



KILLER IMAGE

The return of the Mice Templar headlines the big summer plans for the publisher of *Spawn*, *Savage Dragon*, *Walking Dead* and more!

By Josh Wigler

MICE TEMPLAR

Although the heroes of Bryan Glass and Michael Avon Oeming's *The Mice Templar* stand only a few inches tall, the book itself is growing much bigger this summer.

"I'm excited at the prospect of a monthly *Mice Templar*," says series co-writer/artist

Oeming of the book's new regular schedule. As part of the monthly routine, Oeming will continue to illustrate specific story segments and covers, but the main art chores will fall upon new artist Victor Santos and colorist Veronica Gandini.

"I'm nervous," Santos admits about coming onto the series. "It's like a high school

assessment—I did my homework, I studied and I just hope that I'll pass the exam."

While the new artists are busy chewing on humble pie, Oeming insists that their stellar (and timely) artwork is the reason that *Templar* can live on in its new monthly format. And live on it shall, particularly now that the most difficult task—setting up the

book's rodent-filled world—is out of the way.

"Volume One, 'The Prophecy,' was about establishing our world, setting up our concepts, revealing aspects of the backstory and moving our characters into position," says writer Glass. "Now, Volume Two, 'Destiny,' is going to explode. The action quotient picks up

substantially with epic battles, dramatic sacrifices, insidious court intrigue and an unexpected love story.”

Several weeks have passed between the events of volumes one and two. Karic, the series’ protagonist, is now a knight of the Templar and is training under Cassius, a mentor that is less Ben Kenobi and more Mickey from the *Rocky* movies.

“Karic will definitely become a genuine warrior in this next arc, due mainly to having a genuine teacher in Cassius,” says Glass. “But Cassius has his own issues which only hamper the process.”

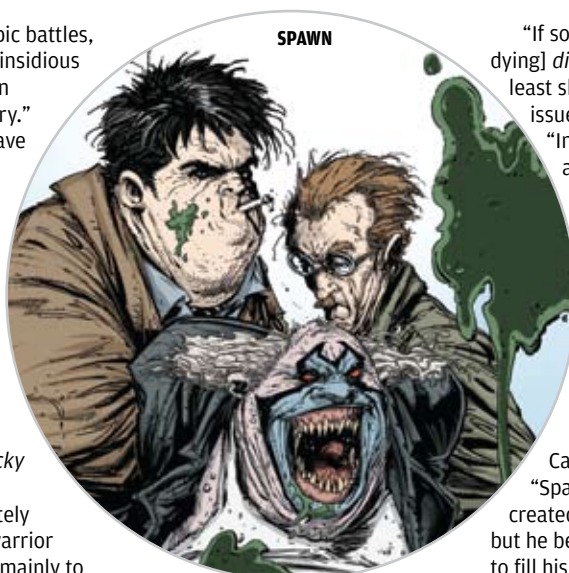
Luckily for Karic, the budding mouse knight won’t have to rely on skill alone in his new adventures. “At the end of ‘The Prophecy,’ Karic was given one opportunity to call upon the direct intervention of Wotan—the ultimate ‘Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free card’ to be used only in ‘the moment of great need,’” says Glass. “When Karic uses that trump card—and especially why he uses it—proves to be a stunning moment setting up dramatic repercussions that will be felt for many issues and volumes to come.”

WALKING DEAD

For Rick Grimes and his band of not-so-merry survivors, getting to Washington, D.C. could mean salvation from the human-hungry zombies of *The Walking Dead*. But it’s a long road—“sometime in 2010,” says creator Robert Kirkman—assuredly filled with all-new kinds of bumps along it.

“Starting in June’s issue #62 through October’s #66, we’re going to prove once and for all just how dangerous humans can be,” reveals Kirkman. “Those crazy people from Woodbury just wanted the prison. They weren’t out *just* to kill—killing was a means to an end. This summer, our unfortunate cast has encountered a group of people who are bored and have decided that hunting humans is a good way to pass the time. These people are bad news.”

