

# MILTRKOY DEPTHS

THE QUARTERLY ANTHOLOGY OF GRAPHICALLY DARK SPECULATIVE FICTION

MATURE CONTENT

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POETRY  
SAM STONE

STORIES  
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MARTIN DEEP  
GINN

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW  
CHAPTER 23

FROM THE PAPERBACK

**KILLING KISS**

BY SAM STONE

INTERVIEWS  
CHRIS MOORE  
LUKE COOPER  
JASON BEAM

# TASTER #3

For those too strapped to buy a print issue of Murky Depths - I wouldn't dare suggest that you're too tight! - or you just want a little hint of what to expect if you did buy Murky Depths in all its glossy glory (or maybe you just aren't keen on the magnificent aroma of printing ink) here's our third taster issue.

You'll have the bonus of seeing a sneak (and a very small sneak at that) preview of the cover for Issue #7 which the legendary Chris Moore has illustrated for us. It's based on James Johnson's *A Brief History of Dogfighting* brought to life by the amazing art of Leonardo M Giron. If you've picked up one of our little brochures or postcards at conventions you'll know what I'm talking about.

If you've a lust for some biting passion we have an extract from Sam Stone's first book in the Vampre Gene Trilogy. This is in no way typical of what we normally print in Murky Depths but we thought this taster issue was a good place to give you a teaser. I offer a big thank you to Andy Bigwood whose cover for this teaser issue is based on *Killing Kiss*

Terry Martin, Publishing Editor

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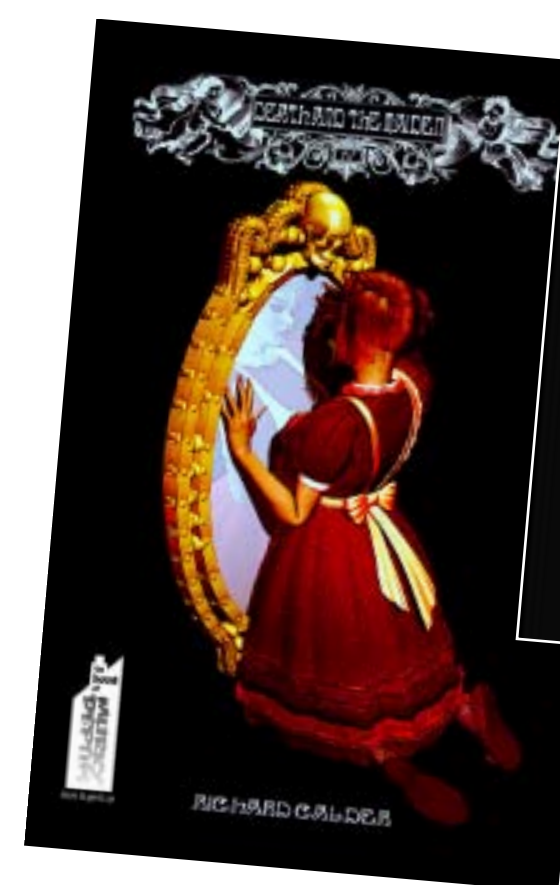
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The doorman stares with dismay at Lilly's long blonde hair and too-normal make-up, before casting his disdainful expression in my direction. He has 'LOVE' and 'HATE,' tattooed on his knuckles. He tugs at the cuffs of his shirt, jerks his neck, and blocks our entrance while letting in a motley group of black clad, Marilyn Manson look-alikes – it's hard to distinguish male from female.

"Not Goth, no entry." He looks awkward and wrong in his black tuxedo.

"We're not poor imitations, we're the real thing," Lilly says smilin. The long points of her fangs are so visible that I gasp with excitement.

"Why didn't you say so?" The bouncer nods, stepping back. "First door on the left."

I realise I've been holding my breath as my lungs begin to ache and I take a shuddering wheeze to ease the pressure. Lilly grabs my arm as the smell of salt and iron fills the air and we halt, overcome by the aroma.

"Blood."

"Yes," I agree.

She surges forward. I hold her arm; make her walk in a controlled and dignified way. She stumbles, pulling against me for a while before our paces match and we walk slower.

The door ahead opens as though of its own volition just as we reach it.

"Biter or donor?" asks another bouncer. This one younger and less rough in appearance, which seems to suit his stark black outfit, despite his eyebrow and lip piercing.

"Biter," I confirm.

"Good, we've more donors in tonight."

We walk through a dark cavern that leads to a small reception room. The room is dimly lit and stark. The midnight ceiling is low, almost touching my head. Black and purple walls suffocate the meagre lighting but my eyes adjust instantly to the gloom and I see small alcoves in the walls, glowing with the light from single candles standing in the tarnished candelabras that hangs from above. Each holds renaissance-style chairs covered with thick dark purple fabric and a table with a black lace cloth draped over it. Cliché. I gulp back a patronising smile. I feel like an experienced pornographer visiting a back alley adult sex shop.

"You're new here."

A small, pale girl stands before us. She is wearing a long Wicca black dress and her hair shines blue-black in the candlelight. She holds out an antique silver tray that is covered with glistening raw razor blades.

"We never re-use or recycle." Smiling she shows her fake fangs. "There's a yellow plastic bin in each

alcove. You ditch them in there when you've finished."

