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PAGE ONE (Three Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) CHINATOWN, neon-lit and filled with shopping tourists, glows with local color as a long row of cars slowly make their way down the busy street. Shops of all types line the sidewalk. Colorful banners string from building to building and signs hang in store windows announcing the upcoming CHINESE NEW YEAR.

JACK and DIANA WEBBER, both in their early-forties, pass between the almost stopped traffic. Diana struggles with both a purse and her shopping bag while Jack hurries her across the street. She looks furious.

CAPTION:

San Francisco, Chinatown.

DIANA:

I really don't care what you think!

JACK:

Why do you always do this?!
Can't we just enjoy ourselves?

Panel 2. (Close Up) In the foreground, a BUTCHER in his shop guts a frog with a knife... its severed head sits next to a cleaver stuck into a chopping block. Dead chickens and other birds hang in the window. Through a small open area between butchered animals Jack and Diana can be seen walking past, still arguing.

DIANA:

That's right Jack, it's always my fault.

Panel 3. The couple pauses beneath the awning of a warm and inviting restaurant. The red and yellow sign above reads: LING'S DINE-IN RESTAURANT in both English and traditional Hanzi. A large, neon sign of an ANIME CAT happily slurping noodles hangs in the window. Jack pulls a map from a hip-pack slung about his waist and begins to unfold it.

JACK:

Don't start that passive-aggressive...
Where the hell are we?

PAGE TWO (Five Panels)

Panel 1. Jack fumbles with the map, holding it up to the light of the neon sign as he does his best to ignore his wife. Diana fumes, knowing full well what he is doing. People are beginning to stare.

DIANA:

Put that damn thing away! I'm talking to- -

JACK:

No, you're *yelling* at me... *and* embarrassing yourself!

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) Diana storms down the alley adjacent to the restaurant, leaving Jack behind. The alley, only wide enough for a single car to pass through, is well lit from above by street lights attached to the wall of the restaurant. The walls themselves seem to glow with lush and beautiful graffiti depicting scenes from CHINESE HELL. Old posters and advertisements, placed so long ago they are almost completely faded and torn away, dot the walls covering the graffiti. Steam snakes from a grating on the ground as pigeons peck at bits of food and trash. High above, hundreds of small PAPER DOLLS hang from a rusted fire escape and clotheslines which crisscross the alley.

DIANA:

God, I hate you!

Panel 3. (High Angle, Overhead) In the foreground, several paper dolls sway in the breeze. Below, Diana runs ahead of Jack, who attempts to catch up to her.

JACK (Burst):

Damn it, Diana!

Panel 4. Showers of sparks fall on Jack as the overhead street lights begin to burst one after another. Diana can be seen farther down the alley. She is strangely motionless. Jack looks scared.

JACK:

Diana?

Panel 5. (Close up) Diana's shopping bag and purse hit the ground next to her feet; their contents spill out.

PAGE THREE (Four Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) An odd wind blows through the darkened alley, sending discarded newspapers and a few loose paper dolls swirling in the air. Diana stands eerily stiff, her arms at her side. A strange aura surrounds her. In a voice not her own, she begins to repeat a Chinese nursery rhyme as Jack, confused and terrified, slowly approaches her.

DIANA (Chinese Text):
Firefly, Firefly, come from the hill.

JACK:
Diana, Honey? What are you...?

Panel 2. Diana continues to recite the bizarre rhyme in perfect, horrible Chinese. Her hair blows violently in the swirling torrent of debris and paper dolls. Jack cautiously reaches for her.

DIANA (Chinese Text):
Your father and mother are waiting here still.

Panel 3. (Close Up) Jack places a hand on Diana's shoulder. Her face is hidden off panel.

DIANA (Chinese Text):
They brought you some sugar, some candy and meat...

Panel 4. (Jack's Point of View) Diana quickly spins around. Horribly changed, her face has six glowing green eyes and horrible, demon-like fangs protrude from her gaping mouth. With an animal snarl, she lunges for Jack. Paper dolls rain all around them.

DIANA/MONSTER (Chinese Text):
... for baby to eat!

