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# AWAKENING 02

TAPALANSKY ECKMAN-LAWN MAUER

MR

MATURE  
READERS



FEBRUARY 1ST

CYNTHIA CLAIMS  
EVERYTHING COMES  
BACK TO CLINE  
PHARMACEUTICAL.


THEY PACKED UP  
AND SHUT DOWN IN  
DECEMBER. NO  
REASON WAS GIVEN.

A FEW WEEKS LATER,  
PEOPLE STARTED  
DISAPPEARING.


NOT LONG AFTER  
THAT, PEOPLE  
STARTED TURNING  
UP DEAD.

THE EVIDENCE  
SAYS THEY WERE  
EATEN ALIVE.






CLINE SHOWED UP  
ALMOST AS QUICKLY AS  
THEY LEFT. THEY SET UP  
SHOP JUST OUTSIDE OF  
TOWN IN AN OLD FACTORY  
JUST BEFORE SUMMER.  
BY CHRISTMAS, THEY  
WERE GONE.




THEY SPENT A FORTUNE  
RENOVATING THE PLACE!  
THESE ARTICLES PLACE  
THE AMOUNT IN THE  
MILLIONS AT LEAST.

WHY JUST UP  
AND LEAVE?



WHAT WENT BAD SO  
FAST THAT YOU HAD  
TO RUN OUT?



WHAT ARE  
YOU HIDING?

cine pharmaceutic  
1400000000  
of UK 1000000000  
1000000000



DO-DEE-DO-DO-DO-DO!

GOD, I HATE  
THIS PHONE.

YEAH.

WELL? DID YOU FIND  
ANYTHING YET?







HHE  
B-BIT ME!





I TRIED TO PUSH HIM AWAY BUT HE JUST WOULDN'T LET GO. THEN HE BIT ME, RIGHT THROUGH MY JACKET...

TAKE YOUR TIME, MISS.



WHAT'VE YOU GOT SO FAR?

DERRICK, YOU'RE RETIRED. YOU KNOW I CAN'T TALK ABOUT AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION.



I ALREADY HAVE A LEAD.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



YOU SHOW ME YOURS...

YOU MIGHT BE A GREAT DETECTIVE, BUT YOU'RE ALSO A REAL PRICK SOMETIMES.



I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING WITHOUT SENDING MYSELF UP THE CREEK...BUT WHAT I *CAN* DO IS INTRODUCE YOU TO SOMEONE. IN THE INTEREST OF PROFESSIONALISM, OF COURSE.

OF COURSE.

HOWE! GET OVER HERE!





DERRICK PETERS, THIS IS DOCTOR DANIEL HOWE. HE'S BEEN SENT TO BE A PAIN IN MY ASS. YOU TWO HAVE THAT IN COMMON.

NICE TO MEET YOU.



SO, WHAT BRINGS YOU TO PARK FALLS, EXACTLY?

THE SAME THING THAT BRINGS US BOTH HERE TODAY: THE ATTACKS, THE ABDUCTIONS, THE MURDERS.



AND YOU THINK THEY'RE ALL CONNECTED?

I THINK THAT'S PRETTY CLEAR. BUT I ALSO THINK THERE'S MORE THAN ONE ATTACKER INVOLVED.

BUT WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH YOU? WHO SENT YOU?

THAT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER. WHAT *DOES* MATTER IS THAT SOMEBODY OUTSIDE OF YOUR CITY IS AWARE OF THE PROBLEM AND THINKS IT SERIOUS ENOUGH TO STEP IN.





WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS ONE?

SHE'S DEFINITELY TOUGH TO SHAKE OFF AN ATTACKER LIKE THAT AND KEEP HER COMPOSURE.

THIS IS THE SECOND TIME IN AS MANY DAYS THAT SOMEONE'S BEEN HURT, BUT THE ATTACKER'S LEFT BEFORE FINISHING THE JOB...



THAT'S BECAUSE THERE'S MORE THAN ONE ATTACKER; EACH RESPONDS DIFFERENTLY WHEN PROVOKED. IT SEEMS THAT THIS ONE GETS SPOOKED EASILY.

