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DEC 08

**GRAY
PALMIOTTI
GARRES**

JONAH HOOK

*Seven
Graves
Six Feet
Deep*

GARRES

DCCOMICS.COM

Pulaski, Tennessee. 1866.

THERE IS A PLACE IN THE TENNESSEE VALLEY KNOWN FOR ITS SERENITY. TO THE CASUAL VOYAGER, THERE MAY BE A CERTAIN DULLNESS IN THE MILES OF ROLLING GREEN HILLS, STRETCHING ON AND ON INTO PALE SKIES. BUT THE NATIVE OF THE STATE KNOWS DIFFERENT.

HE KNOWS THAT THE GREEN HILLS SHELTER IN THEIR GENTLE VALLEYS MANY PLACID LAKES AND ROARING RIVERS, CAREFULLY SECRETED IN VIRGIN PINEWOODS.

BIRTHPLACE OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

THOSE DISTANT SHADOWS AGAINST THE SKYLINE ARE PREHISTORIC PINE, WHICH ADMITTEDLY ARE STRANGE TO FIND IN A PLACE SO HIGHLY CULTIVATED AND MARKED BY BLOSSOMING TOWNS STILL SMOKING FROM THE WAGES OF A LOST WAR.

PROBABLY EACH OF US HAS HIS MENTAL PICTURE THAT PASSES AS A SYMBOL RATHER THAN AN IDEA, BUT FOR MANY IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING THE STATES WAR THE VISAGE OF THIS MAN DREW SCORNFULNESS, HATRED, AND SO OFTEN VIOLENT RESPONSE.

IT IS IN JUST SUCH A PLACE WE FIND ONE OF THE WORST HUMAN BEINGS TO HAVE EVER WALKED UPRIGHT.

AFTERNOON,
MA'AM.

AND, OF COURSE...
FEAR.

THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OTHERS WHO WERE AS RIGOROUSLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY TRAINED AS JONAH HEX WAS FOR HIS BLOODY OCCUPATION. IF SO, THE DETAILS OF THEIR TRAINING HAVE NOT COME TO MY ATTENTION.

AH WUZ WONDERIN' IF N YA COULD TELL ME WHERE...

MORAL IMPROVERS HAVE A CALL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL, GREAT MEN LEAD BY EXAMPLE, BUT ALL OF US HAVE A CROSS TO BEAR. MOST BEAR IT IN PRIVATE.

OH LORD! YOU'RE ONE A' THEM!

VERY FEW ARE SO BRAZEN AND GUILT-RIDDEN THAT THEY ALLOW OTHERS, COMPLETE STRANGERS IN FACT, TO WITNESS THE IMMATERIAL BURDEN CARRIED IN A DARKENED HEART.

HELP!
HELP ME!

EASY NOW!
AH DON'T MEAN NO HARM. THIS HERE UNIFORM'S ALL AH GOT TA WEAR 'TIL AH GIT BACK HOME...

GET AWAY FROM ME!

JONAH HEX IS SUCH AN ANOMALY. THE WORKINGS OF A MIND LIKE HIS ARE UNFATHOMABLE FOR EVEN THE MOST LEARNED AND BRILLIANT ALIENIST.

AIEEE!

SPLASH!

HEY!
LOOK OUT...!



HISTORICAL SPECULATION RUNS RAMPANT WITH REGARD TO HEX'S INSISTENCE ON WEARING A CONFEDERATE UNIFORM UNTIL THE TIME OF HIS DEATH IN 1904.

HUKKI!

GLUGGGG!



POPULAR OPINION IS DIVIDED, MUCH LIKE NORTH AND SOUTH WERE IN THOSE DAYS.



HANG ON!

SOME HISTORIANS HAVE PETITIONED TO HAVE JONAH HEX'S EXPLOITS ERASED FROM PUBLICATION ON THE BASIS THAT HIS LEGENDARY STATUS IS LITTLE MORE THAN A RECORD OF ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY A RACIST MASS MURDERER.



AH GOT'CHAI!



WHACK!

AN OFTEN OVERLOOKED OR IGNORED FACT IS THAT JONAH HEX MARRIED A CHINESE IMMIGRANT NAMED MAI LING, WHO BORE HIM A SON NAMED JASON. OF COURSE HEX'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CIVIL WAR ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE CONFLICT IS IRREFUTABLE.





HIS REASONING FOR JOINING THE SOUTHERN CAVALRY REMAINS IN THE REALM OF CONJECTURE.

SWIM IF'N YA CAN!



DAMMIT!

