

AGENTS EXTRAORDINARY

11: BLACK HAT, WHITE RABBIT

By Nathan Alderman

PAGE ONE

1.1

Late September in London. The doors to the BRANCH's elevator open, and PARRY LORD and CELIA CHANCE emerge, laughing and smiling. CHANCE is teasing, not unaffectionately, while LORD looks mock-indignant. They're wearing their usual work clothes -- LORD's black bowler hat, black suit and white shirt with Indian stylings, and umbrella; CHANCE's Sex Pistols T-shirt over a long-sleeved undershirt, Army surplus jacket, jeans and boots. CHANCE has a duffel bag slung casually over her shoulder, with a fold of strangely iridescent fabric peeking out. If we see the reception desk, PORTIA's not there.

LORD: ... **What?** I mean, he **did** steal an "**invisibility cloak**."

CHANCE: "Let's get you back to **Hogswatch?**"

1.2

LORD is holding open the door for CHANCE as they enter the BRANCH's glass-walled conference room, just off the main lobby. CHANCE is still teasing LORD.

LORD: Hogswatch. It's the name of the school, right?

CHANCE: Look, if you **haven't** read the **books**, **don't** make the **reference**.

KING (o/p): You're **back**.

1.3

REGINA KING and DESMOND QUEEN stand at the far side of the table, next to a seated man -- Indian, late '50s but still robust, with handsome features, salt-and-pepper hair, and a long, faded scar running vertically down over his left eye socket.

QUEEN: This is **General Anand Murkhjee** of **Indian Intelligence**.

KING: It seems we've got a bit of **trouble**.

1.4

As a shocked CHANCE and QUEEN look on -- along with an as-ever unperturbed MRS. KING -- LORD, blindly furious, has pinned MURKHJEE to the ground and is choking the life of out of him, with his umbrella across MURKHJEE's throat! MURKHJEE looks strangely calm, as if he were expecting this.

KING: Ah.

KING: I see you've **met**.

TITLE AND CREDITS

PAGE TWO

2.1

The BRANCH's infirmary. DRS. DANNY and DONNY MACDOUGAL, MAL AMEBE, and PORTIA LONGLEY huddle conspiratorially around a sheet of paper that's been laid out on one of the metal examining tables. MAL is studying the paper particularly closely; PORTIA's standing next to him.

DANNY: It's just nae **fair**, we're thinkin'. I know she's got th' **cottage** an' all, but...

DONNY: A wee tiny lass deserves some **fresh air**. Some **sunlight**.

MAL (small): It might work...

2.2

PORTIA, as usual, provides the skeptical voice of reason.

PORTIA: This wouldn't **harm** her, would it?

DANNY: Not a bit. I've been lookin' o'er the **scans** of her **brain**, mappin' things oot.

DONNY: An' I've been through all the **journals**, callin' doctors...

2.3

MAL stands up, decisive. The four seem agreed.

MAL: I can **build** this. It will take time, but I can **do** it.

DONNY: I think it'd be th' **world** tae her.

PORTIA: So, bigger question...

PORTIA: How exactly do we keep this **secret**? Especially from **her**?

2.4

WHAM! The doors to the lab fly open; CHANCE has a struggling LORD in a headlock, and is dragging him into the infirmary.

CHANCE (to the others): **OUT**. Now.

2.5

LORD and CHANCE, in each others' faces, CHANCE bewildered and LORD furious, as the others hastily file out the doors.

CHANCE: Have you gone **completely MENTAL**?

LORD: He **killed** my **family**!

CHANCE: ... he **what**?

PAGE THREE

3.1

A younger, less careworn PARRY LORD is looking into a mirror, amused and incredulous, at the black bowler hat perched atop his head. His fiancée, CHAAYA, long-haired, dark-eyed, and lovely, leans in over his shoulder; she's had her hands over his eyes and has just now pulled them away. CHAAYA and LORD's dialogue, like all the other dialogue in this scene, should be in an Hindi-esque script to imply that they're speaking a different language.

CAPTION: Nearly six years ago. Kerala, India.

CHAAYA: You look **dashing**.

LORD: I look **ridiculous**, Chaaya.

3.2

They're in a swanky menswear shop, picking out LORD's suit for their impending wedding. CHAAYA's in an attractive sari, while LORD, startlingly, is wearing a bright, colorful sportshirt -- the cuffs rolled up to reveal his unscarred hands and forearms -- and khaki slacks. LORD turns to CHAAYA, smiling, as she hangs about his neck affectionately, one hand adjusting the hat on his head to a more rakish angle. They're clearly, and poignantly, very much in love. Draped over a nearby rack of clothes, we see a curiously familiar-looking black suit and white shirt.

LORD: I'm beginning to **reconsider** this whole **marriage** thing.

