Evolution's Nightmare

**Writer:** Doug Moench

**Artists:** Ed Hannigan and Jim Mooney

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Stan Lee PRESENTS: PLANET OF THE APES!

DAWN IN THE DESOLATE REGION DAMNED AS THE FORBIDDEN ZONE...

AN HOUR PASSES...

...TWO...

...AS TWO OPPOSING FACTIONS GATHER IN NUMBER AND FORCE...SLOWLY...OMINOUSLY...

...FACTIONS DIVIDED BY HATRED... AND A GLUE OF ARID VALLEY CARPETED IN SUN-BAKED MUD.

THE VIEW FROM ONE RIDGE THEN...

THERE MAY BE A LOT OF THEM, BUT THEY'LL FALL LIKE GRASS UNDER SCYTHE. AFTER ALL, THEY'RE NOTHING BUT PUNY.

--APES, WOR.. SAVAGE AND PRIMITIVE, STRENGTH IS STILL ON THEIR SIDE.

MAYBE SO...

...BUT IT'S HUMAN CUNNING THAT'LL WIN THIS DAY.

...AND THE VIEW FROM THE OTHER,
ONE RIDE, ARMED WITH STEEL AND HATE --

EVEN AT THIS DISTANCE, I CAN SEE THEM TREMBLING.

FACING THE OTHER, ARMED WITH THE SAME.

I CAN SMELL THE STINKING BEASTS FROM HERE!

SO DIFFERENT IN ASPECT AND MIEN...

YES, SIR!

THE FORBIDDEN ZONE: A DREADED PLACE SHUINED BY THE LIVING EVER SINCE ALL LIFE WAS BURNED FROM ITS FACE IN A HELLISH INSTANT OF SEARING WAR...

A PLACE NOW INIMICALLY POPULATED AGAIN, IF ONLY BRIEFLY... AND IF ONLY TO REVISIT THE HELLISH BATTLEGROUNDS OF WAR.

THE GHOST OF NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST EMULGES THE AIR, A PURPLE MIST OF LANGUIID RADIATION...

THERE IS SILENCE, AS TENSE AND PROLONGED AS IT IS EAGER AND ALL TOO EPHEMERAL... A NERVOUS SILENCE NONCLEAED BY...

...BUT SO IDENTICAL IN DIFFERENCE.
CHARGE!!

It is the first and brutal overture in a sweeping clash of chaos, all sounds and all fury, all signifying the clamorous rapacious silence by many...

...by hooves pounding sun-baked mud...
...and taut strings.
...now gone slack...

...by shouts of frenzy...
...and whine of flame.
...the piercing shriek of animals...

...and the pierced flesh of life...
...by hatred swirled in lust.
...and boiling madness...

Spat in strife.

More than mere war, it is the dream of Genesis drenched dark and browm perverted. No longer a dream, it is now...
THE ISSUE IS NEITHER BOUNDARY NOR WEALTH. THERE IS NOTHING TO GAIN, LESS TO PILLAGE.

THE ISSUE IS NEITHER NATIONAL NOR RACIAL. COUNTRIES NO LONGER EXIST, AND RACES HAVE NOW BECOME INSIGNIFICANT AND UNITED IN THE FACE OF AWESOME SCHISMS OF SPECIES.
NIGHTMARE!

AND THOUGH ENMITY BETWEEN SPECIES SPAWNED THE ISSUE, IT HAS NOW DISINTEGRATED TO FAR LESS THAN APE VERSUS HUMAN. IT IS NOW AN ELEMENTAL BATTLE OF ATAVISTIC RAGE—WHERE COMBATANTS FIGHT DEATH BY DEALING DEATH...

...AND THUS, THEY FIGHT EACH OTHER ...AND THUS THEY KILL.

AND THUS, THEY HAVE EACH LOST THEIR INDIVIDUAL FIGHT AGAINST DEATH...

...FOR DEATH IS THE ONLY AND TRUE VICTOR.
IT CONTINUES THROUGH MORNING INTO AFTERNOON, AS THE CHARRED FIELD OF BATTLE DROWNS IN THE BLOOD OF LIFE...GASPS UNDER THE WEIGHT OF DEATH...
STILL IT CONTINUES...

MORE...

MORE—INTERMINABLY MORE...

SLAY THEM!

APES KILLING HUMANS...

HUMANS MURDERING APES...

YAAAH!!

