

THIS EXERCISE OF
LOOKING BACK...



MAKES ME REALIZE...



HOW MUCH MORE I'VE
FORGOTTEN...



THEN I HAVE REMEM-
BERED.



I SAVED ONLY A FEW
SCRAPS...



WHILE GREAT SWATHS
OF TIME...



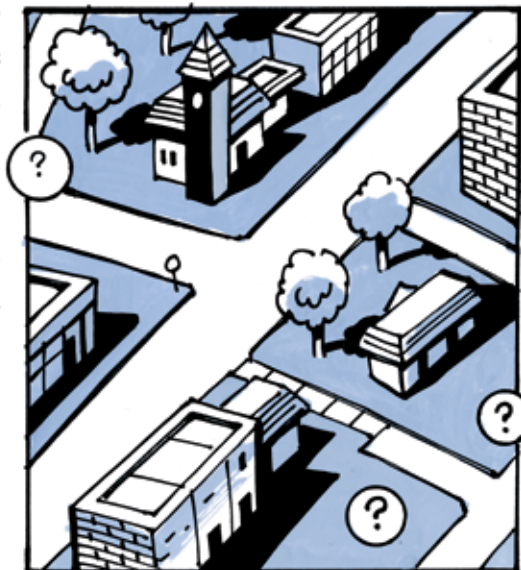
WENT UNRECORDED.



I MEAN, I LIVED IN
TILBURY FOR EIGHT
SIGNIFICANT YEARS.



IT WAS A VERY SMALL
TOWN. ↓



I COME UP MOSTLY
EMPTY HANDED. ↓



AND YET, WHEN I
TRY TO VISUALIZE IT,
BRING IT TO LIFE...



A MAP COMPOSED OF
MANY BLANK SPACES.



STREETS I REGULARLY
WALKED...



HAVE WORN PATHWAYS
IN MY BRAIN...



BUT ANYWHERE OFF
THOSE WELL-WORN
PATHS...



LEFT LITTLE IMPRESSION.



I RECALL A BAKERY...



WHERE WE'D BUY MY
YEARLY BIRTHDAY CAKE.



WHERE WAS THAT?



IT WAS NEXT TO A LOCAL
SODA POP DISTRIBUTOR,
I THINK.



WHAT STREET CORNER
WAS THAT ON?



THERE WERE CHURCHES.



BUT JUST EXACTLY
WHERE WERE THEY?



I SEE THE PARK GATES
CLEARLY ENOUGH...



AND THE TOWN POOL
INSIDE...



YET THE REST OF THE
PARK REMAINS SOME-
WHAT VAGUE.



WAS THERE A PICNIC
PAVILION? SWINGS?
TETTER-TOTTERS?



YES, I THINK SO.



I DO KNOW WHERE THE
BIG CATHOLIC CHURCH
WAS...



BUT WASN'T THERE A
CATHOLIC SCHOOL NEAR
THERE SOMEWHERE?



I RECALL A MOTEL.



OUT ON MILL STREET
EAST?



A BUTHERSHOP?



A MECHANIC?



MAYBE.



WHY ISN'T THIS
ALL CLEARER?



I CAN STILL SEE CERTAIN STREET CORNERS...



IN MY MIND'S EYE...



BUT HAVE NO CLEAR PICTURE...



JUST WHERE IN TOWN THEY SAT.



JUST ISLANDS...



ON A FOGGY MAP.



STREETS BRANCH OUT...



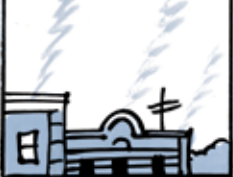
AND FADE OFF...



AS THEY EXIT INTO THE EMPTY SPACE OF MEMORY.



WHEN I FINALLY LEFT TILBURY...



I COULDN'T FORGET THE PLACE FAST ENOUGH.



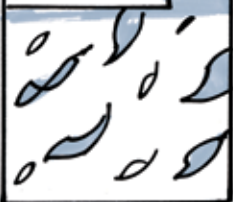
I RARELY THOUGHT ABOUT IT...



AS I BUILT A NEW LIFE IN TORONTO.



I TRIED NEVER TO THINK OF IT.



I WISHED IT AWAY.



IN THE END...



IT SEEMS I'VE JUST ABOUT GOT THAT WISH.



BUT MOVING ON...



THE BIG V

NEXT TO THE LIBRARY WAS THE BIG V.



PART OF A LOCAL CHAIN OF DRUG-STORES.



I SPENT ALMOST AS MUCH TIME IN THERE AS AT THE LIBRARY.



IT'S LAYOUT REMAINS CLEARLY IN MY MIND.



THE GREETING CARDS, TOYS, STATIONARY...



CONFECTIONS, SUN-DRIES, PHARMACY AND SO ON.



AND, OF COURSE, THE MAGAZINE STAND.



THAT RACK WAS SOMETHING OF A LIBRARY TO ME, AS WELL.



IT'S WHERE I DISCOVERED WHERE COMIC BOOKS.



THOSE COMIC BOOKS WERE MY GREATEST JOY FOR 6 FORMATIVE YEARS.



FROM ABOUT GRADE 8 UNTIL I LEFT HIGH-SCHOOL.



AS I SAID EARLIER, I'D CERTAINLY READ A FEW COMICS BEFORE THE BIG V...



BUT IT WAS THERE THAT I BEGAN TO COLLECT THEM.



IT'S FUNNY, I RECALL THE EXACT FIRST COMIC I BOUGHT THERE.



I PRACTICALLY REMEMBER THE EXACT MOMENT ITSELF!



A MUNDANE EXPERIENCE... YET FROZEN IN MEMORY.



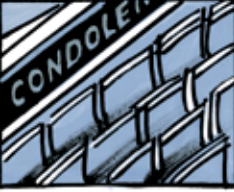
WHY?

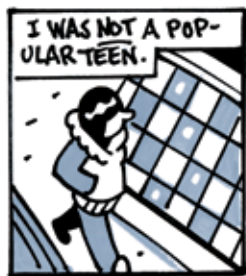


SURELY, I COULDN'T HAVE RECOGNIZED ITS SIGNIFICANCE AT THE TIME.



THAT PURCHASING IT WOULD DETERMINE MY VOCATION.







IN THE GLARE OF THE
STREETLIGHTS...



I SAW MY COMIC
BOOKS GLIDE AWAY...



AND CAME TO REST ON
THE HARD SURFACE OF
THE SNOW.



THERE THEY WERE.
DISPLAYED FOR ALL
TO SEE!



I JAMMED THEM
BACK INTO THE BAG
AS FAST AS I COULD.



THEN DASHED AWAY
IN A PANIC.



NEVER ONCE LOOK-
ING BACK TO SEE IF I
HAD BEEN OBSERVED.



UTTERLY ASHAMED.



IT ALL SEEMS SO
SILLY NOW-- SO
FOOLISH.



MORE THE SORT OF
FUSS ONE MAKES OVER
PORNOGRAPHY...



NOT COMIC BOOKS.



IN RETROSPECT, I
DOUBT ANYONE WOULD
CARED IN THE LEAST.



I WAS JUST SO
PAINFULLY SELF-
CONSCIOUS THEN.



TERRIFIED OF ANYTHING
THAT COULD FURTHER
SINGLE ME OUT...



LEAD TO MORE
RIDICULE.



WHENEVER I DAY-
DREAM ABOUT CORR-
RECTING THE PAST...



THE FIRST THING
THAT COMES TO MIND...



IS A WISH...



THAT I HADN'T CARED
SO MUCH WHAT OTHERS
THOUGHT.





