

THE

DAN WICKLINE

PHILLIP SEVY

FRODO BAGGINS

ISSUE TWO

Image



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THE FREEZE

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LETTERS BY TROY PETERI
EDITED BY ELENA SALCEDO
EDITOR IN CHIEF MATT HAWKINS

COVER BY PHILLIP SEVY



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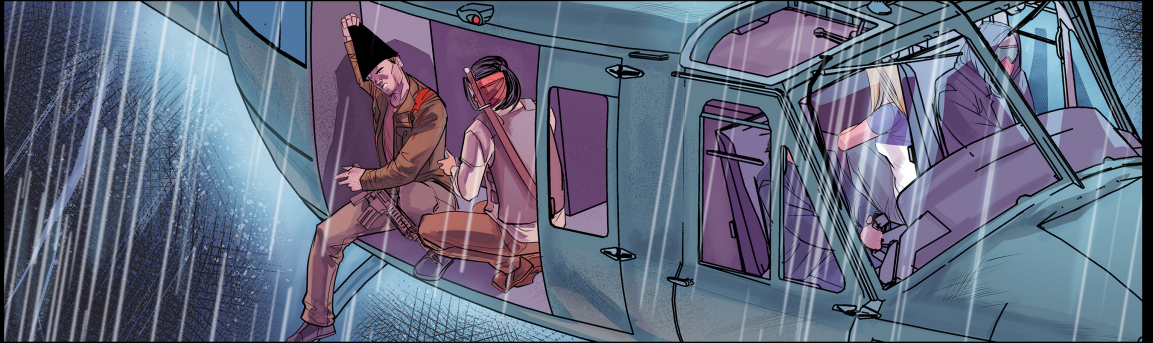
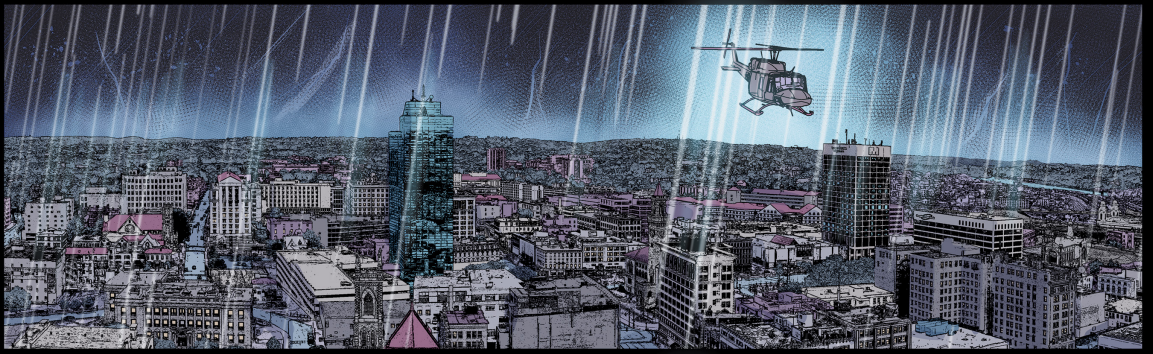
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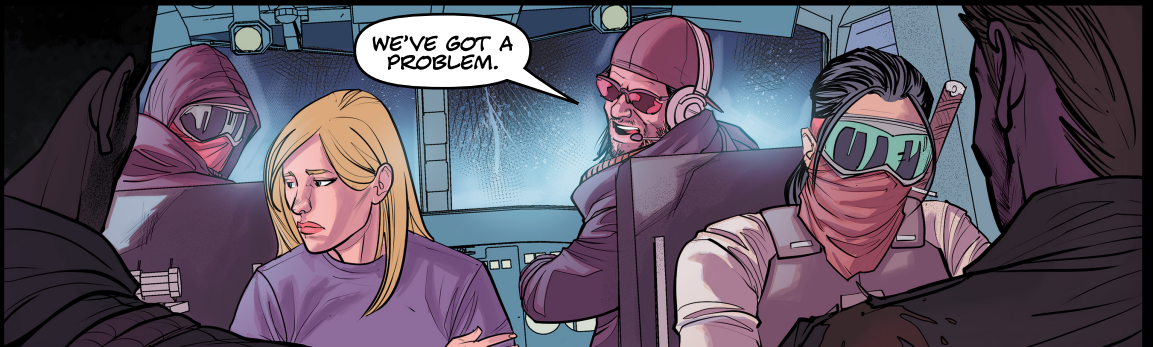
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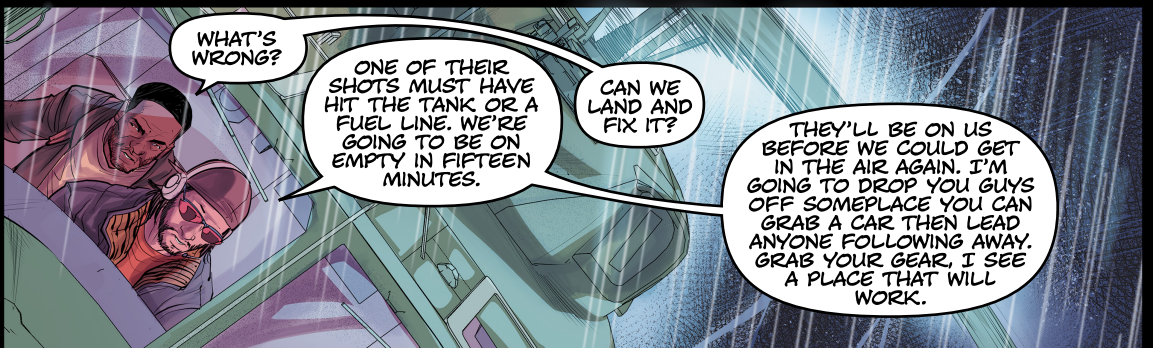


HOW BAD IS IT?

TOOK A CHUNK OUT OF YOUR SHOULDER, BUT YOU'LL HEAL. IT'S GONNA LEAVE A SCAR.



WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.



WHAT'S WRONG?

ONE OF THEIR SHOTS MUST HAVE HIT THE TANK OR A FUEL LINE. WE'RE GOING TO BE ON EMPTY IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

CAN WE LAND AND FIX IT?

THEY'LL BE ON US BEFORE WE COULD GET IN THE AIR AGAIN. I'M GOING TO DROP YOU GUYS OFF SOMEPLACE YOU CAN GRAB A CAR THEN LEAD ANYONE FOLLOWING AWAY. GRAB YOUR GEAR, I SEE A PLACE THAT WILL WORK.



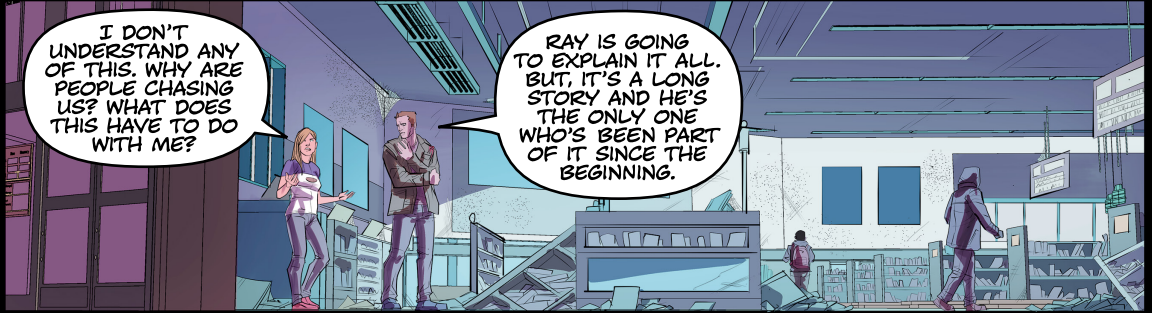
FIND US SOMETHING BIG WITH A FULL TANK IF YOU CAN!

NO PROBLEM!



LET'S GRAB SOME SUPPLIES FROM INSIDE. BUT MAKE IT QUICK. ON THE ROAD IN FIVE MINUTES.

I'LL GRAB SOME MORE BANDAGES FOR BEN'S SHOULDER.



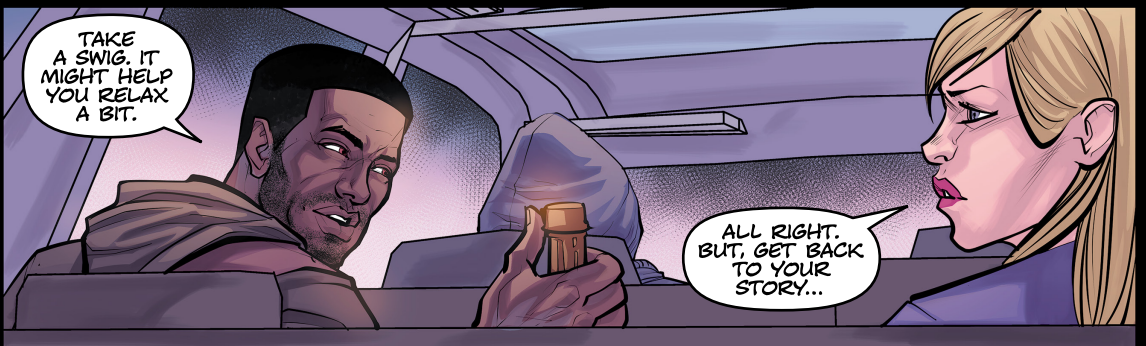
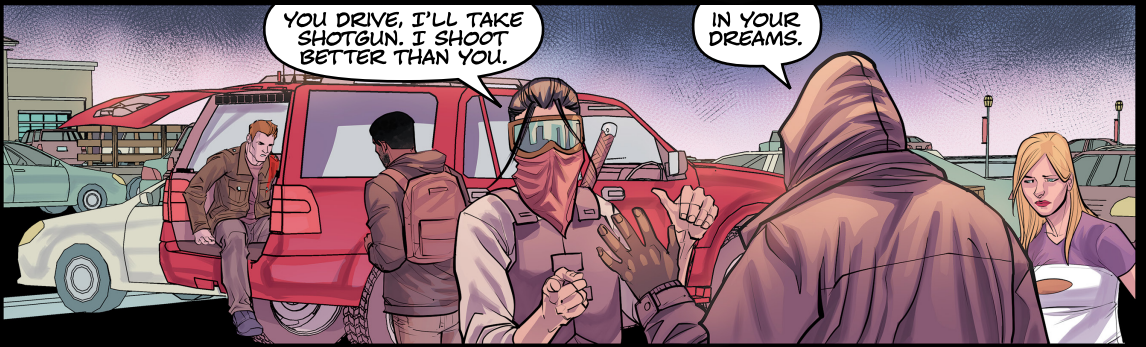
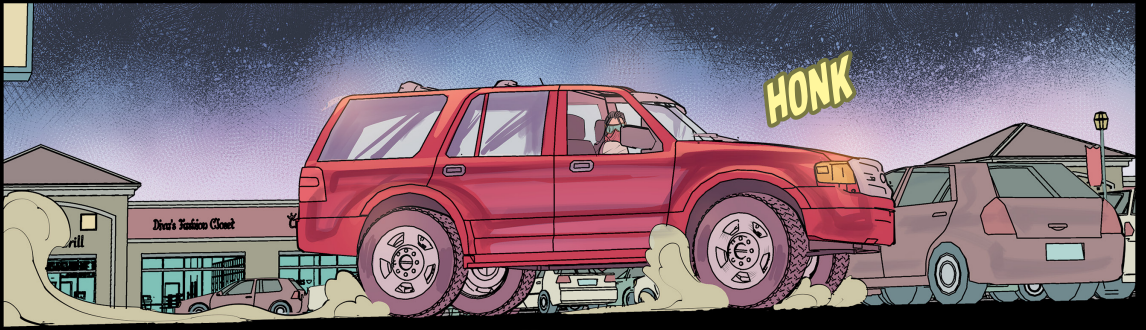
I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS. WHY ARE PEOPLE CHASING US? WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

