

# **Shatterland**

Dave Stone

1: Something Inside

Page 1

1. We're looking down and at an angle on a child's room, the perspective pulled a so that it looks as though we're looming a little menacingly. The twisted branches of a tree outside the window cast shadows over an accumulation of stuffed TOYS, turning them into the kind of little-animal pack about which children have nightmares.

Importantly, tacked to the wall somewhere, is the childish-scrawled drawing of a BIG HOUSE – a huge building, like a tenement block, with many, many windows. This image shall occur, but for the moment it's just an incidental detail stuck to a wall.

The room is that of LUCY MARSH, a girl of around six. At the moment she's bundled under the covers of her bed: a child frightened from a nightmare.

BOX THE SOUND AGAIN.

BOX NEEDLE-TEETH ON POLYTHENE.

2. Closeup on Lucy as she peeps a wary eye out from the covers. Suitably menacing-looking shadows behind her.

BOX THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE.

3. From Lucy's POV we see a collection of stuffed toys and dolls, ranging from teddies to baby-dolls to the celebrated hairless naked Barbie with one leg. The dark and shadows have turned the subtly monstrous. They seem not a little hungry.

BOX SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO *SEE*.

BOX SEE THAT IT'S NOT *THERE* SO YOU CAN MAKE IT GO AWAY AGAIN.

4. Lucy pulls back the covers and climbs out of bed. She's slight, blonde and long-haired. She's a naturally solemn child. She wears a simple white night-dress, which extends to her ankles.

BOX SO LUCY WENT.

5. A low angle on Lucy's bare feet and indications of the night-dress hem as we follow her across the floor. The indications of toys to either side contrive to give the impression that they might or might not be watching her.

BOX FEET RASPING ON SCRATCHY NYLON SOMETHING BRUSHED AGAINST HER *CALF* AND AN INCISOR SLICED A FOLD OF FLESH AND FRESH BLOOD BURSTING IN HER *MOUTH* SHE

BOX WENT.

6. Lucy stands before the window, beyond which the twisting and skeletal branches of a tree are silhouetted against street-light. The effect, rather than looking out into darkness, is that of looking out from a dark room into a gnarled black tangle against a kinda alien-abduction light.

BOX THEY WAIT UNTIL YOU THINK THERE'S NOTHING *THERE* AND –

**Page 2**

1. Extreme close-up on a computer monitor in darkness. Indications of its casing and controls tie in with the look of the BUNKER we'll encounter some way below – slightly alien and retro-looking.

(This set-up shall recur, so we'll tag it BUNKER MONITOR.)

The monitor is switched off. Reflected in it we see what might or might not be a gaunt female face. A thread of cigarette smoke trails across the frame.

BOX JANUARY 12.

2. Daylight. We're outside a dirty and run-down second-storey apartment – the sort where a flight of rickety stair lead to a door halfway up the wall.

Two men, dressed in the instantly identifiable suits of plainclothes cops, stand before the door. Their names are NAIL and ROTH. Nail stands facing the door, having just knocked. Roth is keeping watch, glancing around with apparently casual unconcern.

Roth is carrying a plastic-bag-wrapped package. We don't get what it is, yet, but it's the right size and shape for a sawn-off shotgun.

3. The bunker monitor again – in the process of being switched on and flaring to life.

SFX - BOIT –

4. Outside the apartment again, looking over Nail's shoulder to the door, as behind it somebody fumbles with chains and deadlocks.

SFX RAK (...) TOK (...) RAK-CLIK

5. The same POV. The door has opened and a pale and haggard face is peering out from the darkness beyond.

This is MICHAEL CASE, a somewhat wasted man of medium height, unshaven, hair greasy, long and ragged, dirty shirt and jeans. Michael has an unconscious paranoid tendency to shrink away from physical human contact.

MICHAEL H-HELLO?

6. Mike's POV on Nail and Roth, looming somewhat in the doorway. Nail is grinning nastily and showing us a warrant card. Behind him, Roth seems completely casual and unconcerned.

NAIL MR CASE? MR *MICHAEL* CASE?

(link)

I'M DETECTIVE NAIL. SPECIAL CRIMES. THIS IS DETECTIVE ROTH.

(link)

HE DOESN'T TALK MUCH. CERTAIN LACK OF *PEOPLE* SKILLS, YOU KNOW?

(link)

MAY WE COME IN?

**Page 3**

1. The bunker monitor again. The screen now shows a city map, on which a cluster of icons are flaring.
2. Inside the apartment. A jittery Michael is backing away from Nail and Roth into a dirty living room crammed with piles of old magazines, half-eaten food and so forth. Various doodlings and daubings on the wall, together with the occasional tatty pornographic poster – the idea is that our Mikey has *never* let anyone into this private space.

Nail and Roth are advancing on him with a kind of calm inexorability.

MICHAEL LISTEN, WHAT'S THIS ..? I DON'T *LIKE* ... WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

NAIL CALM DOWN, MR CASE. SETTLE.

3. Nail puts his face very close to Michael's. In backing away from it, Michael is half-falling, half-sitting-down – onto a rather horrid sofa, scattering and spilling various items.

NAIL WE JUST WANT TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS.

MICHAEL AK!

NAIL SIT DOWN. RELAX.

