



SANDMAN

Volume 1



Issue 1

ONE. TWO.
THREE. FOUR...

HER NIPPLES ARE HARD AND
DARK AND SHRUNKEN ON
BREASTS LIKE EMPTY POUCHES.

HER HAIR COMES OUT IN
CLUMPS WHEN SHE MOVES.
SHE TRIES NOT TO MOVE
TOO MUCH.

HER SKIN IS FLAKING,
INFECTED AND INFLAMED.
BEDSORES COVER HER
BACK AND LEGS.

TWENTY-EIGHT.
TWENTY-NINE.
THIRTY...

HER FINGERNAILS GREW LONG
AND BRITTLE; THEN THEY BROKE
OFF. THE RAGGED NAILS RIP HER
SKIN WHEN SHE SCRATCHES.

HER STOMACH SHRANK, THEN
BLOATED. THEN IT SHRANK
AGAIN. HUNGER SUBSIDED TO A
LOW NAGGING IN THE BACK OF
HER MIND.

IT'S OK. IT
GOES AWAY.

LIKE THE PAIN GOES AWAY. LIKE
EVERYTHING GOES AWAY WHEN
THE DREAMS COME.

...SHE FEELS REALITY
EBBING BACK.

DELAY THE
PLEASURE.

DELAY THE
DREAMS.

WILL SHE DISSOLVE IT IN HER
MOUTH? BREATHE IT? RUB
IT INTO HER SKIN?

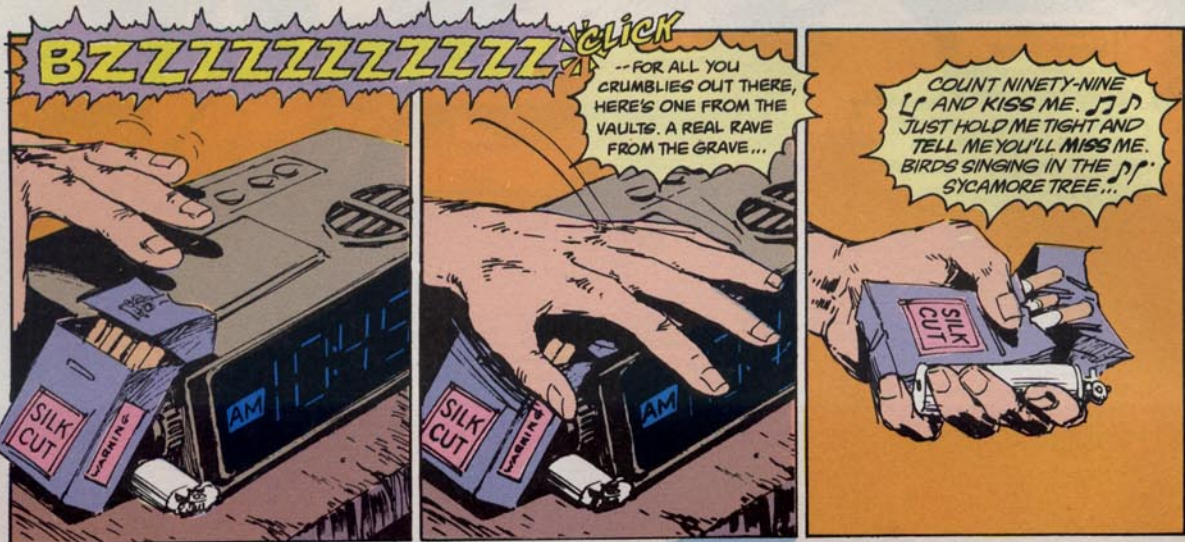
IT DOESN'T
MATTER.

SHE'S COUNTING
TO A HUNDRED.

NINETY-SIX. NINETY-SEVEN.
NINETY-EIGHT...

SIXTY-FIVE.
SIXTY-SIX...

SHE'LL
WAIT.



...DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME.



HAVE YOU EVER HAD ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHEN SOMETHING JUST SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMEBODY?

THERE WAS A SMELL OF MAGIC SOMEWHERE, LIKE THE BLUE-SPARKS SMELL OF OZONE AT A FUNFAIR.

I'D JUST HAD THIS NIGHTMARE.

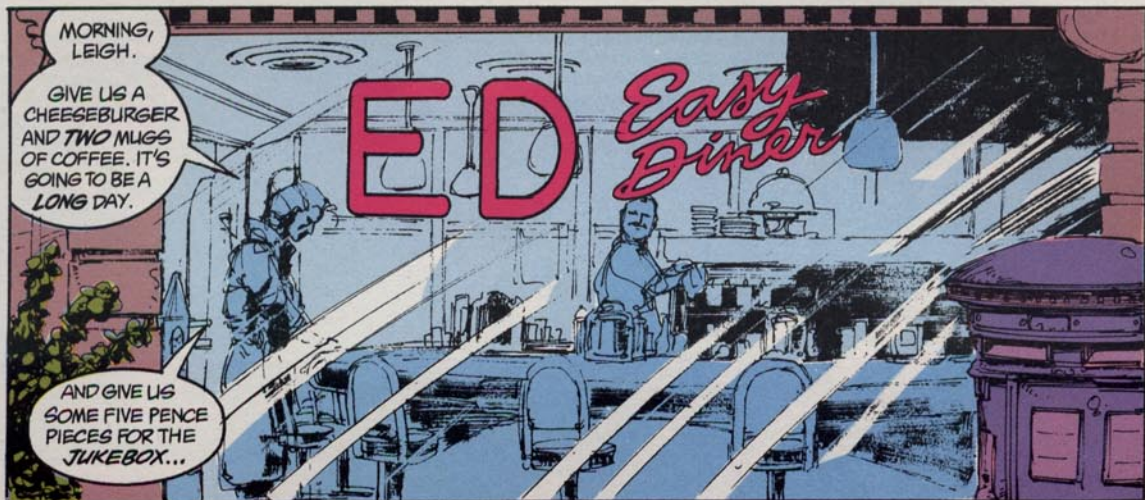
THESE THINGS WITH FACES LIKE APPENDECTOMY SCARS WERE CROCHETING MY INTESTINES INTO BODY BAGS FOR THE BLIND AND DEAD.

