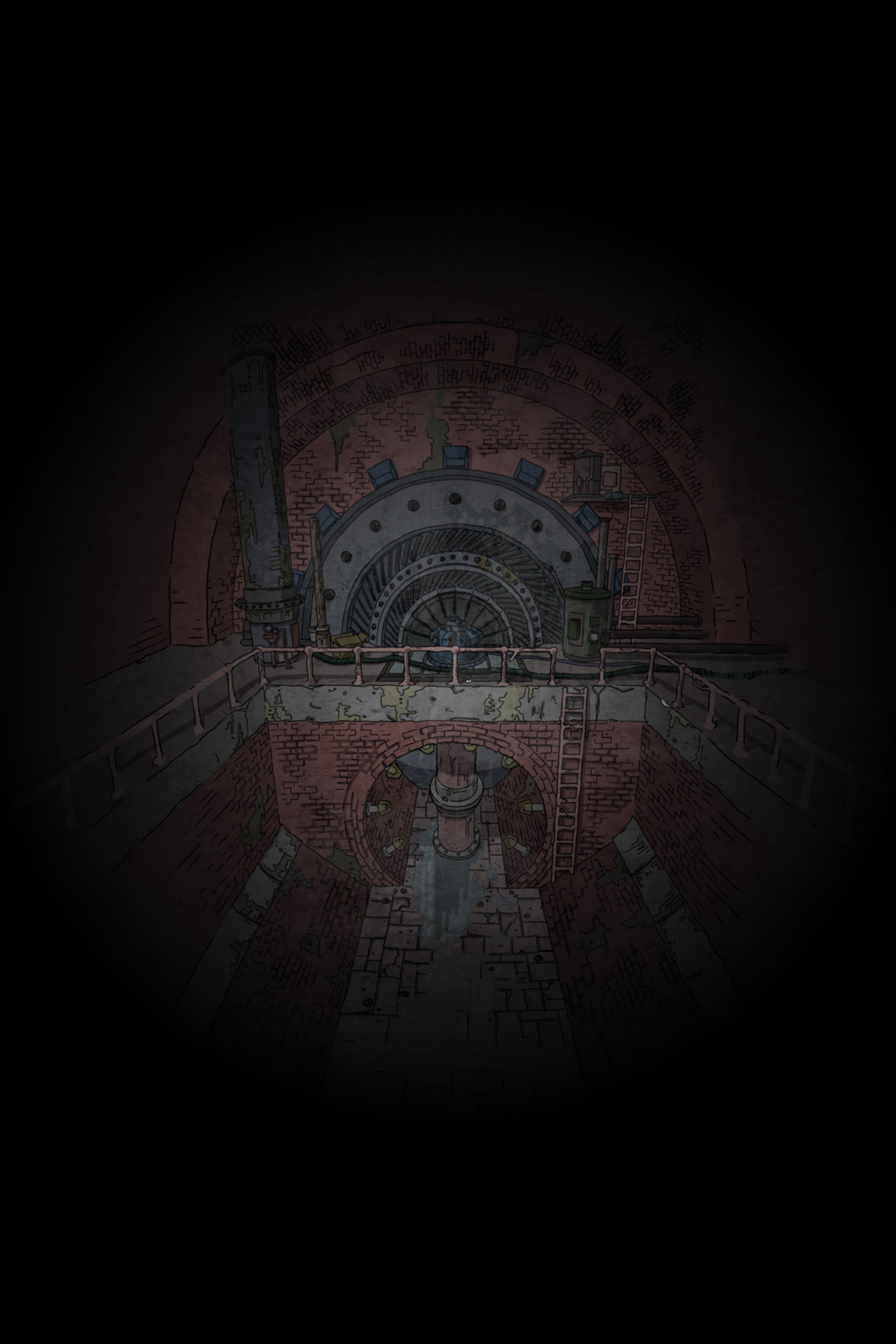


the **GHOST** 
ENGINE







the GHOST
ENGINE

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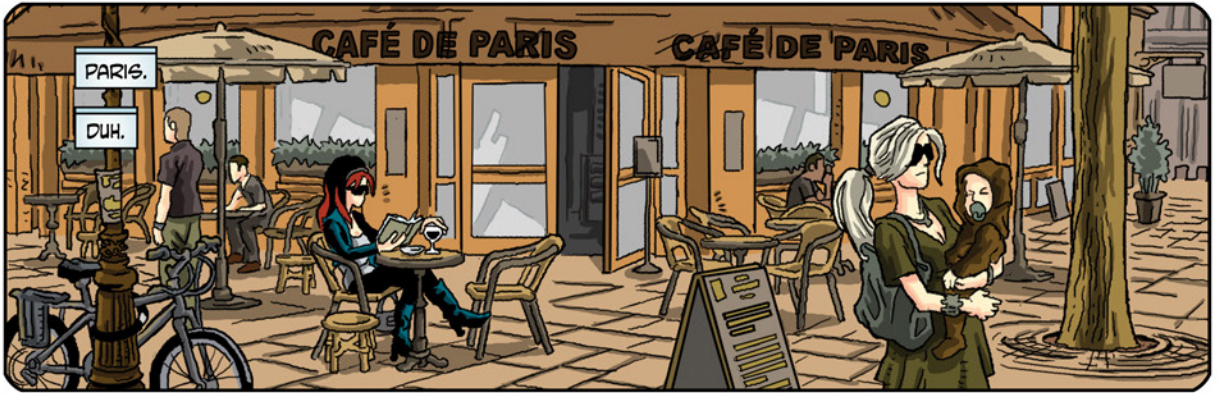
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writer
DANNY DJELJOSEVIC

illustrator
ERIC ZAWADZKI

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

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PARIS.
DUH.



EVER NOTICE IT'S *ONLY* OKAY TO DRINK IN THE AFTERNOON WHEN YER ON VACATION?

I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT.



