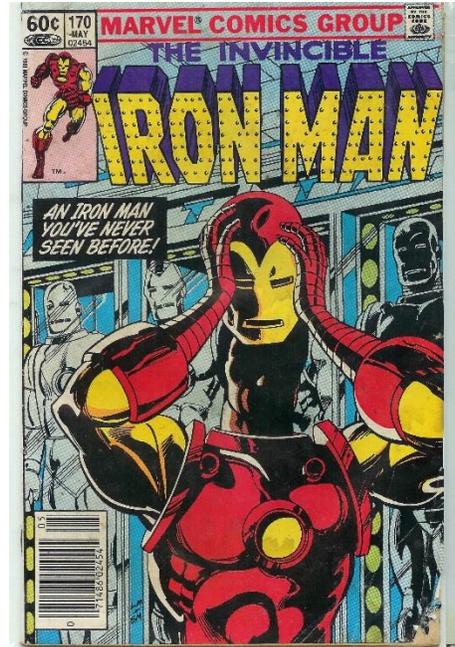


# COMICON *Shelby 2016*



*And suddenly I felt like one of them.*

Shelby North Carolina has now been added to the illustrious list of venues to host what can only really be described as, 'a way of life'. Yes, Comicon has reached its furry clawed robot talons even here, and I admit, I loved it.

I did not do the honorable thing and dress up for my first adventure into this other realm of being, as the true dagger to the heart of comicon nerdhood had not surrounded and enveloped me at that time. But as I browsed the massive assortment of old and new comics and prints, watched the parade of personalized superheroes strut their stuff, listened to and photographed all sorts of heroic, villainous, horror celebrities and whatever you wish to call it, I was struck by the total immersion some go to portray those figures that touch their hearts and lives.

I stood next to a guy at one of the comic book hangouts who was using a computer to research each comic that grabbed his attention. I picked up a Batman Shadow of the Bat

comic, a Web of Spiderman comic and 4 Ironman comics purely on the cool graphics and colors of the cover art. I bought what I liked, that's as far as my comic book expertise went. I waited for The Flash to pay for his comic, then handed over six dollars for my stunning array of cool. It was just at that moment that I felt the hair on the back of my neck bristle. Eyes were upon me.

From across the dazzling display of Star Wars action figures and some I'd never heard of before, I looked up into the black eyes of filmdom hell. Jason Vorhees was starring me down. The chutzpah was not the only thing in my soul to shiver at that moment, I was conscious of something else. I felt like one of them. Call it nerdism, freak n fiction, dimensional transmogrification or whatever you like, but it felt good.

Maybe next time I will move a little further into this new dimension by waxing my moustache and wearing a top hat, who knows. All I can say is, it was worth the time to have this much fun, and that is the real word that describes comicon. It's adventurous, it's different but more than anything, it's fun.

By Rob Ashford

