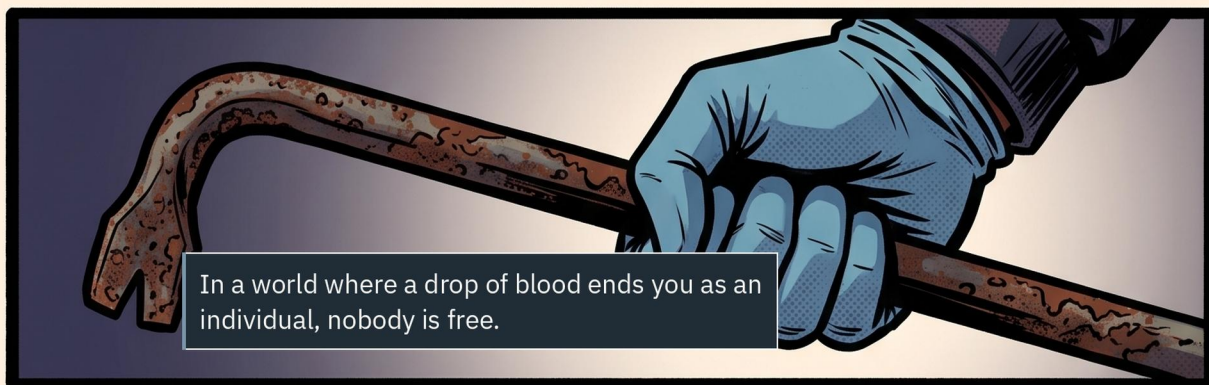
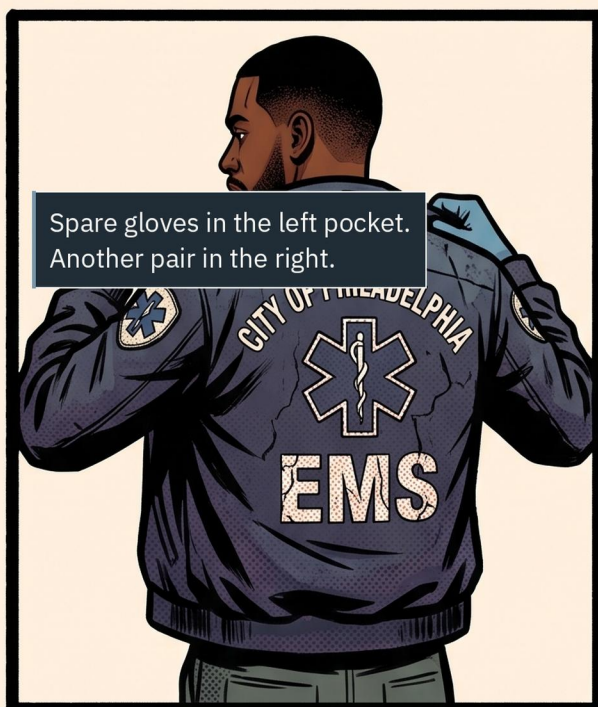


