

NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE



ATOMIC BLONDE

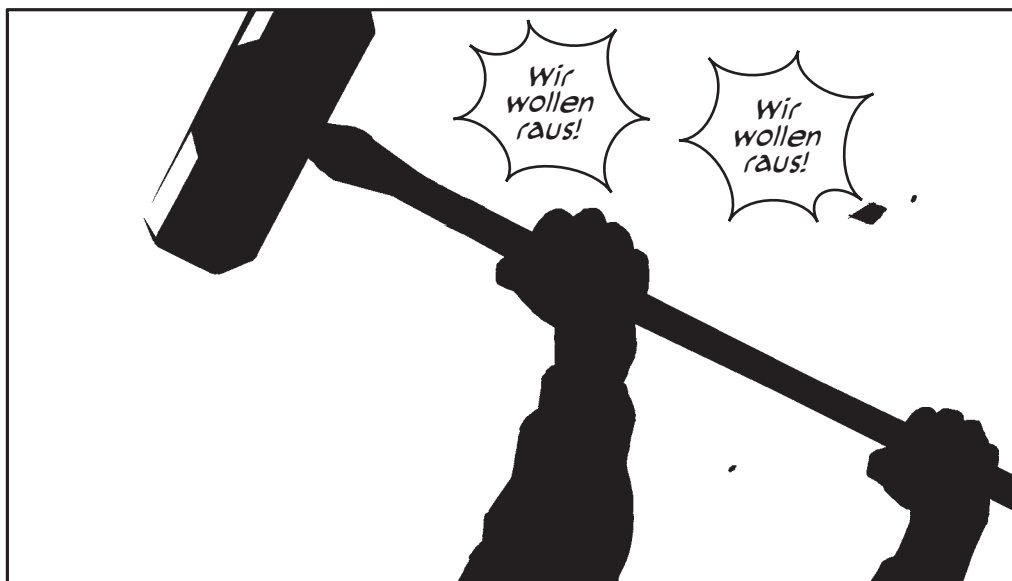
WRITTEN BY
ANTONY JOHNSTON

ILLUSTRATED BY
SAM HART

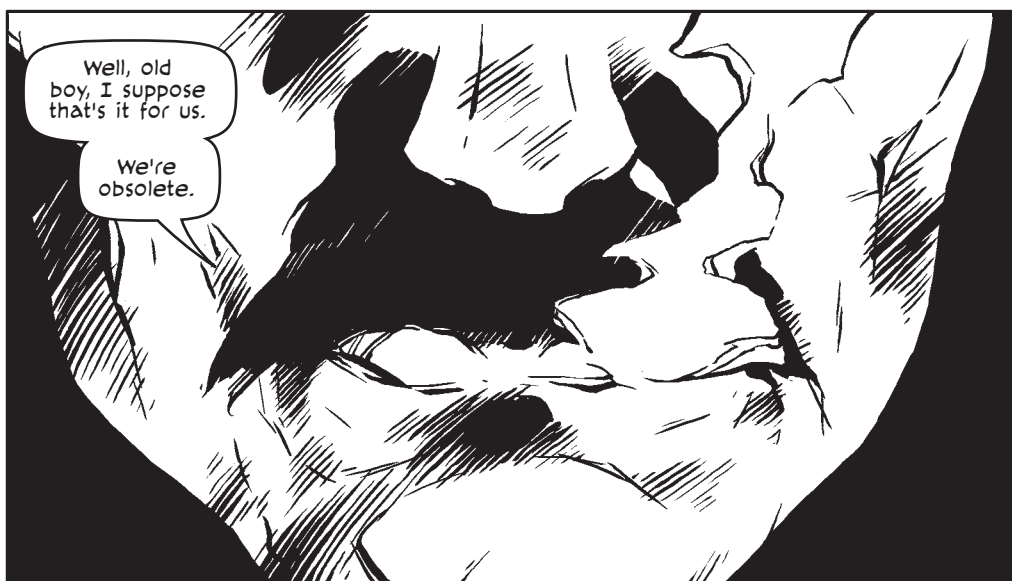


ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AS

THE COLDEST CITY



ONI PRESS PRESENTS





A GRAPHIC NOVEL





BY ANTONY JOHNSTON





ILLUSTRATED BY



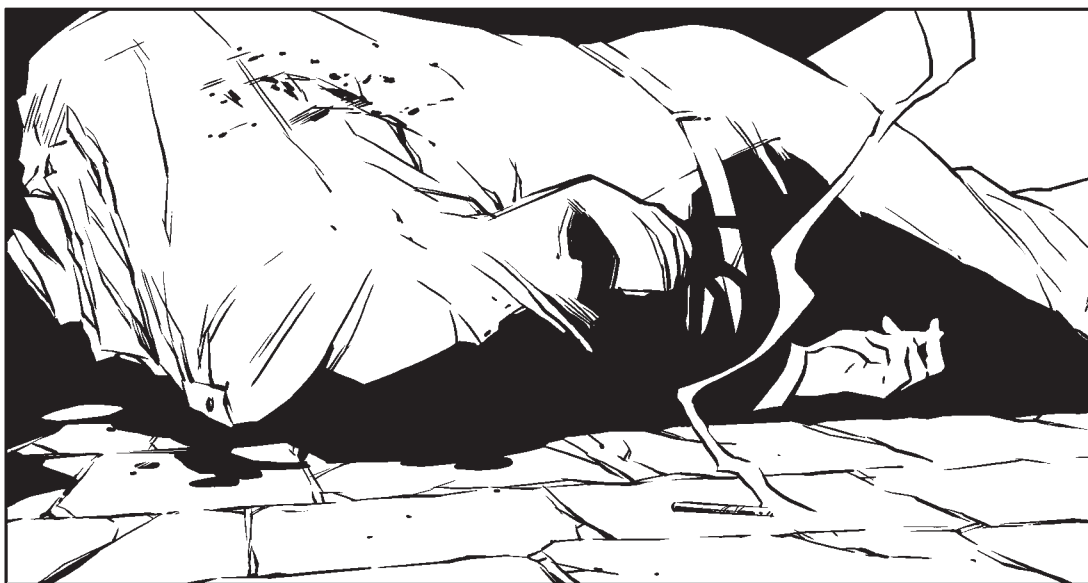


SAM HART





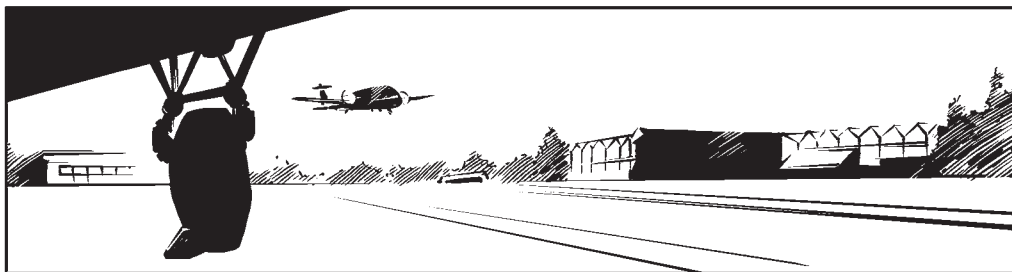
ATOMIC

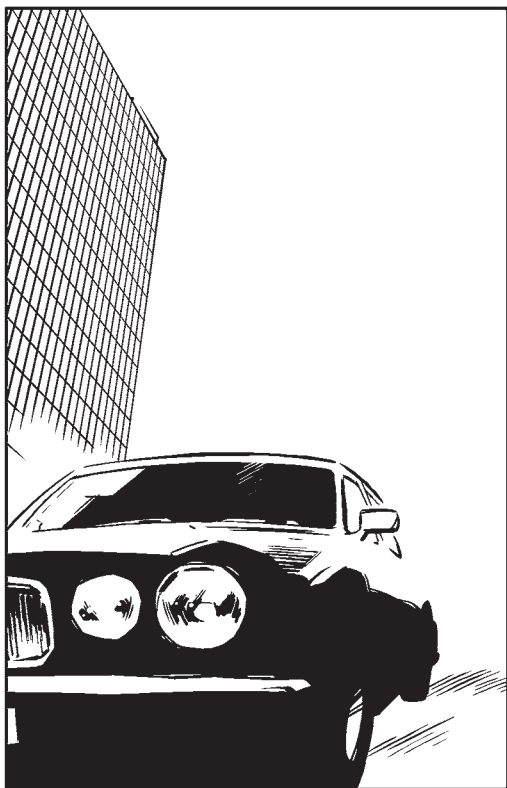
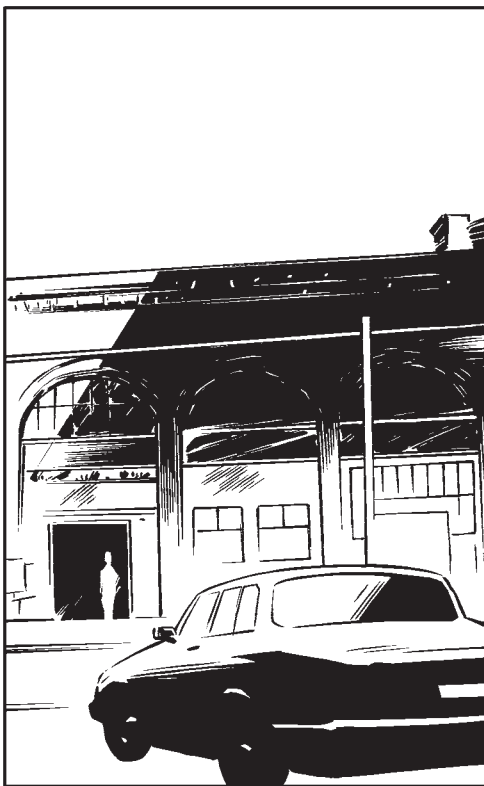




BLONDE









NOVEMBER 11TH 1989
CENTURY HOUSE, LONDON

Uncomfortable.



Sir, why am I
in the bin? I was
going to type up
my debrief on
Monday.

Given the scale
of recent events,
I need to hear it
directly from you,
without delay.









Well, he's not moving much at all any more. On Wednesday, BER-1 messaged that BER-2 was incommunicado.

Last night, the Jerries fished Gascoine's body out of the Spree.



You mean he was killed on our side? In West Berlin?

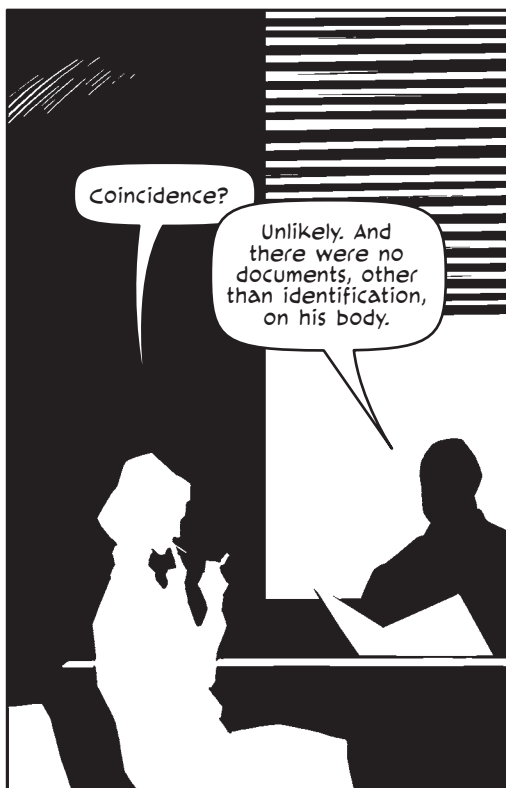
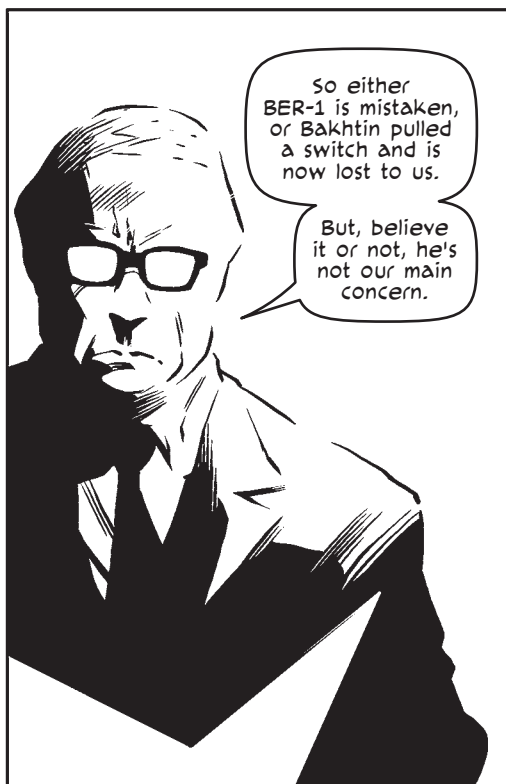
Yes. BER-1's sources point to Yuri Bakhtin, a known KGB officer. Bakhtin was in Berlin, but left the day after BER-2's death, returning to Moscow.



What do you need me for? Surely you don't want me to chase him down in Moscow?



No point. Bakhtin never arrived.





SPYGLASS claimed it contained the name and position of every officer in Berlin.

Every officer. Yanks, Frogs, us, the Soviets, even some Fins and Italians.



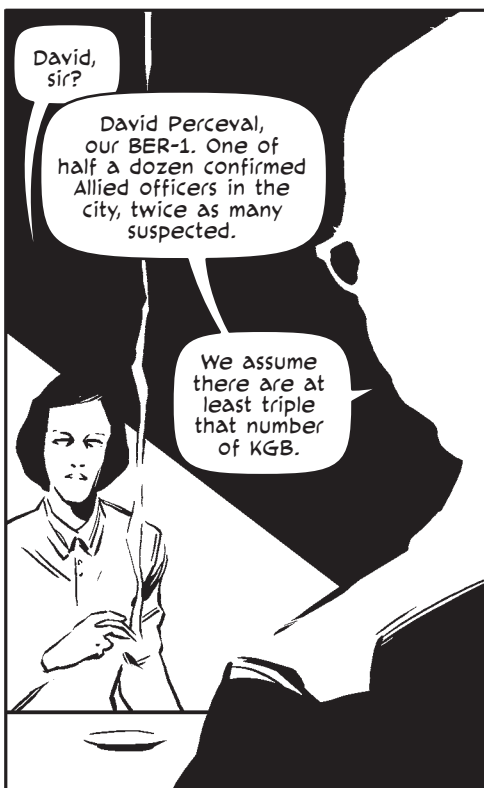
That's... oh, bloody hell.

But what do you want me to do? I've never even been to Berlin.



Berlin is a powder keg. Bloody Gorbachev and his *glasnost* nonsense has us all running around like blue-arsed flies.

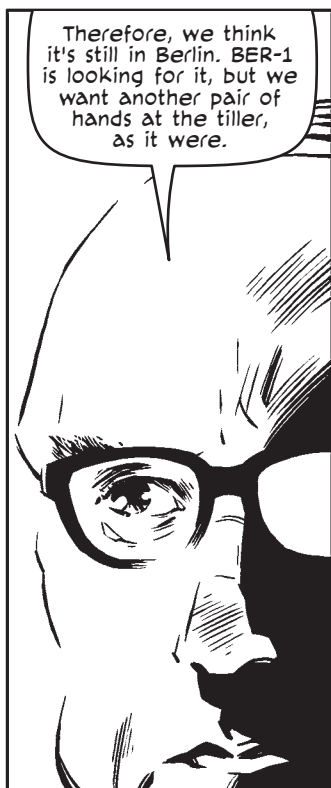
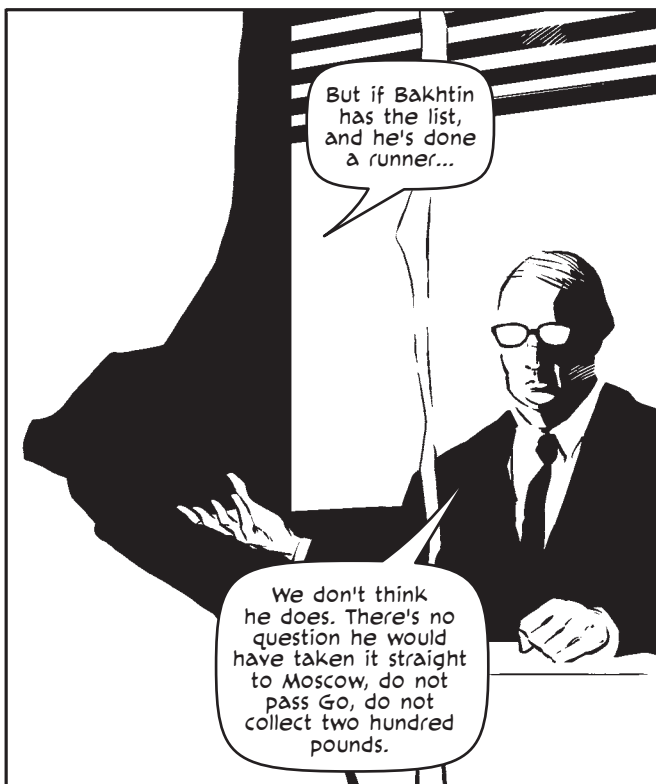
Recent CX suggests the wall won't last much longer. David thinks it might even fall before Christmas.



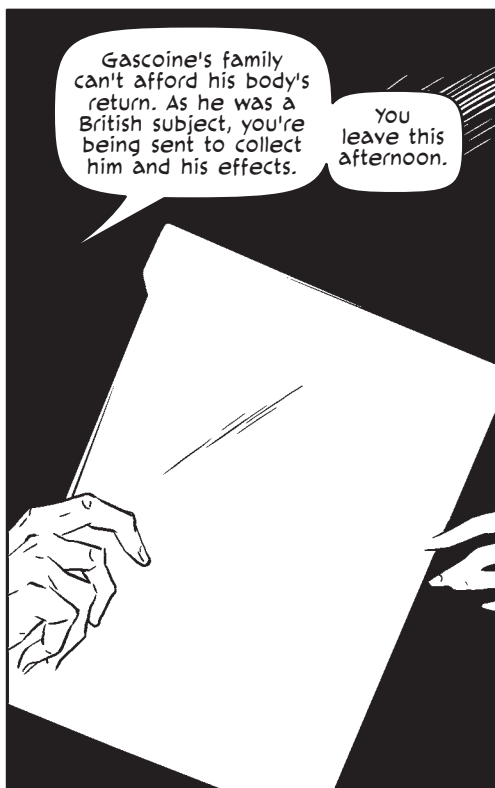
David, sir?

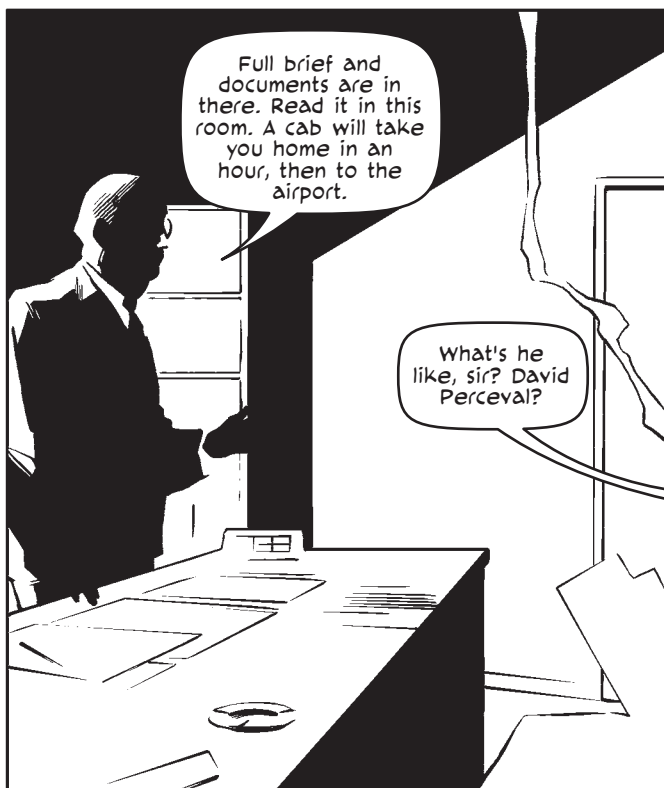
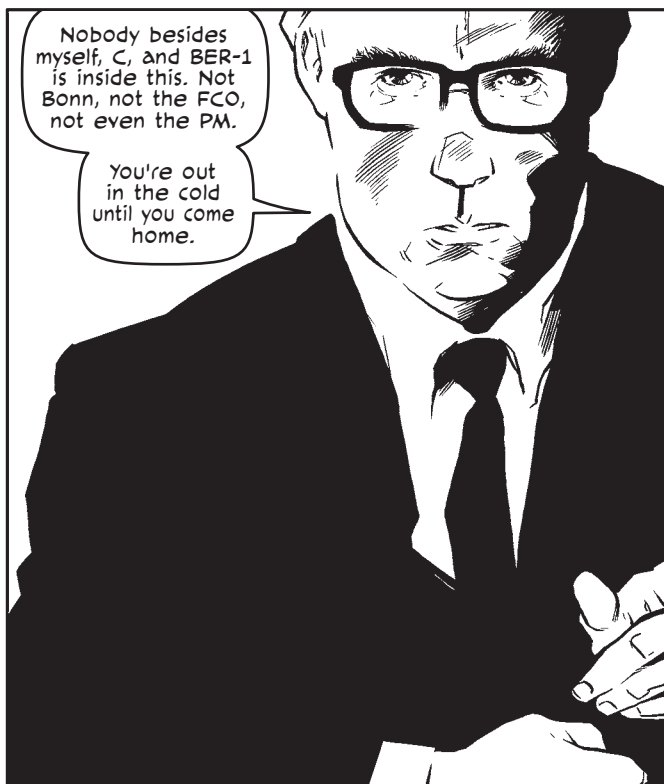
David Perceval, our BER-1. One of half a dozen confirmed Allied officers in the city, twice as many suspected.

