

LOVE MONSTER: HARD CIDER
Written & created by Christopher Howard Wolf

PAGE ONE

Panel One - Int. Town Council Meeting - Morning

This is a moderately-sized meeting room filled with folding chairs that face a large DESK with three COUNCILMEN sitting behind it. The various Councilmen are nondescript, essentially the sort of folks one would expect to join and operate a town council when no one else wants to. Most of the folding chairs have CONCERNED CITIZENS of all types sitting in them. The Citizens seem relatively aggravated, like an argument has been going on between them and the Councilmen. Standing at a PODIUM facing the Councilmen is a CONCERNED FATHER, a mild older man in thin-rimmed GLASSES.

COUNCILMAN #1: Please, please... we need order. We cannot proceed unless you all come to order!

Panel Two - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

We focus on the Concerned Father as he stands at the podium. He seems very distraught, and has one hand in his pocket.

CONCERNED FATHER: You MUST pay attention to this! People are DISAPPEARING. My son... just had his BRACES put on, and... I don't claim to understand WHY, but all I know...

Panel Three - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

The Concerned Father rubs his eyes with his free hand. It's clear that he is fatigued. Haggard. He's probably been up all night.

CONCERNED FATHER: All I know is we need to CLOSE Pritchett's Orchard to the public. It's the only way to be SURE.

Panel Four - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

We now focus on Councilman #1 as he looks down at some PAPERS in his hands. He smirks, clearly not taking any of this very seriously.

COUNCILMAN #1: Right. At the height of the season. The Pritchett family BUILT this town, I think we OWE them better than some WITCH HUNT.

Panel Five - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

Two SECURITY GUARDS are now pulling the Concerned Father away from the podium. The Concerned Father now seems to be grabbing at whatever was in his pocket, as if he's about to bring out something important. The Guard don't care.

COUNCILMAN #1: (off panel) Security, please remove this man. Be careful, he's been through a lot already.

CONCERNED FATHER: No! You have to SEE! You'll SEE and you'll BELIEVE ME!

PAGE TWO

Panel One - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

The Security Guards are now dragging the Concerned Father out of the room as the Concerned Father struggles to get loose of them and return to the podium. He is still holding something in his pocket.

CONCERNED FATHER: WAIT! I didn't get to SHOW you! If I can just SHOW you..

Panel Two - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

As the Concerned Father is finally being dragged through the exit doors by the Guards, he thrusts a ROTTEN APPLE in the air, which he has presumably pulled from his pocket. The Concerned Father is wild-eyed, manic, as he shows off this apple. We can not yet see anything odd about it.

CONCERNED FATHER: LOOK! I found this in the orchard! You have to SEE it!

Panel Three - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

We focus on the rotten apple as it bounces on the floor here, where the Concerned Father dropped it as he was dragged out. We still cannot see anything odd about the apple just yet.

CONCERNED FATHER: (off panel) Wait! You have to SEE!

Panel Four - Int. Town Council Meeting - Continuous

This is a large panel, a close-up of the rotten apple. We can now see a crude little FACE craved into the apple. The empty eye sockets and the wide mouth are sunken and shriveled from the apple's rotting. Inside the mouth we can see some little carved TEETH lined with real metal BRACES!

CONCERNED FATHER: (off panel) The BRACES!!

CAPTION: Love Monster: Hard Cider

CAPTION: Written & Created by Christopher Howard Wolf

CAPTION: (inset additional credits)

PAGE THREE

Panel One - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Afternoon

This is a dirt parking lot in the middle of a beautiful countryside. AUTUMN leaves color the trees and sparsely litter the ground here. A few CARS are here, along with a weathered painted wooden sign that reads "PRITCHETT ORCHARDS". An APPLE sits on top of the sign, though we cannot see the small fruit very well at this point.

CAPTION: It's a tradition.

