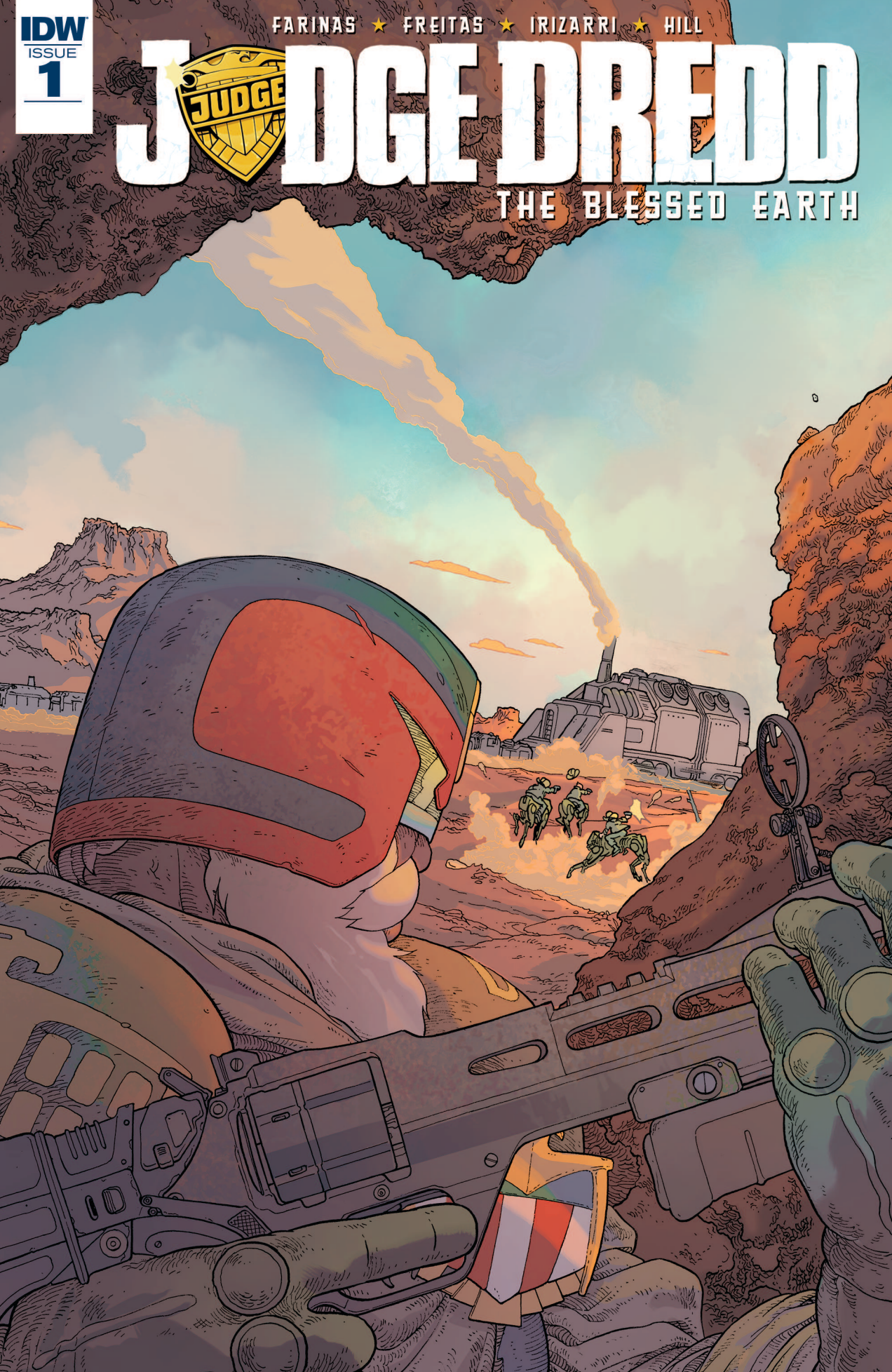


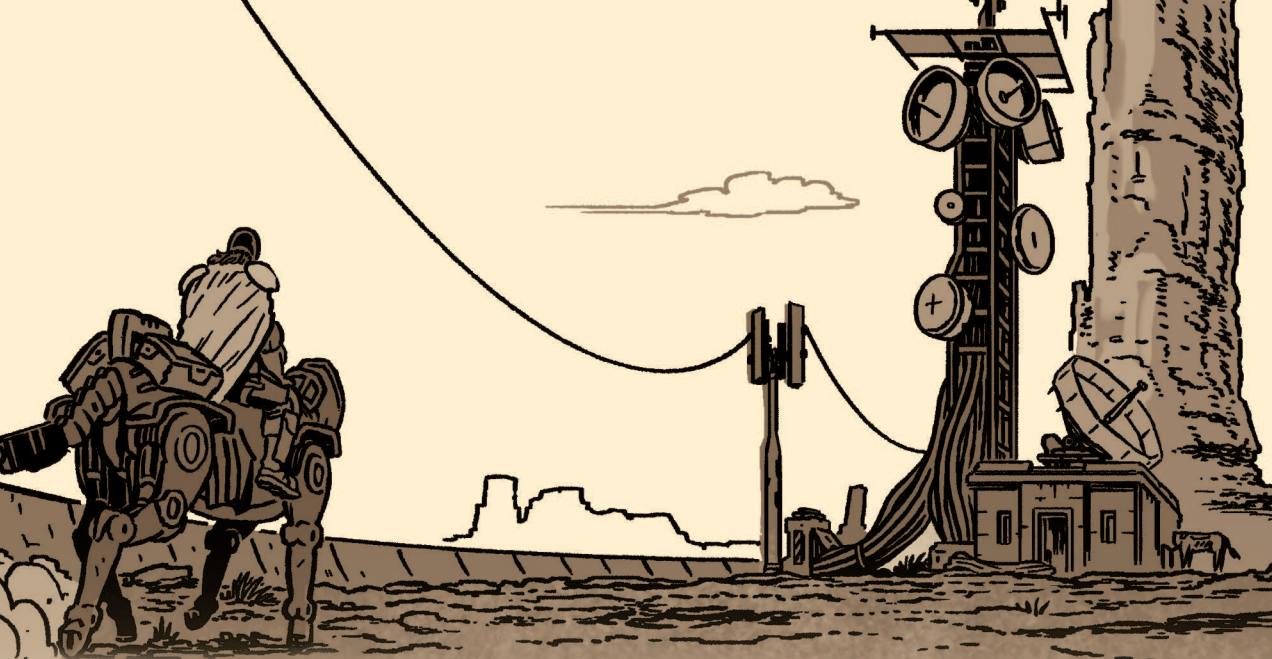
IDW
ISSUE
1

FARINAS ★ FREITAS ★ IRIZARRI ★ HILL

JUDGE DREDD

THE BLESSED EARTH





JUDGE DREDD

THE BLESSED EARTH

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Special thanks to Ben Smith and Matt Smith for their invaluable assistance.

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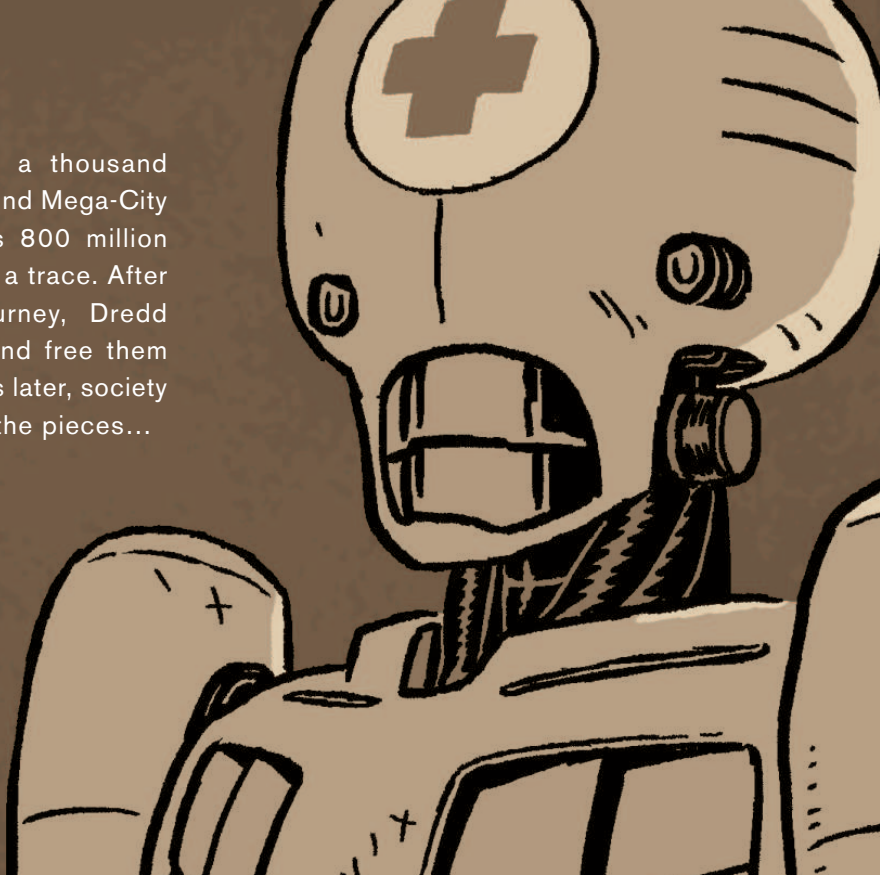
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Judge Dredd awoke a thousand years in his future to find Mega-City One in ruins and its 800 million citizens gone without a trace. After a long, strange journey, Dredd managed to locate and free them all. And now, ten years later, society continues to pick up the pieces...



