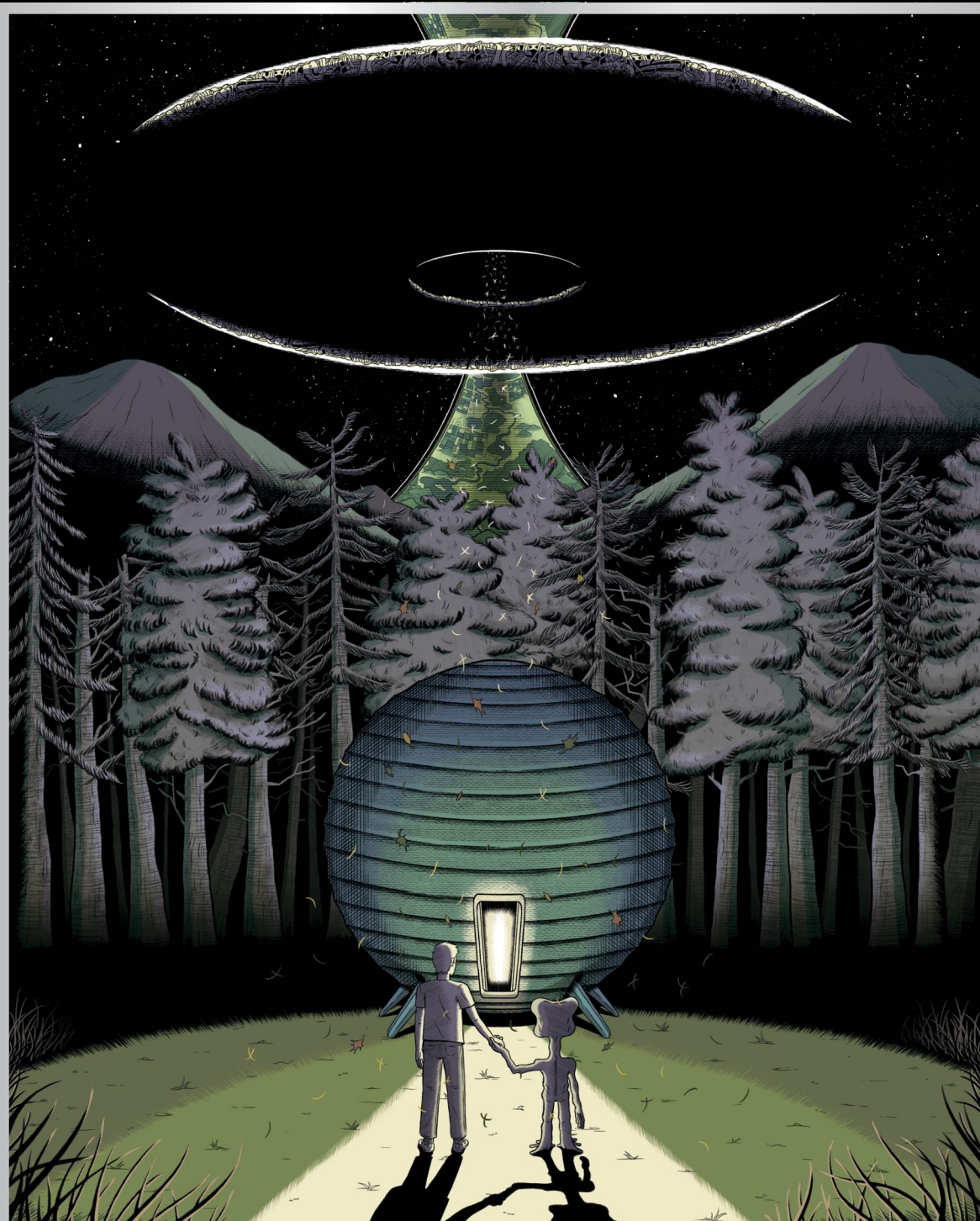


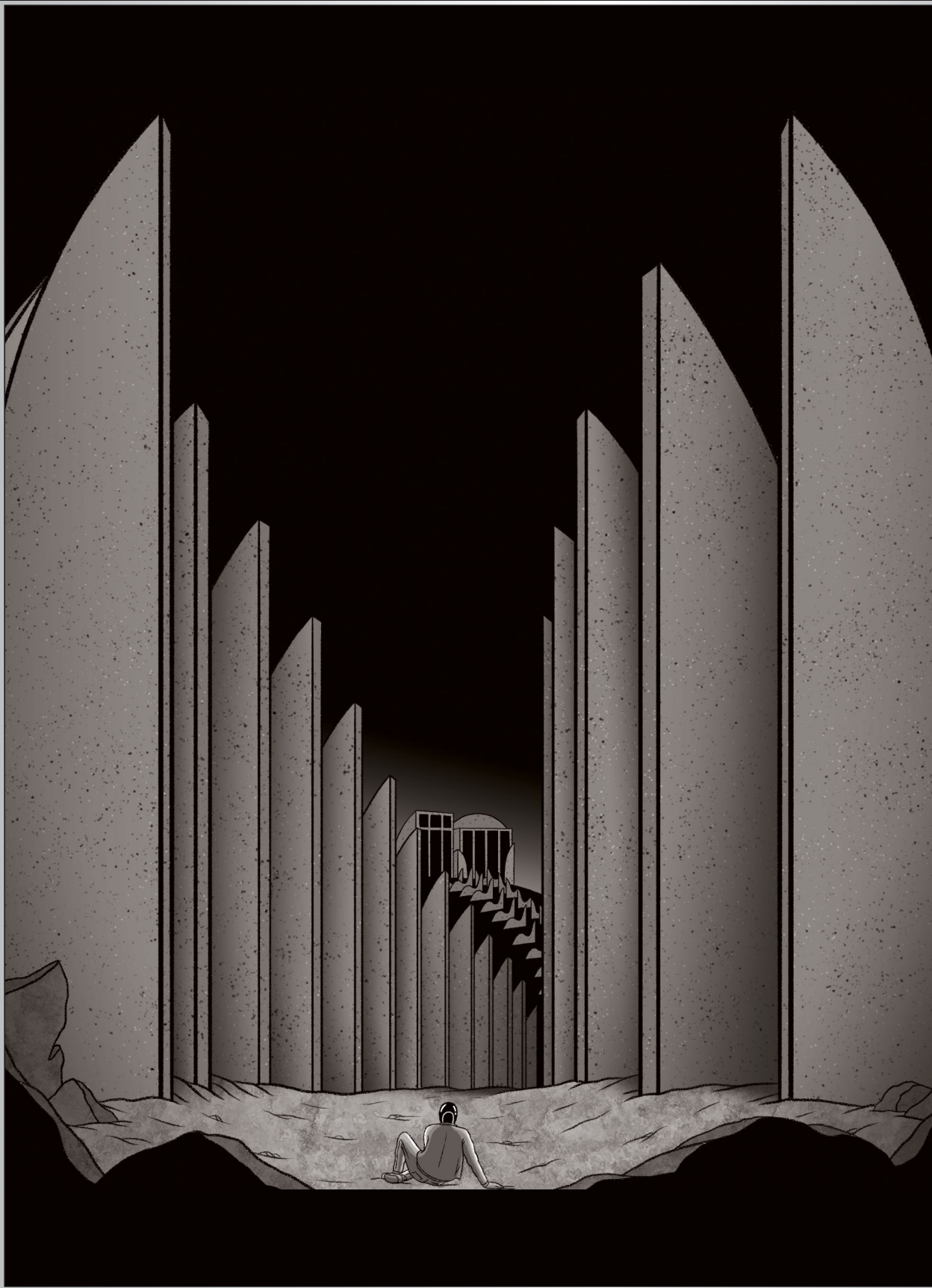
LITTLE VISITOR & OTHER ABDUCTIONS



Adam Szym

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“Little Visitor”

MORIZ
PRODUCER

THE AMERICAN
MOVIE HAD JUST COME
OUT ON TAPE.

NOT LEGALLY, YES, BUT
MANY PEOPLE WERE BUYING
IT ANYWAY. THAT'S HOW
IT WAS THEN.

I DIDN'T SEE IT UNTIL
MANY YEARS LATER, BUT
I KNEW WHAT IT WAS. IT
WAS A BOY AND AN ALIEN
AND A FAMILY.

AND THE ALIEN
WAS NICE.



WHAT I KNEW MOST
WAS THAT IT MADE
A LOT OF MONEY.

THAT WAS THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING TO
KNOW, FOR US.



SO WE THOUGHT MAYBE
WE CAN MAKE THIS MOVIE,
BUT FOR THIS COUNTRY.

IT WAS A GOOD IDEA.



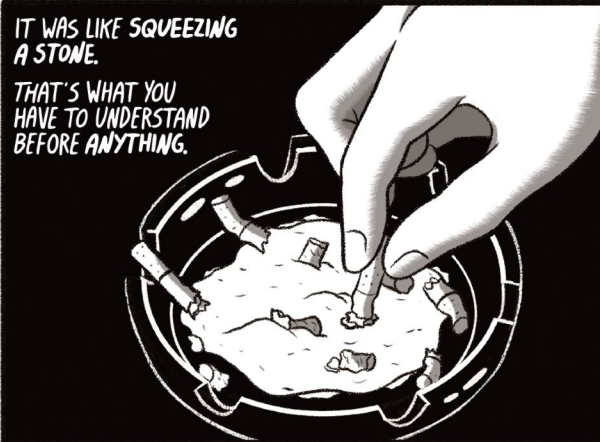
THE BUSINESS WAS SMALL
BACK THEN. THERE WAS
LITTLE MONEY.

TO MAKE THIS KIND
OF MOVIE, YOU
NEED MONEY.

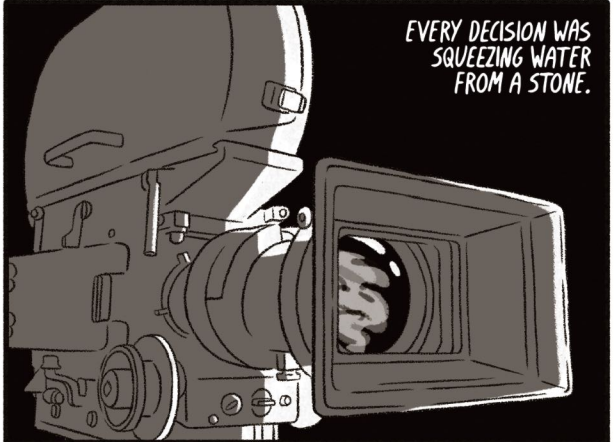


IT WAS LIKE SQUEEZING
A STONE.

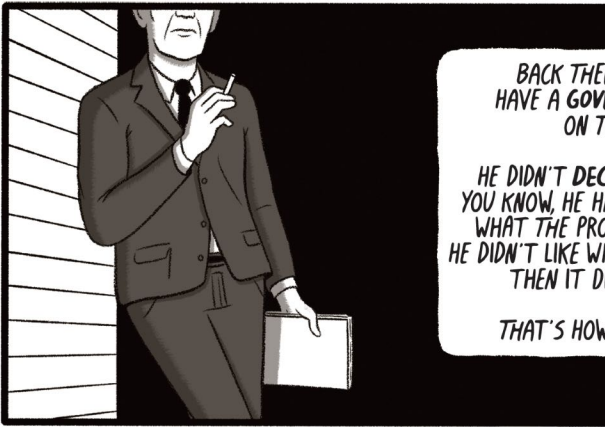
THAT'S WHAT YOU
HAVE TO UNDERSTAND
BEFORE ANYTHING.



EVERY DECISION WAS
SQUEEZING WATER
FROM A STONE.





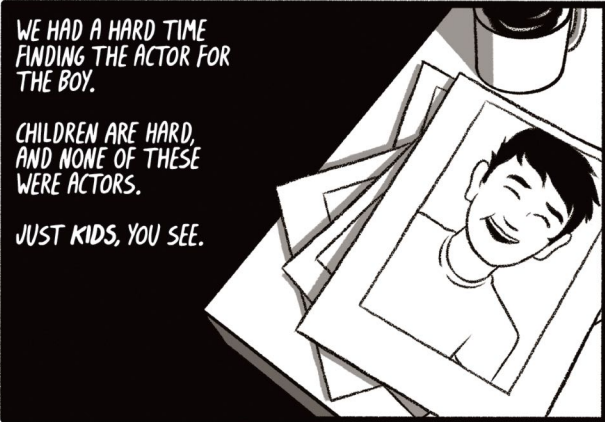


BACK THEN, WE HAD TO HAVE A GOVERNMENT MAN ON THE JOB.

HE DIDN'T DECIDE THINGS, BUT, YOU KNOW, HE HAD TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE PROJECT WAS, AND IF HE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT HE UNDERSTOOD, THEN IT DIDN'T HAPPEN.

THAT'S HOW IT WAS THEN.

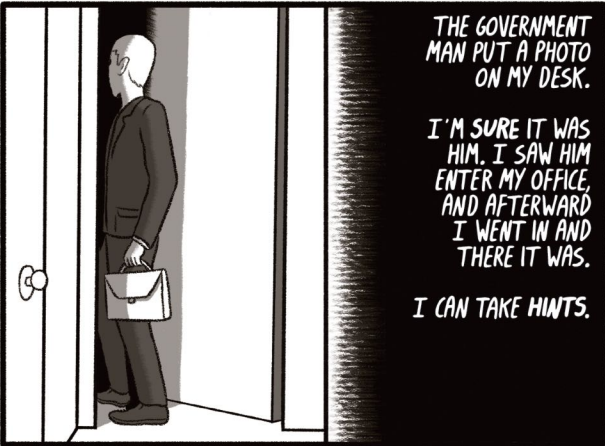
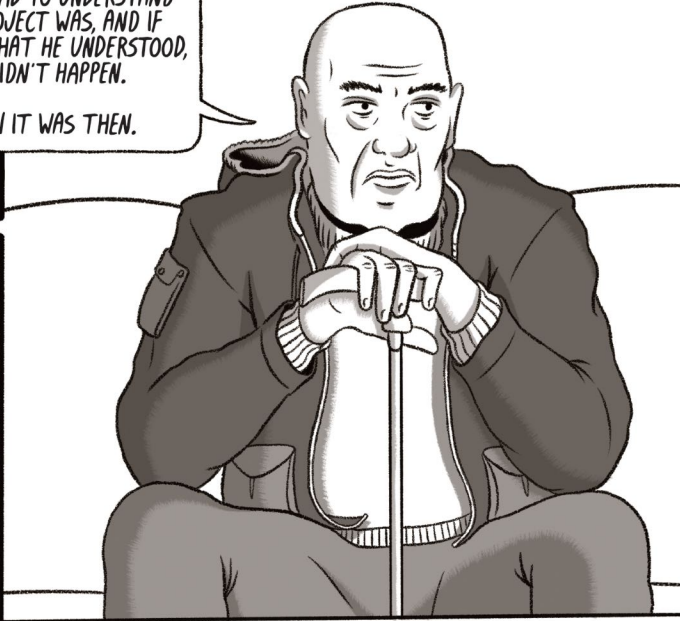
ALEKSANDR
CASTING DIRECTOR



WE HAD A HARD TIME FINDING THE ACTOR FOR THE BOY.

CHILDREN ARE HARD, AND NONE OF THESE WERE ACTORS.

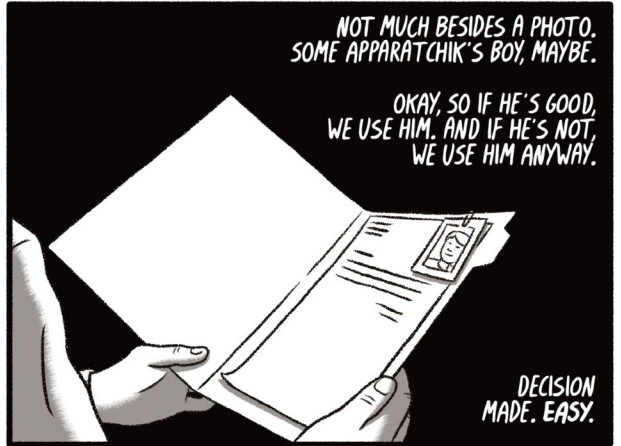
JUST KIDS, YOU SEE.



THE GOVERNMENT MAN PUT A PHOTO ON MY DESK.

I'M SURE IT WAS HIM. I SAW HIM ENTER MY OFFICE, AND AFTERWARD I WENT IN AND THERE IT WAS.

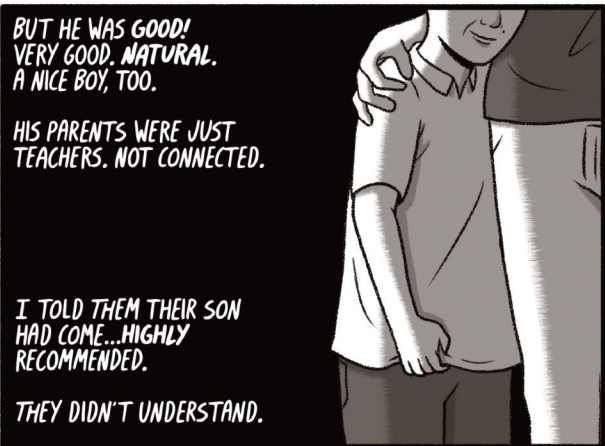
I CAN TAKE HINTS.



NOT MUCH BESIDES A PHOTO. SOME APPARATCHIK'S BOY, MAYBE.

OKAY, SO IF HE'S GOOD, WE USE HIM. AND IF HE'S NOT, WE USE HIM ANYWAY.

DECISION MADE. EASY.

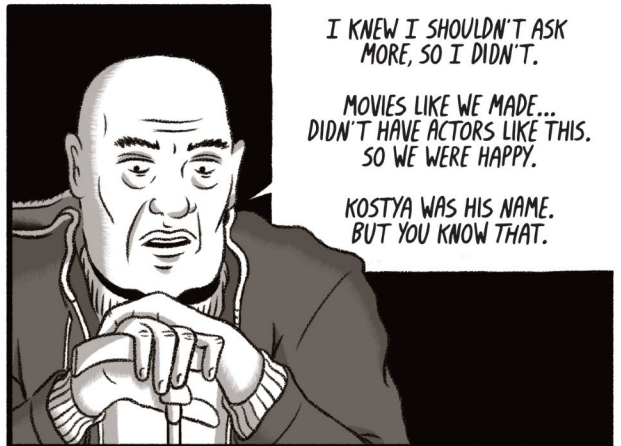


BUT HE WAS GOOD! VERY GOOD. NATURAL. A NICE BOY, TOO.

HIS PARENTS WERE JUST TEACHERS. NOT CONNECTED.

I TOLD THEM THEIR SON HAD COME... HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.



I KNEW I SHOULDN'T ASK MORE, SO I DIDN'T.

MOVIES LIKE WE MADE... DIDN'T HAVE ACTORS LIKE THIS. SO WE WERE HAPPY.

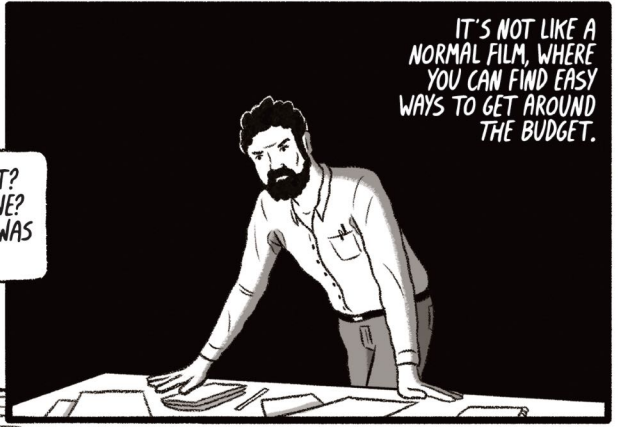
KOSTYA WAS HIS NAME. BUT YOU KNOW THAT.

YEVA
ASSISTANT
PRODUCTION DESIGNER



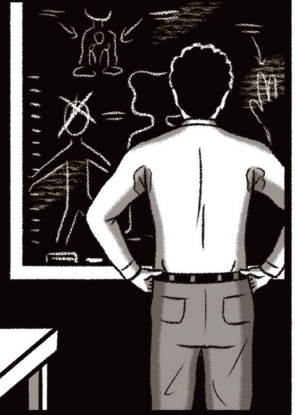
MORIZ SAID THAT?
SQUEEZING A STONE?
HA, WELL, YES, IT WAS
LIKE THAT.

IT'S NOT LIKE A
NORMAL FILM, WHERE
YOU CAN FIND EASY
WAYS TO GET AROUND
THE BUDGET.



ANATOLY, THE HEAD OF
THE DEPARTMENT, SAID
OUR BUDGET SHOULD
BE LARGER.

ON A FILM LIKE THIS,
WHERE ELSE SHOULD
IT GO BUT TO US?



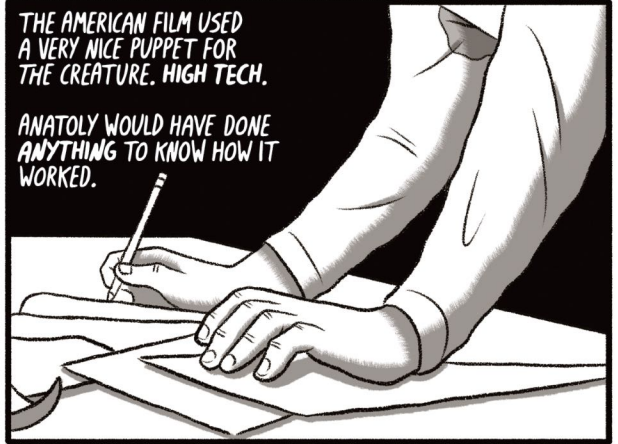
BACK THEN, THOUGH, THESE
PROJECTS WERE WALLETS
FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

JUST WAYS OF PUSHING
MONEY HERE AND THERE.



THE AMERICAN FILM USED
A VERY NICE PUPPET FOR
THE CREATURE. HIGH TECH.

ANATOLY WOULD HAVE DONE
ANYTHING TO KNOW HOW IT
WORKED.



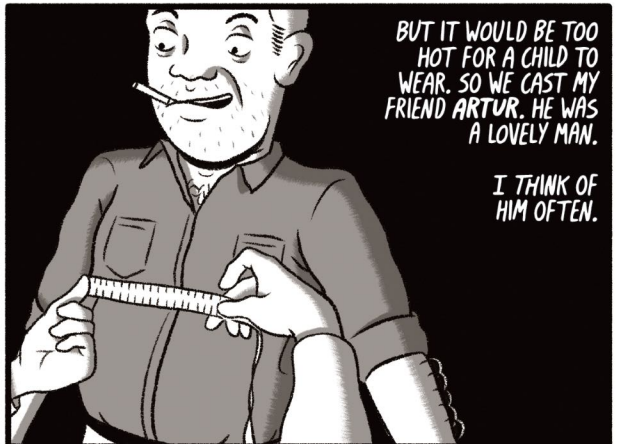
EVEN IF HE KNEW,
WE COULDN'T
HAVE DONE IT.

WE HAD TO DO
A COSTUME.

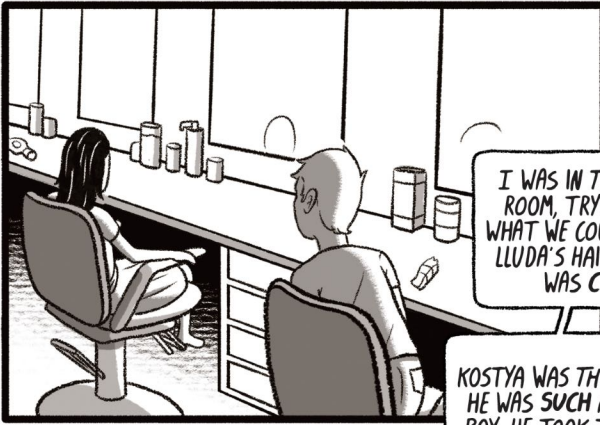


BUT IT WOULD BE TOO
HOT FOR A CHILD TO
WEAR. SO WE CAST MY
FRIEND ARTUR. HE WAS
A LOVELY MAN.

I THINK OF
HIM OFTEN.



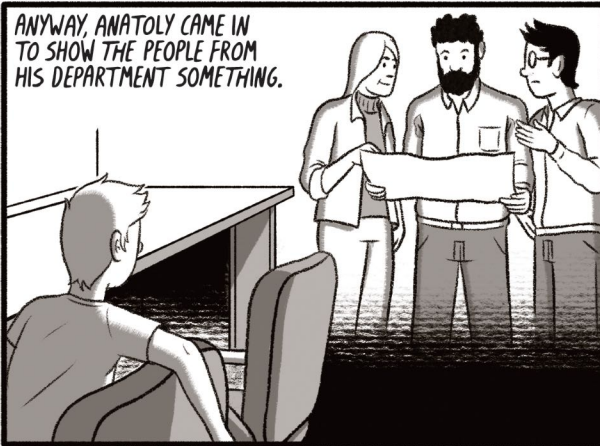
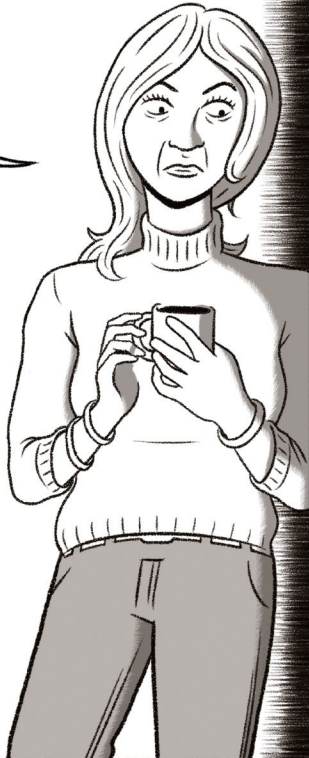
TATI
STYLIST



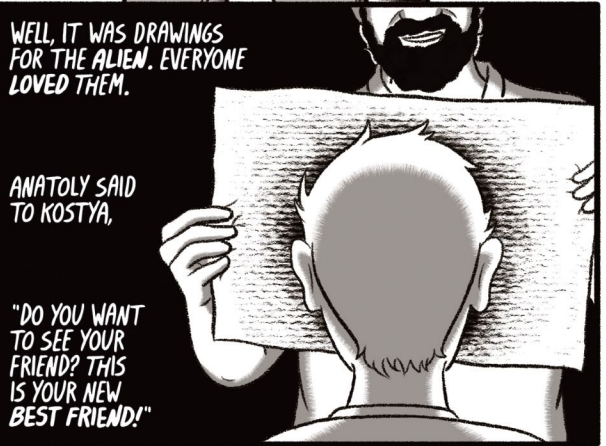
I WAS IN THE MAKEUP ROOM, TRYING TO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO WITH LLUDA'S HAIR. HER HAIR WAS CHAOS.

KOSTYA WAS THERE, TOO. HE WAS SUCH A SWEET BOY. HE TOOK TO LLUDA IMMEDIATELY.

ON SET, HE WAS VERY PROTECTIVE. I THINK BECAUSE SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO HIS LITTLE SISTER.



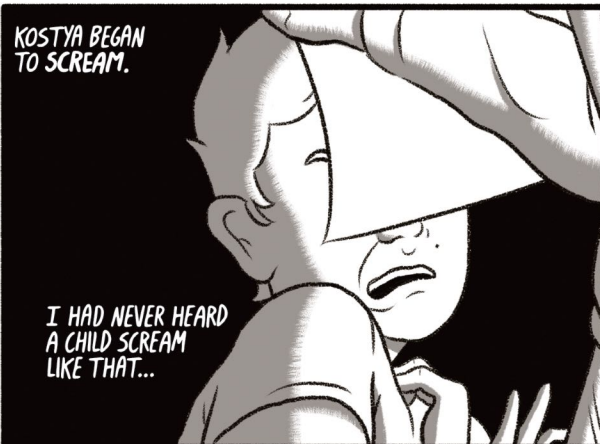
ANYWAY, ANATOLY CAME IN TO SHOW THE PEOPLE FROM HIS DEPARTMENT SOMETHING.



WELL, IT WAS DRAWINGS FOR THE ALIEN. EVERYONE LOVED THEM.

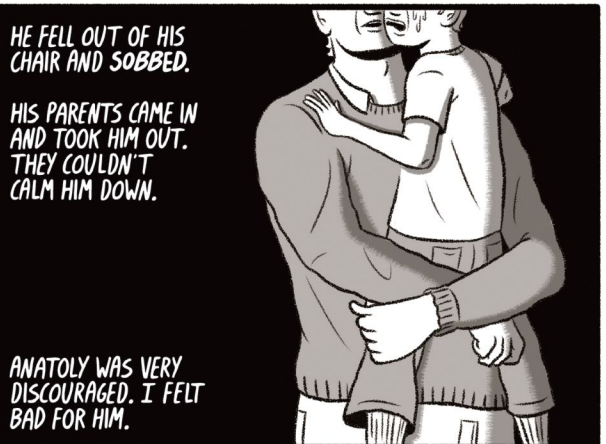
ANATOLY SAID TO KOSTYA,

"DO YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR FRIEND? THIS IS YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND!"



KOSTYA BEGAN TO SCREAM.

I HAD NEVER HEARD A CHILD SCREAM LIKE THAT...

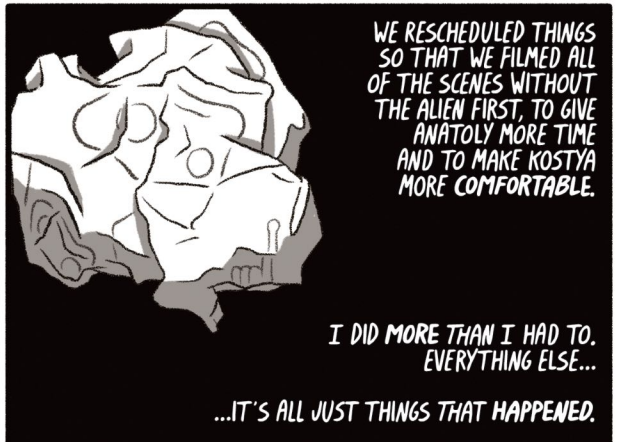
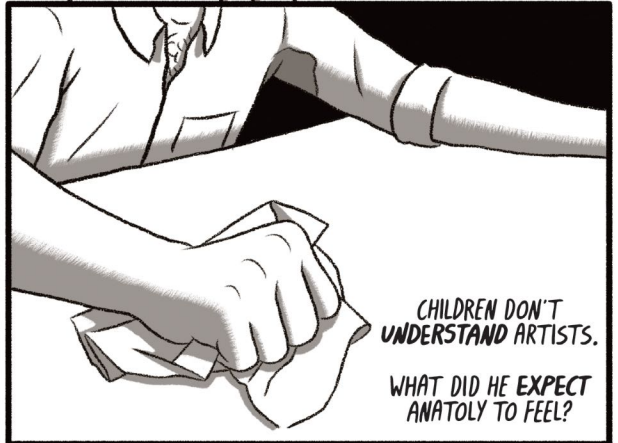
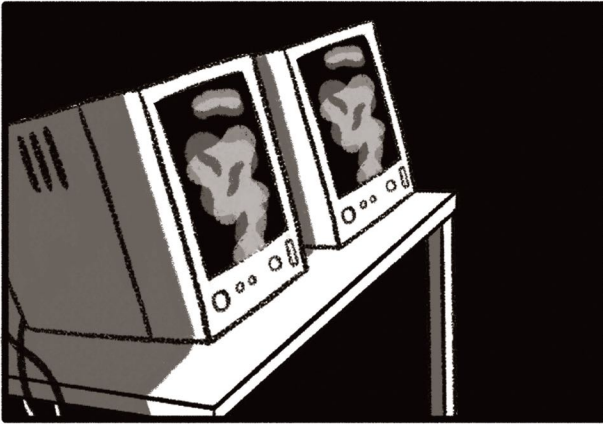
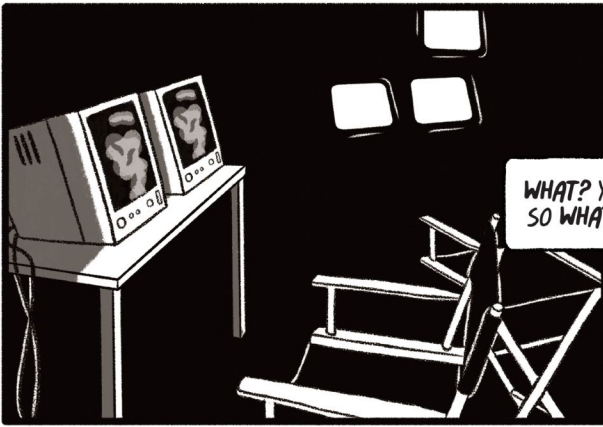


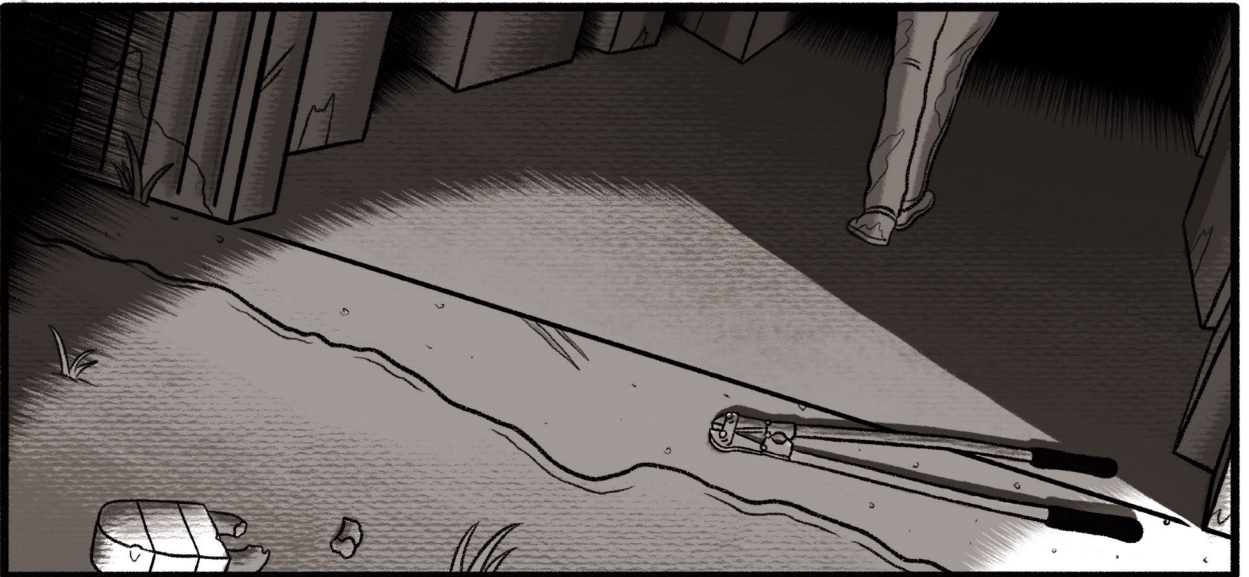
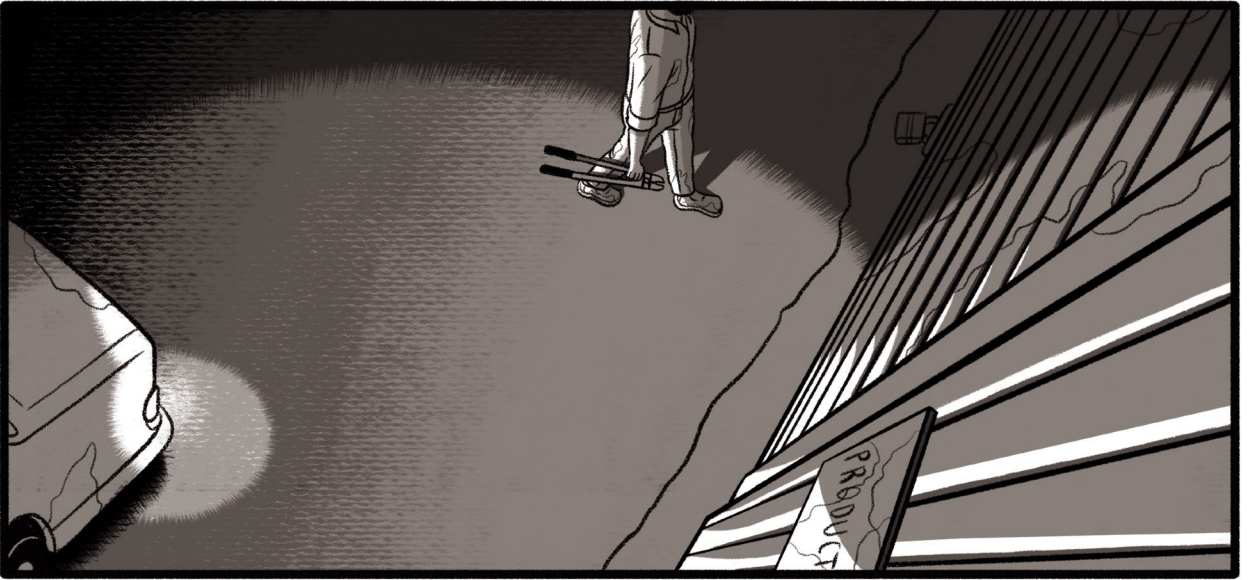
HE FELL OUT OF HIS CHAIR AND SOBBED.

HIS PARENTS CAME IN AND TOOK HIM OUT. THEY COULDN'T CALM HIM DOWN.

ANATOLY WAS VERY DISCOURAGED. I FELT BAD FOR HIM.

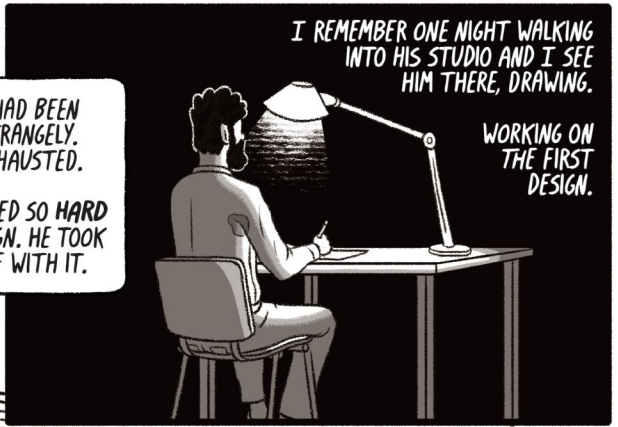
STEPAN
DIRECTOR





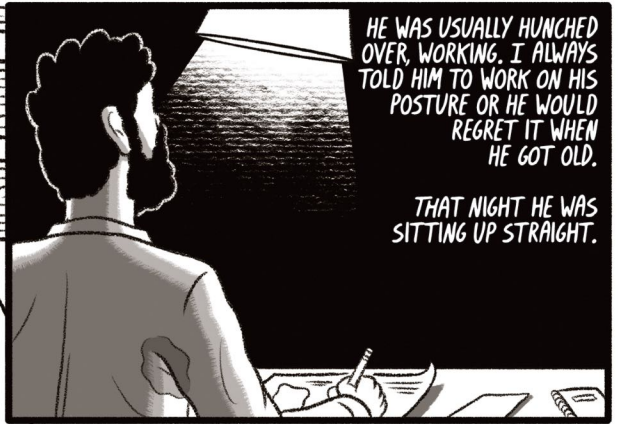


ANATOLY HAD BEEN ACTING STRANGELY. HE WAS EXHAUSTED. HE HAD WORKED SO HARD ON THE DESIGN. HE TOOK GREAT CARE WITH IT.



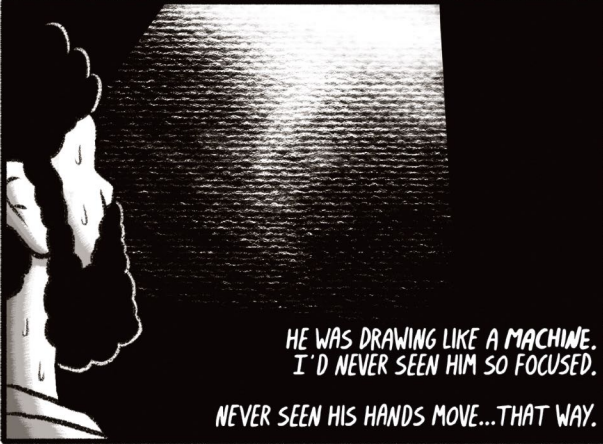
I REMEMBER ONE NIGHT WALKING INTO HIS STUDIO AND I SEE HIM THERE, DRAWING.

WORKING ON THE FIRST DESIGN.



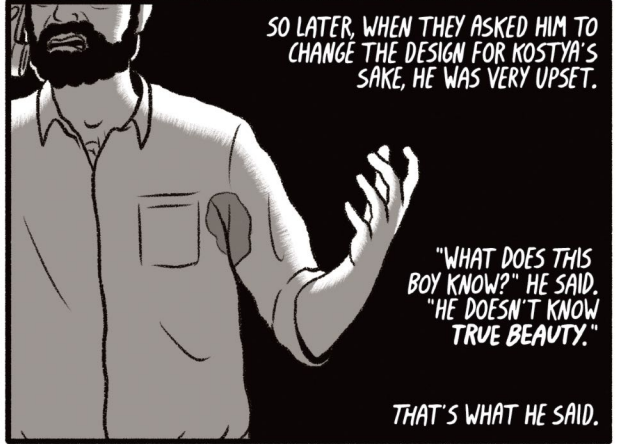
HE WAS USUALLY HUNCHED OVER, WORKING. I ALWAYS TOLD HIM TO WORK ON HIS POSTURE OR HE WOULD REGRET IT WHEN HE GOT OLD.

THAT NIGHT HE WAS SITTING UP STRAIGHT.



HE WAS DRAWING LIKE A MACHINE. I'D NEVER SEEN HIM SO FOCUSED.

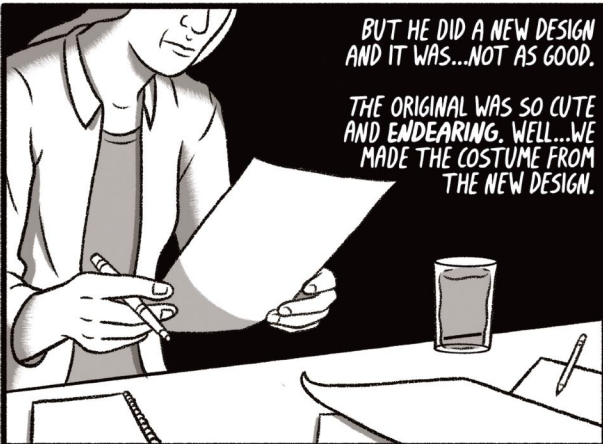
NEVER SEEN HIS HANDS MOVE... THAT WAY.



SO LATER, WHEN THEY ASKED HIM TO CHANGE THE DESIGN FOR KOSTYA'S SAKE, HE WAS VERY UPSET.

"WHAT DOES THIS BOY KNOW?" HE SAID. "HE DOESN'T KNOW TRUE BEAUTY."

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.



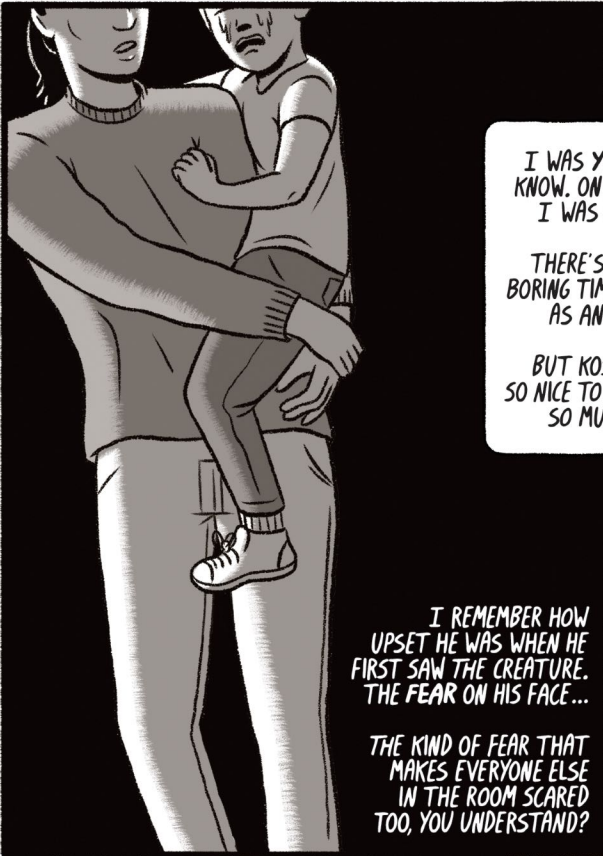
BUT HE DID A NEW DESIGN AND IT WAS...NOT AS GOOD.

THE ORIGINAL WAS SO CUTE AND ENDEARING. WELL...WE MADE THE COSTUME FROM THE NEW DESIGN.



BUT ANATOLY, HE WAS VERY UNHAPPY...I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS SO DEEP, THOUGH.

LLUDA
ACTOR - YULA



I WAS YOUNG, YOU KNOW. ON MOST SETS I WAS IGNORED.

THERE'S A LOT OF BORING TIMES WORKING AS AN ACTOR.

BUT KOSTYA WAS SO NICE TO ME...WE HAD SO MUCH FUN.

I REMEMBER HOW UPSET HE WAS WHEN HE FIRST SAW THE CREATURE. THE FEAR ON HIS FACE...

THE KIND OF FEAR THAT MAKES EVERYONE ELSE IN THE ROOM SCARED TOO, YOU UNDERSTAND?



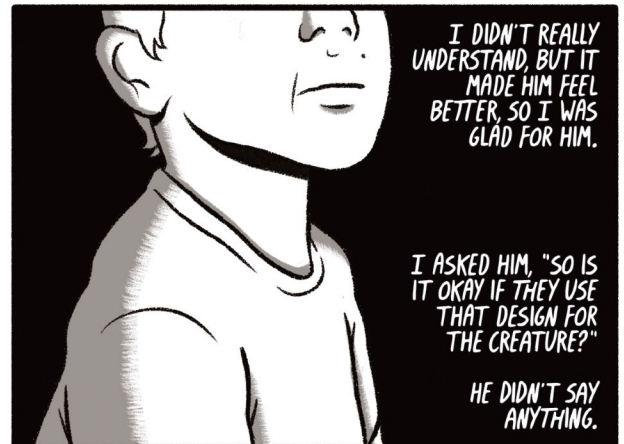
MY FATHER SUGGESTED I SHOULD BRING HIM A TREAT. HE WAS SHAKING, SITTING ON HIS MOTHER'S LAP.

STILL SO SCARED, THAT SCARED ME. BUT I GAVE HIM SOME CANDY AND HE SMILED.



LATER, HE TOLD ME HE WASN'T SCARED ANYMORE.

HIS MOTHER HAD TOLD HIM THAT SOMETIMES THINGS IN THE REAL WORLD LOOK LIKE THE THINGS FROM OUR DREAMS, BUT IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE.



I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND, BUT IT MADE HIM FEEL BETTER, SO I WAS GLAD FOR HIM.

I ASKED HIM, "SO IS IT OKAY IF THEY USE THAT DESIGN FOR THE CREATURE?"

HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.

WE THOUGHT ANATOLY HAD QUIT, AT FIRST.

UNPROFESSIONAL, YES, BUT NOT UNHEARD OF.



WHEN WE BECAME CONCERNED WAS WHEN WE FOUND THE COSTUME. HE HAD BURNED IT.

IT WAS COMPLETELY UNUSABLE.

WE WERE WORRIED, THEN. THE COSTUME HAD BEEN VERY EXPENSIVE, AND OUR FUNDS WERE, WELL, LOW.



CONVINCING KOSTYA TO FILM WITH IT... THAT BECAME OUR NEW PRIORITY. IF HE WOULDN'T DO IT, THE PROJECT WOULD END.



BUT HE HAD MADE ANOTHER COSTUME! IT WAS FOUND IN HIS HOME, AS IF IT HAD BEEN LEFT FOR US.

