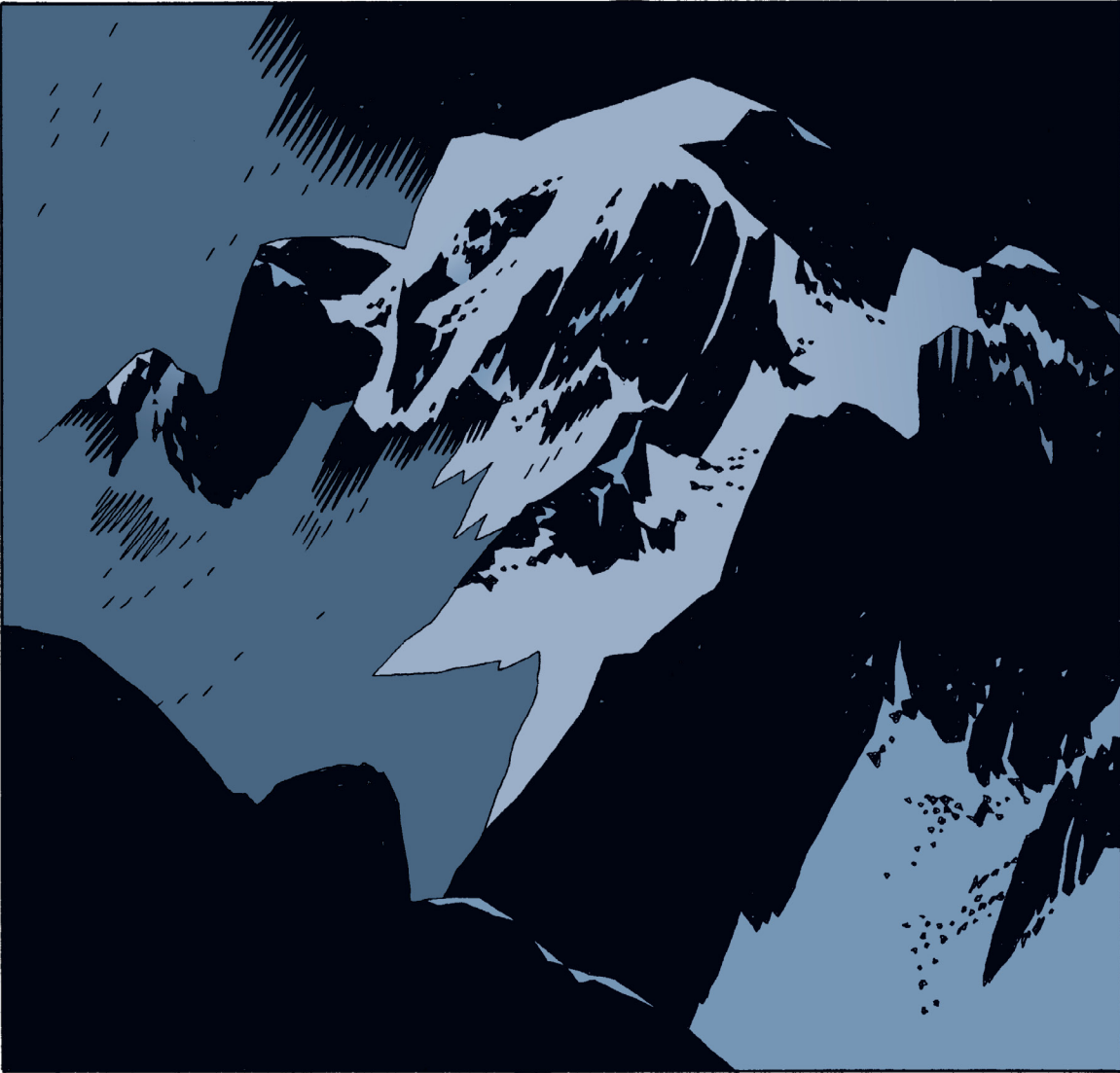
AND DID I DO
WELL?

EXCELLENTLY
WELL, MY DEAR.



EXCELLENT...





CHAPTER TWO

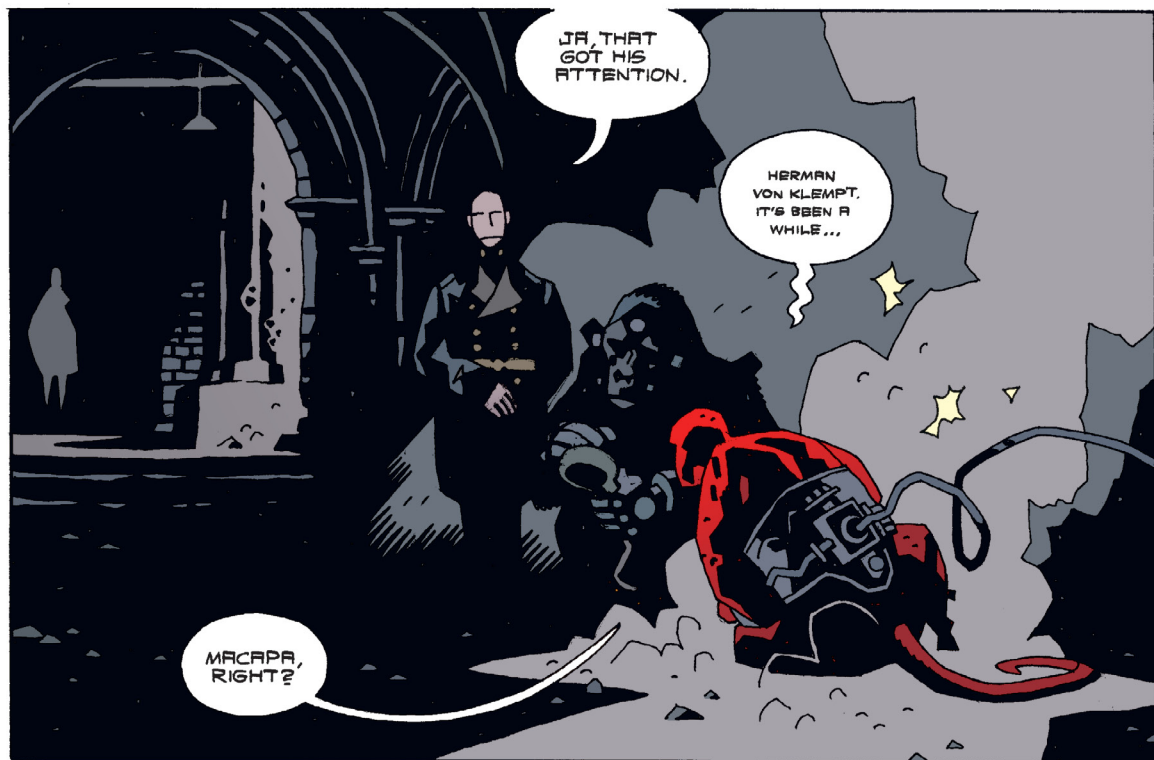
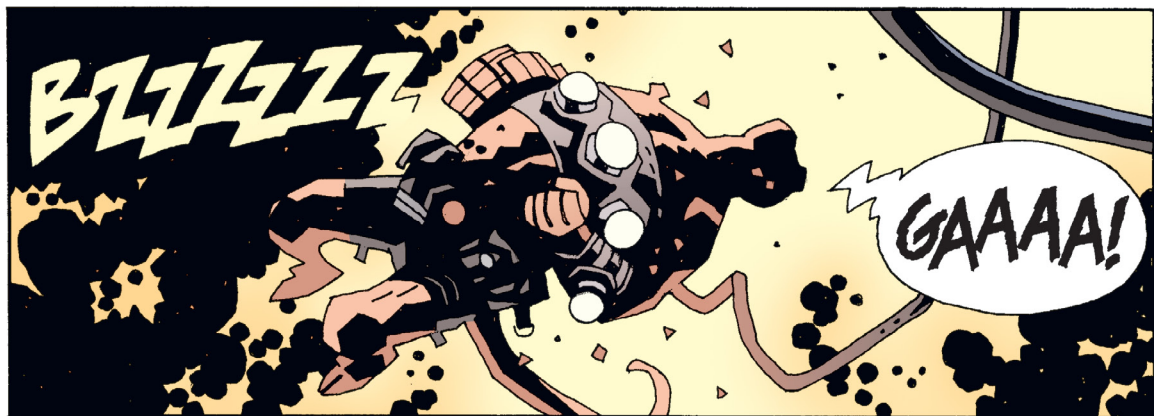


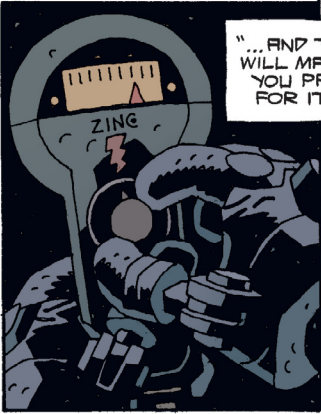
SON
OF R...

MIGNOLA

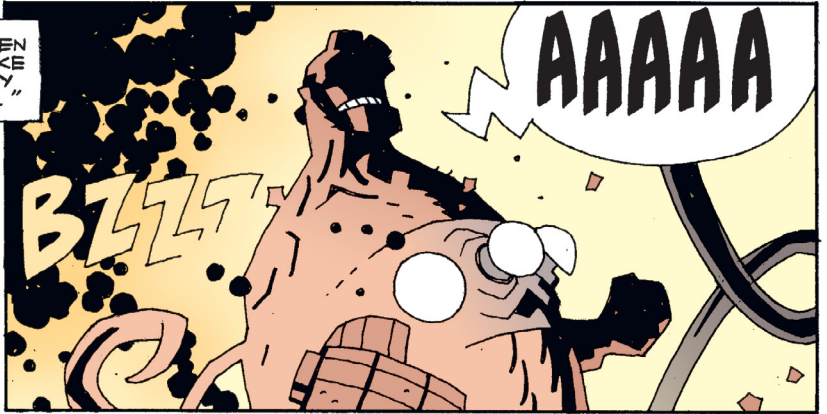








"...AND TEN
WILL MAKE
YOU PAY
FOR IT."



AAAAAA

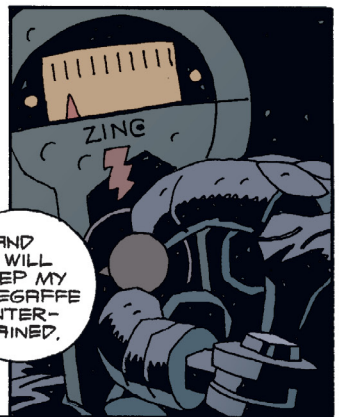


I'VE HAD A NEW
GENERATOR IN-
STALLED HERE IN
THE CASTLE, VOLTS
ENOUGH TO LIGHT
UP HAMBURG. BY
THIS HARNESS
YOU ARE TIED
DIRECTLY INTO
IT.

I
DO NOT
THINK IT
IS ENOUGH
POWER TO
KILL
YOU...



...BUT IT *IS* ENOUGH
TO KEEP YOU IN BLIND,
AGONIZING PAIN.



AND
IT WILL
KEEP MY
KRIEGAFFE
ENTER-
TRAINED.

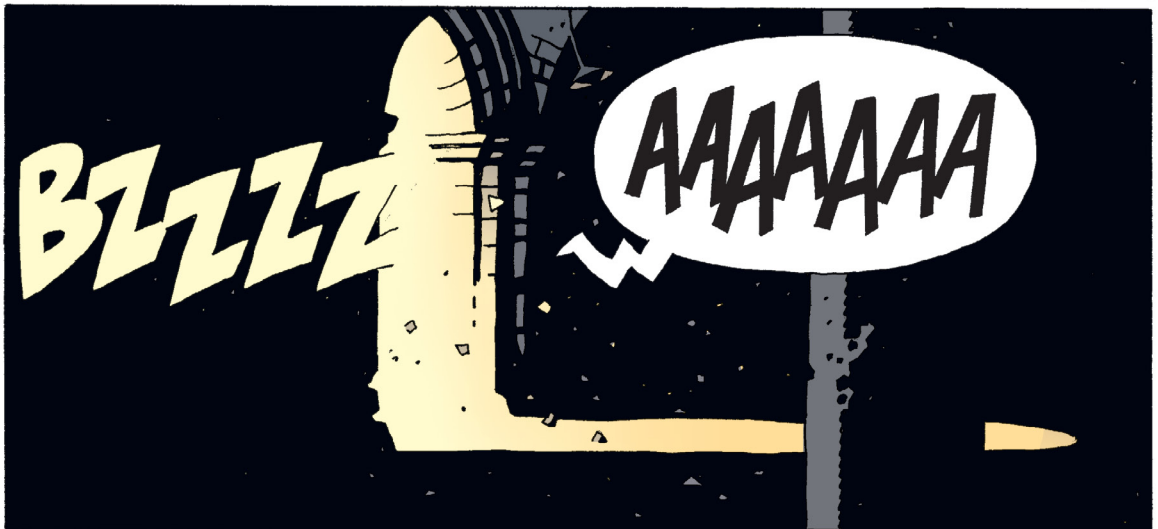


SO YOU
ENJOY
THAT.

MY GRAND-
DAUGHTER AND
I HAVE
PREPARA-
TIONS TO
MAKE.



NAZI PINHEAD
AND
HIS ORGAN-GRINDER
MONKEY.



BZZZZ

AAAAAAA





"SO, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE WAR, I WENT BACK TO GERMANY. I STILL HAD A WORKSHOP THERE HIDDEN UNDER AN OLD CEMETERY NEAR INGOLSTADT..."



"THERE I GATHERED THE MATERIALS TO BUILD A NEW KRIEGAFFE--"



EXCUSE ME, GRAND-FATHER,

?

I SEE YOU HAVE A MAN CHAINED UP OVER HERE, HE ISN'T ONE OF MINE, IS HE?



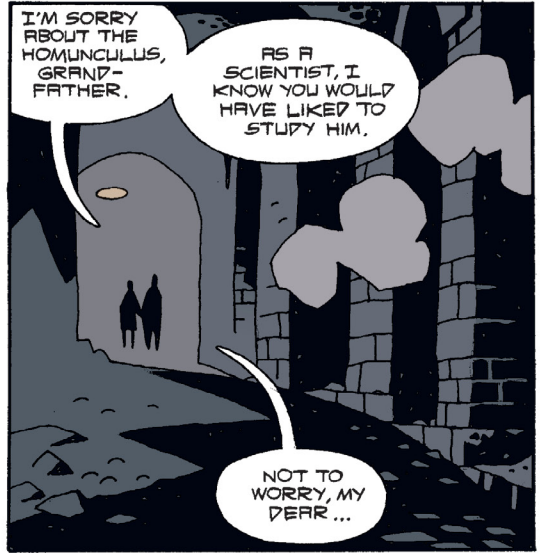
OH, HIM.

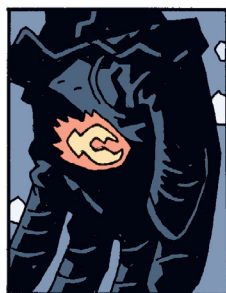
WE FOUND HIM WHEN WE ARRIVED. NO IDEA *WHO* HE IS. I CAN'T MAKE HIM TALK, AND I REALLY HAVE NO USE FOR HIM...



YOU CAN HAVE HIM, MY DEAR.

DO IT.







JUSTICE? YOU
CALL THAT
JUSTICE?

I SAW
YOU SHOOT
THOSE TWO MEN
WITH NO WARNING,
NO --

NOT
MEN,
DOGS.

WHAT?

MAD
DOGS.



NO BETTER,
NO DIFFERENT,
THAN A
HUNDRED OTHERS
I'VE KILLED IN
MY TIME.



AND THAT CASTLE
UP THERE IS *FULL*
OF DOGS.

I HAVE
TO GET
BACK UP
THERE.

I HEARD
THE MACHINE
GUN AND WATCHED
YOU FALL.

WHAT ARE
YOU THAT YOU
CAN LIVE THROUGH
THAT?

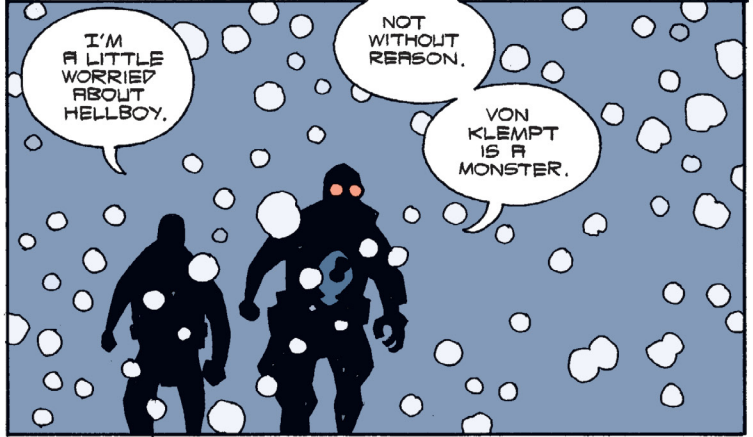
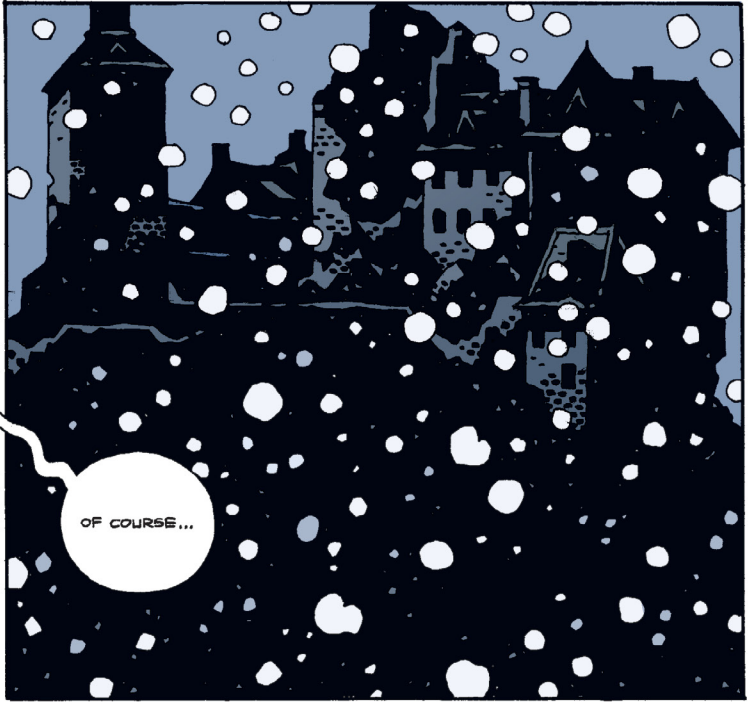


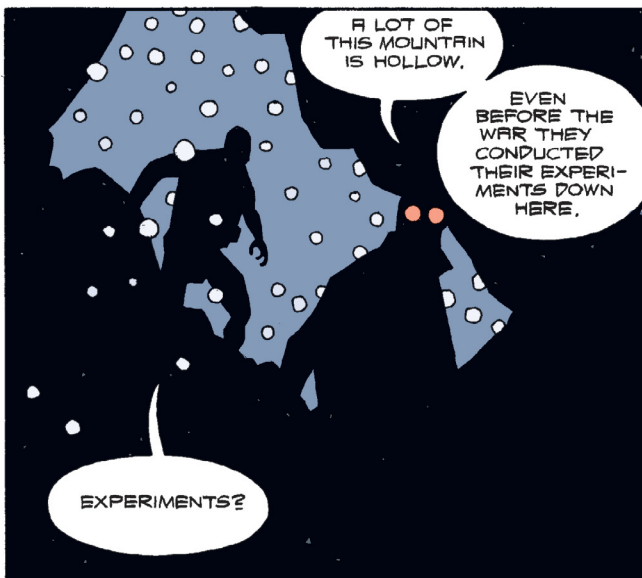
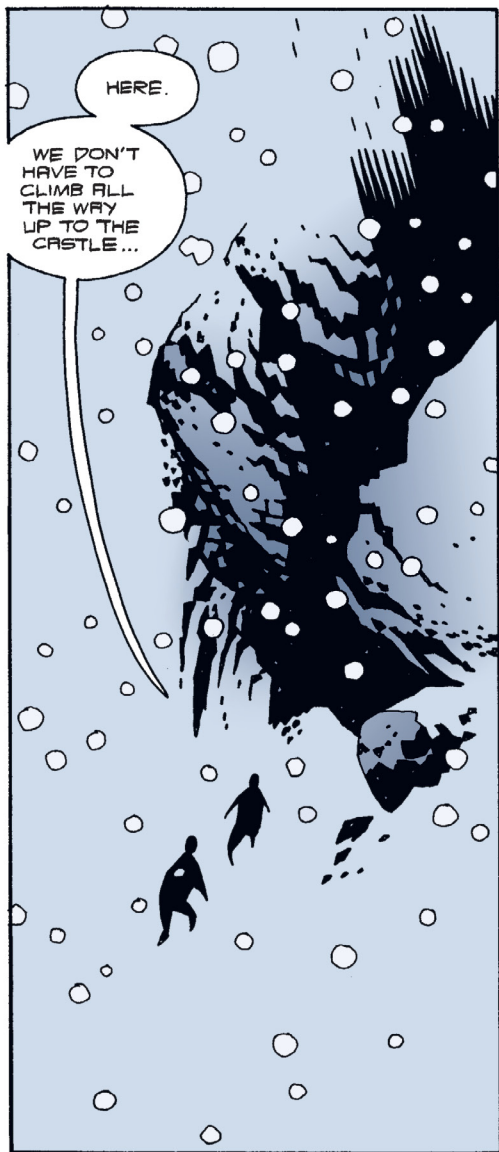
I WAS GROWN
IN A JAR IN AN
ALCHEMIST'S
LABORATORY...

