

ASTRONAUT DAD, BOOK ONE

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PAGE ONE

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with three panels inserts (2-4) tiered on the right side.

PANEL 1

(EXT LAUNCH PAD - NIGHT) A NASA rocket, similar in design to those used in the Mercury program, shines in the floodlights.

CAPTION

Liberty, Texas

Top secret NASA launch site

RADIO TRANSMISSION (NO POINTER)

Odysseus 1, this is Mission Control.
Verify overhead panel lights. Are they
operational?

PANEL 2

(INT ROCKET CAPSULE) Full front shot of *special operations/reserve astronaut* STAN NORTON upside down and strapped into his seat, wearing full space suit without helmet. (Reference: Mercury space suits)

STAN is a middle-aged man with Buck Rogers bravado and good looks, the quintessential astronaut icon.

STAN

Roger, control. Overhead panel lights
are good.

PANEL 3

(INT MISSION CONTROL) Another reservist ED KELLY stands behind the RADIO OPERATOR and swipes the microphone. ED is older (late 40s), buzz cut. He is a tough man, with the physique of a retired football player. He's seen a lot of action and has lived to tell about it. ED is wearing a tight fitting polo shirt tucked into pleated pants with a belt. His plastic name badge squarely pinned on. The RADIO OPERATOR, in contrast, is a geeky pinhead in thick-rimmed glasses. He wears a white short sleeve shirt with a thin black tie.

ED

Ah, Odysseus 1, Stan, this is your mother speaking. Can you verify we'll be done within the next hour? It's past your bedtime.

PANEL 4

(INT ROCKET CAPSULE) Same as panel 2. STAN smiles, knowing ED likes to horse around when bored with these procedures.

STAN

I copy that, *Mom*. These ground tests are necessary for our upcoming launch, but everything on my end looks good. We should be done in no time.

PAGE TWO

NOTE: Same panel layout as page one. Full page shot (1) with three panel inserts (2-4) tiered on the right side.

PANEL 1

(EXT LAUNCH PAD) Same as page one, panel 1. The rocket.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

Stan Norton was a reserve astronaut, one of three. He wasn't part of the Original Seven involved in the Mercury program, nor would he join the "New Nine" who landed on the moon. Unknown to the general public, these reserve astronauts participated in more launches than anyone.

At the time, not even the families knew about these special operations.

PANEL 2

(INT MISSION CONTROL) The disgruntled RADIO OPERATOR is reaching for the microphone. However, ED casually keeps him back with one outstretched arm, as he holds the mic in his other hand, continuing the conversation with STAN.

RADIO OPERATOR

Give that back!

ED

(speaking to STAN)

Last time you said we'd be done in "no time," it took an hour just to get the capsule door open.

Are we still on for tomorrow's cookout?

PANEL 3

(INT ROCKET CAPSULE) STAN, upside down, smiles at ED's antagonism.

STAN

Mission control, can I speak with someone who is actually familiar with the equipment in front of me? It seems Commander Ed Kelly is thinking with his stomach again.

PANEL 4

(INT MISSION CONTROL) Same as from panel 2.

ED

Odysseus 1, you may resume ground tests, but you still haven't answered my question.

PAGE THREE

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with one panel insert (2) on the lower right side.

PANEL 1

(EXT LAUNCH PAD) Same as page one, panel 1. The rocket.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

LIFE magazine would eventually credit their spy orbital missions with helping to de-escalate the Cold war.

Stan Norton was a hero.

RADIO TRANSMISSION (NO POINTER)
Copy. Cookout is good to go. Now if you
don't mind, Ed, it's past my bedtime
and I'd like to get home.

PANEL 2

(INT MISSION CONTROL) ED hands the microphone back to the
frustrated RADIO OPERATOR.

ED
That's all I need to know.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL 1

(INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM) Close on JIMMY sleeping in his bed.
JIMMY is a young boy, thirteen years old.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
But to me, he was just a father who was
never around much.

PANEL 2

Pull back. STAN, his dad, sits at the foot of the bed,
watching JIMMY sleep.

PANEL 3

Pull back further. We can see the details of JIMMY'S room
(chemistry set on a nearby table, telescope pointing out
the window, model rocket identical to the one seen on the
previous pages, comic books scattered everywhere, mobile of
the solar system hanging from the ceiling). Some stuff is
still packed inside moving boxes. STAN sits, watching his
son sleep soundly.

STAN
Sleep well.

PAGE FIVE

Title page. Black background. White font.

TAG: Chapter One. August 1963.
The Fall-Out Party.

PAGE SIX

PANEL 1

(EXT SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON) Est. shot of the Houston suburbs. A pleasant neighborhood. Perfect weather.

PANEL 2

(EXT THE NORTON'S HOUSE) Straight shot of the Norton's house (and next door, the Kelly house, off to the left -- barely on panel). Well groomed front lawn, modest shrub landscaping. A family of five walks to the front door from next door (ED KELLY and his wife, CAROL, their adolescent daughter VANESSA and the younger twins DWIGHT and DAVID). VANESSA is carrying some covered dish. ED is wearing another polo shirt and slacks.

