

CAESAR CRAWFORD'S

POPPI & P E

#1

OMINOUS MISCHIEF BY THE DEMENTED DEAD

\$5

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J. Palumbo 21

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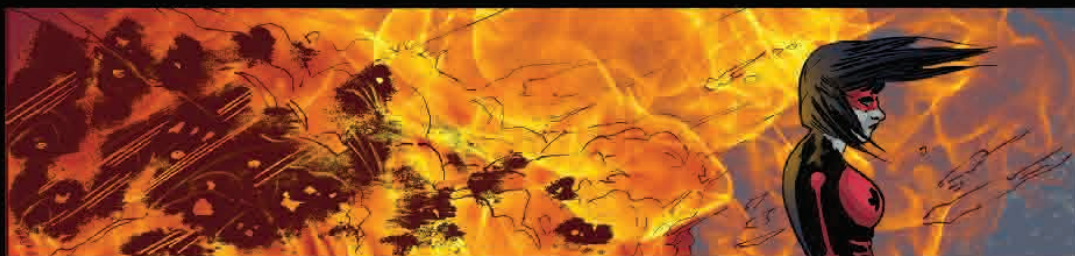
THE BOUNDARIES WHICH DIVIDE LIFE FROM DEATH ARE
AT BEST SHADY AND VAGUE. WHO SHALL SAY WHERE
THE ONE ENDS, AND WHERE THE OTHER BEGINS?

EDGAR ALLAN POE

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ISSUE #1
 CREATED BY AND STORY & ART BY:
 CAESAR CRAWFORD

COVER A : CAESAR CRAWFORD
 COVER B : JIMMY PALMIOTTI
 COVER C : JIMMY PALMIOTTI

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COVER A




COVER B



COVER C





What have I become?
My sweetest friend
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end
You could have it all
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt
- Trent Reznor

INNER CITY

THERE'S TIMES WHEN I FEEL LIKE THIS IS ALL JUST PART OF SOME CRUDE JOKE, OR MAYBE A WILD ADVENTURE IN A TRASHY INDIE COMIC.

BUT WHAT ELSE IS THERE? THIS IS MY LIFE AND MY MONKEY, THE TRUE AND ONLY FAMILY I HAVE LEFT. ARE WE GOOD? OR ARE WE THE NIGHTMARE FOR THE NIGHTMARES? OR MAYBE WE ARE WHAT GOES BUMP IN THE NIGHT?

THE FIRE, I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW LONG IT HAS BEEN NOW BUT, I'M NOT A LITTLE GIRL WITH A TOY MONKEY ANYMORE.

YEAH, THE FIRE ANGELS APPEARED AND HELPED US RISE FROM THE ASHES. SURE GLAD THEY DID, POE...

WHAT'S THAT, POE?

I HEAR A HEART BEAT!

IT MUST BE DELIVERED TO US, MY SWEET.

OH POE, I THINK YOU ENJOY KILLING LIVING THINGS SO MUCH, BECAUSE YOU USED TO BE A TOY!


IT'S HARD TO UNDERSTAND, POE, BUT SOME PEOPLE ACTUALLY DESERVE TO LIVE. FOR EXAMPLE, LITTLE GIRLS AND BOYS WHO HAVE TOY MONKEYS...

BUT WHEN THEY'RE EXTINGUISHED, THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN AND TAKE OVER, FOR THE FIRE ANGELS HAVE COMMANDED US...

...AND HAVE GIVEN US GREAT POWERS. AND WITH GREAT POWERS COME...UM...MURDERS! EXECUTIONER!



THE TRUTH IS WE ARE ALL GHOSTS.
IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.



SOMETIMES THEY SAY THE CHOICES
YOU MAKE, MAKE YOU.

AND WHEN SOMETHING DOESN'T
GO AS PLANNED,
SOMETIMES THEY SAY...

...THROUGH TRAGEDY,
MANY BEAUTIFUL THINGS
ARE BORN.



THEY SAY A LOT OF
THINGS, DON'T THEY, POE?

I USED TO SNEAK INTO
CRACK HOUSES AT NIGHT
TO CUDDLE MY MOM,
TO MAKE SURE SHE
WAS SAFE AT NIGHT.

WHAT WOULD THEY
SAVE ABOUT THAT?



YOU KNOW, POE, FIRE CAN
DO SO MANY THINGS.



