

AGE OF THE WOLF



AGE OF THE WOLF CREATED BY ALEC WORLEY AND JON DAVIS-HUNT



FOREWORD

There's limits to what you can do with a werewolf. Much more so than with, say, ghosts or vampires. The classic werewolf tale features someone who gets bit, then transforms every full moon. What's left for that character to do except eat a silver bullet in the third act? I wanted *Age of the Wolf* to go deeper and bite harder than a lot of the werewolf stories I was used to. So I plunged into Scandinavian legend and European folklore, recovering a wealth of ideas that presented the werewolf as something deep, dark and decidedly unfamiliar. Suddenly *Age of the Wolf* was less a straight horror story and more an epic fantasy saga about the price of heroism, writing your own destiny, and wondering what's so great about the human race anyway.

Then there was the heroine: Rowan Morrigan. There's been a lot of debate recently about depictions of female characters in comics, and with good reason. But I find many such examples come down to nothing more than

lazy writing. Stories don't need 'strong female characters'. Stories need well-written characters, regardless of whether they have boobs or a willy. So it was important to me that Rowan wasn't perfect, that she was scared and made mistakes, had vulnerabilities that would make her all the more courageous as she transformed from book to book. And, judging from the feedback I've since received, I'm pleased to say readers appear to have fallen under her spell as much as I did when I was writing her.

I'm indebted to *2000AD*'s editor Matt 'Tharg' Smith, as I am to ace artist Jon Davis-Hunt, whose vivid designs brought solidity and sensitivity where it was most needed. Thanks too to letterers Simon Bowland and Annie Parkhouse, and colourist Gary Caldwell. All of whom helped *Age of the Wolf* find its mark.

Alec Worley
Summer, 2014



Sample file



Sample file

BAD MOON RISING

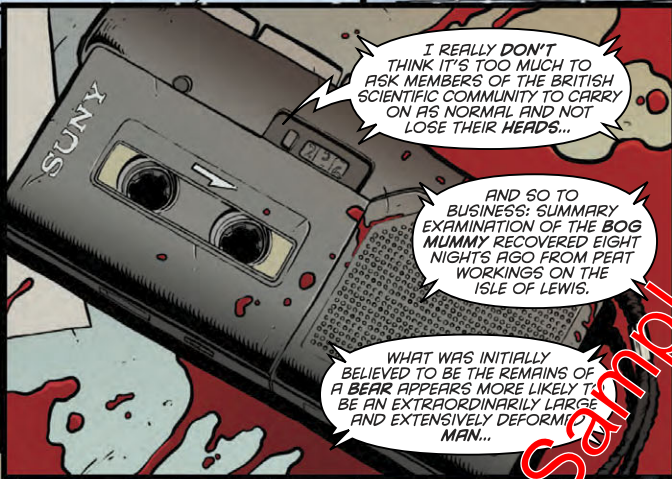
Script: Alec Worley
Artist: Jon Davis-Hunt
Letters: Simon Bowland

Originally published in *2000 AD* Progs 1700-1708

TUESDAY
22 NOVEMBER 2016.
PROFESSOR CARTER
RECORDING.

IT'S 15:45 AND THE
WORLD LOOKS SET TO
EXPERIENCE A FULL MOON
FOR THE NINTH NIGHT
IN A ROW.

