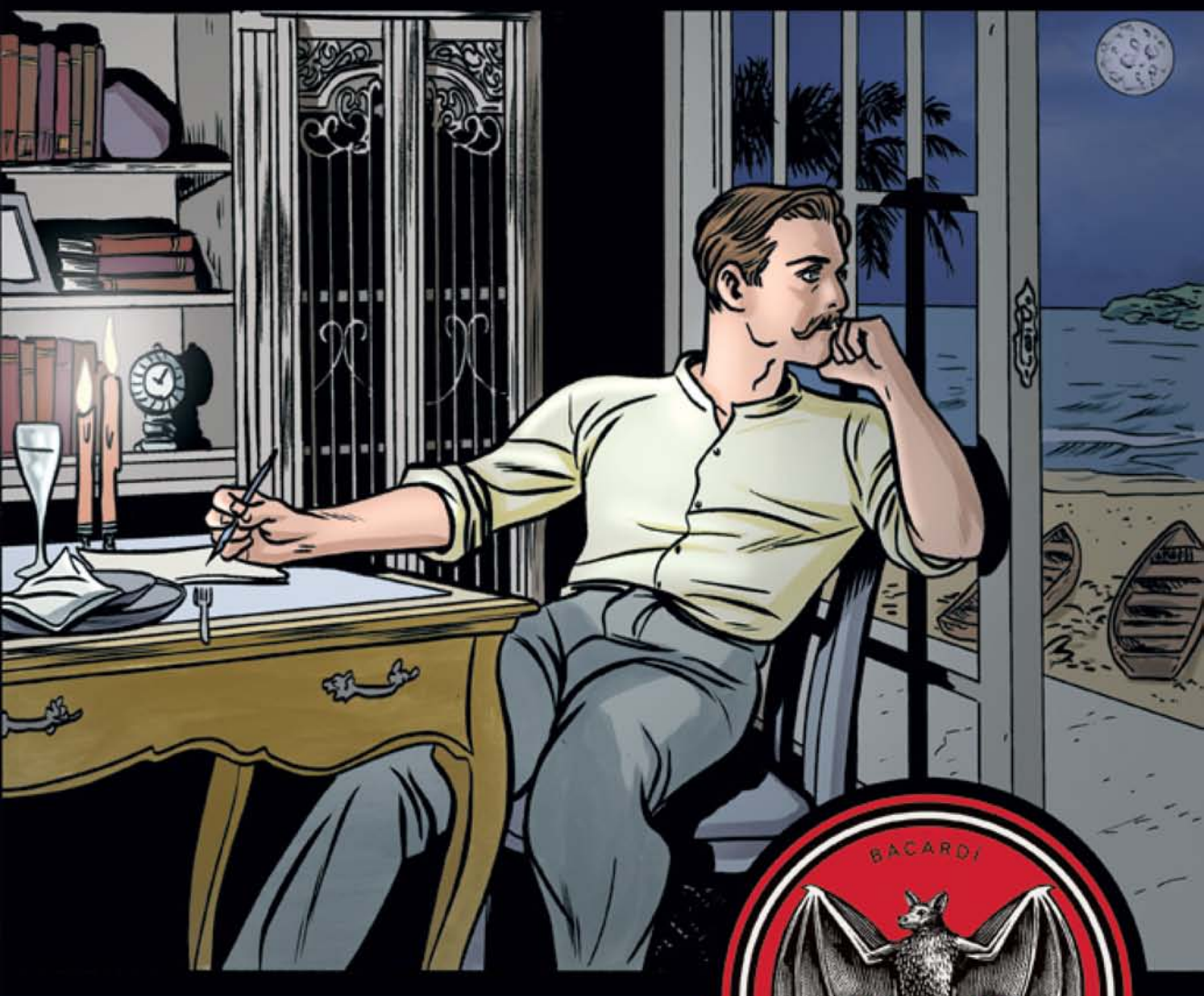


WARREN ELLIS • MICHAEL ALLRED

THE SPIRIT OF

BACARDI



THE SPIRIT OF BACARDÍ



JULY 1898, CUBA

FOLLOWING THE BLOODY BATTLE OF SAN JUAN HILL,
US FORCES TAKE CHARGE OF THE ISLAND.

ONE MONTH LATER

EMILIO BACARDÍ, SON OF BACARDÍ FOUNDER
DON FACUNDO BACARDÍ MASSO, RETURNS FROM EXILE
TO HIS BELOVED HOME OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA.

HE FINDS THE CITY CRUMBLING BEFORE HIS EYES
AND BELIEVES ITS PEOPLE HAVE
BEEN FORGOTTEN. HE CHOOSES TO ACT.

BASED ON ACTUAL EVENTS

THIS IS THE STORY OF ONE MAN'S IRREPRESSIBLE
SPIRIT, PATRIOTISM AND DETERMINATION
TO DO WHAT HE KNOWS IS RIGHT.

WRITTEN BY

WARREN ELLIS

LETTERS BY

NATE PIEKOS

ART BY

MICHAEL ALLRED



BACARDÍ.

BACARDÍ WAS CREATED IN CUBA IN 1862, THE BACARDÍ FAMILY AND COMPANY HAS BEEN IN EXILE
SINCE 1960 AND SINCE THEN ALL BACARDÍ PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED OUTSIDE CUBA.

BACARDÍ AND THE BAT DEVICE ARE TRADEMARKS OF BACARDÍ & COMPANY LIMITED.

◀ LIVE PASSIONATELY. DRINK RESPONSIBLY ▶



JUNE 1896.



REPUBLICAN PARTY CONVENTION, ST. LOUIS.

WHAT THE HELL'S THAT?

"WHAT THE HELL'S THAT, CONGRESSMAN," SONNY.



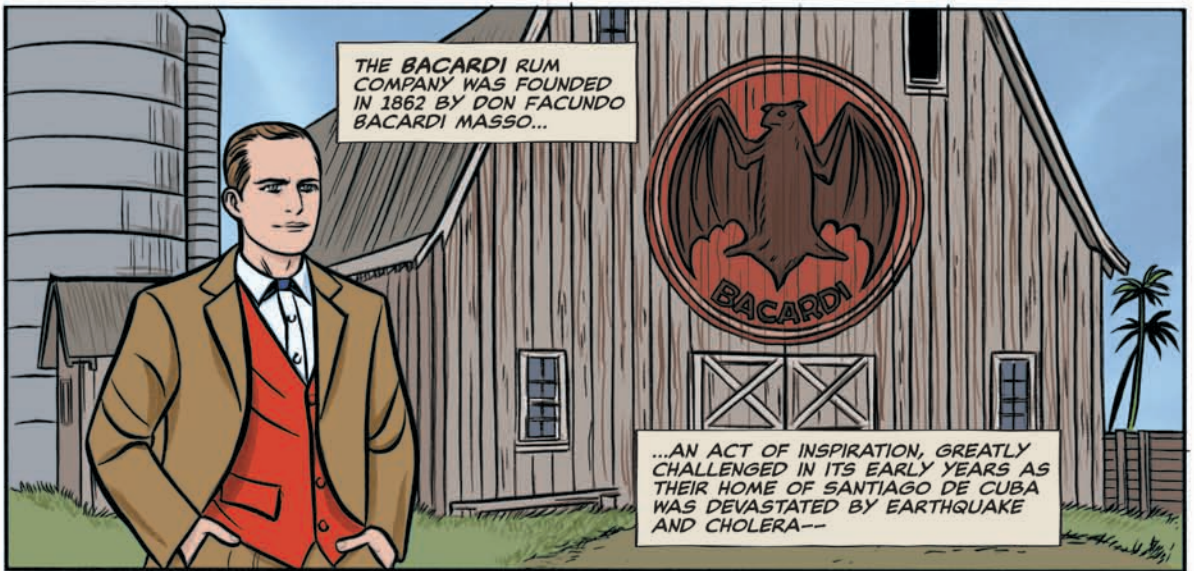
SORRY, SIR. HEARST NEWSPAPERS.

I COULD HAVE GUESSED THAT BY YOUR MANNERS. IT'S THE FLAG OF CUBA.

WHY FLY THAT HERE? WHAT'S THE STORY, SIR?



THE STORY?
THE STORY IS BACARDI.

