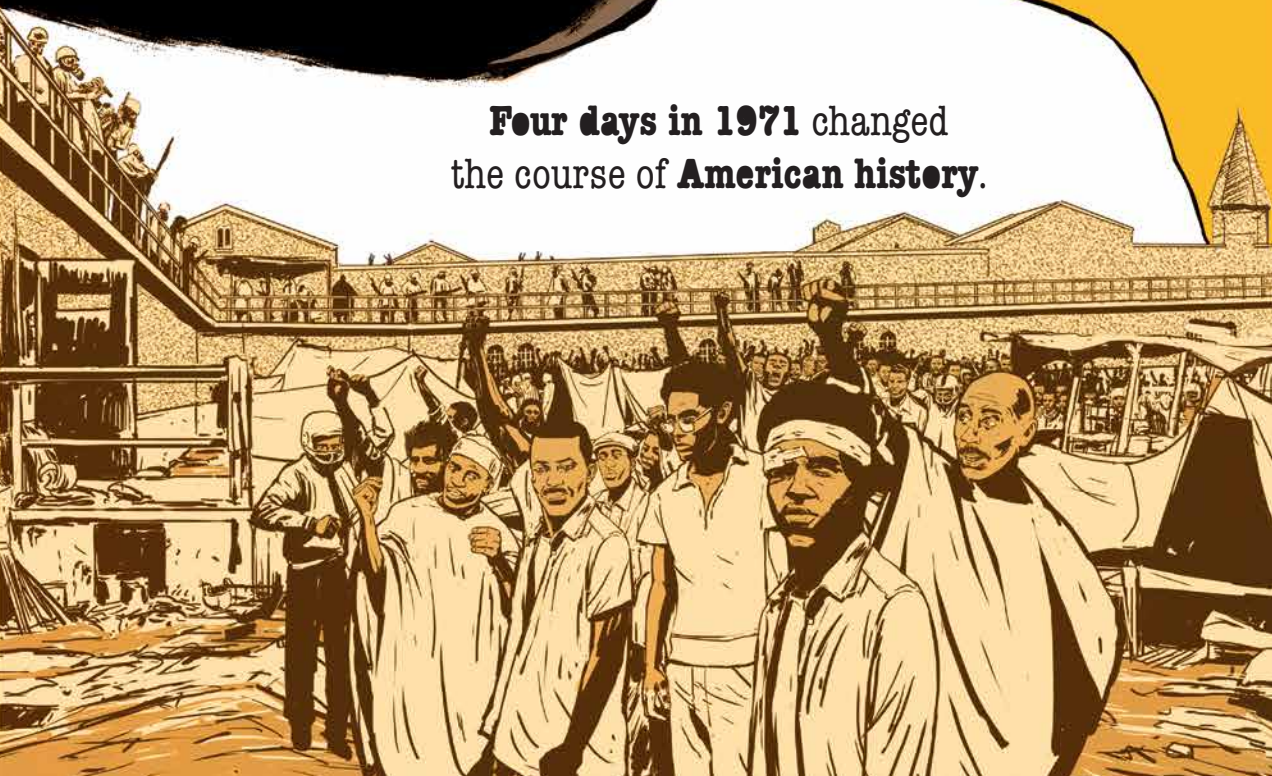


FRANK "BIG BLACK" SMITH

BIG
BLACK
STAND AT
ATTICA™

JARED REINMUTH
AMÉZIANE

Four days in 1971 changed
the course of **American history.**



**BIG
BLACK
STAND AT
ATTICA™**



Published by
ARCHAIA™

BIG B STAND A



Four days in 1971 changed
the course of **American history**.



BLACK TATTICA™



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For the 1539,
That their Stand at Attica
Inspires the Spirit of Abolition and Resistance.
And brings Hope and Inspiration to those Incarcerated
In these modern institutions of Inhumanity.

For Mom and Dan,
Who taught me the story of Attica,
Introduced me to Big Black and Pearl,
And with Love and Generosity,
Pursued Justice Relentlessly to the End.

For Pearl,
Big Black's North Star,
Who guided us,
Kept us moving Forward,
And never allowed us to Give Up.

And for Big Black,
The Heartbeat of our Story.

—Jared Reinmuth

For my love, Syb.

For my boys, Gab & Noé.

For all the ones who
trusted me on this book:
Patrick, Jared, Pearl, Alex, Judy,
Joan, Sierra, and Allyson.

—Améziane



INTRODUCTION

This graphic novel is about real people and events. It is about a courageous, gentle person; a huge man with a booming voice. It is about people who were imprisoned at Attica, the maximum-security penitentiary in upstate New York in 1971. It is about a rebellion for humane treatment. It is about the state's violent repression of an uprising that culminated in a bloody massacre committed by a police force that Dr. Clarence B. Jones (lawyer and former speechwriter for Martin Luther King, Jr., who was present at the prison at the request of the inmates) called "young, tense, and infected with racism." My involvement begins on the day of the uprising with a phone call from the prison to my law office. Here starts a personal and legal commitment that would last three decades.

September 13, 1971 became one of the bloodiest days in modern United States history when N.Y. State Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered the violent retaking of Attica Prison. Troopers indiscriminately shot two thousand rounds of ammunition at unarmed people trapped within the prison walls, resulting in the deaths of 29 prisoners and 10 guards. After the shooting stopped, police beat and tortured the surviving prisoners. One of the worst atrocities was the sadistic barbarism perpetrated by state police and guards against Frank "Big Black" Smith, the central figure of this book.

To hold the state accountable, in 1974, on behalf of the 1,281 prisoners who were brutalized in D-Yard that morning, I filed a federal class action civil rights damage lawsuit against Governor Nelson Rockefeller and other state officials, seeking compensation for the wrongful deaths and brutalities inflicted against the prisoners. For an incredibly long 26 years, the legal team of five lawyers and innumerable dedicated supporters sought justice in and out of court for the prisoners, who became known as the Attica Brothers.

Following his release from prison, Big Black began working for me and for other lawyers as an investigator for people charged with crimes. He had the ability to make people feel comfortable and forthcoming. He was intelligent, strategic, and charismatic, which made him an ideal investigator.

At Attica, his communication skills and commitment to fair play were displayed as the prisoners' football coach. His stature and character were two of the reasons he was selected by the rebelling inmates to be their chief of security, and he certainly lived up to his reputation. No one was harmed for four days in D-Yard, including state officials, up until the massacre of September 13. As you will see on the pages before you, because of Big Black's role during the uprising, the state tortured him beyond what is imaginable.



After his release from Attica, Big Black also became an early intervention drug counselor for addicted youth. At the time, early intervention, non-punitive treatment was innovative. In Brooklyn, he worked with high school youth in a vocational program sponsored by the United Auto Workers, and had a close relationship with Sam Meyers and other UAW officials.

In his own case, Big Black was a riveting witness. His testimony about enduring sadistic torture and brutality resulted in a unanimous jury verdict. He was awarded compensatory damages in the amount of \$4 million, the largest jury verdict for a sole prisoner in the history of the United States. The judgement was wrongfully dismissed, and all other verdicts nullified by an appellate court. In 2000, after 26 years and faced with no credible options, the Attica Brothers Lawsuit settled for the inadequate sum of \$12 million to be shared amongst the plaintiffs.

Big Black was so magnetic and respected that the unfavorable trial judge invited him to his and his wife's home for a holiday dinner. Upon hearing of Big Black's declining health, Daniel Callaghan, Former Capt. 19th Special Forces Group, present at Attica and a witness at trial, wrote to Big Black, "...today I am a better human being than I once was, and you made me so."

I have often asked myself how a person could suffer such brutality and remain optimistic and kind. As Big Black's wife Pearl testified at trial, she would often find him underneath their bed, shaking from a PTSD-induced nightmare. But with her loving support, he remained steady and generous. Big Black and Attica Brother Akil Al-Jundi were a driving force in the quest for justice. He remained close to all the surviving Attica Brothers, especially Carlos Roche, until the end of his life in 2004.

With the introduction of the archaic Rockefeller drug laws, and for-profit prisons, mass incarceration has exploded. In 1971, New York State laid claim to 12 prisons and 12,500 prisoners. In 2000, when the case was settled, that number had ballooned to 72 prisons and 72,500 prisoners, ravaging poor communities of color and making the Attica prison uprising a story for today.

This book, with its accuracy and visual depth, is an honest portrayal of those horrifying and tragic events—events which resonate in today's political climate. Frank "Big Black" Smith's story is an inspiration to my family, to Jared, to his siblings and his mom, and it will continue to inspire future generations.

Daniel Meyers, Esq.

Attica Brothers Legal Team, 1974-2000

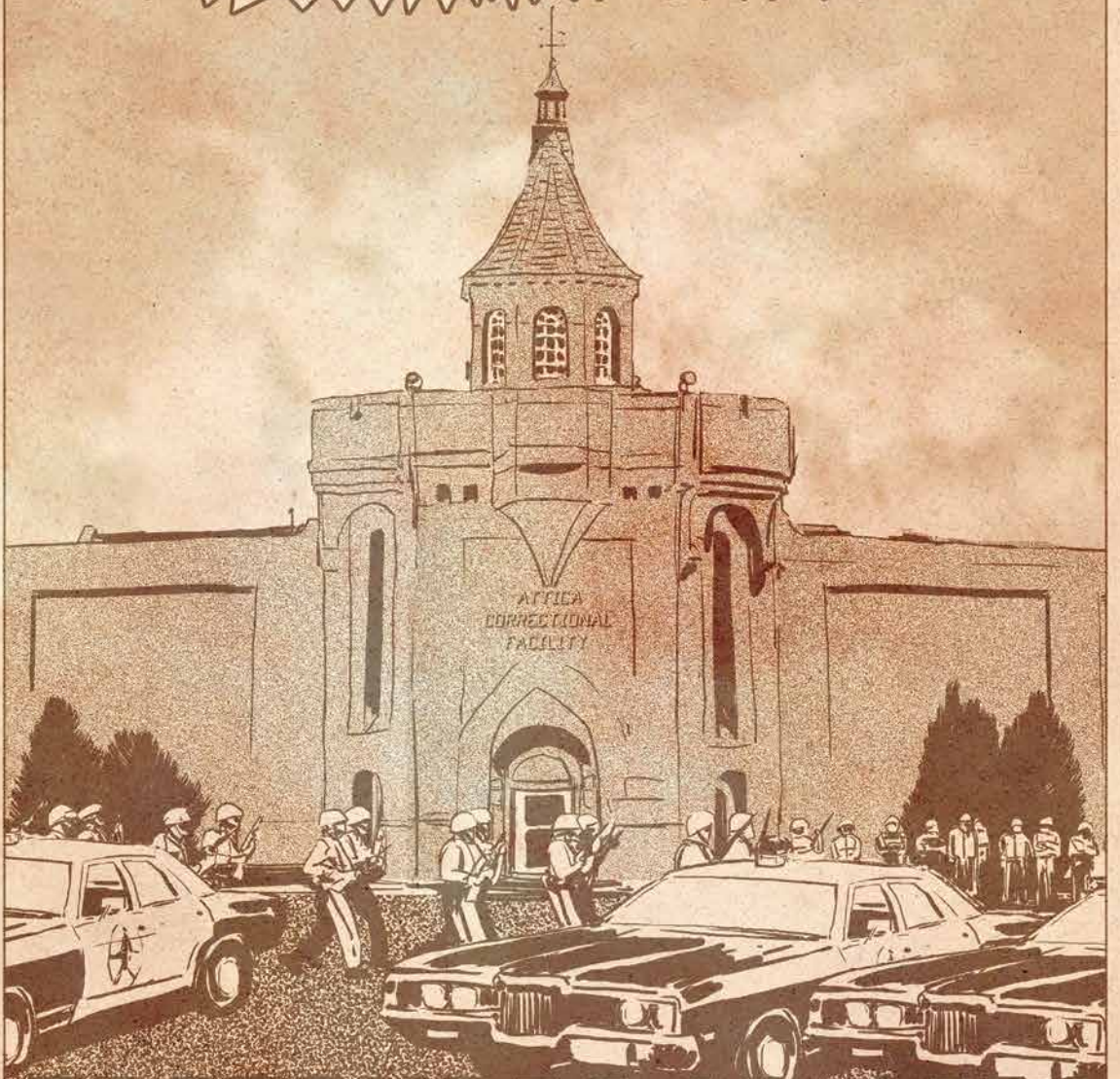


THE 15 PRACTICAL PROPOSALS OF REBELLING ATTICA PRISONERS

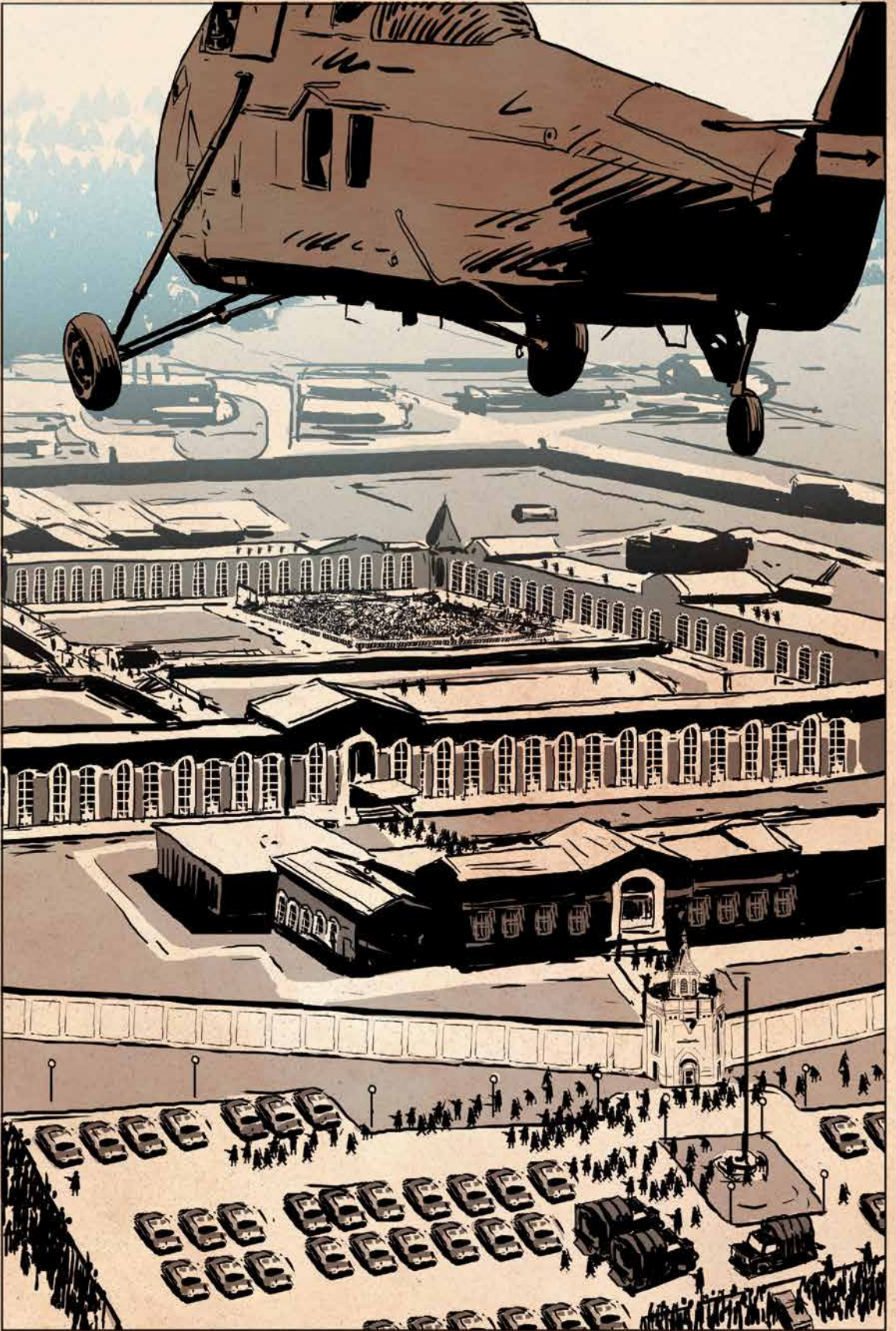
1. Apply the New York State minimum wage law to all state institutions. **STOP SLAVE LABOR.**
2. Allow all New York State prisoners to be politically active, without intimidation or reprisals.
3. Give us true religious freedom.
4. End all censorship of newspapers, magazines, letters, and other publications coming from the publisher.
5. Allow all inmates, at their own expense, to communicate with anyone they please.
6. When an inmate reaches conditional release date, give him a full release without parole.
7. Cease administrative resentencing of inmates returned for parole violations.
8. Institute realistic rehabilitation programs for all inmates according to their offense and personal needs.
9. Educate all correctional officers to the needs of the inmates, i.e., understanding rather than punishment.
10. Give us a healthy diet, stop feeding us so much pork, and give us some fresh fruit daily.
11. Modernize the inmate education system.
12. Give us a doctor that will examine and treat all inmates that request treatment.
13. Have an institutional delegation comprised of one inmate from each company authorized to speak to the institution administration concerning grievances (QUARTERLY).
14. Give us less cell time and more recreation with better recreational equipment and facilities.
15. Remove inside walls, making one open yard, and no more segregation or punishment.

THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

PLANTATION TO PLANTATION!

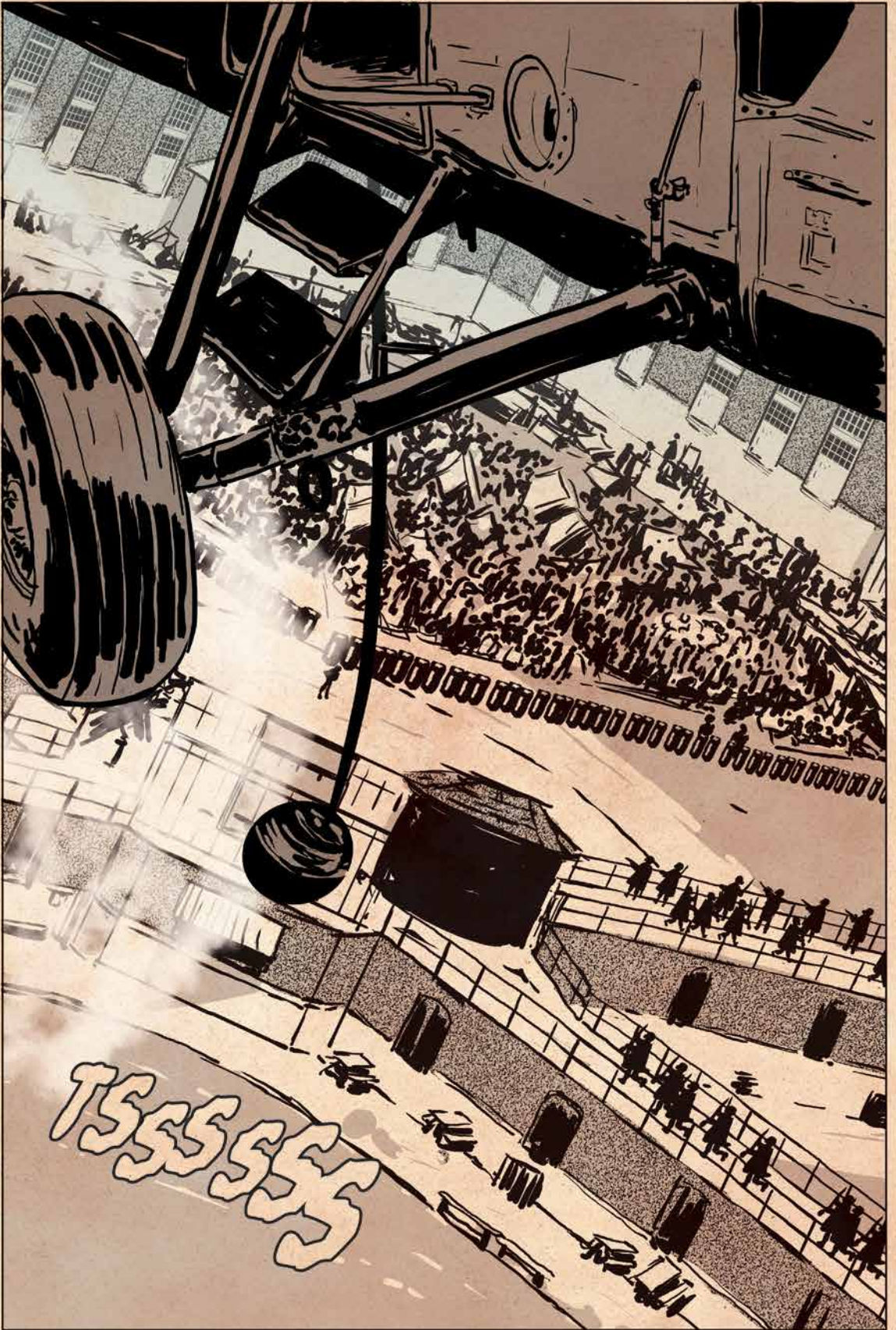


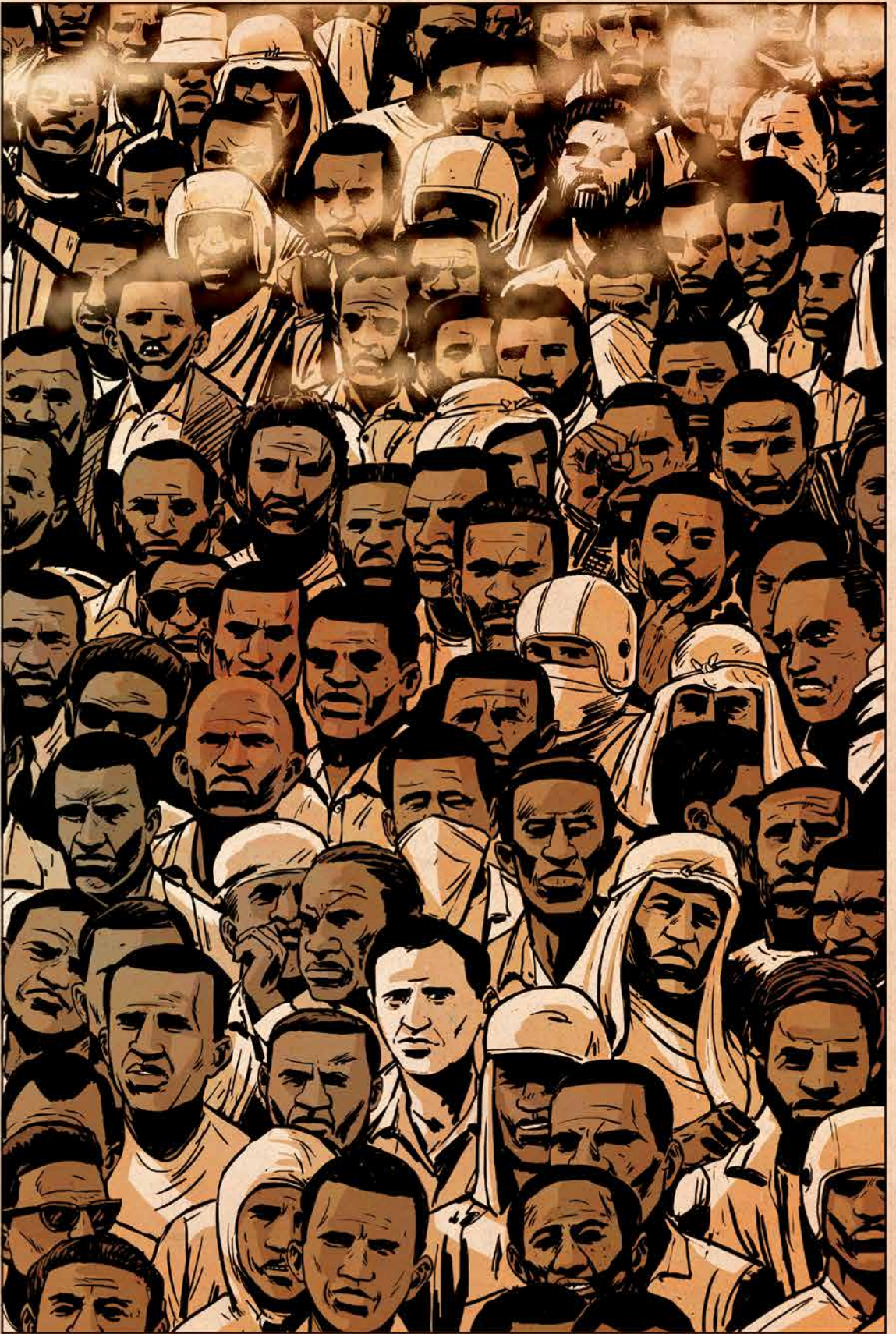
SEPTEMBER 13, 1971

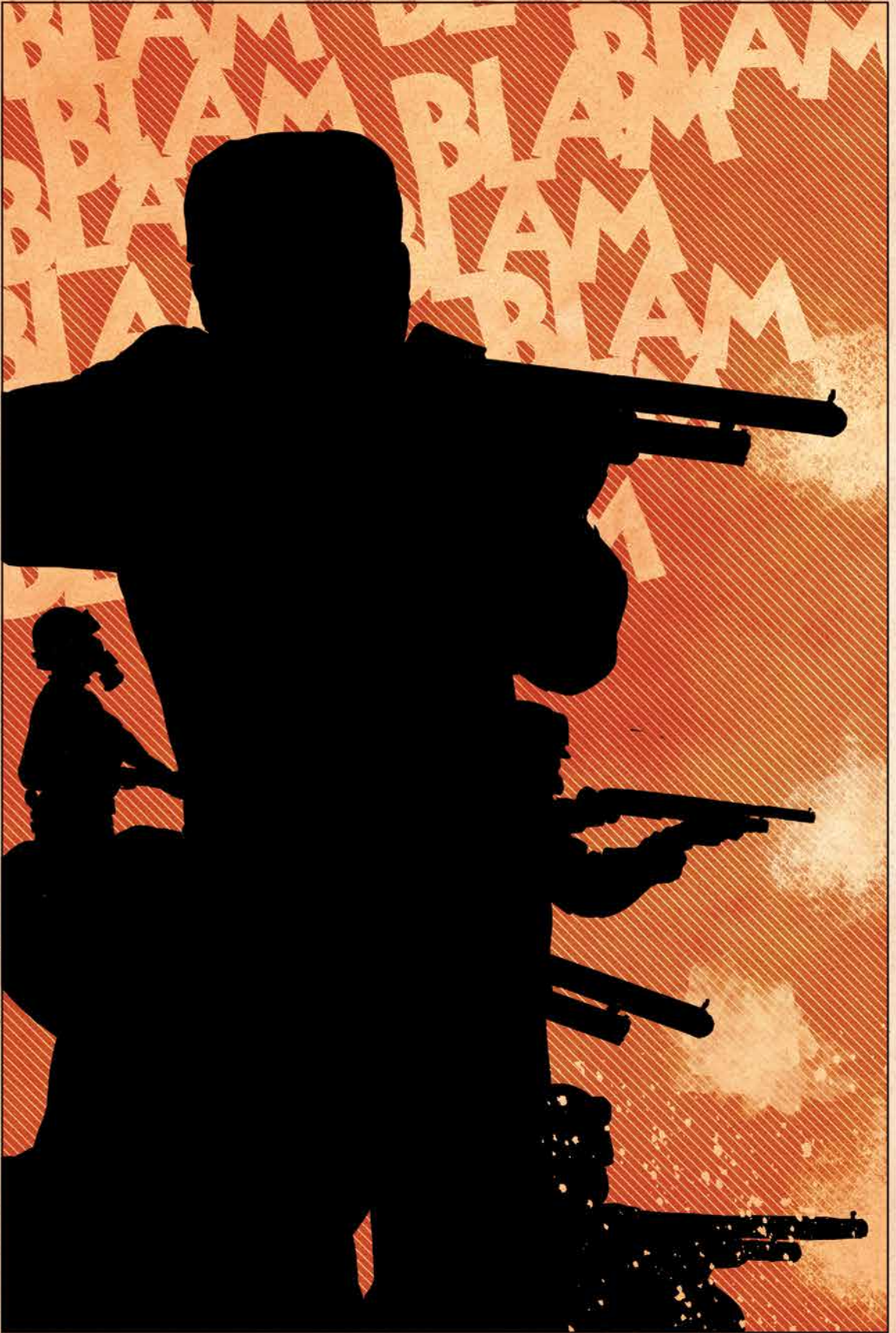


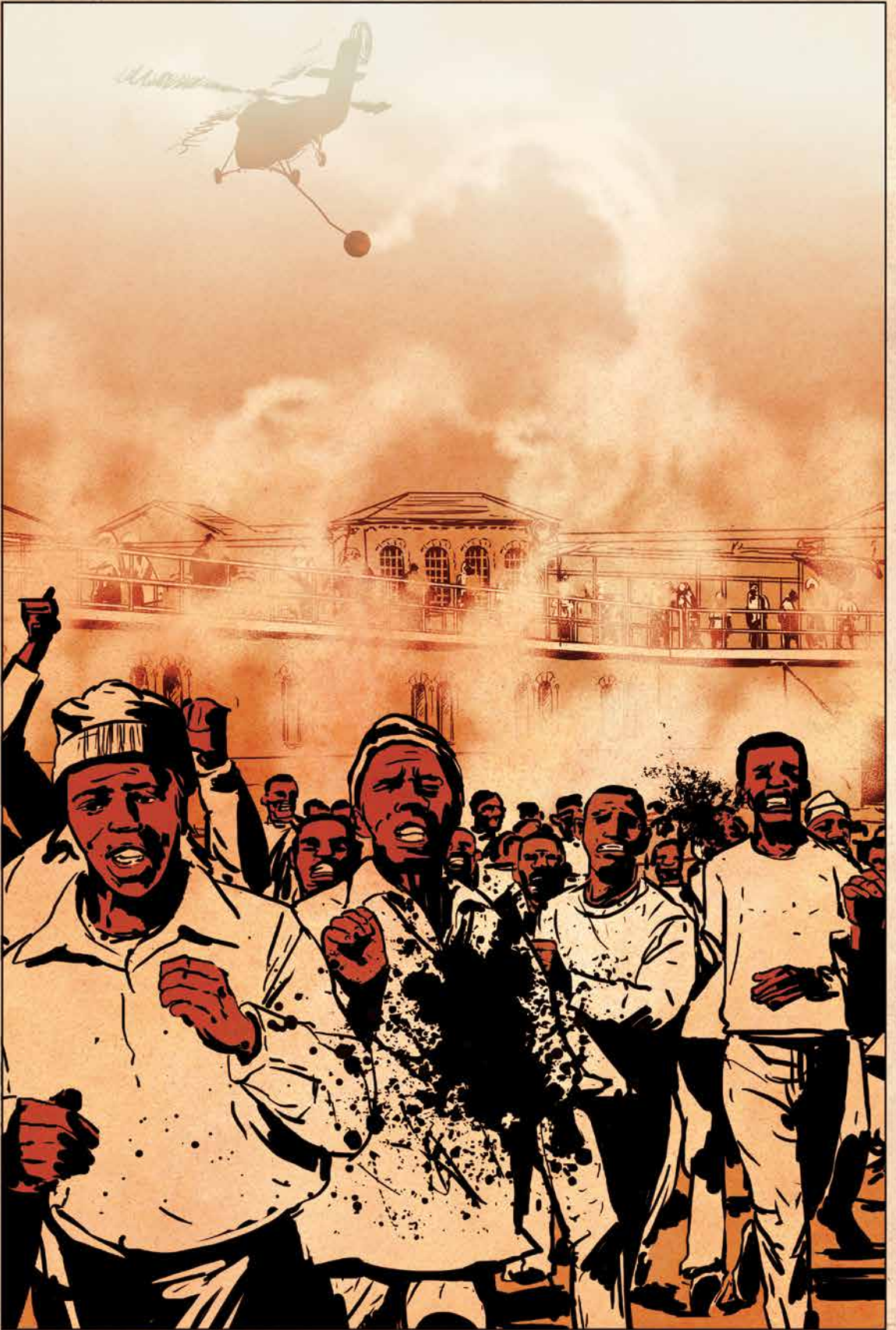










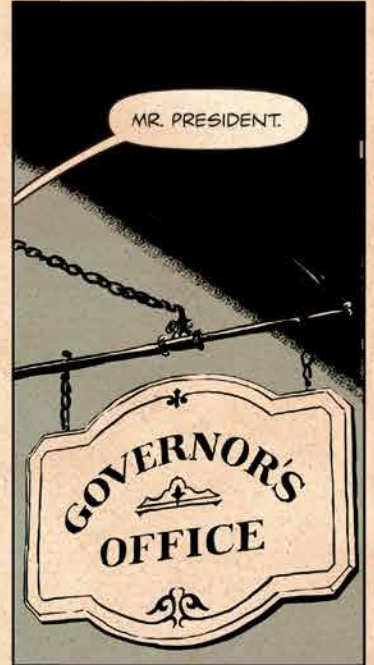
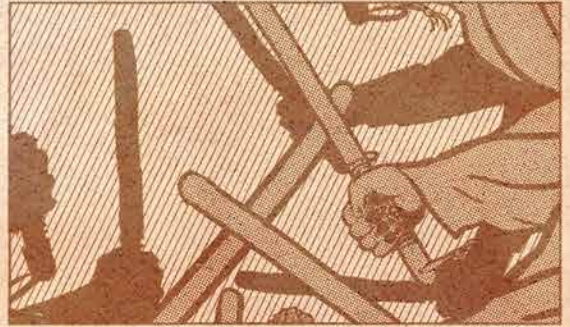


