

DARK HORSE COMICS
30 YEARS
NUMBER 2

**"BRIGGS LAND GOT ME THINKING HOW SUCH A CRAZY
IDEA IS REALLY CLOSE TO HAPPENING NOWADAYS.
I'M ALMOST SCARED TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.
ALMOST SCARED, BUT I'M VERY CURIOUS."**

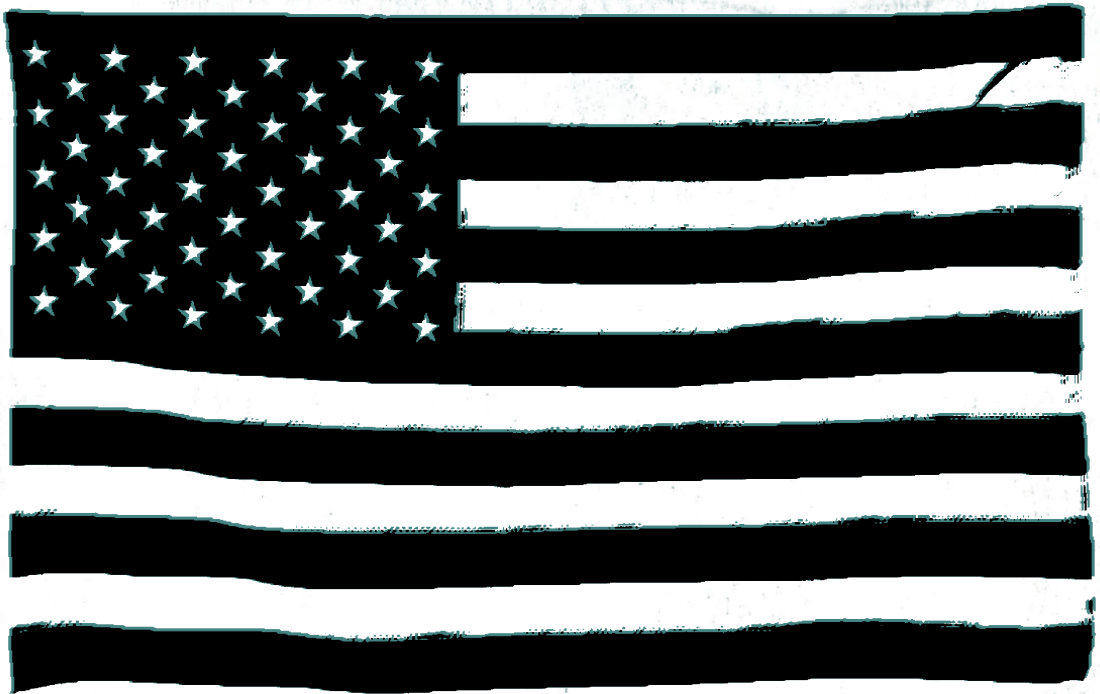
— FÁBIO MOON



BRIAN WOOD / MACK CHATER / LEE LOUGHRIDGE / TULA LOTAY

BRIGGS LAND™

AN AMERICAN FAMILY UNDER SIEGE



BRIGGS LAND™

BRIGGS LAND, USA—NEARLY A HUNDRED SQUARE MILES OF RURAL WILDERNESS, OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY THE BRIGGS FAMILY, A COMMUNITY OF ANTIGOVERNMENT SECESSIONISTS. FOR GENERATIONS, THE BRIGGS CLAN WERE CONTENT TO LIVE FREE AND PEACEFUL LIVES, BUT WITH THE RISE OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND THE AGE OF TERROR, THEIR ACTIVITIES HAVE TURNED CRIMINAL.

UNDER THE EYES OF A PAIR OF FEDERAL AGENTS, GRACE BRIGGS WORKS TO CONSOLIDATE THE POWER SHE JUST SEIZED AND PREVENT A CIVIL WAR AMONG HER SONS.



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VILLAGE OF WRENTON
EIGHT MILES FROM BRIGGS LAND



ALBANY
OFFICE LEFT
A MESSAGE ON
MY CELL THIS
MORNING.



DON'T
CALL
BACK.

IT'S THE JIM
BRIGGS CASE
FILES. ISN'T IT? YOU
STOLE THEM,
DIDN'T YOU?