4. Wide-shot of the room. Michael is sitting, wracked with anxiety. Nail just stands there talking to him. Roth is glancing unconcernedly around himself, negligently clutching the baggie-wrapped package with one hand.

NAIL WE'RE INVESTIGATING A SERIES OF MURDERS, MR CASE. SEVERAL VERY *NASTY* MURDERS.

(link)

LITTLE KIDDIES.

5. Cut to the bunker console again. An alert-readout has flashed up on the screen, reading: MANDO REP 2 ST 7.1 ACTIVE. BULGE CONFIRMED.

6. Back in the apartment, close-up on Nail.

NAIL THE DETAILS ARE QUITE UPSETTING. IT'S THE WORK OF A MADMAN, MR CASE. SOMEONE WITH A HISTORY OF VIOLENT MENTAL PROBLEMS.

7. Cut to the bunker monitor again. A street-map on the screen tells us that we're zeroing in on a particular location ...

8. Back in the apartment, we're looking over Nail's shoulder to Michael's stunned reaction.

NAIL SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

**Page 4**

1. Cut to the bunker console again. An alert-readout reads: BIG GHOST UNITS 57 AND 41 – ACTIVATE.
  
2. Back in the apartment, Nail lectures an increasingly desperate Michael.  
  
NAIL IT WOULD APPEAR, FROM YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS, THAT YOU'RE PRONE TO FUGUE-STATE *BLACKOUTS*, MR CASE.  
  
(link)  
  
YOU DO THINGS AND THEN YOU FORGET YOU DID THEM. CONVENIENT, DON'T YOU THINK?
  
3. On Michael, desperate and sweating away.  
  
MICHAEL I - I DON'T DO ...  
  
(link)  
  
I MEAN, SOMETIMES THINGS GO STRANGE AND I GO BLANK AND I Y'KNOW SOMETIMES FEEL I'M SOMEWHERE *ELSE* BUT ...
  
4. Michael is almost pleading with an implacable Nail. Roth stands nearby, still nonchalantly holding his package ... only now he has quite calmly started to unwrap it.  
  
MICHAEL GIVE ME SOME NAMES. GIVE ME SOME DATES! I CAN PROVE IT WASN'T –  
  
NAIL IT WASN'T YOU, MR CASE.
  
5. Nail has suddenly – and very calmly – pinned a surprised Michael to the sofa, holding him down in an unshakable grip.  
  
Roth, meanwhile, has unwrapped the package to reveal a sawn-off shotgun. He's just standing nonchalantly there with it.  
  
NAIL OF *COURSE* IT WASN'T YOU.

MICHAEL HNG.

NAIL WE KNOW *PRECISELY* WHO IT WAS.

6. Cut to the POV of what we'll later learn to be a BIG GHOST. For the moment, we just get the sense of some mobile robot-thing: the grainy and digitised output from photosensors overlaid with status-readouts and the like – think Terminator-vision, basically.

For the moment, the Big Ghost is running down a generic city alleyway. Garbage and scraps of newspaper, disturbed by our passing and swirling in actinic alley-door light. Importantly, a particular readable headline reads: DEAD IN BIG HOUSE.

(Our POV Big Ghost is one of a pair, running along together. For the moment we only see peripheral indications of its running mate – a cybernetic claw or shoulder on the edge of frame and so on. See the description on Page 6 to keep things consistent.)

BOX “I JUST SAID IT WAS CONVENIENT.”

**Page 5**

1. We're back in the apartment, on the same set-up as when we left it. Nail holding a frightened Michael down, Roth just standing there and holding the sawn-off gun.

NAIL I DIDN'T KNOW YOU KEPT A *GUN* ON THE PREMISES. UNLICENSED, TOO, I IMAGINE.

(link)

I CAN JUST IMAGINE THE SCENE, CAN'T YOU?

2. We move in. Nail is gripping Michael on the nape of the neck, holding his head up and still. Roth is shoving the barrels of the shotgun into Michael's mouth – still with an attitude of complete unconcern; he might as well just be a workman slotting some component into a piece of machinery.

NAIL WE COME TO QUESTION YOU, ALL UNKNOWING THAT YOU HAVE A GUN.

(link)

BEFORE WE CAN DO A THING, YOU MAKE A GRAB FOR IT, STICK IT IN YOUR MOUTH AND LET IT OFF.

3. Cut away to the Big Ghost's POV. We're in a bar-lined street, shoving its way through a night-time crowd with a cybernetic claw. People are looking at us, not unnaturally, with shocked disbelief.

BOX "BIT EMBARRASSING FOR ALL CONCERNED, REALLY."

4. Back in the apartment. Nail holding Michael down. Roth sticking the gun in Michael's mouth. Incidentally – but importantly as a set-up – we're aware of a window somewhere behind Nail.

NAIL OUR ... *SUPERIORS* DEEM IT NECESSARY TO WRAP THIS WHOLE UNPLEASANT BUSINESS UP. WRAP IT UP NOW.

(link)

WE NEED A *SCAPEGOAT*, FRANKLY. OR A SACRIFICIAL LAMB.

5. Closeup on Michael as he tries to speak around the gun. A thread of blood from a cut in his mouth trails down his jaw.

MICHAEL -- UKK --

(link)

... THISH ISH ... OH FUGHK ...

(link)

... YOU CAN'T *DO* THISH!

