



PRESENTS:

Boxcar Tales





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Boxcar Tales

A showcase of cartoonists and
other like-minded artists in and
around the Triangle.

Boxcar Tales

Published in 2024 by the Triangle Comics Creator Network

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INTRODUCTION

THE TRIANGLE COMICS CREATOR NETWORK, OR TCCN, PROVIDES INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT FOR A COMMUNITY OF COMICS MAKERS AND ARTISTS OF ALL AGES.

IT WAS CREATED BY DURHAM COUNTY LIBRARY IN 2018 AS AN OFFSHOOT OF AMY GODREY'S DURHAM COMICS FEST.

BOXCAR TALES IS THE SECOND ANTHOLOGY CREATED BY TCCN. THIS COLLECTION FEATURES WORKS FROM 8 NORTH CAROLINA ARTISTS WITH A VARIETY OF ART AND STORYTELLING STYLES.

THIS ANTHOLOGY WAS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF THE DURHAM LIBRARY FOUNDATION.

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THE PRODIGAL SON BY GABRIEL PERAGINE

OUTING BY MELINDA BOX

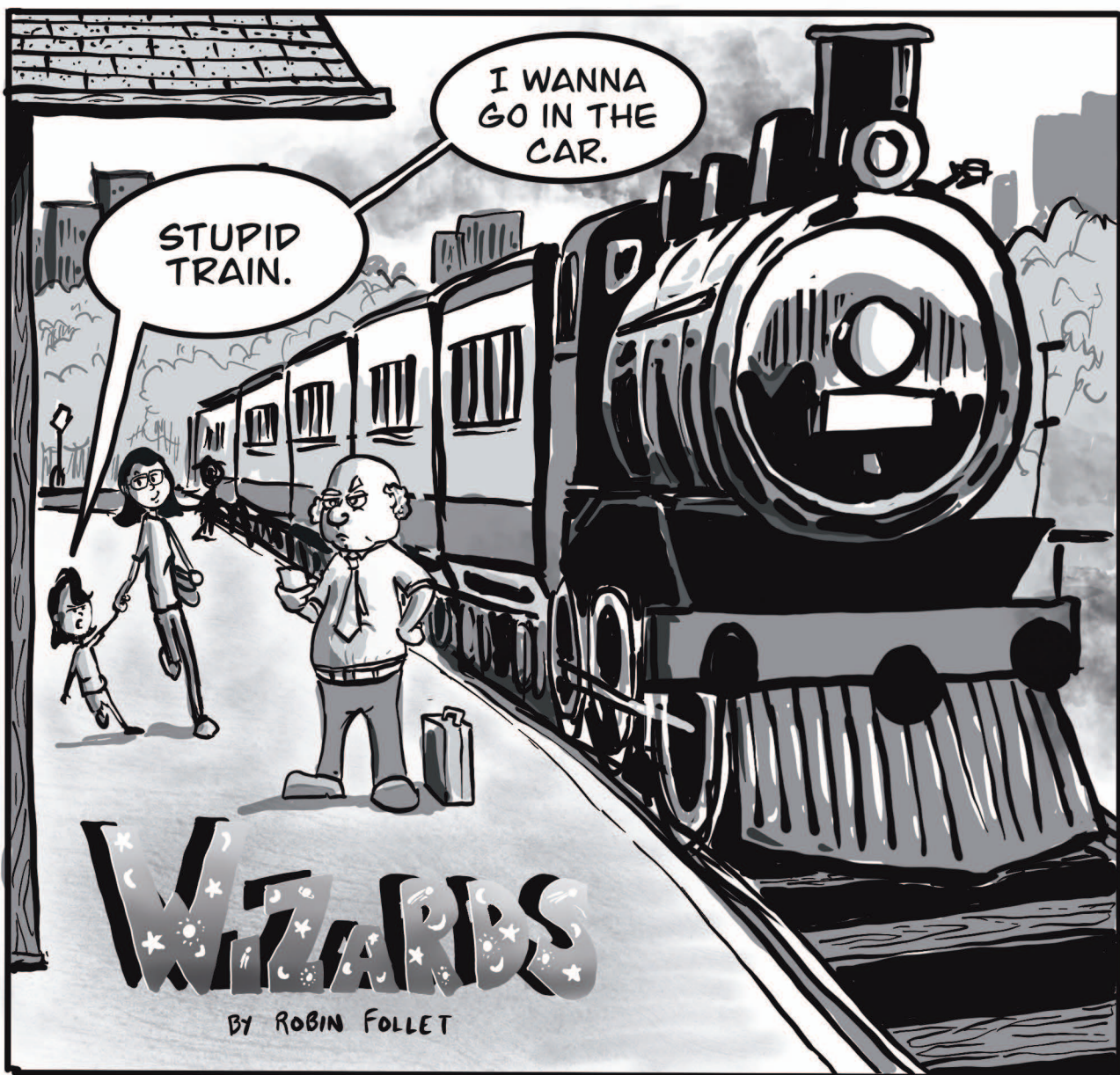
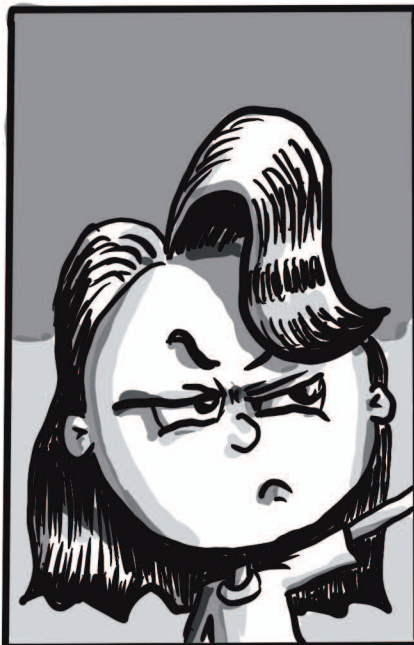
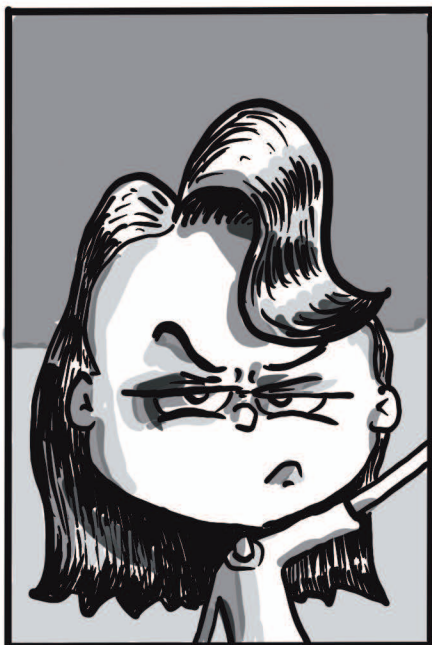
DEAD TIRED BY DEAN GARRIS

DUPLEX BY CHAZ

FIDGET HERO BY MIRELYS COLÓN

TRIAL BY FIRE BY DARREN ROCHE

UNTITLED BY PATRICK HOLT

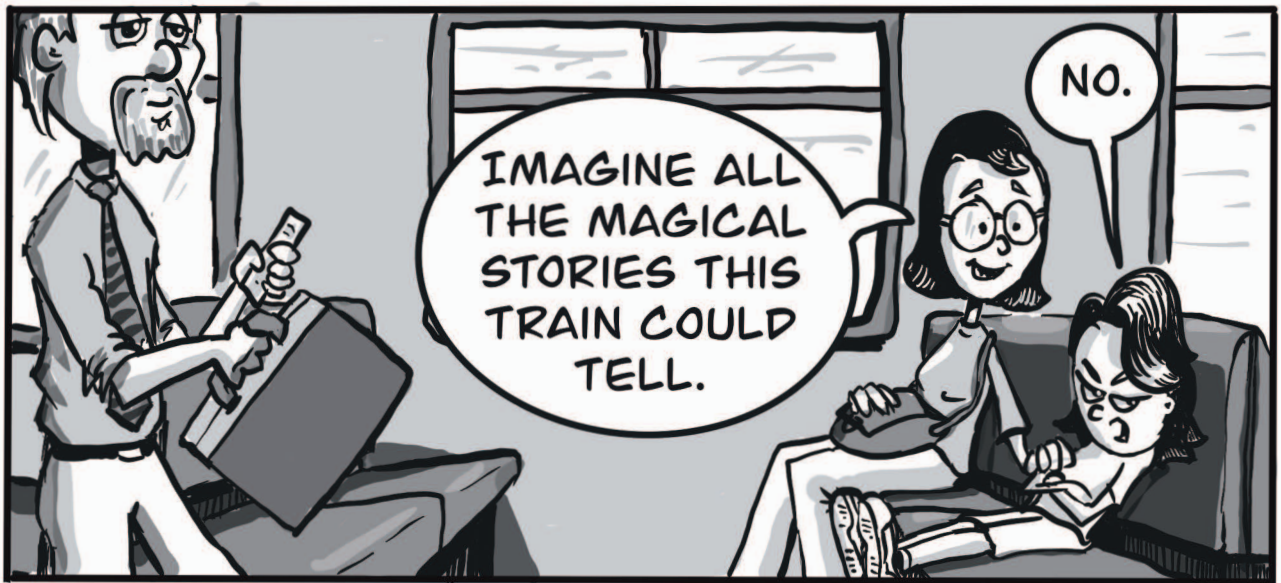


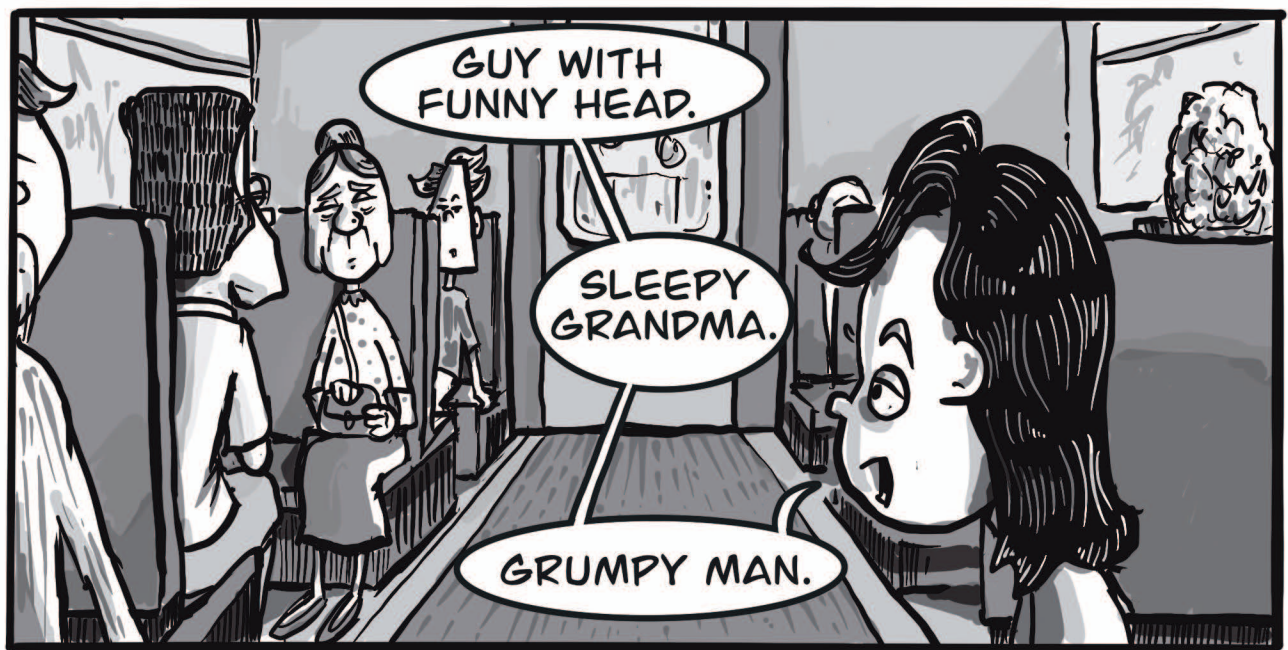
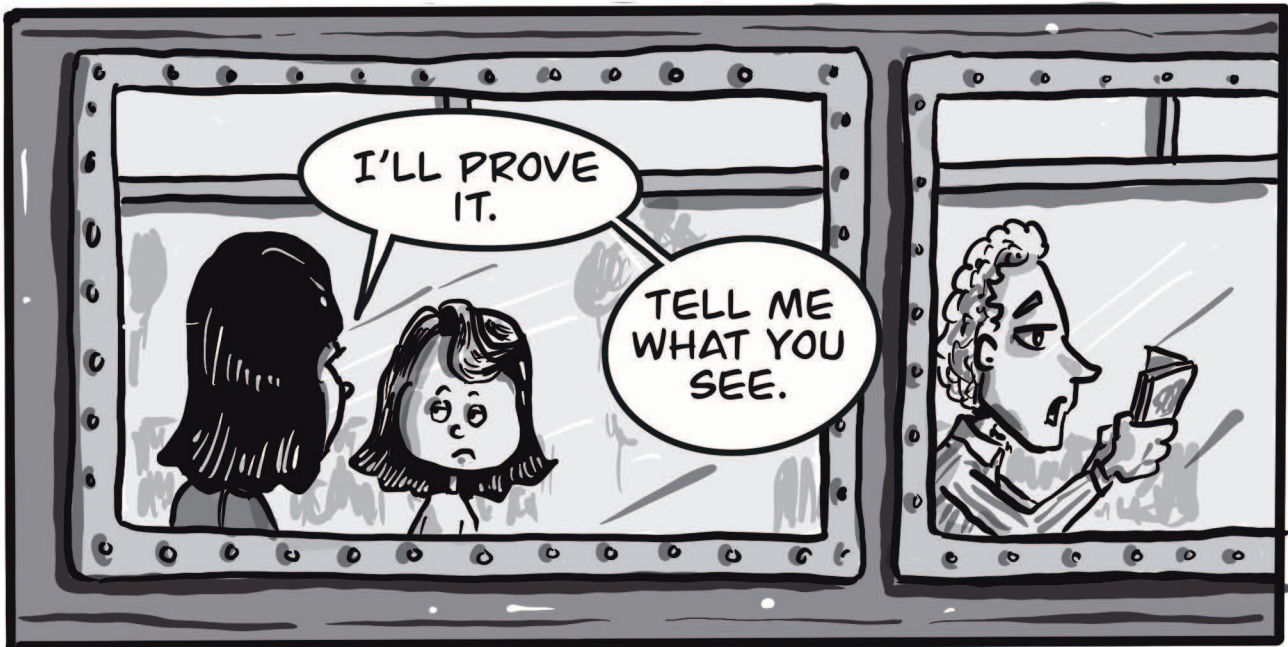
STUPID
TRAIN.

