



# *Run Downhill*

presents

The Carousel  
Couple

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presents

## The Carousel Couple

The introductory tale of the ongoing KILBOURN saga

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Originally appearing as part of  
the Song Comic album  
"KILBOURN" from the band  
**Run Downhill**

This convention edition  
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*Oh, My Terrible Joy*  
*Music and Comics*

Special thanks to Scott, Juli,  
Blake, all fans, comic and  
music supporters everywhere.

**THIS EDITION COMES WITH  
A FREE SONG DOWNLOAD**


"FEVER" from the album MIDNIGHT ROAD TRIP by RUN DOWNHILL  
Remixed by 2000 B.C. aka BLAKE COLIE

REDEEM AT

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FOR MANY YEARS,  
A DULLNESS STOPPED  
PEOPLE FROM ACTUALLY  
THINKING THROUGH WHAT  
WAS GOING SO  
WRONG...

...AS THOUGH  
AN OPAQUE VEIL OF  
BLAND CONFUSION HAD BEEN  
DRAWN OVER THEIR  
VERY MINDS.

FOR ME, TRY  
AS I MAY, I COULD  
NEVER FORGET. I CAN  
TELL YOU EXACTLY  
WHERE ALL THIS  
BEGAN...

A PHANTOM  
ON A HILLSIDE, A  
PROSPECTOR WHOSE  
CURRENCY WAS THE  
HUMAN SOUL...

...AND A  
CHANCE ENCOUNTER,  
WITH THREE PEOPLE...

...SIMPLY  
IN THE WRONG  
PLACE, AT THE  
WRONG TIME.

KILBOURN HAS LONG HAD ITS HARDSHIPS: A SMALL HARVEST TOWN DETACHED FROM THE TERRITORY, THE DIFFICULTY LAY IN THE TRANSPORT OF FRESH PRODUCE TO CITY MARKETS MILES AWAY. BUT WITH THE COMING RAIL LINE, KILBOURN RESIDENTS CAN AFFORD A SMALL GLINT OF HOPE. THE NEW SPUR, CONNECTING TO THE GREAT RAIL, WITH ITS ICE-COOLED CARS, WILL GET THE PRODUCE TO MARKET FASTER AND FRESHER.

WILLIAM MCCALLISTER, PRESIDENT OF THE MCCALLISTER RAIL COMPANY, INTENDS TO USE THIS PROMISE TO HIS ADVANTAGE, APPROPRIATING VAST COALFIELDS AND ABSORBING WATER RIGHTS FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES. HIS COMPANY MEN HAVE THEIR WAY WITH THE TOWN, AND STAY ONE STEP BEYOND THE REACH OF THE LAW.

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES, THE TOWN REMAINS OPTIMISTIC: WITH THE RAILROAD COMES MONEY, AND FOR MARY LANTON, HER DREAM OF LIFE BEYOND KILBOURN'S CONFINES IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO GRASP.

FOR MASTER HORSE TRAINER ERNEST HARVIN, NOTHING WOULD BE MORE PLEASING THAN TO TAKE HIS FINEST MOUNTS AND LEAVE TOWN WITH THE YOUNG MARY ON HIS ARM, THOUGH IN SPITE OF BEST INTENTIONS AND A GENUINE AFFECTION FOR ONE ANOTHER, THEIR COURTSHIP HAS NOT BEEN EASY.

NEWS HAS ARRIVED: WILLIAM MCCALLISTER HAS RETIRED, AND APPOINTED HIS YOUNGEST SON, ANDERSON, TO LEAD THE RAIL EMPIRE. AS A GIFT, WILLIAM HAS ARRANGED PURCHASE OF TWO PRIZED MORGANS FROM ERNEST, AND SENT HIS OLDER SON, JAY MICHAEL MCCALLISTER, TO KILBOURN TO COMPLETE THE TRANSACTION.

ON THIS NIGHT, MARY ARRIVES AT CRADY'S ANNUAL HARVEST DANCE, INTENT ON KEEPING HER MIND OFF THE TURBULENT CAROUSEL OF INDECISION THAT IS HER RELATIONSHIP WITH ERNEST. THE TOWN SQUARE IS FINELY DECORATED, THE PUNCH IS COLD, AND THE WEATHER AGREEABLE. THE SHERIFF HAS REQUESTED THAT ALL MEN SURRENDER FIREARMS AT THE DEADLINE, AND SET HIS THREE DEPUTIES TO THE TASK.

