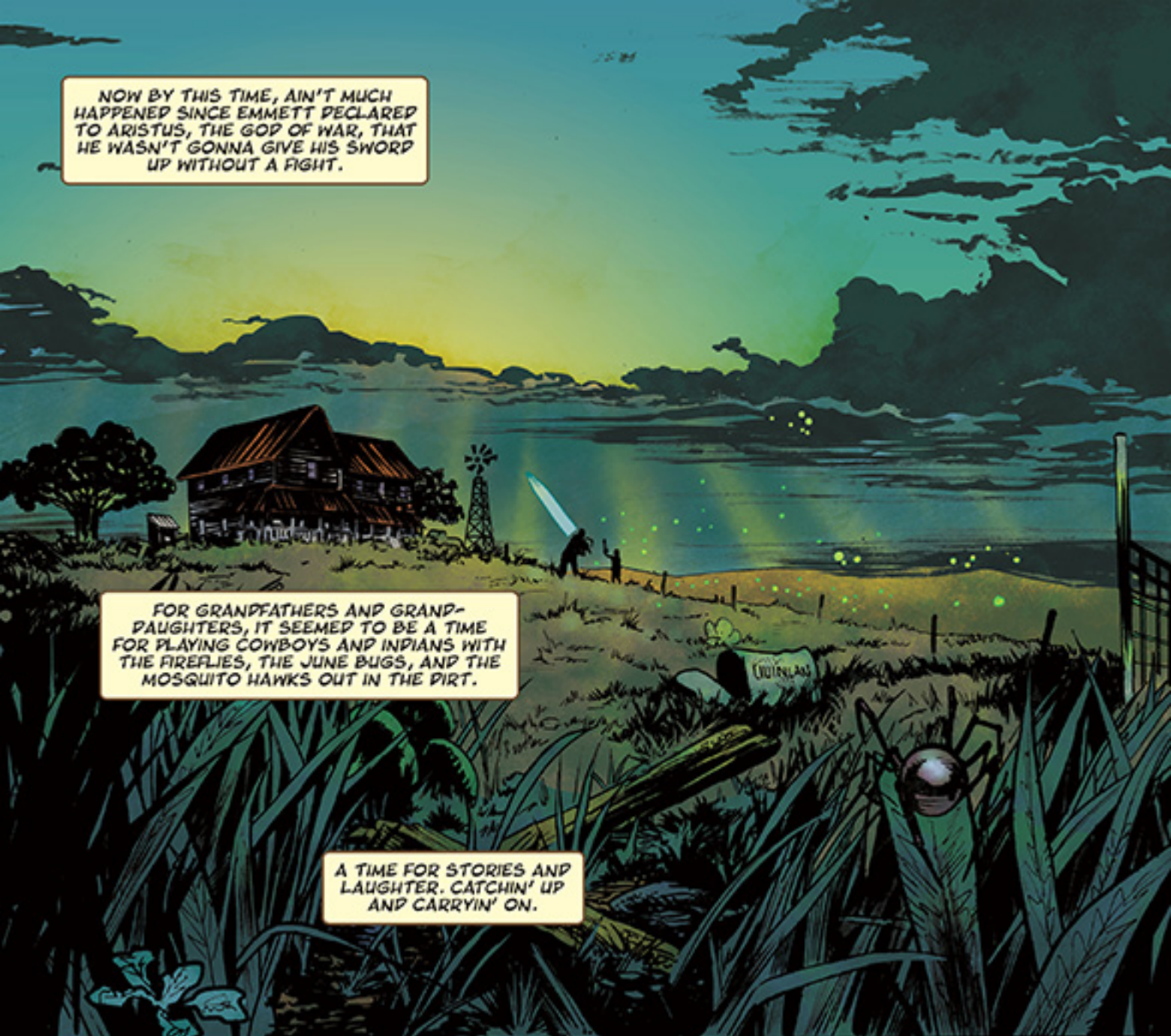



NOW BY THIS TIME, AIN'T MUCH HAPPENED SINCE EMMETT DECLARED TO ARISTUS, THE GOD OF WAR, THAT HE WASN'T GONNA GIVE HIS SWORD UP WITHOUT A FIGHT.




FOR GRANDFATHERS AND GRAND-PAUGHTERS, IT SEEMED TO BE A TIME FOR PLAYING COWBOYS AND INPIANS WITH THE FIREFLIES, THE JUNE BUGS, AND THE MOSQUITO HAWKS OUT IN THE DIRT.

A TIME FOR STORIES AND LAUGHTER. CATCHIN' UP AND CARRYIN' ON.

