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ISSUE

1

THE

AUTUMN

KINGDOM

CULLEN BUNN

CHRISTOPHER MITTEN

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COVER G 1:50 FULL ART VARIANT

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And so, the Empress of Ghosts, the Wraithbound Queen, trudged ever closer to the Stygian Citadel.

Here, in this Hell-Shadow, she would face the woman who murdered everyone Elsethriel ever loved.

Here, she would pay her sister back a thousandfold.

She was weary from her travels. Half-dead or more. But her rage...

...and the energy of the souls imprisoned within the Animis Blade...

...compelled her to keep standing, to keep moving forward.



Her hated enemy...her
own sister...had gathered
daemons to her banners.

YOU
SHOULD NOT HAVE
VENTURED TO THIS
PLACE!

IT IS
FORBIDDEN!

AND
YOUR LIFE WILL
FUEL THE DEATH
FURNACES!

YOUR FLESH
WILL FEED THE
REVENANT
FIELDS!

SHRA
SHRA
SHRA-SHRA-SHRA
SHRA

While Elsethriel
was alone...

HAHAHAHA!

...save for the dead.

Trapped within the **Animis Blade's** steel was the memory of every life it had taken.

THOUSANDS OF
SOULS, INNOCENT
AND CORRUPT
ALIKE.

MY
EMPIRE.

I'LL NOT
TURN BACK
NOW!

YEAARRGGGGHHHHH

...served the
Wraithbound Queen.

As the Wraithbound Queen served,
for all eternity, her own bloodlust.



WELL...IT'S DARK.



AND...I MEAN...
A LOT DARKER
THAN THE LAST
BOOK.



I DUNNO,
SOMMER.

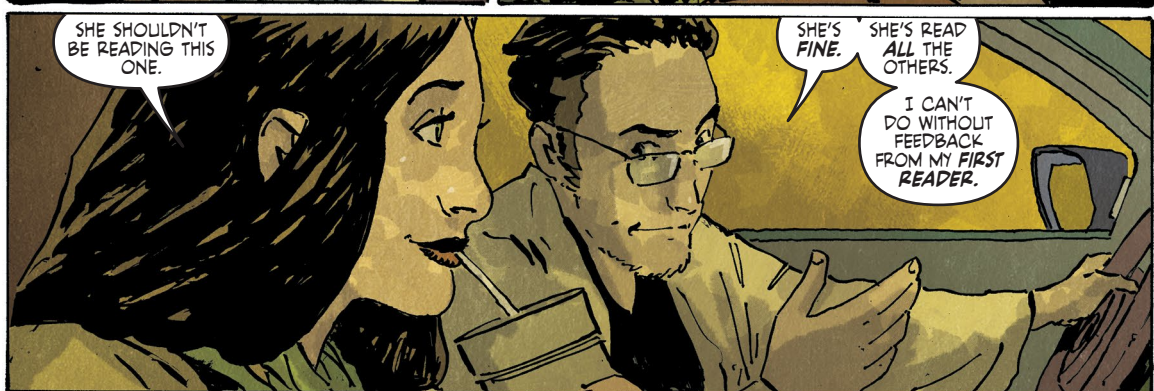
I FEEL LIKE
EVERY BOOK
IN THE SERIES
HAS BEEN
PRETTY
BLEAK.

RIGHT?



YOU'RE
KIDDING,
RIGHT?
DAD.

SHE SACRIFICES
BABIES IN ORDER TO
SCRY THE LOCATION
OF HER SISTER'S
CASTLE.



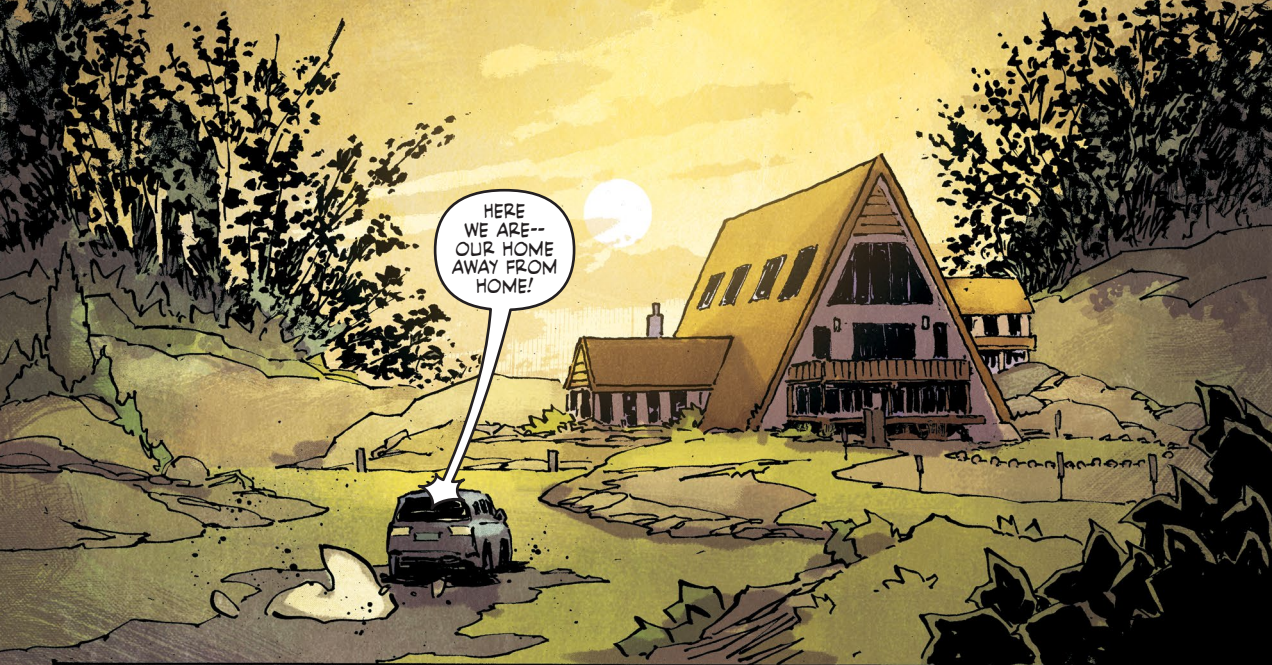
SHE SHOULDN'T
BE READING THIS
ONE.

SHE'S
FINE.

SHE'S READ
ALL THE
OTHERS.

I CAN'T
DO WITHOUT
FEEDBACK
FROM MY
FIRST
READER.





HERE WE ARE--
OUR HOME
AWAY FROM
HOME!