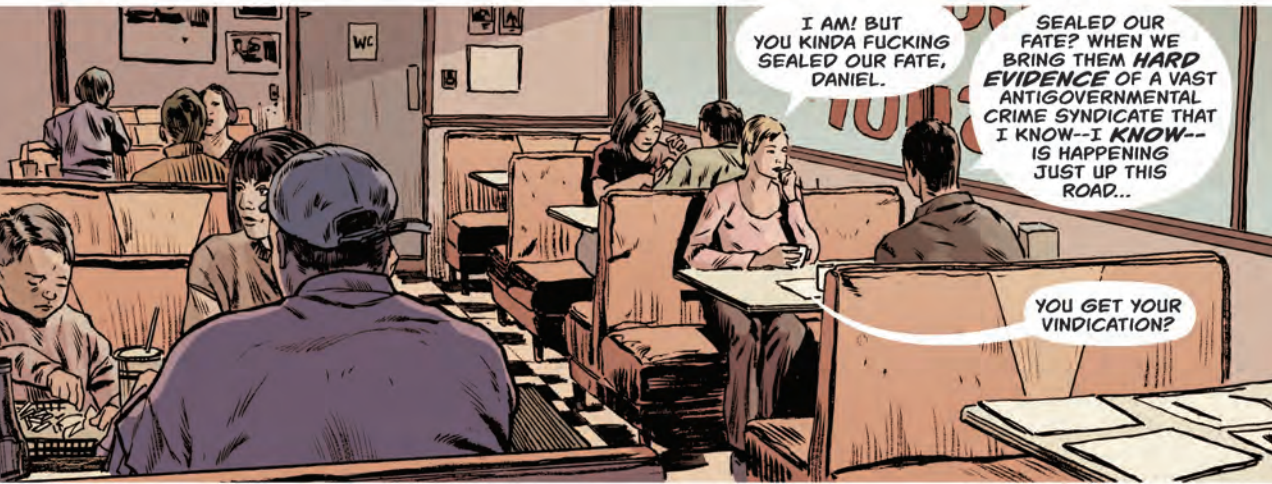
YOU TOLD ME THEY RELEASED THEM TO YOU.

FUCK ALBANY.



MY FATHER BUILT THAT CASE. THAT CASE IS A PART OF MY CHILDHOOD. IT'S MY LEGACY.

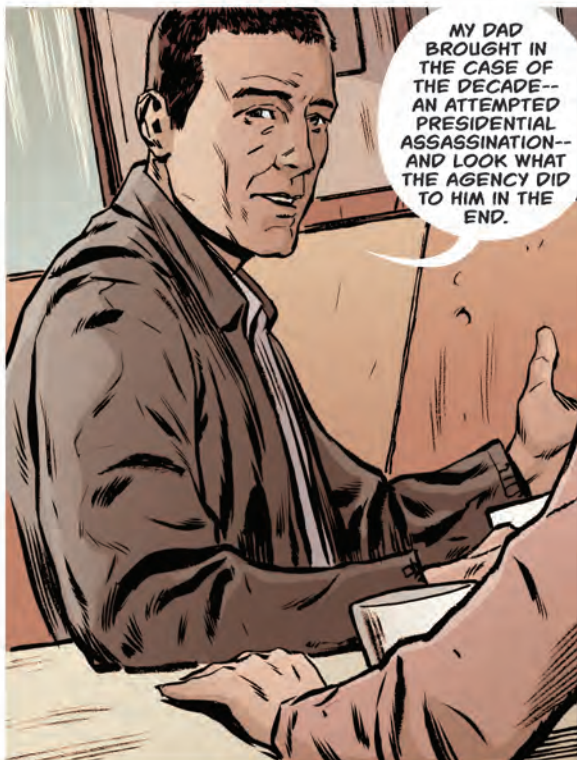
YOU SAID YOU WERE ALL IN ON THIS WITH ME.



I AM! BUT YOU KINDA FUCKING SEALED OUR FATE, DANIEL.

SEALED OUR FATE? WHEN WE BRING THEM HARD EVIDENCE OF A VAST ANTIGOVERNMENTAL CRIME SYNDICATE THAT I KNOW--I KNOW-- IS HAPPENING JUST UP THIS ROAD...

YOU GET YOUR VINDICATION?



MY DAD BROUGHT IN THE CASE OF THE DECADE-- AN ATTEMPTED PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSINATION-- AND LOOK WHAT THE AGENCY DID TO HIM IN THE END.



IT'S NOT MY VINDICATION I'M AFTER.

**BRIGGS
HOUSE**

MOM, I'M
SORRY.



I COULDN'T DO IT.
I JUST COULDN'T
PULL THE
TRIGGER.



I'VE
DONE TOO
MUCH OF THAT
RECENTLY.

ISAAC,
HUSH. IT'S
OKAY, BUT
LISTEN...



