



MANY A TIME I'VE HAD
TO SING FOR MY
SUPPER. BUT I DOUBT
YOU'RE-SO INCLINED....

AND IF YOU WERE,
I SHOULDN'T WANT
TO HEAR IT.



AND SO, WITH YOUR
KIND PERMISSION...

YOUR HUMBLE
SUPPER PROPOSES
INSTEAD TO SING
FOR YOU.



THEY SAY THAT ONCE
UPON A TIME
THE WORLD WAS FREE
FROM VICE AND CRIME
AND WE WERE HAPPY
ALL THE TIME
AS INNOCENT AS MICE.



THE LION LAID DOWN
WITH THE LAMB
AND WOLVES ATE GRASS
INSTEAD OF HAM

FOLKS HELPED IF YOU
WERE IN A JAM
THE WORLD WAS
PARADISE.

A PRETTY TALE BUT I WOULD SAY
THE WORLD HAS ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY
A MADHOUSE AS IT IS TODAY
IN A CRAZY UNIVERSE.



BUT WHAT IF ONCE
THERE WAS A GUY
WHO TAUGHT US ALL
TO CHEAT AND LIE?
I THINK THAT NO-ONE
COULD DENY
IT WOULD HAVE MADE
THINGS WORSE.



I HEARD A STORY
LONG AGO
I THINK IT'S ONE
YOU OUGHT TO KNOW



ABOUT A LITTLE
SO-AND-SO
WHO LOVED TO
CHEAT AND
TRICK.

AND SO FOR THIS
MY FINAL SONG
I'LL TELL OF HOW THE
WORLD WENT WRONG
I PROMISE THAT IT
WON'T TAKE LONG--

THE STORY OF

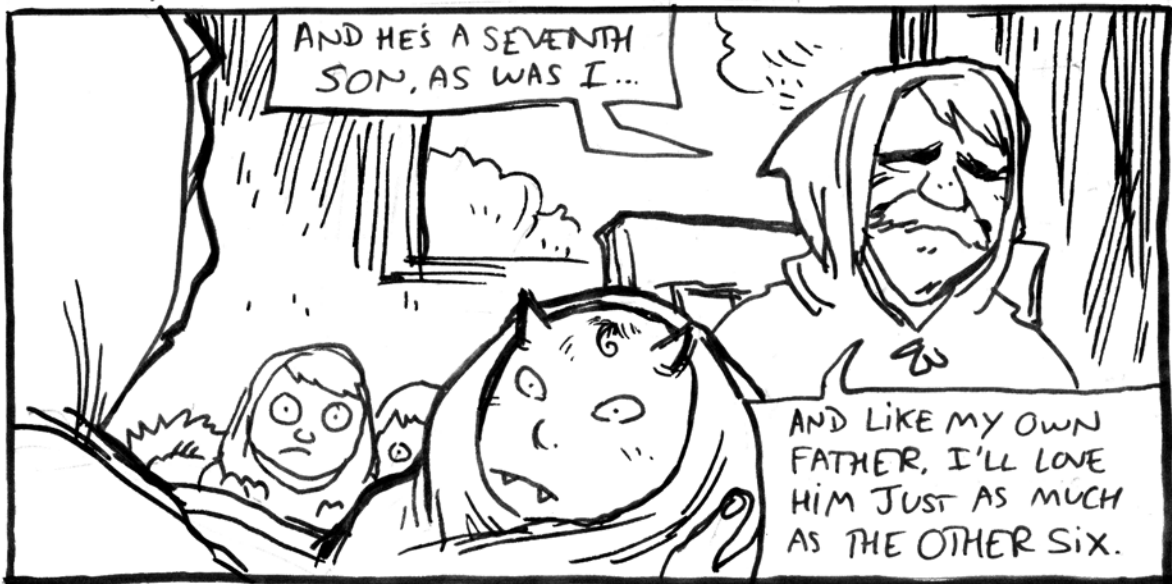
YOUNG NICK

A 24 HOUR COMIC BY
MARK SIMMONS



A VERY LONG TIME AGO,
IN A REMOTE VILLAGE...

WAAAAA





HAVING EXHAUSTED THE RESOURCES OF HIS GRIEVING PARENTS, NICK GOES CALLING ON THE NEIGHBORS.



CARRY YOUR BREAD TO THE MARKET, MA'AM?



WATCH YOUR HORSE FOR YOU, SIR?