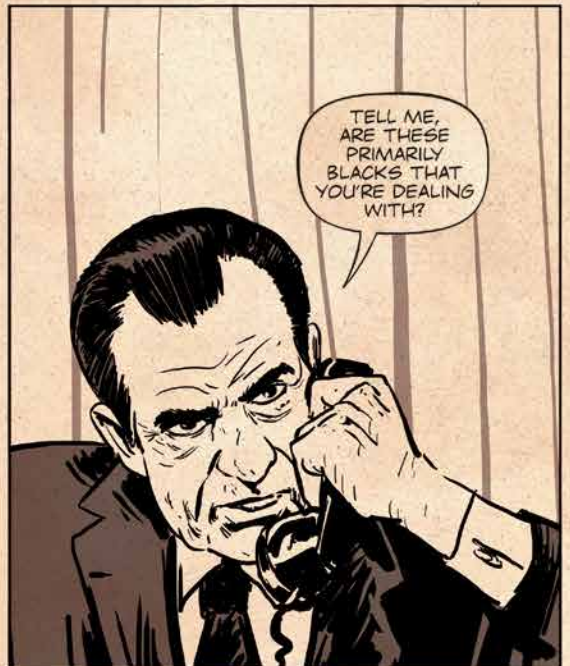
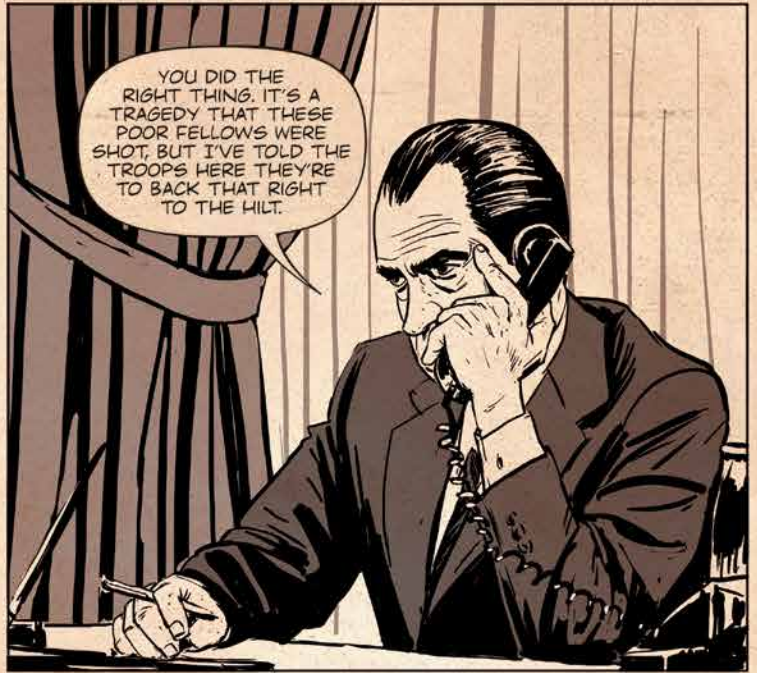


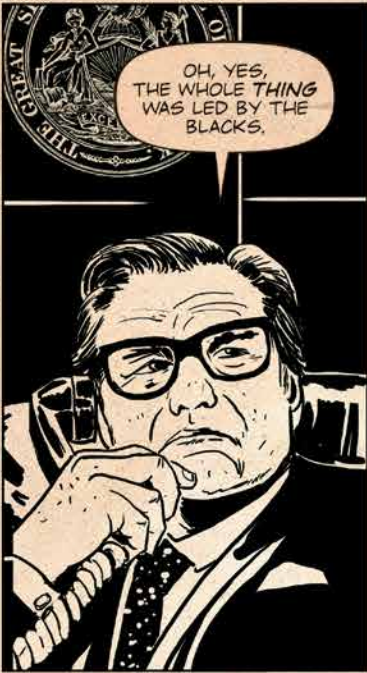
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM



ONE THOUSAND NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS, DEPUTIES, AND CORRECTION OFFICERS STORMED ATTICA PRISON.







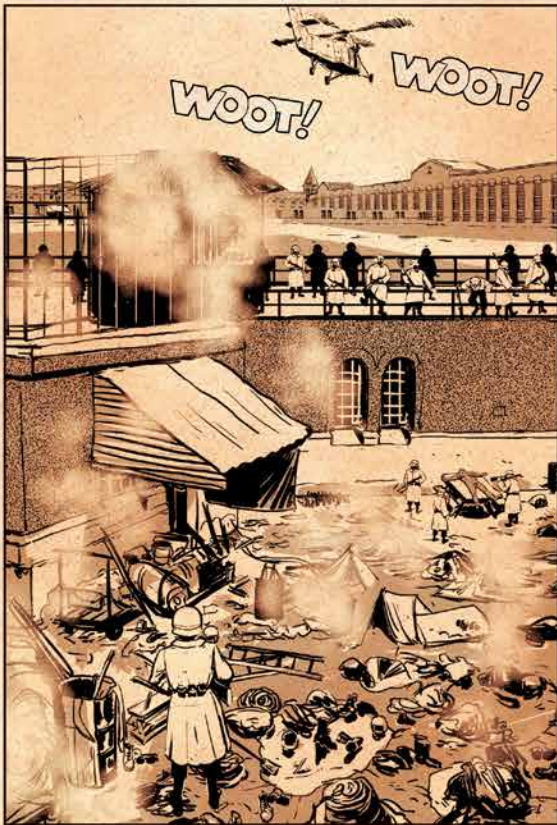
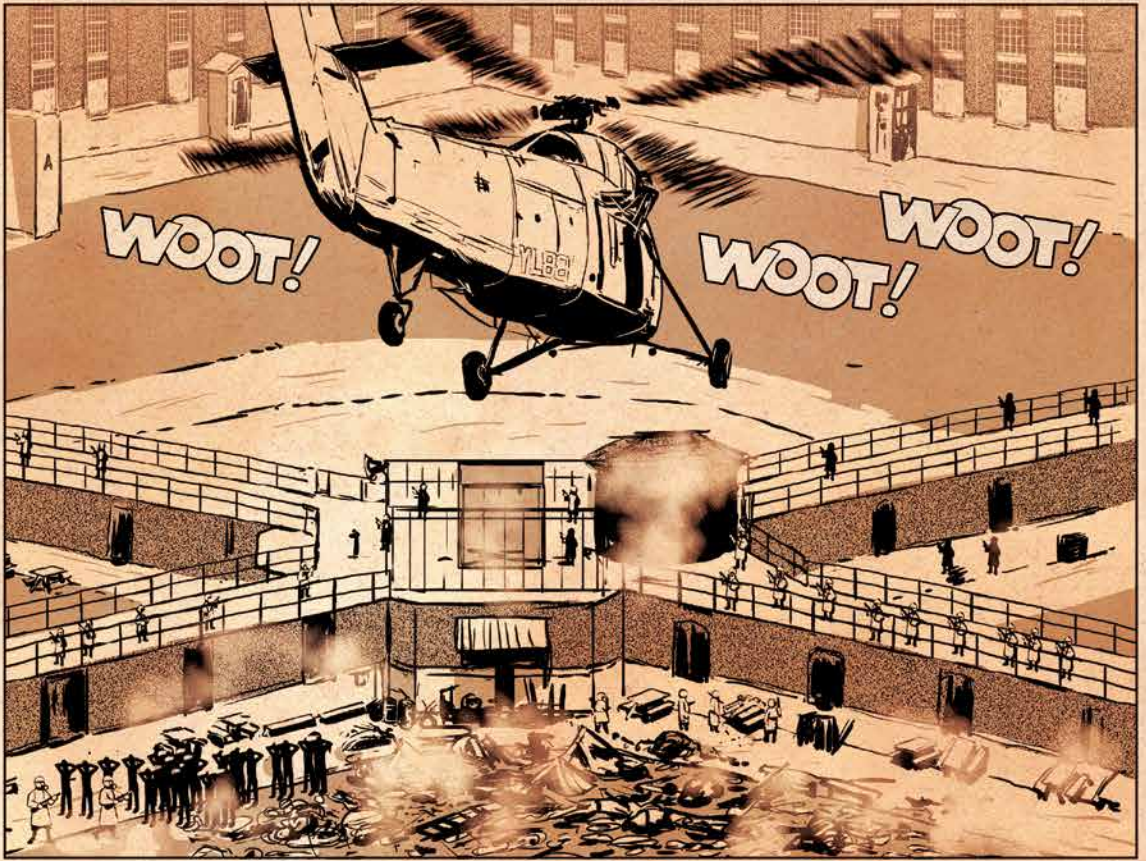
IN ATTICA, YOU GOT ONE SHOWER PER WEEK...

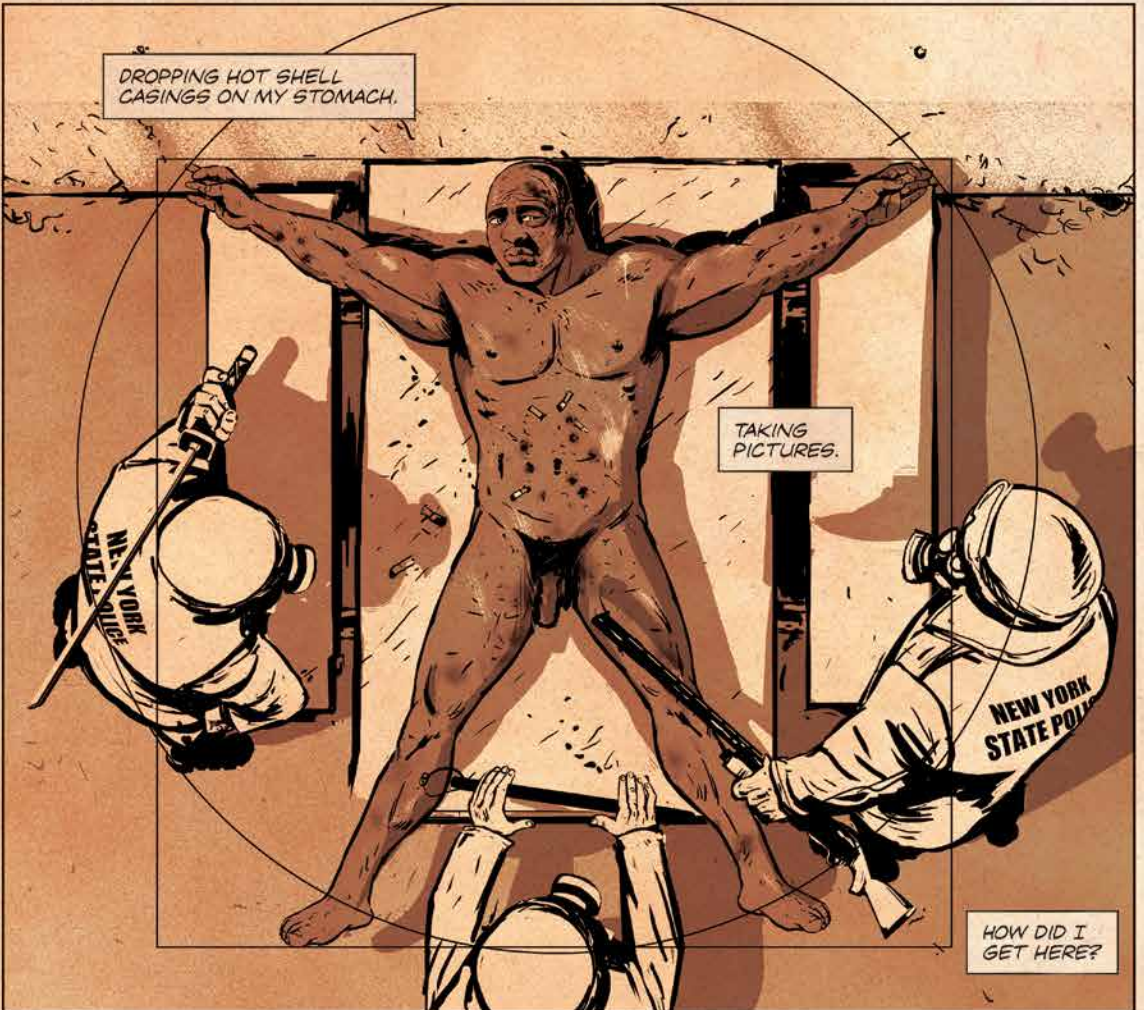
...ONE ROLL OF TOILET PAPER PER MONTH...

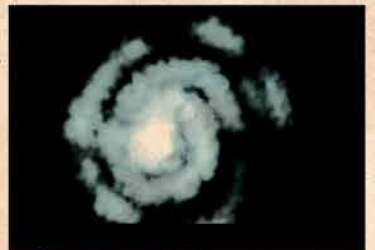
...SLAVE WAGES...

...AND THEY WONDERED WHY WE REBELLED.









THEY ALWAYS MAKE IT ABOUT EMASCULATION...

...IT'S HOW A SLAVE REBELLION ENDS.

1997

LEGAL ASSISTANT JOEY LEWIS
AND I REVISIT THE PAST.



1933



1938

WHEN I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, MY MOTHER PUT ME INTO THE FAMILY WAGON FOR THE MOVE TO NEW YORK CITY.



1950

AS A TEENAGER I WAS A PHYSICAL SPECIMEN, THE LARGEST GUY ON THE FIELD, AND I EXCELLED AT FOOTBALL. MY TEAMMATES HELD CLOSE TO ME.





THAT'S
BIG BLACK
TO YOU,
BROTHER.

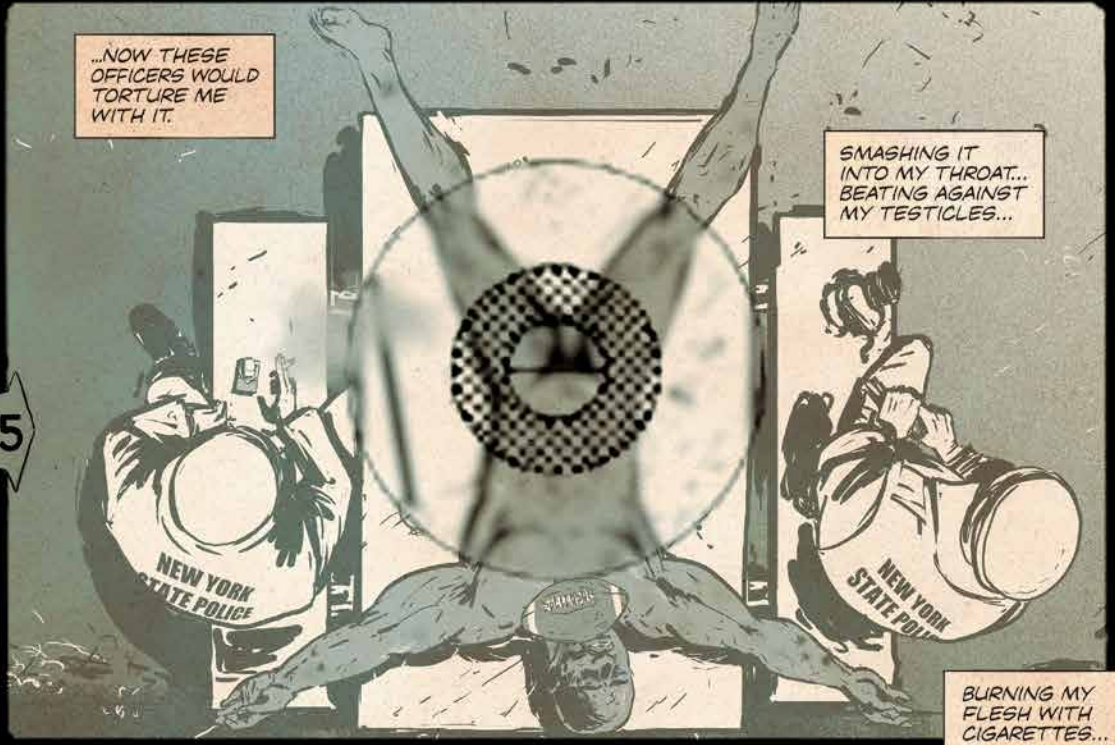
I'M BIG
BLACK.



I ALWAYS LOVED FOOTBALL, AND EVERYBODY KNEW IT, MADE ME COACH IN THE YARD...

56

125



1965

MY FRIEND IRON HORSE AND I MADE A PLAN.







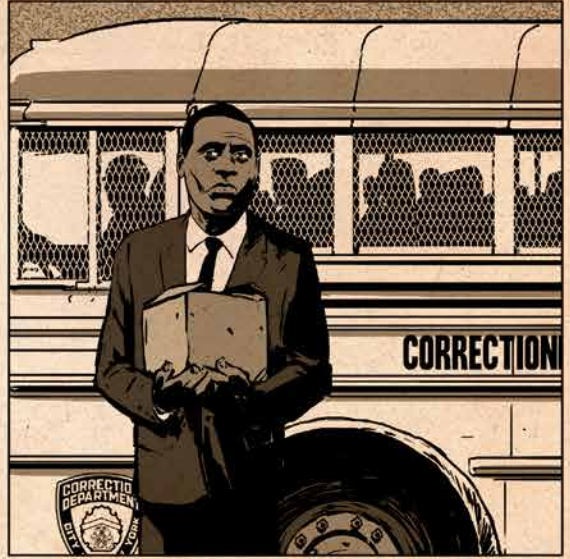
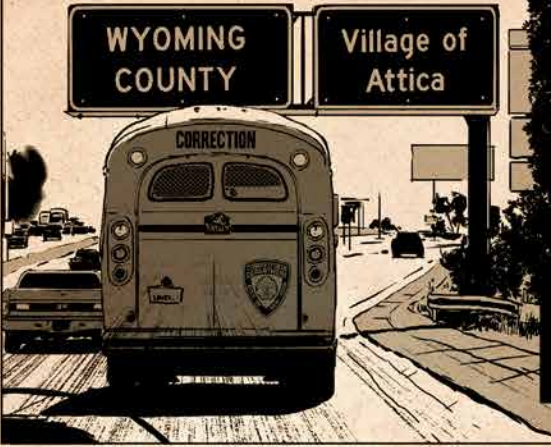


I WAS NEVER SO
HIGH IN MY LIFE
THE NIGHT THEY
BUSTED US.





INSTEAD, I WAS BEING SHIPPED UPSTATE...TO ATTICA.



FORTY DOLLARS AND A SUIT.

SAY WHAT?

FORTY DOLLARS AND A SUIT. THAT'S HOW THEY LEAVE YOU WHEN YOU GET OUT OF PRISON. FORTY DOLLARS AND A SUIT.

NOW, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN TO THAT PERSON?

I DON'T KNOW.

THE P-P-P CYCLE.

WHAT'S THAT?

PRISON. PAROLE. PRISON.

I'M LUTHER.

BIG BLACK.



LUTHER WAS
AN ARTIST.

LEONARDO
DA VINCI'S
VITRUVIAN
MAN.

IT'S ALL ABOUT
PROPORTION.

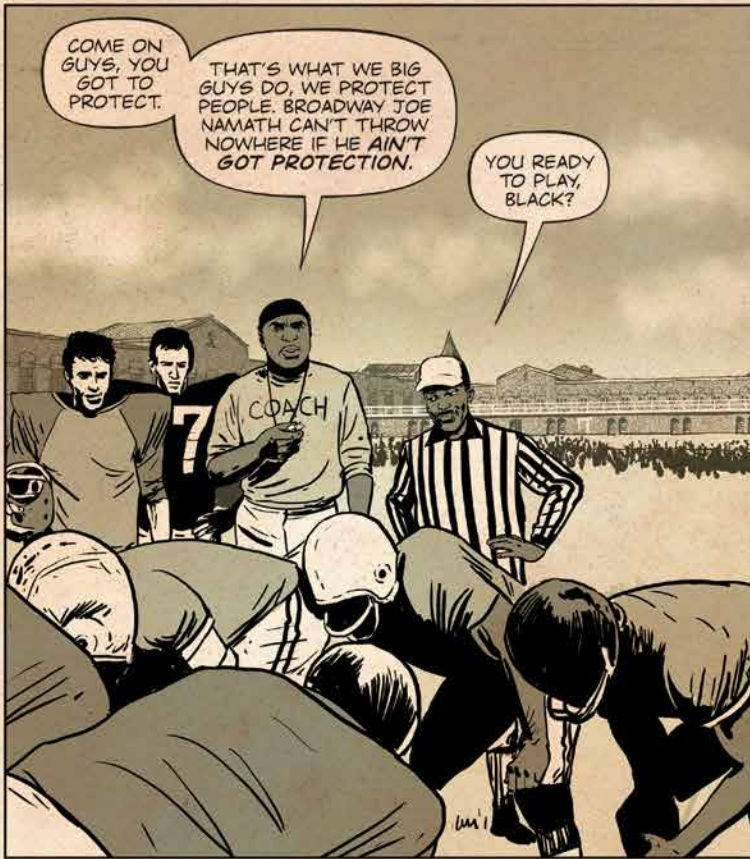
AND THIS HAD
BECOME HIS
OBSESSION.

AS LONG AS HE COULD
STILL HOLD A PENCIL, HE
WOULD SKETCH IT... GET
LOST IN IT. MAYBE SAW
THINGS OTHERS DIDN'T...

PROPORTION--
WHAT A PERSON
CAN TAKE UNTIL
THEY HAVE TO
FIGHT BACK.

HE GOT ME
THINKING, TOO.

LIGHTS
OUT!



COME ON GUYS, YOU GOT TO PROTECT.

THAT'S WHAT WE BIG GUYS DO, WE PROTECT PEOPLE. BROADWAY JOE NAMATH CAN'T THROW NOWHERE IF HE AIN'T GOT PROTECTION.

YOU READY TO PLAY, BLACK?



THE OTHER BROTHERS WOULD HANG AROUND JUST TO WATCH US PRACTICE. I COULD SEE THEY ENJOYED WATCHING ME COACH.

LET'S GO! HUSTLE, HIT, AND NEVER QUIT!



LUTHER WASN'T LIKE THE NEW ARRIVALS.



OOF!

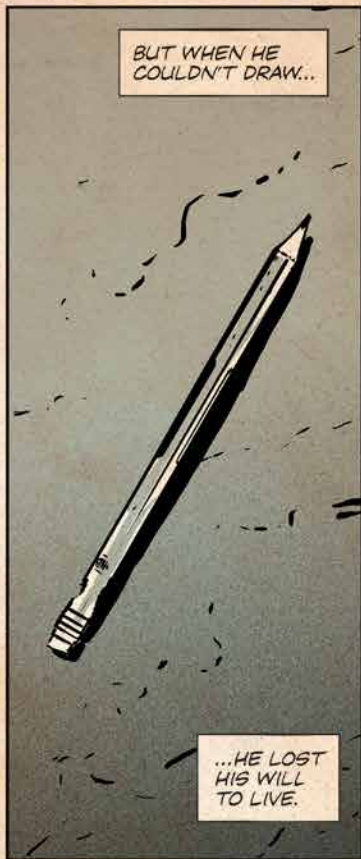


LAZARUS!

IT WAS AN EPITHET YOUNGER PRISONERS HURLED AT THE OLDER ONES FOR BEING TOO COMPLACENT WITH PRISON LIFE.



LUTHER SAW SO MUCH FROM A PRISON CELL.



BUT WHEN HE COULDN'T DRAW...

...HE LOST HIS WILL TO LIVE.

AN OLDER BLACK MAN WITH ARTHRITIS AND DIABETES GETS VERY LITTLE TREATMENT IN PRISON. AT ATTICA, YOU WERE LUCKY TO GET ANY TREATMENT AT ALL...



...AND YOU DIE WITHOUT ANYONE TAKING NOTICE.

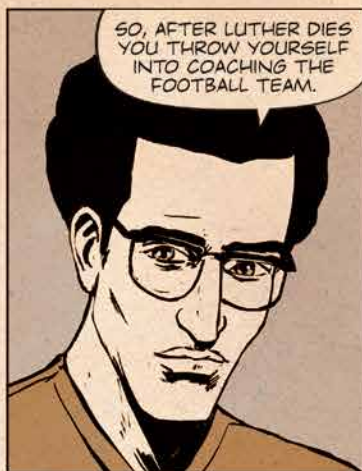


I MISS HIM EVERY DAY, BUT SOMETIMES WONDER IF IT WASN'T FOR THE BEST.



1997

GIGI'S RESTAURANT HAD THE BEST SOUL FOOD IN BUFFALO, AND WAS MY FAVORITE PLACE TO EAT DURING THE TRIAL.



SO, AFTER LUTHER DIES YOU THROW YOURSELF INTO COACHING THE FOOTBALL TEAM.



YEAH.