IT CAN END OLD THINGS,
IT CAN GIVE BIRTH TO NEW THINGS,
IT CAN WARM US, IT CAN ENRAGE US,
IT CAN EVEN MAKE US LOVE.



OK, POE,
HOW ARE YOU?
YOU SEEM TO BE
AWFULLY QUIET.

JUST SLOWLY BECOMING INSANE
WITH LONG INTERVALS OF HORRIBLE
SANITY, MOST OF IT SPEWING FROM
YOU, MY DEAR.

BUT I MUST SAY, VIOLENCE
LOOKS GOOD ON YOU, MY
SWEET...SOMETIMES I
THINK ALL THAT WE SEE
OR SEEM IS BUT A
NIGHTMARE WITHIN
A NIGHTMARE.



YOU'RE SILLY POE!

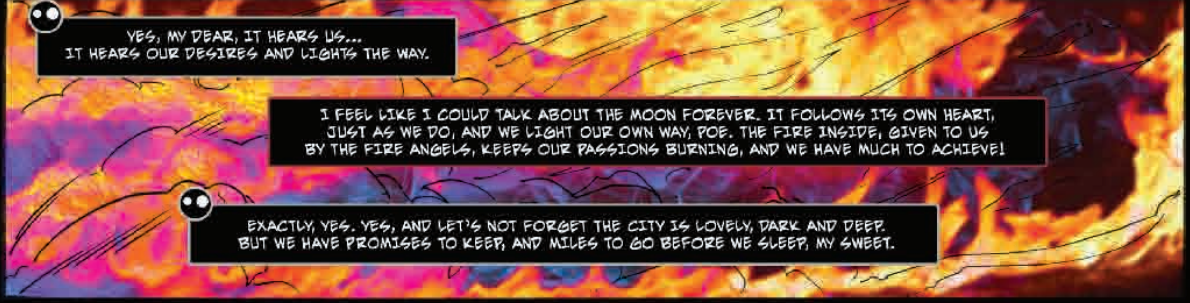


WHEN I NAMED YOU POE, I NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT THE EDGAR ALLEN POE'S SOUL WOULD BE REINCARNATED INTO MY STUFFED MONKEY, ALONG WITH ME, BUT THE ANGELS OF FIRE WORK IN BIZARRE WAYS.

THE CHILD WILL BE NEVERMORE... DO WHAT THOU WILT. YOU MAY FIND ME FUNNY, IF IT PLEASES YOU, DEAR.



LOOK AT THE STARS, POE! THE MOON FOLLOWS US, DOESN'T IT?



YES, MY DEAR, IT HEARS US... IT HEARS OUR DESIRES AND LIGHTS THE WAY.

I FEEL LIKE I COULD TALK ABOUT THE MOON FOREVER. IT FOLLOWS ITS OWN HEART, JUST AS WE DO, AND WE LIGHT OUR OWN WAY, POE. THE FIRE INSIDE, GIVEN TO US BY THE FIRE ANGELS, KEEPS OUR PASSIONS BURNING, AND WE HAVE MUCH TO ACHIEVE!

EXACTLY, YES, YES, AND LET'S NOT FORGET THE CITY IS LOVELY, DARK AND DEEP. BUT WE HAVE PROMISES TO KEEP, AND MILES TO GO BEFORE WE SLEEP, MY SWEET.



OH POE, YOU'RE SO SMART. WE MUST DO OUR CHORES BEFORE WE SLEEP. YOU'RE RIGHT.

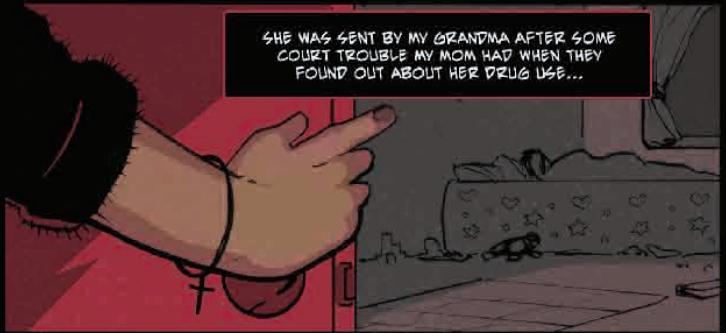
WE LOVED WITH A LOVE THAT WAS MORE THAN LOVE... AND WE SHALL KILL WITH A KILL THAT IS MORE THAN DEATH!