...BLAST FROM THE PAST
OLDIE BUT GOODIE
THE MAN WITH
THE MAGIC...

I TOLD MYSELF IT WAS ONLY A DREAM, BUT IT DIDN'T MATTER. THE BASTARDS JUST KEPT ON BLOODY KNITTING.

MIS-TER SANDMAN
I'M SO ALONE, AIN'T
GOT NO BODY--**CLICK**





MORNING,
LEIGH.

GIVE US A
CHEESEBURGER
AND TWO MUGS
OF COFFEE. IT'S
GOING TO BE A
LONG DAY.

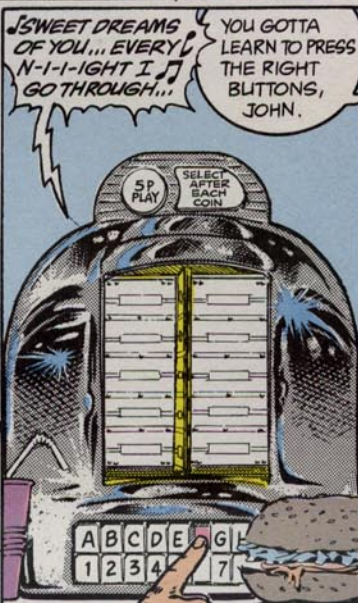
ED *Easy Biner*

AND GIVE US
SOME FIVE PENCE
PIECES FOR THE
JUKEBOX...



WHAT ARE YOU
PUTTING ON?

"I HEARD IT THROUGH
THE GRAPEVINE" USED TO
SING IT WITH *MUCOLUS* MEMBRANE
AGES AGO. PRACTICALLY MY
THEME SONG...



♪ SWEET DREAMS
OF YOU... EVERY
N-I-I-I-GHT I
GO THROUGH... ♪

YOU GOTTA
LEARN TO PRESS
THE RIGHT
BUTTONS,
JOHN.



♪...THE WHO-OLE NIGHT ♪
THROUGH INSTEAD OF HAVING
SWEET DREAMS ALL
ABOUT YOU...

...SOMETHING TRYING TO
TELL ME SOMEBODY...?



SOMEBODY
TRYING TO TELL
YOU SOMETHING?
YUP.

I THINK IT'S
YOUR GIRLFRIEND,
OUTSIDE. HEHE.

WHUMP WHUMP



JESUS!
MAD
HETTIE...



HE LEFT THE PORSCHE HALF A MILE BACK DOWN THE ROAD. HOPES IT WON'T GET **STOLEN**. THERE ARE SOME REAL **THIEVES** AROUND THESE DAYS.

THEY CALL THEMSELVES **CREEPERS**. IT'S A **SPORT**. **BREAKING INTO PEOPLE'S HOUSES** WHILE THEY'RE **STILL AT HOME**.

DURING THE DAY HE'S AN **INVESTMENT COUNSELOR**.

CHECKBOOKS. CREDIT CARDS. CDS. VIDEO TAPES.

HE THINKS OF IT AS HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE **FREE MARKET ECONOMY**.

AND HE...

HE...

HE...

HE **MUST BE DREAMING**.

HE CAN FEEL THE **WARM TIGHTNESS OF HER SKIN**; THE **SCENT OF SEX** IS **HEAVY IN THE AIR**.

HER **LIPS TASTE OF ROSES AND PASSION**, AND SHE **HOLDS HIM LIKE HER LIFE DEPENDS ON IT**.

THIS IS **TOO GOOD**.

TOO GOOD
TO BE TRUE.

HE'S HITTING A HUNDRED
AND FIFTY IN THE
LAMBORGHINI OF
HIS DREAMS.

EVERYBODY'S GREEN WITH
ENVY. THE ACCELERATION
GOES ON FOREVER.

JESUS.

HE'S DYING FOR THEM
AND THEY LOVE HIM.

HE'S PURE AND PERFECT
AND HE'S DYING FOR THEIR SINS.

HE CAN SEE HIS PARENTS, HIS
BOSS, HIS LOVERS IN THE
CROWD BELOW HIM.

THEY'RE SORRY NOW. SORRY THEY
TREATED HIM SO BADLY. BECAUSE
HE'S THE SON.

LAST SON OF A
DEAD PLANET.

STRONGEST
MAN IN THE
WORLD.

HE CAN DO
ANYTHING.

ANYTHING.

ABSOLUTELY
ANYTHING.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS
I KEEP MEANING TO
INVESTIGATE THIS
SANDMAN STUFF. I JUST
NEVER QUITE GET
ROUND TO IT.