MY APOLOGIES, SIR, BUT I'M QUITE EXHAUSTED FROM MY LONG TRIP. PERHAPS YOUR LOVELY WIFE COULD SHOW ME TO A ROOM WHILE YOU SEE TO MY HORSE?

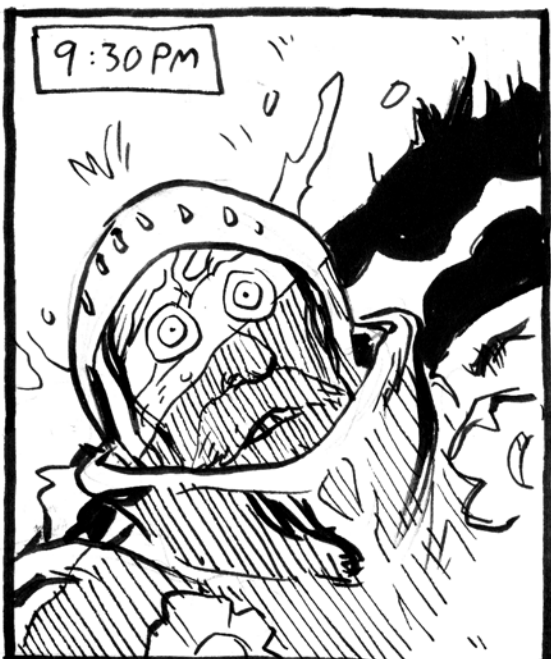


BUT THANKS TO ALL HIS
LIES AND LUST
THE NEIGHBORS SOON
LEARNED NOT TO TRUST
HIS BUSINESS WENT FROM
BOOM TO BUST;
HE'D NO ONE TO
IMPORTUNE.

AND SO DEPARTED
WICKED NICK
IN SEARCH OF FOLKS
TO CON AND TRICK
TIED HIS BELONGINGS
TO A STICK
(AND GAVE THE DOG
A FINAL KICK)
AND WENT TO SEEK
HIS FORTUNE.









HIS TRAIL OF VICTIMS GREW AND GREW
HE HOODWINKED MAIDENS WITH A SHOE

FIT THE SLIPPER,
WIN A PRINCE!



SWAPPED BROKEN LAMPS FOR SHINY
NEW, EXCHANGED SOME BEANS FOR CATTLE.

THEY'RE MAGIC!



HE SIGNED UP AS A HIRED LANCE
DEMANDED PAYMENT IN ADVANCE



THEN BLEW IT ALL ON
GAMES OF CHANCE
AND FLED BEFORE THE BATTLE.

OUR WICKED NICK, HE HAD HIS FUN
BUT NOW THEY HAD HIM ON THE RUN
BECAUSE OF ALL THE THINGS HE'D DONE
A CHRONICLE OF SIN.

THEY WANTED HIM ALIVE OR DEAD
AND SO HE FIGURED HE WOULD HEAD
BACK HOME, WHERE, I HAVE HEARD IT SAID
THEY HAVE TO TAKE YOU IN.

WANTED

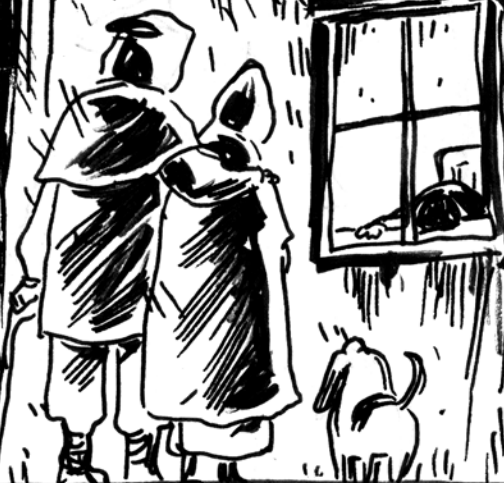


FOR

FRAUD, THEFT,
LECHERY, SLOTH,
TRAFFICKING IN
STOLEN GOODS,
CONTRIBUTING TO
THE DELINQUENCY

HIS AGING, GRIEVING MOM AND DAD
MADE HIM A FEAST OF ALL THEY HAD
THEN HEARD FROM THE UNGRATEFUL AD
HE'D RATHER DINE ALONE.

