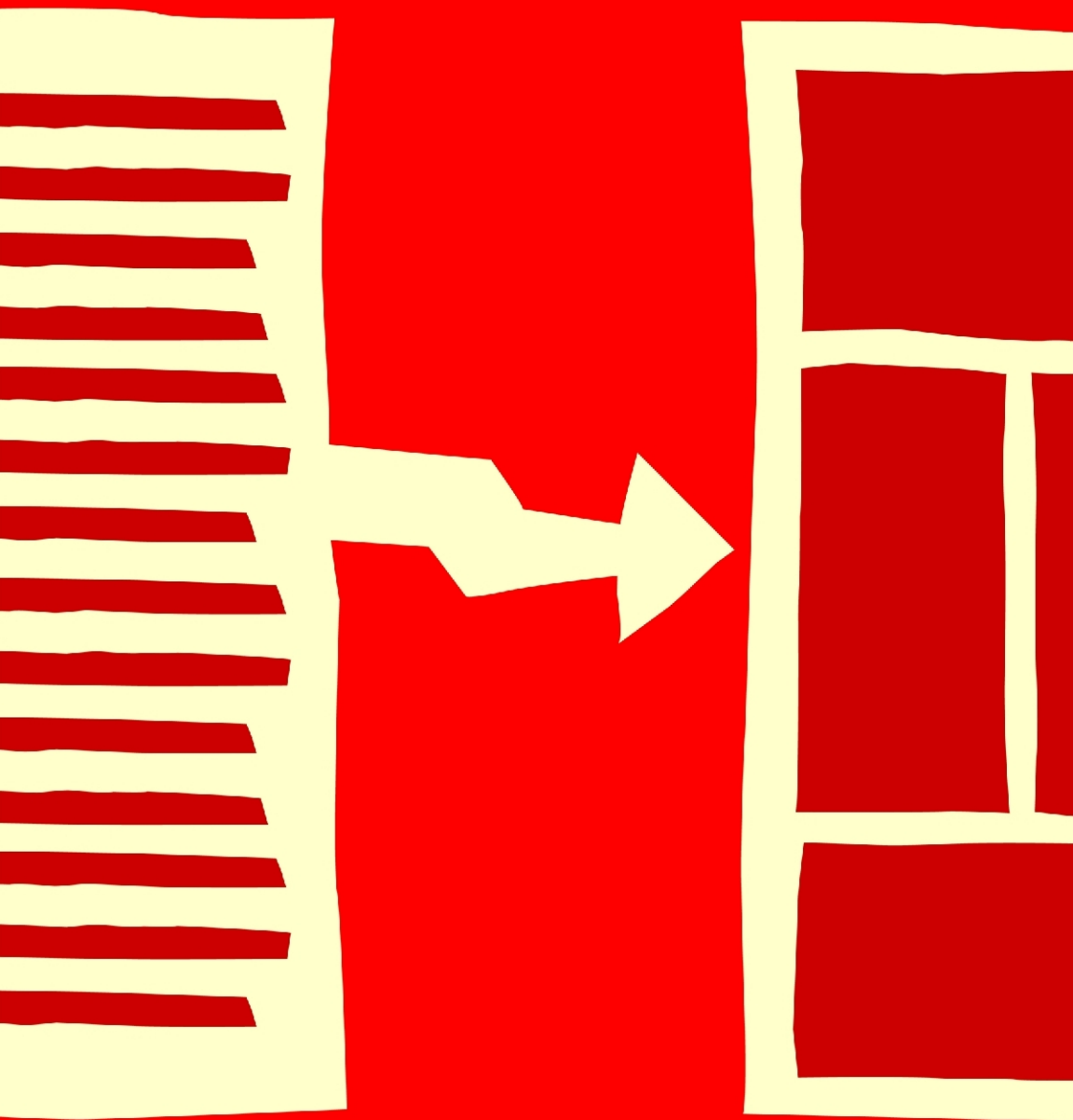


KARMA INCORPORATED



SCRIPTS
BY DAVID HOPKINS

KARMA INCORPORATED

Also from David Hopkins

Emily Edison

Antigone

Karma Incorporated: Poor Mr. Wilson

Astronaut Dad

KARMA INCORPORATED,
SCRIPTS BY DAVID HOPKINS

Antihero Comics -- Arlington, Texas

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www.thatdavidhopkins.com

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creation of Karma Incorporated, Volume 1: Poor Mr.
Wilson (copyright © 2006-2007 David Hopkins, art by Tom
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Marfa" (copyright © 2008-2009 David Hopkins, art by
Daniel Warner), featured in PopGun Vol. 3 published by
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INTRODUCTION

I was bored one Saturday afternoon. I had an idea for a comic book and decided to create a "teaser" using some film editing software. White text on a dark screen with rain pouring down, Mr. Blue Skies by ELO as the music.

"Stuck in traffic. Girlfriend left. Milk went sour. Toilet backs up. Lost your job. Flat tire. IRS audit. Flight delay. Lost your wallet. Dog ran away. Computer crashes. What if it's not all coincidence? KARMA INCORPORATED. Let us ruin someone's day. A new comic book by David Hopkins. Currently in production (if nothing goes wrong)."

I didn't have a story, characters, or an artist. It was just an idea. I watched the trailer about 50 times. Then I asked Melissa to take a look. "Cool. That's your best idea so far. You should go with it." Like all great advice, I didn't take it. Not at first.

Instead, I worked on a proposal for Viper Comics called *Rocket Science*. Think 1950's alien invasion with Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys as our only hope. I took the proposal to the San Diego Comic Con. While there, I talked with my friend Paul Kilpatrick at Antarctic Press. He asked me what I was working on. I casually mentioned Karma Incorporated. He said, "That's a cool idea. Could you email me more about it?" Uh, sure. Then only a few minutes later, Viper rejected *Rocket Science*.

However, I was so excited about things with Antarctic Press, I said, "That's cool. I think Antarctic Press is interested in another story I have." This got the attention of Jessie Garza at Viper. "Really? What is it?" I explained Karma Incorporated to him too. His response was almost immediate. They wanted to publish it. Do you have the first issue written? "Yes." I lied.

Once home from San Diego, I emailed Paul to say Viper wanted Karma Incorporated. I thought it'd be a good fit there. All was copacetic. Then I wrote the synopsis and first issue within a week. It wasn't perfect, but I could always edit later. The challenge was to find an artist. On August 5, 2004, I emailed Tom Kurzanski. I sent him my "teaser" video, told him Viper Comics was interested, and asked if he would like to illustrate Karma Incorporated. Tom and I were already working on an adaptation of *Antigone*, which we'd later publish with Silent Devil. Tom emailed me that same day and said yes.

Let me take a moment to say nice things about Tom. More than any other person, I owe Tom my break in comics and helping me become a better writer. It takes a brave person to undertake a project with an unproven writer. Without him, Karma Incorporated would still only be an idea. He didn't fight the script, but allowed me to see it just as I wrote it, which helped me understand how a script works. He gave dramatic and visual depth to scenes I could only vaguely visualize. Tom read each script and gave me notes. He wasn't only the artist; he was the editor. These notes were invaluable. I especially remember the countless rewrites on the epilogue. You don't learn anything from a first draft. By your fifth and sixth draft? You're tired, angry and grasping for words, and you're a writer damn it. If Tom was going to illustrate my story, he expected it to be good. I was lucky in that Tom's style mirrored the type of quirky stories I hoped to write, something with range and something distinctive.

Within a year, we had a comic book on the shelves. Sales were low. Reviews were generally positive. (My favorite was from Needcoffee.com: "We're enjoying the hell out of this book: it's funny, it's got a nice trace of bitterness, and we have no idea where the hell it's going.") We had a few bona fide fans. People wanted more

Karma Incorporated. I certainly wanted more Karma Incorporated.

I started work on the follow up immediately after writing the first series. Whereas *Poor Mr. Wilson* was about the aftermath of a job gone horribly wrong, a story about them getting a dose of their own medicine, *Vice and Virtue* would be about the job itself, the planning and the execution. It would be their biggest target, the mayor of Dallas. I added a subplot with Terry, hinted at in the first series. The third chapter was entirely devoted to this storyline. I gave Malcolm a larger role, which was important. *Vice and Virtue* upped the stakes.

We lost momentum during this process. It took a year for Viper to approve the second series. While waiting, Tom and I shifted our attention to *Antigone*. I also started work on *Emily Edison* with Brock Rizer and *Astronaut Dad* with Brent Schoonover. And for personal reasons, there were other delays. The delays became an albatross. So much so that I doubt *Vice and Virtue* will ever see print.

I realize "never say never." Indie projects tend to have a timeline all their own. There will certainly be more Hopkins/Kurzanski collaborations in the future. The best hope for more Karma Incorporated could be on the Hollywood end of things. Viper Comics is pretty aggressive in getting their properties optioned. (Did anyone see the Middleman on ABC Family? Incredible.) Karma Incorporated has always had people interested in it for a TV series. I had an hour-long phone conversation with one writer/producer. His take would be very faithful to the original comic. Perhaps I've said too much? Anyways, such a development, if it were to happen, might bring Karma Incorporated back. Might.

Until then, I decided it would be nice to make the *Vice and Virtue* script available to people who are curious about where the story was going -- or for people who just like reading comic book scripts. *Vice and Virtue* was a series intended to wrap things up. However, it opened some doors to future stories. There's a great long-term antagonist in Mayor Kathy Graham. She's Professor Moriarty to Marsha's Sherlock Holmes. There are still things left undone. You haven't met Marsha's

son Carson who is only briefly mentioned. And other things, I wouldn't want to spoil.

In a perfect world where I have thousands of faithful readers and limitless resources, where would the series go after *Vice and Virtue*? Volume 3 would be an origin story. I would start where a certain flashback in chapter 3 of the second series left off. Each chapter would focus on a single character and how they joined Karma Incorporated. The story would show Marsha and Terry putting everything in place. Volume 4 would deal with the personal lives of each member more -- their respective families. Volume 5 would bring back Mayor Kathy Graham and the FBI hunting after Susan. Also, I'd finally insert a storyline I planned from the first issue -- a budding, albeit awkward, relationship between two members of Karma Incorporated. Volume 6 would mark the return of a main character who disappears at the end of *Vice and Virtue*. Once again, I don't want to spoil anything. After you read the script, you'll know.

I also included two short stories in this script book. These stories are part of the PopGun anthology from Image Comics, "50 Miles to Marfa" and "The Heist and The Heart Attack." Len and Stag, two grifters, attempt a bank robbery in west Texas. It felt like a good fit, certainly written with the same mindset for mischief.

Thank you Paul Milligan for designing the cover. Thank you A.C. Hall for teaching me how to format my Word documents to be book ready. Thank you Scott Hinze for teaching me the word "Schadenfreude." Thank you Tom Kurzanski and the incredibly talented Marlana Hall. Thank you Viper Comics, Scott Agostoni, Mike Werb, Ice Cube, and anyone else who has taken an interest in Karma Incorporated.

David Hopkins,
June 14, 2009

Karma Incorporated:
Poor Mr. Wilson

KARMA INCORPORATED
PART ONE OF THREE

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 - Straight ahead shot of Marsha Elliot sitting on the left side of a bench at a bus stop. Marsha is wearing over-sized dark sunglasses and a long coat. She's reading the newspaper, Dallas Times Herald. The headline reads: *City council to address safety concerns*. On the back of the paper is a half-page ad for an upcoming Gun Show. The bus stop is on the corner of an intersection. The immediate surroundings are impoverished -- litter on the ground, gang markings, etc.

PHILLIP (off panel, right side): Dammit!

2 - Side shot. Marsha, in the foreground - left side, looks down the street. A man Phillip, in the background - right side, is walking up the street towards the bus stop. Phillip is a businessman. However, he is a complete wreck -- unshaven, clothes haphazardly put together, tie a mess. Phillip looks as though he survived a war, barely.

PHILLIP (mumbling to himself): Damn showerhead -- gotta call the plumber. Brand new too! Damn, damn, damn --

3 - Close on Phillip. Talking to himself, half-crazed.

PHILLIP (mumbling to himself): I set my alarm clock. My clock! Damn! It's my clock.

4 - Phillip next to bench, pointing at it, looks at Marsha. She looks back. Her newspaper neatly folded in her lap.

PHILLIP: You mind?

5 - Close on Marsha, half smile. She's looking up at Phillip (off panel).

MARSHA: Hello. Marsha Elliot. Pleased to meet you.

6 – Phillips sits on bench, looking over at Marsha who has resumed reading her paper.

PHILLIP: You wouldn't believe the day I've had.

PAGE TWO

1 – Flashback. Phillip is asleep on his bed, wearing boxers and a t-shirt. The blanket and bed sheets are tossed to one side of the bed.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): First off, I overslept.

2 – Same panel. Phillip sits up in a panic. Eyes wide open. Dear god, he overslept.

3 – Close on his hand turning on the water to the shower.

4 – In the shower, instead of water, it's some odd black sludge that sprays Phillip. He recoils in horror.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): And then, the shower was broken.

5 – Peers out from behind the shower curtain. The towel bar is empty.

PHILLIP: Where are my towels?

PAGE THREE

1 – At his dresser, hair still soaking wet, he holds up one sock. He's confused.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): ...couldn't find a single matching sock...

2 – Dressed. He's in the kitchen, holding a glass of milk. He spits milk out in disgust.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): ...the milk was sour...

3 - He's in the garage in front of his car, with the hood open.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): ...my car was running fine last night...

4 - He's trying to open the door from the garage. It's locked.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): ...swear I didn't lock the door...

5 - He's walking on the side of the road, similar to page one, panel 2. There's a large water puddle in the street. A small RV approaches in the distance.

CAPTION (PHILLIP): ...it's been one mishap after another...

6 - Car drives by, hitting the puddle, splashing him.

PAGE FOUR

1 - Flashback over. Marsha and Phillip sit at the bus bench. Marsha looks at him, intently.

2 - Same as panel 1.

MARSHA: I had to wait in line for ten minutes to get my breakfast bagel.

3 - Marsha walks away. Phillip looks completely defeated.

MARSHA: I love those bagels.

4 - As Marsha walks off with Phillip in the background, she raises her wristwatch to her mouth -- speaking into it. She's in "business mode."

MARSHA: Cue the bench.

PAGE FIVE

NOTE: Full splash page

1 - Marsha continues to walk off, a smug look on her face. The bus bench breaks in two with Phillip crashing to the ground.

TITLE: KARMA INCORPORATED, part 1 of 3

CREDITS: written by David Hopkins
illustrated by Tom Kurzanski
colored by Marlena Hall

PAGE SIX

1 - Late afternoon. Exterior establishing shot of Karma Incorporated warehouse/office, located in the heart of the Dallas industrial area, near downtown (I'll send you the reference photos soon). On the front of the warehouse is a sign with the letters "KI" on it.

CAPTION (ART): This is a bad idea.

2 - Interior establishing shot of warehouse. High angle. The five members of Karma Incorporated gather in the lounge area of the warehouse. Lots of space. Decorated with a modernist mid-century look. Very swank. This panel should focus on the overall layout of the interior, while the five people can be quite small in this panel. Art Gellman stands in front of a projector with a small movie screen behind him. Everyone else is on the couches.

ART: This is a very bad idea.

3 - Closer. Art Gellman stands in front of the movie screen, motioning to it. On the screen is a photo of "Rob Wilson", a basic headshot. The other four Karma Incorporated employees are on the couches. We only see the backs of their heads, from left to right: Marsha, Terry, Malcolm, and Susan.

ART: Hello?! Rob Wilson? He hired us a year ago to take care of his boss. If we do this job, he'll know it's us screwing with him.

TERRY: Puh-lease!

4 - Terry McKay on the couch, sitting next to the stoic Marsha. He's over-animated, throwing his arms in the air, rolling his eyes.

TERRY: Oooh, I'm Rob frickin' Wilson. I'm a desk clerk. I'm so tough. I own a mini-van.

PAGE SEVEN

1 - Art points to himself, wide-eyed and about to pick a fight with Terry.

ART: Terry, I was a desk clerk. Seventeen years. You want to mess with me?

2 - Art glares at Terry who sits casually on the couch. Susan and Malcolm watch this exchange with great interest.

3 - Terry reclining on the couch, eggs Art on.

TERRY: What would you do? Report me to the IRS?

4 - Susan and Malcolm, sit anxiously at ringside -- the mood has gotten tense.

SUSAN (whispering): meow.

PAGE EIGHT

1 - Art moves closer to the seated Terry. Art is pointing menacingly at him. Terry is amused.

ART: I've got access to information. Don't forget that. Credit history, insurance records, bank statements, FBI files. I've got ways. Don't push me.

SUSAN (off panel): mm-rrr-oww!

2 - Close on Terry. He raises an eyebrow.



TERRY: Are you threatening *me*?

3 – Art leans in closer to Terry. The two stare each other down.

ART: I might be.

TERRY: I think you are.

4 – Art leans towards Terry.

ART: I'd kick your ass, Princess.

5 – This got to Terry. He jumps up from the couch. The two are girl-fighting, slaps and hair pulling.

TERRY: Take that back!

PAGE NINE

1 – Marsha sits calm as Terry and Art go at each other.

MARSHA: Ladies, stop it.

2 – Terry and Art stop fighting. Looking worriedly at Marsha... don't mess with her.

3 – Marsha stands to address the group. Art stands close by, still ruffled from the cat fight.

MARSHA: Mr. Gellman is right. This is a bad idea.

ART: Exactly.

4 – Marsha turns her head to address Art.

MARSHA: However, we've had other hard cases. So when we do this, we do it carefully.

ART: Oh, come on --

5 – Marsha motions to the movie screen.

MARSHA: Please continue.

PAGE TEN

1 - Art, returning to his presentation, opens a notebook.

ART: He lives with his wife and 6-year-old son not far from here.

2 - Close on the notebook, filled with receipts, memos, e-mail printouts, and photos.

ART: Our records indicate he comes home straight from work and spends a lot of time in his garage.

3 - Art reads from his notebook.

ART: He's made recent purchases that tell us he's taken up building powered model planes as a hobby.

4 - Scene change. Rob Wilson, in his garage with tools neatly arranged, works on a large model plane. There's a remote control within arms reach, and a phone mounted on the wall nearby.

CAPTION (ART): In fact, I'd bet fifty dollars that's what he's working on right now.

5 - On his tiptoes, his son Jeffrey stands behind Rob trying to see what he's doing.

JEFFREY: Whatcha doing, Dad?

6 - Rob holds the plan in front on his wide-eyed son Jeffrey.

ROB: It's a new plane. Almost finished.

JEFFREY: Cool.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 - Rob holds his son. In his free hand, he lifts the model plane high overhead.

CAPTION (ART): He's an all-around nice guy, attends church and coaches his son's soccer team.

ROB: Test flight this Saturday?

JEFFREY: Alright!

2 – The plane now rest on the worktable. Rob has lifted his son over his head and is "flying" him around the garage. Both are happy.

ROB: So when do we test fly you? Now?

JEFFREY: Noooo.

ROB: Right now!

3 – Continues to "fly" his son around the garage.

JEFFREY: Hahahahahahaha... stop it!

4 – Art shuts the notebook in disgust. The others observe his frustration.

ART: I can't do it. He's Ward Cleaver. I'm not going to target a guy who doesn't deserve it.

MALCOLM: If this man hired us a year ago, he can't be too clean.

5 – Susan asks the obvious question.

SUSAN: Exactly. So who hired us?

6 – Wide shot of everyone in the room.

MARSHA: His wife.

PAGE TWELVE

1 – The Wilson household. Kitchen. Rob's wife Teresa is on the phone (not cordless) with someone. She's cautiously looking to the side, hoping no one catches her.

TERESA: You know you shouldn't call me here... shut up... no, not now, later... I'll call you later okay?

2 - Teresa, with the phone, smiles like a schoolgirl. Shrugs her shoulders a bit, being coy.

TERESA: Stop it... no, I won't... ooohh... later, alright?

3 - Rob walks up behind Teresa, still on the phone. His "happy dad" demeanor is gone; he appears solemn and slightly intimidating.

TERESA: Yeah, you too. Bye.

4 - She nervously hangs up the phone. Rob is still behind her.

ROB: Who was that?

TERESA: Carol from work. She had a question about a thing. It's silly. Office politics, you know.

5 - Rob has left. It's now just Teresa, alone with her guilt. She looks up (looking for divine intervention?).

TERESA: Aw, hell.

6 - Wide shot of the Wilson family sitting at the dinner table. Like a Norman Rockwell gone horribly wrong, mother and father look disconnected and depressed. The son is unaware of the strife.

CAPTION (ART): This isn't right.