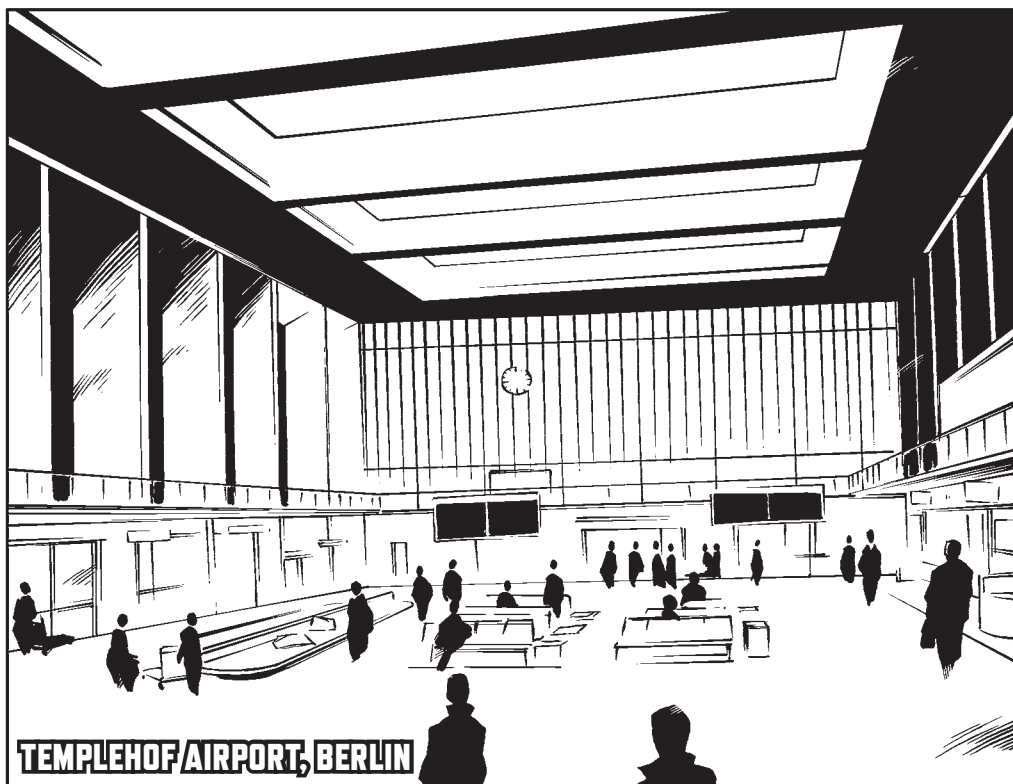
We assume there are at least triple that number of KGB.

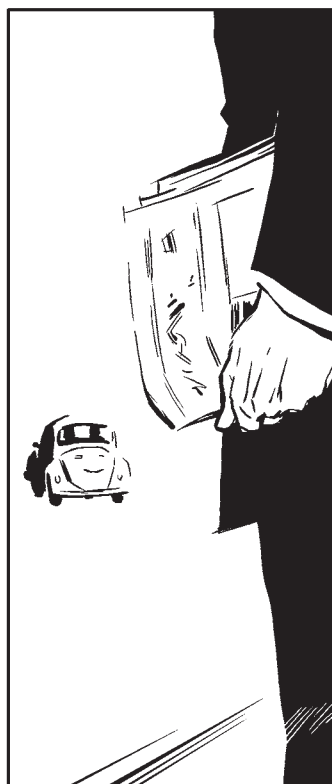
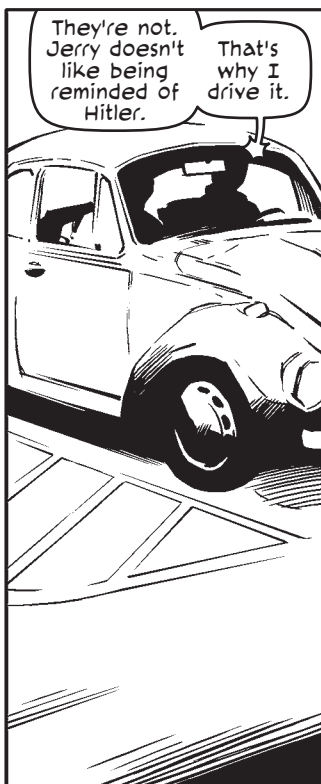




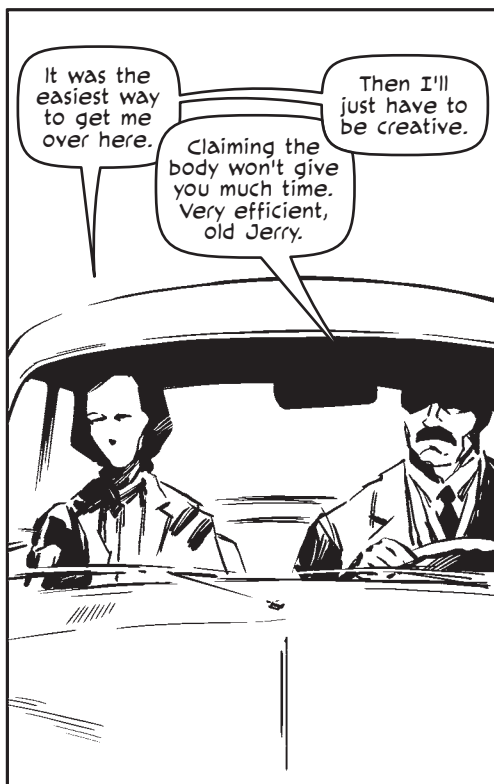
















All right, look. You clearly don't want me here, and frankly neither do I.

But C himself gave me this job, so if you've got some kind of problem, you can bloody well stick it up your arse!



Now if you'd be so kind, turn left here and take me to my hotel.

They said you'd never been here. How do you know where the hotel is?



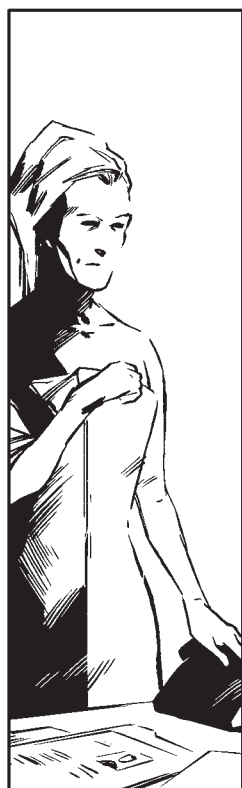
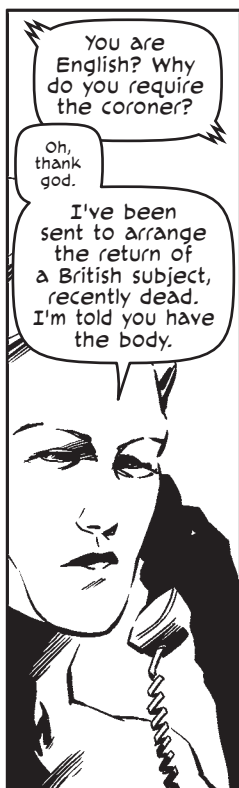
Because I can read a bloody map!

That's enough!



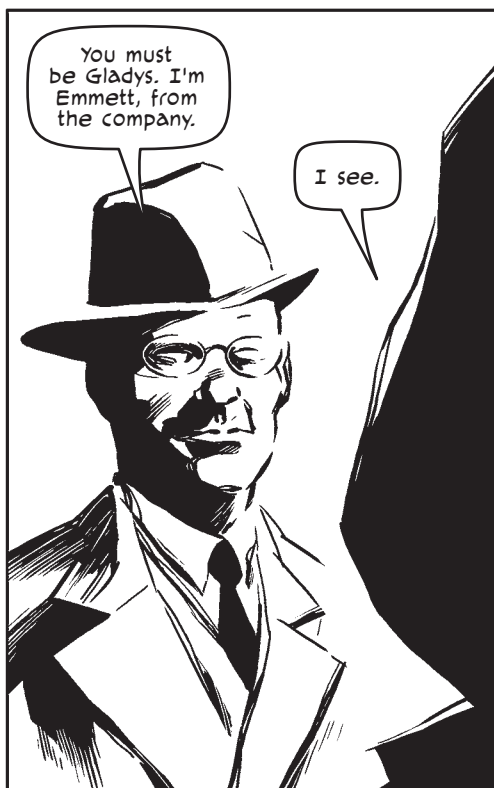
You may not be declared here, but I am still head of this station, and I will not be lectured by a... a bloody woman!

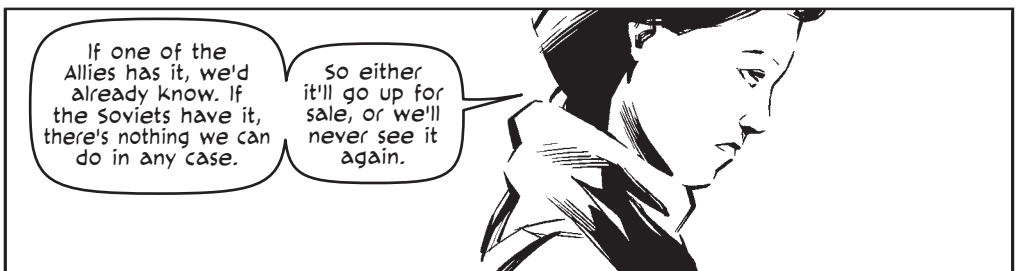


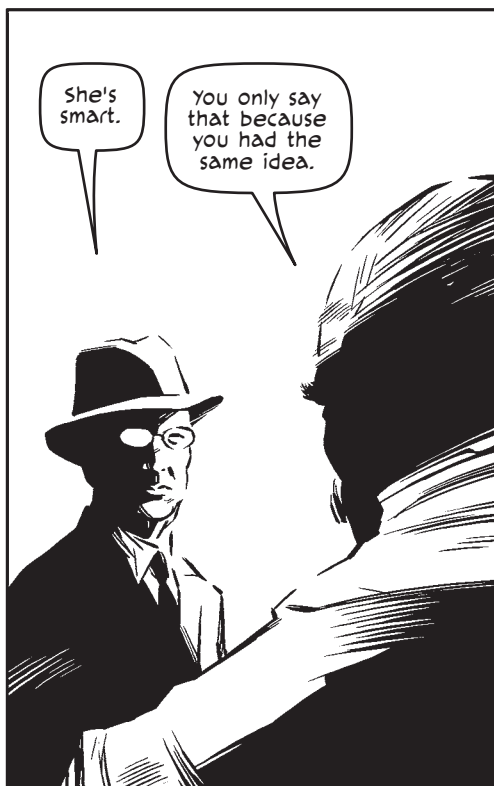

















I suppose
it shouldn't
surprise me
that he went
straight to the
bloody CIA.




Like C said, sir,
Perceval had gone
native. I think all
he cared about
was his life and
connections in
Berlin.

I was
merely an
irritant.



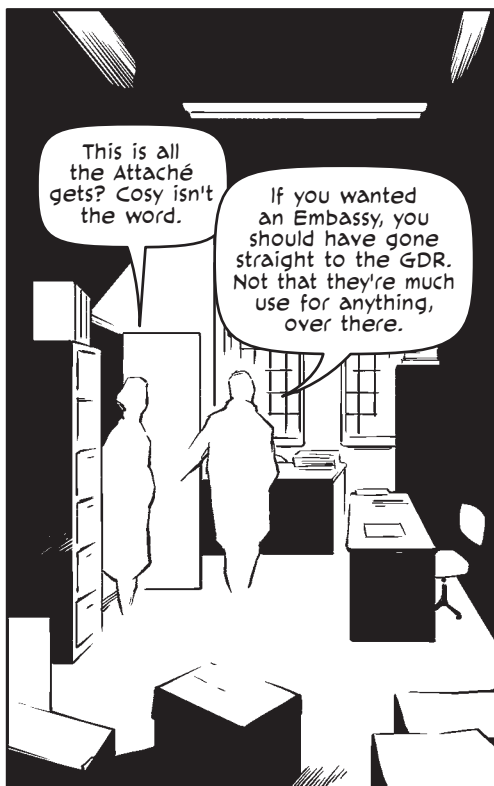
And yet he
never once
messed us
to complain.

Instead, he declared
you to the Yanks. May
as well have broadcast
it from the top of the
Brandenburg Gate.



I don't think
it was all that
bad, sir.

Never mind.
Carry on.



This is all the Attaché gets? Cosy isn't the word.

If you wanted an Embassy, you should have gone straight to the GDR. Not that they're much use for anything, over there.



I'll need Gascoine's address here in Berlin, and his passport.

The police have his passport. He was carrying it.



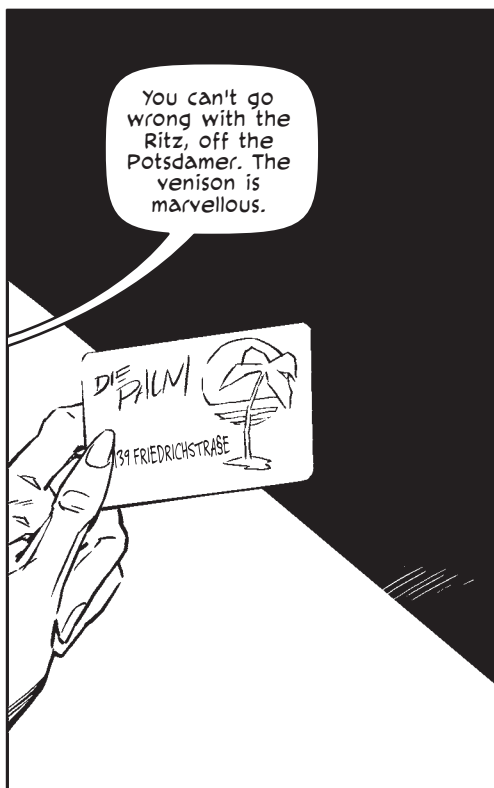
Don't you have a copy?

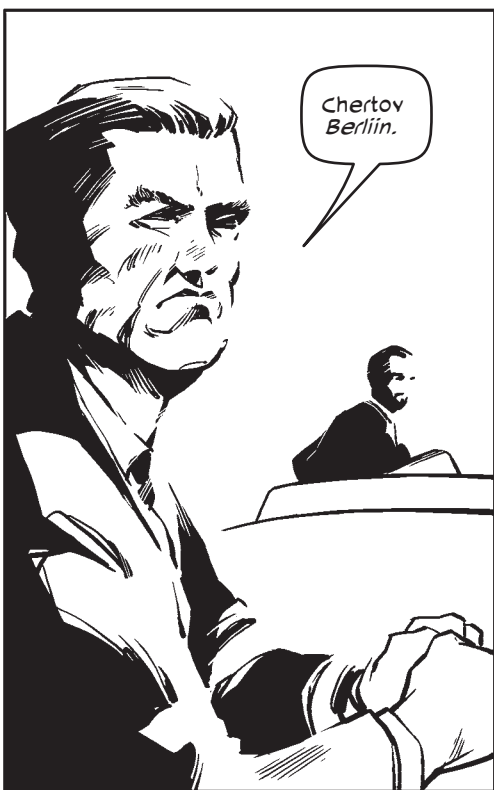
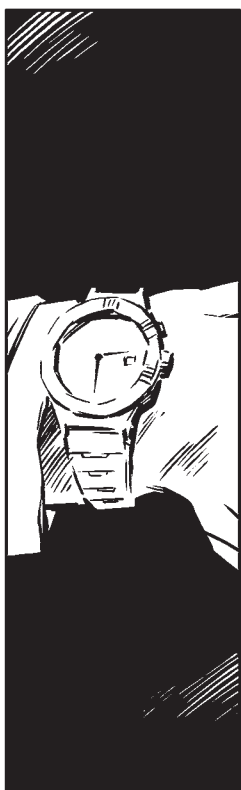
Oh, uh... No, of course not.

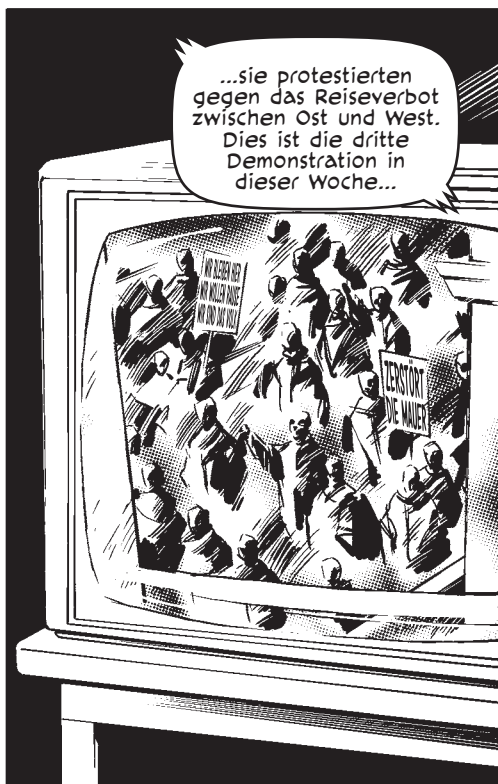


Don't worry, the Home Office called me yesterday with the number.

I see. Can you write it out for me?







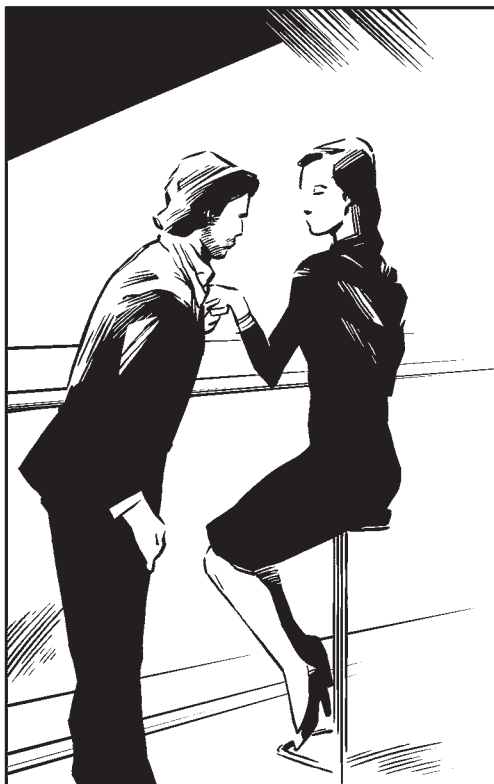

















And that's it? The only contact you made?



At that time, yes. I needed to get a handle on the city and the social scene before I started making moves.