AND EVER... DEATH.

MORE LOUDLY...

--HOARSELY IN PANIC...

THE DESiccATED FIELD IS NO LONGER GREEDY, QUENCHED NOW AND BLOATED, SATIATED, GLUTTED BEYOND SANGUINE LUST, IT WANTS NO MORE...

...BUT THE BLOOD CONTINUES TO BURST AND TO GUSH AND SUN-BAKED MUD TURNS SCARLET...

AT LEAST, IN THOSE SMALL AND FEW AREAS WHERE VIEW IS NOT OBSTRUCtED BY CORPSES.
And still it continues... Corpses gathering...

...Combatants dwindling. Conservation of exploding energy transmuting to lifeless matter littering dead ground soaking wasted blood...

...Spilled in more death...

...More facing death...

...More faces slashed to death...

...And more death than life...

...For there is no life...

It is over but no one sighs.

The rape of silence leaves behind a soft whimper of guttering flame. An empty rape, for nothing will be born of it.

...Save more hate, and therefore more death...
...because the fight against death has been lost.

BADLY LOST. DEATH HAS WON AND THERE IS NO ONE LEFT TO FIGHT.

MANY HAVE BEEN SLAIN, BOTH HUMAN AND SIMIAN...

BUT DEATH IS THE TRUE VICTOR.

DEATH -- IS THE ONLY VICTOR.

-- IS ALL ALONE NOW. YOU CAN SEE IT -- THERE IS NOTHING ELSE.

BUT JUST BARELY. FOR IT IS A LIFE WHICH CAN NEVER LEAVE THE TWISTED TANGLE OF DEATH SPRAWLING EVERYWHERE AROUND IT...

A MOVEMENT...

...A LIFE YES -- A LIFE...

NEVER LEAVE ON LEGS BROKEN AND BURNT, ON LEGS USELESS AND RUINED.

ACROSS THE SCARLET FIELD... ANOTHER...? DEATH HAS BEEN BEATEN BY TWO... AND THIS LIFE LURCHES ON LEGS UNIMPAIRED, AND PERHAPS EVEN IMPOSSIBLY UNSCATHED, BUT HIS ARMS...

AH YES, HIS ARMS -- THEY HANG LIMP.

YOU DAMN DIRTY APE...!!

WHAT--?!

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT... YOU STINKING BEAST--!

IT WAS YOUR WAR... A HUMAN WAR -- WHICH CREATED THIS FORBIDDEN ZONE, AND IT IS YOU WHO SHOULD BE HELD CULPABLE FOR THE DEATH WHICH NOW FILLS IT.

THUS BY THE AUTHORITY OF SIMIAN IMPERATIVE, IT IS MY DUTY TO ANNOUNCE--

IT'S YOUR FAULT THAT MY PEOPLE LIE HERE DEAD, THEIR BLOOD SPILLED AND MINGLING WITH THE FILTHY BLOOD OF APES!

SILENCE, HUMAN!
--YOUR DEATH!!

OH YEAH...? WELL, BY THE AUTHORITY OF HUMAN DIGNITY, IT'S MY DUTY TO ANNOUNCE -- THAT YOU CAN JUST SHOVE IT, VERMIN-BAG!!

SKOR!

CHUD!!

A SILENCE, THEN... THE SILENCE OF A STAND-OFF AS EACH OPPONENT SLOWLY REALIZES...

THAT MURDER BECOMES A DIFFICULT PROPOSITION WHEN ONE IS CRIPPLED. IT IS THE HUMAN WHO FIRST BREAKS THE SILENCE.

YES, HUMAN... BUT NEVERTHELESS WE SHALL BOTH DIE.

BUT WHY SHOULD WE BOTH DIE...? ISN'T IT BETTER TO ESCAPE THIS PLACE AND REGAIN OUR HEALTH -- AND THEN DECIDE WHICH OF US IS FATED TO DIE.

YOUR WORDS MAY BE LOOSELY CONSTRUED AS LOGICAL, HUMAN...

IT'S NO USE. I CAN'T REACH YOU WITHOUT LEGS... AND YOU CAN'T EVEN HOLD A WEAPON WITHOUT ARMS.

HELPLESSLY... IN STARVATION.

NOT IF WE... NOT IF WE WHAT, HUMAN...?