"Of course." I return her over-zealous smile as I reach out and take a blade.

Lilly takes one, but remains silent.

"Obviously, it's a donors' market. They like you, they give," the Wicca girl continues. "I'm a donor. I swing both ways." Her eyes sweep us. "I like you – both."

My skin prickles as I feel Lilly look at me.

"That would suit us. My friend is hungrier than I am. Where?"

"Follow me."

Our new donor leads us further into the room past the Goths who are kissing and more in the corner of the room. She raises a black curtain to reveal a door. She quickly dips under it, pushing open the other entrance and I move to follow. Lilly grabs my arm as I reach out to the curtain.

"I *don't* swing both ways."

"It's not sex, it's food."

"Funny, you seem to like fucking yours."

"Not anymore." I shake my head and look deeply into her green pools of anxiety.

She's stiff, unmoving. But still I pull her into my arms. Her lips are ruby in the artificial twilight. I kiss her softly but she doesn't react. She is terrified, though of what I am unsure.

"Get off," she replies finally, but there is no fight in her.

Her mouth opens, responding despite herself and I kiss her long and deep until we are both breathless.

"I promise," I say, reluctantly pulling back, "no sex. Just blood. I wouldn't like it if you were. . ."

She blinks, surprised.

"Why?"

"I don't know. But I definitely don't want you with a male donor. It could so easily turn sexual."

Her eyes nod her acceptance.

"Okay. Let's go. I'm famished."

The curtain rises and our 'donor' stares out at us through watery yellow eyes.

"Problem?"

I shake my head.

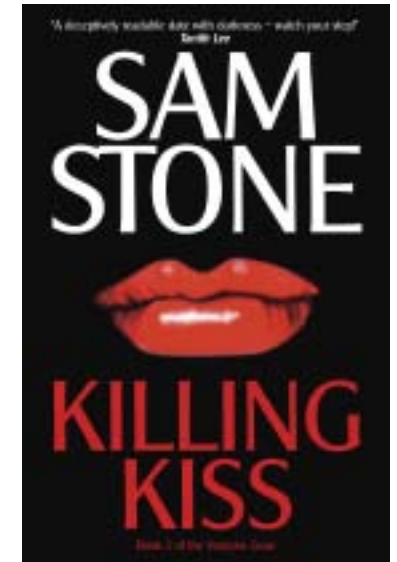
Behind the curtain is a door leading into a small room. It is sparse inside with only a three-quarter four poster bed, a chair and an antique bureau.

"What's your name?" Lilly asks as she looks around the room.

"They call me Serena."

"I think we need something to get us in the mood," I suggest.

Serena smiles knowingly, closing the door against the black of the outside curtain. She rams home a well-oiled bolt, that barely squeaks. Then she moves over to the bureau, opens it and pulls out a tray holding a decanter filled with a ruby red liquid and some crystal glasses. She pours slowly. It sounds like blood dripping from a major artery; I wonder how long she has cultivated this skill to achieve just the right amount of trickle. She holds



out a glass. I take mine and sniff the contents. Mmmm. . . wine with a trace of blood. *Nothing else hidden within.*

"It smells like you," I tell Serena.

She pulls back the long drooping sleeve of her dress and I see the tiny bandage covering her wrist. Her lower arm bears the healed and healing scars of previous donations.

"My own brand. This is my regular room."

So. Serena is not merely a willing patron; she will require some recompense for her contribution.

"How much?" I ask.

"I'm not cheap, but I come with a guarantee."

Slowly she turns again to open her bureau. Inside the top drawer she pulls out a piece of paper. A certificate.

"I'm clean. No, syph, AIDS, hepatitis. I offer peace of mind, unlike the freebies in the alcoves. So a hundred for a small donation."

Lilly is shocked.

"You're a prostitute?"

"Oh, puhhlease! What I'm selling is far rarer than sex. Though I'm not averse to it, if the mood is right; I offer blood, discretion and no nasty surprises."

"You are exactly what we want," I tell her as I raise the glass to my lips and sip at the wine. "Yes. You'll do nicely. Taste it, Lilly."

Lilly swigs, deliberately unladylike, but I refuse to let her bait me. The rush from the blood hits her and her pupils dilate immediately. Her expression becomes glazed and she throws back the contents of the glass. She sways on her feet for a moment, before her eyes refocus, landing on Serena. The face of the seductress replaces the familiar soft lines of my beauty as she moves in with feral determination on the unsuspecting Serena. I block her, pushing back the pride that threatens to develop my ego to obscene proportions; I would love to watch her take this girl how she wants, but – would Lilly recover from the horror of it?

"We are willing to pay double for a large quantity of blood. How willing are you?" I ask.

Serena has trouble looking away from Lilly, her head turns to me but her eyes stay on my lover.

"Gave a lot, once before. . . It was good. He was . . . like you two. I . . . yes . . . I want that. . ."

"Like us?"

"Yes."

"A man?"

"More than that . . . the real thing. You're 'real' aren't you?" Serena sighs; her too thin body leans into me but she slides against my hip and around me making herself more accessible to Lilly. Serena's nose has been broken in two places and badly fixed. I wonder who or what did this to her? But it's irrelevant. I step back. I have to let Lilly do this. It will strengthen her, make her more mine.