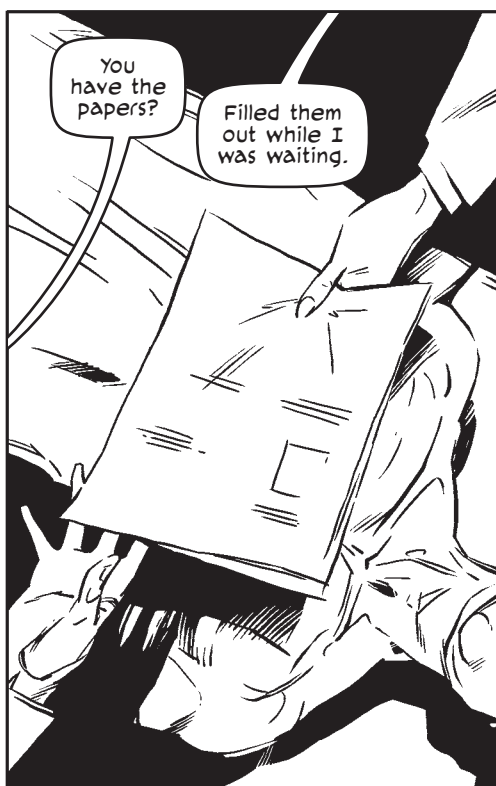
Did you forget the urgency of this mission?

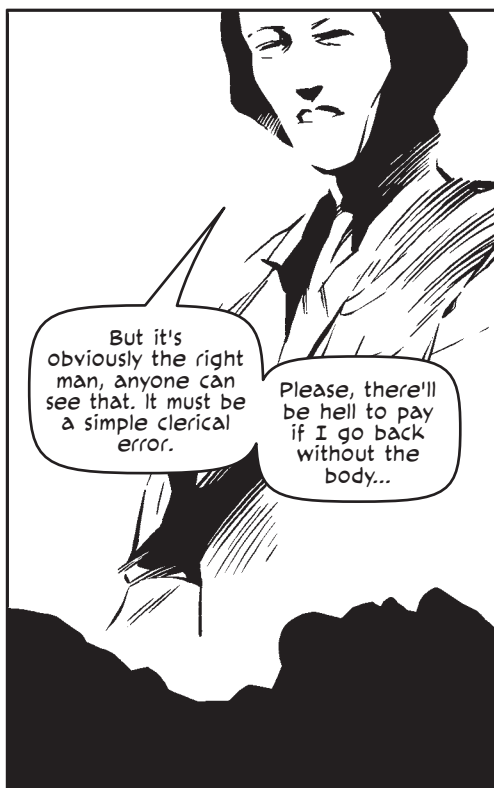
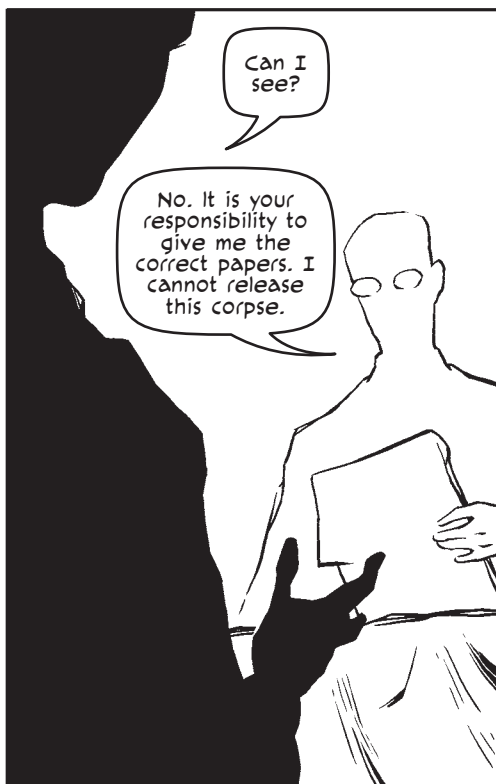
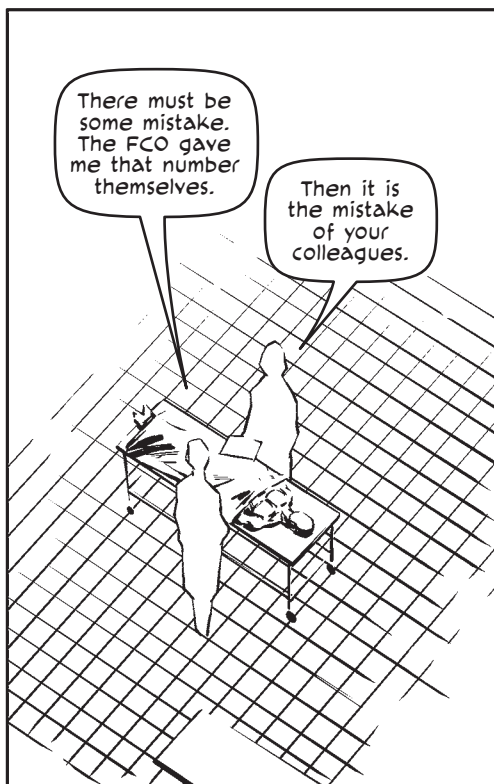


With respect, sir, it's not the Sixties any more. The theatre has changed. People suspect all too quickly these days.

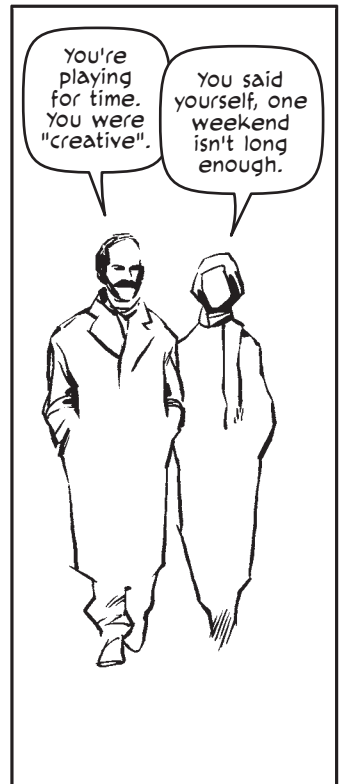
Besides, I knew I'd be in Berlin longer than Perceval expected. He'd all but given me the method himself.

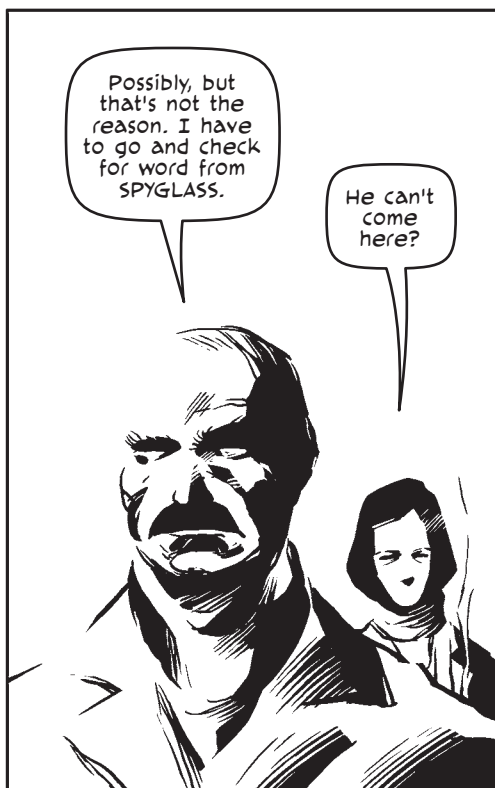


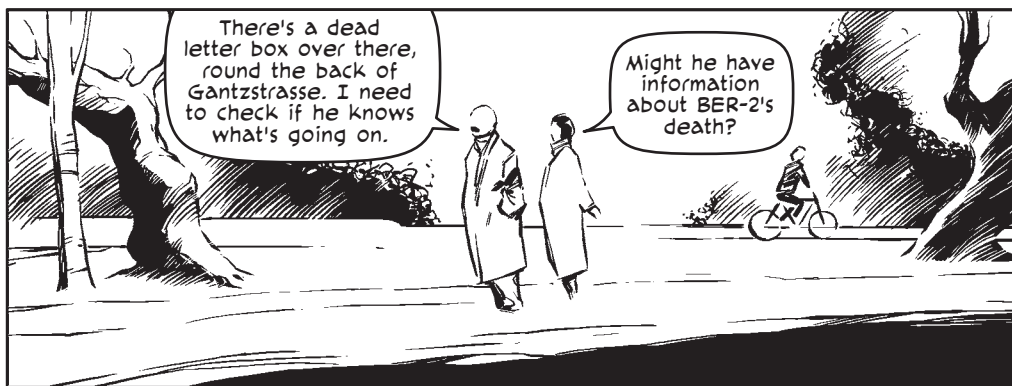


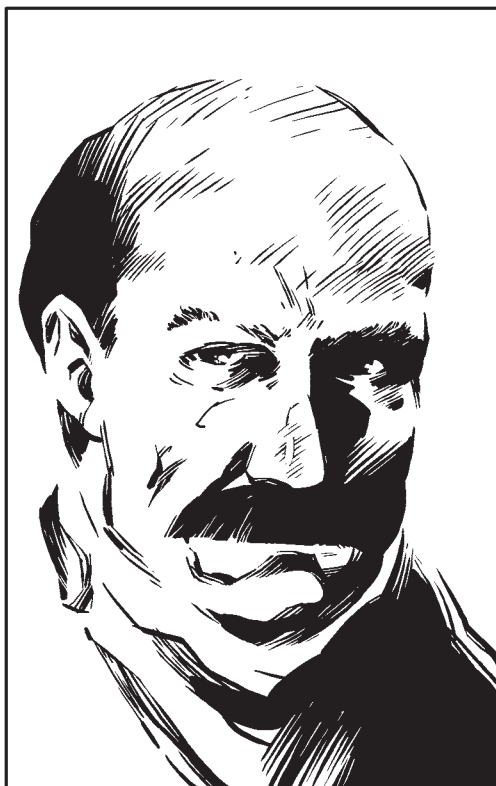
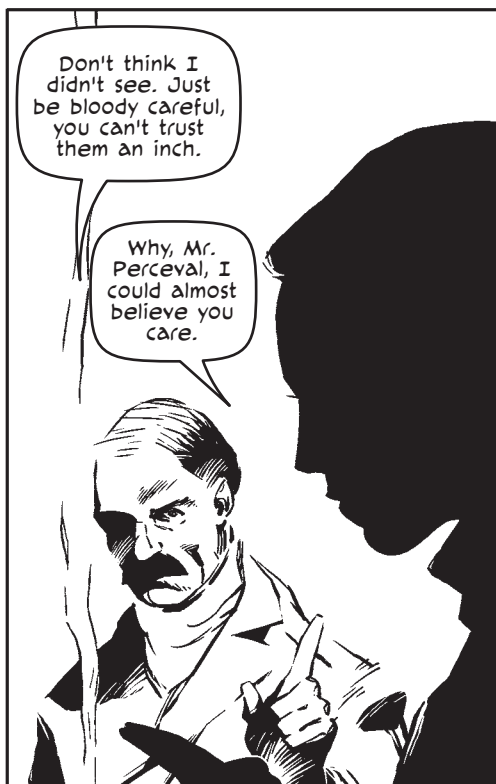
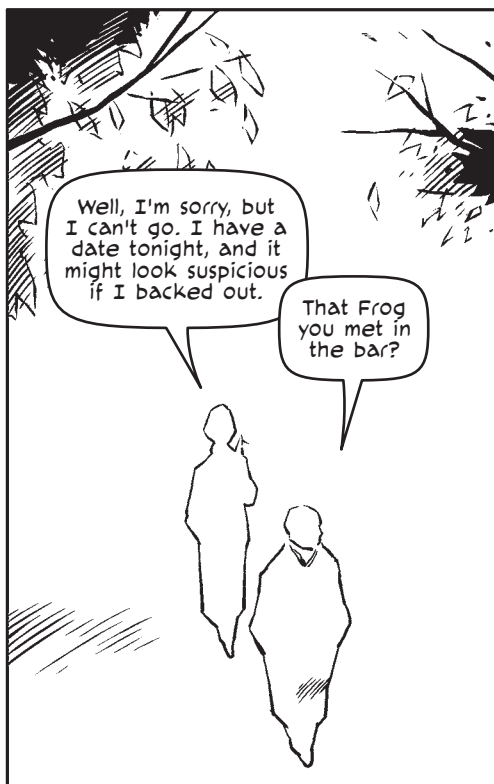






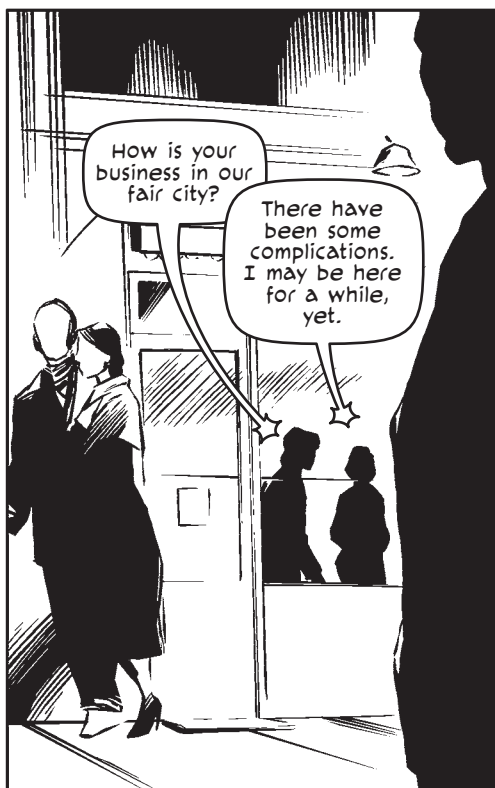


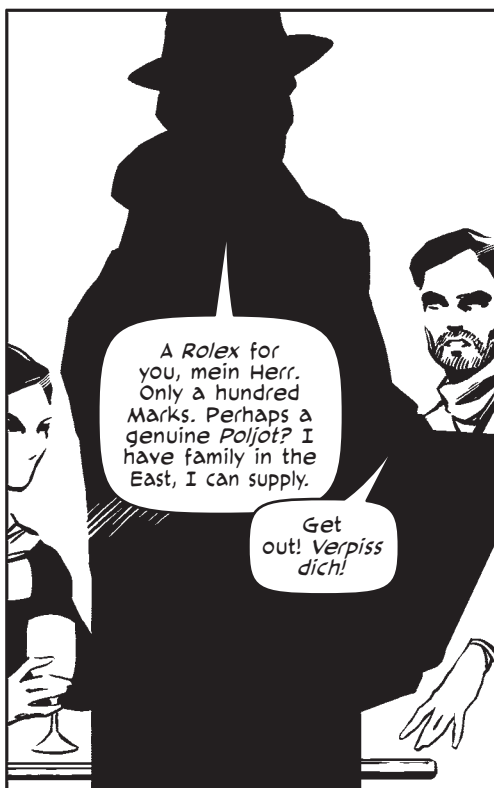






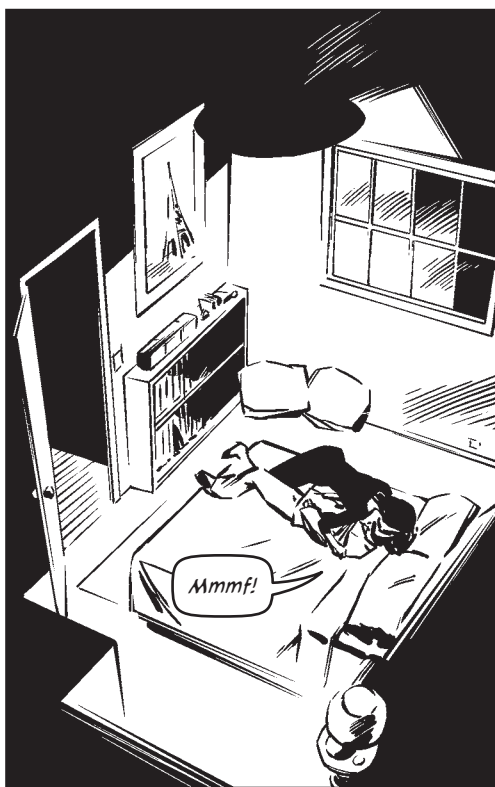




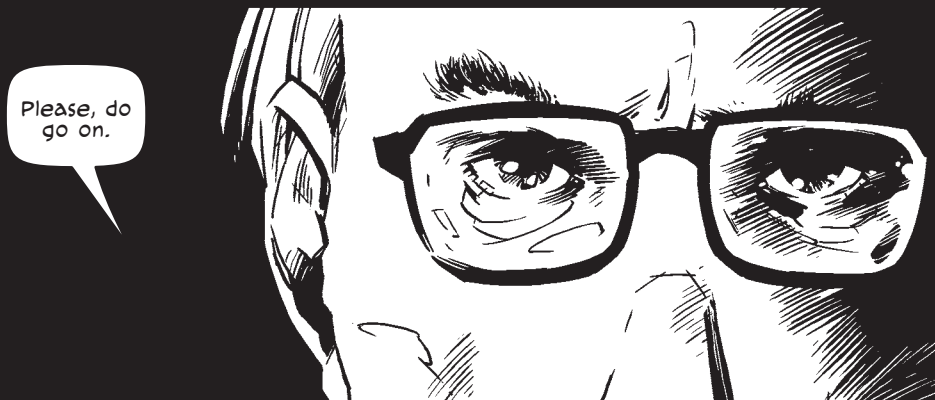
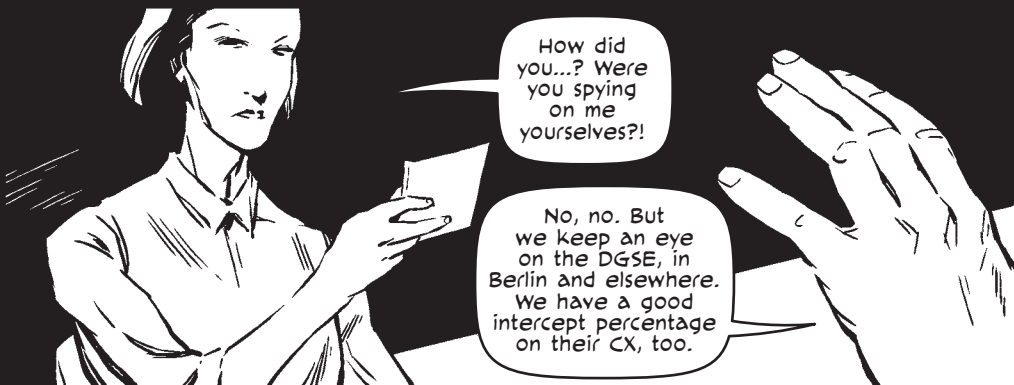


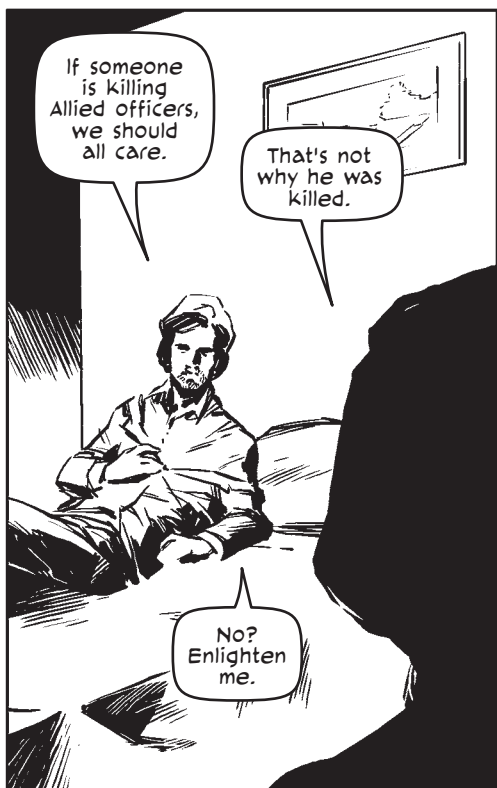








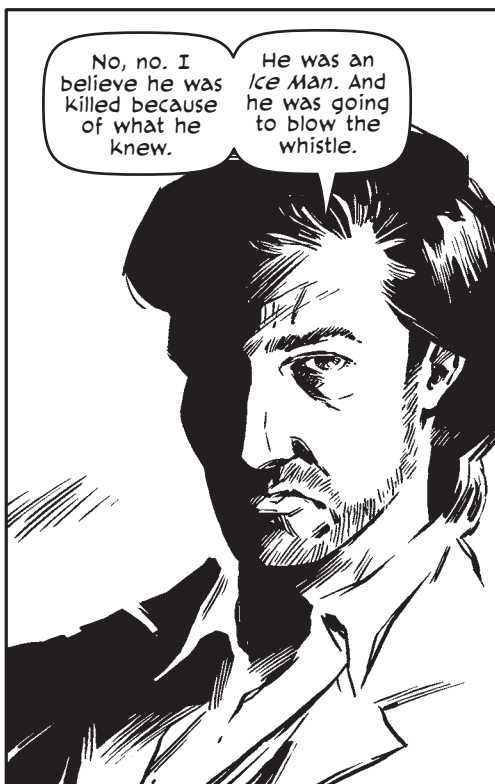






You bloody Gallic buffoon, if I was going to kill you I'd have done it by now.

