



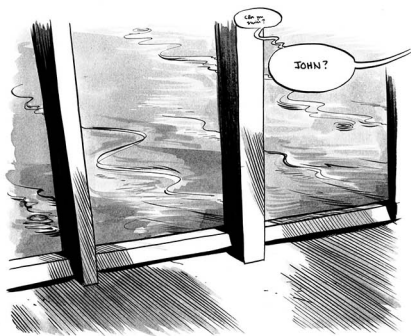
MARCH

BOOK ONE

JOHN LEWIS
ANDREW AYDIN NATE POWELL



*To the past and future children
of the movement.*



EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

CAN YOU SWIM?



NO.

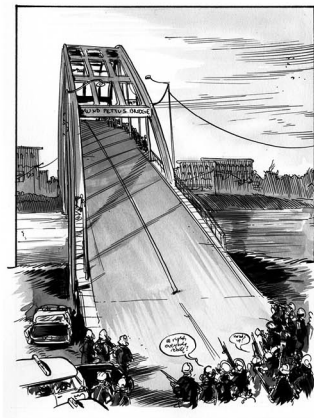
well,

NEITHER CAN I--



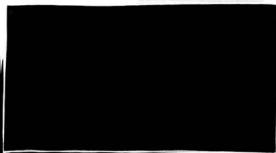
BUT WE MIGHT HAVE TO.











MAAR





DOOM!

BOOK ONE

JOHN LEWIS
ANDREW AYDIN
NATE POWELL

WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 20, 2009.





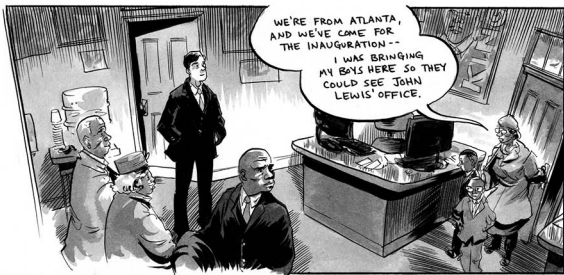
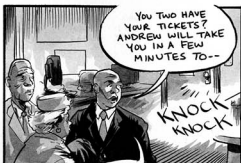






CANNON HOUSE
OFFICE BUILDING







COKE, MAYBE SOME WATER?





... HOW FAR WE'VE COME.

THIS IS MY OFFICE, WHERE I DO MOST OF MY WORK. HERE IN WASHINGTON.

SORRY IF IT'S A LITTLE JUNKY.

yeah...
shh!



LET ME POINT OUT A FEW THINGS.



HERE I AM WHEN I WAS 23 YEARS OLD, MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KENNEDY...



AND THIS ONE WAS TAKEN AUGUST 28, 1963, AT THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON WHERE DR. KING GAVE HIS "I HAVE A DREAM" SPEECH.



AS A CHILD, MY PARENTS GAVE ME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TAKING CARE OF OUR FAMILY'S CHICKENS.



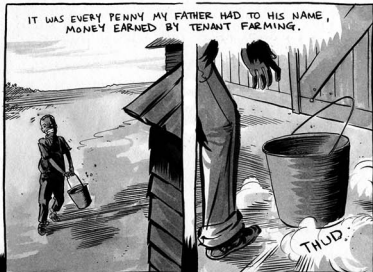


WE LIVED ON 110 ACRES OF
COTTON, CORN, AND PEANUT FIELDS
IN A LITTLE CORNER OF
PIKE COUNTY, ALABAMA.

MY FATHER BOUGHT IT IN
THE SPRING OF 1940 FOR \$300.

CASH.

IT WAS EVERY PENNY MY FATHER HAD TO HIS NAME,
MONEY EARNED BY TENANT FARMING.



I NEVER HAD ANY FEELINGS ABOUT THE
OTHER ANIMALS ON OUR FARM,



BUT I WAS ALWAYS
DRAWN TO THE CHICKENS.

I NEVER TOOK THE CHICKENS
STRAIGHT TO THE YARD TO FEED THEM--



I FELT THE NEED TO
TALK TO THEM FIRST.





THEN THERE WAS
LIL' PULLET, MY
FAVORITE. SHE LIVED
LONGER THAN ANY
OTHER BIRD I HAD.



EVERYWHERE I WENT AROUND
THE CHICKEN YARD, LIL' PULLET
WOULD BE RIGHT THERE
BEHIND ME.

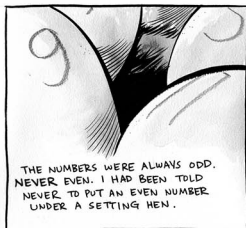


SPRINGTIME WAS MY FAVORITE TIME OF
YEAR BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY SEASON
WE COULD GET BABY CHICKS.

WHEN THE HENS BEGAN LAYING THEIR
EGGS, I'D MARK EACH ONE WITH A LIGHTLY
PENCILLED NUMBER TO HELP KEEP TRACK
OF ITS PROGRESS DURING THE THREE
WEEKS IT TOOK TO HATCH.



THE NUMBERS WERE ALWAYS ODD.
NEVER EVEN. I HAD BEEN TOLD
NEVER TO PUT AN EVEN NUMBER
UNDER A SETTING HEN.



IT WAS
BAD LUCK.



AND I WOULD CHEAT
ON THOSE SETTING HENS.



I'D TAKE A FEW FROM THE HENS
THAT WERE SETTING ON A LARGE
NUMBER OF EGGS, AND SLIP
THEM UNDER THE HENS THAT
WEREN'T.

THIS CUT DOWN ON THE NUMBER OF "BAD" EGGS.



I ALSO LEARNED THAT A HEN WILL CONTINUE TO SET AS LONG AS SHE HAS EGGS UNDERNEATH HER.



SO BY SLIPPING MORE EGGS UNDER MY HENS, I WAS ABLE TO KEEP THEM SETTING ANOTHER THREE WEEKS.

STRETCHING OUT THAT PROCESS IS NOT NATURAL, AND IT TOOK A TOLL.



SO, I BUILT A MAKESHIFT INCUBATOR.



I ALWAYS HOPED TO SAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR AN ACTUAL INCUBATOR, LIKE THE \$18.95 MODEL ADVERTISED IN THE SEARS-ROEBUCK CATALOG.





I FELL ASLEEP MANY NIGHTS DREAMING ABOUT IT THE WAY OTHER CHILDREN DREAMED ABOUT BICYCLES AND DOLLHOUSES.

BUT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO AFFORD IT.

yes?



if you loved chickens so much, why didn't you become a chicken farmer?

hm--

I SUPPOSE THERE ARE MANY REASONS. GROWING UP, WHAT I REALLY WANTED TO BE WAS A PREACHER. AN UNCLE GAVE ME A BIBLE FOR CHRISTMAS WHEN I WAS FOUR--

--and YES, I DO REMEMBER WHEN I WAS FOUR--



I'LL NEVER FORGET MY MOTHER READING ALOUD TO ME THE FIRST WORDS IN THAT BOOK--

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth."

BY THE TIME I WAS FIVE I COULD READ IT MYSELF, AND ONE PHRASE STRUCK ME STRONGLY, THOUGH I COULDN'T COMPREHEND ITS FULL MEANING AT THE TIME--



SO I PREACHED TO MY CHICKENS JUST ABOUT EVERY NIGHT.



I WOULD GET THEM ALL INTO THE HENHOUSE AND SETTLE THEM ON THEIR ROOSTS.



THEY WOULD SIT QUIETLY.



Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

THEY WOULD BOW THEIR HEADS,

THEY WOULD SHAKE THEIR HEADS,



Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

BUT THEY WOULD NEVER QUITE SAY AMEN.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.





Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

I IMAGINED THAT THEY WERE MY CONGREGATION,



AND ME--

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:



I WAS A PREACHER.

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



OF COURSE, ANYONE CAN
FIGURE OUT THE DANGER
OF MAKING PETS OUT
OF FARM ANIMALS--

ESPECIALLY CHICKENS.



YOU GET EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO
AN ANIMAL DESTINED FOR THE
DINNER TABLE, AND YOU'RE ASKING
FOR A BROKEN HEART.

BUT I COULDN'T HELP IT.

MORE OFTEN THAN I LIKED,
A GROWN MEN OR EVEN A
CHICK WOULD DIE OF
MORE NATURAL CAUSES.



FOR THESE BIRDS,
I WOULD CONDUCT
A FUNERAL.



THIS WAS NOT CHILD'S PLAY.
I WAS GENUINELY GRIEF-
STRICKEN, AND THE SERVICES
WERE PAINSTAKINGLY
PRECISE.



I WOULD GATHER WHICHEVER OF
MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS AND
COUSINS I COULD.

AND I WOULD DELIVER
A EULOGY.



MY PARENTS WOULD WATCH
THE NEWEST TINY COFFIN JOIN
THE NEAT ROW OF SMALL
DIRT-MOUNDED GRAVES,



AND WONDER WHAT KIND
OF SON THEY HAD.



I EVEN WENT THROUGH
A PERIOD OF
PERFORMING BAPTISMS.



I WAS TRULY INTENT
ON SAVING THE LITTLE
BIRDS' SOULS.