The air is tense. Serena's aura has come alive as a reaction to the blood lust. Lilly touches her and the tension soars. The air crackles with unchecked energy. I fight the urge to intrude again. Serena is cloy in her hands, as Lilly moulds her.

"No teeth. No evidence." I whisper holding out the razor blade but Lilly has hers clutched in her eager fingers.

The wrist bandage flutters to the floor and Lilly carefully opens the raw wound beneath, drawing a thin red line along the vein. Serena sighs, shudders. Arousal scents the air, drowning out all other smells, even the blood as it bubbles up and out of her wrist.

I guide them both to the bed, feeling like a pimp, as Lilly licks delicately at the wound. Serena stretches out, her sharp body forms the shape of the pentagram; her face matches her name. Lilly crouches over her, and the tender licking becomes greedier as she clamps her mouth over the gape and sucks. Perspiration pops up on my brow. I am painfully stimulated by the whimpering murmurs that escape the willing victim's lips. I look away from them both, wiping my hand over my mouth but I can't shake the vision, so I have to look back.

I feel like Victor Frankenstein watching my creature come alive. Lilly stretches out beside Serena whose burnt umber skirt rides up to reveal brown legs. I turn away as the tan flesh begins to whiten with every gulp of blood. The sleeve of Serena's dress pushes further up her arm revealing still more tiny scars in her powdery flesh. How many? Over a hundred. I begin to count them to distract myself from the vision of their bodies moulding together.

Serena's throat convulses. I snap alert. Lilly's hunger is still too ravenous and Serena's arm is bloody pulp.

"Lilly. Stop!"

I hurry forward roughly pulling at her, but her strength is shockingly equal to mine. Serena's limbs float like feathers in the wind with every tug on Lilly's arm.

"Lilly. You're killing her. Look," I say gently.

Lilly is oblivious. Her blood lust is all she sees and all she can hear is the rapidly decreasing sound of Serena's heart beat as the blood loses its fight to pump and I know how delectable that can be. . .

"Lilly. For God sake!"

My head pounds in response to the slowing thud. I release her. Step back. We are killers. Maybe this is how it should be. She will have to learn the hard way, like I did. She will harden her heart to the death and then she and I will be truly alike. This was what I wanted, wasn't it?

But no. I promised her that I would not let her go too far.

"No. Killing this girl will change you. I don't think I want that."

But I am powerless. All I can do is look on until the frenzy slows. As I hear Serena's heart flow still slower, Lilly looks up at me through the bulk of blonde waves that drape over the bloody arm like a silken shroud. Grudgingly she pulls away, throwing a fleeting glance down at the pale girl. She licks her lips.

"I think I went too far," she sighs.

"Perhaps." Yes. She did.

She stretches with feline beauty. New muscles shift under the surface of her bare arms and she looks at her glowing skin, her eyes widening with surprise.

"How do you feel?"

As she rises gracefully to her feet, she looks once more at Serena lying unconscious; her small chest labouring against the cheese-cloth Wicca dress.

"Sexy." She smiles. "I feel, very, very, sexy."

Her arms are around my neck before I have chance to assimilate her words. She kisses me; her mouth tastes of blood and I pull her to me.

"Lilly . . ."

I lick nectar from her tongue, lap at the teeth and gums taking away the last traces of Serena's lifeblood. I draw her nearer, her strong body compresses against mine as she squeezes back. My heart beat feels as though it will burst my chest. *She's mine.*

Love and passion, not the lust, drives me as I kiss her willing mouth; but still she holds back. Pushing me away, she hurries to the door, unbolts it and lifts the curtain. A gush of air wafts in and I am left unsatisfied once more. Will she ever surrender again? From the corner of my eye I see the tiny ripple of air lift and drop the papers on the bureau and I catch a glimpse of a photograph as it falls in apparent slow motion to the floor.

On the tacky purple carpet the picture lands face up. The same limpid expression in a smaller body; a male child. I look back at the still body, the glassy eyes, Serena's lifeless posture. I reach in my pocket for my bulging wallet and stuff the promised money into the bureau, stepping over the photograph as I walk towards the door.

"I need to see my parents one last time," Lilly says, dropping the curtain down behind us as we exit.

And now I know; she has changed – but is it for the best?



# EMPATHY

By Luke Cooper

WILKINSON  
DEPTIS



OKAY, I'M GOING IN. NO TIME TO WAIT FOR SWAT. NAME?

UM, THOMAS ARCHER.



IS HE NUTS? WE CAN'T LET HIM JUST-

WHAO THERE, KID. DON'T YOU KNOW WHO THAT IS? THAT'S JIMMY FUCKIN' MORGAN, KING OF NEGOTIATORS! WHEN HE GOES IN, EVERYONE COMES OUT ALIVE. I'M TELLIN' YA, IT'S CREEPY. IT'S LIKE HE CAN SEE WHAT THE PERP SEES. I SWEAR THE GUY'S PSYCHIC OR SOMETHIN'. SCARY SHIT, MAN!



SIT. GO ON.

OKAY, DAD. PLEASE, JUST STAY CALM.



