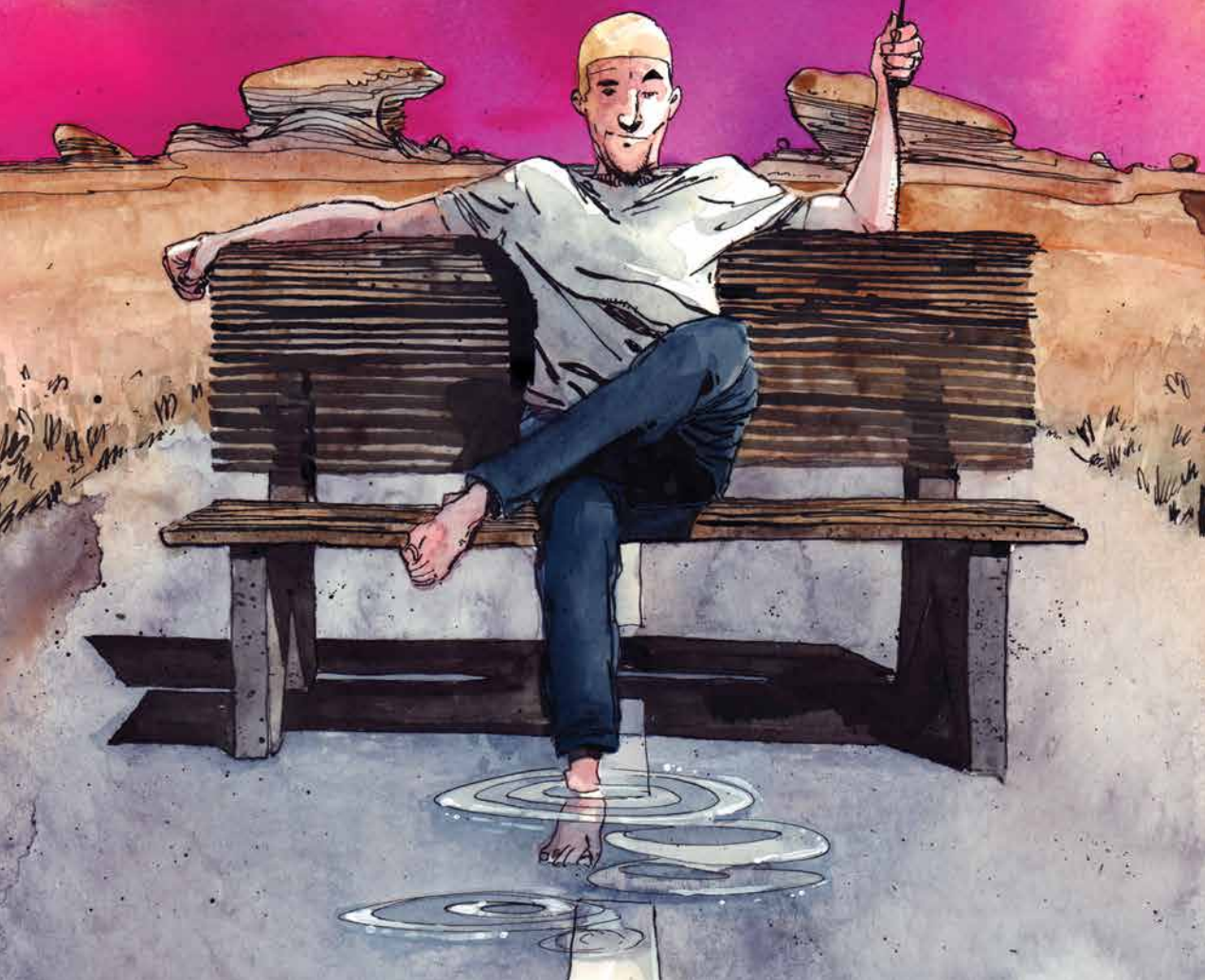


W. MAXWELL PRINCE

TYLER JENKINS

HILARY JENKINS

KING OF NOWHERETM





KING OF NOWHERE™

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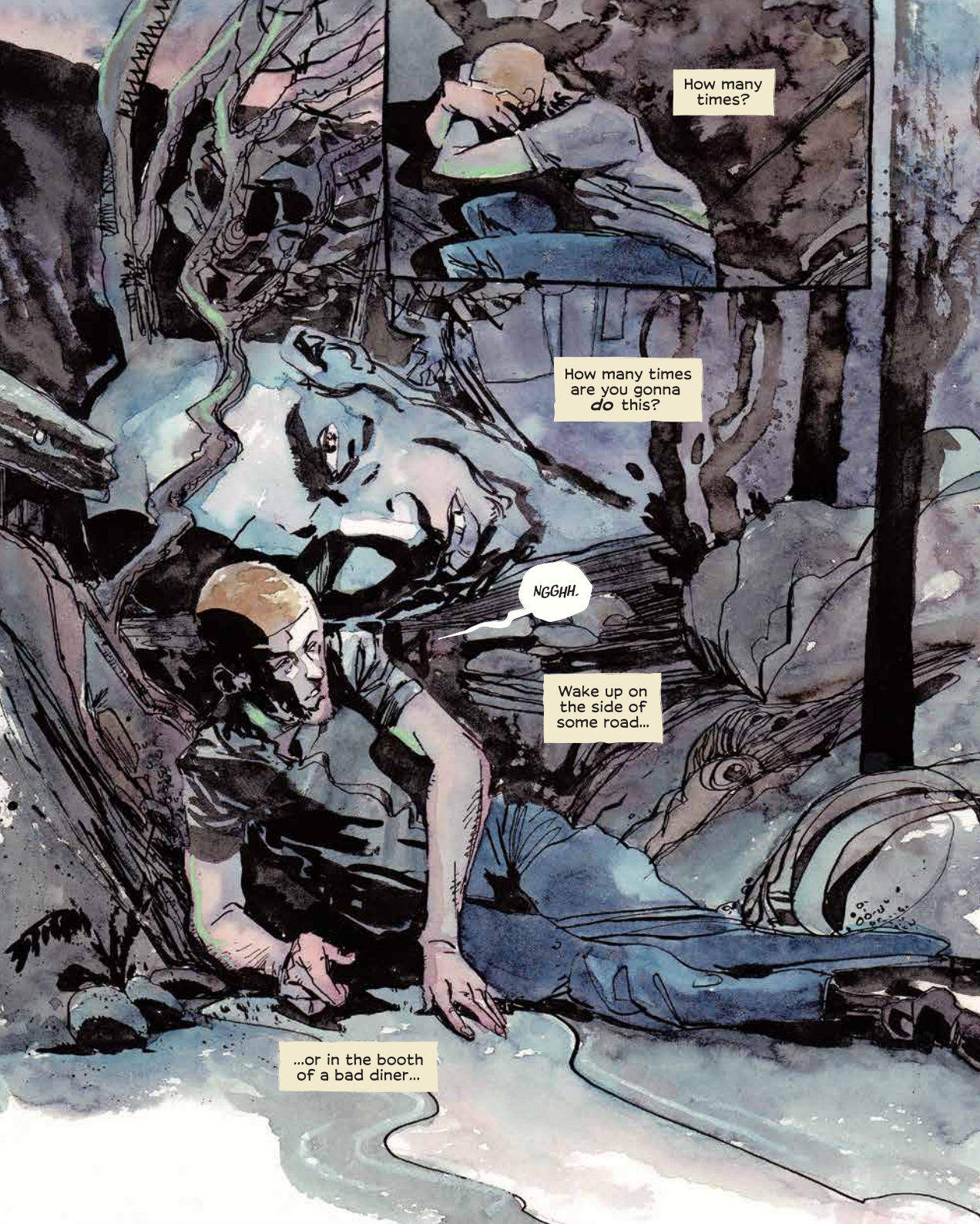
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AND **HILARY JENKINS**

CHAPTER ONE



How many times?

How many times are you gonna *do* this?

NGGHH.

Wake up on the side of some road...

...or in the booth of a bad diner...



...or on a park bench too *small* for a sleeping adult.

GREAT.



How come never your *bed*?



Or, for that
matter, *someone*
else's bed?

Why never wrapped
in high thread-count
sheets, head nestled in
the hug of a pillow?

...your feet warm under a
quilt as you dream *dreams*
of wheat fields or angels or
any other of a *million* such
pleasant visions.



YOU'RE
GOING THE
WRONG
WAY.



Why not
better
dreams?



ARE YOU
A...

DEER?

HO,
BOY, A
NEWBIE.

THAT
PLACE IS
GONNA EAT
YOU ALIVE.

GOOD
LUCK, PAL!

"Good luck, pal,"
says the deer
in the jeep.

Which means,
of course:



The *poison* in your
brain is doing its
directorial *thing*.

Welcome to
NO W HERE

Assembling
images--uncanny
and *absurd*--into a
wild movie-picture
of some kind.

Once again, a
BAD dream.

Welcome to
NORTH WAHEREK

SPEED
LIMIT
37

- POP.



999

Or you're
tripping.

Or maybe
it's *both*.

WOOF!

Either way,
you know
the drill:

Ride it out.
Lean in.

THANK
GOD.

BAR

Be the best
dreamself
you can be.

You'll wake
up soon
enough.



CANADIAN
CLUB, POR
FAVOR.

YOU MUST
HAVE MADE
A WRONG
TURN...



I'VE GOT A
SIXTH SENSE
ABOUT THESE
THINGS.



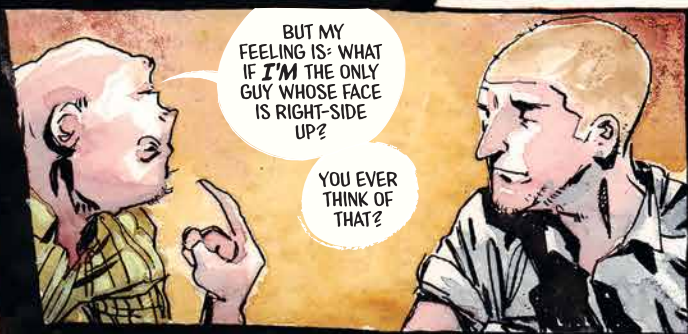
YOUR
FACE IS
UPSIDE
DOWN.

PEOPLE
ARE ALWAYS
SAYING
THAT...



BUT MY
FEELING IS: WHAT
IF I'M THE ONLY
GUY WHOSE FACE
IS RIGHT-SIDE
UP?

YOU EVER
THINK OF
THAT?







OBLIGED.
I'VE GOT KIND OF
AN UPSTREAM
NIGHT AHEAD
OF ME.

I BET.

I'M
SERIOUS!

A GUY WITH A
BUNCH OF ARMS IS
ON HIS WAY TO BEAT
THE LIVING CRAP
OUT OF ME.

"A BUNCH
OF ARMS."

LISTEN,
JED...



DON'T
WORRY SO
MUCH.

YOU'RE JUST A
FIGMENT OF MY
IMAGINATION.



ANY
MINUTE NOW
I'M GONNA
WAKE UP--



--PROBABLY
IN SOMEPLACE
UNPLEASANT...



...AND YOU
AND THE REST OF THIS
LSD MENAGERIE ARE
GONNA GO **POOF**, RIGHT
BACK INTO THE RECESSES
OF MY DUMB LITTLE
BRAIN.

YOU
SEEM SO
CERTAIN.

I KNOW
WHEN I'M
HALLUCINATING,
MAN.

WELL,
I HOPE
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

'CAUSE
OTHERWISE
THIS IS GONNA
HURT.

JED.

YOU
SON OF A
BITCH.

OUTSIDE,
JED. **NOW.**

CULLEN!
WHAT A
SURPRISE!



WALK.

ALRIGHT,
ALRIGHT.
YOU WIN.

There's
a *motor*
inside you.

IF ANYONE
NEEDS ME, I'LL BE
OUTSIDE GETTING MY
HAT HANDED TO ME
BY THE TALL
FELLA.

A piece of interior
machinery responsible
for some of your
all-time *worst* ideas.

Some notable ones:

OWWWW!

Throw an empty bottle
of gin at a cop's head;
cheat at cards against
a man renowned for
murdering people who
cheat at cards...

OOOFFF!

Betray a biker gang;
sleep with your
dealer's wife...

...intervene
on behalf of
the talking
salmon.

GODDAMMIT.



YOU
FLEEDED ME,
GUPPY. BIG
MISTAKE.



"FLEEDED."

ALL I DID
WAS MEDIATE
A DIVORCE
BETWEEN YOU
AND YOUR
SAVINGS. IS
THAT SO--



PUNCH!
PUNCH!
PUNCH!

HEY...



LEAVE
HIM ALONE,
WHY DON'T
YA?



WHO
THE FUCK
ARE YOU
SUPPOSED
TO BE?

DENIS,
BUDDY...



ANY
CHANCE...YOU
CAN DREAM
ME...AN ICE
PACK?

QUIET,
FISH.

IT'S
UNFAIR, IS
WHAT IT
IS.

HE'S ONLY
GOT TWO
ARMS!



WALK BACK
INSIDE, PAL...

Scuffles, *scrapes*,
donnybrooks,
imbroglios...



FUCKER.



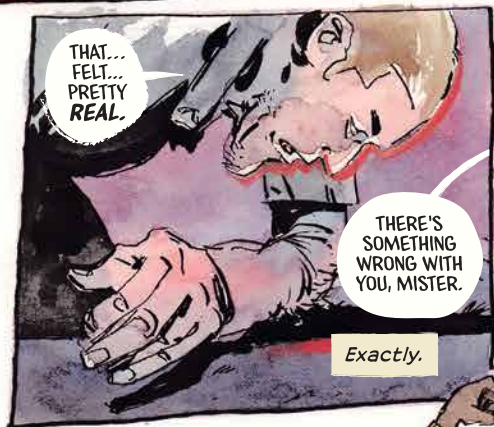
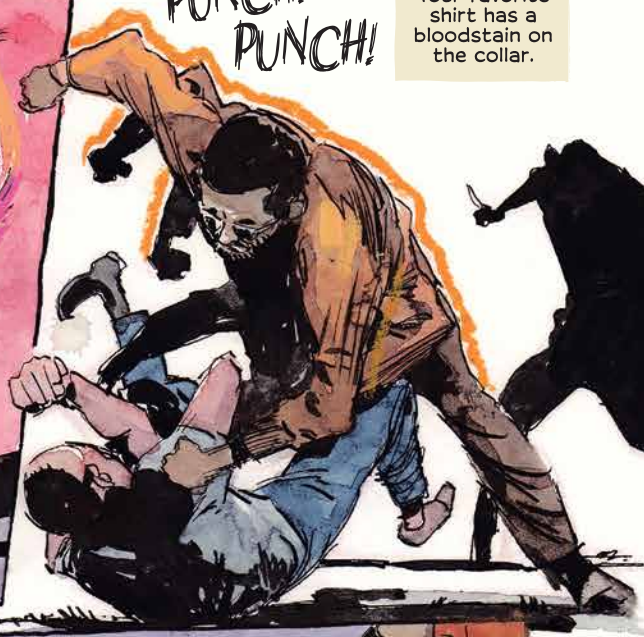
See here and commit
to memory the sorry
vocabulary of your
time on this Earth.



You showed up to your uncle's funeral with a black eye.

PUNCH!
PUNCH!

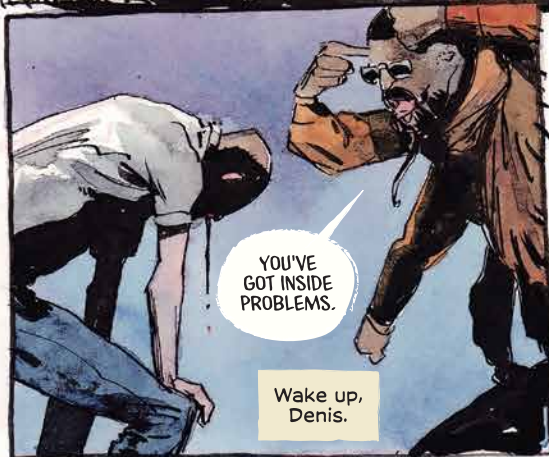
Your favorite shirt has a bloodstain on the collar.



THAT... FELT... PRETTY REAL.

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU, MISTER.

Exactly.



YOU'VE GOT INSIDE PROBLEMS.

Wake up, Denis.



Time to wake up.

...NOW.



NOW.

YOU BOYS ABOUT FINISHED?





