

THE

DAN WICKLINE

PHILLIP SEVY

EDGE PRIZE

ISSUE THREE



Image

TOP GUN
PRODUCTIONS

P.C.V.

THE FREEZE

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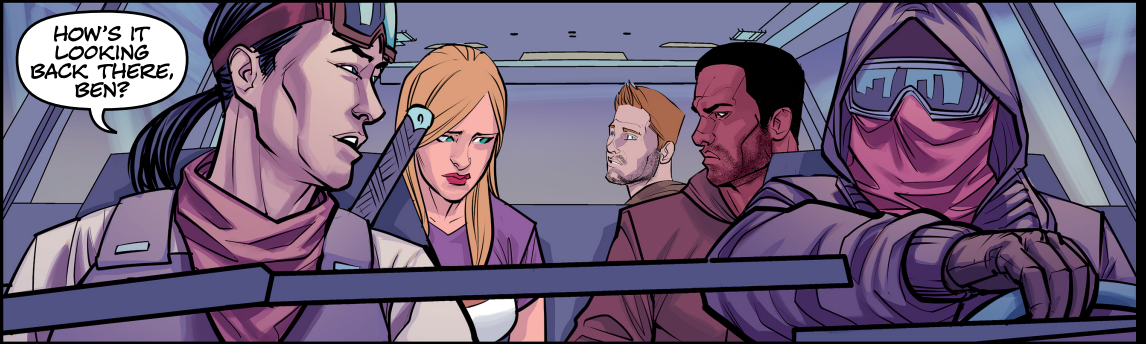
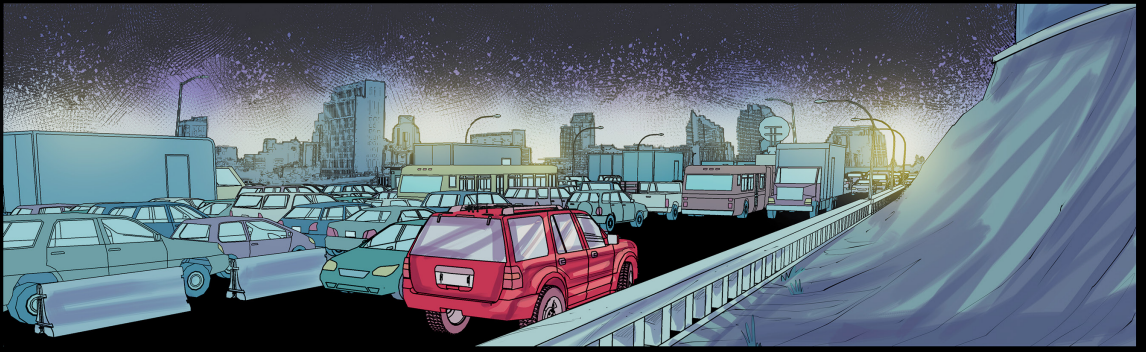
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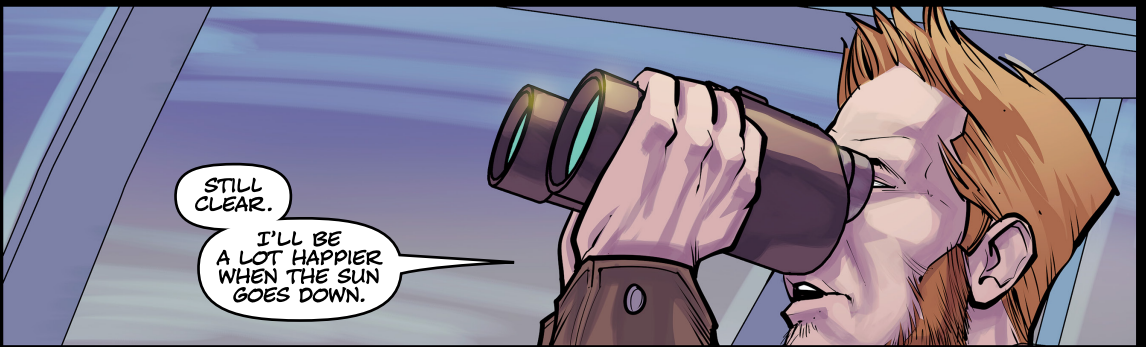
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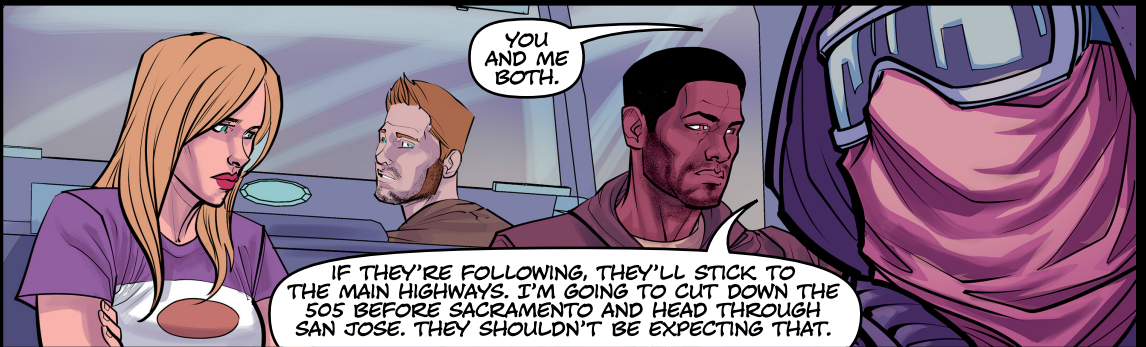


HOW'S IT LOOKING BACK THERE, BEN?



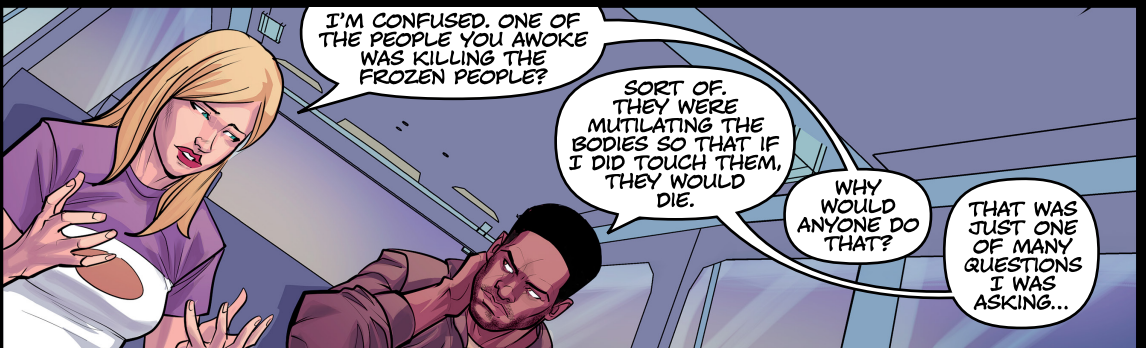
STILL CLEAR.

I'LL BE A LOT HAPPIER WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN.



YOU AND ME BOTH.

IF THEY'RE FOLLOWING, THEY'LL STICK TO THE MAIN HIGHWAYS. I'M GOING TO CUT DOWN THE 505 BEFORE SACRAMENTO AND HEAD THROUGH SAN JOSE. THEY SHOULDN'T BE EXPECTING THAT.



I'M CONFUSED. ONE OF THE PEOPLE YOU AWOKED WAS KILLING THE FROZEN PEOPLE?

SORT OF. THEY WERE MUTILATING THE BODIES SO THAT IF I DID TOUCH THEM, THEY WOULD DIE.

WHY WOULD ANYONE DO THAT?

THAT WAS JUST ONE OF MANY QUESTIONS I WAS ASKING...

GAVIN INSISTED WE GATHER EVERYONE TOGETHER, SO WE COULD LET THEM KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON. ALL ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN PEOPLE.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE UNTIL YOU THINK OF IT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SEVEN AND A HALF BILLION PEOPLE ON THE PLANET. WE WERE TRYING TO BE CAUTIOUS. JUST WAKE THE PEOPLE WE NEEDED UNTIL WE FIGURED OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON.

SOMEONE TO KEEP THE POWER GOING, KEEP THE CELL PHONES WORKING, START GROWING FOOD. I WASN'T SURE WHAT HALF OF THEM DID, I JUST WOKE THE PEOPLE GAVIN TOLD ME TO. HE HAD A PLAN ON HOW TO REBUILD SOCIETY.

