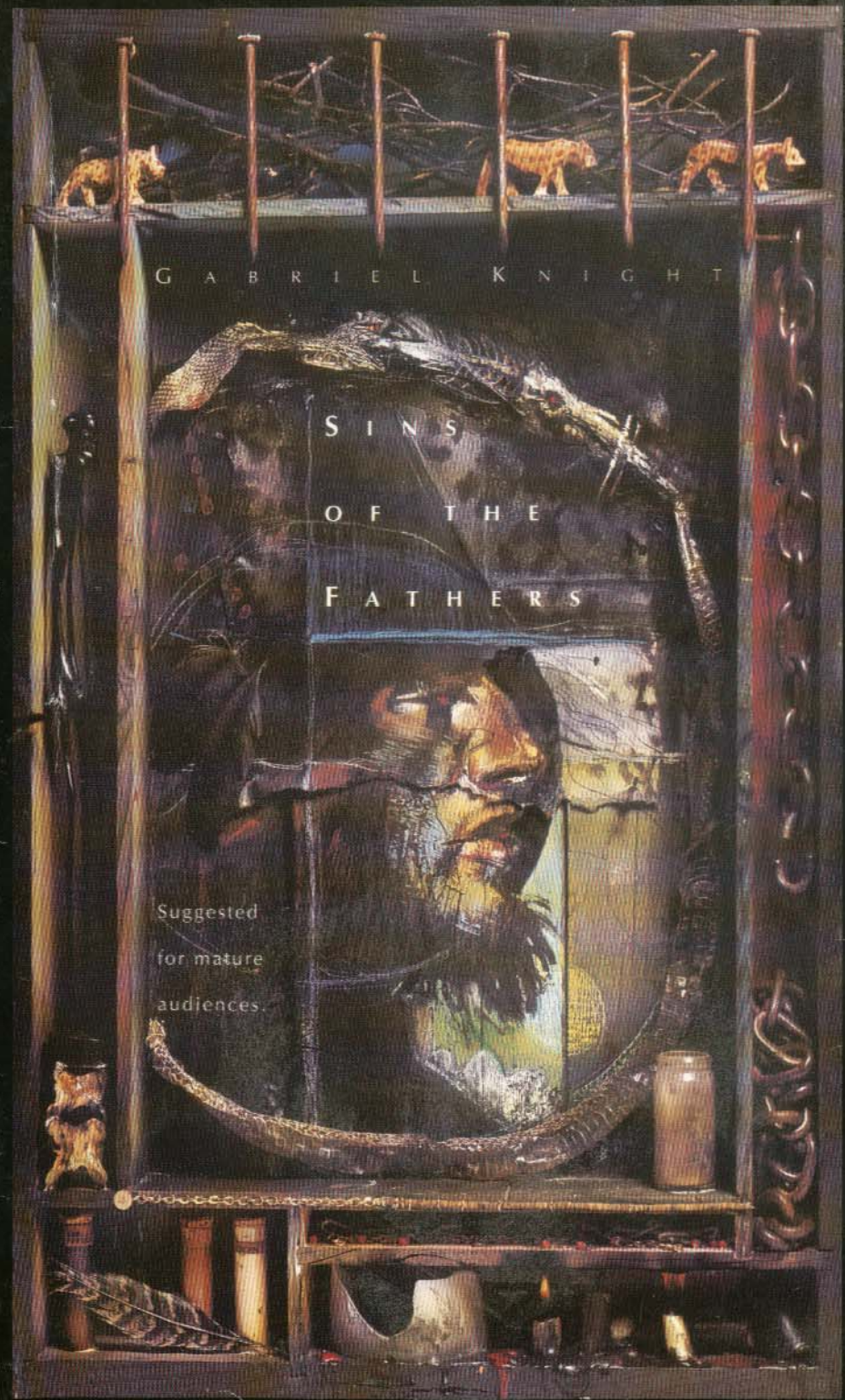


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Sins of the Fathers

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In the woods, outside Charleston, South Carolina.

