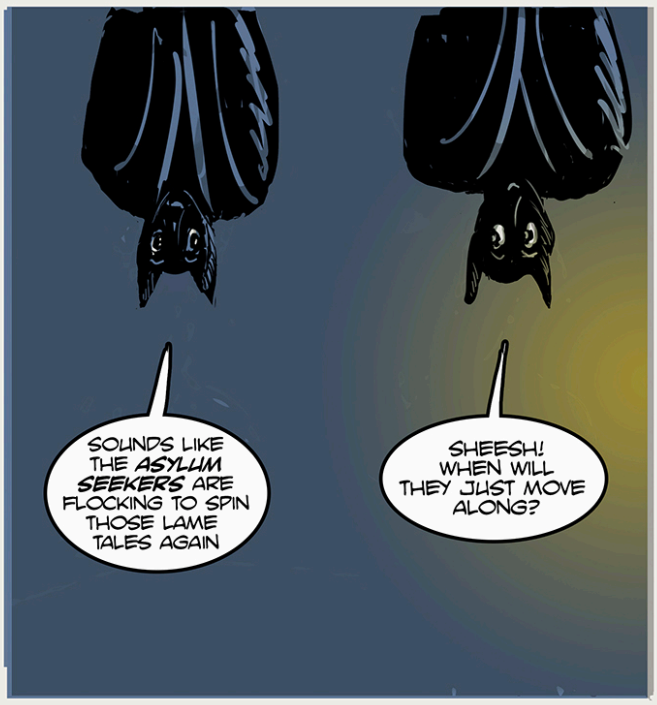
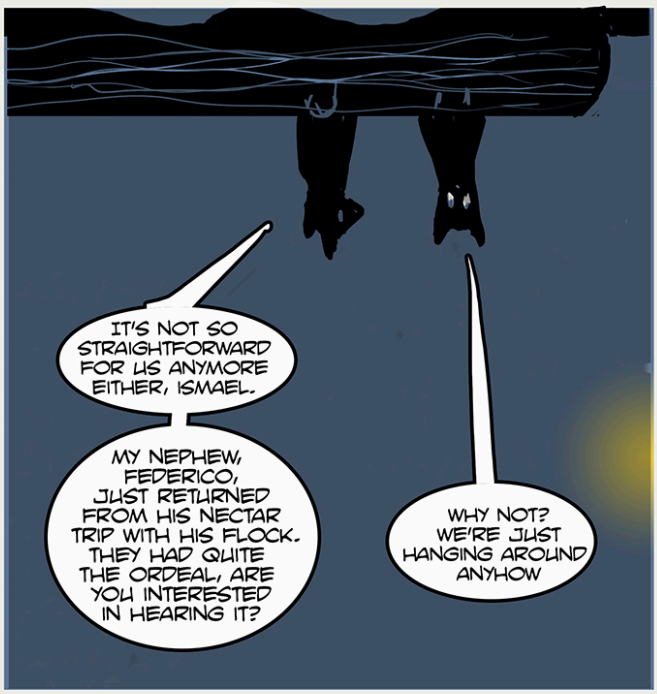
