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BALTIMORE

THE PLAGUE SHIPS

MIKE
MIGNOLA

CHRISTOPHER
GOLDEN

BEN
STENBECK



DIRECT SALES



7



BALTIMORE™

THE PLAGUE SHIPS

Created by Mike Mignola and Christopher Golden



Story by

MIKE MIGNOLA

and

CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN

Art by

BEN STENBECK



Colors by **DAVE STEWART**

Letters by **CLEM ROBINS**

Cover Art by **MIKE MIGNOLA** *Cover Colors by* **DAVE STEWART**



NUMBER 1 IN A SERIES

Designer AMY ARENDTS *Assistant Editor* DANIEL CHABON

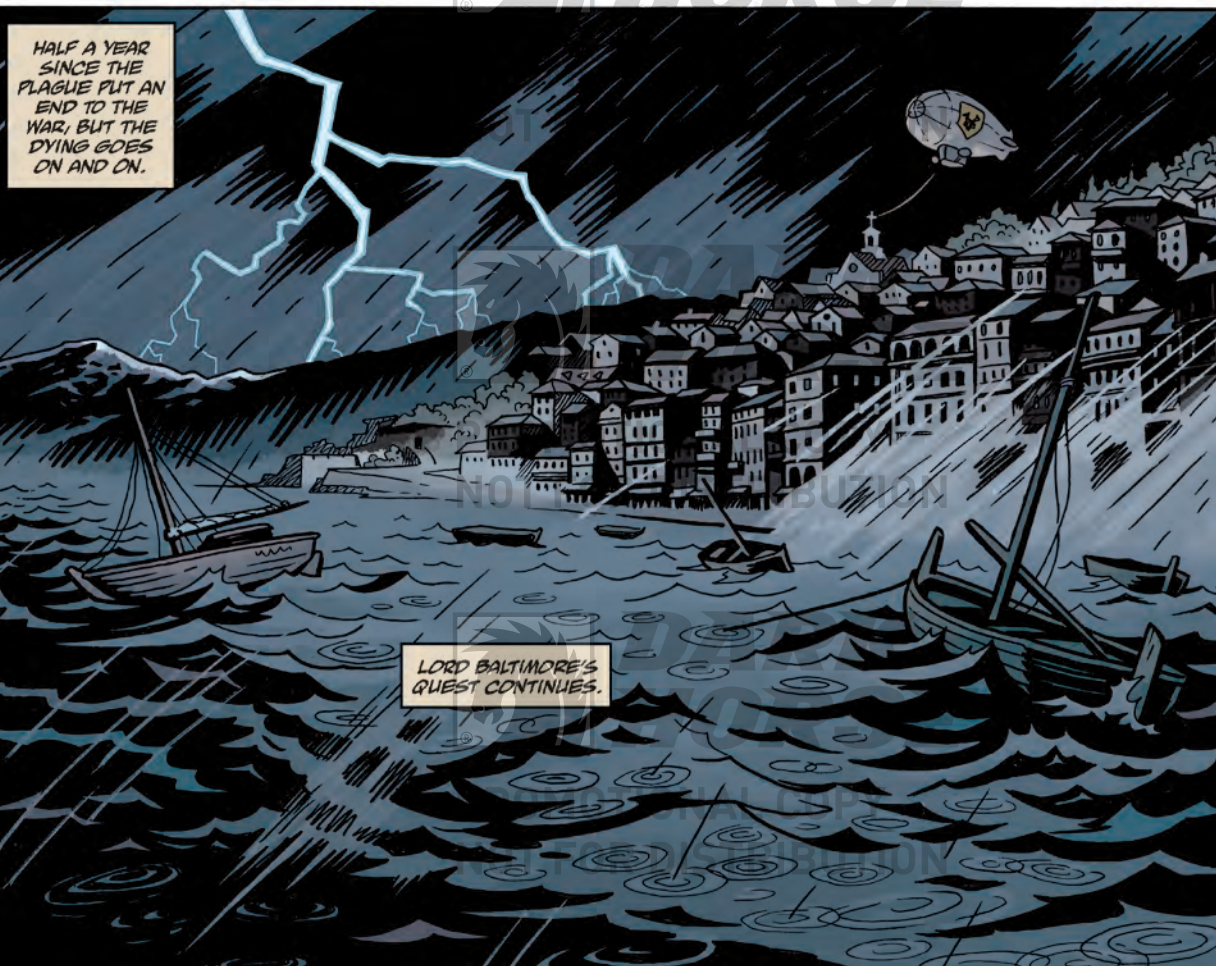
Associate Editor SAMANTHA ROBERTSON *Editor* SCOTT ALLIE *Publisher* MIKE RICHARDSON