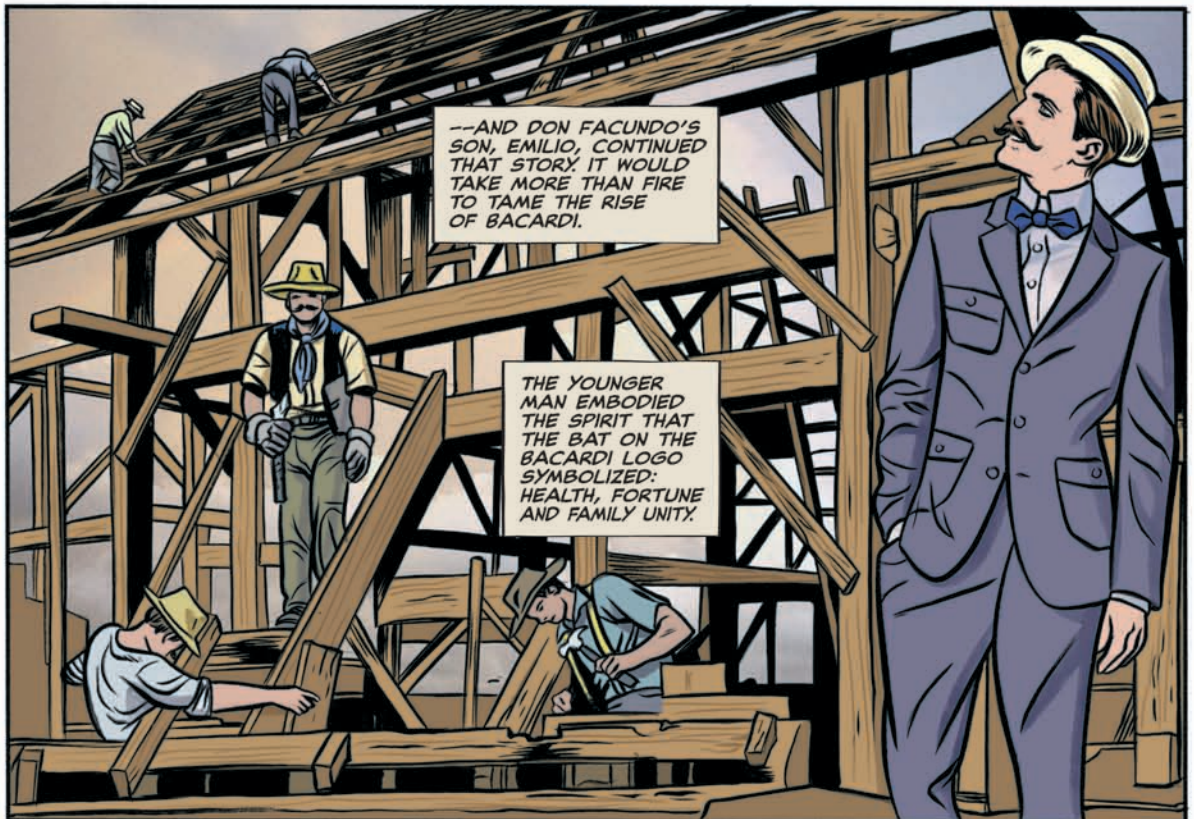


THE BACARDI RUM COMPANY WAS FOUNDED IN 1862 BY DON FACUNDO BACARDI MASSO...

...AN ACT OF INSPIRATION, GREATLY CHALLENGED IN ITS EARLY YEARS AS THEIR HOME OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA WAS DEVASTATED BY EARTHQUAKE AND CHOLERA--



--AND THE DISTILLERY ITSELF WAS TAKEN BY FIRE IN 1880. BUT THE STORY OF BACARDI IS DEFINED BY RESURGENCE--



--AND DON FACUNDO'S SON, EMILIO, CONTINUED THAT STORY. IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN FIRE TO TAME THE RISE OF BACARDI.

THE YOUNGER MAN EMBODIED THE SPIRIT THAT THE BAT ON THE BACARDI LOGO SYMBOLIZED: HEALTH, FORTUNE AND FAMILY UNITY.



CUBA WAS OCCUPIED BY THE SPANISH.

THE REBEL LIBERATION ARMY, POOR AND UNDER-RESOURCED, STRUGGLED FOR CUBAN INDEPENDENCE.



EMILIO PRIVATELY WORKED FOR THE REVOLUTION, MOVING MONEY AND COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL GROUPS AND THE FIGHTERS RANGED IN THE HILLS OUTSIDE SANTIAGO DE CUBA.



EMILIO WAS ARRESTED BY THE SPANISH MORE THAN ONCE.

UNABLE TO PRODUCE THE GROUNDS ON WHICH TO EXECUTE HIM, THEY FINALLY IMPRISONED HIM.



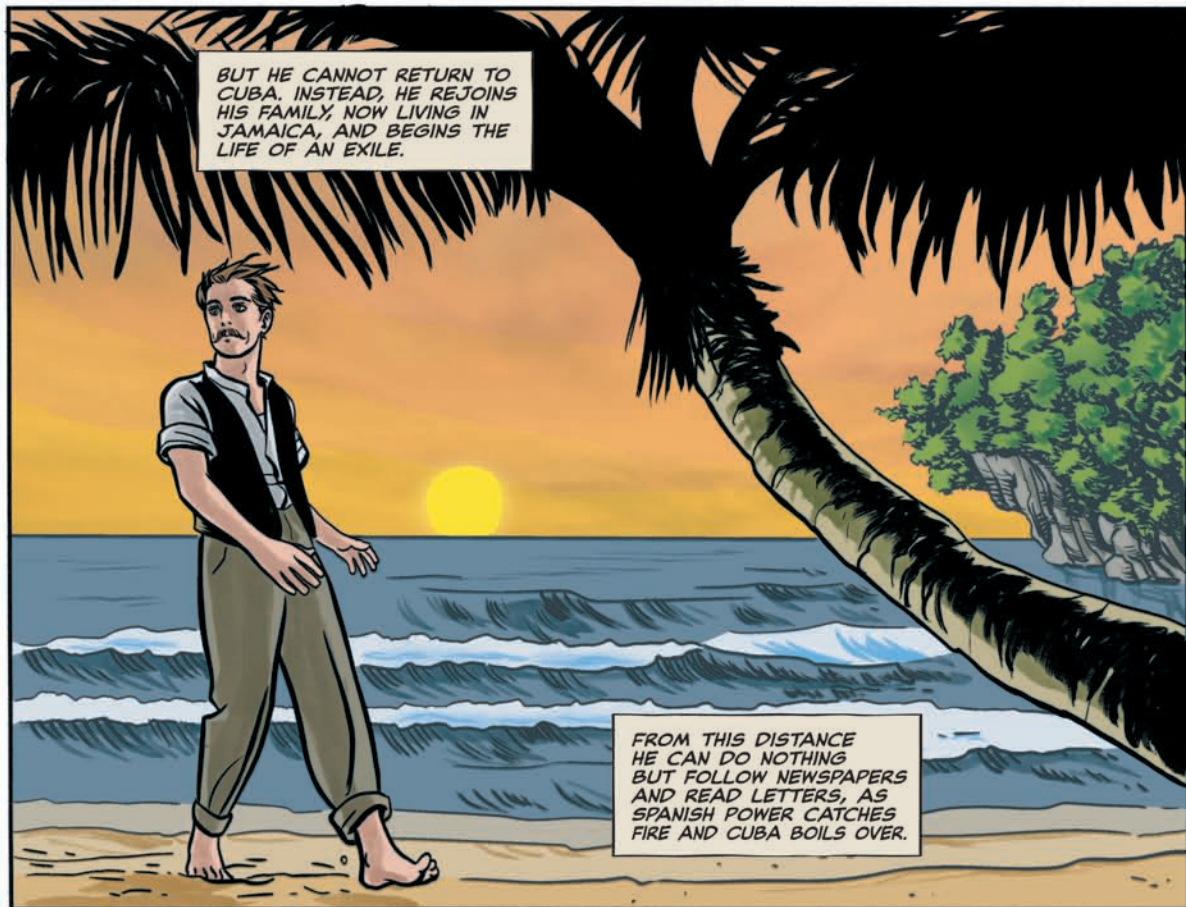
BUT HIS NETWORK SURVIVED, FINDING SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT IN AMERICA.

THE HEARST NEWSPAPER EMPIRE JOINED THE FORCE OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON THE SPANISH OCCUPATION, UNTIL:

LATE 1897: SPANISH
NORTH AFRICA.

