

Writing Samples: Anna C. Webster

Because my current work with Fallout: Cascadia is in production and thus not released to the public, here are some comic script samples which feature similar stylistic elements to game writing, as well as showcase the amount of background and supplementary research I like to put into my work.

Thank you so much for your time. Enjoy!

Contents:

Isla and the Demon (Excerpt)

Pages 1-17

Summary: terminally-ill young adult Isla makes an unusual deal with a peculiar demon.

Holly. (Excerpt)

Pages 18-

Summary: In the pages prior, now-ex- 'working girl' Holly accidentally ends up in the mob.

"Holly." explores themes of bonding among women, the Native American Rights Movement, and the idea of obligatory 'caretaking' of those we love.

Isla and the Demon (Working Title)

Anna C. Webster

PAGE 1:

Four equal-sized panels.

PANEL 1: An empty bathroom in what appears to be a hospital, the view is looking into the reflection of the room in the mirror. In the bottom there appears to be the view of someone's back, as if they are leaning over the sink to wash their face.

PANEL 2: A young woman (ISLA), having just come up from splashing cold water on her face, looking white as a sheet. She looks terrified and is wearing a hospital gown and hospital ID bracelet, and an IV access port on the back of her hand. She has brown hair and a very “girl next door” sort of look, somewhat like actress Shailene Woodley is known for.

PANEL 3: ISLA stepping out of the bathroom and into her hospital room proper, wiping away tears with the back of her hand. On her bedside table is a bouquet of flowers and other get-well-soon paraphernalia.

PANEL 4: ISLA grabbing a bag titled “PATIENT BELONGINGS” from a cabinet, tears drying on her cheeks.



Figure 1: Shailene Woodley

PAGE 2:

Four equal-sized panels.

PANEL 1: ISLA peeking out the door of her hospital room.

PANEL 2: ISLA, hugging her bag of belongings to her, walking (barefoot) down the hallway of the hospital now that the coast is clear.

PANEL 3: ISLA dashing down a stairwell.

PANEL 4: ISLA in a parking garage, digging through her “patient belongings” bag for something, while also looking nervously over her shoulder. It’s very clear she’s sneaking out, her IV not even removed.

PAGE 3:

Three panels: two on top of one half-splash.

PANEL 1: ISLA fumbling some car keys into the door of an old sedan.

PANEL 2: A reflection of ISLA’s eyes/top of head in the rear-view mirror of a car that is entering out into the night.

PANEL 3: View of a car from behind as it speeds along a paved road, heading toward the countryside (not that this seemed to be a particularly urban area in the first place). The license plate on the car is that of the United Kingdom. There is a sign on the side of the road.

SIGN: NOW LEAVING MARLBOROUGH

PAGE 4:

Full splash page of the bird's-eye view of a crossroads of dirt roads somewhere out in the middle of nowhere in the countryside. A single, bedraggled street light illuminates the crossroads point. Along one of the branches of road is ISLA's vehicle, coming to a stop.

ISLA (OFF) 1: I DIDN'T CARE IF THE OLD STORY WAS FAKE OR NOT.

ISLA (OFF) 2: I WAS WILLING TO TRY ANYTHING.

ISLA (OFF) 3: I WAS OUT OF OPTIONS.

PAGE 5:

Page 5 contains six panels in total with a somewhat irregular layout across two tiers. The first tier is quite thick, and takes up about 2/3rds of the page. The first panel is tall, and the two smaller panels in the tier are stacked atop each other to its right. Beneath it in the smaller tier are three equal-sized panels.

PANEL 1: ISLA standing in the center of the crossroads, looking around nervously.

PANEL 2: ISLA tearing a patch of fabric from a frayed end of her hospital gown.

SFX: RIIIIIP!

PANEL 3: ISLA picking some cornflower blue wildflowers from the side of the road, the torn scrap of fabric limp in her hand.

PANEL 4: ISLA looking pensively.

ISLA (THOUGHT): NOW ALL I NEED IS...

PANEL 5: semi beat-panel - same image from PANEL 4, however this time her eyes are directed downward, out of the frame.

ISLA (THOUGHT): ...OH.

PANEL 6: a raccoon that was run over by a car. The image is not too gruesome, and most of the "damage" to the raccoon's body is implied and obscured by foliage.

PAGE 6:

Page six has six panels in total across three tiers. The first tier takes up roughly half of the page, and is three equal, tall and skinny panels. The second tier contains two equal panels, and the third tier, the skinniest of them all, contains just one long panel.

PANEL 1: the view of ISLA, wincing as she is reaching for the raccoon.

PANEL 2: same view of ISLA, except now she looks horrified.

PANEL 3: ISLA, now holding the detached tail of the dead raccoon. It seems to have fallen right off due to the state of decay. ISLA is looking at it nervously.

PANEL 4: ISLA's hands, wrapping the raccoon tail and the blue flowers up in the scrap of fabric torn from her hospital gown.

PANEL 5: ISLA finishing tying the knot of the little bundle.

PANEL 6: a really distant profile view of ISLA in silhouette, kneeling down

PAGE 7:

Page 7 contains five panels across two tiers. The first tier contains two equal panels, and the second tier contains three equal-panels.

PANEL 1: A small hole dug in the ground, and ISLA placing the bag inside of it. With her other hand she is scooping a little bit of dirt on top of it.

PANEL 2: ISLA patting the flat dirt of the now-filled-in hole.

PANEL 3: ISLA's silhouette, now standing in silhouette in the center of the crossroads.

PANEL 4: Beat panel.

PANEL 5: Beat panel.

ISLA: ...HELLO?

* The artist with which I am collaborating is Brazilian, and in Brazil (although this story is set in the UK), it is a commonly known folktale that you can summon a spirit at a crossroads. All you have to do is put an organic object and a flower into a bag or box and bury it where two roads come together - and wait. It's also believed that this is how Faust conjured the demon to which he sold his soul, so it's a nice little homage.

PAGE 8:

Page 8 contains only three panels. In what would be a full splash page, panels 1 and 3 create cutouts in the top and bottom right corners, respectively.

PANEL 1: ISLA, looking over her shoulder in fear. A heavy mist is settling around her.

PANEL 2: KONRAD appears, a suave-looking demon...or at least he *would* be, however he is wearing a bathrobe, pajama pants, and pink bunny slippers. He looks groggy, and is holding a cup of coffee labeled "LIMBO'S BEST DEMON." The heavy mist is swirling about him now, and he's standing on top of where ISLA buried the little bundle of materials meant to summon him.*

KONRAD: HUH? **WHERE** AM I? **WHO** SUMMONED ME?

PANEL 3: ISLA, looking timidly, slightly holding up her hand like answering a question in class.

ISLA 1: UM...

ISLA 2: ...I DID.

PAGE 9:

Page 9 has three panels: two equal-sized panels on top of a half splash.

PANEL 1: KONRAD, looking down at her, scrutinizing her, highly perplexed by her hospital gown.

KONRAD 1: ...WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?

KONRAD 2: YOU MORTALS ARE SO **ODD**.

PANEL 2: ISLA, looking confused.

ISLA: I COULD ASK **YOU** THE SAME QUESTION.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: THAT'S FAIR.

KONRAD (OFF) 2: HMM...WE MUST BE OUT NEAR FYFIELD DOWN! JUST **LOVELY** THIS TIME OF YEAR!

PANEL 3: ISLA and KONRAD standing and talking, but Konrad has started like he would much rather be somewhere else.

KONRAD: VERY WELL THEN. I SEE YOU'VE PERFORMED THE RITUAL, SO YOU'D LIKE TO STRIKE A **DEAL**, YES?

ISLA: YES.

KONRAD: WELL THEN, WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOUR BOYFRIEND DUMPED YOU?

PAGE 10:

Page 10 contains five panels in total across two tiers. In the first tier, there would be two equal panels, however in the right-hand panel there is a smaller cutout in the bottom right. In the second tier, the first panel is slightly larger than the second.

PANEL 1: ISLA, now fiddling with her ginger hair, revealing an IV cannula still on the back of her hand and the hospital bracelet around her wrist. She looks both sad, and in shock - the reality of her situation doesn't really seem to have hit her yet.

ISLA 1: UM...NO.

ISLA 2: I RECEIVED SOME RATHER BAD NEWS TODAY.

