

## ON NEON LIT

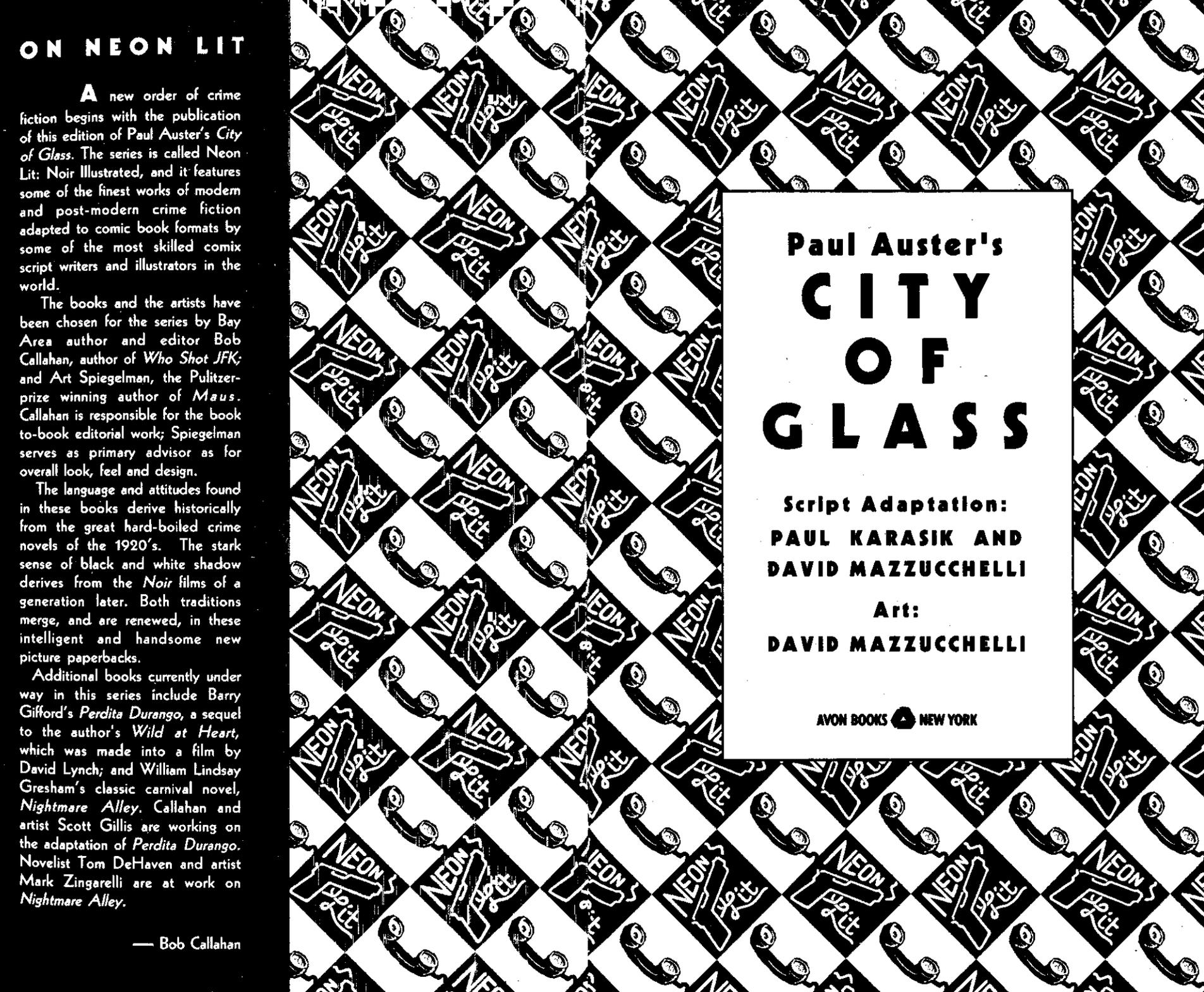
A new order of crime fiction begins with the publication of this edition of Paul Auster's *City of Glass*. The series is called Neon Lit: Noir Illustrated, and it features some of the finest works of modern and post-modern crime fiction adapted to comic book formats by some of the most skilled comic script writers and illustrators in the world.

The books and the artists have been chosen for the series by Bay Area author and editor Bob Callahan, author of *Who Shot JFK?* and Art Spiegelman, the Pulitzer-prize winning author of *Maus*. Callahan is responsible for the book-to-book editorial work; Spiegelman serves as primary advisor as for overall look, feel and design.

The language and attitudes found in these books derive historically from the great hard-boiled crime novels of the 1920's. The stark sense of black and white shadow derives from the *Noir* films of a generation later. Both traditions merge, and are renewed, in these intelligent and handsome new picture paperbacks.

Additional books currently under way in this series include Barry Gifford's *Perdita Durango*, a sequel to the author's *Wild at Heart*, which was made into a film by David Lynch; and William Lindsay Gresham's classic carnival novel, *Nightmare Alley*. Callahan and artist Scott Gillis are working on the adaptation of *Perdita Durango*. Novelist Tom DeHaven and artist Mark Zingarelli are at work on *Nightmare Alley*.

— Bob Callahan



# Paul Auster's CITY OF GLASS

Script Adaptation:  
**PAUL KARASIK AND  
DAVID MAZZUCHELLI**

Art:  
**DAVID MAZZUCHELLI**

AVON BOOKS ● NEW YORK

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Based on the novel *City of Glass*, by Paul Auster. Copyright © 1985 by Paul Auster.

**Neon Lit:** Paul Auster's *City of Glass* is an original publication of Avon Books. This work has never appeared in graphic form. Any similarity to actual persons or events is purely coincidental.

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## WRONG NUMBER

The music of historic change is now heard in some of the most exciting works of contemporary crime fiction. These days, sophisticated writers turn to the comparative simplicities of crime fiction to help spell out the essential unease of our age. In this regard — and as our own leading example — Paul Auster's *City of Glass* appears to us today as an unfinished, perhaps ultimately unfinishable diagram for some bold, new and experimental symphony. In a book such as *City of Glass*, we leave forever the honorable worlds of a Dashiell Hammett or a Raymond Chandler, and enter into a far darker, more complex domain.

In Dashiell Hammett's world, decent, tough-minded individuals called private detectives still succeed in restoring the social order, by redressing the crime of sin. In Auster's era — our own era — crime is inherent: it can't be reversed. And the social order will not be restored, for it never existed in the first place. In the new city, both the criminal and the detective have been assigned a fate before the book even begins, a fate in which no easy sense of a lost Eden can possibly be regained. Everything here is shadows. This is a world in which only a neon literature might actually obtain.

The sound of shattered glass, and the sight of jagged edges, is at the very center of word and picture driven crime fiction. The old logics simply no longer calculate. "Commit a crime," *Real Clue Comics* told us, as early as in 1948, "and the world is made of glass." In Paul Auster's city, we are driven back beyond even Hammett and Chandler to the still earlier genius of a Sir Conan Doyle. Compare, for example the role of

deductive reasoning in both Auster and Doyle. With Doyle, deduction is everything. With Auster, the clarity of pure reason becomes a vast, still musically interesting highway which, if pursued too rigorously, can only lead straight into the loony bin.

Turn, if you will, to one of the crowning moments in this book — the moment when Auster's sleuth, Daniel Quinn, finally confronts his own Moriarty, Peter Stillman's unknown and ultimately unknowable Father. The men meet in a park-bench setting on Riverside Drive in the city of New York. As in Doyle, both men are hunch-makers, note-takers, code-breakers, reason's scientists — but, in this city at least, such artful habits of mind won't do either man any damn good. The darkness is there to engulf them. Everywhere, the shadows extend.

The question therefore is not whether Paul Auster is a crime writer, anymore than it is whether Daniel Quinn is a real crime detective. Both the author and the character have, in fact, fallen into this world at random, and both will choose the patterns of crime detection to transcend the darkness which both know intuitively stands at the heart of the post-modern condition. Quinn's journey will fail. For showing us this world in its exactness, and in its limitations, Auster, quite clearly, may claim a win.

In the end, this new neon literature is the literature of individual human obsessiveness. It assumes silently that when no convincing social order can be established, the individual personality itself will start to unhinge. Its ancestors are thus not Hammett, Chandler, or Doyle; but Poe, Dostoyevsky, and perhaps James M. Cain. This new literature makes the point, rather decisively, that, in such a violent and irrational world, it is not surprising when the deeds of serial killers are taken as hideously precise omens of the true nature of our age.

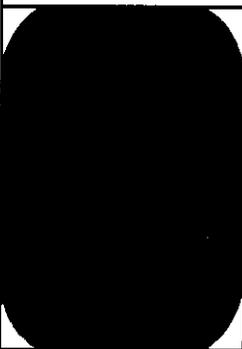
And here, finally, is where we make our own shift into this landscape. In the hands of Paul Karasik, who first found the right rhythms, and David Mazzucchelli, who has brought these rhythms to form, we move past the speed of sound to the actual speed of light in order to capture the switches which occur throughout the fall in, and out, of human intellectual abstraction. A final lamp light lit against the darkness? A shadow, after all, is still a sign.

The tension between the absolute geometries of the minds of Stillman and Quinn, and the absolute randomness of the world which will rise up and swallow them, cannot be rendered any more exactly than it has been in this singular act of picture fiction, the first Neon Lit edition of Paul Auster's *City of Glass*.

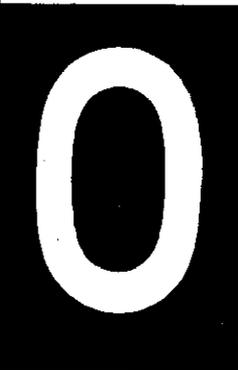
— Bob Callahan

It was a  
wrong number that  
started it...

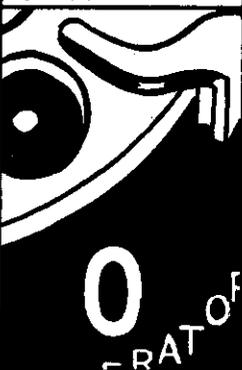
...THE TELEPHONE RINGING THREE TIMES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT...



...AND THE VOICE ON THE OTHER END...



...ASKING FOR SOMEONE HE WAS NOT.



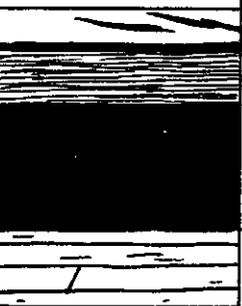
MUCH LATER, HE WOULD CONCLUDE...



...THAT NOTHING WAS REAL...



WHETHER IT MIGHT HAVE TURNED OUT DIFFERENTLY OR WAS PREDETERMINED IS NOT THE QUESTION.



THE QUESTION IS THE STORY ITSELF...



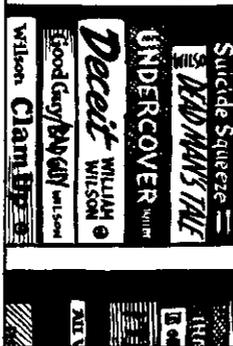
...AND WHETHER OR NOT IT MEANS SOMETHING IS NOT FOR THE STORY TO TELL.



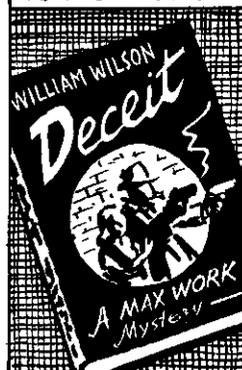
AS FOR QUINN, HE WAS THIRTY-FIVE AND BOTH HIS WIFE AND SON WERE DEAD.



AS A YOUNG MAN, HE HAD WRITTEN POETRY, PLAYS AND ESSAYS.



BUT QUITE ABRUPTLY, HE HAD GIVEN UP ALL THAT.



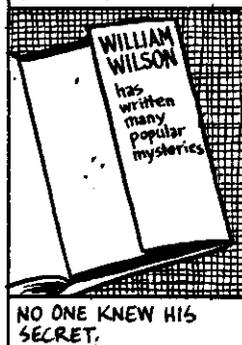
A PART OF HIM HAD DIED AND HE DID NOT WANT IT HAUNTING HIM.



HE NOW WROTE MYSTERY NOVELS UNDER THE NAME OF WILLIAM WILSON.



QUINN NO LONGER EXISTED FOR ANYONE BUT HIMSELF.



NO ONE KNEW HIS SECRET.

HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS THAT HE HAD INHERITED A TRUST FUND FROM HIS WIFE.



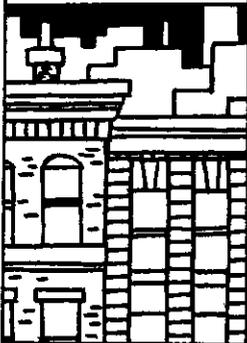
BUT THE FACT WAS THAT HIS WIFE HAD NEVER HAD ANY MONEY.



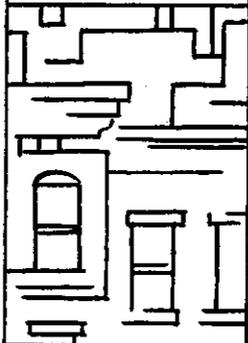
AND THE FACT WAS THAT HE NO LONGER HAD ANY FRIENDS.



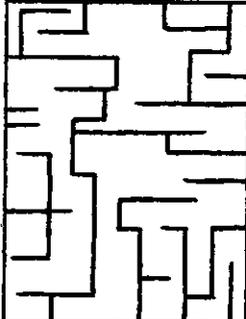
MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WHAT QUINN LIKED TO DO WAS WALK,



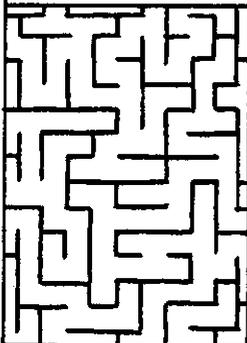
NEW YORK WAS A LABYRINTH OF ENDLESS STEPS...



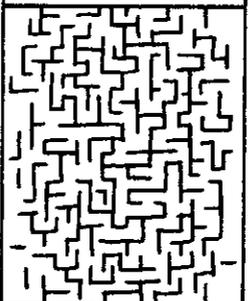
...AND NO MATTER HOW FAR HE WALKED, IT ALWAYS LEFT HIM WITH THE FEELING OF BEING LOST.



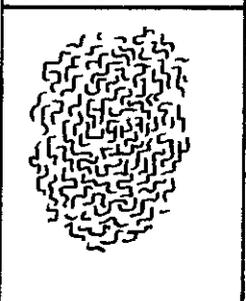
EACH TIME HE TOOK A WALK, HE FELT HE WAS LEAVING HIMSELF BEHIND.



BY GIVING HIMSELF UP TO THE STREETS, BY REDUCING HIMSELF TO A SEEING EYE, HE WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE THINKING.



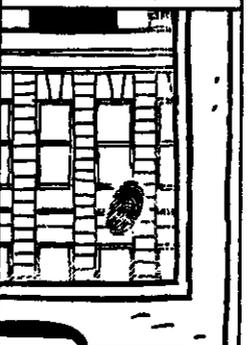
ALL PLACES BECAME EQUAL, AND ON HIS BEST WALKS, HE WAS ABLE TO FEEL THAT HE WAS NOWHERE.



THIS WAS ALL HE EVER ASKED OF THINGS: TO BE NOWHERE.



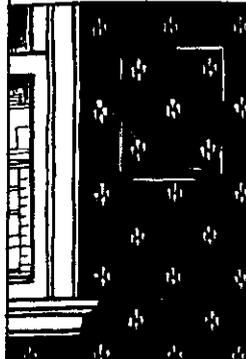
NEW YORK WAS THE NOWHERE HE HAD BUILT AROUND HIMSELF...



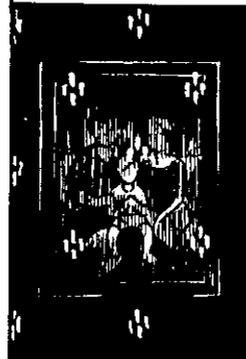
...AND HE HAD NO INTENTION OF EVER LEAVING IT AGAIN.



IT HAD BEEN MORE THAN FIVE YEARS NOW.



HE DID NOT THINK ABOUT IT VERY MUCH ANYMORE.



EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, HE WOULD SUDDENLY FEEL WHAT IT HAD BEEN LIKE...



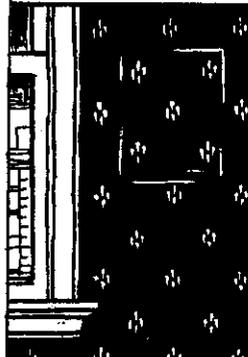
...TO HOLD THE THREE-YEAR-OLD BOY IN HIS ARMS,



IT WAS AN IMPRINT OF THE PAST LEFT IN HIS BODY.



BUT THESE MOMENTS CAME LESS OFTEN NOW.



HE HAD CONTINUED TO WRITE BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY THING HE FELT HE COULD DO.





IF HE LIVED NOW IN THE WORLD AT ALL, IT  
WAS THROUGH THE IMAGINARY PERSON  
OF MAX WOK, THE PRIVATE-EYE  
NARRATOR OF WILLIAM WILSON'S NOVELS.



OVER THE YEARS, WORK  
HAD BECOME VERY  
CLOSE TO QUINN.