WE WILL, POE, WE WILL!

REMINDE ME, WHO DID WE JUST BLOW UP?



THEY CALLED HER SISTER BECKY.



SHE WAS SENT BY MY GRANDMA AFTER SOME COURT TROUBLE MY MOM HAD WHEN THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT HER DRUG USE...



SHE WAS SENT TO HELP AND COMFORT AN INNOCENT CHILD.

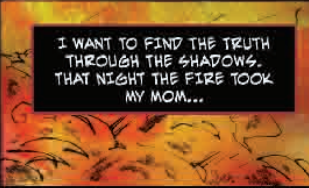


HER HANDS WORKED EVIL, AND THERE WAS NO COMFORT, AND THERE WAS NO HELP.

NEVERMORE WILL SHE USE HER EVIL HANDS.



THERE MUST BE THE STEADY PRESSING DOWN OF THE STAMP UPON THE WAX.



I WANT TO FIND THE TRUTH THROUGH THE SHADOWS. THAT NIGHT THE FIRE TOOK MY MOM...

I SAW A SHADOW RUNNING AS I CLOSED MY EYES FOR THE LAST TIME...



LUCKILY, THE FIRE ANGELS BROUGHT ME BACK AS A BIG GIRL AND A MATURE WOMAN, AS THOUGH I HAD NEVER DIED, AS IF YEARS HAD PASSED... BUT TIME WAS STOLEN FROM ME, WASN'T IT, POEB?

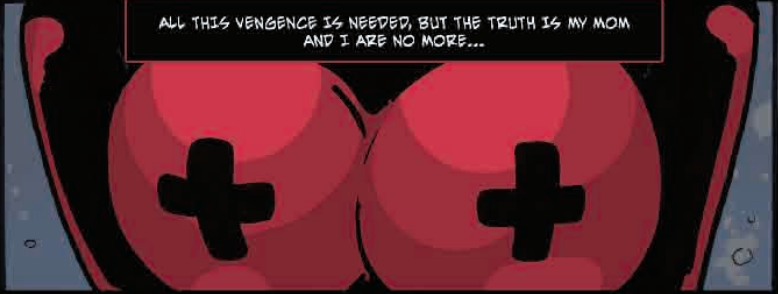
YES, DEAR, AND I AM ACTUATED BY AN AMBITION WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE AN HONORABLE ONE... TO TRY AND CORRECT THE INJUSTICE FOR YOU, MY SWEET.



MOMMY, THE MOON FOLLOWS ME,
AND THE STARS BURN FOR YOU...

POE SAID SO.

ALL THIS VENGEANCE IS NEEDED, BUT THE TRUTH IS MY MOM
AND I ARE NO MORE...



THE FIRE ANGELS PUT A
THEORY OF
JUSTICE INSIDE ME THAT HOLDS
BACK THE THOUGHTS
I DON'T WANT AT THIS TIME...
BUT SOON MY MOM WILL COME,
AND I WILL GO BACK WITH HER, AND
WE WILL REST AGAIN TOGETHER.

I WILL ACCEPT
THINGS I CANNOT,
BUT I WISH, FOR
AT LEAST A MOMENT,
TO HOLD MY MOM'S
HAND ONE LAST TIME...



LET THE BURIAL RITE BE READ - THE FUNERAL
SONG BE SUNG! - AN ANTHEM FOR THE
QUEENLIEST DEAD THAT EVER DIED SO YOUNG
- A DIRGE FOR HER THE DOUBLY DEAD IN
THAT SHE DIED SO YOUNG.



YES, I WAS YOUNG, BUT MAYBE IT'S ALL
JUST ANOTHER STORY BORN OUT OF A TRAGEDY?



JUST ANOTHER STORY OF
A CHILD AND A TRAGEDY...

