

CASEFILE:
ARKHAM

“NIGHTMARE ON CANVAS”

CREATED BY
JOSH FINNEY & PATRICK McEVOY

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"NIGHTMARE ON CANVAS"

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"No Safe Space."

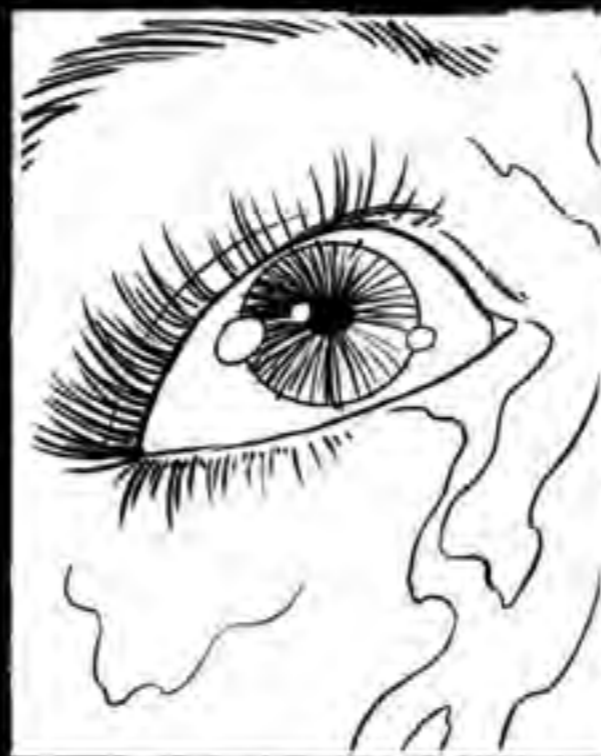
CASEFILE
ARKHAM

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PROLOGUE

MURDER! ON NEWBURY STREET





THE
CASTLE
ARKHAM



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CHAPTER ONE

“Hell is a state of mind.”

MURDER SPREE!

I THOUGHT HELL WAS FINALLY BEHIND ME.

Miskatonic
s More
Cadavers
Go Missing

Local Art Critic
& Wife Found

Slab
bu

I'D DONE MY TIME IN THE PACIFIC.

GIVEN UNCLE SAM HIS POUND OF FLESH.

I'D BEEN THE PRODIGAL SON COME HOME, BACK FROM THE WAR WITH A CHEST FULL OF MEDALS AND HEAD FULL OF HOPES AND DREAMS.

SOMEHOW I'D CONVINCED MYSELF A NORMAL LIFE WOULD BE WAITING FOR ME IN ARKHAM.

IT WAS PURE FANTASY.

AN ELABORATE LIE.



THE DAY I STEPPED OFF THE BOAT WAS THE DAY THOSE FRAGILE DREAMS SHATTERED.

I HAD NO WIFE.

NO SAVINGS.

NO BORING JOB TO SETTLE INTO.

THREE YEARS OF BULLETS, MUD, AND C-RATIONS, AND ALL I HAD TO SHOW FOR IT WAS...

...FIFTY DOLLARS IN MY POCKET AND A STEEL PLATE IN MY HEAD.

GILMAN'S CANNERY

HOME OF ARHAM PICTURES



THE PRICE THAT REFRESHES

APPLY TO 392 TRAVEL AGENCIES

QUALITY ALES BY SILVER

BUY NOW



I'D GONE TO WAR BELIEVING IN A BETTER WORLD.

A DECENT WORLD.

ONE WHERE FAIR PLAY WAS LAW, CHILDREN SLEPT SAFE IN THEIR BEDS, AND EVERY GUY HAD AN HONEST SHOT AT...

...LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF WHATEVER HAPPINESS HE COULD MANAGE.

EXTRA!
EXTRA!
SLASHER CLAIMS TWO MORE LIVES!
GET THE SHOCKING FACTS!

LIKE I SAID...

I THOUGHT HELL WAS FINALLY BEHIND ME.



YOU AIN'T UP TO DATE IF YA DON'T GOT A MORNIN' COPY OF THE ARKHAM ADVERTISER!



WILL THE KILLING EVER END?

BUT I'VE LEARNED, HELL AIN'T A PLACE.



IT'S A STATE OF MIND.

SO WHEN REALITY SANK ITS GREEDY TEETH INTO TO MY FRAGILE HOPES AND ILLUSIONS...

I DID WHAT EVERY MAN DOES WHEN HE'S AT THE END OF HIS ROPE AND ALL OUT OF OPTIONS.



I'M HERE TO SEE DERLITH.

I'M EXPECTED.



AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE, SIR?



HENRY FLYNN.

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR.

I MADE DO.

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TELL ME MISTER FLYNN...

DO YOU APPRECIATE ART?



DEPENDS ON THE PAINTING.



THAT'S AN ORIGINAL PICKMAN YOU ARE ADMIRING THERE.

PICKMAN, EH?

IF YOU TOOK EVERYTHING OUT BUT THE BLOOD...

...THE GUY COULD BE THE NEXT JACKSON POLLOCK.

PLEASE.

ANY
BOOZHOUND
WITH A BRUSH CAN
DRINK HIMSELF STUPID
AND THEN EJACULATE
ONTO A CANVAS,
MISTER FLYNN.

BUT
PICKMAN...



HE...



IS...



...A
VISIONARY.

"LIKE BOSCH
AND DORÉ
BEFORE HIM..."

"...PICKMAN
TEACHES US TO
APPRECIATE THE
GROTESQUE."

"DEATH..."

"VIOLENCE..."

"SUFFERING..."

"EVEN THE LAMENTS OF
THE DAMNED BECOME
A THING OF BEAUTY
IN PICKMAN'S HANDS."