BER-2 was killed because of something he was carrying. I can't tell you what.



No, no. I believe he was killed because of what he knew.

He was an Ice Man. And he was going to blow the whistle.



What the hell is an Ice Man?

Assassins. Spies for hire. Mercenaries. They are infamous on both sides of the Iron Curtain.



You're having me on.

I believe your man was one of them, but wanted out. He was killed to stop him talking.



But you do not share this theory.



I'd never even heard it before now.

The item BER-2 was carrying was a document. Very sensitive.



What was on it?

I can't tell you.



But believe me, it's valuable. If the other side gets it... well, it would be bad news for us all.

That's why you were talking to the pedlar.

There's a good chance it will float on the black market, yes.



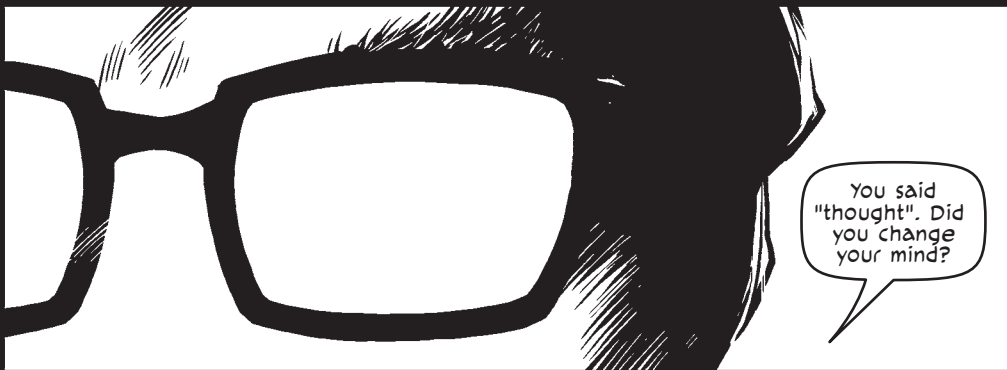


Ice Men? I've never heard anything so ridiculous.



That's what I thought, sir.

A network of officers across Europe, for hire as assassins? Something like that could never be kept quiet.



You said "thought". Did you change your mind?



Yes.

In fact, I now believe BER-1 was the ringleader.



**OCTOBER 31st 1989,
CHECKPOINT CHARLIE**



Was ist der Grund für ihren Besuch, Fräulein Kupetski?

Ich habe Familie dort leben.



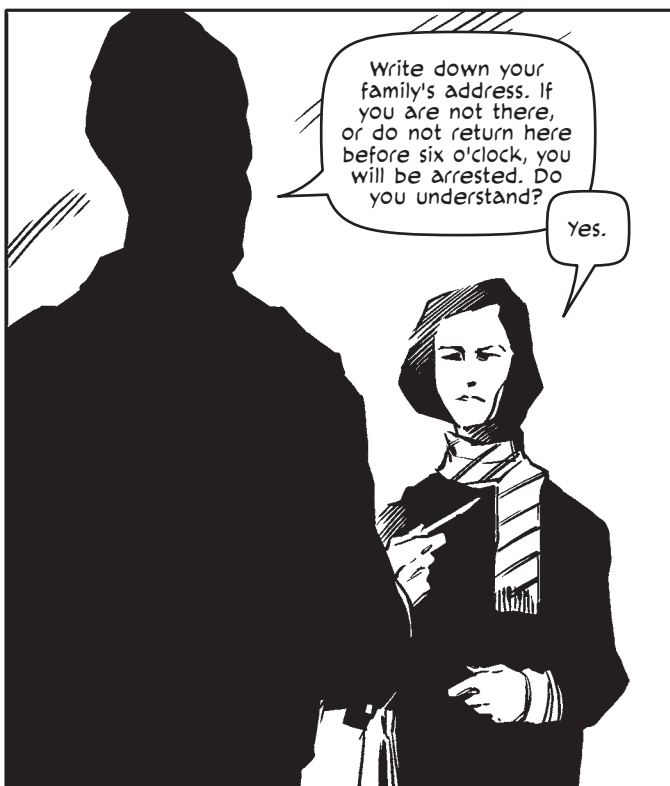
Your German is very bad. Where are you from?

England, but my parents were born in Leningrad. I'm visiting my grandparents today.



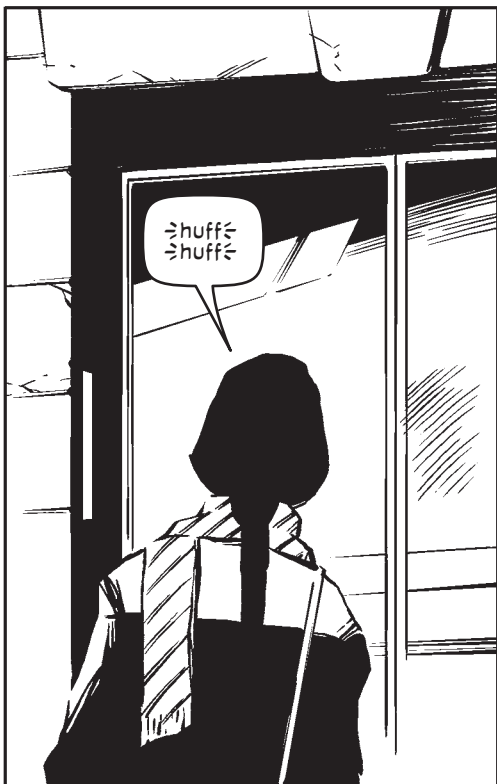
You should have applied for a visitor's permit.

I didn't even know I'd be here until two days ago. My company sent me over for a meeting.

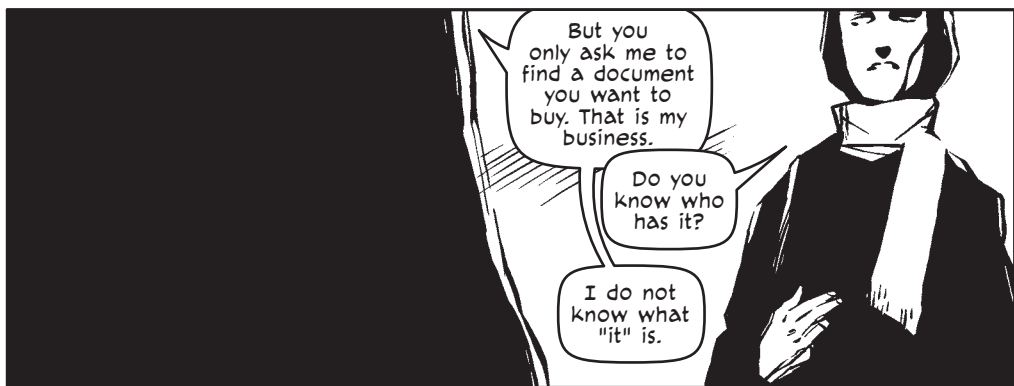




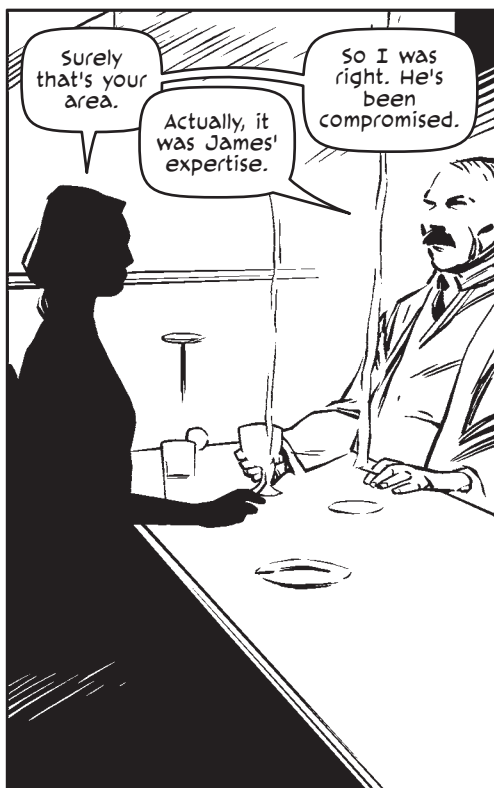


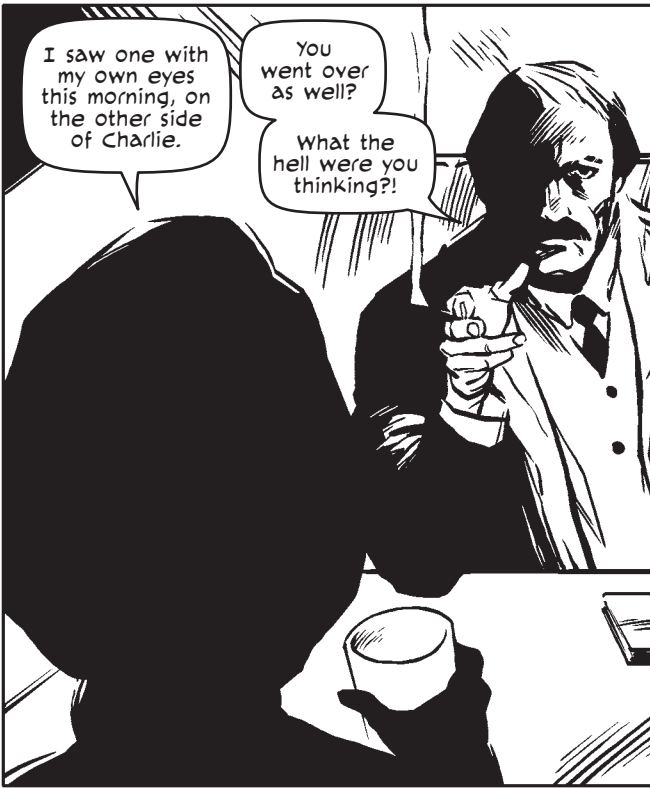












I saw one with my own eyes this morning, on the other side of Charlie.

You went over as well?

What the hell were you thinking?!



That it was best you didn't know. Deniability, and all that.

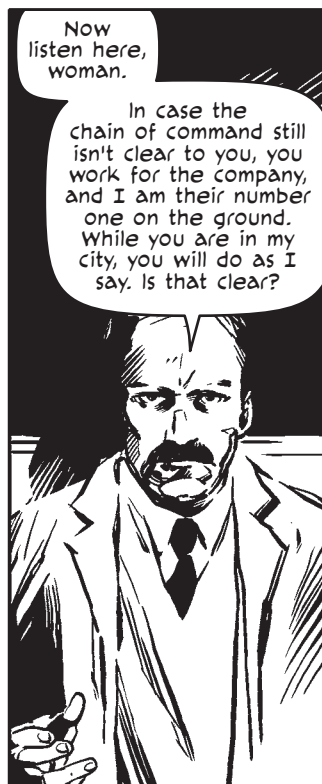


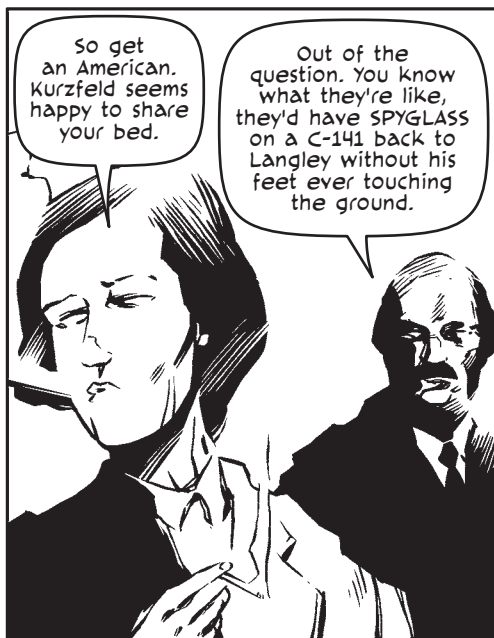
You bloody fool! You could have been shot!

So could you!



Anyway, untwist your knickers. I just had to connect with a source. I won't need to go over again.







Don't
make me
regret it.



Why do we
care if he's
arrested,
anyway?

Surely he can't
tell them anything
about us they
don't already
know.

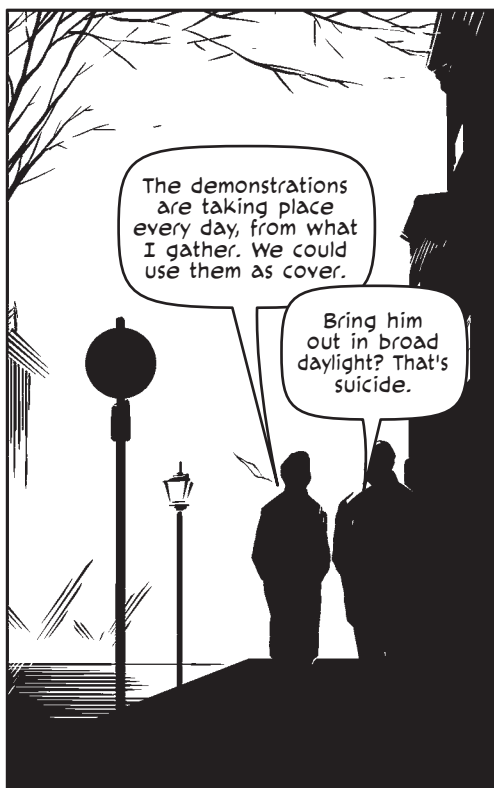
Probably not.
But remember,
SPYGLASS wrote
that list. So if the
Soviets do get
their hands on
it...



...it won't
matter, because
if we have him,
we've all got the
same intel.

Precisely.







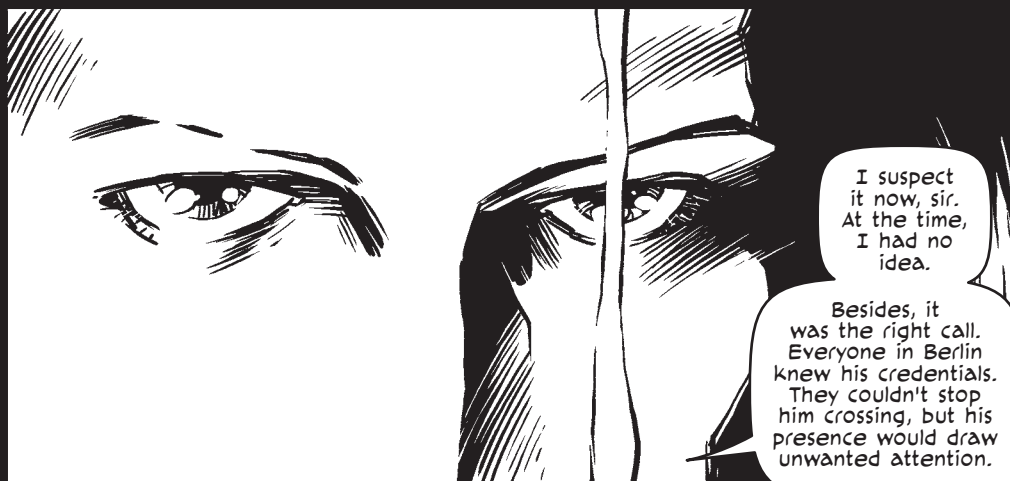
We spent the next three days planning everything out.

Perceval contacted SPYGLASS and sorted IDs, while I arranged things with Merkel.



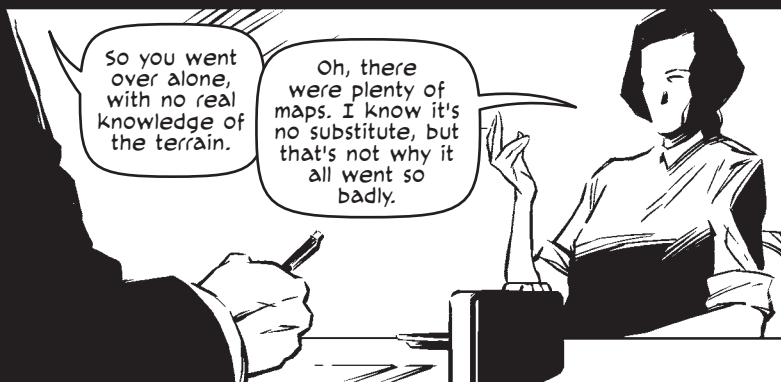
Perceval would wait for us in a safe house on the West. I'd use Merkel as a supply point in the East.

Hold on. You suspected BER-1 of running an assassin ring, but you let him send you over the Wall alone?

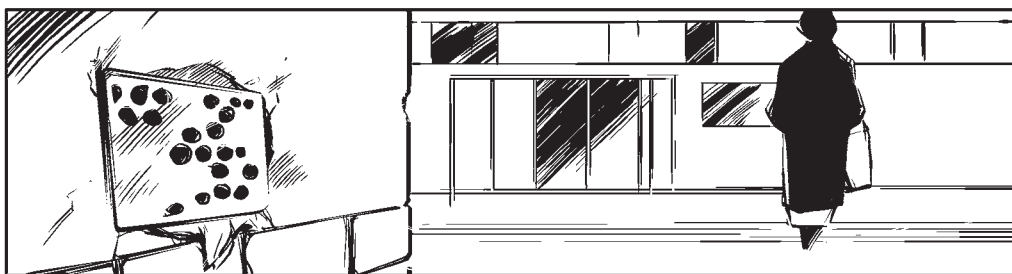


I suspect it now, sir. At the time, I had no idea.

Besides, it was the right call. Everyone in Berlin knew his credentials. They couldn't stop him crossing, but his presence would draw unwanted attention.















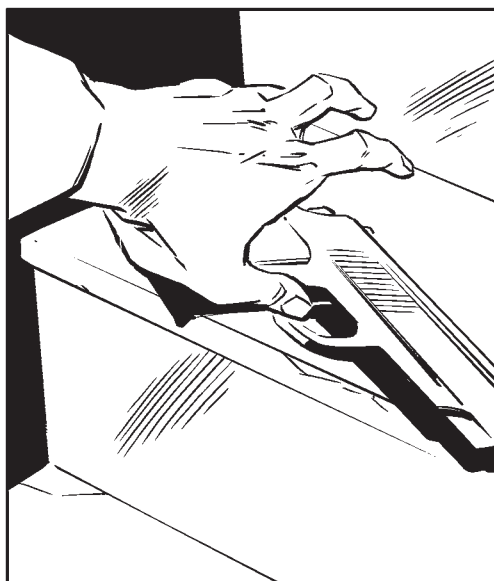






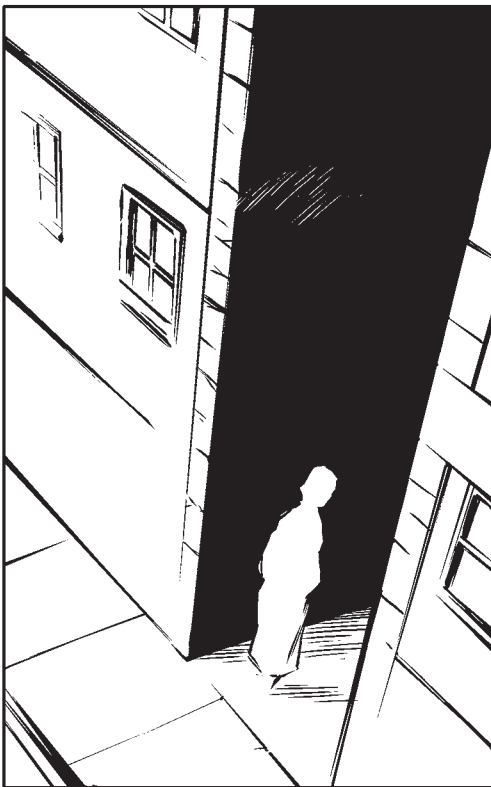


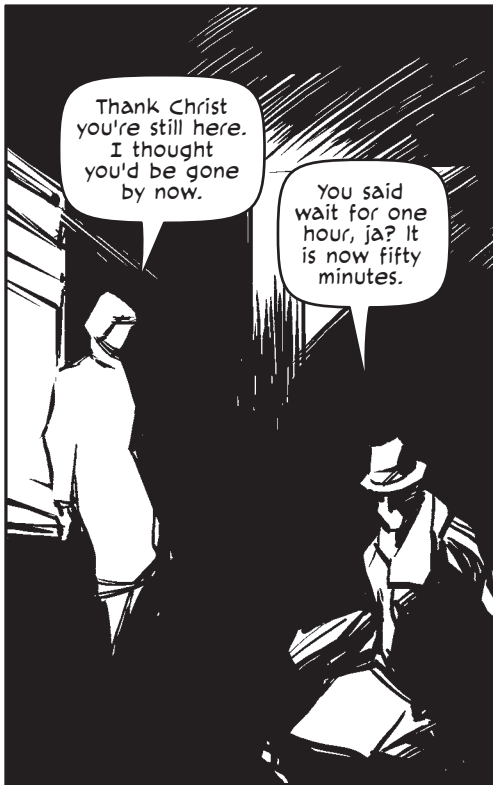












Thank Christ
you're still here.
I thought
you'd be gone
by now.

