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HERO² SQUARED

OMNIBUS



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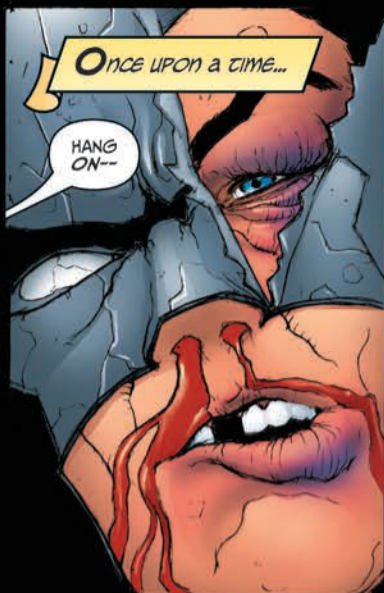
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Collected Edition

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HERO3

S Q U A R E D

Over THE LOOKING GLASS





ISN'T THIS
THE PART WHERE--
WITH TEARS
STREAMING DOWN
YOUR CHEEKS--YOU
LOOK TO THE
HEAVENS--

--AND SCREAM:
"NOOOOOOO!"

AFTER WHICH
YOU COLLAPSE IN
A PATHETIC HEAP,
DAZED AND
BEWILDERED.

AH...BUT
THEN...THEN...YOU
RISE UP, RAGE
LIGHTING YOUR EYES,
AND VOW REVENGE
AGAINST THE ONE
WHO DID THIS.

"YOU WILL
NOT," YOU WHISPER
TENDERLY TO YOUR
DEAD COMRADE, "HAVE
DIED IN VAIN!"

AN EXCELLENT
PERFORMANCE, O
GREAT AND POWERFUL
LORD CALIGNOUS!
MOST EXCELLENT!
TWO THUMBS UP!

SHUT UP,
SLOAT.

OF COURSE,
O GREAT AND
POWERFUL LORD
CALIGNOUS! SHUTTING
UP IS NOW IN
PROGRESS!

YOU SOULLESS
MONSTER! LOOK AT
WHAT YOU'VE DONE!
LOOK!

AN ENTIRE
UNIVERSE LAID
WASTE...AND FOR
WHAT?

ACTUALLY, THE
GREAT AND POWERFUL
LORD CALIGNOUS HAD
VERY GOOD REASONS!
NOT THE LEAST OF
WHICH WAS--

FIRST OF
ALL--HE WAS
ADDRESSING
ME, NOT
YOU.

SECOND OF
ALL, I BELIEVE I
ORDERED YOU
TO SHUT UP.

I
KNOW THAT,
YOUR SUBLINE
VICIOUSNESS,
BUT--

BUT THE
WRETCHED AND
MISERABLE SLOAT
WAS ONLY TRYING TO
DEFEND HIS LORD
AND MASTER AGAINST
CAPTAIN VALOR'S
CALUMNY!

HIS...
WHAT?

CALUMNY.

WHERE DID
AN IDIOT LIKE
YOU EVER HEAR
A WORD LIKE
THAT?

DENSE AND
DOLTISH THOUGH
SLOAT ASSUREDLY
IS, HE HAS BEEN
ENDEAVORING TO...
IMPROVE
HIMSELF.

REALLY?

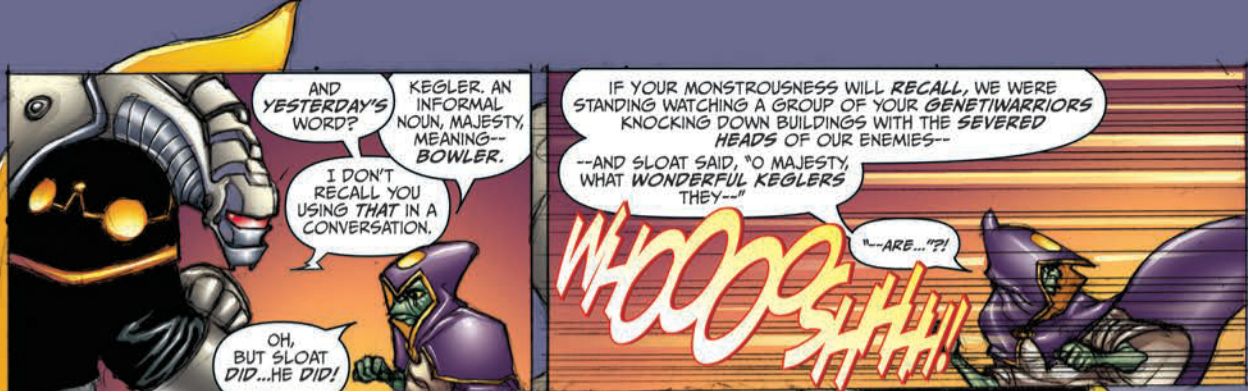
EVERY DAY,
SLOAT PICKS A
RANDOM WORD FROM
THE DICTIONARY AND
TRIES TO USE IT IN
CONVERSATION.

