

“EMPTINESS WATCHES, EMPTINESS SEES...”



# MOON DUST

— graphic novel —







# MOON DUST

g r a p h i c n o v e l

DEDICATED TO

NEIL A. ARMSTRONG,  
BUZZ ALDRIN AND  
MICHAEL COLLINS  
("APOLLO 11")

screenplay, dialogues and drawings by:  
Nikolai Koriagin

"Thank you for the children's encyclopedia, mom. Dad, you have never recommended bad books. Your library card has saved not one summer, grandpa. **Grandma**, we missed you so much."

2016



1985, NOWADAYS

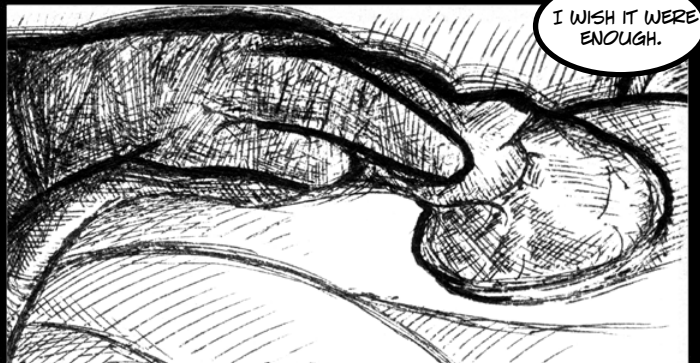
MARE INGENII (SEA OF DREAMS), FAR SIDE OF THE MOON



THERE IS NO TIME...



THE GLASS IS COVERED WITH FROST...

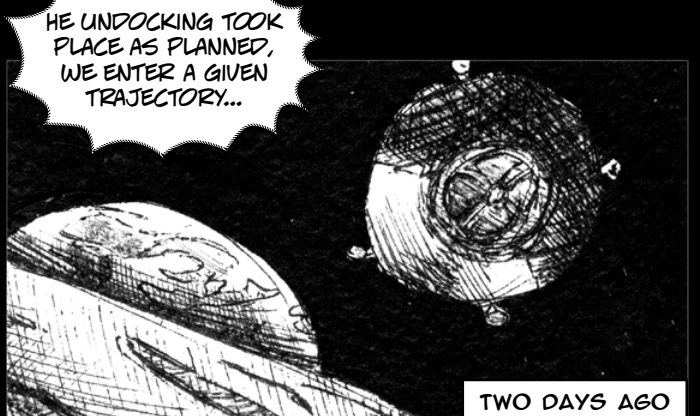


I WISH IT WERE ENOUGH.



**YOU WON'T KILL ME...**

THREE DAYS EARLIER

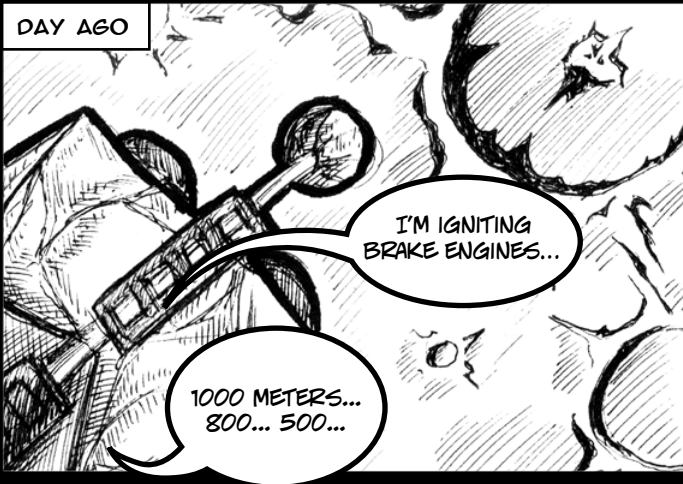


HE UNDOCKING TOOK PLACE AS PLANNED, WE ENTER A GIVEN TRAJECTORY...

TWO DAYS AGO

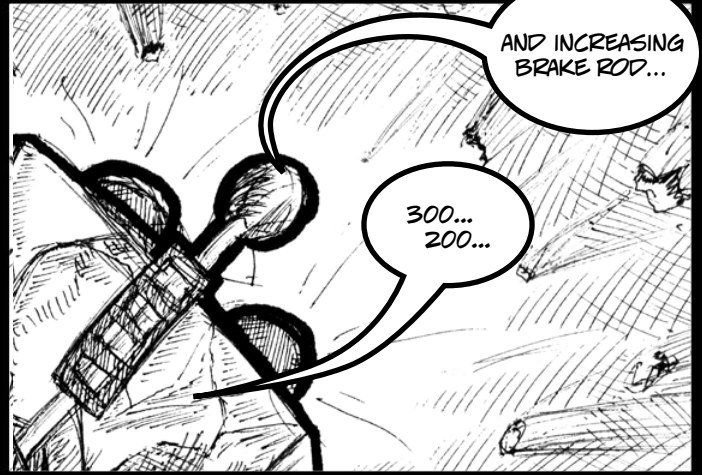


DAY A60



I'M IGNITING BRAKE ENGINES...

1000 METERS...  
800... 500...



AND INCREASING BRAKE ROD...

300...  
200...

THE MOON SURFACE, A LANDER



CONTACT WITH THE SURFACE MADE. HOUSTON, EVERYTHING IS OK!

WELL DONE GUYS, YOU TOUCHED DOWN NICE!...

ORBIT, COMMAND MODULE



...A COUPLE OF MILES TO THE SOUTH, LIKE CHIMPS.

IT'S OKAY FOR OUR PURPOSES, CAPTAIN, NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

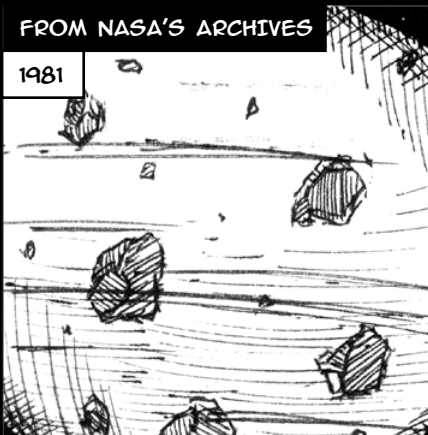


WELL, GONNA TAKE A NAP FOR AN HOUR OR TWO AND GO?..

GOOD IDEA. >> YAWNS <<  
TOMORROW WILL BE A LONG DAY...