CALL A TRUCE -- A TEMPORARY ONE, OF COURSE. FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

TO HELP -- TO USE EACH OTHER TO GET OUT OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE... TO REACH FOOD AND A PLACE WHERE OUR WOUNDS CAN HEAL...!

YOUR PROPOSAL CONSTITUTES BLASPHEMY TO THE TENETS OF SIMIAN IMPERATIVE.

...AND SINCE MY ARMS ARE ALL RIGHT, I'LL JUST TEAR SOME CLOTH OFF THIS UNIFORM...

...AND USE IT TO BIND A SLING AROUND YOUR BACK.

ALL RIGHT, JUST LET ME GRAB SOME WEAPONS... AND THEN I'LL WALK MYSELF...

NEXT WEEK YOU MUST READ STRANGE ALLIES!
Stan Lee PRESENTS: PLANET OF THE APES!

DEATH LIES AT THE MOUNTAIN OF MADNESS

THE BATTLE WAS QUICK AND FINAL. WHEN THE DUST SETTLED OVER THE BODIES OF THE DEAD, ONLY TWO REMAINED TO ATTEMPT THEIR BURIAL--ONE MAN AND ONE APE.

BUT EVEN BETWEEN TWO MORTAL ENEMIES THERE MUST COME A TIME WHEN A TALEL DEPENDS FOR EITHER TO SURVIVE...

...A TIME WHEN BOTH ARE CRIPPLED, AND NEITHER CAN SURVIVE ALONE!

Stan Lee, Dan Adkins, Doug Moench, pencilled, and Jim Mooney, inked. EXCURSION INTO FANTASY.
"...and progresses step by trudging step through the same, the human finds time to think... and to scheme... for wouldn't it be easy now?"

That way, ape... before the scavengers mistake us for carrion.

I know the way, human... and I'm not in the habit of taking orders from the likes of you.

Just remember, human...

The ape would never even know... until the blade brought choking blood into his throat...

...if this is to succeed, we must cooperate...

...because if I die, you'll be left to rot on your belly.

Yes, the human has found time to think.

But he has not used it.

It began on a familiar and expected note, one striking discordance and far from harmony...
HOURS PASS, AND THE WITHERED TERRAIN OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE BURSTS INTO AN EFFULGENCE OF MUTATED FOREST, GLOWING BIZARRE AND RESPLENDENT IN DUSK...

"...BECAUSE I SEE SOMETHING UP AHEAD, AND IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN..."

"-IT'S OUR DINNER.-"

By night, and the glaze of a fire, they have learned—GRUDGINGLY—THE SOUND OF EACH OTHER'S NAME.

All done and JUICY too, Solomon...

Hurry up and SLICE it, then... BEFORE MY STOMACH JUMPS OUT AFTER IT.

AND LET'S GO GET IT—!
OF COURSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEED ME! I DON'T EVEN WANT YOUR STINKING HIDE NEAR ME! BUT YOU'D DAMN WELL BETTER FEED ME--IF YOU HOPE TO MOVE ONE INCH FROM THIS CAMPsite AT ANYTHING FASTER THAN AN ELBOW-CRAWL!!

THE MEAT IS SLICED AND EATEN...BY THE ONE WHOSE HANDS HAVE SLICED IT!

WELL, JOVAN--?

WHAT ABOUT ME?...

YOU...YOU WANT ME TO...FEED YOU--?

OF COURSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEED ME! I DON'T EVEN WANT YOUR STINKING HIDE NEAR ME! BUT YOU'D DAMN WELL BETTER FEED ME--IF YOU HOPE TO MOVE ONE INCH FROM THIS CAMPsite AT ANYTHING FASTER THAN AN ELBOW-CRAWL!!

THE POINT IS TAKEN...

...AND THE MEAT PROFFERED, WITH NO SMALL MEASURE OF DISGUST.

SOLOMON ACCEPTS IT...

...SIGNIFICANTLY BARING HIS TEETH MORE THAN NECESSARY.

AND LONG AFTER HE HAD BEGUN TO CHEW THE MORSEL, HIS GLARE LINGERED...

MORNING PLUS TWO HOURS OF AIMLESS PROGRESS. SOLOMON AND JOVAN ARE HOPELESSLY LOST.

LET'S TRY THAT DIRECTION.

YOUR PRECISE WORDS, HUMAN... BEFORE WE LOST THE TRAIL.
--A sound--

WHAT'S THAT THRASHING--?

