



Joshua Hale Fialkov • Rahsan Ekedal

ECHOES™



2
of 5

Digital
Edition

www.topcow.com



Previously in...

ECHOES™

Brian Cohn had come to say goodbye to his father who'd given him so much.

The same face, the same temper, the same mental illness.

Now his father is riddled with Alzheimer's, comatose, and on the verge of death, and Brian has decided it's time to make peace.



But his father has other plans...

IN THE CRAWLSPACE... UNDER THE HOUSE ON HAYMAKER, YOU HAVE TO FIND THE BOX.

THIRTEEN THIRTY NINE HAYMAKER.

He then lay back and died.



Badly in need of another dose of his meds, filled with anxiety and dread from the death of his father, Brian goes to the house...

Hallucinating and shaky, he makes his way downstairs where he discovers a box filled with his father's sins.



Hundreds of dolls made from the flesh and bone and clothing of his father's victims.



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a Top Cow Productions company

Echoes created by:

Joshua Hale Fialkov

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for this edition cover by:

Rahsan Ekedal & Jessica Kholinne of IFS

Echoes issue #2, January 2011. **FIRST PRINTING.**

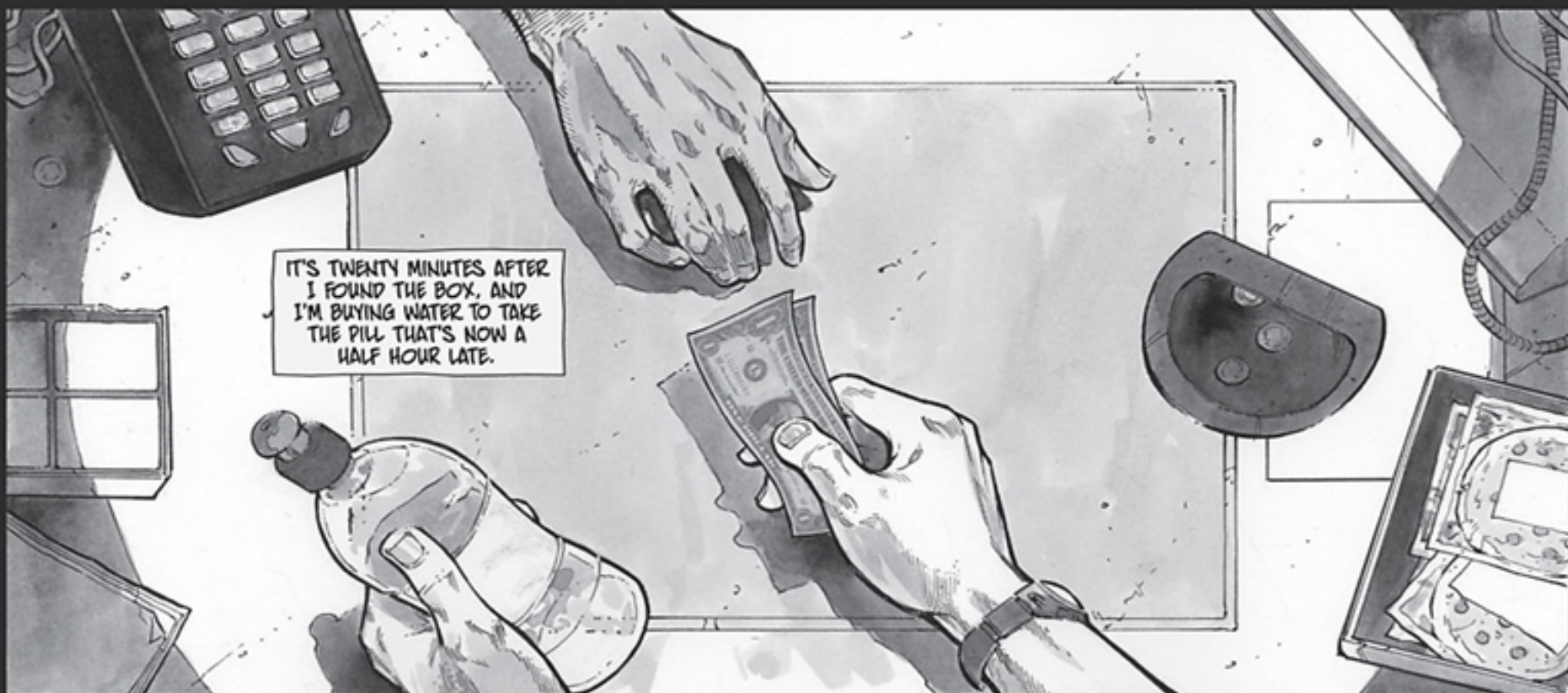
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IT'S THREE DAYS LATER,
AND MY FATHER IS BEING
PUT TO REST.



IT'S TWENTY MINUTES AFTER
I FOUND THE BOX, AND
I'M BUYING WATER TO TAKE
THE PILL THAT'S NOW A
HALF HOUR LATE.



IT'S A WEEK SINCE I FOUND
OUT, AND EVERY DAY AND
EVERY NIGHT SINCE THAT I'VE
SPENT LOCKED IN MY
BASEMENT STARING AT MY
FATHER'S WORK.





WHY DID YOU
KEEP THE BOX?



IT'S
EVIDENCE.



I'M VERY
DISAPPOINTED
IN YOU, BRIAN.



THEY KNOW
YOU TOOK
IT.

DID YOU
WIPE OFF
ANYTHING
YOU
TOUCHED?

