

The Nine Brides

By David Hopkins

Script V2

Edits to previous draft of script:

Added title page for quick reference of edits made.

At request of owner all spellings of Helona are now Halona.

Ginger and April's awakening scenes have been combined

Ginger and April have a talk

Ginger and April's capture scene has been combined

Some lines added or minor dialogue edits.

Flashback picture descriptions added to the scenes where the women describe they're lives. These will be handled as parenthesized descriptions underneath dialogue.

I have started drawing pages, This script will be updated as I go.

(Yet to add, more flashback prompts, Cherpy scenes (Front and back),

Halona and Celeste on dresses and societal approved bondage)

Here we go.

Page 1

Panel 1

A big green text saying “PLAY” encompasses the black panel suggesting a video tape starting up. In every following panel until the title page put a little green triangle in the bottom left corner to suggest a tape is running.

Panels 2&3

Video static

Panels 4-6

POV of a shaky hand held camera going up a set of stairs in a poorly lit hallway. There is a door at the top of the stairs. In these panels we could probably get away with reusing the same background zoomed in.

Panel 7

A hand reaches past the camera and opens the door.

Panel 8

Revealing a small room with no windows. In the center of the room, under a single exposed bulb, a pre-teen girl (HEIDI) is on her knees with her back to the camera. Her hands are tied behind her back and around her feet. Although blindfolded, HEIDI’s head turns as the camera approaches her.

VADE (From behind the camera)

Good morning Heidi. Are we feeling any better today?

Page 2

(Because of the way the page eventually laid itself out (In sort of a spiral pattern) I was thinking of using the dialogue bubble’s to sort of bridge readers to each new panel)

Panel 1

(Scene continues) Camera man is circling around HEIDI.

HEIDI
Let me go.

Panel 2
The camera continues circling.

Panel 3

VADE (Off screen)
Daddy finally died today.

HEIDI is visually stunned and begins to weep.

HEIDI
No...

Panel 4

VADE (Off screen)
It's true, I've got it all on tape if you'd like to see.

Panel 5

VADE (Off screen)
By the way do you want to know what that burning
smell is?

Panel 6

VADE (Off screen)
Hint, it's not Daddy's after-shave.

HEIDI screams. When she calms down VADE continues.

Panel 7

VADE (Off screen)
So...

Page 3

Panel 1

VADE (Off screen)
Is this the point where Duddley Doo Right jumps
in to save our young maiden?

Panel 2
HEIDI quiets and listens.

VADE (Off screen)
Or perhaps this is the point where the killer
realizes his wrongs and let the poor young girl go?

Panel 3

HEIDI
Please...

Panel 4

VADE (Off screen)
Sorry, I don't make those kinds of movies.

The rest of the page is television static, except for that little green triangle on the bottom left corner of the page, suggesting a break in the film.

Page 4

Panel 1 & 2
Static

Panel 3

The view once again becomes clear and we see a close up of HEIDI's face. HEIDI has apparently been redressed in a sort of prom dress. We are now outdoors, although all we see of the background is blue sky with a sprinkling of clouds behind her and the tops of trees poking out from the bottom of the frame. A strong wind is blowing through HEIDI's hair.

VADE (Off screen)
Good now stay there while I get the angle right.

Panel 4

HEIDI takes numerous panicked breaths while the camera circles around her but she does not move.

HEIDI
Please, I want my mother.

Panel 5

Do the background of this panel either on a separate sheet or on the back of this page so that it can be recycled for the next couple of panels

HEIDI
I just want to see my momma again.

Panel 6

HEIDI
I want my momma!

The camera steps back and we see that HEIDI is standing on the edge of a building. If she were to take another step she would fall to her death. Trees, buildings, clouds and mountainscapes are at your discretion Roz, just as long as the reader knows what danger HEIDI is in before she does.

VADE (Off screen)
You can take the blindfold off now little girl.

Panel 7

HEIDI does so

Page 5

Panel 1

HEIDI looks down and she screams. The panel is purposely off center to give the impression of erratic forward movement. Roz, Don't worry about a background for the first two panels on this page. I'm relatively sure I can produce it from the back ground of page 4.

HEIDI
AAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Panel 2

She looks behind her just in time to see the camera rush forward...

HEIDI
NO! MOMMA!!!

Panel 3 & 4

...and VADE, pushes her over the edge. The camera follows her down having been dropped with her.

HEIDI
Ennn! Nnnn!

Panel 5

HEIDI falls with the camera/reader following

HEIDI
NO!!!

Page 6

Panel 1

The camera rolls focusing on the building walls zooming by.

HEIDI (Off Panel)
OH GOD! OH GOD!

Panel 2

The camera continues to roll, catching a glimpse of VADE looking over the edge of the building

The way this page was laid out left open a lot of space which gave me an idea that the panel could bleed into the open space. I'll go back and hint the panels could do this in a moment. This gives me an idea about how the sequence ends. Opinions?

HEIDI (Off Panel)
NO!

Panel 3

Upside down view of the surrounding scenery HEIDI is still off panel.

HEIDI (Off Panel)

NO!

Panel 4

The ground and HEIDI's hand are once again in view.

Roz there is a 3d arrow drawn in this panel to show the angle of the ground. The arrow is on its own layer.

(Although to be honest I don't think it matters what angle it's shown at.)

HEIDI (Off Panel)

NO!

Panel 5

Most of HEIDI is in view as she heads for the ground

HEIDI (Off Panel)

NO!

Page 7

Panel 1

HEIDI is so close to the ground that we can now see her shadow against it.

HEIDI

Mo-

Panel 2

HEIDI splats against the pavement.

HEIDI

-

Panel 3

The last thing the camera sees before hitting the ground and is destroyed is a close up of HEIDI's broken face.

Panel 4

Once again static.

Page 8

This is where we display our “9 Brides” title.

At this point some time has passed, but I don’t want readers to know exactly how much time has passed. Normally I’d solve this with an exterior shot, but I also don’t want to give the reader any clue as to where they are now. One idea I had is that the above starts as soon as the reader opens the book leaving the inside cover as blank as possible with no titles or publisher credits until after the opening sequence finishes.

What I have set up in the page is a sort of Hashmarks logo with the “Brides” text to be added in PS. The back ground of the page should be solid black but I’d like flowers and leaves in the bottom of the page with little ripples suggesting that the black is only a poorly lit pond. This page will likely see several edits and redoes.

Page 9

Panel 1

The left side of the panel is black, but we are no longer seeing through the eyes of a camera. The black slides away (Likely due to some PS tool) to show out first view of the factory from inside. It is a long hallway with doors on either side. (To expose the labyrinth)

Panel 2

Next is the inside of an empty room. It is disheveled and unkempt, but the main purpose of this panel is to show a bricked in window. (To show isolation)

Panel 3

Now a panel of the ceiling and an exposed florescent lamp. One of the elongated bulbs is still lit while the other has died out. (To suggest age.) (If this were animated I’d have the lit bulb flicker and die at this point)

SQUAL (O/P)
Hello?

Panel 4

Another room with dusty cardboard boxes stacked and in the center hanging from the ceiling a single light bulb. (For loneliness)

Panel 5

A close up of the pipes that occasionally run along the hallway walls. (Mixed with Squal's off panel request, I hope, will give readers the idea that she is lost) (Roz remind me to show you some of HR Giger's pipe paintings for inspiration on this panel.)

SQUAL (O/P)
Can anybody hear me?

Panel 6

We expose the shredding room. There should be something uniquely foreboding about this room. In the story, the most death happens here. I'm thinking about using rust colors to contradict the rest of the building's gray but I would like something in its design. Especially the machine it's self. If we could work it so that it seems to have a face with out being too obvious, like the front of a car or how a house with two windows lights on look as if they're looking back, that would be great!

The machine will need a large feeder at the top of it accessible by stairs (which HALONA and CELESTE will hide under) which lead to a platform and a crane with which to feed things into the machine from above.

The room holding the machine will need some sort of observation room looking over it (Where SQUAL and VIDALIA watch)

Roz? When the time comes I'll talk to you about ideas I have on all of this.

SQUAL (O/P)
...anyone...?

Page 10

Panel 1

We see SQUAL. She has been tied sitting with her hands around a column in the middle of a poorly lit room. A rope around her ankles that leads to a line connected to the top of the column lifts her feet. She is wearing an elegant bridal gown and her facial expression shows confusion and fear. She struggles vainly against the ropes that hold her in place.

The background around her suggests she is in some kind of church setting. (Stacks of bibles, tiled floor ect. I dunno.)

BOX

Bride #5

Name: Squal Middling

Age: 28

Occupation: Homemaker

Panel 2

In this panel SQUAL is looking over her surroundings but the curved edge of the panel's betrays to the reader that she is being recorded.

Panel 3

(Not recorded) SQUAL looks up to find a weakness in the bonds that hold her.

Panel 4

SQUAL continues to struggle but this panel shows that the room she is in is different from the rest of the factory. While one half of the room retains the dry crusty decor of the factory as shown in the last page, the half that SQUAL inhabits is made up to look like the hallway of a cathedral. Including dusty paintings and stacks of hymnals tossed around the floor. Showing this half room concept sounds like it would be tricky, and I welcome your ideas.

SQUAL (To the ropes)

ENGH!

Panel 5

Close up on SQUAL still at it

SQUAL (To the ropes)

Come on!

Panel 6

And still at it...

SQUAL (To the ropes)

Ehhh!

Page 11

Panel 1

Back in a factory corridor we see an open door.

PAREDOLIA

Come on!

Panel 2

The scene changes and we now see that PAREDOLIA is making headway against the ropes that hold her to the towel rack. The room she is in is made to resemble a bathroom; there is a toilet, a bathtub (Which PAREDOLIA is standing in) and a showerhead.

As it was with SQUAL she is also dressed as a bride.

PAREDOLIA

All most!

Panel 3

Putting a foot against the wall to brace her, she gives an extra hard tug at the ropes.

PAREDOLIA

EERRRRR!!!

Panel 4

After a brief bit of resistance, she breaks free, loosing her balance in the process.

Panel 5

Having fallen half in and half out of the tub, we can see now that she is in another half-dressed room of the factory as the background now from a new angle is completely dirty.

PAREDOLIA

Ow...

Panel 6

She starts to get herself up. The background is clean again.

PAREDOLIA

I've got to get out of here...

Panel 7

She bites on the ropes around her wrists, freeing herself. I've left notes (on a separate layer) about where to show the divide between dirty and clean sections of the room.

Panel 8

Rubbing her newly freed wrists, she is interrupted by a cry for help some distance away.

MENIAL (Off panel)

Help! Is anybody there?

Panel 9

PAREDOLIA gets up to investigate.

PAREDOLIA (Whispering to herself)

I'm coming whoever you are. Just hold on...

Panel 10

Now completely free PAREDOLIA steps through the door into the factory hallway towards the plea for help. The box is at the top of the panel with her word balloon at the bottom. (This is set up so that the reader notices the box after seeing panel 2.

BOX

Bride #7

Name: Paredolia Vibius

Occupation: Student (Psychology)

PAREDOLIA

... and for God's sake keep quiet.

Panel 1

The scene switches to APRIL who is also tied to a pole in an empty room and she is also wearing a bride's gown but her head is slumped forward as if passed out. She too is in a half-dressed room, with potted plants and other paraphernalia made to suggest a jungle setting.

BOX

Bride # 2

Name: April Stamper

Age: 18

Occupation: Student (K-12)

Panel 2

Slowly APRIL begins to wake and as she does she becomes more aware of her plight.

APRIL

Unh, wha...

Panel 3

Continued Panel 2

APRIL

Why cant I- HUH!

Panel 4

Forward of APRIL on the pole

APRIL

How did I get here?

Panel 5

She struggles briefly. The BG of this panel is dirty and we can see a bricked in window.

APRIL

Ennnh!

Panel 6

APRIL cries out

APRIL
HELP! Is anyone out there?

Panel 7
Continued panel 6, camera shot.

APRIL
HELP!

Page 13

Panel 1

Next we see GINGER. Like the others she is terrified, confused, and adorned in a bride's gown. She is tied to a wall similar to a princess in a medieval dungeon to which her half dressed room reflects. GINGER struggles for a few moments...

BOX
Bride #1
Name: Ginger McFearson
Age: 19
Occupation: Hostess

GINGER
NNNN!

Panel 2
...but soon quits with a depressed huff.

GINGER
It's no use. They won't budge.

Panel 3
Close up of GINGER's face as she reacts to APRIL's cry.
Camera shot.

APRIL (Off Panel)
Is anyone there?

Panel 4

We see a vent in the ceiling where APRIL's voice is coming from.

APRIL (From the vent)
Please?

Panel 5

GINGER yells to the vent.

GINGER
Hello? I hear you!

Page 14

Panel 1

APRIL suddenly smiles hearing another voice. She notices the vent in the floor.

GINGER (Off Panel)
Hey! Do you hear me?

Panel 2

This panel shows a cross section of the complex allowing the reader to see APRIL and GINGER's place with each other

APRIL
Yes! Oh yes!

GINGER
I need help. I've been tied to this wall and I can't get myself free. Can you help me?

Panel 3

APRIL

APRIL
Heh, Sorry hon. I sort of need some help too.

Panel 4

GINGER

GINGER

Oh... Is there anyone else there?

Panel 5

APRIL shrugs

APRIL

Nope, just me and my bones.

Panel 6

GIGER desperate.

GINGER

Well, then how do we get out of here?

Panel 7

APRIL sardonic.

APRIL

When you figure that out, be sure to tell me.

Page 15

Panel 1

We see HALONA leaning forward, her arms stretched behind her and her head nodded forward. She is in the simplest of the nine dresses. This is when we see her half-dressed room is a kitchen.

BOX

Bride #8

Name: Halona DelaChanto

Age: 48

Occupation: Cashier

Panel 2

HALONA begins to wake up.

HALONA

Nnn...

Panel 3

HALONA looks behind herself and sees her wrists tied and resting against a pole. It is set up so that if she leaned back far enough she could slip her wrists over the top of the pole and be freed.

HALONA
Huh..? How did I-

Panel 4

She leans back. Stretching her arms.

HALONA
Ennh

Panel 5

Close up on HALONA's face from the side as she continues to struggle.

HALONA
Come on, just a little more, Just a little-

Panel 6

Extreme close up of HALONA's face as she makes an expression of surprise.

Page 16

Panel 1

HALONA jerks up as soon as she realizes something is wrong and immediately feels pain. she has been tied to an old stove. If she leans back enough she can easily free her hands and then quickly escape, but she will get burned.

HALONA
Engh!

HALONA
Hot... Burns...

HALONA
Jesus Christ, where am I?

Panel 2
Then she hears voices in the distance.

AL (Off panel)
You think theirs one over here?

DE'ROUCHER (Off panel between panels 2 & 3)
Yeah, yeah! The other guys are checking the upper
floors but I know theirs got to be a few in the
basement.

Panel 3
As they talk and come closer HALONA tests the oven again,
burning herself further.

AL (Off panel)
I know what I'm gonna do with 'em. You?

Panel 4
HALONA is given incentive to hurt herself to get
free.

DE'ROUCHER (Off panel)
Yeah I'm gonna bend her over the nearest surface
and fuck the shit out of her ass.

HALONA
Oh my God!

Panel 5
HALONA leans back allowing herself to be burnt (maybe add
little 's''s to help show this) and she stresses to finally unhook her
arms.

HALONA
Nnnnnnnngggg...

AL (Off panel)
No foreplay, just right in there?

DE'ROUCHER (Off panel)
Foreplay is for women and I don't care if they like
it!

Page 17

Panel 1

HALONA's hands go over the bar

Al (Off panel)
Oh I bet back home all the girls love you.

Panel 2

HALONA falls awkwardly

DE'ROUCHER (Off panel)
Shut up!

HALONA
ENN!

Panel 3

HELONA frees her feet

AL (Off panel)
You hear that?

Panel 4

HALONA gets up

DE'ROUCHER (Off panel)
Yeah! Hurry up!

Panel 5

HALONA hides as the two men enter and see the oven with the ropes on the floor.

DE'ROUCHER
GOD DAMN IT! The bitch bolted!

Page 18

Panel 1

MENIAL is hanging in the air from her arms with a rope around her wrists that attach to an over head lamp. She kicks and squirms but can not seem to get free. Her half dressed room is that of a typical office setting.

A note about the half dressed rooms: It seems to me that VADE doesn't have a set designer. So the accuracy of making them look as the script describes is not very important. Vade would not of sweated over details and would of just tossed into the set things that would give the impression of a setting. In this case, for example, while modern offices would certainly have computers and keypads, all Vade could find was an old typewriter and instead of facing a window, Vade would have the desk facing out of a corner, making its placement completely impractical.

MENIAL
Engh! ENHH!

BOX
Bride #4
Name: Menial Rigby
Age: 32
Occupation: Novelist

Panel 2

With a huff she lowers her head in defeat,

MENIAL
Its no use...

Panel 3

She sniffles

Panel 4 & 5

And then she closes her eyes and sobs softly.

MENIAL (softy pan 5)
Help...

Panel 6

This allows her to miss seeing PAREDOLIA walk into the room. PAREDOLIA instantly recognizes her face.

MENIAL (Softly off panel)
Please, someone help me...

Panel 7

MENIAL's head looks up.

PAREDOLIA (off panel)
M- ... Ms. Rigby?

Page 19

Panel 1

MENIAL's eyes are open in fright as she looks down at the woman bellow her.

PAREDOLIA
Can I help you down?

Panel 2

MENIAL looks blank for a moment

Panel 3

But she soon looks overjoyed.

MENIAL
Yes, Yes!

Panel 4

PAREDOLIA pushes a desk up to MENIAL for her to stand on.

MENIAL

Oh, thank God you found me!

Panel 5

PAREDOLIA also gets up on the desk and begins untying her wrists.

PAREDOLIA

Hold on, this won't take too long at all Ms Rigby.

MENIAL

Thank you, thank you. But, how do you know my name?

Panel 6

PAREDOLIA is embarrassed.

PAREDOLIA

I –um- I recognize you from your picture on the back of your books Ms. Rigby. Ma'am.

Panel 7

The ropes around MENIAL's wrists are undone and the two women step down from the desk.

MENIAL

Yes that did it!

Panel 8

PAREDOLIA steps down

PAREDOLIA (Idolizing)

I –um, I'm not sure this is the right time, but, I've read all your books.

Page 20

Panel 1

MENIAL speaks while PAREDOLIA beams
MENIAL (While rubbing her sore wrists)

Well, Coming from the woman who likely just saved my life, I'm deeply faltered. Please, you can call me by my first name.

Panel 2

Close up on PAREDOLIA

PAREDOLIA

I would but I think I'm pronouncing it wrong.

Panel 3

Close up MENIAL

MENIAL

Don't worry. Everyone does. It's not Me-nial it's Men-ial. My simple parents thought they were being creative and I don't think they knew how to use a dictionary.

Panel 4

PAREDOLIA introduces herself

PAREDOLIA (Proudly)

I'm Paredolia Vibius Ma'am. Er, Ms. Menial. It's Roman, uh, I think.

MENIAL

Yes I believe it is.

Panel 5

Close up PAREDOLIA

PAREDOLIA

But my friends call me Doli.

Panel 6

PAREDOLIA follows MENIAL out of the room.

MENIAL

Then may I call you Doli.

PAREDOLIA
Oh yes! Please do.

Page 21

Panel 1

PAREDOLIA and MENIAL venture out into the hallway.

PAREDOLIA
That's a beautiful dress.

MENIAL looks down at her dress as if she's seeing it for the first time.

MENIAL
Oh it's- it's not mine. I just- I was in my study and I guess I must of fallen asleep. But I woke here, in this... dress.

Panel 2

PAREDOLIA inspects her dress.

PAREDOLIA
Me too. I went to bed for the night and I woke up here. I'm not even really sure this isn't a dream. I mean, seeing you here. Some one I've wanted to meet for a long time.

Panel 3

Close up MENIAL

MENIAL
I don't think it's a dream. I thought it had to be a dream too but it can't be a dream if we both think we're dreaming. Can it? H-how long were we out?

Panel 4

The two women wander the hallway

PAREDOLIA

I don't know. I'm not even sure what time of day it is. All the windows have been bricked up.

MENIAL

That's... odd... Where are we?

END OF ISSUE 1

In still another room VIDALIA is giving a journeyman's effort at freeing herself. She has been tied to an elegant bed, which is in keeping with the bedroom aspect of her half-dressed room. While her legs are tied at the knees and ankles her arms are spread out towards the bedposts.

BOX

Bride #9

Name: Vidalia De Lourme

Age: 25

Occupation: None

VIDALIA doesn't know any English and can only speak French. I signify this by keeping her speech in-between alligator brackets. For example "Je suis Vidalia" would be written "<I am Vidalia>". I will continue this for the sake of the script but when we do our final version it'd be cool if we could only print her speech in French so that the average reader will be as much in the dark about what she's saying as the other characters.

If we can't find someone who will do the translations for free, then I will pay to get it done. I just worry about something that should read "What are you doing for dinner?" reading to a Frenchman as "I can has cheeseburger?"

VIDALIA

<Eh! Shit! Shit! SHIT!>

PUP (Off panel)

Did you hear that?!

VIDALIA looks up and decides that whoever is coming is the person who kidnapped her and tied her to the bed. As the voices speak she pulls harder on the ropes.

PUP (Off panel)

It's one of those bitches. Christ I hope it's the one I want. I'm gonna fuck that bookworm until she bleeds!

BENNIE (Off panel)

Be quiet... Niqug? Can you watch out for the others to make sure they don't interrupt?

VIDALIA succeeds in freeing her right hand and she uses it to free her left.

NIQUG (Off panel)

Surely... Would you like me to send them away or just slit they're throats?

BENNIE (Off panel)

Just plug 'em.

VIDALIA frees her other hand. Instead of freeing her legs she crawls off the side of the bed falling out of view just as PUP and BENNIE enter the room. I see them and NIQUG dressed in prison orange uniforms.

NIQUG (Off panel)

Delightful. Remember, I want her... After...

PUP

Where the fuck is she!

VIDALIA slides under the bed to completely hide herself.

BENNIE

She's not here.

PUP

You're a bright one aren't you Bennie? No wonder the mob kept you around.

