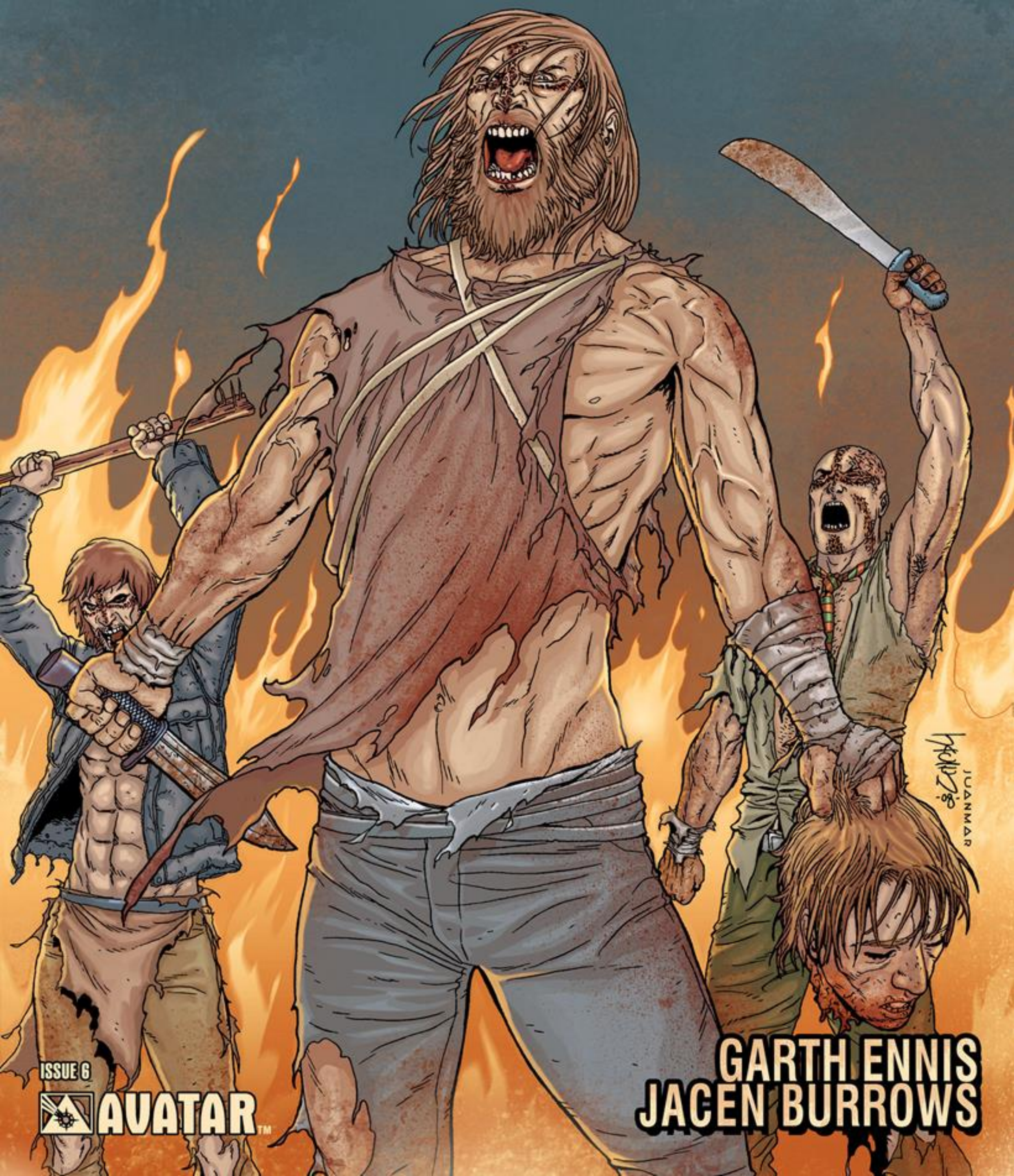


CROSSED



ISSUE 6



AVATAR

GARTH ENNIS
JACEN BURROWS

GARTH ENNIS story

JACEN BURROWS artwork

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THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE WHEN THAT THING FLOPPED DOWN IN FRONT OF YOU, I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO SHIT MYSELF LAUGHING.

I SWEAR.

BRETT WAS THE BIGGEST PRICK I EVER MET.

MADE JOEL SEEM LIKE FUN COMPANY.

BUT HE HAD A STASH OF FOOD AND GEAR LIKE NONE WE'D SEEN BEFORE, AND ALL HE WANTED IN EXCHANGE WAS TO COME ALONG WITH US.

HE'D SHOWN UP WEST OF DENVER, ALMOST GOT HIMSELF BLOWN AWAY WHEN HE CRASHED OUT OF THE TREES ONE EVENING. I WAS ON WATCH; HAD THE FRONT SIGHT ON HIS STUPID SMIRK AND ALMOST PULLED THE TRIGGER WHEN I REALISED HE WASN'T WHAT I'D THOUGHT.

I'D HAD CAUSE TO REGRET THAT CAUTION, MANY TIMES.

DON'T LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES TOO WELL, DO THEY?

GOT OTHER THINGS ON THEIR MINDS.

THAT'S WHY ALASKA'S SUCH A SMART IDEA.

NICE AND COLD UP THERE.

GEOFF AND KITRICK
MADE IT THROUGH
THE MOUNTAINS.

GEOFF GOT BETTER FIRST, THEN HE
WENT TO WORK ON KITRICK. FED HIM
SOUP, KEPT HIM WARM, MADE HIM
DO THE THINGS THAT HE NEGLECTED
IN HIS SAD, STRICKEN MARCH
TOWARDS OBLIVION.

WOULDN'T LET UP.

WHAT
IS IT WITH
THAT GUY,
ANYHOW?

GUY LIKE *NEVER* SMILES,
HE'S THE MOST
MISERABLE PERSON I
EVER SAW BEFORE OR
AFTER. I MEAN I
KNOW THINGS
ARE F--

WE'RE NOT
DOING SO GOOD,
OKAY, BUT THE
WORLD'S CHANGED.
GET OVER IT. HOW THE
HELL DOES MOPING
AROUND BUMMING
EVERYBODY OUT
HELP...?

WELL?

WHATEVER...



KITRICK GOT IT WORSE
THAN ANYONE I EVER
HEARD OF.

BABY?

YEAH?

