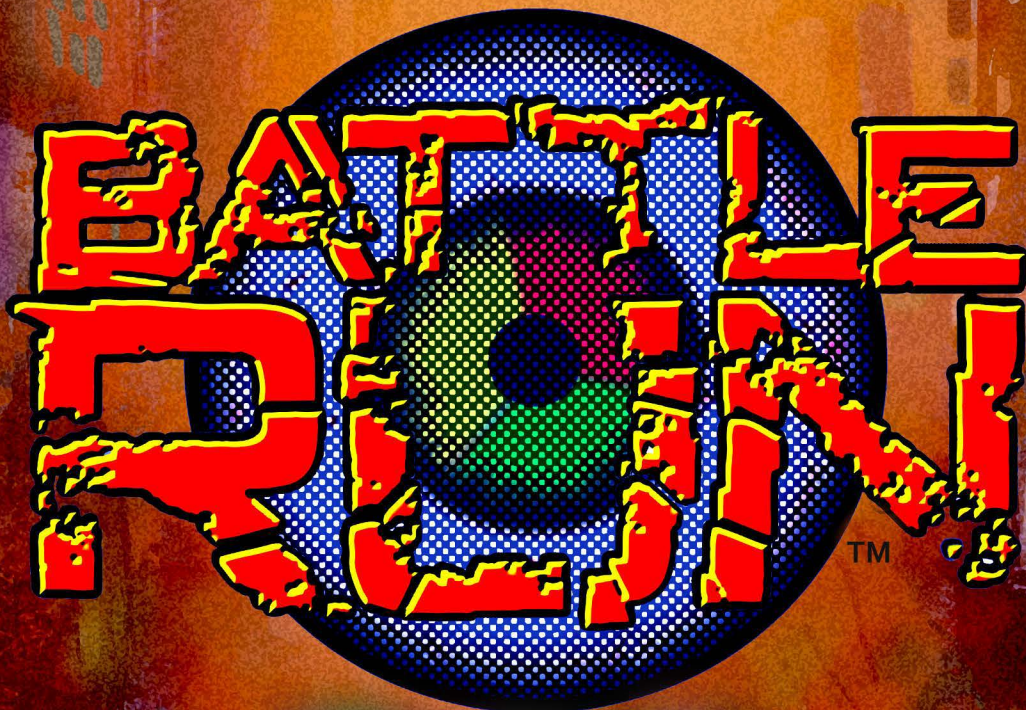




SHROUD OF FOG

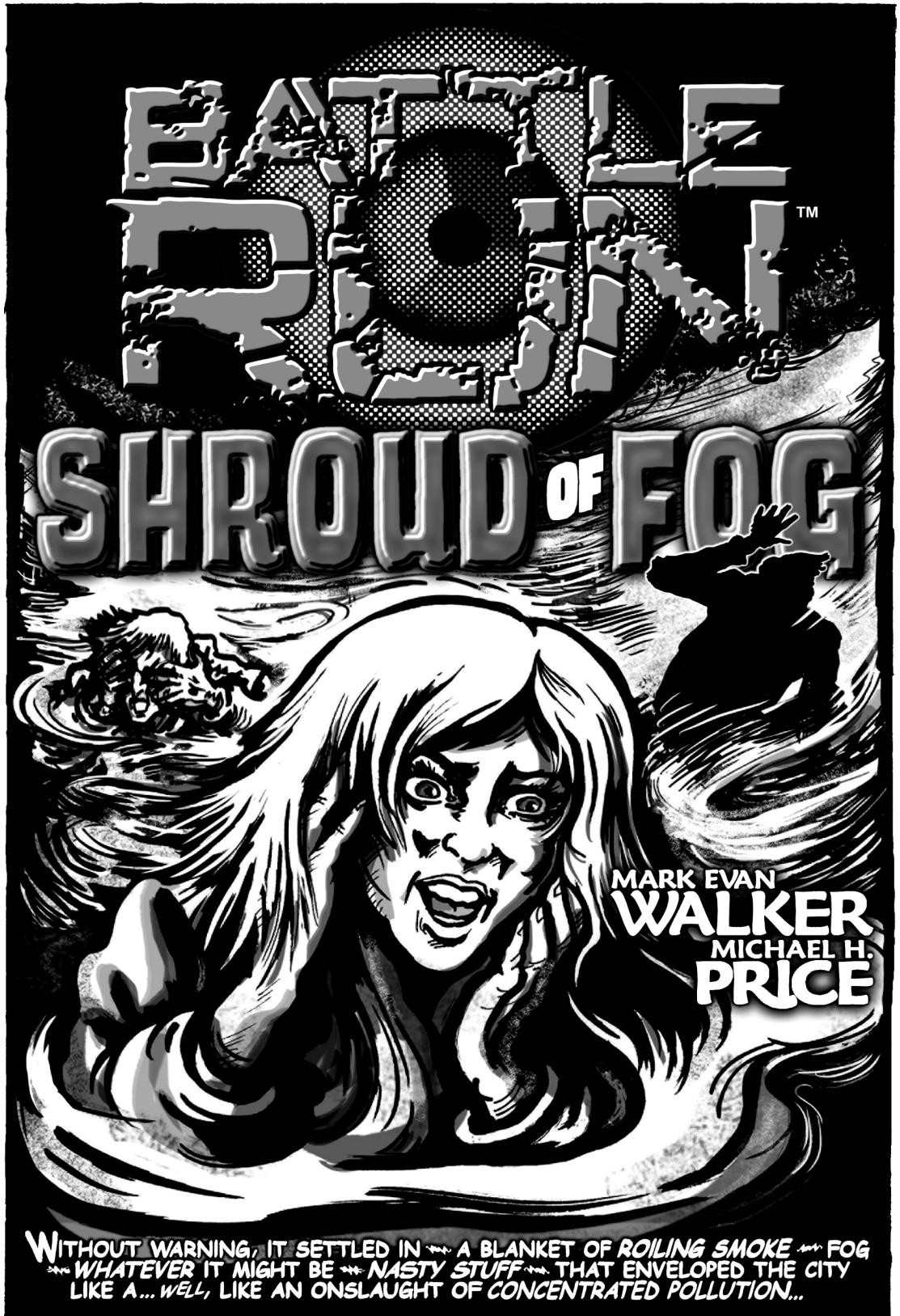


BATTLE
RUN

By Walker & Price

Based On "BATTLE RUN" Created By Keith Randal Duncan

S H R O U D O F F O G



WITHOUT WARNING, IT SETTLED IN ~~~ A BLANKET OF ROILING SMOKE ~~~ FOG
~~~ WHATEVER IT MIGHT BE ~~~ NASTY STUFF ~~~ THAT ENVELOPED THE CITY  
LIKE A... WELL, LIKE AN ONSLAUGHT OF CONCENTRATED POLLUTION...



POLLUTION DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN, Y'KNOW... IT'S PUT THERE, WHETHER BY NATURE, CARELESSNESS, OR DE-LIBERATION. NO TELLING WHAT THE CAUSE WAS, HERE, BUT THIS ALL SEEMED TOO SUDDEN TO BE SOME CHANCE DEVELOPMENT.

THOSE WHO NOTICED IT AT FIRST I WAS DISTRACTED OTHERWISE MUST'VE BEEN ANNOYED THEN, BEWILDERED THEN, TERRIFIED AND FINALLY MADDENED BY THE POISONOUS CONTACT.

THE SUBSTANCE BOBBED AND HOVERED, AS IF LIGHTER THAN THE AIR IT TAINTED.

LIKE I SAY, I WAS DISTRACTED... WAY DOWN BELOW THE STREETS.



MY CREW HAD SPLIT EARLY TO GO TOPSIDE  
FOR A NIGHT OF CAROUSING, THE USUAL  
"BOOZE AN' WIMMEN." SO NOW, WHO WILL  
HELP ME FINISH THESE REPAIRS?

"NOT I," SAID  
THE BOOZE-SCARFING  
