

SCOTT SNYDER MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

AMERICAN VAMPIRE



VERTIGO

11
Mar '11

suggested for
mature readers
vertigo.com

IT'S BEEN OVER A DECADE SINCE I LET MYSELF GO LIKE THIS.

IT'S SHOCKING HOW EASY IT IS TO GIVE IN TO THE BLOOD AFTER ALL THIS TIME--THE HUNGER, AND EVEN MORE SHOCKING IS HOW DOWNRIGHT GOOD IT FEELS.

IMAGINE EVERY CELL IN YOUR BODY IS AN ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB, AND THEY'RE ALL LIT UP AT ONCE.

BUT BENEATH IT ALL IS THIS FEAR. THE FEAR THAT THIS TIME HENRY WILL SEE ME FOR WHAT I REALLY AM. HE'LL SEE HOW MUCH I'M ENJOYING THIS, HOW MUCH FUN I'M HAVING.

I TELL MYSELF THAT THIS IS SILLY. BECAUSE HE WAS THERE WITH ME IN HOLLYWOOD. HE FOUGHT BY MY SIDE. HE KNOWS.

BUT THE FEAR IS STILL THERE, BECAUSE WHAT IF IT DIDN'T SINK IN FOR HIM BACK THEN? WHAT IF THIS TIME, HE FINALLY REALIZES--HE MARRIED A MONSTER?

AND WHAT IF HE'S ALREADY THINKING ABOUT LEAVING ME, ABOUT HOW SOON HE CAN GET OUT? WHAT IF IN HIS OWN MIND, HE'S ALREADY GONE?

HENRY?

"HENRY,
WHERE ARE
YOU?"



GO ON. RUN. CAN'T RUN
FAST ENOUGH...



YOU CAN'T RUN FAST ENOUGH
TO HIDE FROM ME.



CRUNK!

"THERE ISN'T ENOUGH ROAD IN THE WORLD."

I'M SORRY, MISS, BUT IT'S JUST NOT WHAT WE TRADE IN.

MR. ROY, I KNOW AT FIRST GLANCE ITEMS LIKE THESE MIGHT SEEM OUT OF PLACE IN YOUR STORE, BUT YOU DO HAVE WOMEN CUSTOMERS, DON'T YOU?

FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT THEY'RE WIVES OF FARMERS AND RANCH-HANDS.

AND BECAUSE THEIR HUSBANDS ARE MEN OF THE LAND, THAT MEANS THESE WOMEN, YOUR CUSTOMERS, DON'T THINK ABOUT BEAUTY? BECAUSE I CAN PROMISE YOU, MR. ROY...

ding-ding

...IN THIS HARSHTEST OF REGIONS, A WOMAN IS STILL A WOMAN.

DELICATE, VULNERABLE...

...IN NEED OF PROTECTION, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO HER... FACE.

MY GOD...



MORNING!

WHAT--WHAT
HAPPENED TO
YOU?

ME? OH, NOTHING.
JUST OUT FOR A
MORNING STROLL.

YOU GOT
ANYTHING IN A
SIZE 4?

SHE'S
DELIRIOUS.
GET HER SOME
WATER!



LET'S GET YOU
CLEANED UP, MISS. AND
FORGIVE ME IF I'M
BEING BOLD, BUT IF YOU
WANT, BEFORE THE
POLICE ARRIVE, I CAN
SHOW YOU HOW
TO COVER THAT
MARK...

ON YOUR
FACE?

WHAT...



...MARK?



PEARRRRLLL!!

SCREEEE



"...LET'S MAKE
THIS UGLY."