ISLA 3: I'M--UH--KINDA **DYING?**

PANEL 2: A pattern like a medical diagram of a lung with cystic fibrosis [see figure 2].

ISLA (OFF) 1: I HAVE CYSTIC FIBROSIS. IT'S A GENETIC THING.
ISLA (OFF) 2: THERE'S A LOT OF MUCUS IN MY LUNGS.

PANEL 3: close up of ISLA's hand wiping away a tear from her freckled cheek.

ISLA 1: I WENT TO HOSPITAL BECAUSE IT'S BEEN GETTING **WORSE**.
ISLA 2: THEY NOW SAY I MAY NOT HAVE LONG.

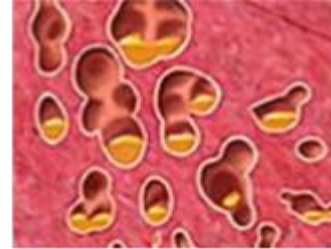


Figure 2: medical illustration of mucus trapped in the airways of the lung.

PANEL 4: KONRAD idly sipping from his cup of coffee, looking rather detached from the situation. He's very clearly seen this sort of thing before and is rather bored by the prospects. ISLA on the other hand, looks enraged and is shouting at him, clearly not appreciating how nonchalant he is being about her situation.

KONRAD: SO LET ME GUESS...YOU WANT ME TO EXTEND YOUR LIFE?
ISLA: **NO**, THAT IS **NOT** WHAT I WANT! DO YOU THINK I WANT A LONGER TIME TO DETERIORATE?

PANEL 5: ISLA, brushing some hair behind an ear nervously, trying to calm herself. Yelling at a demon is *generally* not a very good way of ensuring that you get what you want.

ISLA 1: I DON'T KNOW HOW **MUCH** TIME I HAVE LEFT...AND IT'S THE INEVITABLE.
ISLA 2: SO IN THE REMAINING TIME...
ISLA 3: I WANT TO HAVE **FUN**.

PAGE 11:

Page 11 has six panels across three tiers. The second tier is thicker than the other two. The first tier has two small panels stacked on top of each other, followed by one longer panel to their right. The second tier is one large panel, and the third tier is two equally-sized panels.

PANEL 1: KONRAD, looking absolutely *stunned*.

PANEL 2: Same image as previous panel, but now KONRAD's expression has turned into a devious smirk.

KONRAD 1: ...YOU'RE AN ODD ONE.
KONRAD 2: MOST PEOPLE ASK FOR **EXTENDED** TIME. NOT JUST A **GOOD** TIME.

PANEL 3 : Profile of ISLA, now looking down sadly, her eyes closed.

ISLA 1: THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS I HAVEN'T DONE - THINGS MOST **WELL** PEOPLE MY AGE **HAVE** DONE. I'VE NEVER BEEN **KISSED** FOR GOD'S SAKE!
ISLA 2: I **KNOW** THAT I AM GOING TO **DIE**.
ISLA 3: BUT I WANT TO HAVE **MORE FUN** THAN ANYONE'S **EVER** HAD BEFORE I GO.

PANEL 4: KONRAD is now looking highly interested, walking around ISLA, inspecting her from all angles (he may be drawn multiple times as he is going around her - that's up to artist interpretation).

KONRAD 1: DID THEY TELL YOU **HOW** LONG YOU HAVE LEFT?

ISLA 1: NO.

KONRAD 2: DO YOU **WANT** TO KNOW?

ISLA 2: NO - BUT HOW DO **YOU** KNOW?

KONRAD 3: IT'S MY **JOB** TO KNOW THESE THINGS. BUT I RESPECT YOUR DECISION.

KONRAD 4: I **WILL** TELL YOU THAT IT'S MORE THAN A YEAR.

PANEL 5: KONRAD bowing cordially to her.

KONRAD 1: THE GOOD NEWS MA'AM, IS THAT I **CAN** HELP YOU.

KONRAD 2: I CAN MAKE THE REMAINING TIME **EUPHORIC**. BUT IN RETURN, I WOULD NEED SOMETHING...A FRACTION OF THE TIME THAT YOU HAVE LEFT WILL GO TO **ME**.

PANEL 6: Long-distance shot of the two of them talking at the crossroads. In the foreground are some grass and more of those baby-blue flowers that ISLA picked in order to summon KONRAD.

ISLA 1: SO MY TIME WILL ACTUALLY BE **REDUCED**?

KONRAD 1: ONLY SLIGHTLY.

ISLA 2: BUT YOU'RE A **DEMON!** WHAT WOULD YOU WANT WITH MY **LIFE**? YOU'RE NOT LIVING **OR** DEAD!

PAGE 12:

Page 12 contains four panels across two tiers. In the first tier there is a vertical panel with two smaller panels stacked on top of each other to its right. Beneath it in a half splash is one large panel.

PANEL 1: KONRAD, making a dramatic gesture (albeit he is still in his PJs).

KONRAD 1: IT MAKES ME **STRONGER**.

KONRAD 2: NOW LISTEN. I WILL TAKE YOU ON THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME OF YOUR REMAINING TIME. AND WHEN YOU DIE, YOU WILL COME JOIN ME IN THE AFTERLIFE IN HELL.

ISLA (OFF - OUTRAGED): **WHAT!?**

PANEL 2: ISLA, looking absolutely defeated.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: OH **COME** NOW. HELL IS NOT **NEARLY** AS BAD AS YOU MORTALS MAKE IT OUT TO BE. IT'S A CITY JUST LIKE ANY OTHER. LIKE **LONDON**. OR **NEW YORK**.

KONRAD (OFF) 2: WE'LL FIND YOU A NICE FLAT IN A HIGH-RISE OR SOMETHING.

PANEL 3: ISLA, covering her eyes with one hand and holding the other one out to shake.

KONRAD (OFF): SO WHAT DO YOU SAY?

ISLA: FINE...JUST SEAL THE DEAL BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND.

PANEL 4: KONRAD suddenly passionately kissing ISLA (who looks *beyond* surprised). It almost looks like he's draining some of the life or light right out of her.

PAGE 13:

Page 13 consists of five panels total across three tiers. The first tier contains two panels, the first smaller than the second, and the second also contains two, however the first is larger than the second. The third tier is just one long panel.

PANEL 1: ISLA, much paler now, pulling away from him by forcing her hands against his chest. She looks outraged.

ISLA: **WHAT THE BLOODY HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM!?**

PANEL 2: ISLA suddenly looks very woozy, and now has resorted to leaning into KONRAD's grip to help her remain standing. He has a smile on his face, laughing.

KONRAD 1: WHOAH, **WHOAH** THERE.

KONRAD 2: BEST BE CAREFUL! YOU JUST LOST SOME OF THE SAND FROM YOUR HOURGLASS IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

ISLA: I'M DIZZY...

PANEL 3: KONRAD, helping ISLA into the passenger seat of her car (note that the passenger seat is on the left side, and the steering wheel/driver's side is on the right due to the location/setting). All of a sudden he seems quite the gentleman.

KONRAD 1: IT'LL GO AWAY IN JUST A FEW MINUTES, I PROMISE.

KONRAD 2: NOW, MAY I TAKE YOU HOME, MISS--?

ISLA: ISLA.

KONRAD 3: MISS ISLA.

PANEL 4: ISLA nodding drowsily while KONRAD is closing the door to the passenger side.

SFX 1: NOD NOD

SFX 2: SLAM!

PANEL 5: View of KONRAD and ISLA sitting in the front seat of the car, the view is as if we are looking through the windshield from the front of the car. ISLA is reaching for her seatbelt.

ISLA 1: WAIT--WHAT DO I CALL **YOU?** AND DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW TO DRIVE A CAR?

KONRAD 1: IT'S KONRAD. AND OF **COURSE** I DO. I WASN'T CONJURED **YESTERDAY** FOR LUCIFER'S SAKE.

ISLA 2: KONRAD DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A VERY DEMONIC NAME.

KONRAD 2: IT'S NOT MY REAL NAME. THAT ONE SEEMS TOO HARD TO PRONOUNCE TO YOU MORTALS THESE DAYS.

KONRAD 3: SO I CHOSE A NEW ONE! I QUITE LIKE IT. IT'S QUITE **SNAZZY**, DON'T YOU THINK? RATHER **MYSTERIOUS**.

ISLA 3: WHATEVER YOU SAY...