PUP sits carelessly on the bed just over VIDALIA's head.

BENNIE

They never asked for my opinion on anything they
only wanted me to do my job.

PUP

Obviously. That's why I'm the brain of this group.

BENNIE

Come again?

PUP

I have a problem sometimes believing how stupid
you are. I'm the brains, you're the brawn and
Niqug is the creepy bastard we use to scare the
fuck out of people.

BENNIE

Is that so...

PUP

Yes. Which is why, I'm afraid to say, your going
to have to be happy with sloppy seconds this time
around champ.

BENNIE

What...

PUP

Brains always fuck first. Niqug always goes last
for... well... obvious reasons that I think even you
can understand.

BENNIE

Obviously...

PUP

Look, who had the plan to start the riot in E block
so the guards would be distracted and wouldn't
stop us from raping that visiting con's wife?

BENNIE
You did...

PUP
And who came up with the plan to sneak the home
made gun into the prison so we could kill that
stupid guard? The one made of wood so we could
destroy the evidence?

BENNIE
You did...

PUP
So brains are naturally going to have to fuck first.

BENNIE
Not this time...

PUP
Sorry Bennie.

BENNIE (Huffs)
Stand up boy, we have a problem.

PUP stands in front of BENNIE defiantly. Though BENNIE is taller,
PUP is giving off an air of superiority.

BENNIE
You know, theirs only one way to solve a problem.

BENNIE reaches into his shirt pocket and pulls out a deck of cards.
He carefully shuffles them and then fans them out in his left hand. He holds
the fan of cards toward PUP.

BENNIE
Pick a card...

PUP
What is this stupid sh-

BENNIE
Pick a card...

As PUP reaches for the fan BENNIE lets go of the fan and darts his hand forward. He yanks PUP towards him by the collar. From behind BENNIE's back his right hand produces a knife that slashes across PUP's throat. BENNIE then stabs the struggling young con in the chest and stomach over and over. When PUP falls to his knees BENNIE continues to stab repeatedly. Letting PUP fall to the ground BENNIE then starts to stomp on his head.

When I think of mob enforcers "finesse" is not a word that comes to mind rather "Violent explosion of rage" seems more appropriate and that's what I was going for with BENNIE killing PUP.

From the floor PUP sees VIDALIA hiding but is unable to communicate it. He dies.

BENNIE straightens himself and steps out of the room. From the doorway he is addressed by NIQUG.

NIQUG (Still off panel)
Is there... A problem?

BENNIE
No.

NIQUG (Off panel)
Excellent, I never liked him.

BENNIE
The ropes holding her arms were on the bed but the ones around her legs weren't. When the twit warned her we were coming she decided that it was acceptable to run with her legs still tied. She's not far from here. I'll go this way. Continue that way, if you find her, kill her and then do whatever.

NIQUG (Off panel)
Certainly.

End the scene with VIDALIA looking forward in terror at PUP's dead body.

The scene switches to CELESTE; she is still tied to a pole with her hands over her head. I think her dress should fit very loosely on her as if the person who put her in it couldn't find a dress small enough for someone of her age. Not sure what her half dressed room is either.

Note's about CELESTE: I'm not quite sure what the proper age of this character should be. I want her old enough so that she's not a burden and could conceivably do what she's required to in the story but young enough so that she is looks different from the other girls, without looking like a young boy.

BOX

Bride #3

Name: Celeste Giddeas

Age: 13

Occupation: None

CELESTE

HELP! HELP! -mnnh!

Suddenly a hand appears from behind her to cover her mouth. The scene pulls back to reveal a very concerned HALONA is the owner of the hand.

HALONA

Shhh... I'll get you free but you need to keep quiet.

HALONA begins on the ropes.

HALONA

I think we're in a great deal of danger here.

The scene should end before CELESTE is completely free.

HALONA

My name is Halona.

CELESTE

Celeste. Thank you.

This first scene with CELESTE may be a tad short...

GINGER is shaking her leg. They are getting tired being forced to stand. (Once again I'm going to assume the script reader realizes she and APRIL are in two different rooms and are communicating through a vent.)

GINGER

Hey? You still there? You didn't go and get rescued without me did you?

APRIL

Nope, still here. Where else would I be?

GINGER

Are you okay?

APRIL

That's kind of a silly question isn't it? I've got a slight cramp from the way my arm is being bent, I've probably rubbed my wrists raw trying to free them and I'm pretty sure I'll need to use the bathroom in about twenty minutes! So I'm fine thank you, how are you?

GINGER

Scared... (vent)I just wanted to talk to you...
(April)I'm sorry...

APRIL (Sighing)

No, no, I'm sorry... I'm scared too. Your right talking will help. What do you want to know?

GINGER

My name is Ginger.

APRIL

I'm April. Nice to meet you Ms. Ginger the ventilation grate.

GINGER (Laughs a little)

You're a very darling ventilation grate yourself.
Where do you come from?

APRIL (Happy for the distraction)
Hutchinson. (Candy tell me if this is incorrect)

GINGER
Kansas?

APRIL
Mhmm, near the Ken Kennedy Freeway.

GINGER
That's amazing! I live near the Hutchinson mall!

APRIL
You're kidding! If you take 11th avenue east from
the freeway, right at Porter St. and then left at 9th
my house is third on the right.

GINGER
I'm just a block away from you on Swan Drive.
Did you go to Dewsbury High?

APRIL
Yes! I don't remember any "Ginger's" though.

At this point (To spare monotony) we'll intersperse pictures with the
girl's speech.

A note about these "Flashback" pictures: When male characters are
shown in them they will all have their eyes closed, while the women's eyes
are open. I'm also flirting with the idea that all of the men in these pictures
should either seem like they are either ignoring or using the women.

GINGER
Well, I was in pep club and cheerleading.
(Behind GINGER show an image of her and other
cheerleaders "Ra-Raing" to a crowd.)

APRIL

That's why... I wasn't one of those prep girls. I mostly stayed to myself.
(Behind APRIL show her hiding out in the crowd trying not to be noticed.)

GINGER

Well when we get back I'll show you around, let all the girls get to know you and some of the boys too.

(Flank this image with GINGER and APRIL's faces looking proud and annoyed respectively.)

APRIL

Show me around! Like your pet or something?

GINGER

Oh no! That's not what I meant at all! It's just you said you were having trouble fitting in. I wanted to-

APRIL

I've got no trouble fitting in at all! Because I'm not trying to! I don't want to be a bimbo like you or that one ditz Cynthia Haley.

GINGER

You knew Cynthia.

APRIL

Well, I know she was a bad swimmer...

GINGER

Did you know she drowned?

APRIL

Oh, she must have been worse than I thought...

GINGER

Fuck you! You little bitch! Cynthia was my friend... I miss her...

APRIL stays quiet for a moment felling regretful as she listens to GINGER sobbing.

APRIL
I'm sorry, Ginger...

GINGER
No, I'm sorry, I... I just wanted to talk to you...
'm scared- I'll shut up now...

The vent continues to sob at her. GINGER opens her mouth to say more but she stays quiet.

We now return to PAREDOLIA and MENIAL walking the factory hallway moving in and out of rooms. PAREDOLIA is attempting to remain calm MENIAL is slowly loosing it.

MENIAL
Doli, I don't mean to sound like a rattled old hen,
but all this is really beginning to get to me.

PAREDOLIA
Oh you certainly shouldn't be sorry. Why don't we
take a rest for a moment?

The two take a seat next to each other on a crate. (or cinder block or some other convenient flat surface) MENIAL leans against the wall, while PAREDOLIA stretches her legs. Nearby is a window that has been bricked in.

MENIAL
Oh I'm not sure I can take this Doli.

PAREDOLIA
You'll be okay, I'm pretty sure. I mean, you made
it through three husbands I'm gonna bet you'll
come out of this fine.

MENIAL

My marriages ended because I couldn't take them
either.

PAREDOLIA

I'm sorry Menial. I'm sure it must be odd talking
to someone when they know everything about you
and you know nothing about them.

MENIAL (Smiles a little)

It certainly is. But I got used to it some time ago.
So tell me about yourself. Are you married?

PAREDOLIA

Me? Oh no.

MENIAL

Boy friend?

PAREDOLIA

No.

MENIAL

Then, girl friend?

PAREDOLIA

Oh, defiantly not! I mean, I just, that's not very
attractive to me.

MENIAL

Then you must have just gotten through with a
relationship.

PAREDOLIA

No... I'm just not looking I think. Too much
school to have to worry about romance.

MENIAL

That's really too bad. I'm glad I divorced, but I
really don't regret any time with my husbands.
What kind of school?

PAREDOLIA

I'm studying Psychiatry. I'm only a couple of years into it though.

MENIAL

That's not a subject I was ever really interested in. It would be counterproductive for a romance author to study psychiatry. That is someone who writes about people's feelings, studying how people think. Oh, I don't mean any offence.

PAREDOLIA

I wasn't offended. Your right, how people think and how people feel often contradict each other.

MENIAL

What got you interested in it?

PAREDOLIA

Well my mother was very interested in it as a hobby, but I think it was just based on the hope that she someday might understand my father.

MENIAL leans forward. Propping herself up on her arms.

MENIAL

What was your mother like?

PAREDOLIA

Caring, supportive, loving, I was a very ugly child. I know people say I'm different now but I don't see it. She always encouraged me and always told me I was beautiful. I believed it when she said it. (Behind her show a young (12ish) Paredolia, not very ugly at all.)

MENIAL

She sounds wonderful.

PAREDOLIA

Oh, she is and oh, is she gorgeous. I have this image in my head of my mother from when I was a kid. She would often wear this long gown. It was bright red, very respectful, and it left her back open. Whenever she and my father would go to parties she would wear it and while my father was getting ready before they left she, being the chameleon side of me, she would show me Rorschach paintings with the patens shed make on her back. She would tell me this is how she would test patients once she became a real psychiatrist. (Show this scene behind her. Her father is in a washroom tying a tie in a mirror.)

MENIAL stifles a giggle in a lady like manner. Her proper upbringing prohibiting her from fully expressing her enjoyment of the story.

PAREDOLIA

She was wearing that dress the night I left for school. One of father's parties was taking place the same evening and they left before my cab arrived to take me to the airport. On her way out the door, always following my father, she said "Now Paredolia Louise Vibius, don't let those throngs of boys who will be begging for your time distract you from your school work." I told her "Really mom, I don't think I'm all that good looking" She didn't say anything, she just looked at me over her shoulder and smiled at me telling me without saying a single word "Yes you are Doli, yes you are."

(This is accompanied with a picture of her mother in this moment.)

For a moment PAREDOLIA smiled blankly in memory of her mother. MENIAL smiled as well, in privilege of this fond memory being shared with her.

PAREDOLIA

That was the last time I saw my mother. I really should visit my parents. I don't think I've called them in a while either... I probably should, huh?

MENIAL

A mother like that? Yes you should.

PAREDOLIA

You haven't written much about your parents, have you?

MENIAL (Evasively)

I try not to.

PAREDOLIA

Um, I don't mean to pry.

MENIAL (Factually)

Oh, no Doli. You told me something very special about your parents; it's only proper that I do the same. I'm just not sure that there is anything interesting to be said about them.

PAREDOLIA

Well, was your father a romantic? Is that who you base the men in your books on?

MENIAL (Apologetically)

Your asking me about a man I really don't know. He worked late everyday, occasionally on the weekends. He left for his job in the morning and I was in bed when he returned. It's difficult to understand how he sired seven children.

PAREDOLIA

Seven!? Which child were you?

MENIAL

I was the oldest.

PAREDOLIA

Which meant you became a surrogate mother?

MENIAL

Well, yes. “Menial please hurry home from school as soon as you can. I will need to leave you with Cynthia so that I can visit the store.” “Oh good Menial your home. Cynthia needs changing and Jonathan has been tracking mud all over the house. Douglas missed his bus again and I need to pick him up.”

(Young (Teenaged) MENIAL wearing an apron and babushka holding up one child as another runs screaming past, while mother is waving goodbye in the background.)

PAREDOLIA

I’m sorry.

MENIAL

Why? It was my family. They needed my help and I was the oldest.

PAREDOLIA

But it also meant you didn’t get your chance to be a young woman. While you were changing your little sister’s diapers and babysitting your siblings, all your friends and peers were dating and partying and doing all the things your supposed to do when your young.

MENIAL (Shakes her head)

Yes... Mother still doesn’t understand why I ran away from home the very second I was offered a way out. My first husband... But, we were too young to wed. People change when they’re young. They aren’t who they eventually become, when they get older.

(Early twenties MENIAL extremely happy, with her first husband who looks disinterested.)

PAREDOLIA (Nodding)

I never had any brothers or sisters. I can't imagine what it was like for you.

MENIAL (Attempts to shake away emotion)

It wasn't all-bad. I had some moments to myself. I had my books. I had Peter S. Beagle, Candy DeWalt, Anne McCaffrey, Roz Gibson, Marion Zimmer Bradley, all the good ones. Life outside was somewhat miserable, but life in those books was so wonderful.

(Teenage MENIAL on her bed, in her room, with the door locked. (Maybe have the door shaking as if her parents were trying to find out if she was inside) She is enthusiastically reading a book labeled "The Griffin Rangers")

PAREDOLIA (Smiling)

I think I know who Beagle is but all the others went right over my head.

They both let out a small laugh, though MENIAL embarrassingly tries to cover it.

MENIAL

Oh, excuse me... I think I'm all right now Doli. We had probably better get going.

PAREDOLIA stands up, stretching as she does. MENIAL motions to the bricked in window.

MENIAL

Do you have any idea why the windows are bricked in?

PAREDOLIA

I don't know. But, I don't think we're alone here. Some one put us in these dresses. Someone tied us up.

MENIAL

What do you think they want with us?

PAREDOLIA

Your guess is as good as mine. Maybe this is a
drea-

KISHKA (Off panel)

Iz someone there?

PAREDOLIA and MENIAL look towards the sound of the voice.

MENIAL

I think I recognize that voice.

KISHKA (Off panel)

HELP ME!

PAREDOLIA

You do?

They run into a nearby room and find KISHKA tied sitting on a barstool in a bride's dress like the others. The room is dressed to look like a tawdry pup, but as before only one side of the room is fashioned in this way (Like a studio set...). When Candy and I were tossing around ideas, we thought it might be interesting if we fashion KISHKA's speech patterns after Zsa Zsa Gabor.

BOX

Bride #6

Name: Kishka Roseanne Lawrence Domingo

Age: 41

Occupation: Radio talk show host

MENIAL

Kishka, is that you?

KISHKA

Menial? Vat are you doing here?

As PAREDOLIA quickly works to untie her, KISHKA talks to MENIAL.

MENIAL

I don't know. I was working at my desk, when everything just went black. I woke up in this dress, tied up in this place.

KISHKA

Ze same thing, eet happened to me dahlink.

PAREDOLIA finishes with the ropes

PAREDOLIA

You're free now.

KISHKA

Thank you very much young lady. Do you know zis woman, Menial?

MENIAL

Yes. Paredolia saved me too.

KISHKA gets to her feet, she seems more determined than frightened and the others are feeding off of that positive energy.

KISHKA

I yam, by way of introduction, Mss. Kishka Roseanne Lawrence Domingo. But please dahlink, I insist that you call me Kish, and not Kishka. And no I am not Polish dahlink, I do not know why people always ask. I will certainly have to repay you Ms. Paredolia.

PAREDOLIA

Oh, just call me Doli. I'm pleased to meet you. How do you know Menial?

MENIAL

Kish hosts an AM talk show. Politics aren't really my area of interest but, Kish enjoys my books and I'm pleased to have been invited to her show a few times even if it was merely to prove that I don't know anything about government.

KISH

Tell me Doli. Do you follow ze politics?

PAREDOLIA

Only enough to know that the pachyderm is really old and the other guy is an ass.

KISHKA

Good enough dahlink. Well zare has to be a way een and out of zis place and right now we do not have anything better to do than look for eet. Yes?

MENIAL

Right.

MENIAL and PAREDOLIA nod and follow KISHKA's lead.

We are now again with GINGER. She is still tied to the wall and has her head down, seemingly having given up hope.

APRIL (O/P)

Are you okay down there?

GINGER

I want my mother...

APRIL isn't quite sure how to respond for a moment.

APRIL

Some one is bound to find us. I'm sure your mother is looking for you right now.

GINGER nods sighing,

NIQUG (Off Panel)
On candy striped legs...

GINGER's head snaps up in the direction of the voice coming from the doorway.

GINGER
Oh mister, You have to help me! I don't know how
I got here! I-

A thin leg appears near the top of the doorway.

APRIL (Off Panel)
What's going on?! Is someone there?

NIQUG (Off panel)
... The spider man comes...

GINGER opens her mouth but can conger up no sound as NIQUG enters the room upside down, walking on the ceiling. (I know that allowing a spider to walk on a ceiling, defeats my world staple of anthro's being fuzzy humans, but in this case the image of this entrance is too much to ignore.) As he comes closer to her, GINGER frantically tries to get impossibly closer to the wall she is secured to.

NIQUG
There is distress in your face maiden. As well there
should be. I already know you to be "Ginger".
Such a tripe and useless name to give a woman
who was worthless to begin with. But then the
"McFearsons" were never generally known for...
Well, any thing...

NIQUG trades the ceiling for the ground by stretching his legs in the grotesquely alien fashion that spiders do.

GINGER
How do you know-

NIQUG

You need not be disadvantage poor girl. My name is Niqug S'photugtat. Even the most dumbfounded of natures herbivores are given compensation over her carnivores. Even if that advantage is merely numbers, ensuring death will come to the population, in one fashion or the other.

As he advances he stretches his legs so that he towers over GINGER. He then lowers himself to examine her.

NIQUG

Which is a clue to the purpose of our relationship
Ginger.

NIQUG grabs GINGER's jaw and pushes it up, exposing her neck and slamming her head against the wall. NIQUG should now be about half a head taller than she is.

NIQUG (Sighing)

Such an indigestible farcical name. I believe I shall simply refrain from speaking it.

GINGER

ENG!

NIQUG forces her head to the side inspecting her face and looks over her body with all eight eyes.

GINGER

Nnnn- nnn- no....

NIQUG

Ravishing woman, I'm not here to save you... I'm here to eat you alive.

GINGER

No, Please d- MMNNN!

NIQUG covers GINGER's mouth with his free hand and releases her jaw to bring a finger to his lips.

GINGER
MNPFF!

NIQUG (Quietly)
Practice reticence, my enchanting sylph... There
are others and I don't want to share.

NIQUG pulls his hand away. He places his hands flat against the wall flanking her head. NIQUG simulates the up and down motion of love making, growling softly to himself. They're bodies do not touch and GINGER closes her eyes tightly.

NIQUG
Do you know why I used the word "My" just now?
It is because you are mine. Every part of you. Not
just this prodigious husk, that I am inescapably
drawn to.

NIQUG forces his body against hers, briefly causing GINGER to yelp.

GINGER
Ahh!!

NIQUG
Do not worry sweet beauty, I can not ravish you. I
am... incapable.

NIQUG takes GIGER by the hair and forces her face towards his.

NIQUG
I am now the singular proprietor, of your past, your
present and your ephemeral future. Your hold and
the clench others may have claimed to these things
are no longer credible.

Above her APRIL shouts in her defense.

APRIL

Who ever you are leave her alone! Just get the fuck
away from her!

APRIL hears a clanking sound behind her but she can't turn her head
far enough to see past the pole.

APRIL

Hey! Is someone back there? Please help her!

From behind her, angry hands slip a cloth gag into her mouth.

ARON (Off panel)

April, do you know what a Pyro is?

APRIL

MNPF!

NIQUG unzips the front of his prison oranges allowing his pedipalps
to exit and wander over her face. All eight of his eyes close in ecstasy.

NIQUG

Mmmmm... You taste heavenly.

GINGER

Oh God! Oh Jesus!

NIQUG

God! Jesus? Do not make the error of allowing
into your minuscule mind the illusion that even
your very soul is not now mine. Just because I can
not touch a thing, does not mean I do not keep it
hostage. You are in my web now Ginger...

NIQUG releases GINGER's head and once again covers her mouth
with his hand. (There is a temptation to draw NIQUG's next line in a very
sinister fashion but something in me insists for him to say it as if it were
simply fact.)

NIQUG

... Even your living soul is my slave now.

NIQUG uses his free hand to pull the neck of GINGER's dress down slightly, exposing her chest further. His pedipalps then force themselves in-between her breasts. GINGER gives a wide-eyed muffled scream.

GINGER

Nnnnn!

NIQUG (Dreamily)

You taste sssso good....

We split the scene with GINGER and NIQUG by returning to SQUAL, still bound, who seems to have given up.

SQUAL

Hnn!

A tug behind her wakes SQUAL up. She is surprised that she can now move her hands up to her face.

SQUAL

I'm free?

SQUAL looks behind herself and sees VIDALIA has untied the ropes that held her to the pole. Sincerely SQUAL thanks her.

SQUAL

Thank you.

But VIDALIA can only respond with confusion.

VIDALIA

<I'm sorry. I don't understand.>

SQUAL puzzles, as VIDALIA nervously looks around the room.

SQUAL
You don't speak English?

VIDALIA
<We'd better stay together. It's not safe here.
There are men. I saw one kill another man.>

SQUAL eyes VIDALIA curiously.

SQUAL
Are you all right? I mean you look kind of
worried.

VIDALIA notices SQUAL's attempts to converse and mistakes it as
some vague since that she understands her.

VIDALIA (Touching SQUAL's shoulders)
<I woke up before I woke up here. I saw two
people talking. I don't know what about.>

SQUAL completely misunderstands, touching VIDALIA's elbows.

SQUAL
I mean, not that you don't wear it well.

VIDALIA begins to understand she's being misunderstood. (God,
that's a junker of a line...)

VIDALIA
<They said something like> "Gas?" ... "No
witnesses?"

I purposely have the words "Gas" and "No witnesses" outside of
VIDALIA's crocodile brackets so that they are not translated into French.
Though, it may be useful to separate her attempts at English into they're
own captions.

SQUAL (Shrugging but smiling)
I don't know what you're saying. You don't
happen to know the way out of here do you?

