

## FATALE 16 Page Special

### A Christmas Story

Fatale is shopping in Lord and Taylor on Christmas Eve, the anniversary of her mother's abduction. She is buying last minute presents for loved ones when she sees the perfect coat that she's been looking for, the last one of its kind or a one of a kind designer coat. A fur trimmed Anorak snow bunny coat. (or a hat or a scarf?) It is the thing she has been looking for for ages. She buys it, joking with the sales girl about buying a present for herself. The doorman flirts with her as she leaves the store. She walks down the street, enjoying the ambiance of New York at Christmas time. She passes an old homeless woman who is talking to unseen things like a crazy person and the woman looks hard at her, suddenly staring. Fatale is nonplused by the scrutiny and keeps on walking, keeping a wary eye on the woman, when something the woman says brings Fatale up short: "There's a dragon in you".

Fatale says to her that while that may be accurate, she'd like to know how the woman knows that. The woman insists that she come with her to see her friend, a man who can understand this phenomenon. The woman is so desperately insistent that Fatale goes along with her to the McDonalds in Times Square. The old woman, Mercy, says Fatale must go in and talk to her friend Michael sitting at a table inside. She says that she can't go in with her, the management doesn't like her going in there.

It seems harmless so Fatale goes in to where Michael Alexander is drinking coffee. He says that he can see she has a dragon in her but being more savvy than Mercy, he can see that this is not a problem for her. He introduces himself. He tells Fatale a bit about this being his busy season what with all the people having many pressures on them and feeling depressed and alone. He mentions that many are drawn to Times Square, a kind of center for false hopes. This hits home to Fatale and she thinks about her mother. She asks what he does and he says that he helps the people. He goes quantum and Fatale is left looking around in confusion as he plucks a nasty demon off of someone and tussles with it. He comes back and explains to her that there are people who love to cause misery, that they thrive on it. He excuses himself and leaves.

Fatale goes outside to where Mercy is waiting and explains that Michael thinks the dragon thing is OK. Fatale asks where Mercy is going now, she doesn't want to leave Mercy alone. A brutish man jostles Mercy and shouts abusively at her for being in his way. Mercy fires back at the man and a ruckus starts, his friends join in, it is obvious that these men have been sent to hurt Mercy. Mercy is a tough old bird but hopelessly outnumbered. Fatale helps fight them off. Afterward Fatale tries to convince Mercy to come to her hotel or any place of

Mercy's choosing, but Mercy won't go. Fatale follows Mercy to her ATM cubicle and she gruffly gives Fatale something she values, some sentimental thing. Fatale wants to give Mercy something... she gives her the thing that she bought for herself. She begs Mercy to come with her, she is supposed to meet Duke, Lucy, and Donny for Christmas eve dinner, but Mercy refuses. So Fatale makes some calls and soon the whole crew are having a splendid catered dinner in Mercy's ATM cubicle, sitting on the floor, talking and laughing. Donny and Mercy hit it off, of course.

On a roof top across the street Michael stands in Quantum, watching the happy scene. The whole area is suffused by a bright golden glow shining from the happiness of the people within and making passersby smile a little. They are banishing the dark things, at least in this vicinity and making a few hearts a little lighter.

**Title : In Defiance of Reality**

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**Characters:**

Fatale aka Desiree Hopewell

Mercy

Michael Alexander

Duke and Lucy

Donny

**Page 1** Splash page 5/6

Fatale is standing at a counter in Lord & Taylor and the clerk, a woman, is handing her a small paper shopping bag with handles. She turns the heads of passing men, having the usual effect on the populace around her. She has a small stylish purse slung across her body under the open coat she is wearing.

Caption Christmas Eve, 1995, 3:40 PM, NYC, Lord & Taylor Department Store.

Woman Gift wrap is on three, Ms. Hopewell. It may be a bit hectic up there, though.

Fatale That's life in the big city... Everybody waits till the last minute.

