

FOOD CHAIN AVENGERS

A Food Justice &
Worker Justice
Comic Book



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY JEREL DYE
CHARACTERS AND BACKSTORY BY LUIS DELEON

20 MILLION PEOPLE WORK IN THE FOOD SYSTEM IN THE U.S., JOINING MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD WHO LABOR ON FARMS AND IN MEAT, POULTRY AND FOOD PROCESSING FACILITIES, WAREHOUSES, GROCERY STORES AND RESTAURANTS. THE FOOD SYSTEM IS THE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE U.S. AND THE MAJORITY OF FRONTLINE FOOD WORKERS EARN POVERTY WAGES. IN THE U.S., A THIRD OF FOOD WORKERS SUFFER FROM FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER.

THE MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE DECIDED TO CREATE A COMIC BOOK FOCUSED ON FOOD WORKERS IN ORDER TO ILLUSTRATE THE ISSUES FACING THESE WORKERS, AS WELL AS THEIR EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE TO IMPROVE THEIR WORKPLACES, THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND THE FOOD SYSTEM. LUIS DELEON, A RESTAURANT WORKER AND MEMBER OF THE RESTAURANT OPPORTUNITIES CENTER OF CHICAGO, VOLUNTEERED TO WRITE THE BACKSTORY THE COMIC BOOK. HE CREATED FIVE CHARACTERS, EACH REPRESENTING ONE OF THE FIVE MAIN SECTORS OF THE FOOD SYSTEM, AND HE CALLED THEM THE FOOD CHAIN AVENGERS.



GIGI IS A 22-YEAR-OLD WHITE FEMALE PUNK ROCKER. AS A WAITRESS, SHE IS A TIPPED WORKER AND ONLY GETS PAID \$2.13. SHE WOULD LOVE TO BECOME A PASTRY CHEF BUT CAN'T AFFORD TO GO TO CULINARY SCHOOL. AND SHE WORKS LONG HOURS TO KEEP FOOD ON THE TABLE. SHE WORKS AT A NEIGHBORHOOD BAKERY/CAFÉ CALLED ROCK ON CAFÉ. SHE'S GREAT WITH SINGING AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. SHE COULD HYPNOTIZE YOU WITH MUSIC AND IS ALSO GOOD WITH MECHANICS.



JAY IS A 32-YEAR BLACK MALE WHO WORKS AT A LARGE CHAIN GROCERY STORE CALLED BEE HIVE GROCERY, WHERE HE HAS WORKED FOR 3 YEARS. HE HAS GREAT SPEED - HE COULD STOCK THE WHOLE STORE IN AN HOUR AND BAG GROCERIES LIKE NO OTHER PERSON. HE HAS WON EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH FOR THE PAST 3 MONTHS BECAUSE OF HIS UNCANNY SPEED AND HELPFULNESS.



DONNY, A 28-YEAR-OLD LATINO FARMWORKER, HAS VERY LITTLE MEMORY OF HIS PARENTS WHO DIED WHEN HE WAS 5. THE OTHERS LABORERS ADOPTED HIM, AND HE HAS LIVED AND WORKED ON FARMS HIS WHOLE LIFE. HE HAS A SIXTH SENSE FOR NATURE AND ANIMALS AND WOULD ONE DAY LIKE TO BE A VETERINARIAN. HE WORKS AT SUNSHINE FARMS, THE LARGEST IN KETTLE COUNTY. THEY PRODUCE STRAWBERRIES, TOMATOES, AND ORANGES, AND FEAR OF THIS COMPANY RUNS THROUGHOUT THE FARMING COMMUNITY IN THE COUNTY.

