



THE LAST

ZOMBIE

BRIAN KEENE



BEFORE the AFTER



ANTARCTIC PRESS

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THE LAST ZOMBIE

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BEFORE the AFTER

PREVIOUSLY IN THE LAST ZOMBIE...

DEAD NEW WORLD – Two years after a zombie plague brings about civilization's collapse, Doctor Ian Scott and Sergeant Warner head up a team of Colorado-based soldiers and scientists, tasked with a cross-country mission to determine the fate of a FEMA bunker in West Virginia—a facility which housed Ian's fiancée, Jen, among others. While defending a leper colony from a band of marauders, Ian is accidentally exposed to the virus that caused the original zombie outbreak. He injects himself with an experimental vaccine that slows the virus, hoping to delay the inevitable long enough to be reunited with Jen—all while keeping his secret from his teammates.

INFERNO – In Kansas, the team find their mission jeopardized by a statewide wildfire burning out of control and engulfing entire towns. Detouring around the conflagration is impossible. The north is an impassable, radioactive wasteland due to a nuclear reactor meltdown, and the south is controlled by a vast army founded by former Mexican drug cartels. Anger and resentment grows among the civilian refugees fleeing the fire when they learn that the team can't help them. Faced with the certainty that staying will lead to a confrontation and civilian deaths, Warner orders the team to flee directly into the inferno. They emerge on the other side physically unscathed, but psychologically battered.

NEVERLAND – In Iowa, the team assist a community of children living at the former juvenile reformation facility known as Neverland Ranch. After earning the children's trust, the group enjoy some much-needed rest, but that relaxation is short-lived. While looking for parts to repair their damaged vehicles, Planters and Fulton run afoul of a group of Mexican cartel soldiers and barely escape with their lives. When they return with a prisoner, Warner kills the man after interrogating him, so that the Cartel army won't learn of Neverland's existence. Meanwhile, Ian's teammates confront him after suspecting he is ill. Ian manages to convince them their suspicions are unfounded, but Doctor Federman is still determined to learn the truth.

NOW – A blizzard has forced the team to take shelter inside an abandoned hotel in Davenport, Iowa. While the rest of the group takes advantage of the delay, Doctor Federman is perilously close to discovering Ian's secret...

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THE LAST ZOMBIE: BEFORE THE AFTER #4

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SURE THING,
SARGE.

HATE TO
LEAVE THIS
FIRE, BUT I'M
FRIGGING
TIRED.



SO, WHAT'S
ON YOUR MIND,
DOCTOR?

WELL...
I'M SURE YOU'VE
NOTICED THAT DOCTOR
SCOTT HASN'T BEEN
HIMSELF LATELY?



I'VE NOTICED
THAT HE LOOKS
LIKE SHIT, BUT
WE ALL DO.

THIS ISN'T
EXACTLY A FAMILY
VACATION. IT'S BEEN
PRETTY HARD GOING
OUT HERE, SO
FAR.