EMILIO BACARDI IS
AMONG THE POLITICAL
PRISONERS RELEASED
BY THE SPANISH.

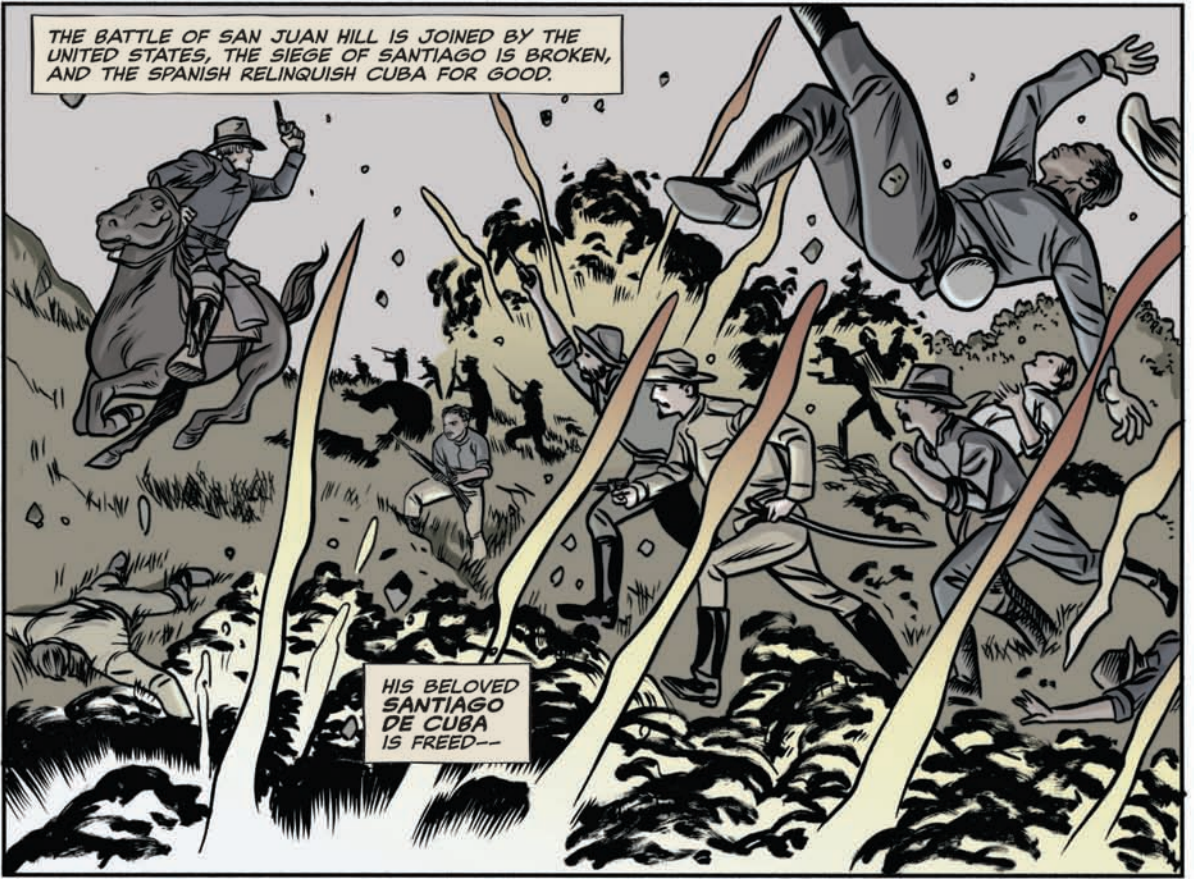
HIS SPIRIT IS
UNDIMMED.



BUT HE CANNOT RETURN TO
CUBA. INSTEAD, HE REJOINS
HIS FAMILY, NOW LIVING IN
JAMAICA, AND BEGINS THE
LIFE OF AN EXILE.

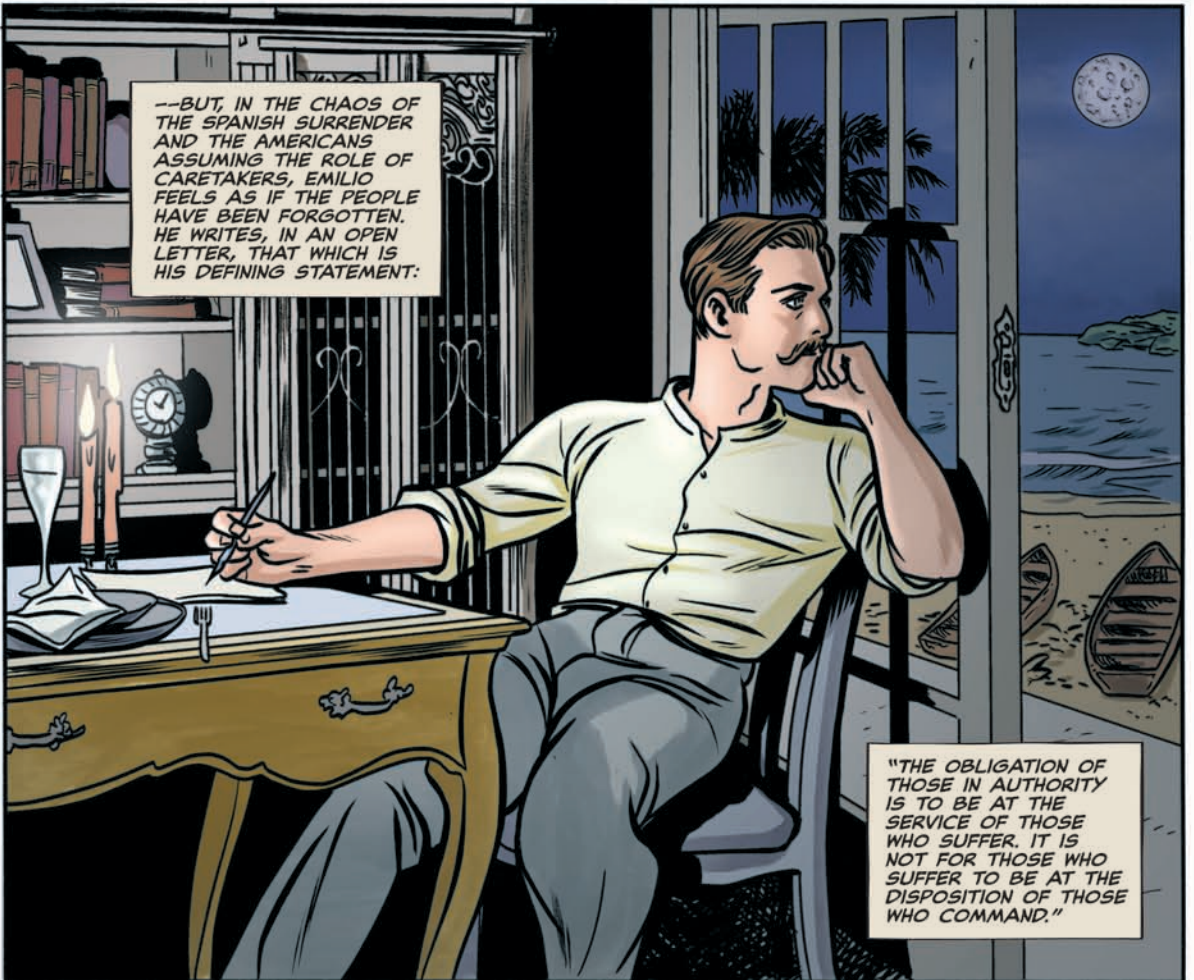
FROM THIS DISTANCE
HE CAN DO NOTHING
BUT FOLLOW NEWSPAPERS
AND READ LETTERS, AS
SPANISH POWER CATCHES
FIRE AND CUBA BOILS OVER.

THE BATTLE OF SAN JUAN HILL IS JOINED BY THE UNITED STATES, THE SIEGE OF SANTIAGO IS BROKEN, AND THE SPANISH RELINQUISH CUBA FOR GOOD.