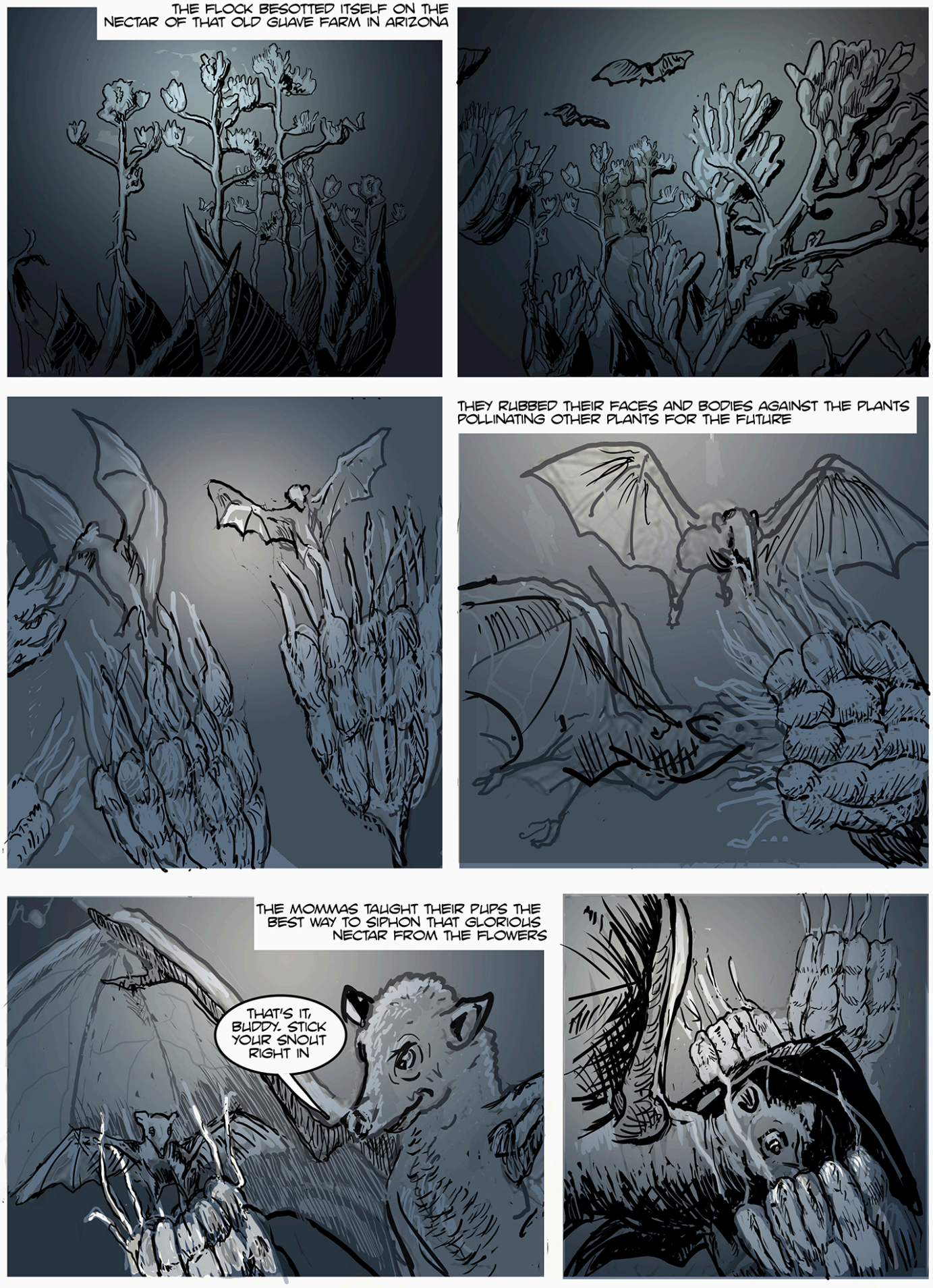