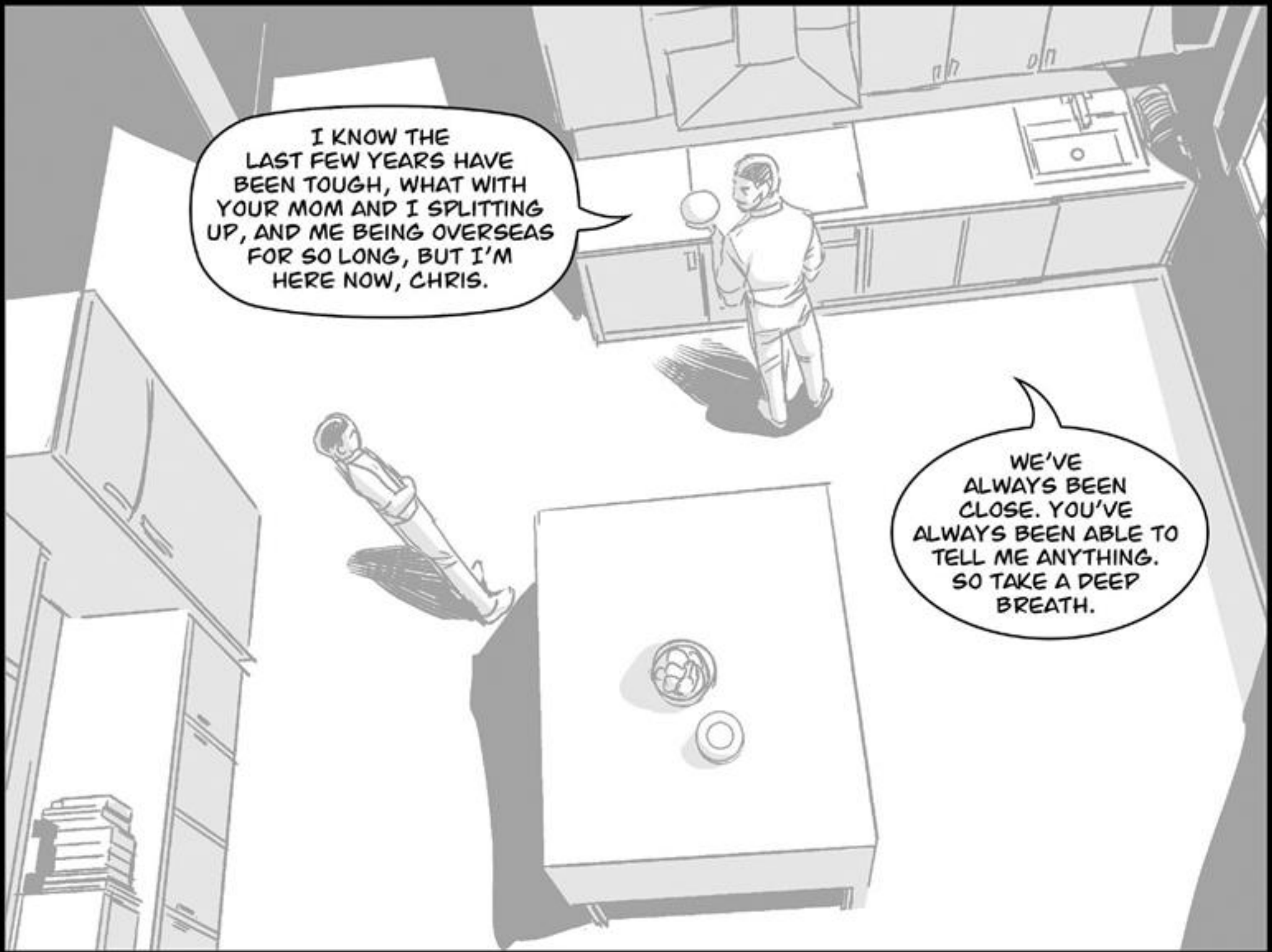












I KNOW THE
LAST FEW YEARS HAVE
BEEN TOUGH, WHAT WITH
YOUR MOM AND I SPLITTING
UP, AND ME BEING OVERSEAS
FOR SO LONG, BUT I'M
HERE NOW, CHRIS.

WE'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
CLOSE. YOU'VE
ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO
TELL ME ANYTHING.
SO TAKE A DEEP
BREATH.



NOW...
WHAT'S ON
YOUR MIND?



DAD.

I'M
GAY.



YOU'RE...



JUST LET ME TALK,
OKAY? THIS IS HARD
ENOUGH WITHOUT YOU
INTERRUPTING.

SORRY.
I'M JUST...GO
AHEAD.

I'M GAY. IT'S NOT A CHOICE
OR A LIFESTYLE. IT'S WHO I
AM. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO
WITH YOU AND MOM AND THE
DIVORCE, OR SCHOOL, OR
REBELLION, OR ANYTHING
LIKE THAT.

I'VE NEVER
TOLD ANYBODY BEFORE.
NOT MY FRIENDS. NOT MOM.
CERTAINLY NOT GRANDMA
AND GRANDPA.
NO ONE.

PLEASE
DON'T HATE
ME...

I'VE KNOWN
SINCE I WAS IN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
AND NOW I WANT YOU
TO KNOW. I'VE
NEVER...

BUT I
WANT TO NOW,
DAD. I WANT PEOPLE
TO KNOW BECAUSE I
WANT THEM TO KNOW
ME. I WANT TO BE
HAPPY.



HATE YOU?
CHRIS...

HOW COULD
I EVER HATE YOU?
YOU'RE MY SON. I
LOVE YOU.



I DON'T CARE
THAT YOU'RE GAY ANY
MORE THAN I'D CARE IF YOU
TOLD ME YOU WERE CONVERTING
TO CATHOLICISM OR YOU'D
DECIDED TO BECOME A
VEGETARIAN.



IT'S NOT
SOMETHING
I JUST
DECIDED,
DAD.



I KNOW
IT'S NOT. YOU
MISUNDERSTAND
ME, KIDDO.

MAYBE
THAT'S MY
FAULT. THIS IS ALL A
LITTLE SUDDEN. I MIGHT
NOT BE SPEAKING
CLEARLY.



WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS THAT I LOVE
YOU, AND IT'S OKAY. I'M PROUD OF YOU
FOR TELLING ME. IT TOOK A LOT OF
BALLS TO DO THAT.

I CAN ONLY
IMAGINE HOW YOU'VE FELT.
HOW MUCH PRESSURE YOU
WERE UNDER.





NO, SIR.

YES,
SIR.

ABSOLUTELY,
SIR. I'LL BE
THERE IN TEN.
UNDERSTOOD.



CHRIS,
I'M SORRY,
BUT I'VE GOT
TO GO.

BUT,
DAD--

LISTEN TO ME!
THERE'S SOME KIND
OF RIOT BREAKING OUT.
THEY NEED US TO GUARD
THE BASE. ALL PERSONNEL
ARE BEING CALLED TO
DUTY. THERE'S NO TIME
TO ARGUE. I'VE GOT
TO GO.