Me included.

panel 2 1/6 Horizontal flapjack panel

Walking away from the counter past racks of clothing Fatale stops short as she spots something in the store.

Fatale Ohh! That's it! That's what I've been searching for.

## Page 2

panel 1 2/9

Fatale is trying on a coat in the designer boutique section of the store. A clerk who is holding the coat she was wearing looks on as she fastens a button at the bodice. The small shopping bag is in evidence on the floor.

Fatale I've never seen anything like this. I love it. And it fits! How *unusual*.

Clerk It's a one of a kind piece, too. All of this designer's work sells out as fast as we get it into the store. Very popular.

panel 2 1/9

Close-up of Fatale holding up her credit card flippantly between two fingers and smiling.

Fatale Well, now this one's sold out too. My little Christmas present to **me**.

panel 3 2/9

The doorman at Lord & Taylor is speaking to Fatale as he opens the door for her. She smiles at him. She is carrying two shopping bags now. A larger one and the smaller one. Her coat is still open and she is wearing gloves. Way in the BG up the sidewalk we can see **Mercy** talking to nothing, waving her arms. Passing pedestrians are giving her a wide berth.

Doorman Merry Christmas, Miss. May I call you a cab? It would be a **pleasure!**

Fatale That's so sweet, but I suppose I'll walk for a while. The exercise will be good for my figure.

panel 4 1/9

Closer up on the pair as Fatale is passing by him.

Doorman No offense ma'm, but your figure is about as good as they get.

Fatale None taken. Thank you very much.

panel 5 1/3

Fatale walks up the street enjoying the ambiance of Christmas in NY. The sidewalks are somewhat crowded with last minute shoppers carrying bags and packages. Many of the male pedestrians are enjoying the ambiance of Fatale. In the FG is Mercy talking to the air and waving her arms.

Mercy            It is written that thou shalt not tempt this old servant of the lord.

### Page 3

panel 1 1/6

Fatale is nearing Mercy and has noticed her. She is giving her a slightly sad sideways look. Mercy has not noticed Fatale and is still waving at something we cannot see to go away from her.

Mercy            You better watch it, 'cause he'll casteth out devils and th' prince of devils.

panel 2 1/6

As Fatale is even with Mercy on the sidewalk, not walking really close to her (in fact everyone is looking at Mercy and giving her a wide berth) Mercy stops talking and stares hard at Fatale. Fatale is looking a little uncomfortable under Mercy's scrutiny, not knowing what to expect.

panel 3 1/6

Fatale is still walking a little past Mercy looking at her with surprise at what she is saying.

Mercy            **Lord!** You got a **dragon** in you!

panel 4 1/6

Closer up. Fatale has stopped in shock and stares incredulously back at Mercy who speaks as though in wonder.

Fatale            **What** did you say?

Mercy            Never seen **anything** like that! A **Dragon!**

panel

Close up on Fatale frowning a little at Mercy.

Fatale            Who **are** you?

panel

Fatale has turned to face Mercy. She is calm, but feeling very strange at having her darkest secret known by this old homeless woman. Mercy is still staring hard at Fatale.

Mercy I see things. The dark places are made light unto me, Oh Lord.

What does that thing do to you, poor girl?

Fatale This is really weird.

panel

Mercy is struck by an idea, Fatale is dumbfounded.

Mercy Yea, I see what I must do! When the dragon saw that he was cast out onto the earth, he persecuted the woman.

Fatale Um... I'm really all right, lady. I'm not persecuted, at least not by the **dragon**.

I can't believe I'm saying this.

Page 3

panel 1 1/6

Mercy is gesturing at Fatale, trying to explain and convince her.

Mercy Come with old Mercy. Got a friend you need to see. He'll know what to do.

Fatale Ma'am, I'm **fine. Really**. Nothing needs to be **done**.

panel 2 1/6

Fatale is following Mercy, rolling her eyes as she lets herself be talked into going with Mercy who is walking away and imploring Fatale to follow. They do not touch. The homeless in NY know there place.