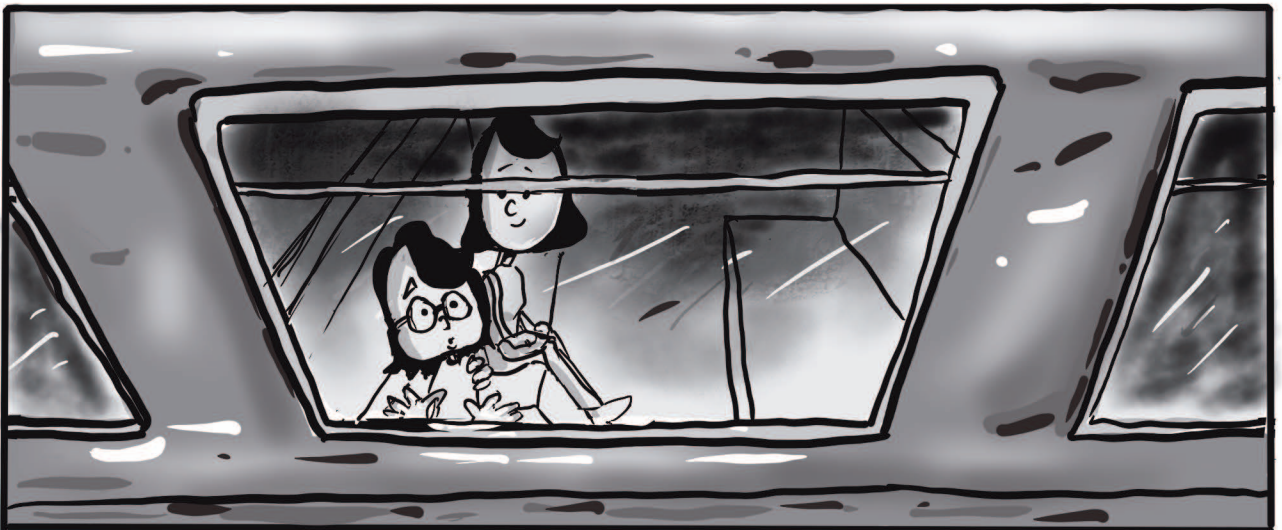
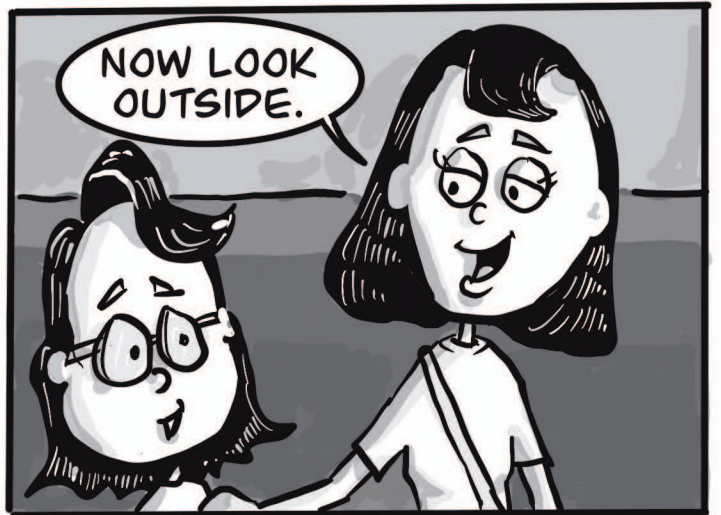
I WANNA
GO IN THE
CAR.

WIZARDS

BY ROBIN FOLLET

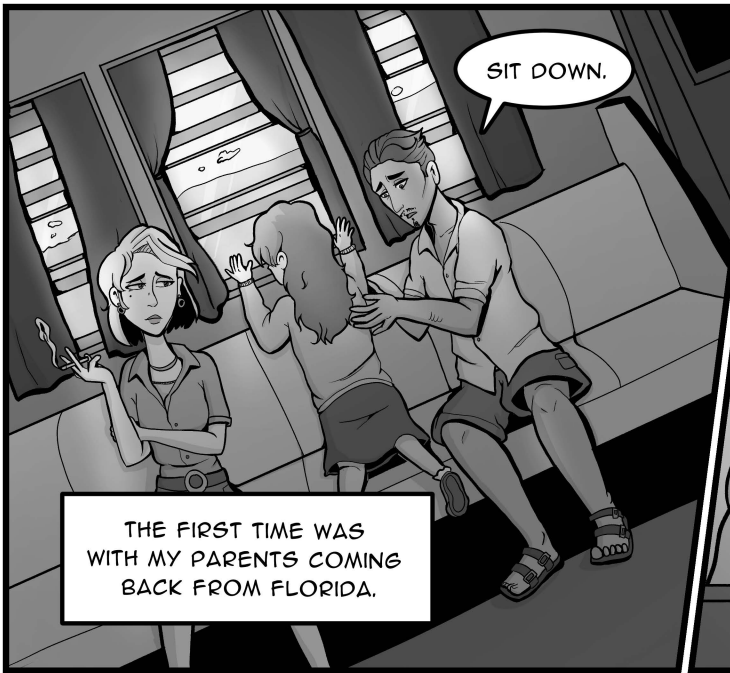










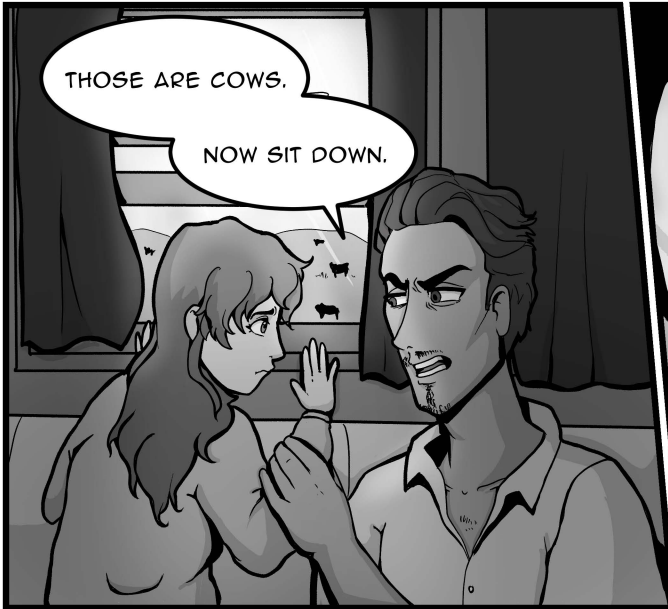


SIT DOWN.

THE FIRST TIME WAS WITH MY PARENTS COMING BACK FROM FLORIDA.



BUT I WANNA SEE THE BROWN BEARS.

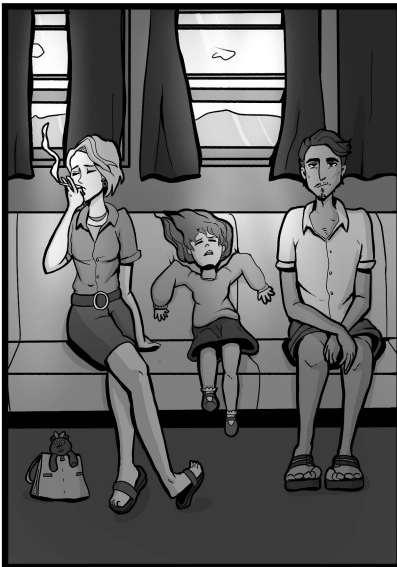


THOSE ARE COWS.

NOW SIT DOWN.



IT ISN'T LADY-LIKE.



BLEH.



WE USED TO RIDE THIS TRAIN TOGETHER.



WE WERE JUST KIDS THEN.
AND WE WERE THE BEST OF FRIENDS



YOU SAW ME WHEN OTHER PEOPLE DIDN'T.



YOU PROTECTED ME FROM A LOT.



THAT'S WHY I WAS ABLE TO SURVIVE THROUGH IT ALL.



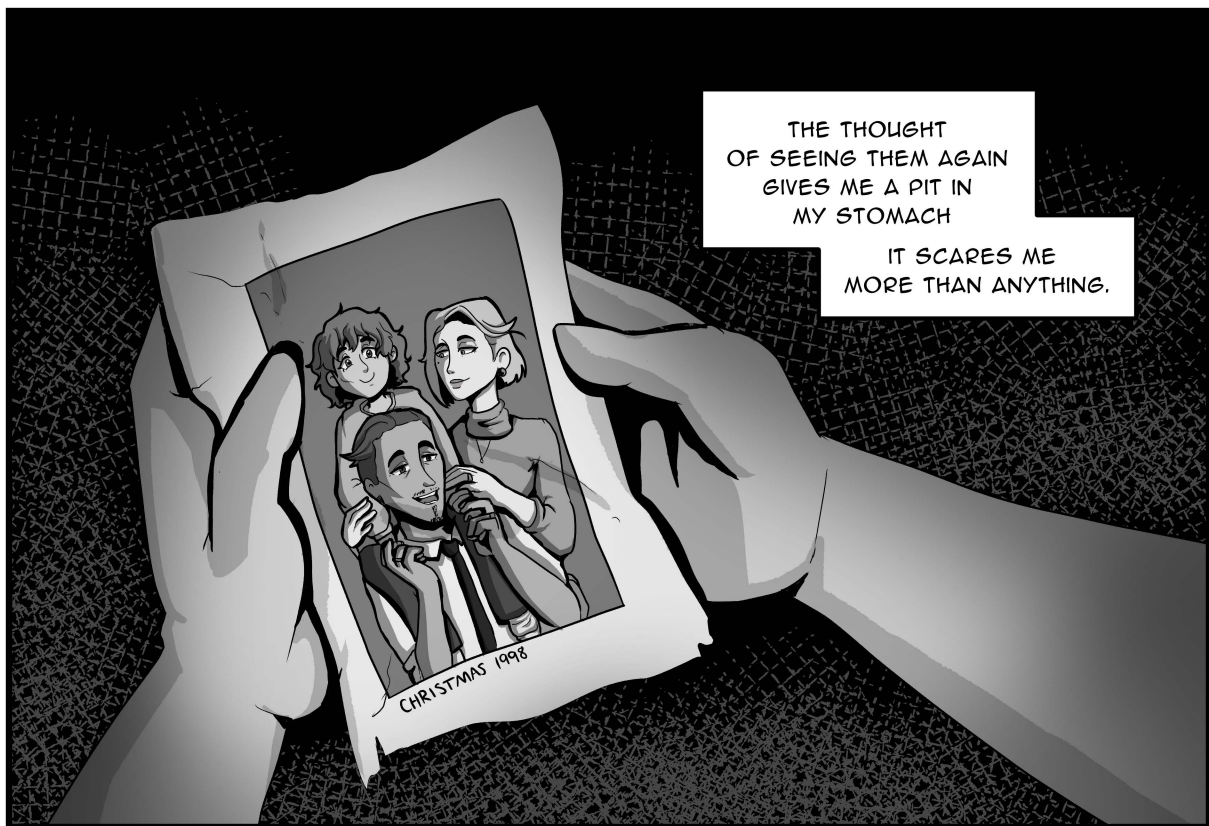
THE WORLD'S
A WASTELAND.

BUT I'M
STILL HERE.



BEING WITH
YOU MAKES
ME STRONG.

BUT EVEN
WITH THAT....



THE THOUGHT
OF SEEING THEM AGAIN
GIVES ME A PIT IN
MY STOMACH

IT SCARES ME
MORE THAN ANYTHING.



THE LAST TIME
I WAS ON THIS
TRAIN IT WAS AFTER
AN ARGUMENT
WITH THEM.



THEY WANTED
SOMEONE ELSE.



SO I LEFT.

AND I WENT TO
A PLACE I COULD
BE MYSELF.



I'M NOT THAT SCARED GIRL ANYMORE.



I CAN DEFEND MYSELF FROM ALL KINDS OF MONSTERS.



I WONDER IF THEY'LL LOOK AT ME THE SAME NOW THAT THERE ARE REAL MONSTERS.



I STILL REMEMBER
THE WAY HE
LOOKED AT ME.



HE LOOKED AT ME
THE SAME WAY
I SEE PEOPLE
LOOK AT ZOMBIES.

WITH HORROR
AND DISGUST.



EVEN NOW I CAN
FEEL THEIR EYES
LOOKING THROUGH ME.





I'M SURE YOU'LL BE JUST FINE.



'SIDES IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD.
THEY'VE GOT BIGGER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT.



BUT WHAT IF THEY DON'T LIKE ME?