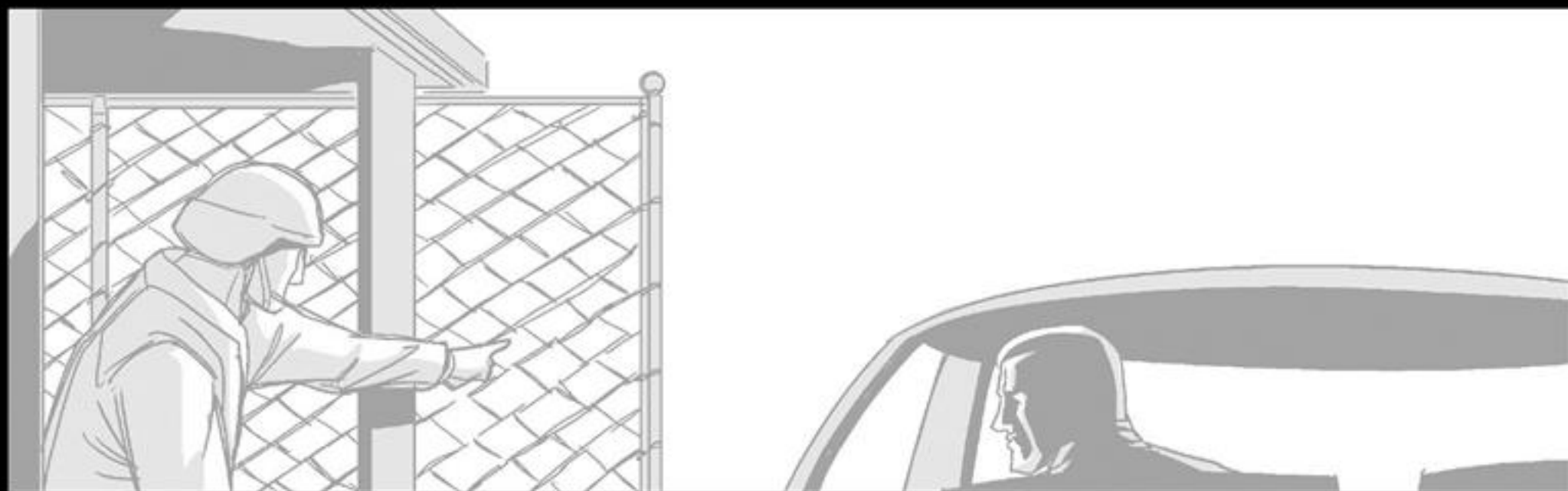
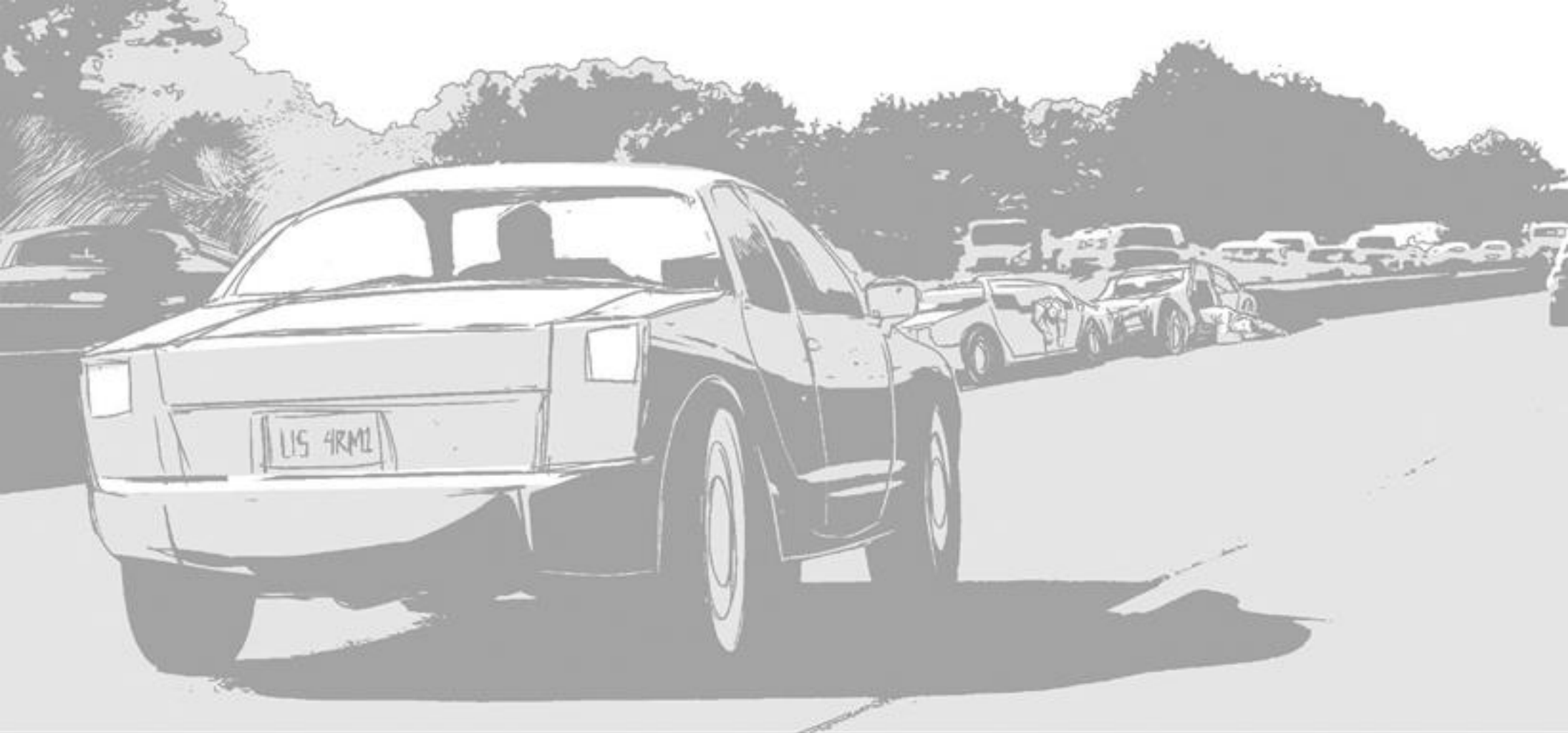
YOU'LL BE
HERE WHEN I
GET BACK?