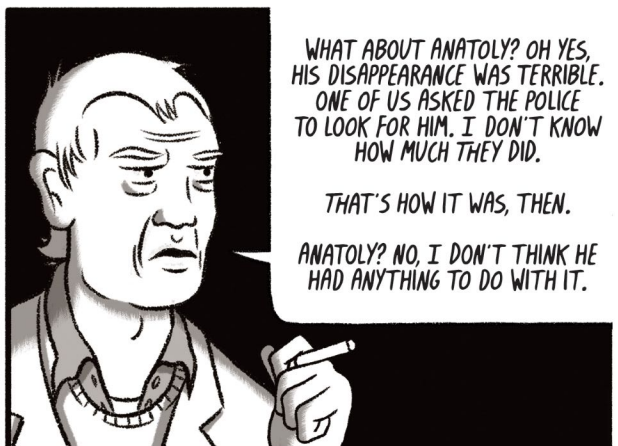
IT WAS FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGN. IMMACULATELY MADE, AND NEARLY FELT ALIVE TO LOOK AT. THE SKIN WAS ALMOST TRANSLUCENT.

SO WHAT? ARE WE NOT GOING TO USE IT?

WHAT ABOUT ANATOLY? OH YES, HIS DISAPPEARANCE WAS TERRIBLE. ONE OF US ASKED THE POLICE TO LOOK FOR HIM. I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH THEY DID.

THAT'S HOW IT WAS, THEN.

ANATOLY? NO, I DON'T THINK HE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.





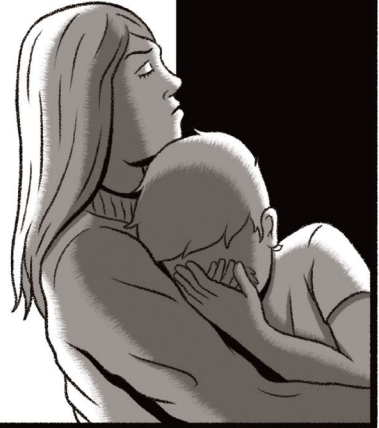
THE BOY WAS DIFFICULT. I DON'T FEEL BAD TO SAY IT. THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M HAPPY ABOUT...WHAT HAPPENED, BUT HE TESTED PATIENCE.

I ASKED HIS MOTHER, "WHY NOT TELL HIM TO THINK OF THE MONEY HE COULD MAKE FOR THE FAMILY?"

IT WAS SO FOOLISH...THERE WAS SO LITTLE MONEY TO BE HAD.

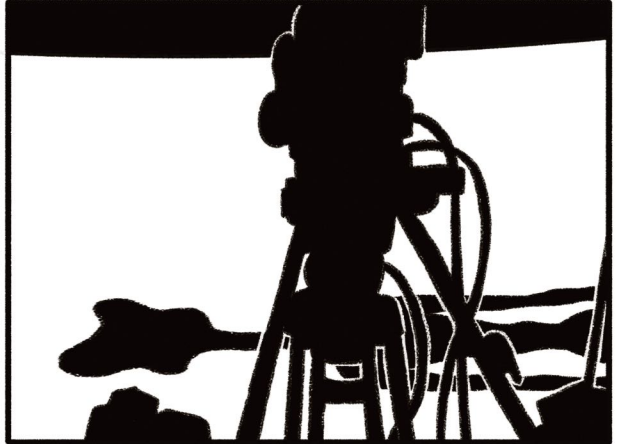
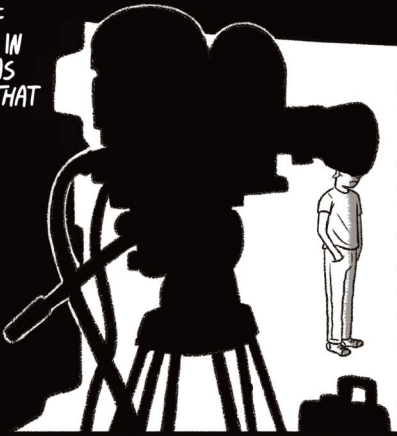
BUT SHE CONVINCED HIM WHEN SHE POINTED OUT HOW HE WAS INCONVENIENCING EVERYONE.

THAT MADE HIM SWALLOW HIS PRIDE.

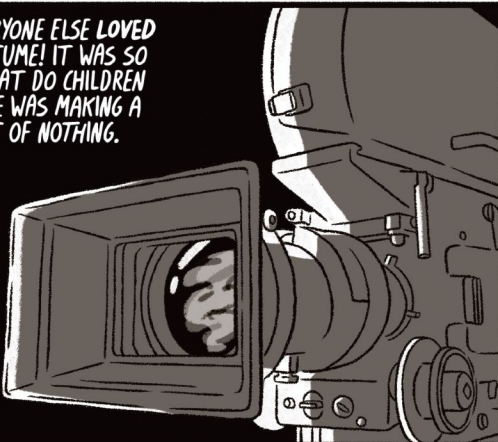


ON THE FIRST DAY OF FILMING WITH ARTUR IN THE COSTUME...I WAS ALMOST CONVINCED THAT KOSTYA'S FEAR WAS GENUINE. HIS EYES...

HE WAS LIKE A CORNERED DOG WHEN HE FIRST SAW IT.



BUT EVERYONE ELSE LOVED THE COSTUME! IT WAS SO CUTE. WHAT DO CHILDREN KNOW? HE WAS MAKING A MEAL OUT OF NOTHING.



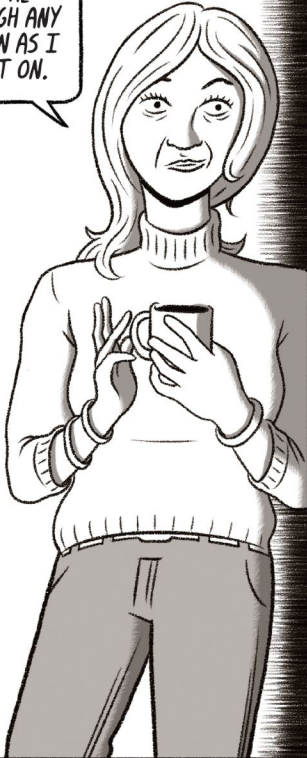
HE WANTED TO BE DISRUPTIVE. HE WANTED ATTENTION.

AND HE GOT IT! WHAT HAPPENED...IT'S HISTORY! YOU THINK HE WAS THE ONLY PERSON WHO WENT MISSING THAT YEAR?

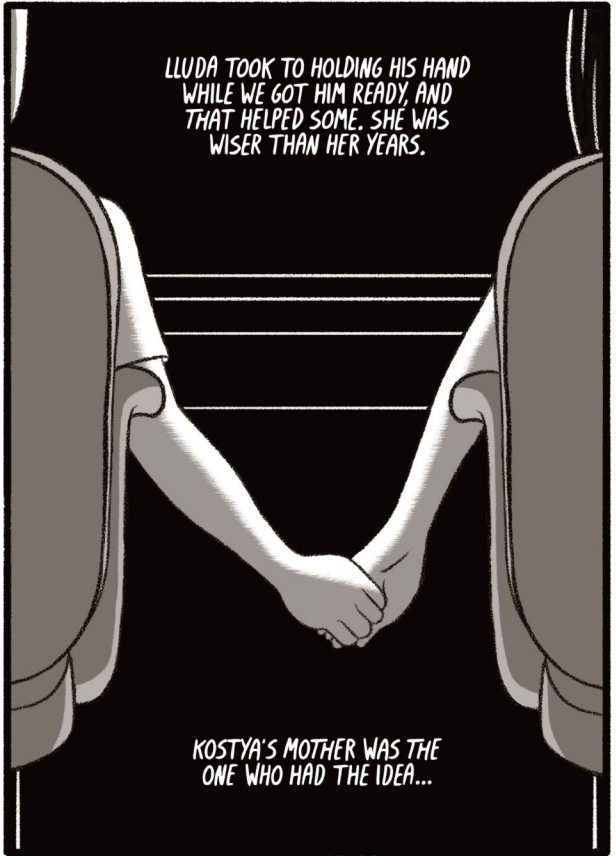
THAT'S HOW IT WAS, THEN.



WORKING WITH KOSTYA WASN'T EASY. HE PUT ON A BRAVE FACE, BUT HE WOULD SWEAT THROUGH ANY MAKEUP JUST AS SOON AS I FINISHED PUTTING IT ON.



LLUDA TOOK TO HOLDING HIS HAND WHILE WE GOT HIM READY, AND THAT HELPED SOME. SHE WAS WISER THAN HER YEARS.



KOSTYA'S MOTHER WAS THE ONE WHO HAD THE IDEA...

"SHOW HIM ARTUR PUTTING ON THE SUIT," SHE SAID.

"SHOW HIM HOW NOT REAL IT IS."



SO WE DID.

KOSTYA WAS SO SCARED, BUT HE PUSHED HIMSELF TO WATCH.

ARTUR TRIED TO COMFORT HIM AS HE SHOWED HIM THE MASK.



HE SAID, "LOOK AT ME. I AM NOT THIS CREATURE, KOSTYA. I'M JUST ME, AND IT IS JUST A SUIT."

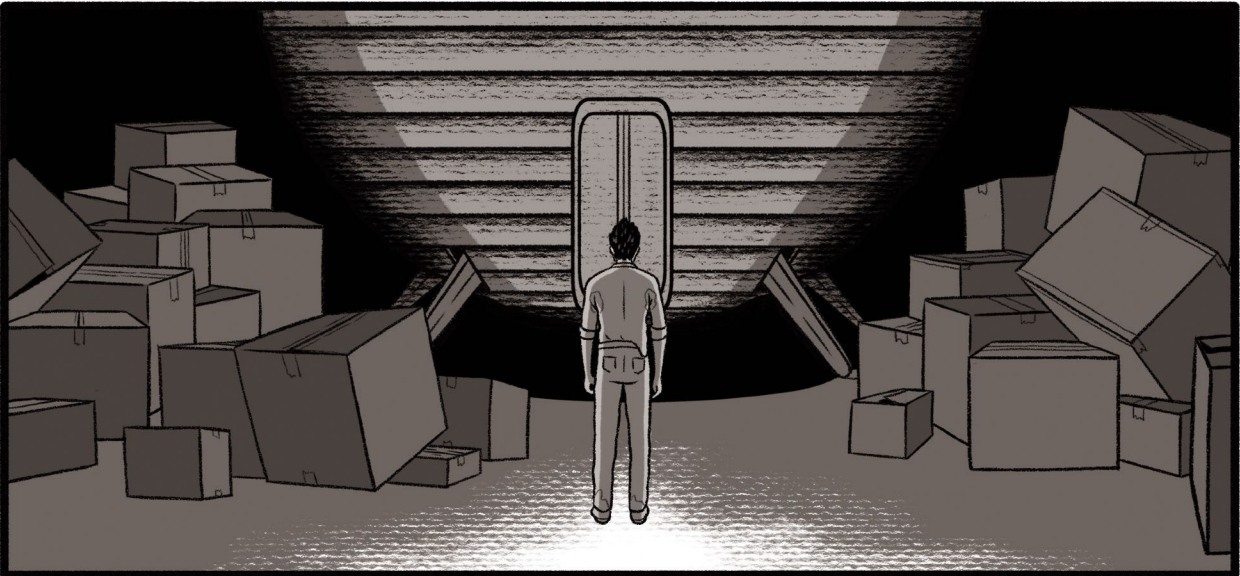
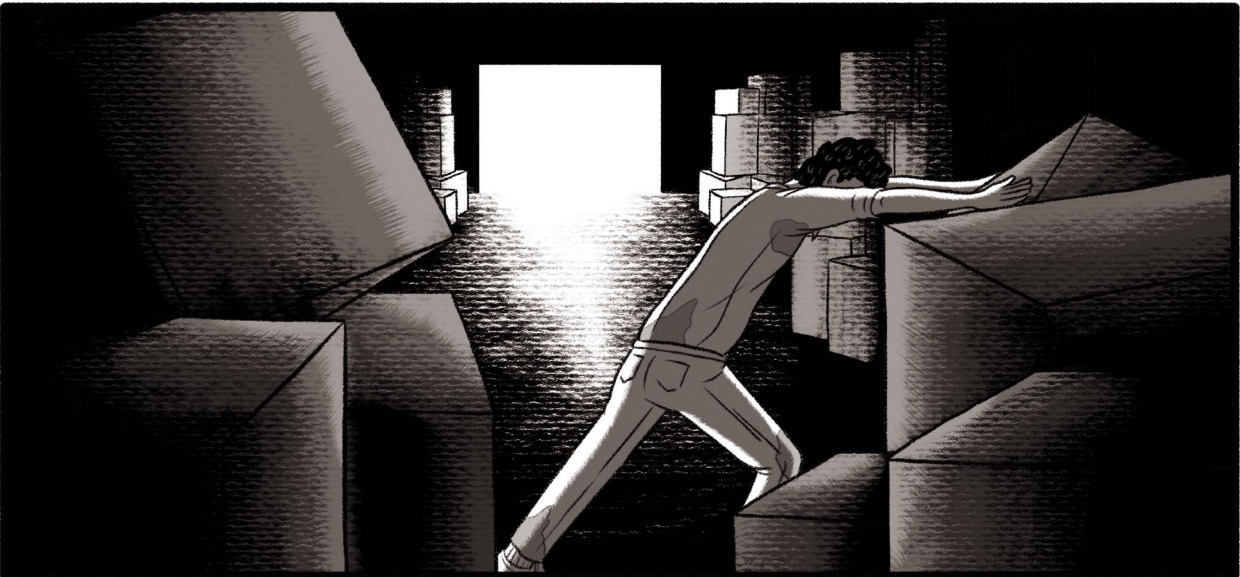
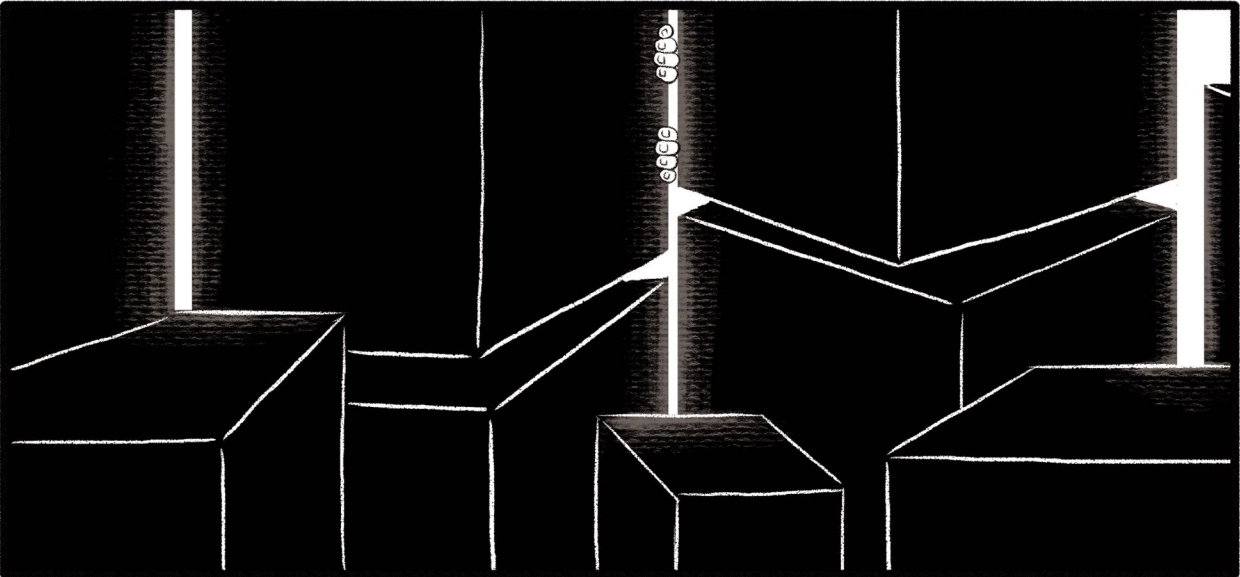
HE WAS A VERY SWEET MAN, ARTUR.



KOSTYA'S EYES, WHEN HE LOOKED AT IT... THERE WAS FEAR, BUT THERE WAS HATE, TOO.

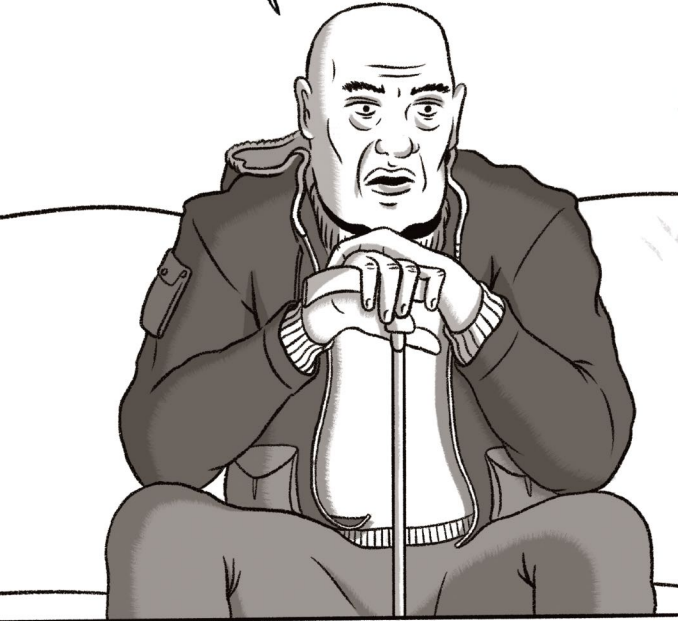
I THINK HE HATED THE THING.





SOMEHOW, WE GOT KOSTYA THROUGH THOSE SCENES. SOMETIMES IT WOULD BE BY FILMING IT CLEVERLY.

NOT HAVING HIM AND ARTUR ON SET AT THE SAME TIME.



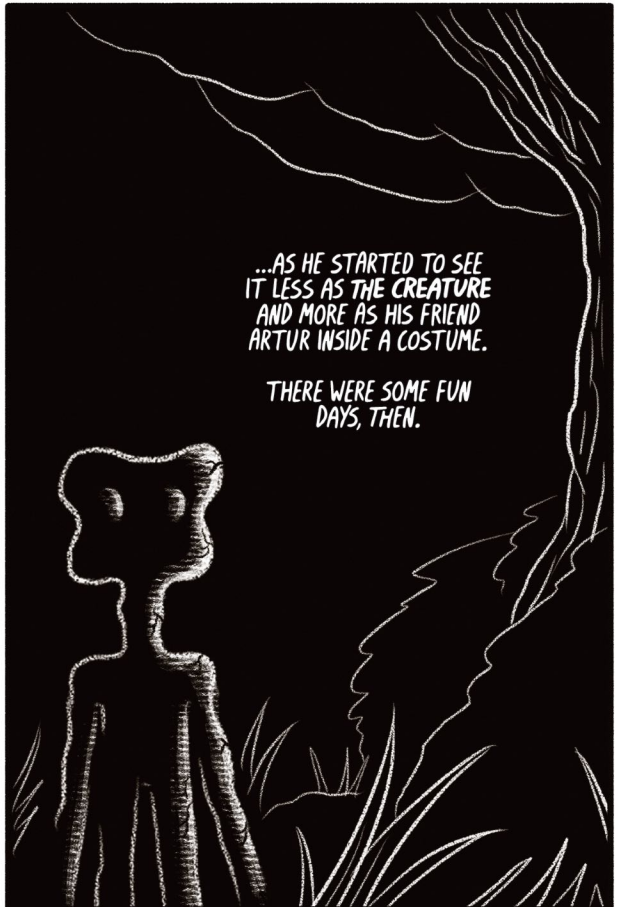
WHEN THAT WASN'T POSSIBLE, WE WOULD HAVE KOSTYA'S MOTHER OFF CAMERA BEHIND THE CREATURE, SHOWING HIM LOVE AND SUPPORT.

IT SEEMED TO HELP HIM A LOT.



...AS HE STARTED TO SEE IT LESS AS THE CREATURE AND MORE AS HIS FRIEND ARTUR INSIDE A COSTUME.

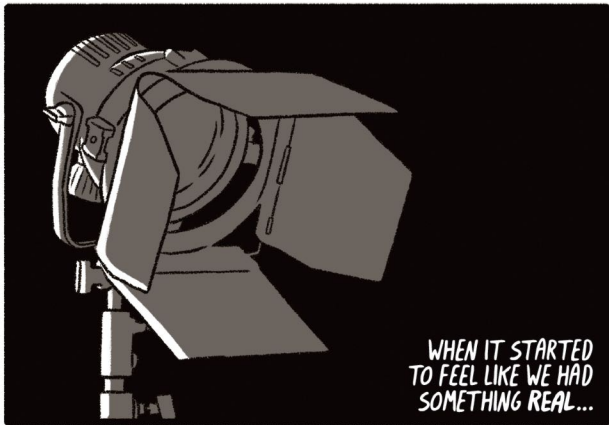
THERE WERE SOME FUN DAYS, THEN.





THINGS WERE GOOD.
PROGRESSING.

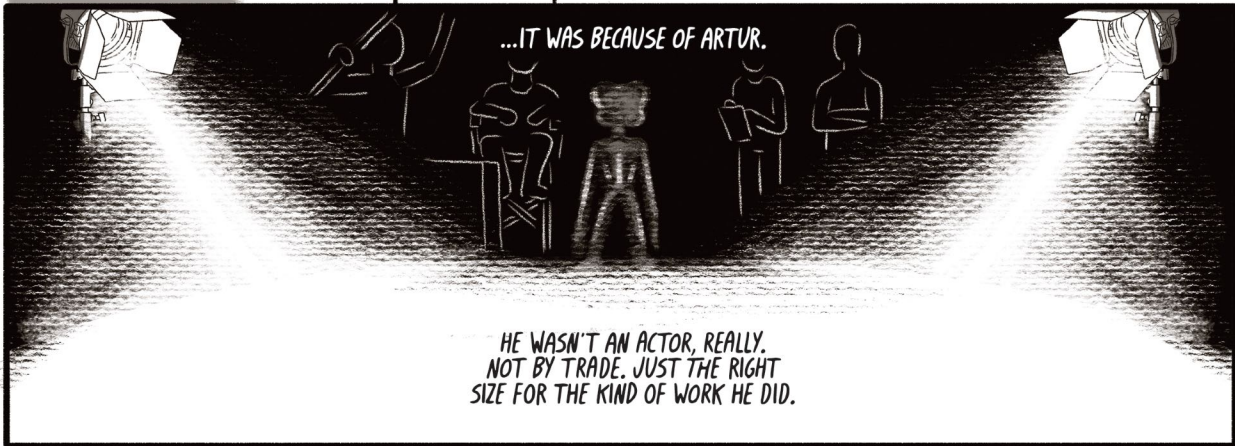
KOSTYA WAS BEING
LESS DIFFICULT--WE
WERE MAKING OUR WAY
THROUGH THE SCRIPT.



WHEN IT STARTED
TO FEEL LIKE WE HAD
SOMETHING REAL...

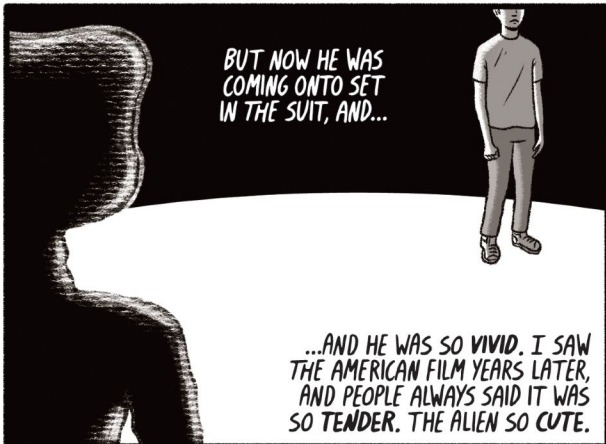


...NOT JUST SOME COPY
OF AN AMERICAN FILM,
BUT SOMETHING OUR OWN...



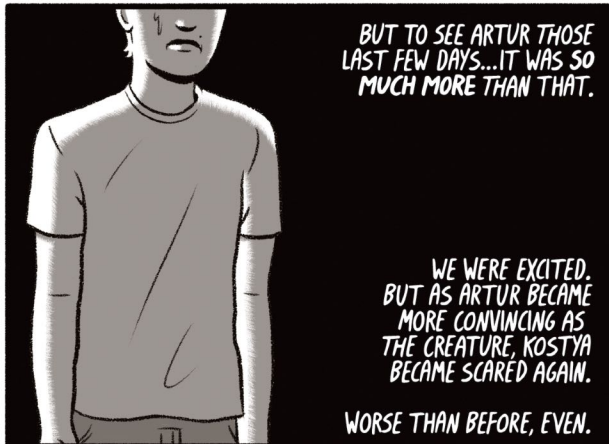
...IT WAS BECAUSE OF ARTUR.

HE WASN'T AN ACTOR, REALLY.
NOT BY TRADE. JUST THE RIGHT
SIZE FOR THE KIND OF WORK HE DID.



BUT NOW HE WAS
COMING ONTO SET
IN THE SUIT, AND...

...AND HE WAS SO VIVID. I SAW
THE AMERICAN FILM YEARS LATER,
AND PEOPLE ALWAYS SAID IT WAS
SO TENDER. THE ALIEN SO CUTE.



BUT TO SEE ARTUR THOSE
LAST FEW DAYS...IT WAS SO
MUCH MORE THAN THAT.

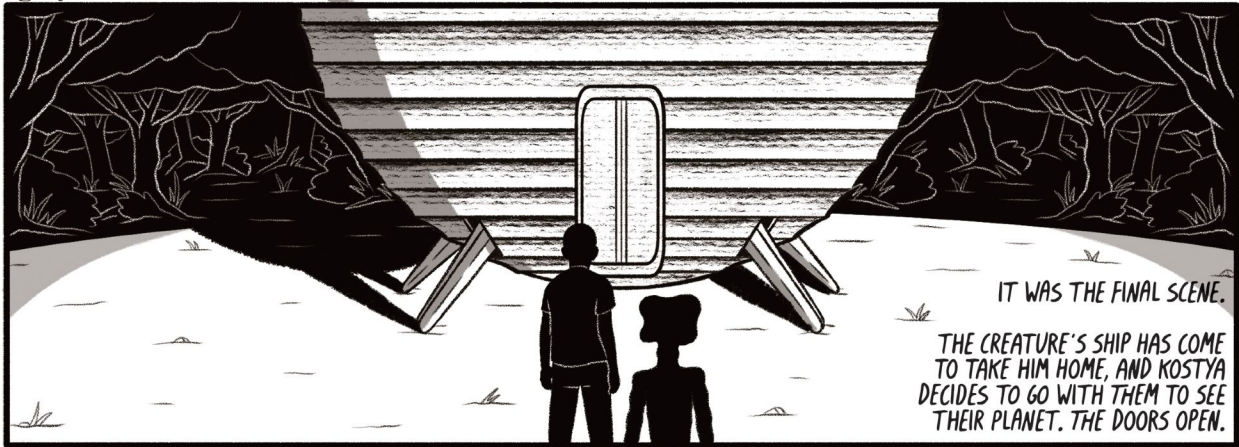
WE WERE EXCITED.
BUT AS ARTUR BECAME
MORE CONVINCING AS
THE CREATURE, KOSTYA
BECAME SCARED AGAIN.
WORSE THAN BEFORE, EVEN.



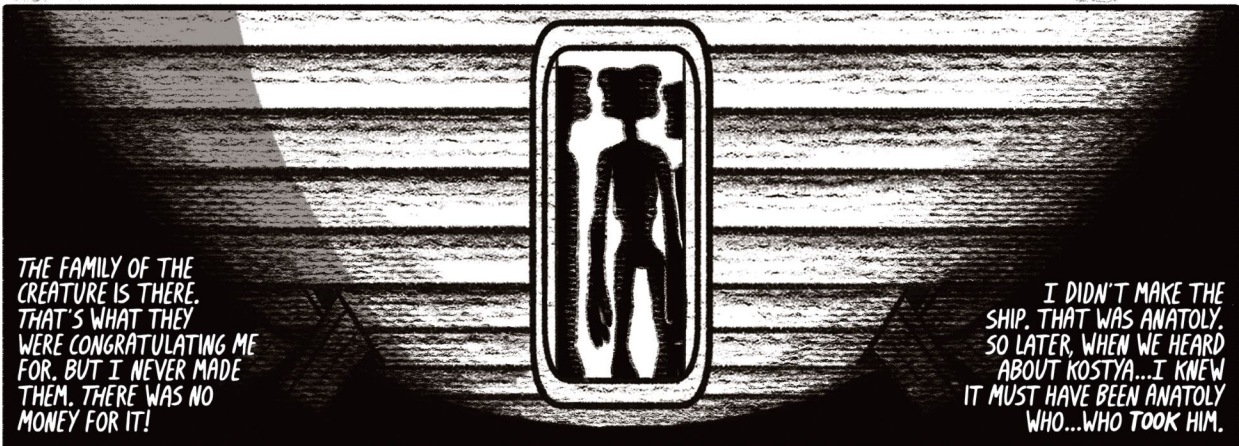
I WASN'T ON SET THAT LAST DAY. I WAS PACKING UP MATERIALS FOR THE FILM, AND SUDDENLY PEOPLE WERE COMING TO MY OFFICE AND CONGRATULATING ME. TELLING ME HOW BRILLIANT MY DESIGNS WERE. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY MEANT.



THIS WAS BEFORE WE HEARD ABOUT KOSTYA. MORIZ AND STEPAN DIDN'T TELL ANYONE AT FIRST, WANTED TO SOLVE IT FOR THEMSELVES. THEY WERE COWARDS, AND IF THEY ARE STILL ALIVE, I'M SURE THEY STILL ARE.



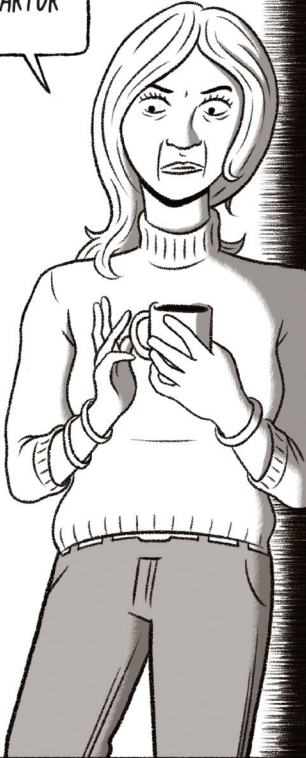
IT WAS THE FINAL SCENE. THE CREATURE'S SHIP HAS COME TO TAKE HIM HOME, AND KOSTYA DECIDES TO GO WITH THEM TO SEE THEIR PLANET. THE DOORS OPEN.



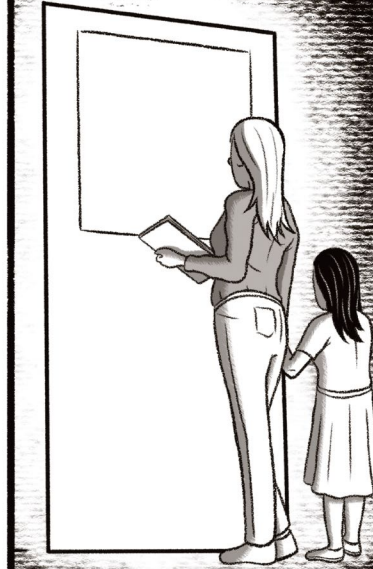
THE FAMILY OF THE CREATURE IS THERE. THAT'S WHAT THEY WERE CONGRATULATING ME FOR. BUT I NEVER MADE THEM. THERE WAS NO MONEY FOR IT!

I DIDN'T MAKE THE SHIP. THAT WAS ANATOLY. SO LATER, WHEN WE HEARD ABOUT KOSTYA...I KNEW IT MUST HAVE BEEN ANATOLY WHO...WHO TOOK HIM.

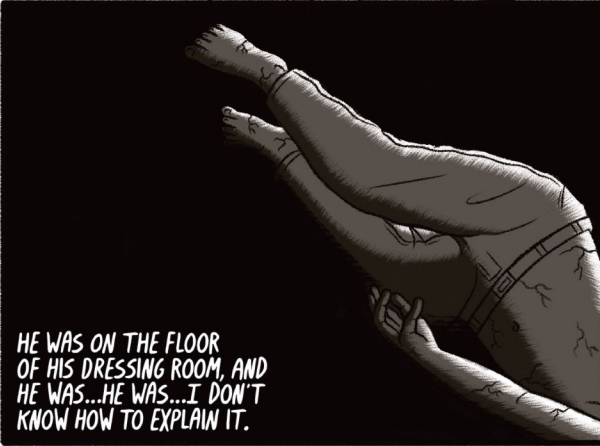
I WISH I HADN'T BROUGHT LLUDA WITH ME. IF I COULD CHANGE ANYTHING, I WOULD NOT HAVE HER SEE ARTUR LIKE THAT.



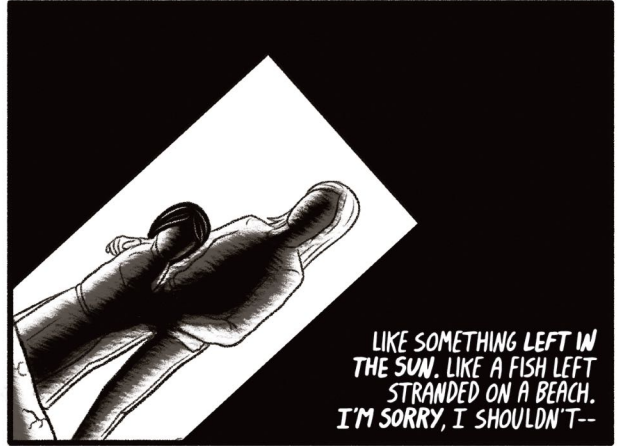
IT WAS AFTER FILMING THE FINAL SCENE. EVERYONE WAS ON SET CELEBRATING, BUT LLUDA AND I DECIDED TO GO FIND ARTUR TO CONGRATULATE HIM. WE HAD ALL GROWN VERY CLOSE THOSE LAST FEW WEEKS.



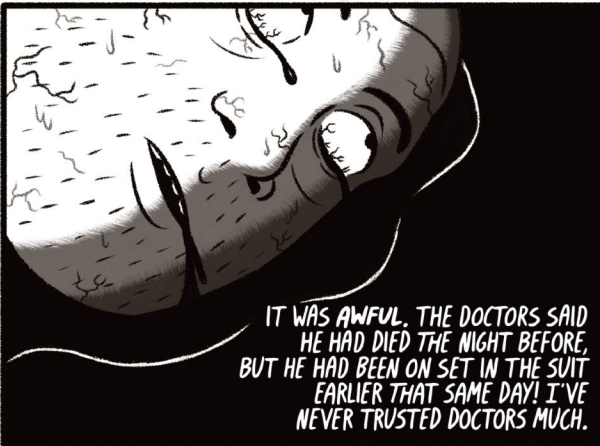
HE WAS ON THE FLOOR OF HIS DRESSING ROOM, AND HE WAS...HE WAS...I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT.



LIKE SOMETHING LEFT IN THE SUN. LIKE A FISH LEFT STRANDED ON A BEACH. I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T--



IT WAS AWFUL. THE DOCTORS SAID HE HAD DIED THE NIGHT BEFORE, BUT HE HAD BEEN ON SET IN THE SUIT EARLIER THAT SAME DAY! I'VE NEVER TRUSTED DOCTORS MUCH.



IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO GET THE IMAGE OF HIM OUT OF MY MIND. AND THIS WAS ALL BEFORE WE HEARD ABOUT KOSTYA.

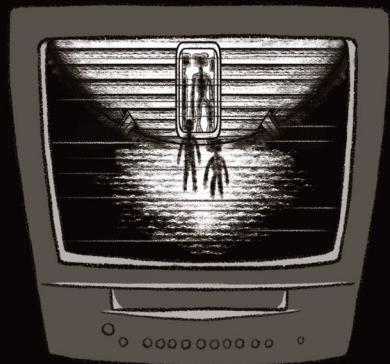




"IS THERE MORE I COULD HAVE DONE?" WHAT KIND OF A QUESTION IS THAT?

YOU THINK I WOULDN'T HAVE STOPPED IT IF I COULD HAVE? THERE WAS NOTHING TO STOP.

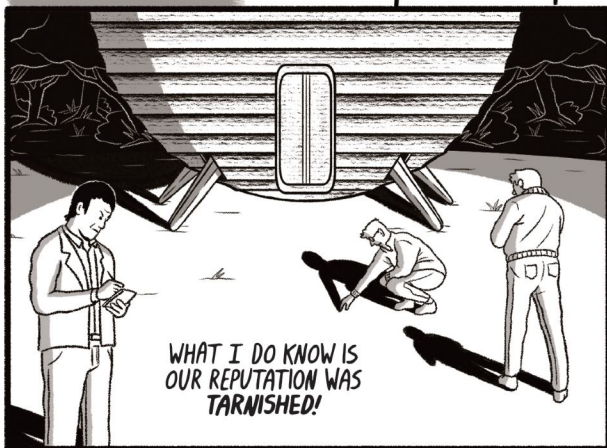
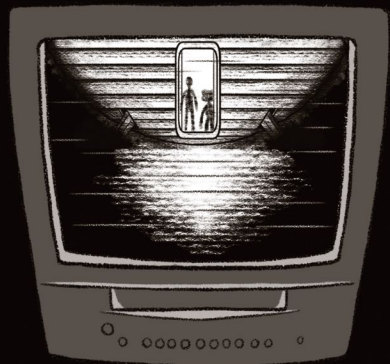
THE SCENE STARTED. THE DOORS OPEN. HE WALKS INTO THE SHIP.



AND THEN HE RAN AWAY!

OR WAS TAKEN!

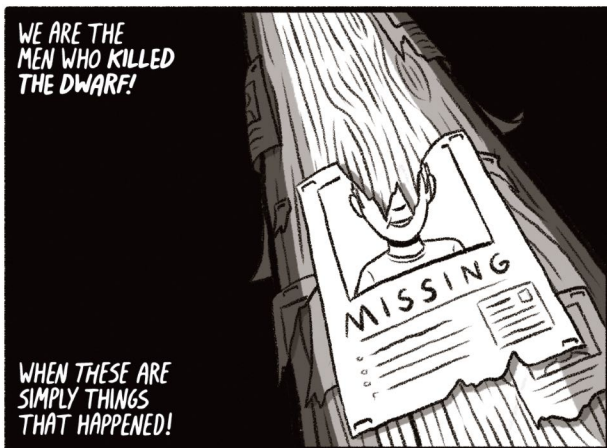
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, AND NEITHER DO THE POLICE, AND NEITHER DO YOU!



WHAT I DO KNOW IS OUR REPUTATION WAS TARNISHED!



SUDDENLY WE ARE THE MEN WHO LOST THE BOY!



WE ARE THE MEN WHO KILLED THE DWARF!

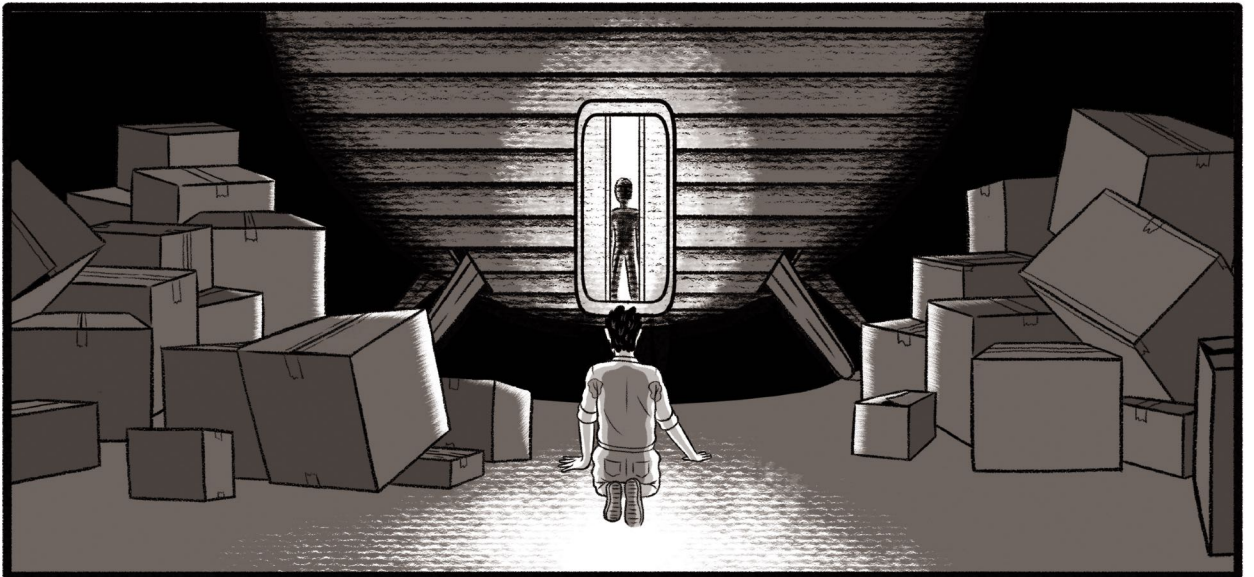
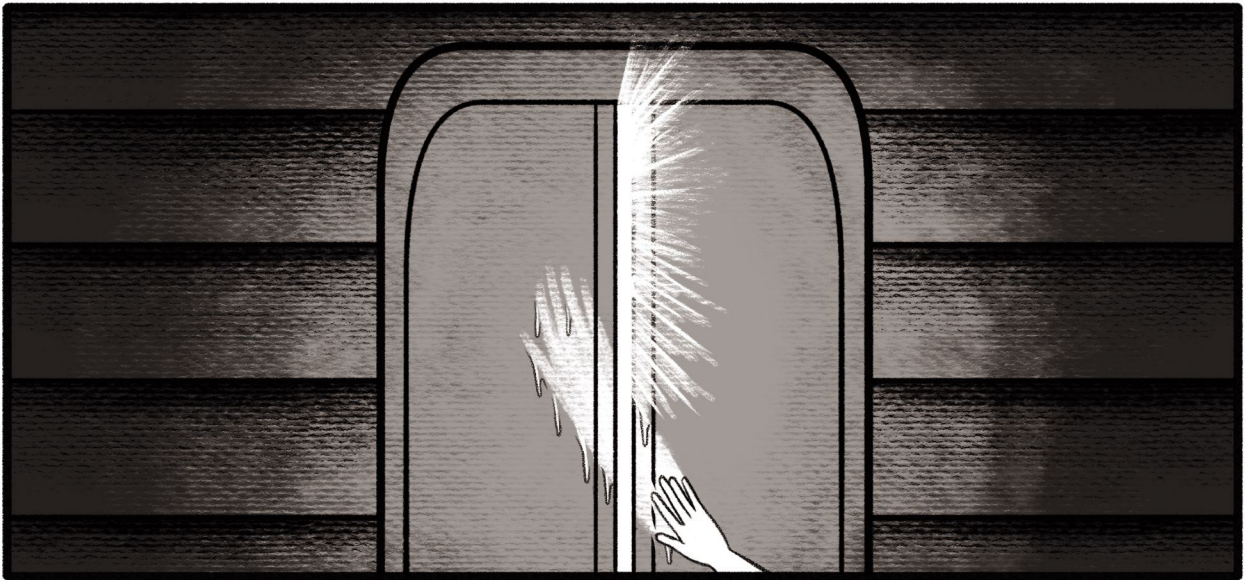
WHEN THESE ARE SIMPLY THINGS THAT HAPPENED!

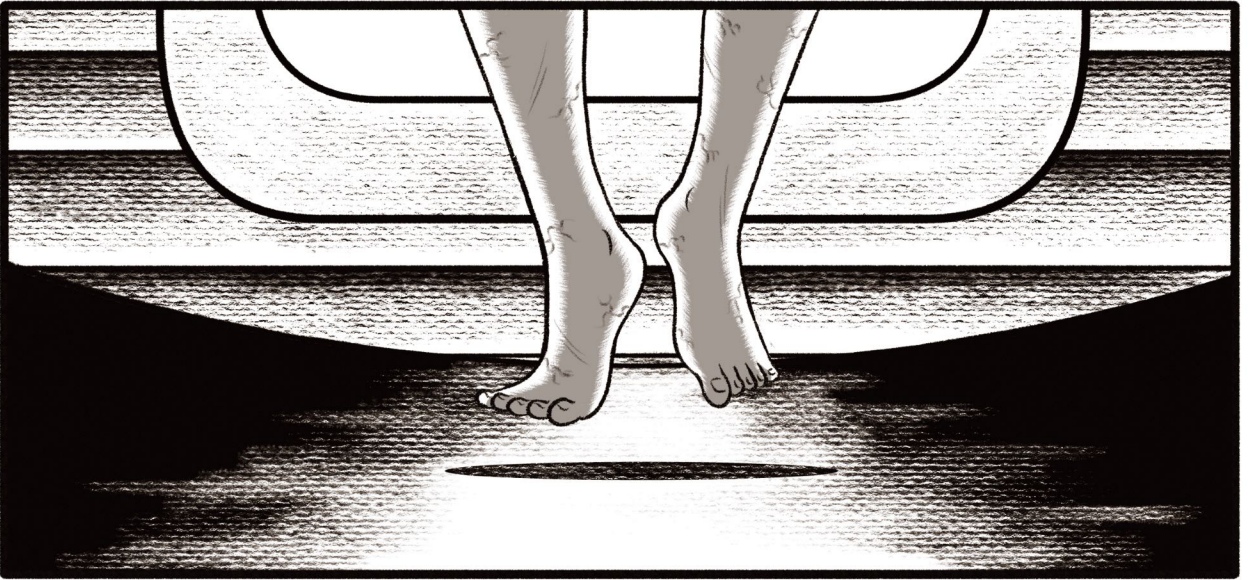


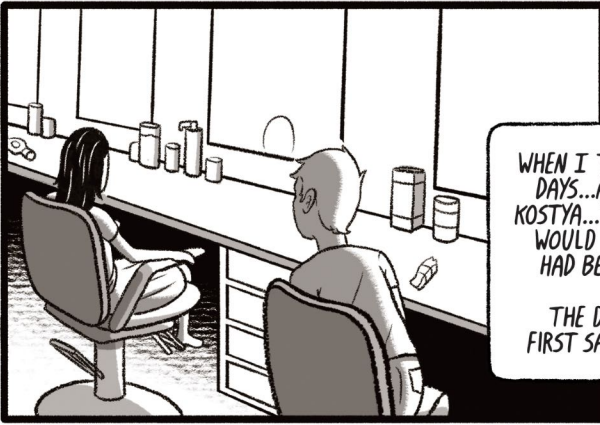
I THOUGHT THIS WAS AN INTERVIEW, NOT A TESTIMONY!

IF YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT THE BOY, WHY DON'T YOU GO FIND HIM. MAKE SURE TO BRING A SHOVEL. I'M SURE YOU WILL NEED IT.

I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY.

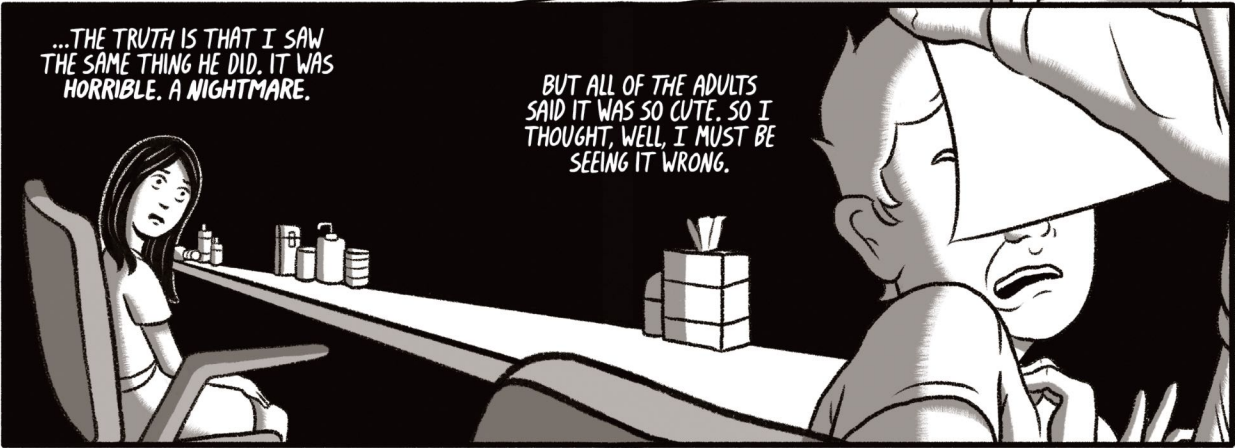






WHEN I THINK ABOUT THOSE DAYS...ABOUT ARTUR AND KOSTYA...I WONDER IF THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT IF I HAD BEEN MORE HONEST.

