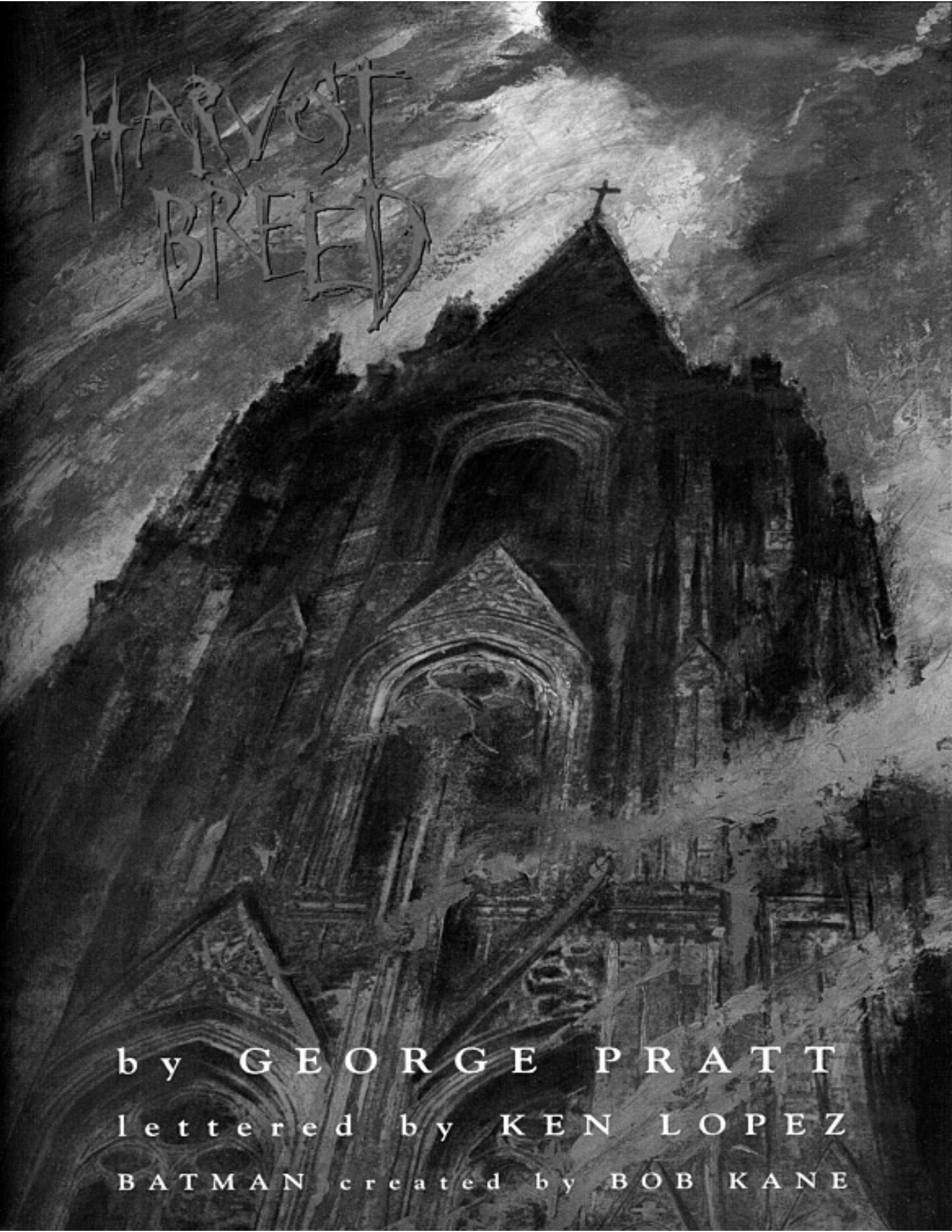
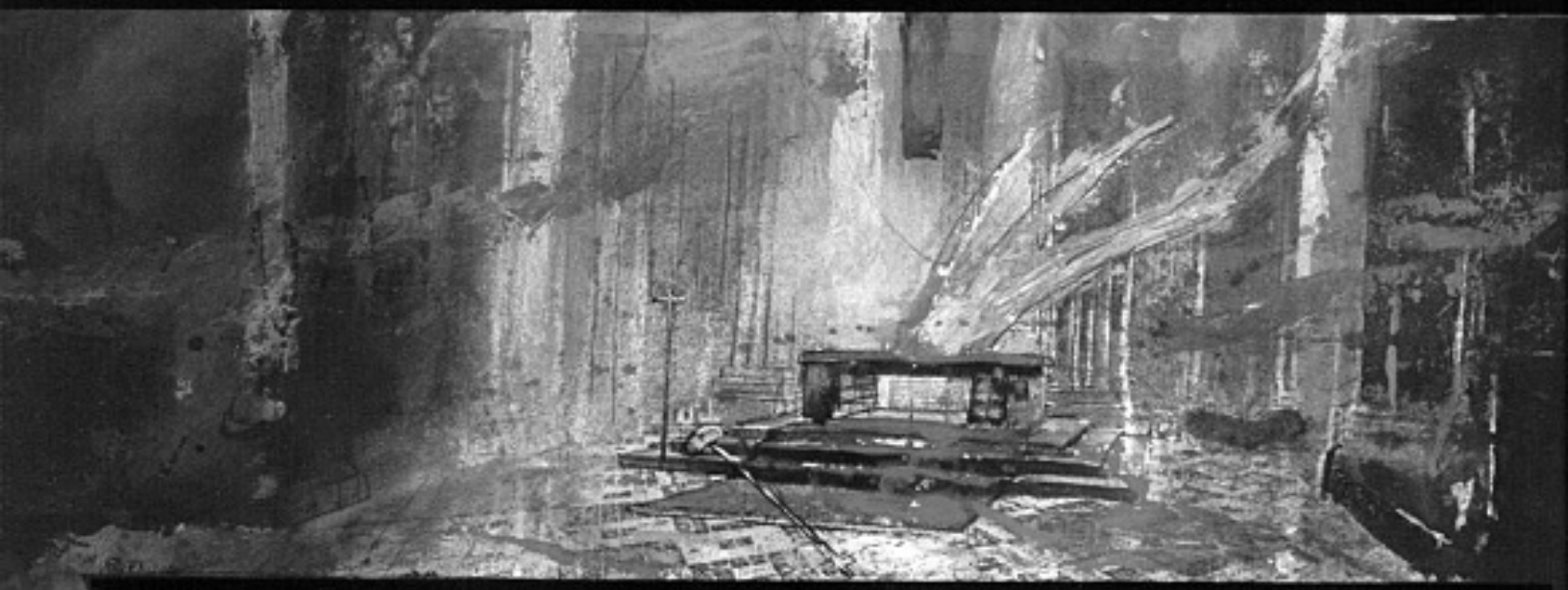
BATMAN®



HARVEST BREED


HARVEST BREED
by GEORGE PRATT
lettered by KEN LOPEZ
BATMAN created by BOB KANE



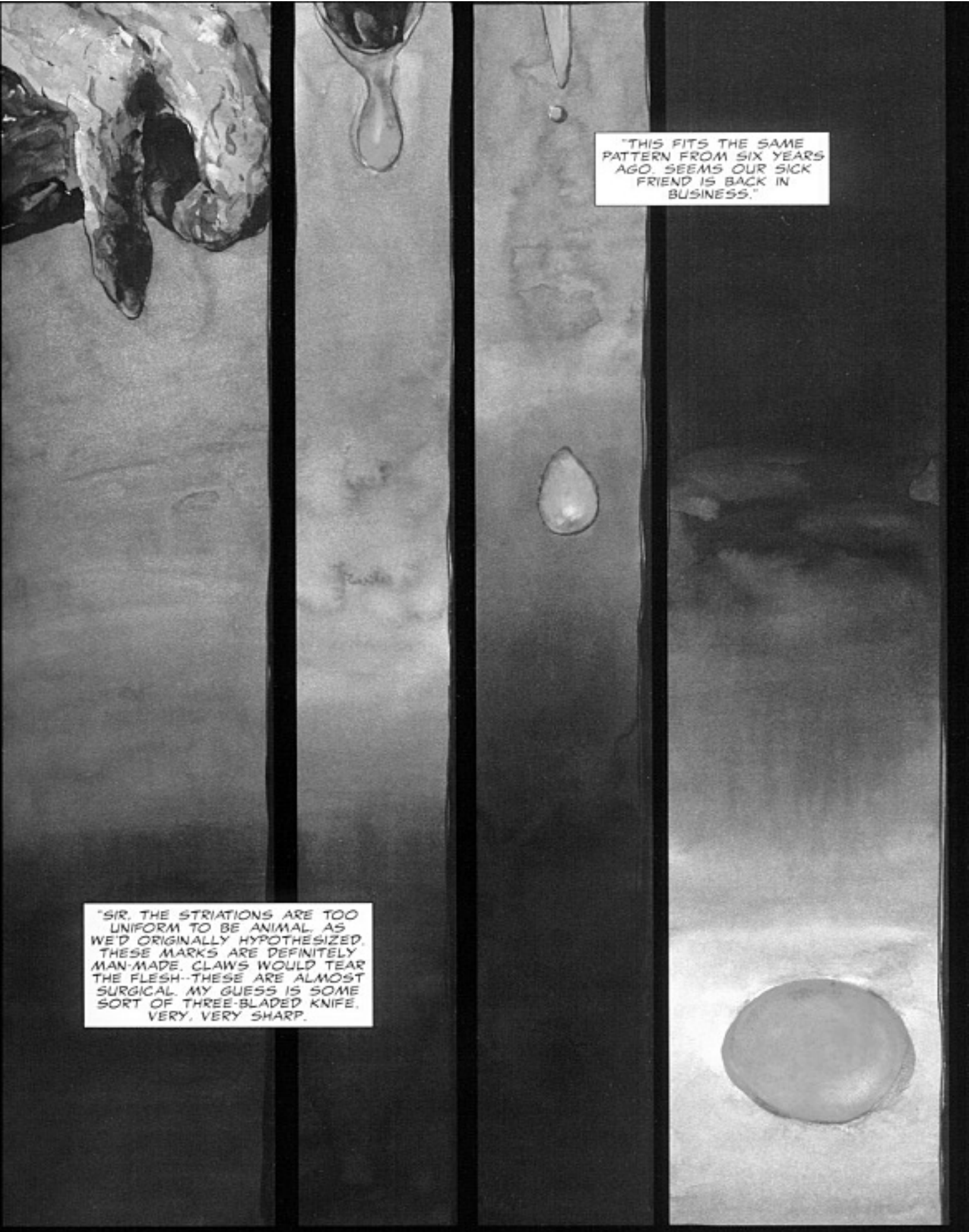











"THIS FITS THE SAME PATTERN FROM SIX YEARS AGO. SEEMS OUR SICK FRIEND IS BACK IN BUSINESS."
"SIR, THE STRIATIONS ARE TOO UNIFORM TO BE ANIMAL, AS WE'D ORIGINALLY HYPOTHESIZED. THESE MARKS ARE DEFINITELY MAN-MADE. CLAWS WOULD TEAR THE FLESH--THESE ARE ALMOST SURGICAL. MY GUESS IS SOME SORT OF THREE-BLADED KNIFE. VERY, VERY SHARP.


GOD HELP US...
...THEY'VE STARTED AGAIN.
NO! PL-PLEASE!


CRUNCH
NO! PL-PLEASE... NO MORE DREAMS!
SNAP!
AAAAHH!


EEEEEEEEEEEE
HEH. HEH! HEAR THAT OLD DAME SCREAM?
YEAH. BUT SHE GOT QUIET PRETTY QUICK.
ACTUALLY PAID US TO HELP HER FIND THAT INNER PEACE.
YOU HEAR THAT?
NO. BUT GO CHECK IT OUT ANYWAY.
EEYAAAHHH!