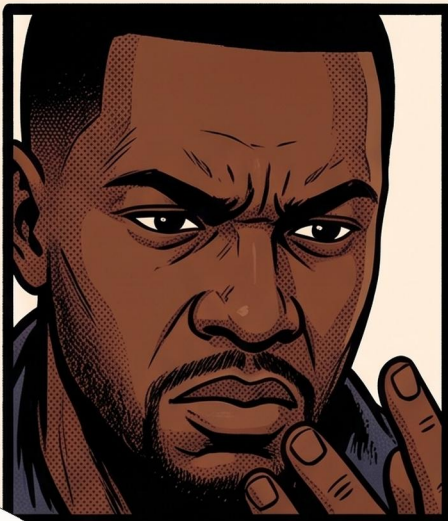
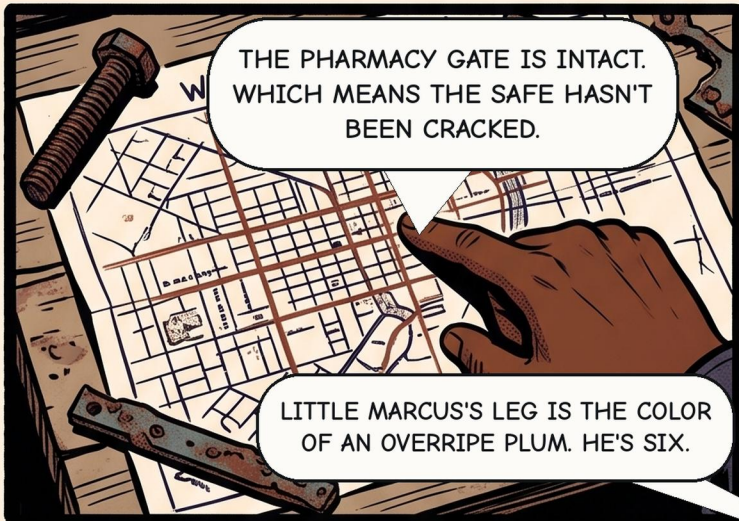
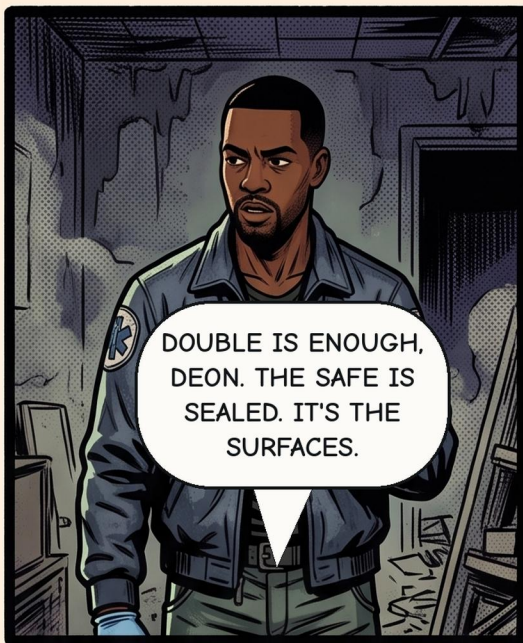
SYMBIONT D Y A D

ISSUE ONE · THE PROTOCOL







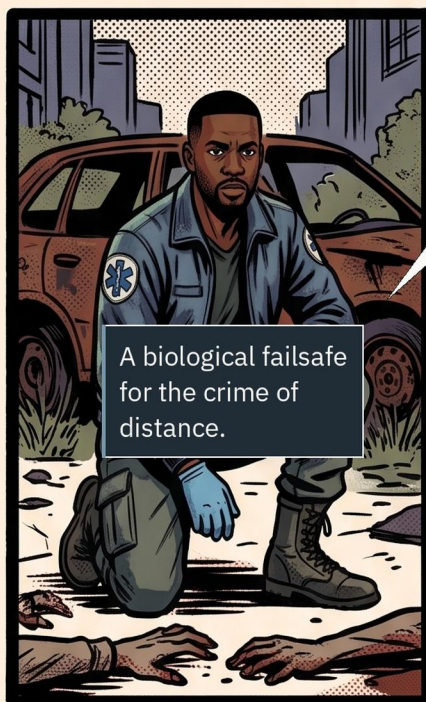






Mid-Crash. Tether broke at ninety meters.

The Symbiont turns your circulatory system into a bomb.