ON ONE
OCCASION
I WAS TOO
INTENSE.

I GUESS I MISJUDGED THE TIME.



I WAS SHOCKED.
ABSOLUTELY TERRIFIED.
I HAD TAKEN ONE OF MY
INNOCENT BABIES AND
ACTUALLY KILLED IT.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



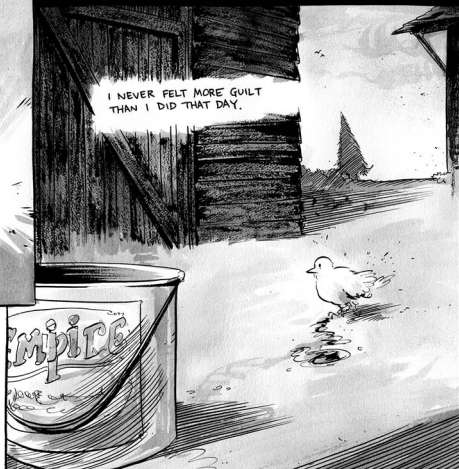
IN MY PANIC I HOPED SOMEHOW THE SUN'S
HEAT MIGHT DRY ITS FEATHERS
AND MAYBE REVIVE IT.



INCREDIBLY, IT DID.



I NEVER FELT MORE GUILT
THAN I DID THAT DAY.





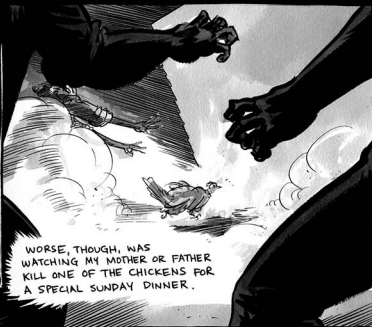
ALL THESE ASPECTS OF MY CHICKEN PLAY TICKLED MY PARENTS AT FIRST, BUT THEIR AMUSEMENT VANISHED AS I BEGAN SERIOUSLY PROTESTING THEIR OWN TREATMENT OF THE BIRDS.

FROM TIME TO TIME, THEY WOULD HAVE NO CASH TO PAY THE ROLLING STONE MAN FOR SOME SORELY-NEEDED SUGAR OR FLOUR, SO THEY WOULD OFFER A BIRD IN BARTER INSTEAD.

ONE OF MY CHICKENS.



I'D CRY, REFUSE TO
SPEAK TO THEM FOR
THE REST OF THE DAY--
EVEN SKIP THAT
EVENING'S MEAL.



WORSE, THOUGH, WAS
WATCHING MY MOTHER OR FATHER
KILL ONE OF THE CHICKENS FOR
A SPECIAL SUNDAY DINNER.



THEY WOULD EITHER BREAK
ITS NECK WITH THEIR HANDS,



SPINNING IT AROUND
UNTIL THE BONE
SNAPPED



OR SIMPLY CHOP
THE HEAD OFF.

THEY WOULD THEN DRAIN THE BLOOD FROM ITS BODY AND DIP IT IN BOILING WATER, SCALDING IT TO LOOSEN ITS FEATHERS FOR PLUCKING.

I WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN AT THOSE FAMILY MEALS.

so you stopped raising chickens because it was too hard to see them be killed?

NO--

THE DEATH OF THOSE CHICKENS WAS JUST A PART OF LIFE.

BUT EVENTUALLY, I BEGAN SPENDING MORE TIME DOING SCHOOLWORK, STUDYING, AND MY EYES BEGAN OPENING TO THE WORLD AROUND ME.

but--

why did you need to study more?

did you fail your tests?

JACOBI!
shhhh!

I DID OKAY. I WASN'T THE BEST.

what?!

BUT SCHOOL WAS IMPORTANT TO ME, AND IT WAS ULTIMATELY THE REASON I GOT INVOLVED IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.

THE THING IS, WHEN I WAS YOUNG, THERE WASN'T MUCH OF A CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. I WANTED TO WORK AT SOMETHING, BUT GROWING UP IN RURAL ALABAMA, MY PARENTS KNEW IT COULD BE DANGEROUS TO MAKE ANY WAVES.

stay out of trouble.

don't get in white people's way.

BUT OTHER MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY HELPED OPEN MY EYES.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1951, I TOOK MY FIRST TRIP NORTH.

OTIS CARTER, ONE OF MY MOTHER'S BROTHERS, ARRANGED THE JOURNEY. HE PLANNED IT COMPLETELY FOR MY SAKE.

HE LIVED IN DOTHAN, ABOUT SIXTY MILES SOUTH OF US, WHERE HE WAS A TEACHER AND A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL.



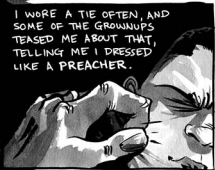
I WAS SO SERIOUS, VERY EARNEST, STILL SERMONIZING WITH MY CHICKENS, STILL PROTESTING WHEN THAT WHITE MEAT WENT ON THE TABLE.



UNCLE OTIS HAD ALWAYS TAKEN A SPECIAL INTEREST IN ME, ESPECIALLY AS I BEGAN TO GROW AND STAND OUT A LITTLE BIT--

NOT JUST WITH MY DEVOTION TO SCHOOLWORK, BUT WITH THE WAY I GENERALLY ACTED.

I WORE A TIE OFTEN, AND SOME OF THE GROWNUPS TEASED ME ABOUT THAT, TELLING ME I DRESSED LIKE A PREACHER.



I KNOW NOW THAT UNCLE OTIS SAW SOMETHING IN ME THAT I HADN'T YET SEEN.



THAT IS WHY WE TOOK OUR TRIP IN JUNE OF '51.





THERE WOULD BE NO RESTAURANTS FOR US TO STOP AT UNTIL WE WERE WELL OUT OF THE SOUTH,

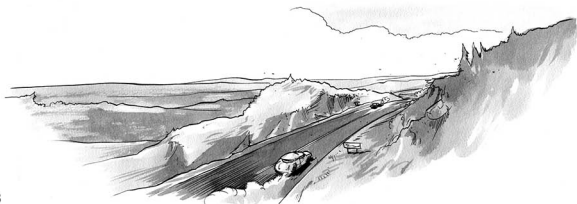
SO WE CARRIED OUR RESTAURANT RIGHT IN THE CAR WITH US.

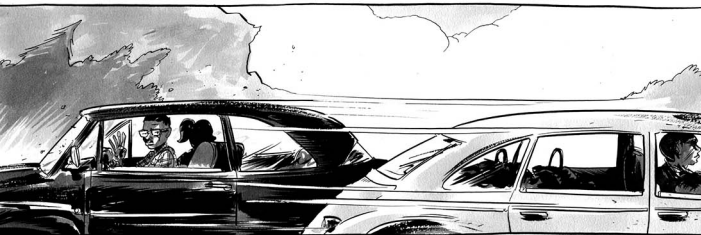
STOPPING FOR GAS AND BATHROOM BREAKS TOOK CAREFUL PLANNING. UNCLE OTIS HAD MADE THIS TRIP BEFORE, AND HE KNEW WHICH PLACES

ALONG THE WAY OFFERED "COLORED" BATHROOMS--



AND WHICH WERE SAFER TO JUST PASS ON BY.





TENNESSEE.

KENTUCKY.

THESE WERE THE STATES WE
HAD TO BE CAREFUL IN AS WE
MADE OUR WAY NORTH.



BLACK DRIVERS WE PASSED GOING THE OTHER DIRECTION,



FROM NORTH TO SOUTH,

FACED AN ADDED DANGER,
THEIR LICENSE PLATES MAKING
THEM VISIBLE TARGETS.



SOMETIMES THEY HAD
TO FACE WORSE.






BY THE TIME WE REACHED LAKE ERIE AND
TURNED EAST TOWARD BUFFALO, I WAS ABOUT READY TO BURST WITH EXCITEMENT.



I WAS NOT DISAPPOINTED.





ARRIVING IN BUFFALO AFTER SEVENTEEN HOURS OF TRAVEL WAS AN OTHERWORLDLY EXPERIENCE.

IT WAS SO BUSY, ALMOST FRANTIC.



WHEN WE REACHED MY UNCLE O.C.'S AND DINK'S HOUSE, I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT--



THEY HAD WHITE PEOPLE LIVING NEXT DOOR TO THEM.



ON BOTH SIDES.





MY AUNT LEOLA AND AUNT MAE CHARLES TOOK ME SHOPPING DOWNTOWN ONE DAY AT A DEPARTMENT STORE CALLED SATTLER'S.



THERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I RODE AN ESCALATOR.



I HAD NEVER EVEN HEARD OF SUCH A THING.



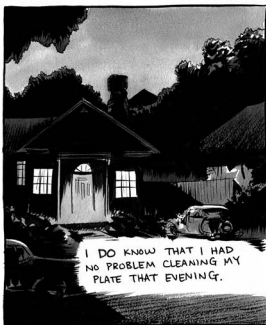
I FOUND MY WAY TO THE CANDY COUNTER AND IT WAS LIKE MAGIC.