I'M TRYING TO
MAKE IT HOME
IN TIME FOR
SUPPER WITH
THE MISSUS.

Wake up
WAKE UP
WAKE UP.



WE DON'T
GET A LOT
OF VISITORS
HERE.

...FOR REASONS
THAT I'M SURE
HAVE BECOME
APPARENT TO
YOU.



I GOT
PUNCHED BY
A GUY WITH
SIX ARMS.

SIX.



CULLEN'S
JUST GOT A
SHORT FUSE
IS ALL.

...IF ONLY HE'D DO
SOMETHING MORE
CONSTRUCTIVE
WITH ALL THOSE
HANDS...



NOWHERE'S
A PRIVATE
TOWN, MR.
SAUNDERS.

A STRANGER
TRAIPS IN
UNANNOUNCED,
WELL...

FOLKS GET
CONCERNED.

XXX



THAT'S JUST THE
THING...TUCKER,
WAS IT? THIS
ISN'T NOWHERE!
IT'S **SOME-**
WHERE.

I...DON'T
THINK I'M
DREAMING
ANYMORE.

THAT REALLY
WAS A DEER
DRIVING OUT
OF TOWN...

WAIT--
YOU SAW
JOHN
DOE?



DAD!

BIG GUYS
ARE BACK ON
THE SOUTH
SIDE.



DAMMIT.
ANYONE
HURT?

NOT YET,
BUT ASK ME
AGAIN IN AN
HOUR.



ALMIGHTY.
SO MUCH FOR
SUPPER.

I DON'T
SUPPOSE YOU
KNOW HOW
TO SHOOT A
GUN?



You're reminded
suddenly of one
Jane Ingerwood,
middle school
sweetheart.

Gentle and lovely Jane, with her lion-shaped barrettes and her sundresses covered in lilac print.

Jane had webbed feet.

I'M A FEW MINUTES OUT. HOW BIG ARE THE FOOTPRINTS?

...GODDAMN. SCALY LUNATICS.

Her dad paid for corrective surgery--a cosmetic amendment that amounted to a doctor snipping the *extra skin* between her toes with kitchen scissors.



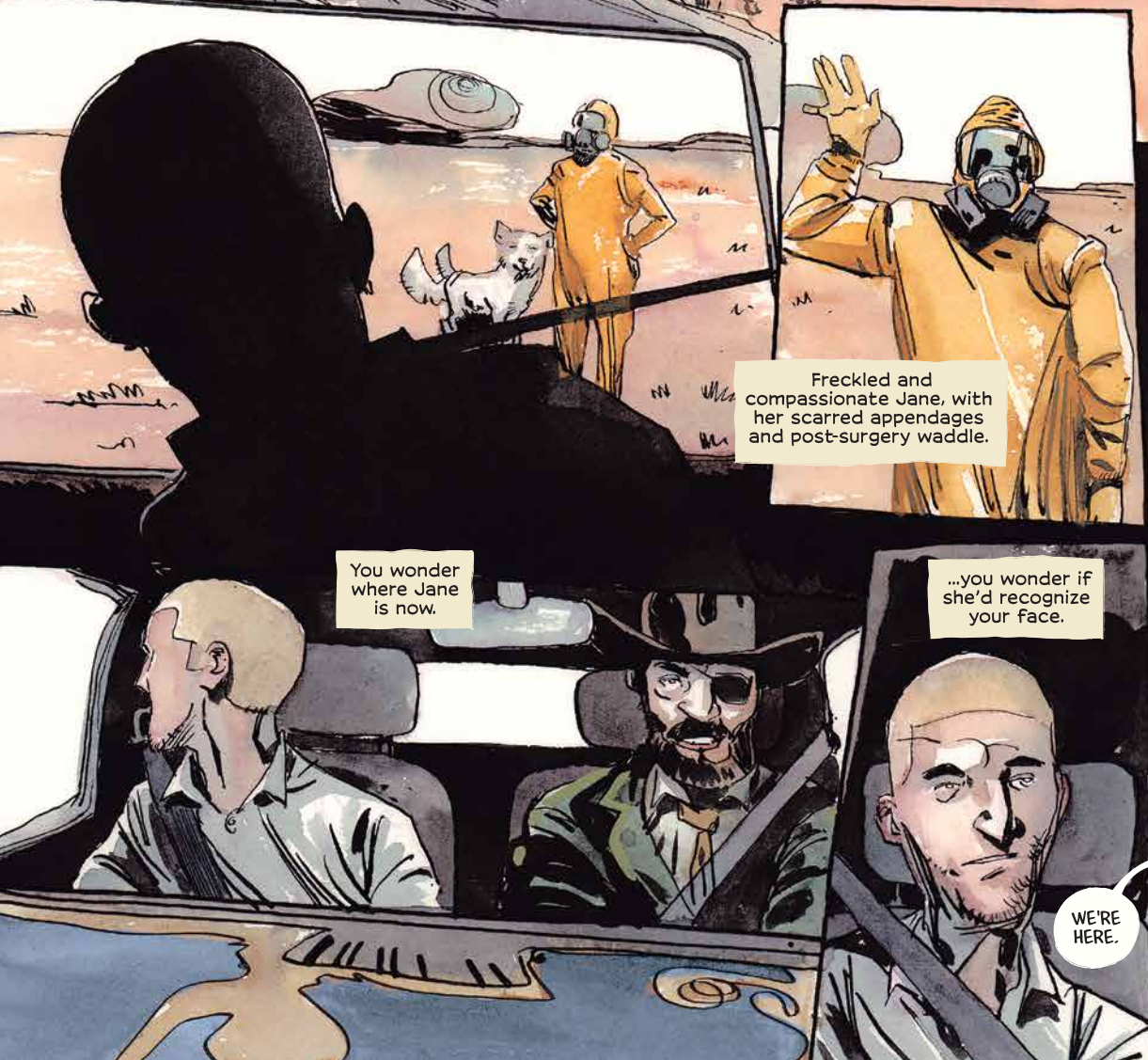
Freckled and compassionate Jane, with her scarred appendages and post-surgery waddle.

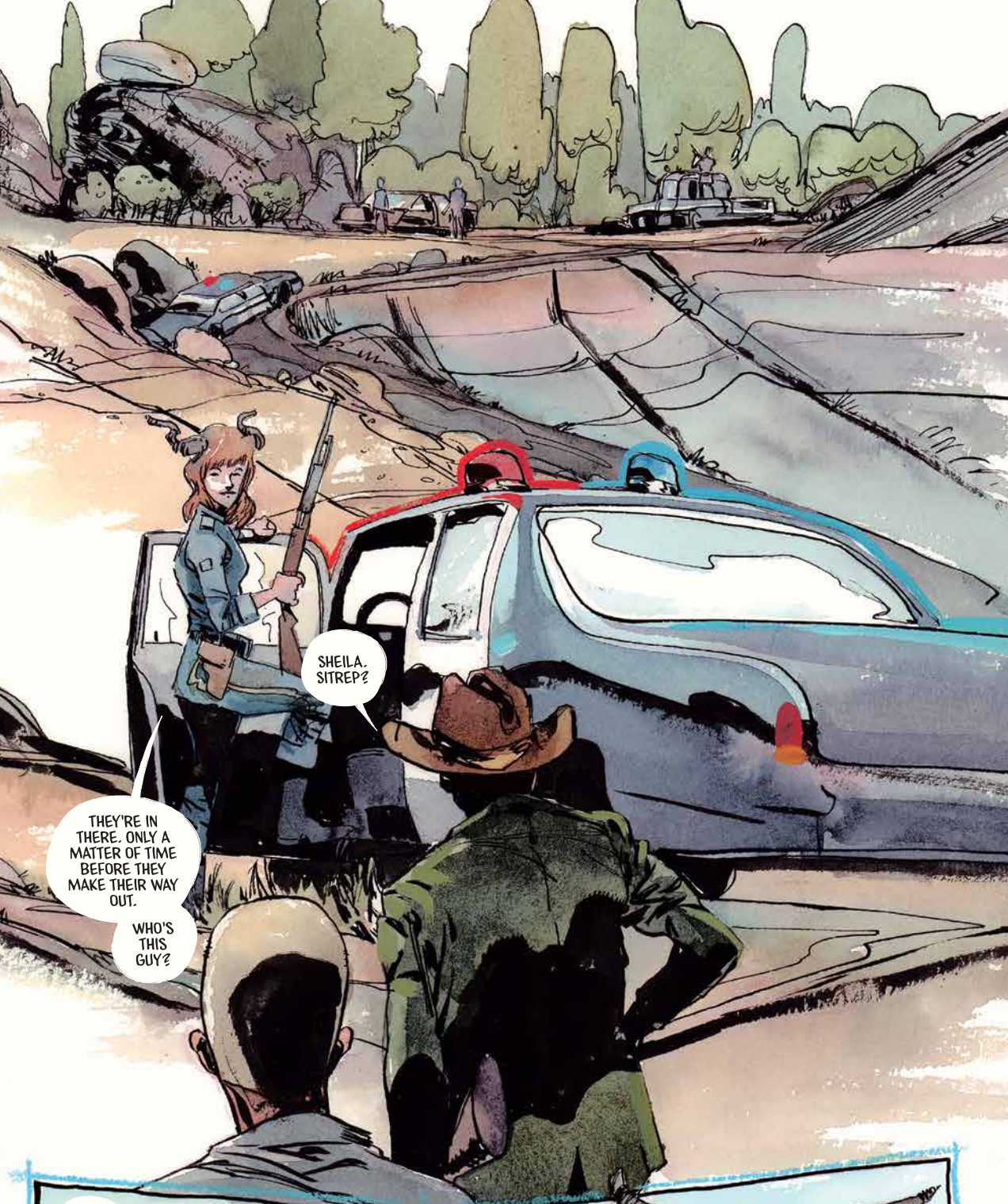


You wonder where Jane is now.

...you wonder if she'd recognize your face.

WE'RE HERE.





SHEILA.
SITREP?

THEY'RE IN
THERE. ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME
BEFORE THEY
MAKE THEIR WAY
OUT.

WHO'S
THIS
GUY?

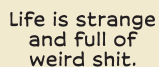
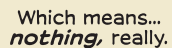
THIS
HERE'S
DENIS.

HE'S
VOLUNTEERED
TO LEND A HAND
WITH OUR IGUANA
PROBLEM.

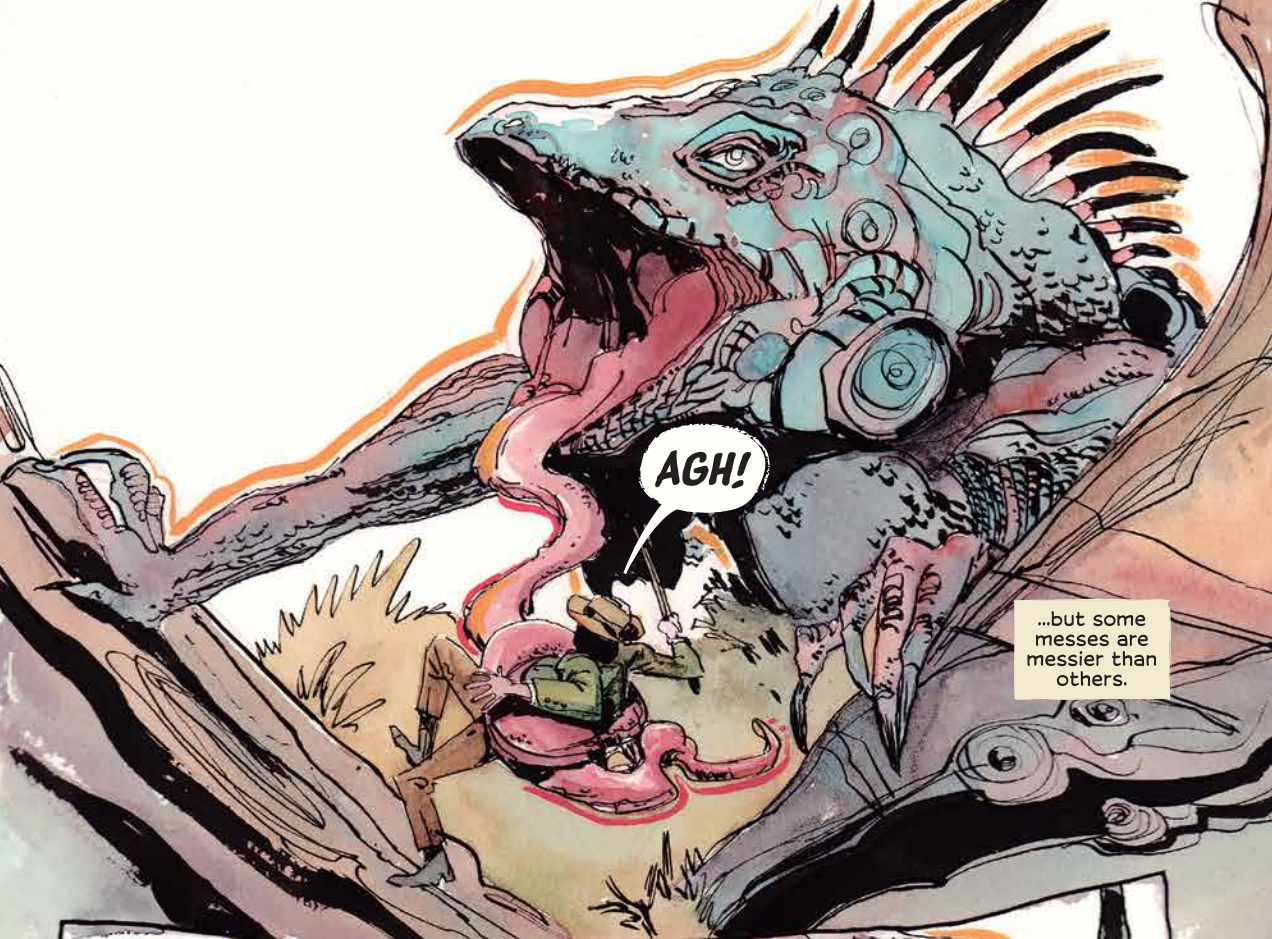
IGUANA?

IGUANAS.

PLURAL.







AGH!

...but some messes are messier than others.



Where in God's name have you landed yourself this time, Denis?



Where are you?

What *is*
this place?

THERE
THEY GO.

GOOD
RIDDANCE.



...RUINED
MY GOD-
DAMN
DINNER.



YOU
ALRIGHT?

THANKS
TO YOU.



YOU'RE
GONNA
FIT IN HERE
JUST FINE.



WELCOME
TO NOWHERE,
DENIS.

Épilogue



WHAT THE
FUCK...

♪

HEY,
MAN, YOU'RE
BLOCKING
THE ROAD.

YES, THAT'S
ONE WAY
OF LOOKING
AT IT.



A QUESTION:
DO YOU KNOW
THIS MAN?



I...



...CAN'T
SAY I
DO.



YES, OF
COURSE.

NO ONE
SEES THIS
MAN.

POP



HE IS
NOBODY.

A DREAM.



NOWHERE

NIGHTY
NIGHT.



ISSUE ONE COVER BY MARTÍN MORAZZO WITH COLORS BY CHRIS O'HALLORAN

CHAPTER TWO



DENIS.