JAY MICHAEL AND HIS CRONIES ARRIVE DRUNK. MARY AND HER FRIENDS MINGLE HAPPILY, THE TOWNSFOLK REVEL IN THEIR CUSTOM, AND ERNEST HAS YET TO ARRIVE...

EVERY YEAR AT HARVEST, CRADY HELD A DANCE OUTSIDE HIS GENERAL STORE IN THE CENTER OF TOWN. AS ALWAYS, MRS. CRADY SPARED NO EXPENSE DECORATING WITH FLOWERS AND COLORED PAPERS AND PENDANTS, SETTING THE FESTIVE MOOD. THE AIR WAS LIGHT AND FRENETIC AS PEOPLE ARRIVED, ABUZZ WITH TALK OF KILBOURN'S BRIGHT FUTURE. FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW MCCALLISTER LINES RAIL SPUR TO TOWN WAS SCHEDULED FOR 3 WEEKS HENCE.



CERTAINLY  
THE FINEST  
HARVEST DANCE  
EVER!

MARY LANTON ARRIVED WITH HER FRIENDS, STEPPING PAST THE WEAPONS CHECK WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A GLANCE AT DEPUTY ORIN CASSADEEN, AND HER FRIENDS FOLLOWED SUIT.



NOT TO MENTION  
THE MOST EXPENSIVE  
ONE MR. CRADY  
HAS EVER SEEN.



NOW, SARAH, LET'S  
NOT SPOIL EVERYONE'S  
NIGHT...



AS ALWAYS, SARAH GRANT WAS QUICK TO RAISE THE SUBJECT OF ONE ERNEST HARVIN...

WHAT? IS IT TOO MUCH FOR A SUITOR TO BRING HIS **WOULD-BE BRIDE** TO SUCH A FINE EVENT?

SARAH, **SHUSH!** ERNEST HARVIN IS AN HONEST MAN! AND WE ALL KNOW ABOUT HIM AND MARY...