VIDALIA huffs and steps away motioning for SQUAL to follow.

VIDALIA

<I suppose this is as good a direction as any.>

VIDALIA cautiously steps out of the room into the adjacent hallway. Carefully peering around corners. SQUAL follows her curiously.

SQUAL

Are you looking for someone?

VIDALIA turns her head to look at SQUAL, not understanding the words but hearing the concern.

SQUAL

Oh, I'm sorry, I forgot you don't understand.

VIDALIA continues, peering around corners as she goes.

SQUAL (Babbling)

I'm just trying to figure this place out. I went to bed last night and I woke up here, where here is I don't know. How I got in this dress, you've probably got a better idea than I do. I'm sure that if you could understand me you'd certainly agree. I know I'm not always the brightest bulb in the batch but I do know when something is wrong and this is-

SQUAL stops when VIDALIA takes a sudden shift of posture. She gives SQUAL a scandalous smile over her shoulder.

VIDALIA

<So, you're the talkative type. It is ironic, no?>

SQUAL

Um, I don't know. Eh, is there a spot on my dress?

VIDALIA holds a finger to her lips.

VIDALIA
Sssshhhh...

SQUAL blushes and begins to babble more silently.

SQUAL (Babbling)
Oh, I'm sorry. I've always had this thing with babbling. My doctor said its how I deal with anxiety, and uncomfortable situations. Oh! And stress! It drove my husband crazy, as you can well imagine. Well probably not imagine since you can't understand me. Well he didn't like it at all when we would be getting romantic and I'd start babbling away. He asked me once if I was just trying to avoid being intimate and I'd say "No" but I'd really mean, "Yes". Well this was all before he died, Off course.

VIDALIA smiles and shakes her head. They both stop for a moment, entering an empty room SQUAL continues to stand but VIDALIA sits on the floor leaning against a wall.

SQUAL
Oh, I do hope I'm not boring you.

VIDALIA looks up to SQUAL sensing that she has just requested a response.

VIDALIA
<I don't know a word your saying. But it is good to hear someone friendly talk to me. I need something to get my mind off of- well... Even though I'll have to make up what your saying.>

SQUAL shrugs and leans against a wall.

SQUAL
I can tell. I'm boring you.

VIDALIA

<Let me see... Ah! You have just told me about this wonderful sexual tryst you had with the man who cleans- No, no, the woman who once lived next to you. I will ask what brought up this subject and you will now tell me that I look to you like this former lover.>

VIDALIA holds a hand out inviting SQUAL to speak.

SQUAL

Oh, um, well your right, this is really kind of a treacherous situation. I mean we have no idea how we got here. That is assuming that you got here the same way I did.

VIDALIA smiles at her invented game, which only confuses SQUAL.

VIDALIA

<I am terribly faltered madam. Please, sit next to me and tell me all the exquisite details.>

VIDALIA stifles a giggle and pat's the floor next to her. SQUAL becomes increasingly more confused. But, she sits next to the strange woman anyway.

SQUAL (Grinning)

You're making fun of me aren't you?

VIDALIA

<Oh my goodness! I'd like to think I've had my share of sensual experiences, but not even I've tried that! Please go on...>

SQUAL

Your making up what I'm saying aren't you? Well I can play that game too. You've just been telling me about your past, and you have been living up to that French stereotype haven't you? You've even been with a few women- um no you haven't gone

that far but, you have done your fair share haven't you? Lets see, you did boy on girl and um... well, there really isn't anything else is there? But if there was you would do it, wouldn't you?

VIDALIA

<Dear lady. I can not say I am not tempted by your offer, but really? In such a tawdry place as this?>

VIDALIA nudges SQUAL accompanied with a come hither glare. Which really confuses SQUAL who giggles nervously and scoots a little further down the wall.

SQUAL

Hey! If you understand me you have to come clean. Cause if you don't, I um, well, I'm not sure.

VIDALIA

<Very well, I accept. I am yours my darling.>

VIDALIA feign a faint into SQUAL's lap. After trying to keep a straight face she laughs which causes SQUAL to laugh. And then they have a moment of awkward silence. SQUAL looking down with a foolish, uncomfortable grin and VIDALIA with a soft promising smile. The image is that SQUAL is very insecure and VIDALIA is much too confident for her own good.

VIDALIA

<I will be gentle with you. There will be no struggle from me.>

SQUAL

I think I'm going to start babbling again.

Both heads turn to the sound of a new voice outside their room.

MOTH (Off panel)

Will you stop walking so fucking close behind me ya' fuckin faggot!

RAYNER (Off panel)
I'm sorry . I guess I'm jus-

MOTH (Off panel)
You keep stepping on my fucking gimp wings! I
know your plan, you want me to trip and land head
first on your fucking dick! You twinkle fairy.

SQUAL
Well those don't sound like very nice men.

In the chance SQUAL was voicing a desire to approach these voices
VIDALIA desperately shushes her.

VIDALIA
<No. No. Shhhh. Please shhhh.>

SQUAL
I understand. Shhhh.

SQUAL holds a finger to her mouth and nods in understanding.

ANT (Off panel)
Would you two knock it off, we're never going to
get to fuck any of those bitches if you two keep
bitching at each other.

RAYNER (Off panel)
I'm not. I was just apologizing, like I'm supposed
too.

MOTH (Off panel)
They're tied up you stupid prick it doesn't matter
how fucking loud we are. I could yell "I'M
GOING TO SHOOT ALL YOU FUCKING
BITCHES IN THE FUCKING FACE!" and it
won't make a fucking difference.

SQUAL
Oh my god!

VIDALIA creeps to the door and peers around the doorway. She motions for SQUAL to stay still. VIDALIA sees MOTH, ANT and RAYNER arguing, though RAYNER seems to be cowering more than fighting. VIDALIA notes that each man is holding a pistol.

ANT

Perfect! Now every con in the building will come here and we won't get anything!

MOTH

You always have to have to bitch about something don't you Ant? What kind of fucking name is Ant anyway? Ant what? Ant Nellie?

RAYNER laughs slightly, attracting MOTH's attention.

MOTH

You having a jolly time laughing your fagot head off over there ya fuckin' prick?

RAYNER

I was only laughing at what you were saying about-

MOTH

You think your so fucking flawless?

RAYNER

No I just-

MOTH reaches out and grabs RAYNER's bulb yanking his head down.

MOTH

What's this fuckin' thing then?

RAYNER

I know! I know! That's my bulb! You've told me, gu-

MOTH
GUY LANTERN FISH DON'T HAVE BULBS
PRINCESS! You hiding something from us?
Should we be hunting you instead of these fucking
bitches?

RAYNER
No I'm just-

MOTH
I swear Kurt Cobain must of thought he was
talking about your fucking head when he said
"Don't worry Courtney, I always keep it empty.
Watch!" BLOOSH!

MOTH pantomimes shooting himself in the head and then pushes RAYNER away. ANT watches all of this with reserve, he is entertained but he has seen this rerun several times. As the two go at it ANT extinguishes and then re-lights a new cigarette.

There is a ringing noise and MOTH digs a device that resembles a cellular phone out of his pocket. (I'm not sure a cell phone would work in their environment) He listens intently for a moment and then puts the phone away.

MOTH
Ed said that he just spotted three of them in a
fucking group, come on.

MOTH hurries off followed by RAYNER and ANT away from SQUAL and VIDALIA.

SQUALL
Jesus thank God they-

SQUALL watches VIDALIA from behind she notices that the zipper on VIDALIA's dress has come down exposing some of the woman's bottom. SQUALL politely looks away but can't stop her eyes from looking at VIDALIA's exposed cheek.

VIDALIA

<It looks like they're moving on. We had better go. I don't know what they said but by the look on your face they->

VIDAILIA turns her head and sees SQUAL trying not to look at her.

VIDALIA

<What is it?>

SQUAL darts toward the zipper, putting it back to its proper place at the small of VIDALIA's back.

SQUAL (Embarrassed)

Just a zipper that got lost, that's all. Heh, there everything correct and proper. Shall we go?

VIDALIA smiles at her.

VIDALIA

<You looked at me, didn't you?>

SQUAL understood what was said without need for a translation and turns red. She gestures for the door.

SQUAL

Can- Can we just go please?

Still smiling VIDALIA once again leads the way through the dark factory.

When we cut to the next scene, I want it to begin with a shot of GINGER's face. She is quiet, but there are tears streaming down her cheeks.

NIQUG (Off panel)

Mmmm... Despite your, no doubt, erroneous upbringing, you've been an exceptional plaything... And I've a few special gifts for you.

When we next see GINGER she is completely naked, as is NIQUG. Though GINGER is kept decent with strategic coverings. Her legs have also been untied.

Legs, middle and shoulders up should be fine. I'm hoping we can get a shot in of the dress crumpled up at her feet. We could also probably use NIQUG's body to cover up certain elements. Showing him completely nude is fine.

GINGER

Please... Just please... stop...

NIQUG

The first is a new moniker... Your breeders were no doubt simple and your existing appellative can not be faulted exclusively on yourself. The neo-romantic in you, should such a creature live, will cherish the name "Josephine".

NIQUG pets her face as he speaks. GINGER violently shakes her head forcing his hand away.

GINGER

MY NAME IS GINGER! IT MAY BE STUPID,
BUT IT'S MINE!

As soon as she says this GINGER instantly regrets it and prepares for NIQUG to lash out at her. He does not, but instead leans down to rummage through his clothes.

NIQUG

So impassioned by all the incorrect things. Such is a woe of adolescence. Remit my deeming that a person should be struck from this world for damning an offspring with a moniker that can effortlessly be abbreviated to allude to a beverage.

NIQUG produces a long silk cloth, which he holds in both hands.

NIQUG

I am mindful to the truth that your new title will take time to get used to, thus I will not take your paroxysm personally. And yet, I still have one more gift for you.

NIQUG pulls the cloth over GINGER's head and behind her neck. As he talks he ties a simple knot just above her breasts.

NIQUG

Your gift goes over your head like this... You must acknowledge I have been quite tender with you Josephine... Now we wrap it up slightly... I've yet to... to ravish you... I can't ravish you, can't... rape you. I am incapable, as I said before... and then let the tails fall between your flawless young breasts.

He lets the tails of the cloth fall against her chest and fall down to her stomach.

GINGER

Please... I... I want my momma. I want my mother...

NIQUG takes her face in both hands.

NIQUG

Now, you're interrupting me Josephine.

GINGER

That's not my name...

NIQUG

Just shhhh.... Mothers are flagitious cunts, and you already have one of those.

NIQUG starts to pet GINGER's head and he moves so close that they're fur is touching one another.

NIQUG

I knew fetching demoiselles like you back home.
They wouldn't let me get this close to them...
They were... Distracted...

I wonder how difficult it would be to have a couple uncomfortable panels of NIQUG just standing against GINGER, breathing and looking at her.

GINGER

Please... Just go away... Let me go...

NIQUG (All eight eyes open)

Why? Because it is the virtuous thing to do? What does such virtue afford me? I receive nothing from virtue. And you? So you can revert to your prior vacuous existence? Perpetually impassioned over banal nothings? A junkie harlot slave to fascists? Made a living zombie controlled by the lies of consumerism, environmentalism, sexuality, and other anti-deities bent on making you live for yourself over others and thus unintentionally doing **EXACTLY** as this establishment demands? A useful idiot, a tart to be willingly ravished by any false God that demands you spread your legs. I will save you from this lie of a life. With me, I will grant you purpose. Just as I did with those others who wouldn't let me get close to them...

NIQUG takes the ends of the cloth in each hand.

NIQUG

Wouldn't let me get this close... unless they had already expired...

NIQUG yanks the cloth ends in opposite directions, strangling GINGER. He stretches his legs lifting GINGER off the ground.

NIQUG (Through gritted teeth)
And I'm afraid it's spoiled me...

GINGER kicks and makes choked screams of protest.

When she finally stops kicking and dies NIQUG unties the cloth. He tilts her head back and forth making sure she is dead.

NIQUG

Now Josephine... I can rape you...

The scene mercifully switches to HALONA and CELESTE. They have found the place that PAREDOLIA was tied up.

CELESTE is on her knees inspecting what remains of the rope. HALONA on the other hand is looking admirably at the young girl.

CELESTE

...Well this is just like the one you found me tied to. The ropes are broken so there might be others here in the same situation.

CELESTE notices HALONA's admirable expression and cant help but smile back.

CELESTE

What?

HALONA

I'm sorry. You just... Well, you reminded me of my daughter.

CELESTE

Don't be sorry. You sort of remind me of my mother. Well, before...

HALONA kneels down next to her. It is apparent that she is comfortable in the maternal role.

HALONA

Before what?

CELESTE leans back against the wall.

CELESTE

Oh, it's nothing Halona. It's not right to pass my-

HALONA

No, it's just fine. Before what?

CELESTE (Sighing)

Before she started drinking...

HALONA puts a hand on CELESTE's shoulder. Allowing her an opening for release.

HALONA

Drinking?

CELESTE

When Dad left she started. At first, ya know, it was only once and a while. Just make sure you're not in the house when she's at it.

(Picture of CELESTE peering around a corner at her mother passed out on a sofa.)

HALONA

I'm so sorry Celeste.

CELESTE

Oh please don't be. I mean, I'm not worth worrying about.

HALONA

Why wouldn't you think so?

CELESTE

Because mom hit me sometimes. You wouldn't hit something that you cared about, would you? I just, ya know, assumed that's how she felt. Someone who isn't even loved by her own mother can't be worth...

(Picture of CELESTE's mother beating her)

CELESTE is becoming emotionally unstable.

HALONA

Some times mothers are wrong. It happens.

CELESTE

She told me I was born to save the marriage and
because dad left, I failed. I was born a failure.

HALONA reaches forward and wraps her arms around CELESTE.

HALONA

No, that's a horrible thing to burden a child with.

CELESTE (Starting to tear up)

It's not my fault Dad left.

HALONA begins to pet CELESTE's head.

HALONA

No, it's not your fault at all. It's okay. You don't
have to say any more.

CELESTE returns HALONA's embrace and the older woman
squeezes her back tightly. But it's clear that something familiar about this
situation is making HALONA uncomfortable. (I hesitate to use the word
"Uncomfortable" because these days it has a sexual connotation to it. This is
not the case here.)

CELESTE snuffles and brings her emotions back under control.

CELESTE

I'm sorry Halona. It's not right of me to give you
my problems like that.

HALONA takes CELESTE's face in her hands holding her head
gently. A stark contradiction to the similar way NIQUG held GINGER.

HALONA

Don't you worry about that baby. Now, listen very
closely to me Celeste. We're all born with a
mother. But, mothers stop being mothers when

they stop acting like mothers. Then, they're just bitter old women trying to fake the part. You don't trust anything that bitter old woman has told you about yourself. Do you understand?

CELESTE nod's and HALONA holds the young girl by the arms.

HALONA

If you'll let me, I'll do my best to fill that role for you.

In a burst of absolute happiness, CELESTE wraps her arms around HALONA's neck. HALONA finds this embrace easier than the one before.

Now we return to SQUAL and VIDALIA who are still walking. When SQUAL babbles I imagine it as it all contained in a single panel, like the "Cathy" comics.

SQUAL (quietly babbling again)

I wonder where those men went off to in a hurry?
I think they said they were after three others. I hope nothing bad happens to them, or us for that matter. Well maybe me, well as long as it isn't too horrible. But you you're far too pretty to have something happen to you. Those things I said about you being a tramp? I know you didn't understand them but I didn't really mean them I'm sure you're a lady. Can you tell I'm terrified out of my mind I- Wait! When I said 'pretty' before I meant it respectfully not with any crude implications.

VIDALIA

<Silly girl. Keep talking, the cadence is relaxing, just keep it down.>

SQUAL (Still at it)

Well, since you don't understand. I suppose I can be honest. I've looked at women but you... No no I'm sorry... It's the situation or the environment

or I don't know. I just, well, why can't I say it?
You won't understand... Just say it Squal, just say
it.

VIDALIA stops recognizing that SQUAL's speech patterns have
changed from confusion to frustrations. VIDALIA looks at her.

SQUAL
Did you understand me?

VIDALIA looks at her with a blank face of concern.

SQUAL
Well, it's no easier when you're looking right at
me! Oh you look worried. Not about me are you?
Okay, okay, just say it. Just say it. Just say it.

VIDALIA (Parroting)
Just say it?

SQUAL
IWantToKissYou.

SQUAL quickly slaps her hands over her own mouth. VIDALIA just
looks at her with the same worried face, She instinctively takes SQUAL's
hands, pulling her into a nearby room.

VIDALIA
<Come with me. It is alright, I am scared too.>

SQUAL
I wouldn't, I never could. I... I...

VIDALIA puts her arms around SQUAL and holds her tightly.
SQUAL starts to shake nervously.

VIDALIA
<It is all right. Calm your self dear girl you will be
alright.>

As VIDALIA nuzzles her tenderly SQUAL looks down her dress and quickly looks away. SQUAL nervously puts her arms around VIDALIA holding her lightly. They experience a “click” moment where they understand each other through the language barrier. Neither notices it but, how best to let the readers in on it? Maybe VIDALIA’s words sporadically end up in English and vice versa? The problem with adding in visual clues is that readers may attribute them to something supernatural. It may just be best to let them play out the scene as scripted and let the people who get it get it and the people who don’t, miss out.

VIDALIA

<You are safe with me.>

SQUAL

I know, I just, a lot has happened today...

VIDALIA

<It certainly has. Are you alright?>

SQUAL

I believe so... Thank you...

VIDALIA

<It has been my pleasure darling.>

VIDALIA kisses SQUAL’s cheek and the two separate, but remain holding hands. SQUAL nervously steps forward. Then lets go of her hands. They’re moment is over.

SQUAL

Er, what happed there?

VIDALIA

<Come on, lets keep moving.>

VIDALIA begins to walk out of the room looking both ways before exiting. Then she motions for SQUAL to follow. Any further conversation is interrupted by the loud screech of an intercom turning on. Both girls cover they’re ears. Then from unknown speakers music begins to play.

SQUAL

Well that's discomfoting... But the tune is
familiar...

VIDALIA ponders the tune and then a huge smile forms on her face,
she sings to SQUAL.

VIDALIA (singing)

<Just a closer walk with thee, grant it Jesus hear
my plea...>

SQUAL

Oh yes! Fairly walking close to thee, let it be, dear
lord.

VIDALIA

<Let it be..>

SQUAL (Smirking)

That was also discomfoting... uh, I think...

MENIAL, PAREDOLIA and KISHKA also hear the tune from where
they are resting.

MENIAL

That's a hymn.

KISKA

It ez indeed darlink.

PAREDOLIA

It's just a smidge creepy.

KISKA

Again, indeed.

MENIAL is the only one who smiles.

MENIAL

You're hearing it out of context. This song reminds me of Sunday school. "Just A Closer Walk With Thee"

PAREDOLIA
What's it about.

KISHKA
It iz God's pledge of allegiance. The patrons of the church are invited to sing zis mantra to express how much they desire an invisible deity over themselves; others and even zar own families.

MENIAL
Now that's not very fair.

PAREDOLIA
You were a churchwoman Kish?

KISHKA
I appreciate your past tense darlink.

MENIAL
Kish had a poor experience when she was younger. I keep telling her that not all churches are like that.

PAREDOLIA
Like what?

KISHKA
Zay demand zat I follow book of rules. Forget zat these rules contradict each other. My life belongs to God! So follow God's rules. If my life belongs to God why did he lone it to Kishka? So I will make good use of it and then return eet when God comes to collect.

MENIAL
Which is how I feel, but I came to the same conclusions and I went to church.

KISHKA

And how long again has eet been since you last stepped foot in a church?

MENIAL simply huffs in frustration.

KISHKA

My point exactly.

PAREDOLIA

I would really like it if you two wouldn't fight.

MENIAL

Oh, I'm sorry Doli. We're friends and we have had this discussion many times.

The song stops playing.

KISHKA

Eet iz true. You see? And now that the song iz over I think we can maybe start moving again.

MENIAL

Right.

The three get up and begin walking again.

CELESTE and HALONA walk into a large open area of the factory. Centered in the room is a large industrial shredder, much larger than is practical. The machine is fed from a platform at the top by a hook or by merely dropping things in. Over looking the area is an observation room whose glass windows have been shattered long ago.

One thing that this room does do, is that it hints that the building they have been brought to is much larger than a mere few stories. I would also like this room to have a uniquely sinister aspect to it but I'm not sure exactly what that should be. This is an area where a number of climactic scenes take place and I think it should have something "special" in it's design.

CELESTE

This place is huge! Halona? Can we rest for a little while?

HALONA

I suppose so. But, we'd better stay hidden.

CELESTE

Why?

HALONA

There isn't anything good in this place. We've been kidnapped, mishandled, and I wasn't wearing this dress before I woke here. You?

CELESTE lifts her dress slightly and shakes her head.

HALONA

That means someone has undressed us, seen us naked, and maybe even tampered with us.

CELESTE makes a face as if she suddenly feels sick. She hadn't contemplated this before.

CELESTE

Oh my God...

HALONA

Whoever did all that... I don't want to meet him; I just want to go home.

CELESTE

I think we'll be all right under there.

CELESTE points to a section under the stairs to the platform.

HALONA

Just a moment.

HALONA bends over and rips away a low section of her dress that she's likely been tripping over.

HALONA
Okay dear.

They take refuge underneath the stairs that lead to the shredder platform. They sit on the floor. HALONA on her knees and CELESTE with her legs crossed.

CELESTE
What was that song that was playing just now?

HALONA
It was a hymn.

CELESTE
A what?

HALONA
A hymn. It's a type of song people sing in church.

CELESTE
Well that explains why I didn't recognize it. I've never stepped foot inside a church in my life.

HALONA
Your parents never took you?

CELESTE
PFFTT! No, they barely took me anywhere. Do you go?

HALONA
No. I mean, I used to. I stopped when... something happened.

CELESTE
You don't want to talk about it?

HALONA
I can, if you want me to.

CELESTE

No it's okay. I just like talking to you. No body has really ever listened to me before, ya know?

HALONA

Oh I know the feeling. I was once married to someone who didn't listen to me.
(Picture of HALONA and her husband, Similar to the earlier picture of MENIAL and her first husband.)