NOP
YOUR
FINGERPRINTS
ARE ALL
OVER THAT
PLACE.



EVERY
DOOR KNOB,
EVERY SINK,
EVERYWHERE.



JESUS CHRIST,
I CAN'T BELIEVE
I HAVE SUCH A
FUCKING MORON
FOR A SON.



PLEASE,
DAD...
JUST GIVE
ME A
SECOND...



WHY
DON'T YOU
JUST TURN
ME IN?

I'M DEAD,
FOR FUCK SAKE.
WHO DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
PROTECTING?



WHAT
ABOUT THE
GIRLS?
WHAT
ABOUT
THEIR
FAMILIES?



YOU'RE
NOT REAL.
YOU'RE JUST MY
GUILT AND MY
CONSCIENCE AND MY
ANXIETY AND THE
CHEMICALS IN
MY HEAD—



MAYBE
THAT'S THE
PROBLEM.
YOU ARE
THINKING
ABOUT
THE GIRLS.

THINKING
ABOUT
THEIR
HANDS
AND
FINGERS
AND THEIR—



SHUT UP.
PLEASE. JUST
SHUT UP.
PLEASE, DAD,
JUST FOR A
SECOND...

YOU'RE A
FUCKING PSYCHO. YOU'RE
JUST LIKE ME, AREN'T YOU?
YOU WANT TO CUT UP
LITTLE GIRLS. THERE'S
NOTHING WRONG
WITH THAT. I WAS MAKING
ART, JUST LIKE YOU
MAKE ART, JUST LIKE
YOU SHOULD
BE MAKING.

I MADE
THESE LITTLE
GIRLS LIVE
FOREVER. ISN'T
THAT MAGICAL?
WHAT I DID
WAS SPECIAL.

WHAT HAVE YOU EVER DONE
THAT'LL LIVE ON AFTER YOU'RE
GONE?

MAYBE YOU SHOULD
GIVE IT A TRY.

COME ON,
KIDDO.

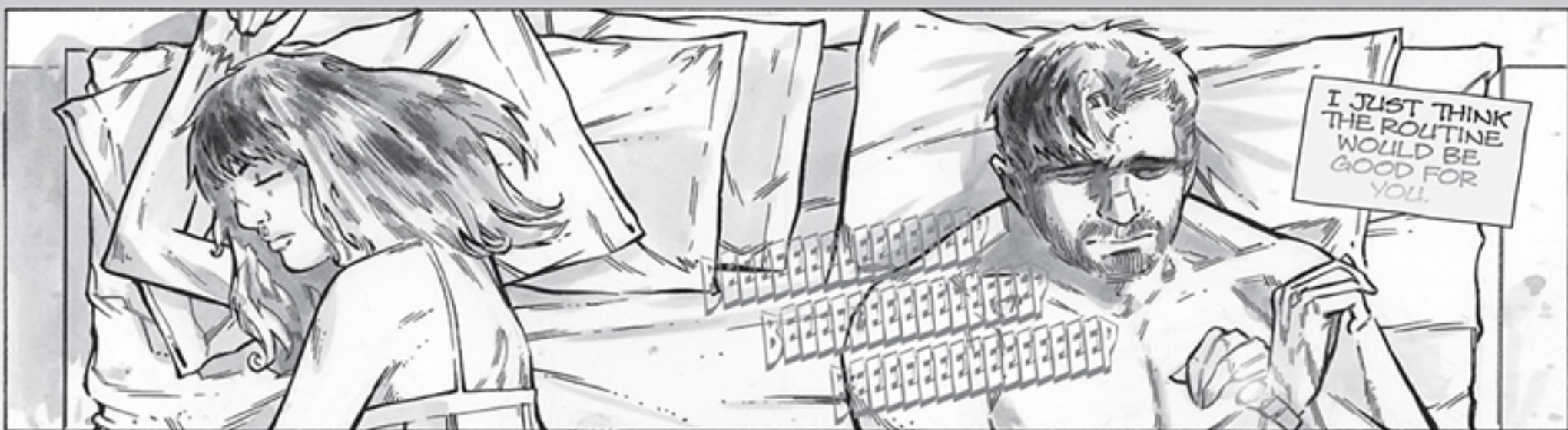
SOMETHING
WE CAN DO
TOGETHER.

JUST LIKE
PLAYING CATCH...
YOU ALWAYS
WANTED TO
PLAY CATCH,
REMEMBER?

ALWAYS
SAYING
I DIDN'T
SPEND
ENOUGH
TIME
WITH
YOU...