MY OWN RESEARCHES
KEEP ME BUSY ENOUGH.

OOOO-OOOH... ♪
SWEET DREAMS ARE
MADE OF THIS... WHO- ♪
AM I TO DISAGREE?... ♪



ONE THING I'VE LEARNED:
YOU CAN KNOW ANYTHING.
IT'S ALL THERE. YOU JUST
HAVE TO FIND IT.

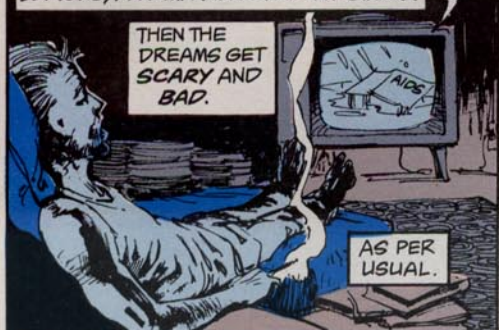


...TO CALL MY
OWN... I WANT A ♪
DREAM LOVER, SO I
DON'T HAVE TO ♪
DREAM ALONE... ♪

DREAMS ARE LIKE ANGELS... ♪
THEY KEEP BAD AT BAY... ♪

I DREAM A MESS OF LEY-LINES AND
LEPTONS, PLASMA FIELDS AND TURF GIANTS.

THEN THE
DREAMS GET
SCARY AND
BAD.

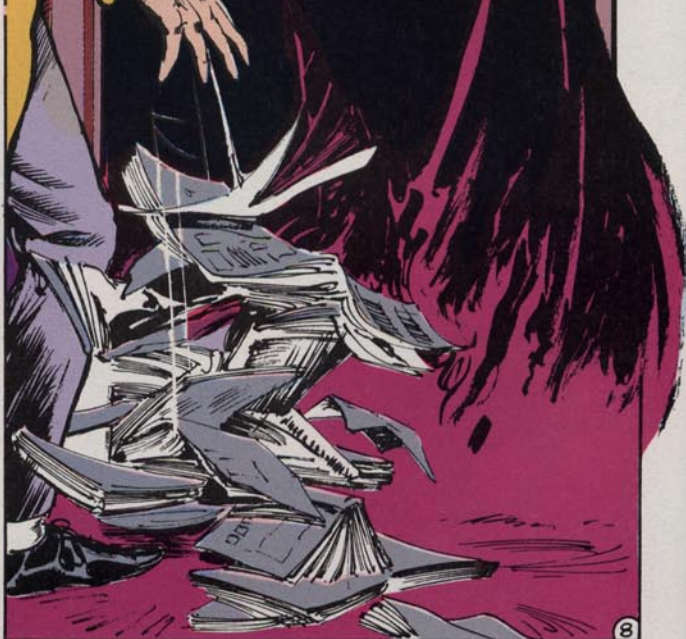


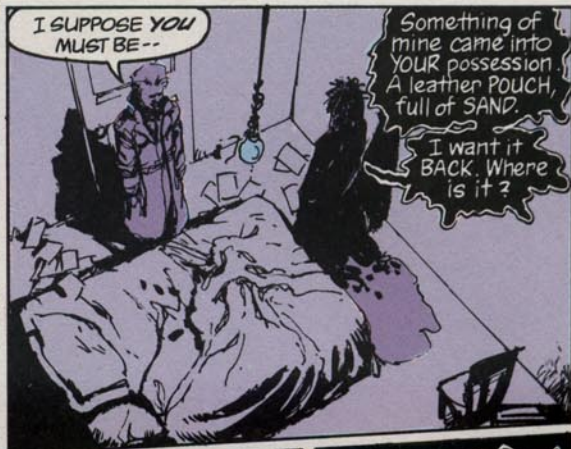
AS PER
USUAL.

IT WAS ON THE THIRD DAY THAT
HE CAUGHT UP WITH ME.



John Constantine,
I presume.







We have been looking for two hours, Constantine. Patience wears thin.

I do not believe it is here.



If it were here, I would be able to feel it.

WE'VE STILL GOT A LOAD OF STUFF TO GO THROUGH YET, BOSS.

KEEP SMILING. IT'LL TURN UP.



HOW DID YOU LOSE THIS POUCH, ANYWAY?

THE OLD "DAEMON KING" HIMSELF, EH?

It was stolen from me. By a man called Burgess.



DAMN!

I DON'T KNOW WHY I HANG ON TO ALL THIS STUFF.

IF THERE WAS A FIRE IT'D BE LIKE MY WHOLE LIFE WAS GOING UP IN FLAMES...

OH.

JESUS. OH JESUS.

BLOODY HELL.