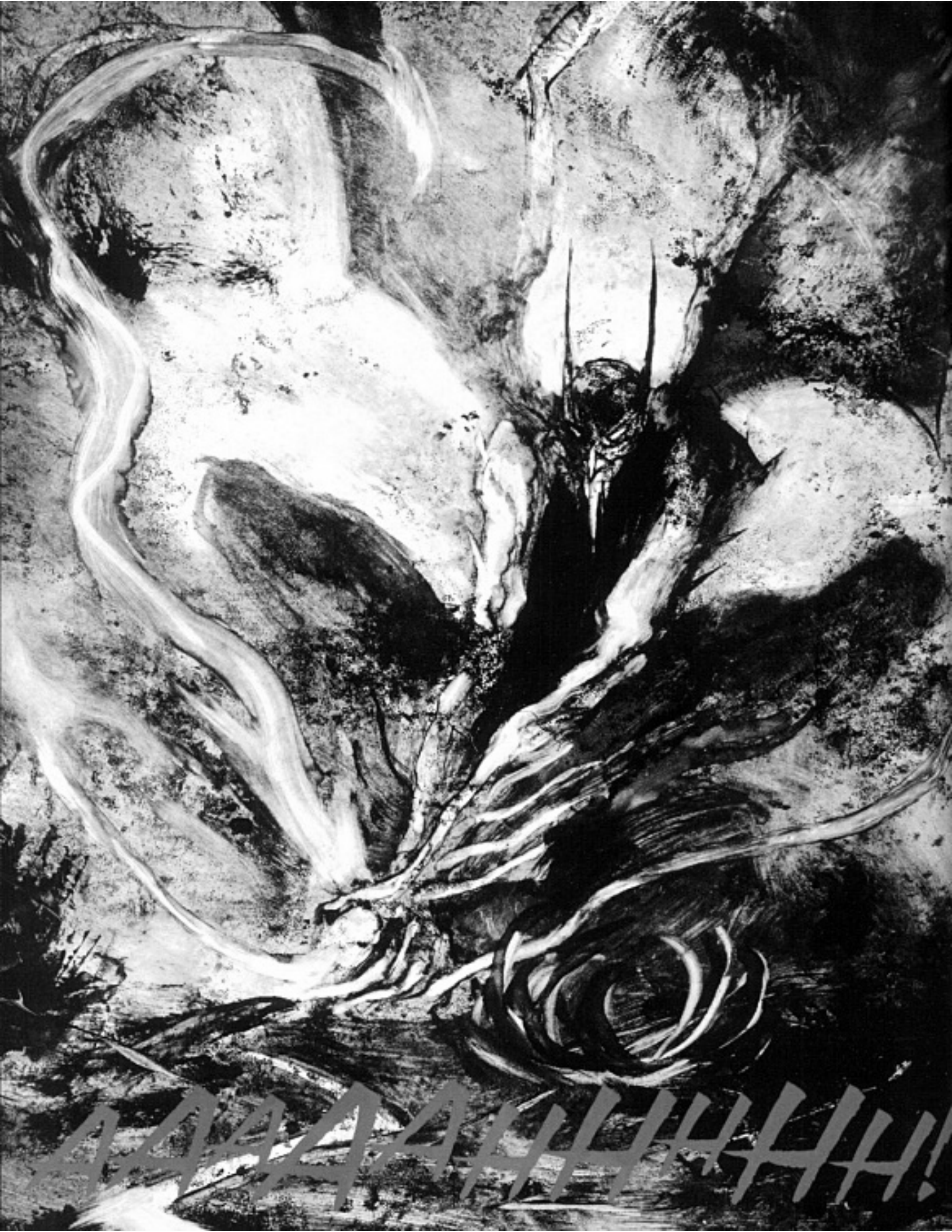

WHO'S THERE?
I'VE GOT A GUN!
DON'T MAKE ME USE IT!


ACK!
GAH!
BL
BLAM!
SNAR!

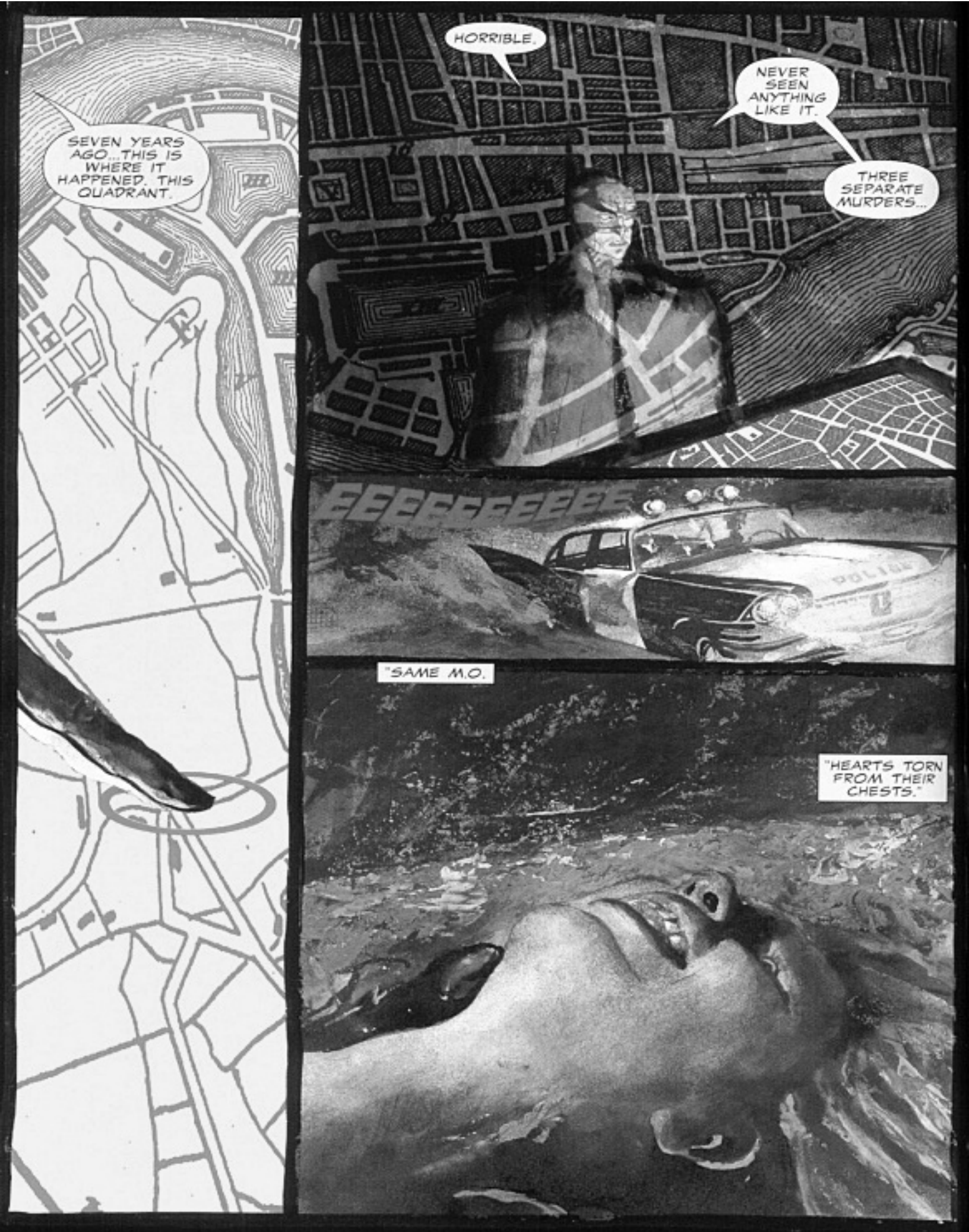

THIS ONE IS JUST A CALLING CARD.
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE?
I'VE BEEN ON THE ROOF. HIS BUDDY WAS THE REAL TARGET. SAME WOUNDS AS THE LAST TWO.
FIRST HANGING WE'VE HAD. THIS GUY WAS JUST IN THE WAY.
DAMN! THIS HAS GOT TO STOP.


NOW YOU'RE THINKING, JIM. CITY'S A LOT SAFER WITH YOU ON THE JOB.

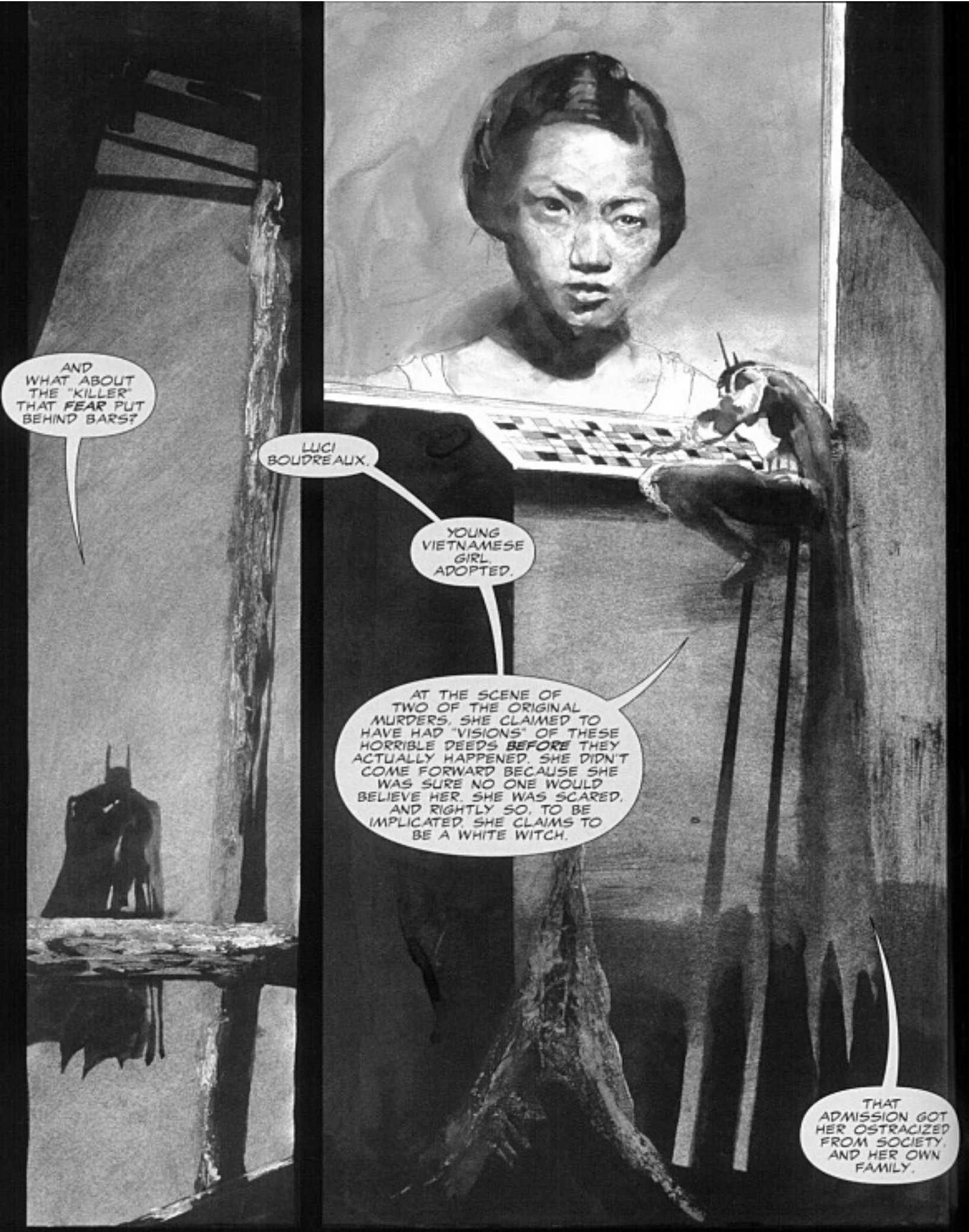

SSSHHHKKKK!
GHHH!

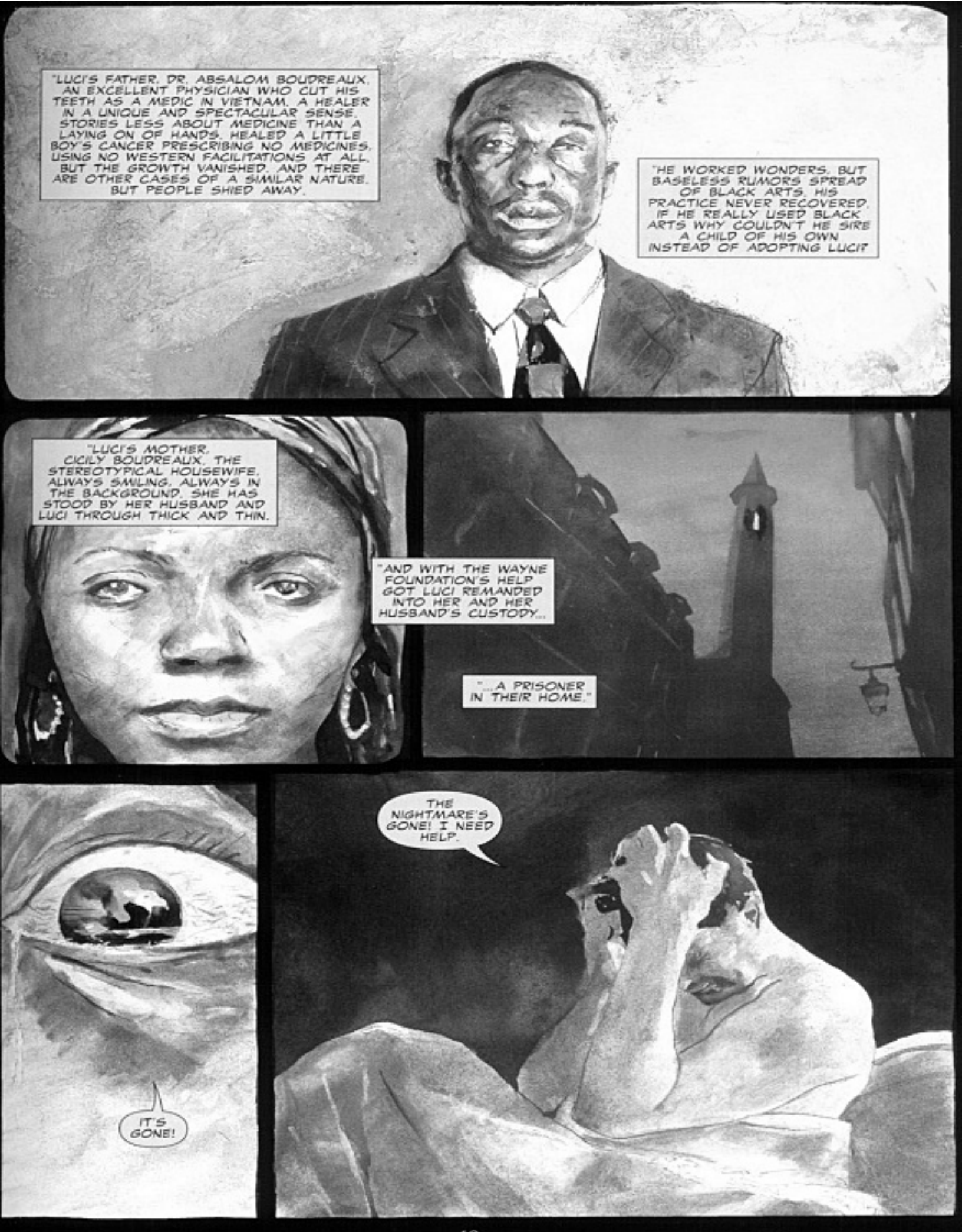

AAAAHHHH!