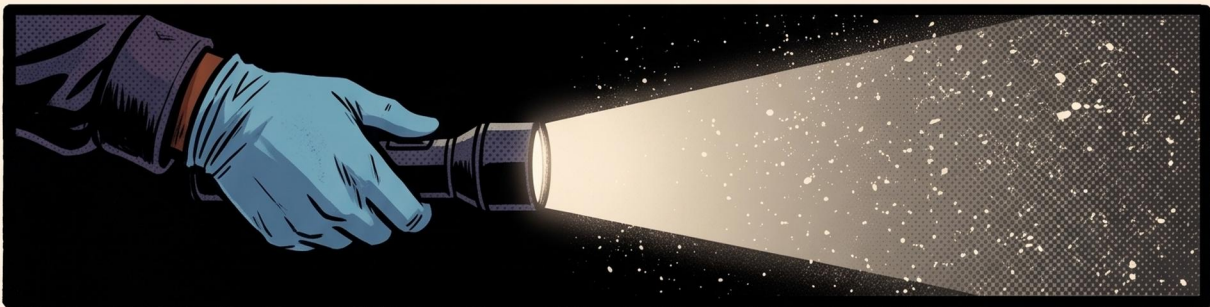
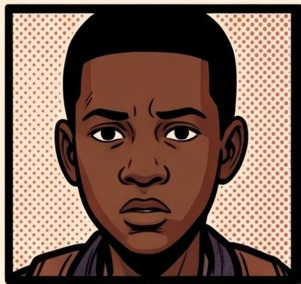
A biological failsafe
for the crime of
distance.



MOVE IT, TERRELL.
WHATEVER DID THAT
MIGHT STILL BE
CIRCLING.









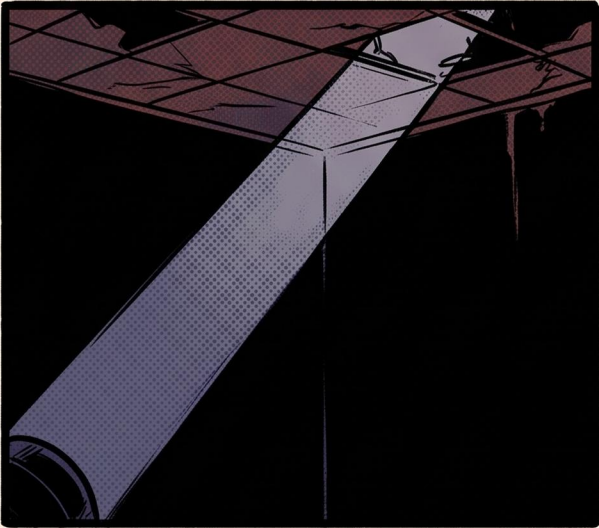
His eye is on the sparrow...

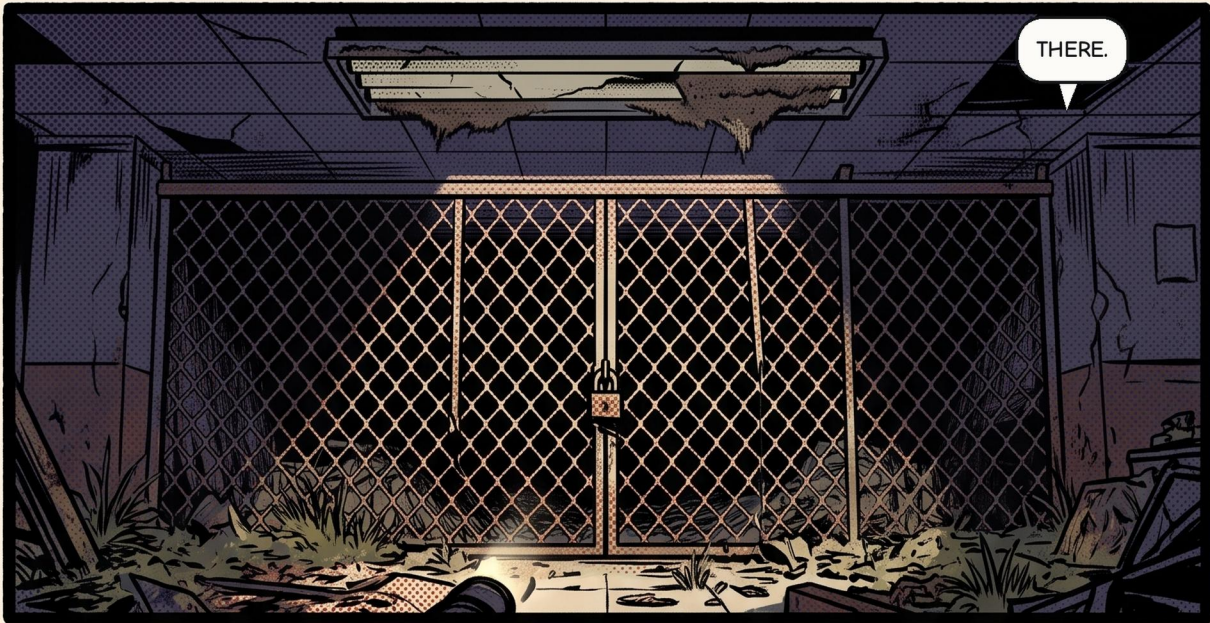
Feral Dyads.