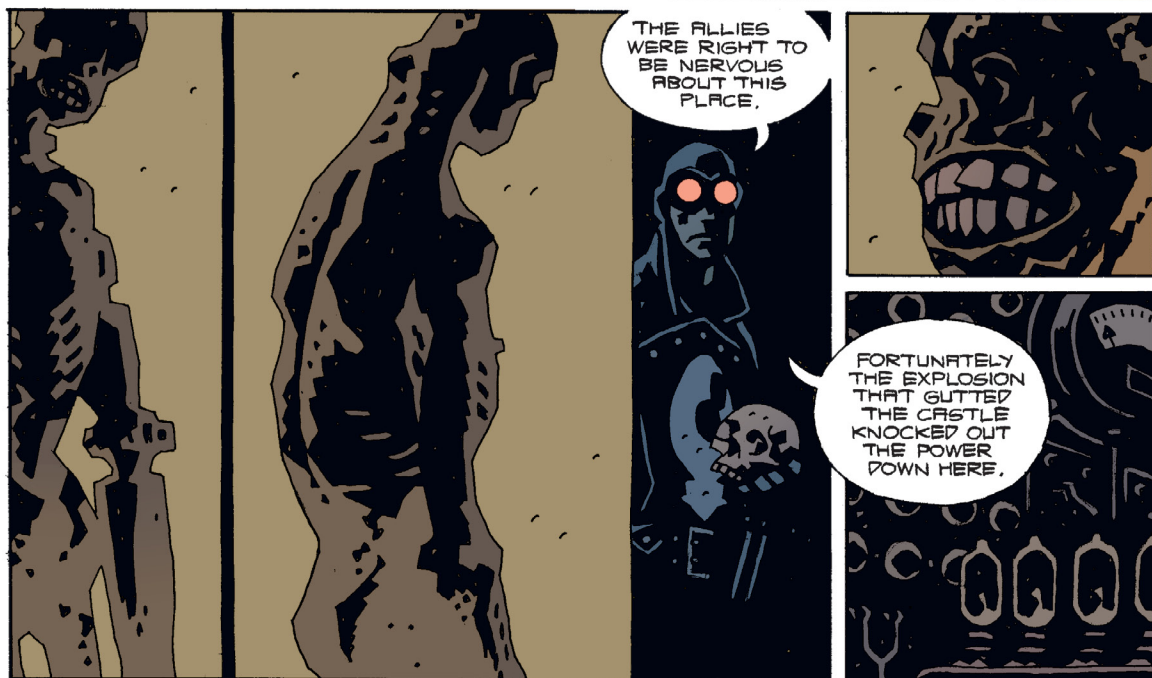
GOOD
ENOUGH.

...AND
BROUGHT TO LIFE
BY A BOLT OF
LIGHTNING.

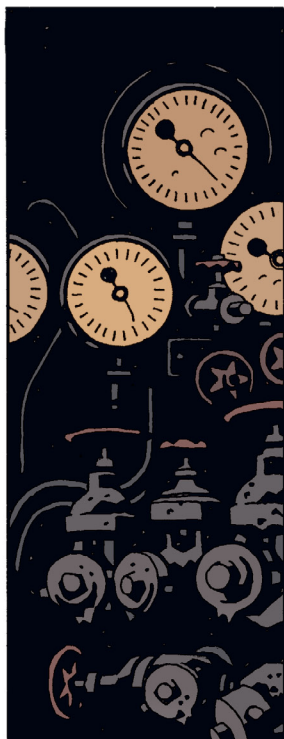












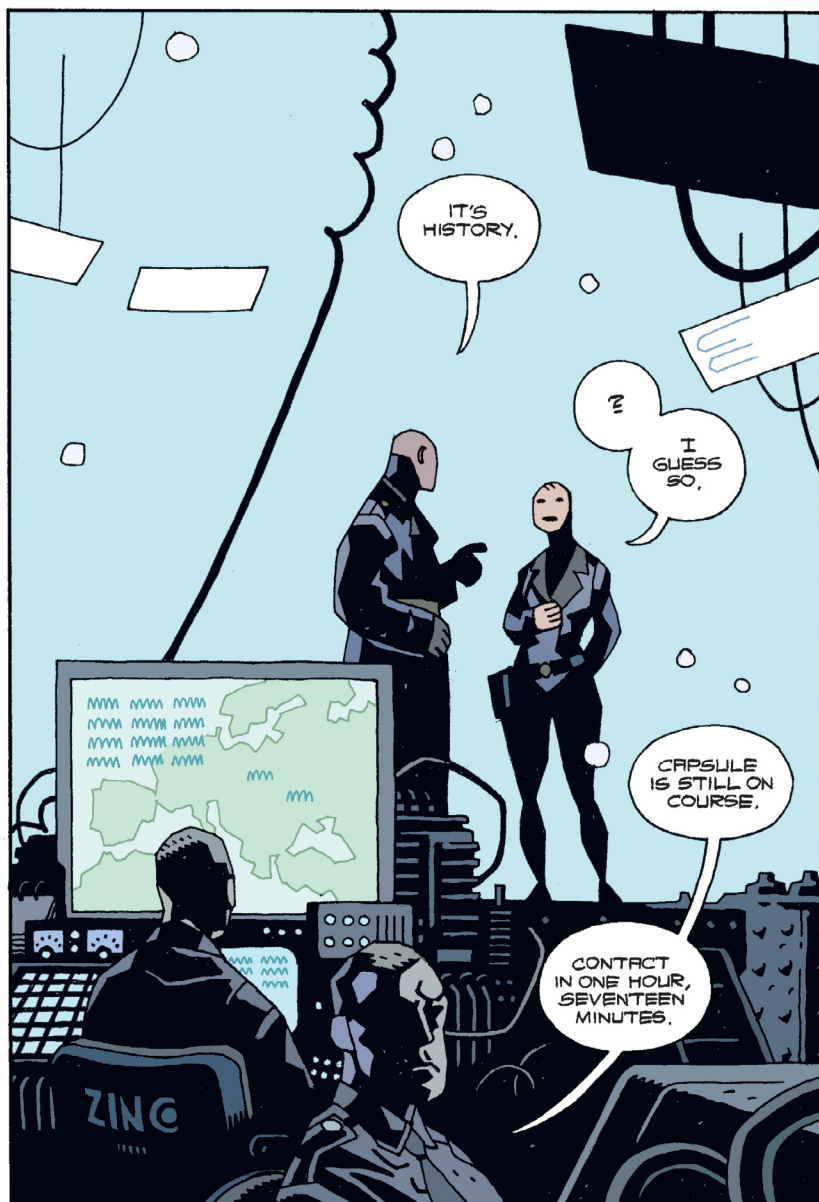


DAMNED
AMERICANS...

THEY
ATTACKED
BEFORE THE
ROOF OF THE
TOWER COULD
BE OPENED.
THAT CAUSED
THE EXPLOSION
AND FIRE.

WELL,
GRAND-
FATHER, AT
LEAST THE
LAUNCH WAS
SUCCESS-
FUL.

YES...
IT COST A
FEW LIVES...
BUT IN THE
LONG RUN
WHAT IS
THAT...?



IT'S
HISTORY.

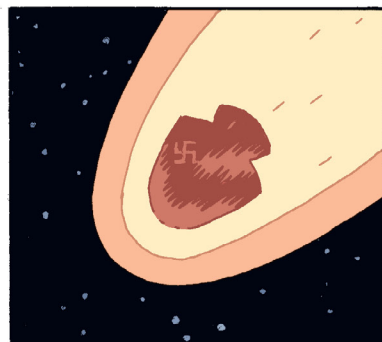
?

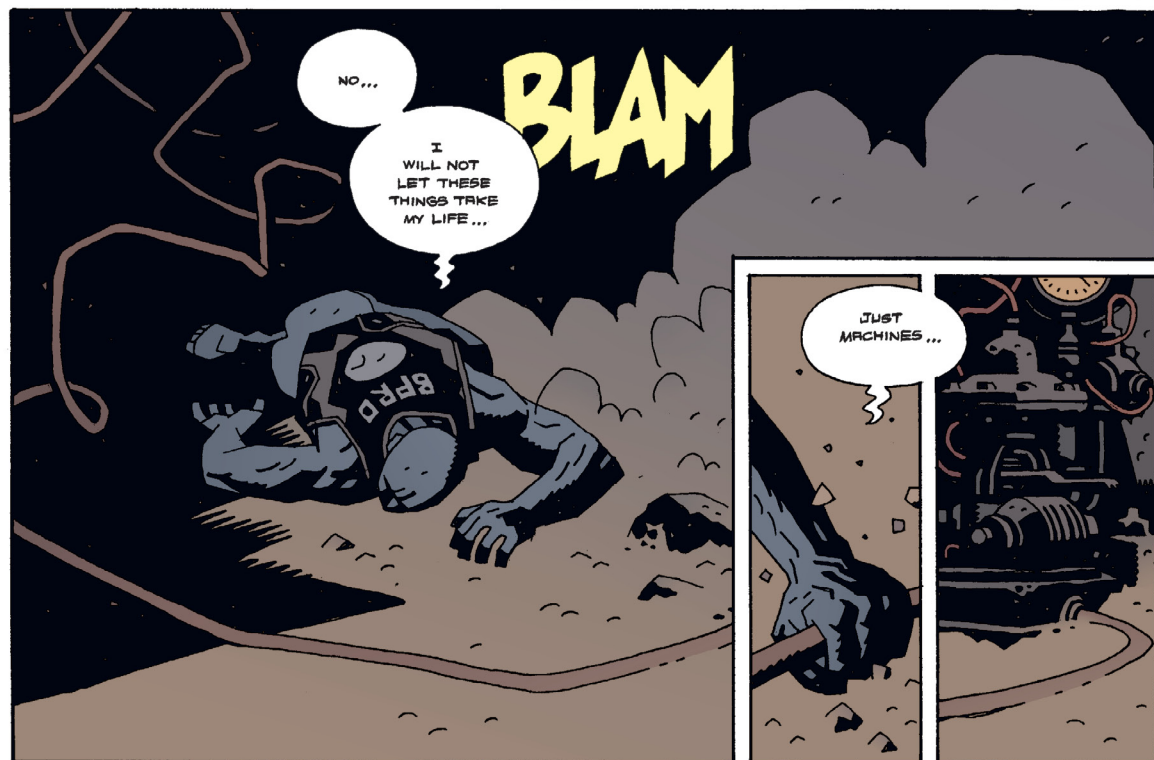
I
GUESS
SO.

CAPSULE
IS STILL ON
COURSE.

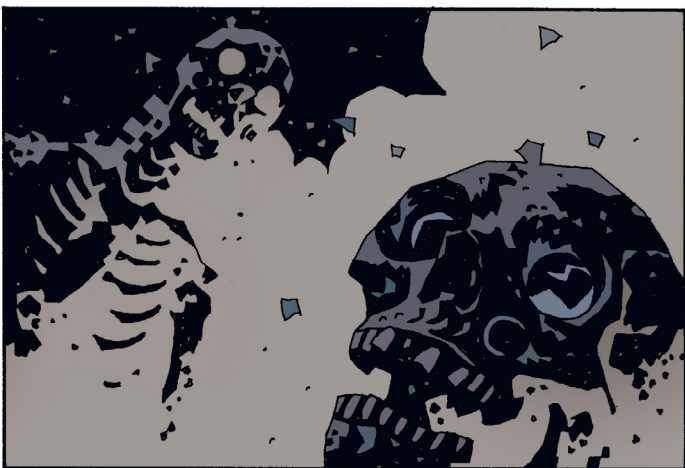
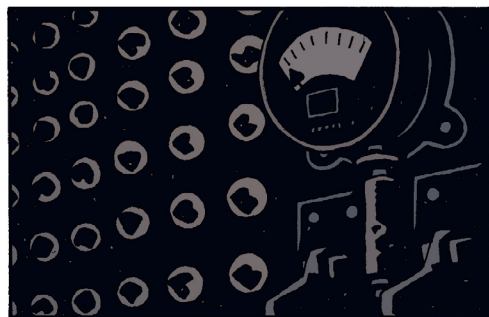
CONTACT
IN ONE HOUR,
SEVENTEEN
MINUTES.

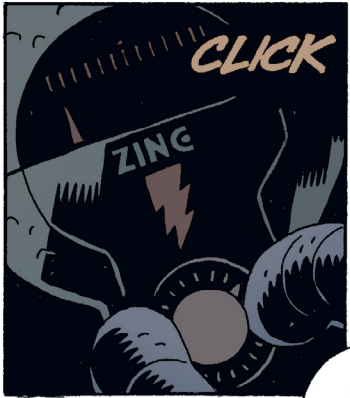
ZINC

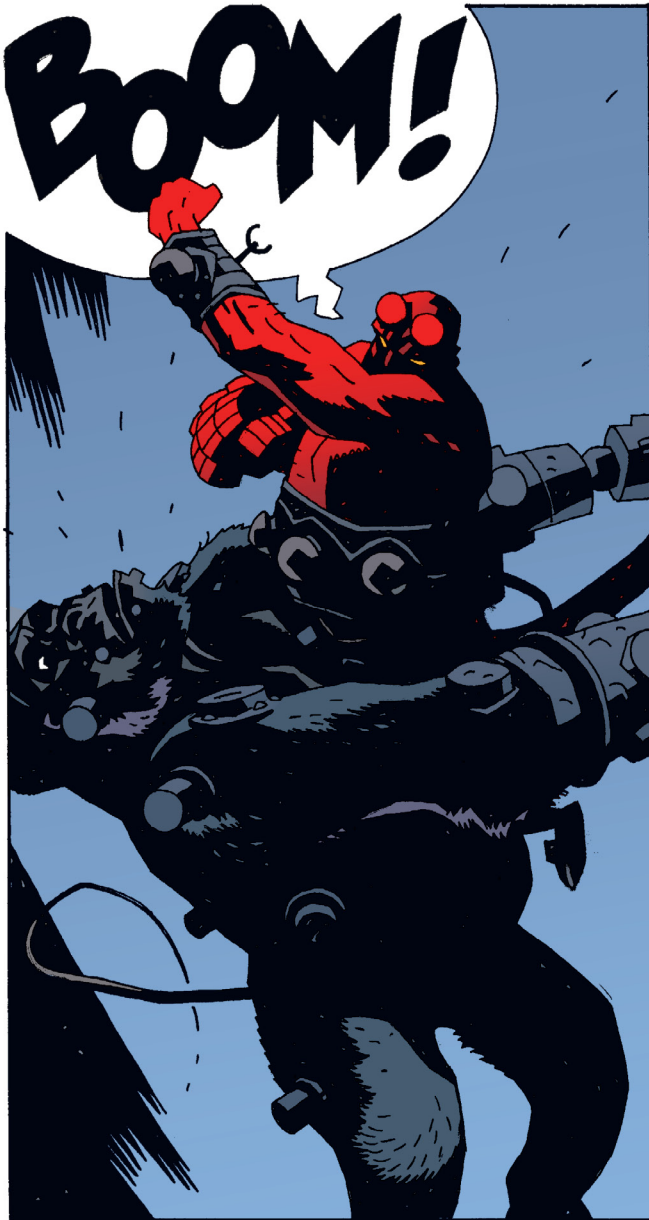


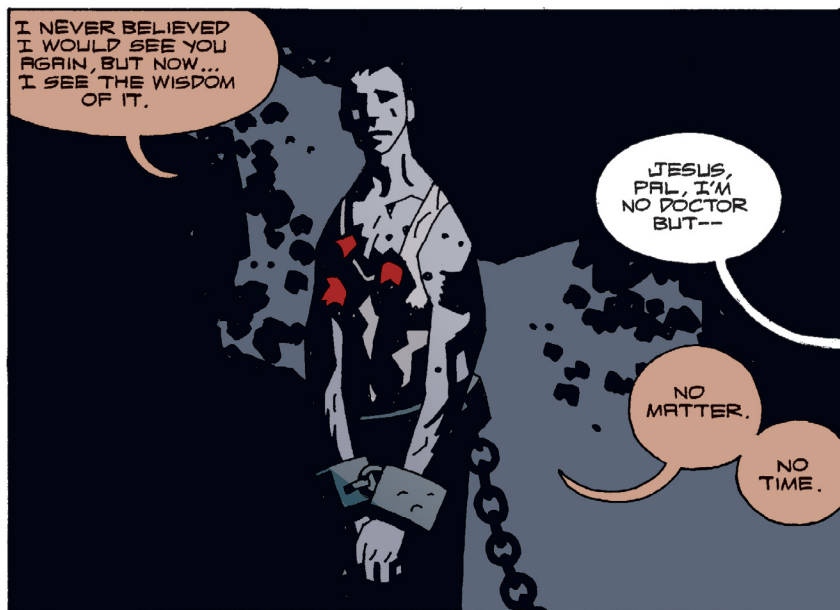
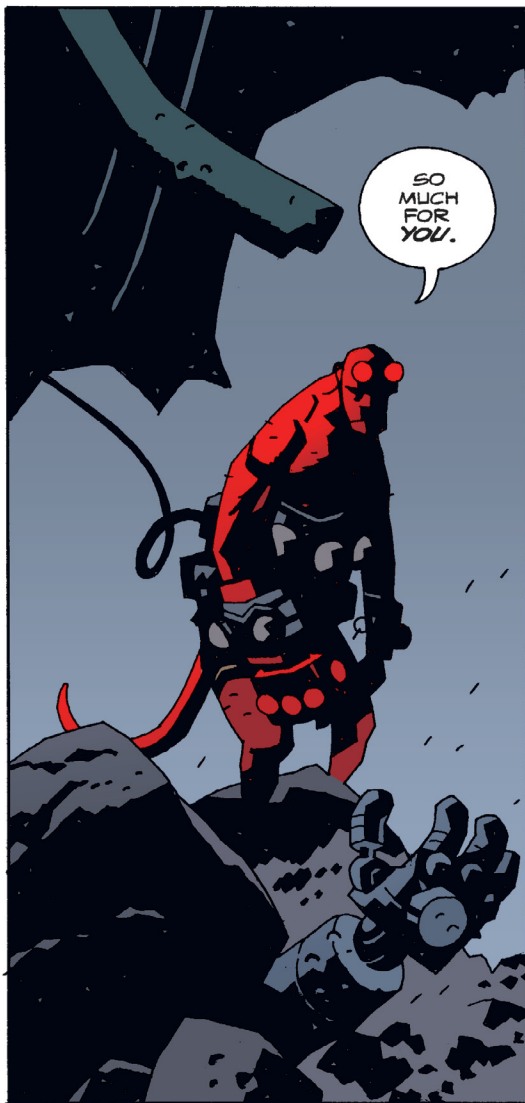










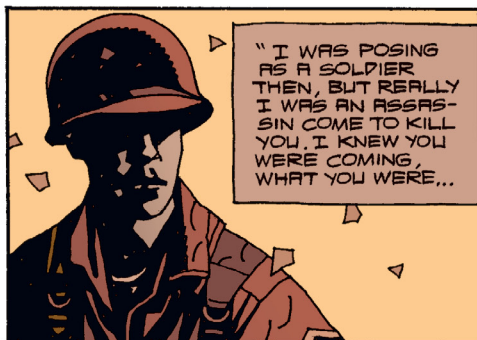




NO TIME
FOR
THAT.

YOU SEEM FAMILIAR...
MAYBE YOUR VOICE...
SOMETHING.

I WAS
THERE THAT
NIGHT WHEN YOU
CAME INTO THIS
WORLD...



"I WAS POSING
AS A SOLDIER
THEN, BUT REALLY
I WAS AN ASSAS-
SIN COME TO KILL
YOU. I KNEW YOU
WERE COMING,
WHAT YOU WERE...



"ANUNG UN
RAMA. THE
DESTROYER..."

"BUT THAT NIGHT I SAW SOMETHING
ELSE IN YOU..."



FREE
WILL.

THE CHANCE
THAT YOU MIGHT
BREAK THE
BOUNDS OF
FATE AND
CHOOSE A
LIFE...



"SO I BROKE WITH MY
MASTERS AND LET YOU LIVE.
TEN YEARS LATER I
WATCHED LILIES GROW
OUT OF YOUR SPILLED
BLOOD IN SAINT LEONARD'S
WOOD* AND I KNEW I HAD
DONE THE RIGHT THING."

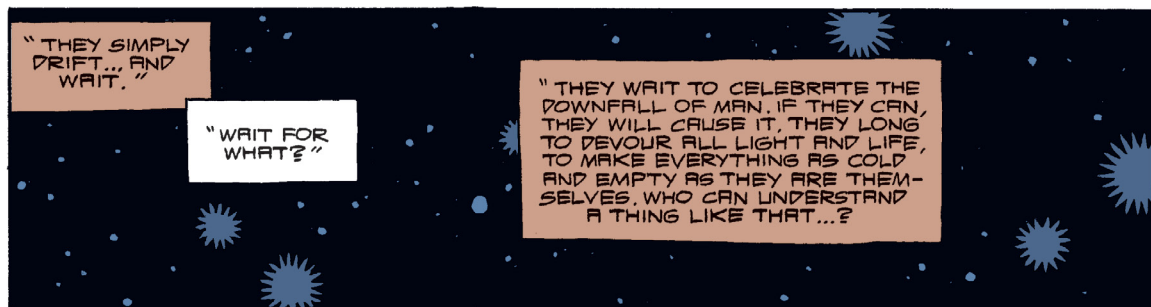




WHO
ARE
YOU?

I'M NOT IMPORTANT,
BUT THE THING COMING
HERE *MUST* BE
STOPPED.

THE TRUTH IS
THAT THERE ARE LIVING
BEINGS IN SPACE, INVISIBLE TO
YOUR SCIENTISTS, UNDETECTABLE
BY MAN-MADE DEVICES. THEY
ARE OLDER THAN THIS PLANET,
AND IF THEY EVER HAD PHYSICAL
BODIES THEY ARE RID OF THEM
NOW...



"THEY SIMPLY
DRIFT... AND
WAIT."