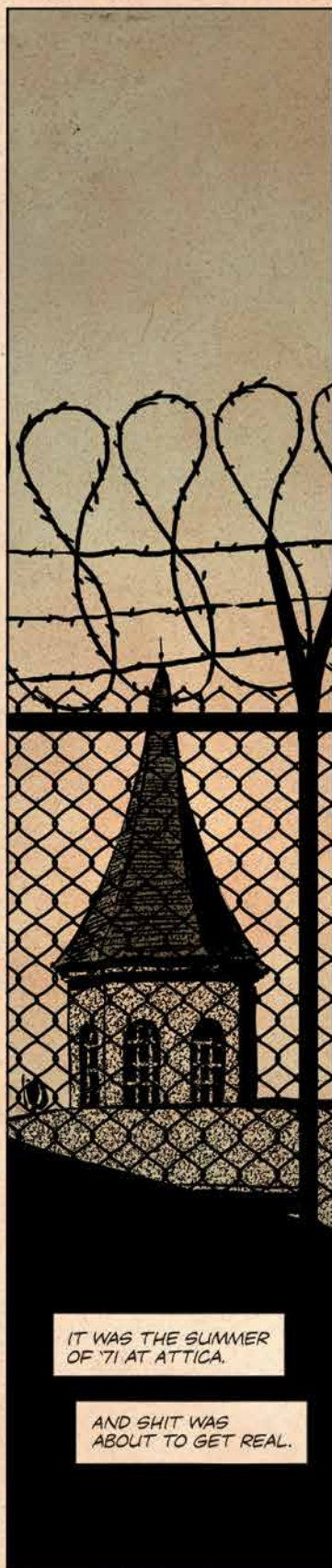
AND YOU THINK THEY PICKED YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE THE COACH?

THAT WAS PART OF IT.

REMEMBER THAT I WAS A LITTLE OLDER THAN MOST OF THEM.

I HAD BEEN A DRILL SERGEANT IN THE MILITARY. AND I COULD GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE.

ALWAYS COULD.



IT WAS THE SUMMER OF '71 AT ATTICA.

AND SHIT WAS ABOUT TO GET REAL.

THERE ARE ALL COLORS AND CREEDS HERE AT ATTICA.

BLACK

WHITE

BROWN

YELLOW

AND RED...





"AND WE ALL WORK TOGETHER IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM."



THE WARDEN'S WIFE WANTS THESE PRESSED.
YOU'RE THE WARDEN'S LAUNDRY BOY.



NO BOYS IN HERE, OFFICER HOLT.



MAN, HOW CAN YOU STAND IT? ONE SHOWER PER WEEK! ONE BAR OF SOAP PER MONTH!

ONE ROLL OF TOILET PAPER PER MONTH. AND LET'S NOT START ON THE FOOD.

UNLESS YOU HAVE BEEN FORCED TO DEAL WITH DEMEANING CONDITIONS...

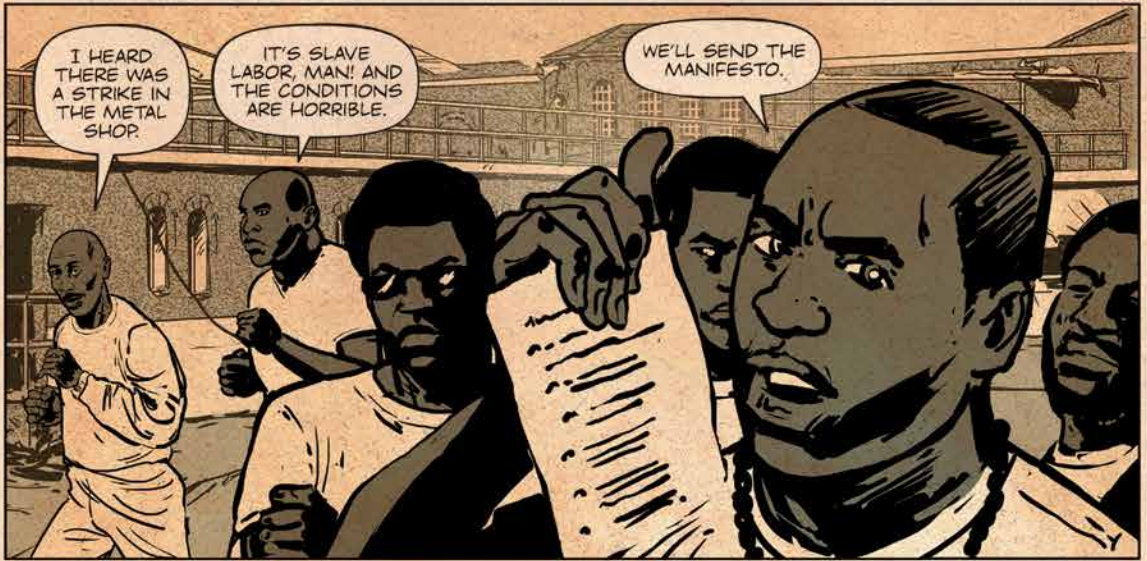


TSK.



NIGGERS IS DUMB!

...YOU WON'T UNDERSTAND THE EFFECT ON A PERSON.



I HEARD THERE WAS A STRIKE IN THE METAL SHOP.

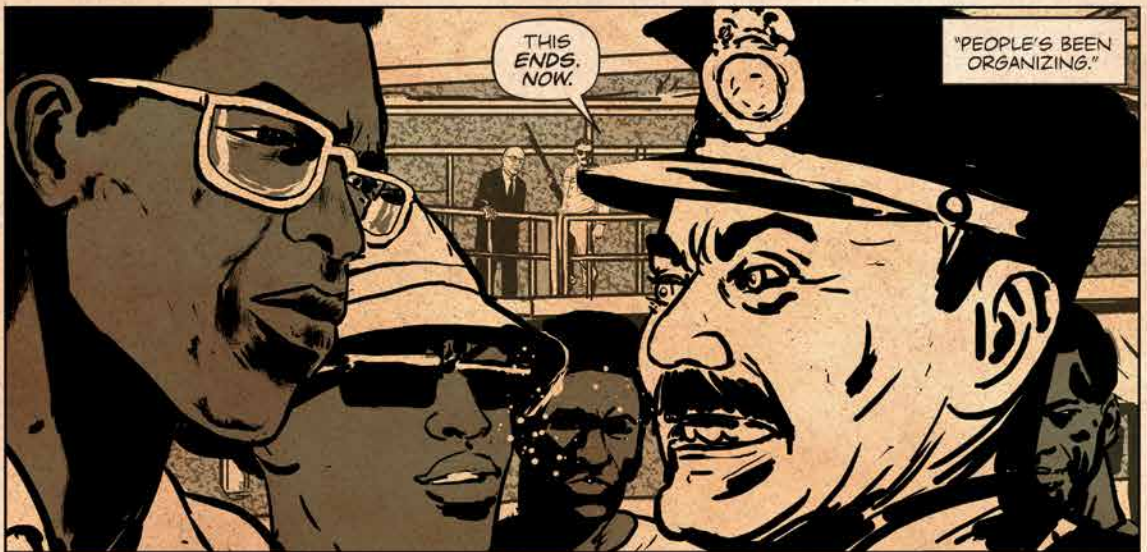
IT'S SLAVE LABOR, MAN! AND THE CONDITIONS ARE HORRIBLE.

WE'LL SEND THE MANIFESTO.



WE ARE FIRM IN OUR RESOLVE, AND WE DEMAND, AS HUMAN BEINGS, THE DIGNITY AND JUSTICE THAT IS DUE TO US BY OUR RIGHT OF BIRTH.

THEN IT WILL BE UP TO THE NEW PRISON COMMISSIONER.



THIS ENDS NOW.

"PEOPLE'S BEEN ORGANIZING."



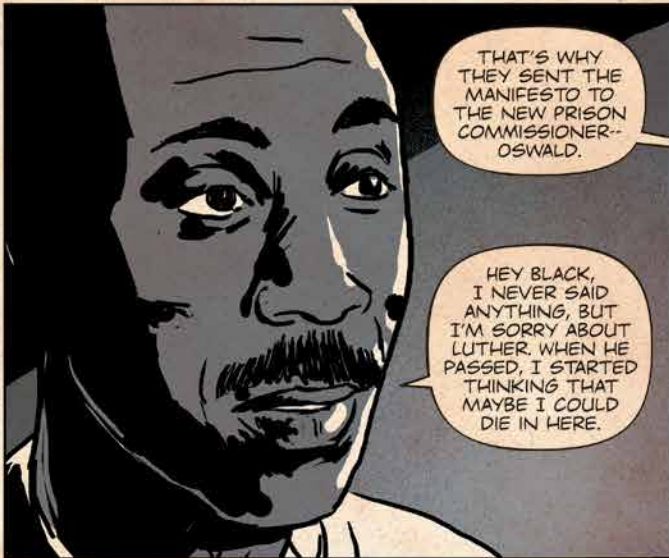
THE WARDEN IS GOING TO BE ANGRY.



HE'LL TRY TO CRUSH IT...



...HE ALREADY RUNS ATTICA LIKE HIS PERSONAL PLANTATION.



THAT'S WHY THEY SENT THE MANIFESTO TO THE NEW PRISON COMMISSIONER--OSWALD.

HEY BLACK, I NEVER SAID ANYTHING, BUT I'M SORRY ABOUT LUTHER. WHEN HE PASSED, I STARTED THINKING THAT MAYBE I COULD DIE IN HERE.



DON'T THINK LIKE THAT, CARLOS. IT WON'T SERVE YOU.

HEY, I GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.



FOR YOU, "LITTLE OLD WINEMAKER."

IT'S FOR THE FISH. THEY FAMILY TOO.



OH, MAN, THANKS!

I THINK I GOT THE HANG OF IT NOW. THEY BEEN DOING REAL WELL.



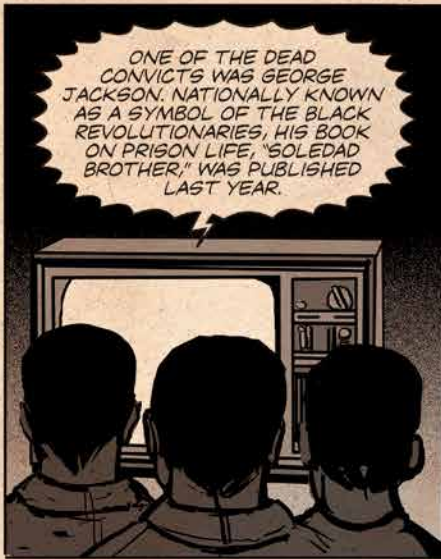
OFFICIALS AT SAN QUENTIN PRISON...



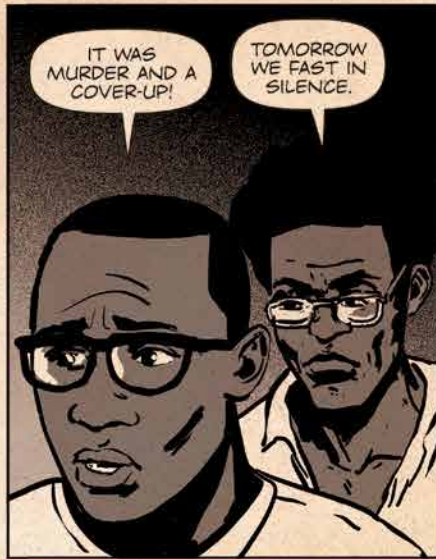
HOLD UP. YOU HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ON THE TV?



...STILL TRYING TO PIECE TOGETHER EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW...



ONE OF THE DEAD CONVICTS WAS GEORGE JACKSON. NATIONALLY KNOWN AS A SYMBOL OF THE BLACK REVOLUTIONARIES, HIS BOOK ON PRISON LIFE, "SOLEDAD BROTHER," WAS PUBLISHED LAST YEAR.



IT WAS MURDER AND A COVER-UP!

TOMORROW WE FAST IN SILENCE.



"ANY MAN WHO CAN PASS THE CIVIL SERVICE TEST CAN KILL ME TOMORROW. ANY MAN WHO PASSED IT YESTERDAY CAN KILL ME TODAY."
- GEORGE JACKSON

INMATES RITUALY TAKE TRAYS, PASS FOOD, AND SIT DOWN IN SILENCE. MANY WEAR BLACK ARMBANDS.

THE SILENCE IS UNCOMMON, CHILLING.



AND THE GUARDS ARE UNEASY.



THE INMATES HAD IT PLANNED. THEY SAID NOBODY EATS TODAY, SO NOBODY ATE. BUNCH OF SHEEP.

THIS BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN GOING ON ALL SUMMER, AND IT'S GOT TO BE STOPPED. THE NEW COMMISSIONER IS ACTUALLY COMING HERE TO LISTEN TO THEIR COMPLAINTS!

THEY AIN'T IN HERE FOR PLAYING JACKS ON THE SIDEWALK.

WELL, THIS IS GOING TO BE DEALT WITH. AND IF IT'S DONE MY WAY, YOU BEST DO WHAT I TELL YOU OR YOU GET TAKEN OUT.



INTO THIS CAULDRON ARRIVES PRISON COMMISSIONER OSWALD.

HE DOESN'T STAY LONG.



RICHARD, YOU SEE WHERE HE'S GOING?

MOTHERFUCKER IS LEAVING WITHOUT EVEN TALKING TO US!

APPARENTLY, HE HAD TAPED A MESSAGE.

I'M CERTAIN YOU REALIZE THAT COMPLETE CHANGE CANNOT BE BROUGHT ABOUT...



THAT NIGHT I DREAM
OF PRISON WRITER
ELDRIDGE CLEAVER.

MEMORIES OF
YESTERDAY WILL NOT
ASSUAGE THE TORRENTS
OF BLOOD THAT FLOW
TODAY FROM MY
CROTCH...

BUT
NO SLAVE
SHOULD DIE
A NATURAL
DEATH.

MOVE ON OVER
OR



WE'LL MOVE
ON OVER YOU

SOUL ONICE
by Eldridge Cleaver

EVER
IDENT

CLEAVER
FOR PRESIDENT



THERE IS A
POINT WHERE
CAUTION ENDS
AND COWARDICE
BEGINS.

CLANG



CLANG

THERE'S SOME
UNUSUAL ACTIVITY
JUMPING OFF
HERE.

CLANG

POWDER KEG...



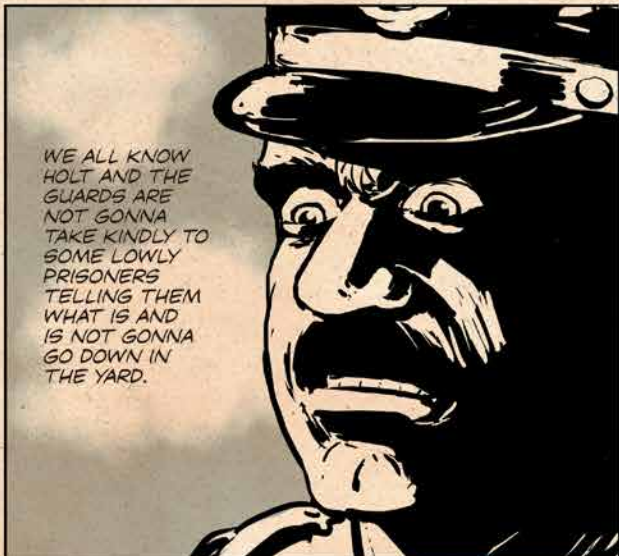
...MEET SPARK:
THE DEWER
INCIDENT.

TWO GUYS
ARE IN THE
YARD SPARRING,
HITTING KNEE
CAPS.



HOLT'S CALLS ARE DROWNED OUT BY THE NOISE IN THE YARD. SO, IN ANGER, HE DISPATCHES TWO GUARDS TO INTERCEDE.

A CROWD OF OFFICERS AND INMATES FORMS AROUND THE CONFRONTATION. A WHITE INMATE, LAMORY, STEPS IN TO DIFFUSE THE SITUATION.



SO, AS DEWER LIES IN BED READING, FOUR GUARDS ARRIVE.



AFTER REMOVING DEWER, THE GUARDS MOVE TO LAMORY.



LAMORY DOESN'T RESIST, AND WALKS OUT CALMLY.

INMATES IN THE CELLBLOCK REACT.

AN INMATE, ORTIZ, THROWS A SOUP CAN THAT HITS A GUARD IN THE HEAD. ONE GUARD YELLS BACK AT ORTIZ, AS THE INJURED GUARD IS ATTENDED TO.



AS A NURSE BANDAGES THE INJURED GUARD, HOLT ADDRESSES THE GUARDS.



TO KEEP-LOCK MEANT AN INMATE STAYED LOCKED IN HIS CELL.



YEAH, THAT'S WHAT HE THOUGHT.



WHEN THE BELL RINGS FOR BREAKFAST, ALL CELL DOORS OPEN EXCEPT FOR ORTIZ'S.



WELCOME TO TIMES SQUARE: THE CENTER OF THE PRISON THAT KEPT THE FOUR CELL BLOCKS LOCKED AND SEPARATED.

IF YOU CONTROLLED TIMES SQUARE THEN YOU CONTROLLED ATTICA.



TIME TO TEACH THEM A LESSON, LIEUTENANT!

I'LL LET THE GUARDS KNOW... AND QUINN'S RUNNING TIMES SQUARE.

BOLT THE GATE AFTER FIVE COMPANY PASSES. NO ONE GOES OUTSIDE TODAY.



MEANWHILE, LIEUTENANT CURTISS LOCKS THE DOOR TO THE YARD.



LET THEM STEW ON THIS.

CLICK

ANOTHER GUARD LEADS FIVE COMPANY THROUGH TIMES SQUARE. THE DEADBOLT LOCKS BEHIND THEM.

FIVE COMPANY IS MARCHED DOWN THE HALLWAY. THEY STOP AT THE A-YARD DOOR.

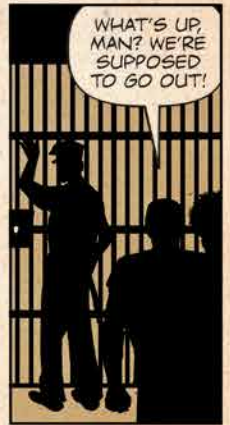
THE PUZZLED GUARD ATTEMPTS TO OPEN THE LOCKED DOOR.

EVERYONE IS TENSE.



WHAT THE--? IT'S LOCKED.

I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW THEY FORGOT TO TELL THE HACK.



WHAT'S UP, MAN? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO GO OUT!

STAY HERE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.



LIEUTENANT CURTISS ENTERS FROM BEHIND.



NOBODY'S GOING IN THE YARD TODAY. YOU'RE GOING BACK TO YOUR CELLS.

YOU NO GOOD MOTHER-!

THE INMATE PUNCHES THE LIEUTENANT IN THE HEAD, SENDING HIM DOWN, AND EVERYONE JUST PILES ON BEFORE BEATING THE GUARD AS WELL.



AND SO IT BEGINS.

MEANWHILE, I'M COUNTING OUT CIGARETTES AND CROSSING OFF CONTRACTS ON MY NOTEPAD AND CARLOS IS STASHING EVERYTHING IN NEATLY WITH THE FOLDED LAUNDRY.

BROTHERS ARE FREEING OTHER INMATES, AND GRABBING OTHER GUARDS. THEY PICK UP ANYTHING THEY CAN FIND TO EQUIP THEMSELVES: FOOTBALL HELMETS, BASEBALL BATS, SLATS OF WOOD...



WE START TO HEAR THE COMMOTION.



THE GATE OPENS LONG ENOUGH TO LET THE BEATEN GUARD RUN THROUGH.

BUT THE BOLT ON THE GATE WAS DEFECTIVE AND GAVE WAY...

...IT CAME CRASHING DOWN ON OFFICER QUINN AS THE PRISONERS CAME THROUGH.

TIMES SQUARE HAS FALLEN.

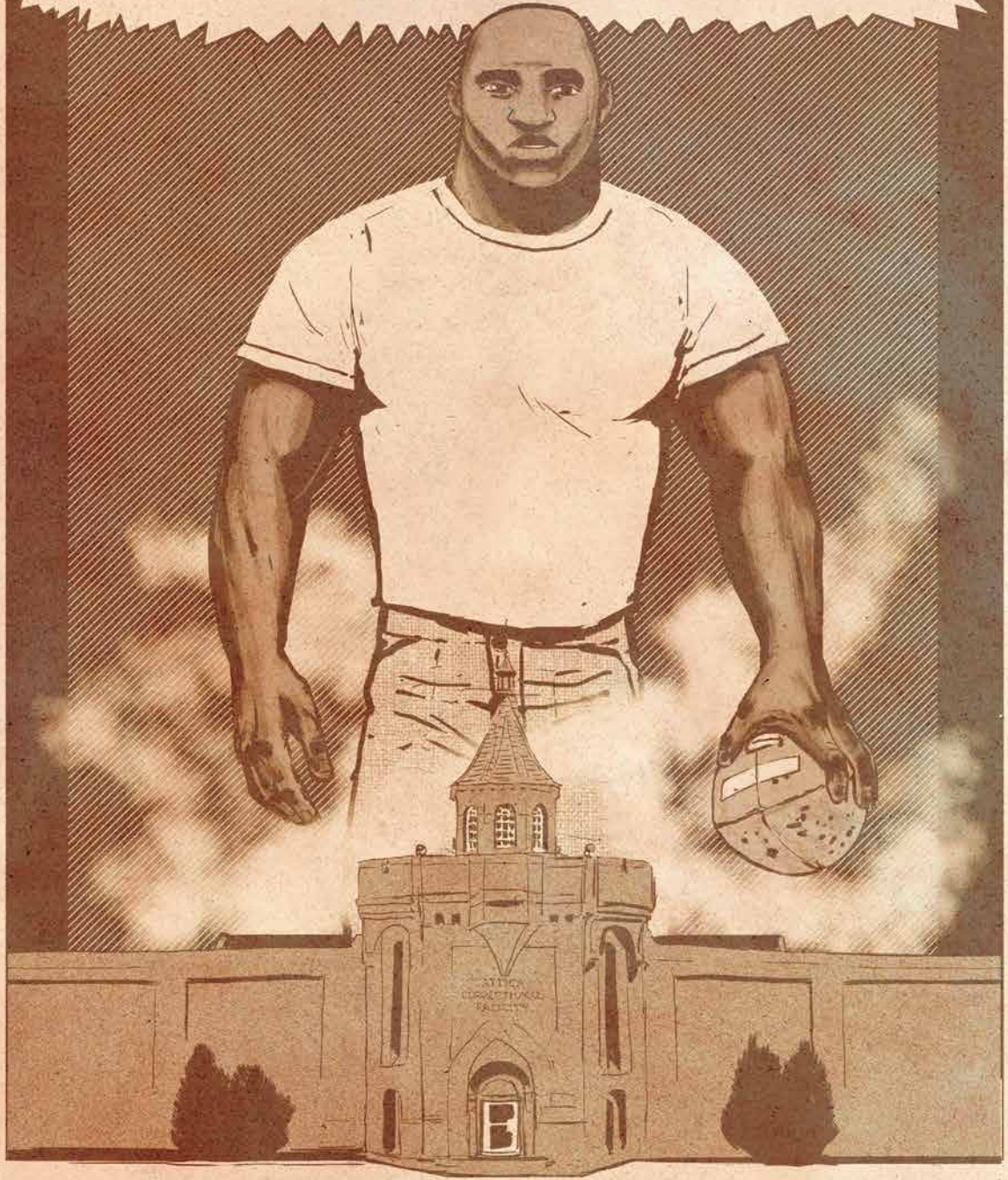


September 9, 1971

The Attica Prison rebellion had begun.

THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

THE UPRISING!



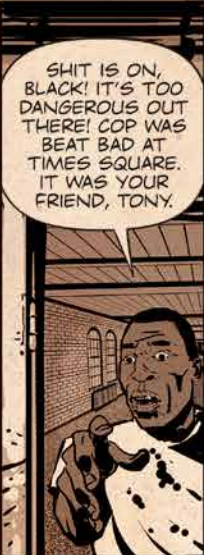
THE PRISON ALARM FINALLY SOUNDS.

RRRIIING



THE PHONE IS DEAD.

EVERYBODY GET BACK TO WORK. EVERYTHING IS UNDER CONTROL.



SHIT IS ON, BLACK! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS OUT THERE! COP WAS BEAT BAD AT TIMES SQUARE. IT WAS YOUR FRIEND, TONY.

BROTHERS WERE STREAMING IN TO GET OUT THROUGH THE BACK OF THE LAUNDRY.

WE COULD HEAR THE SOUND OF THE UPRISING GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER.

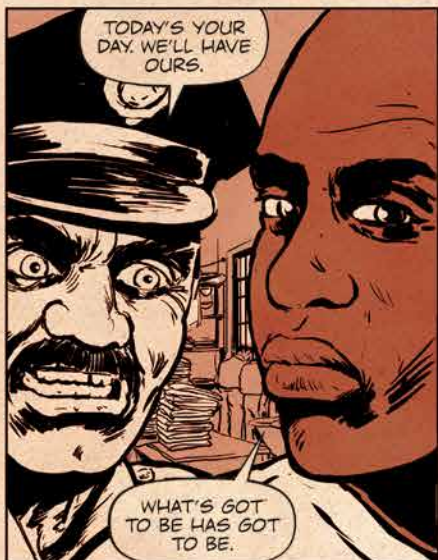


YOU WANT MY KEYS, BLACK?

YEAH.



YOU TELL THEM TO SEND AN AMBULANCE 'CAUSE THERE ARE HURT PEOPLE IN HERE.



TODAY'S YOUR DAY. WE'LL HAVE OURS.

WHAT'S GOT TO BE HAS GOT TO BE.

MY MAMA ALWAYS SAID, "DON'T TROUBLE TROUBLE TILL TROUBLE TROUBLES YOU." HERE WAS TROUBLE.



THIS IS MADNESS GOING ON, BOBBY.



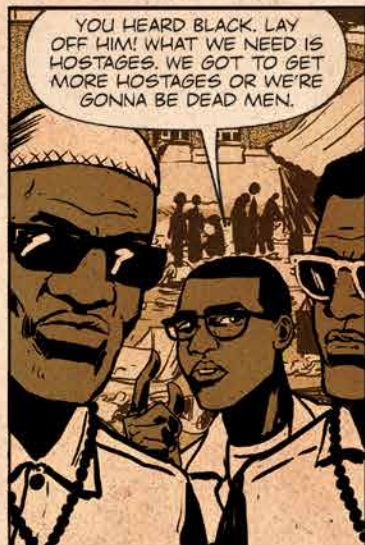
MAYBE WE SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE.



THE TIME IS ALWAYS RIGHT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

I HEAR YOU, SIX. I'M GETTING TONY.

TONY WAS A GUARD, BUT HE WAS ALSO MY FRIEND.



TROOPERS BEGIN TO ARRIVE OUTSIDE THE PRISON, SIRENS BLARING.

THEY'RE WEARING FULL RIOT GEAR AND MOVE THROUGH THE HALLWAYS, SURPRISING PRISONERS AND LIBERATING GUARDS.



I ENTER D-YARD AND SEE A MASS OF INMATES.

TROOPERS TAKE POSITION ON THE CATWALK SURROUNDING THE YARD.

HERBERT X, RICHARD X CLARK, AND BROTHER CHAMPEN ARE WITH OTHER PRISON LEADERS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE.

THE HOSTAGES THE INMATES COLLECTED SIT ON THE GROUND, BLINDFOLDED AND WATCHED OVER BY MUSLIM GUARDS.

I LEAVE TONY WITH THEM. HE'LL BE SAFE. OFFICER QUINN IS BLOODIED AND UNCONSCIOUS AFTER GETTING KNOCKED OUT BY THE COLLAPSED GATE.





IS THAT YOU, BIG BLACK?

TAKE IT EASY, TONY. I'M GONNA GET YOU OUT OF HERE.



BROTHER HERB, I GOT SOMEONE HERE BEAT UP BAD. WE GOT TO GET HIM OUT OF HERE.



JUST STAY BY US, BLACK, AND WE'LL ALL BE FINE.



C-BLOCK SECURED. CONTINUING FORWARD.

NEGATIVE. HOLD POSITIONS. ESTABLISH SECURITY POST WHERE YOU ARE. THE COMMISSIONER IS COMING IN TO NEGOTIATE.

COPY.



WHAT THE HELL DOES THE COMMISSIONER WANT TO WAIT FOR? CHRISTMAS?

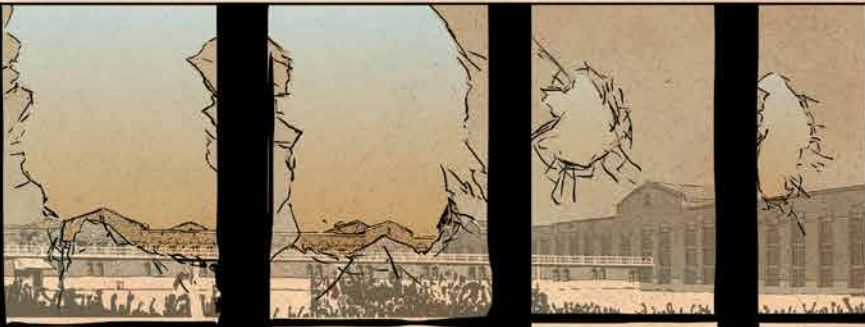


WE ARE ONE, AND WE WILL SPEAK AS ONE.

AND THOUGH THEY DID NOT DO THE SAME FOR US, WE WILL TREAT OUR CAPTIVES, WHO WERE ONCE OUR CAPTORS, LIKE MEN. OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS HAVE SWORN TO PROTECT THEM WITH THEIR LIVES...



"... THEY WILL NOT BE HARMED."



YOU
TELL 'EM,
BROTHER!



NOW,
BROTHERS,
DIG WHERE I'M
COMIN' FROM.
WE ARE THE
VANGUARD!



WE ARE STANDING
HERE FOR ALL THE
OPPRESSED PEOPLES
OF THE WORLD, AND WE
ARE NOT GONNA GIVE
UP OR KNUCKLE UNDER,
WE GONNA SHOW
THE WAY!