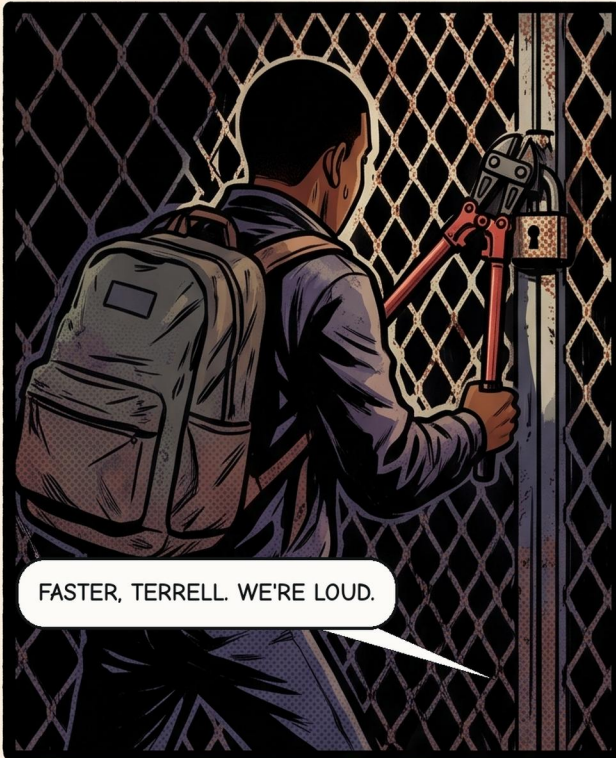
WATCH YOUR STEP.

They won't see us first.
They'll hear the valves of
our hearts.

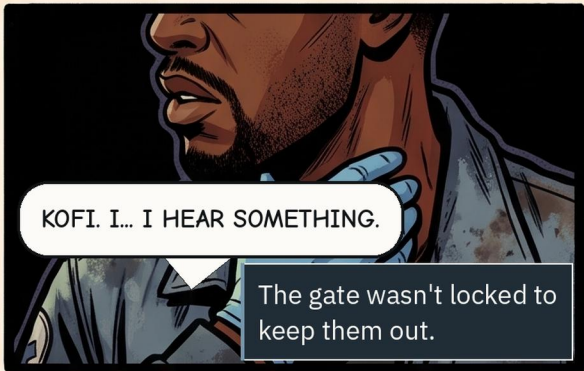




THERE.



FASTER, TERRELL. WE'RE LOUD.



KOFI. I... I HEAR SOMETHING.

The gate wasn't locked to keep them out.



CK-CK-CK

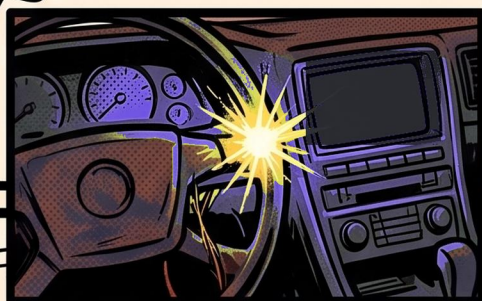
Sweat makes the grease feel like armor. Proof I'm still moving.