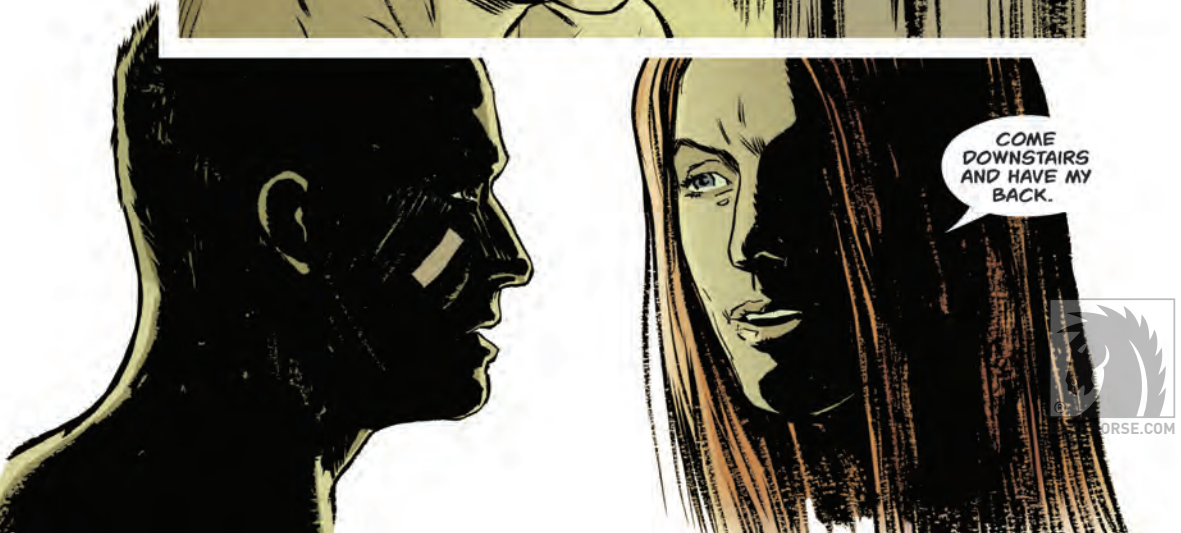
...YOUR BROTHERS
WILL BE HERE SOON.
AND SO RIGHT NOW
YOU NEED TO FIGURE
OUT HOW YOU CAN
HELP ME. IT DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE WITH A
GUN, BUT GOD
HELP US,
ISAAC...

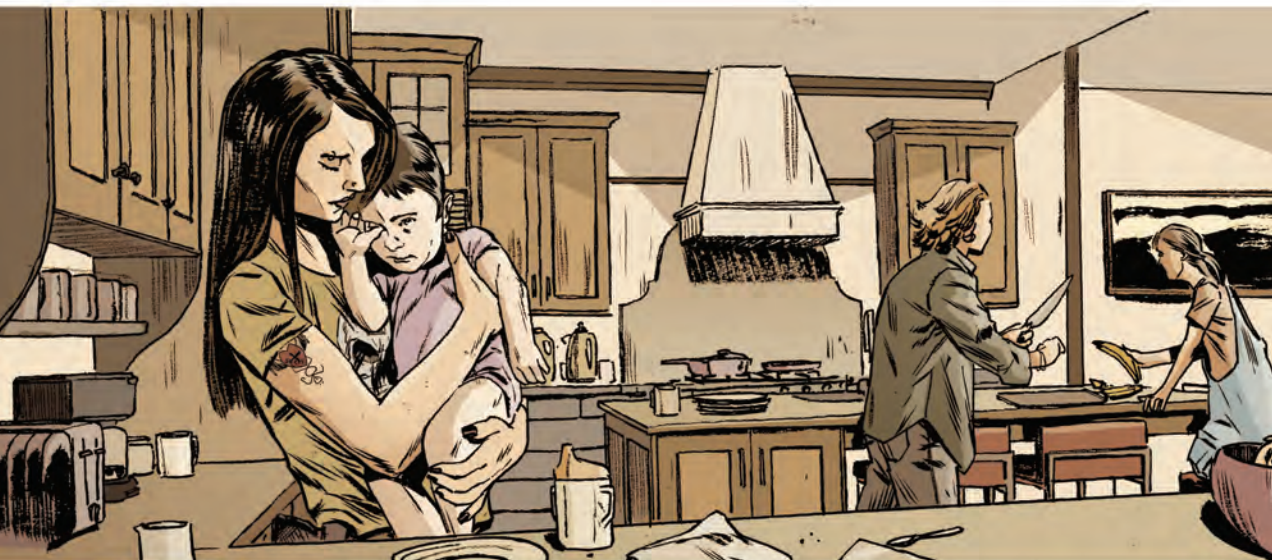
...YOU
HAVE TO
GET OUT OF
THIS BED.

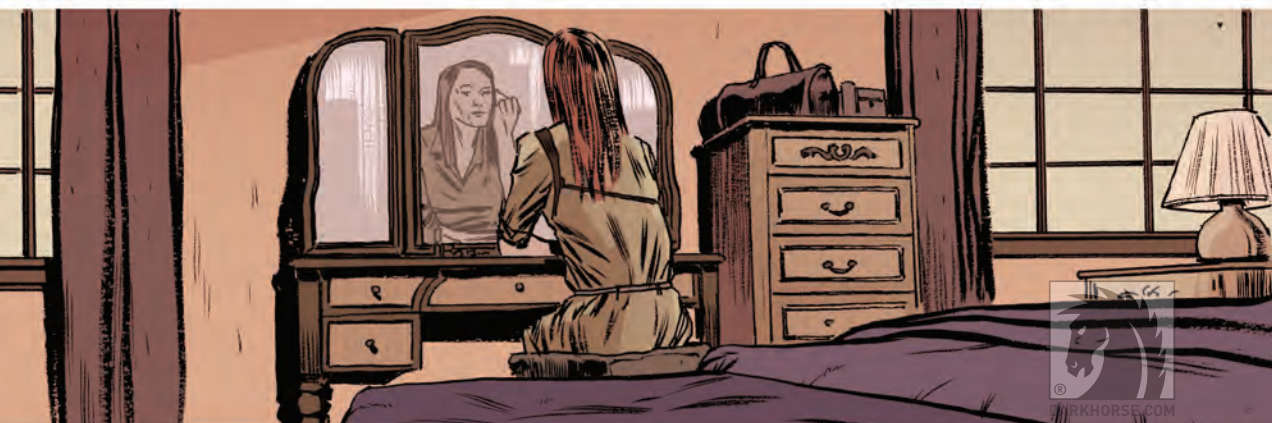


BECAUSE I CAN'T
GO OUT THERE ON MY
OWN. I CAN'T LOOK
VULNERABLE.