WHAT'S ALL THAT RACKET?

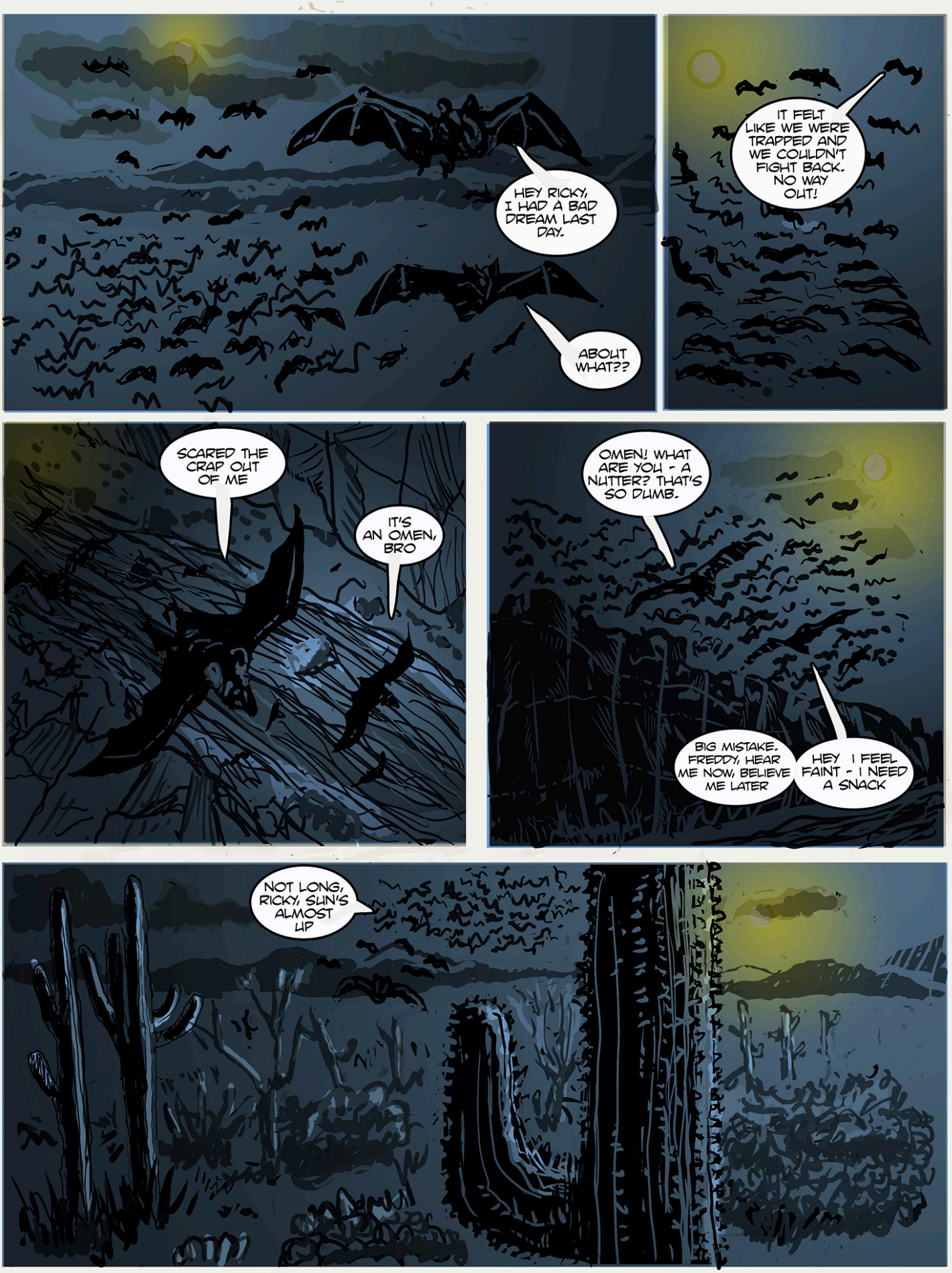

SOUNDS LIKE THE ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE FLOCKING TO SPIN THOSE LAME TALES AGAIN
SHEESH! WHEN WILL THEY JUST MOVE ALONG?