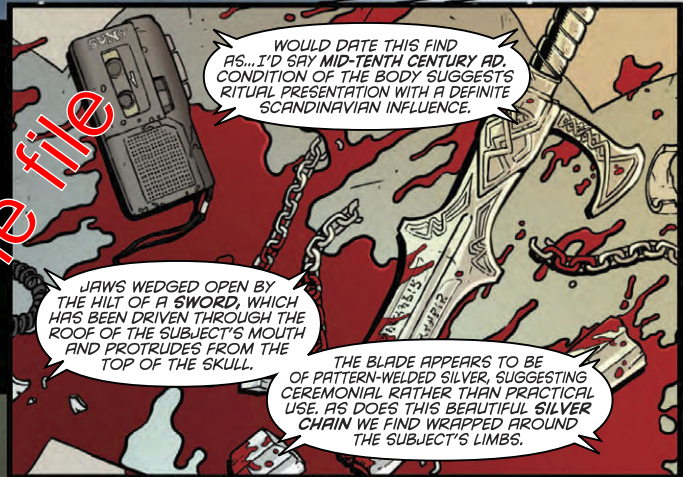
AND ASSISTANTS
JORDAN AND PATTERSON
APPEAR TO HAVE GIVEN IN
TO PUBLIC HYSTERIA BY
NOT TURNING UP FOR
WORK TODAY!



I REALLY DON'T
THINK IT'S TOO MUCH TO
ASK MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH
SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY TO CARRY
ON AS NORMAL AND NOT
LOSE THEIR HEADS...

AND SO TO
BUSINESS: SUMMARY
EXAMINATION OF THE BOG
MUMMY RECOVERED EIGHT
NIGHTS AGO FROM PEAT
WORKINGS ON THE ISLE OF LEWIS.

WHAT WAS INITIALLY
BELIEVED TO BE THE REMAINS OF
A BEAR APPEARS MORE LIKELY TO
BE AN EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE
AND EXTENSIVELY DEFORMED
MAN...



WOULD DATE THIS FIND
AS... I'D SAY MID-TENTH CENTURY AD.
CONDITION OF THE BODY SUGGESTS
RITUAL PRESENTATION WITH A DEFINITE
SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCE.

JAWS WEDGED OPEN BY
THE HILT OF A SWORD, WHICH
HAS BEEN DRIVEN THROUGH THE
ROOF OF THE SUBJECT'S MOUTH
AND PROTRUDES FROM THE
TOP OF THE SKULL.

THE BLADE APPEARS TO BE
OF PATTERN-WELDED SILVER, SUGGESTING
CEREMONIAL RATHER THAN PRACTICAL
USE. AS DOES THIS BEAUTIFUL SILVER
CHAIN WE FIND WRAPPED AROUND
THE SUBJECT'S LIMBS.

Sample file



TODAY, UNDER
THE LIGHT OF THE SO-CALLED
"PERMA-MOON", WE SEEM TO FIND
EVEN RATIONAL PEOPLE PREPARED
TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF
IMMINENT ECO-TASTROPHE...

REMINING ONE THAT
HUMAN SACRIFICES, SUCH AS THE ONE
WE HAVE HERE, WERE USUALLY MADE
TO AVERT SOME PERCEIVED
APOCALYPSE.

AS I POINTED OUT IN MY
RECENT ADDRESS TO THE HELLENIC
SOCIETY, WE FIND THIS CULTURAL
MOTIF RECURS THROUGHOUT THE
CLASSICS--



--ANDROMEDA
OF JOPPA, SACRIFICED
TO PREVENT A SEA MONSTER
FROM DEVASTATING
PHILISTIA...

POLYXENA OF
TROY SACRIFICED TO
APPEASE THE LUSTFUL
GHOST OF ACHILLES,
AND SO ON...



NOT FORGETTING
THE COUNTLESS NAMELESS MAIDENS
SENT TO CURB THE APPETITES OF
RAMPANT DRAGONS IN FOLK TALES
THROUGHOUT HISTORY--

"--OF COURSE, THESE STORIES USUALLY NEGLECT TO RECORD JUST HOW THE SACRIFICE *HERSELF* MIGHT FEEL ABOUT BEING CHOSEN TO *DIE* FOR THE SAKE OF THE *WORLD*."

ooooooooooooo!

I'M SORRY, LITTLE FELLA. WE'RE HERE NOW. WE'LL GET YOU WARMED UP IN A MINUTE.



MARIA...?