PAGE FOUR (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (Close Up) The face of a bizarre, green-skinned demon fills the panel. It is ornate and beautiful with large eyes and an upturned mouth lined with pointed teeth and tusk-like canines. It is obviously a mask.

LeFAUX (Off Panel):

As you can see, yet another of the Kohn masks from Thailand. Notice the tusk-like canines which extend from the snarl as well as the bulging eyes.

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) DR. ROGER LeFAUX stands in the pit of a large classroom, the Kohn mask projected on a wide screen behind him. LeFaux is an older man in his late fifties, wearing a suit jacket and corduroy pants. A black, eyeless sleeping-mask covers his eyes, barely hiding a series of imposing scars that run down his face from beneath the mask. The classroom is packed with students.

LeFAUX:

Now, in the next slide, compare the demon type mask to the monkey variation. Pay particular attention to the tiered headdress as well as the skin color and ornamental differences which describe -

Panel 3. (Same Angle, Closer on LeFaux) Dr. LeFaux stops his lecture mid-sentence. He looks very annoyed.

LeFAUX:

Of course, you could compare them...

Panel 4. CHRISTMAS DANIELS reclines in her chair, her feet propped on the desk in front of her next to a laptop decorated with stickers from punk rock bands. She is a beautiful young woman in her early twenties with dark hair and dressed in a black hooded sweatshirt and blue jeans. A trickle of drool hangs from her gaping mouth. She is fast asleep.

LeFAUX (Off Panel):

...had my Graduate Assistant not fallen asleep three minutes ago.

Panel 5. (Wide Shot) The end of class bell rings, bringing Christmas awake with a jump. LeFaux hovers over her.

SFX:

RIIINNNGG!

(Continued)

(Cont.)

CHRISTMAS (Groggy):
Huzzawha...?

LeFAUX:
Well, I think we have *all* embarrassed ourselves enough for today.

LeFAUX:
Remember to read chapters eight and nine and outlines
for your final reports are due in two weeks.

Panel 6. (Small Panel) Christmas, her hazel eyes swimming in pools of black mascara, wipes her mouth with the back of her hand, too embarrassed to even look in the direction of LeFaux.

CHRISTMAS:
Sorry.

PAGE FIVE (Six Panels)

Panel 1. Dr. LeFaux, his SHOOTER CANE tapping ahead of him and a bundle of MAIL tucked under his arm, makes his way down a sunlit hallway. Christmas follows closely behind, sullen and struggling to carry all of LeFaux's papers and satchels. A few random students meander through the hall.

LeFAUX:
It isn't just today--

CHRISTMAS:
I said I'm sorry.

LeFAUX:
You have a good head on your shoulders.

CHRISTMAS:
You know, when a person apologizes the customary thing to say is, "that's quite alright, young lady, I'm sure it will never happen again"?

Panel 2. Christmas, her arms full, bumps open the door to LeFaux's office with her hip.

LeFAUX;
Was that supposed to sound like me?

CHRISTMAS:
Apparently not.

Panel 3. (Wide Shot) Inside, EDWARD CARVER, a young man with blonde hair, blue eyes and dressed in a tee-shirt advertising a DELTA CAPA DELTA carwash fund-raiser, sits at an ornate desk working at a laptop as he eagerly types from a book propped open on the table.

Behind him, weird fish of all sizes and shapes spin and twirl gracefully in the large fish tank built into the wall. It is dwarfed only by massive, fully stocked, bookshelves on either side of it. Several stacks of books litter the desk. They are all ancient, with titles like: THE HELSINKI GRIMORIE and PRACTICAL MAGICKS of the DRUIDS.

CHRISTMAS:
Morning, Edward! How are things in Librarian Hell?

(Continued)

(Cont.)

EDWARD:
I *like* referencing.

Panel 4. Christmas, setting up her laptop as she cracks open a book with a golden demon face embossed on the cover, takes a seat next to Edward.

CHRISTMAS:
Spoken like a true Frat-boy?

Panel 5. (Same Angle) She looks down at the book with a sigh.

CHRISTMAS (Weak):
Ugh, Latin.

EDWARD (Off Panel):
Put it on my stack.

Panel 6. Edward continues typing while Christmas begins to gather books in a pile.