FROM NASA'S ARCHIVES

1981



THREE MANNED PROGRAM WERE SCUTTLED



THE DREAM TURNED INTO TOO EXPENSIVE REALITY, SAID RICHARD NIXON.

MOREOVER, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE USSR HAS ALREADY LOST MOON RACE.

BUT BY THAT TIME WE ALREADY HAD MORE THAN 130 KG OF MOON SOIL.



WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING IT FOR TEN YEARS AND... I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO SAY IT.

\*...APOLLO PROJECT WAS CLOSED IN 1973.\*

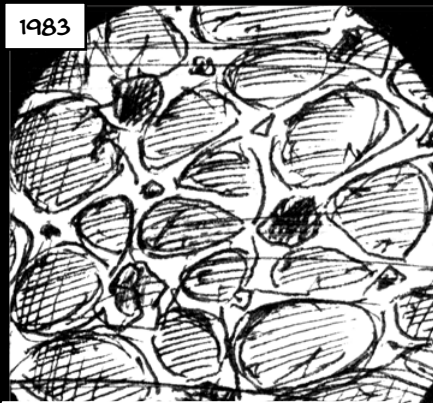




AT THE MOMENT WE KEEP IT IN SECRET FROM THE PUBLIC, BUT TRUST ME...



IF THE RETURN OF MANKIND TO THE MOON MUST HAVE A REASON...



1983

...THEN IT'S THE BEST THING WE COULD EVER DREAMED OF.



"ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN..." DAMN, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SAY THAT.



LOOK...

WHAT'S THERE?

REEVES IS ON THE LINE, OVER! NO, I'M... FIVE HUNDRED KILOMETERS FROM YOU, I HARDLY CAN HELP.



DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

I SEE, BUT I CAN'T RECALL ANYTHING LIKE THAT ON THE MAP...

ME TOO... OKAY, ANYWAY WE'RE NEED TO GO IN THAT DIRECTION.

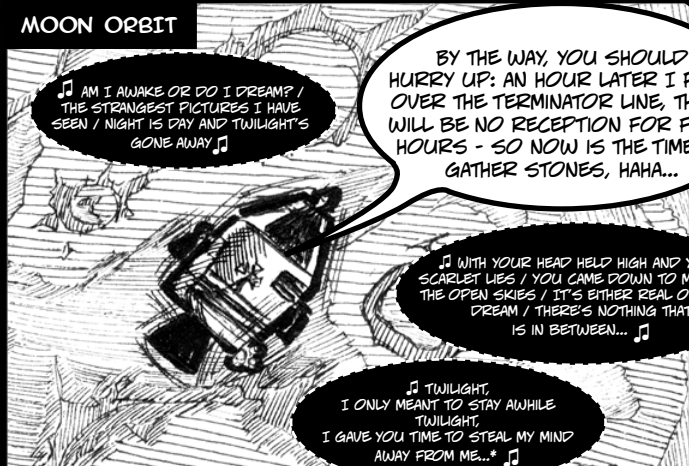


JAMES, WE'RE GOING TO THE SOUTH-WEST, TWO DEGREES TO THE SOUTH OF THE ROUTE, THERE'S A STRANGE FORMATION THERE, PERHAPS THERE'RE DISCOVERED DEPOSITS OF IRON OR TITANIUM, I CAN'T MAKE OUT IT. I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING FROM ABOVE, OVER?



...THE VISIONS DANCING IN MY MIND / THE EARLY DAWN, THE SHADES OF TIME / TWILIGHT CRAWLING THROUGH MY WINDOWPANE...

MOON ORBIT



♪ AM I AWAKE OR DO I DREAM? / THE STRANGEST PICTURES I HAVE SEEN / NIGHT IS DAY AND TWILIGHT'S GONE AWAY ♪

BY THE WAY, YOU SHOULD HURRY UP: AN HOUR LATER I PASS OVER THE TERMINATOR LINE, THERE WILL BE NO RECEPTION FOR FOUR HOURS - SO NOW IS THE TIME TO GATHER STONES, HAHA...

♪ WITH YOUR HEAD HELD HIGH AND YOUR SCARLET LIES / YOU CAME DOWN TO ME FROM THE OPEN SKIES / IT'S EITHER REAL OR IT'S A DREAM / THERE'S NOTHING THAT IS IN BETWEEN... ♪

♪ TWILIGHT, I ONLY MEANT TO STAY AWHILE TWILIGHT, I GAVE YOU TIME TO STEAL MY MIND AWAY FROM ME...\* ♪



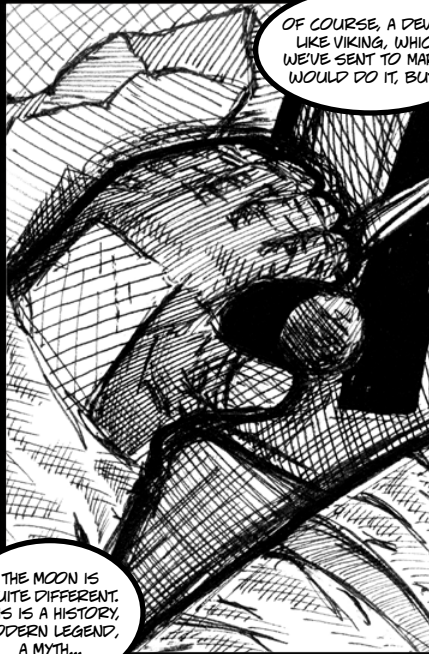
BUT ANYWAY, LET ME KNOW IF YOU SEE A UFO: I LOVE SUCH STORIES.

\* ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA - TWILIGHT (TIME, 1981)





THE MAIN GOAL OF THE EXPEDITION WAS THE COLLECTION OF LUNAR SOIL ON "THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON" - YES, LIKE IN PINK FLOYD'S THING.



OF COURSE, A DEVICE LIKE VIKING, WHICH WE'VE SENT TO MARS, WOULD DO IT, BUT...