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VILLEFRANCHE, ON
THE COAST OF FRANCE.
AUGUST 1916.



HALF A YEAR
SINCE THE
PLAGUE PUT AN
END TO THE
WAR, BUT THE
DYING GOES
ON AND ON.

LORD BALTIMORE'S
QUEST CONTINUES.





THERE ARE
NO SHADOWS
DEEP ENOUGH
TO HIDE YOU.



MAX
DOESN'T
HIDE! MAX
DOESN'T
RUN!

YOU
DON'T
HUNT
US...

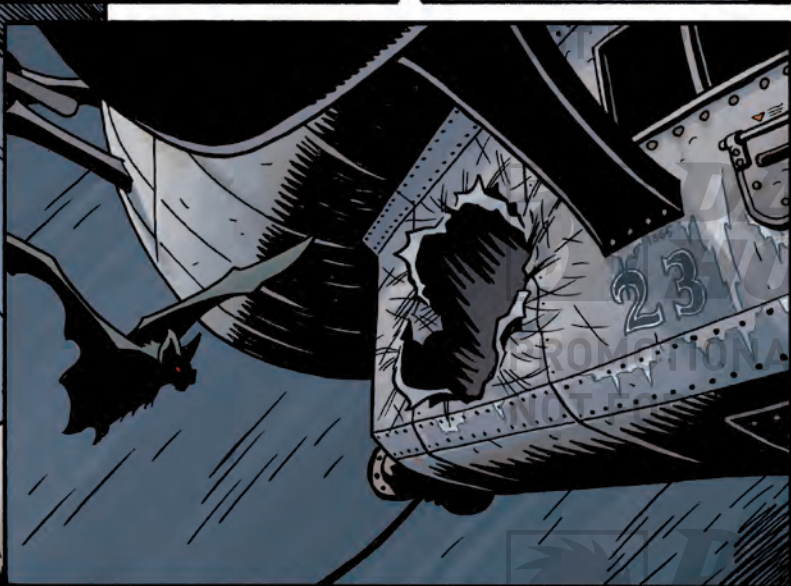


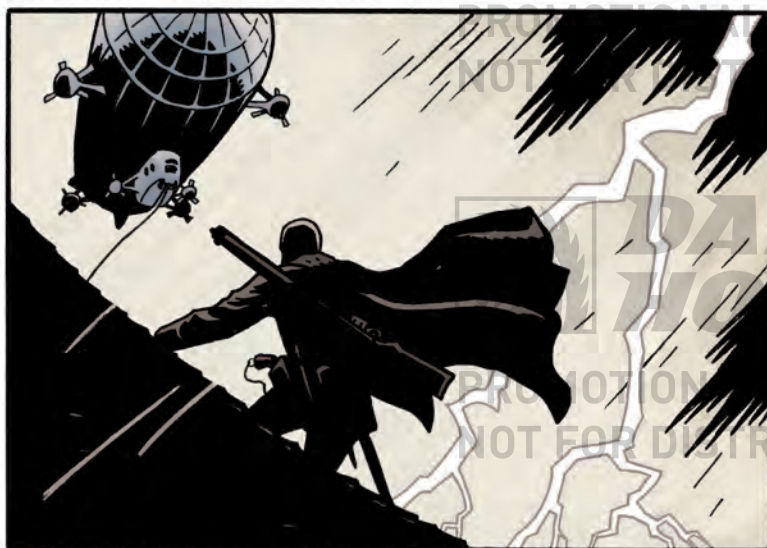
"...WE HUNT
YOU!"