CELESTE

You're divorced?

HALONA

Mmmhmm.

CELESTE

Did he hit you?

HALONA shifts off of her knees and onto her bottom.

HALONA

Oh no, no. He just... didn't listen. He could recite what I had said but he didn't know what I meant.
Do you understand?

CELESTE

No.

HALONA

Oh...

They sit quietly for a beat.

CELESTE

Do you know how we got here?

HALONA

I'm sorry I don't. I went to bed and then I woke up here. My shirt and jeans were gone and I was in this dress.

CELESTE

You go to bed still dressed.

HALONA

Um, not usually, I was... I was very tired...

CELESTE

Oh, I'm pretty sure I was kidnapped. I was at the mall when it happened. I stepped into the bathroom and I started to feel dizzy. I passed out and I woke up where you found me.
(I want a picture for this but I'm not entirely sure what it should be, Ideas?)

HALONA

Where was that? The mall I mean?

CELESTE

My hometown, in Sarasota.

HALONA

Is that in California?

CELESTE

Florida.

HALONA

Jesus!

CELESTE

What?

HALONA

I live in a little town called Bend, in Oregon.

CELESTE (Troubled)

One of us is a long way from home...

HALONA
Or we both are...

They both shift nervously. Trying not to think of the plight that they've found themselves in. CELESTE leans backwards letting her arms prop her up.

CELESTE
I think I'm going to cry. Can we maybe talk about something else?

HALONA
Please, yes... Come here.

HALONA positions her self cross-legged and extends her arms in invitation, to which CELESTE accepts. She sits in her lap with her back against the older woman. HALONA holds CELESTE and the young girl feels loved.

CELESTE
You said that I reminded you of your daughter.
Can you tell me about her? (Smirking) I've never had a sister

HALONA (Having trouble)
Well ... Heidi was a good daughter. The best daughter. My "Perfect Princess". That's what she wanted me to call her, though she didn't like that name quite as much when she got older. But, to me that was what she was. She was about your age. (Behind HALONA show a montage of HEIDI very happy.)

(Smiles sadly) You two could have been twins. Well, not really, but to me you would have been. She was self reliant and inventive. Just like you seem to be. You two would have been fine sisters.

CELESTE (Concerned)

She isn't around any more, is she?

HALONA (Sorrowful)

No...

CELESTE

She died?

HALONA

Yes...

CELESTE

Oh, no... What happened?

HALONA

She- She was killed...

CELESTE is extremely apologetic. HALONA on the other hand is trying, and failing, to keep her reserve.

CELESTE

Oh! I'm so sorry! I didn't-

HALONA

No, it's all right. It's just, it was only a couple years ago and it still hurts...

CELESTE

I can't imagine...

HALONA

She was visiting her father. He and I separated some time before...

HALONA can't contain herself any more. She starts crying over the loss of her daughter.

HALONA

He killed Phillip and then he- he threw my baby girl off of a building. Like she didn't matter. Like

she wasn't my "Perfect Princess". But the worst
thing- the worst- w-was- he

CELESTE

Okay stop. It's all right.

CELESTE turns and holds HALONA tightly and the older woman
holds her back.

CELESTE

Come on mommy. Don't cry. I love you mommy.

After a brief cry HALONA looks at the young girl with curiosity.

CELESTE

Your what a good mother should be. Your
daughter was very lucky to have you and I'm
extremely lucky to have bumped into you here.
I'm far from a... a.. "Perfect Princess" but I'd like
to try, that is, if you don't mind.

HALONA happily takes CELESTE's face in her hands.

HALONA

No. I don't mind, I don't mind at all.

We cut there and are taken back to MENIAL, PAREDOLIA and
KISHKA still wandering hallways looking for an exit. KISHKA leads while
PAREDOLIA and MENIAL converse. Very early it is easy to see that
traveling in a group has given the three a confidence they didn't have before.

MENIAL

Are you sure?

PAREDOLIA

Yup, not one.

KISHKA

You know what? She's right Menial.

MENIAL has an odd expression of shock on her face.

MENIAL

I never noticed... Not one hybrid woman in my whole series...

But she soon replaces her shock with an expression of triumph, to PAREDOLIA's extreme embarrassment.

MENIAL

Well, that has to change. My very next book, the lead will be a hybrid woman named Paredolia Vibus.

PAREDOLIA (Giggling)

Well you don't have to go quite that far.

KISHKA

Yes dahlink. "Doli" will probably be enough.

PAREDOLIA (smirking)

That's not what I meant.

MENIAL

So let's see, Doli, the beautiful psycho analyst-

KISHKA

Ze what?

MENIAL

Head shrink.

PAREDOLIA laughs.

MENIAL

She falls in love with one of her patients.

PAREDOLIA

Oh no, that wouldn't be very ethical.

KISHKA

Ethical? Dear woman, zis iz a harlequin not a
“Janes” reference guide!

MENIAL

The patient falls for her?

PAREDOLIA

Generally, Psychologists treat members of the
same sex.

KISHKA

Zat kleenches eet! I am not going to pay fifty
dollars for a one hour session if I am not going to
be able to stare at a hunk.

MENIAL

Another male doctor?

KISHKA (Clapping)

Oh yes! One with a voice like Robert Goulet and a
body like Christian Bale! (sings) “If evar I woold
leaf you eet wooldnt bee in summar!” Ah yes and
the brains of, urgh, Mat Damon.

MENIAL

Kish! That is Doli’s story. You already had one.

PAREDOLIA

You did? Which book was it?

KISHKA

No! No! Don’t tell her!

MENIAL

“Roses at War”

PAREDOLIA

That was supposed to be you!

KISHKA (Indignant)

And why not? We big girls need romance too.

PARDOLIA

Well, excuse me, but you don't seem like the type of woman who would-

KISHKA

Eh nnnnn no no we're getting off zee subject. An exit, we are looking for zee exit. So we can leave before zee people who dumped us here return. In zee mean time our new friend Doli was about to tell us something dirty.

PAREDOLIA

I don't think I know anything dirty.

MENIAL

Well I need something to go on. Or I'll write the most depraved book my mind can think up.

PAREDOLIA

Well I do have the one dream I'd like to come true... Some day...

KISHKA

Finally, please dear child, ignore my interruption.

PAREDOLIA

Well, in this dream I'm with a man. I don't know who he is because he's always behind me and... um... he has blindfolded me.

PAREDOLIA waits for any negative reaction.

KISHKA

Oh darlink, please tell me zar iz more.

MENIAL

Go on, do you know where you are in this dream?

PAREDOLIA

Yes. In a spacious living room sitting on a couch.

KISHKA

A couch, yet he iz behind you?

PAREDOLIA

Yes, I'm... Sitting between his legs. Leaning back against his chest.

MENIAL

Are you two alone?

PAREDOLIA

I can't tell. Sometimes I think so, sometimes I don't know.

MENIAL

Go on.

KISHKA

Yes please.

PAREDOLIA

He rubs my hips and he tells me I'm safe. He tells me nothing I say will go outside the room. That's when I sometimes here other voices. So he may be lying or he may not be, I don't know... It's... Well...

KISHKA

...More exciting zat way.

PAREDOLIA

Exactly... He starts by breathing with me, very slowly, in time with one another. His hands travel down to my thighs and he tells me to trust him and tell him my favorite fantasy.

MENIAL
What do you say?

PAREDOLIA
I don't know... I just talk and the more I talk, the
faster we breath and the more his hands travel
around my... And I start to feel him... Well...
Grow...

KISHKA giggles slightly, but PAREDOLIA does not take it as
criticism.

PAREDOLIA
Then I'm naked, and I feel, so is he. And his hands
are everywhere until... Well... That's it...

KISHKA
Eet iz! No bumping of zee naughty bits?

MENIAL
Kish, come now. That was very sensual, not
expressly physical, but quite erotic. It will be
perfect Doli.

KISHKA's face soon goes sour from aggravation.

KISHKA
Damn eet...

They enter what is likely the factory entrance hall. The windows like
all the others are bricked up, as are the glass doors.

KISHKA
We're not getting out dis way, either.

MENIAL
Now what do we do?

PAREDOLIA

We saw some stairs on the way here maybe the second floor windows aren't bricked in. We wouldn't have to jump too far.

KISHKA

What ever we do, we can't give up hope.

MOTH (Off Panel)

Ya' lost ladies?

The women turn around to see MOTH and RAYNER have been waiting for them to arrive. MOTH is sitting in a dusty chair with his legs up on a desk. RAYNER is fidgeting nervously, attempting not to make eye contact. MOTH stands up and walks toward them. The girls look and find ANT tapping out a new cigarette, blocking the way they came in.

MOTH (In French)

<Three little ladies, one is too skinny, one is way too fat, but the last little lady... Well, she is a woman too so "Vagina Life Support System" may be a bit kind.>

KISHKA

What?!

MOTH

It's the language of love tubby. 'Bout time you three showed up, I was starting to think Ed dicked us. Say! Can we drive you girls home?

ANT snickers, letting out smoke as he does. KISHKA gets in front of the other two women.

KISHKA

You show us zee way out of here, right now! Owr zo help me God, I will get every mayor, governor, and street cop I can find zo hard own your azz that you'll have to walk own your hands and knees for zee rest of your life!

MOTH and ANT try not to laugh, but find they can't help it. RAYNER continues to look at the floor.

ANT
She thinks she's still in the U.S...

MOTH (Saluting)
Zee? Zee? Like, Zeegheil?

This sets KISHKA back some but she's not dissuaded. RAYNER looks up at PAREDOLIA.

RAYNER (Pointing at PAREDOLIA)
Hey isn't that the virgin?

PAREDOLIA (Gasps)
How do you know that?

MOTH and ANT nearly fall over from laughter. RAYNER quickly goes from a look of abject horror at saying the wrong thing, to a look of apology to PAREDOLIA, to once again staring at the floor.

KISHKA (Unfettered rage)
Kidnapping, spying, zexual assault what else do
you want to get sent to jail for tonight?!

The two men continue to laugh, ANT is choking on smoke. MENIAL and PAREDOLIA look worried but KISHKA's anger is building (Not used to being denied what she wants) She walks up to MOTHS pointing her finger. MOTHS continues to laugh as one of his hands goes behind his back.

KISHKA
Do you think zis iz funny? Am I making myself
clear young man? You and your friends are in a
great deal of troub-

MOTH shoves his gun into KISHKA's mouth. She tries to get away but he holds the back of her head keeping her in place. Now its MOTHS turn to be angry. RAYNER shares MENIAL and PAREDOLIA's look of terror

MOTH
SHUTUP! SHUTUP! YOU FAT BITCH!

KISHKA (Mumbling)
pl....don...I...

ANT points his pistol at MENIAL and PAREDOLIA, blowing smoke through the side of his mouth. He moves toward them backing them into the bricked in exit, trapped.

MENIAL
Don't! DON'T!

MOTH (To KISHKA)
Oh, you're not such a loud mouth bitch now are you?

MENIAL
Don't hurt her! Please we- we just want to go home.

MOTH is serious but ANT finds this to be the most entertaining thing in the world.

ANT
Rayner get your ass over here and watch these two!

RAYNER runs to do as he is told pointing his gun shakily at the two women. They huddle into each others arms. While MENIAL s focused on KISHKA's plight, PAREDOLIA and RAYNER lock eyes. His eyes are apologetic while hers are sad.

RAYNER
Shh... Shh... Don't cry, they're not going to hurt her. Not on purpose.

MOTH (To KISHKA)
Say your sorry bitch!

KISHKA (Sobbing)

m... m... ory...

MOTH (To Ant)

Tie her hands behind her back.

As ANT happily does what he's told. MOTH continues to talk to KISHKA.

MOTH

Say 'I'm sorry I'm such a fat, loud mouthed, stuck up, cunt'!

KISHKA (After a beat)

... ory ...fa... outh....unt...

RAYNER gets closer to PAREDOLIA.

RAYNER (Whispering)

Don't- Don't worry Moth isn't going to do anything to her. He's just playing. He's played this game with me lots of times.

ANT finishes tying her hands, then smacks KISHKA's bottom, just to watch her jump.

MOTH

Stop gabbing with the fuck toys Rayner!

ANT grabs the top of KISHKA's beak and yanks her away from MOTH who then approaches MENIAL and PAREDOLIA.

KISHKA

No! Sto-

ANT holds her beak closed in one hand, with the other he ties a cord around the beak to keep it shut.

MOTH looks disinterestedly at MENIAL and PAREDOLIA. The two women are holding each other in frightened panic. He addresses RAYNER. ANT's speech goes on as his two friends talk.

ANT (To KISHKA)

He likes you, I can tell. He likes his women old and bitchy with a huge fat ass. Just like you. Guess what part of you he's going to fuck? Me, I want to put that loud mouth of yours to good use...

MOTH

Why aren't they tied up?

RAYNER

I didn't know I was supposed to-

MOTH

OH! You dumb FUCK!

He then talks to the two women.

MOTH

Do anything stupid and I'll kill that fat bitch right now.

MENIAL

We- we wont...

We leave these three women to return to APRIL who has also found herself in a precarious situation. Still tied up, and now gagged she is looking at a pistol pointed inches from her face.

For this first bit of this scene I don't think her captor, ARON, should be seen. Maybe just glimpses of his hand holding the pistol. While ARON talks, he rubs the pistol against APRIL in a phallic fashion. She makes various noises, as she is tortured that I'm not going to bother scripting.

ARON

What kind of Pyro uses a gun right? This is just foreplay. I want you wondering "Is he going to shoot me?" To tell the truth I don't know myself.

On the one hand, causing you a little pain before I kill you is very appealing. Then again, I want you intact for the main event. You see, I'll get off on watching the flames crawl up your perfect young body. Watching something painfully beautiful turn horribly ugly. I'm gonna come the moment you die.

Now we see our first shot of ARON as he flicks a lighter. He is wearing a shirt with a "No smoking" label on the chest.

ARON

I'm ready to watch you die now.

Kneeling in front of her ARON lights the hem of APRIL's dress on fire.

In the original comic, instead of focusing on APRIL burning, I focused on ARON pleasuring himself to orgasm. I'm pretty sure that's a wee bit too vile for public consumption. But then again showing a teenage girl burning to death is a bit off the map as well. Unless you can think of something else, we could just focus on ARON getting more and more pleased with him self as he listens to muffled screams. (Not quite touching him self).

The scene ends with APRIL dead in the foreground, flames sprouting up around her head, ARON near the middle of the frame happily watching the girl in a relaxed manner, and in the back ground looking into the doorway are SQUAL and VIDALIA.

ARON

Ahh, you disserved that...

VIDALIA has her hand over SQUAL's mouth to keep her from screaming. Too full of himself ARON misses hearing them dart away.

VIDALIA leads pulling SQUAL along by the wrist. SQUAL can not stop looking behind her and keeps a hand over her own mouth. When they stop SQUAL can't avoid her own panicked babbling.

SQUAL

Oh my God! I knew things like this happened but
I- I- I never thought I-

VIDALIA slaps her hand again over SQUAL's mouth putting a finger to her own lips indicating quiet. When VIDALIA removes her hand SQUAL frantically nods her understanding. After a beat, SQUAL wraps her arms around VIDALIA holding her tightly. VIDALIA is confused by this but eventually holds her back, taking comfort from a sympathetic soul in a desperate situation.

Underneath the platform CELESTE and HALONA remain hidden. They are quite and a bit despondent. HALONA is first to break the ice.

HALONA

We'd better get going now.

CELESTE

Why? Can't we wait just a little longer?

HALONA

Those men I told you about, I don't know where they are now or what their intentions are. They certainly didn't sound friendly.

CELESTE

Well, wouldn't that be a reason to stay hidden?

HALONA (Concerned)

What's the matter honey?

CELESTE

I'm sorry. I'm greedy; I'm scared... I just want to stay with you a little longer.

HALONA (Giving her a security smile)

I'm going to be right next to you the whole time...

CELESTE

I know, it's just, I have a real mother now and out there...

HALONA

You have to share her with a bad place.

CELESTE nods.

HALONA

I feel the same way about you. We'll stay for a little longer.

CELESTE

Thank you.

HALONA invites CELESTE again into her lap. CELESTE sits and HALONA combs her hair with her fingers.

HALONA (Singing softly)

Sweet child, dear child, listen to me. Love child, care child, all of it free. My perfect angel, no flaws can I see. All that I ask is that you also lov-

The two jump at the sound of a voice from outside they're hiding place.

MOTH (Off panel)

End of the fucking road ladies!

RAYNER and ANT are leading PAREDOLIA and MENIAL by they're tied wrists. MOTH is in front of them leading KISHKA by a cord tied around her neck. KISHKA's beak is still tied shut.

While the other two girls are in the same condition we left them in, KISHKA has obviously been roughed up and mishandled her dress is also torn in several places.

MENIAL

Where are you taking us?

MOTH starts pulling KISHKA up the stairs.

MOTH

Get 'em on the platform guys. We're going to have fun with this group.

PAREDOLIA

Let us go-

RAYNER covers PAREDOLIA's mouth.

RAYNER

Shhh, just shhh... Please, stay quiet.... Shhh...

ANT

Yeah honey, we're not the only ones hunting women in this place.

MOTH

We we're just lucky enough to catch you three fucking cunts first.

CELESTE and HALONA watch from they're hiding place.

CELESTE

What do we do?

HALONA

We stay hidden and quiet. When they're all on the platform we'll go.

CELESTE

But those women! They're dressed just like us.

HALONA

There's nothing we can do. I want to help them, but if we try anything we'll get caught too.

CELESTE

But-

HALONA

Celeste? They have guns...

CELESTE accepts this explanation but it's clear to see that it doesn't make her feel better.

MOTH motions to his friend ANT.

MOTH

Start up the machine.

ANT throws MENIAL to the platform floor and goes to the control switch. He pitches the worn down cigarette from his mouth over the railing as he flips the switch. The shredding machine makes so much noise starting up that HALONA and CELESTE must cover their ears. ANT's cigarette drops in front of them.

MOTH pushes KISHKA towards the edge of the platform so that she can look down into the whirling blades that make up the belly of the machine. She tries to fight but MOTH holds her in place.

MOTH

Your gonna die bitch.

MOTH pulls her back away from the machine and addresses ANT, who is lighting a new cigarette.

MOTH

Bring down the hook!

HALONA leads CELESTE away from their hiding spot. Sparing a quick glance to be sure that they haven't been noticed.

MOTH points to PAREDOLIA being held in place by RAYNER.

MOTH

We'll start with her.

PAREDOLIA's mouth hangs open in horror. Behind her RAYNER protests, pulling her away.

PAREDOLIA

Oh, no! Please!

RAYNER

Umm, Not this one... Uhh...

PAREDOLIA
NOT ANY OF US!!!

MOTH
Why the fuck not?

RAYNER
Uh, oh yeah! This one is supposed to be a virgin.
Right? I've never had one of those before.

PAREDOLIA
No!

RAYNER(Quietly)
Please... Just shhh...

MOTH
You've never had anything before.

RAYNER stays firm. MOTH groans and waves him off.

MOTH
Take her someplace else. Do it quick.

RAYNER grins leading PAREDOLIA back down the platform stairs.

RAYNER (To PAREDOLIA)
Come on! It'll be nice, you'll see. Everything will
be okay. I'm not going to hurt-

MOTH
Kill her when you're done.

RAYNER pauses on the steps. He looks to MOTH, who is expecting
an answer, and then he looks to PAREDOLIA.

RAYNER
...I will...

PAREDOLIA
Oh God...

MOTH turns back to the others.

MOTH
We'll start with the writer then.

KISHKA muffles protest as ANT pushes MENIAL towards the hook.

MENIAL
No! Jesus no!

They use the bindings holding MENIAL's wrists together to catch on the hook.

MOTH
Send her up.

Soon MENIAL's arms are raised above her head. She struggles as she is lifted off her feet. KISHKA watches but can do nothing to prevent her friend's death or, she fears, her own. MOTH watches her go up.

MENIAL
Oh my God! Oh my God!

MOTH
I think John Denver said it best when he said,
"Hey, I can fly!"

The hook stops above the shredder. MENIAL looks down past her feet and into the spinning metal teeth of the machine. She screams.

MOTH
There, let her sit up there for a while. I want to
watch her squirm.

ANT
Good,

ANT looks at KISHKA.

ANT

Do you know what a kishka is where I come from?

KISHKA shakes her head.

ANT

That's good...

ANT forces her head against his crotch

ANT

It's always good to try new things.

Below, RAYNER has slipped the ropes binding PAREDOLIA's wrists over a notch in a pipe. Trapping her in place with her arms above her head. They look at each other for a moment, and then RAYNER reaches around her and holds her tightly.

RAYNER

I'll be gentle, I promise, I'll be nice.

When RAYNER lets her go he notices PAREDOLIA does not look as enthusiastic as he is.

RAYNER

Well, what's the matter? I know my friends were scaring you, so you don't have to be scared, because I'm going to be nice to you.

PAREDOLIA

Let me go.

RAYNER (covering her mouth)

Shh... No, no, no... Don't say that, if they hear I'll be in real trouble, and... and they might hurt you.

RAYNER lets her go and looks at her with his hands clasped together.

RAYNER
Do you understand?

PAREDOLIA
Yes...

RAYNER
Good, oh good... Um can, can I call you Doli?

PAREDOLIA
No.

There is no anger in her voice but still, RAYNER looks hurt.

RAYNER
Why not? Don't you like me?

PAREDOLIA
No...

RAYNER (Near tears)
But, but why not? I like you. I like you a lot.
You're the prettiest girl I've ever seen. Your so
beautiful and lovely and, and pretty and beautiful
and-

PAREDOLIA
Because your friends are going to kill my friends
and then you're going to rape and kill me-

RAYNER covers her mouth again and gets very close to
PAREDOLIA's face

RAYNER
Shh, Shhh. No, no, no, no, no, no, I just said that. I
just told him that I would. I lied, I lied, I lied...

He looks down and looks at her breasts. Then back to her.

RAYNER

You're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen
Doli.

With shaky hands RAYNER pulls the dress down exposing the upper half of her body. RAYNER is so mesmerized by her naked form that he doesn't notice she's begun to cry. He hastily finishes undressing her allowing her dress to fall into a heap on the floor.