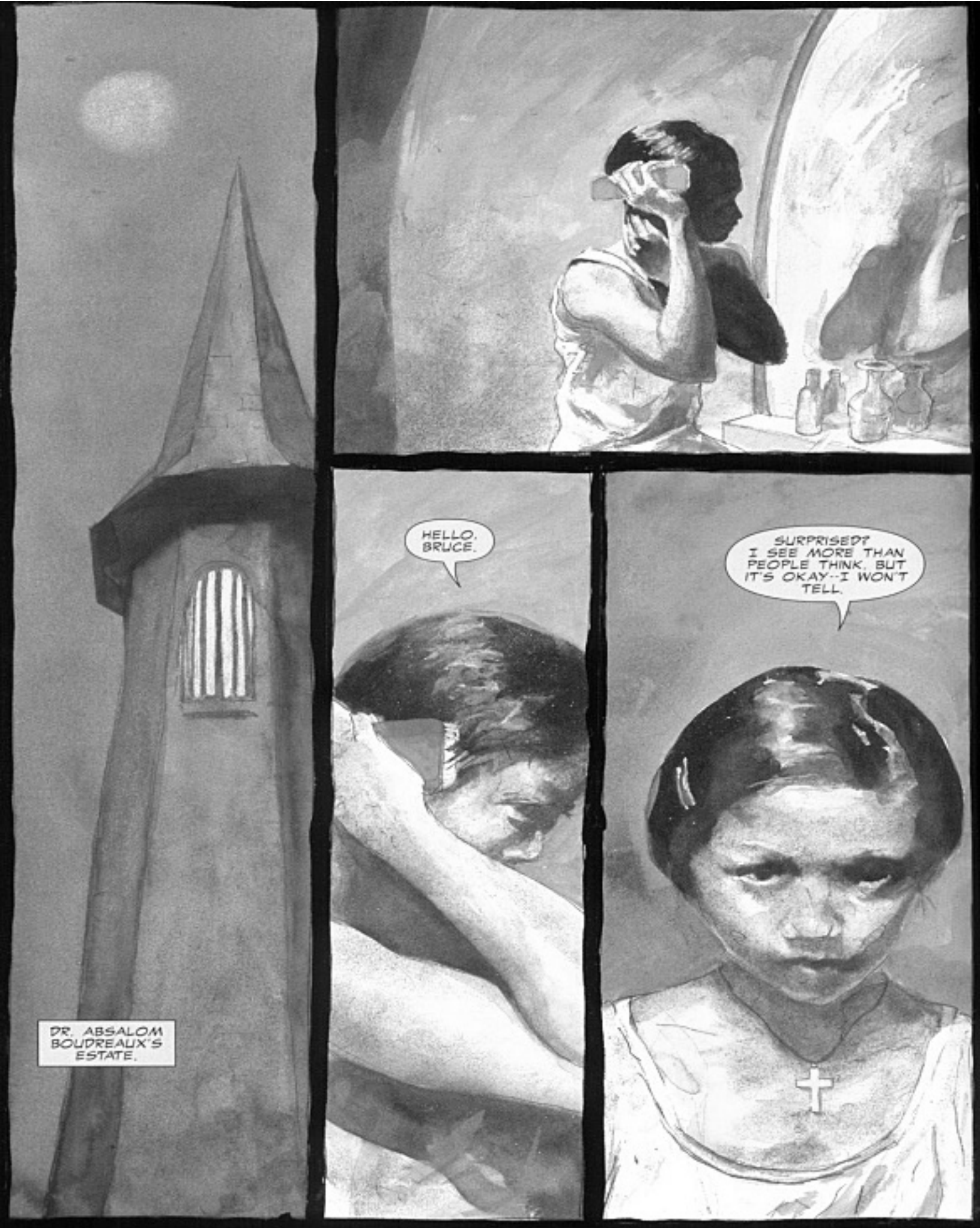

AAAAAAAHHH!
LORD! IT WON'T LET ME GO. SO VIOLENT!
I'M SINKING FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO IT. IT'S ALWAYS THERE.
IF IT SCARES ME THIS MUCH, WHY HAVE I COME TO DEPEND ON IT?
NOW THREE NEW MURDERS IN GOTHAM. SO SIMILAR TO THE OLD MURDERS.
AM I MORE AFRAID OF ITS NOT BEING THERE?
WHY NOW?


SEVEN YEARS AGO...THIS IS WHERE IT HAPPENED. THIS QUADRANT.
HORRIBLE.
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
THREE SEPARATE MURDERS...
EEEEEEEEEE
POLICE
"SAME M.O.
"HEARTS TORN FROM THEIR CHESTS."


WE BELIEVED AN ANIMAL HAD DONE IT. IT WAS OBSCENE. BRUTAL. FINALLY WE WERE ABLE TO PUT A LID ON IT. GOTHAM NEVER KNEW HOW BAD THE MURDERS REALLY WERE.
EVERYONE HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME--BUT JIM AND ME.
KNEW WE DIDN'T HAVE THE KILLER.
ONLY QUESTION WAS WHEN HE WOULD STRIKE AGAIN.
GUESS WE HAVE OUR ANSWER.


AND WHAT ABOUT THE "KILLER" THAT FEAR PUT BEHIND BARS?
LUCI BOUDREAUX.
YOUNG VIETNAMESE GIRL. ADOPTED.
AT THE SCENE OF TWO OF THE ORIGINAL MURDERS, SHE CLAIMED TO HAVE HAD "VISIONS" OF THESE HORRIBLE DEEDS BEFORE THEY ACTUALLY HAPPENED. SHE DIDN'T COME FORWARD BECAUSE SHE WAS SURE NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE HER. SHE WAS SCARED. AND RIGHTLY SO. TO BE IMPLICATED, SHE CLAIMS TO BE A WHITE WITCH.
THAT ADMISSION GOT HER OSTRACIZED FROM SOCIETY. AND HER OWN FAMILY.


"LUCI'S FATHER, DR. ABSALOM BOUDREAUX, AN EXCELLENT PHYSICIAN WHO CUT HIS TEETH AS A MEDIC IN VIETNAM. A HEALER IN A UNIQUE AND SPECTACULAR SENSE. STORIES LESS ABOUT MEDICINE THAN A LAYING ON OF HANDS. HEALED A LITTLE BOY'S CANCER PRESCRIBING NO MEDICINES, USING NO WESTERN FACILITATIONS AT ALL. BUT THE GROWTH VANISHED. AND THERE ARE OTHER CASES OF A SIMILAR NATURE. BUT PEOPLE SHIED AWAY.
"HE WORKED WONDERS. BUT BASELESS RUMORS SPREAD OF BLACK ARTS. HIS PRACTICE NEVER RECOVERED. IF HE REALLY USED BLACK ARTS WHY COULDN'T HE SIRE A CHILD OF HIS OWN INSTEAD OF ADOPTING LUCI?
"LUCI'S MOTHER, CICILY BOUDREAUX. THE STEREOTYPICAL HOUSEWIFE. ALWAYS SMILING. ALWAYS IN THE BACKGROUND. SHE HAS STOOD BY HER HUSBAND AND LUCI THROUGH THICK AND THIN.
"AND WITH THE WAYNE FOUNDATION'S HELP GOT LUCI REMANDED INTO HER AND HER HUSBAND'S CUSTODY...
"...A PRISONER IN THEIR HOME."
IT'S GONE!
THE NIGHTMARE'S GONE! I NEED HELP.


DR. ABSALOM BOUDREAUX'S ESTATE.
HELLO, BRUCE.
SURPRISED? I SEE MORE THAN PEOPLE THINK, BUT IT'S OKAY--I WON'T TELL.


YOU DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE, DO YOU?
THERE'S A LOT I DON'T SEEM TO KNOW THESE DAYS. I'VE HIT A WALL. WHERE DO I GO?
I NEED YOUR HELP.
THE MURDERS. THEY'VE STARTED AGAIN, HAVEN'T THEY? AND YOUR DREAM IS MISSING, ISN'T IT, BRUCE?
YES. THE NIGHTMARES BEGAN WITH THE ORIGINAL MURDERS. I DO HORRIBLE THINGS IN THEM. I KILL. NOW THAT IT'S GONE...
YOU WORRY IT WILL SPILL INTO REALITY, THAT YOU WILL DO THE TERRIBLE THINGS FROM YOUR DREAMS. IT KEEPS YOU SANE, MAKES YOU THE NOCTURNAL ANIMAL YOU ARE. SOME BELIEVE THAT THE THINGS WE DO IN DREAMS WILL INSURE THEY REMAIN ONLY DREAMS, YOURS ARE LOST BECAUSE THE CROSS IS ABOUT TO BE FORMED.


WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "CROSS"?
IN OLDEN DAYS, CRIMINALS WERE NAILED TO A CROSS TO KEEP THEIR SOULS FROM ENTERING HEAVEN.
BUT THERE ARE MANY CROSSES. NOT JUST THE CHRISTIAN CROSS, AND EVIL HAS ITS OWN SINISTER INTERPRETATIONS. FIVE DEATHS, EACH AT MIDNIGHT, ONE ON EACH POINT OF A CROSS, OPENS THE GATES OF HELL AND BESTOWS SUPREME POWER AND INVISIBILITY UPON THE KILLER.
ONCE THE FIRST MURDER IS COMMITTED, THE CYCLE IS SET IN MOTION, AND ONE MURDER A DAY MUST BE COMMITTED FOR AS MANY DAYS AS THERE ARE POINTS ON THE CROSS.
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. THIS IS JUST LEGEND, RIGHT? IT'S NEVER BEEN AUTHENTICATED.
"THE STORIES I'VE READ OCCURRED IN ROME, AND ALSO IN EGYPT, VERY NEAR THE GREAT PYRAMID CHEOPS. THE LAST RECORDED INCIDENT WAS IN 1678, IN POLAND.
"A SAD LITTLE MAN, FRANTIK HRABAL, ALMOST COMPLETED THE CROSS. HE WAS CAUGHT ONE DEATH SHY OF HIS GOAL.


"HORRIBLE THINGS HAPPENED.
"CROPS FAILED. WINTER TURNED ON MAN.
"MOTHERS PRODUCED MONSTERS OR DIED IN CHILDBIRTH.
"DEMONS PLAGUED THE LAND.


"THEY INFESTED THE VILLAGES.
"IT TOOK THIRTY PRIESTS TO PUT THINGS RIGHT.


"THEY VERY NEARLY DIDN'T MAKE IT.
"HRABAL WAS LUCKY--FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE RITUAL FORFEITS THE KILLER'S OWN LIFE. HELL MUST CLAIM A VICTIM. YOU CAN IMAGINE WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THAT INDIVIDUAL. HRABAL WENT TO THE GALLOWS WILLINGLY."
"MY GOD."
"YOU'RE GOING TO NEED YOUR FAITH, BRUCE. CHERISH IT. IT MAY BE ALL THAT CAN SAVE YOU. THERE WON'T BE ANY PRIESTS THIS TIME. AND IT'S ALREADY BEGUN."


EACH MURDER IS AN OPENING, A RIFT IN THE FABRIC OF REALITY. EACH ONE A BEACON IN THE DARK. MIDNIGHT IS THE IN-BETWEEN TIME, THE WITCHING HOUR, AND GOTHAM IS GOING TO PLAY HOST TO MANY HOSTS IF WE DON'T HURRY.
OUR KILLER NEEDS TWO MORE DEATHS, THAT GIVES US TONIGHT AND TOMORROW. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN DO FROM THE INSIDE?
YES. I'LL NEED MY BOOKS. MY PARENTS *MUSTN'T* KNOW. FATHER'S BEEN ILL LATELY. I DON'T WANT TO UPSET HIM OR MOTHER FURTHER.
YOUR MISSING NIGHTMARE IS THE PORTAL AND WILL CAUSE YOU UNTOLD GRIEF IF YOU SUCCUMB TO ITS POWER. YOU MUST HOLD YOURSELF IN CHECK. IF YOU LET YOUR NIGHTMARES RULE YOU, THEY WILL BECOME REALITY. AND SO WILL ALL OF GOTHAM'S.
THERE IS A MAN IN GOTHAM, MZIZI, WHO KNOWS MUCH MORE THAN I. SEEK HIM OUT. HE'S A VERY POWERFUL HUONGONG, A HAITIAN WHITE MAGICIAN. VOODOO.
YOU NEED TO BE VERY CAREFUL, BRUCE. THERE'S AN ANIMAL WITHIN EACH ONE OF US. ONLY YOURS IS STRUGGLING TO GET OUT. FIGHT IT.
OUR KILLER MAY NOT EVEN KNOW HE'S DOING THESE THINGS. HE NEEDS SOMETHING TO AID HIM. IT COULD BE ANYTHING. HRABAL WAS CAUGHT WITH A STRANGE BLADE BELIEVED TO HOLD THE POWER TO CLOUD HIS MIND, MAKE HIM DO THE THINGS HE DID. IT WASN'T JUST THE BLADE, THOUGH: BOOKS SWAYED HIM AS WELL. HIS LIBRARY WAS DESTROYED AFTER HE WAS EXECUTED.