Mercy No, no... **please**. you must come see him. Oh **Lord**, let the scales fall from her eyes.

Fatale Well if it means that much to you. I suppose it won't hurt. I have a couple of hours before I have to be at dinner.

I can't believe I'm doing this.

panel 3 1/6

Mercy and Fatale are approaching the McDonalds in Times Square.



Michael & Fatale settin' in McD's. Way in the BG behind Fatale there is one "**loner guy**" that has just come in and is looking around angrily. The place has a few other customers, too.

Michael      You are more correct than you know.

                  There is more to reality than most people can perceive. A kind of "Twilight Zone" in a way.

panel 2 1/3 horizontal

Switch to a similar POV of Michael and Fatale sitting in the restaurant in quantum. Michael is indicating the surroundings with a wave of his hand. We can see the form of the dragon spirit rising above Fatale. She glows with a beautiful pink light. We see all the other people walking around with their demons and stuff. In the BG the loner guy is walking toward the counter frowning at a Christmas decoration. His silhouette is colored darkish green.

Michael      It's taken a lifetime but I've learned to perceive things that are just out of the reach of our normal senses. And I've discovered that I'm able to help people in certain ways.

Fatale        (skeptically) Uh huh. And you think I need your help?

panel 3 1/6

Fatale & Michael settin' talkin' some more in regular reality again. In the BG the loner guy is at the counter looking around angrily.

Michael      No, I can see that you don't. But I understand why Mercy thought you might.

                  I am curious, however, how did you... acquire this dragon of yours?

Fatale        Well, it's a long story but, basically, I was born with it.

panel 4 1/6

Michael is getting up from the table. In the BG the lonely guy is getting an order of food on a tray. He is frowning at a bright Christmas decoration on the tray.

Michael      I see. Some sort of summoning and sacrifice involving your mother gone wrong, I expect. And you were born with the summoned spirit trapped inside of you.

Fatale        Ye-es... but how could you know?

panel

Close up of Michael

Michael I've studied the occult as it relates to the Quatum Plane. And I've read obscure ancient texts that mention something like that dragon being used in certain ceremonies.

It's supposed to confer the capacity to absorb strength and ability from others.

panel

Closeup of Fatale. The loner guy is in the BG still staring angrily at the tray gripped tightly in his hands.

Fatale It... does, but only temporarily. This is all very **strange**, Mister Alexander.

panel

In thr FG the loner guy is throwing his tray at the counter and shouting.

Michael I understand exactly how you feel.

Excuse me for just a moment.

Loner Guy I hate Christmas! Everybody pretends that they care and no one really does!

panel 6 1/6 horizontal flapjack panel

In Quantum - Michael is headed for the man and he goes quantum and starts to appear on the quantum plane. The loner guy has a bunch of nasty looking demon things plucking at him. Behind him Fatale's silhouette is looking around confused. The dragon spirit mirrors her head movement.

Fatale Mister Alexander?

Where did you go?

Page 5

panel 1 1/3 vertical

In Quantum - As Michael nears the man the creatures tormenting him all turn and hiss at Michael like so many spidery cats. The loner guy is grabbing for the clerk behind the counter.

Poor Guy     It makes me **sick!**

Things        Nooo! The one called **Glimmer** comesss!

Hsss!

Sssstay awaay!

Leave usss!

Michael      You're causing this poor man a bit too much trouble for me to do that.

panel 2 1/6

In Quantum - Michael nabs one of the creatures off the guy and it squirms frantically in his fist. The loner guy has caught hold of the counter person's uniform and is yelling at them.

Poor Guy     What's the matter with you people?!

panel 3 1/6

In Quantum - Michael reaches through the poor guy and grabs another demon as he squirts the first one in his fist and the others leap away in all directions. The guy is letting go of the counter person's uniform and has gone from outrage and anger to whining.