THE DAY THAT KOSTYA FIRST SAW THE CREATURE...



...THE TRUTH IS THAT I SAW THE SAME THING HE DID. IT WAS HORRIBLE. A NIGHTMARE.

BUT ALL OF THE ADULTS SAID IT WAS SO CUTE. SO I THOUGHT, WELL, I MUST BE SEEING IT WRONG.



BUT I SHOULD HAVE TOLD THEM WHAT I SAW IN IT. I'M NOT SAYING THAT IT... THAT THE CREATURE... IT'S NOT REAL.

BUT MAYBE THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT. MAYBE KOSTYA...WOULD STILL BE HERE.

I SAW FOOTAGE OF THE FILM RECENTLY. I STILL SEE IT THE SAME WAY.

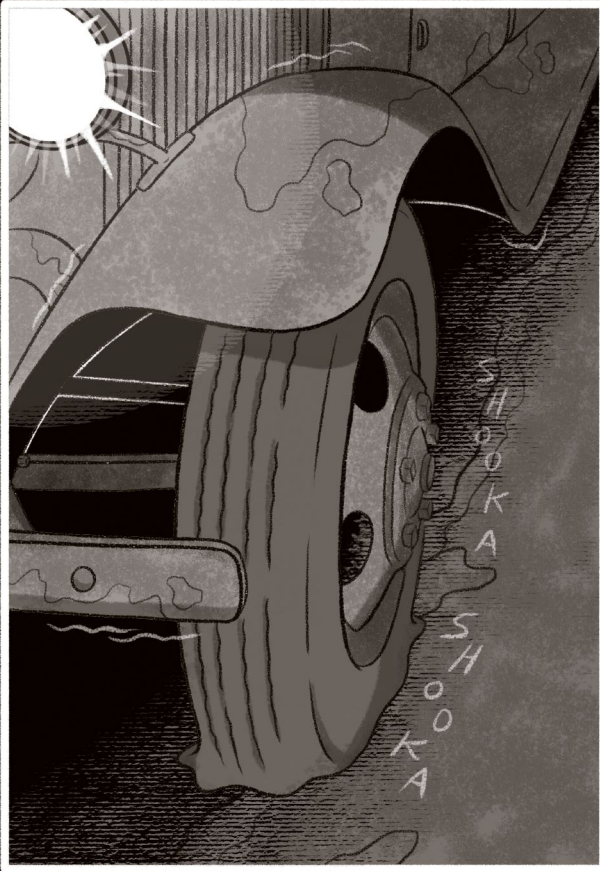
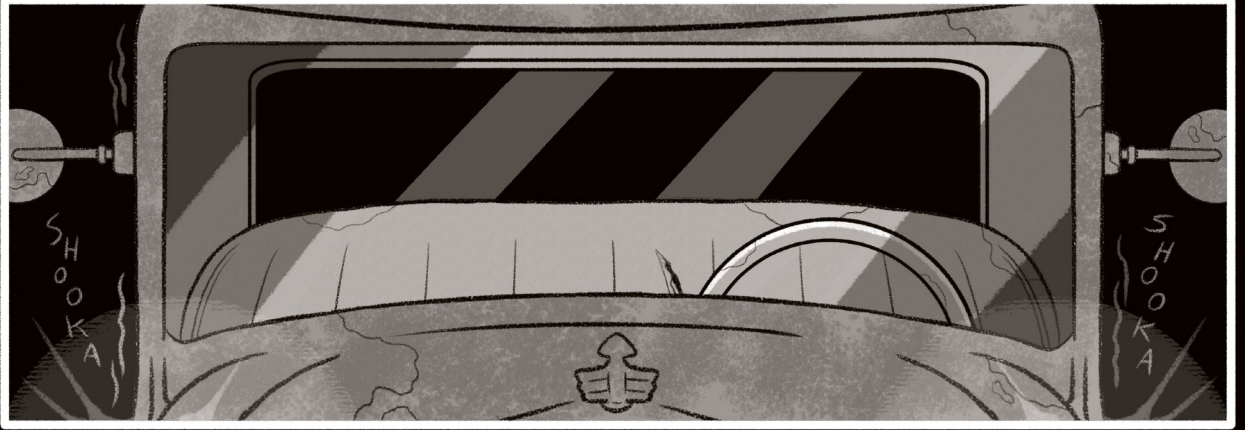
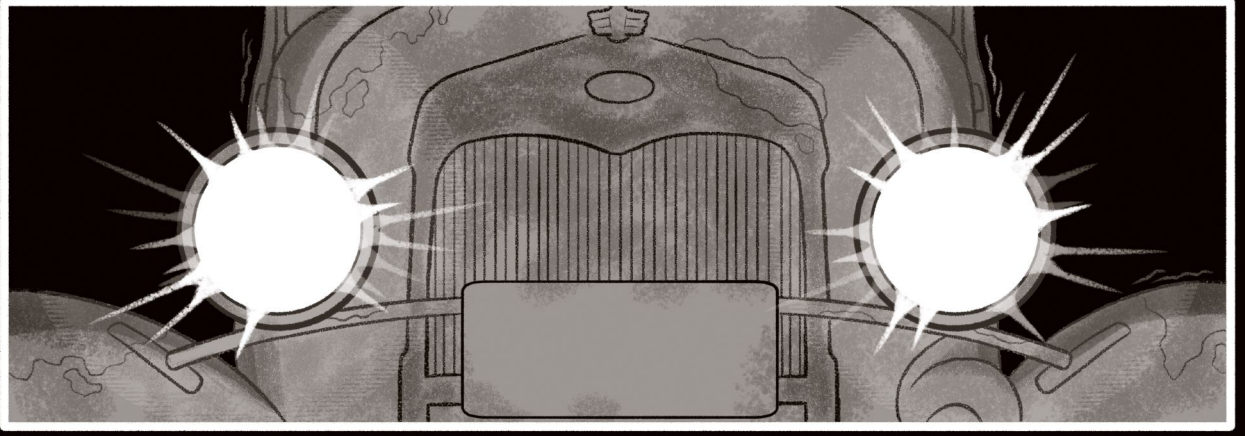
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SEE IT THE WAY THEY DID. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY SAW.

I ONLY KNOW WHAT WE SAW.

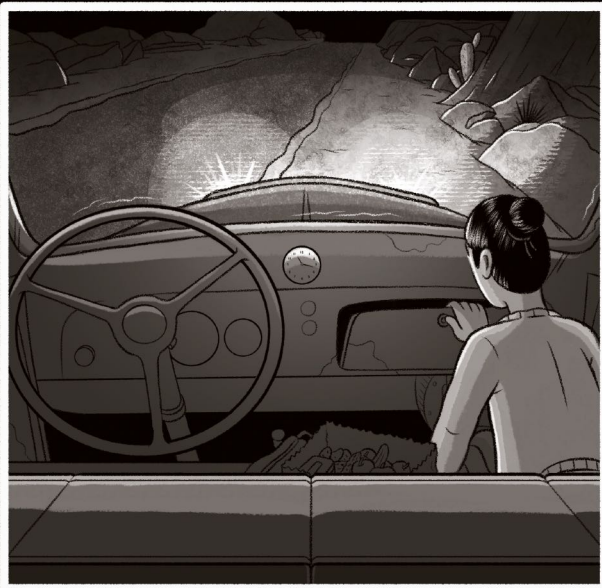


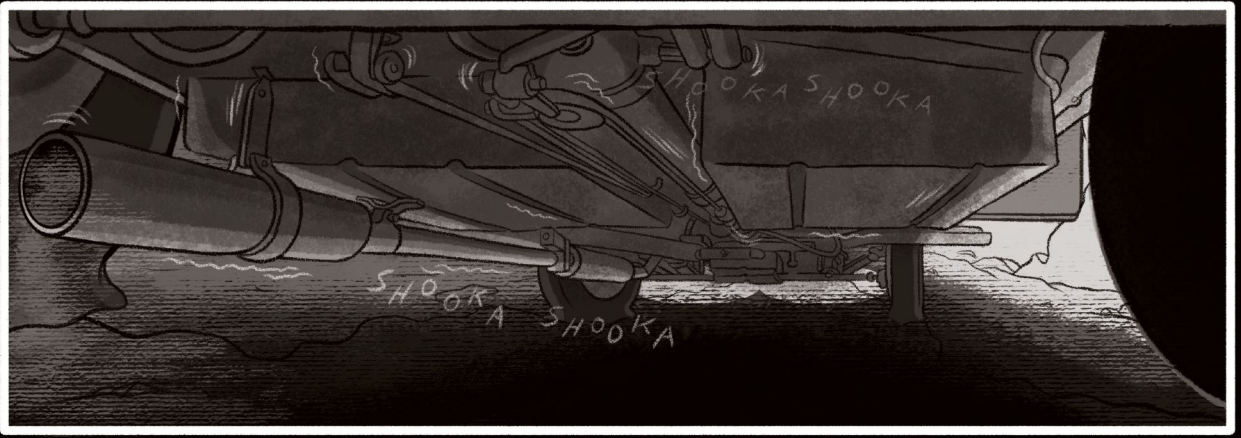
“A Cordial Invitation”

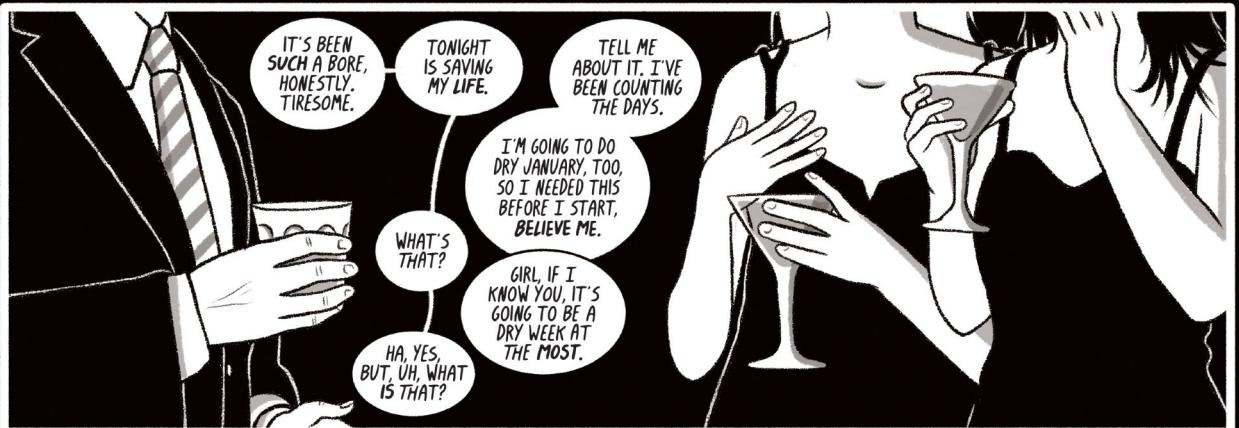


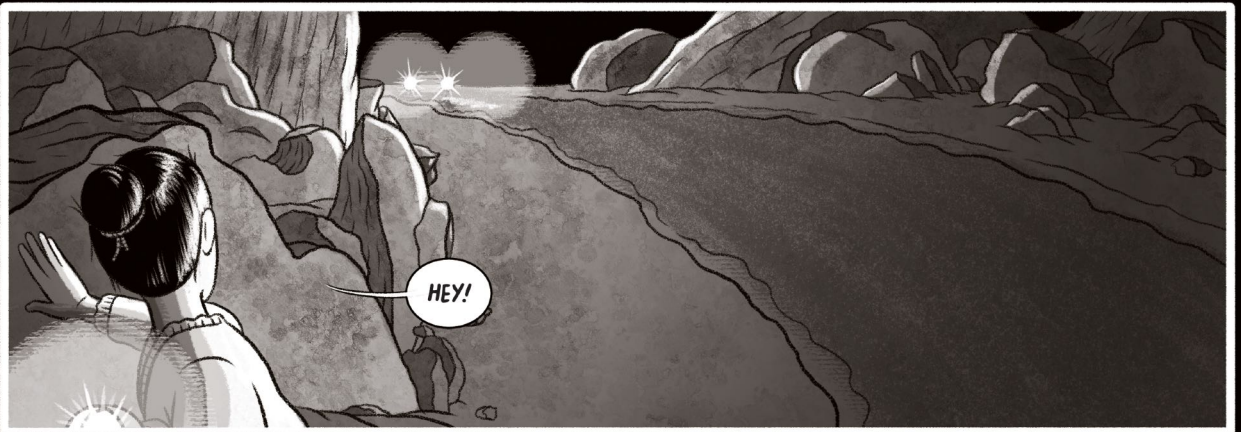




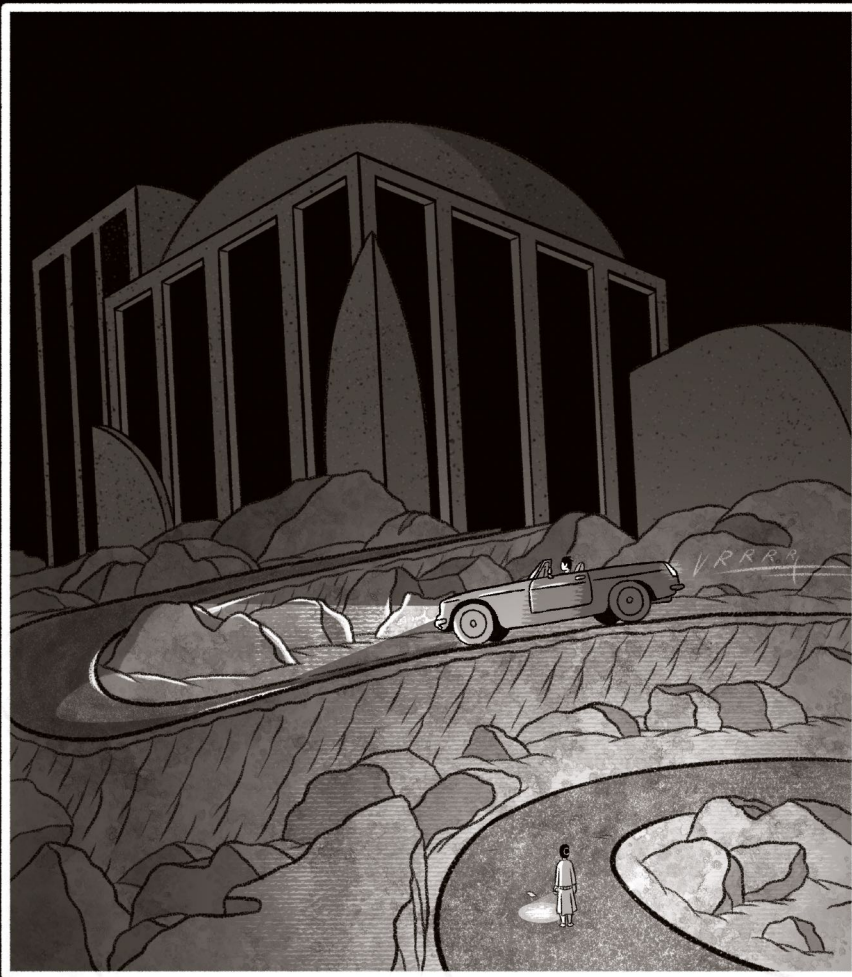




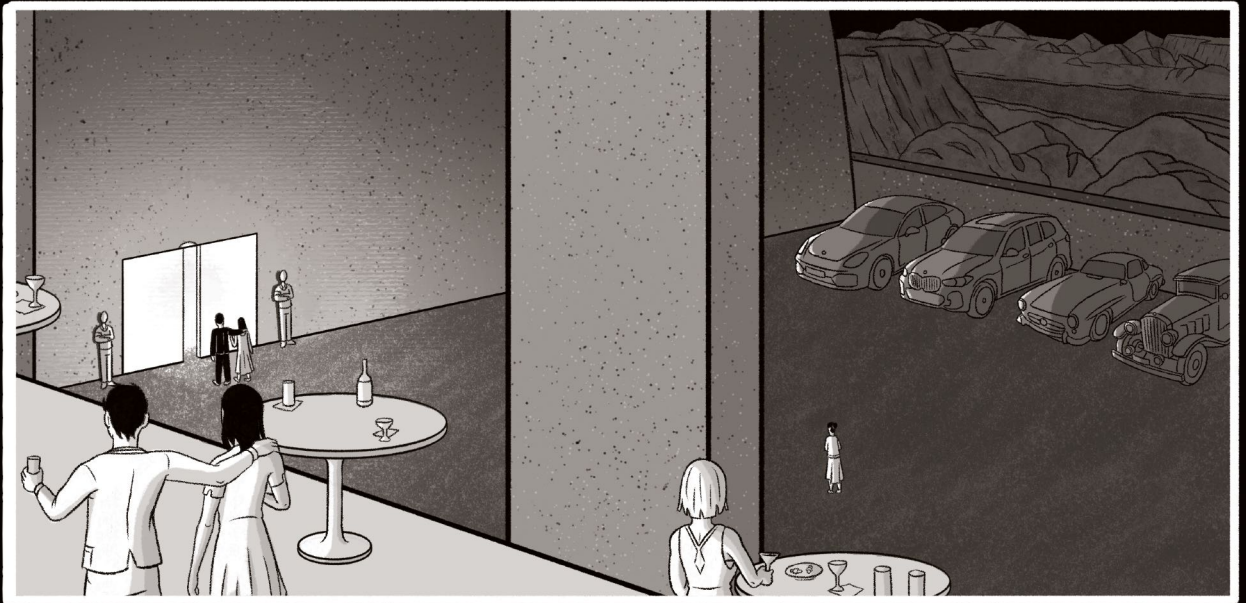


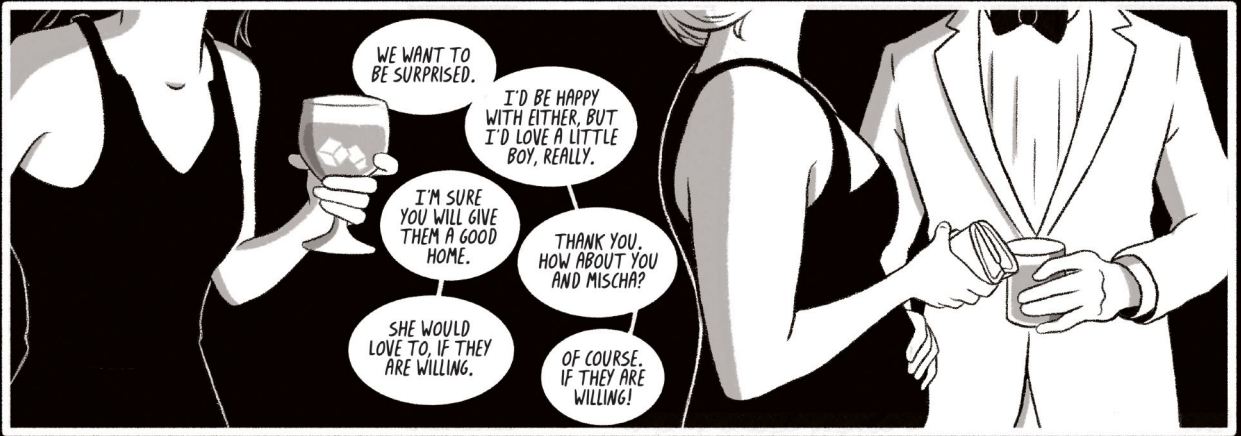












WE WANT TO BE SURPRISED.

I'D BE HAPPY WITH EITHER. BUT I'D LOVE A LITTLE BOY, REALLY.

I'M SURE YOU WILL GIVE THEM A GOOD HOME.

THANK YOU. HOW ABOUT YOU AND MISCHA?

SHE WOULD LOVE TO, IF THEY ARE WILLING.

OF COURSE, IF THEY ARE WILLING!



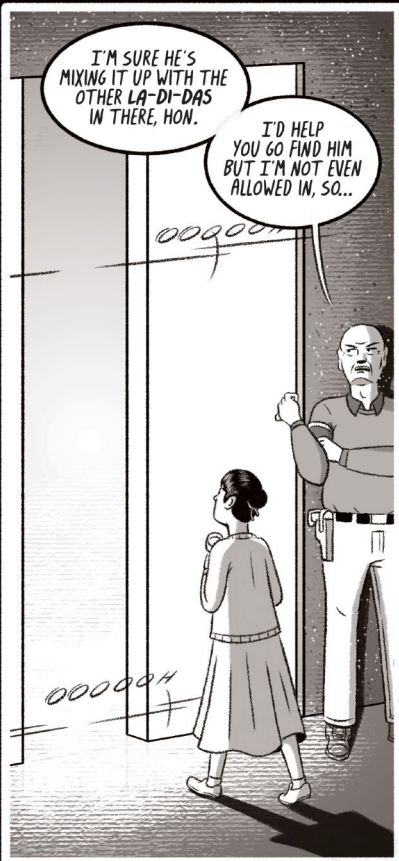
SOMEBODY REALLY DID A NUMBER ON THIS THING, HUH?

HE'S WEARING A COAT AND A CAP, AND HE HAS--



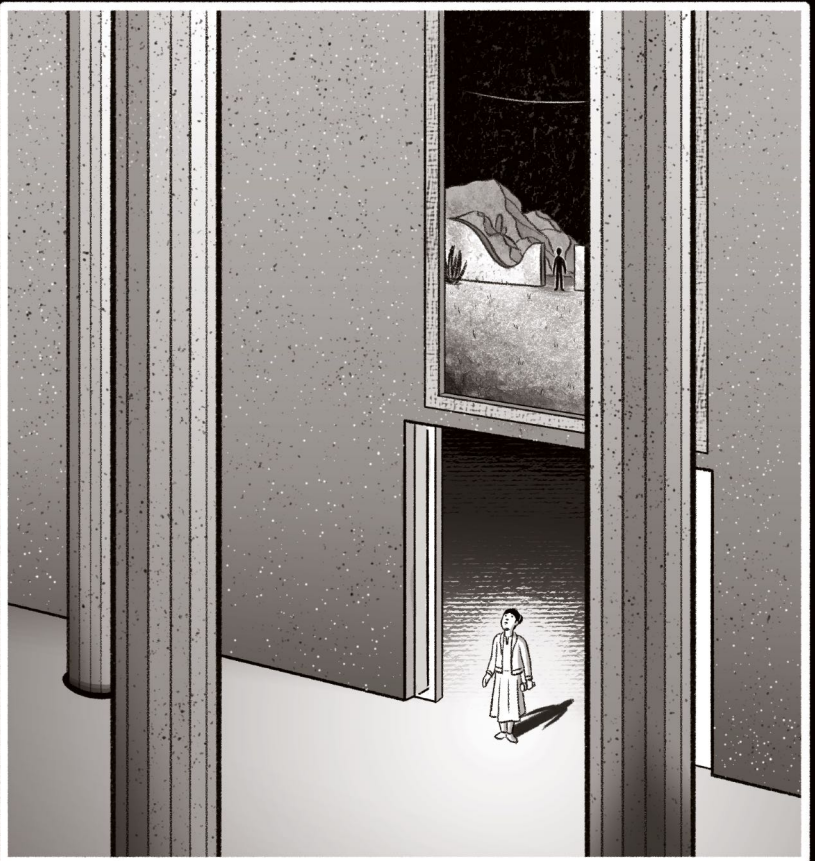
THIS IS MORE OF A BLACK TIE AFFAIR, KID.

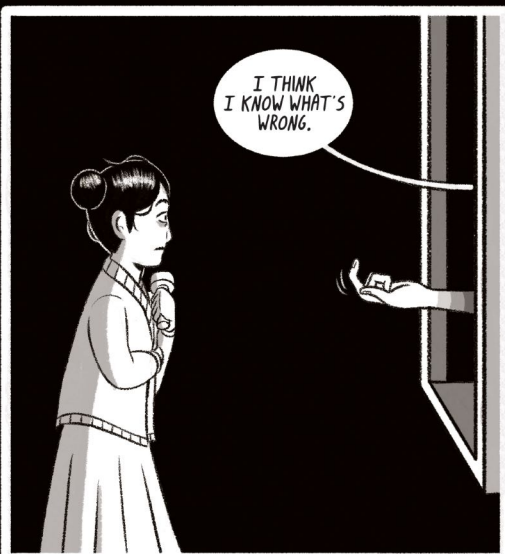
I DOUBT HE'D BE WEARING A CAP.

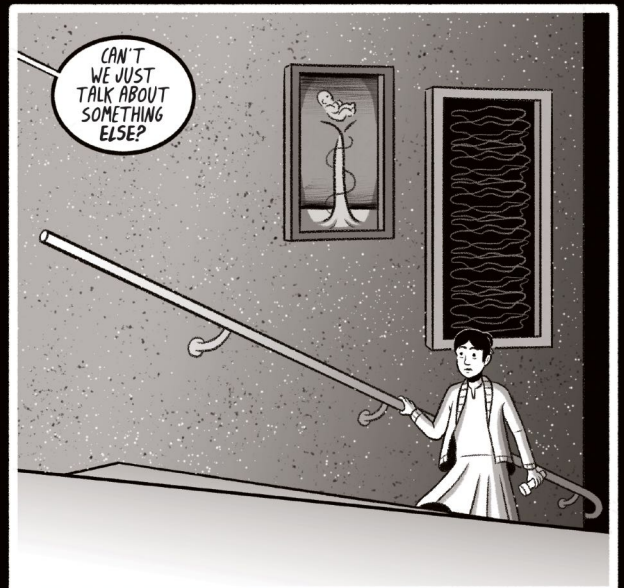
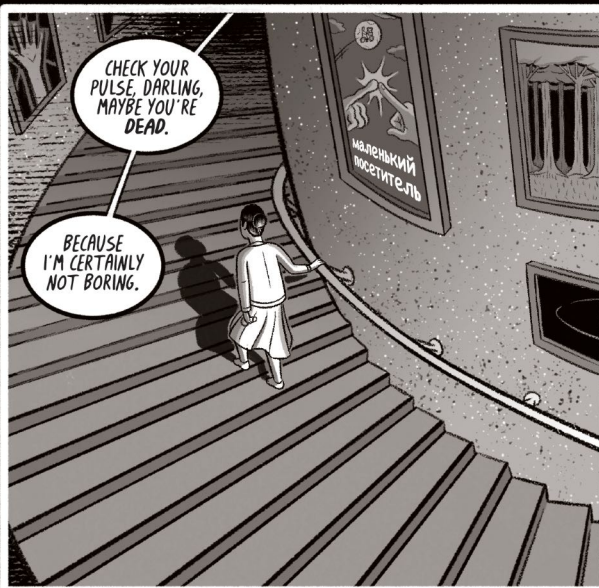
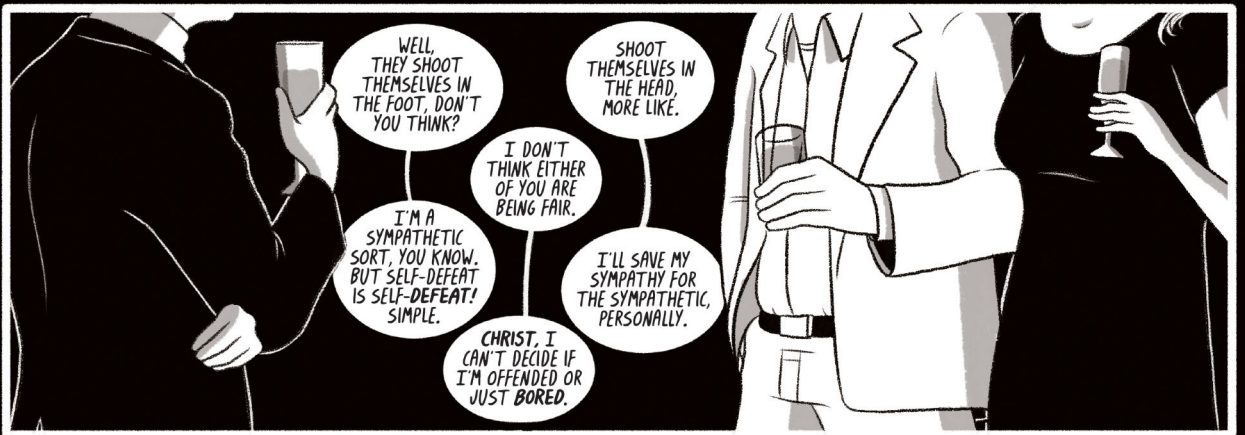
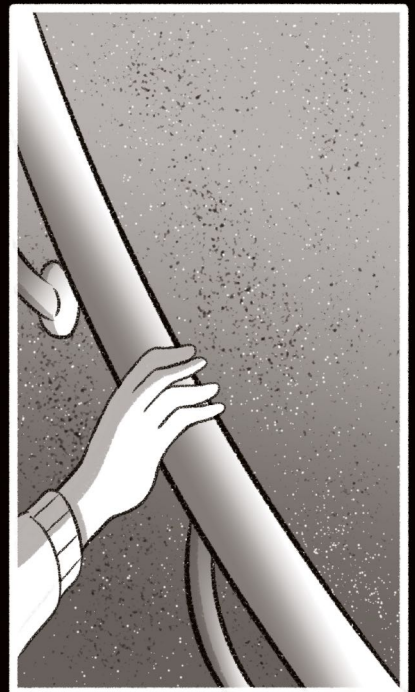


I'M SURE HE'S MIXING IT UP WITH THE OTHER LA-DI-DAS IN THERE, HON.

I'D HELP YOU GO FIND HIM BUT I'M NOT EVEN ALLOWED IN, SO...









TRY ME. I'M MORE THAN CAPABLE OF BLATHERING ABOUT ANYTHING--

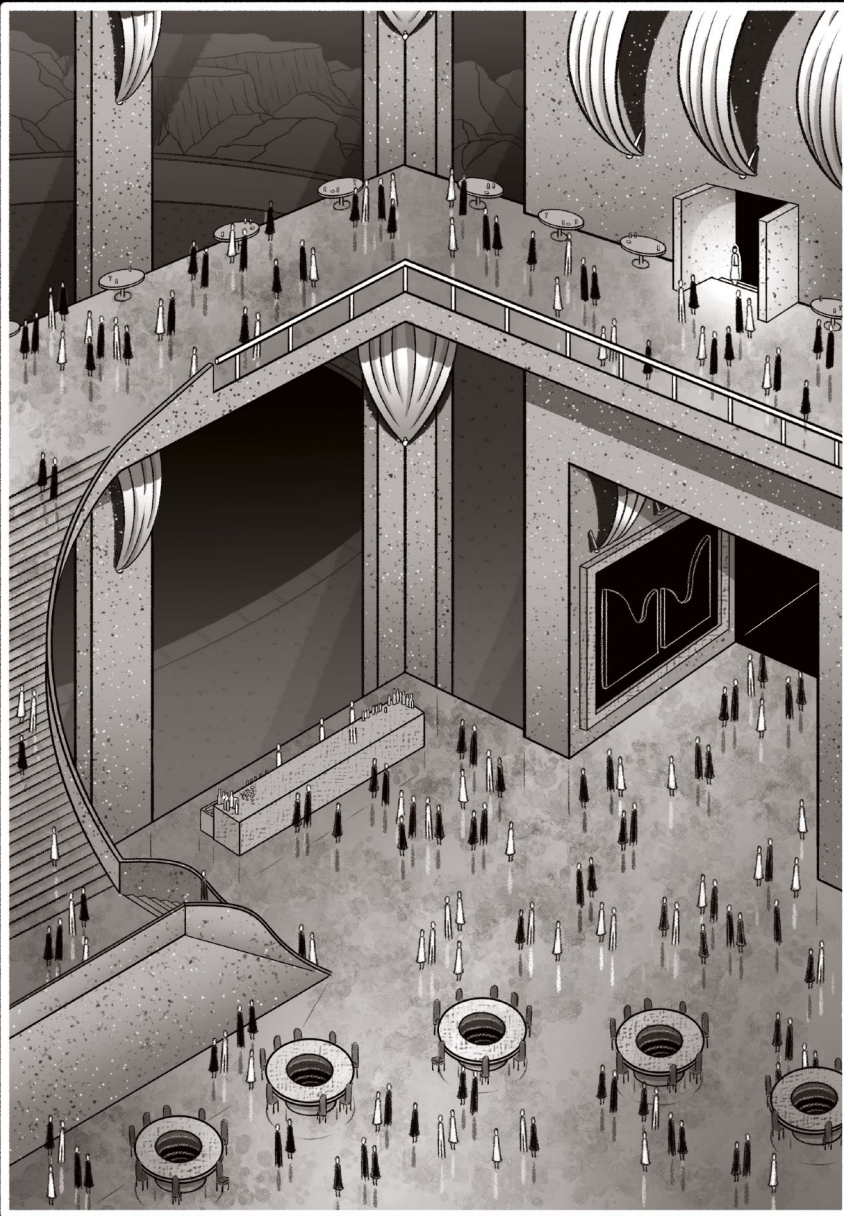


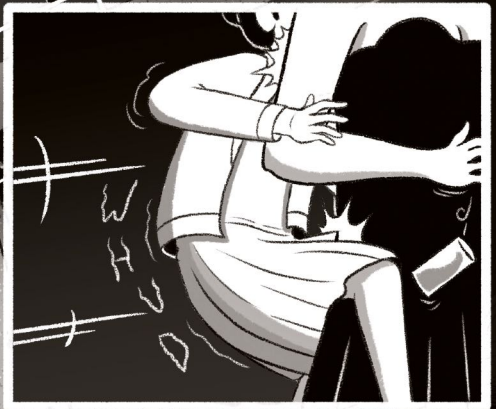
--OH. HELLO THERE.

WHAT A CUTIE PIE YOU ARE!

LOST, DEAR?







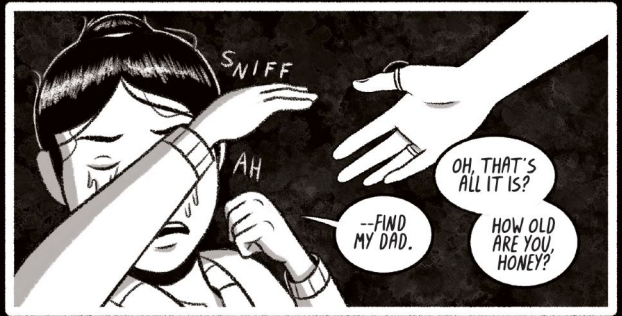


HEY! HEY! EVERYTHING'S OKAY.

AHH UHH HUUHH

I CAN'T--

WHAT'S WRONG, DEAR?



SNIFF

OH, THAT'S ALL IT IS?

--FIND MY DAD.

HOW OLD ARE YOU, HONEY?



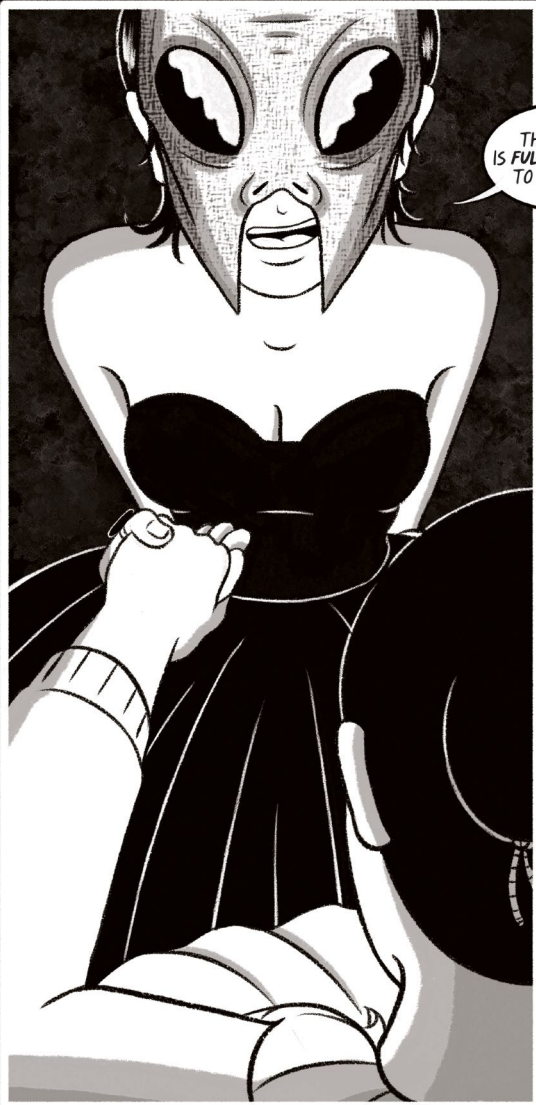
THIRTEEN. TOO OLD FOR CRYING.

SNF

OH, NO ONE IS EVER TOO OLD FOR THAT.



I'VE WATCHED LOTS OF ADULTS CRY. KNOW WHY?



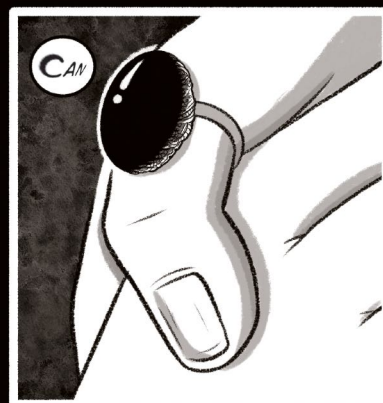
THE WORLD IS FULL OF THINGS TO CRY OVER.



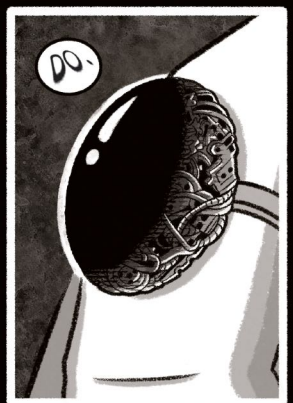
SOMETIMES CRYING IS

ALL

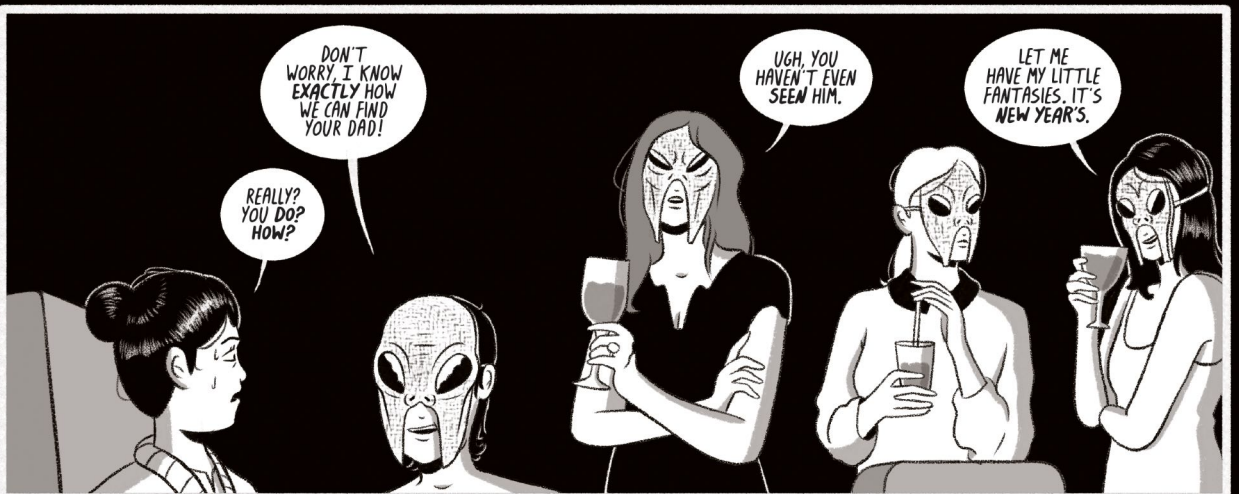
WE

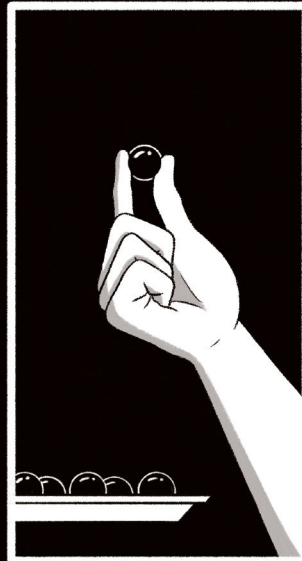
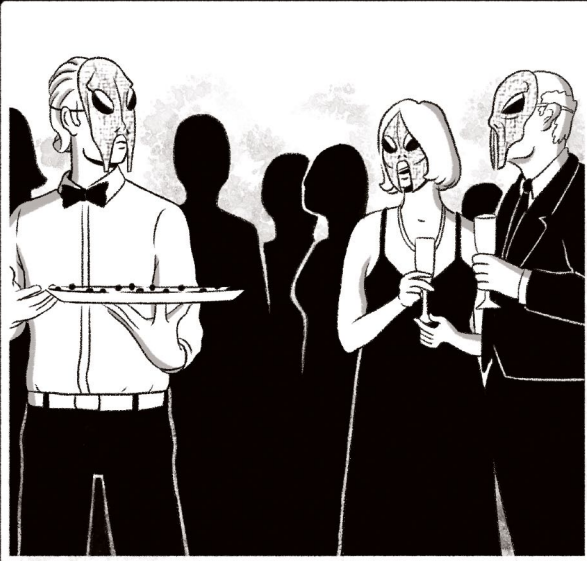
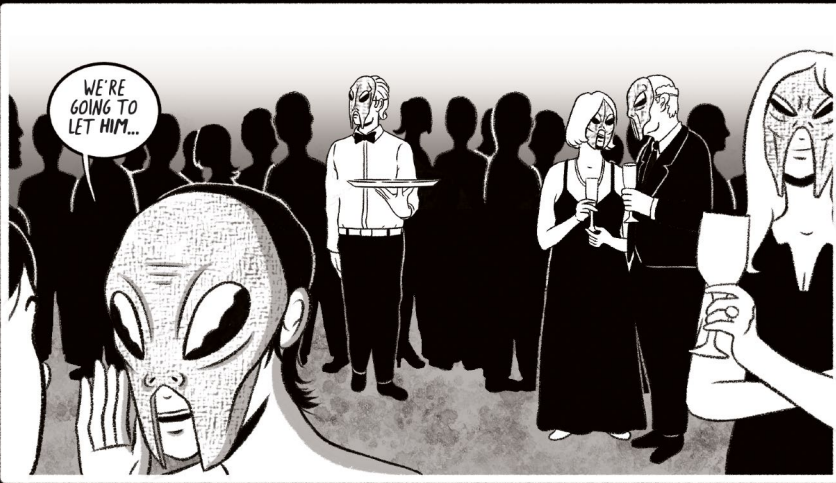


CAN

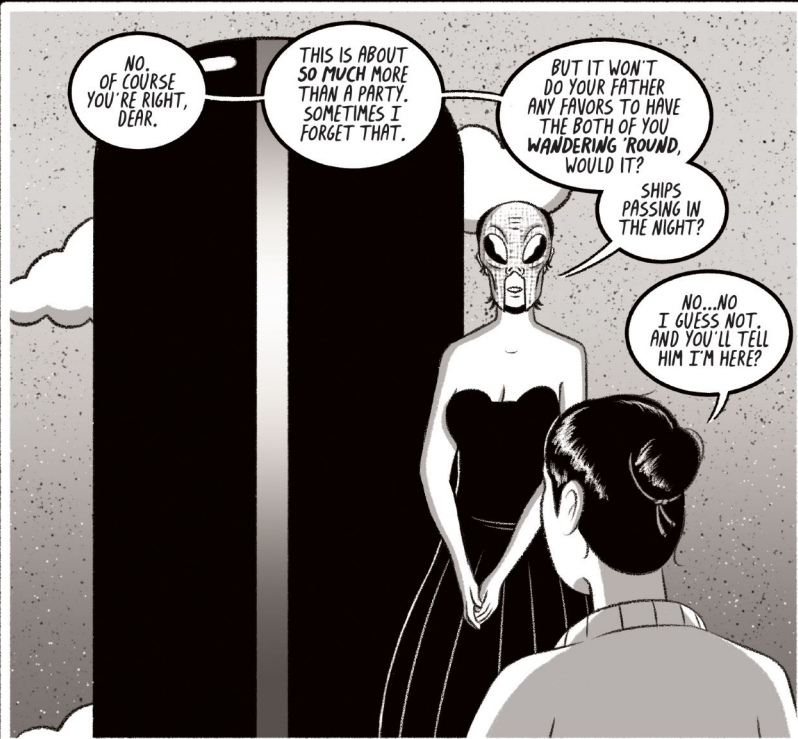
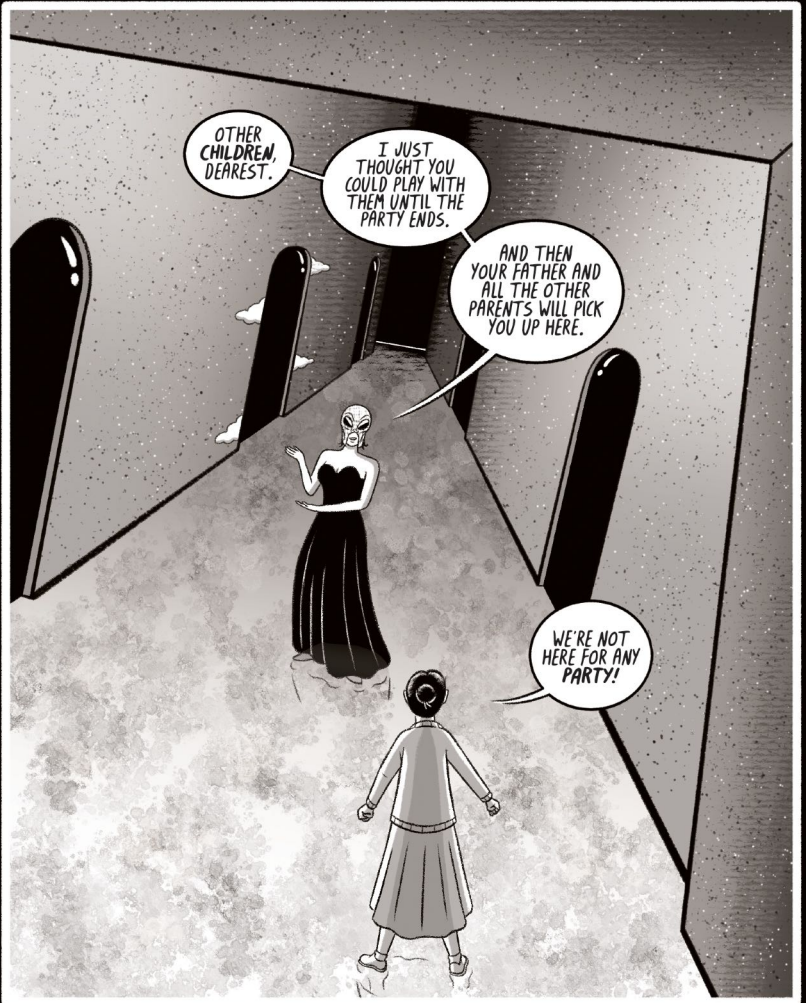