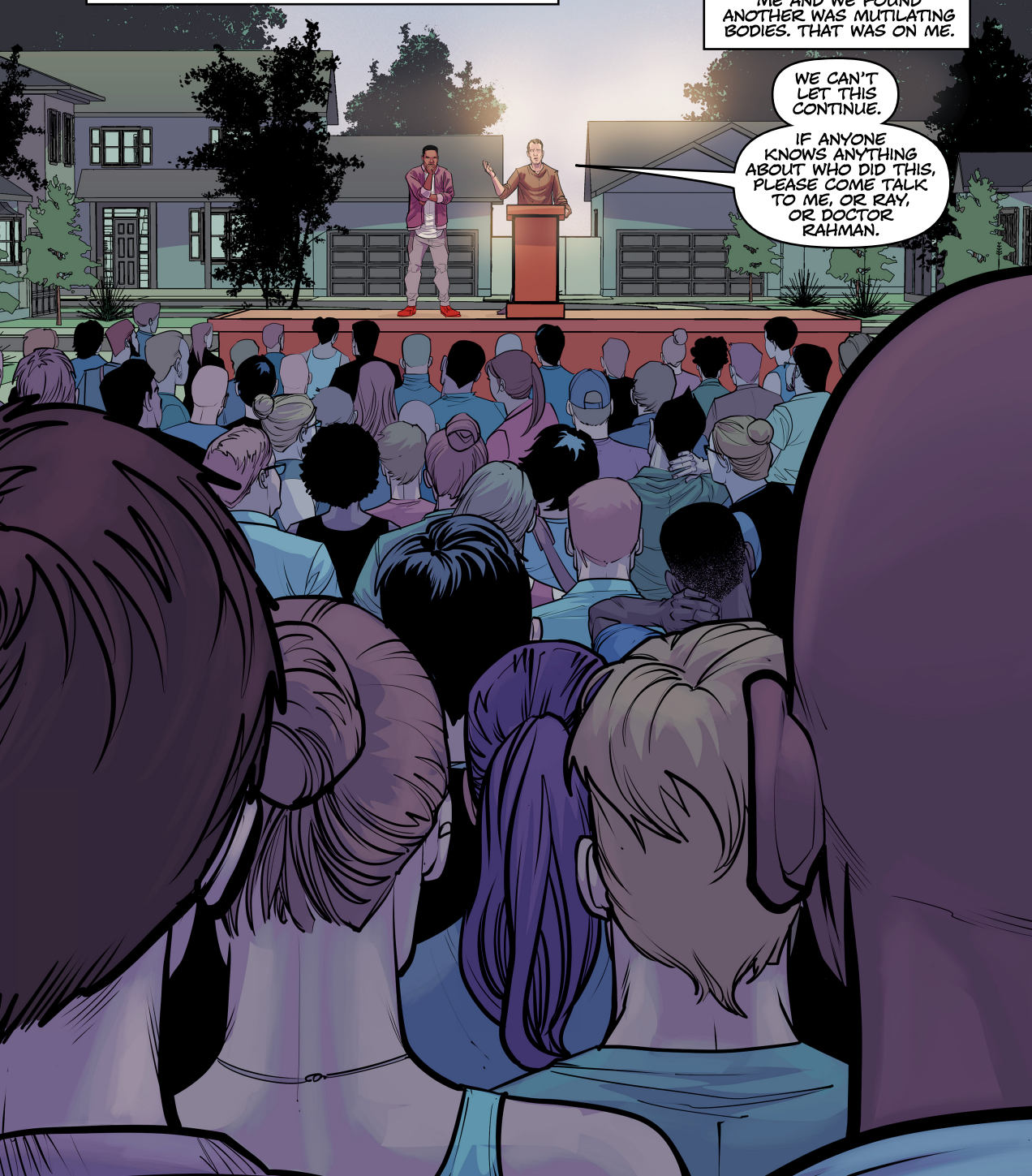
HE SAID HE DID HIS RESEARCH. PICKED ONLY THE BEST PEOPLE THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE GROUP. I TRUSTED HIM, MAINLY BECAUSE I HAD TO TRUST SOMEONE.

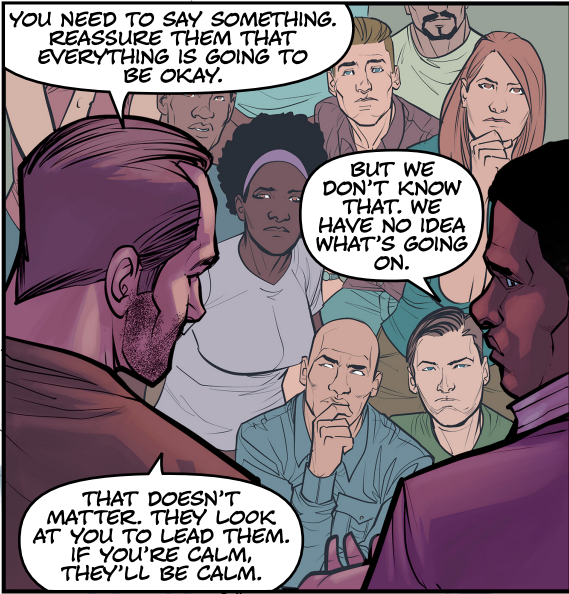
EVERY TIME I TOUCHED SOMEONE, THEY BECAME MY RESPONSIBILITY. I WAS THE ONE ADDING THEM TO THE MIX. I WAS THE ONE WITH THE ABILITY.

AND IN ONE DAY, SOMEONE I UNFROZE TRIED TO KILL ME AND WE FOUND ANOTHER WAS MUTILATING BODIES. THAT WAS ON ME.

WE CAN'T LET THIS CONTINUE.

IF ANYONE KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT WHO DID THIS, PLEASE COME TALK TO ME, OR RAY, OR DOCTOR RAHMAN.





YOU NEED TO SAY SOMETHING. REASSURE THEM THAT EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE OKAY.

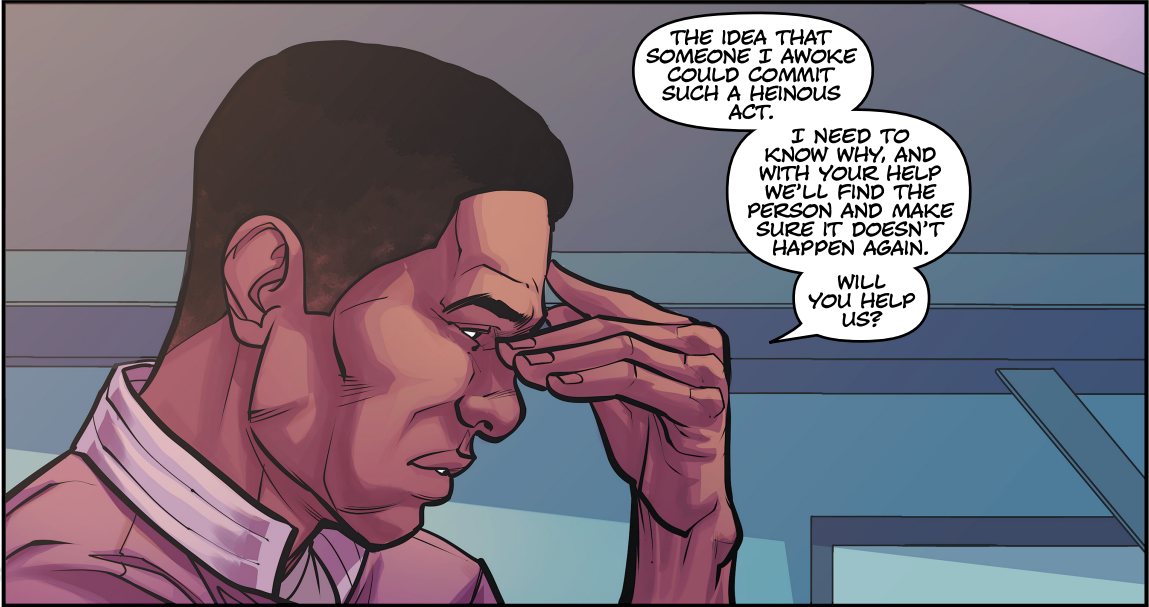
BUT WE DON'T KNOW THAT. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON.

THAT DOESN'T MATTER. THEY LOOK AT YOU TO LEAD THEM. IF YOU'RE CALM, THEY'LL BE CALM.



WE HAVE GONE THROUGH SO MUCH. WE STILL HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS AND NOW THE NEW LIFE WE'RE BUILDING IS SUDDENLY THROWN FOR A LOOP.

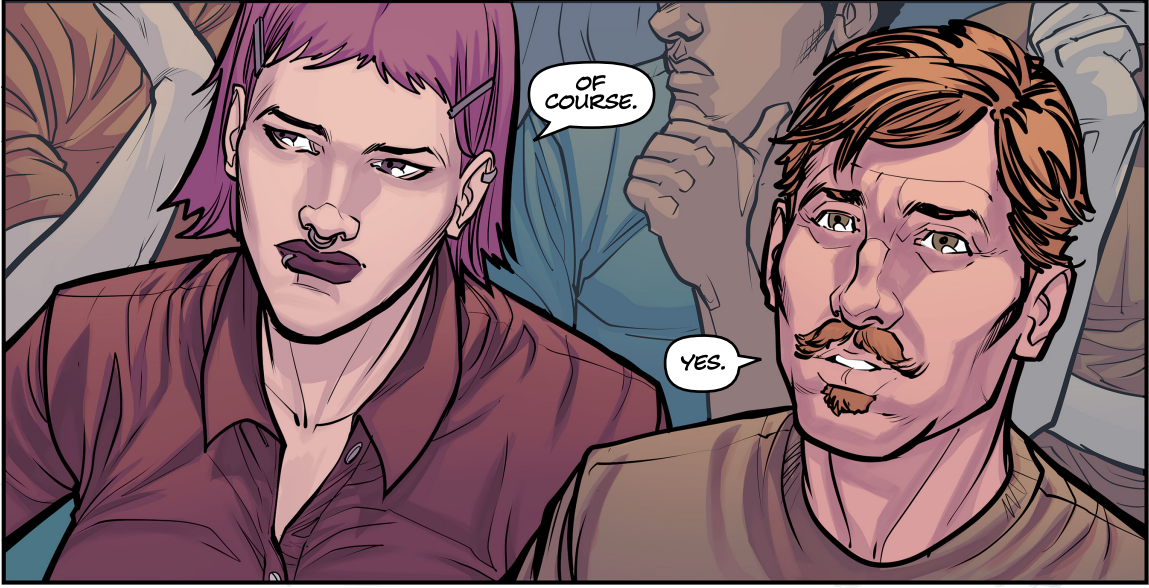
I'M SHAKEN BY THIS, TOO.