LUCI, HONEY?
MY MOTHER!
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT? I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU TALKING WITH SOMEONE.
WHO COULD I POSSIBLY BE TALKING TO, MOTHER?
"EVERYTHING'S FINE."


MEANWHILE IN GOTHAM'S OLD TOWN...
EEEEAAAAAAGGGHHH!!
HEH! HEE--HEH!
EEEEEEEEEEKKKKK!
HONESTLY, WALTER! THAT GIRL UP IN 5G IS SO RUDE! YOU SHOULD GO UP THERE AND GIVE HER A PIECE OF YOUR MIND. IF I WERE A MAN, I WOULDN'T WASTE A MINUTE...
THURSDAY
MMF!
RSDAY
MMMMMMFFFFFF!
SNOOGUMS? HUNNY BUNCH?
THURSDA


?!
!
EEEYYAAAAA!!!!!!!!

"VOODOO. HAITIAN BLOOD RITES...



CHIK-CHAK CHAK-A-CHIK!

"GRIS-GRIS. SANTA RIA...



CHAK-A-CHIK-CHIK

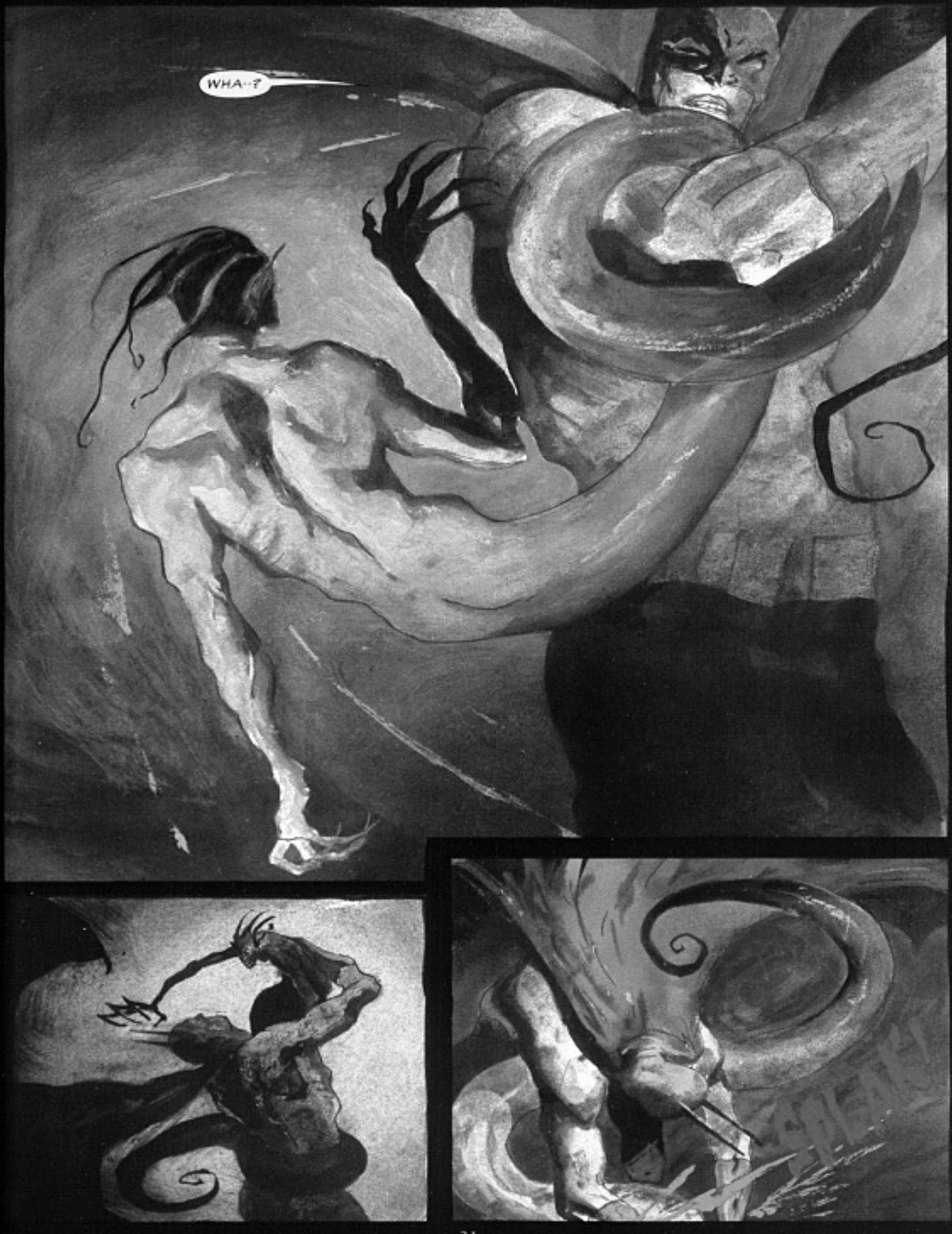
"THE BLACK ARTS. I'VE ENCOUNTERED TOO MANY INEXPLICABLE THINGS IN MY LIFE TO DISCOUNT THE POWER OF THESE TWISTED BELIEFS. YET IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO STUDY THEM ALL. TO FERRET OUT THE CLUES WE NEED.



CHAK-CHAK!

"WHERE DOES ONE EVEN BEGIN?"




WHA--?

"IN A PERVERSE SORT OF WAY WE'RE VERY LUCKY. THERE ARE RULES, *PATTERNS* THE KILLER MUST FOLLOW IN ORDER FOR THE THING TO WORK. THE MURDERS ALWAYS TAKE PLACE AT *MIDNIGHT*.

"HIS BLUEPRINT IS THE CROSS, BUT WITH *FIVE* POINTS RATHER THAN THE FOUR USED TO NORMALLY MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

"TO THOSE VERSED IN THE BLACK ARTS, THE FIFTH POINT, THE LOCATION OF THE FINAL MURDER, IS THE CENTER OF THE CROSS AND IS SYMBOLIC OF THE HEART OF CHRIST. THE FIFTH MURDER IS SEEN AS DRIVING A STAKE THROUGH THAT HEART, AND IT MUST BE PERFORMED ON *HALLOWED* GROUND.

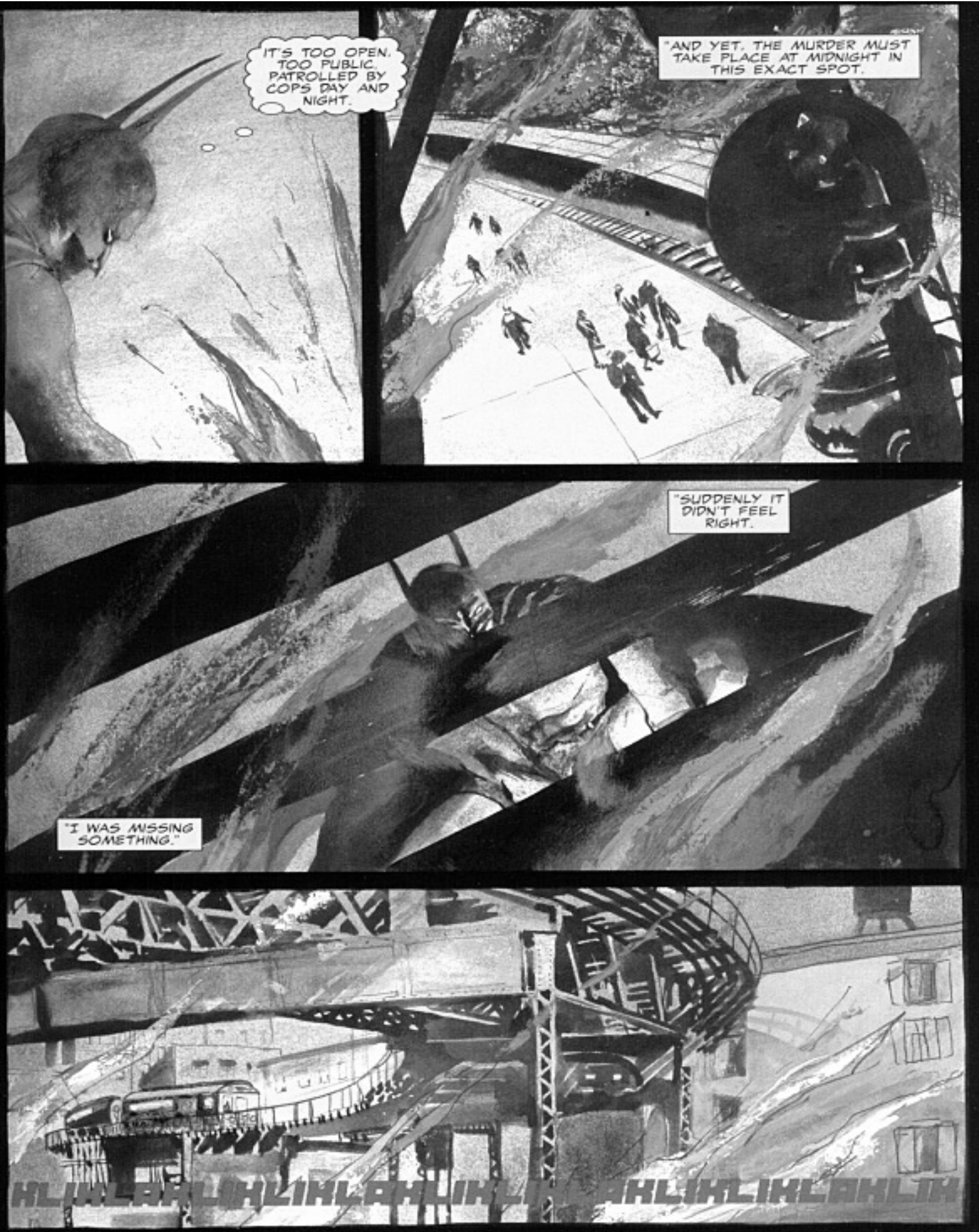
"WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR SMALL FAVORS.

"THERE IS A MAGICAL PARADIGM TO THE CROSS-- THREE EQUAL SIDES PLUS ONE LONG SIDE.

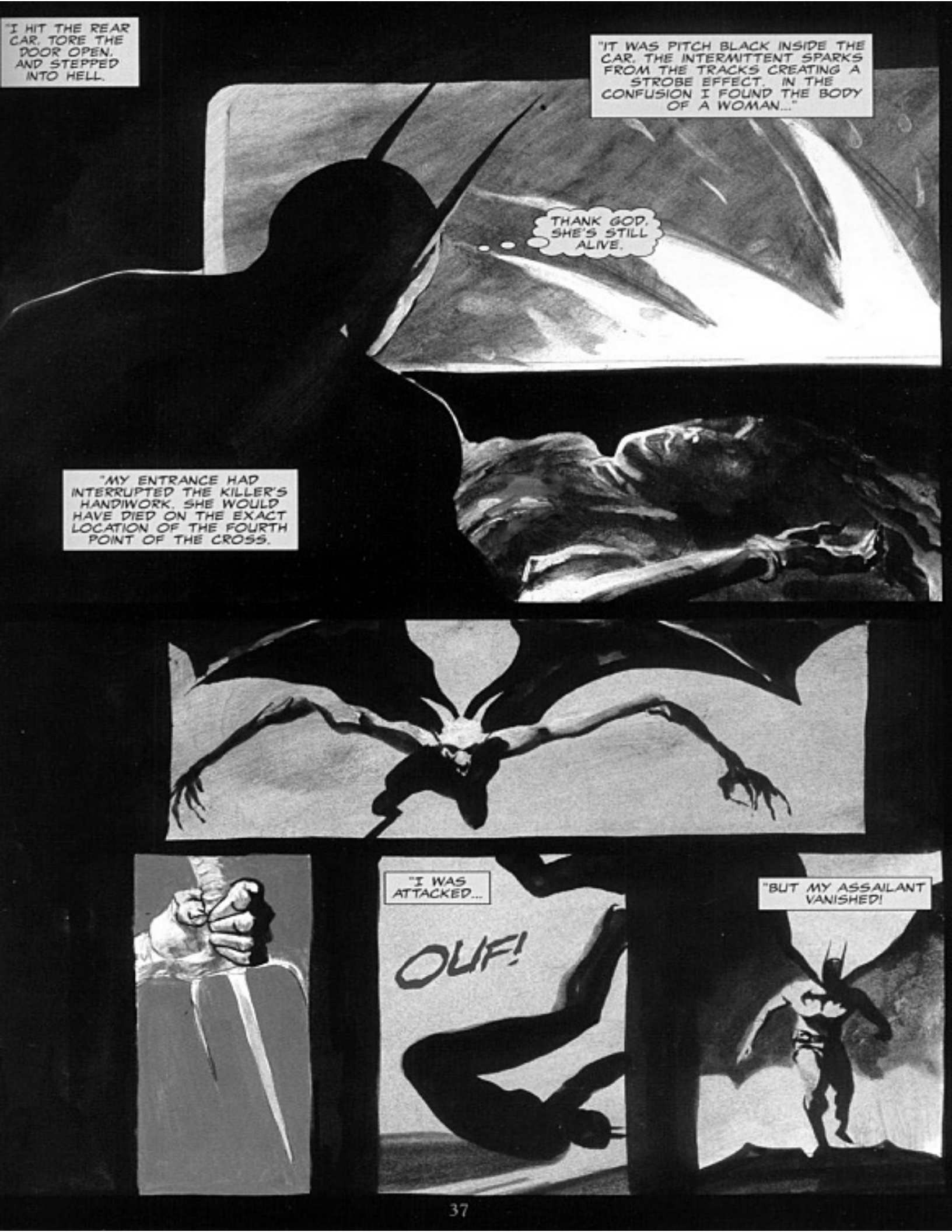
"THE FIRST THREE MURDERS HAVE GIVEN US THREE POINTS OF THE CROSS WHICH CREATE AN EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE. THE TROUBLE IS THAT CREATES THREE POSSIBLE SITES FOR THE NEXT MURDER."

