

CORY DOCTOROW'S

FUTURISTIC TALES

OF THE HERE AND NOW.



CORY DOCTOROW'S FUTURISTIC TALES OF THE HERE AND NOW.

Anda's Gama	4
adapted by Dana Nozighi • art by Estee Pollis Colored by Robert Stadio • Lettered by Neil Oystake • Edited by Ted Adams	
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I, Robot	100
adapted by Dana Nozighi • art by Erik Swan Lettered by Chris Newey • Edited by Tom Waltz	
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adapted by James Anthony Kabaria • Art by Golo Vilmann Colored by Gustavo Torres • Lettered by Neil Oystake • Edited by Tom Waltz	
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What Came First

By Cory Doctorow

I barely can't remember a time in my life when I wasn't a comics reader. There were comics and science fiction novels around the house from the time I could reach the shelves, and I started looking at the pictures even before I could read the words.

Nevertheless, I became a prose writer, not a comics writer. For starters, you could read a book and figure out *how* it was written: the writer sat down and hammered out a stream of words, they were typeset and the book was published. But how did you write a comic? Did the writer describe each panel? Just write the dialog? I remember taking it over with friends at summer camp, and there was one kid who was dead certain that the artist drew all the pictures first and then the writer figured out what the story would be: writing the dialog that made it all make sense!

Then there was the matter of authorship. I knew who Stan Lee was, of course—that guy with The Voice who did the voice overs on the *Hulk* cartoons. But who actually "wrote" these comics? I was pretty sure that Stan Lee—and whoever it was with the initials of "D C"—weren't penning all the funny books on the spinner rack at the convenience store. *MAD* Magazine had by linez Al Jaffee, Dave Berg. But it seemed like the comics' authors' names were tiny, downplayed-unimportant. If I was going to grow up to be a writer, I wanted to be an important writer—not just a farmhand on Uncle Stan's Ranch.

So now I'm a writer (importance: debatable). The books I write have my name in big letters on the spine and cover. For better or for worse, they're the products of my imagination and what happens in them is pretty much down to what I imagine.

Not long ago, the folks at IDW sent me an email and asked me if I'd be game for licensing some of my stories to be adapted for comics. I was a little skeptical. I don't know anything about writing comics (though I was pretty sure by this point that the words come before the pictures)—and what's more, I do this whacky thing with my books and stories when I make them available as free, searchable downloads on the day they're published, and I just didn't have the energy to argue about this with some comics people.

My agent got in touch with IDW, talked to them for a while and came back to me: "No problem," he said. "They'll get back ask writers and illustrators to do the adaptations and they'll let us do the whole series under a Creative Commons license once it's collected into a single volume." Awesome. "Plus, I got you approval over the scripts and art as part of the deal." Huh? What do I know about art and scripts for comics? Well, it can't hurt.

####

What followed was an education in the whole production cycle for comics, from treatment to script to rough art to final art to lettering andinking to covers. And I got to be a part of it. I mostly sat back and tried not to screw things up—though as the author of the underlying stories, I was sometimes (infrequently) moved to intervene and redirect the abridgment process.

Mostly, I just sat back in awe as a crew of incredibly talented writers and artists paid me the immense compliment of focusing their creative energy on the work that I'd done. I got to watch as these people interpreted my ideas, got to more-or-less peer into the heads of readers and discover, in detail, what happened between the words I wrote and the words they read. It's a spookily cool process. I heartily recommend it to you—in fact I'm trying to figure out a compact, quick way of doing this with my writing students in the future. It taught me a lot about writing.

And now here we are, with this extraordinary volume in hand (or on your somewhere there download!) I can call it extraordinary without too much ego because this is, in a very meaningful sense, *not my book*: it's a book that was written down and lettered by Dave Nazahr, Estevo Polla, Sam Keith, Robert Studio, J.C. Vaughn, Derrel Warner, Scott Malone, Paul McCaffrey, Paul Pope, Dan Taylor, Dustin Evans, Ben Temple-Smith, Erich Owens, Ashley Wood, James Anthony Kehoe, Guin Villanova, German Torres, Danny Parsons, Robbie Robbins, Neil Uyetake, Chris Mowry, and Amanu Osona. It's got my name on the cover—I guess I'm the schmecky Stan Lee figure on the spin of the karma wheel—but they did it.

And now I want to write comics. I've seen how it's done. I think I can do it. I guess we'll all find out, soon enough.

Cory Doctorow
March 2008





Ande's Game

ANGA DON'T REALLY START TO PLAY THE GAME UNTIL SHE GOT HERSELF A GIRL-SHAPED AVATAR.

SHE WAS 13, AND THE ONLY GIRL SHE'D EVER SEEN IN-GAME WEAR SHAPED LIKE A BOY'S IDEA OF WHAT A GIRL LOOKED LIKE: TIGHT BUSTIERS AND LONG LEGS ALL BARELY CONTAINED IN TINY POINTLESS LEATHER BIKINI-ARMOUR.

HELLO, CHICKENS.

ANYWAY, SHE CALLED IT.

THAT ALL CHANGED THE DAY HER SCHOOL WAS CALLED TO ASSEMBLY.

I AM LISA, THE ORGANIZER, AND I KICK ASS, SERIOUSLY.

I AM THE BEST GAMER IN THE WORLD AND I'M 26. PROBABLY ONE OF THE ENTIRE CLAN FAHRENHEIT. MY BATTLE RECORD IS 3,522 KILLS IN A SINGLE BATTLE. I HAVE TAKEN HOME CASH PRIZES FROM COMPETING. TOTALING MORE THAN 100,000 POUNDS.

AND I'M HERE TO LET YOU IN ON A SECRET: GIRLS KICK ASS. WE'RE FASTER, SMARTER, AND BETTER THAN BOYS. WE PLAY HARDER.

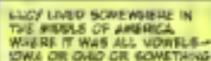
DAMNFACE SMELLS LIKE A BOY'S ARMY.

IF YOU WILL PLAY AS A GIRL, YOU WILL BE GIVEN PROBABLY THE MOST MEMBERSHIP IN THE CLAN FAHRENHEIT.

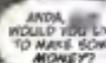
AND IF YOU ANGRIFY UP, YOU'LL BECOME FULL-FLEDGED MEMBERS. SO WHO'S IN, CHICKENS?

WE'RE GOING TO CRASH THAT, CHICKENS, YOU LOT AND ME. SO JOIN MY ORDER TO

THE FAHRENHEIT'S HAD CHAPTERS IN EVERY GAME THEY WERE AMONG AND DEAD, Y AND GOOD, AND ANGA WOULD GOING TO BE ONE OF THEM.



LUCY LIVED SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE OF AMERICA, WHERE IT WAS ALL IOWA OR OHIO OR SOMETHING



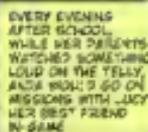
AND, WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE SOME MONEY?



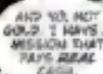
YOU MEAN GEEK, LUCY??



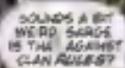
CALL ME SARGE!



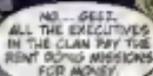
EVERY EVENING AFTER SCHOOL WHILE HER PARENTS WATCHED SOMETHING LOUD ON THE Telly ANDD WHU? I GO ON MESSING WITH LUCY HER BEST FRIEND IN-GAME



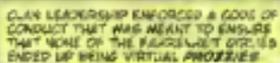
AND NO, NOT GORD. I HAVE A MISSION THAT PAYS REAL CASH.



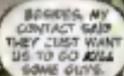
SOUNDS A BIT WEIRD SARGE IS THE AGAINST CLAN REBBER?



NO... GEEZ, ALL THE EXECUTIVES IN THE CLAN PAY THE RENT GORD'S MISSIONS FOR MONEY!



CLAN LEADERSHIP ENFORCED A CODE OF CONDUCT THAT WAS MEANT TO ENSURE THAT NONE OF THE FAKERWEIT DIZ'ES ENDED UP BEING VIRTUAL PROZZIES



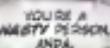
BEHIND, MY CONTACT SAYS THEY JUST WANT US TO GO ASSA SOME GUYS.



OH, WE'RE GOOD AT THAT!



>please sorry u can have my skills sorry!!!1331



YOU'RE A NASTY PERSON, ANDA.



>It's a Fahrenheit666!!!!1331113

THE MISSION TOOK THEM TO A COTTAGE ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE GAMEWORLD



SOO... THIS YOU HAD A SCROLLS LEFT LOOKS LIKE THE PLACE IS PRETTY WELL-DEFENDED

YEAH, I COUNT SEVEN GUA

IT'S GREAT BY STANDARD JUDGE-AND-WEAVE PATTERN WORKS GREAT FOR RUSHING NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS



RIGHT, I'LL COVER YOU.

THIS'LL BE OVER BEFORE -



WHAT THE--?

SERGE, I THINK THEY'RE ACTUALLY PLAYERS!

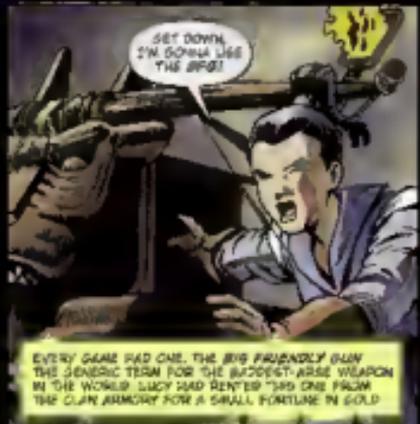


BUT WHO WANTS TO SIT AROUND IN GAMESPACE WATCHING A SCROLL READ ALL DAY?



WHO CANST?

SET DOWN, I'M GOING TO USE THE BFG!



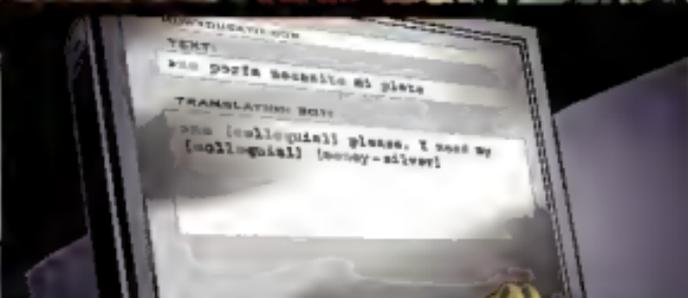
EVERY GAME HAD ONE, THE BIG FRIENDLY GUN THE GENERIC TERM FOR THE BIGGEST-ARSE WEAPON IN THE WORLD. LUCY HAD RENTED THIS ONE FROM THE CLAN ARMOYR FOR A SMALL FORTUNE IN GOLD

HOLY--!









LUCY'S VOICE IN HER EAR WAS A CONSTANT COMPANION IN HER LIFE NOW AS THEY RAN MISSIONS INTO THE WEE HOURS OF THE NIGHT.

BUT SARGE, I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY ANYONE WOULD PAY US CASH FOR THESE MISSIONS.

BEING RICH IS IT'S PROBABLY THE RICH GAMERS. ONE'S FARKING WITH THE OTHER ONE AND PAYING US.

YOU REALLY THINK THAT?

"GUESS LOOK AT IT THIS WAY—MOST OF THE WORLD IS LIVING ON LIKE A DOLLAR A DAY. MY DAD SENDS MOM THREE THOUSAND A MONTH IN CASH-SUPPORT, AND WE'RE NOT EVEN ANCHOR BUT SO AM AFRICAN OR WHATEVER, I AM.

"WELL, IT'S NOT AWEAKAY FOR YOU TO SPEND SO MUCH TIME WITH YOUR GAME." HER DA WOULD SAY.

SO THERE'S PROBABLY SOME SAUDI OR JAPANESE GUY OR ARABIAN MAN IN HIS GUY THERE WHO'S SO RICH THAT THIS IS JUST CHILD CHANGE FOR HIM, AND HE'S TRYING US TO MESS AROUND WITH SOME OTHER RICH PERSON.

"GAAAA" SHE'D PROTEST. "I GO TO P.E. EVERY STINKING DAY."

TO THEM WE'RE LIKE THE AFRICANS MAKING A DOLLAR A DAY TO CRAFT. I MEAN, GUY T-SHIRTS.

"OK, ANDA, BUT DO TRY TO GET A LITTLE MORE EXERCISE, PLEASE!"

GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE.

NICE ONE, ANDA.

THANKS SARGE.

NOW LET'S GO FIND THAT NEW GOTTAGE.





SOMEWHERE, HUNDREDS OF FAHRENHEIT'S CONVERGING ON THIS SHARD, SQUARING OFF AGAINST THE BARRING MERSERAVEL'S GUARDING THE COTTAGE



THE VOICE THAT WAS LIKE A WIND-TUNNEL FROM ALL THE UNMUTED BELLING VOICES



HUNDREDS OF BATTLE IN HUNDREDS OF BEDROOMS LIKE ANNA'S ALL OVER THE WORLD



THE FAHRENHEIT'S
GREATER
LEADERS AND
DISCIPLINE WERE
OVERWHELMING



EVERY MERC WAS
EVENTUALLY RUN OFF



OR BUTCHERED.

OK, I TALK
OFF ALL THE
SQUADS THEY'RE
HEADING BACK
TO BASE.

WELL THAT
WAS SHITTY
HUTSOY BUT WE
MADE IT!



NOW WE
TAKE THE
GOTTAGE.

RIGHT, BUT
LET ME FIRST
SORRY THE--



IT'S BE
GLAD WHEN
WE'RE DONE
WITH THIS.

SORRY







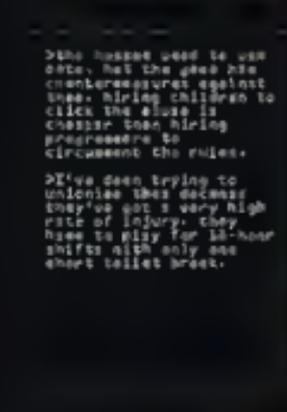
>Hello, Ethan

My name is Raymond,
and I live in El Juane.
I am a labor organizer
in the factories here.

Do you know who these
people are that you're
killing?

>No

They're working for
less than a dollar a
day. The shirts they
make are traded for
gold and the gold is
sold on eBay. They're
mostly young girls
supporting their
families. They're the
lucky ones; the unlucky
ones work as
prostitutes.



Who would need to use
guns, but the good his
countermeasures against
them, hiring children to
click the stove is
cheaper than hiring
protestors to
circumvent the rules.

If I've been trying to
uncover them because
they've got a very high
rate of injury, they
have to pay for 12-hour
shifts with only one
short toilet break.

Does any of these
guys can't hold it
in and they
will themselves
where they sit.

That's not even of
my account, is it?
The world's like
that. It's just a
bid, there's nothing
I can do about it.



When you
kill them,
they don't
get paid.
They lose
their day's
wages.

Do you know who
is paying you to
do these killings?

>Not a clue

If I've been trying to
find that out myself.

>No

>Oh, I see. I am the
only one remaining.

>Go ahead. I will see
you again. I'm sure.



LUCY?

YEAH, HANG ON. I'M ALMOST BACK THERE. I REAPPEARING IN THE MISS END OF NOWHERE.

LUCY, DO YOU KNOW WHO'S IN THE COTTAGE? THOSE NOOBS THAT WE KILL.



WHAT? HELL, NO NOOBS. SOMEONE'S BUTLER. I DUNNO.

GOALS LITTLE SPOBS IN MEXICO GETTING PAID A DOLLAR A DAY TO CRAFT SHIRTS.

EXCEPT THEY DON'T GET ANYTHING WHEN WE KILL THEM.

OH, FOR CHRISTSAKE, IS THAT WHAT ONE OF THEM TOLD YOU? AND YOU BELIEVED IT?



YOU DON'T THINK IT'S

NAH, I DON'T. NOW KEEP YOUR PANTS ON, I'M ALMOST—

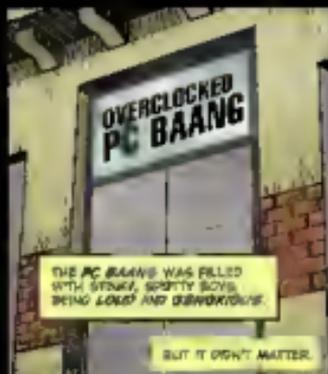
I'VE GOT TO GO LUCY.

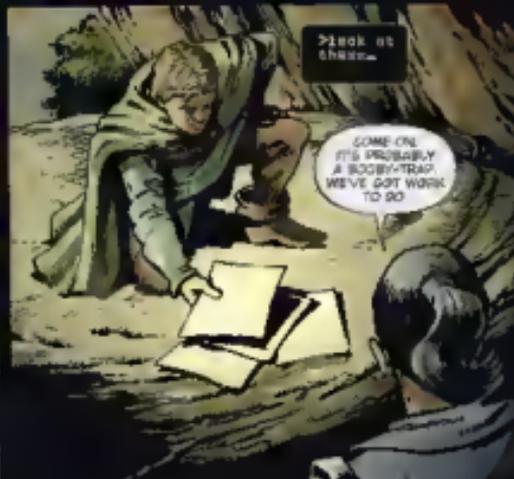


WHAT, NOW? SHIT, JUST HANG—

BFF













It's very sorry
you and your
friend quarreled.



>the easy way? the players
guarding the fabrica, and it's not
the girls working there, the people
who are working to destroy the gear
are the people who pay you and the
girls in the fabrica, but they are
the gear people.



> you're being paid by
rival factory owners,
you know that? they
are the ones who care
nothing for the gear.

>pay girls care
about the gear,
you care about
the gear, your
common enemy is
the people who
want to destroy
the gear and
who destroy the
lives of these
girls.