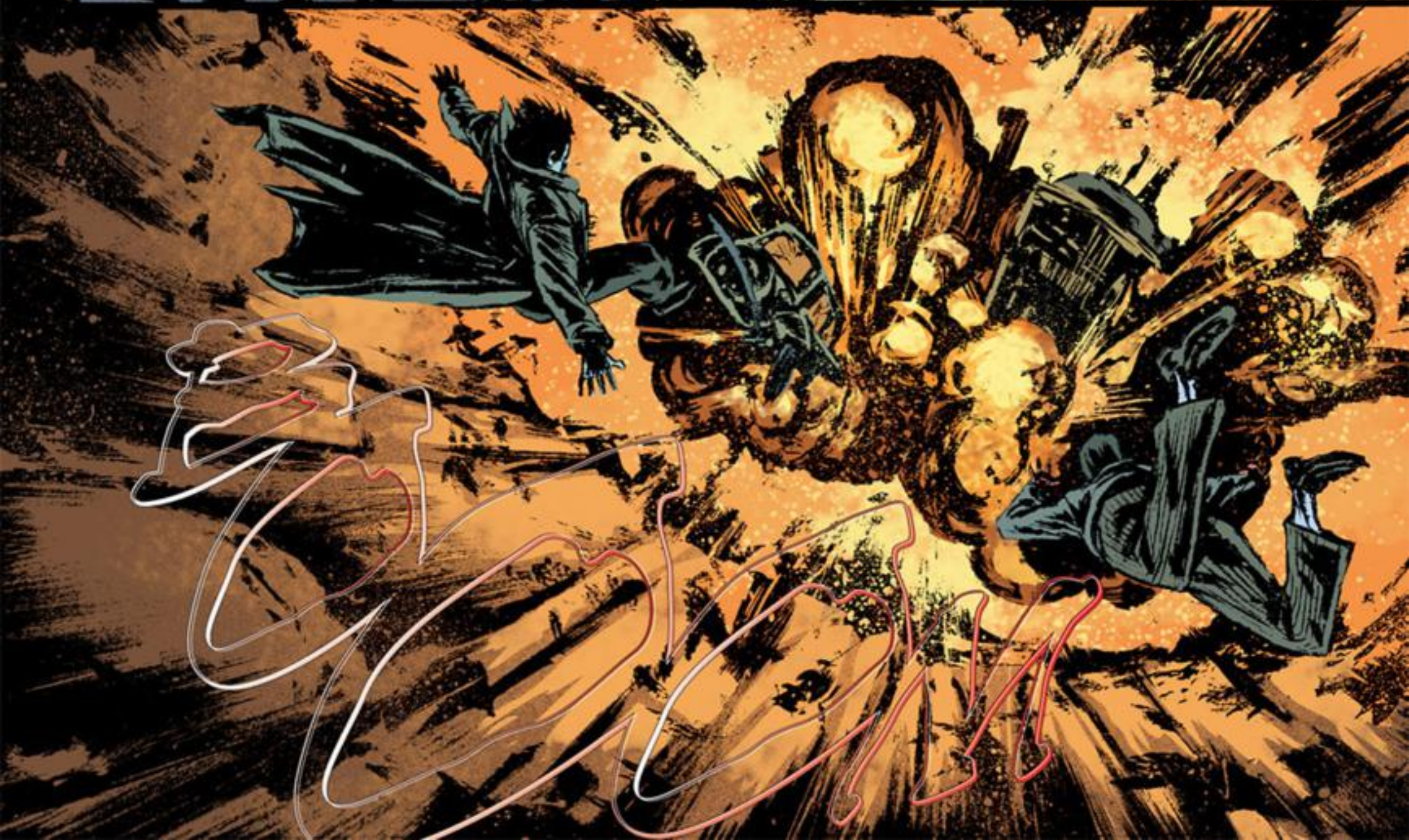
"WHEN
YOU'VE HIT THE
TRAIN AWHILE,
SEEMS YOU
RARELY SEE A
SMILE..."

"THAT'S WHY
I MUST FLY OUT
YONDER, WHERE A
FROWN IS MIGHTY
HARD TO FIND!"

"OH...
CALIFORNIA,
HERE I
COME..."



WHAT, NO
APPLAUSE?





WHERE ARE YOU, DAMMIT. WHERE--



OH NO... NO, NO, NO.



WHEEE

SCREEE



HENRY!!! CAN YOU HEAR ME?!



HENRY, PLEASE...

"...ARE YOU
OUT THERE?

I'LL HAND IT TO YOU, PEARLIE,
THIS PLACE--IT'S VERY YOU.

MEANING, IT'S PRETTY--
IN A PLAIN, BORING OLD
SORT OF WAY.