EDWARD:
It wouldn't be a bad idea to learn some Latin if
you want to keep working with the Doctor.

CHRISTMAS:
You translate; I'll do the heavy lifting.

EDWARD:
It wouldn't kill you to do some of that, too.

PAGE SIX (Four Panels)

Panel 1. Christmas, glancing back at Edward in mock surprise, stands at the bookcase as she re-shelves several books. A fish in the tank with a strangely human face watches her closely with giant eyes.

CHRISTMAS:

I lift, I'm lifting right now as a matter of fact.

EDWARD:

Uh-huh, grab Hodgeson's Encyclopedia while you're up.

EDWARD:

The Doctor wanted it converted to Braille, as well.

Panel 2. Christmas sits on the edge of the desk, flipping through a book titled: HODGESON'S ENCYCLOPEDIA of MODERN DEMONIC BIRTHING PRACTICES. She has a grossed out look on her face. LeFaux, still cradling a stack of mail under his arm, hangs his jacket on a rack in the corner behind her.

CHRISTMAS (to LeFaux):

You'd think you'd have some kinda magic reading thingy?

Panel 3. Edward leans in his chair, stretching out his back. LeFaux walks behind him, giving Edward a light touch on the shoulder.

EDWARD:

He did have a pair of reading eyes.

EDWARD:

You lost them in a taxi in Tijuana, right?

LeFAUX:

You are thinking of the incident in Arizona, the *werewolves* were in Tijuana.

Panel 4. (Close Up) Christmas holds up the BIRTHING PRACTICES book to Edward as she points to a particularly disgusting woodcut of a large goat-monster vomiting demon-snakes that are, in turn, vomiting smaller goat-monsters.

CHRISTMAS:

That's gross!

PAGE SEVEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. Edward closes his laptop and begins to collect his things as Christmas, still transfixed by the grisly images in the book, slinks into her seat.

EDWARD:

Which place was the banshee thing, then?

LeFAUX:

That was in Oshkosh. Arizona was the ghost train.

CHRISTMAS (Whisper, to Herself):

Seriously, a *forehead* is no place for *that*.

Panel 2. (Close Up) LeFaux drops the bundle of mail on the desk in front of Christmas, a thick FED-EX PACKAGE rests on the top of the stack. Christmas' eyes light up.

CHRISTMAS:

Good old American mail- -

Panel 3. She tears open the package, pulling out a small, worn notebook. It is stuffed with papers until the point of bursting and is held closed with a tight rubber band.

CHRISTMAS:

- - finally, something I can translate.

Panel 4. (Same Angle) She opens and scans the book with her eyes. Disappointment washes over her face.

CHRISTMAS (weak):

Latin.

Panel 5. (Same Angle) In a huff, she hands the book to Edward.

CHRISTMAS:

What kind of weirdo writes in Latin?

PAGE EIGHT (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (High Angle, Overhead) Dr. LeFaux has a seat on the edge of the desk while Edward begins to flip through the book. Christmas, pouting, sits Indian-style in her chair.

LeFAUX:
It must be from Nathan Brisbane.

EDWARD:
It is. It's a journal of some kind.

Panel 2. (Close Up) Edward traces his fingers over Latin writing that surrounds a charcoal drawing of the alley next to the LING'S DINE-IN RESTAURANT. On the opposite page, one of the paper dolls from the alley is taped in the book with more Latin inscribed around it.

EDWARD:
He's been writing it for over a year, it looks like.

Panel 3. (Close Up) A page from the notebook has a clipping from the SAN FRANCISCO BUGLE dated March 17, 2008 pasted next to a menu from LING'S. A black and white photograph details a group of Police working a crime scene in the alley. The headline reads: OHIO MAN FOUND MUTILATED IN ALLEY, WIFE MISSING.

CHRISTMAS (Off Panel):
Mutilated?!

CHRISTMAS (Off Panel, Whisper):
If I could go one day without one us using that word...

EDWARD:
March 17? That was just a week ago.

Panel 4. Edward flips farther into the book. He looks horrified.

EDWARD:
There's more, lots of them, all happening in the same alley.