THE IDEA THAT SOMEONE I AWOKE COULD COMMIT SUCH A HEINOUS ACT.

I NEED TO KNOW WHY, AND WITH YOUR HELP WE'LL FIND THE PERSON AND MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

WILL YOU HELP US?

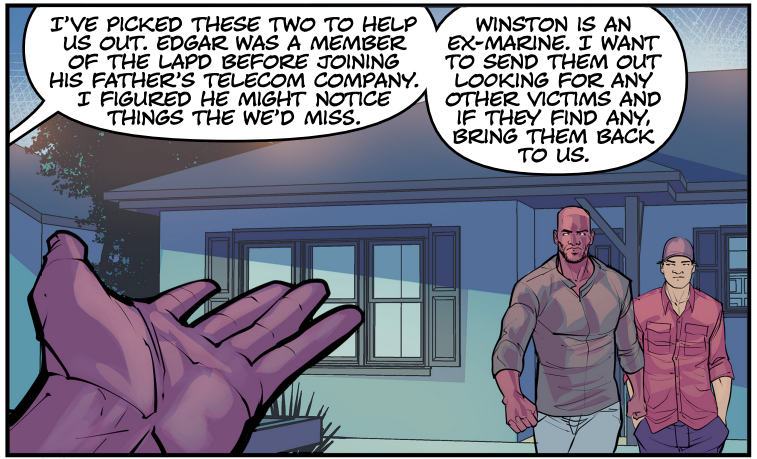


OF COURSE.

YES.



NOW THAT WE'VE TOLD EVERYONE, I THINK WE SHOULD KEEP ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION QUIET UNTIL WE'VE FOUND THE PERSON.



I'VE PICKED THESE TWO TO HELP US OUT. EDGAR WAS A MEMBER OF THE LAPD BEFORE JOINING HIS FATHER'S TELECOM COMPANY. I FIGURED HE MIGHT NOTICE THINGS THE WE'D MISS.

WINSTON IS AN EX-MARINE. I WANT TO SEND THEM OUT LOOKING FOR ANY OTHER VICTIMS AND IF THEY FIND ANY, BRING THEM BACK TO US.



YOU WANT THEM TO MOVE THE BODIES?

YES. ONE BODY COULD BE A FLUKE. BUT IF WE START FINDING MORE THAN THAT, IT COULD CAUSE A PANIC, PEOPLE ACCUSING EACH OTHER.

SOMETHING LIKE THIS COULD CAUSE THIS WHOLE THING TO COME TUMBLING DOWN.



YOU REALLY THINK THERE'S MORE?

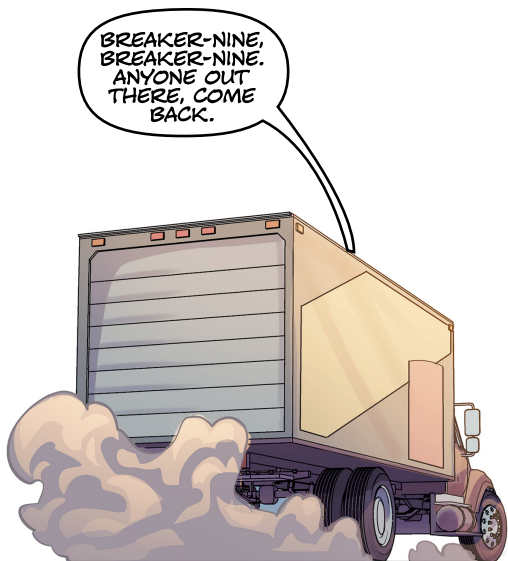
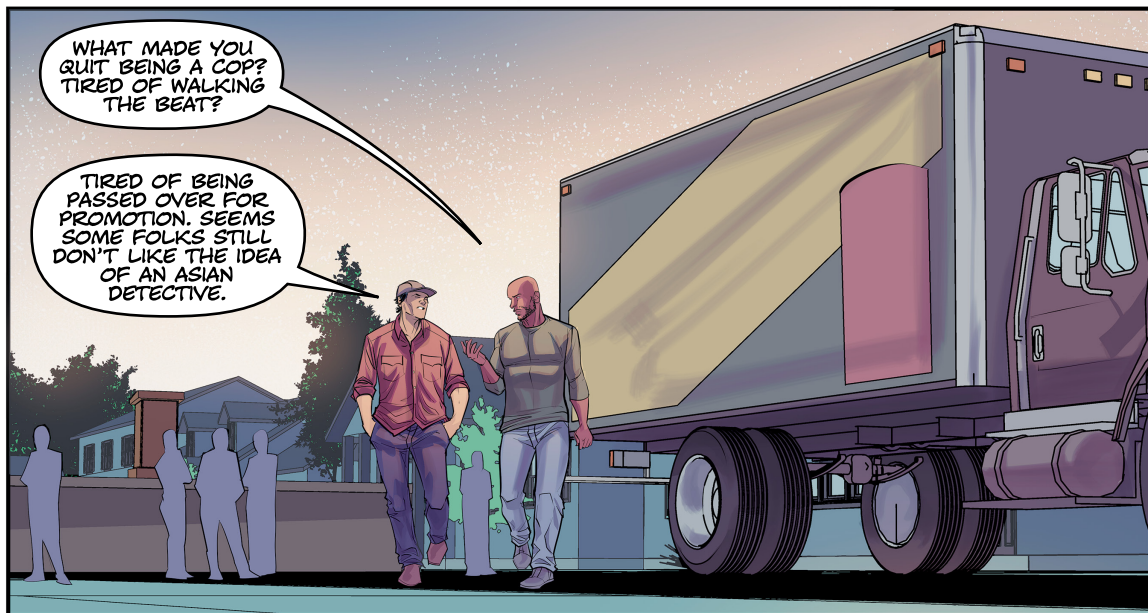
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK. I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHERE TO BEGIN TO LOOK.

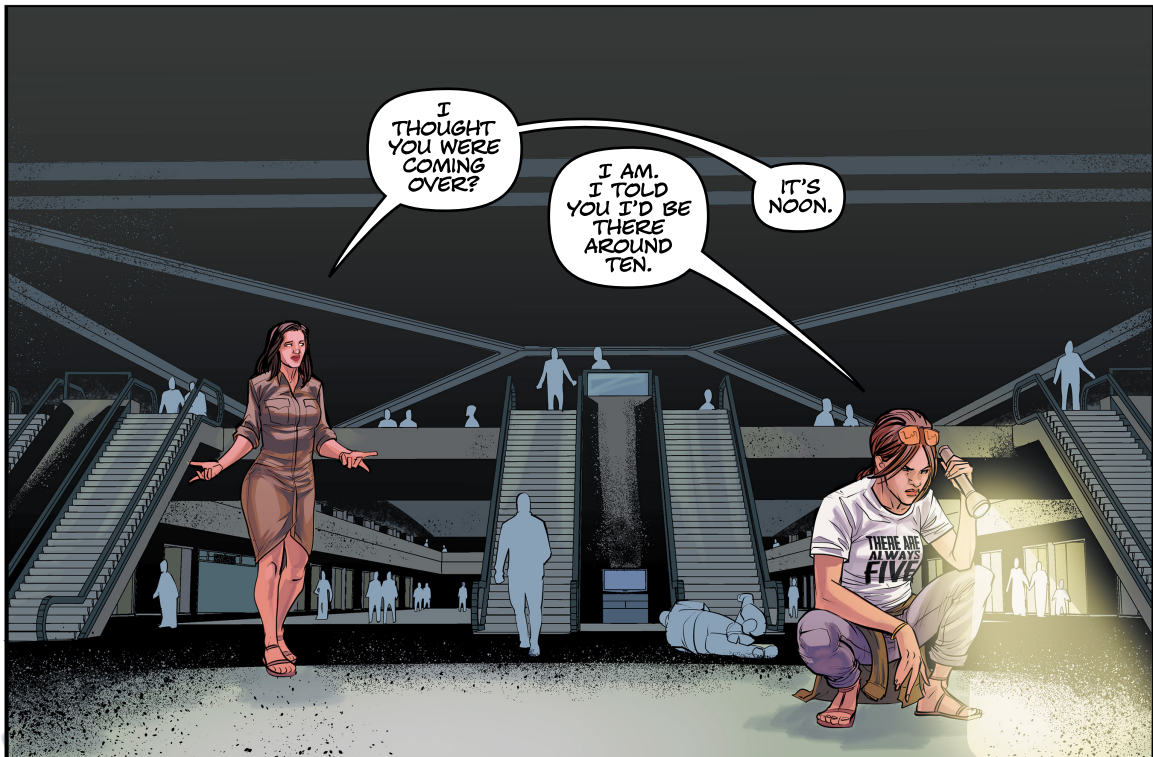


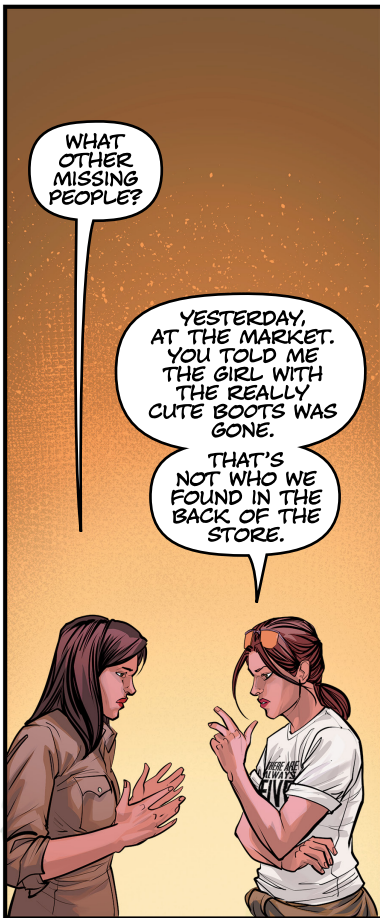
WHAT ABOUT STARTING WITH THE AWAKENED?