PRETTY
GREAT,
RIGHT?

I HAVE
TO ADMIT,
MONEY...

NOT BAD.
NOT BAD AT
ALL.



I LOVE
IT!

CAN WE
JUST LIVE
HERE?

LIKE...
FOREVER?

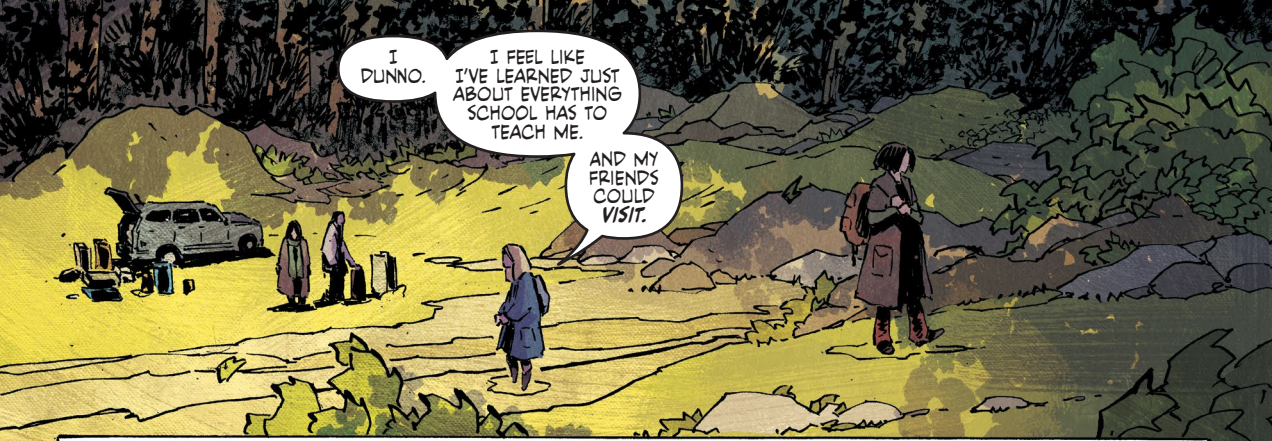


JUST THE
NEXT EIGHT
WEEKS.

YOU WOULDN'T
WANT TO LIVE
HERE FOREVER.

WOULDN'T
YOU MISS YOUR
SCHOOL?

YOUR
FRIENDS?



I
DUNNO.

I FEEL LIKE
I'VE LEARNED JUST
ABOUT EVERYTHING
SCHOOL HAS TO
TEACH ME.

AND MY
FRIENDS
COULD
VISIT.



THERE'S A
PATH OVER
HERE!

A TRAIL
THROUGH THE
FOREST!

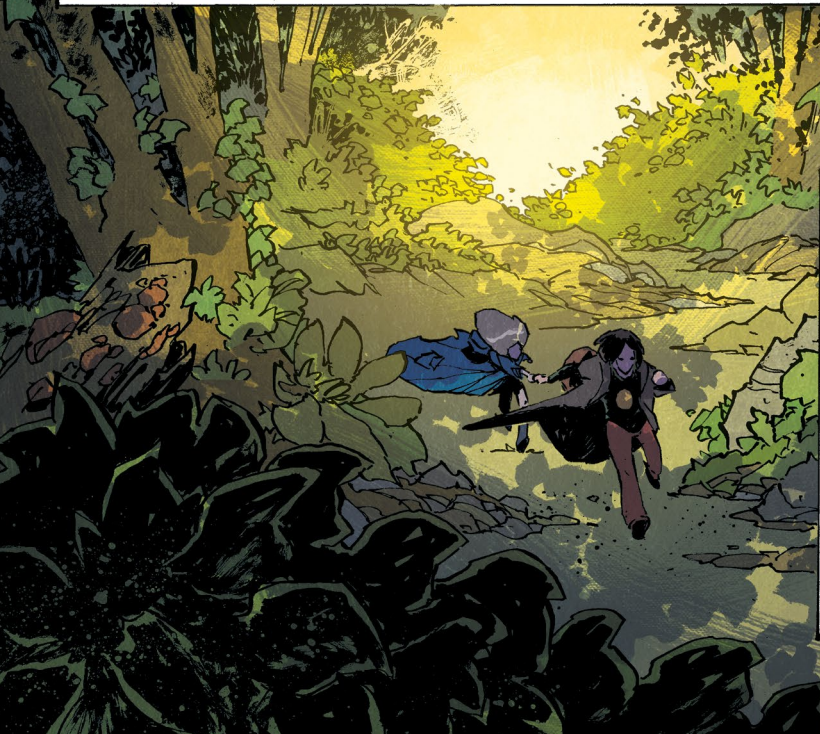
CAN WE
CHECK IT
OUT?



THAT'S
FINE.

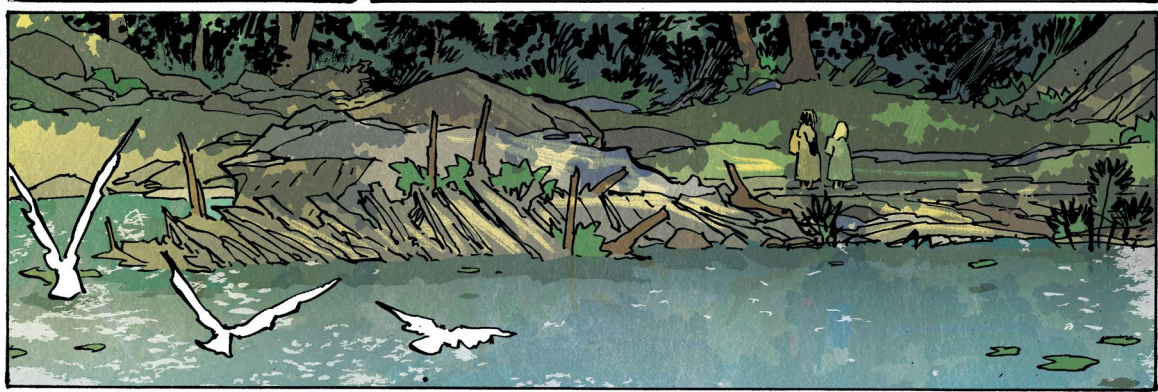
BUT DON'T
STRAY FROM
THE PATH.

AND
DON'T GO
TOO--



--FAR.

GOOD
TALK.