Panel 5. Christmas, afraid of what she knows is going to happen, looks expectantly at Dr. LeFaux.

CHRISTMAS:
At least we aren't anywhere near this alley, right?

PAGE NINE (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) Edward struggles to pull a TRUNK marked “FRAGILE” in several languages from a baggage claim conveyer. Christmas has gotten the other bags, one in each hand and another tucked under her arm. She looks disgusted to even be there. Dr. LeFaux, barking orders to Edward and stamping his white and red Shooter Cane to the floor in frustration, stands next to her.

CAPTION:

San Francisco International Airport

LeFAUX:

Now, please *do* be careful with that trunk- -

LeFAUX:

- - its contents are of extreme value.

CHRISTMAS:

Is someone picking us up, or do we just walk to horrible monster-alley ourselves?

NATHAN (Off Panel):

Ghost-alley, actually- -

Panel 2. A man, cleaning his white-rimmed glasses with a rag and dressed in a stylish sport coat and blue jeans, walks up to them. With graying temples and a white soul-patch just under his bottom lip, he appears to be about the same age as LeFaux, yet he is much more handsome and jovial.

NATHAN:

- - at least I think it is.

LeFAUX:

Children, may I introduce, Nathan Brisbane.

NATHAN:

Please, call me Nate.

Panel 3. Edward enthusiastically shakes Nathan’s hand.

EDWARD:

Edward Carver. It’s a pleasure, sir!

(Continued)

(Cont.)

EDWARD:

My father used to me tell stories about you.

NATHAN:

Carver? You're not Avery's boy?

NATHAN:

I'm sorry to hear about his death. He was a good man.

EDWARD:

Thank you, sir.

Panel 4. Christmas pushes her way past Edward as she extends her hand to Nathan. He looks her over with a sly grin on his face.

CHRISTMAS:

Christmas Daniels. It's nice to meet you.

NATHAN:

Oh no, my dear- -

Panel 5. (Close Up, Small Panel) Nathan kisses the back of Christmas' hand.

NATHAN:

- - it is very nice... to meet you.

Panel 6. (Wide shot) Nathan, a wide grin spread on his face as he regards Christmas, jokingly sticks LeFaux in the ribs with an elbow. Christmas recoils in disgust.

NATHAN:

Even blind... you still know how to pick your Grad Assistants.

PAGE TEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. (Close Up) A framed, sixteen-inch long, braided ponytail hangs on a wall. It is surrounded by various framed diplomas and certifications.

NATHAN (Off Panel):
Oh, that?

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) Nathan's office is filled with ancient knickknacks and occult memorabilia and is plastered with civil rights and ecological conservation posters. Edward, fascinated by every word Nathan has to say, sits on a couch with Dr. LeFaux. Christmas is barely paying attention. She is much more interested in a large, African statue of a very creepy, exceptionally buxom, fertility god standing in the corner.

Nathan sits backwards on his chair, sipping his ginseng tea as he longingly regards the framed ponytail hung above his desk.

NATHAN:
I had to cut that off when I joined the real world.

Panel 3. Nathan shoots Christmas a wink.

NATHAN:
Nothing I'd suggest either of you two do anytime soon.

Panel 4. LeFaux holds up the notebook sent to him.

LeFAUX:
About the alley...

Panel 5. Nathan perks up, pulling out a folder of Police Reports from under a stack of loose papers on his desk.

NATHAN:
I wish I knew more.

NATHAN:
It's all gruesome stuff, really. The Restaurant next to it is owned by a David Ling. He's no help. A local business man, he has enough clout to keep this quiet.

PAGE ELEVEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. As Nathan continues, Christmas takes a seat on the arm of the couch next to Edward.

NATHAN:

Police Reports chalk it up to gang violence,
something territorial.

EDWARD:

Could that be it? Is there any connection
between the victims, anything gang related?

Panel 2. Nathan lets out a long sigh as he cleans his glasses with a cloth. He's been down this road before.

NATHAN:

Not that I can tell. The only constant is that the
phenomena occurs in pairs, to couples, mostly. Other than that- -

Panel 3. (Close up) LeFaux traces the article about the OHIO COUPLE with his fingers.