WHO?

IT'S A GROUP THAT BELIEVES THIS WHOLE THING IS PART OF GOD'S PLAN AND THAT YOU'RE A PROPHET OR THE MESSIAH. THEY MEET OVER AT THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY.







WHAT OTHER MISSING PEOPLE?

YESTERDAY, AT THE MARKET, YOU TOLD ME THE GIRL WITH THE REALLY CUTE BOOTS WAS GONE.

THAT'S NOT WHO WE FOUND IN THE BACK OF THE STORE.



I NOTICED THAT THERE WAS A FINE LAYER OF DUST ON THE GROUND IN THE STORE, EXCEPT WHERE THE GIRL HAD BEEN STANDING.



I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR OTHER EXAMPLES OF THAT AND I FOUND ONE.



SEE, JUST LIKE AT THE STORE YESTERDAY.



YOU'VE BEEN WALKING AROUND LOOKING FOR DIFFERENT LAYERS OF DUST?

WELL, YEAH. HOW ELSE ARE WE SUPPOSED TO SEE HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TAKEN?

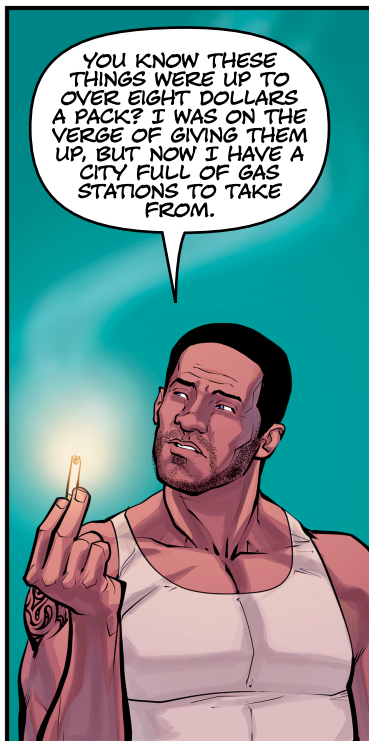


I KNOW WHAT WE SAW YESTERDAY SPOOKED YOU. IT SPOOKED ME TOO. BUT THIS DOESN'T PROVE THAT THERE IS A SECOND PERSON TAKING FROZEN PEOPLE.

I KNOW I'VE GONE OFF ON SOME WILD THOUGHTS BEFORE, BUT TELL ME, WHAT IF I'M RIGHT? WHAT IF THERE IS ANOTHER PERSON? WE NEED TO KNOW FOR SURE.



THIS MIGHT BE THE ONLY GOOD THING TO COME OUT OF THE FREEZE.



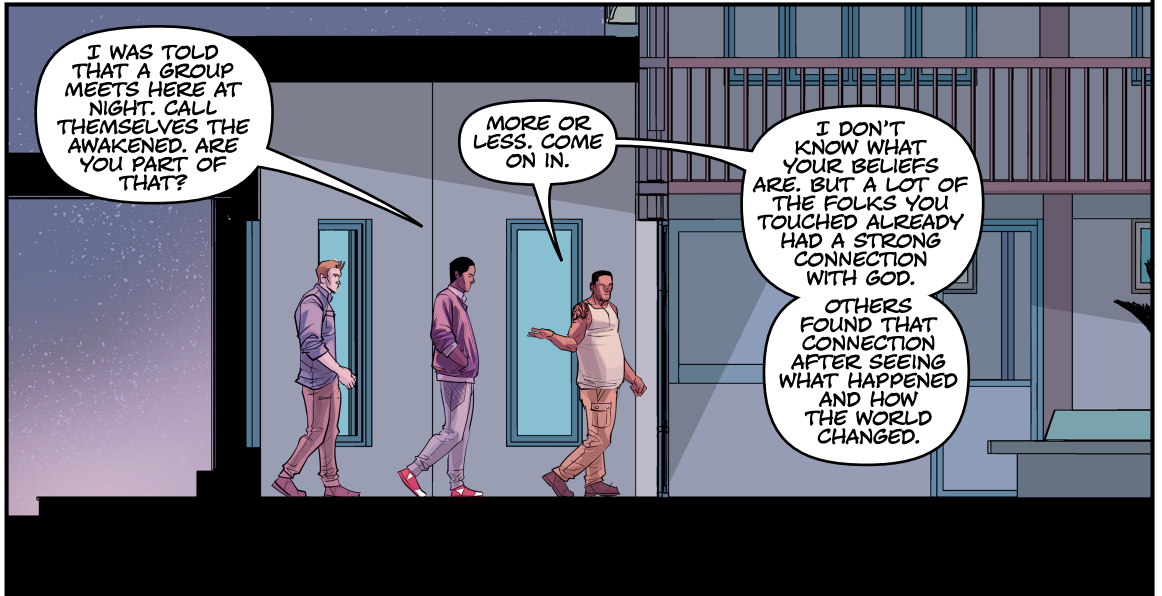
YOU KNOW THESE THINGS WERE UP TO OVER EIGHT DOLLARS A PACK? I WAS ON THE VERGE OF GIVING THEM UP, BUT NOW I HAVE A CITY FULL OF GAS STATIONS TO TAKE FROM.



THEY'LL STILL KILL YOU.

ARE YOU SURE? 'CAUSE YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO GO LONG WITHOUT FOOD AND WATER, YET YOUR FRIEND HERE WENT THREE TIMES LONGER THAN GANDHI FASTED AND HE'S NO WORSE FOR WEAR.

THOSE HARD-FAST RULES OF SCIENCE DON'T SEEM SO HARD AND FAST ANYMORE.



I WAS TOLD THAT A GROUP MEETS HERE AT NIGHT. CALL THEMSELVES THE AWAKENED. ARE YOU PART OF THAT?

MORE OR LESS. COME ON IN.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR BELIEFS ARE, BUT A LOT OF THE FOLKS YOU TOUCHED ALREADY HAD A STRONG CONNECTION WITH GOD.

OTHERS FOUND THAT CONNECTION AFTER SEEING WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW THE WORLD CHANGED.

THEY THINK THIS IS ALL AN ACT OF GOD?

DO YOU HAVE A BETTER EXPLANATION? I'D LOVE TO HEAR IT.

SCIENCE HAS SPENT DECADES TRYING TO EXPLAIN AWAY EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE. BUT THEY'VE NEVER COME UP WITH THE BIG ANSWER. HOW ARE WE HERE?

EVOLUTION IS ALL WELL AND GOOD, BUT I HAD A BOX OF COMPUTER PARTS UNDER MY DESK FOR YEARS, NEVER ONCE DID I PULL IT OUT AND DISCOVER THEY'D FORMED INTO A ROBOT. EVEN IN ALL OF THE SCIENTIFIC PROOF, THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR GOD.

EXIT

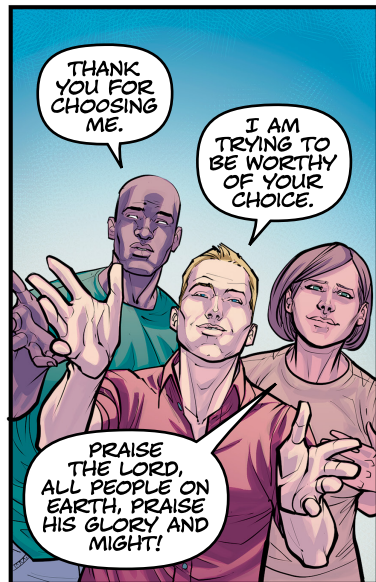
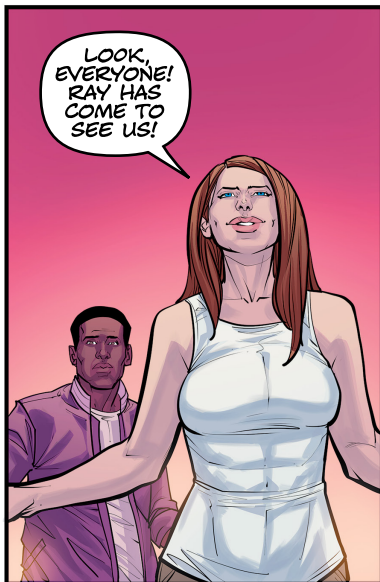
AS A NURSE, I KNOW HOW THE HUMAN BODY WORKS. THERE IS NO SCIENTIFIC WAY TO EXPLAIN HOW PEOPLE ARE JUST SUDDENLY FROZEN, YET STILL ALIVE.