LOAFERS OF THE  
NIGHT SHIFT...



I'D JUST COLLECT THE  
EXTRA OVERTIME...



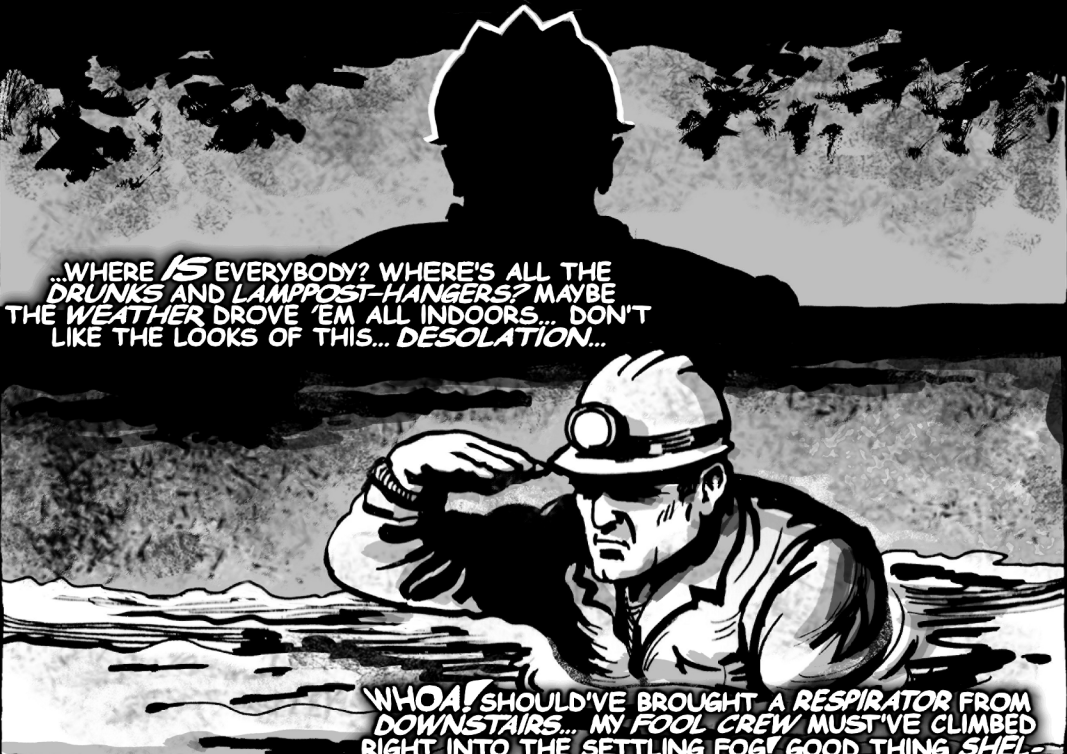
JUST ME AND THE LITTLE RED  
HEN TO WRAP THINGS UP...



**WAIT A MINUTE! I KNOW  
IT'S EARLY, BUT...**



**...WHERE *IS* EVERYBODY? WHERE'S ALL THE  
DRUNKS AND LAMPOST-HANGERS? MAYBE  
THE WEATHER DROVE 'EM ALL INDOORS... DON'T  
LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS... DESOLATION...**



**WHOA! SHOULD'VE BROUGHT A RESPIRATOR FROM  
DOWNSTAIRS... MY FOOL CREW MUST'VE CLIMBED  
RIGHT INTO THE SETTLING FOG! GOOD THING SHEL-  
TER IS JUST A MANHOLE-COVER AWAY...**



**...LIKE SOMEBODY DROPPED THE BOMB IN  
SLOW-MOTION... AND FORGOT TO PICK IT UP...**

SHROUD OF FOG



SOMETHING IN THE FOG MUST'VE MADDENED THEM...

NO! STAY IN  
THE MIST! HE  
CAN'T REMAIN  
BELOW FOR  
LONG!

HELL, HE COULDN'T'VE  
BEEN MORE WRONG...

SUPPLIES  
APLENTY, DOWN  
IN THE SEWER...

AFTER A FEW DAYS, I'D  
MADE MYSELF A HOME  
UNDERGROUND.

NOW I PUT  
TOGETHER  
A GO-BAG...

...AND SET OUT ON  
A TOPSIDE FORAY.





**IMMUNE, THEY'D  
SAID. SUITED ME...**

**AND IF *I* WAS IMMUNE,  
THEN THERE MUST  