He sits in awe of her naked presence. (If we did a close up of RAYNER's face it would suggest that the next panel was his POV which would be that of PAREDOLIA from the neck down. Saying to the reader that he is so entranced at looking at a naked woman, he doesn't notice she's miserable.)

He then looks up and she's her face.

RAYNER

Doli....?

RAYNER shoots onto his feet, he is worried about the girl but he can't comprehend her problem.

RAYNER

Doli, what's wrong?

PAREDOLIA (Through tears)

I didn't want it to be this way... This... This can't
be how... You can't be my first...

RAYNER (Tearing up)

Why? What, what's wrong with me? I love you
Doli... I love you, love you, love you... Don't you
love me?

PAREDOLIA (Briefly enraged)

NO!

RAYNER doesn't notice her pain all he feels is a selfish emotion of rejection.

RAYNER (Shaking his head)

You can love me, I- I just have to prove myself...
Prove that I can be as good a lover as my friends
are.

RAYNER begins to take off his clothes. PAREDOLIA turn her head
away. RAYNER continues to unwittingly lie to himself.

RAYNER

Of course you're scared, you're the only one
naked. I mean the dress has to come off on the
honeymoon. See, now I'm just as vulnerable as
you are.

In morbid curiosity PAREDOLIA looks down to see what she will be
violated with. RAYNER keeps talking as her eyes go wide.

RAYNER

See it's no big deal. Because you know I'll accept
you no matter how you look under your clothes
just like I know you'll... What? WHAT?

RAYNER follows her eyes down to his crotch. He has a very small
penis, but this is likely because he also has a vagina. (Only one shot of this)

PAREDOLIA fearfully looks back at RAYNER who is furiously
shaking in anger.

RAYNER

Don't look at me like that...

PAREDOLIA

...I- I didn't mean t- ULP!

RAYNER grabs PAREDOLIA by the neck with both hands and
squeezes tightly.

RAYNER

DON'T YOU F'F'F- LOOK AT ME LIKE
THAT!!!

Up above MOTH and ANT look at each other. ANT is pushing KISHKA away who is coughing up something.

ANT
Was that him?

MOTH
It was most likely the bitch. Go start the hook up again.

Back bellow RAYNER sees what he is doing and lets PAREDOLIA go. He starts rapidly petting her head apologetically. After she catches her breath all she can do is cry. (I think this next segment with them should be kept above the waist.)

RAYNER
I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Y-y-you just made me angry for a moment, just for a moment. No long fights with me, no ma'am. Just for a moment, only a moment. I'll make it up to you I promise...

PAREDOLIA suddenly makes a disgusted face, which contradicts RAYNER's expression of pure bliss.

PAREDOLIA
ennft!

RAYNER
Oh, oh, oh. Doli oh Doli

RAYNER begins thrusting his body against her.

RAYNER
Oh I knew someday it would be good but this is heaven. Mmm, you wouldn't make it feel this good if you didn't really love me. Do you know what Doli? This is my first time too... We waited for each other, isn't that beautiful?

High above, the hook then begins to slowly lower MENIAL down.

MENIAL

No! Don't kill me! DON'T KILL ME! PLEASE!

MOTH holds KISHKA to the edge of the platform. They both watch, one with amusement and one with terror, as MENIAL is lowered screaming past them.

KISHKA

Please, have mercy. Do not kill us.

MOTH (To KISHKA)

Can you see all right?

MENIAL

AAAAAAAAAAA!!!

(Now, how much of Menial being fed into the machine is probably going to have to be decided in the layouts. We could do a quick panel of it eating her or we could just show blood and chunks shooting up past the characters on the platform. Part of me wants to show as little of Menial's murder as possible, so as not to push people away from the comic. This thing will already play to a small audience, I'm not sure that we should really try to shrink that audience further? (This scene is all ready extensively edited from its original version. (That's a good thing.) In it Menial is raped several times and then, essentially crucified before being fed into the machine.) Another part of me says to leave it in to emphasize the cruelty of the villains and thusly make the reader feel more justified after they see what eventually happens to them. Also to build up the danger that the women who are brought back to the shredding machine in the climax of the story are in. I'm very interested in hearing your thoughts on this.)

MOTH grins as the screams suddenly stop. KISHKA has tightly closed her eyes.

Across the room, SQUAL and VIDALIA watch in petrified terror, from their hiding place in the observation room.

MOTH (To KISHKA)

Guess whose next?

KISHKA
NO! NO! DON'T!

With a single shove, MOTH pushes KISHKA off of the platform and into the bloodthirsty machine bellow. The shredder makes a noise as if grinding on more than it can handle then spits blood, gore and drenched feathers back up.

(This will likely be shown as it was in the original comic. The first panel showing MOTH pushing KISHKA off the ledge and the second showing gore spewing back up as he walks away.)

VIDALIA runs off holding a hand to her face as if she is about to be sick. SQUAL gets up to follow her.

MOTH and ANT are ready to leave. They call out to their friend.

MOTH
Hey Rayner! Is that bitch of yours dead yet?
There's still four more left out there!

RAYNER sticks his head around a corner; he is half-dressed and somewhat nervous.

RAYNER
Yeah, yeah, just uh, Just got done slitting the
bitch's throat.

ANT (Snickering)
Hey stud? How was your first?

RAYNER
Oh, um, yah know she uh, she was crap.

MOTH
Uh huh, you make her come?

RAYNER
No way! Who cares if the uh, slut, comes or not?
Right?

MOTH

You finish getting dressed champ. And don't take
too fucking long.

RAYNER goes back around the corner. MOTH and ANT instantly
crack up.

MOTH

Dude, fifty bucks says he messed his fucking pants
before he even touched her tits.

RAYNER returns to PAREDOLIA who is not dead after all, though
she is still nude and tied up.

RAYNER (Quietly to PAREDOLIA)

I can't, I can't kill you. I wouldn't. Never. Never
ever. I love you.

PAREDOLIA

My friends are dead...

RAYNER

I couldn't kill anyone; I didn't want them to hurt
you. I saved you.

PAREDOLIA

You hurt me...

RAYNER

I can't hurt you Doli. I can't.

PAREDOLIA

You did... You choked me and you raped me...

RAYNER (Sadly)

I said I was sorry...

PAREDOLIA

Untie me Rayner.

RAYNER

I can't, I can't, they would be so mad.

PAREDOLIA

Don't tell them. Lie again.

RAYNER

I'm sorry Doli, I love you Doli. I can't. I have to do this, this way.

From his clothes RAYNER finds some duct tape and returns to PAREDOLIA.

PAREDOLIA

Don't use that, please.

RAYNER

I'm sorry Doli, I love you Doli.

PAREDOLI

You don't lov- mnpf!

RAYNER gags her mouth with the tape and moves close to her head to whisper in her ear.

RAYNER (Whispering)

Yes I do Doli. This is a spot he can't see. Stay here. Stay quiet. When they all leave I'll come back for you.

RAYNER kisses her. PAREDOLIA is in anguish.

RAYNER

I'll come back.

RAYNER takes a last look, smiles at her and then runs to return to MOTH and ANT.

SQUAL pokes her head around the corner of a doorway and looks into the dilapidated janitor's closet.

SQUAL
Are you in h-

VIDALIA (Off panel)
URLCK!

SQUAL sees VIDALIA from behind leaning over a bucket looking a little worse for wear but better than she did before.

SQUAL
Are you okay?

SQUAL closes and locks the door as she comes into the room. VIDALIA rubs her head as SQUAL approaches. SQUAL attempts to smile more out of embarrassment than levity.

SQUAL
I know, dumb question. Well, not that it matters,
you don't understand me and I can't say that I'm
not feeling too-

VIDALIA
<Please, don't look at me like this.>

SQUAL kneels down behind her and tries petting VIDALIA's back.

SQUAL (No longer smiling)
We don't deserve what's happening. Those other
women, whoever they were, no one deserves to die
like that...

VIDALIA (Holding herself)
<Those poor women. Where are we? Why is this
happening to us?>

SQUAL leans back and rests against the wall. VIDALIA soon takes the spot next to her. They sit still for a moment on the floor, as they did before. Side by side, backs against the wall deep in their own thoughts. They do not notice but they both sigh in exasperation at the same time.

VIDALIA rests her head on SQUAL's shoulder and in a similar outreach for comfort SQUAL places an arm around her back.

VIDALIA

<It is not often that I do not know what to do. It, it scares me.>

SQUAL

I'm scared too.

VIDALIA

<When I was young, my father came into my room and he took my... My innocence. He came to me many times, and even then I knew it was wrong. You are the first person I've ever told this to. You are the first person I've ever been compelled to speak to about this.>

SQUAL

I grew up with two very loving parents. Dad would go to work, while mother cleaned the home and took care of the children. Church on Sunday, white picket fence, apple pie in the window. All very... Correct. Very proper.

VIDALIA

<I learned from my father, as children learn from their parents, that this was what love was. This was how people showed they cared for one another. This is how you know if someone loves you, even slightly. They say "Yes." when you ask, "Will you sleep with me?">

SQUAL

The power went out in school, and it was no since keeping everyone there if the heaters couldn't run. So the children all had an unscheduled half-day. I used my key to get into the house, and in my bedroom, on my bed, I saw my mother having sex with a man who wasn't my father...

VIDALIA

<I was... I suppose... a whore... I would sleep with friends, they're boyfriends, teachers, sometimes more than one at a time. I didn't like the name "Whore" or "Slut" I preferred "Lover" because when I was making love with them, I felt loved.>

SQUAL

My perfect, proper world wasn't perfect anymore. It was not correct or proper. I didn't tell my father. Because by the time he came home I had convinced myself "Yes, its true, women will sometimes cheat on they're husbands. But, not in your world Squal. In your world everything is correct, everything is proper. In your world you will never be kidnapped and sent to a strange place where you may die and men will never kill women because they are weaker, or stronger or just because they can..."

VIDALIA

<But if I ask you "Will you sleep with me?" You do not say "yes" and you do not say "no". But, somehow still... I feel loved by you.>

SQUAL

"...And women most certainly do not fall in love with other..."

Without willing so, they're eyes meet.

SQUAL

It's happening again isn't it?

VIDALIA

<Is it bad?>

SQUAL

No it's not "bad" but is it correct or proper?

VIDALIA

<Yes.>

VIDALIA sits upright and puts a hand on SQUAL's shoulder rubbing her gently.

SQUAL

If you hadn't of freed me, I would probably of been one of those women... I'd be dead now... I wish I could thank you for that...

VIDALIA

<I wish I could talk to you... So I could thank you. But more, I want to tell you I feel...>

VIDALIA shuffles her body to sit in front of the other woman.

VIDALIA

<Thank you>

SQUAL uses part of her dress to wipe away some of VIDALIA's tears.

SQUAL

You're such a beautiful woman. I hope that if you can't understand my words, you feel what I'm saying. It could be this place, it could be the danger around us but I have so many feelings for you right now.

VIDALIA

<You are gentle you are kind and I wish I could tell you that you are the only thing beautiful in this place. But, I don't even know your name...>

VIDALIA shuffles back bringing SQUAL forward, kneeling at eye level to the other woman. She puts a hand to her own chest.

VIDALIA

Vidalia.

SQUAL immediately understands, and mimics the same gesture.

SQUAL

Squal, my name is Squal.

VIDALIA

Squal.

VIDALIA puts her hands, palms up in front of her for SQUAL to take.

VIDALIA

<I need your help.>

SQUAL takes her hands and they stay kneeling in front of each other for a moment. Though tears constantly are present as reminder of the danger they face, they are each smiling to the other. If this was animated they would be breathing in time with each other.

VIDALIA

<We are like doe in the woods, you and I, and we are being hunted. But unlike doe, we are not hunted for food or survival, we are hunted for pleasure and it is my realization that we two will very likely die here.>

SQUAL's emotional defenses begin to turn back on, as the moment becomes more intimate.

SQUAL

I have no idea what you're saying but it sounds so pretty.

VIDALIA

<In such times I- "we" need something or someone to live for. I hope- I hope you will forgive me for this, Squal.>

VIDALIA leans forward and kisses SQUAL who is quite shocked by this gesture.

SQUAL

Wow! I know you French have some funny ways of expressing yourselves but-

VIDALIA (With a “come hither” smile)
Squal?

SQUAL scoots back as VIDALIA advances. SQUAL begins to nervously twitch; she’s having some difficulty with the closeness of the situation.

SQUAL (Babbling)

Didn’t taste any vomit either. That’s a bad joke. My quack says I tell them to diffuse intimate moments. He says I also babble. But I told you that, not that you’d remember, you couldn’t understand. I also told you I wanted to kiss you, but I don’t know what that was. Didn’t know what it would do. Is this good or is it bad, what would Pastor Malcovitch thing, er thinp, er think.

VIDALIA

<I will make love to you>

SQUAL leans further back the closer VIDALIA gets to her. Is she trying to get away or is she lying down?

SQUAL (Babbling)

Oh shit! I’m babbling now! Are we having an intimate moment? I can’t tell. Another bad joke. But you can’t understand them... Oh God I want this! But, no, It’s not correct, not proper, not... Familiar... Not safe...

VIDALIA

<Love you. Gently. Tenderly. Softly. Like a woman should.>

SQUAL

Vidalia? You have to understand. I have never done anything like this. I just barely stopped being a virgin last year, the guy was a colossal dip shit, and I only ever kissed a girl once. On a dare. In the fourth gra-

SQUAL is halted in mid babble when she sees VIDALIA push her dress down to her knees.

SQUAL (Trying not to stare)
Oh- um- uh- Hello.

VIDALIA (Parroting)
Hello.

SQUAL
How do you say, “Don’t rape me” in French?

SQUAL is nearly on her back and VIDALIA starts crawling catlike up her body.

SQUAL
Look, its not as if your not one of the most beautiful women I’ve ever –er- or that I’m not tempted... Really, really tempted...

VIDALIA
<Out there we will face, and very likely find, death. But here we can live, and love. So please, close your mouth silly American girl, and just let this happen.>

VIDALIA , kneeling at her middle, guides SQUAL’s head up so that the their bodies are pressed close together. VIDALIA holds SQUAL’s head lovingly in her hands.

SQUAL
...But, is this the right time? Being locked in with a bunch of maniacs who will very likely kill us? I

get the feeling that we should make our time
together count and treat every moment...

VIDALIA

<Though, here we live and die at the whim of
men...>

SQUAL has talked her self into it. The distance between the two
women's faces grow shorter.

SQUAL

...Like...

VIDALIA

<We will love...>

SQUAL

...Our...

VIDALIA

<...Like...>

SQUAL

...Last.

VIDALIA

<...Women.>

The two passionately kiss.

(What follows in the original comic is a brief (only two pages)
montage of hot amateur lesbian lovemaking. Whether it follows into this
translation of the story depends on whether or not we decide to include a sex
scene (Being the only consensual one in the story, I think there's a pretty
good case for it). How vulgar we want to make it (Hard 'R' probably not
'NC17') and how comfortable Roz is with such a scene (Being of the male
persuasion, I'm completely game). There is also a nice little touch in the
lesbian montage that I threw in, out of hand. At the end, when each woman
(This is like the hundredth time I've started to write then erased the word
"Girl" in favor of "Woman".) when each woman climaxes she holds a hand
over her own mouth to prevent drawing unwanted attention.

I know also about the horror movie cliché about “Oh noes! Our friends are dying all around us! There are evil people who want to kill us! Lets rip off our clothes and have hot R rated sex!” I know, I know. But, I really want to make this work (and not just for the glandular reasons). If HALONA and CELESTE (The mother and the child) are the heart and soul of the story (If there is any in this story) than VIDALIA and SQUAL are the hope (again, if there is any in this story).

Heart and soul in that a mother’s love can extend to those beyond the children she birthed and that just because her child dies, it does not mean that the mother has to stop producing love. It means that love is stockpiled and it needs a new place to be shipped.

Hope in that because the situation seems hopeless, it doesn’t mean hope can’t still exist. Two people can still always create it.

...And of course right now your thinking “Damn it Dave, you sure can create huge quantities of bullshit just to get lesbians in your story.”)

In any event the scene will end with both of them naked, face down and exhausted. VIDALIA lying on top of SQUAL.

We now return to PAREDOLIA still in the same predicament as before but now we are seeing her in a different fashion. The sight of her is through a hand held video camera as in the first scene of the story with HEIDI.

PAREDOLIA has her head down in desperation. She jolts up right when she notices the camera looking at her.

VADE (Off panel)
Hello.

As the camera walks closer, PAREDOLIA looks around her for help but finds no one.

VADE (Off panel)
I knew that dweeb couldn’t kill you. So let’s take a
look at you...

The camera begins at PAREDOLIA’s quivering thighs and then travels up her body as VADE speaks.

VADE (Off panel)

(Looking at her vulva) Good. Good. Nothing there, nothing to hide. (Stomach) A little slimmer than I'd like but I think we can work around it. (Chest) Eyuck! Ugly! Yuck, yuck, icky-poo! We'll definitely have to cover up those... "Things"... Some how. (Face) Well not perfect but it doesn't have to be. Still...

VADE's hand reaches past the camera and takes hold of PAREDOLIA's jaw forcing her head to the side.

VADE (Off panel)
Hmmm, yes, I think I can work with what little you're giving me here. I'll have to tie those ears back, or, shit, just cut them off.

Next we cut to HALONA and CELESTE once again in normal view. The older woman is hurrying the younger one up a set of stairs as if they were being chased.

HALONA (looking behind her)
Hurry! I think he might of seen-

ARON (Off panel)
Where did you bitches head off to!

At the top of the stairs they enter a cleaner area of the factory, resembling the halls of a hospital with desks easy chairs and observation rooms. Frantically HALONA pushes the girl forward away from they're unknown tormentor.

CELESTE
Which way?

HALONA
I don't know! Come on, this way!

ARON (Off panel)
Stop fucking running! You're not getting away from me!

The two women turn a corner down a hallway, but quickly realize it's a dead end.

HALONA
Oh God! It's a dead end.

ARON (Off panel)
I know you went this way!

HALONA notices an office desk near the wall and pushes CELESTE behind it.

HALONA (quietly)
Stay behind this...

CELESTE
But, you-

HALONA
Don't argue! Stay hidden and don't move!

CELESTE now hidden HALONA prepares to meet the attacker. With her back against the wall she watches ARON turn a corner and approach her.

ARON
Dead-end bitch!

HALONA raises her hands with her palms outward in a non-threatening manner. ARON has his pistol raised and is showing obvious signs that the pursuit has tired him considerably.

ARON (Panting)
Where's the other one? Where's the little girl?

HALONA
We- We split up...

ARON
FUCK! I wanted her! You're too God damn old!

ARON grabs HALONA, turns her and pushes her face against the wall.

ARON
Look at the fucking wall bitch!

Keeping her in place, ARON pushes his pistol against HALONA's bottom.

ARON
Hands behind your head or you get a new ass hole.

HALONA
Don't!

HALONA complies and ARON cruelly ties her wrists together.

HALONA
AAAA!

ARON
Shut up!

From her hiding spot CELESTE watches HALONA being mishandled (Showing her reaction also gives us a convenient excuse not to show any complicated tying up panels)

HALONA
Please don't do this.

ARON
Shut up! Put your hands down.

Another cord is tied around HALONA's middle keeping her hands down. ARON prepares a cloth gag.

ARON
Can you lift your hands?

HALONA

No... Please listen, I've never done anything to y-

HALONA's reasoning is cut off by ARON gagging her.

HALONA

MNPH!

ARON turns HALONA around so that he can scream in her face.

ARON

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT THE FUCK UP!

ARON grabs the straps of HALONA's dress pulling her even closer to him.

ARON

ALL DAY LONG! ALL YOU BITCHES! YAP,
YAP, YAP, OUT YOUR UPPER CUNTS! NOW
SHUT UP!

He throws HALONA down the hallway marching her away from CELESTE's hiding spot, leading her with his gun. The young girl watches with her head to the reader.

ARON

Start walking, you wrinkled whore.

CELESTE watches pitifully as they go.

CELESTE (Quietly)

Momma...

Cut to SQUAL poking her head around a corner. She beckons VIDALIA to follow her. They too are in the "Hospital" area of the factory.

SQUAL

It seems clear enough.

VIDALIA comes out with a sad smile on her face. SQUAL looks down and notices that VIDALIA is holding her hand. SQUAL smiles approvingly.

SQUAL
Come on.

Nervously they walk down the new hospital esc hallway, hand in hand like Hansel and Gretel, past darkened windows and potted plants this time with SQUAL leading. She is frightened but no longer in a way that makes her feeble. She leads VIDALIA in confidence and she does not babble. SQUAL has changed.

(I had the occasion of being trapped for a long time on a greyhound (Not recommended) this was way back in the SCFA days and the woman I was seated next to didn't have any grasp on the English language, and I had no grasp on Spanish. But we talked anyway, I'd say something in English she'd say something in Spanish and we just sort of invented what the other was saying and we both seemed happy with that. What she was inventing for me to say couldn't have been far from the truth because when the bus stopped she drug me into the handicap stall of the ladies room and we fucked like enigmatic snow cones... Well that last bit wasn't true but it is this kind of ignorant conversation that is what I'm looking for in VIDALIA and SQUAL.)

Click.

VIDALIA
<How are you?>

SQUAL
I'm happy. Scared shitless, but happy.

VIDALIA
<So am I.>

SQUAL
I hope someday, I can tell you all about what
you've done for me.

VIDALIA

<I hope someday, I can tell you all about what
you've done for me.>

SQUAL (Becoming serious)
I think we're getting close to where those voices
we heard came from.

VIDALIA
<Good you heard them too>

SQUAL
I'm not sure what we can do, but we have to try.

VIDALIA
<It was a man yelling at a woman>

SQUAL turns her head to talk to VIDALIA missing a giant tire iron
coming around the corner.

SQUAL
The yelling stopped. That's not good.

VIDALIA
SQUAL!

SQUAL turns her head just in time to catch the tire iron with
her face. She falls limply to the floor. BENNIE steps out holding the iron.
NIQUG grabs VIDALIA from behind by her wrists from the ceiling.

VIDALIA
AAAAAA!!

BENNIE hits VIDALIA hard in the belly with the tire iron causing
her to gasp for air.