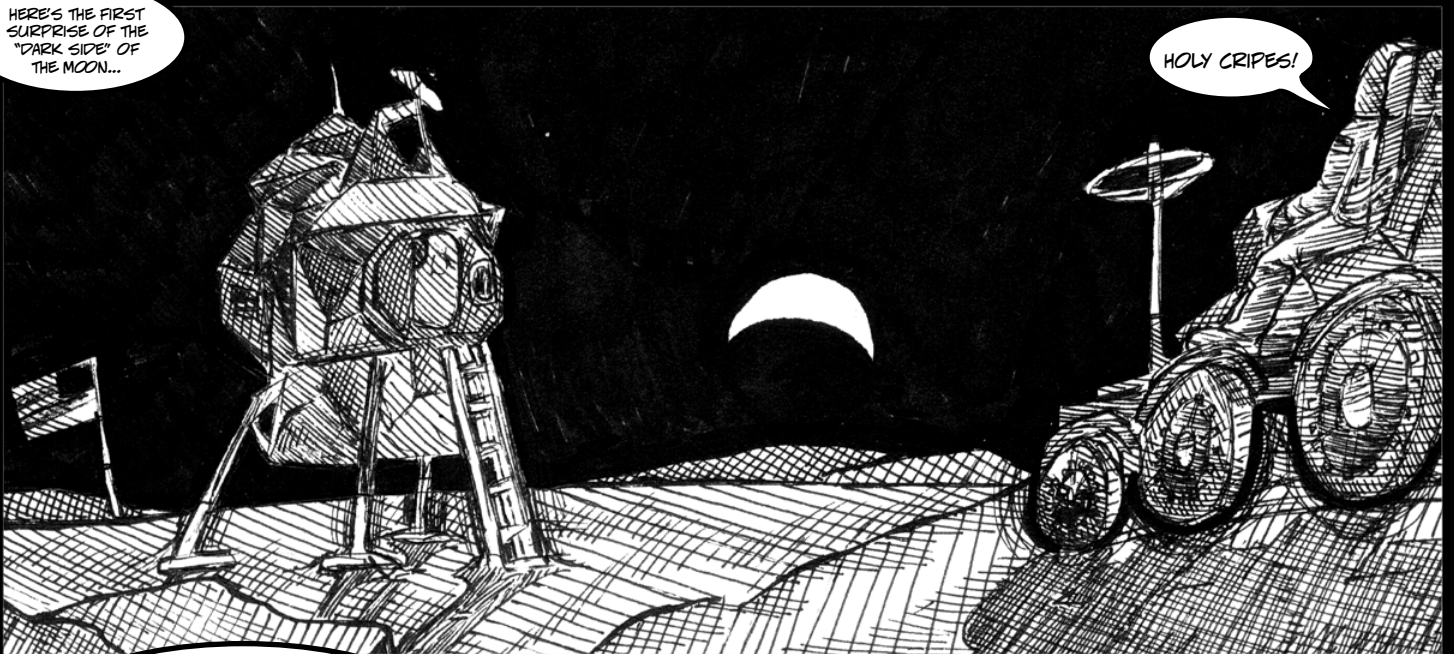
THE MOON IS QUITE DIFFERENT. THIS IS A HISTORY, MODERN LEGEND, A MYTH...



THE FIRST CELESTIAL BODY ON WHICH WE LANDED. AND WE HAD TO RETURN...

WAIT. WHAT?!

HERE'S THE FIRST SURPRISE OF THE "DARK SIDE" OF THE MOON...



HOLY CRIPES!



WE... WE... WE JUST CAME HERE, DIDN'T WE? OR NOT? NO, LOOK, THAT POINT RIGHT BEHIND US, IT'S OUR LANDER, WE'VE LEFT FROM THERE? SO WHAT THE HELL THIS THING IS DOING HERE, WHERE IT'S COMING FROM?!

DYLAN, CALM DOWN, STOP GOING INTO HYSTERICIS.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE LANDERS HAS NOT CHANGED ALMOST SINCE THE APOLLO 11, EXCEPT THAT...

THE NEAREST LANDING POINT IN THE SEA OF TRANQUILITY, IT IS GENERALLY ON A DIFFERENT SIDE OF THE PLANET!



THE HATCH IS NOT CLOSED. LET'S FIND OUT WHAT'S THERE.









HUH?



N-N-NOTHING,  
IT'S JUST...  
I'M GOING  
OUTSIDE.



WELL OK, BUT  
DON'T TURN OFF  
THE RADIO.



I THINK  
I'M GOING  
CRAZY...

EIGHT YEARS, EIGHT  
YEARS, WHY, ELLIE,  
JUST TODAY?

BRACE YOUR-  
SELF, HOWELL...



WAIT, THIS  
SHADOW...



...BUT THE  
VISION HAS NEVER  
DECEIVED ME.

**OH FUCK!!**



**ROBERTSON,  
QUICKLY OUT!**

WHAT?

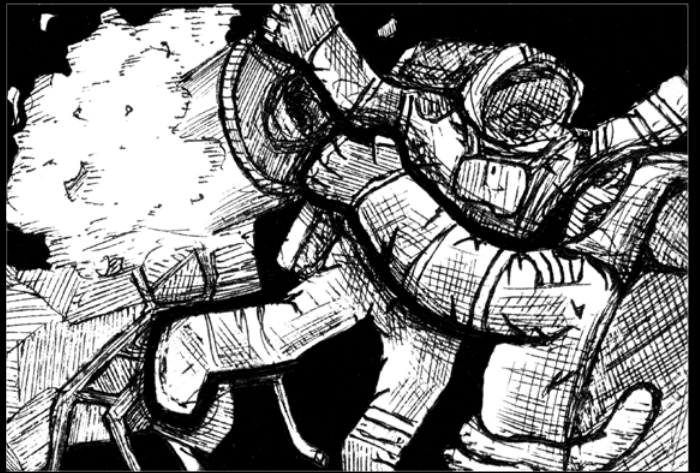
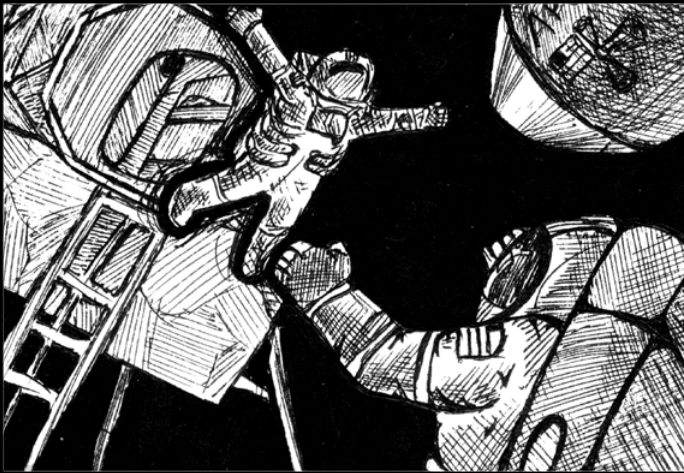