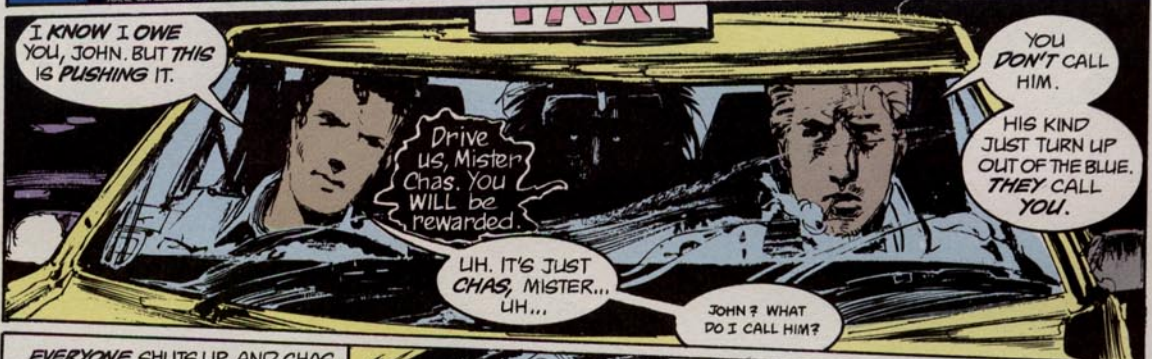
UH, BOSS. I THINK I KNOW WHERE YOUR POUCH IS.

YOU MUST BE OLDER THAN YOU LOOK.



'ERE, JOHN, CAN WE STOP AT A SERVICE STATION? I'M PARCHED. I TOOK OFF WITHOUT ME TEA.

YOU HEARD THE MAN, CHAS, OLD MATE. SORRY. I AIN'T NO MARK FOR THE VENUS OF THE HARDELL...



I KNOW I OWE YOU, JOHN. BUT THIS IS PUSHING IT.

Drive us, Mister Chas. You will be rewarded.

UH. IT'S JUST CHAS, MISTER... UH...

JOHN? WHAT DO I CALL HIM?

YOU DON'T CALL HIM.

HIS KIND JUST TURN UP OUT OF THE BLUE. THEY CALL YOU.



EVERYONE SHUTS UP, AND CHAS JOLTS US UP THE MOTORWAY. OUR VISITOR MELTS INTO THE BACK SEAT SHADOWS.

AND I REMEMBER RACHEL.

AMAZING RACHEL.

JUNKIE RACHEL.

WE WERE LIVING TOGETHER IN A HIGH-RISE FLAT IN EAST CROYDON. I WENT TO ALASKA FOR SIX MONTHS, OVER THE LUPUS AFFAIR.



WHEN I GOT BACK SHE WAS GONE. ALONG WITH ME STEREO, THE TELLY, ME SILVER SURFERS-- ANY OLD JUNK SHE COULD CONVERT TO MONEY.

AND SHE'D LONG SINCE CONVERTED THE MONEY INTO JUNK.

STUPID BITCH.

SOMETIMES I STILL MISS HER.

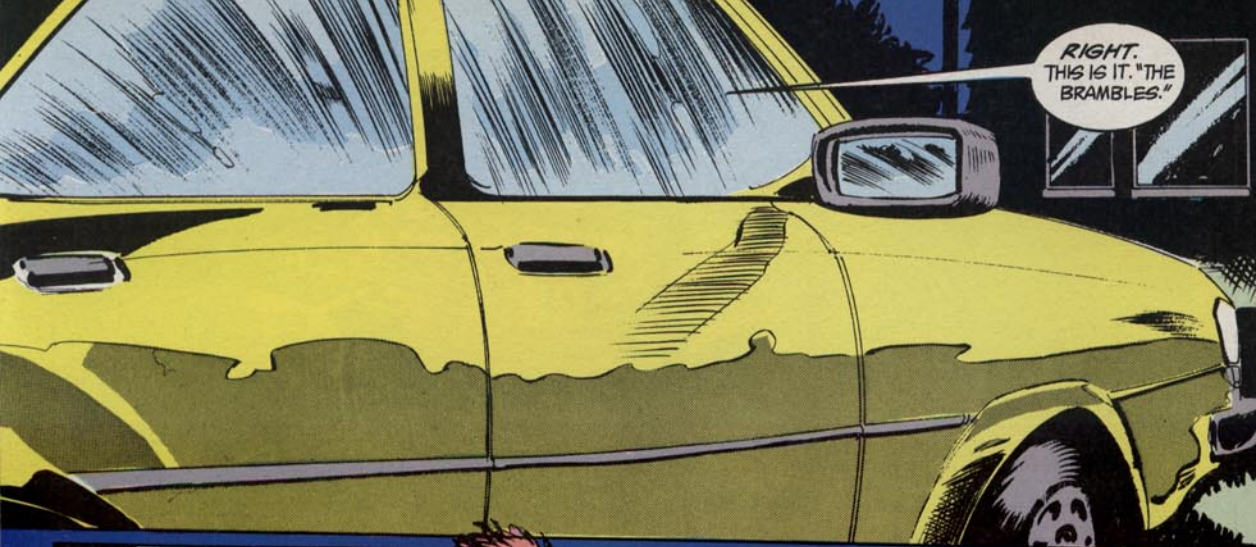
EITHER OF YOU GENTS MIND IF I PUT ON THE RADIO? NO?