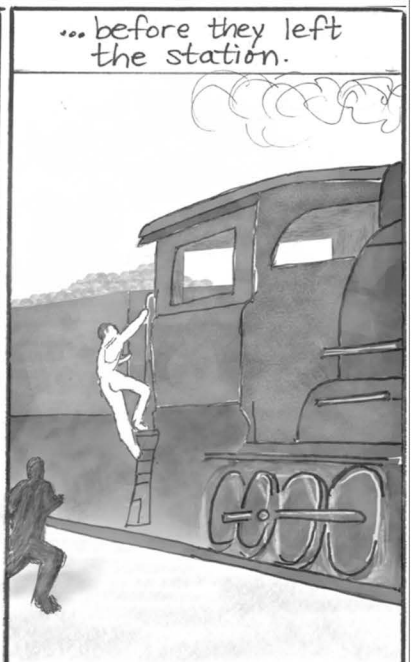
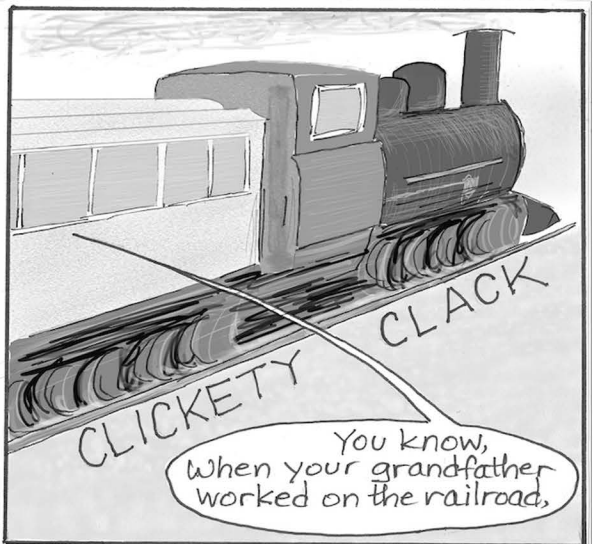
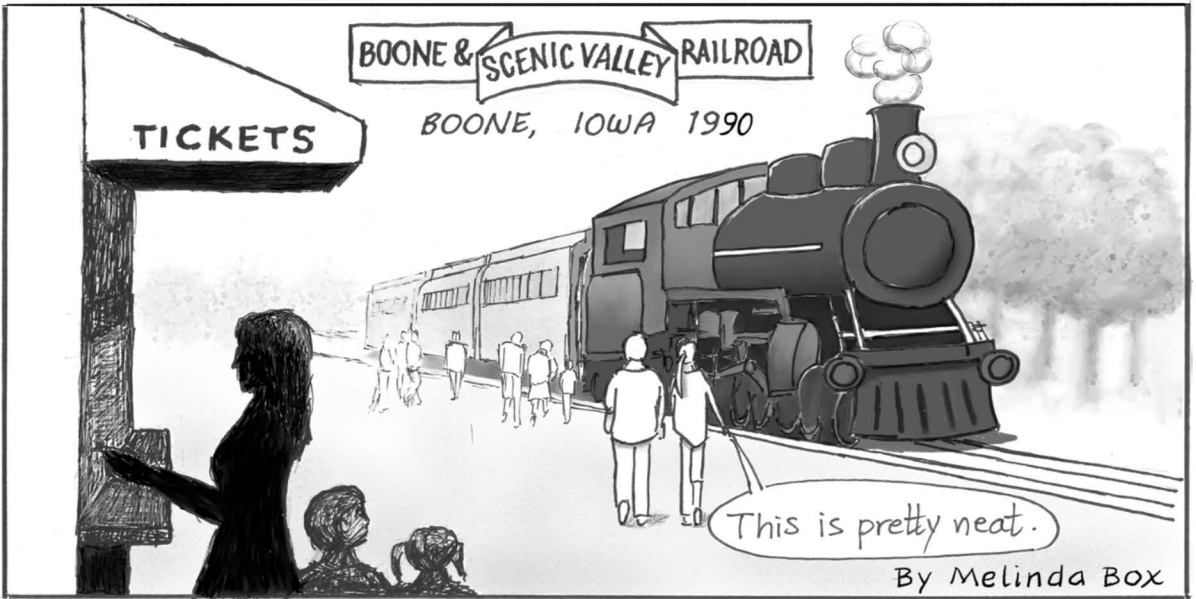
I'VE CHANGED.

A LOT'S CHANGED.

MAYBE THEY HAVE TOO.

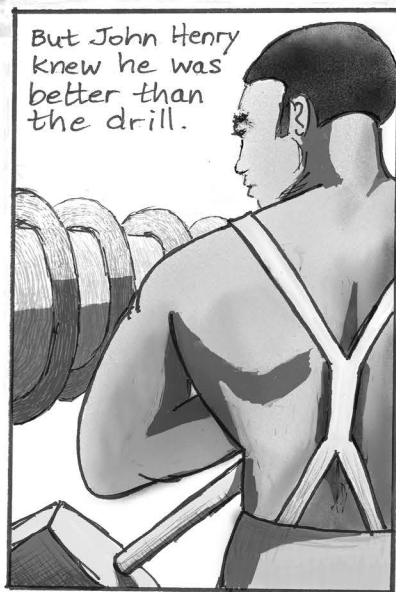


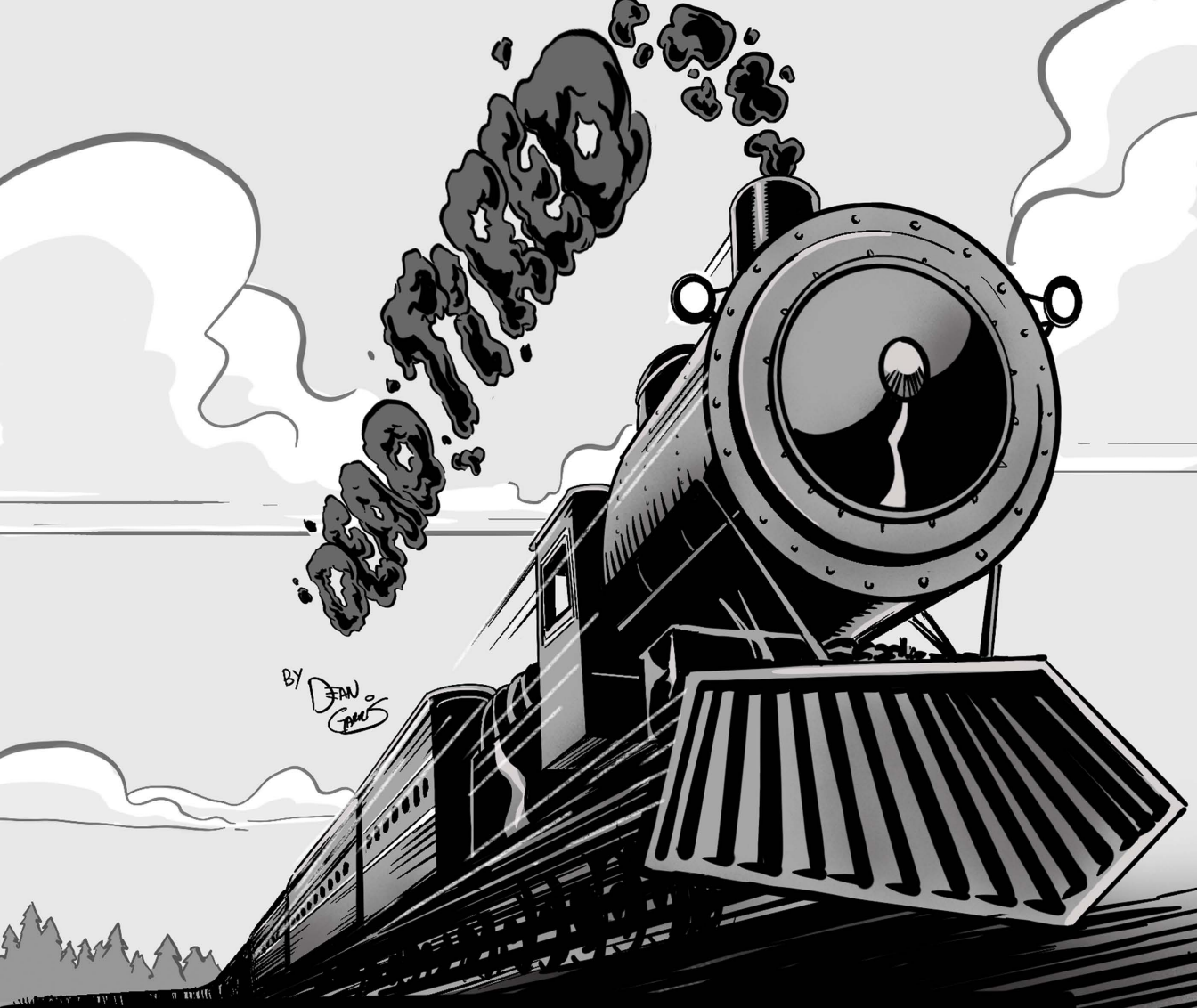
BESIDES, I LIKE YOU.





Well, John Henry was the greatest steel driver that ever lived, and one day a steam drill came to replace the workers on the railroad.





BY DEAN GRUBS



SIR?



EXCUSE ME, SIR?

HUH, WHAT?

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M TRYING TO SLEEP?

I'M DEAD TIRED.



I'M SORRY, BUT WE HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR SEAT.

WHY?



WE'RE ADJUSTING THE SEATING IN THIS SECTION.

A PASSENGER HAS... EXPIRED.



SOMEONE DIED?



SHHHHH.



WE TRY AND HANDLE THESE SITUATIONS AS DISCREETLY AS POSSIBLE.



AHH, I SEE.



WAIT, IS THIS SOME KIND OF TRICK TO GIVE ME A **CRAPPY** SEAT IN THE BACK?

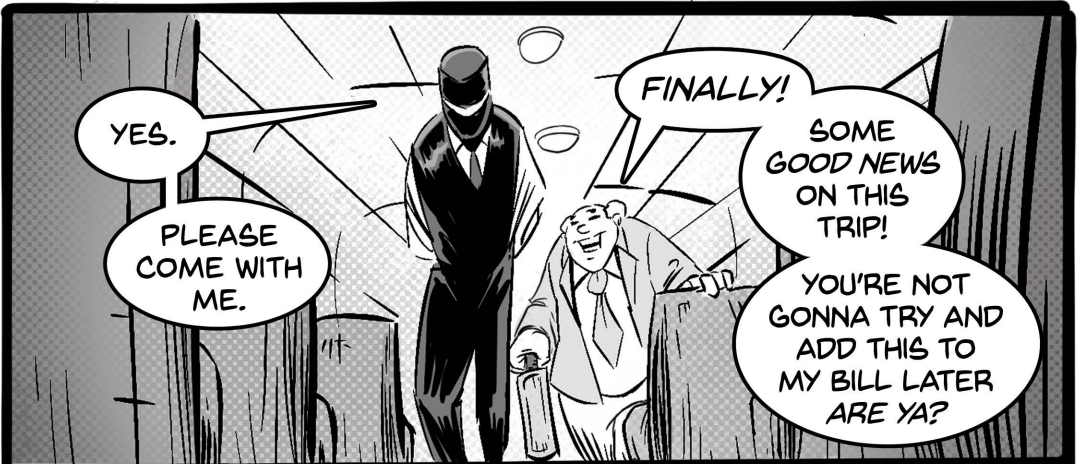


NO SIR.

YOU'RE BEING UPGRADED.



UPGRADED?



YES.

PLEASE
COME WITH
ME.

FINALLY!

SOME
GOOD NEWS
ON THIS
TRIP!

YOU'RE NOT
GONNA TRY AND
ADD THIS TO
MY BILL LATER
ARE YA?



OF COURSE
NOT SIR.



HEEY...
WE **ARE**
HEADED
TO THE
BACK!



THAT'S
WHERE YOUR
SEAT IS
SIR.



I READ IN ONE OF
THOSE CRAPPY DINING
CAR MAGAZINES
THAT THE BACK IS
FOR CARGO... AND
OTHER THINGS.



CORRECT
SIR.

LET ME GUESS...
IT'S WHERE YA KEEP
THE DEAD BODIES?

PRECISELY SIR.

?

**HAAAAHA
HAAAAHA**

I MUST BE
REALLY
TIRED!

YOU
ALMOST
HAD ME!

THAT'S SOME
FANCY SECURITY.
THIS MUST BE AN
EXCLUSIVE CAR.

TAP TAP

VERY
EXCLUSIVE
SIR.

FEW
PASSENGERS
EVER GET
UPGRADED
TO THIS
CAR.

TAPTAP



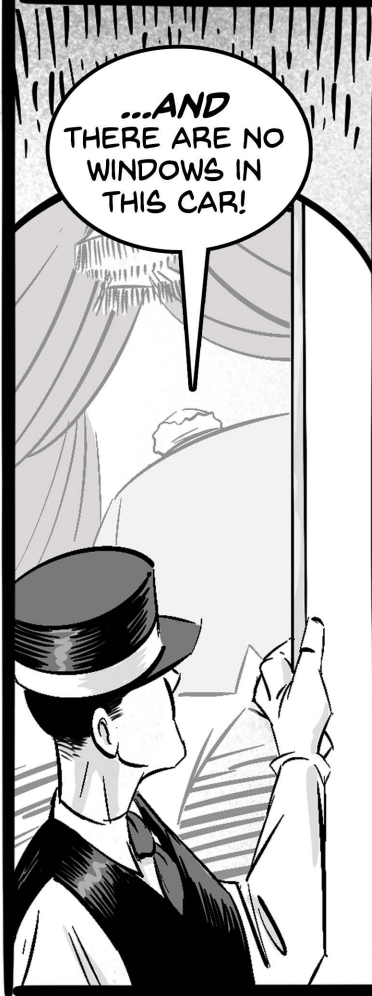


IS THIS
SOME KIND OF
JOKE?!