**GET OUT  
OF THERE!**

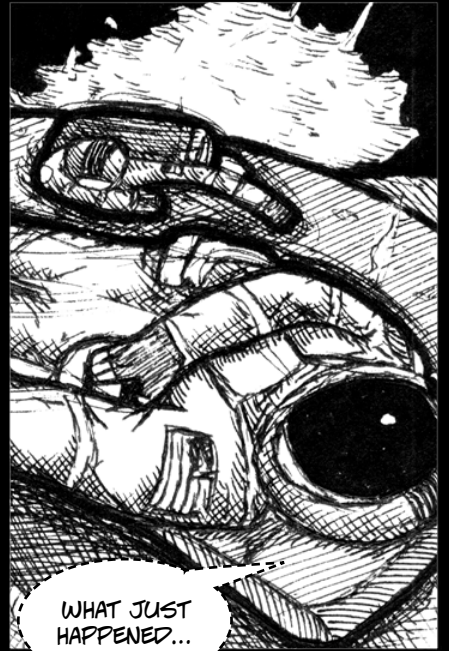


HOLY SH...

**JUMP THE FUCK UP!!  
I'LL CATCH YOU!**







WHAT JUST HAPPENED...



IT'S HARD TO SAY, BUT I HAVE TO.

THE COMMAND MODULE LOST THE ORBIT.



WE WON'T RETURN.



NOWADAYS



YOU WON'T KILL ME, BITCH.



I'LL SURVIVE, I'LL SURVIVE...



FIVE HOURS EARLIER

SHHHH!!



JAMES, YOU... YOU GOT DAMN BASTARD, MAN! WHERE ARE YOU UP THERE?..



SO WHAT'S UP FELLAS, DID E.T. PHONED HOME?

ROBERTSON, HOWELL! YOU DON'T CONTACT FOR A LONG TIME, OVER!

AND WHERE ELSE WOULD I BE, YOU SON OF A BITCH?

I'M AFRAID THAT'S UNLIKELY - THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO GET THE NIGHT SIDE, COMMUNICATION WILL SOON BE INTERRUPTED.

BUT STILL - WHAT HAPPENED? COME ON, IT CAN'T BE RUSSIANS..?



♪ ...'CAUSE THIS IS THRILLER, / THRILLER NIGHT / AND NO ONE'S GONNA SAVE YOU FROM THE BEAST ABOUT TO STRIKE\* ♪

SPIT IT OUT, WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE? HAVE YOU FOUND THE SKULL, ADVENTURE SEEKERS?



IT'S A... LONG STORY, BRO. WHERE ARE YOU NOW? CAN WE CONTACT WITH THE EARTH? HERE'RE THE NEWS - THE HAIR WILL ROSE ON YOUR HEAD, BUDDY.



\* MICHAEL JACKSON - THRILLER (THRILLER, 1982)



COUGH-COUGH! DAMN DUSTY, IT'S EVEN IN A SPACE SUIT.



"LAN..?" ANTHONY, ISN'T HE ON HIGH?

HERE YOU'RE ALMOST RIGHT...

IN GENERAL, WE STUMBLED UPON THE LAN...



LOOK, YOU TOO..?

ME TOO.

DAMN, THIS WEED SHOULD BE TOO DAMN HIGH, BROS! LET ME KNOW WHERE DID YOU KEEP IT, - BUT NOW RUN-RUN TO THE ROVER AND TO THE POINT OF THE SAMPLES COLLECTION, QUICKLY.



I STILL HAVE TEN MINUTES TILL SHHHHHH!

SHADOW ZONE.



I THINK THIS WAY: LUNAR SOIL WILL HAVE TO WAIT. AND JAMES TOO.

YEAR, I AGREE.





I CLOSE MY EYES TIGHT AND SHAKE MY HEAD. I OPEN MY EYES AND... NO, IT DOESN'T SEEM TO ME.



WAIT... HERE WAS THE BLOOD, RIGHT?..

WHAT BLOOD?

SOMETHING WRONG IN DYLAN'S VOICE. HOW DID HE GET THAT ACCENT?

1969



WHERE IS THE BLOOD FROM? THINK ABOUT IT.



WELL, ON THE WALLS, FROZEN. DON'T YOU REMEMBER? YOU PASSED YOUR HAND OVER IT.

LISTEN, YOU'RE SCARING ME, BUDDY.



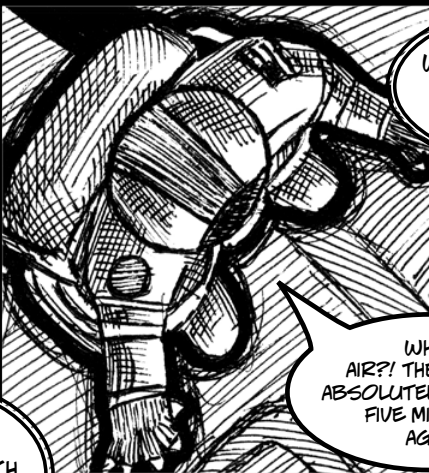
YOU'RE SCARING ME TOO, NEIL.

NEIL?!

DAMN, EVEN THE WAY HE MOVES LOOKS SOMEWHAT... WRONG.



OKAY, LET'S FINALLY CLOSE THE HATCH AND LET IN A LITTLE AIR...



WHAT? WE CAME TO THE SURFACE, AS WE HAD TO, DIDN'T WE?

WHAT AIR?! THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING FIVE MINUTES AGO!



WE'RE THE FIRST ONES, RIGHT?



LISTEN, RELAX, NEIL. WE'VE ALREADY GONE DOWN IN THE HISTORY, AND WE CAN RELAX BEFORE TAKEOFF.



HELP ME TO DETACH THE VALVE...