WHEREAS WILLIAM  
WILSON REMAINED AN  
ABSTRACT FIGURE, WORK  
HAD INCREASINGLY  
COME TO LIFE.



IN THE TRIAD OF  
SELVES, WILSON SERVED  
AS A KIND OF  
VENTRILQUIST...



...QUINN HIMSELF WAS  
THE DUMMY...



...AND WORK WAS  
THE VOICE THAT  
GAVE PURPOSE TO  
THE ENTERPRISE.



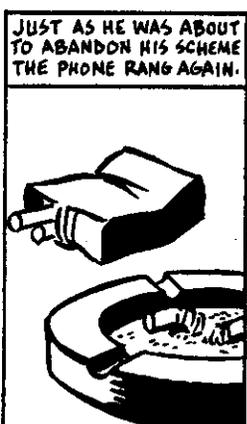
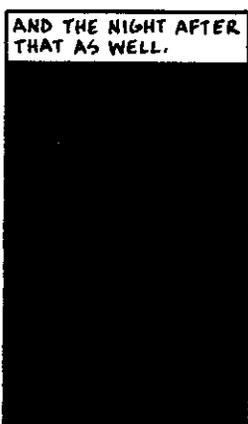
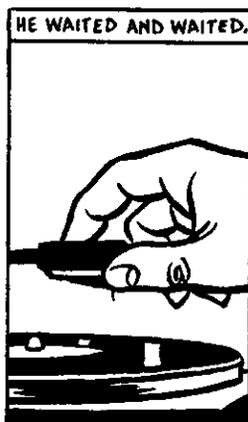
LITTLE BY LITTLE, WORK  
HAD BECOME A PRESENCE  
IN QUINN'S LIFE...



...HIS COMRADE  
IN SOLITUDE.

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT  
QUINN WAS CAUGHT  
OFF-GUARD.





THE NEXT MORNING,  
QUINN WOKE UP EARLIER  
THAN HE HAD IN  
SEVERAL WEEKS.



I SEEM TO BE  
GOING OUT.



IF THIS IS REALLY  
HAPPENING, THEN  
I MUST KEEP MY  
EYES OPEN.



MR. AUSTER?



THAT'S  
RIGHT. PAUL  
AUSTER.

I'M  
VIRGINIA  
STILLMAN.  
PETER'S  
WIFE.



HE'S BEEN FRANTIC. I'VE  
NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE  
THIS BEFORE. HE JUST  
COULDN'T WAIT...





no questions, please.  
yes. no. I AM PETER  
STILLMAN.



I SAY THIS OF MY OWN  
FREE WILL. THAT IS  
NOT MY REAL NAME.



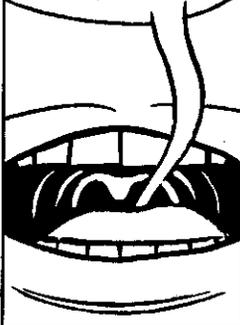
no. OF COURSE, MY  
MIND IS NOT ALL IT  
SHOULD BE. no.



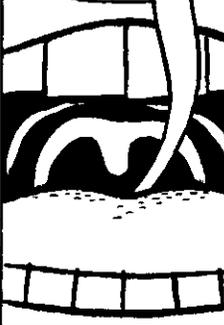
BUT NOTHING CAN BE  
DONE ABOUT THAT.



THIS IS CALLED SPEAK-  
ING. THE WORDS COME  
OUT FOR A MOMENT  
AND DIE.



STRANGE, IS IT NOT?  
I MYSELF HAVE NO  
OPINION.



IF I CAN GIVE YOU  
THE WORDS YOU NEED  
IT WILL BE A GREAT  
VICTORY.

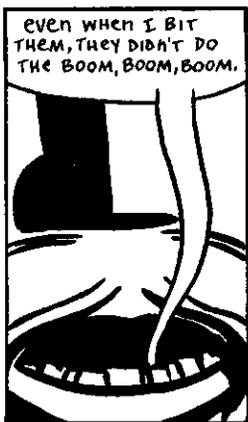
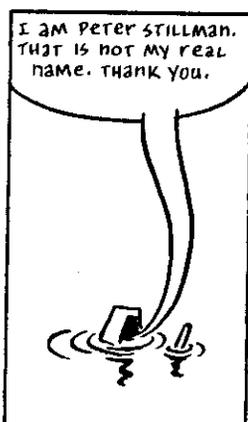
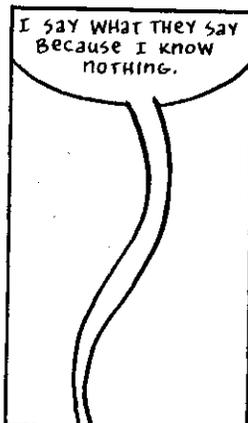


THANK YOU.



LONG AGO THERE WAS  
MOTHER AND FATHER.  
THEY SAY MOTHER  
DIED.





WIMBLE CLICK CRUMBLE-  
CHAW BEELOO. I MAKE  
UP WORDS LIKE THIS  
ALL THE TIME.

YOU ARE WONDERING:  
THE FATHER WHO DID  
ALL THOSE THINGS TO  
LITTLE PETER.

THEY TOOK HIM TO A  
DARK PLACE. THEY LOCKED  
HIM UP AND LEFT HIM  
THERE. HA HA HA. EXCUSE  
ME. SOMETIMES I  
AM SO FUNNY.

THIRTEEN YEARS, THEY  
SAID. A LONG TIME.  
BUT I KNOW NOTHING  
OF TIME.

I AM NEW EVERY DAY.  
I AM BORN WHEN I  
WAKE UP IN THE MORN-  
ING, I GROW OLD DURING  
THE DAY, AND I DIE  
AT NIGHT.

FOR THIRTEEN YEARS THE  
FATHER WAS AWAY. HIS  
NAME IS PETER STILL-  
MAN TOO. STRANGE, IS IT  
NOT? THAT TWO PEOPLE  
CAN HAVE THE SAME NAME?

WE ARE BOTH PETER  
STILLMAN. BUT PETER  
STILLMAN IS NOT MY  
REAL NAME. SO PERHAPS  
I AM NOT PETER STILL-  
MAN AFTER ALL.

THIRTEEN YEARS, I SAY.  
OR THEY SAY. I KNOW  
NOTHING OF TIME.

TOMORROW IS THE END  
OF THIRTEEN YEARS.  
THAT IS BAD.

HE WILL COME.

THE FATHER WILL COME.  
AND HE WILL TRY TO  
KILL ME. THANK YOU.  
BUT PETER LIVES NOW.  
YES.

I AM MOSTLY A POET  
THESE DAYS.

I AM A RICH MAN. I DO  
NOT HAVE TO WORRY.  
YOU BET YOUR BOTTOM  
DOLLAR.

THE FATHER WAS RICH,  
AND LITTLE PETER GOT  
ALL HIS MONEY.

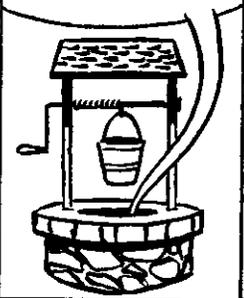
THE FATHER WAS PERHAPS  
NOT REALLY BAD. HE HAD  
A BIG HEAD. THERE  
WAS TOO MUCH ROOM  
IN THERE.

HE WANTED TO KNOW IF  
GOD HAD A LANGUAGE.  
DON'T ASK ME WHAT  
THIS MEANS.

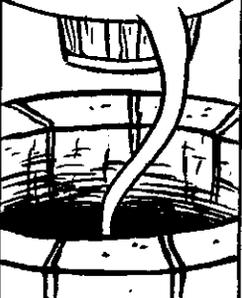
THE FATHER THOUGHT A  
BABY MIGHT SPEAK IT  
IF THE BABY SAW NO  
PEOPLE. WHAT BABY?

PETER KNEW SOME  
WORDS. THE FATHER  
THOUGHT MAYBE PETER  
WOULD FORGET THEM.  
AFTER A WHILE.

THAT IS WHY THERE WAS SO MUCH BOOM BOOM BOOM. EVERY TIME PETER WOULD SAY A WORD HIS FATHER WOULD BOOM HIM.



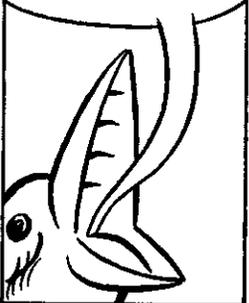
PETER LEARNED TO KEEP THE WORDS INSIDE HIM. THE WORDS MADE NOISE IN HIS HEAD AND KEPT HIM COMPANY.



THAT IS WHY HIS MOUTH DOES NOT WORK RIGHT.



PETER CAN TALK LIKE PEOPLE NOW. BUT HE STILL HAS OTHER WORDS INSIDE HIS HEAD. THEY ARE GOD'S LANGUAGE.



THAT IS WHY PETER LIVES SO CLOSE TO GOD. THAT IS WHY HE IS A FAMOUS POET.



EVERYTHING IS GOOD FOR ME NOW.



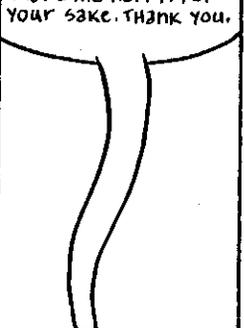
WHENEVER I ASK, MY WIFE GETS A GIRL FOR ME. THEY COME UP HERE AND I FUCK THEM.



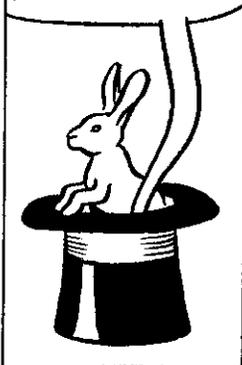
POOR VIRGINIA. SHE DOES NOT LIKE TO FUCK. PERHAPS SHE FUCKS ANOTHER.



MAYBE IF YOU ARE NICE TO HER SHE WILL LET YOU FUCK HER. IT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY. FOR YOUR SAKE. THANK YOU.



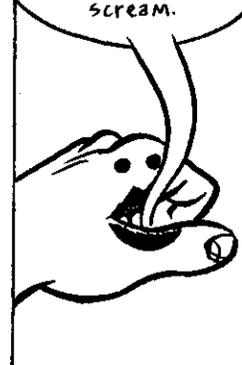
I KNOW THAT ALL IS NOT RIGHT IN MY HEAD.



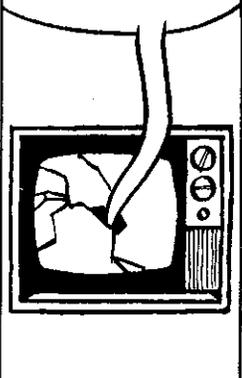
AND IT IS TRUE, YES, AND I SAY THIS OF MY OWN FREE WILL.



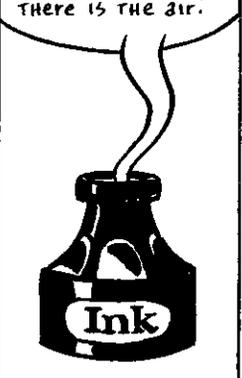
THAT SOMETIMES I JUST SCREAM AND SCREAM.



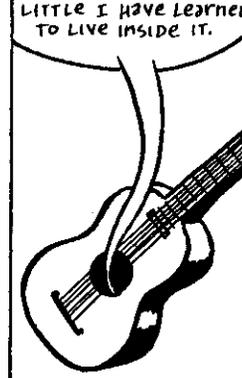
FOR NO GOOD REASON.



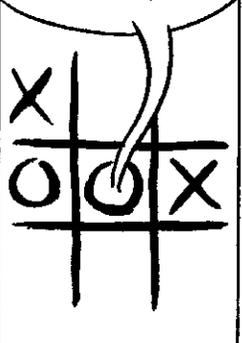
BEST OF ALL, NOW, THERE IS THE AIR.



YES. AND LITTLE BY LITTLE I HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE INSIDE IT.



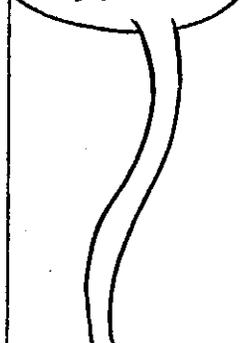
FOR NOW I AM PETER STILLMAN. THAT IS NOT MY REAL NAME.

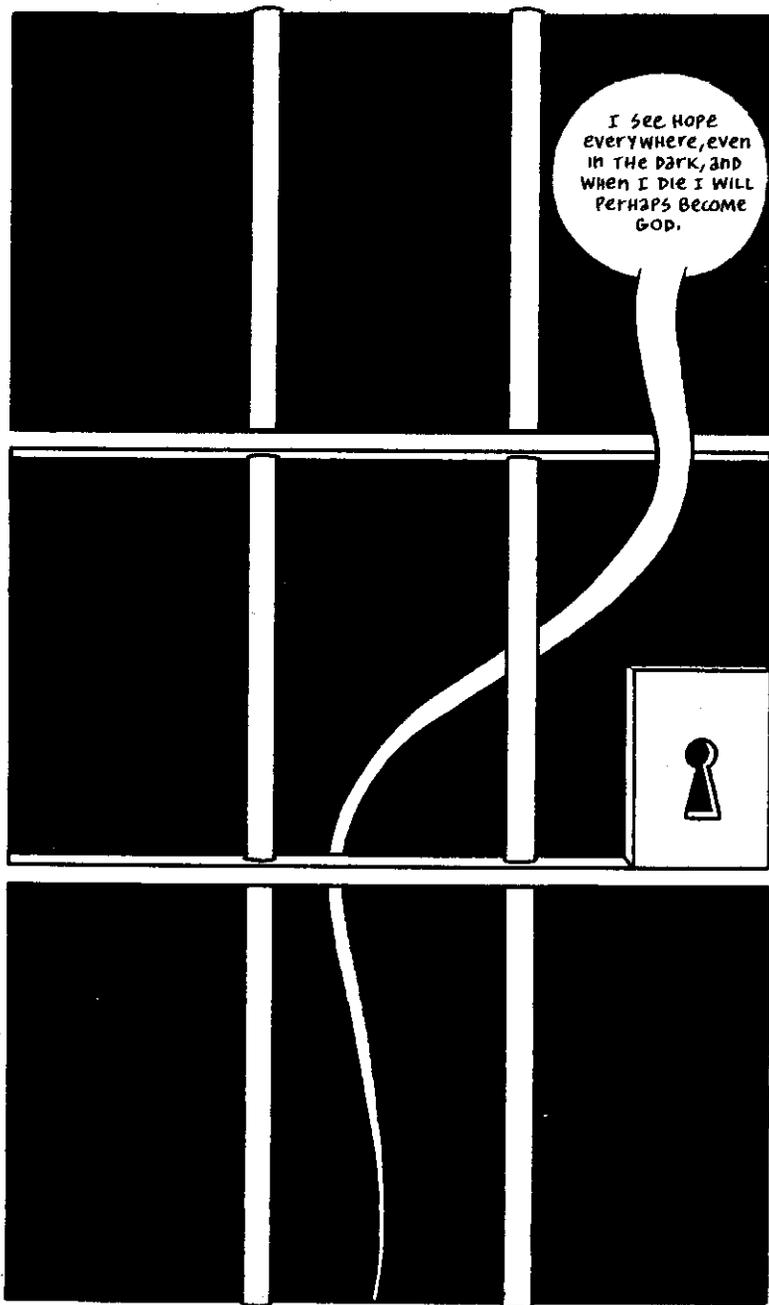


I CANNOT SAY WHO I WILL BE TOMORROW.



EACH DAY IS NEW, AND EACH DAY I AM BORN AGAIN.







IT'S TIME NOW, PETER. MRS. SAAVEDRA IS WAITING FOR YOU.



I AM FILLED WITH HOPE.



I COULD HAVE SPARED YOU THAT, BUT I THOUGHT IT BEST FOR YOU TO SEE WITH YOUR OWN EYES.



I UNDERSTAND.

NO. I DON'T THINK ANYONE CAN UNDERSTAND.



IT'S PROBABLY BESIDE THE POINT. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT I'M WILLING TO HELP.



YOU'RE RIGHT. OF COURSE, YOU'RE RIGHT.



MOST OF WHAT PETER SAYS IS VERY CONFUSING.



YOU MUSTN'T ALWAYS ASSUME HE TELLS THE TRUTH.