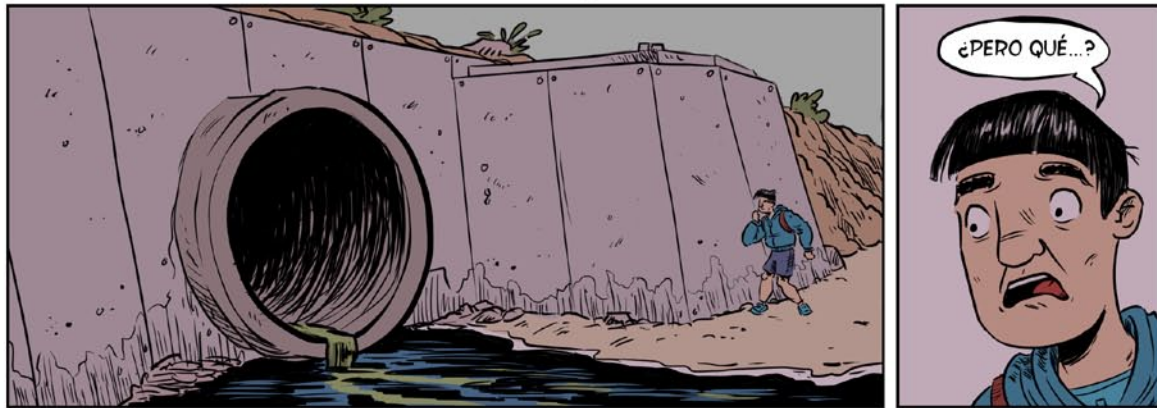


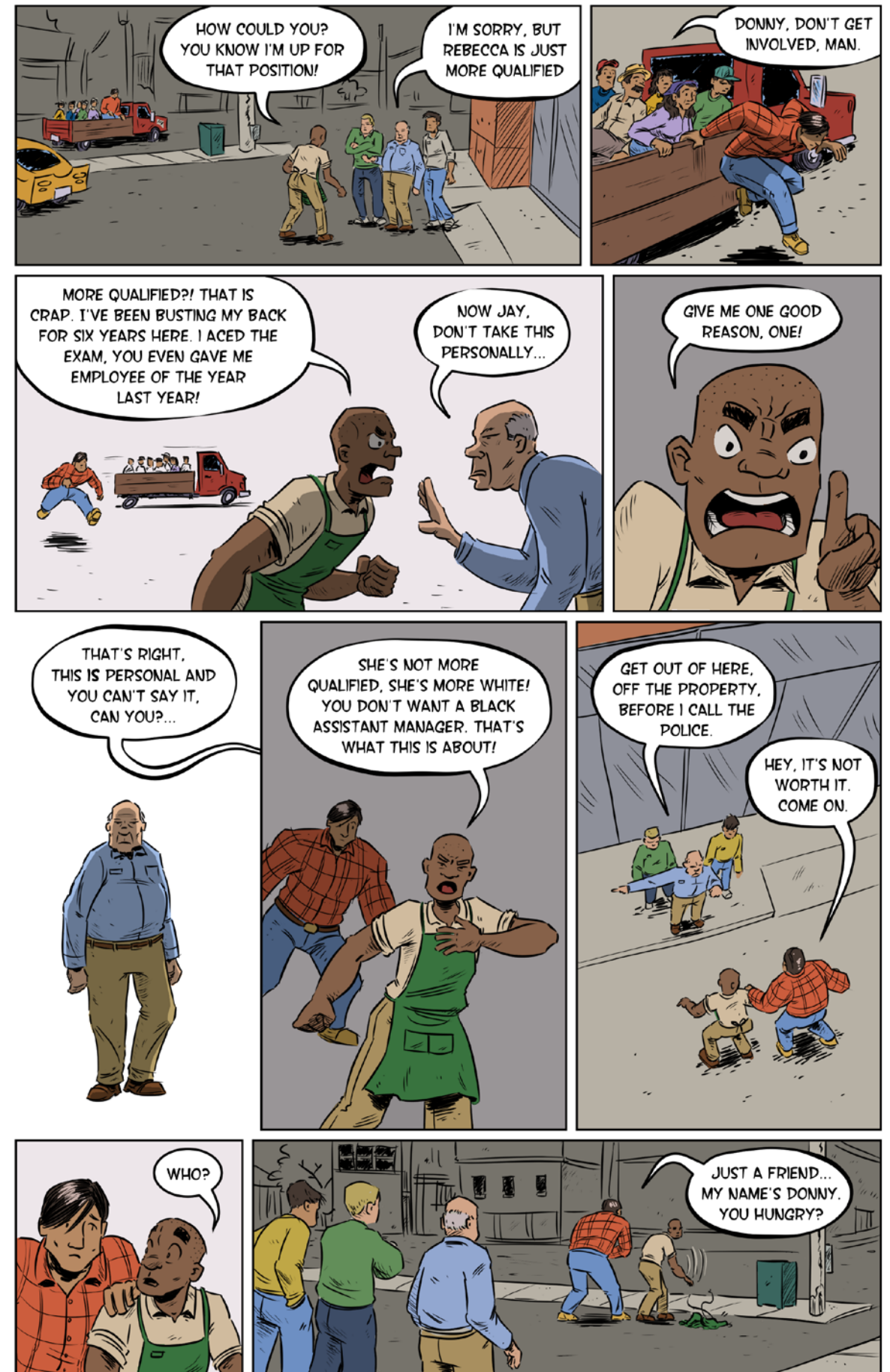
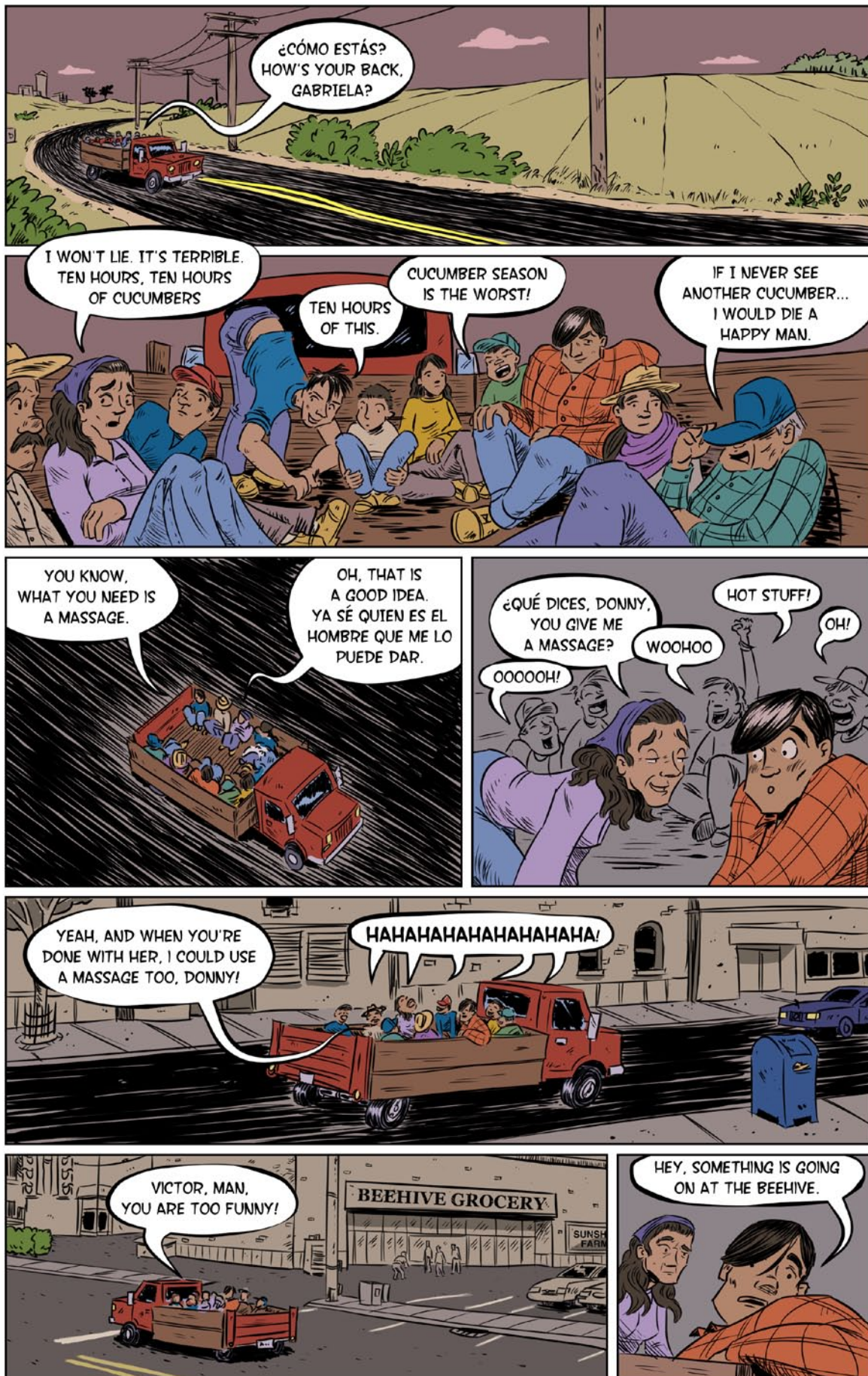
MIMI IS AS SMART AS A COMPUTER. SHE IS 22 AND WANTS TO BE A ORGANIZER TO HELP HER COMMUNITY BY GIVING THEM A VOICE AND BE A LEADER FOR HER PEOPLE. SHE WANTS TO FIGHT FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS AND WORKERS' EQUALITY FOR HER PEERS AND FAMILY BECAUSE HER PARENTS IMMIGRATED TO AMERICA FROM AFRICA FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR HER AND HER SIBLINGS. SHE WORKS AT ARTIC WAREHOUSE THROUGH A TEMPORARY STAFFING AGENCY BECAUSE SHE CAN'T A JOB TO USE HER SKILLS IN.