RAY IS GOING TO EXPLAIN IT ALL. BUT, IT'S A LONG STORY AND HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'S BEEN PART OF IT SINCE THE BEGINNING.



I CAN NEVER FIND THE DAMN DATES ON THESE...

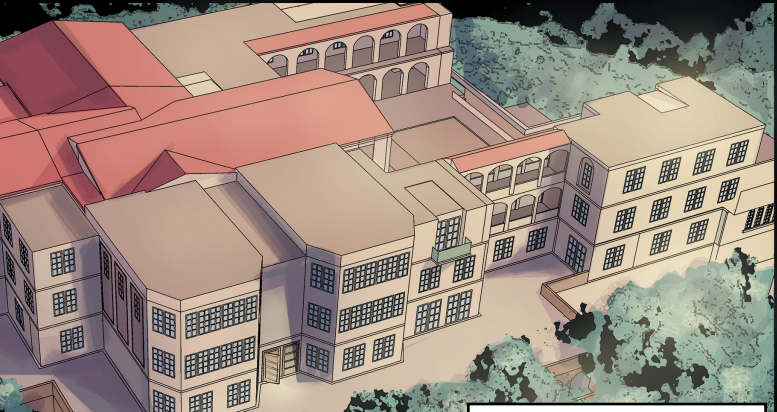
OKAY, STILL GOOD.





"AFTER SOME TIME HAD PASSED AND IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT PEOPLE WEREN'T JUST GOING TO SUDDENLY WAKE UP ON THEIR OWN, GAVIN SUGGESTED WE MOVE OUT OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA."

"GAVIN SUGGESTED THE CITY OF SAN MARINO. HE SAID IT HAD BIG LOTS, SO WE COULD START GROWING OUR OWN FOOD, BUT WAS CLOSE ENOUGH TO DOWNTOWN IN CASE WE NEEDED ANYTHING."



"WE SELECTIVELY CHOSE WHO TO WAKE BASED ON THE NEEDS OF OUR GROWING COMMUNITY. PEOPLE WHO COULD FARM, COULD RUN THE ELECTRICAL GRID, WATER SYSTEMS."

"IT BECAME QUITE A SYSTEM. WHEN WE DISCOVERED A NEED, WE WOULD FIND A FEW LIKELY CANDIDATES, LOOK THEM UP THE BEST WE COULD AND CHOOSE THE ONE MOST LIKELY TO JOIN WITH THE OTHERS WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT OF PROBLEMS."

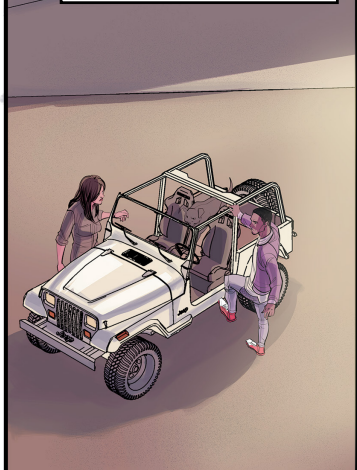
"I PICKED OUT A PLACE I THOUGHT MOMMA WOULD LIKE, THEN HAD HER BROUGHT OVER. I STILL HADN'T WOKEN HER. THERE WERE JUST TOO MANY UNKNOWNNS FOR ME TO RISK IT."

"LISA AND MARIA MOVED IN WITH ME. SAID THEY DIDN'T WANT TO LIVE ON THEIR OWN. THEY EACH HAD THEIR OWN ROOMS. WHICH STILL LEFT SIX EMPTY AFTER WE PUT MOMMA IN ONE AND I TOOK THE OTHER. LUCY HAD THE RUN OF THE PLACE AS USUAL."



"I WASN'T SURE WHICH I WAS LESS COMFORTABLE WITH, KNOWING THAT I WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD BRING PEOPLE BACK TO LIFE,"

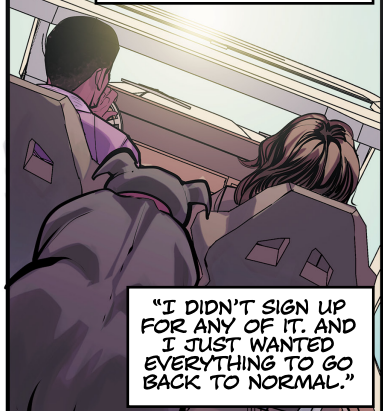
"OR THAT LISA, DAISY, GAVIN, NIZAM AND I HAD THE FINAL SAY ON EVERY DECISION. WE WERE, FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, THE DEFACTO GOVERNMENT."



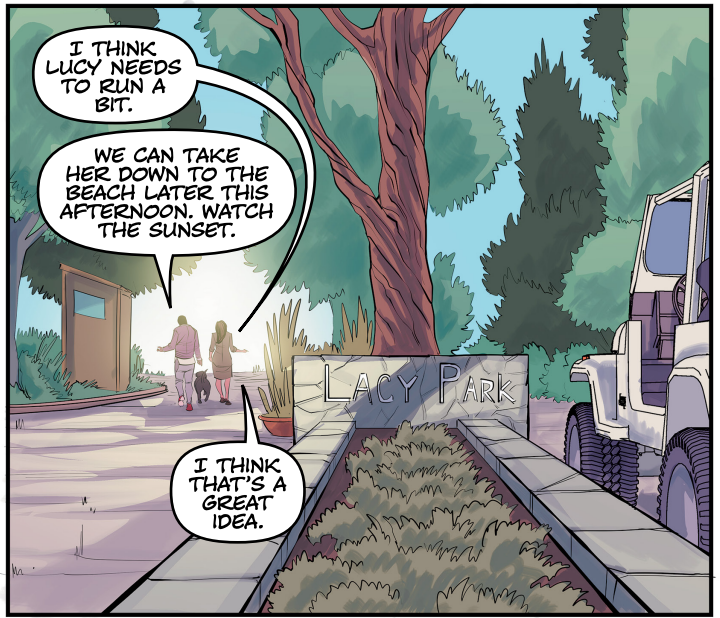
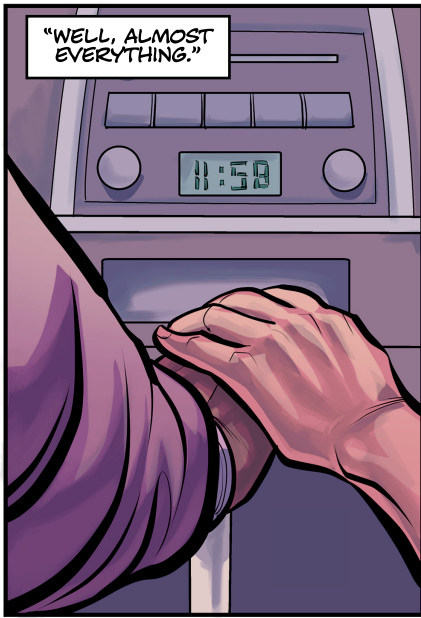
"GAVIN SEEMED TO RELISH IN HIS NEW POWER. NIZAM LOOKED AT THE COMMUNITY AS A PATIENT AND TRIED TO DO WHAT WAS BEST FOR THE PATIENT'S HEALTH."

"LISA WOULD FIND OUT AS MUCH AS SHE COULD ABOUT THINGS BEFORE MAKING A DECISION. DAISY DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE, JUST WENT ALONG WITH THE MAJORITY MOST OF THE TIME."

"I HATED IT. I WAS AFRAID OF MAKING THE WRONG CHOICE AND WHO IT MIGHT HURT."



"I DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR ANY OF IT. AND I JUST WANTED EVERYTHING TO GO BACK TO NORMAL."

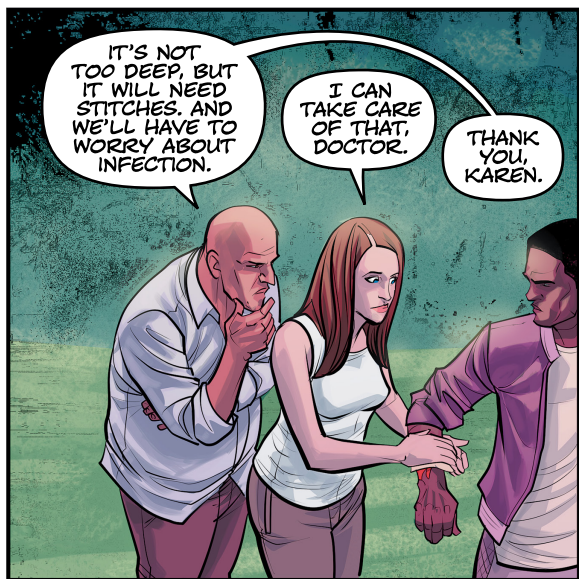








WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?