NATHAN (Off Panel):

Besides, I don't know many gang members that eat their victims fingers.

Panel 4. (Close Up) LeFaux closes the notebook.

NATHAN (Off Panel):

I've been there a thousand times and haven't seen a thing.

LeFAUX:

Well then- -

Panel 5. LeFaux stands, his face stern and serious.

LeFAUX:

- - perhaps I should take a look.

PAGE TWELVE (Five Panels)

Panel 1. Christmas peers out of the passenger side window of Nathan's car, while Nathan leans forward in the driver's seat to look out as well. Edward sits in the back seat with LeFaux, who has a large, wooden box on his lap.

CHRISTMAS:

At least this isn't going to be difficult or anything.

NATHAN:

That's a very large man.

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) Across the street, the alley adjacent to LING'S is closed off with Police Tape. A SECURITY GUARD stands watch at the entrance, directing tourists away from the crime scene. A patch on his chest reads LING INC.

CHRISTMAS:

So, we turning back?

EDWARD:

No.

Panel 3. Christmas turns in her seat toward Edward. He stares out the window, seemingly in deep thought.

CHRISTMAS:

And the plan is?

EDWARD:

Distract them while the Doctor and I slip in.

CHRISTMAS:

How am I supposed to do that?

Panel 4. (Wide Shot) Christmas, tears and mascara running down her face, stumbles up to the Security Guard. He looks her over, a little confused, but wanting to help her in any way he can. She is laying it on very thick.

CAPTION/EDWARD:

"You're a girl, do something girly."

(Continue)

(Cont.)

CHRISTMAS:

This man... he came out of nowhere! He stole my purse!

CHRISTMAS:

I was so scared, please help me...

GUARD:

Calm down, miss. You're going to be all right.

Panel 5. Christmas does her best “startled look” as she points off panel, pressing herself to the Guard’s chest for protection.

CHRISTMAS (Burst):

Oh, my God! That’s him- -

PAGE THIRTEEN (Six Panels)

Panel 1. Nathan, standing farther down the sidewalk amid a crowd of onlookers, finds himself the unwitting center of attention. The other pedestrians nervously back away from him.

CHRISTMAS (Off Panel, Burst)
- - that's the man who robbed me!

Panel 2. (Same Angle, Closer in on Nathan.) It suddenly dawns on Nathan what part of the "plan" he is.

NATHAN (weak):
Ah...Crap.

Panel 3. (Wide Shot.) From the car, Edward watches Christmas as she gives him a high-sign while the Security Guard chases Nathan down the street, leaving the alley unguarded. Dr. LeFaux opens the wooden box. A beautiful glow comes from inside.

EDWARD:
I can't believe that worked.

LeFAUX:
If I've learned one thing in the past several months- -

Panel 4. (Close Up.) The box is lined in silk and houses several sparkling pairs of finely cut, eye-sized jewels. LeFaux removes a pair of Jade emeralds fashioned to be screwed into something.

LeFAUX:
- - it's to never underestimate Miss Daniels' ability to distract.

Panel 5. LeFaux lifts his black mask to reveal his eyeless SOCKETS as he inserts the emeralds.

LeFAUX:
Gather your notebook, Edward- -

Panel 6. The Jade emeralds glow with magic as LeFaux turns to face Edward.

LeFAUX:
- - let's see what we can see.

PAGE FOURTEEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. (LeFaux's Point of View, Wide Shot) Dr. LeFaux scans the alley through the green tint of his magical, jade eyes. Thousands of footprints, both human and animal, litter the ground. Each footprint glows in a brilliant white.

LeFAUX:

Thousands have passed through here. I'm getting nothing.

Panel 2. (Close Up) Edward, a pad and pencil in hand for taking notes, examines a red and gold demon dropping humans in his fiery mouth which has been painted on the alley wall.

EDWARD:

Nothing?

LeFAUX (Off Panel):

Nothing *extraordinary*.

Panel 3. LeFaux picks up a paper doll from the ground, examining it closely. Edward is right behind him, writing down the Doctor's every word.

LeFAUX:

No Spirit Portals. No residual energies that are out of the norm.
Although, the locals seem to believe something is here, hence these figures.