DRAMATIS PERSONAE



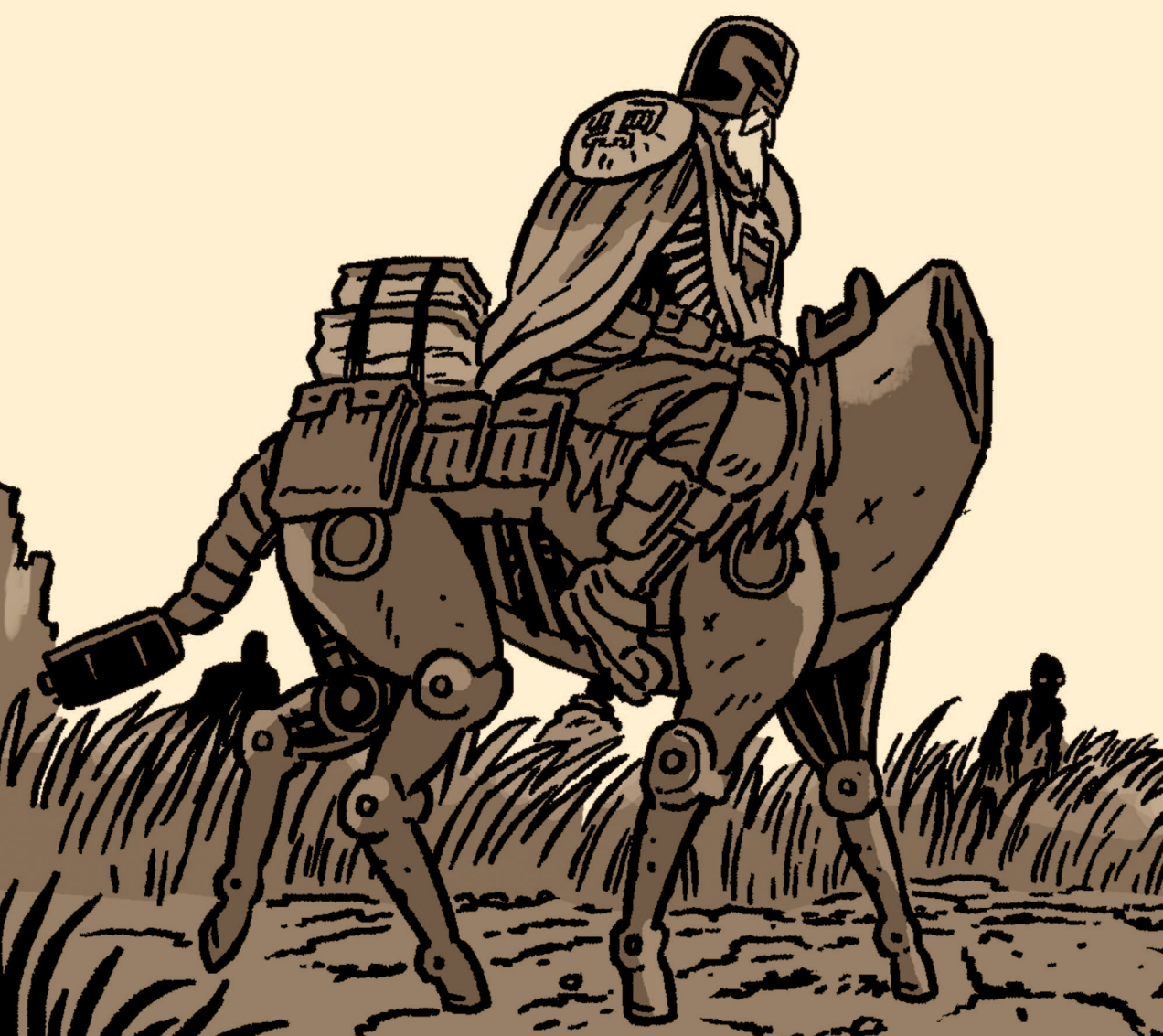
JUDGE DREDD



QUILL



LOLO



SECTOR 159.

I DON'T
LIKE IT.

DON'T
LIKE
WHAT?

NOW LEAVING
MEGA-CITY ONE
TERRITORIES

MEGA-CITY.
WHY THEY CALL
IT THAT?

IT'S AN
ARTIFACT.

WHAT'S
THAT, PA?

SOMETHING
OLD THAT AIN'T
GOT NO USE
ANYMORE.

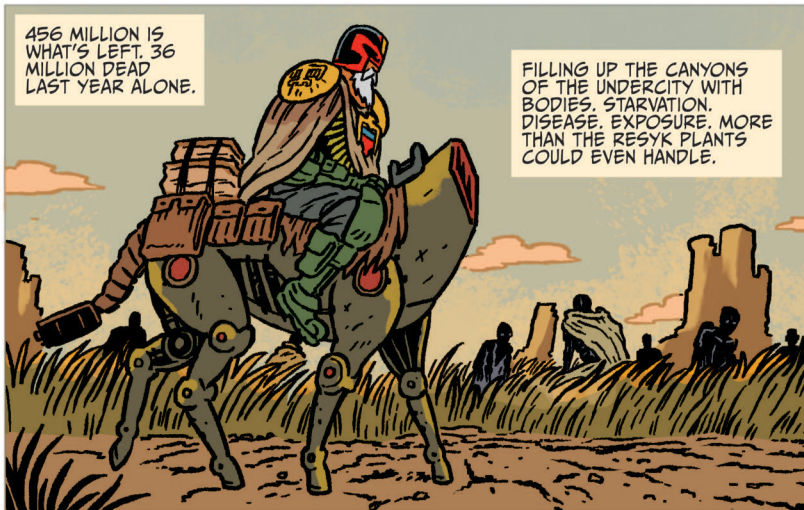
QUIT STARING.
IT'S ANOTHER
THING THE WORLD
AIN'T GOT USE
FOR.

I AIN'T
NEVER SEE
ANYTHING
LIKE IT.

JUST LEAVE
HIM BE. THAT
MAN AIN'T
RIGHT.

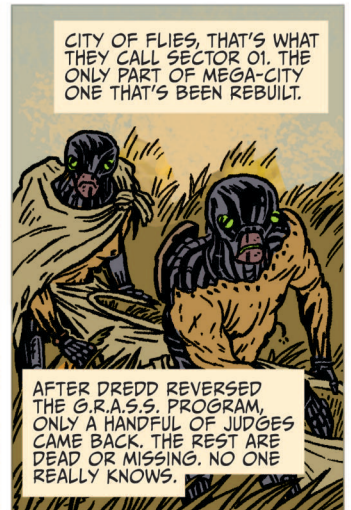
HE
THINKS THE
WORLD IS
HIS.

AND
WHAT'S
THAT?



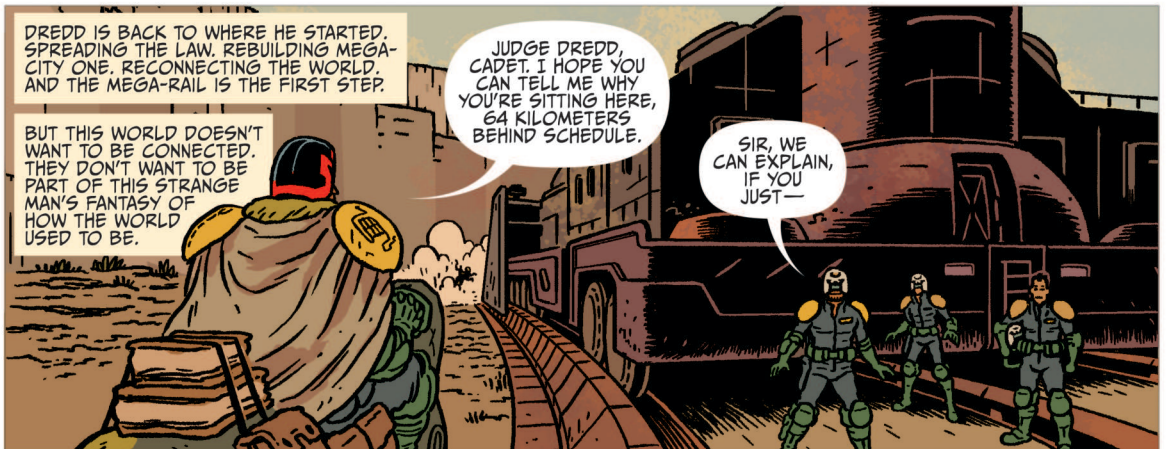
456 MILLION IS WHAT'S LEFT. 36 MILLION DEAD LAST YEAR ALONE.