PAGE THIRTEEN

1 - Back at the Karma Incorporated office. Susan is stationed at her computer, entranced. Susan's work area is a mess. She built her own super computer. There's post-it notes surrounding the monitor, crunched "Zolt! Cola" cans, candy wrappers, and a little plush zombie doll sits on top of the monitor. Art is behind her with



a notepad, running his hand through his hair, worriedly trying to make sense of things.

ART: I don't get it. This is doesn't make any sense...at all! Why would the wife hire us?

SUSAN: Why not?

2 – Susan, in the foreground, is losing patience with Art who's in the background, stressing.

ART: Too many things don't add up. He hired us a year ago. Now she hires us. Why are we getting involved?

SUSAN: Because she paid us!

3 – Susan spins around in her swivel chair to more directly address Art.

SUSAN: I don't care if he's Desmond Tutu. If someone offers the money, I'll rain on Tutu's parade! Since when did it matter if he's a good guy?

4 – Art looks away from Susan. Susan slumps in her chair.

ART: Susan, do you know what my wife did to me?

SUSAN: Not again...

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 – Art pours some coffee, from a nearby coffee maker, into his "SG" mug.

ART: She left me. I spent most of life providing for her, providing for the kids, to give them the type of life they had grown accustomed to.

2 – Small panel. A wall clock, the hands point to 7:05. Panel 2 could overlap panels 1 and 3.

3 - Art, in the background with his coffee, continues talking. Susan rests her head on the table. She's heard the story one too many times.

ART: A marriage is an investment. It takes time. She couldn't see that. She left, took the children, took the house, took damned near everything. But I loved her, still do.

4 - Small panel. A wall clock, the hands point to 7:40. Panel 4 could overlap panels 3 and 5.

5 - Art, now standing closer to Susan, continues talking. His shirt unbuttoned now, with his white undershirt visible. She's fast asleep, drooling on the desk.

ART: I guess we didn't have enough in common. We were different people. Some people say I'm a mysterious person. Most women are attracted to that quality, but not her. She didn't want adventure.

6 - Small panel. A wall clock, the hands point to 8:17. Panel 5 could overlap panels 5 and 7.

7 - Art stands next to Susan, who was asleep at her desk. His hand is on her shoulder. She is abruptly awoken by the action -- she looks like she's about to vomit.

ART: Art Gellman and Susan Adley. We're very much the same. Both free spirits. That's us. You wonder why nothing has ever happened between us before.

SUSAN: Wha--?

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 - Susan explodes out of her seat, yelling at Art.

SUSAN: DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH ME AGAIN!!!

2 - Art looks off to the side, wounded by Susan's reaction. Susan is indignant.

ART: Looks like it's *somebody's* time of the month.

SUSAN: What did you say?!

3 – Susan walked over to the coffee maker. She's grabs the coffee pot.

SUSAN: You did not just say what I think you said.

4 – Susan hurls the coffee pot at Art. Art holds his arms up, trying to shield himself from the hot black coffee going everywhere.

ART: Holy crap!! Ouch!!!

5 – Close on Susan. She's in complete "you go, girl!" mode. Hands on hips, head cocked to the side.

SUSAN: The next time you blame it on my time of the month you better make damned sure it's not!

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 – Evening. Terry waits outside the Lakewood Movie Theatre (another reference photo). He leans against the wall, smoking a cigarette. On the wall is a framed movie poster, NOW SHOWING: THE LAST TRAIN. It's a poster for a *Daisy Kutter* movie with Daisy and Tom poised in a spoof of the "Gone with the Wind" movie poster.

2 – Marsha walks out of the theatre. She's been crying, mascara runs black. In the background, Terry notices her walking off.

3 – Terry catches up to Marsha who is hurriedly wiping the tears and mascara from her eyes.

TERRY: You always cry at movies?

MARSHA: Maybe.

4 – Marsha continues to walk off. Terry grabs her arm.

TERRY: Is it getting to you?

5 – Now Terry stands in front of her. She stops, a little irritated by the scene.

MARSHA: Why the questions?

TERRY: General concern for my employer.

MARSHA: As a professional courtesy, leave me alone.

6 – Marsha, quietly upset, walks past Terry.

TERRY: Is the job getting to you?

MARSHA: Stop profiling me. Go home.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 – Her back is to us and Terry. However, we need it angled so we still get a nice profile shot of Terry. Marsha's stopped walking away.

2 – Same panel.

MARSHA: Terry?

3 – Same panel.

TERRY: Yes?

4 – Reserve angle. We see that Marsha is upset and surprisingly vulnerable. Over the shoulder is Terry standing in the background.

MARSHA: For once, I'd like to save the day, not ruin it. But I seem to be awfully good at one and not the other.

5 – Wide panel. Marsha walks away from Terry.

MARSHA: All of this is ridiculous. I've been thinking about it for some time. I'm done with Karma Incorporated.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 – Morning. Est. shot of a small RV (same one from page three) out in a grassy field, in the middle of nowhere. There is a line of trees off to the far left.

CAPTION (MARSHA): On Saturday, when Malcolm and Susan come back, I'll announce that we're going out of business.

2 – Inside Susan and Malcolm are camped out. The interior of the RV has been converted into a mobile network surveillance center -- typical spy movie stuff. Malcolm has a box of donuts. He offers them to Susan. Susan is holding a large remote controller for a model airplane.

MALCOLM: Donut?

SUSAN: I don't eat.

MALCOLM: Sorry, I forgot.

3 – Malcolm munching away on a donut.

MALCOLM: Art's not too happy with you right now.

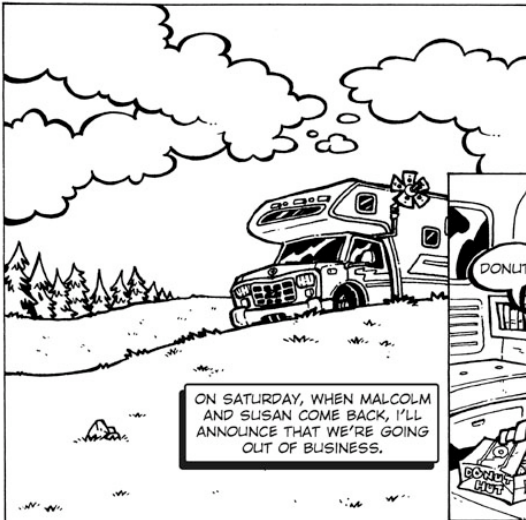
4 – Susan has a smug look. Malcolm still eating.

SUSAN: Who me?

MALCOLM: So funny. This morning, he kept flinching any time anybody reached for the coffee pot.

5 – Malcolm moves to the computer console. On the computer screen, there's a small image, similar to page nineteen, panel 1. It doesn't need to be terribly detailed, just a faint impression of the subject matter.

MALCOLM: We have a visual. Let's get to work.



PAGE NINETEEN

1 – Wide panel. Rob Wilson and his son Jeffrey stand in a large field. The model plane is on the ground in front of them. Jeffrey is holding the remote control.

2 – In the field, close on Rob who looks to Jeffrey (off panel).

ROB: Are you ready?

3 – In the RV, close on Malcolm who looks to Susan (off panel).

MALCOLM: Are you ready?

4 – In the field, close on the excited Jeffrey with the remote controller.

JEFFREY: Yeah!

5 – In the RV, close on the mischievous Susan with the remote controller.

SUSAN: Hell yeah.

PAGE TWENTY

1 – Wide panel. Rob and Jeffrey watch the model plane take off from the field.

2 – Overhead aerial shot. The plane is high in the air. Father and son look up at it from the ground below.

3 – In the RV, Susan with the controller.

SUSAN: Start running.

4 – Close on the airplane as takes a sudden dive.

5 – The airplane continues its dive towards Rob and Jeffrey on the ground.

ROB: Jeff, no horse play. Keep the plane level.

6 – The airplane continues its dive toward Rob and Jeffrey.

ROB: Jeff?

JEFFREY: It's not me.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 – Rob runs from the plane. He has a panicked look on his face. This panel should be a humorous homage to Cary Grant in the film *North by Northwest*.

ROB: Jeff!!!

2 – Rob belly flops to the ground as the plane flies over him, barely missing.

ROB: Uhh!

SFX: Thud.

3 – The plane crashes into the ground.

SFX: Smash!

4 – Low angle. Rob and Jeffrey stand over the wrecked airplane. Rob is furious. Jeff is bewildered.

ROB: Dammit, Jeff! I asked you to keep plane level.

5 – Wide panel. Susan and Malcolm sit in the RV, watching the scene on their TV monitor. Both a little surprised at Rob's harsh reaction.

VIA RADIO (JEFFREY): Dad, it wasn't me.

SUSAN: Why do I suddenly feel like worse person in the world?

MALCOLM: We're going to hell.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 – In front of the Wilson household, Rob and son are walking from the car to the front door, which is open.

JEFFREY: I swear I didn't do it.

ROB: Jeff, I'm not going to tell you this again --

2 – As Rob and Jeff approach the front door, a strange man walks out. Rob is caught off guard. The strange man is larger than Rob, with long hair and a goatee. His name is Greg. Teresa stands at the threshold wearing only an oversized bedtime t-shirt.

ROB: -- stop lying to me?

3 – Close on the shocked Teresa and her trashiness.

TERESA: You're home early?

4 – Rob pushes Greg.

ROB: So this must be "Carol".

5 – Greg punches Rob across the face.

GREG: Pleased to meet you.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

1 – In the background, Teresa at the doorway. In the foreground, Greg has Rob's arm behind his back and pinned face into the ground.

TERESA: Greg, stop it! Stop it!

2 – Greg walks away. Jeffrey stands next to his father, who is on the ground. Rob has a bloody nose.

JEFFREY: Are you okay?

3 – Large panel. Rob looks like he's on the verge of tears. Jeffrey tries to console. Teresa stands at the door.

ROB: What's happening?

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

1 - In the living room of the Wilson house. Teresa is seated on the couch, still in only a t-shirt. She looks hung-over. Rob is standing, furious. There's a coffee table in between them. On the table are some magazines and a few business cards (obviously too small to see the print).

ROB: What the hell? What the hell, Teresa! What's going on?

TERESA: I guess I got your attention now.

2 - Teresa holds up a business card from the coffee table. It clearly reads "KARMA INC".

TERESA: Have a bad day?

3 - Teresa seated on the couch. Rob standing. He can't believe what he's hearing.

ROB: You called them?

TERESA: I got the idea from you.

ROB: But I'm your husband!

4 - Teresa looks positively evil.

TERESA: I want a divorce.

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

1 - Later that day. Rob stands in his garage next to the worktable. The broken airplane is on the table. There's a phone mounted on the wall nearby. This panel looks as though shot from the far end of the garage. Rob is far away and alone.



2 – More in closer. Rob makes some attempt to fix the airplane. Truly sad.

3 – Rob looks to the mounted phone.

4 – Rob is on the phone. He leans against the worktable.

ROB: Hi, Simon, this is Rob. I need a favor.

PAGE TWENTY-SIX

1 – Establishing shot of the Karma Incorporated warehouse/office. The RV is parked in front.

2 – Art, Susan, and Malcolm are standing in the meeting area, all looking quite forlorn.

ART: I finally found a job I'm good at, and now Marsha's shutting down the whole operation.

3 – Susan marches toward Marsha's office.

SUSAN: This is absurd. We're not calling it quits.

4 – Susan bursts into Marsha's messy office. There are boxes everywhere. Marsha is behind her desk, packing up stuff.

SUSAN: What are you doing?!

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

1 – Close on Marsha. Perfectly nonchalant.

MARSHA: Excuse me?

2 – Susan puts both hands on the desk, leaning it toward Marsha.

SUSAN: You heard me.

3 – Marsha leans in toward Susan.

MARSHA: Ms. Adley, all this bickering amongst ourselves is becoming cliché.

SUSAN: And your periodic nervous breakdowns aren't? Don't drag us down with you.

4 – Close on Marsha as she opens a file drawer with various tabbed manila folders in it.

MARSHA: Want to point out my failings? Dig into my life? I know some secrets too.

5 – Marsha holds up a file folder. It's all about Susan. Marsha has the upper hand. Susan appears as though someone punched her in the stomach.

MARSHA: For instance, I know your name is not "Susan Adley".

SUSAN: How do you -- ?

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

1 – Marsha holds the file in front of Susan.

MARSHA: You're wanted by the FBI for more tech crimes than I have time to name. But that's not why you changed your identity.

2 – Marsha continues. She gives Susan (off panel) a knowing look.

MARSHA: Terry doesn't know he has a daughter, does he? He'd probably put two and two together, if he knew your actual name.

3 – Susan looks off innocently to the side. She's a terrible liar. Marsha gestures to Susan with the file.

SUSAN: That's not true.

MARSHA: Yes, it is. And he deserves to know.

4 – Susan walks off, head down. Aw shucks!

SUSAN: Nevermind. I'm out of here.

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

1 – Marsha alone in her office.

MARSHA: Good job, Marsha, your people skills are getting better all the time.

2 – Marsha alone in her office. Back to work.

3 – Marsha looks up.

ART (shouting, off panel): Marsha!

PAGE THIRTY

NOTE: Full page

1 – Marsha steps out of her office. Rob Wilson is in their warehouse. There's a police officer named Simon standing next to him. Simon has his gun drawn. While Art, Malcolm, and Susan look completely distraught, Marsha sighs, knowing it was bound to happen sooner or later.

MARSHA: Oh god.

SIMON: You think you can play jokes on people? You think it's funny? We know what you're up to.

All of you are under arrest!

TO BE CONTINUED IN CHAPTER TWO.

KARMA INCORPORATED
PART TWO OF THREE

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 – Wide panel. Marsha's POV. Straight ahead shot of Rob Wilson sitting in front of Marsha's desk in her office. He looks completely helpless.

CAPTION: One year ago

ROB: Let me see if I understand correctly. You ruin a person's day, and make it look like an accident.

This is your business?

2 – Over the shoulder of Rob, Marsha sits poker-faced at the desk. Terry stands behind her, playing the role of Marsha's right hand man.

TERRY: Still interested?

3 – Rob places a shoebox on the table before Marsha and Terry. The box is duct taped shut.

ROB: I have the money.

4 – Terry leans forward and place a hand on the shoebox.

TERRY: Okay then. Who's the target?

5 – Rob is disgusted as he speaks about his boss.

ROB: My boss. Donald Williams, but he makes us call him "Mr. Donny". This asshole has tormented me from day one. I'm sick of his staff meetings, his memos, and that ridiculous cowboy hat.

PAGE TWO

NOTE: For the next couple of pages, we jump back and forth between (1) a conversation at a water cooler and (2) the events with Mr. Donny. We may want to use some sort of visual device to clarify the two different scenes. Maybe the water cooler panels would be without panel borders, while the Mr. Donny panels would have borders? I don't know. You're pretty good at organizing my clutter.

1 - Wide panel. Interior of an office building. An angry Mr. Donny (reference - mrdonny.jpg) marches to his office door. Jennifer, his sexy secretary, stands at the doorway, nervous. Her own small desk is positioned on the other side of the doorway.

MR. DONNY: What is it now?

2 - Wide panel. At the water cooler, Rob, with a half-smile, stands next to his co-worker. In the near background, and off to the right side is a janitor with his cleaning cart. It's Art from Karma Incorporated.

CO-WORKER: Did you hear about what happened to Mr. Donny this morning?

ROB: No.

CO-WORKER: He was trapped in the elevator for three hours.

ROB: Really?

3 - Wide panel. Back to the moment from panel 1. Mr. Donny walks past her toward the doorway of his office.

JENNIFER: Mr. Donny, your wife called. I think she knows about us, and she --

MR. DONNY: I'll be in my office.

PAGE THREE

1 - At the water cooler, the co-worker explains the "elevator" situation.

CO-WORKER: Three hours in stuck in an elevator.
It took maintenance forever to show up.

2 - In the office, Mr. Donny is at his desk, working on his computer. He looks confused. There's a Newton's Cradle on his desk.

MR. DONNY: Jennifer? Where are all the files on my computer?

JENNIFER (OFF PANEL): Some girl from tech support said she had to reimage your hard drive.

3 - Mr. Donny takes off his hat, revealing his bald head. He's completely given up.

MR. DONNY: You're kidding me.

4 - At the water cooler, two shot of the co-worker and Rob.

CO-WORKER: From what I heard, Mr. Donny started crying after the second hour.

5 - In the office, Mr. Donny looks up. He notices something on the ceiling.

MR. DONNY: What the hell?

PAGE FOUR

1 - At the water cooler, reaction shot of Rob.

ROB: He was crying?

2 - Mr. Donny stands on his desk with a golf club, poised to swing. There's a cockroach on his ceiling. He looks menacingly at the tiny bug. The ceiling is drywall, divided into rectangular segments, typical of offices.

MR. DONNY: Jennifer! There's a dang cockroach on the ceiling. Go get a paper towel.

3 - Close on the cockroach.

4 - At the water cooler, close on co-worker confirming the story.

CO-WORKER: Oh, he cried like a baby.

5 - Mr. Donny swinging at the cockroach with his golf club. His golf club tears a hole in the ceiling.

MR. DONNY: Yee-haaw!

6 - In the office, cockroaches pour out from the hole in the ceiling onto Mr. Donny, standing on the desk with the golf club. He looks completely repulsed.

PAGE FIVE

1 - Jennifer the secretary walks into the office with a roll of paper towels.

JENNIFER: Mr. Donny, did you get the cockroach --?

2 - Jennifer looks at Mr. Donny, covered in cockroaches. Mr. Donny looks at Jennifer. Both scream.

MR. DONNY/ JENNIFER: Aaaaaaaahhhh!

3 - Mr. Donny, still covered with cockroaches, runs past the mortified Jennifer.

JENNIFER: Oh god. I'm going to be sick.

MR. DONNY: Aaaaaahhhh!

4 - Rob and co-worker at the water cooler. Different angle, so we see Mr. Donny's open office door in the background.

ROB: Did you hear something?

5 – Same shot. Rob and co-worker at the water cooler -- both turn their heads to see the spectacle. In the background, Mr. Donny has fled his office, screaming and covered in cockroaches.

MR. DONNY: Get 'em off, get 'em off, get 'em off!

PAGE SIX

1 – Close on Mr. Donny running, covered in cockroaches. The door to the men's restroom is directly in front of him.

2 – Same shot. Wouldn't you guess it? Malcolm from Karma Incorporated opens restroom door. Mr. Donny collides into it. Malcolm is wearing large headphones, listening to tunes, dressed as a maintenance man. Malcolm acts completely oblivious.

SFX: SLAM!

3 – Overhead shot. Mr. Donny disoriented and on the floor -- the cockroaches crawling on him.

4 – Co-worker and Rob at the water cooler. Wide-eyed. What the hell just happened?

CO-WORKER: Did you see that?

That was awesome.

PAGE SEVEN

NOTE: Full splash page

1 – Same scene as the full page spread on page thirty of chapter one.

Rob Wilson is in the Karma Incorporated warehouse. There's a police officer named Simon standing next to him. Simon has his gun drawn. Marsha stands next to her office, quietly observing. Art, Malcolm, and Susan are

understandably uneasy with the situation, being that there's a gun pointed at them.

Note: It may be off panel, but we'll need a chair somewhere in the room for later on (page 13). We'll also need a flat screen television mounted where the slide projector screen was in chapter one (for pages 27-29).

CAPTION: Present day

ROB: No more games. Your business is over.

TITLE: KARMA INCORPORATED, part 2 of 3

CREDITS: written by David Hopkins
illustrated by Tom Kurzanski
colors by Marlena Hall

PAGE EIGHT

1 - Malcolm, with hands up, cautiously approaches Simon, gun still raised.

MALCOLM: I don't understand what you're talking about. We're a data solutions company.

SIMON: If you could please not take another step.

2 - Susan gives an evil grin.

SUSAN: Malcolm, I dare you. Take another step.

3 - Turning around, Malcolm glares behind toward Susan (off panel). Simon still has his gun aimed at Malcolm.

MALCOLM: Shut up!

SIMON: Excuse me. I need your attention, right now.

4 - Susan becoming a little too casual with the situation. Malcolm turns around to speak with Susan. Simon is getting nervous, still holding his gun.

SUSAN: Five hundred dollars if you take another step. I dare you.

MALCOLM: Holy crap, Susan. Are you off your medication?

SIMON: I'm not going to ask you again!

5 – Susan starts singing and doing a little groove dance.

SUSAN: Bad boys, bad boys. Huh! Whatcha gonna do? Whatcha gonna do when they come for you? Bad boys.

6 – Close on Simon's hand holding the shaking gun. His hands are sweaty. The finger is slightly squeezing the trigger.