CHAAYA: Please? Just for **one** day?

CHAAYA: It's not like you'll **wear** it the rest of your **life**.

3.3

LORD and CHAAYA flirt with one another, sweetly.

LORD: I thought it was **bad luck** for you to **see** what I'll be **wearing**.

CHAAYA: That only applies to **me**, silly.

LORD: Ah, well. It'll give me something to **toss off** when I get up to **sing**.

3.4

LORD is cavalierly flinging the bowler hat off his head, through the air, as he sings to a delighted and embarrassed CHAAYA.

CHAAYA: You **wouldn't**.

LORD: You just **wait**.

LORD (singing, in English): "Me... and... my... shaaaaadow..."

3.5

A severe-looking young Indian woman, a web of scar tissue crisscrossing her throat, effortlessly snatches LORD's flying bowler hat from midair. She has close-cropped hair, a military bearing, and frighteningly cold eyes. This is KALI -- the personal aide/bodyguard of a younger, unscarred *Colonel* MURKHJEE, who has just strolled into the shop with her. MURKHJEE is smiling genially; KALI is most definitely not.

MURKHJEE: I always **liked** that song.

PAGE FOUR

4.1

KALI hands LORD back his hat, with crisp efficiency. CHAAYA and LORD look uneasy, but LORD doesn't back down. When KALI speaks, her voice is creepy and ragged -- not unlike the RED QUEEN's, come to think of it.

KALI (rough): Nice hat.

LORD: Nice catch.

LORD: I **know** you two, don't I? I've seen you **meeting** with my **mother**.

4.2

LORD and MURKHJEE look one another in the eye, sizing each other up. MURKHJEE remains outwardly affable.

LORD: **Colonel Murkhjee**. You're not the biggest **fan** of Mum's **Kashmir** proposal.

MURKHJEE: Given her **charisma**, and the **publicity** your **father** can buy, I doubt that will **matter** much.

4.3

CHAAYA speaks, nervous but defiant, and MURKHJEE responds.

CHAAYA: If you want to get a **message** to her, you're **wasting** your time.

MURKHJEE: I just wanted to pay my **respects** to the happy bride and groom to be. These are **such** uncertain times.

4.4

MURKHJEE turns to leave, flanked by an ever-alert KALI.

MURKHJEE: Especially in **Kashmir**. So much tension. Such an **explosive** situation.

MURKHJEE: Your mother **means** well, I'm sure. But we've all got to be mindful...

4.5

LORD and CHAAYA, still close to one another, with the mirror behind them and the hat and suit draped over a nearby rack of clothes, watch the departing MURKHJEE. A certain pall's been cast over their happiness.

MURKHJEE: ... of where our **true loyalties** lie.

PAGE FIVE

5.1

Back to the present. The Branch's infirmary. LORD and CHANCE are both more subdued, LORD talking darkly, CHANCE listening with sympathy.

LORD: He wasn't at the **wedding**.

LORD: But I saw **her** there -- the **aide, Kali**. Dressed as one of the **caterers**.

LORD: Just before the **car** -- before they...

5.2

CHANCE moves to stand next to LORD, who keeps talking, lost in thought.

CHANCE: I'm **sorry**.

LORD: ... I did some **checking** on Murkhjee, after. He's got his fingers in all **manner** of pies.

LORD: Dubious dealings across the map, but nothing that **sticks**. He's even running for **Parliament** back home.

5.3

CHANCE suggests something. LORD seems to be thinking back.

CHANCE: So what about this **Kali** person?

CHANCE: Could you get to him through **her**?

LORD: It **occurred** to me.

5.4

Flashback! LORD, in his black suit, gloves, and bowler hat, stands on the edge of a London rooftop at night, the skyline illuminated behind him. He's got his heels dug in against the edge of the roof, counterweighting KALI, who's leaning backwards off the roof in the opposite direction. Only LORD's firm grip on an errant strap from KALI's sleek black tactical spysuit keeps her from plunging off the roof to her (apparent) death. Both KALI's suit and LORD's are torn and rumpled, clearly from a fight, and they both have blood, bruises, and scratches on their faces. LORD looks as cold and merciless as we've ever seen him.

CAPTION: Three years ago.

LORD: You've **missed** your **target**, Kali. The **minister's** alive.

LORD: And now you're going to tell me **everything** about my **wedding day**.

PAGE SIX

6.1

KALI smirks back at LORD. We can see the drop below her. It's a LONG way down.

KALI (rough): Or **what?**

KALI (rough): You'll **drop** me?

6.2

LORD means absolutely every word he says.

LORD: No. I'll make you **wish** I had.

6.3

KALI, behind her back, flicks her wrist -- a concealed blade flips into her hand...

KALI (o/p, rough): Ask me about it...

SFX: SVIK!