COME ON, YOU UGLY BITCH.
GIVE ME SOMETHING.



Metallic. Sharp on the tongue.

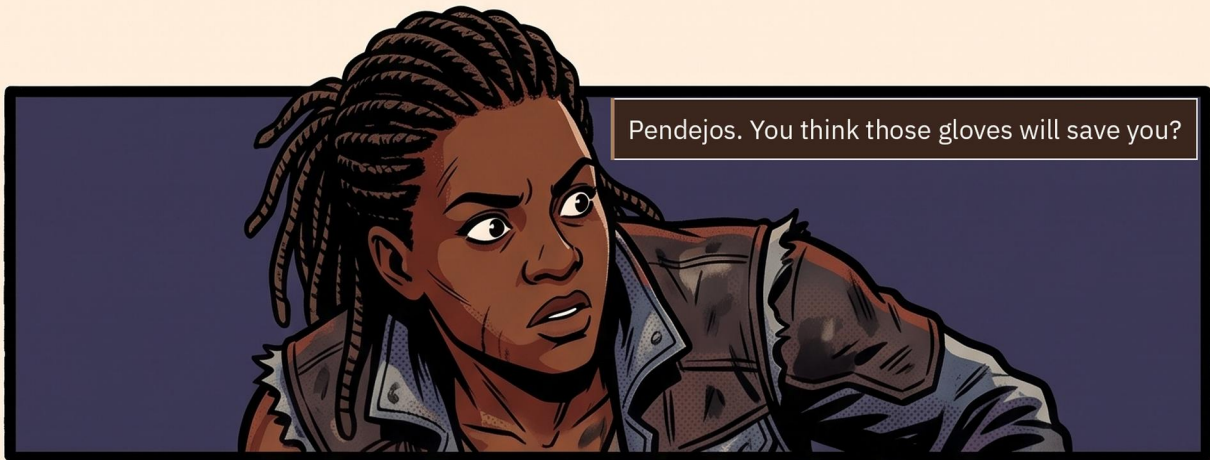


Alone. The way I like it. Solo is the only way to stay clean.



URRM

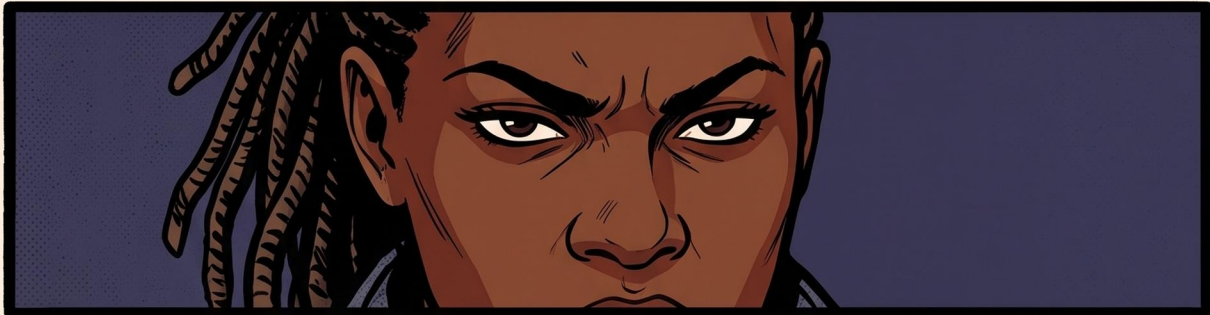




Pendejos. You think those gloves will save you?