THE SEATS
ARE MADE OF
WOOD.

HOW AM
I SUPPOSE
TO REST ON
THOSE?

THERE'S DUST
EVERYWHERE...



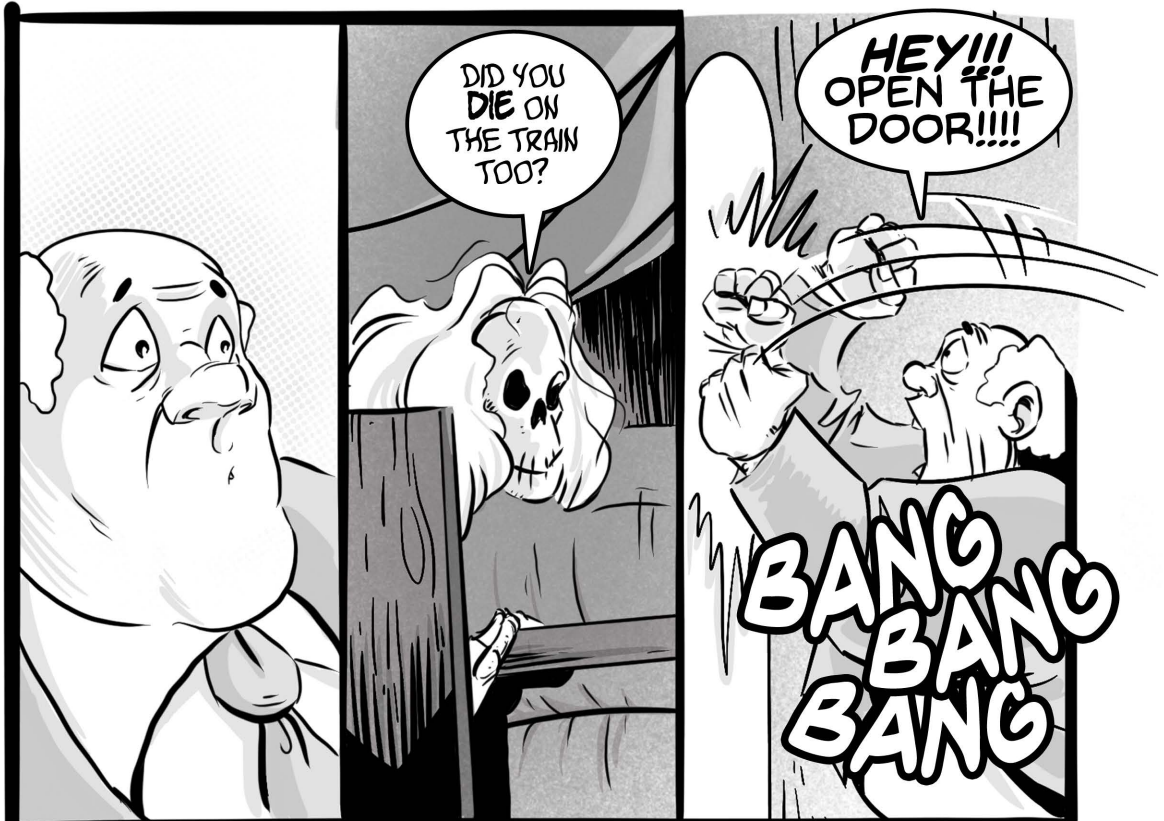
...AND
THERE ARE NO
WINDOWS IN
THIS CAR!



SHUT!!
LOCK!!

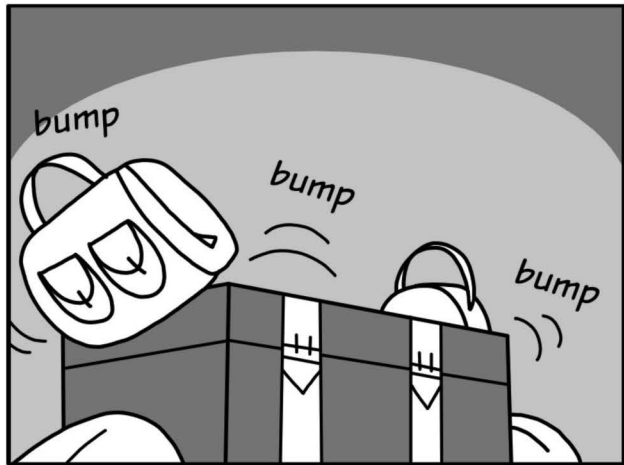
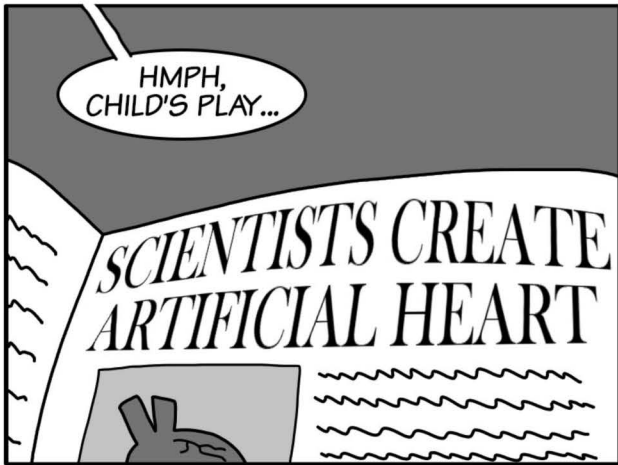
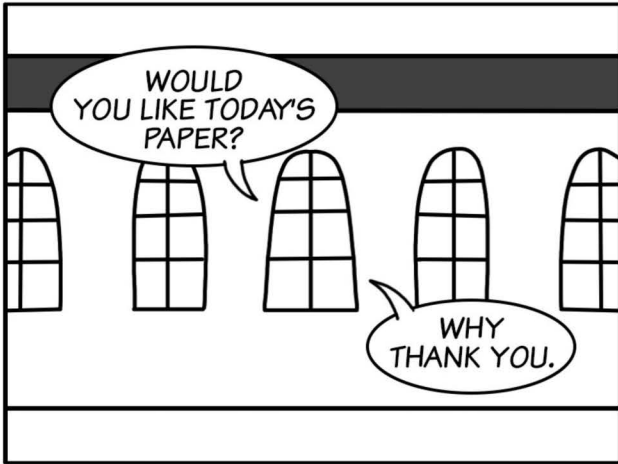
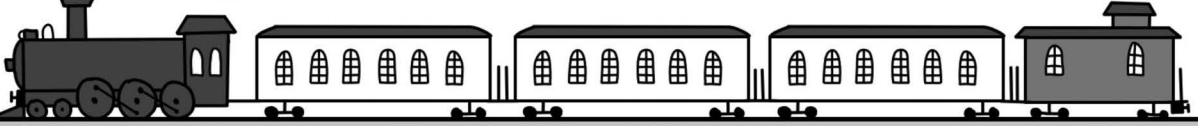


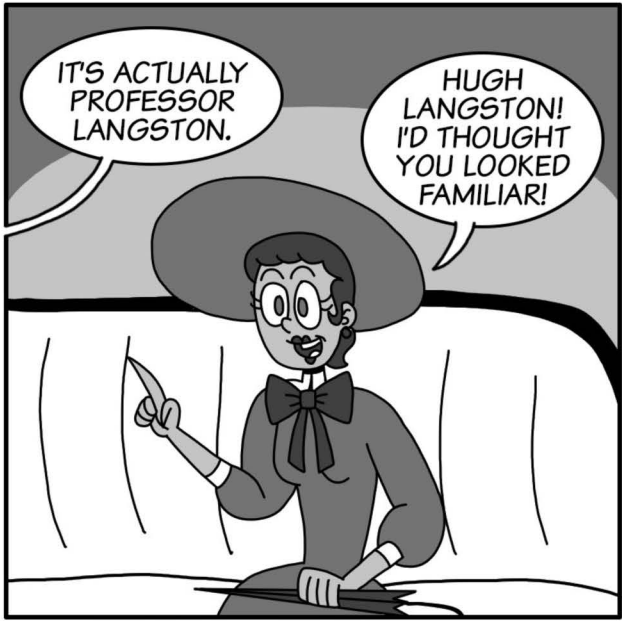
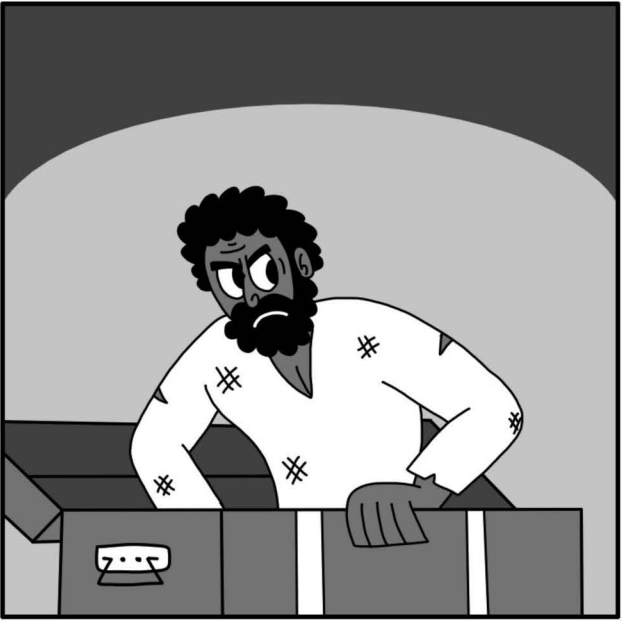
IS THAT
SOMEONE
NEW?



DUPLEX

by Chaz







THAT'S RIGHT! ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH MY WORK?

HARDLY. I REMEMBER SITTING NEXT TO YOU IN COLLEGE.



KRAK



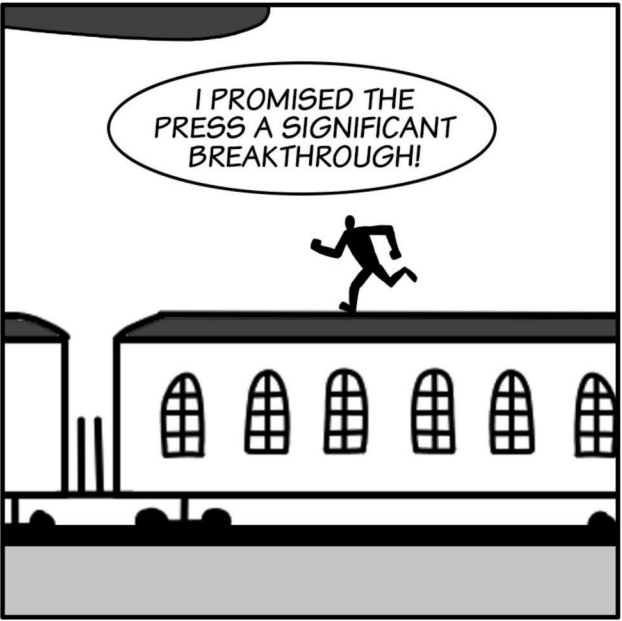
AH, AN ALUM. WHAT WAS YOUR MAJOR? GENETICS? BIOCHEMISTRY? BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING?

I SHOULD ANSWER BEFORE YOU NAME EVERY SCIENCE.

LITERACY.



SO YOU'RE A WRITER. PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO WITNESS MY PRESENTATION.



I PROMISED THE PRESS A SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH!



WHAT KIND OF BREAKTHROUGH?

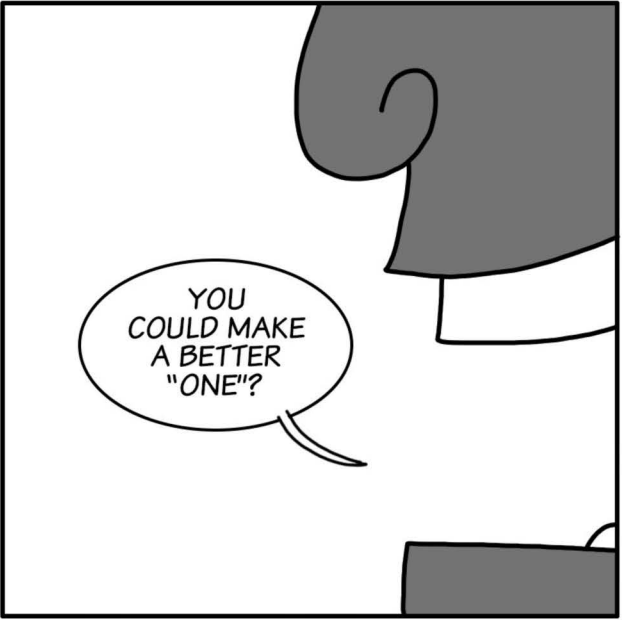
CRASH



AN ACHIEVEMENT IN HEREDITY-- NEIGH, HUMAN HISTORY...!



A STEP INTO OUR FUTURE, IF YOU WILL. MY APOLOGIES. IF I COULD CONVEY MY POINT WITH A QUESTION: WHAT IF INSTEAD OF MAKING ONE BETTER...