6.4

KALI swings her arm, aiming the blade to slash LORD's throat!

KALI (rough): ... the next time we **meet**.

6.5

Sudden gunshots hits a startled KALI, one in the chest and one blasting a good chunk out of her left arm, stopping her in mid-swing of the knife!

SFX: BLAM! BLAM!

KALI (rough): hggggk!

6.6

As LORD watches, stricken, KALI slips limply from his grasp, the knife tumbling from her fingers, and drops off the edge of the roof!

KALI: ...

PAGE SEVEN

7.1

Still in flashback: LORD looks over to see his then-partner COLIN MULWRAY (hooray!) halfway up a ladder to the roof, a smoking pistol still in one hand. COLIN is just beginning to realize that he might not have made the right move.

COLIN: The patented **Colin Mulwray** last-minute save, I call it.

COLIN: Or maybe just the **Mulwray**. Got a ring to it.

7.2

LORD stalks off, furious, not even looking at him, as a bewildered COLIN watches.

COLIN: You all right, Parry?

COLIN: ... **Parry?**

7.3

Back to the present: LORD and CHANCE in the infirmary. An awkward silence -- LORD brooding, CHANCE looking uncertain and sympathetic -- is broken by the arrival of MRS. KING.

KING: If you **children** are **quite** finished causing an **international incident**...

7.4

As CHANCE looks on, KING stares down LORD. LORD meets her gaze, apologizing, but not backing down.

LORD: I'm **sorry**. It was **unprofessional** of me.

KING: You're **damned** right.

KING: I once sat down and had a nice cup of tea with the man who'd shot my **husband** in the **face**.

7.5

KING turns back to make a point as she leaves the room.

KING: And **because** he had **vital information**, I **somehow** managed **not** to **throttle** him to death.

7.6

As KING is in the doorway, facing away to leave, CHANCE somewhat nervously asks the obvious question. KING's lips are pressed into the thinnest of smiles.

CHANCE: Er... what **happened** to him? The **man**.

KING: It seems the **tea** didn't quite **agree** with him.

KING: **Funny**, that.

PAGE EIGHT

8.1

MRS. KING is already back in the conference room by the time a seething LORD and a wary CHANCE re-enter. MR. QUEEN has positioned himself next to the door, looking ready to grab LORD if he does anything rash. MURKHJEE stands calmly on the opposite side of the conference table, rubbing his throat, smiling calmly.

MURKHJEE: *kaff* **There** you are.

MURKHJEE: **Excellent** use of the forearm. You should be working for **me**.

8.2

LORD glares at MURKHJEE across the table. MURKHJEE just can't be fazed. This guy sleeps like a baby every night -- clean conscience.

LORD: What do you know about the **death** of my family?

MURKHJEE: On and **off** the record, Mr. Publisher -- **nothing** at all.

LORD: Then I have **nothing** to say to you.

8.3

LORD has taken a seat as far across the room from MURKHJEE as possible, with CHANCE sitting next to him, sizing up MURKHJEE warily. At MR. QUEEN's prompting, MURKHJEE picks up a remote control device and gestures toward the flatscreen mounted on the wall at the far end of the room.

QUEEN: Now that we've done with the **pleasantries** -- if you **would**, General?

MURKHJEE: *kaff* Absolutely.

8.4

MURKHJEE stands before the flatscreen. Half the image shows the face of a young Indian researcher, pudgy, bearded and bespectacled; the other shows a strange-looking industrial device nestled inside a large steeljacketed suitcase.

MURKHJEE: Last month in New Delhi, **Dr. Sarangan Singh** of IIT developed a revolutionary **control circuit** to triple the efficiency of **uranium reprocessing**.

MURKHJEE: It's portable, easily installed in existing plants, and not **nearly as secret** as we had **assumed**.

8.5

Close on MURKHJEE's face. He looks genuinely grave and concerned.

MURKHJEE: Dr. Singh was **shot** and **killed** while idling in **traffic** last week. The same **afternoon**, the circuit was **stolen** from his lab.

MURKHJEE: Believe it or not, that's **not** the **bad** news.

PAGE NINE

9.1

A grave-looking QUEEN and KING flank a nervous CHANCE and a disturbingly icy LORD as they listen to MURKHJEE's briefing.

MURKHJEE (o/p): My operatives managed to track the device to an **arms dealer** here in London.

MURKHJEE (o/p): We were able to **recover** Dr. Singh's creation -- but not before its **thief** had lined up a **buyer**.

9.2

MURKHJEE gestures to the flatscreen, which now shows a surveillance photo of a middle-aged, bearded man in Western dress, snapped in mid-conversation with younger associates outside a slightly run-down building in the Brixton area of South London.

MURKHJEE: **Ali Al-Mazri**. Pakistani by birth, emigrated to **Brixton** ten years ago.