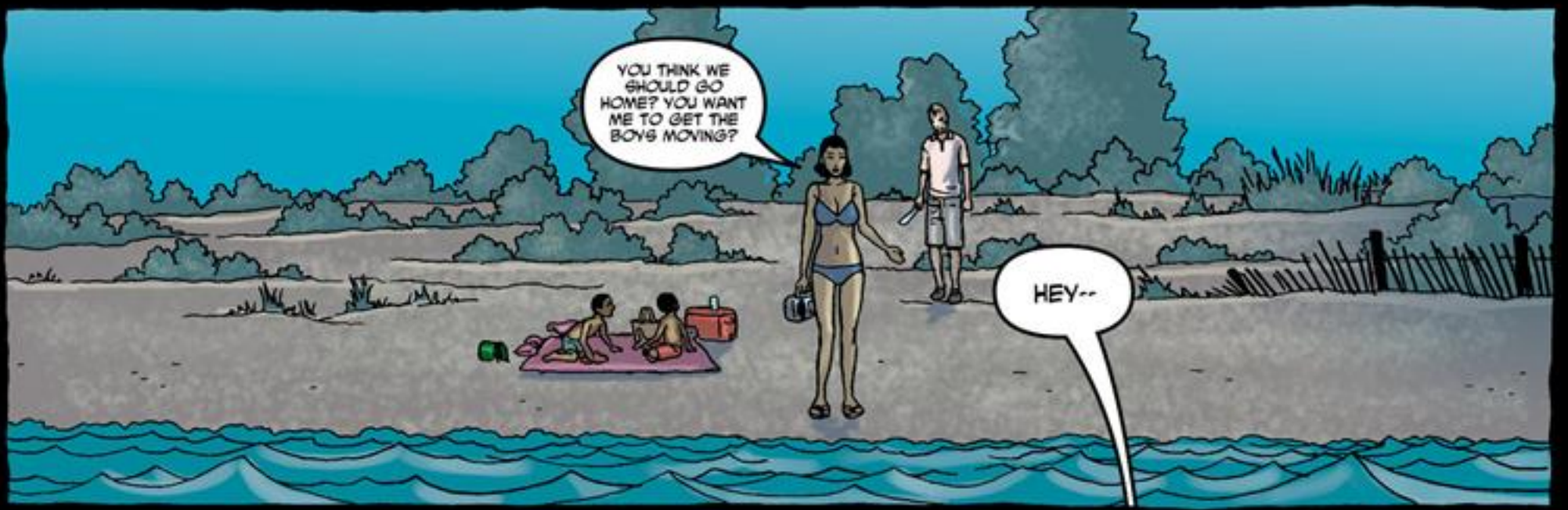
THE
RADIO SAID
SOMETHING
HAPPENED...

WHAT?

I SAID I THINK
SOMETHING'S
HAPPENED, IT WAS
ON THE RADIO!

WHAT
HAPPENED?

I DON'T KNOW,
THE GUY GOT
CUT OFF, IT
SOUNDED A
LITTLE WEIRD.



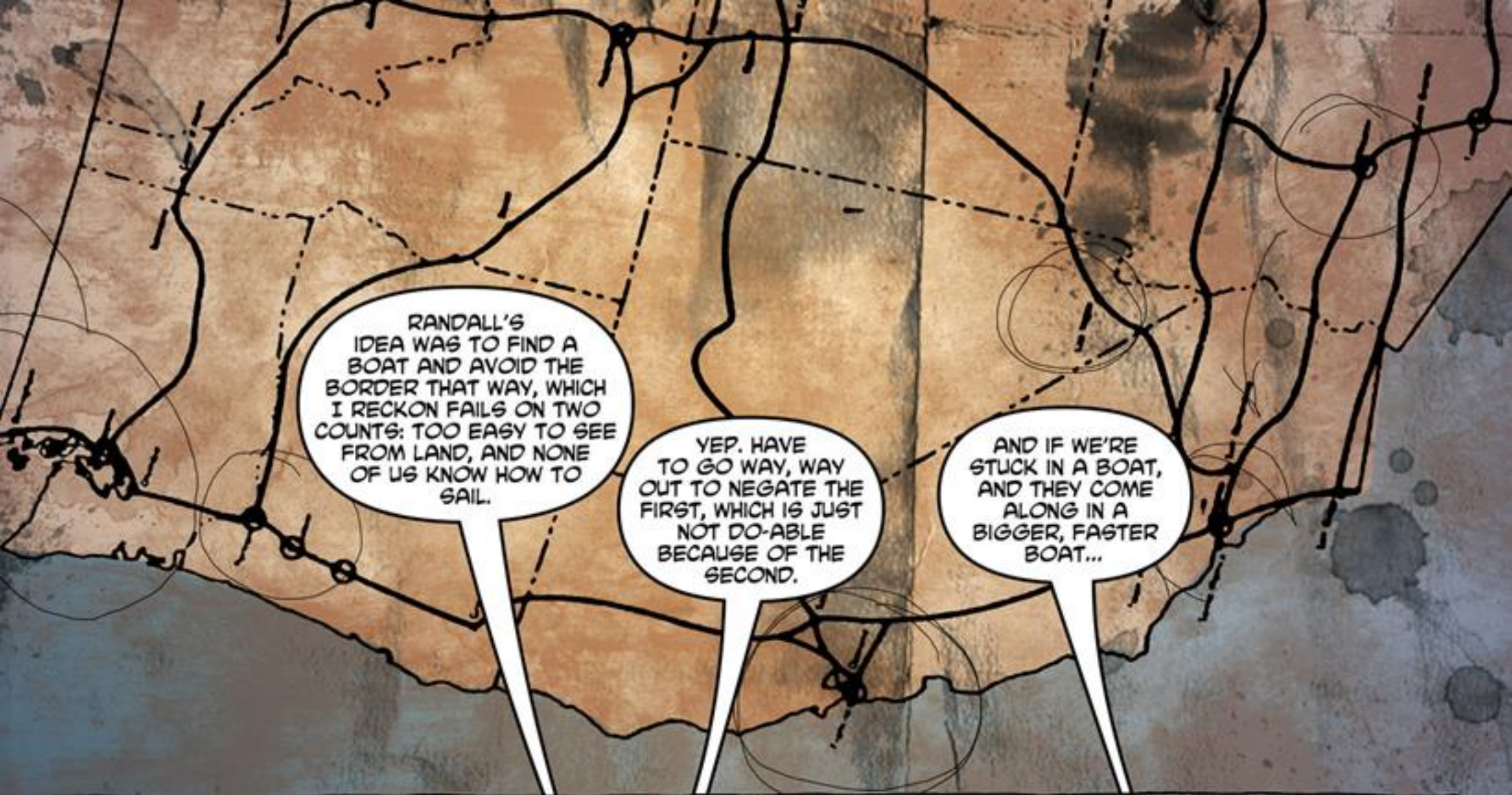




HE JABBLED OUT THE WHOLE UNIMAGINABLE HORROR THAT FIRST NIGHT WE MET HIM, AND WHEN HE WOKE IN THE MORNING IT WAS AS A DIFFERENT MAN.