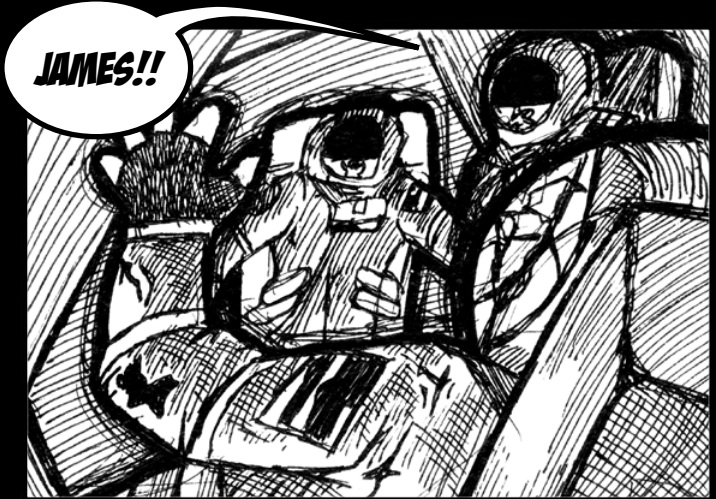
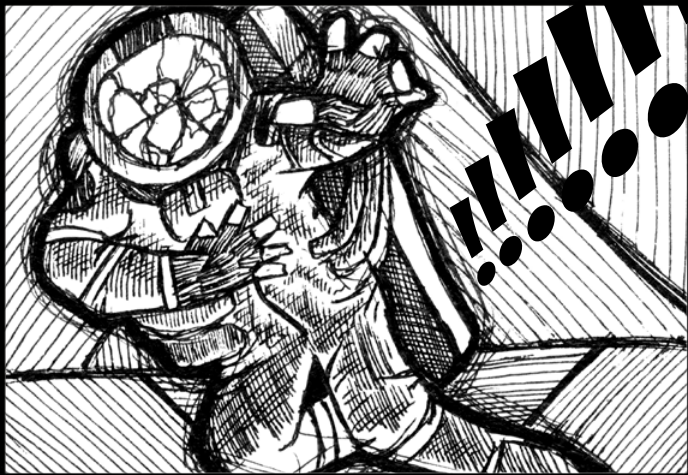
ROBERTSON, SHE SAW...



IT CAN'T BE TRUE...







HE'S ON A DIFFERENT FREQUENCY...



JAY, IS THAT YOU? HOW DID YOU GET HERE? WE'VE BEEN TALKING A MINUTE AGO! YOU WERE IN ORBIT!!



ETERNITY... I SAW ETERNITY, IT PASSED THROUGH ME...



WHAT IS HE ABOUT?..



I LOOKED INTO HIS EMPTY EYE SOCKETS... HE IS AN EMPTINESS. MILLIONS OF YEARS OF EMPTINESS...

"IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, THE WORD WAS AT GOD..." I SAW GOD



LOOK, HIS LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM IS GOING TO STOP SOON. LET'S TAKE HIS HELMET OFF? WHAT, IT SEEMS HE RECOVERED FROM THE SHOCK. JAY, HERE'RE WE...

WHAT AM I...



WAIT, WAIT, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY?.. SHIT, HOWELL - HIS LEGS ARE BROKEN...



EMPTINESS SEES! DARKNESS WILL EAT YOU AND FEAST ETERNITY LONG IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!

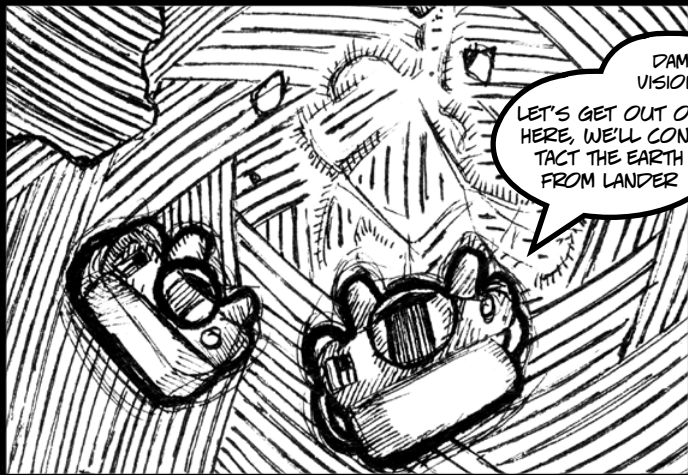
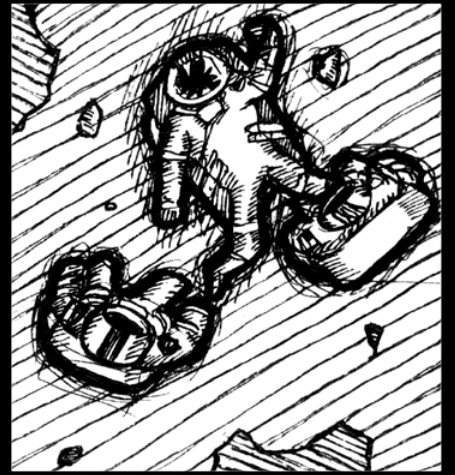
BUT I WON'T BE THERE!

YOU WON'T GET ME BACK ALIVE!



STOP!!





...

STOP...

LISTEN, UHM...

YOU DIDN'T LET ME TAKE THE HELMET OFF.

THANK YOU.

...

DAMN VISIONS. LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, WE'LL CONTACT THE EARTH FROM LANDER

IF THERE IS STILL SOMEONE IN THE ORBIT...

DO YOU THINK APOLLO IS STILL THERE?

FUCK KNOWS IT.



NOWADAYS



I'LL SURVIVE.



I WILL SURVIVE...



I'LL GET THE DAMNED MODULE, I'LL START IT UP, IF NEED BE, I'LL EVEN FIND APOLLO IN THE ORBIT AND DOCK WITH IT - BUT YOU WON'T GET ME. NOT HERE...

THREE HOURS AGO



IT SEEMS THAT WE'RE GOING FOR AGES.



I REMEMBER ABOUT CAMERA.

IS THERE ANY RADIO SIGNALS?...

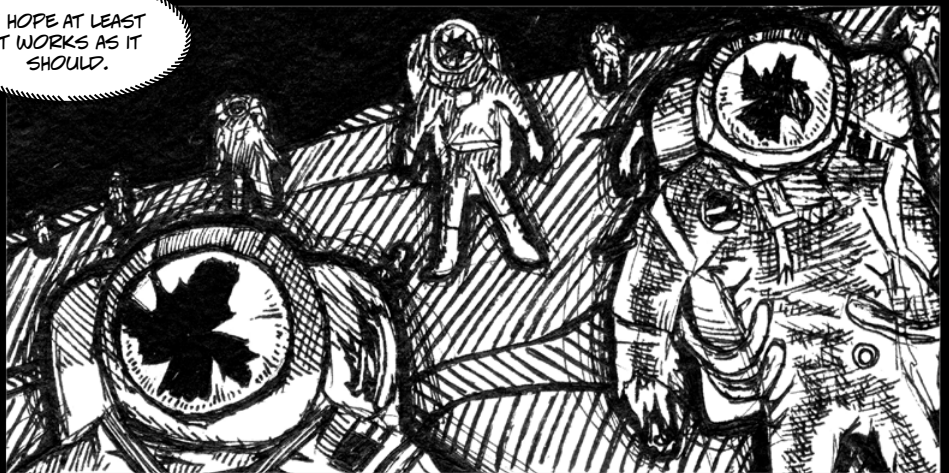


NOPE...