AMERICAN, HUH? WHAT BRINGS YOU TO PARIS?

ANYONE EVER TELL YOU, YOU COULD BE A REAL *HIGH-CLASS* STRIPPER?



NOT REALLY, NO. I TEND TO HANG OUT WITH PEOPLE WHO RESPECT ME.

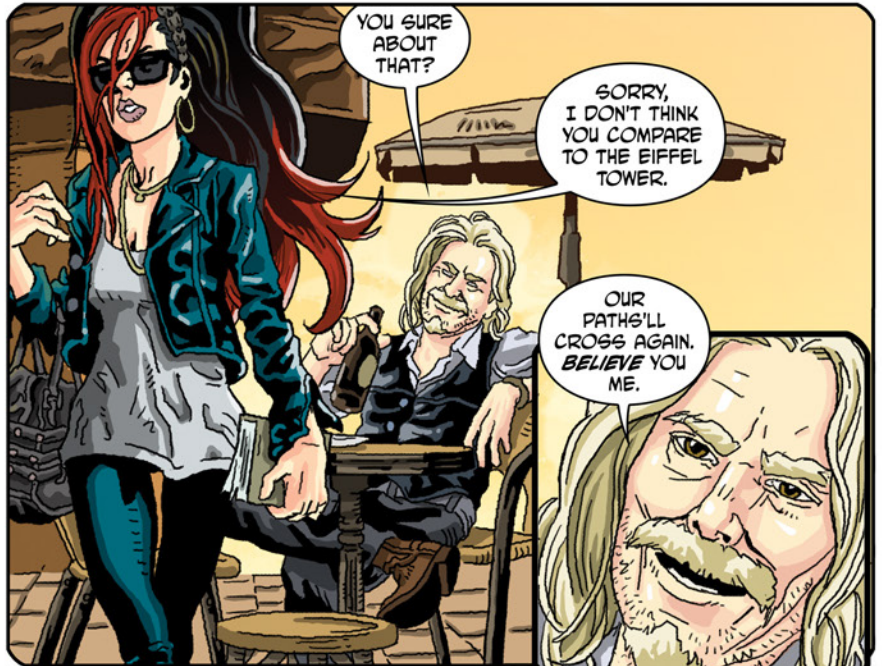
WELL, YER LUCKY I'M HERE.

PRICE. GEOFFREY PRICE. YOU *MIGHT* HAVE HEARD OF ME. YOU WATCH TV?

NO, SORRY. WERE YOU ON ONE OF THOSE HILLBILLY ROMANCE SHOWS?



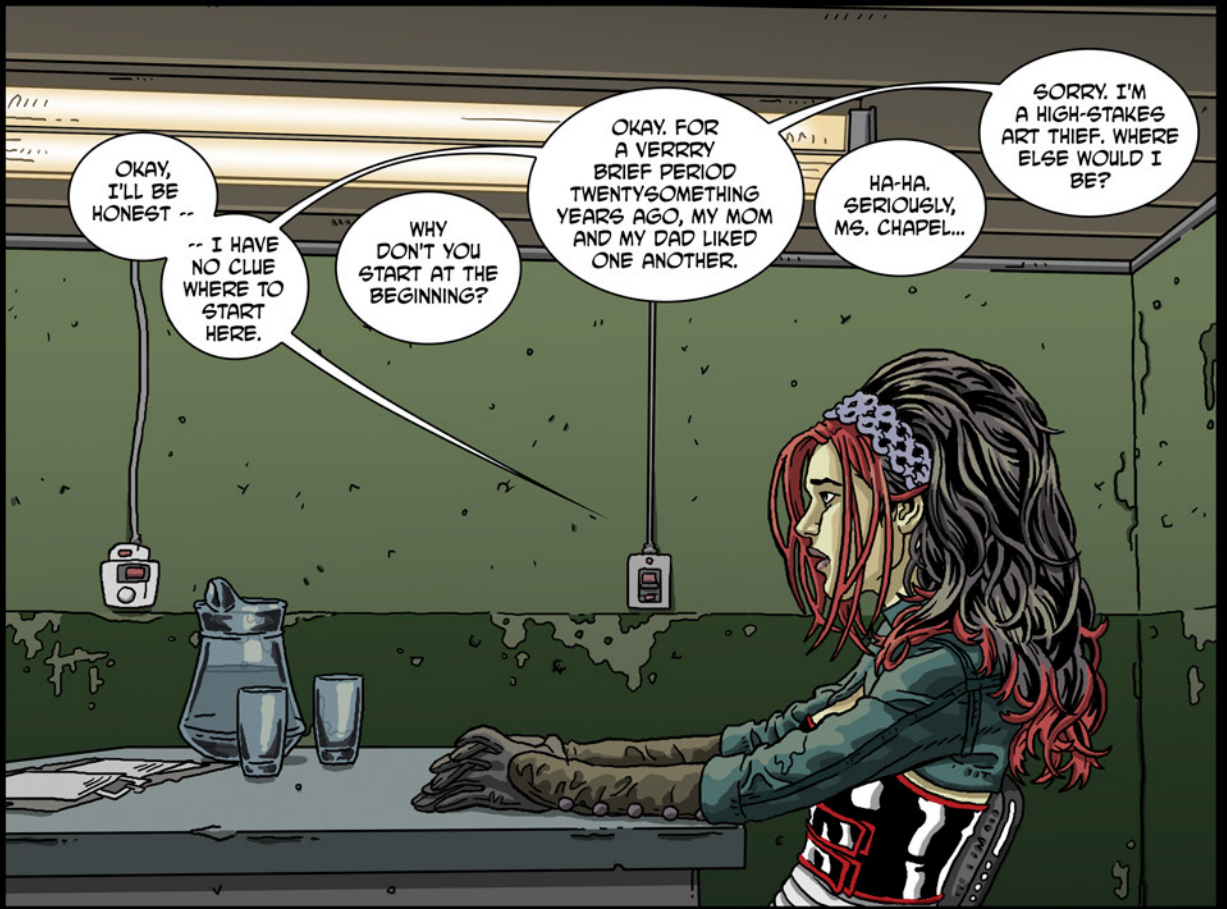
I NEED TO GO. I'VE GOT A DATE.



YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

SORRY, I DON'T THINK YOU COMPARE TO THE EIFFEL TOWER.

OUR PATHS'LL CROSS AGAIN. *BELIEVE* YOU ME.



OKAY, I'LL BE HONEST --

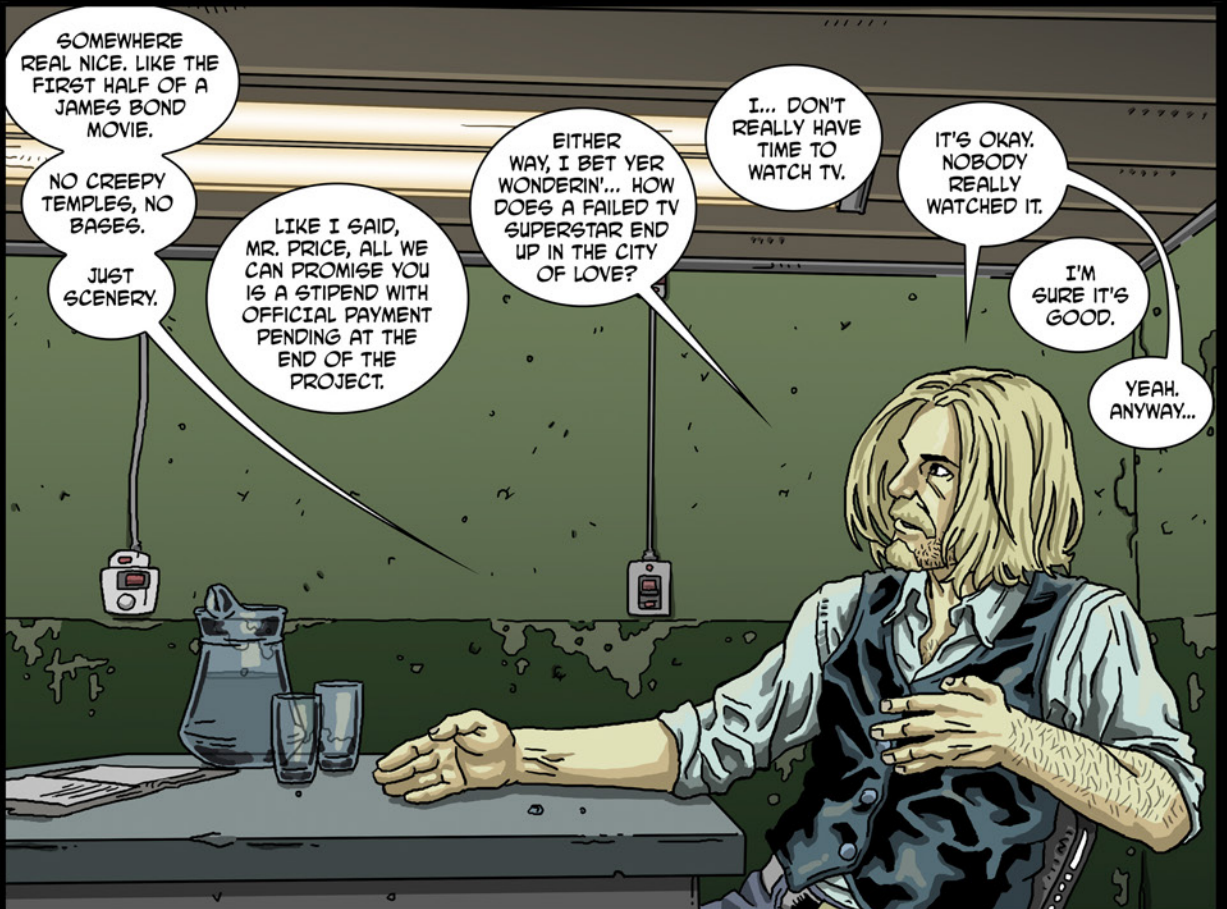
-- I HAVE NO CLUE WHERE TO START HERE.

WHY DON'T YOU START AT THE BEGINNING?

OKAY. FOR A VERRRY BRIEF PERIOD TWENTYSOMETHING YEARS AGO, MY MOM AND MY DAD LIKED ONE ANOTHER.

HA-HA. SERIOUSLY, MS. CHAPEL...

SORRY. I'M A HIGH-STAKES ART THIEF. WHERE ELSE WOULD I BE?



SOMEWHERE REAL NICE. LIKE THE FIRST HALF OF A JAMES BOND MOVIE.

NO CREEPY TEMPLES, NO BASES.

JUST SCENERY.

LIKE I SAID, MR. PRICE, ALL WE CAN PROMISE YOU IS A STIPEND WITH OFFICIAL PAYMENT PENDING AT THE END OF THE PROJECT.

EITHER WAY, I BET YER WONDERIN'... HOW DOES A FAILED TV SUPERSTAR END UP IN THE CITY OF LOVE?

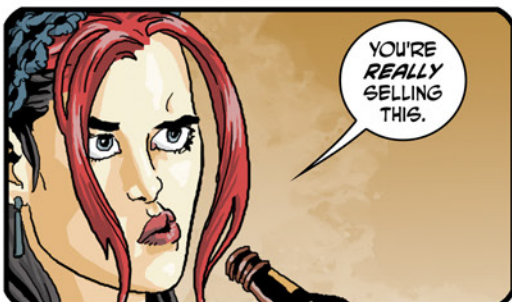
I... DON'T REALLY HAVE TIME TO WATCH TV.