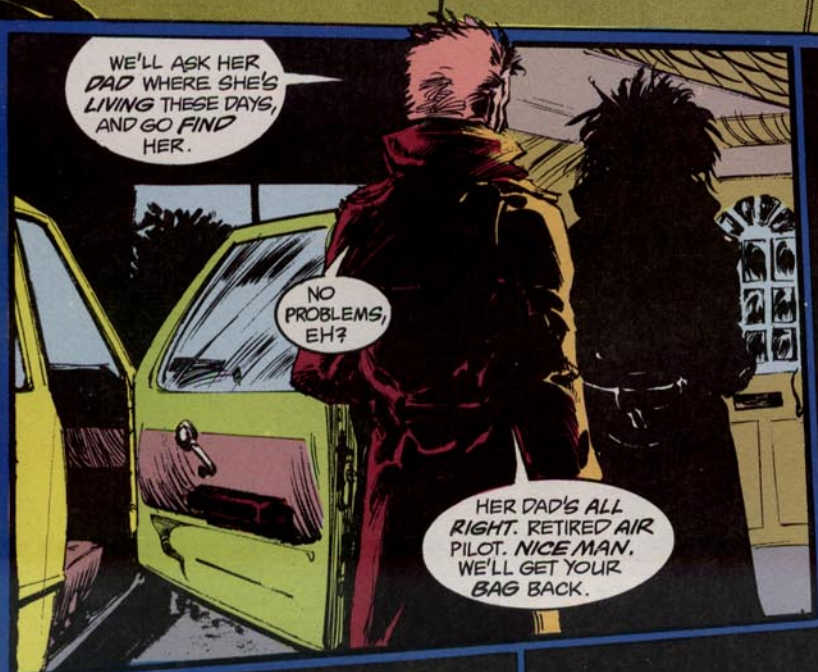
I WISH I'D REALIZED THAT SHE'D NICKED THE POUCH AS WELL, THOUGH.

"CANDY-COLORED CLOWN"? YEAH, RIGHT.

THE CANDY-COLORED CLOWN THEY CALL THE SANDMAN... TIP-TOES THROUGH MY ROOM EVERY NIGHT... JUST TO SPRINKLE STARDUST...



RIGHT.
THIS IS IT. "THE
BRAMBLES."



WE'LL ASK HER
DAD WHERE SHE'S
LIVING THESE DAYS,
AND GO FIND
HER.

NO
PROBLEMS,
EH?

HER DAD'S ALL
RIGHT. RETIRED AIR
PILOT. NICE MAN.
WE'LL GET YOUR
BAG BACK.



The POUCH
is HERE.

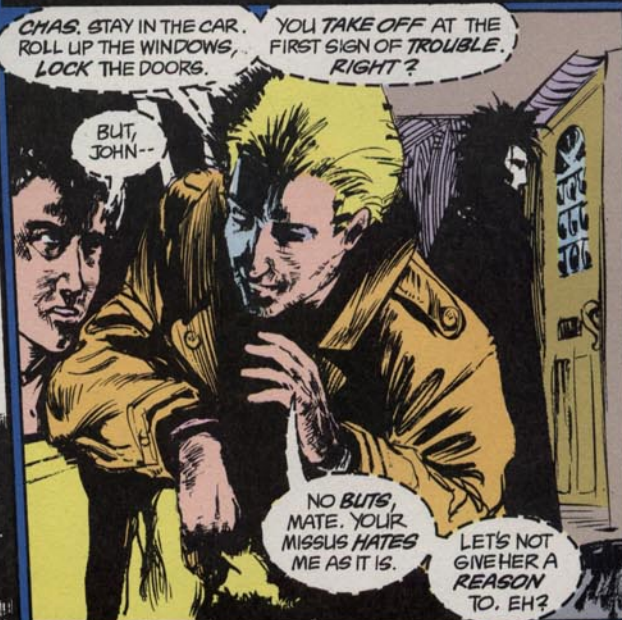
HOW
DO YOU
KNOW?

I KNOW.



The POUCH is
here. And MORE
than the Pouch...

This house
is DANGEROUS,
Constantine.



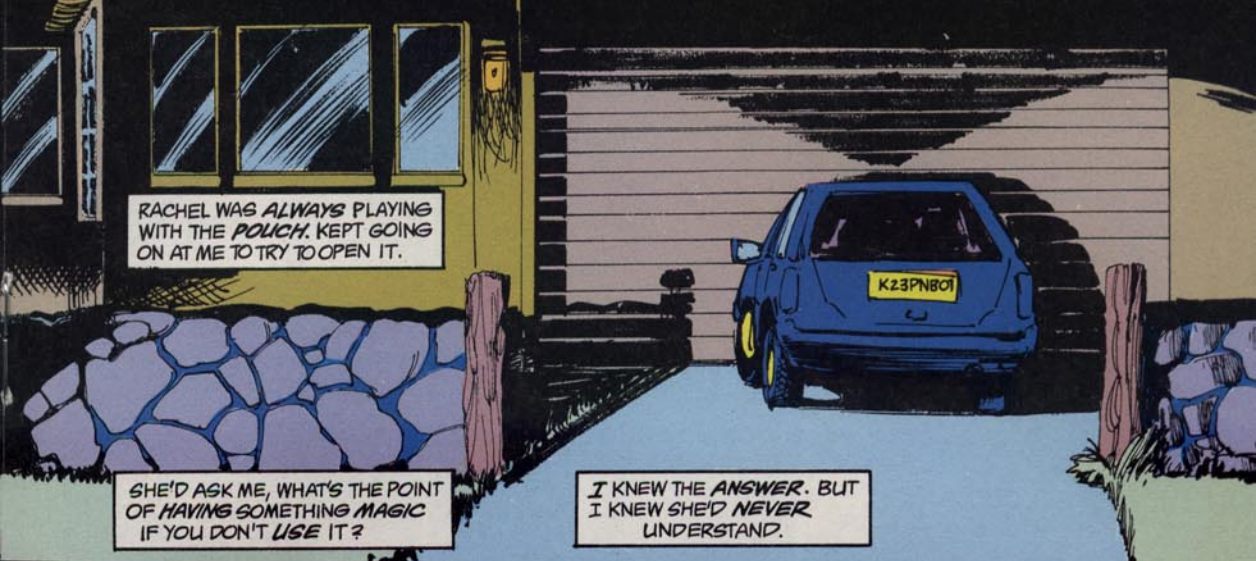
CHAS. STAY IN THE CAR.
ROLL UP THE WINDOWS.
LOCK THE DOORS.