THOSE TROOPERS
LOOK LIKE THEY
WOULD LOVE NOTHING
MORE THAN TO GET
A SHOT AT US.

CONCURRENTLY,
THESE WERE THE
TIMES OF "LAW AND
ORDER"...

SOCK IT
TO ME!

...AND
CROOKS.



AND THE PERSON
MAKING THE DECISIONS
FOR ATTICA WAS RICH
AND POWERFUL...

HI YA,
FELLA.

...AND
ARROGANT.



BORN
WITH A SILVER
SPOON IN HIS
MOUTH...

...AND TO
A FAMILY SO
WEALTHY...

...THEY MADE A
JINGLE ABOUT
THEM...



John D. Rockefeller
read a newspaper
announcing the
birth of his third
grandson, Nelson.

July 8, 1908
Oil on canvas

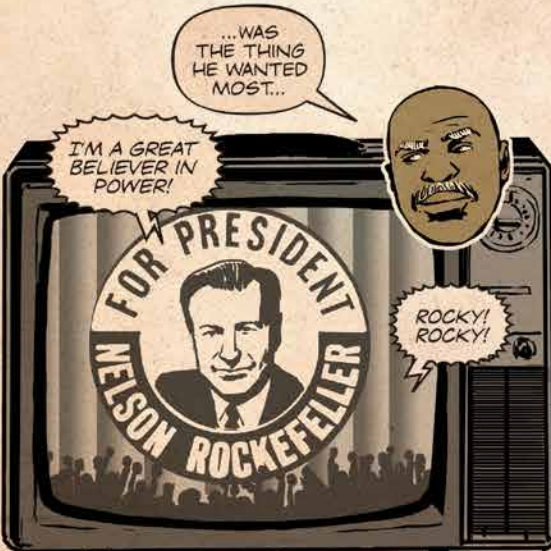
...BETTER COFFEE
ROCKEFELLER'S
MONEY CAN'T
BUY...



...SO, HE SUED
THEIR ASSES.
BUT WHAT HE
COULDN'T
BUY...

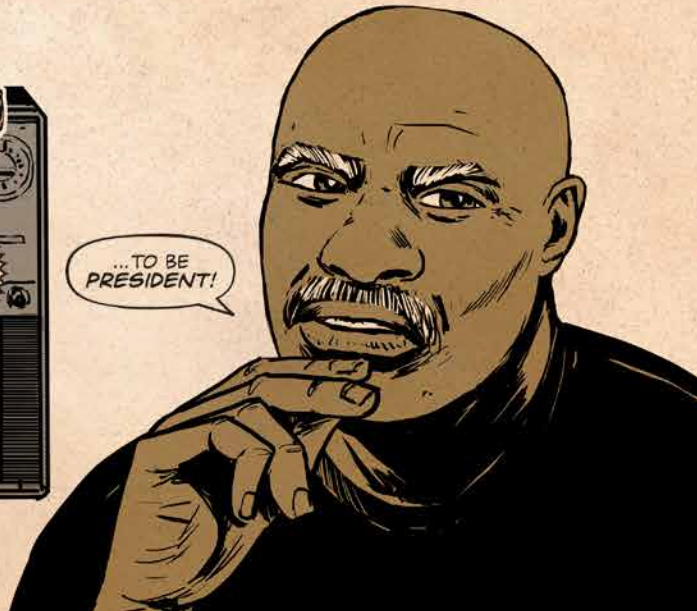
...WAS
THE THING
HE WANTED
MOST...

I'M A GREAT
BELIEVER IN
POWER!



ROCKY!
ROCKY!

...TO BE
PRESIDENT!

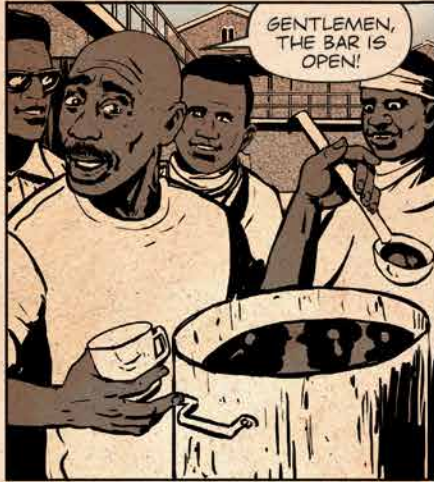


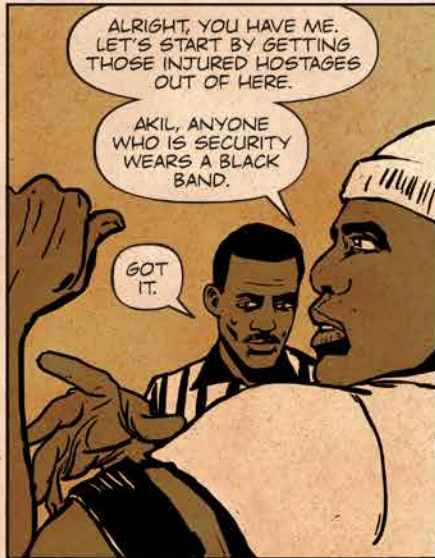
THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

MANIFESTO!



JUST AS I START TO WORRY, CARLOS PUSHES HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD, CARRYING A POT OF HOOCH FOR THE INMATES.





VARIOUS ONLOOKERS BEGIN TO ARRIVE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE PRISON.

STATE TROOPERS CONTINUE TO ARRIVE, AS WELL AS FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE HOSTAGES.

PRISON COMMISSIONER OSWALD RETURNS.

TROOPERS, GUARDS, AND WARDEN MANCUSI WAIT AT THE GATE.

I, ALONG WITH RICHARD X CLARK, AKIL, AND A GROUP OF INMATES, WEAR WHITE FLAGS AS WE DELIVER THE HOSTAGES TO THEM.

OFFICER QUINN IS CARRIED.

MY FRIEND TONY IS AMONGST THE INJURED.

THE WARDEN HAS TO RESTRAIN ANGRY GUARDS.

WE MEET THE WARDEN IN THE DMZ--THE DEAD MAN'S ZONE. WE DON'T CONTROL IT. THEY DON'T CONTROL IT.

BUNCH OF NIGGERS!

TAKE IT EASY, HOLT.

WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH, BLACK?



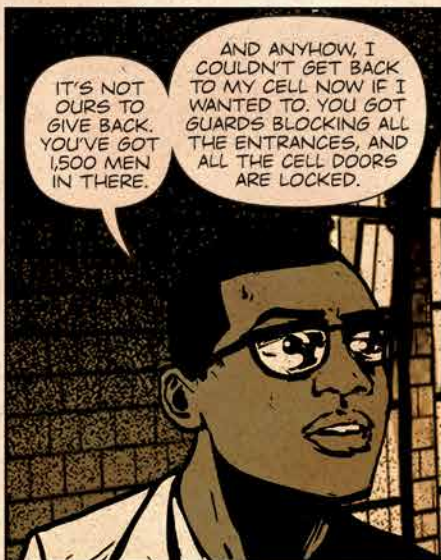
I CAN'T, TONY. I'M IN THIS NOW. MAYBE BY STAYING, I CAN HELP.

ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE ME BACK CONTROL OF THIS INSTITUTION AND RETURN TO YOUR CELLS?



IT'S NOT OURS TO GIVE BACK. YOU'VE GOT 1,500 MEN IN THERE.

AND ANYHOW, I COULDN'T GET BACK TO MY CELL NOW IF I WANTED TO. YOU GOT GUARDS BLOCKING ALL THE ENTRANCES, AND ALL THE CELL DOORS ARE LOCKED.



YOU'RE THE ONES POINTING THE GUNS.



SHUT UP, BOY!



WE WANT TO SPEAK WITH THE COMMISSIONER. WE HAVE A LIST OF DEMANDS.



COME BACK HERE! I'M NOT FINISHED WITH YOU!



YEAH, BUT WE'RE FINISHED WITH YOU.



DON'T WORRY, WE KNOW WHO YOU ALL ARE. WE'LL REMEMBER YOU WHEN THE TIME COMES. OUR DAY IS COMING!



WE KNOW HE MEANS IT.





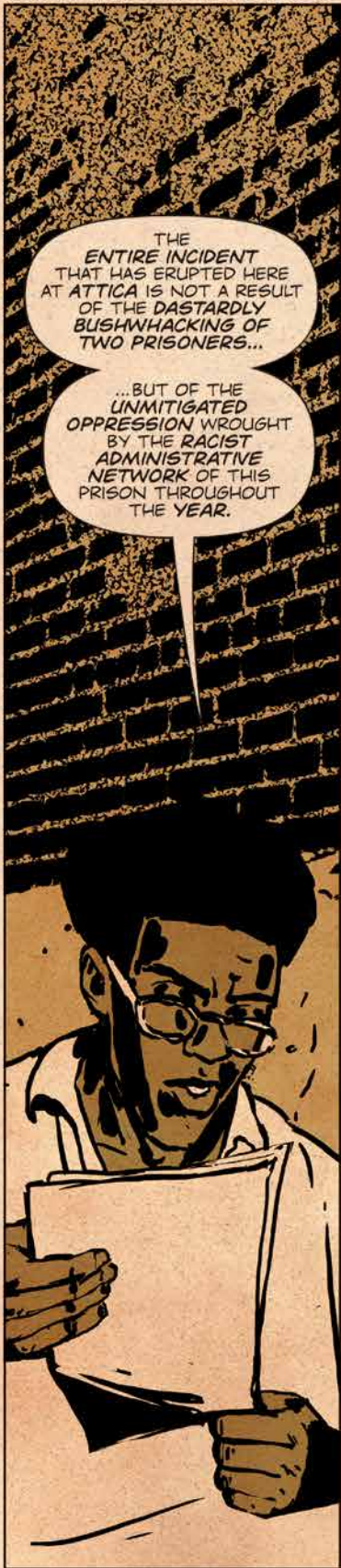
Big Black

Herbert X Blyden

Roger Champen

Richard X Clark

L.D. Barkley



THE ENTIRE INCIDENT THAT HAS ERUPTED HERE AT ATTICA IS NOT A RESULT OF THE DASTARDLY BUSHWHACKING OF TWO PRISONERS...

...BUT OF THE UNMITIGATED OPPRESSION WROUGHT BY THE RACIST ADMINISTRATIVE NETWORK OF THIS PRISON THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.



WE ARE MEN!

WE ARE NOT BEASTS!

AND WE DO NOT INTEND TO BE BEATEN OR DRIVEN AS SUCH.



WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE...

...IS BUT THE SOUND BEFORE THE FURY OF THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED.

INMATES WATCH THE NEWSCAST.

THE COURTYARD INSIDE THE WALLS REMSEMBLES A MILITARY BIVOUAC, WITH THE INMATES RUNNING THE TENT-LIKE COURTYARD CITY ON EXACT TIME SCHEDULES.



THERE ARE 38 HOSTAGES NOW, 11 OF THEM CIVILIAN WORKERS. USING THE HOSTAGES AS A BARGAINING TOOL, THE INMATES AGREED TO TALKS TODAY WITH PRISON OFFICIALS...



...PRISONERS WOULD ONLY TALK TO NEW YORK STATE CORRECTIONS COMMISSIONER RUSSELL OSWALD. THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORT OF WHAT THE PRISONERS ARE DEMANDING.



THAT'S BULLSHIT! THEY KNOW WHAT WE'RE ASKING FOR!

COMMISSIONER OSWALD COMES IN WITH THE "OBSERVERS," A COMMITTEE OF LAWYERS, JOURNALISTS, AND ACTIVISTS REQUESTED BY THE INMATES TO STAND WITNESS TO NEGOTIATIONS.

MY JOB IS TO MAKE SURE THEY ALL GET IN AND OUT SAFELY.

OSWALD RUNS THROUGH THE LIST OF DEMANDS.

...APPLY STATE MINIMUM WAGE LAWS TO ALL STATE INSTITUTIONS. STOP SLAVE LABOR. ALLOW ALL PRISONERS TO BE POLITICALLY ACTIVE WITHOUT INTIMIDATION OF REPRISALS. I'M IN FAVOR OF THAT...



HE AGREES WITH US ON JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING.

GIVE US TRUE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. I'M IN FAVOR OF THAT TOO.

WE ARE ALL IN FAVOR OF THESE THINGS! WHEN ARE CHANGES GOING TO BE IMPLEMENTED?



BLACK, DON'T SPEND SO MUCH TIME IN FRONT OF THESE TV CAMERAS. IT WON'T GO WELL.

MAN, I'M NOT DOING THIS FOR ME. IT GOES HOW IT GOES.



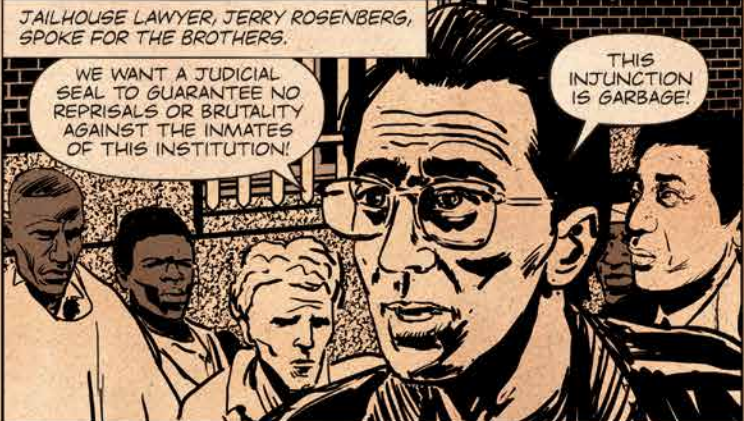
THE MAIN STICKING POINT FOR PRISONERS IS THE FEAR OF REPRISALS AND RETALIATION.

HERBERT X HAD PARTICIPATED IN REBELLIONS AT AUBURN AND THE TOMBS. THE RESULT WAS BEATINGS AND LONGER SENTENCES. SO, WHEN THE COMMISSIONER BROUGHT AN INJUNCTION, THE BROTHERS WERE WARY.

JAILHOUSE LAWYER, JERRY ROSENBERG, SPOKE FOR THE BROTHERS.

WE WANT A JUDICIAL SEAL TO GUARANTEE NO REPRISALS OR BRUTALITY AGAINST THE INMATES OF THIS INSTITUTION!

THIS INJUNCTION IS GARBAGE!





TENSIONS ARE HIGH, IT FEELS LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO JUMP OFF AGAIN.





RACIST COP'S A COWARD!



YOU SEEM TO BE A STRONG FORCE...IF YOU GAVE ME A SIGN OF GOOD FAITH, I COULD--

MAN, IT AIN'T ABOUT YOU OR ME. IT'S ABOUT PRISONS! GET THE GOVERNOR. YOU'RE NOT ACCOUNTABLE. YOU'RE JUST A PUPPET. NOTHIN'S GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU OR THROUGH YOU.

N-NOW, WAIT A MINUTE, PAL--



I AIN'T YOUR PAL! GET THE GOVERNOR HERE!

OSWALD HAS NO REAL POWER, AND HE KNOWS IT. ROCKEFELLER IS GOING TO BE THE ONE WHO ENDS THIS THING, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.



GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER, THE GREAT WOULD-BE PRESIDENT, WAS A RUTHLESS CAMPAIGNER.

★ HE CAR

ROCKEFELLER IS IN THE CLUTCH OF A ROARING, HOUSE-WRECKING, PARTY-SMASHING EGOMANIA.

for President

ROCKEFELLER

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN UNDER THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

HE'S DOING WHAT HE DID IN 1960 WHEN, HAVING FAILED TO TAKE THE PRESIDENCY FROM NIXON, HE DEGRADED HIM. HE WANTS TO RULE OR RUIN.

MEANWHILE, RIGHT OUTSIDE THE PRISON...

WHEN WILL I KNOW IF MY HUSBAND IS SAFE?

YOU CODDLE THESE CRIMINALS!



I'M NOT GOING BACK IN THERE ANYMORE-- NOT THAT I'M AFRAID...

BUT THIS MORNING, THEY TRIED TO TAKE ME. I CAN'T DO ANYBODY ANY GOOD IF I'M JUST ANOTHER HOSTAGE.



THEY WANT THE WORLD!

AW, MAN, I TOLD YOU WE COULDN'T TRUST THIS COP.

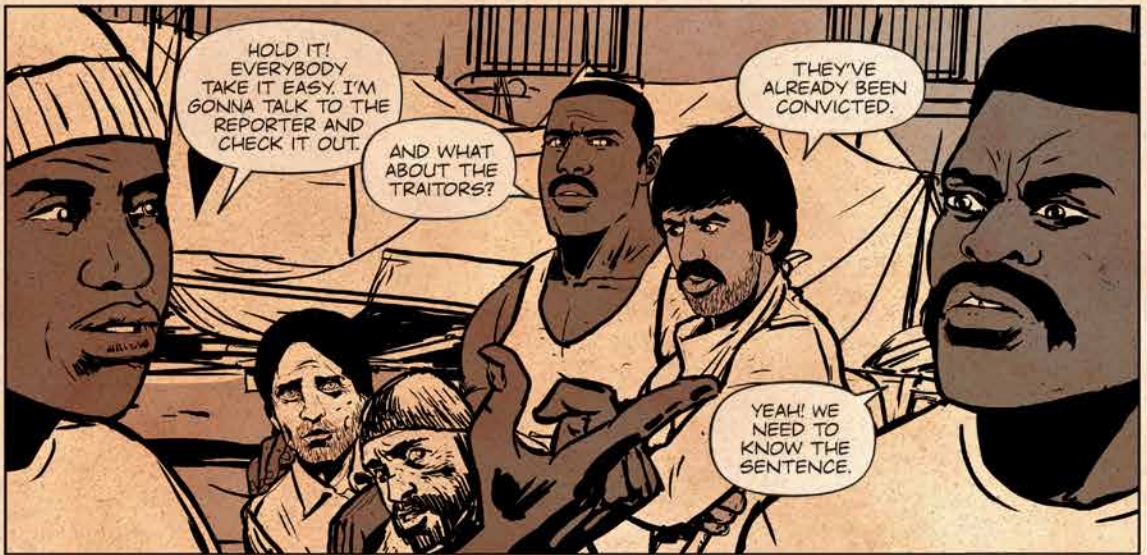
DON'T THAT TURKEY KNOW WE'RE WATCHING HIM ON TV?



WHAT ABOUT MY SON WHO'S HELD IN THERE? WHAT ABOUT HIM?

EVERYBODY KNOWS OSWALD IS IN OVER HIS HEAD.

IN D-YARD, TWO INMATES ARE BROUGHT BEFORE ME, ACCUSED BY THE OTHER INMATES OF BREAKING RULES.



PEOPLE ARE GETTING RATTLED. LOSING THEIR COOL.



I HEAR A GROAN COMING FROM INSIDE THE PRISON.



THIS IS THE BEST I CAN DO, AND THEY KNOW IT.

I KNOW THERE ARE MEN SLEEPING OUTSIDE, ENJOYING THE STARS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DECADES, BUT I HAVE A SICK FEELING AS I WALK BACK TO THE YARD.



NOW, IF THERE IS ANYBODY IN THIS LAND THAT THOROUGHLY BELIEVES THAT THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH, THEY HAVE NOT OFTEN LET THEIR PRESENCE BE KNOWN.



HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA HA HA



HEY, BOBBY, WAKE UP.

YEAH, BLACK?

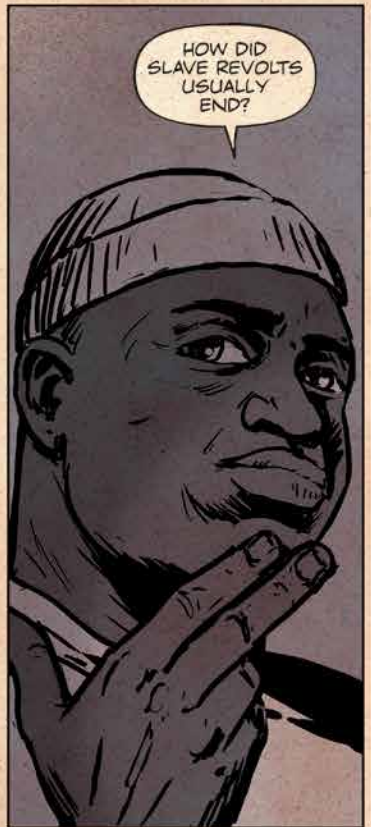


TAKE THIS CONDENSED MILK. WHEN THEY GAS US, RUB IT ON YOUR SKIN. IT'LL COOL THE BURN.



HOW YOU KNOW THEY'RE GONNA COME IN?

HOW DID SLAVE REVOLTS USUALLY END?



THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

D.M.Z.

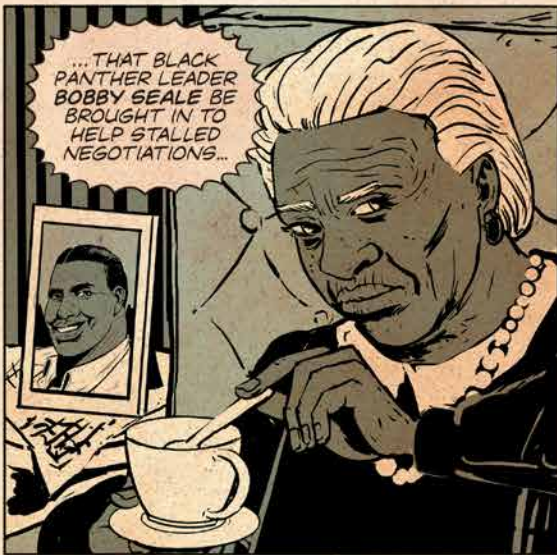
(DEAD MAN ZONE)



September 11, 1971



THE OBSERVER COMMITTEE AT ATTICA MADE A PUBLIC REQUEST TODAY...



... BUT THE DEATH OF ONE OF THE GUARDS HAS HARDENED THE POSITION OF PRISON OFFICIALS...



... AND THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS TONIGHT THAT POLICE WILL BE SENT INTO THE CELL-BLOCK IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THE REST OF THE HOSTAGES BY FORCE.



AT FIRST THE WARDEN REFUSED TO LET BOBBY SEALE IN.



SO, THE BROTHER SPLIT.



BUT SOMEONE THOUGHT BETTER OF IT, AND TROOPERS CHASED DOWN HIS CAR.

SEALE, FOLLOW US. THE WARDEN WANTS TO TALK TO YOU.



BOBBY! YOU CAME BACK?



THEY ASKED ME TO.

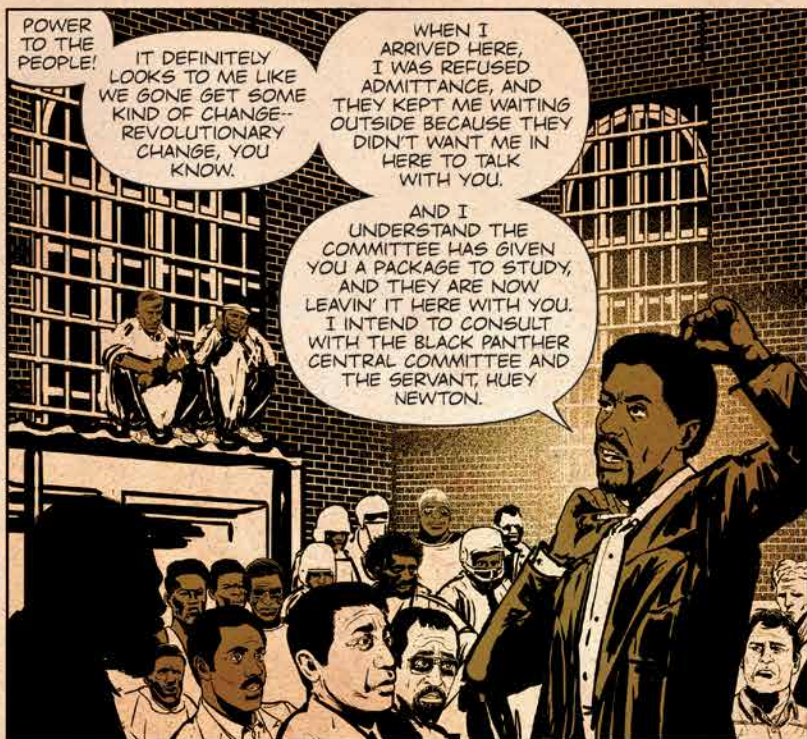
YOU BETTER NOT TRY TO INFLAME THEM IN THERE.

I STILL DON'T SEE AN EFFECTIVE PROVISION FOR AMNESTY.

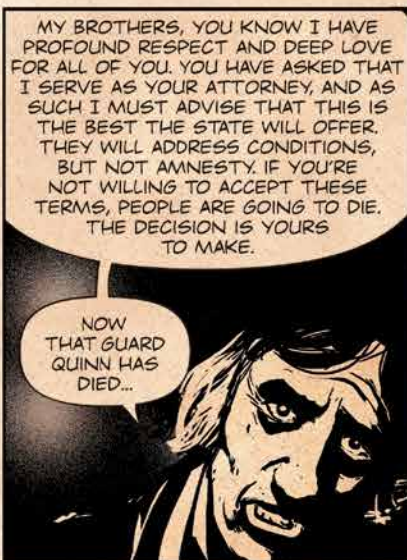
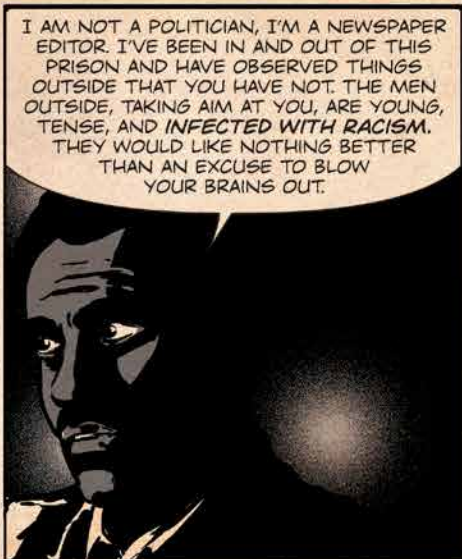
YOU ARE GOING IN THERE... DO YOU UNDERSTAND THIS...? TO TRY TO MAKE THEM RELEASE THE HOSTAGES. THEN WE'LL TALK ABOUT CHANGES.

THE BEST I CAN DO IS SUPPORT THE INMATES IN WHATEVER THEY DECIDE.





September 12, 1971





FALSE ALARM, BLACK.

THANKS, CARLOS. WE'RE ALL COOL FOR NOW.

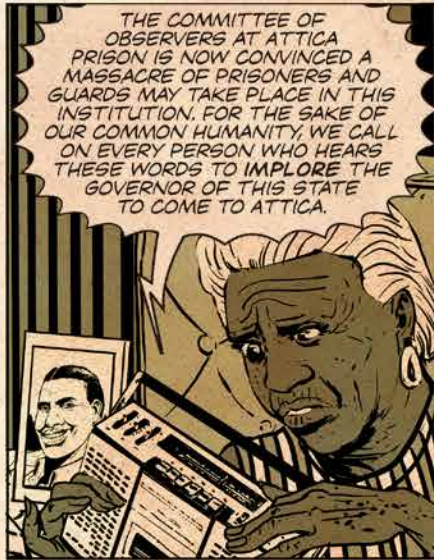


I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY WOULD TRY TO COME IN WHILE THOSE OF US OBSERVERS ARE STILL IN HERE.

THINGS HAVE SHIFTED, CLARENCE. A GUARD IS DEAD.



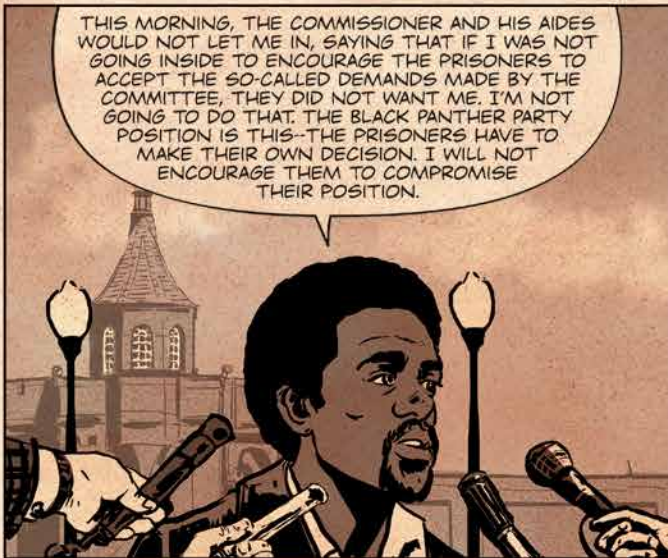
CLARENCE, BILL... YOU ALL GOT TO HELP US GET THE GOVERNOR HERE. WHATEVER IT TAKES.