IT'S NOT TOO DEEP, BUT IT WILL NEED STITCHES. AND WE'LL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT INFECTION.

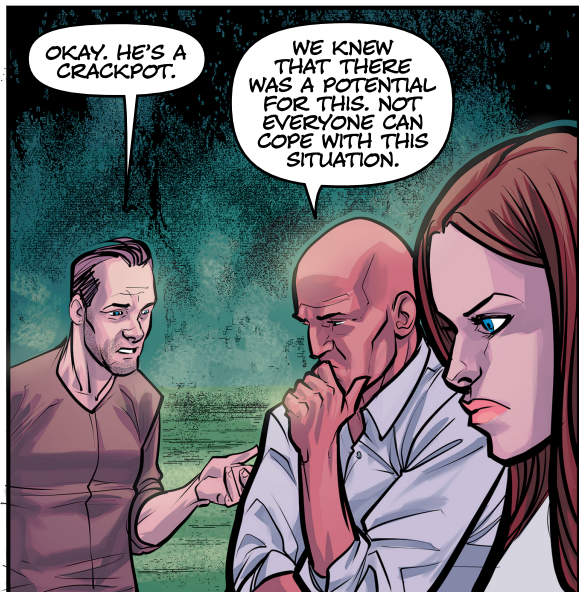
I CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT, DOCTOR.

THANK YOU, KAREN.



WHY DID YOU ATTACK RAY?

HE IS THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS! HIS DEATH WILL UNDO THE WORK OF SATAN!



OKAY. HE'S A CRACKPOT.

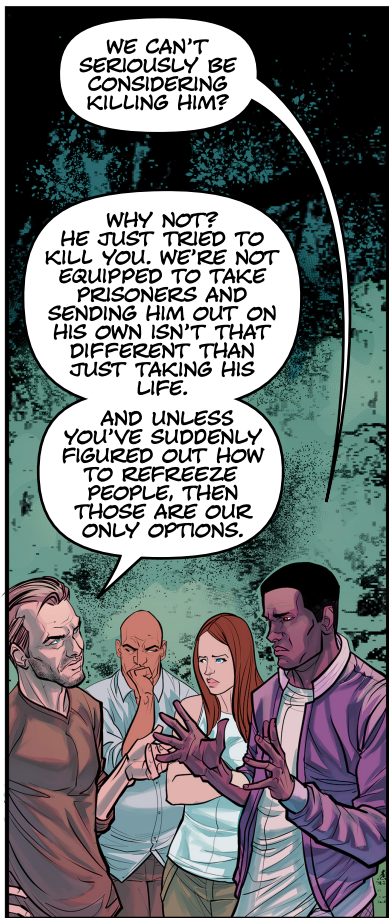
WE KNEW THAT THERE WAS A POTENTIAL FOR THIS. NOT EVERYONE CAN COPE WITH THIS SITUATION.



THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE ARE ONLY THREE VIABLE OPTIONS.

WE CAN INCARCERATE HIM, BANISH HIM...

OR EXECUTE HIM.



WE CAN'T SERIOUSLY BE CONSIDERING KILLING HIM?

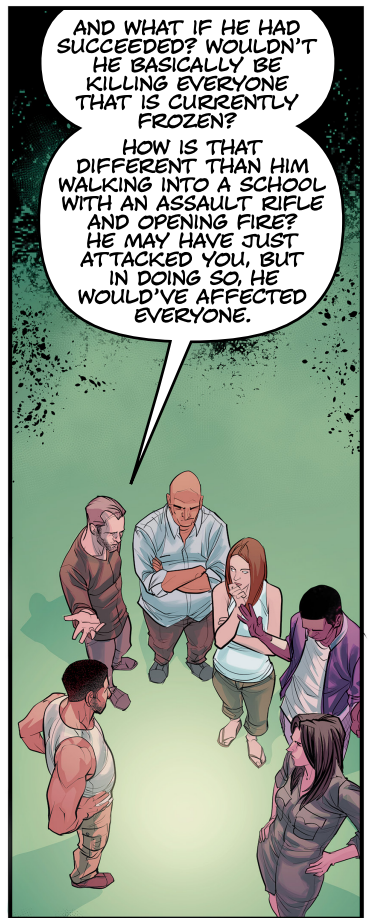
WHY NOT? HE JUST TRIED TO KILL YOU. WE'RE NOT EQUIPPED TO TAKE PRISONERS AND SENDING HIM OUT ON HIS OWN ISN'T THAT DIFFERENT THAN JUST TAKING HIS LIFE.

AND UNLESS YOU'VE SUDDENLY FIGURED OUT HOW TO REFREEZE PEOPLE, THEN THOSE ARE OUR ONLY OPTIONS.



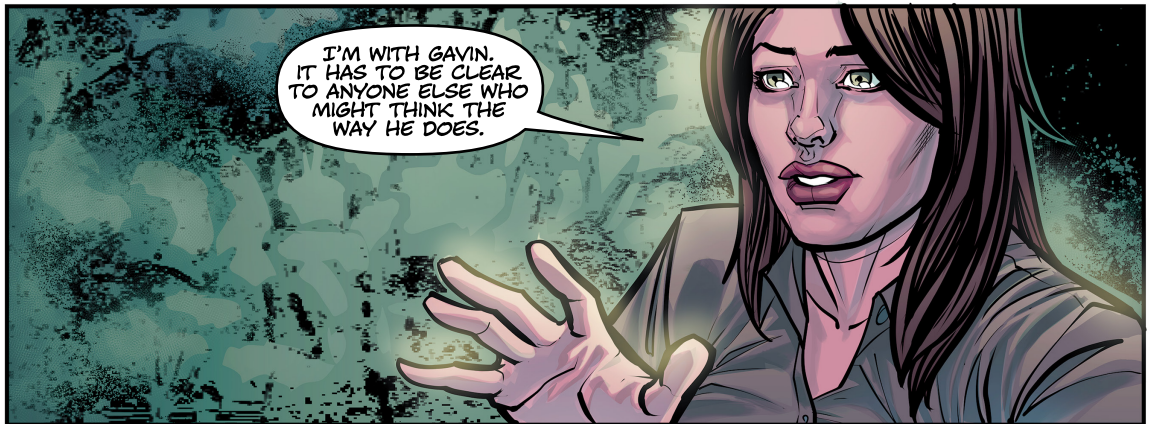
HE JUST ACCUSED ME OF PLAYING GOD. AND ISN'T THAT EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE DOING? WE ALREADY CHOOSE WHO I UNFREEZE. DECIDING WHO GETS TO CONTINUE THEIR LIFE BASED ON HOW THEY MIGHT HELP THE COMMUNITY.

I'LL BE DAMNED IF WE'RE GOING TO START CHOOSING WHO DIES.



AND WHAT IF HE HAD SUCCEEDED? WOULDN'T HE BASICALLY BE KILLING EVERYONE THAT IS CURRENTLY FROZEN?

HOW IS THAT DIFFERENT THAN HIM WALKING INTO A SCHOOL WITH AN ASSAULT RIFLE AND OPENING FIRE? HE MAY HAVE JUST ATTACKED YOU, BUT IN DOING SO, HE WOULD'VE AFFECTED EVERYONE.



I'M WITH GAVIN. IT HAS TO BE CLEAR TO ANYONE ELSE WHO MIGHT THINK THE WAY HE DOES.



I CAN'T ABIDE THE THOUGHT OF TAKING A LIFE. SEND HIM AWAY, LET HIM FEND FOR HIMSELF.

AS YOU KNOW, DAISY HAS GIVEN ME HER PROXY. I DOUBT THAT HE UNDERSTOOD EXACTLY WHAT HE WAS DOING. BANISHMENT MAKES THE MOST SENSE.

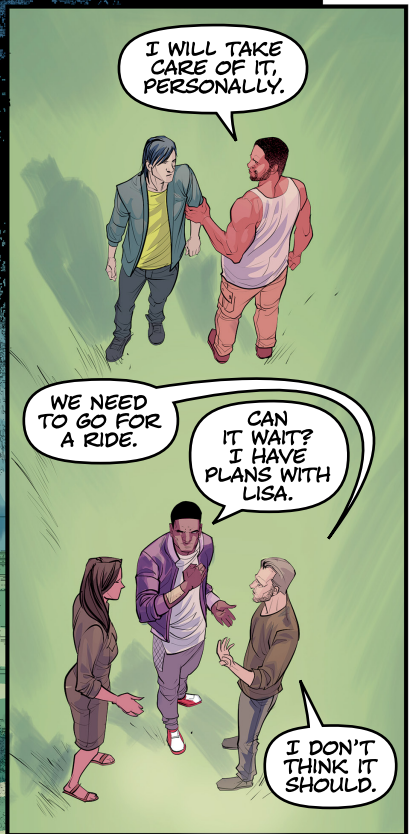


THAT'S TWO FOR BANISHMENT AND TWO FOR KILLING. IT'S UP TO YOU, RAY.



THE WORLD MAY HAVE CHANGED, BUT I WON'T LET IT TURN ME INTO A KILLER.

BANISH HIM.



I WILL TAKE CARE OF IT, PERSONALLY.

WE NEED TO GO FOR A RIDE.

