

Bayport is a postcard kind of town.

CHAPTER ONE

Postcards that show off all of its best parts.



The lighthouse. The harbor. The boats that fish for lobsters and tourist dollars.



The postcards are invitations, bringing people to this sleepy little town.



And living here it sometimes feels like we're meant to stay frozen in time, forced to stay the same, like the images on the postcards.



But there's a lot the postcards don't show.

Stuff that I'm only finding out.

Stuff like...



...murder.



My father,
Fenton Hardy,
was murdered.
One month ago,
March 20th.

And they think my
brother Joe and
I did it. Offered our
own dad.

I loved that man.
There's no way
in hell I would. Or
could.



Joe must be in the other room. I'm sure they're going heavy on him, hoping he'll break.

He's a strong one, but even still--

JOE.
JOE?



YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?

I'M FRANK, CHIEF. JOE'S IN THE OTHER ROOM. WHY DO YOU ALWAYS MIX US UP?

Chief Collig's a good guy. Well, at least used to be, before middle age and the thought of pensions made him lazy.



YOU'VE READ TOO MANY BOOKS, OR WATCHED TOO MUCH TV. THIS WHOLE...MACHO POLICE THING DOESN'T WORK ANYMORE.

PROBABLY ENDED WHEN THEY STARTED TO BAN SMOKING INSIDE THESE ROOMS.

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF THE "HIGH-VALUE DETAINEE INTERROGATION GROUP" APPROACH? IT'S BEEN PROVEN TO WORK BETTER. GETS MORE CONFESSIONS.

LESS ANTAGONISM, MORE FRIENDLY BANTER.

I'LL GET A CONFESSION FROM YOU THAT WAY?

NO. 'CAUSE I DIDN'T DO IT. NEITHER DID JOE.



BUT SERIOUSLY, YOU'RE DOING THIS WRONG. YOU COPS ARE MORONS. IF ONLY YOU--

FRANK, FRANK...THIS ISN'T SOME SORT OF LITTLE TEEN ADVENTURE...



...THIS IS
REAL LIFE.

KRAK



Maybe I should
have chosen to
"remain silent."

Joe's better
at this part, the
whole physical
force thing.



I ALWAYS
KNEW FENTON
HARDY WAS
A CROOKED
COP.

AND YOU
KIDS EVEN
WORSE.


EVERYONE
THOUGHT YOU
WERE ANGELS.
WELL...



Collig's not the
smartest app
on the phone.

...NOT
ANYMORE.


But he's right.
We're no angels
anymore. Not like
we used to be.




I kinda miss the old days. Before things got complicated.

We had it all. Our parents were cool.


Dad was the lead detective for the police, Mom ran a small online business.



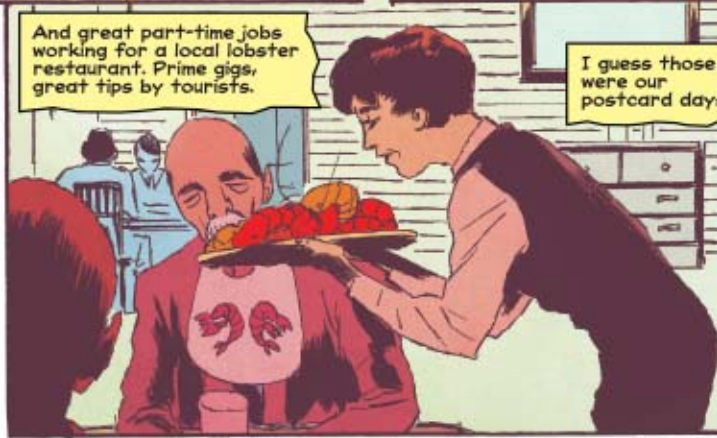
We actually did well in class. I guess 'cause we paid attention? Well, at least a bit more than most.




We had friends. Lots of 'em.



And no problems in the girlfriend department.



And great part-time jobs working for a local lobster restaurant. Prime gigs, great tips by tourists.