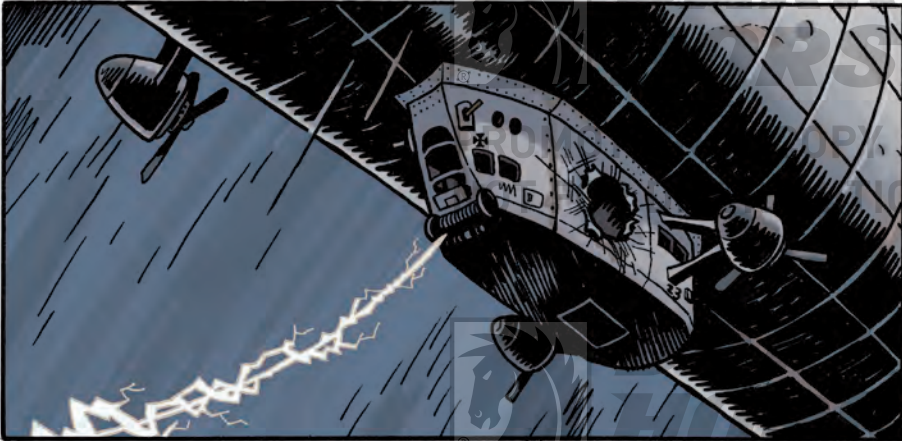
















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PLEASE, SIR, PUT
THE BLADE AWAY.
MY GRANDMOTHER
MEANS YOU NO
HARM.



WHO
ARE YOU, GIRL?
ANOTHER
WITCH?



MY NAME IS
YANESSA KALDERAS.
AS FOR WITCHERY,
DON'T LET GRAND-
MOTHER FOOL YOU.
SHE CAN NO
MORE CALL THE
LIGHTNING
THAN--



HUSH
YOUR MOUTH,
GIRL.



IF YOU *DID* CALL THE
LIGHTNING, YOU'LL GET
NO THANKS FROM ME. I
NEEDED ONE OF THEM
ALIVE. THEIR ASHES
CAN'T TELL ME WHAT
I NEED TO KNOW.



I CAN SEE YOU WERE
A GENTLEMAN ONCE,
BUT YOU'VE
OBSOLETELY LOST
YOUR MANNERS. I
KEPT THEM FROM
ESCAPING.



THEY
WOULDN'T HAVE
ESCAPED.



HALF THE TOWN IS DEAD OR DYING OF PLAGUE AND THEY'VE BEEN FEEDING OFF WHAT'S LEFT FROM THE SHADOWS. I WOULDN'T WANT EVEN **ONE** OF THEM LEFT ALIVE.

IF YOU COULD HAVE KILLED THEM YOURSELF, WHY DID YOU WAIT WHILE SO MANY DIED?

KILL **ONE**, THEY MAKE **TWO MORE**. THE OLDER ONES HIDE THEMSELVES. ONLY WHEN YOU FLUSHED THEM OUT COULD I BE SURE TO GET AT THE OLD ONES. THE **SMART** ONES.



THERE MAY BE OTHERS, RECENTLY MADE, STILL HIDDEN. SOME WHO SEEM TO BE STRICKEN WITH PLAGUE ARE AFFLICTED WITH MORE THAN DISEASE.



THE STRAGGLERS WILL POSE NO DIFFICULTY.



WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW, WITHOUT THE INFORMATION YOU SOUGHT?

CONTINUE MY HUNT.



