



A hardboiled detective. His knuckleheaded partner. And a bar girl with a mysterious past. Their lives intersect in the most unlikely of places – a murder scene, where a minister who killed himself 20 years ago, is found dead again.

In the tradition of noir comics like *Sin City*, *Sprawl* is gritty and laced with dark humour. Innovative and surprising in its blend of poetry and art, *Sprawl* is the first in a new graphic novel series by Felix Cheong and Arif Rafhan.

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Editions



**SPRAWL** FELIX CHEONG | ARIF RAFHAN

Marshall Cavendish Editions

# SPRAWL

## A GRAPHIC NOVEL

WRITTEN BY FELIX CHEONG  
ILLUSTRATED BY ARIF RAFHAN



**"A MEMORABLE,  
VISCERAL GUT PUNCH  
OF A GRAPHIC NOVEL.  
I LOVED IT."  
— NEIL HUMPHREYS**





With a hardboiled edge, Felix Cheong and Arif Rafhan have created a sin city to rival Frank Miller's. The blood doesn't spill from the page. It splatters, reaching the darkest corners of the most privileged in society. Uncompromising in the best possible way, *Srawl* revels in its artistic vision and sweeps the reader along. A memorable, visceral gut punch of a graphic novel. I loved it.

— Neil Humphreys, author of *Bloody Foreigners*

Frank Miller aesthetics cloak this crime noir thriller set in Sin-gapore City as Felix Cheong and Arif Rafhan spin this tale of corruption and tarnished heroes with verve and hardboiled excitement.

— Kenny Chan, former Asia-Pacific senior store and merchandising director, Books Kinokuniya

Felix Cheong and Arif Rafhan's *Srawl* brings together two literary genres, poetry and noir, in the graphic novel form. The graphic form meshes well with both the kinetic aspects of poetry and noir. It's a dark and bloody tour through a city's underbelly.

— Dr Ian Gordon, author of *Superman: The Persistence of an American Icon*

The struggle redemption, framed in the grittiness of film noir, capturing the brilliant poetics of the urban underbelly, *Srawl* is a cinematic and captivating thrill ride.

— Crispin Rodrigues, poet

For Review only

# SPRAWL

FELIX CHEONG | ARIF RAFHAN

To Daniel

For all the years we have spent  
dreaming of stories in noir chiaroscuro.

— FC

Enjoy my first noir, my lovely colorful family;  
Suhana, Mya, Hamka, and Sina!

—AR

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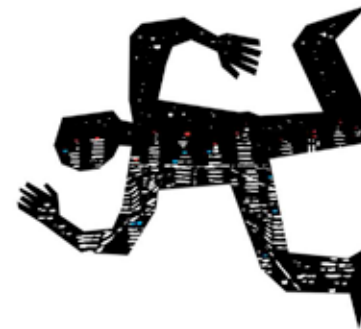
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iew only

AND LIKE A MIRROR, THE CITY LIGHTS SHINE  
THEY'RE SCREAMING AT US,  
WE DON'T NEED YOUR KIND.  
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF THE WORLD'S SO SMALL.  
THAT WE CAN NEVER GET AWAY FROM THE SPRAWL.

- "SPRAWL II (MOUNTAINS BEYOND MOUNTAINS)", ARCADE FIRE.)



For Rev





# PROLOGUE

THE CITY STRETCHES YOUR EYES,  
ITS CANVAS TAUT ACROSS THE SKY.



NO PIXEL IS LEFT UNTOUCHED,  
NO VIEW DEEMED TOO RUSHED.



**DRIP!**



ITS SMILE FOLLOWS YOUR EVERY TURN,  
TAKES IN WHATEVER YOU YEARN.



BUT I SENSE IT WEAKENING AT ITS KNEES,  
HEAVING AS IT BREATHES -



AS I AM, LIKE I DO, AND I WAS,  
BEFORE DEATH FLEXES ITS CLAWS.





# KEEP TO YOUR LANE

SIX MONTHS AGO.

DAMN THIS EXPRESSWAY.  
PLANNED TO A HILT

BUT TRAFFIC MOVES  
LIKE A HEARSE.

A YOUNG PUNK CUTS IN.

A FEW HONKS YIELD  
ONLY THE MANNERS

**HONK!**  
**HONK!**

OF HIS MIDDLE FINGER.

I GIVE HIM A THUMBS UP.

HE WILL HEAR FROM  
GARY SOON AT TRAFFIC

LIKE A BLACK DOG  
OUT OF THE BLUE.

EVERYBODY MAKES USE OF SOMEBODY.



# STILL LIFE

EVERYTHING HERE MOVES WITH  
THE DRAG OF ALCOHOL IN  
THE BLOOD.



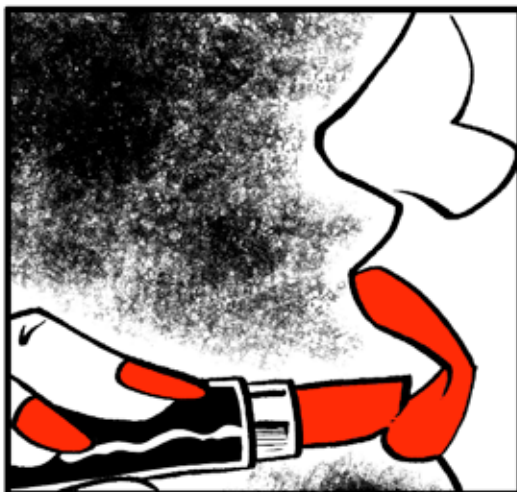
O'Shea



IT COULD BE THE DIM LIGHT  
THAT EATS AWAY YOUR YEARS.