MURKHJEE: My government and yours have long **suspected** him of **terrorist** ties. We've never had **proof** -- until now.

9.3

LONDON at night. The Millennium Bridge, dazzlingly lit, spans the Thames, with the Tate Modern and its tall chimney at one end, and the glowing basilica of St. Paul's Cathedral near the other.

CAPTION/MURKHJEE: "I've set up a **meet**, posing as the seller. **0200 hours** tomorrow, in the middle of the **Millennium Bridge**."

CAPTION/MURKHJEE: "And I need your help."

9.4

In the shadows of the buildings on the St. Paul's side of the bridge, LORD, wearing an overcoat atop his usual suit and hat, gazes bridgeward through binoculars. He's got a small radio headset on, with a microphone attachment. CHANCE, also in a heavy British Army jacket, is about to climb into the back of a nondescript van, painted to look like it belongs to a janitorial service, as LORD speaks.

LORD: I've got **movement** on the bridge.

CHANCE: About bloody **time**. I thought **terrorists** were... you know... **prompt**.

LORD: **Skylark**, confirm.

9.5

High above the bridge, running with its lights off, a Metropolitan Police chopper hovers. In the cockpit, we see Constable HELEN BRIGGS, in the pilot's seat, and Constable RAMZI KHALID in the left-hand observer's seat.

BRIGGS: This is **Skylark**, in position above the bridge, over.

KHALID: I have **seven heat signatures** on the **TI**, moving your way.

PAGE TEN

10.1

CHANCE climbs into the back of the van, which is kitted out with surveillance equipment. MURKHJEE waits there, calm as ever, sitting opposite an open suitcase which contains Dr. Srinagar's device.

CHANCE: You're **on**, General.

CHANCE: Hold still, and I'll do you up with the **wire**.

10.2

CHANCE adjusts a surveillance mic taped beneath MURKHJEE's shirt, brusquely. He watches her work with mild amusement.

CHANCE: Microphone's in the **button** on your coat, so don't worry about **reception**.

CHANCE: Don't pinch the **wires**, Mal says, or the **sound** might cut out.

MURKHJEE: You don't **like** me, **do** you?

10.3

CHANCE turns a cool gaze on MURKHJEE, who seems no less amused. The device, in its open suitcase, is prominent in the background.

CHANCE: I had a **cat** once, looked a lot like you.

CHANCE: Especially after he'd **eaten** another of my **goldfish**.

CHANCE: Why aren't we bringing a **decoy**?

10.4

MURKHJEE does up the buttons on his shirt as CHANCE closes up the device's case, hunched over in the cramped quarters of the van.

MURKHJEE: These men are not **stupid**, Doctor.

MURKHJEE: Besides, I've hidden a **tracker** in the lining of the case.

MURKHJEE: We make the trade, wait for them to **scurry home**, then **strike**.

10.5

CHANCE hands MURKHJEE the case. He's posing her a question.

MURKHJEE: Tell me -- have you ever **been** to **Pakistan**?

CHANCE: It's not the **highest** on my list. Why?

MURKHJEE: A bright, independent, **outspoken** woman like you...

MURKHJEE: In **Pakistan**, you might be **raped** on the street. Possibly **killed**.

PAGE ELEVEN

11.1

CHANCE scowls at MURKHJEE, who just smiles back.

CHANCE: ... You've a real **way** with **people**, haven't you?

MURKHJEE: Oh, they **veil** themselves in **modernity**, the Pakistanis, but I've seen the **true face** beneath.

11.2

CHANCE and MURKHJEE talk. MURKHJEE has a far-off look in his eye, nostalgic.

CHANCE: So you'll scrap with 'em, endlessly, over a bit of land that just wants to be left alone?

MURKHJEE: My **grandparents** were **Kashmiri Pandits**. I spent **summers** there as a child.

11.3

MURKHJEE's face. He looks serene, even hopeful.

MURKHJEE: My grandfather ferried tourists across the **Dal Lake**. The **mist** in the morning, as it sheeted the mountains...

11.4

MURKHJEE looks CHANCE in the eye, and for a moment, his gaze turns deadly serious.

MURKHJEE: Those who do not, who **cannot** know the place **firsthand**... should keep their **good intentions** to themselves.

MURKHJEE: ... Are we **finished** here?

11.5

CHANCE sits in the back of the van, thoughtful, watching MURKHJEE as he climbs out.

NO DIALOGUE

11.6

MURKHJEE moves off past LORD, still standing sentinel outside the van. MURKHJEE's casting a glance at LORD as he passes; LORD's looking stonily ahead.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE TWELVE

12.1

A man clearly recognizable as ALI AL-MAZRI and six of his men, dressed warmly in street clothes, wait warily on the bridge. They wear bulky jackets and sweatshirts, possibly concealing armaments.