YOU'VE
GOT ME ALL
WEEKEND. BE
CAREFUL,
DAD.

I WILL.
I LOVE
YOU.

I LOVE
YOU, TOO.

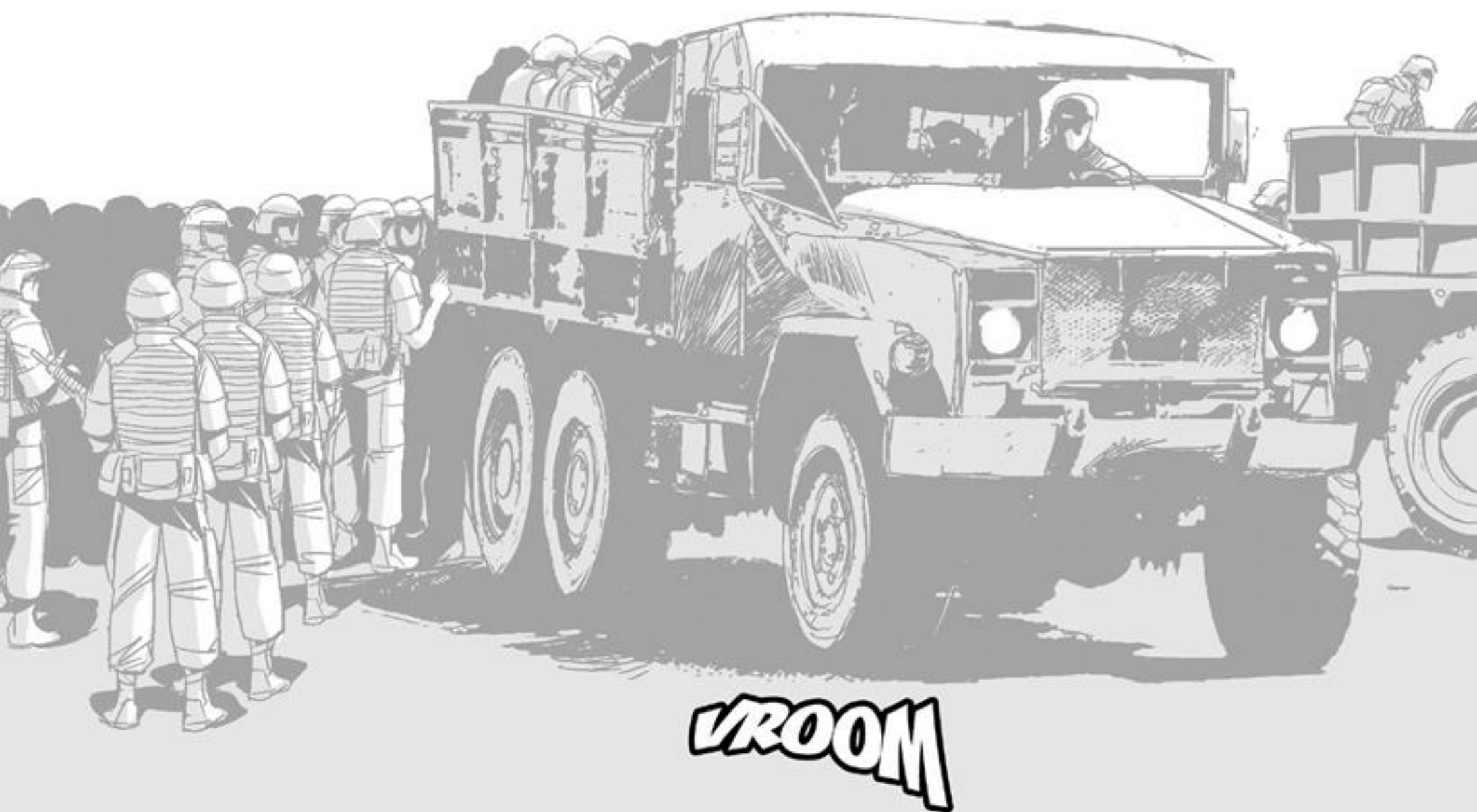




SHIT'S BREAKING
OUT EVERYWHERE.
HAVEN'T YOU SEEN
THE NEWS?