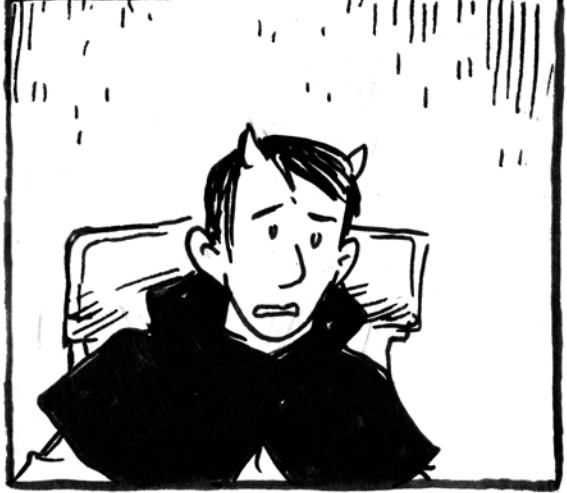
HE LEFT HIS PARENTS
IN THE RAIN
A POOR REWARD FOR
ALL THEIR PAIN
SO THEY COULD ONLY
WATCH IN VAIN
AS NICK CHOKED ON
A BONE.



EMERGING FROM A FEVERED DREAM
HE WOKE UP WITH A STIFLED SCREAM



FOR IN HIS SLUMBER IT WOULD SEEM
HE'D REACHED HIS LOWEST LEVEL.



HIS SINS WOULD NOW RECEIVE THEIR WAGE
FOR NICK WAS IN THE CENTER STAGE;
THE COURTROOM DRAMA OF THE AGE --



THE TRIAL OF
THE DEVIL.

ONE BY ONE, THE PEOPLE NICK HAS
WRONGED GIVE THEIR TESTIMONY.



ALL OF THEM.



IT TAKES A VERY LONG TIME.



WELL, THIS HAS ALL BEEN
PERFECTLY BORING.

MAY I PRESENT
MY DEFENSE?





LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN
OF THE JURY!

YOU'VE HEARD DESCRIBED A
COMPLETE AND UTTER FIEND,
A MAN OF NO REDEEMING
QUALITIES, DESERVING OF
THE GRAVEST PENALTY!



BUT I SUBMIT TO YOU THAT I AM
NOT SUCH A MAN! FOR WHO
COULD LOVE SUCH A SCOUNDREL?
AND LOVED I AM!



TELL THEM, SPOT.



SPOT?

A DOG, THEY SAY,
IS MAN'S BEST FRIEND
HE'LL STICK WITH YOU
UNTIL THE END
BUT EVEN SPOT
COULD NOT DEFEND
HIS MASTER'S NEGLIGENCE.

SO NICK WAS FORCED
TO TAKE THE STAND
AND TAKE HIS OWN
DEFENSE IN HAND
HE SWORE HE'D MAKE
THEM UNDERSTAND
HIS SAINTLY INNOCENCE.

HE MADE EXCUSE
UPON EXCUSE
TO SAVE HIS NECK FROM
JUDGEMENT'S NOOSE
BUT FOR HIS TRICKS
AND CRUEL ABUSE
HE OFFERED NO
REPENTANCE.

FOR SEVEN DAYS
AND SEVEN NIGHTS
OUR HERO STOOD UP
FOR HIS RIGHTS

HIS ORATORY REACHED
SUCH HEIGHTS

HE PASSED OUT
IN MID-SENTENCE.



HIS CAPTORS SEIZE THEIR CHANCE TO CUT THE PROCEEDINGS SHORT.



DUMP ME DOWN AN OUBLIETTE, WILL YOU?! I WON'T FORGET THIS!



STILL, BETTER TO REIGN IN A WELL THAN SERVE IN HEAVEN. LET'S SEE WHERE THIS LEADS.



WHO THROWS AWAY A
PERFECTLY GOOD FIDDLE?
I SWEAR I'LL NEVER
UNDERSTAND THESE PEOPLE.



AND MORE
SURPRISES!



NOW THIS IS
REALLY THE
SORT OF THING
YOU DON'T SEE
EVERY DAY.