PAGE 14:

Page 14 contains five panels across two tiers. The first tier is much larger (about 3/4ths the height of the page) than the second. The first tier contains one large vertical panel, and two smaller panels stacked on top of each other to its right (the second panel is much taller than the third, here). Beneath it in the second tier are two panels, the first smaller than the second.



Figure 3: British terraced townhouses.

PANEL 1: The car pulling up in front of a row of British terraced townhouses [see figure 3].

KONRAD 1: ALRIGHT. LET'S GET YOU INSIDE AND INTO SOME **REAL** CLOTHES.

KONRAD 2: ADDITIONALLY, YOU MAY WANT TO CONTACT ANY FAMILY OR LOVED ONES. TELL THEM THAT YOU'RE GOING ON A LONG TRIP.

KONRAD 3: BECAUSE ONCE WE START THE JOURNEY, I DON'T THINK WE'LL HAVE MUCH TIME TO COME BACK.

PANEL 2: KONRAD helping ISLA out of the car.

ISLA: OK...JUST LET ME PACK A BAG AND--I GUESS I'LL LEAVE A NOTE.

KONRAD: GOOD CALL.

PANEL 3: A door of one of the rowhouses with the number 27 on it.

PANEL 4: ISLA and KONRAD standing in the front hallway of a quaint British, middle-class home.

PANEL 5: ISLA sitting down at a writing desk in the living room, taking up a pen and paper. A doorway into the kitchen can be seen.

KONRAD (OFF - FROM KITCHEN): DO YOU WANT ME TO PUT THE KETTLE ON?

ISLA: NO--JUST LET ME WRITE THIS REAL QUICK.

PAGE 15:

Page fifteen consists of four panels. One large horizontal panel, like a half-splash, although it is a little smaller than half the page. Beneath it are two equal-sized panels with one odd little cutout panel crossing between them.

PANEL 1: An open, old-fashioned/hard-cover suitcase on a bed, full of clothes which have been haphazardly tossed into it, not folded in the slightest.

ISLA (OFF) 1: DEAR MUM AND DAD,

ISLA (OFF) 2: THE NEWS WE HAVE LONG FEARED HAS FINALLY COME. AND I HAVE TO SEE THE WORLD BEFORE I LEAVE IT.

ISLA (OFF) 3: I DO NOT KNOW WHEN I WILL BE BACK, BUT I PROMISE YOU - I AM SAFE, AND FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE, I AM HAVING THE MOST FUN I HAVE EVER HAD.

ISLA (OFF) 4: ALL MY LOVE,

ISLA (OFF) 5: - ISLA

PANEL 2: ISLA in profile next to her bed, trying to close her stuffed suitcase. KONRAD, now in his dapper suit, is leaning in the doorway to her room. On her bedside table is the note that she has written to her parents explaining her sudden departure.

KONRAD 1: ALMOST READY TO GO? MY CAR'S WAITING OUTSIDE.

ISLA: HOW DID YOU CHANGE CLOTHES SO QUICKLY?

KONRAD 2: OH, EASY! WANT ME TO DO IT TO YOU?

PANEL 3: KONRAD snapping his fingers.

SFX: SNAP!

PANEL 4: Same image as PANEL 2 however ISLA is now wearing a dark green sweatshirt with the text LONGLEAT printed across it, and some dark-grey leggings. ISLA looks stunned - even the IV on her hand is gone! Poof!

ISLA: W-WHAT DID YOU DO!? HOW--?

KONRAD: READY NOW? LET'S GO.

PAGE 16:

Page 16 contains four panels in total. The first panel is a half splash, and beneath it to the left are two panels stacked atop of each other, with a large single panel to their right.

PANEL 1: KONRAD pushing open the door of the house, revealing a VERY snazzy and super classy black car waiting by the curb.

KONRAD 1: MAY I HELP YOU TO YOUR CHARIOT, MA'AM?

ISLA (OFF): THAT'S **YOURS?**

KONRAD 2: I DON'T LIKE TO BRAG, BUT...

KONRAD 3: GO AHEAD AND GET IN, I'LL PUT YOUR SUITCASE IN THE BACK.

PANEL 2: ISLA's suitcase, now in the trunk of the car.

PANEL 3: KONRAD closing the top of the trunk.

SFX: SLAM!

PANEL 4: ISLA getting into the passenger seat, looking distant and sad.

SFX: SIGH

PAGE 17:

Page 17 contains four panels and is a complete mirror of page 16. There is a half splash followed by three panels: a large one on the left, followed by two panels stacked atop each other to its right.

PANEL 1: ISLA looking out the back window as they are driving away from the rowhouses. While she is showing no signs of obvious resistance, she also looks a little sad about the life that she is leaving behind.

ISLA: BYE, HOUSE.

PANEL 2: KONRAD looking over from the driver's seat. He's got a proud smirk on his face - he knows that she's now in his grip.

ISLA: WHERE ARE WE GOING NOW?

KONRAD 1: I THOUGHT WE WOULD START TONIGHT BY GOING TO LONDON.

KONRAD 2: THEN WE CAN TALK ABOUT YOUR BUCKET LIST AND ALL THAT NONSENSE HUMANS DO. IT MUST BE SO STRANGE TO HAVE A FINITE EXISTENCE...

PANEL 3: ISLA, now looking sleepily out the window.

KONRAD (OFF): IT'S GOING TO BE A BIT BEFORE WE GET THERE. FEEL FREE TO TAKE A REST. YOU'LL NEED IT - BIG DAY TOMORROW!

PANEL 4: Semi beat-panel of PANEL 3, however Isla now has her eyes closed, taking his advice and getting some shut-eye before they arrive in London.

PAGE 18:

*Page 18 is a full-splash of a **super swanky** hotel room in the Langham Hotel (take inspiration from Figure 4?) in London. ISLA and KONRAD are sleeping in the king-size bed, with KONRAD snuggling up to ISLA a little in a rather un-demon-like way.*



Figure 4: the "Portland" suite at the Langham Hotel in London.

CAPTION: 8:11 AM

PAGE 19:

Page 19 has five panels across three tiers - but the third tier is thicker than the other two. The first tier has two panels, the first one smaller than the second. The second tier is one long panel, and the third tier is two equal-sized panels.

PANEL 1: Close-up of ISLA beginning to wake, her eyes opening and her head resting on a pillow.

PANEL 2: ISLA, now in a panic after realizing where she is and that she and KONRAD are in a bed together. She is pushing him away, and he is woken up by the commotion.

ISLA: HEY--WHAT'S GOING ON!?

KONRAD: MMH--?

PANEL 3: ISLA and KONRAD in bed - the view of them is as if we are looking from the foot of the bed. ISLA is in her hoodie from yesterday, but KONRAD is once again in his lovely demon jammies.

ISLA: WHAT HAPPENED--DID WE...?

KONRAD 1: OH CALM DOWN. **NO**. NOTHING HAPPENED.

KONRAD 2: I MIGHT BE A DEMON BUT I WOULD **NEVER** MAKE LOVE TO A LADY WITHOUT HER CONSENT.

ISLA 2: THEN **WHY** WERE YOU ALL CUDDLED UP TO ME LIKE THAT?

KONRAD 3: YOU HUMANS ARE WARM, WHAT CAN I SAY?

PANEL 4: A view of All Souls Church at Langham Place, London, [see figure 5] with curtains on either side, as if they are seeing it from out of the window of their suite.

ISLA: WHERE **ARE** WE?

KONRAD: THE LANGHAM HOTEL. OXFORD CIRCUS.

PANEL 5: KONRAD, rolling over in bed to grab the telephone that's on the bedside table.

KONRAD 1: I WAS THINKING WE WOULD ORDER A BREAKFAST SPREAD FROM ROOM SERVICE.

ISLA: BUT WHAT ABOUT **MONEY**?

KONRAD 2: **HAH!** YOU MORTALS ARE SO PRECIOUS.



Figure 5: All Souls Church at Langham Place, near Oxford Circus, London.

PAGE 20:

Page 20 contains four panels, one three-quarter splash and then three equal panels beneath it.

PANEL 1: This panel is a 3/4ths splash of ISLA and KONRAD sitting at the table in their hotel suite, still in their jammies, an absolute MONSTER breakfast stretching across the table between them. There's pretty much anything imaginable: eggs, bacon, pastries, tea, sausages, sauteed mushrooms and tomatoes...the works. It's far too much for just two people to eat, even if one *is* a supernatural demon from Limbo.