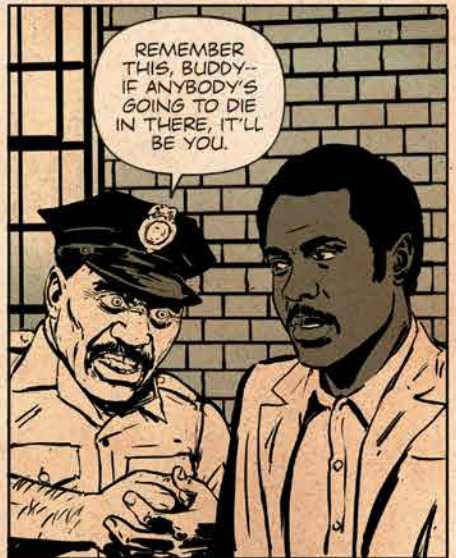
THE COMMITTEE OF OBSERVERS AT ATTICA PRISON IS NOW CONVINCED A MASSACRE OF PRISONERS AND GUARDS MAY TAKE PLACE IN THIS INSTITUTION. FOR THE SAKE OF OUR COMMON HUMANITY, WE CALL ON EVERY PERSON WHO HEARS THESE WORDS TO IMPLOR THE GOVERNOR OF THIS STATE TO COME TO ATTICA.



SPONTANEOUS PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN HARLEM IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE ATTICA BROTHERS. SIGNS CONTAIN SLOGANS SUCH AS: "ATTICA IS ALL OF US!"; "PRISONER RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!"; "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!".



THIS MORNING, THE COMMISSIONER AND HIS AIDES WOULD NOT LET ME IN, SAYING THAT IF I WAS NOT GOING INSIDE TO ENCOURAGE THE PRISONERS TO ACCEPT THE SO-CALLED DEMANDS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE, THEY DID NOT WANT ME. I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT. THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY POSITION IS THIS--THE PRISONERS HAVE TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISION. I WILL NOT ENCOURAGE THEM TO COMPROMISE THEIR POSITION.



REMEMBER THIS, BUDDY-- IF ANYBODY'S GOING TO DIE IN THERE, IT'LL BE YOU.

THE OBSERVERS ARE MEETING WHEN THE COMMISSIONER RETURNS.

I SENT IN OUR FINAL OFFER. NO FURTHER VISITORS WILL BE ALLOWED IN D-YARD.



ARTHUR O. EVE, ASSEMBLYMAN, NY

THE INMATES ARE EXPECTING US. IF YOU THINK THOSE CATS ARE JIVING, AND IT COMES OUT WE SOLD THEM DOWN THE RIVER, THEN IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER I DIE IN THERE OR WHETHER MY HOUSE IS BOMBED--YOU JUST JEOPARDIZED MY LIFE.



WILLIAM KUNSTLER, ESQ., ATTICA BROTHERS ATTORNEY

IF THE TROOPS GO IN THERE, IT'S GOING TO BE A MASSACRE IN THIS PRISON. AND IT'S ON THE HEADS OF THE AUTHORITIES IF IT TAKES PLACE.



HERMAN BADILLO, U.S. REP, NY

THE HOSTAGES THEMSELVES HAVE REQUESTED OUR PRESENCE. THERE IS ALWAYS TIME TO DIE.



TOM WICKER, ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

PLEASE, COMMISSIONER, CHOOSE LIFE.



TELL DUNBAR TO HOLD THAT THING...

IF OSWALD WAS READY TO LOCK US OUT, THEY'RE BOUND TO BE PLANNING AN ATTACK THIS AFTERNOON.

CLARENCE JONES, PUBLISHER OF THE AMSTERDAM NEWS, NY

IT LOOKS LIKE THE MASSACRE IS IN THE WORKS.



TROOPERS READY THEIR EQUIPMENT FOR ASSAULT.



A CANISTER FALLS OVER UNNOTICED AND BEGINS TO LEAK. GAS FILLS THE AIR.



I SMELL GAS!

I SAW... IT'S A LEAKING CANISTER.

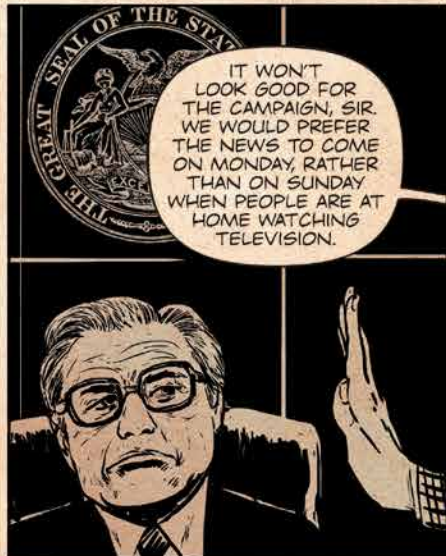


I TELL YOU, WE ONLY GOT ONE CHANCE. WE HAVE TO GET ROCKY TO GIVE US MORE TIME AND SOME CREDIT WITH THOSE GUYS IN THERE.



JOHN DUNNE, STATE SENATOR, NASSAU COUNTY, NY

I'VE GOT THE NUMBER TO HIS ESTATE.

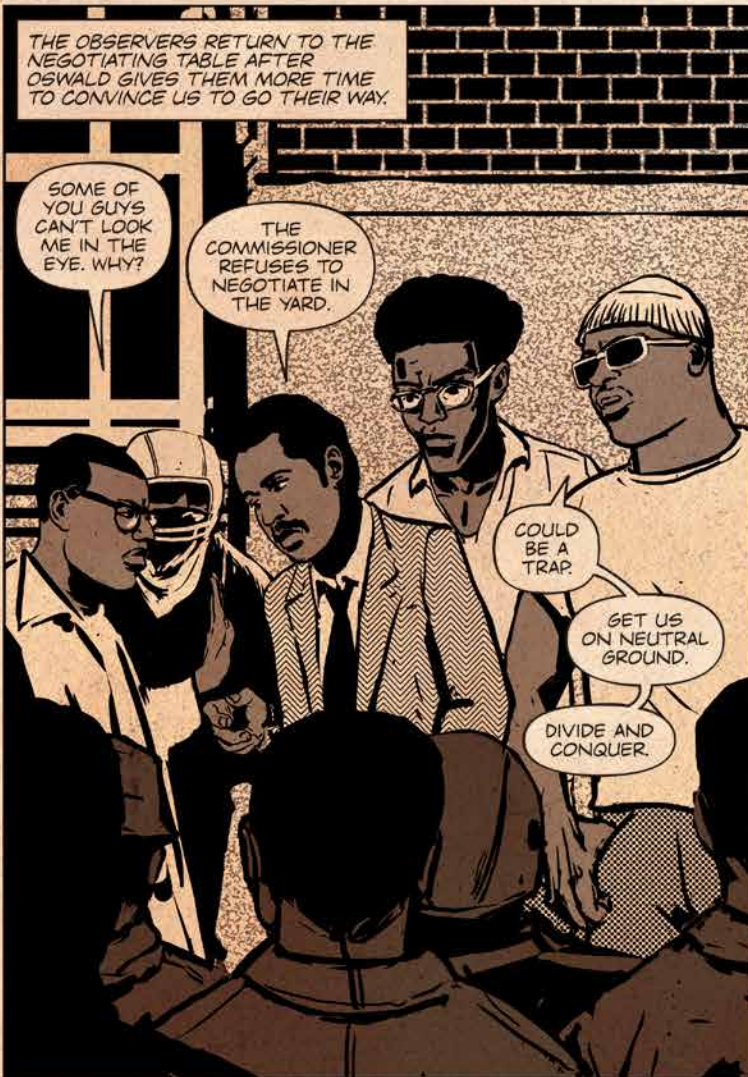


IT WON'T LOOK GOOD FOR THE CAMPAIGN, SIR. WE WOULD PREFER THE NEWS TO COME ON MONDAY, RATHER THAN ON SUNDAY WHEN PEOPLE ARE AT HOME WATCHING TELEVISION.



WHEN YOU GOING IN?

S'POZED TO HAVE BEEN THIS AFTERNOON. SONS OF BITCHES CALLED IT OFF.



THE OBSERVERS RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE AFTER OSWALD GIVES THEM MORE TIME TO CONVINCE US TO GO THEIR WAY.

SOME OF YOU GUYS CAN'T LOOK ME IN THE EYE. WHY?

THE COMMISSIONER REFUSES TO NEGOTIATE IN THE YARD.

COULD BE A TRAP.

GET US ON NEUTRAL GROUND.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER.



HOW DO WE VOTE ON COMMISSIONER OSWALD'S PROPOSAL TO NEGOTIATE IN MESS HALL "A"?

NO!

NO!

NO!

NO!

NO!



IT'S EVERYTHING TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THESE INMATES, AND THE EASIER YOU TREAT THESE PEOPLE, THE HARDER IT IS FOR US.

AND YOU THINK THE ANSWER RIGHT NOW IS TO REMOVE COMMISSIONER OSWALD?

DEFINITELY. I DO. I THINK MY FELLOW OFFICERS AGREE WITH ME. HE'S A PANTY-WASTE. MY FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER WANTS TO KNOW, WHY DIDN'T THEY GO IN AND START SHOOTING THE FIRST DAY!



I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

NO!

STILL CAN'T HEAR YOU!

NO!

HELL NO!!!

WE BEEN HERE FOUR DAYS, AND MR. BIG STUFF COMMISSIONER SAY HE GONE CUT OFF YOUR FOOD, CUT OFF YOUR WATER, YOUR MEDICAL SUPPLIES--

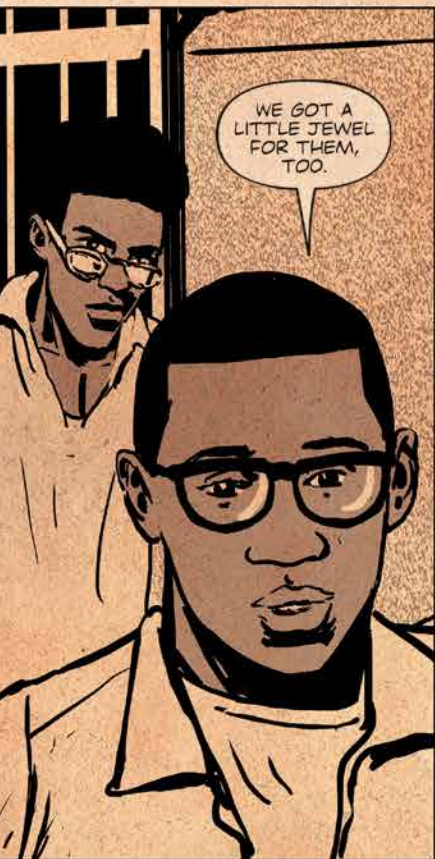
FUCK MR. BIG STUFF!

DON'T NEED IT!

HOW MANY TIMES CAN WE DIE WHEN THE MASSACRE COMES?

WE CAN DIE FIFTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE TIMES--

THE NUMBER OF INMATES PLUS HOSTAGES!



WE GOT A LITTLE JEWEL FOR THEM, TOO.

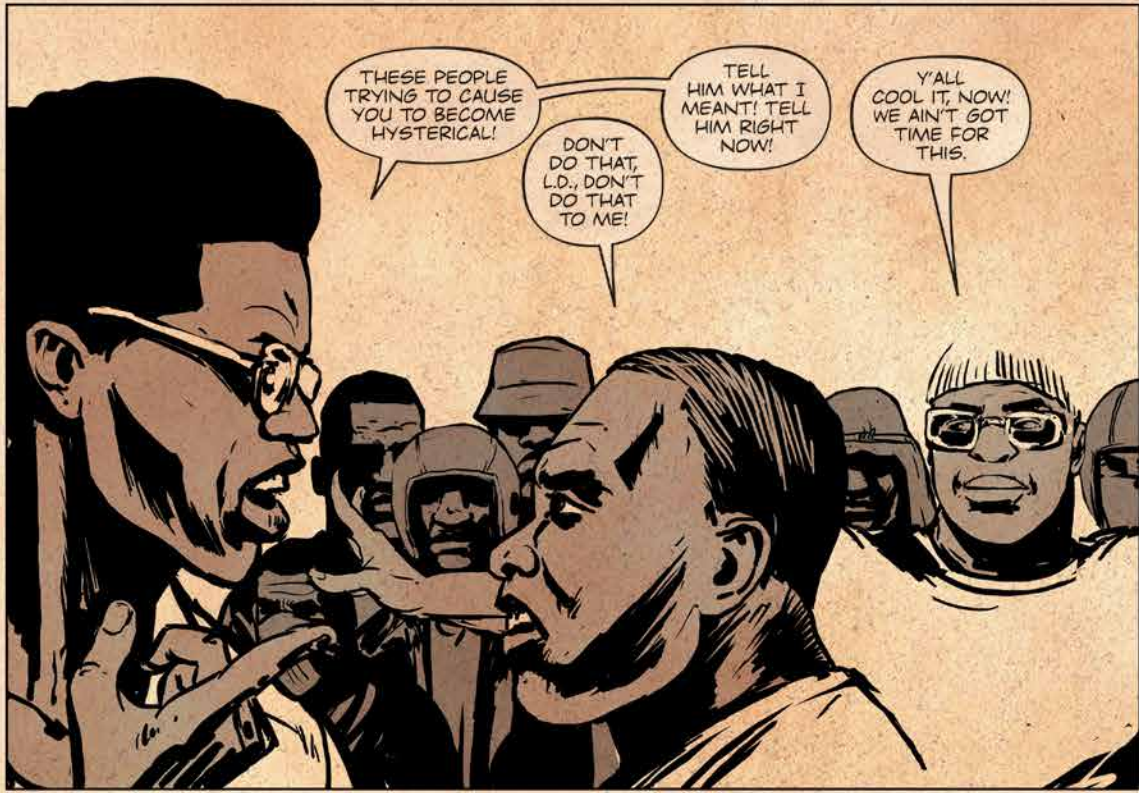


WE'S PLAYING HOST TO REPORTERS WHO ARE GOING TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT THE HOSTAGES.

THE HOSTAGES KNOW BY NOW THAT THE COMMISSIONER TALKS OUT HIS ASS.



THEY LOOK LIKE THEY BEEN BEATEN? THE BROTHERS GONE LET THE WORLD KNOW THAT THEY WAS BEASTLY TO US, BUT WE WAS HUMANE TO THEM.



THESE PEOPLE TRYING TO CAUSE YOU TO BECOME HYSTERICAL!

DON'T DO THAT, L.D., DON'T DO THAT TO ME!

TELL HIM WHAT I MEANT! TELL HIM RIGHT NOW!

Y'ALL COOL IT, NOW! WE AIN'T GOT TIME FOR THIS.



AN IMPASSE IS AT HAND!

AND I WANT YOU, BROTHERS, TO SEE YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE.



WE GOT TO FORGET THESE LITTLE DIFFERENCES, AND START REMEMBERING WHAT TIME IT IS, MAN, 'CAUSE THE GAME'S ALMOST OVER...

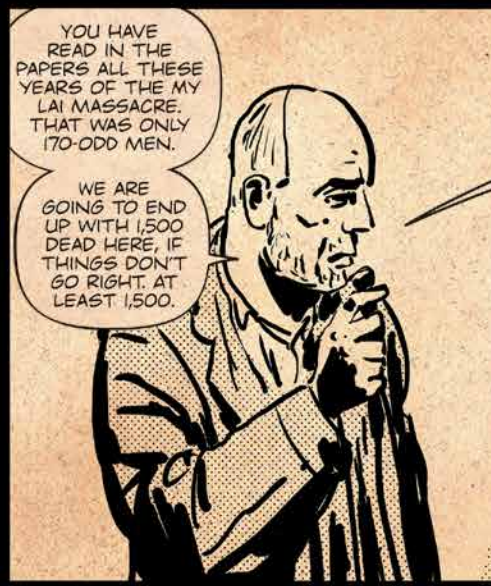
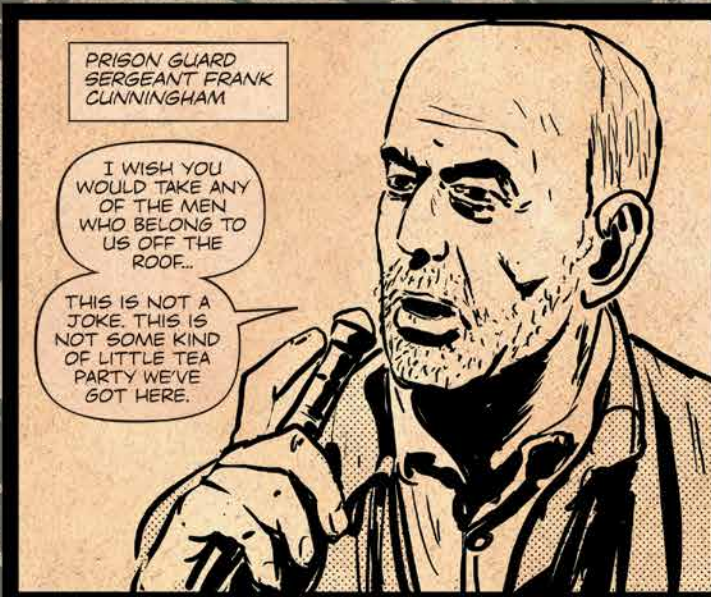
SOME OF YOU GONE PANIC, YOU MIGHT COME AT ME, BUT I AIN'T COMMITTED NO CRIME ON YOU AND YOU AIN'T COMMITTED NO CRIME ON ME.




HERB.



I DON'T SIT DOWN, I GO OUT AMONG THE PEOPLE.





ASK HIM ABOUT AMNESTY.

LISTEN, CHAMP--DON'T PROMPT US LIKE THAT RIGHT ON CAMERA.

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE INTERVIEWING THESE GUYS HONESTLY, NOT PLAYING A PART FOR YOU. WE GOT TO GO BACK TO OUR WORLD, TOO.

BROTHER, WE AIN'T GONE HAVE NO WORLD TO GO BACK TO.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEND A MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNOR?

I CERTAINLY WOULD.

IF HE SAYS "NO," I'M DEAD.

AND THAT THERE IS THE TOUGHEST FUCKIN' SERGEANT ON THE JOB.

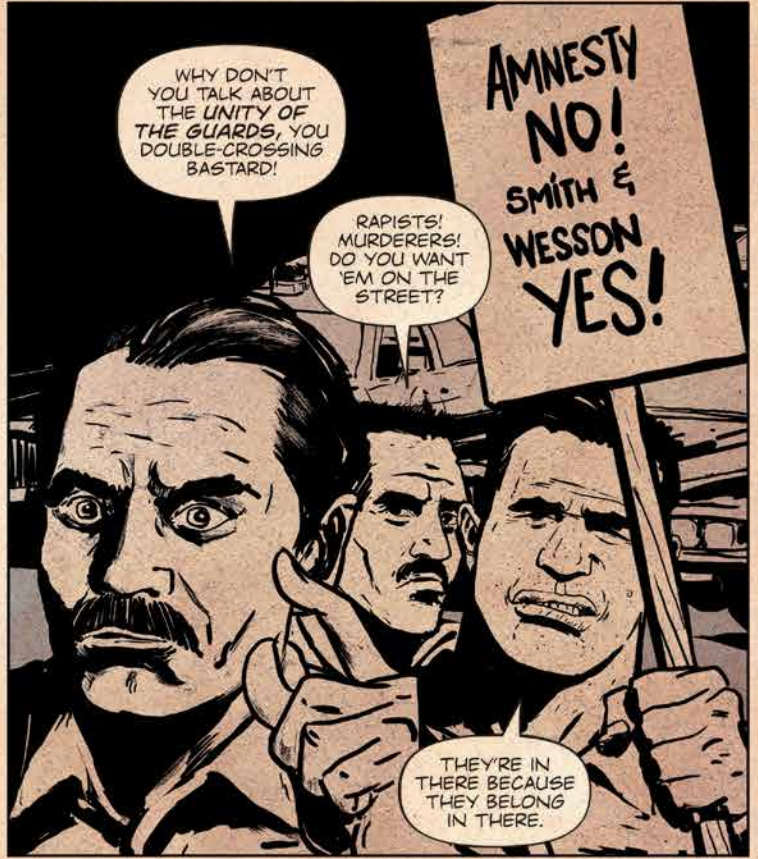
ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS WILL BE THE RESULT OF THE COMMISSIONER MOVING--NOT US.

AND 39!

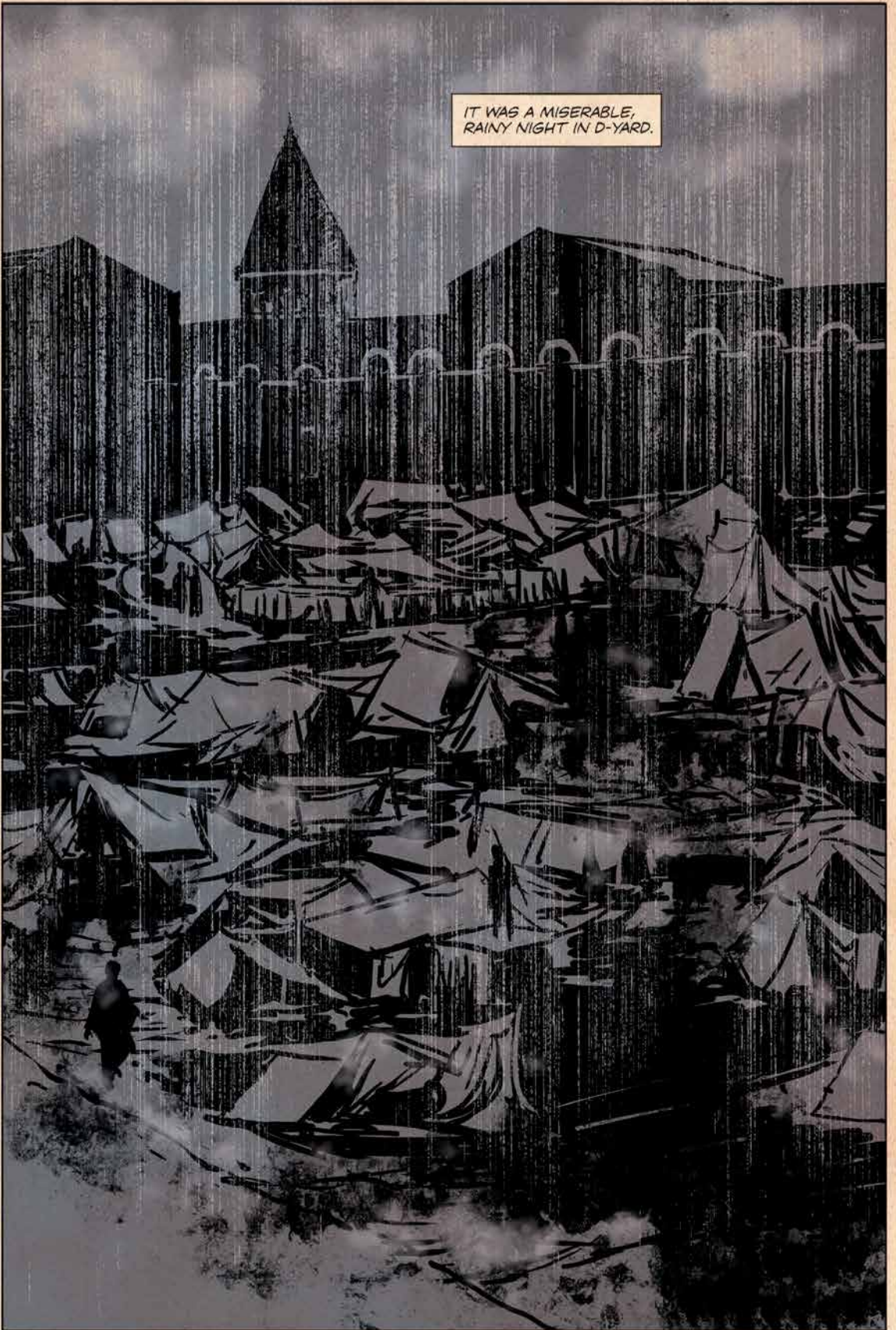
AND 39.

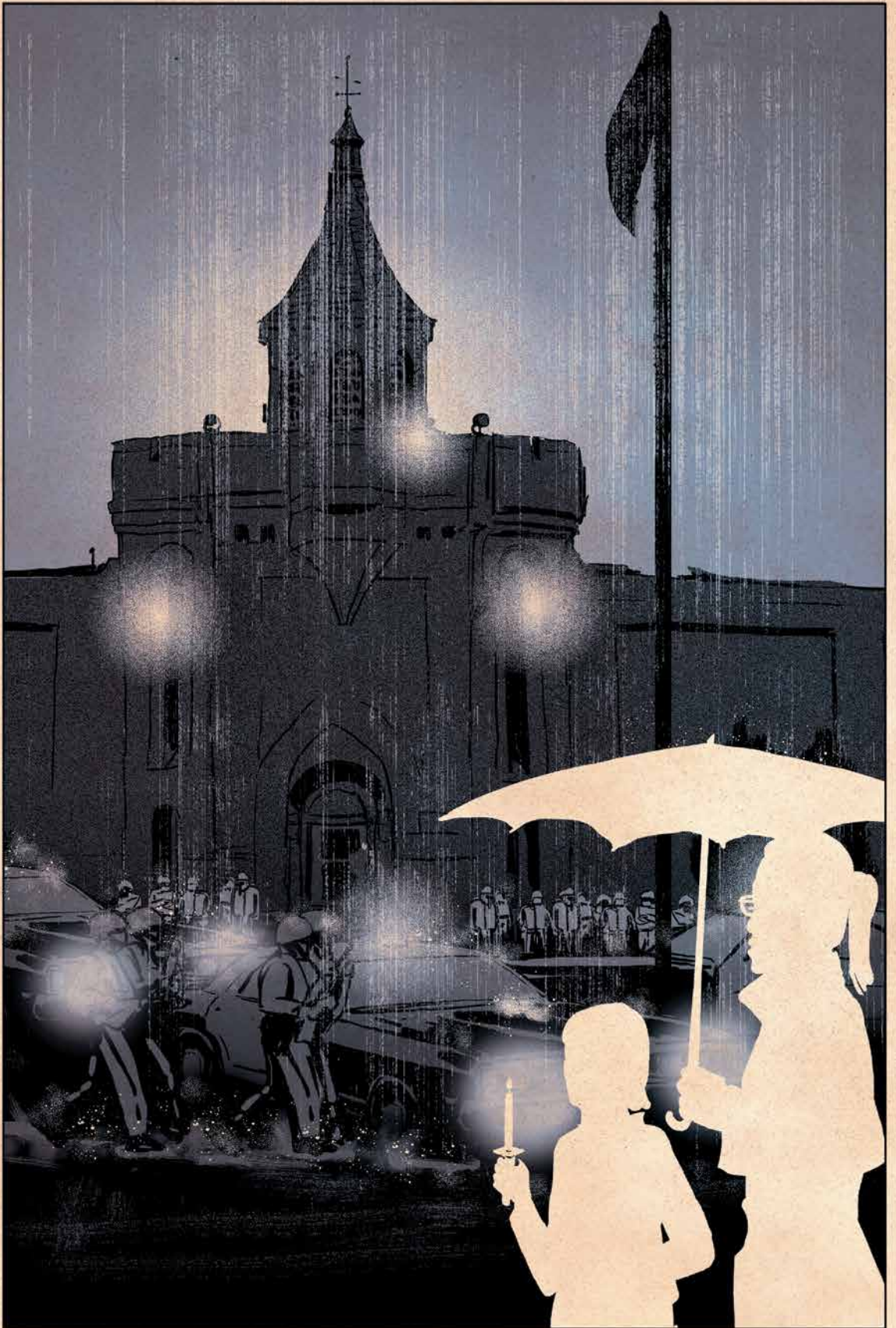






IT WAS A MISERABLE,
RAINY NIGHT IN D-YARD.

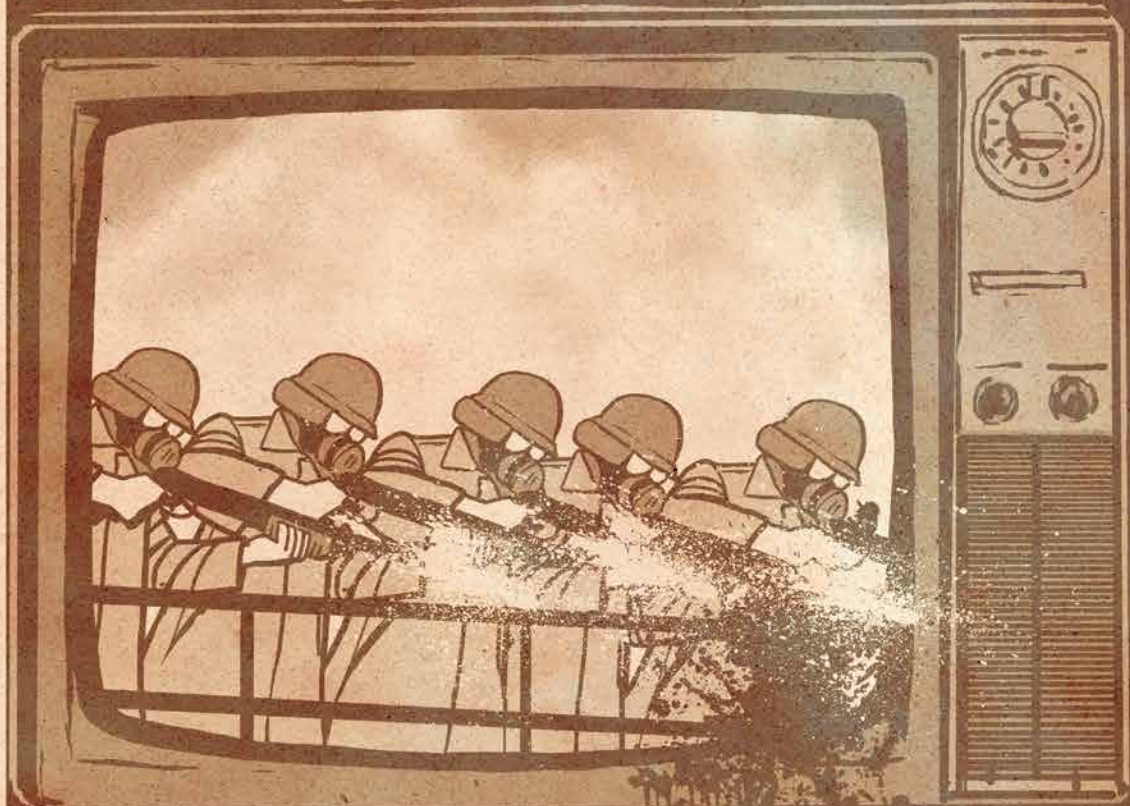




THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

MASSACRE AT

ATTICA!



