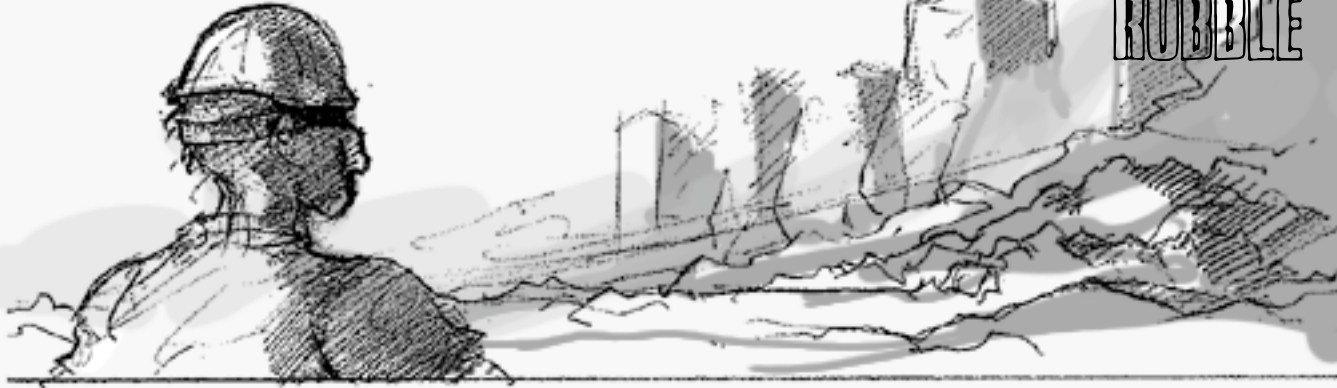


STORY: SHATHLEY/Q
ART: ANDREW DONALDSON

RUBBLE

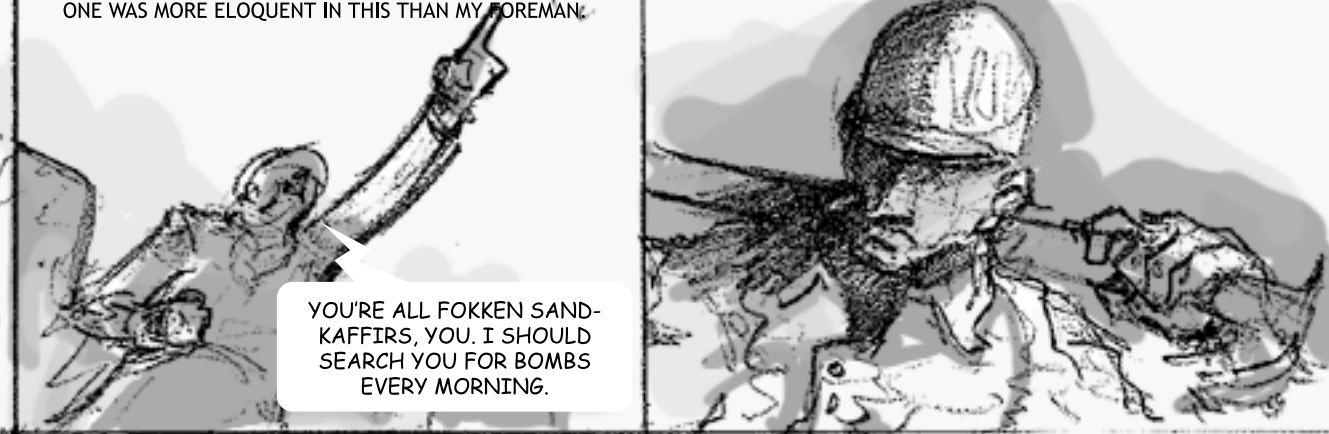
WORKING CONSTRUCTION CLEANUP AT THE ATHLONE STADIUM SITE WAS AN EASY WAY TO PAY OFF A STUDENT LOAN. AND IN THOSE DARK DAYS, MY CHOICE WAS EASILY MADE BETWEEN GULLIBLE OPTIMISM, AND CYNICAL GALLOWS-HUMOR.



IN THE WEEKS FOLLOWING THE SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH INCIDENT, RUBBLE BEGAN TO TAKE ON A PROFOUND MEANING FOR ME.



