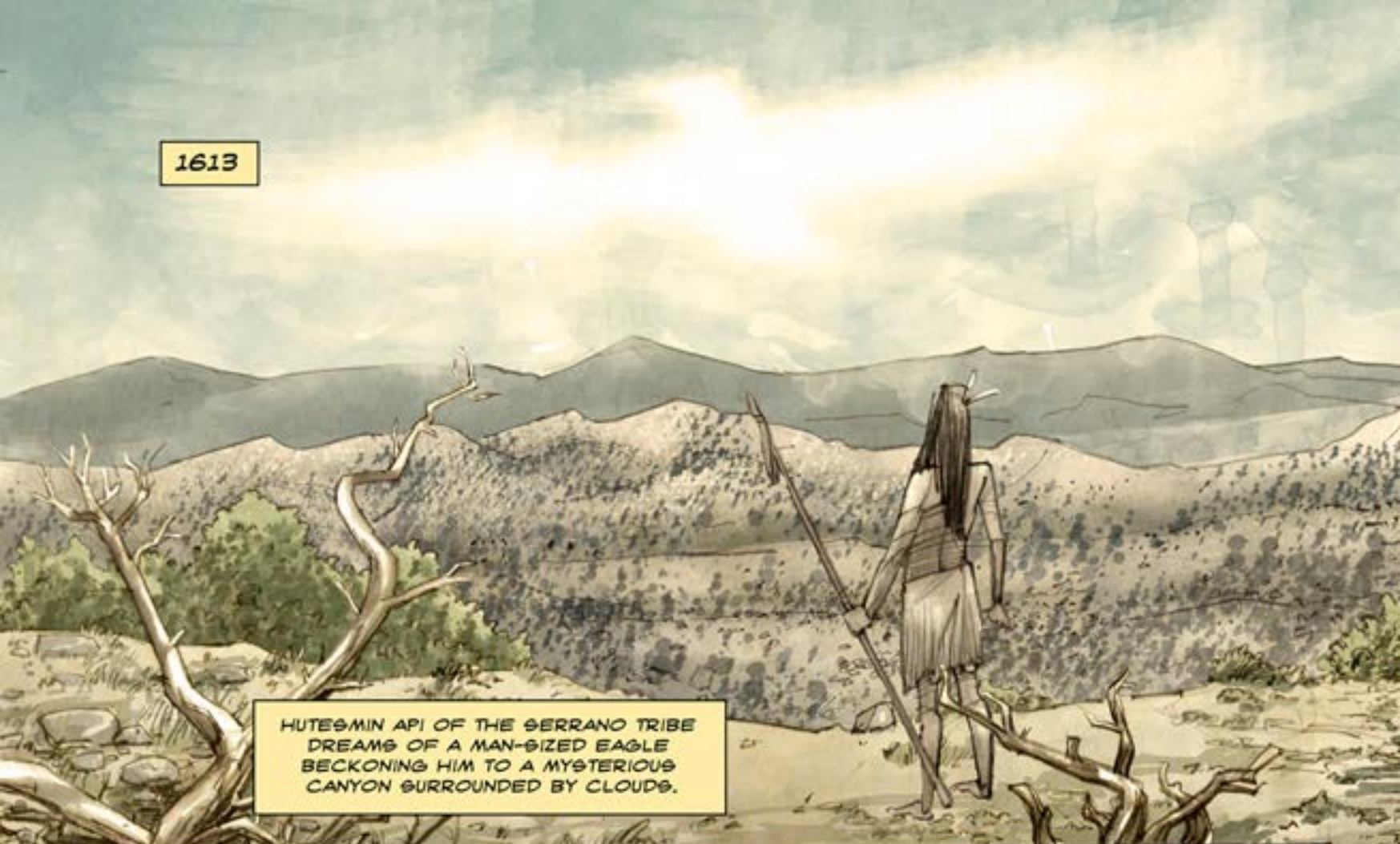





The Secret History of
SILVERWOOD

story: Tony E. Valenzuela script: Dirk Manning art: Anthony Peruzzo



HUTESMIN API OF THE SERRANO TRIBE DREAMS OF A MAN-SIZED EAGLE BECKONING HIM TO A MYSTERIOUS CANYON SURROUNDED BY CLOUDS.