I REMEMBER WHEN WE FIRST
DISCOVERED IT TOGETHER.
DRIVING AROUND THAT WEEKEND
IN BIG ELLIE'S CAR, WHICH WE
HAD TO PAY HER TO BORROW.



TWO EXPLORERS
WANDERING AROUND
CALIFORNIA WITH A
MAP ON THE DASH.



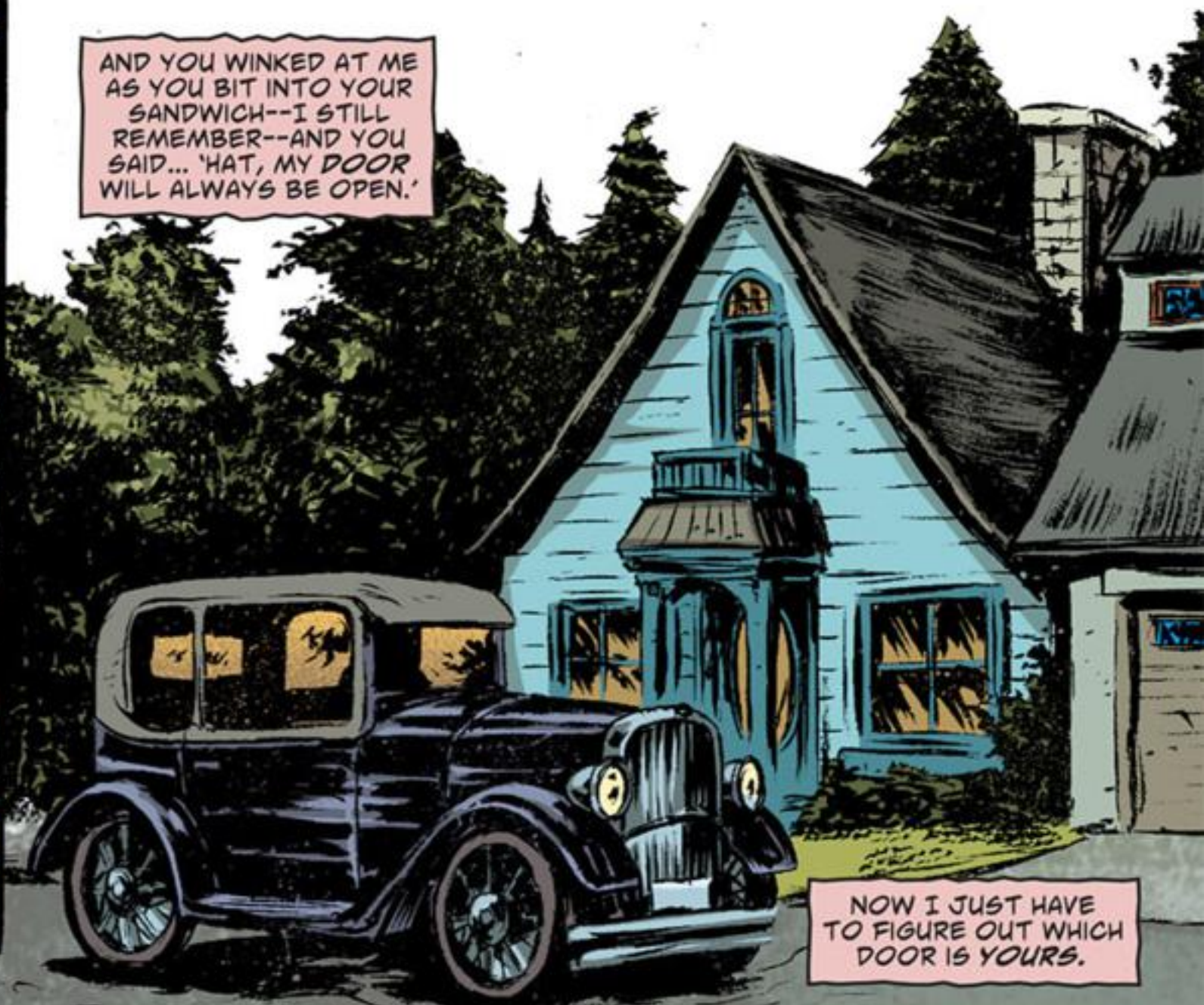
WE ATE LUNCH BY THE LAKE
BEHIND TOWN, AND WE TOOK
THAT BIG PHONOGRAPH OUT
FROM THE BACK SEAT AND
LISTENED TO AL JOLSON
WHILE WE ATE.