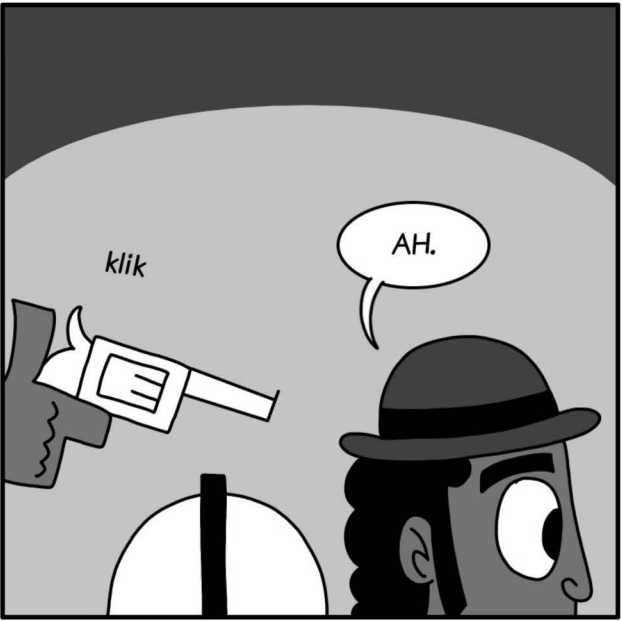


YOU COULD MAKE A BETTER "ONE"?



GASP!

HAVE I STARTLED YOU, MY DEAR?



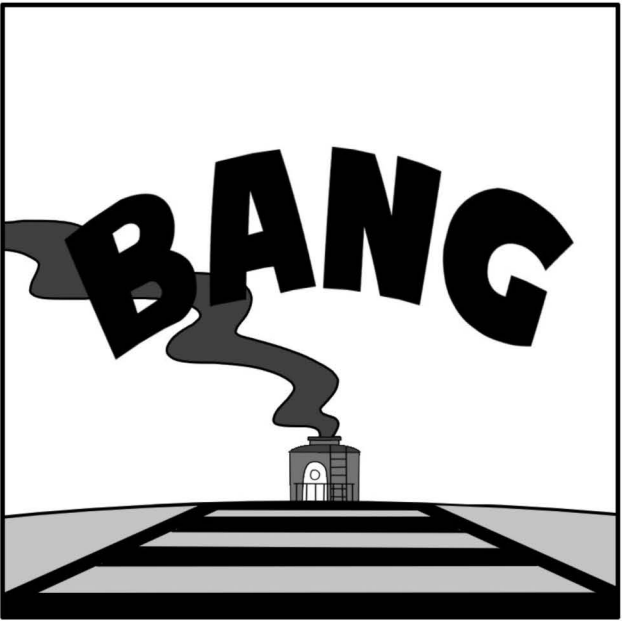
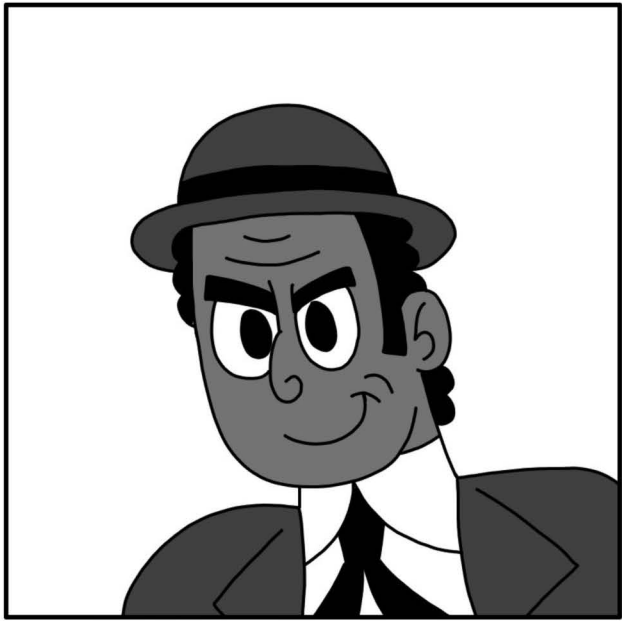
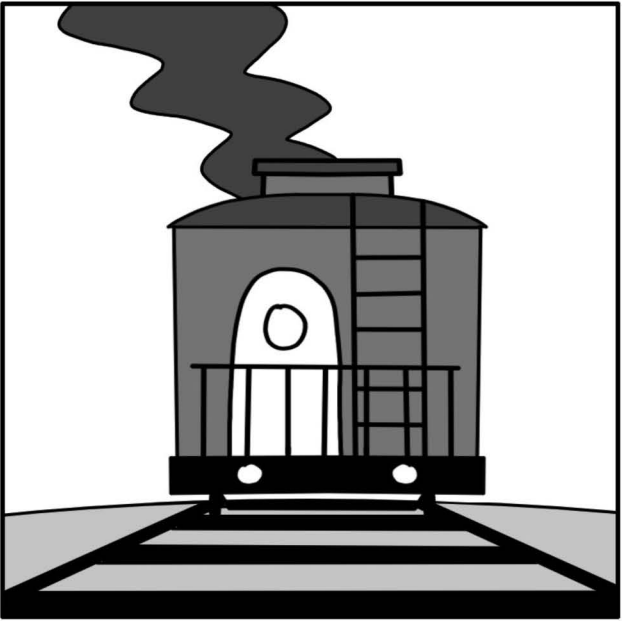
AH.

klik



I SEE
YOU HAVE
ESCAPED.

ATTEMPTING
TO STOP ME,
NO DOUBT?



SOON...

A RATHER UNUSUAL CASE, CHIEF.

IT LOOKS LIKE A REGULAR HOMICIDE TO ME.

SO IT WOULD SEEM...

THE SUSPECT SHARES A STRANGE RESEMBLANCE TO THE VICTIM.

THAT IS UNUSUAL. ANY CLUES?

THERE IS THIS NOTEBOOK--OR "WAS". IT WAS BURNED AFTER THE DEED WAS DONE.

BLAST... THAT WOULD LEAVE OUR WITNESS.

I DON'T THINK I'D BE MUCH HELP, CONSTABLE.

I HARDLY KNOW...KNEW HIM...

WOULD YOU AT LEAST TELL HOW YOU KNEW THE VICTIM?

HE...

HE WAS A SCIENTIST.

POLICE

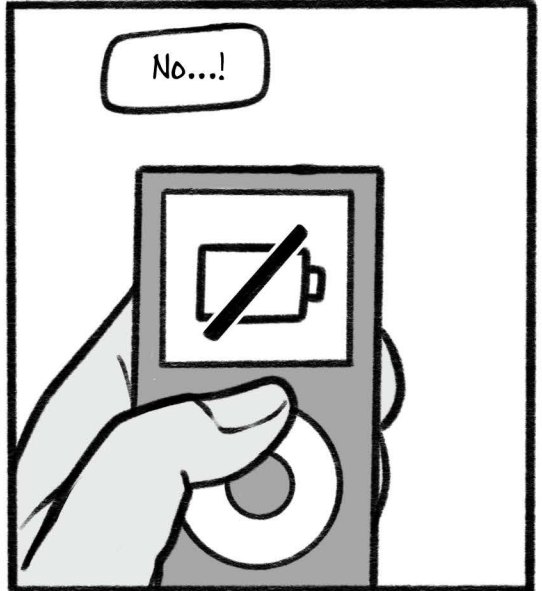
END

FIDGET HERO

By Mirelys Colón









TAKA-TAKA





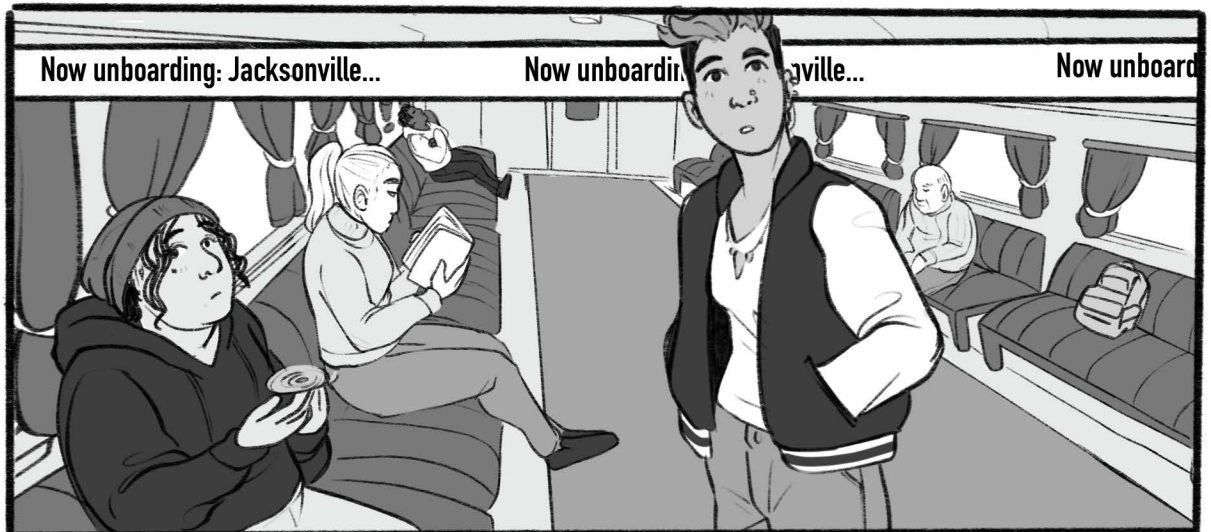
Need a fidget?

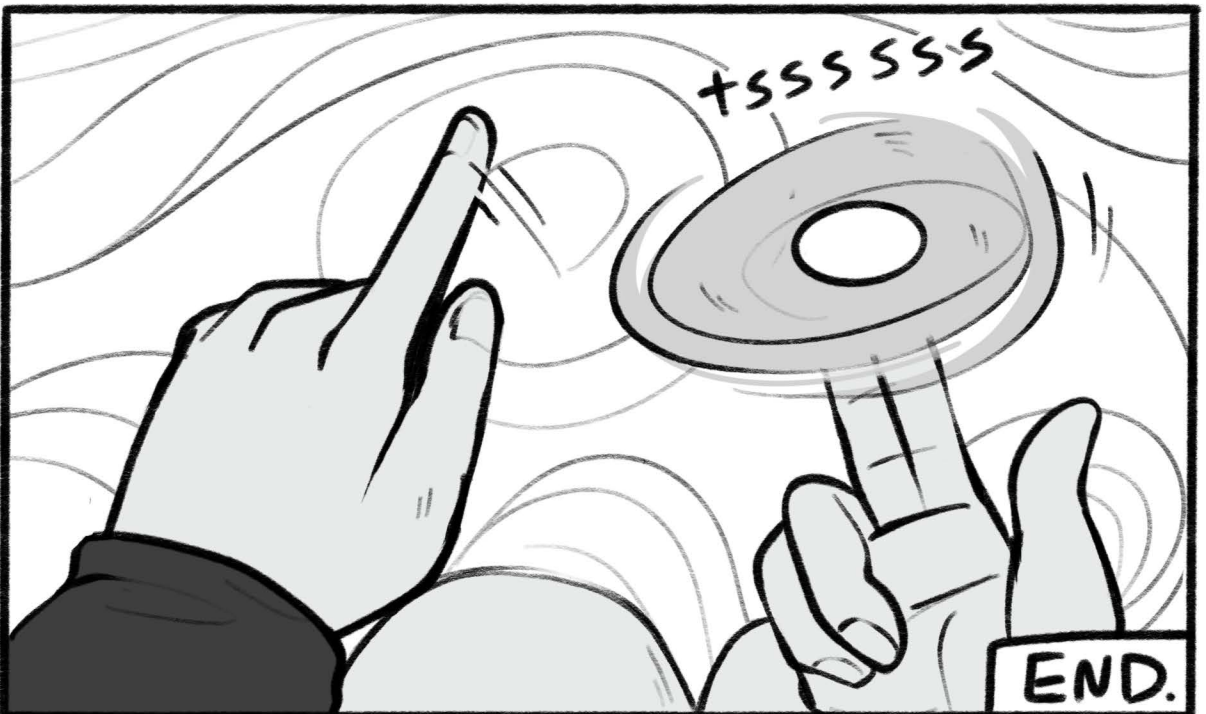
A... what?

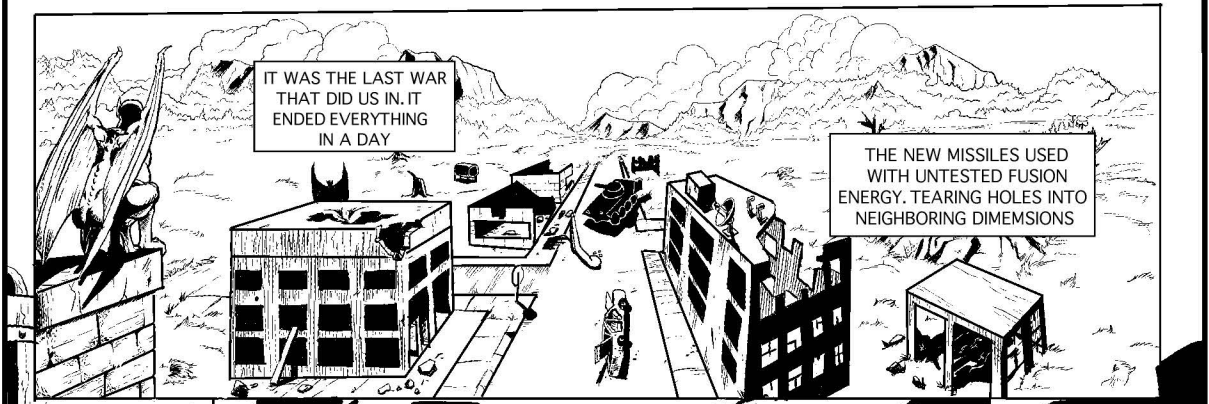
A fidget!
Something to do with your hands!

This one spins, see?

Here, give it a try!