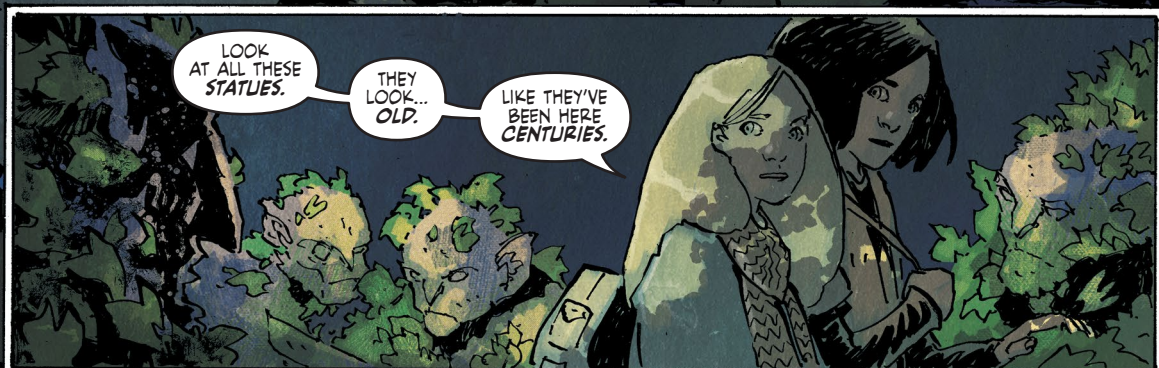
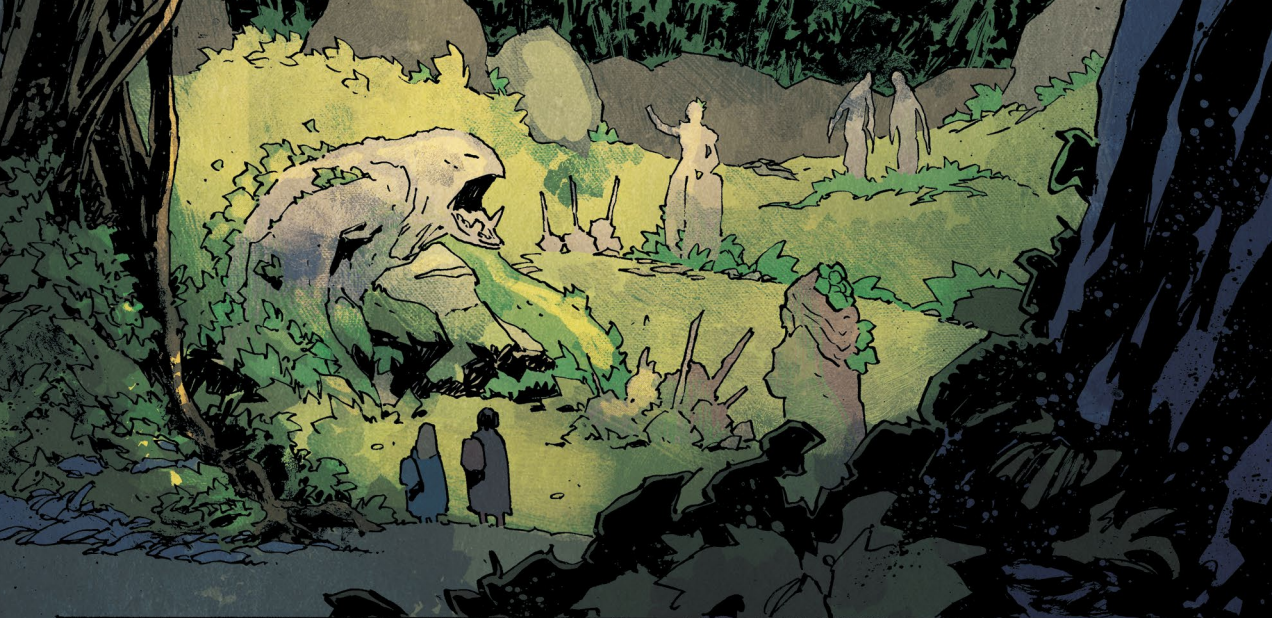
LOOK
AT THIS!



WHAT IS IT,
WINTER?

HOLD
ON!

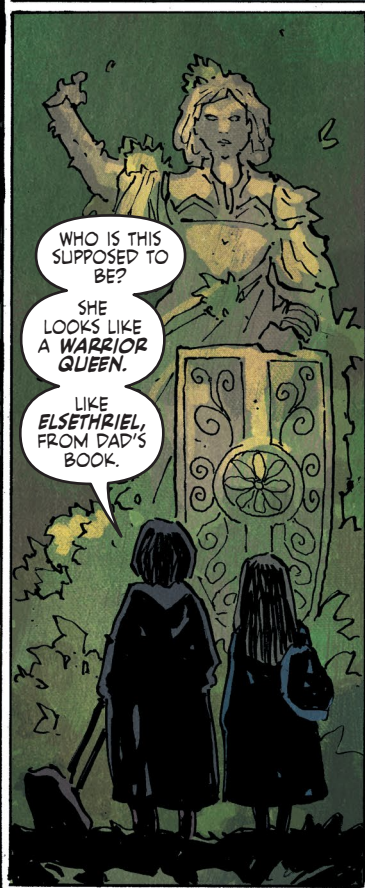
MOM
SAID NOT
TO LEAVE
THE--



LOOK
AT ALL THESE
STATUES.

THEY
LOOK...
OLD.

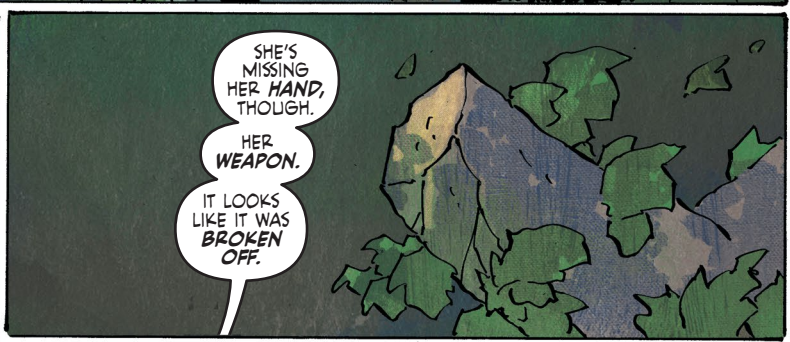
LIKE THEY'VE
BEEN HERE
CENTURIES.



WHO IS THIS
SUPPOSED TO
BE?

SHE
LOOKS LIKE
A **WARRIOR
QUEEN**.

LIKE
ELSETHRIEL,
FROM DAD'S
BOOK.