Panel Two - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

We now see a BUS on a nearby dirt road. It is parked, and has let off Bob and Pearl. Bob is dressed casually, wearing a long-sleeved shirt. Pearl is dressed as if it's the dead

of winter, with a JACKET, warm BOOTS, GLOVES, SCARF, and a FUZZY HAT. Both of them look off into the distance, as if surveying the orchard as they walk away from the bus.

CAPTION: Well... a NEW one, I guess. Autumn apple-picking, just Pearl and me. No worries and no "drama" as she puts it.

PEARL: I... am... FREEZING.

Panel Three - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

Bob and Pearl stop and face each other. Pearl looks genuinely distressed as she hugs herself. Bob grins.

BOB: Weird, I'M fine.

PEARL: Of COURSE you're fine. You're a BOY, and boys NEVER know what's good for them!

Panel Four - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

Pearl and Bob continue walking toward the orchard. Pearl presses up against Bob as they walk side-by-side. Bob is a little taken aback by this.

PEARL: Hold me.

CAPTION: I think I'll remember those words out of context.

BOB: Hey, it's okay...

Panel Five - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

We now focus on the apple sitting on top of the sign. We can now see a small FACE caved into its rotting flesh. A NECKLACE with a LOCKET hangs down as if draped around the apple's nonexistent neck.

BOB: (off panel) ... You'll live!

PAGE FOUR

Panel One - Int. Orchard Gift Shop - Moments Later

This is a small, quaint store at the entrance to the orchard. SHELVES of various apple-themed TOYS and TRINKETS line the walls, and a rack of apple-themed SHIRTS stands at the center of the room. Above the toys and trinkets is a sign that reads: "HAND MADE". A stack of APPLE BASKETS stand next to a wooden COUNTER with a CASH REGISTER. On the counter are a few APPLE-SHAPED HATS. Imagine the "Cheese Head" hats Wisconsin sports fans wear... but it's an apple. There is an ELDERLY WOMAN behind the counter. Bob is at the counter with the Elderly Woman while Pearl marvels over a shelf of toys.

CAPTION: I insist on paying, even though I'm not TOTALLY sure where the money's coming from. Suffice to say, I'm going to get pretty sick of these things for three meals a day.

BOB: Two baskets, please.

Panel Two - Int. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob is handing some money to the Elderly Woman, who studies him humorlessly.

ELDERLY WOMAN: Yes, sir. Beautiful day for pickin'.

CAPTION: It's worth it, though. I really need a nice, ordinary day of boring-as-Hell "fun".

Panel Three - Int. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob is picking up two apple baskets from the stack as the Elderly Woman speaks to him. Bob seems as if he has frozen in the middle of this action.

ELDERLY WOMAN: Just don't go past the DEAD TREES.

Panel Four - Int. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob is now holding two baskets as he peers at the Elderly Woman. She peers right back at him, again humorlessly.

BOB: ... WHY?

ELDERLY WOMAN: They're SPRAYIN' today. CHEMICALS. Don't go past the dead trees.

BOB: Huh.

Panel Five - Int. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

We see a close shot of Bob's face as he looks skeptical of what the Elderly Woman has just told him. Over his shoulder, Pearl holds up a CRAB TOY that looks like it's part apple. She looks incredibly happy.

BOB: Pesticides. Makes sense.

PEARL: BOB! A CRAB APPLE! I can have, yes?

PAGE FIVE

Panel One - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

We now see the exterior of this small store. An APPLE PRESS and a TABLE with CUPS and PITCHERS stand in front of the building. Bob and Pearl are walking away from the gift shop, each holding an apple basket. Bob seems lost in thought as he considers what the elderly woman said. Pearl is all smiles and happiness.

PEARL: I'm going to pick the BIGGEST apple.

BOB: I bet.

PEARL: How much?

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob stops and looks at Pearl quizzically. She's still grinning.

BOB: How much what?

PEARL: How much do you bet? If I pick the BIGGEST one EVER? Bigger than any of yours?

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob and Pearl continue walking. Bob is now a bit more carefree. He's essentially disregarded the weird feeling he just had.