"WAIT FOR
WHAT?"

"THEY WAIT TO CELEBRATE THE
DOWNFALL OF MAN. IF THEY CAN,
THEY WILL CAUSE IT. THEY LONG
TO DEVOUR ALL LIGHT AND LIFE,
TO MAKE EVERYTHING AS COLD
AND EMPTY AS THEY ARE THEM-
SELVES. WHO CAN UNDERSTAND
A THING LIKE THAT...?"



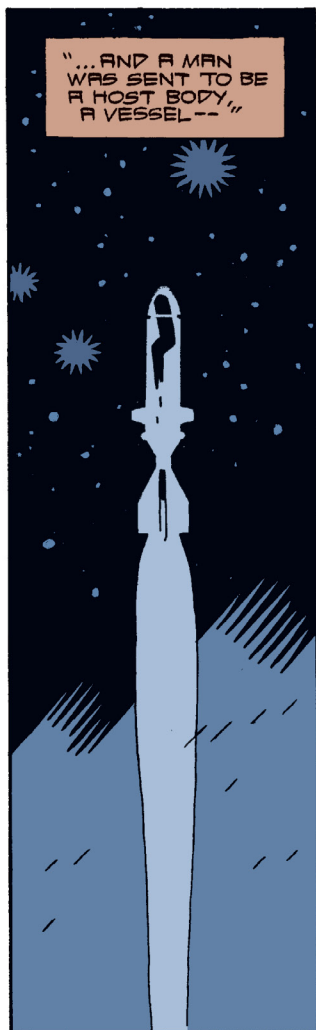
"BUT THEY HAVE ALWAYS
CALLED OUT TO MAN. IN
THE PAST, THERE WERE
HUMANS WHO COULD HEAR
THEM, WHO COULD COM-
MUNICATE WITH THEM, BUT
THESE WERE HUMANS OF
A RARE SENSITIVITY OF
MIND."



"HOW THE
DULL, EVIL
MEN OF THIS
PLACE
MANAGED TO
DO THE SAME
I DON'T
KNOW..."



"...BUT THEY
DID, AND A
DEAL WAS
STRUCK..."



"...AND A MAN WAS SENT TO BE A HOST BODY, A VESSEL--"



POSSESSION BY SPACE-GHOSTS? I DON'T BUY IT.

THE AMERICANS AND RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN SENDING GUYS UP THERE FOR YEARS.



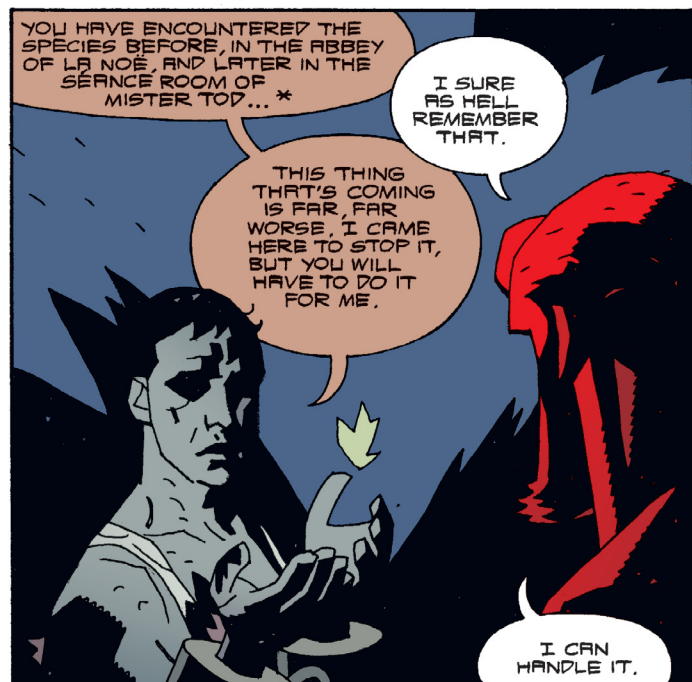
LIVING MEN...

"BUT THE NAZIS SENT A DEAD MAN, AN *EMPTY* VESSEL. HIS BODY WAS SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR THIS PURPOSE..."

"...SENT AS A BAITED TRAP INTO A SEA OF MONSTERS..."



"NOW, SIXTY-ONE YEARS LATER, SOMEONE HAS RECALLED THE TRAP AND IT'S DOOM FOR MAN..."



YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED THE SPECIES BEFORE, IN THE ABBEY OF LA NOË, AND LATER IN THE SEANCE ROOM OF MISTER TOD... *

I SURE AS HELL REMEMBER THAT.

THIS THING THAT'S COMING IS FAR, FAR WORSE, I CAME HERE TO STOP IT, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO DO IT FOR ME.

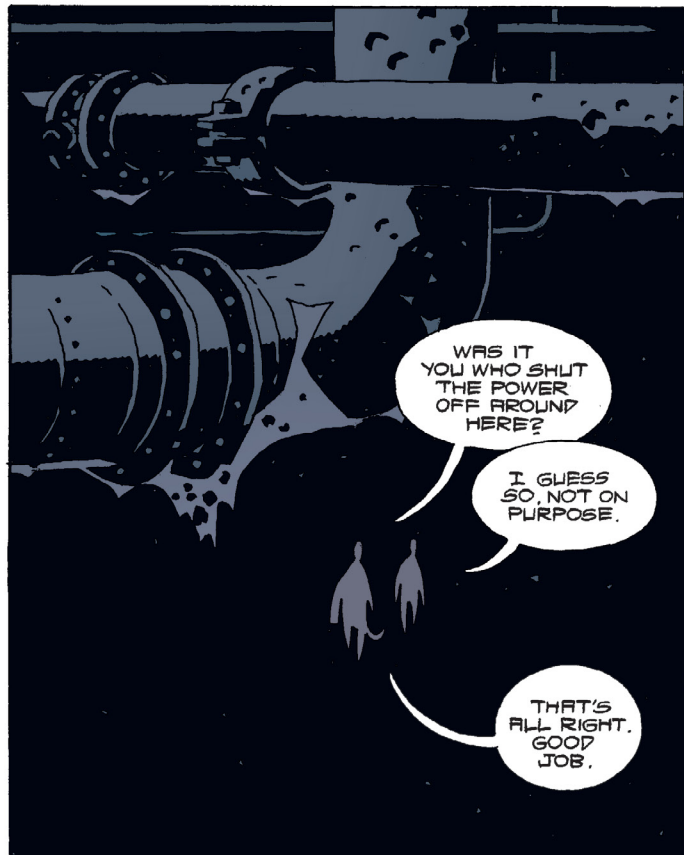
I CAN HANDLE IT.

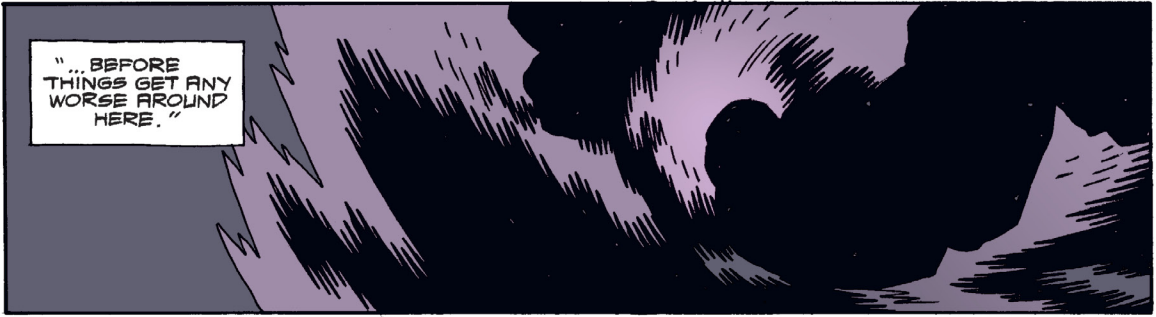


MORE THAN BRUTE FORCE AND BURNING HERBS WILL BE NEEDED, HERE IS A TRAP FROM WHICH THERE IS NO ESCAPE. USE IT.

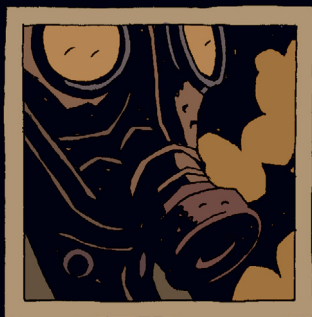
AH... MY TIME IS NEARLY RUN OUT...







CHAPTER THREE

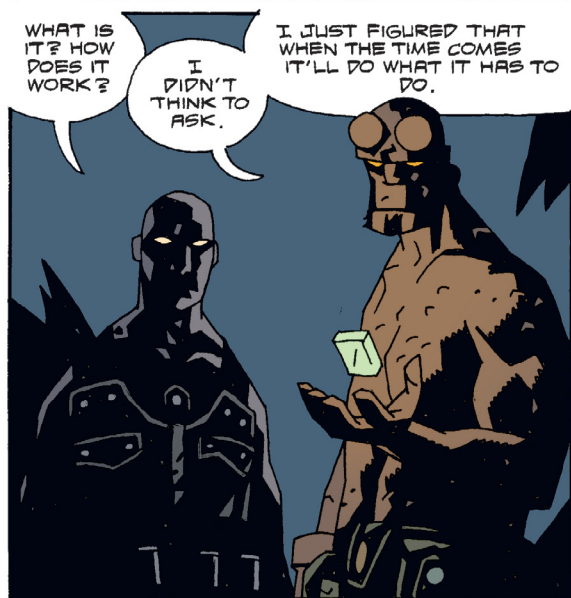




MENOLA



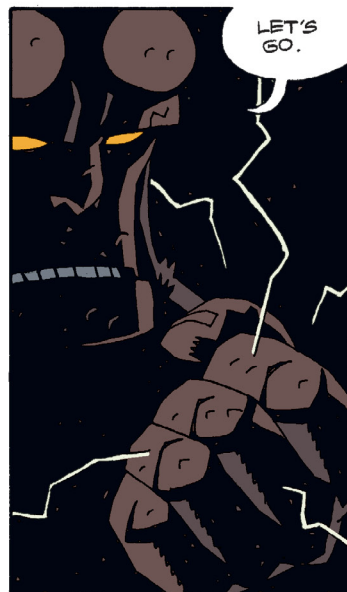
HUNTE
CASTLE.
11:49 P.M.



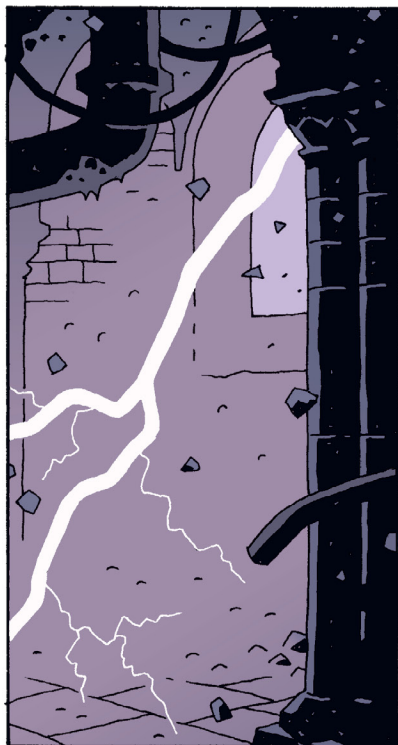
WHAT IS
IT? HOW
DOES IT
WORK?

I
DIDN'T
THINK TO
ASK.

I JUST FIGURED THAT
WHEN THE TIME COMES
IT'LL DO WHAT IT HAS TO
DO.

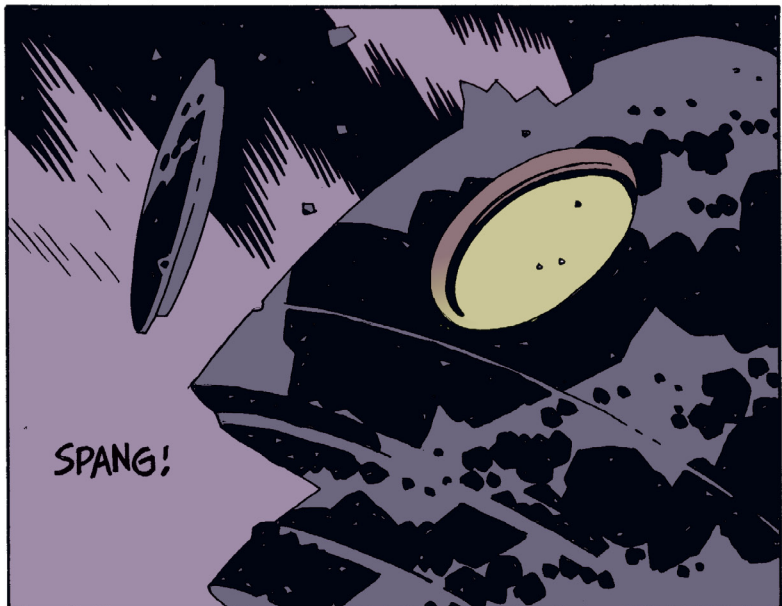
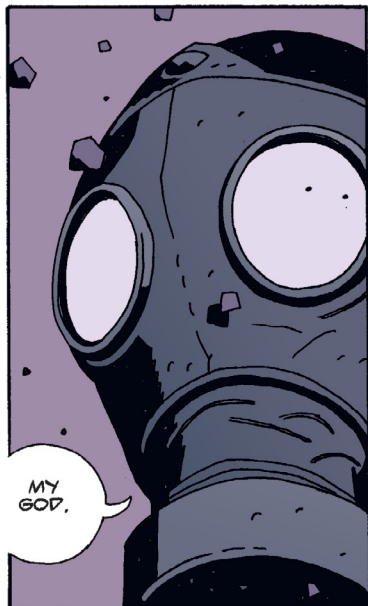
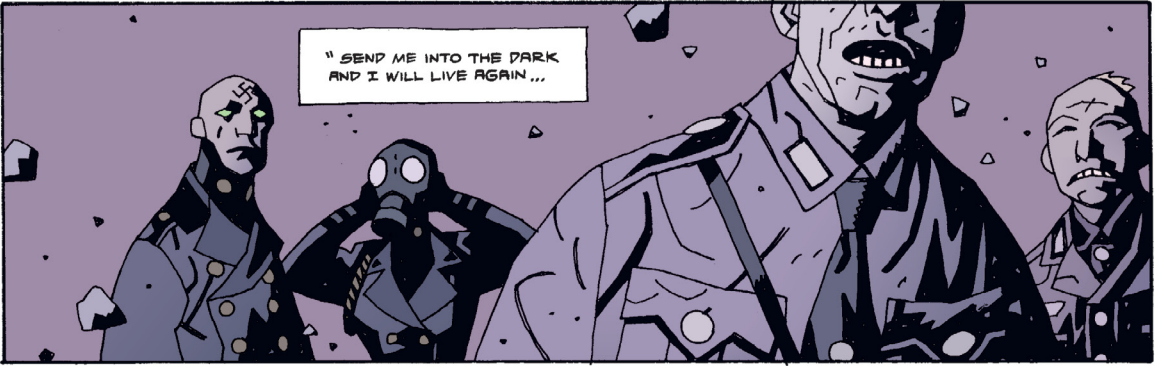


LET'S
GO.

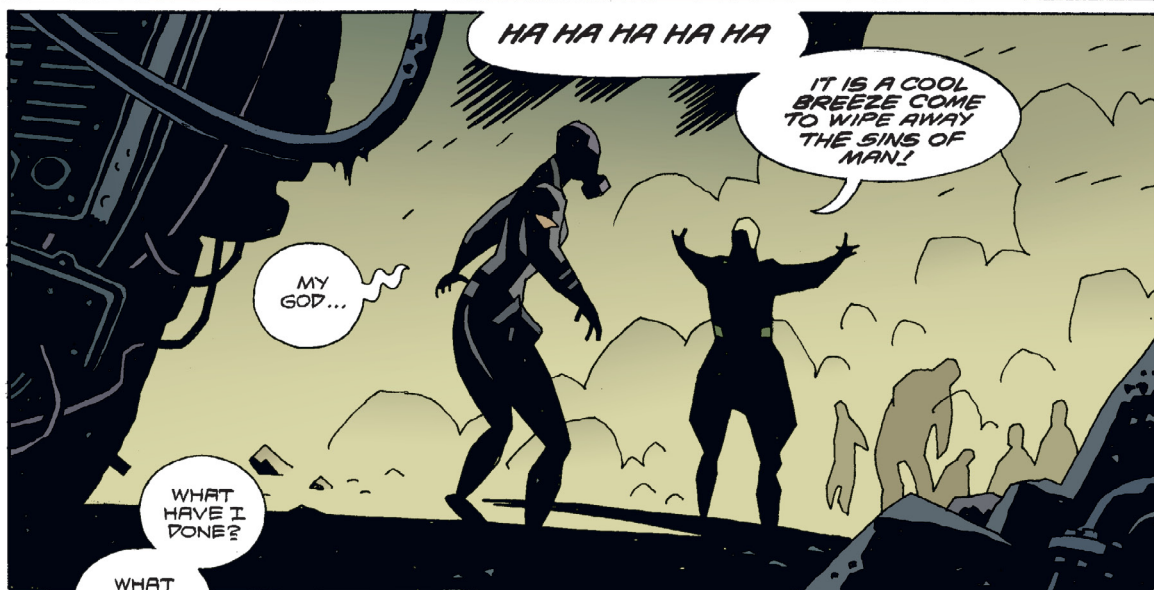


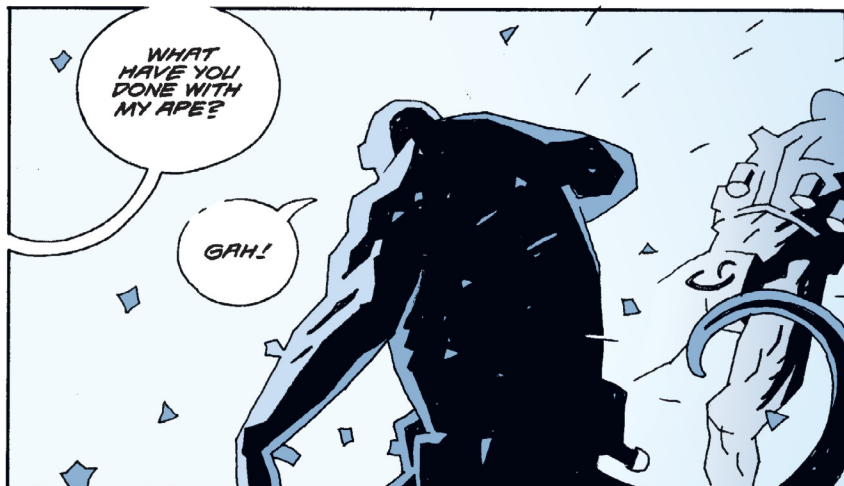
NOW IS THE TIME, CHILD, PUT YOUR GAS MASK ON.