Poor Guy     You're all a bunch of hypocrites!

panel 4 1/6

Real World view. The miserable guy is collapsed on the counter in despair, but the violence has gone out of him. Michael is coming out of quantum.

Poor Guy     No one really cares.

Michael      You'll feel better now. For a while anyway. I can't solve your problems for you...

panel 5 1/6

Michael is putting some coins on the counter. The manager Lionel is there behind the counter. The other counter persons have backed away. The guy is leaning on the counter looking downward, now ashamed.

Michael        Maybe you should just get some dinner and relax. Some people **do** care. There's plenty of good ones, you just need to find them.

                  It's okay, Lionel. He'll be all right now.

Lionel         Okay, Michael, if **you** say so.

Page 6

panel 1

Michael has returned and is sitting down at the table where Fatale has waited.

Fatale         What was **that** about? Where did you go? Did you...**help** that guy?

Michael        One of those levels of reality that I was telling you about is filled with many ills that are created and fed by mankind's fears and in turn prey on and increase them.

panel 2

close up on Michael.

Michael        I've learned to enter what I call the Quantum Plane and destroy these things. But they grow back in time if the afflicted individual doesn't change what caused them in the first place.

panel 3

Fatale looks sad and distracted at what Michael is saying to her.

Michael        This is a busy time of year for me. So many people feel so much more isolated and alone at Christmas time.

Fatale         I know what you mean about that. My mother was all alone and in hiding the Christmas before she died. I think about what she must have felt like twenty four years ago tonight... so lonely and afraid.

panel 4

Michael        People feel isolated and alone that even in a crowded city like New York. Especially so. And there are those who revel in their fear and misery, that thrive on it.

I do what I can.

panel 5

Michael is getting up to leave. Fatale is smiling up at him. They've bonded.

Michael I'd better get back to it. It was very nice meeting you.

Fatale It's been very odd meeting you, Mister Alexander but ,somehow, I like you.

Page 7

panel 1

Fatale is leaving the McDonalds, Mercy is waiting for her outside looking happier than before. Fatale, of course still has the shopping bags.

Mercy Michael just told me that you were all right. He oughtta know. He's a smart one that Michael.

Fatale He's an amazing man, that's for sure. He said that he spent his whole life learning to see the Quantum plane, but how do **you** see these things?

panel 2

Close on Mercy and Fatale. Fatale is looking at Mercy nonplussed.

Mercy Me? Oh, I'm **crazy**.

Fatale Oh.

panel 3

Fatale and Mercy are walking down the street.

Fatale Where are you going now, Mercy?

Mercy Yea, I must walk through the valley of the shadow a' death. But I don' fear no evil.

panel 4

Fatale and Mercy continue to talk on the sidewalk near McDonalds. Three large mean looking men are approaching from behind Mercy.

Fatale            Why don't you come with me? I'm going to meet my family and friends for dinner and I'd love it if you came.

Mercy            Oh, no no. Old Mercy don't belong in polite company.

Fatale leaves Mercy but feels bad and goes back

panel 5

One of the men jostles Mercy as he passes her.

Thug 1           Watch it, you old **bat**!

Mercy            Don't you be pushin' me, you thugs!

Page 8

Panel 1

The man turns to Mercy threateningly. His friends flank him, cutting Mercy off from Fatale. Fatale comes running back. She is wearing a coat and gloves.

Thug 1           Shouldn't be so quick to mouth off. Old woman like you.

Mercy            I'm not afraid of **thugs** like you!

Fatale            Hey! Leave her alone!

panel 2

The thugs have moved in closer on Mercy and are grabbing her and thug 1 is speaking sneeringly to Fatale and shoves her back hard. There is a truck on the street behind them. Like a Ryder truck.