THAT'S GOOD, TOM. HEY, WE'RE MAKING REAL PROGRESS HERE.

HEY, TOM. CAN I CALL YOU TOM? MY NAME'S JAMES, BUT PEOPLE CALL ME JIMMY. I'M HERE TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE'S OKAY. I GOTTA TELL YOU, TOM, THERE'S SOME WORRIED PEOPLE OUT THERE. YOU WANNA TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?



PLEASE, HELP ME.

THIS GIRL IS NOT MY DAUGHTER. SHE'S AN IMPOSTOR. THEY SWAPPED HER. THEY DIDN'T THINK I'D NOTICE, BUT I KNOW MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD AND THIS ABOMINATION IS NOT MY DAUGHTER.



NO! YOU'RE ONE OF THEM. AREN'T YOU, TRYING TO CONFUSE ME. I GOTTA-



**BOOM**

SORRY, TOM.



UH, I'M SORRY, TOM. THAT SOUNDS ROUGH. WHY DON'T YOU LET THE GIRL SIT DOWN OVER IN THE ARMCHAIR AND US GUYS CAN GET TO WORK PUZZLING THIS THING OUT.



**GUNGH!**

JUST RELAX, TOM. EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE OKAY NOW. NO ONE'S GETTING KILLED ON MY WATCH.



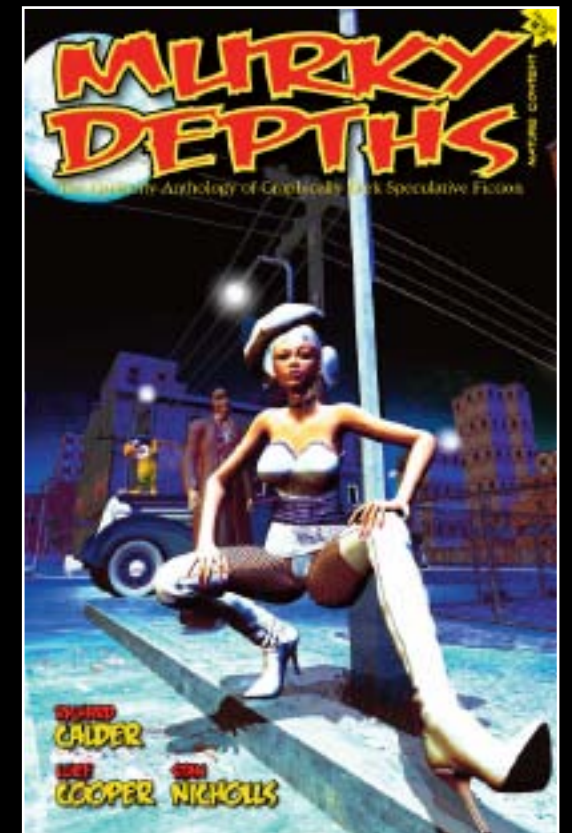
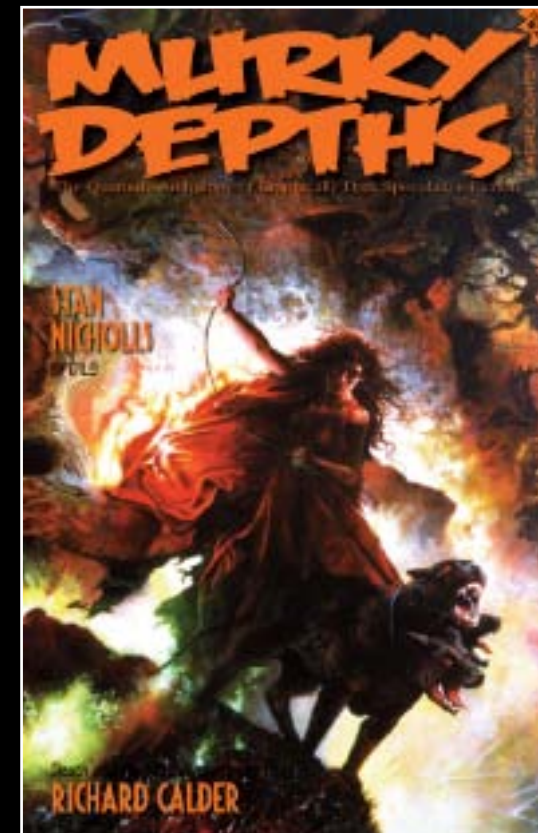
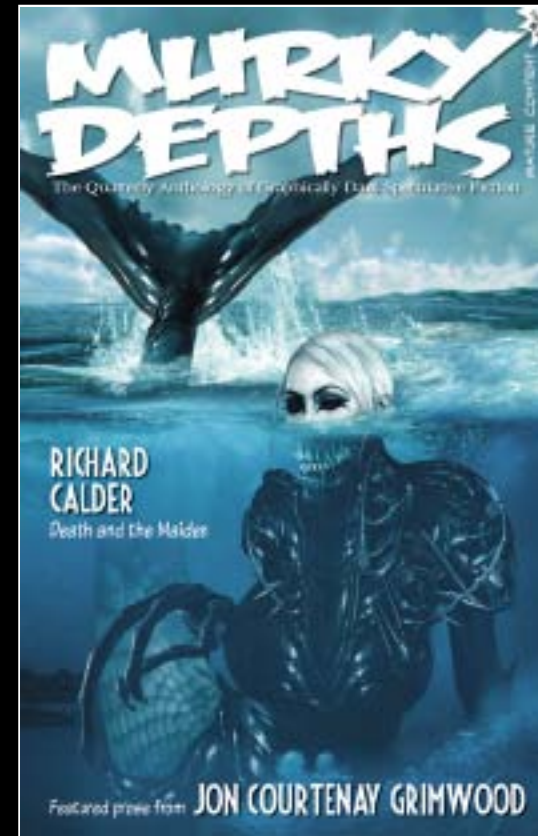