IT'S TOO EARLY FOR A COPYCAT, THOUGH. THIS HAS TO BE A PARTNER... BUT THERE'S NO COORDINATION, NO PATTERN TO IT.



AAAAAAAAA!



SORRY MISS... JUST COLLECTING EVIDENCE...



THERE'S NO PATTERN THAT WE CAN SEE, BUT WE DON'T HAVE ALL THE PIECES YET.

WELL, I'VE GOT SOMETHING I'M LOOKING INTO. I SHOULD HAVE MORE OF THOSE "PIECES" BEFORE THE WEEK IS OUT.





WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

A WITNESS. SHE SAW AN ATTACK A FEW NIGHTS BACK ON HER WAY HOME. HER INFORMATION IS PRETTY OUT THERE BUT, IN ITS OWN WAY, FITS WITH WHAT I'VE HEARD ABOUT THE CASE. I CAN'T CONFIRM ANYTHING WITHOUT SEEING WHAT'S BEEN FOUND SO FAR.

NO PROBLEM. I'VE GOT FILES BACK AT THE STATION. I'LL GET YOU COPIES.



BUT THAT'S POLICE EVIDENCE. IT CAN'T BE DISCUSSED WITH CIVILIANS.

GOOD THING I'M NOT POLICE THEN, HUH?

DO-DEE-DO-DO-DO-DO!



DERRICK? WHAT HAPPENED? DID YOU SEE IT?

NO, I DIDN'T SEE THE ATTACKER--JUST ANOTHER VICTIM.

IT'S THEM! IT'S CLINE! THEY'RE DOING THIS! I KNOW IT!



LISTEN, YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN. I'M DOING WHAT I CAN. YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY BE ON TO SOMETHING AND I'M GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP.

ANYTHING! JUST GET THOSE FUCKING ASSHOLES AND SIC ONE OF THEIR MONSTERS ON THEM! I GET FIRED FOR "INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR" BUT *THEY* MAKE FUCKING ZOMBIES--



STOP FOR A SECOND AND LISTEN, ALRIGHT? I NEED INFORMATION ABOUT ANYONE WHO WORKED WITH YOU. NAMES, ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS, WHATEVER YOU HAVE.

I-I HAVE A CONTACT LIST, STILL. I TOOK IT WITH ME WHEN I LEFT.

GOOD, I'LL BE RIGHT OVER TO GET IT.

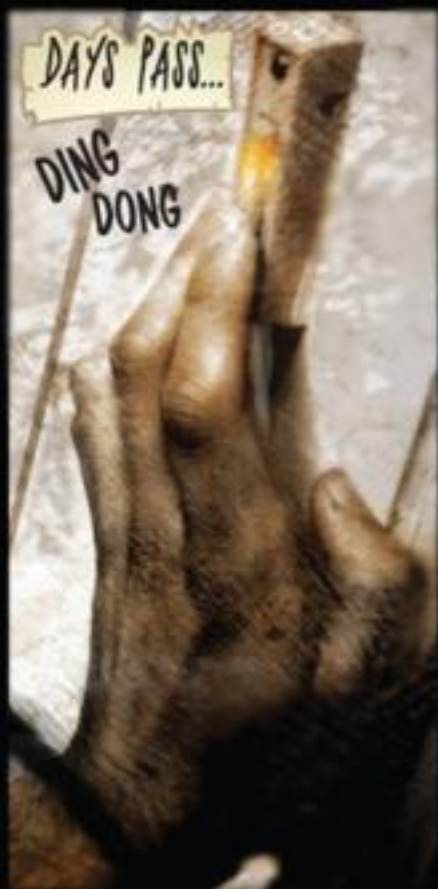


I'LL KEEP YOU POSTED.

DID SHE SAY ZOMBIES?

I'LL GET BACK TO YOU.





NO CLUE.  
SORRY.



I NEVER  
REALLY TALKED  
TO ANYONE. I WAS  
STUCK IN THE MAIL  
ROOM ALL DAY.