SHE'S
MISSING
HER **HAND**,
THOUGH.

HER
WEAPON.

IT LOOKS
LIKE IT WAS
**BROKEN
OFF**.



COME
ON.

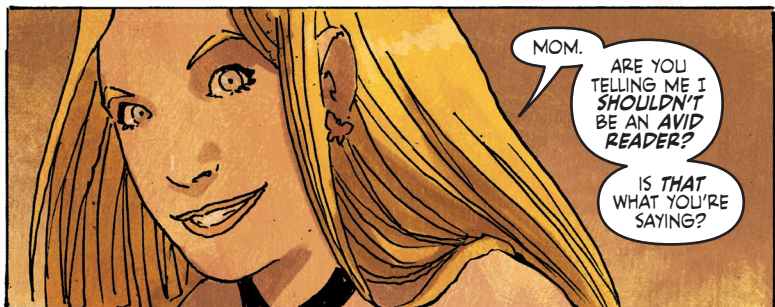
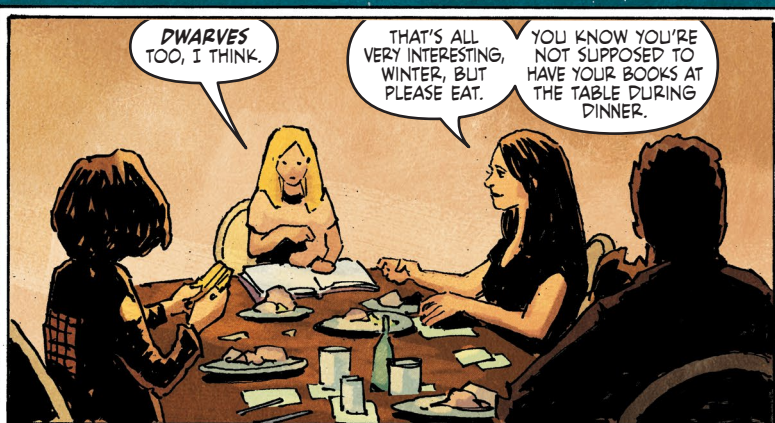
WE'VE
PROBABLY
BEEN GONE
TOO LONG.

MOM'S
GONNA
WORRY.

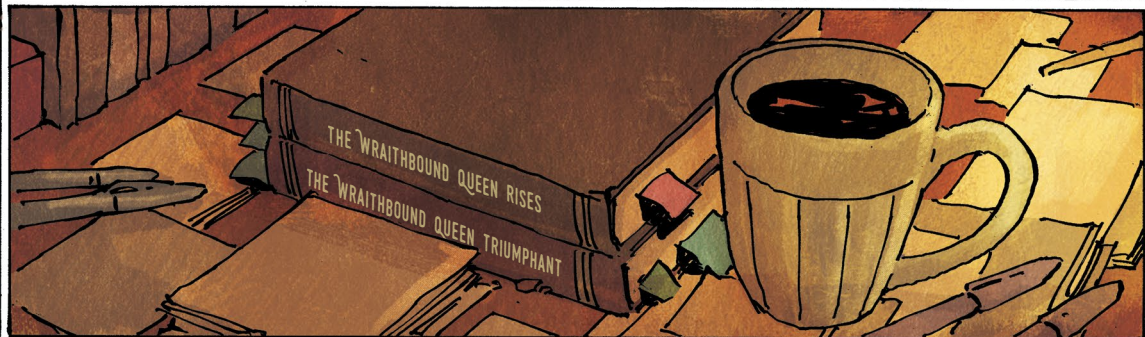
"YOU SHOULD
HAVE SEEN THEM!"

"I THINK THE STATUES ARE
SUPPOSED TO BE *TROLLS*."

"AND
ELVES."

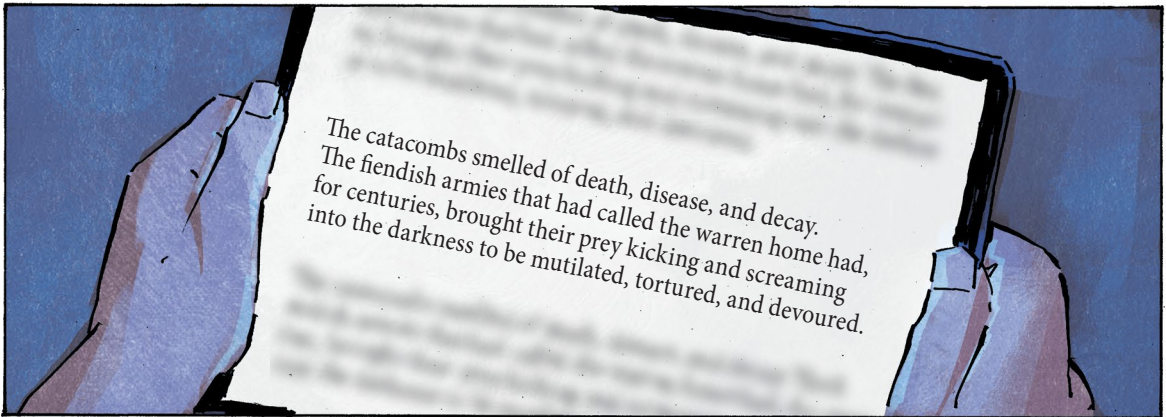
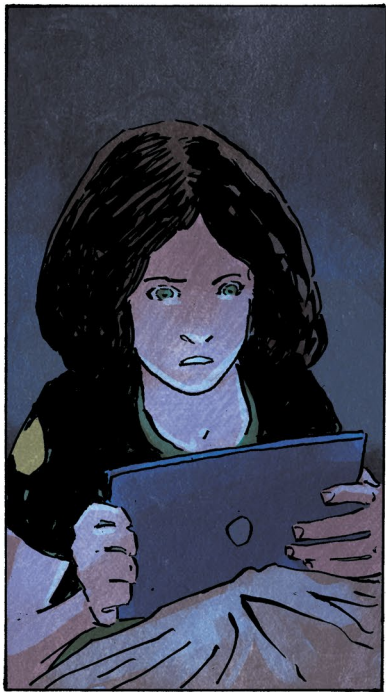


"MAYBE TOMORROW YOU
CAN SHOW ME THESE TROLLS
AND DWARVES, ALL RIGHT?"



CHAPTER NINE





Once, such a loathsome place...
such ghastly circumstance...
would have been alien to the
young queen's senses.

But no
longer.

Elsethriel muttered words that
came so easily to her now.

KILL
THEM.