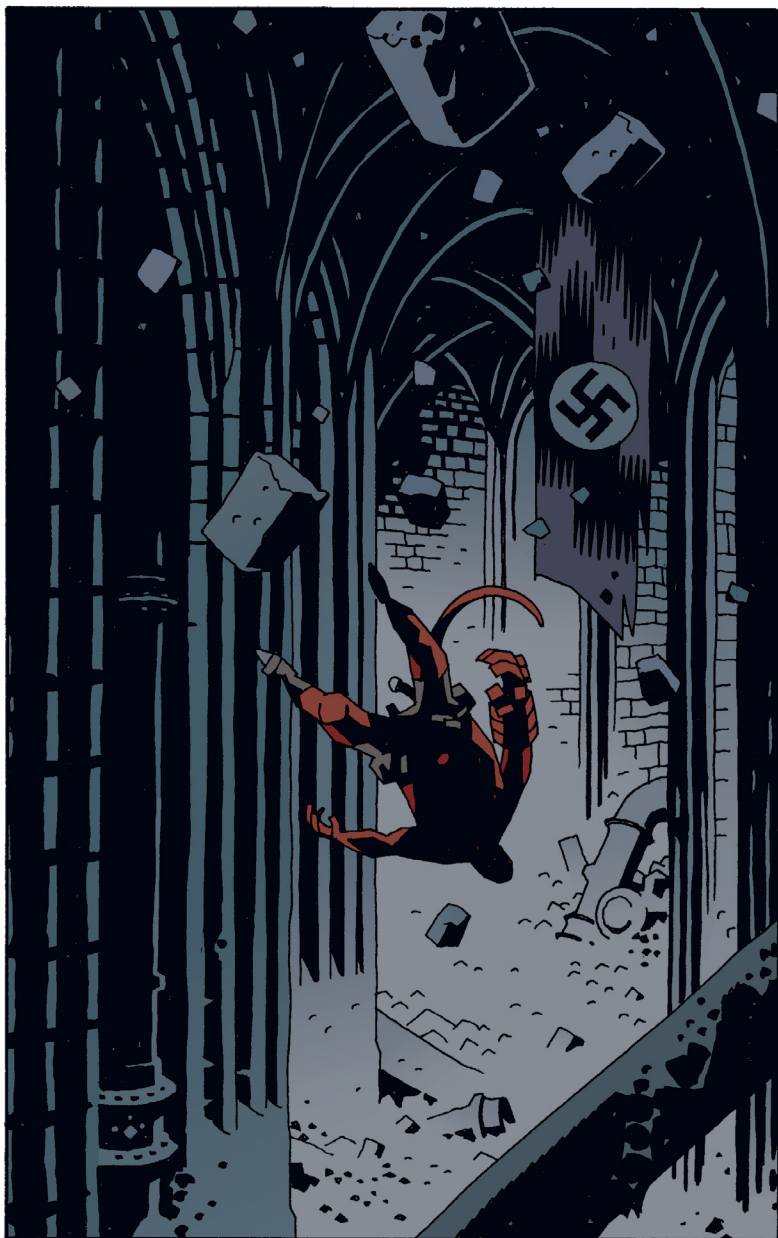




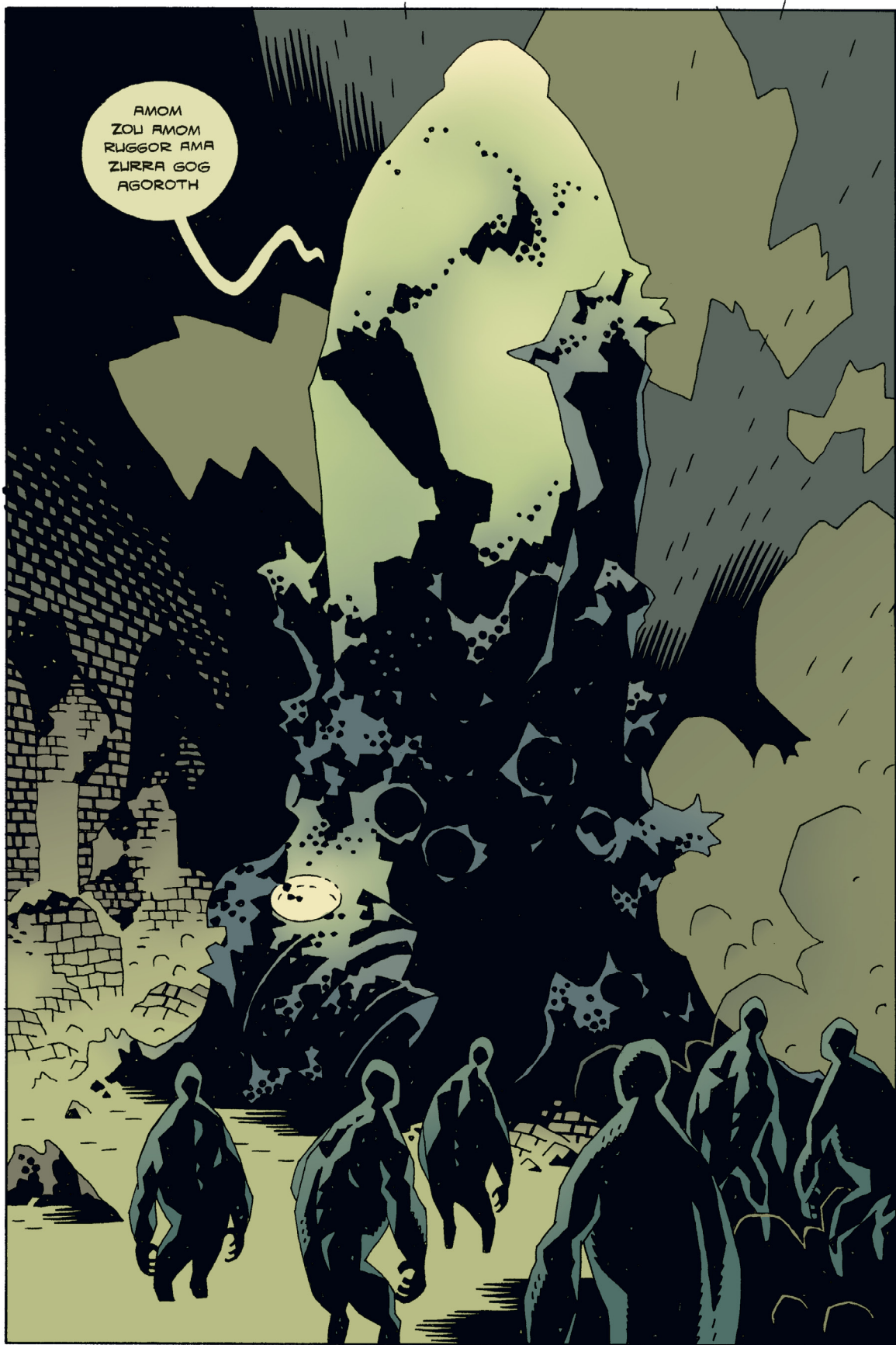








AMOM
ZOL AMOM
RUGGOR AMA
ZURRA GOG
AGOROTH





ZUGGOR
AMMA

" THEY LONG TO DEVOUR ALL LIGHT AND LIFE, TO
MAKE EVERYTHING AS COLD AND EMPTY AS THEY
ARE THEMSELVES .

" IN THE PAST,
THERE WERE
HUMANS WHO
COULD
COMMUNICATE
WITH THEM....

" HUMANS OF A
RARE SENSITIVITY
OF MIND...,"



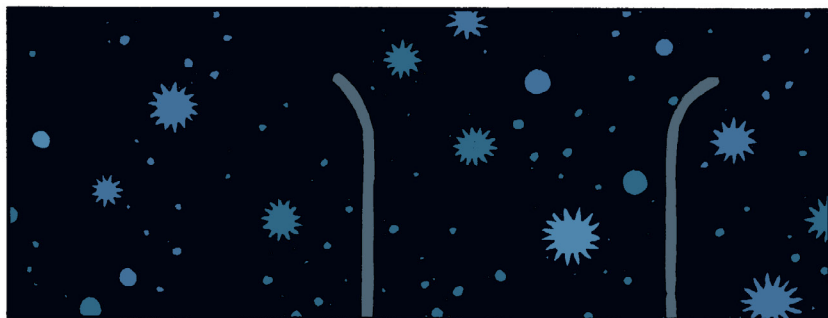
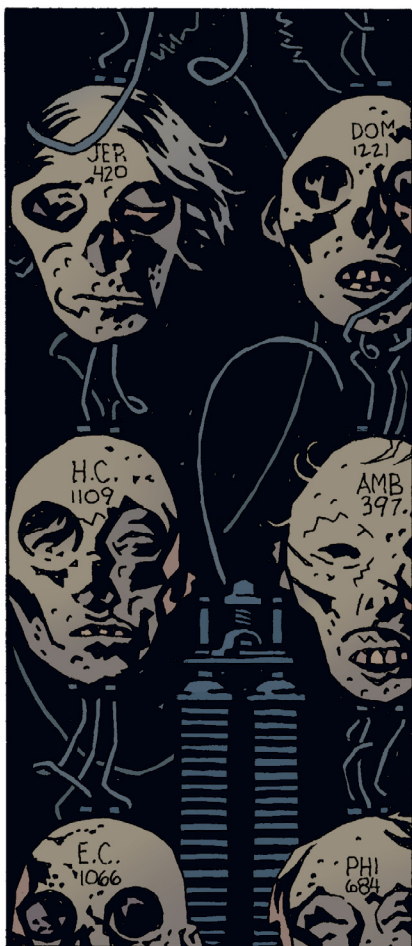
" HOW THE DULL, EVIL
MEN OF THIS PLACE
MANAGED TO DO THE
SAME I DON'T KNOW...

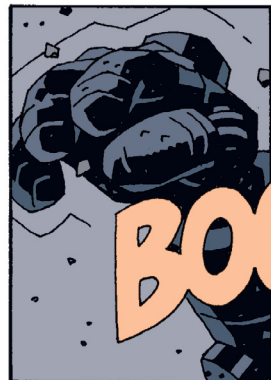
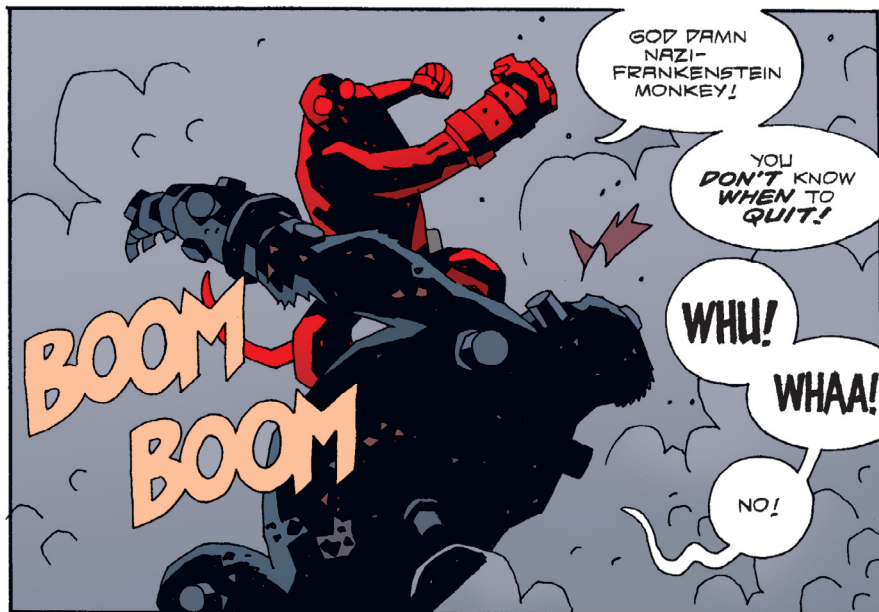


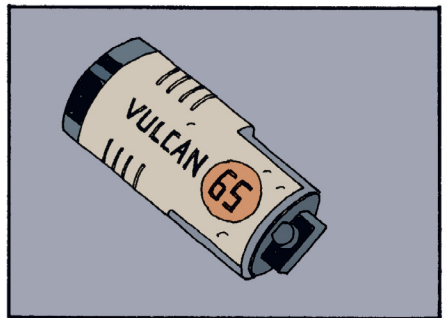
"...BUT
THEY
DID."

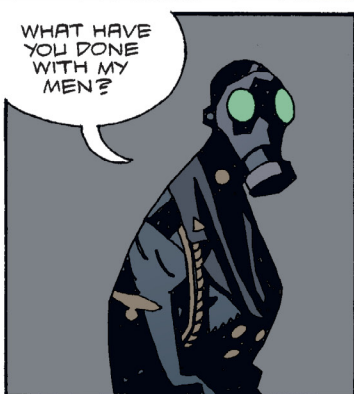
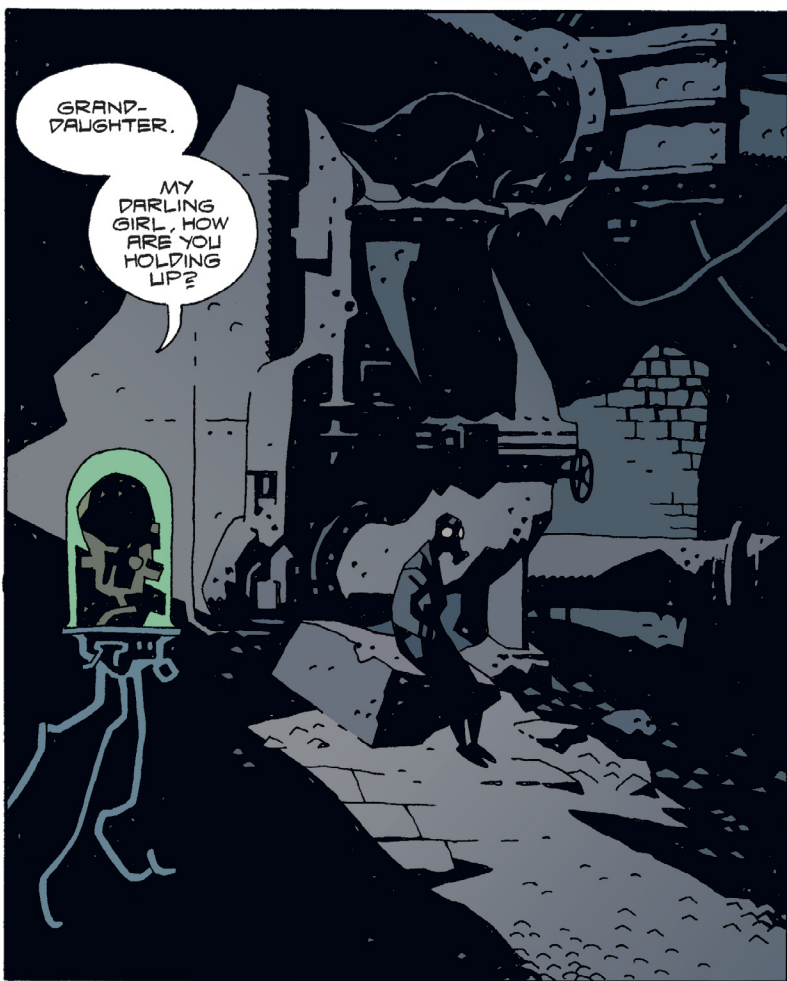
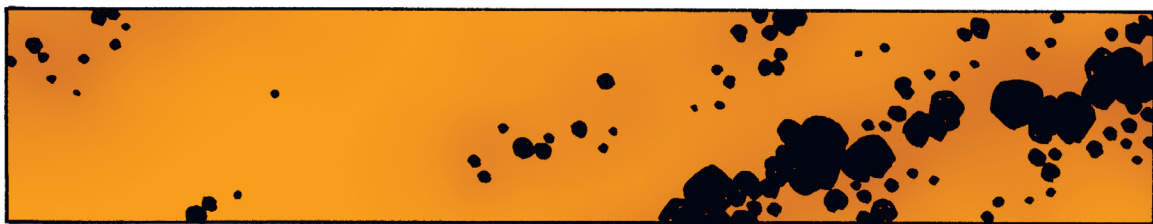


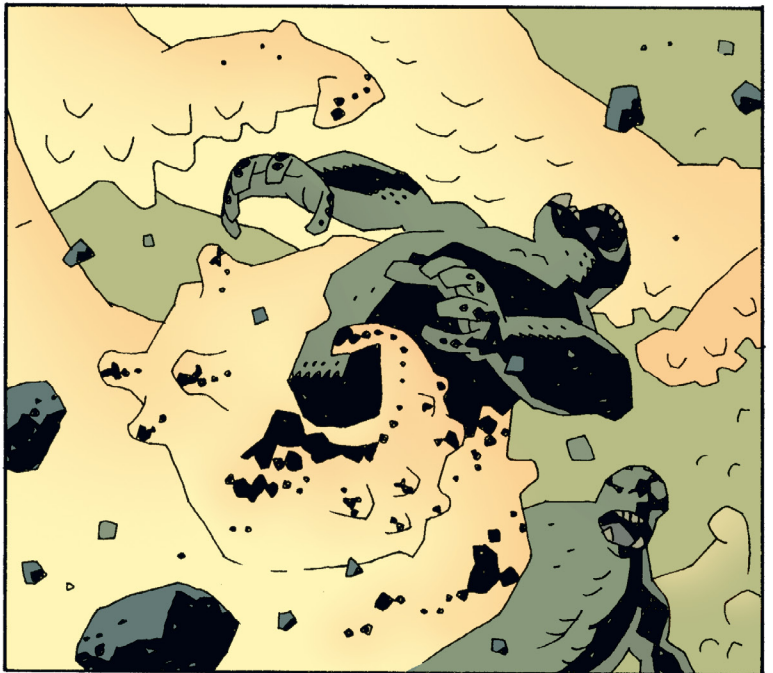




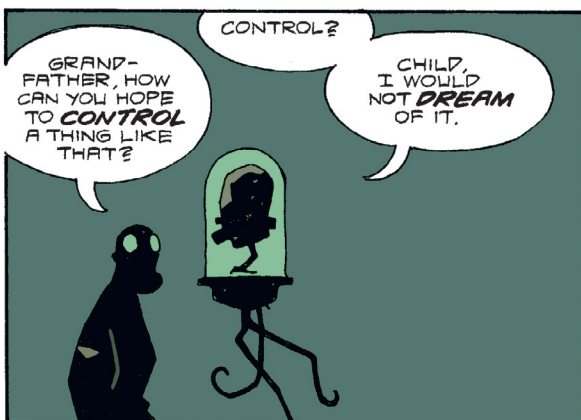








"THIS IS THE ULTIMATE DESTROYER. THERE IS NO END TO THE HUNGER, AND THE MORE IT EATS THE MORE IT WILL GROW, AND ON AND ON AND--"



GRAND-FATHER, HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO **CONTROL** A THING LIKE THAT?

CHILD, I WOULD NOT **DREAM** OF IT.



POOR GIRL. NOW IT IS TIME TO TELL YOU THE WHOLE TRUTH.



I WAS IN MY WORK-SHOP UNDER THAT INGOLSTADT CEMETERY...



"I HAD NEARLY COMPLETED MY KRIEGAPPE NUMBER TEN WHEN A CRIPPLING DESPAIR OVERWHELMED ME..."



TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THIS LIFE?

WHY DO I GO ON?



"...THE GLORY OF HITLER'S
THIRD REICH WAS A LOST
DREAM..."



"MY OWN PRO-
JECTS WERE
IN RUINS..."



"THE LAST
OF MY OLD
ALLIES WERE
DEAD..."



ALL
GONE, AND
I LEFT WITH
NOTHING..."



"THEN, AS THOUGH
CALLED, THE
ANGEL OF DEATH
APPEARED AND
SPOKE TO ME..."



HERMAN
VON
KLEMP, YOU ARE
CHOSEN.

" AND THAT'S HOW
I LEARNED THE
SECRET AT THE
HEART OF THE
NAZI SPACE
PROGRAM ...



" ... THAT THE GREAT
DOCTOR OEMING WAS
STRAPPED INTO THAT
SPACECRAFT, ALREADY
DEAD ...



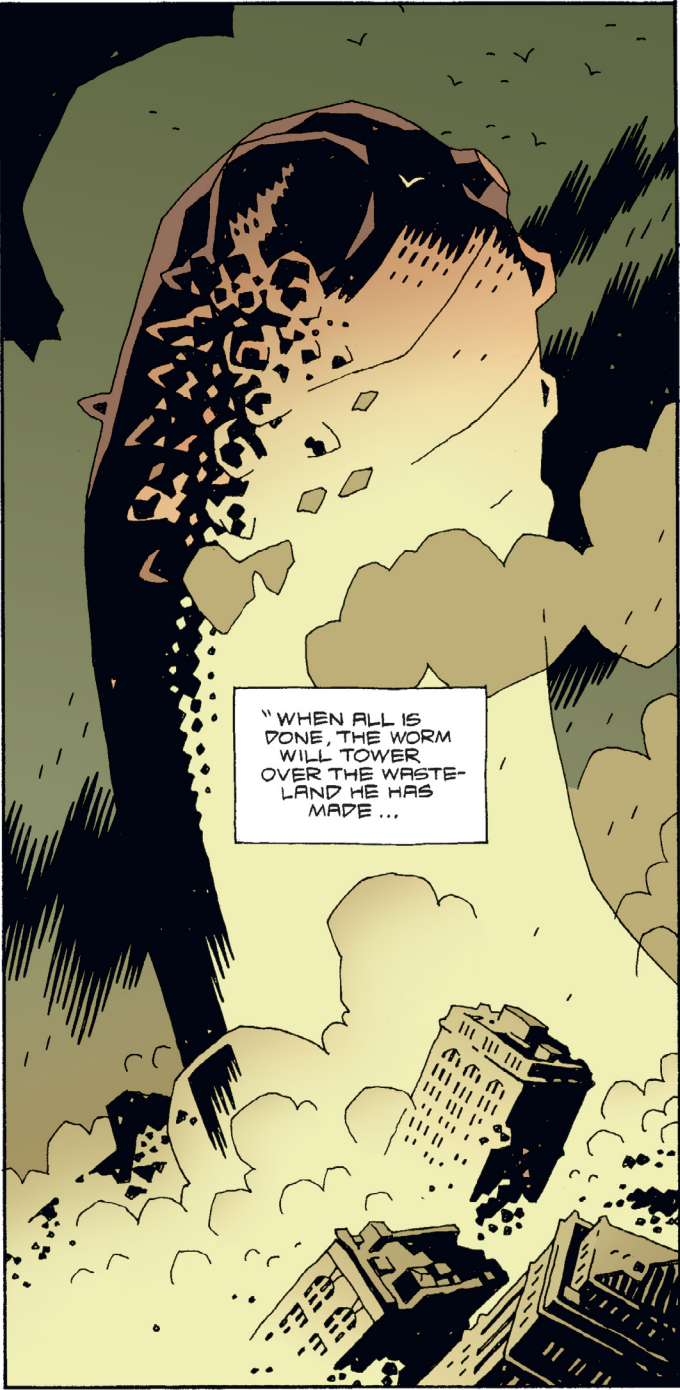
" ... THAT HE WAS INTENDED
AS A VESSEL FOR AN ALIEN
LIFE FORM, AND THAT THAT
LIFE FORM WOULD BE THE
AGENT OF MANKIND'S
DEMISE .



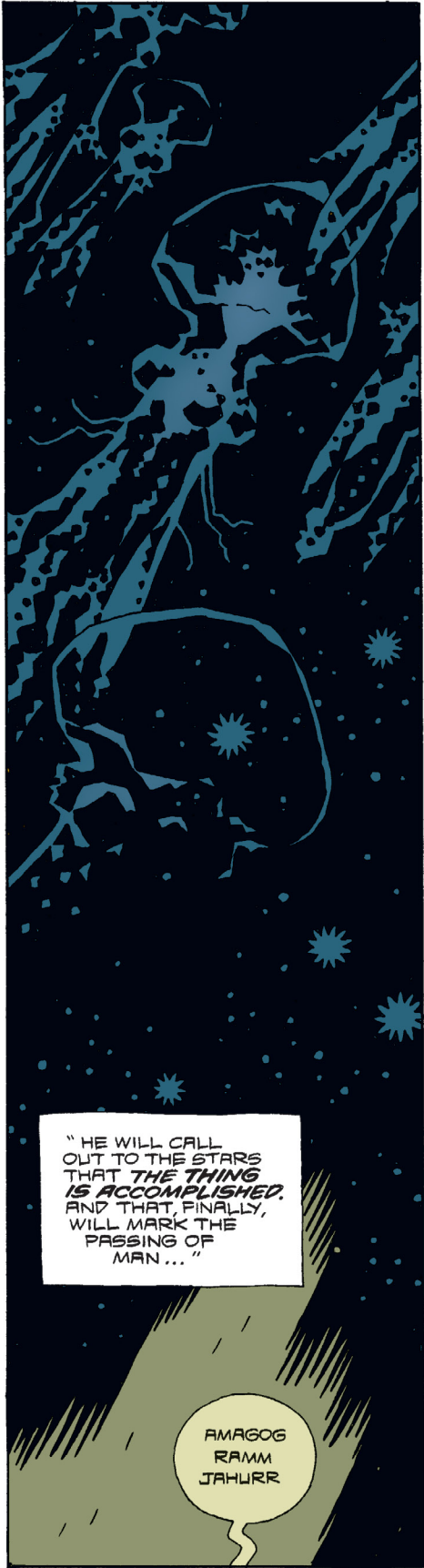
" THE WORM
IS MEANT
TO RIOT .