FILLING UP THE CANYONS OF THE UNDERCITY WITH BODIES. STARVATION. DISEASE. EXPOSURE. MORE THAN THE RESYK PLANTS COULD EVEN HANDLE.



CITY OF FLIES, THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL SECTOR 01. THE ONLY PART OF MEGA-CITY ONE THAT'S BEEN REBUILT.

AFTER DREDD REVERSED THE G.R.A.S.S. PROGRAM, ONLY A HANDFUL OF JUDGES CAME BACK. THE REST ARE DEAD OR MISSING. NO ONE REALLY KNOWS.



DREDD IS BACK TO WHERE HE STARTED. SPREADING THE LAW. REBUILDING MEGA-CITY ONE. RECONNECTING THE WORLD. AND THE MEGA-RAIL IS THE FIRST STEP.

BUT THIS WORLD DOESN'T WANT TO BE CONNECTED. THEY DON'T WANT TO BE PART OF THIS STRANGE MAN'S FANTASY OF HOW THE WORLD USED TO BE.

JUDGE DREDD, CADET. I HOPE YOU CAN TELL ME WHY YOU'RE SITTING HERE, 64 KILOMETERS BEHIND SCHEDULE.

SIR, WE CAN EXPLAIN, IF YOU JUST—



PKANG

THIS MEGA RAIL NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED, THERE CAN NO LONGER BE ANY PLACE WHERE THE LAW CAN'T REACH.



BUT SIR, WE CAN'T GET NOTHING DONE, THEY HATE JUDGES! THEY BEEN SAYING US EXILES* GOT NO RIGHT TO TELL THEM WHAT TO DO. THIS MEGA-RAIL AIN'T GOING ANY FURTHER.

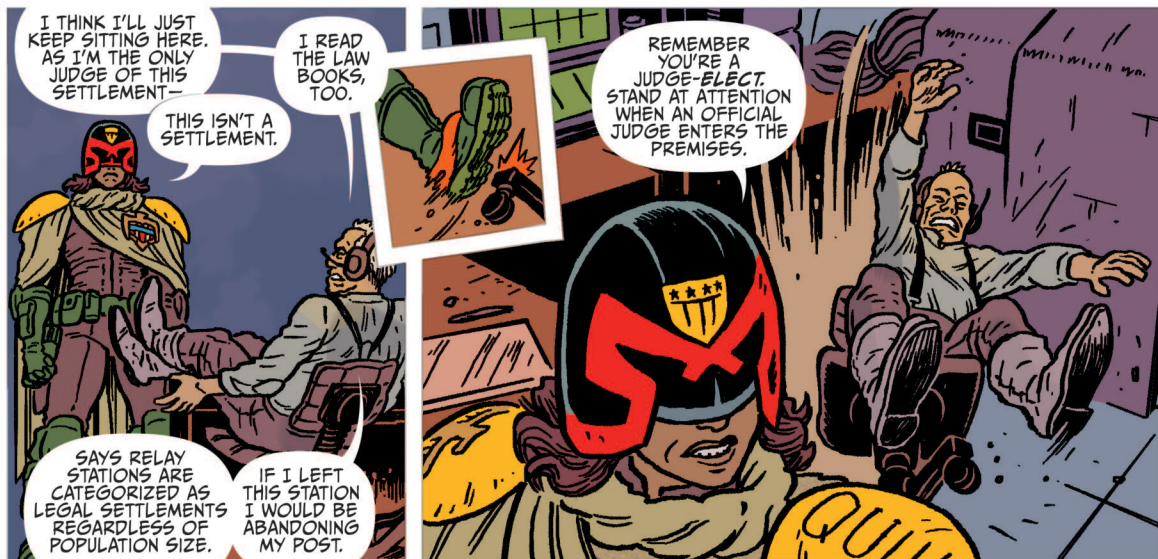
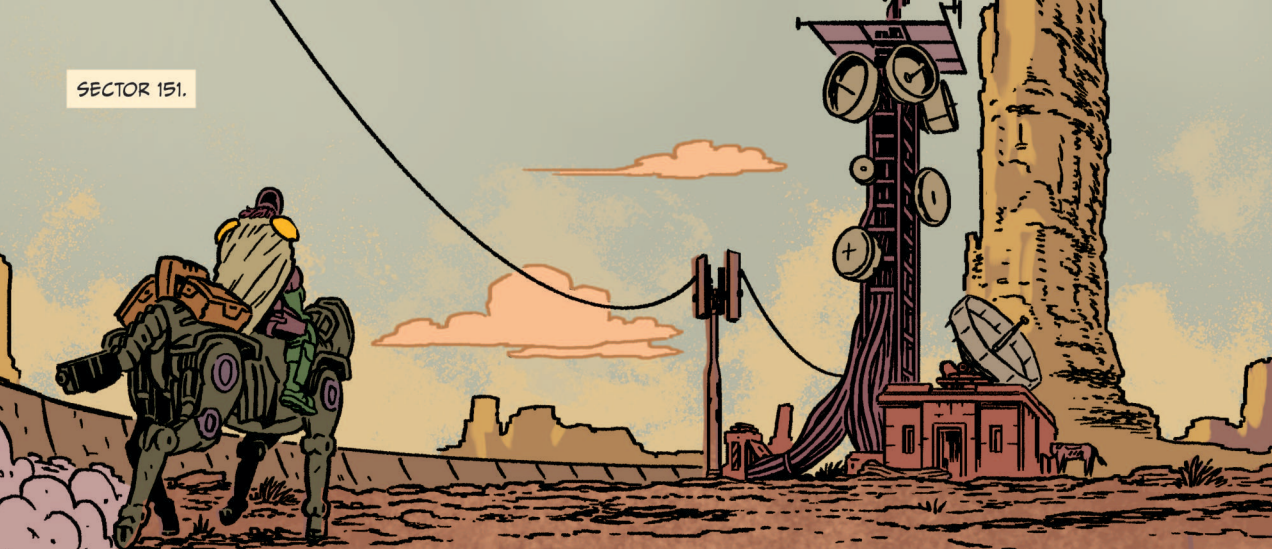
*EXILES—NICKNAME FOR THE 800 MILLION WHO EMERGED FROM THE GRASS



FORSAKEN
population 180
WE WERE HERE
FIRST

CALM DOWN, CADET. WHERE'S YOUR SUPERVISOR?

HE'S RIGHT UP THERE, SIR.

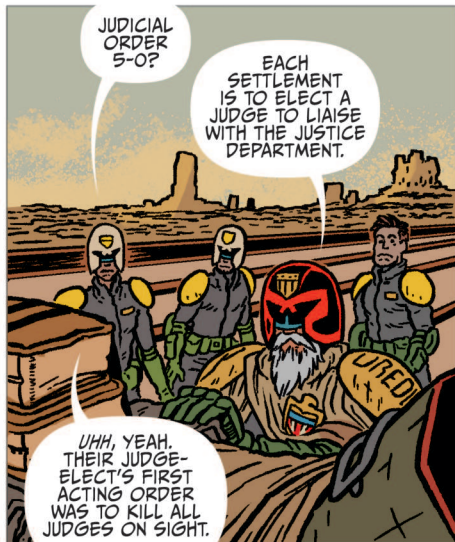




DRONE, GIVE ME AN INVENTORY BREAKDOWN. MUNITIONS FIRST. CADET BRONSON, HAS THE TOWN BEEN MADE AWARE OF JUDICIAL ORDER 5-0?

TWO LAWGIVER '86 STANDARD ROUNDS, FOURTEEN HI-EX, NINETEEN ARMOR PIERCING, THIRTY-TWO RICOCHET, FIFTY-SIX INCENDIARY, TWELVE MK2 STUMM GAS GRENADES, TEN XMSB RIOT FORM GRENADES, FIVE T.D.O.'S-

THAT'S ENOUGH, DRONE-ALERT MODE.



JUDICIAL ORDER 5-0?

EACH SETTLEMENT IS TO ELECT A JUDGE TO LIAISE WITH THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT.

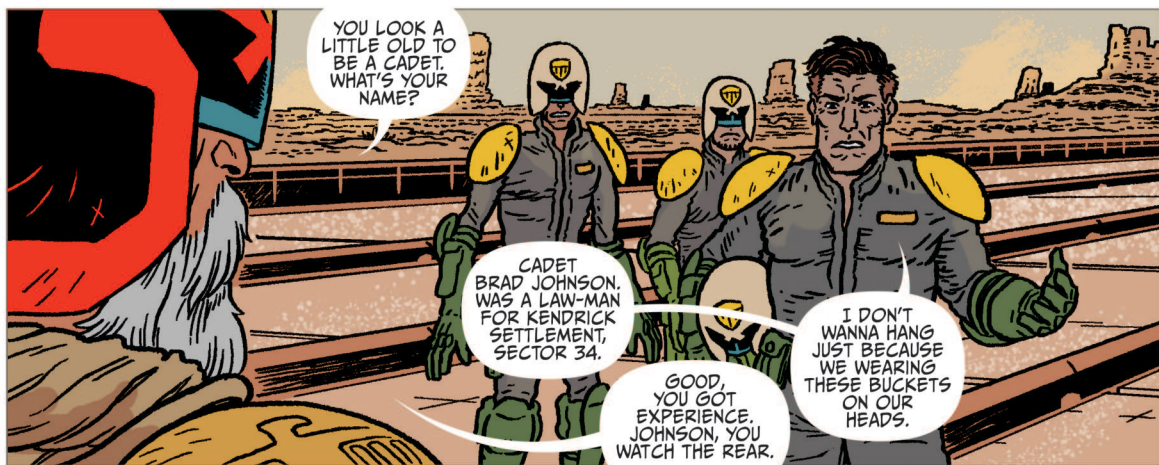
UHH, YEAH. THEIR JUDGE-ELECT'S FIRST ACTING ORDER WAS TO KILL ALL JUDGES ON SIGHT.



WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, CADET?

WE AIN'T STAYING. TOWN TOLD US WE GOTTA CLEAR OUT BY NOON OR THEY ARE COMING OUT HERE AND KILLING EVERY LAST ONE OF US.

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT NEEDS BOOTS ON THE GROUND, AND YOU'RE THE ONES FILLING THEM. LET'S GO.

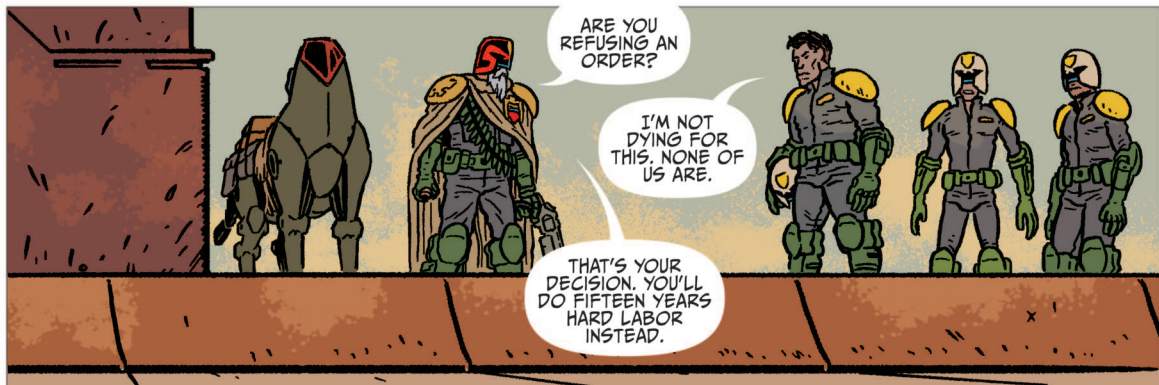


YOU LOOK A LITTLE OLD TO BE A CADET. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

CADET BRAD JOHNSON. WAS A LAW-MAN FOR KENDRICK SETTLEMENT, SECTOR 34.

GOOD, YOU GOT EXPERIENCE. JOHNSON, YOU WATCH THE REAR.

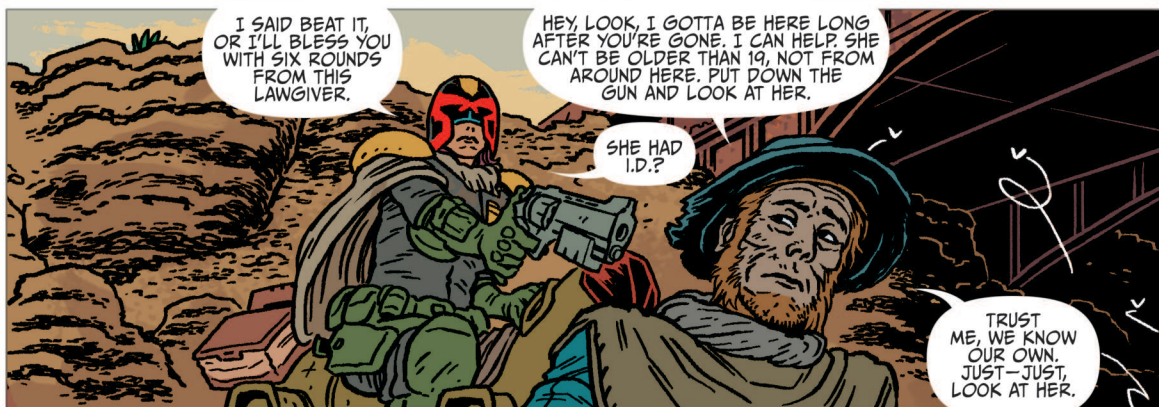
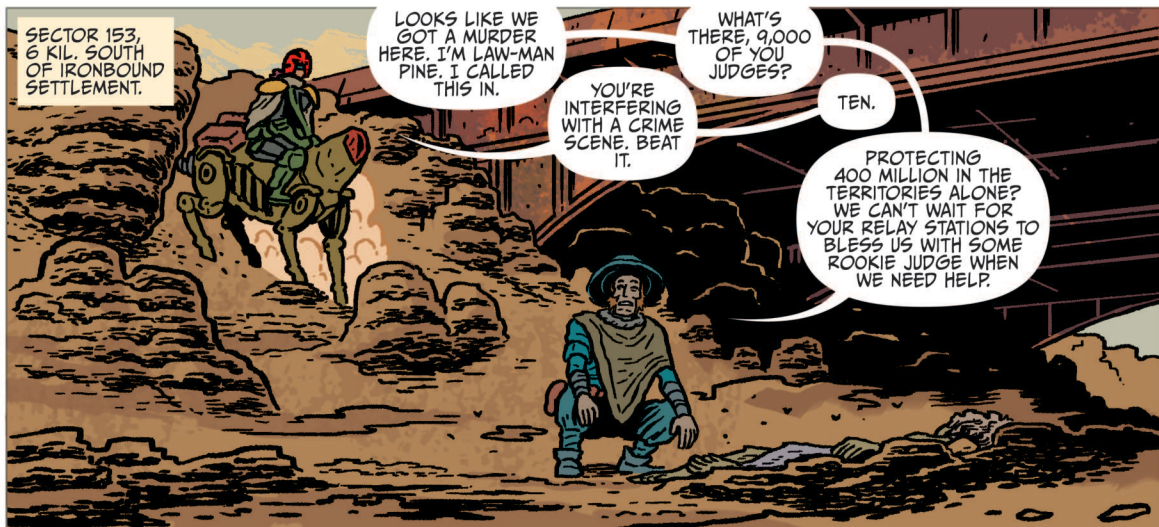
I DON'T WANNA HANG JUST BECAUSE WE WEARING THESE BUCKETS ON OUR HEADS.

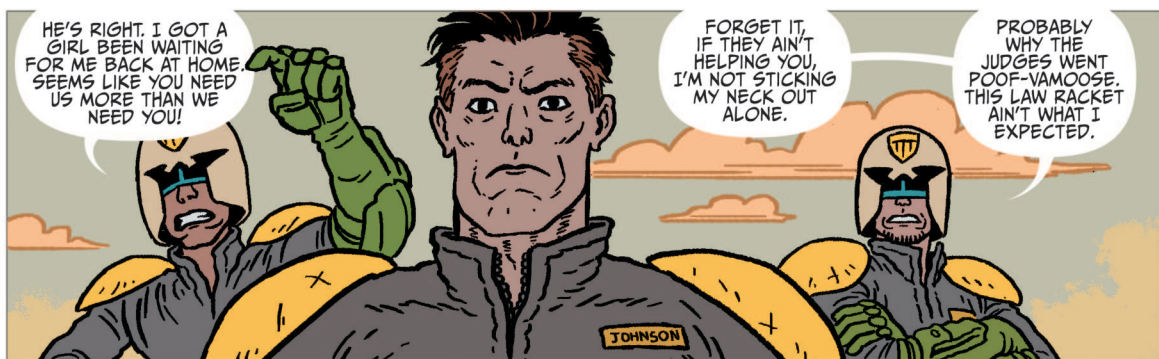


ARE YOU REFUSING AN ORDER?

I'M NOT DYING FOR THIS. NONE OF US ARE.

THAT'S YOUR DECISION. YOU'LL DO FIFTEEN YEARS HARD LABOR INSTEAD.



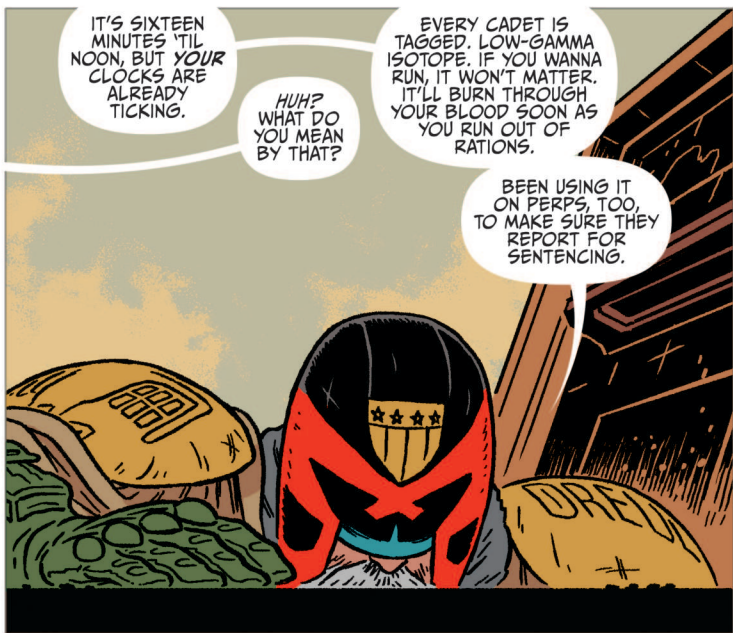




A TOWN THAT
SIZE PROBABLY
ONLY HAS 10 OR 12
CAPABLE FIGHTERS.
ONE TRAINED JUDGE
IS WORTH TWICE
AS MANY.