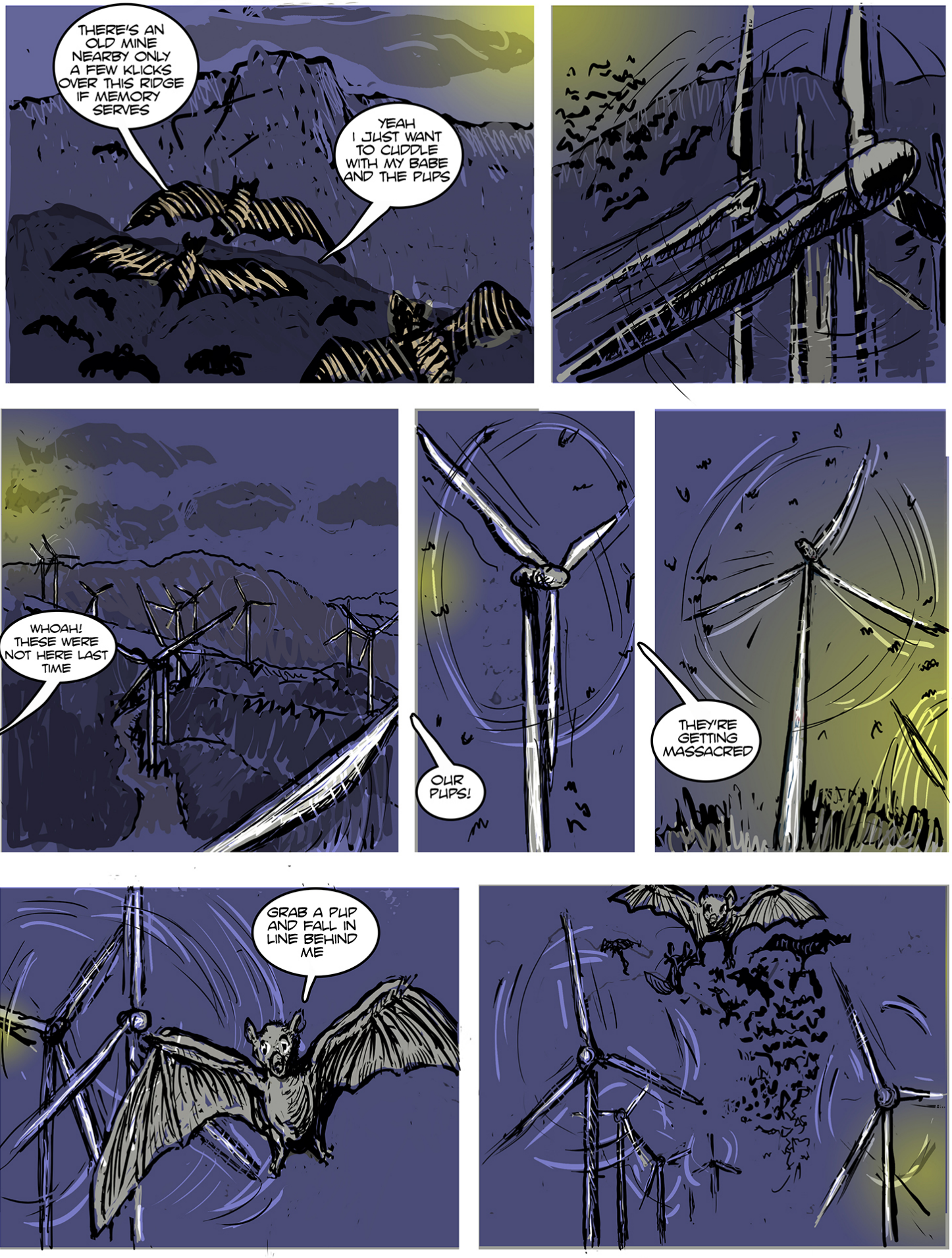

I MEAN, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? WE'VE CROSSED THAT BORDER FOR CENTURIES, GERALDO. IT'S NOT HARD

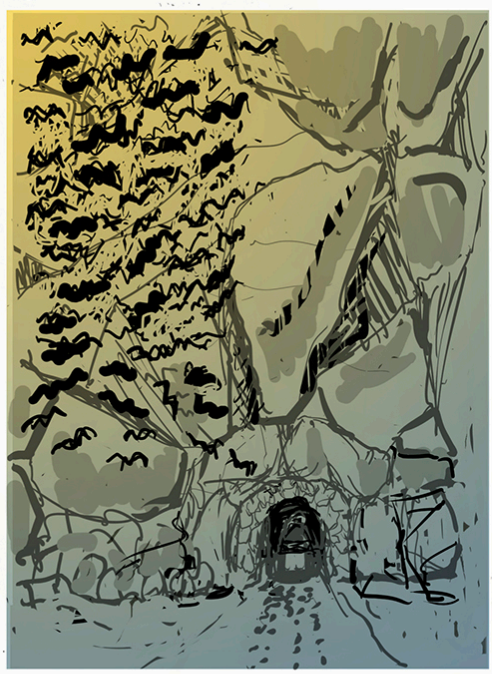

IT'S NOT SO STRAIGHTFORWARD FOR US ANYMORE EITHER, ISMAEL.
MY NEPHEW, FEDERICO, JUST RETURNED FROM HIS NECTAR TRIP WITH HIS FLOCK. THEY HAD QUITE THE ORDEAL, ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HEARING IT?
WHY NOT? WE'RE JUST HANGING AROUND ANYHOW