" BY HIS BREATH
HE CHANGES
MAN, AND THEN
HE CONSUMES
HIM. ALL MEN,
EVERYWHERE .

" THERE IS
NO ESCAPING
THE WORM .




"WHEN ALL IS
DONE, THE WORM
WILL TOWER
OVER THE WASTE-
LAND HE HAS
MADE ...



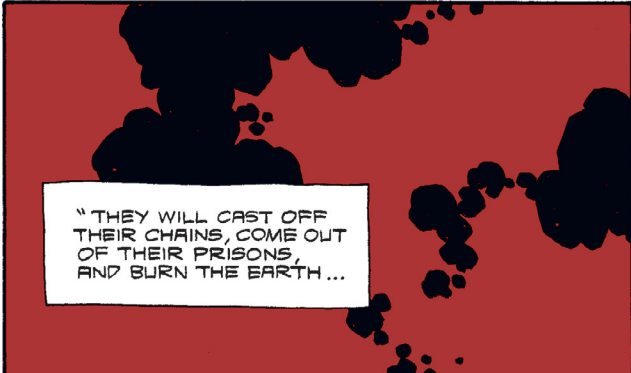
" HE WILL CALL
OUT TO THE STARS
THAT *THE THING*
IS ACCOMPLISHED.
AND THAT, FINALLY,
WILL MARK THE
PASSING OF
MAN ... "

AMAGOG
RAMM
JAHURR.



" THEN THE THREE
HUNDRED AND SIXTY-
NINE CHILDREN OF THE
OGDRU JAHAD WILL
WAKE AND COME UP
OUT OF THEIR PRISONS
IN THE EARTH AND IN
THE SEA ,

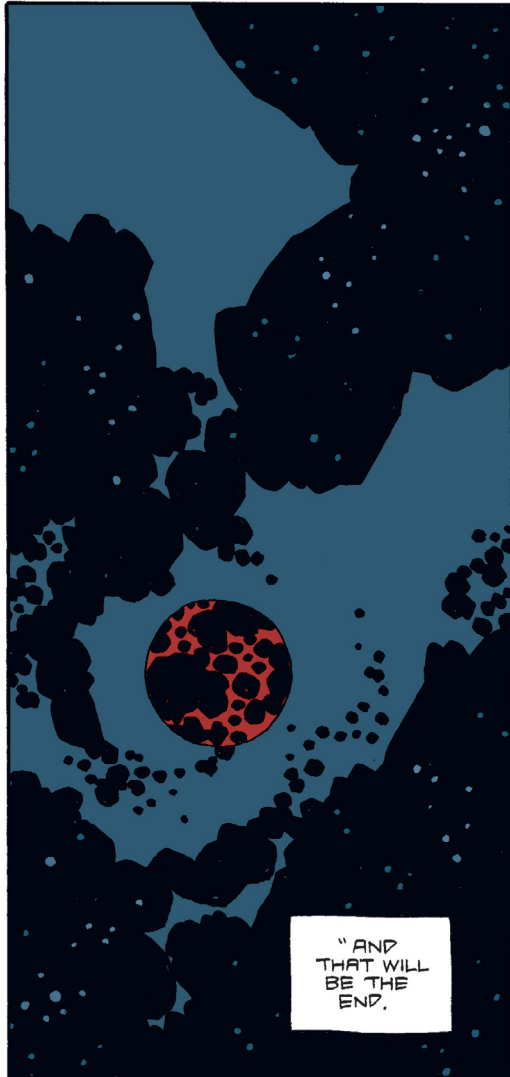
" THEN THE OGDRU
JAHAD WILL WAKE .
THE SEVEN WHO ARE
ONE , THE SERPENT , , ,



" THEY WILL CAST OFF
THEIR CHAINS , COME OUT
OF THEIR PRISONS ,
AND BURN THE EARTH ...



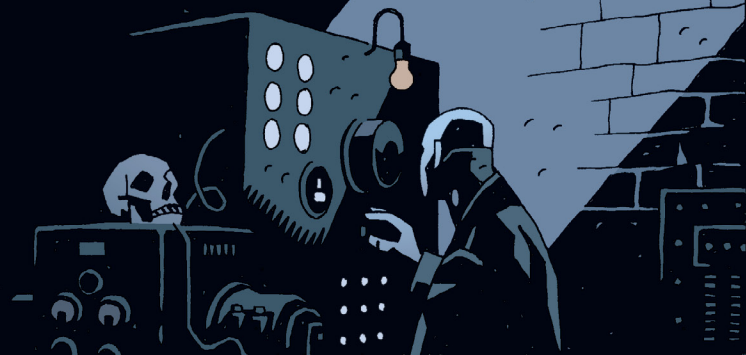
" MAKE OF IT
A BLACKENED
CINDER ...



" AND
THAT WILL
BE THE
END .

"BY MAKING RADIO CONTACT WITH THE SPACE CAPSULE, RECALLING IT TO EARTH, I SET ALL THESE EVENTS INTO MOTION.

"ONLY LATER DID I LEARN OF YOUR EXISTENCE. I THANK YOU FOR AIDING ME IN THESE FINAL PREPARATIONS ..."

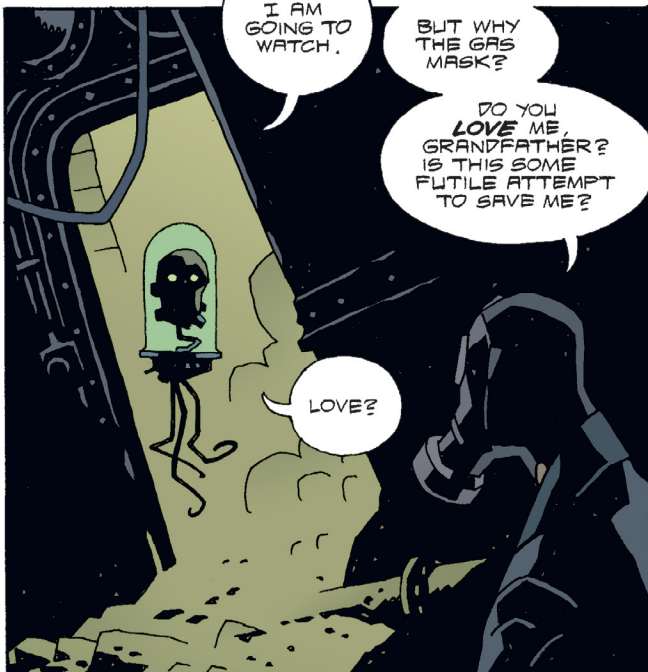


NOW I AM GOING TO WATCH.

BUT WHY THE GAS MASK?

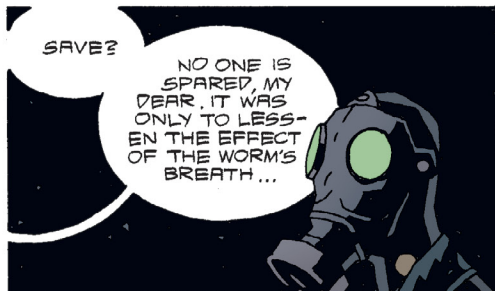
DO YOU **LOVE** ME, GRANDFATHER? IS THIS SOME FUTILE ATTEMPT TO SAVE ME?

LOVE?



SAVE?

NO ONE IS SPARED, MY DEAR. IT WAS ONLY TO LESS-EN THE EFFECT OF THE WORM'S BREATH...



...TO PRESERVE YOUR HUMAN MIND SO THAT YOU MAY FULLY APPRECIATE THE END.

WHEN YOU ARE READY, YOU MAY JOIN ME.



RÜBEZAHL.

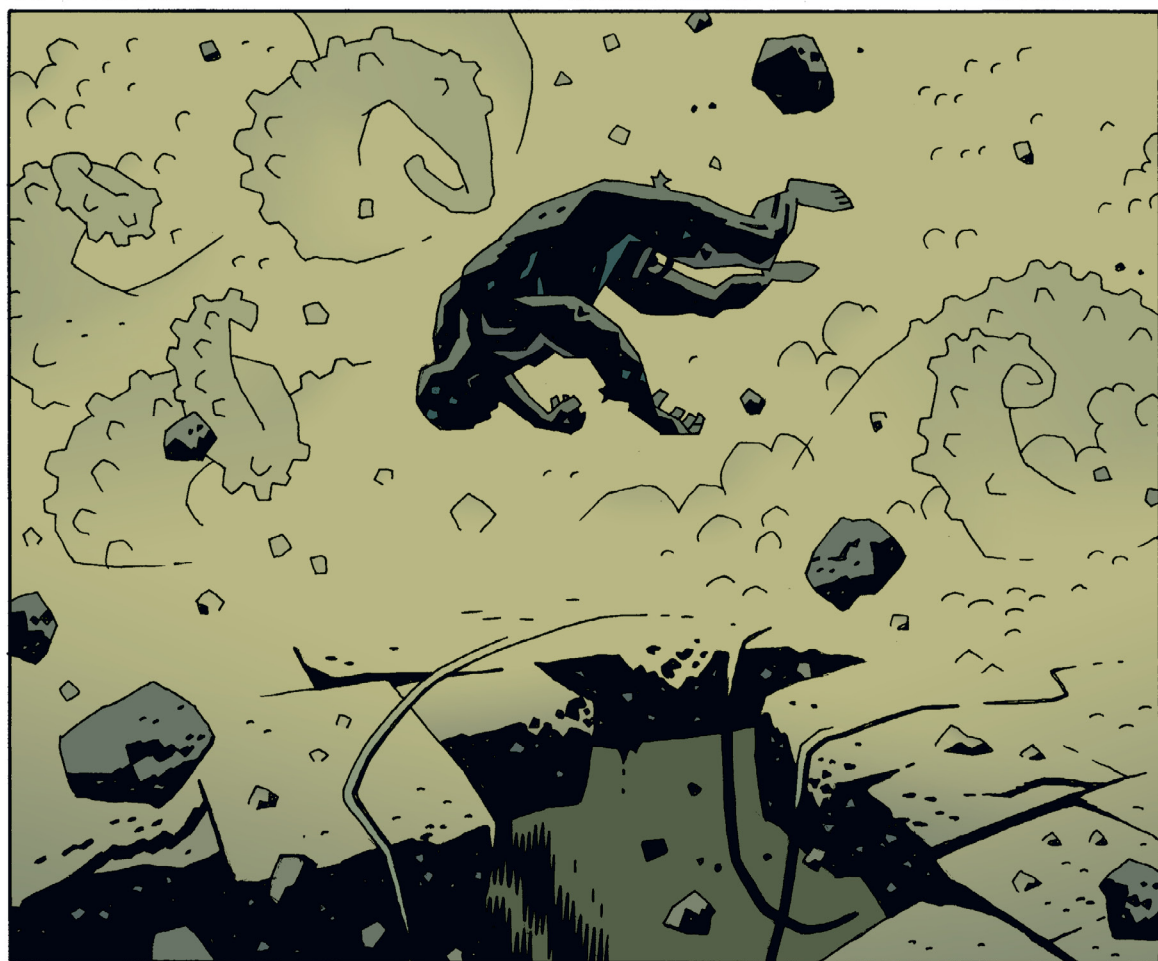


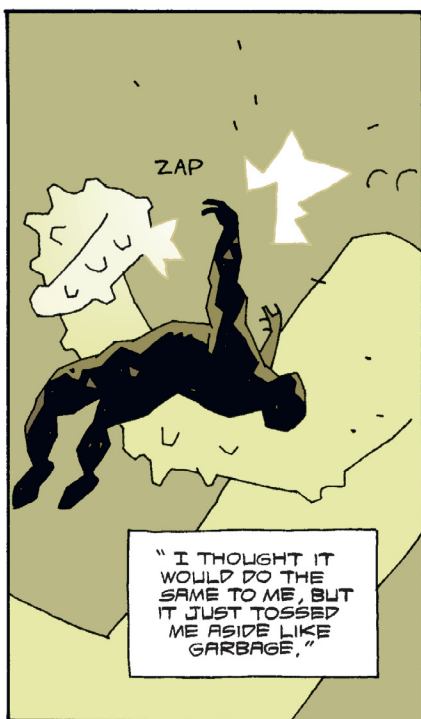
CHAPTER FOUR

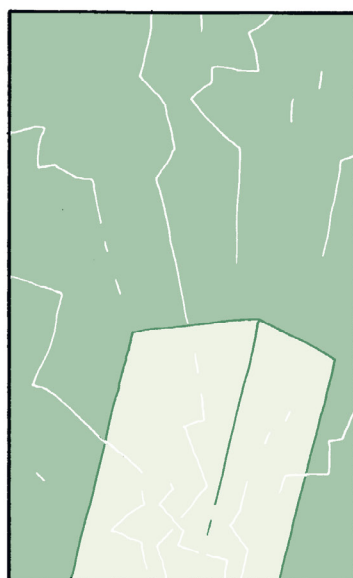
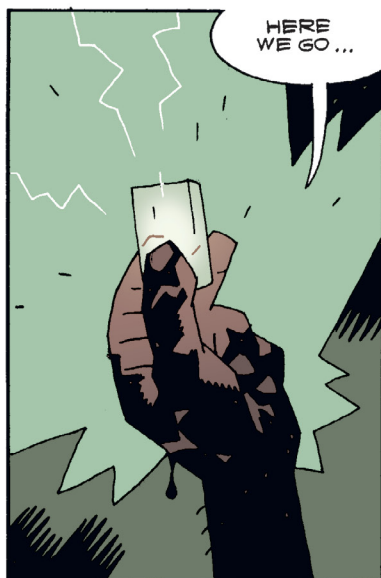
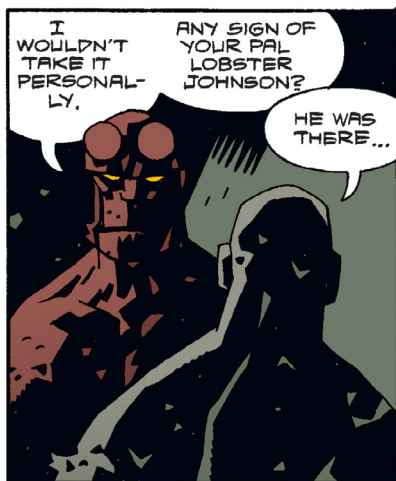




MIGNOLA





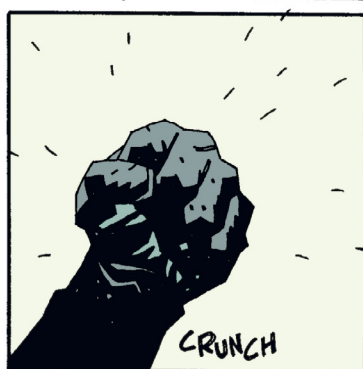
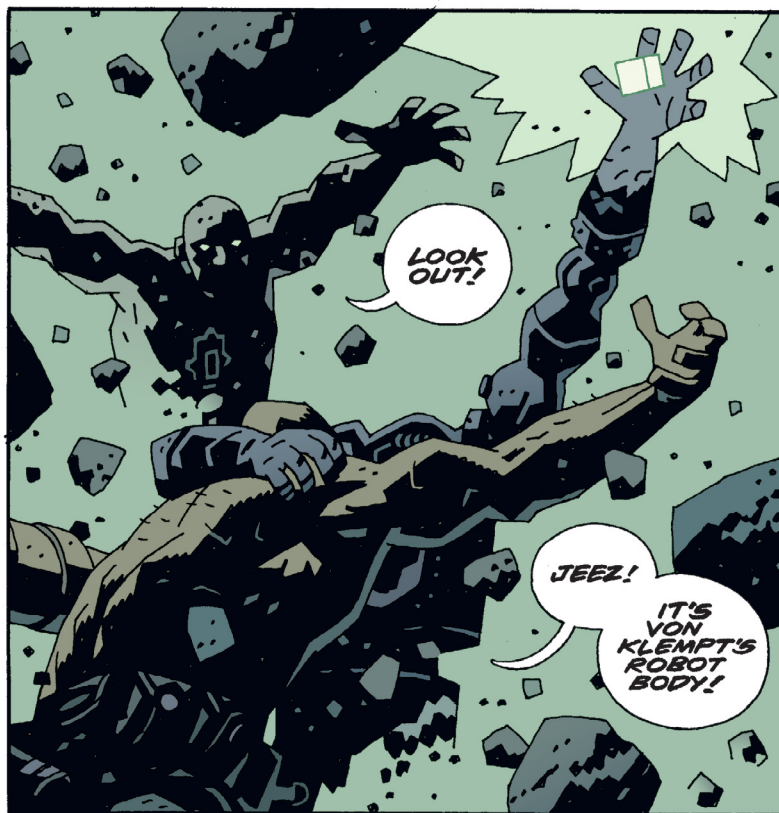
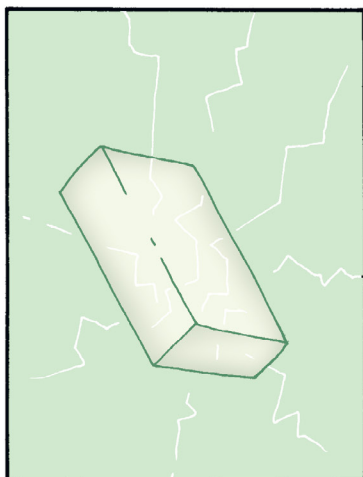




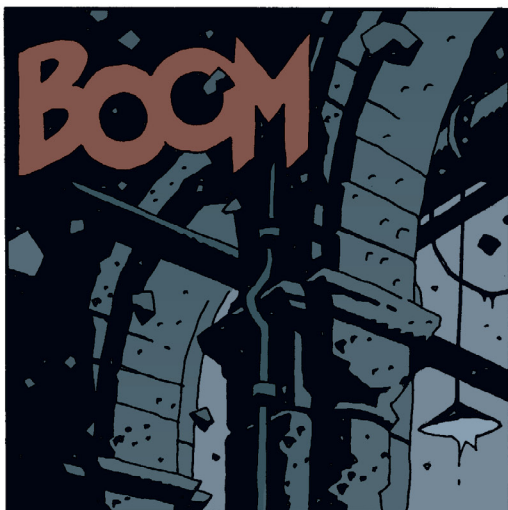
NUGUGHHYAHHYAHYAYA
YAYAYAAAAA

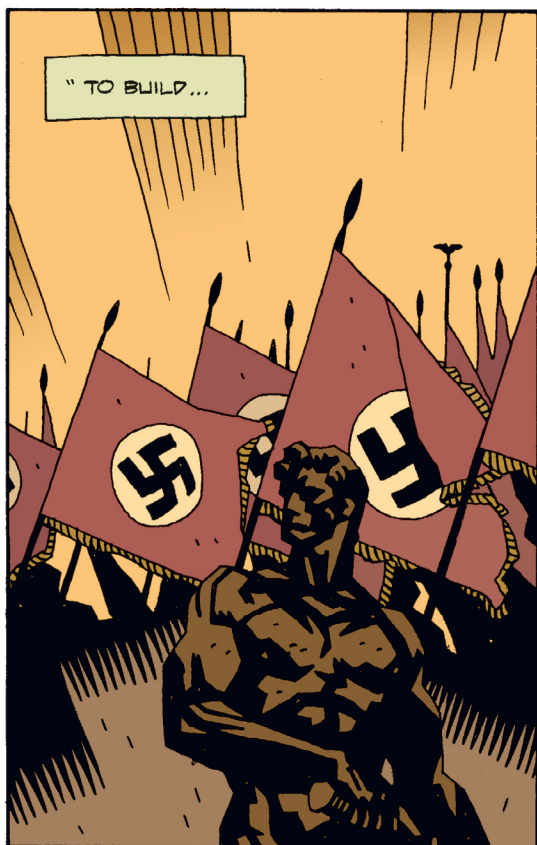
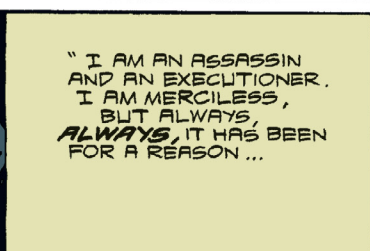



WHOA!
HEY!












IT'S TRUE, THE
WORM IS RINGING
DOWN THE CUR-
TAIN ON THE
HUMAN RACE. FOR
A WHILE NOW ALL
WILL BE GRAVEL
AND SMOKE.


BUT LOOK BACK
TO **THE BEGINNING**.
MANKIND WAS
BORN OUT OF THAT
KIND OF SMOKE. THE
FIRST RACE OF
MAN, THE **PRE-**
HUMAN HYPER-
BOREANS...