VIDALIA
URLK-!

BENNIE
Bring her into the room, I'll get the other one.

BENNIE looks down at SQUAL lying limp on the floor; there is some blood around her head.

BENNIE (To NIQUG)

Good news for your pecker, I think she's dead.

As NIQUG pulls VIDALIA into a room, BENNIE follows dragging SQUAL by the arms.

VIDALIA

Squal...

Can anybody think of a better ambush than this? VIDALLIA needs to be caught by BENNIE and NIQUG and SQUAL needs to be knocked out.

In grand cliffhanger tradition (and so that this comic doesn't become any worse than it already is) we return to HALONA. We find her bound to a pole. Still gagged, with her arms above her head. Her ankles have been tied around the back of the pole with a short rope causing her legs to stretch around the pole, leaving them open.

She is shivering and scared and knows she is about to die. But she also knows its happening to keep CELESTE safe.

As before we don't see ARON as he engages in his "foreplay", just his hands, his gun and his victim.

He starts by pointing his weapon at HALONA's face and then, as he talks he lets it travel downward against her body.

ARON (Off panel)

Right now you're asking yourself, "What kind of pyro uses a gun?" Well, the kind that wants to scare the fuck out of you. It's a kind of foreplay "Will he shoot me? And where?" Your neck so you can gurgle on your own blood? Your tits, your belly or...

As ARON breaks off his normal rant one hand starts to lift HALONA's dress slowly exposing her private area, while the hand holding the gun lowers and presses it closer and closer to her vagina.

ARON (Off panel)

I know you'd like one last romp, one last fuck...

At this point we'll focus only on HALONA's face as her expressions contort and her head turns violently.

(The impression I'm trying to leave on the reader (and this is one of those "Let me know if I've gone too far" things) is that ARON is raping her with the pistol. The character (HALONA) is old enough that I would be all right showing her genitals, but I've drawn the line with my inner Drip about showing violent penetration of any kind in a public offering. Odd isn't it? So ARON's vicarious rape will be implied instead or shown.)

ARON (Off panel)

But you're too old! Too fucking ugly! Enjoying this bitch? It's all you get. While most women would worry about this thing coming, as it moves in and out of them like this. You don't need to worry, know why?

At this point the rape ends and ARON screams into HALONA's face.

ARON

'CAUSE YOUR TOO FUCKING UGLY!

ARON undoes his pants and pulls out his lighter creating a small flame. A look at his crotch and one can see that, despite his claims about HALONA's looks, he is obviously excited.

ARON

Time to die hag.

He approaches her one hand holding up his jeans, the other holding the fire. Then to ARON, and even her surprise, HALONA kicks out, her leg having somehow been freed and knocks the flame out of ARON's hand.

The flame arcs upward and lands in ARON's open jeans.

(I'd like to mimic the pose from the original comic where the fire lands between him and his penis.)

Focusing on HALONA we see CELESTE looking out from behind the pole holding the rope she undid from around the older woman's ankles.

ARON (Off panel)

ARRRRRAAAAA!!!

As ARON runs around the room with his crotch engulfed in fire, CELESTE tries not to watch. Desperately she tries to ignore him and instead focuses on freeing HALONA.

ARON
YOU CUNT! YOU FUCKING CUNT!

HALONA and CELESTE face each other as ARON's screams die down. HALONA, with her hands still tied together pulls her gag down to her neck. CELESTE is crying and shaking, the situation catching up to her, experiences with her own mother has her convinced HALONA will be angry.

CELESTE
m- Sorry, Mamma- Sorry I took so long-

HALONA (Sympathetic)
No, no, no. You did good baby. Real good!

ARON (Off Panel)
AAAAaaannnnnbitchnnnn

(Something I just noticed in the original comic that we might want to copy to the new. Up to a certain point, at the climax of the story, we never see the bad guys die and we never see they're corpses. We see that other character see them die and other characters see they're bodies, but not the reader. This was mainly because I like drawing women more than men but I think it's an interesting facet that adds something. I'm not sure what that something is, maybe it makes climax of the story more triumphant because we actually see baddies die, but its just interesting. Your thoughts?)

HALONA turns CELESTE away from ARON's remains.

HALONA
I want you to stay here. Don't look at him, okay?

CELESTE
Okay...

CELESTE closes her eyes tightly, doing as she's told. While HALONA steps off panel.

HALONA (Off panel)
I'm coming right back.

HALONA returns with ARON's gun. With her empty hand she lightly pushes CELESTE forward.

HALONA
Okay baby, let's go.

They walk out of the room and HALONA closes it behind them. She looks around, gun ready, for signs of trouble.

HALONA
Okay I think that's good...

HALONA gets on her knees in front of CELESTE and opens her arms to the young girl. Her eyes begin to water.

HALONA
Come here...

CELESTE eagerly accepts HALONA's embrace. They hold each other very tightly.

HALONA
You saved my life.

CELESTE
I couldn't let him- him- k- ki-

HALONA
Shhh, its okay baby, It's okay, just shush now.

HALONA
I love you Celeste. Like I loved my own daughter,
I love you.

CELESTE

I love you too mamma...

(Crying, I'm such a sap...)

We return to a close-up on SQUAL. She is lying down in a corner.

BENNIE (Off panel)

Engh-ENH!

SQUAL begins to open her eyes, not dead after all.

VIDALIA (Off panel)

AAHHH!

SQUAL rubs her head still too dizzy to comprehend what's going on.

BENNIE (Off panel)

SHUT HER UP!

NIQUG (Off panel)

I adore her dolorous screams.

SQUAL creeps forward on all fours towards the voices.

NIQUG (Off panel)

How frequently are we going to receive screams
with an exotic tongue?

VIDALIA (Off panel)

<Get off me! Get off me you son of a bitch!>

NIQUG (Off panel)

Moreover, despite my erudite modus vivendi. I do
not speak Martian.

SQUAL (Whispering)

Huh! Vidalia!

SQUAL approaches a table turned on its side that separates her from the voices.

BENNIE (Off panel)
SHUT UP YOU BITCH!

VIDALIA (Off panel)
AAAA!

SQUAL peers over the table and is horrified by the sight she sees.

BENNIE, his back to SQUAL, is between VIDALIA's legs and has her pinned to the ground. Her dress has been pulled up part way exposing one of her breasts (1 panel of all of this only. The rest with creative angles and close ups) and she looks as if she is in horrible pain.

NIQUG is in the corner taking it in. (As NIQUG talks he spins in the corner. This concept is hard to explain. With his front legs on the floor and his back legs on the two walls he does a 180. At the end he is upside down and his front legs are on the walls while his back two are on the floor.)

NIQUG
You are cognizant to the reality that you are in the
incorrect orifice, are you not?

VIDALIA (Off panel)
<STOP, IT HURTS!>

BENNIE (Off panel)
Oh shut up! Bitches only have two holes one for
shiting and one for fucking and I'm not gonna get
my dick brown!

NIQUG
Whatever, make haste with the creature. I want my
time with it.

(Spinning spider ends here, NIQUG is upside down.)

BENNIE
You can wait your fucking turn. I need mine to
still be warm...

Close-up on SQUAL for her reaction to this next line.

BENNIE (Off panel)

Besides, you already fucked that dead bitch we
threw in the corner.

SQUAL looks down at her dress and notices for the first time a stain near her crotch. She experiences a panic attack. This statement becomes the M1 Abram that broke the camel's back.

(It was pointed out to me about a year ago that one of my artistic trademarks is that there is often points in my stories where I do multiple panels of the same character in the same place in different posses, showing action or emotional progression. I call them "Key Frame Moments" I'd like to do one here for SQUAL's breakdown, as well as many other moments throughout the story.)

She is snapped back into some form of reality by VIDALIA's voice uttering her name in a desperate plea.

VIDALIA (Off panel)

<Kill me... Let me be with my **Squal**... But please
no more...>

(In the French text we should find a way to make Squal's name stand out so that readers who don't know French won't accidentally gloss over it and miss what Squal hears.)

SQUAL's pupils are small (not dead eyes, but close. Type "1000 yard stare" in google images.) and her body is running on automatic as she pulls the costume gloves off of her arms.

BENNIE (Off panel)

Oh you sweet bitch!

To avoid seeing what SQUAL is up to we cut to a close up of BENNIE enjoying himself. Arcing back, lifting VIDALIA's arms as he does. His eyes are closed tightly

BENNIE

Oh you slut!

NIUG creeps low towards them.

BENNIE

I'm gonna give it to you bitch! You ready to take
it!

NIUG tilts VIDALIA's head back to talk to her face to face. She is in so much pain both emotionally and physically that her eyes are closed.

NIUG

Are you prepared to succumb ingénue? Are you
braced to become mine?

Close-up on BENNIE. With NIUG focused on VIDALIA's face and BENNIE's eyes closed in evil ecstasy, neither men notice SQUAL's hands, holding her gloves between them, pass slowly in front of BENNIE's face.

BENNIE

Oh, I'm gonna cum all over you whore!

Yanking back SQUAL catches BENNIE by the neck. Pulling him off (and out) of VIDALIA. NIUG and VIDALIA look stunned. VIDALIA is overjoyed to see her lover still alive.

VIDALIA

<Squal... Your alive!>

NIUG looks behind and begins to scamper towards his pistol left on the floor by the corner.

BENNIE tries to grab at the cloth strangling him, his erection twitching in plain sight. SQUAL's eyes are still full of crazy.

SQUAL

DON'T YOU HURT HER YOU SON OF A
BITCH!

From the floor VIDALIA lifts one of her legs and kicks forward, connecting with BENNIE's member.

As BENNIE passes out from pain (his penis erect but now bent) SQUAL lets go allowing him to fall to the ground.

NIQUG is just about to grab his pistol when he is stopped by a new voice.

HALONA (Off panel)
Don't!

With CELESTE hiding behind her, HALONA points ARON's gun at NIQUG.

HALONA (Slightly trembling)
Back up, keep your hands raised.

VIDALIA and SQUAL watch. The two still divided by the overturned table. NIQUG complies with the command.

NIQUG
Frau, you do not deceive me. You can not fashion
the favor to extinguish a life.

HALONA (To the VIDALIA)
Ma'am? Could you get this man's gun please?

SQUAL knowing that VIDALIA can not understand does the chore her self. She picks up the weapon and looks at it for a moment before aiming it at NIQUG. She's not angry or intimidated, she looks scared, but not of what's around her, rather she is scared of herself. She has enough of a rational mind left to realize that she's going crazy.

SQUAL (To NIQUG)
Did you rape me?

NIQUG
You were supposed to be departed...

The response made no since to SQUAL. Her dwindling mind needed something rational to cling onto.

HALONA turns CELESTE's head to her stomach, protecting the girl's eyes from what she thinks is coming.

SQUAL repeats the question, maybe he didn't understand.

SQUAL

I said, did you rape me?

NIQUG

I would not of been capable of climax if you were
not with your creator...

Still crazy, his response made no since. Perhaps more forcefully.
NIQUG responds with equal force spreading his fangs for the one and only
time in this story.

SQUAL

DID YOU FUCKING RAPE ME!

NIQUG

YOU SMELLED DEAD!

Make the crazy stop. SQUAL pulls the trigger. There is no emotion in
her eyes when she kills him. (and thank God too, I can finally take
Thesaurus.com out of my bookmarks.)

The others watch her, for a moment SQUAL just stands still with her
hand to her forehead. At first looking up as if the sky has answers, then her
eyes close.

SQUAL

So much has changed today. I- I got out of bed and
I thought this would be just another day. I was-
“was” as if I’m talking about something that
happened years ago. I was just a simple woman,
naive- stupid- in one day I’ve seen people die
horribly, like no one should die, not even him.

She gestures towards the floor in front of her. The crazy is beginning
to leave, but its being replaced by fear and sorrow.

SQUAL

Then I found someone I’ve missed my whole life, I
fell in love, but I can’t tell her how I feel. And just
as soon I was spoiled, while I was unconscious, I
couldn’t say “No”. Couldn’t fight it or even beg. I

woke to seeing them do the same to my Vidalia
and now I'm a- a...

SQUAL looks at the gun.

She doesn't finish she just starts. HALONA is quick to put her hands
on the crying woman to comfort her.

HALONA

It's okay dear, you just cry, go on...

VIDALIA watches tearfully wanting to do something but not knowing
what to do or even how to ask.

SQUAL turns to HALONA and the two women hold each other while
CELESTE watches, being in the same predicament as VIDALIA.

SQUAL

It was just going to be another day...

HALONA

Your all right dear, you're going to be okay.

VIDALIA's face goes from sympathetic to "pissed right the fuck off"
(PRTFO) when she hears a weak noise behind her.

BENNIE (Weakly)

Unnnghhhh...

HALONA and SQUAL separate when they hear a repeated
"THWAP" noise.

VIDALIA (Off panel)

<BASTARD!>

SQUAL

Vidalia...

VIDALIA is on her knees and she has BENNIE's head in both hands,
she is repeatedly bouncing it against the floor, each time producing a
satisfying "THWAP" sound, each time bits of his face come off.

VIDALIA

<Do you like going up and down with me now!>

HALONA calls to VIDALIA not knowing she won't understand.
SQUAL hurries towards her woman.

HALONA

NO! We need him alive! He needs to tell us what's
going on!

VIDALIA lifts BENNIE's head up with one hand to yell at his face. He is still alive but he is unable to struggle. His face is covered with blood, and the side of his face she has been beating up is torn and damaged. (I'm not sure how to draw this but I had an idea that his eyelids would be barely attached, causing the bug-eyed look you'll see in the original comic.)

VIDALIA

<You ruined me! You poisoned me! You broke
into my temple...>

VIDALIA slams his head into the floor this time not producing a "THWAP" but rather a "CRACK"

VIDALIA

<And wrote "God rapes babies" on my altar!>

(I tossed this line at Katie and she voted it stupid. I like the play on the phrase "My body is my temple" but I don't want things to get ridiculous. (Even if people won't understand it on the first read through.) An additional concern of mine is the "God rapes babies" bit, being blasphemous is the point, but this feels like a stretch even for me. I suppose I'm looking for someone else I trust to say, "No, it's all right in this context" before I'm okay with it.)

By now SQUAL is with her, touching her back, trying to calm her righteous anger.

SQUAL

Vidalia, I'm here, you have to stop.

VIDALIA (Still looking forward)

<I was yours Squal, and he ruined me for you.
Then he would have killed me like those others.>

VIDALIA turns her head to look at her lover her anger gone instead there is sorrow. SQUAL can't understand her passionate words and it hurts them both.

VIDALIA

<I thought they killed you. I love you Squal, but now I am broken how can you still want me? Now that I am ruined I want so much just to simply say that I love you.>

HALONA walks up behind them and what she says amazes them both.

HALONA

<I could tell her for you.>

SQUAL

You understand her!

VIDALIA

<Oh yes! Please tell her!>

HALONA nods and addresses SQUAL.

HALONA

Squal? Vidalia says she was scared because she thought they had killed you. She says she was worried because she believed that after being violated you wouldn't want her.

SQUAL looks into VIDALIA's eyes. Both women overjoyed that they're feelings could now be shared.

SQUAL

She doesn't have to worry about that.

HALONA

She also told me to tell you that, well, she loves
you.

SQUAL (Looking at VIDALIA)
Please tell her I love her.

HALONA
<Squal says she will always want you, because->

VIDALIA (Looking at Squal)
<She loves me. I know. I see it in her eyes. She
loves me. Thank you dear woman. Thank you.>

CELESTE walks up to HALONA's side wearing a conspiratorial
smile.

CELESTE
French?

HALONA (Slightly embarrassed)
I spent a few years living in Quebec.

CELESTE (Proud)
My new mommy is full of surprises.

VIDALIA and SQUAL are about to embrace when they are
interrupted by a voice from bellow.

BENNIE (Off panel)
Don't start that again, wait until I get my camera,

BENNIE is still alive but it seems that half his face is ruined and his
cracked skull is leaking meat. He can't move his body but he can still talk.
(This didn't look right in the original comic so when we discover his
final design I'll do multiple tests of this. What I did like though is that nearly
every close-up of him in this state was set at an odd angle.)

BENNIE
This movie was better before it was dubbed.

HALONA pushes the other two aside so she can talk to the half corpse. CELESTE dutifully follows.

HALONA (Pointing)

I have some questions for you and you **will** give me answers or I'll tell Vidalia to step on your balls again.

BENNIE (Loosing it)

Sure, what the hell, at the rate my brain is leaking out of my head, I'll be dead soon anyway.

BENNIE notices CELESTE who hides behind HALONA.

BENNIE

Oh hey there little girl. Everyone's looking for you. You ever been penetrated? You will be. Over and over and over...

HALONA raises her arms to block his view of the girl.

HALONA

Why were we brought here?

BENNIE

Pfft, stupid bitch... So we can kill you...

BENNIE is starting to get loopy.

HALONA

How do we get out of here?

BENNIE

Much better question and I'll answer it after you show me that little girl's titties.

CELESTE shouts in outrage while HALONA speaks conspiratorially to VIDALIA.

CELESTE

NO!!

HALONA

<Vidalia? Get ready to make him eat his testicles.>

BENNIE

Okay! Jesus! There's a hole cut in the ceiling, on the top floor. Only way in, only way out. Near the control room. Now, about those titties... Hurry up while I can still comprehend what I'm looking at.

CELESTE turns away, covering herself with her arms and crying. HALONA holds her and snaps at BENNIE.

HALONA

STOP IT! How many of you are there?

BENNIE

Minus the two, er, I suppose I count don't I, three you babes have already clocked, then there was Pup. He he, I did that one... Fifteen.

CELESTE

FIFTEEN!

SQUAL (Near crazy again)

WHY GOD DAMN IT WHY! WHY US!

BENNIE

Yeah your tits aren't so tough now are they? Oooh, what a pretty white light...

CELESTE is horrified. HALONA explains this new knowledge to VIDALIA.

CELESTE

Why us? What did we do?

HALONA

<Fifteen, there are fifteen others hunting us.>

SQUAL starts yelling at BENNIE but she gets no response.

SQUAL
Hey! HEY!

HALONA stares down at BENNIE with out sympathy.

HALONA
He's dead...

And then BENNIE wakes back up.

BENNIE
Nah, just fuck'n with ya. But you bitches better
hurry, I'm nearly gone.

Un-amused by his joke, SQUAL yells at the dying murderer.

SQUAL (PRTFO)
WHY US YOU MOTHER F-F-F-UKER!!

BENNIE
Well, I'm not sure, is your mother as skanky
looking as you are? You're on video bitch. We're
making a movie. There are seven hidden cameras
in this room alone. You are all staring in Edmond
Vade's latest snuff film.

(Not sure if BENNIE's "Mother Fucker" joke works)
HALONA is visibly shaken by Vade's name, and CELESTE notices
it.

HALONA
Vade! Where is he?

MACELLE
Momma?

BENNIE

Probably, in his control room, near the exit,
watching us now.

In every other instance where the girls talk about they're past it may be interesting to have visual references. For example as they speak about it, show young PAREDOLIA admiring her mother and show CELESTE entering the mall restroom with a hint that someone is stalking her. This would be especially useful in VIDALIA's case since the majority of the audience won't be able to read her words. But I think this next bit should be kept in the room and not told through flashbacks.

HALONA

Vade killed my only daughter. He threw her off a building. Then a month later I got a package in the mail with no return address. (Pause) I missed her, I was lonely for her. What mother wouldn't watch a video labeled "Your daughter's last moments"? I watched him kill my baby. I heard her beg for her mother... me... And when she needed me most... I wasn't there...

(Here I go again, what a sap.)

The moment is interrupted by BENNIE.

BENNIE

I know that video. Vade showed it to us. I felt something when your daughter asked for her mother... I thought... I'd really like to fuck that bitch.

HALONA's emotional expressions don't change; she just looks to VIDALIA.

HALONA

<Vidalia? You can kill him now.>

BENNIE watches VIDALIA approach holding his own gun.

BENNIE

Ut oh, here we go...

VIDALIA kills BENNIE.

(Once again we don't see BENNIE take the hit just a panel of VIDALIA firing at the floor. And I think I know why I like this not showing dead baddies thing. I think it works as a form of misdirection to the readers. By not knowing for themselves that the baddies are dead they think they'll resurrect them selves at any moment in classic Freddie Kreuger fashion.)

SQUAL holds up her weapon as she talks to HALONA

SQUAL

We have three pistols, we can make a go for the exit.

HALONA

There's nothing else to do. Let me fill Vidalia in.

HALONA (Now to VIDALIA)

<Vidalia, he told us we are here so they can make a film of our deaths.>

VIDALIA

<I know.>

This understandably surprises HALONA.

HALONA

She says she knew, we were being hunted.

CELESTE

What?!

VIDALIA

<I couldn't understand what they said, but I will try to repeat it. I woke up before I woke up here...>

Now we get into a flashback of VIDALIA waking up in a black room. This is Vade's control room. I imagine it to be completely black with it's

only features being glowing control panels and monitors. It's not that the room is necessarily dark, it's just... ugh... every thing is "Painted Black".

She is not in the brides dress, but rather whatever she was wearing before coming here (Please oh please, a blouse with most of the buttons undone). Her arms are tied above her head. HALONA narrates the flashback.

HALONA (Voice over)

She says she woke up before she woke up here.

As VIDALIA wakes she sees the other girls still passed out next to her and tied in a similar fashion. The girls closest to VIDALIA should be APRIL, GINGER (To give them more exposure) and especially PAREDOLIA (To remind readers that she is still alive.).

HALONA (Voice over)

She saw all of us, passed out...

Then VIDALIA sees something ahead of her that gives her an expression of awe.

MR. 753 (Off panel)

...Once the women are dead and the film complete?

HALONA (Voice over)

She saw some man talking to another man through a large screen.

Now we see VADE's face, he is grinning as he talks to a still unseen MR. 753. VIDALIA can be seen in the background with the other girls.

VADE

I press this button and the building floods with gas, no survivors, no witnesses, and I get to expand the extra's section of my DVD.

Now we see VADE from VIDALIA's perspective. He is talking to a giant image of MR. 753 made of several monitors stacked together.

VADE

After they kill the women, they will all die.

MR. 753 (Looking past Vade)
One of your charges is awake...