6. Big Ghost POV again. The exterior of Michael's apartment, where we first met Nail and Roth – this time through a Big Ghost's eyes as we run toward it.

BOX "THISH ISH *INSHANE* ..."

7. Back inside the apartment again, as the cops prepare to do Michael in. Nail is smiling slightly but still perfectly calm. Importantly, in the window behind him, we see what might or might not be the shadowy form of the things we'll meet next page ...

NAIL THE WORD IS *INHUMAN*, MR CASE.

(link)

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SAY 'BAA'.

**Page 6**

1. Splashpage as the two Big Ghosts come bursting through the window – and in fact, a large portion of the wall the window's in. An explosion of glass and timber and masonry – and we finally see the Big Ghosts in all their glory:

They're vaguely humanoid but the size of a gorilla, their heads wrapped in filthy rags from which their cybernetic eyes – at least three - blaze like searchlights. Their bodies are lumpen and distorted with arcane and rather alien-looking cyber-implants. Their right arms terminate in powered claws; their left arms terminate in seriously fuckoff multi-barrelled blasters. They look, quite simply, like a cross between Ridley Scott's Alien and a riot cop.

In the extreme foreground, our three human people react with appropriate shock and terror.

SFX (lettered like shattering glass) SKRAAASH!

TITLE AND CREDITS: SHATTERLAND 1.1: SOMETHING INSIDE.

**Page 7**

1. As the shadow of a Big Ghost looms over our three humans, it seems as though Nail has gone instantly and hysterically insane. He's shoving Roth out of the way and wrenching the shotgun from Michael's mouth. There's a small spray of blood.

NAIL *MEAT EATING!*

MICHAEL UKK!

2. Screaming madly, Nail brings the shotgun round and blasts both barrels at a Big Ghost. The blast catches its shoulder and blows a hole in a spray of slime and circuitry.

NAIL *EATING MEAT!*

SFX SKLAMM!

GHOST (a string of digitised alien-spiderly language)

3. Closeup on a frantic Nail working the action of the empty shotgun. A big Ghost claw is reaching for him from off frame and a Big Ghost shadow has fallen over him.

NAIL *EATING!*

(link)

*EATING MEAT!*

SFX SHIK-CLIK

4. A wide shot of the action. The intact Big Ghost is in the process of knocking Roth away from Michael. The damaged Ghost (it was hit on the 'blaster side') has grabbed nail and is wrenching him off the ground with enormous force. The shotgun is falling from nerveless fingers.

Michael is just looking at this carnage with stunned terror.

NAIL *EATING MEETING EATING -- GLUK! -- EEEEEEEEEEE (...)*

MICHAEL no.

5. Closeup on Michael, sweating and wide-eyed. There's a certain kind of puzzlement to his shock and terror – it might just be possible that all this is an hallucination he should be fighting against ...
- NAIL (off frame) (...) EEEEEEEEEEE (...)
- MICHAEL no, please, I ...
6. We're looking over Michael's shoulder as a Big Ghost brings its head down to peer at him, filling the frame. We see that the blazing eyes behind the rags are lens optics punched into the rotting matter of its head. They're arranged in a rough but distinct triangle.
- NAIL (off frame) (...) EEEEEEEEEEE (...)
- MICHAEL no
7. Closeup on the face of the Big ghost. It's become digitised and grainy, as though being relayed by a low-definition monitor. The blazing eyes are pure white, having overloaded the pixels.
- BOX TURN IT OFF.
8. Black frame, with a small flare of light in the middle to convey a monitor being switched off.
- SFX -- BOIT --

1. Splashpage. We're in a cavernous shaft walled with mucus membrane, shot through with segmented metal tubes and cilia-like protrusions. Sporadic clusters of crystalline mineral formations flash like a local infection of jewels. Through rents in the membrane wall of the shaft we see alien landscapes, spectral forms, human faces screaming in agony, the distorted forms of the Big Ghosts we encountered earlier ...

Through this, Michael is falling. His image is repeated several times – possibly enclosed and cut off by shatter-jagged sub-frames to give a pleasing graphical effect.

The important thing is that, as he falls, Michael is transforming – from the ragged, greasy wreck we know to something altogether stronger, brighter and beautiful. This 'new' Michael is bright and metallic, like living quicksilver: think Silver Surfer with a slightly better dress sense and without the plank.

A string of text is incorporated into the page-design, as oppose to merely being in boxes:

TEXT

CAUGHT AND CAUGHT AND HEAD OVER HEELS THEY  
CAME THEY CAME THEY *CAME* FOR ME THE  
BOOGIEMEN AND JUJU LIGHTS BEHIND THEIR FEARFUL  
RAGGED EYES AND SUDDENLY I'M IT'S WET AND ITS  
RED AND MY HEARTS IN MY MOUTH AND IT HURTS TO  
*BREATHE* AND SOMETHING IS SOMETHING IS  
HAPPENING TO MY SKIN AND MUSCLE SLOUGHING AND  
REFORMING SOMETHING BRIGHT AND METAMETALLIC  
AND IT'S QUICKSILVER SHOT WITH TENSILE NEON LIKE  
A BIG LIGHT SWITCHING ON INSIDE AND IT'S LIKE  
SOMEWHERE ELSE AND BRIGHT AND BIG AND FAST AND  
OH GOD IT'S AS BIG AS THE WORLD IT

**Page 9**

1. The transformed Michael is hitting the mucus-membrane floor of the shaft with enormous force. Clawed hands on forearms are sprouting from the floor, something like flowers in a bed. The actual flesh and skin of them has been removed in some manner to leave bones covered with a fragile tangle of blood-vessels conforming to the shape arms and hands.