June, 1693

THE VILLAGE ELDERS GATHER AT THE SITE OF A BRUTAL, RITUALISTIC MURDER.

"WHAT SAYEST THOU, MAYOR CRODWELL?"

ALL EYES TURN TO A SHORT, SQUARE MAN...

"NOT AGAIN!"

"THIS IS THE SIXTH..."

"I SAY... DEVILS FROM HELL ARE AMONG US!"

"TIS WORSE THAN THE TROUBLE THEY HAD UP NORTH."

"...MOTHER OF GOD PROTECT US!"

THE GRIM VIGIL IS BROKEN BY THE SOUND OF A HORSEMAN'S GALLOPING APPROACH.

AN ODDLY DRESSED STRANGER DISMOUNTS...

"THOU ART THE WITCH-HUNTER?"

"JA. HERR RITTER, AS THOU REQUESTED."

"AND PAID WELL FOR. I AM MAYOR CRODWELL, AND THESE GOOD BROTHERS ARE FROM THE CHARLESTON COUNCIL."

"I TRUST THY JOURNEY OVER THE SEAS WAS UNEVENTFUL?"

"I WAS WELL PROTECTED."

"SO SHALL WE BE, NOW THAT THOU ART WITH US."

THE WITCH-HUNTER REJECTS FURTHER FORMALITIES, TURNING INSTEAD TO THE GORY SCENE SPREAD OUT BEFORE HIM...

"TIS THE WORK OF WITCHES, IF NOT THE DEVIL HIMSELF!"



"I MUST MAKE THAT DETERMINATION, HERR CRODWELL."

"JA. IT IS WITCHCRAFT..."

"...THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT."

"THE WITCH-HUNTER WILL FIND THE GUILTY ONE!"



"THANK JEHOVAH!"

"WELL?"

WHEN THE WITCH-HUNTER FINALLY ANSWERS, HIS VOICE IS GRIM...



THE SOUND OF A DELICATE FOOTFALL QUIETS THE ANGRY MEN. INTO THEIR MIDST COMES ONE WHO SHINES LIKE COPPER IN THE BRIGHT MOONLIT NIGHT.



"ELIZA, WHY ART THOU HERE?"

"A LETTER FOR THE WITCH-HUNTER, MASTER."

"GIVE IT TO ME, CHILD."

AS THEIR EYES MEET, SOMETHING PASSES BETWEEN THE WITCH-HUNTER AND THE SLAVE-- SOMETHING LIKE...



...RECOGNITION.





Dear Father,

I recieved thy missive - I
know thou art angry - but my
journey here was not in Vain.
The colonists here have stumbled
upon a true Evil - magic dark &
olde. It is unlike anything I
have seen on the continent -
Please write me more about
thy work in St. Dominique -
there is a pattern around the

bodies that recalls thy stories
of those killings, I shall begin
to question the local slaves. Do
not fear - the Talisman will
protect me. I only do my best to
fill thy shoes as Schattenjäger -
beloved Father. As thou has oft
told me - We must prepare to
sacrifice all -

Your son

Winter



AT THE END OF A SCORCHING SUMMER DAY SPENT INVESTIGATING, GUNTER RITTER FINDS HIMSELF AT THE SLAVE QUARTERS OF MAYOR CROWDELL. THE SIGHT OF A FAMILIAR FIGURE IS A WELCOME RELIEF...



"MISTRESS ELIZA, MIGHT I TROUBLE THEE?"



"IT IS VERY HOT IN THY COLONY. WOULDST THOU HAVE SOME WATER?"



"IT IS NOT MY COLONY. COME INSIDE BEFORE YOU FALL DOWN."



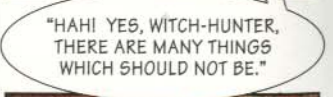
"SO, YOU ARE THE FAMOUS WITCH-HUNTER?"

"THAT IS WHY I AM HERE."