MOM DID WHAT SHE HAD TO DO, AND ANYWAY IT'S DONE NOW. YOU ALL KNOW THE REASONS WHY. SO LET'S JUST FOCUS ON MOVING FORWARD, ON WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

HAVE A SEAT, MOM.



NOT YET.

I NEED TO GET SOME ASSURANCES FIRST.



I WANT YOU ALL TO COMMIT, WITH ME, TO NEVER SEEING VIOLENCE BROUGHT TO THE HOUSE AGAIN. IF NOT FOR OUR SAKE...



...THEN FOR THEIRS.

CAN YOU DO THAT?



NO ONE WANTS BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN, GRACE, BUT LAST NIGHT? YOU ACT LIKE YOU DID NOTHING TO CAUSE IT.

MAYBE THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU DID, WHICH WAS TO ACT AGAINST YOUR HUSBAND AND AGAINST GOD. YOU STOP TO THINK ABOUT THAT?

ELLIE, COOL IT.

I CAME HERE WITH TERMS, GRACE.

BUD HILLSON SELLS HILLSON HOME VALUE TO ME. EXISTING FAMILY ARRANGEMENTS WILL STAY IN PLACE, BUT OTHERWISE I MAKE ALL DECISIONS REGARDING IT.



I GET THAT WITHIN A MONTH, AND I'LL SUPPORT YOU AS HEAD OF FAMILY, NO QUALIFICATIONS.



YOUR SUPPORT HAS TO BE PUBLIC AND TOTAL. YOUR WORDS, YOUR MONEY IF NEED BE, AND YOUR STRENGTH.

YOU'RE THE ELDEST SON. ANY TIME SOMEONE COMES TO YOU LIKE YOU'RE IN CHARGE...?

I DEFER TO YOU. THAT'S THE DEAL. I GET IT, GRACE.



EXCUSE ME?



A FUCKING HARDWARE STORE? THAT'S IT? YOU **SERIOUS?**

WHAT ABOUT YOU, NOAH?



I WANT TO BE BOSS OF THE VILLAGE, MOM. HEAD OF SECURITY. THE FUCKING SHERIFF.

I'M THE LOGICAL CHOICE ANYWAY. CALEB'S TOO JAWOHL THESE DAYS, AND ISAAC SOLD HIS SOUL TO THE GREAT SATAN AND CAN'T BE TRUSTED, AM I RIGHT?



FUCK YOU, NOAH...

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK? I'LL BACK YOU, JUST LIKE CALEB.



YOU CAN'T HAVE COMPLETE AUTONOMY. AS HEAD OF FAMILY, I'LL BE YOUR BOSS. AND YOUR CREW DOWN IN THE VILLAGE, THEY HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT TOO.

I DON'T WANT A BUNCH OF MACHO ASSHOLES GOING ROGUE BECAUSE THEY THINK AN OLD LADY GIVING THE ORDERS MAKES THEM WEAK.

YEAH, I GET THAT, AND I CAN KEEP THEM IN LINE, NO WORRIES...



...YOU CAN GIVE THE ORDERS, BUT I HAVE TO HAVE SOME **OPERATIONAL LEEWAY** IN HOW IT GETS DONE. I CAN'T BE CHECKING IN WITH MOM FOR EVERY LITTLE THING THAT COMES UP.

LOOK, MA, IT'S THE SAME WITH NOAH AS WITH CALEB. THEY'RE **SONS**. IF MR. BRIGGS ISN'T RUNNING THINGS NO MORE, IT'S LOGICAL THEY DO. BUT IF **THEY** AREN'T?

AT LEAST DON'T MAKE THEM **LOOK** LIKE PUSSIES IN FRONT OF THE WHOLE FUCKING WORLD.



ABBIE!

COOL IT, ALL OF YOU.

DARKHORSE.COM

NOAH, HEAD OF SECURITY FOR THE VILLAGE. BUT NOT THE HOUSE, UNDERSTOOD?

ABSOLUTELY.

AND ABBIE?



...YOU RESPECT ME AND THE FAMILY. AND WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE, ESPECIALLY AROUND THE KIDS.

I'VE SPOKEN TO ISAAC ALREADY, AND HE'S ASKED TO REOPEN THE OLD BORDER RUNS THAT UNCLE SETH USED TO DO. THAT'S HOW HE'LL BE CONTRIBUTING, AT LEAST FOR NOW.

MISSING KANDAHAR ALREADY, HUH? GODDAMN BORDER SMUGGLING--BRIGGS HAVEN'T DONE THAT FOR THIRTY YEARS. EVER HEAR OF FEDEX, ISAAC? HELL OF A LOT FASTER.



WHOA, CHECK OUT THE MOUNTAIN MAN!

