

DOSE!

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ELLIS & GEBBIA

4



ULTRA-VIOLENCE!



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created by SEAN ELLIS & JOHN GEBBIA

IT'S
ALIVE!

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art JOHN GEBBIA

publisher DREW FORD

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HERES BURNOUT!

STORY:
SEAN
ELLIS

ART:
JOHN
GEBBIA

YOU POOR
FOOLS MUST BE
FROM OUT OF
TOWN. BECAUSE
EVERYONE KNOWS,
WHEN YOU STEAL
DRUGS IN TOFU
CITY...



I'M THE GUY
WHO COMES
TO DECAPITATE
YOU.



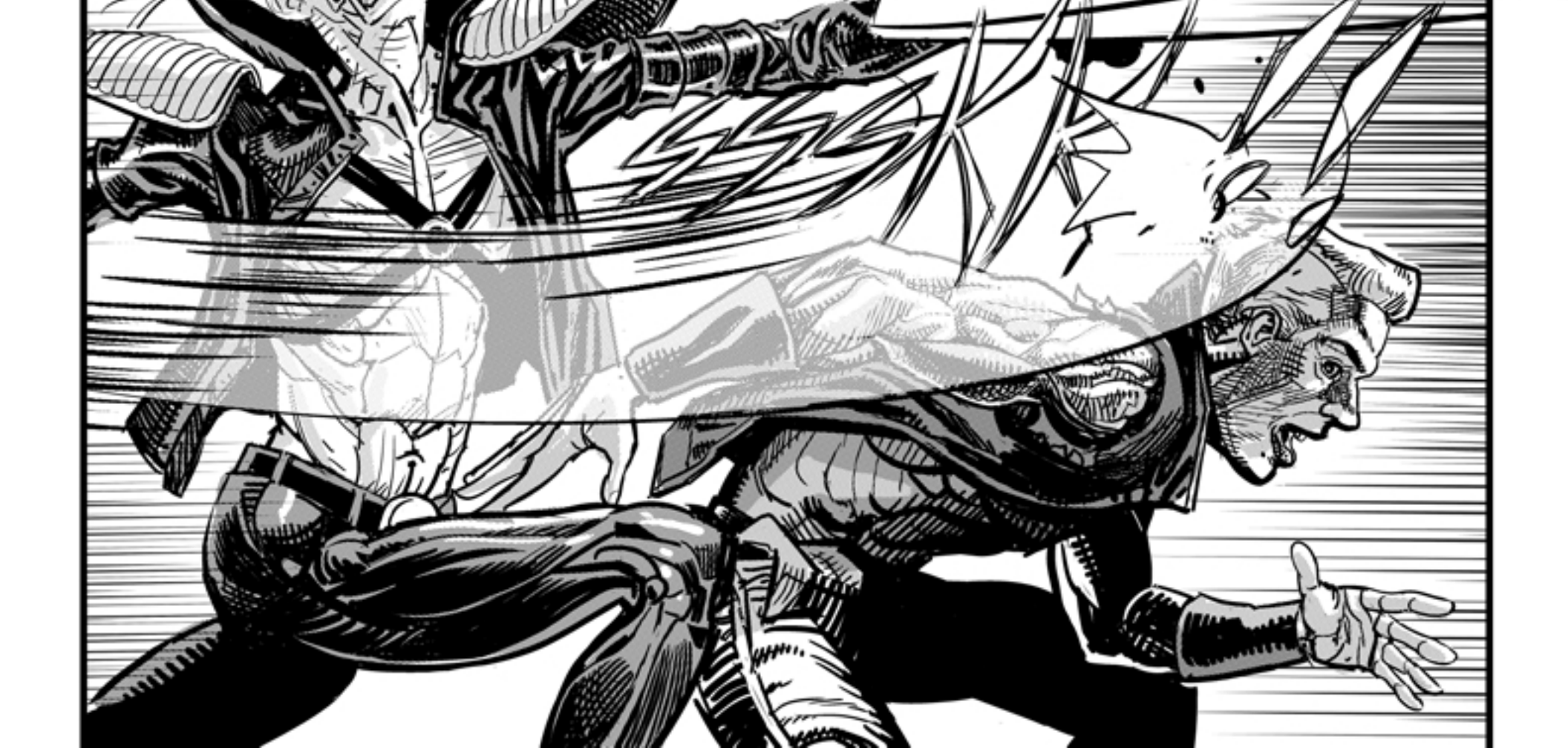
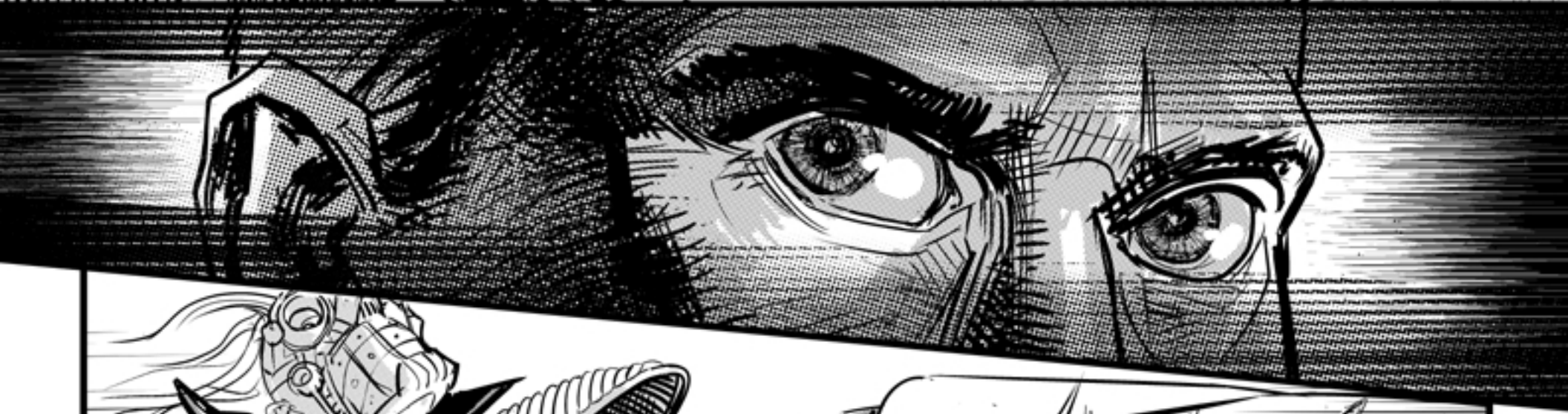
THIS WARPRIZE WAS WON
FAIR AND SQUARE. YOU'RE
WELCOME TO TRY AND
WIN IT BACK.