AND I REMEMBER YOU
TOLD ME THAT THIS WAS
IT. THIS WAS THE TOWN
YOU'D MOVE TO WHEN
YOU FINALLY LEFT
HOLLYWOOD. RIGHT HERE.

I TOLD YOU TO
COUNT ME OUT.
YOU COULD FIND
YOURSELF A NEW
ROOMMATE WHEN
THAT DAY CAME.

AND YOU WINKED AT ME
AS YOU BIT INTO YOUR
SANDWICH--I STILL
REMEMBER--AND YOU
SAID... 'HAT, MY DOOR
WILL ALWAYS BE OPEN.'



NOW I JUST HAVE
TO FIGURE OUT WHICH
DOOR IS YOURS.







ALL FOR MONEY. BOOTLEGGING HUMAN BLOOD FOR THOSE PIECES OF UNDEAD SHIT.

HEY, I'M A SMUGGLER SINCE I WAS 13 YEARS OLD.



THAT'S WHO LITTLE FEET BEALE IS. IN THE TEENS I SMUGGLED GIRLS. IN THE TWENTIES, I SMUGGLED BOOZE. NOW, I SMUGGLE BLOOD. NO DIFFERENCE TO ME.

IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO ME.



GO ON THEN. PRETEND YOU DON'T WANT IT TO HAPPEN THAT WAY FOR YOU.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

PRETEND YOU WANT TO DIE A WRINKLED OLD MAN IN SOME ARMCHAIR WITH YOUR LADY.



GUYS LIKE YOU AND ME, MEN OF THE ROAD, WE AIN'T FIT TO GET OLD. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE OUT IN THE WORLD, ALIVE, PLUGGED IN.