BELIEVING IT TO BE AN INVITATION OF FUTURE PROSPERITY FROM THE GREAT SPIRIT, API LEADS HIS ONE HUNDRED-STRONG TRIBE ON A QUEST TO FIND THE VALLEY.



AS IF GUIDED BY SOME UNSEEN FORCE, API AND HIS PEOPLE FIND THE CANYON WITHIN A WEEK OF BEGINNING THEIR JOURNEY.

THAT NIGHT A DARKNESS FALLS OVER THE CAMP, CAUSING THE SERRANOS TO ATTACK EACH OTHER IN A WILD FRENZY OF VIOLENCE.



MORTALLY WOUNDED AND THE LONE SURVIVOR OF THE WAVE OF VIOLENCE, API CLINGS TO LIFE LONG ENOUGH TO PAINT A WARNING ON THE WALL OF A NEARBY CAVE IN HIS OWN BLOOD...



"THE MADNESS ARRIVES AS WE SLEEP."

"I AWAKE TO THE SOUND OF MY WIFE TEARING AWAY HER OWN SKIN."

"I ASK THE GREAT SPIRIT WHAT HAS HAPPENED"

"I GET NO ANSWER"



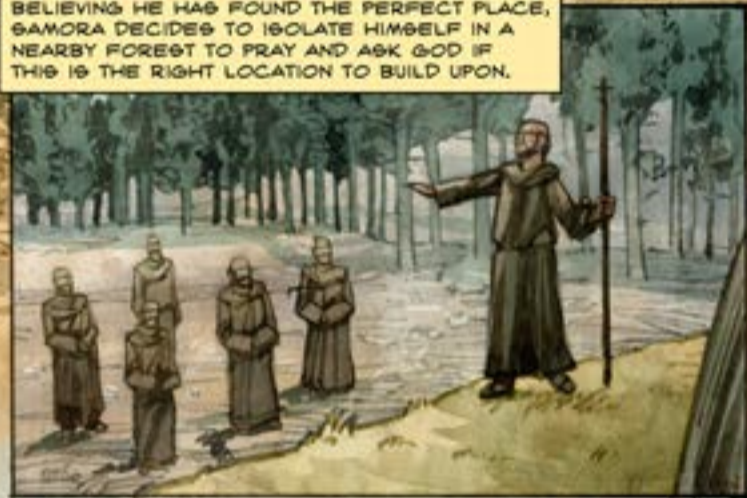
"THE WHITE EAGLE WAS A LIE"



PADRE GABRIEL SAMORA IS CHARGED BY THE VICEROYALTY TO BUILD A SMALL, INLAND POST IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.



BELIEVING HE HAS FOUND THE PERFECT PLACE, SAMORA DECIDES TO ISOLATE HIMSELF IN A NEARBY FOREST TO PRAY AND ASK GOD IF THIS IS THE RIGHT LOCATION TO BUILD UPON.



THREE DAYS LATER HE RETURNS, DEMANDING A LETTER BE IMMEDIATELY SENT TO THE COAST DESCRIBING THE CANYON AS "A PERFECT PLACE TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR GOD."