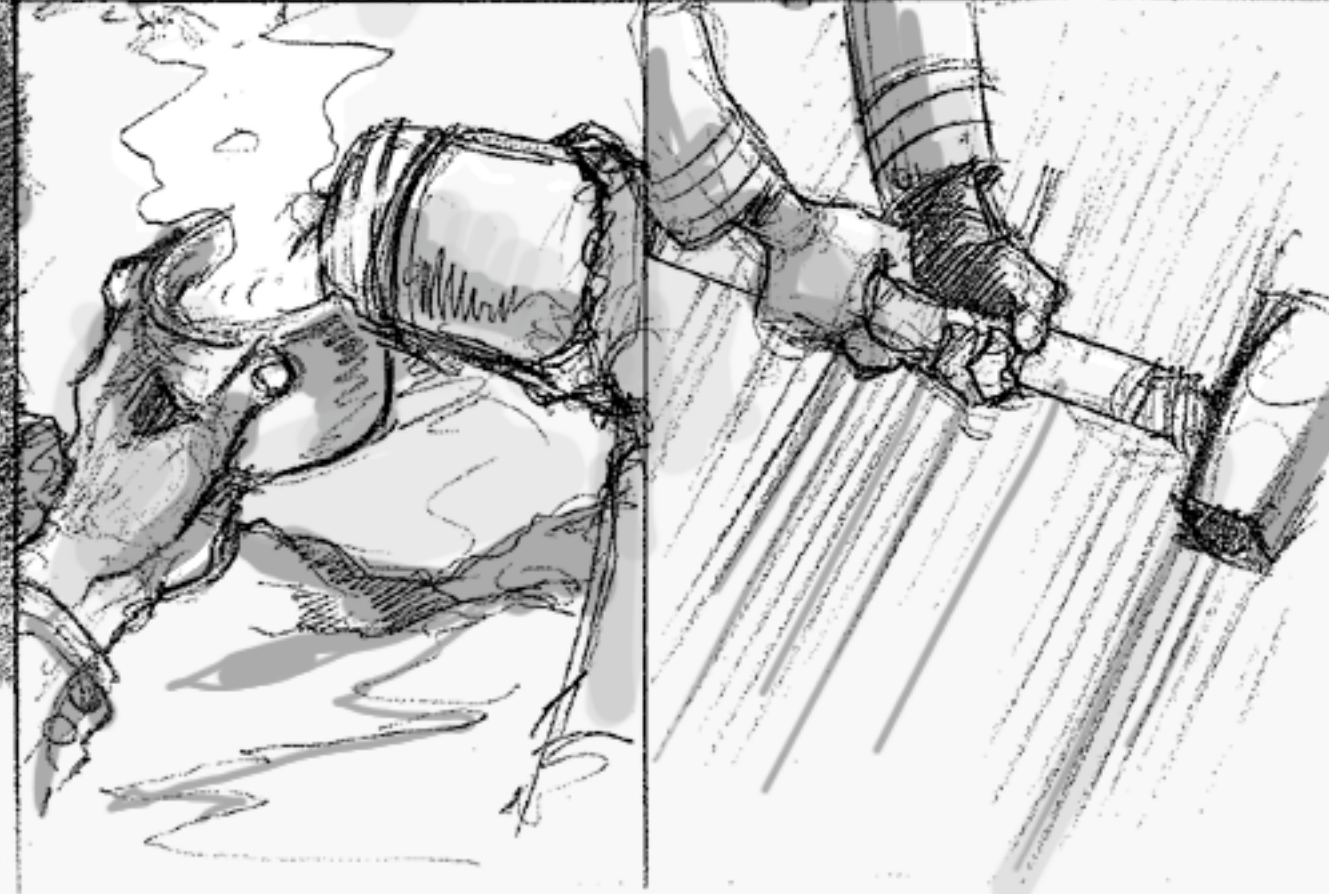
AFTER 9-11 ANTI-MUSLIM SENTIMENT WAS HIGH AND NO-ONE WAS MORE ELOQUENT IN THIS THAN MY FOREMAN.