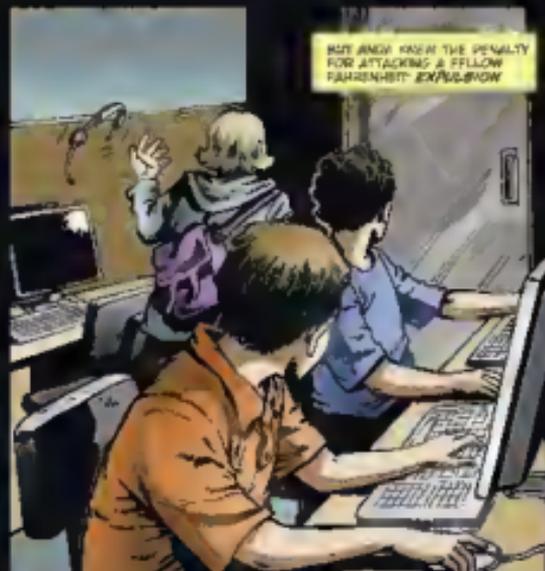


LUCY?

THERE WERE LOTS OF **AMM'S**
FOR FAHRENHEIT, AND THE
PENALTIES FOR BREAKING
THEM WERE



NOT ANY MORE THE PENALTY
FOR ATTACKING A FELLOW
FAHRENHEIT **EX/ALBION**





AND, DEAR, THERE'S A PHONE CALL FOR YOU.

SOMEONE FROM YOUR DADS. I THINK.



HULLO?

HULLO, CHICKEN.

LEIA?

YES, CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

SHE DID STUMBING OVER THE DETAILS. BACK-TRACKING AND GUTTERING.



-AND I... I DON'T THINK IT'S READY TO KILL THEM, THOSE GIRLS. ALL RIGHT?

WELL, I HAPPEN TO AGREE THOSE GIRLS NEED OUR HELP MORE THAN ANY OF THE GIRLS ANYWHERE IN THE GAMB.

THE FANGIRLS' STRENGTH IS THAT WE CARE. IT'S ANOTHER WAY THAT WE'RE BETTER THAN THE BOYS.



I'M ASKING THAT YOU 'LOOK A STAND WHEN YOU GO.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KIDNAP ME?

NO, CHICKEN. I THINK YOU DO THE RIGHT THING?



IF YOU KIDNAP LUCKY, I'LL SHOOT...

OH, CHICKEN. YOU'RE A BRAVE GIRL. AREN'T YOU?

NO ONE'S BEING KIDNAPED, FEAR NOT. BUT I WANTS TALK TO THE RAYNARD OF YOURS.







I WANT THEM TO WALK OUT. TO GO ON STRIKE IN CORDA, JUMBLE AND ULUMAL. IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET RESULTS.

I'LL CALL THE PRESS IN. WE'LL MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT. WE CAN WIN. I KNOW WE CAN.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

GETTING THEM ORGANIZED. WE'VE BEEN TRYING FOR YEARS, BUT THEY LOCK THE DOORS AND KEEP US OUT.

BUT IN THE GAME I THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO REACH THEM—



BUT THE BOSSES KEEP FOL AWAY?

I KEEP GETTING KILLED. I'VE BEEN PROCCING MY SPORRIFIGHTING, BUT IT'S SO HARD—

THE BOSSES WERE SOME PRETTY MEAN HERDS, AND KNEW SHE'D BEEN ONE.



THIS WILL BE AWAY! LET'S GO!

WHERE?

TO AN IN-GAME FACTORY. WE'RE RAYMOND'S NEW BODY GUARDS!



OH!



HEY, LADY—



—LET'S GO GET US A COUPLE MORE, OKAY?

THE END.



DOCTOROW ON: "ANDA'S GAME"

Editor Tom Waltz: Cory, let's start with the obvious question—what sparked the idea for "Anda's Game"?

Cory Doctorow: Two things, one was my idea of writing a bunch of stories that riffed on the titles of famous SF—*I Robot*, *Anda's Game* (*Ender's Game*), *I, Row-Boat* and soon, *True Names*—after hearing Ray Bradbury despise this practice, calling it rude and immoral. Bradbury was pissed off at Michael Moore for calling his movie *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Bradbury supports Bush's plan to go to Mars—but I thought that this was just goofy. Titles are—and have always been—for gems. What's more, *Fahrenheit 451*, Bradbury's classic novel, is all about free expression (Bradbury denies this—he says it's about television, which is why you should never ask writers what their work is about). (Should we end the interview now?)

The other thing was the early reports of gold farming in games: something that really sparked my imagination.

TW: I consider myself a semi-avid video gamer, and when I first read "Anda's Game" I thought it was a bizarre vision of a possible future, only to read an article recently about how China is taking over in the gaming "sweat shop" market from other developing nations like Mexico. For me, personally, it's a sad and pathetic reality that videogames have become so important to some people that they are willing to go to great lengths to cheat at the games, even so far as purchasing in-game characters that were earned through what truly amounts to industrial slavery. Do you feel that gaming has become too important, and if so, is the technology to blame... or the gamers themselves?

CD: No, gaming hasn't become too important! MMORPGs and other MMOs are social constructs, spaces where we meet, socialize, make friends, cooperate, and play together! It's where we undertake the business of civilization. It's a goddamned shame that (so far) all of these civilizations-in-bottles are owned by giant media companies (worse still, that Universal/Blizzard, a really abusive bully, owns *World of Warcraft*, the most

popular), but asking if play has become too important is as silly as asking if art has become too important, or thought, or scholarship.

TW: When I sent you the artwork for "Anda's Game," penciled by the fantastic Estève Polls, your reaction to seeing it for the first time was... and I quote... "Holy crap, this is EERILY COOL!" I was hoping you could expand on that and describe the different feelings you are having as you see your short prose stories coming to life in illustrated sequential form.

CD: Well, I'd never really had my work adapted before. When a talented artist like Polls turns my work into something that isn't what I saw in my mind's eye, but IS a plausible thing for a reader to see... it's like being able to stick a reader in an MRI while she reads one of my stories and see what it's doing to her head.

TW: Taking the last question a step further, we have various comic book writers adapting your short stories in script form for this project—specifically for "Anda's Game," writer Dara Nareghi. What things do you look for in a script based on your work before you approve it for publication?

CD: Well, it has to suit the work—it doesn't have to be accurate (in the sense of portraying all the events that look place in the work), but it DOES have to be faithful to the artistic intent and mood that inspired the work.

TW: Have you ever considered scripting your own comic book series or graphic novel?

CD: Every now and again, I have a million projects on my plate right now—BoingBoing and empty thoughts, little blog projects that we're playing with, a movie I'm co-producing, a TV show I'm consulting on, two nonfiction books, a zillion short story ideas; my podcast; travel; speaking (and I'm moving home to London from LA in two weeks!).

Art by Scott Horne

WHEN SYSADMINS RULED THE EARTH



THE SUBURBS OF TORONTO
ONTARIO, CANADA, 193 A.D.

BREED
BREED
BREED
BREED
BREED
BREED





HELLO?

MAIN ROUTERS NOT RESPONDING. BGP NOT RESPONDING. THE MECHANICAL VOICE OF THE SYSTEMS MONITOR SAID HE CURSED A LITTLE CLUNKY AT IT AND FELT A LITTLE BETTER.



WHY DIDNT
YOU TURN THAT
THING OFF
BEFORE WE
WENT TO BED
FELIX?

YOU'RE NOT A
DOCTOR YOU'RE
A SYSTEMS
ADMINISTRATOR.
AND YOU'RE A
FATHER NOW!



IT'S
MY JOB,
KELLY.

MAYBE I
CAN LOG IN
AND FIX IT
FROM HERE.



IN FIVE YEARS
OF MARRIAGE YOU
HAVE NEVER ONCE
BEEN ABLE TO FIX
ANYTHING FROM
HERE.



SHE WAS WRONG ABOUT THAT, OF
COURSE. HE HAD FIXED PLENTY OF
MINOR THINGS FROM HOME, ONLY
HE DIDN'T MAKE A BIG DEAL ABOUT
IT. SO SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER.

THE MECHANICAL VOICE CALLED HIM TWICE MORE ON THE WAY THERE. THEN KELLY CALLED

DON'T GRINSE. I CAN HEAR THE GRINSE IN YOUR VOICE.

NO GRINING. CHEEK.

I'M TOTALLY BOWERS FOR YOU, KELLY. GO BACK TO BED.

THE BABY'S AWAKE. LISTEN, YOU'VE BEEN THERE SEVEN YEARS—

—YOU HAVE TO GIVE THAT PHONE TO ONE OF THOSE GUYS WHO WORKS FOR YOU. YOU'VE HAD YOUR TRIPS.

I KNOW, EYEGARDING DON'T TAKE HOLIDAYS.

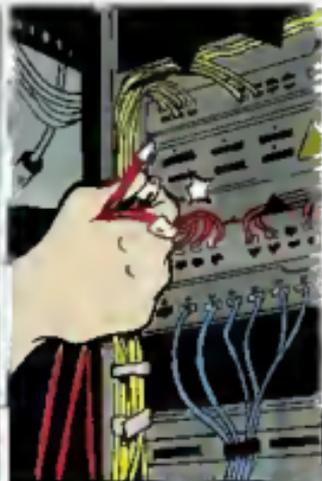
FAPS
DAYS WILL
PROMISE



URGENT SERVER
ROOM, DOWNTOWN
TORONTO, 2:00 AM









I'M SICK. I
CAN'T EVEN STAND
ANYMORE...



WHO, KELLY?
WHO'S DEAD?



THE BABY.



THE BABY?
WHAT?

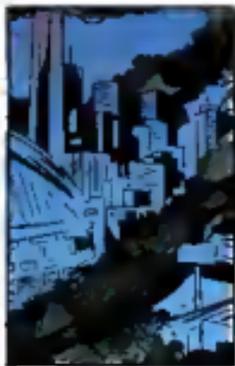
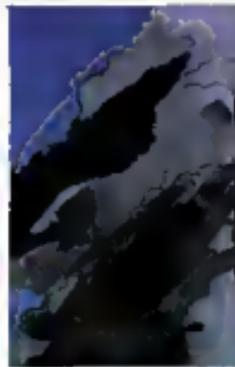
KELLY, WHAT
HAPPENED?

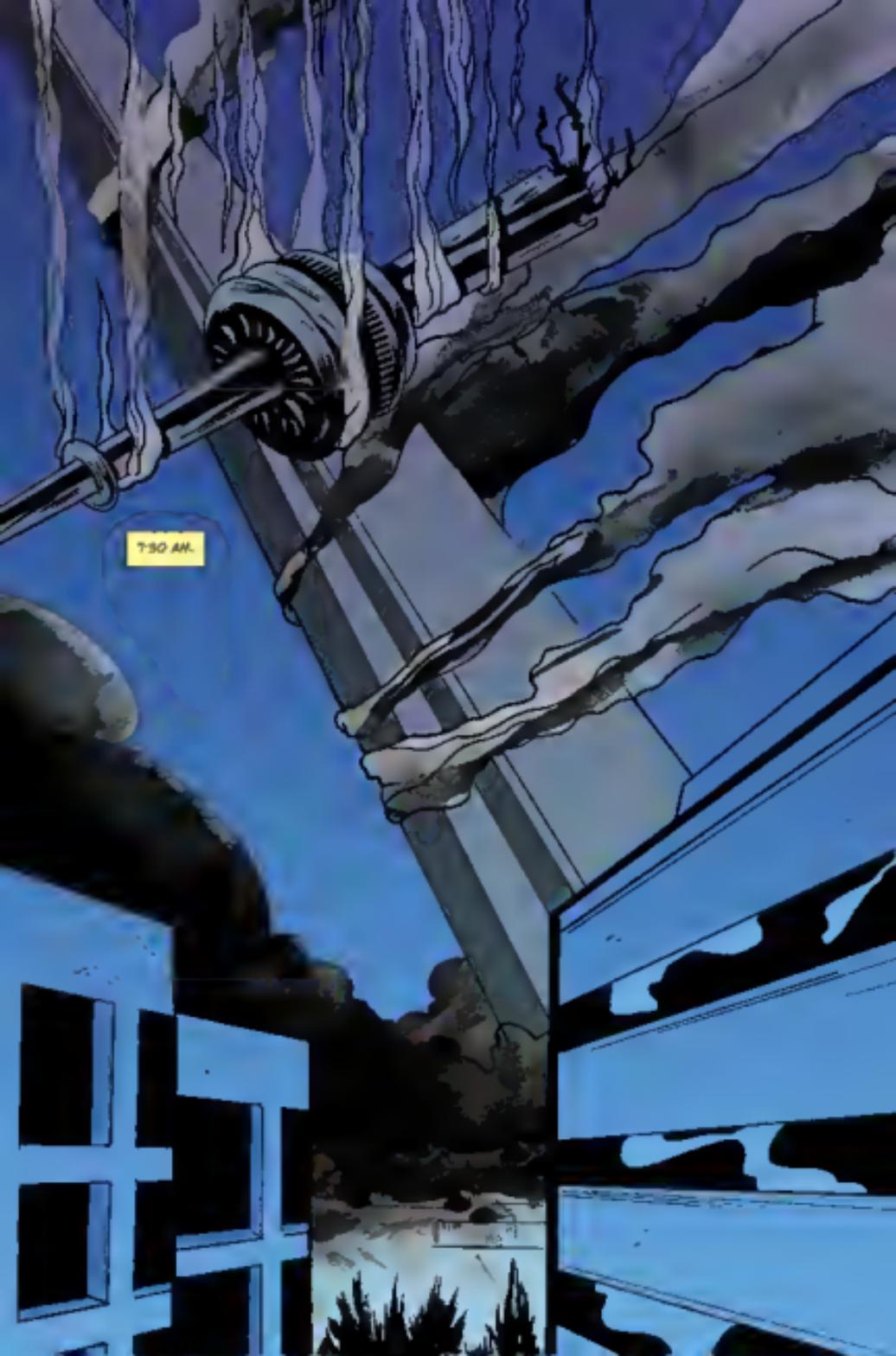


EVERYONE...
EVERYONE IS...

ONLY TWO
CHANNELS ARE
LEFT ON THE
AIR...

IT LOOKS
LIKE DAWN OF
THE DEAD OUT
THIS WINDOW.





7:30 AM.

DAY 2, 2:00 AM.

I USED TO
LIKE THAT IT
WAS SO GOLD
N HERE

WE CAN'T
LEAVE YET VAN
WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT'S OUT
THERE

WILL'S
DOWNSTAIRS IN
ANOTHER CLEAN
ROOM. MAYBE
SOME OF THE
OTHERS...

WHAT
HAPPENED OUT
THERE, PELIK?
WAS IT THE
WORM?

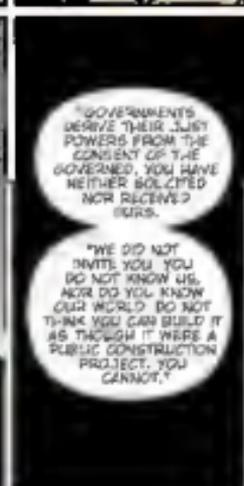
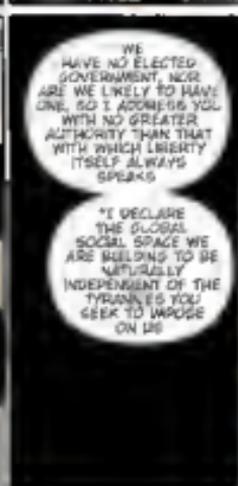
IT COULDN'T
HAVE ONLY
BEEN THE WORM
IT SOUNDS LIKE IT
WAS A LOT OF
DIFFERENT
STUFF

WE'RE JUST
GOING TO KEEP
THAT DOOR
CLOSED UNTIL
WE

WE'RE ALL
GETTING
TOGETHER ON
THE SIXTH
FLOOR.

IF THERE'S A
RED-AGENT IN
THE BUILDING,
WE'RE ALL DEAD

TALK
TO ME





"IT IS AN ACT OF NATURE AND IT GROWS ITSELF THROUGH OUR COLLECTIVE ACTIONS."



"THAT'S FROM THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF CYBERSPACE. IT WAS WRITTEN 12 YEARS AGO, AND I THOUGHT IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS I'D EVER READ."



"I WANTED MY KID TO GROW UP IN A WORLD WHERE CYBERSPACE WAS FREE."



"MY BEAUTIFUL SON AND MY BEAUTIFUL WIFE DIED TODAY. MILLIONS MORE 'DIED' THE CITY IS LITERALLY IN FLAMES. WHOLE CITIES HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE MAP."



"WE HAVE INDEPENDENT POWER, FOOD AND WATER, AND WE HAVE THE NETWORK."



"WE HAVE A SHARED LOVE OF LIBERTY THAT COMES FROM CARING ABOUT AND CARING FOR THE NETWORK."



"WE ARE IN CHARGE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ORGANIZATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL TOOL THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN."

"WE ARE THE CLOSEST THING TO A GOVERNMENT THE WORLD HAS RIGHT NOW."



"WE HAVE THE MACHINE WITH THE POTENTIAL TO REBUILD A BETTER WORLD."



"OH, HOW DO WE DO IT?"

DAY 2, 9:17 PM.

PRIME
MINISTER OF
CYBERSPACE?
THAT'S JUST
GREAT.

AND VERY
PRACTICAL,
TOO.

YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO WANTED
TO KNOCK THE
WHOLE INTERNET
OFFLINE, WELL

IF YOU
DON'T LIKE MY
PLATFORM, RUN
AGAINST ME
OTHER PEOPLE
AR

DO
SOMETHING OR
JUST SHUT UP
BUT FOR CRYING
OUT LOUD, GUT
WHINING

SCREW
YOU GUYS
I'M OUTTA
HERE.

I THOUGHT
THAT GUY WOULD
NEVER LEAVE

DAY 2, 11:30 PM.