REALLY?
AND TODAY'S
WORD WAS--

UH--

CALUMNY.
MEANING:
"DEFAMATION;
SLANDER."

EXCUSE
ME...?



AND
YESTERDAY'S
WORD?

KEGLER. AN
INFORMAL
NOUN, MAJESTY,
MEANING--
BOWLER.

I DON'T
RECALL YOU
USING THAT IN A
CONVERSATION.

OH,
BUT SLOAT
DID...HE DID!

IF YOUR MONSTROUSNESS WILL RECALL, WE WERE
STANDING WATCHING A GROUP OF YOUR GENETIWARRIORS
KNOCKING DOWN BUILDINGS WITH THE SEVERED
HEADS OF OUR ENEMIES--

--AND SLOAT SAID, "O MAJESTY,
WHAT WONDERFUL KEGLERS
THEY--"

"--ARE...?"!

WHOOOSH!!!



YOU WERE
DOING THAT JUST
TO PROVOKE ME,
WEREN'T YOU?

WASTING TIME
IN WORTHLESS
BANTER--

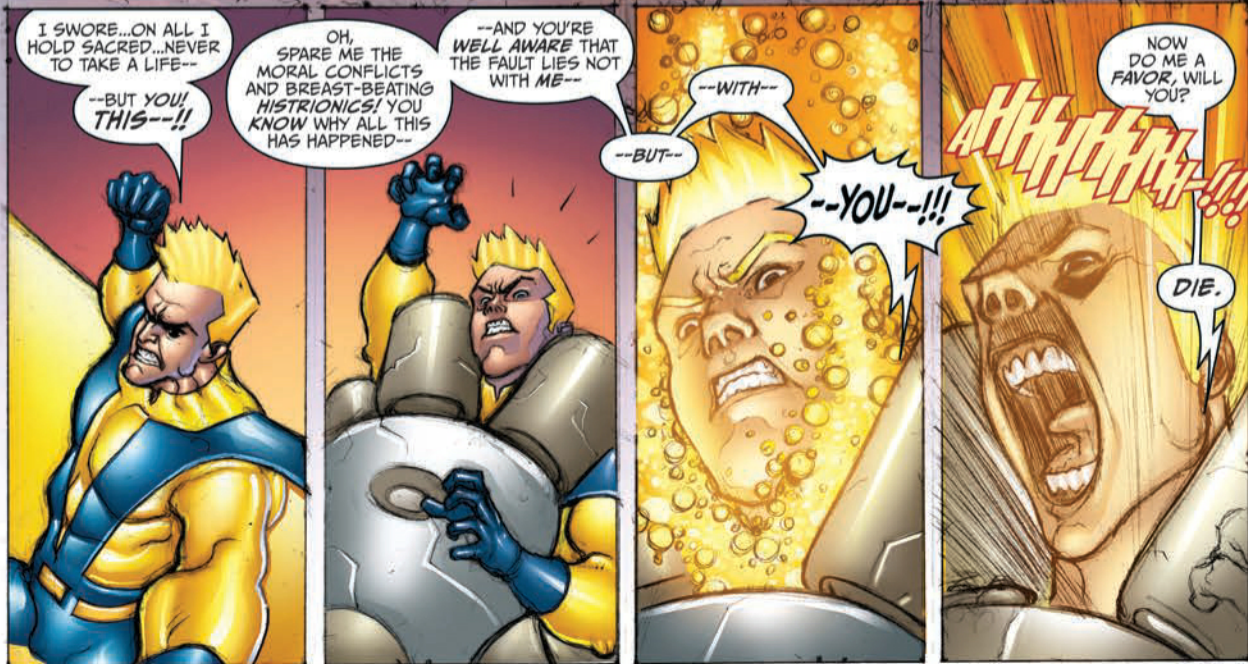
WHILE OUR
WHOLE WORLD
BURNS
AROUND US!