September 13, 1971.

GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER ADDRESSES HIS STAFF IN THE LIBRARY OF HIS POCANTICO HILLS ESTATE.

HE'S IN A JOVIAL MOOD AS HE SHOWS OFF A NEW RAINCOAT TO THE ASSEMBLED GROUP.

HOW YA LIKE THE NEW SLICKER?

I'VE MADE A DECISION ABOUT ATTICA. IT'S A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE. WE'RE DEALING WITH REVOLUTIONARIES HERE, AN INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY, AND IF THEY THINK THEY CAN FORCE ME TO NEGOTIATE--THIS THING WILL SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE. I WON'T BE SEEN AS KNUCKLING UNDER...NOT IN FRONT OF ALL THOSE TV CAMERAS.

THIS IS ABOUT PRESERVING OUR TRADITIONS OF JUSTICE.



THE NEXT MORNING,
WE GET WORD...

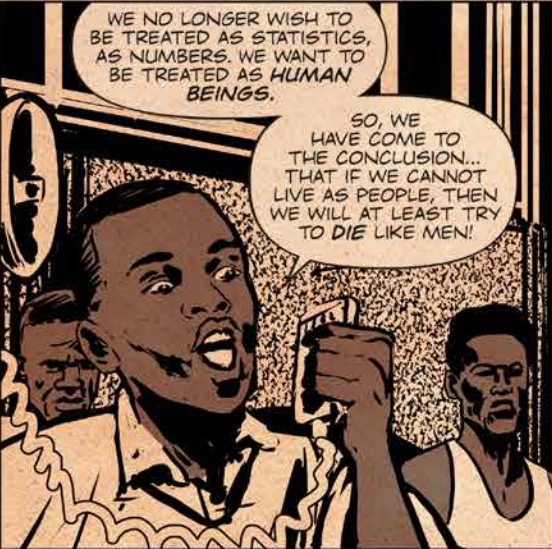


HERE'S THE FINAL
QUESTION FROM
THE COMMISSIONER.
ARE WE COMING
OUT? ARE THEY
COMING IN?



NO!
NO!

HELL
NO!



WE NO LONGER WISH TO
BE TREATED AS STATISTICS,
AS NUMBERS. WE WANT TO
BE TREATED AS HUMAN
BEINGS.

SO, WE
HAVE COME TO
THE CONCLUSION...
THAT IF WE CANNOT
LIVE AS PEOPLE, THEN
WE WILL AT LEAST TRY
TO DIE LIKE MEN!



ATTICA
IS ALL OF
US!

ATTICA!
ATTICA! ALL
OF US!



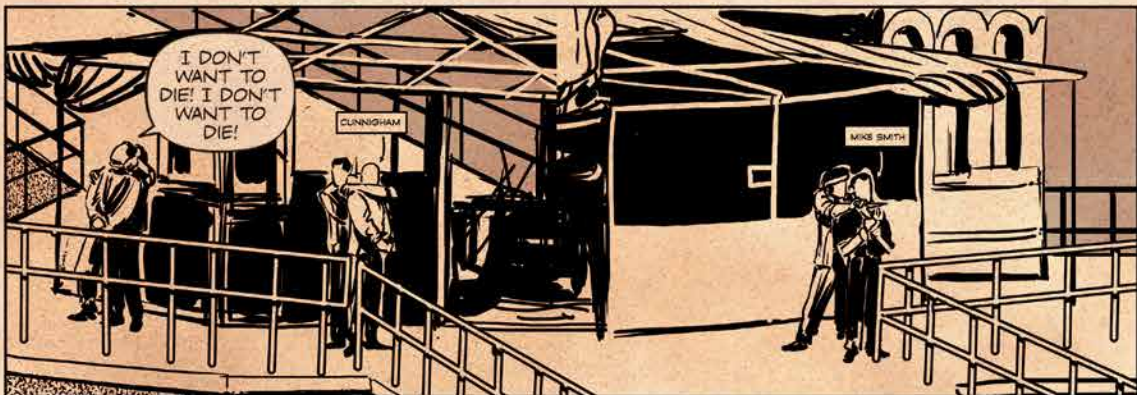
TROOPERS, YOU GOTTA
DO WHAT YOU GOTTA DO...
WE GOTTA DO WHAT
WE GOTTA DO!

WE
STAND AT
ATTICA.

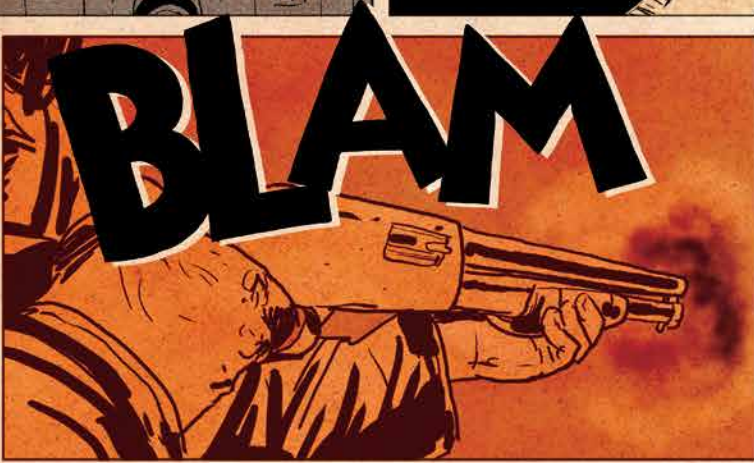
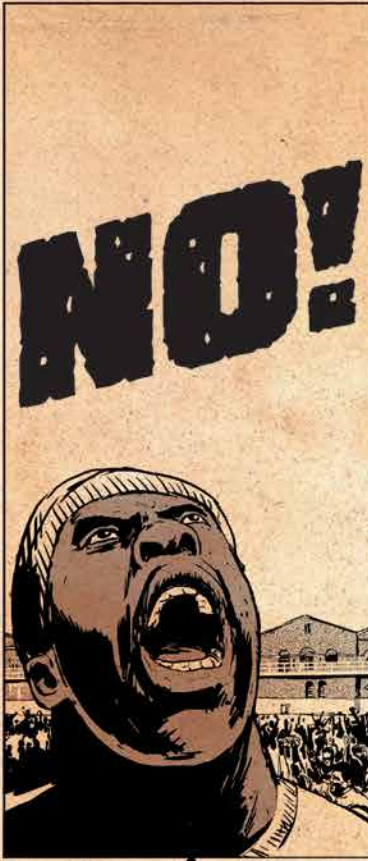


ATTICA!
ATTICA!

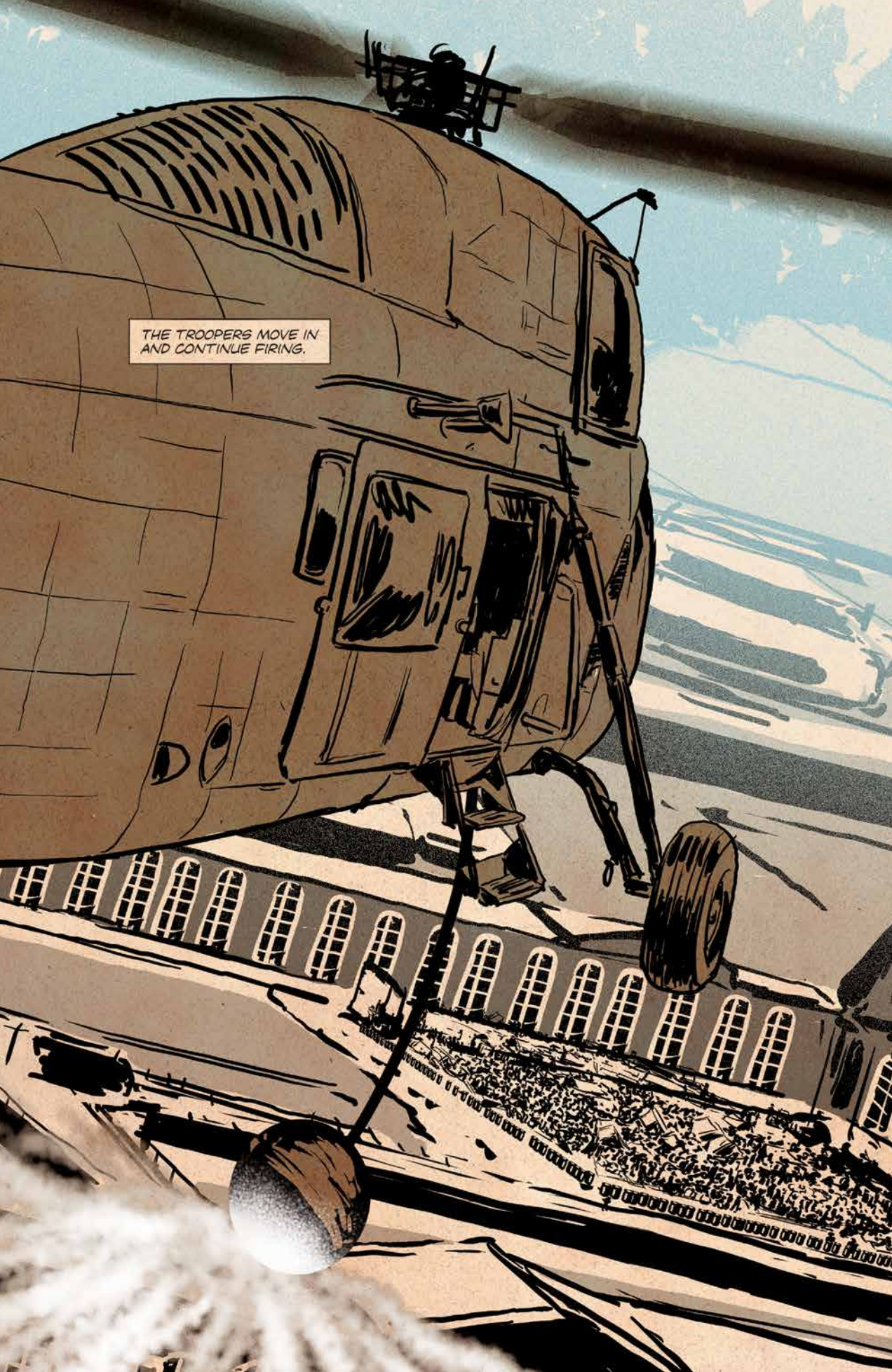
ATTICA!
ATTICA!



IT WAS SEPTEMBER 13, 1971.



THE TROOPERS MOVE IN
AND CONTINUE FIRING.







HOSTAGE AND
GUARD MIKE SMITH
IS HIT IN THE
LOWER ABDOMEN.

WE ARE OUTSIDE THE GATES OF ATTICA. THE COMMISSIONER IS MAKING A STATEMENT AS THE ASSAULT IS TAKING PLACE.



THE ACTION NOW UNDERWAY WAS INITIATED WITH EXTREME RELUCTANCE.



ARMED REBELLION OF THE TYPE WE HAVE FACED THREATENS THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR FREE SOCIETY.



WE CANNOT PERMIT THAT DESTRUCTION TO HAPPEN.



I CAN'T CONTINUE WITH THIS...
...MEN ARE DYING IN THERE.



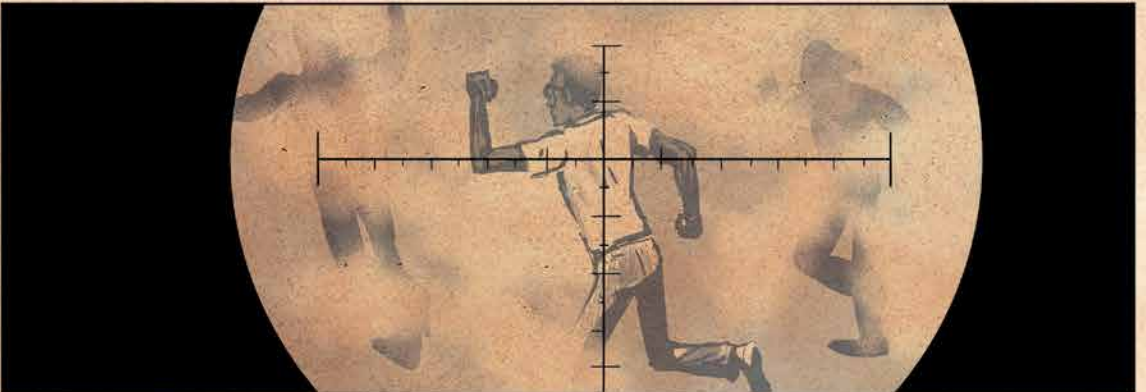
TURN THE CAMERA OFF!















DO NOT
HARM THE
HOSTAGES...



...SURRENDER
PEACEFULLY...

BROTHER AKIL
HAD A GIANT
HOLE BLOWN
CLEAN THROUGH
HIS HAND.



...YOU
WILL NOT BE
HARMED...

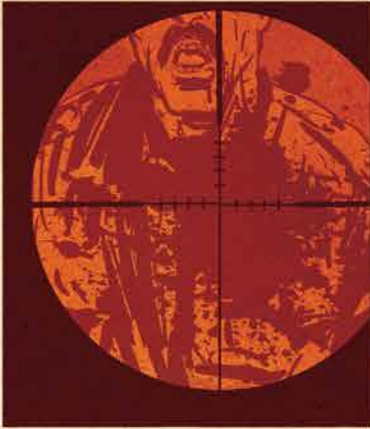
THEY USE EXPANDING
BULLETS...OUTLAWED BY
THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS.

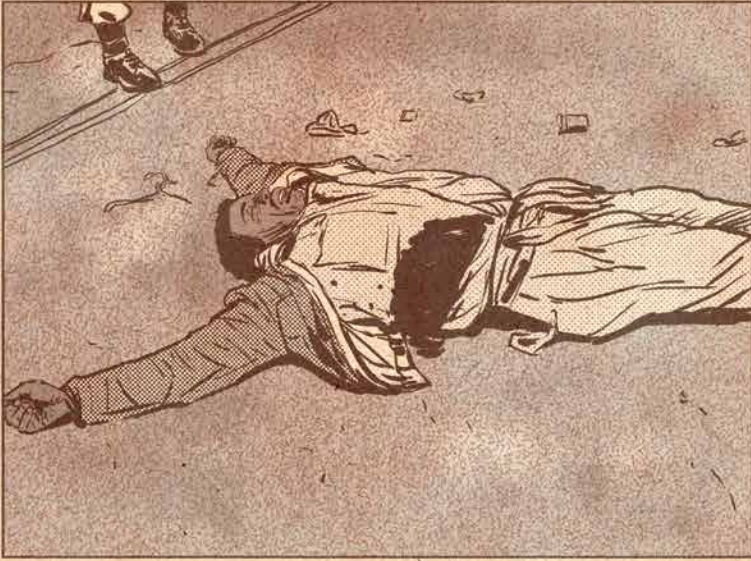
I SMEAR CONDENSED
MILK ON MY SKIN, AS
WE'RE OVERCOME BY
THE GAS.















THE STORY OF BIG BLACK

THE AFTERMATH



THE GUARDS ENTER,
SWINGING CLUBS.

THE TROOPERS BEGIN TO HIT
INMATES WITH THEIR RIFLE BUTTS
AND CONTINUE SHOOTING AT
UNARMED INMATES AT RANDOM.

CRAWL,
INMATES!
IT'S OUR
DAY!



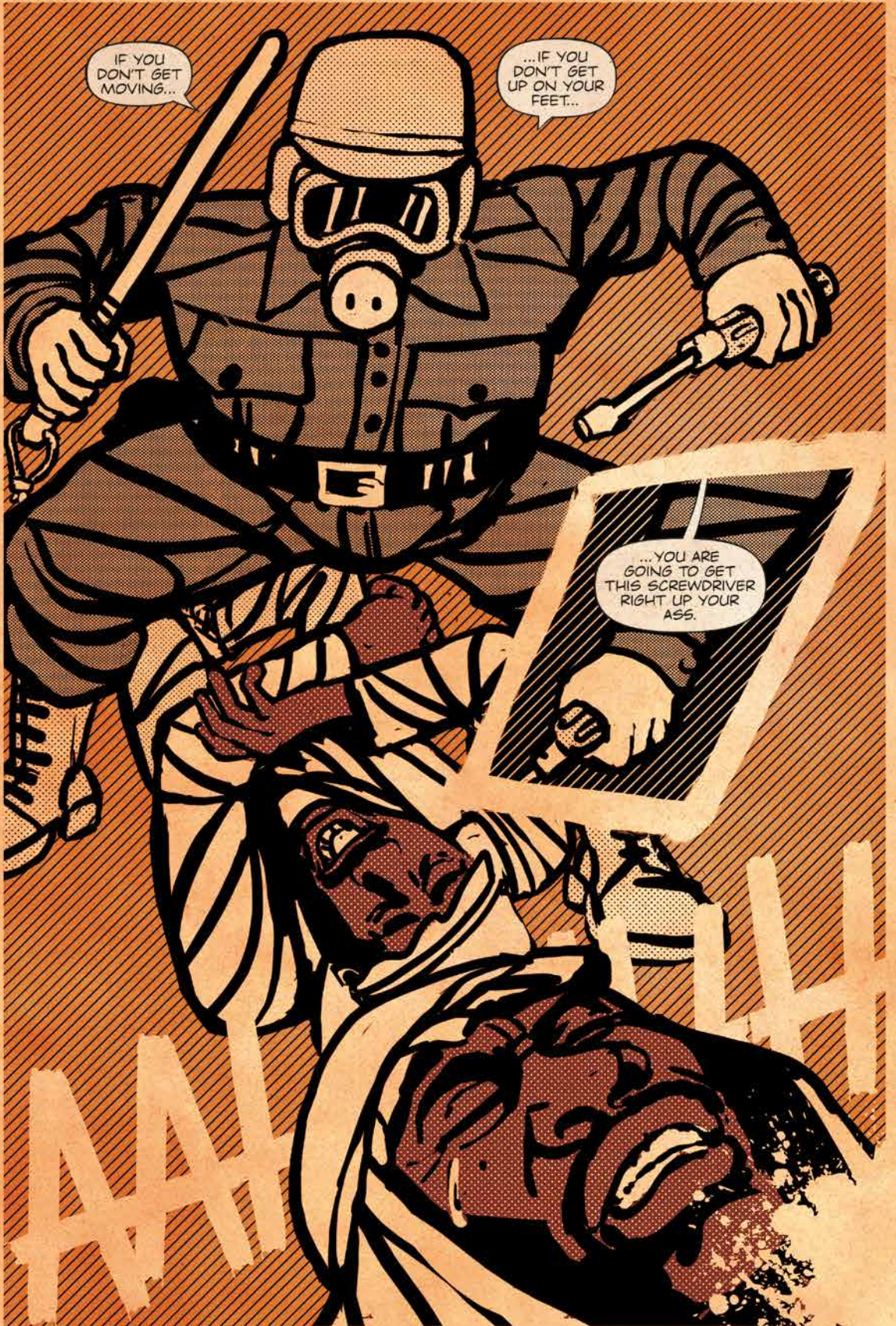


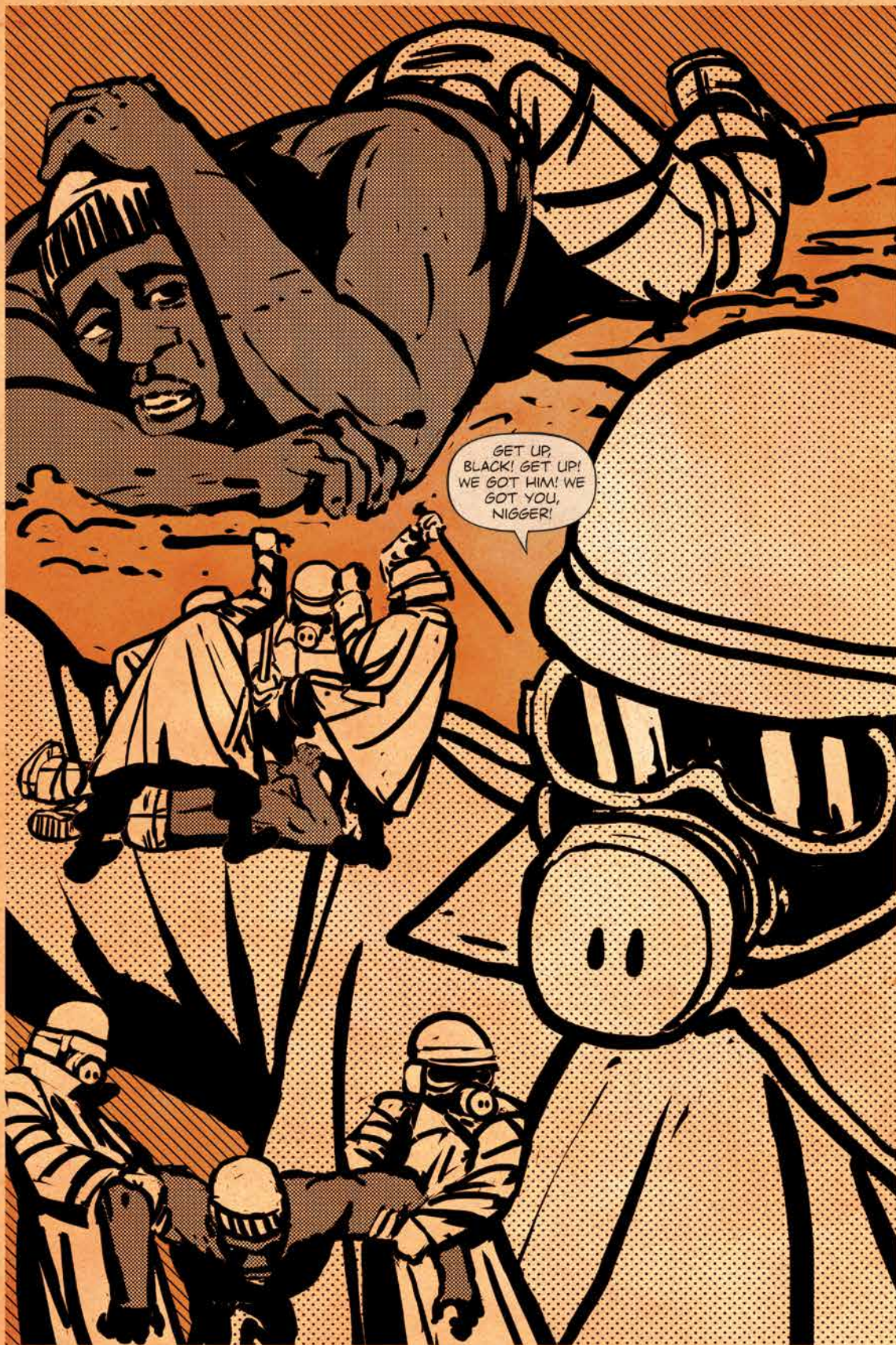


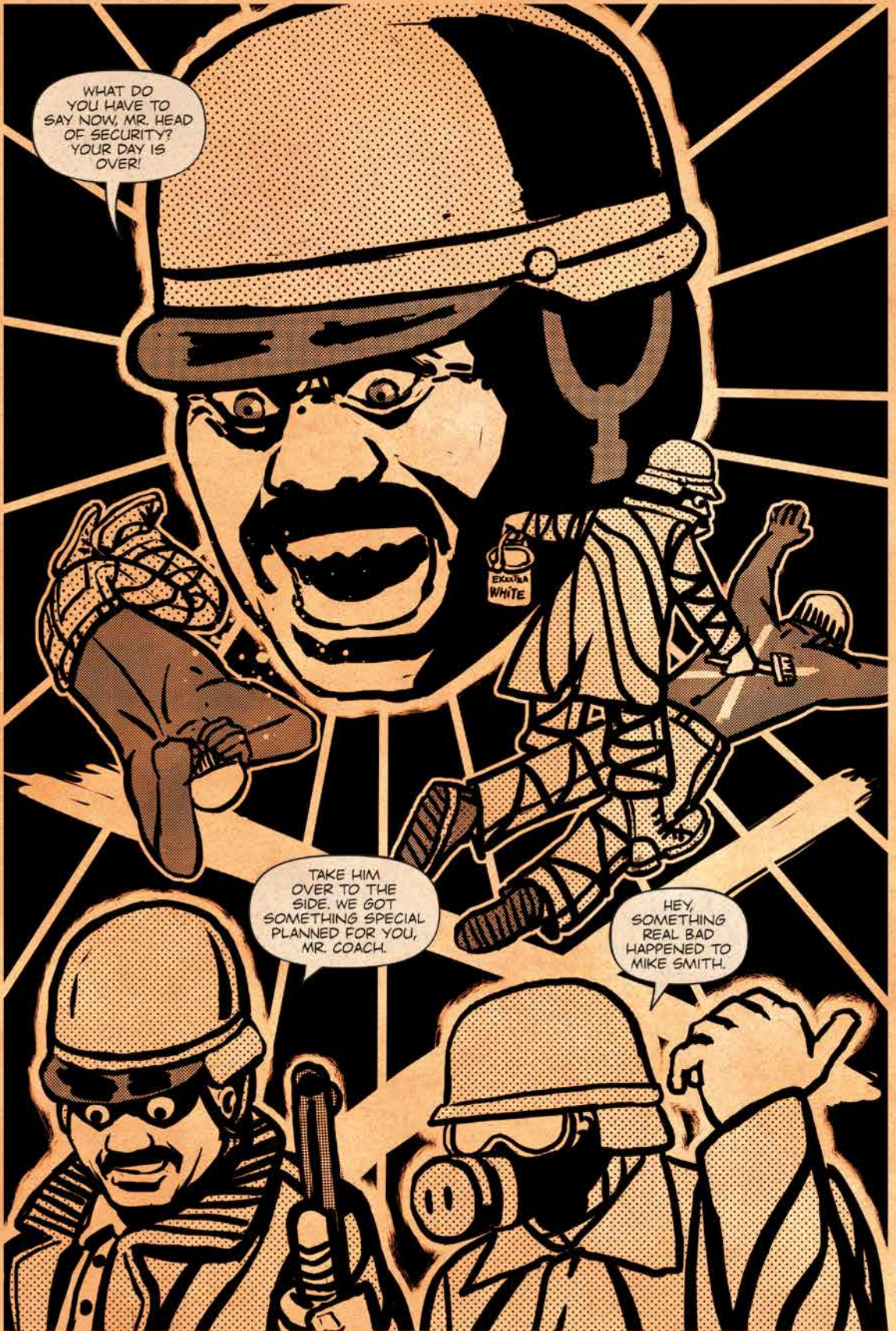


COME ON, NIGGER, YOUR DAY AIN'T OVER YET!

















BLACK, YOU DIDN'T CASTRATE NO ONE, DID YOU?



YOU KNOW ME, JOHN! YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T DO THAT!

HE WIPES CIGARETTES AND SHELL CASINGS OFF MY STOMACH.



I HEAR THE BEATING OF CLUBS BUILDING IN THE HALLWAY.



HOLD ON. I'M GONNA FIND OUT WHAT THAT RACKET IS.

KLOONK



BUT BEFORE HE CAN GET BACK, I'M RIPPED OFF THE TABLE. MY LEGS BUCKLE BENEATH ME.



THEY HUSTLE ME TOWARD THE TUNNEL...

KLOONK



...THE OFFICERS LINE THE HALL, WAITING.

COME ON DOWN, NIGGER! COME ON DOWN!

KLOONK

KLOONK



OH, MAMA! GIVE ME STRENGTH, SIX!