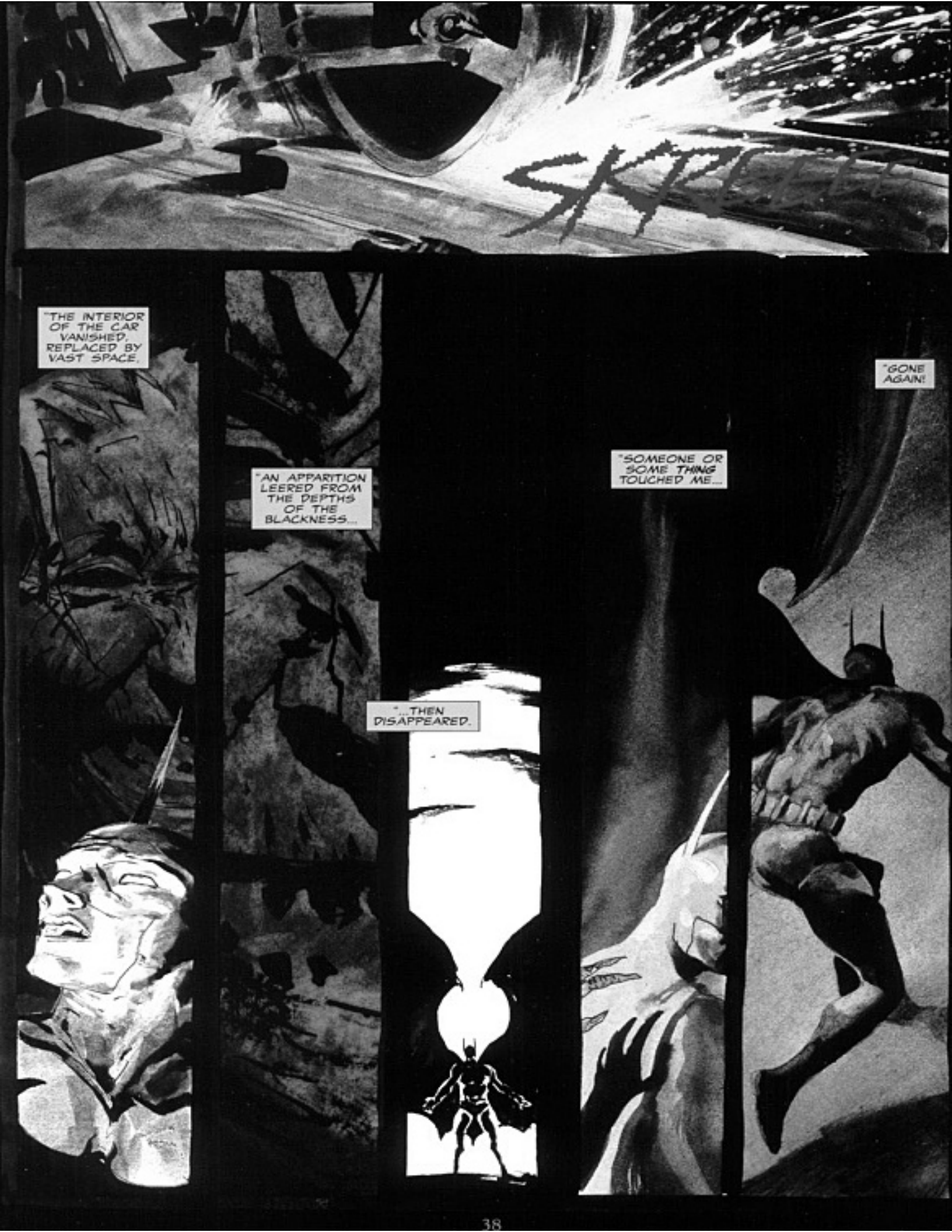

BISECTING EACH SIDE AND EXTENDING EACH LINE TWICE THE DISTANCE OF THE EQUAL SIDES WE CREATE OUR CROSSES.
E(·)+≠4≠
"ONE WILL BE THE FOURTH LOCATION, AND THE CENTER OF THAT CROSS WILL BE THE FIFTH AND FINAL SPOT.
"GOTHAM ELEVATED TRAIN STATION, THE ROBINSON ART MUSEUM, AND SPRANG'S FURNITURE MART.
LOGIC TELLS ME SPRANG'S AND INTUITION THE TRAIN STATION...
"...THE MUSEUM IS AN UNLIKELY TARGET: LASER SCREENS, DIGITAL GAS ALARMS, AND A SECURITY GUARD LOCKED INSIDE. IT'S TIGHTER THAN FORT KNOX."
I'VE NOTIFIED GORDON. HE'LL BE AT SPRANG'S, AND HE'S SENDING THREE MEN TO COVER THE MUSEUM. JUST IN CASE.
IN LIEU OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARANORMAL EVENTS IN GOTHAM, CARDINAL GOODWIN HAS PETITIONED THE VATICAN FOR HELP. THIRTY-FIVE PRIESTS HAVE BEEN CALLED TOGETHER TO PRAY FOR THE CITY.


WITH ANY LUCK, THIS WILL END TONIGHT!
ALMOST MIDNIGHT... I CAN MAKE IT!
"I ARRIVED AT THE TRAIN STATION WITH TIME TO SPARE. THE STATION SEEMED QUIET ENOUGH. EVERYTHING APPEARED NORMAL."
HOW CAN A MURDER TAKE PLACE HERE?


IT'S TOO OPEN. TOO PUBLIC. PATROLLED BY COPS DAY AND NIGHT.
"AND YET. THE MURDER MUST TAKE PLACE AT MIDNIGHT IN THIS EXACT SPOT.
"SUDDENLY IT DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT.
"I WAS MISSING SOMETHING."
KLIKLAKLIKLIKLAKLIKLIKLAKLIKLIKLAKLIK


THIS HAS TO BE THE RIGHT SPOT!
"THEN MY BLOOD RAN COLD.
AAIIEEEEEEEE!
A SCREAM FROM THE CAR BELOW!
NO!
EEEEEEEEEE!
"A MOVING SUBWAY CAR NEVER OCCURRED TO ME!


"I HIT THE REAR CAR. TORE THE DOOR OPEN. AND STEPPED INTO HELL.
"IT WAS PITCH BLACK INSIDE THE CAR. THE INTERMITTENT SPARKS FROM THE TRACKS CREATING A STROBE EFFECT. IN THE CONFUSION I FOUND THE BODY OF A WOMAN..."
THANK GOD. SHE'S STILL ALIVE.
"MY ENTRANCE HAD INTERRUPTED THE KILLER'S HANDIWORK. SHE WOULD HAVE DIED ON THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE FOURTH POINT OF THE CROSS.
"I WAS ATTACKED...
OUF!
"BUT MY ASSAILANT VANISHED!


SKETCH
"THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR VANISHED, REPLACED BY VAST SPACE.
"AN APPARITION LEERED FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE BLACKNESS...
"...THEN DISAPPEARED.
"SOMEONE OR SOME THING TOUCHED ME...
"GONE AGAIN!


"I CANNOT EXPLAIN WHAT I SAW...
"...NOR HOW A SUBWAY CAR COULD BE SO CAVERNOUS. MY STRENGTH WAS FUGITIVE. MY FACULTIES DIMINISHED. SOMETHING WAS EXERTING AN INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE ON MY ENTIRE BEING.
"LUCI WAS THERE! I'M SURE OF IT!
LUCI?
"BUT I WAS TOTALLY ALONE."


"THE VICTIM IS IN SERIOUS, BUT STABLE, CONDITION. WHERE DOES THE KILLER GO FROM HERE?
"LUCI SAID THAT IF HE FAILS TO COMPLETE THE FINAL MURDER, HELL CLAIMS HIS LIFE. DOES THAT EXTEND TO THE FOURTH MURDER AS WELL?
"HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE TO SATISFY THIS ONE PERSON'S EGOCENTRICITY?
"AND WHAT ABOUT THE VICTIMS? WHO'S REALLY THERE FOR THEM?
"WE'RE ALL BUSY LOOKING FOR KILLERS, AND NEVER STOP TO REALIZE WHAT WE'VE LOST."
TIME TO HAVE A CHAT WITH THE HUONGONG OF THE JACKALS.


MZIZI!!
NEED A WORD WITH YOU.
I GOT 'IM, 'ZIZI!
CAREFUL, TIBEAUX! HE NO HUMAN, MON!


MMFF
YAAAAAHHHH!
YO, MAN!
YOU BROKE MY RIBS!


YOU HELP ME TODAY, LITTLE MAN, AND MAYBE I WON'T BUST YOUR BUTT FOR THE CRACK I KNOW YOU'RE CARRYING. YOU'RE A HUONGONG, A WHITE MAGICIAN.
HOW YOU KNOW THAT? WH--
PEOPLE ARE BEING BUTCHERED, EACH ONE ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL POINT OF A CROSS. I STOPPED THE FOURTH SO WE'RE SAFE FOR NOW. BUT WE'RE MISSING SOMETHING. WHAT IS IT?
NUMBER FIVE BE COMIN', MON, AND NOT CROSSES, MON. YOU LOOKIN' AT THE WRONG T'ING. TRIANGLES!
FIND THE TRIANGLES N'YOU FIND THE CENTER.
RIGHT, TRIANGLES, CENTER OF THE CROSS--WE ALREADY KNOW THAT. TELL ME WHAT WE'RE MISSING, DAMMIT!


NOT A NORMAL CROSS. CRIPPLED CROSSES! CRIPPLED CROSSES! THIS NO VOODOO. POWERFUL JU-JU, MON! BEYOND HUMAN!
CRIPPLED CROSSES! SKIP THE RIDDLES. JUST TELL M--
FREEZE!
DON'T SHOOT!
HELP! HE'S NUTS, MON!
BAH--


MOTHER OF ALL SAINTS! I THOUGHT..
WHAT, JIM? WHAT DID YOU THINK?
THIS ONE NEEDS AN AMBULANCE, SIR...HE'S HURT PRETTY BAD.
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? YOU DON'T OPERATE THIS WAY! I THINK YOU NEED SOME DISTANCE.
WHO ARE YOU TO TELL ME WHAT I NEED?