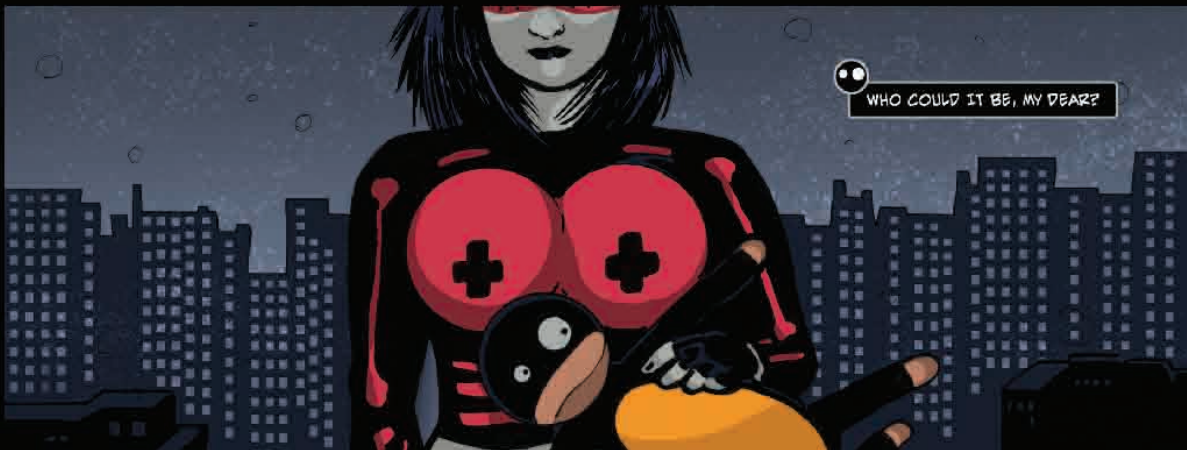
ALREADY FORGOTTEN
BY THE WORLD.



BECAUSE I FEEL THAT, IN THE HEAVENS
ABOVE, THE ANGELS, WHISPERING TO
ONE ANOTHER, CAN FIND, AMONG THEIR
BURNING TERMS OF LOVE, NONE SO
DEVOTIONAL AS THAT OF MOTHER.
YOU WILL FEEL HER EMBRACE
AGAIN, MY DEAR.



FUCK IT!
WE ARE GOING TO BLOW SOME SHIT UP
AND SLIT SOME THROATS! WHATEVER
IT TAKES TO FIND THE SHADOW FIGURE!



WHO COULD IT BE, MY DEAR?



I WISH THE FIRE ANGELS COULD TELL US! THE ONLY OTHER PERSON THAT KNEW WHERE THE CRACK HOUSE WAS--AND USED IT--WAS MY MOM'S FRIEND MARTY. SHE WORKED AT THE BAR CALLED BUTCHER BOTTLES. WE CAN START THERE.



YES! I CAN SENSE SOME BEATING HEARTS!



I THINK I SEE THE BAR.



A DRINKING ESTABLISHMENT, YES... THE CUSTOMS OF THE WORLD ARE SO MANY CONVENTIONAL FOLLIES.



OK, POE, SO I DON'T THINK IT WAS HER, BUT LET'S HOPE SHE STILL WORKS HERE, THE FIRE ANGELS TOLD ME SOME TIME HAS PAST, BUT THEY DIDN'T SAY HOW LONG... I WAS ONLY 8 YEARS OLD, AND NOW I HAVE THE BODY AND MIND OF AN 18-YEAR-OLD. SO, LET'S HOPE IT HASN'T BEEN THAT LONG.

WELL, MY SWEET... I CANNOT GIVE YOU AN ANSWER ON TIME, BUT TIME WILL SURELY GIVE YOU THE ANSWER.



POB, THIS WEIGHT I CARRY FOR THE LOSS OF MY MOM
IS SO HARD, BUT I FEEL LIKE IT'S ALL I HAVE LEFT.

HER SMILE AND HER HUGS ALWAYS BRIGHTENED MY DAY,
LIKE THE WARMTH OF A FIRE ... LIKE THE SUN RISING AFTER A STORM.
NOW I WALK THIS EARTH SEEKING THOSE THAT DESTROYED IT.
DO I SOUND SILLY, POB?

TO BE CARRIERS OF FIRE
(THE RED FIRE OF THEIR HEART)
WITH SPEED THAT MAY NOT TIRE
AND WITH PAIN THAT SHALL NOT PART
WHO LIVEST THAT WE KNOW
IN ETERNITY WE FEEL
BUT THE SHADOW OF WHOSE BROW
WHAT SPIRIT SHALL REVEAL?

THANKS, POB, YOU ALWAYS
KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
I LOVE YOU.

0000000000

OK, POE, STAY LOW.
WE DON'T WANT TO ATTRACT
A BUNCH OF ATTENTION.