I DON'T KNOW
WHY WE'VE GOT TO
BE INVOLVED. SOUNDS
LIKE A JOB FOR THE
NATIONAL GUARD.

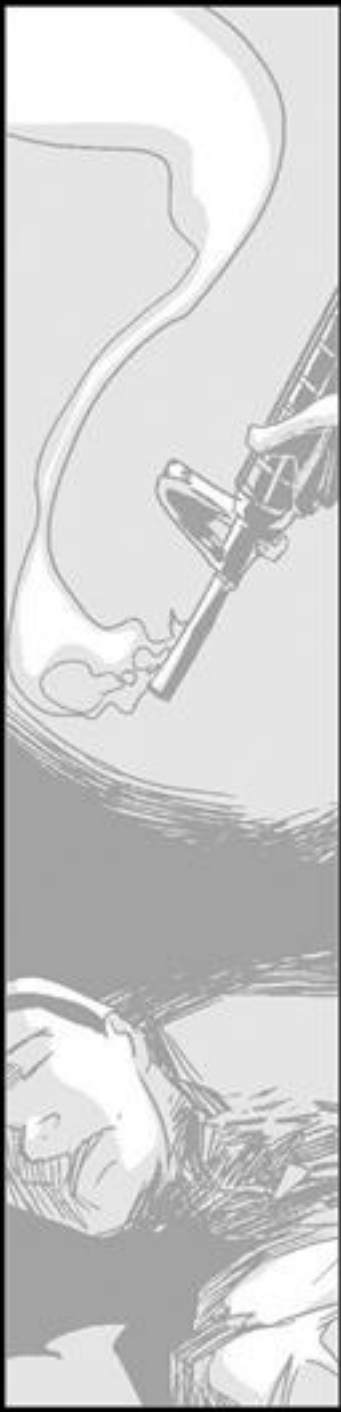
BECAUSE
OUR COUNTRY
NEEDS US. TIME
TO GO TO WORK.



THOSE AREN'T
RIOTERS...







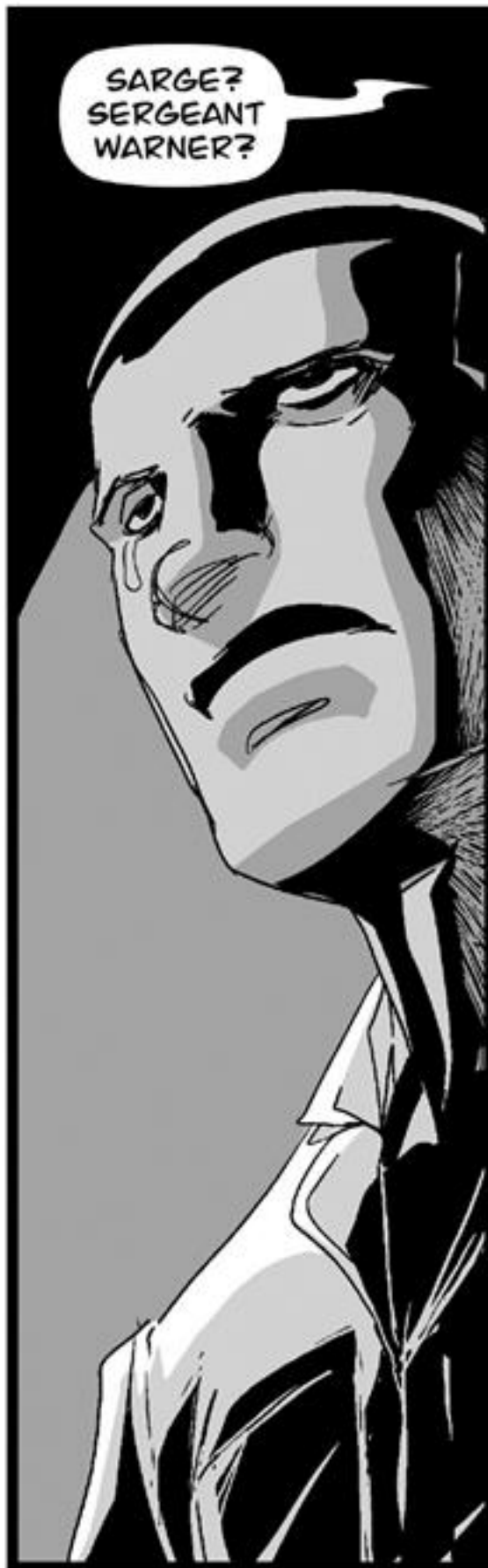
OH, CHRIS...
OH, NO...MY LITTLE
BOY...WHAT DID
THEY...