HOWEVER, DOCUMENTATION FROM 1863 STATES THAT JONAH WOODSON HEX SURRENDERED TO UNION FORCES AT FORT CHARLOTTE. HEX'S PLATOON WAS CONSEQUENTLY CAPTURED AND SLAUGHTERED DURING THE FORT CHARLOTTE MASSACRE.



PROponents FOR JONAH HEX STATE THAT THERE IS NO RECORD OF HIS HAVING OWNED SLAVES OR HIS LIVING AMONG THE SOUTHERN COMMUNITY WITH WHICH HE CHOSE TO ALIGN DURING THE CONFLICT. IN FACT, HIS LAST KNOWN ADDRESS PRIOR TO HIS ENSLAVEMENT BY APACHE INDIANS WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN IN COLORADO.


MA'AM? HEY, CAN YA HEAR ME?



IT WAS NOT UNTIL A FEW WEEKS PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE CIVIL WAR THAT COLORADO BECAME A TERRITORY. SHORTLY AFTER, FOUR THOUSAND MEN FROM THE COLORADO TERRITORY ANSWERED PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S CALL AND SERVED IN THE VOLUNTEER UNION FORCES AUTHORIZED BY THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

DAMN FOOL GIRL!

IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT, HAD HEX NOT BEEN SOLD AS A SLAVE TO THE APACHE, HE MAY HAVE SERVED ON THE UNION SIDE OF THE CONFLICT.



ONE CAN MAKE THE ARGUMENT THAT THE ISSUE OF SLAVERY WASN'T ENTIRELY RELEVANT TO JONAH HEX UNTIL HE'D ALREADY ENLISTED. THE PUNISHMENT FOR DESERTION FROM THE CONFEDERATE RANKS WAS DEATH, AND IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT HEX FOUND HIMSELF FORCED TO COMPLY WITH HIS ORDERS.

ALL'S AH WANTED WUZ DIRECTIONS TA THE NEAREST TOWN!

FURTHERMORE, HAVING SPENT THE BETTER PART OF HIS CHILDHOOD AS A SLAVE TO THE SO-CALLED SAVAGE APACHE MAY HAVE ALTERED HEX'S PERCEPTION OF THE WAR DURING 1863, LEADING TO HIS SURRENDER.



BREATHE, DAMN YOU!



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!?!

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE HISTORICAL RECORDS REGARDING JONAH HEX PAINT THE PICTURE OF A MAD KILLER RESPONSIBLE FOR OVER FOUR HUNDRED KNOWN DEATHS.

AMONG THOSE KILLED BY HEX, LESS THAN TWENTY HAD BEEN FORMER SLAVES, AND IN EVERY INSTANCE THE MEN WERE WANTED OUTLAWS WITH A PRICE ON THEIR HEADS.



NOW WAIT ONE MINUTE...!



YA DON'T UNDERSTAND!

I'LL KILL YOU!





I'LL KILL HIM!



NO! IF DA OTHERS IS NEAR, DEY'LL HEAR DE SHOTS!



WE'LL HAVE TA BURN DEM CLOTHES.



SUIT ME FINE!



T'ROW DIS DEAD MAN IN DE RIVER WHEN WE DONE!

NONE HIS FRIENDS GON' KNOW!



IF WE CAIN'T
USE DAT GUN, DEN WE
STRING HIM! JEZT LIKE
HE AN' DEM OTHERS
WHAT DONE KILLED
ISAIAH! NO NOISE
DAT WAY!



HANG 'M
HIGH FER DEM
OTHERS TA SEE,
AN MEBBE DEY
STOP!



NO! ONCE
HE DAID, DEN
WE GIT RID A'
HIM.



POOR EVIE
NEVER DID
NO HARM TO
NOBODY.



WAIT!



WHAT IF
DIS AIN'T DE
WAY WE SEES
IT?



EVIE'S ALL
WET FROM DA
RIVAH. WHAT SAY
DAT MAN TRIED TA
HELP IF SHE
FELL IN?

WE ALL SEEN
HIM TRY AN' KILL
HER! ALL THET'S
HAPPENED, HOW CAN
IT BE ANOTHER
WAY?



IT CAIN'T!
WE KNOW DEY BEEN
ROAMIN' DA WOODS,
WE KNOW WHAT DEY DONE
TA ISAIAH! DIS MAN IS ONE
A' DEM, ONE WITH THE
BURNIN' CROSSES AN'
WHITE ROBES!

HE GOT DA
REB UNIFORM
ON!





THE
HELL WITH
EASY!

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM!

UMPE!

K-BOOM!


BLAM!



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS



...THEN
THERE'S THE
FREEDMEN'S
BUREAU...