SINCE THEN, I DON'T THINK HE'D SAID A DOZEN WORDS HE DIDN'T HAVE TO.





RANDALL'S
IDEA WAS TO FIND A
BOAT AND AVOID THE
BORDER THAT WAY, WHICH
I RECKON FAILS ON TWO
COUNTS: TOO EASY TO SEE
FROM LAND, AND NONE
OF US KNOW HOW TO
SAIL.

YEP. HAVE
TO GO WAY, WAY
OUT TO NEGATE THE
FIRST, WHICH IS JUST
NOT DO-ABLE
BECAUSE OF THE
SECOND.

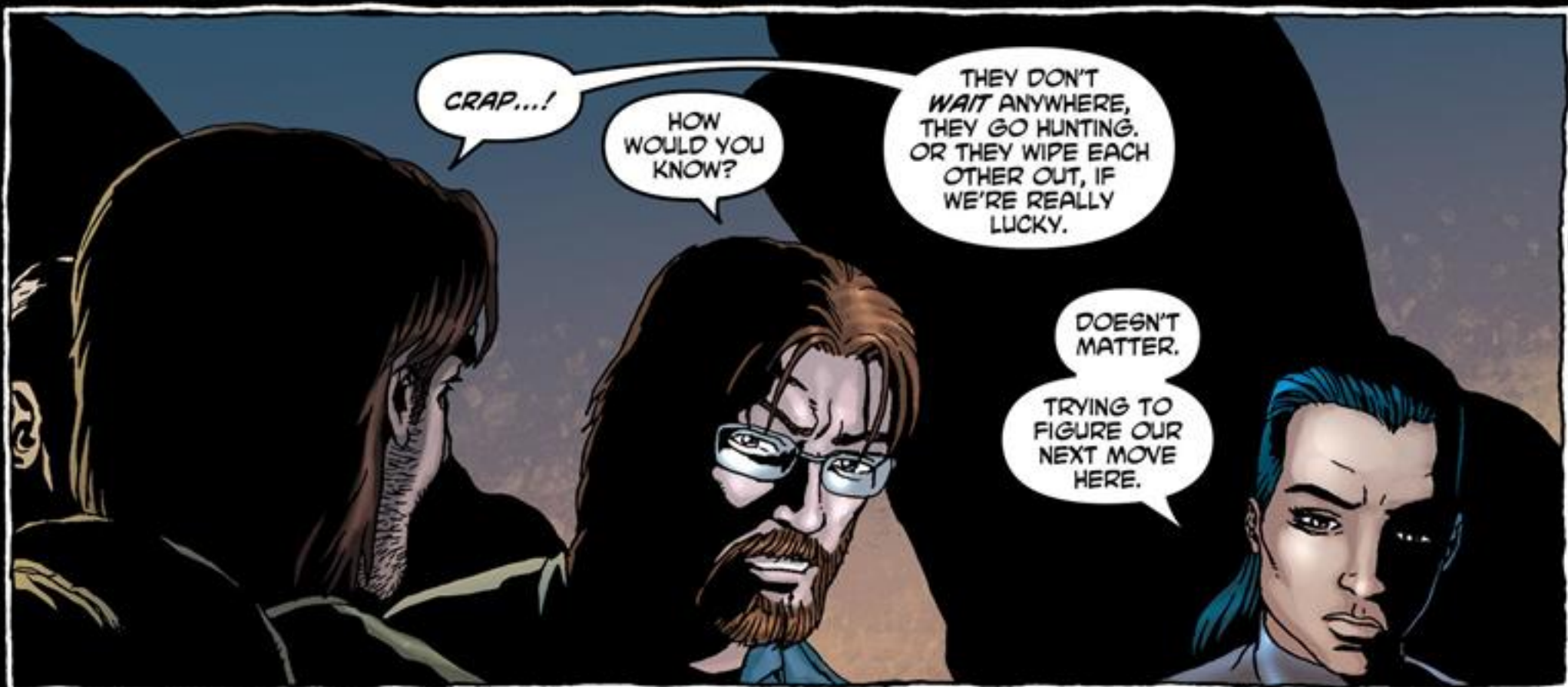
AND IF WE'RE
STUCK IN A BOAT,
AND THEY COME
ALONG IN A
BIGGER, FASTER
BOAT...



WHAT'S THE
BIG DEAL
ABOUT THE
BORDER?

WE HEARD
SOME BAD
STUFF ABOUT
IT...

LIKE
WHAT USED
TO BE THE
CANADIAN
ARMY'S WAITING
THERE.



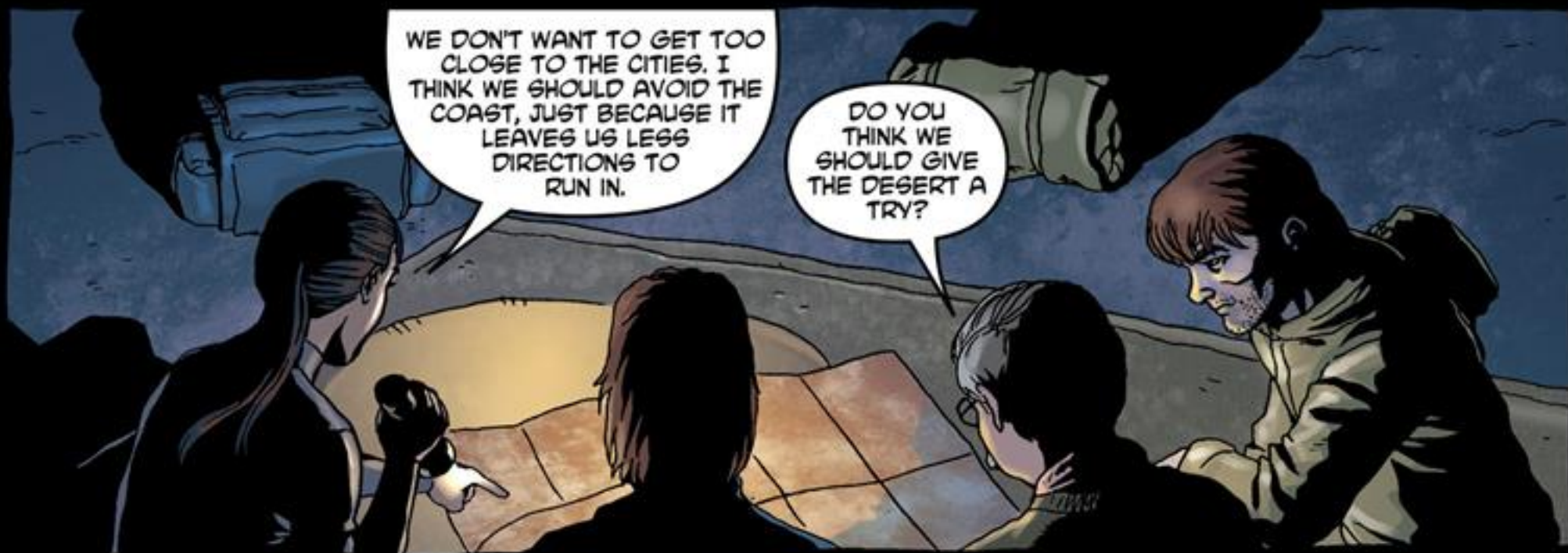
CRAP...!

