



The
The
VENGER
Dead Man Rising

WRITTEN BY: MATTHEW SPATOLA
ART AND LETTERS: JASON OSSMAN
COLORS: JOHN D. WEST "DAD1CUS"

THE VENGER: DEAD MAN RISING CREATED BY MATTHEW SPATOLA
SERIES AND CHARACTER DESIGNS CREATED BY JASON OSSMAN

CHAPTER 1

JAO
2005

"...AND SO THE RECENT INCREASE OF VIOLENCE IN THE CITY CONTINUES. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLIC LIAISON OFFICER, VIOLENT CRIMES HAVE INCREASED AT THE STAGGERING RATE OF OVER 200%. MURDER, RAPE, ARSON AND ROBBERY HAVE ALL MORE THAN DOUBLED IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS."

"AT TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE, POLICE CHIEF GARY DONAHUE OFFERED NO EXPLANATION FOR THE SUDDEN INCREASE, LABELING IT MORE AS A 'STATISTICAL ANOMALY' AND NOT A DISTURBING SIGN OF A NEW CRIME TREND. HE IMPLORING THE CITY'S CITIZENS TO CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THEIR VIGILANCE THROUGH WHAT HE CALLS A 'TEMPORARY CRISIS'."

"THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, REPRESENTED AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE MAYOR'S CHIEF OF STAFF AND PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER BRIAN GALL, HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH STATE AND FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPING A TASK FORCE TO ATTACK THE VIOLENCE PROBLEM."

"CITIZEN'S GROUPS HAVE BEEN HIGHLY CRITICAL OF BOTH THE MAYOR AND THE POLICE CHIEF THROUGHOUT THIS CRISIS, LABELING THEM AS 'INEFFECTIVE' OR EVEN 'UNCONCERNED'. SOME POLITICAL INSIDERS HAVE JOINED IN WITH THE CITIZEN'S GROUPS CALLING FOR NUMEROUS RESIGNATIONS IN THE MAYOR'S ADMINISTRATION FROM THE MAYOR ON DOWN."

"NATURALLY ALL OF THIS TURMOIL HAS GIVEN FODDER FOR A VARIETY OF THEORIES FROM INTERNET CONSPIRACY BUFS, RANGING FROM THE CRISIS BEING THE MAYOR'S ATTEMPT AT A POWER GRAB TO A FOREIGN TERRORIST PLOT AT DESTABILIZING OUR CITY TO THE SUPERNATURAL BELIEF THAT 'THERE IS AN EVIL AT WORK'."

CHAPTER

1

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THIS AFTERNOON'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC OUTCRY OVER YESTERDAY'S ARSON AND MURDER AT SAINT LUKE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE BODY OF FATHER ROBERT KAUFFMAN, 64, WAS FOUND IN AN ALLEY BEHIND THE RECTORY BY A PARISH EMPLOYEE.

AT THE SAME TIME FIREFIGHTERS WERE CALLED TO THE SCENE TO BATTLE A BLAZE THAT HAD ENGULFED HALF OF THE CHURCH BY THE TIME THE FIRST RESPONDERS HAD ARRIVED.

A CITY IN CRISIS



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CRIME CONTINUES TO RISE...NO END IN SIGHT

"INITIAL REPORTS BY THE POLICE CRIME SCENE TEAM LIST THE CAUSE OF DEATH FOR FATHER KAUFFMAN AS MULTIPLE GUN SHOT AND STAB WOUNDS."

"DAMAGE ESTIMATES FOR THE TWO HUNDRED YEAR OLD LANDMARK ARE IN THE MILLIONS."

DISTRICT

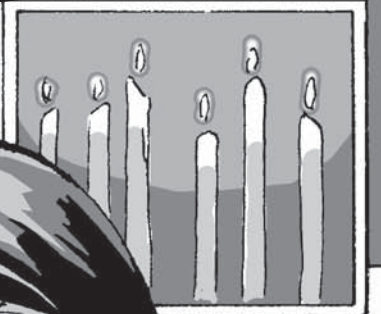
FIRE



"FATHER KAUFFMAN'S VICIOUS MURDER IS THE LATEST IN THE SERIES OF UNRELATED MURDERS PLAGUING THE CITY DURING THIS CRISIS."

FATHER KAUFFMAN'S KILLING BRINGS THE MURDER TOLL TO 11 AND STILL POLICE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THESE DEATHS ARE IN ANY WAY CONNECTED OR THE WORK OF A SERIAL KILLER.

A CITY IN CRISIS



"PARISHIONERS OF ST. LUKE'S HAVE SCHEDULED A CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY TONIGHT IN REMEMBRANCE OF FATHER KAUFFMAN AND ALL THE VICTIMS OF THE RECENT VIOLENCE."



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PLEASE STAY TUNED TO BENNETT NEWS FOR CONTINUING COVERAGE OF: A CITY IN CRISIS. AND NOW BACK TO YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING.

This city IS in crisis my dear... Just like before...

...just like before.

All of this has happened before; the violence and the deaths.

I was a part of that violence. And I know what this means; he's coming back...again.

Damn him. This time though I will send him to hell myself.

But...so much has changed over the years. Like this city and the people and even me.

Look at me. The years have ruined me. Back then I was young and strong and now I am just old...well this body is old anyway.

But I can't do this alone. No one is going to listen to some old man.

And I'm still the only one who understands what is happening.

Michael and Andrea are here.

He is a good man; very dedicated and strong. Too much like his father though ...all that hope and optimism ...always by the rules.

But he should know that in this world and in his job sometimes the rules don't work.

Life can be good like he thinks it is; all pretty and happy.

For some people it is maybe.

But that comes with costs.

He'll need to see things my way...the way they REALLY are...before he'll be of any use.

YOU REALIZE THAT THIS CRISIS IS NOT SOME STUPID ANOMALY LIKE DONAHUE SAID DON'T YOU? EVERY LITTLE INSTANCE AND INCIDENT IS PART OF A MUCH BIGGER PLAN.

YOU NEED TO REALIZE THAT MICHAEL, WE CAN STOP THIS...YOU AND I... TOGETHER.

GRANDDAD...LISTEN I KNOW YOU BELIEVE THAT FOR SOME REASON YOU HAVE THIS UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT'S GOING ON BUT...

...I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU THINK YOU KNOW SO MUCH.

EVERYONE ON THE FORCE AND EVEN THE FEDS ARE WORKING THIS CASE, AND THIS IS AT THE SAME TIME WE ARE ON THE MATTIAS FINN TRIAL.

THIS SHIT IS JUST TOO RANDOM.

NO DAMMIT, I HAVE SEEN THIS BEFORE.

BUT EVERYONE IN THIS CITY SEEMS TO FORGET WHAT IT USED TO BE LIKE. HOW THEY WERE AFRAID AND THE CRIME AND VIOLENCE WAS CONTROLLING OUR LIVES. THE POLICE COULDN'T PROTECT US BACK THEN EITHER.

THEY ARE NOT STORIES DAMMIT! IT'S THE TRUTH. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN WE HAD TO SAVE THIS CITY FROM THE HORROR AND THE TERROR. NOW NO ONE CARES OR EVEN CARES TO REMEMBER.

YEAH I'VE HEARD YOU TELL THESE STORIES A MILLION TIMES--

ALRIGHT FINE, ALL THE STORIES YOU TOLD WERE TRUE- EVEN THE ONES ABOUT THE CRIMINAL GENIUSES AND THE NAZI PLOTS AND ALL THAT OTHER STUFF.

SO WHAT DOES THAT...