IT WAS THE LAST WAR
THAT DID US IN. IT
ENDED EVERYTHING
IN A DAY

THE NEW MISSILES USED
WITH UNTESTED FUSION
ENERGY. TEARING HOLES INTO
NEIGHBORING DIMENSIONS



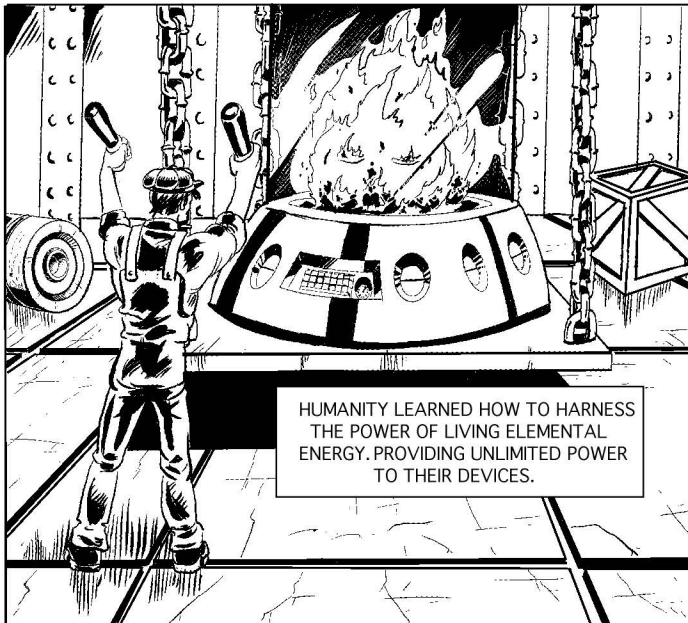
OPENING THE WAY
FOR THE MONSTERS
TO POUR INTO
OUR UNPROTECTED
WORLD



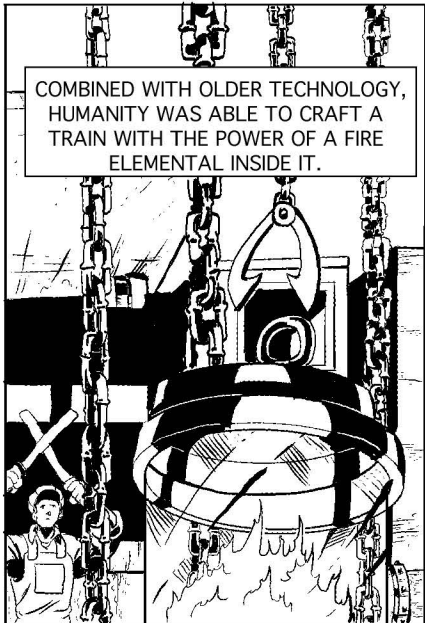
TWO GENERATIONS HAVE PASSED.
FINALLY WE HAVE A
WAY TO REACH SAFETY.
AWAY FROM THE MONSTERS.

TRIAL BY FIRE

STORY / ART: DARREN ROCHE



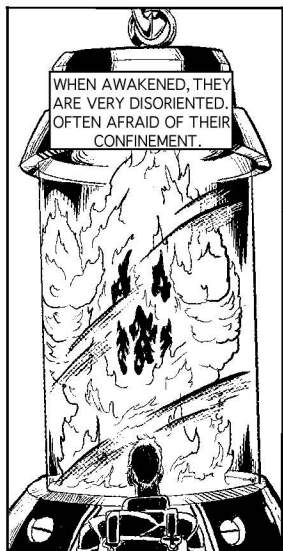
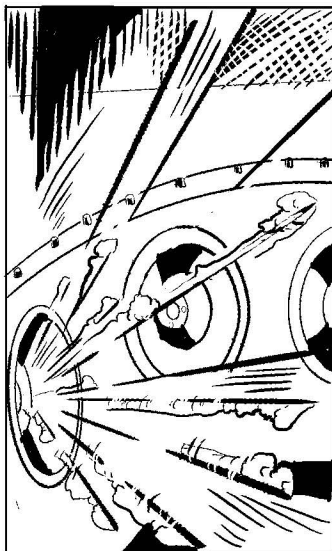
HUMANITY LEARNED HOW TO HARNESS THE POWER OF LIVING ELEMENTAL ENERGY, PROVIDING UNLIMITED POWER TO THEIR DEVICES.



COMBINED WITH OLDER TECHNOLOGY, HUMANITY WAS ABLE TO CRAFT A TRAIN WITH THE POWER OF A FIRE ELEMENTAL INSIDE IT.

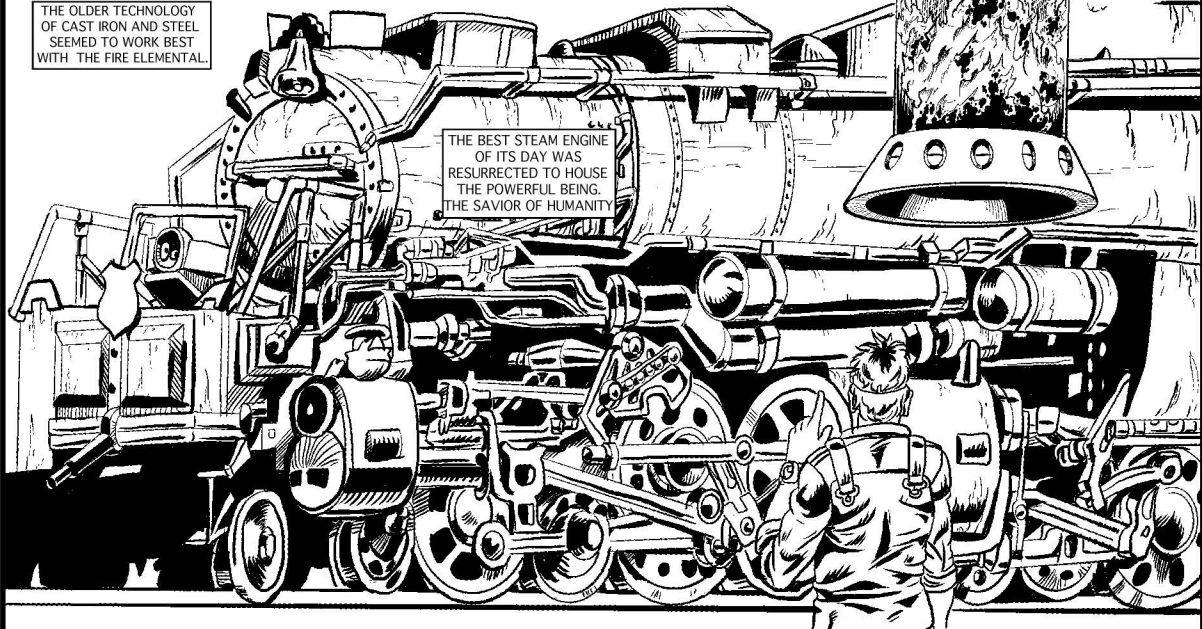


HELD DORMANT INSIDE SPECIAL CONTAINMENT TUBES FOR SAFE KEEPING.

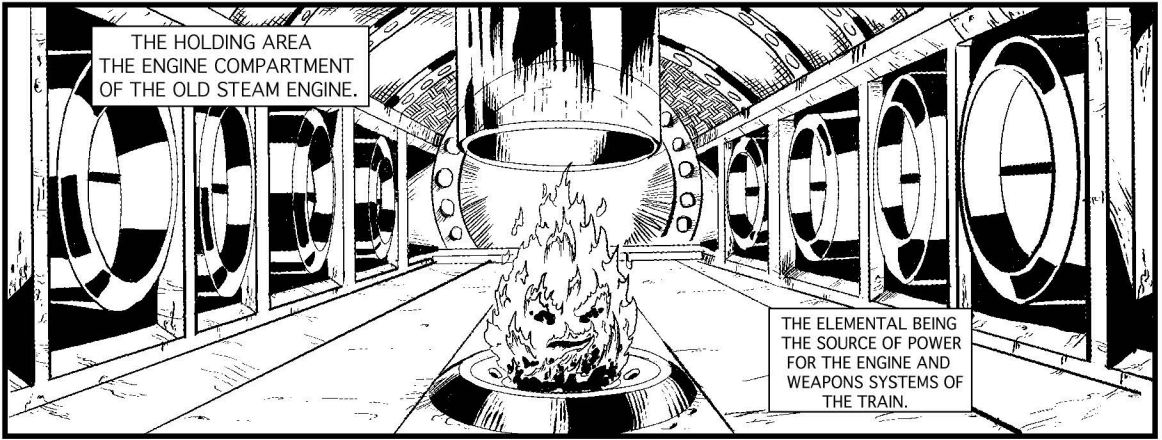


WHEN AWAKENED, THEY ARE VERY DISORIENTED, OFTEN AFRAID OF THEIR CONFINEMENT.

THE OLDER TECHNOLOGY OF CAST IRON AND STEEL SEEMED TO WORK BEST WITH THE FIRE ELEMENTAL.

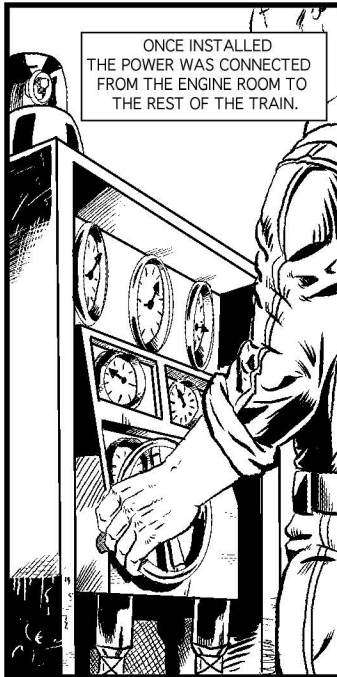
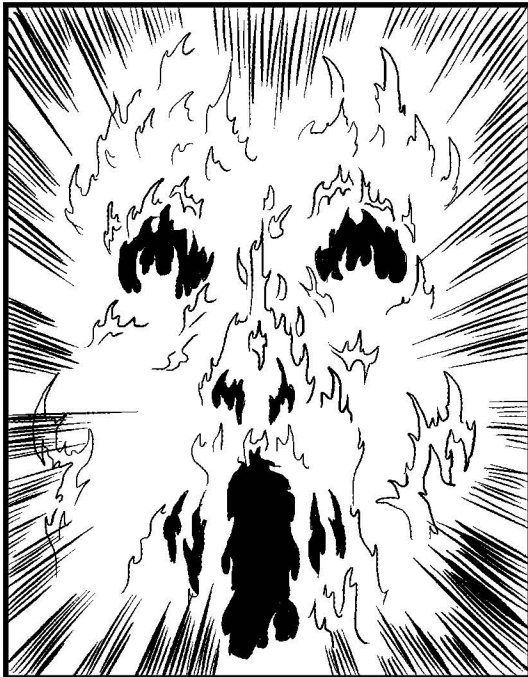


THE BEST STEAM ENGINE OF ITS DAY WAS RESURRECTED TO HOUSE THE POWERFUL BEING, THE SAVIOR OF HUMANITY

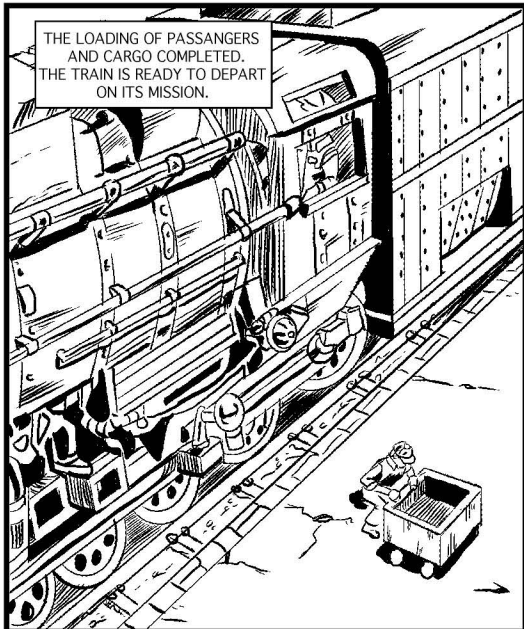
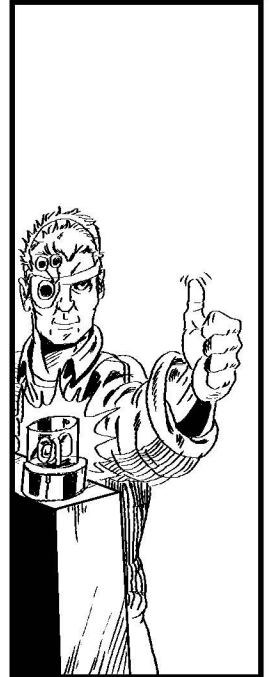


THE HOLDING AREA
THE ENGINE COMPARTMENT
OF THE OLD STEAM ENGINE.

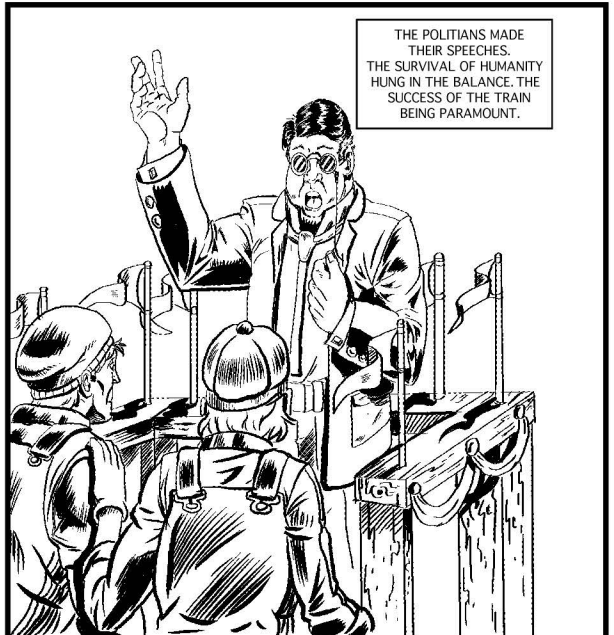
THE ELEMENTAL BEING
THE SOURCE OF POWER
FOR THE ENGINE AND
WEAPONS SYSTEMS OF
THE TRAIN.