IT'S OKAY. NOBODY REALLY WATCHED IT.

I'M SURE IT'S GOOD.

YEAH. ANYWAY...

HOW BECKY CHAPEL ENDED UP IN PARIS

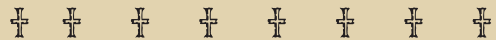
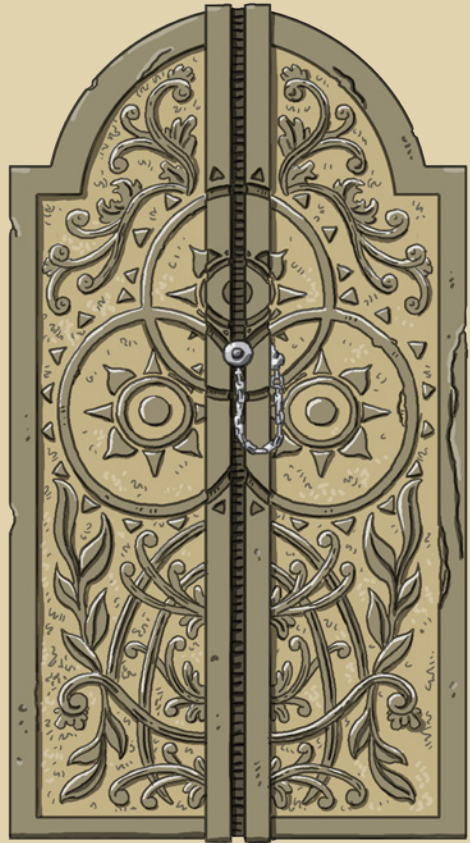
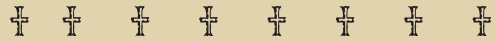


HOW GEOFFREY PRICE ENDED UP IN PARIS



the GHOST ENGINE

CHAPTER 1



LIFE GOES OFF





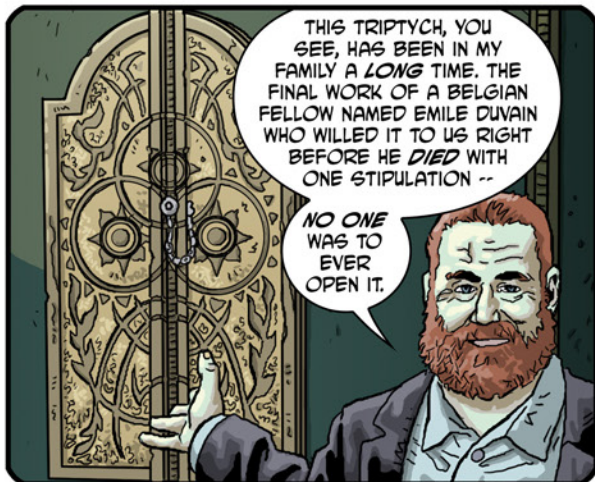
MY COUNTRY MAY HAVE GIVEN THE WORLD *SARTRE* AND *CAMUS* --

WHO?

(UGH.)

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE -- THE WORLD IS BIGGER THAN OUR RIDICULOUS LITTLE SPHERE AND THE SILLY PEOPLE IN IT.

THERE'S A REASON YOU MISMATCHED AMERICANS ARE HERE.



THIS TRIPTYCH, YOU SEE, HAS BEEN IN MY FAMILY A *LONG* TIME. THE FINAL WORK OF A BELGIAN FELLOW NAMED EMILE DUVAIN WHO WILLED IT TO US RIGHT BEFORE HE *DIED* WITH ONE STIPULATION --

NO ONE WAS TO EVER OPEN IT.



YOU CAN'T HEAR IT, BUT THERE ARE VOICES WITHIN THESE DOORS... GIVING ME *VERY* SPECIFIC ORDERS.

NO OFFENSE, *RAY-NARD*, BUT I THINK YOU MIGHT BE A BIT *COO-COO*.

EVEN FOR A *FRENCHIE*.



IT WAS TEDIOUS, BUT I SCOURED THE WORLD FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

AMERICA'S A CANDY STORE FOR *LOWLIFES* AND *LOSERS* THAT NOBODY WOULD MISS.



I *KNEW* I'D MADE THE RIGHT DECISION WHEN YOU TWO JUMPED AT THE FREE MEDICAL EXAM.

WHAT'S UP WITH YOUR COUNTRY, BY THE WAY?



ANYWAY I GIVE YOU DUVAIN'S LIFE'S WORK --






BOUVIE?
I DUNNO -- HE'S
FRENCH. DOESN'T
THAT SAY
IT ALL?

ACTUALLY, IT
DOESN'T SAY
VERY MUCH.

HE'S A BIG
PERFUME MOGUL. A
DUDE OBSESSED WITH
SMELLING THINGS?
TEACHES ME TO TRUST
WEIRDOS.



IT'S WEIRD --
WHEN THE GHOSTS
WENT INTO *US*, IT WAS
LIKE HAVING AN
UNWANTED GUEST IN
OUR BODIES.

BUT WITH
FRANÇOIS...
REYNARD TOTALLY
TOOK OVER
THE GUY.

MAYBE
IT'S BECAUSE
THEY SHARE A
LOT OF THE
SAME DNA.

I'M NO
SCIENTIST,
THOUGH.

ARE *YOU* A
SCIENTIST? YOU
LOOK LIKE A
SCIENTIST.

LET'S
MOVE ON.

FINE.
HERE'S
HOW IT
WENT...

HE SENT ME
OUT TO COLLECT NEW
PARTS FOR ALL THE
COMPONENTS OF THE
THING THAT FELL
APART AFTER A
HUNDRED YEARS.

WHICH ISN'T
AS EASY AS IT
SOUNDS, BY
THE WAY.