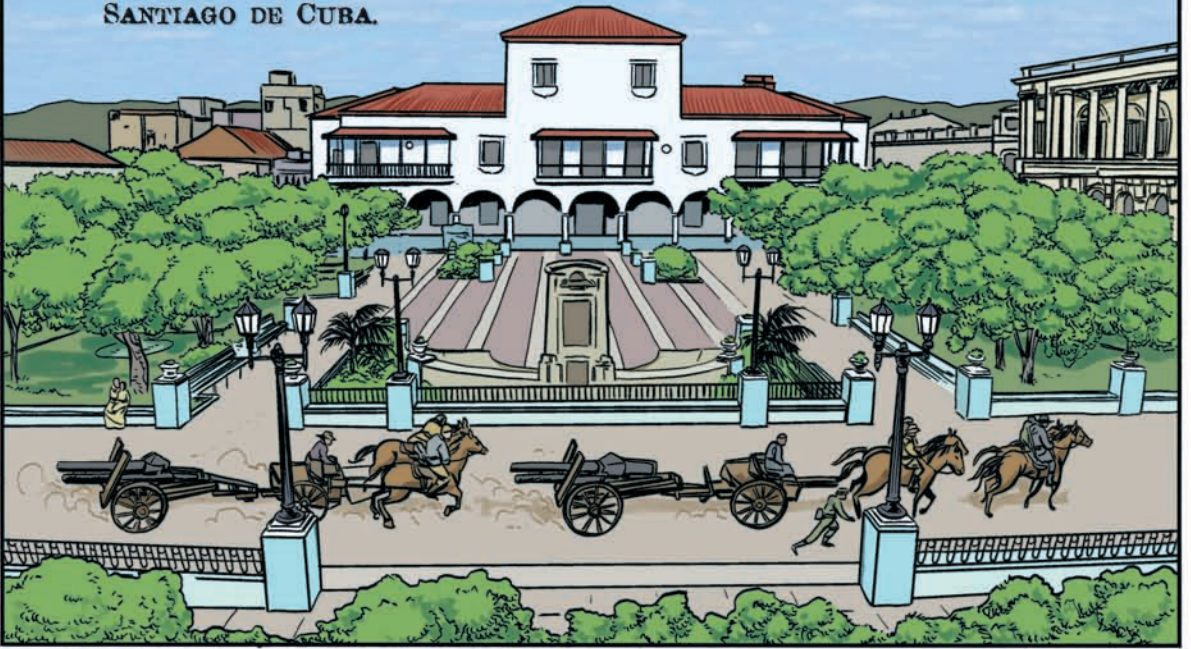
HIS BELOVED SANTIAGO DE CUBA IS FREED--

--BUT, IN THE CHAOS OF THE SPANISH SURRENDER AND THE AMERICANS ASSUMING THE ROLE OF CARETAKERS, EMILIO FEELS AS IF THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN. HE WRITES, IN AN OPEN LETTER, THAT WHICH IS HIS DEFINING STATEMENT:

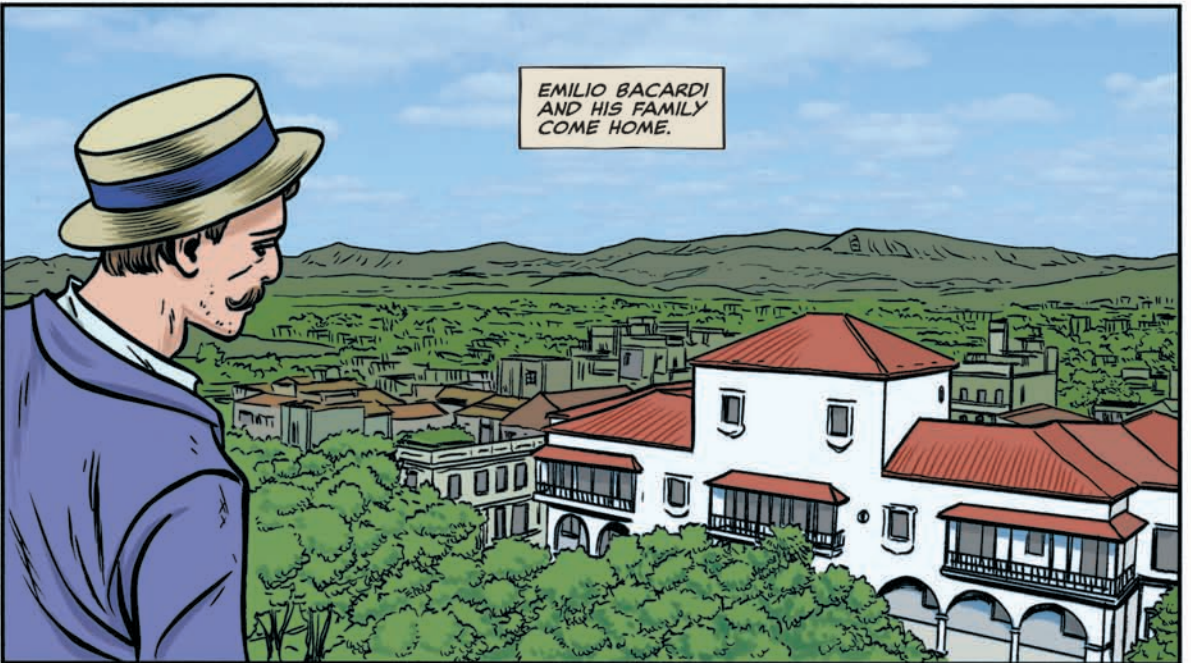


"THE OBLIGATION OF THOSE IN AUTHORITY IS TO BE AT THE SERVICE OF THOSE WHO SUFFER. IT IS NOT FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER TO BE AT THE DISPOSITION OF THOSE WHO COMMAND."

AUGUST 1898:
SANTIAGO DE CUBA.



EMILIO BACARDI
AND HIS FAMILY
COME HOME.





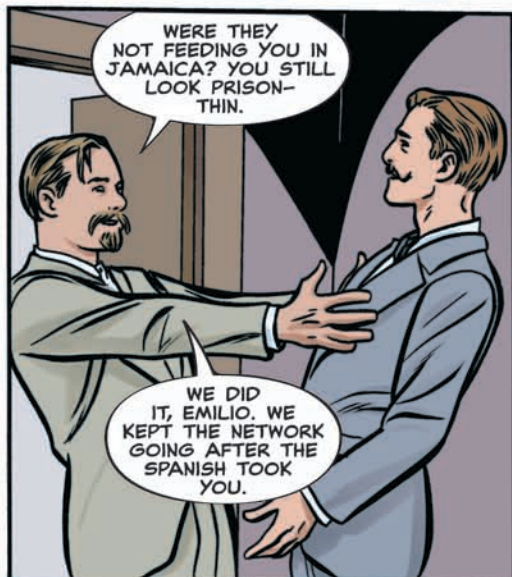


EMILIO?
IS THAT
YOU?



ARE YOU
OKAY? WHERE'S
MY BROTHER-
IN-LAW?

ENRIQUE'S
AT THE DISTILLERY.
WE'RE FINE. EVERY-
THING'S FINE. IT'S
BEEN SO LONG!



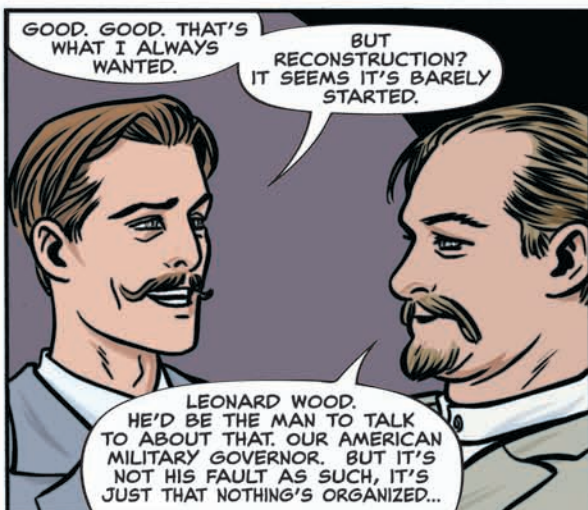
WERE THEY
NOT FEEDING YOU IN
JAMAICA? YOU STILL
LOOK PRISON-
THIN.

WE DID
IT, EMILIO. WE
KEPT THE NETWORK
GOING AFTER THE
SPANISH TOOK
YOU.



AND WE'RE STILL
IN BUSINESS? THE
DISTILLERY REALLY
SURVIVED?