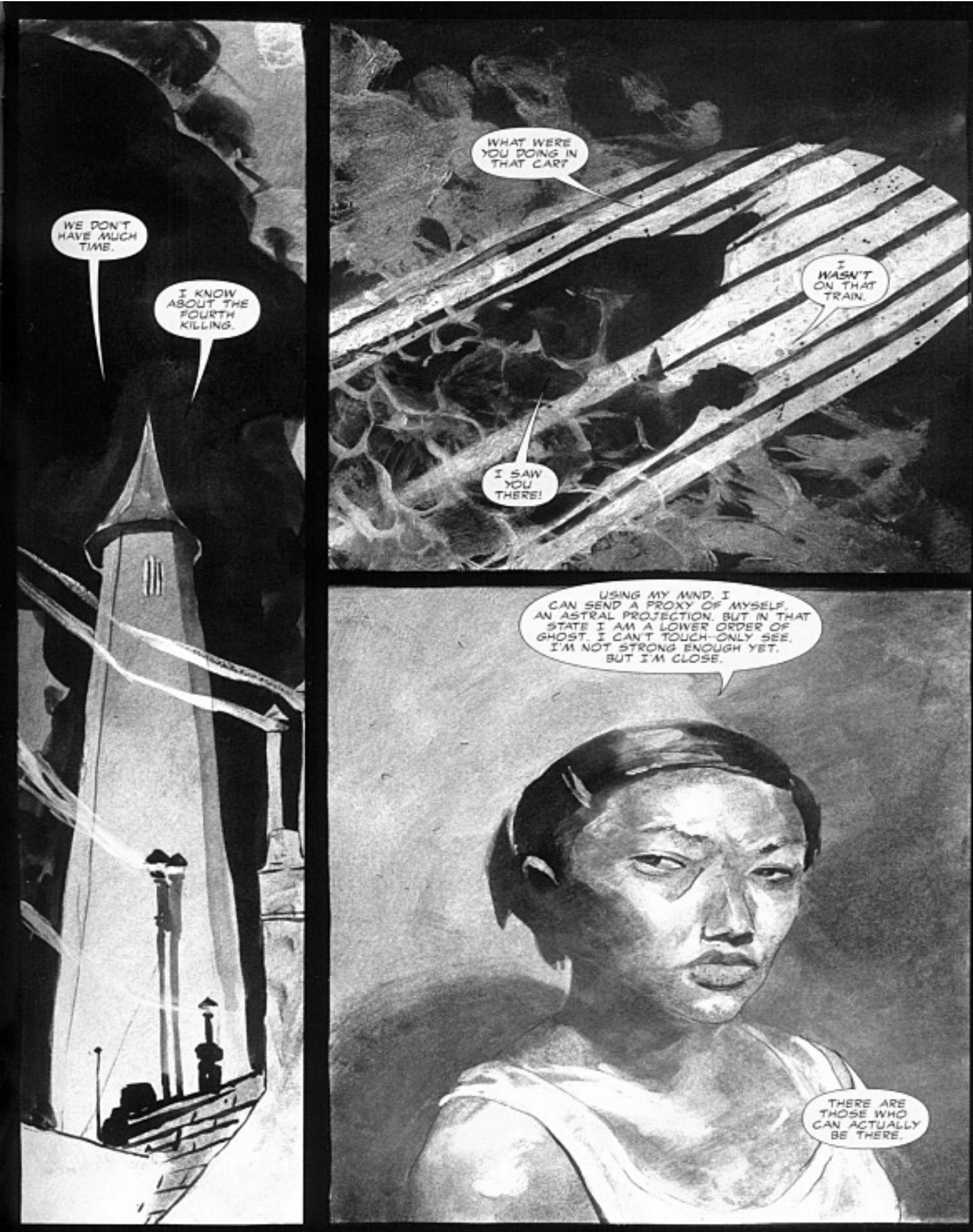

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, GOTHAM'S BECOME A BATTLEGROUND FOR HEAVEN AND HELL. ONLY THE HOME TEAM HASN'T EVEN SHOWN UP YET! I'M THE ONLY THING YOU'VE GOT RIGHT NOW. YOU'D HAVE ANOTHER BODY ON YOUR HANDS IF IT WEREN'T FOR ME.
REALITY CHECK! EVERYONE DIED IN THAT MUSEUM! THAT'S NUMBER FOUR, HOTSHOT. WITH INTEREST! I LOST SOME GOOD MEN. DAMMIT!
DIED? IMPOSSIBLE! THERE WAS NO WAY INTO THAT MUSEUM. IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPREGNABLE! I STOPPED THE MURDER AT THE SUBWAY STATION!
YOU STOPPED A MURDER! YOU'RE PLAYING A GUESSING GAME WITH PEOPLE'S LIVES. TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON! I'M GETTING BIZARRE CALLS FROM PEOPLE ALL OVER CLAIMING TO HAVE SEEN DEMONS AND GHOSTS. HAS THE ENTIRE CITY GONE MAD?
YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE IT!
TRY ME!
ISN'T THERE A BADGE THAT NEEDS POLISHING? I'VE GOT WORK TO DO.


PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR, BATMAN, AND TURN AROUND.
NO!
BLAM!!
TCHAK
WE'LL DEAL LATER!
OUF!


SWEET MERCY! LOOK AT ALL THE BATS!
MOTHER OF GOD.
NO, JIM. WRONG PERSON ENTIRELY.


AND THOSE AREN'T BATS.
ENDGAME HAS JUST BEGUN.
GOTHAM'S WATCHDOG HAS JUST SLIPPED ITS CHAIN.

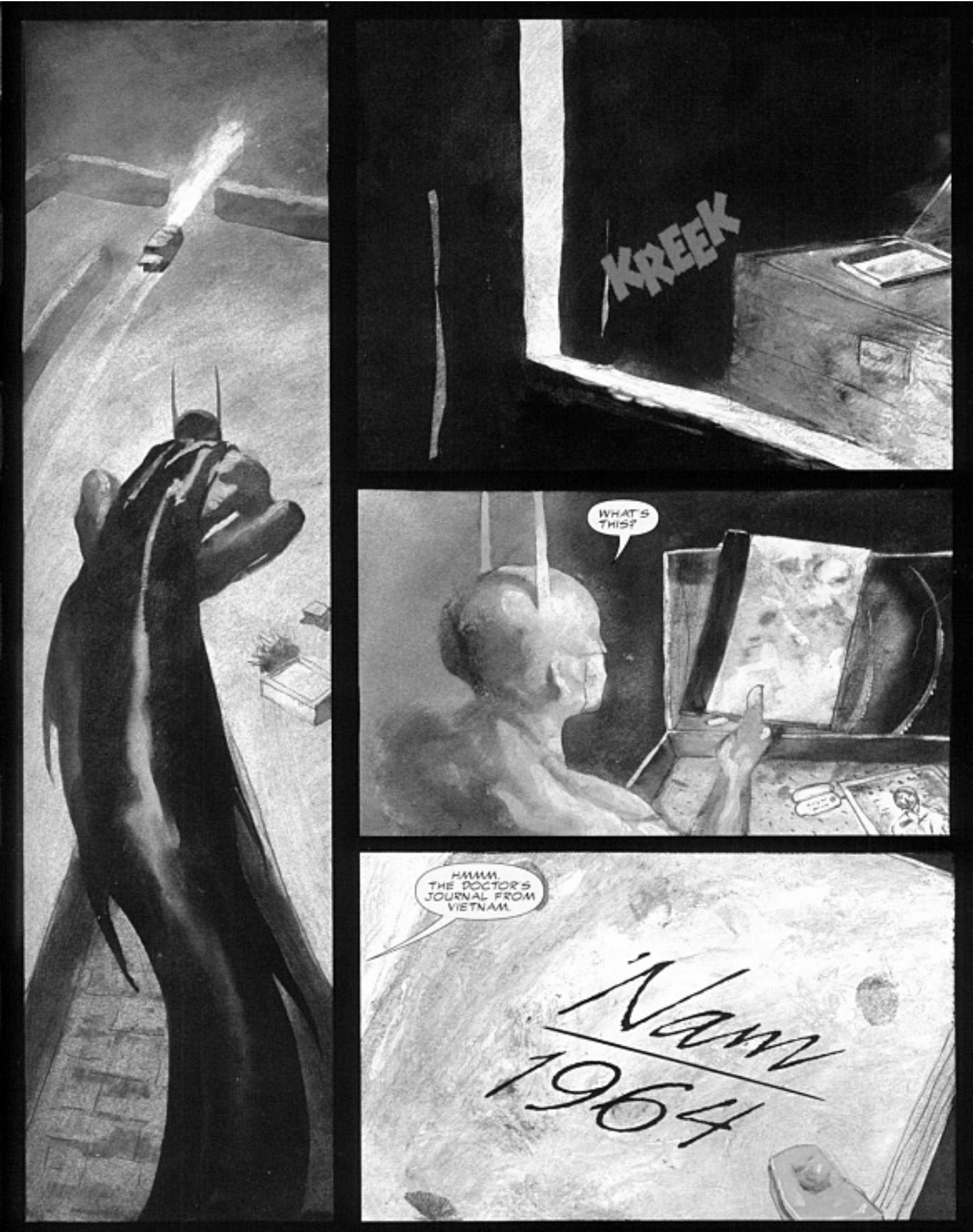

MORE BLOOD ON MY HANDS. IT'S LIKE MY NIGHTMARE COMING TRUE! I'M AN ACCOMPLICE BY DEFAULT. I'M LOSING IT. GETTING TOO VIOLENT. NOT THINKING STRAIGHT--HARDER TO KEEP MYSELF IN CHECK!


WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
I KNOW ABOUT THE FOURTH KILLING.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THAT CAR?
I WASN'T ON THAT TRAIN.
I SAW YOU THERE!
USING MY MIND. I CAN SEND A PROXY OF MYSELF, AN ASTRAL PROJECTION. BUT IN THAT STATE I AM A LOWER ORDER OF GHOST. I CAN'T TOUCH--ONLY SEE. I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH YET. BUT I'M CLOSE.
THERE ARE THOSE WHO CAN ACTUALLY BE THERE.

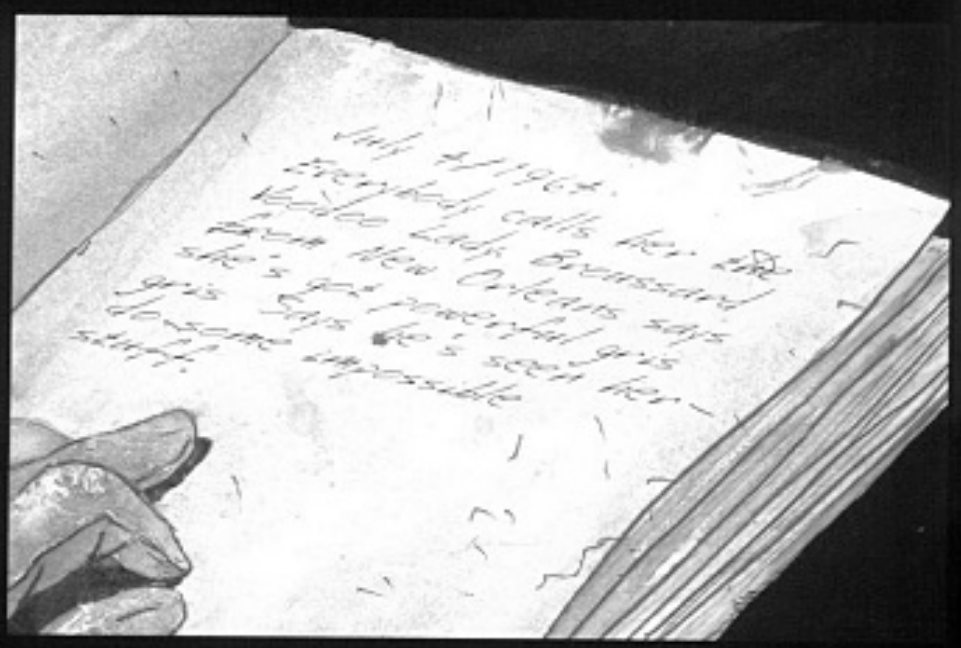

NO!
DEVILS! IMPS OF SATAN!
DADDY, WAIT!
IT'S NOT RIGHT! HAVEN'T WE BEEN CURSED ENOUGH?


DEVIL'S COME TO TAKE MY BABY. CAN'T HAVE HER!
GOT TO STOP THEM! THEY'LL HURT MY BABY.
I'LL MAKE THEM LEAVE HER ALONE!


WH--?
THERE'S NO ONE HERE, DADDY. PLEASE...
IT'S OKAY. EVERYTHING'S FINE. THERE ARE NO DEMONS HERE. WE'RE ALL FINE.
HONEY. EVERYTHING'S FINE. WE HAVE TO LEAVE: THE BENEFIT IS IN LESS THAN AN HOUR.


KREEK
WHAT'S THIS?
HMMM. THE DOCTOR'S JOURNAL FROM VIETNAM.
Nam
1964





July 27 1968.
Everybody calls her the Voodoo Lady of Bunnsboro from New Orleans says she's very powerful. She's also very dangerous. Says she's seen her do some impossible things.

Says wounds healed right in front of his eyes. Just closed up, not a scar to be found. He says it could really help our guys. If we could get her to teach us we'd be the hottest medics in Nam.

I told him it was crazy. Even if she could do these things, we shouldn't be messing with it. No Voodoo for me.

Hadn't planned on going, but got drunk last night.

She lived two klicks north of camp. Her hooch was scary. Bones over the door, goat skulls all over. There was a kettle boiling on a fire, smelled like death.



She had black teeth from chewing betel nut, and eyes like a cat. Her face was one big wrinkle. She looked like a damn monkey. Broussard tudded around, gave her a little grief, like we were powerful, too and that mama-san should give us what we want. I kept trying to get him to cool it but he wouldn't. She just smiled, but it was like the way a cat smiles at a bird it's getting ready to eat. She left the hooch for a second, came back with a goat. She pulled out this huge knife and ripped open the thing's chest. Ripped its heart out!

She touched Broussard and chattered something in Viet. Broussard turned white and almost dropped to his knees. He was practically crying. What, I said. What?





Broussard grabbed me and we ran. It took him hours to calm down. Later he told me that when she touched him he saw how he was going to die and she was saying that one who loses his head like he does for fun sometimes gets his wish. He asked me if I saw anything when she touched me.