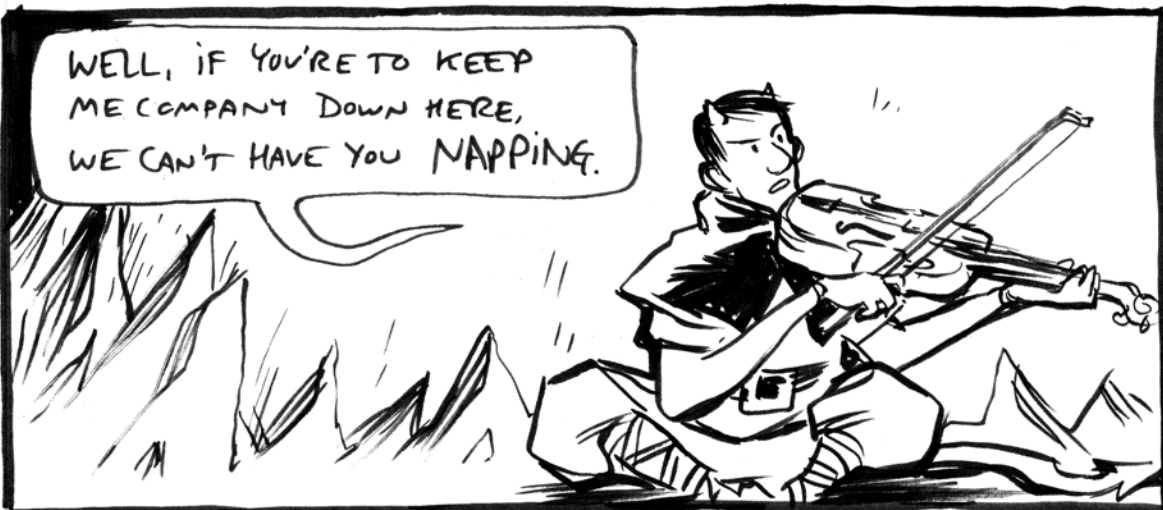
SO WHAT DO WE
HAVE HERE, HM?



A GIANT FROM THE DAWN OF TIME
IMPRISONED FOR A COSMIC CRIME
CONDEMNED TO SPEAK ONLY IN RHYME--
UGH, SOUNDS TEDIOUS!



WELL, IF YOU'RE TO KEEP
ME COMPANY DOWN HERE,
WE CAN'T HAVE YOU NAPPING.



AHEM!



AND IN THAT CAVERN COLD AND VAST
NICK PLAYED HIS FIDDLE HARD AND FAST
HE RUMINATED ON HIS PAST
AND EVERYONE HE HATED

HIS MUSIC ECHOED
THROUGH THE GROUND
AND EVERYWHERE
THE WHOLE WORLD ROUND
BOTH MAN AND BEAST
COULD HEAR THE SOUND
AS IT REVERBERATED



HIS FIDDLELING HAD A
STRANGE APPEAL
IT MADE YOU WANT
TO LIE AND STEAL



OR VIEW YOUR PACK-MATES
AS A MEAL



IF THAT'S YOUR
INCLINATION.



I'VE DONE MY BEST
TO SIMULATE
THE MUSIC OF
THE DEVILS HATE
WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE
THE REST TO FATE...

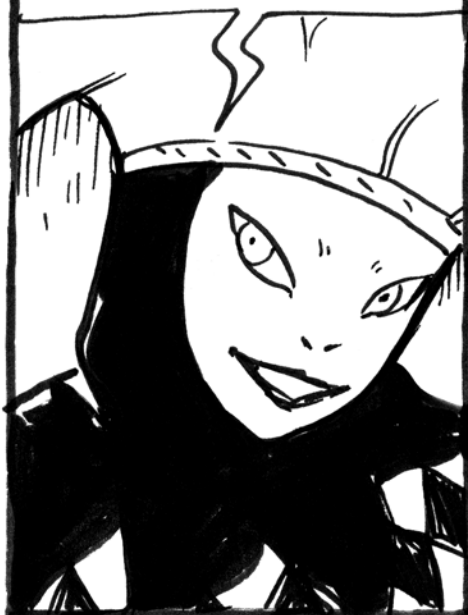
AND YOUR IMAGINATION.



MY STORY'S END I THINK YOU KNOW
NICK AND HIS FRIEND REMAIN BELOW
WHERE ALL THE WICKED PEOPLE GO
TO SHARE A JOLLY LAUGH.



AND IF HE'S FEELING
REALLY GRAND
OLD NICK MIGHT JUST
STRIKE UP THE BAND
TO GIVE US ALL A
HELPING HAND



ALONG
THE
DOWNWARD
PATH.





SO NICK AT LAST
HAS FOUND HIS PLACE
A MODEL FOR THE
HUMAN RACE
DESPITE HIS LACK OF
CHARM AND GRACE
HIS LIFE IS NOT SO GRIM.



HE WASN'T QUITE LIKE
ALL THE REST



THANKS TO HIS LOVE OF
FUN AND JEST



BUT NOW IT'S
WORKED OUT
FOR THE BEST--

WE'VE GOTTEN MORE LIKE HIM.



THE END