SFX -- FLUNCH! –

2. An intact transformed Michael is hauling himself up from the floor. He seems blankly puzzled rather than anything else. Several of the skeletally venous hands are reaching out to clutch at him.

MICHAEL Uh ...

BOX IN MY HEAD.

3. More and more of the hands are scrabbling and grabbing at the transformed Michael as he panics and struggles against them.

BOX HOT AND CLOTTED SLICING IN MY HEAD.

MICHAEL LET ME ... LET ME – GUH! – LET ME ...

4. The transformed Michael is levitating off the floor. Light and energy are exploding out of him, blasting the clawing hands to charred shreds.

MICHAEL LET ME GO!

5. The transformed Michael now floats over a charred blast-radius crater, looking down at his hands uncertainly. He has no idea what he's just done. Importantly, we see some peripheral indication that the blast from him has torn open a rent in the mucus membrane wall of the shaft.

MICHAEL WHAT?

6. Closeup on the transformed Michael's face as it turns in surprise to see the out-of-frame hole.

MICHAEL WHAT DID I ..?

7. We're following the transformed Michael as, in silhouette, he drifts towards the hole in the cavern wall, from which lights are blazing. (In composition, this image is reminiscent of Lucy in front of the window back on page 1.)

## Page 10

1. Splashpage. We're looking through the hole so that we only see the barest peripheral indications of its edges. Beyond it is Psychospace.

Psychospace is infinite and infinitely mutable. Here it takes the form of a vast, swirling Mandelbrot-Mandela of globes, like a galactic spiral, each globe containing a world. (The best way of doing this graphically, I think, would be to simply get a whole bunch of random images, from the prosaic to the striking, and plug them into the appropriate globes.)

The above is background to a number of floating world-fragments – lumps of twisted rock covered with alien vegetation, the remains of buildings and other signs of inhuman habitation, floating cities. The overall impression is that of a churning vortex of all possible – and impossible – worlds.

In particular, we see a massive, cracked stone head, its features blocky and Titanic, its eyes closed in repose. A gnarled and leafless tree is sprouting from its forehead.

**Page 11**

1. First of a three-frame sequence running across the top two-thirds of the page. The overall image shows the membrane-shaft rip to the left, as seen from the other side – a kind of hole hanging in Psychospace. To the right, in the foreground, we see the twisting limb of a leafless tree – the same tree we saw last page. We see very small indications of the burning girl we'll meet below, reclining on the branch.

In this frame, the small figure of the transformed Michael is floating through the hole.

BOX IT WAS DAZZLING AND DISLOCATED AND INSANE. A LIGHT SO BIG IT ALBIFIED MY MIND; BURNING IT OUT WHITE.

BOX I FELT AS IF I COULD –

2. in this frame the small figure of the transformed Michael soars through the gulf of Psychospace, lost in the joy of rather superhero-like flight.

BOX THIS IS MINE!

BOX MINE AND MINE AND *MINE* ALONE AND –

3. The small figure of the transformed Michael has banked in the air and is looking down at what might or might not be the figure of the burning girl.

BOX SOMEBODY DOWN THERE.

4. The girl – seemingly made of living fire, reclines in the tree and looks up as Michael swoops towards her.

MICHAEL WAIT! I JUST –

5. The girl launches herself from the tree in flight, leaving Michael to plough rather inelegantly into it.

MICHAEL WHUF!

**Page 12**

1. A thin and rather graphical strip running down the left-hand side of the page. The small and white-out silhouette of the girl is soaring upwards, the silhouette of Michael trying to catch her up.

2. The burning girl banks and turns as Michael shouts to her.

MICHAEL PLEASE!

(link)

LISTEN!

(link)

WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE? WHERE *ARE* WE?

3. Closeup on the burning girl's face, smiling.

GIRL DREAMS.

(link)

WE'RE IN YOUR DREAMS.

GIRL (no link) TIME TO WAKE UP, NOW.

4. Transition frame. The girl's face hazes with jagged static.

5. Again, closeup on the girl's face. It's human, now, and patently real-life. She's gaunt to the point of skin-and-bone. Ratty, greasy hair and pronounced dark circles under her eyes. Behind her, the walls are steel plate.

GIRL CAIN. SELA CAIN.

(link)

I'M SELA CAIN.

6. Our first real look at what we will come to know quite well as the Bunker. At the moment we're in the Access Room:

The walls are concrete and steel plate. Along one wall is a row of three couches, set up like mini aircraft-cockpits with restraining straps and electrode-headsets hooked to banks of arcane-looking cybernetic equipment. Said equipment looks really high-tech and slightly alien – but also as though it were constructed sometime in the 1950s.

A heavy steel hatch bears a distinctive logo looking like a stylised head split down the middle.

A battered real-life Michael is in one of the couches, a headset strapped to him and himself strapped to the couch as though under mental-patient restraint. He's looking in alarm to the real-life and rather crazy-looking Sela Cain as she casually pulls her own headset off and climbs off her own couch.

SELA

WELCOME TO THE BUNKER.