THERE'S HONOR IN IT, ASSHOLE. IT'S A FAMILY TRADITION, GOING ALL THE WAY BACK.

SAME AS STICKING BY YOUR BLOOD, NO MATTER WHAT.

NO MATTER WHAT WE ALL GOT WHAT WE WANT, SO MOM'S THE HEAD OF FAMILY NOW.

CAN WE ALL AGREE ON THAT AND JUST EAT ALREADY?



ONE LAST THING.

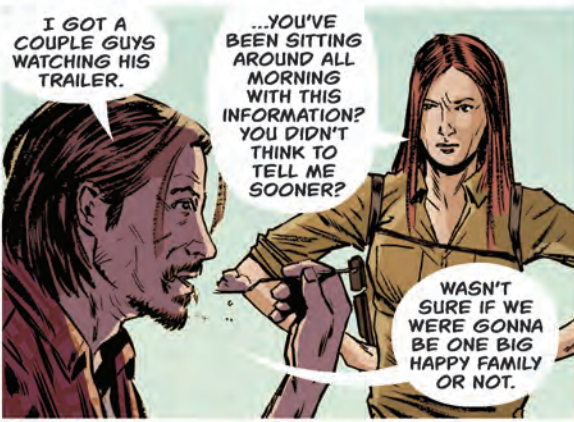
WHO TRIED TO KILL ME LAST NIGHT? ISAAC'S RIGHT: FAMILY IS FAMILY, SO IF YOUR FATHER GOT TO ONE OF YOU, TELL ME NOW. IT WON'T AFFECT THE DEAL GOING FORWARD--

IT'S NOT US.



MY GUYS DOWN IN THE VILLAGE SPOTTED THIS METH HEAD PICKING BITS OF MOM'S PLATE GLASS WINDOWS OUT OF HIS ASS. NAME'S BEN CAULEY. HE'S NOBODY.

WE THINK DAD CALLED THE COMMUNAL PHONE AND OFFERED THE CONTRACT TO THE FIRST PERSON WHO PICKED UP.



I GOT A COUPLE GUYS WATCHING HIS TRAILER.

...YOU'VE BEEN SITTING AROUND ALL MORNING WITH THIS INFORMATION? YOU DIDN'T THINK TO TELL ME SOONER?

WASN'T SURE IF WE WERE GONNA BE ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY OR NOT.

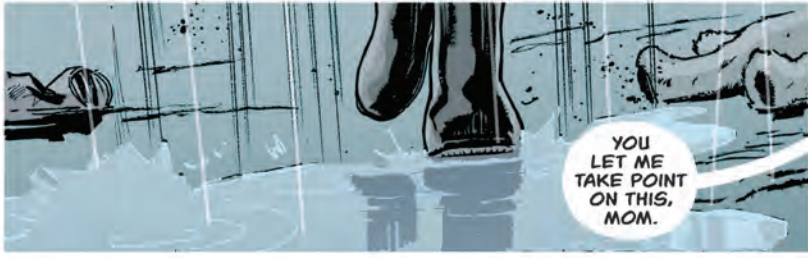


BUT NOW I KNOW.



ANYONE ELSE GOING TO EAT, OR JUST ME?





YOU LET ME TAKE POINT ON THIS, MOM.

THE BRIGGS VILLAGE



I'M THE ONE HE CAME AFTER.

YEAH, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW THESE PEOPLE. YOU DON'T SPEND TIME IN THE VILLAGE.

DON'T GIVE ME THAT LOOK.

I HELPED BUILD THIS VILLAGE.



DID YOU KNOW BEN CAULEY'S KID IS DISABLED? DID YOU KNOW HE DOESN'T LET HIS WIFE OWN SHOES?

...WHAT?

I'M LOOKING FOR BEN CAULEY!





BEN CAULEY!



BEN, COME ON, GET YOUR ASS OUT HERE!

HE AIN'T HERE!



THEN YOU COME OUT!



IT'S JUST US, I SWEAR. DON'T KNOW WHERE BEN IS.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME OUT.



MOM, WHAT THE FUCK--?

CAN I COME IN THERE?

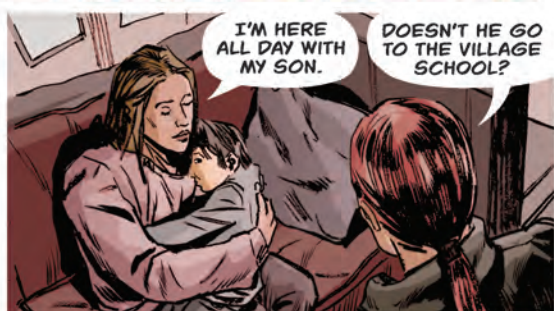
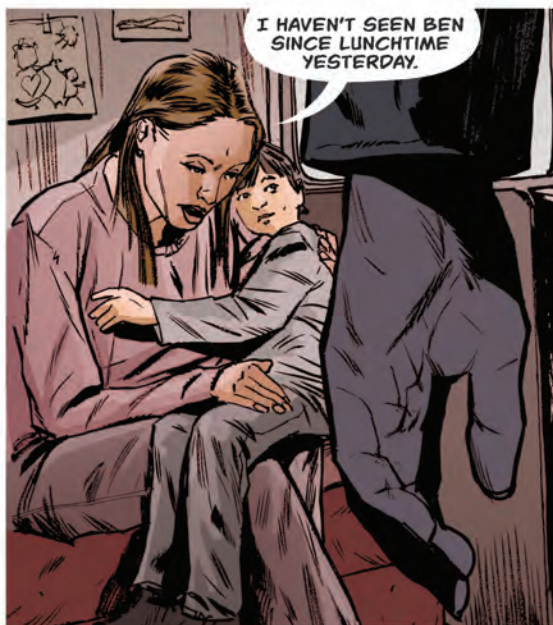
FOR ALL YOU KNOW, CAULEY'S IN THERE WAITING FOR YOU.