RAY IS 20 YEARS OLD AND CAME FROM A FISHING VILLAGE IN THAILAND WHERE HE WAS THE BEST FISHERMAN AND CAN SWIM LIKE A SEAL. HE MOVED TO AMERICA TO ONE DAY BECOME A MARINE BIOLOGIST AND COULD ONLY FIND WORK AT A COMPANY CALLED SHARK TANK, WHICH FISHES, PROCESSES AND DISTRIBUTES FISH, SUCH AS SALMON, PERCH, AND CATFISH. RAY GETS PAID \$6.50 A HOUR BECAUSE HE IS NOT A CITIZEN AND HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO WORK THERE.









...AND WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THEY'VE BEEN DOING IT, TOO. I MEAN, PEOPLE FISH THAT RIVER. THEY COULD BE GETTING SICK!

I ALMOST SWAM THERE TODAY! I WAS LUCKY I DISCOVERED IT. BUT HOW MANY OTHER PEOPLE HAVE GONE SWIMMING THERE?

THAT IS JUST AWFUL, AND YOU CAN'T FILE A COMPLAINT?

TO WHO? MY BOSSES? NO WAY. CLAYTON WAS RIGHT, I'D GET FIRED FOR THAT.



THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO. JUST TRY NOT TO GET SO WORKED UP ABOUT IT.

HMMM



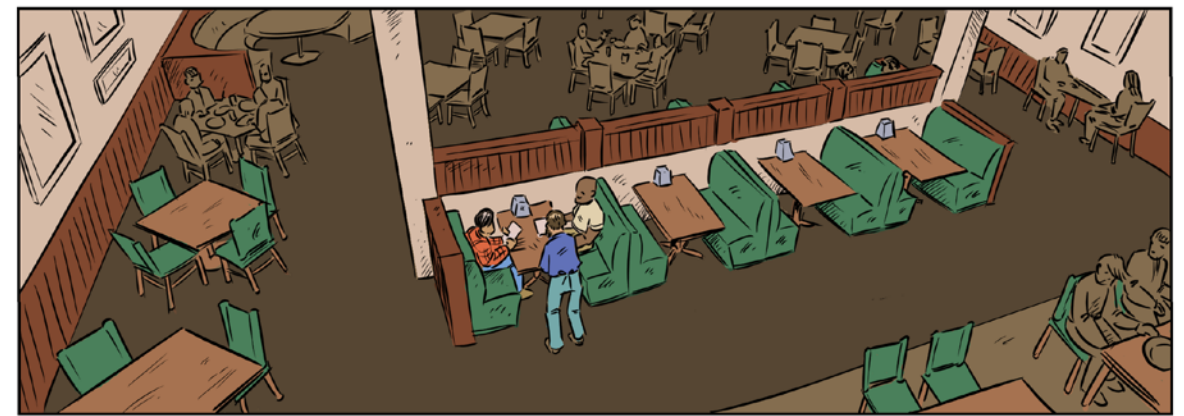
OH, UH YEAH. I GET TOO MAD ABOUT THE LITTLE THINGS



WELL, I GOTTA GET BACK TO WORK

HEY, THANKS FOR LISTENING, GIG!

IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO.



HEY, THIS IS ON ME. I STILL HAVE A JOB AFTER ALL.

ARE YOU ALWAYS THIS NICE TO STRANGERS?



NAW, YOU JUST LOOKED LIKE YOU NEEDED SOME HELP. NEEDED A FRIEND...

YEAH, I GUESS I DID, ERR DO. WHO KNOWS HOW THAT MESS WOULD HAVE TURNED OUT IF YOU HADN'T COME ALONG?



WHAT REALLY GETS ME ABOUT IT IS THAT IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN PASSED UP.

THE FIRST TIME I THOUGHT I JUST NEEDED TO WORK HARDER.



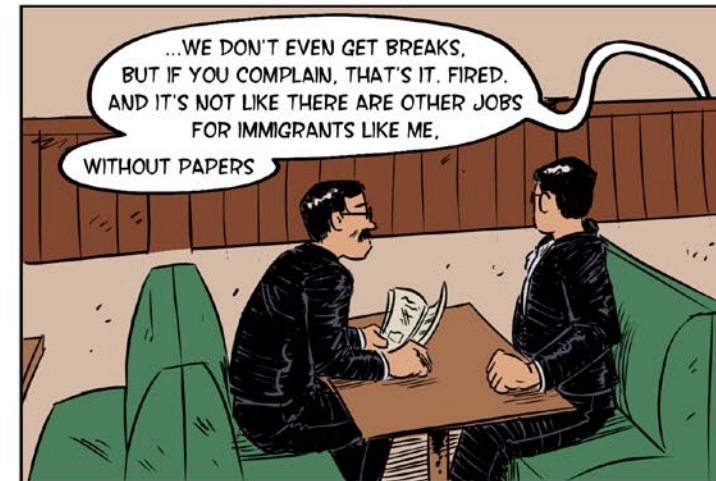
I PUT MYSELF OUT THERE ALL THE TIME, TO GET THEM TO KNOW WHAT A HARD WORKER I AM.