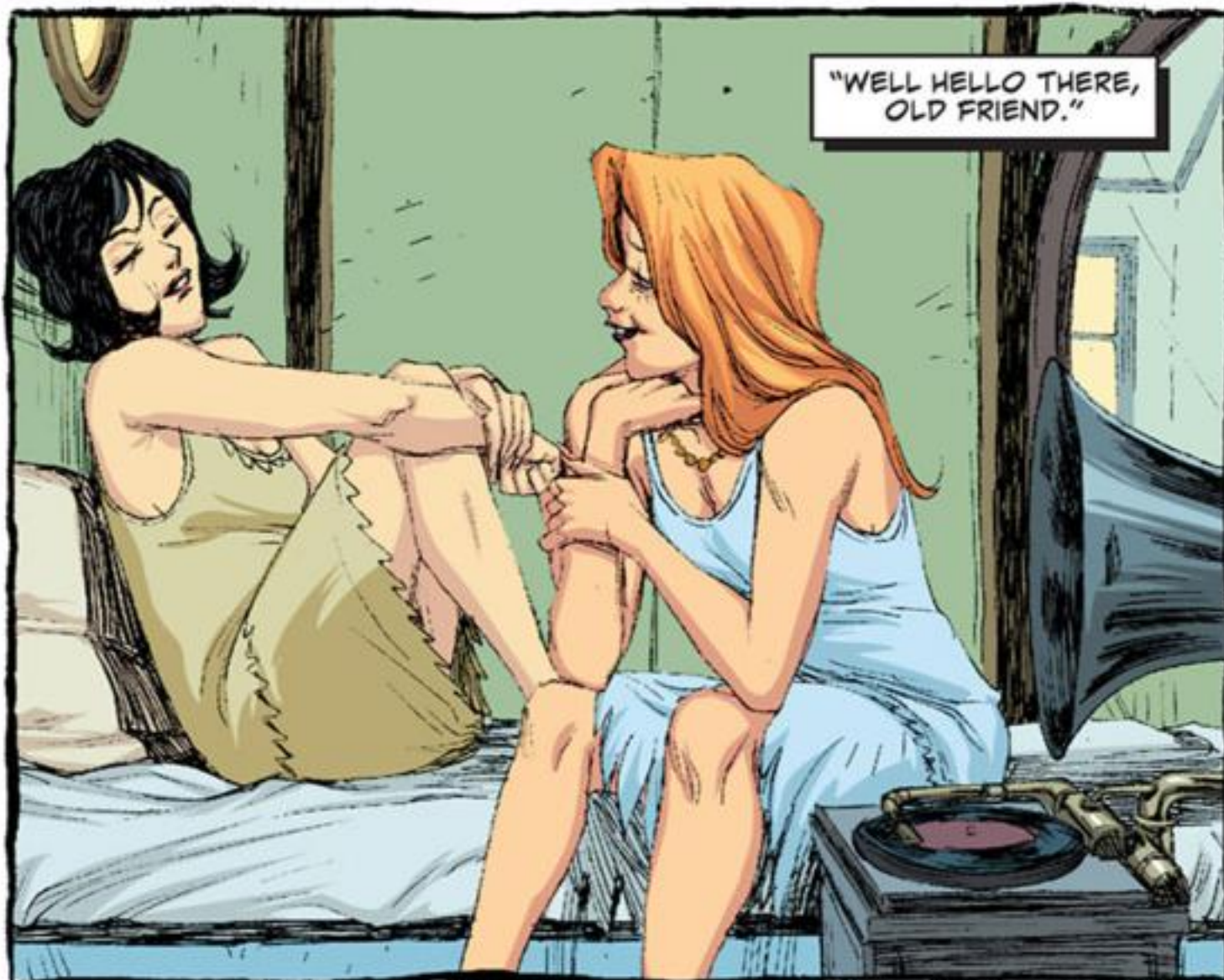
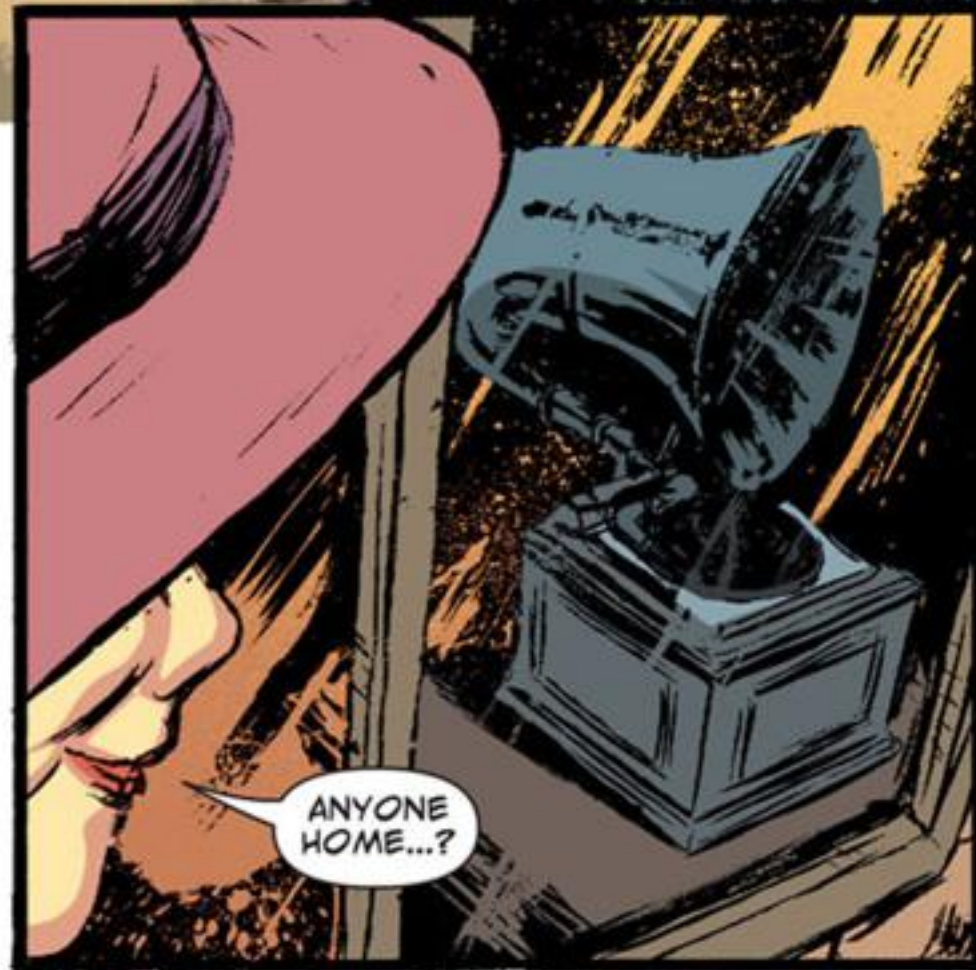
EVERY MUSIC MAN I SOLD TO THEM, EVERY ONE, I'LL BET YOU, HE WENT OUT HAPPIER THAN HE WOULD'VE IN THE LONG RUN. EVEN IF HE DIDN'T KNOW IT AT THE TIME.



KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT.

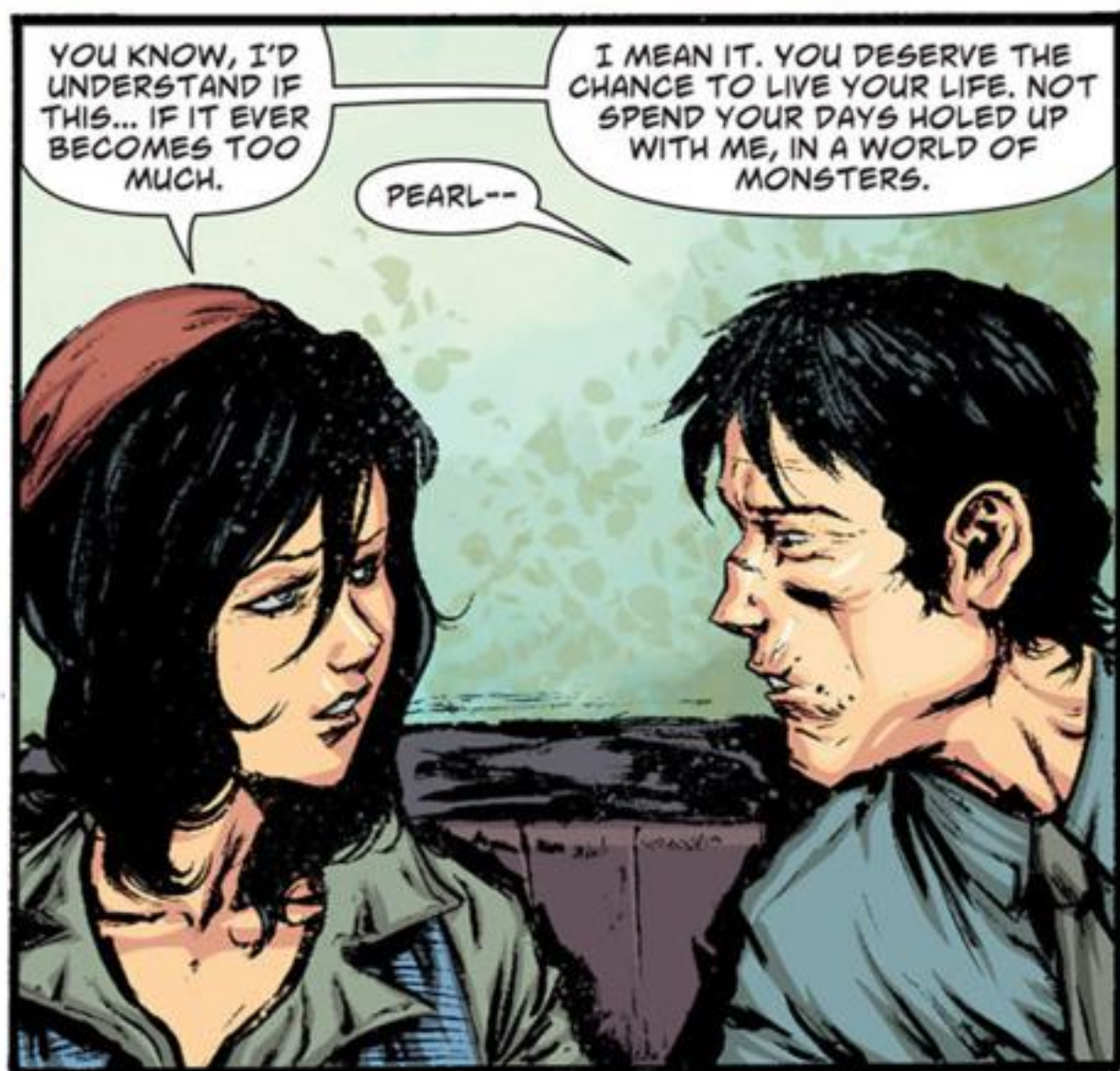


"...JUST GET
MY OLD
BONES HOME."



"WELL HELLO THERE,
OLD FRIEND."







I AM
LIVING MY
LIFE.



DO YOU EVER
THINK ABOUT IT?
ABOUT... YOU
KNOW?

SURE. SURE
I DO.

DO
YOU?



EVERY DAY. BUT I
CAN'T DO IT TO YOU,
HENRY. BELIEVE ME,
YOU DON'T WANT
THIS IN YOU.



WELL, I FIGURE WHEN THE
TIME COMES, THAT'LL BE MY
DECISION TO MAKE. BUT I
WANT YOU TO KNOW, I
DON'T EVER WANT TO DO
IT OUT OF FEAR.

I DON'T WANT
YOU TO CHANGE
ME BECAUSE WE'RE
FRIGHTENED OF THE
FUTURE, OR THE PAST
OR WHAT'S HIDING
BEHIND THIS OR
THAT DOOR.

NOW,
TODAY, THIS
IS US. AND I'M
HAPPY WITH
THAT.



ME
TOO.

COME
ON, LET'S
GET INTO
BED.



YOU'RE
TURNING ME
INTO A DIRTY
OLD MAN.

MY DIRTY
OLD MAN.



"THE COAST,
HUH?"

"YES, I REMEMBER NOW. WE WERE STILL
JUST CONSIDERING THE HOUSE, I ASKED HER
WHY THEY WERE IN SUCH A HURRY TO MOVE...



"...AND THEY
LOOKED AT EACH
OTHER, AND THEN
SHE SAID TO ME,
'OH, THE
NEIGHBORHOOD'S
JUST GETTING A
LITTLE CROWDED
FOR OUR TASTE."

"WHICH STRUCK ME AS A
PECULIAR THING TO SAY