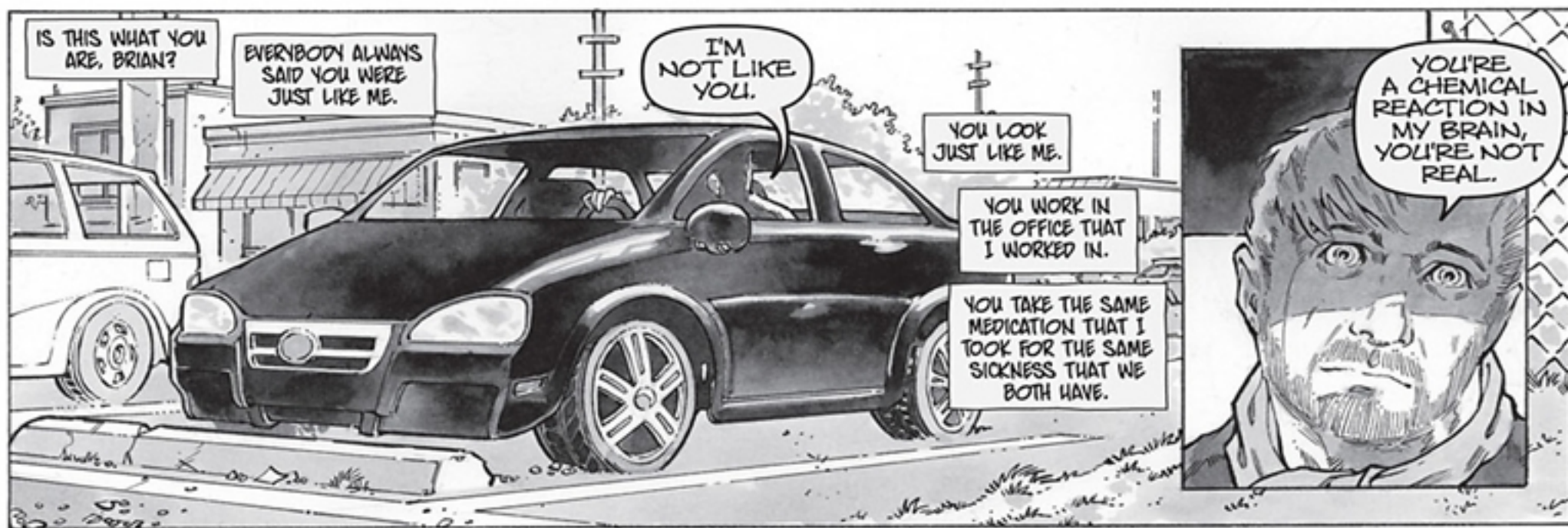


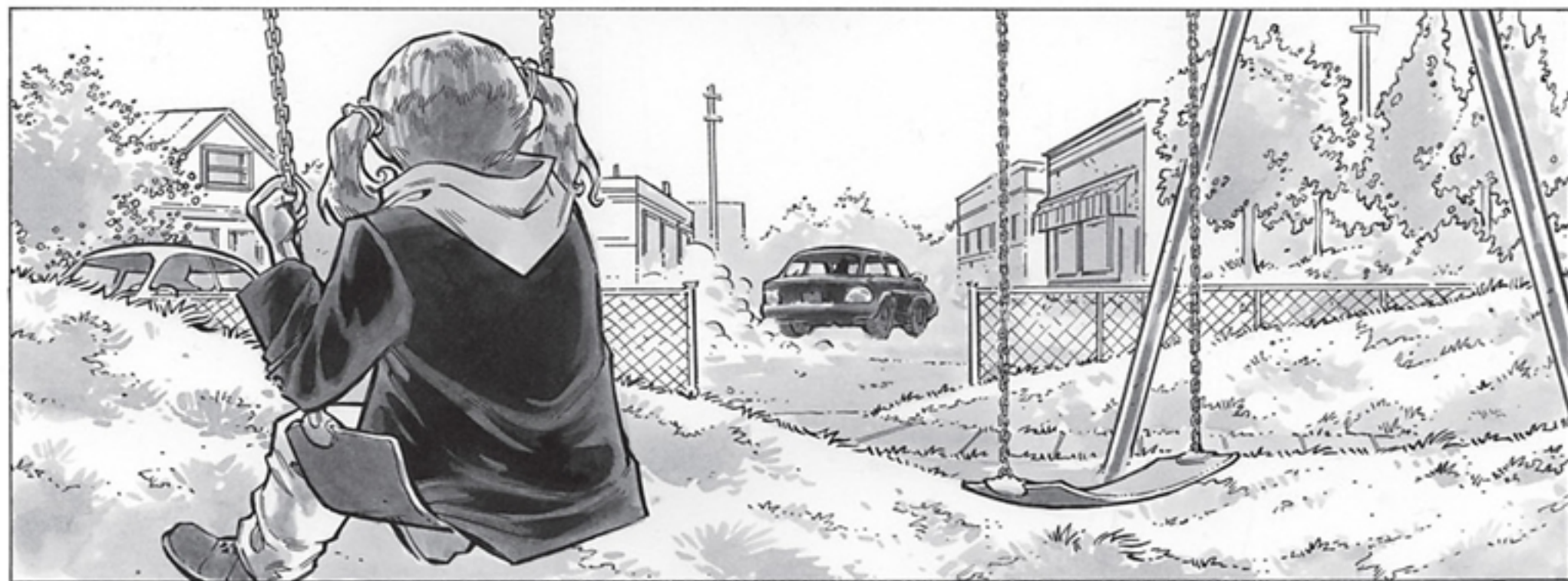
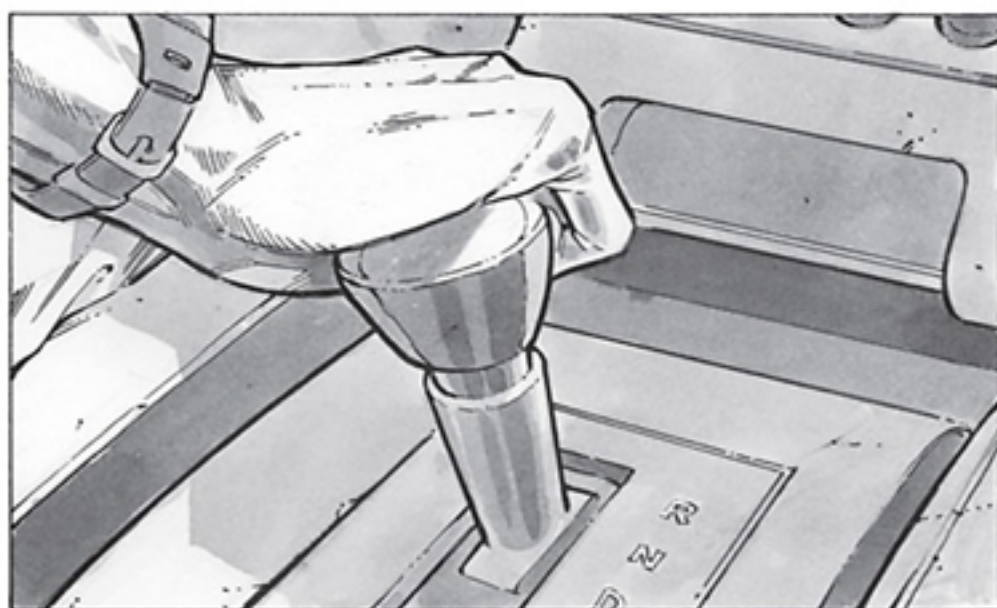