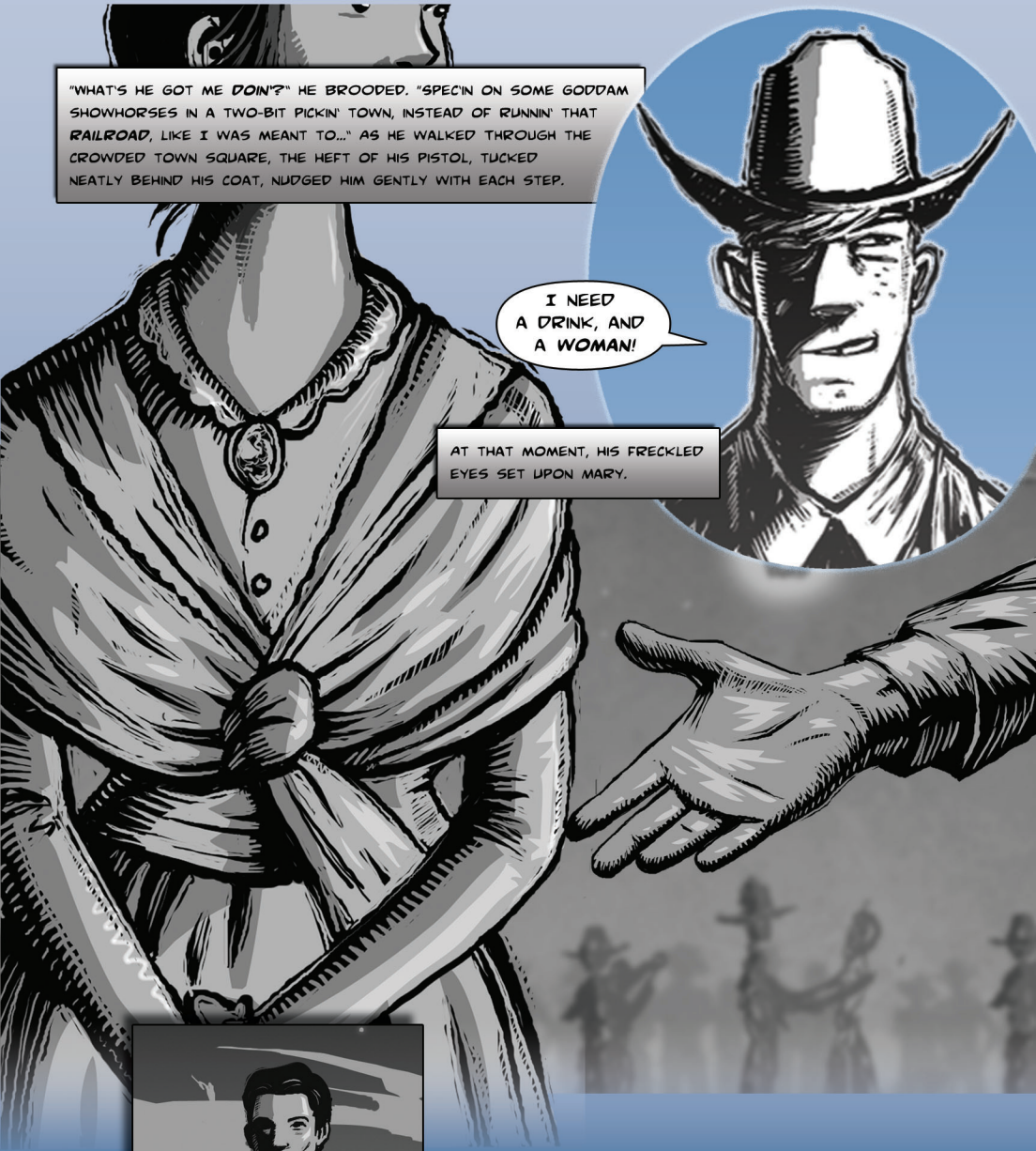
BUT HE'S GOT HER **RUNNIN' IN CIRCLES**, LIKE SOME MERRY GO-ROUND!

ENOUGH TALK ABOUT IT, BOTH OF YOU! I JUST WANT TO TAKE MY MIND OFF THE **WHOLE THING**.

JAY MICHAEL MCCALLISTER CARRIED A REPUTATION AS A DRINKER, A GAMBLER, AND A WOMANIZER, AND HE HIMSELF WOULD ATTEST TO ALL THE SON OF THE INFAMOUS RAIL MOGUL, JAY MICHAEL WALKED WITH AN AIR OF IMPUNITY AND RAGE, AWARE THAT HIS VERY PRESENCE PUT CERTAIN OF THE TOWNSFOLK ON EDGE.

DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL **DADDY'S** SO UP ABOUT THIS SHITHOLE FOR! THIS TOWN DON'T NEED A RAIL LINE, IT NEEDS A **FIRESTORM...**

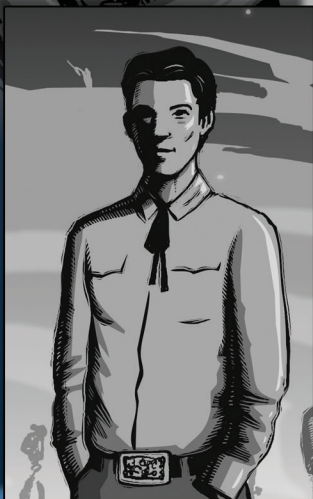
JAY MICHAEL'S LACKEYS INTERCEPTED YOUNG DEPUTY CASSADEEN BEFORE HE COULD REQUEST ARMS FROM THE MEN, AND IN THE SCUFFLE AND FROLICKING, JAY MICHAEL WALKED CALMLY BY **WITHOUT GREETING**.



"WHAT'S HE GOT ME DOIN'?" HE BROODED. "SPEC'IN ON SOME GODDAM SHOWHORSES IN A TWO-BIT PICKIN' TOWN, INSTEAD OF RUNNIN' THAT RAILROAD, LIKE I WAS MEANT TO..." AS HE WALKED THROUGH THE CROWDED TOWN SQUARE, THE HEFT OF HIS PISTOL, TUCKED NEATLY BEHIND HIS COAT, NUDGED HIM GENTLY WITH EACH STEP.