You said
wait for one
hour, ja? It
is now fifty
minutes.



It's a total
bust. There was
a sniper waiting.
"Herr Schmidt"
is dead.

I understand.



They're on
high alert now,
there's no way
I can cross. I'll
have to use
the old sewer
tunnel.

Will you
be OK?



I am a
citizen of the
GDR. Do not
worry about
me.

Go.

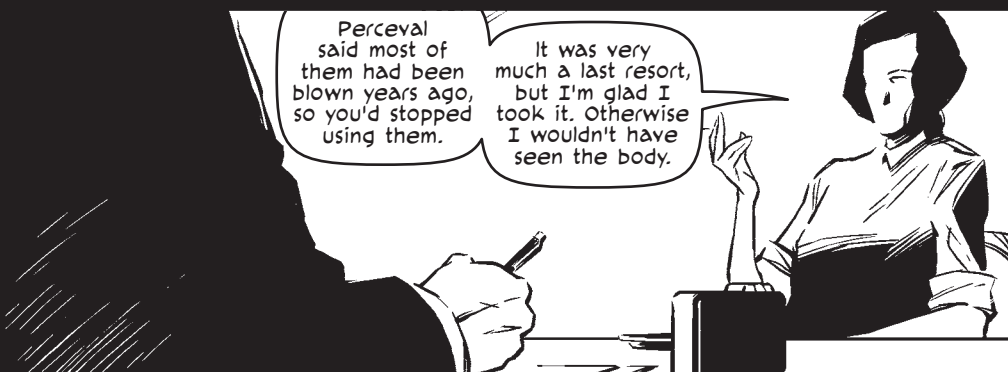






Good thing you arranged a safe house with Merkel.

Why didn't you just use the tunnel to start with?



Perceval said most of them had been blown years ago, so you'd stopped using them.

It was very much a last resort, but I'm glad I took it. Otherwise I wouldn't have seen the body.



It was Bakhtin, I'm sure of it. I recognised him from the file, and the body was relatively fresh.

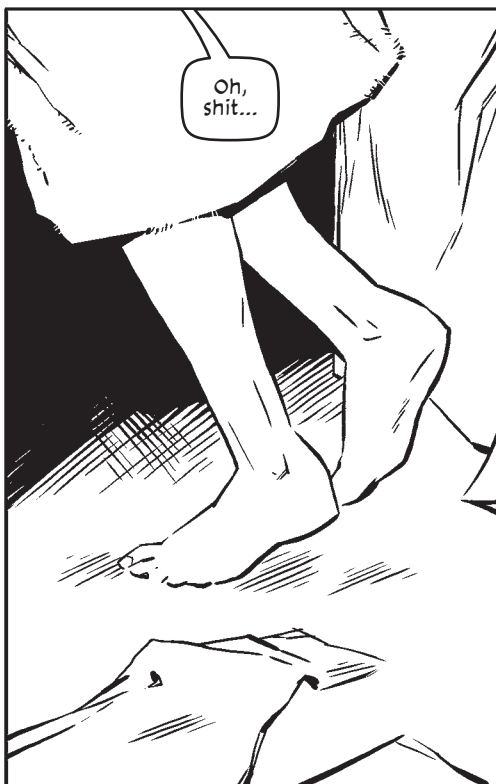


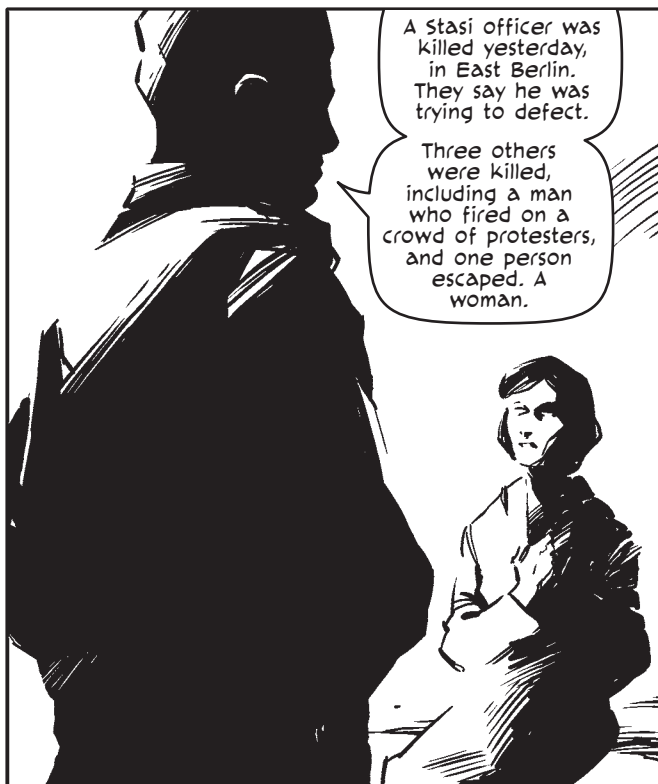
Did you confront BER-1?



No, I went home to lay low and figure out what was going on.

But that didn't work out too well, either.





A Stasi officer was killed yesterday, in East Berlin. They say he was trying to defect.

Three others were killed, including a man who fired on a crowd of protesters, and one person escaped. A woman.



I don't understand. Why are you telling me this?

Do not play games!



The Britischer who was shot last week was a spy, wasn't he? And now they send a replacement, to stage a defection!

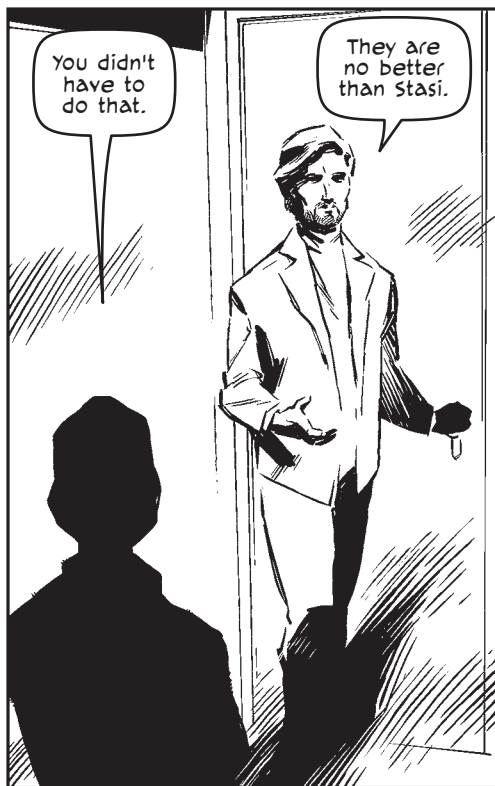
What are you talking about? I'm a civil servant, a lawyer!

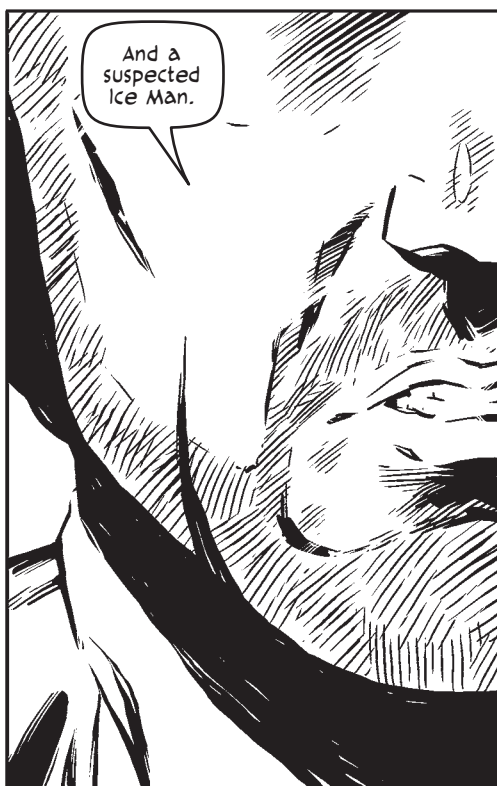


Your government may not care about the mess it makes, but this is still our country!

Where were you yesterday, at 2pm?









What's that supposed to mean?

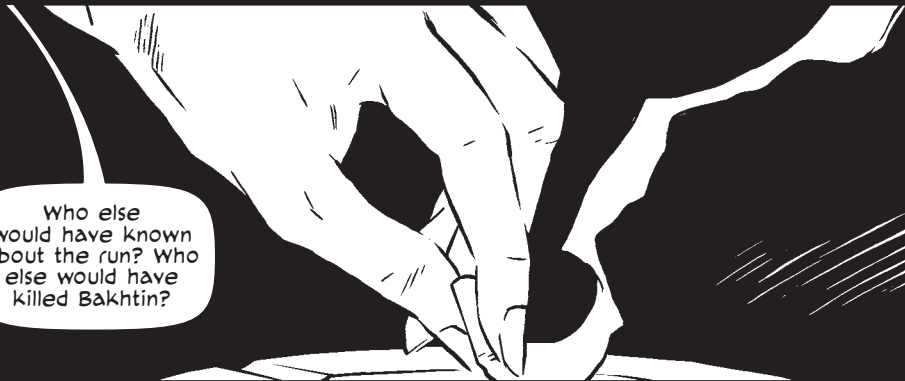


I think he mentioned it, but only in passing. A mole in the DGSE, or something. Not our problem.


To be honest, sir, I had bigger concerns.



Yes, yes, the "Ice Men". Come on, Lorraine. You seriously expect us to believe BER-1 was running an assassin ring?




Who else
would have known
about the run? Who
else would have
killed Bakhtin?



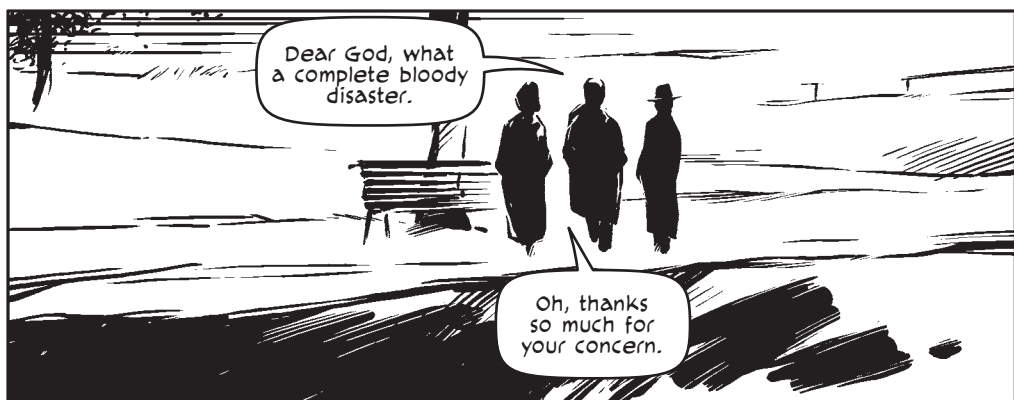
So you
believe the
pictures were
genuine?

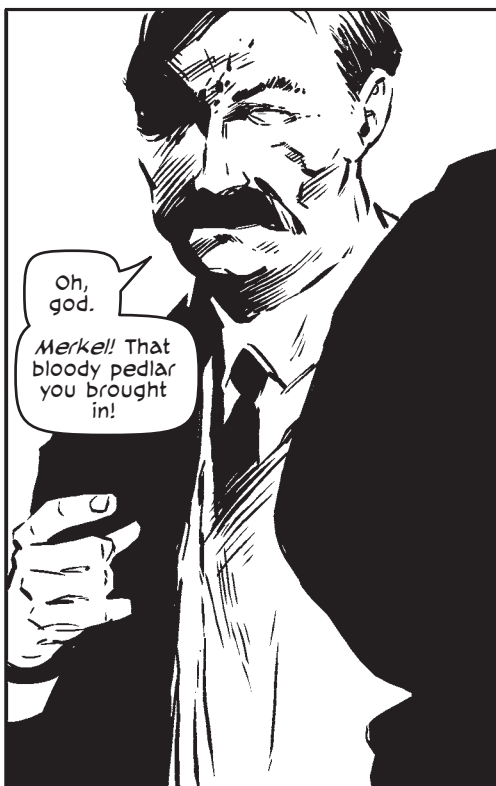
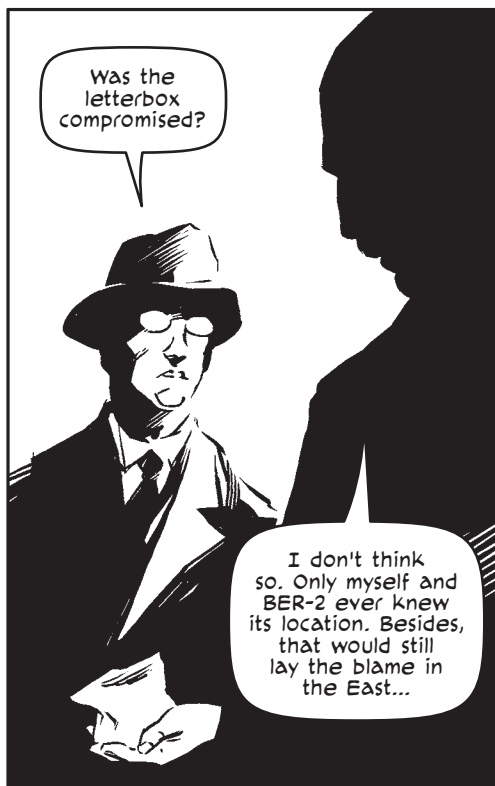
Of Perceval
and Yerchenko
together? Yes.
Why would Pierre
fake them?



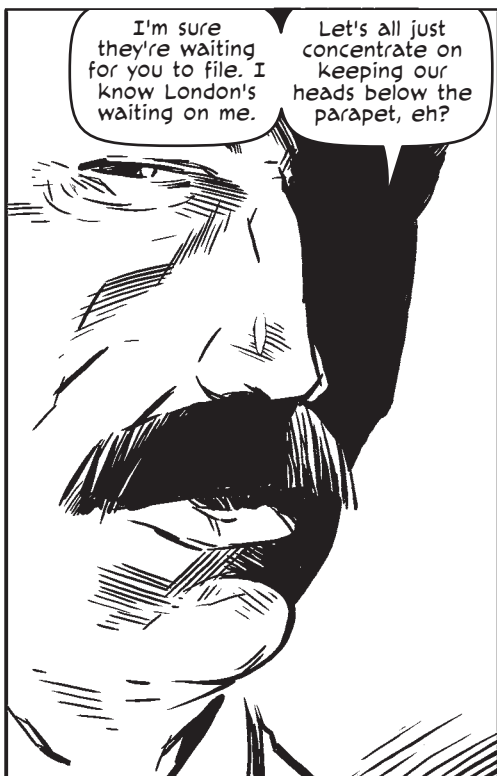
We'll
come to
that later.

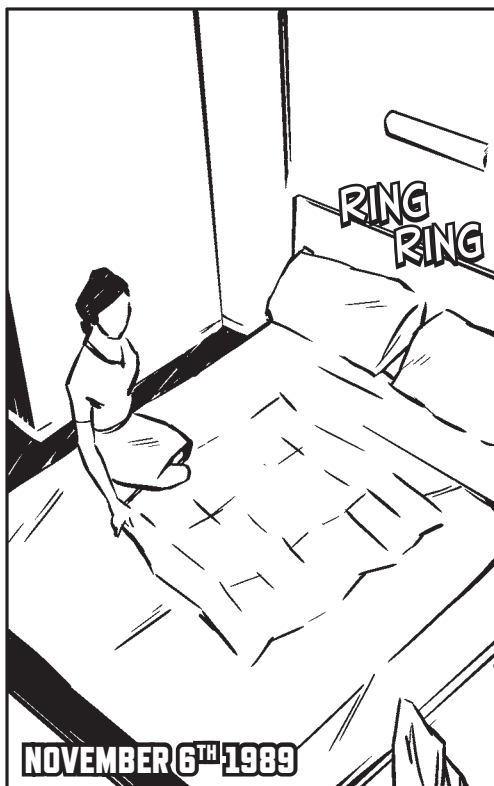
First, tell
me... how did
Perceval take
SPYGLASS'
death?



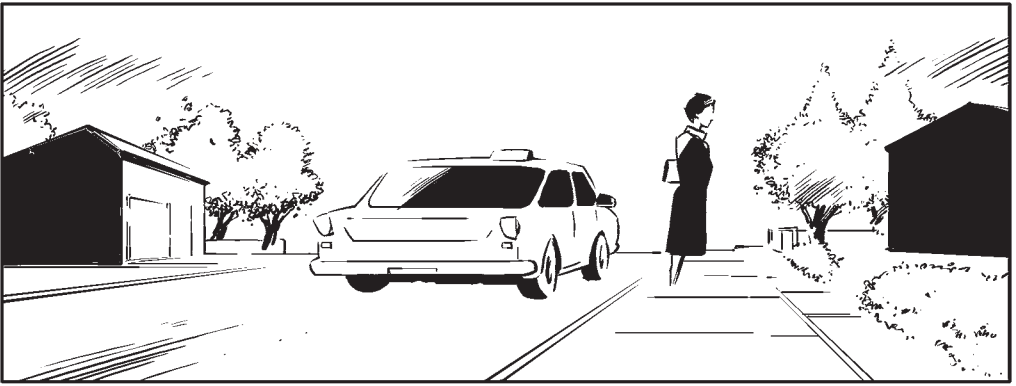


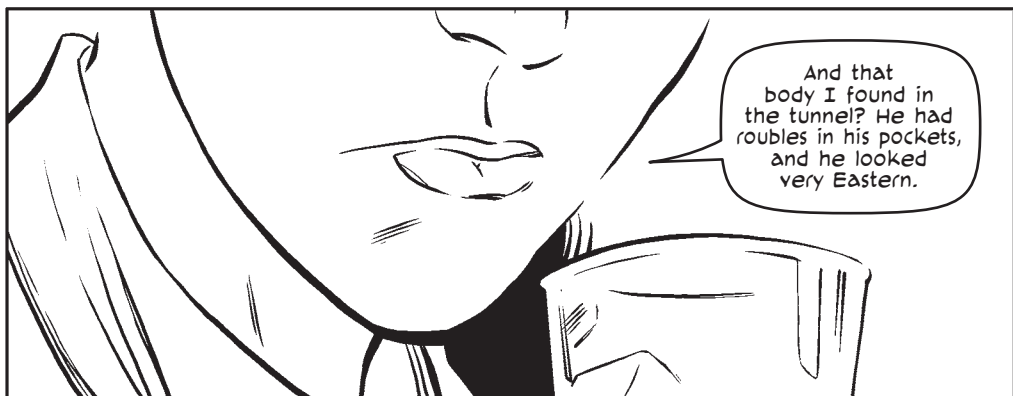
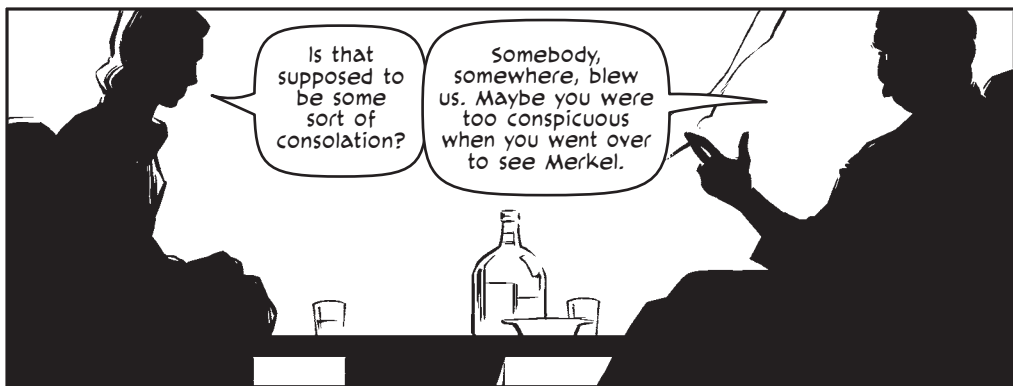