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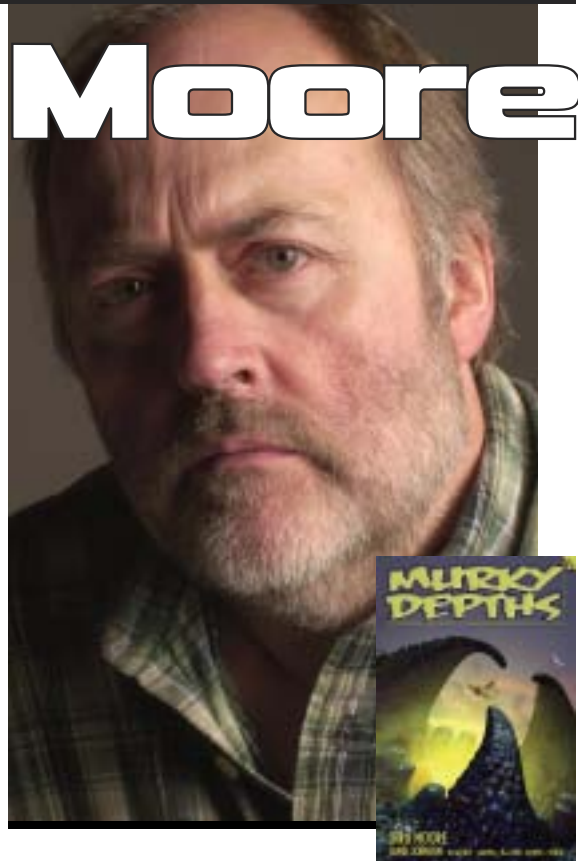
# THE COLLECTABLE COVERS OF MURKY DEPTHS

## An interview with Chris Moore

#7

"THE COVER WAS QUITE TRICKY REALLY BECAUSE THE STARTING POINT WAS SOMEONE ELSE'S DRAWINGS"

"I APPLAUD THE ACTIVITIES OF MAGAZINES LIKE MURKY DEPTHS IN PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR NEW TALENT"

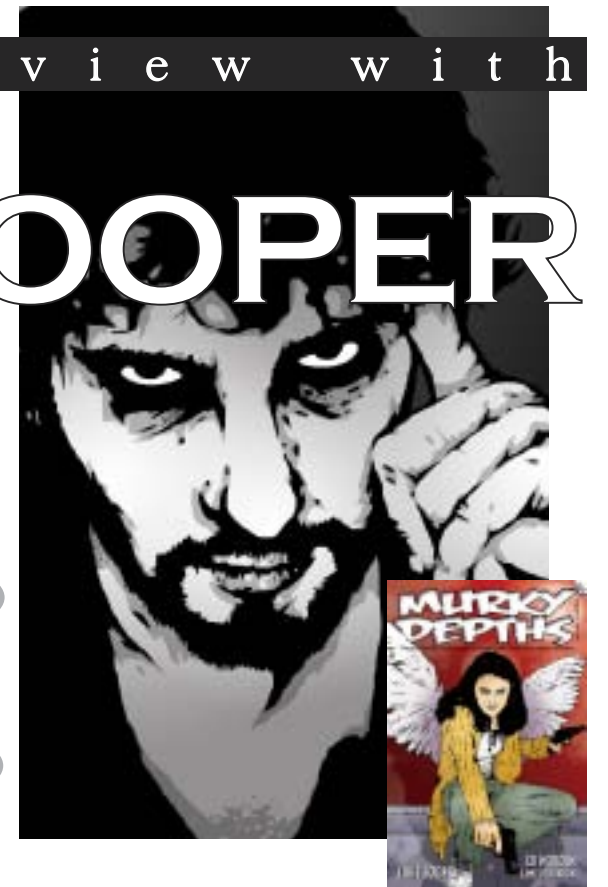


## An interview with LUKE COOPER

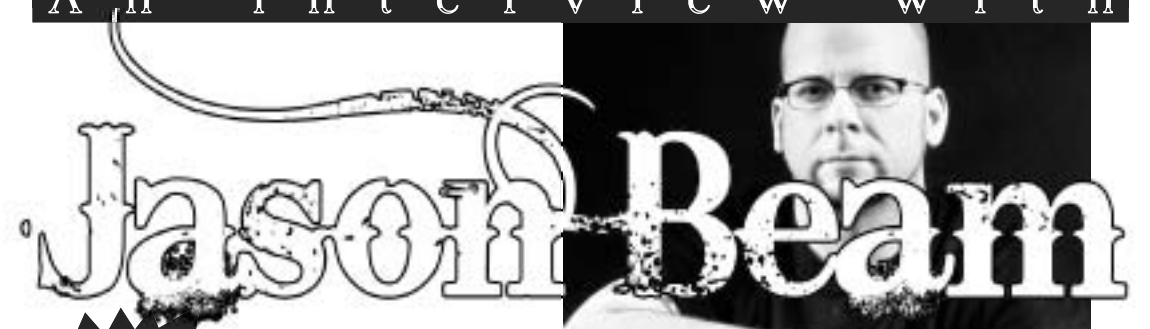
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"I CHALLENGE THE ASPECTS OF FAITH THAT I DON'T LIKE OR DON'T UNDERSTAND . . ."