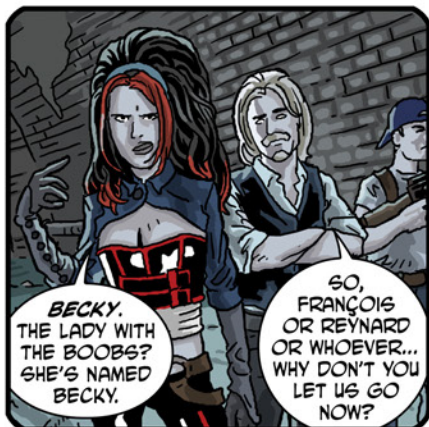
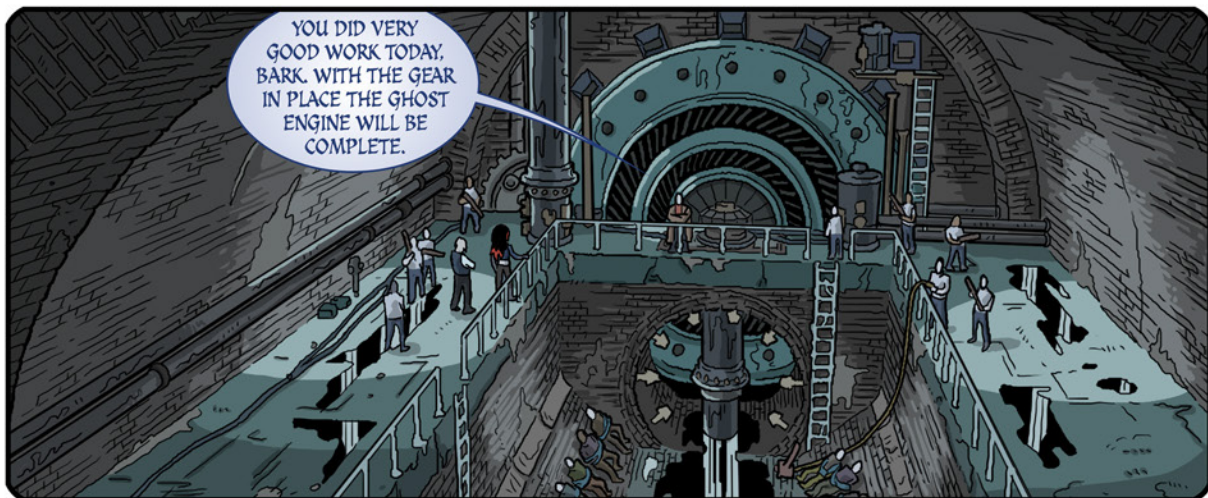
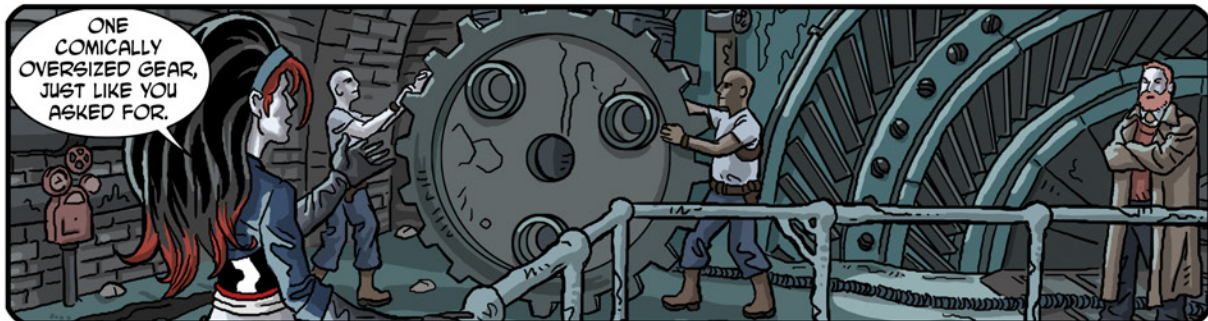
PUT IT THIS
WAY... I HAD TO
ROB MY FAIR
SHARE OF CLOCK
TOWERS.

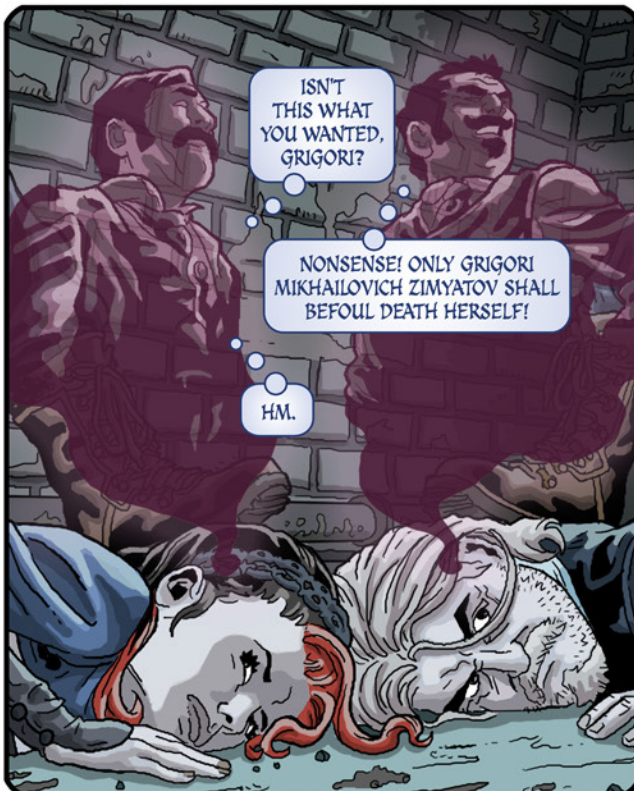
HE MADE ME
HELP HIM GET IT ALL
TO WORK AGAIN. I
GUESS THAT WAS *THIS*
ONE'S JOB WHEN THEY
ORIGINALLY BUILT
THE THING.