HOW
WOULD YOU
KNOW?

THEY DON'T
WAIT ANYWHERE,
THEY GO HUNTING.
OR THEY WIPE EACH
OTHER OUT, IF
WE'RE REALLY
LUCKY.

DOESN'T
MATTER.

TRYING TO
FIGURE OUR
NEXT MOVE
HERE.



WE DON'T WANT TO GET TOO CLOSE TO THE CITIES. I THINK WE SHOULD AVOID THE COAST, JUST BECAUSE IT LEAVES US LESS DIRECTIONS TO RUN IN.

DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD GIVE THE DESERT A TRY?



WHAT?

WELL, IF WE TURN NORTH-WEST NOW, WE CAN CROSS UTAH AND NEVADA AND STAY BEHIND THE SIERRAS ALL THE WAY TO OREGON. LOTS OF OPEN SPACE, WE'LL SPOT ANY TROUBLE FROM MILES AWAY.

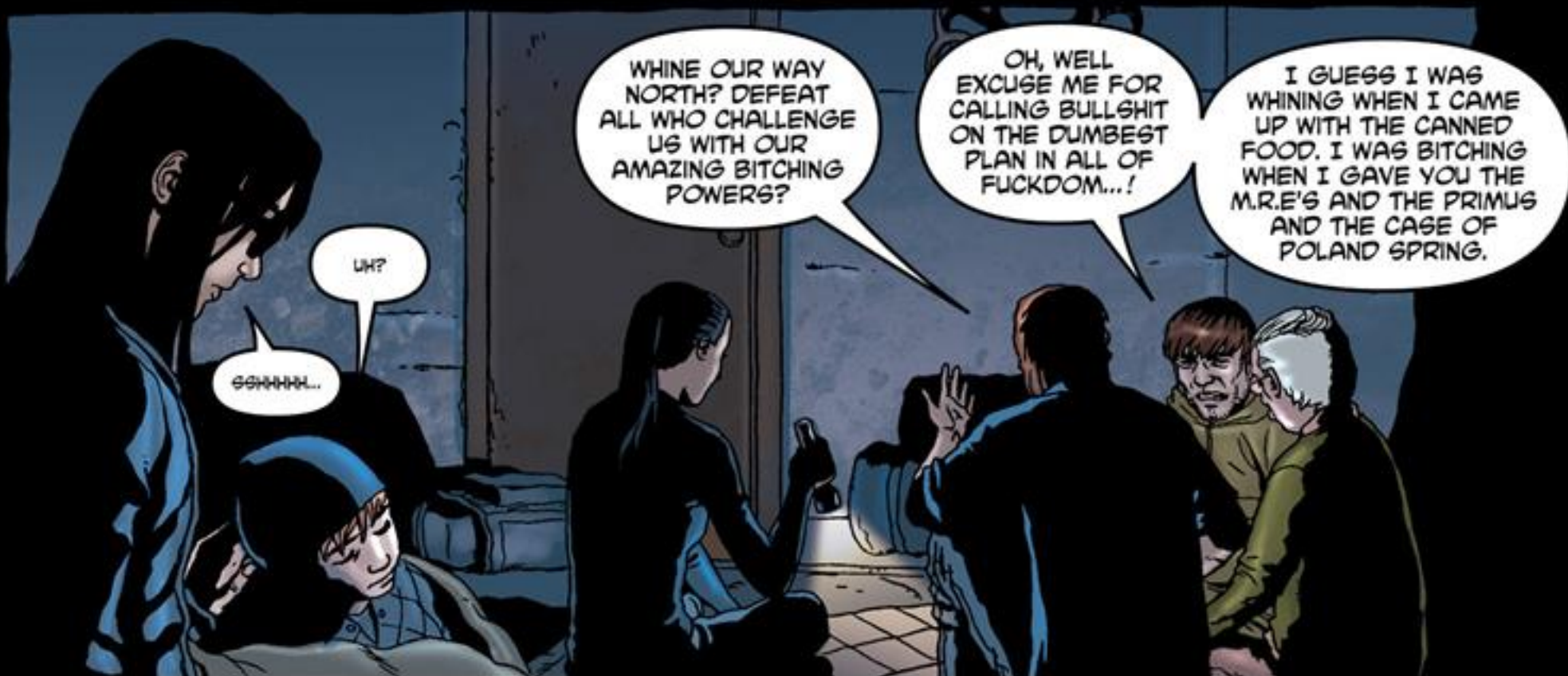
AND THEY DON'T TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES, JUST LIKE YOU SAID. THE DESERT'S GOING TO BE A DEATH TRAP FOR THEM, THEY PROBABLY LEARNED TO AVOID IT MONTHS AGO...



BUT IT'S GOING TO BE A WALK IN THE PARK FOR US, IS IT? FIVE HUNDRED MILES OF TOTAL FUCKING NOTHING?

AND WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN, *LEARNED*? THEY SEE US THEY'LL FOLLOW US, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF WE WALK THROUGH HELL ITSELF...

SO WHAT'S YOUR SUGGESTION, EXACTLY?



WHINE OUR WAY NORTH? DEFEAT ALL WHO CHALLENGE US WITH OUR AMAZING BITCHING POWERS?

OH, WELL EXCUSE ME FOR CALLING BULLSHIT ON THE DUMBEST PLAN IN ALL OF FUCKDOM...!

