

BEEF WITH TOMATO



DEAN HASPIEL



"AWFUL GEORGE"

ALPHABET CITY,
NEW YORK.

IF
ANOTHER DAMNED
JUNKIE SNAPPED THE
BASEMENT DOOR LOCK AND
HIJACKED MY BIKE FOR
SMACK--

--I'M
GONNA CRAP IN THE
SUPERINTENDENT'S
MOUTH!



THAT'D
MAKE THREE
SECOND-HAND BIKES
RIPPED OFF IN
ONLY TWO
MONTHS!

AND
WITH MY SALARY,
I CAN'T AFFORD
ANOTHER SET OF
CRUMMY SPOKES.

UGH!

WHAT'S
WITH THE FOUL
BUM ASYLUM
STENCH!?!

MOTHER
DOG!



I WAS CONFRONTED BY THE STARTLING SIGHT OF A WOMAN FRANTICALLY PERFORMING IMPROMPTU SURGERY ON A KITTY CAT WHILE STANDING OVER A MAKESHIFT OPERATING TABLE MADE FROM MILK CRATES AND A BROKEN REFRIGERATOR DOOR.



BLOODY TOWELS AND BOWLS OF WATER WITH ARCHAIC METAL INSTRUMENTS OF VARYING DEGREES OF HORROR WERE STREWN ABOUT THE SPACE.

CROWDING THE SPACE WERE METAL CAGES HOUSING TWO-TO-THREE CATS IN EACH ONE. THE CATS WERE EITHER HALF-WAY TO HEAVEN OR HALFWAY TO HELL.

SOME CATS WERE MISSING AN EYEBALL OR A TAIL. OTHERS WERE MISSING A LIMB AND/OR TEETH. ALL OF THEM WERE IN PAIN AND SUFFERING.

BIKES AND BOXES OF VALUABLES WERE SAFELY STASHED IN THE BACK OF THE BASEMENT. NOTHING WAS STOLEN FROM THE PREMISES, ONLY ADDED TO.









NOSY NEIGHBORS DISCOVERED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO RECORD OF HER BURIAL.

ERGO, THE ETERNAL RANK OF DEATH BETRAYING COVERT ASYLUM.



THE BROKE AND LONELY [REDACTED] WAS PULLING AN "ED GEIN" IN NEW YORK CITY!

HEAR WHAT?

DID YOU HEAR THAT?

BZZT

SOMETHING ... MOVED.



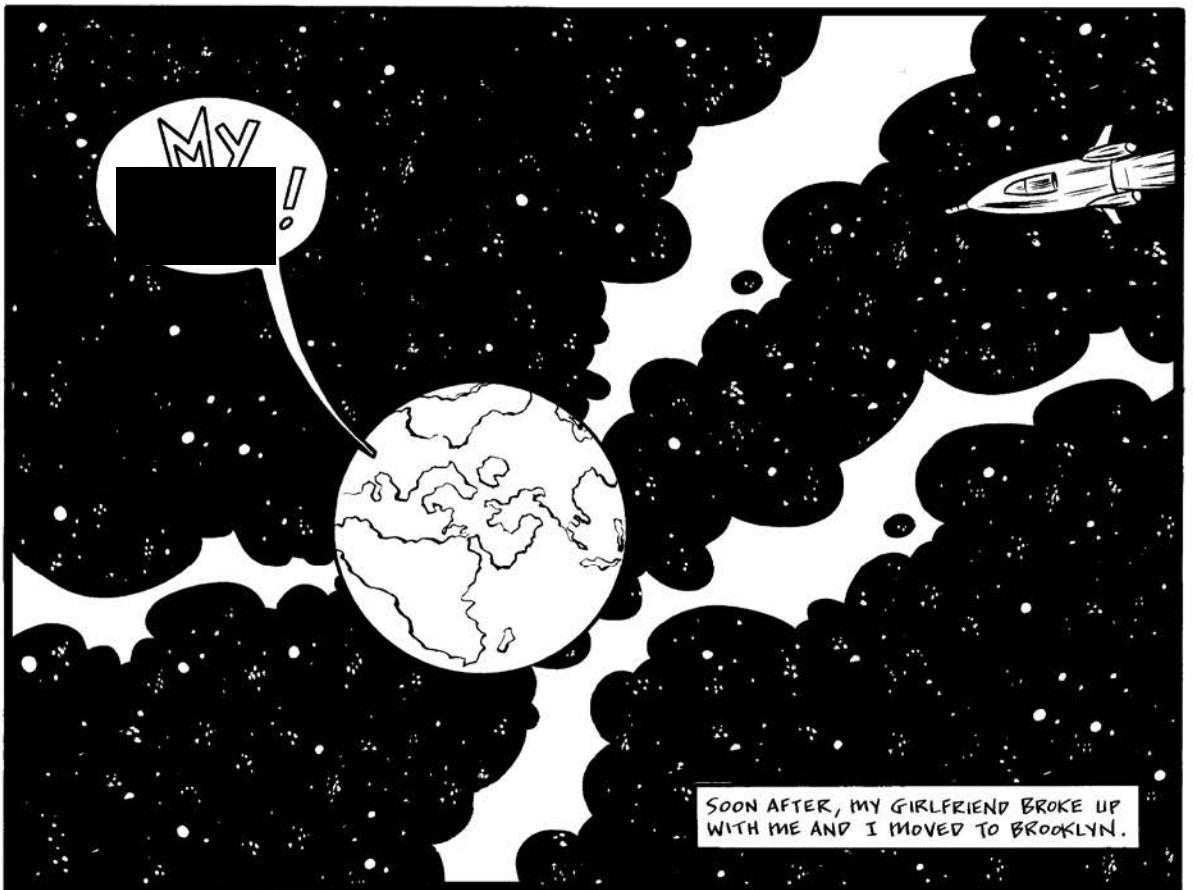
SHORTLY THEREAFTER, AWFUL GEORGE WAS FOUND WANDERING THE GHETTO AND WAS SENT TO BELLEVUE HOSPITAL TO UNDERGO PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION.