...WHICH YOU
THINK WOULD BE
ENOUGH TO CONVINCE
THOSE YANKEE BASTARDS
HOW WRONG-HEADED
LINCOLN'S DAMNED
REFORMATION IS.



LOOK
AROUND, NATHAN.
THE CHOIR'S
ASSEMBLED.

TO A MAN, WE'VE
SEEN THE NEGROES DROP
HOE AND COTTON SACK,
EACH ONE SO FULL UP ON
THE NOTION THAT FREEDOM,
AS PRESENTED, SIGNIFIES THE
CHANCE TO SUCKLE THE TEAT
OF OUR ECONOMY FREE
OF CHARGE.

THIS STUPIDITY
HAVING BEEN FOSTERED
BY THE SUPPOSITION
THAT THE YANKEE
GOVERNMENT WILL FEED,
CLOTHE, AND SHELTER
EVERY SLAVE!



DEEDS ALREADY
IN ACTION ON PART OF
THE REFORMATION BUREAU!
AND WHILE SUMMER FIELDS
REST UNATTENDED, SAID
NEGROES ASSEMBLE IN
NORTHERN CITIES AND TOWNS
TO BE SUPPORTED LIKE
NEWBORN BABES.

EVEN AS WE
WORK TO EXTINGUISH
THE FIRES AND REBUILD OUR
TOWNS, THE BUREAU'S REFUGEES,
BACKED BY MILITARY FORCE,
ENCOURAGE THE NEGROES IN
IDLENESS AND SUPPORT THEIR
MALICIOUS HOSTILITY
TOWARD US!



ANOTHER PROUD
SON OF DIXIE SURVIVES
THE BACKLASH OF
TROUBLED TIMES.
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME, SIR?

JONAH.



JONAH,
MY NAME'S
NATHAN WALKER.
COME AND HAVE A
DRINK WITH US IF
YOU'RE ABLE.



A
TESTAMENT TO
YOUR BRAVERY,
JONAH.

AH DON'T
FOLLOW.



WHAT JUBAL
IMPLIES IS THAT IT
TAKES A PROUD AND
BRAVE MAN TO WEAR A
GRAY COAT WHEN SO MANY
OF US HAVE BEEN FORCED
TO GROUND BY
CARPETBAGGERS.



TIMES ARE
CHANGING, AND WITH
CHANGE COMES A NEW
UNIFORM FOR THE OPPOSITION
TO LINCOLN'S LAW. WE'RE
THINKING SOMETHING WHITE
TO STRIKE THE FEAR IN
BLACK HEARTS.




THE
SCALAWAG'S AND
NEGRO'S DAYS
ARE NUMBERED.



THEY MAY
BE NUMEROUS AT
PRESENT, BUT AS LONG
AS MEN LIKE US LIVE
AND BREATHE, THE
SOUTH WILL RISE
AGAIN!

SIR, WHEN
A MAN TOASTS,
PARTICULARLY A MAN
RESPONSIBLE FOR
YOUR CONTINUED
EXISTENCE...



WHILE AH APPRECIATE NOT BEIN' DEAD AS A RESULT A' YER INTERVENTION...

...AH TAKE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES IN REACTION TA HAVIN' WITNESSED THE COLD-BLOODED KILLIN' A' UNARMED MEN.

AND WHAT, PRAY TELL, DOES THAT MEAN?

FER ONE, AH AIN'T A SON A' DIXIE.

YOU KNOW, NATHAN, IT STANDS AS A POSSIBILITY THAT THIS MAN'S ATTIRE MAY HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED FROM THE PERSONAGE OF A DEAD SOLDIER.

COULD BE HE'S A SPY, BUT MY OPINION LEANS IN FAVOR OF MENTAL DEFICIENCY.

AH AIN'T A SPY, AN' THE UNIFORM IS MINE, EARNED AND WORN IN BATTLE.

BUT AS TIME HAS PASSED AND REFLECTIONS BOLSTERED BY SEVERAL ATTEMPTS AT SURRENDER HAVE TAUGHT ME...

...THE THINKIN' BEHIND BOTH BLUE AN' GRAY LEAVES A BITTER TASTE.



CURIOSITY OVERSHADOWS MY TEMPER BY ONLY A HAIR. WHAT REASONING COMPELLED YOU TO DON THE CONFEDERATE UNIFORM, AND HOW DID YOU ARRIVE AT SUCH A PROFANE OPINION?

A YOUNG MAN WANTIN' FER COMPANY OF HIS OWN KIND AFTER YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE APACHE IS LIKELY TA TAKE UP ANY CAUSE, NO MATTER HOW FOOLISH.