The ghosts delighted in their
slaughter of the living.

Now, to her
own horror, she shared
the angry spirits' glee.

When she found her sister, Xenaidra...

HELLO, DEAREST WOMB-MATE.

IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG.

TOO LONG SINCE I'VE SAVED THE ENDLESS PAIN IN YOUR EYES.

...Elsethriel realized she did not want the ghosts of the Animis Blade to slay her.



No.



She would kill Xenaidra herself.



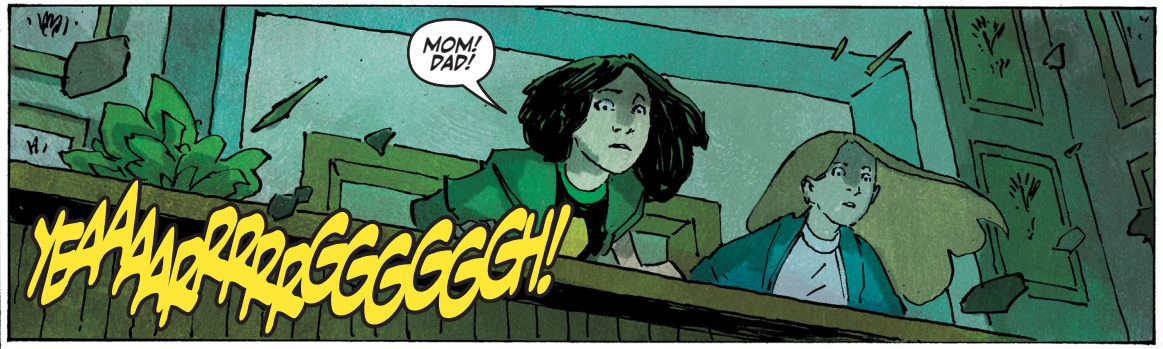




SREEEEEEAAAK



SRRRRR-SREEEEEEAAAK







...WE'RE
GOING TO
FIGHT!



To be continued...

TAKE UP THE BLADE

Issue 2 on sale October 2024

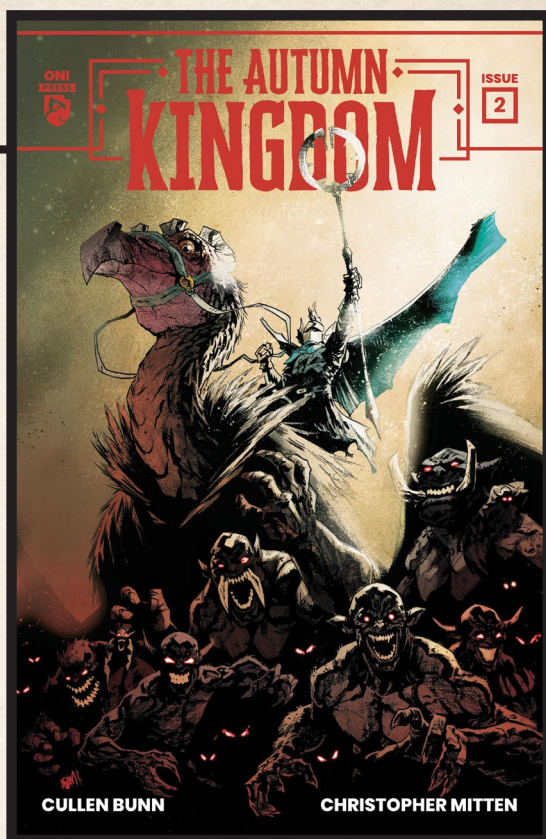


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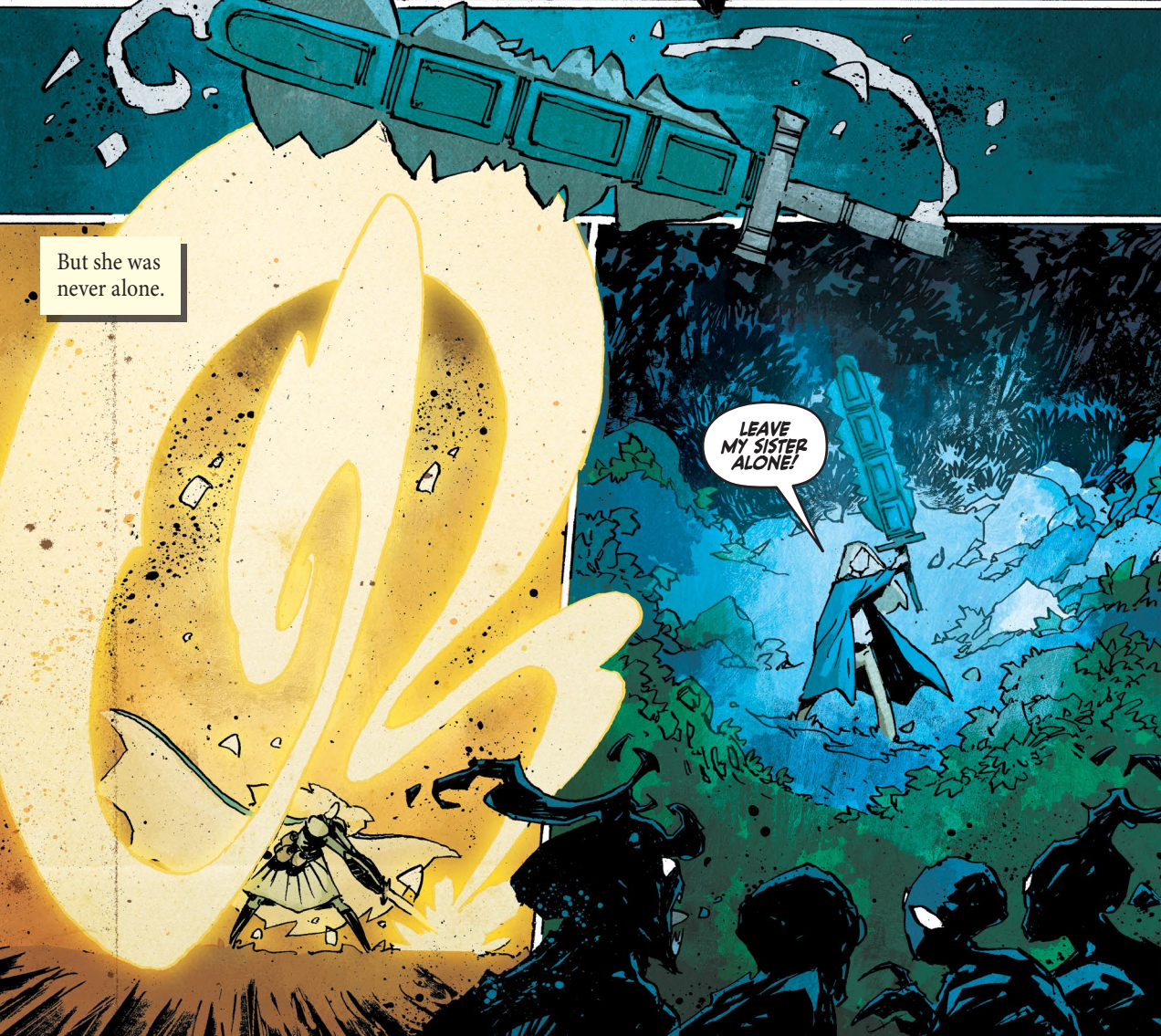
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ADAM GORHAM