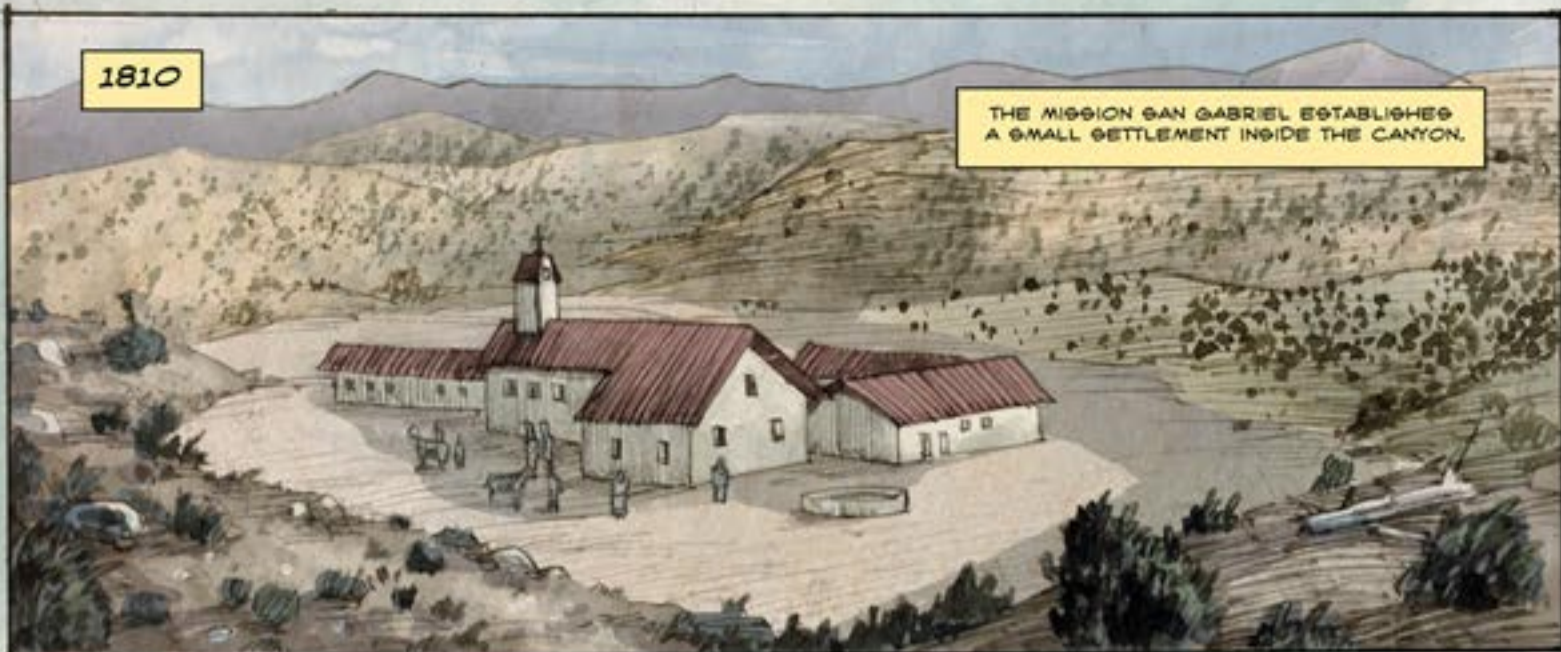
WITHIN A YEAR OF THE OUTPOST'S CONSTRUCTION BEGINNING THE VICEROYALTY RECEIVES AN ERRATIC LETTER FROM SAMORA IN WHICH HE CLAIMS TO HAVE "DISCOVERED THE ENTRY TO HEAVEN."



AN EXPLORATORY CREW ARRIVES TO FIND THE BODIES OF SAMORA AND HIS MEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CANYON.

1810

THE MISSION SAN GABRIEL ESTABLISHED A SMALL SETTLEMENT INSIDE THE CANYON.



THE COMMUNITY IS PLACED UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF A PLATOON OF YOUNG SOLDIERS AND HIPOLITO, A TRUSTWORTHY NATIVE AMERICAN GUIDE AND LIAISON WITH THE GUACHAMA TRIBE.



1812

AN UNEXPECTED EARTHQUAKE ROCKS THE CANYON, RELEASING SEVERAL HOT SPRINGS.



INTERPRETING THE EARTHQUAKE AS A SIGN THE CHRISTIANS ARE NO LONGER WELCOMED BY THE GREAT SPIRIT, THE GUACHAMA VOTE TO BREAK THEIR TREATY WITH HIPOLITO AND THE MISSIONARIES...