SIMON: If you could all stop talking for a moment
--

PAGE NINE

1 – Terry is standing behind the nervous Simon, unaware. Terry is holding a fire extinguisher, ready to hit Simon with it.

SIMON: -- I need everyone to keep their hands in the air.

2 – Terry hits Simon across the back of the head with the fire extinguisher.

SFX: wack!

3 – Simon is on the ground unconscious. Terry smiles, quite proud of himself. Rob stands nearby, in utter disbelief with the turn of events.

TERRY: Assaulting a police officer. Brand new felony for me.

4 – Rob makes a run for the front door.

5 – Art starts running after Rob.

ART: I got him.

PAGE TEN

1 - Exterior of the K.I. warehouse/headquarters. Rob is running outside of the Karma Inc warehouse with Art following behind. As you draw the exteriors, don't forget Simon's police car parked somewhere out front.

2 - Rob running. He looks behind him to see if Art is chasing him. And yes, while Art is behind him, he's struggling to keep up.

3 - Rob runs down the sidewalk. Art chases after, but the gap is widening. Art looks more and more worn out.

4 - In the foreground, Art has stopped running. He's hunched over with his hands on his knees, trying to regain his breath. In the distant background, Rob is getting away.

ART: gasp!

PAGE ELEVEN

1 - Closer on Art, still hunched over with his hands on his knees, trying to regain his breath.

ART: Wait -- hold on -- one second -- I'm coming.

2 - Over the shoulder of Art, Rob is even further in the distance... running away.

ART: Crap. I lost him.

3 - Art hunched over, trying to breathe.

ART: gasp!

4 - Susan walks up behind Art, who is completely worn out from running those few yards.

SUSAN: You are such a loser.



PAGE TWELVE

1 – Malcolm and Terry stand over the unconscious police officer, Simon. The two are arguing. (Off panel: Susan watches the argument. Marsha sits on the couch nearby, thinking. Art paces.)

MALCOLM: Why the hell did you do that?

TERRY: My mistake. I thought maybe you'd like to not go to jail!

2 – Close up on Simon. He's regaining consciousness.

SIMON: Oooohh...

3 – Susan points at Simon. Malcolm and Terry stop their fight.

SUSAN: He's waking up.

4 – Susan kicks Simon in the stomach. Malcolm freaks.

SIMON: Unghh!

MALCOLM: What are you doing?!

5 – Susan tries her odd reasoning with Malcolm.

SUSAN: I don't know! Make him unconscious again?

PAGE THIRTEEN

1 – Art is pacing back and forth, running his hand through his hair.

ART: We are so screwed.

2 – Close on Simon at their feet. He's pushing up off the floor. Still woozy.

SIMON: I need everyone... hands in the air...

3 – Susan is grabbing for a chair.

SUSAN: Maybe if we hit him with something?

MARSHA (off panel): How about --

4 - Marsha seated on a couch. She is, as always, well composed and confident.

MARSHA: Let's stop hitting the nice man and just tie him up?

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 - Small panel, inset in panel 2. Close on Rob. He's looking nervously over his shoulder.

2 - Large panel. Rob's escape has forced him to walk home. He stands in the middle of a Mexican barrio in east Dallas. (reference photos coming soon). There's flock of pigeons gathered in an empty lot, along the building tops. [Note: The pigeons don't have to be in every single panel, but I would be interested in them serving as extras in the cast. Subtly in the background.]

3 - Wide panel. Three young adults are hanging out in front of a convenience store. LUJAN, the leader of this trio, wears a large Cowboys jersey, a blue bandana tied as a three-point head covering, worn backwards (knot in the front), and a pair of over-sized blue jeans. He has a thick mustache. Lujan is physically imposing. MOLINA wears a buttoned-all-the-way-up short sleeve collared shirt and nice beige khakis. His hair is greasy and slicked back, clean-shaven. SHAFER, white guy, wears a filthy dirt-stained tank top and a pair of blue jeans torn in the knees. He's made a pitiful attempt at a mustache and goatee, a few wiry hairs -- buzz haircut. SHAFER is skinny, a disgusting mix of trailer trash and heroin addict.

Rob walks past attempting to ignore them. A few pigeons on the sidewalk.

LUJAN: You look lost. ¿Dónde está su carrucha?
What happen to your car?

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 – Lujan catches up with him. Rob stops. He knows he can't avoid this situation.

LUJAN: I bet you drive a Lexus, huh? You got one of them Lexus cars.

ROB: I don't want any trouble.

2 – Lujan puts his arm around Rob with Shafer and Molina close behind.

LUJAN: What? You got a problem, cabrón? You think we some gang?

SHAFER: Anybody is welcome in our neighborhood.

3 – The joking among friends stops. Lujan gets serious and looks directly at Rob.

LUJAN: Hey cabrón, you have twenty dollars I can borrow?

ROB: I don't have any cash.

4 – Rob's POV. Lujan, Molina, and Shafer stand in front of him. Lujan lifts up his jersey. There's a gun tucked in front of his jeans. Partially visible, his last name "LUJAN" is tattooed across his muscular stomach in a nice thug-ish Old English font. A pigeon in the background is flapping its wings.

LUJAN: Es bueno. There's an ATM in this store. Let's just go in. Veinte dólares.

PAGE SIXTEEN

[Note about pages sixteen and seventeen -- Karma Incorporated is a blend of both humorous and serious moments. Some of the best stories do that. To me, this moment is the turning point of the story. Rob crosses that line, from prey to predator. It's a serious moment. It will set the tone for when we next see Rob on page 24.]

1 – In a moment of complete daring, Rob swipes the gun from Lujan's jeans. A nervous pigeon flaps its wings.

2 – Rob nervously holds them at gunpoint. Clearly, with his limp grip, Rob has never fired a gun before. The "tough guy act" has completely disappeared from the trio. They are nervous.

SHAFER: Damn.

LUJAN: Shut up, Shafer.

3 – Close on Rob holding the gun. He's a little crazy, a little scared.

ROB: Today has been the worst day of my life. You know that? I'm tired of people pushing me around.

4 – Close on Lujan. He's no longer the thug. He's worried for his life.

LUJAN (to Rob): Nothing stupid, man. I got two boys. Taking them to the State Fair tonight. I promised them.

5 – The flock of pigeons in the empty lot takes to flight. Startled by the gunshot.

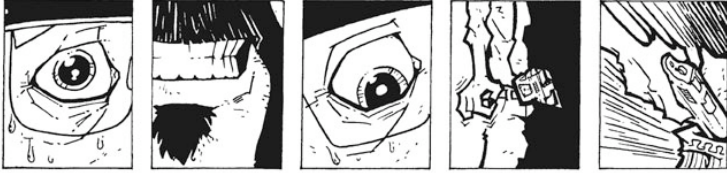
SFX: Bang!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 – Straight shot on the newly empowered Rob, with an expression of sick satisfaction, as he walks away. On Rob's shirt, light blood splatter, but nothing excessive (since it's a gun shot at point blank). In the background, the trio, Lujan is on the ground bleeding. Molina and Shafer are at his side, tending to him.

2 – Molina and Shafer hold Lujan, who is bleeding profusely from his chest. He is in great pain. Molina puts his hand over the chest wound of Lujan, blood still going everywhere.

LUJAN: Uh... uh... uh...



MOLINA (calling for help): Alguien llame a una ambulancia. ¡Necesitamos ayuda!

3 – Lujan tries to get up. He's completely delirious at this point. Blood everywhere. The left side of his body is completely unresponsive. Molina is still calling for help.

MOLINA (calling for help): ¡Ching! Alguien llame a una ambulancia. Mi amigo a recibido un disparo.

4 – Reserve angle. The sidewalk is empty. Wherever Rob is, he's not there anymore. Lujan has stopped moving. Molina is calling for help. Shafer is standing, looking away.

MOLINA (calling for help): ¡Alguien ayúdenos! Él no se esta moviendo. ¡Necesitamos ayuda!

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 – Susan is in front of her computer, hard at work. On the other side of the counter, in the lounge area, is Simon tied to the chair. His walkie-talkie is on the counter next to the computer. (Everyone else is in the office, but off panel. Malcolm and Terry are on the couch. Art is at the coffee maker. Marsha leans against the wall, a few feet from Simon.)

SUSAN: This is unfortunate.

SIMON: What?

2 – Susan leans over the counter to address Simon. She has a sour look on her face.

SUSAN: I hacked into your personal records.

You still live with your mother?

3 – This got Malcolm's attention; he's sitting in the lounge area reading a copy of the magazine, 2600: The Hacker's Quarterly (www.2600.com). Terry is sitting next to him, bored.

MALCOLM: I think we've got blackmail material right there.

TERRY: Let's just kill him.

4 - TERRY's POV. Simon's tied up. Susan stands next to her computer. Both characters look at Terry (off panel).

SUSAN: That's not in my job description.

5 - Close on the walkie-talkie on the desk.

DISPATCH: 10-200 to 1209, East Grand and Samuell, we have a shooting with the suspect in close proximity. Please be advised.

6 - Simon looking desperately at the walkie-talkie on the desk.

SIMON: Once the Dispatch radios my 10-20 and I don't respond, they're going to start looking for me.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 - Art at the coffee maker with his coffee.

ART: Didn't I say this would be a bad idea? We shouldn't have taken the case.

2 - Close on Marsha leaning against the wall.

MARSHA: Lest we forget -- you let Rob get away.

3 - Terry still on the couch.

TERRY: I suggest some serious damage control and then we leave town.

4 - Susan, incredulous, walks towards Terry.

SUSAN: Leave town? Is that your answer for everything?

TERRY: You'd be amazed how effective it is.

PAGE TWENTY

1 – Marsha, smirking, joins the conversation. Susan is dead serious ("Don't tell my secret.")

MARSHA: Susan, you've become quite a pro at escaping the authorities. Maybe you could give your *dad* a few pointers?

SUSAN: I don't know what you're talking about.

2 – Marsha walks toward Susan. Both are glaring at each other.

MARSHA: Yes, you do.

SUSAN: Bitch, don't you say another word.

3 – Standing up, Malcolm grabs onto Susan's arm, to hold her back. Terry also stands.

MALCOLM: Whoa. Whoa. I'm confused. What's this about?

SUSAN: Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

4 – Complete chaos! Malcolm holds Susan back from clawing Marsha's eyes out. Marsha appears ever so slightly peeved. Simon, tied up nearby, looks miserable. Terry walks off, disgusted.

MARSHA (to Susan): Now, this is unfortunate.

SUSAN: Say that again when I have my foot up your ass!

TERRY: Where's my gun?

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 – Push closer on the scene from page twenty, panel 4. Susan held back as she tries to claw at the reserved Marsha.

SUSAN: There is nothing to tell!

2 - Close on Malcolm, always the peace keeper.

MALCOLM: So what's this about your dad? Why the rage?

NOTE: Panels 3-5 need to all be on the same row. So that Marsha in panel 4 is looking at Susan in panel 6 with Terry in the middle -- subtly indicating that this is all about him.

3 - Close on Marsha. She looks to the right, towards Susan (off panel).

4 - Terry is on his hands and knees, in Marsha's office. He's in front of an open steel briefcase on the ground. Eureka! Found the gun. The office door into the lounge area is open.

TERRY: Found it! I knew I left it here.

5 - Close on Susan. She looks to the left, towards Marsha (off panel). Susan is pleading with her eyes. Please -- don't -- tell -- my -- secret.

6 - Wide panel. Terry walks back into the room. Marsha is one side, Susan on the other--Malcolm standing close to Susan. Marsha looks at Susan, but Susan has turned away. Terry walks into the middle of this. He proudly holds his handgun (the silencer on) with both hands as though presenting the gun to the group.

MARSHA: Susan's father is in jail. She didn't want anyone to know. That's what upset you.

SUSAN: Yeah, that's it.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 - Wide panel. Inside the Wilson house, at the front door (open) Teresa is affectionately saying good-bye to Greg. The wide front window is in the foreground.

TERESA: You shouldn't have come back.

GREG: I wanted to see if you were okay.

TERESA: I am. Now go.

2 – Same shot. Door closed. Teresa stands there for a moment, a little relieved.

3 – Same shot. Greg crashes through the front window. Glass flies everywhere. Teresa is startled.

4 – Same shot. Greg is lying on the ground, amidst the broken glass. Teresa stands there in shock.

TERESA: Greg! What happened?

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

1 – Closer on Teresa. There's a knock at the door. She looks at the door with a sense of dread.

SFX: Knock!

Knock!

Knock!

2 – Close on her hand reaching for the doorknob.

3 – She opens the door. Nothing could've prepared her for what she sees. We do not see who is at the door. We only see her reaction -- complete shock.

4 – Same panel. She brings her hand to cover her mouth in astonishment.

TERESA: What have you done?

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

1 – Teresa's POV, we see Rob. He has a vacant look in his eyes, all life drained from him and replaced with some passionless primal instinct. On Rob's shirt, light blood splatter, but nothing excessive. He holds Lujan's gun in his hand, more confidently now. He is a different person. The pushover is gone.

ROB: Am I supposed to say something?

2 – Rob walks into the room with the gun pressed against Teresa's chest. She stumbles backwards as he enters.

ROB: What do you want me to say?

3 – Teresa's stumbles backwards towards the ground, begging Rob who still has the gun leveled on her.

TERESA: Jeffrey is in the garage. He fixed your airplane. Please, not here, not in front of our son.

4 – Push closer on them. Rob, still vacant. He points the gun at Teresa.

ROB: Sit next to your boyfriend.

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

1 – Teresa is now sitting next to Greg who is still lying in the glass next to the broken window, presumably unconscious. Rob sits in a chair next to them. He holds the gun with it resting between his legs. For the Freudian reader, the gun is a definite phallic symbol here -- although not too blatant.

2 – Rob's POV. Jeffrey walks into the living room. He is confused as to what's going on.

JEFFREY: Dad, what's wrong?

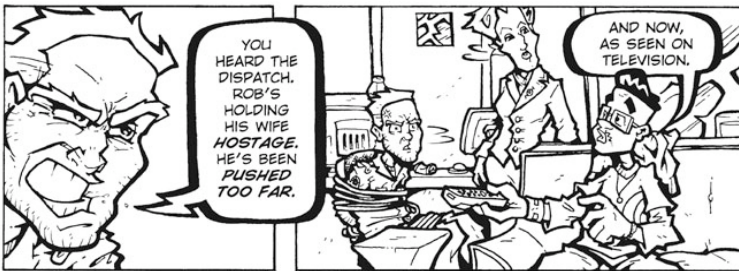
3 – Over the shoulder of Jeffrey, Rob sitting at the chair.

ROB: Jeffrey, go to our neighbor's, call 911. Okay?

4 – Exterior. Front of the house, Jeffrey runs next door.

5 – Interior. Rob looks at Teresa on the floor.

ROB: Happy? Jeffrey is no longer in the house.



PAGE TWENTY-SIX

1 - Sitting on the couch (from left to right) Malcolm, Susan, Terry, and Art. Bored and bummed out. Marsha, also looks worn out, is standing next to Simon who is still tied up. [Note: You don't need to show everyone in the room, but I wanted to give you a sense of where everyone is located.]

ART: We beat up a police officer, and now have him tied up. Any more bright ideas?

2 - Art pulls out his cell phone.

ART: If you don't mind, I'm going to call my kids and tell them that daddy's going to jail.

3 - Terry sitting on the couch. He holds his gun in the air.

TERRY: Uh, guys? I had an idea.

3 - Close up on the walkie-talkie.

DISPATCH: 10-78 to 1194, 823 Cordova. All units. Major crime alert, citizen holding wife hostage, possible others inside. Code 27. Code 27. Over.

4 - Close on Simon, tied up.

SIMON: 823 Cordova. That's Rob Wilson's house.

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

1 - Simon, tied up, looks to Marsha, pleading.

SIMON: Untie me! I can talk to Rob before he does anything stupid.

MARSHA: I think you're a little late.

2 - Simon pleads with Marsha.

SIMON: We're friends. I came here as a favor to him. I didn't even have an arrest warrant.

MARSHA: That's lovely. What were you hoping to do? Point your gun and shout until we wrote him an apology?

3 - Close on Simon, getting angry.

SIMON: You heard the dispatch. Rob's holding his wife hostage. He's been pushed too far.

4 - Malcolm with the remote control motions to the flat screen television. Marsha and Simon look over at Malcolm.

MALCOLM: And now, as seen on television.

5 - From behind the couch, over the heads of Art, Terry, Susan, and Malcolm sitting there, towards the flat screen TV on the far wall. On the TV, we might be able to barely make out the image of two news anchors at a news desk for CHANNEL 11, with the inset image of Rob Wilson (same mug shot used by Art Gellman in his presentation in chapter one) in the top right corner -- or something equivalent to that.

SUSAN: We can say we knew him before he became cool.

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

1 - The news report. A reporter stands in front of a police car, and on the other side of the street is the Wilson household -- front window broken. Below her is the television news tagline, which reads: CHANNEL 11
BREAKING NEWS

TV (STEPHANIE): I'm Stephanie Lucia with Channel 11 news, bringing you live coverage of a hostage situation in Lakewood.

2 - Photo of Rob Wilson. Same mug shot used by Art Gellman in his presentation in chapter one, with the tagline, which reads: ROBERT DEAN WILSON, SUSPECT

TV (STEPHANIE): Suspect is believed to be Robert Dean Wilson, an employee for the Dal-Mart corporate offices. Witnesses report his wife is being held captive, along with one other man. Their son escaped to safety, calling 911.

3 - Same as panel 1.

TV (STEPHANIE): Reports also allege Wilson may have been earlier involved in a fatal shooting in a nearby Latino community. Police have made no official statement.

4 - Same as panel 1.

TV (STEPHANIE): Few minutes ago, we got footage of Wilson shouting to the police. From what you will see, he is armed and clearly dangerous.

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

1 - News footage. Shot from the sidewalk. Rob shouts from his living room, standing in front of the large broken window. He's holding his gun in the air. The tagline now read: RECORDED EARLIER TODAY

You may want to find a more interesting way to letter the *BEEP*.

TV (ROB): Karma Incorporated can go *BEEP* itself. I know who you are. I know what you've done. I'm telling everyone!

2 - Same as page twenty-eight, panel 1.

TV (STEPHANIE): At this time, we have no information on the company "Karma Incorporated". If they may be a rival to Dal-Mart is uncertain.

3 - Same as page twenty-eight, panel 1.

TV (STEPHANIE): Channel 11 will stay with you throughout this dangerous situation with all the latest updates. Right now, we have a neighbor who says the suspect may have terrorist connections.

4 - A microphone is held towards one woman, the next door neighbor. She has big hair, large hoop earrings, gold chain necklace with a cross on it, a worried frazzled look on her face. This is a woman who has smoked too many cigarettes, drank too much coffee, took too much Metabolife, and has been to the tanning salon too many times. Tagline now reads: WHITNEY ROBERTS, NEIGHBOR

WHITNEY: I seen him. In his garage. Always working on this and that. Spends all his time in there. I wouldn't be surprised if he was making a bomb or something.

PAGE THIRTY

1 - Wide panel. From the television's POV, the members of Karma Incorporated are sitting on the couch, watching the news. (From left to right) Simon is tied up in his chair now positioned next to the couch. Malcolm is sitting on the couch. Susan is next to him. Terry is next, then Art, with Marsha leaning against the right side of the couch. Marsha is not looking at the news report. She is deep in thought, very serious, conflicted.

SUSAN: Score.

2 - Marsha walks away from the group towards the front door.

3 - In the foreground, Marsha at the front door, beginning to open it. In the background, Terry on the couch calls out to Marsha.

TERRY: Marsha? Where are you going?

4 - Terry's POV. Marsha stands at the front door.

MARSHA: To save the day.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN CHAPTER THREE.



KARMA INCORPORATED
PART THREE OF THREE

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 - Wide panel. The year is 1979 on a college campus sidewalk. On the left side walking towards the right, a younger Marsha Elliot heads to her next class, moving cautiously. Two Kappa Psi sorority sisters Anne and Julia stand by, watching her, with mischievous smiles. Both have their hands behind their backs, hiding something. These two beautiful girls look like clones of each other -- with feathered-back hair, wearing super tight designer blue jeans and matching small Kappa Psi (KΨ) t-shirts, tucked into the blue jeans. COLOR NOTE: Kappa Psi's colors will be blue and gold.

Marsha is definitely not the same confident bitch we know and love. She's a little overweight (but not huge, just big enough to feel slightly insecure about it). Also, Marsha's nose is prior to plastic surgery.

NOTE: Since we have older Marsha looking a lot like Kim Novak's *Madeline* character from *Vertigo*, it might be interesting to have the younger Marsha look like Kim Novak's *Judy* character from the same film. Same hairstyle, same earrings, same dress. It may be tricky to show how different she is and still have the reader be able to identify her -- but we'll see.