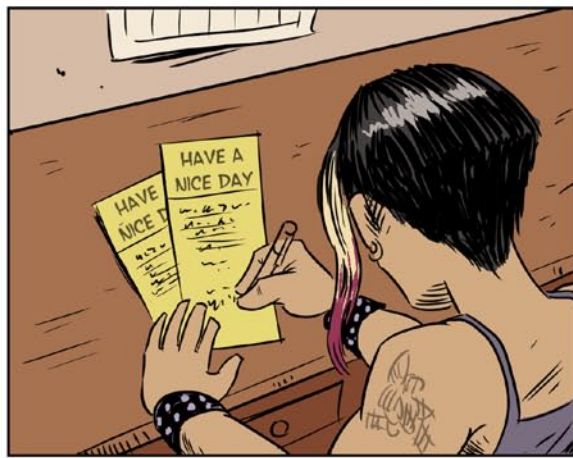
WILLING TO SACRIFICE FOR THE COMPANY. I MEAN, THAT'S WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO TAKE, RIGHT?

LIKE DILIGENCE IS ALL THAT SHOULD MATTER, BUT IT'S NOT

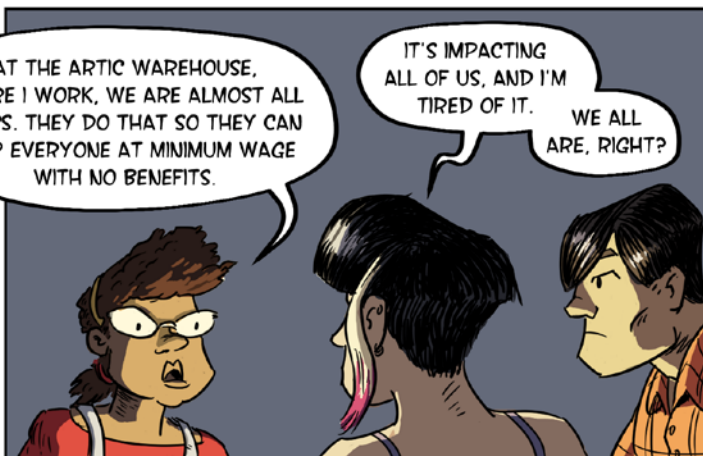
NOT IN THIS TOWN.



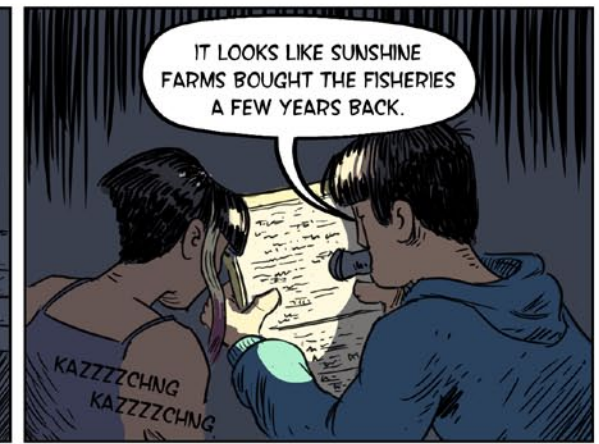
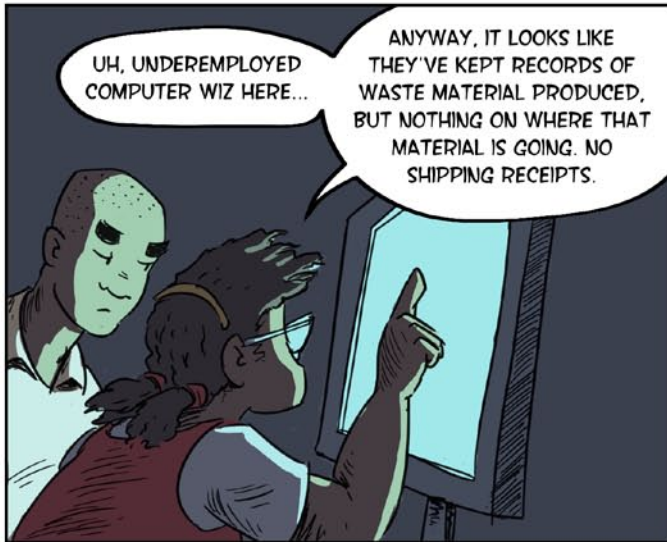