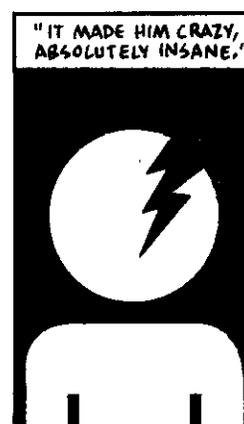
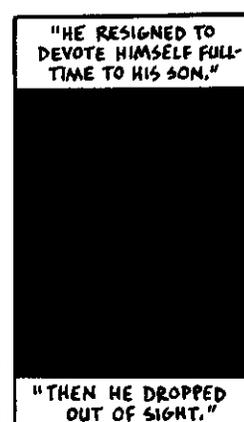
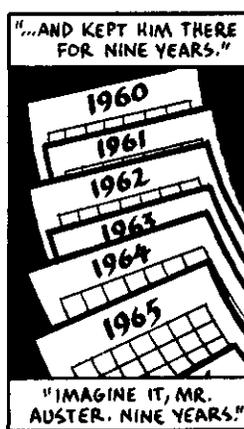
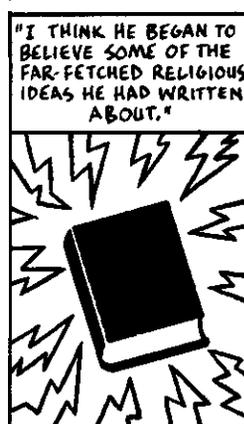
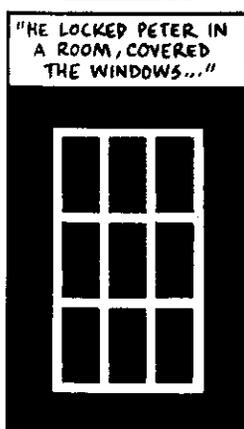
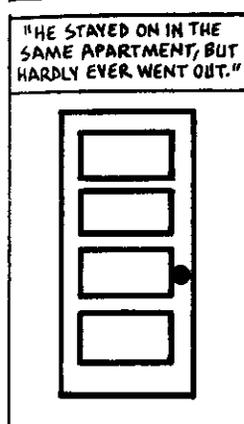
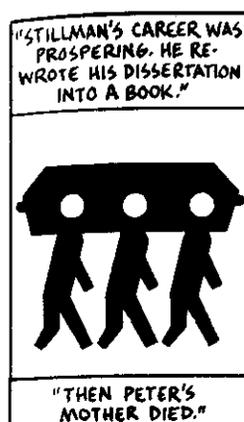
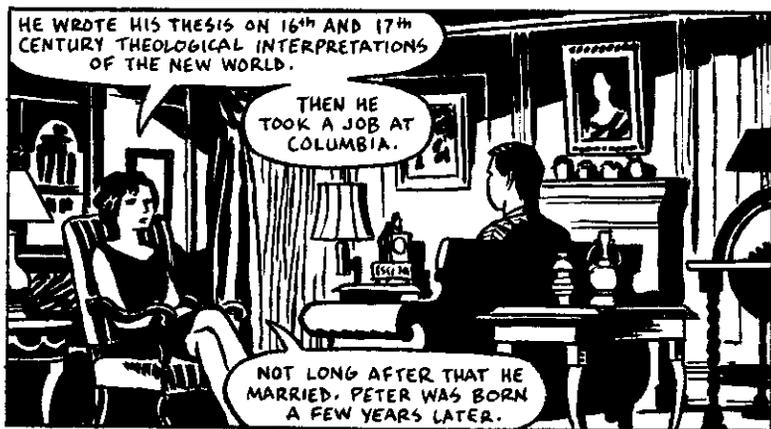
ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WOULD BE WRONG TO THINK HE LIES.

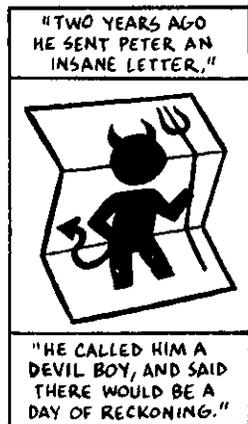
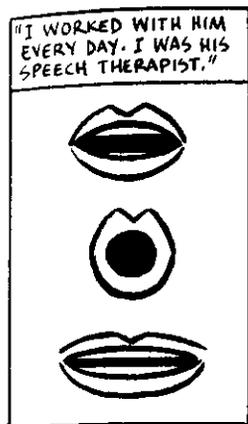
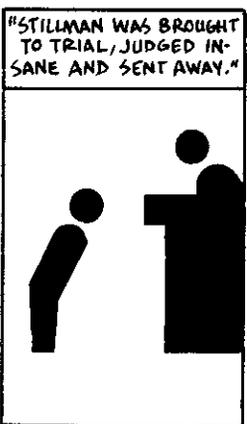
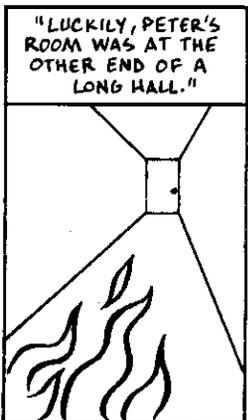
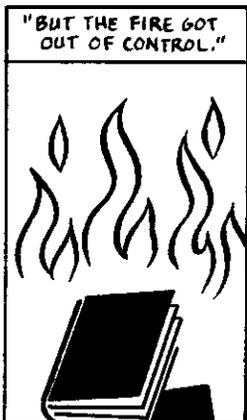


YOU MEAN I SHOULD BELIEVE SOME OF THE THINGS HE SAID AND NOT OTHERS.

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN.

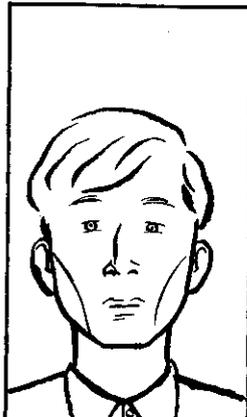








QUINN HAD HEARD OF CASES LIKE PETER STILLMAN BEFORE.



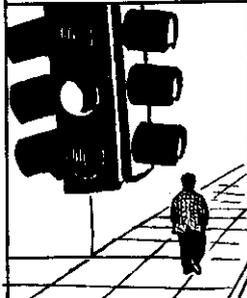
HE HAD ONCE WRITTEN A REVIEW OF A BOOK ABOUT THE WILD BOY OF AVEYRON.



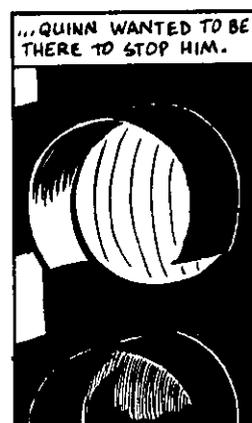
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAD SUFFERED, BEEN MISTREATED, DIED BEFORE THEY COULD GROW UP.



IF STILLMAN WAS COMING BACK TO AVENGE HIMSELF ON THE BOY WHOSE LIFE HE HAD DESTROYED...



THROUGHOUT THE AGES THERE WERE TALES OF CHILDREN GROWING UP IN ISOLATION.



... QUINN WANTED TO BE THERE TO STOP HIM.



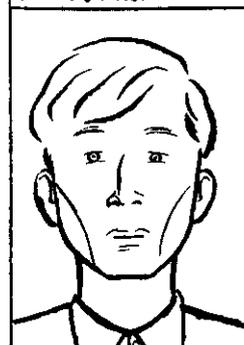
IT HAD BEEN YEARS SINCE QUINN HAD ALLOWED HIMSELF TO THINK OF THESE STORIES.



THE SUBJECT OF CHILDREN WAS TOO PAINFUL TO HIM.



AT LEAST HE COULD PREVENT ANOTHER BOY FROM DYING.



HE THOUGHT OF THE LITTLE COFFIN THAT HELD HIS SON'S BODY BEING LOWERED INTO THE GROUND.



IT DID NOT HELP THAT HIS SON'S NAME HAD ALSO BEEN PETER.

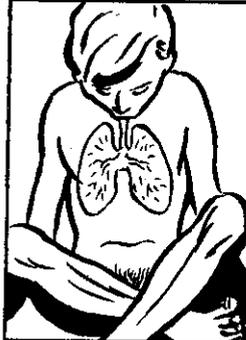
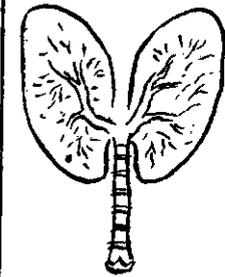




QUINN WONDERED IF PETER SAW THE SAME THINGS HE DID...

...OR WHETHER THE WORLD WAS A DIFFERENT PLACE FOR HIM.

AND IF A TREE WAS NOT A TREE, HE WONDERED WHAT IT REALLY WAS.



QUINN USED A TYPE-  
WRITER ONLY FOR  
FINAL DRAFTS.



HE WAS ALWAYS ON  
THE LOOKOUT FOR  
GOOD NOTEBOOKS.



WITH THE STILLMAN  
CASE, HE FELT A NEW  
NOTEBOOK WAS IN ORDER.



IN THAT WAY, PERHAPS,  
THINGS MIGHT NOT GET  
OUT OF CONTROL.



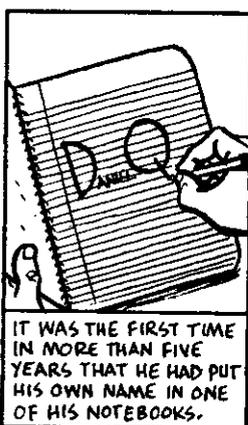
THIS NOTEBOOK WAS  
SPECIAL —



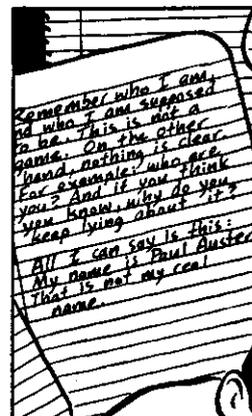
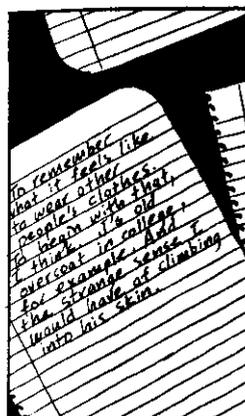
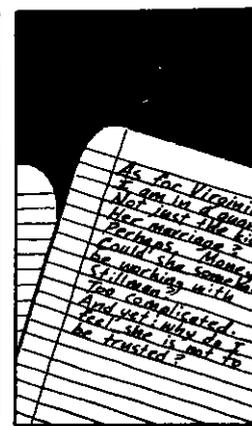
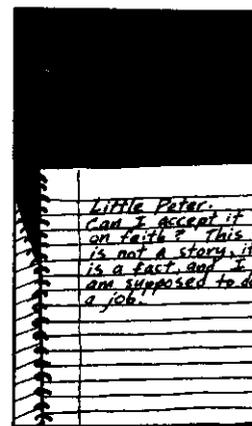
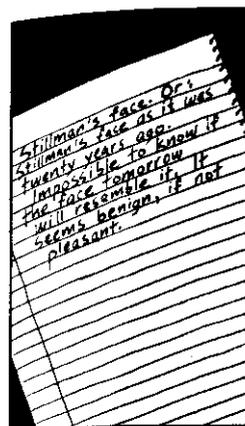
— AS IF ITS UNIQUE  
DESTINY WAS TO HOLD  
THE WORDS THAT CAME  
FROM HIS PEN.



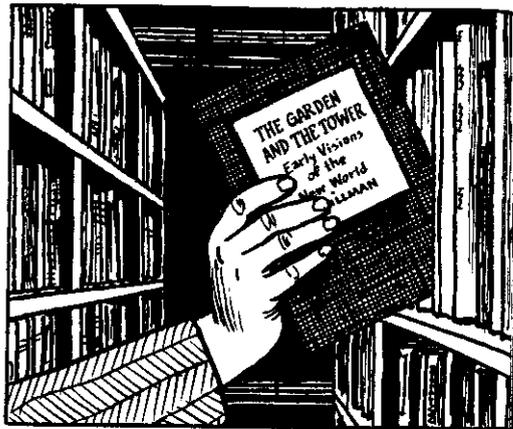
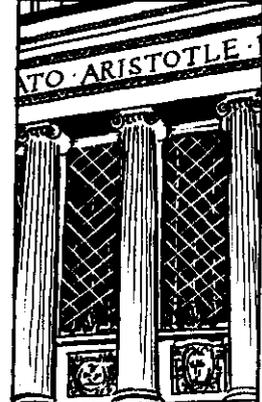
HE HAD NEVER DONE THIS  
BEFORE, BUT IT SOMEHOW  
SEEMED APPROPRIATE TO  
BE NAKED AT THIS MOMENT.



IT WAS THE FIRST TIME  
IN MORE THAN FIVE  
YEARS THAT HE HAD PUT  
HIS OWN NAME IN ONE  
OF HIS NOTEBOOKS.



QUINN SPENT THE NEXT MORNING AT THE COLUMBIA LIBRARY WITH STILLMAN'S BOOK.



IT BEGAN WITH A NEW EXAMINATION OF THE FALL, RELYING HEAVILY ON MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST*.



STILLMAN CLAIMED IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE FALL THAT HUMAN LIFE AS WE KNOW IT CAME INTO BEING.



FOR IF THERE WAS NO EVIL IN THE GARDEN, NEITHER WAS THERE ANY GOOD.

AS MILTON WROTE: "IT WAS OUT OF THE RIND OF ONE APPLE TASTED THAT GOOD AND EVIL LEAPT FORTH INTO THE WORLD, LIKE TWO TWINS CLEAVING TOGETHER."

STILLMAN DWELLED ON THE PARADOX OF THE WORD "CLEAVE", WHICH MEANS BOTH "TO JOIN TOGETHER"...



...AND "TO BREAK APART!"

ADAM'S TASK IN THE GARDEN HAD BEEN TO INVENT LANGUAGE.



AFTER THE FALL, THIS WAS NO LONGER TRUE.



NAMES BECAME DETACHED FROM THINGS.

IN *PARADISE LOST*, EACH KEY WORD HAS TWO MEANINGS — ONE BEFORE THE FALL, FREE OF MORAL CONNOTATIONS, AND ONE AFTER, INFORMED BY A KNOWLEDGE OF EVIL.



IN THAT STATE OF INNOCENCE, HIS WORDS HAD REVEALED THE ESSENCES OF THINGS.



LANGUAGE HAD BEEN SEVERED FROM GOD.



A THING AND ITS NAME WERE INTERCHANGEABLE.



THE STORY, THEREFORE, RECORDS NOT ONLY THE FALL OF MAN, BUT THE FALL OF LANGUAGE.



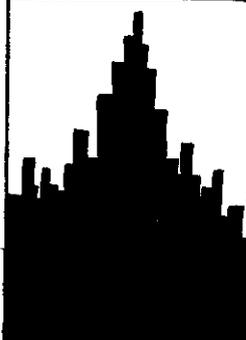
THE TOWER OF BABEL EPISODE IS AN EXPANDED VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED IN THE GARDEN.



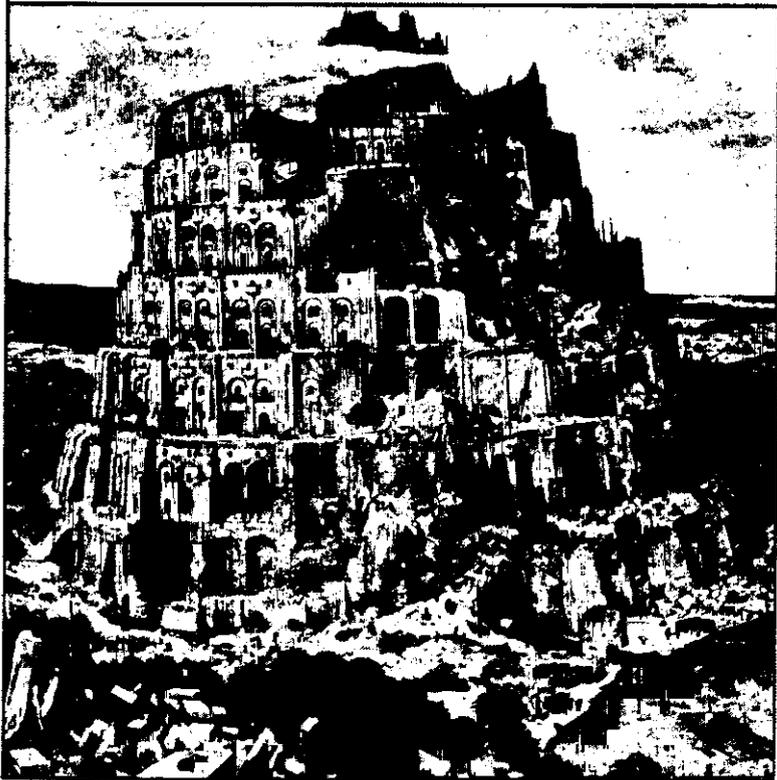
THIS IS THE VERY LAST INCIDENT OF PREHISTORY IN THE BIBLE.



IT STANDS AS THE LAST IMAGE BEFORE THE TRUE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.



THE TOWER WAS BUILT 340 YEARS AFTER THE FLOOD BY A UNITED MANKIND, OF ONE LANGUAGE, OF ONE SPEECH, "LEST WE BE SCATTERED ABROAD UPON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH."



THIS DESIRE CONTRADICTED GOD'S COMMAND: "BE FERTILE...AND FILL THE EARTH."



AS DIVINE PUNISHMENT, ONE THIRD OF THE TOWER SANK INTO THE GROUND...



...AND ONE THIRD WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE.



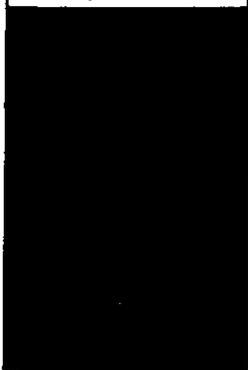
STILL, A PERSON COULD WALK FOR THREE DAYS IN THE SHADOW OF THE PART LEFT STANDING.