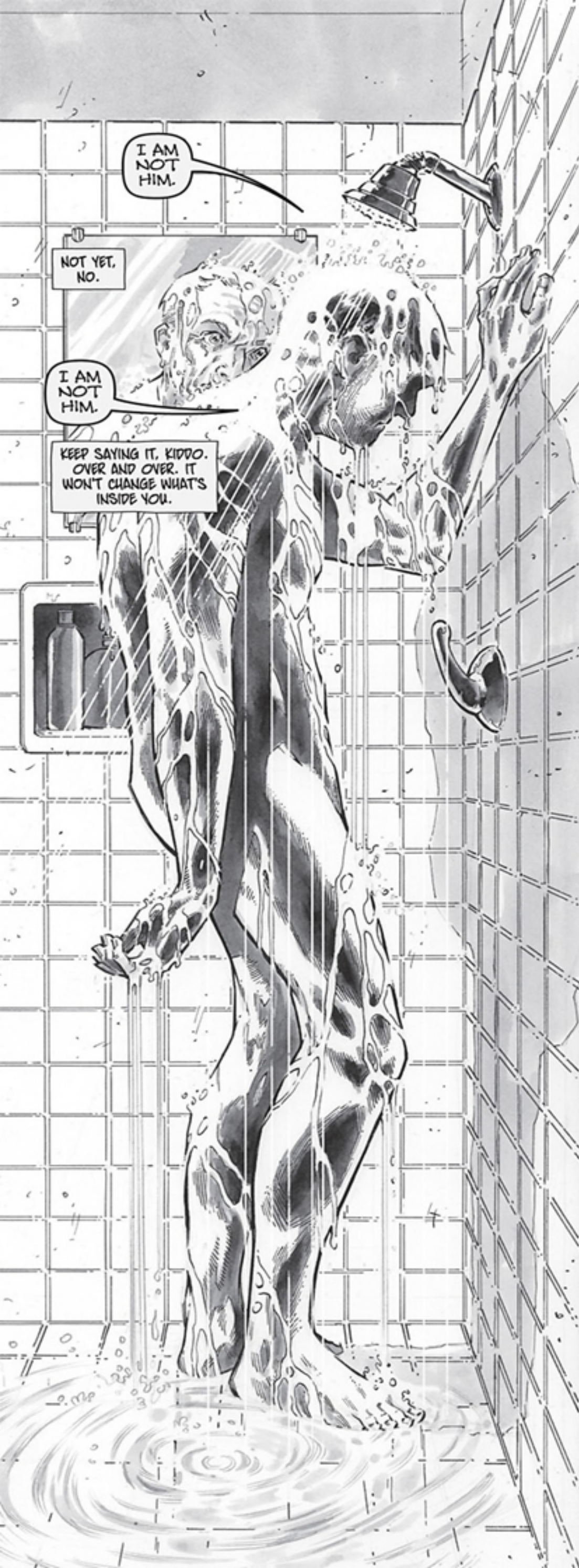










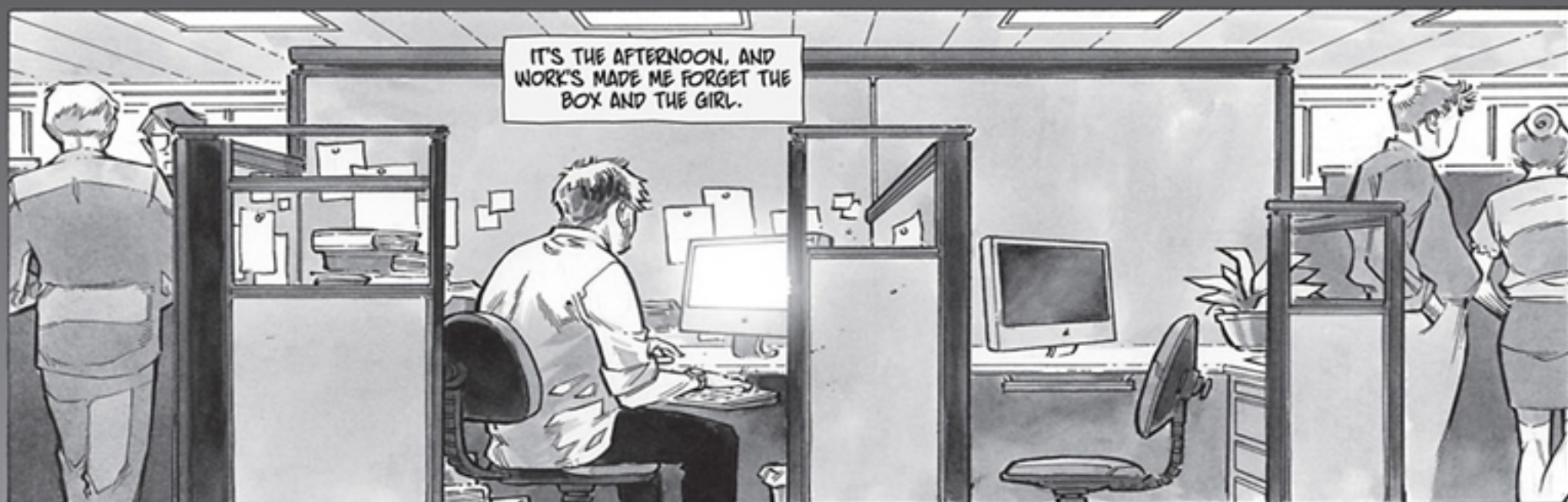




IT'S THE NEXT
MORNING, AND I'M
GETTING DRESSED.