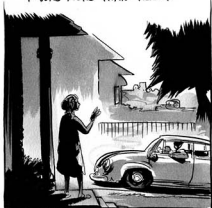
I TRIED TO MAKE THAT BAG OF NEAPOLITAN CANDY LAST FOREVER.



CITY PEOPLE DIDN'T RAISE THEIR OWN CHICKENS. THEY DID WHAT MY AUNT DID--



BY LATE AUGUST WHEN IT WAS
TIME TO RETURN TO ALABAMA,
I WAS MORE THAN READY.



I MISSED MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS.



I MISSED MY PARENTS.



WHEN I FINALLY ARRIVED HOME,
I WAS CRYING BECAUSE IT
FELT SO GOOD TO BE BACK.

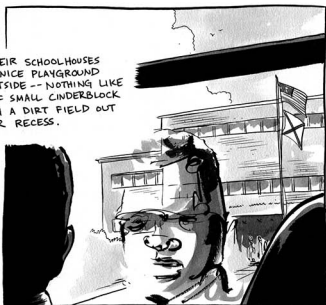
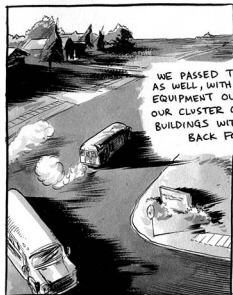


AFTER THAT TRIP,
HOME NEVER FELT THE SAME,
AND NEITHER DID I.

IN THE FALL, I STARTED RIDING
THE BUS TO SCHOOL, WHICH
SHOULD'VE BEEN FUN.

BUT IT WAS JUST ANOTHER
SAD REMINDER OF HOW DIFFERENT
OUR LIVES WERE FROM THOSE
OF WHITE CHILDREN.





WE DROVE PAST PRISON WORK GANGS ALMOST EVERY DAY. THE PRISONERS WERE ALWAYS BLACK.



AS WERE THE FOLKS WORKING IN THE FIELDS BEYOND THEM.



YOU COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE.

SQUEE

DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT CONFRONTED ME ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL,



I WAS IN HEAVEN ONCE I STEPPED INSIDE IT.

I LOVED GOING TO THE LIBRARY. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I EVER SAW BLACK NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES LIKE JET, EBONY, THE BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN, OR THE CHICAGO DEFENDER.

AND I'LL NEVER FORGET MY LIBRARIAN, COREEN HARVEY.



MY DEAR CHILDREN, READ. READ EVERYTHING.

BUT SOMETIMES GOING TO SCHOOL WAS A LUXURY MY FAMILY COULDN'T AFFORD. WHEN PLANTING AND HARVESTING SEASONS ARRIVED, THE REALITY OF THOSE FIELDS DISPLACED ANY DREAMS ABOUT THE FUTURE.



I'D PLEAD WITH THEM
TO LET ME GO.



I'D EXPLAIN HOW FAR
BEHIND I'D FALL IF I MISSED
THOSE DAYS OF CLASSWORK.

we need
you here,
Bob.



THEN,



WHEN I COULD HEAR THE
APPROACHING BUS,

I'D DASH OUT



CLIMB ON



AND BE OFF.





WHEN I GOT HOME, MY FATHER WOULD BE FURIOUS.



I WAS CERTAIN HE'D
TAN MY HIDE.



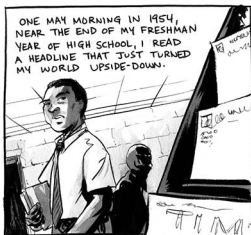
BUT HE NEVER DID WHIP
ME-- NOT OVER THAT.



I DID IT AGAIN, AND
OF COURSE HE WOULD
SCOLD ME AGAIN.

BUT DEEP INSIDE I THINK HE KNEW
THERE WAS NO STOPPING ME.

THIS WAS A LIFE DECISION
I HAD MADE, AND IT WAS
NEAR-IMPOSSIBLE TO TURN
ME AWAY FROM IT.



ONE MAY MORNING IN 1954,
NEAR THE END OF MY FRESHMAN
YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL, I READ
A HEADLINE THAT JUST TURNED
MY WORLD UPSIDE-DOWN.

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HAD HANDED
DOWN ITS DECISION IN THE SCHOOL
DESEGREGATION CASE OF BROWN VS.
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF TOPEKA.



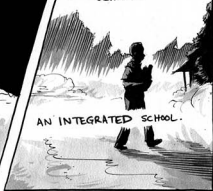
THE DOCTRINE OF "SEPARATE BUT EQUAL"—UPON WHICH THE ENTIRE INSTITUTION OF SEGREGATION WAS BASED—HAD BEEN RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL.



I WAS SO EXCITED-- SURELY EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO CHANGE.



I THOUGHT THAT, COME FALL, I'D BE RIDING A STATE-OF-THE-ART BUS TO A STATE-OF-THE-ART SCHOOL.



AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL.

NOT EVERYBODY WAS SO EXCITED.



don't get in trouble.

don't you get in the way.

BUT MY PARENTS' ATTITUDE DIDN'T BOTHER ME NEARLY AS MUCH AS THOSE AMONG THE MINISTERS AT THE CHURCH, WHO NEVER MENTIONED THESE INJUSTICES IN THEIR SERMONS.



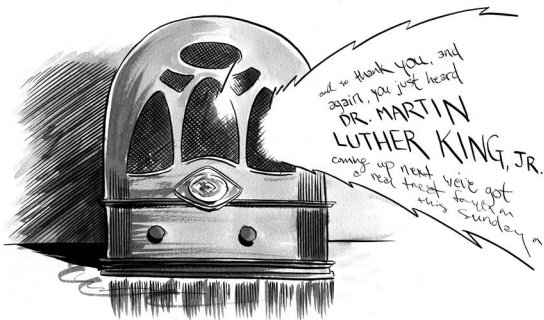
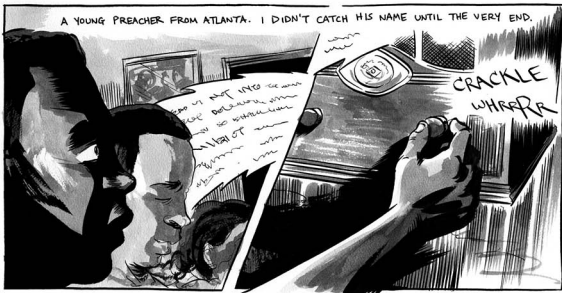
IT DID NOT ESCAPE MY NOTICE THAT OUR MINISTER ALWAYS DEPARTED CHURCH IN A VERY NICE AUTOMOBILE.



THEN, ONE SUNDAY MORNING IN EARLY 1955, I WAS LISTENING TO WRMA OUT OF MONTGOMERY WHEN I HEARD A SERMON BY SOMEONE UNKNOWN TO ME --



A YOUNG PREACHER FROM ATLANTA. I DIDN'T CATCH HIS NAME UNTIL THE VERY END.



DR. KING'S MESSAGE HIT ME LIKE A BOLT OF LIGHTNING. HE APPLIED THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING NOW, TODAY. IT WAS CALLED THE SOCIAL GOSPEL--



-- AND I FELT LIKE HE WAS PREACHING DIRECTLY TO ME.

I WENT TO THE SCHOOL LIBRARY ON MONDAY TO FIND OUT EVERYTHING I COULD ABOUT THIS MAN.



AT THE TIME, I COULD ONLY FIND ONE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE. BUT 1955 WAS A WATERSHED YEAR.

to be the
at Dr. Martin L.
King, Jr., a graduate
of Morehouse College in
Atlanta, GA was appointed
resident pastor of Dexter
Avenue Baptist Church.

ARBON HILL - 81-year
Cedell Rogers is
to be the first
ation of a



IN MAY, A SECOND SUPREME COURT RULING IN BROWN V. BOARD PROMPTED SEGREGATIONIST ELECTED OFFICIALS, LIKE SENATORS JAMES EASTLAND OF MISSISSIPPI AND STROM THURMOND OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO SWEAR TO THE DEATH THEIR CONTINUED DEFIANCE OF THE COURT.

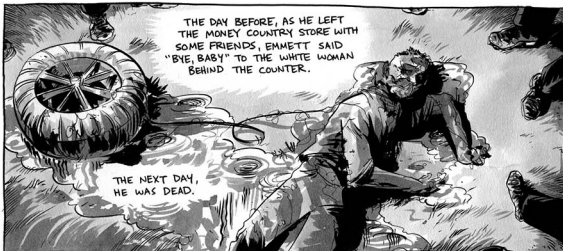
LINES HAD BEEN DRAWN.
BLOOD WAS BEGINNING
TO SPILL.



THAT AUGUST, AN INCIDENT OCCURRED
WHICH NO ONE COULD IGNORE.



IN MONEY, MISSISSIPPI, THE BODY OF
FOURTEEN-YEAR OLD EMMETT TILL,
WHO WAS DOWN FROM CHICAGO
VISITING RELATIVES, WAS PULLED
FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE
TALLAHATCHIE RIVER.



THE DAY BEFORE, AS HE LEFT
THE MONEY COUNTRY STORE WITH
SOME FRIENDS, EMMETT SAID
"BYE, BABY" TO THE WHITE WOMAN
BEHIND THE COUNTER.