ANY WORDS OF ADVICE
BEFORE WE GO IN, POE?

IN SPRING OF YOUTH IT WAS MY LOT
TO HAUNT OF THE WIDE WORLD SPOT
THE WHICH I COULD NOT LOVE THE LESS
SO LOVELY WAS THE LONELINESS...

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WELL, LOTS OF LONELINESS
CAN BE FOUND IN BARS, I SUPPOSE.
THANKS, POE... NOT SURE HOW THAT
WILL HELP, BUT THANKS.



OH MY!
THIS IS FAR FROM
SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS!



EXCUSE ME, MA'AM!
MAY I HAVE A
GLASS OF MILK?



ENJOY YOUR MILK,
BE SURE TO TIP.
LET ME KNOW IF I
CAN HELP YOU WITH
ANYTHING ELSE.

ACTUALLY, I'M
LOOKING FOR MARTY.
DOES SHE
WORK HERE?



WHAT? NOBODY
KNOWS SHE'S HERE.
WHO ARE YOU?
A NEW DANCER?

MY MOTHER WAS
A FRIEND OF HERS,
AND I HAVE A COUPLE QUESTIONS
SINCE MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY.

WELL, CRAP, I WAS HOPING
YOU WERE SOME NEW TALENT.
WE COULD REALLY USE SOME
NEW TALENT.
I'LL SEE IF I CAN GET MARTY.
SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR
MOTHER. WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR
NAME WAS?

POPPI.



HEY! MARTY! SOMEONE NAMED POPPI IS HERE TO SEE YOU!



POPPI?



YEAH, SHE SAYS YOU KNEW HER MOM? I DON'T KNOW, BUT WE ALSO NEED MORE BLUVOVKA.



I'M SORRY. DO I KNOW YOU? THE ONLY POPPI I KNEW PASSED AWAY.



HEY, BABE... HOW MUCH FOR A GOOD TIME?!



OH, MY DEAR!



THANKS FOR THE GOOD TIME!

HIS HEART, IT STILL BEATS, MY DEAR.



QUIET, POP.



POPPI, IF YOU ARE THE REAL POPPI, WE NEED TO TALK OUTSIDE! NOW!





WHERE DO I EVEN START? SHE LOVED YOU DEARLY. BUT SHE GOT INTO SOME BAD STUFF. SHE SIGNED UP FOR A DRUG TESTING COMPANY CALLED MEDIRA...

LITTLE DID SHE KNOW SHE WOULD BECOME HOOKED TO A NEW DRUG CREATED BY BIG PHARMA, AND IT BECAME A NEW STREET DRUG OVERNIGHT. IT WAS BANNED DUE TO SIDE EFFECTS AND ADDICTION.



SO, I WOULD SAY THE ENEMY--THE ONE WHO'S DOING COVER-UPS--WOULD BE MEDIRA. BUT FIRST OFF, HOW DID YOU SURVIVE THE FIRE? I KNOW IT WAS 10 YEARS AGO, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AGAIN, GIRL.



I DIDN'T SURVIVE.



HEY, BOB, DON'T GO TOO FAR AHEAD.



SO, POE, HOW DO YOU THINK YOU CAME TO BE MY PAL?
IS IT JUST BECAUSE I NAMED YOU POE?

FROM MY REMEMBRANCE
SHALL NOT PASS--SOME POW'R
OR SPELL HAD BOUND ME.



I LOVE YOU, POE. I HOPE YOU ARE
HAPPY TO BE MY STUFFED ANIMAL
AND MY FAMILY, EVEN WITHOUT A HOME.




I REACH'D MY HOME--MY HOME NO MORE--
FOR ALL HAD FLOWN WHO MADE IT SO,
I PASS'D FROM OUT ITS MOSSY DOOR
AND THO' MY TREAD WAS SOFT AND LOW,
A VOICE CAME FROM THE THRESHOLD STONE
OF ONE WHOME I HAD EARLIER KNOWN--
O, I DEFY THEE, HELL, TO SHOW
ON BEDS OF FIRE THAT BURN BELOW
A HUMBLER HEART--A DEEPER WO.

I LOVE YOU AS WELL, MY SWEET.