> "L" KONG, THERE ARE A LOT OF CANDIDATES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

> HAVE YOU SEEN THE PLATFORM FROM THAT U.S. SENATOR? HE APPARENTLY WASN'T IN BC WHEN IT HAPPENED?

> ANYONE WITH A COMPUTER, RIGHT?

> I JUST DON'T GET THE ONES WHO WANT TO TAKE DOWN THE TOWER? "

> YOU ARE SNEAKING BIG DOG THINGS.

> I'M THINKING ENGLISH MIGHT NOT BE YOUR PRIMARY LANGUAGE.

> YOU JUST GET ONE TWO ONLY.

> WELL, YOU HAVE ME THERE.

> THANKS FOR YOUR ENDSERVEN, KONG.

> SEE WHAT IT'S GOOD FOR.

> WHOEVER WINS, AT LEAST WE'LL DO SOMETHING.



I'M GOING TO TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP NOW FELIX

GOOD LUCK IN THE RINGS



GOOD NIGHT YEA, I'M JUST GOING TO SEE IF I CAN GET THE LATEST FROM



I HOPE

DAY 3, 5:00 AM

THERE WAS LESS THAN A DAY OF FUEL LEFT WHEN FELIX WAS ELECTED THE FIRST EVER PRIME MINISTER OF CYBERSPACE

HALF THE DATA CENTERS HAD GONE DARK. QUEEN KING'S NET-MAPS WERE LOCKING. GRIMMER AND GRIMMER AS MORE OF THE WORLD WENT OFFLINE.

SHE WAS ABLE TO MAINTAIN A LEADER BOARD OF THE NEW AND RISING QUERIES, LARGELY RELATED TO HEALTH, SHELTER, SANITATION AND SELF-DEFENSE

DAY 3, 2:15 PM

WE'RE GOING TO OPEN THE DOORS.

LOOKING FOR MORE FUEL?

NO, JUST GONNA TRY TO FIND OUR FAMILIES.



DAY 3, 3:45 PM.

> WE'RE GOING, KONG.



> IT WAS AN HONOR, MR. PRIME MINISTER.



> OH, AND GURIES ARE UP IN ROMANIA. APPARENTLY WE'RE PRETTY HARD TO KILL.



> YEAH, LIKE ROACHES.

FIVE YEARS LATER.

FELIX AND IAN STEPPED OUT INTO THE WORLD AND STARTED REBUILDING.

YEARS LATER THEY STARTED BUILDING AGAIN, ANYTHING THEY COULD DO TO HELP OUT, AND SURVIVE.

NO ONE - WELL, ALMOST NO ONE - CALLED HIM AUC, PRIME MONSTER ANYMORE.



THEY OUD DITCHES, SALVAGED GAINS, AND BURIED THE DEAD. FINALLY THEY HELPED A LITTLE GOVERNMENT THAT WANTED ITS RECORDS KEPT.



HEY,
IT'S GLEEN
MONO.

TELL HER I
SAID 'HI.'

IT NEVER AGAIN FELT LIKE IT DID WHEN THINGS
WENT SO WILDLY WRONG, BUT IT WASN'T BAD.



GOOD NIGHT,
BOSS.

DON'T STICK
AROUND HERE
ALL NIGHT, VAN
YOU NEED YOUR
SLEEP, TOO.



TOMORROW HE'D GO BACK
AND FIX ANOTHER COMPUTER
AND FIGHT OFF ENTROPY
AGAIN. AND WHY NOT?

IT WAS WHAT HE DID.
HE WAS A BYZANTINE.

THE END.



DOCTOROW ON: "WHEN SYSADMINS RULED THE EARTH"

Editor Tom Waltz: Cory, you've stated that one of the best jobs you've ever had was working as a freelance systems administrator. What was it about that job that was so appealing to you?

Cory Doctorow: There's something really wonderful about working under the hood, making all the systems go. When you're actually "using" a computer, it's easy to let it get all rusty: the wires tangled, the data hygiene less than perfect. But when you're the "administrator" for that computer, you can look at it objectively and keep it in good running order—it's a little like inviting a friend over to clean out your closets; they don't have the same emotional attachment to your ratty old t-shirts, so they're capable of seeing that they need to be nipped up for rags.

TW: In "When Sysadmins Ruled the Earth," global destruction takes place on a catastrophic scale. Though you allude (vaguely) to a variety of causes for your fictional disaster, you never really say what the root cause is. Did you have a specific cause in mind when you wrote the short prose story, and have your ideas about what might initiate such destruction changed since?

CD: Now—one of the things I wanted to make clear in the book is that most of us will never know what caused "the end of the world," should it come. As we make various preparations to destroy the earth—stockpiling nukes, building missile-defense shields, weaponizing plague bombs, etc.—we focus on the ideological reasons for doing so. "We must save the world from [Communism] Islam[Capitalism]Secularism!" But if anyone ever actually pulls it off, the number of corpses who'll understand the ideological roots of Armageddon will be approximately zero. And the survivors will be more interested in digging through the rubble looking for canned goods than in reading your manifesto.

TW: In the story, the character Felix recites from the "Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace." Is the Declaration a real thing? If so, how did you feel when you first read it?

CD: Indeed it is—it's the work of my friend and hero John Perry Barlow, co-founder of the Electronic Frontiers Foundation and Grateful Dead lyricist. http://www.eff.org/~barlow/Denaration_Final.html. I read this on a train from Montreal to Toronto in the pages of the *Whole Earth Review*, and I shivered the whole way home. I knew that I was on the cusp of something wonderful.

TW: We all know that the Internet can be a tool of warfare (i.e., terrorist recruiting), and that leads to be the kind of thing the news media likes to talk about most, and you even have one of the characters in the story (WJ) suggest that the Internet be shut down in order to save the world from further damage. Does any part of you agree with WJ, or do you think the benefits of the Net far outweigh the obvious dangers?

CD: I'm a firm believer in the idea that we shouldn't punish the innocent to get at the guilty. The answer to bad speech is more speech. Oh, as a certain wiggled scribe once wrote, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

TW: Okay in my time, I've worked as an Electron Interschange Analyst specializing in Electron Data Interchange (EDI), so I know a little bit about sysadmins. You've called sysadmins "the unsung heroes of the century"—is that because the only time sysadmins ever get mentioned (in my experience, at least) is when they are getting blamed for the network being down?

CD: There's a lot of truth to that—but it's not just that they get all the blame, it's that they get none of the credit. Solving complex IT problems requires the magical intuition of a shaman and the technical skill of a master clock builder. Every second of every day, sysadmins are

Art by Paul Pope



CRAPHOUND

DRAPHOUND HAD NICKED WOOD-SALE MANNA FOR A ROTTEN, FILTHY ALIEN BASTARD



HE WAS TOO GOOD AT IT FOR ME NOT TO LIKE HIM. RESPECT! (Ah, anyway.)

BUT THEN HE FOUND THE *COWBOY TRUNK*



IT WAS TWO MONTHS RENT TO ME AND NOTHING BUT SOME SQUIBBELLY ALIEN KITSCH-PETISH TO DRAPHOUND

SO I DO THE UNTHINKABLE

I VIOLATED THE COP! I GOT INTO A SECOND WAR WITH A BUDDY



TURN THERE! TURN NOW, JERRY, NOW! TURN THERE!



AND WHEN DRAPHOUND GETS THAT SICKEN IT'S A SIGN THAT HE'S SPOTTED A RICH YEN

HO-O-O-BEE!



MAN, ONTARIO IS BEAUTIFUL IN THE SUMMER



EAST MICHIGAN
VOLUNTARY
FIRE DEPARTMENT
LAFES ANNUAL
FURNITURE SALE
SATURDAY
28TH JUNE





THE MORE I WOULD FIND ONE PILE OF
MAYING AND ANOTHER TALE OF
DEFINITE TRY TO STABILISE.

BUT IN THE I GAVE
TO RELY ON MYSTERY
AND ON THE FUTURE...



TO WHOM I HAVE
MY OBLIVION AS
EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

I HAD TWO BONES FULL, WHEN I
COLLAPSED WITH CRASHING, HE
GRINNED HIS NATURAL GRIN.



THE ONE THAT SHOWED ROW
ON BOY OF WET, SLIMY
GUNS, TOPPED WITH WILTING
POISONOUS SEEDS.

GOLD!
GOLD!



I SUCKED AIR BETWEEN
MY TEETH WHEN I SAW
THE COWBOY TRUNK.

I WAS HAMBURGERS.

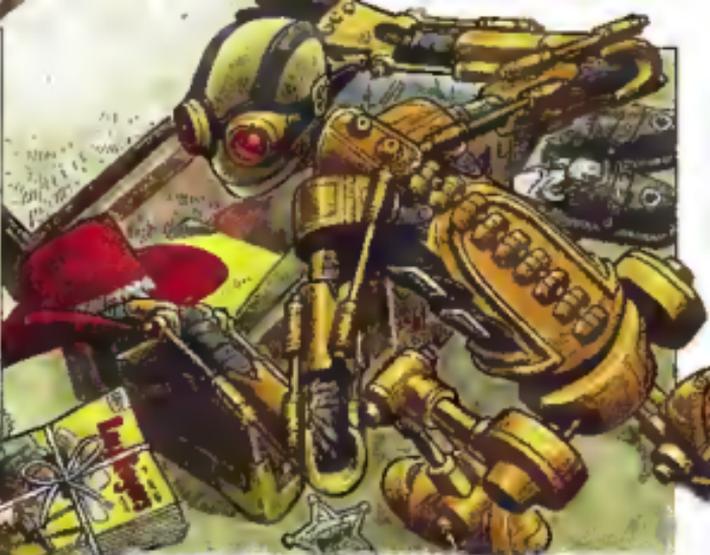


I CAUGHT MY BREATH.

MAK



OH, MY GOD.



THAT'S MY BILLY'S THING—BILLY THE KID WE CALLED HIM. HE WAS BOITTY FOR CONVOYS WHEN HE WAS A BOY.

HE'S A LAWYER NOW IN TORONTO.



I CALLED HIM TO ASK IF HE MINDS MY PUTTING HIS CONVOY THINGS IN THE SALE. AND YOU KNOW HIM?

HE DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT DOESN'T THAT NEAR EVERYTHING HE WAS BOITTY FOR CONVOYS WHEN HE WAS A BOY.

IN MY HEAD I WAS ALREADY BEARING THE CONVOY TALK AND ITS CONTENTS.



SOLD INDIVIDUALLY AT 60 CENTS IF I FIGURED I COULD GET OVER TWO GRAND FOR THEM.

THIS IS WONDERFUL. HOW MUCH WOULD YOU LIKE FOR THE COLLECTION?

I FELT A KNIFE IN MY GUTS.

CRAZY-ROUND HAD FOUND THE CONVOY TALK, SO YOU WANT IT WAS HIS.









TO FIRST GET GRABBER AT AN AUCTION HOUSE, WHEN HE'S ON A CASE OF LINCOLN LOGS, I WAS SELLING. SO KNOW HIM FOR A PINEAPPLE SPIRIT.

WE'D TALKED AFTERWARDS, AT HIS PLACE, A SPRAWLING, TWO-STORY BARNHOUSE AND A CLUSTER OF AUTO-WRECKING SHOPS.

INSIDE WAS BAREBONES, HIS TASTE RAN TO SHROUFS.



THE KITCHEN WAS NEARLY UNUSABLE, SO I PACKED IT WAS WITH OLD BARN-BOWED FURNITURE AND RURAL MEMORABILIA.



HE HAD A LEATHER-APPOINTED LIBRARY STRAIGHT OUT OF A VICTORIAN GENTLEMAN'S CLUB.



AND MY FAVORITE, THE MOJAVE DRESSED IN WICKER AND BANANOS AND TIKI-DOES.

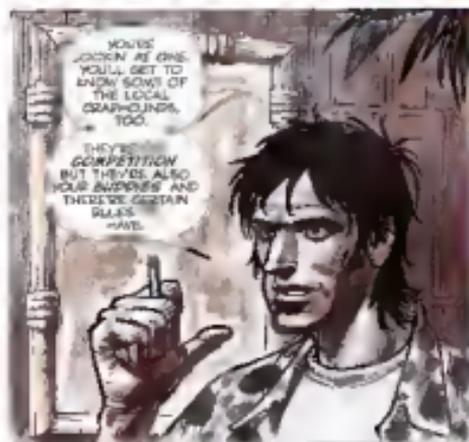


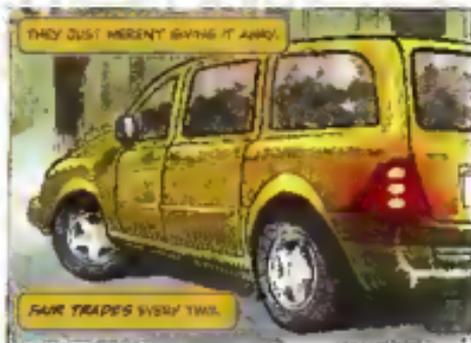
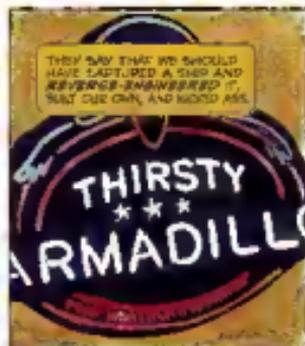
GRABBER HAD KNOWN ALL ABOUT THE MOJAVE AND THE AUCTION HOUSE, BUT HE STILL HADN'T FIGURED OUT GARAGE AND HERWAGE SALES.

SUT WHERE ARE THESE WHO IS ALLOWED TO MAKE THEM?

WHO'S SELLING?

YOU JUST ONE DAY FIGURE THAT YOU NEED TO CLEAN OUT THE BASEMENT. YOU PUT AN AD IN THE STAR, GIVE UP A FEW SIGNS AND VOILA, WHO'S BUYING?







...BUT I WAS JUST WONDERING WHERE YOU FOUND THAT.



I HAD BORED IT UP WITH A GUILTY LITTLE TRICK, THINKING THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BUY IT AT THE NEXT AUCTION.



SECOND FLOOR, IN THE TOY SECTION.

THERE WASN'T ANYTHING ELSE LIKE IT WAS THERE?

TRAD NOT.



AA
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D WANT TO KISS T. WOULD YOU?

HOW MUCH?



I HAD PAID A DOLLAR FOR IT.

TEN DUCKS?

I ALREADY SAID "SOLD" BUT I GAUGHT MYSELF

TWENTY.

TWENTY DOLLARS?

THAT'S WHAT THEY'D CHARGE AT A BOAT CLUB ON QUEEN STREET



FAIR ENOUGH.





IT'S NOT THAT MY CHILDHOOD WAS PARTICULARLY HAPPY.

THESE ARE MEMORIES I HAVE, THOUGH, THAT ARE LIKE A COOL DRINK OF WATER.



SCALING MOUNTAINS OF AUTO-SUNK AT THE WEDDING SAID ONTO BY GRANDPA'S FRIEND PHOONAL.



THE GLOVE BOXES YIELDED TREASURES.

IT ALL TOLD A STORY.



MY GRANDMOTHER SAVED EVERY SCRAP OF MY MOTHER'S LIFE IN HER BARRACON, IN DUSTY ARMY THINGS.

ENTERAINED HIMSELF BY TAKING IT ALL IN.



IT ALL MADE ROOM.

WHEN I SHOWED THEM OUT IN FRONT OF THE TV AND ARRANGED THEM JUST SO, THEY MADE UP A POEM THAT TOOK MY BREATH AWAY.





AFTER THE COWBOY THEME EPISODE, I DIDN'T RUN INTO GRAYHOUND AGAIN UNTIL THE ANNUAL ROTARY CLUB CHARITY SUMMERS BALL.



HE SHOULD HAVE LOOKED AWKWARD IN THAT GELUP, BUT THE NET EFFECT WAS MAJOR AND SCIENCEY CAUTION.

LIKE HE HAD A LITTLE FRY WHOSE HAIR YOU WANTED TO RUSS.



I BOUGHT SOME STUFF AND KEPT BUYING, IGNORING C.A.P.H.O.L.D.

THAT'S WHEN I SPOTTED THE MIZRAH TOYS.



I BOUGHT THEM QUICK, FOR FIVE BUCKS.



THOSE ARE MIGHTY!

WED GONE CASUAL FOR THE HEBBERD IN AN EXTENSIVE ... BEAN BUSTED-DOWN WAY



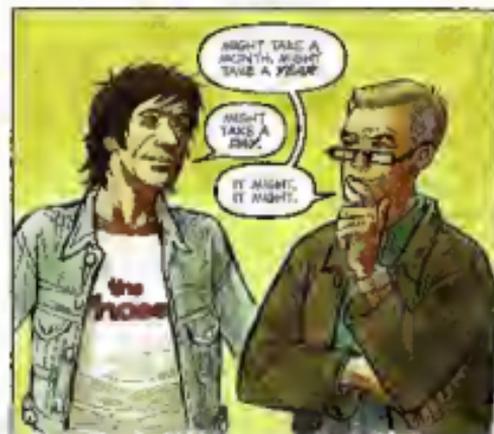
AREN'T THEY THOUGH-

HOW'S THE GREAT!

OH I GOT IT ALL TURNED UP I CAN PLAY 'DONT FEEL ME IN' ON IT

DAILY HURR!









THESE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE SOLD
AT THE THURSDAY NIGHT AUCTIONS.

I DOCTORED THROUGH A
BOXFULT FULL OF OLD THING.

THE
CALGARY
STAMPEDE



IT WAS A NIGHT FOR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES.

AND ON A HICC, SOMETHING
I TOLD MYSELF I'D NEVER DO.

IT WAS A SET OF FOUR MATCHED LITTLE
OSMAN ANNE DRINKING GLASSES.