YOU TAKE OFF AT THE
FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE.
RIGHT?

BUT,
JOHN--

NO BUTS,
MATE. YOUR
MISSUS HATES
ME AS IT IS.

LET'S NOT
GIVE HER A
REASON
TO. EH?



RACHEL WAS ALWAYS PLAYING WITH THE *POUCH*. KEPT GOING ON AT ME TO TRY TO OPEN IT.

SHE'D ASK ME, WHAT'S THE POINT OF HAVING SOMETHING *MAGIC* IF YOU DON'T *USE* IT?

I KNEW THE *ANSWER*. BUT I KNEW SHE'D *NEVER* UNDERSTAND.



WELL, THERE'S NO *ANSWER*. AND IT'S *LOCKED*, *BOLTED* AND *ALARMED*.



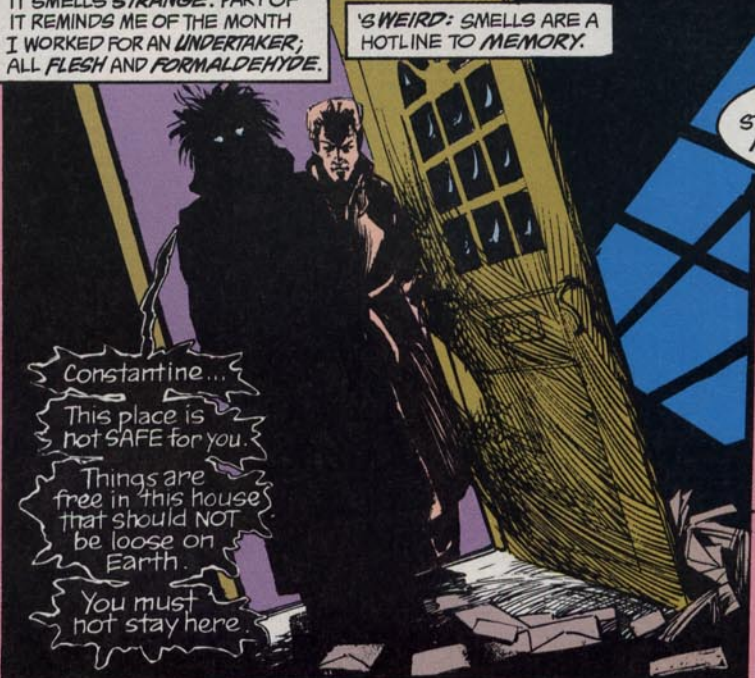
LET'S GO *ROUND THE BACK*, WE CAN *SMASH* A WINDOW, GET IN *THAT WAY*...



We go in by the *FRONT* door.

IT SMELLS *STRANGE*. PART OF IT REMINDS ME OF THE MONTH I WORKED FOR AN *UNDERTAKER*; ALL *FLESH* AND *FORMALDEHYDE*.

'S *WEIRD*: SMELLS ARE A HOTLINE TO *MEMORY*.



Constantine...

This place is not *SAFE* for you.

Things are free in this house that should NOT be loose on Earth.

You must not stay here.



NAW. I'LL STICK AROUND. I'M *INTRIGUED*.

ANYWAY, I WAS FOND OF RACHEL ONCE. SHE WAS, YOU KNOW, THE *GIRL* OF MY DREAMS.

FOR A *WHILE*.

THE
ELECTRICITY'S
CUT OFF. THERE'S
SIX MONTHS' WORTH
OF MAIL ON THE
DOORMAT.

WHAT'S BEEN
HAPPENING
HERE?

Watch out
for the
HUMAN.

WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, WATCH OUT
FOR--

AAAH!

THU-DUMP

HUMAN.

IS HE...?

YES.

He's
ALIVE.
After a
fashion.

CLUCK

He's
being
eaten by
dreams.

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO HIM?

You need light. Is
that better?

UH.
SURE. THANKS.

I'VE BEEN OUT OF MY
DEPTH BEFORE.
SOMETHING TELLS
ME THERE ARE SHARKS
IN THESE DEPTHS.

I OUGHT TO
BE RUNNING
AWAY. BUT.

RACHEL...

MOVIES. OLD DARK HOUSE.
HORRIBLE MENACE ON THE
LOOSE. "LET'S SPLIT UP."
MUFFLED SCREAMS IN
DARKNESS...



UH...WE'LL
STICK TOGETHER,
WON'T WE?



OF COURSE.

UNTHINKING, I REACH
FOR THE LIGHTSWITCH...



YECHH.

CHRIST.
THERE'S SOME-
THING ON THE
WALLS.



SOMETHING
WET.

AND.

AND.

AND I CAN SEE THE
CLOUDS. THEY LOOK
KIND OF SOLID. AND
THE GROUND BELOW
THEM.