SORRY, I  
WISH I COULD BE  
MORE HELP.



LAST ONE. ALL I'VE  
GOT SO FAR JUST  
PROVES THAT CLINE  
DIDN'T TRUST CYNTHIA  
ANYMORE THAN THE  
REST OF THE CITY  
DOES--JUST GAVE  
HER A LIST FULL  
OF TEMPS.



HELLO MRS. WATSON.  
MY NAME'S DERRICK PETERS.  
I'M A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR.  
MAY I ASK YOU A FEW  
QUESTIONS?



THIS IS  
ABOUT CLINE, ISN'T  
IT? YOU SHOULD  
COME IN.





CAN I TAKE  
YOUR COAT MR.  
PETERS?

I, UH, YES.  
THANK YOU.



I'M SORRY,  
I'M JUST A LITTLE  
SURPRISED. HOW DID  
YOU KNOW WHY I  
WAS HERE?

OH, JUST A  
FEELING. AND  
I WAS ONE OF  
THE FEW PEOPLE  
WHO TALKED TO  
CYNTHIA AFTER  
SHE LEFT.

SHE CALLED  
EARLIER AND  
SAID YOU'D BE  
COMING BY.



YOU DON'T HAVE  
TO WORRY MR. PETERS, I'M  
NOT ANOTHER "CRAZY". I JUST  
HAPPEN TO THINK THAT CYNTHIA  
NEEDS A FRIEND. EVERYBODY  
NEEDS AT LEAST ONE,  
DON'T YOU THINK?



PLEASE, CALL  
ME DERRICK MRS. WATSON.  
AND YOU'RE RIGHT, I SUPPOSE.  
WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT  
CLINE PHARMACEUTICAL?





AND IN OTHER NEWS, AN ACCUSED RAPIST WENT FREE TODAY WHEN A JURY WAS UNABLE TO--

CLICK

TSK. IT JUST KEEPS GETTING WORSE OUT THERE...

FOR STARTERS, I CAN TELL YOU THEY HAD NO INTENTION OF STAYING LONG. EVERYONE I WORKED WITH WAS A TEMP.



EVERY POSITION THEY CREATED SEEMED LIKE IT WAS THERE FOR THE SAKE OF FILLING IT WITH SOMEONE.

NICE P.R., THOUGH, HAVING A BUILDING FULL OF LOCALS; "GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY," RIGHT?



CAN YOU TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT IT WAS THAT WAS ACTUALLY BEING DONE IN THE FACILITY?

IT'S LIKE I SAID, IT WAS A WHOLE LOT OF NOTHING FOR THE TEMPS. WE ANSWERED PHONES AND FORWARDED CALLS, SENT MAIL, RAN ERRANDS FOR BOSSES WE NEVER SAW.

IT SEEMED LIKE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND WAS ONE LONG LINE OF NOBODY. IF I GOT COFFEE FOR SOMEONE, IT WAS PASSED TO ANOTHER TEMP WHO PASSED IT TO ANOTHER, AND SO ON.



WHEN THEY TOOK OFF, IT WAS IN A HURRY. WE ALL SHOWED UP FOR WORK ONE DAY AND EVERYTHING WAS LOCKED UP AND SHUT DOWN. I DON'T THINK ANYBODY'S HEARD ANYTHING SINCE.




THANK YOU, MRS. WATSON. IF YOU THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE, DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT ME.

IF I DO, YOU'LL BE THE FIRST TO HEAR IT.




OH, AND DERRICK?





"BE CAREFUL."



Bldg full of temps  
No notice to employees  
Who's in charge?



DR. HOWE.


DANIEL, IT'S  
DERRICK.



HOW'D THE  
INTERVIEWS  
GO?

EVERYBODY BUT  
ONE HAD NOTHING FOR  
ME. THIS LAST WOMAN,  
REBECCA WATSON, HAD  
A LOT TO SAY.

AND?