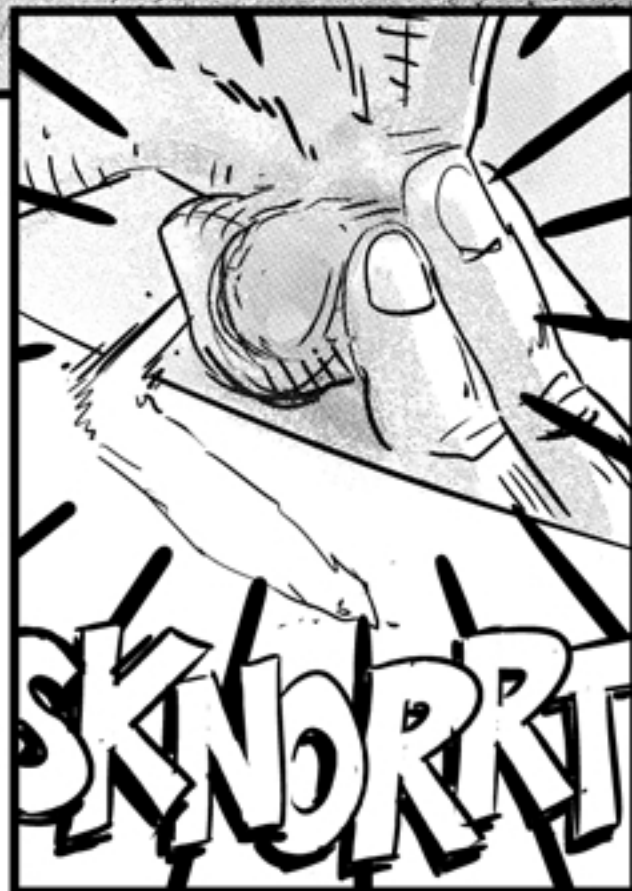


CHALLENGE AC-
CEPTED. AS I'M SURE
YOU'RE WELL AWARE,
WARPRIZE BATTLES OC-
CUR AMONGST METAS
ONLY. THEY DO NOT
INVOLVE LEGITIMATE
BUSINESS PEOPLE.