I PURSUE A PARTICULAR VAMPIRE, ONE OF THE OLD ONES, SOMETIMES CALLED **HAIGUS**. YOU WOULD KNOW HIM BY THE LONG SCAR HERE AND BY THE ABSENCE OF HIS RIGHT EYE.



"DEATH SITS UPON HIS SHOULDER, NOT FOR HIM, BUT FOR THOSE WHO ALLY THEMSELVES WITH HIM.

"HIS QUEST WILL COST THE LIVES AND SOULS OF EVERYONE HE LOVES."



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"...THE MAN JUST SCOURED THE FILTH FROM OUR HOME. THE **LEAST** WE OWE HIM IS THE TRUTH. THE ZEPPELIN CORPS WERE RECENT ARRIVALS, ONLY A FORTNIGHT AGO. **YOUR** VAMPIRE WAS HERE LONG BEFORE THAT.



"THE PLAGUE HAD TOUCHED US **BEFORE** HE CAME, BUT IT SPREAD MUCH MORE QUICKLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. HE KILLED MANY, AND OTHERS HE MADE LIKE HIM. TWO NIGHTS AGO A SHIP SAILED FROM HERE BOUND FOR LIVORNO, ON THE ITALIAN COAST. WHISPERS SAY IT SAILED **AFTER DARK** BECAUSE YOUR VAMPIRE WAS ON BOARD."



I'LL NEED A SHIP, THEN. THE SWIFTEST VESSEL AVAILABLE. WHERE CAN I FIND A MAN WILLING TO CARRY ME TO LIVORNO?

NOT ANOTHER WORD, GIRL...



"...YOU HAVE TOLD HIM WHAT HE NEEDS TO KNOW.



"THIS VILLAGE HAS BEEN CURSED ENOUGH, SIR. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE ANYTHING MORE TO DO WITH YOU."



"DON'T LISTEN TO MY GRANDMOTHER. I KNOW A MAN WITH A SHIP. I CAN HELP..."





...BUT
YOU'VE
GOT TO TAKE
ME WITH
YOU.



I TRAVEL
ALONE.



NO, DAMN YOU.
I TOLD YOU WHAT
YOU WANTED TO KNOW.
THIS PLACE IS NOTHING
BUT A GRAVE NOW,
SWALLOWING US ALL.
TAKE ME--

DON'T BE A
FOOL, VANESSA.
CAN'T YOU SEE
THE CURSE
THAT HANGS
OVER HIS
HEAD?



GOOD
EVENING, SIR.
DOES THIS
BELONG TO
YOU?

IT
DOES.



TAKE
ME WITH
YOU!



NO, YOU
FOOLS!
HE DROVE
THE EVIL
OUT!

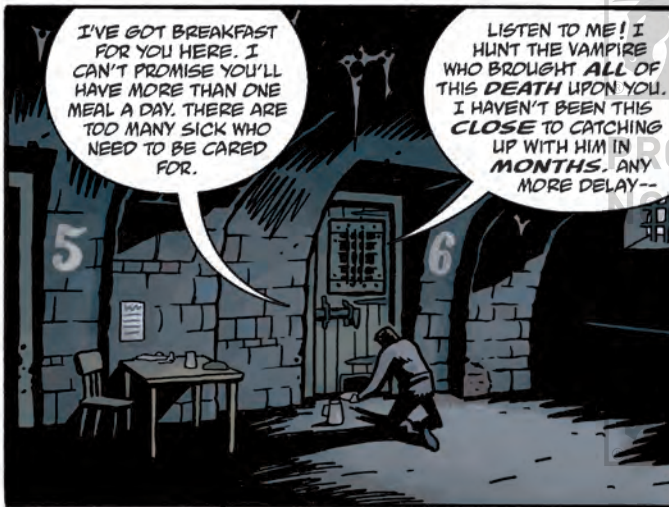


THE DEVIL
WEARS MANY
FACES.