OKAY, ROWAN. NO ARGUMENTS THIS TIME. WE'RE GETTING OUT OF LONDON RIGHT NOW.

I SPOKE TO MY DAD, OKAY? WE'RE GONNA STAY WITH HIM IN SURREY. MY BROTHER'S PICKING US UP AT THE STATION.



Sample file

ROWAN, DON'T GIMME THAT LOOK. THIS ISN'T ME PANICKING, OKAY?

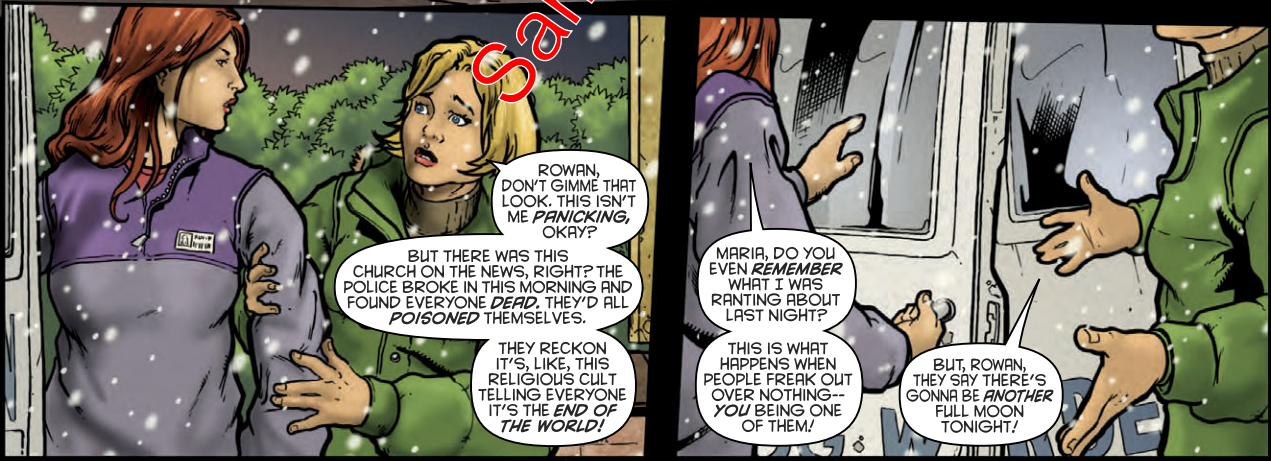
BUT THERE WAS THIS CHURCH ON THE NEWS, RIGHT? THE POLICE BROKE IN THIS MORNING AND FOUND EVERYONE DEAD. THEY'D ALL POISONED THEMSELVES.

THEY RECKON IT'S, LIKE, THIS RELIGIOUS CULT TELLING EVERYONE IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!

MARIA, DO YOU EVEN REMEMBER WHAT I WAS RANTING ABOUT LAST NIGHT?

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE FREAK OUT OVER NOTHING-- YOU BEING ONE OF THEM!

BUT, ROWAN, THEY SAY THERE'S GONNA BE ANOTHER FULL MOON TONIGHT!



Y'KNOW WHAT, MARIA? I JUST PICKED THIS ONE UP FROM THE PRECINCT 'CO'S HIS OWNER WENT CRAZY AND STABBED SOMEONE OVER A PACK OF MINERAL WATER.

SO PLEASE, JUST CALM DOWN AND THINK FOR A MINUTE.

IF YOU DIDN'T INSIST ON FAST-FORWARDING THOSE GOVERNMENT BROADCASTS YOU'D KNOW IT'S JUST GAS SEEPING INTO THE MOON'S ATMOSPHERE. THAT'S WHY IT'S GLOWING. THANK YOU, SCIENCE!