I GUESS I WAS WHINING WHEN I CAME UP WITH THE CANNED FOOD. I WAS BITCHING WHEN I GAVE YOU THE M.R.E'S AND THE PRIMUS AND THE CASE OF POLAND SPRING.

UH?

GGHHHH...



IF YOU THINK THAT
GIVES YOU A
LICENSE TO--

WHY
DON'T YOU
GO--

YOU
TWO ARE
BORING THE
PISS OUT OF
ME.



POINT
OF THE
DESERT IS ANY
ALREADY IN IT
ARE LONG
DEAD.

KEY'S WATER.
WE'VE GOT SOME
AND WE CAN FIND
MORE, AND WE HAVE
THE PURIFICATION
TABLETS IF WE NEED
THEM. QUESTION IS,
WILL THERE BE
ENOUGH FOR US OUT
THERE ONCE WE'RE
PAST THE POINT WE
CAN'T TURN BACK?



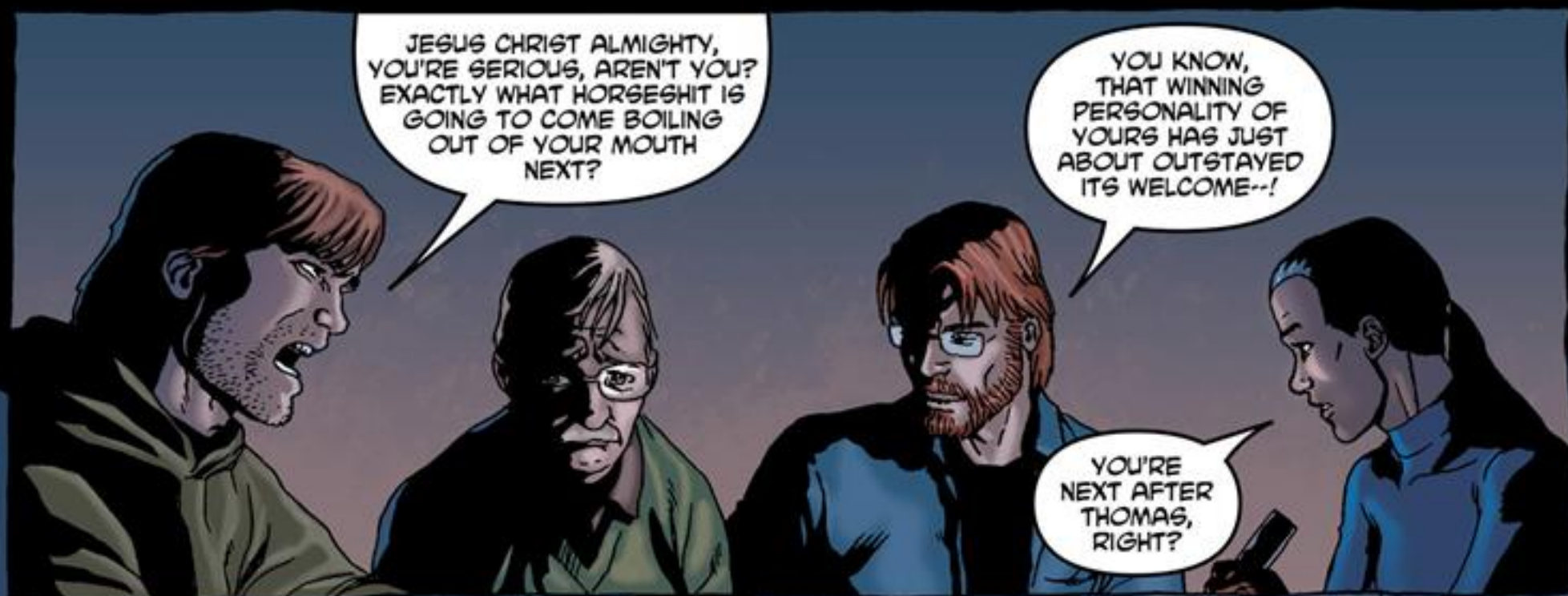
I THINK WE'LL BE
OKAY, THERE'S A LOT
MORE INFRASTRUCTURE
SCATTERED AROUND
OUT THERE THAN
YOU'D THINK...

THOSE
TABLETS
AREN'T THE
ANSWER TO
EVERYTHING.

NO.

AND
THEY KILL THE
BACTERIA IN
YOUR STOMACH,
WE'D BETTER NOT
USE UP ANY
MORE OF THE
YOGURT...

YOGURT?



JESUS CHRIST ALMIGHTY,
YOU'RE SERIOUS, AREN'T YOU?
EXACTLY WHAT HORSESHIT IS
GOING TO COME BOILING
OUT OF YOUR MOUTH
NEXT?

YOU KNOW,
THAT WINNING
PERSONALITY OF
YOURS HAS JUST
ABOUT OUTSTAYED
ITS WELCOME--!

YOU'RE
NEXT AFTER
THOMAS,
RIGHT?





IDEA IS TO CUT
ACROSS NEVADA.
MAIN CONCERN'S
WATER.

OH, I'D
SAY WE'D
MAKE IT
OKAY...



YEAH?

WE WERE ALL SWEATING THE
ROCKIES, AND EVEN KITRICK
SURVIVED THAT ONE. I THINK FATE
HAS SOMETHING A LOT LESS
MUNDANE THAN DEHYDRATION
IN STORE FOR US.

DOG'S
BACK
AGAIN.



SO HE
IS.



GOING
TO COME
AND SAY
HELLO THIS
TIME?



MAN, I BET
YOU'RE
USELESS.

I BET YOU CAN'T SNIFF OUT
CROSSED OR DO ANYTHING
HELPFUL AT ALL. YOU'RE
PROBABLY THE EXACT
OPPOSITE OF MOVIE
MIRACLE DOG.