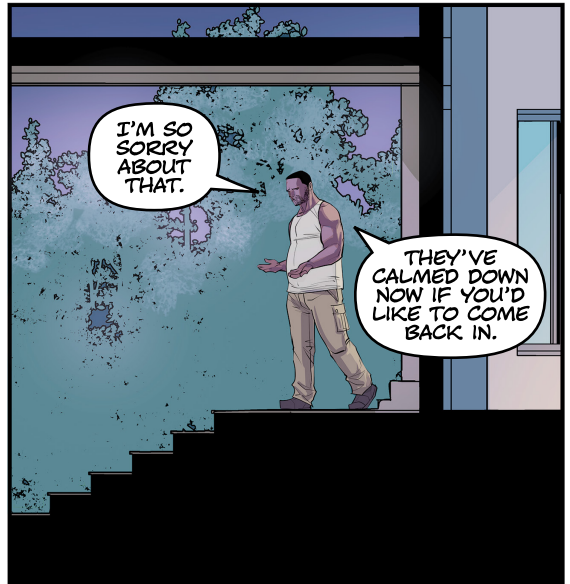
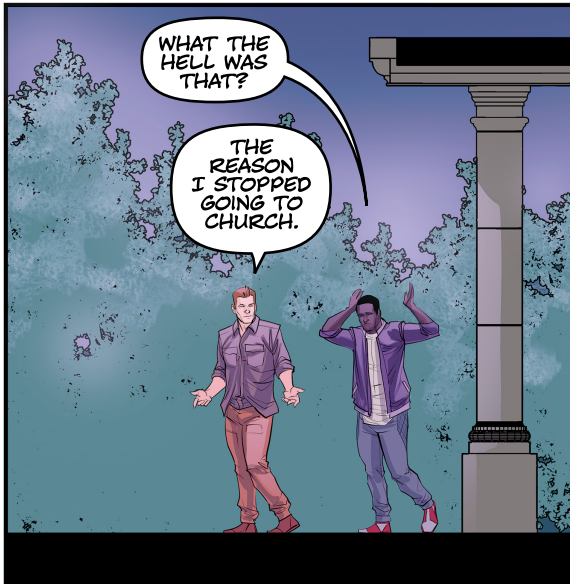
TO US, YOU'RE JUST LIKE NOAH, LOT AND JOB. GOD HAS CHOSEN A FREEZE THIS TIME, AND YOU ARE HIS CHOSEN ONE TO REBUILD HUMANITY. YOU'RE THE HAND OF THE LORD.

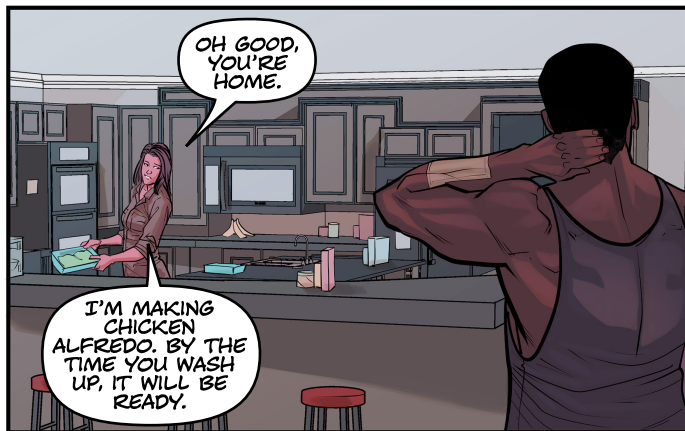
NO...THAT'S CRAZY. I'M JUST A COMPUTER GEEK.

AND JESUS WAS A CARPENTER. HE WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS. YOU MAY THINK IT'S CRAZY, BUT IT'S NOT TO US.

AND THEN THERE IS THE OTHER QUESTION--OF ALL THE PEOPLE ON THE PLANET, WHY YOU? WHAT MAKES YOU SO SPECIAL?

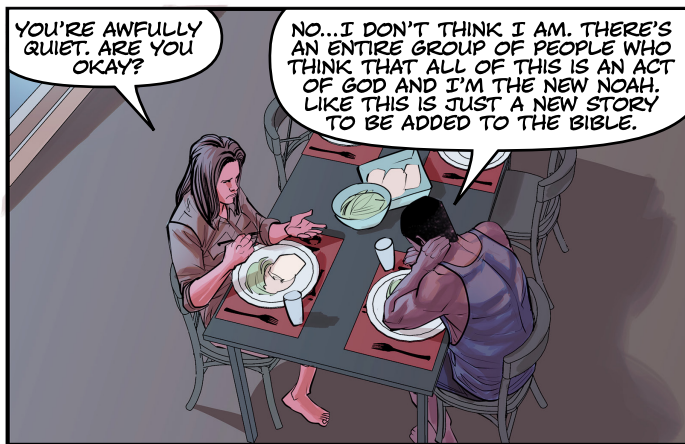






OH GOOD, YOU'RE HOME.

I'M MAKING CHICKEN ALFREDO. BY THE TIME YOU WASH UP, IT WILL BE READY.

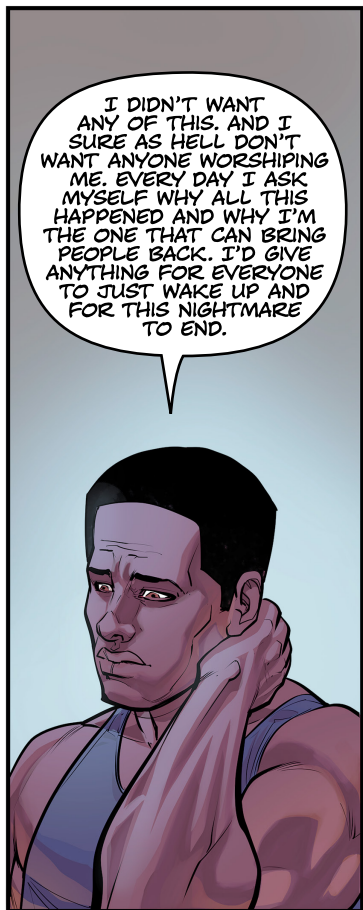


YOU'RE AWFULLY QUIET. ARE YOU OKAY?

NO... I DON'T THINK I AM. THERE'S AN ENTIRE GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT ALL OF THIS IS AN ACT OF GOD AND I'M THE NEW NOAH. LIKE THIS IS JUST A NEW STORY TO BE ADDED TO THE BIBLE.



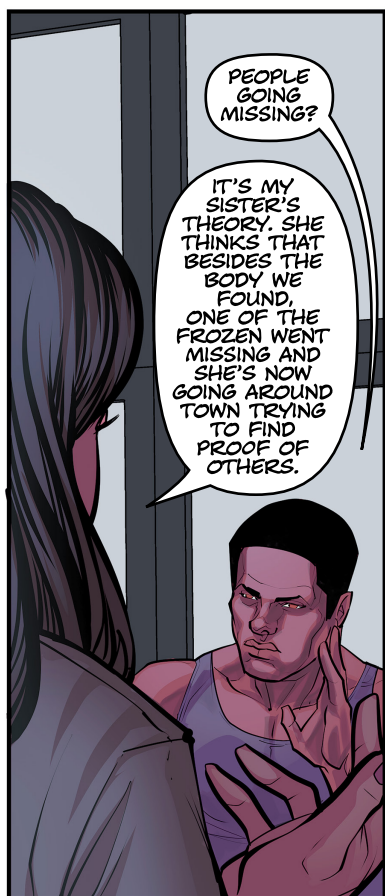
I CAN SEE THAT. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN USING FAITH TO FILL IN THE UNKNOWN FOR AS LONG AS MAN HAS EXISTED. IT MAKES A LOT OF SENSE THAT THEY'RE DOING IT AGAIN. WITHOUT SOME KIND OF ANSWER, EVEN A RELIGIOUS ONE, SOME PEOPLE JUST GET OVERWHELMED.



I DIDN'T WANT ANY OF THIS. AND I SURE AS HELL DON'T WANT ANYONE WORSHIPING ME. EVERY DAY I ASK MYSELF WHY ALL THIS HAPPENED AND WHY I'M THE ONE THAT CAN BRING PEOPLE BACK. I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR EVERYONE TO JUST WAKE UP AND FOR THIS NIGHTMARE TO END.



I KNOW YOU WOULD. I WISH THAT TOO. I'D LIKE TO SEE THE WORLD GO BACK TO NORMAL SO WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MUTILATED BODIES AND PEOPLE GOING MISSING.

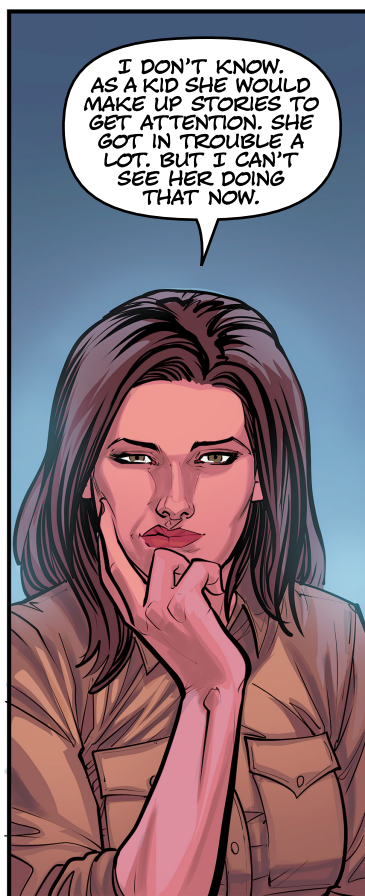


PEOPLE GOING MISSING?