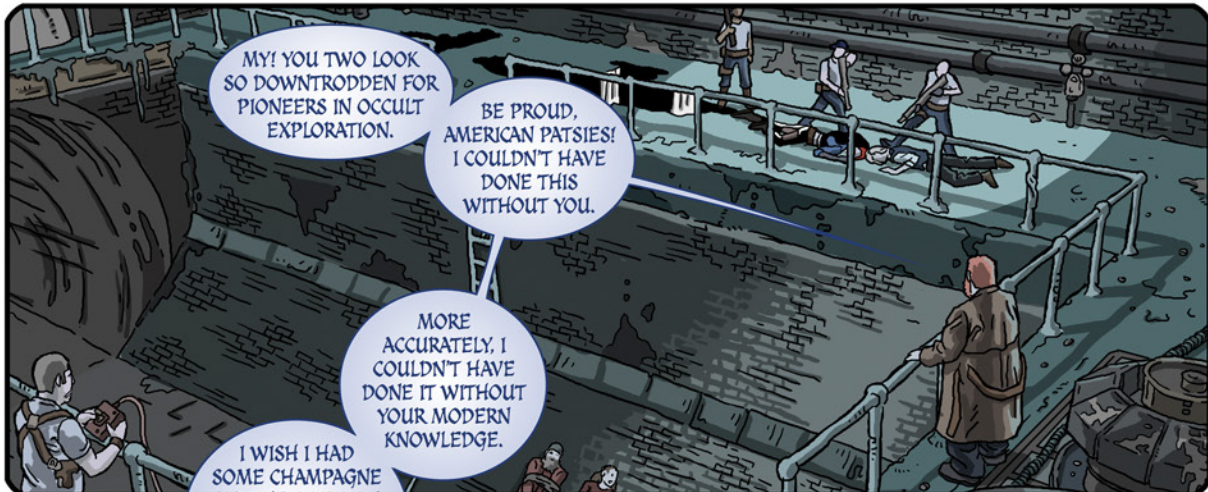
HE ALSO
MADE ME HELP
ROUND UP ALL THE
BUMS HE USED TO
POWER THE
THING.

HOMELESS
PEOPLE... IN THE
CATACOMBS...

WHAT IS IT
WITH THAT
GUY AND
SMELLS?







MY! YOU TWO LOOK SO DOWNTRODDEN FOR PIONEERS IN OCCULT EXPLORATION.

BE PROUD, AMERICAN PATSIES! I COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT YOU.

MORE ACCURATELY, I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR MODERN KNOWLEDGE.

I WISH I HAD SOME CHAMPAGNE FOR THE OCCASION, BUT AFTER THE LAST TIME I FEAR IT A BAD PORTENT.



I FEEL LIKE I HAVE A BABY IN ME THAT JUST WON'T COME OUT.

THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS FEELS LIKE. TRUST ME.



NO MATTER.

SPEAKING OF, BE SURE TO SILENTLY THANK YOUR, AH, INTERIOR APPARITIONS.

THANKS? FOR BUILDING YOU A MIRACLE?



YOU ARE THE SCUM UNDER MY SHIT, BOUVIE! I WILL KILL YOU TO DEATH AND EAT YOUR FUCKSPAWN!?

?

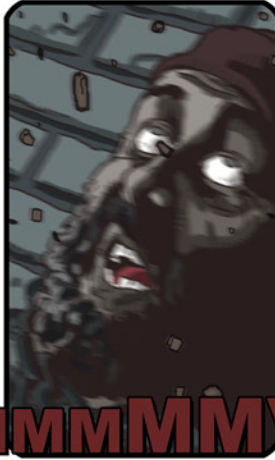
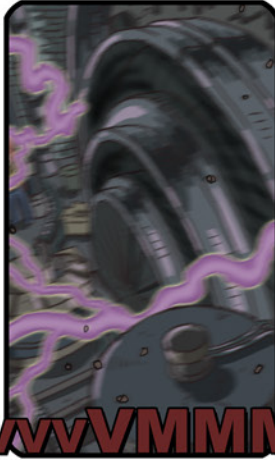
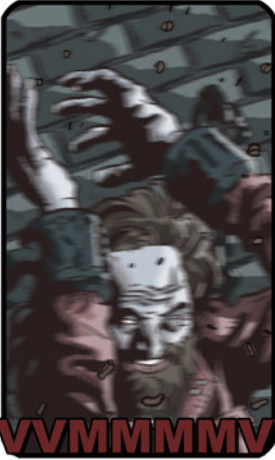


IF THERE'S ONE THING I'LL MISS, GRIGORI, IT WILL BE YOUR RUSSIAN POETRY.

START THE GHOST ENGINE.



