

Curtis S. Niles

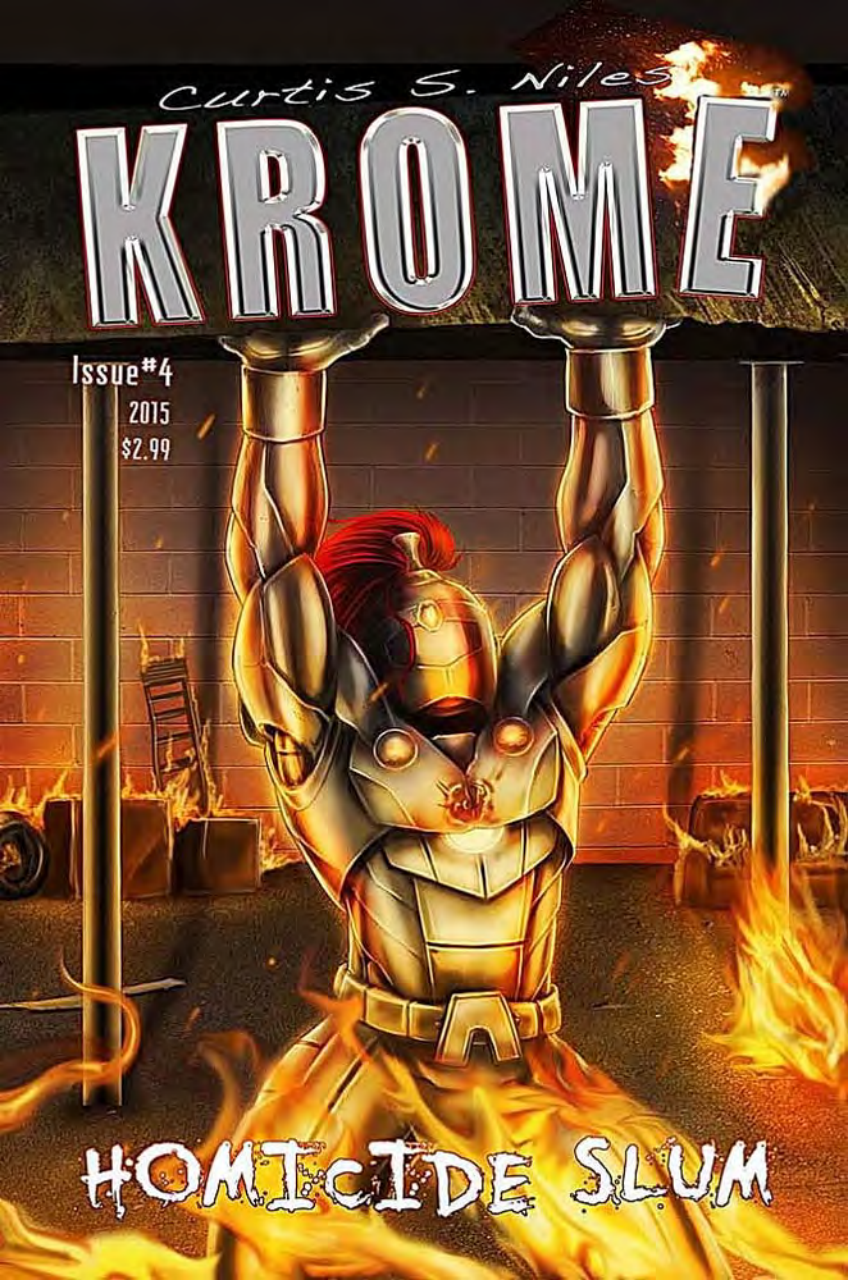
KROME™

Issue #4

2015

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HOMICIDE SLUM



PREFACE

WELCOME TO ISSUE #4 "HOMICIDE SLUM" OF THE ARMORED COMICS' 'KROME' SERIES. OUR COMICS ARE PRODUCED WITH AN 'INFO-COMIC STYLE' APPROACH TO REAL ESTATE INFORMATION SPECIFICALLY FOR CONSUMERS. IN THIS ISSUE, WE TOUCH ON THE LANDLORD/TENANT RELATIONSHIP AND RELATED SCENARIOS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS IN THIS BOOK:

KROME: A home inspector and owner of Armored Home Inspections. When presented with various evil plots and calamities, he dons an armored suit equipped with an array of cool gadgets and weaponry. His new equipment this issue:

- Recording unit – A camera mounted in Krome's helmet that allows him to document evidence or cases for future review.
- Infra-Red Scanner – Krome's helmet scanners are equipped with thermal imaging devices that allow him to detect changes in temperature and lock on to specific heat signatures.
- Servo Lockdown – A function of Krome's suit that allows him to use the servos that give him enhanced strength to seal up and make the suit's joints rigid to increase overall strength and durability.