CAPTION: Twenty-five years ago

JULIA: Hey Marsha!

ANNE: Guess what? Your essay broke the curve in our class.

2 - Reserve angle. Julia and Anne are holding water balloons behind their backs. Center on the water balloons. Marsha has stopped to talk with them, still nervous and rambling like a dork.

JULIA: You must be the smartest student here.

MARSHA: I got a scholarship. They put my name in our hometown paper.

3 - Close on Marsha. Big dorky grin. She thinks she's found new friends.

MARSHA: Did you read Steven's paper on child custody? He pointed out a loophole in temporary custody. You see, in the case of parental kidnapping, the spouse is not guilty of misconduct

--

4 - Close on Julia and Anne. They have a confused, raised-eyebrow look. What the hell is Marsha rambling about?

MARSHA (off panel): -- based on the AAML's Standard of Conduct in Family Law Litigation, which forces the spouse who files the complaint to first seek divorce.

5 - Close on Marsha.

MARSHA: Crazy, huh?

In the gutter between panels 5 and 6.

SFX: SPLASH!

6 - Marsha drenched in water. The broken water balloons at her feet. She looks absolutely devastated. The two sisters walk away from her laughing.

JULIA: Geez, you're a little wet there.

ANNE: Yeah, how about you file *that* complaint?

PAGE TWO

1 - Establishing shot. Nighttime. Outside the Kappa Psi sorority house. A shadowy figure sneaks up to the doorstep with a small bag held in front of her.

2 – Close on Marsha holding a brown paper bag with poo in it. The bottom of the bag is stained and wet. The stench is overwhelming. Marsha is nauseated.

3 – Marsha places the bag on the welcome mat to the front door of the sorority house.

MARSHA: This is me, filing my complaint.

4 – Marsha uses a lighter to set fire to the top of the bag.

5 – Leaning forward, ready to bolt, Marsha pushes the doorbell.

SFX: Ding-dong!

6 – Marsha hauls off, running away from the door and the stinky flaming poo-bag.

PAGE THREE

NOTE: All the reaction shots of Marsha hiding behind the bench should line up along the far left side, one directly above the next.

1 – Small panel. Marsha hides behind a bench, waiting and watching.

2 – A random sorority girl (not Julia or Marsha) has opened the door. She's wearing a large grandma nightgown, fuzzy slippers, and has curlers in her hair. The flaming poo-bag is on the welcome mat in front of her. She looks curiously at the bag.

GIRL: Hello?

Wha--?

3 – Same as panel 1. Marsha hiding, she grins a little. Anticipating.

4 – Random sorority girl freaks out and starts stomping on the bag to put out the fire.



GIRL: Ack!

SFX: Stomp! Stomp! Stomp!

5 – Same as panel 1. Marsha looks concerned.

MARSHA: No.

6 – Random sorority girl is now trying to shake off the bag, which has stuck to her foot. She's in a panic.

PAGE FOUR

1 – Same as page three, panel 1. Marsha is mortified.

MARSHA: Oh god.

2 – Random sorority girl, now more panicked, is desperately trying to shake the bag off her foot. Part of her nightgown has caught fire.

3 – Same as page three, panel 1. Marsha is mortified.

4 – Random sorority girl is running back in the house.

GIRL: Sisters! Help!

5 – Reaction shot. Close on Marsha. Wide-eyed, jaw gaping, as she watches the sorority house go up in flames. (COLOR NOTE: If we're able to, it'd be cool to see the bright light of the flames shining on Marsha's face.)

6 – Marsha's POV. The sorority house is engulfed in flames. Fire trucks and an ambulance are at the scene. Several sorority girls in unflattering full length grandma nightgowns stand outside, hair in curlers, mud masks, etc.

PAGE FIVE

NOTE: Full splash page

A chaotic scene similar to the previous page. It's the Wilson neighborhood with police cars, police officers, an ambulance, road blocks, a few on-lookers, news media in front of the house with Marsha in the foreground walking towards the house.

CAPTION: Present day

TITLE: KARMA INCORPORATED, part 3 of 3

CREDITS: written by David Hopkins
illustrated by Tom Kurzanski
colors by Marlena Hall

PAGE SIX

1 - Over the shoulder of two police officers keeping watch on the house toward Marsha who is entering the house.

POLICE OFFICER #1: Is that the negotiator we requested?

2 - Interior of the house. Marsha has entered into the house.

MARSHA: Hello? I hope you don't mind the intrusion. The door was unlocked.

3 - Closer on Marsha as she walks further into the house.

MARSHA: We wrecked your toy airplane. Don't you think this is a little extreme? Mr. Wilson?

4 - Close. Marsha turns to have a gun pointed in her face. She is still poker faced.

MARSHA: Oh. There you are.

5 - The crazed Rob with his two hostages sitting behind him -- Greg is badly injured and half-conscious; Teresa

is catatonic, looking off blankly. Rob has the gun pointed at Marsha. [NOTE: If possible, there should be a glass-framed picture on the wall behind Marsha, and slightly off to one side. Doesn't matter what the picture is of. And we don't need to be able to see it in this panel; it's for page eleven.]

ROB: I'm tired of seeing you today.

MARSHA: You came by for a few minutes with your friend, and then ran off. Hardly any time to sit and chat.

PAGE SEVEN

1 - Rob turns his back to Marsha. Marsha stands there, poker faced.

ROB: It's all your fault.

MARSHA: We had nothing to do with the current situation. Your wife hired us to push you, but not this far.

2 - Rob gestures with his gun towards Teresa and Greg.

ROB: You made me look like a goddamn fool.

3 - Close on Marsha. The glass-framed picture behind her, slightly off to one side.

MARSHA: Mr. Wilson, this is probably not the best way to save your marriage.

4 - Marsha's POV. Rob, wild-eyed, has pointed the gun at Marsha again.

ROB: Stop talking!

PAGE EIGHT

1 - Wide panel. Outside the house. On the left side are all the police cautiously waiting. Across the lawn on the right side is the house.

2 – Wide panel. Same scene. A gun shot rings out. All the police flinch or duck in response.

SFX (huge letters): BANG!

3 – Wide panel. Same scene. All is quiet. The police look up slowly from their crouched position. What just happened?

4 – Small panel. Reaction shot. Close on Police Officer #1. Looking around. Talking into his walkie-talkie excitedly.

POLICE OFFICER #1: Shot fired! There's been a shot fired!

5 – Small panel. Reaction shot. Close on Police Chief. Agitated.

POLICE CHIEF: Did anyone get a visual?

6 – Small panel. Reaction shot. A male EMT worker stands next to the ambulance, shouting.

EMT: What's going on?

7 – Small panel. Reaction shot. Close on reporter Stephanie Lucia. She's bewildered still crouching, looking around and holding her mic. Still reporting.

STEPHANIE: -- a gunshot from within the house. Details are sketchy, but we know Wilson was armed.

PAGE NINE

1 – Close up on the gun in Rob's hand. The barrel is pointed downward.

2 – Pull back. Rob is sitting on the ground next to catatonic Teresa and half-conscious Greg. For the moment, Rob looks as though the energy has left him.



3 – Rob's POV. Reveal Marsha, still standing, still poker-faced. The glass-framed picture has a hole in it. The glass is shattered.

MARSHA: You missed.

4 – Quiet moment. Rob, Teresa, and Greg on the ground. Marsha leans against the wall. What to do?

PAGE TEN

1 – An almost exact replica of page thirty, panel 1 from chapter two. Simon and Karma Incorporated watching TV, minus Marsha, obviously. Terry looks irritable.

SUSAN: You think he shot Marsha?

2 – Same shot. Terry, Art, and Malcolm turn toward Susan and glare at her.

SUSAN: You heard the reporter.

3 – Reverse angel. So we see over the couch towards the TV with Stephanie Lucia on it.

ART: Do you think she's married? I don't see a wedding ring.

4 – Terry, frustrated, stands up from the couch.

TERRY: Enough! We've got to get off our asses and help Marsha.

5 – Malcolm and Art stand up, but Susan stays put.

SUSAN: No way. She put herself in that situation. She can get herself out of it.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 – Wide panel. Art, Malcolm, and Terry staring at the stubborn Susan sitting on the couch.

2 – Wide panel. Same shot. The three of them grab her and attempt to carry her away from the couch. She fights back.

ART: Like it or not, you're helping out.

SUSAN: Hey! Hey! Let go of me.

MALCOLM: You'll thank us for this.

3 – On Susan being carried off by Terry and Art (off panel). Struggling and snarling her frustration, she shoves her hand in his face, clawing at him, trying to get him to let go.

SUSAN: Put -- me -- down!

TERRY: Not gonna happen.

4 – Wide panel. Terry has managed to get Susan in a full-nelson lock; Art has grabbed her legs. Susan is still struggling. They are leading her toward the front door. Malcolm stays by the couch, next to Simon tied up.

TERRY: Malcolm, stay and watch our friend here.

MALCOLM: Done.

SUSAN: Wait! Why can't I stay?!

5 – Malcolm alone with Simon. The two look at each other. Malcolm smirks. Simon looks a little uneasy.

6 – Malcolm places a hand on the shoulder of the wary Simon.

MALCOLM: Didn't you pull a gun on me earlier today?

PAGE TWELVE

1 – Similar page eleven, panel 4. Rob, Teresa, and Greg on the ground. Marsha sits in a chair next to them.

MARSHA: Teresa, you've been awfully quiet. Is there anything you'd like to add?

2 – Close on Teresa. Still catatonic -- in absolute shock from the situation.

3 – Marsha (dripping with sarcasm) turns to Rob.

MARSHA: I think she was trying to say, "Rob, I'm sorry I cheated on you. If you're patient, I'm sure we can work this out."

Is that what you want to hear?

4 – Rob looks away from Marsha. She's gotten to him.

ROB: All I've ever been is patient.

MARSHA: It's never our fault, is it?

PAGE THIRTEEN

1 – Marsha has turned from Rob; she calmly examines Teresa (still oblivious). Marsha places a gentle hand underneath Teresa's chin, lifting her head ever-so-slightly.

MARSHA: My husband and I divorced a few years ago. Should've seen it coming. I married the first person who showed interest in me.

2 – Same panel. Marsha, the stoic, looks back at Rob.

MARSHA: Unlike Teresa here, I never stopped loving my husband.

3 – Rob gets angry. Marsha gets vicious.

ROB: I never did anything wrong.

MARSHA: You're pathetic.

4 – In a fury, Rob pistol whips Marsha across the face. Her head snaps back from the fierce blow.

MARSHA: Ugghh!

5 – Marsha has fallen backwards against the wall, as Rob hits her again.

ROB: Say it again!

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 – Art behind the steering wheel of the RV. Susan is riding in the passenger with a laptop. Terry in the back.

ART: I admit it. I'm lost. Now, shut up!

2 – Susan gestures to the laptop.

SUSAN: We're supposed to be on Cordova. This is Valencia. You need to be one street over.

3 – Art is no longer watching the road. He turns his head to yell at Susan. She yells back.

ART: You told me to take the second right.

SUSAN: No, I told you it'd be the second street on the right.

ART: How is that not the same thing!?

SUSAN: If you'd pay attention --

4 – The RV bounces up over the curb, tearing through someone's front yard.

5 – Art, Susan, and Terry all wide-eyed. Oh shit.

(space permitting) 6 – Close on Art's foot slamming on the brakes.

7 – In the foreground, the RV (half in the yard, half in the street) has stopped. In the background, down the street is the media/police event in front of the Wilson house.

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 - Art looks like he had a heart attack. Susan is regaining composure.

SUSAN: Looks like we're here.

2 - Push closer on Susan. She raises a curious eyebrow. Susan sees something.

SUSAN: ?

3 - Small panel. Susan's POV. Rob's son Jeffrey, clearly upset, sits with a police officer on the curb. The police officer is trying to console the boy.

4 - Small panel. Extreme close-up on Susan's eye. Concentration.

5 - Small panel. Susan's POV. The remote control to the airplane.

6 - Small panel. Extreme close-up on Susan's eye. Eureka!

7 - Small panel. Susan's POV. Closer on Jeffrey.

8 - Terry is trying to see what Susan sees. Susan smiles. She's got it.

TERRY: What is it?

SUSAN: I've got an idea. Terry, I need you to check on something in the Wilson's garage.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 - Back at Karma Incorporated HQ. Malcolm sits in comfortably on the couch. Malcolm holds in his hand, his check book and a pen. Malcolm faces Simon who is still tied to his chair. FYI: There's a magazine on the coffee table, which we may not be able to see right now. It'll come up in a few panels.

MALCOLM: We're at a standstill. If your superiors discover you've been waving your gun around as a

favor to a friend, you're in as much trouble as we are.

2 - Simon growls at Malcolm. Malcolm isn't even looking at Simon anymore. He's opened his check book, and is writing in it.

SIMON: Doubtful.

MALCOLM: Police officers don't make a lot of money?

3 - Malcolm tears the check from his checkbook.

MALCOLM: A few years ago, I scored big. Internet business. The right place, right time with the right skills.

4 - Close on Malcolm's hand picking up the magazine.

5 - Malcolm, smiling, holds up a magazine next to his face. The magazine is titled MONEY TALKS. Malcolm is on the front cover, sporting an almost identical smile. The tag line reads: EXCLUSIVE! THE SECRET LIFE OF MILLIONAIRE MALCOLM HUGHES

MALCOLM: I'm worth millions.

6 - High angle. Malcolm gestures with magazine towards the check laying on the coffee table. Simon is indignant.

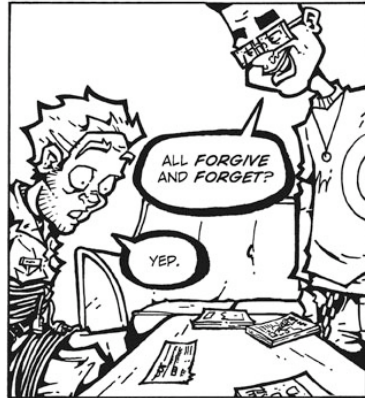
MALCOLM: I've written a personal check. It has your name on it.

SIMON: Are you bribing me?

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 - Malcolm puts in the check right in front of Simon, so he can see it. Simon is silenced and stunned by the amount (which we don't see).

MALCOLM: No, I'm buying you. How would you like to be our inside man with the police department?



SIMON: Uh... wow.

2 - Same as previous.

MALCOLM: Would you like to move out of your mother's house?

SIMON: Yep.

3 - Same as previous.

MALCOLM: Is it safe to say Karma Incorporated has a new friend on the police force?

SIMON: Yep.

4 - Malcolm stands up. Well pleased. Simon is still frozen by the surprise.

MALCOLM: All forgive and forget?

SIMON: Yep.

5 - Malcolm pats Simon on the head.

MALCOLM: Alright then, let me untie you.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 - Inside the Wilson house, close on Marsha. She's been badly beaten. Her hair is also messed up. All the same, Marsha is holding it together.

MARSHA: You're still pathetic.

2 - Pull back. Rob hits Marsha across the face again with his gun.

ROB: Do you want me to kill you? Is that it?

3 - Rob is practically on top of Marsha. He has her pinned down awkwardly against wall and floor. He's

choking her with the hand not possessing the gun. She struggles to get up and fight back.

ROB: I'm not the bad guy.

4 - Susan positioned in the back of the RV with a headset on, and the infamous remote controller in hand.

SUSAN: You find anything?

5 - Terry, inside the Wilson's garage, stands next to the model airplane on the workbench. He's talking into his wristwatch.

TERRY: I certainly did.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 - Close on Marsha. She is pissed off, clinched teeth. Rob's hand still at Marsha's throat.

MARSHA: Do you remember Terry? He's a professional hit man. I swear to god, if you don't let go of me, you won't live another week.

2 - The life and death struggle between Rob and Marsha.

ROB: I don't plan for any of us to live another hour.

3 - Terry, in the garage, the airplane at his feet. He's talking into the wristwatch.

TERRY: Everything is set. Ready when you are.

4 - Susan, in the RV, with her remote control.

SUSAN: Let's hope it flies.

4 - Marsha is clawing at Rob's face for dear life.

PAGE TWENTY

1 - The airplane flies out from the garage. The garage door is halfway open.





2 - Close as possible on the struggling Marsha and Rob. He's lodged his gun down Marsha's throat.

ROB: This time I won't miss.

3 - Extreme close up on Marsha's face. There's panic in her eyes. A tear begins to fall.

4 - Close on the model plane, high in the air, as it takes a sudden dive. Reminiscent, if not identical to chapter one, page twenty, panel 4.

5 - The airplane flies directly over the police officers outside, towards the house and the open window.

6 - Inside the house, Rob on top of Marsha. (The gun-in-the-mouth is such a crude, violent image -- let's have it out in this panel, as though in the moment, Rob forgot what he was doing.) He has paused and looks curiously, directly at the reader.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 - Half page. Crash! That bastard gets what's coming to him! The plane smashes, a direct hit, into Rob's face. He is knocked backwards. However you draw it, it needs to look incredibly painful.

2 - In the RV, Susan and Art hug each other in celebration. Overjoyed.

SUSAN: I did it! I rule!

3 - The moment ends quickly. Susan has a sour look on her face. Art is touching her.

4 - Susan, irritated, pushes Art onto his ass.

SUSAN: Don't touch me!

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 - At Karma HQ, from the television's POV. Malcolm and Simon (now untied and holding the remote) sit on the

couch, like long-time friends, watching TV. Simon is confused. Malcolm is slightly amused.

SIMON: A model airplane flew into the house?

MALCOLM: I've got it on TiVO.

2 - Police chief. Thoroughly confused.

POLICE CHIEF: What the hell?

3 - Police officers with guns drawn enter cautiously through the front door.

4 - The officers stand over Rob.

POLICE OFFICER #2: This wasn't too hard.

POLICE OFFICER #1: Nope.

5 - Police Officer #2 looks over at Police Officer #1.

POLICE OFFICER #2: Where's the negotiator that came in here?

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

1 - The door of the back porch.

2 - Same shot. The door opens slightly; a war-torn Marsha emerges.

3 - Pull back. Terry is standing on the porch with gun drawn. Marsha stands on the porch, in front of him, bewildered from the previous events.

TERRY: Crazy stunt. Did it go according to plan?

MARSHA: More or less.

4 - Marsha and Terry stand there. Marsha is on the verge of breakdown.

TERRY: I was coming to save you.

MARSHA: Thanks.

TERRY: We should probably disappear.

5 - Marsha collapses into Terry's arms. Her nerves finally unraveled. She's crying.

6 - Close on Terry holding the sobbing Marsha.

TERRY: It's okay now.

7 - On the back porch. Terry holds Marsha.

TERRY: It's going to be all right.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

1 - Establishing exterior shot of "Lakewood Landing", a bar in Dallas. Nighttime.

CAPTION: Epilogue

2 - Establishing interior shot of the bar. Marsha sits alone in the corner, an empty martini glass, a small wad of dollar bills, and a bar tab in front of her. Marsha's drunk, badly bruised and swollen from the day's previous events. She stares at the wad of bills. Too drunk to make sense of how to pay her tab.

3 - On Marsha, some guy is now standing next to her table. The panel cuts off his head. While we don't know who it is yet, he's nicely dressed, clean cut.

PHILLIP: Marsha, right?

4 - Marsha's POV. Looking up. It's Phillip from chapter one, pages one through five. He's looking much better. He's smiling and happy to see her.

PHILLIP: Remember me? From the bus stop.

5 - Phillip's POV. Marsha is too drunk to think clearly.

MARSHA: Damn.

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

1 – Phillip sits next to the delirious Marsha (who's speaking more to herself than Phillip).

PHILLIP: Are you all right?

MARSHA: I'm surviving.

2 – Phillip holds up the bill, looking at it. Whoa.

PHILLIP: You spent over fifty dollars on martinis.

MARSHA: Damn.

3 – Marsha looks away from Phillip, not want to get too personal.

PHILLIP: You know, I was having a really bad day when we first met. I'm not usually neurotic.

MARSHA: I specialize in bad days.

4 – Phillip trying to console. Marsha is poking the empty martini glass with her finger.

PHILLIP: And some are worse than others.

MARSHA: True.

5 – Close on Phillip. He's reflecting back on that day.

PHILLIP: Some are worse than others. Yeah.

My best friend from college died almost a year ago. That day was the worst.

6 – Close on Marsha. This got her attention.

MARSHA: What happened?

PAGE TWENTY-SIX

1 – Close on Phillip and Marsha. Marsha listens intently.



PHILLIP: Heart attack. He was only thirty-five years old. Left a wife and daughter behind.