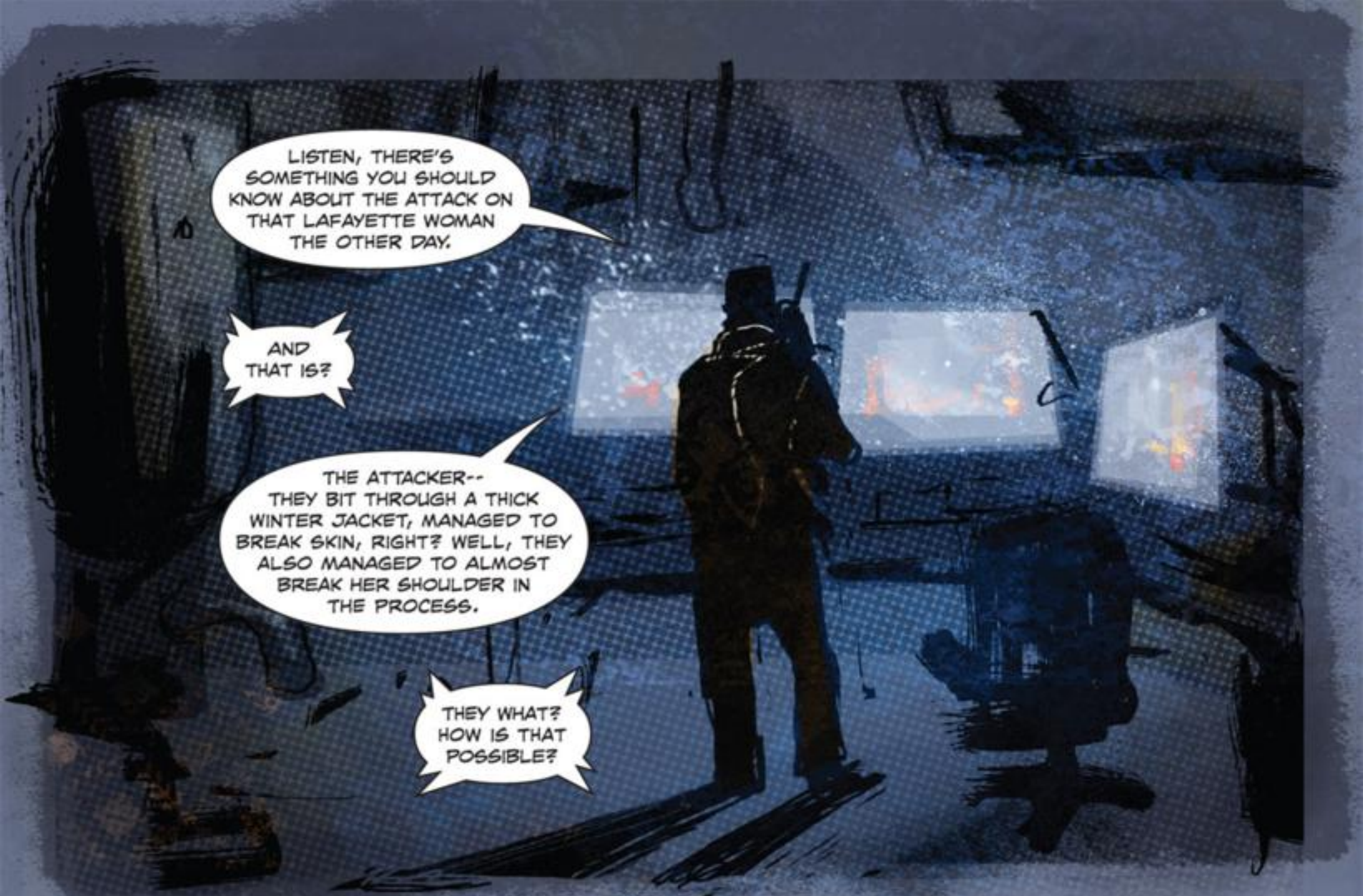
RAR! GONNA  
BITE YA!

HEE HEE!  
STOP IT!

