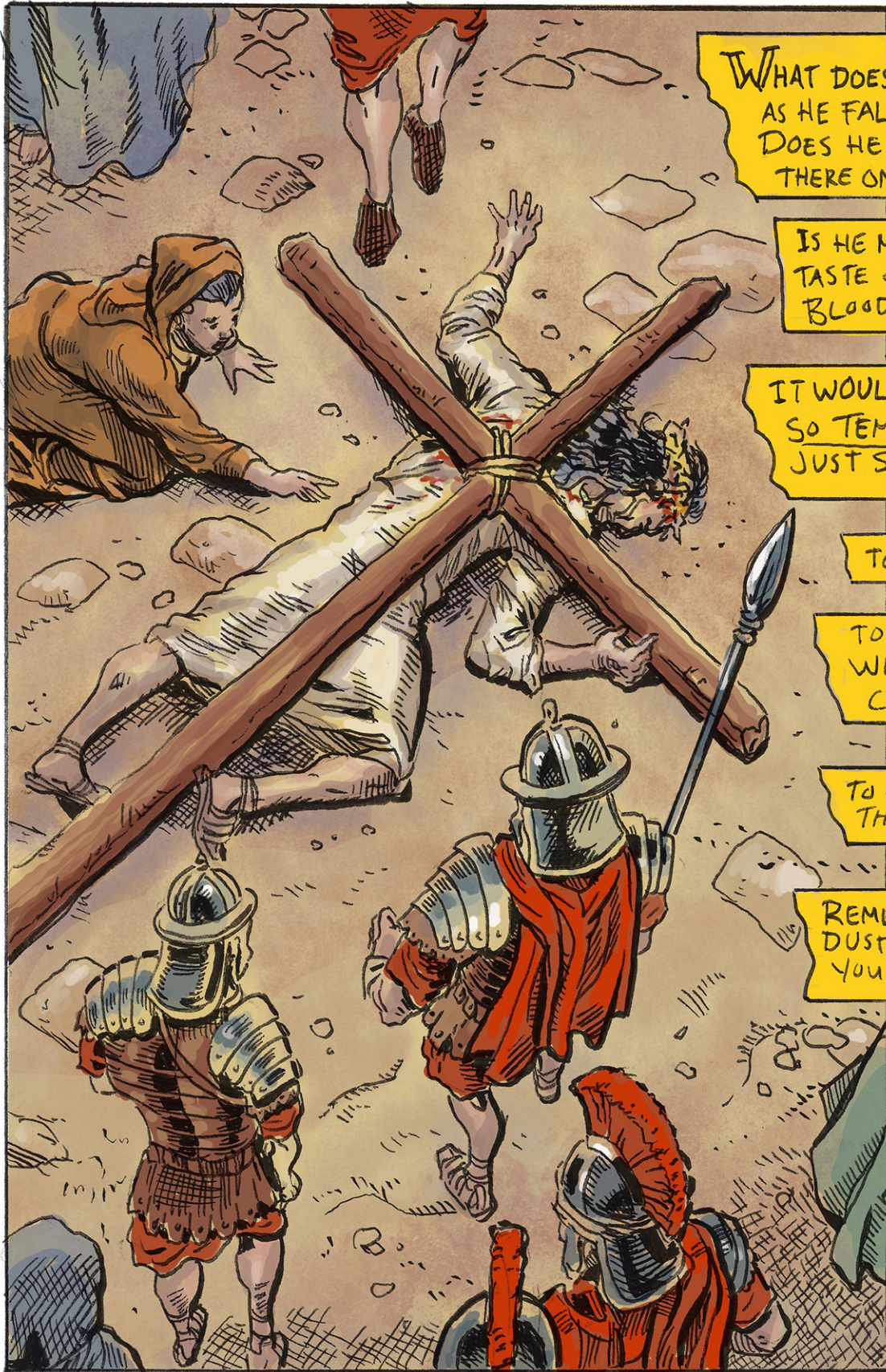


IX

JESUS Falls a Third Time

STORY AND ART BY EARNEST GRAHAM



WHAT DOES HE THINK,
AS HE FALLS THIS TIME?
DOES HE THINK? OR IS
THERE ONLY PAIN LEFT?

IS HE NUMB TO THE
TASTE OF GRAVEL AND
BLOOD IN HIS MOUTH?

IT WOULD BE SO EASY
SO TEMPTING — TO
JUST STAY HERE —

TO NOT MOVE.

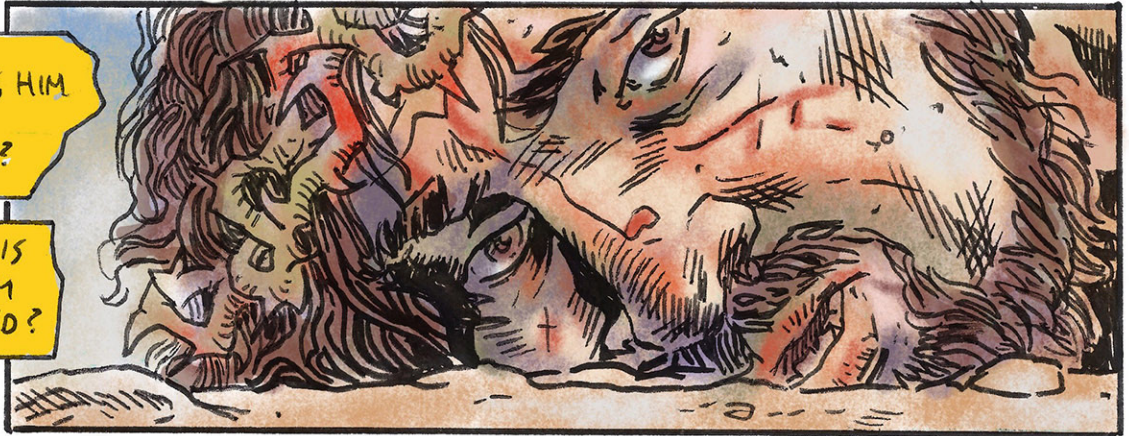
TO GIVE IN TO THE
WEIGHT OF THE
CROSS

TO HOLD ON TO
THE EARTH,

REMEMBER YOU ARE
DUST, AND TO DUST
YOU WILL RETURN.

WHAT MOVES HIM
TO LOOK UP
ONCE MORE?

TO RAISE HIS
BODY FROM
THE GROUND?



IS IT THE PRODDING OF
THE SOLDIERS' SPEAR
IN HIS SIDE - THE THREAT
OF THE WHIP?

OR THE SIGHT OF HIS MOTHER,
OR THE COMPASSION OF THE
WOMEN IN THE CROWD?



IS IT THE SHEER
DETERMINATION
TO SEE THIS THROUGH
TO THE END? TO NOT
LET HIS ENEMY WIN?



HE DECIDES.
THIS IS NOT
THE TIME.

NOT YET.