AND WHOEVER LOOKED UPON THE RUINS OF THE TOWER...



...FORGOT EVERYTHING HE KNEW.



WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH THE NEW WORLD?



SUDDENLY, STILLMAN BEGAN DISCUSSING THE LIFE OF HENRY DARK, WHO WAS BORN IN LONDON IN 1649...



...AND SERVED AS SECRETARY TO THE BLIND POET, JOHN MILTON.



HMM...I THOUGHT MILTON DICTATED TO ONE OF HIS DAUGHTERS.

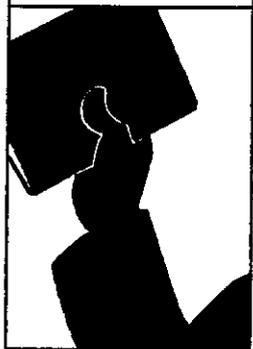
DARK AND MILTON OFTEN DISCUSSED MATTERS OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS.



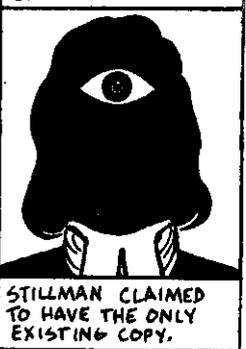
UPON MILTON'S DEATH IN 1675, DARK CAME TO AMERICA, WHERE HE HEADED A PURITAN CONGREGATION.



IN 1690 HE PUBLISHED A PAMPHLET: *THE NEW BABEL*.



IT WAS A VISIONARY ACCOUNT OF THE NEW CONTINENT.



STILLMAN CLAIMED TO HAVE THE ONLY EXISTING COPY.

*THE NEW BABEL* PRESENTED THE CASE FOR BUILDING A NEW PARADISE IN AMERICA.



PARADISE WAS NOT A PLACE — IT WAS IMMANENT WITHIN MAN HIMSELF.



MAN COULD BRING FORTH THIS PARADISE BY BUILDING IT WITH HIS OWN TWO HANDS.



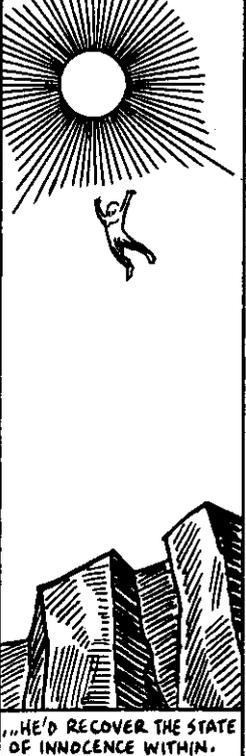
LIKE HIS MENTOR, MILTON, DARK PLACES INORDINATE IMPORTANCE ON THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE.



TO UNDO THE FALL OF MAN, THE FALL OF LANGUAGE MUST BE UNDONE.



IF MAN COULD LEARN TO SPEAK THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF INNOCENCE...



...HE'D RECOVER THE STATE OF INNOCENCE WITHIN.

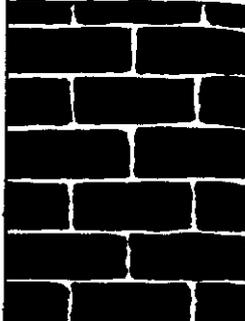
TURNING TO BABEL,  
DARK THEN ANNOUNCES  
HIS PROPHECY.



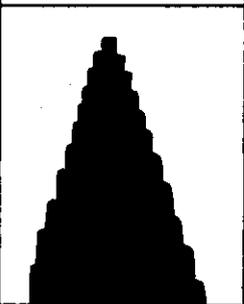
IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S  
COMMAND TO "BE FER-  
TILE... AND FILL THE  
EARTH", MAN WOULD  
INEVITABLY MOVE WEST.



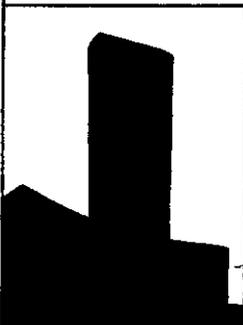
THE EARLY ENGLISH  
SETTLERS OF AMERICA  
FULFILLED THIS  
COMMANDMENT.



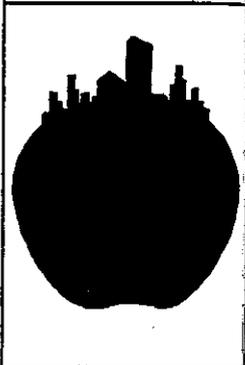
ONCE THAT CONTINENT  
WAS FILLED, THE IMPED-  
IMENT TO BUILDING A  
NEW BABEL WOULD BE  
REMOVED.



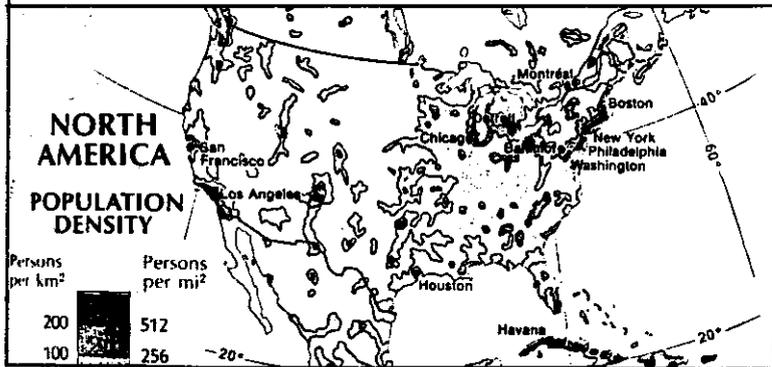
THEN IT WOULD BE  
POSSIBLE FOR THE  
WHOLE EARTH TO BE OF  
ONE LANGUAGE.



COULD PARADISE BE  
FAR BEHIND?



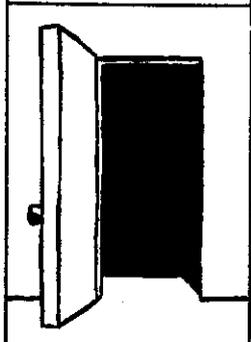
AS BABEL HAD BEEN BUILT 340 YEARS AFTER THE FLOOD, 340 YEARS  
AFTER THE MAYFLOWER THE COMMANDMENT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT.



IN THE YEAR 1960, WHAT  
HAD FALLEN WOULD BE  
RAISED UP; WHAT HAD  
BEEN BROKEN, MADE  
WHOLE.



IN THE NEW TOWER,  
THERE WOULD BE A ROOM  
FOR EACH PERSON.



ONCE HE ENTERED THAT  
ROOM, HE WOULD FORGET  
EVERYTHING HE KNEW.



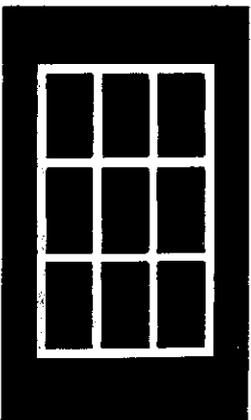
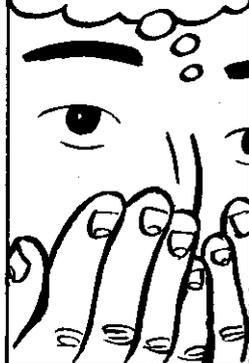
AFTER FORTY DAYS AND  
NIGHTS, HE WOULD  
EMERGE SPEAKING GOD'S  
LANGUAGE...

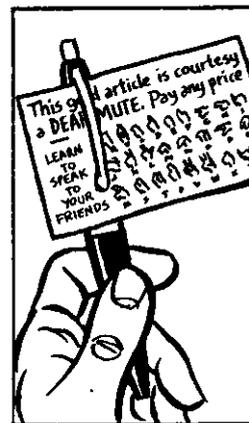


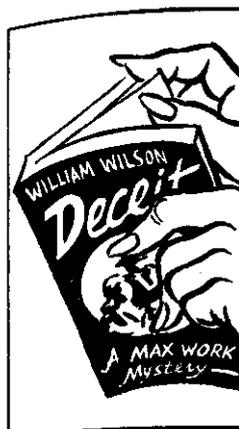
... PREPARED TO INHABIT  
EVERLASTING PARADISE.

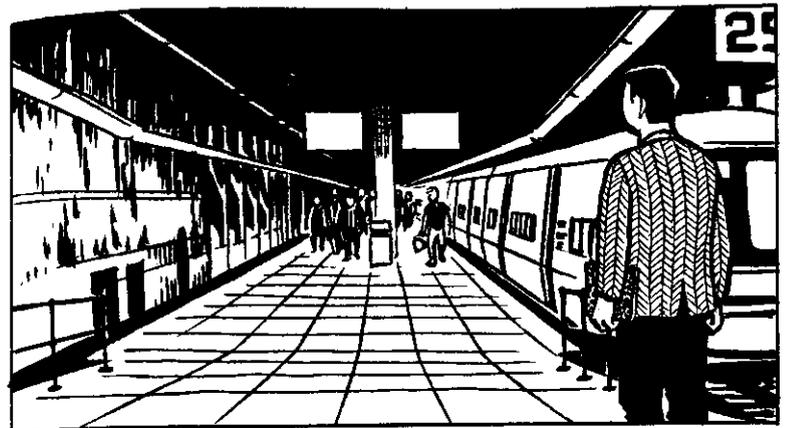


...THE YEAR STILLMAN  
LOCKED UP PETER.











STILLMAN DID NOT LOOK AT THE THINGS AROUND HIM. THEY SEEMED NOT TO INTEREST HIM.



HE SEEMED TO BE MOVING WITH EFFORT, A BIT THROWN BY THE CROWD.



WHAT HAPPENED THEN DEFIED EXPLANATION.



FOR A SECOND, QUINN THOUGHT IT WAS AN ILLUSION.



BUT NO, THIS OTHER STILLMAN MOVED, BREATHED, BLINKED HIS EYES.



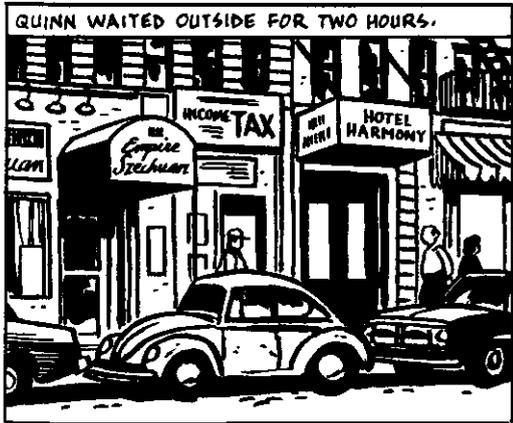
THERE WAS NOTHING QUINN COULD DO NOW THAT WOULD NOT BE A MISTAKE.



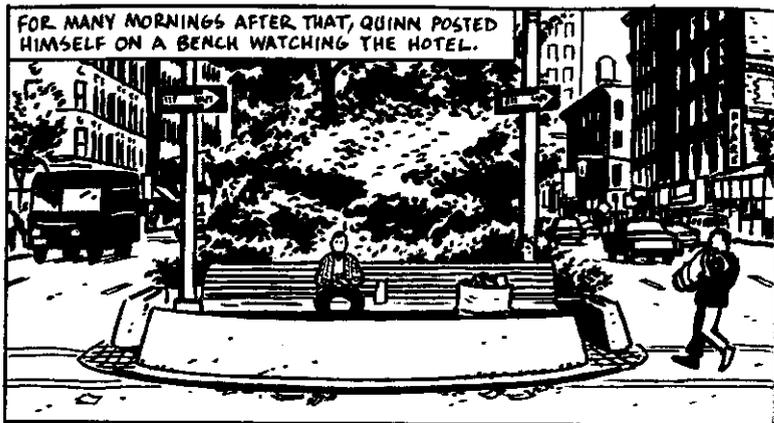
WHATEVER CHOICE HE MADE WOULD BE A SUBMISSION TO CHANCE.

DO SOMETHING NOW, YOU IDIOT.





FOR MANY MORNINGS AFTER THAT, QUINN POSTED HIMSELF ON A BENCH WATCHING THE HOTEL.



BY EIGHT O'CLOCK, STILLMAN WOULD COME OUT.



FOR TWO WEEKS THIS ROUTINE DID NOT VARY.

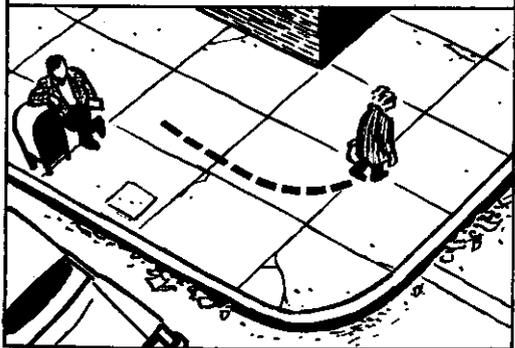
THE OLD MAN WOULD SLOWLY WANDER THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



QUINN WAS USED TO WALKING BRISKLY. SHUFFLING WAS A STRAIN.



STILLMAN NEVER SEEMED TO BE GOING ANYWHERE IN PARTICULAR, BUT HE KEPT TO A NARROWLY CIRCUMSCRIBED AREA.



HE DID NOT LOOK UP.



EVERY NOW AND THEN HE WOULD PICK SOME OBJECT OFF THE GROUND.



AS FAR AS QUINN COULD TELL THESE OBJECTS WERE VALUELESS.



THE FACT THAT STILLMAN TOOK THIS SCAVENGING SERIOUSLY INTRIGUED QUINN...



...BUT HE COULD DO NO MORE THAN OBSERVE...



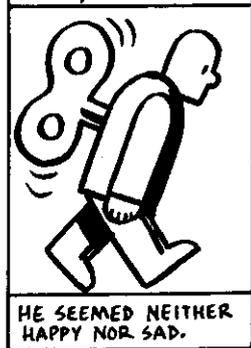
...WRITE DOWN WHAT HE SAW, HOVER STUPIDLY ON THE SURFACE OF THINGS.



OTHER THAN PICKING UP OBJECTS, STILLMAN SEEMED TO DO NOTHING.

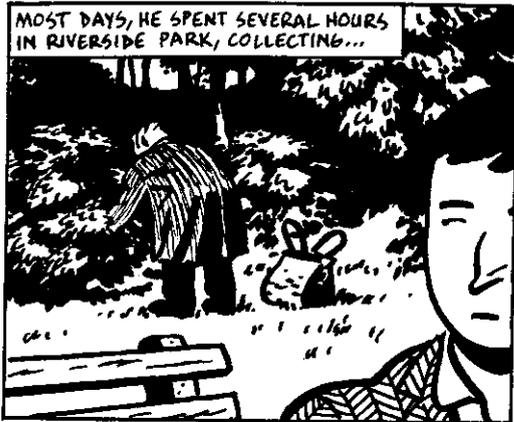


HE DID NOT TALK TO ANYONE, GO INTO ANY STORE, OR SMILE.



HE SEEMED NEITHER HAPPY NOR SAD.

MOST DAYS, HE SPENT SEVERAL HOURS  
IN RIVERSIDE PARK, COLLECTING...



...AND RESTING.



WHEN DARKNESS CAME  
STILLMAN WOULD DINE  
IN A COFFEE SHOP...



... THEN RETURN TO HIS HOTEL.



NOT ONCE DID HE TRY TO CONTACT HIS SON.

QUINN BEGAN TO WONDER IF HE HAD NOT  
EMBARKED ON A MEANINGLESS PROJECT.



IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT  
STILLMAN WAS MERELY  
BIDDING HIS TIME.



QUINN PREFERRED TO  
THINK THAT STILLMAN  
HAD A PLAN.



IT JUSTIFIED HIS  
TAILING HIM.

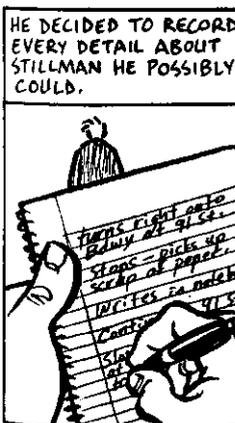
BUT TIME AND AGAIN  
HIS THOUGHTS WOULD  
BEGIN TO DRIFT.



THIS MEANT HE WAS CONSTANTLY IN  
DANGER OF OVERTAKING STILLMAN.



HE DECIDED TO RECORD  
EVERY DETAIL ABOUT  
STILLMAN HE POSSIBLY  
COULD.



THIS KEPT HIM OCCUPIED,  
AND SLOWED HIM DOWN.



HIS NIGHTLY CONVERSATIONS WITH VIRGINIA STILLMAN WERE BRIEF.

FROM ALL I'VE SEEN, THERE'S NO THREAT.

YOU COULD BE RIGHT.



AT FIRST QUINN HAD EXPECTED HE WOULD EVENTUALLY FIND HER IN HIS ARMS.

BUT JUST TO REASSURE ME, GIVE IT A FEW MORE DAYS.

ON ONE CONDITION.



BUT THERE HAD BEEN NO FURTHER ROMANTIC DEVELOPMENTS.

NO MORE RESTRAINTS, I HAVE TO BE FREE TO TALK TO HIM.

WOULDN'T THAT BE RISKY?