**Page 13**

1.           Sela casually busies herself by unstrapping a suspicious Michael from his couch.

SELA           DO YOU LIKE ME? I DON'T LIKE YOU.

(link)

YOU LOOK MAD AND YOU SMELL LIKE FISH AND PISS AND I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER WANT TO FUCK YOU.

2.           Closeup on Michael, reacting just like anybody would if somebody suddenly just came out and said something like that.

MICHAEL       WHAT?

3.           Michael is sitting up and rubbing at his recently restrained wrists, looking concernedly at a suddenly almost hysterical Sela, who is plucking and clutching at herself in an unconscious effort to wound.

SELA           OH!

(link)

LOOK, I'M SORRY, ALL RIGHT? I'M SORRY!

(link)

I ALWAYS DO IT WHEN I *EXCISE*. I TRY TO THINK THINGS AND MY MOUTH FILLS UP WITH WORDS AND WORDS AND *WORDS* AND WORDS –

4.           A startled Michael rocks back as Sela snaps at him as though furious.

MICHAEL       'EXCISE?'

SELA           SLIT MY BRAIN! FROM THE *BIG* THING! EVERYTHING THERE EVER WAS AND ...

(link)

YOU'RE *STUPID!*

5. Closeup on Sela, looking little girl scornful.

SELA YOU'RE JUST STUPID.

(link)

LET ME TELL YOU.

6. Move in towards Sela's eyes. In isolation we get a sense of the kind of long-term suffering that would have driven anybody mad.

SELA LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT *PSYCHOSPACE.*

**Page 14**

1. A big montage. Off to one side is a computer-wireframe representation of a trepanned human skull and brain, from which tendrils extend and interconnect into a complex network. Dropped into this are other images: a monstrously bloated leather doll of a woman clutching a struggling child to it's breast. On its stomach is scrawled SUCK. Charred skeletons in a burning car. A human in the process of transforming into an alien insect larva. Floating clusters of gemstones ...

BOX 'BILLIONS OF MEAT MACHINES, EACH PROGRAMMED FOR SELF-AWARENESS. THEY IMPACT AND INTERACT AND FEED OFF EACH OTHER TO BUILD *AUTOMEMES*.'

BOX EVERYTHING EXISTS. IDEAS HAVE A LIFE OF THEIR OWN. PSYCHOSPACE JUST GIVES THEM SOMEWHERE TO LIVE.'

2. Back in the Bunker's Access Room, Sela now seems perfectly calm. In the background behind her we see the hatch.

SELA SOME PEOPLE CAN ACCESS PSYCHOSPACE. NEUROLOGICAL COMPULSIVES, PARANOIACS ... ALL IT TAKES IS THAT FINAL MENTAL TWIST.

3. The hatch is now open. Sela has turned her back and is walking into the darkness beyond. Michael is trailing along behind.

MICHAEL THAT WAS WHERE WE WERE ..?

SELA THAT WAS JUST A CONSTRUCT.

4. A graphical frame showing the silhouettes of Michael and Sela as they walk through corridor-space.

SELA WE'VE BEEN HOOKING YOUR SENSORIUM INTO THE NULL AREAS OF YOUR BRAIN, ORIENTATING AND REALIGNING YOU MIND.

(link)

IT'S LIKE BUILDING A FIREWALL. DIRECT ACCESS TO PSYCHOSPACE YOU WILL YOU AT THIS STAGE.

5. We've reached another hatch. Sela is turning from it as it opens, her face a little concerned.

SELA THE MINDSCAPE – THE HUMAN MINDSCAPE IS INFECTED. QUASI-VIRAL CONSTRUCTS. THAT'S WHAT THE BUNKER TOLD ME.

(link)

WE CALL THEM THE JOKAI.

**Page 15**

1. We're now in what's basically a med-bay. Drips and bleep-machines and surgical devices. Again the equipment is ultra-hi-tech, but with a sense of it having been built in the 1950s.
- In one wall is a large plate-glass viewing window. We make out a tangle of tubes and wires connecting to something bulky behind it.
- Sela and Michael are entering the room and heading for indications of what might or might not be a man strapped into a kinda healing-machine hospital bed.

SELA WE'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON YOU FOR MONTHS. YOU WERE DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL TO ACCESS AND MAKING A BULGE.

(link)

THE JOKAI NOTICED YOU, TOO. THEY SENT TWO OF THEIR CREATURES TO KILL YOU IN THE REAL. THOSE TWO COPS.

2. Two-shot of Michael and Sela. Michael is puzzled, Sela is unconcerned.

MICHAEL THOSE COPS WERE ..?

SELA INFECTED WITH AUTOMEMES. SELF-REFERRING CONSTRUCTS OVERRIDING THE CORE CORTICAL FUNCTIONS. THEY PROBABLY THOUGHT IT WAS THEIR OWN IDEA.

3. Sela absently checks over the controls on a biomonitor readout.

SELA THEIR PSYCHES WOULD HAVE FALLEN APART SPECTACULARLY IN TIME, OF COURSE – THE JOKAI AND HUMANITY ARE INCOMPATIBLE ON A FUNDAMENTAL LEVEL – BUT THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO LATE FOR YOU.

(link)

AS IT WAS, WE HAD TO ACTIVATE A COUPLE OF BIG GHOSTS.