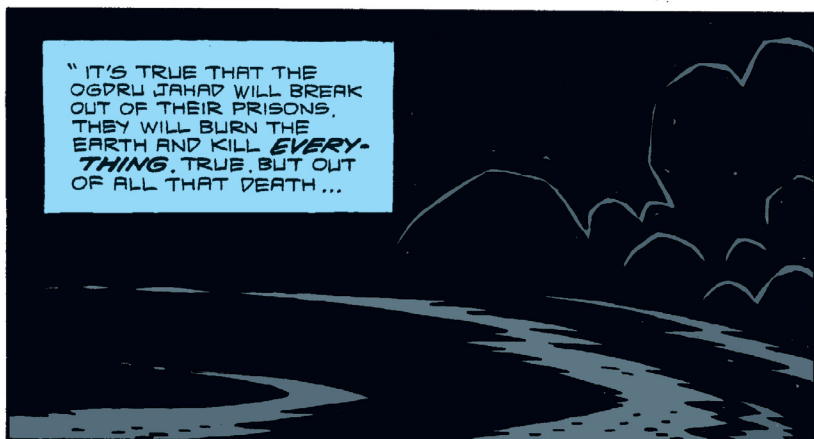
"AND **THAT** WAS
MANKIND'S
GOLDEN
AGE ...



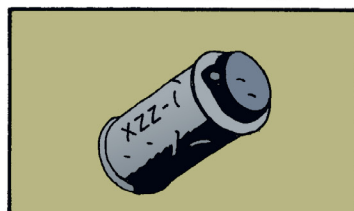
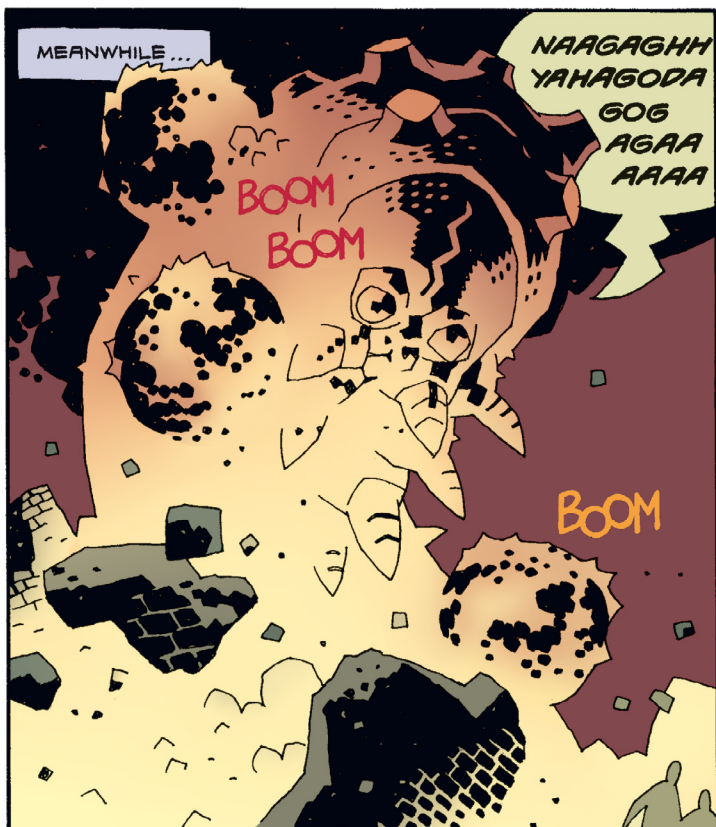
"AND WHEN POLAR ICE
CRUSHED THAT WORLD,
A **NEW** RACE OF MAN
RAISED ITSELF UP FROM
THE BEASTS. THE **SECOND**
RACE. **HUMAN**...

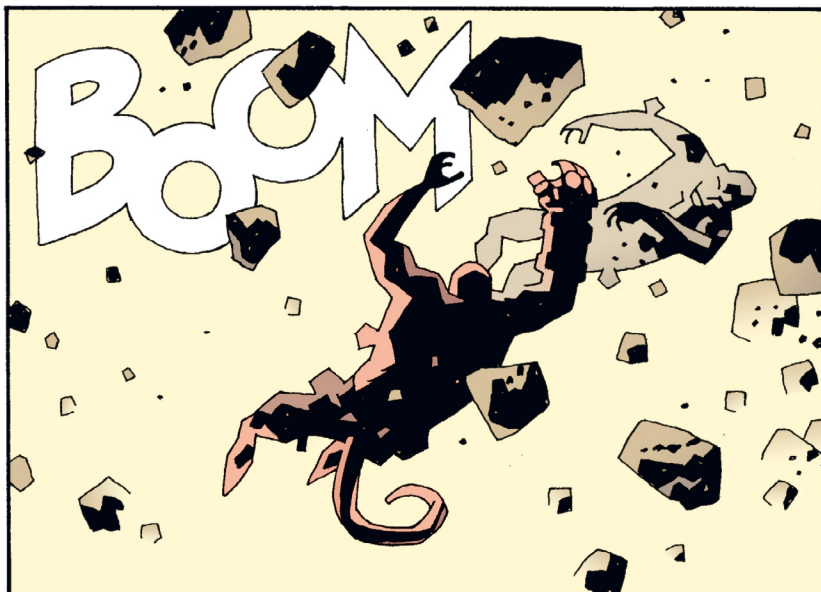


"ATLANTIS, LEMURIA,
SUMERIA, BABYLON.
HUMAN CIVILIZATIONS
COME AND GO, BUT THE
HUMAN RACE HAS
ENDURED. DOWN LONG,
HARD CENTURIES ..."









WELL, THAT *DIDN'T* WORK. I'M STARTING TO GET PRETTY CONCERNED.

THE WORM IS BIGGER AFTER EATING THOSE REPTILE MEN. IF IT GETS DOWN THE MOUNTAIN TO A POPULATED AREA, WHAT'S TO STOP IT FROM--?

NOTHING!

NOTHING WILL STOP IT. IT CANNOT *BE* STOPPED!



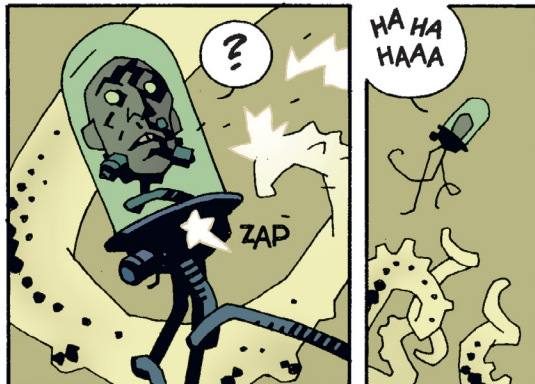
THE WORM WILL LAY WASTE TO ALL. MAN, ANIMAL, PLANT--NOTHING WILL REMAIN!

YOU'RE AS CRAZY AS THE BASTARDS WHO STARTED THIS MESS.

I WAS ONE OF THEM! I WAS HERE THEN, AND NOW I ALONE WILL BE WITNESS TO THE--

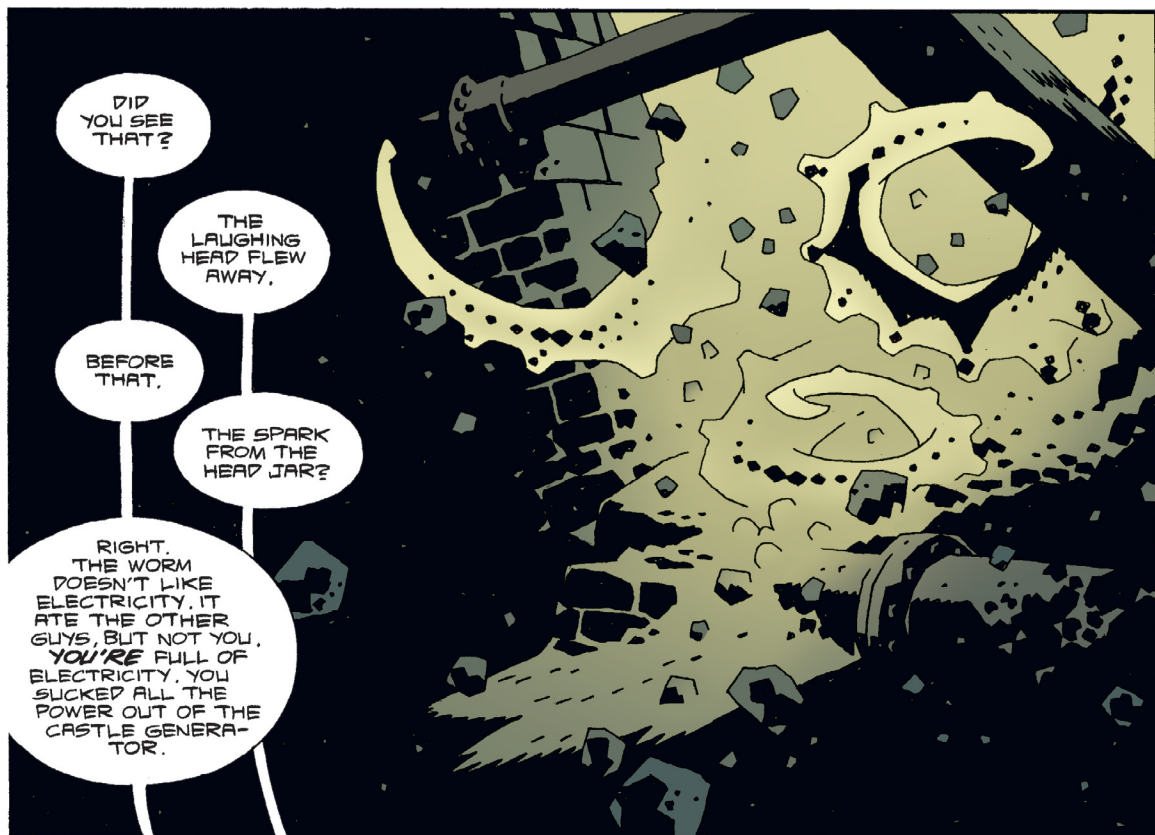
AHH!

NOT YET!



ZAP

HA HA HAAA



DID
YOU SEE
THAT?

THE
LAUGHING
HEAD FLEW
AWAY,

BEFORE
THAT,

THE SPARK
FROM THE
HEAD JAR?

RIGHT.
THE WORM
DOESN'T LIKE
ELECTRICITY. IT
ATE THE OTHER
GUYS, BUT NOT YOU.
**YOU'RE FULL OF
ELECTRICITY. YOU
SUCKED ALL THE
POWER OUT OF THE
CASTLE GENERA-
TOR.**



YES.



I
WONDER...

IF THERE WAS SOME
WAY YOU COULD SHOOT
THAT ELECTRICITY
BACK OUT...



I
CAN.



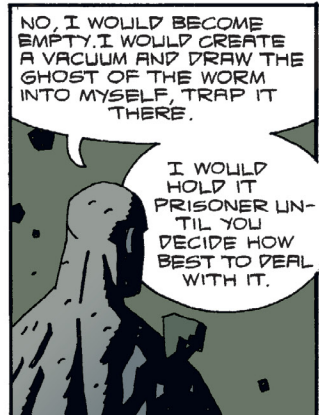
LIKE WHEN YOU PUT
LIZ'S LIFE FORCE BACK
INTO HER.

YES.

BUT
THAT
KILLED
YOU.

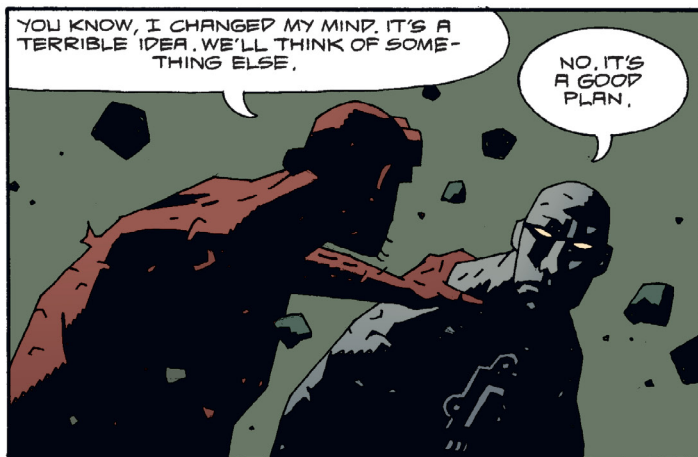


KILLED?
NO.

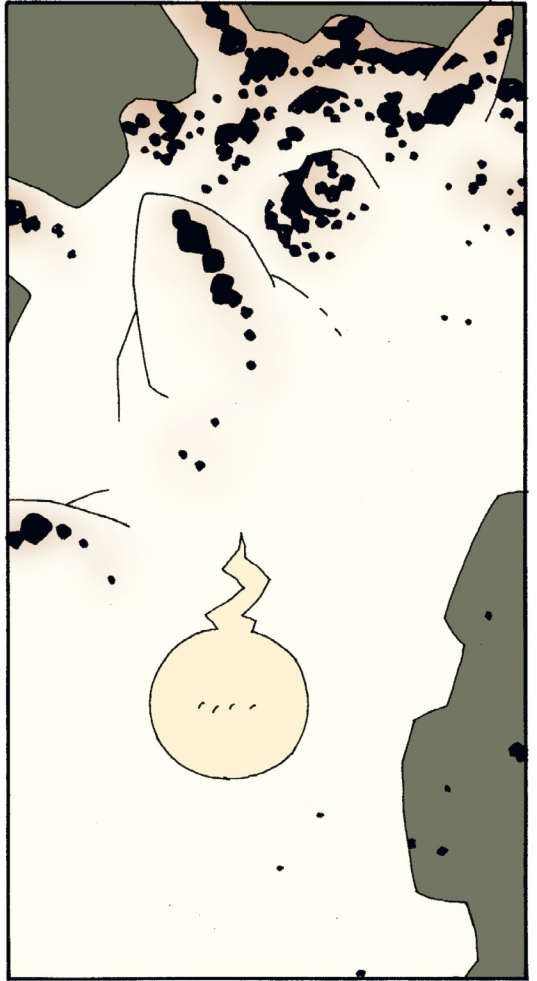


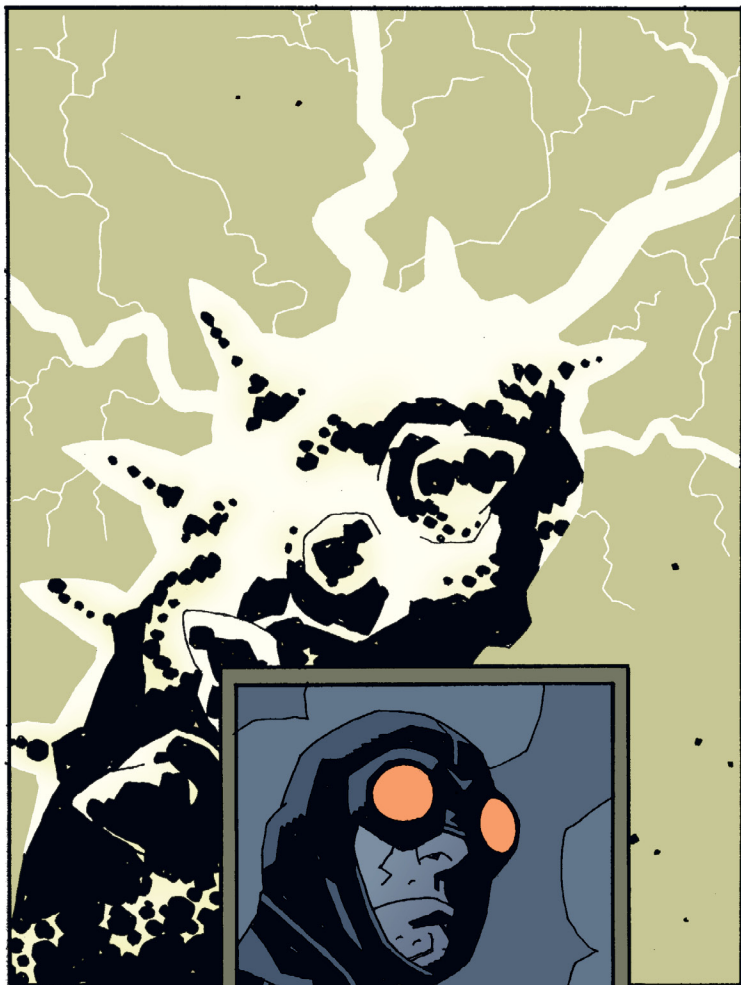
NO, I WOULD BECOME
EMPTY. I WOULD CREATE
A VACUUM AND DRAW THE
GHOST OF THE WORM
INTO MYSELF, TRAP IT
THERE.

I WOULD
HOLD IT
PRISONER UN-
TIL YOU
DECIDE HOW
BEST TO DEAL
WITH IT.



ANLINGAYAGAAA
AAAAAAA

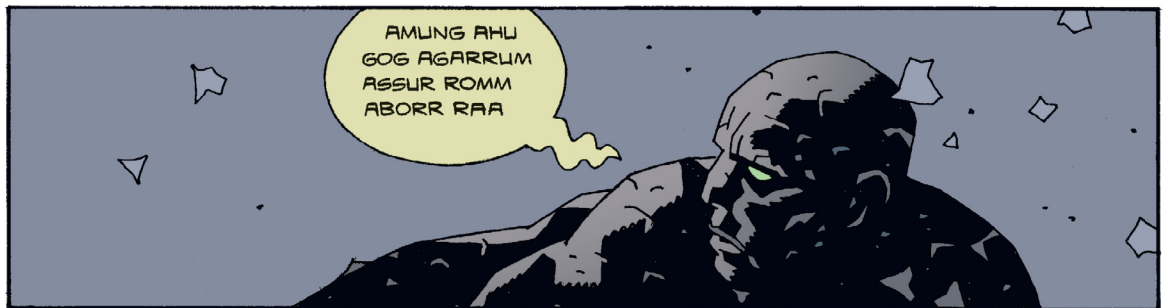
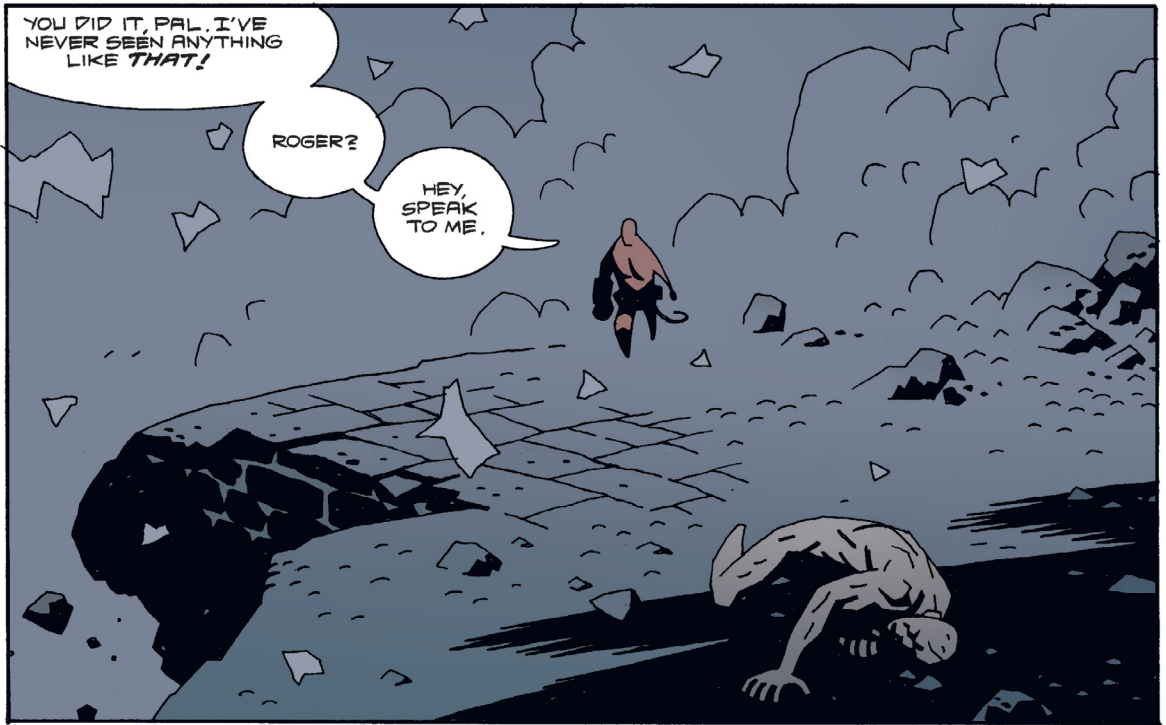




MIMES, IN THE FORM OF GOD
ON HIGH,
MUTTER AND MUMBLE LOW,
AND HITHER AND THITHER FLY--
MERE PUPPETS THEY, WHO
COME AND GO
AT BIDDING OF VAST FORMLESS
THINGS
THAT SHIFT THE SCENERY
TO AND FRO ...

...FLAPPING FROM OUT THEIR
CONDOR WINGS ...

... INVISIBLE WOE! *





YUGG ARRAM ANANG
ZUGGOR AMMA ZUG-
GOR AMANG ZUGGOR
GAA DURR ANNNNG
BASHLR



FIGHT IT!



AAAAA!



'YOU JUST HAVE TO HANG ON
'TIL WE CAN GET YOU DOWN TO--

HELLBOY,
YOU HAVE
TO DO IT.

?



I KNOW YOU
HAVE THE MEANS
TO DESTROY
ME ...

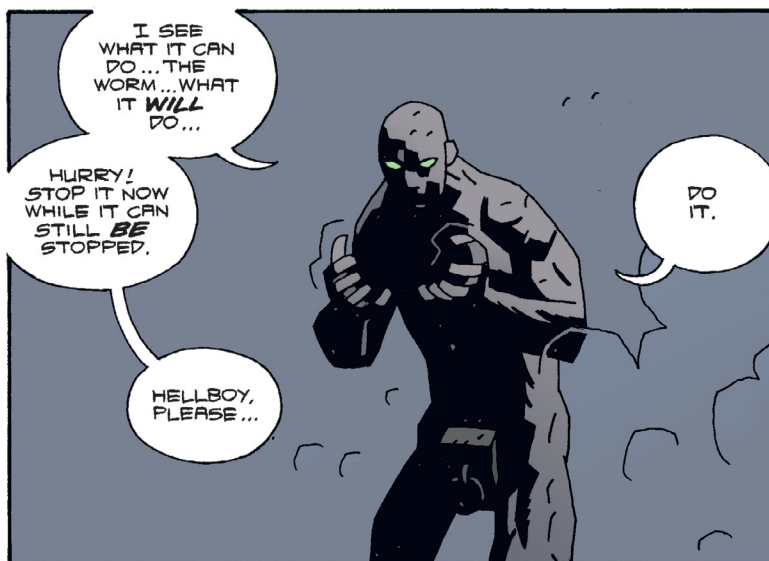
DO IT
NOW!