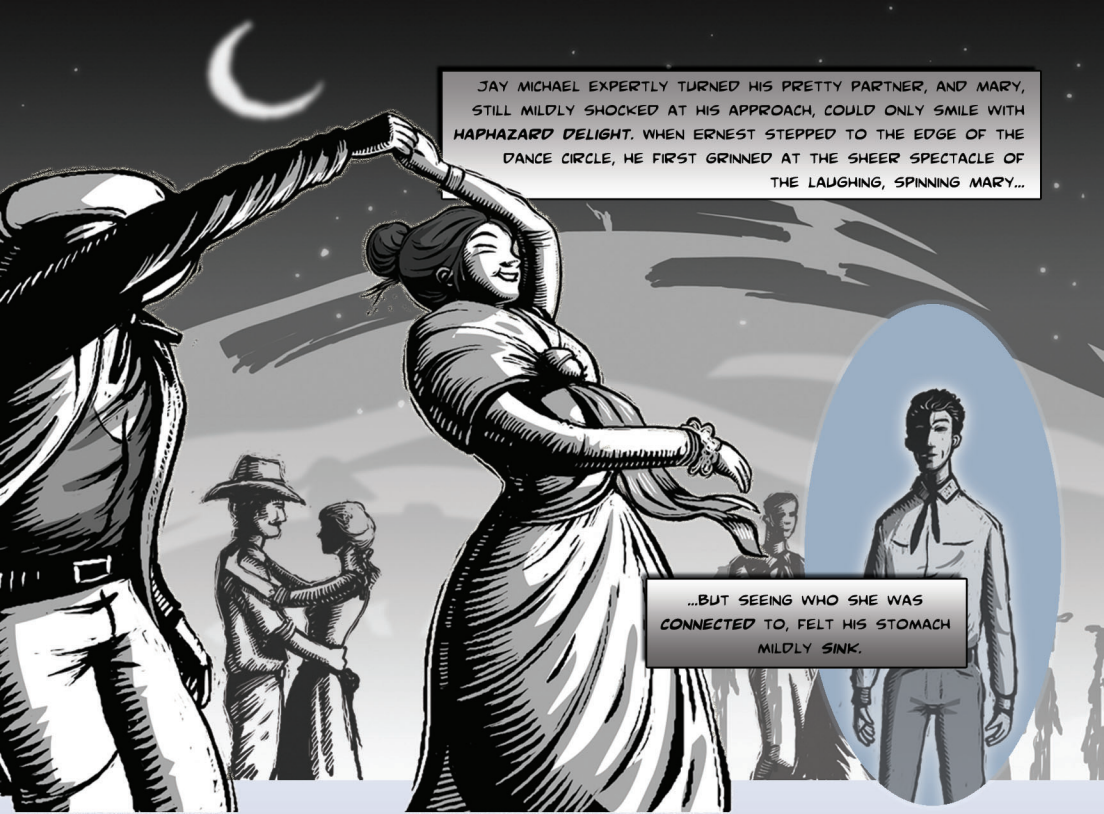
I NEED  
A DRINK, AND  
A WOMAN!

AT THAT MOMENT, HIS FRECKLED  
EYES SET UPON MARY.



THROUGH THE GATE WALKED A LONE MAN, SIMPLY BUT PLEASANTLY DRESSED. AS HE MOVED THROUGH THE CROWD, HE QUIETLY GREETED EACH PERSON WHO CAUGHT HIS STEELY GAZE, AND EACH GREETED HIM WARMLY IN RETURN. HIS EYES WERE UP, TAKING IN THE FACES OF EVERYONE AROUND, LOOKING FOR SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR. AND WITH EACH PERSON HE GREETED, SO TOO THEIR EYES TURNED AND SCANNED THE CROWD FOR THIS SAME PARTICULAR PERSON. SUCH THAT ALL ERNEST HAD TO DO WAS FOLLOW THE GLANCES, AND HE WOULD FIND WHO HE WAS LOOKING FOR.