THAT LOOKS REALLY
SOLID. IT'S A LONG
WAY TO FALL.

AND I'M
FALLING.

HOW DID I
GET HERE?

I DON'T WANT
TO DIE. I DON'T
WANT TO FALL.

MEMORY FILLS IN:
THE PLANE ON
FIRE; I JUMPED...?

I WAS: THE PILOT?
NO. A PASSENGER,
THEN?

I TELL MYSELF IT'S
NOT THE FALL. FALLING
DOESN'T HURT...

...IT'S WHEN
YOU STOP.

CONSTANTINE!

John,
You're HERE.

UH.

...SO
REAL.

YAAAAH!

It is
NEVER "only
a dream,"
John Constantine.
HERE less than
some other
places...

YOU WERE
THERE, TOO.

A DREAM.
IT WAS ONLY A
DREAM.

More
light.

JEEESUS.

WHAT
IS THIS
STUFF?

A human
body. What's left
of it. Your woman's
father, I would
surmise.

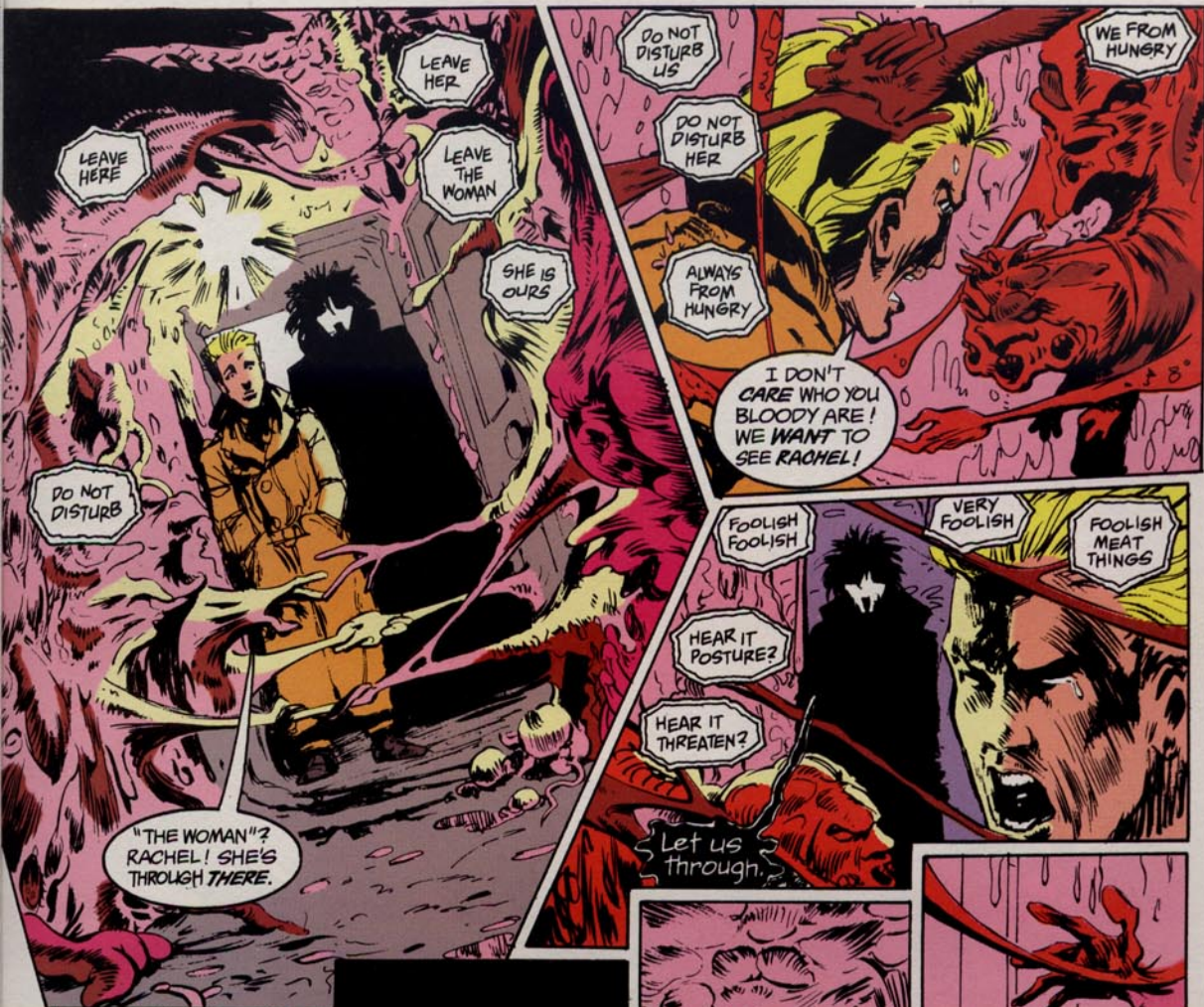
BUT IT-
IT'S STILL
ALIVE.

That's
right.

I FEEL SICK. I CAN FEEL
THE HOT DOG AND COFFEE
I GRABBED FOR DINNER
TRYING TO FIGHT THEIR
WAY BACK UP FOR AIR ...

HOW?

The
Pouch.



