



**DARK
HORSE
COMICS**

THE STRAIN

6

\$3.50

GUILLERMO DEL TORO & CHUCK HOGAN'S

THE STRAIN

DAVID LAPHAM MIKE HUDDLESTON DAN JACKSON

They have always been here.
VAMPIRES.

In secret and in darkness.
WAITING.

Now their time has come.
In one week, Manhattan will be gone.
In one month, the country.
In two months—the world.

GUILLERMO DEL TORO & CHUCK HOGAN'S

THE STRAIN

STORY BY GUILLERMO DEL TORO AND CHUCK HOGAN SCRIPT BY DAVID LAPHAM ART BY MIKE HUDDLESTON
COLORS BY DAN JACKSON LETTERS BY CLEM ROBINS COVER BY E. M. GIST
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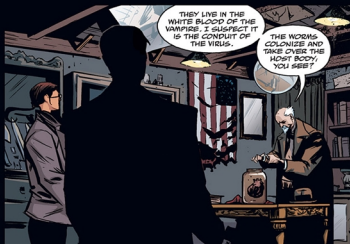




SO...HOW DOES A HARLEM PAWNBROKER KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING?







THEY LIVE IN THE WHITE BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE. I SUSPECT IT IS THE CONDUIT OF THE VIRUS.

THE WORMS COLONIZE AND TAKE OVER THE HOST BODY, YOU SEE?



IT LIVES ON BLOOD.

A FEW DROPS EVERY FEW DAYS IS ENOUGH.



I ACQUIRED IT IN THE SPRING OF '71.

FOR FORTY YEARS YOU'VE KEPT A HEART IN A JAR LIKE...LIKE SOME PET?



TO REMIND MYSELF OF WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST.



THERE ARE SEVEN ORIGINAL VAMPIRES KNOWN AS **THE ANCIENTS**.

AS I SAID, I SUSPECT THEY HAVE BEEN HERE POSSIBLY LONGER THAN HISTORY HAS BEEN RECORDED.



THERE WAS A SCHISM. THREE ANCIENTS REMAINED IN THE OLD WORLD AND THREE CAME HERE TO THE NEW.

THEY HAD A TRUCE BETWEEN THEM AND FOR MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS THERE HAS BEEN CALM.

THEN THERE IS THE SEVENTH ANCIENT, WHOM I KNOW AS **THE MASTER**. HE IS A ROGUE.



THE MASTER DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE WAYS OF THE OTHERS, HIDING LIKE RATS, FEEDING IN DARK CORNERS TO PROTECT THEIR SECRET.

THAT HE IS HERE BREAKS THE TRUCE AND IS ESSENTIALLY AN ACT OF WAR.

WHAT'S MORE, HE IS IN LEAGUE WITH A HUMAN.

WITHOUT HELP HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CROSS THE OCEAN, WHERE HE IS MOST VULNERABLE.



THE BOX-- THE COFFIN WE FOUND ON THE PLANE.

HE WAS INSIDE. WHEN WE OPENED IT, HE WAS STILL INSIDE...

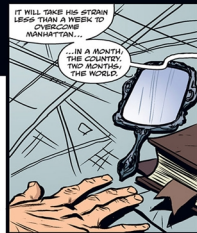


IN THE SOIL. YES, THE SOIL IS SACRED TO HIM.

IT IS FROM THIS THAT HE RENEWS HIMSELF.

I-IF THIS IS A VAMPIRE WAR, WHY IS HE RANDOMLY INFECTING ALL THESE PEOPLE?

THE MASTER WILL GO WHERE THE OTHER ANCIENTS WOULD NOT DARE.



IT WILL TAKE HIS STRAIN LESS THAN A WEEK TO OVERCOME MANHATTAN...

...IN A MONTH, THE COUNTRY. TWO MONTHS, THE WORLD.



OKAY, MR. SETRAKIAN. I THINK THERE'S MORE SCIENCE HERE THAN YOUR GHOST STORIES...

...BUT I'VE SEEN ENOUGH TO KNOW YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY CRAZY.

PLUS, I DON'T THINK WE HAVE MANY OPTIONS.

SO WHERE DO WE START?



YES,
MR. KENT.



I UNDERSTAND...YES...
PLEASE GIVE ME A
MOMENT.



MR. PALMER,
SIR. IT'S JIM
KENT.

HMM?

YES,
GIVE IT
HERE.

YES, OFFICER,
VICIOUS LITTLE MEN
WITH POINTY EARS, ANY BLUE
AS MY AUNT KHONDY'S
NALAGAYDE SOFA...

I'D LIKE
TO REPORT
A FIRE...

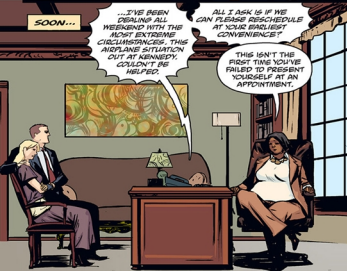


MR. KENT, WE WERE ABRUPTLY CUT
OFF WHEN LAST WE SPOKE.

CAN YOU
HEAR ME? I
HAVE TO TALK
QUIETLY.

THE PILOT,
REDFERN, HAD ESCAPED.
I WENT LOOKING FOR HIM,
AND I THINK HE HIT ME OR
SOMETHING. I GOT A RUDDY
CRACK ON THE HEAD.







FLATBUSH...

ANSEL?

I'VE
SENT THE KIDS
TO MY SISTER'S.
IT'S JUST US
NOW.

THE DEVIL
HAS YOU.
I CAN TELL. I
PRAY, ANSEL.
I PRAY SO
MUCH...