LET'S CHECK IN THE MODULE IN AN HOUR.

I HOPE AT LEAST IT WORKS AS IT SHOULD.



WHAT A LIFELESS, DEADLY-PALE DESERT AROUND US...





SILENCE SIT'S HEAVY ON MY MIND.

...YOU KNOW, I'M IN SPACE FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, - I BUILT 'SKYLAB', WORKED WITH THE RUSSIANS AT 'SOYUZ-APOLLO' ...

IN ANY CASE, RAMPAGE OF THE ASTRONAUT'S NASA MAY BE FOUND INTERESTING...

...BUT I HAD NO EXPEDITION LIKE THIS BEFORE, MAN. I WONDER IF NEIL ARMSTRONG WAS UNDER HALLUCINATIONS ON THE MOON TOO? WEIRD, HUH?

I DON'T EVEN, **COUGH!** KNOW...

YOU KNOW, I... **COU-U-U-UGH!**  
OH CRAP, I'M...  
OH.

I DON'T LIKE THAT COUGH...

**AAARRH-YU  
OOKAAAAAAAII?!**

HEY, ARE YOU OKAY?..

A-ARGH!

"EMPTINESS...  
MILLIONS OF YEARS  
OF EMPTINESS."



TWENTY MINUTES AGO



THE DARKNESS IS COMING... FEAST ETERNITY LONG...

YOU NEED TO WAKE UP.

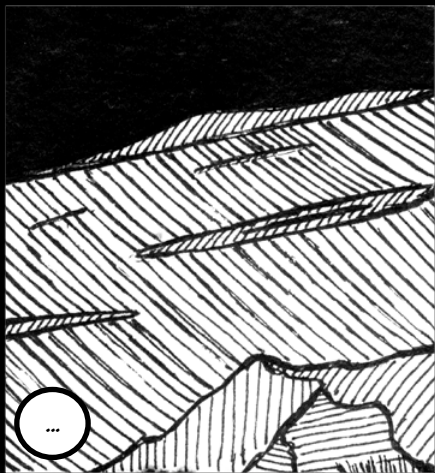
AIR... IT'S HARD TO BREATHE.



I'M STILL ALIVE?



HOW LONG WAS I UNCONSCIOUS?



...



HECK.



THE HOSE IS TORN... THERE IS NO AIR.



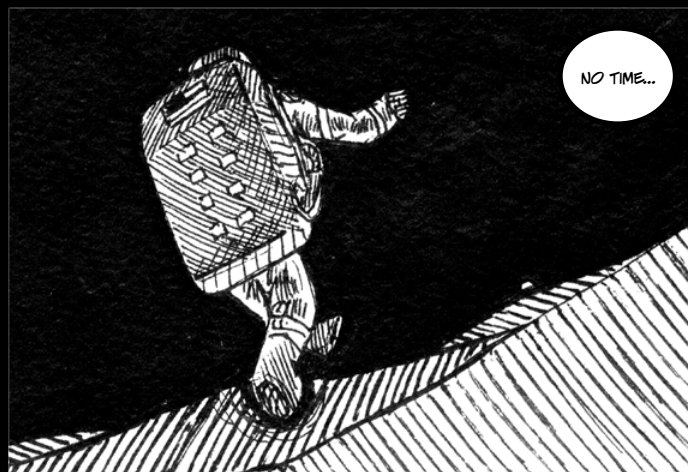
EMERGENCY AIR IS...



...MAXIMUM THIRTY MINUTES.



NO TIME.

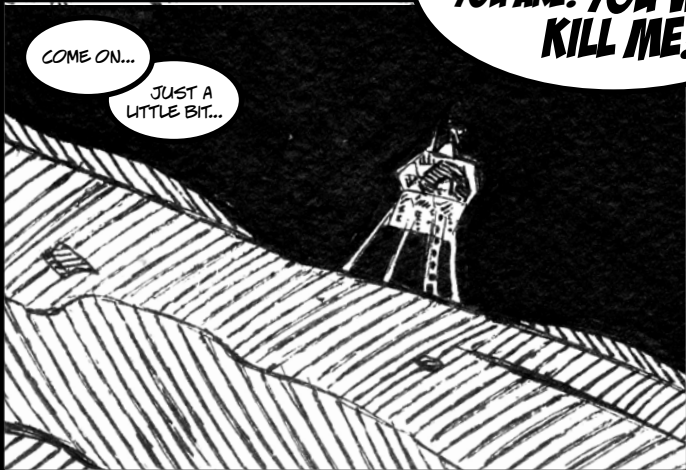


NO TIME...





**NOT HERE...  
NOT NOW, WHATEVER  
YOU ARE. YOU WON'T  
KILL ME!**



COME ON...  
JUST A  
LITTLE BIT...



WAIT, **WHA?!**



THERE ARE  
**TEN DAYS**  
BEFORE THE  
SUNSET!



WHAT THE HELL'S  
GOING ON?!

O-OH!



NO...



NOT THE  
LANDER...