That’s a bad omen for fan-



favorite characters Dale and Andrea, who’ve been flirting with the idea of breaking off from the group for several issues now. Good idea or bad idea? Says Kirkman: “Their situation will be wrapped up in a big way in the hunter storyline.” Survey says: Bad idea!

“There will be plenty of blood, guts and gore,” promises Kirkman of this summer’s developments. “But there’s also heart—and no, not the bloody kind.”

INVINCIBLE

According to writer Robert Kirkman, *Invincible* is all about change this summer.

“Starting with April’s issue #61, we see Conquest coming for a big confrontation with *Invincible*,” says Kirkman. “Conquest is the strongest Viltrumite in the galaxy and *Invincible*’s deadliest foe yet. Mark was put in charge of conquering Earth for the Viltrumites and told that there’d be hell to pay if he didn’t assume control of the planet—Conquest is that hell.”

But for a young man in love man like Mark Grayson, newly connected with longtime romantic interest Atom Eve, the impending Viltrumite vengeance might be the least of his worries.

“There will definitely be a strain in Mark and Eve’s relationship, that’s for sure,” warns Kirkman. “That’s one way of putting it. Another way of putting it is that Eve is going to die.”

Uh, what did he just say?!

“If something like [Eve dying] *did* happen, it’d be the least shocking event in these issues,” Kirkman declares. “*Invincible* has a hard road ahead of him.”

SPAWN

In this summer’s *Spawn* #193, a familiar face reenters the ring—fan-favorite artist Greg Capullo will join the book for a one-shot issue in June.

“It feels necessary,” Capullo says of his return. “*Spawn* might have been created by Todd [McFarlane], but he belongs to me. I can’t wait to fill his veins with my blood once again.”

“The plan that the Clown now has of assembling his team is going to come into direct competition with some of the down-to-earth investigations that Sam and Twitch are doing,” creator McFarlane describes of the one-shot’s plot.

OLYMPUS

Debuting this summer from writer Nathan Edmondson and artist Christian Ward, *Olympus* is a modern take on classic Greek mythology starring the brothers Castor and Pollux, made immortal by Zeus.

“We find these two brothers serving the god of gods [in present times],” Edmondson describes. “But in the course of hunting down *Olympus*’ most



notorious exile, the brothers release a formidable monster and must let go of each other to attempt to make things right again under *Olympus*.”

SAVAGE DRAGON

Being back in blue on Chicago’s police force may not be best for *Savage Dragon*, as creator Erik Larsen promises more turmoil down the line.

“The destruction of one precinct is small potatoes compared to what may be in store,” Larsen says of fin-head’s coming months. “Everybody the *Dragon* has known or cared for is a potential victim. Beyond that, everybody in the city is as well. There is no shortage of victims.”

Also, watch for the villainous Overlord to return “in a way no one will ever see coming,” says Larsen, who even suggests that *Dragon* may not survive the encounter, but “if he’s going down, he’ll go down fighting.”

DAWN

There is a new *Dawn* on the horizon as Joseph M. Linsner returns to the character he created 20 years ago with *Dawn: Not to Touch the Earth*.

“*Not to Touch the Earth* is a perfect place to discover *Dawn* because it is a stand-alone short story that reintroduces all of the characters,” Linsner says. “It’s my take on a classic folktale about a knight who saves a faerie queen from a demon and gets invited to her faerie realm. I’ve wanted to do this story for years.”

If a one-shot isn’t enough to keep you *Dawn* lovers sated, Linsner reveals: “This is going to be the first of a handful of one-shots I’ll be doing before *Dawn*’s fourth miniseries.”

YOUNGBLOOD

Youngblood #9 hits shelves in May as series creator Rob Liefeld once again takes the reins on the book. Featuring a team of heroes hand-selected by newly elected President Barack Obama, you can bet that *Youngblood* is going to be a heck of a ride for old and new readers alike.