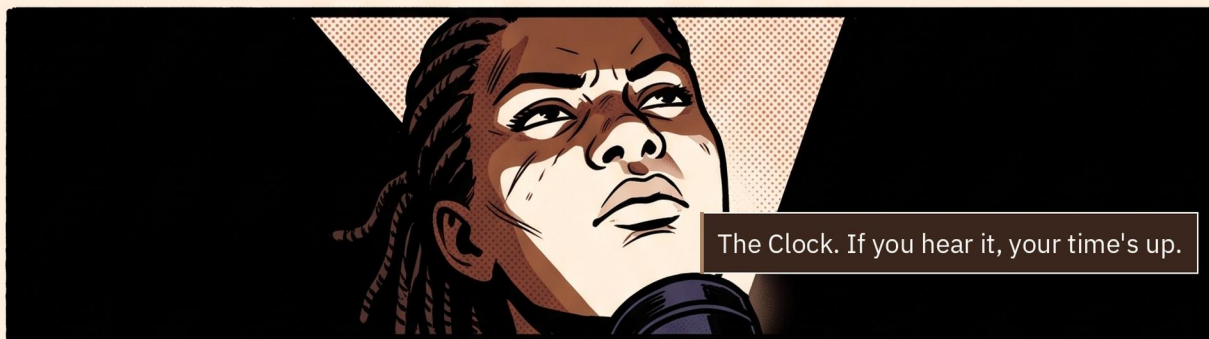
Double gloves. Checking them like a nervous tic. That's not a scavenger. That's a man who used to have a hospital.



Too many to fight.



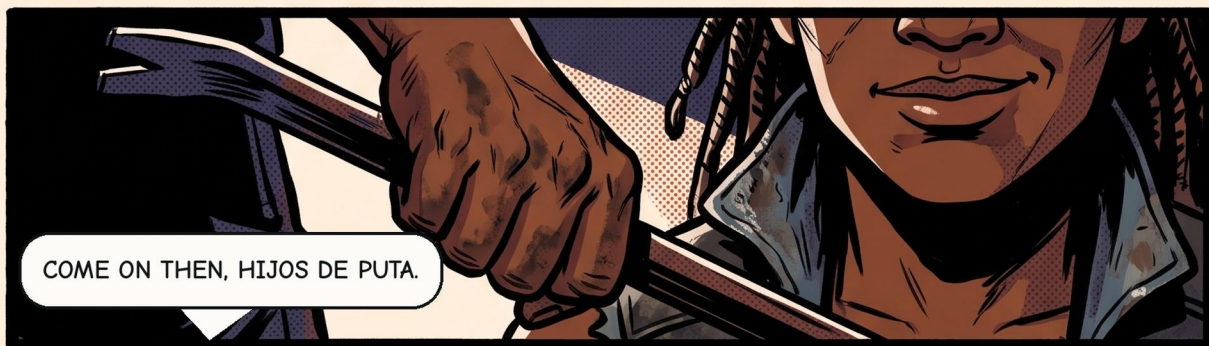
Mierda.



The Clock. If you hear it, your time's up.



One organism. Twice the reach. No hesitation.



COME ON THEN, HIJOS DE PUTA.



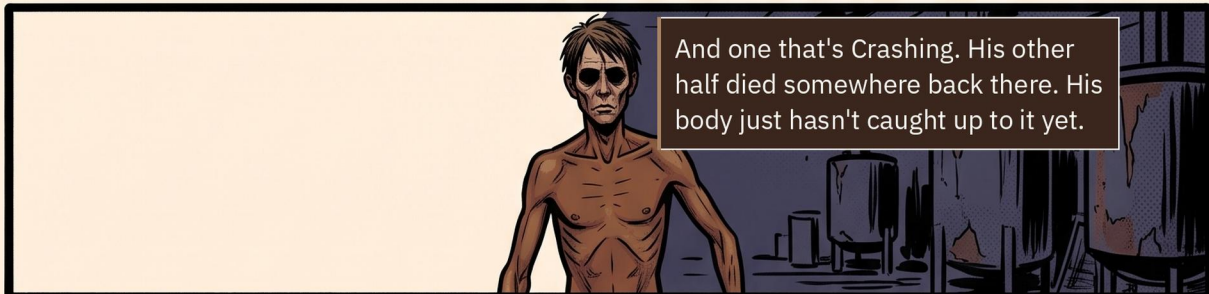
Three.