EDWARD:

Hell Notes, paper offerings of items for the dead.
But why the doll shapes, aren't they usually in shapes
of money or worldly items?

LeFAUX:

It isn't a doll, it's a body... to replace one that was lost.

Panel 4. Another LING Inc. Security Guard walks into the alley carrying two coffees in a Styrofoam holder. LeFaux and Edward can be seen down the alley, both surprised to see him standing there.

GUARD (Burst):

What the...? You two can't be in here!

Panel 5. Edward positions himself between the Guard and Dr. LeFaux. The Guard pokes Edward in the chest with a night stick.

(Continued)

(Cont.)

GUARD:
You and "Fancy Glasses" here need to leave!
This is private property.

EDWARD:
Nobody owns this alley!

GUARD:
You can take that up with Mr. Ling.

PAGE FIFTEEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. LeFaux holds up his hands, attempting to separate the two.

LeFAUX:
It was our mistake. We certainly don't want any- -

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) Behind the Guard appears the ghostly shape of a nude, CHINESE WOMAN. Her skin is a chalky white, with long black hair hanging down to her shoulders framing her gaunt, but strangely beautiful, face. A thick layer of dark, red blood coats her slender body, while long, blade-like fingernails extend from her pinky fingers. She tilts her head to the side, staring with black, dead eyes as she opens her mouth in a silent scream.

Panel 3. LeFaux backs away, taking Edward with him.

LeFAUX (Whisper):
We need to leave... now.

GUARD (Off Panel):
Damn straight you do!

Panel 4. Edward and LeFaux back out of the alley, stepping through the Police Tape. Edward is shocked to see actual fear on LeFaux's face.

EDWARD (Whisper):
Sir?

Panel 5. (Close Up) Dr. LeFaux removes his jewel eyes, fear turns to a look of determination.

LeFAUX:
We need to talk to Ling.

PAGE SIXTEEN (Five Panels)

Panel 1. (Extreme Close Up) A colorful, pastel illustration of a group of boys playing baseball in a sandlot fills the panel.

NATHAN (Off Panel):
It wasn't part of the plan!

Panel 2. (Wide Shot) The four sit in a sterile waiting room, a coffee table filled with magazines at their feet. A large painting of an anime cat slurping noodles, the LING INC. Logo, hangs on the wall above them. Christmas props her feet on the coffee table as she works on a puzzle in a HIGHLIGHTS for CHILDREN magazine. Nathan sits next to her, nursing a black eye. Dr. LeFaux, his black mask returned to his face and his Shooter Cane folded in his lap, sits patiently next to him, while Edward thumbs through a COSMO that proclaims several new ways to please a man. Christmas is doing her best to ignore Nathan's whining.

CHRISTMAS:
I improvised. It worked.

NATHAN:
Worked?

NATHAN (Weak):
I think I'm missing a tooth.

Panel 3. A secretary behind a window counter reads from a sign-in clipboard.

SECRETARY:
Dr. LeFaux, Mr. Ling will see you now.

Panel 4. The three get up. Nathan decides to stay behind.

NATHAN:
You three go, Ling and I have... history.

Panel 5. (Wide Shot) A MAN, his face hidden off panel, fills out papers on his neatly organized desk in the foreground. The room is beautifully decorated with brown and gold accents and is littered with Asian statuary. The "Noodle Cat" logo is printed in a white outline on the carpet in the center of the room. The Secretary leads Dr. LeFaux and the others into the room. Two black-leather chairs sit in front of the desk.

PAGE SEVENTEEN (Six Panels)

Panel 1. DAVID LING stands from behind his desk. He is a tall Chinese man, fit and handsome, about the same age as the Doctor. He wears an expensive black suit with a red tie which has the “Noodle Cat” logo printed on it. Behind him, several framed photographs of him shaking hands with politicians and celebrities adorn the wall, all surrounding a huge portrait of his father. Ling, a wide, white smile on his face, reaches out to shake LeFaux’s hand.

LING:

It is a pleasure to meet *the* Roger LeFaux. I’ve read your thesis on Dragons in a post war Europe. Fascinating, ridiculous, but fascinating.