"WHY DO YOU DO THAT-- HUNT WITCHES?"



"THERE ARE THINGS THAT... SHOULD NOT BE."



"HAHI YES, WITCH-HUNTER, THERE ARE MANY THINGS WHICH SHOULD NOT BE."



"TELL ME ABOUT THYSELF, ELIZA."

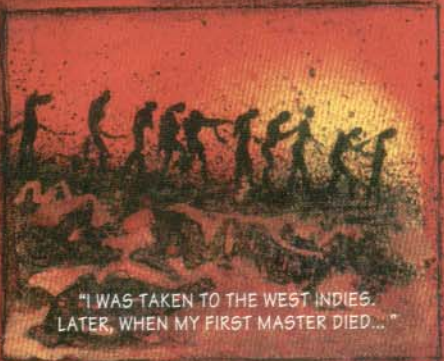
THE WOMAN STARES AT HER QUESTIONER, UNABLE TO FATHOM HIS INTEREST. BUT WHEN HIS FACE REMAINS SINCERE, SHE FINDS HERSELF SPEAKING. THE BITTERNESS IN HER VOICE SURPRISES HER.



"WHAT IS THERE TO TELL? MY REAL NAME IS TETELO."

"FEW SURVIVED THE SLAVERS."

"MY PEOPLE WERE STRONG AND BEAUTIFUL. MY FATHER LED THEM TO PROSPERITY, UNTIL..."



"I WAS TAKEN TO THE WEST INDIES. LATER, WHEN MY FIRST MASTER DIED..."



"...I WAS BOUGHT BY CROWDELL. HE BROUGHT ME HERE."

"IS HE GOOD TO THEE?"

"GOOD? ARE YOU MAD, WITCH-HUNTER?"



THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN, BREAKING THE MOMENT...

"ELIZA! MY PRETTY ONE..."

"HERR RITTER, I DID NOT EXPECT TO FIND THEE STILL ABOUT."



"IT IS LONG PAST SUNSET."



GUNTER FINDS HIMSELF STRANGELY EMBARRASSED.

"I WAS JUST LEAVING. GOOD NIGHT, MAYOR."

THE NEXT DAY GUNTER FOLLOWS A LEAD TO THE CROW'S NEST-- A SEAMAN'S TAVERN.

"SO THE VICTIMS HAVE ALL BEEN SEAMEN?"

"SWAT I SAID. MEN AROUND HERE ARE GETTIN' AWFUL JUMPY. LAST MAN WHAT WENT DOWN'S A CAPTAIN."

"NAY, E'D BEEN A SLAYER ONCT, BUT GAVE IT UP, YA KNOW."

"FROM THE MERCHANT'S PRIDE?"

"TOO MUCH BLOOD IN IT FOR 'IM."

"SOME 'R SQUEAMISH 'BOUT SUCH THINGS."

AS HE HEADS THROUGH TOWN, GUNTER SEES A DISTANT FLASH OF SKIRT AND HURRIES TO CATCH UP.

"MISTRESS TETELO. GOOD DAY. MIGHT I AID THEE WITH THOSE PACKAGES?"

"I AM SORRY... ELIZA."

"THERE ARE NO SLAVES WHERE I COME FROM. I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE PROPER... PROCEDURE."

"DON'T CALL ME THAT! ELIZA IS MY NAME! DO YOU WANT TO GET US BOTH IN TROUBLE? I AM A SLAVE!"

"FORGIVE ME."

"WE ARE NOT IN YOUR HOMELAND, NOR MINE. IF YOU OWNED ME, I WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT YOUR 'ATTENTIONS'."

"SINCE YOU DO NOT, LEAVE ME ALONE!"

THAT NIGHT GUNTER CANNOT SLEEP. HE STRUGGLES WITH AN OPPRESSIVE RESTLESSNESS-- AN ANXIETY HE CANNOT NAME. THE LIGHT TAPPING AT THE DOOR TAKES A MOMENT TO REGISTER.