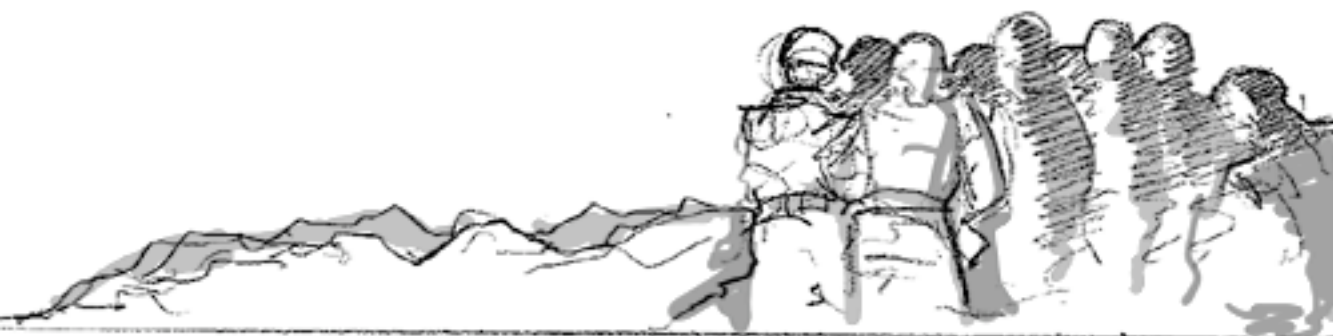
RUBBLE, IN A VERY POSITIVE SENSE, HAD BECOME A CANVAS FROM WHICH SOMETHING NEW COULD BE BUILT. AND IT WAS SIMPLY EVERYWHERE THESE DAYS.



ESPECIALLY HERE.



IT HAPPENED HALF AN HOUR OR SO AFTER LUNCH



QUENTIN HAD FALLEN THROUGH SOME LOOSE RUBBLE INTO AN OPENING. WE HAD TO GET HIM OUT QUICKLY BEFORE MORE RUBBLE CAVED IN.

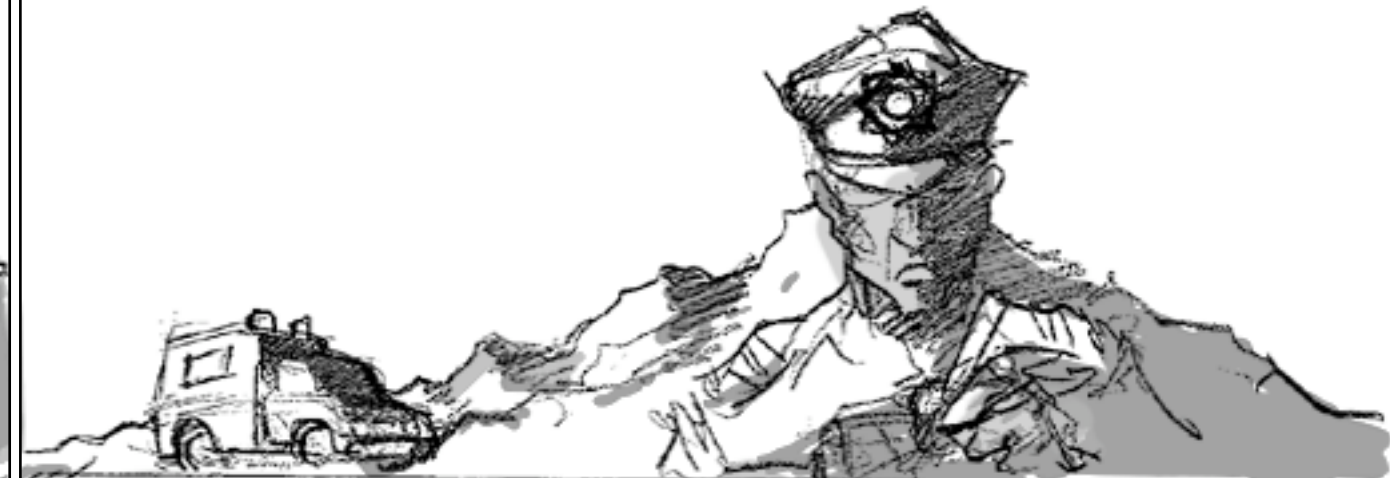


OUENS, I'M ORRIGHT BUT YOUSE BETTER GET THE POLICE!



THERE WAS SOMETHING SICKENING DOWN THERE. YOU COULD TELL BY HIS VOICE.

THE POLICE ARRIVED AND WORK WAS SUSPENDED FOR THE REST OF THE DAY



...AND WHAT IS YOUR DIRECT LINK TO PAGAD AND THEIR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES, SIR?

I DIRECTLY READ ABOUT THEM IN NEWSPAPERS.

ONLY NEWSPAPERS, SIR?