MAX: A cute cyber-nerd who helps Krome on his various adventures from her "command center." She's an accomplished hacker and technophile, and manages to squeeze in a video game during her off hours.

SCORCH: A pyromaniac whose life-long obsession with fire led to his becoming an arsonist for hire. He's built himself a reputation for making any fire appear accidental or to completely disguise the point of origin. He also enjoys his work too much, suffering burns from staying in a fire too long after starting it. As such, he's adopted wearing a flame retardant suit that not only protects him, but conceals his identity.

WE TRUST YOU WILL FIND THIS STORY ENTERTAINING, AS WELL AS INFORMATIVE.

YOU CAN SEE OUR OTHER TITLES IN THIS SERIES:


ISSUE #1 - HOME INVASION

ISSUE #2 - SPORES OF TROUBLE

ISSUE #3 - SPLASHDOWN

AT ARMOREDCOMICS.COM

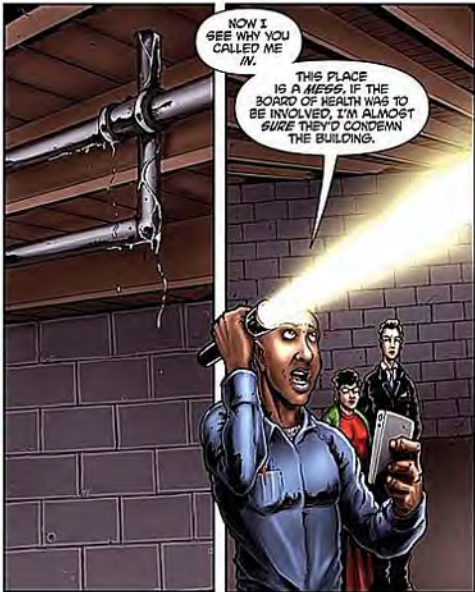
HOMICIDE SLUM



I NEED TO KEEP THIS SUPPORT BEAM UP UNTIL *HELP* ARRIVES, OR ELSE THE ENTIRE BUILDING WILL COLLAPSE ALL AROUND ME!

BUT IF MY SUIT CAN'T PROTECT ME FROM THE *FLAMES* LONG ENOUGH, THAT MAY BE THE *LEAST* OF MY PROBLEMS!

Krome Created by Curtis S. Niles
Story By Chris Buchner • Art By Hector E. Rodríguez
Colors By Richard Williams • Letters By Johnny Lowe
Cover By Richard Williams



THAT'S THE WHOLE FOUNDATION OF OUR CASE. MY CLIENTS FEEL LIKE THE LANDLORDS ARE LETTING THE BUILDING CRUMBLE IN ORDER TO FORCE THEM OUT OF THEIR HOMES WITHOUT THE MESSY EVICTION PROCEEDINGS.

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT THAT?

'CAUSE THIS IS ONE OF THE LAST RENT-CONTROLLED BUILDINGS IN THE AREA, AND THEY'D LOVE NOTHING MORE THAN TO GET US OUT SO THEY CAN JACK UP THE RENT OR PUT UP A NEW FANGLED CONDO OR SOMETHING.



WELL, I HOPE YOU'RE WRONG AND THAT THIS WILL HELP GET SOME CHANGES DONE AROUND HERE.

I'LL E-MAIL YOU A COPY WHEN I GET BACK TO THE OFFICE.

GREAT, THAT'S ONE PROBLEM DOWN.

ONE PROBLEM?



LOOK, I'LL LEVEL WITH YOU—THIS IS MY FIRST BIG CASE. I'M THE BEST THESE PEOPLE COULD AFFORD.

THE PREVIOUS LANDLORD RECENTLY SOLD OFF THE BUILDING TO A CORPORATE SUBSIDIARY THAT I'VE BEEN HAVING TROUBLE TRACKING DOWN.

SO, I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE TO DELIVER IT.

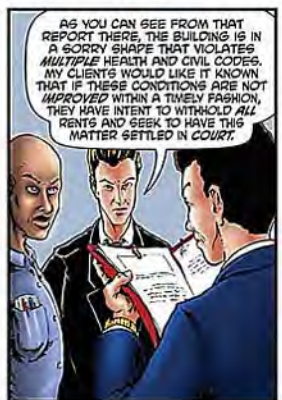
HMM, MAYBE I CAN HELP.