ONLY TO FIND ALL THE MISSIONARIES AND SOLDIERS IN THE TOWN DEAD UPON THEIR ARRIVAL...



AND A HORRIFIC SCENE THAT WOULD BE SPOKEN OF ONLY IN WHISPERS FOR GENERATIONS TO FOLLOW.



1845

DEMITRI ZILBERVOT AND HIS COUSIN VLADIMIR JOIN SWEDISH TRAVELER LARS VILKÖ ANDERSON AND HIS TWO WIVES IN HEADING WEST TO JOIN THE MORMON BATTALION.

UPON STUMBLING ACROSS THE CANYON, THEY DECIDE TO MAKE CAMP THERE FOR THE EVENING.



THE FOLLOWING MORNING WHILE BATHING IN ONE OF THE HOT SPRINGS, ANDERSON FINDS SEVERAL LARGE NUGGETS OF GOLD.

DEMITRI CONVINCES HIM IT IS MERELY WORTHLESS PYRITE, ALSO KNOWN AS "FOOL'S GOLD."

THAT EVENING, DEMITRI, WITH VLADIMIR, KILLS ALL THREE SWEDES IN THEIR SLEEP.

IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS DEMITRI WRITES THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN HIS JOURNAL:

"IT WAS GOD HIMSELF WHO TOLD ME TO STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW, WITH A VOICE SO PURE AND BEAUTIFUL AND FULL OF LIGHT."

1846

DEMITRI ZILBERVOT DECIDES TO "AMERICANIZE" HIS SURNAME TO "SILVERWOOD" AND BRING IN HEAVY MACHINERY TO EXPAND HIS CLAIM ON THE LAND SURROUNDING THE CANYON.



DEMITRI BUILDS SILVERWOOD MANOR AND TAKES A WIFE NAMED KATHLEEN.

KATHLEEN BEARS A SON NAMED PETER IN THEIR HOME THE FOLLOWING SUMMER.



1847

SILVERWOOD

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF DEMITRI, THE MINING TOWN OF SILVERWOOD IS FORMALLY ESTABLISHED.