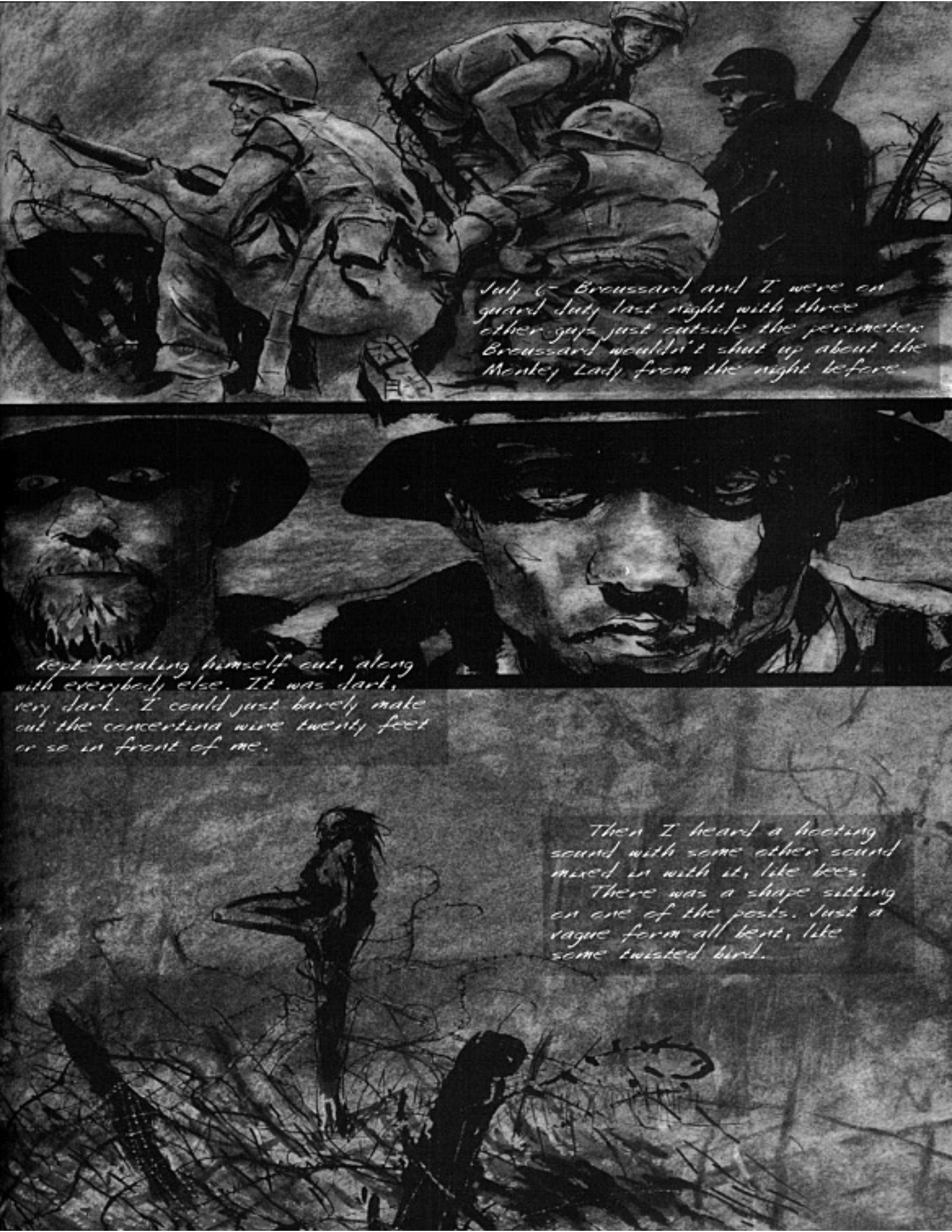
But I didn't see anything, just felt a kind of shock, a jolt, go into me. I asked him what she said to me.

"She said that only you could save me. Could save a lot of guys. That you have the touch now."

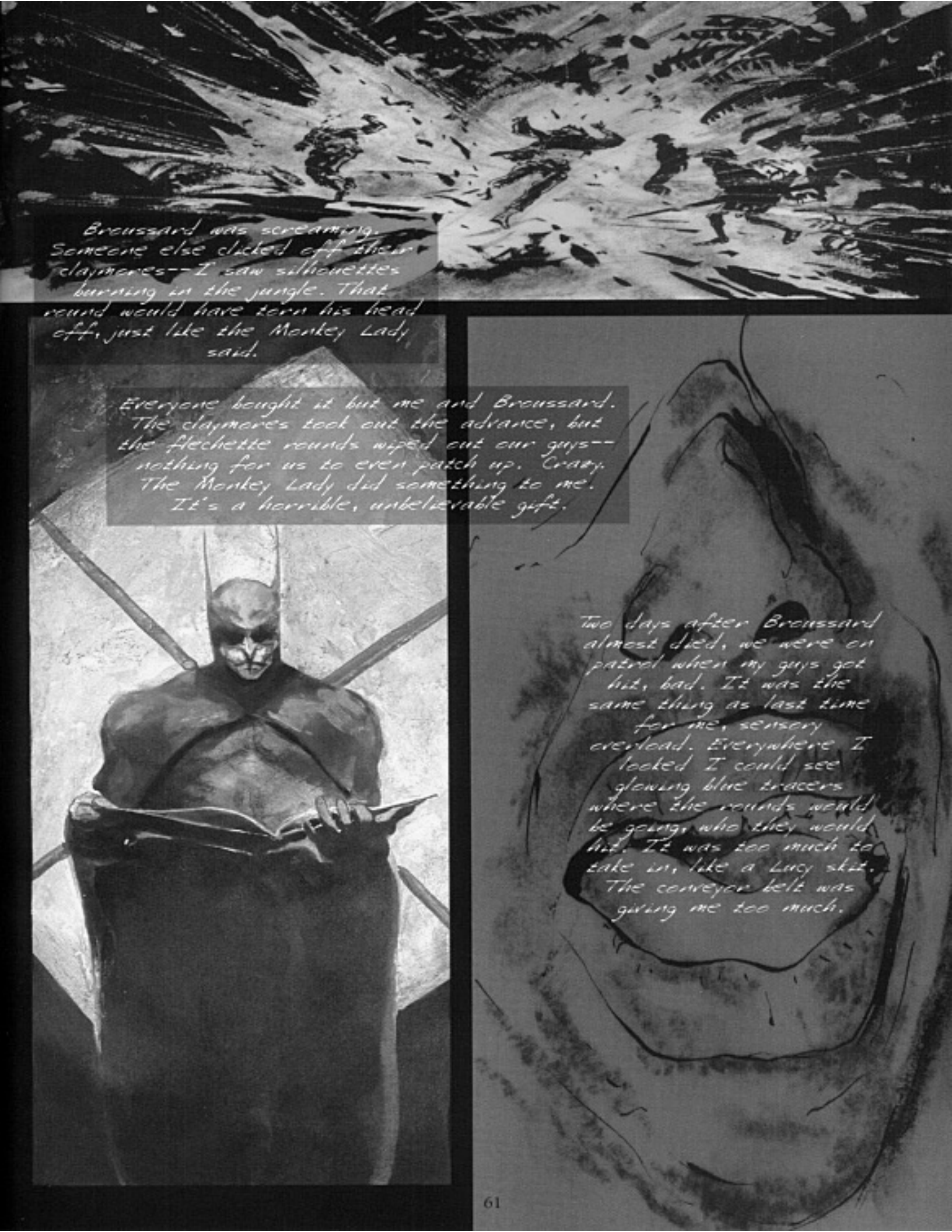
I told him it's all bushwah. That she was just scaring us. You shouldn't mess with these people, man.

"I don't know, man. That's some major dinki dau action that dink was throwing at us."




July 6 - Breussard and I were on guard duty last night with three other guys just outside the perimeter. Breussard wouldn't shut up about the Monkey Lady from the night before.
kept freaking himself out, along with everybody else. It was dark, very dark. I could just barely make out the concertina wire twenty feet or so in front of me.
Then I heard a beeping sound with some other sound mixed in with it, like bees.
There was a shape sitting on one of the posts. Just a vague form all bent, like some twisted bird.


Then I realized it was no bird, but the old woman, the Monkey Lady, whispering my name over and over. She was warning me.
The sound of the bees grew louder. Hechette rounded, and I could see where they were going before they did. A round was heading right for Broussard and I threw myself into him and onto the jungle floor while the sugar hit the fan.


Breussard was screaming. Someone else clicked off their claymores--I saw silhouettes burning in the jungle. That round would have torn his head off, just like the Monkey Lady said.
Everyone bought it but me and Breussard. The claymores took out the advance, but the flechette rounds wiped out our guys--nothing for us to even patch up. Crazy. The Monkey Lady did something to me. It's a horrible, unbelievable gift.
Two days after Breussard almost died, we were on patrol when my guys got hit, bad. It was the same thing as last time for me, sensory overload. Everywhere I looked I could see glowing blue tracers where the rounds would be going, who they would hit. It was too much to take in, like a Lucy skit. The conveyor belt was giving me too much.

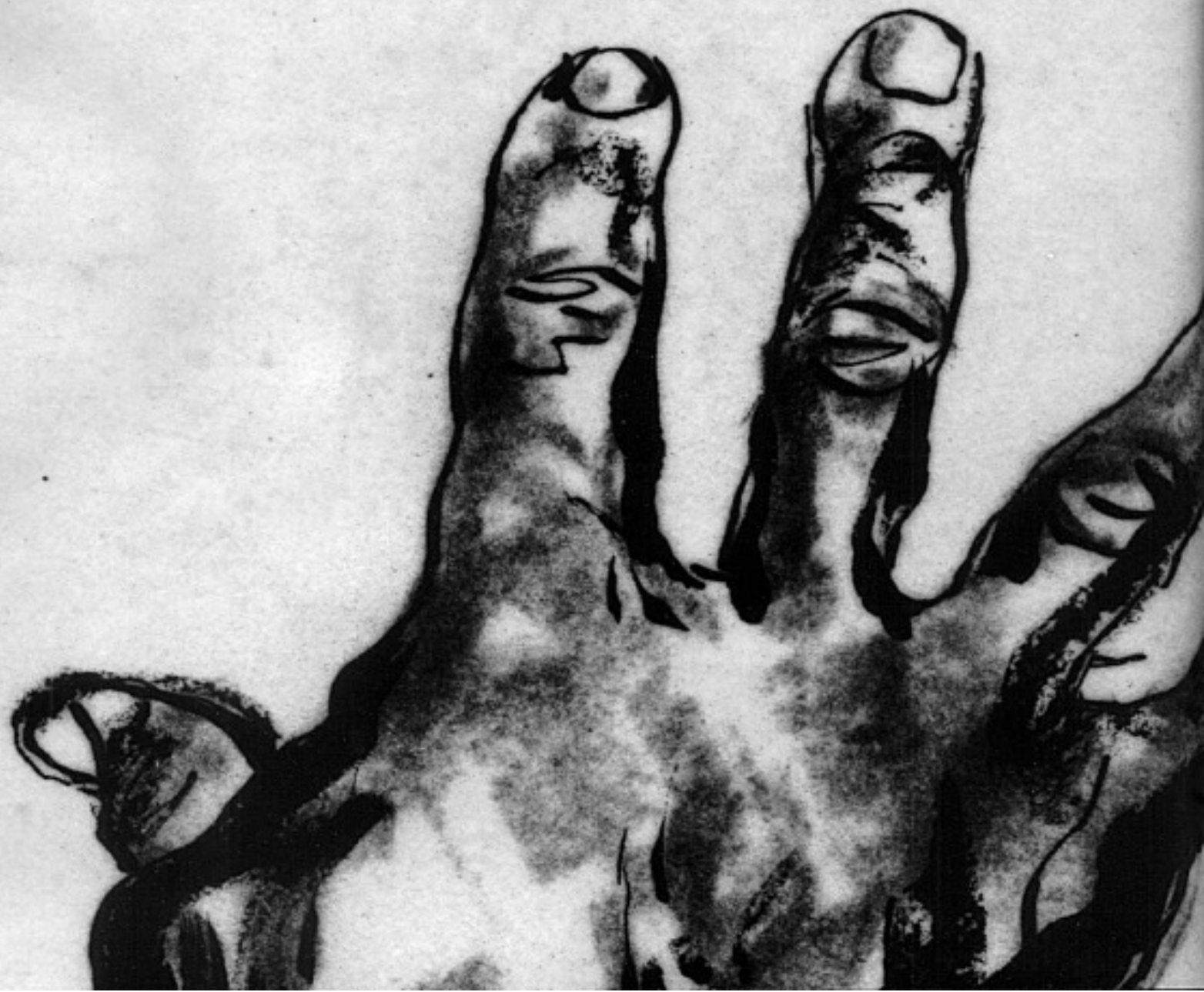

First kid I was able to crawl to was already down, gut-shot. He crouched there screaming, holding his intestines in, while rounds snapped the elephant grass all around us. He didn't even know I was there. If he let go of himself he would've spilled all over the mud.


I pressed my hands over his stomach, pushing him down. The second I touched him two things happened-- he immediately stopped screaming, and I got slammed by some kind of vision.
I saw this kid, the kid I was working on, and he wasn't a kid anymore, but an old man. He was lying in a bed back in the World surrounded by his loved ones. He closed his eyes, and the people started crying. I snapped out of it and looked down at him. I knew I'd just seen how he was going to die. And it wouldn't be in some rice paddy in this hole.



He was quiet and I thought that he was dead. But he wasn't. He was practically smiling.

When I looked down at his stomach, the wound was practically closed! There was still a lot of blood, we were drenched in it, but the wound looked like little more than a small gash and was getting smaller.




Brouzard later told me that he saw me stand up in the middle of this firefight like some kind of zombie, tracers flying all around me. I lost a finger and didn't even know it.



He would be decapitated, and the Monkey Lady was going to be the one to do it.

Everyone I've touched since then I've seen die inside my head. I'll heal them, all the while knowing they're going to die and how. I can't take it anymore. It's driving me insane!


Breussard woke me up the other night, sneaking out of barracks. He badgered me and badgered me until I told him what I'd seen and how the sight is driving me nuts. I jumped out of my cot and followed him.
By the time I caught up with him it was all over. I was too late. Breussard lay on the bloody straw like some puppet missing its strings. His head was inverted at an improbable angle, a confused look in the eyes.



The Monkey Lady crouched nearby, and was reaching out for a baby who was crying uncontrollably.