IMAGINE THE
STATE OF SOCIETY
IF EVERYONE SIM-
PLY RESORTED TO
VIOLENCE WHEN-
EVER THEY DIDN'T
WANT TO PAY FOR
THINGS.

TSK TSK.



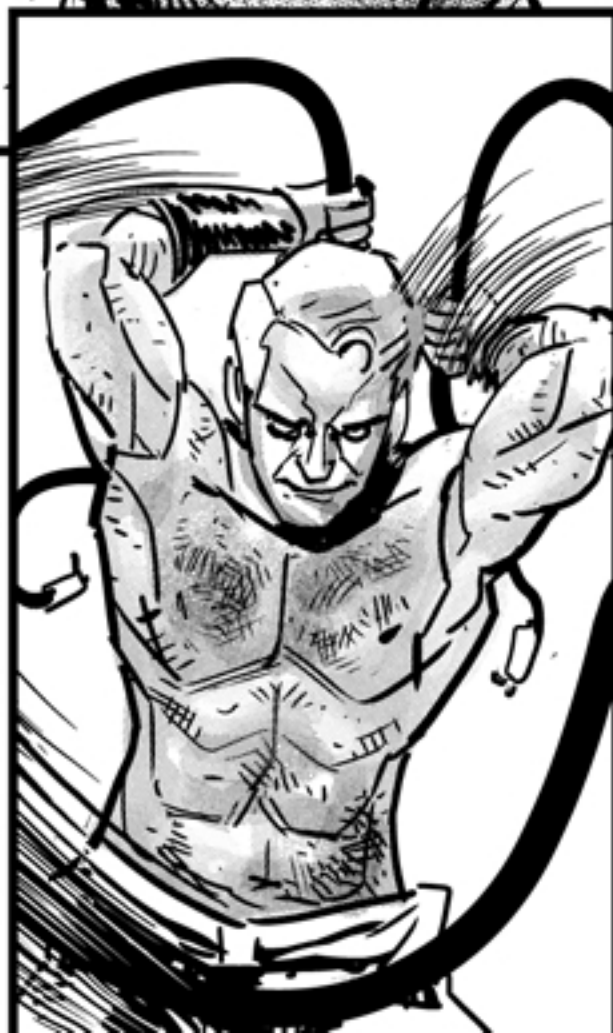








BURN OUT!!









YOU'RE GOING TO
PAY FOR THAT BLUR---
THROUGH SUFFERING
AND MISERY!



YOUR DEATH COULD
HAVE BEEN PAINLESS. IN-
STEAD, I HEREBY SENTENCE
YOU TO LINGCHI, DEATH
BY 1,000 CUTS!!!



PRACTICED IN
ANCIENT CHINA...

THE FIRST SLICES
OF LINGCHI BEGIN
THE BLEEDING OUT
PROCESS.



THEN I START
LOPPING OFF...

YOUR
APPENDAGES.

INCLUDING

YOUR

COCK.

THE PROCESS

WILL BE

QUITE

EXCRUCIATING.

FREQUENT
BLUR USE RESULTS IN
IMPOTENCE AND PENIS
SHRINKAGE. YOU SURE
YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO
COMPENSATE FOR ANY-
THING WITH THOSE
BLADES, BURNOUT?

AND JUST SO
YOU KNOW, I'VE HAD
PAPERCUTS WORSE
THAN THIS.

VERY
SOON

NOTHING
BUT

YOU'LL
BE

A
BLOODY
STUMP.



YOU GOT
HIM RIGHT
WHERE YOU
WANT HIM,
WORM.

DON'T CHASE
AFTER HIM.

THAT'S WHAT
HE WANTS.

FLIP THE SCRIPT
INSTEAD.

USE HIS
SPEED...

TO YOUR
ADVANTAGE.

TIME

DOWN

NOW.