JAY MICHAEL EXPERTLY TURNED HIS PRETTY PARTNER, AND MARY, STILL MILDLY SHOCKED AT HIS APPROACH, COULD ONLY SMILE WITH HAPHAZARD DELIGHT. WHEN ERNEST STEPPED TO THE EDGE OF THE DANCE CIRCLE, HE FIRST GRINNED AT THE SHEER SPECTACLE OF THE LAUGHING, SPINNING MARY...

...BUT SEEING WHO SHE WAS CONNECTED TO, FELT HIS STOMACH MILDLY SINK.

MARY PAUSED LONG ENOUGH TO CATCH ERNEST'S EYE AND HER DANCING STOPPED; SHE IMMEDIATELY LOST INTEREST IN HER DANCE PARTNER, AND FROM THE SUDDEN SHIFT, JAY MICHAEL NOTICED IT, TOO. ERNEST STEPPED TOWARDS THEM, SPLITTING THE COUPLE APART.



MARY,  
MAY I SPEAK  
WITH YOU A  
MOMENT?

THEY WALKED AWAY ACROSS THE DANCE FLOOR, AND AS JAY MICHAEL WATCHED, A MUFFLED VOICE IN HIS MIND BECAME AUDIBLE, LIKE A PHANTOM HEARTBEAT BENEATH A VELVET DRAPE. HE TURNED AND WALKED BLINDLY TO HIS BOYS GATHERED IN THE CORNER, PAINFULLY AWARE OF THEIR LAUGHTER AT HIS RETREAT.

THE BAND MOVED INTO A GENTLE WALTZ: THE FIDDLE WARBLED, THE GUITAR STRUMMED SWEETLY, AND THE SONG CARRIED THE DANCERS A QUARTER INCH OFF THE GROUND. ERNEST AND MARY SHARED A SILENT DANCE, EACH WAITING FOR THE OTHER TO SPEAK.

HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO MY... PROPOSITION?

NOW YOU'RE PROPOSING? SO MUCH FOR THE COURTSHIP!



"C'MON NOW, MARY," HIS VOICE QUIET AND INTENSE. "EVERYONE CAN SEE IT, I SEE IT... THERE'S SOMETHING MORE THAN YOU'RE GIVING WAY TO. I'M RIGHT HERE, WHY CAN'T YOU JUST... C'MON?"

"AND HOW LONG YOU PLAN ON STAYING THERE, ERNEST?" SHE LOOKED AT HIM, A SERIES OF CONFLICTING EMOTIONS MOVING ACROSS HER FACE. "I NEED YOU TO BE HERE, I DON'T WANT TO STAY AWAY ANYMORE. I'M TIRED OF GOING IN CIRCLES."

"THEN LET'S STOP TURNING THEM," HE SAID, A BROAD GRIN SPREADING ACROSS HIS FACE. "LET'S NOT STAY AWAY ANY MORE, NO MORE DANCING IN CIRCLES."

AS THEY DANCED AND TALKED AND LAUGHED AND LOOKED AT ONE ANOTHER'S FACES, IT SEEMED TO THEM AND TO EVERYBODY WATCHING, THAT AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN MADE, ONE THAT WAS SIMPLY AWAITING ITS TURN BEFORE A HIGHER COURT. ALL GAVE A SILENT CHEER; IT FELT LIKE A VERY GOOD HARVEST DANCE THIS YEAR.





JAY MICHAEL FUMED FROM ACROSS THE SQUARE, WHILE THE BOYS SNICKERED AND STOOD WITH THEIR THUMBS IN THEIR POCKETS.

"WHY, JAY MIKE, HE'S DANCIN' WITH YORE GIRL! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WAS IN THE HABIT OF LETTIN' FOLKS TAKE YORE THINGS!"

ANOTHER ONE JOINED: "TELL ME AGAIN WHAT ERRAND YORE DADDY GOT YOU RUNNIN'? PICKIN' OUT PRETTY HORSES FOR THE COMPANY MEN?"

JAY MICHAEL COULD FEEL HIS ANGER RISING, LIKE A HOT FLAME HE COULDN'T GET AWAY FROM, SMOTHERING AND STILL STRANGELY *COMFORTABLE*. HE FELT HIMSELF WELCOMING IT.

"YOU BOYS CUT IT! WHO PAYS YOUR DOLLARS?" HE YELLED VICIOUSLY.