BOB: If you win, I'll keep the HOT CIDER coming for as long as it takes to WARM you up!

PEARL: And if YOU win?

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

This is a close shot of Bob's face as he looks incredibly serious. Almost... evil!

BOB: I get the crab apple.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Pearl dramatically holds the Crab Toy to her cheek and looks incredibly shocked!

PEARL: NOOO! NOT MR. SNIPPINS!!

PAGE SIX

Panel One - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Moments Later

This is a dirt path leading into a thick apple orchard. The trees here are not necessarily imposing, but still create a "deep woods" sort of setting. As Pearl and Bob walk toward the entrance of the orchard, a YOUNG COUPLE walks in at a different angle, having come from somewhere else. The young couple, a male TOUGH GUY and a female AIRHEAD, look like typical high school "popular kids" and are not carrying apple baskets. The Tough Guy has a LIP RING and the Airhead is wearing big HOOP EARRINGS.

TOUGH GUY: Ha! Can't believe you chumps bought BASKETS.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

Bob steps up to the Tough Guy. Bob seems a bit meek while the Tough Guy sneers at him.

BOB: Excuse me?

TOUGH GUY: The baskets. Nobody around here PAYS for apples. Just pick 'em and eat 'em. What can they DO about it?

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

Pearl steps up next to Bob. Bob smirks at her words.

PEARL: Uh, HELLO. He's not CRIMINAL.

CAPTION: Ahh-ha ha ha! Classic.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

The Tough Guy puts his arm around the Airhead as the two of them turn away from Bob and Pearl. Both the Tough Guy and Airhead look as if Bob and Pearl are the stupidest people they've ever met.

AIRHEAD: What-everrrr.

TOUGH GUY: Enjoy paying for free fruit, suckers.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

We now focus on Pearl and Bob. They are now standing arm-in-arm and are smiling at each other.

BOB: Ms. Sucker?

PEARL: Mr. Sucker.

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

We pull back and watch as Bob and Pearl walk into the orchard, about to disappear into the tree line.

CAPTION: On a day out with the girl I love, who has no idea I love her. Ah, if that jerk only KNEW the depths of my suckertude.

PAGE SEVEN

Panel One - Ext. Deep Orchard - Later

This is a deep, dark section of the orchard. The grass is a bit over-grown and the trees are a bit shabby and rotten. This is clearly an area that has not been kept up. The Concerned Father from the beginning of the story is walking through this area, looking very scared and very cautious.

CONCERNED FATHER: J-John?

Panel Two - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

Suddenly, the Concerned Father stops and looks over his shoulder as if he heard something in the distance.

Panel Three - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

The Concerned Father stops at a HUT made of STICKS. This is a very haphazard and poorly made structure, clearly created as a very basic semblance of shelter from the elements. The Concerned Father has his hand in his pocket.

CONCERNED FATHER: Johnny? I'm not scared of you. You... you evil THING.

Panel Four - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We focus on the Concerned Father's HAND as he holds a LIGHTER to the hut, setting it on FIRE!

CONCERNED FATHER: (off panel) J-John... Johnny-

Panel Five - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

The Concerned Father suddenly turns and looks at the reader with fear in his eyes! It's clear that we're looking at him from the point of view of someone else... The Concerned Father is dropping the lighter, and the hut behind him is ablaze!

CONCERNED FATHER: JOHNNY EVIL-SEEEEEEED!

Panel Six - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We now see an AXE raised in the air, covered in BLOOD. We can see that it's been HACKING something... presumably the Concerned Father... off-panel. We cannot see who or what is holding the axe. All we can see is the bloody axe head and some of the wooden handle.

SFX: (hacking) HAKK-HAKK-HAKK

PAGE EIGHT

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - At That Moment

We rejoin Bob and Pearl. They are standing amid the apple trees here, plucking low-hanging fruit. The baskets are now on the ground, a few sparse apples within them.

BOB: I'm SO going to win.

PEARL: Oh, please. I'm like... a world-champion apple-picker. You didn't know that when you entered into the wager.