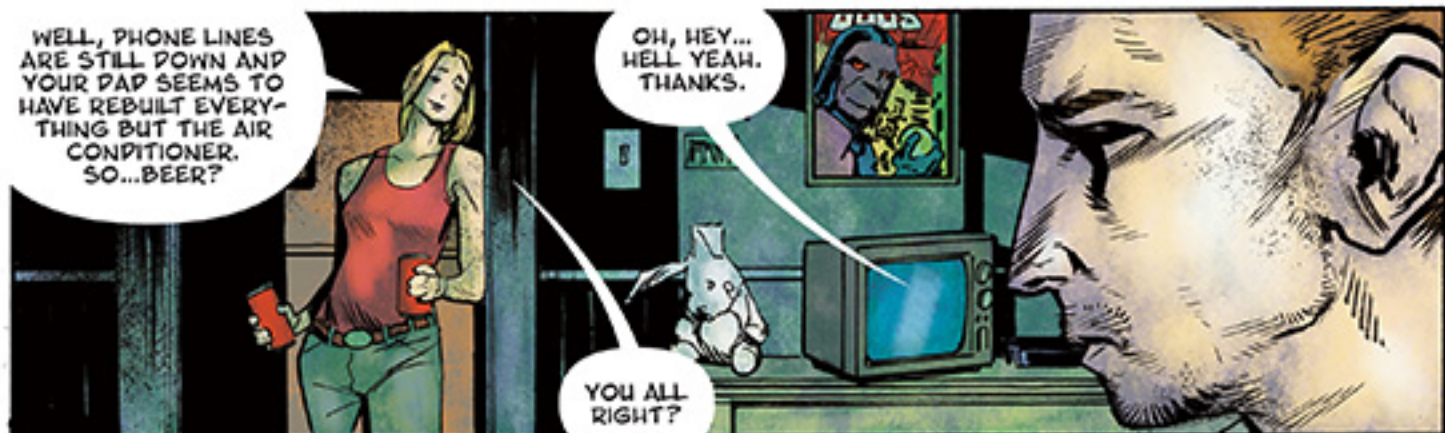


WHAT IT REALLY WAS, AND LORP HELP 'EM, THEY COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN THIS, WAS A TIME TO BATTEN DOWN.



A BRIEF REPRIEVE TO HOLD TIGHT TO PRECIOUS AND FRAGILE THINGS BEFORE EMMETT'S FIGHT ARRIVED...

...AND TURNED EVERYTHING TO ASH...



WELL, PHONE LINES ARE STILL DOWN AND YOUR DAD SEEMS TO HAVE REBUILT EVERYTHING BUT THE AIR CONDITIONER. SO...BEER?

OH, HEY... HELL YEAH. THANKS.

YOU ALL RIGHT?



YEAH...I JUST...IT'S NICE, YOU KNOW? SEEING THEM LIKE THIS.

GIANT TALKING SWORD ASIDE, YOU MEAN?

YOU THINK I OUGHTA GO DOWN THERE?



NO. NO, I TRUST HIM. HE'S A GOOD GUY, ROY.



HOW...HOW MANY OF THOSE HAVE YOU HAD?

NOT NEARLY ENOUGH. BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER.

I WAS WRONG TO SAY THE THINGS I DID. I FEEL...AWFUL ABOUT IT. YOU WERE GRIEVING, AND I--



I THINK I'M GONNA NEED TO CATCH UP WITH YOU IF WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE THIS CONVERSATION.



NO...NO CONVERSATION. JUST...LIKE YOU SAID, SEEING HIM LIKE THAT, HAPPY AND PLAYFUL AND, Y'KNOW...DRESSED AND SHAVEN AND ALL.

I GET IT. I SEE IT.



YEAH...WELL, IT WASN'T LIKE THAT WHEN I WAS A KID. HE WASN'T...HE WASN'T LIKE THAT WITH ME.