INCREDIBLY, GEORGE WAS DEEMED SUFFICIENTLY SANE AND NOT SO AWFUL, AND WAS RELEASED TO THE CITY STREETS WITHIN 24-HOURS.



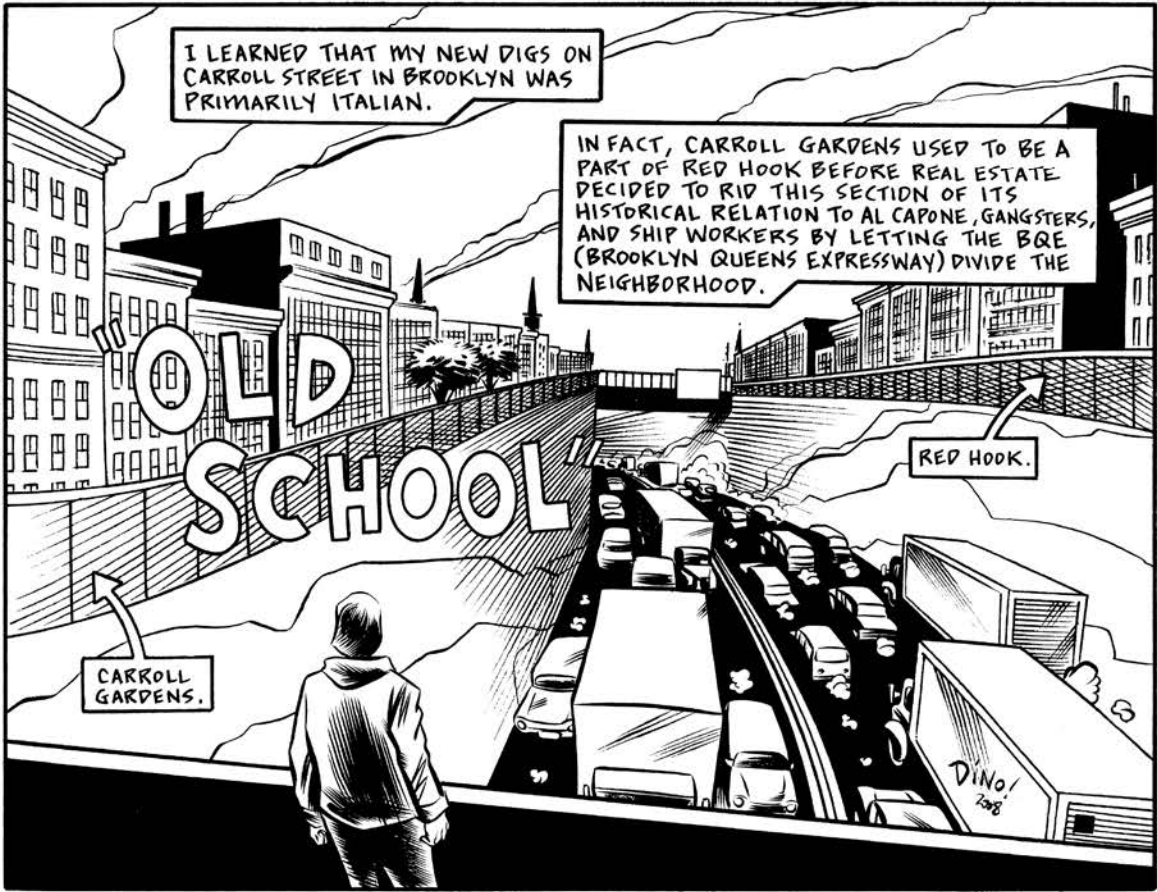
A WEEK LATER, MY THIRD BICYCLE OF THE YEAR WAS STOLEN.