4. Indications of the man on the bed as Sela fusses over him with the absent professionalism of a nurse. We see that there are several IV-tubes plugged into the man's skin.

SELA THE JOKAI HAVE ALWAYS IMPINGED TO A CERTAIN EXTENT – MASS DELUSIONS, DANCING FITS, YOU CAN SEE THEIR INFLUENCE IN MOB-DYNAMICS ... ONLY NOW THEY WANT IT ALL.

(link)

THEY'RE BREEDING OUT OF CONTROL, TEARING AT THE CRACKS BETWEEN THE WORLDS AND LOOKING FOR A WAY INTO THE REAL.

5. Sela yanks a cluster of IV needles from the man's arm, patently not caring much if it damages or hurts him.

SELA THERE'S A MINDQUAKE COMING AS BIG AS THE WORLD – AND NOBODY WILL BE CRAWLING FROM THE MENTAL WRECKAGE.

(link)

COME ON, JOEY. ON YOUR FEET.

**Page 16**

1. JOEY NOBODY climbs from the bed. Like Sela – and Michael, for that matter – he’s thin and malnourished, but what we’ll think of his particular ‘madness’ is the blank personality of severe autism. His features are slack, his eyes completely dead.

His left shoulder is heavily and inexpertly bandaged. A thin trickle of blood runs down his arm from where the IV-needles were removed.

JOEY (lower-case) yes.

2. Sela dumps the IV-tubes in an obviously non-functioning autoclave already filled with a dirty and quite frightening-looking tangle of other tubes and weird medical equipment.

SELA JOEY WAS DRIVING THE BIG GHOST THAT COP SHOT. PSYCHOSOMATIC CELLULAR COLLAPSE.

3. Michael seems vaguely apologetic. Joey just stares blankly.

MICHAEL UH ... I’M SORRY ABOUT THAT ...

JOEY yes. you’re sorry about that.

4. A wide shot of the medibay. Sela is guiding Joey towards the door. Michael has paused by the big plate glass window and is looking into it with surprise.

SELA JOEY’S A SAVANT. NOT A LOT OF SUPEREGO AND HE WORKS LIKE A DATABASE. THERE’S A HELL OF A LOT OF STUFF IN THERE.

(link)

PARADISE LOST, JOEY. PARADISE LOST FROM LINE ONE.

JOEY of man’s first disobedience and the fruit of that forbidden tree

5. Reverse-shot from the window. A completely unconcerned Sela has joined Michael as he looks out at us with astonishment.

JOEY (off) whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe

MICHAEL OH MY GOD.

(link)

WHAT'S THAT? WHAT IS IT?

6. We're in the room beyond the window. Floating in an antique-looking and corroded steel and glass tank, its supporting fluid slopping and leaving crusty trails, is a bloated lump of flesh that might once, at some point, have been human. Indications of baby-fingers and toes. Tangled clusters of cables and wires sprout from the diseased-looking flesh, hooking it to alien support machines – it's as if the ikky medical-bay images we've seen concerning Joey Nobody have suddenly had all their knobs turned up to eleven.

In the far wall is the plate-glass window, and the silhouettes of Sela and Michael observing the scene.

JOEY (off) with loss of eden till some greater man

SELA THAT'S BABE.

**Page 17**

1. We're back in the Access Room again. Joey is on a couch, still talking away. Sela is settling an electrode headset on him. Sela's talking absently to us.

JOEY on the secret top of oreb or of

SELA BABE'S A CATALEPTIC – NO HIGHER FUNCTIONS AND SHE JUST GROWED LIKE TOPSY. IN PSYCHOSPACE HER CONSTRUCT IS LIKE TOTALLY DIFFUSED.

(link)

WE USE HER AS A GATEWAY.

2. Sela taps a large and archaic-looking monitor, on which a central icon is surrounded by a galaxy of pinpoints.

SELA AND THAT'S YOU.

(link)

YOUR CONSTRUCT'S DORMANT, BUT THE JOKAI ARE AWARE OF IT. THEIR PROBES ARE CIRCLING YOU LIKE MANTAS, WAITING FOR THE CHANCE TO SLICE AND DICE ...

JOEY (off) envy and revenge deceiv'd the mother of

3. Sela suddenly turns to snap viciously at someone out of shot.

SELA SHUT THE FUCK *UP*, JOEY!

JOEY (off) yes.

4. The whole scene. Michael, on his own couch, is nervously pulling on his own set of electrodes. On her couch, Sela is pulling on her headset with one hand while with the other swinging a small control-console over her lap.

SELA NOW LISTEN, MICHAEL: WE HIT PSYCHOSPACE, YOUR CONSTRUCT GOES ACTIVE AND THE JOKAI-PROBES WILL ZERO IN. OUR JOB IS TO BURN THEM OFF YOU, GIVE YOU TIME TO LOCK AND COHERE, UNDERSTAND?

MICHAEL UH ... NOT REALLY, NO ...

5. Close on Sela as she unconcernedly works the controls.

SELA YOU'LL PICK IT UP AS WE GO ALONG. TRUST ME.

(link)

LET'S DO IT.

6. Tight closeup on Sela's hand as she works a control.

SELA LET'S GO OUT.

7. A jagged frame of transition-static, and then we're in ...

1. Michael, Sela and Joey burst into Psychospace in full superheroic energy-explosion glory. Michael, as before, is mirror-bright, Sela is burning – and Joey is simply a white-out blank, with no outline, as though somebody has painted his silhouette on the page with Tipp-Ex.