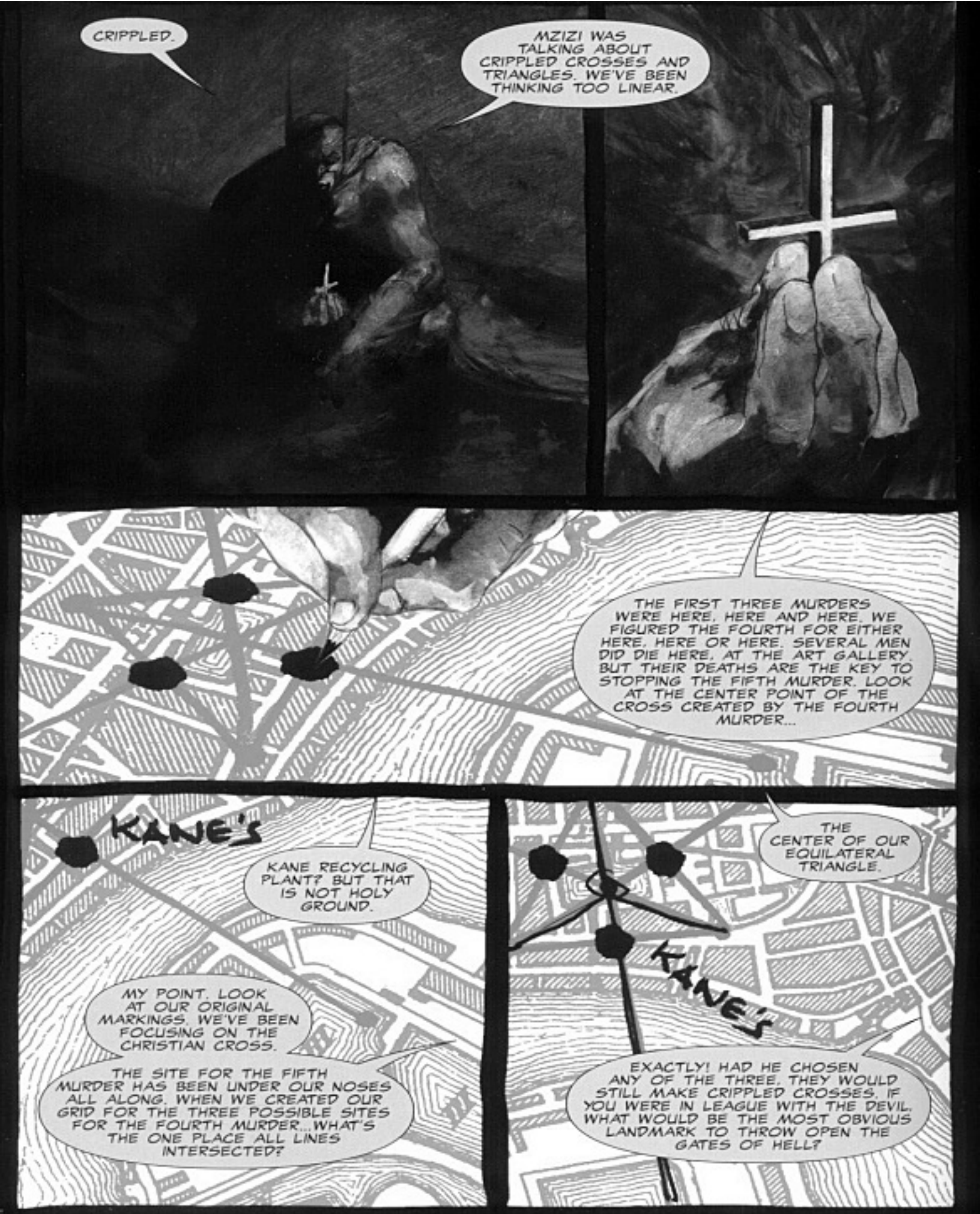
Gibbering in Viet, she touched her scarlet fingers to the wet cheeks of her child. She repeated what I think is the baby's name: Luc. Then the Monkey Lady died.



I didn't know what to do. I picked the baby up to try to calm it down. She quit crying the moment I touched her. Broussard got his, just like she said he would. He died trying to get her to take the sight off me. Now I had to do the right thing by her child. I knew some people, couple of bigwigs owe me big time. Cicily can't have children. Now maybe we can. I'll call her Luci.


IT'S UNREAL. THIS EXPLAINS HIS BEING ABLE TO HEAL THE BOY WITH CANCER. HE STILL HAS THE GIFT. THE POWER TO HEAL. AND THE SIGHT. LUCI COMES BY HER VISIONS HONESTLY. THE VIETNAMESE WOMAN ON THE TRAIN...BLACK PAJAMAS...CAN'T BE!
NEW ENTRIES--A WEEK AGO.
Terrible things are happening. She's drawing on the floor. Candles are everywhere. Those words... I know they're bad. I feel her in my head at night.
HE'S LOSING HIS MIND.
HE BRINGS A LITTLE VIETNAMESE GIRL. LUCI. BACK FROM THE WAR TO SOMEHOW REPAY A CRAZY VOODOO WOMAN WHO GAVE HIM THIS POWER TO HEAL. HE MUST HAVE SEEN LUCI CASTING ONE OF HER SPELLS AND IT THREW HIM BACK TO HIS WAR. UNHINGED HIS MIND.


MY FATHER. HE'S SICK. HIS MIND I-IS--I DON'T KNOW IF MY HAVING THESE POWERS HAS CAUSED THIS.
HE NEEDS HELP, LUCI.
HE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT VIETNAM. SOMETHING--HORRIBLE. BUT HE WON'T SAY WHAT. HE JUST BABBLES. MY MOTHER TRIES TO COMFORT HIM BUT HE'S GROWN DISTANT FROM HER.
MY CROSS...IT'S GONE!


CRIPPLED.
MZIZI WAS TALKING ABOUT CRIPPLED CROSSES AND TRIANGLES. WE'VE BEEN THINKING TOO LINEAR.
THE FIRST THREE MURDERS WERE HERE, HERE AND HERE. WE FIGURED THE FOURTH FOR EITHER HERE, HERE OR HERE. SEVERAL MEN DID DIE HERE, AT THE ART GALLERY. BUT THEIR DEATHS ARE THE KEY TO STOPPING THE FIFTH MURDER. LOOK AT THE CENTER POINT OF THE CROSS CREATED BY THE FOURTH MURDER...
KANE'S
KANE RECYCLING PLANT? BUT THAT IS NOT HOLY GROUND.
MY POINT. LOOK AT OUR ORIGINAL MARKINGS. WE'VE BEEN FOCUSING ON THE CHRISTIAN CROSS.
THE SITE FOR THE FIFTH MURDER HAS BEEN UNDER OUR NOSES ALL ALONG. WHEN WE CREATED OUR GRID FOR THE THREE POSSIBLE SITES FOR THE FOURTH MURDER...WHAT'S THE ONE PLACE ALL LINES INTERSECTED?
THE CENTER OF OUR EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE.
KANE'S
EXACTLY! HAD HE CHOSEN ANY OF THE THREE, THEY WOULD STILL MAKE CRIPPLED CROSSES. IF YOU WERE IN LEAGUE WITH THE DEVIL, WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST OBVIOUS LANDMARK TO THROW OPEN THE GATES OF HELL?


"GOTHAM CATHEDRAL! IT'S LATE, SO YOU MUST HURRY! AND REMEMBER, YOUR DISBELIEF IN THE DARK SIDE CAN SAVE YOU. I'LL BE THERE IN SPIRIT."


THE ALTAR...
WHA--?


ARGH!
THERE'RE TOO MANY OF THEM!
THE LIGHT... BLINDING!

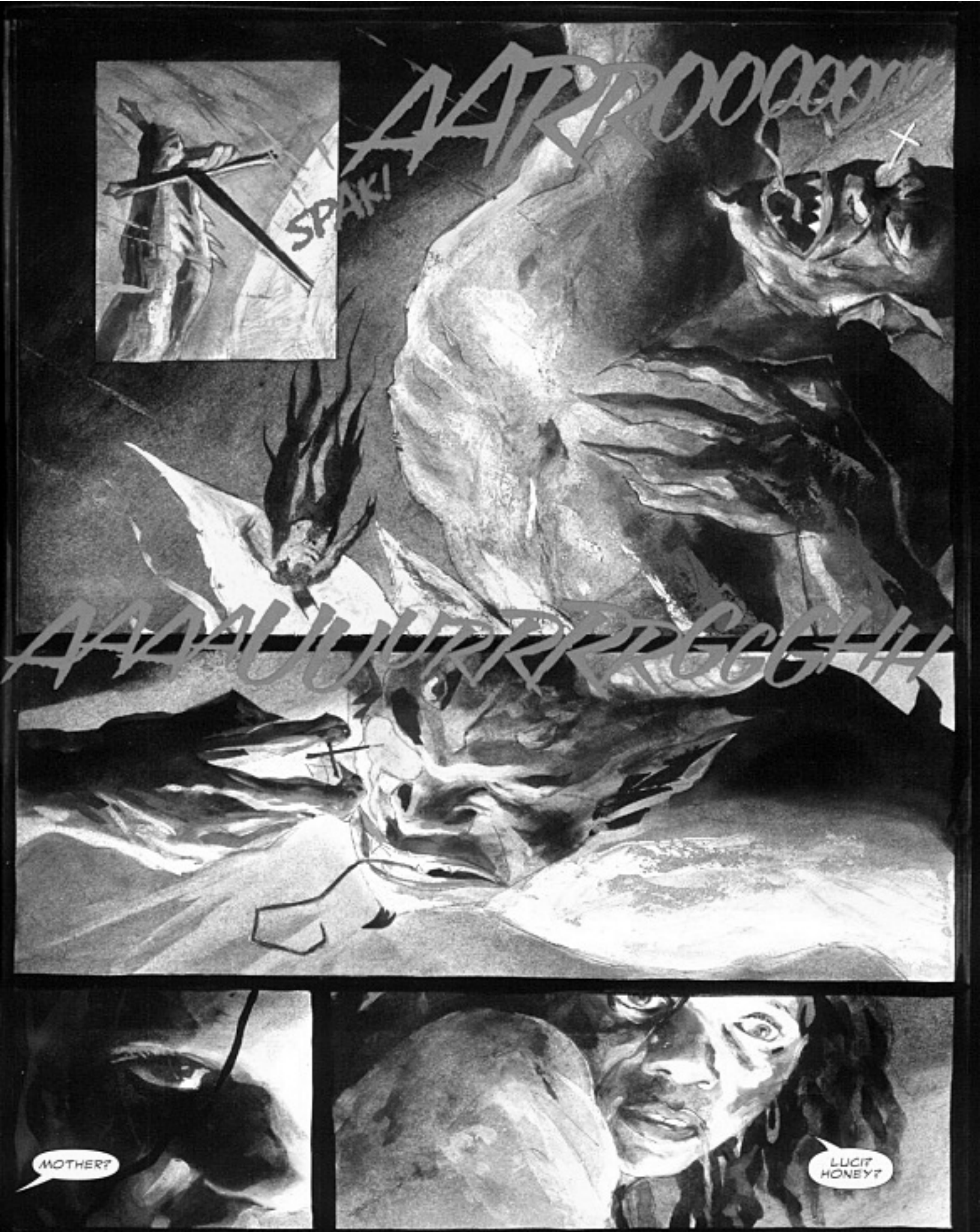

IT DROVE THEM AWAY!
GOD IN HEAVEN!


NO!
THUK THUK THUK
DR. BOUDREAUX, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
!!IT'S CICILY! MY WI--LOOK OUT!
EEEEEEEE!


CRACK!
I WON'T LET YOU STOP ME!
NO!
THERE MUST BE ONE MORE!




NO! TAKE HIM! I'M YOUR SERVANT!
N-NO...
LET HER GO!
UHR?


SPEAK!
AARROOOO


WHY SO MANY INNOCENT PEOPLE? AND WHY DAD?
YOU AND YOUR FATHER HAVE AMAZING GIFTS. I-I HAVE NOTHING. YET. YOUR WONDERFUL GIFTS ARE TEARING US APART.
I JUST WANTED TO BRING US BACK TOGETHER. BE A FAMILY AGAIN. I LOOKED IN YOUR BOOKS AND THERE WERE SPELLS. INCANTATIONS TO BRING THE FAMILY BACK TOGETHER.
BUT... THEY LIED TO ME.
SHUNT
AND NOW I'VE LOST YOU BOTH.
COME BACK TO US, MOTHER.
YOU CAN FIGHT IT! BUT YOU HAVE TO WANT TO!
WHY, MOTHER?
I'M SORRY, LUCI. I-I DON'T..


"I AM HIS NOW."
IT'S TOO LATE.
DAD, HELP HER! USE YOUR POWER!
I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN...NOT ABOUT THE MURDERS, BUT...
PLEASE...
SNAP!
I KNOW WHAT YOU SEE, DEAR. WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS SEEN...MY TIME TO DIE.


LUCI. NO!
TAKE ME!
YOU'VE ALWAYS HEALED MY HEART.
NOW I CAN GO WITH GOD... AND END THIS TERROR.
AARGHHHH!


AAAA


GRRRAAARRRAAAA
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
IT'S THE GATES OF HELL...
AAARRROOOOOOOO


...THEY'RE CLOSING.
YOUR FATHER WILL BE FINE. HE'S GOING TO MAKE IT.
IT'S OVER. MY MOTHER HAS RETURNED TO GOD.
I PRAY HER SOUL TO KEEP.
SLEEP WELL, BRUCE.


EEEEEEOOOO
WHAT IN BLAZES HAPPENED HERE?


WE'VE GOT A LIVE ONE, COMMISSIONER!
GET THE PARAMEDICS IN HERE!


LUCKY TO BE ALIVE!


EEEEEEEEOOOO
EMERGENCY SERVICE




GODSPEED, OLD FRIEND.