IT'S THE AFTERNOON, AND
WORK'S MADE ME FORGET THE
BOY AND THE GIRL.

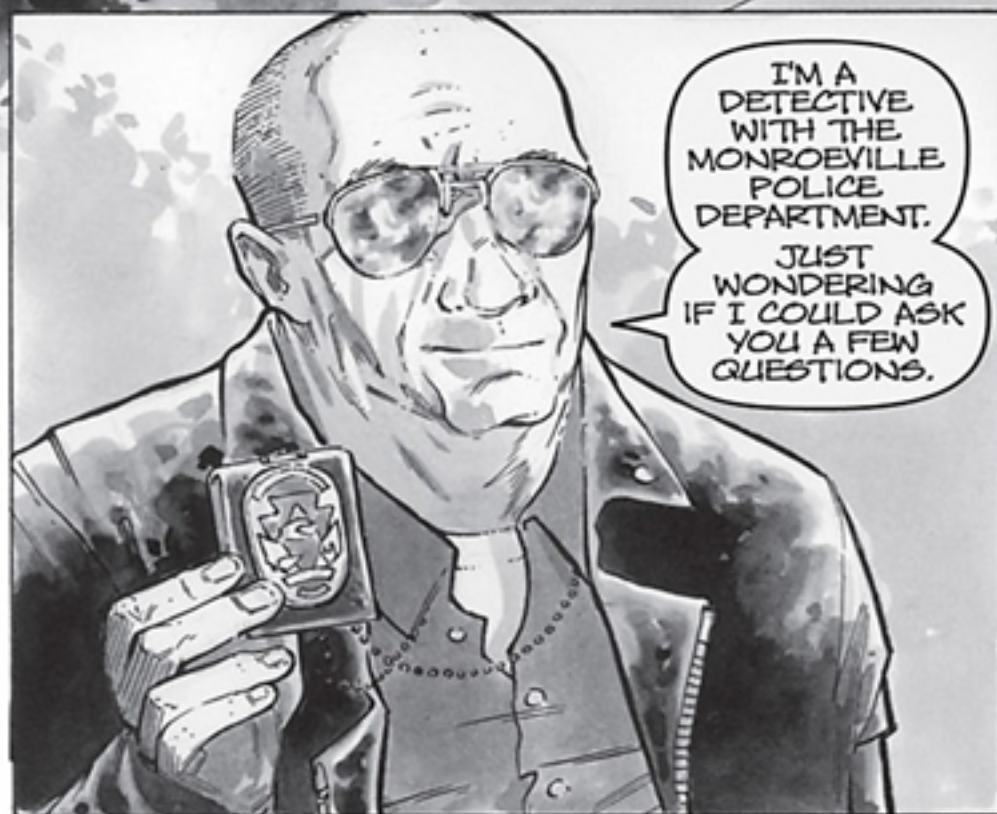


LIFE GOES BACK
TO NORMAL.