"BOSS, I'LL SHUT UP LONG ENOUGH TO MISS TELLIN' YOU WHO THAT TALL STRANGER IS THERE..." SAID THE LANKIEST OF THE MEN, NODDING TOWARDS THE DANCING ERNEST AND MARY.

WHAT THE HELL...? SAY THAT AGAIN!

THAT MAN THERE IS THE ONE *BREAKIN'* THEM PRETTY PONIES YORE DADDY SENT YOU TO *COLLECT!*

AND JAY MICHAEL'S RAGE CROSSED OVER INTO A DARKER PLACE, AND FOR THE NEXT FEW MINUTES, HIS EYES TOLD THE TRUTH OF SOME COLD AND WRONG THING THAT HAD STEPPED INSIDE HIS BODY.

HE DREW HIS PISTOL AND DECIDED TO ACT

JAY MICHAEL WANDERED INTO THE DANCE AREA, BOTTLE IN ONE HAND AND IN THE OTHER HIS PISTOL, TRAINED AT THE FACE OF ERNEST HARVIN.

**HARVIN!!!**  
DAMN YOU, ANIMAL HAND! HOW DARE YOU MAKE THE FOOL OF ME!



**EXCUSE ME?**  
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO GO TO HELL ONCE ALREADY!

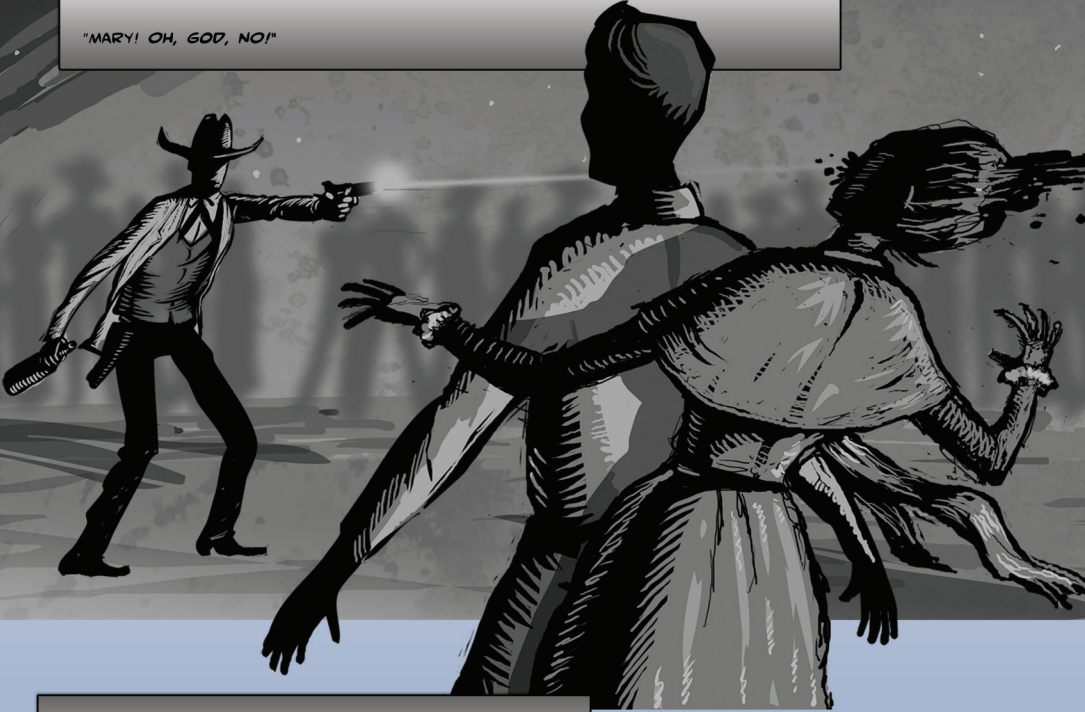
JAY MICHAEL SEEMED ON THE VERGE OF LOSING CONTROL. "YOU GOT NOTHIN' TO SAY TO ME, PONY BOY!" HE YELLED. "MY DADDY MIGHT HAVE YOUR EMPLOY, BUT YOU AIN'T S#@ TO ME!"