This area of Psychospace is in a state of flux: swirling patterns like oil on water. Hanging in the ‘air’ are the Jokai probes Sela mentioned – a sort of cross between a scorpion and a jellyfish, with bulbous flotation-sacs and each equipped with a huge, barbed stinger.

SELA JOEY! THE RIGHT! BURN THE ONE ON YOUR RIGHT!

JOEY yes.

2. The white-out silhouette of Joey grabs hold of a probe and fries it superhero-energy style. It’s flotation sacs explode.

SFX SRAAAK!

3. In the foreground, Sela is shooting energy from her hands at something out of shot. From what we make out of her face, it’s teeth-gritted vicious. Behind her, Michael hangs in the ‘air’ seemingly at a bit of a loss.

MICHAEL LISTEN, SELA ... I’VE NEVER *DONE* ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE!

(link)

WHAT SHOULD I BE *DOING*?

4. Sela blasts away at another probe and snaps at us angrily.

SELA WELL YOU CAN GET OUT OF THE FUCKING WAY, FOR A START!

SFX SRAAAK! SPLUNCH!

SELA JUST STAY OUT OF THE WAY AND TRY TO STAY ALIVE!

5. Michael floats off moodily as the battle rages spectacularly around him. We get the impression, basically, that he is currently just feeling a bit of a spare tool.

BOX OKAY.

BOX FINE.

6. Close on Michael's face as he turns to see something with alarm.

BOX IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT, I –

MICHAEL UH ...

**Page 19**

1. Closeup on a quasi-organic and extremely vicious looking clawlike projectile, shooting towards us with tremendous force and trailing a fleshy tube the like line of a harpoon.

2. Big frame as the projectile hits Michael, shooting through his mouth to burst out of the back of his head in a spray of abstract meat and bone and fluid. (In Psychospace, such things are not necessarily fatal, however distressing and gory.) The force of impact is knocking him back, the tube trailing from his mouth and out of shot.

A nearby Sela, in the process of burning another probe, is turning to see what's happening and shouting in alarm.

SFX FLUTCH!

MICHAEL HGNN!

SELA MICHAEL!

3. Closeup on the claw-projectile, the barbs of which are extending themselves like the tines of a grappling hook.

SFX -- SHIK --

BOX OH GOD

4. Closeup as the tube is wrenched out through Michael's mouth, the tines of the 'claw' biting into the back of his head.

SFX CLUNCH!

BOX OH SHIT

5. A wide shot of the scene. The stricken Michael hangs in the air, the tube from his mouth snaking off into the distance – where something huge is resolving itself from the chaos of Psychospace. (See next page to keep things consistent.)

The small figures of Sela and Joey are heading for Michael concernedly, in the celebrated 'superheroes flying to help their team-mate manner.

BOX OH GOD OH SHIT IT WENT RIGHT *THROUGH* ME AND I –

BOX NO.

6. Closeup on Michael's agonised eyes as he sees the thing coming towards him ...

BOX OH PLEASE GOD NO ...

**Page 20**

1. Splashpage as we see the ... thing in all its horrible glory. It's a mountain-sized, hideously bloated and distorted little girl's head, a tiny body hanging limply off it by a thread of vertebrae. It's rotted-tooth grinning and drooling, mucus and matter caked on its chin, and its eyes are crusted, rotted holes. From one of these eye-holes comes the tube of the projectile which has impaled Michael.

The chaos of Psychospace swirls around it. The image is patently demonic and disturbing – but strangely familiar. It's the hideously warped image of LUCY, the girl we met back on page 1.

THING (directionless) KILL YOU.

**Page 21**

1. The tube running from Michael's mouth is jerked, wrenching him forward at enormous speed.

THING (directionless) CHEW YOUR BONES

MICHAEL GLUH!

THING (directionless) LICK YOUR BLOOD

2. We're looking past Michael as he is hauled into the darkness of the Thing's vast eyehole.

THING (directionless) EAT YOU IN THE DARK

3. The start of a montage in darkness, with frames and images flowing together and text-boxes winding through them.

In this frame, Michael writhes as alien energies crackle around him and tear lumps out of him.

BOX ANAESTHETIC ACID LACERATING AND CAUTERISING MEMORIES AND IDENTITY AND OH SO VERY PAINLESS ...

BOX IT'S TAKING YOU AWAY.

BOX (THE WAY YOU MOVED, THE WAY YOU LAUGHED, SLEEPING CURLED TOGETHER AND THE WARM BEAT OF YOUR HEART)

4. Montage continues. In this frame the burning face of Sela is screaming. He burning quasi-flesh is sloughing off from a graphic abstract skull.

BOX SELA CAIN'S HERE NOW, SOMEHOW.

BOX SELA'S SCREAMING, BUBBLING TO BONE.

5. Montage continues. Joey Nobody's white-out form is spread-eagled in the dark, energy crackling around him.

BOX JOEY'S HERE, TOO. SCREAMING, TOO. BUT HE –

BOX I CAN FEEL SOMETHING.

BOX A PRESSURE, LIKE A BULGING. LIKE ONCOMING THUNDER.

6. Closeup on Michael, his mouth hugely distended and screaming in agony.

BOX SOMETHING COMING. SOMETHING BIG.