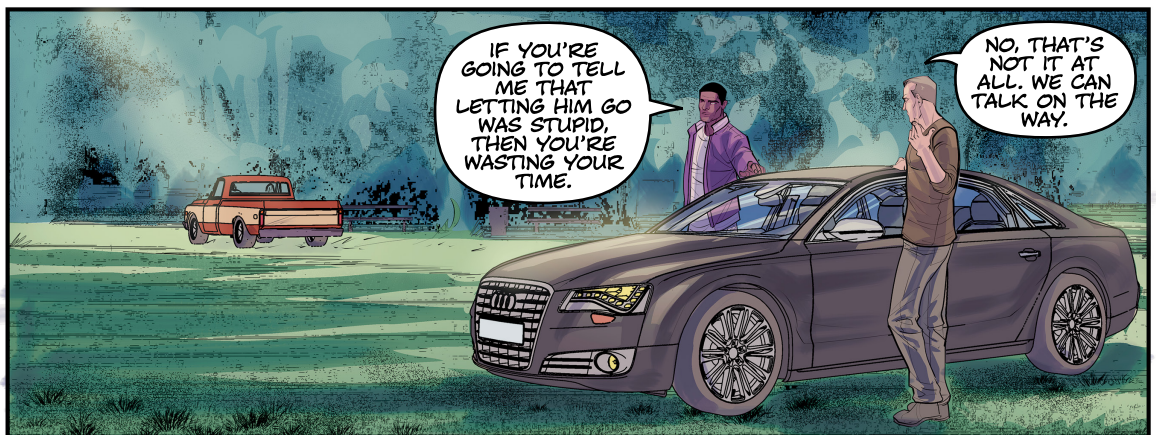
CAN IT WAIT? I HAVE PLANS WITH LISA.

I DON'T THINK IT SHOULD.



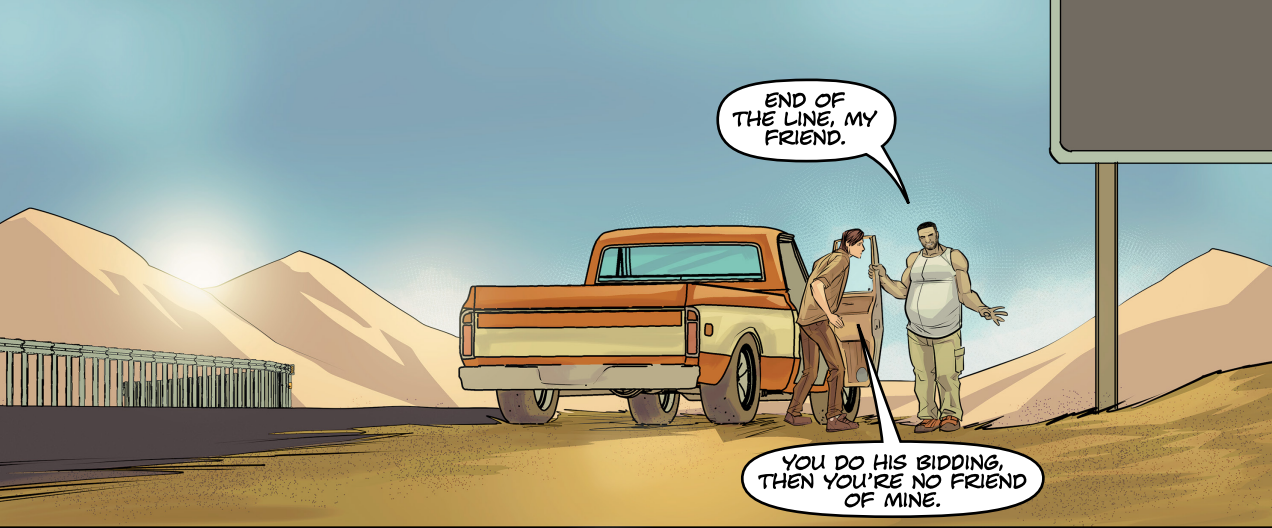
IT'S ALL RIGHT. WE'LL DO IT TOMORROW. MARIA WANTED ME TO GO WITH HER TO CHECK ON PATRICK ANYWAY. I CAN PICK UP SOME SUPPLIES WHILE I'M OUT.

ALL RIGHT. TAKE LUCY WITH YOU, PLEASE.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME THAT LETTING HIM GO WAS STUPID THEN YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME.

NO, THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. WE CAN TALK ON THE WAY.



END OF THE LINE, MY FRIEND.

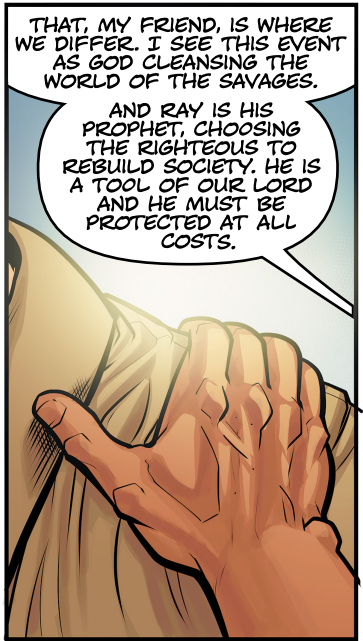
YOU DO HIS BIDDING, THEN YOU'RE NO FRIEND OF MINE.



I APPRECIATE YOUR FAITH. I TOO FOLLOW THE PATH OF THE LORD.



THEN YOU MUST SEE THE ABOMINATION AS I DO. THAT HE HAS BROUGHT A PLAGUE TO THIS WORLD AND ONLY HIS DEATH CAN END IT.



THAT, MY FRIEND, IS WHERE WE DIFFER. I SEE THIS EVENT AS GOD CLEANSING THE WORLD OF THE SAVAGES. AND RAY IS HIS PROPHET, CHOOSING THE RIGHTEOUS TO REBUILD SOCIETY. HE IS A TOOL OF OUR LORD AND HE MUST BE PROTECTED AT ALL COSTS.



YOU WERE NOT WORTHY TO SEE THE LIGHT.



SAINTS OF GOD, COME TO HIS AID. COME TO MEET HIM, ANGELS OF THE LORD. RECEIVE HIS SOUL AND PRESENT HIM TO GOD, THE MOST HIGH. MAY CHRIST, WHO CALLED YOU, TAKE YOU TO HIMSELF; MAY ANGELS LEAD YOU TO ABRAHAM'S SIDE.

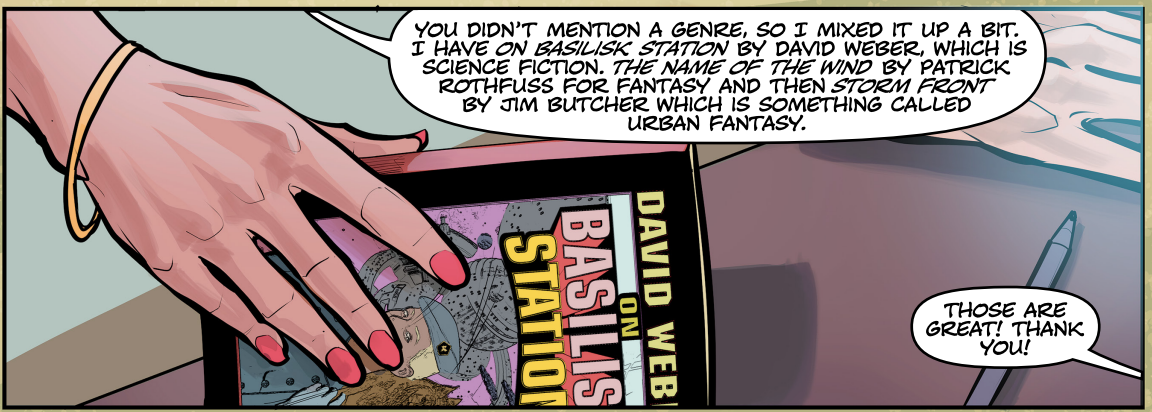
LAST TIME I WAS HERE, YOU SAID YOU LOVED TO READ, BUT DIDN'T HAVE ANY BOOKS.

I DO, AND I JUST CAN'T GET INTO READING ELECTRONICALLY. I NEED TO FEEL THE PAGES AGAINST MY FINGERS.



YOU DIDN'T MENTION A GENRE, SO I MIXED IT UP A BIT. I HAVE *ON BASILISK STATION* BY DAVID WEBER, WHICH IS SCIENCE FICTION. *THE NAME OF THE WIND* BY PATRICK ROTHFUSS FOR FANTASY AND THEN *STORM FRONT* BY JIM BUTCHER WHICH IS SOMETHING CALLED URBAN FANTASY.

THOSE ARE GREAT! THANK YOU!



AND I MADE YOU SOME CHICKEN FETTUCINE ALFREDO. IT'S ALMOST THE SAME RECIPE WE USED AT THE RESTAURANT I WORKED AT, BUT I TWEAKED THE SAUCE JUST A LITTLE.



THAT IS GOING TO BE SO MUCH BETTER THAN THE FROZEN PIZZAS I USUALLY EAT.



YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO STAY HERE ALL THE TIME. LET ME TALK TO RAY ABOUT FINDING SOMEONE ELSE TO WORK WITH YOU.





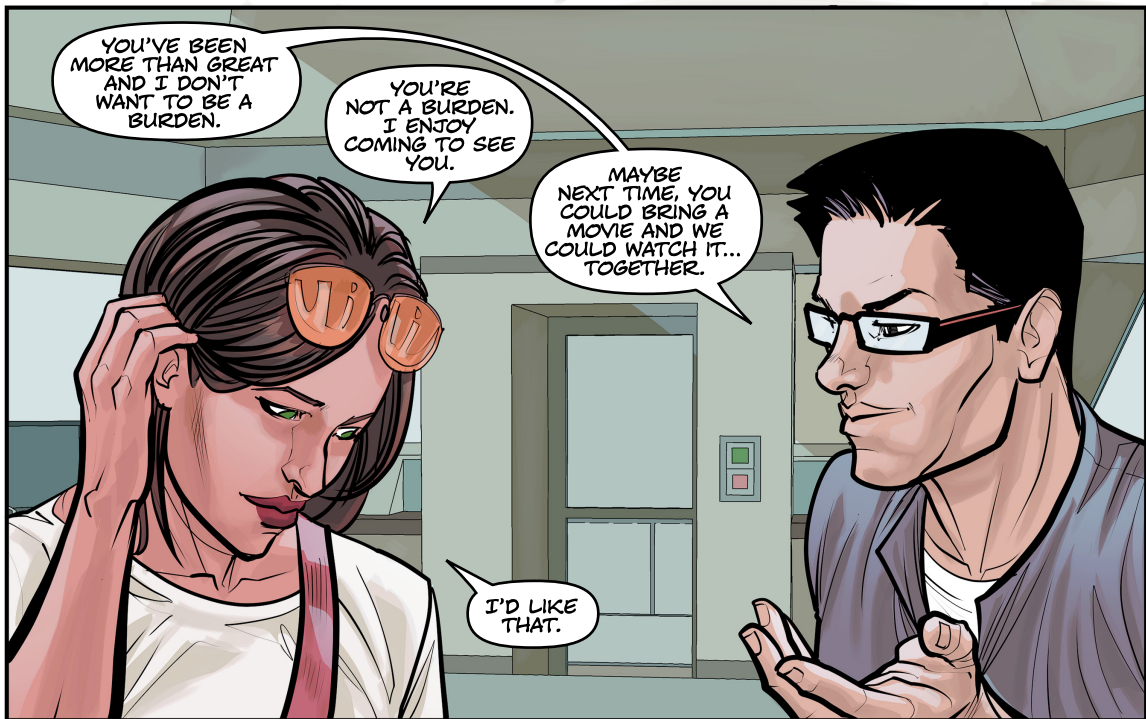
NO, IT'S FINE. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M WORKING HARD. I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME PLAYING VIDEO GAMES AND NOW READING THANKS TO MARIA.
SOMEONE JUST NEEDS TO BE HERE TO MONITOR THE BOARD AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS WHERE NEEDED.