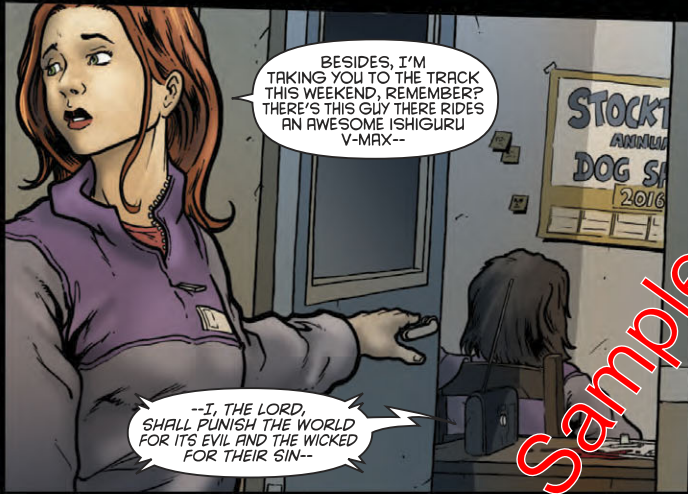




ROWAN, YOU'RE NOT LISTENING TO ME. I KNOW I'M A DIZZY COW SOMETIMES AND THERE'S A PANIC ON THE NEWS EVERY FIVE MINUTES, BUT THIS TIME--

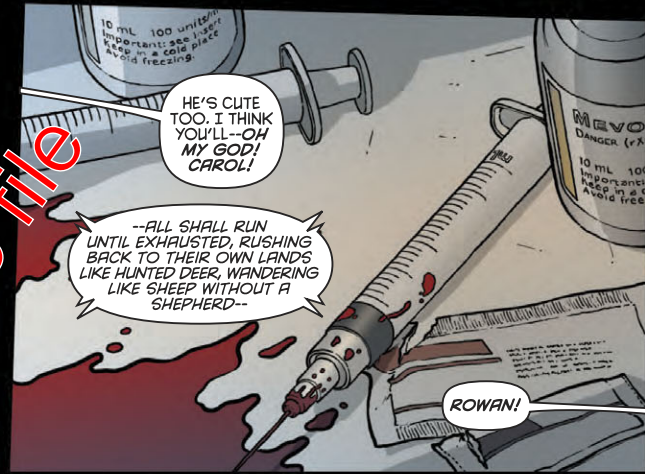
MARIA, AS SOON AS I'M DONE HERE WE'RE GOING HOME, OKAY?

LOOK, I'LL MAKE US HOTDOGS AND WE CAN START ON THAT ROBO-GEISHA BOXSET. WHAT WE'RE NOT GONNA DO IS FREAK OUT LIKE EVERYONE ELSE!



BESIDES, I'M TAKING YOU TO THE TRACK THIS WEEKEND, REMEMBER? THERE'S THIS GUY THERE RIDES AN AWESOME ISHIGURU V-MAX--

--I, THE LORD, SHALL PUNISH THE WORLD FOR ITS EVIL AND THE WICKED FOR THEIR SIN--



HE'S CUTE TOO. I THINK YOU'LL--OH MY GOD! CAROL!

--ALL SHALL RUN UNTIL EXHAUSTED, RUSHING BACK TO THEIR OWN LANDS LIKE HUNTED DEER, WANDERING LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD--

ROWAN!