ROGER...

TING

NOW!



I SEE
WHAT IT CAN
DO ... THE
WORM ... WHAT
IT *WILL*
DO ...

HURRY!
STOP IT NOW
WHILE IT CAN
STILL *BE*
STOPPED.

HELLBOY,
PLEASE ...

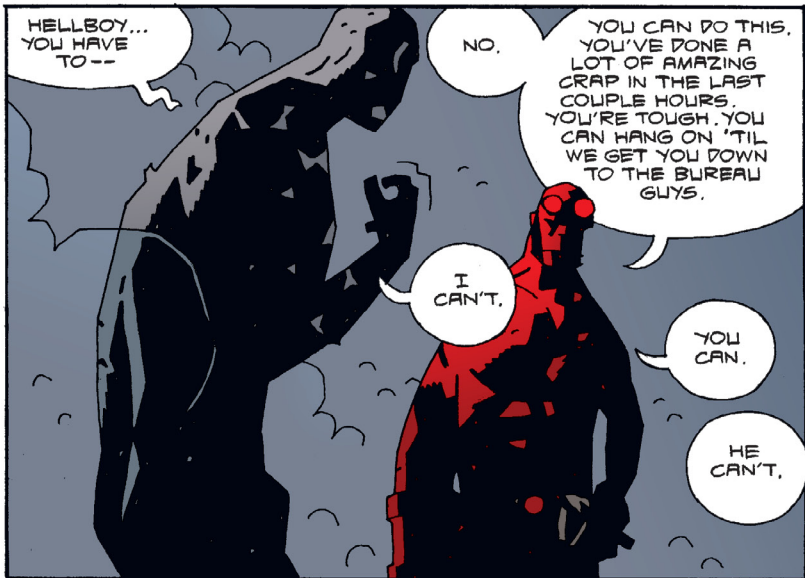
DO
IT.





NO.

CLINK



HELLBOY...
YOU HAVE
TO--

NO.

YOU CAN DO THIS.
YOU'VE DONE A
LOT OF AMAZING
CRAP IN THE LAST
COUPLE HOURS.
YOU'RE TOUGH. YOU
CAN HANG ON 'TIL
WE GET YOU DOWN
TO THE BUREAU
GUYS.

I
CAN'T.

YOU
CAN.

HE
CAN'T.



GET OUT OF
HERE, HEAD. I'LL
DEAL WITH YOU
LATER.

IGNORANT TROLL.
I HOPED TO SEE YOU
DIE, BUT THIS...THIS IS
BETTER. YOU'RE
BROKEN. YOUR FRIEND IS
LOST. YOU'VE LOST
EVERYTHING.
THE ANGEL OF DEATH
HAS SPOKEN.

UHH

URRRR...

SCREW
YOU, VON
KLEMP.



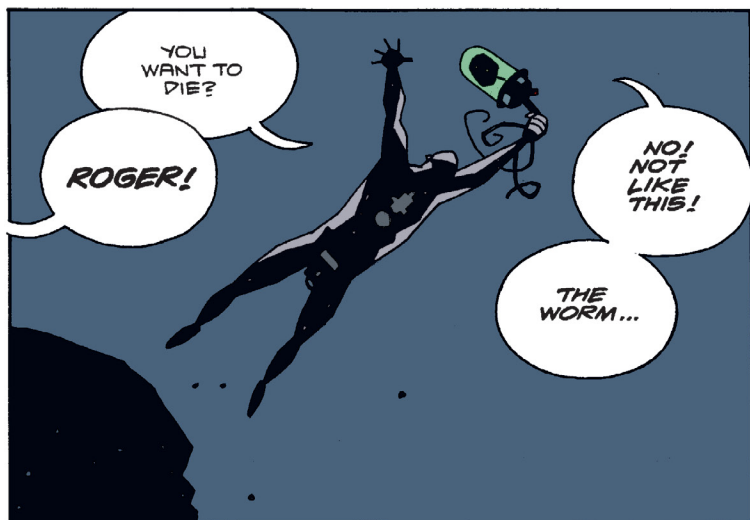
GURR
OSTHAA UN
YARMA

YES, MY
DARLING.
COME FORTH,
WORM, AND
DO YOUR
WORK.

I AM
READY
TO DIE.



ROGER...?



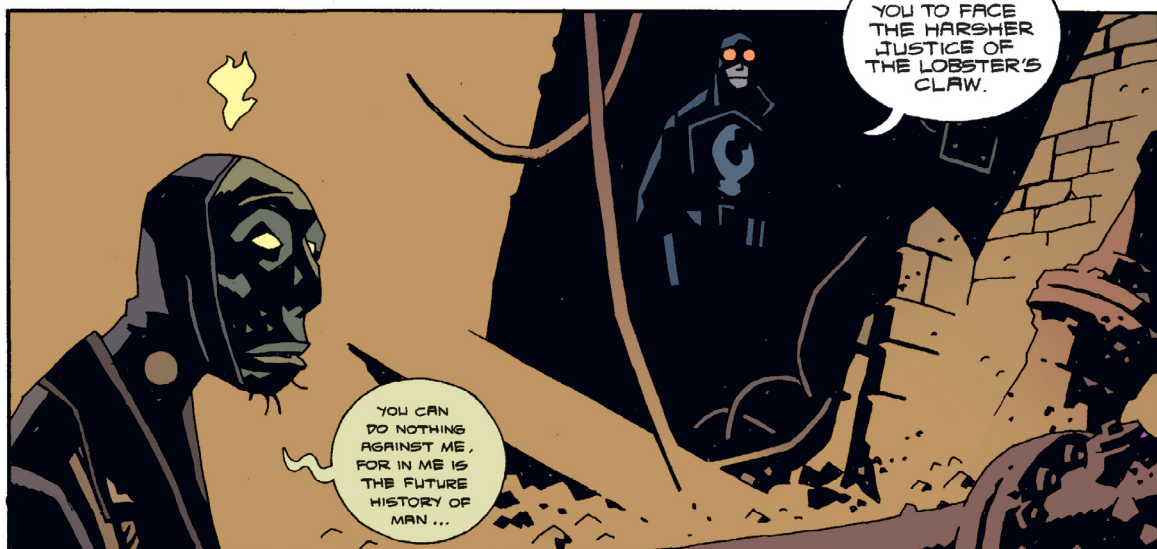


HERMAN VON
KLEMPT IS DEAD.
HE HAS PAID FOR
HIS CRIMES.

NOW
INGER
VON
KLEMPT
...



TIME FOR
YOU TO FACE
THE HARSHER
JUSTICE OF
THE LOBSTER'S
CLAW.



YOU CAN
DO NOTHING
AGAINST ME,
FOR IN ME IS
THE FUTURE
HISTORY OF
MAN ...



I AM THE
FUTURE!

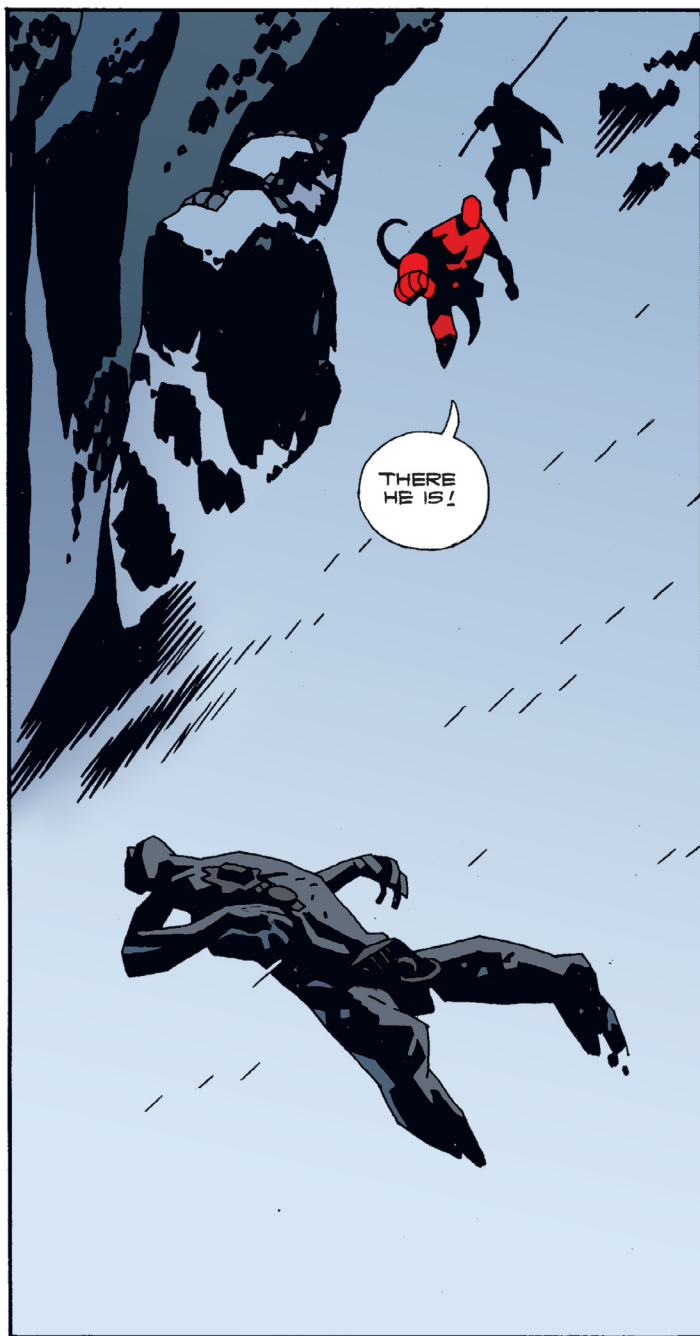
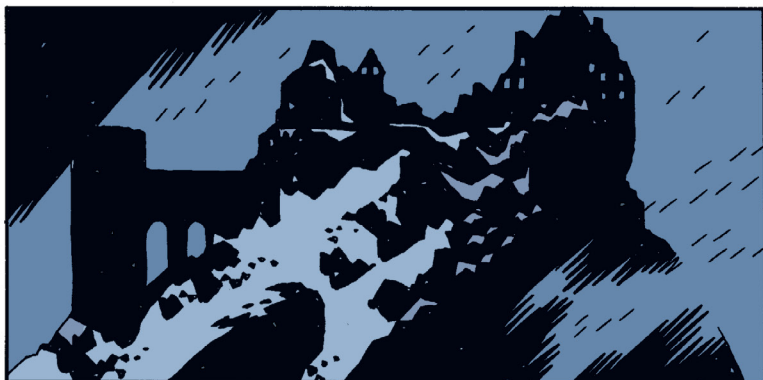
YOU
OWE TOO
MUCH
TO THE
PAST ...



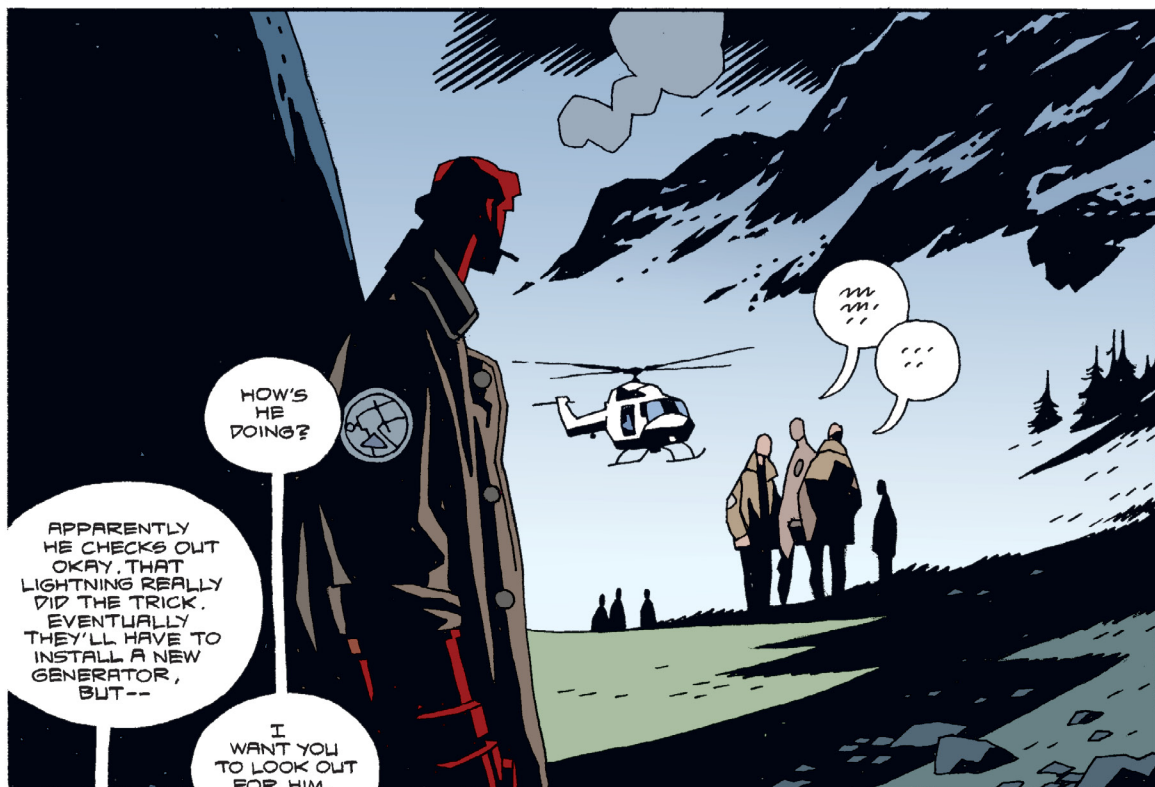
"YOU
HAVE TO
PAY."

BAP
BAP
BAP









HOW'S
HE
DOING?

APPARENTLY
HE CHECKS OUT
OKAY. THAT
LIGHTNING REALLY
DID THE TRICK.
EVENTUALLY
THEY'LL HAVE TO
INSTALL A NEW
GENERATOR,
BUT--

I
WANT YOU
TO LOOK OUT
FOR HIM,
OKAY?

WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?

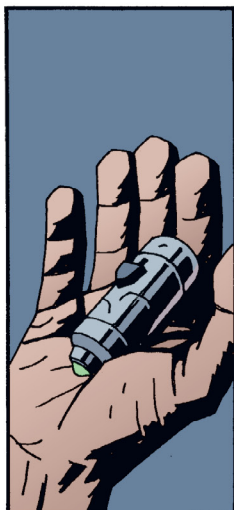
HELLBOY!

YEAH.

EXCUSE
ME,
KATE.

HELLBOY, GOOD JOB
UP THERE. I NEED A
FULL REPORT AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE.
AND ABOUT THAT
BUSINESS BEFORE YOU
MADE SOME GOOD
POINTS, AND--

TOM, HOLD OUT YOUR
HAND.



I
QUIT.

YOU'RE
REALLY
GOING TO
TAKE
OFF?

YEP.

REALLY?

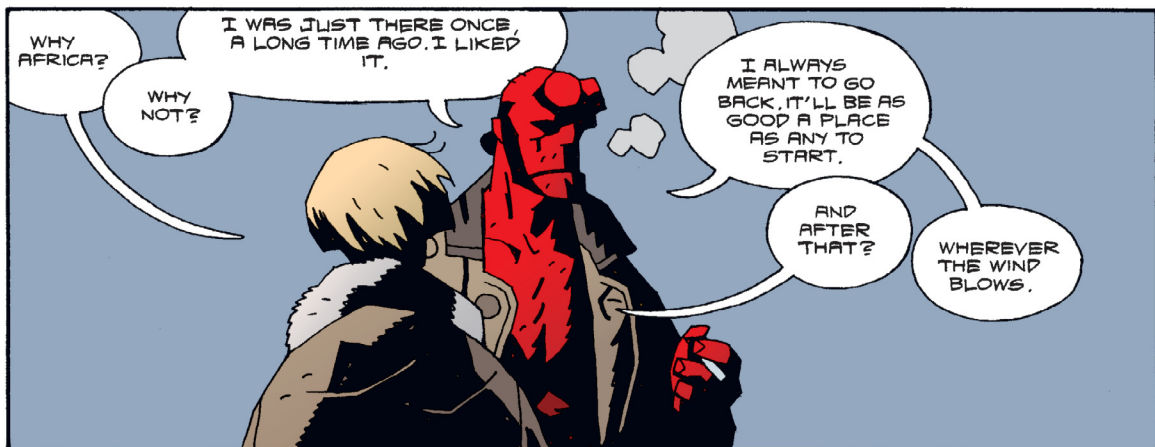
IT'S NOT
JUST THAT
THEY PLANTED
A BOMB ON ROGER.
IT'S ALL THIS OTHER
STUFF WITH ME.
CROWN OF THE
APOCALYPSE? RIGHT
HAND OF DOOM?
FLOWERS GROWING OUT
OF MY BLOOD?

YOU
NEVER
TOLD ME
ABOUT THE
FLOWERS.

I JUST
HEARD ABOUT
THAT ONE MY-
SELF.

SO
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?

AFRICA.



Epilogue



DO NOT
LINGER
HERE, OLD MAN.
GIVE UP. GO.
REST IN PEACE
IF YOU CAN.

SOMEWHERE
INSIDE HUNTE
CASTLE.

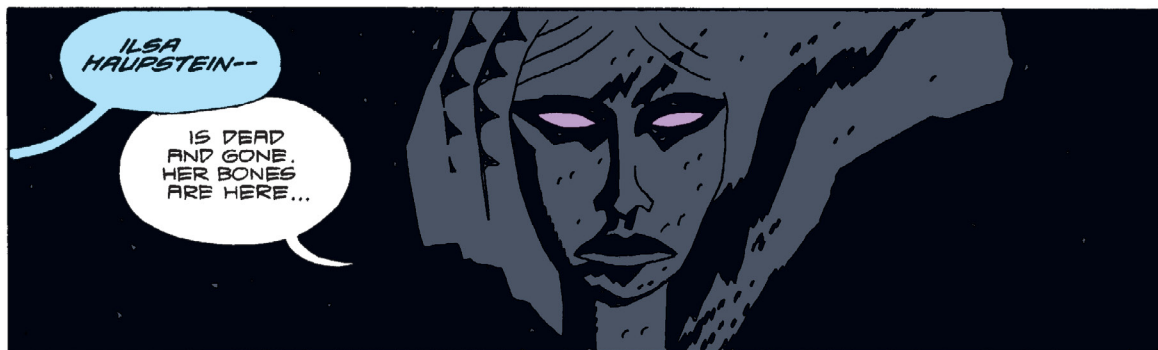
DO NOT PITY
ME, GIRL.

WHAT
WOULD
YOU HAVE
ME DO?

SERVE
ME, AS
YOU WERE
CREATED
TO DO.

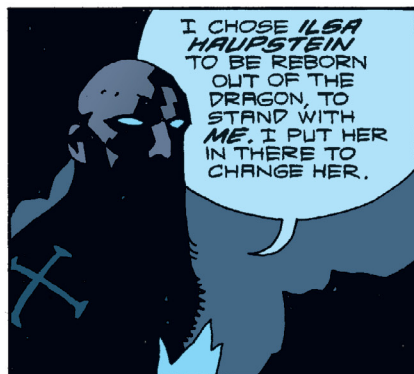
AHH,
THIS IS
TOO
SAD.

YOU DO
NOT KNOW
WHO I AM.



ILSA
HAUPSTEIN--

IS DEAD
AND GONE.
HER BONES
ARE HERE...



I CHOSE **ILSA
HAUPSTEIN**
TO BE REBORN
OUT OF THE
DRAGON, TO
STAND WITH
ME. I PUT HER
IN THERE TO
CHANGE HER.



ONLY
FOR
YOU.



SHE'S
GONE.

I OWE YOU
FOR HER
BLOOD AND THIS
IRON SKIN ...



ALL
ELSE IS
ME.

GORGON-
EYED
HECATE.

GODDESS
OF CROSS-
ROADS,
QUEEN OF
DOGS ...

HA!



I WAS **AT**
CASTLE GIURESCU,
I **SMELLED** YOU
THERE.

HALF
DEAD, HALF
FORGOTTEN.
HIDING LIKE A
SNAKE IN A
GRAVE.

HELLBOY
WAS
THERE...

I
KNOW.



HELLBOY...

"I KNEW HIM FOR WHAT HE WAS AND TRIED TO WAKE HIM TO HIS PURPOSE. WE FOUGHT AND HE DESTROYED ME..."



BUT PART OF ME STILL LIVED IN THE VAMPIRE.

GIURESCU?

JUST AS YOU GAVE ONE HALF OF YOUR SPIRIT TO THE BABA YAGA TO HIDE IN THE ROOTS OF THE WORLD TREE, SO I GAVE A PIECE OF MYSELF TO HIM...