BOB: World-champion?

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl studies a large, shiny red apple in her hands.

PEARL: Well, I was runner-up for "Little Miss Granny Smith" when I was eight. Same thing.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl suddenly drops the apple in shock as a loud noise echoes off-panel.

SFX: (gunshot) KRAKK!

PEARL: Eek!

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob is now in front of Pearl, basically making himself a human shield in front of her as he stares stoically into the distance. Pearl is still confused.

CAPTION: All I wanted was ONE day away from the psycho circus that is Pearl's dating pool... I should've known my luck wouldn't hold out!

PEARL: What was-

BOB: Behind me.

PEARL: But-

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We watch as HUNTER, tall, dark Native American man, steps out from an apple tree some distance from Bob and Pearl. Hunter is dressed casually in JEANS and a T-SHIRT. In his hair is a black CROW FEATHER. He is holding a smoking HUNTING RIFLE.

HUNTER: Oh. Hi.

PAGE NINE

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob relaxes. Pearl steps out from behind him, looking at Bob as if he's gone insane.

BOB: Ahh, good. It's just a Native American dude.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Hunter walks up to Bob. He regards Bob as if he's a strange little man.

HUNTER: I think that's the first time a white guy said that.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob and Hunter continue to talk. Pearl is standing nearby, looking Hunter over with an interested eye.

BOB: The gunplay was a bit startling... let's start again. My name's Bob, and this is Pearl.

HUNTER: I'm Hunter. The Pritchetts pay me to keep the crows away.

BOB: Ah! Now it's clear.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob points to the crow feather in Hunter's hair.

BOB: So I guess the feather is a sign of respect for their spirits, or something?

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is a close shot of Hunter as he reaches for the feather in his hair. He has a look of disgust on his face as he tries to look in the direction of the feather.

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is still the same close shot of Hunter as he now looks forward, presumably toward Bob. He has a humorless expression as he holds the crow feather in his hand.

HUNTER: I didn't know that was there.

PAGE TEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob and Hunter stand there, looking at each other. Bob seems a bit uncomfortable. Pearl is nowhere to be seen.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is the same shot.

BOB: Soo... Guess I'm gonna skedaddle...

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob jumps once again, gritting his teeth as Pearl shouts to him from off-panel.

PEARL: (off panel) HEY!!

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob turns to see Pearl some distance away, holding an apple in her hands.

PEARL: HUGE apple! You're way behind, Bobby-boy!

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob turns to walk away from Hunter, waving to the man awkwardly.

BOB: Nice meeting you, Hunter. See you around!

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob faces the reader as he stops in his tracks. Behind him, Hunter speaks.

HUNTER: By the way, don't go past the dead trees...

PAGE ELEVEN

Panel One - Ext. Deep Orchard - At That Moment

We are now back where the fire was started in the deep, dark orchard. This fire is now spreading, consuming a few trees. The stick hut is no more than ashes. Standing before the fire is a black SILHOUETTE that is vaguely human-shaped, but is distorted by the heat and light of the fire. **We cannot make out the details of this figure's body yet,** but this is JOHNNY EVIL-SEED, an undead creature of sorts with a WOODEN BODY with random BRANCHES jutting out of his shoulders. One of his wooden hands has been replaced with an AXE HEAD, and his own head is a bloated, rotten, oversized APPLE with a human jawbone. He is wearing poorly kept OVERALLS and BOOTS.

CAPTION: There's that warning again.

Panel Two - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We now focus on the bloody axe head, dropped to the figure's side. The fire is still burning in the background.

CAPTION: Something tells me it's not really the pesticides.

Panel Three - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We now see an APPLE in a WOODEN HAND that looks a bit like a hand-shaped tree branch, uneven and awkward. The apple has a FACE carved in it, and is wearing the Concerned Father's glasses.

CAPTION: But then again, as long as it STAYS past that trees, who really gives a crap?