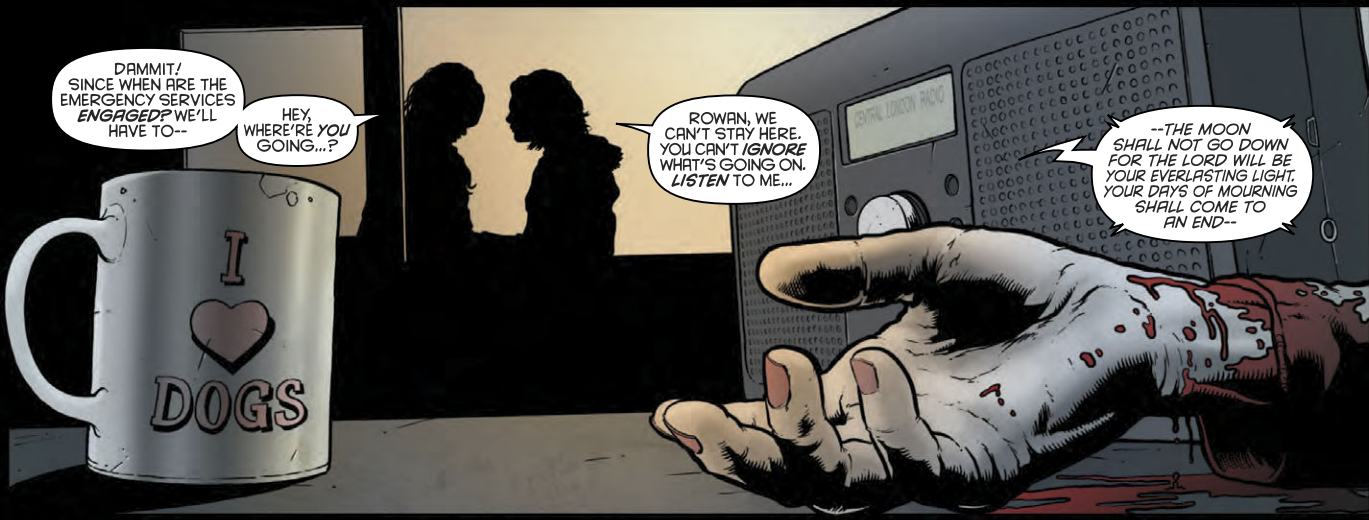


ROWAN, SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH THE DOGS. NONE OF THEM ARE MOVING...

--WILD ANIMALS SHALL MOVE ABOUT THE RUINED CITY. THE HOUSES SHALL BE HAUNTED BY HOWLING CREATURES--

ROW? WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE'S CAROL?

STAY HERE.

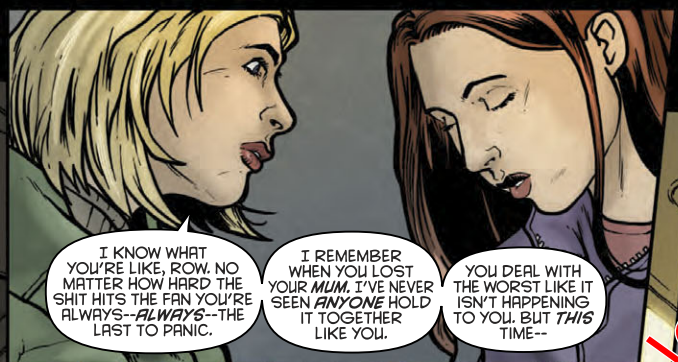


DAMMIT! SINCE WHEN ARE THE EMERGENCY SERVICES ENGAGED? WE'LL HAVE TO--

HEY, WHERE'RE YOU GOING...?

ROWAN, WE CAN'T STAY HERE. YOU CAN'T IGNORE WHAT'S GOING ON. LISTEN TO ME...

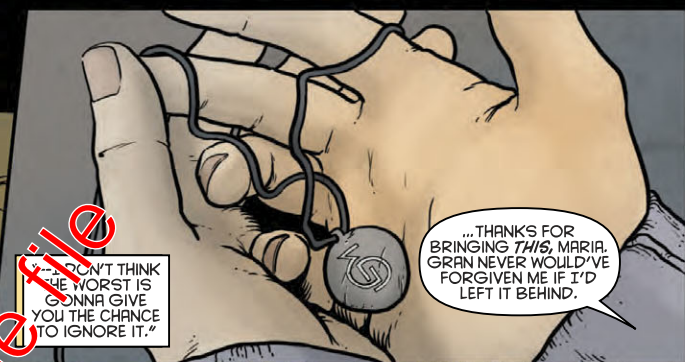
--THE MOON SHALL NOT GO DOWN FOR THE LORD WILL BE YOUR EVERLASTING LIGHT, YOUR DAYS OF MOURNING SHALL COME TO AN END--



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LIKE, ROW. NO MATTER HOW HARD THE SHIT HITS THE FAN YOU'RE ALWAYS--ALWAYS--THE LAST TO PANIC.