Car trouble? Getting locked out of your house? Being late for work? That's nothing to losing someone you love.

2 – Phillip's POV. A beat. Marsha is deep in thought, concentrating on something important. The wheels are turning.

3 – Phillip's POV. Another beat. Marsha turns her head ever so slightly from Phillip gaze. Her face softens. That mouth which always stays so firmly closed when in concentration, openly slightly. She's having moment of enlightenment.

4 – Phillip's POV. On Marsha, a moment of genuine compassion, she empathizes with Phillip's pain.

MARSHA: You're right. You're so right.

5 – Marsha, frustrated at herself. Phillips now listens to Marsha's barroom confessional.

MARSHA: When I was in college, I had no friends. Ever.

6 – Close on Marsha. Not looking towards Phillip (off panel anyways), more talking to herself.

MARSHA: My freshman year, there were these sorority girls. For weeks they pretended to be my friend, then one day, they pelted me with water balloons. I mean, water balloons? How childish is that?

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

1 – Phillip puts a comforting hand on Marsha.

MARSHA: I went to my dorm room and cried for hours. I was angry. I wanted them to pay.

PHILLIP: What did you do?

MARSHA: Eventually, I became a lawyer.

2 – On Marsha, explaining her story.

MARSHA: That worked for a few years. Then after my divorce, I switched jobs. Started my own company.

3 – Marsha looks towards Phillip. Marsha is amused by the sad irony.

MARSHA: What a mess. Every single person I work with has had a divorce... or two.

What's our problem?

4 – Phillip puts his hand on Marsha's shoulder. Marsha raises her empty glass a few inches off the table as a gesture. Smiles warmly. A real smile, not those smirks that have become part of her trademark.

PHILLIP: Things will get better. Trust me. Here. Let me drive you home.

MARSHA: Thanks. I'd like that.

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

1 – Establishing shot. Exterior of the Karma Incorporated warehouse. Morning. Terry is having a smoke.

2 – Susan walks up to Terry.

SUSAN: Hey.

3 – Susan stands a few feet from Terry, who is calmly enjoying his cigarette.

TERRY: Got a call from Marsha this morning. She's coming back.

SUSAN: I thought she was closing us down.

4 – Closer on Terry.

TERRY: She told me she had a moment of inspiration last night.

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

1 – Quiet, awkward silence between the two. Both look at the ground.

2 – Same shot. Susan looks away, about to make an excuse to leave.

3 – Terry breaks the silence.

TERRY: You remind me of a woman I once met, before your time, while working in Paris.

SUSAN: Yes?

4 – Close on Terry. He looks intently at her (off panel).

TERRY: Peut-être je ne suis pas le seul avec quelque chose de cacher?

5 – Susan. Embarrassed. He knows!

SUSAN: De temps en temps, j'ai le sens que je suis deux personnes différentes.

6 – A still moment. There's a mutual understanding. The two stand outside the warehouse.

TERRY: Interesting.

PAGE THIRTY

1 – Scene almost identical to chapter one, page six, panel 3. Everyone sits at his or her spot on the couch, including Marsha. Art stands in front of the projector screen with a new target being shown. It'd be fun to have it be Marlena's husband, Ben. I'm sure Marlena can provide some good reference shots, if not there's a few on my website.

ART: This is a bad idea. His house is secured with some fancy computer surveillance. No simple breaking and entering.

2 – Susan sitting next to Malcolm on the couch.

SUSAN: Malcolm and I can take care of it.

MALCOLM: What did this guy do to gain our attention?

3 – Art looks at his cluttered notebook.

ART: He poisoned his neighbor's dog.

4 – Marsha sits on the couch, arms crossed. Listening.

MALCOLM (off panel): Maybe the dog had it coming?

SUSAN (off panel): What's your deal with dogs?

MALCOLM (off panel): Bad memories.

5 – Move closer on Marsha. Ready to get back to business.

MARSHA: Let's get him.

END.

Karma Incorporated:
Vice and Virtue

KARMA INCORPORATED: VICE & VIRTUE
PART ONE OF FOUR

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 – Wide panel. Introducing the Hensley's, a sibling hit squad (see attached reference photo). All of them dressed normally and hanging out in their warm-inviting kitchen, which has all sorts of guns, ammo, heavy artillery, and bomb-making materials scattered on the kitchen table and the counter tops. Clearly, something is different about this family. From left to right, Emily is seated at the kitchen table holding a big-ass sniper rifle, pointed down, in one hand and a cleaning rag in the other hand. Dan, also seated at the table, tinkers on a bomb. Trevor is leaning against the counter, next to the fridge.

EMILY: Dammit, you don't remember Mom and Dad taking us to Yemen?

TREVOR: We've never been to Yemen.

2 – Closer on Emily, she's holding the sniper rifle, casually looking through the scope.

EMILY: No, it was when I was really young. We were living in Saudi at the time, but we went to Yemen for the weekend.

3 – On Dan, busy at work. Trevor in the background.

DAN: You were only three years old at the time. How would you remember and Trevor forget? We've never been to Yemen.

TREVOR: Ha!

4 – Pull back on all three -- Emily still eyeing the scope, Dan busy at work, and Trevor just hanging.

EMILY: Whatever. The scope is off a bit.

DAN: The scope isn't off. Did you take care of that thing last night?

PAGE TWO

1 - Establishing shot of exterior of the Karma Incorporated headquarters. COLOR NOTE: Early in the morning.

CAPTION (EMILY): Take care of what thing?

CAPTION (DAN): Emily, you know what I'm talking about.

2 - Interior of the empty Karma Incorporated headquarters. COLOR NOTE: Lights are out -- use blue tones, like in issue one of the first series, page two, maybe?

CAPTION (EMILY): Our surprise for Terry and friends?

CAPTION (DAN): That would be it.

CAPTION (EMILY): Of course. Why even ask?

3 - Interior of the Karma Incorporated headquarters. Move to the computer area -- Susan's computer, with the beanie zombie, and swivel chair.

CAPTION (DAN): Need I remind you about our last assignment?

CAPTION (EMILY): You asshole! That was a fluke! You promised me you wouldn't bring it up again.

4 - Interior of the Karma Incorporated headquarters. Angled to look under Susan's computer table. There's a time bomb duct taped underneath. The timer uses clock hands, not a digital display.

CAPTION (DAN): We have to do this right the first time. We may not get a second opportunity.

A WAVE OF VARIED SFX OF ALARM CLOCKS ALL GOING OFF, DIRECTLY ABOVE A ROW OF SMALL PANELS OF ALARM CLOCKS.

5 – Terry's alarm clock. Sensible digital clock. Glass ashtray nearby. Time: 6:55

6 – Art's alarm clock. A small travel clock. Wristwatch and car keys next to it. Time: 7:30

7 – Susan's alarm clock. A "Hello Kitty"-type clock. A paperback. Time: 6:40

8 – Malcolm's alarm clock. Some stylish Ikea clock. A framed photo of his two daughters (Denise, age 10, and Maya, age 5) next to it. Time: 6:30

9 – Marsha's alarm clock. 50s Apollo Mark II Alarm Clock. A bottle of aspirin and a glass of water nearby. Time: 5:45.

PAGE THREE

1 – Terry sits on the edge of his bed, having a quiet moment before he has to get ready for the day. He's wearing nice silk pajama pants and matching silk pajama button-up shirt. His loft is immaculately clean and rather sparse.

CAPTION: Terry

2 – Art is face down on top of a messy bed. He never made it under the covers, still wearing clothes from last night. The alarm continues to beep.

CAPTION: Art

ART: Uhhh...

3 – Susan's hand comes out from under a mound of blankets and pillows to hit the alarm's snooze button. Her room is a tribute to the "Hello Kitty"-type character. Her laptop computer placed on desk area in her bedroom. Lots of books, scattered here and there.

CAPTION: Susan

SFX: Wack!

4 – Malcolm sits up in his bed. No shirt. Wide-eyed early morning shock. His room is very swanky cool, tasteful bachelor pad for a father.

CAPTION: Malcolm

5 – Marsha's bed is a mess and unoccupied. The TV in her bedroom is on. She's walking back into the room, while reading a newspaper. She's wearing a classic-styled long nightgown and robe. Like her office, there are unpacked boxes in her bedroom and a slight mess. More movie posters?

CAPTION: Marsha

PAGES FOUR AND FIVE

Two page spread. Five equally sized columns. Each of the characters' bathrooms. Each character is looking in his or her bathroom mirror, getting ready for the day. All of them are facing to the right.

TITLE: KARMA INCORPORATED:
VICE & VIRTUE

1 – Terry. Wearing his silk pajamas, flossing his teeth.

2 – Art. Wearing yesterday's clothes, shirt unbuttoned and un-tucked, hair a mess. He stares in the mirror as a zombie. He's holding deodorant.

ART: Uhhh....

3 – Susan. Wearing a white tank top and a pair of baggy boxer shorts. She's brushing her teeth.

4 – Malcolm. Out of the shower, towel wrapped around his waist. He's shaving with an electric shaver.

5 – Marsha. Combing her hair.

PAGE SIX

1 – Malcolm with his daughters Denise and Maya at their private school. He's walking them to the front of the school. The Hockaday School. The girls are wearing their uniforms, both with backpacks and a sack lunch. Note: the younger girls at Hockaday (Maya) wear a different uniform than the older girls (Denise). During this scene, if you draw any other schoolgirls in the background, make sure they are white. I want to contrast Malcolm's privileged lifestyle with the predominantly black south Dallas.

MALCOLM: Your mom said she's picking you up after school?

DENISE: Yes, Dad.

MALCOLM: Do you have everything you need for the weekend?

2 – Close on Denise. She looks irritated by the questioning.

DENISE: I already told you. Yes!

3 – Malcolm kneels down next to his girls to say goodbye.

MALCOLM: Baby, I'm just doing my job -- making sure the two most important people in my life remember to pack their toothbrush.

4 – Same shot.

MAYA: Oops.

MALCOLM: You forgot, didn't you? I'll bring it by this evening.

MAYA: Thanks.

5 – He hugs both his girls.

MALCOLM: Have a good day. Study hard.

PAGE SEVEN

1 – Malcolm inside his car driving to south Dallas.

2 – Malcolm's car parks next to Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (attached reference photo). Roland, a large black man, stands at the steps, waiting. He looks like Charles Mingus.

3 – Malcolm gets out of his car. Roland on the steps.

ROLAND: Malcolm. For a while there, I didn't think you knew where south Dallas was. Good to see you again.

MALCOLM: You wanted me. Here I am.

4 – Malcolm has gone to the steps where Roland is. They shake hands.

ROLAND: Your brother told me about this Karma Incorporated thing.

MALCOLM: Yeah?

ROLAND: We want to hire you.

MALCOLM: Who's we?

5 – Close on Roland.

ROLAND: Some concerned citizens. This is heavy and we've got the money to cover it.

6 – Roland and Malcolm on the steps.

MALCOLM: Tell me about it and I'll see what I can do.

PAGE EIGHT

1 – Close on Marsha, dead serious.

MARSHA: Absolutely not.

2 – Move back. Inside Marsha's office. Marsha is at her desk. Terry stands behind her. Malcolm is standing in front of the desk. He's frustrated.

MALCOLM: That's it? You say "no" and that's it.

MARSHA: They want us to target the mayor during her re-election campaign.

3 – Malcolm leans in to press the issue.

MALCOLM: And offering one million dollars to do it.

MARSHA: All the more reason to decline. That's too much money for us to launder.

4 – Malcolm continues to debate, but Marsha cuts him off.

MALCOLM: If we channel the funds through --

MARSHA: When we get involved in manipulating an election, we're no longer pranksters. We're terrorists.

PAGE NINE

1 – Terry speaks up.

MALCOLM: Terrorists? Come on, Marsha.

TERRY: We can't take the case. Perhaps you should let this go.

2 – Malcolm starts pointing a finger at Terry, who is unresponsive.

MALCOLM: Excuse me? I don't remember talking to you, hitman.

TERRY: *Retired* hitman.

MALCOLM: I'll send a memo to the victims' families.

3 – Inside the lounge area of the Karma Incorporated headquarters. Susan is on the couch nearest the computer area. She's playing a handheld video game (PSP?). Art sits on the other couch, working on some files. Both busy working, while listening in on the debate in Marsha's office. The door to Marsha's office is open.

MALCOLM (off panel, from inside Marsha's office):
I'm sure they would be proud!

SUSAN: Ouch. Another point for Malcolm.

4 – Closer on Susan and Art. Susan looks up from her game. Art talks, but still looking down at the file he's putting together.

SUSAN: I lost count. What's the score now?

ART: Five points to Terry. Seven points Marsha and only four for Malcolm.

5 – Same shot. Art still working on his files.

MARSHA (off panel, from inside her office):
This is a business decision. We can't justify the risk.

ART: Too bad. A million dollars would be nice.

6 – Close on Susan.

SUSAN: After expenses, and then divided between the five of us, a million dollars isn't as great as --

PAGE TEN

1 – Exterior of the Karma Incorporated warehouse. The back end of the building explodes.

SFX: BOOM!

2 – Double take. Another angle of the explosion. We get a closer look at the force of the blast, bricks flying everywhere.

SFX: BOOM!

3 - Exterior of the Karma Incorporated warehouse. Everything is silent. The back end of the warehouse collapsed, black smoke billows out. The rest of the warehouse is still standing.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 - Marsha's office. Marsha, Terry, and Malcolm were knocked back to the far wall, covered in dust and debris. They are now on the ground, completely disoriented.

TERRY: We can't... the risk...

2 - Pull back. The wall between Marsha's office and the lounge is gone. It now opens to the outside. We see the wreckage, the smoke from where the blast was. Terry gets to his feet, hand to his head trying to collect himself.

3 - Closer on Terry. Eyes wide. What just happened comes back with sudden clarity.

TERRY: Susan! Art!

4 - Terry moves into the rubble looking for them.

TERRY: Susan! Where are you?

PAGE TWELVE

1 - Wide panel. Police at the scene of the warehouse, with officers searching through the wreckage, with Crime Scene tape and roadblocks placed in front.

CAPTION: A few hours later

2 - Officer Simon Goggins, who we know and love from the first series, sits on the curb across from the warehouse. He looks worn out. A person (Dan from page one) stands behind him. The panel cuts off his head, so we don't know who it is yet.

3 – Pull back slightly and reveal Dan who kneels down next to Simon to talk with him.

DAN: Were you the first officer to arrive at the scene?

SIMON: Yes sir.

DAN: Any casualties?

4 – Close on Simon. He looks out the corner of his eyes, back at Dan. Simon's suspicious.

5 – Same shot. Close on Simon. He now looks forward.

SIMON: There were only two people in the building. One was uninjured. The other was rushed to Parkland Hospital. I don't know if she survived or not, possible D.O.A.

PAGE THIRTEEN

1 – Dan snarls, clearly things did not go as planned. Simon continues.

DAN: The uninjured one, have you had a chance to question him?

SIMON: Only briefly. We also sent him to the hospital as a precaution. My partner Officer Thompson is supervising.

2 – Push closer on Simon. Dan is off panel.

SIMON: I haven't seen you around. Who are you with? FBI? Homeland Security?

3 – Wide panel. Pull back. Simon turns around. Dan is gone.

SIMON: Somebody else?

4 – Simon is inside his patrol car talking on a cell phone.

SIMON: Marsha, it's Simon. So far, the police haven't found anything connected with your operation. Not that they're looking, but you know.

5 – Same shot. Looking around, cautious that no one sees him making this phone call.

SIMON: Also, Terry was right. Stay low.

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 – Establishing shot of the Como Motel, an old-styled roadside motel in Dallas with vintage neon sign. Low rates, sleazy (attached reference photos). The RV is parked in front of one of the rooms.

2 – Inside the motel room, double beds. Marsha sits on the bed, talking on the phone. Art is lying on the other bed, ice pack on his head, and huge bruise on the side of his face. He's never been so beaten and torn up.

MARSHA: Thank you, Officer Goggins. Please keep us updated. I'll let Terry know.

ART: What the hell...

3 – Marsha hangs up the phone and talks with a groggy Art.

MARSHA: How are you, Mr. Gellman?

ART: When're you going to start calling me Art?

MARSHA: I'm sorry. Art.

4 – Art tries to get up, emphasis on *tries*. A sympathetic Marsha looks on, now standing over him.

ART: Ooh... the drugs are kicking in. What'd you give me?

MARSHA: Percocet. Don't try to get up.

5 – Art embraces the bed, a tad delirious.

ART: M'kay... s' everyone?

6 – On Marsha, pulling the chintzy motel curtains aside to look out the window.

MARSHA: Terry is with Susan at the hospital.
Malcolm went to pick up his daughters from school.
Looks like he's back.

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 – In the motel parking lot, Malcolm is with his two daughters (still in Hockaday uniforms). Denise is throwing around some attitude.

DENISE: Mom was supposed to pick us up. Why are we here?

MALCOLM: It's difficult to explain. We need to hide for a while.

2 – Same scene.

MAYA: What about mom? Will she be okay?

MALCOLM: Don't worry. I'll give her a call.

3 – Maya, moving down her list of concerns (figuratively speaking).

MAYA: Daddy, did you get my toothbrush?

4 – Malcolm holding up a small kid's toothbrush.

MALCOLM: I wouldn't forget.

5 – Wide panel. Interior of the motel room. In the foreground, Art passed out on the bed, looking terrible. Bottle of pills on the bedside table. In the close background, Malcolm, Denise, and Maya have entered in the room; door opened.

DENISE: I wanna go home.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 - Malcolm and Marsha are talking at the back of the room, where the sink area and door to the bathroom is. (Depending on the angles in this scene, Art is still passed out. Denise and Maya sit on the other bed watching TV.)

MARSHA: We're taking the case against the Mayor. Tell your friend.

MALCOLM: Excuse me?

MARSHA: You heard me. Tell your friend. I have a contact with the re-election campaign. I'll work on the inside.

2 - Marsha is matter-of-fact about the 180. Malcolm is astounded.

MALCOLM: Now? This is insane.

MARSHA: We have all our equipment in the RV and the files are backed up on the server.

MALCOLM: Marsha...

MARSHA: We need the money.

3 - Malcolm trying to talk her off the ledge. Marsha pushes ahead.

MALCOLM: We don't! I can give you the money to rebuild and start over --

MARSHA: I need the distraction!

4 - Close on Marsha. She's trying real hard to not cry, everything is so overwhelming -- staying professional is the only coping mechanism she's got. She steadfast.

MARSHA: Terry is going to find out who did this. He'll take care of it. Meanwhile, I can't sit here and do nothing.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 – Both Marsha and Malcolm lean against the sink/backwall. Both face towards the reader, not looking at each other. Malcolm bewildered by her change of plans. Marsha cracks a half-smile at the irony.

MALCOLM: What about that whole bit about us being terrorists if we sabotage the election?

MARSHA: Well, I'm still going to vote for her.

2 – Close on Malcolm. He smiles too.

MALCOLM: Really? For her?

3 – Marsha is back in business mode.

MARSHA: Grab your laptop. We'll do some basic fact finding and set our basic plan. Tomorrow, you and Art check her house. I'll see what I can do with the campaign.

4 – Maya tugs on Malcolm and points off panel (to the bed where Art is).

MAYA: The guy on the bed is making funny noises.

5 – Art on the bed, drowsy and out-of-it.

ART: S'what do 'morrow? Mayor? 'ats crazy. 'et's do it.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 – Establishing shot of the exterior Parkland Hospital. (reference: <http://www.parklandhospital.com>)

CAPTION: Next morning

2 – Hospital room. A disheveled Terry sits with Susan who is unconscious and fully hooked up to various tubes, IVs, monitors. Her head is bandaged. Her eyes are swollen and bruised. Terry looks very tired, bags under his eyes. He hasn't slept all night.

3 – Dr. Samir enters the room with a notepad under his arm. He is in his early 30's, head shaved bald, Indian. He is wearing scrubs.

SAMIR: I'm not the only one who didn't get much sleep last night.

Nurse tells me Susan's been stable for the past four hours. That's important considering the amount of internal damage.

4 – Terry stands up to talk with Dr. Samir.

TERRY: Anything else?

SAMIR: It's not good. At this point, her heart, her lungs, anything could give. We're doing the best we can. Hopefully, in a few days, she can move to long-term care facility.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 – While talking, Dr. Samir checks Susan's blood pressure.

SAMIR: Looking at the x-rays, even in a best case scenario, she's sustained considerable damage to the L-1 and L-2 area of her spinal cord.

2 – Dr. Samir writes in his notebook. Terry is truly taken back by this information.

TERRY: What does that mean?

SAMIR: The hospital has literature available on paraplegia. The nurse can get it for you.