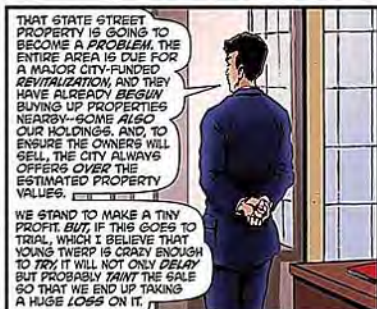
AND WHILE YOUR REPORT WILL BE INFINITELY HELPFUL IF THIS EVER GETS TO COURT, TRYING TO GET IT TO THE LANDLORD HAS PROVEN A BIT OF A CHALLENGE.

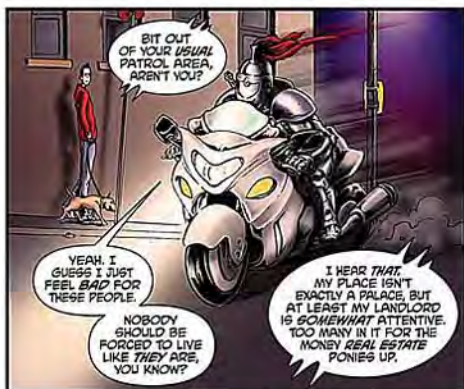
WHY?















AND THIS FIRE ISN'T HELPING! I NEED TO BRACE IT UNTIL HELP ARRIVES!

SUIT, EMERGENCY LOCK ALL SERVOS!

WITH MY SUIT LOCKED, THE STRAIN OF HOLDING UP THE BEAM IS OFF ME, BUT IT ALSO MEANS I CAN'T ESCAPE THE GROWING HEAT!



I CAN ALREADY FEEL THE SUIT'S COOLANT RESERVES RUNNING OUT!



YOU'RE ONLY PROLONGING THE INEVITABLE.

MY FLAMES WILL CONSUME THIS BUILDING, AND NOW YOU. ALL YOU HAVE GAINED IS THE PRIVILEGE OF DYING BY THEM.

THANKS FOR OPENING THE EXIT FOR ME, THOUGH.

BURN WELL.



THE TEMPERATURE LEVELS OF THE SUIT ARE INCREASING RAPIDLY. IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

CENTRAL SUPPORT BEAM'S BROKEN. I'VE LOCKED THE SUIT IN PLACE TO TRY AND KEEP IT UP.

AND THERE'S AN ARSONIST GETTING AWAY.

OTHER THAN THAT, EVERYTHING'S PEACHY!



HMM, LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T HELP ALLEVIATE AT LEAST ONE OF THOSE PROBLEMS.

JUST A LITTLE MATH TO CALCULATE THE EFFECTIVENESS...





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Curtis S. Niles, Sr. has been in the Real Estate Industry since 1994. Prior to Home Inspections, he owned and operated a contracting company, and performed various contracting services from Massachusetts to Maryland. In his company's history he has personally performed every aspect of home improvement/remodeling on all types of homes, from new construction to 100+year old historic homes. This experience provided him with significant, and in-depth knowledge of various types of construction methods. Building upon this background, he began his home inspection career in 1999, and strives to be a leader in his field.

Curtis is committed to Truth, Honesty, and Education as he carries out his various roles as; President of his company, New Inspector Trainer/Mentor, NAHI Director, and Past President (Board of Directors) of the local Southeast NAHI Chapter (NAHIPA). While under his 4-year leadership as President, the NAHIPA chapter earned the coveted NAHI Chapter Award in 2008 for outstanding chapter promotion, membership, and legislative initiative. As Past Chapter President, he was instrumental in the current drafting of the proposed Home Inspector Law currently in the State Legislature. He established his chapter's e-newsletter, and has authored numerous articles in national publications. Curtis is also the 2007 recipient of the NAHI Member of The Year Award, and in 2012 earned the NAHI Lifetime Achievement Award. He was elected to the National Board of Directors in 2008, where he served as NAHI President for two consecutive terms, and still remains as the Eastern Regional Director.

Curtis is also recognized in his area's judicial system as an Expert Witness. He maintains the following licenses/certifications and/or affiliations: Radon measurement by the PA DEP, PA Dept. of Agriculture Certified Pest Technician, PA Licensed Real Estate Agent, Certified Mold Inspector (CMI) by the Environmental Solutions Assoc., Member of Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors, he is a NAHI Certified Real Estate Inspector (CRI), and is a NAHI Inspector Trainer (NIT).