1849

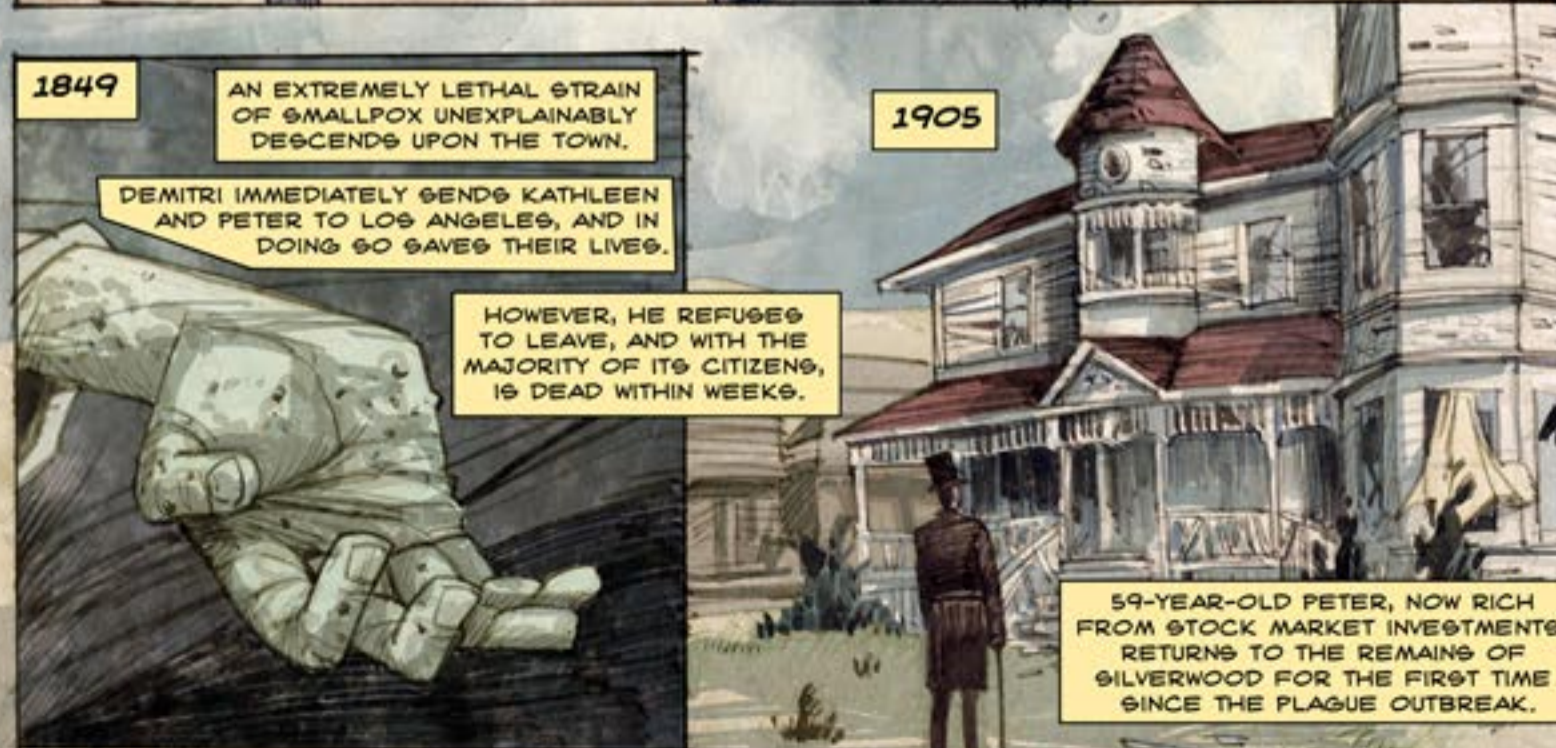
AN EXTREMELY LETHAL STRAIN OF SMALLPOX UNEXPLAINABLY DESCENDS UPON THE TOWN.

DEMITRI IMMEDIATELY SENDS KATHLEEN AND PETER TO LOS ANGELES, AND IN DOING SO SAVES THEIR LIVES.

HOWEVER, HE REFUSES TO LEAVE, AND WITH THE MAJORITY OF ITS CITIZENS, IS DEAD WITHIN WEEKS.

1905

59-YEAR-OLD PETER, NOW RICH FROM STOCK MARKET INVESTMENTS, RETURNS TO THE REMAINS OF SILVERWOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE PLAGUE OUTBREAK.



1907

AFTER RESTORING SILVERWOOD MANOR TO ITS FORMER GLORY BY REOPENING THE MINES, PETER BRINGS HIS WIFE MYRA AND HIS TWO-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER CATHERINE TO TOWN.



1912

PETER IS SHOWN CRYPTIC NATIVE AMERICAN CAVE PAINTINGS DISCOVERED BY A MINER INSIDE ONE OF THE MINES.