I'M GOING TO  
HAVE TO GO OUT THERE  
AND CHECK THINGS OUT FOR  
MYSELF. SOMETHING VERY  
STRANGE WAS GOING ON AND  
I'M GOING TO SEE IF I CAN  
FIND OUT WHAT. DO YOUR...  
PEOPLE KNOW ANYTHING  
ABOUT CLINE?

NOTHING THAT  
THEY'RE SAYING, NO.  
IT'S LIKE I TOLD CHIEF  
MOORE--I WAS TOLD TO  
COME HERE AND WHAT TO  
WORK ON. THAT'S IT.  
THAT'S USUALLY  
HOW IT IS.






LISTEN, THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE ATTACK ON THAT LAFAYETTE WOMAN THE OTHER DAY.

AND THAT IS?


THE ATTACKER-- THEY BIT THROUGH A THICK WINTER JACKET, MANAGED TO BREAK SKIN, RIGHT? WELL, THEY ALSO MANAGED TO ALMOST BREAK HER SHOULDER IN THE PROCESS.

THEY WHAT? HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?



YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH PRESSURE THE MOUTH CAN EXERT. AN AVERAGE PERSON CAN BITE WITH A PRESSURE EQUAL TO 150 LBS AND BITE STRENGTHS OF ALMOST 1000 LBS HAVE BEEN RECORDED.

STILL, WHOEVER THIS WAS WOULD'VE FELT EXTREME PAIN HOLDING ON AS LONG AS THEY DID TO DO THAT KIND OF DAMAGE.



WHOEVER WE'RE DEALING WITH IS STRONG AND MAY NOT FEEL PAIN. OR AT THE VERY LEAST DOESN'T RESPOND TO IT WHEN THEY DO.

DOESN'T RESPOND TO PAIN AND RIPS THE STOMACHS OUT OF THEIR VICTIMS...UNLESS THEY GET SPOOKED, THEN IT'S A BITE-AND-RUN. FANTASTIC.





KNOCK  
KNOCK  
KNOCK

I'LL CALL  
YOU BACK.

HOWE? YOU  
IN HERE?

LOOK, I KNOW  
YOU'RE WORKING WITH  
PETERS. I KNEW HE  
WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO  
STAY AWAY FROM  
THIS CASE.

LISTEN, I--



LET ME FINISH. I KNOW YOU'RE WORKING  
WITH HIM AND I'M GLAD. IF ANYONE CAN CRACK  
THIS IT'S HIM, AND IF YOU'RE HERE UNTIL THIS  
MESS IS CLEANED UP, I WANT IT DONE  
WITH QUICKLY.



WHY *ISN'T* DERRICK ON  
THE FORCE ANYMORE?  
HE'S TOO YOUNG TO  
HAVE RETIRED.

THAT'S...THAT'S  
SOMETHING YOU'LL  
HAVE TO ASK HIM.  
NOT MY PLACE TO  
SAY ANYTHING  
ABOUT IT.



AND ON THE SUBJECT  
OF NOT SAYING ANYTHING, NO  
ONE OUTSIDE THIS DEPARTMENT  
CAN KNOW DERRICK IS INVOLVED.  
HE'S A CIVILIAN NOW AND I'LL  
LOSE MY JOB IF IT  
GETS OUT.

MY LIPS  
ARE SEALED.

GOOD.

'CAUSE I'D  
HATE TO HAVE TO  
BEAT THE TAR OUT  
OF YOU, SON.



FEBRUARY 20TH

IT'S BEEN TOO QUIET  
LATELY. NOT EVEN A  
PEEP FROM OUR KILLER.  
TIME TO GET SOMETHING  
CONCRETE TO BUILD ON.

GOD, I HATE  
DRIVING OUT  
HERE--CAN'T SEE  
A DAMN THING.

GOOD PLACE TO SET UP,  
THOUGH. CLOSE ENOUGH TO  
THE CITY, BUT NOT SO MUCH  
THAT PEOPLE WOULD COME  
OUT UNLESS THEY HAD TO.



YOU KNOW,  
LOOKING FOR  
ZOMBIES.