WE'LL USE THE
MAINTENANCE
TUNNEL BENEATH
THE RAIL. SOMEWHERE UP THE RAIL,
THEN BACKTRACK UNTIL
WE COME UP IN THE
MIDDLE OF THEIR
TOWN SQUARE.



IT'S SIXTEEN
MINUTES 'TIL
NOON, BUT YOUR
CLOCKS ARE
ALREADY
TICKING.

HUH?
WHAT DO
YOU MEAN
BY THAT?

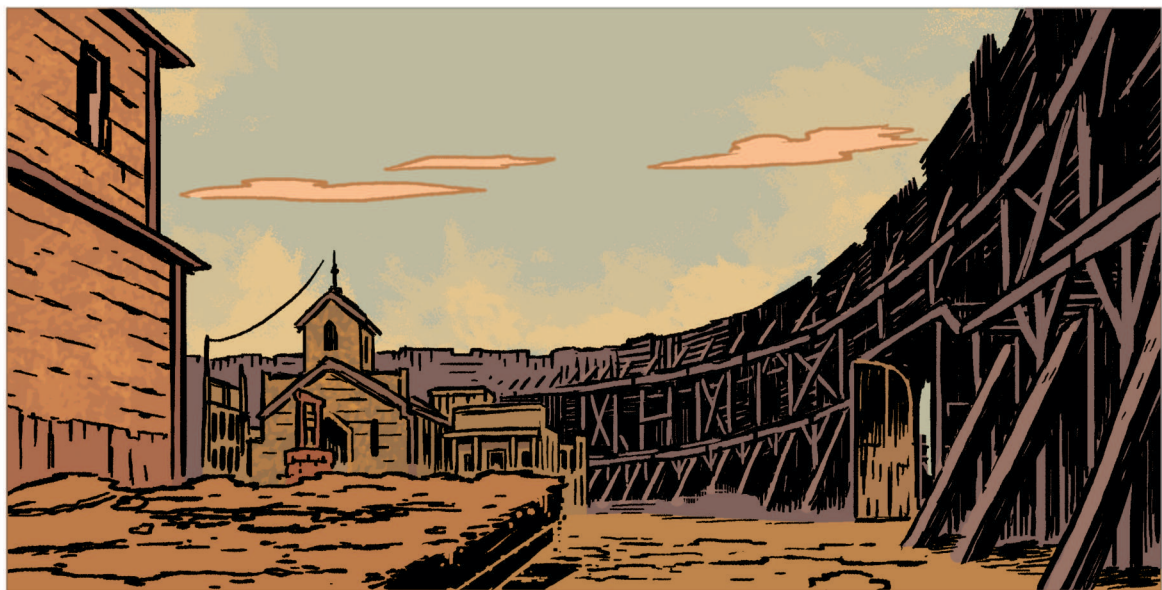
EVERY CADET IS
TAGGED. LOW-GAMMA
ISOTOPE. IF YOU WANNA
RUN, IT WON'T MATTER.
IT'LL BURN THROUGH
YOUR BLOOD SOON AS
YOU RUN OUT OF
RATIONS.

BEEN USING IT
ON PERPS, TOO,
TO MAKE SURE THEY
REPORT FOR
SENTENCING.

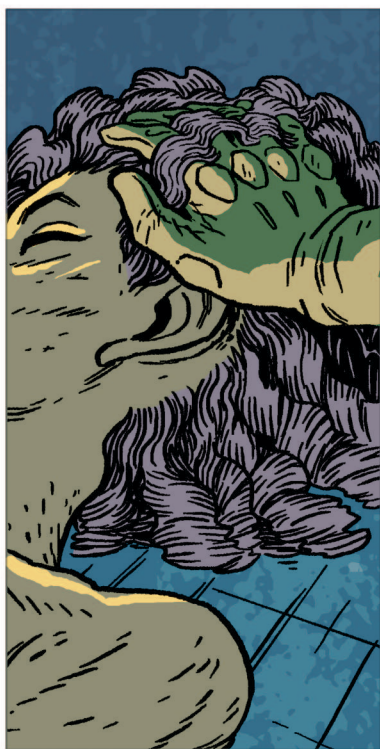


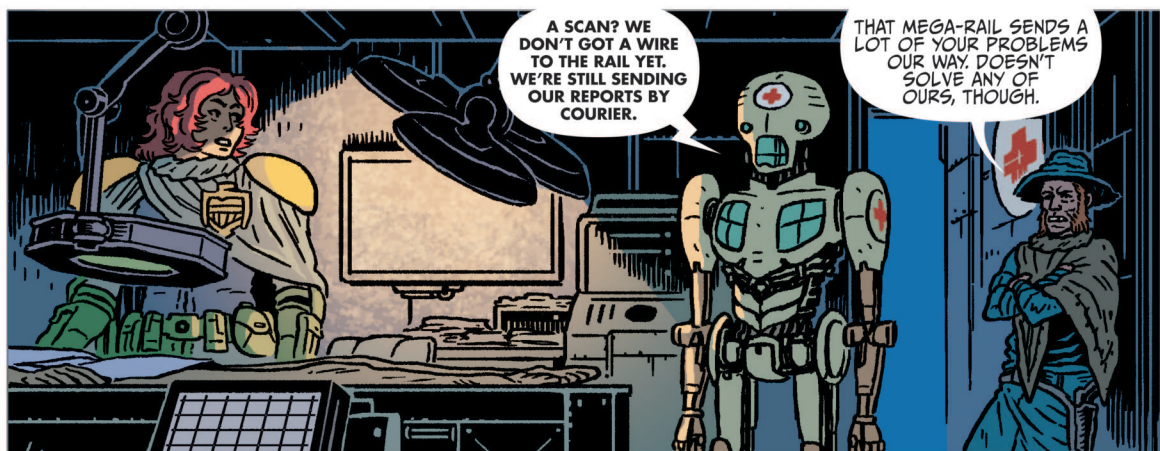
LOOK, DON'T
GET SPUGGED.
WE JUST DO WHAT
WAS PLANNED AND
WE WILL BE ON
EASY STREET.

