**Graphic story script**

**PAGE 1**

**Panel 1**: visuals – **establishing shot** of the forest with tall pines and people squatting, picking mushrooms

Narrator: *It’s matsutake season again. The forest is busy with foragers looking for this rare mushroom…*

**Panel 2:** visuals - marketplace trading, diagonals and frame variation to show dynamisms and traffic of forest and trading, atmosphere reminiscent of a gold rush

Narrator: *… to then sell them at enormous profits in makeshift markets.*

**Panel 3**: visuals – **close-in** on a matsutake with hands reaching for it from different directions

Narrator: *But what is in a mushroom? What brings us all here, to this remote forest in Oregon? Why do people leave cities… and choose to live precarious lives at the edge of society?*

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**Panel 3:** visuals – **wide angle shot** of pickers in layered clothing sitting by a campfire + cluttered, ragged campsite, modest belongings in the background

Narrator: *At night, pickers set up camp and socialize. ~~Seng is usually the one breaking the silence.~~*

Seng (turning to people around him): *God, I’m tired. How did we end up here, anyway? Eh, Dara?*

**Panel 4**: visuals – other people sitting by the campfire. medium close-up on woman on a camping chair. One of her legs is a prosthetic

Dara: *Well, you know. I had nowhere to go. Who would employ someone like me*?

**Panel 5**: visuals - close-up of same woman staring at the fire

Dara: *But it’s not just about the money, you know?*

Panel 6: visuals – closeup on Dara’s prosthetic

Dara: *After I stepped on that landmine in Cambodia, I was lost. Immobilized. It was only here that I started to heal.*

**Panel 7:** visuals: close-up on Seng’s face as he responds

Seng: *Funny you should say that - I also had to escape my country. Then I got fed up with my boss here in the US and decided to flee the city.*

**Panel 8:** visuals – Seng standing on one end of a precipice while his family on the other

Seng*: Leaving my family behind is the hardest thing I’ve ever done. But at least there’s opportunities here.*

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**Panel 9**: visuals – close-up of Seng’s face by the fire, image of mushroom and dollar signs in his eyes

Seng: *It feels great to not have a boss. I’m running my own business here.*

**Panel 10:** visuals - wide angle shot: Seng looking at a man facing away from him

Seng: *What about you, pal? Jeff, right?*

**Panel 11:** visuals – close-up of Jeff grumpily responding

Jeff: *I’m not your pal, Seng. You know damn well that if we met 30 years ago, it would’ve been in Vietnam, hunting down each other, you commie.*

**Panel 12:** visuals – close-up of Seng replying

Seng: First of all, I was never a ‘commie’. ~~I never really got into that stuff, but if I had to, I would have enlisted on in the Royal Lao Army.~~ We would’ve been on the same side, buddy.

**Panel 13:** supe**r** close-up of Jeff frowning

Jeff: *Whatever, you’re all Charlies to me.*

**Panel 14:** wide shot of everyone by the campfire, Seng is standing up, his hands reaching out wide with blurgits/swalloops (curved lines preceding or trailing after a character’s moving limbs – found this term in Walker’s Lexicon of Comicana)

Seng: ~~Hah.~~ ~~Good thing that now we only have to hunt for matsutake!~~ *But for real, you think I’d come to live here if I was happy with what the world out there had to offer? I’m a businessman! I thrive on the land of the free.*

**Panel 15**: medium close-up of Dara by the fire

Dara: *I share your view, Seng . This is a place when one can be free.*

**Panel 16:** super close-up on Jeff as he turns away, showing the US flag on his baseball cap

Jeff (murmurs): *Damn right it’s the land of freedom. You don’t have to tell me that*.

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**Panel 17:** visuals - wide angle horizontal panel with maze running through the forest. Pine trees peek out of the maze and we see people squatting. Above each picker, a ghost-like shape lingers.

Narrator: *The land of freedom. As it turns out, the pickers navigate the forest through a maze of differences…*

*…haunted by the ghosts of their pasts.*

*But even amongst their differences…*

**Panel 18:** visuals – maze shown from bird’s eye view with the ghost-like shapes melting into one

Narrator: …a common vocabulary of freedom seems to have emerged.

**Panel 19:** wide angle shot of camp at night, everyone sleeping. To the right of the panel is a tree trunk dividing the panel. On the right side of the tree the unnamed character is sitting with hazy, wavy lines surrounding him.