Two halves of one machine. Synchronized down to the twitch.



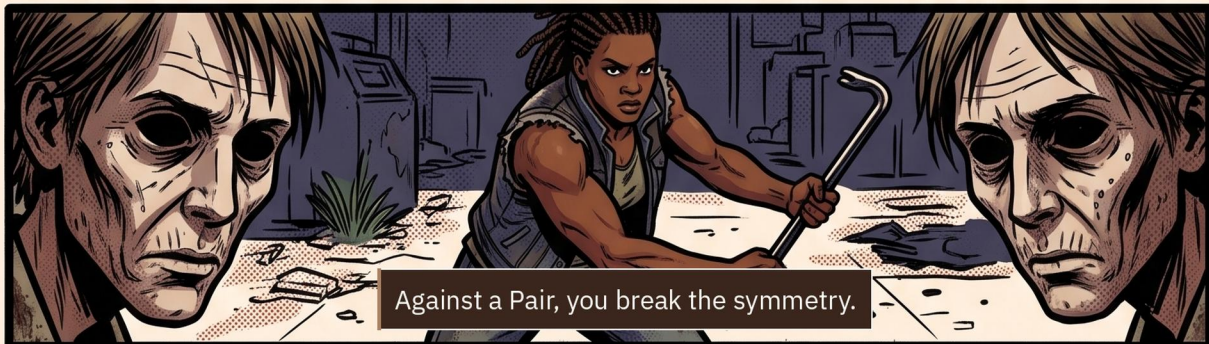
And one that's Crashing. His other half died somewhere back there. His body just hasn't caught up to it yet.

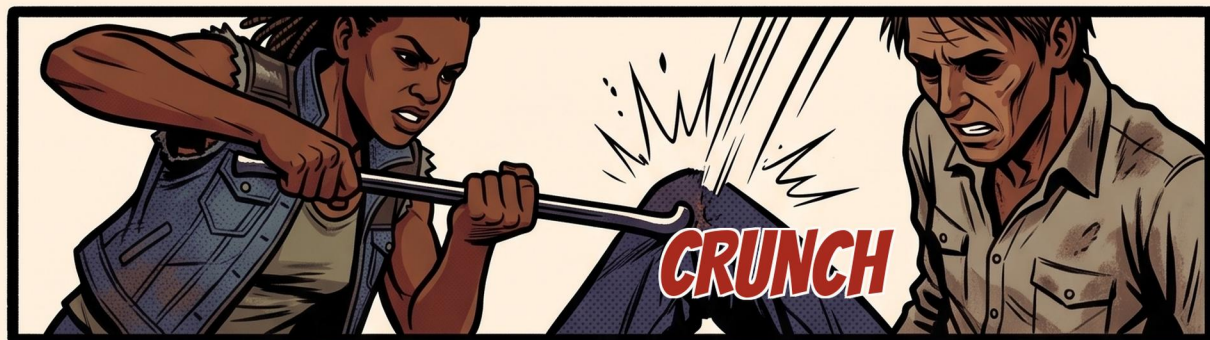


A dying engine doesn't stall quiet. It explodes.