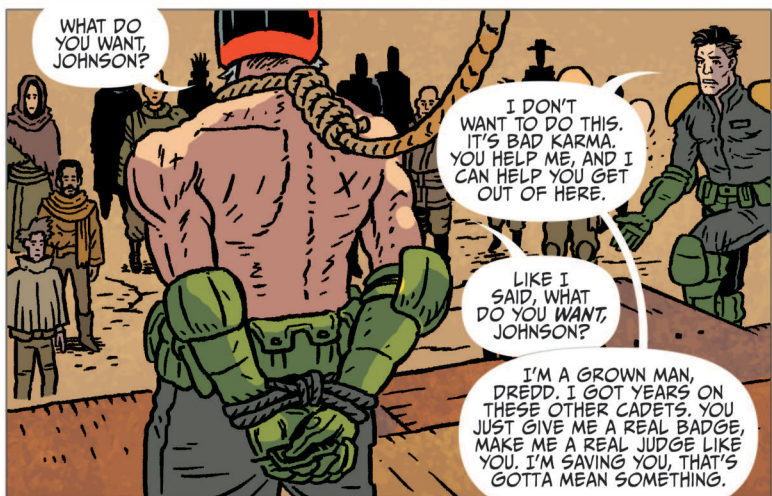


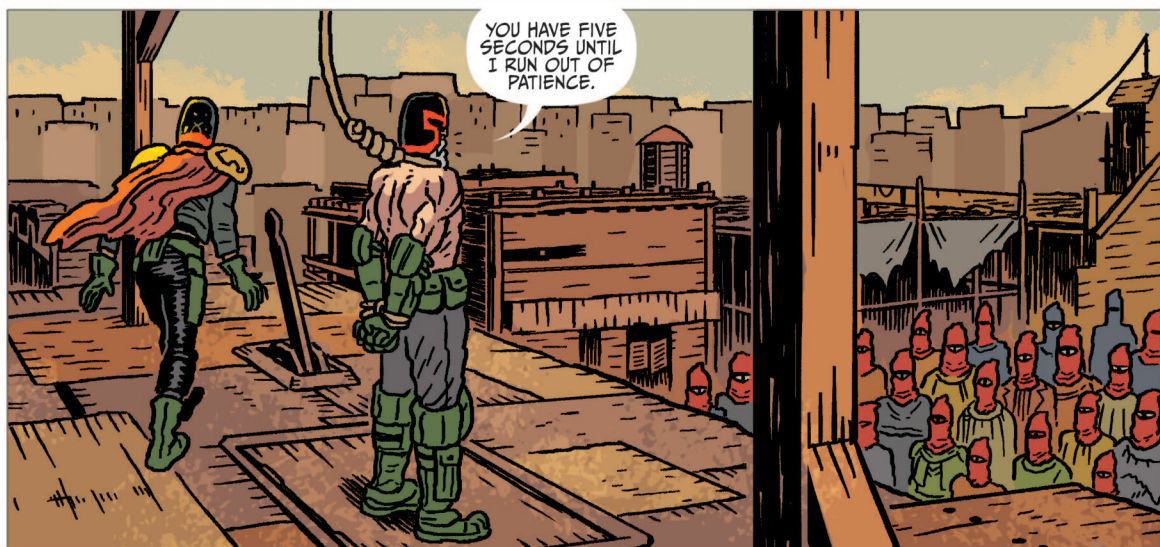


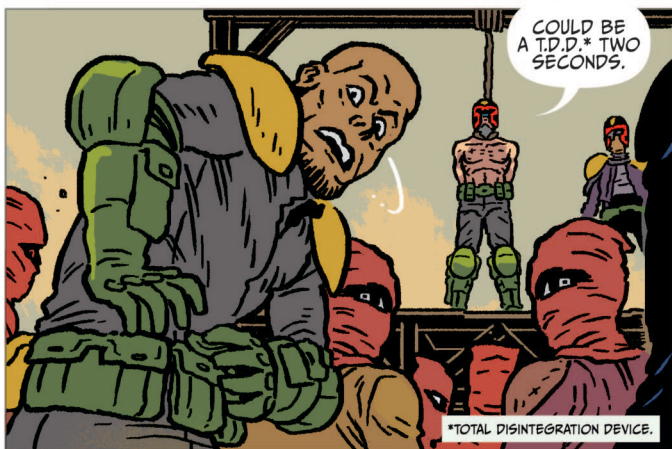
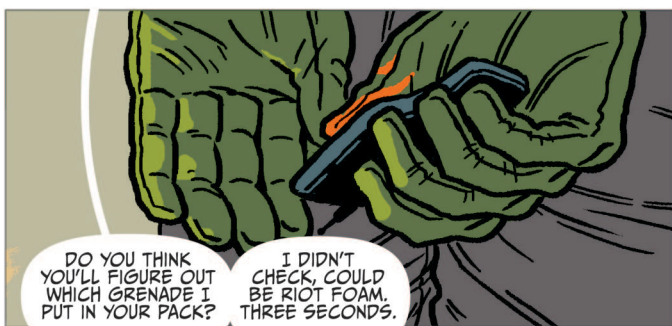


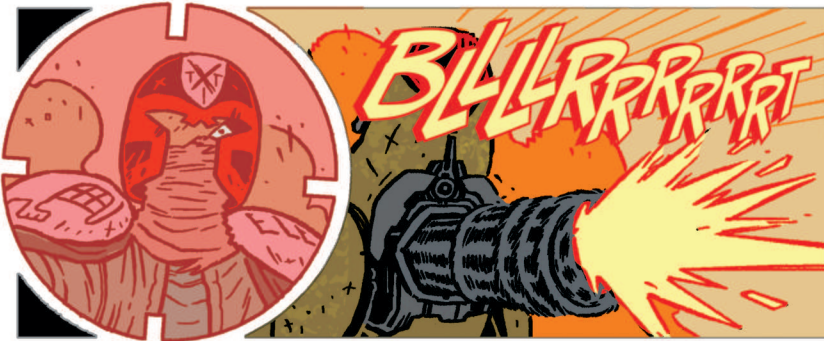
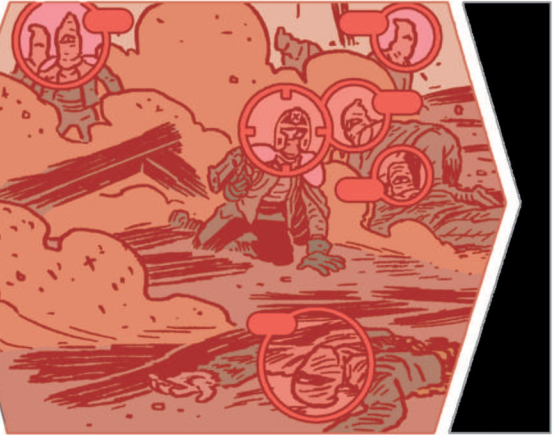




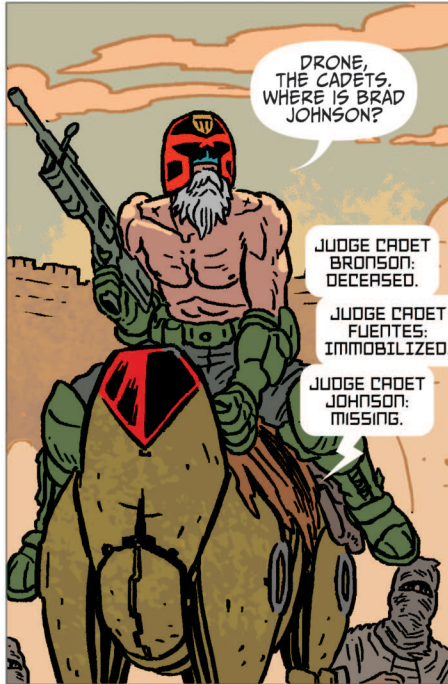






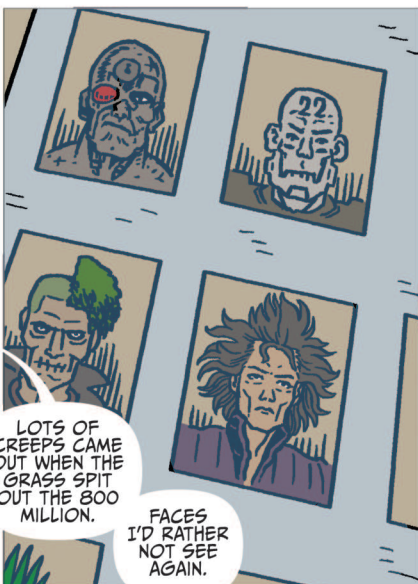


THIS TOWN IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY
OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT.
YOU'RE ALL UNDER ARREST.
SENTENCES WILL BE DETERMINED
ACCORDINGLY.





DON'T KNOW IF IT'S IN THERE. JUST SOME PHOTOS OF CREEPS WITH TATTOOS.



LOTS OF CREEPS CAME OUT WHEN THE GRASS SPIT OUT THE 800 MILLION.

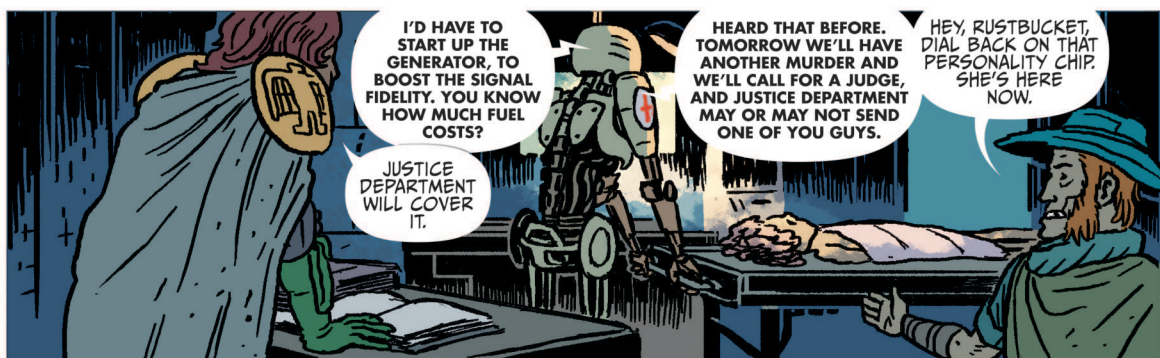
FACES I'D RATHER NOT SEE AGAIN.



COULD BE NOTHING. I'VE SEEN DOZENS OF KIDS TATTOOED HEAD TO TOE.

IT'S SOMETHING. THE BONES REMOVED. THIS MICROBRAND.

HAS HER DNA PROFILE TURNED UP ANY ID ON THE JD-NETWORK?



I'D HAVE TO START UP THE GENERATOR, TO BOOST THE SIGNAL FIDELITY. YOU KNOW HOW MUCH FUEL COSTS?

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WILL COVER IT.

HEARD THAT BEFORE. TOMORROW WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER MURDER AND WE'LL CALL FOR A JUDGE, AND JUSTICE DEPARTMENT MAY OR MAY NOT SEND ONE OF YOU GUYS.