--AND A MUTATED JUGGERNAUT OF FRENZIED HORROR EXPLODES FROM SHREDDING CONCEALMENT.

GASPING IN SHOCK, SOLOMON LURCHES BACK. THE SLING SNAPS. AN EFFLUVION OF BELCHED STENCH ASSAULTS THEM, AND THEY--

GROWW!


IT HAPPENS QUICKLY NOW. THE CREATURE SNORTS, BELLOWs, AND RUSHES TOWARD ITS LUNGE...

GROWLING!

A LUNGE CAUGHT BY SOLOMON'S DRIVING FEET.

-- OVER --

THE FEET KICK THE CREATURE UP...

-- AND ONTO THE KNIFE HELD IN JOVAN'S HANDS --

IS THAT THE COOPERATION YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT, SOLOMON...

OR WAS IT JUST A COINCIDENCE THAT I HAPPENED TO BE HOLDING THE KNIFE --?

There is no reply.

LATER --

-- THEY ARE STILL LOST --

-- AND NOW, WET --

BECAUSe THIS RAIN CAUGHT US OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE ...

-- AND IF WE DON'T FIND US SOME SHELTER, WE'RE BOUND TO DIE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE --

Can barely see in this downpour -- I don't know why we should even bother going on...
SHRACK!

"WAIT A MINUTE--TAKE A LOOK UP NEAR THE TOP OF THAT ROCK PILLAR..."

YES...

CAN YOU MAKE OUT THE MOUTH OF A CAVE UP THERE?

...AND THERE'S LIGHT EMANATING FROM IT-- A FIRE...AN OCCUPANT... AND MAYBE FOOD--

THE TORTUOUS ASCENT BEGINS, ALREADY DOOMED TO DISASTER ON FOUR SIDES BORDERING MADNESS...

ONE: DARKNESS RENDERS THE CLIMB PERFECTLY IMPOSSIBLE.

TWO: IT IS UNDERTAKEN BY TWO CRIPPLERS, EACH A CLUMSY HINDRANCE TO THE OTHER.

THREE: ALREADY SLIPPERY, THE SHEER ROCK GROVES INCREASINGLY MORE SLICK AS MERE RIVULETS OF RAIN FLOOD TO SHEETING SLICES.

AND FOUR: THE BOND OF COOPERATION SEALING THE CLIMB IS A TENOUS ONE, AND LIABLE TO SNAP AT THE FIRST BLURTED WORD.
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE, JOVAN. ARE YOU GOING TO SHAKE ME LOOSE—OR TRY TO SAVE YOUR LEGS—?

SHUT UP AND SWING YOUR BODY FORWARD...

-- BEFORE MY FINGERS SLIDE US BOTH ALL THE WAY DOWN!

HUMANS ARE INCAPABLE OF EARNING GRATITUDE, WHEN THIS IS OVER, I SHALL REWARD YOU ONLY WITH DEATH, JOVAN.

REMEMBER THAT.

PULL YOURSELF UP WITH YOUR LEGS—MY ARMS CAN'T DO ALL THE WORK—!

YEAH AND I HATE YOUR FILTHY GUTS TOO, SOLOMON. BUT SINCE WE'VE REACHED THE CAVE...

EVEN SO, YOU'RE GOING TO OWE ME SOME THANKS FOR THIS...

I SUGGEST WE SAVE OUR HATRED AND...
GET OUT OF THIS WATERFALL BEFORE WE MELT.

INSIDE: SPARSELY FURNISHED. A CAVERN GLAZED BY LURID FIRE. A HUDDLED FORM, AND A VOICE FROM UNTURNED PAGE...

COME--COME IN. DRY YOURSELF BY THE FIRE. COLD RAIN IS NOT KIND TO THE BONES.

WHO... ARE YOU...?

I AM OLD. I AM WISE. I AM FREE.

TURNING, HE IS SURPRISED TO LEARN--

THERE ARE TWO OF YOU--AND SUCH UNLIKELY COMPANY AT THAT.

I AM A HERMIT, AND WHEN CALLED...I AM MORDECAI.

STILL, I CAN SEE WHY YOU TOLERATE ONE ANOTHER...AS WELL AS WHY I HEARD ONLY ONE SET OF FOOTSEPS.

WE TOLERATE EACH OTHER OUT OF NECESSITY, HERMIT. ONE HEALED, ONE OF US WILL BE COMPANY TO NO ONE.