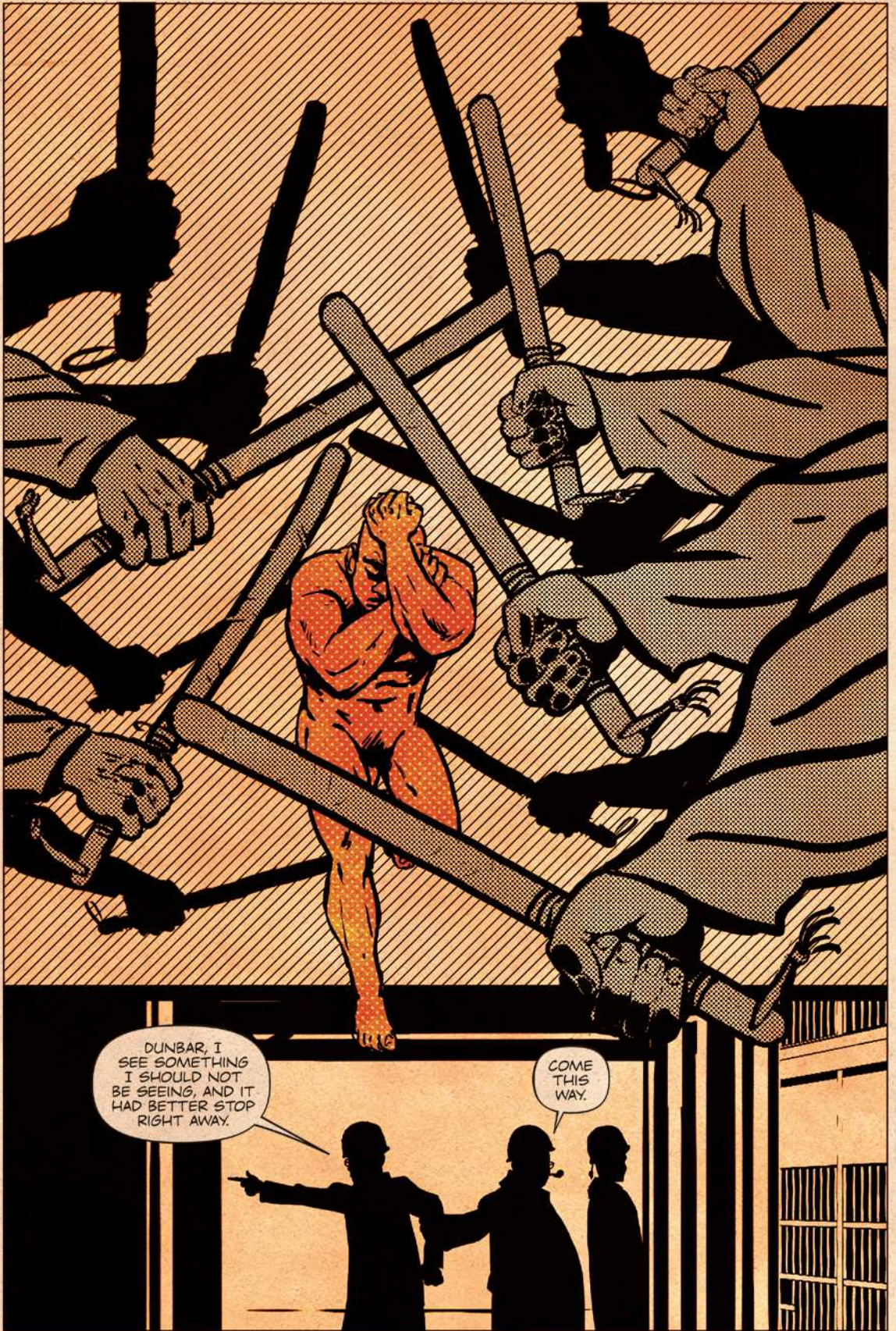
WHUMP



YOU ANIMAL!

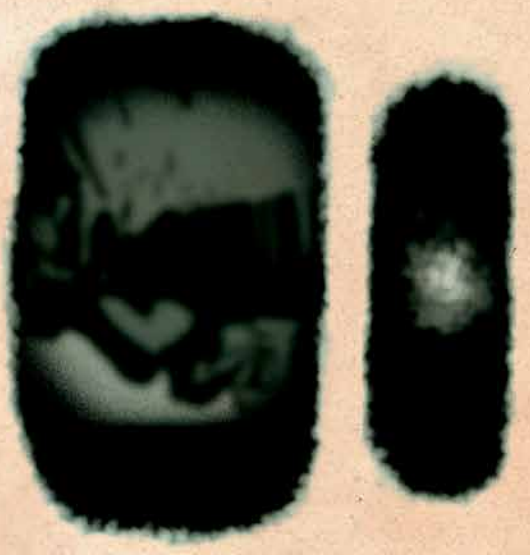


YA GONNA CUT OUT TESTICLES!



DUNBAR, I SEE SOMETHING I SHOULD NOT BE SEEING, AND IT HAD BETTER STOP RIGHT AWAY.

COME THIS WAY.



THE UGLIEST DISPLAYS OF RACISM, CRUELTY, AND BARBARISM RAN RAMPANT--BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE THE PRISON.





SAY YOUR PRAYERS!



IT'S YOUR TURN NOW.



WE'LL KILL YOU...



...AND NO ONE WILL CARE!

**THE WILD CRUEL
BEAST IS NOT
BEHIND THE BARS
OF THE CAGE.**

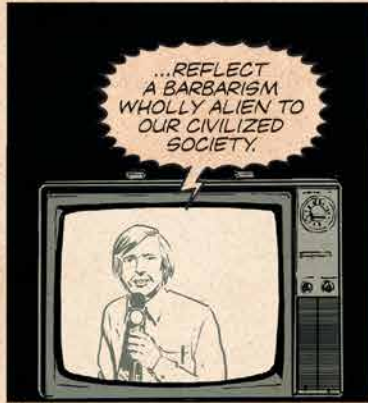
**HE IS IN
FRONT
OF IT.**

- ELDRIDGE CLEAVER











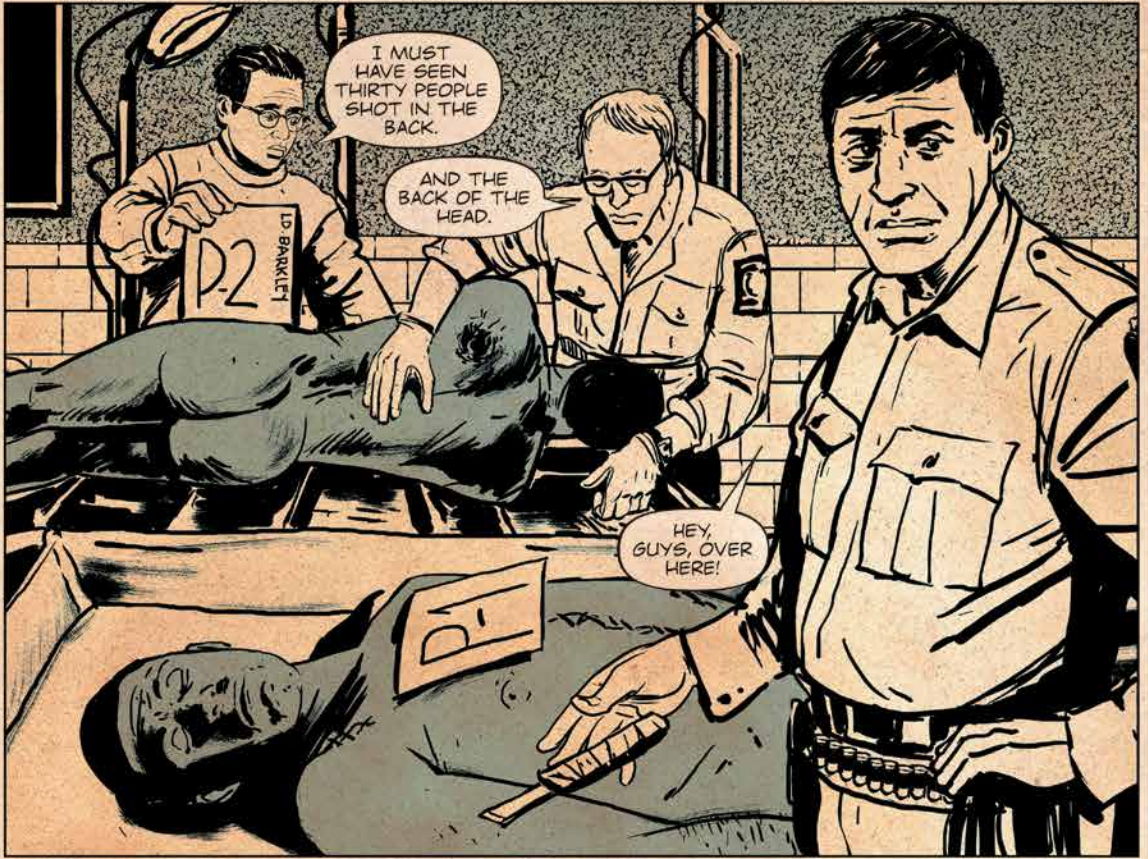
STOP!
THIS ISN'T
RIGHT!

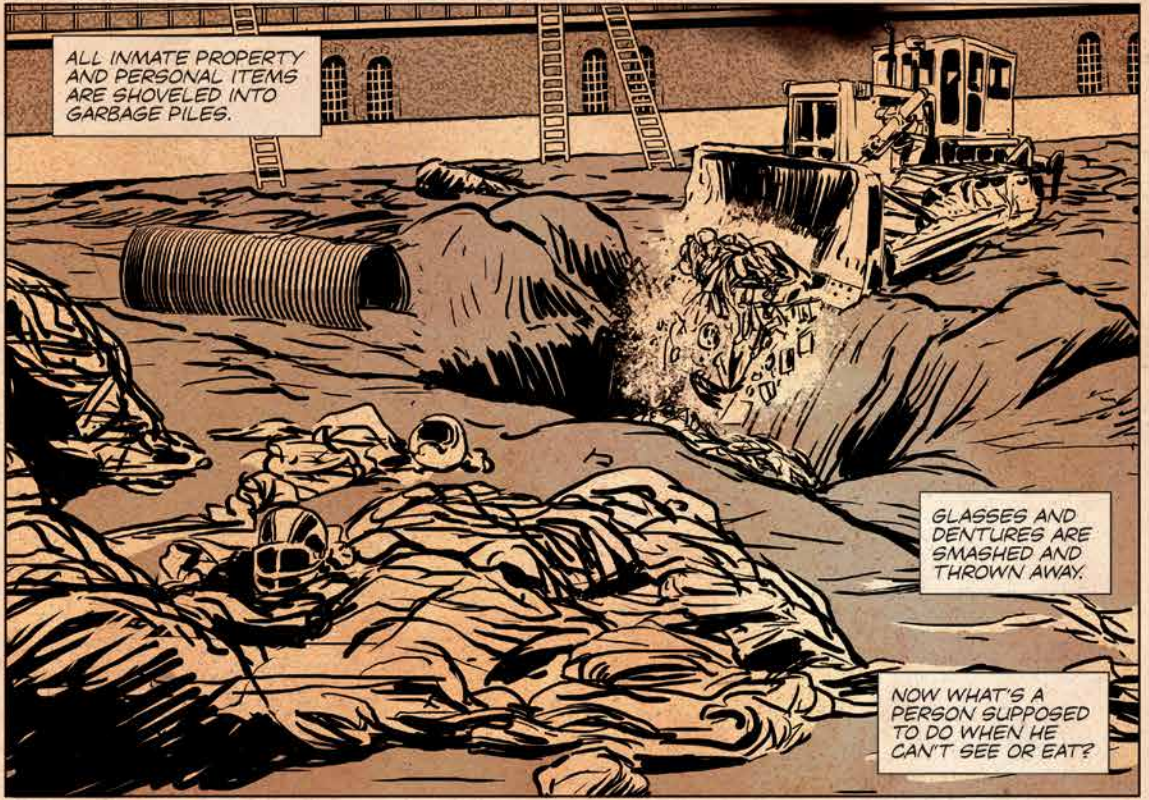
YOU DON'T
LIKE IT, THEN
GO!

THAT'S
OKAY. WE WON'T
KILL HIM NOW. WE'LL
SAVE HIM FOR THE
GAS CHAMBER. THIS
ISN'T OVER!

THIS ISN'T
RIGHT...



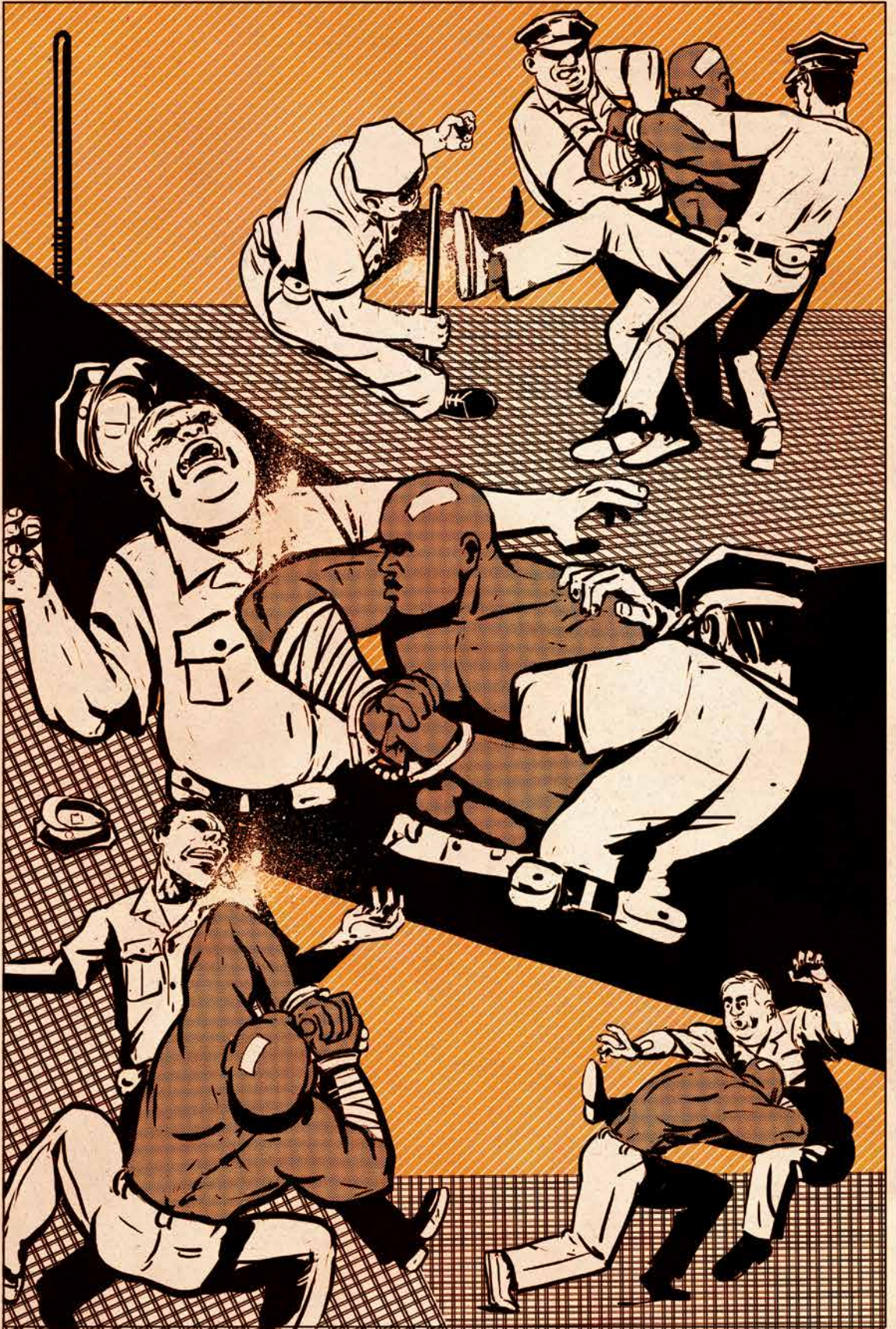
















I TELL YOU,
MOTHERFUCKERS,
WHEN YOU BEAT
SOMEONE LIKE THAT,
SOMETHING'S GONNA
HAPPEN!

YOU
WANNA
COME
ON?

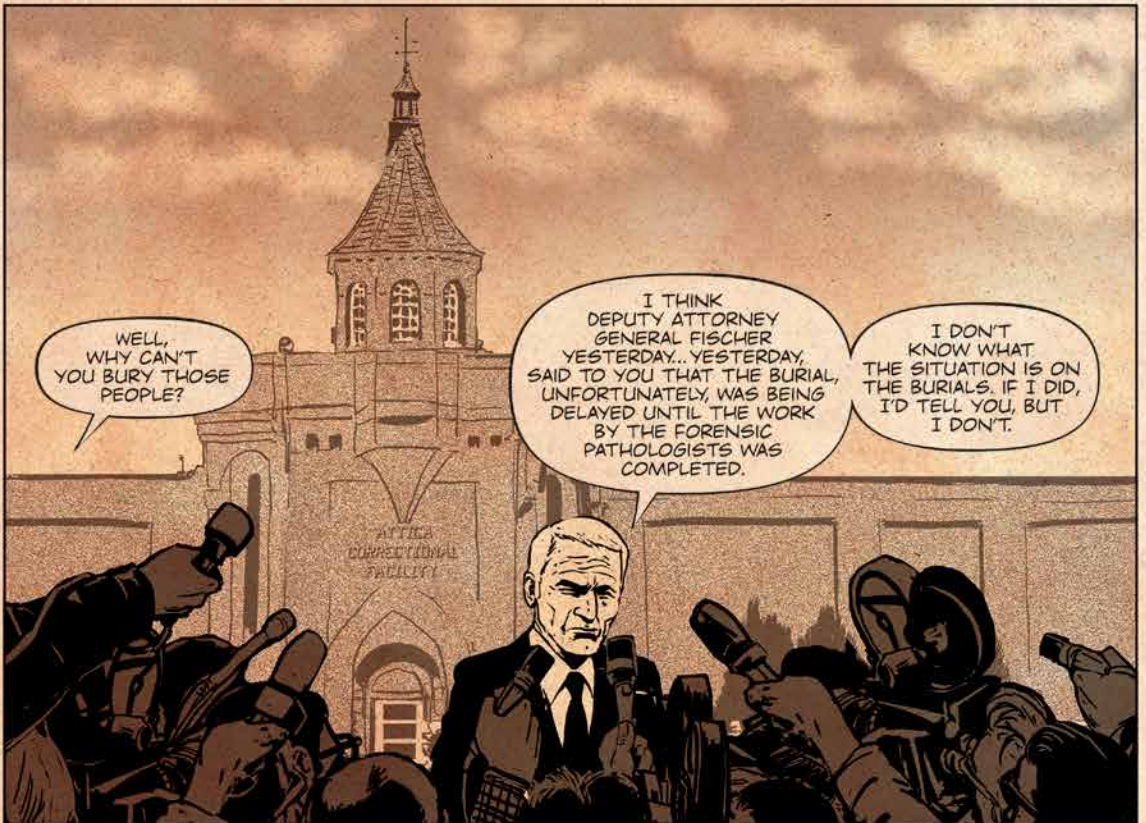
NO MORE
BEATINGS!



THE
CONTROVERSY
OVER WHAT HAPPENED
AT ATTICA PRISON
FOLLOWED THE DEAD
HOSTAGES TO THE
VERY BRINK OF
THE GRAVE.

WHEN
THE FUNERAL
WAS OVER, AND ALL
THE WORDS WERE SAID,
THE BODIES WERE
TAKEN, NOT TO BE
BURIED...

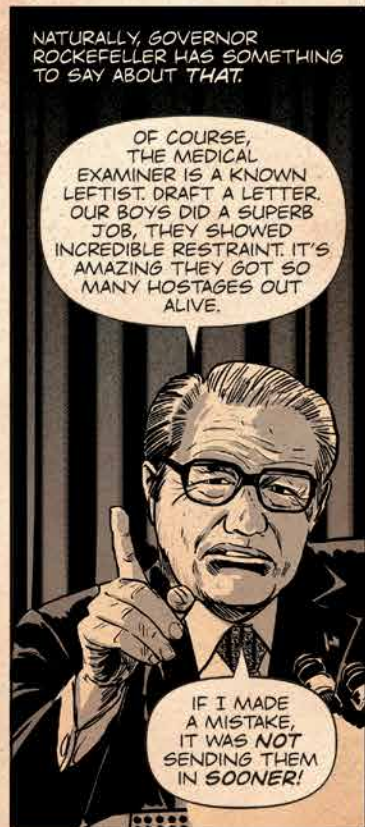
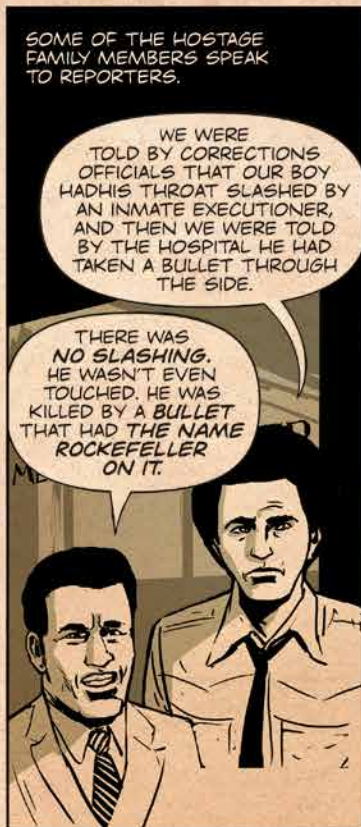
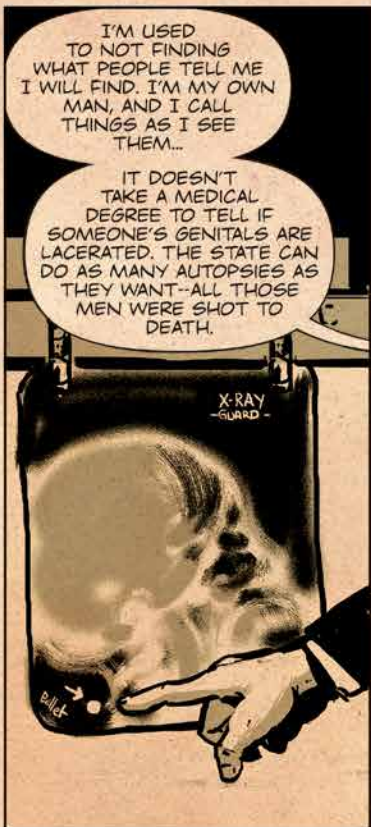
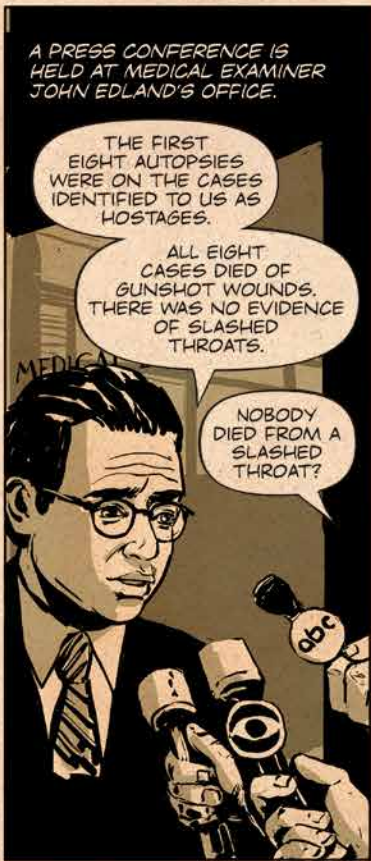
...BUT
BACK TO THE
FUNERAL HOME FOR
YET ANOTHER
AUTOPSY.

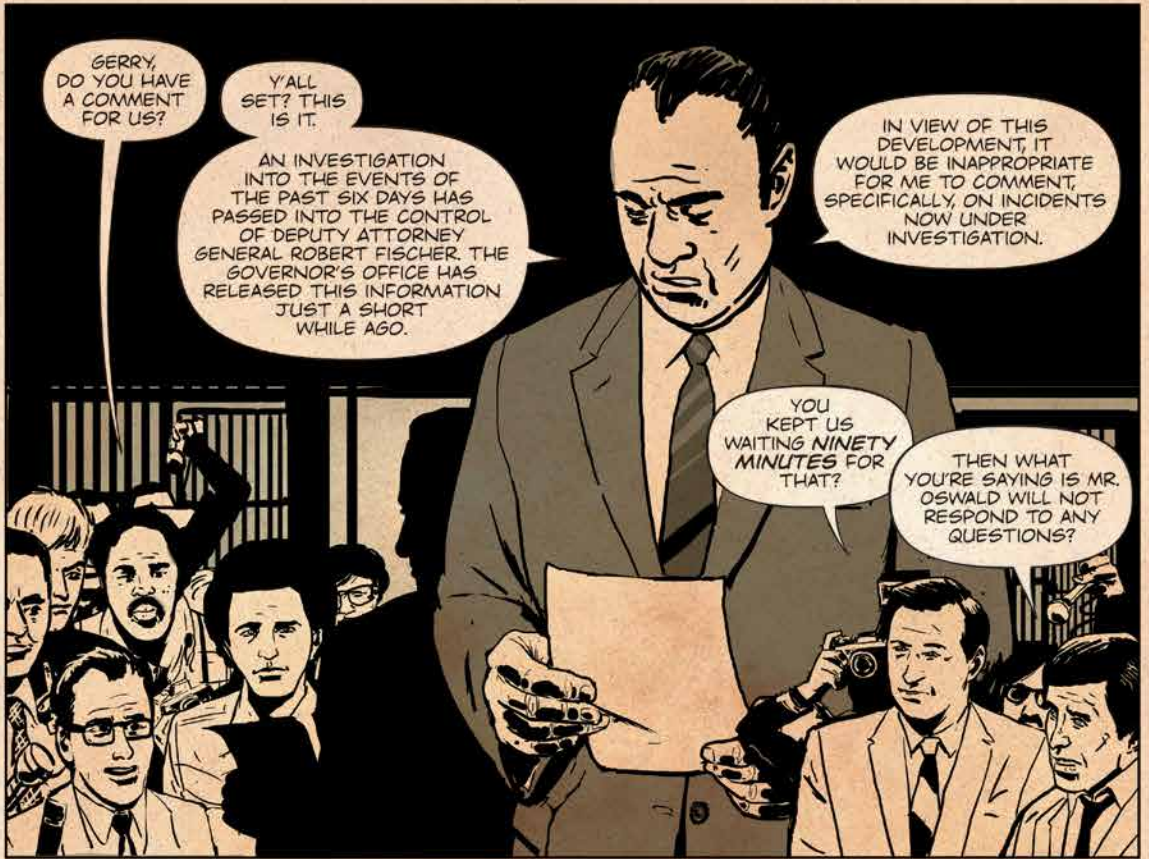


WELL,
WHY CAN'T
YOU BURY THOSE
PEOPLE?

I THINK
DEPUTY ATTORNEY
GENERAL FISCHER
YESTERDAY... YESTERDAY,
SAID TO YOU THAT THE BURIAL,
UNFORTUNATELY, WAS BEING
DELAYED UNTIL THE WORK
BY THE FORENSIC
PATHOLOGISTS WAS
COMPLETED.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
THE SITUATION IS ON
THE BURIALS. IF I DID,
I'D TELL YOU, BUT
I DON'T.





GERRY,
DO YOU HAVE
A COMMENT
FOR US?

Y'ALL
SET? THIS
IS IT.

AN INVESTIGATION
INTO THE EVENTS OF
THE PAST SIX DAYS HAS
PASSED INTO THE CONTROL
OF DEPUTY ATTORNEY
GENERAL ROBERT FISCHER. THE
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE HAS
RELEASED THIS INFORMATION
JUST A SHORT
WHILE AGO.

IN VIEW OF THIS
DEVELOPMENT, IT
WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE
FOR ME TO COMMENT,
SPECIFICALLY, ON INCIDENTS
NOW UNDER
INVESTIGATION.

YOU
KEPT US
WAITING NINETY
MINUTES FOR
THAT?

THEN WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING IS MR.
OSWALD WILL NOT
RESPOND TO ANY
QUESTIONS?



IS THAT
IT? YOU WILL NOT
RESPOND TO ANY
QUESTIONS AT
ALL?

WHAT
ABOUT REPORTS
THAT THROATS
HAD BEEN
SLASHED?

NOT AT
THIS TIME.
THAT'S ALL.