ISLA 1: BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. HOW ARE WE GOING TO PAY FOR ALL THIS?

KONRAD 1: YOU ALREADY **DID**, REMEMBER? ONCE WE MADE THE DEAL, EVERYTHING FROM HERE ON OUT IS ALL-EXPENSES PAID.

ISLA 2: YOU'RE **SERIOUS**?

KONRAD 2: MMHMM. _

PANEL 2: Closeup of an empty cup-and-saucer, KONRAD pouring honey into it to fix his tea. The glass is more than halfway filled with the honey.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: SO I THOUGHT TRAVELING THE WORLD MIGHT BE A GOOD START FOR YOUR ADVENTURE.

KONRAD (OFF) 2: IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE, WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

PANEL 3: Same shot of the cup and saucer, however KONRAD is now pouring in the tea to top off the cup. It's easily three parts honey to one part tea.

ISLA (OFF): TOKYO, PROBABLY.

KONRAD (OFF): TOKYO IT IS, THEN!

PANEL 4: ISLA, taking a bite of a crumpet slathered in blueberry jam. She looks pleased but confused.

ISLA: DO YOU WANT SOME **TEA** WITH YOUR **HONEY**?

KONRAD (OFF): I **DID** PUT SOME TEA IN THERE!

PAGE 21:

This page layout is all kinds of weird. It's six panels across two tiers. The first tier contains one panel which takes up a little over half the tier, however there is a small cutout panel in the upper left. Then to the right, there are two smaller panels stacked on top of each other. The second tier contains two panels, the first one a little bit larger than the second.

PANEL 1 (CUTOUT): KONRAD snapping his fingers - can be the same image as the cutout on page 15 to save time.

SFX: SNAP!

PANEL 2: KONRAD now holding two plane tickets in his hand, taking a sip of his honey (tea).

KONRAD: TWO FIRST-CLASS TICKETS TO TOKYO, AT YOUR SERVICE.

ISLA (OFF): NICE!

PANEL 3: A closeup on the tickets, with emphasis on the time of departure, which reads: 13:35

KONRAD: WE SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO LONG EATING, THOUGH. WE BOARD AT 1 AND HEATHROW IS A **NIGHTMARE**.

PANEL 4: KONRAD reaching into the pocket of his bathrobe.

KONRAD: OH! I ALMOST FORGOT.

PANEL 5: A dark-purple smartphone device. Kind of looks like if an iPhone had a goth gf.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: HERE. THIS IS FOR YOU. SO WE CAN COMMUNICATE BETTER.

KONRAD (OFF) 2: I DOWNLOADED SOME **REALLY NEAT** APPS ON THERE LAST NIGHT WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING.

KONRAD (OFF) 3: *PURGATORY MOBILE* HAS **SURPRISINGLY** GOOD SERVICE IN THE MORTAL REALM!

PANEL 6: ISLA taking the mobile phone, looking genuinely excited down at the device in her hands.

ISLA: WOW THANKS!

KONRAD (OFF): NOW LET'S HURRY UP AND EAT AND PACK! WE'VE GOT A PLANE TO CATCH!

PAGE 22:

Page 22 contains seven panels in total: a thin bar-like panel across the top with six panels beneath it in a standard 2x3 grid.

PANEL 1: ISLA and KONRAD standing outside the departures drop-off at an airport, their backs are to the viewer.

KONRAD: HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU HOW MUCH I HATE AIRPORTS?

ISLA: NO.

PANEL 2: A suitcase with a paper travel tag indicating where they are flying to, being lifted by an airport employee.

KONRAD (OFF): NO OFFENSE, BUT MOST OF THE TIME I THINK YOUR KIND IS FOOLISH AND VASTLY INCOMPETENT.

PANEL 3: The many desks of departure check-ins of various airlines, with lots of people getting ready to travel. Some appear to be having much more fun than others.

KONRAD (OFF): BUT SOMEHOW, YOU ALL HAVE MANAGED TO CREATE AN INSTITUTION WORSE THAN LIMBO ITSELF!

PANEL 4: KONRAD's horrified looking face, as if this was a bad 1950s horror movie.

KONRAD (OFF): THE **AIRPORT**.

PANEL 5: A scene of people waiting at a gate. There's a *very* stressed-out looking businessman, a highly dolled-up and contoured "instagram-girl" taking selfies, a cheerful old man reading a book, and a young mother holding a crying infant.

KONRAD (OFF): PEOPLE WAITING AND **WAITING**, WITH **TERRIBLE** WIFI CONNECTIVITY AND EVERYONE'S **GRUMPY** AND NOT **NEARLY** AS CAFFEINATED AS THEY SHOULD BE!

PANEL 6: Close up of the crying infant mentioned in PANEL 5.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: ADD ON TOP OF THAT: CRYING **BABIES**?

KONRAD (OFF) 2: I THOUGHT **DEMONS** WERE ONLY CAPABLE OF SUCH **TORTURE**!

PANEL 7: KONRAD and ISLA, still standing outside of the departures area as before. Konrad looks as though he's seen a ghost. ISLA looks at him with a pitying smirk.

KONRAD: HORRIBLE. JUST **HORRIBLE**.

ISLA: DRAMA QUEEN.

PAGE 23:

Page 23 contains three panels - two equal-sized panels on top of a half-splash.

PANEL 1: KONRAD looks ready to head inside, but ISLA appears to be having a bit of a laugh.

KONRAD 1: SO WITH ALL THAT SAID...READY TO GO IN?

ISLA: WAIT--CAN OTHER PEOPLE **SEE** YOU? YOU'LL **TERRIFY** THEM!

KONRAD 2: OF **COURSE** NOT! YOU ONLY SEE ME LIKE THIS BECAUSE I **LET** YOU.

PANEL 2: A somewhat-KONRAD-looking businessman, smiling in a very so-cheerful-it's-probably-fake kind of way. He has a very “clean-cut all-American” look to him.

KONRAD 1: I JUST LOOK LIKE A NORMAL BLOKE TO THIS LOT.

KONRAD 2: I LIKELY LOOK LIKE I’M GOING ON A BUSINESS TRIP. NO ONE WILL SUSPECT A THING.

PANEL 3: KONRAD (now back to his demonic self) carrying ISLA’s suitcase for her.

KONRAD 1: MAY I TAKE YOUR SUITCASE, MA’AM?

ISLA 1: YOU MAY. I DON’T KNOW WHAT I’M DOING, BY THE WAY. I’VE NEVER FLOWN BEFORE. SO I’M FOLLOWING YOU.

KONRAD 2: **NEVER?** WELL FIRST THING’S FIRST, WE CHECK IN. THEN WE’LL NEED TO GO THROUGH SECURITY AND GET SOME SNACKS - IT’S GOING TO BE A LONG FLIGHT.

ISLA 2: I’M STILL FULL FROM BREAKFAST.

KONRAD 3: **LIVE** A LITTLE. THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BEST TIME OF YOUR LIFE. I **PROMISE.**

PAGE 24:

Page 24 contains four panels, the first of which is a half-splash. Beneath it is a large panel on the left, and two smaller panels stacked on top of each other to the right.

PANEL 1: A plane flying, albeit descending, in front of Mt. Fuji in the early morning light.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (OFF): LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE WILL BE LANDING IN TOKYO’S NARITA AIRPORT IN JUST A FEW MINUTES. THE LOCAL TIME IS 9:35 AM, AND THE TEMPERATURE IS 21 DEGREES CENTIGRADE.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (OFF) 2: PLEASE PUT YOUR TRAY TABLES UP AND YOUR SEATS INTO THEIR FULL UPRIGHT POSITION, AND PLEASE REMAIN SEATED UNTIL THE PILOT HAS TURNED OFF THE SEATBELT SIGN.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (OFF) 3: ON BEHALF OF THE CREW TODAY, THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO FLY WITH UNION JACK AIRLINES. WE WILL BE LANDING SHORTLY.

PANEL 2: ISLA leaning against KONRAD’s side and sleeping in a rather unflattering way - mouth slightly open, face kinda smooshed on the side that’s leaning against him. Konrad can’t help but grin at her. At least she looks comfy!

KONRAD 1: HEY. HEY **AURORA.**

ISLA 1: MMMH?

KONRAD 2: WE’RE LANDING SOON.

ISLA 2: MMMH.

