



WE WERE AT THE END OF OUR ROPE IN HIGHLAND COUNTY. WE COULDN'T EARN ENOUGH MONEY TO SURVIVE RAISING HONEST CROP.



SO WE STARTED GROWING MARIJUANA.

Bhang!
Bhang!



AT LAST WE COULD AFFORD TO FIX UP THE OLD CHURCH. WE ADDED A STAINED GLASS WINDOW OF THE BURNING BUSH.



I HEAR WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON GROWED HEMP. MY KIN NEVER BEFORE GROWED CROP WITH A COLOR IN ITS NAME EXCEPT ORANGES.



ONE NIGHT I SEE SOME SPARKLING STUFF IN THE SKY WHAT I KNOW AIN'T NO FALLING STAR.

I WISH ON IT ANYWAY.

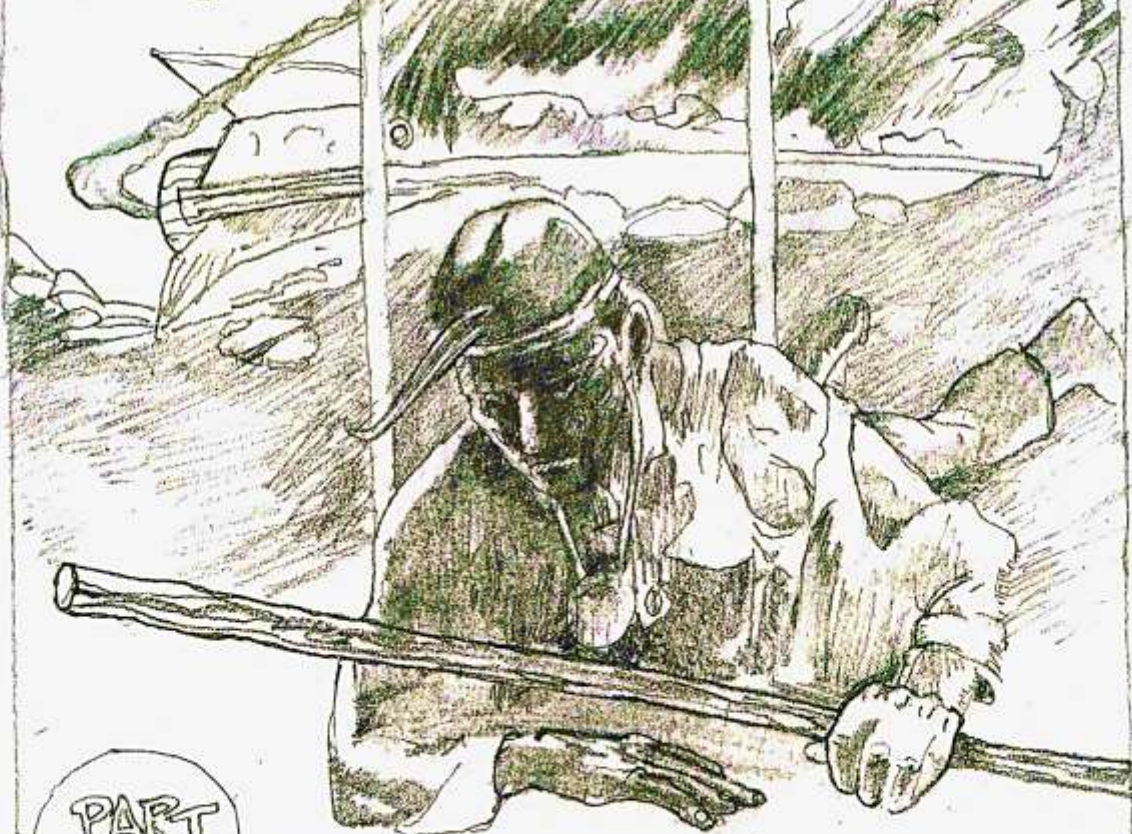


RUNCH!

I WISH THERE WAS SOME OTHER WAY WE COULD KEEP OUR PRIDE, KEEP OUR WAY OF LIFE AN' KEEP ALIEN INFLUENCE'S OUTTA TH' COUNTY.

Cyril Knight

HIGHLAND GOLD



PART
ONE

JOINT VENTURE



MEANWHILE, AS IF NOTHING EXTRAORDINARY ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH HAS HAPPENED, JAKE AND THE BOYS PARLEY WITH THE CONVOY FROM MIAMI BUSINESS AS USUAL



'EY ANGLO!

I SUSPECT WE'RE DEALING WITH GERMANICS, PEDRO COMMUNITY ORIENTED NOTORIOUSLY XENOPHOBIC

GERMAN FRENCH, JEW IT DON MATTER THEY RE ALL ANGLOS TO ME, MAN



ANGLO-- YOU KNOW DEALING AT GONPOINT IS HOW PONKS AND AMATEURS DIE!