IT WAS THE THIRTEENTH DAY SINCE THE CASE HAD BEGUN.

picks up pen in middle of block. Examines, hesitates, puts in bag. Continues north to 82 St. Turns left. Buys sandwich in deli at corner. Walks along 82 St. to Riverside Park. Sits on bench in park and reads through notebook. Searches through bushes - finds discarded coffee cup, puts in bag. Walks south on left side of 82 St. cigarette end.



PERHAPS HE HAD MOMENTARILY CONFUSED HIMSELF WITH MAX WORK.



HE WON'T GUESS WHAT I'M UP TO, TRUST ME.

ALL RIGHT, I DON'T SUPPOSE IT WILL HURT.

OR PERHAPS HE WAS JUST FEELING HIS LONELINESS MORE KEENLY.



GOOD. I'LL GIVE IT A FEW MORE DAYS.

MR. AUSTER?

MUCH LATER, LONG AFTER IT WAS TOO LATE, HE REALIZED HE HAD A SECRET HOPE.



YES?

I'M TERRIBLY GRATEFUL. PETER HAS BEEN IN SUCH GOOD SHAPE. YOU'RE LIKE-LIKE... A HERO TO HIM.

HE HAD ALWAYS IMAGINED THAT THE KEY TO GOOD DETECTIVE WORK WAS A CLOSE OBSERVATION OF DETAILS.



YET QUINN FELT NO CLOSER TO STILLMAN THAN WHEN HE BEGAN FOLLOWING HIM.



INSTEAD OF NARROWING THE DISTANCE BY WATCHING AND LIVING STILLMAN'S LIFE...



TO SOLVE THE CASE SO BRILLIANTLY THAT HE WOULD WIN VIRGINIA'S DESIRE.



AND HOW DOES MRS. STILLMAN FEEL?

MUCH THE SAME WAY.

THAT, OF COURSE, WAS A MISTAKE.



MAYBE SOMEDAY SHE'LL ALLOW ME TO FEEL GRATEFUL TO HER.

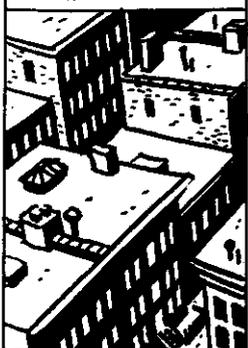
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. REMEMBER THAT.

BUT IT WAS NO WORSE THAN ANY OF THE OTHER MISTAKES HE MADE FROM BEGINNING TO END.

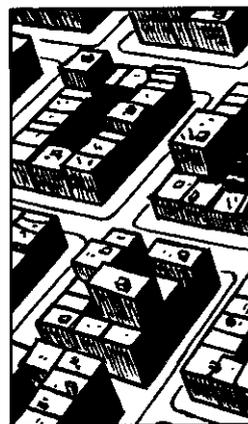
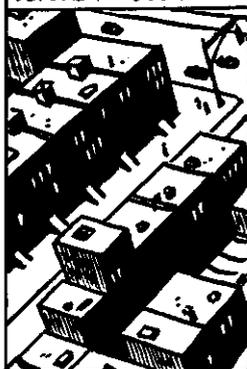


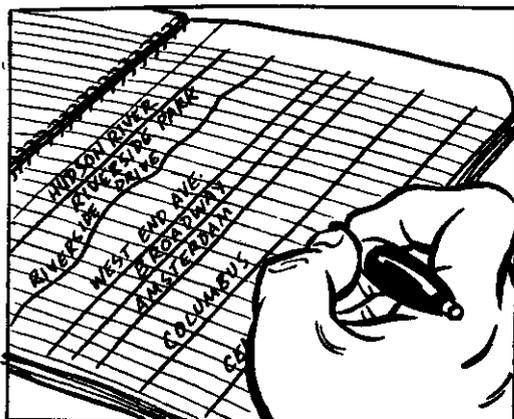
I WILL, I'D BE A FOOL NOT TO.

...HE HAD SEEN THE OLD MAN SLIP AWAY FROM HIM...



...EVEN AS HE REMAINED BEFORE HIS EYES,

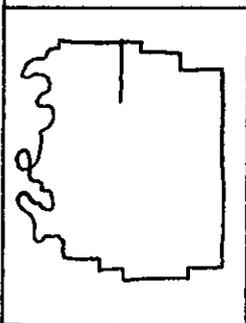




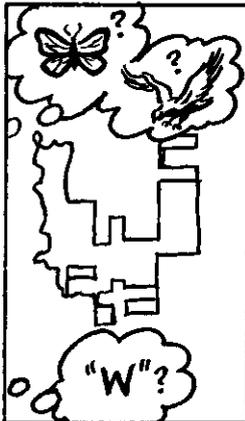
FOR NO PARTICULAR REASON, QUINN BEGAN TO TRACE STILLMAN'S PATH ON A SINGLE DAY—



— THE FIRST DAY HE HAD KEPT A FULL RECORD OF THE OLD MAN'S WANDERINGS.



QUINN WENT ON TO THE NEXT DAY TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

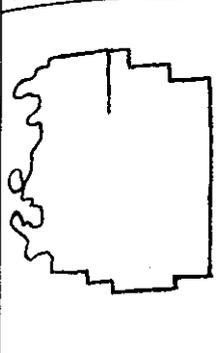


AM I JUST KILLING TIME, OR WHAT?

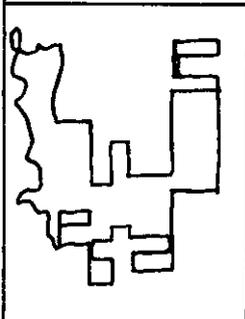


HE TRACED OUT THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS.

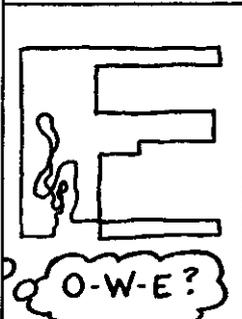
EACH MAP WAS DIFFERENT.



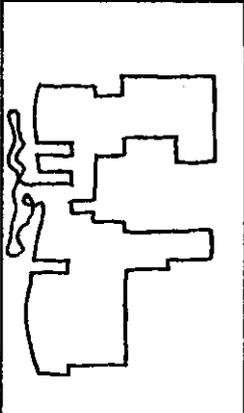
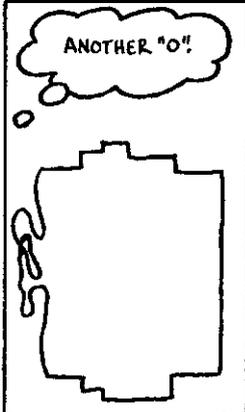
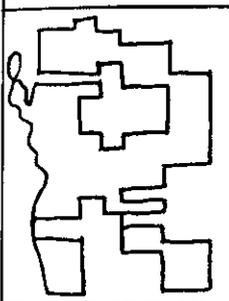
HE WAS RANSACKING THE CHAOS OF STILLMAN'S MOVEMENTS FOR SOME GLIMMER OF COGENCY.



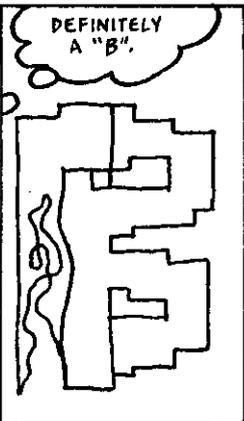
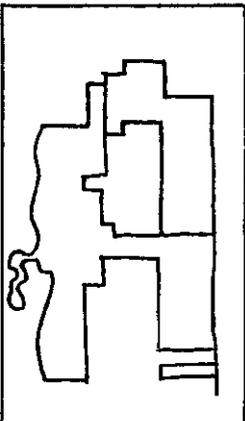
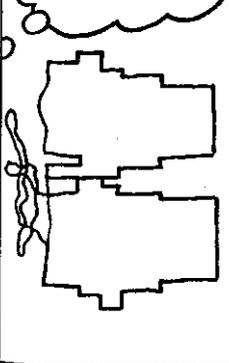
THERE NO LONGER SEEMED TO BE A QUESTION ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

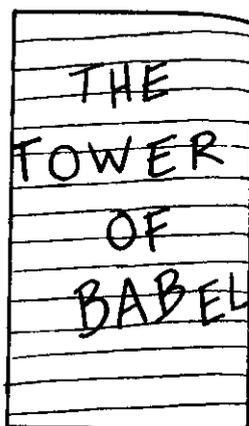
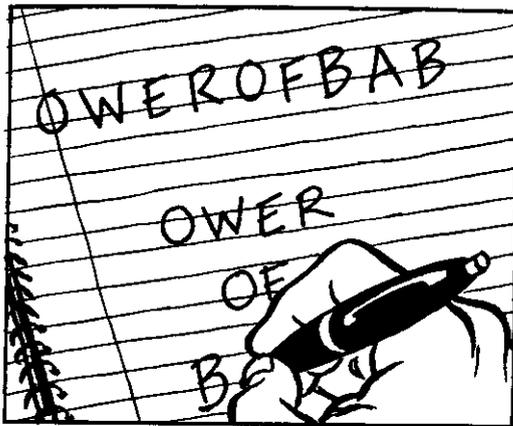


QUINN WISHED HE HAD STARTED TAKING NOTES SOONER. THE FIRST FOUR DAYS WERE IRRETRIEVABLY LOST.



MAYBE A "B"... OR AN "B".





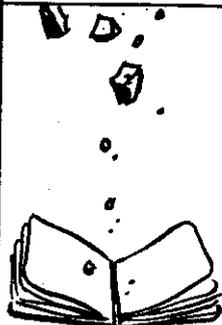
BUT, WHY? IT WAS LIKE  
DRAWING A PICTURE  
IN THE AIR WITH YOUR  
FINGER...



...THE IMAGE  
VANISHES AS YOU ARE  
MAKING IT.

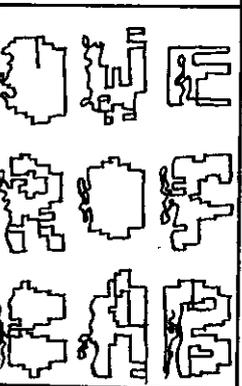


AND YET...

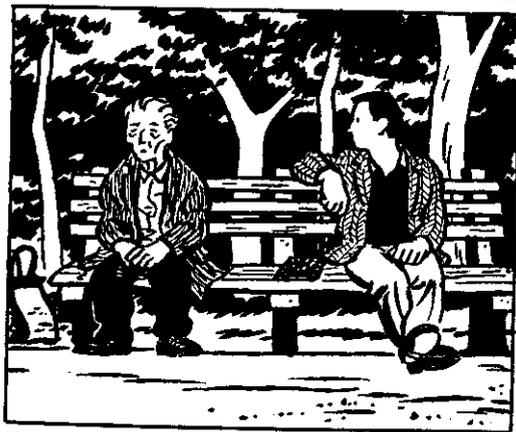


...THE PICTURES DID  
EXIST...

...IN QUINN'S NOTEBOOK.



THEIR FIRST MEETING TOOK PLACE IN RIVERSIDE PARK.



EXACTLY.

AH, QUINN.



VERY INTERESTING. QUINN. RHYMES WITH TWIN, DOES IT NOT?

THAT'S RIGHT, TWIN.

AND SIN, TOO.



HMM. QUINN... OF QUIDITY. QUICK, FOR EXAMPLE, AND QULL, QUACK, QUIRK. HMM. RHYMES WITH GRIN. NOT TO SPEAK OF KIN. HMM.



AND WIN. AND FIN. AND DIN. AND GIN. AND PIN. HMMM. EVEN RHYMES WITH PJINN. HMMM.

I LIKE "QUINN". IT FLIES OFF IN SO MANY DIRECTIONS AT ONCE.



YES, I'VE OFTEN NOTICED THAT.

MOST PEOPLE THINK OF WORDS AS UNMOVABLE STONES.

STONES CAN CHANGE. THEY CAN ERODE.



EXACTLY. I COULD TELL YOU WERE A MAN OF SENSE.

IF ONLY YOU KNEW HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD ME.



BUT I HAVE NEVER BEEN DAUNTED. I WILL SOON HOLD THE KEY TO MAJOR DISCOVERIES.

THE KEY?

YES. THE KEY. A THING THAT OPENS LOCKED DOORS.



FOR THE TIME BEING I'M COLLECTING DATA. IT'S DEMANDING WORK.

I CAN IMAGINE.



YOU SEE, I'M THE ONLY ONE TO UNDERSTAND. IT'S A GREAT BURDEN ON ME.

THE WORLD ON YOUR SHOULDERS,

YES. OR WHAT IS LEFT OF IT.



THE WORLD IS IN FRAGMENTS, SIR. MY JOB IS TO PUT IT BACK TOGETHER.

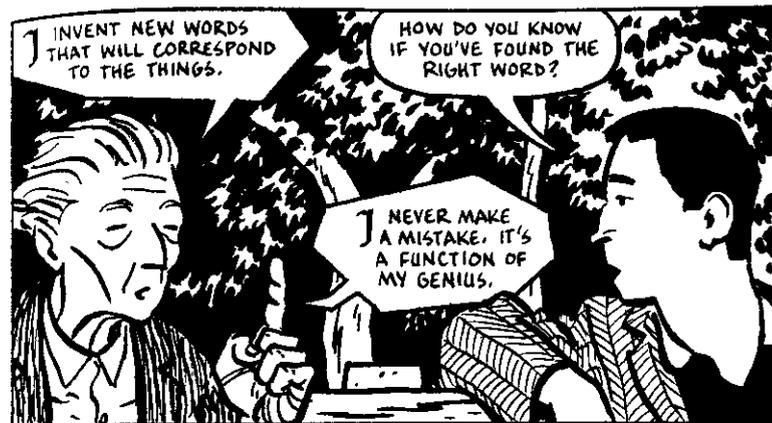


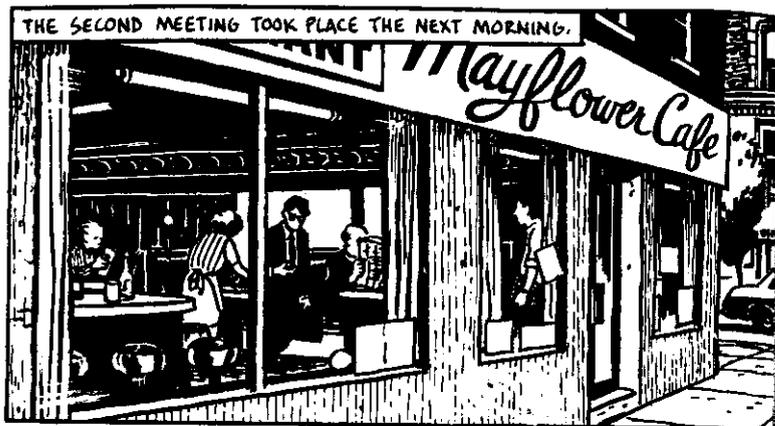
HAVE YOU MADE MUCH PROGRESS?

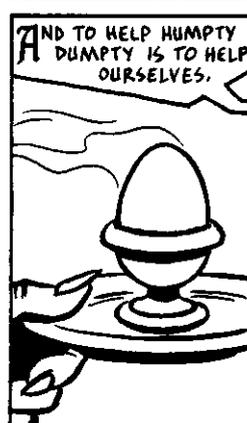
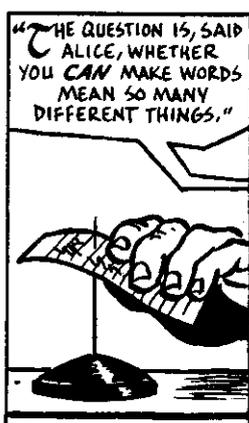
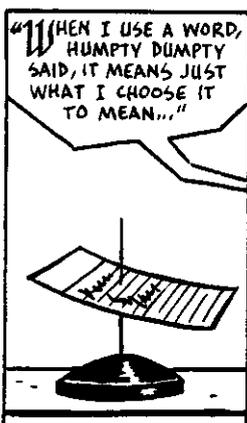
YES. MY BRILLIANT STROKE HAS BEEN TO CONFINE MYSELF TO A SMALL AREA.

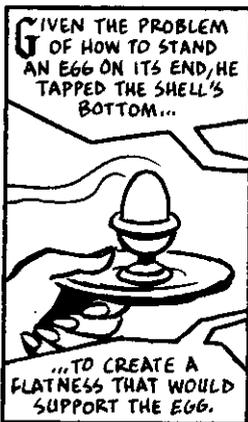


YOU SEE, I AM INVENTING A NEW LANGUAGE.









WAS IT POSSIBLE FOR SOMEONE TO BE SO IMPERVIOUS TO WHAT HE SAW?



MY NAME IS PETER STILLMAN.

THAT'S MY NAME.



I'M PETER STILLMAN.

I'M THE OTHER PETER STILLMAN.

CHILDREN ARE A GREAT BLESSING. I'VE ALWAYS SAID THAT.



AS FOR ME, I HAVE MY GOOD DAYS AND MY BAD DAYS.



ON BAD DAYS, I THINK OF THE GOOD ONES.

OH, YOU MEAN MY SON. YES, THAT'S POSSIBLE.



OF COURSE, HE IS BLOND, BUT PEOPLE CHANGE.