NO DIALOGUE

12.2

BRIGGS and KHALID in the cockpit of the police chopper.

KHALID: **Skylark to Hedgehog**, subject is **approaching** the **targets**.

KHALID (quiet): Wish they'd tell us **why** we're **here**. Bloody **spooks**.

BRIGGS (quiet, friendly): Oh, quit your whingeing. It's **double pay**, isn't it?

12.3

CHANCE is closing the van's back door and talking to LORD, who's watching through binoculars. CHANCE looks thoughtful, as if her talk with MURKHJEE's given her something to chew on.

LORD: I've been **thinking**.

CHANCE: Yeah, me too. What about?

LORD: He's a **general**. The brass. Why's he going in **person**? Why not send an **agent**?

12.4

CHANCE huddles in her jacket against the chill night air, moving almost unconsciously closer to LORD for warmth. LORD has put down the binoculars and is meeting her gaze.

CHANCE: I don't know -- he seems the **detail-oriented** sort.

LORD: Or maybe he's got **expenses** to fund. Campaigns can be **costly**.

12.5

Over the shoulders of AL-MAZRI and his men, we see a calm, satisfied-looking MURKHJEE making his way across the bridge, carrying the suitcase.

CAPTION/LORD: "What if this is a straight **sale**, not a **sting**? What if it's somehow **both**?"

12.6

And high atop the chimney of the Tate Modern on the far side of the river, looking down to the bridge and the people upon it, someone stands -- in a swirl of scarlet fabric...

CAPTION/LORD: "What if he's **playing** us all?"

PAGE THIRTEEN

13.1

MURKHJEE and AL-MAZRI size each other up.

AL-MAZRI: Is that **it**?

MURKHJEE: **Indeed**.

AL-MAZRI: First we **see** it. Then I **transfer** the **funds**.

13.2

Hunched in the back of the van, CHANCE and LORD (momentarily hatless) listen in on headphones. CHANCE looks sour at what she's hearing, LORD suspicious.

WIRETAP (elec, staticky): I'm sure you'll find it's *skkkrrrrrrkkkkk*

CHANCE: **Dammit!** I told him not to get the **wire** pinched.

LORD: I'm sure you **did**...

WIRETAP (elec, staticky): *skrrrrrk* --ur Swiss account set-- *skrrrrrrrrkkkk* -- own people **take out** Si -- *skrrrrrrrrkkkk*

13.3

The bridge. AL-MAZRI is looking into the open case, satisfied. One of his MEN is handing MURKHJEE a PDA.

AL-MAZRI: I'm **satisfied**. You can confirm the **transfer** yourself.

MURKHJEE: Pleasure **doing business** with you.

13.4

The cockpit of the chopper. BRIGGS is telling a funny family anecdote; KHALID has just noticed something odd on his video screen.

BRIGGS: ... And then he tells me, "But Mummy, I already **walked** the dog!"

KHALID: Wait, wait -- have a look. The chimney of the **Tate**.

KHALID: I keep seeing something **moving** up --

13.5

From outside the chopper, we see the flare of a rocket and a trail of smoke, as a surface-to-air missile lances upward from the chimney of the Tate, toward the helicopter!

BRIGGS (inside chopper, small): Oh God.

BRIGGS (inside chopper): Mayday, **mayday**, this is **Skylark--**

PAGE FOURTEEN

14.1

The helicopter EXPLODES as the missile smashes into it, sending plumes of fiery debris raining down onto the bridge and the Thames. Silhouetted by the light of the blast, we see a scarlet-cloaked figure standing atop the chimney of the Tate Modern, casually tossing aside a spent Stinger surface-to-air missile launcher. The RED QUEEN. She seems to be wearing some sort of belt harness, with a cord anchored to the top of the tower, and trailing off the edge of it.

NO DIALOGUE

14.2

The men on the bridge run for cover as the flaming wreck of the chopper crashes down on the St. Paul's side of the bridge -- effectively cutting MURKHJEE off from LORD and CHANCE! The bridge is swaying and buckling under the sudden weight, supports twisting, but it's holding...

SFX: KRASH!

14.3

LORD and CHANCE have burst out of the back of the van and stopped short, staring in horror and disbelief. Even at this distance, they're illuminated by the roaring flames.

NO DIALOGUE

14.4

AL-MAZRI and his men have drawn pistols, looking around warily, ready for anything. AL-MAZRI, still clutching the briefcase, has his pistol trained on MURKHJEE, who remains calm, though certainly not oblivious to his surroundings.

AL-MAZRI: **Explain.**

MURKHJEE: Point that **elsewhere**. I don't drop **aircraft** on myself.