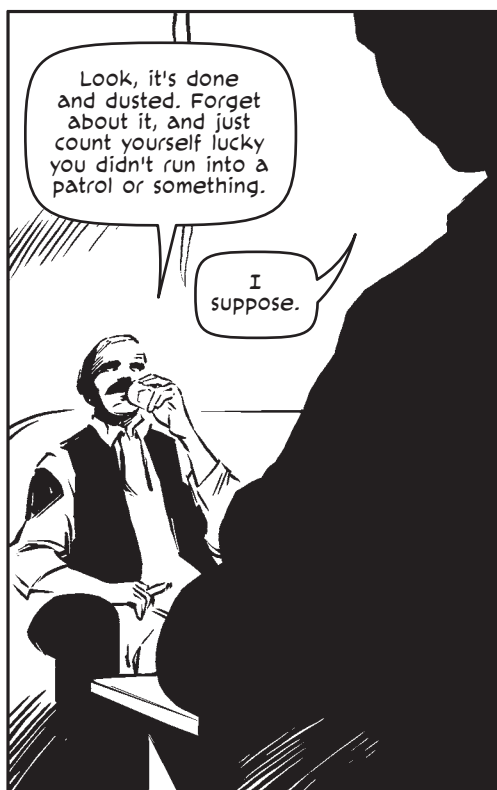
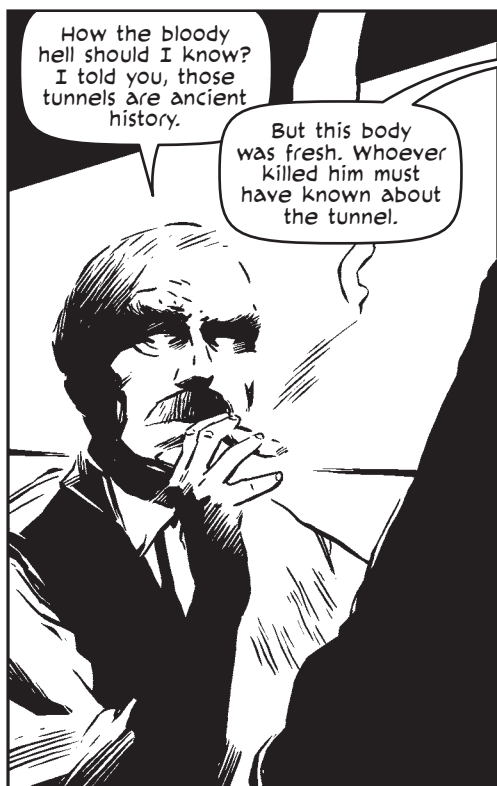


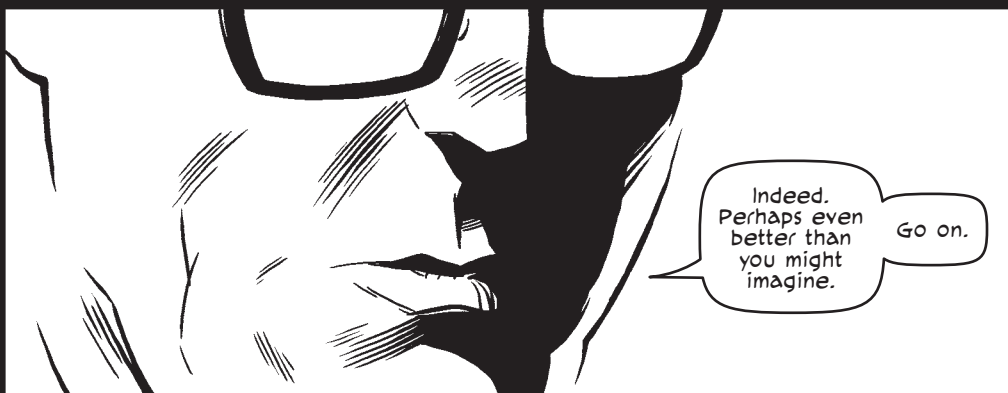
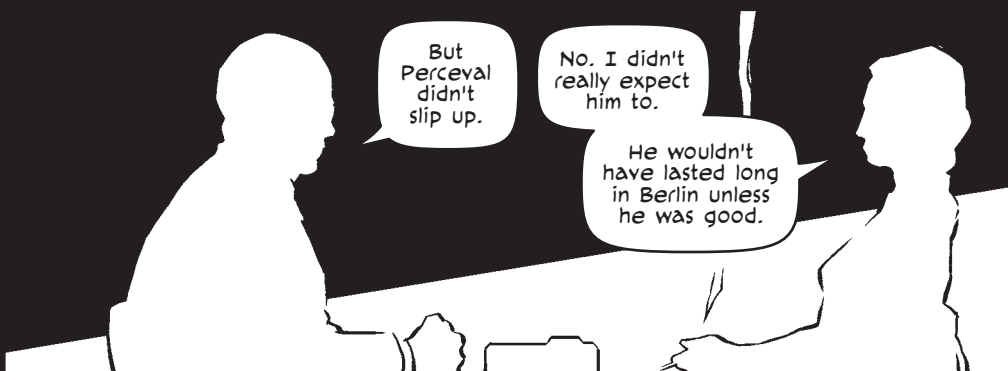






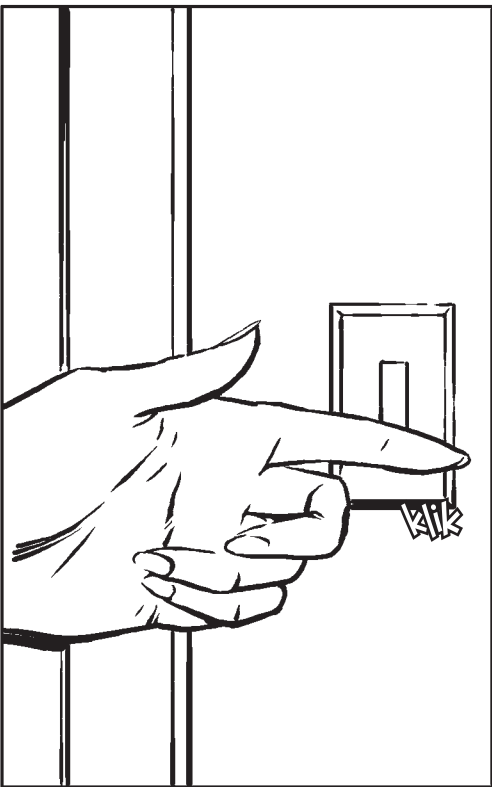






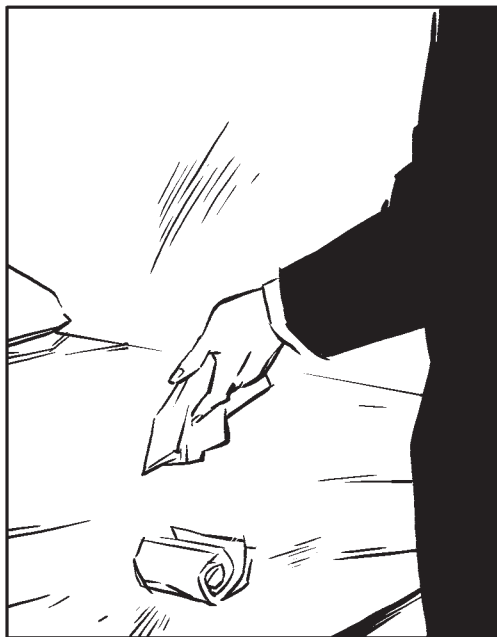
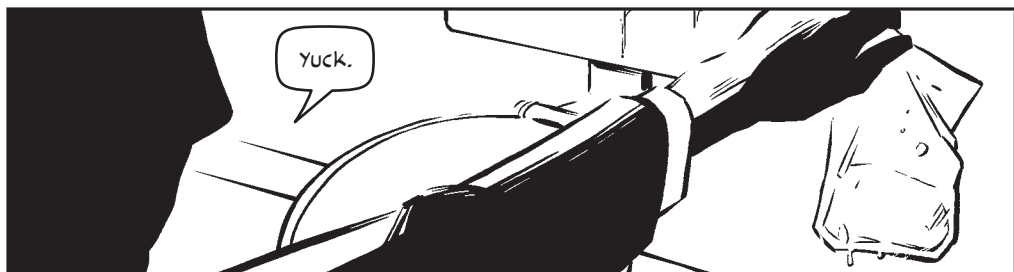














You're
sure it was
Bakhtin?

Absolutely. And
Perceval was
giving him a
package.

The DGSE had
obviously been
keeping tabs
on our men for
some time.

And
where are
the pictures
now?



I burned
them.



...You did
what?!




Not straight
away. But when
Perceval was killed,
I couldn't risk the
police finding them.
Embarrassing for
all of us.




You
bloody fool,
Broughton.

you
bloody,
bloody
fool.

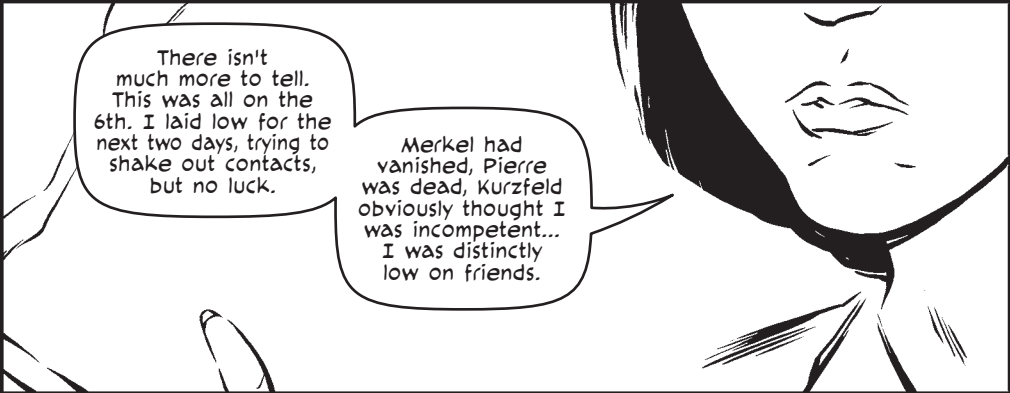


Sir? I don't
understand.
Perceval's dead,
what does it
matter?



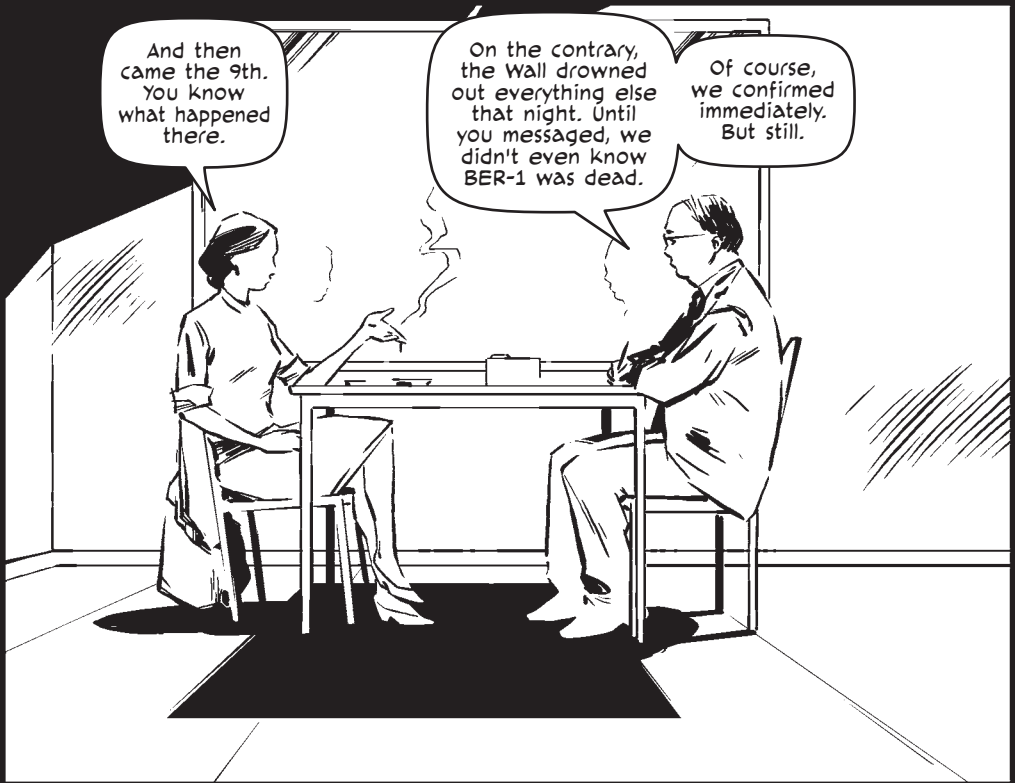
But
his legacy
lives on.

Oh, just...
go on,
finish. Then
I'll explain.



There isn't
much more to tell.
This was all on the
6th. I laid low for the
next two days, trying to
shake out contacts,
but no luck.

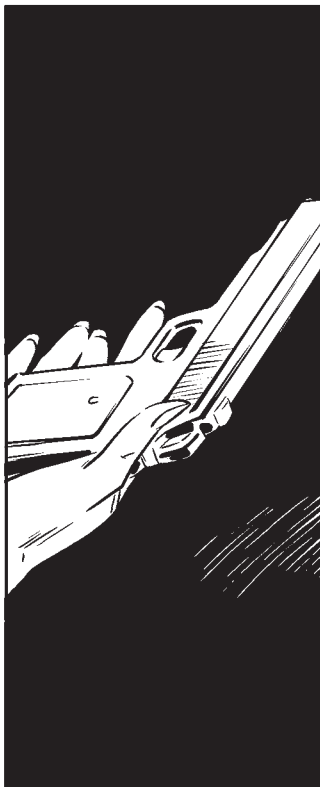
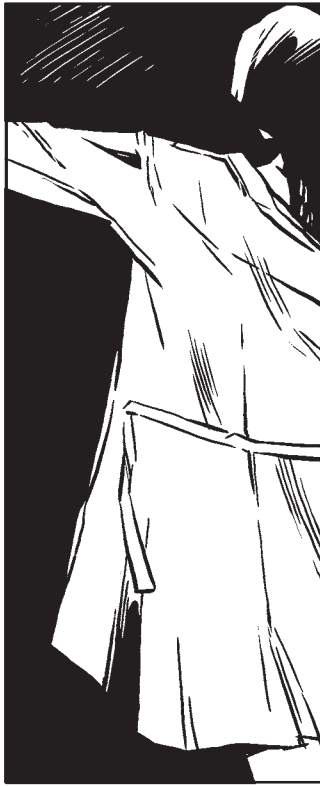
Merkel had
vanished, Pierre
was dead, Kurzfeld
obviously thought I
was incompetent...
I was distinctly
low on friends.



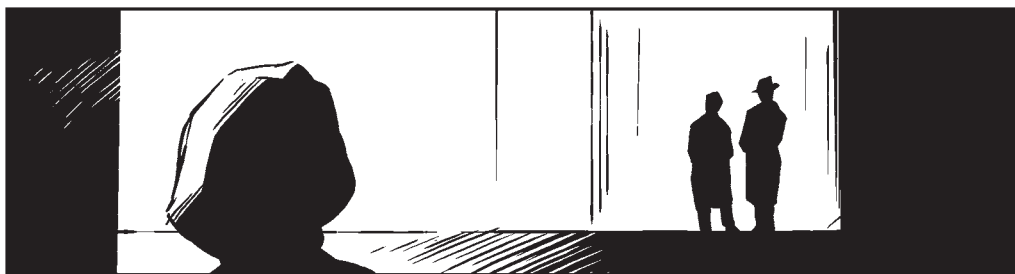


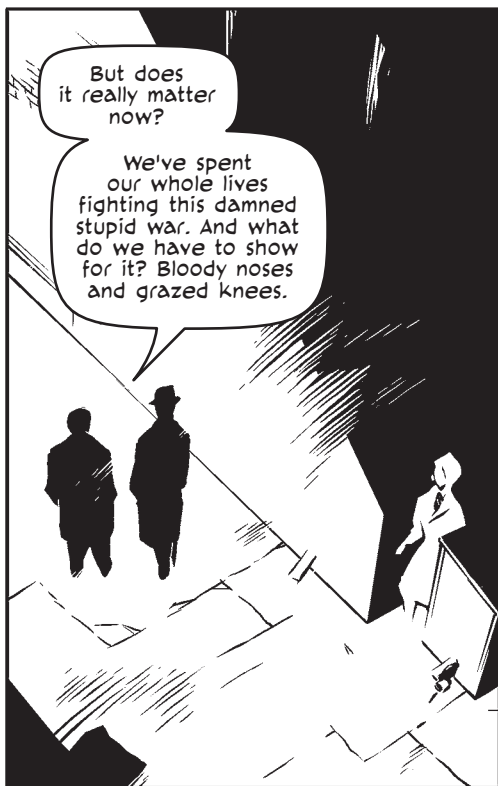
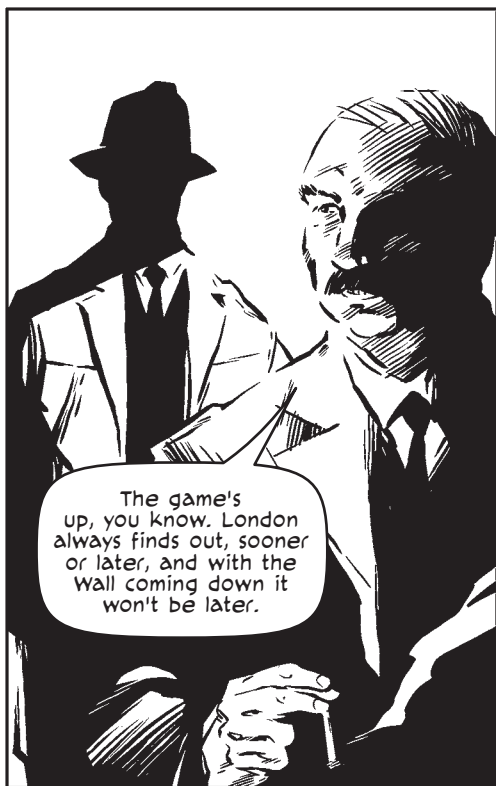






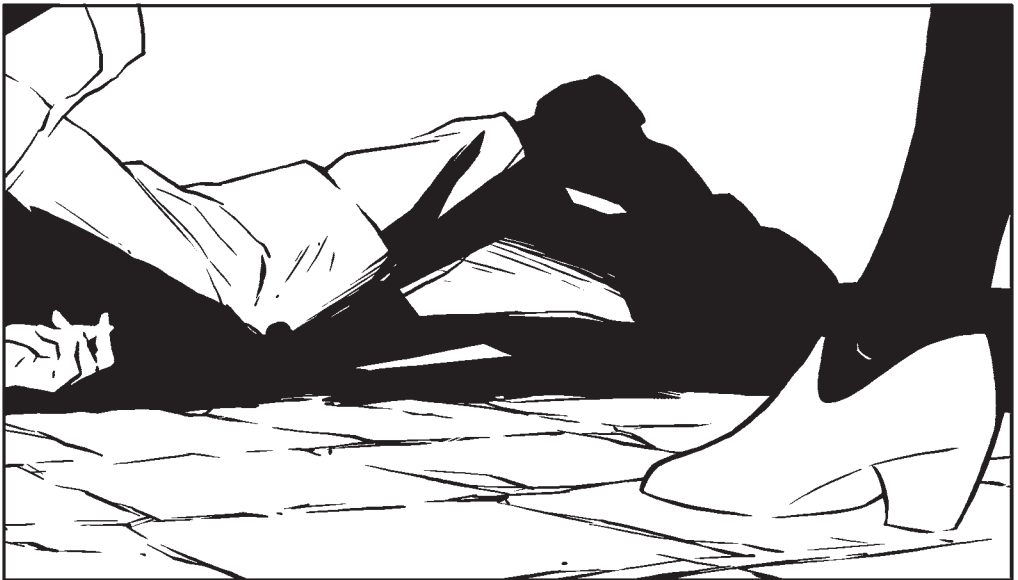

















I went straight to the Attaché's office and messaged you, before calling the police.