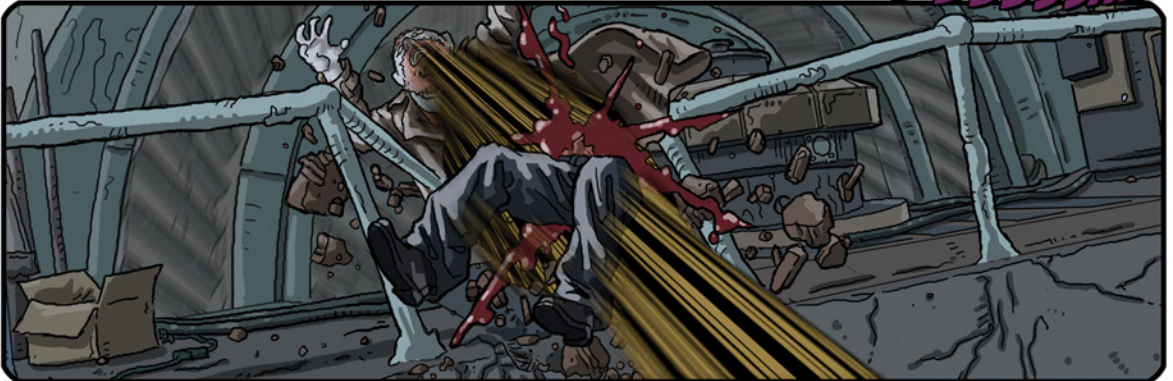
VMMMMM VVVMMMMMMMMMM VVVMMMMMMMMMMMM



VMMMMM VVVMMMMMMMMMM VVVMMMMMMMMMMMM



VVVMMMM IZZKKKSSSSSSHHH







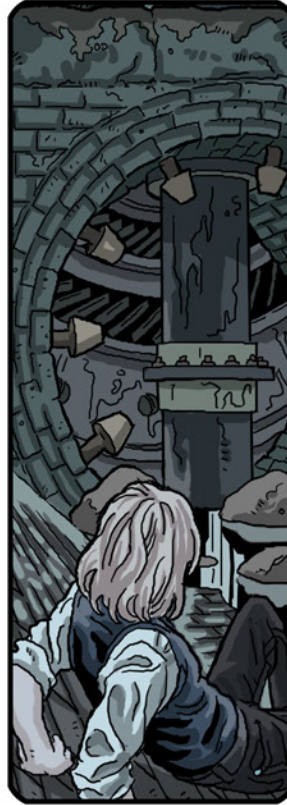
LEARN FROM YOUR FRIEND'S STUPIDITY, GRIGORI MIKHAILOVICH ZIMYATOV.



YOU DO NOT CONQUER DEATH.



DEATH CONQUERS YOU.



BOY, DO I FEEL USELESS IN ALL THIS. THEN AGAIN, I'M NOT THE ONE WHO'S DEAD.

AM I RIGHT, BECKS?



BECKY?

"WHAT WAS I THINKING?"

"OH, SHIT, THERE'S A MONSTER COMING OUT OF A HOLE IN REALITY, I WANT TO SLEEP IN MY OWN BED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS."

ALSO, "IF I SPEND ANY MORE TIME WITH THIS HILLBILLY I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM EAT A VEGETABLE."

EXPLAIN THIS HOSTILITY TOWARDS MR. PRICE.

HE'S LOUD AND CRUDE AND I'M A GIRL. OF COURSE I FIND HIM REPULSIVE.

USUALLY FACIAL HAIR IS KIND OF SEXY, BUT IN HIS CASE, NOT SO MUCH.

I KNOW YOU DON'T KNOW ME, BUT PLEASE TRY TO BE HONEST HERE.

NO JOKE? NO SNARK?

HE CAN'T CONTROL THAT RUSSIAN GHOST INSIDE HIM.

AND HAVING NO CONTROL MAKES HIM DANGEROUS.

SHE'S PRETTY NICE. WELL, NOT NICE-NICE.

SHE'S A BIT STUCK-UP AND HAS A MOUTH LIKE THE GUY ON TV WHO MAKES FUN OF OTHER TV SHOWS.

I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH --

SHE'S... SPIRITED. I LIKE IT.

I'M SURE SHE'S VERY AGREEABLE, BUT WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT MS. CHAPEL AND HER GHOST?

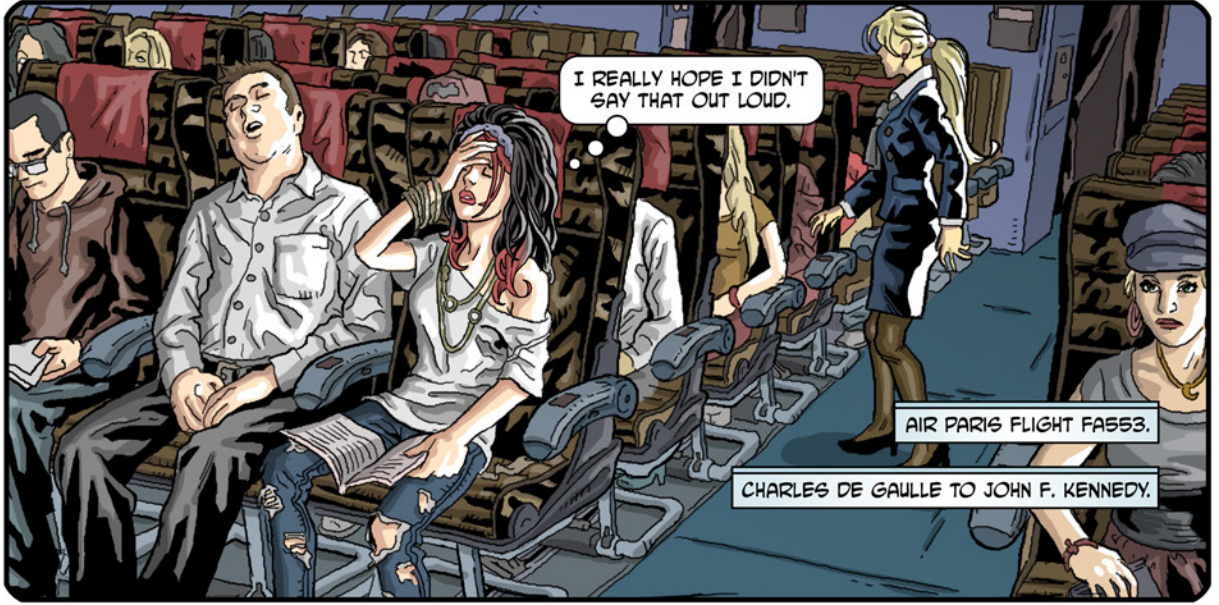
SHE'S GOT SOME ENGLISH GUY. THE MAN UP HERE DON'T LIKE HIM. THEY WORKED TOGETHER ON THE DOOHICKEY.

AIN'T THAT RIGHT, ZIMMY?

BOY, HE'S GOT A LOT TO SAY ABOUT WILLIAM BARK.