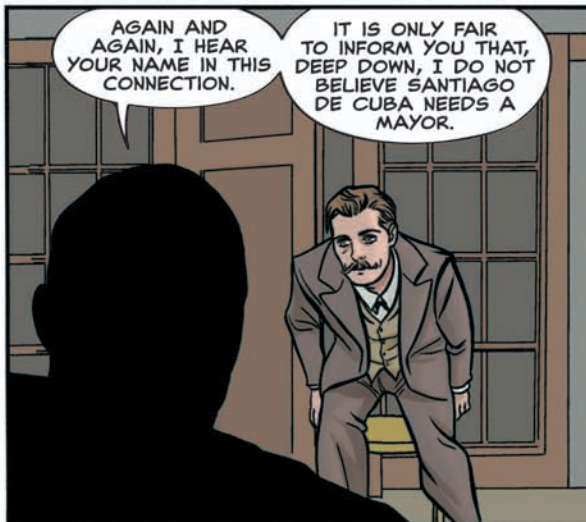
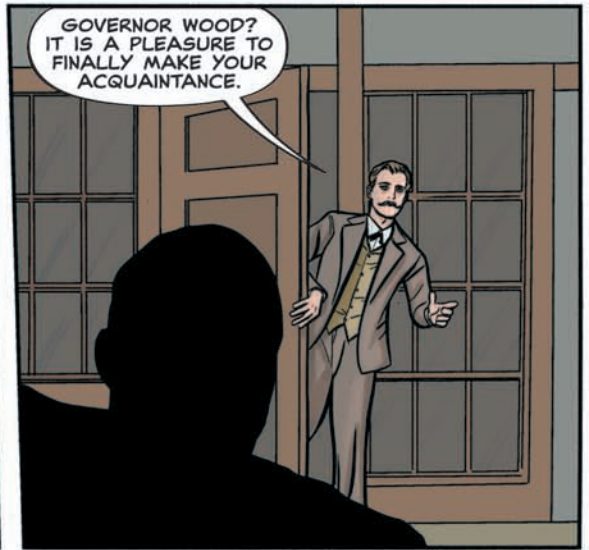
MORE A
PART OF CUBAN
LIFE THAN EVER. WE
DID EVERYTHING FOR
THE PEOPLE THAT
WE COULD. AND
WE'RE ALL STILL
STANDING.

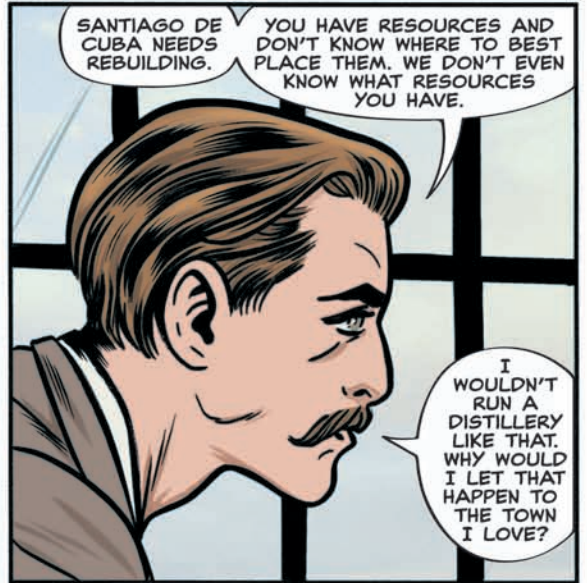
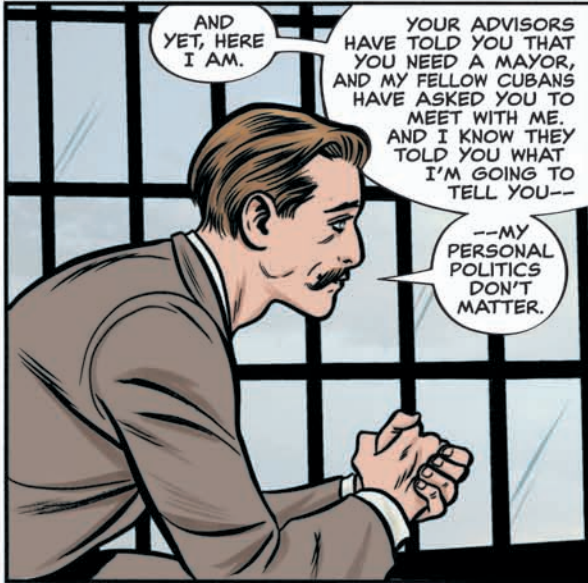
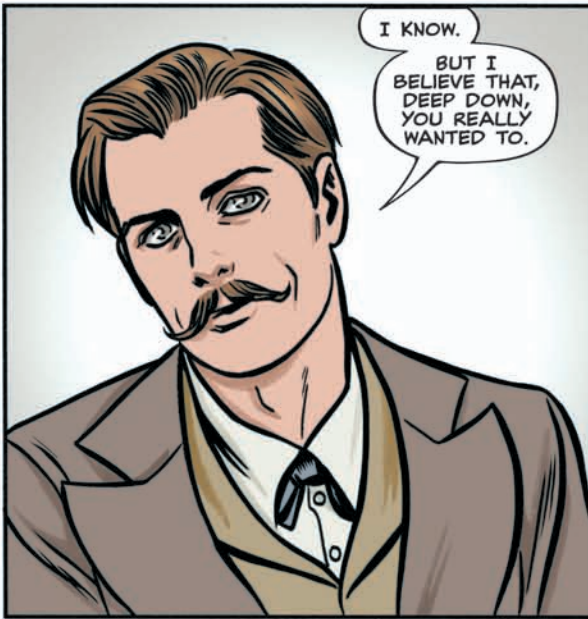


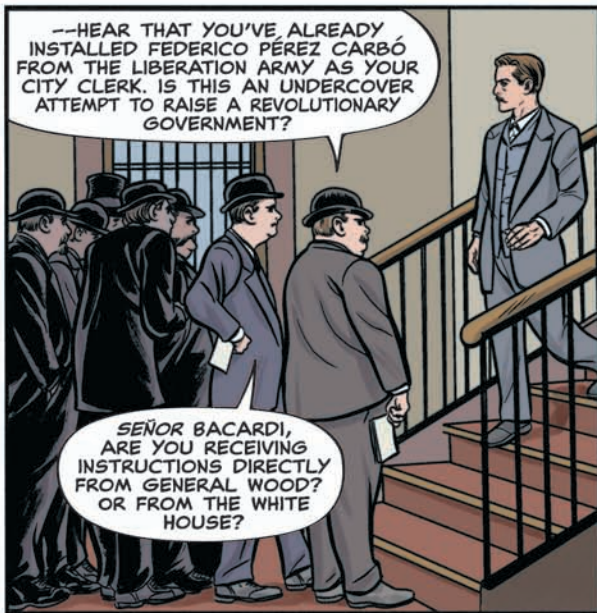
GOOD. GOOD. THAT'S
WHAT I ALWAYS
WANTED.

BUT
RECONSTRUCTION?
IT SEEMS IT'S BARELY
STARTED.

LEONARD WOOD.
HE'D BE THE MAN TO TALK
TO ABOUT THAT. OUR AMERICAN
MILITARY GOVERNOR. BUT IT'S
NOT HIS FAULT AS SUCH, IT'S
JUST THAT NOTHING'S ORGANIZED...

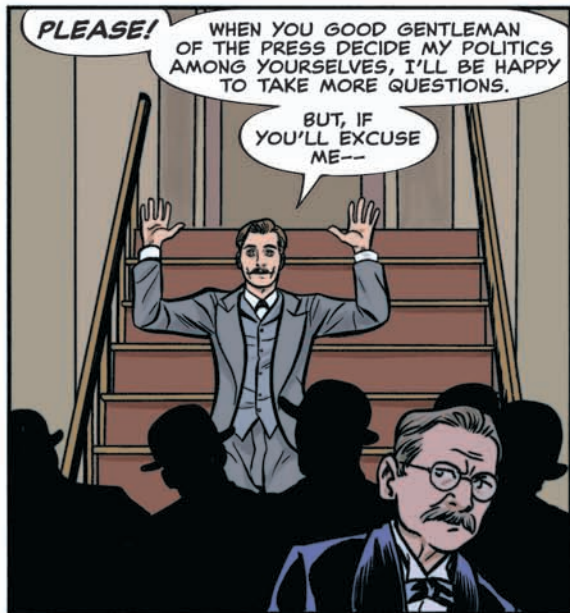






--HEAR THAT YOU'VE ALREADY INSTALLED FEDERICO PÉREZ CARBÓ FROM THE LIBERATION ARMY AS YOUR CITY CLERK. IS THIS AN UNDERCOVER ATTEMPT TO RAISE A REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT?