And you never found the list.

No, sir. Sorry, sir.



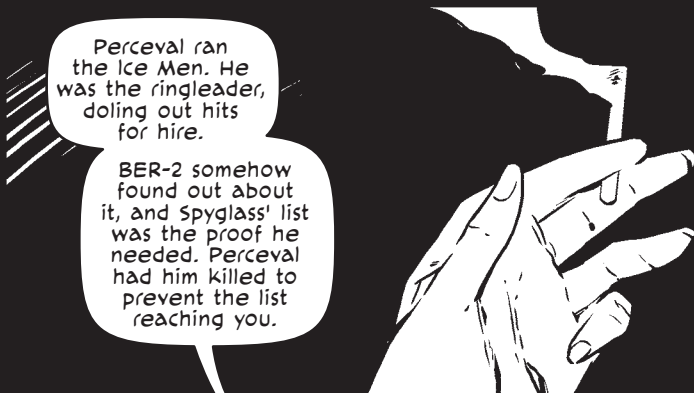
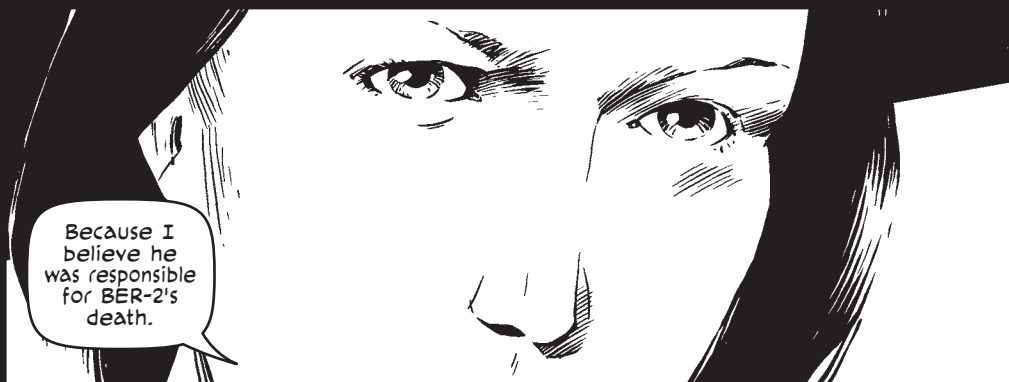
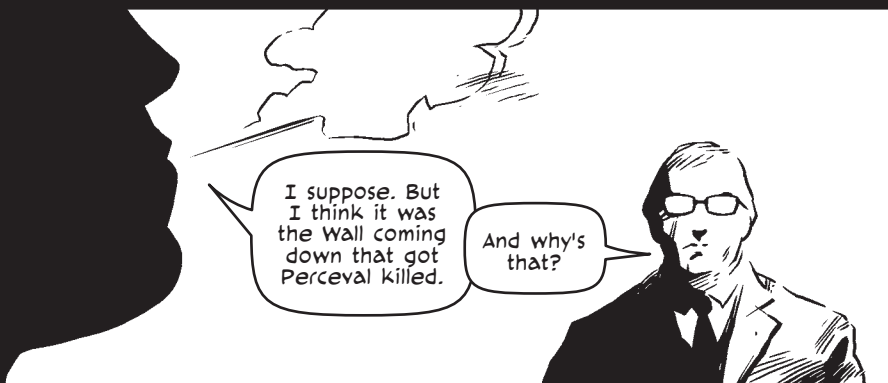
But like Perceval said, does it matter now? The Cold War is over.


Is that what you think?

It's what people are saying.

You should know better than to listen to the people, Broughton.

Berlin is reunited. Germany may follow, and maybe the entire Iron Curtain will fall. But Russia will always be Russia.





But then why would BER-2 tell him about the list in the first place? BER-1 knew what he was carrying, remember.

Well, I... I don't know.

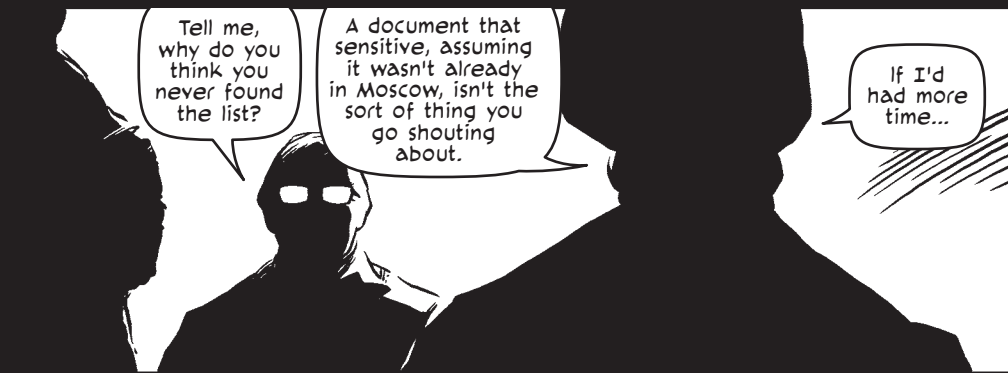
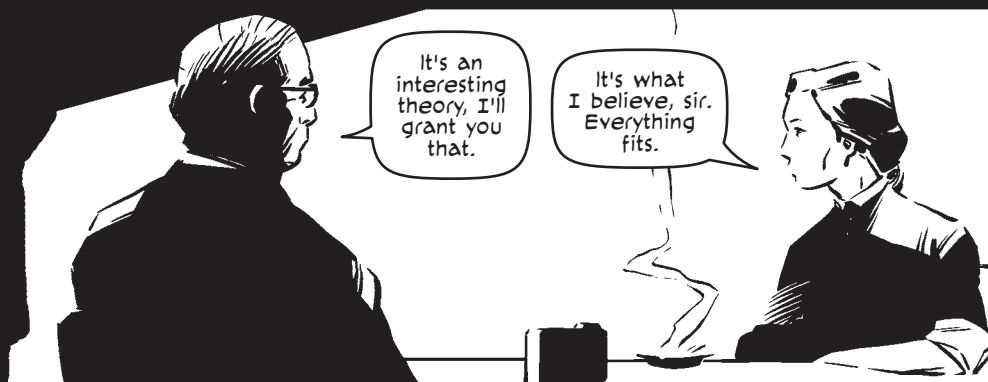
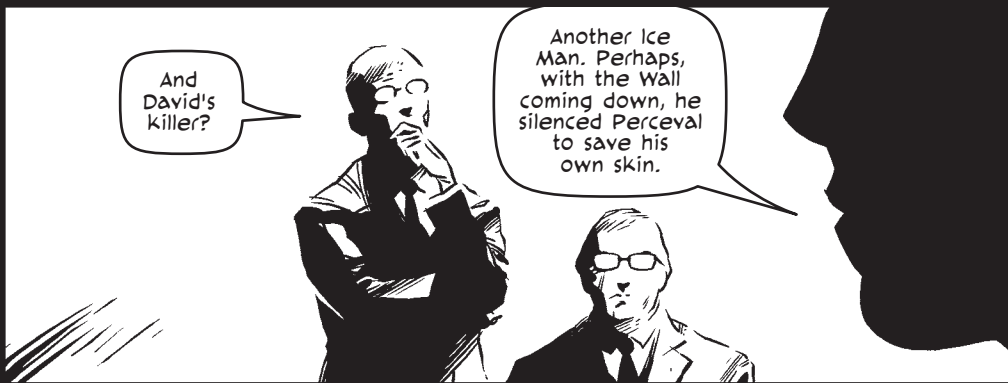
But, sir, it all fits!

Perceval never wanted me in Berlin. He tried to get rid of me at every turn.

He didn't seem particularly bothered about the list. I don't think he wanted it found.

Perceval also knew the exfil route. So he told Yerchenko to kill SPYGLASS before he could spill the beans.

And Bakhtin killed BER-2 on Perceval's orders, then Perceval silenced him, dumped him in the sewers, and fed us that rubbish about a train to Moscow.





There is
no list.

*There
never
was.*

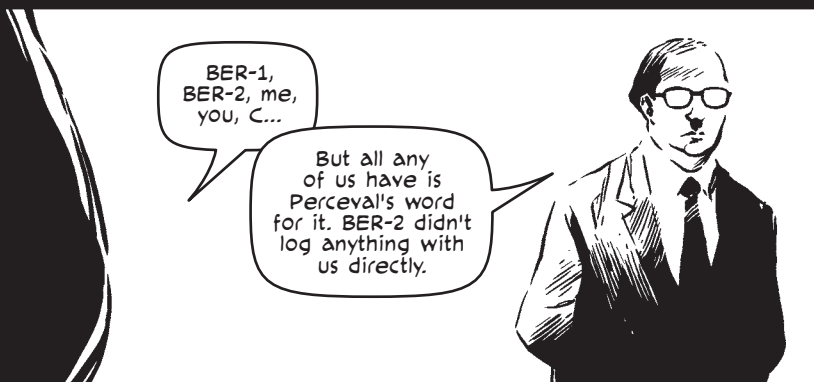


I don't
understand.



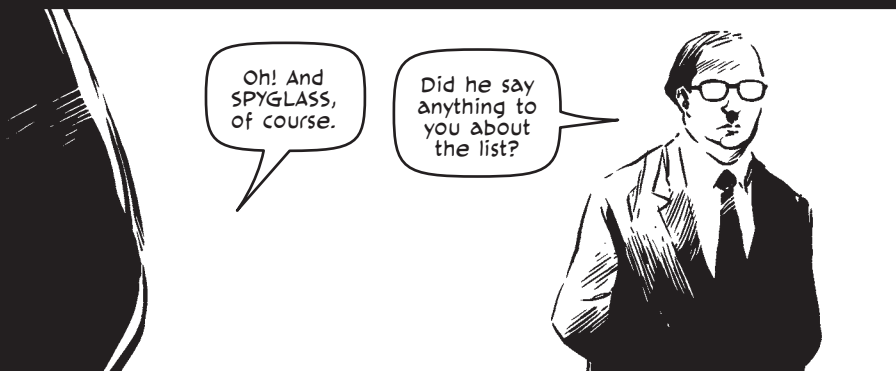
Perceval pulled a fast one, on all of us.

Think, Lorraine. Who knew about the list?



BER-1, BER-2, me, you, C...

But all any of us have is Perceval's word for it. BER-2 didn't log anything with us directly.



Oh! And SPYGLASS, of course.

Did he say anything to you about the list?



No, there wasn't time...

...before he was killed.



And David didn't tell me about it till after Gascoine was found dead.

So the only two men who could confirm the list's existence were both dead.



But why lie? It doesn't make sense.


It makes perfect sense.



Perceval killed BER-2, and used Bakhtin as a scapegoat. On that much, I agree with you.


But he needed a cover story.

The KGB doesn't go around shooting British officers for fun. The game was never that blatant, not even in the glory days.


A close-up, high-contrast black and white illustration of a man's face. He is wearing thick-rimmed glasses and has a serious expression. His hand is partially visible near his chin.

So he fabricated the list, to distract us. And it worked.

It was quite brilliant, really. Worthy of an officer of his calibre.


A black and white illustration of a man in a suit and tie, looking down with a somber expression. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows.

I don't care how you get it, who you upset, or where it takes you. Bring it home.

A black and white illustration of two men in suits. The man on the left is in profile, resting his chin on his hand. The man on the right is facing forward, looking slightly to the side.

Hitler said, *"The greater the lie, the more inclined people are to believe it."*

Goebbels, actually, but the principle is sound.

A black and white illustration of a woman's face, looking upwards with a concerned or questioning expression. Her hair is dark and styled in a short, wavy bob.

Where's the motive? Surely even Perceval wouldn't kill a fellow officer because they didn't get along.



Think,
Lorraine,
think!

Perceval
killed BER-2
and fed us a
line. We sent
you in, and he
told you the
same story.

Sent you on
a wild goose
chase.

But then
SPYGLASS wanted
out. Perceval
messaged that to
us, of course. Not
the sort of thing
he could go
silent on.

But he
had to silence
SPYGLASS, before
we could question
him about the list.



Remember
I asked
afterwards if
you were the
real target?

Yes, but I still
believe it was
SPYGLASS.



In fact, I
believe you're
both right. There
were two targets.
SPYGLASS...

...and
you.



That's
absurd...!

More absurd
than Perceval
playing fixer
to a ring of
assassins?

So he failed
to eliminate you,
but no matter. After
that, I think he
believed he was
safe.

Until the
Frog said
he had
information
for you.

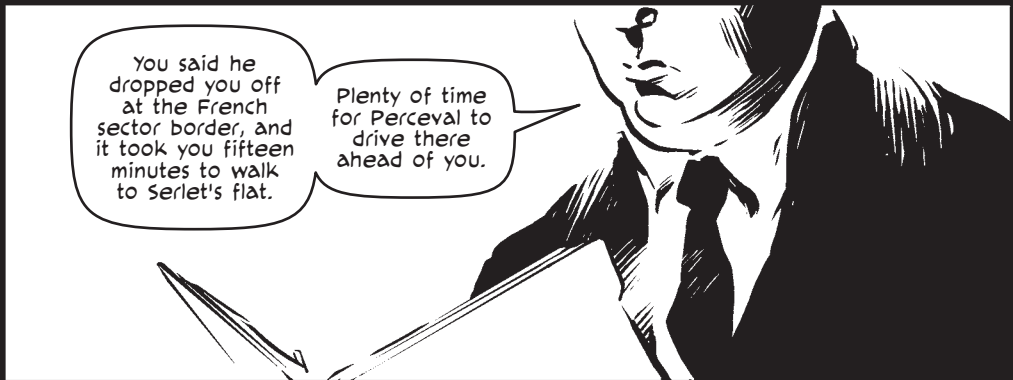



...A top
secret recipe
of great interest
to your company,
I am sure.



And you told
Perceval.








Now hang on
a moment! You
can't think I
killed Perceval!



Did
you?



No! For
God's sake!

He was a
misogynistic,
bullying prick,
but I didn't want
him dead!



Someone
did.



Did you get a good look at his killer?

No... well, he did look sort of familiar, but I couldn't place him. Maybe from an old case file. I can check, if you like.



I've saved you the trouble. Take a look at these.



This one... he looks familiar. I'm not sure, I...

oh, god.



The Pole, in the bar. The one who chatted me up. It was him!



Aleksander Bremovych. Born 1952, Kraków, to Russian immigrant parents. Recruited '69, quickly became one of the KGB's top runners.



He was involved with that bloody mess in Czechoslovakia in '75, not to mention a few Frog doubles over the years.

Bremovych flew into Berlin on the 29th.



So he was KGB. That doesn't mean he wasn't an Ice Man.

Doesn't this line-up strike you as odd? Bremovych, Yerchenko, Bakhtin?

I don't follow.



Your fabled Ice Men are supposedly an international outfit. But all three of these men are KGB.

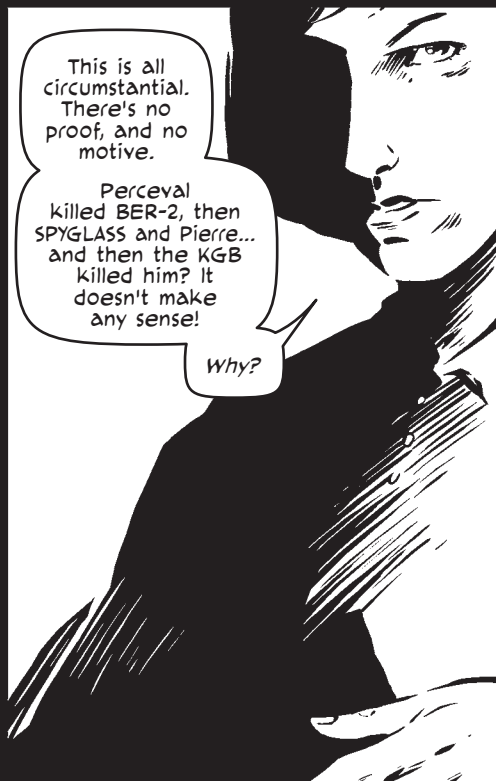
A remarkable coincidence, wouldn't you say?



Berlin is crawling with KGB, everyone knows that.

And Frogs, Yanks, Poles, Eyeties, even us.

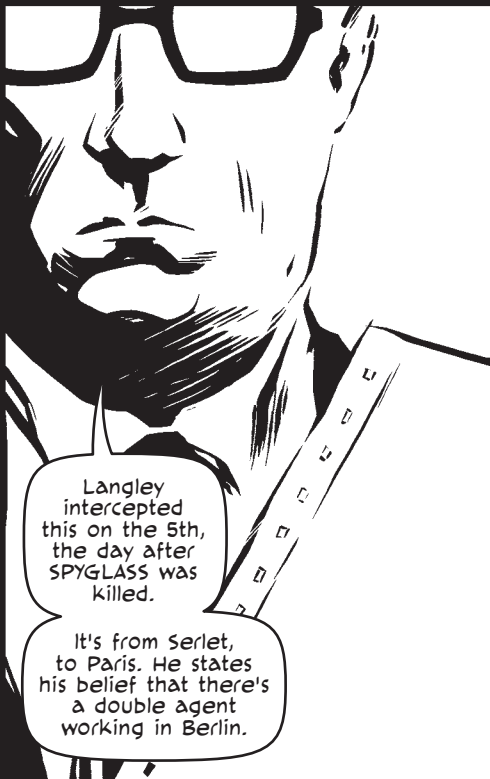
You really think Russians are the only people willing to kill for money?



This is all circumstantial. There's no proof, and no motive.

Perceval killed BER-2, then SPYGLASS and Pierre... and then the KGB killed him? It doesn't make any sense!

Why?



Langley intercepted this on the 5th, the day after SPYGLASS was killed.

It's from Serlet, to Paris. He states his belief that there's a double agent working in Berlin.



A British double.

That's... that's why you asked if Pierre mentioned doubles?

You thought he meant a double in the DGSE. In fact, he was talking about Perceval.

Perceval isn't mentioned by name.

The French know we read their mail, they're not going to give us the golden egg without cutting a deal first.

And if the CIA intercepted it, you can be sure the KGB did too.

It's been known for some time that Bremovych was running a British double, codename STACHEL. We just didn't know who it was.

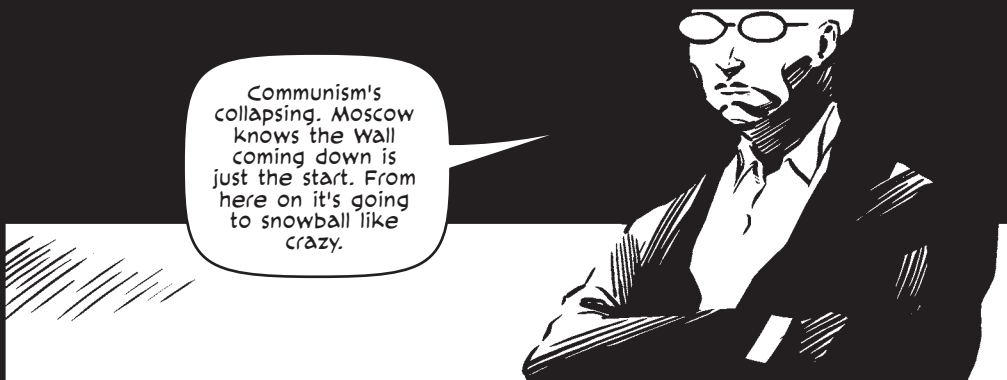
Those photos Serlet showed you weren't evidence of Perceval's involvement with assassins.

They were proof he was STACHEL.



So, three days
after BER-2 is
killed, Bremovych
arrives in Berlin.
Perhaps Perceval
wanted to defect.

And
why?



Communism's
collapsing. Moscow
knows the Wall
coming down is
just the start. From
here on it's going
to snowball like
crazy.



Defection's
always been a
good life. Apartment
in Moscow, enough
cash to retire, KGB
security... if you make
it over the Curtain,
you're good as
made.



But if the
Kremlin collapses,
what then? The
KGB's power wanes.
All those state-
guaranteed roubles
are gone.

Defection
is no longer
appealing.



But if
Perceval came
back and flipped
for you, instead...

BER-2 was
on to Perceval
all right. He'd
blown him as
a double.

But if SPYGLASS
talked, we'd find
out the list didn't
exist. Paris would
confirm our
suspicions.