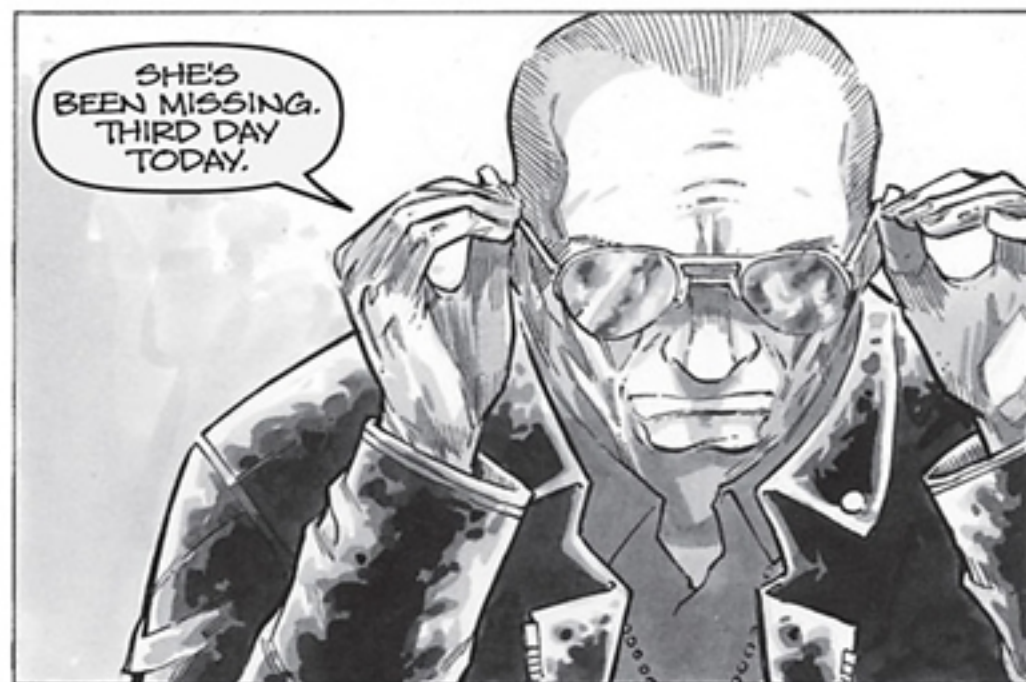


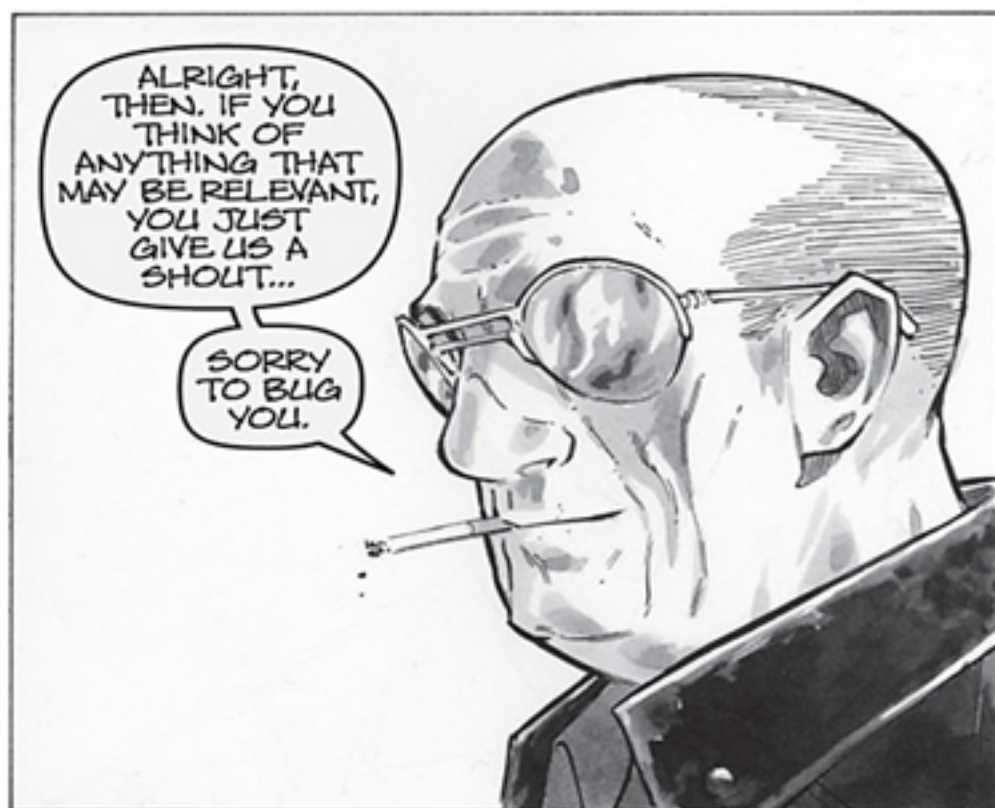
IT'S THE NEXT THREE DAYS
IN RAPID SUCCESSION,
EVERYTHING MOVING JUST
AS IT SHOULD.