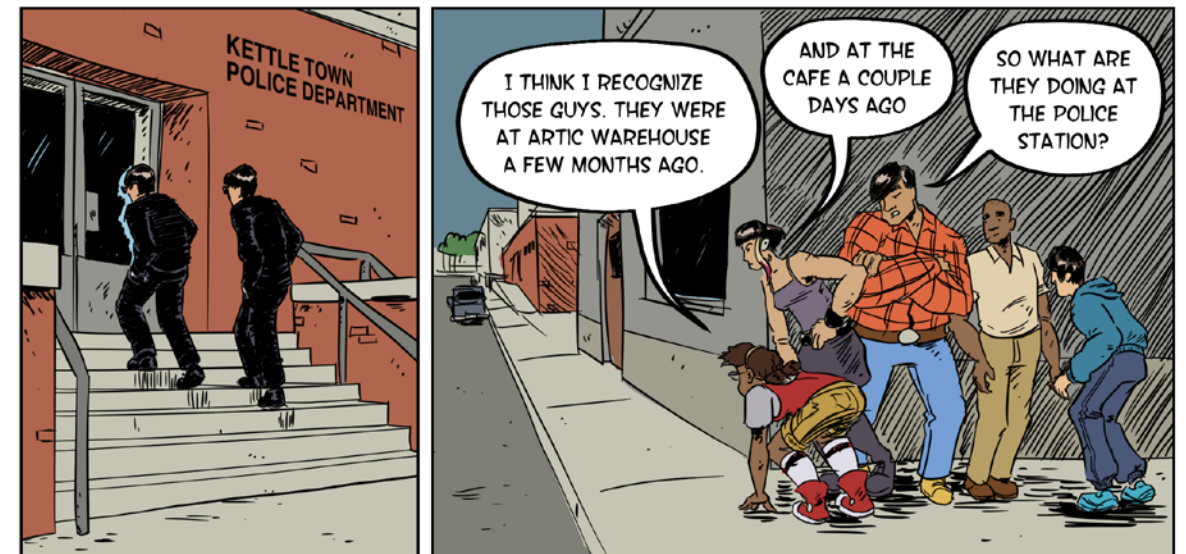
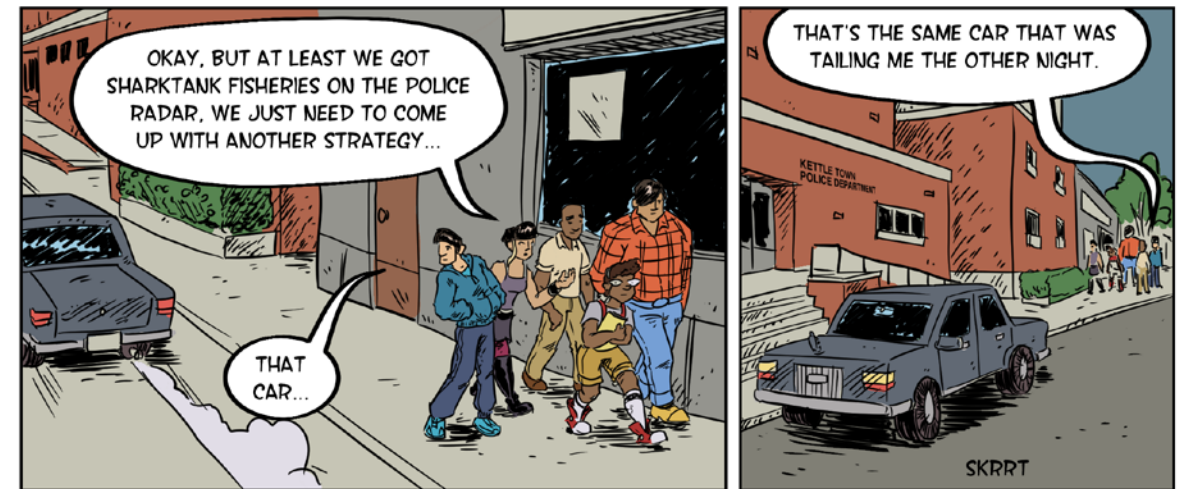
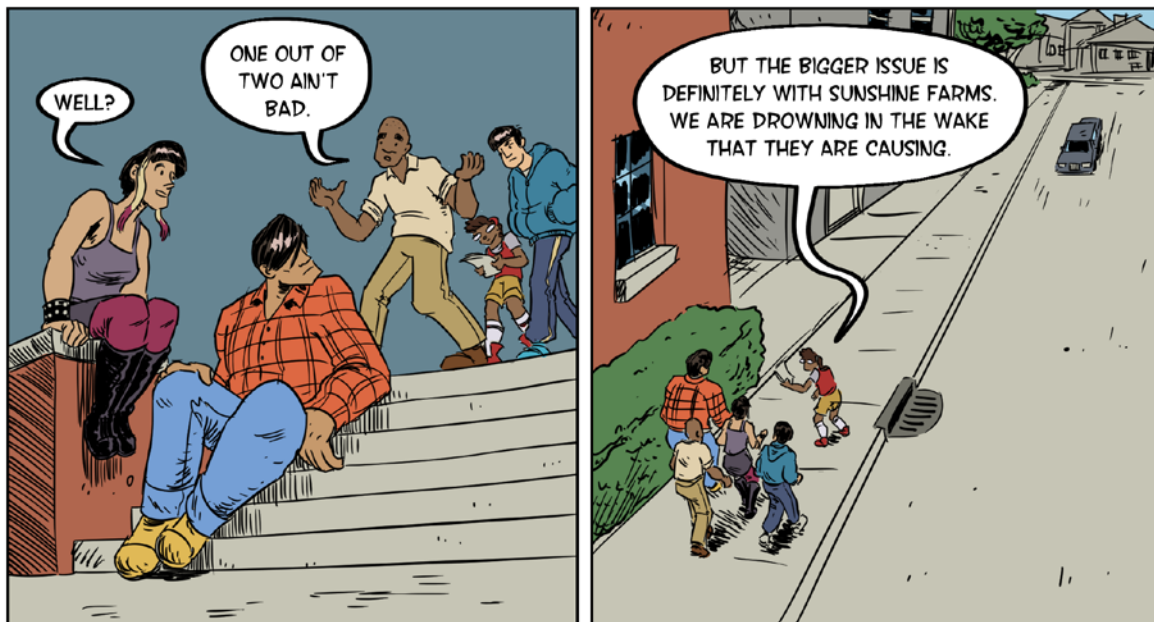
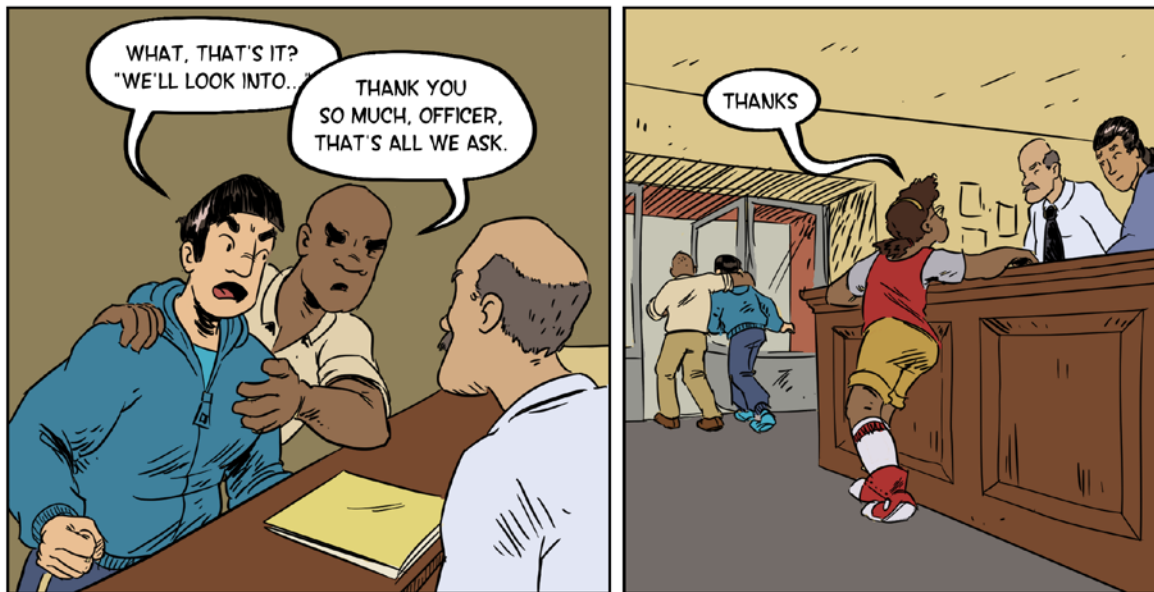