3 – Terry looks down at Susan.

4 – Dr. Samir stands at the door ready to leave. Terry is still looking at Susan.

SAMIR: I saw a picture of the warehouse in today's newspaper. I'm amazed anyone survived.

PAGE TWENTY

1 – Wide panel. At the motel, Marsha and Malcolm sit on the bed, wearing the same clothes as the day before. Malcolm with his laptop, they're working through last minute details.

2 – Wide panel. Art in front of the mirror, ice pack on his head. Different angle, but similar expression as Art from the two-page spread.

ART: Uhhh....

3 – Wide panel. Denise and Maya sitting on the floor of the motel, watching TV.

4 – Wide panel. Susan, unconscious, in her hospital bed. Terry is by her side, but slightly off panel.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 – Terry sits next to the unconscious Susan.

2 – Terry tries desperately to control his anger.

TERRY: When I find who did this --

3 – Terry puts his hands to his mouth. A moment of pause, reflection, resolution.

4 – Extreme close on Terry kissing Susan on the forehead.

5 – Terry stands over her.

TERRY: I'm sorry.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 – Waiting outside Susan's hospital room, with her back to the wall, is Emily (from page one) dressed as a nurse, wearing hospital scrubs. She has a vicious smile on her face. She's found Terry.
TO BE CONTINUED IN CHAPTER TWO.

KARMA INCORPORATED: VICE & VIRTUE
PART TWO OF FOUR

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 – The Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Roland sits outside on the steps, waiting and in a sour mood. Malcolm walks up with his daughters Maya and Denise. All three are wearing the same clothes as before. Malcolm looks uncharacteristically unkempt.

ROLAND: Good morning. You look like shit.

MALCOLM: Thanks.

2 – Closer on Roland as he thumbs towards Maya and Denise.

ROLAND: And they're here because?

MALCOLM: It's take-your-daughters-to-work day.

3 – Malcolm and Roland face each other. Clearly there's tension between them.

ROLAND: Fair enough.

4 – Malcolm and Roland shake a little too formal.

ROLAND: Okay. What's the word?

MALCOLM: We'll take the case. In fact, we're working on it right now.

PAGE TWO

1 – Close on Roland.

ROLAND: That's good news.

2 – Close on Malcolm.

MALCOLM: But you gotta be patient, we've had some heavy stuff hit lately.

3 - Close on Maya and Denise as they stand next to their dad, cut off at the panel edge. Both girls look at each other, uneasy about the situation.

MALCOLM (off panel): I can't go into the specifics. But suffice to say, we've got a full plate, you understand?

4 - ROLAND gives a light bullying push to Malcolm in his chest.

ROLAND: The money we're paying doesn't cover "patient". How about you understand that?

PAGE THREE

1 - Malcolm, very calm, grabs Roland's wrist. Roland looks like he wants a fight.

MALCOLM: Money won't speed up the process. You're asking us to target a high profile public figure. That requires a gentle hand and good timing.

Let us do our job.

2 - Roland walks away from them, speaking with his back to them. Maya and Denise cling close to Malcolm.

ROLAND: If this goes down *after* the election, it doesn't do us any good.

MALCOM: It'll happen before.

3 - Large panel. Reverse angle. We see Roland walking towards us, dark solemn expression on his face. In the background, Malcolm, Denise, and Maya watching him leave.

ROLAND: We want a catastrophe.

MALCOLM: You're in luck --

PAGE FOUR

1 - Full page shot. Hospital room. Susan is in her hospital bed, still unconscious, with all sorts of tubes and monitors still on her. The room is empty, except for Emily the nurse (from the last page of chapter one) approaching the bed with a hypodermic needle.

CAPTION (MALCOLM): -- that's our specialty.

2 - Small panel insert, lower half of the page. Close on the needle.

3 - Small panel insert, lower half of the page. Close on Emily. She looks confused.

EMILY: Terry?

PAGE FIVE

1 - Same shot as page four, panel 3. Except now Terry's hand is over Emily's mouth.

2 - Pull back. Terry's hand is over Emily mouth. With his other hand, he's holding her hand that welds the needle. He's still disheveled in appearance. No sleep.

TERRY: Emily Hensley? So you and your brothers.

3 - Emily brings her head back violently to hit Terry in the face.

TERRY: Uhh!

4 - Reaction shot. Terry's dazed by the blow, with hand over his face.

5 - She's turned around, and is stabbing the needle towards Terry.

PAGE SIX

1 - Terry has a gun pointed at Emily's face. Dang. He's quick. She's stopped in mid-motion with her stab.

TERRY: Cute, but no. Who hired you?

2 - Close on the hand dropping the hypodermic needle.

3 - Emily gives a snarky half-smile.

EMILY: Yeah right. You think this changes anything?

4 - Terry puts his gun back into his jacket holster.

TERRY: It might.

5 - Two shot of Emily and Terry.

TERRY: We're going to leave this place, and go for a drive. If you make any attempt to run, I *will* shoot you. Understand?

EMILY: I know the drill. We're making a trade?

TERRY: We're making a trade.

PAGE SEVEN

1 - Wide panel. A fancy restaurant, Ciudad (attached photo references). Mayor Kathy Graham is seated at table with Marsha, still wearing the same clothes as the previous day -- hair unmanaged. Graham's approximately the same age as Marsha, although let's make sure she doesn't look too much like former Dallas mayor Laura Miller. They are eating lunch. Graham has a chicken with vegetables type meal. Marsha has a salad. Both with wine glasses. The overall shot should be far enough back to act as an establishing shot and provide room for the conversation to trail across the wide panel.

GRAHAM: Marsha, I didn't know you were still living in Dallas. I thought you quit your legal practice.

MARSHA: I did. I'm the CEO for a data solutions company.

GRAHAM: What exactly does that mean?

MARSHA: I get paid to make other people's lives more difficult.

NOTE: Panels 2 - 4 all on the same row.

2 - Close on Kathy Graham. Smiles, as she cuts at her food. Not making eye contact with Marsha (off panel).

GRAHAM: Sounds like a loose interpretation of *my* job.

3 - Same shot. Kathy looks up to Marsha (off panel). A concerned I'm-trying-to-be-a-friend look.

GRAHAM: Before we start talking business, I want to apologize about what happened all those years ago. If I knew he was your husband, I would've never --

4 - Same shot. Kathy looking at Marsha (off panel). She puts down her fork and knife.

GRAHAM: This sounds so rehearsed, but we were young, and he was on the fast track. The fund raising campaign had us on the road for quite some time --

5 - Two shot. Graham touched a nerve, but Marsha is trying to keep her composure. It should be noted that Marsha is holding her fork tightly.

MARSHA: Please don't give me a play-by-play.

GRAHAM: Sorry.

MARSHA: Accepted.

6 - Graham took a bite of her chicken, and is talking while chewing her food.

GRAHAM: How is Senator Elliot?

PAGE EIGHT

1 – Marsha raises an eyebrow. Not touching her food.

MARSHA: I wouldn't know. We're divorced.

2 – Graham now cutting at another piece of chicken.

GRAHAM: Of course, but I figured with your son Carson, you might still be in contact.

3 – Marsha feels like she's the one being cut and devoured here. Marsha tightens her mouth.

MARSHA: Carson's at the Washington Academy, and he's self-sufficient. I do get the occasional update on our Senator Jimmy Elliot.

4 – Graham, now with chicken on fork, is gesturing with it.

GRAHAM: Nothing is more ugly than divorce between lawyers and politicians, especially when kids are involved.

5 – Marsha gives a menacing smile.

MARSHA: On the bright side, the settlement gave me the capital to start my own data solutions company.

6 – Graham still eating.

GRAHAM: See! Cloud? Silver lining.

What's the name of your company?

PAGE NINE

1 – Wide panel. Graham raises her glass high. Marsha holds her glass to up only slightly, enjoying the irony.

MARSHA: Karma Incorporated.

GRAHAM: Let's give a toast. To Karma Incorporated.

MARSHA: Some days, I'd work there for free.

2 - Move closer on them.

GRAHAM: About the mayoral race. When we talked on the phone, you said wanted to help with my re-election. Why again?

MARSHA: You've worked hard on the Trinity River project. As a business owner, I'd like to see you finish what you started.

3 - On Marsha. Some server (slightly off panel) is refilling her drink.

MARSHA: In particular, I can get my ex-husband to endorse your re-election. Granted, I haven't talked to him in awhile, but I have a feeling he can be persuaded.

4 - Two shot on Marsha and Graham.

GRAHAM: The National Party isn't too happy with some of my positions. You really think he'd extend the olive branch?

MARSHA: You're a white collar moderate. Your voters, very soon, will be his voters.

PAGE TEN

1 - Art, still bruised from the explosion, dressed up as a restaurant employee hands Marsha a folded sheet of paper.

ART: Message for you, ma'am.

MARSHA: Thank you.

2 - Marsha's POV. Close on the folded paper. There's a set of keys folded in the paper (BMW key chain), along with a message hand-written on the paper: WE MADE

COPIES. YOU CAN RETURN THEM NOW. P.S. YOUR EX-HUSBAND IS A SENATOR?! YOU NEVER TELL US ANYTHING.

3 – Two shot on Marsha and Graham

GRAHAM: Is everything okay?

MARSHA: Yes, it seems I have some business to take care of. Can't stay for dessert.

4 – Graham wiping her lower lip with the cloth napkin.

GRAHAM: To your offer, yes, I'd gladly take Senator Elliot's endorsement. South Dallas has it in for me. I could use all the support I can get.

Meet Monday at my office?

5 – Graham and Marsha get up from the table. Marsha points at the floor.

MARSHA: Are those your keys on the floor?

6 – Marsha hands the keys to Kelly Graham.

MARSHA: Must've fallen out of your purse.

GRAHAM: Thank god you saw them.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 – Establishing shot of Mayor Kelly Graham's house (see attached references), a house located on Swiss Avenue in Dallas.

CAPTION (GRAHAM): My whole world is on that key ring.

2 – Art and Malcolm are in Kelly Graham's spacious bedroom. (Both dressed as workmen in full jumpsuits and baseball caps, walkie-talkies and a few tools – Malcolm has his headphones around his neck.) There are huge French doors leading to a backyard with curtains on either side. Bathroom door is on the opposite side of the room from them. Art plants a "bug" in her bedside

phone, while Malcolm places some surveillance wiring behind a picture frame.

ART: Heard any news on Susan? How she's doing?

MALCOLM: Terry hasn't called.

3 - Art sits on her bed with the phone in his lap.

ART: Somebody blew up our office. Call me crazy, but I'd say that's pretty serious.

4 - Outside the house. Mayor Kelly Graham is unlocking her front door. She has some junk mail tucked under her arm.

5 - Graham walks through her living room. Glancing through the mail.

6 - Two shot of Malcolm and Art in the bedroom.

MALCOLM: Marsha thinks Terry's the target. An old associate looking to settle a score.

ART: He's going to get us all killed.

PAGE TWELVE

1 - Graham walks in through the open door, leading into her bedroom. Still reading her mail.

2 - Graham walks past Malcolm and Art, completely oblivious and reading her mail. She's walking towards the bathroom. Both Malcolm and Art are wide-eyed, out in the open, and standing completely still. Oh crap. This is going to be bad.

3 - *However*, Graham's completely oblivious. She opens the bathroom door. Malcolm and Art, statue-like, watch her.

4 - Same shot. The door shuts.

5 - Close on Malcolm and Art, still frozen, but now looking at each other.

MALCOLM (whispering): Did that just happen?

ART (whispering): Let's call it a day.

PAGE THIRTEEN

NOTE: Panels 1 – 3 all on the same row.

1 – Graham sits on her toilet, reading the junk mail. Oblivious.

2 – Same shot. Wait a second! She looks up from her mail. Eyes to the left. ("What just happened?")

3 – Same shot. Eyes shift to the right. She's a little confused.

4 – Shot of her bedroom, Art and Malcolm are gone. Graham's head pokes out from behind the bathroom door.

GRAHAM: Hello? Anyone out there?

5 – Outside the house. Art and Malcolm walking down the front steps towards the street. Art looks behind at the front door.

MALCOLM: I won't tell Marsha, if you won't.

ART: Deal.

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 – Inside the motel room. Marsha sits on the edge of the bed. She's buried her head in her hands, resting for a moment. Marsha's hair is down, a rare event. Denise and Maya stand in front of Marsha, looking at her with the sort of cautious interest kids would have when finding a dead bird. Maya holds a small plastic baggy with candy in it.

DENISE: What are you doing?

MARSHA: Nothing.

MAYA: Are we ever going home?

MARSHA: No. Never.

2 – Same shot. Marsha's head is still down.

DENISE: What's wrong?

MARSHA: I have to --

3 – On Marsha as she looks up. Hair in her face. She looks worn out.

MARSHA: I have to break into the Mayor's office tonight. And I'm always a nervous when I go places where I don't belong.

4 – Marsha and Denise look at each other. Marsha talks to Denise as she would talk to any adult, with a dry and deadpan expression.

DENISE: Why's that?

MARSHA: Last time, I was stupid and nearly got killed.

DENISE: What happened?

MARSHA: Someone put a gun down my throat.

5 – Shot positioned similarly to panel 1, except Marsha (same deadpan expression) is now looking at the girls. Maya sincere and concerned, holds up her bag, offering some candy as comfort.

MAYA: Want a tooty-fruitie?

MARSHA: Thanks.

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 – Close on Emily talking on a cell phone. She's rolling her eyes.

EMILY: It's not my fault!

2 - Move back so we see Terry sitting next to her (she's at the end of the table, while he's sitting on the right side of the table - they are at a 90 degree angle to each other), and to reveal the setting. They are in the far corner booth at the Meridian Room (attached reference photos). Emily is still talking on the cell phone. Terry is smoking, casual and at ease.

EMILY: Hey Dan -- hey Dan -- listen to me! I did what you *told* me to do. I followed it word for word. And Terry found me. Yeah -- yeah.

3 - Reaction shot of Terry, smoking. He feels completely in control.

EMILY (off panel): God! You always do this! You're always taking Trevor's side.

4 - Emily on the phone. She looks defeated. Terry to the right.

EMILY: Yes, we're making a trade. Front entrance of Fair Park. Tonight at midnight.

TERRY: I'll give him my terms at that time.

EMILY: He'll give you the terms tonight.

5 - Same shot. Emily holds the phone away from her ear. She looks at Terry.

EMILY: You are so dead.

TERRY: Funny. And I thought I had the upper hand.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 - Nighttime. Exterior establishing shot of Dallas City Hall. (attached reference photo)

CAPTION (Marsha): This is a bad idea.

2 - Marsha (hair still down) sits behind the mayor's desk in the dark. She's holding a mag light, looking

through some file folders. It should be noted the tooty-fruitie bag is on the desk. On the back wall, a framed poster of the Dallas skyline with a god awful cursive-font tagline: "Dallas! A Place for Business!" Somewhere, in the room should be a Texas state flag, and a Dallas city flag.

MARSHA (talking to self): Why did I agree to this case?

3 - Close on Marsha. Still talking to herself.

MARSHA (talking to self): We don't need the money. I don't need the distraction. Why?

4 - Silent panel. Marsha flips through the file folders, deeply concentrating.

5 - Same shot. Huh. Something in the file catches her eye.

MARSHA (talking to self): This is interesting...

6 - She takes a picture of the open file with her digital camera.

SFX: Click!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 - Marsha, now leaving the office, walks towards the door. She's holding her mag light.

2 - As she's walking, someone else (JIMMY ELLIOT) walks in the office and they almost bump into each other. He's holding a bottle of wine in one hand, and two glasses in the other. He's wearing a polo-shirt. Marsha is startled.

NOTE: Just as Marsha has a Kim Novak quality, Senator Jimmy Elliot could be her Jimmy Stewart. Not a direct representation, just that sort of quality to him.

MARSHA: Aaaah!

3 - Instinctively, Marsha hits the person (JIMMY) over the head with her mag light.

4 - Jimmy falls against the wall.

5 - Marsha hits him across the face with the mag light, holding it with both hands. Ouch.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 - Jimmy is on the ground, in pain. The bottle of wine (unbroken) on the floor next to him.

JIMMY: What the hell! Why did you hit me?

2 - Jimmy looks up. He looks up, surprised to see Marsha.

JIMMY: Marsha?

3 - Marsha looks equally surprised.

MARSHA: Jimmy?

4 - Two shot. Jimmy on the ground. Marsha standing over him. They both look at each other, confused.

TO BE CONTINUED IN CHAPTER THREE.

KARMA INCORPORATED: VICE & VIRTUE
PART THREE OF FOUR

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 – Large panel. The year is 1979 in a small apartment in Paris, France. Terry is in his early twenties. He should still be recognizable, except now has longer hair – a bit like Antonio Banderas in *Desperado*. He wears a white suit, and a black button-up shirt (top button is un-buttoned). No tie.

Gabrielle is Susan's mother. She's also in her early twenties. Her hair is straight, cut along the jawline, bangs cut straight across. She wears circular "John Lennon" glasses. Gabrielle has on a comfy oversized button-up shirt with the top two buttons unbuttoned, no visible cleavage. The shirt is untucked, sleeves rolled up to elbows. Tight pair of slacks.

A couch is overturned, laying between the cracked open front door and the rest of the room. Terry sits on the floor next to the couch. His back to the front door, he has his gun in one hand and a grenade in the other. Gabrielle sits on the floor, near the open closet door on the other side of the room. She has a hard-shell suitcase, which she's putting clothes in. NOTE: There's a window on the far wall that leads to the fire escape. Maybe on the ledge, there's a plant similar to the one in the movie *Léon*?

CAPTION: Twenty-five years ago

CAPTION: Paris, France

GABRIELLE: Terry? Are they going to kill me?

TERRY: They're going to try.

2 – Close on Gabrielle, packing. She's deeply worried.

GABRIELLE: How are you so sure?

3 – Close on Terry, looking cautiously over his shoulder.

TERRY: Because that's what I would do.

PAGE TWO

1 – Gabrielle holding a shirt that she's about to pack.

GABRIELLE: I sent them the wire transfers. Everything should be in their account... with interest.

2 – Terry holds his gun up, ready to strike at whoever comes through the door.

TERRY: That's not the part they remember. You borrowed the money without asking. I mean, who'd you think you were dealing with?

3 – Gabrielle with both hands in the suitcase, a defeated look.

GABRIELLE: They're going to kill me.

4 – Man bursts through the door. He looks like Genndy Tartakovsky, wielding a shotgun.

PAGE THREE

1 – Genndy stumbles backwards. He's got two gunshots in him, one in his chest and one in the side of his throat. Blood.

SFX: BANG! BANG!

2 – Genndy, clearly disoriented and dying, wildly fires his shotgun -- haphazardly blasting a hole in the closet door. Both Terry and Gabrielle hit the ground.

SFX: BOOM!

GABRIELLE: Aaaaeeeiii!!!

3 – Genndy is slumped against the nearest wall. Dead.

4 – Terry looks up from being on the floor.

TERRY: They are going to *try*.

PAGE FOUR

1 – Terry grabs Gabrielle by the arm to help her up. She's shutting her suitcase. Still bewildered by the event.

TERRY: I've arranged to smuggle you to the States, but we only have an hour.

2 – Close on Gabrielle and Terry as they look at each other. A nervous moment. It looks like they are about to kiss, her mouth slightly open in anticipation.

3 – Same shot.

TERRY: I can't --

4 – Terry opens the window for Gabrielle to go out onto the fire escape. Terry is cold, all business.

GABRIELLE: I love you. I don't care what you think. I don't care if I'm being foolish. I love you.

TERRY: The car is in the alley.

5 – Gabrielle pauses. She looks at Terry with a deadpan expression. (Something Susan might be capable of.)

GABRIELLE: But sometimes, I hate you.

PAGE FIVE

1 – End of flashback. Full page panel. Nighttime. The front entrance of the Texas State Fair (attached reference photo). Terry, with his back to the reader, walks behind Emily with a gun to her back. They both

head towards Dan who has his arms outstretched wide to show he's unarmed. Dan's wearing a jacket, and he's about fifty yards away from them. Terry and Emily are much closer in the foreground.

CAPTION (TERRY): You're not the only one.

CAPTION: Present day

DAN: This is the last time we try to kill you. Swear. We've learned our lesson.

TERRY: If someone had wired the explosives correctly, we wouldn't be having the discussion.

PAGE SIX

1 - Front shot of Emily and Terry. She turns her head to bark at him.

EMILY: Oh god! You think it was me, don't you?

Dan does the explosives.

2 - On Dan, his arms still outstretched.

DAN: You were the one in charge. You were the last person to handle the C4. Not to mention, you put it under the wrong desk.