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LISTEN TO ME! I HUNT THE VAMPIRE WHO BROUGHT **ALL** OF THIS **DEATH** UPON YOU. I HAVEN'T BEEN THIS **CLOSE** TO CATCHING UP WITH HIM IN **MONTHS**. ANY MORE DELAY--



SO YOU SAY. BUT THERE ARE DEVILS AND THEN THERE ARE **DEVILS**. YOU'RE HERE UNTIL JUDGE DUVIC TESTS YOU, AND HE'S NOT DUE FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER FORTNIGHT.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO IS THIS JUDGE?

"JUDGE DUVIC IS WITH THE NEW INQUISITION."

"IT IS FOR **HIM** TO DETERMINE WHO **IS** AND IS **NOT** IN LEAGUE WITH DEVILS."



UNTIL HE ARRIVES, YOU WILL REMAIN WITH US, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU HOWL.



THUMPP



ANTOINE,
COME AWAY
FROM THE
WINDOW.

BUT,
MOTHER, YOU
SAID THE MAN
WITH THE WOODEN
LEG KILLED THE
MONSTERS.



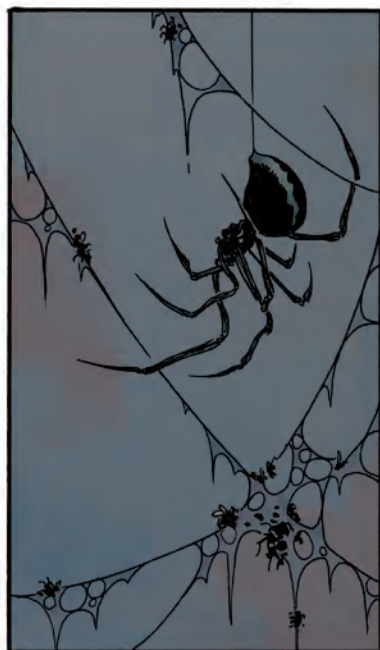
I SAID COME
AWAY FROM
THERE.

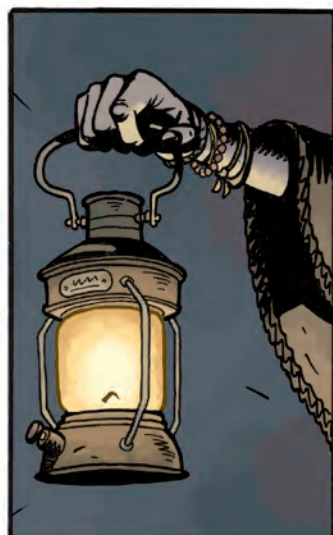


WE CAN'T
KNOW IF THE
STRANGER
KILLED THEM
ALL.



"LET SOME
OTHER
MOTHER'S
CHILD PROVE
THE NIGHT
SAFE."



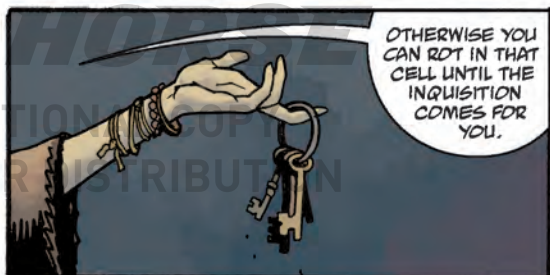




I HAVE INFLUENCE
WITH THE GUARD
AND I'VE ARRANGED
FOR A SHIP TO
TAKE YOU TO
LIVORNO.



BUT **ONLY** IF
YOU TAKE ME
WITH YOU AND
PAY FOR MY
PASSAGE AS
WELL.



OTHERWISE YOU
CAN ROT IN THAT
CELL UNTIL THE
INQUISITION
COMES FOR
YOU.



I FEAR
YOU WILL
REGRET
THIS.



THIS
PLACE IS HELL,
MONSIEUR.



"I'LL TAKE MY
CHANCES."



TO BE CONTINUED.