

JOE BENITEZ'S

Vol. 9

Holly-Rosing · Benitez · Montiel · Rich · Heisler

Lady Mechanika



THE
MECHANICAL
MENAGERIE

MONTIEL

CHAPTER ONE

MECHANIKA
CITY.

INSPECTOR SINGH! I WAS NOT EXPECTING YOU TO PULL UP IN AN OFFICIAL POLICE VEHICLE. WHAT WILL THE NEIGHBORS THINK?

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK YOU'LL LOSE ANY SLEEP OVER IT.

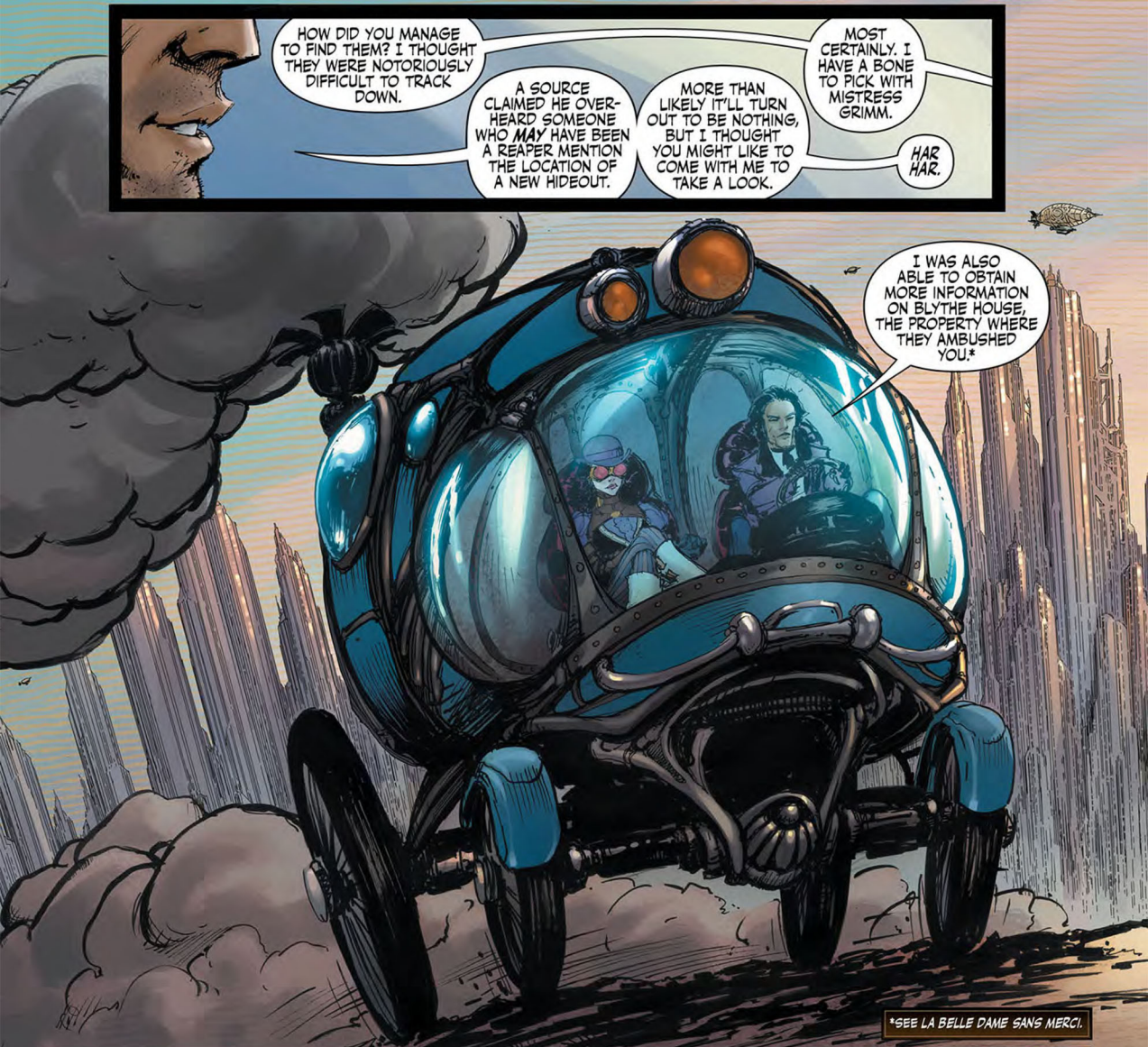
HEH. YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

I REQUISITIONED IT FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE DAY. WE'VE GOT QUITE A WAY TO GO AND I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE MORE CONVENIENT THAN HIRING A CARRIAGE.