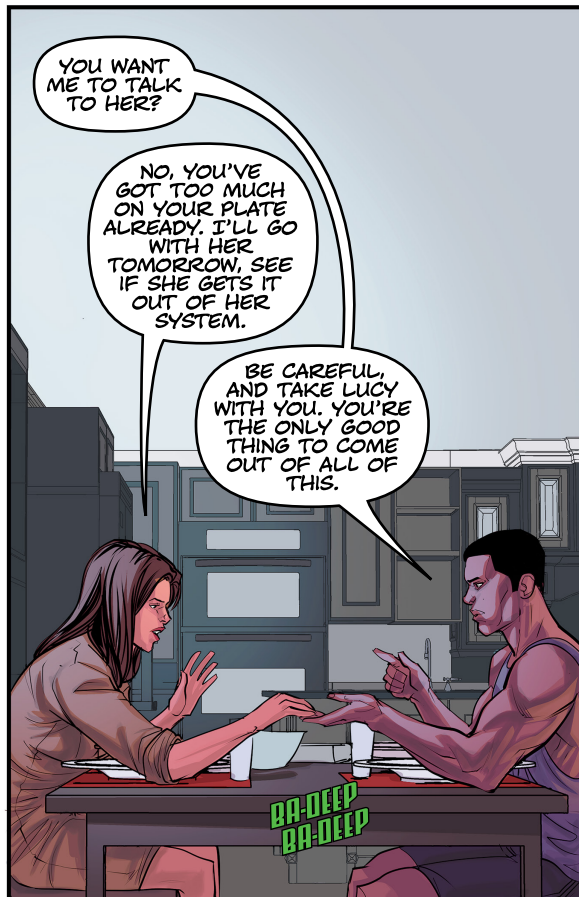
IT'S MY SISTER'S THEORY. SHE THINKS THAT BESIDES THE BODY WE FOUND, ONE OF THE FROZEN WENT MISSING AND SHE'S NOW GOING AROUND TOWN TRYING TO FIND PROOF OF OTHERS.



DO YOU THINK SHE'S RIGHT?



I DON'T KNOW. AS A KID SHE WOULD MAKE UP STORIES TO GET ATTENTION. SHE GOT IN TROUBLE A LOT. BUT I CAN'T SEE HER DOING THAT NOW.



YOU WANT ME TO TALK TO HER?

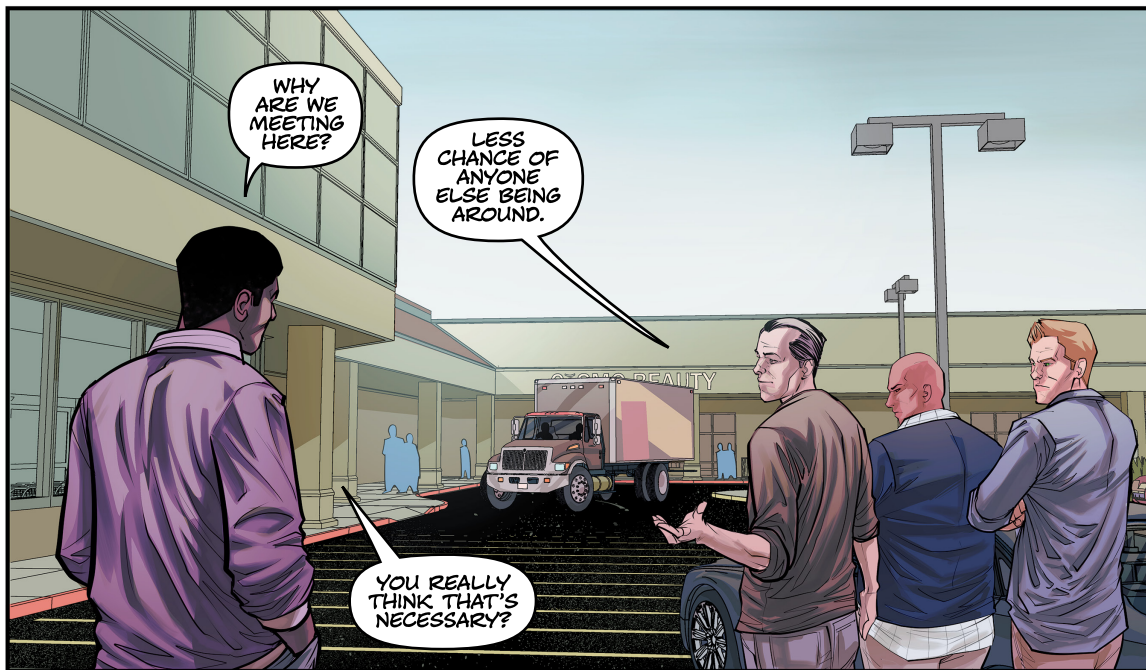
NO, YOU'VE GOT TOO MUCH ON YOUR PLATE ALREADY. I'LL GO WITH HER TOMORROW, SEE IF SHE GETS IT OUT OF HER SYSTEM.

BE CAREFUL, AND TAKE LUCY WITH YOU. YOU'RE THE ONLY GOOD THING TO COME OUT OF ALL OF THIS.

BA-DEEP
BA-DEEP

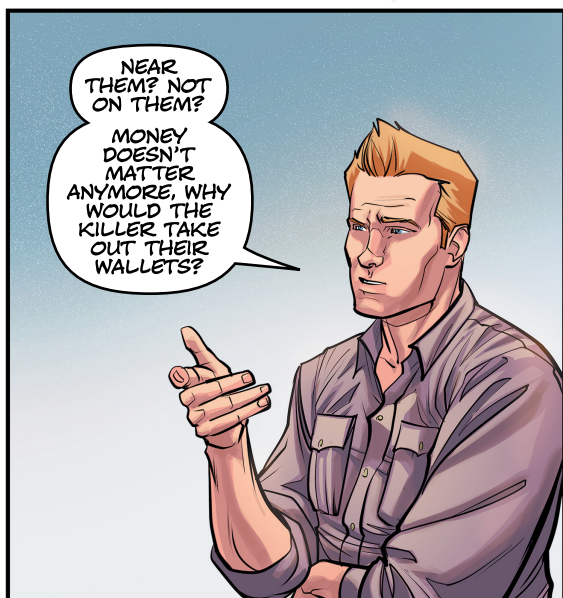


NO REST FOR THE WICKED.





SOMEBODY'S BEEN VERY BUSY.





DOC. COME HERE FOR A MINUTE.



THAT'S A WHOLE LOT OF BODIES.

I'LL GO THROUGH AND SEE WHAT I CAN FIND. BUT IF THEY'RE ANYTHING LIKE THE ONE AT THE MARKET THERE WON'T BE MUCH TO GO ON.



I DON'T GET THIS. WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO MUTILATE A BODY LIKE THAT?

IT'S INSANITY.



IT IS MANY THINGS, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S INSANITY.

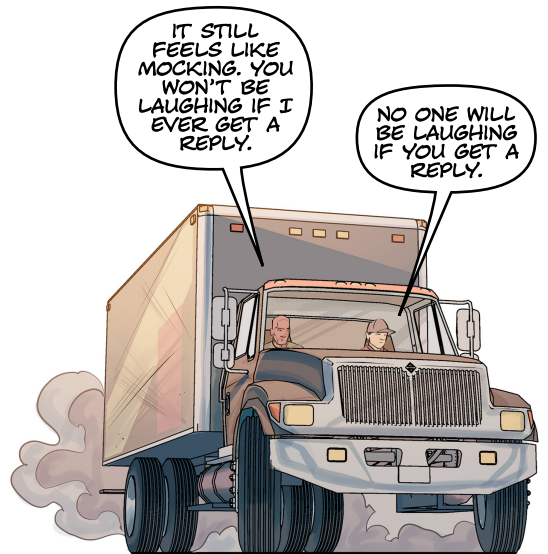
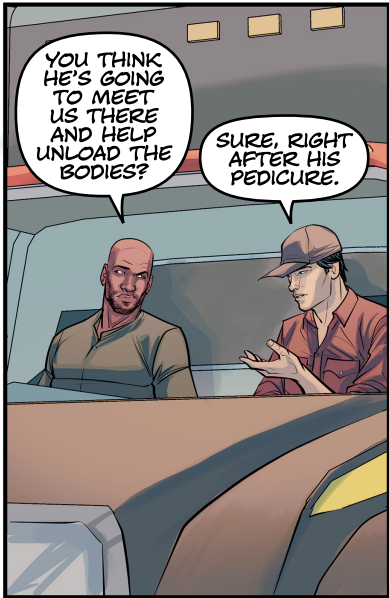
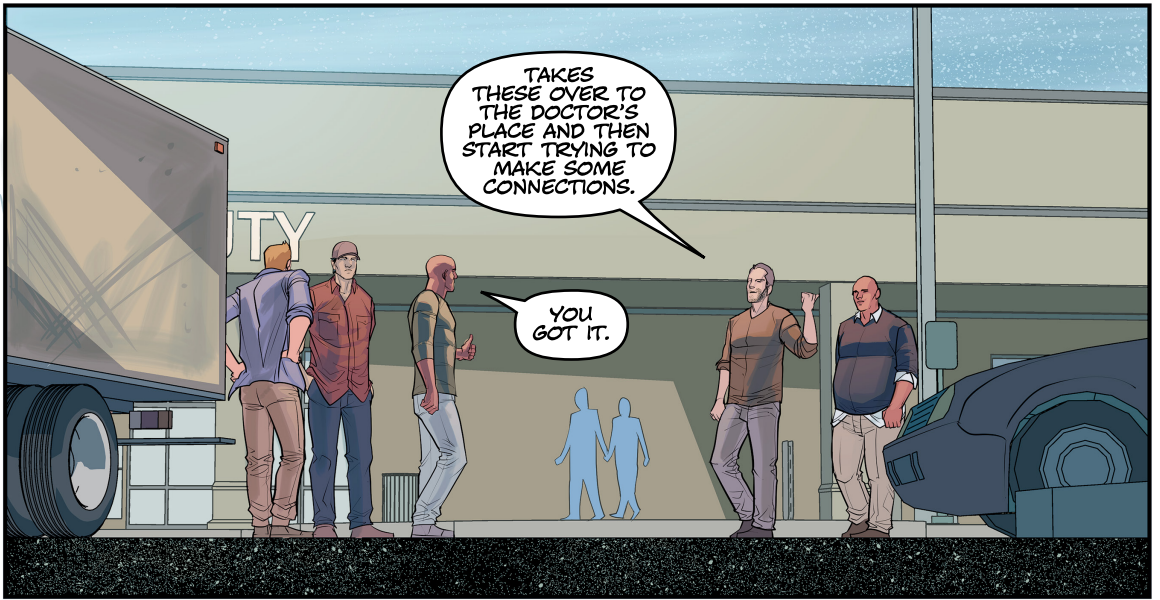
WHOEVER IS DOING IT COULD SIMPLY CUT OFF THE HEAD OR A DOZEN OTHER THINGS FAR MORE EASILY THAN TAKING THE TIME TO REMOVE THE HEART LIKE THAT.