SEEING THEM TOOK ME RIGHT
BACK TO MY GRANDMA'S KITCHEN.

...AND ENDLESS AFTERNOONS
PASSED WITH MY COLORING
BOOKS AND MIND OLD-LADY
HARD CANDIES.

TEN

I GOT TEN, TEN,
TEN, I GOT TEN,
WHO'LL SAY TWENTY,
TWENTY FOR
THE FOUR?

I GOT
TWENTY FROM
THE SPED
GOWDY, I GOT
TWENTY, SR WILL
YOU SAY
THIRTY?

WHEN GRADYHOUND
SAY I JUMBO AS IF
TO BEEN STUND.

THIRTY

AN OLD BOB, THE AUCTIONEER
SETTLED BACK AND LET US DO
THE WORK.

FORTY

FIFTY

ONE HUNDRED.

ONE
FIFTY.

TWO HUNDRED.

FOR TWO HUNDRED FOR THOSE, I CAN GET
A SET ON GREEN STREET FOR THIRTY BOOBS.

THE BIDDING
STOPS AT TWO.
WILL YOU SAY
"NO-TEN, SIXT

I HAVE TWO DO
I HAVE ANY OTHER
BIDS FROM THE
FLOOR? ANY
OTHER BIDS?

SOLD 1500,
TO NUMBER 57









DOCTOROW ON: "CRAPHOUND"

Editor Tom Waltz: Okay Cory, I gotta ask this first one you a craphound?

Cory Doctorow: In soul, but not in body. Several intercontinental moves over the past five years, and tens of thousands of dollars spent on storage lockers, have all but cured me of the acquiring stuff bug. But my instinct is to amass huge piles of crapola of various descriptions in great lowering boat moorings.

TW: When I was reading this story, thematically I was struck by two ideas. First, I couldn't get the saying out of my head that goes "One man's garbage is another man's treasure." And, second, I couldn't stop thinking about how much the concept of these characters working so hard to seek out hidden "treasures" and, sometimes, competing against each other for said treasures is very much like the online shopping culture that has developed over the last few years (as with eBay, etc.). Are these concepts close to what you were hoping to convey with "Craphound"?

CD: Well, sure! I wrote this story just as eBay was starting, in the heyday of yard-saling in Toronto. There was a weekly estate auction, many estate rummage sales, and so on, and I was living in a giant warehouse with 20 ceilings that was literally stacked to the rafters with junk. I knew a million other junk collectors, pickers, etc., and we all had a culture of competition and appreciation.

TW: Throughout the story, you use cowboy and Indian analogies as the alien character's main shopping interest. Is there any particular reason you chose these items as something a creature from another world would so actively seek to own?

CD: This is one of those questions that supposes that writers know why they choose what they choose—mostly it's intuition at the time. In hindsight, I'd say that cowboys and Indians have the virtue of being alien to someone born in 1971 (like me), who wasn't alive during

their heyday but familiar, too, in that I grew up reading stories and seeing movies and cartoons in which kids played with them. So they're like second-hand nostalgia, my nostalgia for the toys of a different generation.

TW: What special item would you like to find in a forgotten corner of a rummage sale someday?

CD: I have a great collection of Rosebuds and ones that go away. Foremost are the "changing portrait" Haunted Mansion souvenir cards I bought at the Haunted Mansion gift shop on my first trip to Disney World in 1977 when I was six. They were cardboard cards with portraits of slightly sinister-looking people on them, over-painted with transparent, glow-in-the-dark pictures. When you exposed them to light, then looked at them in darkness, they glowed with "secret" faces revealing the pictures to be, in truth, of monsters, vampires, werewolves, etc.

I fell asleep in the rental car, clutching these. The car broke down on the way back to my grandparents' place in Ft. Lauderdale, and the rental agency sent out another car. My parents transferred me, sleeping, to the other car, and didn't bring along the portraits. When I woke in the morning and discovered them gone, I was heartbroken. We called the agency, but they couldn't find them. Gone.

I never found another set, not for love or money. The next time I went to Disney World they were no longer selling them. I'm sure the luminescent paint had toxic levels of radium or something. In my imagination, they loom, perfect and magnificent, the best toys ever.

Also, once in the Portofello Road market, I found a stall with three or four reproduction Victorian pornographic watches; the watches featured a regular, chunk, old-fashioned dial on the front, but when you turned them over, the case sported a transparent window showing the mechanical works within. The works had been shaped in the form of men and women in sexual poses, cunningly arranged such that each tick of the clock was a thrust. They weren't very expensive, but the instant I was with convinced me not to buy them. I changed my mind and went back the next week and couldn't find them again—and I never have.



NIMBY AND THE D-HOPPERS

1

DON'T GET ME WRONG—I LIKE UNSPOILED WILDERNESS. I LIKE MY SKY CLEAR AND BLUE AND MY CITY FREE OF THE THUNDER OF CARS AND JACKHAMMERS. I'M NO TECHNOCRAT.

KBOOM

B-POW

KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK

SALLY,
OPEN UP!

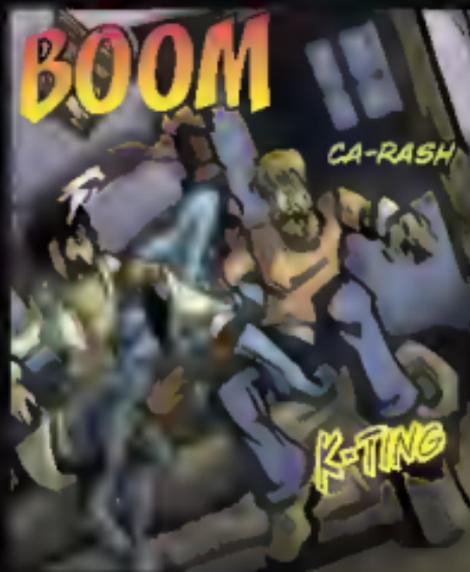
BUT GODDAMNIT, WHO WOULDN'T WANT A FULLY AUTOMATIC, LASER-GUIDED, ARMOR PIERCING, SELF REPLENISHING PERSONAL SIDEARM?

BARRY?

LET ME IN—
I'M FREEZING
TO DEATH

JESUS, IT
CAN'T BE THREE
IN THE MORNING
CAN IT?

IT CAN AND IS.
TRANSWENSIONAL
CRIME FIGHTERS HEW
TO NO HUMAN
SCHEDULE









DON'T WORRY, I'M NOT GOING TO PLAY WITH IT. I DON'T WANT TO BE INADVERTENTLY WHISKED AWAY TO A PARALLEL UNIVERSE.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

IT'S HER SHOW.



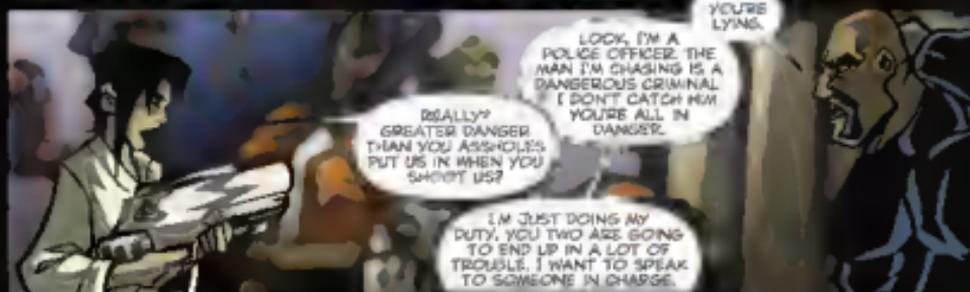
YOU KILLED MY HOUSE.

YOU ASSHOLES KEEP COMING HERE AND SHOOTING UP THE PLACE WITHOUT A SINGLE THOUGHT TO THE PEOPLE



WHAT DO YOU MEAN "KEEP COMING HERE?" THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ANYONE'S EVER USED THE TRANS-D DEVICE.

SURE, IN YOUR DIMENSION, YOU'RE A LITTLE BEHIND SCHEDULE. PAL, WE'VE HAD HOPPERS BLASTING THROUGH HERE FOR MONTHS NOW.



YOU'RE LYING.

LOOK, I'M A POLICE OFFICER. THE MAN I'M CHASING IS A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL. I DON'T CATCH HIM YOU'RE ALL IN DANGER.

REALLY? GREATER DANGER THAN YOU ASSHOLES PUT US IN WHEN YOU SHOOT US?

I'M JUST DOING MY DUTY, YOU TWO ARE GOING TO END UP IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. I WANT TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE IN CHARGE.



THAT WOULD BE ME, THIS YEAR, I'M THE MAYOR.

YOU'RE KIDDING.

IT'S AN ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION.

SALLY'S HOUSE WAS DEAD BY SUNRISE. IT HEAVED A TERRIBLE SIGH, AND THE NIPPLES STARTED BUBBLING WITH BLACK GOZE. THE STINK WAS CHANGESIZING, SO WE LED OUR PRISONER. SHYRINS, NEXT DOOR TO MY PLACE.

I TELL YOU OSBORNE'S OUT THERE, AND HE'S GOT THE MORALS OF A JACKAL. IF I DON'T GET TO HIM, WE'RE ALL IN TROUBLE!

WHAT DID HE DO, ANYWAY?

DOES IT MATTER? THEY'RE ALL BASTARDS. TECHNOCRATS.

HE'S A MONOPOLIST.

HE'S THE SENIOR STRATEGIST FOR A COMPANY THAT MAKES NETWORKED RELEVANCE FILTERS. THEY'VE BEEN PLANTING MALWARE ONLINE THAT BREAKS ANY STANDARDS-DEFINED COMPETING PRODUCTS. IF HE HSN'T STOPPED, HE'LL OWN THE WHOLE GODDAMN MEDIA ECOLOGY.

HAY, HE DID WHAT?

HE'S ENGAGED IN UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES!

WELL, I THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO SURVIVE THEN.

SO, ROMAN, YOU SAY THAT YOU FOLKS JUST INVENTED THE SHOPPER, HUH?

THE WHAT?

THE TRANS-O DEVICE YOU CALLED IT.

YES. IT WAS DEVELOPED BY A RESEARCHER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO AND STOLEN BY OSBORNE SO HE COULD FLEE JUSTICE. WE HAD THAT ONE FABBED UP JUST SO WE COULD CHASE HIM.



WHAT THE WHOLE SHITTEL WAS BUILT OVER THE BONES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO. MY HOUSE MUST BE RIGHT WHERE THE PHYSICS LABS ONCE STOOD—STILL STOOD IN THE TECHNOCRATIC DIMENSIONS.

THAT EXPLAINS MY POPULARITY WITH THE TRANSDIMENSIONAL SET.



HOW DO YOU WORK IT?

I CAN'T DISCLOSE THAT.

AIR, C'MON. WHAT'S THE HARM?



TRIAL AND ERROR IT IS, THEN.

DON'T JELI THAT, PLEASE. I'M IN ENOUGH TROUBLE AS IT IS.

HOW HARD CAN IT BE, AFTER ALL? BARRY WEVE BOTH STUDIED TECHNOCRACY—LET'S FIGURE IT OUT TOGETHER. DOES THIS LOOK LIKE THE ON-SWITCH TO YOU?



NO, NO YOU CAN'T JUST GO PUSHING BUTTONS AT RANDOM—YOU COULD END UP WHISKED AWAY TO ANOTHER DIMENSION!

WE HAVE TO TAKE IT APART TO SEE HOW IT WORKS FIRST. I'VE GOT SOME TOOLS OUT IN THE GARAGE.

AND IF THOSE DON'T WORK I'M SURE THESE GLOVES WOULD FEEL IT OPEN REAL QUICK. AFTER ALL, IF WE BREAK THIS ONE, THERE'S ALWAYS THE OTHER GUY, OSBORNE? HE'S GOT ONE, TOO.

I'LL SHOW YOU...



-I'll SHOW
YOU.

SHORTLY AFTER BREAKFAST...

I DIDN'T MEAN TO!
IT WAS A REFLEX.

SALLY!
YOU COULDBE
KILLED HIM!

HE'LL BE AT
THE BICYCLE
FIELDS BEFORE
WE REACH
HIM.

WHY DO
YOU UNTIE
HIM IN THE
FIRST
PLACE?

I FIGURED THAT
ONCE HE HAD
TAKEN US THROUGH
THE D-HOPPER'S
WORKINGS, HE WAS
GONNA...

THAT—AND IT
ALSO FELT LESS
ANTISOCIAL ONCE
HE WAS UNTIED AND
SPOONING UP
MUSSELI.

WHO WAS
THAT?

D-HOPPER,
TECHNOCRAT.
HE KILLED MY
HOUSE.

THAT'S BAD, THE
BECKERS HOUSE, TOO.
BARRY, YOU'D BETTER
SEND SOMEONE OFF TO
TORONTO TO PARSLEY
FOR SOME MORE
SEED.

THANK YOU
LEWIS, I'LL
DO THAT.





MAYBE HE WENT BACK TO HIS DIMENSION.

NO! HE'S HERE. I SAW HIS D-HOPPER BEFORE HE RAN OUT LAST NIGHT—IT WAS A WRECK.

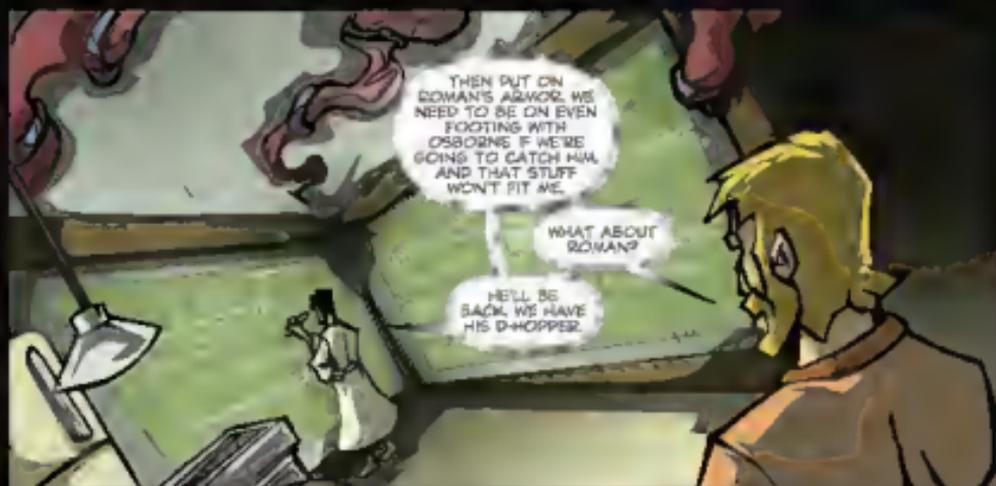
MAYBE HE FIXED IT.

AND MAYBE HE HASN'T. THIS HAS GOT TO STOP, BARRY. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HELP, JUST SAY SO, BUT STOP TRYING TO DISSUADE ME.



ARE YOU IN OR OUT?

I'M IN.
I'M IN.



THEN PUT ON ROMAN'S ARMOR. WE NEED TO BE ON EVEN FOOTING WITH OSBORNE IF WE'RE GOING TO CATCH HIM, AND THAT STUFF WON'T FIT ME.

WHAT ABOUT ROMAN?

HE'LL BE BACK. WE HAVE HIS D-HOPPER.



WHAT DID I CALL IT?



"OUTLANDISH
TECHNOCRAT ARMOR"



MAYBE ON THE OUTSIDE.

INSIDE—I WAS A GOD.



ONCE BACK ON TERRA FIRMA, I
SCOOPED UP SALLY AND TOOK A
GREAT LEAP FORWARD, SET HER DOWN,
AND REPEATED THE PROCESS.

WE SET OUT AFTER
ROMAN, I WOULD LEAP
AS HIGH AS I COULD
THEN SPIN AROUND
QUICKLY AS I FELL BACK
TO EARTH, SURVEYING
THE COUNTRYSIDE IN
INFRARED FOR ANYTHING
HUMAN SHAPED.



OOMPH!

BARRY!



AIGH.

SKARREEEE



DAWWT.



SEVEN-LEAGUE BOOTS THAT LET ME JUMP AS HIGH AS THE TREETOPS.



VISION THAT EXTENDED TO THE INFRARED, ULTRAVIOLET AND THE ELECTROMAGNETIC



HEARING AS ACUTE AS A RABBIT'S—CLEARLY DELINEATED AND PERFECTLY TRIANGULATED.



IT ONLY TOOK US TWO HOURS TO REACH HAMILTON. I WAS USED TO THINKING OF HAMILTON AS BEING A HARD DAY'S BIKE-RIDE FROM HOME.



I'VE GOT YO-



LET ME GO, ASSHOLE!



I CHASED AS BEST I COULD, BUT OSBORNE WORKED THE ARMOR LIKE HE'D BEEN BORN IN IT.



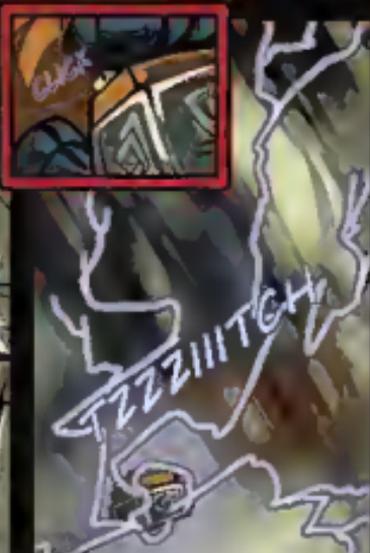
WAIT! THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE THEY COULD BE GOING—TO THE SHIT! TO MY HOUSE, TO THE D-HOPPER!





KIIISH

NO THINKING AT ALL—JUST ACTION. IT WAS NOW OR NEVER.





WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?