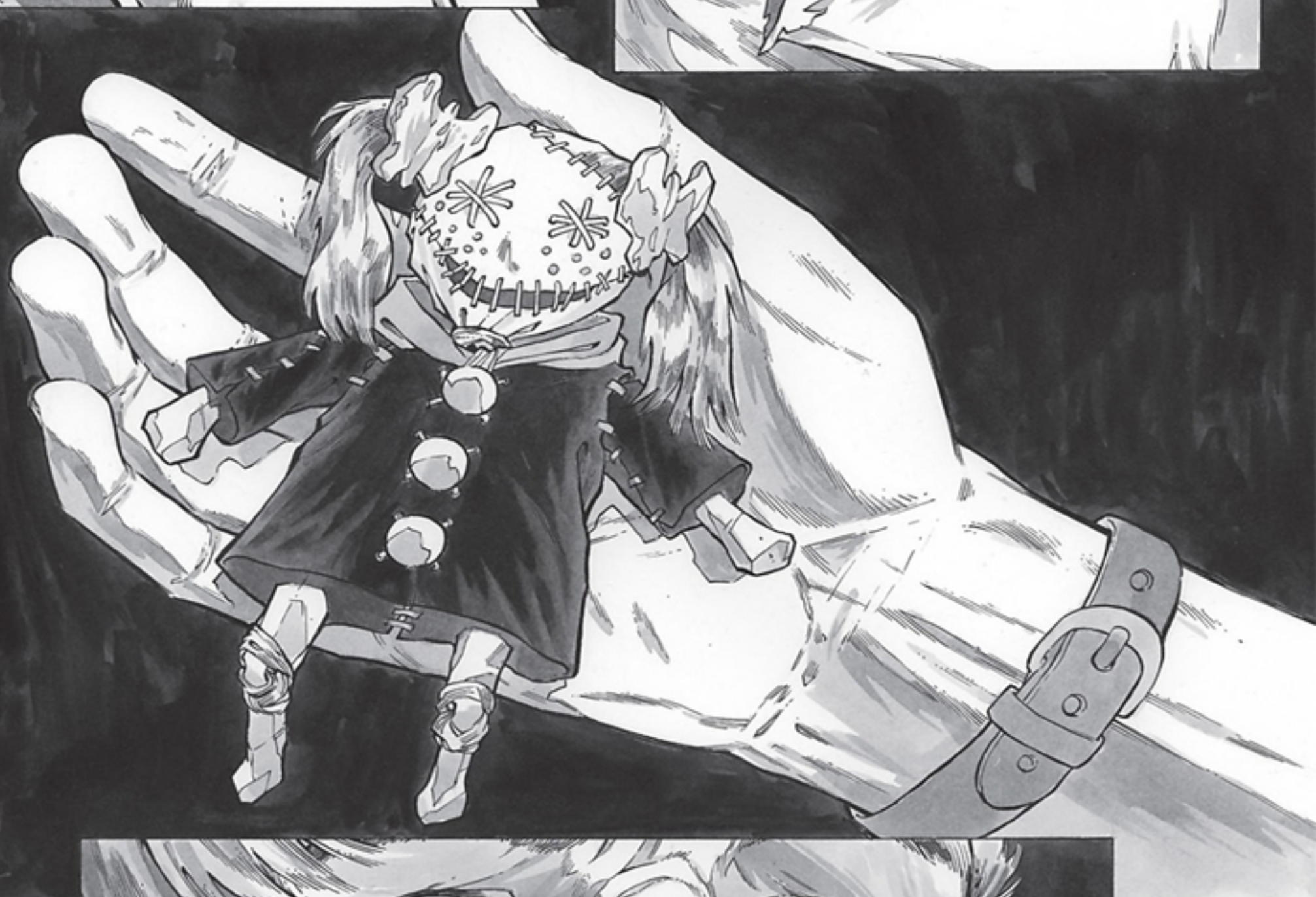












END ECHOES CHAPTER TWO.

WRITTEN AND CREATED BY: JOSHUA HALE FIALKOV

ART BY: RAHSAN EKEDAL

LETTERED BY: TROY PETERI

EDITORS: FILIP SABLIK & PHIL SMITH

Next issue

ECHOES™

#3



"BACK TO HAUNT YOU"

ECHOES™

"HOLY TRINITY"

To my mind, good fiction comes from three things, compelling characters, logical decisions, and a complete world. These three things allow you to tell a believable story that's set on the outreaches of space or in the apartment next door and make your reader actually interested in just what that pharmacist with a heart of gold or alien blasting space ranger do. Each piece of that tripod must service the other two, and make them stronger, otherwise the whole damn thing falls to the ground like the stool I tried to make in woodshop in the 8th grade.

Echoes cheats a bit. By having a main character with a mental illness who makes irrational decisions, we get away with quite a lot on the second and third legs. For instance, if you or I were faced with the truth that Brian must face, that his father was a monster and that he may be a monster-in-training, we'd talk to our spouses or our doctors or the authorities. But, Brian suffers from Schizophrenia. And even though he's been treated and medicated for a good long while, the stress of the situation is causing his brain to misfire and to tell him that the world is out to get him, that he's nothing but an evil little toad that any decent person in the world would want to see stamped out, and consequently he has no choice but to keep it all inside and slowly go insane.

I spent a long time reading and researching just what schizophrenia feels and acts like. I did this through a couple of ways. First off, my father is a forensic psychiatrist. He's got literally decades of experience dealing with some very, very sick individuals, making him a rich resource for the technical details including the meds, the side effects, and the general believability of the story. From him, I was steered towards a few books, and more importantly, a slew of journal articles dating back twenty or thirty years to when schizophrenia was still being explored in more... unique ways. One of these ways was long form journal type articles by people suffering from the illness in various states of wellness.

Through these long missives, you get a snapshot of what it's like to be both lucid and deluded simultaneously. To know full well that the guy on the bus is not getting ready to stab you in the face, but at the same time be so inexplicably terrified that maybe, just maybe he was ready to stab away that you had no choice but to stay home. In the basement. With the doors locked and a baseball bat at the ready. To know that path A leads to loss and misery, and path B led to happiness, and yet, choose path A because path B is probably a lie set up to trap and destroy you.

Probably the most resonant thing I found reading these articles was how much of it sounds just like things every person on earth must feel. For example, when you move to a new school as a kid, and feel as though every eye is on you, every private snicker is directed at you, and that the entirety of the school was silently judging you. And while most of us feel that way (to some degree) schizophrenia makes it so that the alternative (maybe they're just shy, maybe something funny happened not involving you, etc) doesn't exist.

That, to me, is a helluva state to put the main character in a thriller through. He's already on edge, he already has the weight of the world on his shoulders, oh, and, he sees things that aren't there, and believes there's a conspiracy building against him.

So, I go back to where I started. What we attempted to build in Echoes is a story that satisfies those three conditions. Brian is certainly a compelling character (with a compelling challenge.) As far as his decisions and his world, due to the most dominant part of his character right now, his world doesn't stretch much farther than the few feet around him, and his decisions are so frantic and tainted by misfiring neurons and out of whack chemicals, that to him every decision isn't necessarily the right one, but, it's the only one possible.