3 - Emily and Terry. Emily talks to Dan (off panel).

EMILY: If I didn't have a gun to my back, I would
--

TERRY: Emily, shut up.

4 - Shot of all three, Dan standing across from Emily and Terry, Dan is still a good thirty yards from them.

DAN: So? What's the deal?

5 - Terry shrugs.

TERRY: I'm retired. I have no agenda. Tell me your employer's name, leave town, and we'll call it a night.

PAGE SEVEN

1 - High angle shot down on Terry, Emily, and Dan. (It's Trevor's POV.)

DAN: Our credibility is tied to keeping our employer confidential.

TERRY: Then you lose cred, save your sister.

2 - Pull back further. Over the shoulder of Trevor, he's perched on top of a nearby brick wall, part of the front entrance. He has the same scope rifle from chapter one, page one. It's aimed at Terry.

DAN: It's not that easy.

TERRY: I don't care.

3 - Close on Trevor, looking intently through the scope, finger over the trigger.

DAN (off panel): Send us away, someone else will come to finish the contract. You're a marked man.

PAGE EIGHT

1 - Flashback. Terry behind the wheel of his car, a Simca 1000. Gabrielle sits in the passenger seat.

TERRY: You ready?

2 - At the end of the alleyway, a van pulls up—blocking their exit.

GABRIELLE (inside car): Terry...

3 - Inside the car, for once, Terry looks worried. Gabrielle is an absolute deer-in-headlights.

GABRIELLE: Terry.

4 - Outside the car, at the other end of the alley, another van pulls up—blocking the other exit.

PAGE NINE

NOTE: This is how I see the lay-out: panels 1 and 2 are on the same row, with panels 3 - 7 all on the same row.

1 - On Gabrielle, her left hand braced against the dashboard and her right hand against the window of the passenger side door. A posture of claustrophobia, as if she were in a sinking submarine, trying to keep the vessel from imploding. There's a tear coming down her cheek. She's terrified.

GABRIELLE: Mince, Terry, tu ferais mieux de faire quelque chose.

2 - Reaction shot of Terry. He's trying to figure something out. Worried.

3 - Small panel. Close on the hands of someone holding an AK-47.

4 - Small panel. Close on the hands of someone else holding an AK-47.

5 - Small panel. Close on the hands of someone else holding an AK-47.

6 - Small panel. Close on the hands of someone else holding an AK-47.

7 - Small panel. Close on the hands of someone else holding an AK-47.

8 - Wide panel. Overhead shot of the alleyway. There are gunmen lining the rooftops, all aiming at Terry's Simca 1000. Each of them with an AK-47 in his hands. They are not your generic "Stormtrooper" villains. Each one is dressed differently and looks different. One or two are wearing sweaters. Another a vest. One person has a ski cap on and smoking a cigarette. If you wanted to do friend cameos, these characters would work.

9 – Wide panel. Level shot of the gunmen on the rooftop ledge.

GUNMAN #1: Feu!

PAGE TEN

1 – End of Flashback. Terry and Dan discuss terms of handing back Emily. Terry holds Emily close, gun to her back.

DAN: You want a name. I can't give you that.

I can give you a head start, if you decide to run.

TERRY: Think that will do any good?

2 – Dan shrugs.

DAN: You've been involved longer than we have.
Will it?

3 – Terry tries to be more threatening, repositioning his gun under Emily's chin. Terry grits his teeth as he talks. Emily is unsure of this situation.

TERRY: That depends on the name.

4 – Dan isn't fazed.

DAN: Figure it out! An explosives-job is not cheap. It's dramatic and messy. A simple kill-job, we'd shoot you in your sleep or poison you.

A bomb sends a message to others.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 – Terry and Dan despise each other. Fully invested in their conversation. Emily tries to inject her opinion with the gun under her chin, barrel pointed up.

TERRY: Everyone I know was in that building.

EMILY: Terry --

DAN: Not everyone.

EMILY: -- could you get the gun away from my face?

2 – Same shot. Emily doesn't like the gun under her chin.

TERRY: Gabrielle?

DAN: Damn right. The ghost.

EMILY: If I had a choice, I'd rather not be shot in the face.

3 – Close on Trevor's finger as he begins to squeeze on the trigger of his sniper rifle.

4 – Terry and Dan argue, completely ignoring Emily.

TERRY: You think killing me will bring her out of hiding?

EMILY: Take the head start.

DAN: Couldn't hurt.

5 – Close on Trevor's finger. He's fully squeezed on the trigger. No SFX though.

PAGE TWELVE

Note: I'm not great at my choice of SFX. If there's a better sound for a ton of AK-47s firing, have at it. This whole page will have gunfire SFX running across the panels.

1 – Flashback. The car gets riddled with holes. The front, back, and both side windshields all shatter simultaneously.

SFX: KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KA

2 – Inside the car. Gabrielle has her hands over her ears. She's terrified. Broken safety glass is everywhere, including in her hair.

SFX: KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK

3 – Terry, sitting in the driver's side, tosses his grenade out the front where there used to be a windshield.

SFX: KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK

4 – Close on the grenade (without the pin) bouncing on the ground near the wall of the other building in the alleyway.

SFX: KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KAK-KA

5 – Wide panel. Interior of a flower shop. An old man on the far left side reads a book, *L'Étranger*. He's behind the counter and looking bored. The gunfire SFX is present, but smaller, muted. It's going on outside.

SFX: kak-kak-kak-kak-kak-kak-kak-kak-kak-kak

PAGE THIRTEEN

1 – Wide panel. Same shot of the flower shop, except on the right side of the back wall a hole has blown through (from the grenade). The hole is not large enough for a car to drive through -- but the bricks along the wall have loosened. The old man, startled, instinctively holds his book as a shield.

SFX: FOOM!

2 – The old man peers over the top of his book.

3 – Terry's Simca 1000 breaks through the hole in the wall. The loosened bricks fly everywhere. The car makes it halfway through.

4 – Passenger side door has opened. Terry and Gabrielle are out of car. Gabrielle has her arm around Terry,

supporting him. Terry's sustained gunshot wounds. His eyes roll back, almost unconscious.

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 - End of flashback. On Terry, holding Emily. Trevor's gunfire grazes Terry's shoulder.

SFX: BANG!

2 - Dan pulls out a gun from inside his jacket.

3 - Emily shouts in the direction of Trevor (off panel).

EMILY: I *told* you the scope was off!

4 - Close on Dan as he fires his gun (at Terry, but all that is off panel. We only see Dan).

SFX: BANG!

5 - Terry, turning and still holding Emily, fires his gun in the direction of Trevor (off panel). Terry is quick. Panels 4 and 5 are basically happening simultaneously.

SFX: BANG!

6 - Trevor falls off the side of the wall. Body limp. He's been shot. Although, in this case, I don't want to get too gruesome.

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 - Straight on shot of Terry standing behind Emily. She's been shot right below the collarbone. (Note on what happened: When Terry turned to shoot Trevor. Emily was then directly in between Dan and Terry. So Dan unintentionally shot his own sister.)

2 - On Emily. Now, she is a few steps away from Terry. (Dan is off panel.) She is tense, like she's holding her breath.

EMILY: Freakin' typical. The scope was off. No one ever believes me.

3 – Dan stands, wide-eyed (What have I done?), pointing the smoking gun.

4 – Dan drops the gun.

5 – Gun hits the ground.

6 – Emily collapses to the ground.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 – Terry, determined and angry, points the gun towards Dan.

TERRY: Give me the name.

DAN: I can't.

2 – Close on Terry. He's struggling against his own nature. He wants to pull the trigger, but can't.

3 – Same shot. Terry's expression fades. He can't do it.

4 – Terry walks away from them. Back to them.

TERRY: Take your sister to the hospital.

5 – Dan snarling reaches down to pick up his gun.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 – Close on the hand grasping for the gun on the ground.

2 – Close on Terry looking forward, walking off, seemingly oblivious.

3 – Close on Dan lifting up the gun.

4 – Close on Terry looking forward, walking off. He cracks a thin half-smile.

5 – Close on Dan pointing the gun towards the reader (at Terry, off panel).

6 – A blank panel. Black background, white font. Normal-sized text.

CAPTION (no box): Bang.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 – Flashback. One of the AK-47 gunman, Gunman #1 talks on a CB radio outside the flower shop. He's not happy about the situation. His rifle has been put away in a duffle bag, which he has near him. Another gunman (#2) leans against the wall, as a look-out, smoking a cigarette. Also with no rifle.

GUNMAN #1 (on the CB): Nous les avons perdu. Nos hommes ont cherches partout. Ils ont disparus. C'est comme si se sont des fantomes.

2 – Same shot. Voice from the CB responds.

CB RADIO: Verifis les ports. Ne la laisse pas s'en aller.

3 – Same shot.

GUNMAN #1 (on the CB): Oui Monsieur.

4 – The Gunman #1 yells at gunman #2 leaning against the wall.

GUNMAN #1: Tu l'as entendu! Foutons le camp d'ici.

5 – Elsewhere, Terry and Gabrielle stumble up a staircase in an apartment building. Terry is in pretty bad shape.

TERRY: Where... we going...?

GABRIELLE: We need a new plan.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 – The younger Marsha (who we remember from chapter three of the first series, she's a few months older now) is in the hallway, leaving an apartment. She's wearing a COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY sweat shirt. She has a large camera bag and a folded map of Paris.

2 – Heading towards Marsha, Gabrielle practically drags Terry who is now unconscious. Marsha is shocked and a bit confused.

GABRIELLE: Are you an American?

MARSHA: Yes.

GABRIELLE: Tourist?

MARSHA: Study abroad.

3 – Gabrielle comes closer.

GABRIELLE: What's your name?

MARSHA: Marsha.

4 – Close on Gabrielle. Desperate.

GABRIELLE: Marsha, we need your help.

5 – Pull back. Marsha and Gabrielle face each other. Gabrielle holds Terry. It's an important moment for both of them, one that will forever affect their lives.

MARSHA: Okay.

PAGE TWENTY

1 – End of flashback. Susan's hospital room. Dr. Samir sits next to Susan's bed. Susan is now barely conscious, still with lots of monitors and tubes attached to her.

SAMIR: Do you remember what happened?

SUSAN: No.

2 – Closer on both of them.

SAMIR: The warehouse where you work, it blew up.

The police want to ask a few questions. They're having difficulty tracking down information about your place of employment.

3 – Move closer, center on Susan.

SUSAN: Lucky to be alive. Yeah?

TO BE CONCLUDED IN CHAPTER FOUR.

KARMA INCORPORATED: VICE & VIRTUE
PART FOUR OF FOUR

WRITTEN BY DAVID HOPKINS
ILLUSTRATED BY TOM KURZANSKI

PAGE ONE

1 – This chapter begins where chapter two ended. Marsha stands over her ex-husband Jimmy who she hit with her mag light. He has a bottle of wine and two glasses with him.

JIMMY: What are you doing here?

MARSHA: Breaking in. What are you doing here?

JIMMY: Not breaking in.

2 – Mayor Kathy Graham walks into the scene. She's holding a plastic bag of take-out food from Eatzi's. She's dressed much more casual -- shirt, top few buttons unbuttoned, and some jeans.

GRAHAM: Jimmy, sweetie, I heard a noise. Is everything okay?

3 – Graham notices Jimmy and Marsha in her office. Jimmy is standing now.

GRAHAM: Marsha? The offices closed hours ago.

MARSHA: This doesn't look good.

4 – Marsha's POV. Jimmy with the bottle of wine and Graham with the take-out bag.

PAGE TWO

1 – Close on Marsha.

MARSHA: And I thought your relationship with my ex-husband ended years ago.

2 – On Jimmy and Graham.

GRAHAM: This is not what it looks like.

3 – Similar shot as panel 1, except now she's holding a digital camera up to take a picture.

MARSHA: Then you won't mind if I take a picture of what it doesn't look like.

SFX: Click!

4 – Marsha walks past the confused Graham and Jimmy.

MARSHA (to Graham): Before you fire me, I quit.

5 – Same shot. Marsha is out the door and out of the scene. Graham and Jimmy are still confused.

PAGE THREE

1 – Closer on Kathy Graham looking at Jimmy.

GRAHAM: Oh god. She's going to ruin us.

2 – Marsha grabs for the knob of a door at the end of the hallway.

3 – Marsha walks down the stairs of an interior fire escape. She's talking on a cell phone.

MARSHA: Is this the front desk at City Hall? I work with the mayor's campaign, third floor. I heard some noises in her office. Someone's breaking in. Please help.

4 – Graham and Jimmy are in the hallway. Searching for Marsha.

JIMMY: Marsha?

5 – Marsha is at the bottom of the stairway in the interior fire escape. She's putting on a janitor's jump suit and baseball cap.

6 – The lobby of city hall. A fat security guard is runs from his front desk, worried, and on the walking talkie. There's a nondescript door against the back wall.

SECURITY GUARD: Possible break in. Request back up.

PAGE FOUR

1 – The empty lobby.

2 – Same shot, except Marsha has now opened that door and is peering out.

3 – Marsha quickly walks to the front door, looking down the whole time. She has a small gym bag slung over one shoulder.

4 – Marsha pushes her way out the front doors.

PAGE FIVE

1 – Marsha is in a nearby alleyway, leaning against a brick wall. The gym bag is at her feet. She breathes a sigh of relief.

2 – Then out of nowhere, Marsha throws her arms up in frustration.

MARSHA: Dammit! Jimmy! What were you doing there?!

3 – Marsha kick her gym bag.

MARSHA: Argh!

4 – Close on Marsha, her eyes shift to the left. Regaining her calm, if not coming across a little bipolar.

MARSHA: Calm yourself. He's no longer your husband. He can do what he wants, and so can you.

5 – Marsha gets her cell phone.

6 – Marsha holds the cell phone to her ear.

MARSHA: Malcolm, come get me. I'm done here.

PAGE SIX

1 – The next day. Close up on the front cover of the Dallas Times Herald. We can see Malcolm's hands hold the paper open. The headline reads: *Election day scandal! Affair between Graham, Senator Elliot.* The sub-headline of: *Inquiry into illegal use of federal money to support mayoral race.* And yes, there's that photo of Senator Elliot and Kathy Graham in the mayor's office. On the back of the paper is an advertisement for an upcoming Gun Show, like from page one, panel 1 of the first series.

CAPTION: Next morning

2 – Pull back. Malcolm is reading the newspaper. Marsha, Art, and Malcolm are inside the RV. Getting ready for their operation. Art is eating some donuts. He's dressed like a security officer. Marsha is wearing a nice business suit. Malcolm is casual cool like always.

MALCOLM: I gotta say, Marsha, you killed on this assignment. I mean, how did you get the Herald to post this sensationalism?

MARSHA: Have you met the editor? It was too easy.

3 – On Art as he eats a donut. Yes, he has crumbs all over his uniform.

ART: What about me? Wait until you see the fine piece of work I did last night.

4 – Art shoves the remaining donut into his mouth.

ART: This might be my proudest moment.

PAGE SEVEN

1 – Art holds up his finger to indicate they need to wait for what comes next.

ART: Hold on. I got this for you.

2 – Art reaches in his pocket.

3 – Art pulls out a sizable lock of hair (the mayor's hair) gathered in a rubber band.

ART: It's her hair.

4 – Art hands it to Marsha. She's disgusted by it, but does reach to take it from him.

MARSHA: What do you want me to do with it?

ART: I don't know. Trophy or something? You could frame it?

5 – Exterior shot of the RV, parked along next to the rumble that once was the Karma Incorporated warehouse.

MARSHA (from inside): That is sick.

PAGE EIGHT

1 – Exterior shot of the Mayor's house. The Channel 11 news van is parked in front, satellite antennae extended. Our reporter from the first series Stephanie Lucia is armed with a microphone. The cameraman has his video camera pointed at her.

CAPTION (ART): I'm just doing my job.

2 – Interior of Mayor Graham's bedroom. She is asleep under the covers. We can't see her face yet.

SFX: Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!

3 – Close on the alarm clock, stylish circular and silver, sitting on the bedside table.

SFX: Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!

4 – Kathy Graham's hand on the alarm clock to turn it off.

GRAHAM (off panel): Uuuughh...

PAGE NINE

1 – Her bare feet touch on the carpeted floor next to the bed. She's wearing silk pajama pants.

2 – Close on Graham's hand as she grabs for the bathroom door handle.

3 – Close on Graham's hand as she turns on the water faucet.

4 – Close on Graham's eyes. They go wide.

5 – Move down. Close on lower half of Graham's face, her nose and mouth.

GRAHAM: Oh no.

PAGE TEN

NOTE: Full page panel.

1 – Similar to the two page spread in chapter one, pages four and five. Graham stands in front of her mirror. Facing to the right. It's a nice traditional bathroom, fine silver fixtures. She's wearing silk pajamas, pants and button-up shirt. However... her hair has been chopped off. It sticks up in short irregular tufts. Some areas on her head you can see the scalp.

PAGE ELEVEN

1 – View from her bedroom. The partially opened bathroom door.

GRAHAM (from inside the bathroom): NOOOOOOOOOO!!!

2 – She burst out of her bathroom walking with a purpose. Graham looks completely horrified.

GRAHAM: No. No. No. No. No.

3 – She’s now in the kitchen. Looking around.

GRAHAM: Where’s my cell phone?

4 – Closer on her worried face.

GRAHAM: Where’s my cell phone!

PAGES TWELVE AND THIRTEEN

NOTE: A montage of crisis. Feel free to scatter the panels across this two-page spread at odd angles, all disjoined.

1 – Kathy Graham slips and falls on her ass in the kitchen. The kitchen floor gleams.

GRAHAM: Oof!

2 – Graham tries to use a normal house phone.

GRAHAM: Hello?!

3 – Graham struggles to pull on some slacks, but they do not go past her hips.

GRAHAM: Uggh!!!

4 – Graham, facing forward, paranoid, centered in her walk-in closet.

GRAHAM: Nothing fits.

5 – In bathroom, Graham spits out her toothpaste and water. She’s holding a toothbrush. She’s wearing a tight sweater, blue jeans with the top button unbuttoned, and a hat.

GRAHAM: Ack!

6 – Graham looks from around the window curtain to see the news reporter in her front yard. Eyes wide. Oh crap.

7 – Graham holds the newspaper. We only see the back of it with the gun show ad.

GRAHAM: This is bad.

8 – Graham, on the floor, in the fetal position. A few tears.

9 – Graham leans up against a door. She looks upward for inner strength.

GRAHAM: Pull yourself together. Need to get to the office.

10 – She looks in her garage. It's empty, except for a bicycle leaning against the wall.

GRAHAM: My car.

PAGE FOURTEEN

1 – Graham is wobbly on the bike, and peddling alongside a busy street. She looks crazy and determined.

GRAHAM: Marsha...

2 – The Karma Incorporated's RV approaches her bike from behind.

3 – Upward angle. Graham and her bike fly through the air. Her legs are off the pedals, and extended in front of her. She is no longer on the road, but high in the air over a grassy hill just off the road. We see the sun in the sky, clouds and birds over head.

GRAHAM: Whoa.

4 – Graham's bike hits the ground hard. She doesn't have control.

5 – A worried Malcolm behind the wheel of the RV. Art sits shotgun.

ART: Should we check to see if she's okay?

MALCOLM: I wanted to nudge her. That's all.

6 – Graham and her bike cartwheel down the hill. It looks ugly.

PAGE FIFTEEN

1 – Graham is at the bottom of the hill. The bike is bent. Her face has dirt and grass on it, road rash and scratches all over. She looks exhausted.

2 – Close on Graham as she looks to the side.

MARSHA (off panel): Kathy, are you all right?

3 – Marsha is at the top of the hill. She looks concerned.

MARSHA: Let me take you to the hospital.

4 – Graham, still on the ground, tries to get the bicycle off her.

GRAHAM: You can go to hell! This was all you. I did nothing wrong.

5 – Marsha makes her way down the hill.

MARSHA: Because you didn't have an affair with my husband?

6 – Graham, still on the ground.

GRAHAM: You were as good as divorced. It was over. You couldn't admit it. Last night, we were meeting for old time sake. Believe it or not, he loved me.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 – Graham in pain.

GRAHAM: Ow! My leg!

2 – Marsha stands over Kathy Graham. Graham motions with her hand.

MARSHA: We need to get you to a hospital.

GRAHAM: Come closer.

3 – Graham has reached up, grabbed a good hold on Marsha hair, pulling hard.

MARSHA: Ah! You bitch!

4 – Marsha slaps Graham's face. Kathy, still holding Marsha's hair, also reaches for Marsha's ankle.

SFX: Wack!

MARSHA: Let go!

5 – Graham pulls at Marsha's ankle. Marsha falls down on top of her.