IS THIS AN AUTHORIZED OUTING?

WELL, IT *IS* PART OF MY DUTIES TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM DANGEROUS CRIMINALS. AND FEW ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN MISTRESS GRIMM AND HER GANG OF REAPERS.





HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO FIND THEM? I THOUGHT THEY WERE NOTORIOUSLY DIFFICULT TO TRACK DOWN.

A SOURCE CLAIMED HE OVERHEARD SOMEONE WHO MAY HAVE BEEN A REAPER MENTION THE LOCATION OF A NEW HIDEOUT.

MORE THAN LIKELY IT'LL TURN OUT TO BE NOTHING, BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO COME WITH ME TO TAKE A LOOK.

MOST CERTAINLY. I HAVE A BONE TO PICK WITH MISTRESS GRIMM.

HAR HAR.

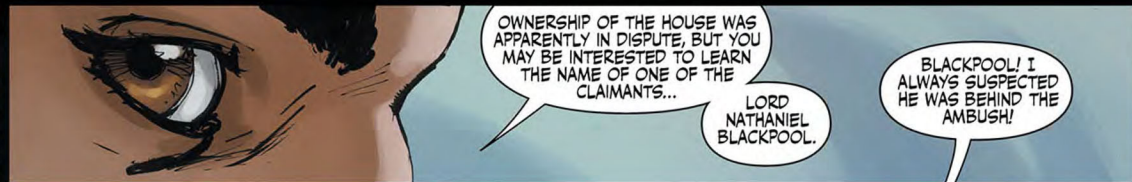
I WAS ALSO ABLE TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ON BLYTHE HOUSE, THE PROPERTY WHERE THEY AMBUSHED YOU.*

*SEE LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.



YOU HAVE BEEN BUSY WHILE I WAS AWAY!

JUST DOING MY JOB, MISS.



OWNERSHIP OF THE HOUSE WAS APPARENTLY IN DISPUTE, BUT YOU MAY BE INTERESTED TO LEARN THE NAME OF ONE OF THE CLAIMANTS...

LORD NATHANIEL BLACKPOOL.

BLACKPOOL! I ALWAYS SUSPECTED HE WAS BEHIND THE AMBUSH!



IT MAY LINK HIM TO THE LOCATION, BUT IT'S NOT DEFINITIVE PROOF HE WAS BEHIND THE ATTACK.

NO...NO, OF COURSE NOT.

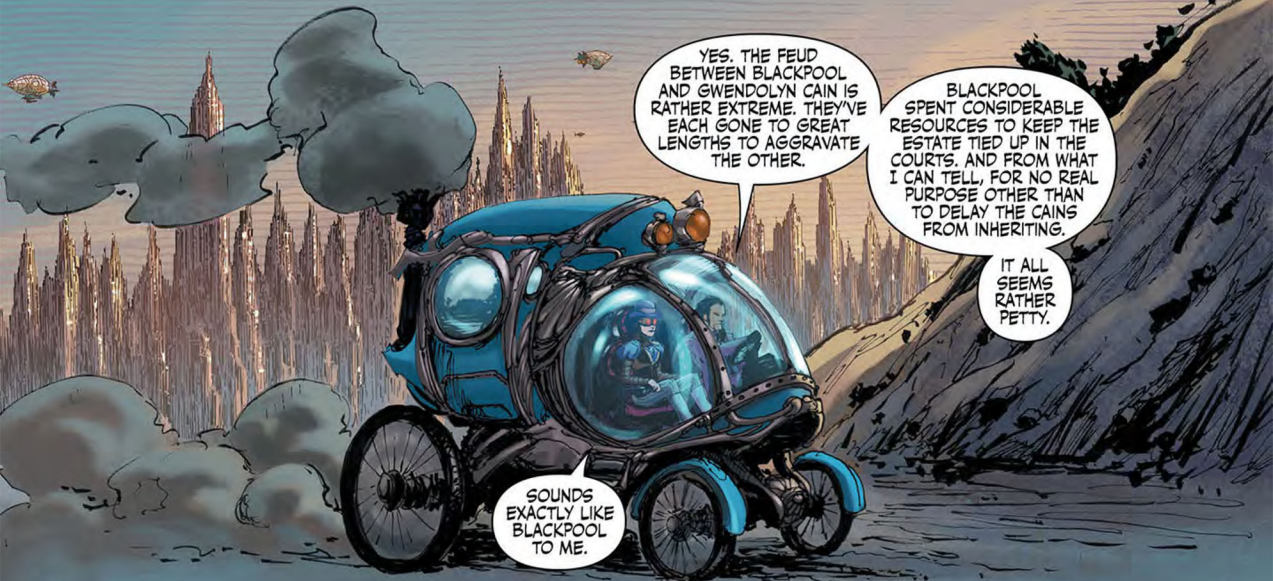
THE PROPERTY IS PART OF A LARGER ESTATE THAT BELONGED TO A RELATIVE OF HIS FATHER'S SECOND WIFE.