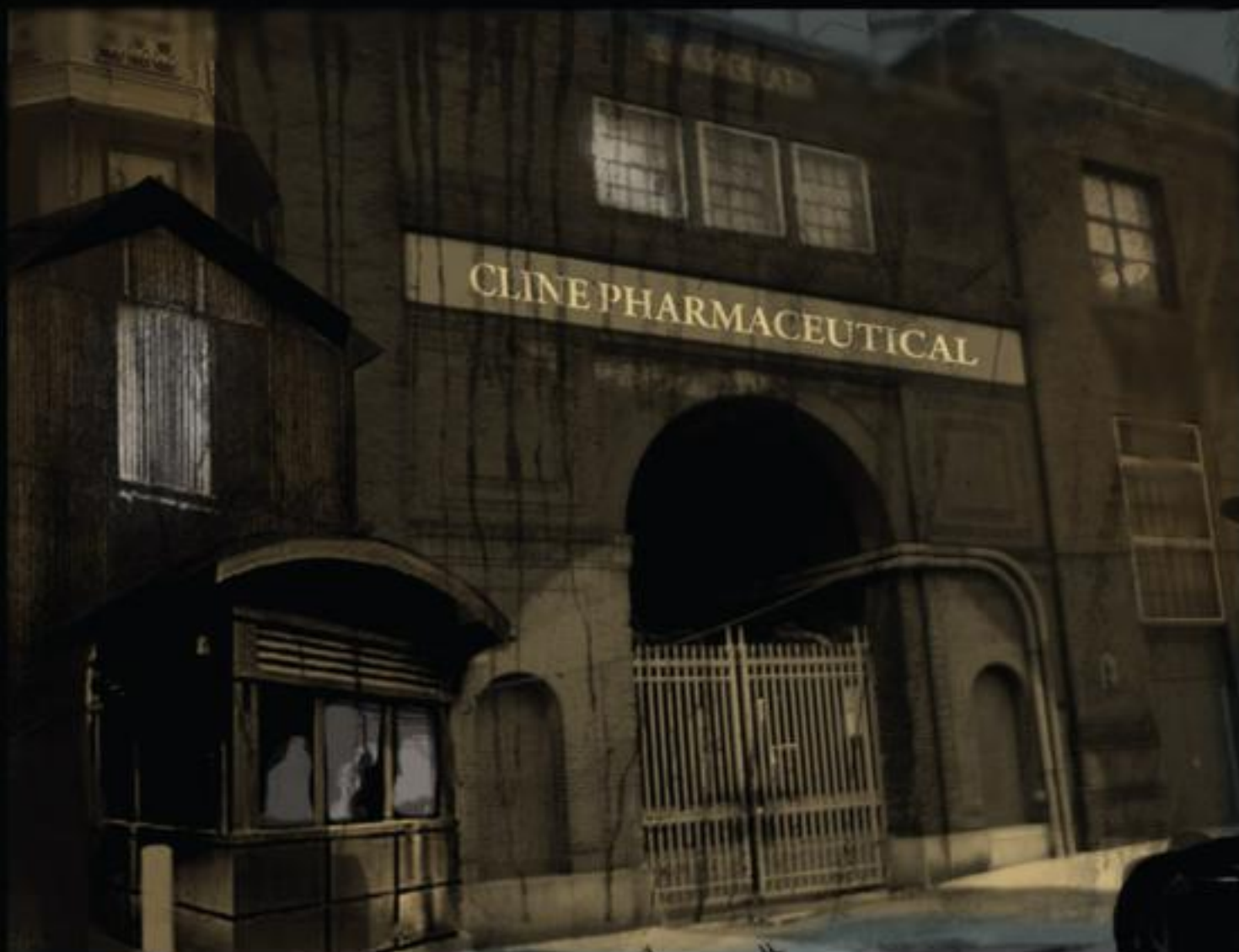


THIS IS RIDICULOUS.  
STILL, SOMETHING  
SEEMS OFF ABOUT  
*CLINE*. MAYBE  
CYNTHIA...NO.