"YAS?"

"TETELO!"

"YES. I WANT YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT IT."

"ABOUT WHAT?"

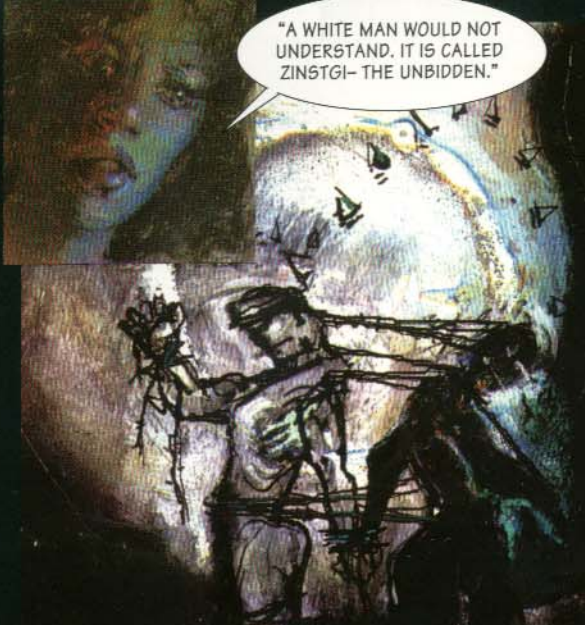
"YOUR HOMELAND."

"JAI CERTAINLY. PLEASE, TAKE A SEAT."

GUNTER FINDS HIMSELF TELLING THE BEAUTIFUL SLAVE ABOUT HIS FATHER, ABOUT THEIR FAMILY ROLE OF SHATTENJÄGER-- SHADOW HUNTER-- DESTROYERS OF EVIL, ABOUT THE TALISMAN THAT GOES WITH THE TITLE...

"I AM TORMENTED BY THOUGHTS OF THEE, TETELO. I WANT SUCH... THINGS."


"YES. I CAN FEEL THE TOTEM'S POWER... AND YOURS."




"A WHITE MAN WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND. IT IS CALLED ZINSTGI- THE UNBIDDEN."




"YES. I CAN SEE THAT."




"YOU WOULD NOT HAVE COME TO ME."



"I DID NOT WANT TO BE LIKE THE OTHERS."



"GOOD. IT IS BETTER THAT I CHOSE FOR MYSELF."



"WHEN A MAN AND A WOMAN ARE BROUGHT TOGETHER BY THE UNIVERSE. THEY HAVE NO CHOICE. THERE IS ALWAYS A REASON-- A CHILD MUST BE BORN, A VILLAGE SAVED... TO FIGHT IT IS A LIVING DEATH."

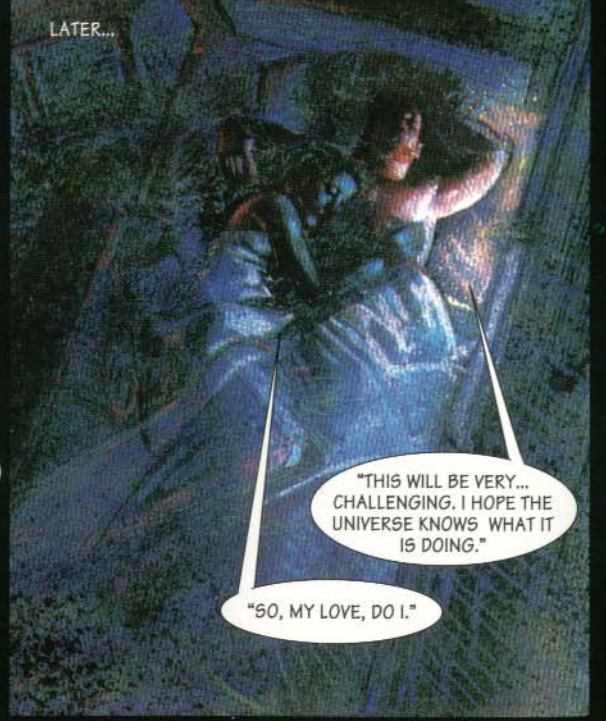


"YOU UNDERSTAND?"