THIS
ONE IS
TITLED...

...THE
CHRISTENING.

MY
HUSBAND...

HE'S A
GREAT ADMIRER
OF YOUNG PICKMAN.
HE AND I OWN NINE
OF RICHARD'S
PAINTINGS.

ALL
ORIGINALS,
OF COURSE.

ON A FIRST MEETING,
MOST CLIENTS LEAD
WITH A SOB STORY...

...OR TRY TO
CONVINCE ME
HOW TOUGH
THEY ARE.

BUT MAY DERLITH
WAS AN ODD BIRD.

SHE DIDN'T PLAY ANY
OF THE USUAL GAMES.

THIS WOMAN DIDN'T
SEEM TO GIVE A DAMN
ABOUT MY FEE...
OR, MY CREDENTIALS.

SHE JUST WANTED TO
BE ENTERTAINED.



EVERYONE
EXPERIENCES
PICKMAN'S ART
DIFFERENTLY.

THAT IS
BECAUSE BEHIND
THE BLOOD AND
SPECTACLE OF IT
ALL, THERE IS
NUANCE.

TELL ME,
MISTER
FLYNN...

WHAT
DO YOU SEE
IN HIS BOLD
STATEMENT?

THAT'S
QUITE A SET
OF CHOPPERS
ON THE DEMON
DOG.



GHOLL.



WHAT?

THE
SUBJECT
IN THE
PAINTING.

HE IS A
GHOLL.

A PILLAGER
OF GRAVES, AN
EATER OF HUMAN
FLESH.

ARE YOU
NOT FAMILIAR
WITH THE
TALES?

GHOLLS
HAVE BEEN
A PART
OF...

...NEW
ENGLAND'S RICH
FOLKLORE AS
FAR BACK AS THE
COLONIES.



WHAT I KNEW
ABOUT DERLITH
COULD'VE FIT
IN A MATCHBOOK.

SHE WAS
THIRTY-ONE...

WAS FROM
NEW MONEY...

AND ASIDE
FROM THE
OCCASIONAL
CHARITY
AUCTION...



LADY,
I'M A GOOD
CATHOLIC
BOY...

THE ONLY
MONSTERS I'M
SUPPOSE TO FEAR
ARE GENUINE
HAPPINESS AND
ORIGINAL SIN.



DARLING...

YOU
DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
MISSING.

...HER ONLY CLAIM
TO FAME WAS POPPING
UP IN THE SOCIETY
PAGES WHENEVER SHE
DRANK TOO MUCH.

SHE ALSO WAS IN NEED OF A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR.

SO, YOU SAID THIS WAS A MISSING PERSONS CASE.

WHO NEEDS FINDING?

PICKMAN?

"OR YOUR HUSBAND?"

PICKMAN.

I ALREADY KNEW THE ANSWER.

MY HUSBAND...

...REST HIS SOUL...

...EXITED THIS WORLD TWO YEARS AGO.

TUBERCULOSIS.

I JUST WANTED TO HEAR HOW SHE'D TELL IT.

HE MAY BE A RICH MAN...

BUT WHILE AMONG THE LIVING HE NEVER...

...DID ANYTHING BEFITTING OF A GREAT MAN.

SO NOW THERE IS PICKMAN.

HE IS TO BE MY HUSBAND'S LEGACY.

A GIFT TO THE MATERIAL WORLD.

PICKMAN MUST BE ALLOWED...

...TO TAKE HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN HISTORY AS A MASTER PAINTER.

LEMME GUESS...

YOU GAVE A SIZABLE AMOUNT OF DOUGH TO YOUR DEAD HUSBAND'S LEGACY...

AND NOW IT'S GONE WITH THE WIND.



NO.
WELL...



IT'S NOT HOW IT APPEARS.



IT NEVER IS.

YOUR PET ARTISTE, HE HAVE ANY VICES?

LIKE MAYBE HE PLAYS THE PONIES?

OR PLAYS THE NEEDLES?



I DON'T LIKE YOUR MANNER!



S'ALRIGHT.

CUZ I AIN'T SELLING IT.

SISTER, IF I'M TO FIND YOUR MAN YOU'LL HAVE TO BE SQUARE WITH ME.

ALRIGHT?

MISSING PERSONS ONLY COME IN TWO BREEDS...

ONES WHO NEED FINDING, AND THOSE WHO DON'T WANT TO BE FOUND.

IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN A NAME AND A PHOTOGRAPH FOR ME TO WORK THIS CASE.



YOU WANT MY HELP?

YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO SPILL.



LET'S START WITH AN EASY ONE.

HOW DID YOU MEET?



PICKMAN CAME TO ME BY WAY OF...

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ARKHAM



DERLITH HAD OFFERED UP A WHOLE BUCKET OF CRAZY AS TO WHY PICKMAN MAY'VE GONE MISSING.

BLACKMAIL...

AMNESIA...

KIDNAPPED BY JEALOUS RIVALS.



BUT A GILDED CAGE WILL ONLY HOLD AN ANIMAL LIKE PICKMAN FOR SO LONG...

...EVEN WHEN IT COMES WRAPPED IN A SILK DRESS AND HAS ACCESS TO A DEAD HUSBAND'S FORTUNE.

PICKMAN WAS LONG GONE.

THAT MUCH I WAS SURE OF.

MAYBE HE WAS JUST LAYING LOW, OR VANISHED TO THE NEXT TOWN OVER.

WHEREVER HE'D GOTTEN TO, I WAS SURE OF ONE THING...

HE'D LEFT FOR GREENER, YOUNGER FIELDS TO PLOW.



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