NNNNHHHHHH...

I'M WEAK,
ANSEL.
WHAT DO
I DO?

I SEE
WHAT YOU WANT.
THE DOGS WEREN'T
ENOUGH. YOU NEED
TO HURT SOMEONE
ELSE OR YOU'LL
DIE.

DO YOU
WANT ME TO
GIVE MYSELF
TO YOU?

CHNK

NNNNHHH!

UUUUHHHHH...







GAAHHH--
UK--AH--

AGHLAAGH!

HAIL MARY,
FULL OF
GRACE. OUR
LORD IS WITH
THEE...



SO, YOU'RE
SAYING ALL
THOSE BODIES IN
THE MORGUE HAVE
JUST GOTTEN UP
AND GONE
HOME?

THE CREATURES
OPERATE ON INSTINCT AT
FIRST. THEY NEED TO SEEK
NOURISHMENT.

WHEN THEY WAKE, THE
VESTIGES OF WHO THEY WERE
DRIVE THEM TO SEEK OUT THOSE
THAT ARE CLOSEST TO THEM. THOSE
THAT ARE IMPRINTED ON THEIR
PSYCHE. THEIR "DEAR ONES."



I REMEMBERED
THIS GIRL FROM THE
PLANE. EMMA WAS HER
NAME. SHE COULDN'T
HAVE BEEN OLDER
THAN EIGHT.

HNNN...

COME.



BLACK LIGHT IS MERELY *U.K.A.*, WAVES. REVEALING BUT HARMLESS. *U.V.B.* IS STRONGER AND CAN CAUSE SUNBURN OR CANCER.

THIS IS *U.V.C.*, SHORT WAVES, USED FOR STERILIZATION. VERY HARMFUL TO HUMANS... BUT TO THE VAMPIRES... IT'S WEAPONS GRADE.







NOW!



BACK!



KSSSAHHH!



KSHHH--

NORA! THE DOORS!

I GOT THEM!



UHHH...





KAH-EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!




BACK,
STRIGOI!



QUICKLY, DR.
GOODWEATHER,
HAND ME THE
LAMP.





IF THERE ARE TWO HUNDRED DEAD AND EACH ONE IS OUT CONVERTING HOW MANY OTHERS FOR THE SECOND NIGHT IN A ROW...THEY'RE SPREADING LIKE A VIRUS.

WE CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.



WHAT'S BARNES GOING TO SAY?

WELL, IF HE DOESN'T SAY, "LET'S CALL OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD," I THINK WE'RE ALL IN BIG TROUBLE.

DIRECTOR BARNES. IT'S BPH...



FINALLY, HE'S TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY.



EVERETT!



THANK GOD YOU'VE COME AROUND. WE HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE.

Send your letters to thetrain@darkhorse.com

Pandemic Post

I work in a comic book store in Phoenix, so being surrounded by *every* character, publisher, and comic on the planet can thin the ranks out, to say the least. I am always on the lookout for something eye catching and special. Luckily, I found that in *The Strain*.

I'll admit, I did not know the book existed until I picked up the comic, but I'm thankful now to have been able to read both, and simply cannot wait to see how one of the best stories I ever read winds up being depicted in one of the best comic adaptations I am now reading. Big thanks to Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan for their great story, and please thank Mike Huddleston for some of the coolest, grittiest, and most chilling art I've seen in a while. Rarely do you find the two complement each other as well as *The Strain* does. And thank you, Dark Horse.

Michael Cramer
Samurai Comics
Phoenix, AZ

Just picked up the first two comics in the Strain Trilogy—*loved* them! I really enjoyed the books. No lovey-dovey vamps, just stone-cold killers! The comics rocked and the art is amazing. I will definitely continue to purchase.

Kim J
Dunellen, NJ

I just read the first issue—in fact, I'm reading it now—and I'm going on to the second one! *The Strain* just makes it! I am a big fan of del Toro.

I noticed you asked about our favorite characters . . . I like Zack. In most novels, the kid always dies and later there's revenge for the father, but I'd like this one to somehow stay alive! I may be overreacting though!

Thanks from Haiti,
Cris Emery Walker

Hil.

I just finished the issue #1 of *The Strain*. I have been in the USA for a week and bought it. It's just awesome. It practically steals the spirit of the book and I don't know how I can wait till Italy translates and publishes your great work. Dark Horse, it's fuckin' great. Compliments to all of you; you're a fantastic team. I hope I can buy the other ones online.

Gennaro C.
Italy

Wow! When I first read *The Strain* a couple years ago, I was amazed at how it read almost like a movie. It was quick and it was damn scary. The comic is evoking the same feelings I had—I can only imagine what it will be like seeing the intense imagery that the story has to offer. I will be rereading the trilogy books again to refresh myself on the story, so if nothing else, you got me to reread the books too. But damn, what a good adaptation of an awesome vampire tale. This is what vampires need to be, not love-lost sparklers staring moodily and expressionlessly into the camera.

Long live *The Strain*,
Adam

Guys and gals, I can't tell you how exhilarating and encouraging it is to hear so many nice things about *The Strain*—especially when they come directly from satisfied and excited readers like yourselves! Editor Sierra Hahn and I are particularly proud of the amazing work that Lapham, Huddleston, Jackson, and Gist are putting together on this series. We're thrilled to hear we're not the only ones!

Gennaro, every issue of *The Strain* can be found at *Digital DarkHorse.com*—both in the US and internationally.

Till next time, you bloodthirsty fiends!

JIM

Jim Gibbons
Assistant Editor



Meet the master exterminator who may be the key to ridding Manhattan of vampires!
NEXT MONTH! *The Strain* #7