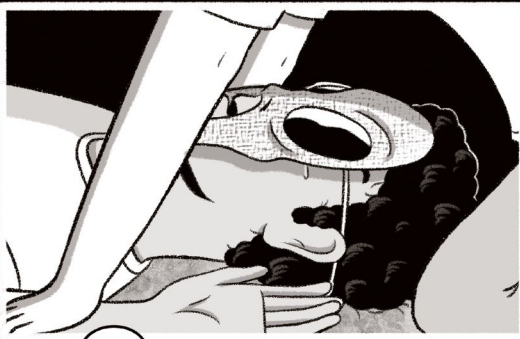
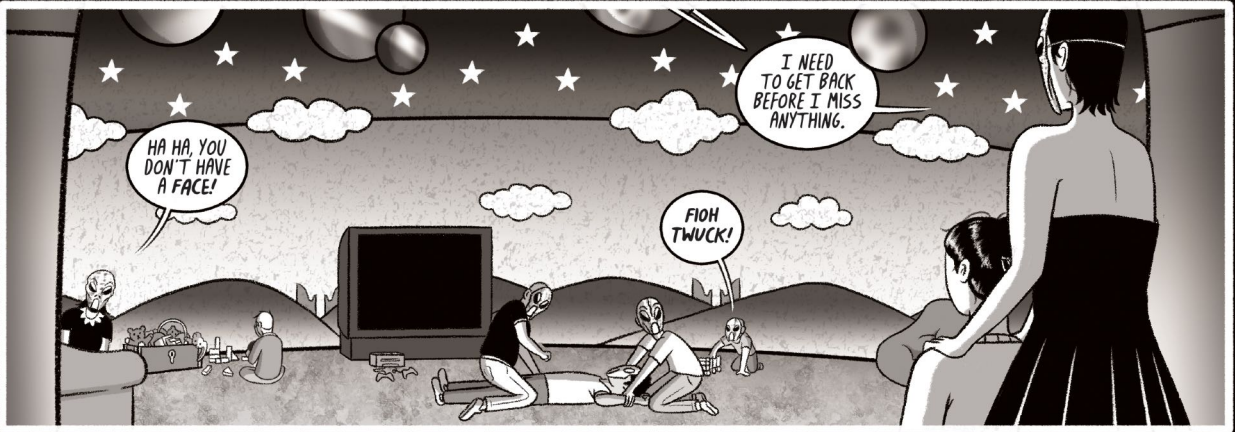
DO-

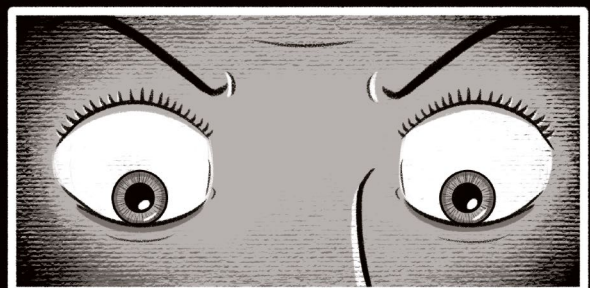
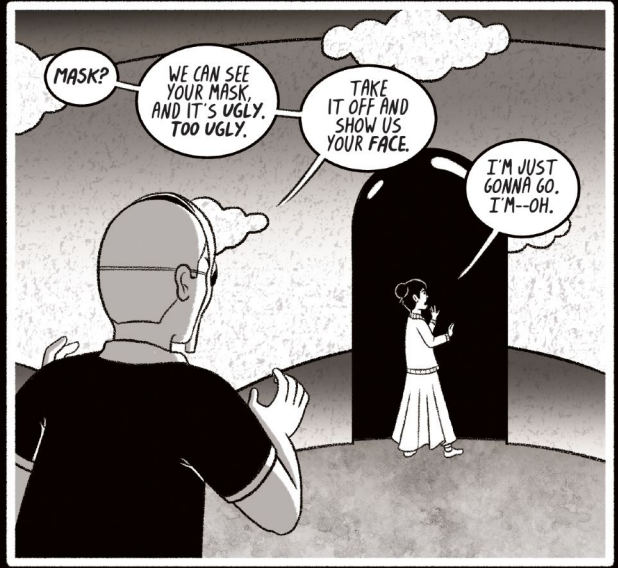


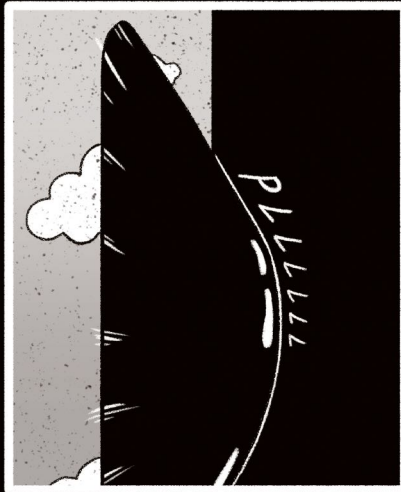
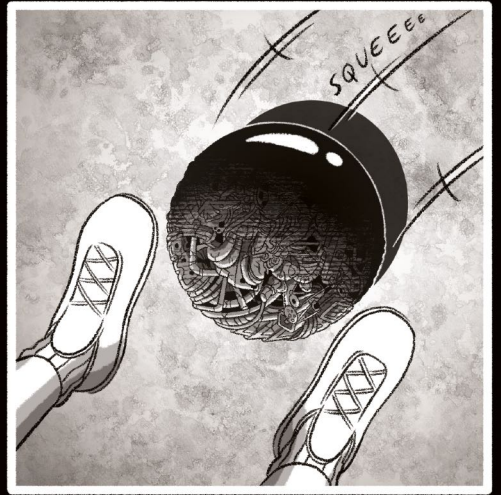
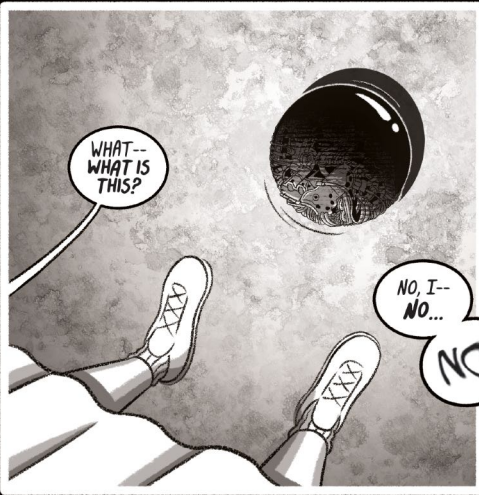


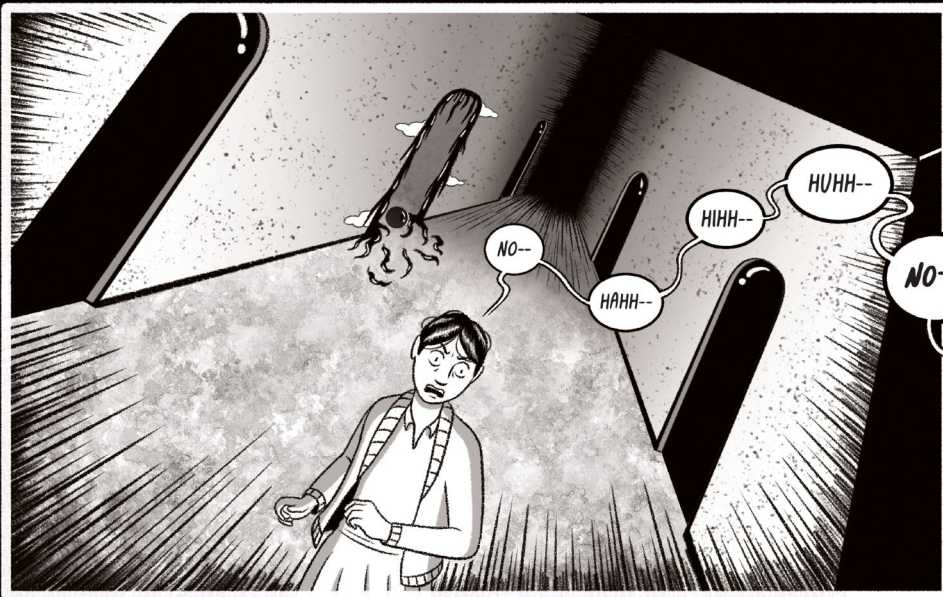
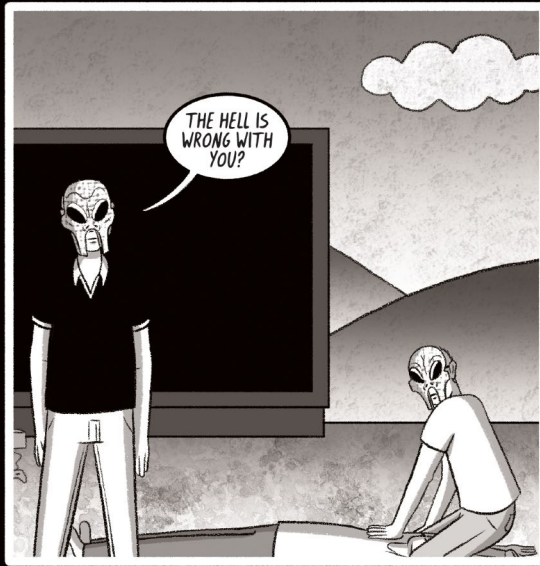


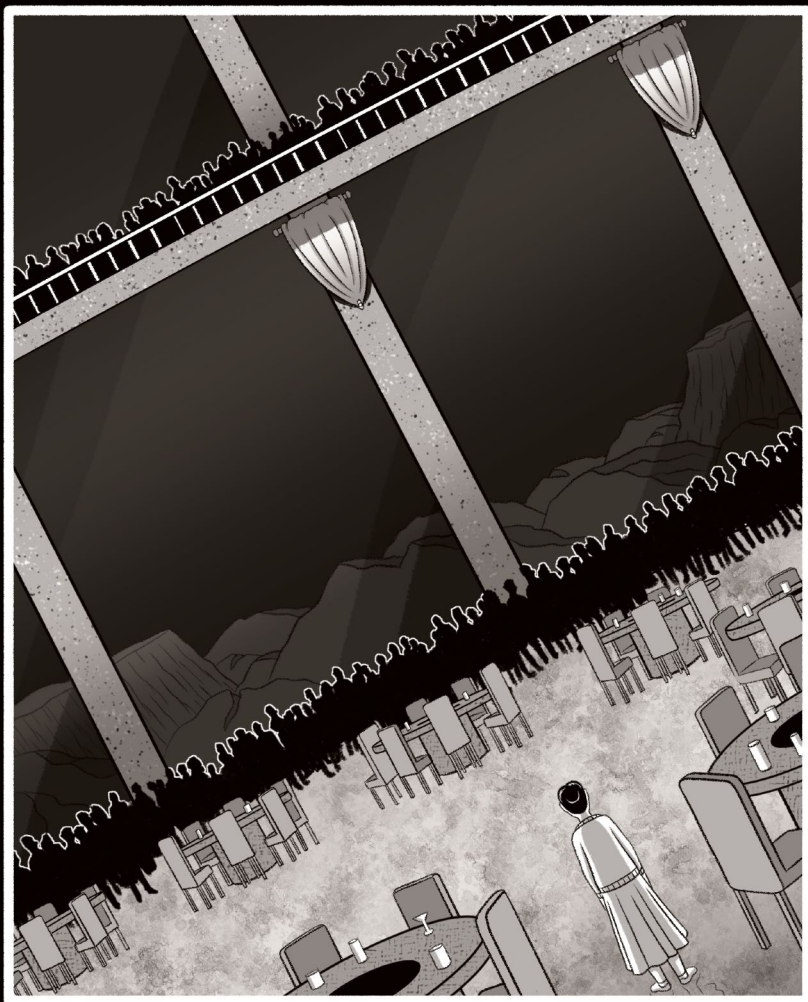


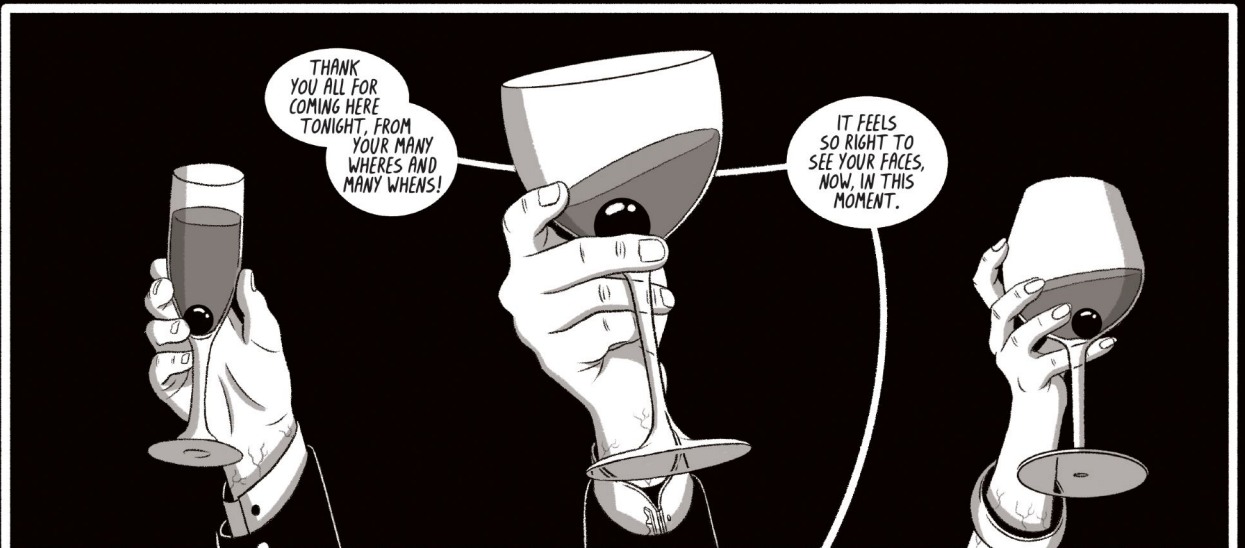
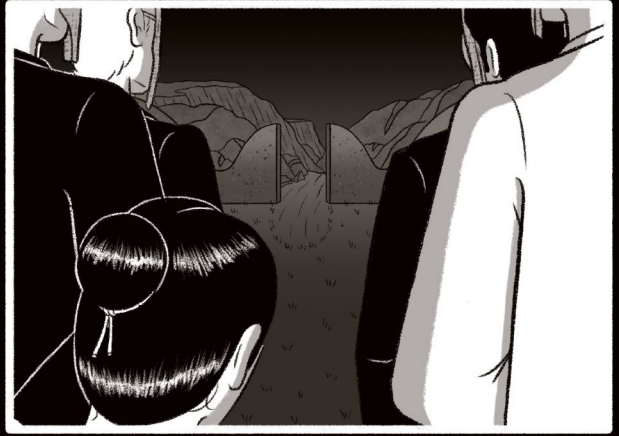






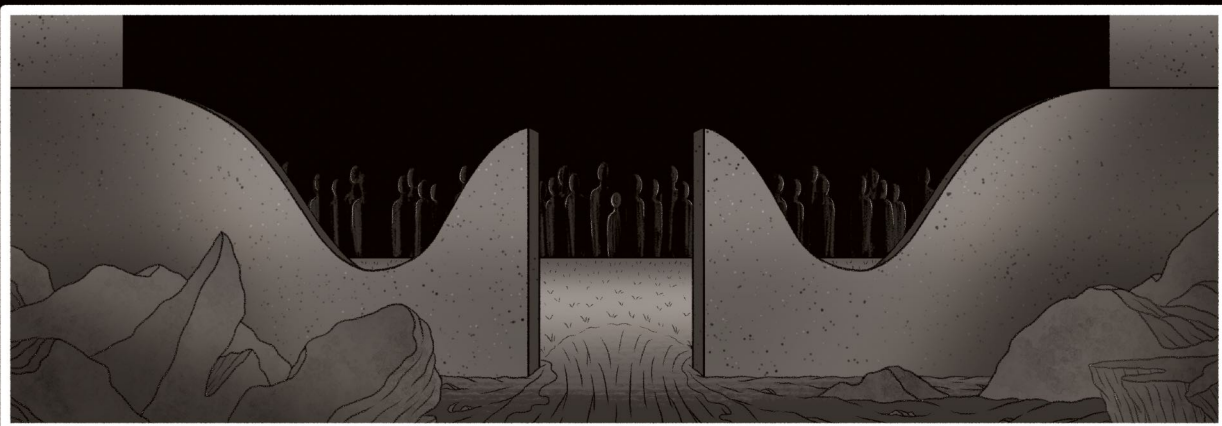


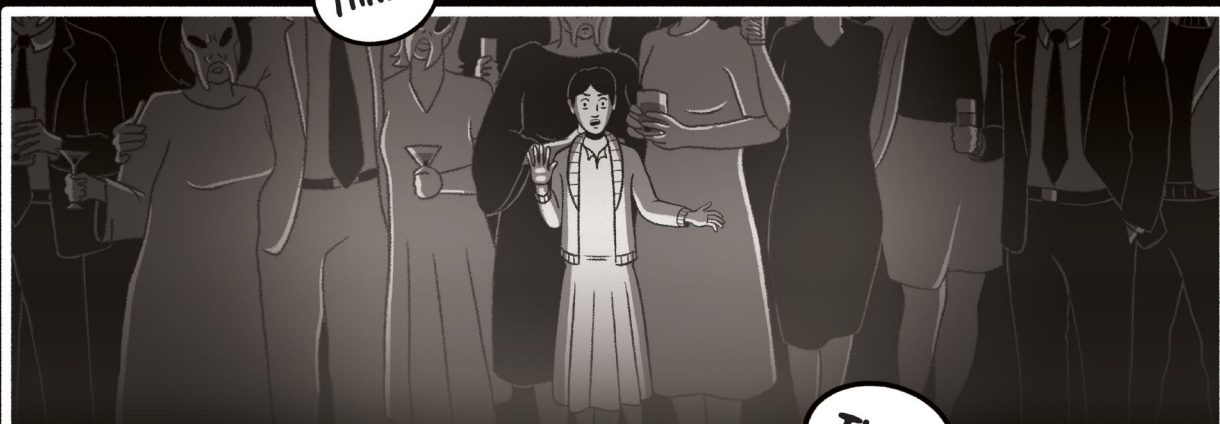


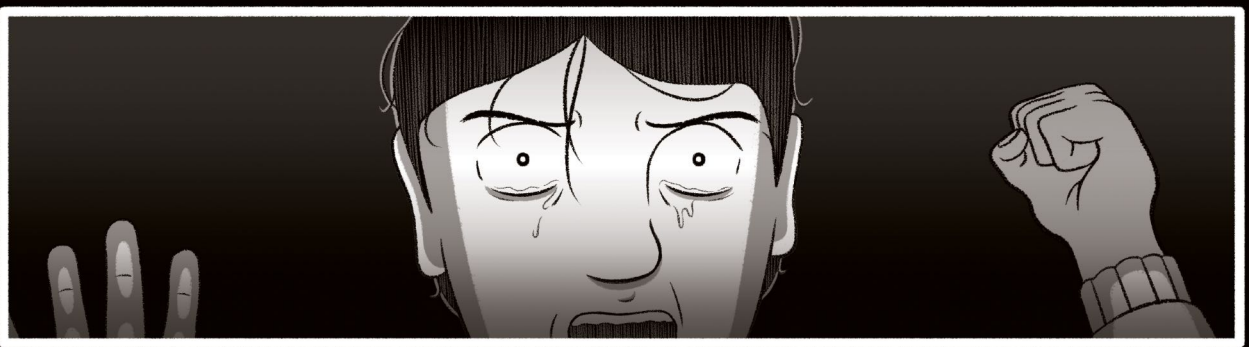


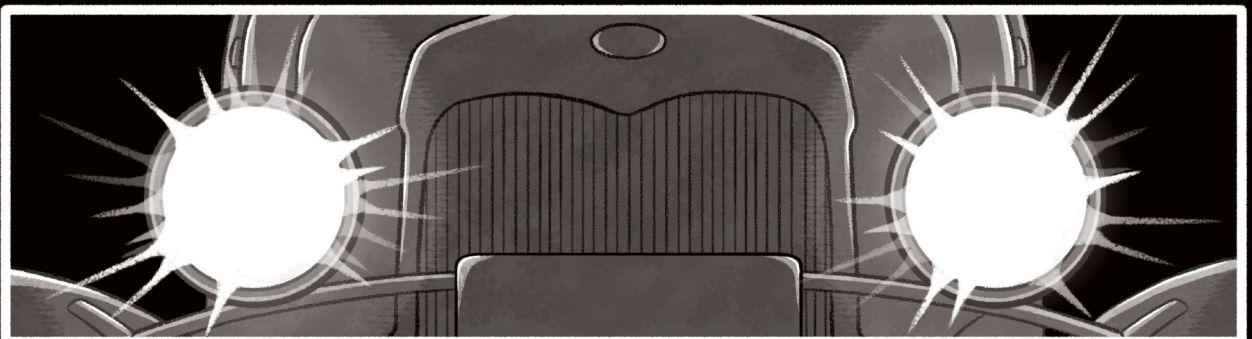
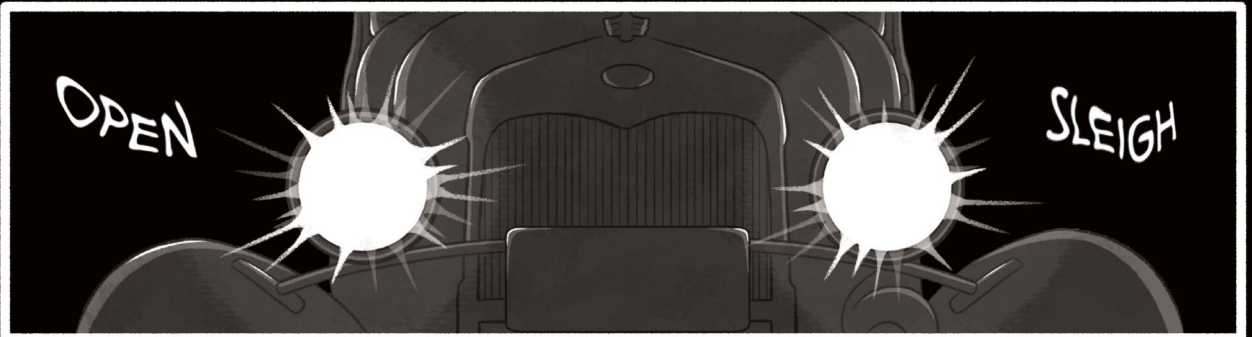
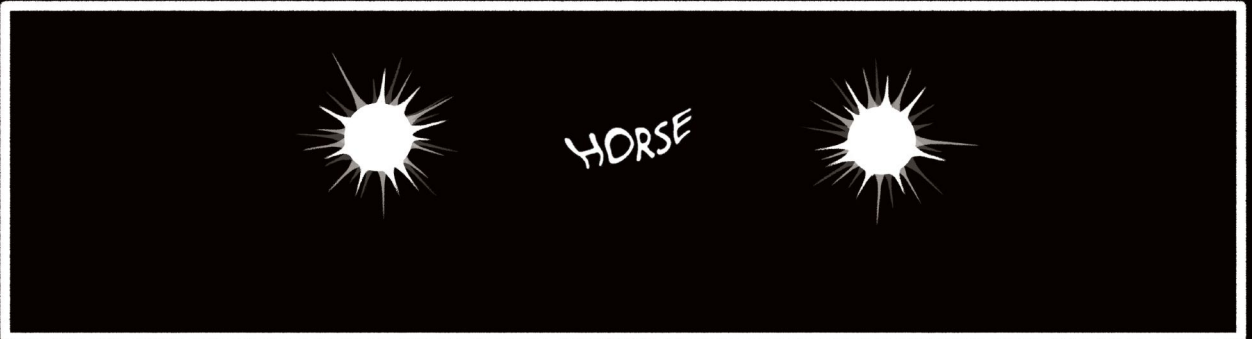
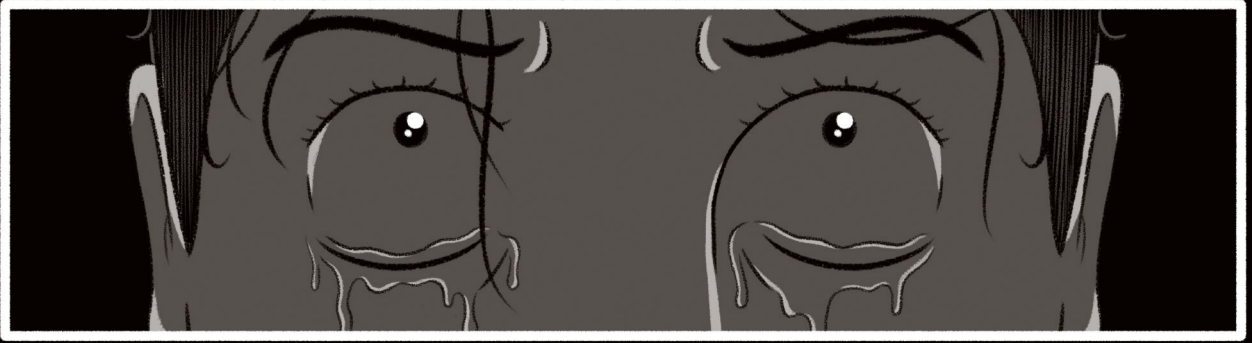


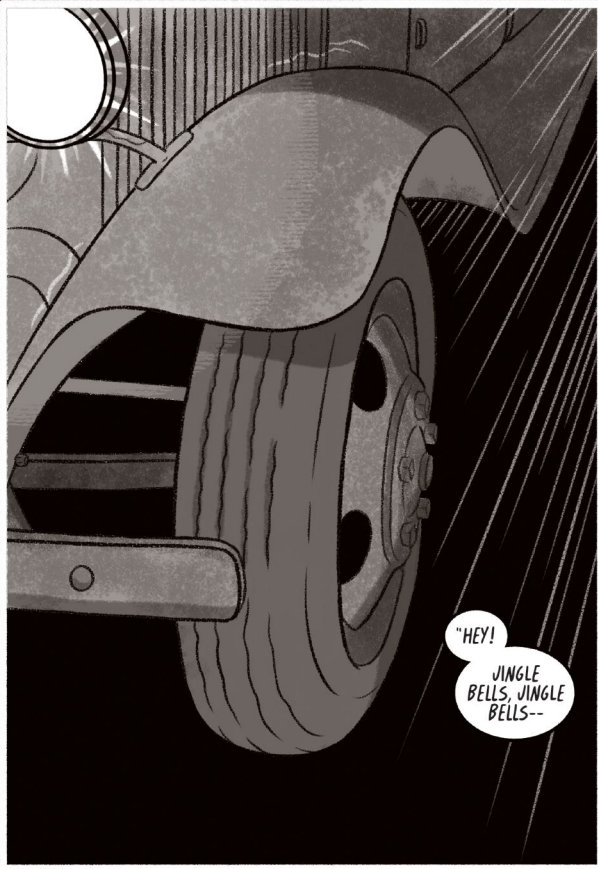




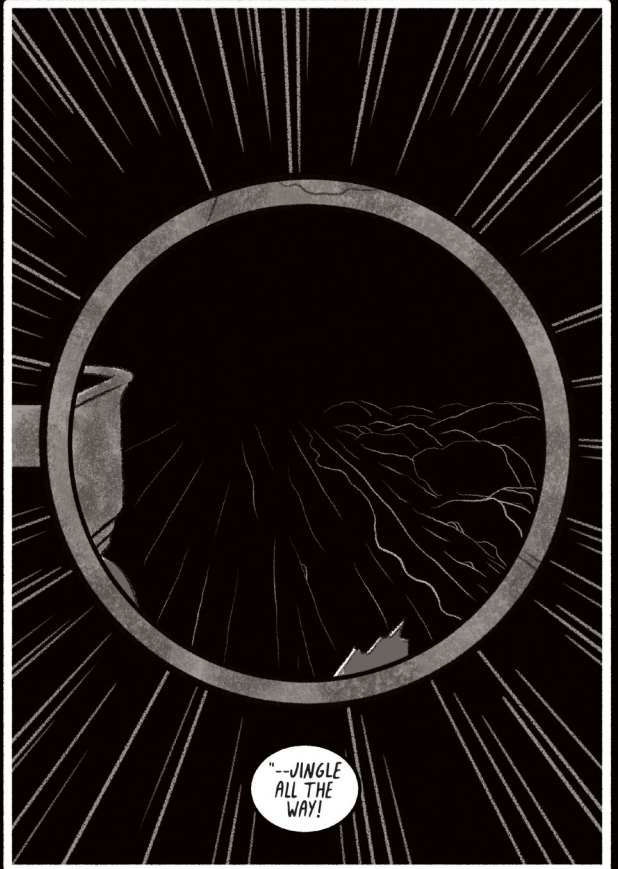








"HEY!
JINGLE
BELLS, JINGLE
BELLS--"



"--JINGLE
ALL THE
WAY!

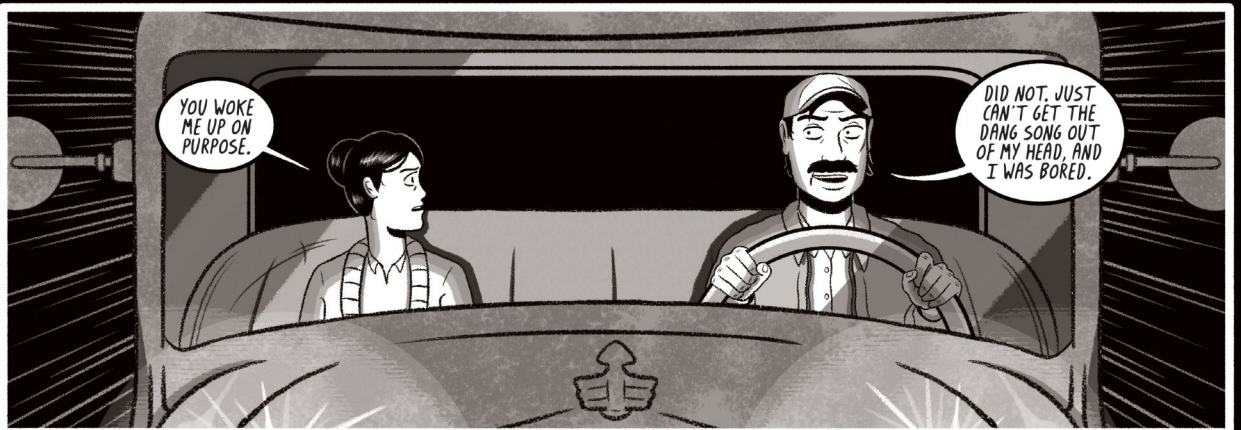


"OH, WHAT
FUN IT IS
TO RI--"

CHRISTMAS
WAS LAST
WEEK.

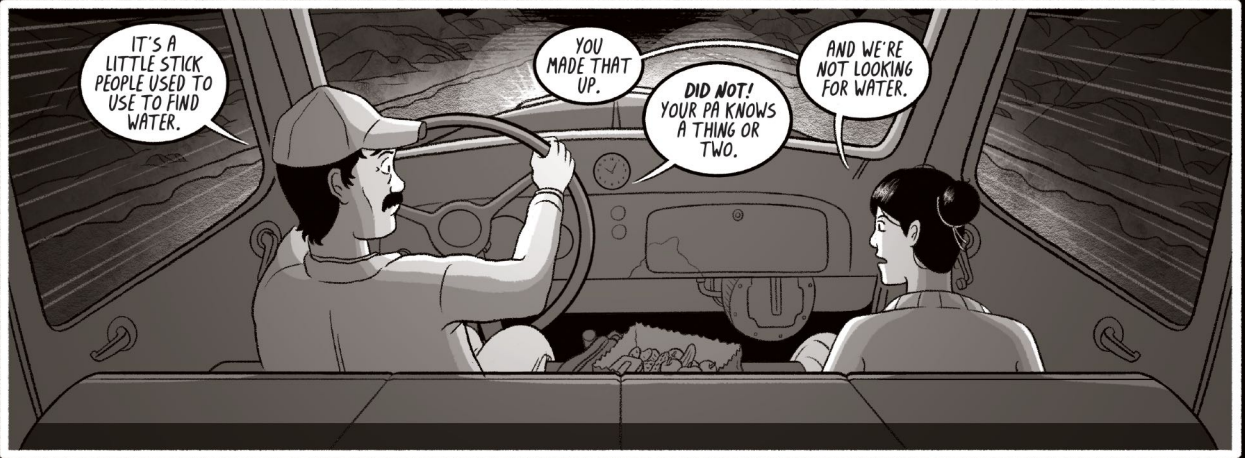


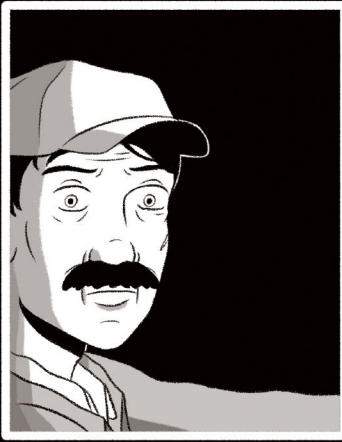
"YOU'RE
AWAKE!



YOU WOKE
ME UP ON
PURPOSE.

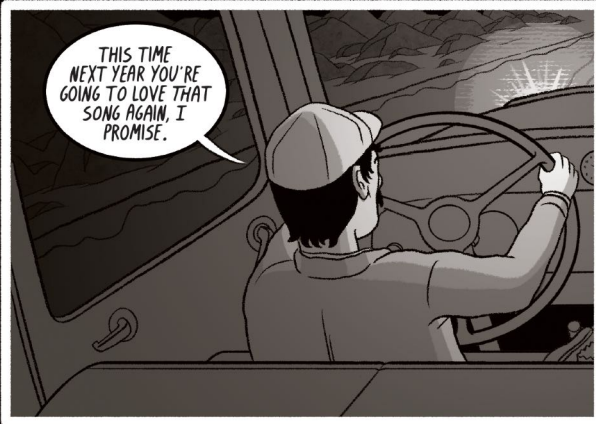
DID NOT. JUST
CAN'T GET THE
DANG SONG OUT
OF MY HEAD, AND
I WAS BORED.





SORRY, HONEY.

IT'S OKAY.



THIS TIME NEXT YEAR YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE THAT SONG AGAIN, I PROMISE.



YEAH.



AND YOU'LL BE SINGING IT WITH MOM, TOO.



I HOPE SO.

THAT'D BE NICE.

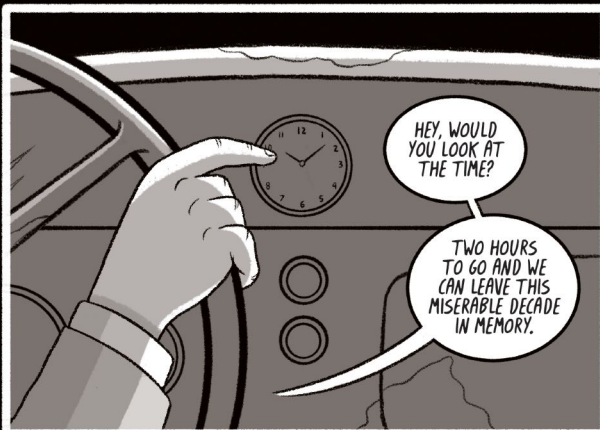
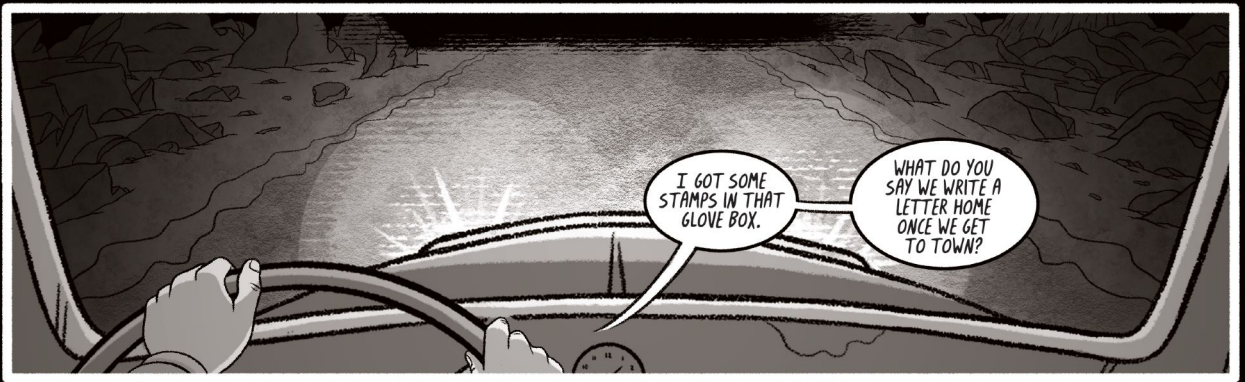
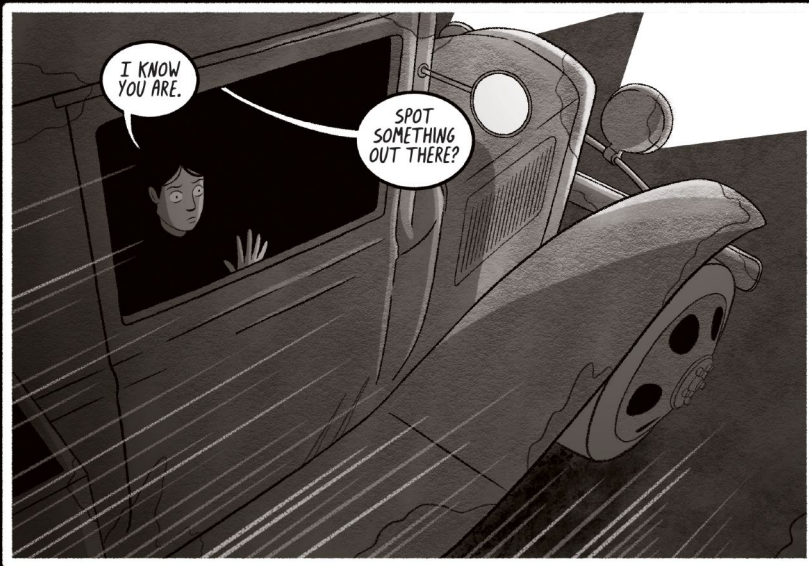
IT WILL BE NICE, LIKE I SAID, I KNOW A THING OR TWO.

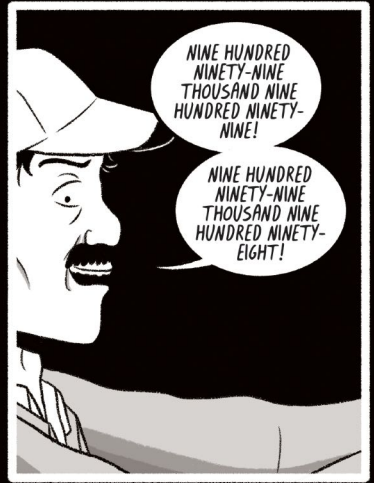


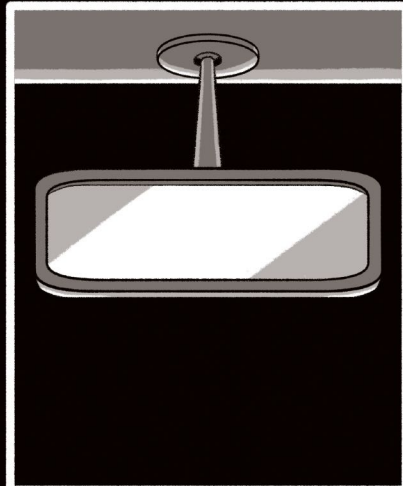
WE GET SETTLED IN, WE FIND WORK, WE GET HER AND GRANDMA UP HERE.

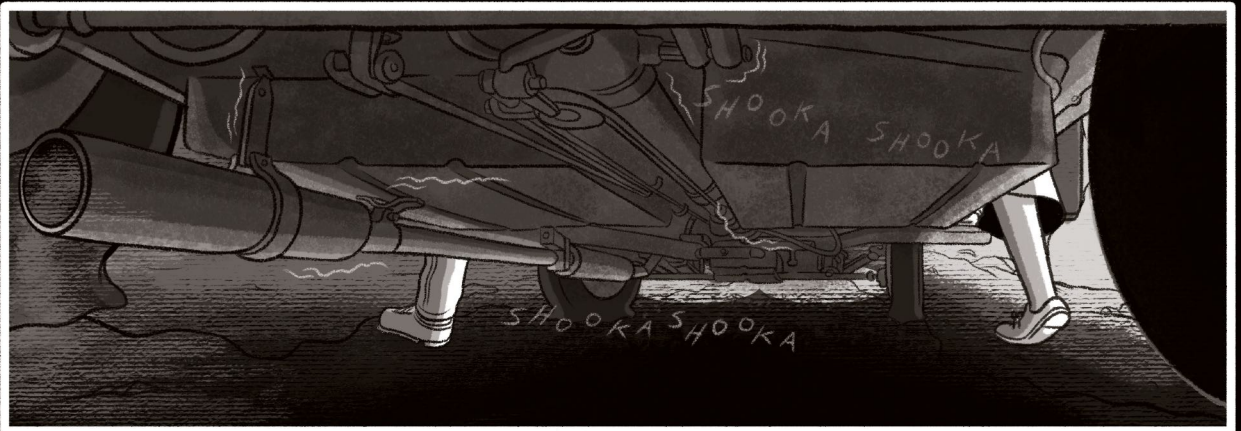
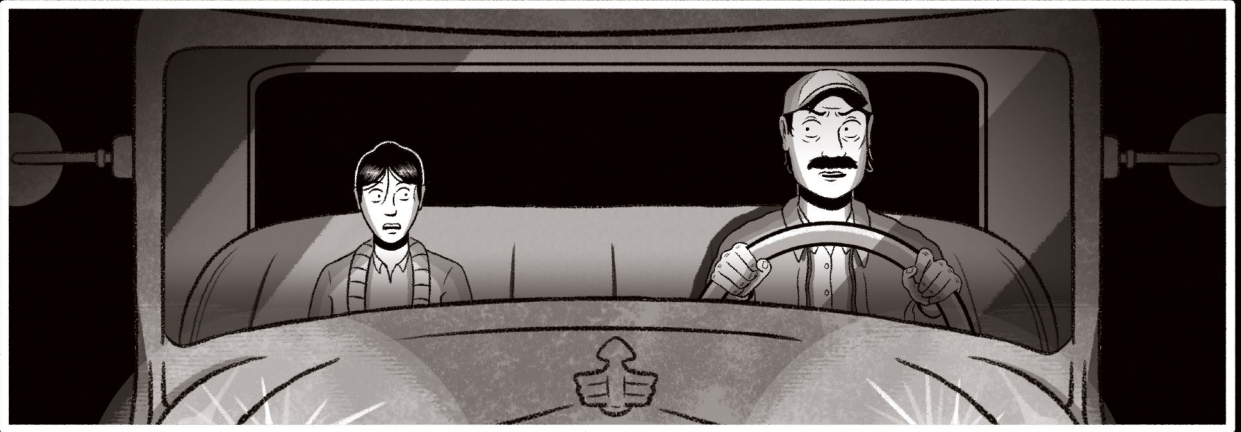
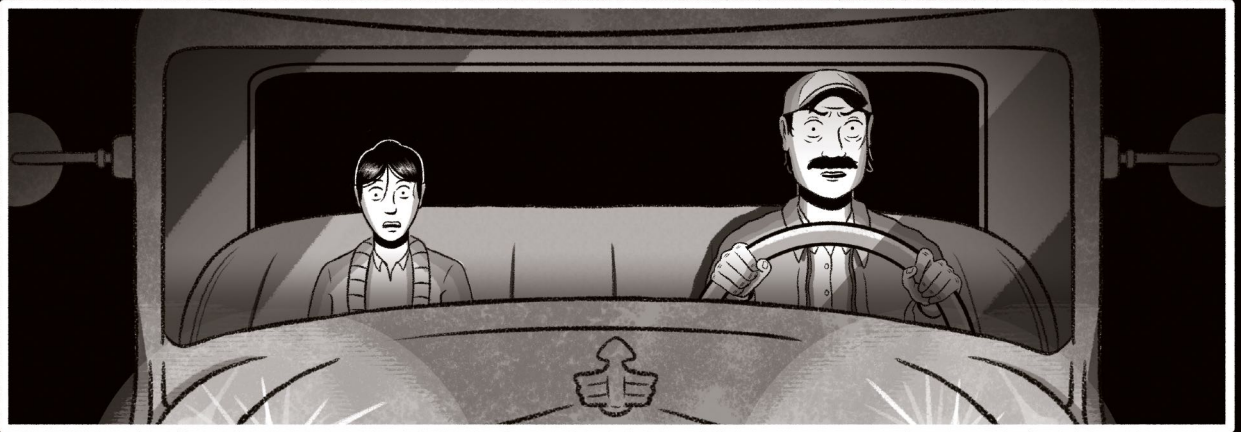
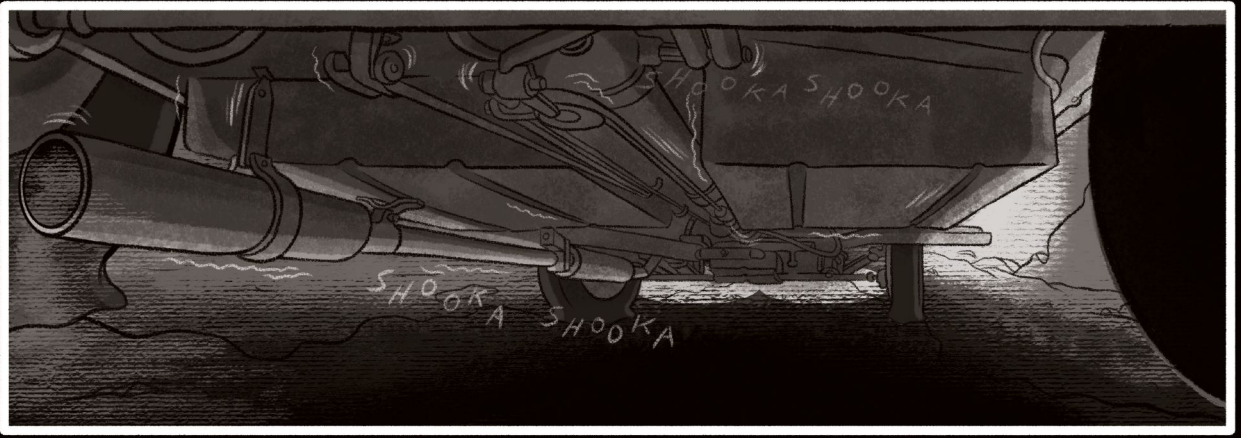
AND THINGS WILL BE RIGHT AS RAIN!

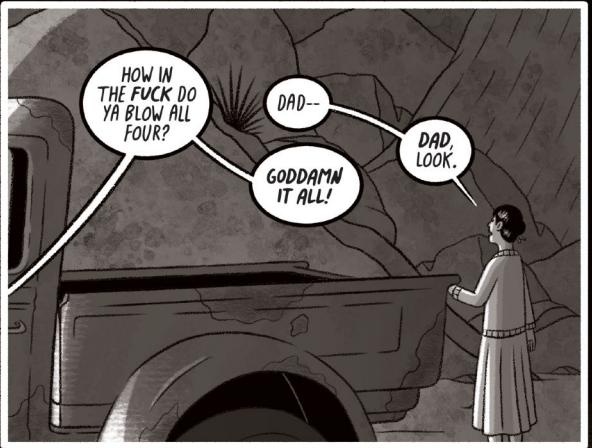
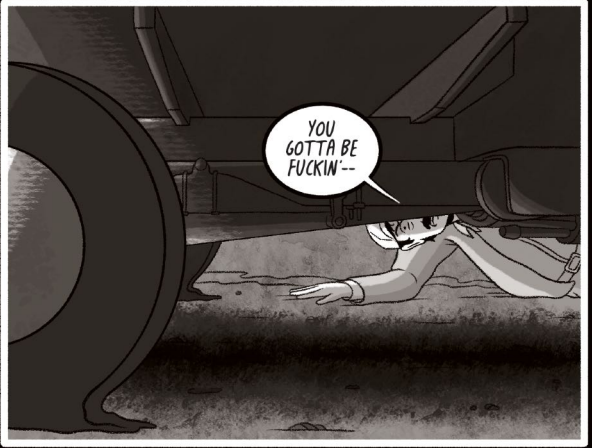
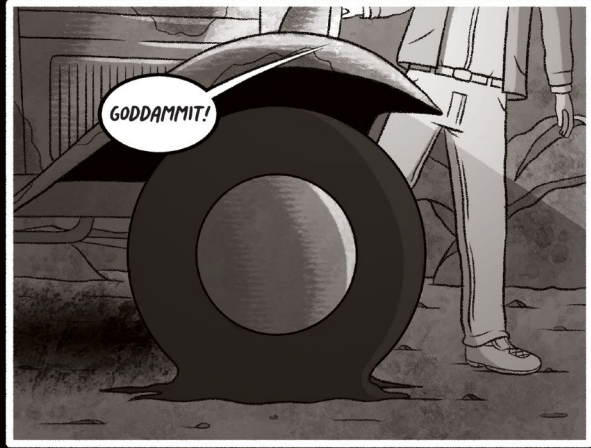
AND I'M A DOWSING ROD FOR WORK, TOO.