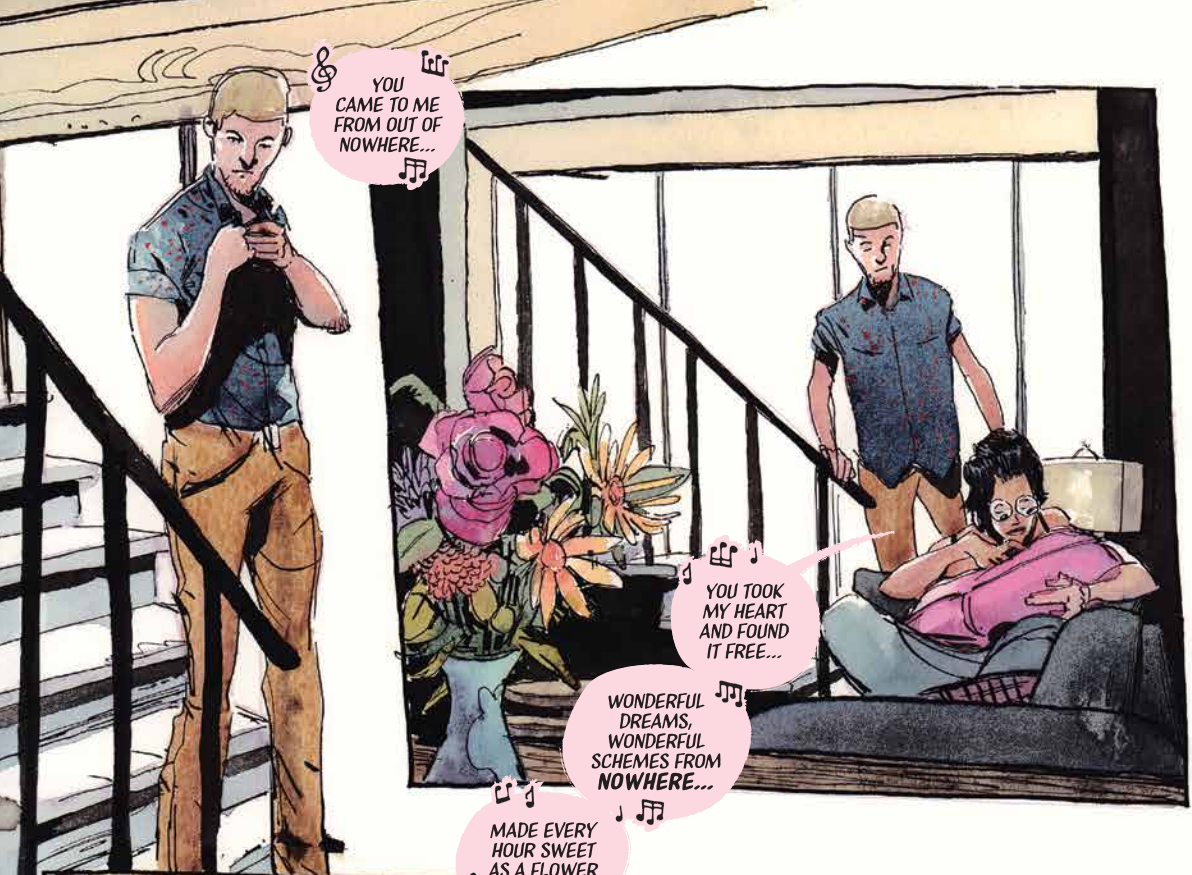
DENIS!
I COULD USE
YOUR **HELP**
DOWN HERE.

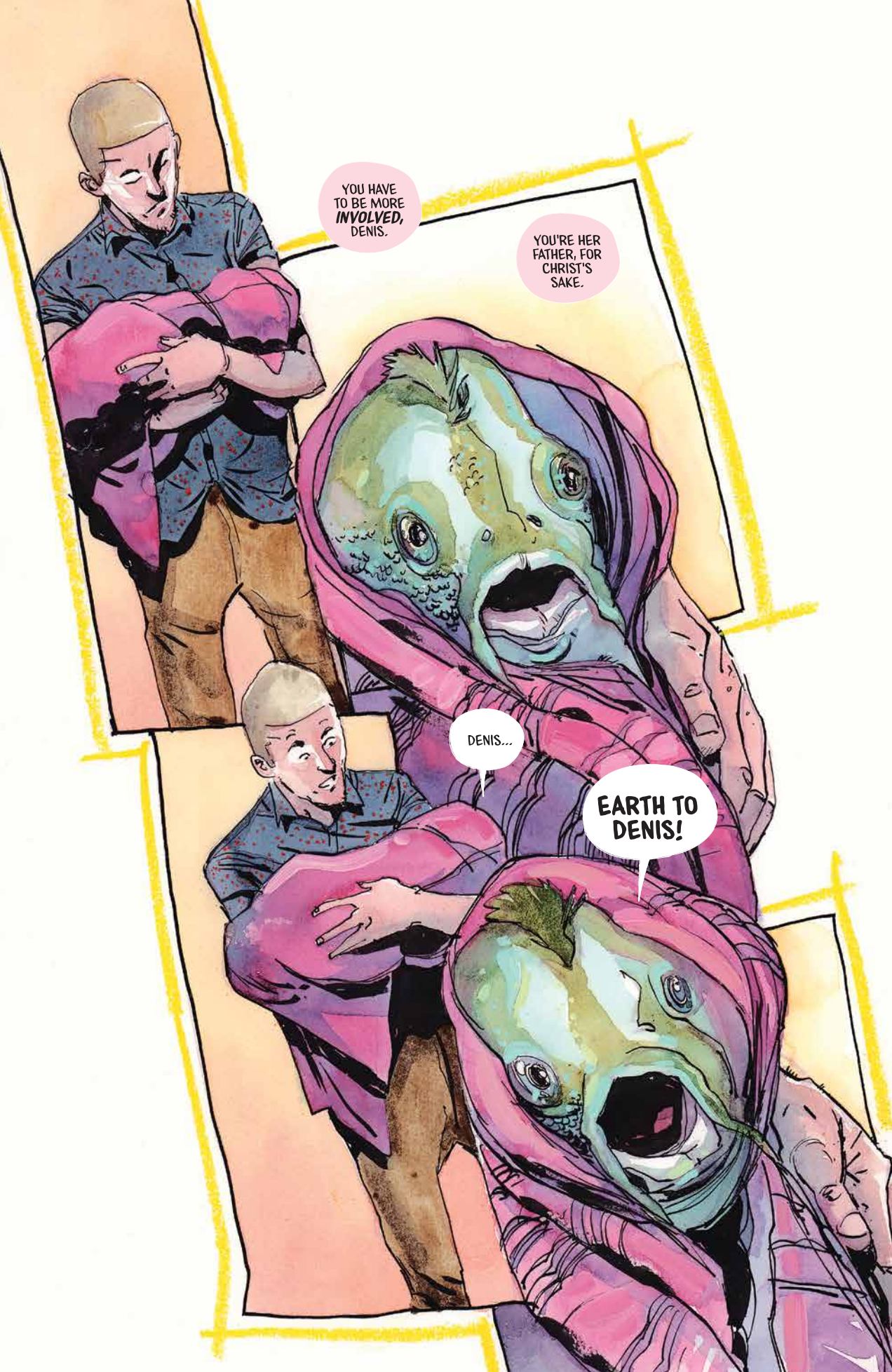


YOU'RE A
BIG FELLA,
AIN'T YA?



COMING!





YOU HAVE
TO BE MORE
INVOLVED,
DENIS.

YOU'RE HER
FATHER, FOR
CHRIST'S
SAKE.

DENIS...

**EARTH TO
DENIS!**

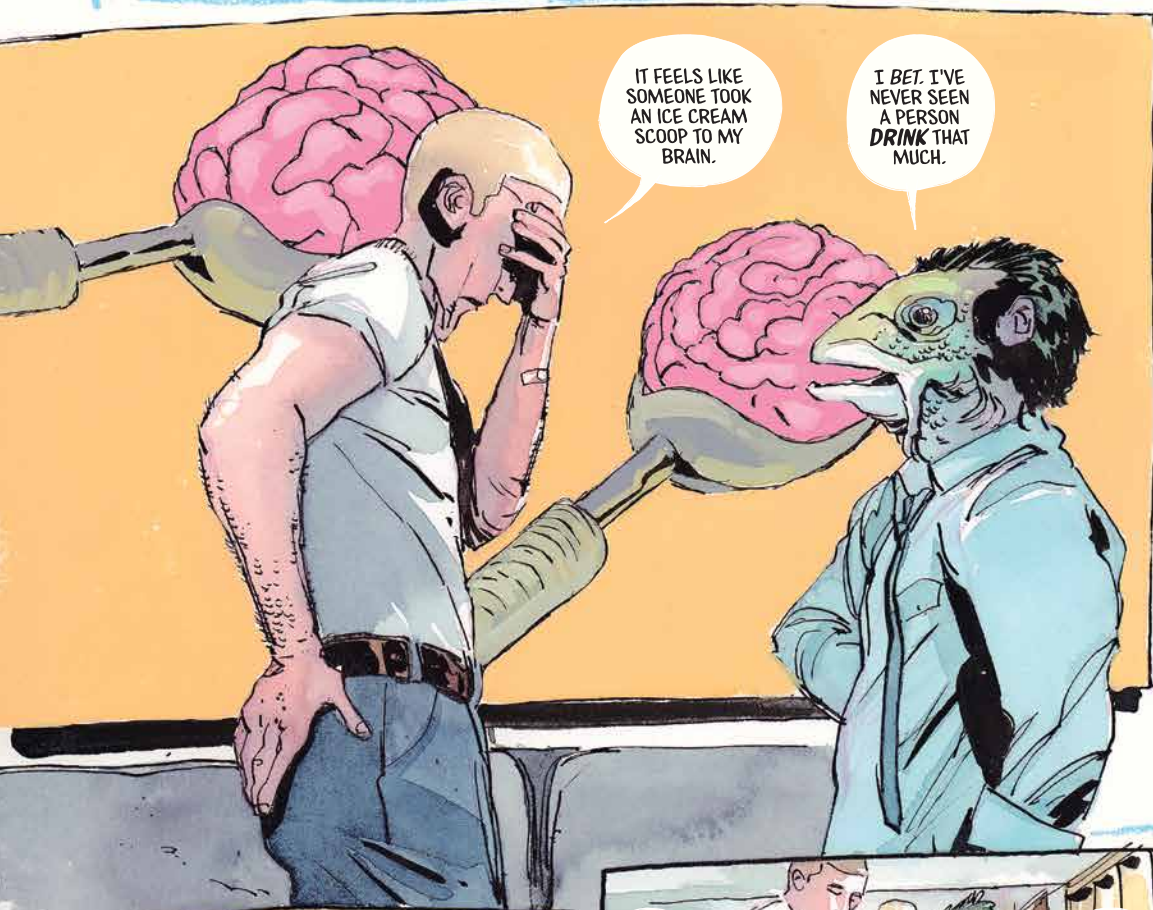


WAKY
WAKY,
HOMO
SAPIEN.



GOOD
DREAMS?

NOT
TYPICALLY.



IT FEELS LIKE
SOMEONE TOOK
AN ICE CREAM
SCOOP TO MY
BRAIN.

I BET. I'VE
NEVER SEEN
A PERSON
DRINK THAT
MUCH.



AND I'M A
GODDAMN
FISH.



~TT~

EMPTY.

WORRY NOT,
DREAMER
OF DREAMY
DREAMS!



Which, as you've come to understand it, is a *real* place.

...some small, blink-and-you-miss-it outpost tucked away where the world can't see.



But here it is, blooming to life before your eyes, *assailing* you with visions...



Proof-positive of the *impossible*:

FIX YOUR SHOES, BUDDY?



A cobbler with no skin--you can see *right* through to his viscera.

Goat children playing soccer in the street.



A biped javelina with a monocle in each eye.



People... but not.

How long before they see you for what you really are?

How long before *your* insides are on the outside?



THIS WAY, MOUTH-BREATHER.



THANKS, SULLY. I OWE YOU ONE.



SULLIVAN!
LIL' SULLY!

HOW'S
MY FAVORITE
LOCAL BUSINESSMAN
AND HIS VESTIGIAL
HOMUNCULUS?



I GOT SCIATICA AND
ANGINA, AND AM, GENERALLY
SPEAKING, A **MISERABLE
SONUVABITCH**. SO EVERY DAY
THAT PASSES I GET A LITTLE
CLOSER TO FINALLY PUTTING A
GUN IN MY MOUTH AND ENDING
THIS WHOLE UNGODLY CIRCUS
ONCE AND FOR ALL.

DON'T
LISTEN TO
HIM. HE'S
FINE.

WHO'S
YOUR PAL?



THIS HERE'S DENIS.
ME AND HIM WERE
WONDERING IF WE
COULD BORROW SOME
SHARP TOOLS FOR A
FEW HOURS.



THE LAST TIME YOU
"BORROWED" SOMETHING
WAS THE LAST TIME I
SEEN MY CAR.

WE'VE HAD
TO **WALK**
EVERYWHERE,
JED!

THAT WAS
A **FREAK
EVENT**. A
ONE-TIME
MISTAKE.

LISTEN,
SULLY...



YOUR **BACK**
AND **HEART** ARE NO
GOOD, AND WINTER'S
RIGHT AROUND THE
CORNER.

LET ME AND
DENIS GO AND
CHOP UP SOME
FIREWOOD.



WE'LL SELL IT
TO YOU AT A
DISCOUNT.

"YOU CAN GET ONE AT
PRETTY MUCH ANY
HARDWARE STORE."



A NAIL
GUN?

ONLY
THING THAT
COULD PUSH IT
THROUGH WITH
SUCH FORCE.



JOHN,
YOU IDIOT.

WE'RE GONNA
NEED TO GET
MITCH OUT HERE
TO CLEAN IT
ALL UP...

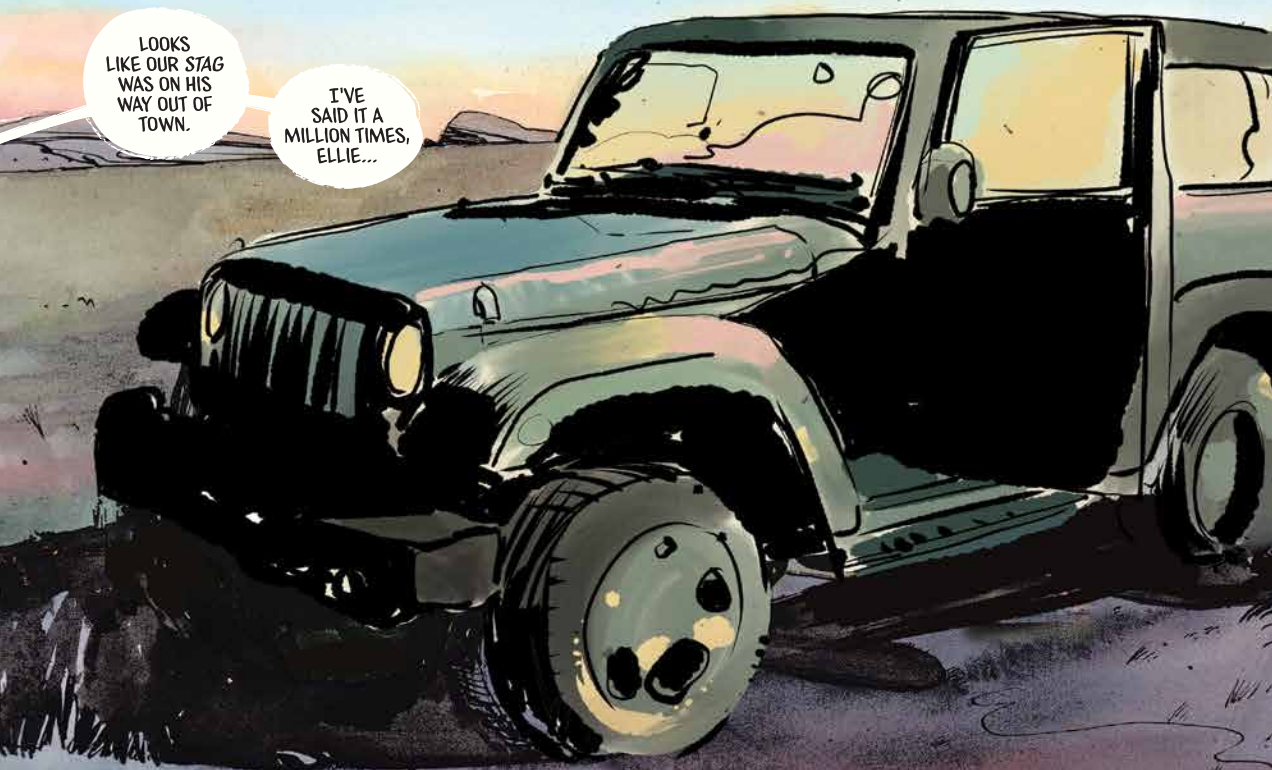


WHO WOULD
DO THIS, DAD?
JOHN DOE WAS
A **GOOD**
MAN.

"MAN."

LOOKS
LIKE OUR STAG
WAS ON HIS
WAY OUT OF
TOWN.

I'VE
SAID IT A
MILLION TIMES,
ELLIE....



THE WORLD
OUT THERE'S A
CROOKED, COLD
PLACE.