HERE WE ARE LIKE RUSSIA AND AMERICA, ALL THIS HARDWARE POINTED AT OUR HEARTS

ONE MISTAKE - ONE SUSPECTED SLIP OF TONGUE-- MAYBE YOU MISUNDERSTAND SOME THING I SAY IN SPANISH TO ME COMPADRES AND



BAM! NOBODY'S LEFT!

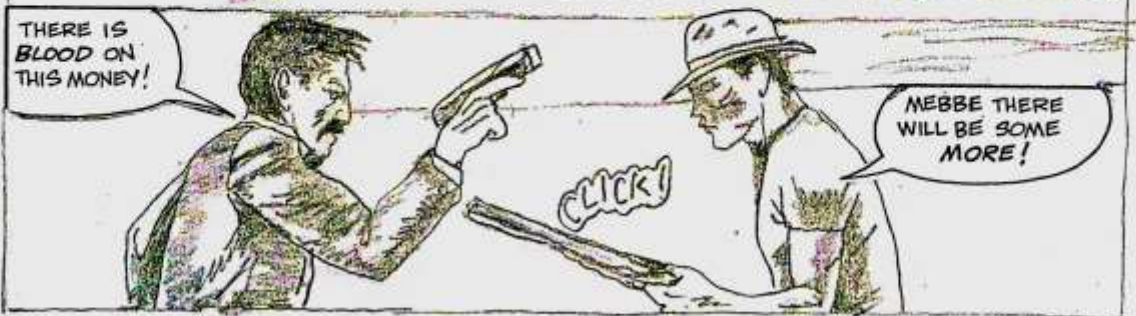
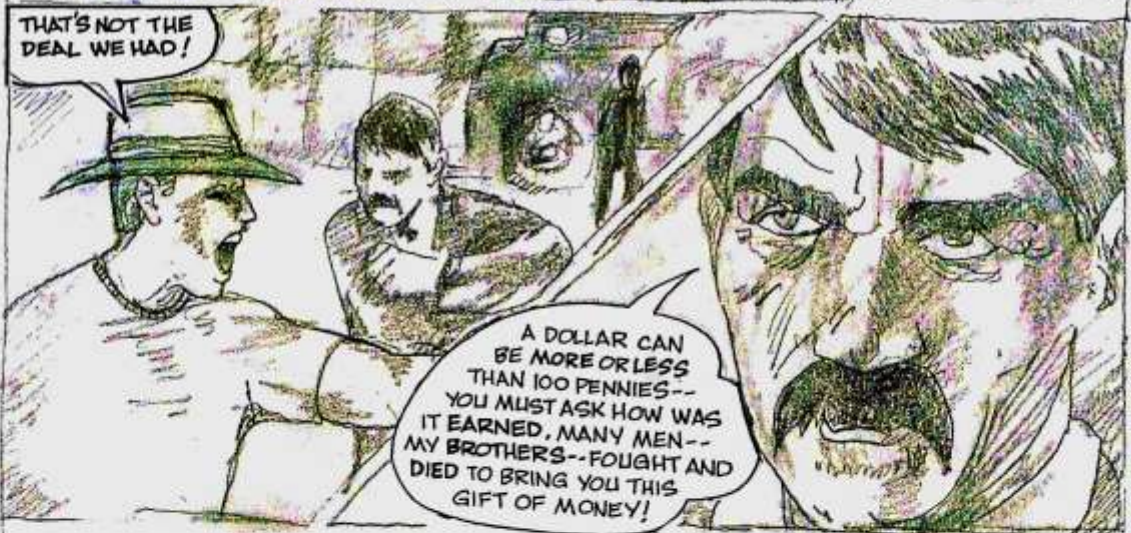


WE INT THE GODLESS ROOSKIES, PEDRO I BELIEVE WE CAN ACHIEVE PEACE THROUGH UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT THE WORD IS BILATERAL

HE GOTTA TELL YOU HOW TO USE YOUR OWN LANGUAGE, MAN?