OH,
FUCK!



NNNNNN
OOOOOOOO
OOOOOOOO
OOOOO!



SARGE?
SERGEANT
WARNER?



EH? OH,
JOHNSON. IT'S
YOU.

SORRY,
SARGE. DIDN'T
MEAN TO SCARE
YOU.





IT'S
LIKE WADING
THROUGH WET
CEMENT.



BUT IT DID
END, CHRIS. IT ENDED
THE MOMENT I CAME HOME
THAT NIGHT. EVERYTHING SINCE
THEN... ALL THIS... HAS JUST
BEEN A LONG FUCKING
EPILOGUE.

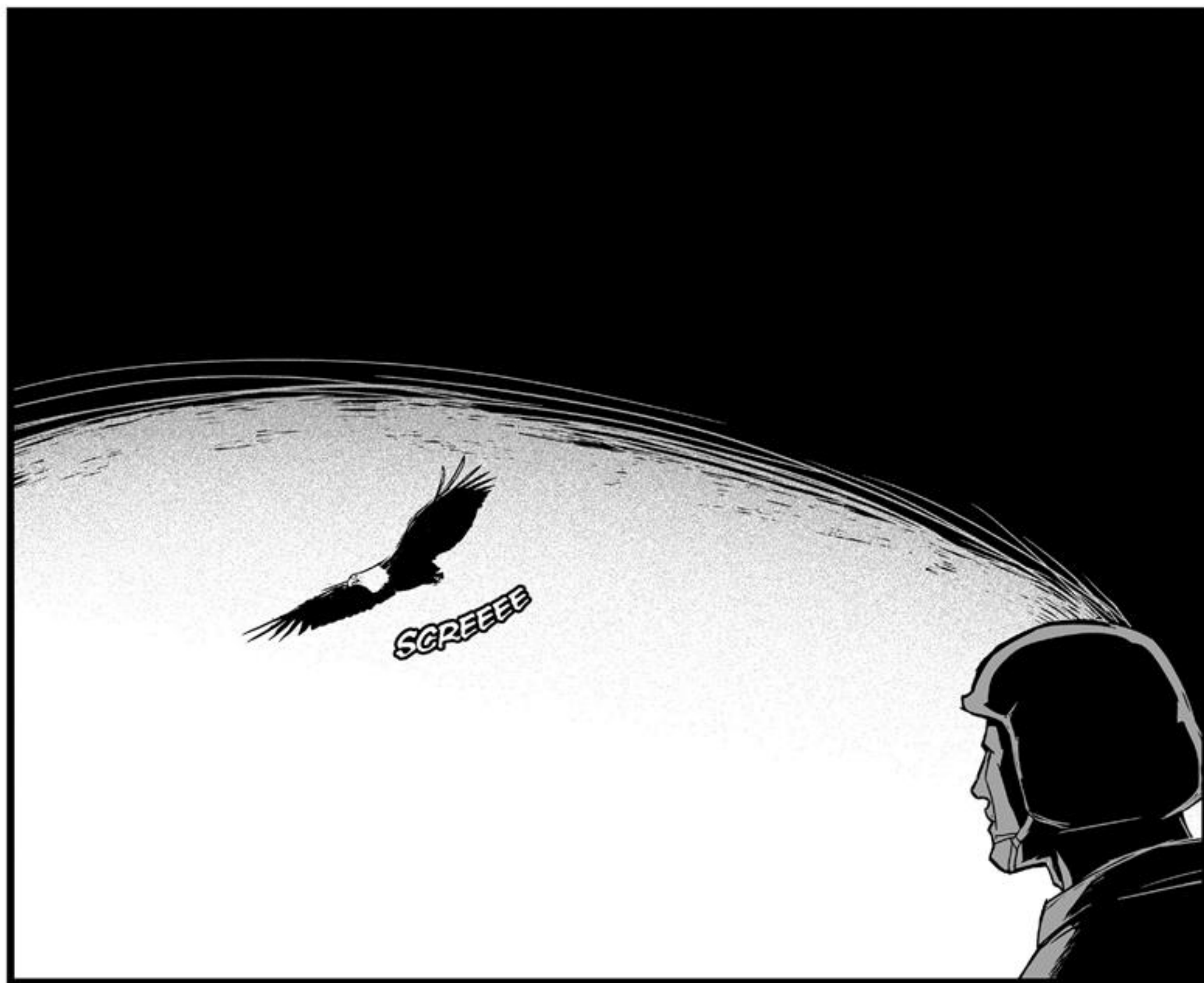
I KEEP THINKING
BACK TO THAT DAY, WONDERING
IF THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE I
SHOULD HAVE SAID. I KNOW I TOLD
YOU THAT I LOVED YOU, AND THAT
IT DIDN'T MATTER. THAT I JUST
WANTED YOU TO BE HAPPY.