SEÑOR BACARDI, ARE YOU RECEIVING INSTRUCTIONS DIRECTLY FROM GENERAL WOOD? OR FROM THE WHITE HOUSE?



PLEASE!

WHEN YOU GOOD GENTLEMAN OF THE PRESS DECIDE MY POLITICS AMONG YOURSELVES, I'LL BE HAPPY TO TAKE MORE QUESTIONS.

BUT, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--



--IT'S A VERY BUSY DAY.

GENERAL WOOD IS GOING TO HAVE YOU SHOT.

NOT YOU TOO, CARBÓ.

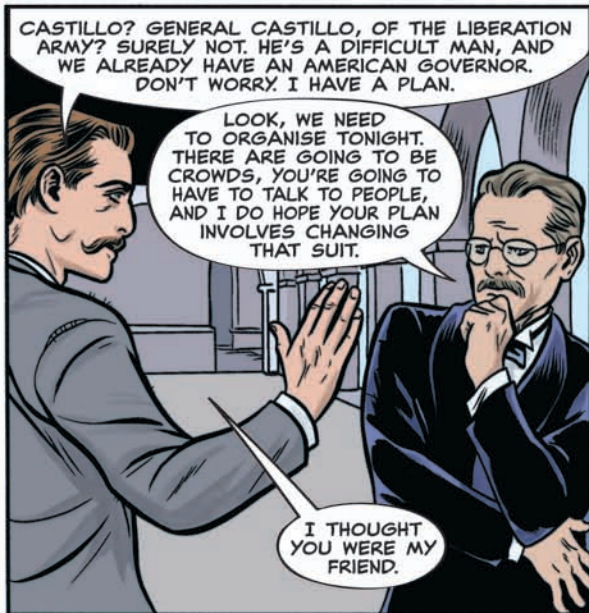


I HAVE A REBEL GENERAL WHO TELLS ME HE'S INVITED TO TONIGHT'S CEREMONY BY YOU.

THE MAN'S A HERO, CARBÓ.

IF YOU APPEAR ON THE BALCONY WITH A SOLDIER OF THE LIBERATION, WOOD IS GOING TO GO INSANE.

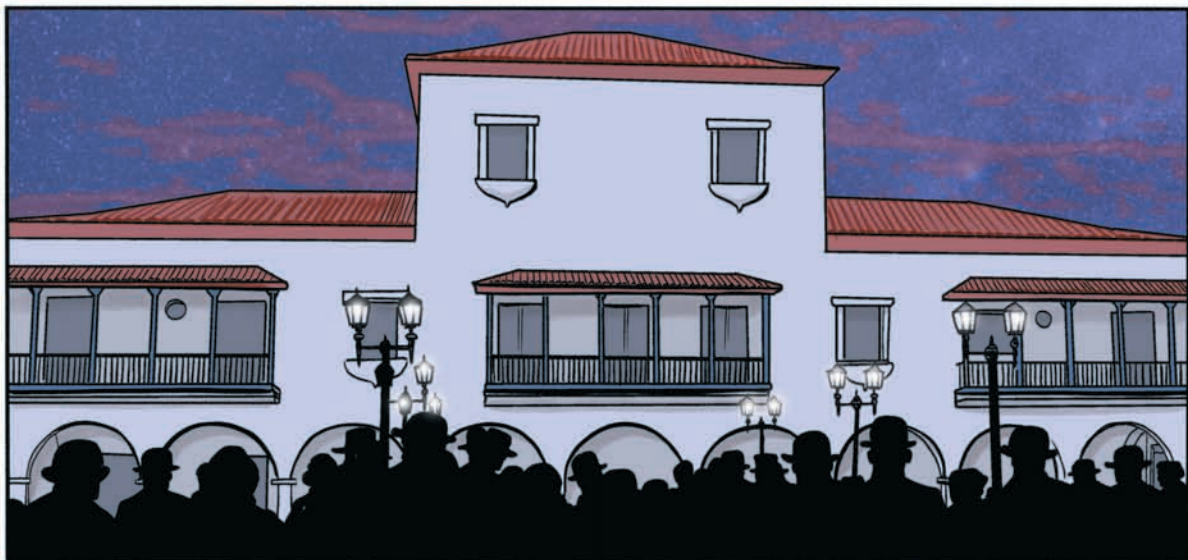
THERE'S ALREADY A STRONG RUMOUR THAT HE'S GOING TO MAKE CASTILLO A GOVERNOR.

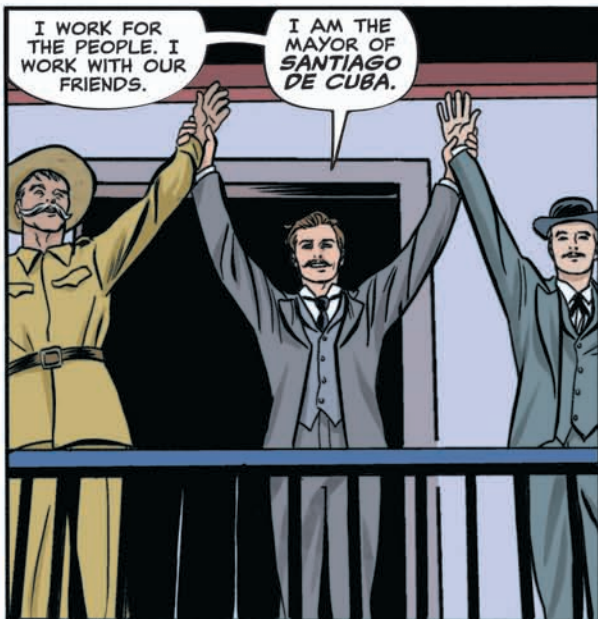
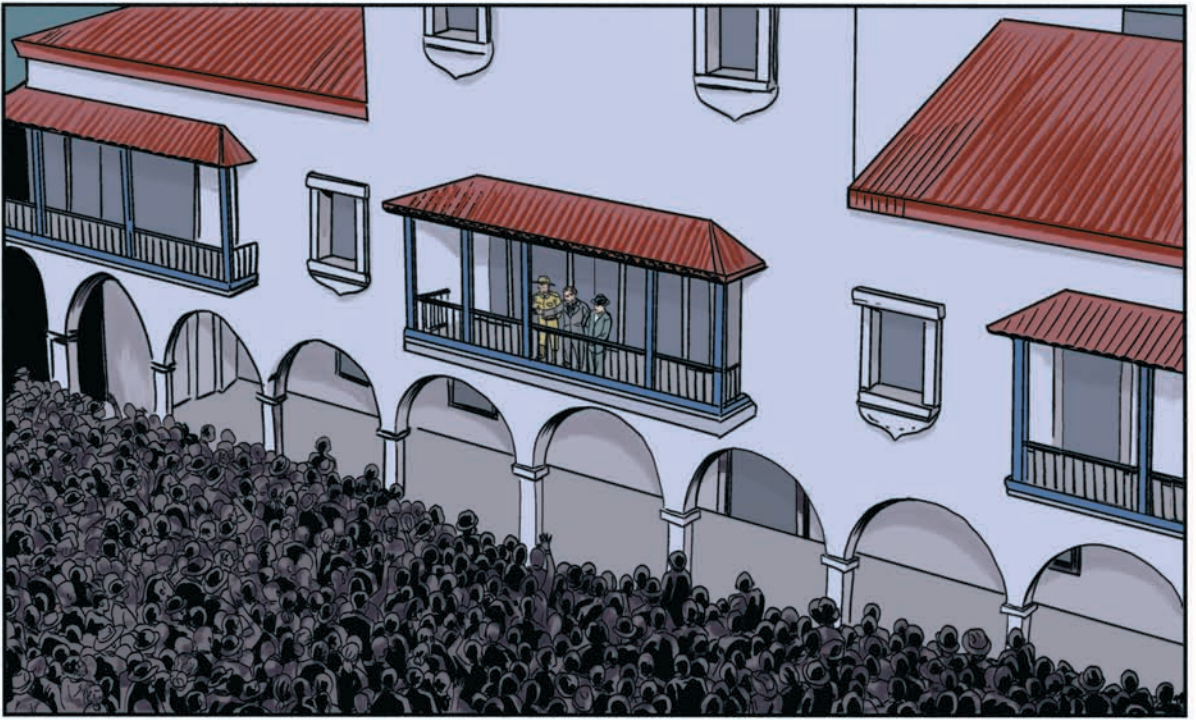