"YES."


LATER...



"THIS WILL BE VERY... CHALLENGING. I HOPE THE UNIVERSE KNOWS WHAT IT IS DOING."

"SO, MY LOVE, DO I."

SEVERAL WEEKS LATER IN THE OFFICE OF MAYOR CROWDELL...




"THERE IS PROGRESS. THE PATTERNS, THE RITUALS. MY FATHER HAS ENCOUNTERED IT BEFORE. THE MAGIC IS AFRICAN."




"AFRICAN? AFRICAN! ART THOU SAYING OUR SLAVES ARE RESPONSIBLE?"




"I SHALL KILL EVERY NIGGER IN THE STATE, BY GOD! INSOLENT BASTARDS!"



"BE CALM! A MASSACRE IS NOT THE ANSWER! I AM SURE THERE ARE NO MORE THAN FIVE OR SIX INVOLVED. THESE COVENS WORK IN SECRET."




"ART THOU SURE THIS IS NOT SIMPLY AN EXCUSE FOR SPENDING SO MUCH TIME IN MY SLAVE QUARTERS?"




THE WORDS, NOW SPOKEN, HANG BETWEEN THE TWO MEN.



"NO. GIVE ME ONE MORE NIGHT."




"I HAVE SET A TRAP. BY TOMORROW, THOU WILT HAVE THY WITCH."



"IT HAD BETTER BE SO. THE EXAMPLE WE MAKE OF THIS COVEN SHALL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN."



"...CAN GO HOME."



"AND THEN THOU, HERR RITTER..."

THAT SAME NIGHT...

"OH THE SHEA, SHE
ISSA TERRIBLE MISTRESS,
HEIGH (HIC) HOOO!!!!!"



"(HIC)."



"WHERE ARE
MY MEN?"



"WHERE ARE
MY..."



CRACK!



HE FIGHTS THE DARKNESS TO THE
THROBING OF DRUMS.

THE WITCH-HUNTER THOUGHT OF THE
PERFECT TRAP...

AND INTO IT HAD FALLEN THE ONE
PERSON HE HAD LEAST EXPECTED...



HIMSELF.

WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS
RETURNS, HE FINDS IT
STRANGER THAN ANY DREAM!

"DAMBALLAH OUEDDO, OU COULEVRE MOINS!"



"OGOUN BADAGRIS,
VINI 'GIDER NOUS!"



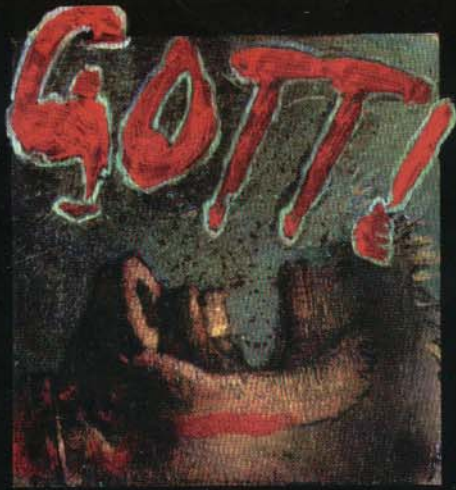
"DAMBALLAH, OUR GREAT SERPENT GOD, COME AND AID YOUR PEOPLE!"