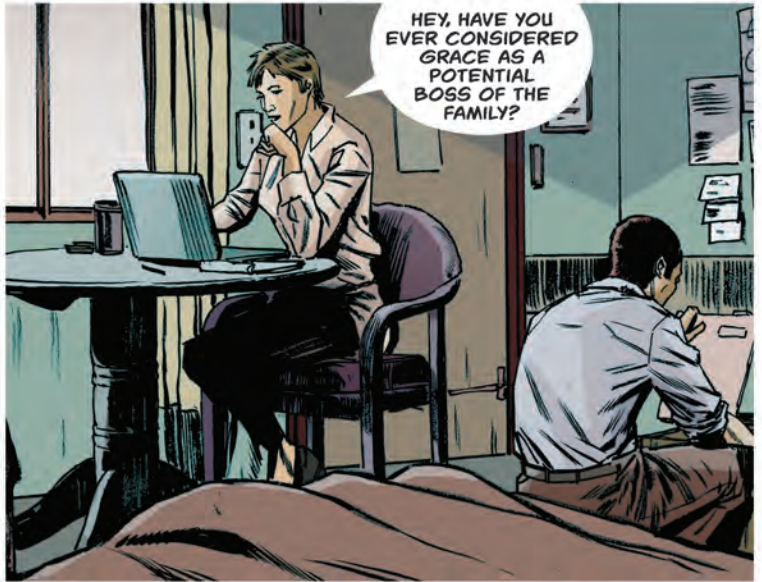
HE AIN'T, I PROMISE.

I BELIEVE YOU.

FOR FUCK'S SAKE...!



WRENTON



HEY, HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED GRACE AS A POTENTIAL BOSS OF THE FAMILY?



SHE'S NOT THE BOSS. JIM BRIGGS IS.

YEAH, BUT HOW ABOUT IT? WANNA GAME IT OUT?



WHAT'S THE POINT? THESE EXTREMIST COMMUNITIES ARE ALL PATRIARCHIES. CALEB BRIGGS IS NEXT IN LINE WHENEVER THE OLD MAN KICKS THE BUCKET.

GRACE IS A HOUSEWIFE.

MAYBE THERE'S MORE TO HER THAN WE THINK.