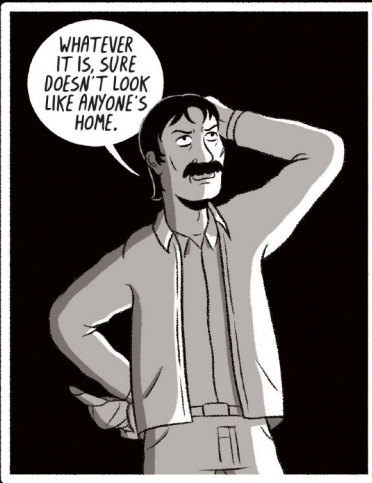




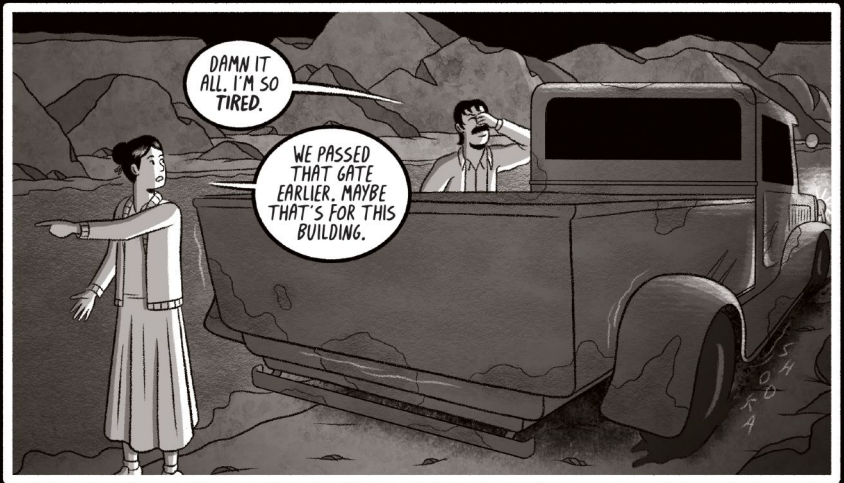
HUH.
SO THERE
IS.

HELL OF A
HOUSE. LOOK
AT THAT
THING!

MAYBE
IT'S NOT A
HOUSE?



WHATEVER IT IS, SURE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYONE'S HOME.



DAMN IT ALL, I'M SO TIRED.

WE PASSED THAT GATE EARLIER. MAYBE THAT'S FOR THIS BUILDING.



WAS IT OPEN?

I DON'T THINK SO.

DIDN'T LOOK LIKE THERE WAS A GATE-HOUSE, EITHER.



HOW FAR BACK WAS THAT, ANYWAY?

HMM...I DON'T KNOW. MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MINUTE OR TWO DRIVING?



I DON'T KNOW.

HMM.



HMM.



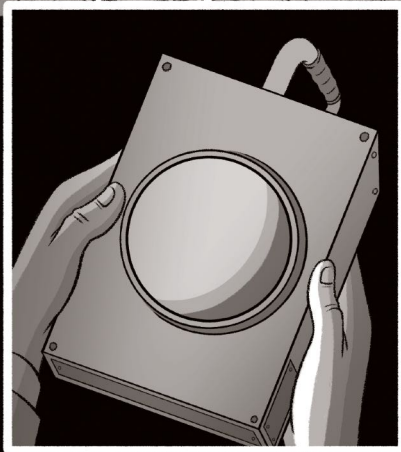
YOU KNOW, IT DOESN'T LOOK TOO BAD TO WALK UP.

IT'S TOO DARK, DADDY!

WE GOT THAT NEW FLASHER IN THE GLOVE!



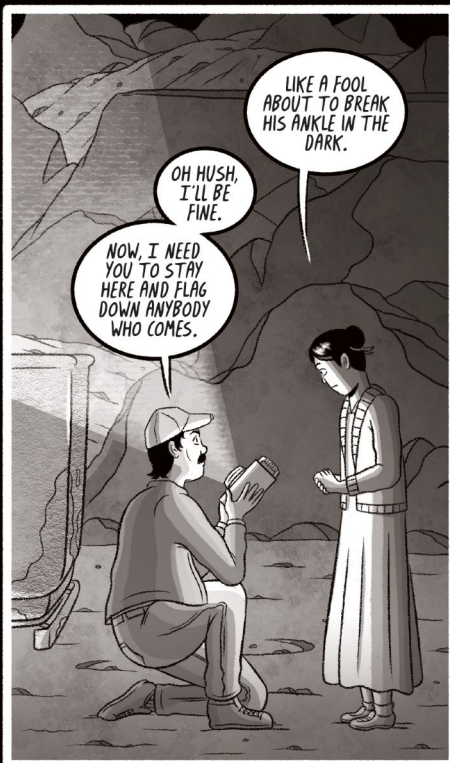
YOU KNOW WHAT? WE GOT THAT OLD LANTERN, TOO.



AHA! STILL WORKS LIKE A CHARM.



HOW DO I LOOK?



LIKE A FOOL ABOUT TO BREAK HIS ANKLE IN THE DARK.

OH HUSH, I'LL BE FINE.

NOW, I NEED YOU TO STAY HERE AND FLAG DOWN ANYBODY WHO COMES.



I WANNA GO WITH YOU!

NOBODY MIGHT BE HOME.

IN WHICH CASE WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO WAIT FOR A CAR.



YEAH.

I WON'T BE GONE LONG, I PROMISE.

YOU JUST STAY IN THE CAR AND WAVE DOWN ANY LIGHTS YOU SEE.

USE THAT NEW FLASH-LIGHT.



DAD, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU GOING UP THERE.

LET'S JUST WAIT FOR A CAR.



IT'S NOT TOO COLD OUT.



DON'T WORRY, I HIKED UP TOUGHER ROCKS THAN THIS IN THE SERVICE.

IT'S GONNA BE NOTHING.

REALLY?



OKAY. JUST.

JUST COME BACK QUICK.



I DON'T LIKE IT OUT HERE.



I WILL.

THINK WE'LL HAVE EARNED SOME REALLY GOOD FOOD WHEN WE GET TO TOWN.

AS FAR AS THE FIREWORKS GO...I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU.







--HELL'S WRONG WITH ME.

DAMN IT, I NEED SLEEP.



HOW'D I GET SO MIXED UP?



SOON AS SHE CAN, THAT GIRL'S LEARNING TO DRIVE SO I CAN GET SOME DAMN SLEEP.



WHERE THE--

MUST' A GOT TWISTED AROUND.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS...



SWEAR I'VE BEEN BY THIS BEFORE...



WHO'S THAT?

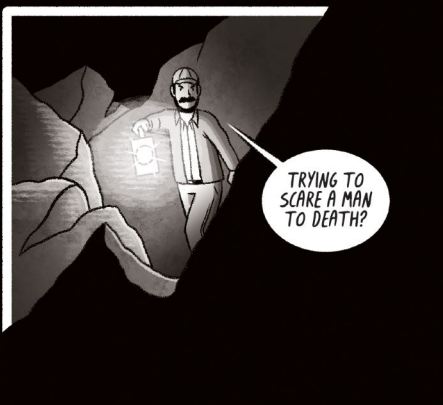


HEY--!

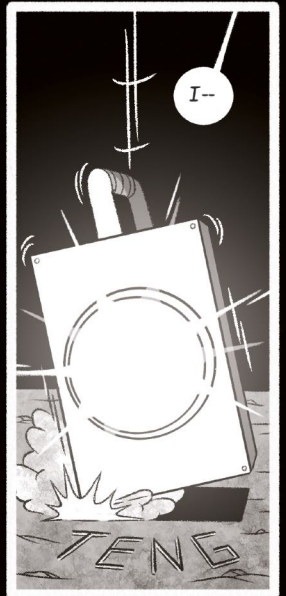


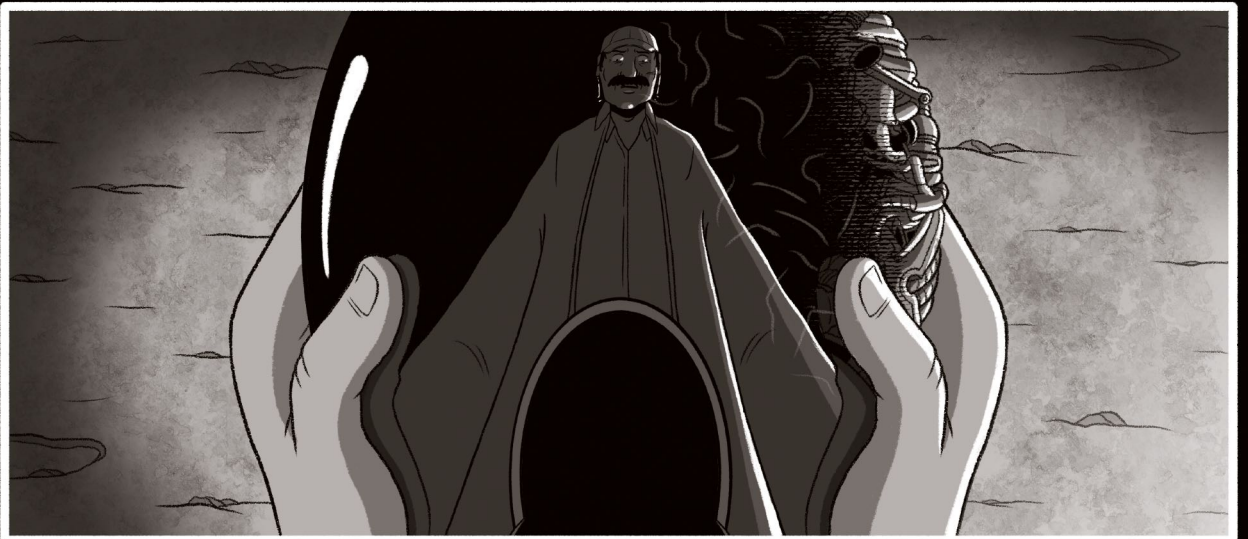
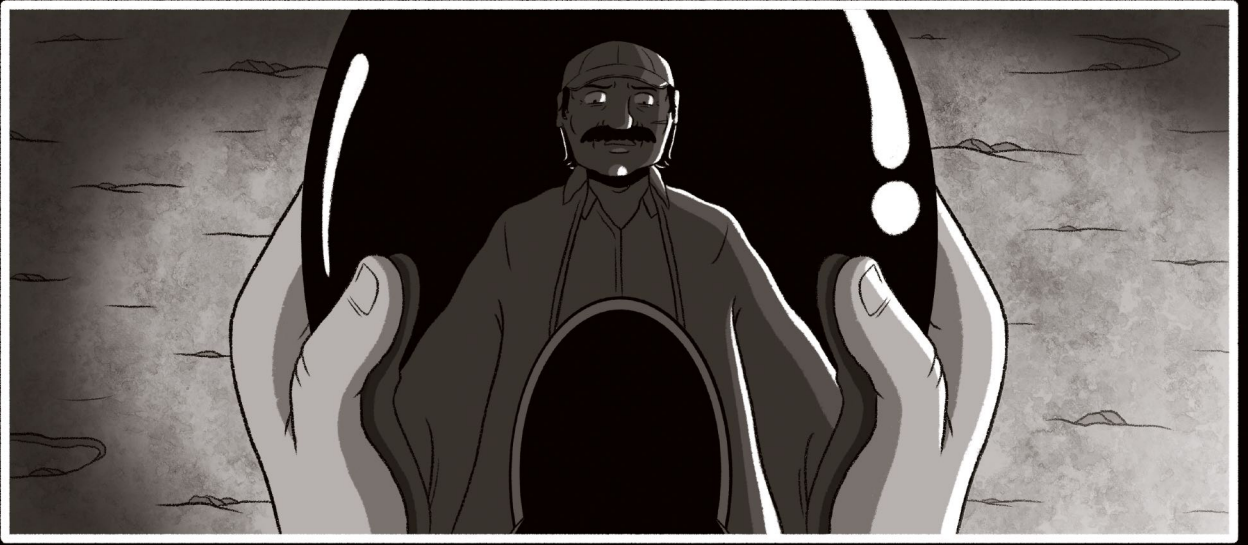
I SEE YOU, SNEAKY SON OF A BITCH.

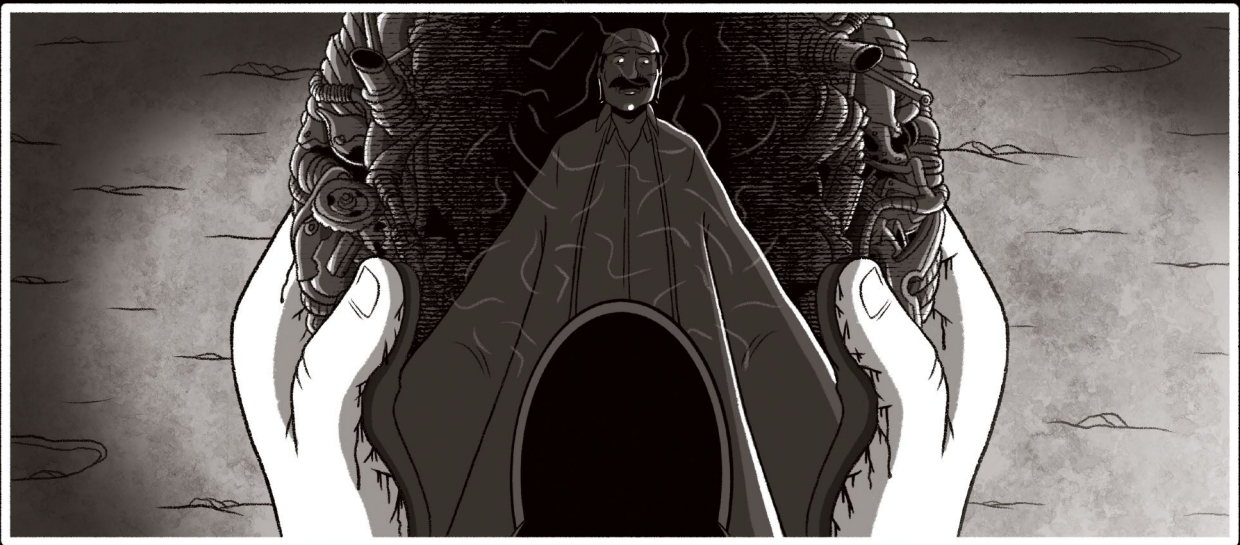
WHAT'S THE GAME, HERE?

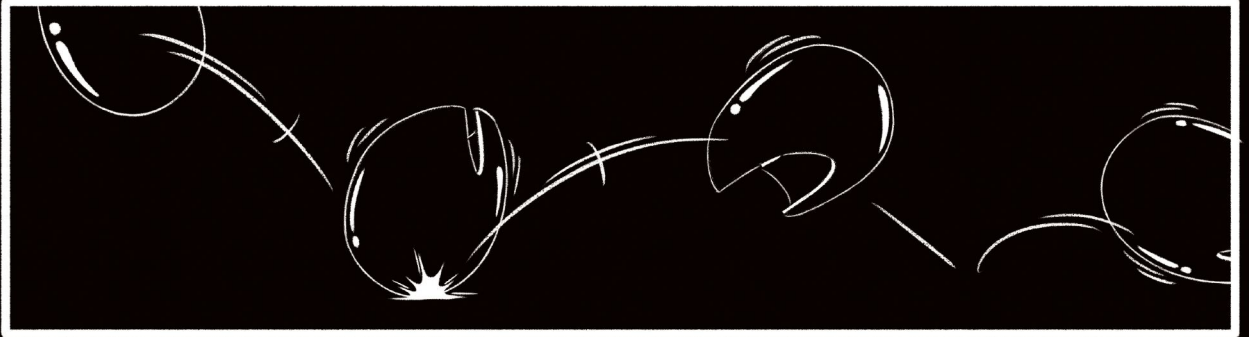


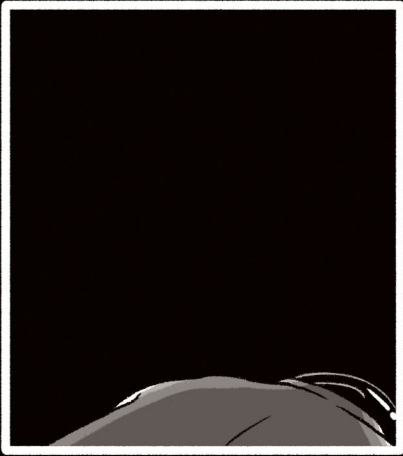
TRYING TO SCARE A MAN TO DEATH?

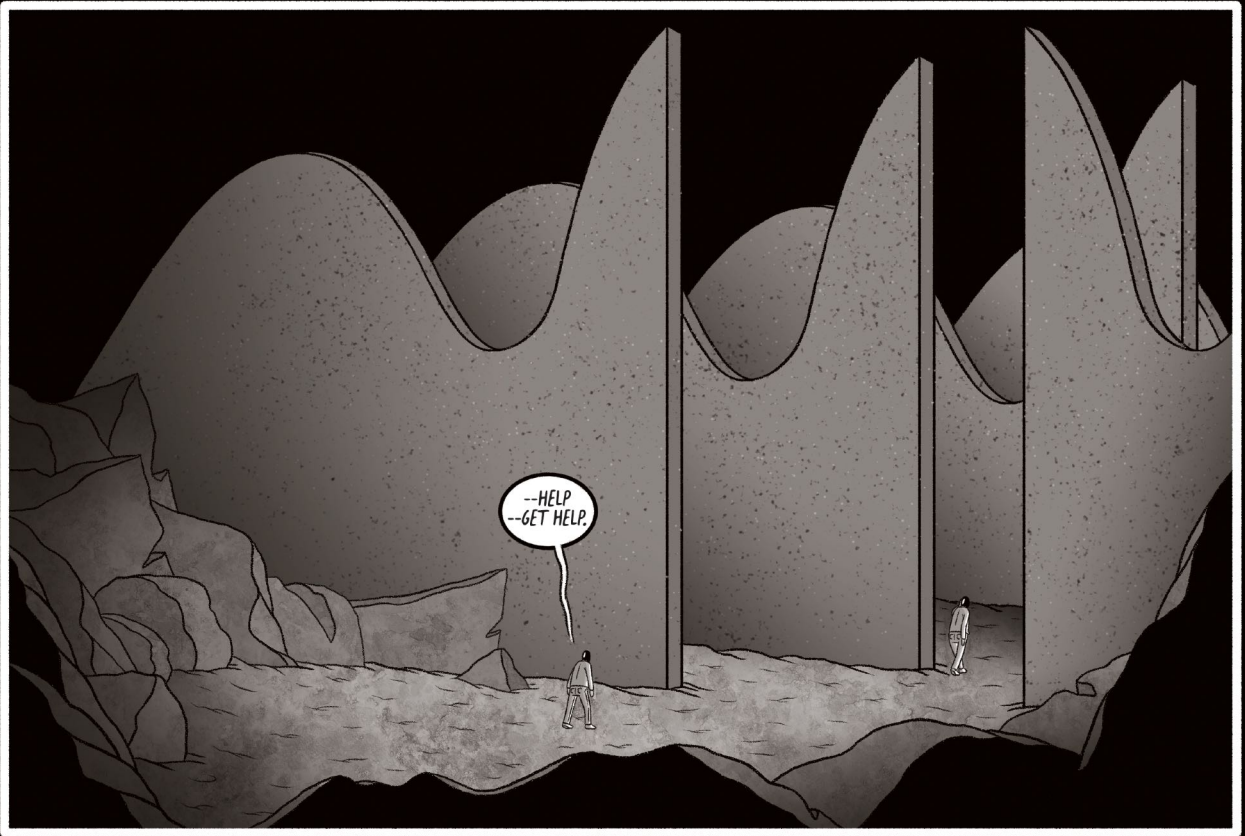
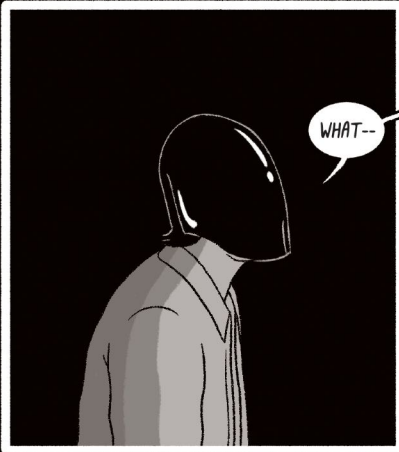


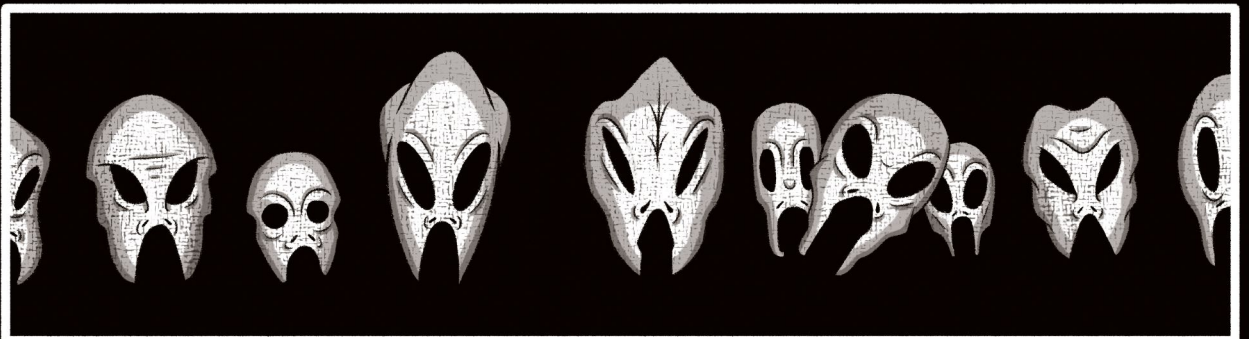
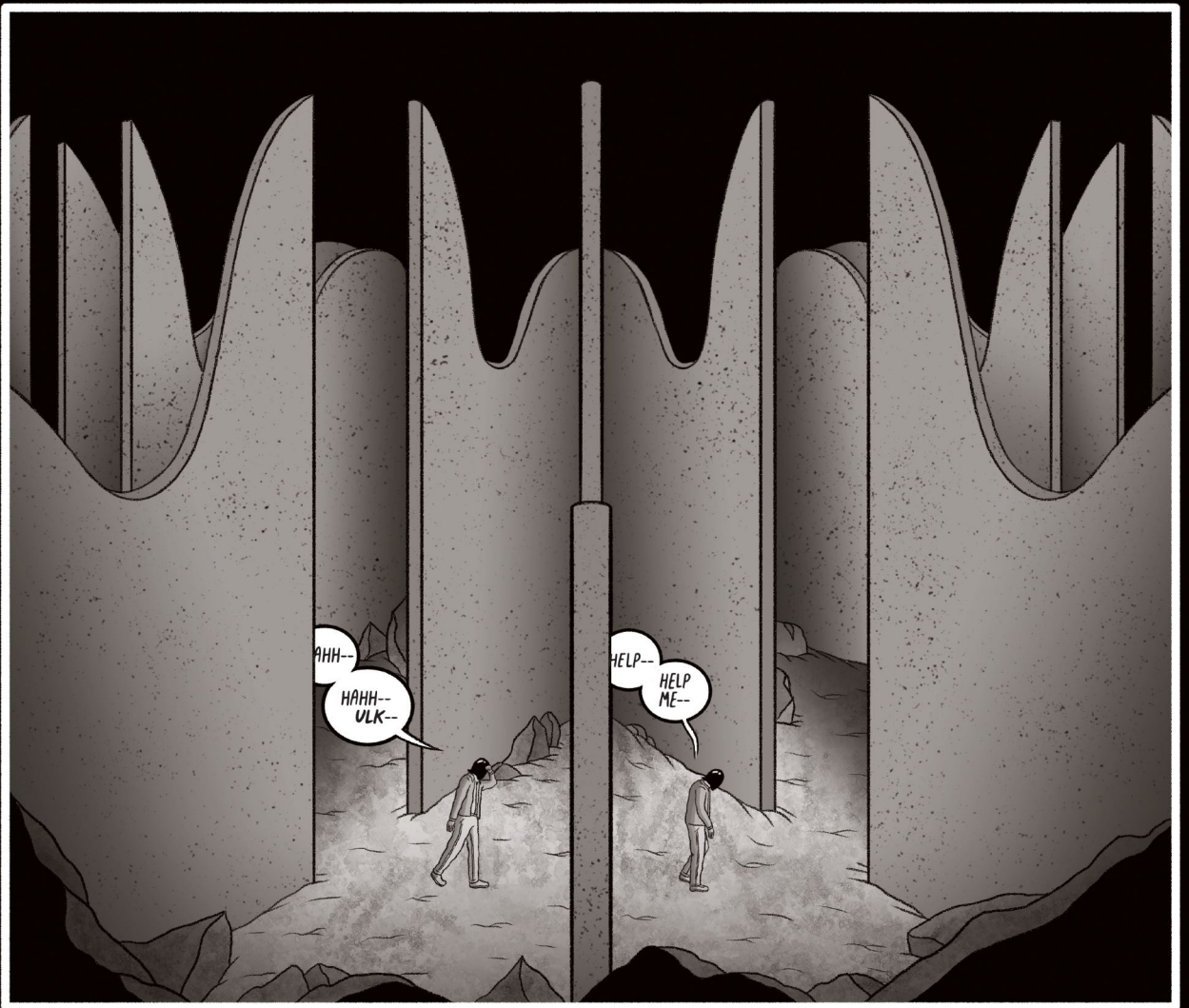


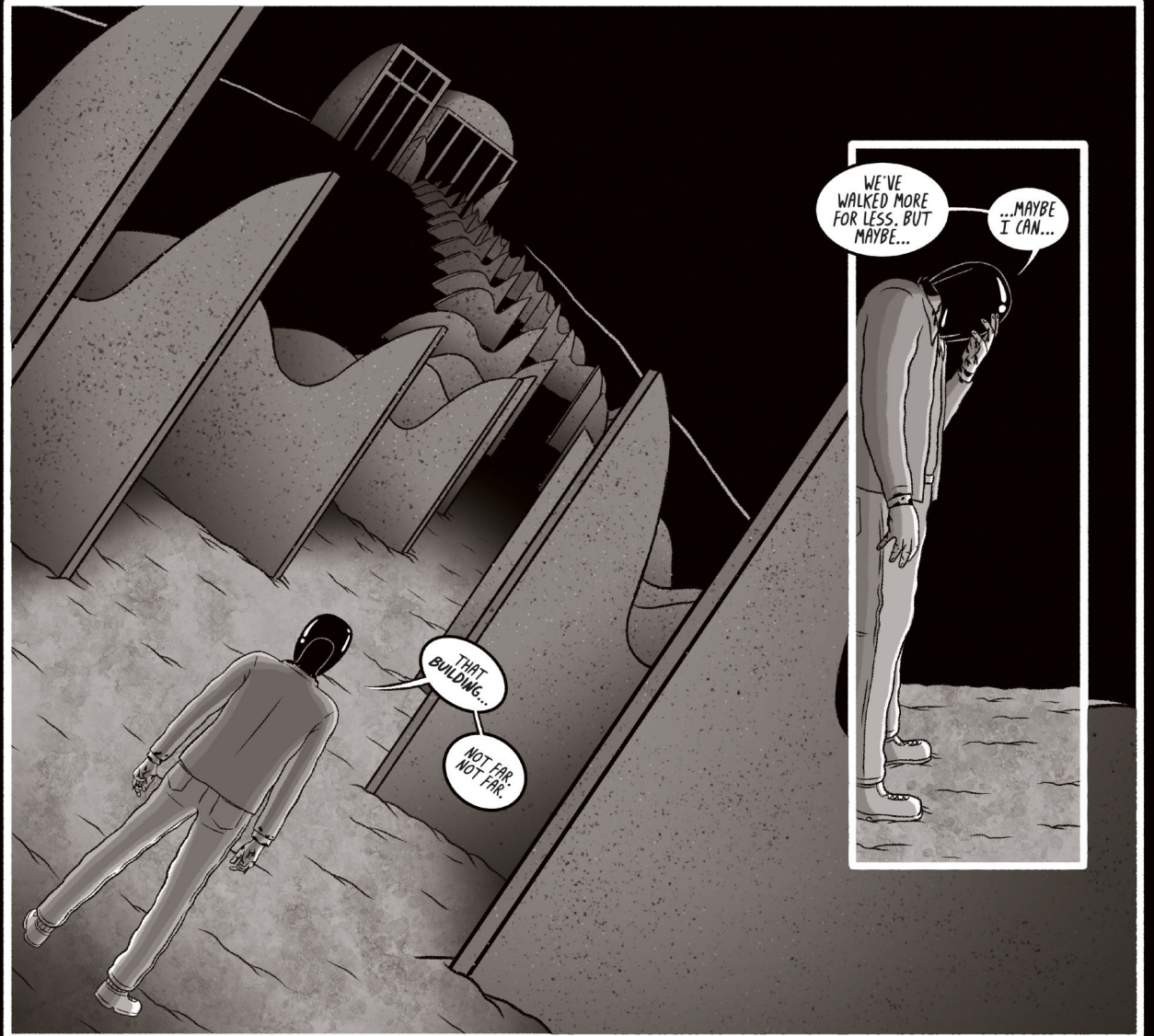
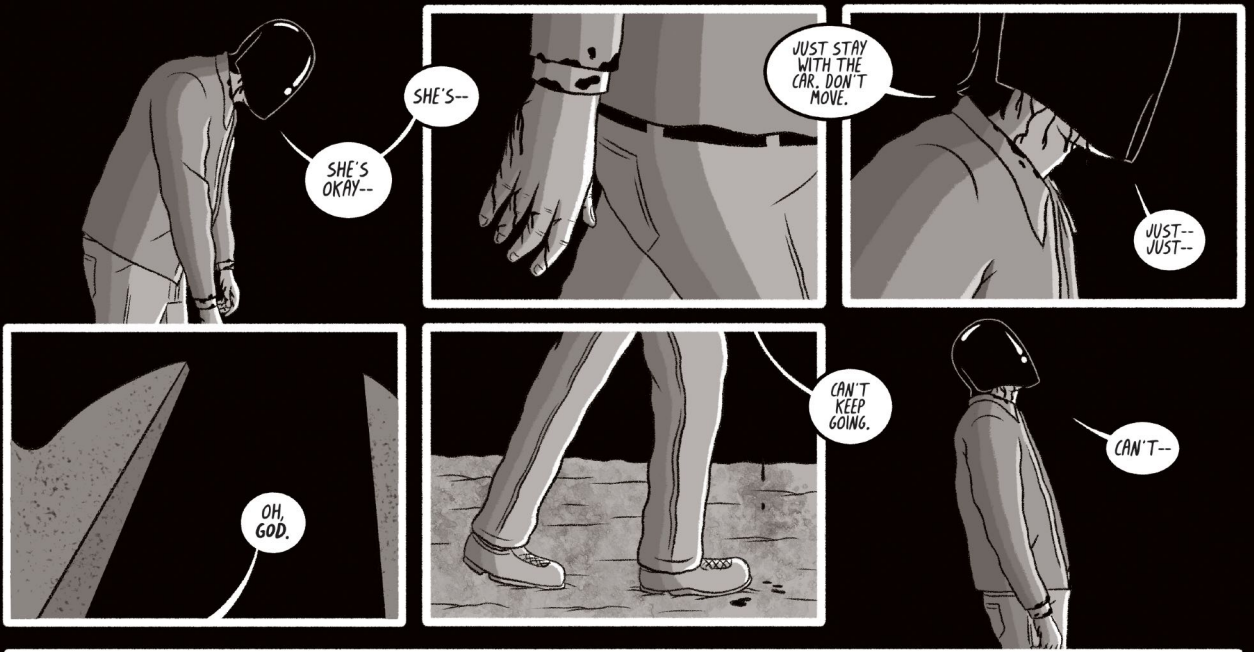


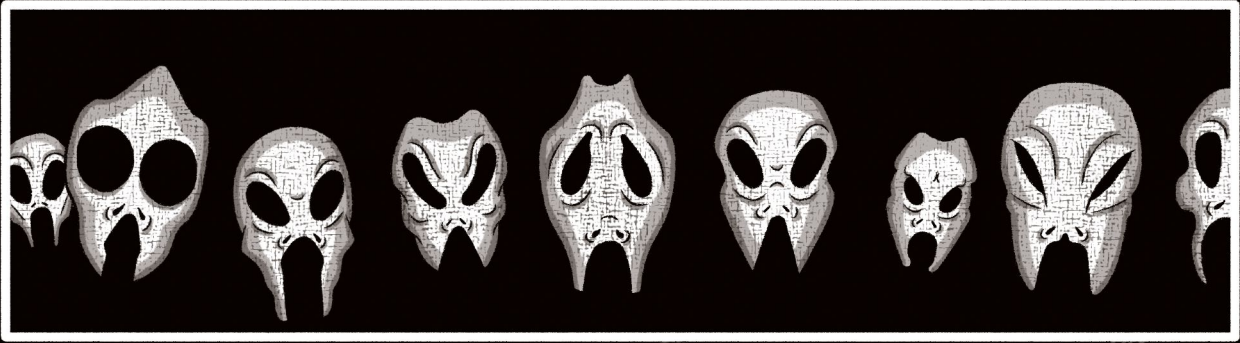




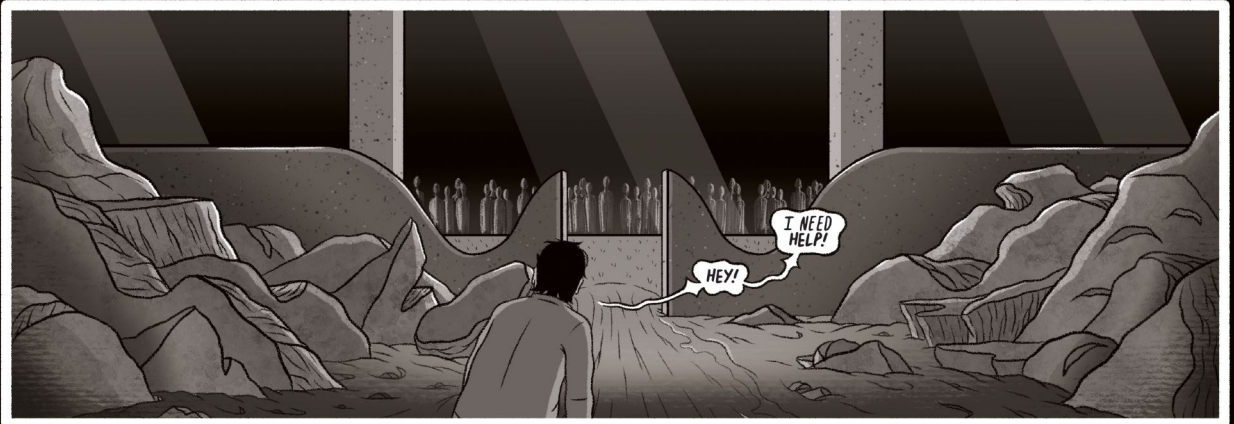


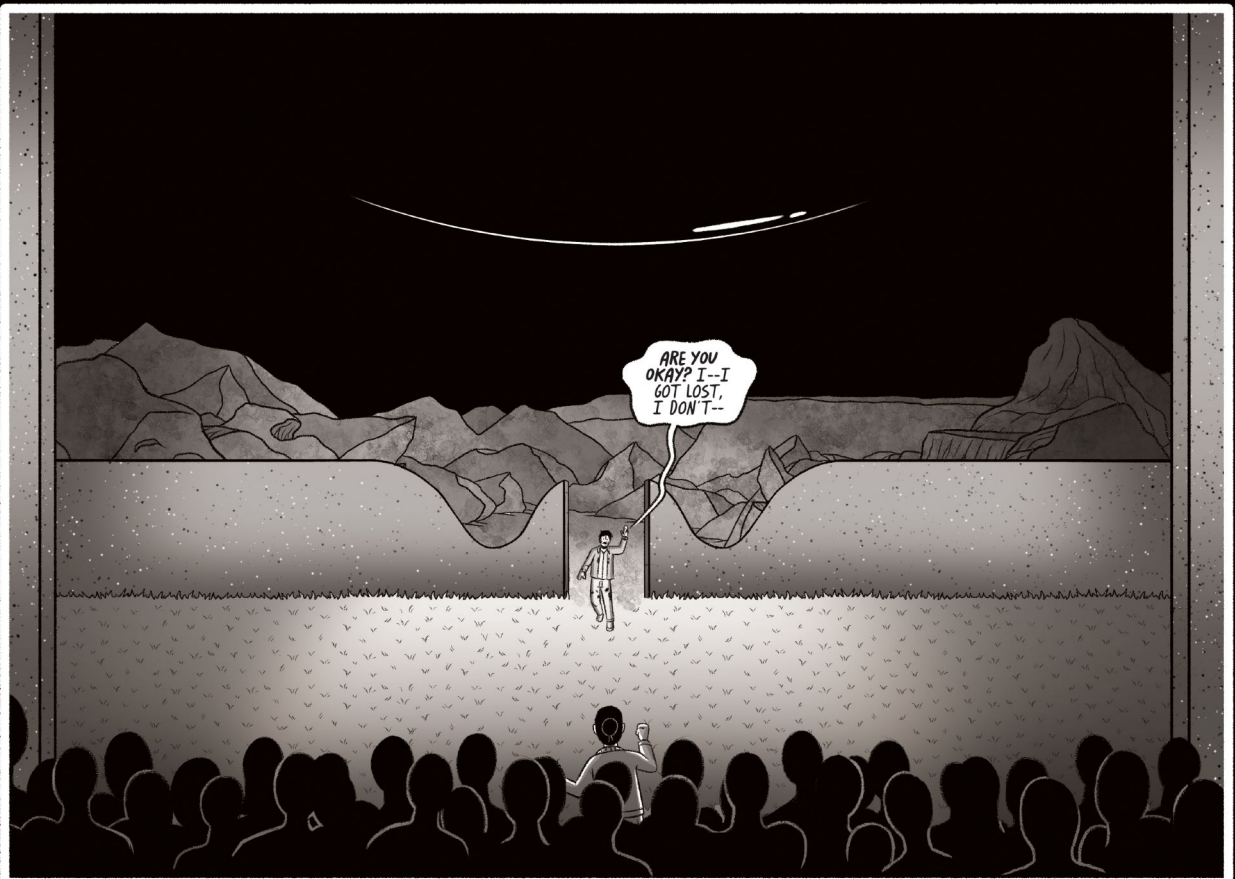
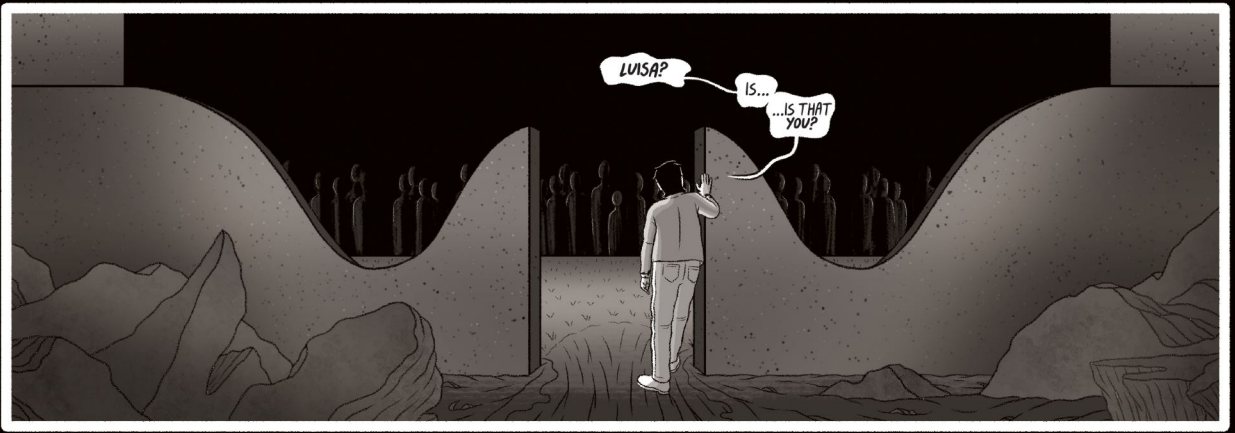






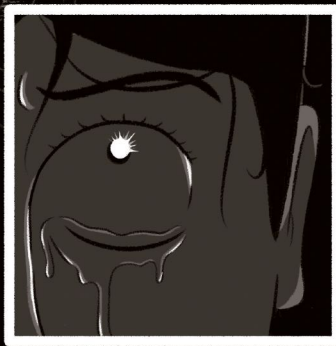
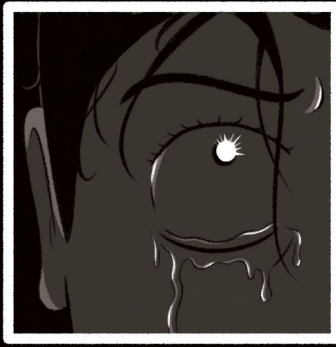
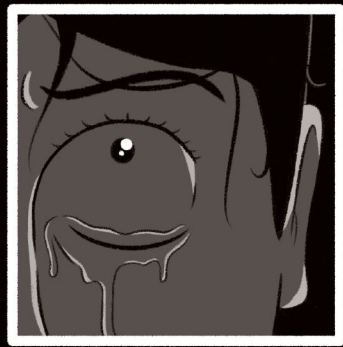
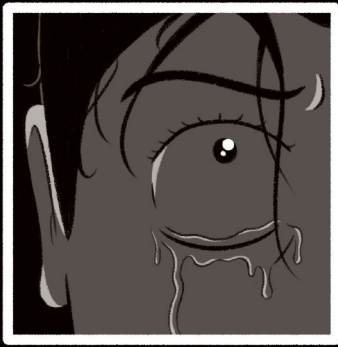




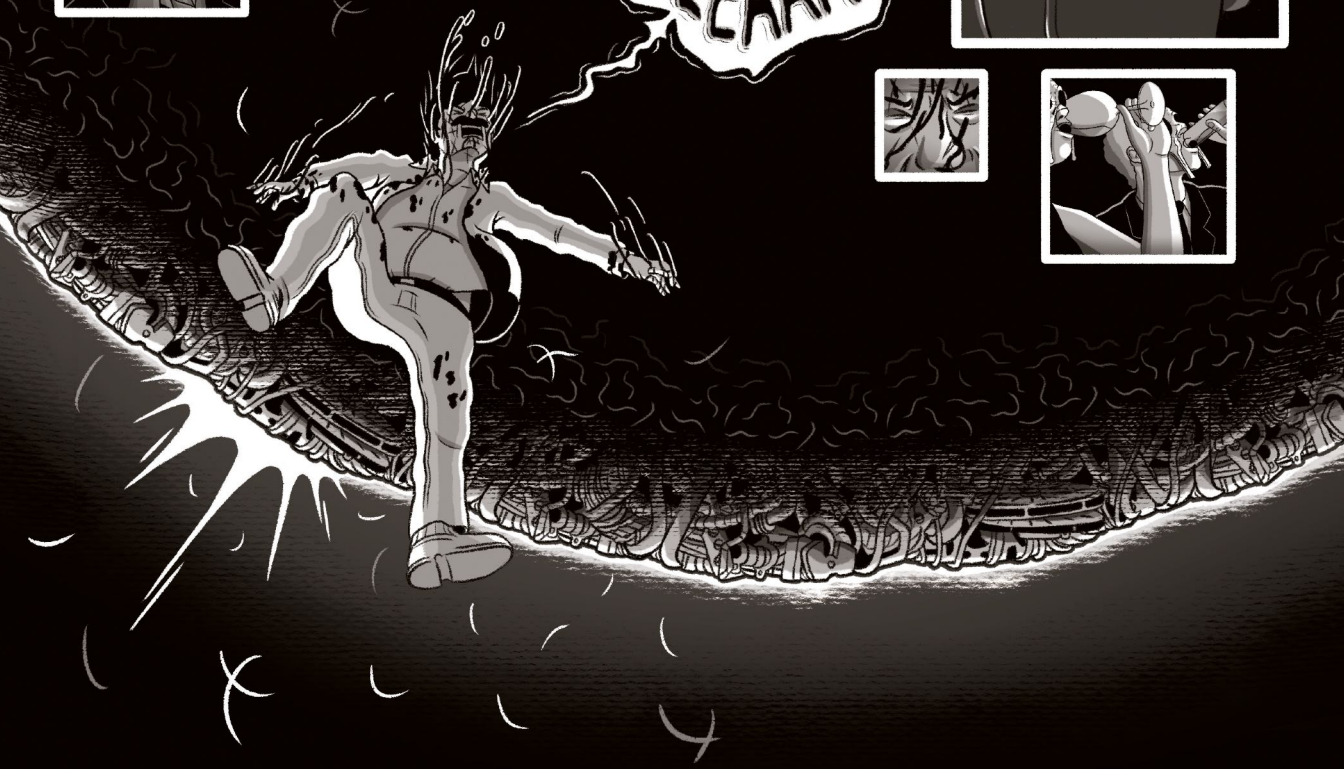




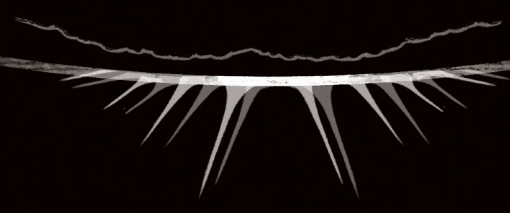




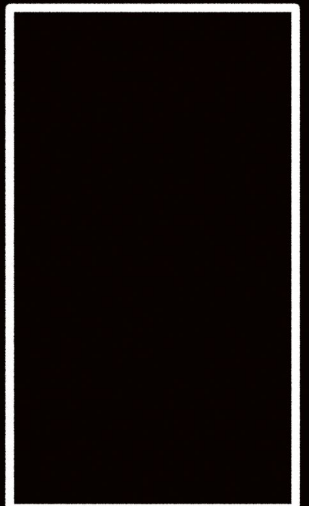
YEEAAAGHHH!