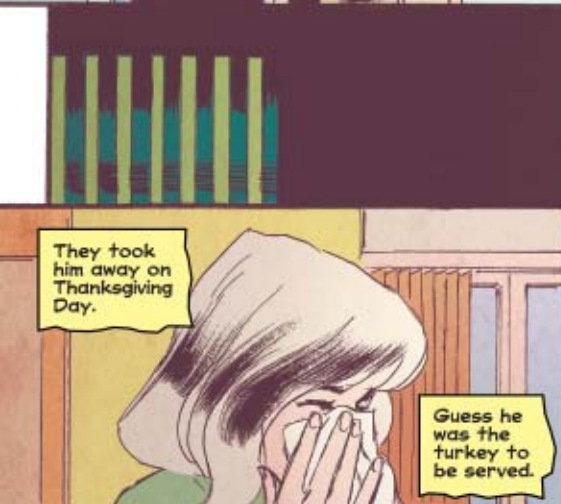


I guess those were our postcard days.

Until...



...Dad was arrested, accused of police corruption. Taking bribes from criminals and doing their dirty work from inside.




They took him away on Thanksgiving Day.

Guess he was the turkey to be served.



He was innocent. The charges were trumped up.





Dad started to get depressed.




CRIMINAL

In a small town, people don't like dirty police.


But we couldn't prove it.



Neither do wives.




Or girlfriends.

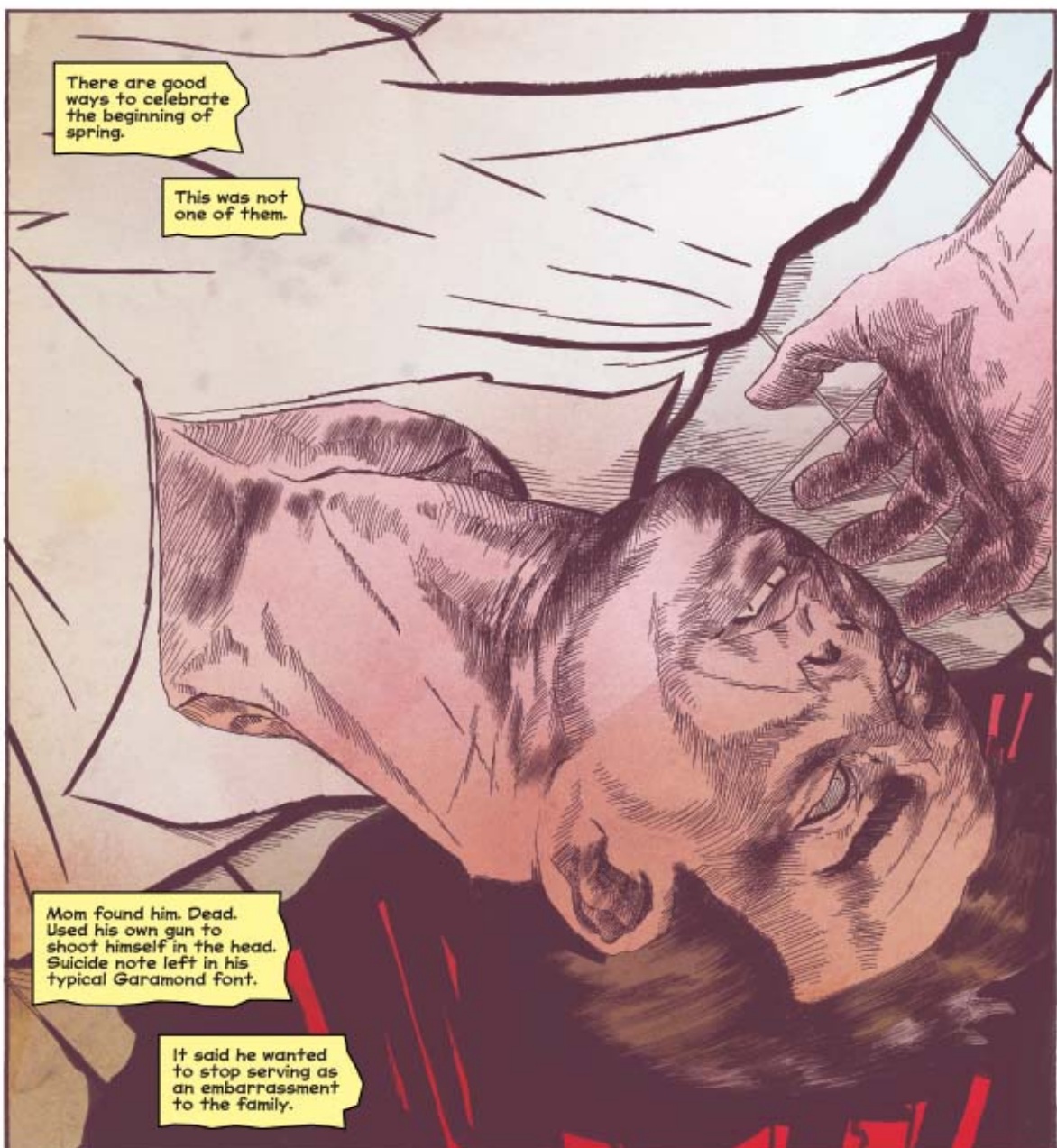


Or bosses.