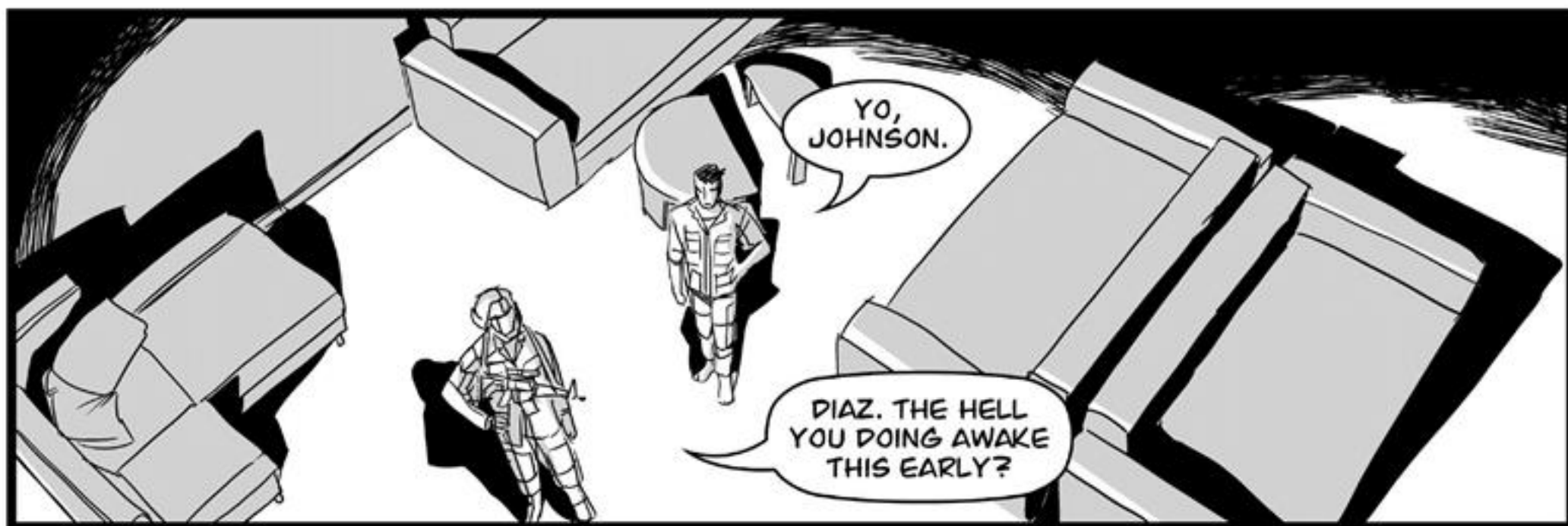
BUT WAS
THERE SOMETHING
ELSE I SHOULD HAVE
SAID? SOMETHING I DIDN'T
THINK OF? I DON'T KNOW.
AND NOW I'LL NEVER
KNOW.