PLUS, YOU COME AND VISIT ME. THIS IS ACTUALLY AN IMPROVEMENT OVER HOW MY LIFE USED TO BE.



IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED? I CAN SWING BY IN A COUPLE DAYS.



YOU'VE BEEN MORE THAN GREAT AND I DON'T WANT TO BE A BURDEN.

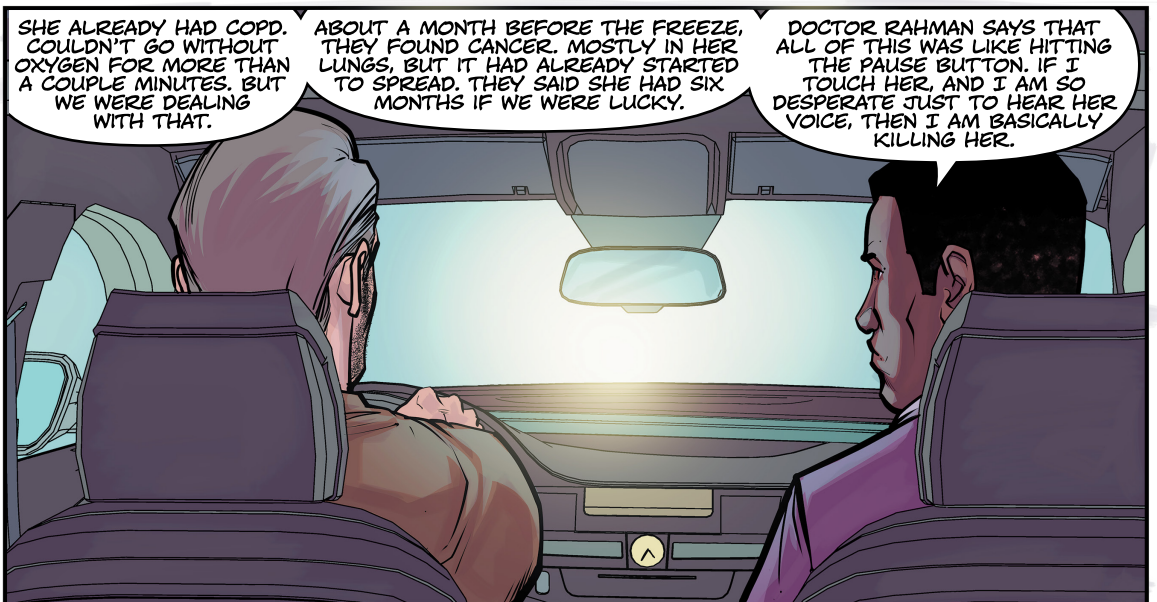
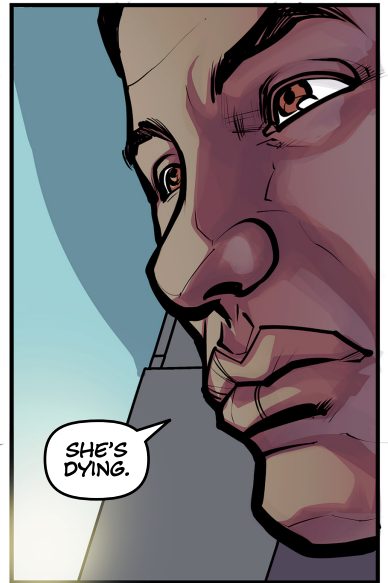
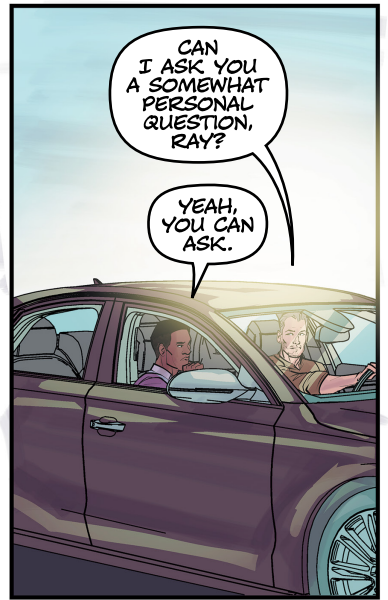
YOU'RE NOT A BURDEN. I ENJOY COMING TO SEE YOU.

MAYBE NEXT TIME, YOU COULD BRING A MOVIE AND WE COULD WATCH IT... TOGETHER.

I'D LIKE THAT.

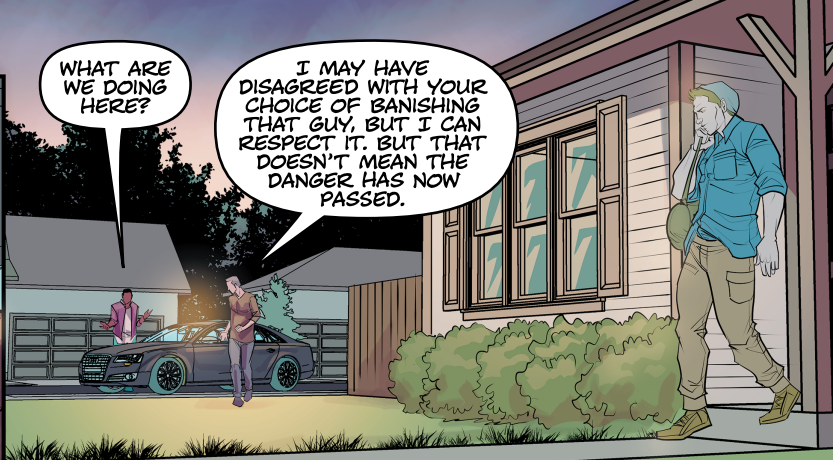


YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN NEXT TIME. I'M NOT GOING TO WATCH YOU TWO MAKE OUT.





I'M SO SORRY.



WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

I MAY HAVE DISAGREED WITH YOUR CHOICE OF BANISHING THAT GUY, BUT I CAN RESPECT IT. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE DANGER HAS NOW PASSED.



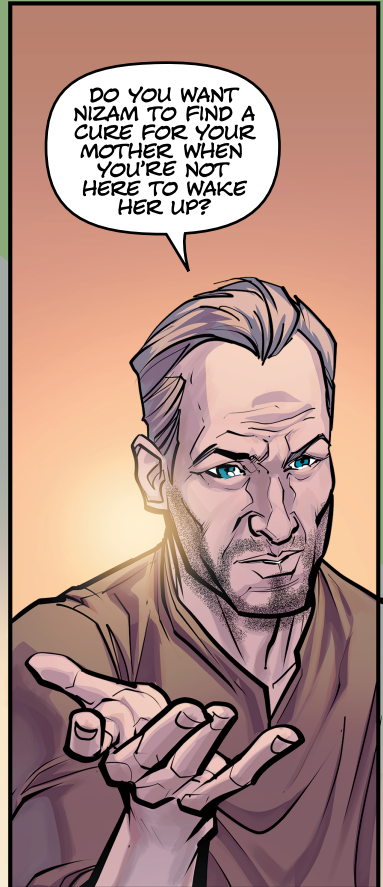
THAT WHACK-JOB MIGHT COME BACK OR SOMEONE ELSE MIGHT GET THE IDEA TO HURT YOU. YOU NEED TO BE PROTECTED.

AND BEN HERE IS THE ONLY PERSON I WOULD TRUST TO DO THAT.

YOU WANT ME TO HAVE A BODYGUARD? NOT A CHANCE.