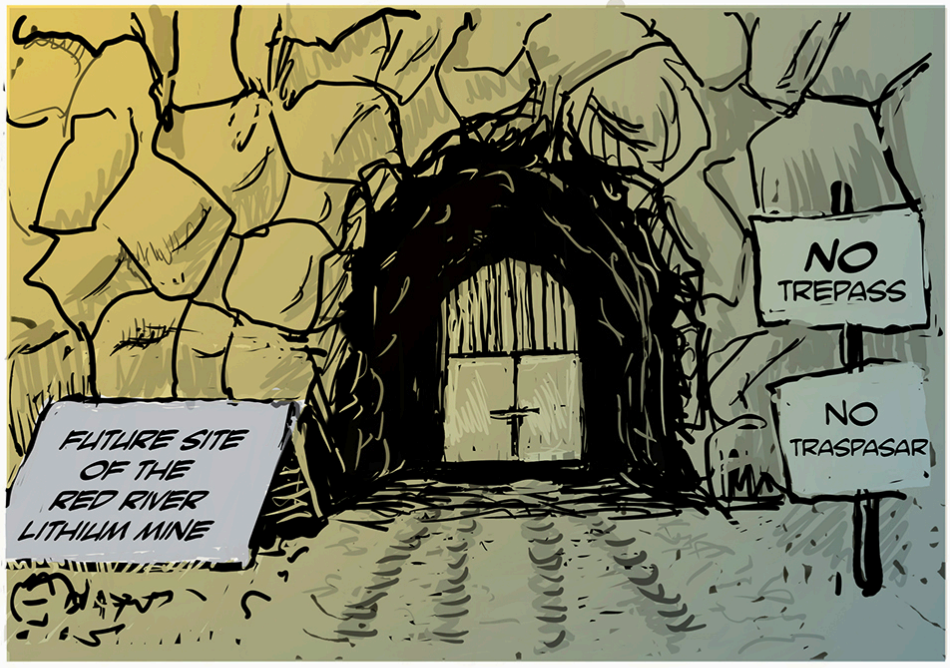

IT WAS NOT A PRODUCTIVE TRIP WITH MANY UPS AND DOWNS, NO PUN INTENDED


THE FLOCK BESOTTED ITSELF ON THE NECTAR OF THAT OLD GUAVE FARM IN ARIZONA
THEY RUBBED THEIR FACES AND BODIES AGAINST THE PLANTS POLLINATING OTHER PLANTS FOR THE FUTURE
THE MOMMAS TAUGHT THEIR PUPS THE BEST WAY TO SIPHON THAT GLORIOUS NECTAR FROM THE FLOWERS
THAT'S IT, BUDDY. STICK YOUR SNOUT RIGHT IN


HEY RICKY, I HAD A BAD DREAM LAST DAY.
ABOUT WHAT??
IT FELT LIKE WE WERE TRAPPED AND WE COULDN'T FIGHT BACK. NO WAY OUT!
SCARED THE CRAP OUT OF ME
IT'S AN OMEN, BRO
OMEN! WHAT ARE YOU - A NUTTER? THAT'S SO DUMB.
BIG MISTAKE. FREDDY, HEAR ME NOW, BELIEVE ME LATER
HEY I FEEL FAINT - I NEED A SNACK
NOT LONG, RICKY, SUN'S ALMOST UP


THERE'S AN OLD MINE NEARBY ONLY A FEW KLICKS OVER THIS RIDGE IF MEMORY SERVES
YEAH I JUST WANT TO CUDDLE WITH MY BABE AND THE PUPS
WHOAH! THESE WERE NOT HERE LAST TIME
OUR PUPS!
THEY'RE GETTING MASSACRED
GRAB A PUP AND FALL IN LINE BEHIND ME