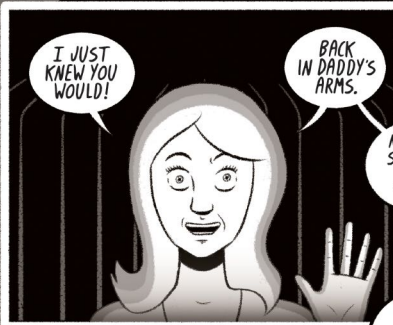


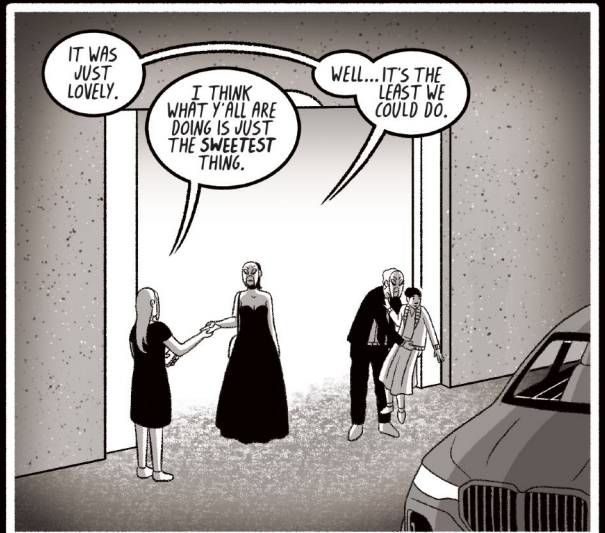


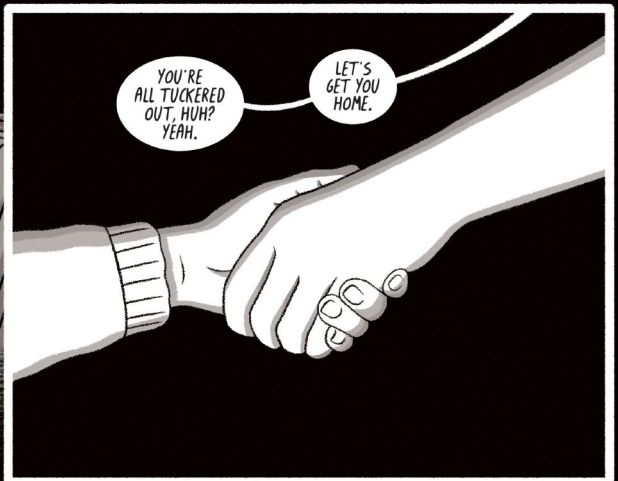


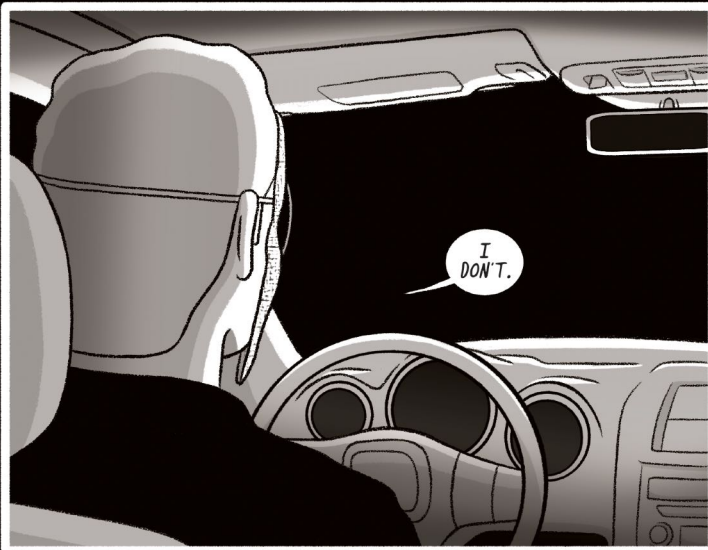


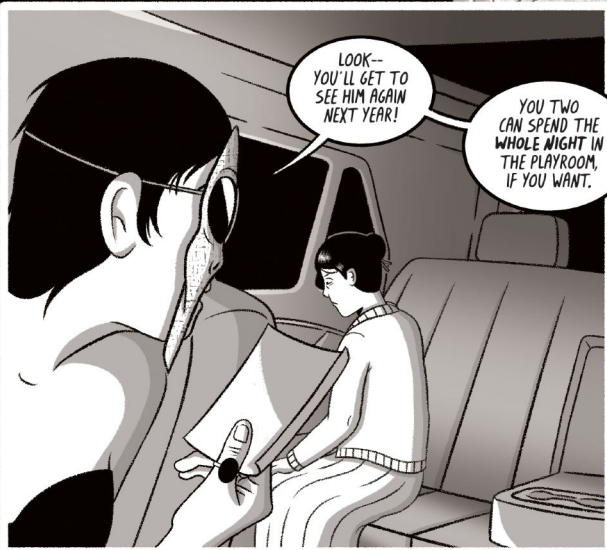


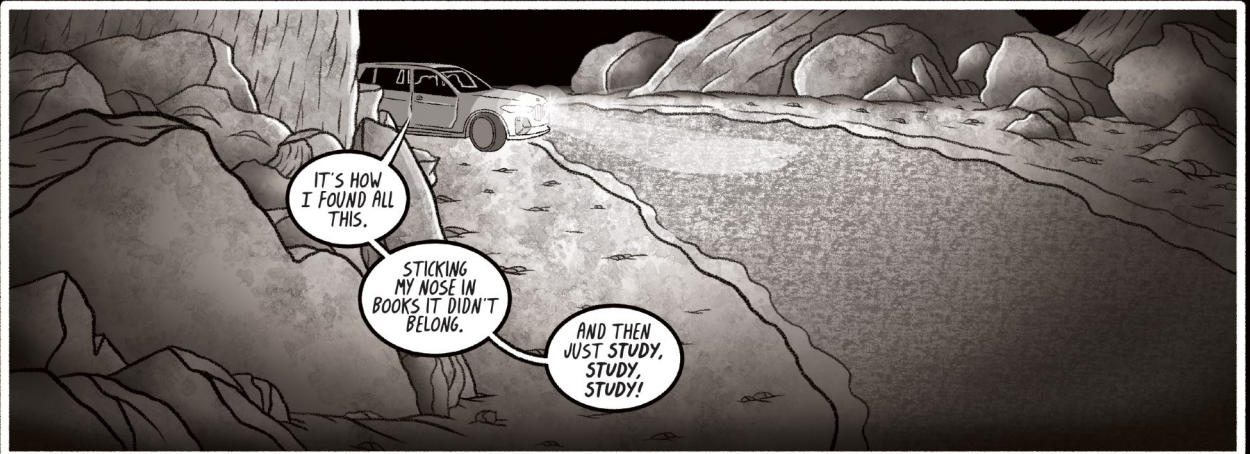
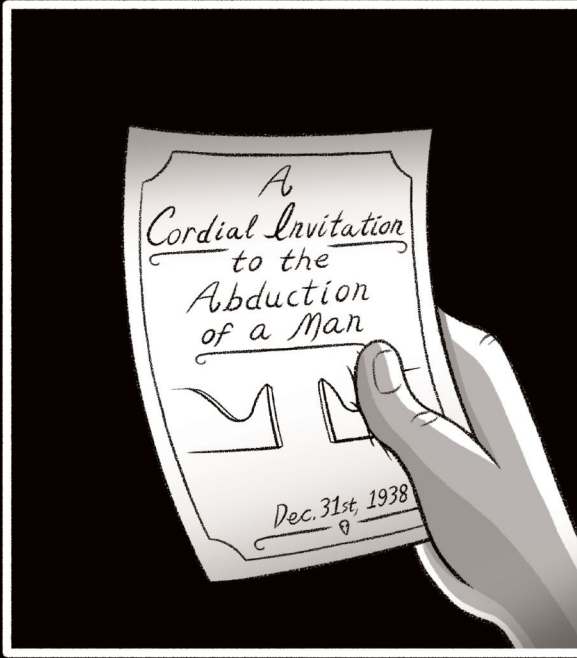












A
Cordial Invitation
to the
Abduction
of a Man

Dec. 31st, 1938

NEXT YEAR,
YOU'LL HAVE A
WHOLE DIFFERENT
OUTLOOK ON
TONIGHT.

SO MUCH
TO LEARN.

BUT DON'T
WORRY, IT'S
GONNA BE
FUN!

YOU LIKE
SCHOOL,
I BET.

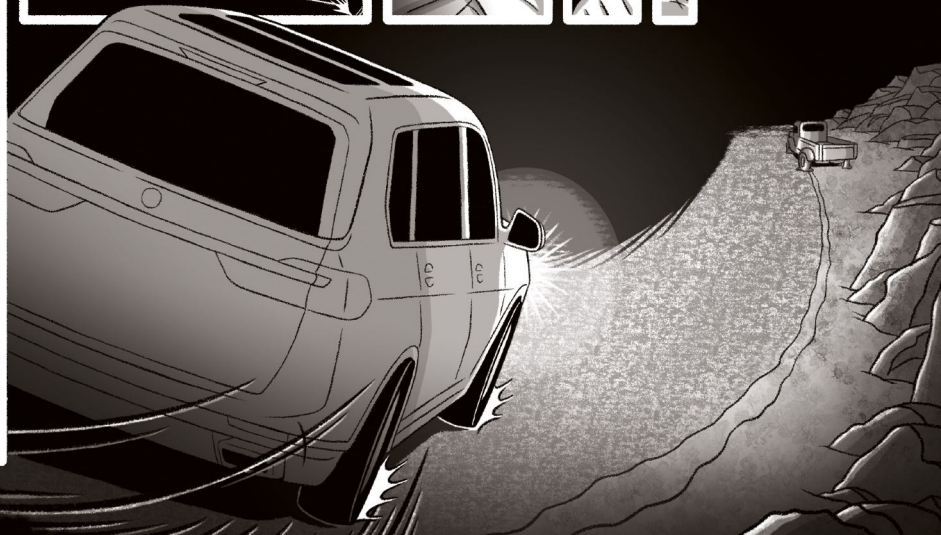
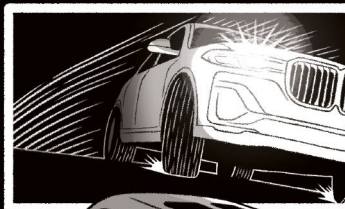
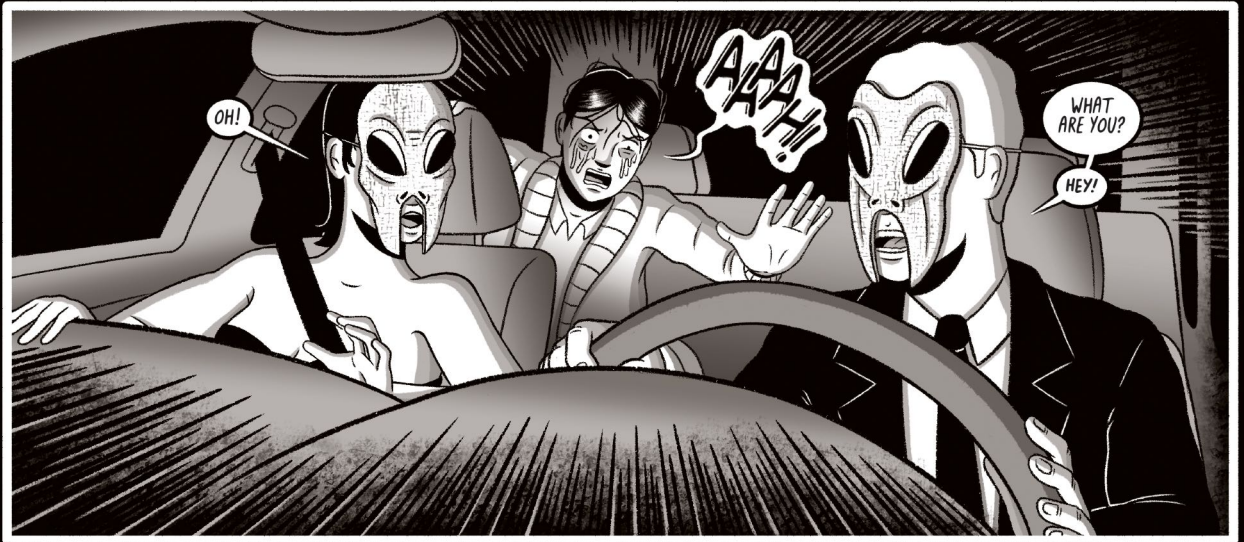
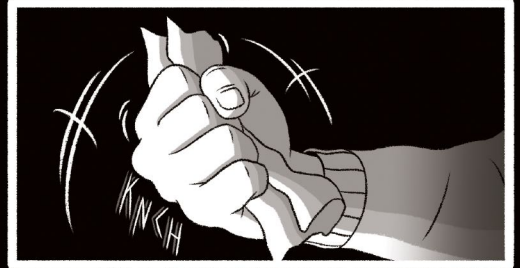
I WAS A
BOOKWORM,
TOO.

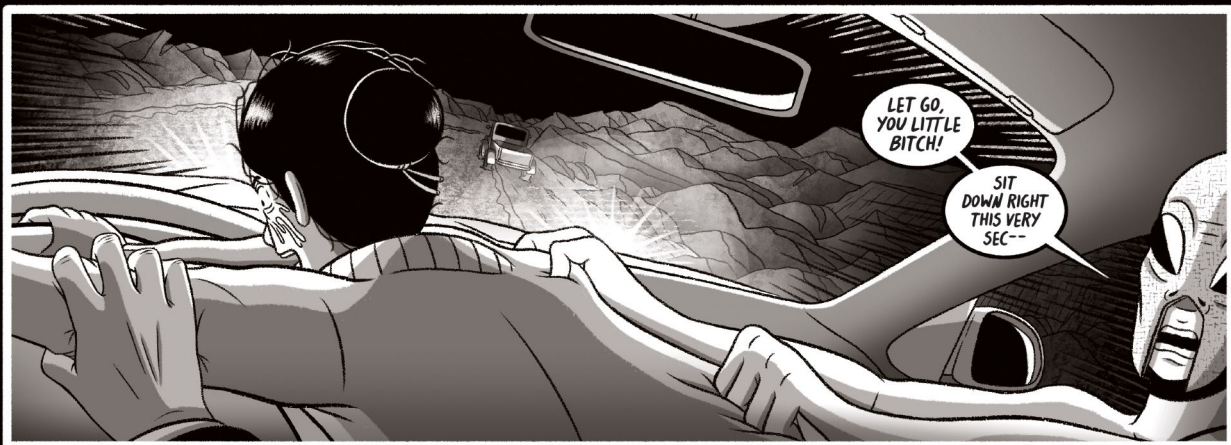
IT'S HOW
I FOUND ALL
THIS.

STICKING
MY NOSE IN
BOOKS IT DIDN'T
BELONG.

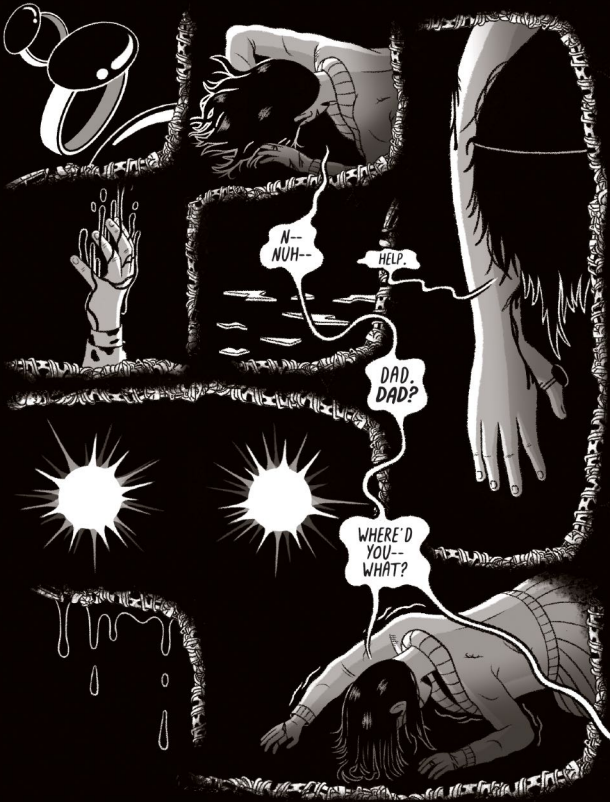
AND THEN
JUST STUDY,
STUDY,
STUDY!















NGUHK--

HEPP.

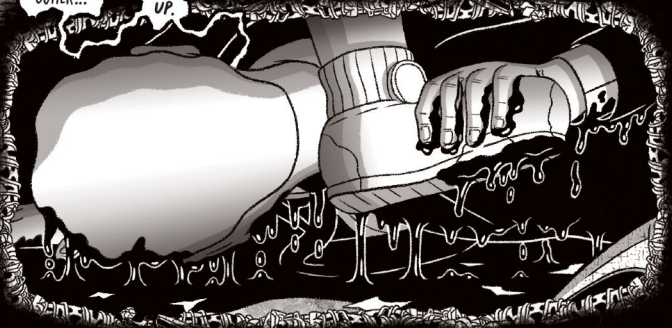
HEPP.
UP.

KEHLK--



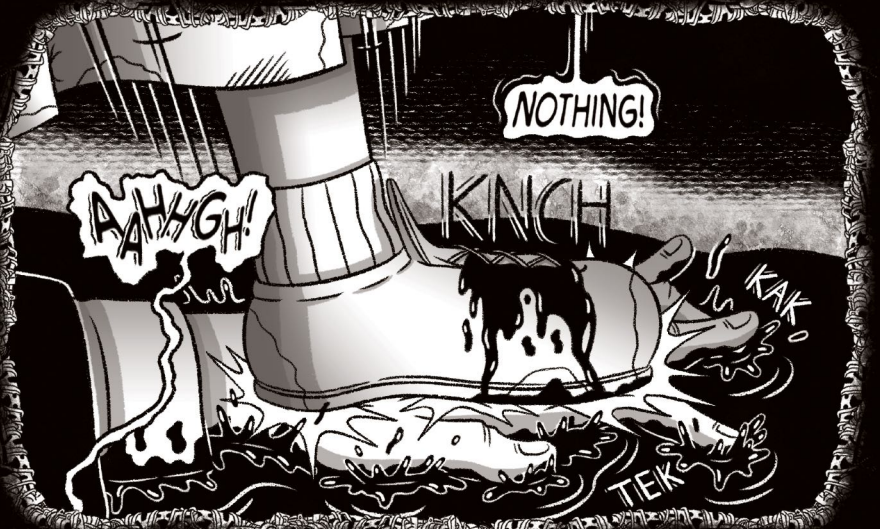
PLESS...
GUHLK...

UP.



WHAT
DID

I DO?



NOTHING!

AAHHH!

KNCH

KAK

TEK



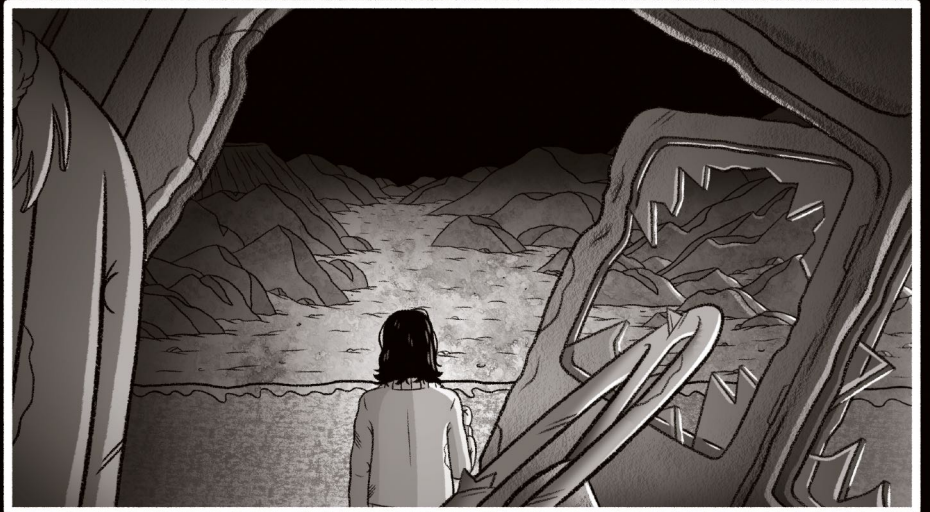
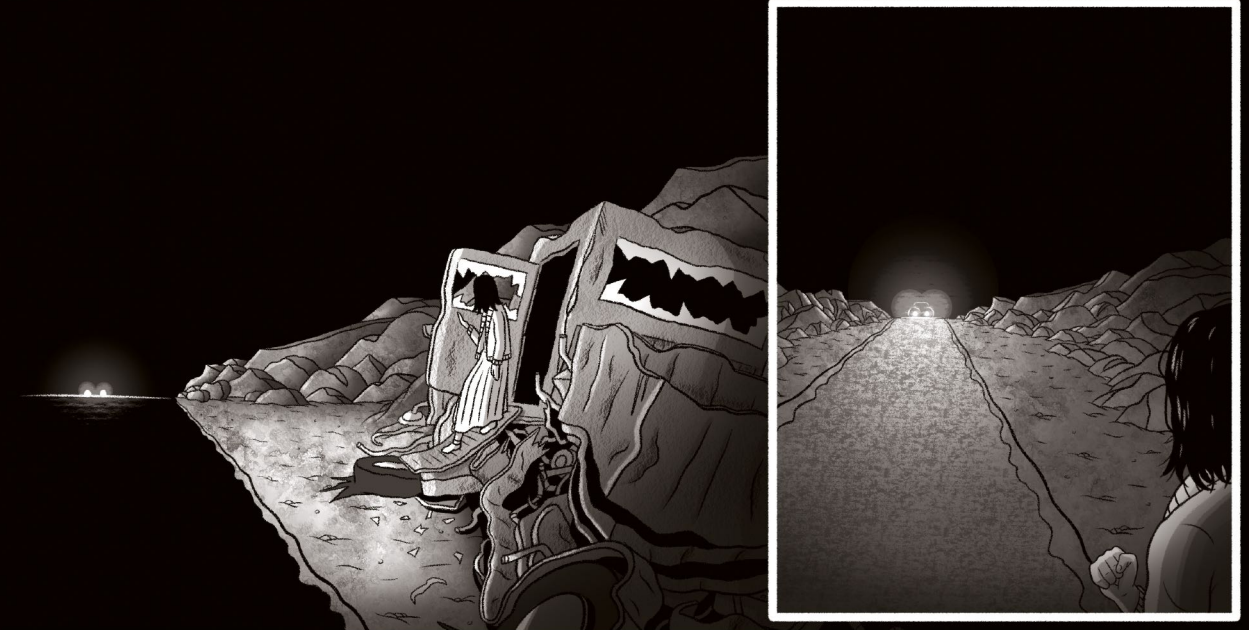
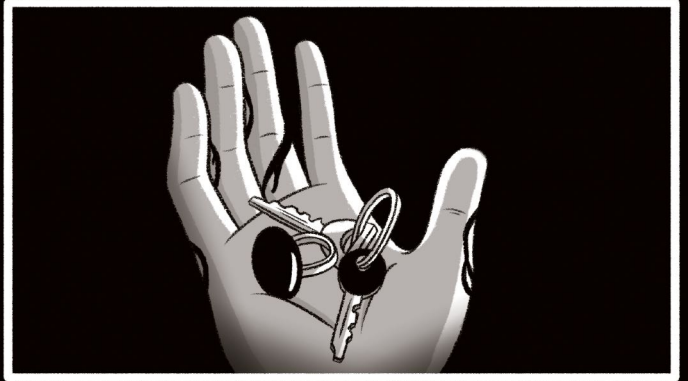
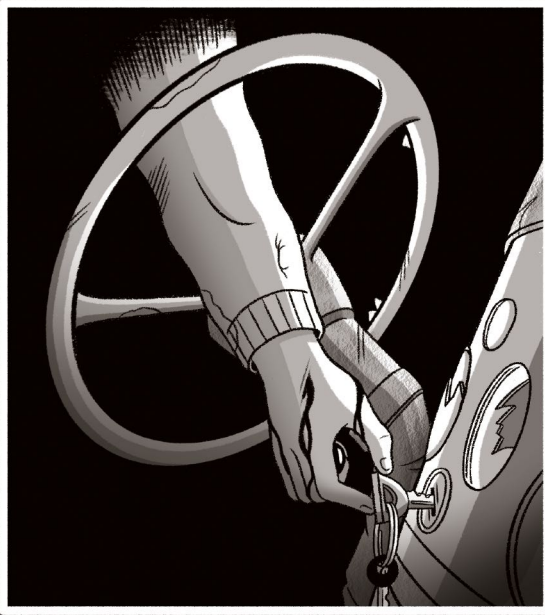
NOTHING.

NO!

DON'T
HURT HIM!

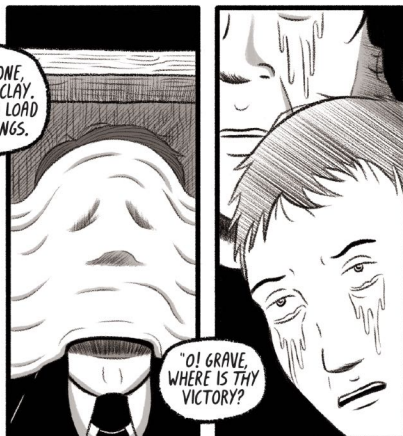
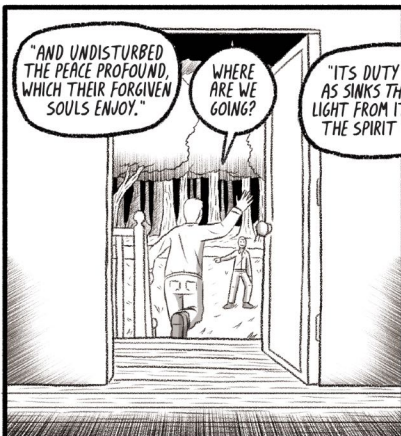
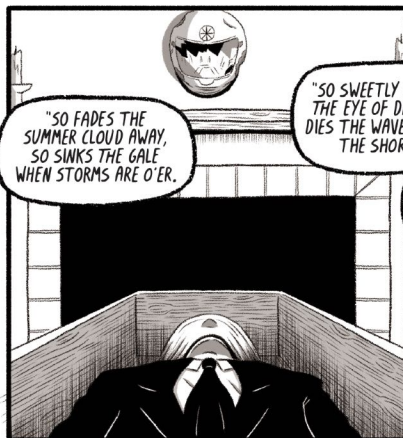
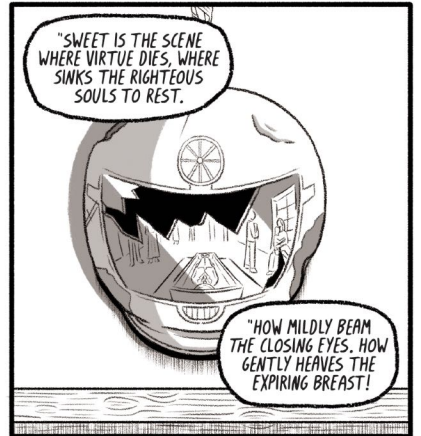
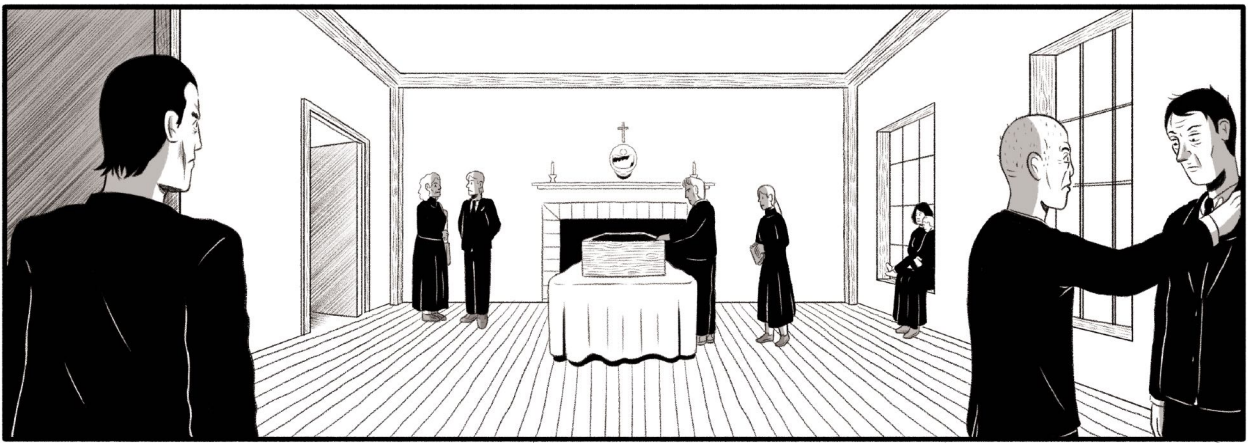


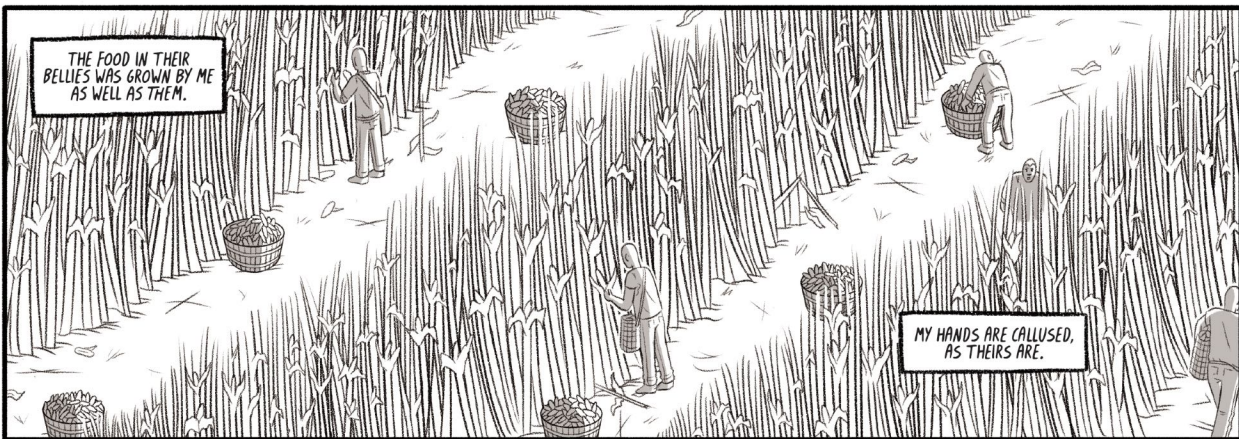






“Frolicker”



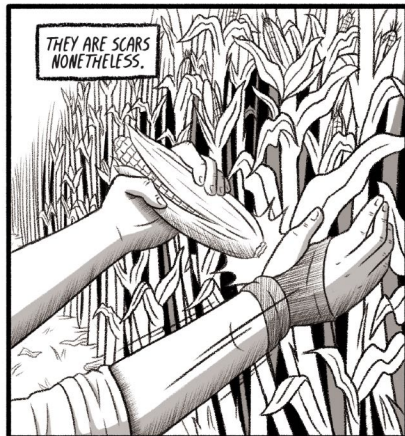


THE FOOD IN THEIR BELLIES WAS GROWN BY ME AS WELL AS THEM.

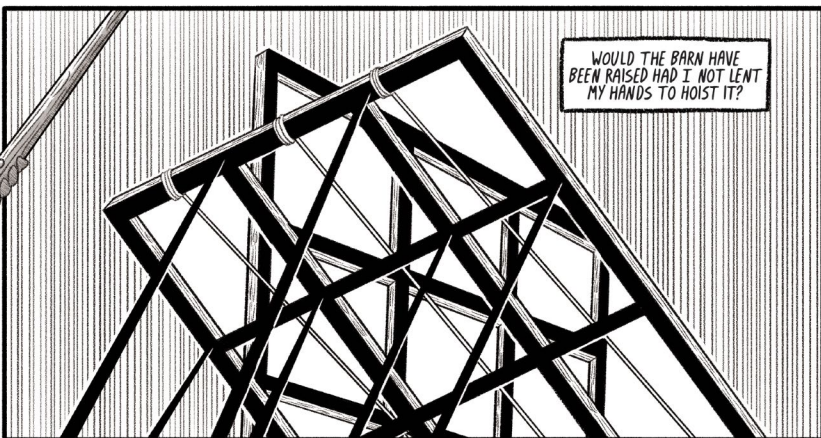
MY HANDS ARE CALLED, AS THEIRS ARE.



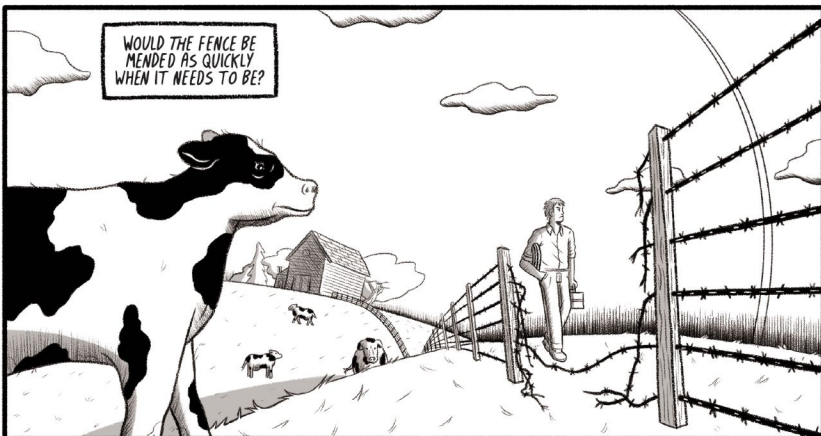
I'VE MY SHARE OF SCARS, SMALL THOUGH THEY MAY BE.



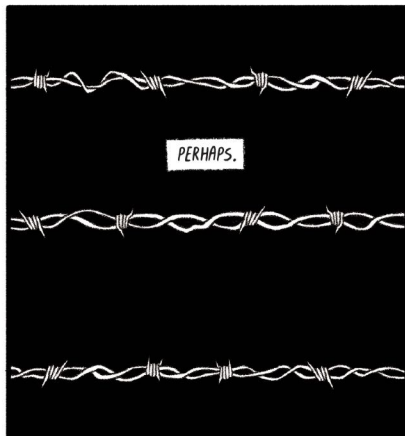
THEY ARE SCARS NONETHELESS.



WOULD THE BARN HAVE BEEN RAISED HAD I NOT LENT MY HANDS TO HOIST IT?



WOULD THE FENCE BE MENDED AS QUICKLY WHEN IT NEEDS TO BE?

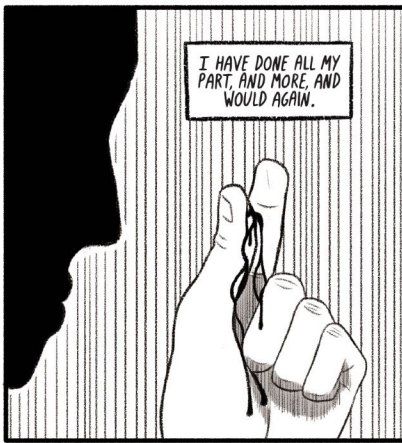


PERHAPS.



BUT I DID HOIST WITH THE OTHERS.

I DID MY MENDING, TOO.

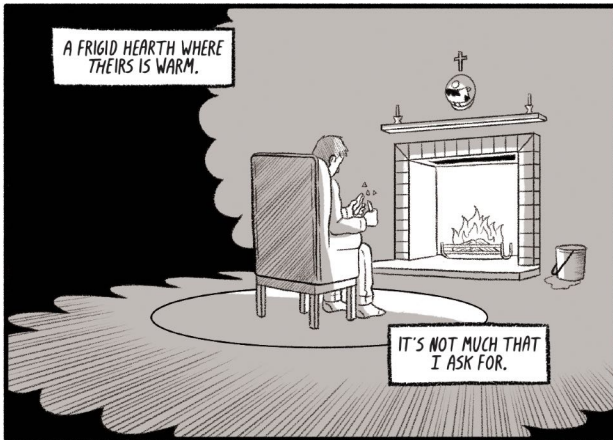


I HAVE DONE ALL MY PART, AND MORE, AND WOULD AGAIN.



AND WHAT DO I HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT?

AN EMPTY HOUSE WHERE THEIRS IS FULL.



A FRIGID HEARTH WHERE THEIRS IS WARM.

IT'S NOT MUCH THAT I ASK FOR.



JUST WHAT I NEED.

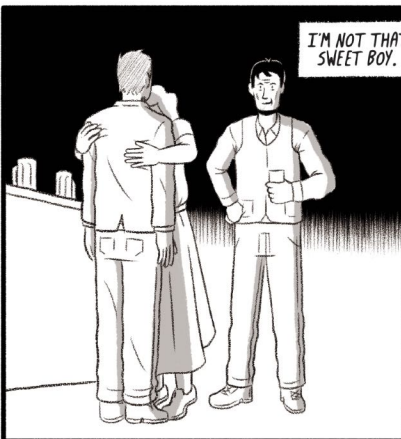


MOTHER LIES THROUGH HER TEETH AND SAYS I'M STILL YOUNG, DON'T WORRY.



THEY RAISED ME WITH HONEY IN MY MOUTH.

THEIR SOFT TOUCH HAS A HAND IN HOW I'M SEEN, IN HOW EVERYONE THINKS I AM.



I'M NOT THAT SWEET BOY.



I'LL SPIT OUT THEIR HONEY AND SOONER DRINK ALE.



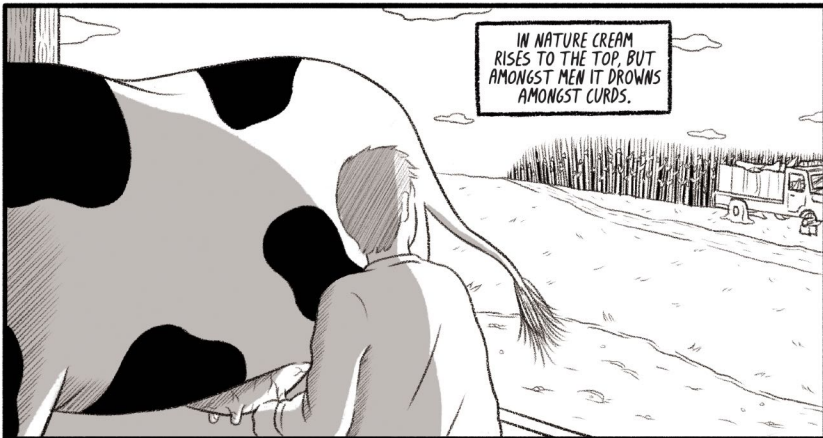
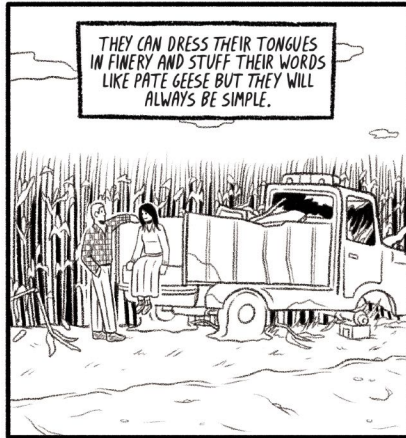
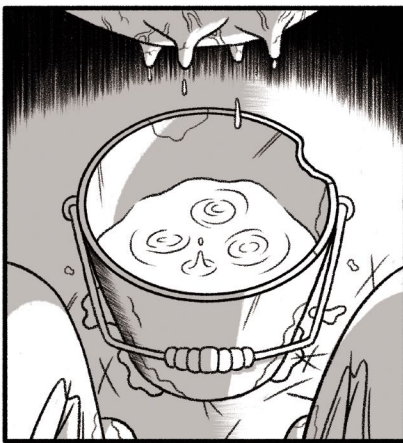
THEY ALL LOOK AT ME AND SEE ONLY THE STALK THAT I GREW FROM.

PULL BACK MY HUSK
AND I'LL STICK IN
YOUR TEETH.

YES, SIR.

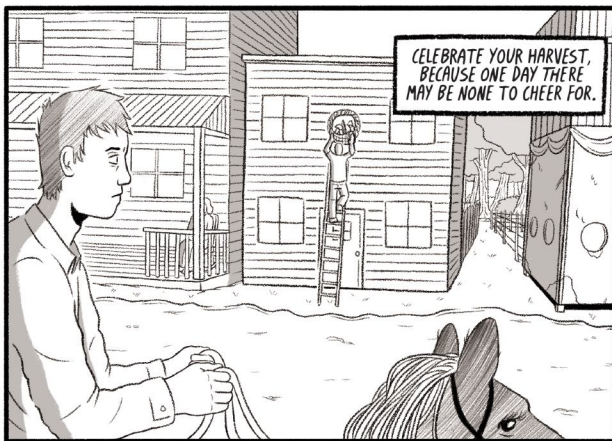








TRADITIONS REMIND US TO OPEN OUR EYES TO THE PRECARITY WE LIVE AMONGST.



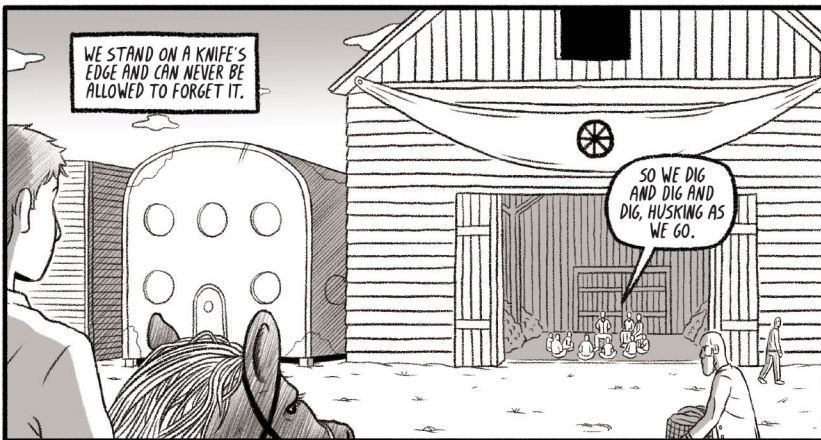
CELEBRATE YOUR HARVEST, BECAUSE ONE DAY THERE MAY BE NONE TO CHEER FOR.



REJOICE IN THE ANNIVERSARY OF YOUR BIRTH, BECAUSE IT MEANS, FOR NOW, YOU'RE STILL ALIVE.



GIVE GIFTS, BECAUSE SOON YOU MAY NOT HAVE COMFORT TO ALLOW FOR SUCH CHARITY.



WE STAND ON A KNIFE'S EDGE AND CAN NEVER BE ALLOWED TO FORGET IT.

SO WE DIG AND DIG AND DIG, HUSKING AS WE GO.



AND WHAT ARE WE RACING TO FIND, BOYS?

THE RED EAR!

A RED ONE!



THAT'S RIGHT, AND ONCE WE FIND IT, WHAT CAN WE ASK FOR?

A KISS!

EWW!
YUCKY!



NOW GIRLS, IS THERE A WAY TO MAKE THAT ICKY BOY GO AWAY?

THE SMUT EAR!

SHOW THE SMUT EAR!



IT IS TOO LATE TO REMIND MY PEERS, THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO FORGET.



INSTEAD I WILL SHOW THEM THE EDGE OF THE KNIFE ITSELF.



I'D LAY THEM OUT LIKE CORD WOOD, IS WHAT I WOULD DO.



IT'S WHAT I PICTURE WHEN I SUP WITH THEM.



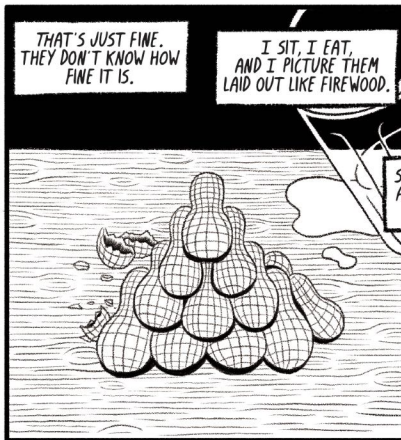
WHAT I PICTURE WHEN THEY CHEER, THEIR TOASTS NEVER REACHING THE EDGE OF MY GLASS.



WHEN THEY LAUGH TO JOKES NOT MEANT FOR MY EARS.



THEIR EYES TWINKLE IN THE LAMPLIGHT, BUT THAT SHINE IS NOT FOR ME.



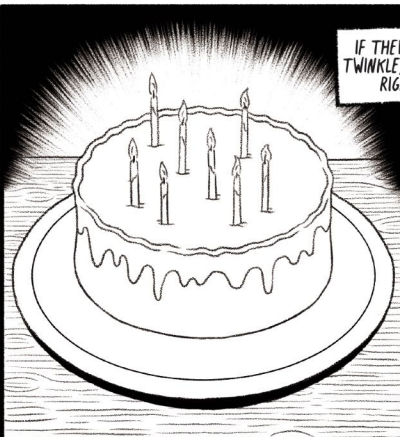
THAT'S JUST FINE. THEY DON'T KNOW HOW FINE IT IS.

I SIT, I EAT, AND I PICTURE THEM LAID OUT LIKE FIREWOOD.

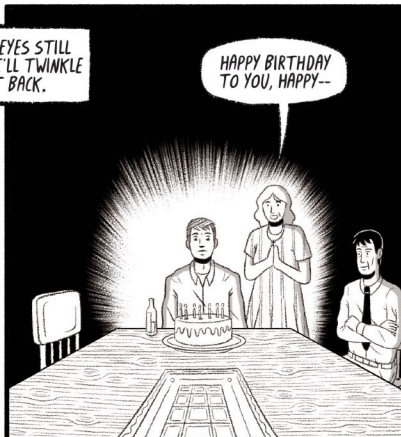
STACKED NEAT, ALL FACING THE SAME WAY.



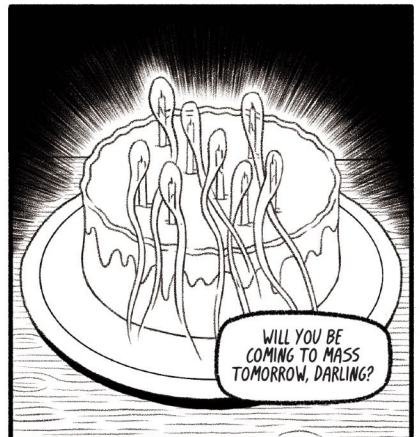
THEY'LL BE LOOKING AT ME THEN.



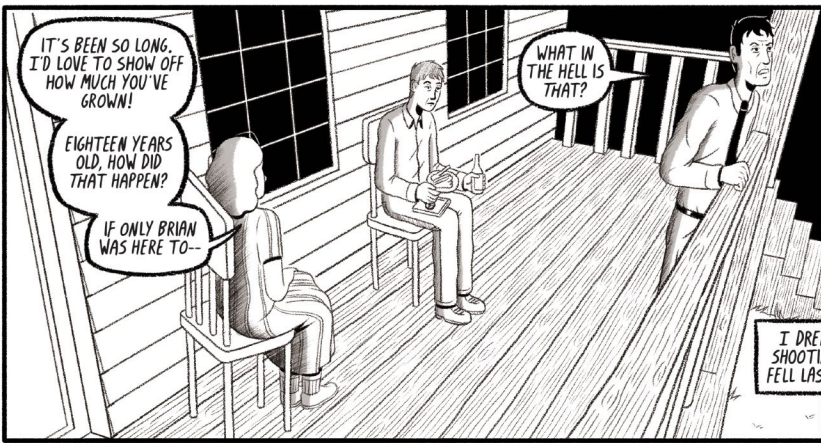
IF THEIR EYES STILL TWINKLE, I'LL TWINKLE RIGHT BACK.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU, HAPPY--



WILL YOU BE COMING TO MASS TOMORROW, DARLING?



IT'S BEEN SO LONG. I'D LOVE TO SHOW OFF HOW MUCH YOU'VE GROWN!
EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD. HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?
IF ONLY BRIAN WAS HERE TO--

WHAT IN THE HELL IS THAT?



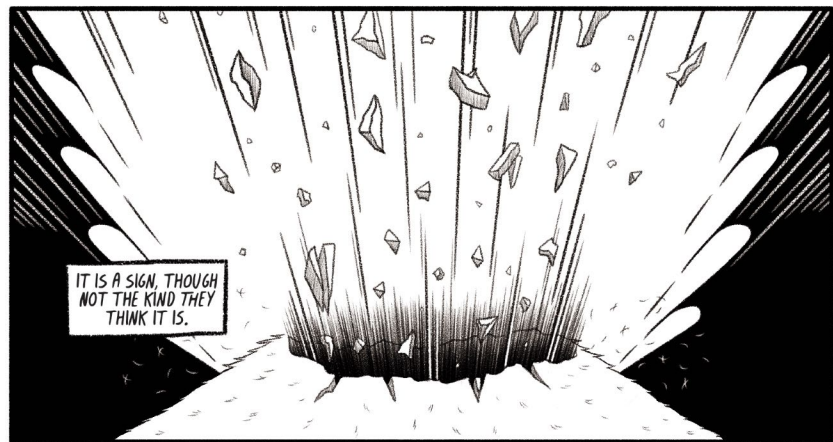
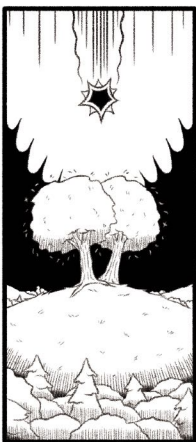
I DREAMED A SHOOTING STAR FELL LAST NIGHT.