Joshua Hale Fialkov
North Hollywood, CA

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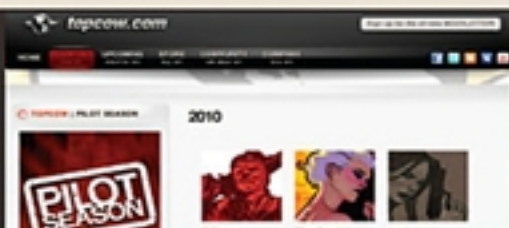


A Comic Shop

Located in Florida's studious Winter Park, A Comic Shop's owners Aaron Haaland and Jason Blanchard bring a creativity and energy to their store that makes us here at The Cow feel right at home. Not only can you browse their packed shelves, rent your favorite graphic novels, watch their weekly videos, but, if you know the password, find yourself in the GeekEasy. Just don't tell them we told you about that last one. For more information, please visit: www.acomicshop.com.

THIS MONTH ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

We create, you decide. Five entries will enter **Pilot Season 2010**, but only one will win. And who decides who wins? You, the reader, do! Now that's power. The five-week event will wrap by the end of October, with voting polls opening up for the entire month of November. So jump on the nearest computer, log on to www.topcow.com and vote for who you think deserves a series of their own: a group of bank robbers, a femme fatale of the digital age, a former assassin for the CIA, a doctor working at a pharmaceutical company, or an ex-pat who has a deal with a demon. And if you're in the area, join us at the Pilot Season 2010 kick off at **Long Beach Comic Con**, October 29-31.



THIS MONTH'S TOP COW



REST TRADE PAPERBACK

(W) Mark Powers (A) Shawn McManus, Marco Castiello (Cov) Phil Jimenez

The Rest Story Completed!

The long awaited collection produced by Heroes star Milo Ventimiglia and DiVide Pictures with story by Mike O'Sullivan arrives! John Barrett is a man going nowhere. In his late 20's, he's stuck in a dead-end job with no friends and no future. When his best friend from college mysteriously resurfaces with news of a new wonder drug that replaces sleep, John falls into a conspiracy that threatens to change the course of human history! Written by **Mark Powers** (*GI Joe*), art by **Shawn McManus** (*Sandman*) and **Marco Castiello** (*Witchblade*) and covers by the industry's hottest talents including **Tim Sale** (*Heroes*), **Phil Jimenez** (*Amazing Spider-Man*) and others.

This volume collects *Rest* #1-5 along with a cover gallery, behind-the-scenes commentary and sketches, and much more!

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
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11.10
IN STORES

BROKEN TRINITY: PANDORA'S BOX #4 • DARKNESS #87
WITCHBLADE: REDEMPTION TRADE PAPERBACK • DARKNESS/PITT TRADE PAPERBACK
ANGELUS #6 • WITCHBLADE #139 • VELOCITY #3 • ARTIFACTS #3

FROM THE MOOS DESK



Whilce Portacio Joins the Artifacts Race

Whilce Portacio (*Uncanny X-Men*, *The Punisher*) is joining **Ron Marz** for the second chapter of *Artifacts*, beginning with issue #5.

"This arc was specially set up for me," Portacio told USA Today. "I like doing tech stuff, but I also like doing dark and moody. In this case, that moodiness revolves around supernatural stuff and that's right up my alley. This was a chance for me to artistically examine technology versus spirituality."

Artifacts will segue into the next four-issue arc with Portacio joining Marz on the project. The first chapter of *Artifacts* will conclude with a shocking cliffhanger and the second chapter shows no sign of letting up. With all of the players on the board, the antagonist manipulating the Bearers of the Artifacts moves to complete his plan for utter annihilation of the world. But how do the members of Cyberforce fit into the machinations of the supernatural?

everything you need to join the herd and more

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NOISE from the HERD a word with Joshua Hale Fialkov Writer *Alibi*, *Echoes*

Embrace the new. That's what I'm asking you to do. You're already stepping outside of the comfort zone of Spiders and Bats and Spitecurls just by showing up to the Top Cow Universe. You've already proven that you value story and quality over crossovers and quantity. And sure, you love the uber-talented duo of Ron Marz on *Witchblade* and Phil Hester on *The Darkness*, along with their armies of the most talented young artists on the planet.

And sure, their comics are the very cutting edge of superhero comics, creating a whole new playbook for the big boys to mull over and copy. But, if you think that stuff is edgy, how about you come see what **Rahsan Ekedal** and I are peddling over here. *Echoes* is not your average Top Cow Book. Hell, I like to think it's not your average comic book. It's a story about a regular guy, just like you or me, who wakes up in the worst possible nightmare you can imagine.

Imagine finding out something about yourself that just couldn't possibly be true... but is. Imagine if you found out you had the blood of a-

I'd better not say, I don't want to spoil it for you.

Let's just say that the only artifacts in *Echoes* are tiny dolls stitched together by our heroes father from the bodies of...

There I go again... telling too much, too soon.

What Top Cow does great, and why I'm proud to call them a creative home, is tell stories about people. They may be people who look good half naked with a mind-controlled metallic weapon clinging to their body, or people able to summon the darkest forces of nature (and human nature) and manipulate them to their whims. But, they're about people. Flawed, tragic people.

Echoes is the same, except this tragic flawed person could be you.



A cow spends 13 hours a day lying down and up to 8 hours a day eating. LA Top Cows spend the last three hours with Halo and Rock Band tournaments.

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