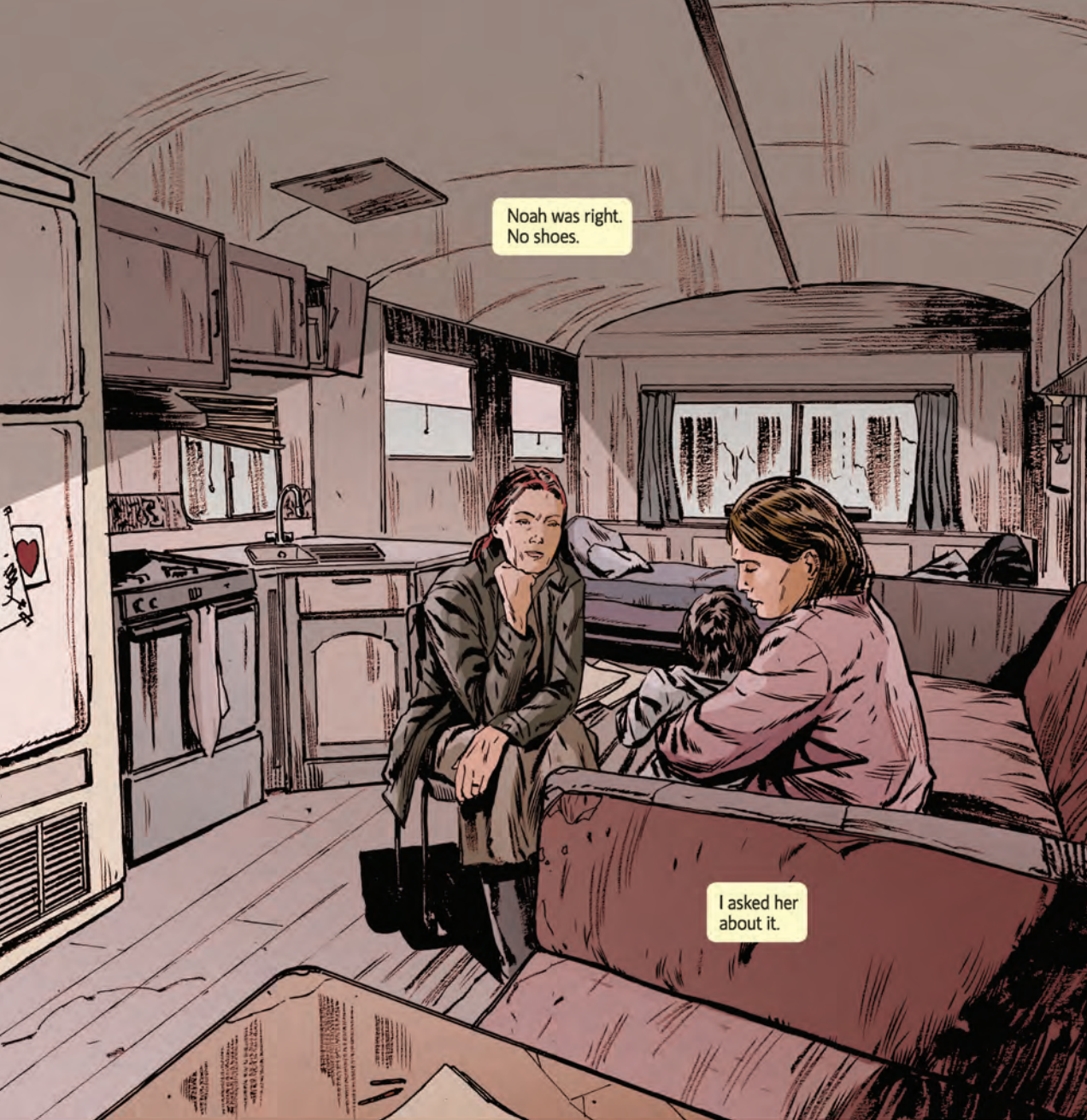


DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS?



... HOW THE FUCK DID YOU FIND THIS?





Noah was right.
No shoes.

I asked her
about it.



He took away her
shoes. "So I'll learn
my place," she said.

She spoke those
words matter-of-fact,
as if this was a routine
thing that husbands
did to their wives.





SHE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING.

THESE PEOPLE SOMETIMES PLAY THE VICTIM TO HIDE THEIR GUILT. DON'T LET HER MANIPULATE YOU.



OUR FOCUS IS CAULEY, NOT HER.

WE CAN USE HER TO GET TO HIM!



MOM!

FIND BEN CAULEY, NOAH. HE'S THE TARGET.

YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING HER A FAVOR, BUT YOU CAN'T HELP PEOPLE LIKE THAT. I SPEND EVERY DAY DOWN HERE IN THE VILLAGE--I KNOW.



YOU CAN'T GET INVOLVED IN EVERY SHITTY DOMESTIC SITUATION.

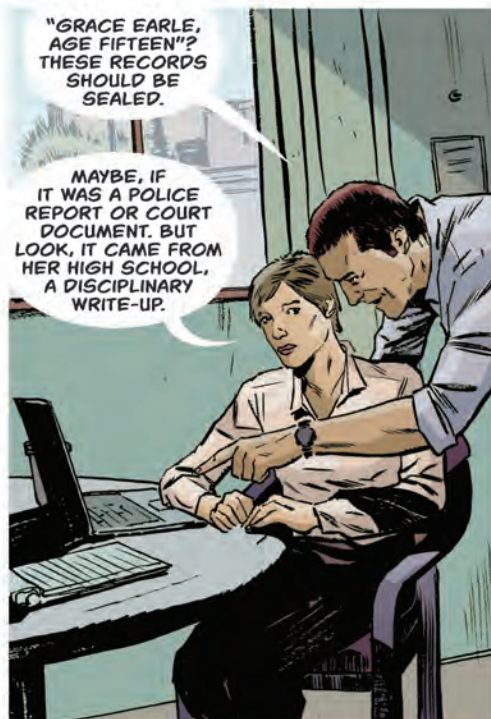
IT SHOULDN'T BE THAT WAY.

YEAH, WELL, SOCIETY SUCKS.



THIS ISN'T SOCIETY. THIS IS BRIGGS LAND.

IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE BETTER.



"GRACE EARLE, AGE FIFTEEN"? THESE RECORDS SHOULD BE SEALED.

MAYBE, IF IT WAS A POLICE REPORT OR COURT DOCUMENT. BUT LOOK, IT CAME FROM HER HIGH SCHOOL, A DISCIPLINARY WRITE-UP.



THAT'S SOME FUCKING WRITE-UP.

I'M JUST SAYING, IT'S SOMETHING TO CONSIDER. THE GIRL IN THAT REPORT ISN'T SOME SWEET COUNTRY ROSE. THAT'S ONE TOUGH KID.



THE WHOLE REASON WE'RE EVEN *HERE* IS JIM BRIGGS.

BUT LET'S JUST THINK ABOUT IT...



...WHAT IF WE'RE REALLY HERE BECAUSE OF *GRACE BRIGGS*?

NOT THE ERRAND-GIRL HOUSEWIFE IN FARM BOOTS WHO NEVER FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL, BUT THE *TRUE* HEAD OF THE BRIGGS FAMILY ORGANIZATION...