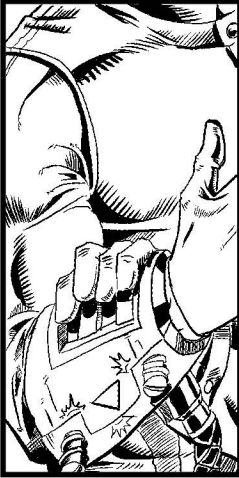
ONCE INSTALLED
THE POWER WAS CONNECTED
FROM THE ENGINE ROOM TO
THE REST OF THE TRAIN.



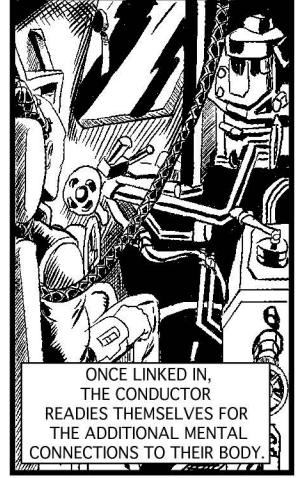
THE LOADING OF PASSENGERS
AND CARGO COMPLETED.
THE TRAIN IS READY TO DEPART
ON ITS MISSION.



THE POLITIANS MADE
THEIR SPEECHES.
THE SURVIVAL OF HUMANITY
HUNG IN THE BALANCE, THE
SUCCESS OF THE TRAIN
BEING PARAMOUNT.



THE TRAIN CONDUCTOR IS LINKED MENTALLY TO THE TRAIN THROUGH A COMPLEX INTERFACE OF CABLES.

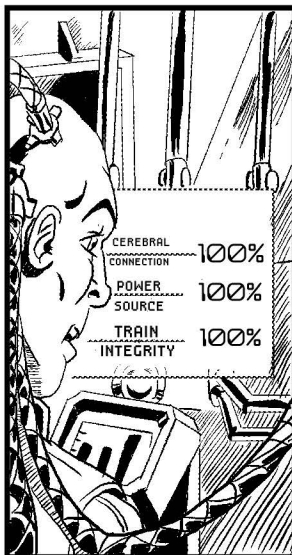


ONCE LINKED IN, THE CONDUCTOR READIES THEMSELVES FOR THE ADDITIONAL MENTAL CONNECTIONS TO THEIR BODY.

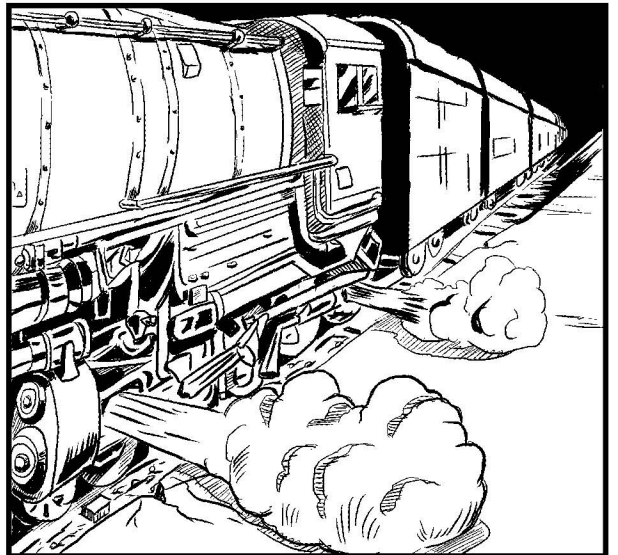


THE BURNING POWER OF THE ELEMENTAL. THE STRENGTH OF IRON AND STEEL OF THE TRAIN.

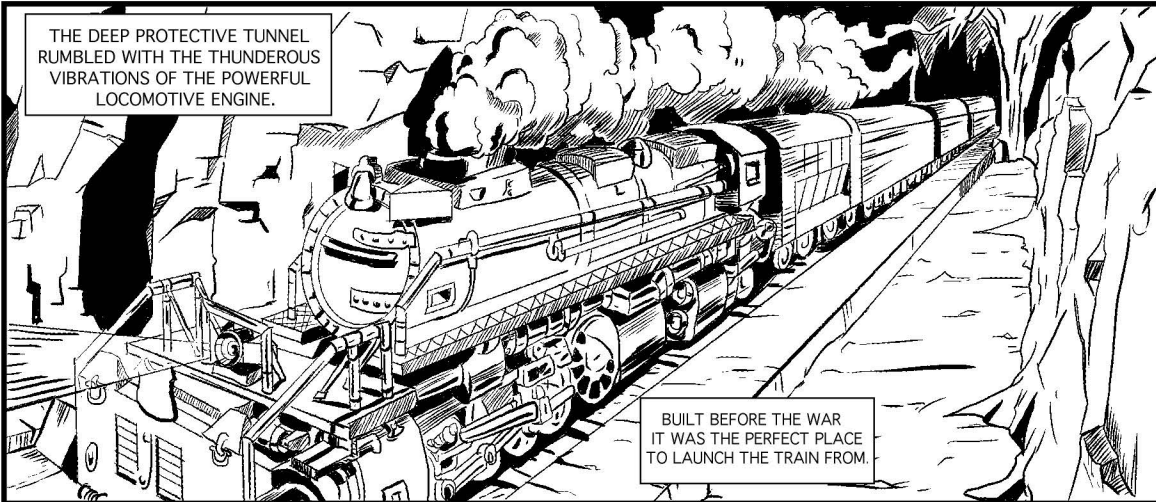
ALL OF IT AT THEIR COMMAND. POWER MORTALS ARE RARELY ABLE TO HANDLE.



CEREBRAL CONNECTION 100%
POWER SOURCE 100%
TRAIN INTEGRITY 100%

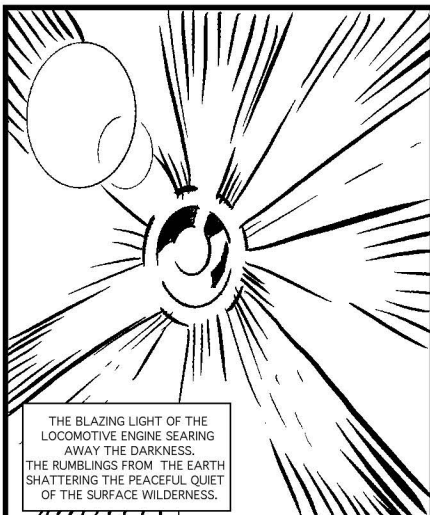
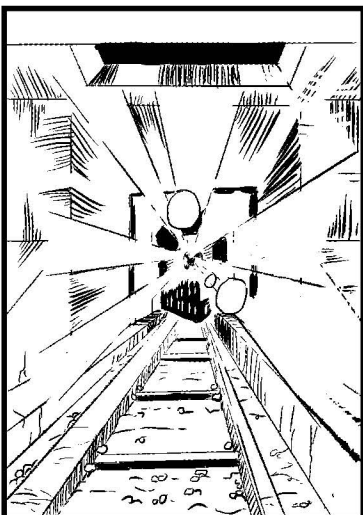


THE DEEP PROTECTIVE TUNNEL
RUMBLLED WITH THE THUNDEROUS
VIBRATIONS OF THE POWERFUL
LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE.



BUILT BEFORE THE WAR
IT WAS THE PERFECT PLACE
TO LAUNCH THE TRAIN FROM.

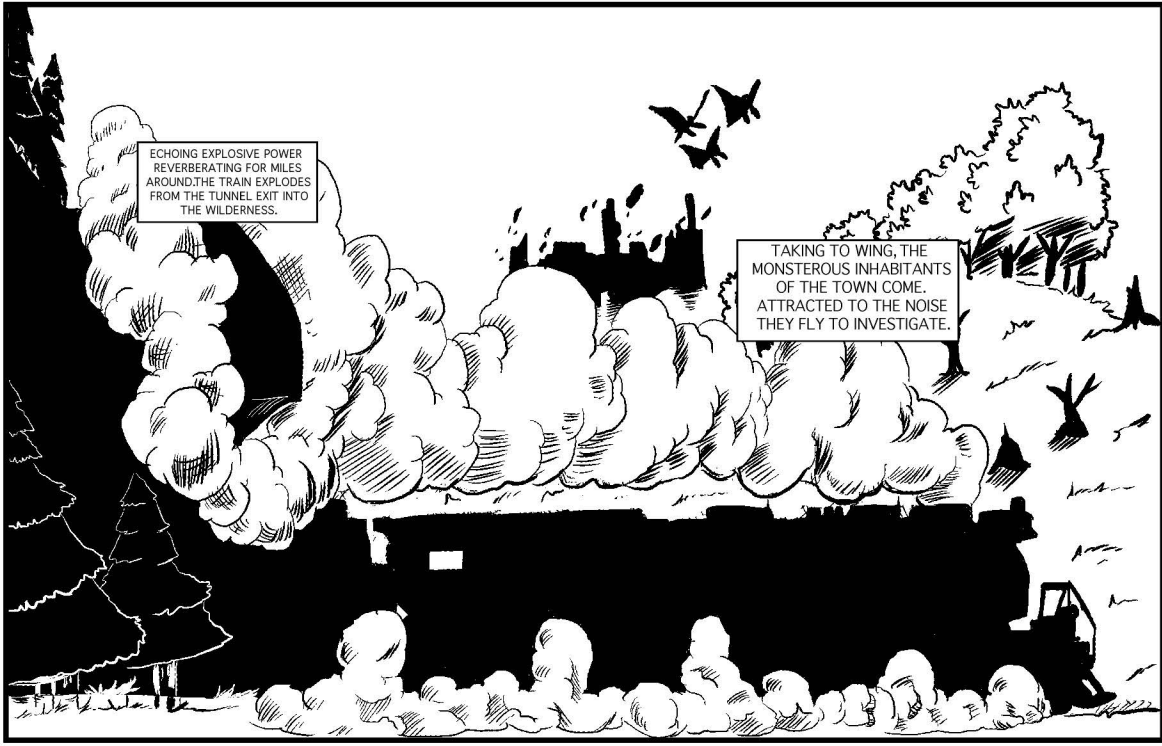
THE ANCIENT RAILWAY SYSTEM
OF THE MAGINOT LINE,
CONSTRUCTED TO PROTECT
FRANCE IN WORLD WAR II.

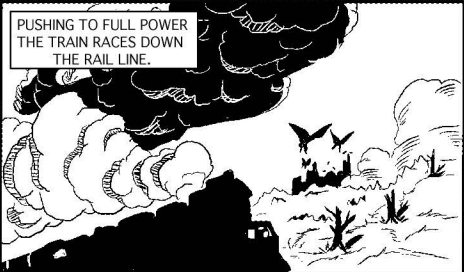


THE BLAZING LIGHT OF THE
LOCOMOTIVE SEARING
AWAY THE DARKNESS.
THE RUMBLINGS FROM THE EARTH
SHATTERING THE PEACEFUL QUIET
OF THE SURFACE WILDERNESS.

ECHOING EXPLOSIVE POWER
REVERBERATING FOR MILES
AROUND THE TRAIN EXPLODES
FROM THE TUNNEL EXIT INTO
THE WILDERNESS.

TAKING TO WING, THE
MONSTEROUS INHABITANTS
OF THE TOWN COME.
ATTRACTED TO THE NOISE
THEY FLY TO INVESTIGATE.






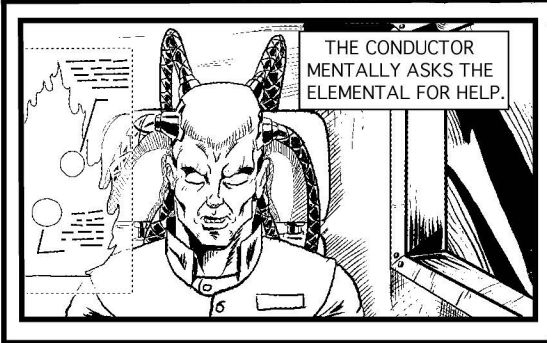
PUSHING TO FULL POWER
THE TRAIN RACES DOWN
THE RAIL LINE.



DRIVEN BY HUNGER
THE GARGOYLES
ATTACK!



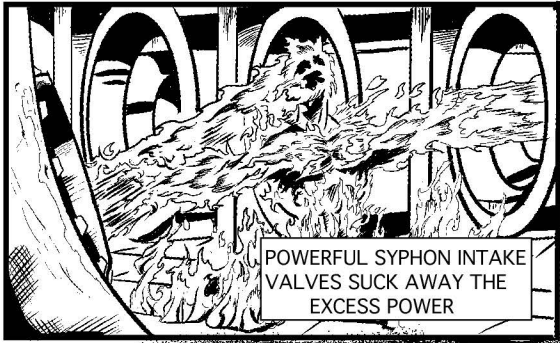
RAILWAY WHEELS FOLD UPWARDS
TO LOCK INTO THEIR ENGINE HOUSING.
THE ROAR OF STEAM POWERED THRUSTERS
PUSHING THE MASSIVE ENGINE
INTO THE SKY.