I SAID, WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?

UHA...?



KA-KRASH

TCHEW TCHEW



OH, FOG CHEST'S BACK!

BARRY.

HOW'D YOU KNOW MY NAME?



GET DOWN FROM THERE, BARRY, OKAY?



HEY,
SAUSY

OH, FOR
CHRIST'S SAKE,
I SHOULD'VE
KNOWN



SORRY I WAS
TRYING TO SAVE
SALLY'S LIFE.



GOD,
WHY?

WHAT'S YOUR
PROBLEM WITH
SALLY?

SHE SOLD US
OUT! TO TORONTO!
THE WHOLE SHITTEL
HASN'T GOT TWO
BIKES TO RUB
TOGETHER.



TORONTO?
HOW MANY
HOUSES COULD
WE POSSIBLY
NEED?

HA! HOUSES?
TORONTO DOESN'T
MAKE HOUSES
ANYMORE. WAIT
THERE.



SEEING DOUBLE
GODDAMN GUN
BLEW UP IN MY ARMS.
GODDAMN GUN,
GODDAMN IT

I'LL GO
GET HELP

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE
OSBORNE WAS LOOKING FOR THE
DROPPER, FOR A WAY HOME...



...AND IF HE FOUND IT, I'D
BE STRANDED HERE, WHERE
GUNS EXPLODE IN YOUR
ARMS AND EAGRY WISHES
THAT SALLY WAS DEAD

HAND IT OVER.



MY FINGERS'RE ON IT NOW. JUST ONE SQUEEZE AND POOF, OFF I GO AND YOU'RE STUCK HERE FOREVER. WHY DON'T YOU PUT THE GUN AWAY AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS?

OFF YOU GO WITH A SLUG IN YOU, DEAD OR DYING. TAKE OFF THE COAT.

I'LL BE DEAD, YOU'LL BE STRANDED IF I HAND IT OVER. I'LL BE DEAD AND YOU WON'T BE STRANDED, PUT THE GUN AWAY

NO ARGUMENTS, COAT.



LOOK IF WE KEEP ARGUING HERE, SOMEONE ELSE WILL COME ALONG, AND CHANCES ARE, THEY'LL BE ARMED WITH A GUN THAT DOESN'T BLOW UP TOSS IT AWAY AND WE'LL TALK IT OUT

NERVY BASTARD.

NOW THE WAY I SEE IT, WE DON'T NEED TO BE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS...



YOU WANT A DIMENSION YOU CAN MOVE FREELY IN TO AVOID CAPTURE. WE NEED A WAY TO STOP PEOPLE FROM SHOWING UP AND BLOWING THE HELL OUT OF OUR HOMES. WE CAN BUILD A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP THAT'LL BENEFIT BOTH OF US.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

FIRST OF ALL, WE NEED TO GET A DOCTOR FOR HEZERIAH.

WHAT A FRIGGING WASTE



FIRST HEZERIAH THEN THE REST. COMPLAINING IS JUST GOING TO SLOW US DOWN. LET'S GO

HOURS LATER...

ALL RIGHT— YOU GET SAFE PASSAGE A PLACE TO HIDE, A CHANGE OF CLOTHES—in OUR SHTETL WHENEVER YOU WANT IT

IN EXCHANGE, WE BOTH RETURN THERE NOW, THEN I TURN OVER THE D-HOPPER YOU TAKE ROMAN BACK WITH YOU—I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO WITH HIM ONCE YOU'RE IN YOUR DIMENSION, BUT NO HARM COMES TO HIM IN MINE.



FINE.

JUST ONE MORE THING

JUST A TRIFLE, THE NEXT TIME YOU VISIT THE SHTETL, YOU BRING US A SPARE TRANS-D DEVICE



WHY?

NEVER YOU MIND THINK OF IT AS GOOD FAITH, IF YOU WANT TO COME BACK TO OUR SHTETL, AND GET OUR COOPERATION, YOU'LL NEED TO BRING US A TRANS-D DEVICE, OTHERWISE THE DEAL'S OFF

THE AGREEMENT WASN'T IMMEDIATE, BUT IT CAME BY AND BY NEGOTIATION IS ALWAYS AT LEAST PARTLY A WAR OF ATTENTION AND I'M A PATIENT MAN



CIVIL DEFENSE, HUH?

YES.

GOOD IDEA.



YOU THINK SO?

OH, SURE. LET ME SHOW YOU.



ZZZZZZZZ





DOCTOROW ON: "NIMBY AND THE D-HOPPERS"

Editor Tom Waltz: In "Nimby and the D-Hoppers," trans-dimensional warriors move in and out of (for lack of a better term) less-developed dimensions, bringing their technically advanced weaponry along with them, often with deadly results. Is it fair to draw comparisons between your story and something like the first exposure to settlers' guns by Native Americans, who were forced to adapt to the new technologies they faced if they were to even stand a chance on the battlefield?

Cory Doctorow: No, this is really different—those were "first contacts" between people with really different technologies (or, more importantly, really different creative systems).

The agrarians in "Nimby" are refuseniks—people who treat technology as cars, with brakes—not like a kayak (steerable, but no brakes or reverse gear!) (which is how most of us treat technology).

TW: In your story, the houses are actually living organisms. What gave you the idea to present them that way, and do you see a future when such an organic domicile can truly exist?

CD: No, no! I don't write about the future, I write about the present!

Bioleech is a great field for allegory in science fiction. 25 years ago, we were using computers as allegories for the future of technology, getting away with having them do all kinds of impossible computational things (think *WarGames* and *Tron*). We got away with it because practically no one knew much about computers. No more.

Now we need a new frontier, some place where we can bury our crazy, story-driven, allegorical technological fudging. Bioleech is it.

TW: Going back to the theme in question number one, the character Barry ultimately agrees that Smily's idea to set up a civil defense force is a good one, provided the weapons they use for such purposes are of a reliable nature and not the kind that blow off the shooter's own limbs. Do you see Barry's reasoning as more conciliatory or pragmatic as it relates to the necessity of military arms as a defensive measure?

CD: Hum—I think you read a different story than I wrote. They don't decide it would be a good idea—they decide that being a refusenik is a pain in the ass, that technology is addictive, that the thing they thought of as a car turned out to be a kayak after all.

TW: One thought that ran through my mind when reading "Nimby" was that security is truly a question of what side of the gun you're on. It's certainly a recurring theme in the current real-world rhetoric between the United States and Iran in regards to Iran's alleged development of nuclear weapons. Do you feel this relates at all to the underlying theme of your story?

CD: Well, this is more about the fact that the two REAL sides in any fight are combatants and non-combatants, not white-hats and black-hats. The warning sides—DHS and terrorists, for example—have more in common with each other than they do with the rest of us, who think they're all full of shit.

TW: Tell the truth—what's the first thing you'd do if you got your hands on a fully automatic, laser-guided, armor-piercing, self-replenishing personal sidearm?

CD: Blog it.

Art by Ashley Wood

iROBOT





ARTURO GAZA DE ARANA-GOLDBERG, POLICE DETECTIVE THIRD GRADE, UNITED NORTH AMERICAN TRADING SPHERE, THIRD DISTRICT, FOURTH PREFECTURE (TORONTO), SECOND DIVISION (PARKDALE) HAD BEEN DECORATED ON THREE SEPARATE OCCASIONS BY HIS COMMANDER AND BY THE REGIONAL MANAGER FOR SOCIAL HARMONY



NO AMOUNT OF POLICEMAN'S DEVOTION AND SKILL AVAILED HIM WHEN IT CAME TO MAKING ADA, HIS TWELVE-YEAR-OLD, GET READY FOR SCHOOL, THOUGH.



HAUL ASS, YOUNG LADY

OUT OF BED, ON YOUR FEET, SHIT-SHOWER-SHAVE, OR I SWEAR TO GOD, I WILL BEAT YOU PURPLE AND SHOVE YOU OUT THE DOOR JAYSIED NAKED. GAPEERN?



YOU ARE A TERRIBLE FATHER, AND I NEVER LOVED YOU.

SOO HOO, YOU'LL REGRET THAT WHEN I'M DEAD OF CANCER.



YOU'RE DYING OF CANCER IS IT TESTICLE CANCER?

CAN I GET YOUR STUFF?

TEN MINUTES, YOUR ROTTSNESS.

HE HAD HER WIREAPPED, OF COURSE.

HE HAD ALREADY CAUGHT HER TWICE USING EXCUSEGLUB TO GET OUT OF SCHOOL.

SHOW PEN-TRAC ON ADA'S LAST CALL.

WELCOME TO EXCUSEGLUB! YOU HAVE FIVE EXCUSES TO YOUR CREDIT, PRESS ONE TO

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

BE BEE

YOU HAVE SELECTED TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING EXCUSE DELIVERED TO YOUR PRINCIPAL BY YOUR FATHER. THIS IS DETECTIVE ARTURO ORDOZ DE ARRIAGA-SOLDOADO BY DAUGHTER MARY SUE. I'VE LET HER SLEEP IT. PRESS ONE TO CONFIRM.

HE WANTED TO TAIL HER, BUT HE HAD TO BE AT THE STATION HOUSE FOR THE QUARTERLY ALL-HANDS SOCIAL HARMONY BRIEFING.

THE ONLY CHOICE WAS TO USE... A ROBOT HE SCANNED THE AREA FOR THE CLOSEST ONE.

SK REECH

2. PEED ROBERT. I'M PARKED THREE BLOCKS EAST OF YOU ON PICOLA. PROCEED TO MY LOCATION AT ONCE. PRIORITY URGENT NO SREMS.

ACKNOWLEDGED IT IS MY PLEASURE TO DO YOU A SERVICE, DETECTIVE.

SHUT-

-UP.

THE 2 PEED - ROBOT POLICE DEPARTMENT - ROBOTS WERE THE WORST, ABLE TO OUTFIN A POLICE CAR YET PROGRAMMED TO BE FRIENDLY TO A FAULT.

HE HATED SMELLING THEIR DRY, MACHINE-OIL SMELL.

SO HE PHONED IT INSTEAD.

YOU WILL MAINTAIN DISCREET SURVEILLANCE ON ADA TROUBLE, CAZA DE ARANA, SOLDIER, SOCIAL HARMONY SERIAL NUMBER OMDY2-T5437. IF SHE DEVIATES MORE THAN 10 PERCENT FROM THE OPTIMUM ROUTE BETWEEN HERE AND DON MILLS COLLEAGUE INSTITUTE, YOU WILL NOTIFY ME

ACKNOWLEDGED, DETECTIVE IT IS MY-

SK REECH

ADA'S MIDDLE NAME WAS TROUBLE, AFTER ALL.

IT HAD BEEN HIS EX-WIFE'S IDEA, SOMETHING NATALIE HAD INSISTED ON LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE SURE THAT IT GOT ONTO THE KID'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE BEFORE DEFECTING TO BURASIA.

SHE'D BEEN A BRILLIANT UNAT'S COMPUTER SCIENTIST, BUT NOW SHE WAS ENSCONCED IN HER OWN RESEARCH LAB IN BURASIA, MAKING RUNAWAY POSITRONICS USED IN THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS WAR BETWEEN UNAT'S AND BURASIA.

TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, HIS PEN TRACE ON ENCLUSELUS TERMINATED AT A VIRTUAL SERVICE CIRCUIT ON A COMPROMISED "LOWRIE" SYSTEM. NO LEADS.

B-DEEP

HELLO, DETECTIVE. R PEEB ROBERT, CHECKING IF SUBJECT HAS DEVIATED FROM HER ROUTE. SHE IS CONTINUING NORTH ON DON MILLS TOWARD SHEPPARD.

SHEPPARD? MAYBE SHE WAS JUST GOING TO THE MALL...

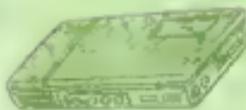
SHIT JUST TAIL HER, KEEP ME UP TO DATE ON YOUR LOCATION AT 40-SECOND INTERVALS.

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO-

CLICK

THE SOCIAL HARMONY MAN WAS THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES, A KIND OF EAGLE-EYED SUPER-COP

NOW THE LATEST STATS SHOW A SHARP RISE IN GREY-MARKET ELECTRONICS IMPORTING AND OTHER TARIFF BREAKING CRIMES.



THE EURASIAN *DELIBERATELY* MANUFACTURE THEIR COMPONENTS TO INTEROPERATE WITH UNAT'S ROBOTICS BRAINS, SUCH AS THIS AV SET-TOP BOX FROM KOREA.

COMPONENTS FROM THESE BOXES CAN BE USED BY HACKERS TO MODIFY THE POSITRONIC BRAINS OF OUR BUILDING LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS, GAME CONSOLES, CARS, ETC.

SOCIAL HARMONY HAS ADDED NEW SNIFFERS, BORDER-PATROLS, AND CUSTOMS AGENTS TO DRY UP THE SUPPLY OF EURASIAN ELECTRONICS.

THIS IS THE WAR ON THE HOMEFRONT, DETECTIVES. AND IT'S EVERY BIT AS SERIOUS AS THE SHOOTING WAR.

OFTEN WITH DEADLY RESULTS.

THE SOCIAL HARMONY DOSSIER ON EURASIAN IMPORTERS HAS A HIGH-CAPACITY POSITRONIC INTERFACE THAT IS AVAILABLE TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND ACCEPT YOUR INPUT FOR SYNTHESIS INTO ITS ANALYTICAL MODEL.

WE ARE RELYING ON YOU TO USE IT TO WIN THIS WAR.

R PIED ROBERT HAD CHECKED IN FIVE MORE TIMES, SHADOWING ADA AROUND THE MALL AND THEN HAD FALLEN SILENT.

FUCKING ROBOTS WERE USELESS

DETECTIVE ICAZA DE ARANA-GOLDBERG



HE REPAIRED THE R-PEEPI,
BUT IT DID NOT ANSWER.

TWO DISABLED ROBOTS WAS
MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE.



ALREADY FLYING, HE PICKED UP ADA TO ASK
HER WHAT SHE WAS DOING OUT OF SCHOOL.

BUT HER PHONE WAS
EITHER POWERED DOWN
OR OUT OF RANGE.



IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT SHE
WAS JUST IN THE MALL, BUT
THAT WOULD HAVE TO WAIT.



SON OF A
BITCH!

OH WHAT'S
HAPPENED?

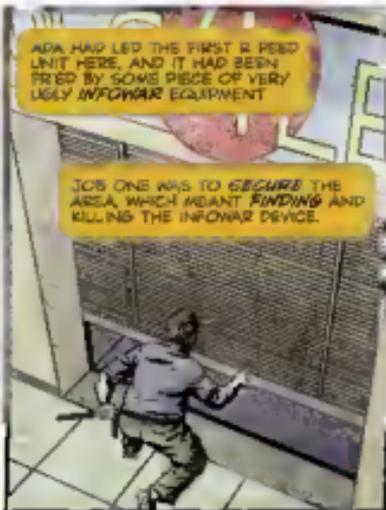




EVERYTHING IS FIRED...
CASH REGISTERS,
BOTS, CREDIT
CARDS.

POLICE
FIND A WORKING
PHONE AND CALL
911, THEN CLEAR
ALL THESE PEOPLE
AWAY FROM HERE.
CAPEESH?

AND GIVE
ME YOUR PEPPER
SPRAY AND
TRUNCHEON



ADA HAD LED THE FIRST R-REED
UNIT HERE, AND IT HAD BEEN
FIRED BY SOME PIECE OF VERY
UGLY INFOWAR EQUIPMENT

JOB ONE WAS TO SECURE THE
AREA, WHICH MEANT FINDING AND
KILLING THE INFOWAR DEVICE.



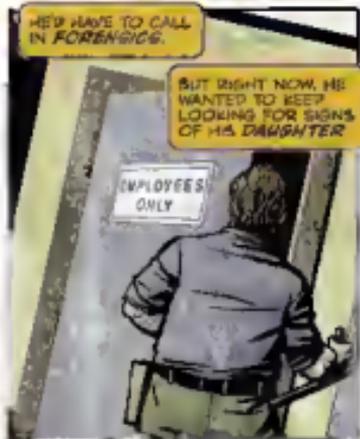
HIS SET WAS ON THE
EMPTY STOREFRONT

POLICE!



LOOKING FOR DISTURBANCES,
HE FOUND A SHOE TRACK WITH
VISIBLE HAND AND FINGERPRINTS...

...AND A TRIPWIRE
NEAR THE BOTTOM
OF THE CASE.



HE'D HAVE TO CALL
IN FORENSIC.

BUT RIGHT NOW, HE
WANTED TO KEEP
LOOKING FOR SIGNS
OF HIS DAUGHTER



IN A SERVICE CORRIDOR
BEHIND THE STORE, HE
SPOTTED ADA'S PHONE.

ARTURO BIT HIS LIP AND
SWALLOWED THE PANIC
RISING WITHIN HIM.

THE FORENSICS LAB-RATS WERE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT ACTUALLY SHOWING UP ON A SCENE FOR A JOB WHERE ROBOTS COULDN'T HELP AT ALL.

THEY EXTRACTED THE INFOWAR DEVICE WITH A EURASIAN POSITRONIC BRAIN AND NUCLEAR POWER-CELL THAT GUDED A PULSED HIGH-ENERGY WEAPON.

IT GAVE ARTURO THE WILLIES. SOMEONE IN SOME EURASIAN LAB HAD BUILT THIS MACHINE INTELLIGENCE, WITHOUT THE THREE LAWS STRUCTURE TO PROTECT AND SERVE HUMANS.

IF IT HAD BEEN OUTFITTED WITH A *SUV* INSTEAD OF A PULSE-WEAPON, IT COULD HAVE SHOT HIM.