14.5

Shots ring out! With the chopper still burning in the background, and smoke billowing from the wreck across the bridge, two of AL-MAZRI's MEN -- call them YUSUF and ISMAIL -- have drawn their pistols, as eerie FIGURES silhouetted in the foreground clamber (dripping wet) up over the sides of the bridge...

YUSUF (in Arabic): What in **hell**?

ISMAIL (in Arabic): What **are** they?

FIGURES: kht kht kht...

PAGE FIFTEEN

15.1

Big panel. THE RED QUEEN strides through the smoke drifting along the bridge toward MURKHJEE, AL-MAZRI, and his MEN. Her sword (last seen at the end of issue 6) glimmers in her left hand. Flanking her, a half-dozen BUNNYMEN -- sleeker and more refined than when we last saw them, with thicker-looking armor and more reinforced antenna "ears" -- are clambering inhumanly up and over the sides of the bridge. The clocks on the BUNNYMEN's chests all read about ten past two.

NO DIALOGUE

15.2

On the opposite side of the bridge, LORD and CHANCE are shying away from the intense heat of the wrecked chopper. LORD is looking off to one side of the bridge, to one of the two lines of suspension cables that help support the bridge.

CHANCE (small): Those poor sods...

CHANCE: It's too damned **hot!** We can't get **past!**

LORD: Tell me, Doctor -- how's your **balance?**

PAGE SIXTEEN

16.1

With MURKHJEE behind him, resolutely clutching the case, AL-MAZRI fires his pistol again and again at the oncoming RED QUEEN.

SFX/PISTOL: BLAM BLAM BLAM!

AL-MAZRI (small): Allah'u akbar, Allah'u akbar...

16.2

The RED QUEEN's sword flashes back and forth, effortlessly deflecting the bullets. Behind her, we see the BUNNYMEN swarming in a skin-crawling mass over what's left of AL-MAZRI's MEN, with several bodies already littering the bridge.

SFX/RICOCHETS: SPANG! SPANG! SPANG!

16.3

The RED QUEEN slashes with her sword, and though we can't see quite what she's done to AL MAZRI, the way his pistol seems to be popping forth into the air of its own volition suggests it's something horrible.

SFX/SWORD: SVIKKKK!

AL-MAZRI (o/p, ghastly): Ghhhhrrrk--*

16.4

THE RED QUEEN brandishes the point of her sword directly at a shaken but unbowed MURKHJEE. He's seen worse.

RED QUEEN (rough): Hello, General.

16.5

The RED QUEEN and MURKHJEE are both distracted as, on the opposite side of the bridge, a BUNNYMAN is thrown to the ground, its mask and one of its eyepieces badly cracked as if by blunt impact. The BUNNYMAN is shrieking, a horrible, inhuman, electronic sound.

SFX: THWUD!

BUNNYMAN: HREEEEEEEEEE!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

17.1

LORD, in midair, is kicking another BUNNYMAN in the face, one arm flung back from where he'd just swung his umbrella into the first BUNNYMAN's mask. CHANCE, just over the railing, is punching a third BUNNYMAN as hard as she can in its throat, causing it to emit a gurgling burst of static.

BUNNYMAN: KHHHHRRRRK!

CHANCE: Oh, I'm sorry. Are we **interrupting?**

17.2

LORD is a man possessed. He hits the pavement in a crouch, ducking under another BUNNYMAN's sweeping high kick...

NO DIALOGUE

17.3

... then, rising, drives the point of his umbrella up into the bottom of that BUNNYMAN's chin, beneath the faceplate of its mask, *lifting the BUNNYMAN off the ground--!*

NO DIALOGUE

17.4

CHANCE is flipping the BUNNYMAN she's been tangling with over her shoulder -- to swat the one LORD sent flying out of the air. SMACK!

CHANCE: Hnnnnfff!

SFX: SMACK!

17.5

The RED QUEEN, momentarily distracted, has turned to see MURKHJEE fleeing determinedly toward the TATE side of the bridge!

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE EIGHTEEN

18.1

The remaining two BUNNYMEN standing have flanked LORD and CHANCE, who stand back to back, ready for anything. The BUNNYMEN are extending their hands ominously...

CHANCE: Oh, what's this? Going to waggle your **fingers** at us?

LORD: You're only **encouraging** them...

18.2

The tips of the BUNNYMEN's fingers shoot off toward LORD and CHANCE, trailing wires and crackling with sparks-- and we realize they're TASERS!

SFX/TASERS: ZZZZZKKK!

LORD: **Down!**

18.3

LORD and CHANCE hit the deck as the BUNNYMEN's tasers, thunk into each other's faceplates, sending both writhing from a nasty dose of current. Sparks and smoke are erupting from their helmets.

SFX/TASERS: TZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

BUNNYMEN: HREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

18.4

MURKHJEE's running pell-mell for the Tate side of the bridge, carrying the case with him. But the RED QUEEN is sprinting along the railing of the bridge after him, and she's gaining!