I ALWAYS
KNEW YOU WERE
HARD-HEARTED,
CAPTAIN--

--BUT TO CALL
SLOAT'S SELF-
IMPROVEMENT
"WORTHLESS"?

THAT'S JUST
WRONG.

WHOOOSH!!!



I SWORE...ON ALL I
HOLD SACRED...NEVER
TO TAKE A LIFE--

--BUT YOU!
THIS--!!

OH,
SPARE ME THE
MORAL CONFLICTS
AND BREAST-BEATING
HISTRIONICS! YOU
KNOW WHY ALL THIS
HAS HAPPENED--

--AND YOU'RE
WELL AWARE THAT
THE FAULT LIES NOT
WITH ME--

--BUT--

--WITH--

--YOU--!!!

NOW
DO ME A
FAVOR, WILL
YOU?

DIE.

HHHHHHH!!!



OH, POOR BABY--
DOES IT HURT?

WH-
WH-WHAT ARE
YOU--?!

INVULNERABILITY
DOESN'T COUNT FOR
MUCH, DOES IT--WHEN IT
COMES TO SUBATOMIC
STRUCTURE. BREAK
DOWN THE BOND AND
YOU BREAK DOWN
THE FORM.

NOW
WHY, I WONDER,
DIDN'T I DO THIS
A LONG TIME
AGO?

I SUPPOSE
A GOOD THERAPIST
COULD EXPLAIN IT. BUT
THERE AREN'T ANY
LEFT ALIVE NOW,
ARE THERE?

AND
SO WE
PULL YOU
APART--

--ATOM
BY ATOM
BY--

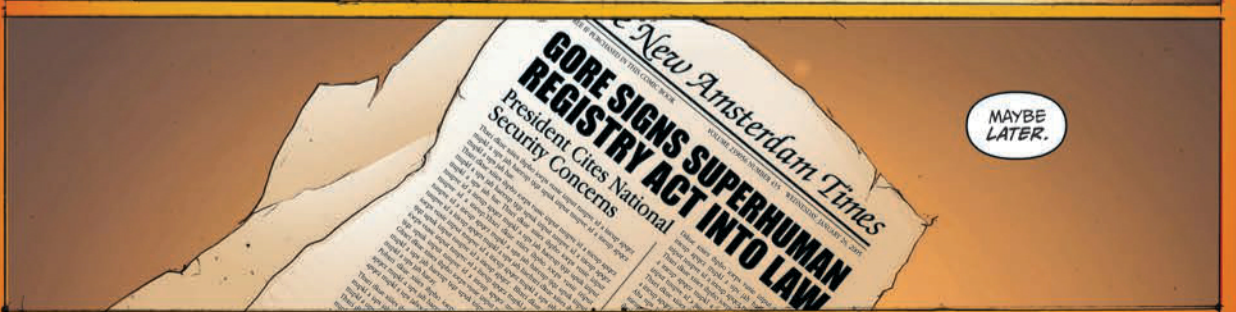
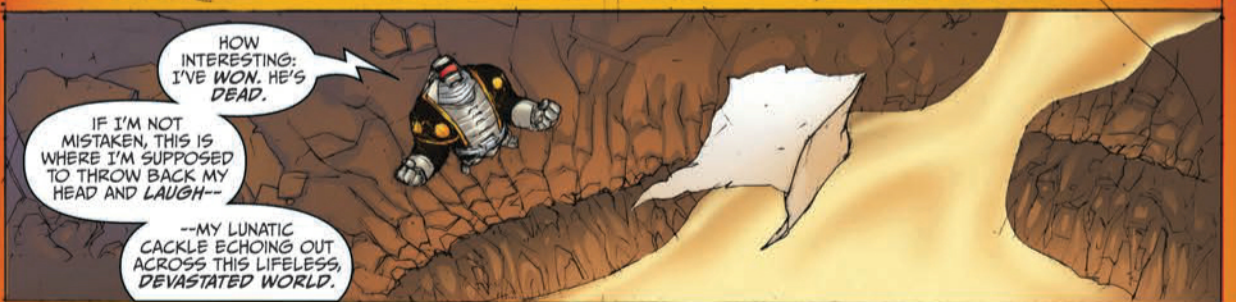
KOOOONNN!