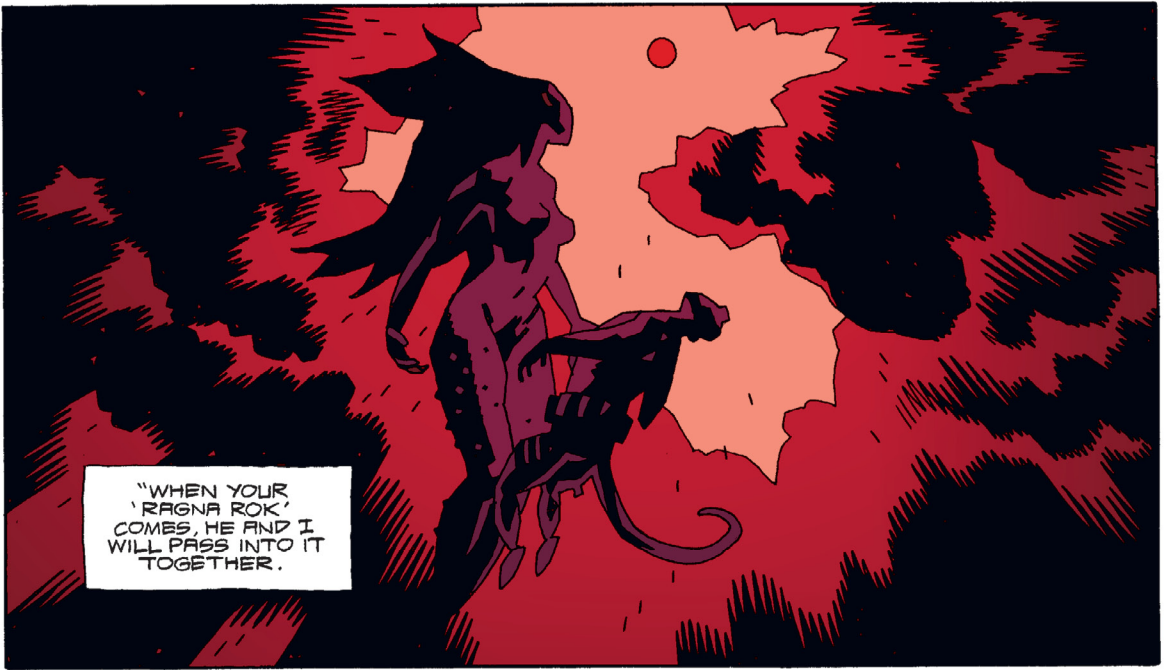
"GIVING HIM THAT NEW LIFE, MAKING HIM MY SON..."

"THEN I GAVE HIM UP TO ENTER INTO YOUR FLESH-AND-IRON MONSTER..."*

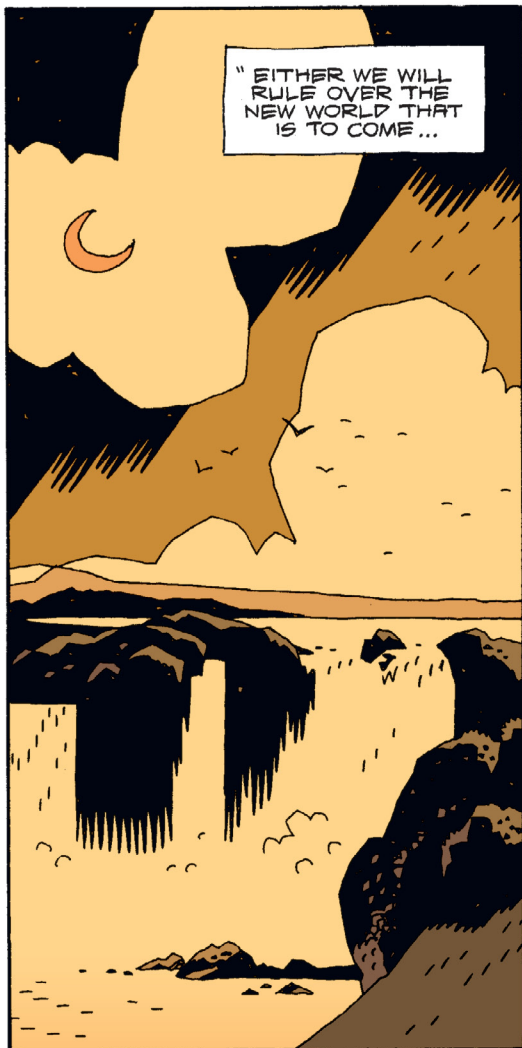
AND THE THING NOW IS ME. AS SUCH I WILL GO ON UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD... AND MAYBE BEYOND THAT.

HELLBOY DESTROYED YOU ONCE. HE'LL DO IT AGAIN.

HE CANNOT. WE ARE BOUND TOGETHER, HE AND I...



"WHEN YOUR
'RAGNA ROK'
COMES, HE AND I
WILL PASS INTO IT
TOGETHER."



"EITHER WE WILL
RULE OVER THE
NEW WORLD THAT
IS TO COME ..."



"OR WE
WILL DIE.
I DON'T
KNOW. I
CAN'T
SEE THAT
FAR ..."



BUT
YOU...

YOU
THINK
YOU CAN
SHAPE
THESE
EVENTS?



I CANNOT AND
I AM A GODDESS.
YOU ARE SOOOO
MUCH LESS.

I CAN
AND I
WILL.



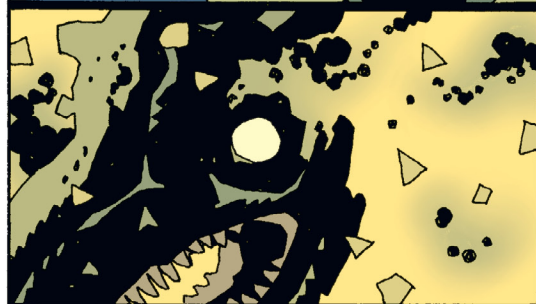


I WAS CHOSEN BY THE
DRAGON, OGPRU JAHAD, TO
DELIVER HIM FROM HIS PRISON
AND BRING ABOUT THE END
OF THE WORLD, TO MAKE WAY
FOR A NEW WORLD. AND
I... I *ALONE* WILL BE
LORD OVER *THAT*!

FROM
CAVENDISH HALL
I SHOOK THE DRAGON
AND SOON ENOUGH I
WILL BREAK HIS
CHAINS AND SET
HIM FREE!



"POOR
RASPUTIN..."



YOU KNOW
AND I KNOW
THAT ONLY *ONE*
POWER ON
EARTH CAN EVER
LOOSE THE
DRAGON ...

NO!

YOU'VE
ALWAYS
KNOWN...





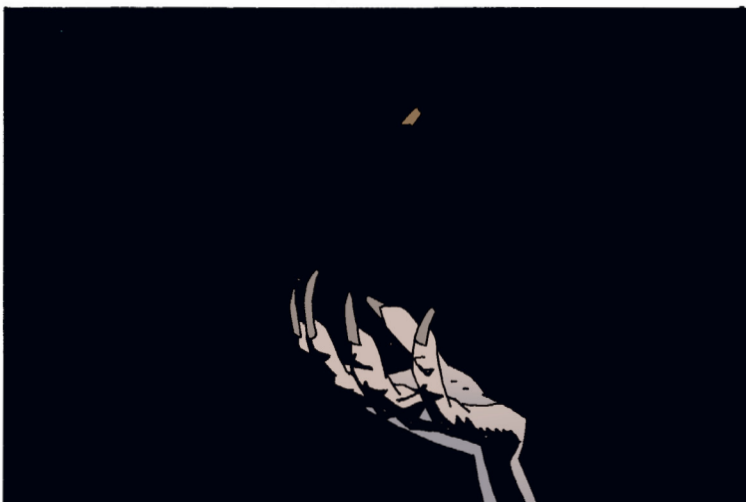
I WILL
SEE YOU
CRAWL
BEFORE
ME!



THIS
IS NOT
THE
END.



IT
IS.





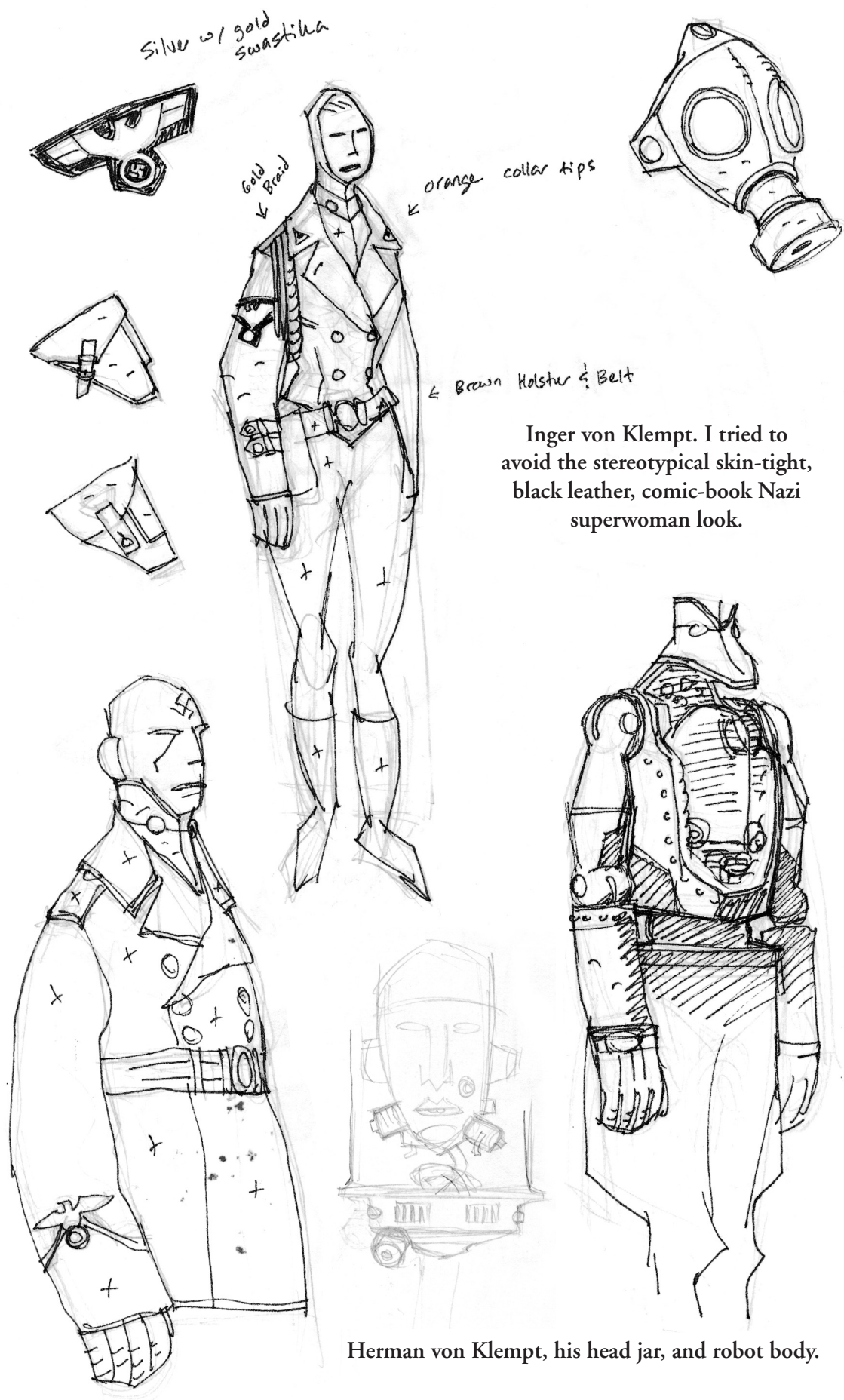
THE
END

HELLBOY™

SKETCHBOOK

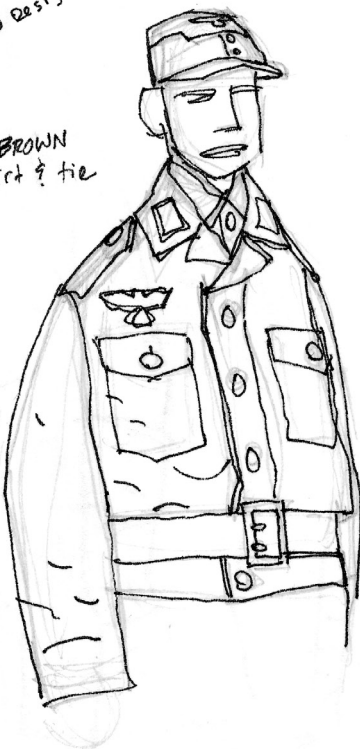
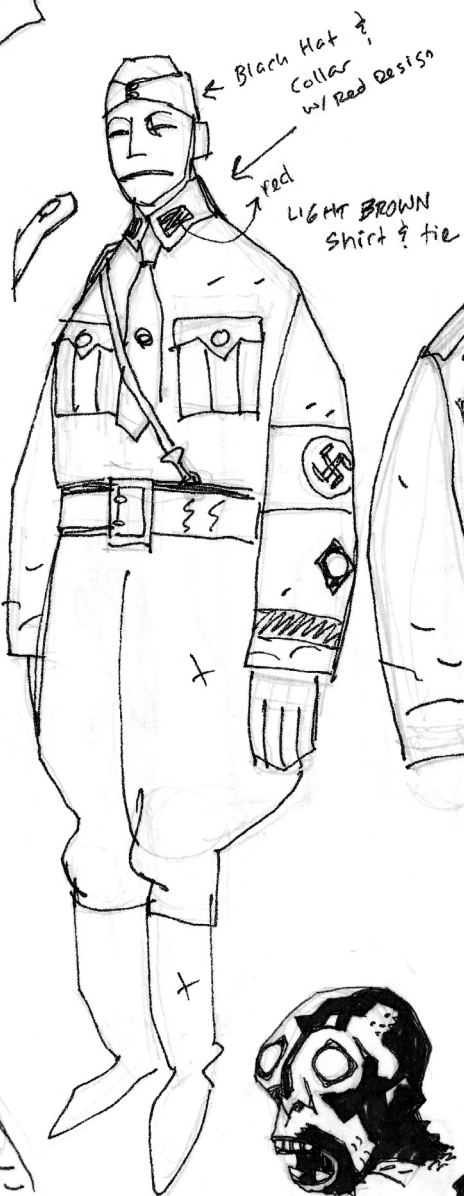


The Conqueror Worm himself.
Actually, worms aren't very interesting
looking, so this is based on a caterpillar.

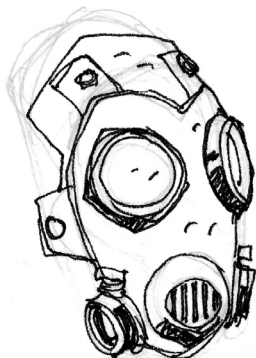
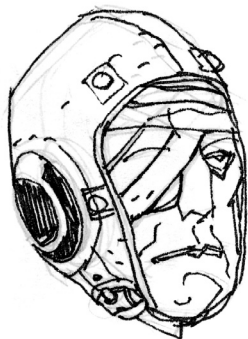
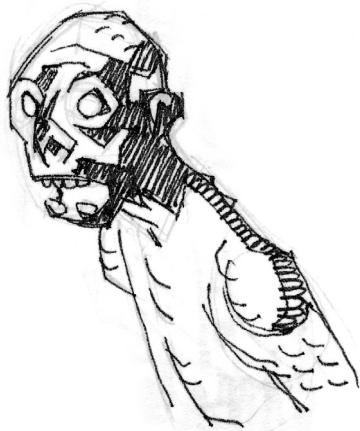




Nazi designs:
Human and reptile.

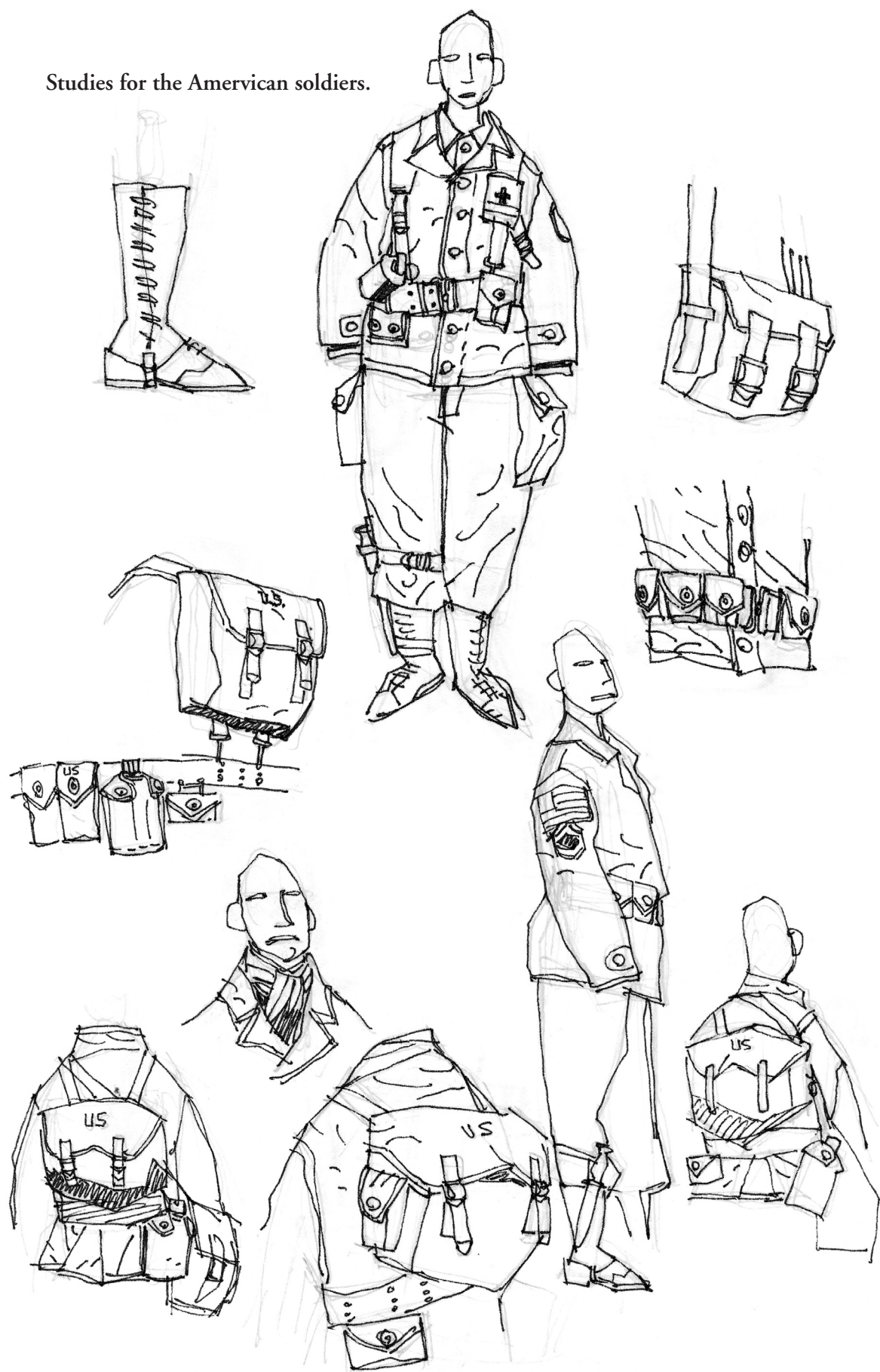


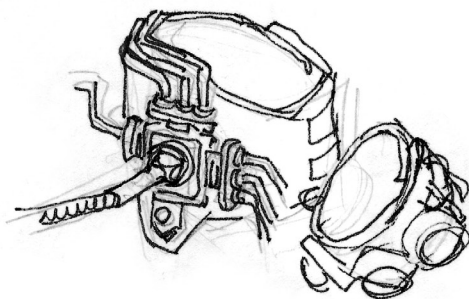
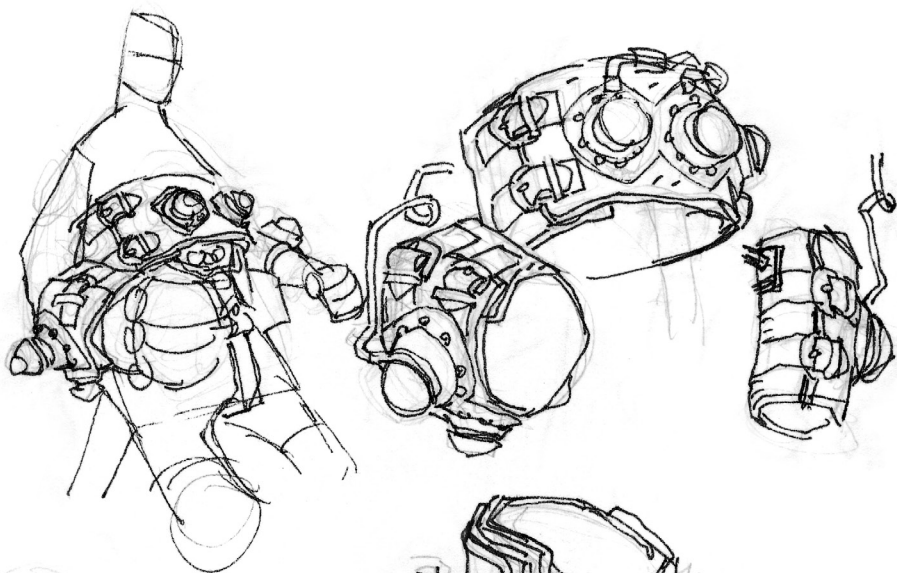
Black
Pants -
Dark
Brown
Belt



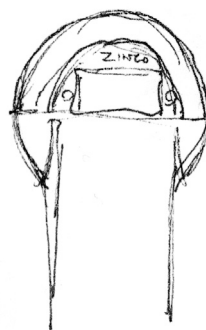
Study for Doctor Oeming in
his space capsule. I added a
mustache to avoid confusion
with Lobster Johnson.

Studies for the Amervican soldiers.





The "torture harness" (above) and its control box (below) which was based on the parking meter outside my apartment.



And finally the poor dead alien in all his glory.



There you go.

MIKE MIGNOLA

Mike Mignola
New York City



“Move in and explore these pages. They draw us into a deeper, richer universe; they crown all past work and signal a new promising future . . . all while still giving us the pulp beauty, cheap thrills, and cosmic horrors that have become Mignola’s signature. A work of genius.”

*from the introduction by
Guillermo del Toro*