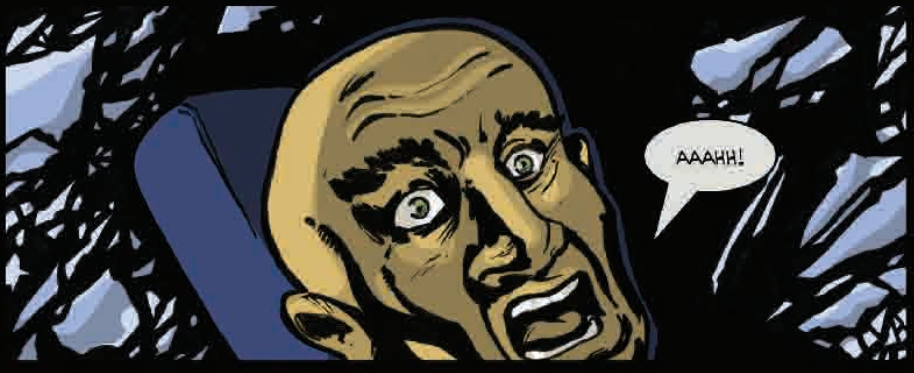


OK, WE ARE HERE.
THAT MUST BE THE HEAD OF MEDIDRA.



OK, POE!
YOU'RE GOING TO STAY BACK,
'CAUSE WE ARE GOING
TO MAKE SOME NOISE, AND
IT MIGHT GET DANGEROUS.

TO SOUND OF COMING DARKNESS
(KNOWN TO THOSE WHOSE SPIRITS HARKEN)
AS ONE WHO, IN A DREAM OF NIGHT,
WOULD FLY BUT CANNOT FROM A DANGER NIGH.





HAUNT YOU?
WE ARE GONNA
DO MORE THAN THAT!
WHO ORDERED YOU
TO DO THE SWEEPEE!



IT WAS ALL MY DECISION...ME AND MY PARTNER,
HEARST...BUT HE COULDN'T LIVE WITH THE FACT THAT WE
KILLED SO MANY. AND WHEN HE HEARD ABOUT HOW WE
KILLED A CHILD, HE'D HAD ENOUGH, AND HE ENDED
HIMSELF. BUT I'M THE ONE YOU WANT.
I'M THE TRIGGER MAN!



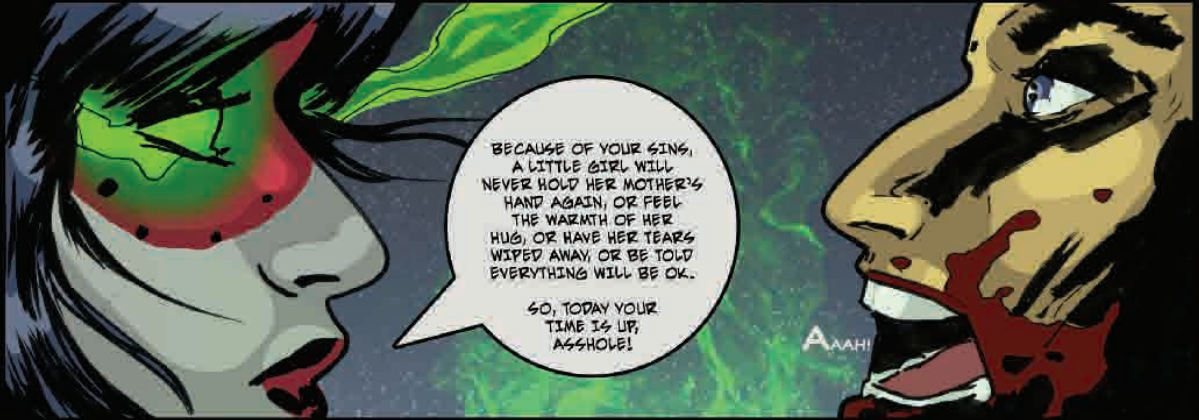
WELL, TOO BAD YOUR PARTNER
COULDN'T BE HERE.
GUESS IT'S A ONE AND
DONE DEAL!

HOLY FIRE ANGELS!!!
I HAVE FIRE POWER,
POE!





AS YOU SET MY LIFE TO A FLAME,
SO WILL I, SET YOU TO A FLAME.



BECAUSE OF YOUR SINS,
A LITTLE GIRL WILL
NEVER HOLD HER MOTHER'S
HAND AGAIN, OR FEEL
THE WARMTH OF HER
HUGS, OR HAVE HER TEARS
WIPED AWAY, OR BE TOLD
EVERYTHING WILL BE OK.

