

SPIKE & DAWN: THE VAMPIRE ROCK 'N' ROLL SWINDLE
A *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* comic book proposal
by Jamie S. Rich

The simple breakdown: Following the events of the Spike comic strips from *Dark Horse Extra*, the vampire punk rock band The Bleeders come to Sunnydale to find their drummer, Emo Globin. Once in town, they discover that their old comrade Spike has killed Emo, and they decide that if he is going to take one of theirs, they are going to take one of his. They kidnap Dawn in order to spur a showdown between themselves and Spike, leading to a blood-and-guts battle in the sewers.

This could either be a 32 or 48 page one-shot, or a two-shot, or whatnot. I can tailor it to your needs.

The villains: The Bleeders are a legendary punk band on the underground scene. To the uninitiated, they are simply a band whose shtick is pretending they are vampires. To the real fans, they really are a dastardly vampire punk band, touring the world and playing loud music and sucking blood. Though obviously, the band are vampires and thus not subject to aging, these guys have toured and partied relentlessly for the past 25 years, and it is beginning to wear on their bodies. They are a bit haggard, a little thicker looking, and definitely have more tattoos and piercings than we may have seen in the original strips.

- (1) SCAB: vocalist for the band. He is your general Johnny Rotten type. Smart and witty—perhaps too smart for his own good, sometimes. No one is as clever as he thinks he is. These days he takes to wearing long overcoats, muscle Ts, and has a short crew cut (think the lead singer of Bad Religion). Part of the haircut is down to style, part of it is to the creeping advances of age (again, a good visual if not wholly accurate).
- (2) OI NEGATIVE: bassist, an old school skinhead. Wears the standard white T-shirt, suspenders, black pants tucked into his boots. Lots and lots of tattoos. Maybe even a cool one on his head. (Has anyone designed a vampire power symbol? Perhaps skins in the vamp world are all about vampire supremacy.)
- (3) CLOT: guitarist. Think Sid Vicious. This is the real mean one. He just likes mayhem for the sake of mayhem. He is Scab's brother, and they do look alike. But Clot has gone a bit Keith Richards on us. He still wears the leather and the studs and has short, spiky black hair...but man, has the road beaten the crap out of *him*.

The story: Open on the NYC streets in 1977. Some white suburban wannabes are looking for the location of the secret Bleeders gig. These are your typical see-it-from-the-outside types that other punks hate—they know every release date of every Ramones 45, but they have never *lived* it. Thus, they are the perfect type to hear the rumblings about this ultracool, ultrahard band and go looking for them. Unfortunately for our kids, they actually run into The Bleeders and their pal Spike, who have no compunctions about sending them back to mama as a different kind of hardcore.

Cut to the present, the three remaining members of The Bleeders standing on a Sunnydale street in almost an identical picture—only with the above described changes of age. They are outside a demon bar, and they are a bit pissed off. They go inside and start asking around about Emo Globin, their lost drummer. They have a tour about to start, and they need their sticksman. Someone points them to Gutter Vampire (from the strips), who shudders when he sees the three badasses heading his way.

Elsewhere, Dawn is getting out of school late. She had to stay to work on a school project—painting scenery for the class play. Buffy isn't able to pick her up, and so she has sent Spike. No one really wants her to walk home alone in the dark, despite her protests. (Or, if you prefer, this could take place while Buffy is dead...and so Spike is the only one who *can* protect her. This would mean the strips would have happened during the Glory days.)

On the walk home, they run into the Bleeders. A few blows are exchanged, but Spike, who is really concerned about protecting Dawn, tries to weasel out of the fight, citing friendship. Unfortunately, he lets slip that Dawn is his real motive for not throwing down, and Scab gets an idea. He gets the others to retreat. This, of course, worries Spike.

The next morning, as Dawn is on the way to school, Oi and Scab pull a daring daylight grab, jumping out of the sewers (covered in blankets, ponchos, parkas, whatever), and snag the girl, dragging her down into the muck.

As evening approaches, and Spike rouses himself from his daytime slumber, he discovers a video tape at the foot of his bed. It's footage of the Bleeders with Dawn, telling Spike to come down and find her or they will turn her into one of their special groupies. Clot flashes his teeth and his mean vamp face, and bites the head off a rat to prove he's still one crazy bastard. Scab takes it all more seriously. "You killed someone that was important to this band," he says, "and now we're gonna take someone who is important to *you*."

Flashback to 1977: the Bleeders hanging with some girls Spike has procured for them. They make a comment about them joining their "special groupies," and those groupies--a gaggle of nasty vampire punk girls—are revealed.

Spike, of course, has no choice but to go—and he has to go alone or the others will have his head for letting this happen. What ensues is some heavy action, with Spike, of course, emerging triumphant. Scab and Spike also have an argument over Spike having changed—how despicable it is for him to have gone from being despicable to being what he is. Spike denies everything, and says Scab will never understand, before staking him. He goes to Dawn, one reason he doesn't regret "selling out." She is dirty and scared, but okay—thanks to him.

We close on one last flashback—Spike and the boys after gorging themselves, the band going on about how they will never sell-out, never give in to corporate greed, never

change, always be friends. Spike toasts them and says, "You've got that right, mate. You've got that right."