Thug 1           **You** stay out of it, Chickie!

panel 3

Fatale is struggling to her feet and the men are hustling Mercy into the back of the truck. She is half out of her coat and is pulling off one glove off her free hand with her teeth. The shopping bags are slung onto the free arm that is out of the coat. The little purse is still slung across her body.

panel 4

Fatale leaps for the truck as the back doors are closing and it is pulling away (shopping bags still on her arm). She is grabbing for one of the thugs who is hanging on the back of the truck.

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panel 1 1/3 Vertical

Fatale has pulled the thug off the truck onto the street and is kissing his limp form as a black limo swerves to avoid them.

panel 2 1/6

Fatale, now energized, runs up the street in Times Square after the truck. She touches a few pedestrians and drains them as she runs by. They wobble unsteadily in her wake.

panel 3 1/6

Fatale leaps onto the roof of a moving car behind the truck.

panel 4 1/3

Fatale is on the back of the Truck ripping the doors open.

Page 10

panel 1 1/6

In the FG Fatale is pulling herself inside the truck. Two stunned thugs are getting up to fend her off. Mercy is kneeling in the BG.

panel 2 1/6

Fatale hugs the two thugs and drains them. Mercy is shocked and fascinated.

panel 3 1/6 horizontal flapjack

Fatale grabs Mercy and leaps out of the back of the still moving truck.

panel 4 1/3

Fatale and Mercy land on the street right in front of a cab that screeches to a violent stop inches from them.

panel 5 1/6 horizontal flapjack

Fatale has opened the door to the cab and is motioning for Mercy to get in. The cab driver stares at them wide-eyed with shock.

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panel 1 1/3

The cab has pulled up in front of Mercy's ATM hangout and Fatale and Mercy are getting out.

Mercy I shoulda known that Michael's enemies wouldn't leave me alone at this time of year. He wants to hurt Michael any way he can.

panel 2 1/6

Fatale and Mercy talk in front of the ATM area.

Fatale Please come with me, Mercy. At least to my hotel.

Mercy This is old Mercy's home here. This is what I know, I'm comfortable here. Come in for a minute.

panel 3 1/6

Inside the ATM cubicle Mercy turns away and rummages in her blouse.

Mercy I want you to have something

panel 4 2/9

Mercy comes up with what she is looking for and holds it up.

Mercy Here it is!

panel 5 1/9

In Mercy's hand is a small broken heart-shaped locket. It is scratched and dented but an inscription can still be read that says: "To Mercy, the light of my life."

Mercy

Page 12

panel 1

Mercy presses the locket into Fatale's hand though she is reluctant to take it.

Fatale            But Mercy I can't take this! This is something you would give to your daughter or grandchild.

Mercy I want you to have it. You're very special to me.

panel 2

Fatale is touched. there is a tear in her eye as she looks down at the locket in her hand

Fatale Oh Mercy, I'll always treasure it. But I have nothing to give you

Mercy            I don't need anything

panel 3

Fatale is handing Mercy the large shopping bag with the designer coat in it to Mercy

Fatale            Oh wait yes I do. It would mean a lot to me if you would have this.

panel 4

Mercy pulls the coat out of the bag and looks all choked up

Mercy I never had anything so nice.

panel 5

Fatale has pulled out a very compact (expensive) cellular phone from the little purse and is dialing on it.

Fatale            Well, I can't leave you here like this and you won't come with me. So... If the mountain won't come to Mohammed

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panel 1 2/3

It is night outside and Inside the ATM cubicle Fatale, Mercy, Duke, Lucy, and Donny are seated on the floor being served by a couple of caterers with trays of food. Donny and Mercy are talking and laughing. Everybody is having a good time.

panel 2 1/3

In Quantum - A shot of Michael on a roof top across the street looking down on the happy scene below. The whole area is suffused by a bright golden glow shining from the happiness of the people within and making passersby smile a little. Their joy and love are banishing the dark things of the substratum which skitter away into the shadows, at least in this vicinity and they are making a few hearts a little lighter.