AT LEAST I  
WON'T HAVE TO  
WORRY ABOUT  
BEING BOTHERED  
OUT HERE.







HUH. BIG PLACE.



BUT BIG MEANS LOTS FOR THEM TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GETTING RID OF.



AND THAT MEANS A BETTER CHANCE THAT SOMETHING INTERESTING MIGHT'VE BEEN LEFT BEHIND.







AND WHATEVER  
IT IS, I'M GOING  
TO FIND IT.



SHIT. THEY'RE  
ALL LOCKED.



NO CHOICE,  
I SUPPOSE.







STEEL DOORS...?  
THAT'S INTERESTING.  
I'LL BET THOSE  
WERE PART OF  
THE "REMODEL."



DAMN, IT'S  
BOLTED SHUT.



SHIT. I GUESS  
I'LL HAVE TO FIND  
ANOTHER WAY UP.



CREEEAAAK



THIS PLACE IS  
A COMPLETE  
WRECK.



MUST'VE  
BEEN IN A  
HURRY TO  
GET OUT.



JACKPOT.



SHIT.



SOMEONE'S  
HERE.

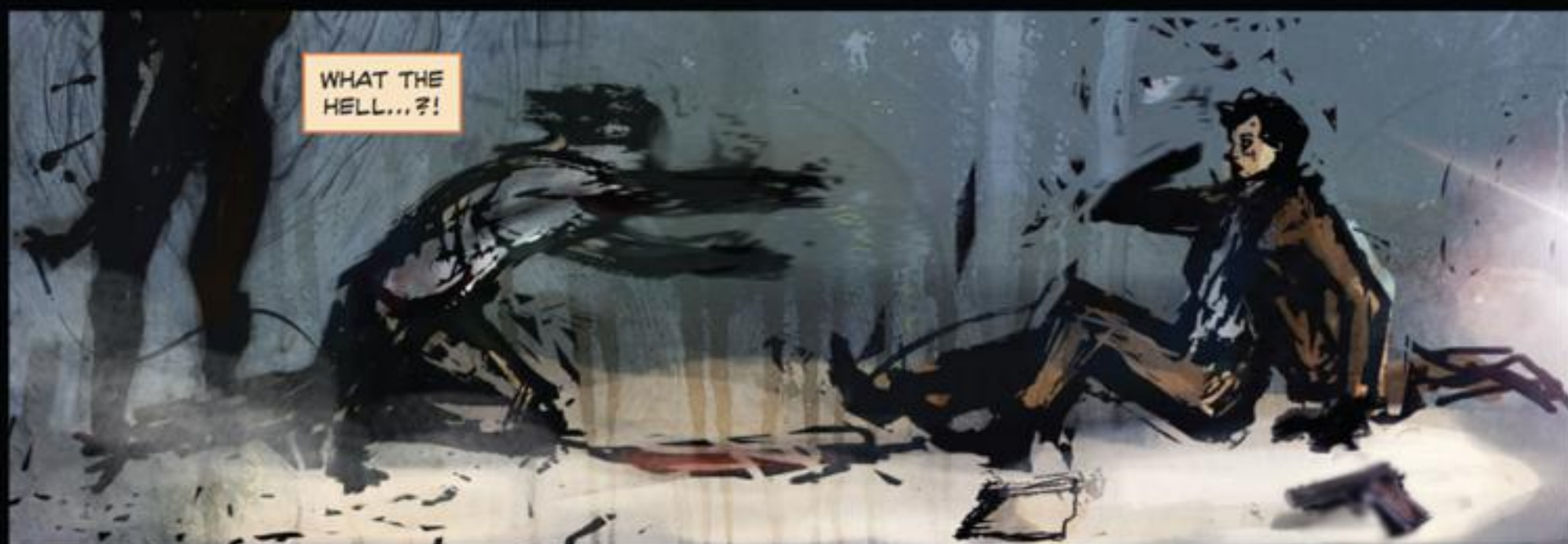














ARE YOU  
ALRIGHT?







*Some things are better left undead...*