THE NEXT DAY,
HE WAS DEAD.



A BLACK FARMER NAMED MOSES WRIGHT
WITNESSED THE TWO WHITE MEN DRAGGING
EMMETT TILL FROM HIS RELATIVES' HOME,
AND HAD THE COURAGE TO TESTIFY
AGAINST THEM IN OPEN COURT.

THE ALL-WHITE JURY FOUND THOSE TWO
WHITE DEFENDANTS NOT GUILTY.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, THEY EVEN CONFESSED
TO THE MURDER IN LOOK MAGAZINE, BUT THERE
WAS NOTHING TO BE DONE — THEY HAD ALREADY BEEN TRIED.





I LISTENED FIRSTHAND TO ACCOUNTS OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

They'd want to get some free bus

Mae, they're empty! every day they'd be full, but there's hardly a soul riding those buses now.



I FOLLOWED IT ALMOST EVERY DAY, EITHER IN THE PAPERS...



... 50,000 NEGROES ARE BELIEVED TO BE PARTICIPATING AT THIS TIME...

OR ON THE RADIO.



THE BOYCOTT WENT ON FOR MORE THAN A YEAR.

CLIP CLIP

CLIP CLIP CLIP

DR. KING'S EXAMPLE SHOWED ME THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO DO MORE AS A MINISTER THAN WHAT I HAD WITNESSED IN MY OWN CHURCH.

I WAS INSPIRED.



SO, FIVE DAYS BEFORE MY SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY,
I PREACHED MY FIRST PUBLIC SERMON--

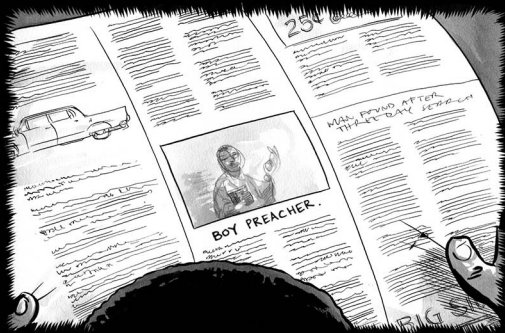


AFTER HEARING OF MY SERMON,
THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER
ASKED TO TAKE MY PICTURE
FOR AN ARTICLE.

PFASH!
KLIK
PFASH!!

KLIK
PFASH!!

THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME
I EVER SAW MY NAME IN PRINT.









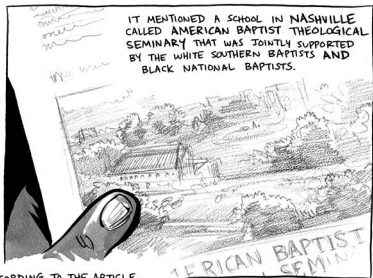
MY MOTHER HAD A PART-TIME JOB WORKING AT THE WHITE BAPTIST OFFERING HOME IN DOWNTOWN TROY, ALABAMA.



ONE DAY AT WORK, SHE SAW A LITTLE PAPER PUBLISHED BY THE ALABAMA BAPTIST CONVENTION (which was all-white).



IT MENTIONED A SCHOOL IN NASHVILLE CALLED AMERICAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY THAT WAS JOINTLY SUPPORTED BY THE WHITE SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AND BLACK NATIONAL BAPTISTS.



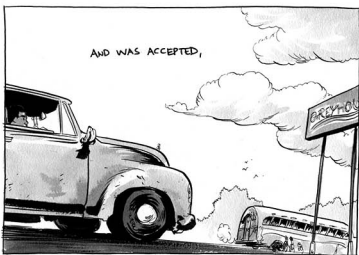
ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, IT WAS A SCHOOL FOR BLACK MEN AND WOMEN TO STUDY TO BECOME MINISTERS OR MISSIONARIES-- AND IT OFFERED A WORK-STUDY PROGRAM ON CAMPUS.



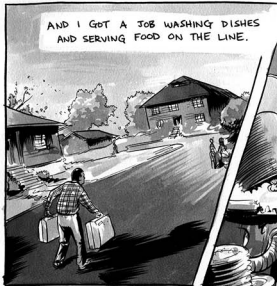
SO I APPLIED TO
GO TO SCHOOL THERE,



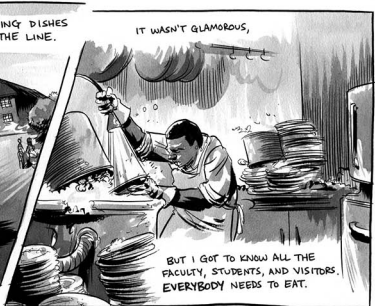
AND WAS ACCEPTED,



AND I GOT A JOB WASHING DISHES
AND SERVING FOOD ON THE LINE.



IT WASN'T GLAMOROUS,



BUT I GOT TO KNOW ALL THE
FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND VISITORS.
EVERYBODY NEEDS TO EAT.

I LOVED THE NEW IDEAS COLLEGE
WAS INTRODUCING ME TO, IN
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY--
BUT I COULDN'T STOP THINKING
ABOUT THE SOCIAL GOSPEL.

HERE I WAS READING ABOUT
JUSTICE, WHEN THERE WERE
BRAVE PEOPLE OUT THERE
WORKING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.



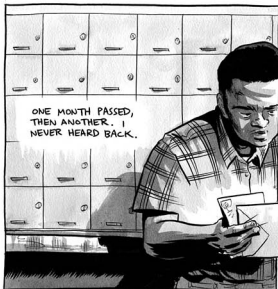
I STARTED TO FEEL GUILTY
FOR NOT DOING MORE.
I BECAME RESTLESS.

I THOUGHT ABOUT TROY STATE, JUST A FEW MILES FROM MY PARENTS' HOME, WHERE NO BLACK STUDENT WAS ALLOWED.



SO I APPLIED AS A TRANSFER STUDENT.

ONE MONTH PASSED, THEN ANOTHER. I NEVER HEARD BACK.



FINALLY, I DECIDED TO INTRODUCE MYSELF TO THE ONLY PERSON WHO I THOUGHT COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO:

To Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:
Please excuse the over-
whelming this I would like
to introduce myself. My
John Robert

OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS I EXCHANGED A SERIES OF LETTERS AND PHONE CALLS WITH REV. RALPH ABERNATHY AND A LAWYER NAMED FRED GRAY.



EVERYONE KNEW FRED GRAY. HE REPRESENTED ROSA PARKS, AND WAS NOW DR. KING'S ATTORNEY.



FINALLY, GRAY AND ABERNATHY WROTE TO TELL ME THAT DR. KING WANTED TO MEET ME.



ONE SATURDAY MORNING IN THE SPRING OF 1958, MY FATHER DROVE ME TO THE GREYHOUND BUS STATION AGAIN.



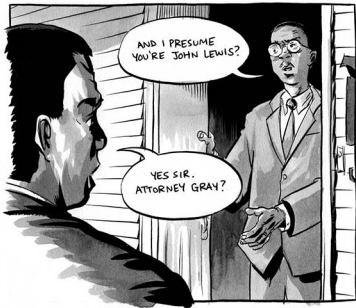
NEITHER OF US SAID A WORD.



I BOARDED A BUS, AND TRAVELED THE FIFTY MILES FROM TROY TO MONTGOMERY.



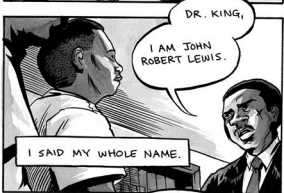
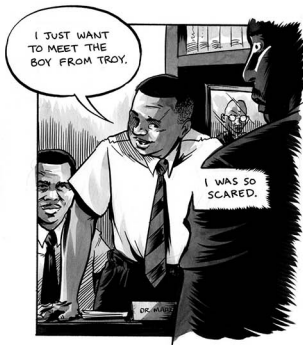
I'D NEVER SEEN A LAWYER BEFORE-- BLACK OR WHITE.



WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DRIVE OVER TO THE CHURCH.



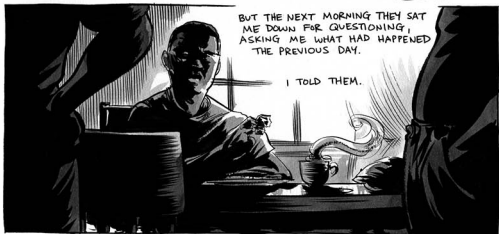








MY FATHER DIDN'T SAY A WORD TO ME ON THE RIDE BACK FROM THE BUS STATION, EITHER.



BUT THE NEXT MORNING THEY SAT ME DOWN FOR QUESTIONING, ASKING ME WHAT HAD HAPPENED THE PREVIOUS DAY.

I TOLD THEM.



AT FIRST THEY WANTED TO BE SUPPORTIVE. BUT THEY WERE AFRAID. NOT JUST FOR THEMSELVES, BUT FOR THOSE AROUND US, OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

THEY SAID THEY DIDN'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH FILING A SUIT AGAINST THE STATE OF ALABAMA. NOTHING. NOT ONE THING.