THE GUN FIRED ALMOST WITHOUT JAY MICHAEL EVEN KNOWING, THE TRIGGER PULLED FROM A HAND NOT ENTIRELY HIS OWN. THE LAST THING MARY LANTON SAW WAS THE LOOK OF SHOCK ON THE SHOOTER'S FACE. SHE FELT HERSELF BECOME HEAVY, THEN THE DROPPING OF THE WORLD FROM BENEATH HER FEET, CONVINCED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME MISTAKE. SHE HEARD ERNEST'S VOICE SPEAK ONCE MORE BEFORE SHE RETIRED.

"MARY! OH, GOD, NO!"



THERE WAS A SUDDEN, NEAR COMPLETE SILENCE, AND THE PEOPLE COULD HEAR A FAINT WHISPER MOVE ACROSS THE UNSHAPEN EARTH BENEATH THEM. ONE BY ONE THEIR EYES FELL TO THE DEAD GIRL BEFORE THEM.

ERNEST HARVIN'S EYES FELL UPON THE MAN WHO HAD FIRED THE WEAPON.





STAY  
BACK!!

ERNEST WAS TWO STRIDES AWAY FROM HIM. JAY MICHAEL'S GUN SHOOK IN HIS HAND AS HE FIRED; THERE WAS NO REAL AIM TO IT, ONLY THE SHEER PROXIMITY ENSURED IT WOULD HIT ITS INTENDED TARGET.

TWO BULLETS HIT ERNEST IN THE STOMACH AND STERNUM; EACH PASSED COMPLETELY THROUGH HIS BODY LIKE THROUGH A BALE OF HAY. HE STAGGERED AND FELL TO THE GROUND, BLEEDING FURIOUSLY, AND SOON WAS DEAD.

FROM THE STEPS OF CRADY'S STORE, THE HEAVY PISTOL OF SHERIFF DICKENSON FIRED QUICK AND RIGHTEOUSLY. AS COLD AS LADY JUSTICE, HIS TIMELY BULLET STRUCK MCCALLISTER'S HEART AND KILLED HIM DEAD IN AN INSTANT. SCREAMS OF HORROR ROSE FROM THE CROWD, STRANGELY SHORT AND OUT OF CHARACTER, AND THEN FELL SUDDENLY SILENT. PEOPLE MILLED ABOUT, SHUFFLING AGAINST THE DIRT, EYES MOVING BACK AND FORTH FROM THE SHERIFF TO THE THREE BODIES STAINING THE SOIL WITH THEIR BLOOD.





THE SHERIFF LOWERED HIS ARM, AND THE GUN SETTLED LOOSELY IN HIS HAND. THE ACRID SWEET BLUE SMELL OF GUNPOWDER DANCED POLITELY AWAY FROM THE LIPS OF THE BARREL.

TO HELL  
WITH THESE  
MCCALLISTER PEOPLE...  
TO HELL WITH THIS  
RAILROAD...





THE TOWNSFOLK STOOD WITH VACANT LOOKS. THE FLOWERS AND COLORED PAPERS AND PINWHEELS WHIPPED AND SHOOK IN THE WIND, WHICH HAD STOOD UP BEFORE ANYONE TOOK NOTICE. THE PROMISE OF A NEW AND BETTER TOWN OF KILBOURN BLEW AWAY ON THE EVENING BREEZE.

SHERIFF DICKENSON STOOD OVER THE BODIES AND STARED, SEARCHING FOR SOME WORD TO SPEAK. FINDING NOTHING, HE TURNED AND WALKED TOWARD THE TABLES AND FOUND SEVERAL CLOTHS, WHICH HE USED TO COVER THE FACES OF THE DEAD.



Tell me to run....  
Tell me that at the bottom of all of this,  
there is truth.

Tell me to run to the very end,  
as far down as there is to go.  
Tell me to drive myself straight to Hell...



...and I would do it.

**Run Downhill**

presents

*Midnight Road Trip*

The brand new album featuring  
a preview of the all-new Song Comic original

**SPURS #2**

Written by T.J. Troy Illustrated by Chris McFann

Available September 2015 online and at select record stores and comic book shops

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**WAIT.. WHAT'S AN  
ASSCAN?**



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