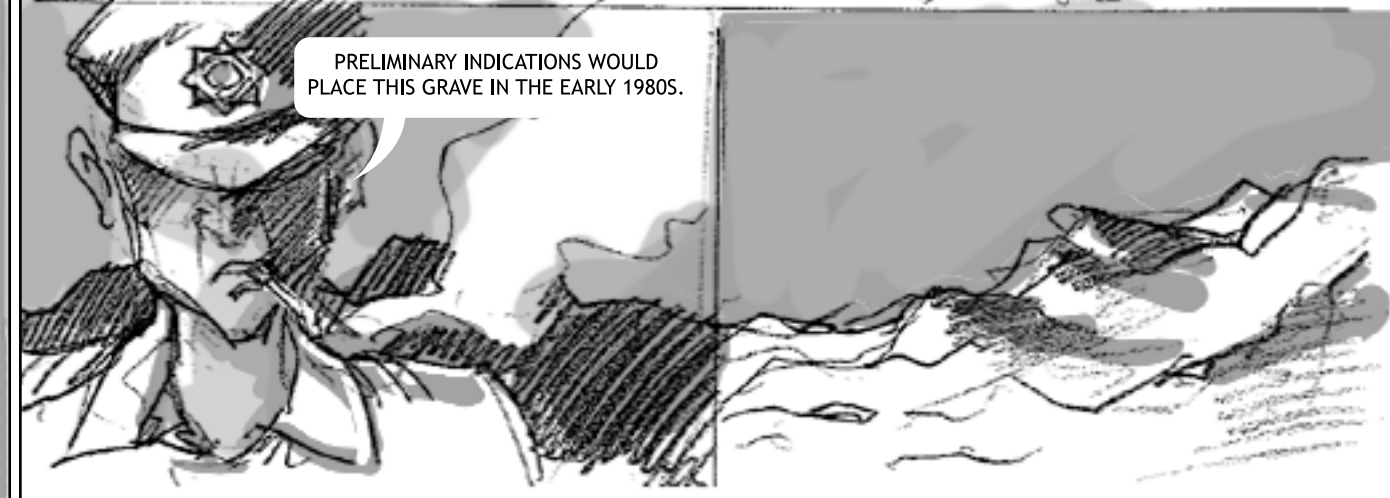


WHEN IT ALL SHOOK OUT, WE HAD FOUND ENOUGH HUMAN BONES FOR A DOZEN OR SO FULL SKELETONS, WITH A FEW EXTRA BITS LEFT OVER.



BUT THAT WAS NOT THE WORST OF IT.

PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS WOULD PLACE THIS GRAVE IN THE EARLY 1980S.



I WAS STILL IN SCHOOL IN THE 80S

SOME THINGS FROM BACK THEN JUST JUMP OUT TO ME, EVEN NOW.

I REMEMBER BEING ANGRY.

HIDE IN THE LAUNDRY. THE POLICE MUSTN'T SEE YOU IN YOUR SCHOOL UNIFORM.

THE 80S. FUCK! WE'D STUMBLED ONTO AN APARTHEID MASS GRAVE. RIGHT HERE IN AN URBAN AREA. ALL OF A SUDDEN MY CHOICES WEREN'T SO CLEAR-CUT ANYMORE. SO WHERE DID THIS UNWELCOME FIND PUT ME, NOW? WAS I BLACK? COLORED? MUSLIM? WAS I STILL FIGHTING? WHAT WAS I FIGHTING? FIGHTING AGAINST? FIGHTING FOR?

I REMEMBER RUNNING MOST TIMES.

THERE WAS A STRENGTH IN NUMBERS, THEN.

THE STREET-GAMES WE PLAYED WERE HARSH

THE NEXT DAY SOME OFFICIAL-LOOKING TYPES SUPERVISED THE REMOVAL OF THE BONES. AND GOT EVERYONE TO SIGN DOCUMENTATION.

LOOK YOU SEEM SMART ENOUGH, SO I'M NOT GOING TO INSULT YOU AND GIVE A FALSE NAME. JUST THINK OF ME AS 'Q'.

YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT ANYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED HERE. NOTHING. AND THIS THING YOU'VE SIGNED...

...IT'S A CONTRACT WITH THE GOVERNMENT. IF YOU TALK ABOUT ANYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED HERE. I CAN STOP BY YOUR HOUSE AND KILL YOU.