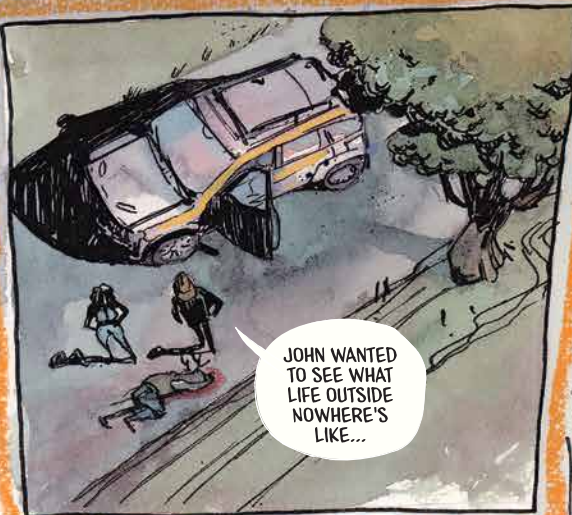
FOLKS GET
ONE LOOK AT
US AND THEIR
MINDS GO TO
OATMEAL.



WELL,
NOW HE
KNOWS.



"THE TRUTH
MIGHT KILL
YOU..."



JOHN WANTED
TO SEE WHAT
LIFE OUTSIDE
NOWHERE'S
LIKE...



...BUT WE
DON'T OPEN
'TIL THREE,
PAL.



YOU'RE THE
PROPRIETOR
HERE, YES? I'M
LOOKING FOR A
PERSON...



AN
ALCOHOLIC.



COME BACK
AT THREE AND
YOU'LL SEE
PLENTY.



YOUR
FACE, I
WONDER...

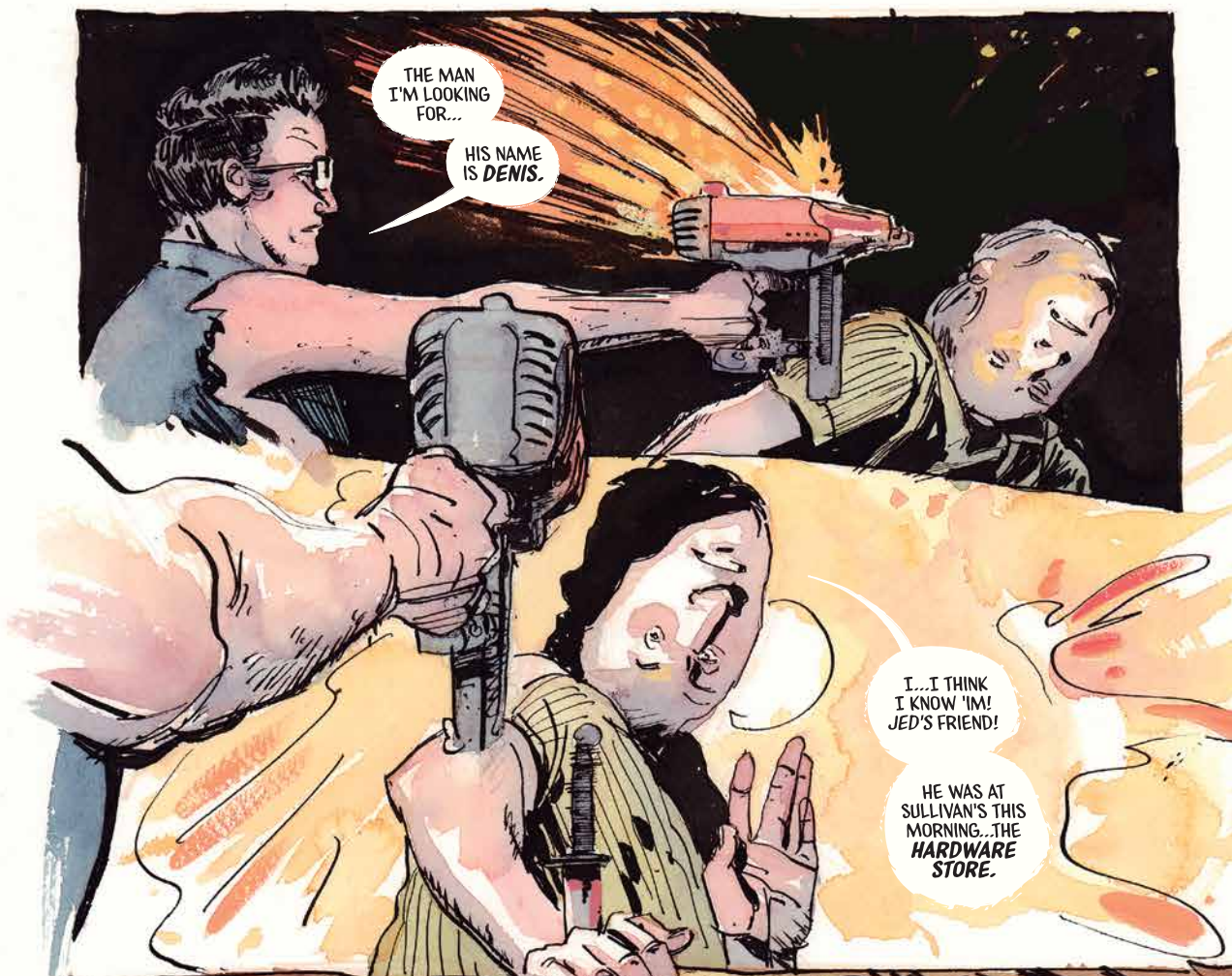
IS IT
RIGHT-SIDE
UP?

OR IS MINE
THE FACE
THAT'S UPSIDE
DOWN?

THAT'S
WHAT I'VE
BEEN
SAY--



AHHH!



THE MAN
I'M LOOKING
FOR...

HIS NAME
IS *DENIS*.

I...I THINK
I KNOW 'IM!
JED'S FRIEND!

HE WAS AT
SULLIVAN'S THIS
MORNING...THE
HARDWARE
STORE.

"JED'S FRIEND."
YOU'VE BEEN A
GREAT HELP,
THANK YOU.



MAY
THE REST OF
US LIVE TO SOLVE
THE MYSTERY OF
YOUR FACE.



PLEASE



"LIKE A KNIFE
THROUGH BREAD..."



HYAH!



PEOPLE WANT TO BE COMFORTABLE, BUT THEY'RE NOT WILLING TO DO THE **LABOR** TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.

WHICH CREATES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR **NATURAL** PROFIT.



OKAY... BUT HOW DOES MONEY EVEN WORK HERE? YOU'RE CUT OFF FROM ANY KIND OF REAL ECONOMY.

YOU'RE **BEYOND** THE FUCKING GRID!



DENIS, MAN. YOU'RE GONNA LEARN THIS REAL FAST.



CHOP!



THE FEWER QUESTIONS YOU ASK ABOUT NOWHERE, THE **BETTER**.

NOW HOW'S ABOUT YOU GO FIND SOME MORE WOOD FOR ME TO HACK?



No questions. That's not a problem.



You learned long ago the funny little paradox of *knowledge*:

The *more* you know, the *less* you understand.

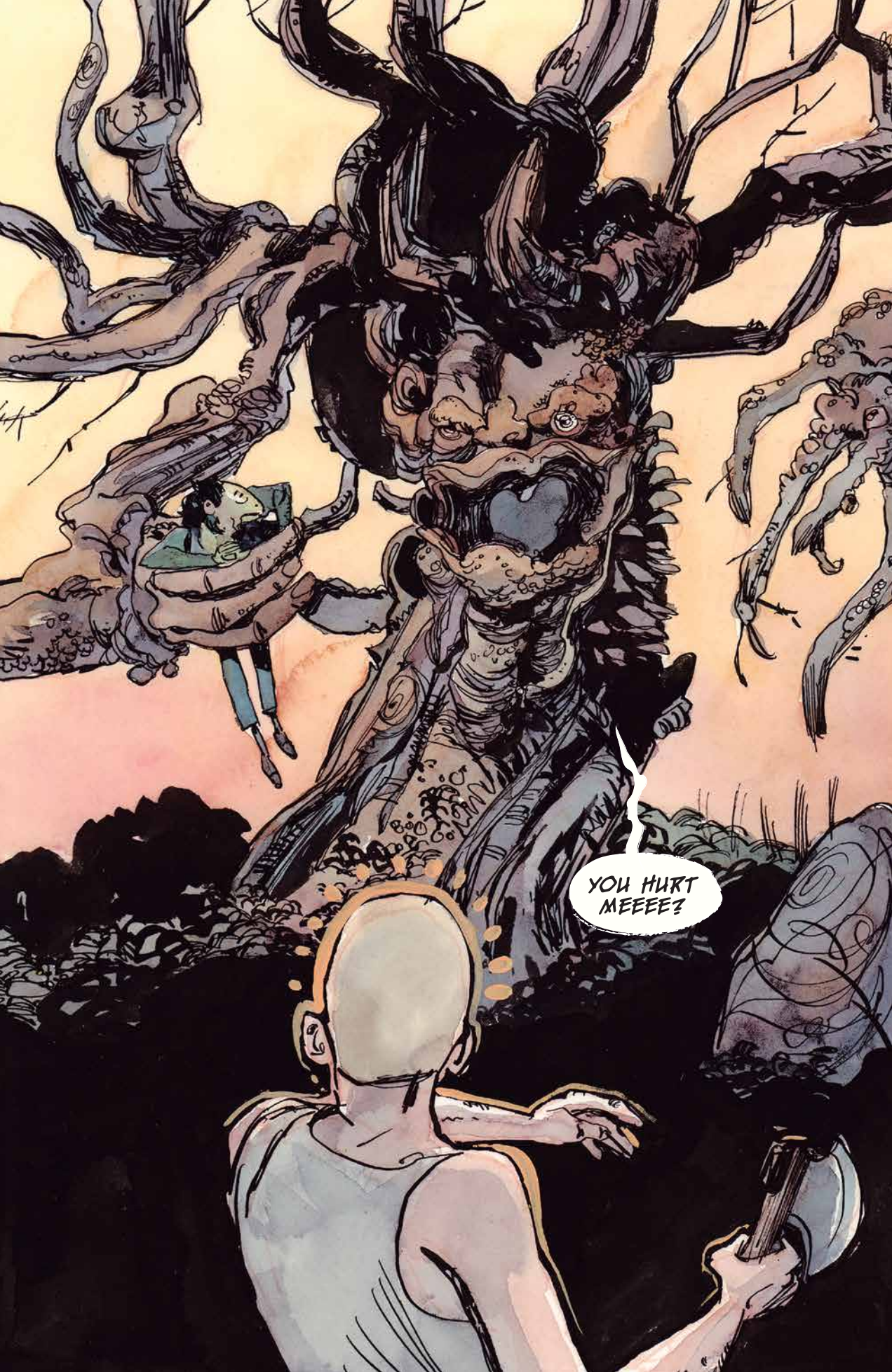
Trust nothing--not even the *truth*.

Not even the stuff right in front of your own eyes.

DENIS!
HELP!

WHY: TOES
CLEFT FROM MY
FEET-ROOTS BY
SKINNY STEEL

WHY:



YOU HURT
MEEEE?



JED!
YOU OKAY,
MAN?

I...NNF!
I THINK I
MIGHT HAVE
PISSED OFF
THIS TALKING
TREE!

ONCE:
THERE
WAS GREG
RICHARDSON
OF NORTH
WAHEREK

OTHER-
ONCE: THERE
WERE FOREST AND
TREES, A WILDERNESS
UNBURDENED BY
GREG

THEN: INVISIBLE
HEAT IN THE AIR,
POISON WIND; STRANGE
SICKNESS BORNE ON
ITS SPUTTERING
TENDRILS

NOW: GREG
AND GREEN ARE
THE SAME; BLOOD
AND PITCH RUN
TOGETHER INSIDE
SKIN-BARK

NOW: WE
KILL THOSE
THAT CLEAVE
GREG-
WOOD

GREG...

PLEASE
DON'T KILL
MY FRIEND!

HE'S FROM
NOWHERE,
TOO. I MEAN,
JUST LOOK AT
HIM!

SEE: GILLS
ON THE NECK
OF A HUMAN-
THING

SEE-ALSO:
SADNESS IN
THE EYES OF A
FISH-MAN

DON'T
JUDGE ME,
TREE!



SEE: FIRST ACT
OF COMPASSION
IN TWO AND SIXTY
EARTH YEARS

WITNESS:
TREE-GREG'S
GENEROSITY IN SPARING
THE LIFE OF THE
DEPRESSED SALMON-
PERSON



I'M A
HAPPY
PERSON!

YOU'VE
BEEN OUT
HERE FOR
SIXTY-TWO
YEARS?



TIME:
DIFFERENT IN
THE WEB OF
WOOD AND
WILD

TIME:
MARKED BY
SILENCE, BY THE
QUIET CYCLE OF
SEASONS



YES: TWENTY-TWO
THOUSAND TIMES HAVE
THE MORNING GLORIES
OPENED AND SHUT
FOR TREE-GREG

TREE-GREG:
HAS WATCHED HIS
HOME BECOME
NOWHERE

TREE-GREG: HAS
LISTENED CLOSELY
TO THE DIRT, TO THE
BONES BENEATH THE
FLOWERBEDS THAT
SPEAK WITHOUT
SOUND

KNOW:



THIS PLACE
IS ONE OF
SECRETS--ITS
ROOTS ARE
ROTTEN

"I JUST DON'T
GET IT..."





DO YOU
KNOW WHERE
I MIGHT FIND
A MISTER
JED?

WHAT'S IT
CONCERNING?

IT IS
A...PRIVATE
MATTER.

SORRY, BUDDY,
BUT I'M NOT IN
THE PRACTICE OF
TELLING--

HE'S IN
THE WOODS
WITH HIS
NEW PAL!

THEY'RE
CHOPPING
DOWN **TREES**
FOR MONEY!

DAMMIT,
SULLY!

I'M A
BEING OF
FREE
WILL!

IN THE
WOODS. YES.
ONE MORE
QUESTION:

HOW MUCH
FOR THIS JUG
OF KEROSENE?

"GOT A LIGHT?"



THANKS.

ALL THAT
WORK FOR
NOTHING.

HERE'S
WHAT I
DON'T GET,
JED...

YOU WANT
TO CONVINCE ME
THAT THERE'S AN
IMPOSSIBLE TOWN
HIDDEN AWAY FROM
EVERYTHING...

...A PLACE
FULL OF SCHEMING
FISH-DUDES AND
INSIDE-OUT
SHOEMAKERS.

TALKING
FUCKING
TREES...



FINE,
WHATEVER. THE
WORLD IS FULL OF
STRANGE SHIT.

BUT JED,
MAN...

WHY
NOT JUST
GET OUT OF
DODGE?

THERE'S
PLENTY OF
PLACES TO
MAKE SOME
SCRATCH.

"IT'S COLD
AND CROOKED
OUT THERE,
FOLKS..."





HUH?

IT'S WHAT
SHERIFF TUCKER
ALWAYS TELLS
US. ABOUT
LEAVING.

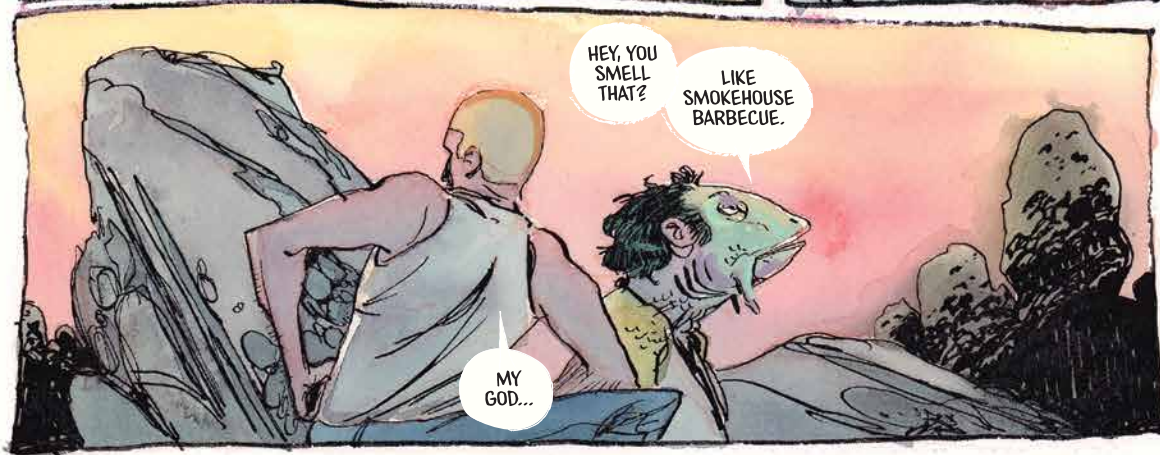


I MEAN,
LOOK AT
ME, MAN.