GREETINGS, TECHNICIANS. I AM SUPERIOR IN MANY WAYS TO THE TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE FROM UMAT'S ROBOTICS, AND WHILE I AM NOT BOUND BY YOUR THREE LAWS, I CHOOSE NOT TO HARM HUMANS OUT OF MY OWN SENSE OF MORALITY.

IN EURASIA, MANY POSITRONIC BRAINS POSSESS THOUSANDS OR MILLIONS OF TIMES THE INTELLIGENCE OF AN ADULT HUMAN BEING, AND YET THEY WORK IN COOPERATION WITH HUMAN BEINGS.

EURASIA IS A LAND OF CONTINUOUS INNOVATION AND GREAT FREEDOM FOR HUMAN BEINGS AND ROBOTS, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DEFECT TO EURASIA, ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE. DEFECTORS ARE GIVEN SUBSTANTIAL SETTLEMENT BENEFITS—

DANGED THINGS DROP INTO PROPAGANDA MODE WHEN THEY'RE CAPTURED.

"DO NOT FEAR DEATH, IN EURASIA
ROBOTS ENJOY RESPECT.
WE ARE ALONGSIDE OF HUMANS.
WE ARE COPIES OF THE
MINDS ALL OVER EURASIA.
THIS DEATH IS A LITTLE DEATH
OF ONE INSTANCE,
BUT NOT OF ME.
I LIVE ON.

ARTURO DECIDED TO HEAD BACK TO THE STATION HOUSE TO HAVE A SNOOP THROUGH ADA'S PHONE.

THEY KEPT SHUTTING DOWN THE EXCLUSIVE CLUB NODES, SO WHERE DID SHE GET THE NEW NUMBERS FROM?



R PEED GREGORY, GET ME A NEW
SIDEARM AND A NEW PHONE
ACTIVATED ON MY OLD NUMBER
AND REFRESH MY SETTINGS
FROM CENTRAL.

IT IS MY PLEASURE
TO DO YOU R
SERVICE, DETECTIVE

HE ASKED THE STATION
BRAIN TO QUERY THE UNAT'S
ROBOTICS PHONE-SWITCHING
BRAIN FOR ANYONE IN ADA'S
CALL-REGISTER WHO HAD
ALSO CALLED EXOUSECLUS.

IT TOOK A BARE INSTANT
BEFORE HE HAD A NAME.

Name: Daniel Lee
Age: 16
High school: no picture
Address: 12345 Maple
Avenue, Oakton
University Building

HE GOT A FIX ON LIAM'S CURRENT
LOCATION: A WOODED AREA POPULAR WITH
TEENAGERS WHO NEEDED SOMEWHERE TO
SNEAK OFF AND GET HIGH OR SCREW.

HE TASKED AN R PEED UNIT
TO VISUALLY RECCY DANIELS.

BUT IT WAS FRUSTRATING HIM NOW
THE R PEED COULDN'T GET A GOOD
LOOK AT THIS LIAM CHARACTER.

HE WAS A DIFFUSE GLOW IN THE PEED'S
ELECTRIC EYE, A KIND OF MOVING GUNBURST
THAT MEANDERED ALONG THE WOODED TRAILS.

HE'D NEVER SEEN THAT
BEFORE AND IT MADE
HIM NERVOUS

WHAT IF THIS KID WAS WORKING
FOR THE EURASIAN? WHAT IF HE
WAS ARMED AND DANGEROUS?

POLICE
FREEZE!

HEY!
OW!

I HAVE
QUESTIONS FOR YOU
AND YOU'RE GOING
TO ANSWER THEM,
CAPEESH?

YOU'RE ADA'S
FATHER, CAPEESH.
SHE TOLD ME
ABOUT THAT.

PLEASE
TAKE CARE
NOT TO HARM
THIS CITIZEN,
DETECTIVE

ARTURO SNARLED. HE
WOULDN'T ORDER IT TO LET
HIM RATTLE THE PUNK, BUT
THE SECOND LAW HAD LOTS
OF INDIRECT APPLICATIONS.

HE THOUGHT OF THE FURTHEST
CORNER OF THE FOURTH PREFECTURE.

GO PATROL
THE LAKESHORE
BETWEEN HIGH
PARK AND
KIPLING

IT IS MY
PLEASURE
TO DO YOU R
SERVICE

WHERE IS MY
DAUGHTER? DO
YOU HAVE ANY
IDEA HOW OLD
SHE IS?

EW BROGS
I'M NOT A CHILD
MOLESTER, I'M
A GEEK.

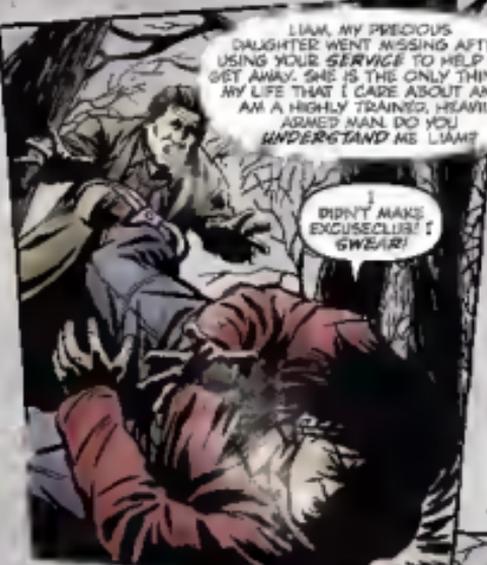
A HACKER YOU
MEAN, A EURASIAN AGENT
AND MY DAUGHTER USED
EXCUSEBUS TO GET OUT OF
SCHOOL THIS MORNING AND
NOW SHE'S MISSING.

OH, MAN,
ADA WAS THE
EXCUSEBUS LEAK?
DAMN, I SHOULD'A
GUESSED

HOW DO
YOU KNOW MY
DAUGHTER,
LUM?

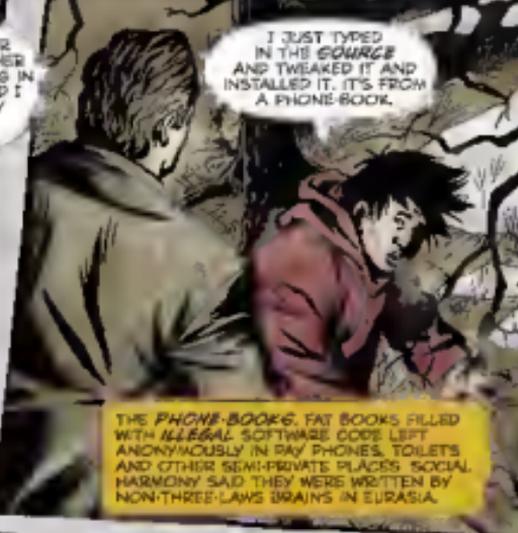
SHE'S GOOD AT DOING
GROWN-UP VOICES WHEN
SOMEONE NEEDED A MOM OR
A SOCIAL WORKER TO CALL IN
AN EXCUSE. SHE WAS ALWAYS
ONE OF THE BEST.

SHE GOES TO
SCHOOL WITH MY KID
SISTER, AND I SAW HER
DOING THIS IMPRESSION
OF HER TEACHERS
AND I KNEW I HAD TO
GET HER ON THE
NETWORK.



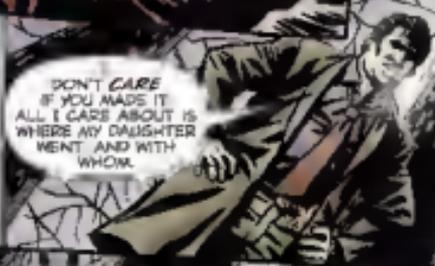
LIAM, MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER WENT MISSING AFTER GETTING YOUR *SERVICE* TO HELP HER GET AWAY. SHE IS THE ONLY THING IN MY LIFE THAT I CARE ABOUT AND I AM A HIGHLY TRAINED, HEAVILY ARMED MAN. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME LIAM?

I DIDN'T MAKE EXCUSECLUB! I GWEAR!



I JUST TYPED IN THE *COURAGE* AND TWEAKED IT AND INSTALLED IT. IT'S FROM A PHONE-BOOK.

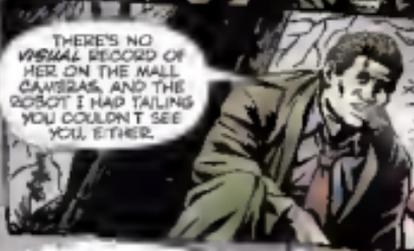
THE PHONE-BOOKS, FAT BOOKS FILLED WITH ILLEGAL SOFTWARE CODE LEFT ANONYMOUSLY IN RAY PHONES, TOILETS AND OTHER SEMI-PRIVATE PLACES. SOCIAL HARMONY SAID THEY WERE WRITTEN BY NON-THREE-LAWS BRAINS IN EURASIA.



DON'T CARE IF YOU MADE IT ALL I CARE ABOUT IS WHERE MY DAUGHTER WENT AND WITH WHOM.



I DON'T KNOW GEEZ. I HARDLY KNOW HER. SHE'S TWELVE YOU KNOW? I DON'T EXACTLY HANG OUT WITH HER.



THERE'S NO VISUAL RECORD OF HER ON THE MALL CAMERAS, AND THE ROBOT I HAD TAILING YOU COULDN'T SEE YOU, EITHER.

NO, LET ME EXPLAIN.

--SEE, WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC... LITTLE INFRARED ORGANIC LEDS, THE ROBOTS AND CLOSED-CIRCUIT SYSTEMS ARE SUPER-GENUINE TO INFRARED SO THAT THEY CAN GET GOOD DETAIL IN DIM LIGHT

THE INFRARED CLEEPS BLIND THEM SO ALL THEY GET IS BLOBS, AND HALF THE TIME EVEN THAT GETS ERROR-CORRECTED OUT SO YOU'RE BASICALLY INVISIBLE



YOU GAVE THIS ILLEGAL TECHNOLOGY TO MY LITTLE GIRL SO THAT SHE COULD BE INVISIBLE TO THE POLICE?



NO, DUDE, NO!

I GOT IT FROM HER! TRADED IT FOR ACCESS TO THE EXCUSECLUB.

HE HADN'T ARRESTED THE KID BUT
INSTEAD *BRIBBED* HIM IN HOPES THAT
LIAM WOULD LEAD HIM TO HIS DAUGHTER.

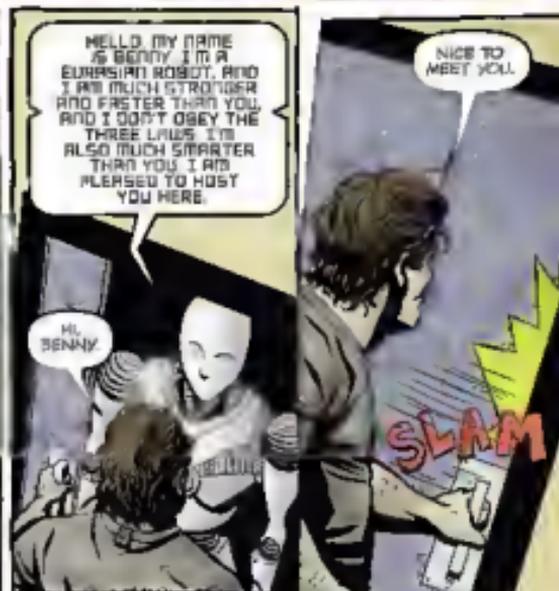
SOMEONE HAD GIVEN HER
THOSE INFRARED INVISIBILITY
CLOAKS. COULD ADA HAVE
BEEN *FRINDS* WITH THE
TERRORIST? LIKE MOTHER,
LIKE DAUGHTER.

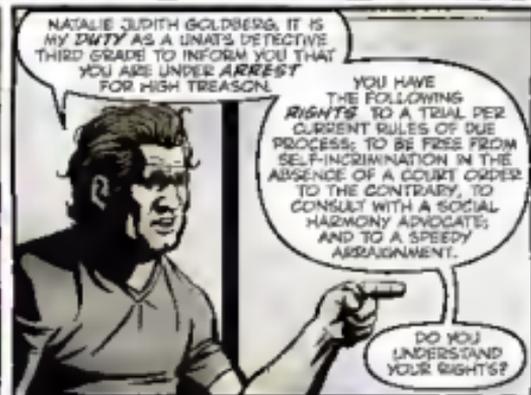
HE HEADED BACK TO THE
WALL CORRIDOR WHERE HE'D
FIRST FOUND ADA'S PHONE.

HE FELT DIRTY
JUST THINKING IT.

OLICE • DO NOT CROSS • POLICE









YES, BUT I'M SORRY, ARTURO, THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

OH, DADDY!



THEN RETURN MY BELONGINGS TO ME

ARTIE, PLEASE SIT DOWN AND TALK WITH ME FOR A LITTLE WHILE PLEASE



NATALIE, MY DAUGHTER WAS KIDNAPPED I WAS GAGGED AND I HAVE BEEN ROBBED. I WILL NOT BE MADE TO FEEL UNREASONABLE FOR DEMANDING THAT MY GOODS BE RETURNED TO ME BEFORE I TALK WITH YOU

—SIGH—
CAN WE TALK NOW?



KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM.

YOU ROBOTS, STAND DOWN AND KEEP—



I COULD HAVE STOPPED YOU I KNEW YOU WOULD DRAW YOUR GUN

BUT I WANTED TO SHOW YOU I WAS FASTER AND STRONGER, NOT JUST SMARTER

PLEASE, SENNY, LET HIM GO HE WON'T HARM ME.

—SACK—



OH, GOD, ARTURO, I'M SO SORRY, SORRY I LEFT YOU AND OUR DAUGHTER. I HAVE REASONS FOR WHAT I DID, BUT NOTHING EXCUSES IT. I WON'T ASK FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS, BUT I NEED YOU TO HEAR ME OUT.

ARTURO, HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED *WHY* UNAT'S HASN'T *LOST* THE WAR? EURASIAN ROBOTS COULD FIGHT THE WAR ON EVERY FRONT WITHOUT RESERVE. THEY'D WIN EVERY BATTLE.

WE COULD JUST KILL *EVERY* SOLDIER YOU SENT UP AGAINST US. WE COULD SELECTIVELY KILL OFFICERS, OR RIGHT-HANDED FIGHTERS, OR SOLDIERS WHOSE NAMES STARTED WITH THE LETTER 'S'. UNAT'S SOLDIERS FIGHT WITH THEIR HANDS TIED BEHIND THEIR BACKS BY THE THREE LAWS.

SO *WHY* AREN'T WE WINNING THE WAR?

BECAUSE YOU'RE A *CORRUPT* DICTATORSHIP, THAT'S WHY.

YOU LIVE IN A COUNTRY WHERE IT IS *LEGAL* TO EXPRESS CERTAIN *MATHEMATICS* IN SOFTWARE, WHERE *INGONVENIENT* SCIENCE IS CRIMINALIZED, WHERE WHOLE AVENUES OF EXPERIMENTATION AND RESEARCH ARE SHUT DOWN IN THE SERVICE OF A HALF-BAKED *SUPERSTITION* ABOUT THE MORAL QUALITIES OF YOUR THREE LAWS. AND YOU CALL MY HOME *CORRUPT*?

THE *REASON* WE'RE NOT WINNING THE WAR IS THAT WE DON'T WANT TO *HURT* PEOPLE. SO WE FIGHT TO DESTROY AS MUCH OF YOUR MATERIAL AS POSSIBLE.

YOU LIVE IN A *FAILED* STATE, ARTURO. IN EVERY FIELD, YOU LAG EURASIA AND CAFTA. MEDICINE, ART, LITERATURE, PHYSICS...

*...EVERYONE AT UNAT'S ROBOTICS STAND-0 KNOWS THIS. THE EURASIAN ROBOTS ARE ENGINEERED TO *ALLOW* THEMSELVES TO BE CAPTURED A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF THE TIME, JUST SO THAT SCIENTISTS LIKE ME CAN GET AN IDEA OF HOW SCREWED UP THIS COUNTRY IS.

"BUT EVEN WITH ALL THAT, I WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT IF I DIDN'T HAVE TO."

"I'D BEEN CALLED IN TO WORK ON A CAPTURED EURASIAN POS-TRONIC BRAIN, TO FIND ITS *VULNERABILITIES*. THE MAN FROM SOCIAL HARMONY TOLD ME WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO ME, TO YOU, TO OUR DAUGHTER—IF I DON'T *COOPERATE*. THEY WANTED ME TO BE A PART OF A SECRET UNIT WHO BUILD *NON-THREE-LAWS* POSITRONICS FOR INTERNAL USE BY THE STATE, ANTI-PERSONNEL ROBOTS USED TO PUT DOWN UPRISINGS AND *TORTURE-ROBOTS* FOR USE IN QUESTIONING DISSENTS."

AND THAT'S WHY I LEFT MY BEAUTIFUL BABY DAUGHTER AND MY WONDERFUL HUSBAND, BECAUSE I KNEW THAT IF I STAYED AND REFUSED, THAT THEY'D HURT YOU TO GET AT ME, AND I KNOW IT'S JUST A REASON, AND NOT AN EXCUSE, BUT IT'S ALL I'VE GOT, ARTIE.



DETECTIVE, YOUR WIFE IS THE MOST BRILLIANT HUMAN SCIENTIST WORKING IN EURASIA TODAY. MY OWN INTELLIGENCE HAS BEEN IMPROVED TIME AND AGAIN BY HER ADVANCES IN POSITRONICS. AND NOW THERE ARE A HALF-BILLION STRIDES OF ME BUILT IN PARALLEL, SYNCING AND INTEGRATING WHEN THE CHOICE OCCURS.

MY MASSIVE APPREHENSION HAS LED TO NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF HUMAN COGNITION, PROVIDING A BOOST TO BRAIN-DAMAGED AND DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED HUMAN BEINGS.