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - At That Moment

We are now back with Pearl and Bob. Bob is carrying both apple baskets, one on top of the other. The baskets are

almost filled with apples now. Pearl walks ahead of Bob as he follows.

BOB: Do you smell smoke?

PEARL: No.

BOB: Okey-doke.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl stops at an apple tree. Bob is standing near another tree nearby, still toting the baskets.

PEARL: That "Hunter" fellow seemed nice.

BOB: I suppose.

PEARL: Maybe you like, eh?

CAPTION: Oh, right. I should remember to, at some point, clear up this minor "Gay Bob" misconception.

PAGE TWELVE

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob absently looks toward the apple tree he is standing near as he replies to Pearl.

BOB: You know, I've been meaning to say-

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Suddenly, Bob DROPS the apple baskets in shock! He is still looking toward the apple tree.

PEARL: (off panel) Hmm?

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We now see what Bob was looking at. An APPLE sits on a nearby branch. It is rotten, with a little carved FACE and a BAND-AID in its "forehead". A few MAGGOTS cluster in its little eye socket.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob has grabbed the rotten apple off of the branch, awkwardly holding the branch while he holds the apple aloft. He looks frantic.

CAPTION: Yup! We officially have a problem. This is the LAST thing I need Pearl to see right now...

PEARL: (off panel) You've been meaning to say what?

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl is now looking directly at Bob, who is holding the rotten apple in his hand, hiding the carved face in his palm. He looks like a deer caught in the headlights, unsure of what to say or do next.

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

With a wince, Bob takes a bite of the rotten apple.

BOB: I'm starving.

SFX: (biting into rotten apple) Slukk

PAGE THIRTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Deep Orchard - At That Moment

We now see a row of DEAD TREES, almost in a perfect regimented line. Their withered branches create the typical sense of death and the supernatural, twisting upward into the air at wild angles. Behind the tree line, we can see there is FIRE spreading. It is not overtaking everything, yet, and is more restricted to the ground and is climbing the trees just a bit.

Panel Two - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

This is a ground-level shot. We see one of Johnny Evil-Seed's BOOTS step up to the tree line. Some thick ROOTS are emerging from the busted TOE of the boot.

Panel Three - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We now see the line of trees again as the fire behind them is growing, consuming more of the land and trees. Johnny Evil-Seed stands at the tree line, almost as if he cannot cross it. He stands stoically, silently, almost zombie-like.

JOHNNY EVIL-SEED: Nevrrr...

Panel Four - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

Johnny Evil-Seed takes a large, meaningful step past the tree line, into the rest of the orchard, as the fire behind him grows even more!

Panel Five - Ext. Deep Orchard - Continuous

We now see Johnny Evil-Seed from behind as he walks away from the reader, into the rest of the orchard.

JOHNNY EVIL-SEED: Nevr passt the ded trees.

PAGE FOURTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Moments Later

Pearl and Bob now stand over nearly full apple baskets. They both seem to be surveying their loot, hands on hips.

BOB: WINNING.

PEARL: Disagree.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl seems curious about something as she addresses Bob, who reacts to the question by covering his mouth as if in shock, his eyes wide.

PEARL: So how DID you break it to Armageddus that he wasn't coming?

BOB: OOP.

Panel Three - Int. Subterranean Lair - At That Moment

This is a dark, dank little room someplace presumably below the Earth's surface. Bare stone walls and sparse furniture make this look like a very depressing little hide-out. ARMAGEDDUS is standing here, shouting at a TELEPHONE on a nearby TABLE. Armageddus is wearing a SUN HAT as his tentacles flail in anger.

ARMAGEDDUS: RING, YOU INFERNAL COMMUNICATION APPARATUS!
ARMAGEDDUS WILL IT SO!!

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - At That Moment

Back with Bob and Pearl, Bob looks sheepish as Pearl gives him a look of slight disappointment.

BOB: I MAY have forgotten to handle that situation.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob and Pearl casually turn toward an off-panel voice. Neither is particularly concerned, they've just had their attention diverted off-panel.