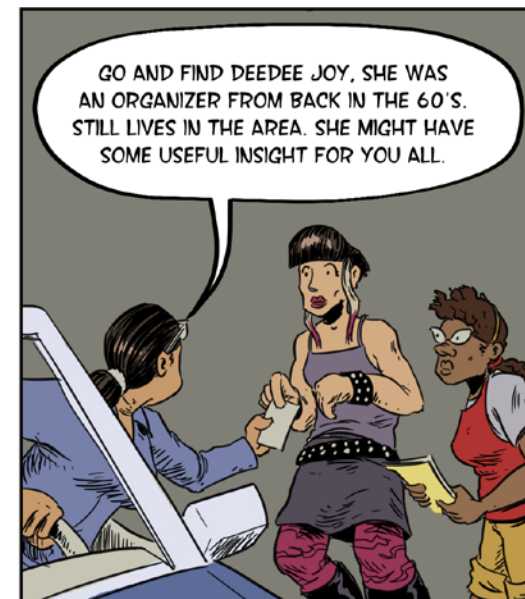
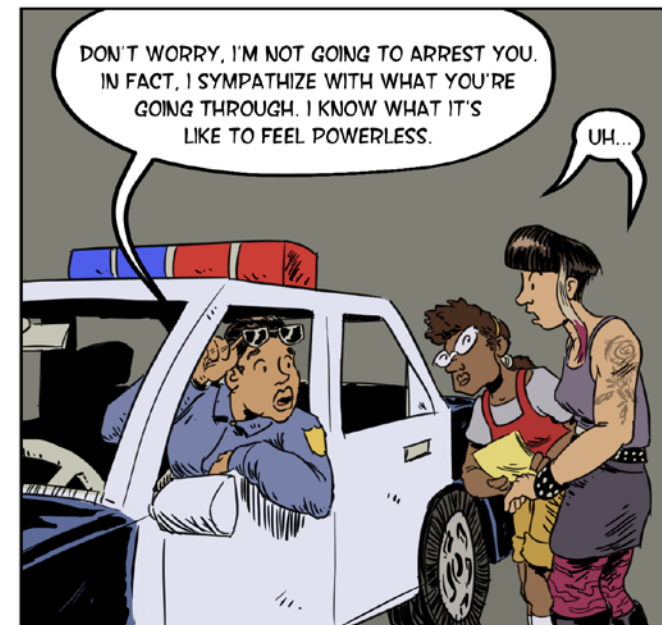
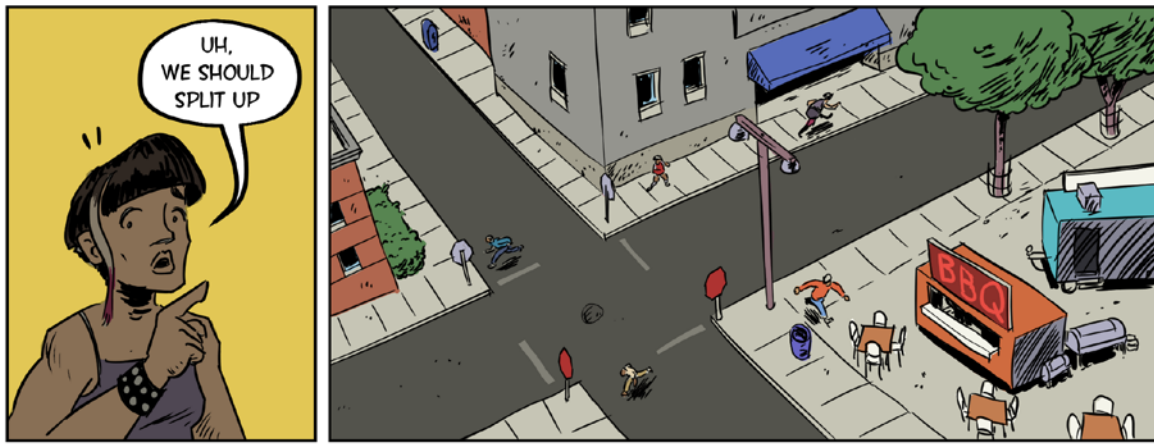