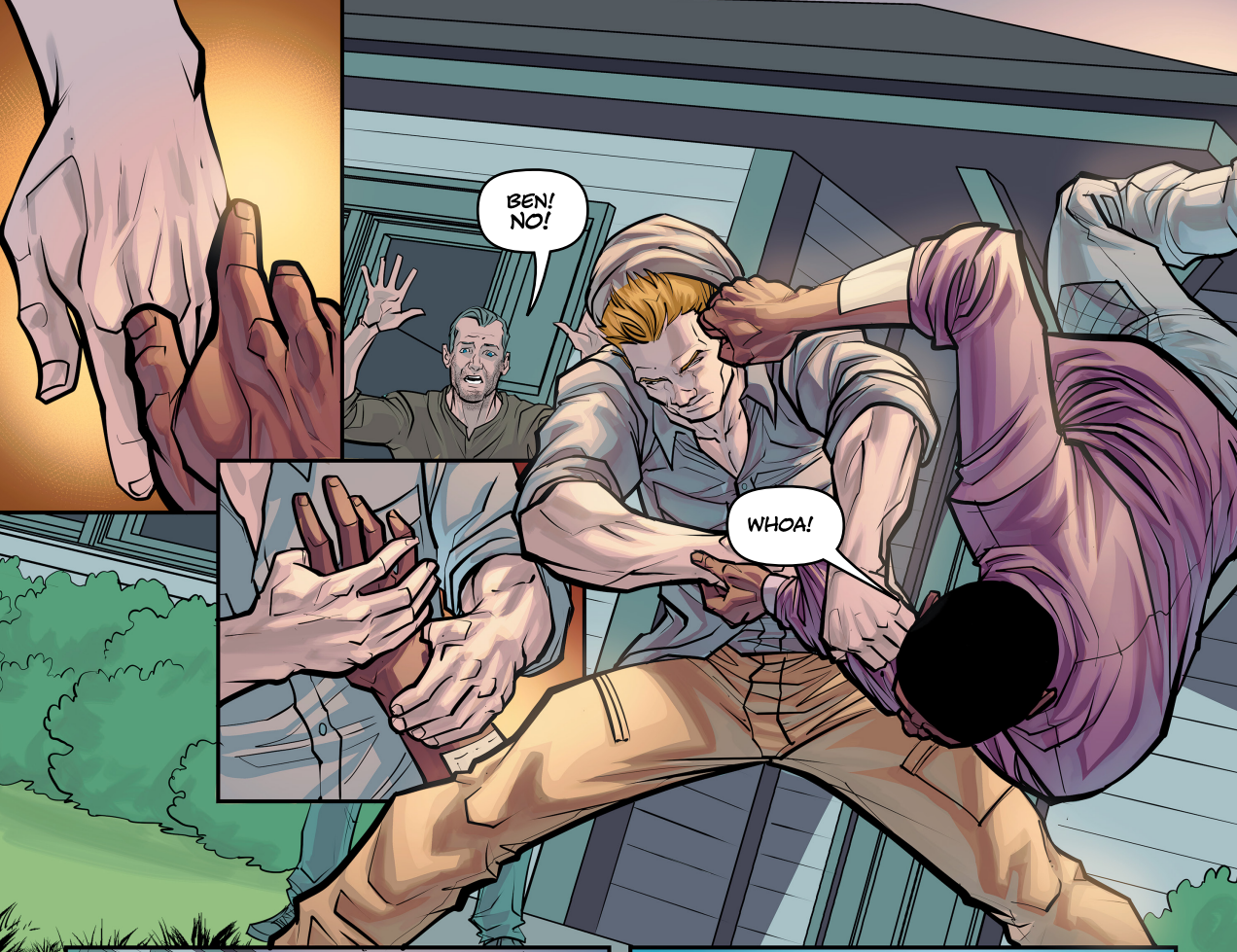
I KNOW ALL OF THIS HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING AND EVERY DAY IT SEEMS TO GET WORSE. BUT IT'S LIKE I SAID AT THE PARK, IF YOU DIE, THEN EVERYONE WHO'S FROZEN DIES TOO.



DO YOU WANT NIZAM TO FIND A CURE FOR YOUR MOTHER WHEN YOU'RE NOT HERE TO WAKE HER UP?



YOU CAN BE A REAL SON OF A BITCH, CAN'T YOU?



BEN!
NO!

WHOA!

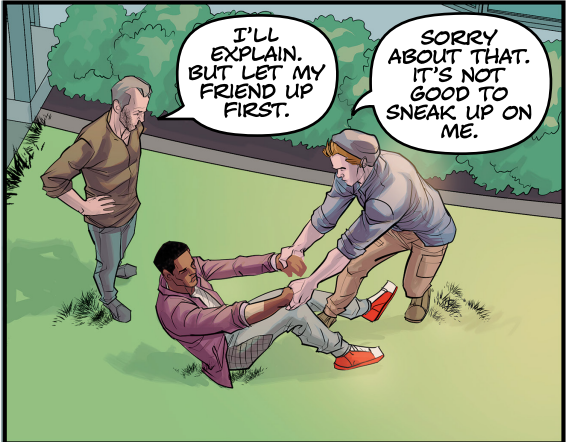


WHO ARE YOU?

BEN!
STAND DOWN!

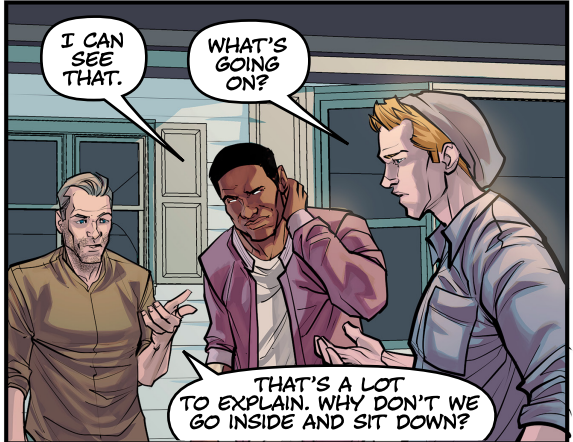


MR. ORDWAY?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



I'LL EXPLAIN. BUT LET MY FRIEND UP FIRST.

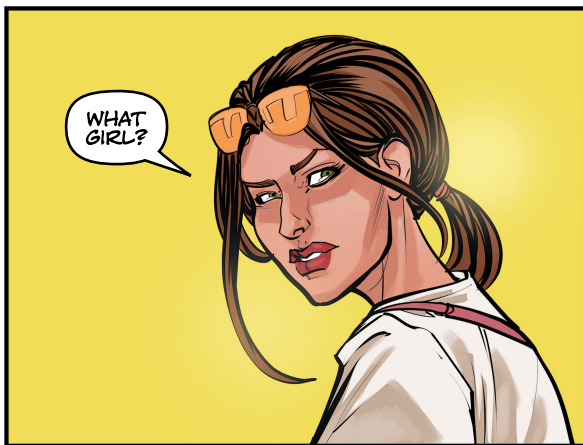
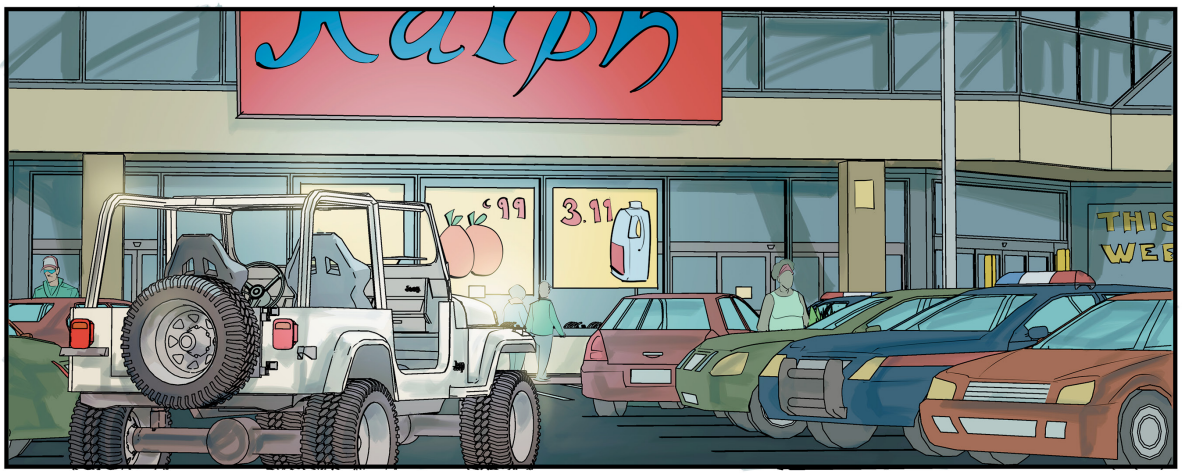
SORRY ABOUT THAT. IT'S NOT GOOD TO SNEAK UP ON ME.



I CAN SEE THAT.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

THAT'S A LOT TO EXPLAIN. WHY DON'T WE GO INSIDE AND SIT DOWN?





GRABBING THOSE STEAKS.



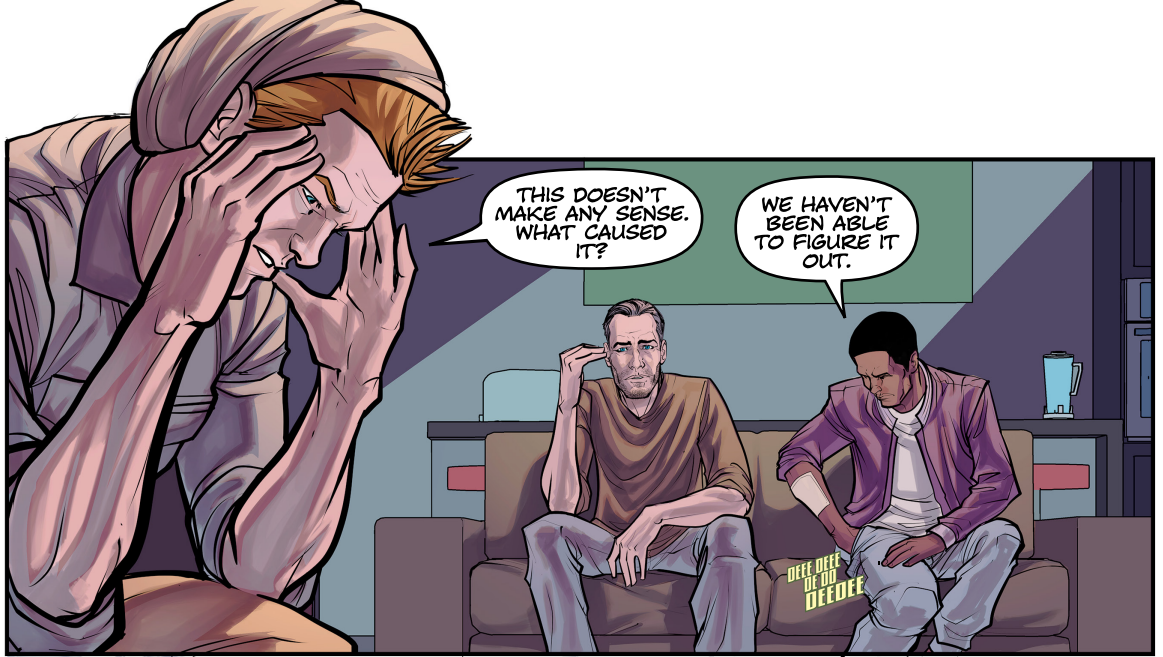
I'M NOT GOING TO FORGET ABOUT OUR LITTLE HERO.
HERE ARE SOME OF THOSE DENTAL TREATS. WE'LL GET THE TASTE OF THAT CRAZY GUY OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.