VADE turns to see VIDALIA. He takes hold of a cloth rag.

VADE

Eh?

Focus on VIDALIA panicking as if VADE was coming towards her.

VADE

Your not supposed to be awake yet...

VIDALIA

<Stay back! No closer! Don't->

VADE forces the rag over VIDALIA's face.

VIDALIA

MNPF! Gff.. nn...

And VIDALIA is once again asleep. (Does the rag do what it should or do you think Vade should have to break out a hypo needle?)

We exit the flash back to the four women ascending a flight of stairs (Remember the stairs from Anthrocon?) (This I imagine would be a vertical panel taking the whole page.)

VIDALIA (In front)

Merde! Merde! Merde!

CELESTE (Behind VIDALIA)

Hate stairs, how big is this place?

HALONA (next in line)

Once we get out of here, I'll take you home with me and you can rest all you want.

SQUAL (In the back)

If we find the exit before the control room, you all should leave. I'll try and let the gas out while you bring back the Army.

VIDALIA halts them and gestures for silence. She puts an ear to the door on this floor.

MOTH (Off panel)

It's not a fucking dress you fucking fairy! I need it open for these damned gimp wings!

ANT (Off panel)

You're a fairy! When you run those wings spread out and you look supper queer.

VIDALIA opens the door a crack to see MOTH, ANT and RAYNER. Approaching them from the far end of the hallway are DE'ROUCHER, AYL, DR. NICK and KESKESAY.

MOTH (Greeting them)

Hey look at these twinkly fuckers right here. De'Roucher? How's life outside death row?

DE'ROUCHER

Moth. How'd you guys do?

MOTH

Shit, we each got a piece.

DE'ROUCHER

Oh, we each got two of 'em.

MOTH

So there are eleven chicks all total? You cunt basket.

DE'ROUCHER

Wait...

AYL

We haven't seen anything.

MOTH

We'll stick with me boys. You're not going to get anywhere following the death row virgin.

DE'ROUCHER

I am not a virgin!

KESKESAY

I just want that little girl. Be so nice to her. I want it only to hurt a little. Wish there were little boys' too-

DR. NICK punches KESKESAY in the neck.

KESKESAY

URHLLLLLICCKK!

DR. NICK

Sick, Pedo creep.

AYL

What's this "Death Row Virgin" thing?

DE'ROUCHER

I'm not a virgin! I fucked her!

MOTH

Did you finish or did you blow your wad on your fucking step dad at the same time you decided to chuck your pants at his face?

AYL

What?

MOTH

You heard me. He tried to show his step dad what-for by chucking his funky britches in his face.

Guess daddy didn't know whether to shit or go blind -- maybe a little of both due to the fucking stench, but he fell down the stairs and broke his neck. "AYGHGHHGHAHAA CRACK!"

DR. NICK

That wouldn't be worth death row.

MOTH

So his chick starts freaking out "Ieeee oh no! You killed him aaaa!" So De'Roucher starts strangling her, which is understandable, because with how fat and ugly she was, he probably thought "it" was going to eat him. It was self-defense!

DE'ROUCHER

SHUTUP RIGHT NOW!

MOTH

So he gets shit scared and lights the house on fire. To cover up the evidence? But he forgets to get dressed and he forgets his step dads house is connected to another house and the family within is burned alive.

KESKESAY

Eyeah... I rape little boys, but you're sick man!

Dr. NICK punches KESKESAY in the neck again.

KESKESAY

Ennh! Owwie!

MOTH

The police find him running around in his tightey-whiteys with his fucking balls hanging out-

DE'ROUCHER

My balls were not hanging out!

MOTH

Oh you'll debate that, but not the fact you were the tender young age of thirty when you had your first fuck.

AYL (Outraged)
Thirty!

DE'ROUCHER cowers slightly.

MOTH

So come with me guys I'll get you laid. Even you Rouch.

DE'ROUCHER (Approaching MOTH)
Give me one good reason why we should follow-

With no change in emotion, MOTH shoots DE'ROUCHER in the balls. He falls to the ground gripping his wound as blood avalanches out of his genitals.

DE'ROUCHER
-!

ANT
(Lights a new cigarette before spitting out the old one)
Nice.

AYL
Shit if you didn't do that I would of.

DE'ROUCHER is left to bleed to death as the cons walk away from him (Away from the stairs) with MOTH leading.

MOTH

I think Emperor Vespasian said it best when he said, " Vae, puto, deus fio!"

ANT groans. DR. NICK is the only one who snickers, being the only one of the group educated enough to recognize these famous last words to mean “Damn it, I think I’m becoming a God”. (The Romans believed that when they’re emperors died they became deities, so this guy’s last words were reportedly a jab at this belief.)

ANT

Oh Jesus, not historical humor...

VIDALIA closes the door.

HALONA

Only two more floors to go, we’d better hurry.

The door at the top of the stairs opens to a new section of the building that resembles a theater. (Opera not movies) Columns, pictures on the walls, carpeting, and low hanging chandeliers. Not necessarily an auditorium, but rather the surrounding halls and a reception area’s

VIDALIA

<We find this control room and gas these bastards,
yes?>

SQUAL

What ever she said I’m staying with her.

HALONA

Oui, Vidalia.

They enter a hallway with a lower ceiling but still too high for them to jump up and touch.

SQUAL

If Vidalia is planing on finding the control room
I’m staying with her. But, you and Celeste should
leave as soon as we find the exit.

HALONA

No... Vade, he- he has to die...

CELESTE (Looking up)
Is that it?

They all stand around a square hole in the ceiling, too high for them to reach, but they can see blue sky through it.

(An environmental note, there can't be anything around that they could stand on or stack to get to the exit. Also carpet is important in the area, explain why latter.)

SQUAL
Bullshit!

CELESTE
How are we going to get out?

VIDALIA looks up at the hole then squats down, extending her arms to CELESTE.

VIDALIA
<Celeste, up on my shoulders! Hurry!>

HALONA
Yes. Celeste? Up on Vidalia's shoulders, quickly!

As VIDALIA lifts her up, CELESTE starts to shake.

CELESTE
I'm gonna fall!

SQUAL
We'll catch you.

HALONA
Celeste? I promise I won't let you fall.

VIDALIA stands and CELESTE can just barely reach the edge of the hole.

VIDALIA
<That's it. Just reach up child.>

CELESTE clammers up the hole. (Note, we do not follow her out as we're trying to keep the reader confined with the other characters in the building. No fresh air just yet.)

VIDALIA
<Good girl darling.>

CELESTE sticks her head back through the exit reaching downward.

CELESTE
Okay Momma. I'll help pull you up.

HALONA looks to the other two for support but finds none.

HALONA
No, I've got to...

SQUAL
Halona, she needs you.

VIDALIA
<You must go with her>

HALONA is quite obviously torn between her desire to go with CELESTE and her feelings of revenge.

HALONA
NO! HE KILLED MY DAUGHTER! I HAVE
TO... DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND!

CELESTE softly pleads from her higher post.

CELESTE
momma... please...

SQUAL watches as VIDALIA tries to reason with HALONA who is crying into her hand.

VIDALIA

<Halona... Your daughter is dead... Nothing will bring her back to you... Not even killing this man... But you have been given the chance to save this little girl...>

(A note on the French (The use of language not the people.) it can be said that I'm giving a lot of lines to VIDALIA, when most of the audience won't understand them. I hope to accomplish two things. First, an English only audience will have to take it exactly as the characters do, this creates a first impression that will last even when they discover what she's really saying and would otherwise find it unrealistic. Second, getting people to discuss with one another "Hey, what does this mean?" is free advertising.)

SQUAL

Celeste needs you. She needs a mother.

HALONA nods and composes herself.

HALONA

You're right... You're both right... Celeste, I'm coming up-

A loud BLAM and a bullet slaps into HALONA's leg.

HALONA
AAAAAA!

MOTH and ANT are peering around a corner. ANT is holding a smoking gun.

MOTH (Sarcastically)
Great fuckin shot Annie Oakley.

SQUAL pulls HALONA away while VIDALIA spastically fires her gun at the men (Note to Dave: She's probably never fired a gun in her life.)

SQUAL
HALONA!

VIDALIA continues to fire as the three back up.

MOTH and all the remaining psycho's take cover behind the corner watching ricochets bounce off the wall.

MOTH (Closest to corner)
Fuckin shit! Some body stick they're fuckin head
around the fuckin corner and see how many fuckin
bitches are there!

RAYNER (Eager)
Yeah, I got it.

RAYNER pokes his head around the corner and a random shot, SQUAL isn't even looking, goes through his neck. He falls onto his back gurgling on and drowning in his own blood.

MOTH simply looks down at his dying comrade in anger.

MOTH
Well? How many are there?

Now at the opposite end of the hall, hidings behind they're own corner; the three women tend to HALONA who isn't too badly hurt. CELESTE calls for her.

CELESTE
Momma!

HALONA
Run baby! Run as fast as you can!

Close-up on CELESTE but stay inside the building.

HALONA (Off panel)
RUN!

Back at psycho corner.

KESKESAY
Are we going after the kid?

MOTH

Sure, yeah, and while your crawling up that fuckin hole one of those fuckin bitches will poke they're fuckin head out and blow you the fuck away!
“Hey Jackie? Put the top down, I want to wave at the grassy knoll.” YOU FUCKING MORON!

While SQUAL helps HALONA up, VIDALIA points toward the reader (Not at the reader just off panel)

HALONA

I'm okay I think I can walk on my own.

VIDALIA

<Look!>

The three women see a metal door completely out of keeping with the aesthetic nature of their current surroundings. The door is slightly ajar and flanked by two lights, both green. (Though that doesn't matter in a B&W comic.)

HALONA (Off panel)

Control room?

SQUAL reasons despairingly with the other two women,

SQUAL

Look, It's probably airtight. (To HALONA) Take VIDALIA, go inside and release the gas.

HALONA

What about you!?

VIDALIA

<What's going on?>

SQUAL

Someone has to distract those men or they'll find a way in. I... I... know what will happen to me.

HALONA (To VIDALIA)

<Squal wants us to go inside and release the gas while she distracts those men. She... She knows she will die.>

VIDALIA (To Squal)
<NO!>

VIDALIA pleads with SQUAL. SQUAL holds her lover by the shoulders trying to fight reason against passion.

VIDALIA
<No! I want to go with you! I don't care what happens!>

SQUAL
Please Vidalia, I want you to live.

HALONA is left with the uncomfortable task of translating for both women.

HALONA
She wants to go with you. <She wants you to live.>

VIDALIA takes SQUAL's face gently in her hands.

VIDALIA
Squal...

The panel that portrays this next line has to be done perfectly (The onus is on me I know.) It must convey VIDALIA's message without the benefit of translation, and it must show SQUAL's resolved understanding that no argument of hers could change her lover's mind.

VIDALIA
<If I do not die with you... I will die without you...>

HALONA can not bring herself to translate.

SQUAL and VIDALIA hold each other tightly, and then SQUAL extends an arm to HALONA.

SQUAL
Good bye Halona...

The three women hold each other.

HALONA
Good bye Squal...

VIDALIA
Au revoir Halona...

TUMMIIE
Au revoir Vidalia...

SQUAL and VIDALIA depart as HALONA watches them go.

VIDALIA
<Hurry inside! Say good bye to Celeste for us.>

HALONA
<I will.>

SQUAL
Please don't worry about us...

As SQUAL and VIDALIA turn the corner they share a smile with each other.

SQUAL
...We're together... We'll be okay...

Inside VADE's control room HALONA slams the door behind her and turns the large handle locking it in place. The lights flanking the door turn from green to red.

Taking a moment to collect herself HALONA puts her back against the door and holds her head in one hand. She is brought back to being by a familiar sounding voice.

CELESTE (Recording)
Is-That-You-Momma-

HALONA starts walking down a black corridor following the noise. The walls of the corridor are decorated with unworn bride's gowns hanging on coat hangers. Occasionally there is a space between dresses, supposedly where the ones the women are wearing once were.

CELESTE (Recording)
Is-That-You-Momma-

HALONA
Celeste?

She enters a large black room illuminated by a single screen with CELESTE's image on it.

CELESTE (Recording)
Is-That-You-Momma-

(I think if we do four separate panels of equal size of CELESTE speaking each word of the "Is that you Momma" phrase, We can give the impression that we are seeing and hearing a spliced together video of the child. We can further the effect by merely cutting and pasting pictures of the girl from previous panels.)

HALONA watches the screen go black in mid message.

CELESTE (Recording)
Is-That-

We then see HALONA from the front and see that a series of screens have come on behind her creating a large image of VADE's face. There also is illuminated a control panel underneath the screens.

VADE (Screen)
Hello!

After HALONA is startled she spins around pointing her gun at Vade's image.

HALONA
VADE! STOP HIDING! WHERE ARE YOU!

VADE is unfazed.

VADE (Screen)
You look so much like your daughter. I think I sent
you an early version of her film. Do you want to
see what made the cutting room floor?

Close-up on HALONA's horrified reaction. (Don't show what she's
seeing, rather let the text rape the viewers imagination.)

HEIDI (Off panel)
Daddy! DADDY STOP!

VADE (Off panel)
Keep going or I'll blow her little head off.

VADE's face reappears on screen, as HALONA turns her eyes away.

VADE (Screen)
And how could we not play you're favorite part?

Back to HALONA, her eyes are closed tightly and her hands are
attempting to cover her ears.

HEIDI (Off panel)
Please, I want my mother. I just want to see my
momma again. I want my momma!

The sight and sound of her daughter begging for her mother has
driven HALONA to her knees.

VADE's face reappears on the screen.

VADE (Screen)
Tell me the truth... Knowing how much you blame
yourself for everything. You must have watched

that part over and over before you gave it to the police, to punish yourself, didn't you?

HALONA pleads with VADE

HALONA

I... I Couldn't... I... Didn't... I...

She breaks down completely crying to the floor on all fours, when she finds her self unable to lie anymore.

HALONA

YES...

In front of the monitor HALONA continues to cry, but VADE's face is not on the monitor rather it is an image of HALONA herself as she is now but at another angle (She is still being recorded.)

VADE (Screen)

Sappy bitch, you came here to kill and you end up crying on the floor...

Outside the control room door all the men have gathered, staring at the two red lights flanking the door. MOTH is tinkering with his cell phone.

ANT

Are they in there?

MOTH

How should I fuckin know? Probably! I'm calling Vade to get him to open the fuckin door.

AL

I can't believe we're being out done by a nag of stupid cu-

A series of loud bangs and bullets fly all around the men. One catches AL in the side of the head. AYL is shot in the arm, but the grand majority are misses.

MOTH
FUCKIN BITCH!

From around a doorway SQUAL and VIDALIA are firing they're guns at their tormentors. VIDALIA's gun stops firing and instead starts clicking.

VIDALIA
MERDE!

SQUAL
Let's go Vidalia!

The two disappear into a room. MOTH is quick to lead the charge. His gimp wings flutter up as he runs.

MOTH
COME ON! I HEARD THEY'RE GUNS GO
DRY-

When he enters the room he is faced with SQUAL pointing her gun at him while VIDALIA is on her knees holding tightly onto her.

SQUAL
You heard her gun go dry, not mine.

This troubles MOTH only for a second. While the other men hide behind cover, he cockily walks toward her with his arms spread in a non-threatening manner. SQUAL's hand begins to tremble; her bluff is being called.

MOTH
Then blow me away bitch!

SQUAL
G-get back...

MOTH
No

VIDALIA
<Why doesn't he just kill us?>

MOTH pauses and smiles at VIDALIA

MOTH
<Because your cunt is still warm.>

VIDALIA has a look of extreme hate. She is unable to communicate with her lover, but she has just discovered that she can converse at length with this killer. Neither woman notices ANT creeping up behind them.

ANT grabs SQUAL's arm. The gun clicks. VIDALIA turns her head to the new attacker giving MOTH the opportunity to lunge at her.

SQUAL
NO!

The empty weapon falls out of SQUAL's hand as her other wrist is gripped from behind. MOTH grabs hold of VIDALIA's hair and drags her toward the waiting psychopaths.

VIDALIA
AAAHH!!!

MOTH
WHO WANTS SOME PUSSY?

ANT has both of SQUAL's wrists in one hand and has forced her arms above her head. With his free hand he lifts her skirt exposing her pubic area.

SQUAL
NO! NO! DON'T!

ANT
FREE EATS RIGHT HERE!

Back in the control room we see Dr. NICK and MOTH conversing on the monitor. What's happening to SQUAL and VIDALIA will be

“artistically” represented with shadows behind the two killers. HALONA has turned away and is yelling at the darkness.

DR. NICK (Screen)

So, we kill them once everyone has had their turn with them?

MOTH (Screen)

Nah, fuckin Vade wants ‘em alive until he calls back. Tell ya what, find out if any of theses pricks know how to tie a noose.

HALONA

VADE! You were going to kill them all anyway!
Release the gas!

VADE reappears on the screen behind her.

VADE (Screen)

But this way, I’m getting spools and spools of usable material.

HALONA turns to face him.

HALONA

Tell me which button does it!

VADE (Screen)

See, all you can do is demand. I could comply but I choose not to.

HALONA is begging to realize the hopelessness of her situation.

VADE (Screen)

Loosing hope are we? Good. Tell you what...
Maybe, you do me a couple of favors and I’ll tell you what you want to know. Won’t take more than twenty minutes.

HALONA looks at the floor in despair.

HALONA

What do you want? I have no pride left...

VADE (Screen)

Get, on your knees, in front of the monitor.

HALONA does as she is commanded to and guesses at VADE's intentions.

HALONA

Please, Vade. Please tell me how to release the gas.

VADE (Screen)

E-ha Ha Ha. A-he, hoo. No! No! I don't want you to beg... That gun in your hand? Put it in your mouth.

HALONA looks at the weapon, terrified.

VADE (Screen)

I'm not going to tell you to pull the trigger, just stick it in your mouth.

HALONA does so and immediately begins to shake, as if afraid the gun will go off all by itself.

VADE (Screen)

Good girl... Now, if you look away or take your eyes off the screen. We'll just start all over again... Here we go...

Focus on HALONA's face. Don't show what she's watching.

VADE (Off panel screen)

Well good morning little angel. How are you doing today?

HEIDI (Off panel screen)

Please let me go... I just want to go home... I just want to see my mother again.

HALONA begins to cry and plea around the barrel of the gun as she recognizes the video of her daughter's murder.

HEIDI (Off panel screen)
What are you going to- AAAHH!!!

HALONA begins to shake uncontrollably; she starts to perspire in buckets. She begins to wonder if the gun going off wouldn't be all that bad after all.

VADE (Off panel screen)
You miss her don't you?

HEIDI (Off Panel screen)
STOP! JUST PLEASE! PLEASE STOP-
EEEEAAAA!!!

HALONA's violent shaking increases and (again the onus is on me) her face mixed with the words on the panel should make every reader sick at the realization of what VADE is putting her through. Reliving the loss of her daughter, something she no doubt only barely survived and then not coming out of it completely intact. All the old feelings of loss suffering and guilt wash over her,

VADE (Off panel screen)
You can see her again, just squeeze your finger.
That's all. Pull the trigger and your baby can see
her Momma again. Just like she wanted.

We end this scene with a close-up of HALONA's finger trembling on the trigger.

VADE (Off panel screen)
Just... Squeeze...

We return to SQUAL and VIDALIA forced on their knees. Neither woman is looking well, and both their dresses have been torn in several

areas and they no longer cover all of the women's private areas. SQUAL is coughing up red while the killer KESKESAY is screaming his head off grabbing an area around his crotch that is ever increasingly growing a dark red. Between the two of them, on the floor, is an unidentifiable piece of meat.

KESKESAY
AAAAAAHHH! YOU FUCKING WHORE!
YOU GOD DAMNED BITCH!!!

The expressions of the other killers run the gambit between annoyance and horror. ANT and MOTH meanwhile are laughing like lunatics.

KESKESAY
YOU FUCKERS! THIS ISNT FUNNY! THIS
ISNT FUCKING FUNNY!

MOTH
Shit ya it is dude.

ANT
We told you.

KESKESAY
THIS HURTS!

MOTH
Too shit fat bad!

KESKESAY (Turns to Squal)
I'M GOING TO KILL THAT CUNT!!!

MOTH
No you're not. Vade hasn't given the word yet.
Come here ya fuckin dufus. I've been to med
school, let me look at it. You others get those two
chicks ready.

SQUAL and VIDALIA are brought to they're feet and they're arms are rudely tied behind they're backs. SQUAL is tied as if her arms are folded

behind her back. VIDALIA is tied both at the wrists and at the elbows forcing her arms into a very painful position.

VIDALIA
ENGHHH!!!

SQUAL
Ennh! Stop! You're hurting her!

KESKESAY pathetically limps toward MOTH whose "med school training" has apparently taught him to simply shoot the wounded killer in the face.

MOTH addresses the others.

MOTH
Let me remind you fuckers of a basic rule of our profession. Don't stick your fuckin dick in the mouth of something that knows your gonna kill it!
Dip shits!

ANT
Hey man, they're ready in the other room.

MOTH
Okay, bring 'em.

The girls struggle but the men holding them force them to follow MOTH into an open room. A ramp down into the room allows it to have the appearance of a higher ceiling than the other rooms in this area. Hanging from a chandelier are two empty nooses, one of which ANT proudly shows off.

SQUAL and VIDALIA have an immediate reaction to the nooses.

SQUAL
JESUS CHRIST!

VIDALIA
<No! No! Don't do this!>

They fight, but eventually they're heads are forced through the nooses.

VIDALIA

<No! Please! Tell them to stop!>

SQUAL

No, please no...

MOTH looks at the two admiringly before signaling to the men holding the ropes.

MOTH

Send them up!

The ropes are pulled and the nooses tighten around the women's necks. The two are lifted toward the chandelier; they're legs left free to kick madly in the air.

VIDALIA

-!

SQUAL

GAHK!

As MOTH and the others watch, AYL approaches the self appointed leader.

AYL

I'm not done with them.

MOTH

That's fine, we can't kill 'em yet. (To the men holding the ropes) Okay, drop 'em.