"I WOULD LIKE TO WORK FOR MURKY DEPTHS FOR EVER, IF YOU'LL HAVE ME."



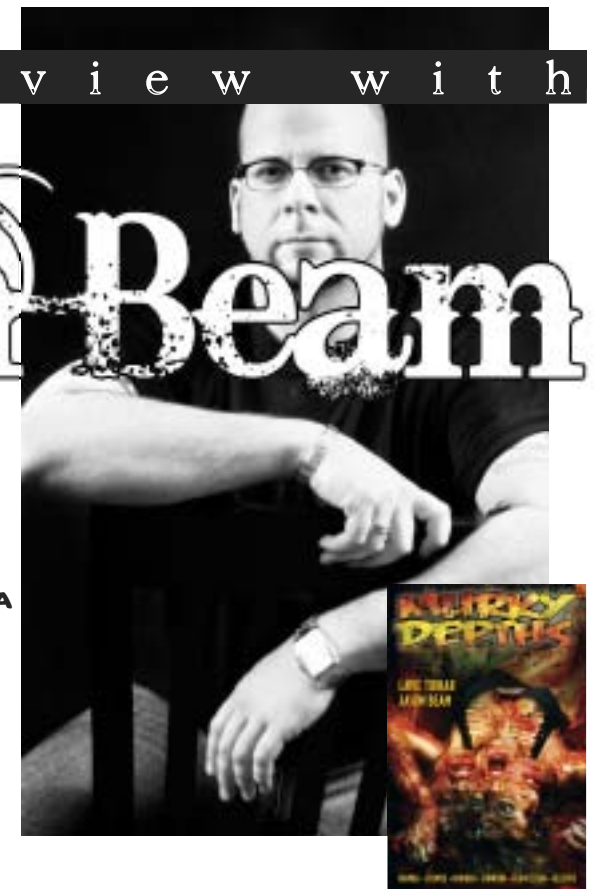
## An interview with Jason Beam



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"WHEN YOU'RE EXPERIMENTING IN A NEW MEDIUM, FRUSTRATION IS LOW BECAUSE YOU'RE BUSY ABSORBING AND LEARNING."

"FOR ME, THE ONE MAJOR THING ABOUT MURKY DEPTHS WAS THE QUALITY OF THE PUBLICATION."



# A Gland Enterprise



## Bill Ward

The tribe hounded it for weeks, expertly, beginning with the bleeder hooks that sapped the creature's strength and left a trail of spattered crimson in the waste below. Only when the bovadon began to fly lower did the tribe bring the shuttle close to its massive form and sink tethered harpoons into its pink skin. The bovadon cried out in the voice of a child at each hit, and its flesh squirmed.

The eons-old shuttle, a relic of the First Time, began its aerial dance around the behemoth, jerking it first this way, then that, wrenching open its wounds. As the creature slipped into a fatal dive the harpoonists—watching through the shuttle's open bay doors—cheered and raised high their fists, and the ship's ghost cackled over the speakers.

The bovadon crashed face first and broke open, its blood running freely on the dry, dead ground of Newhome. The shuttle settled close by and disgorged its eager crew before again taking wing and veering south. It would retrieve the rest of the tribe from the last bovadon crash site, a vast stain of blackened bone and rotting flesh, and bring them to this new oasis of red meat. The skin-clad harpoonists began to flense the beast with bone knives.

The headman and his eldest son did not take part in the harvest, instead they climbed the creature's flank with hook and line, up onto its back. They moved toward its fleshy buttocks, prodding for its spine. It was delicate work, finding the correct vertebrae amongst the fused length of bone and prying them apart to get at the gland inside. Delicate work not to puncture the gland and spill its

**BILL WARD** IS A FREELANCE WRITER OUT OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND. HE HAS SOLD FICTION TO FLASHING SWORDS, EVERY DAY FICTION, DARWIN'S EVOLUTIONS, KALEIDOTROPE AND THE ANTHOLOGIES THE RETURN OF THE SWORD, THE AGE OF BLOOD & SNOW, AND DESOLATE PLACES. TO READ HIS FICTION OR CHECK OUT HIS WEEKLY BOOK REVIEWS PLEASE VISIT [BILLWARDWRITER.COM](http://BILLWARDWRITER.COM).

irreplaceable fluid. The headman guided his son in the process, and the young man retrieved the gland whole and perfect and lifted it high so the hunters could see, a jade sack quivering in his red hands. The harpoonists below cheered and raised their knives in salute.