SO, TODAY YOUR
TIME IS UP,
ASSHOLE!

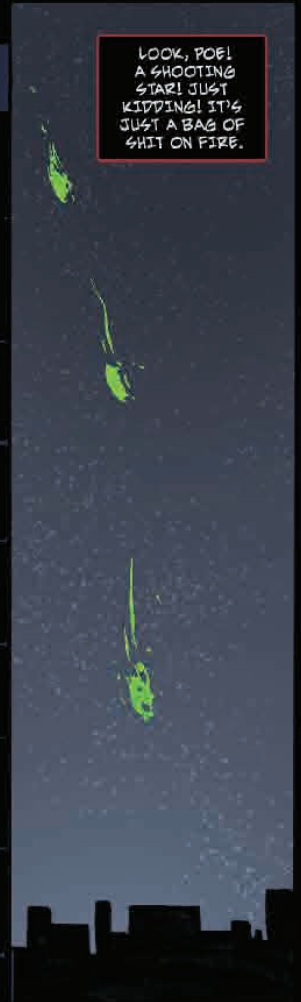
AAAH!



AS POE ONCE SAID,
THE STARS BURN
FOR MY MOM,
AS WILL YOU.



BURN.



LOOK, POE!
A SHOOTING
STAR! JUST
KIDDING! IT'S
JUST A BAG OF
SHIT ON FIRE.



I DON'T HEAR HIS HEART BEAT, MY SWEET.
YOU MAKE ME HAPPY, DEAR.



OH, POE, YOU'RE THE BEST!

HONESTLY, THAT ALL FELT TOO EASY, BUT A BURDEN FEELS LIFTED OFF ME. I FEEL ALMOST HAPPY, POE.




NOW I KNOW I CAN DO SO MUCH MORE WITH THIS GIFT GIVEN TO ME BY THE FIRE ANGELS, AND MAYBE OUR JOURNEY ISN'T OVER YET, POE. MAYBE WE ARE MEANT TO STAY A BIT AND MAKE SOME MORE THINGS RIGHT, FOR THOSE THAT CAN'T FIGHT BACK....

I MEAN, THIS CHAPTER IS DONE, BUT WHAT DO YOU SAY, POE, ABOUT ENDING MORE HEART BEATS?

WE GREW IN AGE--AND LOVE--TOGETHER, ROAMING THE FOREST, AND THE WILD.

COME TO ME CHILD,
COME TO THE FIRE ANGELS,
AND HEAR MORE TRAGEDIES
THAT NEED YOU.



When you're taught
to love everyone,
to love your enemies,
then what value does that place on love?
- Marilyn Manson

EDGAR ALLAN POE
QUOTES:

PAGE 2

"I became insane, with long intervals of horrible sanity."

"All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream."
(A Dream Within a Dream)

PAGE 3

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,"
(Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening)

"we loved with a love that was more than love"
(Annabel Lee)

PAGE 4

"There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax."
(Poems and Tales)

"I am actuated by an ambition which I believe to be an honourable one
— the ambition of serving the great cause of truth, while endeavouring
to forward the literature of the country."
(Letter to Washington)

PAGE 5

"let the burial rite be read — the funeral song be sung! —
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young —
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young."
(Lenore)

PAGE 6

"Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
(To my Mother)

PAGE 7

"The customs of the world are so many conventional follies"
(The Spectacles)

PAGE 8

To be carrier of fire,
(The red fire of their heart,
With speed that may not tire,
And with pain that shall not part —
Who livest — that we know —
In Eternity — we feel —
But the shadow of whose brow
What spirit shall reveal.
(Spirit's Invocation)

EDGAR ALLAN POE
QUOTES:

PAGE 9

"In spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less-
So lovely was the loneliness"
(The Lake)

PAGE 15

"From my remembrance shall not pass — some pow'r
Or spell had bound me"
(Dreams)

PAGE 16

"I reach'd my home- my home no more
For all had flown who made it so.
I pass'd from out its mossy door,
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known-
O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
On beds of fire that burn below,
A humbler heart- a deeper woe."
(Tamerlane)

PAGE 17

"To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, would fly
But cannot from a danger nigh."
(Tamerlane)

PAGE 21

"We grew in age - and love - together
Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather -
And, when the friendly sunshine smil'd,
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven - but in her eyes."
(Tamerlane)

POPPI & POE

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