



... SO HE'S **AWAKE**, BUT STILL COMPLETELY **UNRESPONSIVE**.

WELL, THAT'S TO BE **EXPECTED**...



... EMERGING FROM THE **COMA** DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN THE PATIENT HAS RECOVERED FROM THE **TRAUMA**.

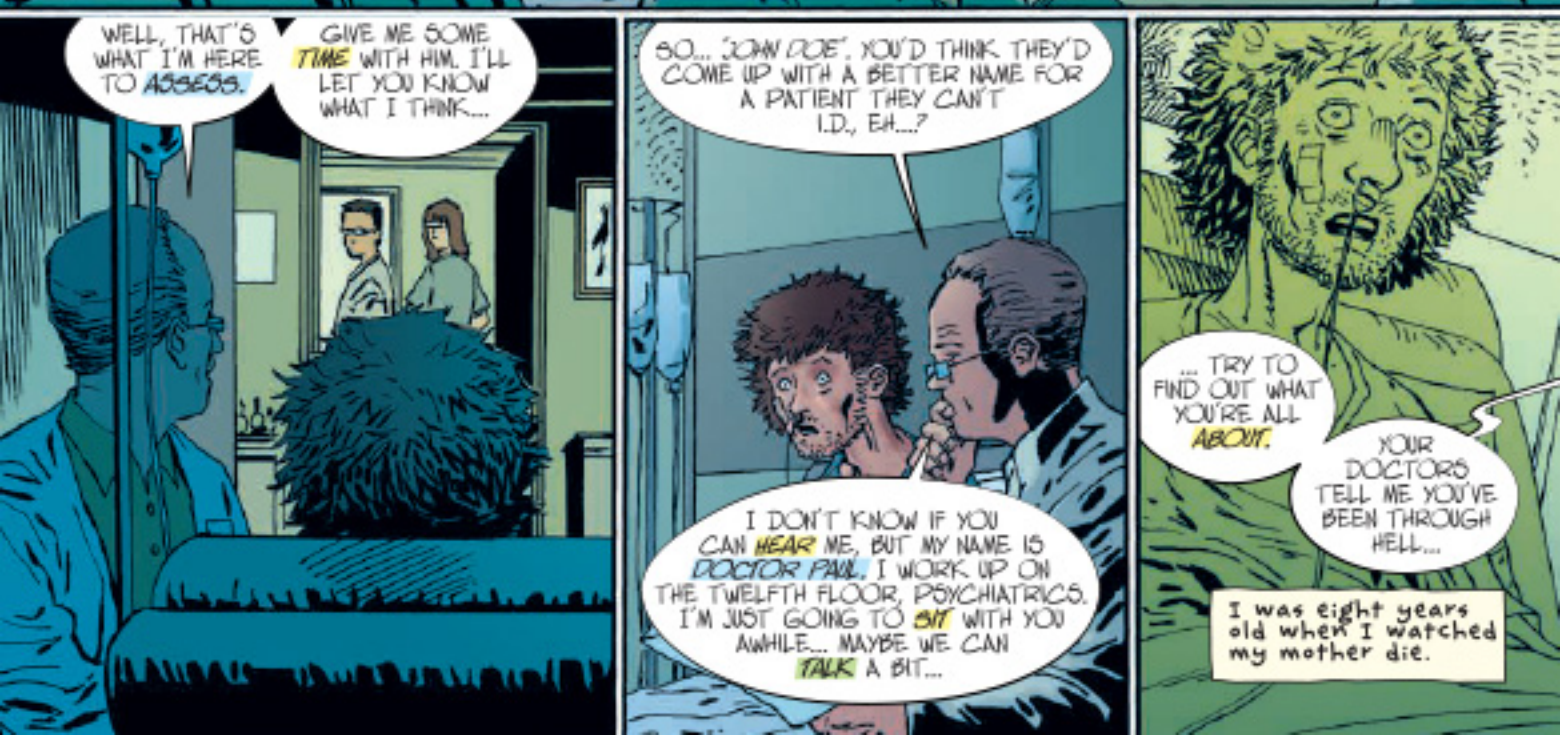
HE WAS HIT BY A **CAR**, THEN...?



WELL, OKAY... HE WAS FOUND IN THE **PLAZA** AFTER GETTING HIT, BUT HIS **INJURIES** INDICATED ALL **SORTS** OF DAMAGE...

HE WAS **BADLY BEATEN**. WE EVEN FOUND EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS **SEXUAL ASSAULT**...

DO YOU WANT HIM MOVED UP TO THE **PSYCHIE WARD**...?



WELL, THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE TO **ASSESS**.

GIVE ME SOME **TIME** WITH HIM, I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK...