**NO, NO,  
NOO!!**



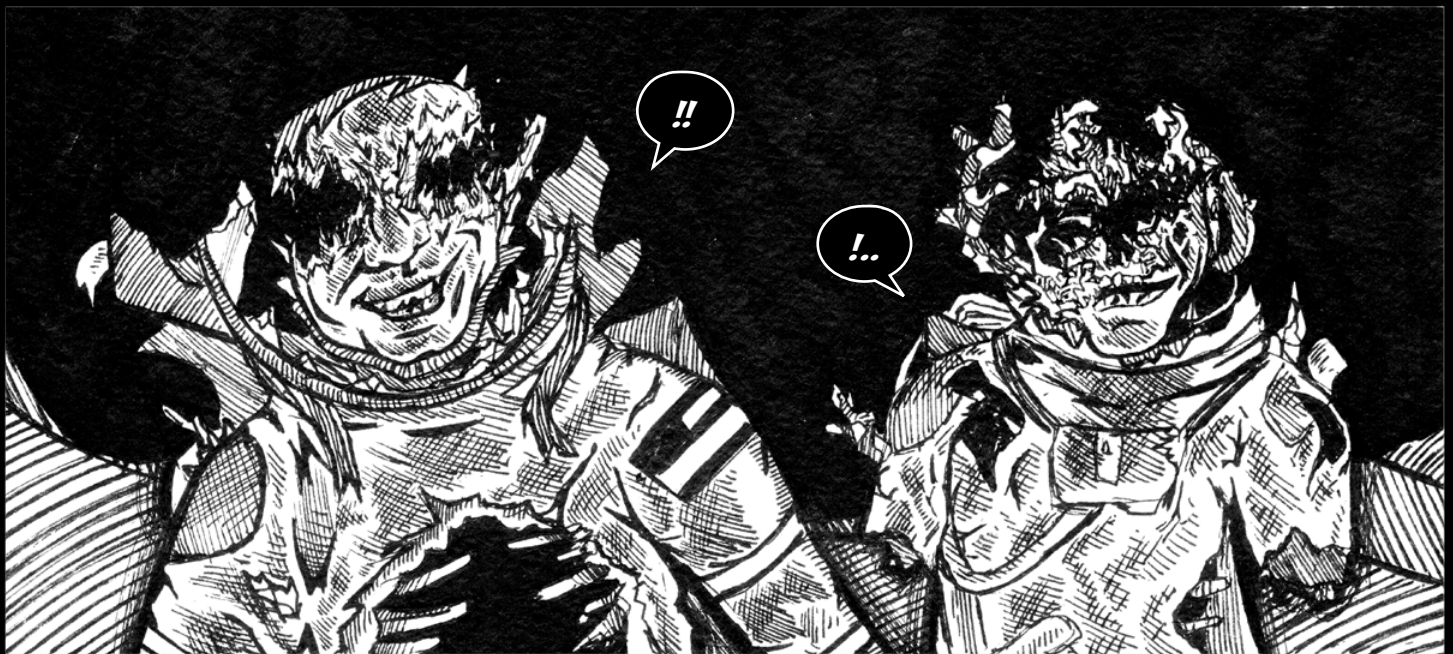
THIS ISN'T REAL...



OH.



...!



!!

!..



DYLAN...  
JAMES...



YOU'RE ALL DEAD...

SOMEONE'S LOOK...



...!





"...AND A GIANT LEAP FOR MAN-KIND..."



HOW FAR WE'VE GONE, HAVEN'T WE?

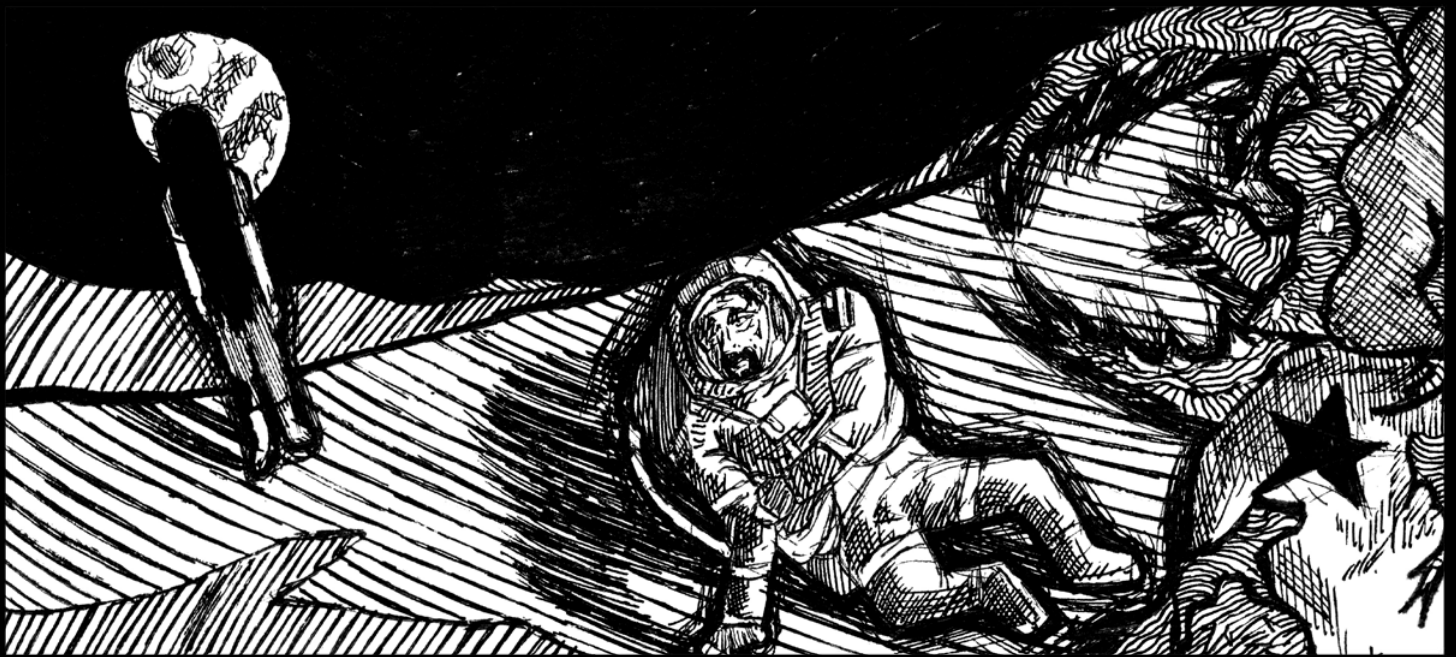


FAR...



ELLIE, FORGIVE ME.







BUT NOW...  
I, A VETERAN OF NASA, ON THE  
MOON, IN A PUNCHED SPACESUIT, IN  
FRONT OF... WHATEVER YOU MAY BE,  
AND FROM ALL THE DEMONS OF MY  
SOUL YOU CHOSE THE IMAGE OF A  
DAUGHTER WHOSE DEATH I COULD  
NOT PREVENT.

I ACTU-  
ALLY CAME  
MYSELF.

YOU WON,  
ELLIE WAS ONLY THE  
WEAKNESS OF MINE.  
IT IS POINTLESS TO  
CONTINUE TO FIGHT.  
LET HER KILL ME AND  
LET'S GET IT OVER  
WITH.