THE WARM, FUZZY FEELING INSIDE LASTED JUST UNDER TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

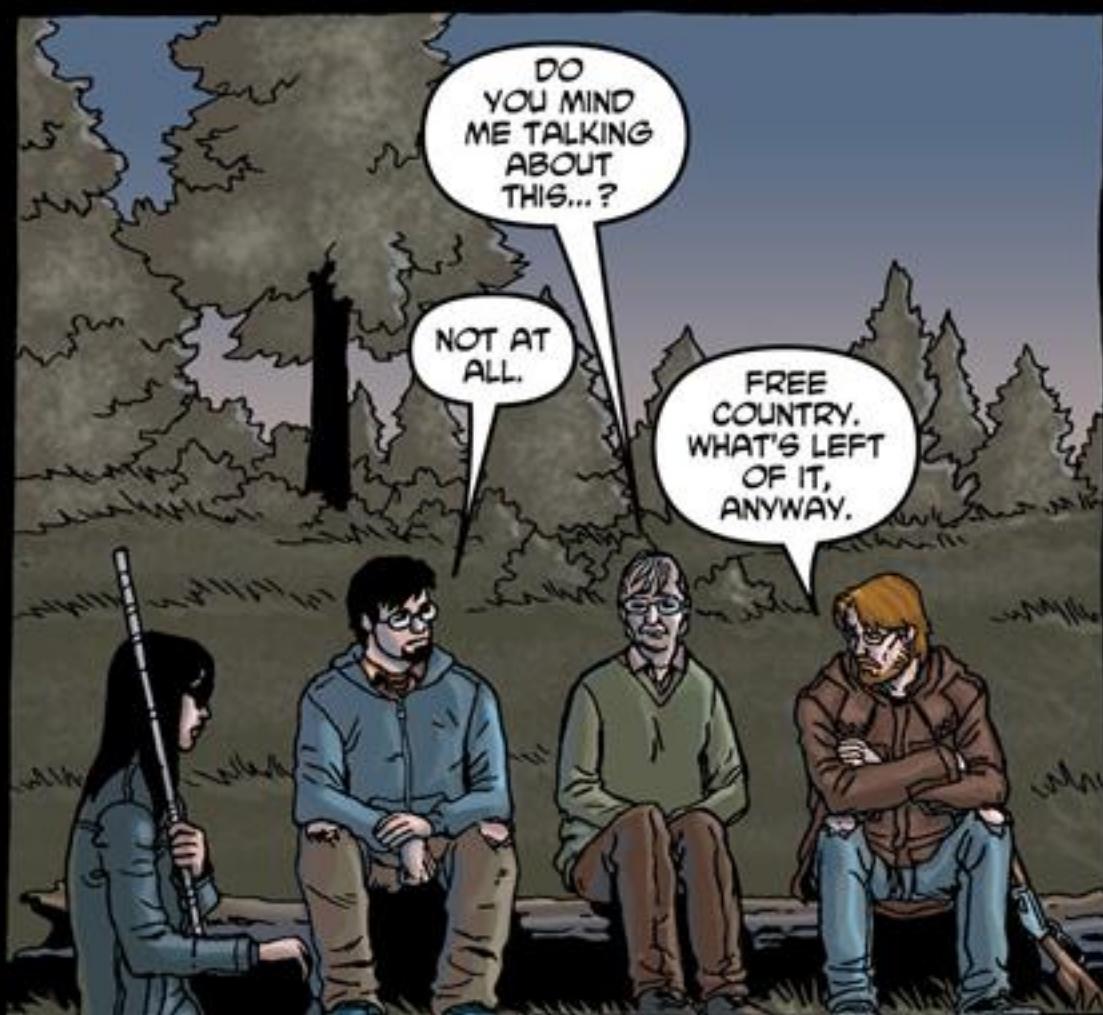




HOW COME?

I'M JUST NOT REALLY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE, STAN.

I NEVER HAVE BEEN.



DO YOU MIND ME TALKING ABOUT THIS...?

NOT AT ALL.

FREE COUNTRY. WHAT'S LEFT OF IT, ANYWAY.



WELL, THAT'S THE THING, ISN'T IT? EVERYTHING'S DIFFERENT NOW.

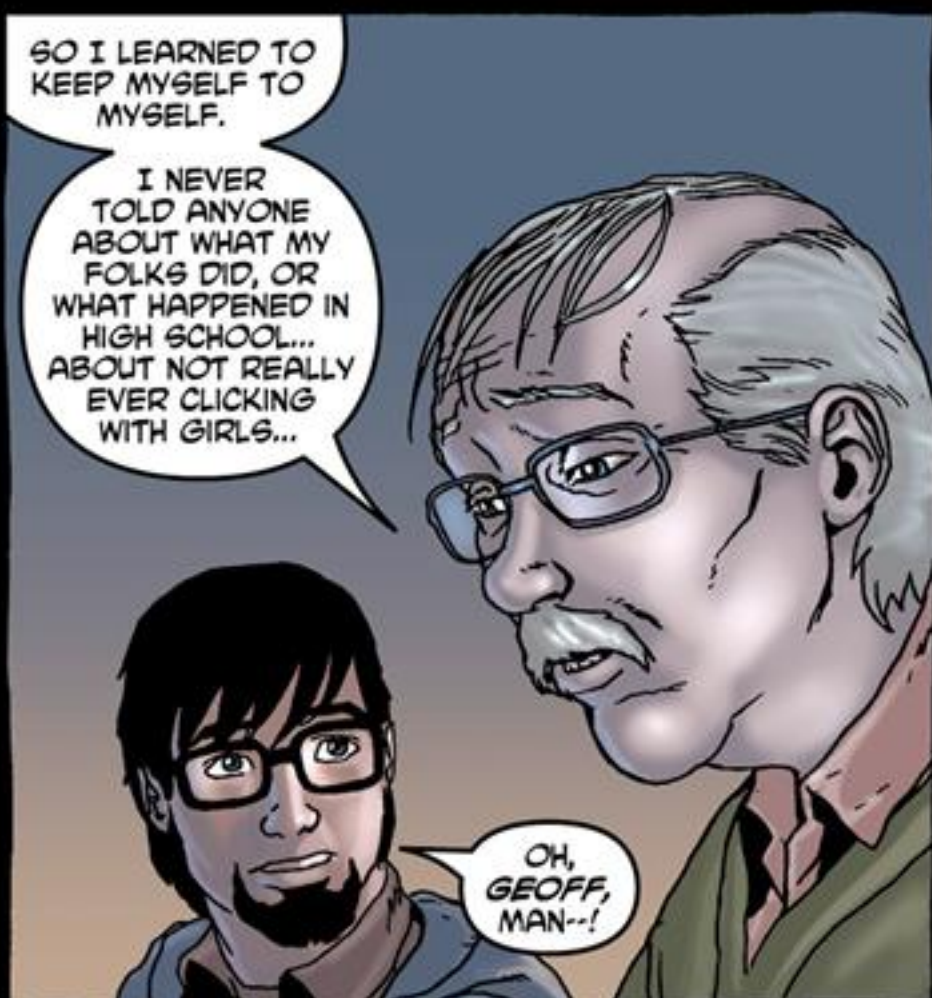
EVERYTHING.