I WAS HEARTBROKEN, BUT IT WAS THEIR DECISION.



I WROTE DR. KING A LETTER EXPLAINING THAT I
WOULD BE RETURNING TO NASHVILLE IN THE FALL.

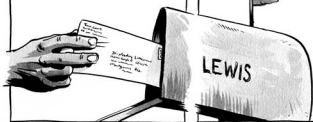


LOOKING BACK, IT MUST'VE BEEN
THE SPIRIT OF HISTORY TAKING
HOLD OF MY LIFE --

BECAUSE IN NASHVILLE I'D
MEET PEOPLE WHO OPENED
MY EYES TO A SENSE OF
VALUES THAT WOULD FOREVER
DOMINATE MY MORAL
PHILOSOPHY --

THE WAY OF PEACE,

THE WAY OF LOVE,



THE WAY OF NON-VIOLENCE.



== KNOCK
KNOCK ==

COME IN?





MARCH 26, 1958.

I WAS ATTENDING FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE.

YOU COULD LITERALLY STAND ON THE STEPS, THROW A BASEBALL, AND HIT THE STEPS OF THE TENNESSEE STATE CAPITOL.

A YOUNG MAN WILL BE JOINING US THIS EVENING, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.

HE'LL BE CONDUCTING A WORKSHOP ON NON-VIOLENCE HERE AT FIRST BAPTIST--

HIS NAME IS JIM LAWSON.



I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST VOLUNTEERS TO ATTEND.



Yes?

IT WASN'T A VERY LARGE MEETING. I WAS THE ONLY STUDENT TO GO FROM MY LITTLE SCHOOL.

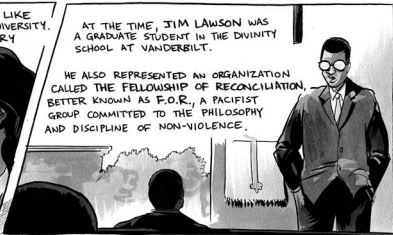


THERE WERE YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE DIANE NASH FROM FISK UNIVERSITY. OTHERS CAME FROM MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE AND TENNESSEE STATE.



AT THE TIME, JIM LAWSON WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT IN THE DIVINITY SCHOOL AT VANDERBILT.

HE ALSO REPRESENTED AN ORGANIZATION CALLED THE FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION, BETTER KNOWN AS F.O.R., A PACIFIST GROUP COMMITTED TO THE PHILOSOPHY AND DISCIPLINE OF NON-VIOLENCE.



MARTIN LUTHER KING
AND
MONTGOMERY

F.O.R. HAD ALSO PUBLISHED A POPULAR COMIC BOOK CALLED MARTIN LUTHER KING AND THE MONTGOMERY STORY, WHICH EXPLAINED THE BASICS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND NON-VIOLENT ACTION AS TOOLS FOR DESEGREGATION.

10c

NEGROES
NEW WAY TO
RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION.



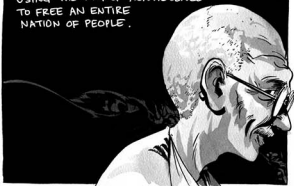
I WANT TO START WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE, WITH STUDENTS-- HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS.



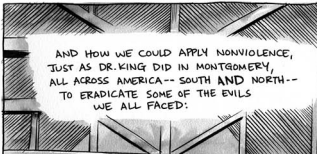
JIM TALKED ABOUT THE MONTGOMERY
BUS BOYCOTT,
ABOUT WAR RESISTANCE,
ABOUT NONVIOLENCE.



HE SPOKE OF GANDHI, THIS
LITTLE BROWN MAN FROM INDIA
USING THE WAY OF NONVIOLENCE
TO FREE AN ENTIRE
NATION OF PEOPLE.



AND HOW WE COULD APPLY NONVIOLENCE,
JUST AS DR. KING DID IN MONTGOMERY,
ALL ACROSS AMERICA-- SOUTH AND NORTH--
TO ERADICATE SOME OF THE EVILS
WE ALL FACED:



THE EVIL OF
RACISM,



THE EVIL OF
POVERTY,



THE EVIL OF
WAR.



JIM LAWSON CONVEYED THE
URGENCY OF DEVELOPING OUR
PHILOSOPHY, OUR DISCIPLINE,
OUR UNDERSTANDING.

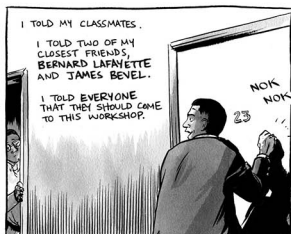


HIS WORDS LIBERATED ME.

I THOUGHT, THIS IS IT...

THIS IS THE WAY OUT.







SOMETIMES I COULDN'T HELP BUT SMILE--
EVEN LAUGH--WHEN SOMEONE PLAYED SUCH
AN UNNATURAL ROLE.

BUT SOMETIMES IT WAS ONE OF YOUR
FRIENDS CALLING YOU NAMES, KNOCKING
YOU DOWN, SPITTING ON YOU.

you okay,
charles?



i don't think
i can do it.

i just
can't.

maybe i can bring
signs, or make them.
maybe i can drive
people to the site.

but i can't
take it. i CAN'T
be nonviolent.

I CANNOT.

FOR SOME, IT WAS TOO MUCH.

BUT WE NEEDED TO SEE HOW EACH OF US
WOULD REACT UNDER STRESS.





LAWSON TAUGHT US HOW TO PROTECT OURSELVES,


HOW TO DISARM OUR ATTACKERS
BY CONNECTING WITH THEIR
HUMANITY,



MAINTAIN
EYE CONTACT,
JOHN!




HOW TO PROTECT
EACH OTHER,



HOW TO SURVIVE.

BUT THE HARDEST PART TO LEARN--
TO TRULY UNDERSTAND, DEEP IN
YOUR HEART--

WAS HOW TO FIND LOVE FOR YOUR ATTACKER.



DO NOT LET THEM
SHAKE YOUR FAITH
IN NONVIOLENCE--
LOVE THEM!

WE TOOK A NAME-- THE NASHVILLE STUDENT MOVEMENT. BECAUSE OF OUR DISTRUST OF CENTRALIZED POWER, WE INSISTED ON A ROTATING LEADERSHIP.



WE WERE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

AND WE WERE READY TO ACT.

SEGREGATION AT THE DOWNTOWN STORES BOTHERED US THE MOST.

WE COULD SHOP THERE AND PAY THE SAME PRICES AS WHITE CUSTOMERS, BUT WE COULDN'T USE THE DRESSING ROOMS, OR SIT AT THE LUNCH COUNTER TO EAT.

IT WAS HUMILIATING.



SO WE DECIDED THE DEPARTMENT STORE LUNCH COUNTERS WOULD BE OUR FIRST TARGET.



NOVEMBER 28, 1959.

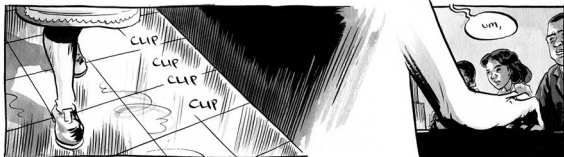
WE STARTED WITH "TEST SIT-INS"
TO TEST THE LOCAL STORES' POLICIES,
ESTABLISHING THAT THEY WOULD NOT
SERVE AN INTERRACIAL OR
ALL-BLACK GROUP.

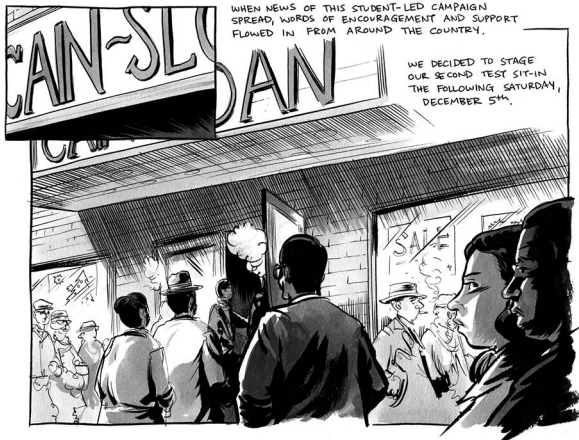
OUR PLAN WAS SIMPLE.
ENTER A STORE, ASK TO BE
SERVED, AND IF--OR WHEN--
WE WERE REFUSED, WE
WOULD LEAVE.



WE EACH PURCHASED SOMETHING,
ESTABLISHING US AS LEGITIMATE
PAYING CUSTOMERS, AND THEN
SAT DOWN AT THE LUNCH COUNTER
FOR A BITE TO EAT.









HOLD UP.

WE DON'T SERVE COLORED PEOPLE HERE.

THIS TIME, I THINK THEY WERE EXPECTING US.



MAY I SPEAK TO THE MANAGER, PLEASE?



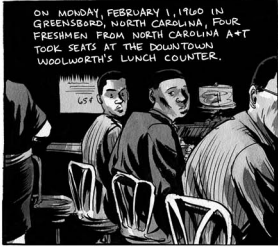
I'M SORRY, IT'S STORE POLICY NOT TO SERVE NEGROES.