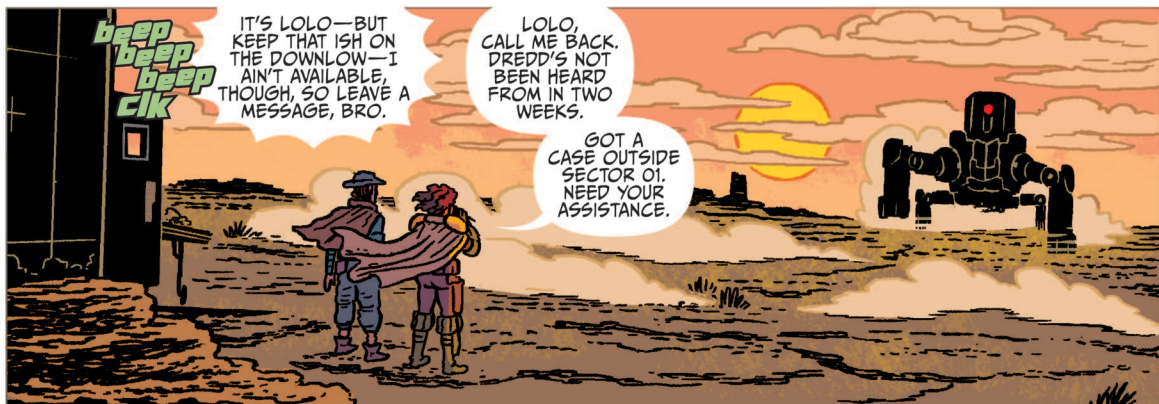
HEY, RUSTBUCKET, DIAL BACK ON THAT PERSONALITY CHIP. SHE'S HERE NOW.



YEAH, ASKING A LOT OF QUESTIONS THAT DON'T HAVE ANSWERS. ON TOP OF THAT, THIS GIRL ISN'T GIVING ANY UP.

ALL I'M SAYING IS SOMETIMES IN LIFE, YOU DON'T WANT THE ANSWERS.

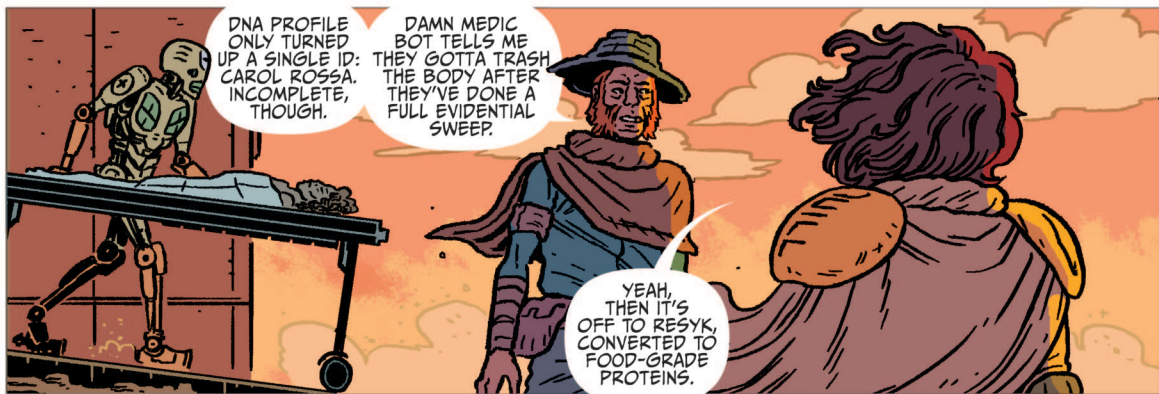
AND MAYBE YOU JUST HAVEN'T REALIZED THAT YET.



IT'S LOLO—BUT
KEEP THAT ISH ON
THE DOWNLOW—I
AIN'T AVAILABLE,
THOUGH, SO LEAVE A
MESSAGE, BRO.

LOLO,
CALL ME BACK.
DREDD'S NOT
BEEN HEARD
FROM IN TWO
WEEKS.

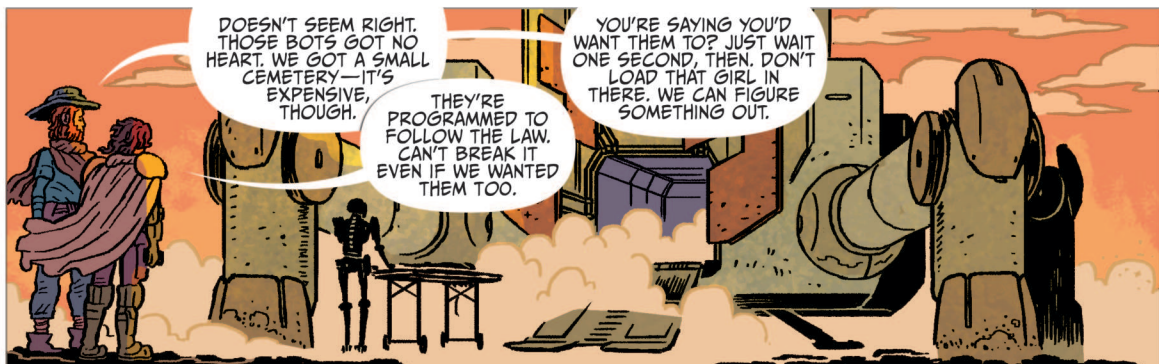
GOT A
CASE OUTSIDE
SECTOR 01.
NEED YOUR
ASSISTANCE.



DNA PROFILE
ONLY TURNED
UP A SINGLE ID:
CAROL ROSSA.
INCOMPLETE,
THOUGH.

DAMN MEDIC
BOT TELLS ME
THEY GOTTA TRASH
THE BODY AFTER
THEY'VE DONE A
FULL EVIDENTIAL
SWEEP.

YEAH,
THEN IT'S
OFF TO RESYK,
CONVERTED TO
FOOD-GRADE
PROTEINS.



DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT.
THOSE BOTS GOT NO
HEART. WE GOT A SMALL
CEMETERY—IT'S
EXPENSIVE,
THOUGH.

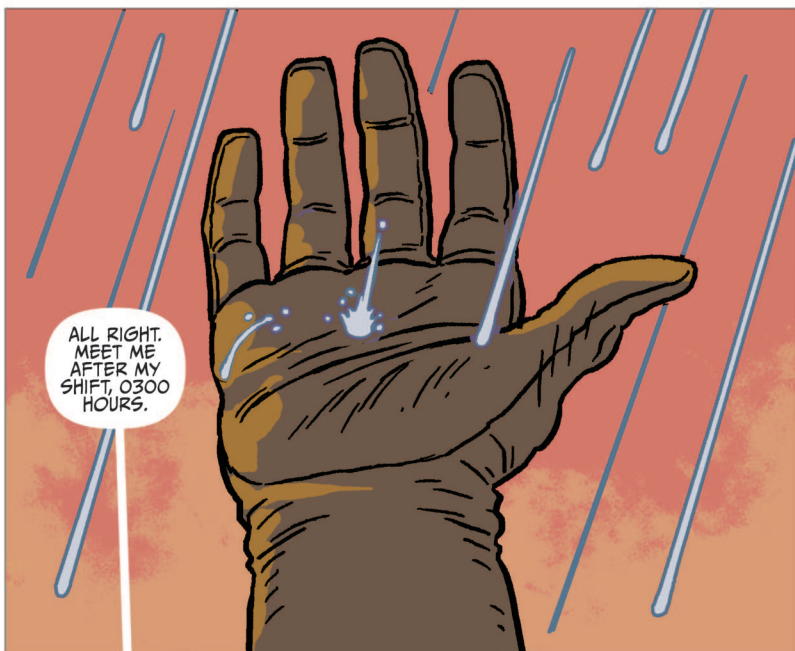
THEY'RE
PROGRAMMED TO
FOLLOW THE LAW.
CAN'T BREAK IT
EVEN IF WE WANTED
THEM TOO.

YOU'RE SAYING YOU'D
WANT THEM TO? JUST WAIT
ONE SECOND, THEN. DON'T
LOAD THAT GIRL IN
THERE. WE CAN FIGURE
SOMETHING OUT.

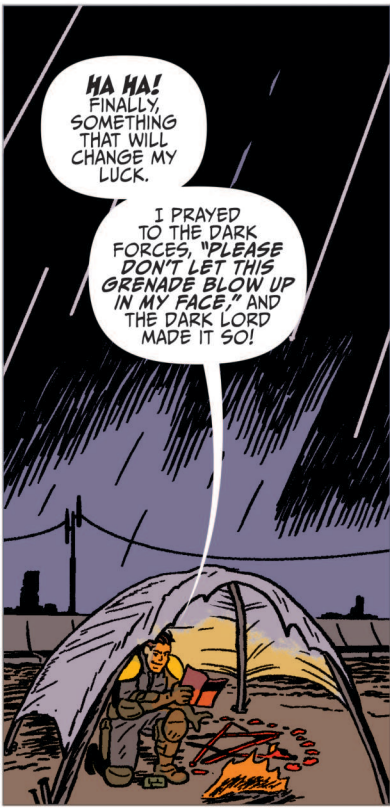


NOTHING TO
FIGURE OUT. THE
LAW IS WHAT IT IS.
JUDGES DON'T
GOT A CHOICE.

JUST
LIKE THAT
ROBOT IN
THERE.