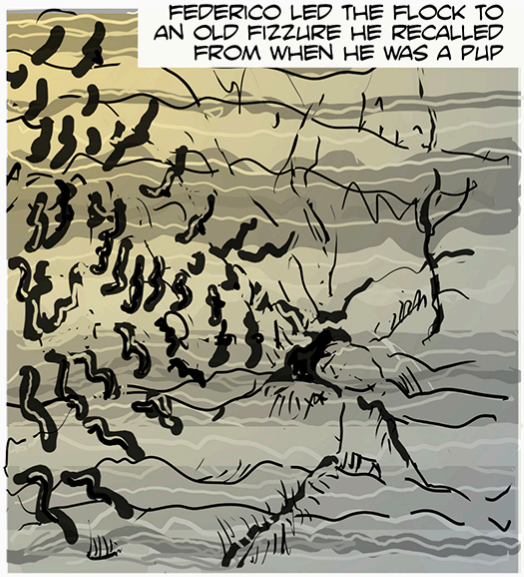

NO TREPASS
NO TRASPASAR
FUTURE SITE OF THE RED RIVER LITHIUM MINE

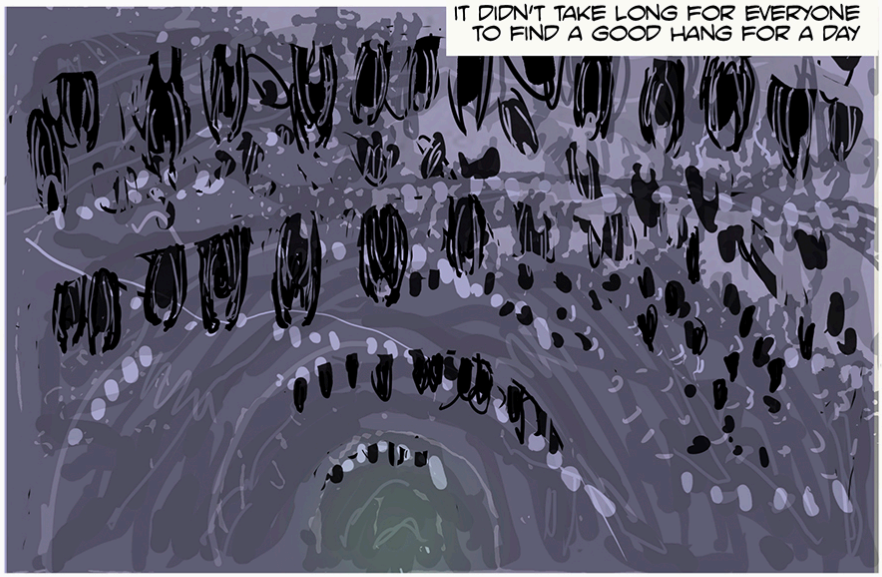



I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!


NOW WHATH DO WE DO FREDDY?


I GOT THIS. FOLLOW ME GANG


FEDERICO LED THE FLOCK TO AN OLD FIZZURE HE RECALLED FROM WHEN HE WAS A PUP


IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR EVERYONE TO FIND A GOOD HANG FOR A DAY


A PEACEFUL DAY'S SLEEP WAS HAD BY ALL


WAKE UP TIME FOR THE LAST LEG




I HEAR THOSE LITTLE BLOODSUCKERS NOW, BOSS
HERE THEY COME, BOYS, BE READY
JUST THE LITTLE ONES, RIGHT?