THANK YOU.

AND SO AGAIN, WE LEFT WITHOUT INCIDENT.

IN JANUARY, FOLLOWING THE WINTER BREAK FROM SCHOOL, OUR WEEKLY WORKSHOP NUMBERS SWELLED.

WE WERE CLOSE TO READY, THOUGH NO SPECIFIC DATE HAD YET BEEN SET FOR OUR FIRST SIT-IN. AS FATE--OR THE SPIRIT OF HISTORY--WOULD HAVE IT, SOMEONE ELSE MADE THE MOVE FOR US.

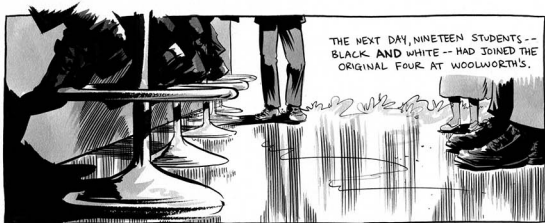


ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1960 IN GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, FOUR FRESHMEN FROM NORTH CAROLINA A+T TOOK SEATS AT THE DOWNTOWN WOOLWORTH'S LUNCH COUNTER.



ONE OF THEM HAD READ THE F.O.R. COMIC ABOUT DR. KING AND MONTGOMERY, WHICH GOT THEM TALKING ABOUT NONVIOLENT ACTION.

I'M SORRY, BUT IT'S AGAINST STORE POLICY TO SERVE COLORED PEOPLE



THE NEXT DAY, NINETEEN STUDENTS -- BLACK AND WHITE -- HAD JOINED THE ORIGINAL FOUR AT WOOLWORTH'S.

BY WEDNESDAY, THE NUMBER SWELLED TO 85, AND SIMILAR SIT-INS HAD FORMED IN RALEIGH AND DURHAM.



A YOUNG NORTH CAROLINA MINISTER, DOUGLAS MOORE, WAS A FRIEND OF JIM LAWSON AND CALLED TO ENCOURAGE US.

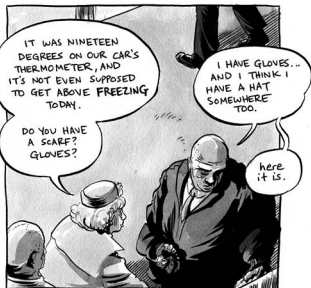
they've been preparing...
mm-hm.

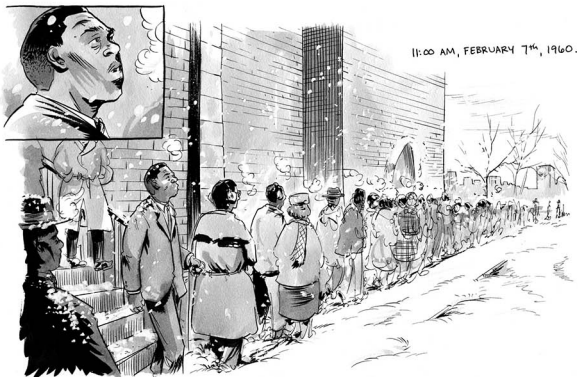
that's right. we've had two. they're nearly ready.

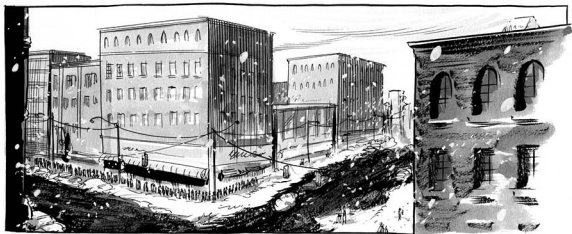


ON FEBRUARY 7th, ONE WEEK AFTER THE GREENSBORO SIT-INS, WE BEGAN OURS.

WASHINGTON, DC -- 8:57 AM,
JANUARY 20, 2009.











KLIK

COUNTER
CLOSED



WHEN WE GOT BACK TO FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, IT WAS LIKE NEW YEAR'S EVE.

THE OTHER TEAMS AT KRESS'S AND MCCLELLAN'S HAD BEEN JUST AS SUCCESSFUL.



THAT WAITRESS WAS SO SCARED, SO NERVOUS, SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! HER HANDS WERE SHAKING AND SHE STARTED DROPPING DISHES RIGHT ON THE FLOOR!

YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT, DIANE!



OUR NUMBERS SWELLED TO OVER 200 STUDENTS FOR OUR NEXT SIT-IN ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH.



AGAIN, THE COUNTER WAS CLOSED.



THAT AFTERNOON, WE STAYED FOR HOURS WITHOUT INCIDENT



TWO DAYS LATER, WE MARCHED AGAIN.

here come the niggers again.

PEOPLE WERE STARTING TO NOTICE.

where am I supposed to eat lunch?



go home, nigger--you're not welcome!

GO BACK TO AFRICA!



THAT NIGHT, JIM LAWSON ASKED TO MEET WITH THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

THE STORE OWNERS ARE ASKING FOR A MORATORIUM ON THE SIT-INS--

THEY SAY THEY NEED SOME TIME TO PUT TOGETHER A PROPOSAL.

SO WE AGREED TO WAIT.

BY THE END OF THE WEEK, WE HAD HEARD NOTHING, SO WE DECIDED THAT SATURDAY WE WOULD SIT-IN AGAIN.

TIK TIK

TAKKA

TAK

TAK

TAK

TAKKA

TAK

OUR NUMBERS WERE MULTIPLYING SO FAST THAT HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS HAD NOT YET BEEN TRAINED IN THE WAY OF NONVIOLENCE, SO I WROTE UP A BASIC LIST OF "DO'S AND DON'T'S" TO BE DISTRIBUTED.

DO NOT:

1. Strike back or curse if abused.
2. Laugh out.
3. Hold conversations with floor walker.
4. Leave your seat until your leader has given you permission to do so.
5. Block entrances to stores outside or the aisles inside.

DO:

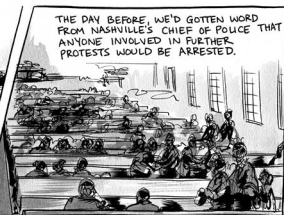
1. Show yourself friendly and courteous at all times.
2. Sit straight; always face the counter.
3. Report all serious incidents to your leader.
4. Refer information seekers to your leader in a polite manner.
5. Remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Love and nonviolence is the way.

MAY GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU

ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 27th, 1960, WE GATHERED TO HEAR WILL CAMPBELL, A WHITE MINISTER WHO'D BEEN RUN OUT OF OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI, FOR PLAYING PING-PONG WITH A BLACK MAN.



THE DAY BEFORE, WE'D GOTTEN WORD FROM NASHVILLE'S CHIEF OF POLICE THAT ANYONE INVOLVED IN FURTHER PROTESTS WOULD BE ARRESTED.



THERE WERE ALSO RUMORS OF PLANNED ATTACKS BY YOUNG WHITES, WHICH THE POLICE DID NOT INTEND TO STOP.



SO ON THIS PARTICULAR MORNING, WILL CAMPBELL HAD COME TO TELL US WHAT HE HAD HEARD FROM HIS CONTACTS IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY.



IF YOU ATTEMPT TO SIT-IN, THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, THE LOCAL OFFICIALS, AND THE AUTHORITIES WILL ALL PULL BACK--

THEY WILL LET POLICE AND... THE ROUGH ELEMENT IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY COME INTO THE STORES AND BEAT YOU.

BUT IT IS YOUR DECISION.

WE KNEW WE COULDN'T LET THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE STOP US.



WE WERE GOING TO SIT-IN.

MY GROUP TARGETED WOOLWORTH'S.

go home
nigger!



GO HOME!
you can't be
here, no more!
my group--

why can't
you go
back home
like me?!

whatsa matter?
you CHICKEN?!

don't want
no niggers!



NO SOONER DID WE TAKE OUR SEATS AT THE
UPSTAIRS COUNTER THAN SOME YOUNG MEN
BEGAN ATTACKING THE GROUP DOWNSTAIRS.

what
whatcha
saying?!

you
nigger!

you
nigger!

you
nigger!

you
nigger!

you
nigger!

you
nigger!



WE IMMEDIATELY WENT DOWN TO JOIN OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.



FURY SPENDS ITSELF PRETTY QUICKLY
WHEN THERE'S NO FURY FACING IT.



THE BEATING SUBSIDED.



THE GROUP AT KRESS'S
FACED HUMILIATION.



AT McCLELLAN'S, PAUL LAPRAD DREW
PARTICULAR ATTENTION FOR BEING WHITE.



THE POLICE, CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT WHILE
WE WERE BEATEN, ARRIVED QUICKLY AFTER
THE MOB WORE THEMSELVES OUT.



IF YOU DO NOT MOVE
FROM YOUR SEATS AND
LEAVE THIS ESTABLISHMENT,
YOU WILL BE PLACED
UNDER ARREST!

WE DIDN'T.



FEBRUARY 27, 1960 WAS MY FIRST ARREST,





SURROUNDED BY SO MANY OF OUR FRIENDS, WE FELT LIKE PRISONERS IN A HOLY WAR.