SO... 'JOHN DOE'. YOU'D THINK THEY'D COME UP WITH A BETTER NAME FOR A PATIENT THEY CAN'T I.D., EH...?

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN **HEAR** ME, BUT MY NAME IS **DOCTOR PAUL**. I WORK UP ON THE TWELFTH FLOOR, **PSYCHIATRICS**. I'M JUST GOING TO **SIT** WITH YOU AWHILE... MAYBE WE CAN **TALK** A BIT...

... TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU'RE ALL **ABOUT**.

YOUR **DOCTORS** TELL ME YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH **HELL**...

I was eight years old when I watched my mother die.



pretty young to witness something so completely [redacted] ed up...



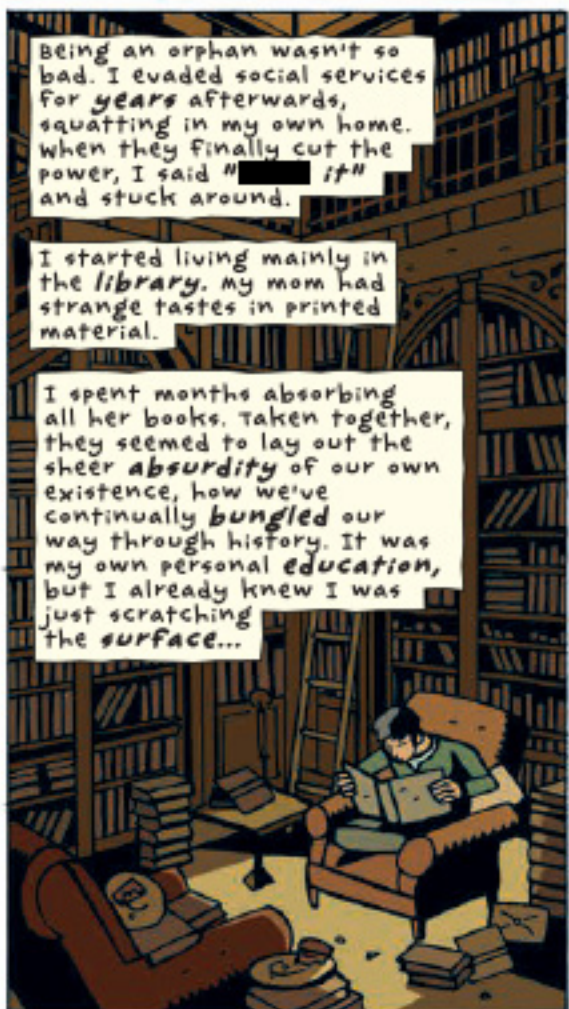
... especially considering that she died laughing.



she'd been sick for a long time. Finally they identified the disease by name... they called it *kuru*.

The end was [redacted] ing brutal. No muscle coordination. Incontinence. Ulcers inside and out. And uncontrollable, cackling laughter...

(years later I learned you could catch this disease if you were a practicing cannibal. considering what I actually remembered about my mother, I wasn't surprised.)



Being an orphan wasn't so bad. I evaded social services for years afterwards, squatting in my own home. When they finally cut the power, I said "N [redacted] if" and stuck around.

I started living mainly in the library. My mom had strange tastes in printed material.

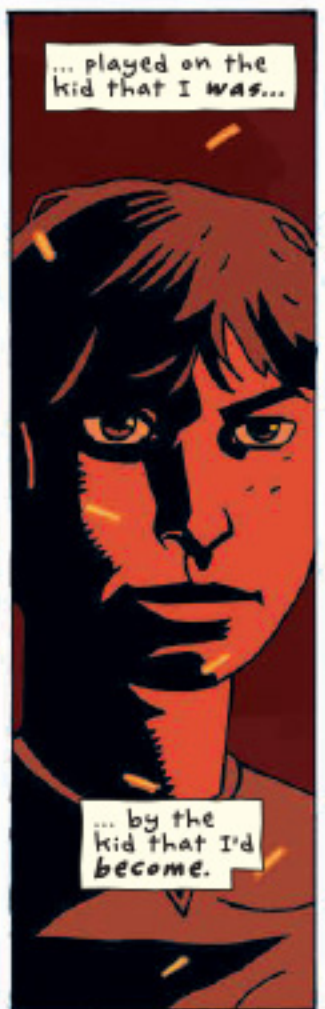
I spent months absorbing all her books. Taken together, they seemed to lay out the sheer absurdity of our own existence, how we've continually bungled our way through history. It was my own personal education, but I already knew I was just scratching the surface...



... when I was done reading, I did the only thing that made any sense:

I burned it all down.

A great [redacted] in! prank...



... played on the kid that I was...

... by the kid that I'd become.