AS TO MUH IMPRESSION OF BOTH COLORS...LET'S SAY WAR HAS A WAY A' ALTERIN' A MAN'S THINKIN', REGARDLESS A' HOW PROFICIENT HE IS AT KILLIN'.

AND YET HERE
WE SITuate OURSELVES,
HAVING MARKed A FULL
YEAR SINCE WAR'S END, AND
STILL YOU ADORN YOURSELF
IN THE GRAY. MY ONLY
CLUTCH ON THIS IS THAT
YOU, SIR, HAVE LOST
YOUR SENSES.

A MAN TAKES
MANY TRAILS IN HIS
LIFE. SOME LEAD HIM
IN THE WRONG DIRECTION,
WHILE OTHERS MARK
HIS SOUL IN WAYS
NO WORD CAN
DESCRIBE.

NOW, AH AIN'T
ONE FER TALKIN', LET
ALONE CONFESSIONS,
AND SUCH THOUGHTS WILL
HENCEFORTH BE TAKEN TA
THE GRAVE WITH ME AT
A LATER DATE. AS FER
THE REST A' YA...



...Y'ALL
BE TAKIN'
THEM WITH YA
NOW.





RETURNING TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME





START
DIGGIN'.



I...
WILL NOT...
GIVE \$%&'S A
PROPER...BURIAL...
LET THE VERMIN...
EAT THEM.



AH SAID
DIG.

GNNHHAAA!!!

GO TO
HELL.



I...
WILL BLEED TO...
DEATH...BEFORE
THE FIRST...
IS FINISHED...

YA DIE
WHEN AH SAY
YA DIE. NOW
DIG.

QUIETLY.


HAVING STUDIED THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JONAH HEX, IT IS THIS AUTHOR'S OPINION THAT THE NOTORIOUS GUNMAN, WHOSE BLOODY EXPLOITS HAVE MARKED HIM AS ONE OF THE MOST INFAMOUS FIGURES IN THE AMERICAN WEST, HARBORED NO DISTINCT HATRED FOR MEN OF COLOR.




YA CAN
DIE NOW.

HIS INSISTENCE ON WEARING THE CONFEDERATE UNIFORM UNTIL THE DAY OF HIS DEATH IN 1904 STANDS AS A SYMBOL OF PERSONAL SHAME, A CROSS TO BEAR. FOR HE KNEW THAT ANYONE WHO SAW THE GRAY COLORS WOULD GREET HIM WITH HATRED AND REVULSION.



A man with dark hair and a mustache lies on his back on a sandy, rocky ground. His eyes are closed, and his mouth is slightly open. A large, dark, curved knife or dagger lies on the ground near his head. The scene is set in a desolate, rocky landscape.

THOSE WHO SAW THE
GRAY COAT AND EXTENDED THEIR
HAND, IN FRIENDSHIP AND THE
RECOGNITION OF AN IDEA WHICH
PROMOTED THE SUBJUGATION
OF ANOTHER RACE, DID SO AT
THEIR OWN PERIL.

A man lies on his back on the ground in a wooded area. His body is partially obscured by the shadows of the trees. The ground is covered with dry leaves and twigs. The trees are tall and thin, with sparse foliage.

AS TO THE SUBJECT OF RACISM,
JONAH HEX WAS A MAN COMPOSED OF
HATRED. ANGER FLOWED THROUGH HIS VEINS
IN SUCH QUANTITY THAT NO ONE KNOWS THE
EXTENT TO WHICH HIS TORTURED SOUL
RAILED AGAINST THE WORLD.

A man wearing a cowboy hat and a dark coat stands on a rocky outcrop. He is looking down at a man lying on the ground. The man on the ground is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background shows a rocky, mountainous landscape.

HIS DETESTATION OF HIS FELLOW MAN WAS
NOT SOLELY FOCUSED ON A SPECIFIC RACE,
COLOR, OR CREED.

A man wearing a cowboy hat and a dark coat stands on a rocky outcrop. He is looking down at a man lying on the ground. The man on the ground is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background shows a rocky, mountainous landscape.

JONAH HEX LOATHED
EVERY HUMAN SOUL WITH
EQUAL ENTHUSIASM.

AS ANY MAN, WOMAN OR CHILD
KNOWS, HE HAD NO FRIENDS,
JONAH HEX...BUT HE DID HAVE TWO
COMPANIONS. ONE WAS DEATH
ITSELF...THE OTHER, THE ACRID
SMELL OF GUN SMOKE.



SIX GRAVES SIX FEET DEEP

JUSTIN GRAY & JIMMY PALMIOTTI: Story - RAFA GARRES: Art & Cover

ROB LEIGH: Letters - TOM PALMER, Jr. & ELISABETH V. GEHRLEIN: Edits