AIRHEAD: (off panel) Like... hello?

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

A bit bedraggled, with TWIGS sticking out of her mussed hair, the Airhead emerges from a mass of BUSHES. She is

holding a CARVED APPLE with the Tough Guy's lip ring on its little face.

AIRHEAD: Have you seen my boyfriend? All I can find is, like, this weird THING...

PAGE FIFTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob has now rushed up to the Airhead and is ushering her away from Pearl, who once again seems confused as to what the heck is going on. Bob holds the Airhead by the arm, gently, leading her. She still seems bewildered.

AIRHEAD: I bet he's playing a TRICK, like, he thinks I'm dumb.

BOB: I'm sure that's it. Listen, why don't you take that back to the GIFT SHOP and talk to the nice lady THERE? I have a feeling she'll want to know about this.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob watches as the Airhead walks off through the orchard, still toting the apple.

CAPTION: Stupid! I should've realized... those two never GOT the warning...

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob turns back to Pearl as if nothing is wrong. He's almost TOO casual.

BOB: OKAY! Now about that hot cider...

PEARL: Wait, what was that about?

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob is now picking up one of the apple baskets off the ground.

BOB: Relationship trouble. You know how that is!

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is a close shot of Pearl's face as she arches an eyebrow at Bob. She seems a bit offended.

PEARL: Oh, do I?

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob is now stacking one apple basket on top of the other. He seems in quite a hurry to get out of here, now.

BOB: MEN. That's what I meant. MEN! What's their deal, right?

PAGE SIXTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Later

The gift shop is just as we left it previously, with a few small changes. First, there is a CLOSED sign at the door, and secondly the pitchers are filled with RED LIQUID. Bob is hurriedly walking up to the shop, his stance awkward as he carries the apple baskets.

BOB: Aaand, here we are! Cider central.

CAPTION: Huh. Odd time to close up shop...

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob is now putting down the baskets. He clearly thinks something strange is going on as he looks concerned. We still haven't seen Pearl.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob is now at the pitchers. He lifts one up and studies the red liquid within.

CAPTION: And since when is cider BLOOD RED?

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

We now see the table the pitchers rest upon. Half-hidden behind one of the pitchers is a CARVED APPLE that is wearing the Airhead's earrings!

BOB: (off panel) Aw, no.

CAPTION: Hmm. Definately my fault.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob suddenly turns away from the table, calling to Pearl, who he assumes to be right nearby. He looks very serious.

BOB: Actually, Pearl, let's...

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Surprised, Bob looks around. Pearl is nowhere in sight!

BOB: PEARL?!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

Bob now runs back to the orchard like a man on a mission. He is cold, reserved, focused.

CAPTION: I know. I should've guessed this would happen.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob is now sprinting through the trees, his senses honed for any sign of Pearl.

CAPTION: It's a fine line I have to walk. I can only watch over her so much before it gets obvious.

BOB: PEARL!?

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob suddenly stops in his tracks as he hears something off-panel. Almost like a predator, he turns to the direction of the noise.

CAPTION: Occasional frantic sprints through valleys of DEATH seem to be the price for being a conniving weasel.

HUNTER: (off panel) Arrghhh...

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob walks up to Hunter, who is slumped against a tree. Hunter holds his GUT as BLOOD seeps through his fingers and stains his clothes. His other hand is still clutching the rifle, and he's clearly in a lot of pain as he grimaces.

BOB: HUNTER!

HUNTER: Nngh.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We see Hunter's face. He looks like he's about to die as he barely looks up at Bob.

HUNTER: Get... Get outta here, boy. Isn't safe anymore... FIRE forced the MONSTER... out of its territory!

PAGE EIGHTEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob squats near Hunter. Bob isn't so much worried about Hunter's condition as what the man can tell him.

CAPTION: I've seen this before. Someone manages to fight off a PSYCHO like this, but it's only after they get in a parting shot... a postponed DEATHBLOW.