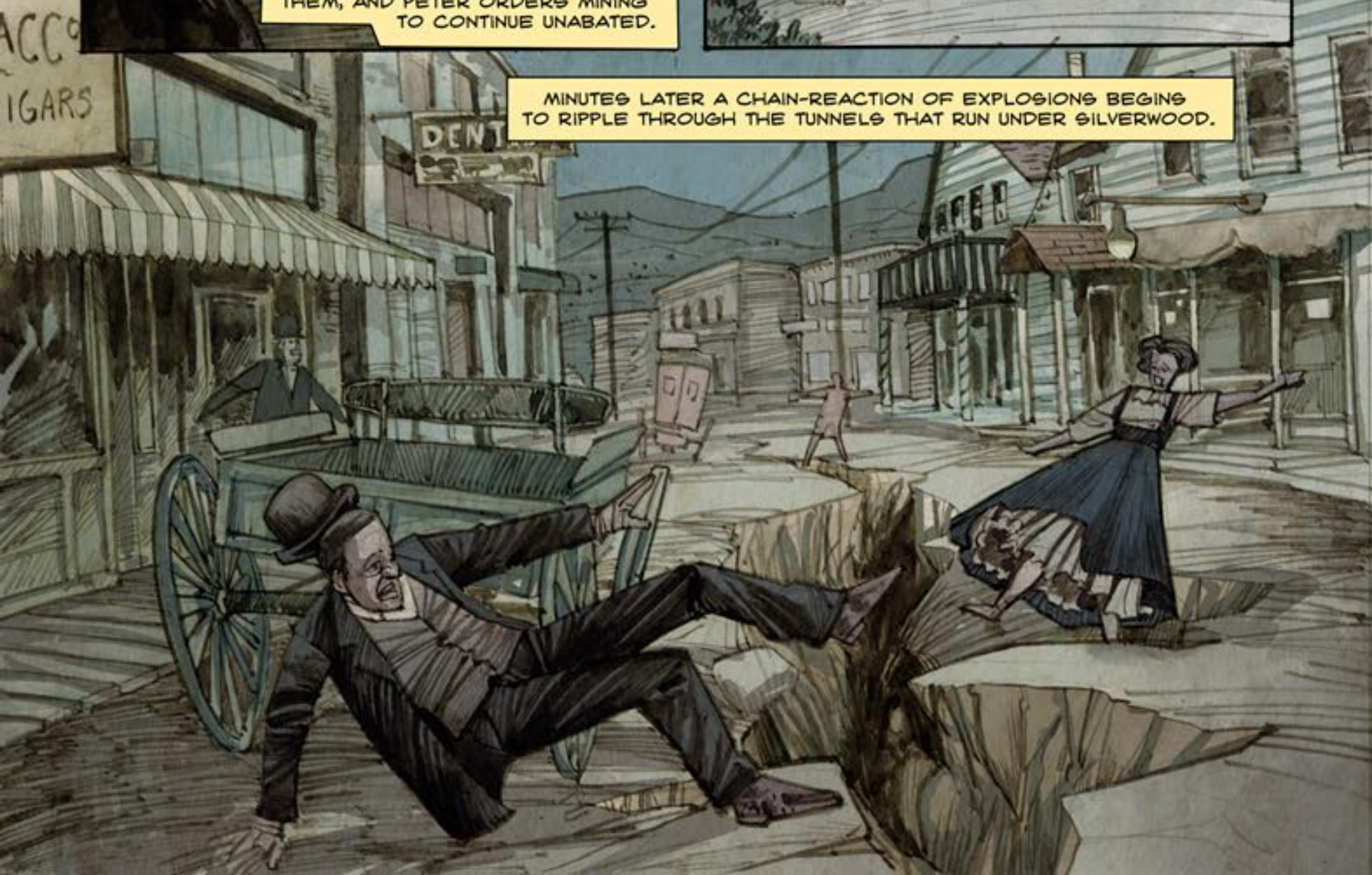
NO ONE IN TOWN CAN INTERPRET THEM, AND PETER ORDERS MINING TO CONTINUE UNABATED.

1913

AN UNIDENTIFIED MINER DRIVES A TRUCK CARRYING A HALF-TON OF EXPLOSIVES INTO THE MINE WHERE THE CAVE PAINTINGS WERE DISCOVERED...



MINUTES LATER A CHAIN-REACTION OF EXPLOSIONS BEGINS TO RIPPLE THROUGH THE TUNNELS THAT RUN UNDER SILVERWOOD.



PANIC BRINGS THE TOWNSPEOPLE FROM THEIR CRUMBLING HOMES.



A SUDDEN AND UNEXPLAINABLE MADNESS CAUSES THEM TO BEGIN ATTACKING AND KILLING ONE ANOTHER.



THE AUTHORITIES ARRIVE THE FOLLOWING MORNING ONLY TO FIND EVERY BUILDING DESTROYED AND ALL THE TOWNSPERSON DEAD...



SAVE ONE LONE BUILDING...



AND ONE LONE TOWNSPERSON.