KONRAD 3: **COME ON, WAKY WAKY.**

PANEL 3: ISLA rubbing her eyes.

ISLA: DO WE HAVE A HOTEL?

PANEL 4: a plane, displaying the name of the airline on its side, having touched down on the runway.

KONRAD (OFF): **DO WE HAVE A HOTEL...**

PAGE 25:

This page contains six panels in a standard 2x3 grid, and within each panel is a “snapshot” of a feature or location in Tokyo, which sets the scene as well as allows ISLA some time to create further development of her character in a conversation with KONRAD that happens out of the shot of the panel.

Differentiating whose speech bubbles are whose can be done in a couple of different ways, either making some sort of noticeable difference in their bubble’s design, or even a cute little cartoon “stamp” of their faces from which the bubbles could be coming from. It’s all up to interpretation.

PANEL 1: A view of Mt. Fuji beyond Tokyo Tower [see figure 6].

ISLA (OFF) 1: I’VE NEVER LEFT THE UNITED KINGDOM, BEFORE.

ISLA (OFF) 2: I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I WAS PRETTY SHELTERED AS A KID.

PANEL 2: Mani orange/black/white koi, swimming together in a pond.

ISLA (OFF) 1: I THINK MY PARENTS WANTED TO PROTECT ME SINCE I WAS ILL.

KONRAD (OFF): YOU CAN’T REALLY BLAME THEM, I SUPPOSE.

ISLA (OFF) 2: ACTUALLY, I CAN.

PANEL 3: “Wish plaques” found at many shrines across Japan - where people write their wishes on them and leave them tied to structures at the shrine, which will hopefully come true [see figure 7].

ISLA (OFF) 1: I THINK THEY FELT **BAD** FOR ME. THAT THEY PASSED DOWN FAULTY GENES. BUT THERE’S NOTHING THEY COULD HAVE **DONE** ABOUT IT.

ISLA (OFF) 2: THEY LET THEIR GUILT GET IN THE WAY OF TREATING ME LIKE A NORMAL CHILD.

PANEL 4: The statue of Hachiko the Akita at the Shibuya train station in Tokyo [see figure 8]. The dog would always greet his owner as he got off the train, however after the owner passed away, Hachiko continued to appear at the train station for over *nine years* until the dog himself passed away. The dog is commemorated in a statue there. This is an interesting parallel to ISLA’s home country of the UK, where there is a similar statue in Edinburgh of a terrier known as “Greyfriar’s Bobby.”

KONRAD (OFF): DO YOU RESENT THEM?

ISLA (OFF) 1: NO.



Figure 6: the view of Mt. Fuji beyond Tokyo Tower.



Figure 7: Japanese wish plaques.



Figure 8: the statue of Hachiko the Akita in Shibuya Prefecture, Tokyo.

ISLA (OFF) 2: BUT I DO WISH THEY WOULD HAVE TREATED ME AS NORMAL.

PANEL 5: An elegant pagoda in a park, surrounded by blossoming cherry trees.

ISLA (OFF): GUILT IS NOT A VERY GOOD FOUNDATION FOR BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR KID, YANNO?

KONRAD (OFF): I UNDERSTAND. BUT I THINK THEY DID IT OUT OF LOVE.

PANEL 6: An image of the interior of the Tsukiji fish market.

ISLA (OFF): THAT'S WHY I CAN'T **RESENT** THEM OR IT. I JUST ALWAYS FELT...OVER-SHELTERED.

KONRAD (OFF) 1: WELL THAT'S MY **JOB**, ISN'T IT? TO FIX THAT?

KONRAD (OFF) 2: YOU'RE GONNA LEAVE THIS WORLD WITH **NO STONE** UNTURNED, **BELIEVE** ME.

PAGE 26:

This page only contains two panels one long, thin panel at the top and a three-quarter splash beneath it.

PANEL 1: KONRAD and ISLA standing in the hallway of a hotel in front of the door to a room. KONRAD is holding a keycard in his hand.

KONRAD 1: WELL, YOU'RE YOUNG, IN TOKYO, AND THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER! WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO NOW?

ISLA: **SLEEP.**

KONRAD 2: WELL YOU'RE IN LUCK! TAKE A LOOK AT THE ROOM I GOT FOR US.



Figure 9: a suite at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Tokyo. I really like the way that they use both Eastern and Western design principles here. Def good inspiration material.

PANEL 2: A *super bougie* (we're talkin' 5-star) hotel room in Tokyo, with a traditional Japanese aesthetic [see figure 9]. There's legit orchids on both bedside tables and maybe a tatami rug or something.

ISLA (OFF): WHOAH....

PAGE 27:

This page contains four panels across four tiers - each tier is its own long, skinny panel.

PANEL 1: Profile view of the bed in the hotel room, ISLA from the waist down can be seen standing at its foot.

PANEL 2: ISLA falling forward onto the bed.

SFX: THUD

PANEL 3: ISLA laying still, face-down on the bed.

PANEL 4: Beat panel.

KONRAD (OFF): YOU ALRIGHT?

ISLA (MUFFLED): YEAH...

PAGE 28:

Page 28 contains five panels in total across three tiers. The first tier is much thicker than the other two, taking up about half the page. It has two panels, the first one slightly larger than the second. In the second tier there are two equal panels, and the third is one long panel.

PANEL 1: KONRAD pulling down the lip of the covers and gesturing to them. On the bedside table is a planter of orchids and a clock declaring that it is 11 AM.

KONRAD 1: WHY DON'T YOU GO AHEAD AND GET SOME REST?

KONRAD 2: WE CAN HIT THE TOWN LATER TONIGHT.

PANEL 2: KONRAD, tucking ISLA in as if he's suddenly got a heavy maternal instinct or something.

ISLA: BUT WHAT WILL **YOU** DO?

KONRAD 1: I HAVE THE MOST **IMPORTANT** JOB OF **ALL**!

KONRAD 2: I'M GOING TO GO FIND US SOME **BRUNCH**!

PANEL 3: ISLA now looking very sleepy in bed, and KONRAD heading for the door.

ISLA: BUT AREN'T YOU **TIRED**?

KONRAD 1: NAH, I DON'T NEED TO SLEEP.

KONRAD 2: **DEMON**, REMEMBER?

KONRAD 3: ANYWAY, IF YOU NEED ANYTHING WHILE I'M OUT, GIVE ME A RING. I'LL BE BACK SOON.

PANEL 4: ISLA rolling over onto her side in the bed, now facing the window. KONRAD has exited the room.

PANEL 5: The view out of the hotel room overlooking Tokyo, rain beginning to fall.

FIN.

Holly.

Alternative Title: "Stone Mother"

Anna C. Webster

Directly previous to this excerpt, the owner (Blackhawk) of the Valley of Fire Casino where Holly works has decided to retire and leaves the entire operation in her hands.

PAGE 72 [I4P15]:

This page contains four panels in total across two tiers. In the first tier, the first panel is much larger than the second. In the second tier, the panels are equally-sized.

PANEL 1: MALAI, sitting at the edge of HOLLY's bed in the Sagebrush suite. She's wearing workout fatigues and a pair of her heels have been tossed on the bed. She's holding the note in her hand and is looking quite pleased and excited.

MALAI: DAMN, GIRL! YOU'RE TURNING OUT TO BE A REAL RAGS-TO-RICHES STORY! THAT'S THE AMERICAN DREAM, RIGHT THERE!

PANEL 2: HOLLY, leaning on the doorframe of the bathroom for support, looking pale, woozy, and like she's just been sick.

HOLLY 1: YOU KNOW...I'VE DONE A LOT OF THINGS IN THESE SUITES...

HOLLY 2: AND I MEAN A LOT.

HOLLY 3: BUT I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE THROWN UP...

PANEL 3: HOLLY, now looking absolutely furious.

MALAI (OFF): OH COME ON...SERIOUSLY?

HOLLY 1 (ANGRY): YES, MALAI! SERIOUSLY! YOU THINK I WANTED ANY OF THIS?

HOLLY 2 (ANGRY): I JUST WANTED BAMBIE TO GET TREATMENT! I DIDN'T WANT TO END UP THE OWNER OF A CASINO! I MEAN HOLY SHIT, HOW STEREOTYPICAL!

HOLLY 3 (ANGRY): I WAS GOING TO MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS I CAN, AND THEN GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE! GET AWAY FROM VEGAS!