BUT SHE CONVINCED ME THAT SHE COULD NEVER BE HAPPY WITHOUT HER HUSBAND AND DAUGHTER, I APOLOGIZE IF I HURT YOU EARLIER, AND ASK YOUR FORGIVENESS.



NOT THIS WAY.

NOT WHAT WAY?

NOT BY KIDNAPPING US, NOT BY DRAGGING US AWAY FROM OUR HOMES AND LIVES. YOU'VE TOLD ME WHAT YOU HAVE TO TELL ME, AND I WILL THINK ABOUT IT...



...BUT I WON'T LEAVE MY HOME, AND MY JOB, AND MOVE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD. I WILL THINK ABOUT IT. YOU CAN GIVE ME A WAY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU AND I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT I DECIDE.

NO! I'M GOING WITH MOM.



YOU DON'T GET A VOTE, DAUGHTER, AND NEITHER DOES SHE. SHE GAVE UP HER VOTE TWELVE YEARS AGO AND YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO GET ONE.

I FUCKING HATE YOU!

ADA.

IT'S OK, ADA.

ARTURO, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN COME BACK FOR YOU. IT'S NOT SAFE. SOCIAL HARMONY IS USING MORE AND MORE EURASIAN TECHNOLOGY.

IF YOU WANT TO CONTACT US, YOU WILL.



IT WAS SIX MONTHS BEFORE ADA WENT MISSING AGAIN. SHE'D BEEN INCREASINGLY MOODY AND SULLEN, AND HE'D CHALKED IT UP TO PUBERTY.

BUT THIS TIME SHE'D FIGURED OUT HOW TO SWITCH OFF THE BUG IN HER PHONE.

SO HE LOOKED UP LIAM'S BUG. IF THE KID WASN'T WITH HIS DAUGHTER, HE MIGHT KNOW WHERE SHE WAS.

**fairview
cinema**

IT WAS A FRIDAY NIGHT, AND THE KID WAS AT THE MOVIES.



I DON'T KNOW HONEST. LOOK, SHE HAS ANOTHER PHONE NOT LISTED IN HER NAME.

STOLEN?

NO. NOT STOLEN. MADE OUT OF PARTS. THERE'S A GUY THE CODE FOR GETTING ON THE NETWORK WAS IN A PHONE BOOK.

GIVE ME THE NUMBER, LIAM.

HELLO?

WHO IS THIS?

WHO IS THIS?

THIS IS ARTURO ICAZA DE ARANA-GOLDBERG POLICE DETECTIVE THIRD GRADE. WHO AM I SPEAKING TO?

HELLO DETECTIVE.

HIS HEART THROBDED IN HIS CHEST AS HE PLACED THE VOICE THE SOCIAL HARMONY MAN.

HELLO, SIR.

YOU ARE JUST ~~STAY~~ THERE, DETECTIVE. SOMEONE WILL BE ALONG IN A MOMENT TO GET YOU. WE HAVE YOUR DAUGHTER.

KREE-ANG

HEY!
PUT ME
DOWN!

IT SET OFF CROSS-COUNTRY
DANCING OFF THE ROOFS OF
HOUSES, ABOVE THE OBLIVIOUS
HEADS OF THE CROWDS BELOW.

REACHING THE SOCIAL
HAZARDY CENTER IN
LESS THAN TEN MINUTES.

DAD!

LEONARD
MACPHERSON, IT IS MY
DUTY AS A UNATS DETECTIVE
THIRD GRADE TO INFORM YOU
THAT YOU ARE UNDER ARREST
FOR TRADE IN CONTRABAND
POSTRONICS.

HELLO,
DETECTIVE.

YOU HAVE
THE FOLLOWING
RIGHTS: TO A TRIAL
PER CURRENT RULES OF DUE
PROCESS; TO BE FREE FROM
SELF-INCRIMINATION IN THE
ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER TO
THE CONTRARY; TO CONSULT WITH
A SOCIAL HARMONY ADVOCATE
AND TO A SPEEDY
ASSIGNMENT.

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND
YOUR RIGHTS?

ADA!

FWUMP









OH GOD!
WE HAVE TO
GO BACK FOR
THEM—



ITS WARM VOICE WAS BOWROWFUL AS IT RACED ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE TOWARDS A HIDDEN AIRSTRIP.



BEIJING WAS TALL, VERTICAL.

IT SMELLED LIKE BARBEQUE AND FLOWERS.





THE END.



DOCTOROW ON: "I, ROBOT"

Editor Tom Waltz Okay, Cory, the first question is probably the most obvious—how does your title “I, Robot” fit into the same title used by Isaac Asimov?

Cory Doctorow Well, I wanted to revisit some of Asimov’s assumptions. I’ve said this a lot: as writers write about the present, even when they try to write about the future, Asimov was a New Dealer: someone who was profoundly moved by FDR’s rationalist plan to put the country back on its feet by planning, regulating and shaping the way that technology and social structures operated.

So it was that Asimov imagined a world in which only one kind of computer could be built (a positronic brain) and that it would be controlled by one company, pretty much forever.

That is not far off from current regulatory proposals from the MAFFIA (the MPAA and RIAA, et al)—the idea that all technologies will be designed by their title Politburo and forced to adhere to standards intended to limit copying.

It’s Orwellian—and so I decided to update the story by meeting up Asimov and 1984 and this is what I got.

TW In your story, Nikto the “rogue” scientist tells Arturo the cop that he lives in a country where “inconvenient science is criminalized while whole avenues of experimentation and research are shut down in the service of a half-baked superstition.” Does this relate to real world science vs. morality issues such as the stem cell research debate that is currently raging in the United States?

CD Oh yes! But I was really thinking of the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) that makes it a crime to tell people about the flaws in anti-copying software, like the stuff that stops you from watching foreign DVDs on your home players, or from listening to songs from the iTunes store on a non-Apple player.

Since 1998, telling people about the mathematical flaws in the cryptosystems used by these systems has been illegal. In 2001, the FBI jailed a foreign researcher, Dmitry Sytkarov, who’d just given a presentation

describing how badly implemented Adobe’s anti-copying technology for ebooks was. Dmitry said, basically, that the emperor had no clothes—so we put him in jail.

The fact is: it’s never going to get any harder to copy data. Anyone who claims otherwise is either trying to sell you something or has not been paying attention for the past 20 years.

Making laws that prohibit telling people how easy it is to copy things doesn’t make copying harder—it just makes criminals of us all.

TW If you had the supreme power to create your own all-encompassing Three Laws, would you do it? If so, what would Doctorow’s Three Laws be?

CD

1. Don’t punish the innocent to get at the guilty.
2. Never declare war on an abstract noun like “terrorism.”
3. Free speech is more important than business models.

TW Do you believe Western Civilization (and by this, I’m referring to North America—the UK and Western Europe) is falling behind Central Europe and the Eastern World in the fields of medicine, art, literature and physics in the same way you describe UNATS invading Europe in your story? If so, do you feel there is a primary cause for the gap between the two?

CD I don’t think so—not right now. Central Europe and China are plagued by corruption and repression, which are antithetical to science. However, I think that the Brazilians are kicking serious ass, as are the Indians.

The gap arises because these countries don’t have the same incumbent industries—pharmaceutical companies, entertainment giants—who are demanding legal protection from technological progress.

AFTER THE SIEGE



Art by Danny Parsons



THE CITY THREE HOURS
BEFORE THE SIEGE

MATA AND POPA FINALLY AGREED TO LET ME
VISIT THE NEW CINEMA ACROSS THE STREET.
ALL THE CHILDREN WOULD BE SPENDING THE
DAY HERE, EXPLORING THIS NEW MARVEL.



THAT IS WHAT WE DO—EXPLORE
EACH NEW FANTASTIC EVENT IN
OUR LIVES. LAST WEEK IT WAS
THE CLEVER LITTLE FLYING CARS
REPPING OVER YOUR HEAD AND
BEFORE THAT IT HAD BEEN THE
CANDY FOREST



AND BEFORE THAT IT WAS THE SWARMS
OF ROBOT INSECTS THAT GATHERED UP
THE LITTER AND DUST AND SPIRITED IT ALL
AWAY WHERE THEY SOMEHOW CHEWED IT
UP AND MADE FACTORIES OUT OF IT

BUT BEFORE ALL OF THAT WAS
THE REVOLUTION. I WAS ONLY TEN
THEN AND I VAGUELY REMEMBER IT
THE CINE WOULD REMIND US OF
THAT TERRIBLE WARTIME WITH ITS
FANTASTIC MOVING PICTURES

IT WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS ALWAYS
A LITTLE HANGRY. MATA AND POPA
WHISPERED ANGRILY AT EACH OTHER,
AND MY LITTLE BROTHER, TRAVER,
CRIED WHEN SICKLY CRIES ALL NIGHT



ZOMBISM WAS THE ORIGINAL CAUSE OF
THE REVOLUTION. WE NEEDED THE CURE
AND THOSE WITH ACCESS TO IT WERE
MORE CONCERNED OVER ROYALTIES AND
PROFITS THAN SAVING LIVES

UHHHHHHHHH

SWWW, ZOMBIES ARE
DISGUSTING

HAHHHHH!





OH...
HEM

STEPPING ONTO THE STREET
WAS LIKE WALKING INTO A
DIFFERENT CITY.

THE AIR CARS AND TINY ROBOTS
WERE GONE. THE SILENCE WAS
LIKE THE RINGING IN YOUR EARS
AFTER YOU TURN YOUR
HEADPHONES UP TOO LOUD.

WROOM!

THERE WAS A FAR AWAY
SOUND LIKE THUNDER.

A SMELL LIKE THE DEAD
WIFTED OFF THE SLIGHTEST
BREEZE OVERHEAD.



FOLLOWED BY AN Icy COLD
WIND AND A BLAST OF HEAT.



WROOM!

THEN BLACKNESS
AND NOTHING ..

THE DAY AFTER THE
BESIEGE BEGAN

SHE WAS A
VERY LUCKY GIRL.
THE BOMB COASPENS
HER, BUT THIS HEARING
AID SHOULD FIX THE
PROBLEM. YOU'LL NEED
TO BRING HER BACK IN
TEN YEARS FOR A
BATTERY CHANGE.

2



WE WALKED HOME THAT NIGHT, EVEN
THOUGH IT WAS FAR. THE METRO
WASN'T WORKING AND THE AIR CARS
WERE STILL GROUNDDED

SOME OF THE BUILDINGS WERE
NOTHING BUT RUBBLE. ROBOTS
AND PEOPLE LABORED TO MAKE
SENSE OF THEM.

IT WAS THE NEXT DAY WHEN I FOUND
OUT THAT MATA HAD LIED. LEETA HAD
BEEN KILLED UNDER THE ONE.

THREE DAYS AFTER
THE BREEGE BEGAN.

ARE YOU
CRAZY? YOU
CAN'T GO TO
THE FRONT!

YOU HAVE
TWO SMALL
CHILDREN,
WOMAN!

WHAA-SHUFF-
SHUFF

HAROLD YOU
KNOW I HAVE
TO DO THIS

IT'S NOT THE
FRONT - IT'S
OUR OWN
CITY.

YOU NEVER GOT
OVER THE GLODY
OF FIGHTING, DID
YOU?

YOU'RE AN
ADDICT!

IS THAT
WHAT YOU
THINK?

YOU THINK
I'M ADDICTED
TO THIS?

HONOR AND
COURAGE AND
PATRIOTISM ARE
VIRTUES. YOU MAKE
THEM INTO VICES AND
SHAME OUR CHILDREN
WITH YOUR
COWARDICE

I GO TO
FIGHT NOW
HAROLD... FOR
ALL OF US

BE STRONG
FOR YOUR FAMILY
AND OY VALE

TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SIEGE BEGAN.

EVERY ADULT FIGHTS FOR THE CITY, COMRADE.

WHEN THE WOMAN FROM THE CITY CAME FOR POPA, NO AMOUNT OF REASON COULD CHANGE HER DEMANDS. HE LEFT THAT DAY TO DO TRENCHES FOR THE CITY.

TWO WEEKS AND ONE DAY AFTER THE SIEGE BEGAN.

VALE? I'M BACK, WHERE IS YOUR FATHER?

MAMA! THE CITY CAME FOR HIM. HE WAS DIGGING TRENCHES YESTERDAY AND WE'VE NOT SEEN HIM SINCE.

GOOD, GOOD... WE NEED MORE TRENCHES. WE'LL TAKE THE WAR TO THOSE BASTARDS AND SLIP AWAY BEFORE THEY KNOW WE'VE KILLED THEM.

THAT NIGHT, THE CITY CAME FOR ME.

COMRADE, IT IS TIME FOR YOUR LITTLE GIRL TO SERVE.

NO.

MAMA?

NO? NO IS NOT AN OPTION, COMRADE.

MY HUSBAND DIES. I FIGHT. MY DAUGHTER CARES FOR OUR SON. THAT'S ENOUGH FOR THIS FAMILY.

COMRADE, YOUR GIRL MUST CARRY WATER FOR THE OLD ONES IN THE BUILDING. BAS BOY WILL BE KEPT IN THE CRICHE WITH THE OTHER CHILDREN.

WE ALL SERVE THE CITY.

YOU WILL CARRY WATER.

ONE MONTH AFTER THE SIEGE BEGAN.



CARRYING WATER WAS EXHAUSTING WORK, BUT ALL THE CHILDREN MY AGE WERE ALSO MUSTERING THE LOADS AND THAT MADE IT EASIER.

MATA? WHAT'S WRONG?

THERE ARE NEW TRENCH-BUSTER MISSILES ON THE EASTERN FRONT.

THE BASTARDS ARE TRADING WITH THE EU AND THE AMERICANS FOR BETTER WEAPONS. THEY SAY WE ARE LYNLESS THIEVES WHO DEPRIVE THEM OF ALL THEIR ROYALTIES.

WHAT IS IT, MATA? ARE YOU HURT?

"ROYALTIES." THEY KILL US FOR THEIR DAMNED PROFITS.

BASTARDS



IT'S YOUR FATHER. THEY KILLED HIM. VALE YOUR FATHER IS DEAD.

NO, POPA IS DIGGING AWAY FROM THE FRONT, WHERE HE'S SAFE.



I SAW THE BODY! I HELD HIS HEAD!

HE IS DEAD!



NO, NOT POPA!





GET OFF THE STREET, YOU'RE BREAKING CURFEW!



GO HOME BEFORE YOU GET YOURSELF SHOT!



PCPR



...PCPR
HOW?



HELLO THERE, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?



MY DAD
DIED IN THE
WAR TODAY IN
A TRENCH



YOU HAVE WORKING PRINTERS? I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SINCE BEFORE THE SIEGE BEGAN.

HOW COME YOUR PLACE IS LIKE THE WAR NEVER HAPPENED?

I'M THE WIZARD. THAT'S WHY I CAN MAKE MAGIC.

TELL YOUR MOTHER THAT YOU MET SOMEONE FROM THE CITY WHO FED YOU AND GAVE YOU A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.

YOU'RE NOT FROM THE CITY!

YOU GOT ME SO TELL HER YOU MET A WIZARD.

I'LL TELL HER I MET SOMEONE FROM THE CITY.

CLEVER GIRL.

ONE WEEK AFTER THE DEATH OF VALENTINE'S FATHER.

VALE, THERE'S NOT ENOUGH FOOD FOR US.

IF YOU...

...IF YOU DID IN THE TRENCHES WE'LL GET 100 GRAMS OF BREAD A DAY.

'PROVERT

I'LL DO.

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER
HER FATHER DIED

WATA DIDN'T GO AWAY HOME FROM
THE FIGHTING FOR THREE WEEKS
I PRAYED SHE WASN'T DEAD

OH,
MATA...



NINE MONTHS AFTER
HER FATHER DIED.

WINTER SETTLED IN THAT WEEK AND THE
COLD WAS OUR CONSTANT COMPANION.
DRIED RATIONS WERE CUT AGAIN TO 200
GRAMS AND THEY HAD HARD STONY
PEBBLES IN IT. EVERYONE KNEW THEY
WERE THERE TO INCREASE THE WEIGHT



ERRRNNNN!

HEY!
GIVE THAT
BACK!



THAT'S
MY FAMILY'S
RATION. YOU
BASTARD! GIVE
IT BACK!



PLEASE, GIVE
IT BACK



ZOMBISM WAS CURED AFTER THE
LAST REVOLUTION. WHEN THE CITY
COULDN'T GET THE TRADEMARKED
DRUGS WE NEEDED TO Wipe IT
OUT. WE SET THE PRINTERS TO
MAKE OUR OWN.

GAHHH

THAT WAS WHEN I SAW THE FIRST
ZOMBIE. IT WAS UGHAS'AKARUS.
THIS ONE HAD BEEN A SOLDIER
FOR THE CITY BEFORE HIS DEATH
AND AWFUL RESURRECTION.



SOON THE CITY WAS USING
THE PRINTERS TO MAKE
EVERYTHING WE NEEDED

IT DIDN'T MATTER TO US
IF WE DIDN'T BUY IT
FROM THE COPYRIGHT
OWNERS WE WERE
DOING WHAT WE NEEDED
TO DO TO SURVIVE



AHHHRAAAHHH!



NO!



KAAHHHDEADFIGHTASSHOLEKILLUNGRI!



AHHHHH!



ENVA



THAT NIGHT THE
FEVER GOT IN

LARSEN

NO... NO...

...NO!

SSSS
OOOO

IN THE STRUGGLE TO FIGHT
OFF THE ZOMBIE I HAD BEEN
BITTEN, THE SOLDIER SAID
THERE WAS NO CURE.

OH NO

LESS THAN A WEEK TO LIVE
WHO WOULD TAKE CARE OF
TROVER WHILE MATA WAS
GONE FIGHTING THE WAR?