"...SOMEONE WHO'S NOT LIKELY TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO."

GOTTA BE HONEST, MOM...



...THIS IS NOT REALLY WHAT I EXPECTED WHEN YOU PROMISED ME OPERATIONAL LEEWAY.



THIS IS YOUR FIRST DAY AS HEAD OF FAMILY. YOU GOTTA KICK IT OFF ROUGH AND CRUEL, SO NO ONE THINKS TO FUCK WITH YOU.

YOU REMEMBER WHAT I SAID THIS MORNING?



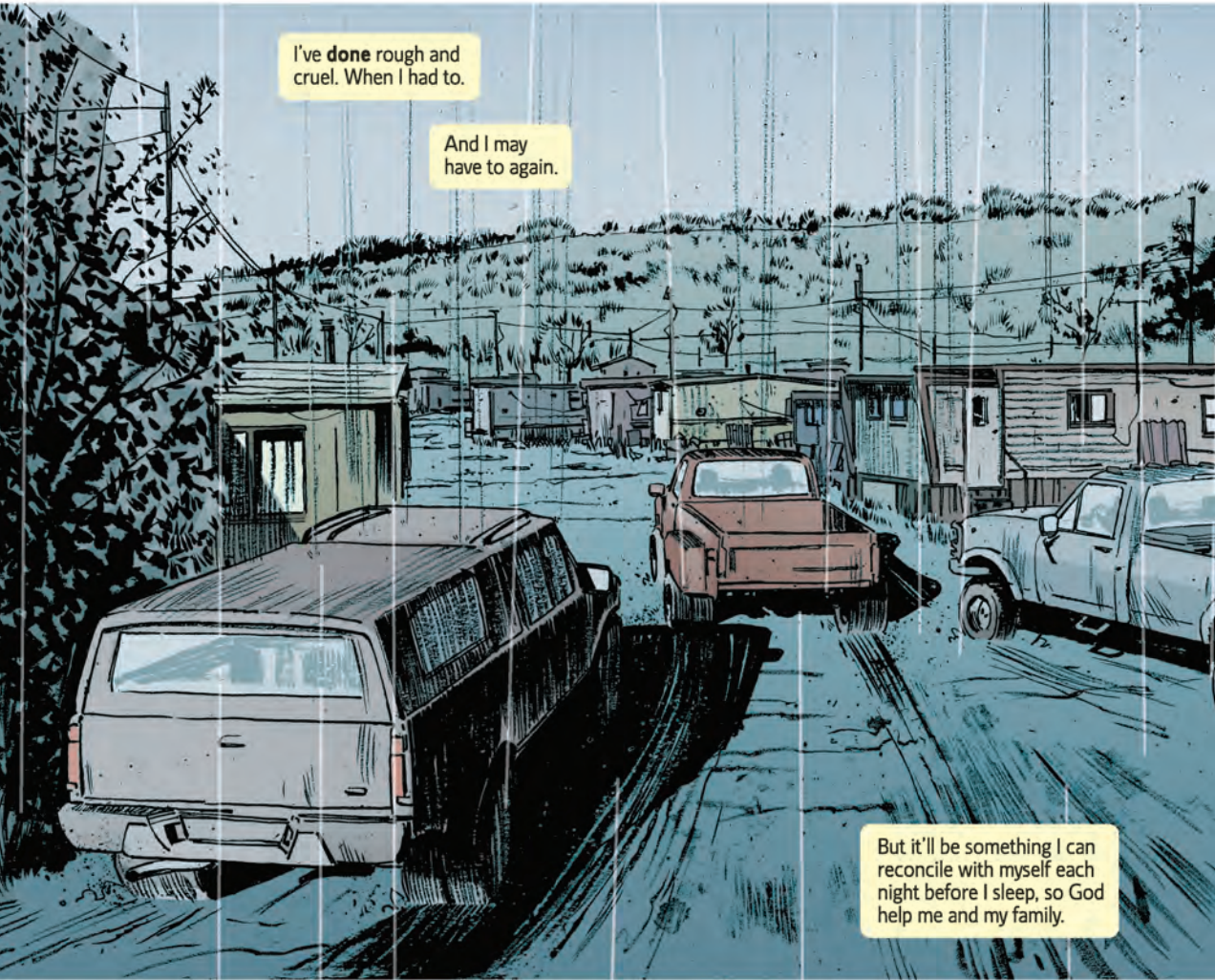
THEY CAME TO MY HOUSE. WHERE MY KIDS AND GRANDKIDS SLEEP. THEY PUT A BOMB ON MY TRUCK. ISAAC ALMOST DIED.

I'M BEING TESTED. BELIEVE ME, I KNOW.

A woman in this life, every day is a test, every thought a judgment, every action a compromise.

I know rough and cruel. I've seen rough and cruel.





I've **done** rough and
cruel. When I had to.

And I may
have to again.

But it'll be something I can
reconcile with myself each
night before I sleep, so God
help me and my family.

STATE OF GRACE

PART TWO OF THREE

Brian Wood / Mack Chater / Lee Loughridge / Nate Piekos of Blambot®
Briggs Land created by Brian Wood