OF COURSE, BUT SIT BY THE FIRE. I HAVE HERBS, AND SALVE. FRESH BANDAGES, TOO. I SHOULD THINK, WOULD NOT BE OUT OF ORDER.

YOU... YOU'RE SO... STRANGE. ARE YOU APE--OR HUMAN?

NEITHER. AND BECAUSE I AM NEITHER... I AM NO MORE THAN A HERMIT.

CONTINUED!
WHAT FOOLS YE BE!

When you were both crippled, you helped each other survive...

...but as your wounds have healed, you forgot your brotherhood...

...and remembered only the years of ape/human hatred.

And so in your foolishness you have decided to end your private war in death!

An ape masterpiece by Doug Moench, Ed Hannigan, and Jim Mooney, writer and artists extraordinary!
Thus, it begins, in the cavern elvire of a hermit known as Mordecai: The Long Period of Convalescence...

My arms gather strength, human... And my legs, ape...

You know what this means...? I cannot wait to find out.

Soon now... Perhaps in several days, I will do more than stand—I will walk.

The fire has fled my arms.

Can you stand, my son?

And now, at last, they respond to my will. In but several days they will obey me completely in every task necessary.

In several days then, Mordecai speaks...

Then you are ready to leave now? To slay one another...

To decide which one of us should be slain, Mordecai. Two can—not die when one is superior.

So we have agreed, Mordecai. And so we shall decide.

Conduct your contest—by all means. Fools must follow the notion of fools...

Then the issue is merely which one of you is superior to the other. The issue may be decided without death. You know...

What do you mean, hermit...?

...but conduct your contest without weapons—without murder. The issue's decision will suffer no less for lack of blood.
I HAVE SAVED YOUR LIVES, AND NURTURED YOU TO HEALTH. I HAVE NOT DONE SO TO SEE YOU DESTROY YOUR LIVES, TO COMPETE IN A CONTEST SUCH AS I HAVE PROPOSED IS SMALL PAYMENT FOR MY NEEDS AND SERVICES.

WILL YOU PAY ME—?

ONLY IF THE HUMAN YOWS ME OBEISANCE WHEN HE LOSES.

IT IS YOU WHO WILL LOSE, SOLOMON—AND YES, I AGREE TO SUCH A CONTEST...

...IF ONLY TO HEAR AN APE'S WHISPER OF DEFEAT.

AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWERING PILLAR, WHEN COMFORT OF CAVERN IS NOW NO MORE THAN MEMORY SCRAPING SKY...

YOUR WRISTS ARE BOUND—NEITHER MAY FLEE, THE CONTEST CAN END ONLY IN DECISION... AND ONLY YOUR FISTS MAY RENDER THAT DECISION...

IN GREAT SADNESS...

...LET IT BEGIN.

SOLOMON IS FIRST—PULLING SHACKLED SASH...

...PUNCHING BRITTLE CHIN.

JOVAN'S REPRISAL...

AS A BIRD WATCHES, MORDECAI REFUSES.

MORE HORRENDOUSLY BRUTAL THAN VENGEFUL ARMY CLASHING WITH COMPLACENT ONE.

AS THE BIRD CANNOT UNDERSTAND...

MORDECAI DOES.
Mordecan's thoughts, sardonic and wrapped in grieving disdain.
So ahead if you must prove something to yourselves and one another...

...And then ponder... just what have you proven...?

You are weakening, human...

And you're fantasizing, ape!

...Beat each other senseless... until one of you can no longer beat on the other...

There is still time for words...

...The most intimate guise of hate...

...Amidst the faces in snarls, the mouths in grunts, eyes in fire...

...Fists swinging, bodies thrashing, and the sash snapping as rage blazes...

...And the sky flares in magenta sunset beautiful through filtered radiation...

...Fists punching, knees churning, groins dodging...

Souls hating...

...And ever, the back... turned to it all...

What are they proving?!
A PUNCH.  

PAIN.  

ANOTHER PUNCH.  

EQUAL PAIN.  

THEN TWO PUNCHES SIMULTANEOUSLY.

BOTH MISS SIMULTANEOUSLY.

BOTH FALL.

EXHAUSTED.

AND MORDECAI RISES AT THE SOUND OF THE FALL... AND THE ABSENCE OF FURTHER SOUND.

NOW... DOES IT MATTER WHICH OF YOU HAS WON?