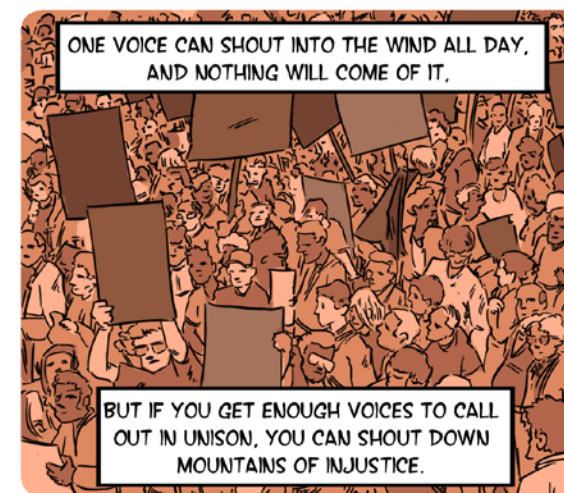
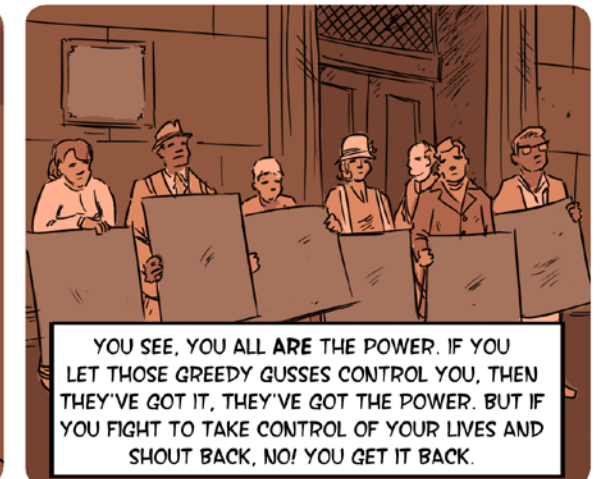
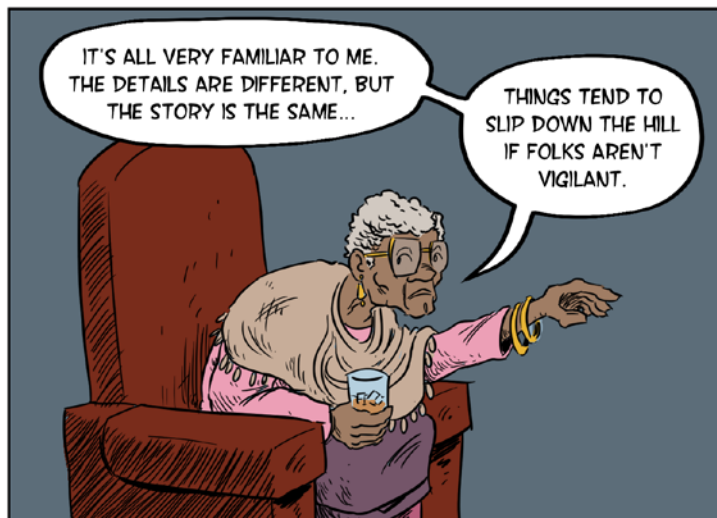
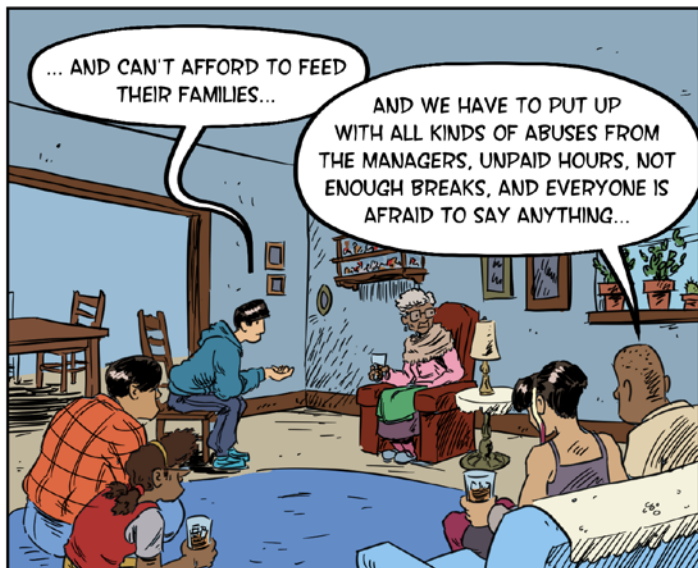
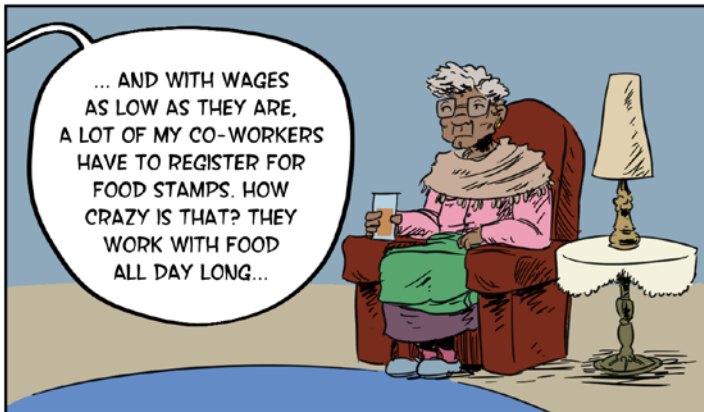














I KNOW THAT YOU ALL CAN DO IT



IT'S CLEAR YOU'VE GOT THE PASSION



YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND YOU ARE READY TO WORK FOR IT



I KNOW YOU'LL FIND THAT THERE ARE LOTS OF OTHER PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO ARE JUST LIKE YOU.



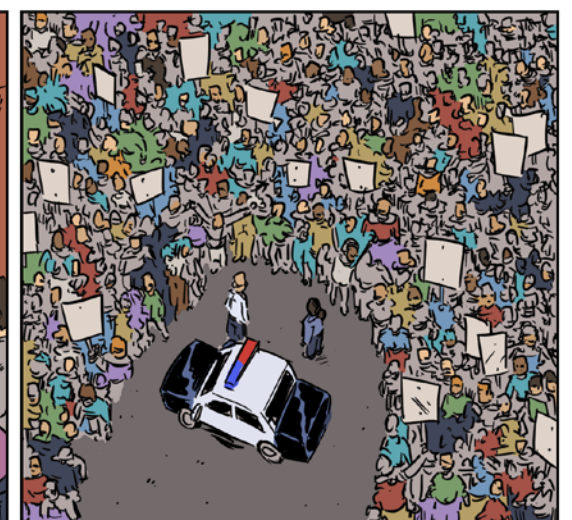
PEOPLE WHO WORK HARD EVERY DAY AND STRUGGLE TO GET BY.

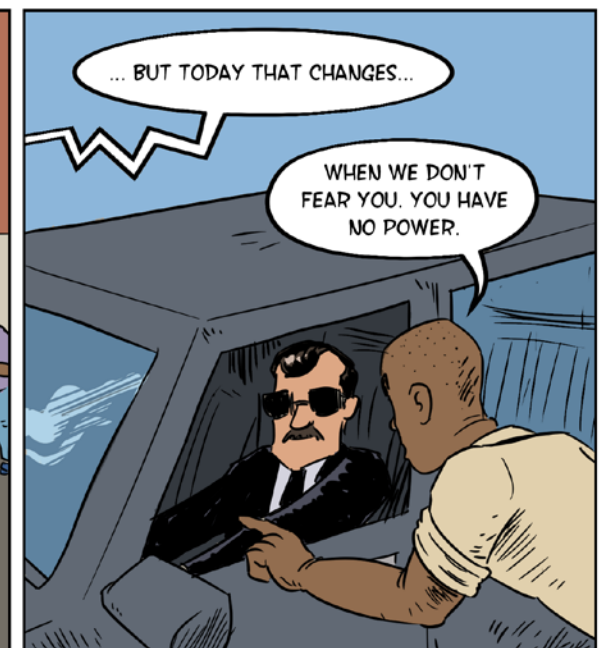
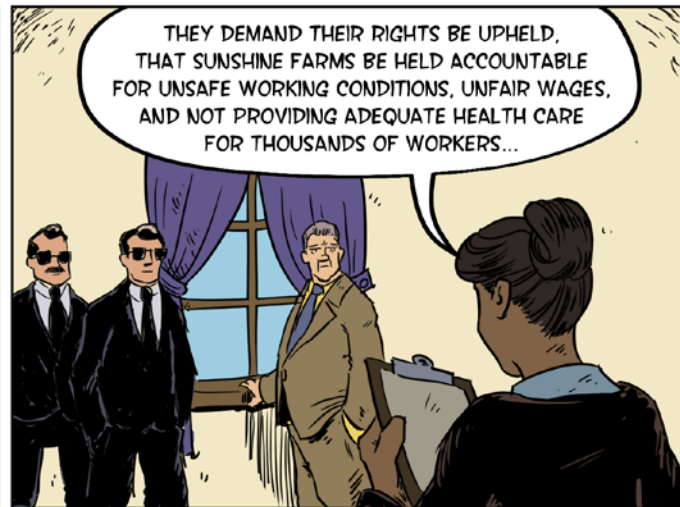