MURKHJEE: *huff* *huff*

18.5

The RED QUEEN swoops down on MURKHJEE -- and neatly IMPALES him through the chest with her sword!

MURKHJEE: Hk!

MURKHJEE: Hggk. Hggk.

PAGE NINETEEN

19.1

Rising from their crouch, the two smoldering remains of the BUNNYMEN on either side of them, LORD and CHANCE look on in horror. LORD's just devastated -- this is the one guy who might have given him answers about the deaths of his family, skewered.

CHANCE (small): That can't **possibly** be good.

19.2

The RED QUEEN kneels down next to the dying MURKHJEE, picking up his case with her right hand, her left withdrawing the sword from his torso. She's whispering something in his ear, something we can't hear, and his eyes are wide with horrible comprehension.

RED QUEEN: (rough, inaudible)

19.3

... and then a furious LORD bodily tackles her, slamming the RED QUEEN hard against the railing of the bridge!

LORD: HRRRAAH!

SFX: KLONG!

19.4

The RED QUEEN smashes LORD across the face with the suitcase, sending him staggering backward, as CHANCE rushes to help him.

SFX: SWAK!

LORD: Gllph!

CHANCE: **Hands off**, you absolute--

19.5

As LORD takes a moment to shake off the blow, the RED QUEEN backflips up toward the railing, sword in one hand, case in the other -- flip-kicking CHANCE in the chest in the process.

SFX: THWUD!

CHANCE: Guh!

PAGE TWENTY

20.1

LORD leaps, kicking the RED QUEEN hard across the face as she balances on the railing of the bridge. She's stumbling backwards, swaying. We can see that debris from the chopper has taken out the section of suspension cable just beyond this area of the railing -- it seems there's nothing but the Thames below the RED QUEEN.

SFX: KRAK!

20.2

As the RED QUEEN sways, LORD -- balanced on the railing next to her -- rakes the curved handle of umbrella down her left arm, stripping the sword from her hand. She's leaning alarmingly far back now...

SFX: SWAT!

20.3

And just as the RED QUEEN's about to fall, LORD, counterbalanced on the railing, grabs her securely by the left wrist.

LORD: **Got** you.

20.4

LORD stares down the RED QUEEN -- well, as well as anyone could, given her all-concealing veil -- as the two balance on the bridge railing. In the background, we see CHANCE getting to her feet.

LORD: I don't know **who** you are. I don't particularly **care**.

LORD: You're all out of **tricks**.

20.5

At which point the RED QUEEN's left arm -- with LORD still clutching her wrist, as the hand gives him the reverse-V "up yours" sign! -- comes detached from the rest of her body with a distinct POP!, and the RED QUEEN falls backward off the bridge.

RED QUEEN (rough): Not quite.

SFX: POP!

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

21.1

CHANCE is just barely able to catch LORD as he stumbles backward off the railing, still clutching the RED QUEEN's detached arm. The wrappings around it have come undone enough to reveal mechanical components -- it's a robotic arm. LORD and CHANCE are both looking at it goggle-eyed.

CHANCE: Um.

CHANCE: What the **hell** just happened?

21.2

On a speedboat on the River Thames, driven by a BUNNYMAN -- wearing a naval captain's hat, for some ridiculous reason -- the RED QUEEN clutches the case with her remaining (right) arm and watches as the bridge, LORD and CHANCE, and the flaming ruins of the chopper recede into the distance.

SFX/BOAT: VMMMMMMMM

21.3

LORD and CHANCE are sitting down hard on the surface of the bridge, dazed, when MURKHJEE stirs nearby. LORD is looking over at him, wide-eyed.

MURKHJEE: *kaff* Hk. Gghk.

21.4

LORD is on his hands and knees now, right by the dying general, all but pleading with him, completely desperate.

LORD: No. No no no.

LORD: You have to **tell** me. You have to tell me before you go.

21.5

MURKHJEE's eyes loll toward LORD, and he manages to gasp out his last words.

MURKHJEE: Hgk.

MURKHJEE (weak): My... conscience... is clear... *

21.6

As MURKHJEE gives up the ghost, LORD just slumps. CHANCE doesn't have that luxury -- she's looking with alarm at something else on the bridge.

BUNNYMEN (elec., o/p): Shame on you.

CHANCE: Oh... **bollocks**.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

22.1

The four remaining BUNNYMEN who weren't fried by each other's tasers have stumbled back into motion, lurching or crawling along zombielike on bent limbs, headed for LORD and CHANCE. As seen in issue 1, a VOICE -- undoubtedly the WHITE RABBITS -- emanates from speakers in their necks in alternating fragments. And even worse -- they've started ticking, the clocks on their chests headed toward midnight...