The men simply let go of the ropes sending the two crashing to the floor. VIDALIA lands on her shoulder and because of the painful position her bonds had forced her arms into, the impact of the floor knocks her arm out of its socket. VIDALIA begins screaming in horrible pain.

SQUAL

Oh my God! (Turning her head to MOTH) Help her!

MOTH

No...

SQUAL

Vade is going to double cross you!

MOTH looks as though his interest is peaked; the others look rather questioningly.

SQUAL

Help her!

MOTH turns to DR. NICK. All the while VIDALIA is still screaming.

MOTH

That screaming is annoying the shit out of me.

DR. NICK walks over to VIDALIA.

DR. NICK

Let me pop that back in place darling.

DR. NICK doesn't bother kneeling to inspect her, he simply kicks VIDALIA in the shoulder, knocking her arm back in place but at the same time causing such blinding pain that she passes out.

SQUAL looks at her in sympathy and then notices MOTH standing over her.

MOTH

Make it good bitch...

SQUAL

Once you kill us, Vade is going to flood the building with gas, he's going to kill you all.

The men take this information seriously. MOTH looks horribly surprised!

MOTH
JESUS FUCKED MARY! You bitches will say anything! (Walking away) Send them back up!

VIDALIA is awakened by the pull at her neck.

VIDALIA
!

SQUAL
Your all gonna di-AACKK!!!

ANT watches the women kick in the air while MOTH retrieves his cell phone.

MOTH
Hold on. Vade's sending a message. (Looking at phone) "Kill Them"

ANT (Not taking his eyes off of the ladies)
Leave them up there?

MOTH
Shit no! Let them down.

The two women are once again dropped to the floor.

ANT
Where?

MOTH
Well I'm sure the boys want another crack at these little girls.

Close-up on the women. VIDALIA is too overcome by pain and fatigue to receive the same terrified reaction SQUAL has to MOTH's next proclamation.

MOTH (Off Panel)

Then we'll take them down stairs to the shredding machine.

Close-up on HALONA still holding the gun in her mouth. As an artistic note, never show what she is looking at to the reader.

VADE (Off panel)

Pause it right there...

HALONA, realizing that VADE isn't talking through the screen, looks to her side.

VADE (Off panel)

No, two frames back...

A pan back shows HALONA on her knees, with the gun in her mouth and sitting at her right is VADE sitting cross legged on the floor, a remote control in one hand and his head in the other, propped on his knee. He has a wistful look on his face as if what he's looking at on the screen is the most wonderful painting in the world.

VADE

Yes, right there...

Close-up on Vade still watching the screen.

VADE

That's the frame of your daughter that I fell in love with.

Still focused on VADE, HALONA pushes her gun against his head. He never takes his eyes off the screen and he retains his same wistful expression.

VADE

That's not going to help you any and you know it.

Pan back to show HALONA holding the gun against VADE's head. His expression stays the same throughout.

VADE

It won't help those two women. It won't save you when that pack of satyrs comes after you next to do the same to you. It certainly won't help that little girl when she finds out she's on an island and there is no where to hide. Right now you're closer to Japan than America, but not by much. Now, you're distracting me and those other women don't have a lot of time.

HALONA pulls the pistol away from VADE's head and holds it with both hands in her lap. Her gaze travels to the screen. (Which we never see) As VADE speaks his face remains jovial, as if discussing a religious experience, even tearing up at the end. HALONA becomes more sorrowful until she can't look anymore and looks away covering her eyes with her hand.

VADE

Just sit there and don't interrupt. Now, look at the screen. Your daughter is about to ask for her mother, you, for the last time. But this is the frame it clicked for me. She asked for her mother so many times. You loved the hell out of that child.

VADE is explaining to HALONA how he could recognize the love that existed between mother and daughter. She cries not just as any person would when another human recognizes an effort that they are proud of but mostly because recognizing this doesn't make VADE apologetic in the least for murdering her daughter.

Never taking his eyes from the screen VADE puts a comforting hand on HALONA's shoulder, she views the hand in distrust, not really knowing what to think of it. His face is now sorrowful, but you'll see his sorrow isn't a sympathetic kind.

VADE

My mother died giving birth to me.

VADE rubs his hand up and down HALONA's arm. Her expression is a mix of disgust and curiosity.

VADE
Your daughter loved you...

VADE (Never taking his eyes off the screen) lays his head on HALONA's shoulder, pulling down a strap of her dress.

VADE
She loved you so much because you loved her more. You were a good mother...

VADE's next action nearly breaks HALONA of her still posture. She quietly screams through gritted teeth when VADE begins to suckle her breast while still watching the screen.

After doing this briefly VADE puts HALONA's dress back into place holding his body close to hers.

VADE
I was so happy to hear that we got you. Because if the occasion arose, and it has, I was going to make you love me just as much as you loved her...

VADE closes his eyes. This is the first time he takes his eyes off of the screen.

VADE
I don't normally do this...

When VADE's eyes open he is looking at HALONA.

VADE
With women...

HALONA (Quietly)
...no...

We switch to VADE's POV of HALONA. He head is lowered in defeat. She has accepted this fate.

VADE (Off panel)

...Lay on your back. After, I'll tell you what you want to know.

HALONA lays down and opens her legs, VADE crawls between them and as he pulls down his pants he takes one last blissful peek at the screen before laying down on her.

(I have a feeling that the panel that ends this scene may be too much. But it's so appropriately creepy that I'll wait for opinions before I edit it out permanently.)

HALONA looks away, her eyes wide open in shame as VADE gently rapes her. He is blissfully unaware of her discomfort and softly whispers to her the same words the HALONA's daughter spoke before she died, but in a lover's tone of voice.

VADE

Please, I want my mother. I just want to see my
momma again. I want my momma!

We return to the perils of VIDALIA and SQUAL. Both women are incredibly weak at this point and it wouldn't be a far stretch to say that death would be a welcome change of pace. They are following MOTH, being pushed forward by a man at each woman's back gripping them at the arms. Their hands have also been retied in front of them and their dresses are barely scraps.

When they enter the giant room with the shredding machine the men show obvious excitement but the women are too tired to give it more than a cursory look. SQUAL and VIDALIA share a glance to each other recognizing the room. Their faces are sad but not for themselves, rather for the lost lives they should have been able to share together.

They are both reverent and both resigned to accept what is being done to them. That after humiliating torture they will now both die in horrible pain.

Stopping in front of the machine MOTH gestures to one of the killers.

MOTH

The controls are over there. Bring the hook this
way.

MOTH looks at the two women then selects VIDALIA pulling her towards the hook. Too weak to protest VIDALIA allows herself to be drug away from her lover. SQUAL silently watches feeling horribly feeble.

VIDALIA's hands are raised until her bonds catch on the hook keeping her arms in the air. MOTH turns to two of the men.

MOTH

She killed some of our own. Rip every scrap off of her, this fucking bitch deserves to die naked.

The two men gleefully go to their task. VIDALIA's only resistance is that of a pleading gaze that the men find no trouble ignoring.

Once she is completely striped MOTH instructs the hook's operator.

MOTH

Feed her to the grinder.

SQUAL

NO!

VIDALIA is raised by her arms into the air.

Close-up on VIDALIA looking down.

VIDALIA

Squal...

Close-up on SQUAL looking up.

SQUAL

...Vidalia.

SQUAL begins to plead with MOTH.

SQUAL

Let me take her place...

Cut to HALONA still laying on the floor, VADE is not with her.

VADE (Off panel)

You can open your eyes now.

HALONA sits up looking toward the sound of VADE's voice.

VADE (Off panel)

Do you realize you were voted dead last?

VADE is standing in a doorway. The bright light behind him creating only a shadow of his form (Note: When showing the door way VADE stands in do not have any of VADE's speech bubbles on that panel. Either it's a wordless panel or HALONA is speaking. This will be tricky because we have to show the shadow doorway a number of times for this plot point to work.)

Back to HALONA.

VADE (Off panel)

Look at the screen.

HALONA looks and she sees an Internet webpage being displayed with all nine women listed along with a picture of each in they're real lives, outside of the factory. Each photo should be of a voyeuristic nature. The order the women are listed doesn't necessarily matter as long as it shows HALONA in last place.

(Candy show this scene to Ryan and see if it gives him any ideas)

HALONA

What is this?

VADE (Off panel)

No body expected you to live long.

HALONA

You invited people to vote on how long it would
take us to die?

VADE (Off panel)

The fans demanded it.

HALONA

FANS! PEOPLE WANT THIS!

VADE (Off panel)

Yes, when finally edited the movie we're filming today will be shown at fifteen thousand a seat and the DVD will probably cost a couple hundred grand.

HALONA

You're killing us for money!

VADE (Off panel)

No, I'm killing you because I want to. For art! But this shit costs a lot to set up. But hey! I think I know what did you in. It was when I posted this on the site.

HALONA watches in embarrassment and with a feeling of violation. The screen plays a video of her bedroom shot from outside of her home. She is watching a recording of herself fully dressed and crying herself to sleep.

HALONA

w- why, why would you do this to me...

VADE (Off panel)

Believe me I've got worse shit than that, but honestly, in my opinion, you're not the most faltering creature when you step out of a shower.

Finish this scene with a shot of the doorway and VADE's shadow. Cut to VIDALIA being lowered into the shredder, she is trying not to watch.

On the ground MOTH finds himself being annoyed, taking away his enjoyment of VIDALIA's death.

SQUAL

Please, let me take her place. Do what ever you want. Kill me! Take as long as you like. Just let her go. Let her live.

In frustration MOTH turns on SQUAL who does not flinch at his outburst.

MOTH

Okay sugar tits! I'm all ears! Why, for fuck's sake!
Why do you have such a huge twitch up your
snatch to get ground into pink dust? WHY!

SQUAL

Because... Because I love her...

MOTH ponders this then address the man holding SQUAL by her
arms.

MOTH

Fine! Strip that bitch.

SQUAL

... thank you, thank you...

MOTH (To hook operator)

Bring that French floozy back down here!

As SQUAL is stripped in the background, ANT talks to his friend.

ANT

You are not really going to go for this bullshit are
you?

MOTH

Would you shut the fuck up! You're always
fucking nagging me! The next time I fuck some
bitch I'm gonna consider it a sin because with the
way you nag me I might as well be cheating on
you! Now would you back the fuck off, I know
what I'm fucking doing!

VIDALIA is pulled of the hook the two men holding her look as
though they have been cheated.

MOTH

Good. Take her...

He then points to SQUAL

MOTH

...and tie them both together, cunt to cunt.

SQUAL

WHAT!

The two women are pushed against each other.

VIDALIA

Eng!

SQUAL

Anh!

MOTH

Be a real fuckin shame if these dykes didn't die in
each other's arms.

ANT (Sarcastic)

It's so poetic, I think I may cry.

HALONA watches SQUAL and VIDALIA through the screen. She
begins to randomly press the buttons on the control panel.

MOTH (Screen)

Use every bit of rope we've got left.

HALONA yells at VADE's shadow in desperation.

HALONA

VADE! I did what you wanted! Which button
releases the gas?

VADE (Off panel)

None of them.

HALONA

They're going to kill them!

HALONA becomes more enraged as VADE talks.

VADE (Off panel)

So will you if you release that gas. Only difference
is that your way is less messy.

In desperation HALONA points her gun at VADE's shadow.

HALONA

If they die like this, Vade! I swear I'll kill you...

The following diatribe by VADE I think should be done looking at HALONA straight on. As he speaks the gun slowly lowers and her face goes from angry to hopeless.

VADE (Off panel)

No you wont and you know it. You can't kill.
You're a fucking mother. You've had something
grow inside you, felt it kick. You had your chance
to be a hero, remember? But you let them kill
those three women. You simply lead that little girl
away and told her not to look. You only killed the
pyro by accident. If that little girl hadn't saved
you, you would of let him burn you alive.
Wouldn't kill those two rapists. You had to let one
of the "stronger" women do it, the same women
who defended you when you were shot. They
fought back while you cowered away. You
couldn't end your own life and you couldn't shoot
when you had your gun against my head... I called
your bluff a long time ago Mommy.

Cut to a wide shot of VIDALIA and SQUAL tied together, being
pulled into the air.

SQUAL

Vidalia...

Move in to a tighter hold on the two women.

SQUAL

I love you Vidalia... I love you. I love you. I don't care if you don't understand... I love you.

VIDALIA

Squal...

Hold on SQUAL's face for VIDALIA's response.

VIDALIA

<I am scared to die... But at least you will travel to heaven with me. I love you Squal. I will say it again.>

HALONA is still trying to aim her weapon at VADE and behind her we see that SQUAL's face fills the screen. The two women are of contrasting emotions. While what VIDALIA says over joy's SQUAL, it breaks HALONA's heart.

VIDALIA (screen)(No translation)

... I love you Squal.

VADE (Off panel)

A mother couldn't kill fifteen other mother's sons and certainly not any mother's daughter who has just fallen in love. Especially not a mother who has lost a child herself.

Empty panel of VADE in the door way then back to HALONA.

VADE (Off panel)

I'll prove it to you. When the lights on the door turn green it's safe to traverse the top floor. We didn't bother venting the rest of the building, it'll be poisonous for a couple hundred years. The ladder out is near the exit, under the carpeting under a floor covering. There is now only one button glowing red on the control panel, it will

release the gas. To bad all we have is a mother and
not an executioner-

Focus on VADE's shadow. While most of the shots miss two bullets
clearly hit the shadow's head and stomach. The shadow falls limp to the
ground.

HALONA's gun is smoking from use and she addresses the corpse at
first apologetically...

HALONA
I stopped being a mother...

...and then in blind rage.

HALONA
...WHEN YOU MADE MY BABY A CORPSE!

HALONA slams her hand on the button.
ANT is first to notice a smell.

ANT
Do you guys smell that?

But then others begin to cough and then vomit violently.

MOTH
GAS! That fucking bitch was-

Suddenly MOTH covers his mouth with his hands. But it doesn't stop
him from vomiting through his fingers.

Above them VIDALIA sees what's happening and weakly smiles.

VIDALIA
Halona...

One of the killers heaves hard, when done he sees pieces of meat
hanging out of his mouth and falls forward dead. Others continue to barf
themselves to death.

(This is defiantly vile, but they disserve it. I don't know if a gas that
makes rapists and murderers puke them selves to death exists, but it should.)

MOTH is at the stairs wiping away a new vomit trail as ANT runs up behind him.

ANT
Where are you going?

MOTH isn't paying attention and doesn't see that ANT is beginning to look queasy.

MOTH
Stairs! The higher up you go, the less effective the
gas-

ANT interrupts by vomiting into MOTH's face.
In disgust MOTH shoots his former friend.

MOTH
Gross! Fucker!

This particular madness ends with a wide shot of the shredder room floor. Many of the killers are dead. A spare few are on they're knees still exhaling they're internal origins. One is on his back still spewing like an unholy water fountain. Yet another has chosen to shoot himself. Above it all hang VIDALIA and SQUAL.

The women happily accept this new demise as preferable to the shredding machine and due to them being higher up (As MOTH stated) the gas has a lesser effect.

SQUAL
That smell... The gas... Halona did it... Breathe in
Vidalia... It's not death... It's... sal...va... tio...

HALONA is sitting on the floor with her back against the control panel. She is loudly (But I think sans any word balloons saying so) crying her eyes out. Behind her, the screen shows a close up of SQUAL and VIDALIA. They are dead.

Show a number of panels of HALONA from the side (So the screen is unseen) loudly crying out of frustration, anguish, pain and sorrow. She tosses her gun away into the black room. No word bubbles are needed, she'll

look like she's making a lot of noise but I want the next few pages relatively silent.

(I had an idea that we show scenes of the building filled with gas. Show GINGER still dead, NIUG and BENNIE and reference other moments from the story. But I don't know how they'd fit properly.)

For one panel only. Show HALONA from the front, on the screen SQUAL and VIDALIA have been replaced by MR 753, who is watching her cry.

(I know I said I'd only show him once but this would be a genuinely creepy signature moment for him to appear at. It also suggests to the audience that even though it seems all the bad guys are dead, maybe not everything is taken care of.)

Show some panels from the side again of HALONA calming down, using part of her dress to wipe her eyes. She lifts her head at a sound.

SFX
BZZVT

The light around the door has turned back green. (Hmm, need something besides color to signify it's safe for her to leave. Being a B&W comic and all.)

When HALONA stands we see that SQUAL and VIDALIA are back on the screen. HALONA turns to face the screen and spreads her arms leaning against the monitor.

HALONA
Goodbye, I hope wherever you are your both very
happy...

HALONA cautiously peeks her head out of the door. She steps around AL who died in SQUAL and VIDALIA's ambush and comes to the exit. She tugs the carpet away and lifts the false floor covering away. She pushes the hidden ladder into place and begins to climb.

When she is almost out of the building she pauses and looks to her side. MOTH is standing in a doorway barely raising his weapon he has one hand on the doorframe to hold himself up. He is in horrible shape and shaking awfully. He looks as if (While HALONA was crying to herself) he had been vomiting, urinating and defecating on himself. He looks as if he somehow knows it was her who released the gas.

HALONA's expression doesn't change. She simply looks at him.

MOTH then falls against the opposite side of the doorway, slips a little then falls over dead.

With his corpse in the foreground HALONA climbs out of the building.

HALONA emerges and we have our first outside look of the building from the outside. The roof is flat and there are palm trees, but only the tops of them (I'm hoping the look of the ceiling will be reminiscent of the roof her daughter was thrown off of.) It should be very windy on the roof.

The next panel is from the sand, looking up the side of the building showing it's massive height and size.

HALONA (Off panel)
Celeste?

The next panel is from the air far away showing the building in its entirety on an island barely big enough to support it. Other similar islands dot the landscape but there is mostly ocean all around.

HALONA (Off panel)
CELESTE!

The next should take up a whole page. Preferably an odd numbered page to force the reader to turn the page to see what HALONA is seeing but should the start of this land on an even numbered page I'd just elect to stretch it over through to the odd page. This is another key frame scene shown looking forward at HALONA, she goes through phases of worry, recognition, joy, confusion, shock, sorrow and then complete madness.

HALONA (Over several panels)
Celeste! Celes- ... CELESTE! Oh baby thank God
your- Baby? Baby... Oh no... no, no, no... I
should of come with you... There was plenty of
time to follow you up... I should of gone... I'm a
bad mother Celeste... I'm a bad... My fault... It's
all my fault... I'm sorry... I... Ah... Aaa...
AAAHH!!

We see CELESTE hanging by her neck from a flagpole in the center of the building. The wind causing her little legs to sway. Pinned to he chest is a note that reads "I don't make those kind of movies"

HALONA (Off panel)
AAAAAA!

From the side we are shown HALONA on her knees pleading with the dead child.

HALONA
I'm sorry Celeste... I'm sorry... It's my fault...
It's all my fault...

She reaches for the child's hand but stops when she notices blood on the little girl's claws.

HALONA notices something on the ground between her and the girl. Behind her we can now see someone standing.

On the ground is a folded letter held down by a rock. On the letter is written "To my Mommy".

HALONA picks up the letter and is shaken by its contents.

The letter contains a Polaroid picture of PAREDOLIA, dead, in a doorway, having been shot in the head and in the stomach on the letter are printed the words "YOU MISSED". The implication being that the shadow HALONA shot at was PAREDOLIA made to stand in for VADE (Which is why I didn't want any voice bubbles coming from the shadow earlier. It's also why I insisted on editing PAREDOLIA from your oridgonal drawings Candy, so that she could be passable as VADE's shadow. Let me know if this idea comes across right or if you think it needs work.)

Show HALONA's face from the side, she continues to focus her gaze forward as VADE speaks to her from behind.

VADE (Off screen)
At this point it may be too cruel to let you live.

HALONA (Quietly)
Yes...

Pan back to show HALONA sitting up. Behind her VADE is standing with a pistol pointed at the back of HALONA's head in executioners position. HALONA continues to stare forward. VADE now has scratches on his face (From CELESTE) that he didn't have before.

VADE

You list of failings just keeps growing. You finally do kill and blinded by rage your victim is an innocent young woman. Some other mother's "perfect princess". Next you let down another little girl who just wanted her mother.

HALONA

Yes,

VADE

You're a horrible lay and worst of all I don't have a single camera up here! Say goodbye then turn around.

HALONA takes one of CELESTE's limp hands with both of hers and sadly smiles to the dead child.

HALONA

I'll see you soon baby...

She turns around to face VADE and his gun. HALONA leans her head forward to rest against the gun's barrel.

HALONA

Send me to my children... Kill me...

Close-up of HALONA's eyes with the gun pointed between them.

HALONA

Kill me...

HALONA's POV of VADE

VADE

Pathetic.

Show both of them. HALONA starts babbling and shaking, VADE just watches.

HALONA
Just do it. Kill me. Kill me. Please, just do it! Just
kill me!

HALONA madly takes hold of VADE's hand with both of her own
pulling the gun against her head.

HALONA
Kill me! Killme! Killme! KILLME!

Vade merely watches with detest.
HALONA puts her hands on the ground to support her as she presses
her face against VADE's gun.

HELLONA
KILL! ME!

Focus on VADE

VADE
Well, let it not be said that my heart is completely
black.

The End

(In the original comic there is a final panel after this of VADE
walking away with CELESTE still hanging and HALONA's body on the
ground behind him. Giving a definite conclusion to the story, but something
in me wants to leave the ending open for reader interpretation as to whether
or not VADE kills HALONA. What are your thoughts?

This is an idea I had if this thing ever became a film, I'd have it end
without VADE shooting her it would just slowly go to black. The theater
would remain quiet as the credits started appearing (The first set of credits
where the screen is filled with a single actors name for a couple seconds)
this is where I'm inviting the audience "Go ahead, discuss what you saw.
Tell me how cheap I am for not giving it a proper ending." And then the
loudest BANG! I could get away with and the rest of the credits and music

play. Not that this is ever going to be a film but maybe the idea can be used elsewhere somehow.

On the subject of the ending, I recognize that this is a really bleak conclusion. I've thought of an alternate ending where CELESTE and HALONA escape and VADE mails them a copy of his movie along with the Polaroid of PAREDOLIA with "You missed Mommy" written on it. But before I switch to a "nicer" ending I want to get yours and a couple other people's reaction to the current ending.

Overall, what do you think? And as always thank you for taking the time for me.)