PANEL 4: MALAI, now also enraged, is holding up one of her high heels and gesturing to it emphatically.

MALAI 1: YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW STEREOTYPES?

MALAI 2: I'M A THAI SEXWORKER FOR GOD'S SAKE!

HOLLY (OFF): WELL I'M A NATIVE AMERICAN WHO NOW OWNS A CASINO.

MALAI 3: YOU'RE HALF NATIVE AMERICAN.

PAGE 73 [I4P16]:

Page 73 has four panels in total. The first is a half-splash, and the remaining three are beneath it: the first is a larger panel, and the second two are stacked on top of each other to its right.

PANEL 1: Half-splash representative of HOLLY and MALAI arguing, however only HOLLY can be seen. She is standing on the shore of Pyramid Lake, wearing traditional Paiute clothing [see figure 2D]. She still looks very angry, and is still squabbling with MALAI, who is offstage.

HOLLY 1: **HALF** DEFINITELY COUNTS - SOME NATIONS ONLY REQUIRE 1/16TH!

MALAI 1: WELL WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO **DO** ABOUT THIS? YOU THINK I **WANT** THIS JOB?

MALAI 2: I WANTED TO BE A BALLERINA! BUT I **COULDN'T**!

MALAI 3: BECAUSE OF WHO I AM!

HOLLY 2: YOU THINK I WANT **THIS** JOB?

HOLLY 3: I GOT **SHANGHAIED** INTO THIS WHOLE OPERATION AFTER JUST TRYING TO HELP A FRIEND!

HOLLY 4: AND BEING A **PROSTITUTE** WASN'T EXACTLY MY DREAM CAREER!

MALAI 4: THEN HOW DO WE GET THE HELL **OUT** OF HERE?

HOLLY 5: I DON'T **KNOW**, MALAI!

HOLLY 6: AND I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT WITH YOU!

PANEL 2: HOLLY grabbing her keys from the bedside table.

HOLLY 1: I GOTTA THINK ABOUT THIS.

HOLLY 2: I'M TAKING A DRIVE.

PANEL 3: MALAI, now looking concerned.

MALAI: WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

PANEL 4: HOLLY, a designer bag now hanging over her shoulder, keys in hand.

HOLLY: OUT.

[Optional: /issue 4]

[Optional issue 5 start]

PAGE 74 [I5P1]:

Page 74 consists of four panels in total across three tiers. The first panel is one long, skinny panel, forming the extent of the tier. The second tier contains two panels, however the first is smaller than the second, and the third tier is also one long panel.

PANEL 1: Close up of tires on a gravel road, kicking up dust.

CAPTION 1: "I AM HOLDING HALF AN ACRE,"

CAPTION 2: "TORN FROM THE MAP OF MICHIGAN."

PANEL 2: A roadsign for NV-160 West against a desert backdrop [see figure 1E].



Figure 2D: traditional Northern Paiute buckskin dresses w/ beaded collar.

CAPTION 1: *“AND FOLDED IN THIS SCRAP OF PAPER”*

CAPTION 2: *“IS THE LAND I GREW IN.”*

PANEL 3: HOLLY, now getting out of her car in Blue Diamond, going to speak to WARTHOG. However, she’s met with a familiar face of a familiar goon (CANADIAN TUXEDO) - who, yes, is in his namesake garb. But this time, she is pushing right past him, a look of rage and determination on her face.

CAPTION 1: *“THINK OF EVERY TOWN YOU’VE LIVED IN,”*

CAPTION 2: *“EVERY ROOM YOU LAY YOUR HEAD,”*

CANADIAN TUXEDO: HEY!

HOLLY: OUT OF MY WAY, ASSHOLE!

CAPTION 3: *“AND WHAT IS IT THAT YOU REMEMBER?”*



Figure 1E: signage for NV-160 West.

PANEL 4: HOLLY, walking up to WARTHOG’s little shack entrance, but she is caught off guard by a wild burro that she is locking eyes with. She jumps a little in surprise, but it’s looking at her quizzically.

CAPTION 1: *“DO YOU CARRY EVERY SADNESS WITH YOU? EVERY HOUR YOUR HEART WAS BROKEN?”*

CAPTION 2: *“EVERY NIGHT THE FEAR AND DARKNESS,”*

CAPTION 3: *“LAY DOWN WITH YOU.”*

CAPTION 4: *HEM - “HALF ACRE”*

PAGE 75 [I5P2]:

Page 75 contains six panels in total across three tiers. There are two panels per each tier, however their size ratios vary. In the first tier, the panels are equal, in the second tier the first is much larger than the second, and the third tier is once again equal.

PANEL 1: WARTHOG sitting on a settee with a rather hoochie looking lady (HOOCHIE MAMA) to his left, who is unbuttoning her flannel and looking at him coyly.

WARTHOG: GO ON, LET ME HAVE JUST A PEEK! MAYBE JUST A NIBBLE!

HOOCHIE MAMA/SFX: GIGGLE!

PANEL 2: Semi beat-panel, however WARTHOG is looking in surprise over his shoulder to his right. HOOCHIE MAMA is frozen mid-unbutton and looks absolutely mortified.

HOLLY (OFF): AM I **INTERRUPTING** SOMETHING? I’VE GOT **BUSINESS** TO ATTEND TO IF YOU DON’T MIND.

WARTHOG (SURPRISED): OH!

PANEL 3: WARTHOG, suddenly looking a little embarrassed, is helping (nearly pushing) HOOCHIE MAMA off of the couch. HOOCHIE MAMA is also VERY red in the face, mortified, and appears to be scrambling to re-do the buttons on her top.

WARTHOG 1: *COUGH* RUN ALONG NOW, SHAWNA. I’LL CATCH UP WITH YOU LATER.

WARTHOG 2: UH--WHAT CAN OL’ WARTHOG DO YA FOR?

PANEL 4: Closeup of HOLLY, who looks irritated.

HOLLY: I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT MY FATHER.

PANEL 5: CANADIAN TUXEDO bursting through the door, finger on the trigger. HOLLY's head has snapped to the side.

CANADIAN TUXEDO: **LISTEN**, YOU CAN'T JUST--

PANEL 6: Close up of HOLLY, but the viewer is looking straight down the barrel of her gun.

HOLLY: BACK OUTSIDE. **NOW**.

PAGE 76 [I5P3]:

This page has six panels in total across three tiers. The first tier has two, equal-sized panels, the second tier has three equal-sized panels, and the third tier is one large panel.

PANEL 1: View of CANADIAN TUXEDO beyond HOLLY's blonde locks. He looks almost horrified.

WARTHOG (OFF): IT'S OK, MARQUEL. SHE'S HARMLESS.

CANADIAN TUXEDO: HOLY **SHIT**, WHAT DID THAT MANIAC **DO** TO YOU?

PANEL 2: CANADIAN TUXEDO, doubled over as HOLLY delivers a firm kick to his stomach.

PANEL 3: profile view of CANADIAN TUXEDO falling backwards through the swinging saloon doors of WARTHOG's shack.

PANEL 4: CANADIAN TUXEDO now lying on the ground outside of the shack, having falling straight through the doors.

SFX: WHUMP!

PANEL 5: WARTHOG, pretending to wipe a non-existent tear from his eye.

WARTHOG: OH, YOUR FATHER WOULD BE **SO** PROUD RIGHT NOW.

PANEL 6: HOLLY, now turning her gun on WARTHOG.

HOLLY 1: TELL ME ABOUT HIM.

WARTHOG 1: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

HOLLY 2: WHERE DID HE COME FROM? WAS HE NATIVE?

WARTHOG 2: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA I BELIEVE. AND NO, HE WAS WHITE. DID YOU REALLY NEVER MEET HIM?

HOLLY 3: NO. HE VANISHED BEFORE I WAS BORN. DO YOU KNOW WHERE HE COULD BE?

PAGE 77 [ISP4]:

Page 77 has six panels in total, with a somewhat irregular layout. The first tier, which takes up about a third of the page, contains two panels, the first slightly smaller than the second. Beneath it, there is one tall panel which takes up about half of the width of the page, and three small panels stacked on top of each other to its right.

PANEL 1: WARTHOG, shrugging.

WARTHOG: HE'S CERTAINLY NOT IN **HEAVEN**, IF **THAT'S** WHAT YOU'RE ASKING.

PANEL 2: A landscape of Death Valley.