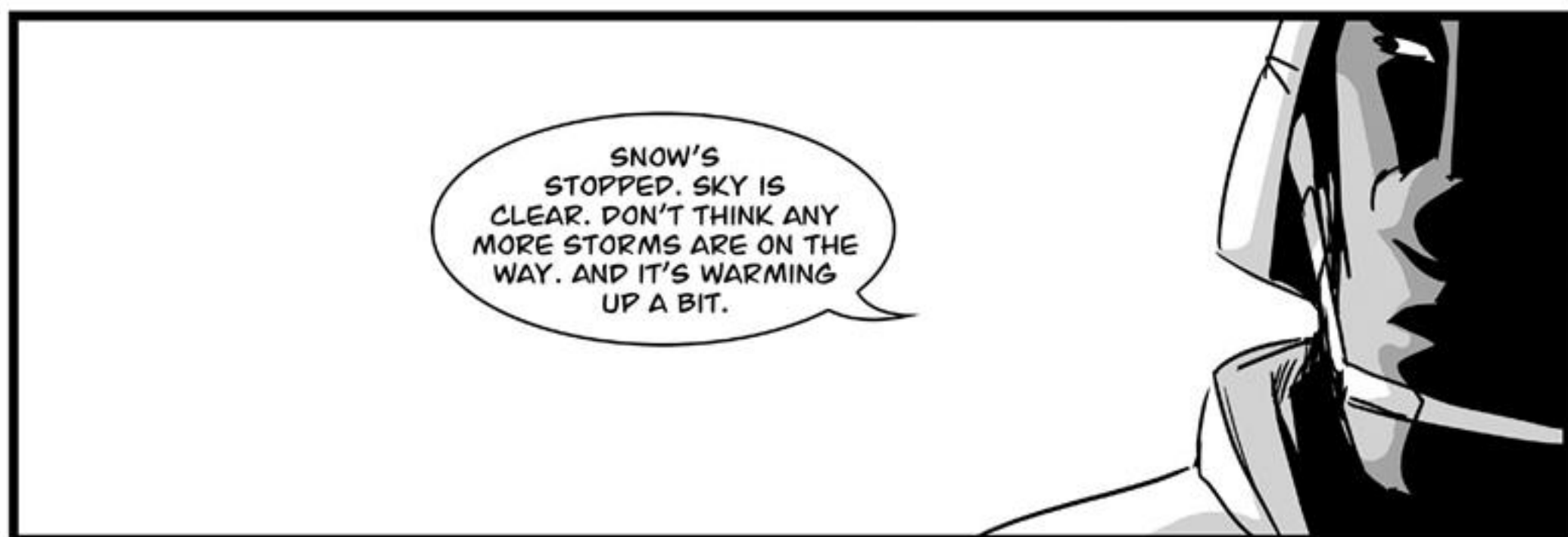
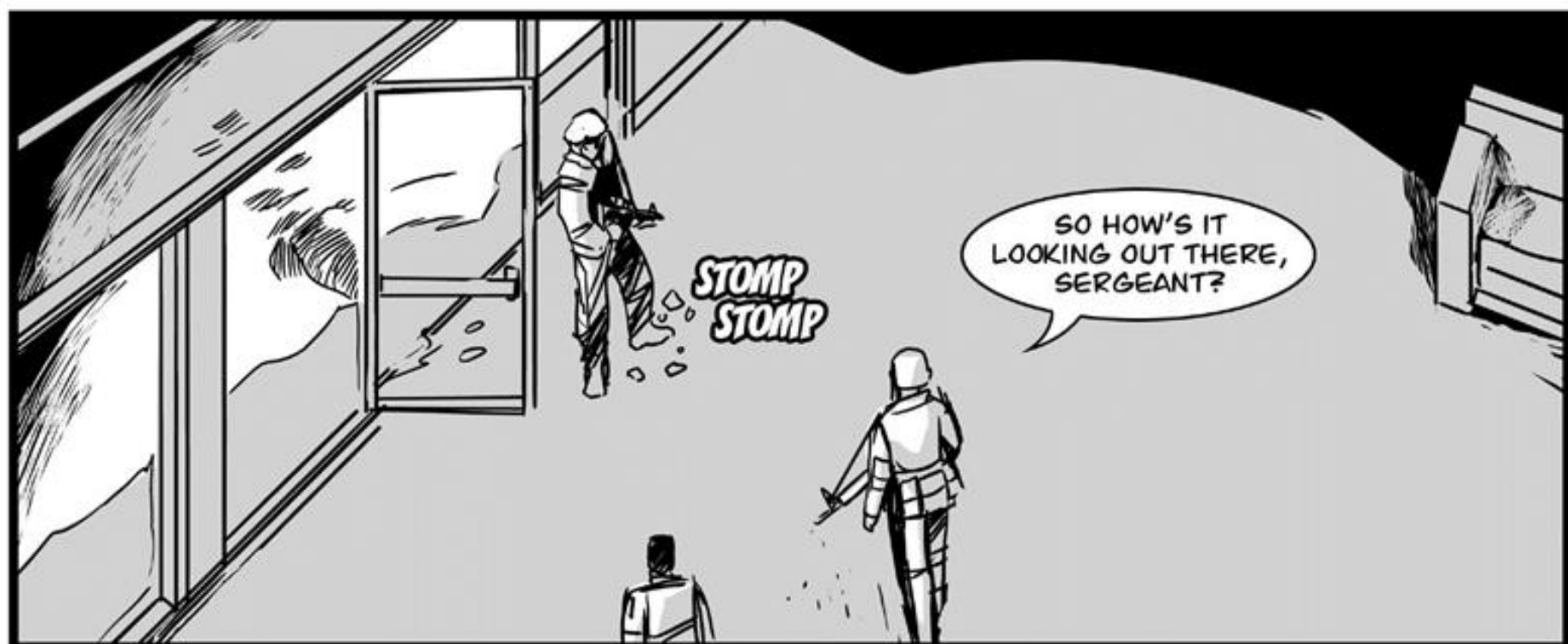
I SHOULD
HAVE SPENT MORE
TIME WITH YOU RATHER
THAN WITH MY COUNTRY.
I WAS ALWAYS SO WORRIED
ABOUT MY ORDERS. ABOUT
DUTY AND OBLIGATION. BUT
WHAT ABOUT MY DUTIES TO
YOU? TO YOUR MOTHER? I
FUCKED THINGS UP WITH
HER. I SHOULD HAVE
DONE BETTER BY
YOU.


I JUST
HOPE YOU KNOW
HOW MUCH I LOVED
YOU. HOW PROUD I
WAS OF YOU.













"GIVEN OUR VEHICLES' CAPABILITIES, I DON'T THINK THE ROADS SHOULD BE A PROBLEM. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GO SLOW."



"YOU GUYS FIND SOME SHOVELS AND START DIGGING US OUT. I WANT US BACK ON THE ROAD ASAP. WE'VE GOT A MISSION TO CONTINUE, AND DOC FEDERMAN'S GOT SOME SHIT HE NEEDS TO DO..."



TO BE CONTINUED...