AAAAAIIIEEEEE!



MARIA!



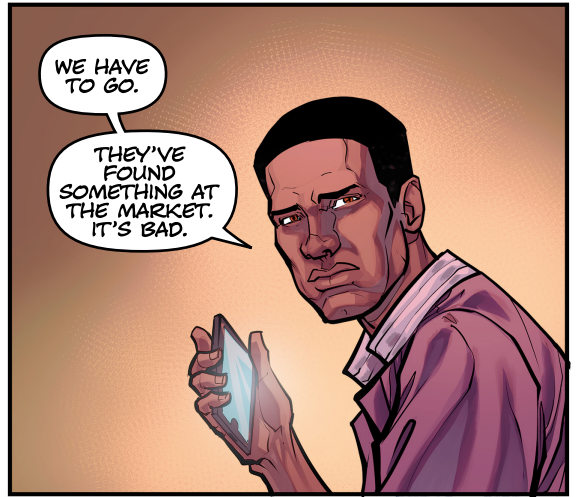
THIS DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. WHAT CAUSED IT?

WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE IT OUT.



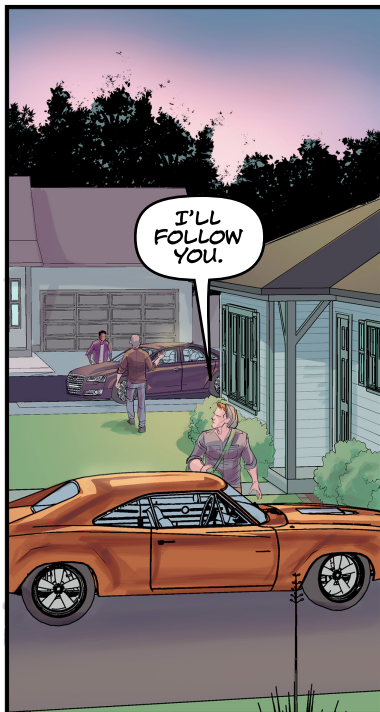
HEY, LISA. WE SHOULD BE...

WHAT?!

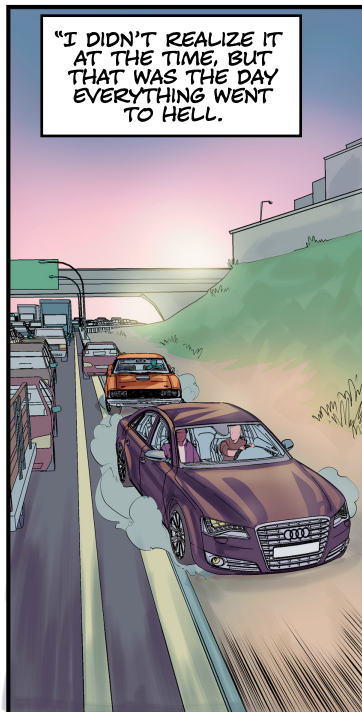


WE HAVE TO GO.

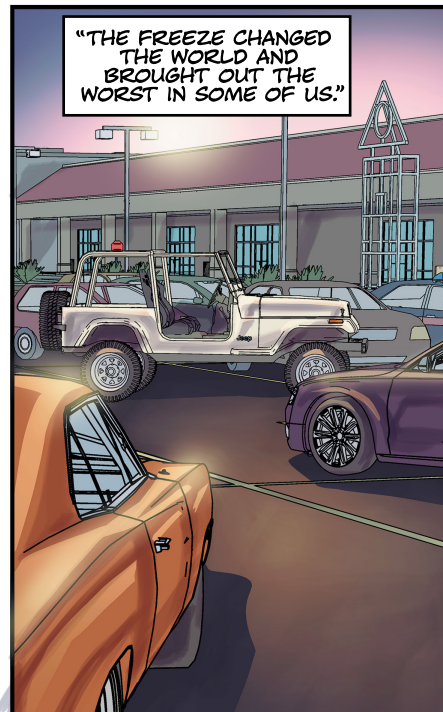
THEY'VE FOUND SOMETHING AT THE MARKET. IT'S BAD.



I'LL FOLLOW YOU.



"I DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THE TIME, BUT THAT WAS THE DAY EVERYTHING WENT TO HELL.



"THE FREEZE CHANGED THE WORLD AND BROUGHT OUT THE WORST IN SOME OF US."

"WE THOUGHT WE WERE DOING EVERYTHING INTELLIGENTLY. HANDPICKING EACH PERSON I AWOKE FOR WHAT THEY COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIETY. BUT THAT WAS A JOKE."

"YOU CAN'T REALLY TELL WHAT SOMEONE IS LIKE BY THEIR WORK HISTORY OR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS. THAT'S THE MASK PEOPLE WANT YOU TO SEE."

"YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER AND THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAD BEEN DOING. LOOKING AT THE SURFACE FACADE AND FORGETTING THAT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT ANYONE IS LIKE DEEP DOWN."

"MY FEAR WAS THAT BY AWAKENING SOMEONE I MIGHT CAUSE THEM TO DIE."

"BUT BY BEING SO CAUTIOUS, I ENDED UP DOING SOMETHING WORSE."

"I WOKE UP A KILLER."

NEXT ISSUE

THE

EDGE OF FREZZE

ISSUE THREE



P.C.V.

FREEZE FRAME

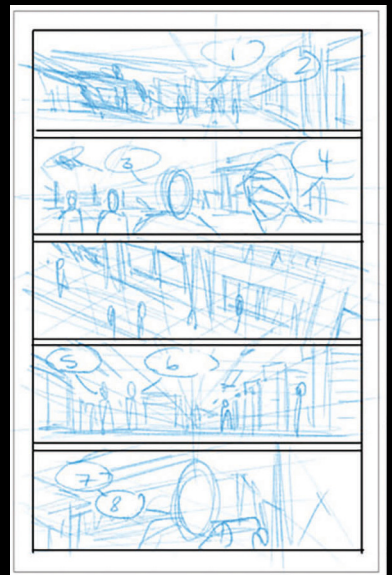
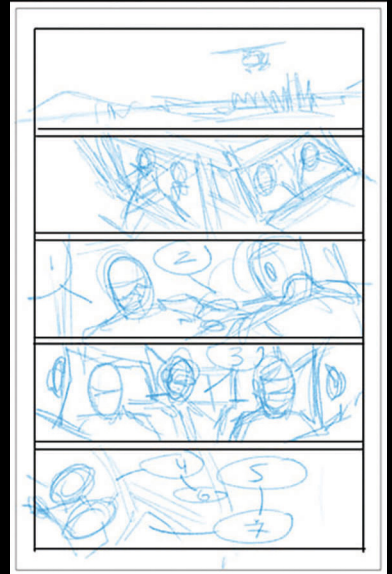
“Nature Abhors a Vacuum” –Aristotle

Turns out, so do writers. We need an audience and feedback on our work, both positive and negative. And while we get some of it from our editors and artists, the true test of a story comes when the book is finally in readers' hands. As I type up this article, I've already turned in the script for issue four and the first issue just hit the shelves five days ago. We're finally hearing what you guys think and we really appreciate all the kind words. Thank you to everyone who picked up the first issue and to all of you who got on social media or came and saw Phillip or I at our signings and let us know what you thought. It means the world to us.

Also, welcome back to issue two. After the first issue, I could've gone a lot of different directions or spent time with Ray, Lisa and the crew dealing with putting out fires, deciding on how their new society would work and waking each person, but I felt moving ahead to the next big event would be the best move. The story here is as much about Ray as it is The Freeze. The Ray we see in the opening pages is very different from the one who innocently went to work before the event happened. We are going to see how he changes and just where he ends up when all is said and done.

It all comes down to power and how it affects people. Some crave it, others accept it while a few avoid it like a plague. But that is just part of it. How do these same people react when power is taken away? We see it around us every day. Horrible things are done in an effort to obtain power and even worse things are done in order to retain it. People become obsessed with it. They become addicted to it and it can take over their lives. Makes those that avoid it seem like the wise ones sometimes.

And the worst part is, someone must claim the power. We're back to the thing about nature abhorring a vacuum and in this case a power vacuum will cause huge problems in a society. Until someone takes charge there will be chaos. Where it seems that Gavin is being a bit power hungry and setting himself up in a position of leadership, he also knows the importance of having leaders in a society. Even in the most primitive cultures, tribes were formed, and leaders arose. Rules began to be made whether through edict or religion. Humans create societies, it's what we do.