THAT'S WHY I HOPE THAT I CAN TRUST YOU WITH THIS.



YOU SEE THE TOWN I GREW UP IN WAS QUITE SMALL, AND THE PEOPLE... WELL, IT WAS VERY LIKE THE PLACE YOU GUYS TOLD ME YOU WERE IN WHEN ALL THIS STARTED.

PEOPLE DIDN'T LIKE IT IF YOU DIDN'T BEHAVE A CERTAIN WAY. IF YOU DIDN'T CONFORM, I SUPPOSE.



SO I LEARNED TO KEEP MYSELF TO MYSELF.

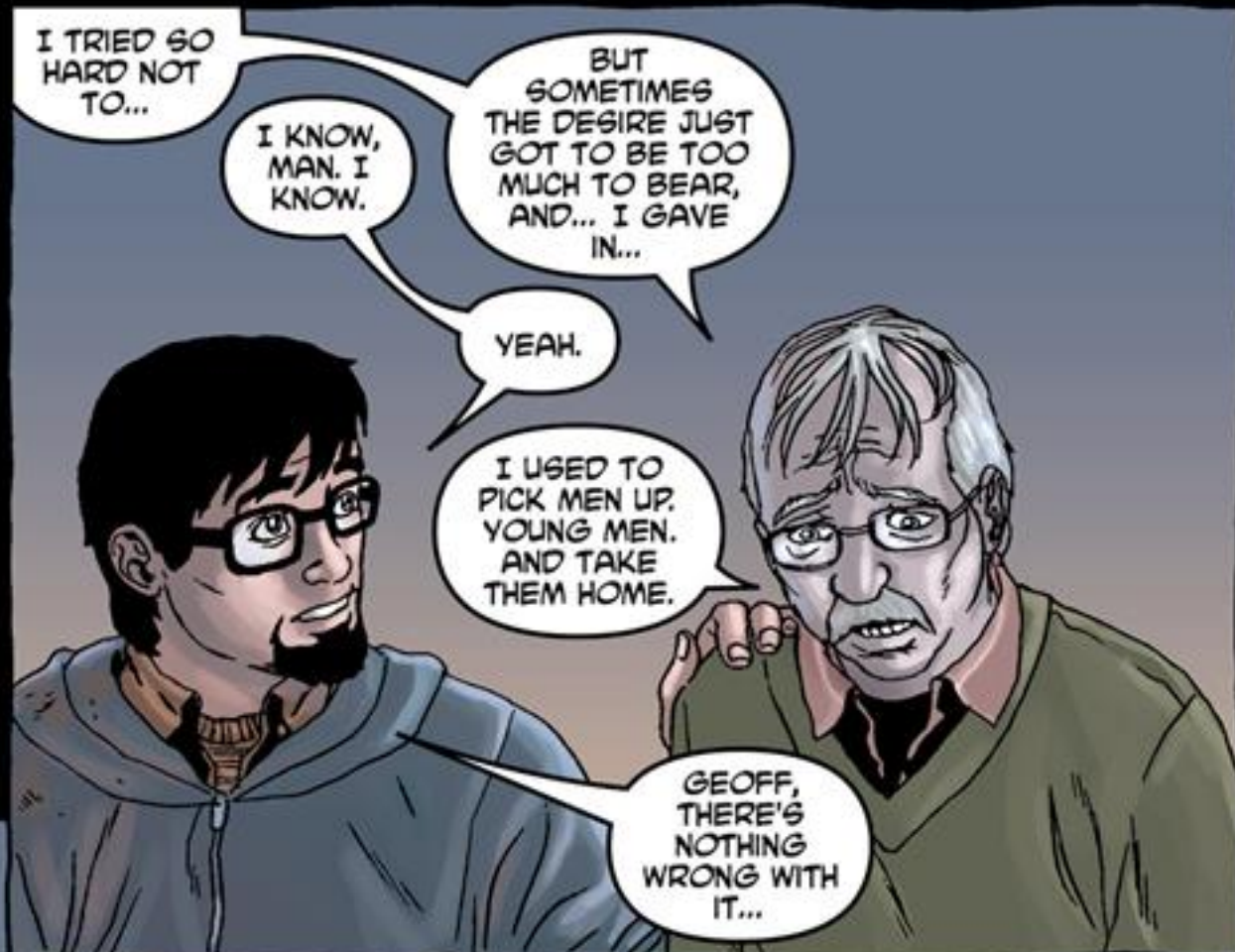
I NEVER TOLD ANYONE ABOUT WHAT MY FOLKS DID, OR WHAT HAPPENED IN HIGH SCHOOL... ABOUT NOT REALLY EVER CLICKING WITH GIRLS...