CHANCE: Their **clocks** just started **moving**.

BUNNYMAN 1 (elec): You've gone and

BUNNYMAN 2 (elec): broken all my

BUNNYMAN 3 (elec): very favorite **toys**.

SFX/BUNNYMEN: tik tik tik tik tik

22.2

A despairing LORD is trying to shake CHANCE off as she tries desperately to drag him to his feet.

CHANCE: They're going to **blow--!**

LORD: Leave me.

22.3

As the BUNNYMEN close in, a determined CHANCE all but hauls LORD onto the railing. He's still staring at MURKHJEE.

CHANCE: The **hell** I will.

CHANCE: And when we hit water...

SFX/BUNNYMEN: TIK TIK TIK TIK

22.4

CHANCE drags LORD along as they leap off the bridge, just out of the shambling BUNNYMEN's grasp...

CHANCE: ...you'd better **damn** well start **swimming**.

SFX/BUNNYMEN: **TIK TIK TIK TIK TIK TIK**

22.5

LORD and CHANCE plunge into the water feetfirst, trailing swirls of bubbles. Strange light flares around them from the explosion on the bridge, and bits of debris lance into the water all around them.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

23.1

LORD and CHANCE surface, completely soaked, from the murk of the Thames, clinging to a floating piece of debris from the bridge railing. If we can see the bridge, the copter's fire has nearly gone out, but a few new flames from the exploded BUNNYMEN still smolder on the increasingly twisted wreck of the bridge. CHANCE is looking at LORD intently, but LORD can't meet her gaze.

CHANCE (small): **Always** in the river...

CHANCE: Look, this needs to stop **right** quick.

LORD: This isn't the **time--**

23.2

Deeply pissed off, CHANCE unceremoniously dunks LORD's entire head back under the water as his hands flail.

SFX: SPLOOSH!

23.3

CHANCE hauls LORD back to the surface, dripping and startled.

CHANCE: I'm **sick** of this, all right?

CHANCE: **Stop trying to kill yourself.**

23.4

CHANCE finally makes eye contact with LORD.

CHANCE: It's not going to bring anyone **back** to you.

CHANCE: And it wouldn't make them **proud**, either.

23.5

CHANCE softens, showing a rare bit of vulnerability here, and LORD's picking up on it. She's actually getting flustered.

CHANCE: There's **actual living people** who **care** about you.

CHANCE: I... I mean... If you were to...

23.6

CHANCE just gives up and wraps her arms around a startled -- but not displeased -- LORD, giving him a crushing hug, of all things.

CHANCE (small): ... the **hell** with it.

23.7

CHANCE has broken off the hug, but her arms are still on LORD's shoulders, and there's still an uneasy intimacy between them.

CHANCE: So... so you better have gotten the **point** of that.

CHANCE: 'Cause I'm... I'm going to stop **talking** now.

23.8

LORD and CHANCE, still treading water, look up at the smoldering bridge, side by side in

the Thames. Police boats are visible in the distance, sweeping the water with searchlights.
CHANCE is grimacing at the taste of the river water.

LORD: ... Lovely night for **hypothermia**, isn't it?

CHANCE: I was **so** hoping the river would **taste** better this time.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

24.1

MR. QUEEN's office, the BRANCH. MR. QUEEN talks with LORD on the phone as a pensive MRS. KING sits on a corner of his desk. They both look grave.

QUEEN: ... it's all right, Parry. You did what you could.

QUEEN: No, sorry. Mal says the tracker's gone **dead**.

QUEEN: Come back for a **debrief**, then we'll let you get some **sleep**.

24.2

QUEEN hangs up the phone, just looking at it. KING seems equally grave.

SFX: klik.

24.3

In a burst of sudden anger, QUEEN hurls the entire phone across the office, sending papers on his desk scattering. The phone smashes to the floor, shattering.

QUEEN: **Dammit!**

SFX/PHONE: SPAK!

24.4

KING, much as she can, tries to comfort QUEEN, putting a hand on his arm. QUEEN looks at her, angry and a little despairing.

KING: Easy on your **blood pressure**. There's still time to **right** this.

QUEEN: It's all going **rotten**. I can **feel** it.

QUEEN: And when it **does**, it's going to be on **our heads**.

24.5

A sleepy PORTIA ducks her head in the office door, slightly alarmed.

PORTIA: Everything all right? I heard a **noise**...

KING: What is it, Portia?

PORTIA: **Five** just passed along word -- there was a rail shipment of **nuclear waste** out of the **Oldbury** plant, and... um...

24.6

KING and QUEEN look at each other darkly as PORTIA finishes her sentence.

PORTIA (o/p): The whole train, all the containers of **waste**...

PORTIA (o/p): It seems to be **gone**.