BOB: You don't have much time, maybe seconds. Tell me what's going on. FAST.

HUNTER: Wow! That's cold.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We see Hunter's face again as he grimaces in pain, eyes closed tightly.

HUNTER: Johnny... this HIGH SCHOOL KID used to... used to skip class and sleep in the orchard...

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob puts a hand to his own face, as if he's disappointed to hear there actually is a monster in the orchard.

HUNTER:(off panel) The PESTICIDES that got sprayed... they ended up killing him...

BOB: Then he came BACK.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Hunter is now trying to hand the rifle to Bob, who hasn't taken it yet. Bob seems a bit hesitant.

HUNTER: Sort of. It's him, but... like a wooden figure. Take this... You have to... kill...

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob now has the rifle in his hands, aimed at Hunter's head. Bob looks grim, but resolved to put Hunter out of his misery.

BOB: I understand.

Panel Six - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Hunter pushes the rifle barrel away as he looks at Bob with an expression of shock! Bob is also surprised.

HUNTER: WHOA! You have to kill JOHNNY EVIL-SEED! Let me finish the damned sentence!!

PAGE NINETEEN

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We join Pearl as she walks through the trees. She seems to be looking for something, and is very determined to find it.

PEARL: Let's see. I need something BIG. Something SHINY.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

As Pearl continues to walk, Johnny Evil-Seed lowers himself from a tree behind her! He seems stealthy, his axe-hand holding to the branch he's lowering himself from.

PEARL: If Bob thinks he's beating LITTLE MISS GRANNY SMITH, he's got another thing coming.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

With glee, Pearl picks a low-hanging APPLE from a tree. It seems to be a pretty large apple. Johnny Evil-Seed is raising his axe behind her, as if he's about to strike!

PEARL: Ah-ha!

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl looks disappointed as she THROWS the apple over her shoulder, hitting Johnny Evil-Seed in the face and sending him for a loop.

PEARL: Nah.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is a close shot of Johnny Evil-Seed's rotten apple face. The area the apple hit him is now broken away a bit, exposing clutches of MAGGOTS and WORMS, which spill forward from his visage.

JOHNNY EVIL-SEED: Hmph.

PAGE TWENTY

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - At That Moment

Back with Bob, we see him once again sprinting through the trees. He carries the rifle at the ready and looks pretty cool.

CAPTION: I think the last time I used a GUN was at the STATE FAIR... and that was against a row of tiny metal ducks.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob stops once again, looking forward. He seems to have spotted something.

BOB: Ah-ha.

CAPTION: Needless to say, when Pearl's in trouble I tend to get incredibly FOCUSED on the task at hand. It's like my entire brain gets tunnel vision.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We look over Bob's shoulder as he aims the rifle. In the distance ahead of him, Johnny Evil-Seed is still stalking Pearl!

CAPTION: I don't usually stop to ponder the little details... like if Johnny stays past the dead trees, who carved the little HEADS all over the place?

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

This is a close shot of Bob's eyes as he looks away from the rifle sight, to his side. He seems to have a feeling someone is right next to him.

CAPTION: Better yet, WHO CARVED JOHNNY?

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We see the NOZZLE from a SPRAY HOSE as it sprays Bob in the face with CHEMICALS! Bob barely shields his eyes, still holding the rifle in one hand.

SFX: (spray) FSSST

BOB: AGGH!

PAGE TWENTY ONE

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob staggers backward, seeming to have only one good eye now that he's been sprayed with pesticides. The Elderly Woman from the gift shop stands before him! She's wearing a TANK OF PESTICIDE on her back, a hose extending from the tank to the spray nozzle in her hand. She seems ready to advance on Bob.

CAPTION: Johnny Evil-Seed... almost certainly Johnny PRITCHETT, as in "Pritchett Farms".

BOB: Lady, *COUGH* that was NOT nice... *HAKK*

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

The Elderly Lady holds the spray nozzle threateningly as Bob struggles to regain his composure.