BE *OTHERS*...**

**...BUT WHERE?**

**THIS IS NO ORDINARY  
POLLUTION... SO WHAT  
ELSE IS NEW...?**

**CROAK ME,  
WILL THEY? CON-  
FORM OR DIE,  
HUH...?**



**MOVE TO HIGHER  
GROUND... THAT WATER-  
TOWER... NOTHING LIKE  
A SECOND HOME  
ABOVE THE FRAY...**





SEEMS THEY'D FORGOTTEN  
ABOUT ME... MINDS DULLED  
BY THE FOG, MAYBE...

LET 'EM KILL  
EACH OTHER,  
THEN...

I FIGURED ANY LOVED ONES  
I MIGHT HAVE REMAINING MUST'VE  
BEEN TRANSFORMED BY THE  
MADDENING ONSLAUGHT OF FOG...

...NO TIME TO WONDER...

BOUND TO BE OTHERS  
LIKE ME, THOUGH ONLY  
TIME WOULD TELL...

...AS THOUGH TIME  
WEREN'T RUNNING OUT...

S H R O U D   O F   F O G

A WOMAN ~~WAS~~ APART FROM  
THE OTHERS... NOT MY  
WIFE ~~WAS~~ NOT THAT I'D HAVE  
DARED TO HOPE. SHE  
SEEMED ALERT ~~WAS~~ IMMUNE,  
MAYBE... SHE DREW NEAR-  
ER, THEN RETREATED,  
ALONE AND ALOOF FROM  
THE MOB.

I HAD NO BETTER  
SENSE THAN TO  
**FOLLOW.**







S H R O U D   O F   F O G





SEEMED AN EXPLANATION MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING,  
AFTER ALL... NO TELLING WHETHER WE WOULD LIVE  
TO HEAR IT, OR TO CONTINUE THIS ACCOUNT...