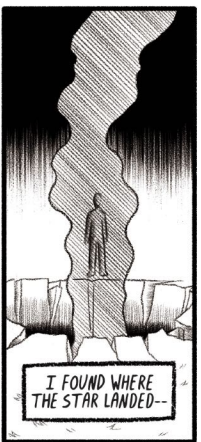
THE SCRATCH IT LEFT ON THE SKY LOOKED LIKE THE ONES MY CAT WOULD LEAVE ON MY ARM WHEN WE WRESTLED.



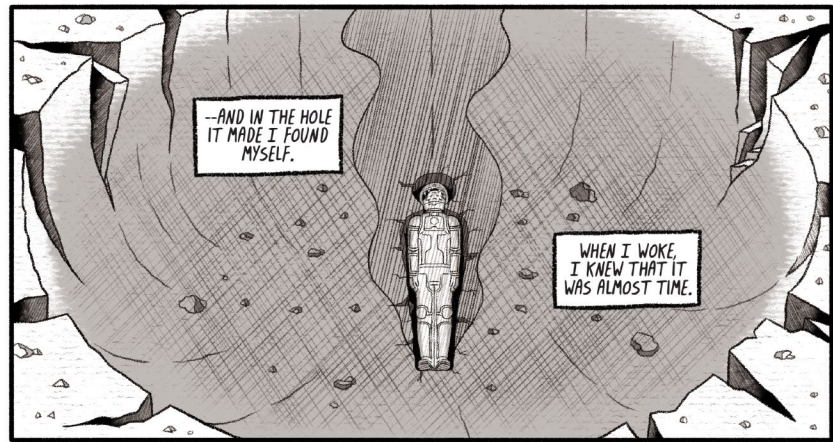
IN THE DREAM EVERYONE SAID THAT IT'S A SIGN FOR IT TO FALL JUST AS THE FESTIVAL BEGINS.



IT IS A SIGN, THOUGH NOT THE KIND THEY THINK IT IS.

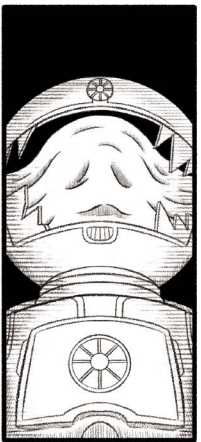


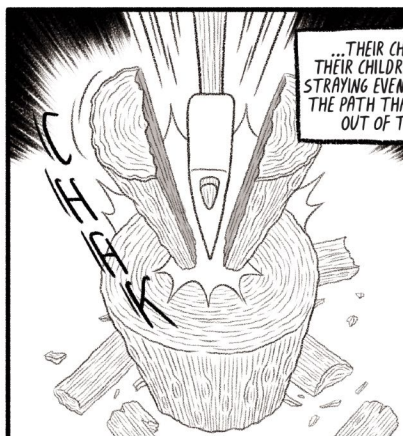
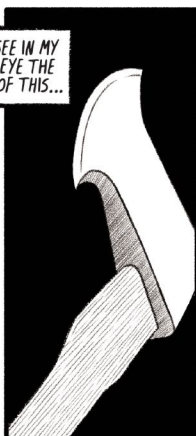
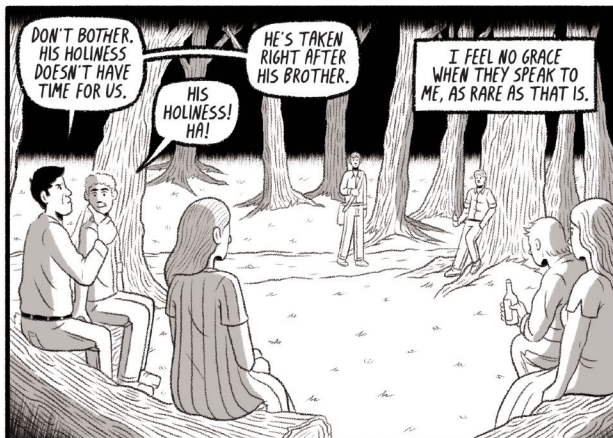
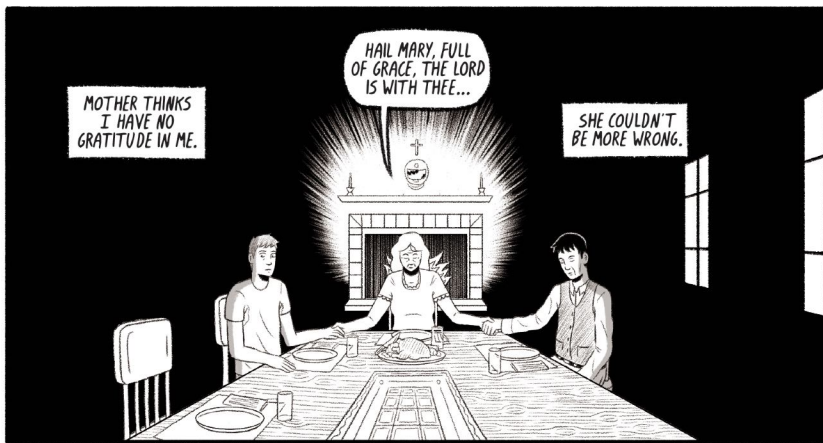
I FOUND WHERE THE STAR LANDED--



--AND IN THE HOLE IT MADE I FOUND MYSELF.

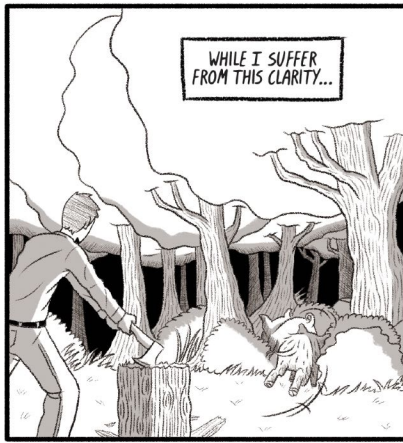
WHEN I WOKE, I KNEW THAT IT WAS ALMOST TIME.







...UNTIL WE ARE ALL BEASTS AGAIN. IT IS A BURDEN THAT I CAN SEE THIS FUTURE WHILE THE REST OF THEM JUST CARRY ON THEIR WAYS.



WHILE I SUFFER FROM THIS CLARITY...



...THEY MAKE LOVE AND SMILE.



I SEE THEM STACKED, AGAIN, AND AM BRIEFLY THANKFUL FOR THAT SAME CLARITY.



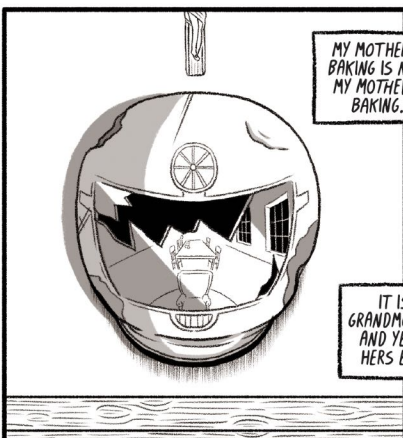
AT IT AGAIN? YOU'LL HAVE TO ROLL ME TO THE FEAST IF YOU KEEP THIS UP.
EVERYONE ALREADY LOVES YOUR PIES, HOW MUCH PRACTICE DO YOU NEED?
I'M RUSTY, AND WANT THEM PERFECT THIS YEAR.



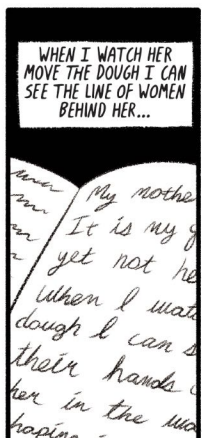
AND NOBODY SAID YOU HAVE TO EAT THEM ALL.
I'D JUST AS SOON GIVE THEM TO THE NEIGHBORS, IF YOU'D LET ME.
OH, NOW, NOW, LET'S NOT BE HASTY!
I JUST HOPE--SNIFF--HOPE THIS YEAR...
OH, GOD...



OH, DARLING, I KNOW, I KNOW.

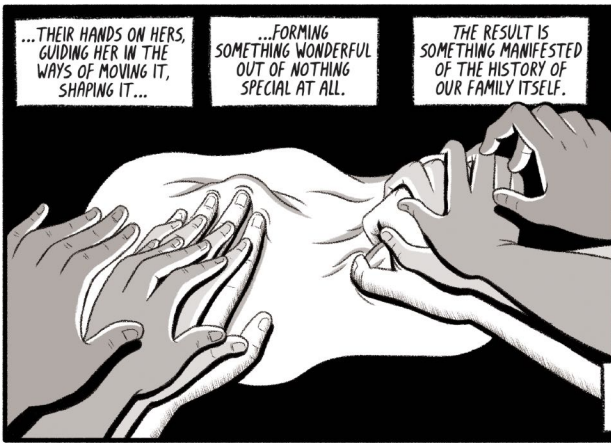


MY MOTHER'S BAKING IS NOT MY MOTHER'S BAKING.
IT IS MY GRANDMOTHER'S, AND YET NOT HERS EITHER.



WHEN I WATCH HER MOVE THE DOUGH I CAN SEE THE LINE OF WOMEN BEHIND HER...

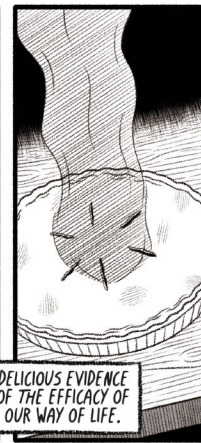
My mother
It is my
yet not he
When I watch
dough I can
their hands
her in the wa
hoping



...THEIR HANDS ON HERS, GUIDING HER IN THE WAYS OF MOVING IT, SHAPING IT...

...FORMING SOMETHING WONDERFUL OUT OF NOTHING SPECIAL AT ALL.

THE RESULT IS SOMETHING MANIFESTED OF THE HISTORY OF OUR FAMILY ITSELF.

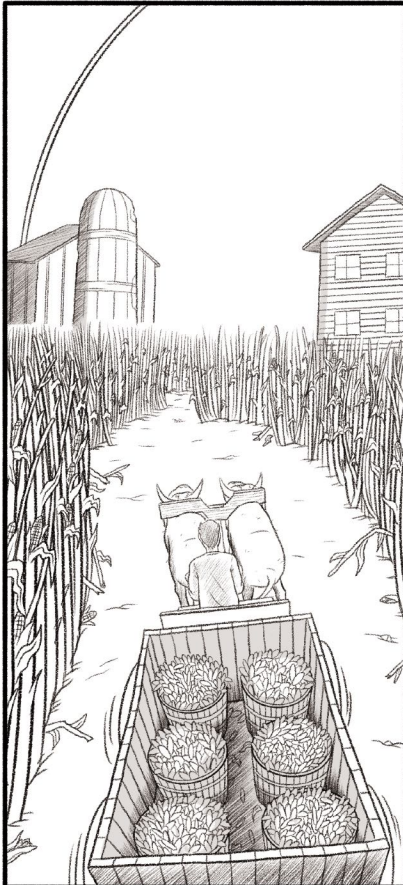


DELICIOUS EVIDENCE OF THE EFFICACY OF OUR WAY OF LIFE.

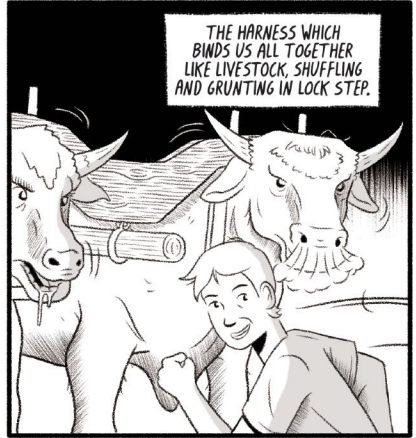


THEY WILL TASTE THAT EVIDENCE AND SAVOR THAT HISTORY, AND IN THAT MOMENT THEY WILL WISH THEY HADN'T TURNED THEIR BACKS ON IT.

MY HERITAGE WILL BE SLIDING DOWN THEIR THROATS.



IT IS A LUXURY OF THE YOUNG THAT THEY CANNOT YET SEE THE YOKE THAT GREW ROUND THEIR NECK IN THE WOMB.



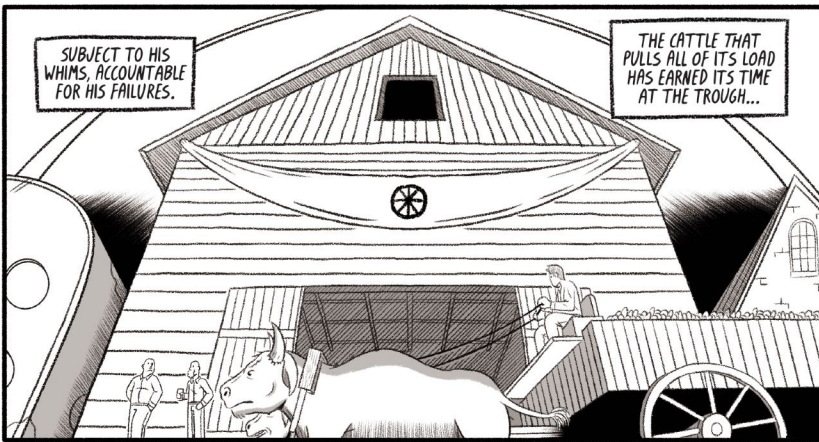
THE HARNESS WHICH BINDS US ALL TOGETHER LIKE LIVESTOCK, SHUFFLING AND GRUNTING IN LOCK STEP.



THEY CANNOT SEE IT, SO THEY RUN FREE, BLISSFULLY UNAWARE.



OUR RELIANCE ON EACH OTHER IS A LIABILITY. A MAN MOVES IN NEXT DOOR AND YOU BECOME NEIGHBOR NOT TO HIM BUT TO HIS HABITS.



SUBJECT TO HIS WHIMS, ACCOUNTABLE FOR HIS FAILURES.

THE CATTLE THAT PULLS ALL OF ITS LOAD HAS EARNED ITS TIME AT THE TROUGH...



...BUT IS ASKED TO SHARE IT WITH THE ONES IT HAD TO DRAG JUST TO GET THERE.



WHAT DOES THE OXEN DO WHEN THE BEASTS TO EITHER SIDE OF IT CHOOSE ONLY TO SLEEP?

DOES IT CEASELESSLY PULL, ITS MUSCLES CRAMPING, JOINTS BUCKLING?



OR DOES IT GNAW AT ITS TETHERS...

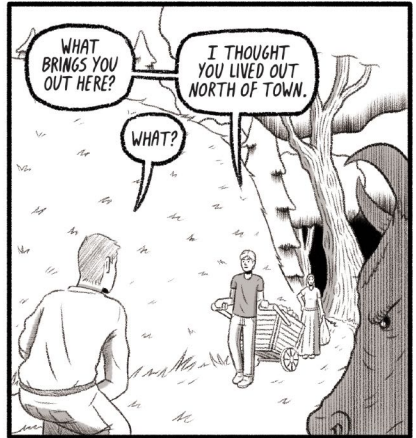
HERE LIES NOBODY WORTH REMEMBERING



...AND TURN ITS HORNS TOWARD ITS NEIGHBORS?



OH, HELLO AGAIN!



WHAT BRINGS YOU OUT HERE?

I THOUGHT YOU LIVED OUT NORTH OF TOWN.

WHAT?

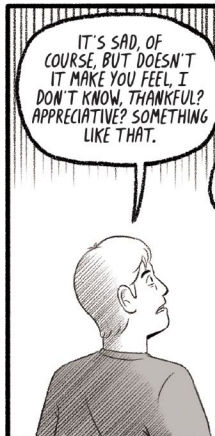


I JUST... GOT SIDE-TRACKED.

AH, WELL, I'VE COME HERE ONCE OR TWICE TO EAT LUNCH.

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL PLACE, IN ITS WAY.

IT'S DEPRESSING.



IT'S SAD, OF COURSE, BUT DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU FEEL, I DON'T KNOW, THANKFUL? APPRECIATIVE? SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

IF YOU SAY SO.



DON'T LISTEN TO HER, SHE'S GOT NO SENSE OF HISTORY.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BY THE WAY! YOUR MOTHER MENTIONED IT AT MASS THE OTHER DAY. EIGHTEEN, NOW?



OH, YES. EIGHTEEN, THAT'S RIGHT.

ONE MORE YEAR FOR ME.



IT'S NICE YOUR BIRTHDAY'S RIGHT AROUND THE FESTIVAL. BEST TIME OF THE YEAR, HUH?

I LOVE THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE.

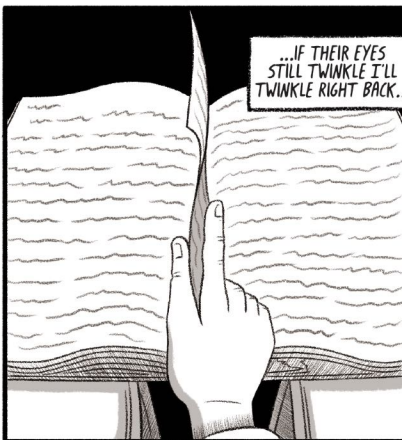
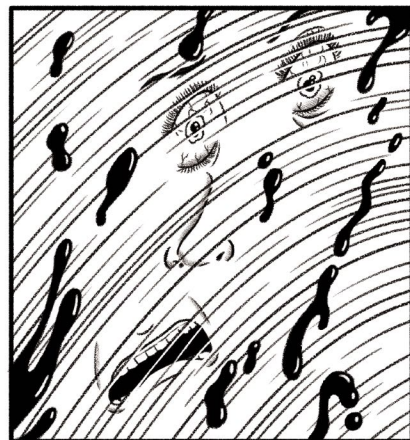
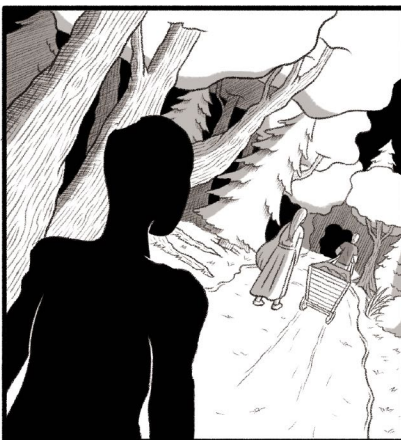
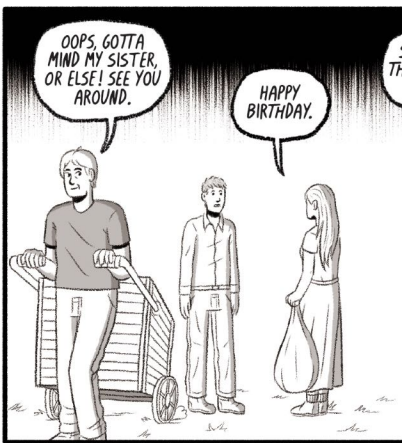
WELL, THERE'S SO MUCH GOING ON.

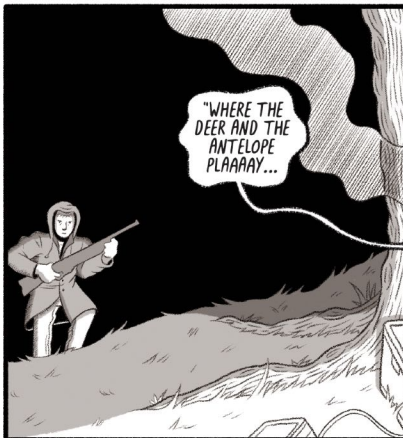
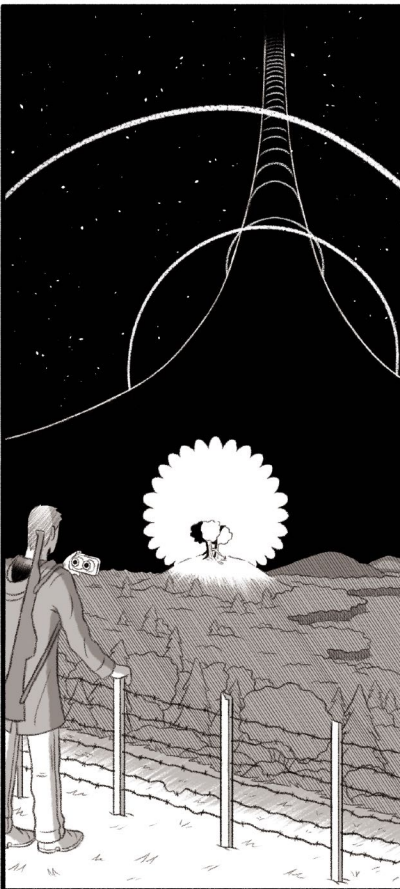
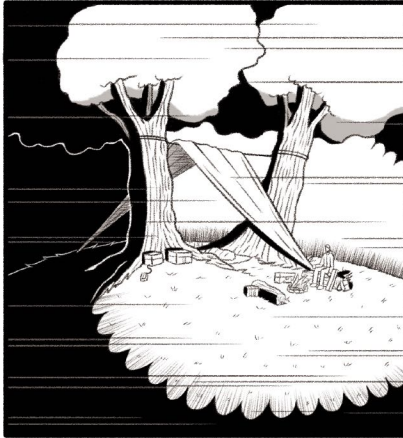
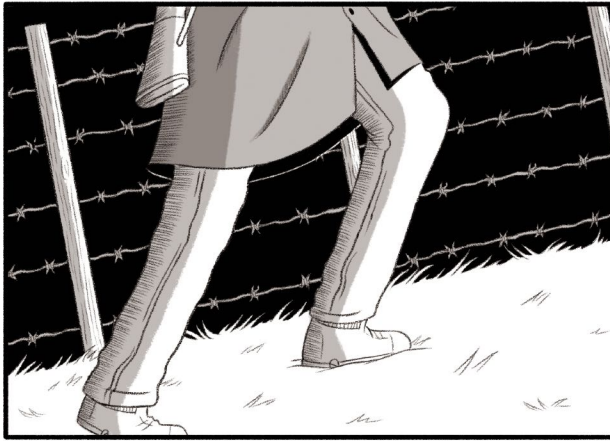
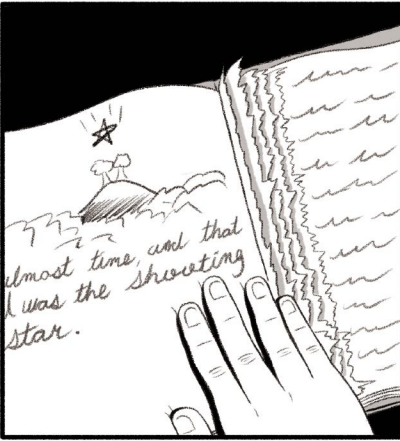


AND SO MUCH TO GET DONE, THAT'S THE RUB. BUT IT'LL BE WORTH IT...WHAT'S MORE FUN THAN THE FROLIC?

HA, YEAH... IT'S GREAT.

COME ON, FATHER'S WAITING.







WHOA THERE!

THIS IS MY FATHER'S LAND YOU'RE ON.

IS THAT RIGHT? I DIDN'T SEE ANY MARKERS OR FENCES.

NEAR ENOUGH FOR ME, I DON'T KNOW YOU.

LIKELIKE, THAT NEEDN'T BE A MARK AGAINST EITHER OF US, DOES IT?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

COOKING BREAKFAST, WITH AMBITIONS TO COOK LUNCH AND DINNER LATER IF I DON'T HAVE A HOLE IN MY HEAD BY THEN.



JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DO KNOW HOW TO USE IT.

WHY WOULD I DOUBT THAT? IT'S A BEAUTIFUL WEAPON. ANTIQUE?



GRANDFATHER'S, BUT IT WORKS.

I DON'T DOUBT THE LONGEVITY OF A WELL MADE WEAPON.

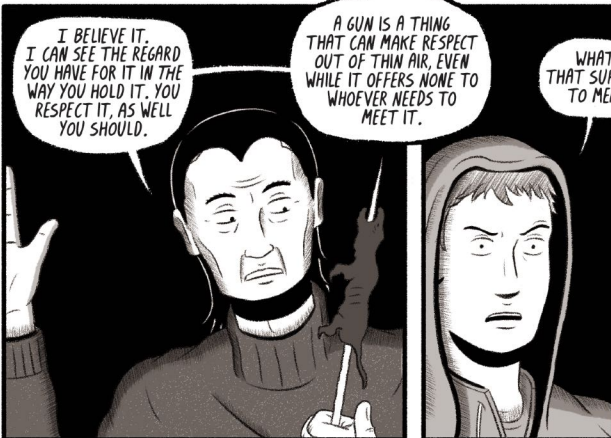


TRUE CRAFTSMANSHIP RESERVED FOR MEN WITH TRUE COURAGE.

BOTH RARE THINGS, NOW.



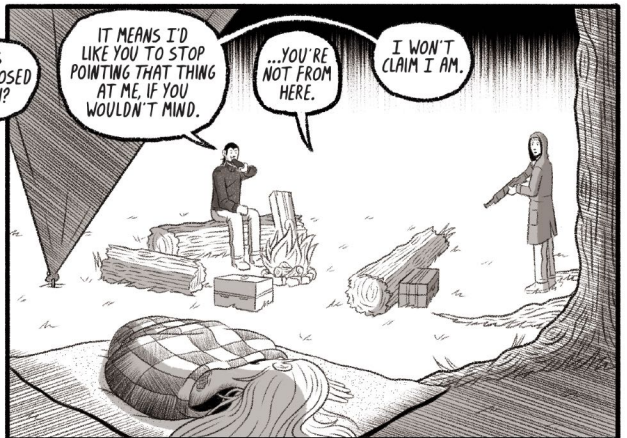
NOT IN MY HOUSE.



I BELIEVE IT. I CAN SEE THE REGARD YOU HAVE FOR IT IN THE WAY YOU HOLD IT, YOU RESPECT IT, AS WELL YOU SHOULD.

A GUN IS A THING THAT CAN MAKE RESPECT OUT OF THIN AIR, EVEN WHILE IT OFFERS NONE TO WHOEVER NEEDS TO MEET IT.

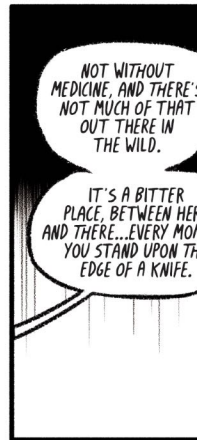
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

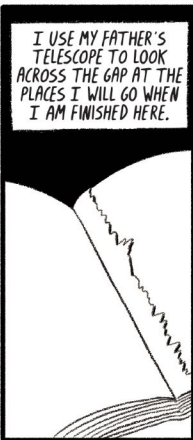
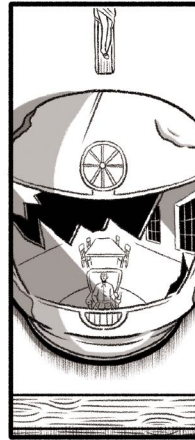
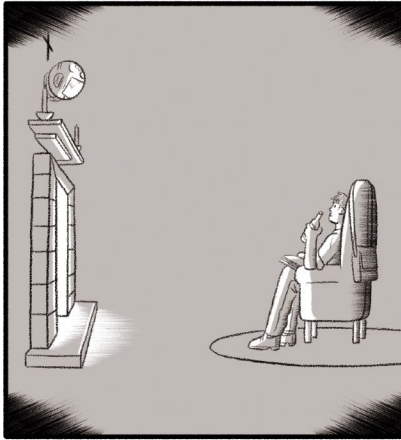
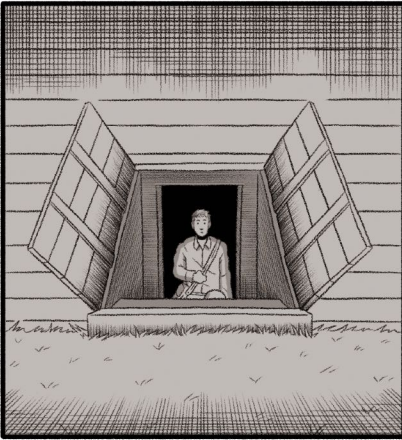


IT MEANS I'D LIKE YOU TO STOP POINTING THAT THING AT ME, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND.

...YOU'RE NOT FROM HERE.

I WON'T CLAIM I AM.

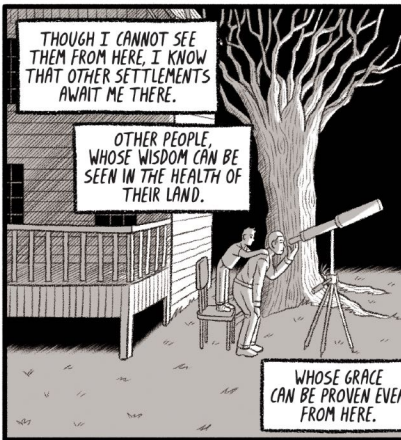




I USE MY FATHER'S TELESCOPE TO LOOK ACROSS THE GAP AT THE PLACES I WILL GO WHEN I AM FINISHED HERE.



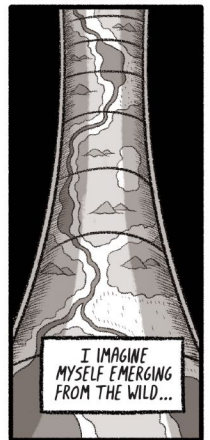
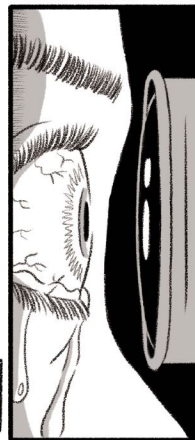
I SEE VERDANT GREEN AND BLUE RIVERS. NOT LIKE THE BEATEN TURF OF THIS SICK PLACE.



THOUGH I CANNOT SEE THEM FROM HERE, I KNOW THAT OTHER SETTLEMENTS AWAIT ME THERE.

OTHER PEOPLE, WHOSE WISDOM CAN BE SEEN IN THE HEALTH OF THEIR LAND.

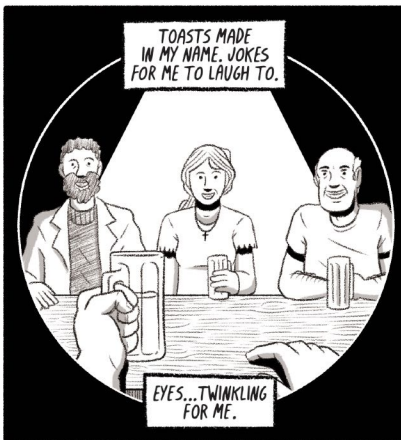
WHOSE GRACE CAN BE PROVEN EVEN FROM HERE.



I IMAGINE MYSELF EMERGING FROM THE WILD...



...AND BEING TRULY SEEN AND WELCOMED.



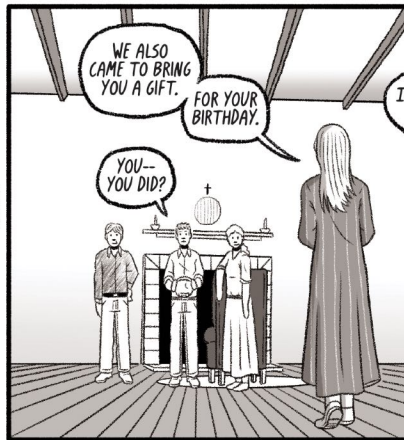
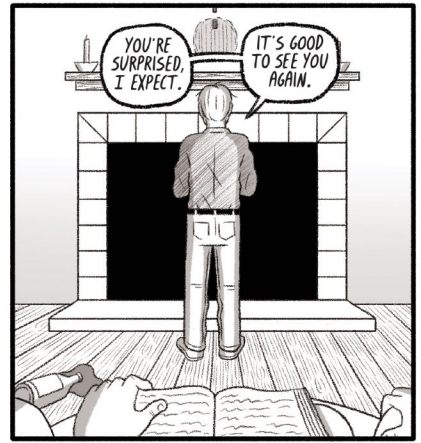
TOASTS MADE IN MY NAME. JOKES FOR ME TO LAUGH TO.

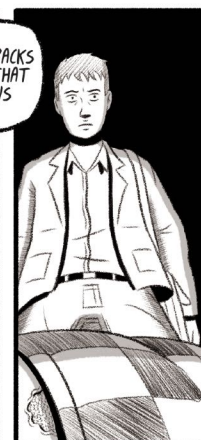
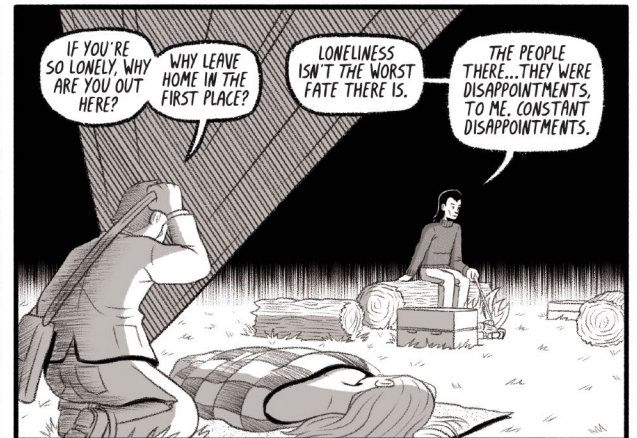
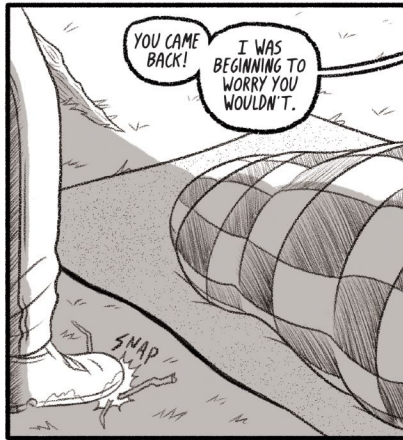
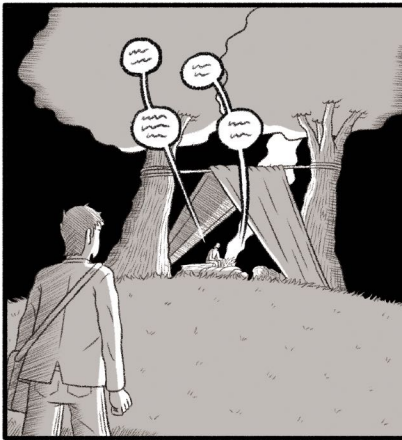
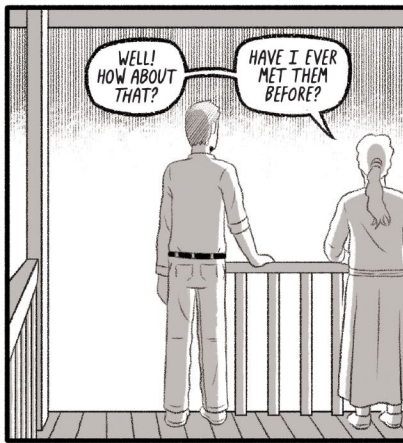
EYES...TWINKLING FOR ME.



I IMAGINE A FULL HOUSE WITH A WARM HEARTH.

BUT I CAN ONLY GO THERE IF I KNOW...







BECAUSE THAT WAY REQUIRES STRUGGLE. IT REQUIRES PAIN.
DON'T YOU FIND?



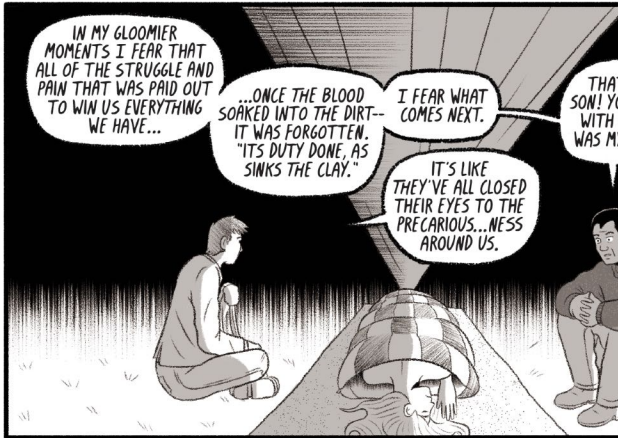
HAVING TO LIVE AMONG PEOPLE LIKE THAT...IT IS A KIND OF DOMINATION THAT THEY WIELD.
NOT YOUR PEOPLE.



I'M SURE THEY ARE A GOODLY FOLK.
GOOD?



THEY WEAR GOODNESS LIKE... LIKE A COSTUME.
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.



IN MY GLOOMIER MOMENTS I FEAR THAT ALL OF THE STRUGGLE AND PAIN THAT WAS PAID OUT TO WIN US EVERYTHING WE HAVE...
...ONCE THE BLOOD SOAKED INTO THE DIRT-- IT WAS FORGOTTEN. "IT'S DUTY DONE, AS SINKS THE CLAY."
I FEAR WHAT COMES NEXT.
THAT'S DEAD ON, SON! YOU HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS. THAT WAS MY PEOPLE, TOO.
IT'S LIKE THEY'VE ALL CLOSED THEIR EYES TO THE PRECARIOUS...NESS AROUND US.



SO WE SHOWED THEM THE CORRECT WAY, AND THEY SPURNED US FOR IT.
BUT FORCING THEM TO CHANGE...IT WAS A WAY OF SETTING THEM FREE.
WHO'S WE?"



LIKEMINDED SOULS. KINDRED SPIRITS.
ALL SCATTERED, NOW. BUT STILL I FEEL CONNECTED TO THEM THROUGH OUR SHARED CONVICTIONS.
OUT THERE...IT'S A PLACE WHERE A MAN WILL BE SWALLOWED WHOLE IF HE DOESN'T STAND FOR SOMETHING.
A PLACE WHERE CONVICTION IS EVERYTHING. A MAN WITH A FULL BELLY WILL STILL BE STARVING IF HE DOESN'T HAVE THAT.



THE PEOPLE WHERE I CAME FROM? THEY'D BECOME SKIN AND BONES FROM THE LACK OF IT...
WELL...I BROUGHT THE MEDICINE SHE NEEDS. I THINK I DID.
THANK YOU, SON.



YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW GRATEFUL SHE WILL BE.
IT'S NOT A PLEASANT THING TO SEE, IS IT?



GO AHEAD.
YOU... YOU WANT ME TO?



MY ROUGH HANDS WOULDN'T DO HER ANY GOOD. JUST BE GENTLE.

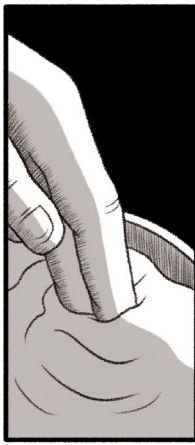


THERE YOU GO. DON'T WORRY.



IT'S NOT CATCHING.





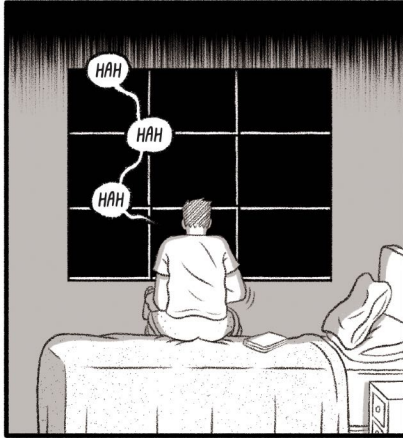
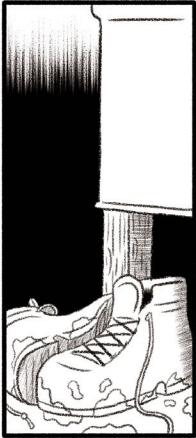
NOT UNLESS YOU WANT IT TO BE.



OHH--



WE'LL NEED MORE THAN THIS. CAN YOU GET IT?



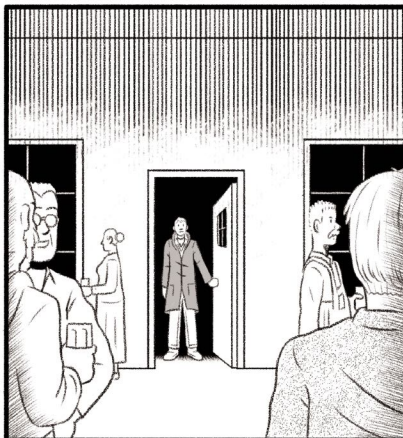
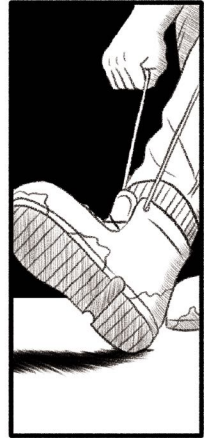
HAH

HAH

HAH



UNG.



HEY!

OVER HERE!

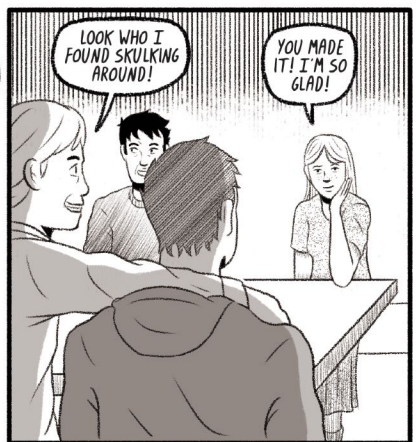


WELCOME! IT'S WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU! ALE?

COME AND JOIN US!

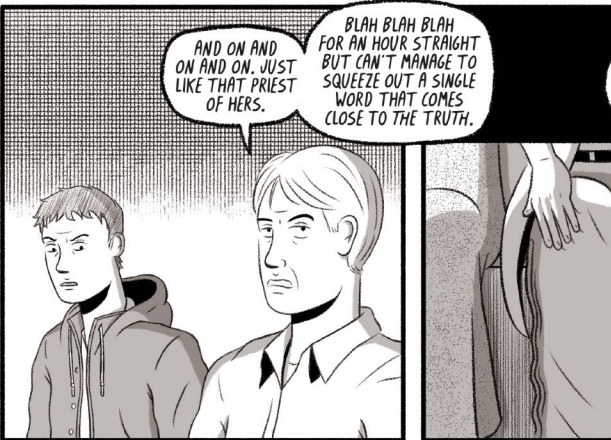
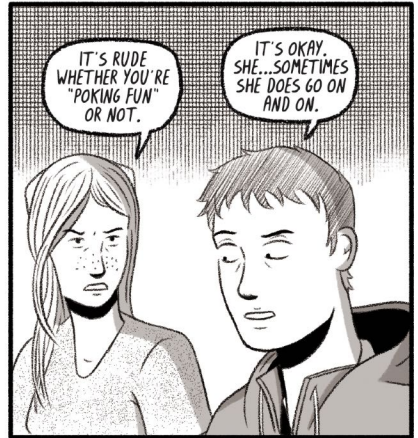
I DON'T KNOW, I THINK I'LL JUST--

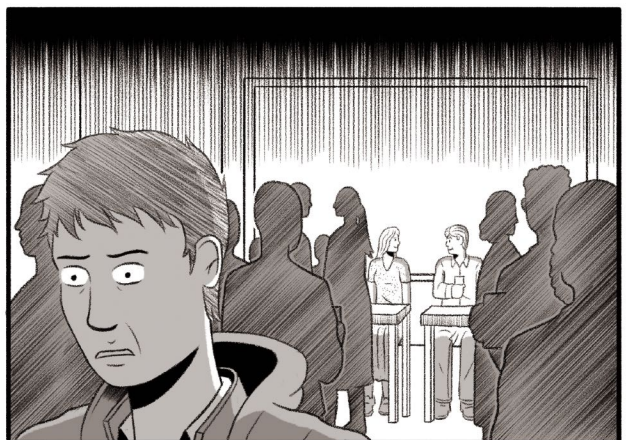
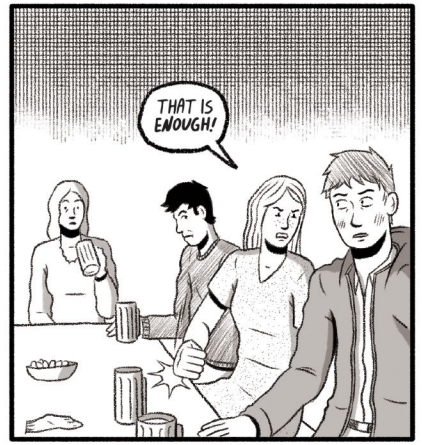
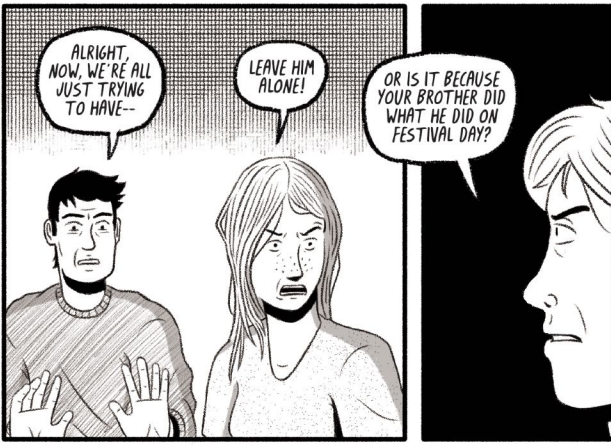
COME ON, DON'T BE A BORE.



LOOK WHO I FOUND SKULKING AROUND!

YOU MADE IT! I'M SO GLAD!







WAIT! HOLD ON, OKAY?

IT'S OKAY, I'M SORRY, I SHOULD JUST GO.

NO, I'M SORRY.



HE WAS AWFUL. I CAN'T--I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

HE CAN BE HORRIBLE SOMETIMES.



IT'S OKAY, IT'S FINE.

NO, IT'S NOT, BUT YOU KNOW...



IF YOU WANTED TO, I DO THINK YOU SHOULD JOIN THE HUSKING BEE TOMORROW.

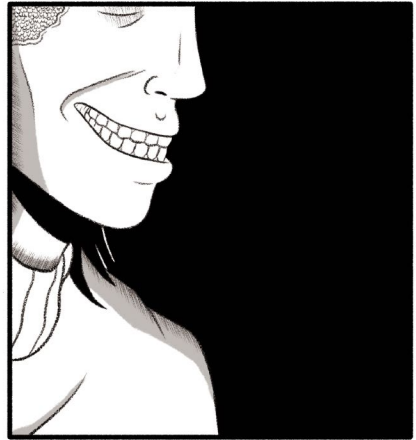
WHAT? YOU DO?

IT COULD BE FUN. IT COULD BE...GOOD, IF YOU WON.



OKAY. MAYBE I WILL, THEN.

OKAY.



YOU'RE BACK ALREADY!

MY BOY, I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH.

JUST DOING WHAT I CAN.



SHE APPRECIATES WHAT YOU'VE DONE. SO DO I.

WELL... I'M GLAD SHE'S DOING A BIT BETTER.



DON'T BE MODEST--SHE'S ON THE MEND THANKS TO YOU.

I CAN FEEL HER ENERGY RISING, AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT?



SHE ASKED AFTER YOU.

SHE... SHE DID?



HER VOICE WAS WEAK, BUT HER PURPOSE WAS STRONG, IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT.



I'M JUST IN THE MIDDLE OF COOKING, GO RIGHT AHEAD. SHE NEEDS RELIEF.



DID YOU TELL ANYONE ELSE ABOUT US CAMPING HERE?

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND SNEAKING AROUND.

NO.

I DIDN'T LIE TO ANYBODY. NOBODY ASKED.



"NOBODY ASKED." THAT WAS ME, AT YOUR AGE.