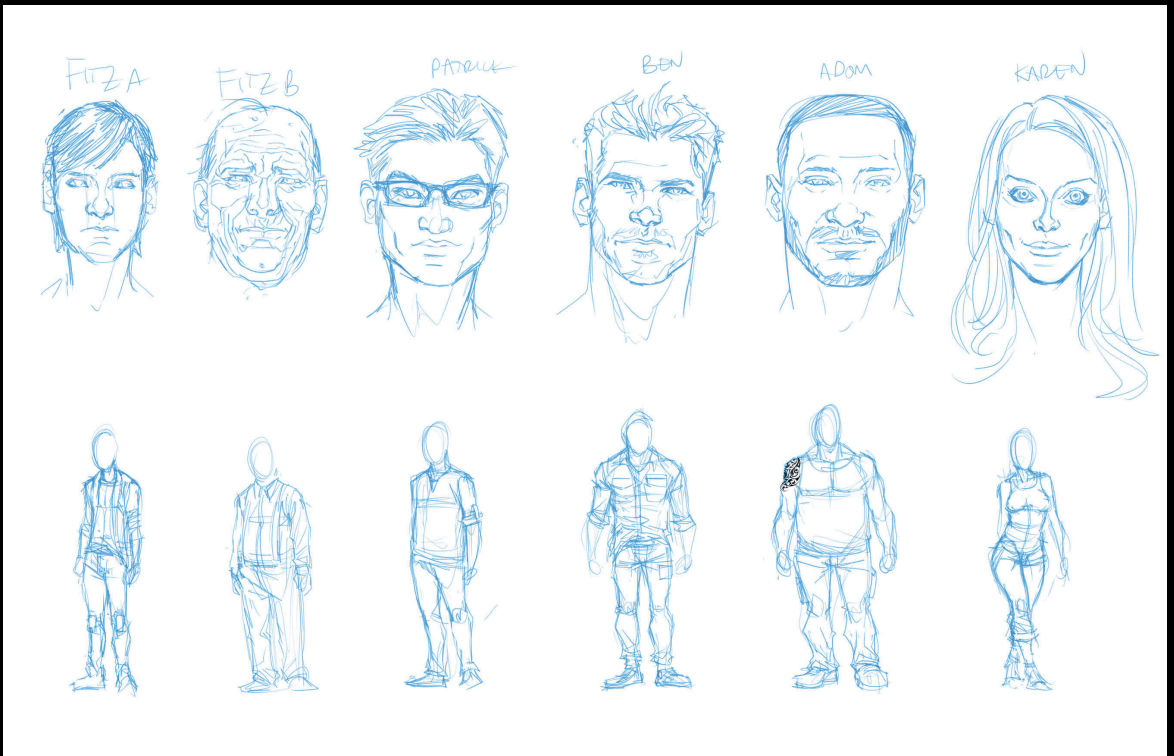


This episode picks up with the new society underway and groups forming within that society. People meeting up based on similar interests and beliefs like we do now. People are creatures of habit and they take comfort in those habits when everything else around them goes crazy. That's why we pick up with the group focused on rebuilding society and not as focused on the cause as you might expect. They focus first on getting control of the situation.

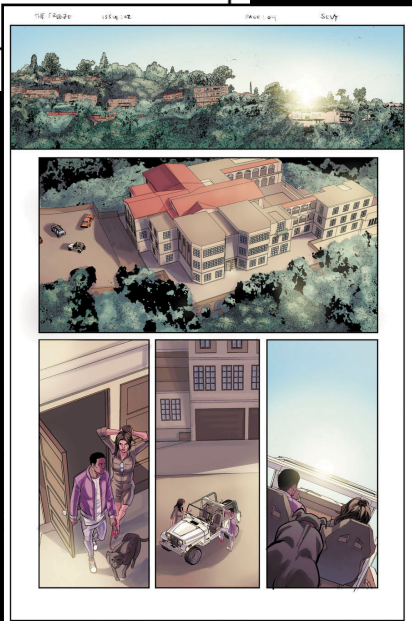
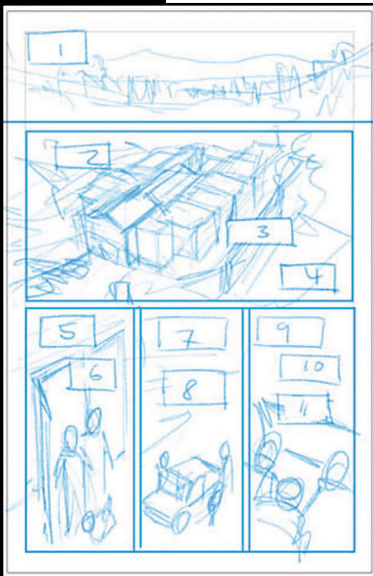
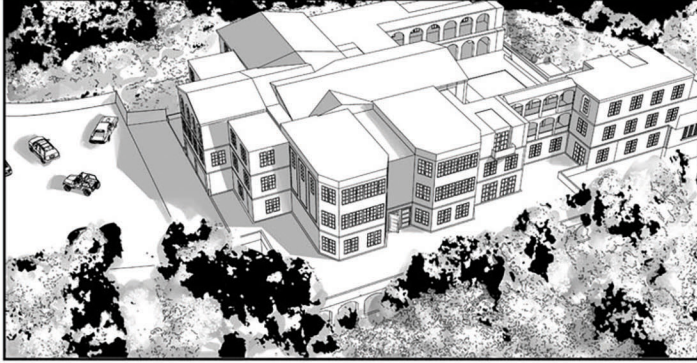
Unless you're the type that reads the backmatter in a comic first, then you know that their attempt at getting some sense of normalcy goes out the window when Lisa and Maria go to the grocery store. This is where things start getting twisted... and fun.

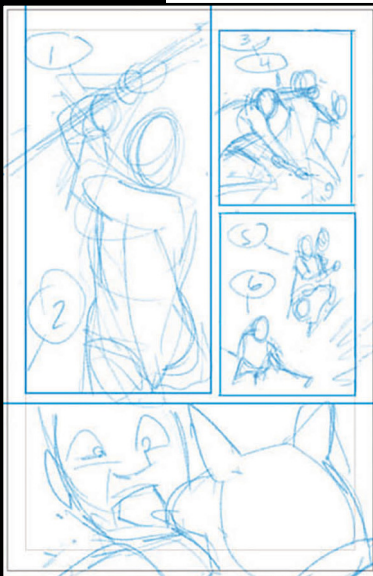
And while you wait for issue #3, ask yourself what your priorities would be if you were in this situation. Would you try to undo what happened and revive everyone, or would you focus on getting control of your situation first? Would you want to be in charge? What would you do if someone else tried to take charge?

—Dan Wickline







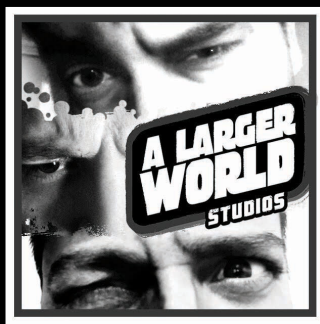




DAN WICKLINE has written for Image Comics, IDW Publishing, Humanoids Publishing, Zenescope Entertainment, Avatar Press, Top Cow and Dynamite Entertainment. He's also scripted for *The Metal Hurlant Chronicles* television series and has penned three novels featuring his character Lucius Fogg—*Deadly Creatures*, *Malicious Intent*, and *Educated Corpses*. He is currently finishing his next novel, *Blythe: the Trailer Park Knight Rises*.



PHILLIP SEVY loves comics. Always has. Always will. He drew his first one at age 4. Over 25 years later, he was a runner-up in the Top Cow Talent Hunt 2013 and his career began. He graduated with an MFA in Sequential Art from SCAD and has worked for Top Cow, Black Mask, Valiant, Zenescope, Action Lab, and most notably on a long run of *Tomb Raider* for Dark Horse. In between drawing projects, he self-published *Paradox* and wrote *The House* (with artist Drew Zucker). Phillip lives in Utah with his wife (just one) and kids (only two). You can keep up with his work at phillipsevy.com.



TROY PETERI, Dave Lanphear and Joshua Cozine are collectively known as A Larger World Studios. They've lettered everything from *The Avengers*, *Iron Man*, *Wolverine*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, and *X-Men* to more recent titles such as *WITCHBLADE*, *CYBERFORCE*, and *Batman/Wonder Woman: The Brave & The Bold*. They can be reached at studio@alargerworld.com for your lettering and design needs. (Hooray, commerce!)

Writer **CAITLIN KITTREDGE** (*THROWAWAYS*, *Coffin Hill*) and artist **ROBERTA INGRANATA** introduce an all new

WITCHBLADE

"I dug the hell out of this first issue and am excited to see where this series goes. I guess I'm a WITCHBLADE fan now."

—**NERDIST**

"They have captured and injected a world of emotion into these pages, bringing this property out of the 90s and into the modern times."

—**COMICOSITY**

"Sharp, powerful and cutting urban fantasy."

—**MONKEYS FIGHTING ROBOTS**

"There's enough of the original mythos present that longtime readers can find their way around, but this new beginning is also accessible... this is exactly what the series needed to move forward."

—**COMICON.COM**

"Buy! Does an excellent job creating a story that is intriguing and allows readers to ease into the legend of the Witchblade... the future is bright for the franchise."

—**ROGUES PORTAL**

"Every panel has a sense of urgency to its composition and the splash of bright colors is restrained until a bloody explosion is shown with a vibrancy for emphasis. It's a very post-*Jessica Jones* comic, but the juxtaposition of the trauma-centric themes with the urban fantasy setting make this a comic with a lot of potential."

—**NEWSARAMA**

"Ingranata and Valenza's art is stellar. They've set this story in a very realistic New York City, that's also the setting of a horror movie. The deep shadows, the strange angles, all contribute to a story that's more ghost story than the supernatural superhero of the previous volume of WITCHBLADE."

—**COMICBUZZ**

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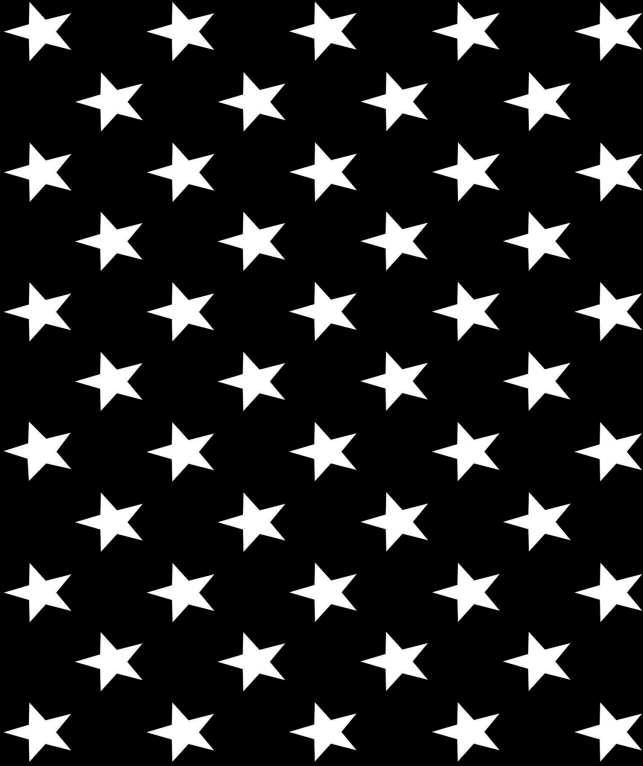


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BARE THEIR TEETH AT A BROKEN SYSTEM.



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CYBER FORCE

AWAKENING
VOLUME ONE

MARC SILVESTRI
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BRYAN HILL
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