He is a devoted husband, loving father of five children, an avid motorcyclist, and obviously enjoys comics!

A WORD ABOUT LANDLORDS AND TENANTS - ONE STORY

As a home inspector, I have been engaged to uncover evidence surrounding cases pending litigation. While this has happened in the homeowner scenario, I have also been hired to represent tenants, who have attempted, unsuccessfully, to get Landlords to fix discrepancies within the rented dwellings. In other cases, I am hired by the Landlord, to uncover the facts to help prove their innocence or guilt. If the evidence supports their innocence, they tend to stick to their guns and would rather go to court to defend their position, rather than roll over and settle to pay a tenant alleging financial loss or injury. If unfavorable evidence is found, they push to settle the case without going to court.

The most recent case was a woman who went to an attorney to file charges against a landlord who allegedly failed to remedy a known water intrusion issue in the basement. As a result the tenant's belongings, located in the basement, became wet, moldy and essentially ruined by this water intrusion. In addition to the personal effects being ruined, she alleged that the mold in the home resulted in her daughter becoming ill with a severe respiratory infection brought on by the mold circulating within the home. The respiratory infection progressed to some sort of lung disease, which may have resulted in her daughter losing a lung. She was suing the landlord for big money due her grown daughters injury. I was actually hired by the landlord, at the suggestion of his attorney, to gather the facts pertaining to the home, and determine if in fact this water intrusion could have caused the mold condition.

When I arrived at the subject property, I observed a row home with a heaping pile of debris in the front of the property, sprawled all over the sidewalk. The height of it was as high as the porch railing or greater (approximately 6'-8'). This was the contents of the 'damaged' or mold contaminated items, which had been located in the home (some of which were from the basement). The tenant, a somewhat middle aged to elderly woman, was on the porch upon my arrival. She was an angry woman, inviting passers-by and neighbors, to avail themselves to whatever they desired of the 'debris', since it was of no good use to her.

While she was rather accommodating to me, she had nothing but expletives to describe her landlord, and vowed if he were to show his face in the home again unannounced, she would not hesitate to help him meet his maker. She described him as a drug addict that was bi-polar. Apparently, he invited himself into her home before, unannounced while she was at work.

Upon my entrance to the home I found it half empty, since the woman was in the process of moving out of the dwelling that very day. My job was to assess the dwelling for water intrusion, test the home for elevated mold conditions, and report on my findings to the client (the landlord).

I did find several conducive conditions for water intrusion in the basement. Poorly sloping concrete walks in the rear of the home pitched toward the foundation. The basement walkout door was a 'leaker', and the surface level storm drain located right outside the rear alley side of the home, was blocked with debris. In the basement, I found stored furnishings and debris covered with visible mold, and partition wall framing with wood decay and water stains clearly evident of a re-occurring water issue in the basement. A forced air furnace was also located in the basement with no return air duct work from the upper floors. Rather the return air was open to the basement with a filthy filter affixed to it. So the furnace was sucking in the basement air contaminated with mold, and was circulating this air throughout the home. (This is not permitted, and certainly not code-compliant.)

Air samples were taken of the dining room area, and the 2nd floor middle bedroom, and sent for microscopic analysis. The indoor air sampling results from the lab, revealed elevated mold spores in both areas, some of which were the toxic *Stachybotrys*. I am sure after my client's attorney received my assessment, he advised him to settle the case and avoid going to court, as the evidence would certainly NOT be in his favor.

Tenants have rights, and landlords have obligations to their tenants. Landlords are obligated to provide a safe environment for the tenants renting their dwellings. Negligence, on the part of the landlord, can result in significant financial loss. Landlords are encouraged to take prudent steps to ensure a safe rental environment for their tenants, and tenants should be sure to inform their landlord of any potential safety concerns that may result in a loss, financial or otherwise. Krome is there to aid either side of this equation, and to ensure against such potential losses.

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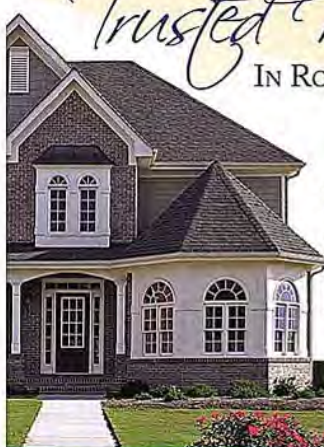


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