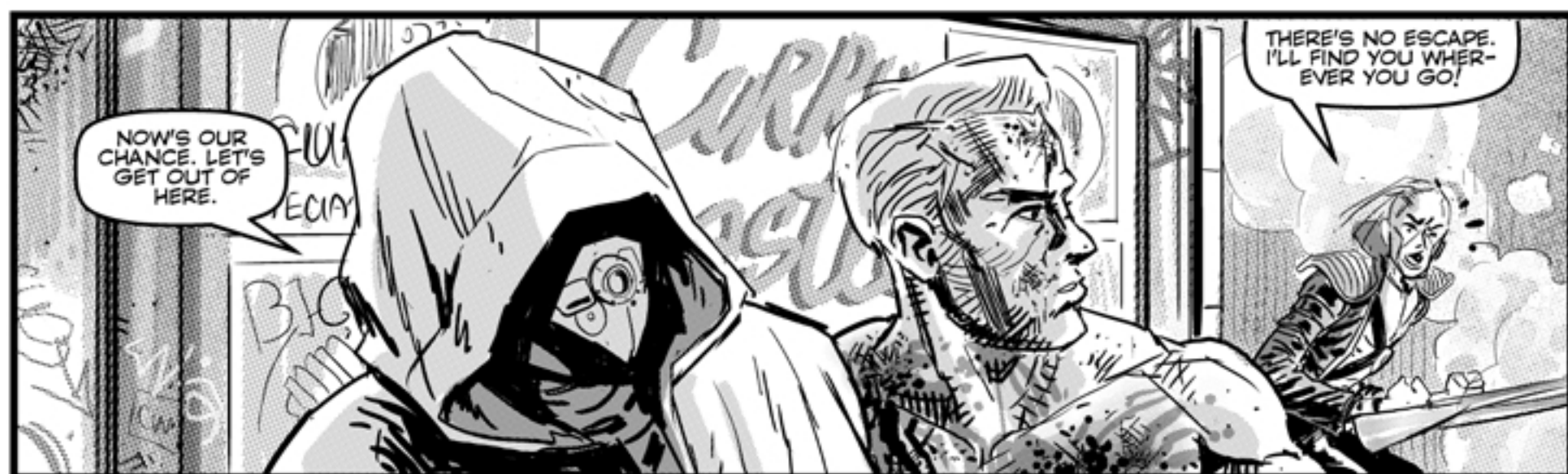
SLOWING

JUST LET
HIM COME...

TO YOU.



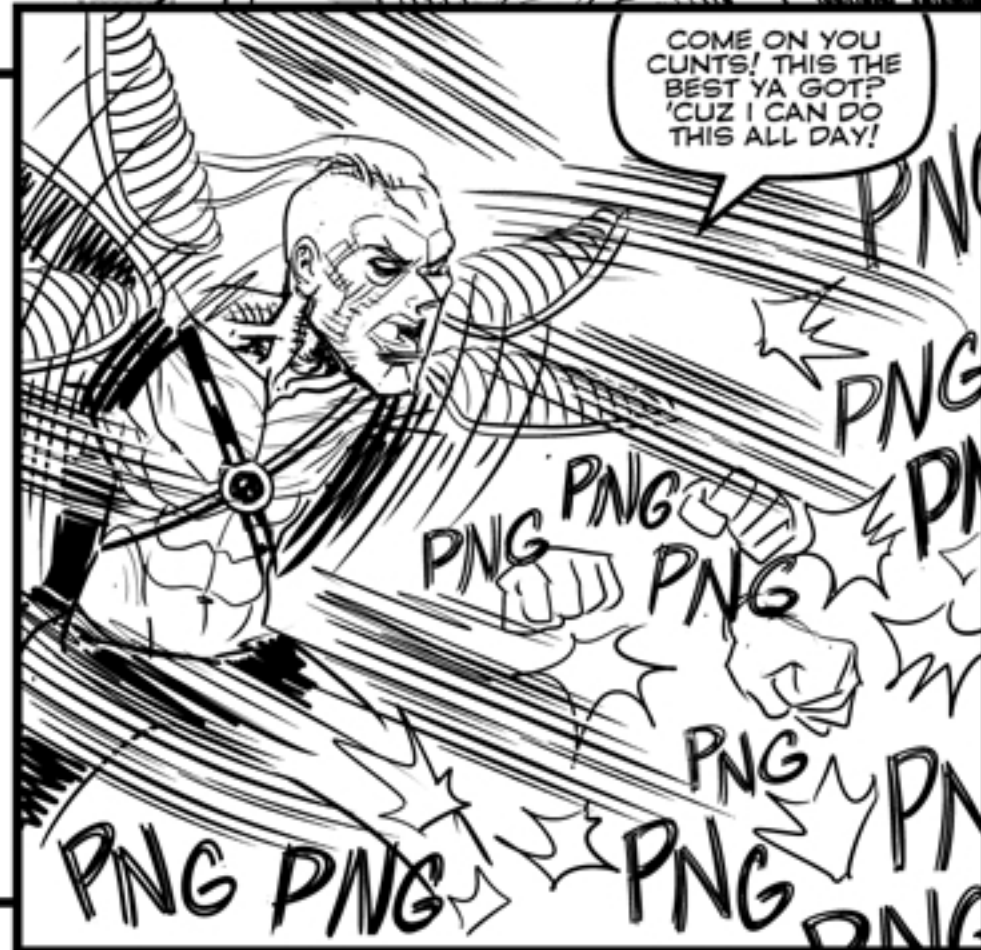




KANGKANGKANGKA



COME ON YOU
CUNTS! THIS THE
BEST YA GOT?
'CUZ I CAN DO
THIS ALL DAY!