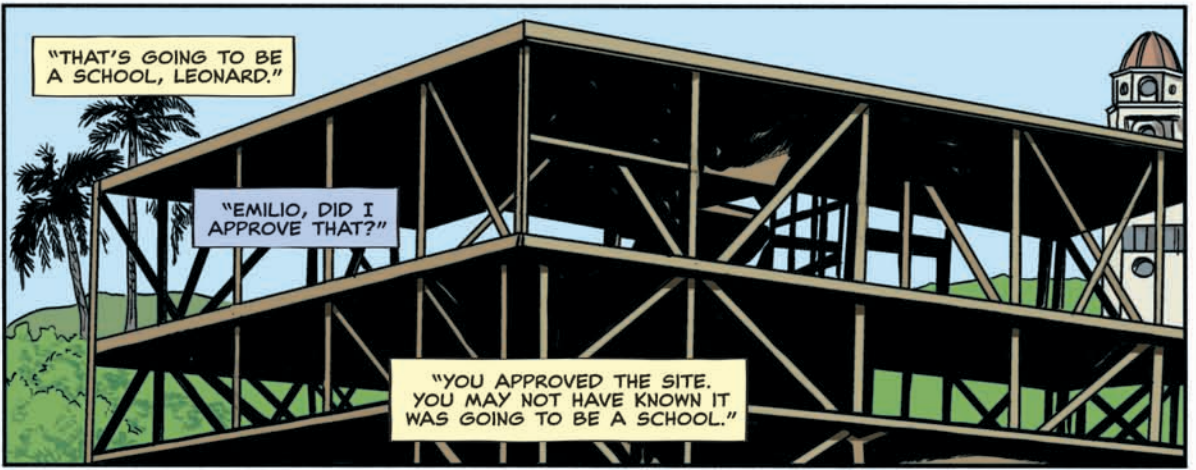
CASTILLO? GENERAL CASTILLO, OF THE LIBERATION ARMY? SURELY NOT. HE'S A DIFFICULT MAN, AND WE ALREADY HAVE AN AMERICAN GOVERNOR. DON'T WORRY. I HAVE A PLAN.

LOOK, WE NEED TO ORGANISE TONIGHT. THERE ARE GOING TO BE CROWDS, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TALK TO PEOPLE, AND I DO HOPE YOUR PLAN INVOLVES CHANGING THAT SUIT.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY FRIEND.







"THAT'S GOING TO BE A SCHOOL, LEONARD."

"EMILIO, DID I APPROVE THAT?"

"YOU APPROVED THE SITE. YOU MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN IT WAS GOING TO BE A SCHOOL."



"YOU KNOW CASTILLO'S STILL TRYING TO BLOCK HALF OF EVERYTHING I DO."

"I'M HELPING WHERE I CAN, EMILIO. YOU KNOW THAT."



"I KNOW. AND YOU'RE DOING GREAT WORK. BUT I ALSO KNOW YOU'VE BEEN PROMOTED TO GOVERNOR OF ALL CUBA. AND THINGS ARE GETTING MISSED."

"IT'LL WORK OUT, MY FRIEND. AND LOOK AT ALL YOU'VE DONE."



"IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN SANTIAGO DE CUBA."





IF THERE'S GOING TO BE A MAYOR, THAT PERSON NEEDS TO BE FREELY ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE.

THERE NEEDS TO BE A MANDATE. THE MAYOR CAN'T JUST BE YOUR HIRED CARETAKER.



YOU WERE HAPPY ENOUGH TO TAKE THE JOB WHEN I OFFERED IT.

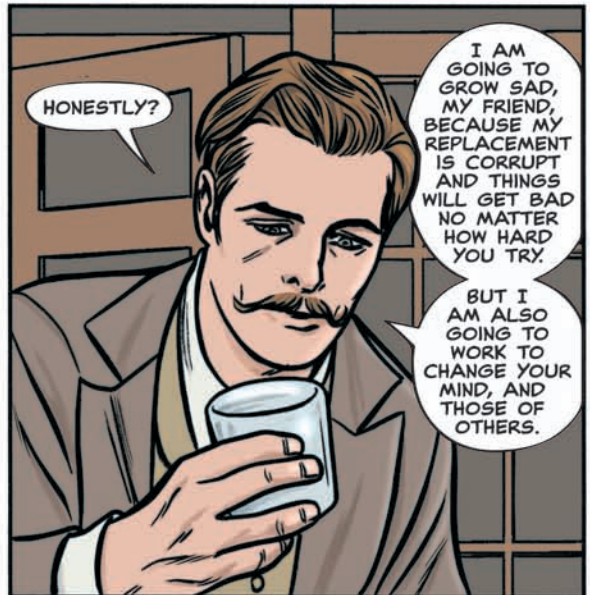
YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT. IN THAT SITUATION, YOU ARE THE SINGLE POINT OF OVERSIGHT. AND YOU'RE JUST ONE MAN.

I DO WHAT I CAN.



YOU'RE A GOOD MAN. YOU ARE MY FRIEND. YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN. BUT PEOPLE CAN HIDE THINGS FROM YOU. AND ULTIMATELY, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE MAYOR CANNOT COMMAND WORKS.

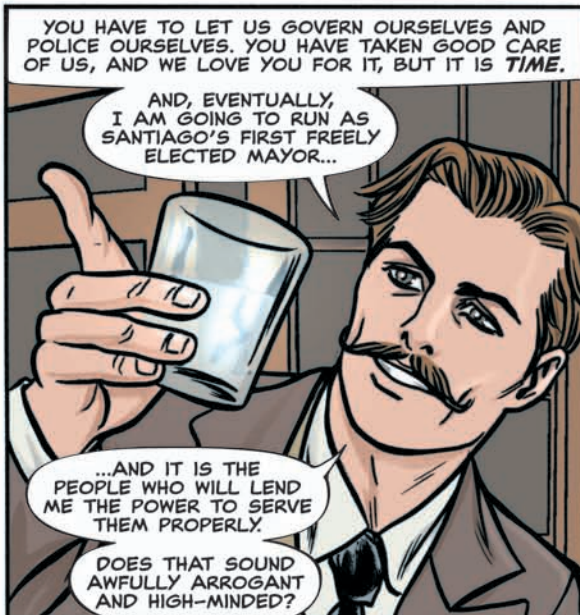
SO...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, EMILIO?



HONESTLY?

I AM GOING TO GROW SAD, MY FRIEND, BECAUSE MY REPLACEMENT IS CORRUPT AND THINGS WILL GET BAD NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY.

BUT I AM ALSO GOING TO WORK TO CHANGE YOUR MIND, AND THOSE OF OTHERS.



YOU HAVE TO LET US GOVERN OURSELVES AND POLICE OURSELVES. YOU HAVE TAKEN GOOD CARE OF US, AND WE LOVE YOU FOR IT, BUT IT IS TIME.

AND, EVENTUALLY, I AM GOING TO RUN AS SANTIAGO'S FIRST FREELY ELECTED MAYOR...

...AND IT IS THE PEOPLE WHO WILL LEND ME THE POWER TO SERVE THEM PROPERLY.

DOES THAT SOUND AWFULLY ARROGANT AND HIGH-MINDED?



NO.

SOUNDS LIKE BACARDI.



EMILIO BACARDI APPEARED TO RETIRE FROM PUBLIC LIFE.

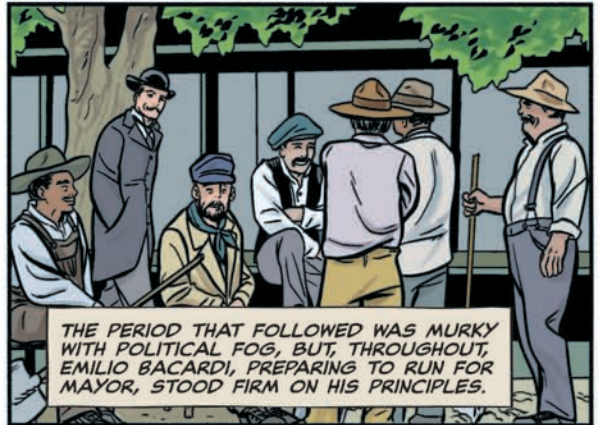
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUBA AND THE U.S. FRAYED, AND THE NEW MAYOR PROVED TO BE BOTH CORRUPT AND PUNITIVE.