BACK AT THE LUNCH COUNTERS, POLICE COULD HARDLY KEEP UP WITH THE WAVES OF STUDENTS QUICKLY FILLING THE EMPTY SEATS. NO SOONER WOULD ONE GROUP BE ARRESTED THAN ANOTHER WOULD TAKE ITS PLACE.



82 OF US WENT TO JAIL THAT DAY.



THE POLICE WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE RID OF US, SO THEY REDUCED THE BAIL FROM \$100 TO \$5 APIECE.

BUT IT DIDN'T MATTER.



WE SHALL OVERCOME

WE SHALL OVERCOME

WE SHALL OVERCOME SOMEDAY

WE WEREN'T ABOUT TO COOPERATE IN ANY WAY WITH THE SYSTEM ALLOWING THE VERY DISCRIMINATION WE WERE PROTESTING.



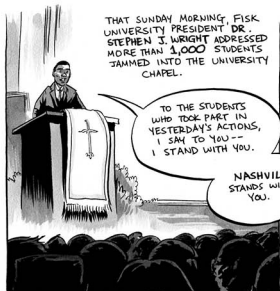
WE SHALL ALL BE FREE

IT DIDN'T TAKE NASHVILLE'S POWERS-THAT-BE LONG TO REALIZE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO FORCE US TO PAY OUR WAY OUT.



AROUND 11:00 P.M., WE WERE ALL RELEASED.





THAT SUNDAY MORNING, FISK UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT DR. STEPHEN J. WRIGHT ADDRESSED MORE THAN 4,000 STUDENTS JAMMED INTO THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL.

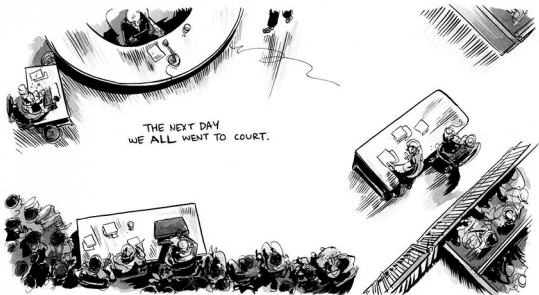
TO THE STUDENTS WHO TOOK PART IN YESTERDAY'S ACTIONS, I SAY TO YOU-- I STAND WITH YOU.

NASHVILLE STANDS WITH YOU.

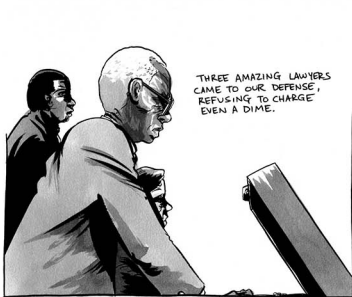


DR. WRIGHT WAS THE FIRST BLACK COLLEGE PRESIDENT IN THE COUNTRY TO TAKE SUCH A STAND.

WE WERE EUPHORIC.



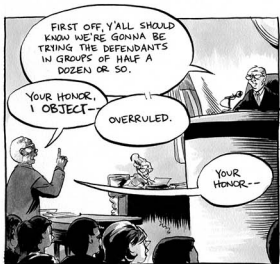
THE NEXT DAY WE ALL WENT TO COURT.



THREE AMAZING LAWYERS CAME TO OUR DEFENSE, REFUSING TO CHARGE EVEN A DIME.



Z. ALEXANDER LOOBY, AN OLDER MAN FROM THE WEST INDIES, WAS OUR LEAD ATTORNEY, AND THE FIRST BLACK MAN ON NASHVILLE'S CITY COUNCIL IN FORTY YEARS. HE HAD ALSO WORKED WITH THURGOOD MARSHALL.





WHEN THE CITY FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH ITS WORKHOUSE ROUTINE, IT PROMPTED OUTRAGE FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. TELEGRAMS OF SUPPORT ARRIVED FROM RALPH BUNCHE, ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, AND HARRY BELAFONTE.



AT THE SAME TIME, MORE STUDENTS VOLUNTEERED AND THE SIT-INS CONTINUED.



MUCH LIKE NASHVILLE ITSELF, MAYOR BEN WEST HAD A RELATIVELY PROGRESSIVE REPUTATION ON RACE. IT DID NOT, HOWEVER, NECESSARILY MEAN HE WAS WILLING TO RISK HIS JOB AND REPUTATION TO HELP.

BUT ON MARCH 3RD, MAYOR WEST ORDERED OUR RELEASE.



WE LEFT JAIL WITH A SENSE OF TRIUMPH, AND WEST ALSO FORMED A BIRACIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY SEGREGATION IN THE CITY. IN RETURN, HE ASKED US TO TEMPORARILY HALT OUR SIT-INS WHILE THE COMMITTEE WORKED, AND WE AGREED.

THAT SAME DAY, THE CHANCELLOR AND TRUSTEES OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY ORDERED THE DEAN OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL TO DISMISS JIM LAWSON.

CUT OFF THE HEAD,
THE THINKING WENT,
AND THE BODY WOULD FALL.

BUT FOR VANDERBILT, THINGS DIDN'T
WORK OUT AS PLANNED. INSTEAD,

DOZENS OF FACULTY AND STAFF THREATENED TO
RESIGN IN PROTEST, MAKING NATIONAL HEADLINES.



BY THE END OF THE MONTH WE DECIDED WE'D WAITED LONG
ENOUGH, SO ON FRIDAY THE 25TH, MORE THAN A HUNDRED OF
US MARCHED FROM FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH TO NINE DOWNTOWN STORES.

THERE WERE NO ARRESTS THAT DAY, BUT AFTER
TENNESSEE GOVERNOR BUFORD ELLINGTON SAW
FOOTAGE OF THE DAY'S PROTEST ON THE NATIONAL
NEWS, HE WAS IRATE.



THESE SIT-INS ARE
INSTIGATED BY, AND STAGED
FOR THE CONVENIENCE
OF, THE COLUMBIA
BROADCAST SYSTEM.



**DON'T
BUY
DOWNTOWN**
HELP US END SEGREGATION IN NASHVILLE

QUIETLY--ALMOST INVISIBLY--WITHIN THE LOCAL
CHURCHES, A BLACK COMMUNITY BOYCOTT OF ALL
DOWNTOWN STORES BEGAN--WHAT SOME PEOPLE
CALLED A "SELECTIVE BUYING CAMPAIGN."

WOULD EVERYONE IN THE
CONGREGATION WHO HAS NOT
SPENT ANY MONEY DOWNTOWN
PLEASE STAND?

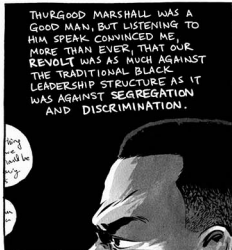
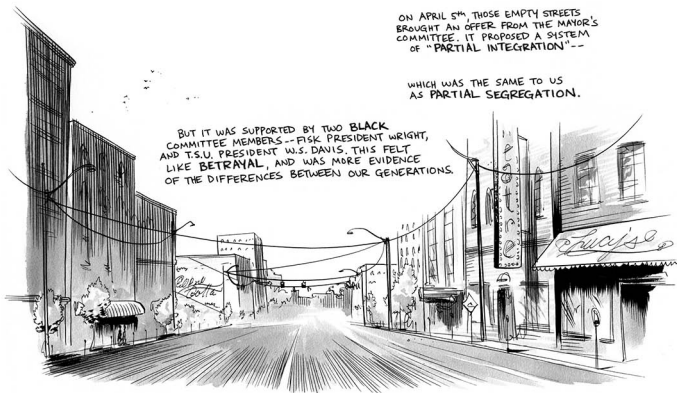




ON APRIL 5TH, THOSE EMPTY STREETS BROUGHT AN OFFER FROM THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE. IT PROPOSED A SYSTEM OF "PARTIAL INTEGRATION"--

WHICH WAS THE SAME TO US AS PARTIAL SEGREGATION.

BUT IT WAS SUPPORTED BY TWO BLACK COMMITTEE MEMBERS-- FISK PRESIDENT WRIGHT, AND T.S.U. PRESIDENT W.S. DAVIS. THIS FELT LIKE BETRAYAL, AND WAS MORE EVIDENCE OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR GENERATIONS.



FIVE DAYS AFTER MARSHALL SPOKE, WE RESUMED THE SIT-INS.



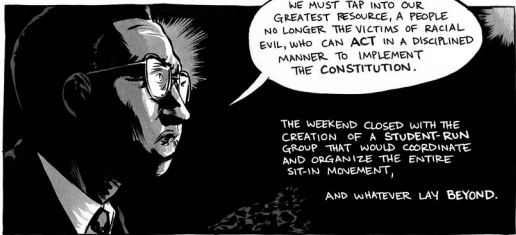
THE NEXT WEEKEND--EASTER--A CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY ELLA BAKER OF SCLC* WAS HELD AT SHAW UNIVERSITY IN RALEIGH.

BAKER ASKED JIM LAWSON, WHOSE MESSAGE APPEALED TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE LISTENING, TO GIVE THE KEYNOTE SPEECH.



* SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
** NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLOURED PEOPLE

WE MUST TAP INTO OUR GREATEST RESOURCE, A PEOPLE NO LONGER THE VICTIMS OF RACIAL EVIL, WHO CAN ACT IN A DISCIPLINED MANNER TO IMPLEMENT THE CONSTITUTION.

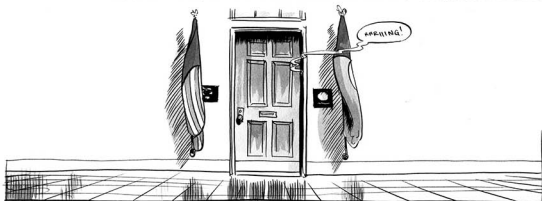
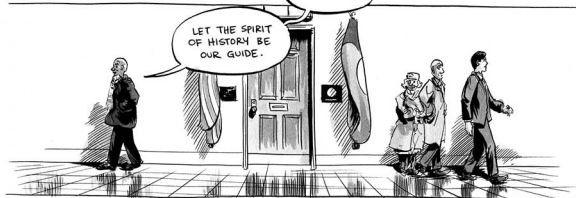


THE WEEKEND CLOSED WITH THE CREATION OF A STUDENT-RUN GROUP THAT WOULD COORDINATE AND ORGANIZE THE ENTIRE SIT-IN MOVEMENT,

AND WHATEVER LAY BEYOND.



THAT ORGANIZATION BECAME KNOWN AS THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE, OR SNCC-- WHICH WE PRONOUNCED SIMPLY AS "SNICK".

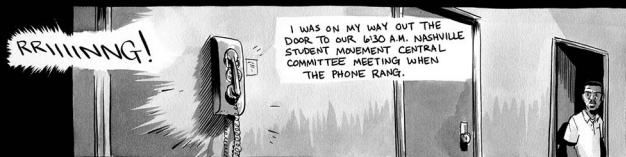



APRIL 19, 1960.

BRRRIING




STUDENTS:
"please" be
mindful of
others who
are studying.
Thank you!






BERNARD!
WE'VE GOTTA
GO--

THEY'VE
BOMBED THE
LOOBY'S HOUSE!



WELL, AT 5:30 A.M.,
SOMEONE THREW DYNAMITE
AT THE LOOBY'S HOUSE FROM
A PASSING CAR--



THE BLAST TORE
OFF THE FRONT OF
THE HOUSE, AND PEOPLE
ARE SAYING IT SHATTERED
WINDOWS A BLOCK
AWAY.

WHAT ABOUT
THE LOOBY'S?
ARE THEY OKAY?!

I THINK SO.
IT LOOKS LIKE,
MIRACULOUSLY,
NO ONE WAS
INJURED.

WE CAN'T LET
THIS INTIMIDATE
US.

WE'VE GOT TO
DO SOMETHING,
AND IT'S GOTTA
BE NOW.

IF WE'RE TO
MAKE OURSELVES
HEARD, WE MUST
DRAMATIZE THE SITU-
ATION, AND WE HAVE
TO STAND TOGETHER.
OUR OWN GOVERNMENT
CANNOT ALLOW
THIS VIOLENCE.

we have
to march.

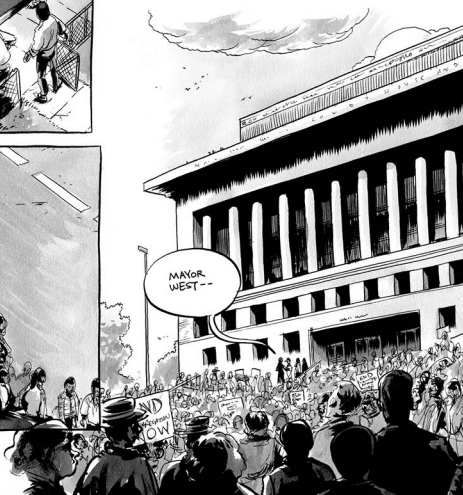
AGREED.

LET'S GET THE WORD
OUT TO OUR PEOPLE AND
SEND A TELEGRAM TO
MAYOR WEST--

LET HIM KNOW
WE'RE ON OUR WAY
TO SEE HIM.



BY NOON, THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE HAD GATHERED AT TENNESSEE STATE TO MARCH ON CITY HALL.







THE NEXT EVENING, DR. KING
ARRIVED TO SPEAK--





X
end book one.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to Andrew Aydin for all of his hard work. He had a vision, and he never gave up. I believe together we have created something truly meaningful. I want to thank Nate Powell for his unbelievable talent, kind spirit, and hard work. He is a wonderful collaborator. And I want to thank Chris Staros, Brett Warnock, Leigh Walton, Chris Ross, and everyone at Top Shelf for their openness, their support, and their powerful work.

John Lewis

I want to thank my Mom for the opportunities in my life that her hard work and sacrifice made possible. I am forever indebted to John Lewis for his remarkable life, his trust, his faith, and his friendship. I am in awe of Nate Powell's talent and grateful to work with him. I want to thank Sara for her patience and support, Vaughn for his guidance and friendship, and Dom for reminding me to have fun. I wish Jordan could see this. And thank you Mr. Parker, Mrs. Fuentes, Jacob Gillison, Professor Uchimura and all of the teachers and mentors that gave me the courage to walk this road.

Andrew Aydin

I'd like to dedicate my work on this book to the memory of Sarah Kirsch (1970–2012), whose compassion, humanity, vision, and talent deeply shaped the direction of my life from my early teenage years; to my wife Rachel, a true original and cranky do-gooder committed to helping those who need a hand; and to our amazing daughter Harper, in hopes of her growing into a world more humane, more considerate, more loving—a world she and her entire generation will inherit. Let's make the world worth it.

Nate Powell

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JOHN LEWIS is the U.S. Representative for Georgia's fifth congressional district and an American icon widely known for his role in the civil rights movement.

As a student at American Baptist Theological Seminary in 1959, Lewis organized sit-in demonstrations at segregated lunch counters in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1961, he volunteered to participate in the Freedom Rides, which challenged segregation at interstate bus terminals across the South. He was beaten severely by angry mobs and arrested by police for challenging the injustice of "Jim Crow" segregation in the South.

From 1963 to 1966, Lewis was Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). As head of SNCC, Lewis became a nationally recognized figure, dubbed one of the "Big Six" leaders of the civil rights movement. At the age of 23, he was an architect of and a keynote speaker at the historic March on Washington in August 1963.

In 1964, John Lewis coordinated SNCC efforts to organize voter registration drives and community action programs during the Mississippi Freedom Summer. The following year, Lewis helped spearhead one of the most seminal moments of the civil rights movement. Together with Hosea Williams, another notable civil rights leader, John Lewis led over 600 peaceful, orderly protestors across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on March 7, 1965. They intended to march from Selma to Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the state. The marchers were attacked by Alabama state troopers in a brutal confrontation that became known as "Bloody Sunday." News broadcasts and photographs revealing the senseless cruelty of the segregated South helped hasten the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Despite physical attacks, serious injuries, and more than 40 arrests, John Lewis remained a devoted advocate of the philosophy of nonviolence. After leaving SNCC in 1966, he continued to work for civil rights, first as Associate Director of the Field Foundation, then with the Southern Regional Council, where he became Executive Director of the Voter Education Project (VEP). In 1977, Lewis was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to direct more than 250,000 volunteers of ACTION, the federal volunteer agency.

In 1981, Lewis was elected to the Atlanta City Council. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 1986 and represented Georgia's fifth district there ever since. In 2011 he was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama.

Lewis' 1998 memoir *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* won numerous honors, including the Robert F. Kennedy, Lillian Smith, and Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards. His most recent book, *Across That Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change*, has won the NAACP Image Award.



Photo by Eric Etheridge



(From left to right): Nate Powell, Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin.

Photo by Sandi Villarreal

ANDREW AYDIN, an Atlanta native, currently serves in Rep. John Lewis' Washington, D.C. office handling telecommunications and technology policy as well as new media. Previously, he served as communications director and press secretary during Lewis' 2008 and 2010 re-election campaigns, as district aide to Rep. John Larson, and as special assistant to Connecticut Lt. Governor Kevin Sullivan. Andrew is a graduate of the Lovett School in Atlanta, Trinity College in Hartford, and Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

NATE POWELL is a New York Times best-selling graphic novelist born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1978. He began self-publishing at age 14, and graduated from the School of Visual Arts in 2000. His work includes the critically acclaimed *Any Empire*, *Swallow Me Whole* (winner of the Eisner Award and Ignatz Award, finalist for the LA Times Book Prize), *The Year of the Beasts*, *The Silence of Our Friends*, and *Sounds of Your Name*.

Powell appeared at the United Nations in 2011, discussing his contribution to the fiction anthology *What You Wish For: A Book for Darfur* alongside some of the world's foremost writers of young adult fiction.

In addition to *March*, Powell is also currently drawing the graphic novel adaptation of Rick Riordan's #1 international bestseller *Heroes of Olympus: The Lost Hero*, while writing and drawing his own forthcoming graphic novel *Cover* and assembling the short story collection *You Don't Say*.

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