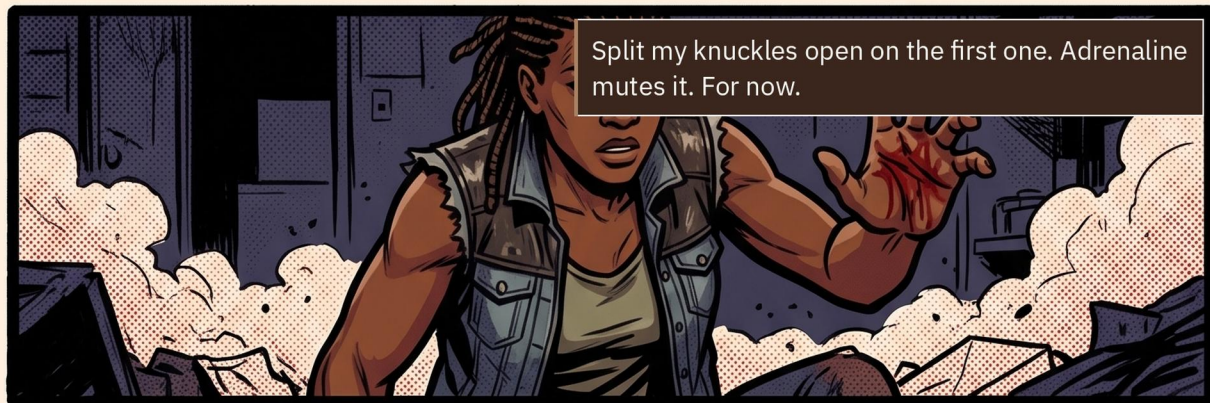


Against a Pair, you break the symmetry.





Symmetry holds. Even in pain.



Split my knuckles open on the first one. Adrenaline mutes it. For now.



Its heart stopped because its partner's heart stopped.

A tether. A lifeline. And a death sentence.





Scavengers.



Move.



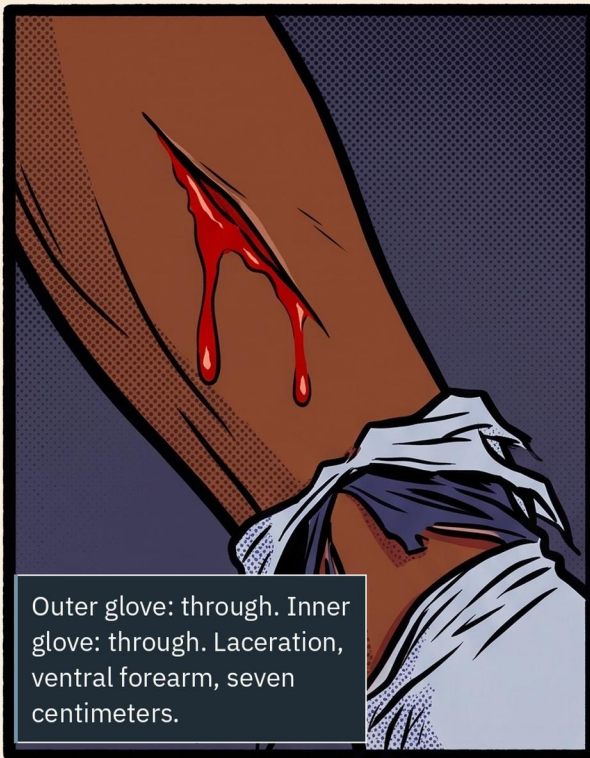
Something catches my heel.

My knife is still in my hand. I never decided to draw it.



Three years of ritual.





Outer glove: through. Inner glove: through. Laceration, ventral forearm, seven centimeters.



Blood loss: minimal. Arterial involvement: negative.



I didn't mean to. I was just falling.



Physics doesn't care about intent.



Contamination risk:



CRITICAL.

A comic book illustration showing two hands, one from the top left and one from the bottom right, reaching towards each other. The hands are rendered in a reddish-brown color with black outlines. At the point where the hands are about to meet, a complex web of glowing blue veins erupts, spreading outwards across the skin of both hands and arms. The veins have a glowing, almost ethereal quality. The background is solid black, which makes the glowing veins stand out prominently. The style is reminiscent of classic comic book art, with bold lines and a limited color palette.

When the two fluids touched, the world turned bioluminescent.

A web of glowing indigo veins erupted from the point of contact, stitching them together.





Your blood went into my arm. You tied us together.

Twenty-four hours to the fever. Forty-eight to the Lock, when the Symbiont finishes stitching two nervous systems into one.