KRYPTONITE LOCK?



MY [REDACTED]!

SOON AFTER, MY GIRLFRIEND BROKE UP WITH ME AND I MOVED TO BROOKLYN.



I LEARNED THAT MY NEW DIGS ON CARROLL STREET IN BROOKLYN WAS PRIMARILY ITALIAN.

IN FACT, CARROLL GARDENS USED TO BE A PART OF RED HOOK BEFORE REAL ESTATE DECIDED TO RID THIS SECTION OF ITS HISTORICAL RELATION TO AL CAPONE, GANGSTERS, AND SHIP WORKERS BY LETTING THE BQE (BROOKLYN QUEENS EXPRESSWAY) DIVIDE THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

OLD SCHOOL

CARROLL GARDENS.

RED HOOK.

Dino!
2008

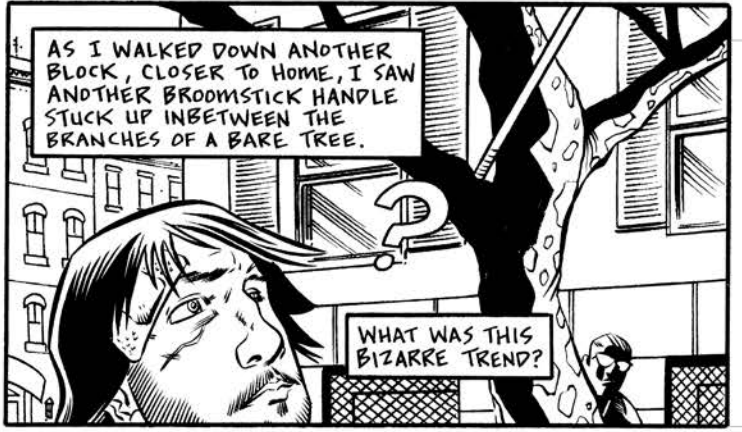


WHEN I FIRST WALKED DOWN MY BLOCK TO SURVEY THE NEIGHBORHOOD, I WOULD GET THE HAIRY EYEBALL FROM OLD ITALIAN MEN WITH WALKING CANES WHOSE FACES LOOKED LIKE WRINKLED BASEBALL MITTS IN WOOL CAPS.

SOMETIMES I'D HEAR A GRUNT OR A POORLY DISGUISED COUGH THAT DECLARED ME "YUPPIE" AS IF I WERE SOME RICH TRUST FUND KID FROM THE UPPER EAST SIDE.

YUPPIE

IF ONLY THEY COULD SEE MY BANK ACCOUNT. NEVER MIND THE FACT THAT I DON'T HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE.







A WEEK LATER, KOREAN FEMALE TWINS MOVED NEXT DOOR TO ME. NOT ONLY DID THEY LOOK EXACTLY THE SAME, THEY HAD THE SAME HAIRCUT, THE SAME FASHION SENSE, AND THEY HAD THE SAME NAME, TOO!



EVERY SO OFTEN I'D GET A KNOCK ON MY DOOR BECAUSE ONE OF THE TWINS LIKED MY CATS AND WANTED TO PET THEM.



I COULD NEVER TELL IF THEY WERE SWITCHING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN EACH OTHER TO MESS WITH ME --



-- BUT WE GOT FRIENDLY, ANYWAY.



ONE LUCID NIGHT I GOT EXPANSIVE AND COMPLAINED ABOUT MY BREAK UP WITH MY GIRLFRIEND BACK IN MANHATTAN AND THE KOREAN CAT LOVER LOOKED AT ME AGHAST!



WHAT'S THE MATTER?



YOU LIVE ALONE WITH TWO CATS.



YEAH, SO?



I'M SORRY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE GAY?



THE END.



A native New York bruiser is fed up with life in the dregs of a drug-addled Alphabet City where his neighbors are shut-ins and his bicycle is always getting stolen. He escapes from Manhattan to make a fresh start in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, only to face a new strain of street logic — where most everything he encounters is not as it seems.

Emmy Award winning artist Dean Haspiel returns to his semi-autobiographical roots in *Beef With Tomato*, and explores the emotional truths between prime and primate.

Collecting the complete *Street Code* comix and essays.