I REMEMBER WHEN YOU LOST YOUR MUM. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE HOLD IT TOGETHER LIKE YOU.

YOU DEAL WITH THE WORST LIKE IT ISN'T HAPPENING TO YOU. BUT THIS TIME--



"DON'T THINK THE WORST IS GONNA GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO IGNORE IT."

...THANKS FOR BRINGING THIS, MARIA. GRAN NEVER WOULD'VE FORGIVEN ME IF I'D LEFT IT BEHIND.



SORRY WE HAD TO LEAVE YOUR BIKE, ROW. I KNEW I BROUGHT TOO MUCH STUFF.

WISH I'D PACKED SOMETHING TO EAT, THOUGH. EVERYBODY STARVING. WHEN'S IT NO?

COME HERE.

IS IT ME OR IS HOT IN HERE?



I'VE BEEN SWEATING ALL--

OOOOOH, GOD!

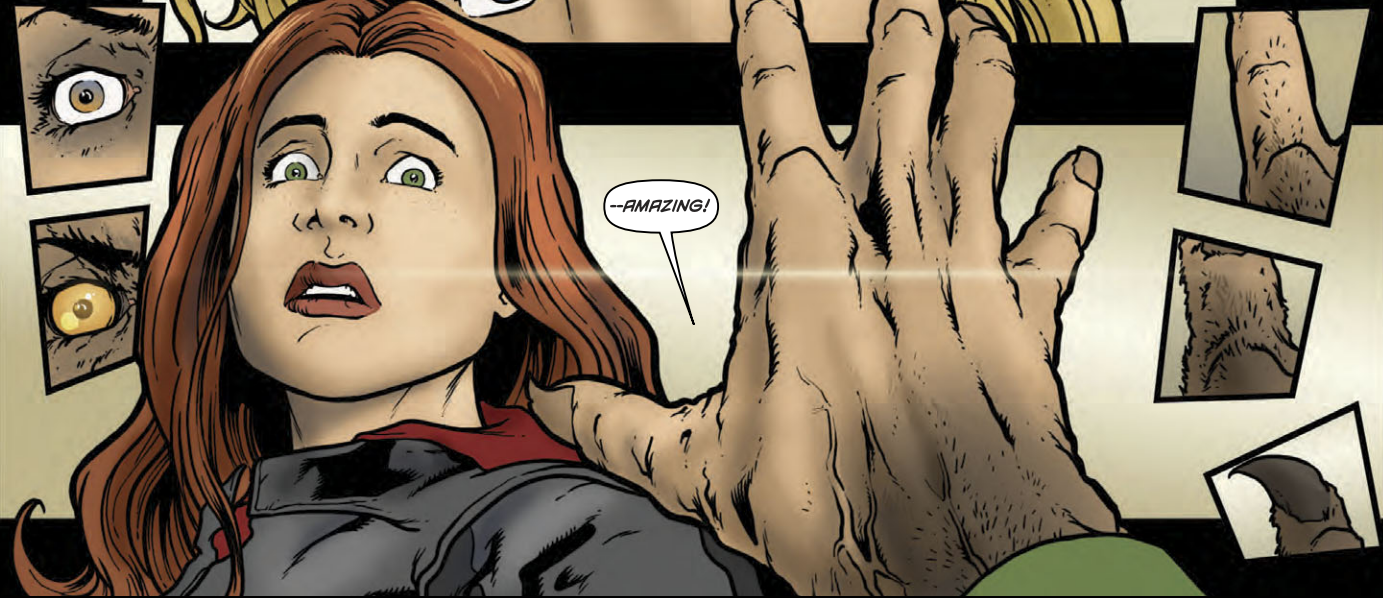
WHAT'S WRONG?