LeFAUX:

I’m surprised to hear anyone has read that.

LING:

I’m Chinese, we like Dragons. Please, sit.

Panel 2. LeFaux and Christmas take a seat in the black, leather chairs as Ling sits at his desk. Edward stands behind LeFaux.

LING:

So, what can I do for you?

LeFAUX:

The alley...

Panel 3. (Close Up) Ling stops smiling.

Panel 4. He stands, facing the portrait of his father, looking into its eyes.

LING:

All due respect for you and your theories, Doctor.
In the *real* world we don’t have time for folk stories.

EDWARD:

Something very real is happening...

LING:

I’m sure.

(Continued)

(Cont.)

Panel 5. Ling turns to face them, his smile returned but very forced, as he palms his hair back into place.

LING:

This is what you do? People like you and that Nathan Brisbane?

LING:

You prey on the weak-minded; tell them to watch out for ghosts and goblins... maybe charge a nominal fee to remove them?

Panel 6. (Close Up) LeFaux keeps calm, his face unwavering.

LING (Off Panel):

Get out. Now.

PAGE EIGHTEEN (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) LeFaux stands, extending his cane. Edward, very upset, approaches the desk. Ling picks up the receiver of the phone, threatening to use it.

EDWARD:
If we don't do something...

LING:
This meeting is over. Leave now or I call security.

Panel 2. (Same Angle) LeFaux is already leaving, feeling the way out with his cane. Edward follows him. Christmas picks up a picture frame on the desk. It is of a lovely Chinese girl... very similar to the ghost woman in the alley.

CHRISTMAS:
Who is she?

Panel 3. Ling, still eyeing her suspiciously, calms a bit as he talks to Christmas.

LING:
My daughter, Lian. She's passed.

CHRISTMAS:
I'm sorry.

Panel 4. (Wide Shot) Christmas walks out of the room, not looking back. In the foreground, Ling replaces the picture frame back in its proper position on his desk.

CHRISTMAS:
She was pretty.

Panel 5. (Close up) David Ling watches them leave as he fumes. He presses a number on his phone, the receiver still in hand.

Panel 6. (Same Angle, Closer on Ling) He holds the receiver to his ear, his eyes blazing.

LING:
Get me Bossu.

PAGE NINETEEN (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) The four exit the LING INC. Building. LeFaux and Nathan look more determined than ever, while Edward just looks angry. Christmas looks away from the others, her hands in her pockets. She appears sullen, as if she is waiting for something bad to happen.

EDWARD:
That son of a...

NATHAN:
That's David Ling for you. Now what?

Panel 2. LeFaux hails himself a cab.

LeFAUX:
Nate, take the children back to the hotel.

Panel 3. (Close Up) Edward helps LeFaux step into the backseat of the taxi.

LeFAUX:
Edward, you and Christmas check the Internet...

EDWARD:
...and look for anything involving David Ling or the alley, I'm on it.

LeFAUX:
I shouldn't be gone long.

Panel 4. Christmas, in a panic, rushes to the side of the cab.

CHRISTMAS:
You're going back to that alley aren't you? I have a bad feeling- -

LeFAUX (From Cab):
Thank you, Miss Daniels, but we both have work to do.

Panel 5. LeFaux places a pair of purple jewels into his eye sockets.

LeFAUX:
I'll try to keep my eyes open.

(Continued)

(Cont.)

Panel 6. (Wide Shot) The taxi drives away. Christmas holds herself, a look of concern washes over her face as she watches LeFaux drive off. Edward seems fine with it.

EDWARD:
Let's get a pizza!

PAGE TWENTY (Five Panels)

Panel 1. (Wide Shot) As the sun sets, LeFaux stands at the entrance to the alley. Somehow it seems larger, more menacing than before. It is as if it were a creature waiting to devour him. It is unguarded and the Police Tape has been broken.

Panel 2. (Close Up) LeFaux prepares himself, adjusting his purple jewel eyes.

Panel 3. (High Angle, Overhead.) He steps slowly down the alley, the glow from his eyes cast a purple tint on the surrounding walls and ground. A wind begins to pick up, sending several paper dolls flying.

LeFAUX:
Hello?