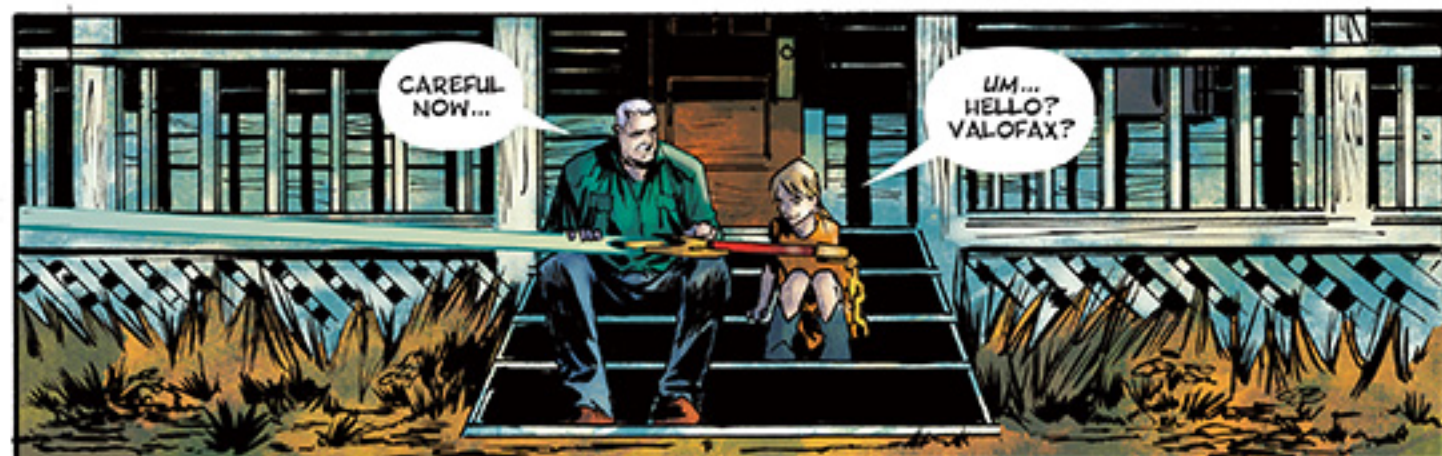
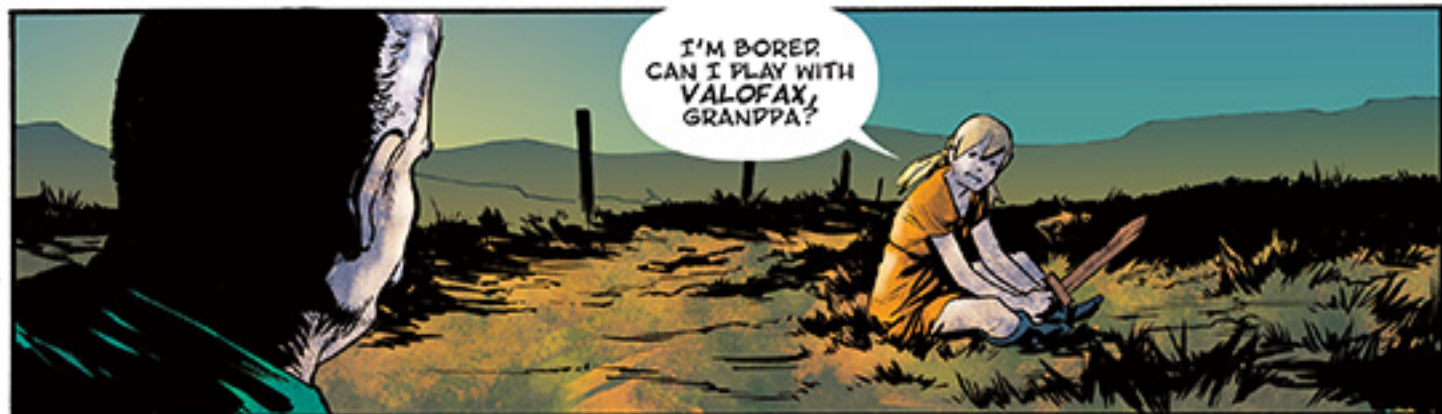
OH.



JANEY... I...



I THINK THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.





I DO NOT HAVE THE TIME FOR THIS, CHILD. I AM NOT YOUR "GRANDPA'S SWORD," AND FURTHERMORE, I AM NOT A "HE." I AM A BLADE. I AM ALL BLADES.

AS WE SPEAK, I AM AT WAR IN MORE REALMS THAN YOU CAN EVEN IMAGINE.

I AM BLOCKING ENDLESS BLOWS, FLYING THROUGH THE THROATS OF A THOUSAND ANCIENT, GALACTIC EVILS, AND DROWNING IN THE BLOOD OF A MILLION DYING WARRIORS IN PLACES YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD OF AND WILL NEVER SEE.

HEY, HEY, EASY...

PEE, WHY DON'T YOU RUN ALONG AND--

BUT LITTLE QUINLAN... I AM ALSO HELD BY NOBLE CHAMPIONS, FIGHTING AGAINST ODDS IMMEASURABLE AND POWER UNFATHOMABLE.