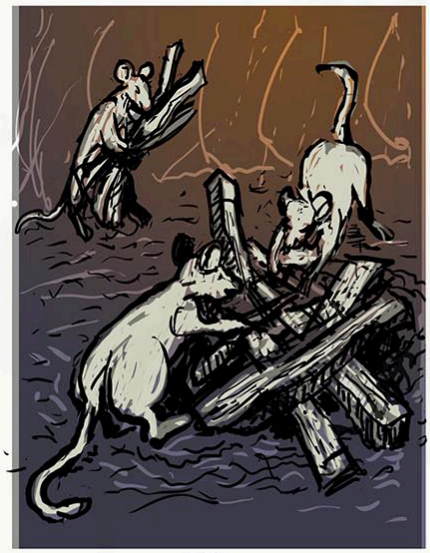

YEEEK
SHRIEK
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP


SHRIEK CHIRP--- CHIRP

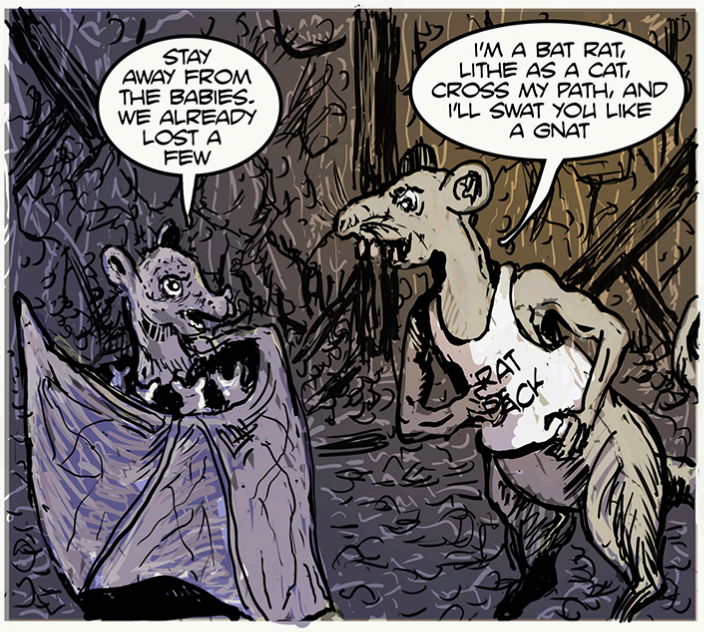

CHIRP CHIRP
YEEEE
COME 'RE STOP SQUIRMING YOU LITTLE -


HMMM LET'S SEE, YOUR LUNCH
I'LL SAVE THE OTHER ONE FOR DINNER


NO SNACKING! STUFF 'EM IN SOME HOLE AND COVER IT FOR NOW
RAT PACK




FREDDY, THEY'RE GOING TO EAT OUR PUPS!
QUICK, GET 'EM IN BEFORE THEY GET AWAY
BLOCK THE HOLES


STAY AWAY FROM THE BABIES. WE ALREADY LOST A FEW
I'M A BAT RAT, LITHE AS A CAT, CROSS MY PATH, AND I'LL SWAT YOU LIKE A GNAT
RAT PACK


WHY ARE YOU GRABBING OUR PUPS?
THEY'RE OUR PAY FOR KEEPING THIS MINE CLEAR OF DISGUSTING SMELLY THINGS
RAT PACK

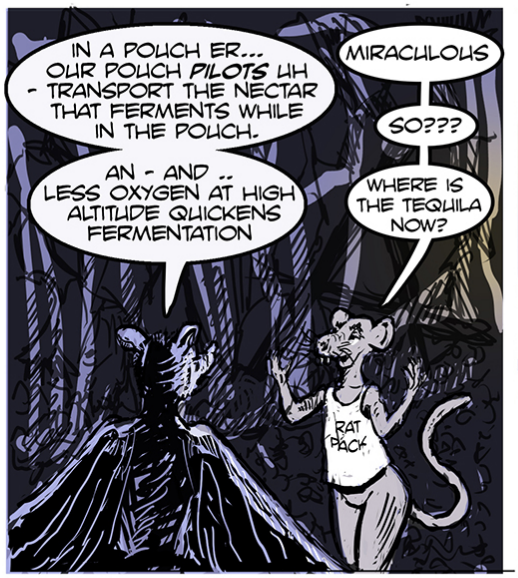

WE'RE PRACTICALLY BROTHERS. HUMANS TREAT US LIKE WE'RE KISSING COUSINS
NOT TRUE! WE DIVERGED 90 MILLION YEARS AGO DURING THE MESOZOIC ERA


WHAT! HOW CAN YOU EVEN KNOW THAT?
I ATE A BOOK ABOUT IT A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO. RODENTSIA AND LAURASITHERIA, WHICH IS MORE OF A NUISANCE


SOUNDS LIKE A BEST SELLER. BUT CAN WE DISCUSS ANOTHER PAY OPTION OTHER THAN OUR PUPS?