WHAT A  
GOOSEY...

OH, GREAT  
LUNAR DEITY!

SUCH  
A BIG AND SCARY  
MONSTER...

...AND SCARED  
OF THE GIRL.

DO I LOOK SO  
TERRIBLY?



K-KEEP  
AWAY FROM  
ME!



WHY ARE  
YOU SILENT...

..!

...CREATOR-  
GOD?



I DIDN'T  
CREATE  
YOU!



WELL, ERM...

TECHNICALLY  
I AM ONLY A  
PHANTOM, LIKE ALL  
THOSE PEOPLE YOU  
KILLED.

THOUGH YOU CON-  
TROL EVERYTHING  
THAT YOU CREATE.



BUT NOT ME.  
**NOT ANYMORE.**







I'M, YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD...



...IS THE PHENOMENON OF A DIFFERENT KIND.



YEA-A-AH...

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

STOP IT!!



NOW I'M EVERYWHERE TOO...

ICE OF THE CENTERS OF THE SOUTH POLE...

COLD OF THE TRANQUILITY SEA...

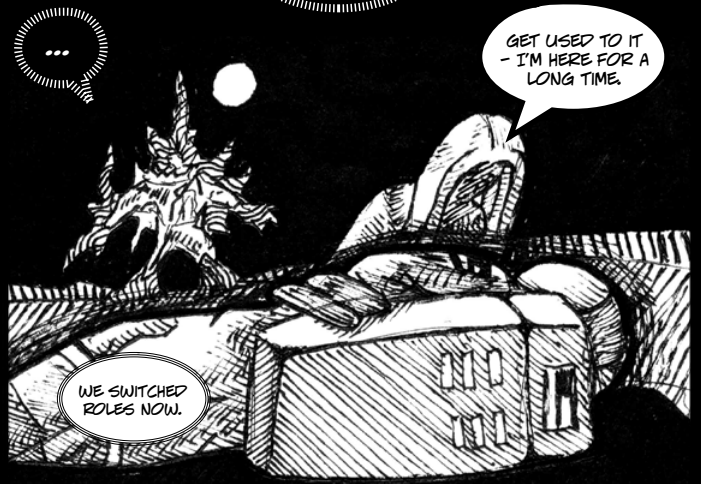
FAULTS OF MOUNTAIN RANGES...

I FEEL THEM WITH EVERY FIBRE... THAT'S BEAUTIFUL.

GRRRRH!..

NOW I'M EVERYWHERE TOO...

SORRY, I RAN AWAY WITH IT. SO HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT... SCHIZOPHRENIA? UNEXPECTEDLY, IS IT?



GET USED TO IT - I'M HERE FOR A LONG TIME.

WE SWITCHED ROLES NOW.

...WHA-A-AT A-ARE YOU-U?!



WHAT AM I? WELL, I'LL ANSWER.

I AM A PART OF THE WORLD, INFINITELY DISTANT FROM YOU...



A WORLD, AS ALIVE AS YOU ARE, AND SO DIFFERENT. A WORLD IN WHICH NOT ONE BODY BUT MANY. WHERE THE MIND IS NOT ONE IN A MILLION PARTICLES. A WORLD THAT YOU FIRST MET SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO.

JULY 20, 1969, I WAS THREE AT THAT TIME.

I... I TOOK YOU WITH MY MOM TO THE CAPE CANAVERAL ON THAT DAY, TO CHECK FOR "UNCLE NEIL"... DO YOU REMEMBER?

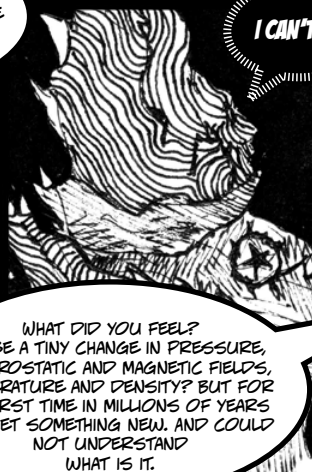
OF COURSE, AND THERE WAS DELICIOUS ICE CREAM.

SO WAS IT SHEPARD? I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST YOUR SCHOOL FRIEND...

EXACTLY, SHEPARD TREATED YOU.

...WHO ACCIDENTALLY BECAME THE FIRST AMERICAN TO GO INTO SPACE, ELLIE.

MY DAD ALWAYS HAD THE MOST BADASS FRIENDS, I KNEW IT!



I CAN'T...

WHAT DID YOU FEEL? MAY BE A TINY CHANGE IN PRESSURE, ELECTROSTATIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS, TEMPERATURE AND DENSITY? BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MILLIONS OF YEARS YOU MET SOMETHING NEW. AND COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT IS IT.



...STIR A FOOT...



YOU BECAME CURIOUS, YOU'VE STARTED TO OBSERVE. YOU BEGAN TO LEARN, TO COPY... BUT THEN EVERYTHING ENDED. THE VOICES BECAME SILENT INSIDE YOU.

IT HURTS...

AND YOU'VE FOUND YOURSELF ALONE...



UNTIL THIS DAY



PURGATORY IS CLOSED, ASSHOLE.

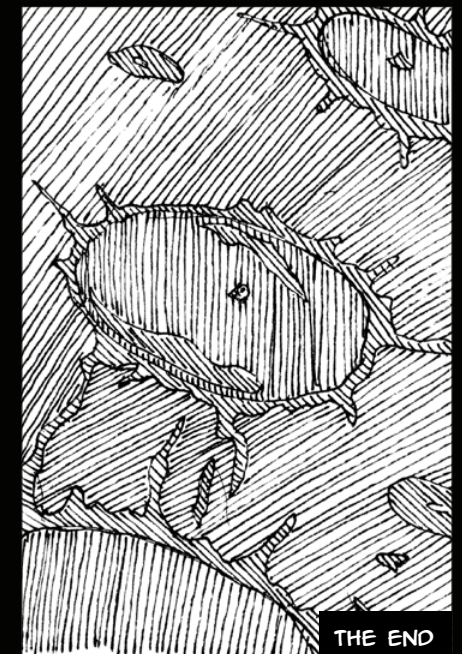


ASHES TO ASHES.



ELLIE...





\* DAVID BOWIE - SPACE ODITY  
(SPACE ODITY, 1969)



C. P.









"IF THE RETURN OF MANKIND TO THE MOON MUST HAVE A REASON..."



"...IT'S THE BEST WE COULD DREAM OF."