LeFAUX:
I'm here to help you.

Panel 4. LeFaux stands, still and calm, as paper dolls begin to swirl around him

Panel 5. (Same Angle) The dolls twirl around him, becoming a violent whirlwind. He shields his face from them.

LeFAUX:
You don't have to do this!

PAGE TWENTY-ONE (Four Panels)

Panel 1. The tempest of paper dolls intensifies, assaulting him from every direction.

Panel 2. (Close Up) Sensing a rising danger, LeFaux turns to leave... and finds himself nose to nose with the NAKED CHINESE WOMAN. She stares into him strangely. There is no expression on her face.

LeFAUX:

Oh...

Panel 3. (Same Angle) She bares her sharp teeth, snarling like a wild cat as a serpentine hiss escapes her mouth. LeFaux backs away from her.

WOMAN:

Hissssss.

Panel 4. (High Angle, Overhead) In a panic, LeFaux looks down. He is standing in a pool of rich, thick blood. He struggles to break free, but his feet have already begun to sink as the Woman stalks around him, her long pinky nails dragging along the ground.

LeFAUX:

No!

PAGE TWENTY-TWO (Five Panels)

Panel 1. LeFaux is waist deep in the pool of blood. The Woman watches coldly as every movement makes LeFaux sink faster. He pulls his cell phone from his jacket pocket, frantically dialing a number.

Panel 2. (Low Angle) LeFaux is up to his neck, trying to stay aloft as he holds the phone to his ear. The Woman, staring down at him, stands motionless in the foreground.

Panel 3. (Low Angle, Close Up) The Woman flashes a horrible, inhuman smile lined with razor sharp teeth. It is much too wide for her face.

Panel 4. (Close Up) LeFaux is completely submerged, only the cell phone held with the tips of his fingers breaks the surface of the blood.

VOICE (From Phone):
Doctor...?

Panel 5. (End the page on a completely black panel.)

PAGE TWENTY-THREE (Six Panels)

Panel 1. (Close Up) LeFaux wakes on his back, lying on the ground, gasping for air as if waking from a terrible nightmare.

LeFAUX:
Gasp!

Panel 2. He struggles to lift himself, making it to his hands and knees. He coughs some blood from his lungs.

LeFAUX:
Cough

Panel 3. LeFaux turns his head to face the foreground. Something is sitting there, in shadow, something horrible by the look on the Doctor's face.

Panel 4. (Wide Shot) A YOUNG MAN, maybe eighteen years old, sits naked against the wall of the alley. His skin is the same chalky white as the Chinese Woman's. With white, vacant eyes, he stares at LeFaux who is still on his knees in the foreground. The Young Man's head is strangely cocked to the side. His throat is slit from ear to ear. A waterfall of blood pours down his chest.

Panel 5. (Same Angle) The Young Man opens his mouth inhumanly wide, exposing several rows of flat, yellow teeth. A horrible noise booms from his mouth. A noise so loud LeFaux must cover his ears. The reverberating noise seems to shake the panel itself out of focus.

SFX/MAN:
DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET!

Panel 6. (End page on an all black panel. The Sound continues over it.)

SFX/MAN:
DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET!

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR (Five Panels)

Panel 1. In the extreme foreground, a cell phone rings on the ground, waking LeFaux who is lying, face down, in the alley next to it.

SFX/PHONE:
DEET! DEET! DEET!

Panel 2. (Same Angle) LeFaux reaches for the phone.

SFX/PHONE:
DEET! DEET! DEET!!

Panel 3. (Close Up) LeFaux sits up, still shaken and disheveled from his ordeal. He puts the phone to his ear.

LeFAUX (Weak):
Yes?

NATHAN (From Phone):
They found her, Roger.

LeFAUX:
Nathan? Found who?

Panel 4. LeFaux, still on the ground, leans back against the wall of the alley as he attempts to catch his breath.

NATHAN (From Phone):
Diana Webber, the wife of the last victim.
You're not going to believe this...

Panel 5. (High Angle, Overhead) LeFaux continues to rest, his back against the alley wall. The ground around him is littered with hundreds of fallen paper dolls.

TEXT:
To Be Continued...