SFX: Zzz Zzz Zzz

Narrator: *it almost feels like there’s a chance to be free here for everyone.*

(above character*): Almost.*

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**Panel 20** – visuals: [the next day] wide angle panel showing forest with pickers and Jeff from the back, moving away from the others

**Panel 21** – visuals: medium close-up of Jeff making his way through the dense bushes and undergrowth of the forest

SFX/comicana: blurgits/swalloops to indicate movement through bushes

**Panel 22** – visuals: POV angle showing Jeff as he stumbles upon a patch rich with matsutake

**Panel 23** – visuals: full body shot of Jeff as he approaches and notices that there’s a man already there, squatting.

Comicana: Exclamation mark to indicate surprise

**Panel 24** – visuals: closeup on Jeff’s face as he is grumpily thinking to himself

Jeff*: Freedom, my ass. How can I be free on my land when it’s filled with all these immigrants?*

**Panel 25** – visuals: slightly tilted (?) panel of Jeff, one hand on his hips, one hand reached out pointing to another dimension, while the unnamed guy is still squatting

Jeff: *Hey, that’s my spot. Get outta here*.

Unnamed picker: *¿Perdón?*

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**Panel 26** visuals – slightly low angle of Jeff standing above the guy with both of his hands on his hip.

Jeff: *Since you must be new around here, let me tell you how this works. This is my spot, go somewhere else.*

**Panel 27** – visuals: medium close-up of unnamed picker standing up, shrugging

Unnamed picker*: Señor, por favor. I’ve been coming here for weeks, I know that the forest belongs to everyone.*

**Panel 28** – visuals: medium-close up of Jeff, body language implies an angry outburst, yelling

Jeff [raises his voice*]: How dare you lecture me about the ways of my country?!!*

**Panel 29** – visuals: medium close-up of unnamed man from a slightly high angle, to imply timidity

Unnamed man: *Señor, please keep it down. I don’t want to attract attention.*

**Panel 30 –** visuals: wide angle horizontal shot of forest, Dara and Seng picking mushrooms on one end and overhearing yelling from the woods coming from the other end

Comicana: grawlixes to imply Jeff swearing

Seng: *What’s going on??*

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**Panel 31 –** visuals: medium shot of Seng and Dara headed over to the arguing people, Seng’s hand is raised as if to signal ‘stop’

Seng: *Man, leave him be! It’s tough enough to be out here on our own, let alone having to look out for the ICE*.

**Panel 32** – visuals: full body shot of unnamed man turning to Jeff, begging

Unnamed man: *Please, this was the only job available. I can’t risk losing it, I have a family back home*.

**Panel 33** – visuals: medium close-up of Jeff crossing his arms and frowning

Jeff: *Well it’s not my problem you came illegally to this country.*

**Panel 34** – visuals: close-up on Dara

Dara: *Hey! What use is there to be here if you’re gonna act like you were back in the world that disappointed you so much?*

**Panel 35:** visuals - close-up on Jeff, frustrated

Jeff: *What the hell?*!

**Panel 36:** visuals - POV angle, Jeff’s fingers pointing towards Dara and Seng

Jeff: *You were the one babbling on freedom yesterday!*

**Panel 37** – full shot of Jeff, pointing towards himself

Jeff: *Well no one can limit my freedom!*

**Panel 38:** visuals – close-up of unnamed man’s face showing signs of outrage and confusion

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**Panel 39:** visuals – super close-up of unnamed man’s face as he opens his mouth

Unnamed man: *Freedom?*

**Panel 40:** visuals – wide angle shot showing full body of unnamed man as he spreads his arms out

Unnamed mand: *WHAT FREEDOM ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!*

**Panel 41**: visuals – close-in on a mushroom in man’s hand

Unnamed man: *How is* this *being free?*

**Panel 42** visuals – ?? maybe wide angle shot showing the man pointing at the three other characters

Unnamed man: *You can romanticize it all you want and I’m glad if it helps you imagine a better life*.

**Panel 43** visuals – ??

Unnamed man: *But some of us aren’t here to find freedom*.

**Panel 44:** visuals – close-up on man with hazy lines around him

Unnamed man: *We’re here to survive.*

**Panel 45:** visuals – wide shot of man hiking through forest/ desert

Unnamed man: *Hoping that at the end of the season we can make it back home.*

**Panel 46:** visuals – full body shot of unnamed man hugging family members

Unnamed man: *And see our families again*.

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**Panel 47:** visuals – silent panel with Seng and Dara hanging and their heads and Jeff also contemplating

**Panel 48** visuals – close-up Jeff opening his mouth.

Jeff: *Hey man, listen.*

**Panel 49**: visuals – medium-close up of Jeff explaining something to the man who’s head is slightly hung

Jeff: *I’m not saying it’s easy*.

**Panel 50:** visuals – wide angle shot of Jeff pointing at him and Seng & Dara, all of them are surrounded by the same ghost-like shapes as in the 4th page in the maze

Jeff: *We’ve all been through stuff*.

Jeff: *And I don’t wanna banish you either.*

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**Panel 51:** visuals – close-up of unnamed man, raising one eyebrow

Unnamed man: *Does this mean I’m free to stay here?*

**Panel 52**: visuals – medium close-up of Jeff, crossing his arms

Jeff: *You can do whatever you want as long as you stay out of my way.*

**Panel 53** – [silent panel] visuals – wide horizontal shot of forest from POV of unnamed man, as Jeff is walking away, facing his back