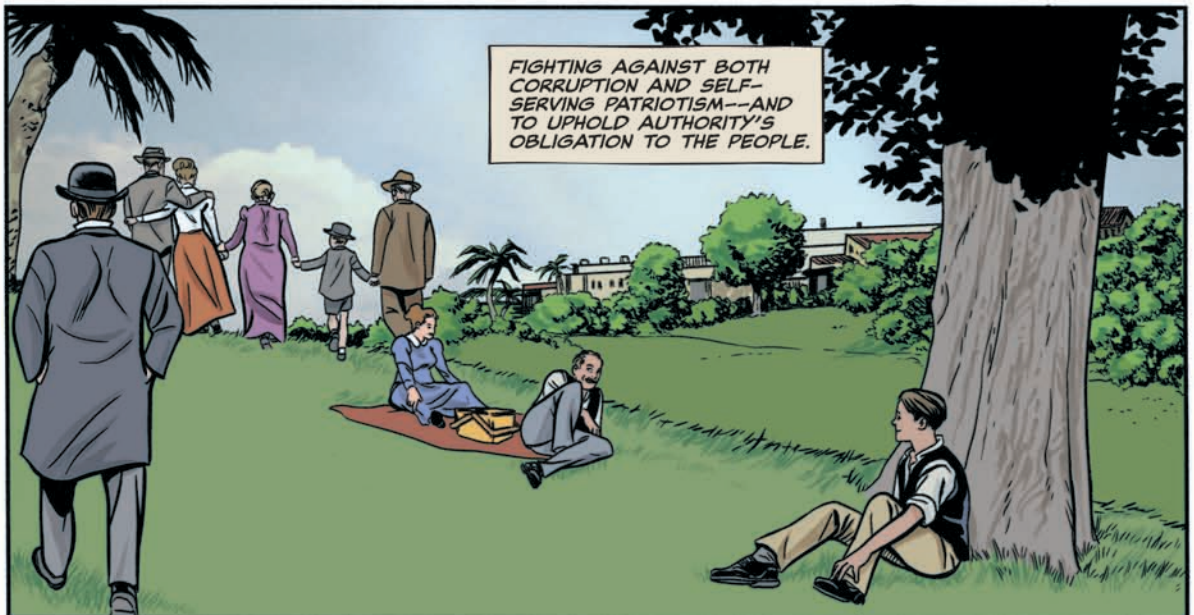
BETWEEN AUTOCRATS AND CRIMINALS, THE VERY IDEA OF CUBAN INDEPENDENCE SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE.



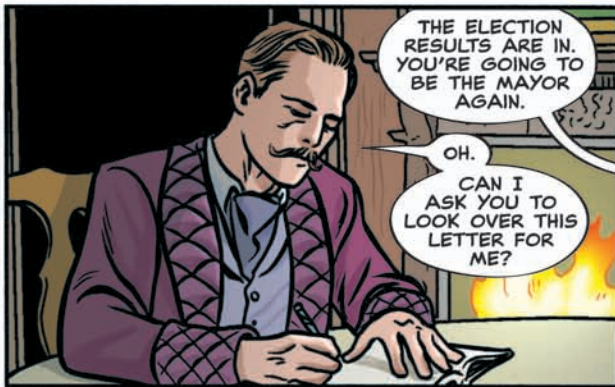
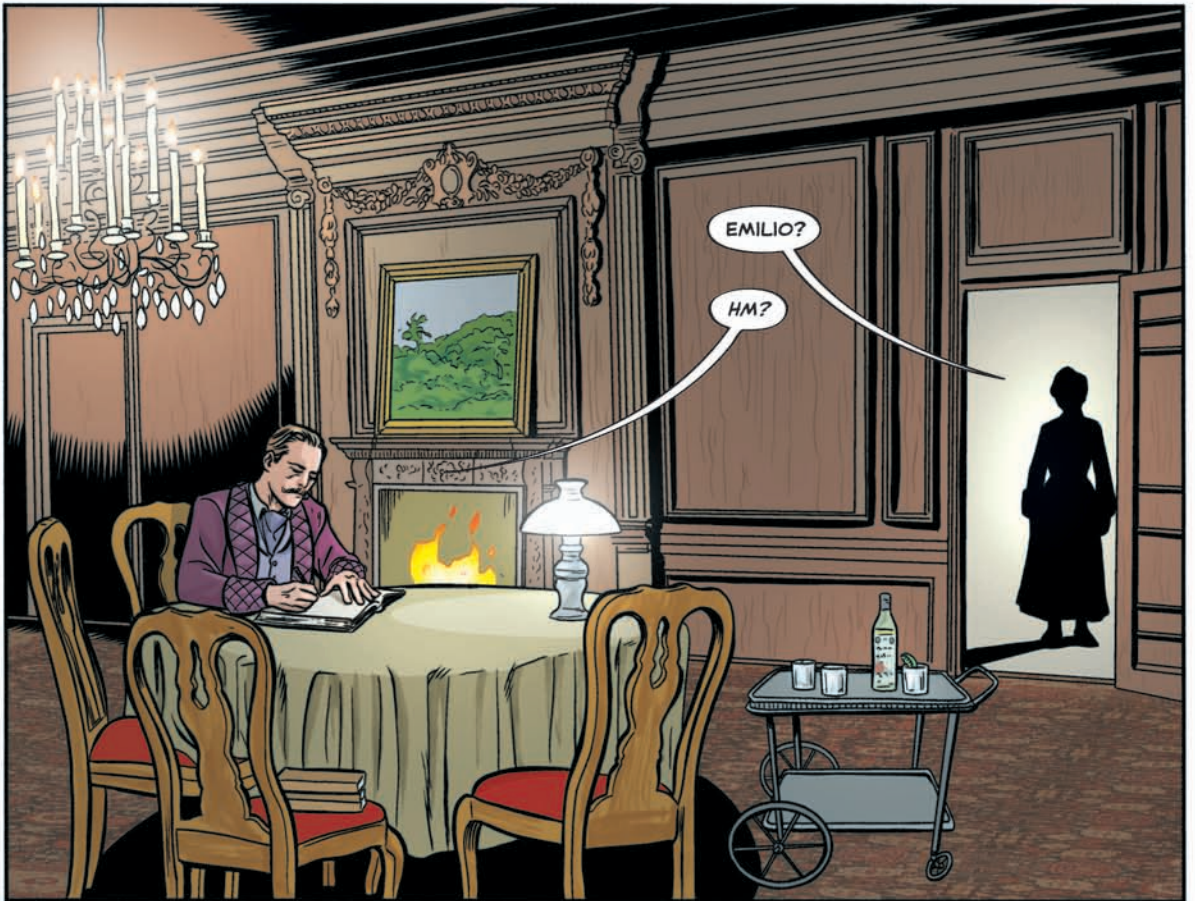
BUT, BEHIND THE SCENES, EMILIO WAS WATCHING AND ACTING. MAKING THINGS WORK.



THE PERIOD THAT FOLLOWED WAS MURKY WITH POLITICAL FOG, BUT, THROUGHOUT, EMILIO BACARDI, PREPARING TO RUN FOR MAYOR, STOOD FIRM ON HIS PRINCIPLES.



FIGHTING AGAINST BOTH CORRUPTION AND SELF-SERVING PATRIOTISM--AND TO UPHOLD AUTHORITY'S OBLIGATION TO THE PEOPLE.



DECEMBER 31, 1901:





EPILOGUE:
HAVANA, 1900.

...NO, NO, RUSSELL, THE THING THE MAMBISES SOLDIERS FROM THE CUBAN LIBERATION ARMY DRANK WAS LITERALLY JUST WATER AND BROWN SUGAR.

AND THAT WAS WHAT THEY CALLED THE CUBA LIBRE?



"FREE CUBA," THAT'S RIGHT.

HELL NO. THAT AIN'T CUBAN.

I BET THEY WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER IF THEY HADN'T BEEN OUT ON BATTLE-FIELDS.

LEMME SEE.



POR CUBA LIBRE!

THE END

EL FIN





BACARDÍ®