WARTHOG 1: BUT HE'S DEFINITELY NO LONGER WITH US, I'M AFRAID. YOU PROBABLY ALREADY FIGURED AS MUCH.

WARTHOG 2: I FIGURE HE'S LYING OUT IN DEATH VALLEY SOMEWHERE.

WARTHOG 3: HE WASN'T EXACTLY BAD AT MAKING ENEMIES. BUT **DAMN** HE WAS SMART.

PANEL 3: A full-body portrait of a much younger looking WINONA in a 1960s casual dress, her cheeks rosy from blushing, hiding a giggle behind a hand over her lips.

WARTHOG (OFF) 1: BUT BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT HE **REALLY** LIKED YOUR MOTHER.

WARTHOG (OFF) 2: HE RAN INTO HER WHILE SHE WAS WORKING AT A RESTAURANT SOMEWHERE UP IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE STATE.

WARTHOG (OFF) 3: I THINK HE FELT GUILTY, THOUGH.

WARTHOG (OFF) 4: HE KNEW HE COULD NEVER BE THE FAMILY MAN SHE WANTED HIM TO BE. HE WAS ALREADY **IN TOO DEEP**.

PANEL 4: HOLLY, looking sad, her eyes cast downward.

HOLLY: WHAT WAS HIS NAME? HIS **REAL** NAME?

WARTHOG (OFF): MICHAEL O'NEIL.

PANEL 5: Beat panel.

HOLLY: ...SORRY I KICKED YOUR HENCHMAN.

WARTHOG (OFF) 1: 'SALRIGHT. HE DESERVED IT.

WARTHOG (OFF) 2: BY THE WAY, DID YOU EVER FIND THAT DRUG YOU NEEDED?

PANEL 6: CANADIAN TUXEDO getting up from the ground (still partially doubled over from getting the wind knocked out of him), brushing himself off with a disgruntled look.

HOLLY (OFF): I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT.

PAGE 78 [I5P5]:

Page 78 contains four panels across three tiers. The first tier, which is thinner than the other two because of the caption at the top of the page, is one large panel, as is the second tier. The third tier has two equal panels.

CAPTION: THREE MONTHS LATER

PANEL 1: A close up of HOLLY signing her legal name (Sarah W. Reese) on a check.

HOLLY (NARRATION): I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I WOULD BE THE ONE SIGNING THE CHECKS.



Figure 2E: White yarrow, native to Nevada.

PANEL 2: Profile view of HOLLY, wearing smart business wear, sitting at what used to be BLACKHAWK's desk. There is a bouquet of yarrow flowers [see figure 2E] on it, now, for a ~feminine~ touch.

HOLLY (NARRATION) 1: BLACKHAWK ONLY SET FOOT IN THIS BUILDING ONCE AFTER THAT NIGHT. TO GET HIS TORTOISE.

HOLLY (NARRATION) 2: IT'S ALMOST TOO QUIET IN HERE WITHOUT THAT THING LUMBERING AROUND.

PANEL 3: HOLLY, putting some paperwork into her open briefcase on the desk.

HOLLY (NARRATION): I GOTTA ADMIT, I'M WAY BETTER AT THIS GIG THAN I THOUGHT I WOULD BE.

PANEL 4: HOLLY, her back to the viewer, walking down the hallway of floor thirteen, holding her briefcase at her side.

HOLLY (NARRATION): BUT THERE'S ONE THING LEFT TO TAKE CARE OF.

PAGE 79 [I5P6]:

This page has four equal-sized panels, forming quadrants.

PANEL 1: HOLLY, standing out in the rain in front of the *Valley of Fire Casino*, hailing a taxi.

PANEL 2: HOLLY, her chin resting against her head, staring out the window in the backseat of the cab. Outside of the window, the rainy night looks almost purple, which shifts into the violet motif of *The Reef*.

PANEL 3: Semi beat-panel where HOLLY is sitting in the back of the taxi, except now she is turned toward where the driver would be sitting.

HOLLY: YOU CAN DROP ME ON THE CORNER, HERE.

PANEL 4: HOLLY, entering the door of a sleek looking club. Above the double glass-doors in purple neon lighting reads *The Reef*, and the windows on either side of the door are actually fish-tanks, filled with exotic fish under violet lights to make their colors even more dramatic. All of the panels which take place within *The Reef* have a violet hue to them.

PAGE 80 [I5P7]:

This page is a full splash (ba dum tish) of a massive fish tank the height of the wall of the club. For size reference, there are a few silhouettes of men standing with drink glasses in their hands, watching the performers within the tank. Rather than having traditional strippers like The Valley of Fire does, here at The Reef, Chantal employs professional mermaids, reminiscent of the ones at Weeki Wachee [see figure 3E] in Florida. There are two of them, one of which is wearing just sea-star pasties, the other a shell bra, on top of their realistic mermaid tails that allow them to swim around in the coral-reef-looking tanks. One of the mermaids is winking and waving coyly at one of the men watching.



Figure 3E: A Weeki Wachee Mermaid.

PAGE 81 [I5P8]:

This page contains four panels in an irregular layout. The first panel is in a “cutout” style, of the second panel, which forms a backwards L. Beneath it, the following two panels are equally-sized.

PANEL 1: HOLLY, now in purple hue, reaching into her briefcase.

PANEL 2: Inside there is a waterfall into a rock pool. Chilling within the water is another attractive

woman wearing a realistic mermaid outfit, her tail hanging out over the edge of the pool. HOLLY is holding a fifty-dollar bill out toward the woman, who is reaching to take it.

HOLLY 1: WHERE COULD A LADY FIND CHANTAL AROUND HERE?

MERMAID: WHY, LOOKING FOR WORK?

HOLLY 2: NOT EXACTLY. I RUN A CASINO AND I WANT TO TALK CAPITAL. SHE KNOWS ME, I PROMISE.

PANEL 3: The mermaid plucking the fifty-dollar bill out of HOLLY’s hand, giving a cheeky grin.

SFX: YOINK!

HOLLY (OFF): THIS **IS** HER BASE OF OPERATIONS, RIGHT? I’M NOT IN THE WRONG SPOT?

PANEL 4: The mermaid now tucking the bill into her bikini top.

MERMAID 1: YEP, SHE’S HERE. THE CODE FOR THE ELEVATOR IS 4702. HEAD UP TO THE THIRD FLOOR.

MERMAID 2: OH - BUT KNOCK FIRST. SHE’S A **REAL** STICKLER FOR THAT.

PAGE 82 [I5P9]:

Page 82 has four panels: three equally-sized, skinny panels on top of a half-splash.

PANEL 1: The doors of an elevator as viewed from the outside, just beginning to open up.

SFX: WUSHH

PANEL 2: The same elevator doors, however they are nearly completely open now, revealing HOLLY standing on the inside of the car with her briefcase at her side. She looks nervous.

PANEL 3: HOLLY's hand, knocking on the wood of a door as she was instructed to do.

CHANTAL (OFF): COME IN!

PANEL 4 (HALF SPLASH): The view of CHANTAL's office. Unlike BLACKHAWK's, which has a desert-like feel, this office could be at the bottom of a magical lagoon somewhere. The far back wall is one giant fish tank containing a forest of giant sea kelp, with fish and wildlife swimming around between the billowing stalks and leaves. On another wall hangs an extensive beaded curtain of purple gemstones. And CHANTAL is seated at her desk next to some papers and a crystal decanter of a clear liquor, looking like she's in the middle of balancing some numbers, but is looking up - a little surprised at who is in front of her.

CHANTAL 1: NOT TO SOUND RUDE, BUT WHAT ARE **YOU** DOING HERE?

HOLLY 1: DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?

CHANTAL 2: SURE.

PAGE 83 [I5P10]:

Page 83 is somewhat of a mirror of the previous page - with only two panels (the first smaller than the second) above a half-splash.

PANEL 1: CHANTAL's hand reaching for the crystal decanter.

CHANTAL (OFF) 1: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BLACKBERRIES?

HOLLY (OFF): I LIKE THEM.

CHANTAL (OFF) 2: EXCELLENT. HAVE A SEAT.

PANEL 2: CHANTAL pouring the liquor into a martini glass.

CHANTAL: BLACKBERRY LIQUEUR FROM NEWPORT, ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT. I'M A SUCKER FOR A GOOD DRINK.