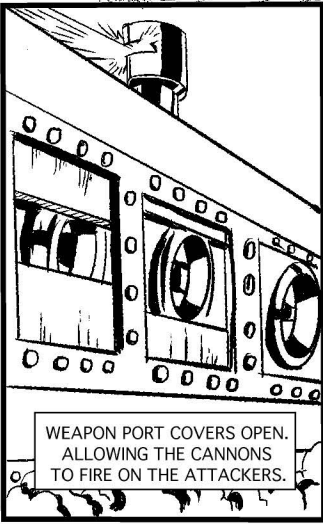
THE CONDUCTOR MENTALLY ASKS THE ELEMENTAL FOR HELP.



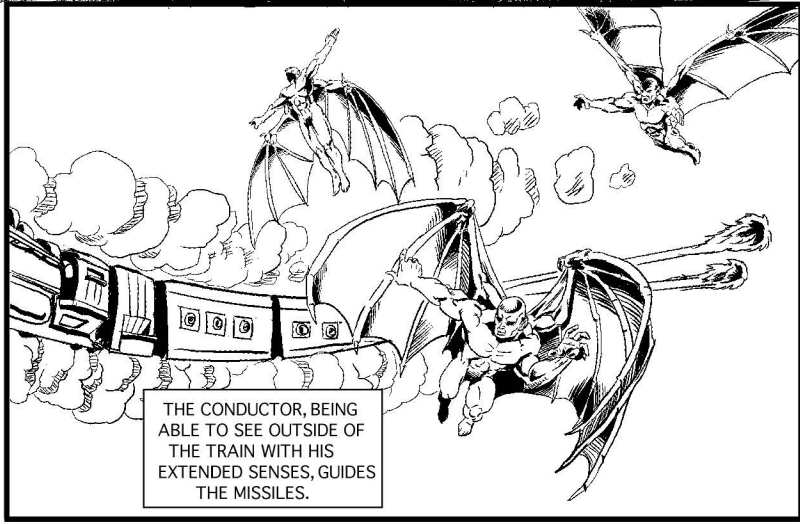
THE ELEMENTAL FLARES WITH POWER, ENRAGED BY THE REQUEST FROM HIS CAPTORS.



POWERFUL SYPHON INTAKE VALVES SUCK AWAY THE EXCESS POWER



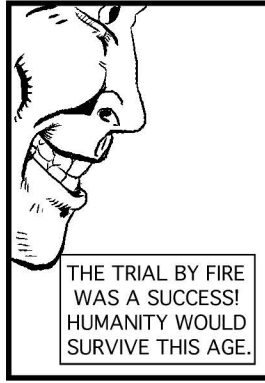
WEAPON PORT COVERS OPEN, ALLOWING THE CANNONS TO FIRE ON THE ATTACKERS.



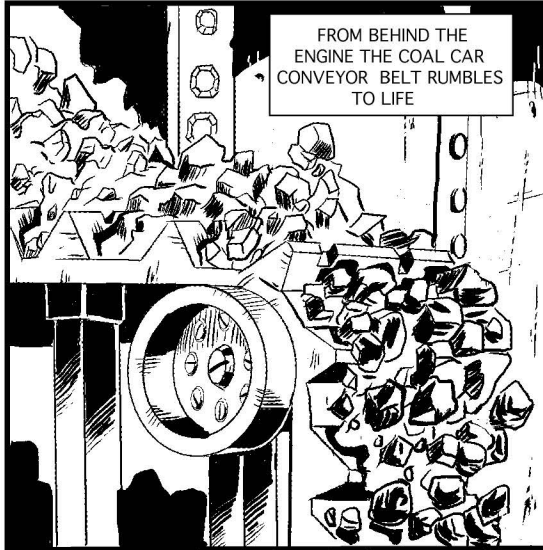
THE CONDUCTOR, BEING ABLE TO SEE OUTSIDE OF THE TRAIN WITH HIS EXTENDED SENSES, GUIDES THE MISSILES.



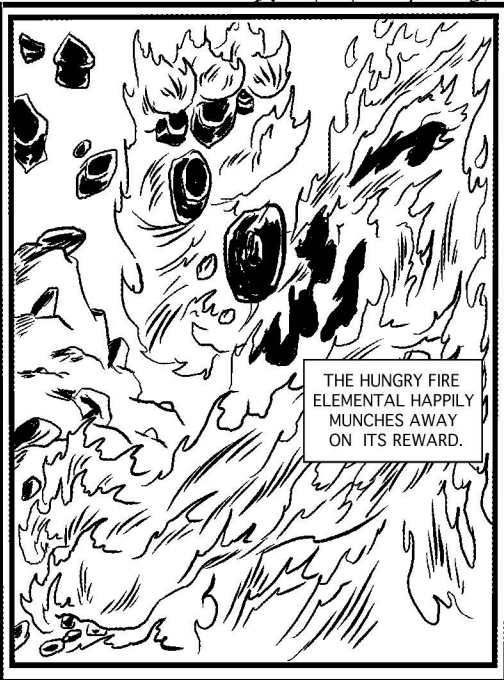
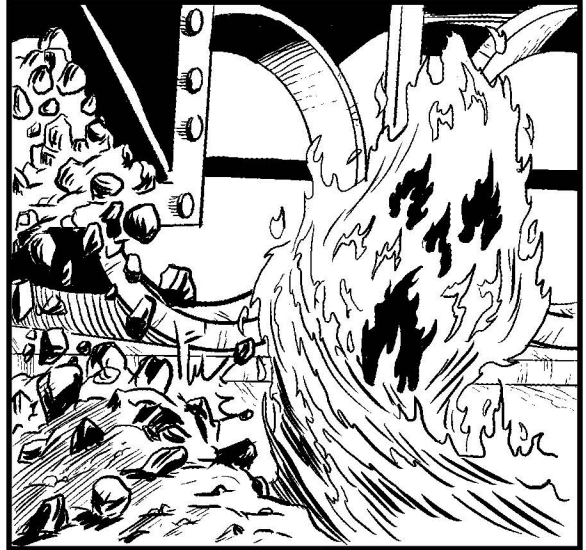
IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS THE LAST ATTACKER IS SHOT FROM THE SKY.



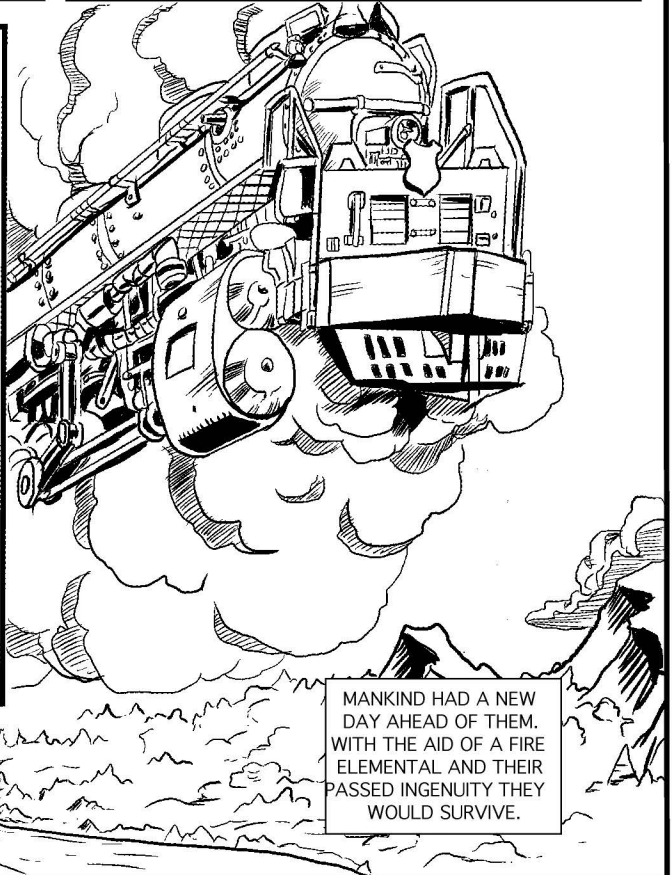
THE TRIAL BY FIRE WAS A SUCCESS! HUMANITY WOULD SURVIVE THIS AGE.



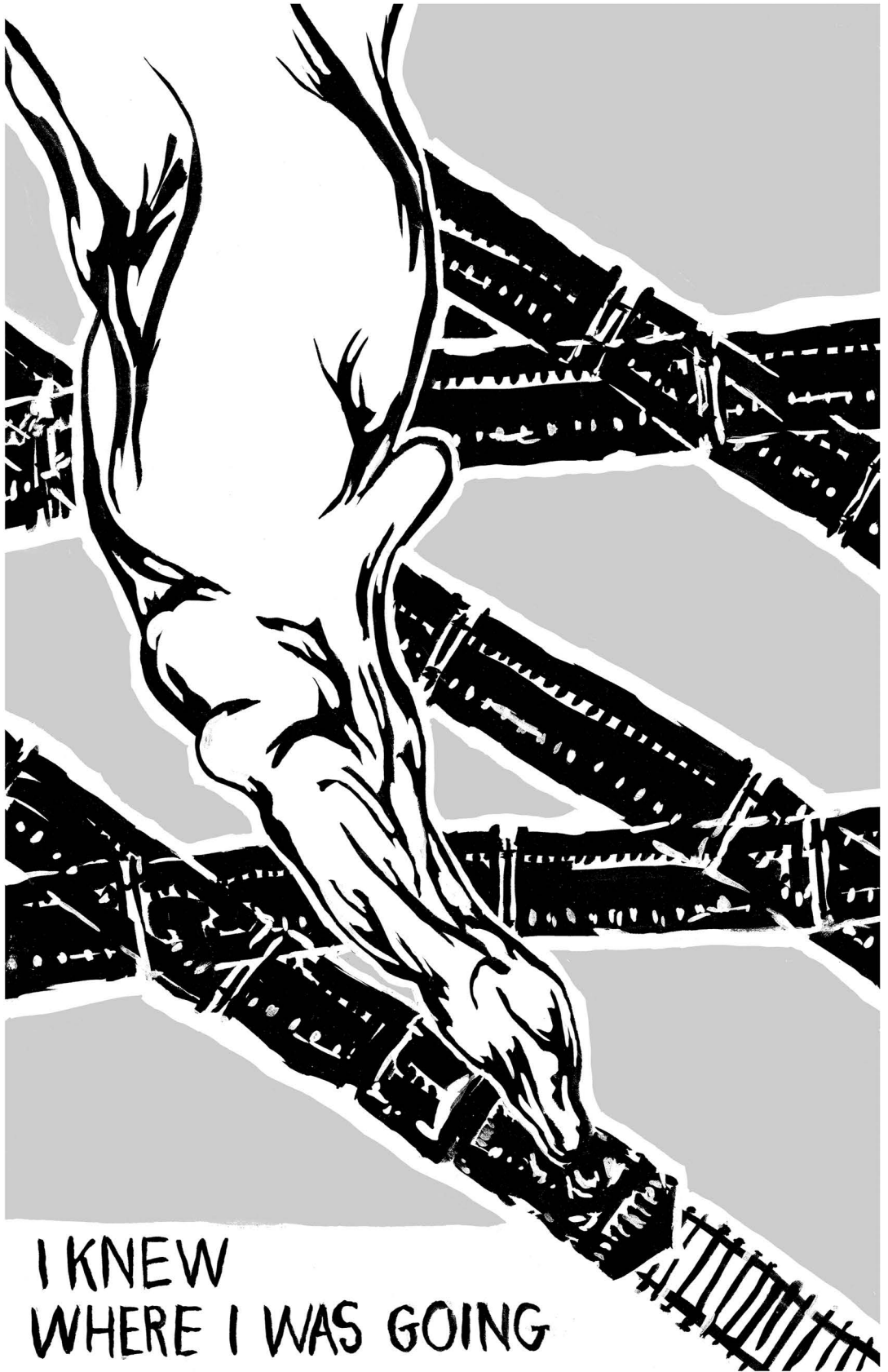
FROM BEHIND THE ENGINE THE COAL CAR CONVEYOR BELT RUMBLES TO LIFE



THE HUNGRY FIRE ELEMENTAL HAPPILY MUNCHES AWAY ON ITS REWARD.



MANKIND HAD A NEW DAY AHEAD OF THEM. WITH THE AID OF A FIRE ELEMENTAL AND THEIR PASSED INGENUITY THEY WOULD SURVIVE.



I KNEW
WHERE I WAS GOING



BUT WHO
WOULD I BE

WHEN I
GOT THERE

CONTRIBUTORS

MELINDA BOX IS AN ASPIRING COMIC ARTIST WITH A PASSION FOR GRAPHIC MEMOIR. WHEN NOT SLAVING AWAY ON HER ART, SHE WORKS IN THE DANGEROUS AND DARING WORLD OF LABORATORY SAFETY AND HOPES ONE DAY TO CREATE A COMIC ABOUT IT.
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DEAN GARRIS GREW UP DRAWING COMICS, CARTOONS, AND MONSTERS. HE HAS AN ONGOING FANTASY SERIES CALLED THE LORD OF DIRT. YOU CAN CATCH HIM AT VARIOUS COMIC CONS AROUND NORTH CAROLINA.
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PATRICK HOLT CREATED TCCN IN 2018 AS A SPINOFF OF DURHAM COMICS FEST. NOWADAYS HE'S AN ARTIST AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER, AND HE RUNS TRIANGULAR COMICS & ZINES, AN ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR COMICS, ZINES, AND OTHER THINGS MADE IN AND AROUND THE TRIANGLE.
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ALL ABOARD!!

TAKE A TRAIN RIDE THROUGH THIS COLLECTION OF STORIES
BY EIGHT NORTH CAROLINA ARTISTS. EACH STORY TAKES
PLACE ON A STEAM ENGINE!