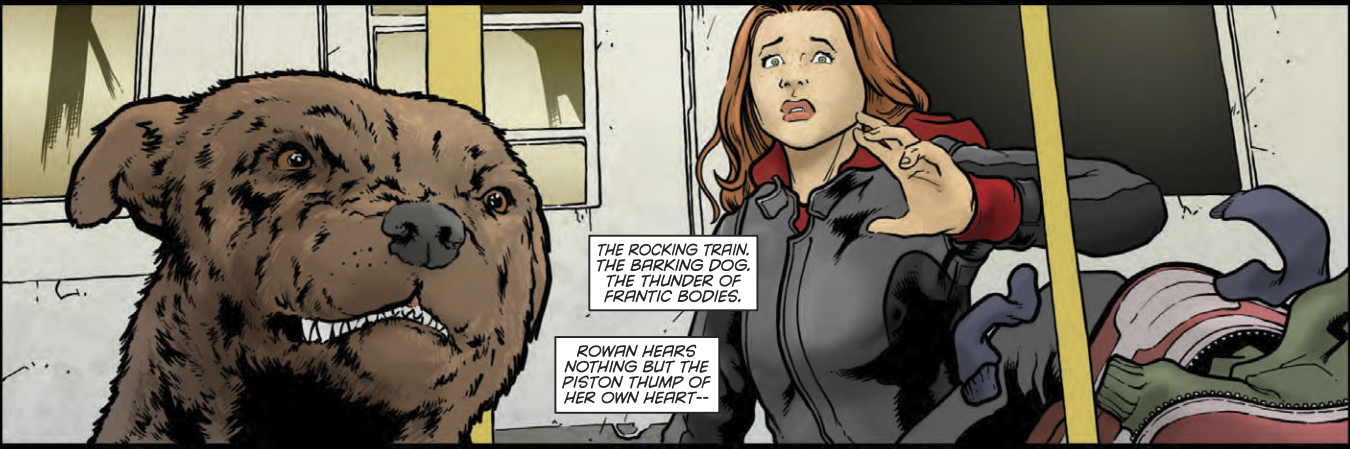


F-FEEL FUNNY... FEELS LIKE I'MMMM--

MARIA?

HRRRR...





THE ROCKING TRAIN.
THE BARKING DOG.
THE THUNDER OF
FRANTIC BODIES.

ROWAN HEARS
NOTHING BUT THE
PISTON THUMP OF
HER OWN HEART--



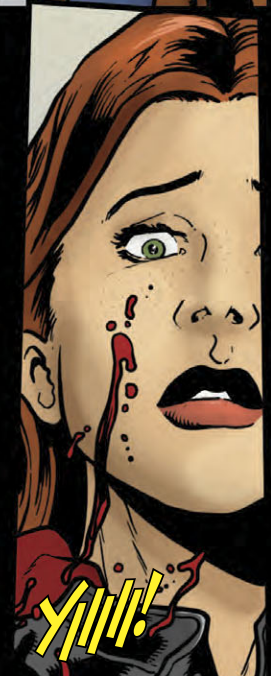
--AS HER BEST
FRIEND DWINDLES INTO
SOMETHING OUT OF A
FAIRY TALE.



ROWFI
ROWFI
ROWFI!



RRRRRRR



YIIII!



WOULD ALL P-PASSENGERS... UH, WOULD ALL PASSENGERS PLEASE MAKE THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE NEAREST EXIT!

← PLATFORM 3 NORTHBOUND
EUSTON CAMDEN TOWN

WAY OUT

Sample file



MARIA...?



RUN!



HRRROOOOO



OUTTA MY WAY!