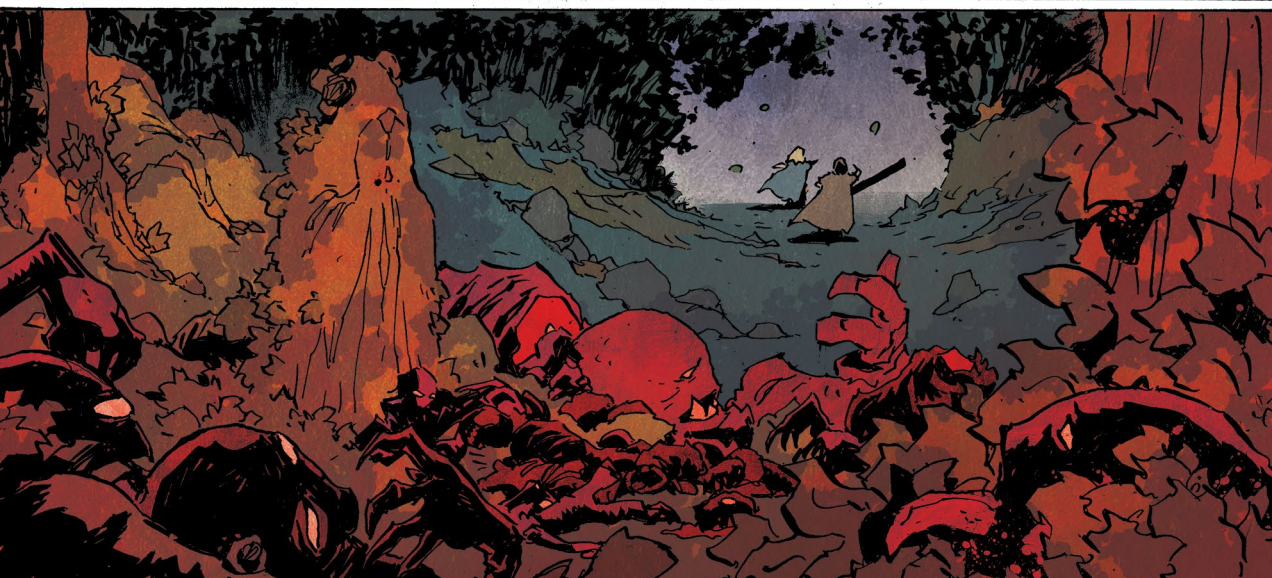
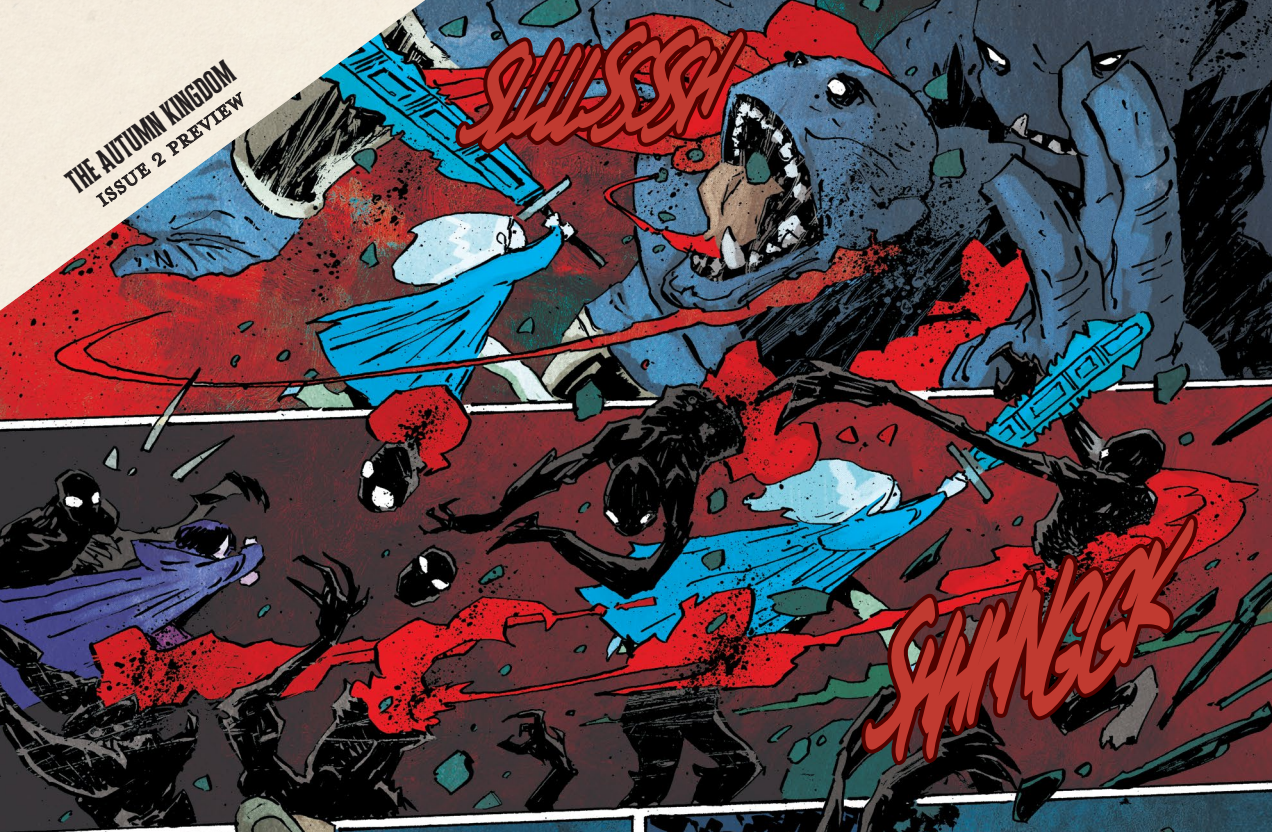
Sisters Sommer and Winter are shaken and bewildered in the wake of a goblin horde smashing apart their vacation cabin and absconding with their parents. But the mysterious, jagged, hulking sword they stumbled upon as they fled into the forest offers the young girls surprising strength, agility, and a vicious means to fight back. When they seek shelter with an old couple in the woods, they learn the truth behind the monsters, the fairies, the withering realm known as the Autumn Kingdom—and the deadly sacrifice it requires . . .