I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S
HOLDING THEM OFF WITH
JUST THOSE BLADES. IF HE
WASN'T TRYING TO DIS-
EMBOWEL ME, I'D STICK
AROUND AND WATCH.





META HUMANS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS META KATE AND ALOYSIUS JOHNSON. THE FEMALE IS WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH FOUR SEPARATE MURDERS.

FOUR MURDERS?!? WHATEVER WE DO, WE CAN'T LET EM GET AWAY.

IF WE LET A MULTIPLE MURDER SUSPECT ESCAPE, THE COMMISH WILL HAVE OUR ASSES IN SLINGS.

I'LL SAY!



IF YOU'RE GOING TO PUKE, PUKE OVER THERE.

OUT OF HUF HUF... SHAPE. FEEL LIKE HUF HUF... I'M GONNA PUKE.



CHECK THIS OUT.



I GUESS THIS IS OUR LUCKY DAY....





CITIZENS! META HUMAN
TERRORISTS HAVE INFIL-
TRATED YOUR PEACEFUL
PROTEST. PLEASE DIS-
PERSE IMMEDIATELY.
FAILURE TO DO SO
PLACES YOU IN THE
WAY OF POTENTIAL
FRIENDLY FIRE!



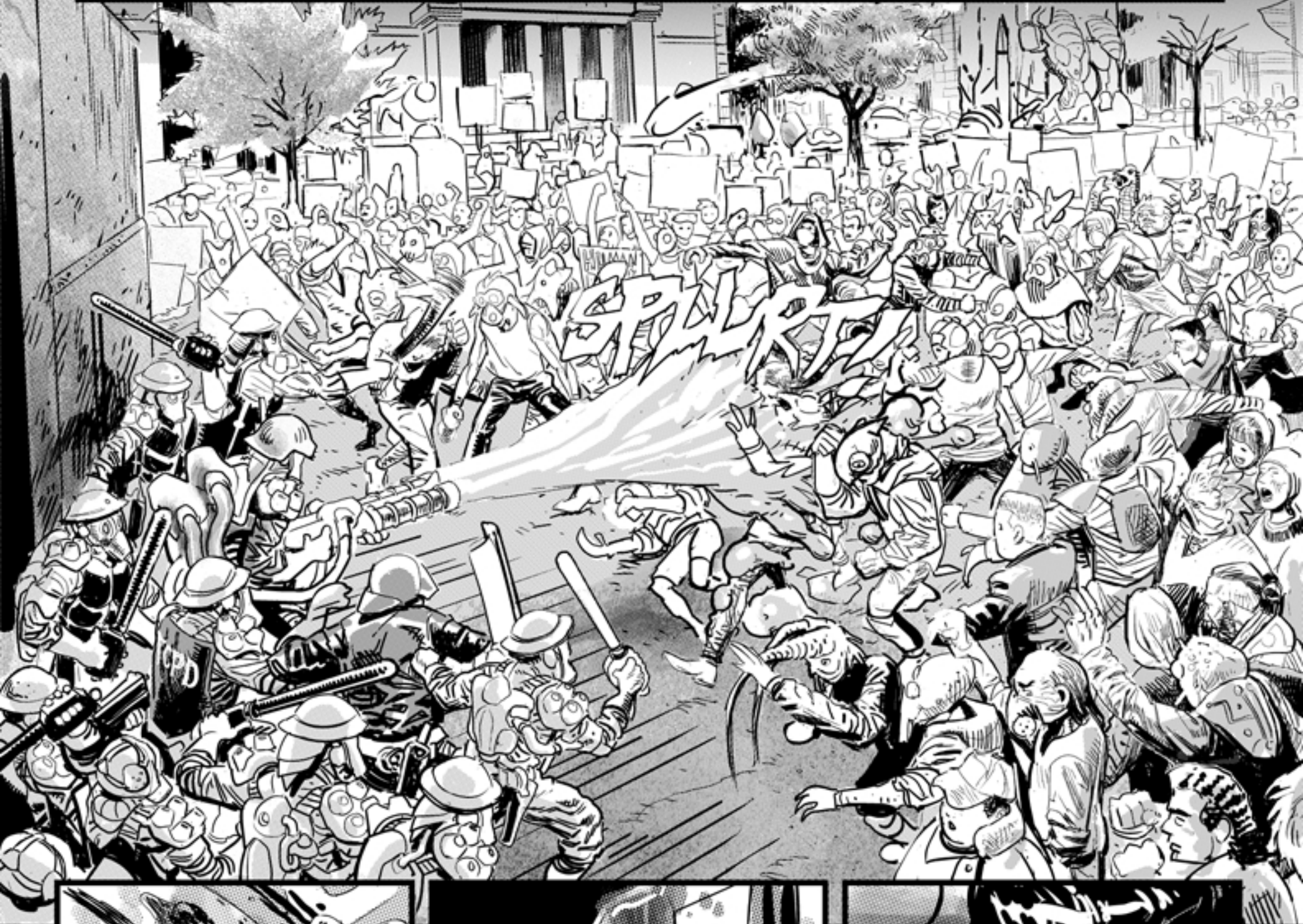
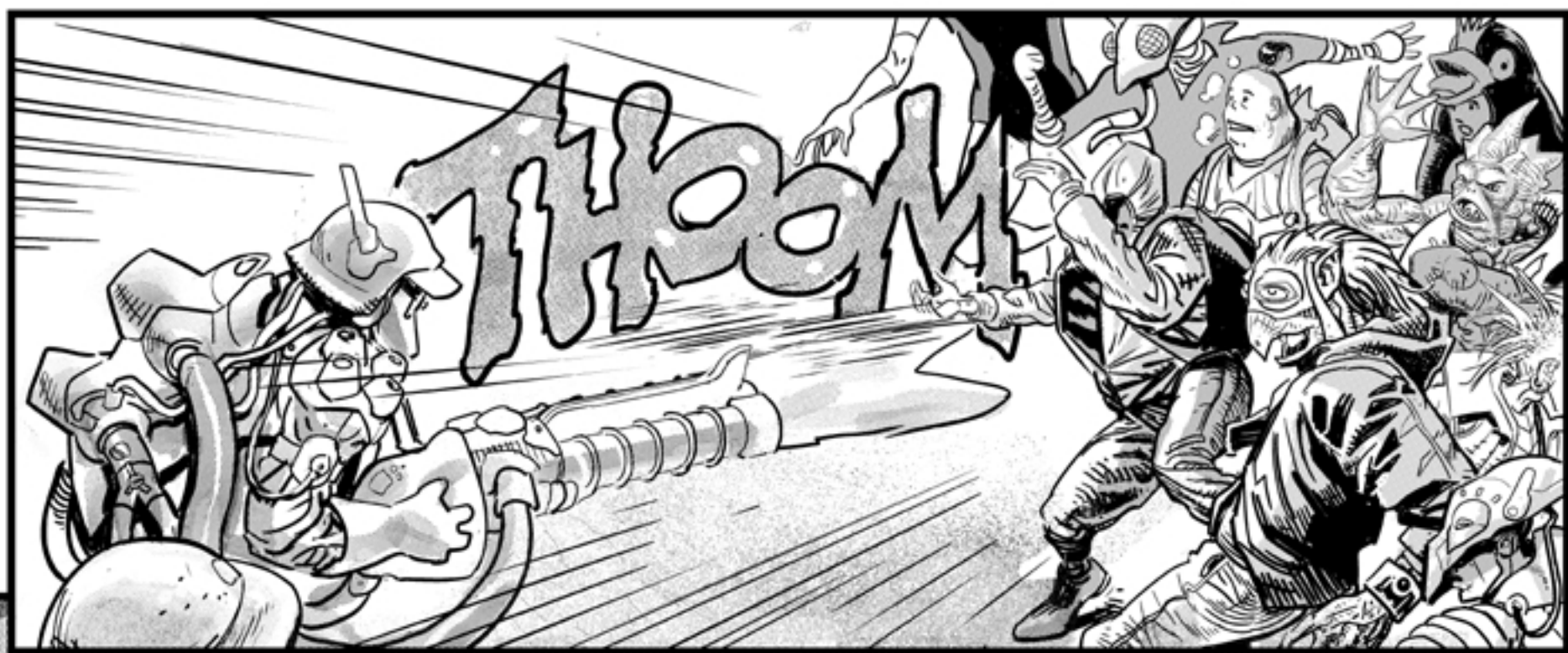
SIR, YOU SURE YOU
WANT TO FOLLOW THEM
INTO THIS MESS? THEY'RE
NOT COMPLYING WITH
OUR COMMANDS.