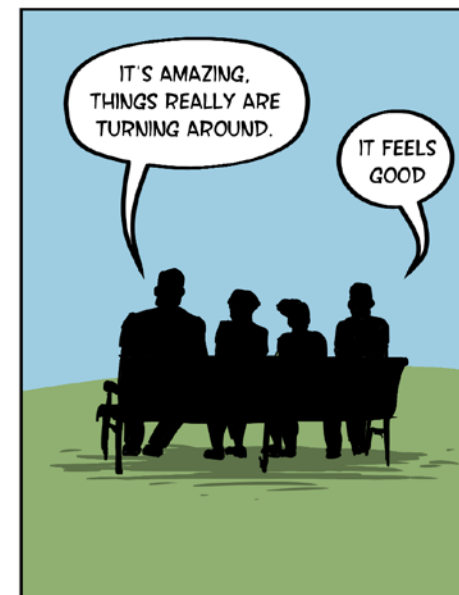
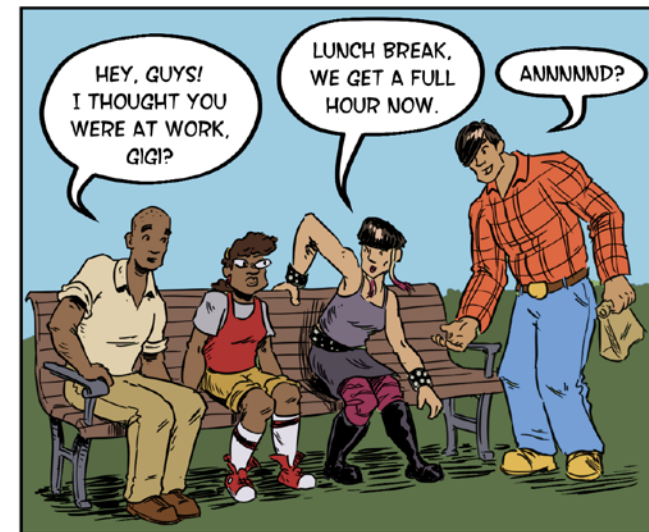
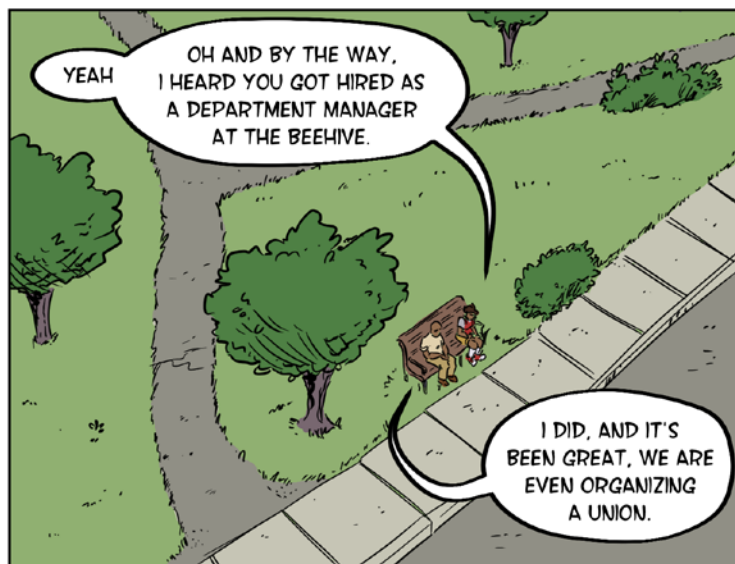
PEOPLE WHO KNOW THAT LIFE SHOULD BE BETTER



AND ARE WILLING TO FIGHT FOR IT.









MEMBERS OF FOOD CHAIN WORKERS ALLIANCE:*

BRANDWORKERS INTERNATIONAL
 BROOKLYN FOOD COALITION
 CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR RURAL STUDIES
 CINCINNATI INTERFAITH WORKERS JUSTICE CENTER
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 WAREHOUSE WORKER RESOURCE CENTER

* AS OF NOVEMBER 2014

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- LUIS DELEON, A RESTAURANT WORKER AND A MEMBER OF THE RESTAURANT OPPORTUNITIES CENTER OF CHICAGO, WROTE THE BACKSTORY FOR THIS COMIC BOOK. HIS FAVORITE CHILDHOOD CARTOON CAPTAIN PLANET, WHICH FOLLOWED FIVE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WERE FIGHTING AGAINST POLLUTION, INSPIRED HIM. HE WAS ALSO INSPIRED BY HIS EXPERIENCES WITH THE FOOD CHAIN WORKERS ALLIANCE IN LEARNING ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOOD WE EAT EACH DAY.
- ALL OUR DONORS VIA INDIEGOGO.
- CRISTINA WARD & AMY LIN, OUR TRANSLATORS

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU WOULD LIKE
TO ORDER COPIES OF THIS COMIC BOOK,
AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH:

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THE FOOD CHAIN WORKERS ALLIANCE IS A COALITION OF WORKER-BASED ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE MEMBERS PLANT, HARVEST, PROCESS, PACK, TRANSPORT, PREPARE, SERVE, AND SELL FOOD, ORGANIZING TO IMPROVE WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL WORKERS ALONG THE FOOD CHAIN. THE ALLIANCE WORKS TOGETHER TO BUILD A MORE SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM THAT RESPECTS WORKERS' RIGHTS, BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND RACIAL JUSTICE, IN WHICH EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE FOOD.