PICK YOUR FELLOW UP... AND HELP HIM... AS I HELPED YOU BOTH.

BUT THOUGH HE HAS Risen...

... CLEARLY, HE STILL REFUSES TO LOOK.

REPAY ME FOR MY AID IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER... BOTH OF YOU... TOGETHER... UNTIL YOU COME TO THE ANCIENT CITY... THAT PLACE WHICH WAS CONSUMED BY FIRE AND GREAT EXPLOSIONS RAiNING FROM THE SKY NO LONGER.

HEAVEN.

LOOK UPON THAT CITY... THAT PLACE CALLED THE FORBIDDEN ZONE... AND SEE WHAT YOU HAVE WROUGHT TODAY. LOOK UPON THE ASHES OF THE PAST... AND SEE WHAT YOU HAVE DESTROYED TODAY.

DO THIS FOR ME--AND GO NOW.

I DO NOT WISH TO KNOW WHO HAS WON YOUR CONTEST-- I DO NOT WISH TO LOOK UPON EITHER OF YOU EVER AGAIN...

... FOR WHILE I AM NEITHER HUMAN NOR APE ...

I AM BOTH-- AND YOU HAVE SHAMED ME TWICE-OVER THIS DAY.

THEY LEAVE, NEVER SEEING THE TEARS, COMPELLED BY VOICE ALONE, EACH BEATEN, BOTH RESTING ASSISTANCE... THEY LEAVE...
AND THEY GO SOUTH, TO THE ANCIENT CITY, BACK TO THE GRIM FORBIDDEN ZONE.

AND WHEN THEY LOOK, AS TOLD THIS IS WHAT THEY SEE:

A GREAT GATE SEALED, ONCE GOLDEN, NOW TARNISHED TO SLAG.

MELTED METAL, CAUTERIZED CONCRETE, WASTED WOOD.
FÜLERIZED PLASTIC, Gaping CRATERS, DISINTEGRATED CIVILIZATION.

ENGINES OF PROGRESS LYING CRUMPLED AT THE ENDS OF THEIR RUPTURED ROADS.

AND SOMEWHERE, BURIED IN IT ALL, A BINGED BOOK ABOUT AN ASININE PARTRIDGE IN A LONG-PULLED PEAR TREE.

JOVAN... I NOW REALIZE WHAT MORDECAI ATTEMPTED TO DEMONSTRATE TO US.

SO BLEAK... NO... SOMETHING STILL HaUNTS IT, JOVAN. WAR Lingers HERE...

YES... WHAT WE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHEN TOLD TO OUR FACES... AND HAUNTED BY... NOTHING.

WAR DID THIS.
Proud, it was proud and awesome...

...and never knowing humility or...defeat.

It's...sad here...very sad...

And the hatred which visited this city resulted only in destruction. There was no victory—only--death.

Maybe war is sad, Solomon... but we can't admit it for fear of losing.

But it was more than war which did this. It was hatred, joyan...

...like the hatred traced between you and me—your people and mine.

They must have cared very much about hatred, like us. And now... there is no one left to care... about anything.

Mordecai was right.
HATED... AND WAR... WILL ADVANCE NEITHER OF OUR SPECIES. ONLY DESTRUCTION WILL FLOURISH. ONLY DEATH WILL PROSPER.

BUT HOW CAN WE STOP HATRED? HOW CAN WE STOP WAR--?

I DON'T KNOW, JOVAN-- BUT THE END MUST BEGIN SOMEWHERE.

I SUGGEST IT BEGIN RIGHT HERE.

AND NOW, WHEN THEY NO LONGER NEED EACH OTHER...

THEY HAVE AT LAST FOUND EACH...

WHOKT!

MUTANTS--!!

HUMAN MUTANTS.

AND APES.

MUTANT APES.

SQUARING OFF...
...Each commanding a ridge of rubble...

...Opposing forces which have gathered.

KILLL-!!!

Two factions divided by hatred... and a gulf of valley carpeted in the corpses of two friends.

The forbidden zone: a dreaded place shunned by the living ever since all life was burned from its face in a hellish instant of searing war... a place now inimically populated again—permanently—by war... a place now inimically populated again—permanently—by indigenous residents spawned and mutated in that hellish instant...

...To perpetuate the battleground of war.

Circles... they repeat themselves.

Circles... they stink.
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by Doug Moench & Mike Ploog

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PLANET OF THE APES

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