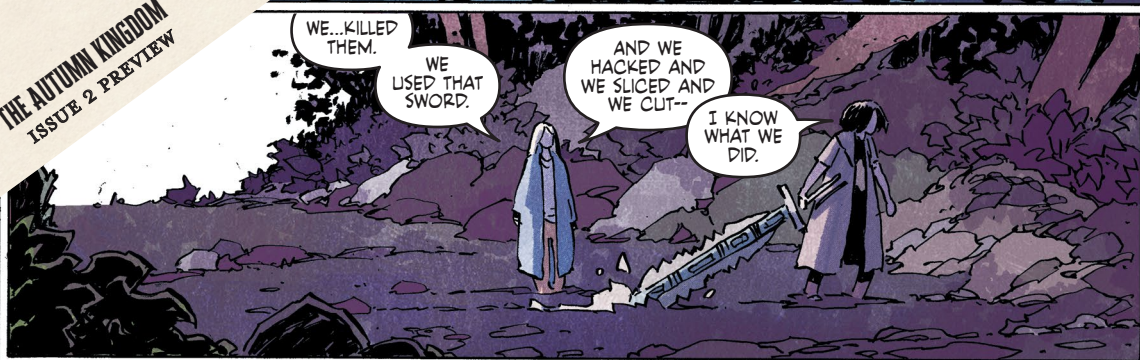


In her quest for blood and revenge, the Wraithbound Queen was, as ever, on her own.

But she was
never alone.









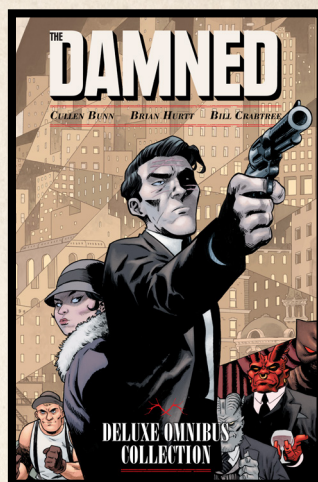
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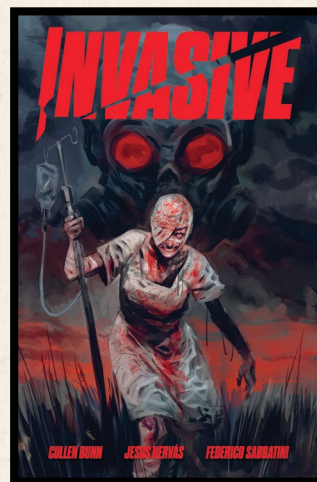
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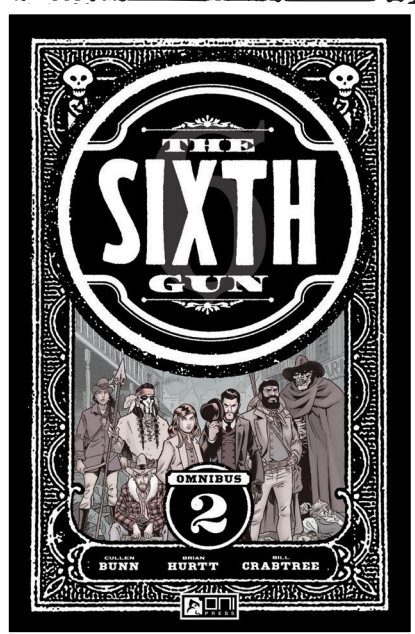
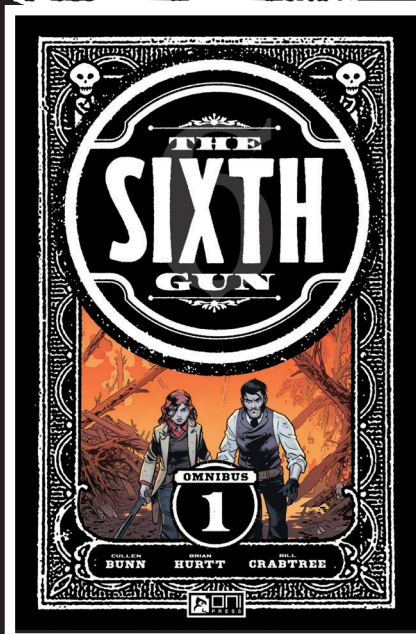
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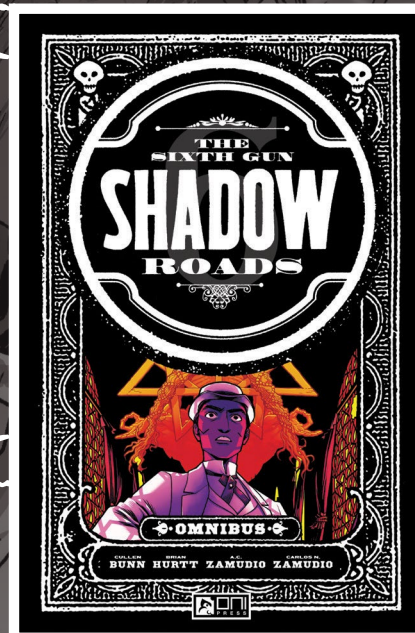
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THE WRITER OF