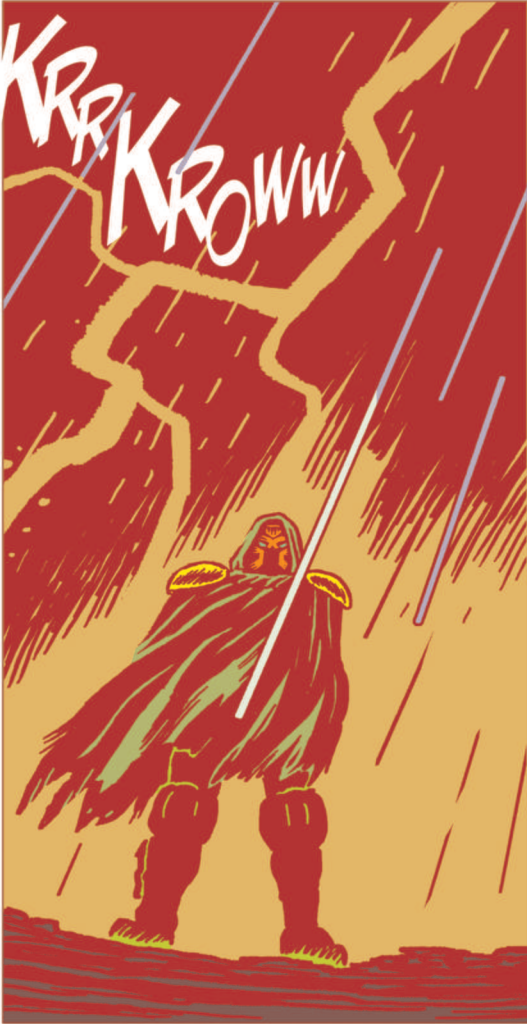


ALL RIGHT.
MEET ME
AFTER MY
SHIFT, 0300
HOURS.



HA HA!
FINALLY,
SOMETHING
THAT WILL
CHANGE MY
LUCK.

I PRAYED
TO THE DARK
FORCES, "PLEASE
DON'T LET THIS
GRENADE BLOW UP
IN MY FACE," AND
THE DARK LORD
MADE IT SO!

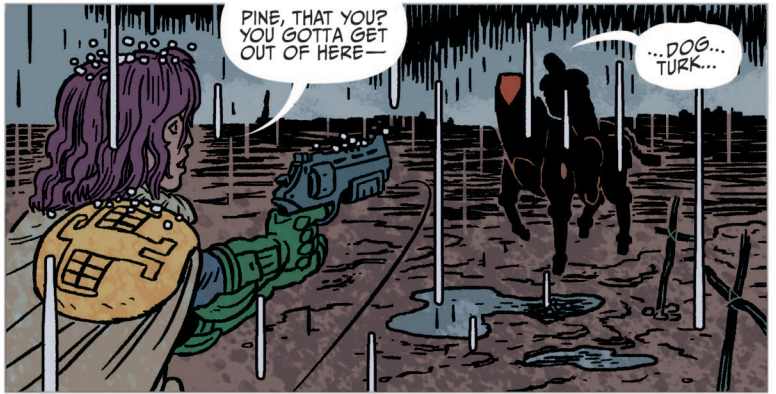
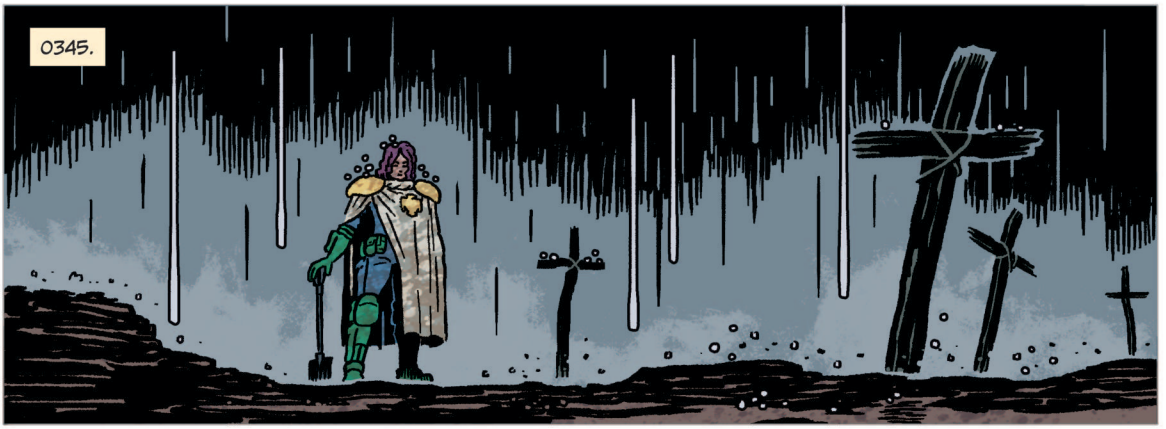


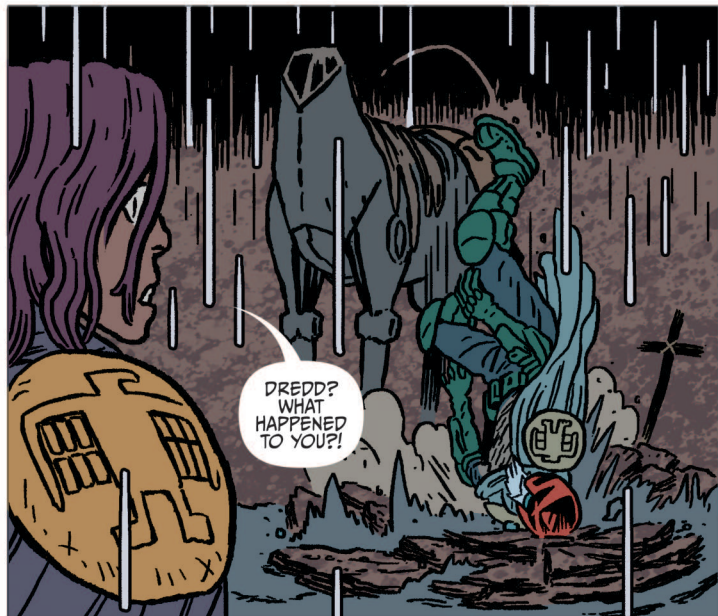
HOW
DID YOU
FIND ME?!



DREDD!
DREDD!

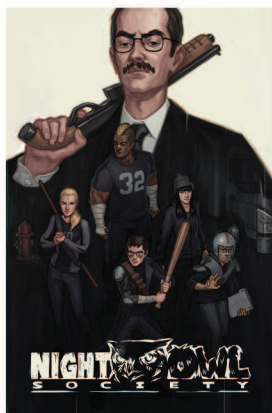
NoOo!





FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

by Ted Adams



I hope you're enjoying *Animal Noir* and *Helena Crash*, the creator-owned books I told you about in February and March. This month, I'd like to introduce you to James Venhaus and Pius Bak, the creators of *Night Owl Society*.

It's the story of a group of misfit high school kids who decide to take on their local mob boss. Imagine a Quentin Tarantino version of *The Breakfast Club*—great characters who actually sound and act like real high school kids and a complex bad guy who isn't just a mustache-twirling villain.

TA: James, the characters you've created in *Night Owl Society* take some of the usual character tropes and turn them on their head. Was that your intention?

detailed sketch of the page, I would send it to James. If he approved and no changes were needed, I would ink and color the page. That's about it.

TA: Both, what were your influences when you created the *Night Owl Society* world?

James: Absolutely. I wanted to give the reader a group of characters that they thought they knew, only to see that there is much more to them than meets the eye. I teach at a private high school that is a lot like the school in *Night Owl Society*. And, what I love about my students is how they are so much more complex than their outward appearance would lead you to believe.

TA: Pius, I'm impressed with your panel layout and storytelling. What's your work process?

Pius: With *NOS*, James gave me the freedom to plan the pages by myself. I would divide each scene from the script into separate possible storyboards at first, while trying to visualize them as illustrations in my head. Then I would group the storyboards into comic pages. If there were a storyboard that I thought could look exceptionally interesting, I would consider doing a full-page spread.

Once I have figured out how many panels I want to put on a page, I would start sketching out all the options for layouts. That's when I decide sizes and shapes of the panels. Some panels will be smaller; some will be bigger, depending on its importance and how much dialogue has to fit in it. Knowledge on composition and graphic design becomes somewhat important at this stage.

After finding the layout I like the most, I would start sketching the content into panel frames. At this stage, I think about camera angles, composition and what would be the focal points in the panels. Once I had a somewhat

James: The school where I teach and my students are a huge influence on the *Night Owl Society*. My students are the perfect subject for a story about crime fighters. They are smarter than the average teenager, have copious amounts of both free time and disposable income, and an overdeveloped sense of right and wrong. They see everything in black and white and aren't afraid to take action when they feel that there is an injustice in their community.

Pius: I think at the time I was drawing the *Night Owl Society*, I was really influenced by comic book artists David Aja and Toni Infante. A lot of it shows in the pages I drew.

TA: Both, anything else you'd like to tell our readers?

James: I love comics, and there are so many truly original and compelling new books out now. I encourage you to read what you love and to broaden your horizons and to try something new. And, as always, support your local comic shop!

Pius: Working with James on *Night Owl Society* was a fun experience and I learned a lot while working on it. Give it a read and I hope you will enjoy it.