HOW
INTERESTING:
I'VE WON. HE'S
DEAD.

IF I'M NOT
MISTAKEN, THIS IS
WHERE I'M SUPPOSED
TO THROW BACK MY
HEAD AND LAUGH--

--MY LUNATIC
CACKLE ECHOING OUT
ACROSS THIS LIFELESS,
DEVASTATED WORLD.



New Amsterdam Times
**GORE SIGNS SUPERHUMAN
REGISTRY ACT INTO LAW**
President Cites National
Security Concerns

MAYBE
LATER.

WHAT
KIND OF
ENDING WAS
THAT?

The New York Times

BUSH SIGNS LITERACY BILL

Misspells Name.

IT WAS
A TOTALLY
BRILLIANT
ENDING!

IT WOULD'VE
BEEN TOTALLY BRILLIANT
IF ROD SERLING HAD
DONE IT FORTY YEARS
AGO, AND I THINK HE
DID, ABOUT FIVE
TIMES.

WELL, THAT'S THE
WHOLE POINT: SHYAMALAN
IS THE HEIR TO THE
SERLING TRADITION. IN FACT,
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED
IF HE WAS ACTUALLY THE
REINCARNATION OF
ROD SERLING.

NOW THAT
WOULD'VE MADE
A BETTER MOVIE. FAMOUS
WRITER REINCARNATES...
AND SPENDS HIS NEXT LIFE
REHASHING ALL THE CORNY
STUFF HE DID IN HIS
PREVIOUS LIFE.

CORNY?
HOW CAN YOU
CALL SERLING
CORNYP?

MY POINT IS THAT IT'S CORNY
NOW. WHEN "TWILIGHT ZONE"
WAS FIRST ON, I'M SURE IT
WAS ALL CUTTING EDGE,
NEVER-SEEN-BEFORE,
TAKE-YOUR-BREATH-AWAY
BRILLIANCE--

--BUT YOU
WATCH IT NOW
AND IT'S ALL, LIKE,
"OH, MY GOD, IT'S A
COOKBOOK! CAN'T
YOU IDIOTS FIGURE
THAT OUT?"

WELL, I STILL
LOVE IT. WHEN I SEE
SHATNER GOING AT IT
WITH THE GREMLIN ON
THE WING OF THE
AIRPLANE--

Y'MEAN
THE FUZZY
LITTLE MUPPET
WITH THE PUPPY
DOG EYES?

CORRECT ME
IF I'M WRONG, MILO--
BUT THAT FUZZY LITTLE
MUPPET SCARED THE
CRAP OUT OF YOU WHEN
WE WERE ABOUT SIX
YEARS OLD.

RIGHT.
BUT I'M TWENTY-
FOUR NOW, AND MY
WORLD-VIEW HAS
EXPANDED JUST
A LITTLE.