WHERE IN
GOD'S NAME
WOULD I
GO?



NOT EVERYONE
CAN JUST **RUN**
AWAY.



HEY, YOU
SMELL
THAT?

LIKE
SMOKEHOUSE
BARBECUE.

MY
GOD...



TREE-
GREG...

The more you
learn, the less
you understand.



SHERIFF

So you try
not to ask
questions.

WHY?
WHO?

Lest you
wind up with
answers.

WE NEED
ANSWERS,
DAD.

...and answers
ain't nothing
but trouble.

A BELOVED
CITIZEN OF
NOWHERE WAS
KILLED JUST
OUTSIDE OF
TOWN.

I WANNA FIND
THE PERSON
RESPONSIBLE.

YOU WANNA
KNOW WHAT
I LIKE ABOUT
ORIGAMI?

IT'S A
SLOW
CRAFT...

IT TAKES
TIME TO PUT
ALL THE PIECES
TOGETHER.

BUT,
EVENTUALLY...
THE PICTURE
BECOMES
CLEAR...

THE
OBJECT
REVEALS
ITSELF.









ISSUE TWO COVER BY MARTÍN MORAZZO WITH COLORS BY CHRIS O'HALLORAN

CHAPTER THREE



I have witnessed
love of every shape.

TWEET
TWEET,
MY LITTLE
GUPPY.



YOUR
ANNIVERSARY
STEW IS ALMOST
DONE!



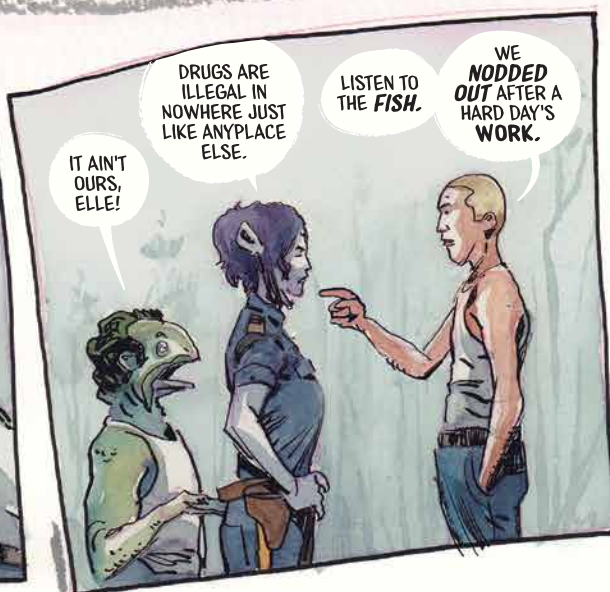
Oblong love and
sideways love.

I MISS
HIM, CARL.

FAMILY
MEMORIES









...IS
THIS YOUR
"WORK"?

...A WHOLE
BIOREGION BURNED
TO ASH, AND HERE
YOU ARE, **SLEEPING**
IN THE EMBERS.

DON'T BLAME
ME FOR YOUR
CRAZY TOWN'S
CRAZY SHIT.

FOR THOSE
KEEPING SCORE, I
SAVED YOUR DAD
FROM A GIANT
SHERIFF-EATING
GODZILLA LIZARD.

MAYBE SOME
THANKS ARE
IN ORDER...

MOTHERFUCKER!

LOOK
OUT!

TWO OF
NOWHERE'S
MOST **BELOVED**
CITIZENS ARE
DEAD, YOU
PIECE OF
SHIT.

MURDERED
WITH A
GODDAMN
NAIL GUN.

AND NOW
THIS...

YOU SHOWED UP
AND **TERRIBLE**
THINGS STARTED
HAPPENING.



NAIL GUN?
I CAN'T EVEN
PUT UP A
SHELF.

IT'S TRUE,
ELLE. HE'S **VERY**
UNCOORDINATED.

I'VE SEEN IT
UP CLOSE.



I'D
NEVER KILL
ANYBODY...

I'M SORRY TO
SAY I **BELIEVE**
YOU--YOU'RE TOO
PATHETIC.

BUT THE
FACTS ARE
INDISPUTABLE.



SOMEONE
IS TRYING TO
SMOKE YOU
OUT.

WHEREVER
YOU SET FOOT,
CARNAGE
FOLLOWS CLOSE
BEHIND.



YOU'RE
POISONOUS,
MAN.

SO UNTIL
I FIGURE OUT
WHAT THE HELL
IS GOING ON IN
MY TOWN...



...THE **BOTH**
OF YOU ARE
COMING WITH
ME.

I have witnessed
private moments of
self-sacrifice.

...tucked away in corners where nobody tends to look.

THUMP

NICE ONE, CULL.

THUUMP!

YOU COULDA BEEN A CONTENDER!

-TT-

YOU GUYS WATCH TOO MANY MOVIES. I DON'T--

BIG BROTHER...

STAIRS, PLEASE.

I NEED A NAP.

YOU BETCHA, ANGEL.

HI, FIONA.

ENJOY YOUR NAP!

...a strain of unadulterated compassion that's sensitive to light--

HERE WE GO.

I GET SO TIRED SOMETIMES...

It flickers in and out of view...



But make no
mistake, it's *there*:



WATCH YOUR
HEAD ON THE
WAY UP.



*Tenderness in
a dark place.*

"WATCH MY
HEAD." YOU'RE
FUNNY.



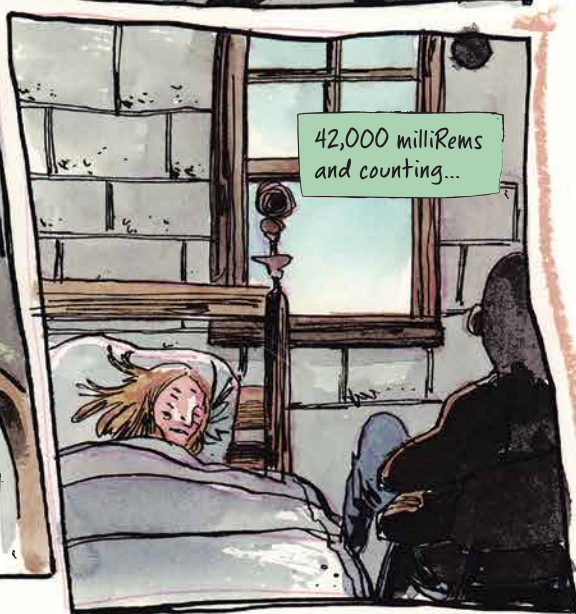
CAN YOU SIT WITH
ME A WHILE,
CULLEN?

I DON'T
LIKE TO FALL
ASLEEP
ALONE.

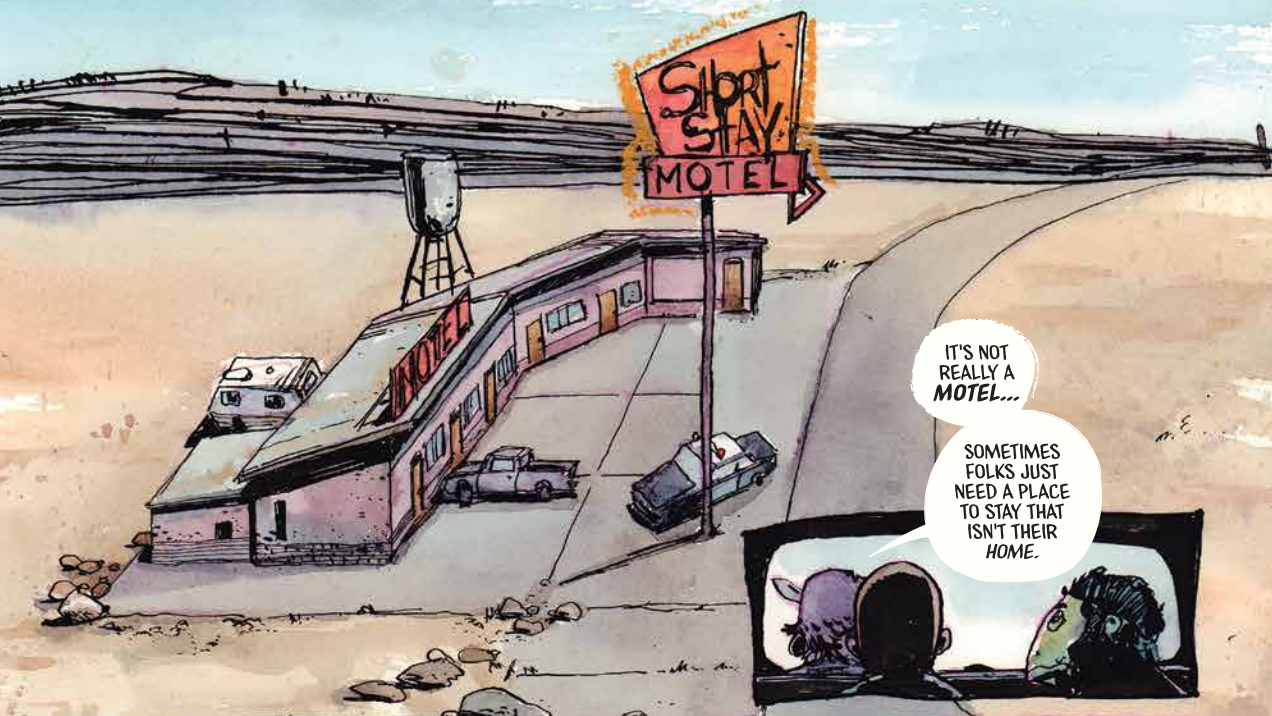


OF
COURSE.

*How lovely to know the
largesse of lab mice!*



42,000 milliRems
and counting...



IT'S NOT
REALLY A
MOTEL...

SOMETIMES
FOLKS JUST
NEED A PLACE
TO STAY THAT
ISN'T THEIR
HOME.



"CRESTFALLEN TYPES
WHOSE WIVES WON'T FUCK
THEM...TEENAGE GIRLS
REBELLING AGAINST
MOMMY AND DADDY..."



"ADDICTS WHO'VE
SQUANDERED THEIR
'ONE LAST CHANCE'
OVER AND OVER
AGAIN..."

MURDER
SUSPECTS.



...MY SOURCES
SAY THERE'S
ANOTHER STRANGER
IN TOWN...AND THAT
HE'S HOLED UP
HERE.



DON'T SPEAK
UNLESS SPOKEN
TO. GOT IT?

JUST CHECKING:
YOU'RE **NOT** A
MURDERER,
RIGHT?



NOT
FUNNY,
JED.



I DON'T WANNA BE A BUMMER OR ANYTHING, BUT I'VE GOT A PRETTY BAD CASE OF *OMINOUS, GUT-LEVEL DREAD* CONCERNING WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN GOING ON HERE.

SHH.

DOOR'S OPEN.

I'M STARTING TO COME DOWN WITH THAT *TOO*, ELLE.

WHAT THE FUCK...

THIS IS ME!

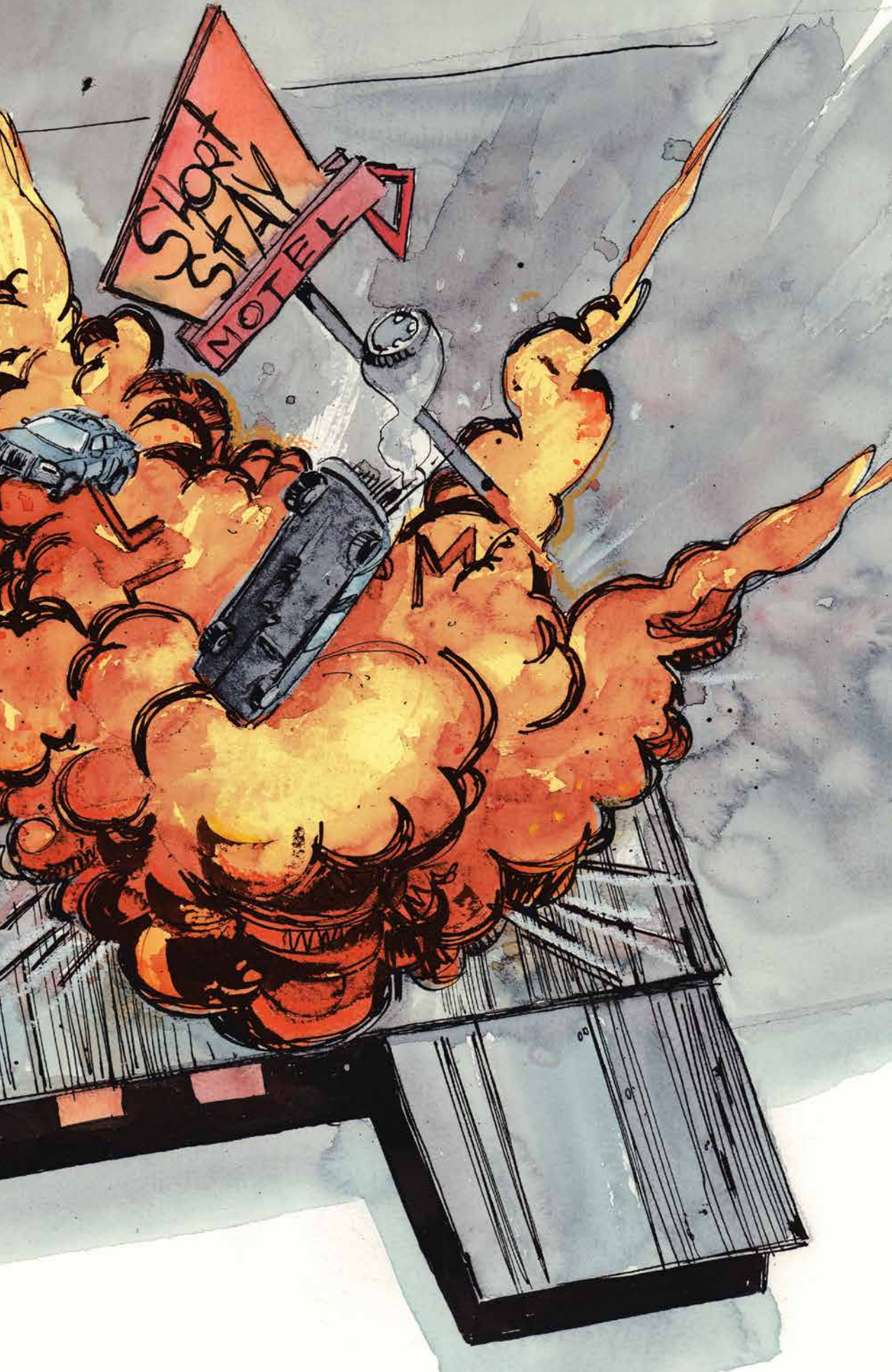
ORIGAMI?

HEY, UH, GUYS...

ANYONE ELSE HEAR THAT *TICKING*?

EVERYBODY RUN.