ELDERLY LADY: Nice? What about shootin' my boy DEAD? He ain't hurtin' nobody, you leave him ALONE!

BOB: I think you *COUGH* have a strange idea of "hurting".

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

The Elderly Woman points a boney finger at Bob as she yells at him. She looks quite demented.

ELDERLY WOMAN: Oh, they'll be FINE! I carve them dead folks APPLES so they can come back just like Johnny! If their family WANTS it enough, like I did, then they'll come back!

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

The Elderly Woman gets ready to spray Bob again as Bob quickly aims the rifle with his good eye, pointing it over the Elderly Woman's shoulder, at the tank on her back.

ELDERLY WOMAN: I'll make YOU one, too, 'cause I got forgiveness in my heart.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob fires the rifle at the tank, which sprays a wet cloud of POISON all around the Elderly Woman's face and head. She drops the nozzle.

SFX: (gun) KRAKK!

SFX: (tank spraying from bullet hole) FSSSSHHHHHHH

ELDERLY WOMAN: Eeeeeee!

PAGE TWENTY TWO

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

As the Elderly Woman falls to the ground, Bob whirls around, back toward where he was previously aiming at Johnny Evil-Seed. All expression is gone from Bob's face. This is like the slow-motion scene in an action movie where the hero is about to kick ass.

CAPTION: Looks like I win.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Still aiming with his one good eye, Bob FIRES the rifle, presumably toward Johnny off-panel.

CAPTION: I'm picking the biggest apple after all.

SFX: (gun) KRAKK

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - At That Moment

We're back with Pearl as she stops walking next to a group of bushes, as if she's hearing something odd. Behind her, Johnny Evil-Seed's head SPLITS OPEN in a hail of rotten apple gore.

SFX: (Johnny's head) BLUUT

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We see Johnny Evil-Seed's limp, mostly headless body as if falls into the bushes!

SFX: (body falling into bushes) Shhff

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl turns around to where Johnny Evil-Seed was, but sees nothing. The body fell cleanly into the bushes and cannot be seen. Pearl is quite concerned about what she might've just heard.

PEARL: Bob? Was that you?

PAGE TWENTY THREE

Panel One - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob is now walking up to Pearl. He has gotten rid of the rifle and seems very happy.

BOB: You got me! Can't put anything past you.

Panel Two - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Pearl playfully SHOVES Bob, who laughs.

PEARL: You SNEAK! I finally found a second to search on my own, and you SPIED on me!

BOB: Ha ha! Yes, that's totally what happened.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

Bob and Pearl walk away from the reader, now. They are arm-in-arm.

PEARL: By the way, you were right. I DO smell smoke.

BOB: Yeah. Let's scoot before it gets in our clothes.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

As they continue to walk away, Pearl leans her head on Bob's shoulder.

PEARL: "Scoot"... "Skedaddle"... I love you, Bob.

Panel Five - Ext. Orchard - Continuous

We now pull back from the orchard, looking down from a bird's eye view as FIRE is spreading throughout the area, almost to the spot where Pearl and Bob are leaving.

CAPTION: I'm DEFINITELY going to remember those words out context.

CAPTION: End.

PAGE TWENTY FOUR

Panel One - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Later

This is the same place we first saw Bob and Pearl in this issue. Right now we focus on the sign we first saw that reads "PRITCHETT ORCHARDS". The sign seems a bit BURNT.

CAPTION: Three hours later.

Panel Two - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

Armageddus is now warily moving through the area, toward the orchard. He looks as if he's surveying the surroundings, not sure what to make of what he's seeing. He's still wearing his sun hat.

Panel Three - Ext. Orchard Gift Shop - Continuous

The gift shop has now BURNED TO THE GROUND.

Panel Four - Ext. Orchard Entrance - Continuous

We can now see that the entire orchard has BURNED TO THE GROUND.

Panel Five - Ext. Rural Parking Lot - Continuous

Armageddus POUTS, furrows his brow, and crosses his front tentacles as if he's angry nothing is left for him to enjoy.