ONE MINUTE WE'RE ONE THING, AND ANOTHER ANOTHER.

EXACTLY.

MEMORY IS A BLESSING. THE NEXT BEST THING TO DEATH.



WITHOUT A DOUBT.

BUT WE MUST LIVE IN THE PRESENT. TODAY I AM HERE, TOMORROW SOMEWHERE ELSE.



IT'S PART OF MY WORK.

IT MUST BE STIMULATING.

TIME MAKES US GROW OLD, BUT IT ALSO GIVES US DAY AND NIGHT.



I'VE OFTEN THOUGHT: "I WONDER HOW PETER IS GETTING ALONG."



I'M MUCH BETTER NOW, THANK YOU.

I CAN SEE THAT. AND YOU SPEAK SO WELL, TOO.



ALL WORDS ARE AVAILABLE TO ME NOW.

I'M PROUD OF YOU, PETER.



I OWE IT ALL TO YOU.

AND WHEN WE DIE, THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE TO TAKE OUR PLACE.



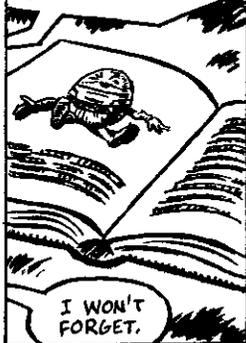
WE ALL GROW OLD.

WHEN YOU'RE OLD, PERHAPS YOU'LL HAVE A SON TO COMFORT YOU.



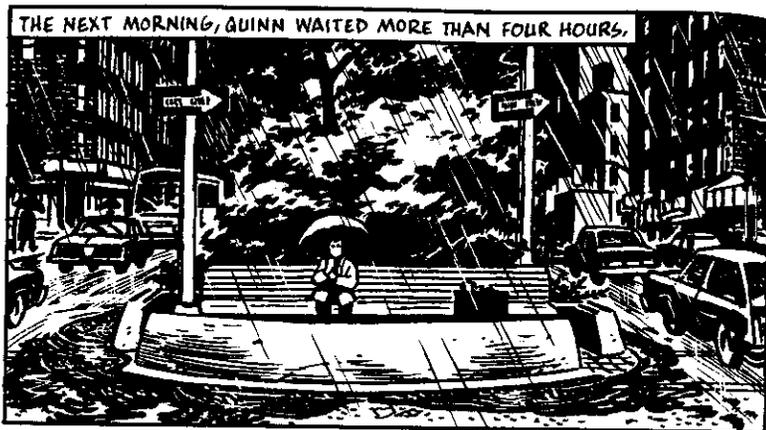
I WOULD LIKE THAT.

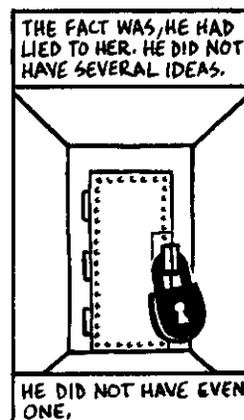
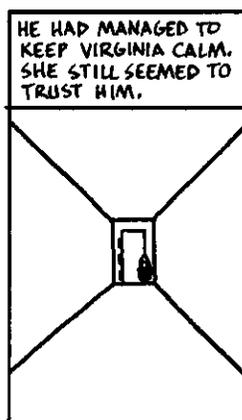
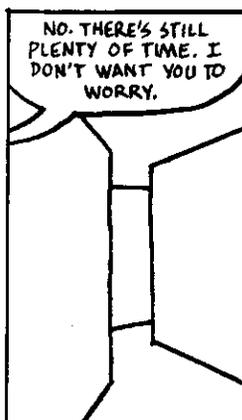
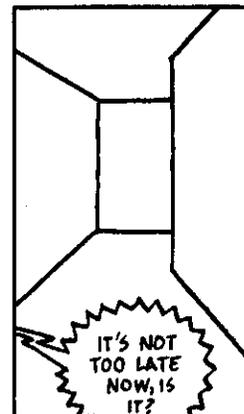
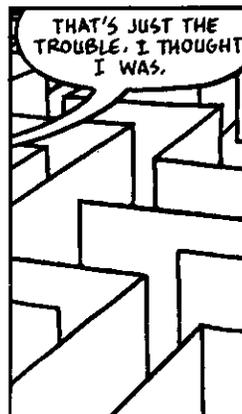
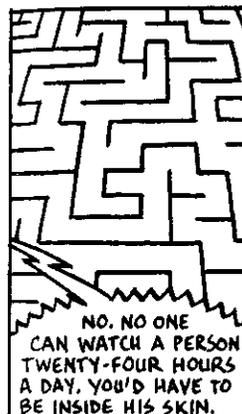
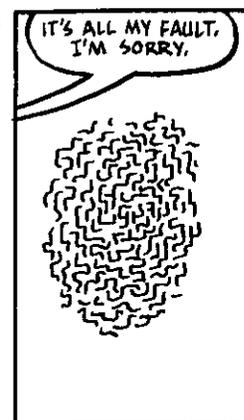
REMEMBER, PETER, YOUR CHILDREN ARE A GREAT BLESSING.

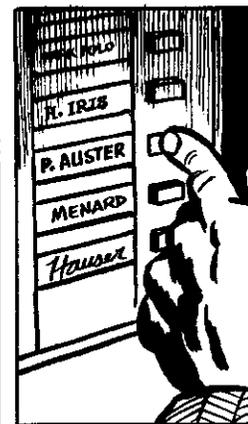
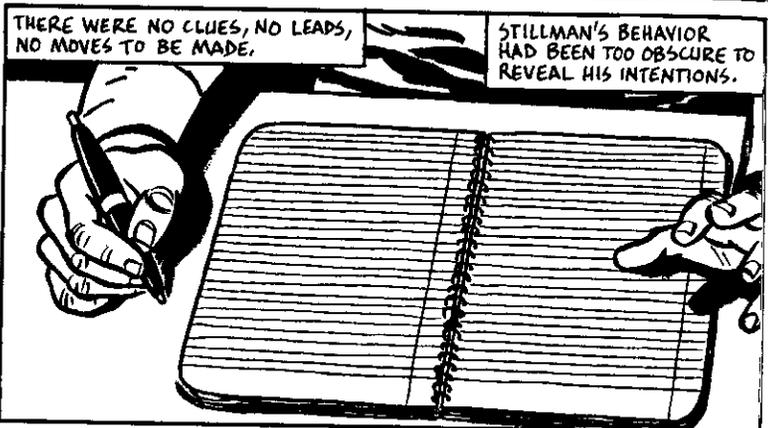


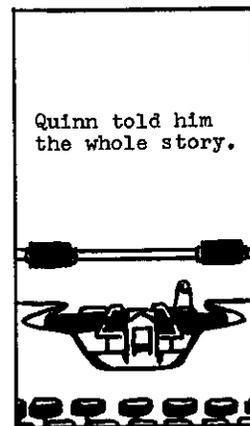
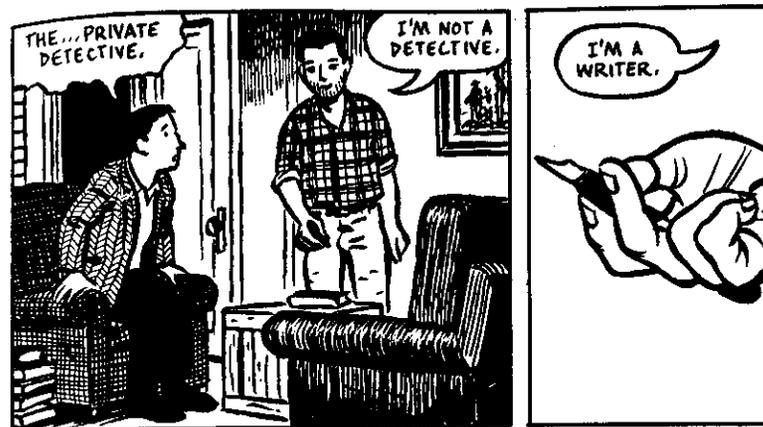
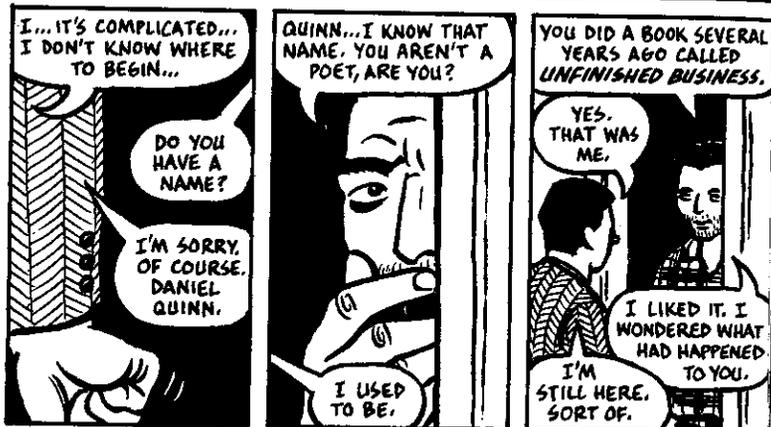
I WON'T FORGET.















RIGHT NOW, AN ESSAY ABOUT *DON QUIXOTE*.

ONE OF MY FAVORITE BOOKS.

MINE TOO.



WHAT'S THE GIST?

IT HAS TO DO WITH THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK.

IS THERE ANY QUESTION?



I MEAN THE BOOK INSIDE THE BOOK CERVANTES WROTE, THE ONE HE IMAGINED HE WAS WRITING.

AH.



CERVANTES CLAIMS HE IS NOT THE AUTHOR, THAT THE ORIGINAL TEXT WAS IN ARABIC.

RIGHT. IT'S AN ATTACK ON MAKE-BELIEVE, SO HE MUST CLAIM IT WAS REAL.



PRECISELY. THEREFORE, THE STORY HAS TO BE WRITTEN BY AN EYEWITNESS...



...YET CID HAMETE BENENGELI, THE ACKNOWLEDGED AUTHOR, NEVER MAKES AN APPEARANCE.

SO, WHO IS HE?



SANCHO PANZA IS OF COURSE THE WITNESS—ILLITERATE, BUT WITH A GIFT FOR LANGUAGE.

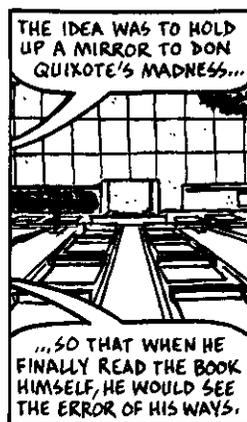


HE DICTATED THE STORY TO THE BARBER AND THE PRIEST, DON QUIXOTE'S FRIENDS.



THEY HAD THE MANUSCRIPT TRANSLATED INTO ARABIC.

CERVANTES FOUND THE TRANSLATION AND HAD IT RENDERED BACK INTO SPANISH.



THE IDEA WAS TO HOLD UP A MIRROR TO DON QUIXOTE'S MADNESS...

...SO THAT WHEN HE FINALLY READ THE BOOK HIMSELF, HE WOULD SEE THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS.

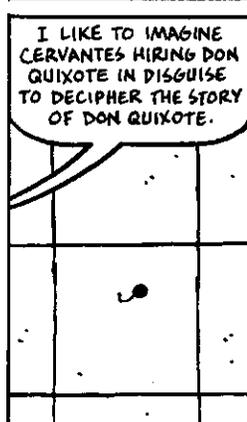


BUT DON QUIXOTE, IN MY VIEW, WAS NOT MAD.

HE ONLY PRETENDED TO BE.



HE ENGINEERED THE COLLABORATION, AND THE TRANSLATION FROM ARABIC BACK INTO SPANISH.



I LIKE TO IMAGINE CERVANTES HIRING DON QUIXOTE IN DISGUISE TO DECIPHER THE STORY OF DON QUIXOTE.

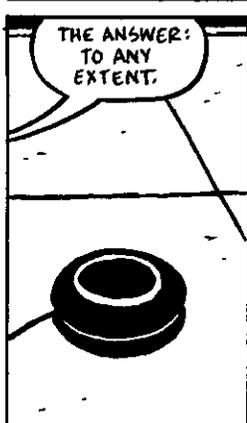


BUT WHY DID QUIXOTE GO TO SUCH LENGTHS?

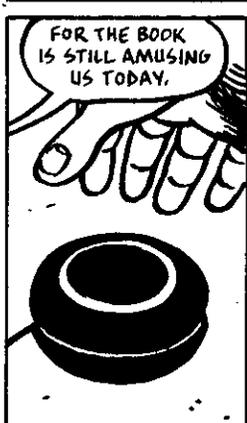
HE WANTED TO TEST THE GULLIBILITY OF MAN.



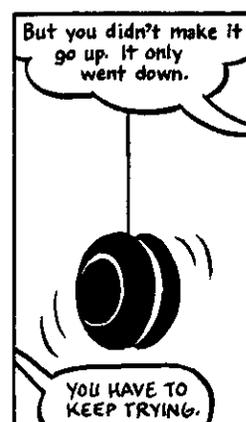
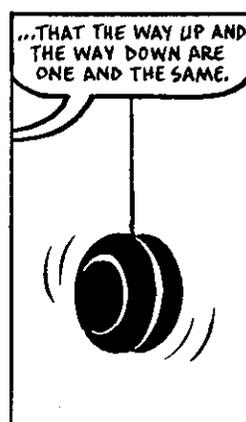
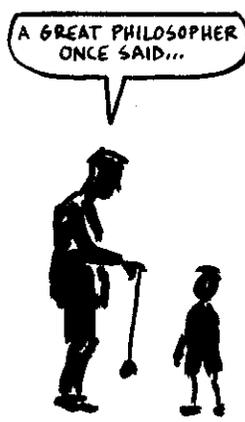
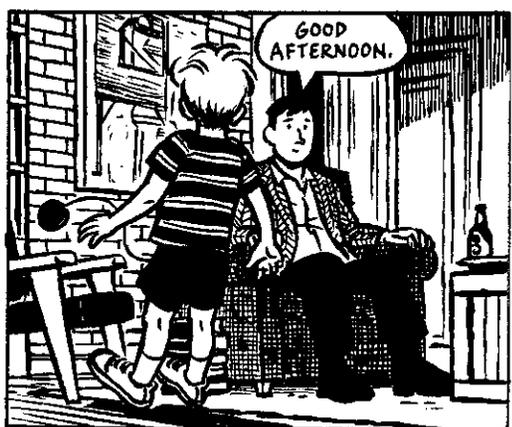
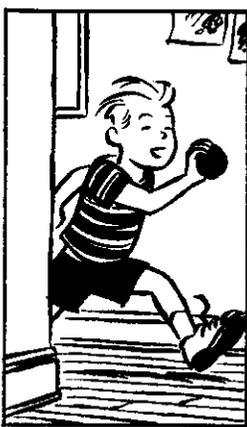
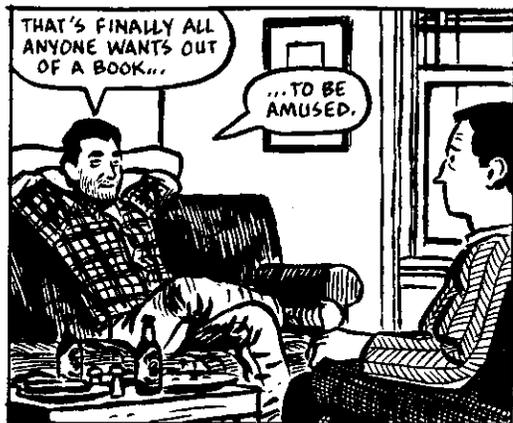
TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD PEOPLE TOLERATE BLASPHEMIES, LIES, AND NONSENSE IF THEY GAVE THEM AMUSEMENT?



THE ANSWER: TO ANY EXTENT.



FOR THE BOOK IS STILL AMUSING US TODAY.





HE HAD BEEN SENT BACK SO FAR BEFORE THE BEGINNING THAT IT WAS WORSE THAN ANY END HE COULD IMAGINE.





QUINN SPENT THE FOLLOWING DAY ON HIS FEET.



HE DIDN'T CONSIDER WHERE HE WAS GOING.

BZZT BZZT BZZT



EVERY TWENTY MINUTES HE WOULD CALL VIRGINIA.



THE BUSY SIGNAL BECAME A COMFORTING METRONOME...



...BEATING STEADILY INSIDE THE RANDOM NOISES OF THE CITY...



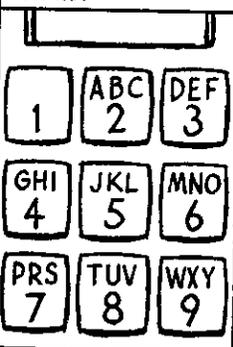
...NEGATING SPEECH AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SPEECH.



VIRGINIA AND PETER STILLMAN WERE SHUT OFF FROM HIM NOW.



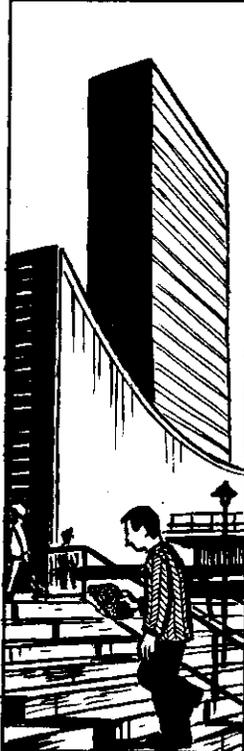
BUT HE SOOTHED HIS CONSCIENCE BY STILL TRYING.