LEAVE HERE

LEAVE HER

LEAVE THE WOMAN

SHE IS OURS

DO NOT DISTURB

DO NOT DISTURB US

DO NOT DISTURB HER

ALWAYS FROM HUNGRY

WE FROM HUNGRY

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU BLOODY ARE! WE WANT TO SEE RACHEL!

"THE WOMAN"? RACHEL! SHE'S THROUGH THERE.

FOOLISH FOOLISH

VERY FOOLISH

FOOLISH MEAT THINGS

HEAR IT POSTURE?

HEAR IT THREATEN?

Let us through.



WHO SAID?

WHO SPOKE?

NOT HIM

NEVER HIM

HE'S GONE

ALL GONE LONG GONE



This has gone far enough. You have exceeded your bounds.



MASTER...?



DREAM DREAM
DREEEEAM...

WHENEVER
I WANT TO...

ALL I
HAVE TO DO...
IS...

...DREEEEAM...

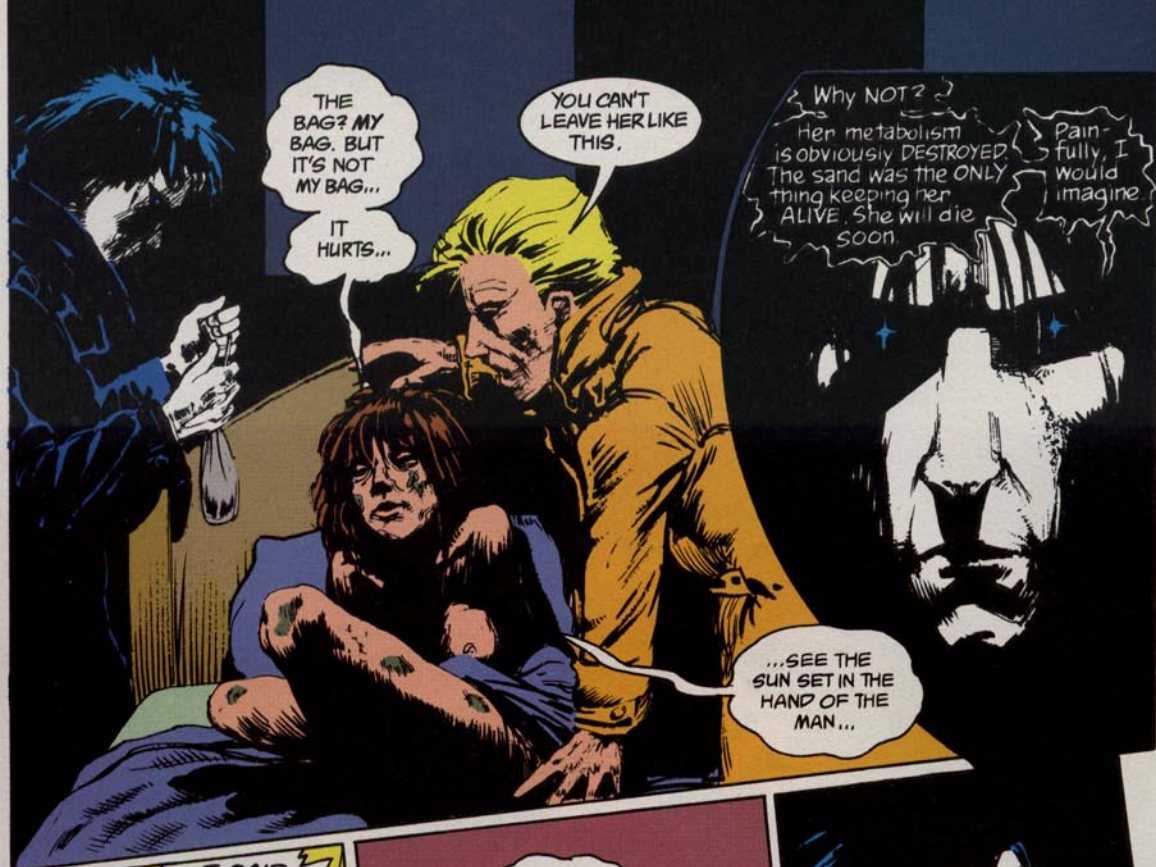
JESUS.

RACHEL.

JESUS.

I have
the pouch.
The dreams
will return
to their
proper
location,
in time...

We can
GO now.



THE
BAG? MY
BAG. BUT
IT'S NOT
MY BAG...

IT
HURTS...

YOU CAN'T
LEAVE HER LIKE
THIS.

Why NOT?
Her metabolism
is obviously DESTROYED.
The sand was the ONLY
thing keeping her
ALIVE. She will die
soon.

Pain-
fully, I
would
imagine

...SEE THE
SUN SET IN THE
HAND OF THE
MAN...

I SAID
YOU CAN'T
BLOODY LEAVE
HER LIKE
THIS!

OUI. NN.
OUGH.

Very well,
Constantine.
Go outside.

BUT--
YEAH. ALL
RIGHT.

RACHEL.

SWEET
DREAMS,
LOVE.



THE VEIL TEARS, AND SHE FEELS THE FLESH FLOW BACK ONTO HER BONES AGAIN.

AND SHE KNOWS HE'S WAITING FOR HER.

JOHN.

HULLO, LOVE.

'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

DID YOU MISS ME, THEN?

NAH.

BASTARD. LOVE YOU.

I KNOW.

IT'S THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS.







NEXT:
GOING  HELL