ABOUT THIS AREA..."



"...SOMEWHERE WITH A LITTLE BITE. YOUR
FRIEND PROBABLY JUST SAID WHAT SHE DID
TO AVOID OFFENDING THE OLD FOGIES."



"THEY LEFT US THIS
NICE PHONOGRAPH AS
A HOUSEWARMING
GIFT THOUGH. SAID
THEY'D MOVED ON TO
A NEWER MODEL WITH
BETTER SOUND."



"DEAR? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
THERE'S... SOMETHING
WRONG WITH YOUR EYES..."

"...MY GUESS IS THAT THEY
MOVED BECAUSE THEY
JUST WANTED TO BE
SOMEWHERE A LITTLE
MORE LIVELY, WITH MORE
ACTION AND ADVENTURE..."

OH PEARLIE, LOOKS LIKE
I JUST MISSED YOU.

THAT'S OKAY
THOUGH.

YOU
WANDER
WHEREVER
YOU WANT.
HIGH. LOW.
LEFT.
RIGHT.

I'LL CATCH UP
TO YOU SOON
ENOUGH.
MEANWHILE...

...I'VE GOT
GOOD MUSIC
TO LISTEN TO...

...I'VE GOT GAS
IN MY TANK...

AND ALL THE TIME
IN THE WORLD...

VERTIGO
A SPARKLING
COMIC
REVUE

"THE WAY OUT"

PART TWO OF TWO

SCOTT SNYDER WRITER MATEUS SANTOLUCO ARTIST
DAVE MCCAIG COLORS STEVE WANDS LETTERS
COVER BY RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
MARK DOYLE EDITOR

AMERICAN VAMPIRE
CREATED BY SCOTT SNYDER

Next:
"Strange
Frontier."