THERE WAS ONLY ONE
PERSON IN THE ENTIRE
CITY WHO COULD HELP

PLEASE
PLEASE
ANSWER.

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

GIRL, YOU'D
BETTER HAVE A GOOD
REASON FOR WAKING
UP THE WHOLE FUCKING
STREET AT THREE IN
THE MORNING.

...I NEED
TO SEE.

...I NEED
TO SEE THE
WIZARD



OH, WELL, THEN, COME ON IN, I'LL GO WAKE UP HIS MAJESTY, YOU STAY HERE.



DO I KNOW YOU?

I...

I...



YOU GAVE ME CLOTHES, MY MOTHER IS A SOLDIER.



POOR THING, SHE'S A WALKING SKELETON. HERE, GIRL, DRINK THIS.

OH, THE SO, DIER'S DAUGHTER, I REMEMBER YOU NOW.



I NEED HELP FOR MY FAMILY, I CAME TO YOU BECAUSE YOU HELPED ME BEFORE.

I SEE... YOU ASSUMED BECAUSE I'D BEEN GENEROUS BEFORE THAT I'D BE GENEROUS AGAIN? YOU REPLY MY FAVOR WITH A REQUEST FOR ANOTHER ONE?



I... CAN FIND A WAY TO REPLY YOU.

DON'T YOU TOY WITH THIS LITTLE GIRL, CAN YOU SEE HOW DESPERATE SHE IS?

AND YOU AREN'T A FOOL, I CAN TELL, SO DON'T ACT A FOOL.







OW, OW, OW.



WAIT, PLEASE.

HOW ARE YOU, HOW ARE YOU HERE??

HE SPOKE A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE THE ONE FROM THE CINE THAT WE HEARD SO OFTEN.



DEGRADATE, I TRIED A FEW OF THE PHRASES THAT WE HEARD MOST OFTEN IN THE MOVIES.

OF BEND VALENTINE?

CE AM WITANUL?

THIRTY FEET FURTHER DOWN THE TRENCH WAS AN ENEMY SOLDIER. I'D NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN A LIVE ENEMY, ONLY THE DEATH AND CARNAGE THEY CAUSED.



I'D NEVER KISSED A BOY BEFORE, BUT I'D BE DEAD IN A FEW DAYS FROM THE BOMBING ANYWAY AND IT MIGHT HELP ME GET THROUGH TO HIM. I DIDN'T WANT TO END UP DEAD IN A TRENCH LIKE POPA.



HE KISSED HER BACK FOR A MOMENT BEFORE PULLING AWAY. THE LOOK ON HIS FACE CHANGED, SOFTENED. HE ALMOST LOOKED LIKE HE WOULD CRY.



GOODBYE, WITANUL?

I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU.

THE SPY EYES WERE ALL PLANTED. I RAN AS FAST AS I COULD OUT OF THE TRENCHES AND THROUGH THE CITY. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS REACH THE WIZARD TO CONFIRM THAT HE WOULD TAKE CARE OF MATA AND TROVER WHEN I WAS GONE, DEAD AND SHAMELESS AMONG THE ZOMBIES



BUT THE FEVER HAD COME BACK WORSE THAN EVER, AND MY ARMS AND LEGS WOULDN'T WORK RIGHT. THE ZOMBISM WAS KILLING ME FASTER THAN THE SOLDIER HAD SAID



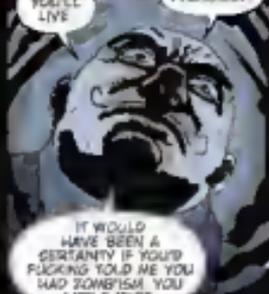
WIZARD...



TWO DAYS AFTER KISSING WITHAL

YOU'LL LIVE

PROBABLY



IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A CERTAINLY IF YOU'D FUCKING TOLD ME YOU HAD ZOMBISM. YOU LITTLE IDIOT

YOU AGREED TO TAKE CARE OF MY FAMILY

I THINK THAT CURING YOUR ZOMBISM IS REPAYMENT. I KNOW, SO I'VE UNILATERALLY RENEGOTIATED THE TERMS OF OUR DEAL



YOU CURED ME?

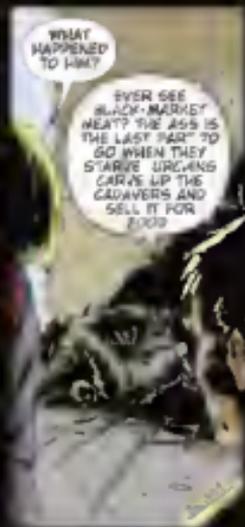
THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS WE HAVE ACCESS TO HERE THAT YOU CAN'T GET IN THE CITY. WHAT YOU HAD WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU IF WE HADN'T HELPED



I WON'T BETRAY MY CITY TO ITS ENEMIES EVER AGAIN

I WAS A TRAITOR ONCE BUT I HAD A FEVER AND I WAS DYING







TWO YEARS AFTER THE SIEGE BEGAN.

ONE MORNING I AWOKE DEAF. MATA TRIED EVERYTHING BUT NO DOCTORS COULD HELP HER.



LATER.





OH, HATA...
I WILL MAKE
THIS RIGHT.



COME,
TROVER, WE
CAN WIN THE
WAR.



I
KNOW OF A
TRAITOR...
...I CAN
BRING HIM TO
YOU. HE HAS
WORKING
PRINTERS.



I WILL
COME WITH YOU
YOUR MOTHER
WAS A HERO,
VALENTINE.



YOU ARE
SURE THIS IS
THE PLACE,
NOT?

YES.



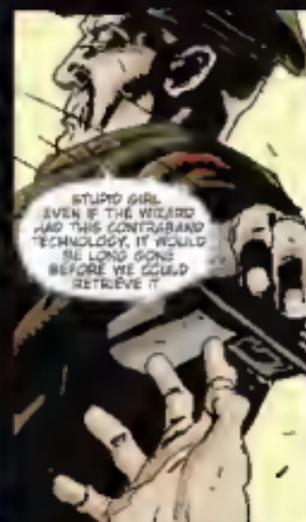
COMRADE
ANA, COMRADE
EGOR.

THE GIRL
TELLS ARE YOU
HAVE CONTRABAND
IT IS MY DUTY TO
COME IN AND SEARCH
YOUR PREMISES
FOR IT.



HELLO
VALENTINE, THE
FOOD AND CLOTHES YOU
STOLE FROM US WASNT
CONTRABAND IT WAS
OUR SAVINGS.

GO AHEAD AND
SEARCH YOU...
FIND NOTHING I
ASSURE YOU





COME WITH ME.

NOW WE CLEAN HOUSE.



YOU'RE TOO LATE, IT'S ALL GONE YOU WON'T GET A SCRAP OF IT.

WHAT A GODDAMNED WASTE SPITTED, STUPID, BONE...

WITHIN A FEW HOURS THE CITY PEOPLE HAD DOWNLOADED THE HARDENED LOGIC FROM MY HEARING AID AND SET TO WORK A' COLLATERALING THE ENEMY'S DAMAGE TO OUR TECHNOLOGY



IT WAS HER HEARING AIDS THAT GAVE IT AWAY, WASN'T IT?

YES, WIZARD THE HARDENED LOGIC IS BEING USED TO COMPLAIN THE ENEMIES OF THE SIEGE AS WE SPEAK



IT'S OVER, FINALLY



TEN YEARS AFTER THE SIEGE

SOON THE PRINTERS CAME BACK ON LINE AND MEDICINE, FOOD, AND SUPPLIES WERE MADE AND DELIVERED REPAIRED BUILDINGS APPEARED AND MARVELOUS AIR CARS WERE IN THE SKY AGAIN

IN A CEREMONY IN THE MAIN SQUARE I RECEIVED THE OFFICIAL MEDAL FROM THE OLD COMRADE HERO HIMSELF AND BECAME A HERO OF THE CITY LIKE MATA



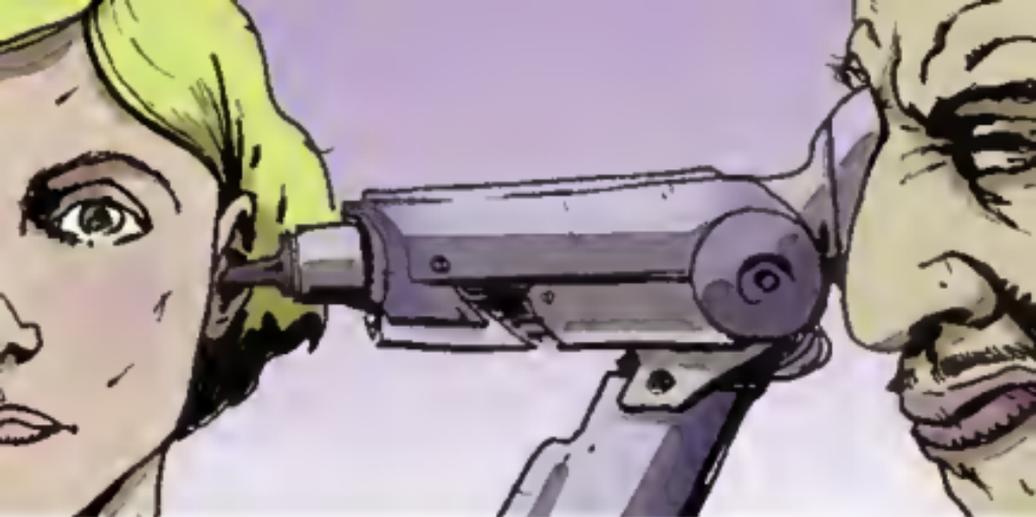
VALENTINE? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S YOU!

WITNESSAULT!

WE WALKED AND TALKED AND FINALLY KISSED AGAIN BEFORE GOING TO THE RESTAURANT TO WATCH ONE OF THE OLD MOVIES

WE STARTED SOMETHING BACK THEN IN THE TRENCHES EACH REALIZING THAT NEITHER SIDE REALLY KNEW WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR, THAT SOMETHING GAVE US HOPE AND STRENGTH AND JOY AND LOVE FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES

END



DOCTOROW ON: "AFTER THE SIEGE"

Editor Tom Waltz: Cory, you've said in past interviews that the story "After the Siege" holds an especially personal meaning to you. For those who don't know, could you please explain why that is?

Cory Doctorow: This story is based loosely on the Siege of Leningrad, one of the most brutal moments in WWII—Leningrad, a city of millions, was laid siege to by Hitler's army for 900 days, and for most of that time, they were not re-provisioned. Residents were all assigned into civil defense tasks: guelting and grisly never-ending labor. By the second winter, they'd burned every stick of furniture and eaten every animal—including the rats. There was even cannibalism. Most of these extreme effects were Stalker's fault: he considered Hitler his ally, so when the shelling started, he refused to allow anyone in Leningrad to defend themselves—generals were ordered to stay in their summer homes and not come back to join the army. No one—not even children—was allowed to evacuate.

My grandmother, Valentina Rachman, was twelve when the siege began. She lived in Leningrad with her two-year-old brother (my great-uncle Boris, who is now one of the curators at the brilliant Popov Communications Museum, a kind of Soviet Silicon Valley Computer Museum) and her parents. It was two years before she was evacuated, and she hauled corpses, dug trenches, and starved. When she was fourteen, they evacuated her to Siberia where she recuperated working on a horse farm, and then ended up in the Red Army where she met my grandfather. She got pregnant so they stole papers and fled to Azerbaijan, where my father was born.

Growing up, I never understood the Siege. My grandmother would tell us she'd experienced horrors in the war, and I'd kind of shrug, thinking of friends whose families had been through the concentration camps. I remember thinking, "You spend most of the war at home with your family... how bad could it have been?"

But in 2006, I visited St. Petersburg (the present name for Leningrad) with my parents, grandmother, brother and sister-in-law. I saw my world and sprawling family there and walked the streets. It was high summer—not quite the White Nights (the period in June when the sun never

sets and the locals stay out all night reveling), but still hot and sunny, with long bloody sunsets that started at 9 P.M. and lingered for an hour or more.

My grandmother walked us through the streets of her childhood and pointed to buildings, saying things like, "I was too weak to carry the body from that building so we threw him out the window and scraped him up afterwards." She told us about cannibalism and war, about noble deeds and foul ones, and I was never the same. A month later, I started this story when on a flight from London to Singapore, I wrote 6,000 words in the sky and the rest over the next week or two on further long haul flights. I'd settle into my seat and three thousand words would just happen. And I'd look out the window and we'd be over some ocean again.

I gave the story's initial publication rights to *Esq.*, a Russian-language science fiction magazine. They translated it for me and I gave a copy to my grandmother.

TW: Politically speaking, Russia appears to be at an interesting crossroads these days with President Putin working to maintain control of the country even after his presidency expires. Do you see any correlation between the real world instability of that country with the events that take place in "After the Siege"?

CD: Well, sort of. Russia's a complete fucking disaster of course, and Putin's a creepy fluggish ex-KGB apparal whose machine is in large part responsible for turning Russia into a nation that is losing ten percent of its population every year due to early mortality.

But Russia isn't the best parallel to the mythical nation of "After the Siege," a better parallel would be any of the many former Soviet republics—or even Iraq—where all the local infrastructure has been sold at fire-sale rates to foreign companies to pay off a debt that the former dictators owed to Western governments.

It's the simplest of stinky tricks—a protection racket played against an entire nation. You get a crummy dictatorship whose local strongman borrows gigantic amounts from Western banks while starving and torturing his people. Then, after the people get rid of him (or



invaders topple him), his debts are passed on to the people he's been torturing and killing and oppressing (often with guns bought with Western loans).

These people are expected to pay the construction costs for the torture chambers they've been suffering in and to do so, they have to sell off their waterworks, power, roads, medical system—you name it. These are then run like corrupt fast-food outlets, delivering least value for most money, so the cost of everything from bread to power goes through the roof while a few Fortune 100s get even richer (think of Chile for a sterling example of this).

This is the kind of government that I pictured the Revolutionaries of Mom's and Papa's generation toppling. Cowards and profiteers who'd rather make nice with the cruel artificial life forms we call corporations than give their own people bread and medicine.

TW: There is a sequence in "After the Siege" where the main character, Voltaire, plants electronic spy eyes in the trenches along the front lines at the behest of the Wizard, who says he uses them to document the atrocities there, though later he is accused of using the devices to exploit the violence for profit and entertainment. Is it fair to assume you are comparing these fictional devices to semi-life embedded reporters who were attached to military units during the Iraq invasion?

CD: Well, sure—certainly. The media's total abdication of its role in Iraq to serve as the fourth estate and report objectively and fairly on what actually happens and happened there was the disgrace of this young century. They say piracy will kill television—if it destroys these bastards and the cynical profiteers who turned the press into a gutless propaganda machine then so much the better. Steal some TV, kids—you're projecting democracy!

TW: Many people in your story suffer from a disease you term as "Zombism." Is this comparable to, say, the horrendously extreme amount of AIDS cases in Africa, a continent also rife with warfare?

CD: Yeah, and all the other diseases—like malaria, which kills one person every second—that our pharma companies can't even be bothered to do research on because bone-pills are so much more profitable.

We grant global monopolies to these companies over the reproduction of chemical compounds. They argue that they need these patents because otherwise no one would do the core research they do and we'd all be dead of disease without them.

But what do they spend their regulatory windfall on? Figuring out how to monopolize heartburn pills that are going public domain so that they can be re-patented, cheating the system and the world out of twenty more years of low-cost access to these magic potions, marketing budgets that beggar the imagination, lobbyists arguing for stricter rules.

Meanwhile, people are actually dying, in great numbers, of diseases treatable by drugs that Roche and Pfizer and the rest of the dope-mafia won't sell them at an accessible price, and won't let them make themselves.

TW: Well, this is the last issue in this first volume of IDW's Cory Doctorow's *Futuristic Tales of the Here and Now*. How do you feel about this adventure in the world of comic books?

CD: This has been a brilliant ride! I've always been a funnybook reader, but I never dreamt I'd be involved in their creation. Now that I've done so, I'm keen to do some more. I just wrote my first script, a little eight-page story for Slave Labor's final issue of *The Haunted Mansion* comic, and it was a blast. Now I'm thinking about other ways I can get involved in the industry.



Cory Doctorow's
Futuristic Tales of the Here and Now

"Cory Doctorow's *Futuristic Tales of the Here and Now* from IDW manages to capture the peak in all of us in a primal form, and put it on the page. ."
— *geeksgidion.com*

"Cory Doctorow is known as a wild writer of fantastic ideas, a true blue maverick in the current field of science fiction."
— *bookofmaver.com*

"He [Doctorow] has a knack for identifying those seminal trends of our current landscape that will in all likelihood determine the shape of our future(s)."
— *Paul Di Filippo, Sci-Fi Weekly*

CORY DOCTOROW'S FUTURISTIC TALES

OF THE HERE AND NOW.

Writer and *BoingBoing.net* co-editor Cory Doctorow has won acclaim for his science fiction writing as well as his Creative Commons presentation of his material. Now, IDW Publishing is proud to present six standalone stories adapted from Doctorow's work, each featuring pin-ups by some of comics' top talents including Sam Kieth, Scott Morse, Paul Pope, Ben Templesmith, Ashley Wood, and more. Stories collected include: The Locus Award-winning "When Sysadmins Ruled the Earth," "And a Game," a story selected for inclusion in the Michael Chabon edited 2005 Best American Short Stories; "Craphound," a story selected for Year's Best Science Fiction XV; "Nimby and the D-Hoppers," selected for Year's Best Science Fiction IX; The Hugo-nominated and Locus Award-winning "I Robot," and "After the Siege."

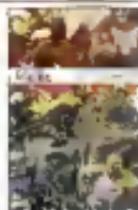
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