BOX SOMETHING INSIDE.

**Page 22**

1. Big frame as plasma explodes from Michael, blowing the darkness to meaty shreds – the solid black of the darkness is behaving like living flesh in an explosion.

Joey and Sela are flung twisting by the force of the blast. Around them the plasma thrashes, as though attempting to form itself into human figures and faces.

BOX A MILLION NAMES, A MILLION FACES ... MEMORIES AND ASSOCIATIONS, WHOLE INTERLOCKING UNIVERSES OF IDENTITY ...

BOX (A WOMAN WITH VULPINE EYES CLUTCHES A CHILD TO HER AND SOBS. THE FACE OF THE CHILD IS FEATURELESS, PERFECTLY SMOOTH.)

2. A battered but intact Michael hangs in the air, winded, as the plasma thrashes around him, still trying to form itself into monstrous quasi-human shapes.

BOX (A MAN WITH A STUNTED PARASITE CLAWS AT HIS FACE AND NECK. HIS SKIN IS LIKE WAX. HIS NAILS LEAVE BLOODLESS FURROWS)

BOX THE DIGESTIVE SAC IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES IS TOO SMALL.

3. Close on Michael. Curling into a foetal ball as the chaos thrashes around him.

BOX (THE DOG FLEXES OILED ROPE TENDONS AND DRAGS ITSELF ACROSS THE GRASS. I WATCH IT FOR A WHILE, THEN TURN MY EYES UP TO THE SUN)

BOX THE ONLY OPTION IS TO SICK IT UP.

4. A blank white frame.

BOX SICK IT ALL UP.

**Page 23**

1. We're back in reality again, back in the bunker. We're looking up at reality-Sela as she looms over us, offering us a steaming paper cup.

Sela looks worn-out and scarred, but somehow happier and more relaxed. Something has changed ...

SELA STOCK CUBES IN WATER. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO EAT AGAIN.

2. A still-groggy Michael is sitting up in a Bunker-medibay bed. Sela hands him the cup.

SELA YOU WERE GOING INTO TERMINAL DISSIPATION. IT TOOK US DAYS TO PULL YOU BACK AND INTEGRATE YOU.

(link)

I WAS GETTING WORRIED.

MICHAEL I ... UH ... IT FELT LIKE I WAS TURNING INTO THE WORLD. WHAT HAPPENED?

3. Wide shot of the medibay. Sela has wandered over to a recently unplugged saline drip and is fingering it absently. Michael is sitting on the bed, legs hanging over the side, and is cradling the hot drink with both hands.

SELA ONE BIG FAT FUCKER OF A JOKAI. IT SUCKED YOU IN AND PULLED A PHOBIC IMAGE OUT OF YOU AND TURNED IT ON US. TRIED TO FLENSSE OUR MINDS.

(link)

THEN SOMETHING CHANGED.

4. Closeup on Sela, looking pensive.

SELA SOMETHING BURST OUT OF YOU AND WRAPPED AROUND US. PULLED US BACK TOGETHER.

(link)

I CAME BACK TO MYSELF, I WAS OUT OF THE WRECKAGE. I FELT STRONGER. MORE ALIVE.

5. Sela's at the medibay hatch and opening it. There's the silhouette of a thin figure standing behind.

SELA SOMETHING INSIDE YOU MELDED OUR CONSTRUCTS. I THINK. YOU AND ME AND JOEY, WE MESHED.

(link)

THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN THE REAL, TOO.

6. Joey Nobody is coming through the hatch. His bearing and expression is different – from being a mere drooling blank, there now seems a kinda puzzled sense of somebody actually living inside him.

JOEY I ... THINK I *KNOW* YOU. DO I KNOW YOU?

BOX SWITCH OUT THE LIGHT.

**Page 24**

(The frames here are set on a black back-page.)

1. We're back in Lucy's bedroom again. Closeup on her as she reaches for the net-curtains of her window, the tree-shadows beyond it casting stripe-shadows on her face.  
BOX NEON ARCING THROUGH THE TWISTS OF OAK AND CRAB-APPLE. THE MUTED SOUND OF EATING. THE
2. Closeup on Lucy's hand from her POV, taking hold of the net-curtain and on the point of twitching it back.  
BOX SLITHER OF A SLICK AND MASSIVE SLUG FOOT. THE DEAD BLACK GRASS IN ITS TRAIL  
BOX (THEY WAIT UNTIL YOU THINK THERE'S NOTHING THERE)
3. Lucy's frightened face as the curtain is pulled back – lit in that 'frightening' way you get with a torch from below.  
BOX OUT THERE.  
BOX LOOKING UP.  
BOX LOOKING UP AT *ME* AND –
4. Through the window, looking down, we see a communal city-garden at night. Trees and benches – think the sort of garden for the well-off that Julia Roberts broke into in Notting Hill. There's nothing even remotely threatening about or in it at all.
5. Cut back to Lucy's face, registering calm relief.  
BOX NOTHING.  
BOX THERE'S NOTHING THERE.
6. A wide shot of the room as Lucy walks back to bed. A twisted ganglion of repulsive tentacles is reaching in, from out of frame

– obviously on the point of grabbing her and horror-story wrenching her back ...

BOX GO TO SLEEP, NOW.

BOX NOTHING THERE.

BOX NEXT: 'LITTLE CREATURES'