WHATEVER DARKNESS THEY WERE LEADING HIM INTO, HE HAD NOT ABANDONED THEM YET.



WHAT HE THEN WROTE  
HAD NOTHING TO DO  
WITH THE STILLMAN  
CASE.



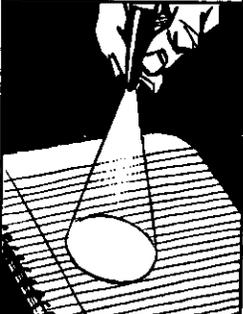
HE WANTED TO RECORD  
THINGS HE HAD SEEN  
THAT DAY...



...BEFORE HE FORGOT  
THEM.



Today, as never before:  
the tramps, shopping-  
bag ladies, drifters  
and drunks...



... the merely destitute  
to the wretchedly  
broken. They are  
everywhere.



Some beg with a  
semblance of pride:  
Soon I will be back  
with the rest of you.



Others have given  
up hope.



Still others try to  
work for money.



Others have real  
talent.



The man improvised  
tiny variations,  
enclosed in his own  
universe.



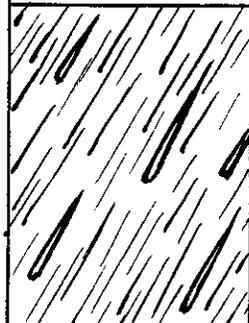
If went on and on. The  
longer I listened, the  
harder I found it  
to leave.



To be inside that  
music: perhaps that is  
a place where one  
could finally  
disappear.



Far more numerous  
are those with  
nothing to do...



... hulks of despair,  
clothed in rags,  
faces bruised,  
bleeding.

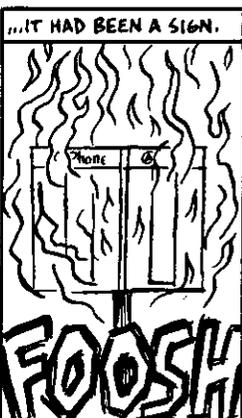
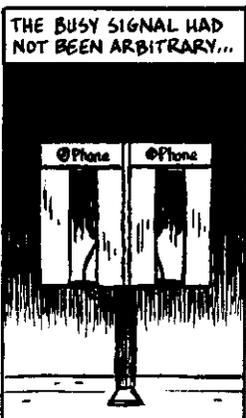


They shuffle through  
the streets as though  
in chains.



They seem to be  
everywhere the  
moment you look  
for them.





A SIGN TELLING HIM THAT HE COULD NOT BREAK HIS CONNECTION WITH THE CASE.



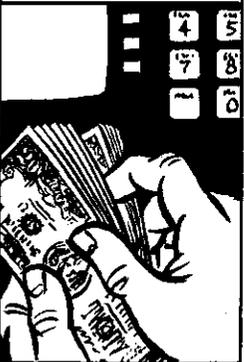
HE HAD TRIED TO CONTACT VIRGINIA STILLMAN TO TELL HER THAT HE WAS THROUGH...



...BUT THE FATES HAD NOT ALLOWED IT.



HIS JOB WAS TO PROTECT PETER.



WHAT DID IT MATTER IF HE COULDN'T CONTACT VIRGINIA, AS LONG AS HE DID HIS JOB?



FROM NOW ON, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR STILLMAN TO COME NEAR PETER WITHOUT QUINN KNOWING IT.



A LONG TIME PASSED. WEEKS, PERHAPS MONTHS.



The account of this period is less full than the author would have liked.

Facts are scarce, and even the notebook, which has provided much information, is suspect.



We cannot say for certain what happened to Quinn during this period.

For it is at this point in the story that he began to lose his grip.



NO ONE LEFT OR ENTERED THE BUILDING WITHOUT HIS SEEING IT.



HE FIGURED THAT VIRGINIA AND PETER WERE HOLED UP.



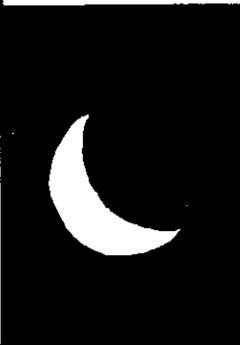
IN ADAPTING TO THIS NEW LIFE, QUINN'S FIRST PROBLEM WAS FOOD.



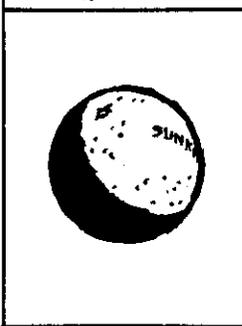
BECAUSE UTMOST VIGILANCE WAS REQUIRED, HE WAS RELUCTANT TO LEAVE HIS POST.



QUINN CHOSE TO DO HIS SHOPPING BETWEEN 3:30 AND 4:30 A.M.



HE ATE LITTLE, AND FOUND HE NEEDED LESS AND LESS AS TIME WENT ON.



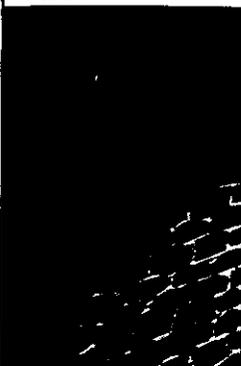
HE DIDN'T WANT TO STARVE HIMSELF, HE JUST WANTED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE THINGS THAT CONCERNED HIM.



THAT MEANT THE CASE, AND HOW TO MAKE HIS LAST THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS LAST AS LONG AS IT COULD.



HIS SECOND PROBLEM WAS SLEEP.



HE DECIDED TO LIMIT HIMSELF TO THREE OR FOUR HOURS A DAY, DISTRIBUTED SO AS TO MISS AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.



HE TRIED TO TRAIN HIMSELF TO TAKE SHORT NAPS.

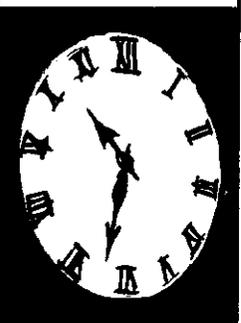


IT WAS A LONG STRUGGLE.

HE WAS HELPED BY NEARBY CHURCH BELLS RINGING EVERY FIFTEEN MINUTES.



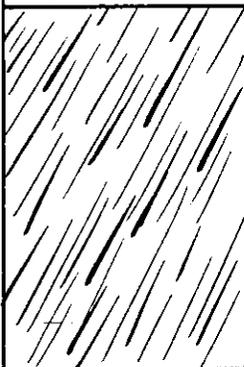
EVENTUALLY HE HAD TROUBLE DISTINGUISHING THE CLOCK FROM HIS OWN PULSE.



THERE WAS NEVER A MOMENT WHEN HE WAS NOT DEAD TIRED.



EVERY NOW AND THEN IT RAINED.



THEN QUINN WOULD CLIMB INTO A DUMPSTER FOR PROTECTION.



THE SMELL WAS OVERPOWERING.



HOW HE MANAGED TO KEEP HIMSELF HIDDEN IS A MYSTERY.



BUT IT SEEMS THAT NO ONE DISCOVERED HIM.



IT WAS AS THOUGH HE HAD MELTED INTO THE WALLS OF THE CITY.



BUT THERE WAS A GAP THROUGH WHICH HE COULD BREATHE AND STILL KEEP AN EYE ON THE BUILDING.



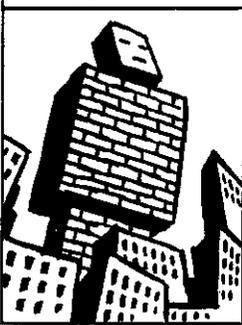
HE EMPTIED HIS BLADDER IN A FAR CORNER OF THE ALLEY.



AS FOR HIS BOWELS, HE WENT INSIDE THE DUMPSTER.



QUINN HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT OF HIMSELF AS A MAN WHO LIKED TO BE ALONE.



NOW HE BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THE TRUE NATURE OF SOLITUDE.



AND OF ONE THING HE HAD NO DOUBT: HE WAS FALLING.



THERE WAS PLENTY OF NEWSPAPER TO WIPE HIMSELF WITH.



AS FOR WASHING AND SHAVING, HE LEARNED TO DO WITHOUT.



AND IF HE WAS FALLING, HOW COULD HE CATCH HIMSELF AS WELL?



WAS IT POSSIBLE TO BE AT THE TOP AND THE BOTTOM AT THE SAME TIME?

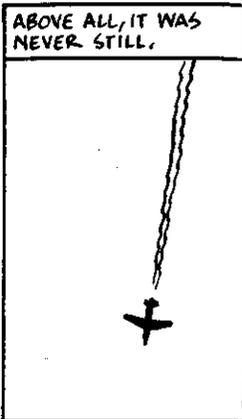
IT DID NOT SEEM TO MAKE SENSE.



HE SPENT MANY HOURS  
LOOKING UP AT THE SKY.



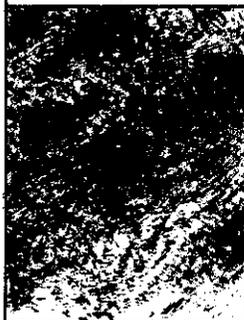
ABOVE ALL, IT WAS  
NEVER STILL.



QUINN SPENT MANY  
AFTERNOONS STUDYING  
THE CLOUDS.



THE WIDE RANGE OF  
GRAYS HAD TO BE  
INVESTIGATED,  
MEASURED, DECIPHERED.



THE SPECTRUM OF  
VARIABLES WAS  
IMMENSE.



ONE BY ONE, ALL WEATHERS  
PASSED OVER HIS HEAD.



SEEING A STAR, HE  
WONDERED IF IT HAD  
NOT BURNED OUT  
LONG AGO.



THE DAYS THEREFORE CAME AND WENT.



STILLMAN DID NOT  
APPEAR.



QUINN'S MONEY RAN  
OUT AT LAST.



IT WAS SOME TIME IN  
MID-AUGUST.



HE WAS CERTAIN THAT  
MONEY HAD ARRIVED  
FOR HIM.



IT WAS JUST A MATTER  
OF GOING TO HIS POST  
OFFICE BOX.



HE COULD BE BACK IN  
A FEW HOURS.



WE WILL NEVER KNOW THE  
AGONIES HE SUFFERED AT  
HAVING TO LEAVE HIS SPOT.



WITHOUT MONEY ENOUGH FOR THE BUS HE BEGAN TO WALK.



HIS LEGS WERE WEAK.



HE HAD TO STOP EVERY NOW AND THEN TO CATCH HIS BREATH.



HE SHUFFLED ALONG, BARELY LIFTING HIS FEET.



IN THIS WAY HE COULD CONSERVE HIS STRENGTH...



...FOR THE CORNERS, WHERE HE HAD TO BALANCE HIMSELF CAREFULLY...



...BEFORE EACH STEP UP...



...AND DOWN FROM THE CURB.



FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HE HAD BEGUN HIS VIGIL, QUINN SAW HIMSELF.

HE WAS NEITHER SHOCKED NOR DISAPPOINTED, MERELY FASCINATED.



HE HAD BEEN ONE THING BEFORE, AND NOW HE WAS ANOTHER.



IT WAS NEITHER BETTER NOR WORSE.



IN A MATTER OF MONTHS HE HAD BECOME SOMEONE ELSE.

AT 96<sup>TH</sup> STREET, QUINN ENTERED CENTRAL PARK.



IT WAS THE FIRST UNBROKEN SLEEP HE HAD HAD IN MONTHS.



HE CRINGED TO THINK OF THE TIME HE HAD LOST.



NO MATTER WHAT HE DID NOW, HE FELT THAT HE WOULD ALWAYS BE TOO LATE.



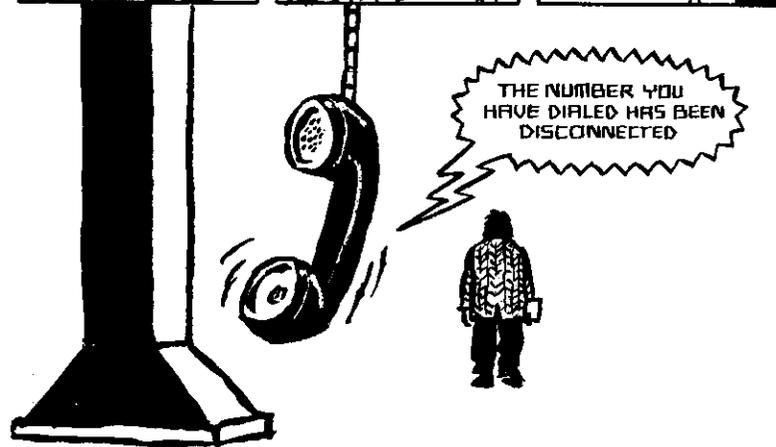
HE COULD RUN FOR A HUNDRED YEARS, AND STILL HE WOULD ARRIVE JUST AS THE DOORS WERE CLOSING.



A TELEPHONE REMINDED HIM OF AUSTER.



PERHAPS HE COULD JUST COLLECT THE CASH FROM THE CHECK.



HE DECIDED TO POST PONE THINKING ABOUT IT.



HE WOULD RETURN TO HIS APARTMENT AND TAKE A HOT BATH.



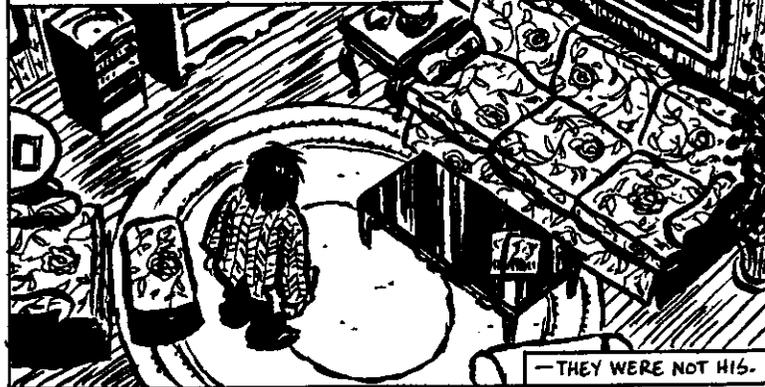
THEN, PERHAPS, HE WOULD BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT IT.



EVERYTHING HAD CHANGED.



THE FURNITURE, THE PICTURES, THE RUGS —



— THEY WERE NOT HIS.

HIS DESK WAS GONE, HIS BOOKS WERE GONE, THE CHILD DRAWINGS OF HIS DEAD SON WERE GONE.



IT TOOK A WHILE TO CALM HER DOWN.



I'VE BEEN LIVING HERE FOR A MONTH. IT'S MY APARTMENT.



BUT I HAVE THE KEY. DOESN'T THAT CONVINCE YOU?

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF WAYS YOU COULD HAVE GOT THAT KEY.



DIDN'T THEY TELL YOU SOMEONE WAS LIVING HERE?

THEY SAID A WRITER. BUT HE DISAPPEARED.



THAT'S ME! I'M THE WRITER!

YOU?! I'VE NEVER SEEN A BIGGER MESS IN MY LIFE.

LOOK AT YOU.



I'VE HAD SOME... DIFFICULTIES LATELY.



BUT IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY.

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS?



FRANKLY, I DON'T CARE.



THIS IS MY PLACE AND I WANT YOU OUT.

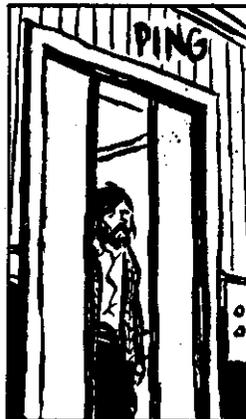
HIS APARTMENT WAS GONE, HE WAS GONE, EVERYTHING WAS GONE.



IT DIDN'T MATTER ANYMORE.



QUINN WAS NOT SURPRISED THAT THE FRONT DOOR AT 69TH STREET OPENED WITHOUT A KEY.



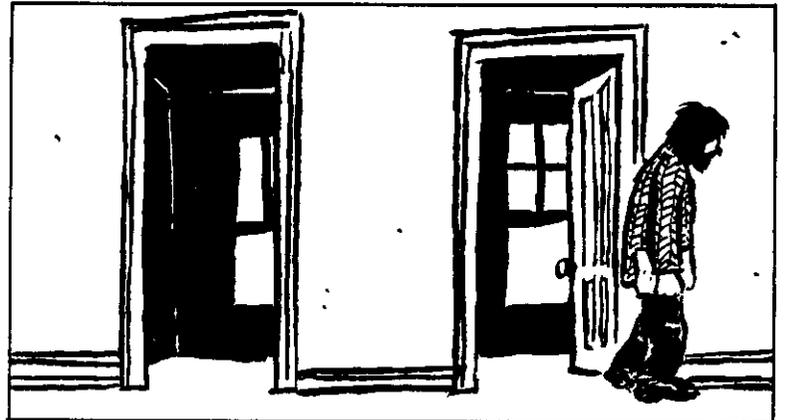
NOR WAS HE SURPRISED WHEN HE REACHED THE STILLMANS' APARTMENT...



...THAT THAT DOOR SHOULD BE OPEN AS WELL.