6 – Full out cat fight.

GRAHAM: I hate you!

MARSHA: I hate you more!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 – Close on Graham and Marsha as they angrily stare at each other.

2 – Same shot. They start laughing.

GRAHAM: Hahahaha.

MARSHA: Heh.

3 – Marsha falls over beside her.

4 – Overhead shot. Both of them lay in the grass, looking up at the sky. They seem calm now or just worn out.

GRAHAM: What happened this morning?

MARSHA: My organization. We do this professionally.

GRAHAM: Who hired you?

MARSHA: You know I can't tell.

5 – Closer on the two ladies, both smiling.

MARSHA: Sorry.

GRAHAM: Accepted.

I still hate you. If I lose this election, I'm going to ruin you.

MARSHA: I'd like to see you try.

6 – Pull far back. Two ladies at the bottom of a grassy hill. The busy road at the top. The RV is parked along the side of the road. It's a beautiful day.

GRAHAM: Can I have my cell phone back?

MARSHA: No.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 – The Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Roland sits on the outside steps. This is a similar scene to chapter two, page one. Malcolm walks up. It's the day after the election. Roland looks pissed.

2 – Roland stands and points menacingly towards Malcolm (off panel).

ROLAND: Don't you come a step closer.

3 – Malcolm looks casual.

MALCOLM: And if I do?

4 – Wide panel. Shot of them standing their ground.

ROLAND: I will kill you. Kathy Graham won the election.

MALCOLM: It was close, but all the other candidates split the vote.

ROLAND: We didn't pay you for "close."

MALCOLM: You asked us to target her. We did, and it was some our best work. No one paid us to rig an election.

5 – Close on Malcolm, giving the straight talk.

MALCOLM: Kathy Graham may be mayor now, but if they continue to investigate, this scandal will ruin her. You have more political clout than ever before. We did all this, working on a tight schedule.

6 – Roland looks off, disgusted.

ROLAND: Malcolm, all I hear are excuses. You and your family are no longer welcome in this neighborhood.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 – Malcolm walks away. Roland is in the background.

MALCOLM: When was I ever welcome? You take advantage of everyone, and then call yourself a pillar of the community.

ROLAND: We want our money back! You hear me?!

2 – Malcolm speaks into his wristwatch, similar to page four of the first Karma Incorporated series.

MALCOLM: Art, cue the bucket.

3 – Art is on the roof of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. He holds a large bucket, filled with water. Art wears a headset with attached microphone.

ART: Gladly.

4 – Art has lost control of the bucket.

ART: Uh oh...

5 – Art no longer has the bucket. He looks down in dread.

6 – The bucket, filled with water, lands on top of Roland. Knocking him out cold.

SFX: THUD!

7 – Malcolm looks at Roland, unconscious on the steps with a bucket next to him.

ART (off panel): Sorry!

MALCOLM: Terry was better at this kind of stuff.

PAGE TWENTY

1 – Establishing shot of the Murray Lofts in Deep Ellum. The site of Karma Incorporated's new headquarters.

CAPTION: Six months later

2 – Interior of their loft offices. There are windows on all sides, a few sky lights, track lighting, wood floors, book shelves, plants, three desks, a nice couch, and boxes that still need to be unpacked. Marsha holds two cups of coffee from Murray Street Coffee House. Susan is there too. Susan is in a sleek black wheelchair, not one from the hospital, clearly a more permanent arrangement. She has fingerless gloves on her hands.

MARSHA: Here I brought you a latte.

SUSAN: Thanks. Caffeine good.

MARSHA: How do you like the new office?

3 – Close on Susan as she looks around.

SUSAN: It's nice. Better than the hospital.

4 – Marsha admires the new place, along with Susan.

MARSHA: We were meeting at the coffee house across the street. They had a nice quiet upstairs area, but I decided we need something more permanent.

5 – Susan looks worried.

SUSAN: Marsha, after everything that happened, I can't return to my apartment. I don't feel safe.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 – Marsha looks at Susan.

MARSHA: I know. You can stay with me. We already moved your stuff.

SUSAN: Thanks.

2 – Susan rolls over to the window. On the brick wall, next to the window, there's a framed shadow box with a lock of the mayor's hair nicely displayed.

SUSAN: The view is great. Has anyone tried a water balloon launcher?

3 – Marsha walks over the window as well. Susan looks out the window.

MARSHA: Art and Malcolm nailed some guy at the corner of Hall and Elm Street on the first day.

4 – Same shot.

SUSAN: Nice.

5 – Susan looks back at Marsha. Susan is concerned.

SUSAN: Have you heard from Terry?

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 - Close on Marsha. Melancholy.

MARSHA: Not since we sent him to the hospital with you.

2 - Together, they look out the window.

SUSAN: Do you think he's -- ?

MARSHA: I don't know.

3 - Same shot. A quiet moment.

4 - On Susan.

SUSAN: Can I try the water balloon launcher?

5 - On Marsha. She smiles.

MARSHA: Sure.

SUSAN (off panel): Like now?

MARSHA: I'll get it.

END.



MARSHA FROM KARMA
INCORPORATED



MALCOLM FROM KARMA INCORPORATED



TERRY FROM KARMA INCORPORATED



SUSAN FROM KARMA INCORPORATED



ART FROM KARMA
INCORPORATED

Short Stories featured in PopGun,
published by Image Comics

50 Miles to Marfa
The Heist and The Heart Attack

50 MILES TO MARFA
(8 page short story, full color)

written by David Hopkins
illustrated by Daniel Warner

SYNOPSIS: Two con men STAG and LEN ditch their getaway car, along with a dead body, out in the middle of nowhere. They now have to walk to the nearest town. Another associate SARAH drives up and, at gunpoint, steals their suitcase. Len rigged the suitcase with explosives intended for Stag. The car blows up. Stag confronts Len about the deception. Stag's impressed and doesn't hold a grudge. The money is still in the car. They walk back to get it.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

STAG - seriously thinning dark hair, a comb over in the making, a thick trashy mustache, sideburns, button-up short sleeve shirt, tight blue jeans, excitable demeanor

LEN - half a foot taller than Stag, he has long straight dirty blonde hair down to his shoulders, he wears a cowboy hat, has a bruised black-eye, swollen

SARAH - a tall slender girl, huge Hollywood sunglasses, tank top, hair pulled back into two short unbraided pigtails, dyed red with dark roots

PAGE ONE

1 - Close on a dead body behind the driver's seat, as seen through the front windshield of 1982 "98" Regency Oldsmobile. It's a man in a business suit. His head is angled back against the head rest. Eyes, rolled back, and slightly open. No noticeable wound, but some blood sprinkled on his face. There's a large crack across the windshield, unrelated to anything.

CAPTION (STAG): For a grifter, there are two ways to put food on the table. The short con and the long con.

STAG (off panel): Be careful now. Keep pushing.

2 – Pull back. Stag and Len are behind the Regency, pushing it towards a cliff. They are not on any road, but on the open plains of west Texas, outside of Marfa. (geographic references available on Wikipedia) Nearby on the ground, there's a briefcase.

CAPTION (STAG): The short con is your bread and butter -- mail fraud, insurance scams, identity theft. Nice, safe, and consistent ways to screw over innocent people.

STAG: Careful.

LEN: I know.

3 – Stag and Len keep pushing the Regency. The front wheels are off the cliff's edge, so the front end of the car dips down and the back end rises slightly.

CAPTION (STAG): The long con is your last meal. Takes time, careful planning, and you hope it's worth it, because the long con is most often against your own partner.

Cannibalism. We eat our own.

4 – Stag and Len stand back, as the Regency's back end raises more, beginning to slide and tip over the cliff's edge.

CAPTION (STAG): Work with another guy long enough, his share begins to look nice and juicy. Your mind dwells on these things, and you get hungry.

PAGE TWO

1 – On the Regency, falling off the cliff. It's about a thirty foot drop, nothing too monumental. A few red tailed hawks hover, circling in the sky.

CAPTION (STAG): I'm at a distinct advantage, because I'm not a smart man and I know it. Too many geniuses take up the grift, well aware of how fucking clever they all are.

I'm an idiot, which gives me a unique edge. I do things no normal grifter would even consider, because it's usually a bad idea to begin with.

2 – The Regency's front end crunches into the ground at the bottom of the cliff – the front and side windows shatter. The hawks scatter a bit from their aerial formation when the car hits.

CAPTION (STAG): For instance, in theory, ditching this car and this body out in the middle of nowhere would seem like a good idea. However, there are two problems.

3 – The Regency rolls over on its side.

CAPTION (STAG): First, leave something in the middle of nowhere, and when it gets found (and it will get found), people know it's not supposed to be there.

CAPTION (STAG): Second, you ditch a car – how the fuck are you suppose to get home? Walk? I didn't think that far ahead.

4 – Len looks over the side of the cliff. Stag looks in the other direction towards the open nothingness of West Texas.

CAPTION (STAG): As I said, I'm not a smart man.

PAGE THREE

1 – Stag, a wide-eyed look of realization.

STAG: Oh, fuck me.

Fuck. Me.

2 – Len looks back towards Stag. Stag puts his hand to his mouth, dumbfounded by his own stupidity.

LEN: What?

STAG: Fuck.

LEN: What?

3 - Stag hits Len over the head.

STAG: How the fuck are we supposed to get home, huh? Huh? We gotta walk! Out in the fucking plains!

4 - Len adjusts and repositions his cowboy hat on his head, giving Stag a sour look.

5 - Len smirks as Stag leans over to pick up the suitcase.

LEN: No worries. What? 50 miles? 50 miles to Marfa? I can carry the suitcase.

6 - Stag begins to walk, leaving Len behind. Note: Whenever walking to Marfa, it will be from the right side of the panel heading towards the left, just so we establish that general direction in the reader's mind.

STAG: No, I'll carry the suitcase.

LEN: You're the boss.

PAGE FOUR

1 - Stag (shirt now unbuttoned) and Len have reached the road. It's barren. Len is straggling a good twenty feet behind Stag.

2 - Stag and Len walk along the empty road. Len is still about twenty feet behind.

LEN: Do you think Sarah's going to rat on us?

STAG: I don't know.

LEN: I mean, the whole scam depends on the teller angle. If I were her, I would've done the operation solo. She's the catch, not us.

3 – Close on Len. We can see the sweat on his face. The shade from the cowboy hat does not help.

LEN: It's a little hot today.

4 – Stag and Len walk along the empty road. Len is several feet behind.

STAG: Len?

LEN: Yeah?

STAG: Shut up.

PAGE FIVE

1 – Stag and Len walk along the empty road... still. The oppressive sun's overhead.

2 – Stag looks back at Len, several feet behind. Len has stopped too, bent over, resting his hands on his knees.

3 – Same shot. The two men are staring at each other. Stag's hands, one holding the suitcase, are raised up in frustration. Len still bent over.

STAG: What are you straggling for? Hurry up.

LEN: I'm tired. I didn't know it'd be this far of a walk.

4 – Stag turns away from Len, and continues to walk.

STAG: That's why it's called the middle of nowhere, you fuck.

LEN: Don't be condescending. You go ahead. I'll catch up.

5 – A 1964 Chevy Nova drives past the Stag and Len.

6 – The Nova stops ahead of them, having pulled off to the side of the road.

PAGE SIX

1 – Sarah steps out of the car. She’s got one hand behind her back.

2 – Stag walks up to Sarah. He’s happy to see her.

STAG: Sarah! Thank god.

3 – Sarah pulls out a colt 38 handgun, pointing it at Stag. She has an evil smile. She loves the control.

SARAH: Um, no.

4 – Stag hands over the suitcase to Sarah. She reaches out for it with her other hand.

STAG: Oh come on. This is ridiculous.

LEN (off panel): Sarah, you really shouldn’t do this.

5 – Sarah with the suitcase.

SARAH: Hey Len, you want to come with?

PAGE SEVEN

1 – Sarah and Stag both look at Len, still twenty feet back. Waiting for a response. His eyes avert to the left, not wanting to make eye contact with either of them.

2 – Close on Len. Now his eyes are straight ahead. He’s made his mind.

LEN: I’m staying here. With my partner.

3 – Sarah couldn’t care one way or another. She’s getting back into the car.

SARAH: Whatever. I’m out.

4 – The Chevy Nova drives off in the background. In the foreground, Len and Stag are on the side of the road, standing next to each other, looking at each other.

STAG: Thanks Len. That's loyalty. I appreciate it.

5 – Same exact shot, except the Chevy Nova blows up. Pieces of car fly everywhere. Stag reacts with surprise: What the hell! Len stands there, unmoved.

SFX: BOOM!

6 – Stag looks at Len who just shrugs. The car is smoldering in the distance.

STAG: A bomb! You put a fuckin' bomb in the suitcase!

LEN: It was supposed to be a small bomb.

PAGE EIGHT

1 – The two con men face each other on the side of the road. A smoldering hub cap bounces by.

2 – Move closer on them.

STAG: You were banking on me carrying it, huh?

LEN: You like to carry the money.

3 – Stag asks the question. Len points back the other way.

STAG: So where *is* the money?

LEN: In the trunk of the car. I was going to come back for it.

4 – Without any discussion, they simply turn around and walk back the other way, now closer to each other.

STAG: You really were going to blow me up? Have you ever made a bomb before?

LEN: I had some help from a few of our old friends.

STAG: What if you timed it wrong? Why not just shoot me?

5 – They continue walking down the road, away from the reader.

LEN: You're right. I'm not that smart about these things.

STAG: Geez. Everyone wants to be so fucking clever.

LEN: I know. I'm sorry.

END.

THE HEIST AND THE HEART ATTACK
(8 page short story, full color)

written by David Hopkins
illustrated by Evan Bryce

SYNOPSIS: In El Paso, Texas, con artists Stag and Len are about to rob a bank. First, they have to calm down their panicked accomplice Jeffrey and coach him on what to do. They have another con artist Sarah on the inside as a teller. As part of the act, Jeffrey pretends to be an undercover police officer and holds Stag and Len at gun point. The intention is to provide a clever escape. Jeffrey though has a heart attack. He falls dead. Stag and Len don't really know what to do, and drag him to their getaway car.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

STAG – as described in “50 Miles to Marfa”

LEN – as described in “50 Miles to Marfa”

SARAH – a tall slender black girl, button striped shirt with a name tag, hair pulled back into two short unbraided pigtails, dyed red with blonde roots, cynical

JEFFREY – thick brown hair combed forward, thick oversized glasses, wears a sports jacket, awkward and ill-suited as a grifter

PAGE ONE

1 – Large wide panel. Establishing interior shot of a small El Paso bank. The front counter with the tellers, SARAH as one of them, an obligatory glass bowl with blow pops, pens attached by beaded chains to the counter, security cameras, and the roped line with four customers holding their checks to deposit: a middle-aged mom with a large purse, a Mexican-American migrate farmer in a trucker hat, a suited business man, a sweet old lady.

CAPTION: I can see why people rob banks. It's where the money is.

2 – Outside the bank, Jeffrey sits on the curb next to the ATM, Stag puts a hand on Jeffrey's shoulder to comfort him. Len is in the background, leaning against the wall -- bored and looking off to the right. There's a silver briefcase also on the curb near them.

CAPTION: However, grifters should never attempt such a heist.

JEFFREY: I feel numb. Hard to breathe.

CAPTION: Here's why: bank robbers are unsophisticated blunt objects. They go in. They grab the money. They leave. It's fucking beautiful. In contrast, grifters always want to be clever.

3 – Closer on Jeffrey, sweating and panicky.

STAG (off panel): Come on. A simple misdirection con. You can do this.

JEFFREY: I know. Give me a second.

CAPTION: That works fine when you're attempting a scam or drop, but why bother with theatrics when you're holding a gun and yelling at a teller?

4 – Shot on Sarah as the teller. She's processing a deposit slip from the middle-aged mom (slightly off panel).

CAPTION: We planted someone on the inside. Sarah has a clean record. The bank hired her two months ago. She'll save us from any dye packs or silent alarms.

5 – Jeffrey, sweating, has now walked to the back of the roped line inside the bank.

CAPTION: We also included an uncover cop angle. Our friend would pretend to thwart the heist, put us and the money in his car. We'd drive off, before anyone thought twice.

CAPTION: Completely unnecessary, dumb idea, but what can I say?

PAGE TWO

1 - Close on Jeffrey. He looks out the corner of his eye anticipating his teammates' entrance. Jeffrey looks like a train wreck.

CAPTION: It was Jeffrey's idea, and he wanted in.

2 - Outside. Stag and Len stand near the ATM. They are each holding panty hose.

LEN: Can Jeffrey do this?

STAG: Fuck if I know.

LEN: We should just grab the money and leave.

3 - Stag and Len simultaneously pull the panty hose on their respective heads.

STAG: You don't have to tell me.

LEN: After this, let's go back to insurance scams.

4 - Stag reaches behind his back. Stag and Len have the panty hose over their faces.

5 - Same shot. He's pulled out a beretta 92 handgun.

STAG: Deal.

PAGES THREE

1 - Straight on shot of Stag and Len as they burst through the front door of the bank. Stag holds his gun and the silver briefcase.

STAG: Good afternoon, you fucks. This is a robbery. Everyone get down.

2 - Len, for no reason, just punches the old lady in the face.

3 – Stag, with the briefcase on the counter, points his gun at Sarah.

STAG: Every bank safety policy I've read advises you put the money in the briefcase. Sweetie.

4 – Sarah proceeds to put the money in the suitcase. Half smile.

PAGE FOUR

1 – Wide shot. Stag and Len stand by the counter. Stag holds the suitcase. Every customer is on the ground, except Jeffrey. Stag and Len stare at the nervous Jeffrey as though it's a school play and they're waiting for him to deliver his line.

2 – Same shot. Stag improvises.

STAG: Well, we're done here.

3 – Same shot. Jeffrey fumbles to pull out his own gun from his jacket.

4 – Jeffrey now has his gun drawn and pointed. He's trembling all over.

JEFFREY: Hold... on. I'm an undercover police officer.

5 – On Stag and Len. Deadpan.

STAG: Well, crap. You got us.

PAGE FIVE

1 – On Jeffrey. He winces. He's in great pain.

2 – Jeffrey's gun dangles from his hand as he struggles with the pain. He's having a heart attack.

3 – Stag and Len stare at Jeffrey, as he begins to crumble.

LEN: Dang. Officer. We almost got away too. We sure picked --

4 - Jeffrey slumps to the floor. Unconscious. Stag and Len just stare at him.

LEN: -- the wrong bank?

You okay?

5 - Jeffrey, face down on the floor.

JEFFREY: Uhhhh.

PAGE SIX

1 - The bank customers on the ground. They all look at each other. What is going on?

2 - Stag nudges Jeffrey with his foot.

STAG: Um, hey. You.

3 - The business man on the floor tries to be helpful.

BUSINESS MAN: I think he's had a heart attack.

4 - Sarah rolls her eyes.

PAGE SEVEN

1 - Len begins to drag Jeffrey by the shoulders. Stag, still holding onto the briefcase and gun.

2 - On Stag

STAG: We're taking this undercover police officer to the hospital. Don't stop us. He might die without immediate medical attention.

3 - Len struggles to lift up Jeffrey a bit, while also attempting to pull open the door.

LEN: A little help here?

4 – Stag leans over Jeffrey to help pull the door open.

STAG: I got it.

PAGE EIGHT

1 – Outside. With the panty hose masks now pulled back, Stag and Len move towards their getaway car, 1982 "98" Regency Oldsmobile. Stag looks behind him. Len has the unconscious Jeffrey under one arm. Jeffrey's feet drag.

STAG: Len, you punched that old lady in the face. Was that necessary?

2 – Backseat door of the Regency open. Stag and Len shove Jeffrey in.

LEN: I was trying to scare them. Show some force.

STAG: It worked.

3 – Len shuts the backseat door.

STAG: Don't punch any more old ladies.

LEN: I won't.

4 – Len and Stag now sit inside the Regency. Len driving. Stag riding shotgun.

STAG: Drive to Marfa?

LEN: Are we still ditching the car?

5 – The Regency drives away and down the street.

STAG: Yeah, ditch this car... and Jeffrey.

END.

About the author

Born in Chicago. Raised in Texas.

David's work includes *Karma Incorporated*, *Emily Edison*, *Astronaut Dad*, an adaptation of *Antigone*, plus regular contributions to D Magazine. He was recognized in the Dallas Observer's Best Of 2006 as "Best Local Comic Book Writer" and the American Library Association's list of "Great Graphic Novels for Teens." For the past nine years, he's taught English and Creative Writing at Martin High School.

David lives in Arlington, Texas with his daughter Kennedy, his girlfriend April, and two dogs Baxter and Berkeley.