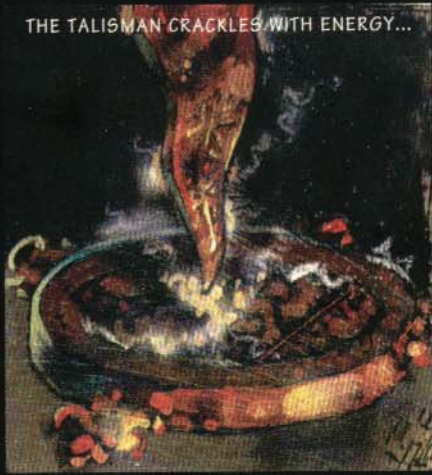
"OGOUN BADAGRIS! VENGEANCE IS TAKEN,
POWER RECALLED! BLOOD FOR BLOOD, AS
YOUR THIRSTY JAWS DEMAND!"



AS THE DAGGER PLUNGES TOWARD HIM, GUNTER CALLS ON HIS MASTER.



THE TALISMAN CRACKLES WITH ENERGY...



"GASPI"

...AND SUDDENLY, THE WITCH SEES THE MAN BENEATH HER.

THE LOVERS STARE AT EACH OTHER IN HORROR...



"...GUNTER???"

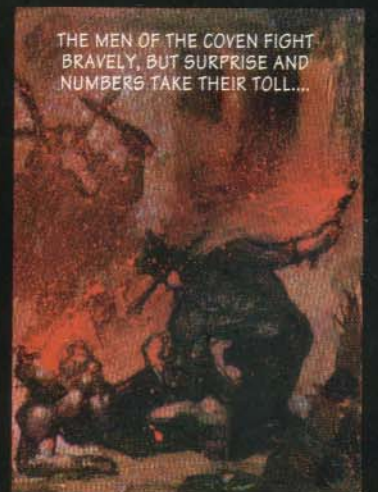
"NO!
IT CANNOT BE
THEE!"

BEFORE THE TWO CAN RECOVER, GUNTER'S MEN MAKE THEIR BELATED ATTACK.



"GOD TAKE THEE, WITCHES!"

THE MEN OF THE COVEN FIGHT BRAVELY, BUT SURPRISE AND NUMBERS TAKE THEIR TOLL....



"A TRAP!"



"THEY WILL KILL THEE! GO NOW!"



"RUN, TETELO..."

IN A HORRIFIED DAZE, GUNTER WATCHES HIS MEN CAPTURE THE COVEN. THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, HE SLIPS AWAY TO CONFRONT THE WITCH HERSELF!

"I KNOW YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND. I BEG YOU, HEAR ME SPEAK!"

"I AM WAITING."

"MY FATHER WAS NOT JUST A CHIEF, HE WAS A BLACK BOKOR..."

"...SHAMAN TO THE DARK GODS THAT GAVE OUR TRIBE POWER."

"THERE CAME A TERRIBLE DROUGHT. NOTHING MY FATHER DID APPEASED THE GODS."

"AFTER MANY DIED, OGOUN BADAGRIS FINALLY ANSWERED."

"HE NAMED THE PRICE OF RAIN..."

"ME."

"MY FATHER THOUGHT HE COULD TRICK OGOUN BADAGRIS. HE TRANSFERRED MY SOUL TEMPORARILY INTO THE BODY OF ANOTHER GIRL..."

"...AND THEN HE KILLED HER."

"BUT OGOUN BADAGRIS WAS NOT FOOLED."

"ANGRY AT MY FATHER'S BETRAYAL, OGOUN SENT THE WHITE MEN."

"OUR PEOPLE FOUGHT HARD..."

"...AND WERE SLAUGHTERED."

"EVERYONE STILL LIVING WAS TAKEN. MANY MORE DIED ON THE VOYAGE."



"BUT WHY KILL THESE MEN NOW? WHAT GOOD CAN IT DO?"

"OGOUN IS WILLING TO FORGIVE, BUT TO REGAIN POWER OUR CAPTORS MUST DIE, OUR HUMILIATION BE REVENGED."



"I CANNOT LET THEE CONTINUE..."

"...I CANNOT FORGET."



"OF COURSE YOU CANNOT. I HAVE BEEN LIVING FOR THE PAST, BUT SINCE YOU CAME I HAVE SEEN OTHER PATHS FOR ME. TOGETHER, YOU AND I..."