The shuttle returned, and the tribe emerged excited and ready for the feast. Food for months loomed above them on the hard, featureless plain. The bovadon was the only geography, and the only sustenance, on the dead world their ancestors had become trapped on long ago. They began to build fires using gobs of fat and hair left from the last of their prey. Soon food smells filled the air and the men and women of the tribe ate with relish.

But once the headman and his son had descended from the behemoth's corpse they did not yet eat, for their first duty was to the future. Reverently carrying the gland they moved past the feast to a few figures huddled in the shadow of the shuttle. Three fat children mewed at their approach, and strained at the tethers that staked them to the ground. The shuttle's ghost imitated them in mockery, its speakers crackling with age.

Carefully the headman fed each child a measure of the precious fluid while his son looked on, until the bovadon gland was shriveled and empty. Already the children were starting to float, and the oldest and largest giggled as his feet lifted from the ground, the cord around his ankles all that kept him earthbound. Soon he would be released to fly free.

The headman wondered idly if his eldest son, when looking at the bloated boy floating before them, still thought of him as a brother—or if the glimmer in his eyes was merely hunger.

## Demon Lover

## Sam Stone

The smokescreen of youth hides a wizened frame;  
Hooked claws, scraping the floor,  
Penetrates an aura with a single curl.

You will pay for the service, orgasm guaranteed.  
Pain of my length, a sharpened sword,  
Disguised as pleasure.

This is how I feed.

Five years of life - given so easily - your  
Female energy - pours from the mouth in  
A moist aging rush.

My talons hold fast, feeding, growing,  
Phallic vigour becoming my glamour;  
A façade that the lonely see.

I am a demon lover.

I know climax, I know ecstasy. I am the  
Ultimate extreme sport. Giving me your  
Passion is selling a piece of your soul.

But I never take too much, am never greedy.  
And though it will never be the same again,  
I will leave some of your life intact;

Open to me at your peril.



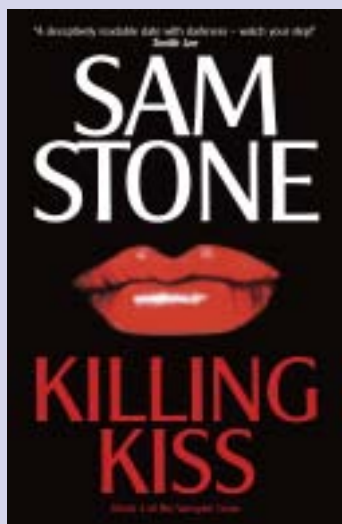
ART: MARTIN DEEP

**SAM STONE'S** NOVEL *GABRIELE CACCINI - THE VAMPIRE GENE BOOK 1* (WRITTEN AS PAIGAN STONE) HAS BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR BOOK OF THE YEAR WITH FOREWORD MAGAZINE. SHE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE SEQUEL. HER WRITING HAS APPEARED IN SIX ANTHOLOGIES UNDER THE NAME SAMANTHA PAIGE. SHE ALSO HAS A DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND WRITING FOR PERFORMANCE AND AN MA IN CREATIVE WRITING.



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SHE CATCHES MY EYE FROM ACROSS THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM.

HERS ARE A STARTLING BLUE; BY FAR THE MOST ATTRACTIVE CHICK AT THIS PARTY.

Story & Script - Sylvanus Moxley  
Art / Inking - Ginn  
Tints - Lord Dragon  
Tint Assistant - Lady Fênix  
Additional layouts & Lettering - Martin Deep

**THE LOOK**

WHAT DOES SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WANT WITH ME? WHO AM I AFTER ALL? JUST AN ORDINARY GUY.



IT'S LIKE MOSES PARTING THE SEA.

NOH... WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?

WE DIDN'T SEE ANY POINT IN MAKING HIM A HUNKY MALE.

... BUT WE USED THE BRAIN OF A MAN.



AN ORDINARY GUY LEANING ON A BAR JUST SEEMED TO MAKE IT MORE POIGNANT. WE'RE DEPICTING LADDISH HUMOUR HERE, YOU KNOW? THE GORGEOUS BLONDE ACTUALLY FANCIES THE GUY.



IT'S WHAT WE ALL DREAM ABOUT, SH?



HA! HA!  
NO! NO!  
HE! HE!  
WHAT?