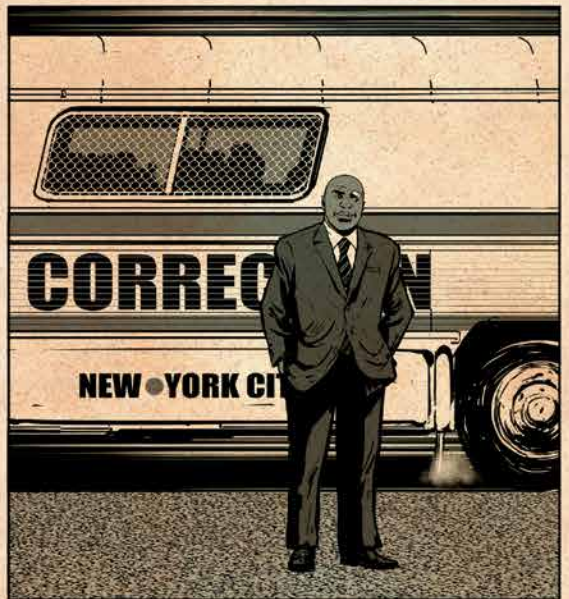
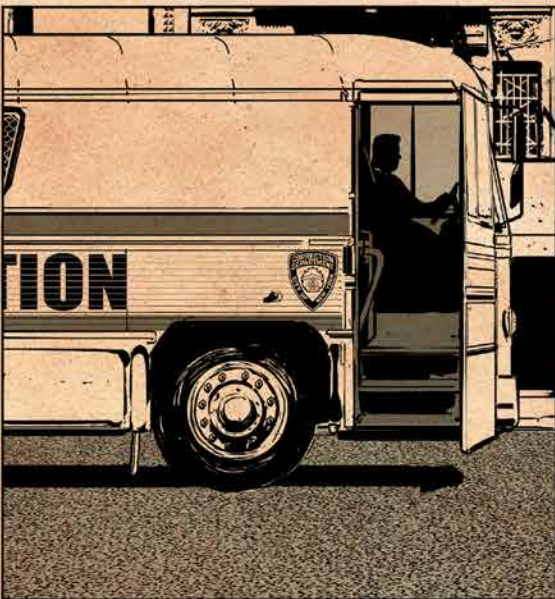
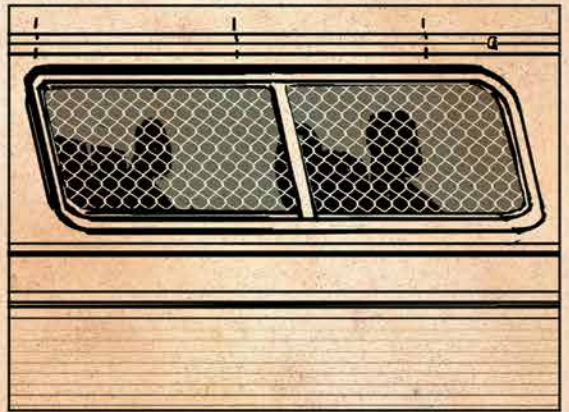
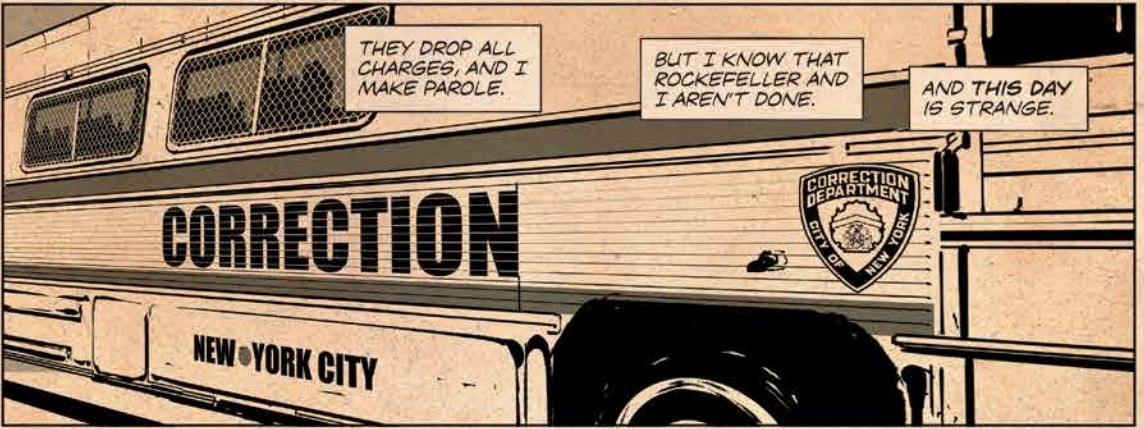
THAT
WASN'T MEANT
TO BE A FACTUAL
ACCOUNT AS TO
THE CAUSE OF
DEATH.



WILL WE
HAVE ANY
ANSWERS AT ALL?
ANY ANSWERS
TO ANY
QUESTIONS?



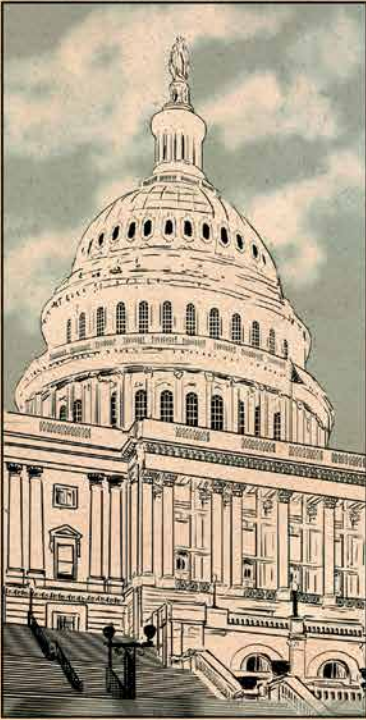
1973





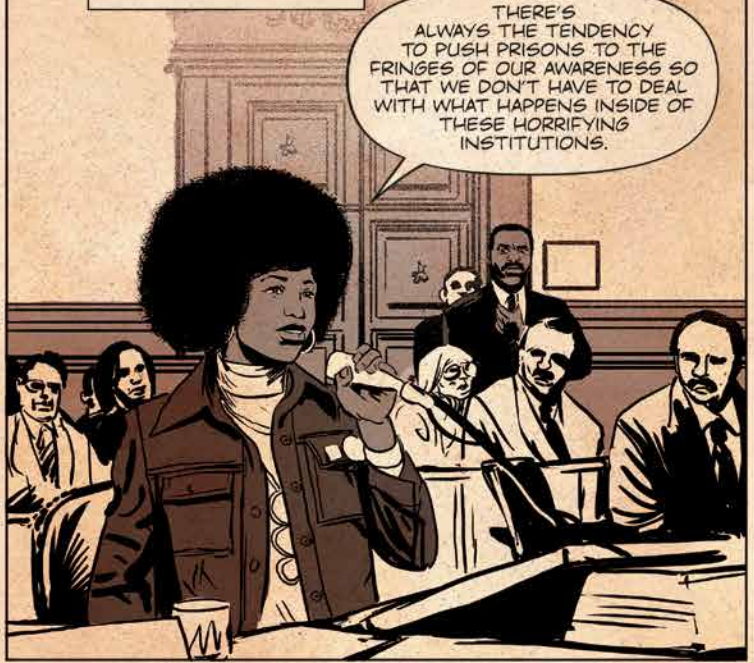
1974

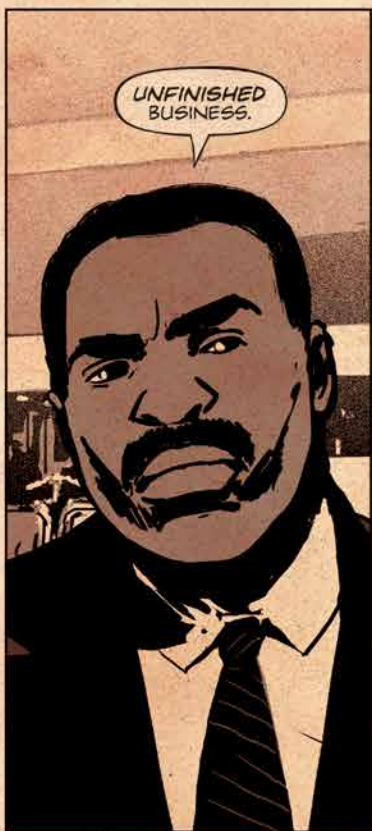
ON AUGUST 26, THE SENATE CONFIRMATION HEARINGS ARE IN PROGRESS.



SO, I SHOW UP IN D.C. TO STAND UP TO NELSON ROCKEFELLER AS HE'S APPOINTED VICE PRESIDENT.

PANTHER LEADER, SISTER ANGELA DAVIS, TESTIFIES.





MY MOTHER, SISTER, AND NEPHEWS WATCH ME TESTIFY AGAINST THE APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.



THE MOST COMPELLING TESTIMONY CAME FROM FRANK "BIG BLACK" SMITH, WHO ACCUSED GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER OF PREMEDITATED MURDER.



I'M NOT TELLING YOU ABOUT WHAT SOMEBODY TOLD ME.

I'M TELLING YOU ABOUT WHAT I KNOW!



AS ARTHUR LIMAN QUESTIONS ROCKEFELLER, THE GOVERNOR EXPOSES HIMSELF BEFORE THE MCKAY COMMISSION.

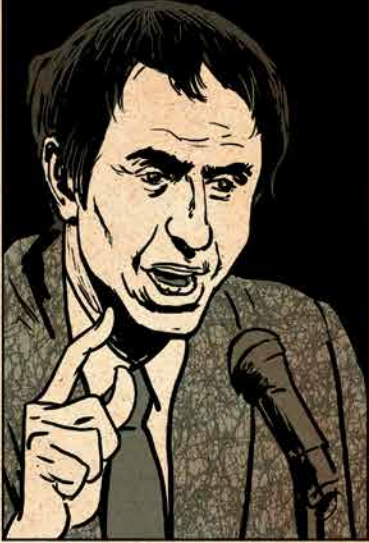
WAS THERE EVER ANY DISCUSSION ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF TRYING TO USE SOME INTEGRATED FORCES TO TAKE THE PRISON?



WHAT DO YOU MEAN "INTEGRATED"?



WELL,
FOR EXAMPLE,
HAVING EVEN ONE
BLACK TROOPER
PARTICIPATE IN THE
ASSAULT.



AN
INTEGRATED
FORCE WITH A BLACK
MEMBER, YOU SAY?
HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY
HIM WITH A GAS
MASK?



I THINK
THE QUESTION
REALLY WAS WHETHER
YOU GAVE ANY
CONSIDERATION TO THE
POSSIBILITY THAT RACIAL
ATTITUDES MIGHT AFFECT
THE CAPACITY
OF--



IF YOU
WILL EXCUSE ME,
I DON'T THINK THE
QUESTION IS
PERTINENT...



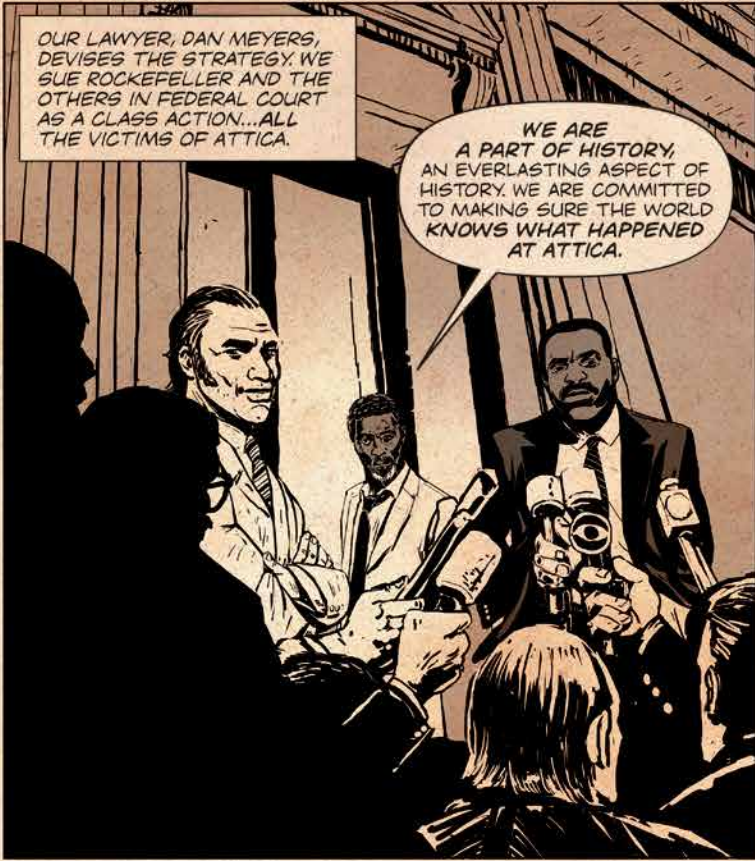
...BECAUSE
I DON'T THINK
THAT IT'S
RELEVANT TO
THE ACTION
THAT WAS
TAKEN.



SPEAKS FOR
ITSELF.

ROCKEFELLER SWORN IN AS VICE PRESIDENT AFTER CONFIRMATION BY HOUSE, 287 TO 128

ROCKEFELLER BECOMES VICE PRESIDENT, BUT ATTICA FOLLOWS HIM.



OUR LAWYER, DAN MEYERS, DEVISES THE STRATEGY. WE SUE ROCKEFELLER AND THE OTHERS IN FEDERAL COURT AS A CLASS ACTION...ALL THE VICTIMS OF ATTICA.

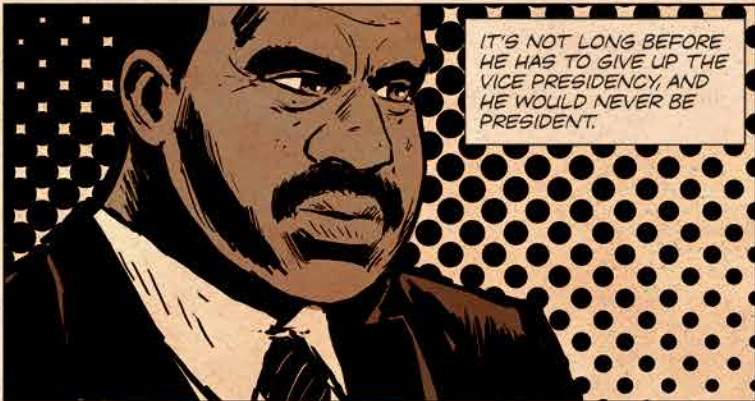
WE ARE A PART OF HISTORY, AN EVERLASTING ASPECT OF HISTORY. WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING SURE THE WORLD KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED AT ATTICA.



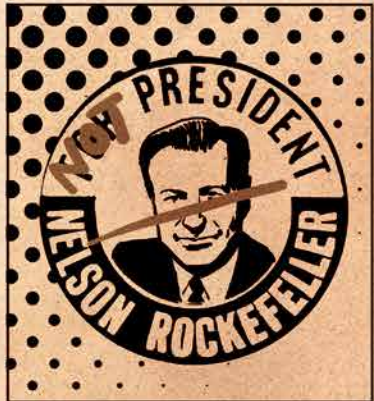
GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER HAS UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN NEW YORK STATE.

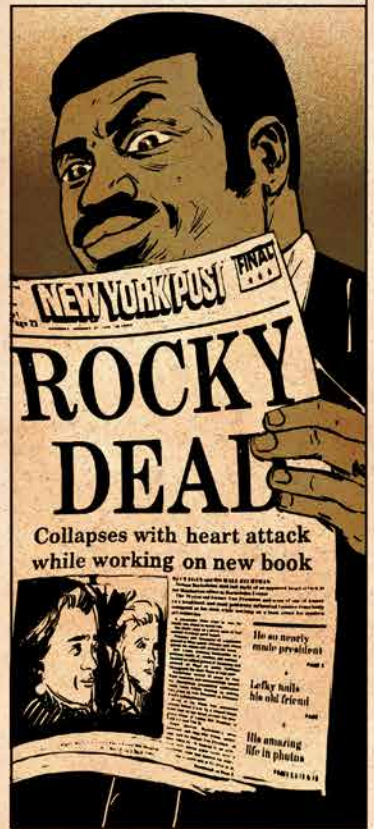


HEY, ROCKY...WHAT HAPPENED AT ATTICA?



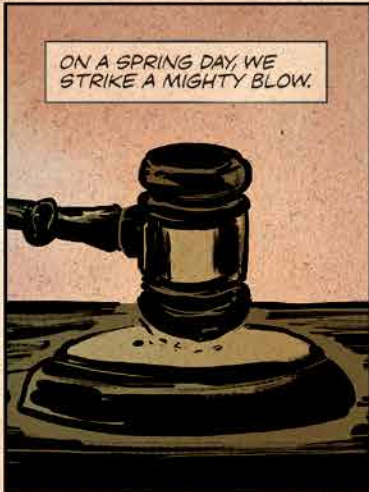
IT'S NOT LONG BEFORE HE HAS TO GIVE UP THE VICE PRESIDENCY, AND HE WOULD NEVER BE PRESIDENT.





1997

NOW I'M BACK
HERE WITH JOEY
AT GIGI'S SOUL
FOOD RESTAURANT
IN BUFFALO, NY,
RETELLING MY
STORY.





Ex-Attica Inmate Wins \$4 Million in Suit Over Reprisals After 1971 Uprising

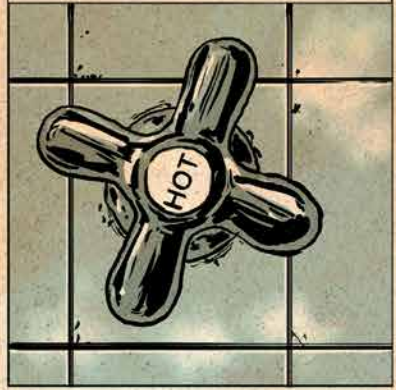
WE ARE FORCED
TO SETTLE.



BUT IT IS NOTHING COMPARED
TO THE DAMAGE DONE.



THERE IS NO APOLOGY.







NO!

I HAVE PTSD.



IT'S ONLY A DREAM, BABY.

IT'S ALRIGHT. YOU'RE HERE WITH ME.

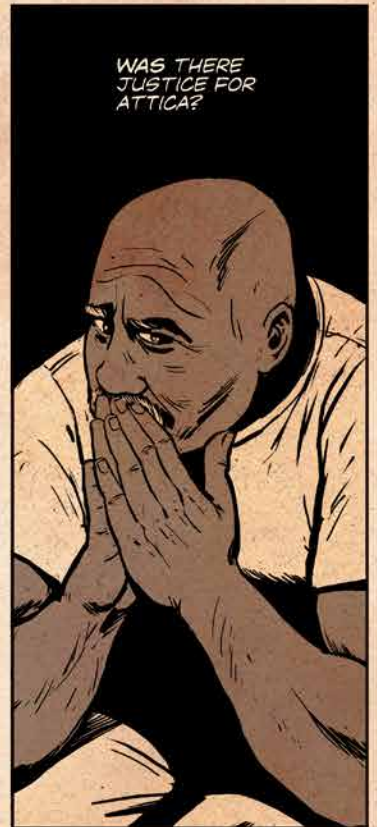
YOU'RE HERE WITH PEARL.



THEY PUT THIS IN ME.

IT'S ONLY A DREAM, BABY. YOU'RE HERE NOW.

IT'S ONLY A DREAM.



WAS THERE JUSTICE FOR ATTICA?



MAYBE WE FORCED
THE TINIEST BIT.



BUT NOTHING
IN PROPORTION
TO WHAT
WENT DOWN...



...ON THAT
COUNT, THERE
ARE NO WINNERS.

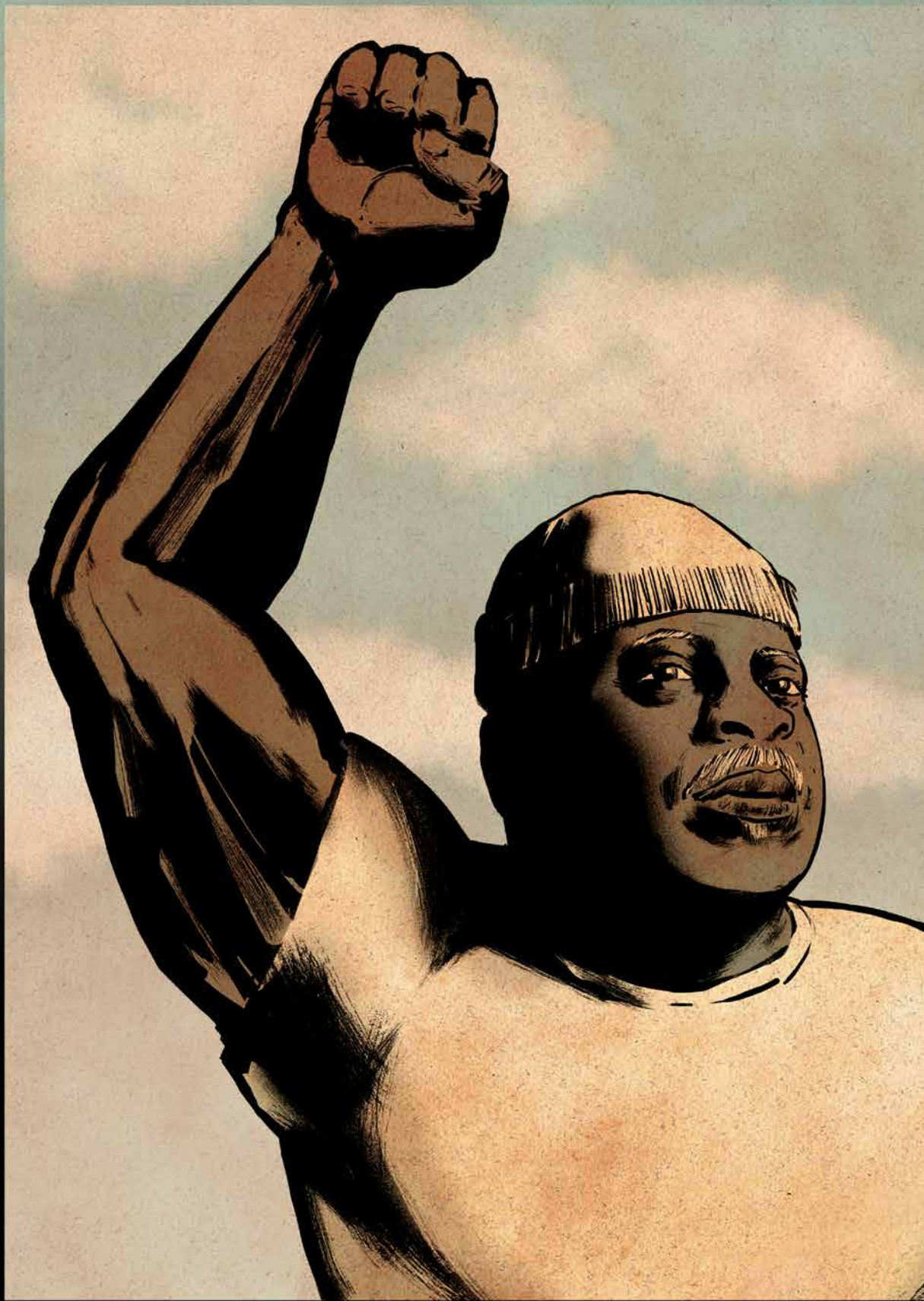




ATTICA IS ALL OF US.







**WAKE UP,
BECAUSE NOTHING
COMES TO A SLEEPER
BUT A DREAM!**

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES!

The End

WHO DIED AT ATTICA, WE WILL NOT FORGET

William Allen

Elliott (L. D.) Barkley

John B. Barnes

Edward Cunningham (hostage)

John J. D'Arcangelo (hostage)

Bernard Davis

Allen Durham

Willie Fuller

Melvin D. Gray

Elmer G Hardie (hostage)

Robert J. Henigan

Kenneth E. Hess

Thomas B. Hicks

Emanuel Johnson

Herbert W. Jones Jr. (hostage)

Richard J Lewis (hostage)

Charles Lundy

Kenneth B. Malloy

Gidell Martin

William B. McKinney

Lorenzo McNeil

Samuel Melville

Edward R. Menefee

Jose Mentijo

Milton Menyweather

John G. Monteleone (hostage)

Richard Moore

Carlos Prescott

Michael Privitiera

William E. Quinn (hostage)

Raymond Rivera

James B. Robinson

Santiago Santos

Barry J. Schwartz

Harold Thomas

Carl Valone (hostage)

Rafael Vasquez

Melvin Ware

Elon F. Werner (hostage)

Ronald Werner (hostage)

Willie West

Harrison Whalen (hostage)

Alfred Williams

FRANK "BIG BLACK" SMITH

(1933 - 2004)





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**WE OWE OUR THANKS TO A LOT
OF INCREDIBLE PEOPLE WHO LIVED AND DIED
FOR THE CAUSE. WE HONOR THEM HERE.**

The Attica Observers

Joseph Agovino

Akil Al-Jundi

Daniel Alterman

Richard Ashe

Ellen G. Battle

Lorenzo Battle

Otis Battle

Robert Bloom

Herbert X Blyden

Ethel Bostic

Robert Boyle

Lillie Bradford and Guy Smith

Charlotte B. Brooks

David Brosig

Haywood Burns

Bob Camp and Missy Ford

Jed Cecil

Roger Champen

Richard X Clark

Joe Corallo

Chuck Culhane

Dennis Cunningham

Nikö Davidopoulos

Jean DeMay

Michael Deutsch

Amy DiCesare and Family

Carol Dudek

Ian Moses Eaton

Soffiah Elijah

Polly Eustic

Elizabeth Fink

FJM Inc. and Families

Andrea J. Fulton

Kent Gash

Mike Gold

Christopher Golden

Judge Emily Goodman

Allen Harris

Glenn Hauman

Joseph Heath

Judy Hinchey and Family

Daryl Hochheiser and Family

Molly Jackson

Gertrude Jeannette

Peter Joseph

Marc Kandel

Joseph Kennedy

Rose Kennedy

Kimanthi

Emily Kunstler

Margaret Ratner Kunstler

Sarah Kunstler

William Kunstler

Joe R. Lansdale

Kasey Lansdale

Frank Lott

Nancy Lyall

Allen Lyons

Dirk Manning

Robert Markfield

The Max/Lewis Family

Leslie McGuire

Delia Mellis

Daniel Meyers

David Meyers and Family

Matt Meyers

Michael Meyers and Family

Sam and Carolyn Meyers

Alicia Mitchell-Foxworth

George Che Nieves

Ward Nixon

Rev. Julian & Debra Pridgen

Joan Max Reinmuth

Kriston Reinmuth and Family

William Reinmuth

Carlos Roche

Jonathan Rosenbaum

Helen Smith

Millie Smith

Pearl Battle Smith

Shakiba Smith

Stephanie Smith

J David Spurlock

Lewis Steel

Frank Stella

Alex Tichane and Kat Famera

Robert Van Lierop

Al Victory

John Wellington

Justus K. White

The White Family

Ellen Yacknin

**AND TO THE ATTICA BROTHERS, THEIR FAMILIES
AND SUPPORTERS (TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION HERE)**



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

FRANK “BIG BLACK” SMITH

Frank “Big Black” Smith was a former inmate at Attica prison who was tortured by officers following the deadly 1971 uprising. After his release from prison, he kicked a drug addiction and worked as a substance abuse counselor. He also devoted his life to becoming the voice of his fellow prisoners in a 26-year lawsuit against New York state. Smith later became an advocate for the Forgotten Victims of Attica, a group comprised of surviving hostages and relatives of the dead prison guards who were believed to have been encouraged to accept limited benefits which barred them from suing the state. Smith married in 1983, studied to be a paralegal, and worked as an investigator for lawyers. He passed away at 70 years old in Kingston, N.C., after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Pearl.

JARED REINMUTH

Jared Reinmuth has worked as an actor, writer, teacher, director, and songwriter. He made his acting debut at the 1994 Dionysian International Theatre Festival in Veroli, Italy in Karen Malpede’s *The Beekeeper’s Daughter*. Regional and National Tour Credits include: *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Dracula*, *Don Quixote*, Athos in *The Three Musketeers*, and Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Jared made his directorial debut in 2016 at the Theater for the New City’s Dream UP Festival with Andrea J. Fulton’s *Roof-Top Joy*. His adaptation, *Monte Cristo*, debuted at the Hackensack Cultural Arts Center. Jared began his writing collaboration with Frank “Big Black” Smith in 1997, while assisting his step-father, famed Attica attorney Dan Meyers. In 2017, at the suggestion of friend and colleague Patrick Kennedy, he joined forces with Pearl Battle Smith and artist Améziane to turn Frank’s vision into the graphic novel *Big Black: Stand at Attica*. Also in 2017, Jared began his musical collaboration with Alex Tichane, songwriting original music to accompany the book, and further explore Big Black’s inspiring biography.

AMÉZIANE

Améziane grew up in Paris, France with the comics of Frank Miller and Bill Sienkiewicz, the films of Bruce Lee, and the soul music of ‘66/’76. Améziane worked several years as an art director, illustrator, and graphic designer. Late in 2001, he finally jump-started his comic book career by writing several scripts. He worked on the comics adaptation of *Cuatro Manos* with his favorite novelist, Paco Ignacio Taibo II. Améziane recently completed *Miss Davis* (a biopic of Angela Davis), the final installment in his Soul Trilogy, which also includes *Muhammad Ali* and *Big Black*. The *New York Times* bestseller *Muhammad Ali* was written by Sybille Titeux de la Croix and is Améziane’s first comics work published in the United States. *Clan* and *CashCowboys* are available digitally, and *Big Black: Stand at Attica* is his first original production in English. Today, Améziane divides his time between his own *Noir* comics, projects with writer Sybille Titeux de la Croix, collaborations with Jared Reinmuth, and working in film. Of course, he doesn’t sleep enough . . .



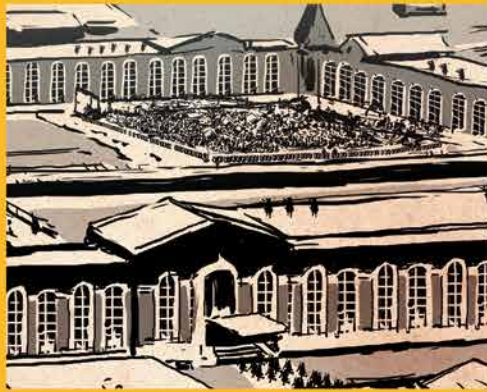
Four days in 1971 changed the course of American history.

This is the true story from the man at the center of it all.

In the summer of 1971, New York's Attica State Prison is a symbol of everything broken in America—abused prisoners, rampant racism and a blind eye turned towards the injustices perpetrated against the powerless. But when the guards at Attica overreact to a minor incident, the prisoners decide they've had enough and revolt—taking their jailers hostage and making demands for humane conditions.

Frank "Big Black" Smith finds himself at the center of this uprising, struggling to protect hostages, prisoners and negotiators alike. But when the only avenue for justice seems to be negotiating with ambitious Governor Nelson Rockefeller, Big Black soon discovers there may be no hope in finding a peaceful resolution for the prisoners in Attica.

Written by Frank "Big Black" Smith with Jared Reinmuth and illustrated by Améziane, *Big Black: Stand At Attica* is an unflinching look at the price of standing up to injustice in what remains one of the bloodiest civil rights confrontations in American history.



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