BLACKPOOL APPEARS TO HAVE PUT A CLAIM ON IT JUST TO PROVOKE HIS STEP-SIBLINGS.

THE CAINS.



COME ON,
UNCLE ARCHIE!
WE FOUND THEM!
WE FOUND THE
WHIMZIES!

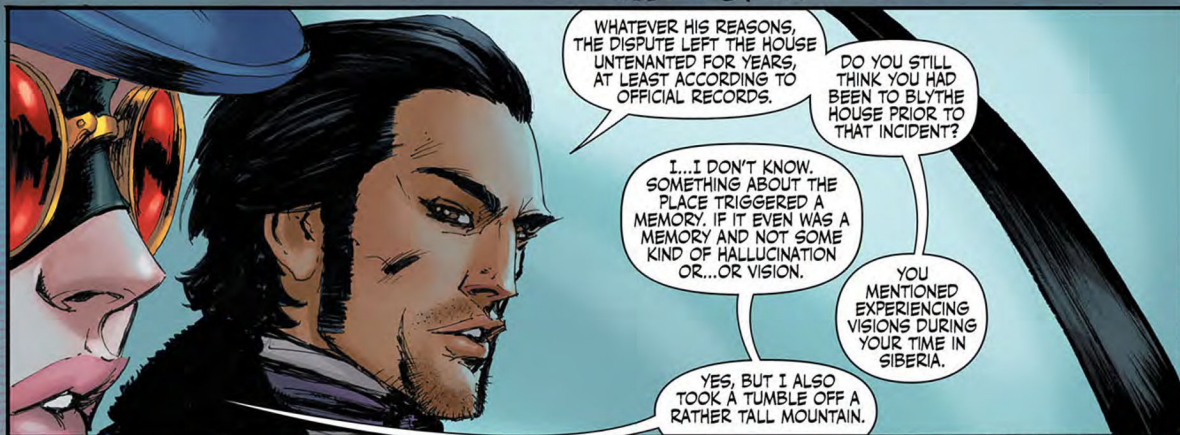


YES, THE FEUD BETWEEN BLACKPOOL AND GWENDOLYN CAIN IS RATHER EXTREME. THEY'VE EACH GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO AGGRAVATE THE OTHER.

BLACKPOOL SPENT CONSIDERABLE RESOURCES TO KEEP THE ESTATE TIED UP IN THE COURTS. AND FROM WHAT I CAN TELL, FOR NO REAL PURPOSE OTHER THAN TO DELAY THE CAINS FROM INHERITING.

IT ALL SEEMS RATHER PETTY.

SOUNDS EXACTLY LIKE BLACKPOOL TO ME.



WHATEVER HIS REASONS, THE DISPUTE LEFT THE HOUSE UNTENANTED FOR YEARS, AT LEAST ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL RECORDS.

DO YOU STILL THINK YOU HAD BEEN TO BLYTHE HOUSE PRIOR TO THAT INCIDENT?

I...I DON'T KNOW. SOMETHING ABOUT THE PLACE TRIGGERED A MEMORY. IF IT EVEN WAS A MEMORY AND NOT SOME KIND OF HALLUCINATION OR...OR VISION.

YOU MENTIONED EXPERIENCING VISIONS DURING YOUR TIME IN SIBERIA.

YES, BUT I ALSO TOOK A TUMBLE OFF A RATHER TALL MOUNTAIN.

ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU'VE FULLY RECOVERED FROM ALL YOUR INJURIES? YOU DO SEEM A TAD...PEAKY. PERHAPS WE SHOULD POSTPONE THIS TRIP TO A LATER DATE.

NO, I'M FINE! DR. LITTLETON GAVE ME A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH.

I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT.

THE DOCTOR HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS HELP. I'M LUCKY HE OFFERED TO ASSIST WITH MY RECOVERY.

AND MR. LEWIS, HOW IS HE? I HOPE THE FALLING OUT BETWEEN YOU IS ALL PATCHED UP AS WELL?



SIGH: I'M AFRAID SOME THINGS WILL REQUIRE A BIT MORE TIME TO MEND COMPLETELY...





GIMME A
CHANCE TO...
HUFF: HUFF:
TO CATCH MY
BREATH...



GIRLS?

EEEEK!



FRED!

ALLIE!



HUFF:
HUFF:



GIRLS! ARE
YOU...



WE FOUND IT! WE
FOUND IT!