THE MAN
FROM MAYBE

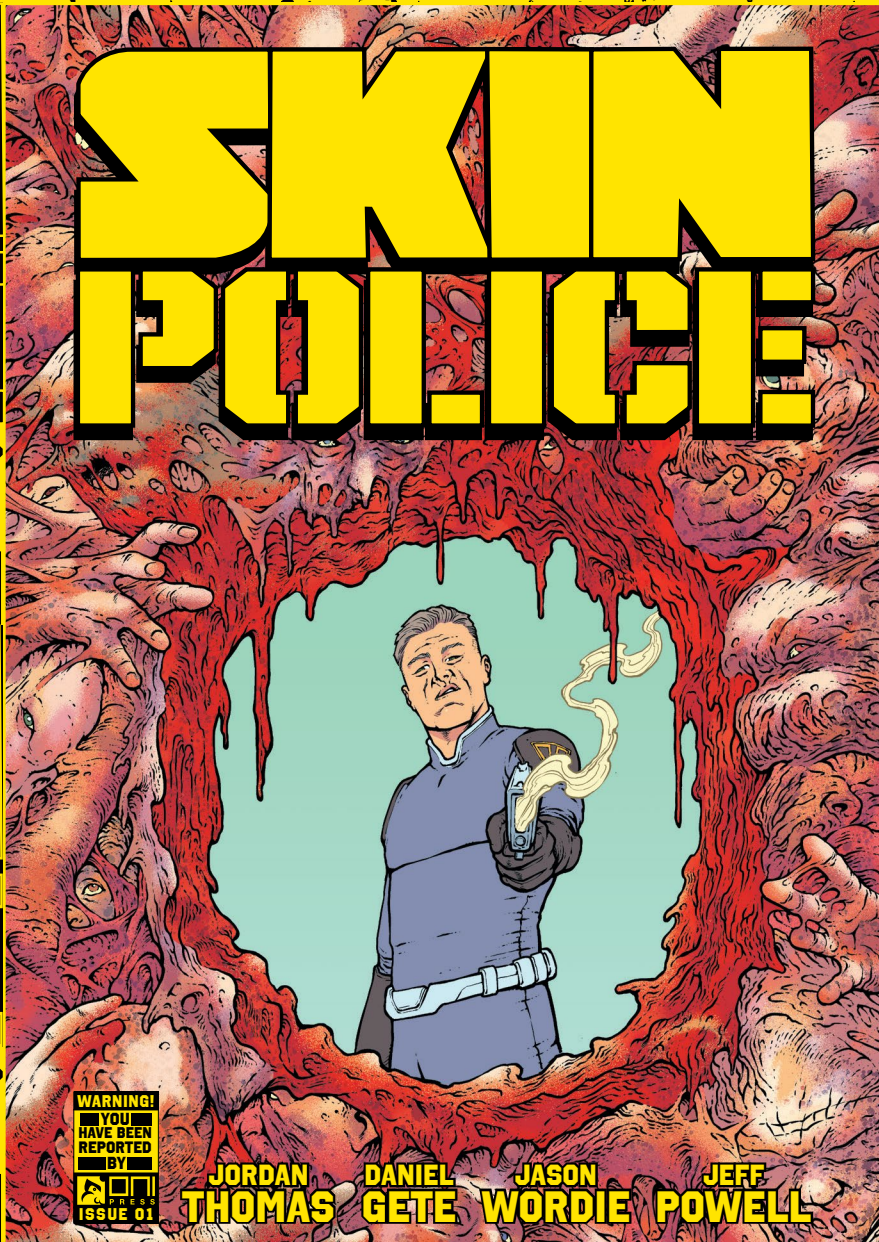
AND

THE ARTIST OF

ÜBER

COMES A TENSE & TURBULENT VISION OF
22ND CENTURY HYPER-ACTION THAT
WILL LEAVE NO ONE UNSCATHED...

SKIN POLICE



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YOU
HAVE BEEN
REPORTED
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THOMAS

DANIEL
GETE

JASON
WORDIE

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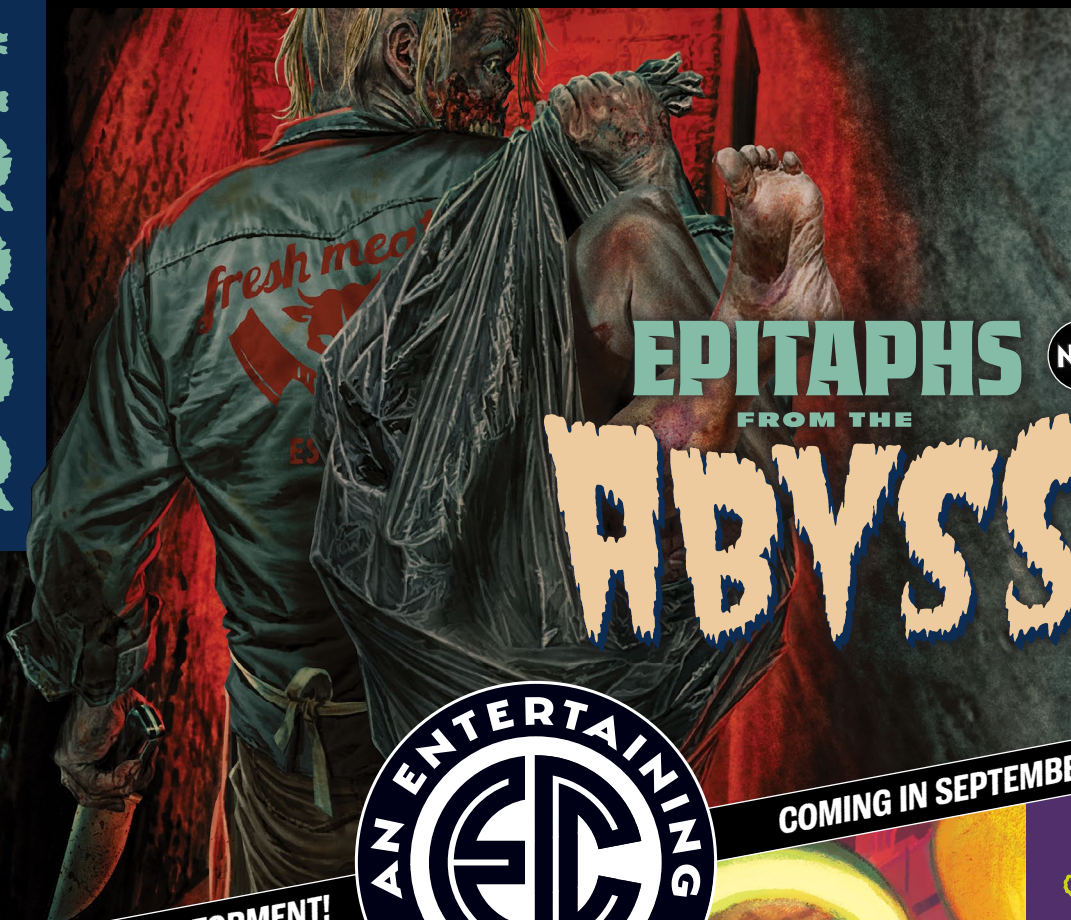
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