And over the next few months even we started to wonder if there was some truth to it all.



I think Dad could see our doubt.




There are good ways to celebrate the beginning of spring.

This was not one of them.


Mom found him. Dead. Used his own gun to shoot himself in the head. Suicide note left in his typical Garamond font.

It said he wanted to stop serving as an embarrassment to the family.



Mom hasn't been the same since.


None of us have.



"TELL ME ABOUT
THAT NIGHT.
MARCH 20TH."

"YOU MEAN
THE NIGHT HE
WAS FOUND
DEAD? *BEFORE*
OR *AFTER*?"

"BEFORE. TELL
ME ABOUT
THE PARTY."



"AH, YES. NAN AND
BERT'S ANNUAL SPRING
FLING. I KNOW, RIGHT?
THOSE SPOILED BOBBSEY
TWINS. ANY EXCUSE TO
THROW A PARTY."

"ANY
EXCUSE FOR
DEBAUCHERY."


"BUT HEY, AT
LEAST THEIR
FATHER'S NOT
A *CRIMINAL*."

"THOUGH IT DID FEEL
LIKE NAN AND BERT WERE
AUDITIONING TO TURN
THEIR PARENTS' HOME
INTO A FRAT HOUSE. OR
SOME KINDA SPEAKEASY."


"EVERYONE
SAW YOU COME
TO THE PARTY."



"SAW ME, AND
IGNORED ME."



"MORE IMPORTANT
THINGS TO DO. OR
PEOPLE."



"BUT THEY ALSO
SAW YOU AT THE
END OF THE NIGHT."

"IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
HARD TO
MISS..."



"I GUESS I TOOK
THE TERM 'PARTY
CRASHER' TOO
LITERAL."



"WHY WERE
YOU FIGHTING?"

"I'VE NEVER HIT
JOE BEFORE."



"WHY WERE
YOU FIGHTING?"



"IN FACT, I'VE NEVER
HIT ANYONE BEFORE."

"HEY, COLLIG, I JUST REALIZED YOU AND
JOE HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON: YOU
LIKE TO BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF ME."



"WHEN PROVOKED, YEAH.
WHAT DID HE DO TO
PROVOKE YOU? OR FOR
YOU TO PROVOKE HIM?"

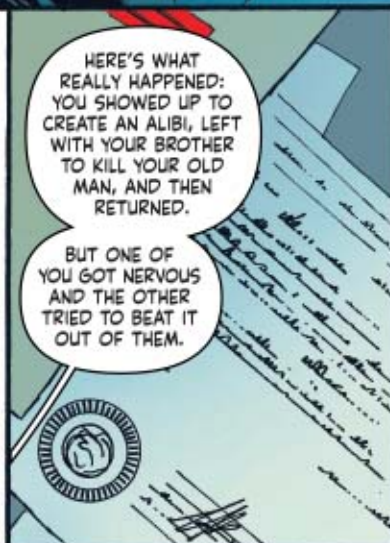
"WE HAD A...
DIFFERENCE
OF OPINION."



"AND THAT'S WHEN
I FOUND OUT MY
FATHER WAS DEAD."



"HIT US
HARDER THAN
ANY PUNCH
COULD HAVE."





WHERE
WERE YOU FOR
THAT HOUR,
JOE?

YOU'RE ASKING
FRANK THE EXACT
SAME QUESTIONS,
RIGHT? USING THE
EXACT SAME
METHODS?

YOU'LL
GET THE SAME
ANSWERS OUT OF
ME, DETECTIVE
PETERSON.



I GOT MY
METHODS.

ARE YOU
SURE YOU WANT
TO DO THAT,
PETERSON?
WITH ME?



Didn't think
so. Smarter
than he looks.

OKAY. WHY
DON'T YOU
TELL ME AGAIN
ABOUT THAT
NIGHT.

That night. The
night that changed
everything.