OH, THEY'LL
COMPLY SOON
ENOUGH. READY
THE "PEACE MAKER."



IT'S QUIET TIME,
YABUMS!







WELL GENTLEMEN, WE HAD OURSELVES A BIT OF FUN, DIDN'T WE?

TWENTY-ONE DISMEMBERED COPS, THAT'S A NEW RECORD! I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING PART OF THIS... MY SPECIAL MOMENT!



I'M IN DEEP SHIT! WORD GETS OUT I LOST A WARPRIZE, I'M DONE AS THE PROPHETS' TOP ENFORCER. NOT TO MENTION ALL MY UHHHH--PERSONAL VIDEOS. IF THOSE WERE TO... I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK TO ABOUT IT!

ALL I KNOW IS, I'VE GOT TO GET THOSE OMNISPECS BACK. FAST!

I NEED MY DAMN TEETH FIXED TOO.

TO BE CONTINUED...

ENTERTAINMENT

At What Cost?:

A Critical Examination of the Meta-Human Tradition of Taking Warprizes and its Destructive Effects Upon Society

by Dr. Michael Penaker

Since the dawn of the Meta-Human Age, the 'taking' of souvenirs, or items of personal property from vanquished foes "warprizes", has been a long-held tradition within the community of both metavillains and metaheroes alike. For the victors, warprizes connote a level of status and superiority over the defeated opponent; for the defeated, however, the taken item conveys shame, inferiority, and impotence. While we may expect this sort of retrograde and childlike behavior from those who identify as metavillains, why is warprize taking considered an acceptable behavior when exhibited by those we grant a privileged status within society, that of the vaunted metahero? A behavior that may have unthinking roots in the spirited horseplay and seemingly harmless rules-of-engagement between fighting children, has, in the context of dangerously enhanced adults, devolved into something incredibly toxic, with deadly ramifications for not only the meta-human community, but for society as a whole. It has recently become clear that now, more than ever, it is imperative that we hold our metaheroes to higher standards and, at the very least, make it abundantly clear that we, as a society, will no longer tolerate their participation in the destructive practice of claiming warprizes.

Best Man, Worst Practices

The warprize-taking tradition is known to have started in the 1930's with the magick-based Best Man, who is said to have had his Magician's Lair full of trinkets, doo-dads, and souvenirs pilfered from his innumerable defeated adversaries. As he explained to the press at the time, taking a piece of paraphernalia from a defeated foe added to the pool of magickal abilities available to him; that is to say, the more souvenirs the Best Man took from bested opponents, the stronger his magickal abilities became. We can neither confirm nor deny the veracity of



The tables are turned on the Best Man in '67

the Best Man's claims, and thus, are left to conjecture. What we do know and can confirm, however, is that this prize-taking ethos became standard practice on the part of both metaheroes and metavillains in Best Man's wake. The metahuman community, began to engage in and reinforce this collective myth; that is to say, the metahuman



The Best Man's costume & wand (1941)

community began to treat the taking of warprizes as though it were actually a boon to their own abilities and powers similar to the way in which the Best Man's taking of souvenirs added to his own magickal abilities. While the Best Man's practice may have actually had some benefit to his abilities, we know for certain that the taking of warprizes does not and has never resulted in any sort of benefit to the abilities of 99.999% of metahumans. What it did result in, however, was a system of social hierarchy within the metahuman community, one in which superiority over others was won and demonstrated through warprize taking: in other words, through outright acts of aggression, violence, and bloodshed. While some of the most strident adherents to this practice were, as we are all fully aware, beloved metaheroes, we might have thought that their investment in and participation in this toxic, hyper-masculine tradition would have served to undermine their standing as actual "heroes" within society. But through the present day, this has regrettably not been the case.