124



125



WAS IT NIGHT?



IF SO, THEN SURELY THE SUN WAS SHINING SOMEWHERE ELSE. IN CHINA, FOR EXAMPLE.

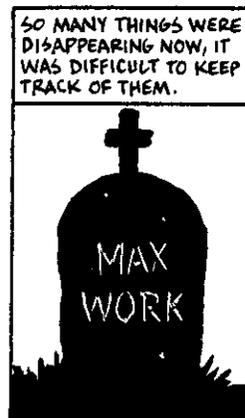


NIGHT AND DAY WERE NO MORE THAN RELATIVE TERMS.

AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT, IT WAS ALWAYS BOTH.



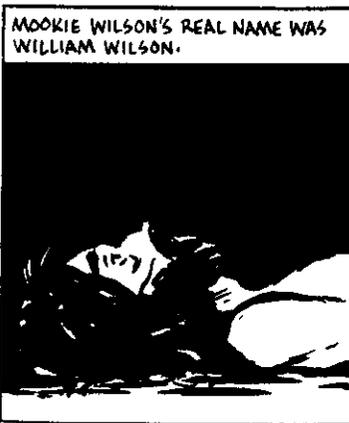
HE TRIED TO THINK ABOUT THE LIFE HE HAD LIVED BEFORE THE STORY BEGAN.



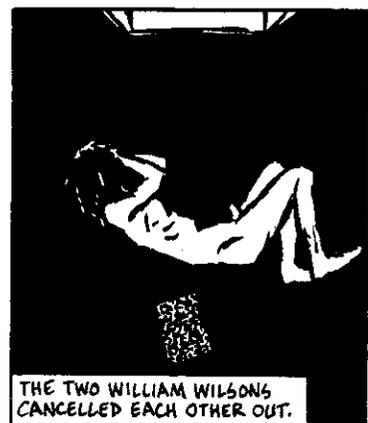
SO MANY THINGS WERE DISAPPEARING NOW, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO KEEP TRACK OF THEM.



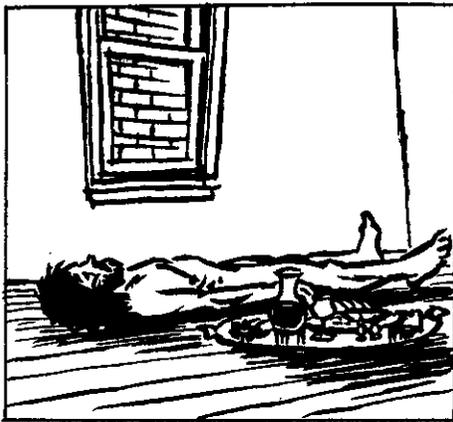
HE TRIED TO WORK HIS WAY THROUGH THE METS' LINEUP, POSITION BY POSITION.



MOOKIE WILSON'S REAL NAME WAS WILLIAM WILSON.



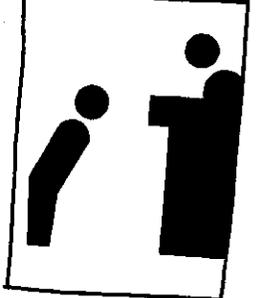
THE TWO WILLIAM WILSONS CANCELLED EACH OTHER OUT.



FOR THE MOST PART, HIS ENTRIES FROM THIS PERIOD CONSISTED OF MARGINAL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE STILLMAN CASE.



WHY HAD HE NOT BOTHERED TO LOOK IN OLD NEWSPAPERS ABOUT STILLMAN'S ARREST IN 1969?



WHY HAD HE TAKEN AUSTER'S WORD THAT STILLMAN WAS DEAD?



*a good egg  
egg on his #  
to lay an egg  
as alike  
as two  
eggs*

WHY HAD DON QUINOTE NOT WRITTEN BOOKS LIKE THE ONES HE LOVED...



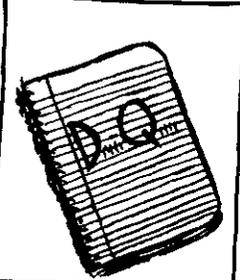
HE WROTE UNTIL IT WAS DARK.



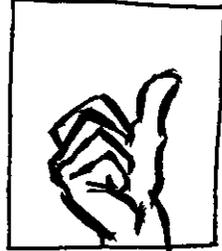
THE THOUGHT OF TURNING ON THE LIGHT DID NOT APPEAL TO HIM.



...INSTEAD OF LIVING OUT THEIR ADVENTURES?



WAS THE GIRL IN HIS APARTMENT THE SAME AS THE GIRL IN GRAND CENTRAL?



WAS THE CASE OVER, OR WAS HE STILL WORKING ON IT?



WHEN IT WAS DARK,  
QUINN SLEPT...



... AND WHEN IT  
WAS LIGHT, HE ATE  
AND WROTE.



LITTLE BY LITTLE  
THE DARKNESS HAD  
BEGUN TO WIN OUT.



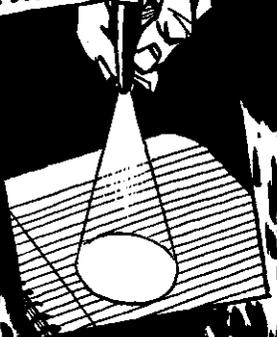
HE BEGAN TO SKIP  
MEALS, BUT THE  
TIME CONTINUED TO  
DIMINISH.



HE HAD FORGOTTEN  
THAT THE ELECTRIC  
LIGHT WAS THERE.



THE LIGHT HAD  
GRADUALLY BECOME  
FAINTER AND MORE  
FLEETING.



IT SEEMED THAT  
THERE WAS LESS  
TIME TO EAT AND  
WRITE...



... THAT THESE  
PERIODS HAD BEEN  
REDUCED TO A  
MATTER OF MINUTES.



THE NUMBER OF  
PAGES IN THE  
NOTEBOOK WAS  
DWINDLING.



HE BEGAN TO  
WEIGH HIS WORDS  
WITH GREAT CARE.



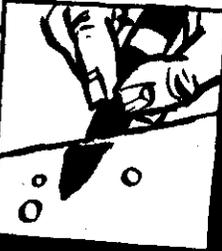
THE CASE WAS FAR  
BEHIND, AND HE NO  
LONGER BOTHERED  
TO THINK ABOUT IT.



ONCE THERE WAS TIME  
ONLY TO WRITE  
THREE SENTENCES.



THE NEXT TIME,  
ONLY TWO.



... AND NOW ITS  
MEANING HAD  
BEEN LOST.



IT HAD BECOME A  
BRIDGE TO ANOTHER  
PLACE IN HIS LIFE...



HE WROTE ABOUT THE  
STARS, THE EARTH, HIS  
HOPES FOR MANKIND.

HE FELT THAT HIS  
WORDS HAD BEEN  
SEVERED FROM HIM,  
THAT THEY WERE  
NOW PART OF THE  
WORLD AT LARGE...

...AS REAL AND  
SPECIFIC AS A  
STONE, OR A  
LAKE, OR A  
FLOWER.

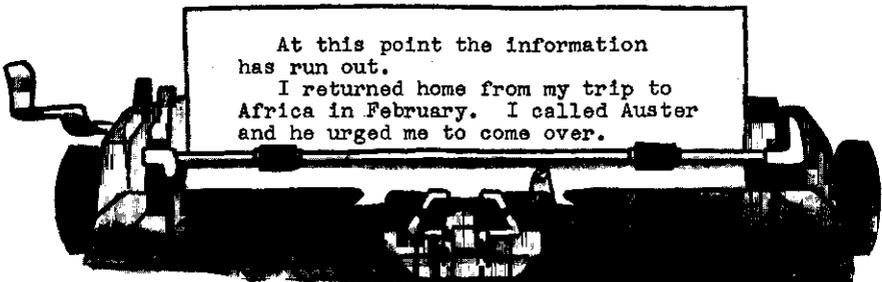
HE REMEMBERED  
THE MOMENT OF  
HIS BIRTH, AND THE  
INFINITE KIND-  
NESSES OF THE  
WORLD...

...AND ALL THE  
PEOPLE HE HAS  
EVER LOVED.

He wondered if he  
had it in him to  
write without a  
pen, if he could  
learn to speak in-  
stead, filling the  
darkness with his  
voice, speaking  
the words into the  
air, into the walls,  
into the city, even  
if the light never  
came back again.



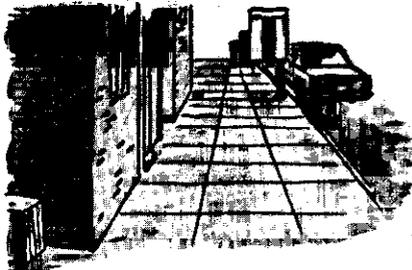
What will happen when  
there are no more pages  
in the notebook?



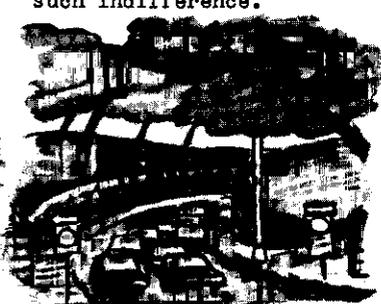
At this point the information has run out. I returned home from my trip to Africa in February. I called Auster and he urged me to come over.

Auster explained to me what little he knew about Quinn and the case. He wanted my advice about what to do.

I began to feel angry that he had treated Quinn with such indifference.



I scolded him for not having done something to help.



He had been feeling guilty and needed to unburden himself.



He said that I was the only person he could trust.



He had spent the last few months trying to track down Quinn, but with no success.

I suggested that we take a look at the Stillman apartment.



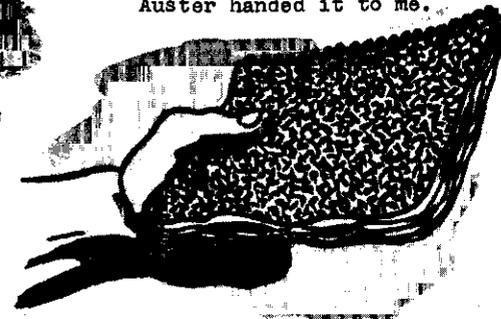
We had little trouble getting into the building.

We went upstairs and found the door unlocked.

In a small room in the back we found the notebook.



Auster handed it to me.

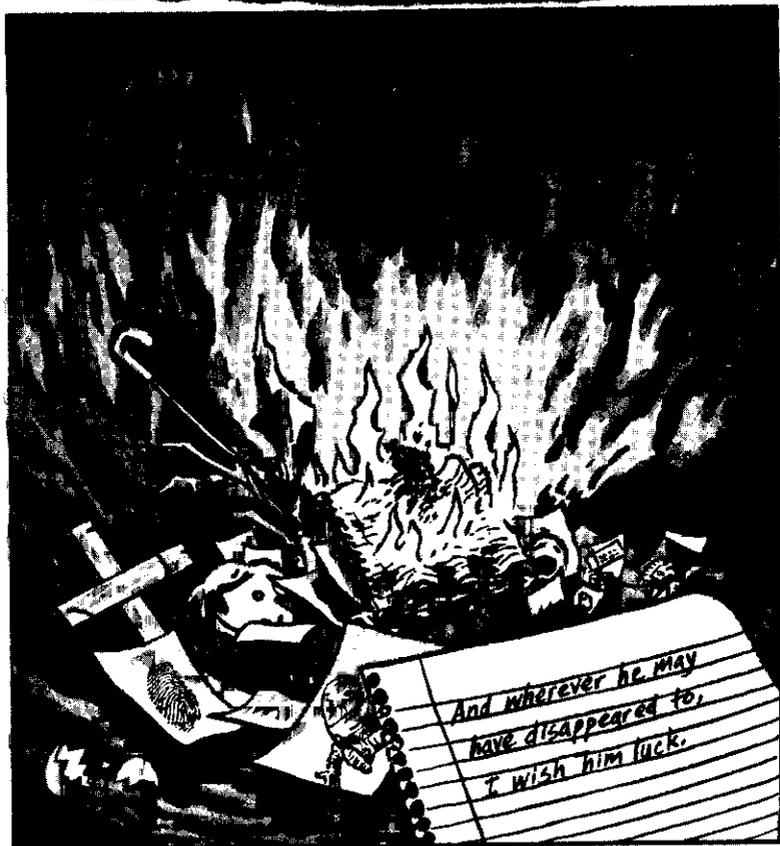


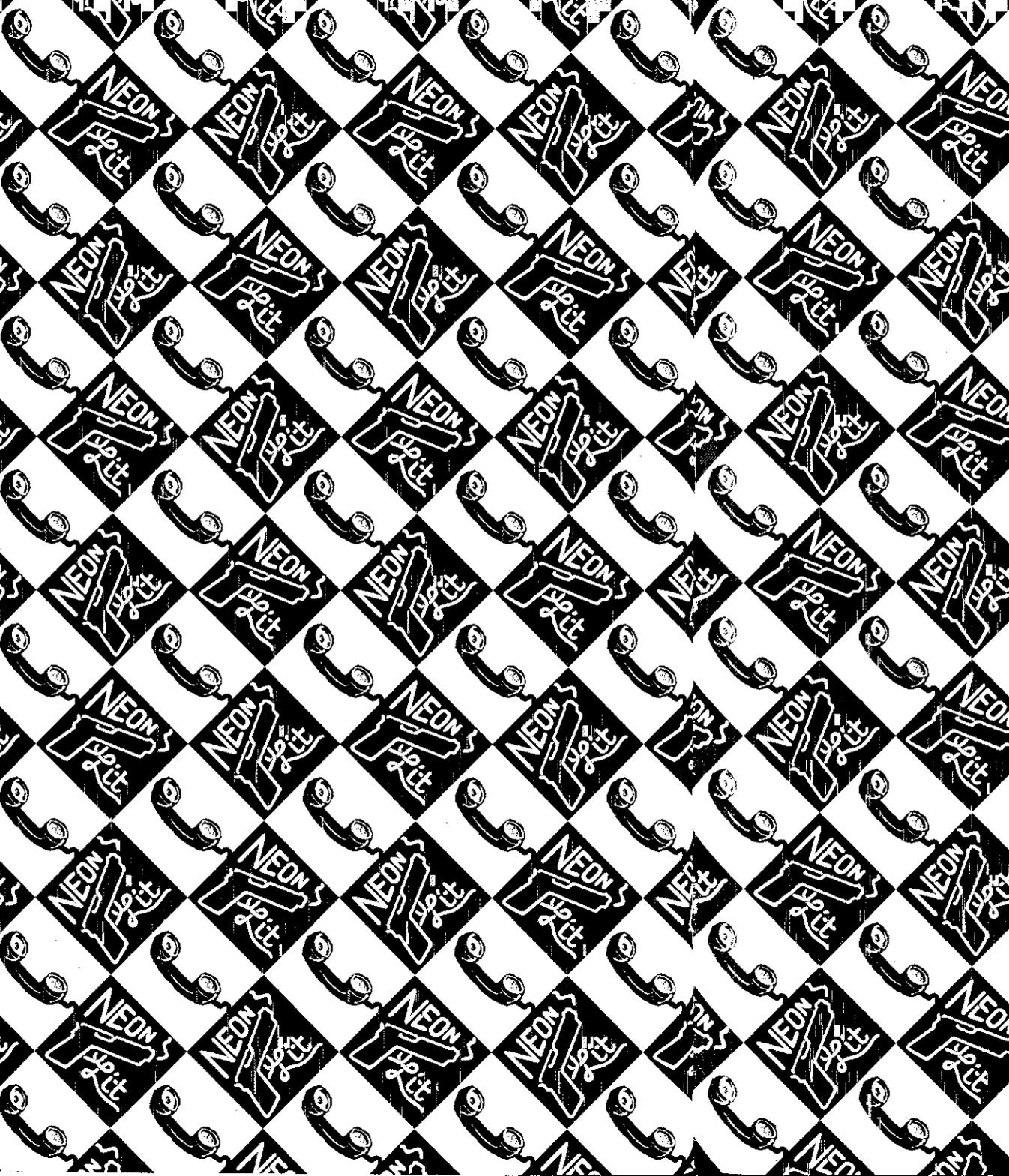
The whole business had upset him so much that he was afraid to keep it.



He never wanted to see it again.

As for Quinn, it is impossible for me to say where he is now. I have followed the notebook as closely as I could, and any inaccuracies should be blamed on me. There were moments when the text was difficult to decipher, but I have done my best. The notebook, of course, is only half the story, as any sensitive reader will understand. As for Auster, I am convinced that he behaved badly throughout. If our friendship has ended, he has only himself to blame. As for me, my thoughts remain with Quinn. He will be with me always.





## THE SUSPECTS



**Paul Auster's** *City of Glass* is the first volume in the New York Trilogy. *Mr. Vertigo* is his most recent novel.



An accomplished cartoonist and script writer, **Paul Karasik** served as advisory editor for *Raw Magazine*.



**David Mazzucchelli's** own stories appear in his award-winning *Rubber Blanket* comix magazine.



**Bob Callahan** is a San Francisco Bay Area writer and editor. He is the author of the idea for this *Neon Lit Noir Illustrated* series.



**Art Spiegelman** is currently working on an illustrated adaptation of the classic, decadent poem *The Wild Party*, by Joseph March.