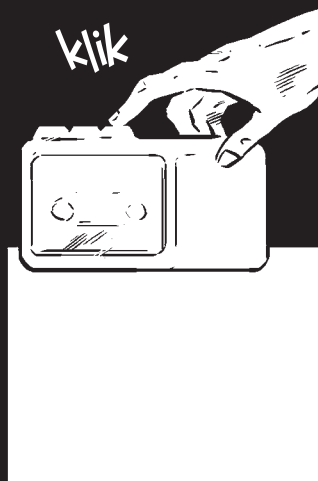
Perceval
was cleaning
up after
himself.

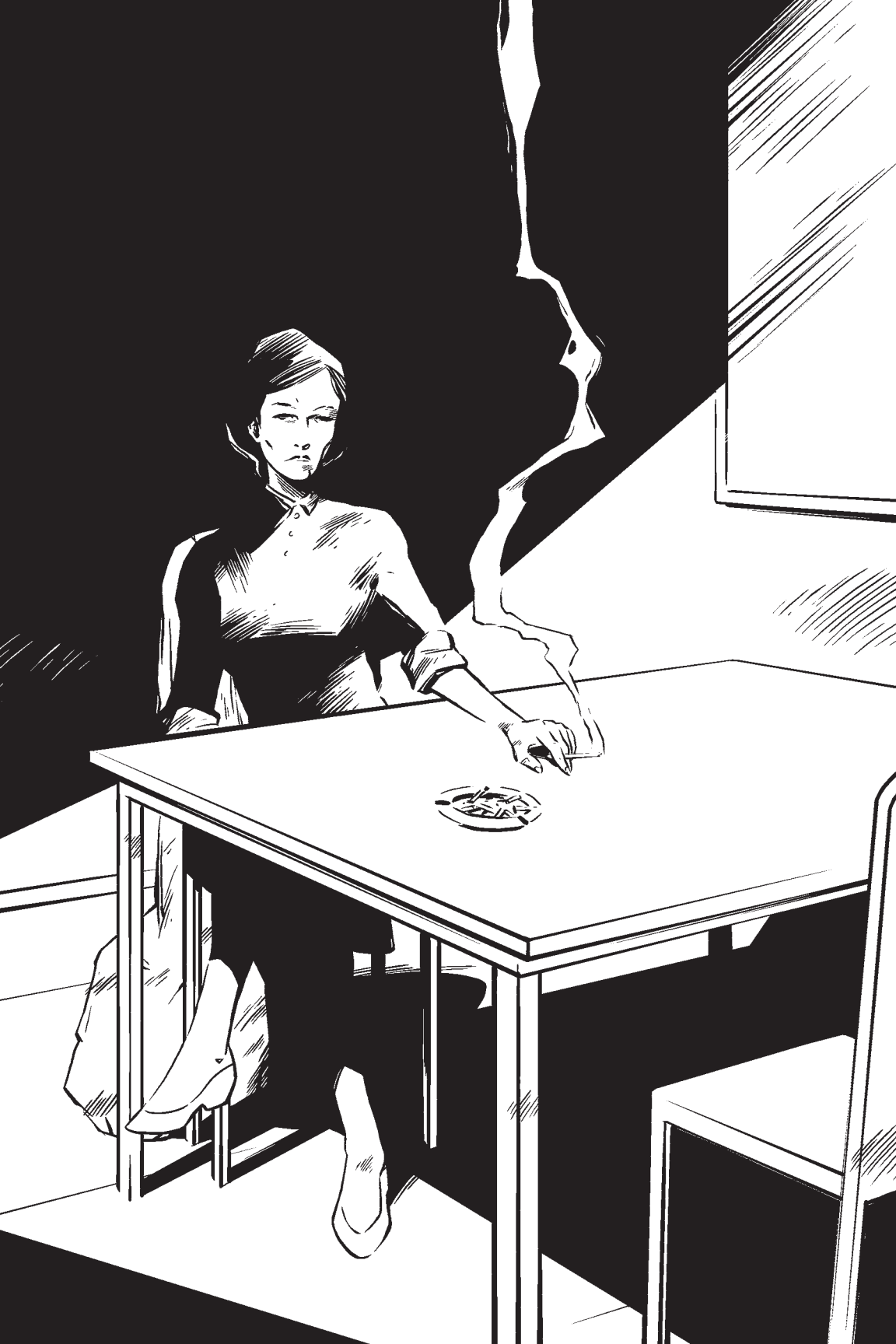
And so was
Bremovych. It was
just a question of
which man finished
the job first.



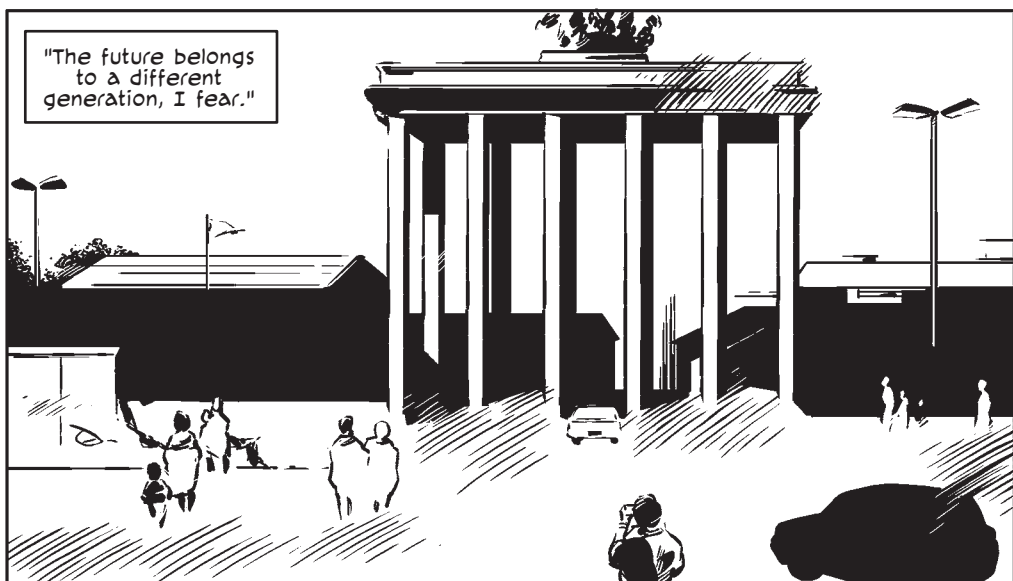
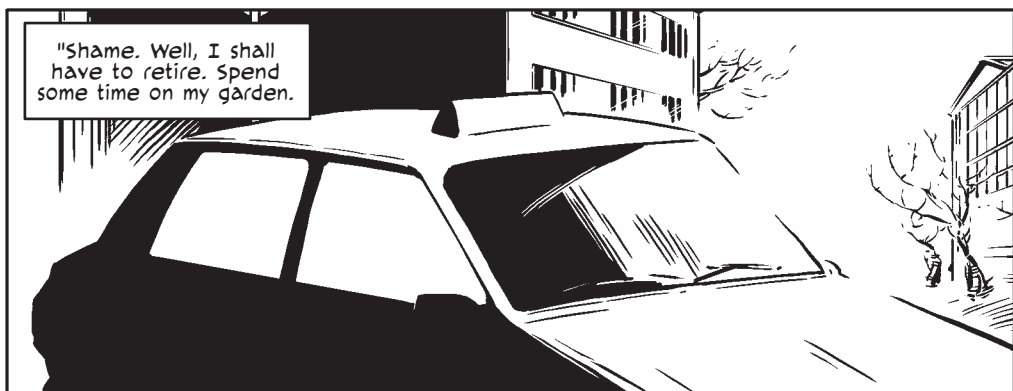
We asked
Perceval to come
home several times,
you know. Every
time he resisted,
insisting he wanted
to stay in Berlin.

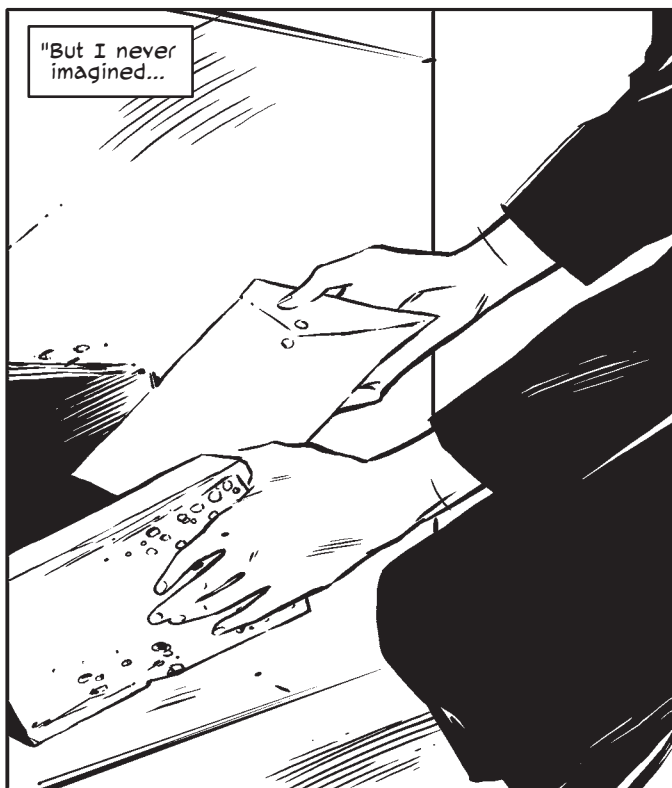
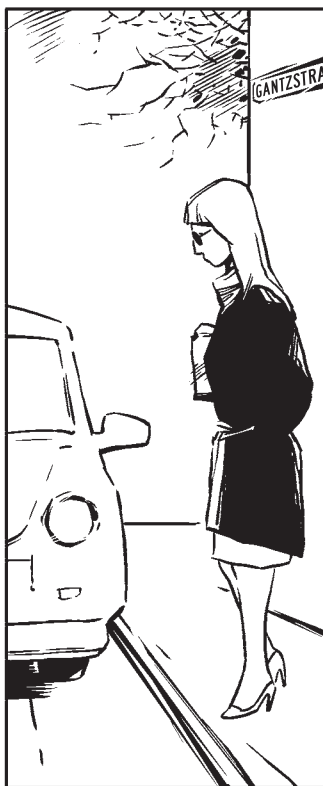
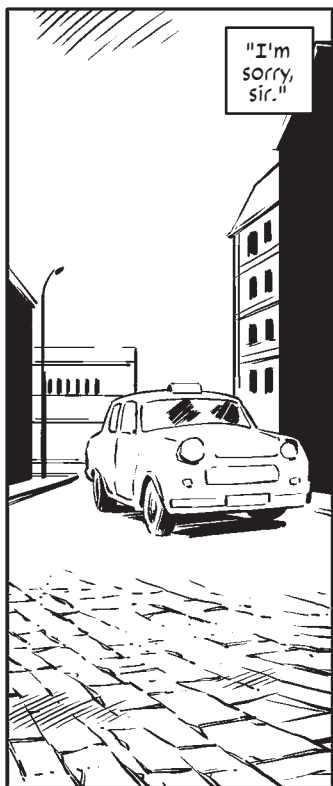
Because of
Thatcher? Or
was that a
smokescreen?

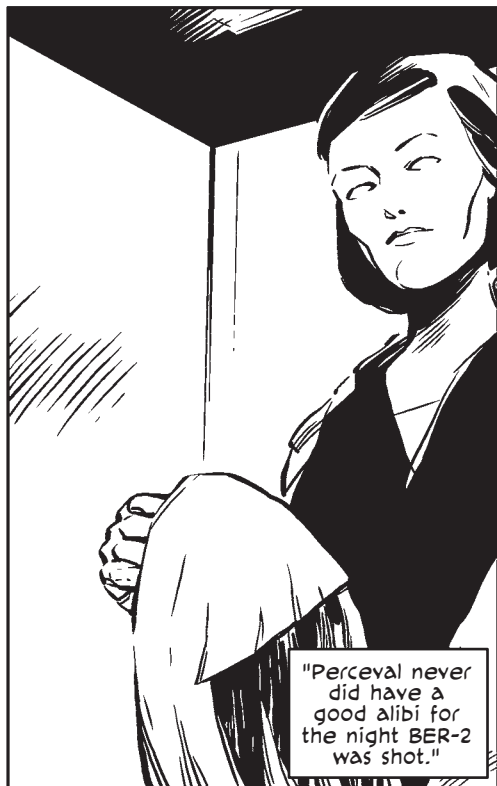
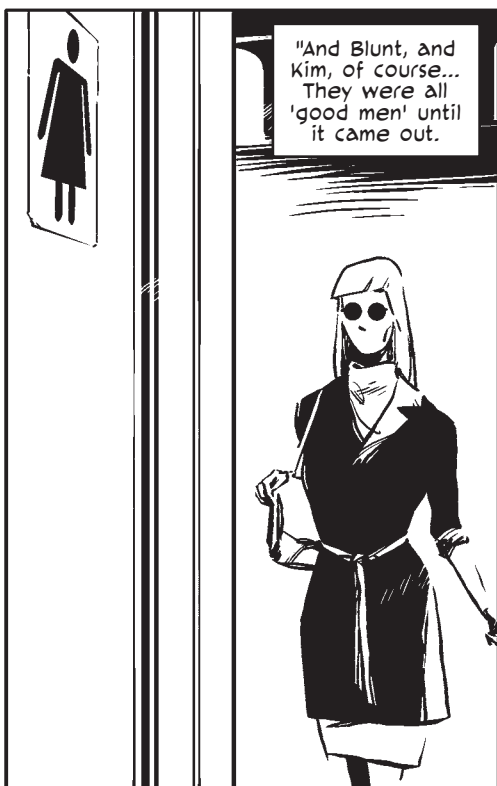
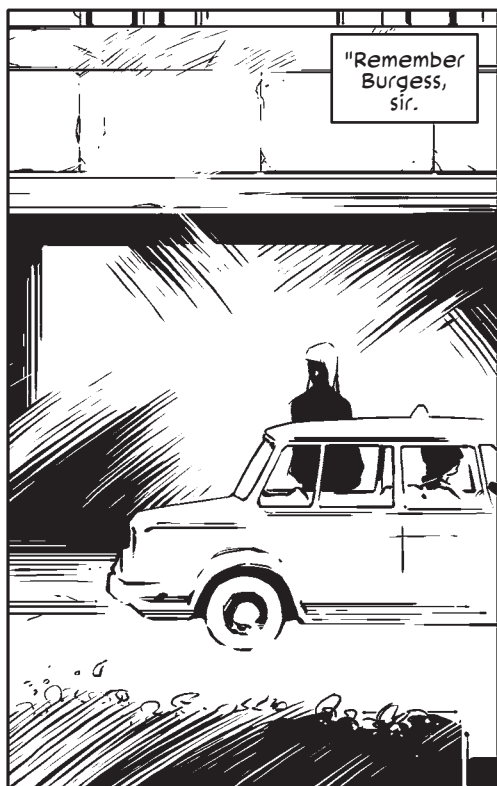


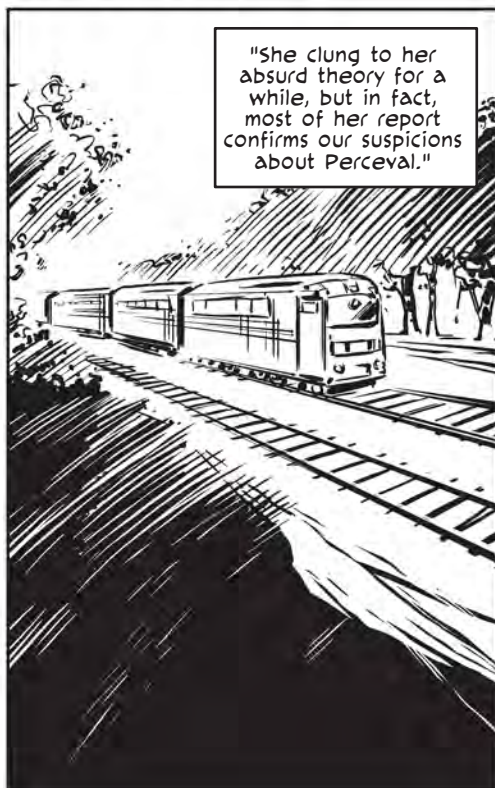














"You'll have to promote her, Waddel. A sweetener, to keep her quiet."



I suspected as soon as you arrived in Berlin, of course. Why else would you come so quickly, when you knew as well as I that the list didn't exist?



Killing the Frog was just icing on the cake.

That was you, wasn't it?

Da.



"Where is she? Still on leave?"



"Yes, sir. I believe she's staying with family, in Somerset."



Lies, secrets,
more lies... it's
what we live
for, I suppose.



But what does
it matter now?
The Wall is coming
down. Our secrets
are worthless.

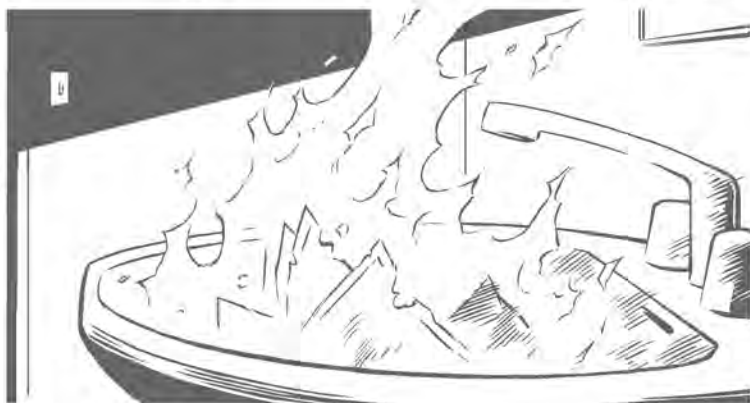


Don't worry,
old boy. I
won't tell if
you won't.

Mum's the
word, eh?







"Well, here goes. Let's see
if the Minister believes
a single word of it."

WARSZAWA CENTRALNA





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Antony Johnston is an award-winning, New York Times bestselling author of more than thirty graphic novels and comic series, including *Atomic Blonde: The Coldest City* and its sequel *The Coldest Winter*, the epic series *Wasteland*, Marvel's superhero *Daredevil*, the modern Shakespeare *Julius*, and more. He also writes video games, such as the seminal *Dead Space* and *ZombiU*. He has adapted books by bestselling novelist Anthony Horowitz, collaborated with comics legend Alan Moore, and his titles have been translated throughout the world. He lives and works in England.

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samhartgraphics.com



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BERLIN WALL CRUMBLES, AN UNDERCOVER
MI6 SPY IS KILLED WHILE CARRYING
PRICELESS INFORMATION – A LIST
CONTAINING THE NAME OF EVERY
SPY IN BERLIN.**

BUT NO LIST IS FOUND ON HIS BODY.

MI6 SENDS VETERAN OFFICER
LORRAINE BROUGHTON TO RECOVER
THE LIST. BUT SHE WALKS INTO A
POWDERKEG OF SOCIAL UNREST,
COUNTER-ESPIONAGE, DEFECTIONS
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FOCUS FEATURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH SIERRA PICTURES A DENVER & DELUKE / CHICKIE THE COP / TSH FILMS AND STEVEN PRODUCTION A FILM BY DAVID LEITCH
CHARLIZE THERON JAMES McAVOY "ATOMIC BLONDE" JOHN GOODMAN TIL SCHWEIGER EDDIE MARSAN SOFIA BUTTELLA AND TOBY JONES
CASTING BY MARY VERNIEU CSA MARISOL BONCALL MUSIC SUPERVISOR JOHN HOLLIHAN ORIGINAL SCORE BY TYLER BATES COSTUME DESIGNER CINDY EVANS EDITOR ELISABET RONALDSOOTTIR
PRODUCTION DESIGNER DAVID SCHEUNEWMANN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JONATHAN SELA EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NICK MEYER MARC SCHABERG JOE NOZEMACK STEVEN V. SCARVELLI
ETHAN SMITH DAVID GULLOD KURT JOHNSTAD PRODUCED BY ERIC GITTER PETER SCHWERIN KELLY MCCORMICK CHARLIZE THERON A.J. DIX BETH KONO
BASED ON THE ONI PRESS GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES "THE COLDEST CITY" WRITTEN BY ANTONY JOHNSTON AND ILLUSTRATED BY SAM HART SCREENPLAY BY KURT JOHNSTAD DIRECTED BY DAVID LEITCH
THIS FILM IS NOT YET RATED



SUMMER

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