A DEEP WELL WITH NOBODY INTERESTED IN DRINKING FROM IT.



I JUST DON'T--

WHAT IS IT, SON?



I DON'T UNDERSTAND SOME PEOPLE.

WHAT THEY WANT, WHAT THEY-- THEY EXPECT SOMETHING FROM ME, BUT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT, OR WHAT IT IS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

I DON'T KNOW.



EVERYONE HAS THEIR DESIGNS ON US WHEN WE'RE YOUNG.



THEY PUSH AND PULL US... THE ONLY ESCAPE IS THE INNER WORLD. KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS CLOSE AT HAND.



THERE'S AN APPEAL TO KNOWING THINGS THE REST OF THEM DON'T, ISN'T THERE?

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT'S EVEN BETTER? KNOWING THINGS THE REST OF THEM CAN'T.

LIKE WHAT?



EXPERIENCES. TASTES THEY'LL NEVER TASTE. SIGHTS THEY'LL NEVER SEE.



SOUNDS THEY'D RATHER NOT HEAR.



ALL THE THINGS WE'VE DONE THAT THE PEOPLE BACK HOME WERE TOO STUPID AND STUNTED TO EVEN ASPIRE TO...

AND ALL IT TOOK WAS THE COURAGE TO CUT THE CORD THAT TETHERED US TO THOSE PLACES.



IMAGINE IF OUR FOREFATHERS HADN'T HAD THAT AUDACITY.

WE'D ALL BE ROTTING BACK ON THAT PUTRID ROCK... AND THIS PLACE?



WOULD STILL BE HELD BY THOSE THAT HAD NO EYES TO SEE ITS REAL VALUE. SEE WHAT I MEAN?

I GUESS SO. I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT BEFORE.



I'M SURE YOU HAVE. I CAN SEE YOUR GEARS ARE ALWAYS TURNING.

WANT TO SEE SOMETHING?



WHAT... IS THIS... HOW OLD IS THIS?



IT WAS CARRIED BY THE MEN WHO FIRST FOUND THIS PLACE, USED TO HELP SECURE IT FOR OUR PEOPLE.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR HISTORY?

I'M SURE YOU KNOW A GREAT DEAL.

I KNOW... WHAT I KNOW.



BUT TRUE HISTORY IS MUCH RICHER THAN THE SCRAPS THEY THROW INTO OUR TROUGHS.



DID YOU KNOW THAT THE JOURNEY THE SETTLERS TOOK DID NOT END HERE?

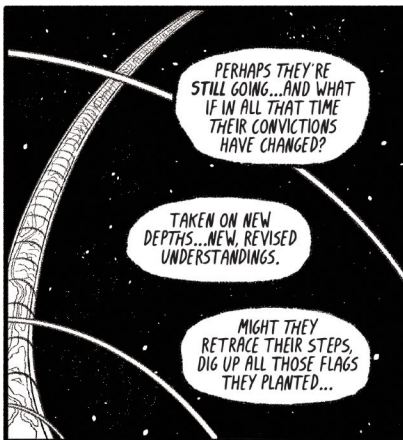
SOME SAY THAT WHEN THEY WERE DONE PREPARING THIS PLACE, THERE WERE SOME...



...WHO WERE UNSÄTISFIED. WHO TOOK WHAT SHIPS REMAINED AND KEPT GOING. WENT DEEPER.



WHO FELT THE JOB WASN'T DONE...MIGHT NEVER BE DONE. HOW FAR DID THAT CONVICTION TAKE THEM? AND WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY FOUND OUT THERE?



PERHAPS THEY'RE STILL GOING...AND WHAT IF IN ALL THAT TIME THEIR CONVICTIONS HAVE CHANGED?

TAKEN ON NEW DEPTHS...NEW, REVISED UNDERSTANDINGS.

MIGHT THEY RETRACE THEIR STEPS, DIG UP ALL THOSE FLAGS THEY PLANTED...



...TO PUT A NEW ONE, A BETTER ONE...IN ALL OF THOSE BEAUTIFUL PLACES?

I DON'T... KNOW ABOUT ALL OF THAT.



DO YOU THINK OUR FOREBEARS WOULD SMILE TO SEE THE WAY YOUR PEOPLE LIVE NOW?

NO. NO, I GUESS THEY WOULDN'T.



THE INDOLENCE, THE ENTITLEMENT, THE LACK OF REGARD FOR GOD OR THE GROUND BENEATH THEIR FEET?

AND WORST OF ALL... ALL OF THE PETTY LITTLE CRUELITIES.

THE KIND THAT KILLED YOUR BROTHER.



WHAT--HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY BROTHER?



I WAS A FRIEND OF HIS. I LIKE TO THINK I'M BECOMING A FRIEND TO YOU AS WELL.

HE AND I SPOKE MANY TIMES, JUST LIKE YOU AND I HAVE BEEN. HE WAS A VERY...OPEN-MINDED YOUNG MAN.

HE BELIEVED IN A WAY THINGS OUGHT TO BE, AND WAS WILLING TO MAKE THAT MANIFEST. TO CORRECT THINGS.



BUT HE HAD A LONELINESS PLACED ON HIS SHOULDERS.



I CAN'T SAY HOW SAD I WAS THAT HE DID WHAT HE DID BEFORE HE LIVED UP TO HIS POTENTIAL.



ALL WE REQUIRED WAS A SIGN OF HIS COMMITMENT AND THEN WE WOULD HAVE DONE THE REST FOR HIM GLADLY.

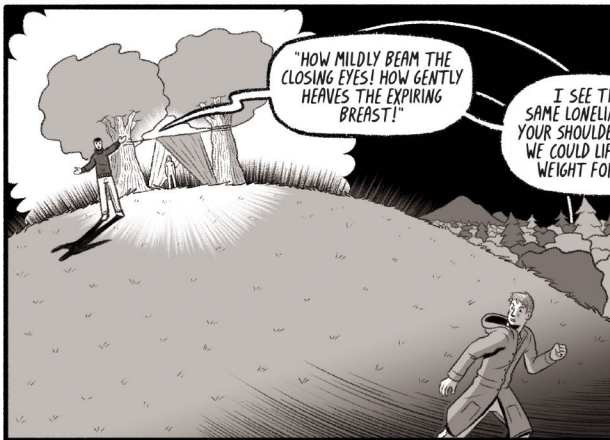
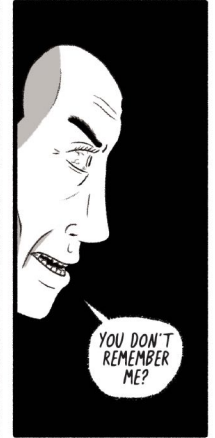
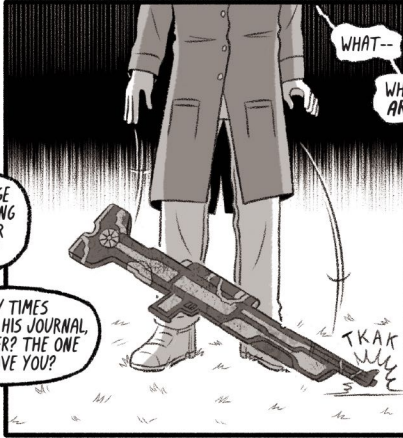
IT'S SHAMEFUL WHAT THE PEOPLE OF YOUR VILLAGE DID TO HIM.

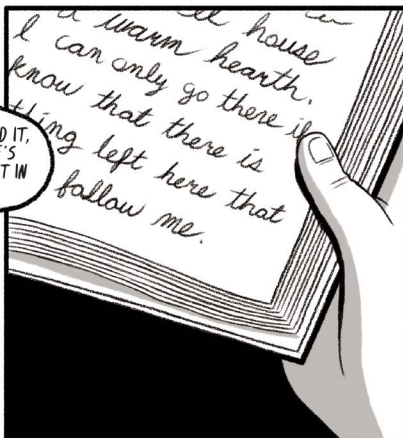
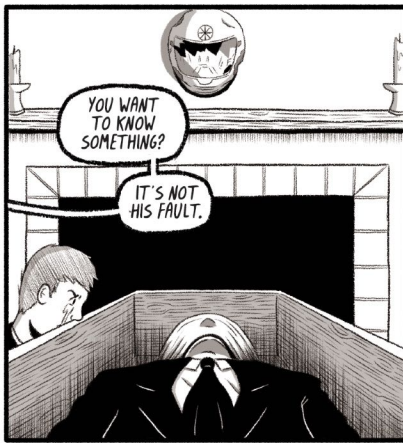


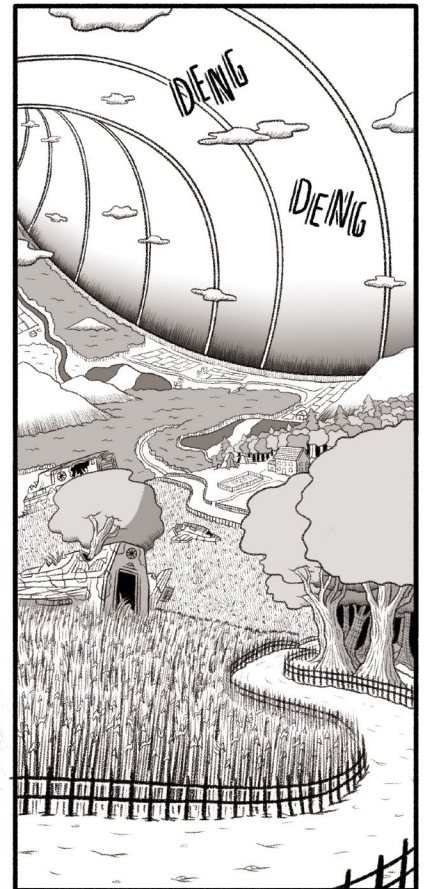
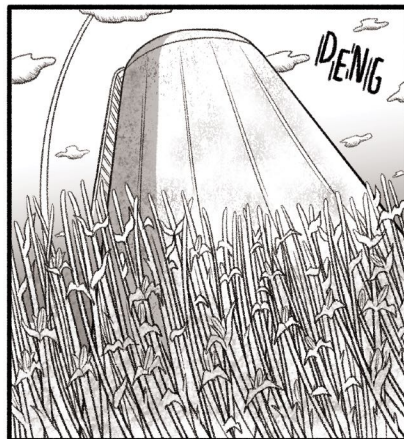
THEIR IGNORANCE, THEIR LAZINESS, THEIR IMPROPRIETY.

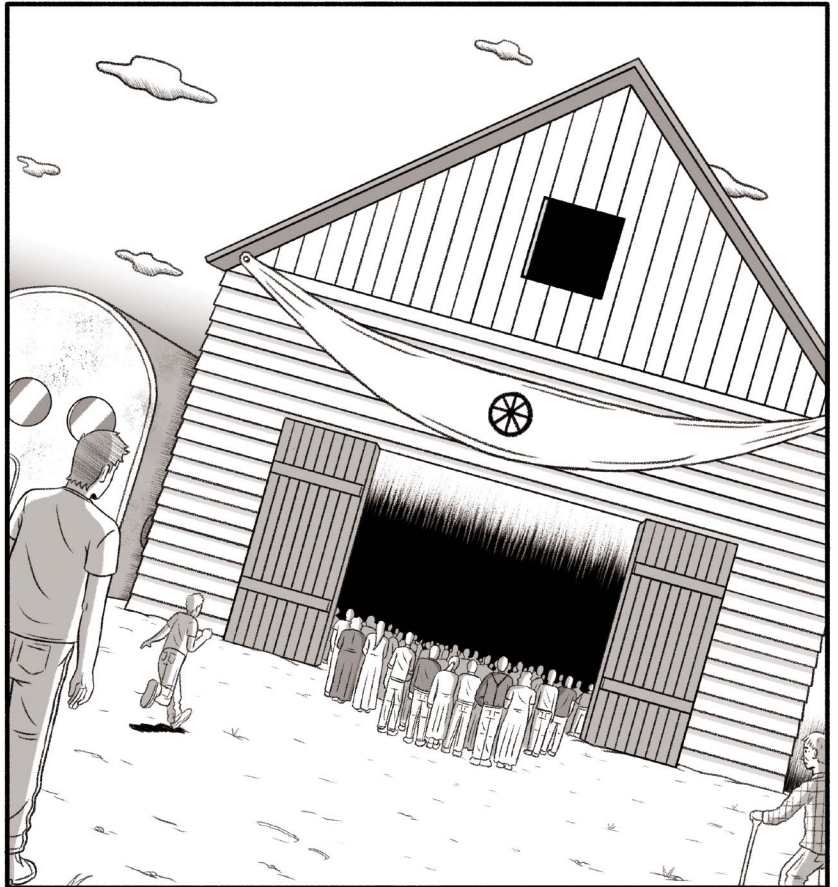
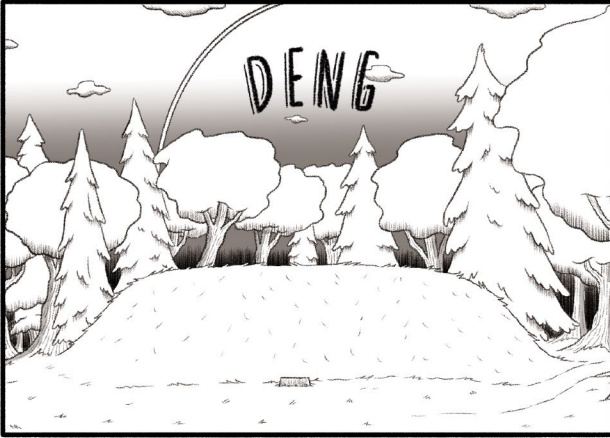
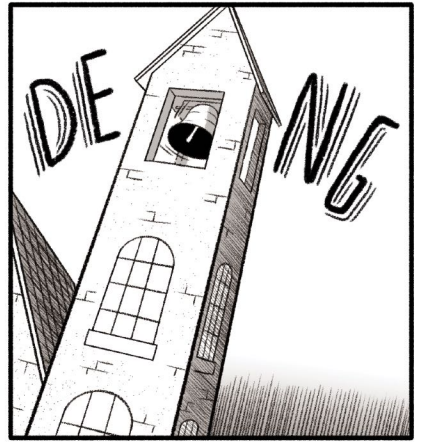
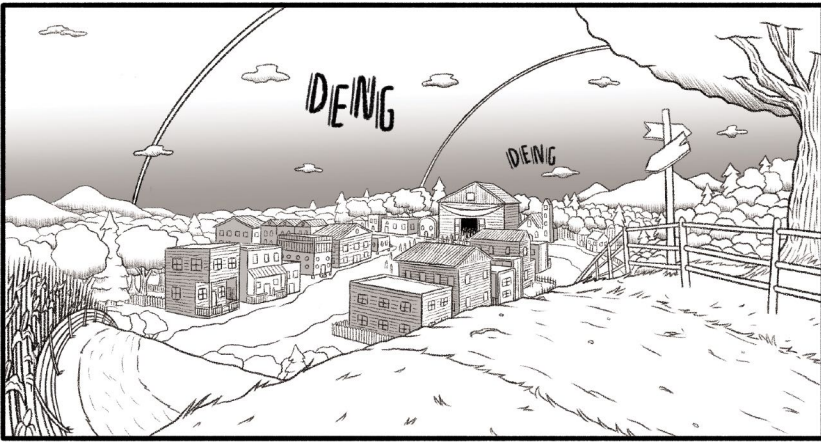


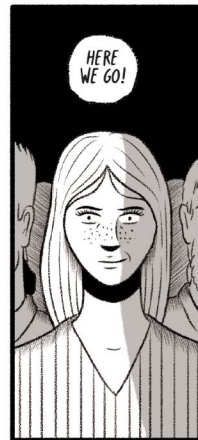
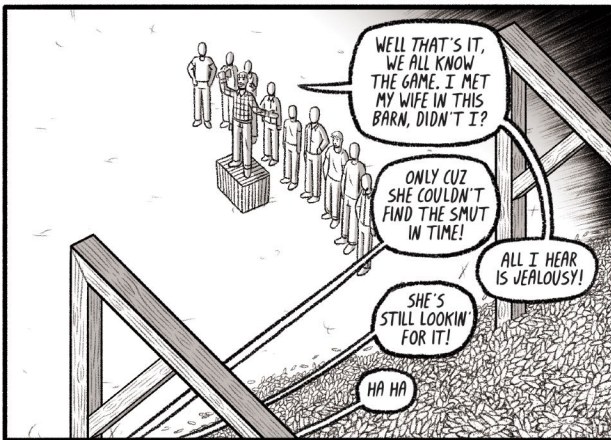
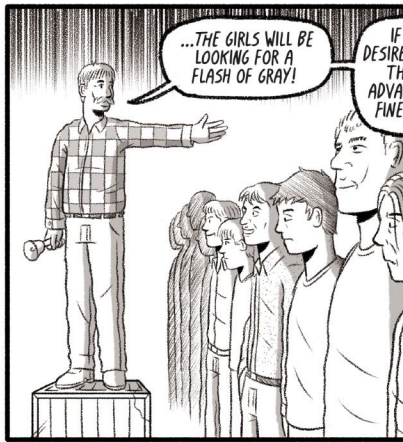
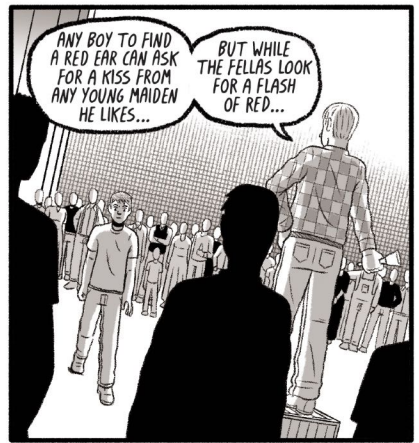
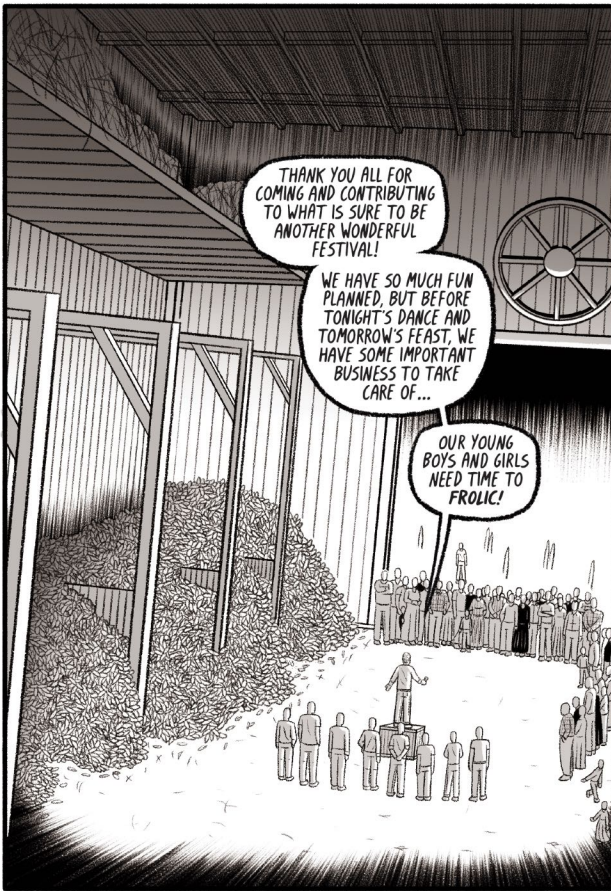
HE SAW WHAT WOULD COME OF IT AND WANTED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

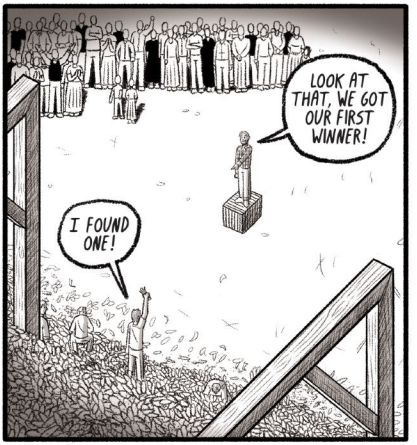
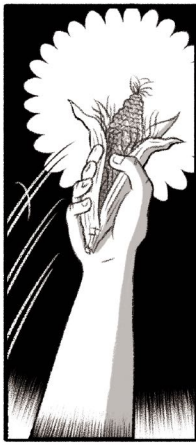


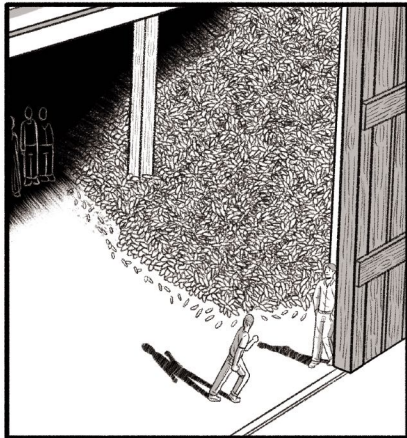
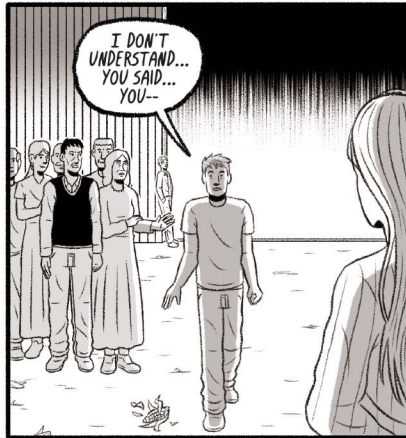














I HOPE YOU WEREN'T TOO OFFENDED.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I DON'T WANT TO TALK RIGHT NOW.

SHE DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING BY IT. DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOUR FEELINGS.

SHE DIDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH HOW PUBLIC IT WAS, YOU KNOW?



I KNOW. IT'S OKAY. IT'S NOTHING.

AND SHE'S JUST YOUNG AND SHY.

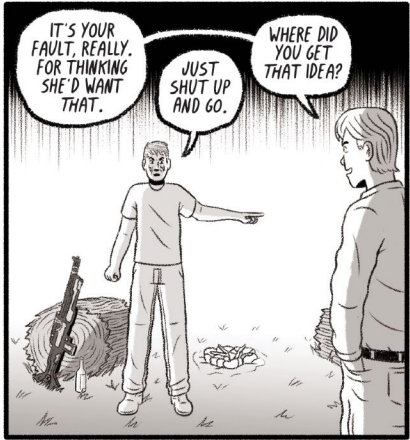


YOUNG AND SHY AND DOESN'T WANT SOMEONE AS PATHETIC AS YOU TOUCHING HER.



WHAT ARE YOU--WHAT IS THIS?

THERE'S NO NEED TO BE OFFENDED.



IT'S YOUR FAULT, REALLY. FOR THINKING SHE'D WANT THAT.

JUST SHUT UP AND GO.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT IDEA?



GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE, I DON'T WANT TO--

IS THAT YOUR GUN? HA HA, OH MY GOD--



--DID YOU COME HERE TO FOLLOW YOUR BROTHER'S LEAD?

OH, THAT'S PRECIOUS!



FAMILY STICKS TOGETHER!

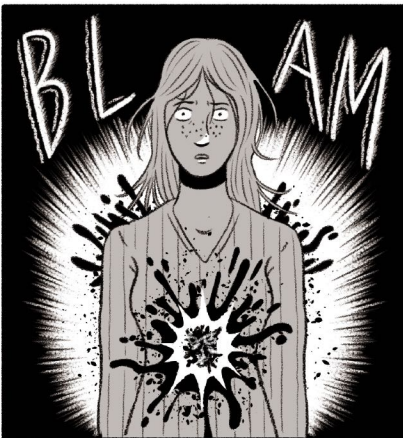
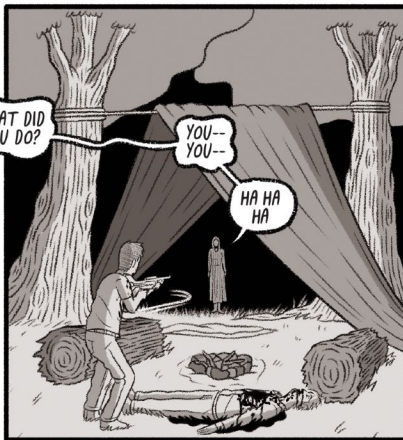
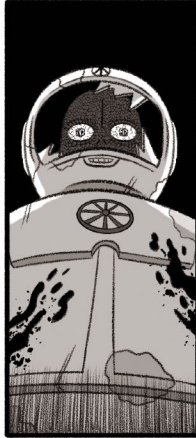
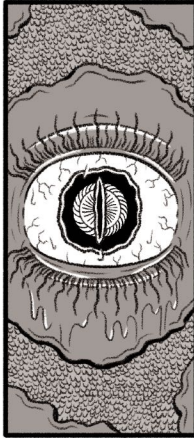
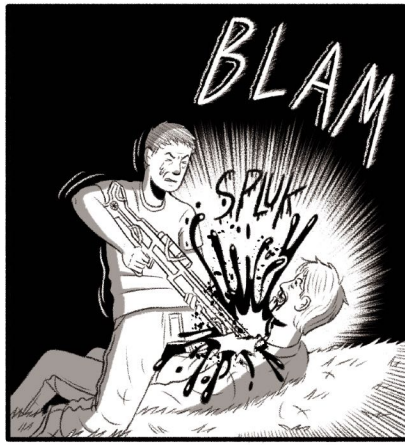


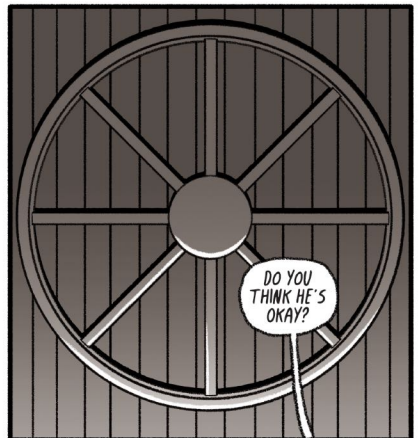
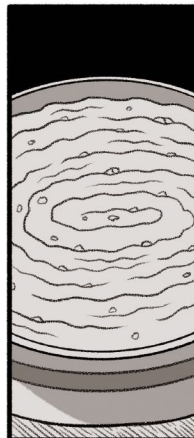
HA HA HA

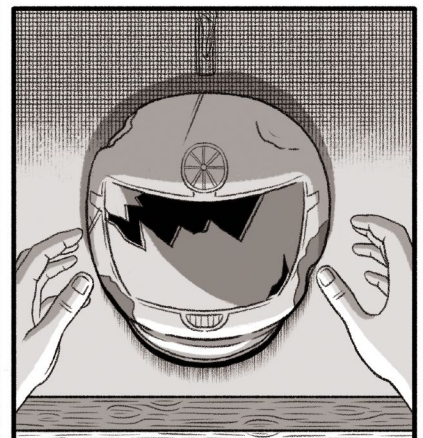
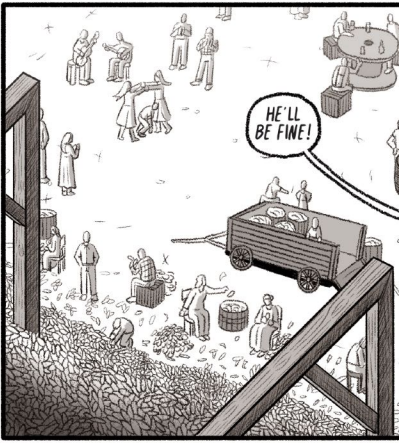


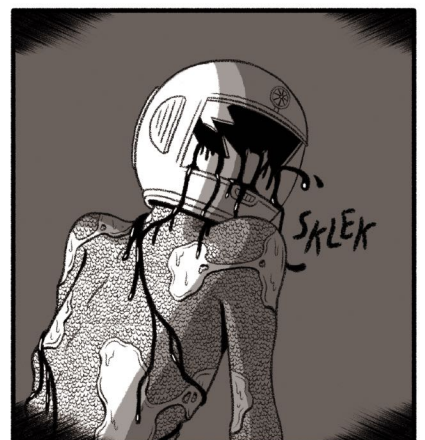
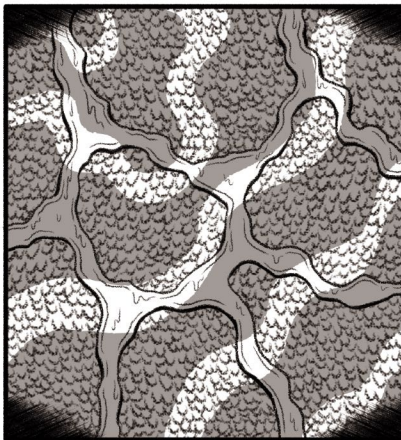
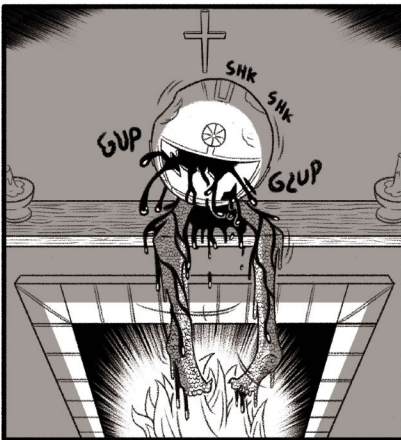
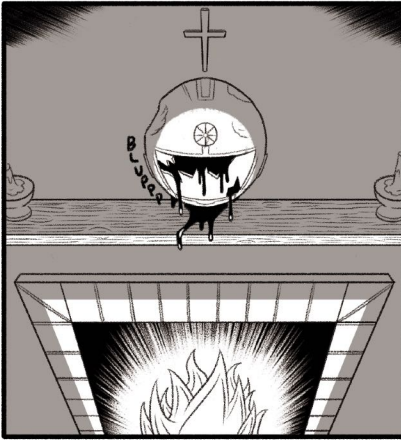
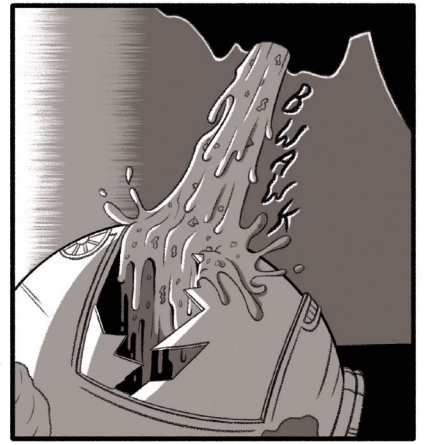
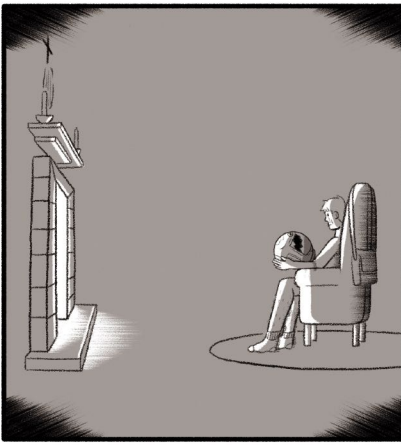
SHUT THE FUCK UP!

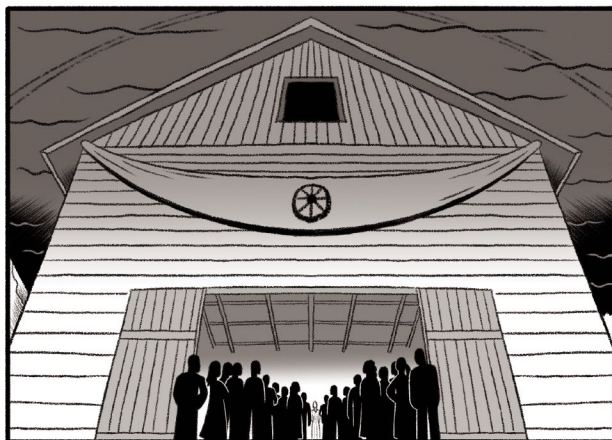
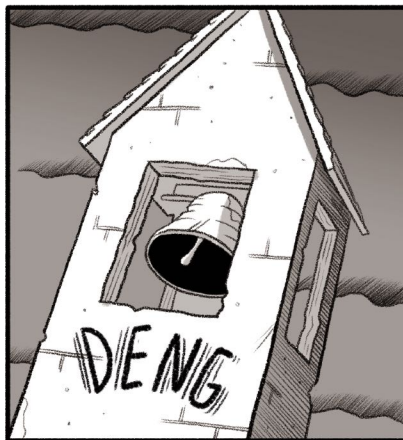
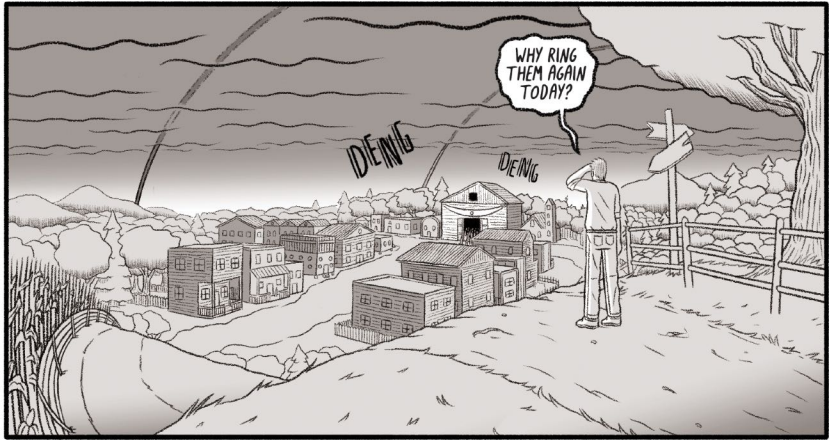
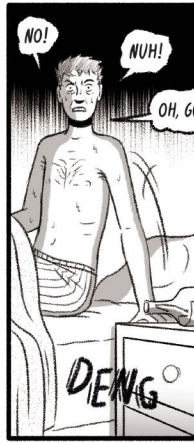
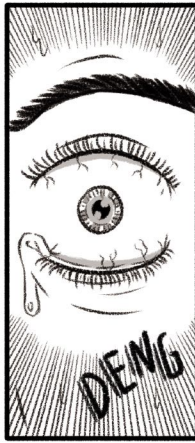
IF YOU WANT TO JOIN YOUR BROTHER...

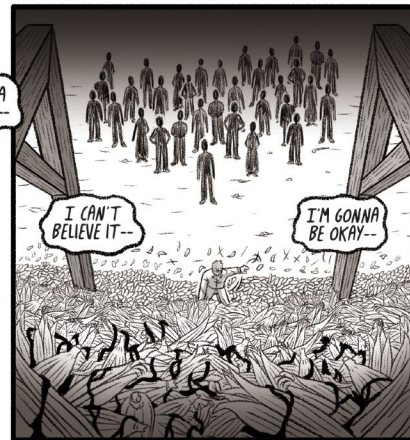
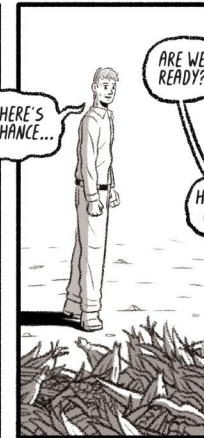


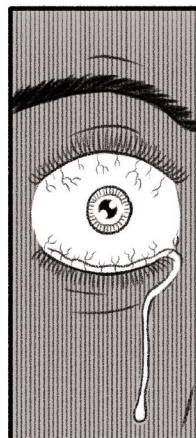
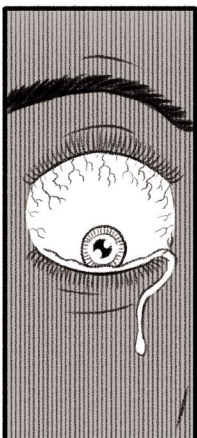
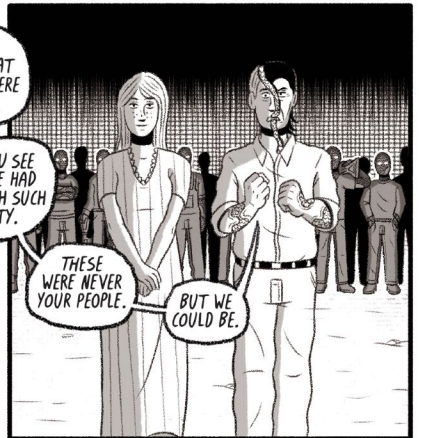














CREATING

**LITTLE VISITOR
& OTHER ABDUCTIONS**

WITH AUTHOR ADAM SZYM

***Little Visitor* Inside Front Cover Image**

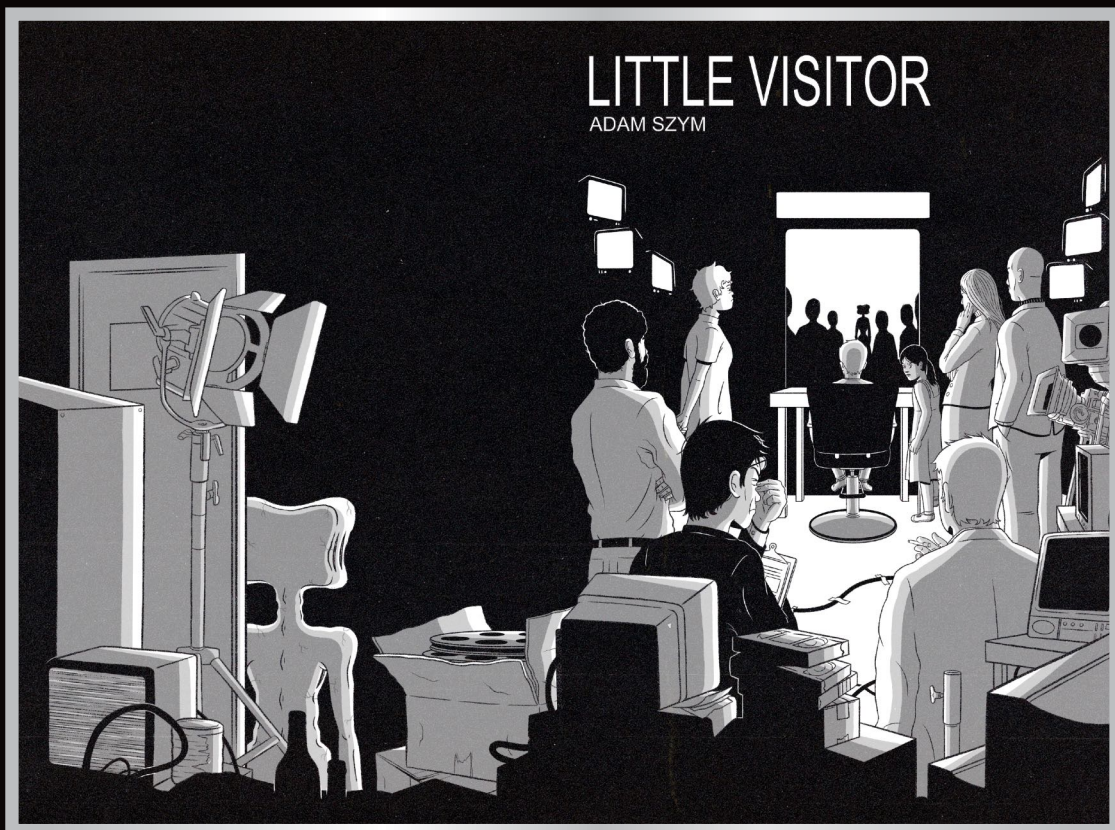
I imagine that this front image is the director of the documentary which is ostensibly being filmed in the story, and this shows him first encountering the film *Little Visitor* as a child.



***Little Visitor* Inside Back Cover Image**

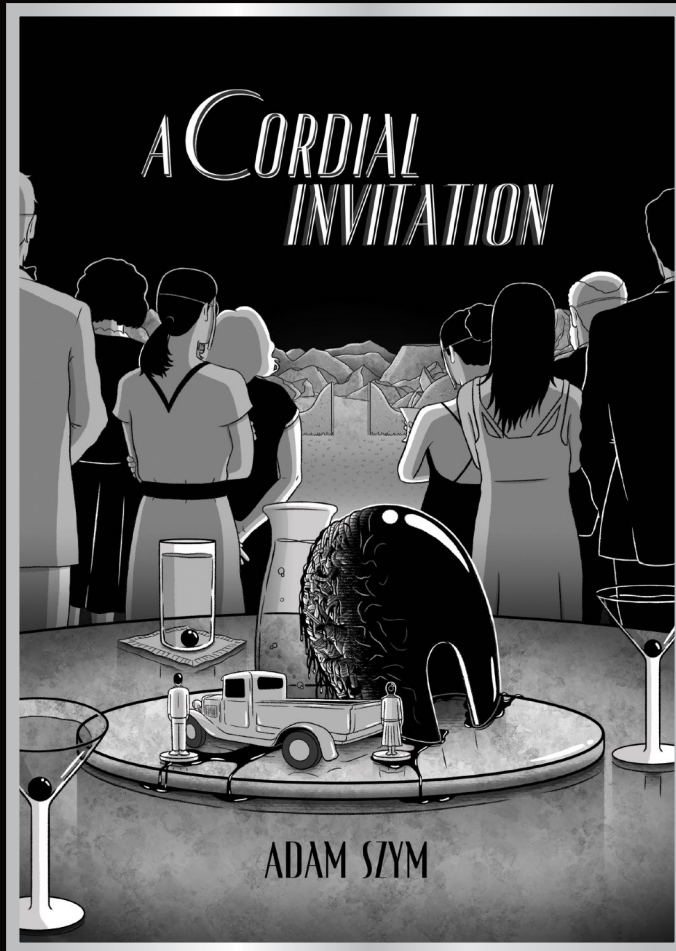
The back image shows what may have happened when certain . . . people . . . become aware of the documentary's existence and were displeased.



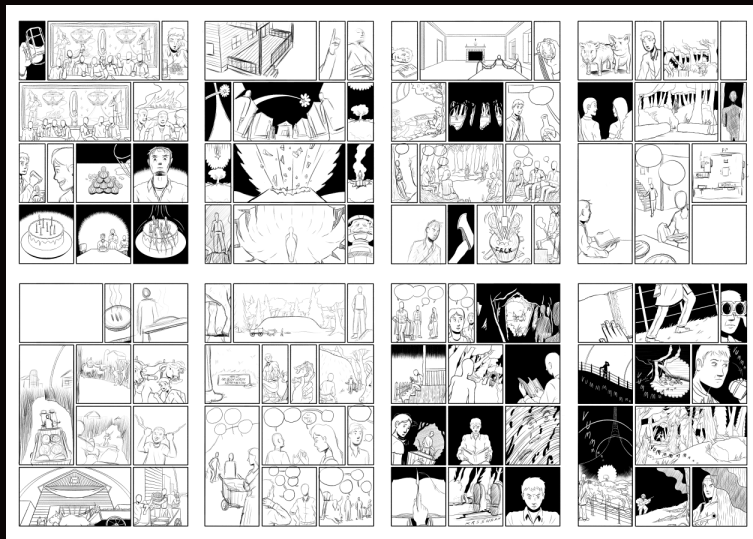
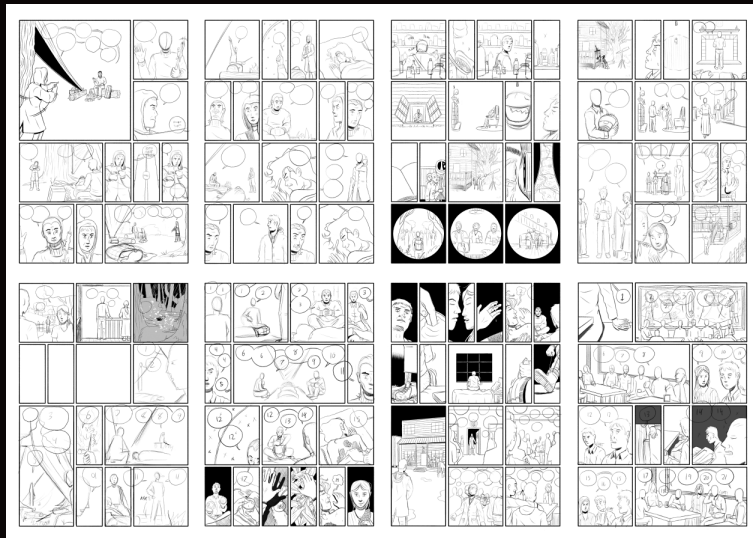


This is the cover for the second self published print edition of *Little Visitor*. I made *Little Visitor* over the course of twenty days in the lead-up to a convention, so the first print run was small, rushed, and had a minimalist cover.

I decided to make a new cover for the second print run. I posed the characters with their backs to us because I wanted it to rhyme with the cover for *A Cordial Invitation*. I also wanted to convey that the menace of the creature was something only the children could perceive, either because the adults were too focused on their work or because they simply chose not to acknowledge the danger.



For the cover of the original print edition of *A Cordial Invitation*, I wanted there to be a sense of anticipation, so I showed the crowd of partygoers looking out over the empty yard. I also wanted Luisa and her father in there somewhere but couldn't figure out how to have both of them in the image in a way that didn't reveal too much. I landed on the idea of these decorative figurines (which are not present in the story), which give the sense that this was all orchestrated and also convey how the partygoers might view their victims: small and insignificant, merely pieces to be moved around a board.



These are some of the thumbnails for “Frolicker.” My production process varies from project to project. For example, with “A Cordial Invitation,” I knew where it started and how it would end but I mostly “wrote” it while drawing page by page. It was originally intended to be around thirty pages but expanded to its final length of more than eighty. However, for “Frolicker,” I knew that I had a very complex story that I wanted to fit into a relatively short page length. For that reason, I wrote what is essentially a movie script for it and then did very detailed thumbnails for each page. I enjoyed this process a lot because when the time came to make final art I was able to turn my brain off a bit and just focus on drawing.

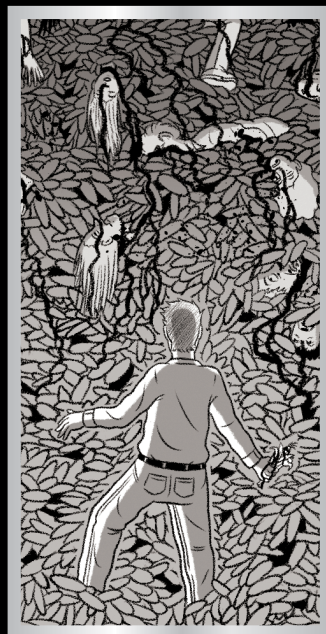
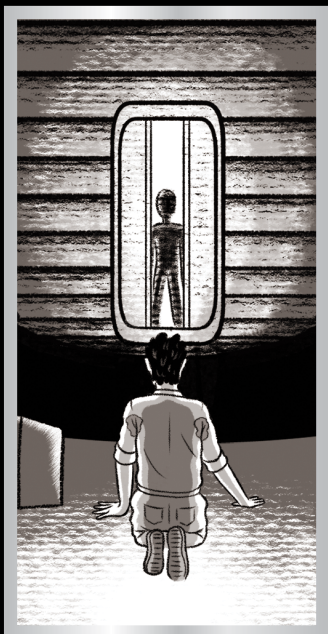


Adam Szym

has been making comics for 15 years now, and some of them have been nominated for awards. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, with his wife, daughter, and two cats.

Three Tales of the Unknown . . .

The cast and crew of an obscure film recount a tragedy that occurred during its doomed production. A young girl searches for her father in the darkness of the desert and stumbles upon an otherworldly cocktail party. Two strangers nurture violent thoughts in a bitter, lonely child as his village's harvest festival nears. Connecting these three stories is one horrific theme . . .



From cartoonist and illustrator **Adam Szym** comes a triptych of otherworldly science-fiction horror stories about alien abductions and the negligence and malice that allows them to happen. *Little Visitor & Other Abductions* is an uncanny trilogy of graphic novellas, perfect for fans of *The Twilight Zone*, *The X-Files*, and all things beyond our understanding.

“These relentlessly uncanny stories will get under your skin and curl up there.”

—Ezra Clayton Daniels (*Upgrade Soul*, *BTTM FDRS*)