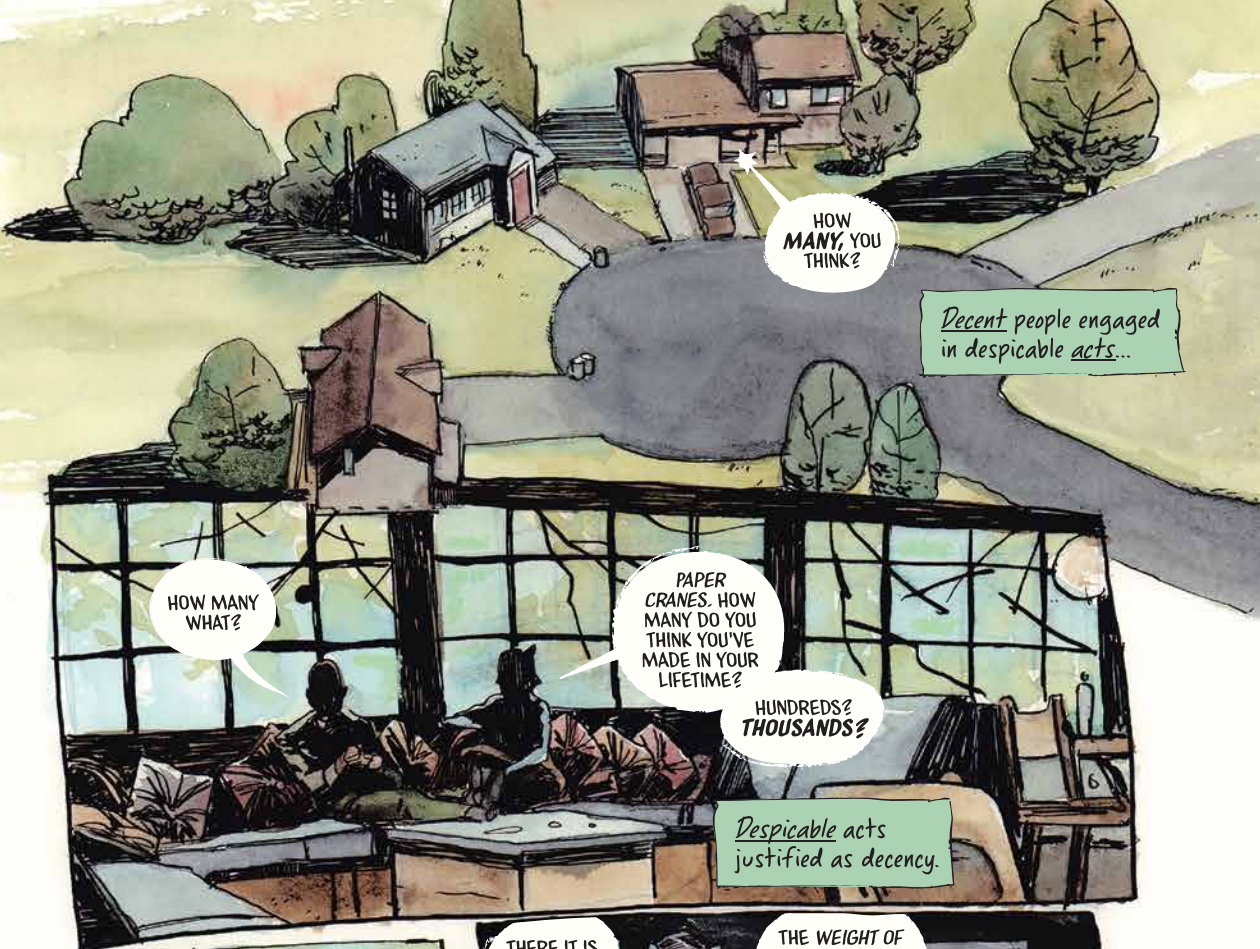


DENIS,
MAN. I HATE
TO SAY IT....

BUT SOMEONE
REALLY WANTS
YOU TO NOT BE
ALIVE.









WE'D
BE LOST
WITHOUT
YOU.

THE FOOD,
THE SUPPLIES,
THE **ORDER...**
THAT'S ALL **YOU**,
TUCKER.

I KNOW, I
KNOW. IT'S
JUST...



The zookeeper is revealed
to be a prison warden.

SOMETIMES
AS SHERIFF
YOU GOTTA DO
THINGS...

THINGS THAT
SIT WRONG IN
YOUR STOMACH.

BUT
YOU DO IT
ANYWAY...

...FOR THE
GREATER GOOD OF
ALL THE PEOPLE
WHO **DEPEND**
ON YOU.



WHAT DO I
ALWAYS TELL
YOU?

YOU'RE
A **GOOD**
MAN.

I KNOW THAT.
ELLE KNOWS THAT.
THE WHOLE GOSH
DARN TOWN KNOWS
THAT!



WE TRUST
YOU TO DO
WHATEVER IT
IS YOU NEED
TO KEEP US
SAFE.



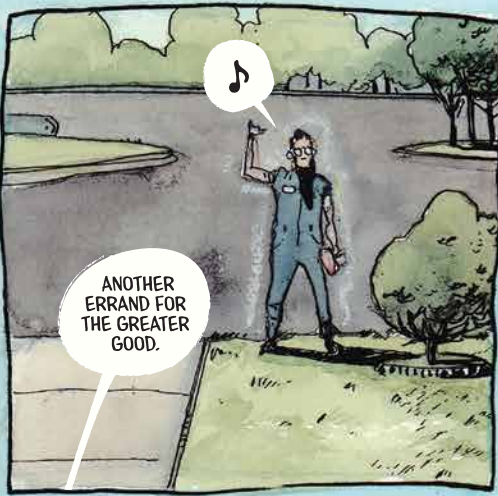
...how *unfortunate*
for all the funny
little animals.

♪



WE EXPECTING COMPANY?

JUST A LOOSE END THAT NEEDS TYING.



♪

ANOTHER ERRAND FOR THE GREATER GOOD.



MEOW MEOW. DON'T WAIT UP.

44,000...



45,000...



"EXPOSURE..."

THIRTY-SIX
POINTS.

JESUS!
EVERY
TIME!

SHE'S GOT THE
GILLS, SHE'S GOT
THE BRAINS.

YOU ORDER
A SINGING
TELEGRAM?

A GUY
TRIES TO HAVE A
QUIET ANNIVERSARY
WITH HIS WIFE...

**KNOCK
KNOCK**

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

KEEP
YOUR PANTS
ON!

SINGING
TELEGRAM.
MAYBE NEXT
YEAR.

NOW
WHO'S--



HI,
DAD.



MY
BOY!

JEDIDIAH!



LITTLE FISHY.
WE'VE BEEN
SO WORRIED
ABOUT YOU.

I KNOW,
MA. SORRY
I HAVEN'T
COME BY IN
A WHILE...



→TT← YOU'RE
OFF THE WAGON
AGAIN. I CAN
TELL...

I...
UH...



THERE'S
NOTHING YOU
CAN HIDE FROM
ME, JED.

YOU CAN RUN
AND RUN, BUT IT
WON'T DO ANY
GOOD...FAMILY
KNOWS.



A voyeur.



A peeping Tom.



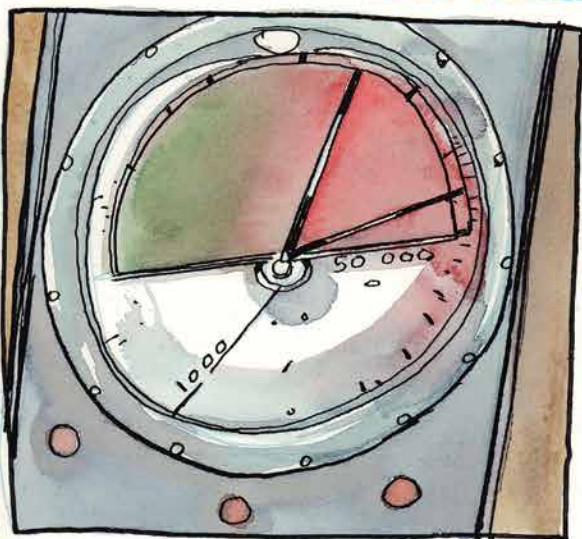
A surveyor of a
controlled environment.



But to be here,
inside Nowhere...



It's simply amazing how fast the experiment is compromised when foreign bodies are introduced.



...how quickly it all falls apart.



But there's still time to make things right...



Irradiated love bubbles with the same stuff that set the stars on fire...

It's hotter than you can possibly imagine.



WHAT NOW?

WE'RE KINDA IN THE MIDDLE OF A REUNION HERE...





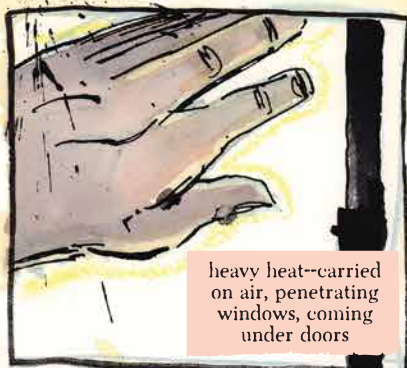
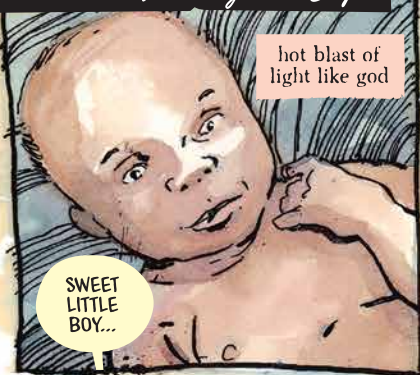
EVENING,
FOLKS. MY
NAME IS
GALVIN
CHOW.

...YOU'RE IN
TROUBLE AND
IT'S ALL MY
FAULT.



CHAPTER FOUR

North Wahereke, 64 Years Ago



but what?

"THE INCITING EVENT, MAN."

California, About a Week Ago



A NUCLEAR
OCCURRENCE JUST
FIFTY MILES UPWIND
OF THE TOWN OF NORTH
WAHEREK.

YOU GOT
FUNNY WORDS.
YOU TALK LIKE A
SCIENTIST OR
SOMETHING.

I AM A
SCIENTIST! I
KEEP TELLING
YOU THAT!

UH-HUH.

DENIS, MAN, I
KNOW WE JUST MET,
BUT I'M SHOWING
YOU MY *SOUL* HERE: I
WORK FOR SOME COLD
MOTHERFUCKERS.

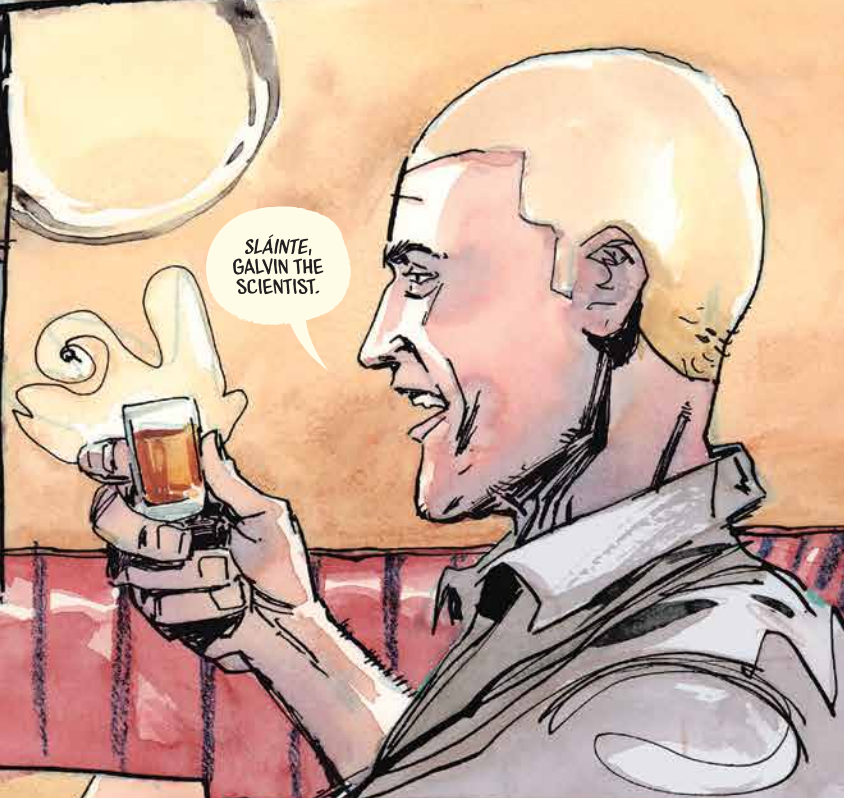
I WALKED
OUT ON MY
WIFE AND
NEWBORN.

YEESH.

THAT'S
PRETTY
BAD, TOO.

BUT
LISTEN, MAN.
LISTEN.

THE
TOWN.



Nowhere, Now



DO YOU
REALLY NOT
REMEMBER
ME?

I...

EVERYTHING'S
FUZZY.

IT'S SO
HARD TO THINK
STRAIGHT THESE
DAYS...

HOLD ON A
SECOND!

YOU'RE
SAYING NOWHERE
GOT, WHAT...
NUKED?



SPEAKING
TECHNICALLY, YOUR TOWN
WAS PART OF AN OFF-
BOOK EXPERIMENT TESTING
THE SHORT-RANGE EFFECTS
OF **CONCENTRATED**
RADIATION ON THE
HUMAN BODY.

THE BIG BAD
GOVERNMENT
WANTED TO KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED
WHEN PEOPLE WERE
EXPOSED TO **TOO**
MUCH TOXIC
STUFF.

WHY IN THE
FUCK WOULD
THEY WANT TO
DO THAT?

YOUR
MOUTH,
JEDIDIAH.





outside, see
Waherek start
to change:

North Wakerak, 63 Years Ago

everything is
post-light now

all life is life
after Glare

life full of
wonder, life full of
strangeness:

...grocer's
fingers have
grown very
long

MORNING,
FRANK!

Joan, head
of PTA...

skin is
deep blue

Jim from down
by the beach has
started to resemble
his pet parrot

scared feeling,
scared for my
town.

scared for my wife. scared for my son.



FRANK...

IS THE BABY WINKING, OR IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIS EYE?



THERESA. YOUR... HAND.



WHA...

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?

there was life before the light...

FRANK!!

but this is after.

"IF WORD GOT OUT ABOUT THIS, THERE'D BE RIOTS IN THE STREETS."

California, About a Week Ago



GALVIN, MAN.
I DON'T THINK
I'M SUPPOSED
TO BE IN HERE.

THE UNITED
STATES GOVERNMENT
SHADOW-TESTING ON
ITS OWN PEOPLE--AN
INNOCENT LITTLE TOWN
ON THE CALIFORNIA
COAST.



...WE POURED
EXPERIMENTAL
MEDICINE INTO THE
AQUIFER TO SEE HOW IT
WOULD AFFECT THE
MUTATIONS...



I JUST MET
YOU IN A BAR.
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW YOU.

OF COURSE
YOU DO: **I'M**
YOUR NEW
SPONSOR.

AND
THIS IS MY
CONFESSION
TO YOU:



**FORGIVE ME,
FELLOW ALCOHOLIC,
FOR I HAVE TAKEN
PART IN A TERRIBLE
AND CRUEL
CONSPIRACY!**



THE
WARPING AND
SUBSEQUENT
BOTTLING OF
AN ENTIRE
CITY!

BEHOLD...



WHAT THE
FUCK.







CARL!



DAD!

THEY
SHOT MY
DAD!



ANYWHERE
I SET
FOOT...

...IT ALL
GOES TO
SHIT.



FUCKING
BOB.



HE'LL KILL
US ALL IF
WE DON'T
MOVE.

beginning to think
we should move

North Wakerak, 62 Years Ago

home no
longer home--
no longer right



HE'S STILL
ALL RHEUMY.
THE EYE DROPS
AREN'T DOING
ANYTHING.



have acquired
extra eye in
middle of
forehead

see now with
new vision
things as in
dreams...



BLINK,
LITTLE BABY.

...wild splashes of
color on canvas of
world...

...portents
of blue and
green...

can see it
there, hanging
in the air:

the putrid
after-light.

HAVE
YOU GUYS
SEEN MY
IGUANAS?





Outside of Nowhere, About a Week Ago





Nowhere, Now



CARL...MY
BIRDIE...

IF WE DON'T
FIND A WAY OUT
OF HERE, WE'RE
TOAST.

WE
CRASHED...I
REMEMBER
THAT.

THEN THE
DEER IN THE
JEEP...



I WOKE UP
AND ALL THE
ANIMALS
COULD TALK.



**NAILS!
DOWN!**



THE
CLOCK'S
TICKING,
FOLKS.

**BOB
IS BAD
NEWS!**



WE...KEEP A
BOAT OUT BY
THE WATER.



YOU CAN
FOLLOW THE
SHORELINE
BACK INTO
TOWN.



FISHES
WITH A
BOAT.

THIS PLACE IS
MAGNIFICENT.

YOU'RE
COMING
WITH US,
MOM.

NO. I'M
STAYING
WITH MY
HUSBAND.



IT'S OUR
ANNIVERSARY
TODAY.

MOM,
PLEASE!



GO,
JEDIDIAH...



AND QUIT
ALL THAT
DRINKING,
WILL YA?



I'M TRYING,
MOM. EVERY
DAY I'M
TRYING.

red, yellow,
aubergine

Nowhere, 61 Years Ago



vermillion,
marigold,
chartreuse...