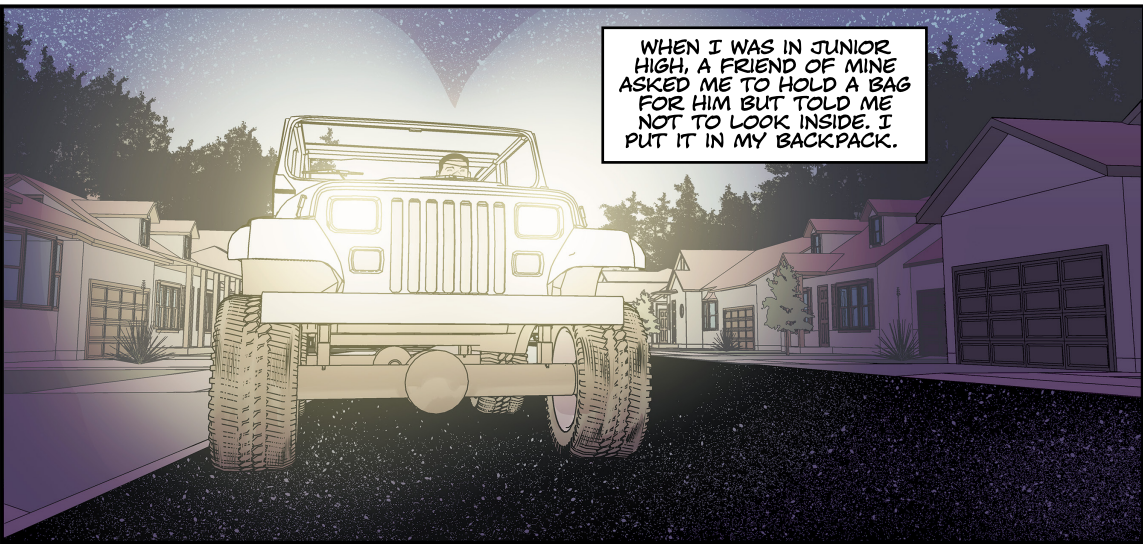


SOMEONE IS PURPOSELY MAKING THESE PEOPLE IMPOSSIBLE TO AWAKEN... BUT IN THE NICEST WAY POSSIBLE?

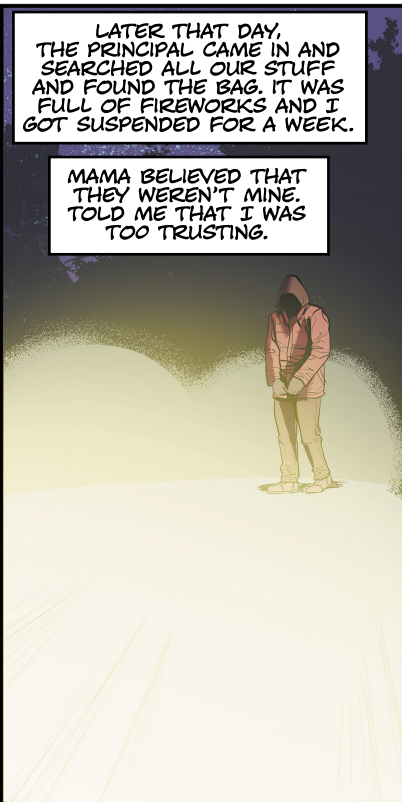
THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO ME.







WHEN I WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH, A FRIEND OF MINE ASKED ME TO HOLD A BAG FOR HIM BUT TOLD ME NOT TO LOOK INSIDE. I PUT IT IN MY BACKPACK.



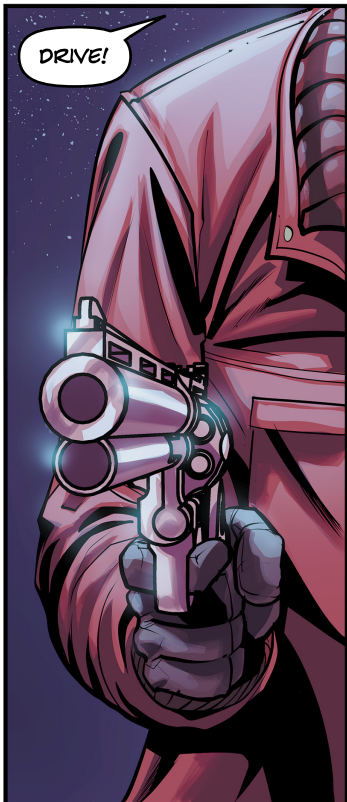
LATER THAT DAY, THE PRINCIPAL CAME IN AND SEARCHED ALL OUR STUFF AND FOUND THE BAG. IT WAS FULL OF FIREWORKS AND I GOT SUSPENDED FOR A WEEK.

MAMA BELIEVED THAT THEY WEREN'T MINE. TOLD ME THAT I WAS TOO TRUSTING.



ARE YOU OKAY?

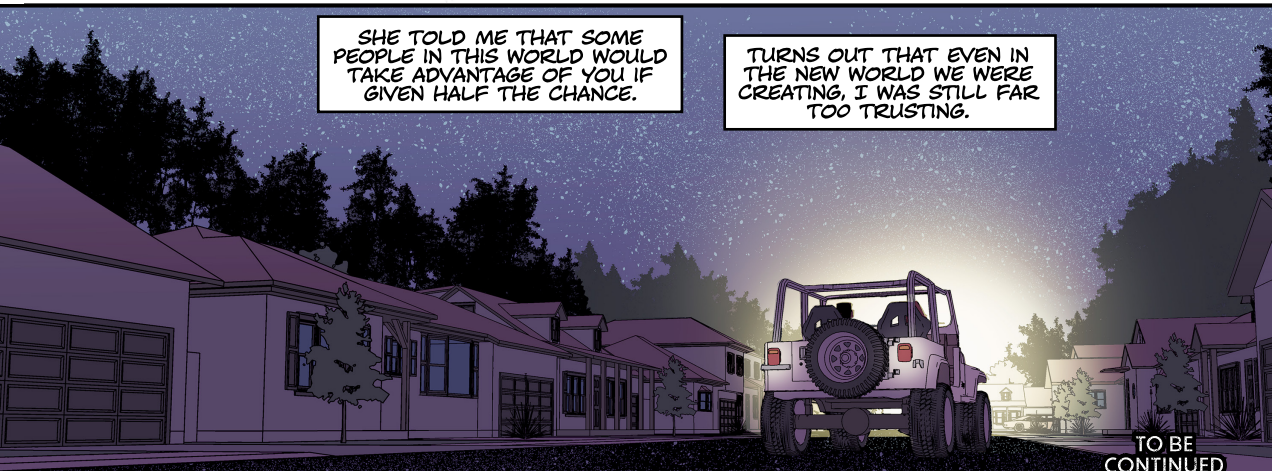
WHAT HAPPENED?



DRIVE!

SHE TOLD ME THAT SOME PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU IF GIVEN HALF THE CHANCE.

TURNS OUT THAT EVEN IN THE NEW WORLD WE WERE CREATING, I WAS STILL FAR TOO TRUSTING.



TO BE CONTINUED

NEXT ISSUE

THE

FREEZE

ISSUE FOUR



P.C.V.

FREEZE FRAME

Hey Faithful Freezers! Phillip here. Dan and I were talking the other month and we decided it might be fun for the backmatter of issue 3 if I took over and gave you a tour of my crazy art process. People generally get a kick out of the BTS/WIP shots I post on my twitter (@phillipsevy), but I thought I'd give some context.

I wanted to go through the steps for issue 3, page 15 (the big bodies splash page in this issue) because it was very important, labor intensive, and my favorite page of this issue (perhaps series).

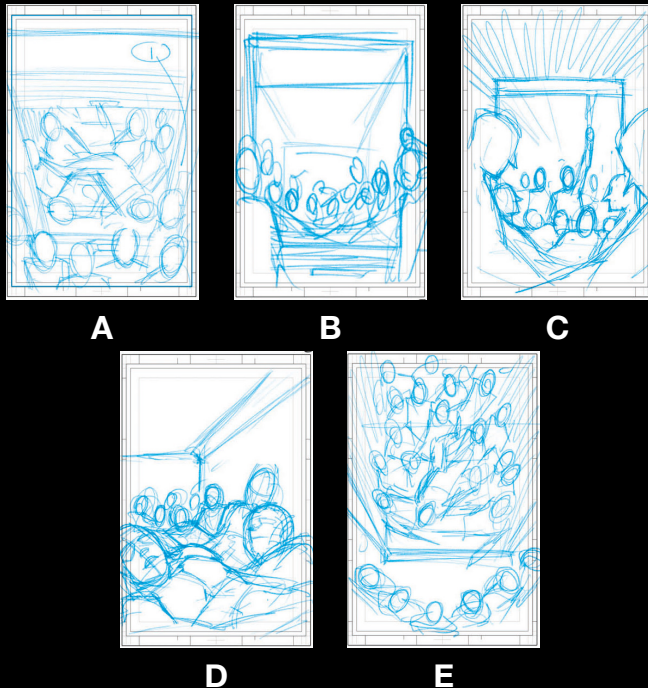
PAGE FIFTEEN (1 Panels)

Panel One: Full-page splash of the inside of the truck. It is filled with a bunch of bodies stacked on top of each other. There are bags of hearts tied to each body. This needs to be a really gruesome scene. Go to town on this page.