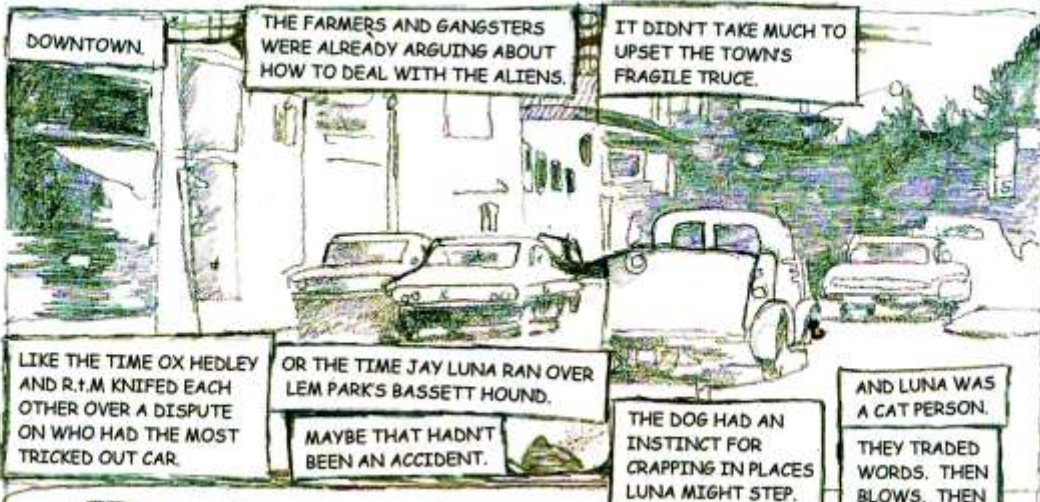


UNILATERAL THAT THERES WHEN YOU LAY DOWN VER CANNONS SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE ME AND THE BOYS IS TOO FULL OF CHARITY TO BLOW AWAY UNARMED MEN THIS CLOSE TO CHRISTMAS!









DOWNTOWN.

THE FARMERS AND GANGSTERS WERE ALREADY ARGUING ABOUT HOW TO DEAL WITH THE ALIENS.

IT DIDNT TAKE MUCH TO UPSET THE TOWN'S FRAGILE TRUCE.

LIKE THE TIME OX HEDLEY AND R.F.M KNIFED EACH OTHER OVER A DISPUTE ON WHO HAD THE MOST TRICKED OUT CAR.

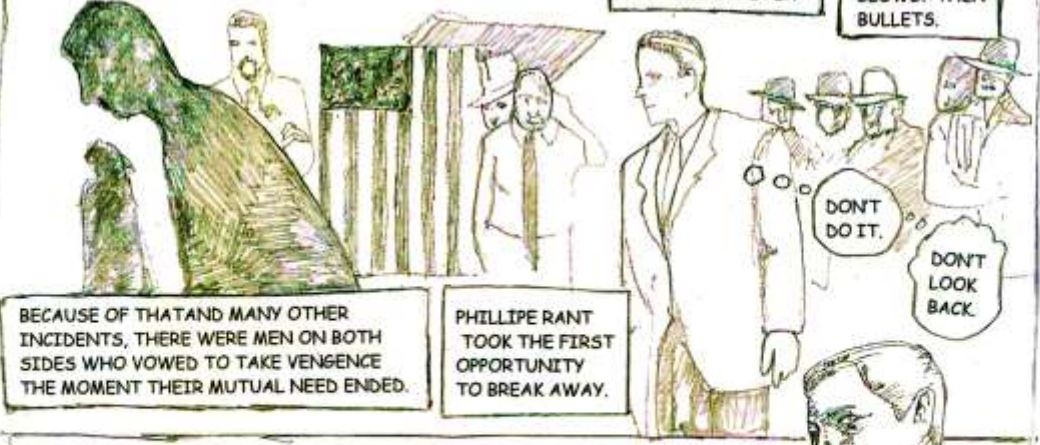
OR THE TIME JAY LUNA RAN OVER LEM PARK'S BASSETT HOUND.

MAYBE THAT HADNT BEEN AN ACCIDENT.

THE DOG HAD AN INSTINCT FOR CRAPPING IN PLACES LUNA MIGHT STEP.

AND LUNA WAS A CAT PERSON.

THEY TRADED WORDS. THEN BLOWS. THEN BULLETS.



BECAUSE OF THAT AND MANY OTHER INCIDENTS, THERE WERE MEN ON BOTH SIDES WHO VOWED TO TAKE VENGEANCE THE MOMENT THEIR MUTUAL NEED ENDED.

PHILLIPE RANT TOOK THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK AWAY.

DONT DO IT.

DONT LOOK BACK.



HE DIDNT WANT TO BE OUT OF CHARACTER. HE DIDNT WANT TO MAKE ANY GESTURE THAT SUGGESTED FEAR. OR THAT HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN UFO'S.

BUT THEN HE ALLOWED HIMSELF A BACKWARD GLANCE.

DEFIANTLY, HE THREW TO THE ARGUING CROWD A LOOK THAT TOLD THEM WHO HE WAS.

A MAN WHO ALWAYS WATCHED HIS BACK.

TO BE CONTINUED...