10,000 Wrongs Don't Make a Right

As time passed, the metahuman community became fully invested in the notion that their self-worth, pride and reputation was tied to and directly associated with the capturing of warprizes, so much so that the practice has only grown until it has become something of a full blown epidemic in modern times. We see that the act of acquiring warprizes, for some metaheroes, has actually far outstripped the desire to either fight injustice or do good in the world; the sole purpose of

some 'metaheroes' has seemingly become the collecting of, and accumulation of warprizes. Indeed, quite a number of metaheroes and metavillains alike have exhibited a monomaniacal fixation on the acquiring, collecting, and hoarding of such objects. Some individual metavillains can be thought to value warprizes more than they actually desire to gain wealth through criminal enterprise, and it is not uncommon to see both metavillains and metaheroes alike take to telepathic social media to display, brag, and gloat about their recently acquired warprizes. And thus, the destructive cycle of violence is intensified and perpetrated not merely by metavillains, but by the very people, our sacred metaheroes, whose professed duty is to not only safeguard us, but to protect the ethics, traditions, and mores that we, as a society, hold dear. With each passing day, the line between metahero and metavillain becomes less clear, less distinct, and the more common the practice of metaheroes taking warprizes has become, the less distinct, the more obfuscated the line between metahero and metavillain, becomes.

Violence Commodified

Once a warprize has been taken or 'won,' it then becomes the duty of the vanquished meta to regain said lost warprize, for it is only through regaining what has been lost that one can reestablish standing and reputation within the metahuman community. Or so, that is the collective myth we have all become fully invested in taking part in. It is not uncommon, however, that when a metahero loses a warprize and is publicly outed for it, they may in turn be dropped by sponsors and consequentially, lose out on future sponsorship possibilities; that is to say, a metahero's livelihood is directly tied to the the concept of not only retaining and not relinquishing warprizes, but also, regaining warprizes once they have been 'lost.' The stakes have now escalated to such an extent that the consequences are higher, more deadly, and more expensive than ever. If dominance is not continually maintained, displayed, and/or reestablished within the metahuman community, a meta's value, worth, and even self-worth within said community decreases correspondingly. Thus, the currency of one's value within both the metahuman community and within society itself is not only commodified through these

acts of violence and aggression, but it is only through one's willingness to continually commit acts of violence and aggression, again and again, in perpetuity, that this commodified value can be retained.

Warprizes and Gender

While the toxic practices within warprize culture might be thought of as inherent in, and most closely associated with toxic masculinity, both females and those who identify as being part of the LGBTQIATH+ community participate in the seizing of warprizes at nearly equal to or higher rates than those of their male counterparts. That is to say, the toxic behaviors that we most closely associate with men via toxic masculinity are, in actuality, bound by neither gender, gender roles, nor sexuality. The predominant behavior we see from metas, however, regardless of either hero/villain association and identification, is abundantly clear. Metas participate within a tradition and culture which perpetuates a needless and continuous cycle of violence, with little, if any, regard to the destruction and harm it causes to either the general populace or society as a whole. It then becomes blatantly obvious that it is not merely pride and reputation at stake within warprize culture, but the financial interests, livelihood, and future earnings potential of both metaheroes, and to some extent, metavillains, which perpetuates such behaviors. We must then ask ourselves how many more lives need be lost, how much bloodshed and destruction must be tolerated so as to allow this sort of behavior to continue?

Deadly Diversions

It is not merely the metahumans who participate in this cultural practice, nor the corporations who help fuel the transactional economics of warprize culture whom must be held accountable, but it is we ourselves, the general public who derives pleasure from the entertainment value which warprize culture affords, who must ultimately be held accountable. For it is our clicks, likes, attention, adulation, and dollars which ultimately fuel the economics of warprize culture. While we are being sincere in thinking that we must hold our beloved

metaheroes to higher standards, it is we ourselves, both as individuals and as society, who must also be held to higher standards and made accountable. As tantalizingly alluring and entertaining these endless blood feuds appear, we must disassociate ourselves from the pleasures and satisfactions which warprize culture engenders, for it is our own participation in said practices which helps to produce these deadly consequences and outcomes; thus, it is our own entertainment which has, in turn, become deadly to us; that is to say, when we act as spectators to the endless battles which are a part of warprize culture, and derive pleasure through said practices, we ourselves not only condone said actions, but also, give our implicit consent to them; though we aren't actually physically participating in these battles, we are as directly responsible for them (and their attendant damage and pain) as the metaheroes fighting warprize battles themselves. Only through divesting ourselves of, and refusing such pleasures, can we ever truly hope to end the harm, destruction and trauma which they inflict upon society.



The Best Man in his Magician's Lair circa 1937