HOLLY: THANK YOU - BUT ACTUALLY I CAME TO TALK SHOP.

PANEL 3: CHANTAL now leaning back in her chair, resting her high-heel clad feet on her desk. She's holding her own glass of the blackberry liqueur.

CHANTAL 1: AH YES, HOW GOES RUNNING *THE VALLEY OF FIRE* SOLO?

HOLLY 1: MUCH BETTER THAN I EXPECTED, ACTUALLY. BUSINESS IS BOOMING.

CHANTAL 2: BUT...?

HOLLY 2: ...I WANT TO **SELL IT**. TO **YOU**.

PAGE 84 [I5P11]:

Page 84 contains four panels across three tiers. The first tier is two equal-sized panels, and the following two tiers are one large panel each.

PANEL 1: CHANTAL doing a spit-take of her precious blackberry liqueur.

CHANTAL (OUTRAGED): **WHAT!?**

PANEL 2: CHANTAL nearly slamming her empty martini glass on the table, looking completely stunned.

CHANTAL (OUTRAGED): ARE YOU **CRAZY?**

PANEL 3: HOLLY from CHANTAL's point-of-view, rummaging through her briefcase which is sitting on her lap, she's grabbed a hold of a thick packet of papers that have been clipped together with a binder clip.

HOLLY 1: NO, ACTUALLY. I'M QUITE SANE. I'VE ALREADY CONSULTED MY LAWYER ABOUT THIS AND DRAFTED A CONTRACT AND BILL OF SALE.

HOLLY 2: I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH BLACKHAWK MAY HAVE TOLD YOU, BUT I NEVER **ASKED** FOR ANY OF THIS.

HOLLY 3: I'M IN THIS MESS ALL BECAUSE I JUST WANTED TO HELP A FRIEND.

PANEL 4: Profile of HOLLY sliding the packet of papers across CHANTAL's desk.

HOLLY: MY INTENTION WAS ALWAYS TO MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS I COULD AS **FAST** AS I COULD, AND THEN GET THE **HELL** OUT OF VEGAS AND **NEVER** COME BACK.

PAGE 85:

This page contains six panels in total across three tiers. The first tier has two equal panels, the second tier is one large panel, and then the third tier contains three panels: the first one larger with two smaller ones to its right.

PANEL 1: HOLLY, now taking a sip of the liqueur from the martini glass.

CHANTAL (OFF): **NEVER!?**

HOLLY: WELL...MAYBE FOR SOME OF THIS BLACKBERRY STUFF. THIS IS **GOOD!**

PANEL 2: CHANTAL picking up the packet of paper from her desk and looking at it incredulously.

CHANTAL: BUT WHERE ARE YOU GONNA GO?

PANEL 3: A shot of Pyramid Lake, NV.

HOLLY (OFF) 1: I'VE GOT A PLACE IN MIND. WHERE MY GRANDPARENTS LIVE, NEAR NIXON.

HOLLY (OFF) 2: I WANT TO BUY THEM AND MY MOTHER A BIG HOUSE WE CAN LIVE IN ON OUR ANCESTRAL LANDS.

HOLLY (OFF) 3: AND WE'LL BE **SET.**

PANEL 4: CHANTAL'S dark eyes looming over the top of the pages in her hands.

CHANTAL: I THINK HE LIKED YOU A LOT THOUGH. BECAUSE YOU WERE NATIVE. THAT MEANT A LOT TO HIM.

HOLLY (OFF): WELL WHAT DO YOU SAY?

PANEL 5: CHANTAL's face, a blank expression.

PANEL 6: Same shot of CHANTAL, but now she is giving a warm smile.

PAGE 86:

This page only contains three panels, with two, tall skinny ones atop a horizontal panel on the bottom.

PANEL 1: Mostly black, the view is of the door on the back of a moving van but from the point of view of the van's interior. HOLLY's hand can be seen grabbing the lever and hoisting the door upwards.

PANEL 2: Same point-of-view, but now the door to the back of the moving van is about three-quarter's open. HOLLY can be seen in silhouette.

SFX: UUURRCHH

PANEL 3: HOLLY, turning over her shoulder to call out to her mother. The inside of the truck can now be seen - it's packed with brown moving boxes. HOLLY looks decidedly dressed-down - in shorts and a t-shirt, and her hair up in a ponytail, looking like she's about to get a start on some hard work.

HOLLY: HEY MOM, ARE YOU READY?

WINONA (OFF): THERE'S ANOTHER CAR PULLING UP, SARAH - ARE THESE YOUR FRIENDS?

PAGE 87:

Page 87 has give panels in total. The first panel is large, the size of the entire tier. The second panel stands beneath it, vertical and on the left. To its right are three equal-sized panels stacked atop each other.

PANEL 1: A car pulling up in a driveway, MALAI at the steering wheel, and ARABELLE practically hanging out the window, waving with a smile.

SFX: HONK HONK!

ARABELLE: HIYA HOLLY!

PANEL 2: Full-body shot of HOLLY in front of the open back of the moving truck.

HOLLY 1: THANK YOU GUYS SO MUCH FOR COMING TO HELP. WE REALLY APPRECIATE IT.

MALAI (OFF): OF COURSE!

HOLLY 2: HEY, I'M GOING TO GO UNLOCK THE PLACE AND GIVE MY MOM THE GRAND TOUR.

PANEL 3: HOLLY's hand, holding a key.

MALAI (OFF): SHE HASN'T BEEN INSIDE YET?

HOLLY (OFF): NOT YET!

PANEL 4: HOLLY and WINONA, who is looking anxiously excited.

HOLLY: READY, MOM?

WINONA: YES, YES! LET ME **SEE!**

PANEL 5: Similar to the second panel of the graphic novel, a key is turning in the lock of a wooden door.

PAGE 88:

This page contains four panels, the first of which is a half-splash. Beneath it are two tiers: the first tier contains two equal panels, and the second tier is one large panel.

PANEL 1 (HALF SPLASH): A bare-bones interior of an open-floor plan home, HOLLY and WINONA coming through the door. HOLLY is smiling proudly, and WINONA looks ecstatic.

WINONA: SARAH--SARAH THIS IS **BEAUTIFUL!**

HOLLY: THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE IT. THERE'S ROOMS FOR ALL OF US UPSTAIRS.

PANEL 2: HOLLY, pulling her mother aside, her hands resting on WINONA's arms.

HOLLY 1: BUT MOM--I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE.

HOLLY 2: ...I WAS NEVER A WAITRESS.

PANEL 3: WINONA pulling HOLLY close in a hug, a kind smile on her face.

WINONA: I KNOW.

PANEL 4: HOLLY, taking her mother's hand and leading her toward a set of French doors out toward a desk on the rear of the house, overlooking the lake - the view is incredible.

HOLLY: COME ON, LET ME SHOW YOU THE BACK DECK. YOU CAN SEE BOTH THE PYRAMID **AND** THE STONE MOTHER!

PAGE 89:

Page 89 is a full splash. HOLLY is standing on the back deck of the house, holding hands with her mother. In the distance can be seen both the famed pyramid and a rock formation known as the Stone Mother [see figure 4E. The image is peaceful and serene, giving the reader, HOLLY, and WINONA alike, a feeling that things are going to turn out OK in the end.



Figure 4E: the "stone mother" rock formation.

CAPTION (IN ITALICS):

GONNA BE SOME CHANGES, SOME CHANGES MADE.

*CAN'T KEEP ON DOING WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING THESE DAYS,
BETTER FIGURE OUT SOMETHING,
THINGS ARE LOOKING GRAVE,
GONNA BE SOME CHANGES, CHANGES, CHANGES MADE.
BRUCE HORNSBY - "CHANGES MADE"*

PAGE 90:

This page is intentionally left blank.

PAGE 91:

Text on a plain white background, a reprise of Laura Stevenson's "Caretaker."

CAPTION (IN ITALICS):

*THIS IS THE LAST NIGHT IN THE HOUSE I WAS BORN IN,
COULD YOU GIVE ME A RIDE TO THE TRAIN IN THE MORNING?
I'VE GOT A REAL NICE PLACE ON A REAL NICE BLOCK,
WITH A GARDEN OUTSIDE - YOU SHOULD SEE IT SOMETIME...
...UNDERSTAND I CAN NO LONGER TAKE CARE.
LAURA STEVENSON AND THE CANS "CARETAKER."*

FIN.