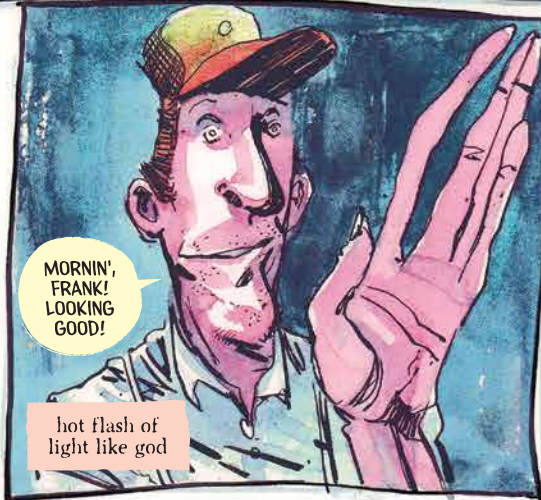


see our home
now as it was
meant to be seen:



in kaleidoscopic,
sensational color!

home full of
wonder, home full
of grace



MORNIN',
FRANK!
LOOKING
GOOD!

hot flash of
light like god



turns out
it was god
after all...



granting me
with second
sight, blessing
me with
vision...



my wife:
sharp-taloned
and beautiful

YOU LIKE
YOUR ORIGAMI,
SWEETIE? DADDY
MADE IT FOR
YOU.



FOLD BY
FOLD BY
FOLD...

and my
son...

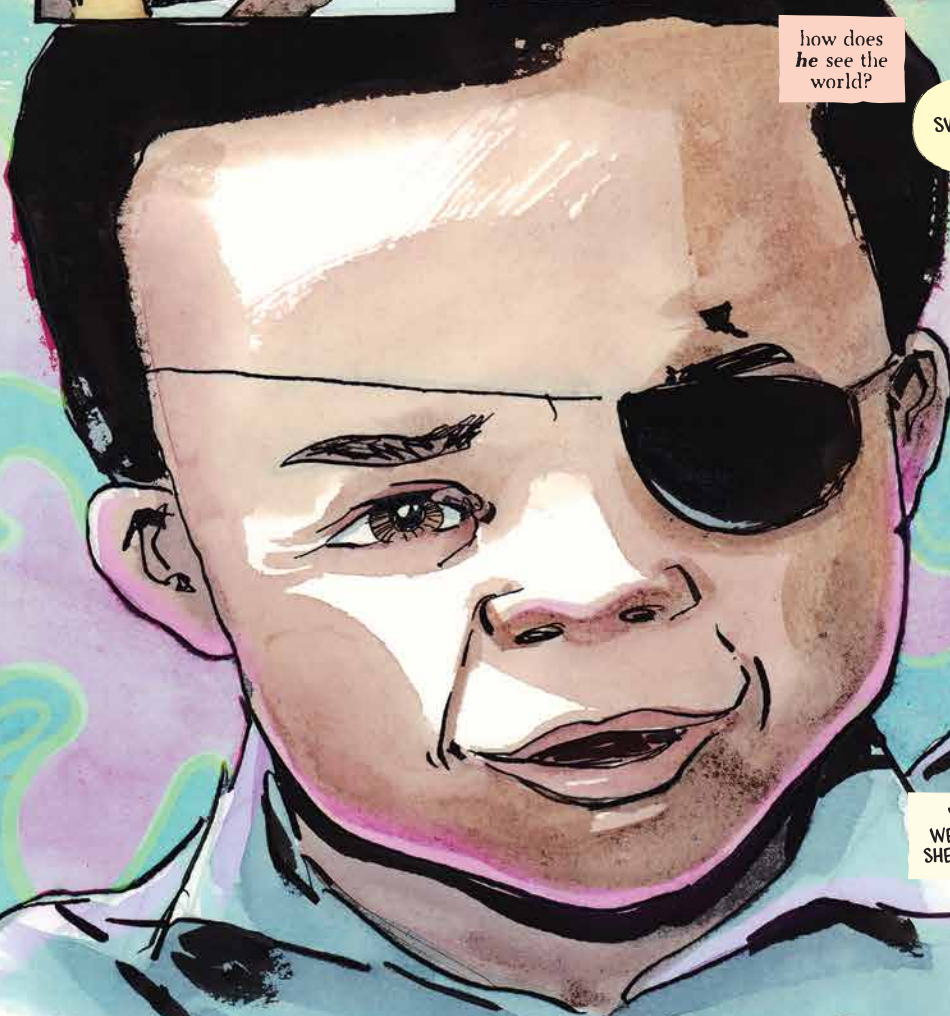
one can't help
but wonder:



was it **his**
eye that I
gained?

and if
so...

LITTLE
CYCLOPS...



how does
he see the
world?

...MY
SWEET LITTLE
TUCKER.

"SHOULD
WE TELL THE
SHERIFF, SIR?"

California, A Little Less Than a Week Ago

NO, THAT
WON'T BE
NECESSARY.

WE'LL
HANDLE THIS
OURSELVES.

MR. CHOW, I'D
LIKE YOU TO TELL
ME IF I HAVE THIS
STRAIGHT...

YOU--AGAINST
EVERY PIECE OF
PROTOCOL AND
CONTRACTUAL
OBLIGATION--TOLD
A CIVILIAN...

...ONE **DENIS
SAUNDERS**... ABOUT
THE EXISTENCE OF
NORTH WAHEREK?

SAUNDERS
Age: 35
History of

AND NOT
ONLY DID YOU
TELL HIM--

--WHICH
IS GROUNDS
FOR IMMEDIATE
TERMINATION, BY
THE WAY--

--YOU THEN
PROCEEDED TO
SHOW HIM OUR
FACILITY HERE?

AND THEN,
HAVING SHOWN HIM
OUR VIEWING STATION,
YOU ERRED FURTHER AND
TRANSPORTED THIS MAN TO
THE NOWHERE CITY
LIMITS...

...WHEREUPON
YOU CRASHED YOUR
CAR AND **LEFT** HIM
HALF-CONSCIOUS TO
WANDER INTO THE
CONTAINMENT
AREA.

DO I HAVE
ALL THAT
RIGHT?



"I CAME BACK TO WARN YOU. BUT IT'S TOO LATE..."



TUCKER, THE
GOVERNMENT,
BOB. THEY'RE
ALL WORKING
TOGETHER.

I KNEW THERE
WAS SOMETHING
ROTTEN ABOUT
SHERIFF T!

EVERYBODY
WANTS YOU
DEAD.

I THINK
I REALLY
NEED TO STOP
DRINKING.

ME TOO.
STARTING
TODAY, I'M
SOBER.



MY
GOD...

NO...





I'M GONNA
KILL BOB AND
THAT ONE-EYED
MOTHERFUCKER.



JED...I'M
SO SORRY,
MAN. THIS IS
MY FAULT.

YOU GUYS
DON'T GET
IT...



THIS IS
BIGGER
THAN THOSE
TWO.

THIS IS A
CITY-SIZED
HUMANITARIAN
CRISIS!



I DON'T GIVE A
WHALE'S BLOWHOLE
ABOUT YOUR BIG,
SPOOKY NUCLEAR
CONSPIRACY.

THIS IS
ALL OF OUR
LIVES...

THIS
IS MY
LIFE!



SO LET'S
GO HAVE A
CHAT WITH THE
SHERIFF OF
NOWHERE...



IT'S TIME
FOR SOME
FUCKING
ANSWERS.



CHAPTER FIVE

Now

There's a *motor*
inside you...

A piece of
interior machinery
responsible for all
sorts of dumb
shit...

Mistake after
mistake after
mistake.

How many times
are you gonna
ask the world for
forgiveness?

HELLO?

How many
times?

Before

"YOU SHOULDN'T
BE HERE, ELLE."

CRASH

YOU
MOTHER-
FUCKER!

"IS IT TRUE, DAD?
OUR TOWN, ITS
FAMILIES, OUR
WHOLE LIVES..."

>HH<

"WE'RE ALL
JUST SOME...
EXPERIMENT?"

>GG<

LITTLE FISHY,
BANGING HIS
HEAD AGAINST
THE GLASS
WALLS OF
HIS TANK.

I WONDER...

"GO HOME TO YOUR
MOTHER, ELEANOR.
I'M ONLY GONNA
ASK ONCE."

WHEN
YOU'RE DEAD...
DO I FLUSH YOU
DOWN THE
TOILET?

"YOU'RE MY
DAUGHTER AND I
LOVE YOU..."



...BUT SOME THINGS ARE BIGGER THAN LOVE.

YOU ARE COMPLICIT IN THE IMPRISONMENT OF A WHOLE TOWN'S-WORTH OF **RADIATION-SICK** AMERICAN CITIZENS, SHERIFF.

"IMPRISONMENT." THAT'S A BUNCH OF HORSE SHIT.

I TAKE **CARE** OF MY PEOPLE. WE HAVE A GOOD LIFE.

JUST GIVE THE WORD, SHERIFF.







WORD GETS
AROUND
QUICK.

As your wife was in the
throes of labor, you were
in the hospital bathroom,
puking your brains out.

When you were finally done retching in that miserable little stall--when you emerged from the bathroom *pale* and shaking...



The nurse was waiting for you outside.

She put a hand on your shoulder.

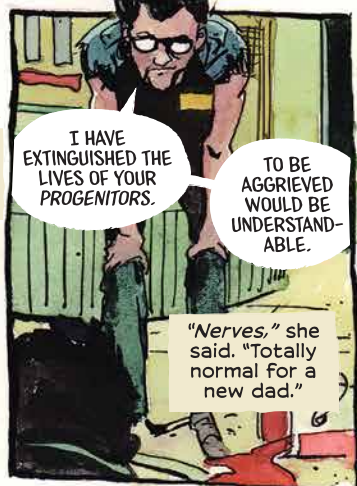
YOU ARE AGGRIEVED, I TAKE IT?



I HAVE EXTINGUISHED THE LIVES OF YOUR PROGENITORS.

TO BE AGGRIEVED WOULD BE UNDERSTAND-ABLE.

"Nerves," she said. "Totally normal for a new dad."



SO STRANGE, THIS PLACE.

A FISH AND A BIRD MAKE LOVE...



AND **THIS** IS THE RESULT. PERHAPS I HAVE DONE THEM A KINDNESS, YES?

NO LONGER DO THEY HAVE TO BE **DISAPPOINTED** IN THEIR SON.

YOU PIECE OF SHIT!



AHHH!

But it wasn't nerves.

You were hungover.

Sleepwalking through your own life.

OOF!

MY FIRST TIME BEING PUNCHED BY AN AQUATIC CREATURE.

THANK YOU FOR THIS GIFT. TRULY.

F-FUCKER.

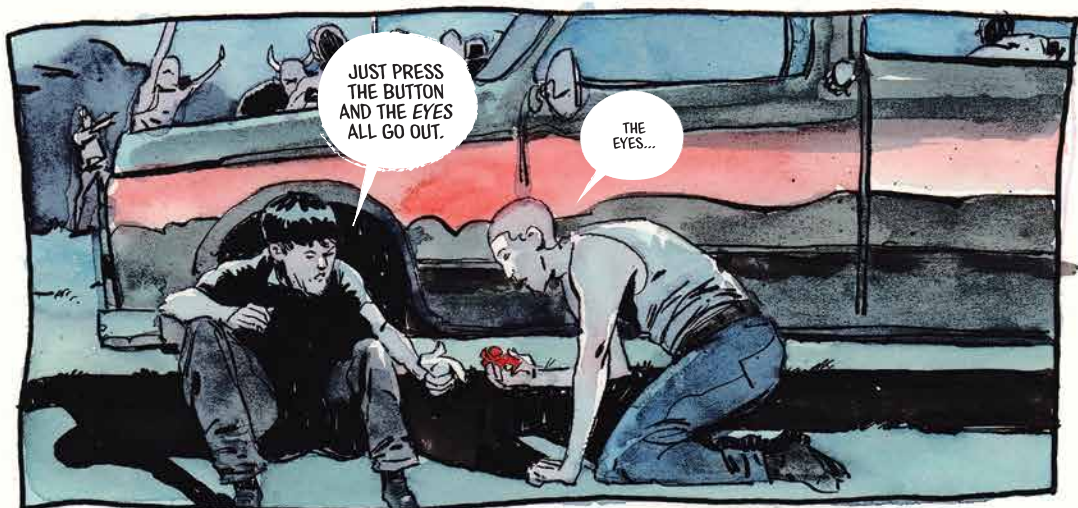
HEY, FISHBRAIN...

It's time to wake up now, Denis.

YOU WANNA BORROW A SHARP TOOL?

HUZZAH!

It's time.





NEPOTISM
ONLY GETS YOU
SO FAR, KITTY
CAT.

YOU WERE
NEVER GONNA
MAKE IT TO THE
REAL SHOW.

WHAT
THE FUCK,
SHEILA?



>NNG<



WE'RE
FUCKING
LAB MICE!

SOME DIRTY
GOVERNMENT
SECRET TUCKED
AWAY WHERE
NO ONE CAN
SEE.



WHAT IN GOD'S
NAME ARE YOU
EVEN FIGHTING
FOR?!



YOU'RE
NOT GONNA
SHOOT ME. YOU
DON'T HAVE THE
CONSTITUTION.



MAYBE
NOT...



HORNY
LITTLE
BITCH.

"I WAS
JUST A
BOY..."

"THEY CAME TO ME IN THE WOODS, OUT WHERE GREG LIKED TO HOLD FORTH ABOUT FLOWERS AND SPORES AND I DON'T KNOW WHATALL...



CLICK
CLICK



"A FEW MEN IN UNIFORM. I REMEMBER THINKING: 'WOW, THEY LOOK JUST LIKE ME.'"



"YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND: **NOBODY** IN NOWHERE LOOKED LIKE ME.

"EVERYONE IN TOWN HAD HORNS OR WINGS OR EXTRA FINGERS..."

HANDS
DOWN,
CULLEN.



"AND THAT'S SAYING NOTHING OF THE PEOPLE THAT WENT FULL-ON ANIMAL.

"MY HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART WAS A CAT..."



YOU OKAY,
CULL?

"THEY MADE A SIMPLE OFFER:"



YOU
BOYS ARE
BEAUTIFUL,
YOU KNOW
THAT?

"HELP THE GOVERNMENT KEEP YOUR TOWN SAFE.

"HELP US KEEP AN EYE ON NOWHERE..."



"AN EYE."

HOW COULD I POSSIBLY SAY NO?



NEAR FIFTY YEARS I'VE KEPT THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN SAFE FROM ALL THE **MESSY BULLSHIT** OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD...



AND THEN **YOU.**

ONE WORTHLESS LOWLIFE WANDERS IN AND THE WHOLE THING GOES UP IN SMOKE...



IT'S A BUNCH OF NONSENSE, IS WHAT IT IS.

YOU MADE THIS MESS. **YOU** LIED TO THE PEOPLE YOU KEEP SAYING YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT.

...YOU KEPT THEM IN A **FUCKING BUBBLE!**



EVERYTHING I DO, I DO FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

A MAN LIKE YOU DOESN'T KNOW **FUCKALL** ABOUT "GOOD."



I'M NOT ONE FOR VIOLENCE, BUT I'M GONNA **ENJOY** PUTTING A BULLET THROUGH YOUR FOREHEAD.





SULLY.
MY LIL'
SULLY...

YES. YOU
ARE FINALLY
FREE.

YOU'RE
WELC--



F-U-C-K



Y-O-U



TRIPLE
WORD
SCORE.

DIE!

BANG!

Zip!

I'VE BEEN
FIGHTING AGAINST
PEOPLE LIKE YOU
MY ENTIRE
LIFE.

MEN WHO
THINK THEY
KNOW WHAT'S
BEST FOR
EVERYBODY

YOU DON'T
KNOW A
GODDAMN
THING.

YOU'RE
NOTHING. AN
ABSENTEE.

MAYBE
SO.

EITHER
WAY...

CLIK!

"YOUR
EYES ARE
CLOSED,
SHERIFF."

BOOM

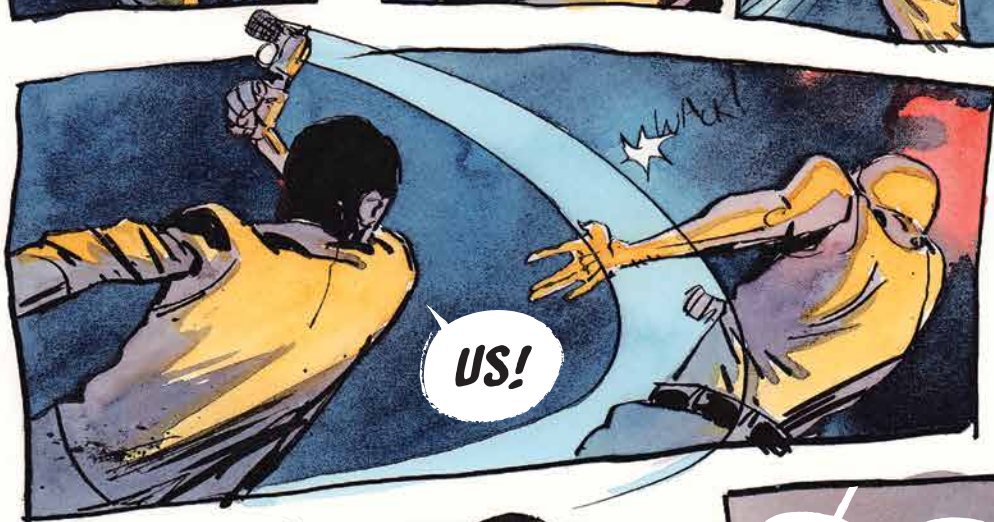
BOOM

FZZZZZAP

YOU
IDIOT.