"HAH! THOU KNEW IT WAS THEE I SOUGHT ALL THIS TIME, AND THOU LET ME LOVE THEE!"

"LET YOU? I HAD NO CHOICE!"

"NO! I... I DO NOT KNOW."



"HOW DO YOU THINK I FELT, IN LOVE WITH MY OWN HUNTER? THIS WAS DESTINED! YOU AND I MUST MAKE A NEW WAY, TOGETHER."



"I MUST GO THINK."



"GUNTER!"



"DO NOT BETRAY ME."



"MAYOR CROWDELL, ALL WERE CAPTURED BUT THE LEADER-- A FEMALE."

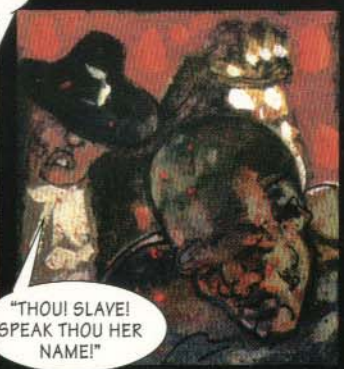
"THE WITCH-HUNTER MUST STILL BE ON HER TRAIL."



"GOD HAS DELIVERED THIS MURDEROUS COVEN OF SATAN UNTO US, SO HE WILL THE WITCH."



"YES. BUT WHO BROUGHT THIS WITCH AMONG US?"



"THOU! SLAVE! SPEAK THOU HER NAME!"



"THOU SPEAKETH NOT, AND YET... THY FACE IS FAMILIAR..."

LOOKING INTO THE COVEN MEMBER'S BLOODY, COPPER-COLORED FACE, A HORRIBLE REALIZATION COMES TO CRODWELL.

"I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HER! AND THE WITCH-HUNTER! FOLLOW ME!"

MEANWHILE, ALONE IN HER CABIN, TETELO PREPARES A RITUAL CIRCLE - HER TRIBE'S VÉVÉ - AND ENTERS THE SPIRIT WORLD...

"FATHER, I CALL YOU. COME SPEAK WITH YOUR DAUGHTER."

"YOU DID...FOR LOVE."

"YOUR LIFE'S ONLY PURPOSE IS TO PAY FOR THAT MISTAKE - NOT REPEAT IT!"

"DAUGHTER, I COMMAND YOU!"

WITH A QUICK MOTION THE VÉVÉ IS SMEARED - THE CONTACT IS BROKEN.

"NO!"

"OH, PAPA..."

"FATHER, I HAVE COME TO ASK YOU... PLEASE RELEASE ME FROM MY DUTY TO THE TRIBE."

"YOU WOULD BETRAY YOUR OWN PEOPLE?"

"PERHAPS IT IS BETTER TO LET THE TRIBE GO."

"YOU MUST DESTROY THIS MAN THAT TEMPTS YOU! HIS KIND WILL ONLY DESPISE YOU IN THE END!"

"THIS IS A NEW LAND, THERE WILL BE A NEW PEOPLE HERE."

"THERE IS A WAY OUTSIDE THE DARK GODS."

"THESE WHITE MEN WILL NEVER GIVE YOU ANYTHING UNLESS YOU USE THE POWER."

"NO. I DON'T BELIEVE THAT."

HE WATCHES, TRANSFIXED, AS THE FLAMES GROW HIGHER.
AND TETELO, ABANDONED ONCE MORE, BEGS HER OLD GODS FOR VENGEANCE.



"DAMBALLAH, OGOUN
BADAGRIS, HEAR YOUR
WICKED DAUGHTER!"

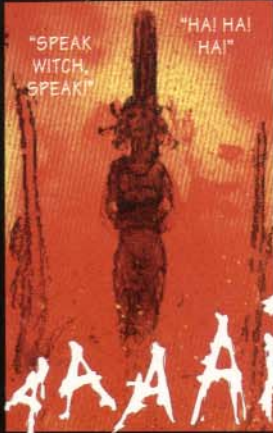


"I CALL UPON YOU TO REVENGE
YOUR PEOPLE! DESTROY THIS
TOWN AND ALL WITHIN IT!"