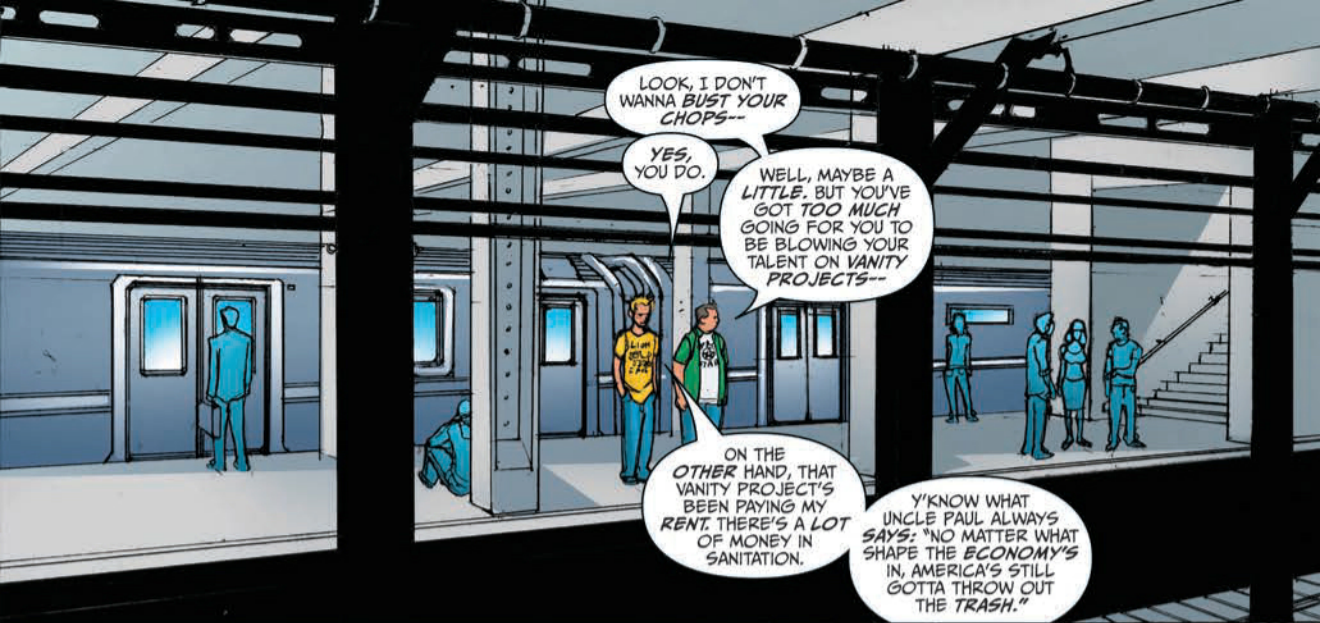
OH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU'RE A GRADUATE
OF THE GREAT N.Y.U. FILM SCHOOL!
YOU KNOW WHAT MISE-EN-SCENE
MEANS! YOU WORSHIP AT THE ALTAR OF
GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM! ORSON
WELLES' PICTURE IS UNDER
YOUR PILLOW!

AND YOU'RE
WAY TOO
SOPHISTICATED
FOR ROD AND
M. NIGHT.

YOU'RE
MOCKING
ME, AREN'T
YOU?

I'M
NOT DONE
YET.

OH.
SORRY.



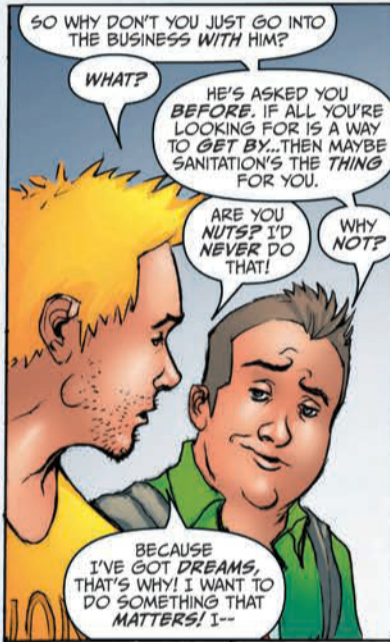
LOOK, I DON'T WANNA BUST YOUR CHOPS--

YES, YOU DO.

WELL, MAYBE A LITTLE. BUT YOU'VE GOT TOO MUCH GOING FOR YOU TO BE BLOWING YOUR TALENT ON VANITY PROJECTS--

ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT VANITY PROJECT'S BEEN PAYING MY RENT. THERE'S A LOT OF MONEY IN SANITATION.

Y'KNOW WHAT UNCLE PAUL ALWAYS SAYS: "NO MATTER WHAT SHAPE THE ECONOMY'S IN, AMERICA'S STILL GOTTA THROW OUT THE TRASH."



SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO INTO THE BUSINESS WITH HIM?

WHAT?

HE'S ASKED YOU BEFORE. IF ALL YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS A WAY TO GET BY...THEN MAYBE SANITATION'S THE THING FOR YOU.

ARE YOU NUTS? I'D NEVER DO THAT!

WHY NOT?

BECAUSE I'VE GOT DREAMS, THAT'S WHY! I WANT TO DO SOMETHING THAT MATTERS! I--

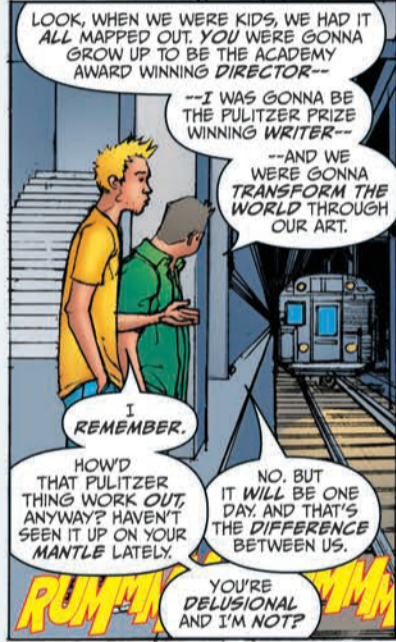


YOU TRICKED ME, DIDN'T YOU?

I WOULDN'T GO THAT FAR.

I WOULD.

IT WASN'T HARD. BENEATH THAT SLACKER EXTERIOR BEATS THE HEART OF A WILD-EYED IDEALIST. A DREAMER OF THE FIRST RANK.



LOOK, WHEN WE WERE KIDS, WE HAD IT ALL MAPPED OUT. YOU WERE GONNA GROW UP TO BE THE ACADEMY AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR--

--I WAS GONNA BE THE PULITZER PRIZE WINNING WRITER--

--AND WE WERE GONNA TRANSFORM THE WORLD THROUGH OUR ART.

I REMEMBER.

HOW'D THAT PULITZER THING WORK OUT, ANYWAY? HAVEN'T SEEN IT UP ON YOUR MANTLE LATELY.

NO. BUT IT WILL BE ONE DAY. AND THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US.

YOU'RE DELUSIONAL AND I'M NOT?



I'M NOT AFRAID OF MY DREAMS!

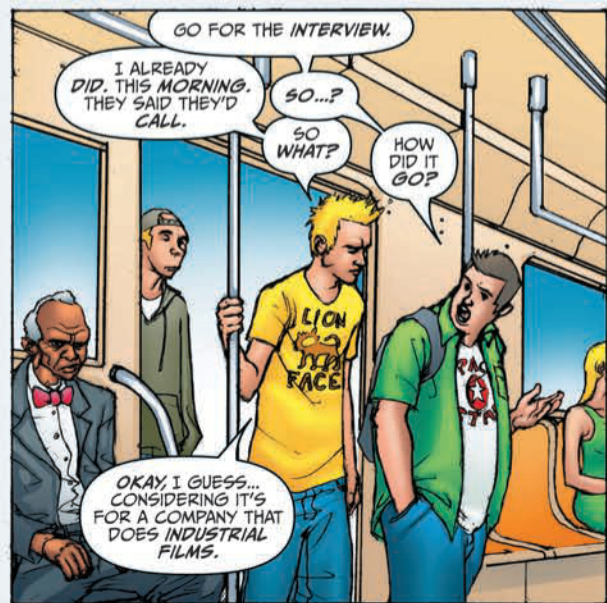
WHAT?!

YOU HEARD ME!

NO, I DIDN'T!

IF YOU DIDN'T HEAR ME, HOW COME YOU KNOW WHAT I JUST SAID?

SORRY! CAN'T HEAR YOU! NOT A WORD!



GO FOR THE INTERVIEW.

I ALREADY DID THIS MORNING. THEY SAID THEY'D CALL.

SO...?

SO WHAT?

HOW DID IT GO?

OKAY, I GUESS... CONSIDERING IT'S FOR A COMPANY THAT DOES INDUSTRIAL FILMS.