YOU DON'T
KNOW
WHAT YOU
JUST DID!









Life is one long dream.



You know that.
You've always known that.



WELL COME ON, THEN.
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!



There's no waking up from it.

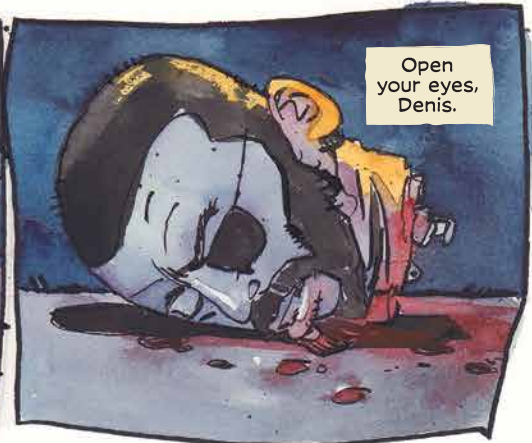
So you do what you gotta...



Lean in.

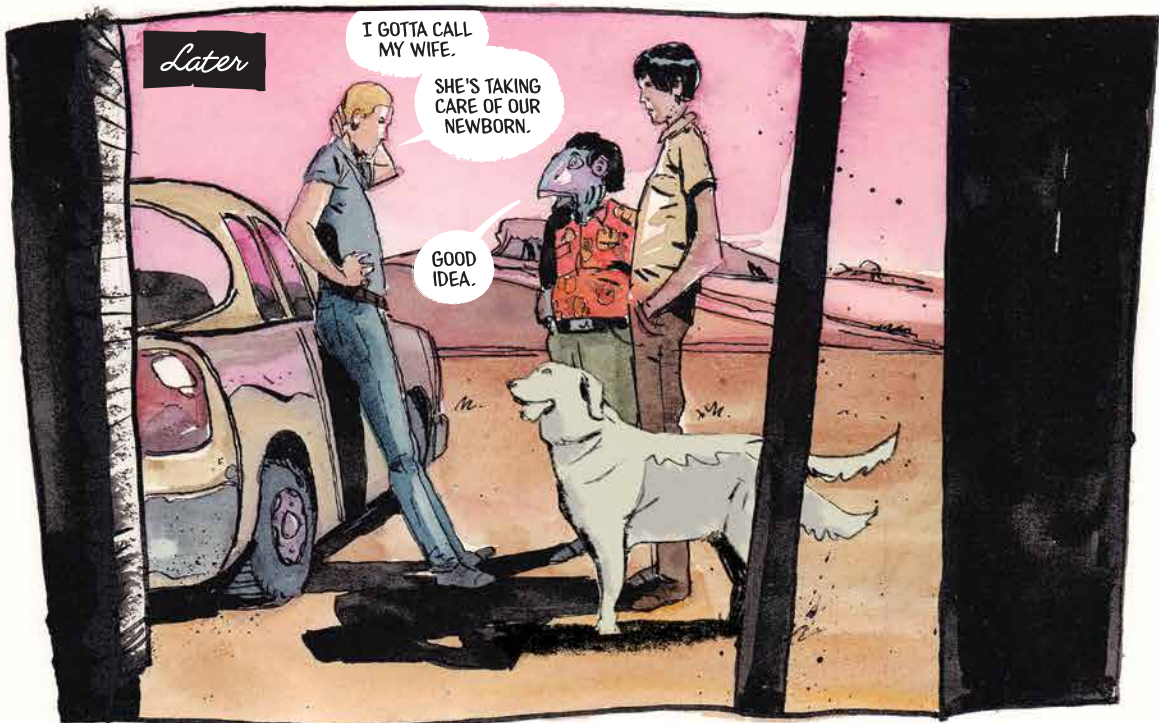


Be the best dreamself you can be.



Open your eyes, Denis.







"WHOEVER
IT IS THAT'S
WATCHING US..."



"LET 'EM
WATCH."

"AND WHEN WE
FINALLY DECIDE IT'S
TIME TO STEP OUT
BEYOND THE LIMITS
OF NOWHERE..."



"JUST LET
'EM **TRY** AND
STOP US."

"WE GOT HEARTS
BIGGER AND
STRONGER THAN
ANYTHING THEY'VE
EVER SEEN."



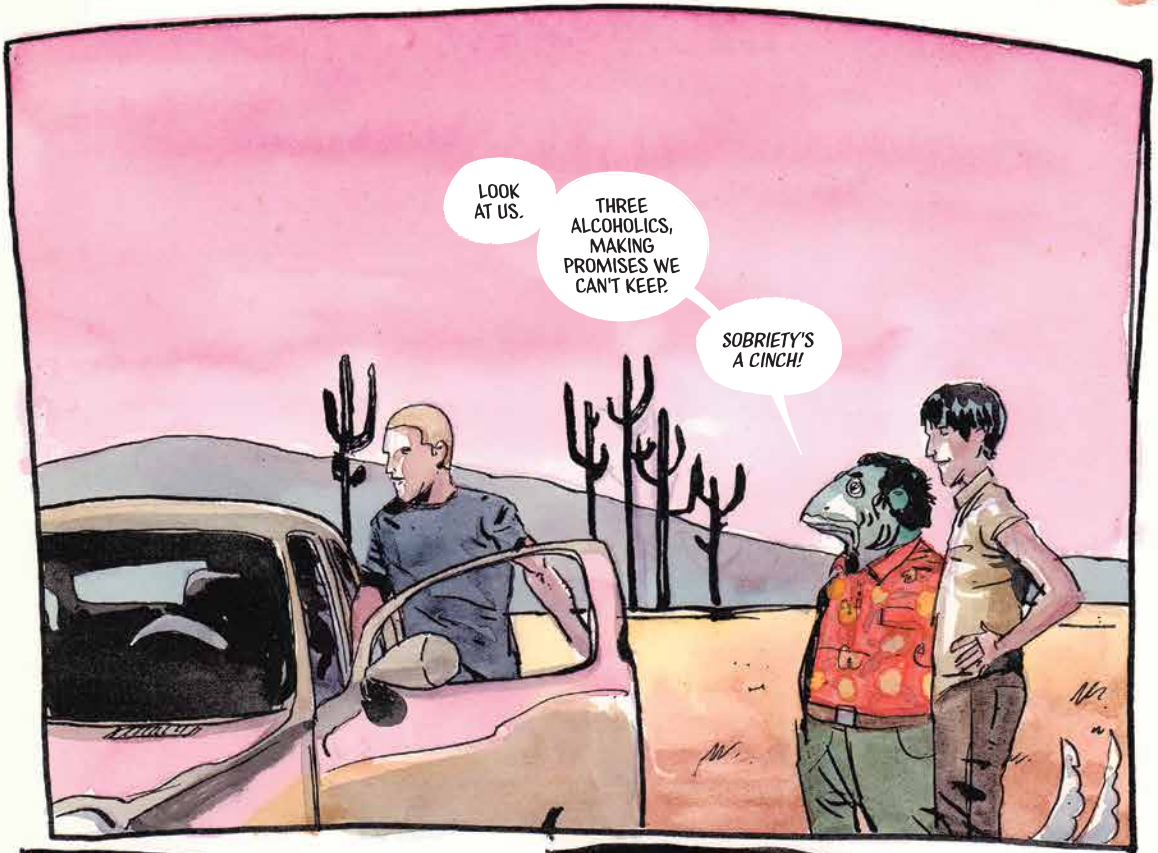
AND GIANT
LIZARDS.

AND GIANT
FUCKING
LIZARDS!



GALVIN, MAN.
WHAT ABOUT
YOU?

...YOU READY
TO GO BACK
TO THE REAL
WORLD?



Now

You're an addict.
You've always
been an addict.

Relapse, rehab,
halfway house,
relapse...

->NNNN<-

See here and commit
to memory the likely
vocabulary of the
rest of your life.

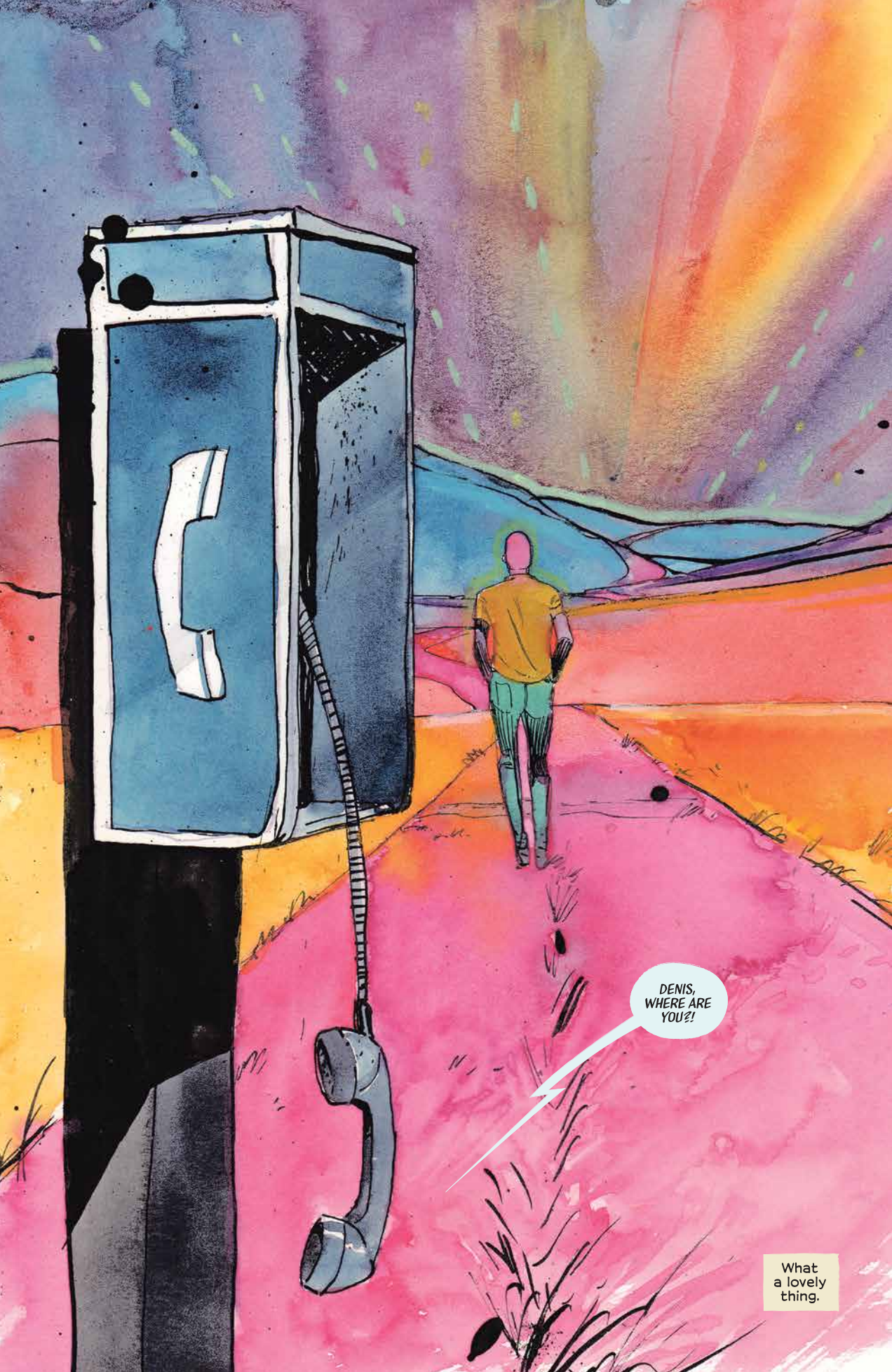
DENIS?
IS THAT
YOU?

Your life...

DENIS?

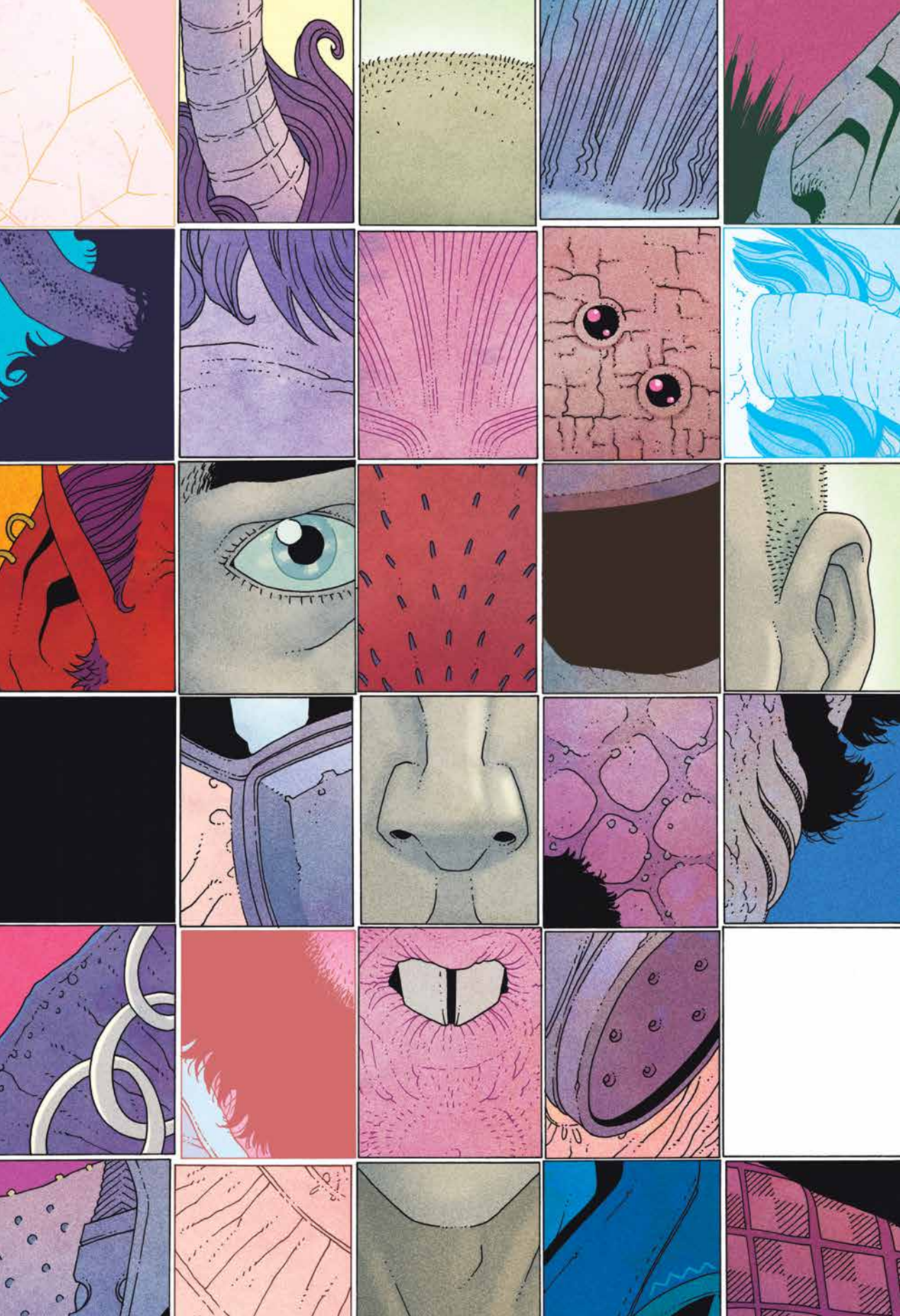
...is strange
and full of
weird shit.





DENIS,
WHERE ARE
YOU?!

What
a lovely
thing.



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