WINSTON

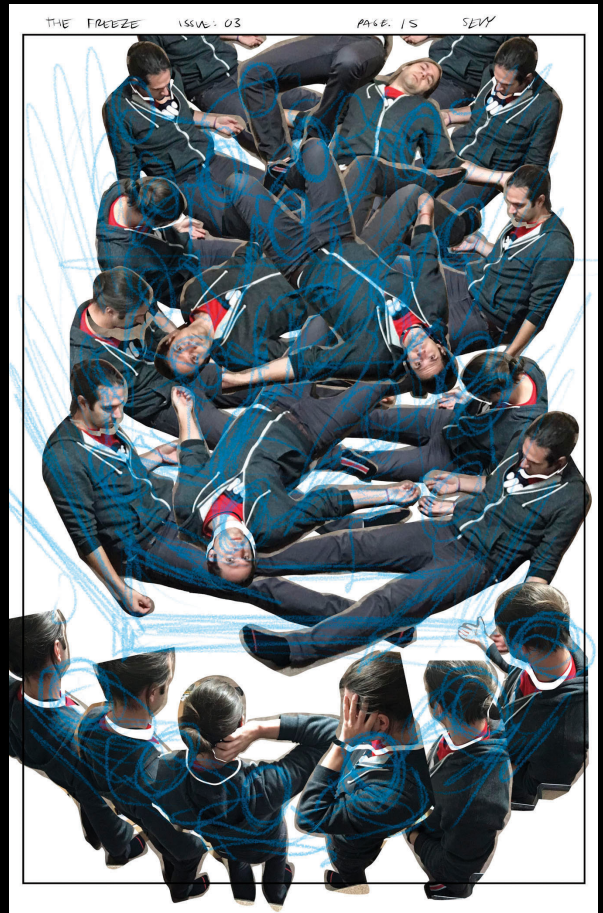
Somebody's been very busy.

Everything starts with Dan's script. As you can see, Dan left a lot of the page up to me. After working together for three issues at this point, we're pretty comfortable with what each other expects/can bring to the table. Dan's very cool to generally give me space to either do my thing or screw it up (hopefully you feel "my thing" more than me screwing it up, thus far). I like room to interpret the script to the best of my skills.

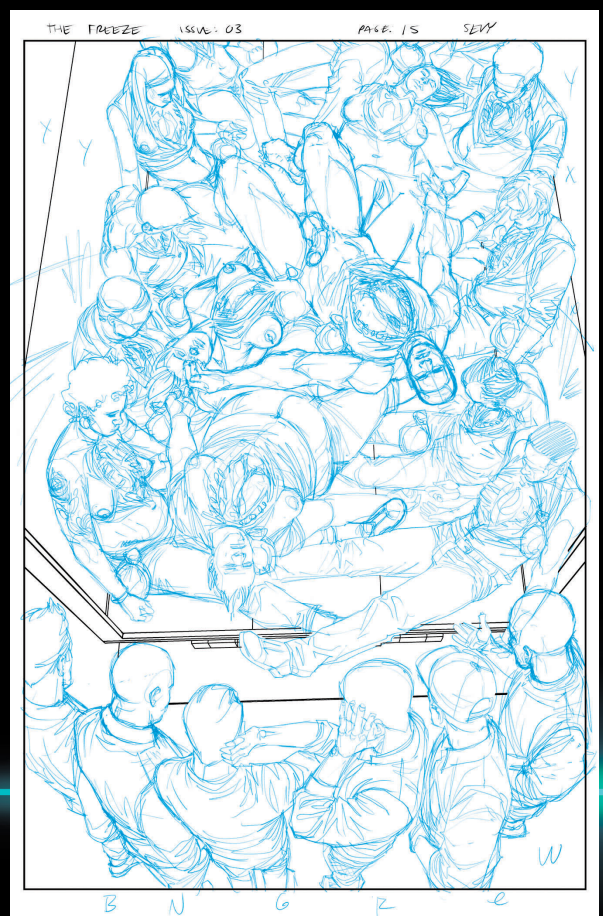


After reading the script, I scribble up thumbnails and then layouts. Because this page was such an important one, I went back to the drawing board and gave Dan five options to choose from. He liked option E and I was cool with it too.

Now, the part that makes everyone laugh. I tend to use a lot of reference when I draw. It speeds up my process and allows me to get subtleties that I might not just drawing straight from my head. While working on a book like *Tomb Raider*, I actually hired a model to pose for my Lara shots, but for something like THE FREEZE (and other projects) that are more grounded in reality, I just take reference photos of myself. I'll take the photos with my camera, on a poseable tripod, with a timer. I import the photos into my computer, then cut them up, copy and paste them into Clip Studio Paint, and arrange them to match my layouts. What I end up with (as you can see) is often a LOT of Phillips interacting with each other. It's ridiculous. We've started calling them the "Council of Phils." This one particularly cracked me up, because it's a van full of dead mes (I might have some issues).



Next stage is pencils. The reference is the base, but I draw all the different characters, genders, body types, clothing (or lack thereof) etc. from my imagination. I'll spare you all my reference photos of open-heart surgeries and spread-open chest cavities that I had to do for this page. It was gross. Take care of your cardiovascular systems, kids—you don't want that surgery if you can avoid it.



After that, inks! Working digitally, I pencil and ink in Clip Studio Paint using primarily Richard Frenden's amazing brushes. I keep my linework more open right now (and when I'm coloring myself) because of the next step:



Gray tones. I digitally paint gray tones into my pages. It's an extra step that can be time consuming, but I like the control over the volumization of the shapes I've drawn. It also gives me some value control. In addition, when I color the pages, I use the gray tones as a shadow layer and it cuts down on my coloring time.



After the black and white work is done, I send my pages to my flatter. Fernando Argüello is my trusty and faithful flatter and I owe him my life and sanity. He's flatted nearly every page of this book. However, he didn't flat this page. Because of his crazy workload and some holiday deadlines, I had a former student (and amazing artist in her own right), Lacey LeBlanc, flat a few pages in this issue. She drew the short straw and got this page. But as you can see, Lacey did a great job (she even flatted all the little designs in character tattoos!). Flating is the process of outlining shapes and throwing in block colors. I take this base and change the colors and use it to start coloring.



Coloring. THE FREEZE has been so fun (and so much work) to do because Top Cow let me color myself. I take all the art and put it in Photoshop. I then press the "Color It" button and viola! It's done. Just kidding. Hardly. There's even more work and choices and thinking that goes into coloring because it's a newer thing for me. But there we go! The insane art process I use to bring the book to you.

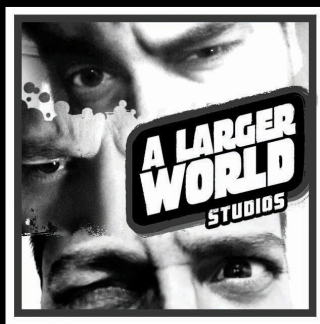




DAN WICKLINE has written for Image Comics, IDW Publishing, Humanoids Publishing, Zenescope Entertainment, Avatar Press, Top Cow and Dynamite Entertainment. He's also scripted for *The Metal Hurlant Chronicles* television series and has penned three novels featuring his character Lucius Fogg—*Deadly Creatures*, *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!)

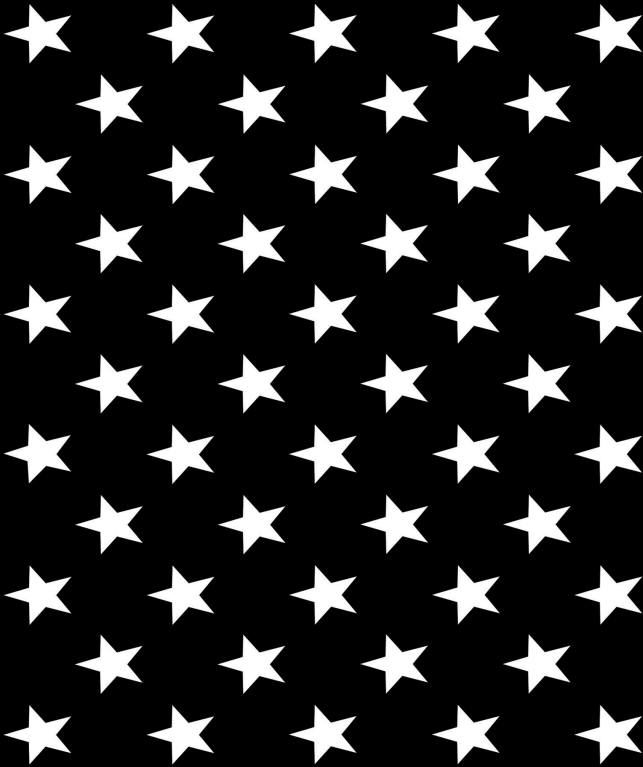


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