IF YOU DON'T *SHUT UP*
I'M GOING TO JAM
THE HEADPHONE JACK
INTO MY EARS!



I REALLY HOPE I DIDN'T
SAY THAT OUT LOUD.

AIR PARIS FLIGHT FA553.

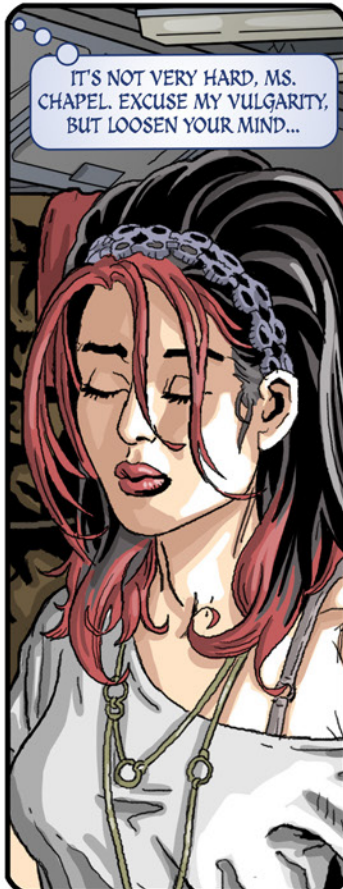
CHARLES DE GAULLE TO JOHN F. KENNEDY.



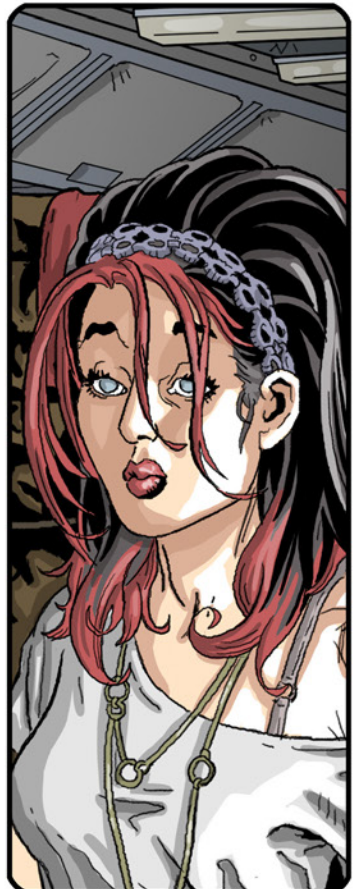
MISS CHAPEL, I UNDERSTAND THAT
THIS SITUATION IS... UNUSUAL. BUT
MUST WE LEAVE MR. PRICE TO HIS
OWN UNCOUTH DEVICES?

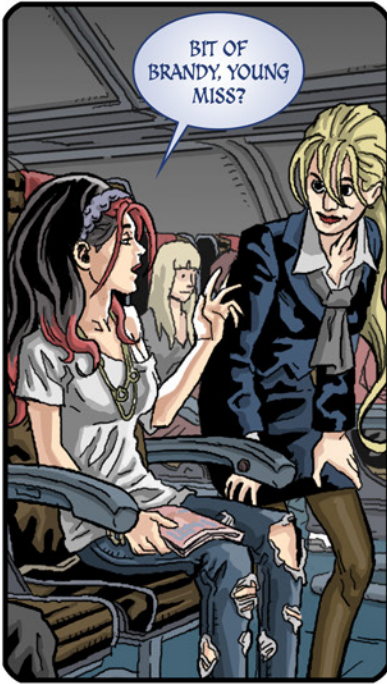
PRICE HAS
A HARD, VACUOUS
HEAD. I DON'T
THINK ZIMYATOV IS
GETTING *ANYTHING*
DONE IN *THERE*.
HE'S IN BRAIN JAIL.

I KNOW YOU SAW
ZIMYATOV SPEAK
THROUGH PRICE.



IT'S NOT VERY HARD, MS.
CHAPEL. EXCUSE MY VULGARITY,
BUT LOOSEN YOUR MIND...





BIT OF BRANDY, YOUNG MISS?



YOU LIMEY BASTARD --



YOUR BRANDY.

UH... THANKS.



THAT *NEVER* HAPPENS AGAIN. *EVER*. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

MY APOLOGIES, BUT YOU NEED TO REALIZE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.

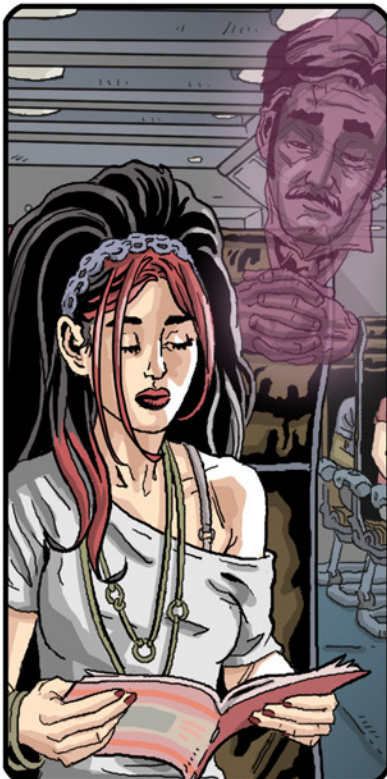
I'D THINK A WOMAN WITH WHAT YOU HAVE AT STAKE WOULD BE MORE CAUTIOUS THAN TO --



LISTEN TO ME, BECAUSE I'M ONLY SAYING THIS ONCE. MY THOUGHTS, MY MIND, MY LIFE -- THEY'RE *NONE* OF YOUR BUSINESS. I DON'T CARE HOW LOUD THEY GET.

YOU'RE A GUEST IN MY BRAIN, AND YOU WILL ACT AS SUCH.

DIG?



...WOULD YOU MIND TURNING THE PAGE?