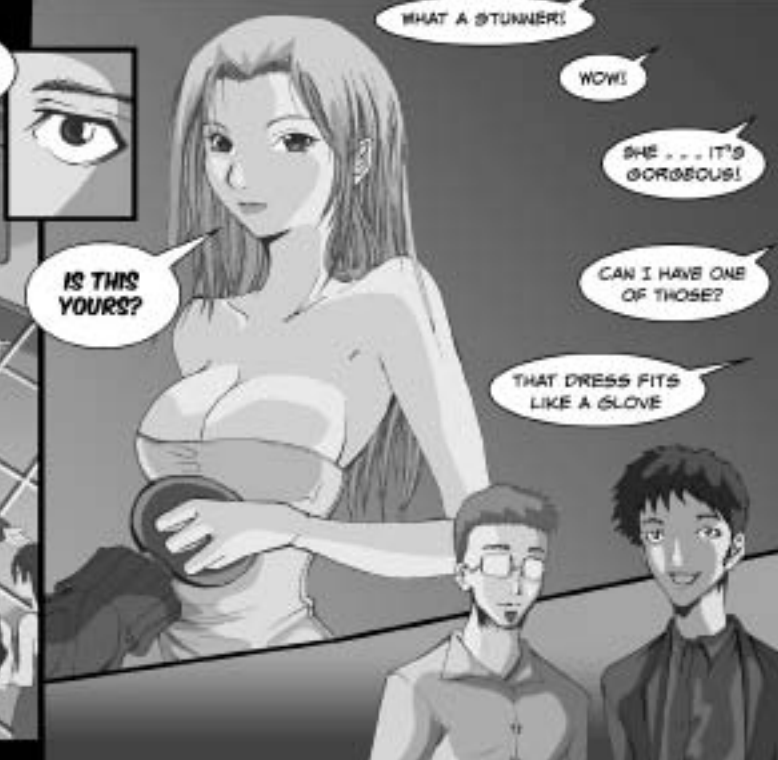
SHE'S ALMOST ALL SILICON, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN.

APART FROM THE ROBOTICS... AND THE BRAIN. A WOMAN'S OF COURSE.



DRUSS HEIGHTEN THE WHOLE SCENARIO. WATCH THE EYE'S DISPLAY. YOU CAN SEE HIS EXCITEMENT.

AND DRUSS KNOCK OUT HIS AND HER SHORT-TERM MEMORY WHEN THE WHOLE PASSEANT ENDS.



WHAT A STUNNER!

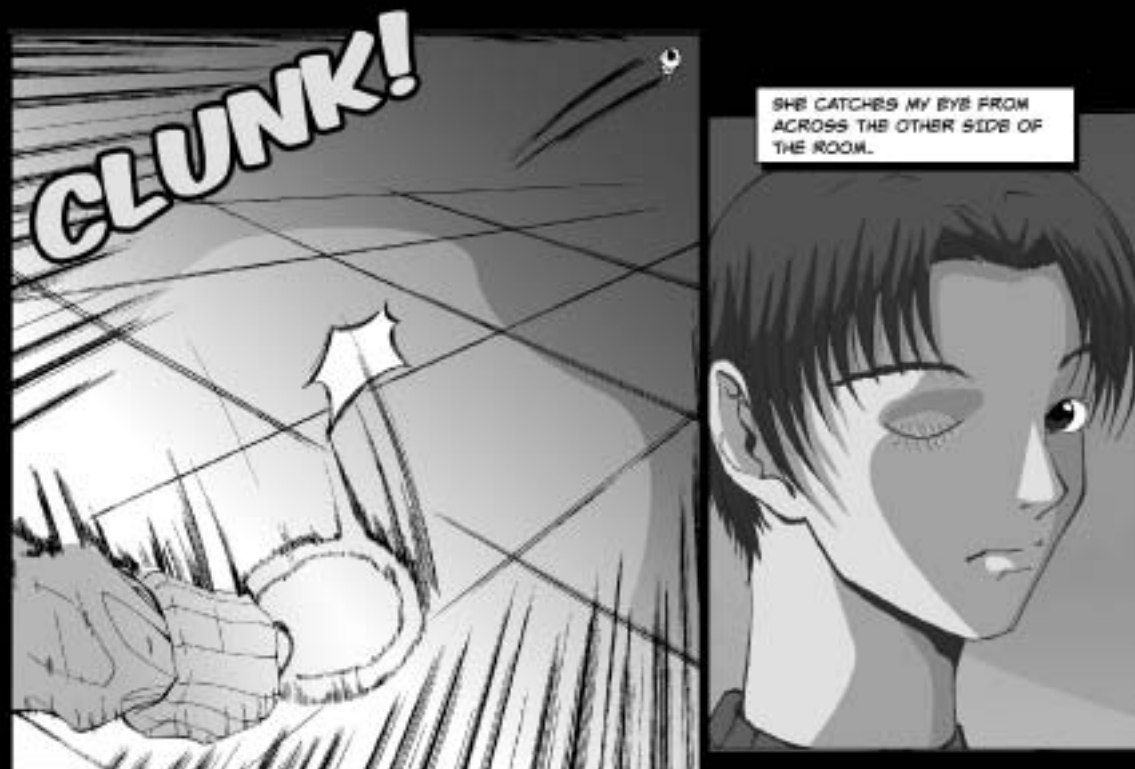
WOW!

SHE... IT'S GORGEOUS!

CAN I HAVE ONE OF THOSE?

THAT DRESS FITS LIKE A GLOVE

IS THIS YOURS?



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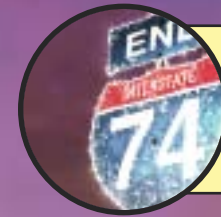
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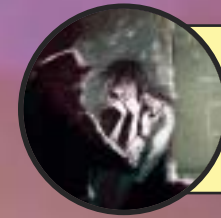
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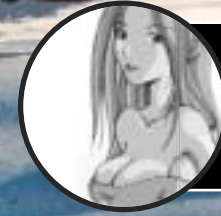
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