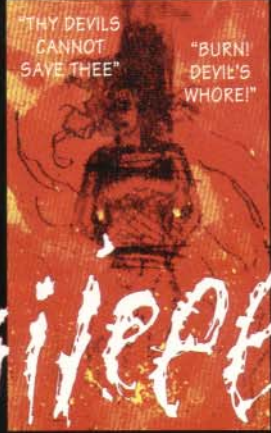
"DAMBALLAH! GREAT SERPENT --STRIKE!"

BUT THE ONLY REPLY IS THE TAUNTS OF THE HATE-FILLED MOB.



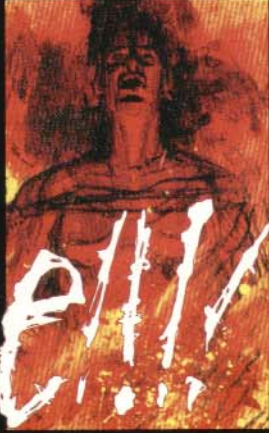
"SPEAK
WITCH,
SPEAK!"

"HA! HA!
HA!"



"THY DEVILS
CANNOT
SAVE THEE"

"BURN!
DEVIL'S
WHORE!"



AAAHHHHHHH!!!

HER AGONY AND HUMILIATION TWIST IN GUNTER'S MIND--SHE, THE MARTYR.
THE CROWD, THE HOWLING DEMONS. IT CAN NOT. GO. ON.



"NO!"



"TETELO!
I EMPOWER
THEE!"



"GOD FORGIVE ME."



THE POWER OF THE
TALISMAN AND THE POWER
OF TETELO'S DARK GODS
CONJOIN IN A TERRIBLE
SYNERGY.



THE HEAVENS BOIL OVER,
BLEED ELECTRICITY...

AND HURLS THEIR DESTRUCTION WITH DEADLY ACCURACY...




AT THE SAINTS AND SINNERS IN THE SQUARE BELOW.



"NOW, MY BROTHERS."


TETELO'S HANDFUL, FREED FROM THEIR BONDS, ATTACK. THEY ARE JOINED BY CHARLESTON'S OTHER SLAVES-- THE OLD GODS FANNING A SPARK THEY HAD FORGOTTEN WAS THERE...



"DAMBALLAH."




A HATE THEY HAD SWALLOWED FOR TOO LONG...




MERCY HAD BEEN LEFT IN THE FIELDS OF AFRICA AND THE HOLDS OF STINKING SLAVE SHIPS...





AND IT IS CHARLESTON THAT WILL PAY THIS NIGHT.



GUNTER SITS IN THE EYE OF THE STORM. WHILE SOME PART OF HIS BRAIN HEARS THE SOUNDS OF THE MASSACRE, HIS EYES REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT. HE STARES AT THE TALISMAN IN HIS HANDS AS THOUGH FOCUSING ON A LIGHT...



UNTIL EVEN THE LIGHT IS POLLUTED.



AND HE CAN NO LONGER DENY...



"LOOK AT ME."

HE WILL NOT, HE CANNOT.



"I...
SAVED
THEE."



"LOOK."



"YOUR GUILT
SAVED ME. AND
THIS..."



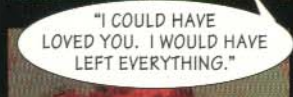
"BUT YOU
BETRAYED ME."



"AT."

"ME."

"YOU
BETRAYED
ME."



"I COULD HAVE
LOVED YOU. I WOULD HAVE
LEFT EVERYTHING."

"WHAT
HAVE I DONE?"



"YOU HAVE
MADE ME MY FATHER'S
DAUGHTER."



"GOOD-BYE, WITCH-HUNTER."