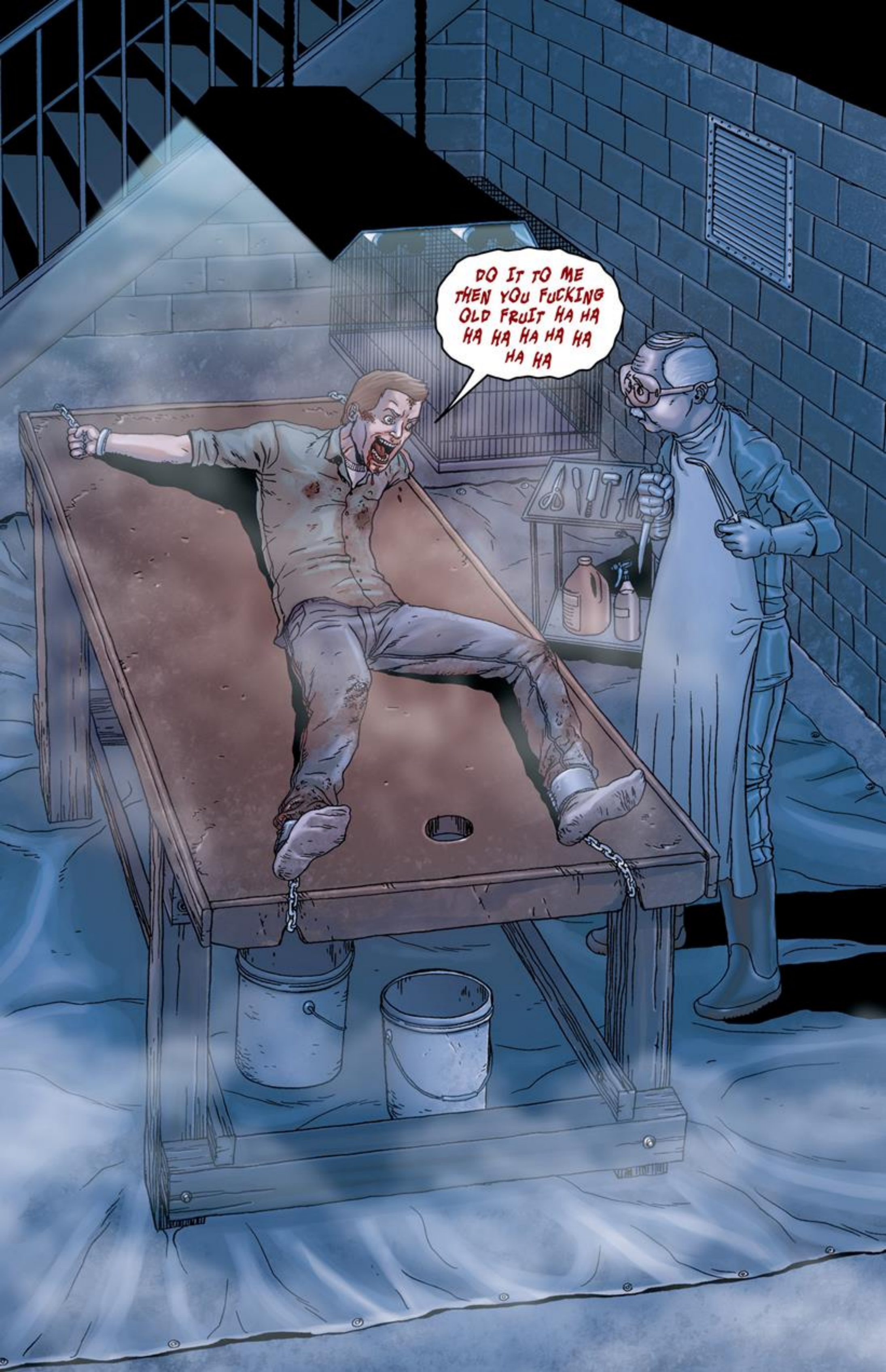
OH, GEOFF, MAN--!



I'M SO SORRY, I NEVER KNEW. IF I HAD I WOULD'VE SAID SOMETHING.

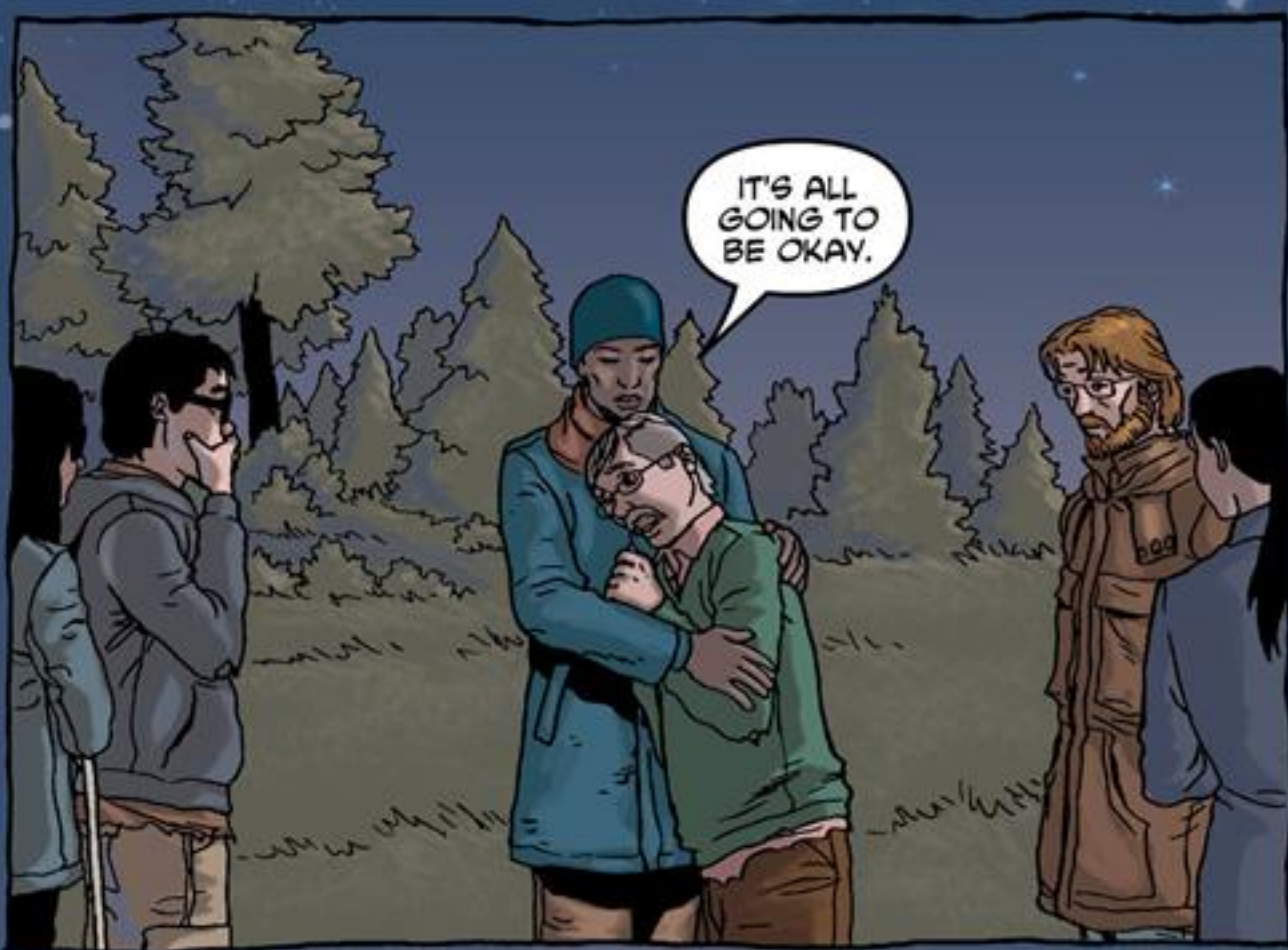
I'VE BEEN THERE, MAN. I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY. JUST LET IT OUT, OKAY?





DO IT TO ME
THEN YOU FUCKING
OLD FRUIT HA HA
HA HA HA HA HA
HA HA





IN THE MORNING GEOFF AND KITRICK TOOK A WALK, AND KITRICK CAME BACK ON HIS OWN.

FIVE DAYS AFTER THAT WE STARTED OUT ACROSS THE DESERT.