THIS IS YOUR NIGHTMARE COME TRUE, FEDERICO. WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO TO KEEP THEM SAFE?
GOT AN IDEA, RICARDO. JUST PLAY ALONG
GET A BUNCH OF THE FLOCK TO PEE IN THAT BIG TROUGH AROUND THE BEND BACK THERE


SO DO YOU LIKE TEQUILA OR SOME MESCAL MAYBE?
HOW PREY TELL, DID YOU HAUL GALLONS OF TEQUILA?
WE'VE GOT GALLONS - WE'RE RETURNING FROM OUR NECTAR TRIP UP NORTH


IN A POUCH ER... OUR POUCH *PILOTS* UH - TRANSPORT THE NECTAR THAT FERMENTS WHILE IN THE POUCH.
MIRACULOUS
SO???
AN - AND .. LESS OXYGEN AT HIGH ALTITUDE QUICKENS FERMENTATION
WHERE IS THE TEQUILA NOW?
RAT PACK


THE PILOTS WILL DUMP IT IN THE TROUGH WAY BACK THERE IN THE TUNNEL IF...
IF YOU LET US LEAVE WITH OUR PUPS.
HMMM LET'S SEE

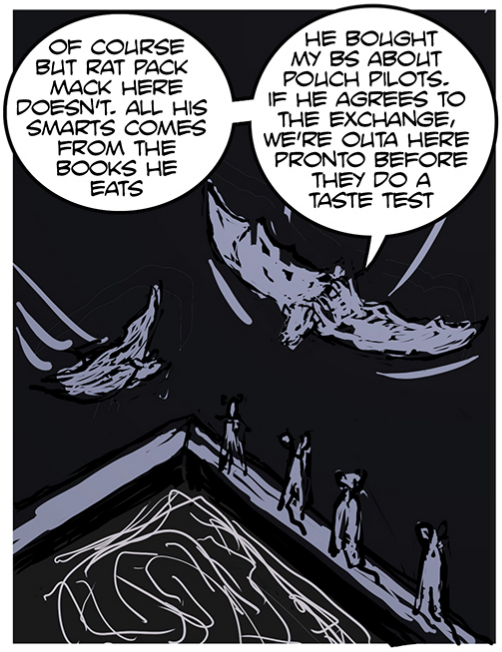

I THOUGHT IT HAD TO AGE FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS
LIKE I SAID, IT FERMENTS QUICKLY UP HIGH - LESS OXYGEN.


CAN WE TASTE IT FIRST?
IF YOU LIKE, BUT IT'D TASTE BETTER AFTER YOU LET IT UM BREATH - INCREASES ITS PIQUANCY YOU KNOW? LIKE A FRESH AND PERKY BEAUJOLAIS
OH YES, BUT OF COURSE


BEEN AWHILE SINCE WE PARTIED
YEAH I WOULDN'T MIND A LITTLE CHANGE UP. THESE PUPS AREN'T TOO SPECIAL
SO GANG WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HELL THIS'D LAST A YEAR


LET'S TALK
FREDDY, THAT'S NOT TEQUILA IN THAT STINKIN' TROUGH
SHHH QUIET


NECTAR ONLY COMES FROM THE GUAVA FLOWERS WE POLLINATE. THE FARMERS SQUEEZE THE TEQUILA OUT OF THE GUAVA PLANTS.
AND IT'S TURNED TO PISS IN OUR BELLIES AND BY NOW IS MARINATING IN THAT ROTTEN OLD TROUGH. YOU KNOW ALL THIS, RIGHT?


OF COURSE BUT RAT PACK MACK HERE DOESN'T. ALL HIS SMARTS COMES FROM THE BOOKS HE EATS
HE BOUGHT MY BS ABOUT POUCH PILOTS. IF HE AGREES TO THE EXCHANGE, WE'RE OUTA HERE PRONTO BEFORE THEY DO A TASTE TEST