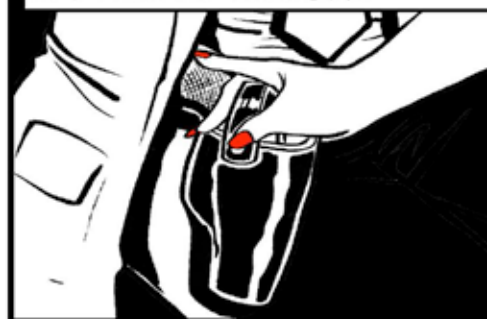
IT BEGINS ABOVE YOUR NECK AND CREATES  
STATIC BELOW YOUR SLITHERING BELT.



IT'S IN HER BODY THAT WEARS  
ITSELF LIGHT, A LOOSE STRAP  
SO SLIGHT.



YOU REMAIN STILL ON THE STOOL,  
LIKE A CLOCK UNHINGED.



IT'S HER ASSET STRIPPING TO A  
SHOW, ONE HAND SHY OF YOUR  
GRASP.



ONE COGNAC BUYS YOU TIME  
AS SHE AWAITS YOUR LUST.



EXIT

SO STILL, BESS,  
STILL SO AND  
AT REST.



# FIGHTING FIRE

I SET A STICK INTO FLIGHT  
AND WATCH HOW EACH BREATH



HASTENS ITS MORTALITY,



CANCER AT THE END OF A BUTT.

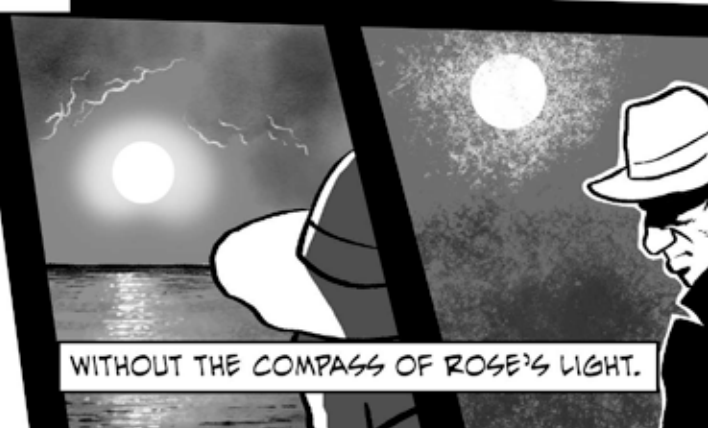


I DO NOT INHALE,

I HAVE PROMISES TO QUIT.

I'D  
A LOVING  
WIFE

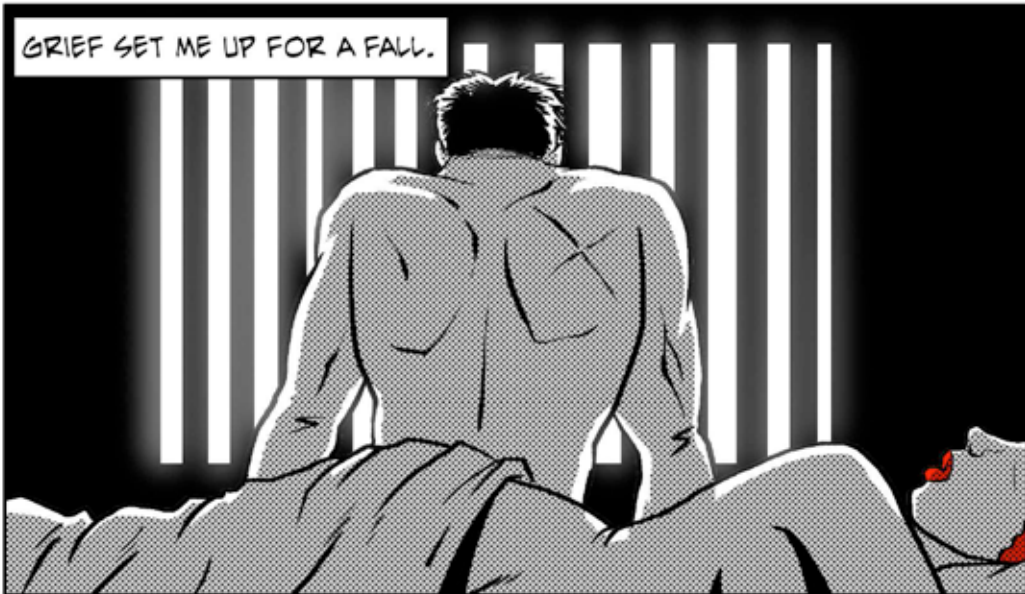
7 YEARS OF DRIFT



WITHOUT THE COMPASS OF ROSE'S LIGHT.



GRIEF SET ME UP FOR A FALL.



I DIDN'T GIVE IT A BLOODY TOSS.



BUT HERE IS NOW IS LOVE THAT LEANS



IN FOR A KISS. AND ALL IS RIGHT AS RAIN.



# CITY OF DREAMS

For Re