CAROL has the look of the ideal Sears catalog housewife, complete with pearl necklace and summer dress. VANESSA is a younger version of her mother, with a skirt and blouse-- she's beautiful. The kind of girl a boy could easily fall in love with. The two twins are goofy, carbon copies, both wearing an identical button up shirt and identical shorts.

NOTE: You don't have to communicate all this information in this single panel. A lot of the description is for future reference.

VANESSA

Dad, do I have to meet these people?

PANEL 3

On the family as they approach the front door. VANESSA is livid. CAROL strains to keep her composure, and not lose her temper with her daughter.

CAROL

Sweetie, Vanessa, you can't stay in the house all summer.

VANESSA

You did.

PANEL 4

With clinched teeth and a snarl, CAROL looks angrily at her daughter in an attempt to stop the sassy behavior. VANESSA rolls her eyes.

CAROL

And *now* we're going to the cookout. Yes ma'am?

VANESSA

Yes ma'am.

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL 1

STAN NORTON's wife, FAYE opens the door. She is five months pregnant with a cigarette in hand. A little less battle-worn than CAROL, but still frazzled underneath a facade of "keeping good appearances."

FAYE

Hello neighbors! I'm Faye, Stan's wife.
It's so nice to have you here finally.
I'm sorry we couldn't plan this sooner.

PANEL 2

Reserve angle. VANESSA counters with her own mock-enthusiasm. CAROL cautiously watches VANESSA. ED is clueless about the family mutiny.

VANESSA

(fake smile from ear to ear)
Thank you. *Thank you*. Faye. Words cannot express how much we appreciate your hospitality.

PANEL 3

VANESSA hands the covered dish to the confused FAYE.

VANESSA

Please accept this green bean casserole prepared by my dear mother.

PANEL 4

FAYE holding the casserole like it was somebody else's screaming child.

FAYE
I'm sure it's delicious.

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL 1

(INT THE NORTON'S HOUSE) The Kelly family enters into the Norton house. Beautiful living room, circa early '60s. There are a few unpacked moving boxes against the wall. FAYE leads the way. CAROL grabs VANESSA by the arm.

CAROL
(whispering through her teeth)
Stop it, right now.

VANESSA
(to FAYE, still smiling)
Mother's secret ingredient is love, ma'am!

PANEL 2

Close on FAYE holding the casserole.

FAYE
Please excuse the mess. We're still unpacking everything.

PANEL 3

(EXT THE NORTON'S BACKYARD) Large panel. The backyard, view faces towards the back fence. STAN playfully chases after six year old daughter KAREN. JIMMY hangs on to STAN trying to slow down the chase. KAREN *always* plays dress-up. Today, she is a cowgirl, complete with a six-shooter and holster by her side, cowgirl hat, and suede dress with fringe. In the backyard, there is a shed near the back fence.

STAN
Daddy buffalo is gonna getcha!

KAREN
Nooo!!!

JIMMY
Hey dad! I bet you can't catch me.

PAGE NINE

PANEL 1

Reverse angle towards the patio. STAN grabs KAREN who is giggling. JIMMY has grabbed STAN. Contrast with the stoic Kelly family entering from the back door. FAYE smiles at her husband's antics. From new angle can see a Weber grill and patio furniture.

FAYE
Stan, the Kellys are here.

PANEL 2

Stan, while carrying KAREN under one arm, shakes ED's hand with his free hand.

STAN
Good to see you.

ED
Looks like you found yourself a little Annie Oakley.

PANEL 3

STAN places KAREN down.

STAN
When I told her we were moving to Texas, she thought she'd be riding to school on horseback.

PANEL 4

ED looks around, admiring the back yard. STAN listens.

ED
Carol was hoping we'd transfer to
Florida.

PAGE TEN

PANEL 1

KAREN, cute as can be, has her six-shooter ready. Looks suspiciously out the corner of her eye, she can tell someone is behind her. And sure enough, the twins DWIGHT and DAVID are standing there.

PANEL 2

KAREN twirls around and points her gun at the twins. DWIGHT and DAVID raise their hands in surrender.

KAREN
Stick 'em up!

PANEL 3

KAREN's POV. The twins with their hands up.

DWIGHT
Hello.

DAVID
Hi.

PANEL 4

KAREN, the goofball that she is, runs away from them.

KAREN
(screaming)
Aaaaahhhh!!!

PAGE ELEVEN

PANEL 1

Over the shoulder shot of FAYE and CAROL. The two mothers watch DWIGHT and DAVID chase after KAREN.

PANEL 2

FAYE looks over at Carol, hoping to break the ice.

FAYE
Would you like something to drink?
Iced tea, perhaps?

CAROL
That's very nice, thank you.

PANEL 3

FAYE and CAROL smile, breaking the tension.

FAYE
Frozen daiquiri?

CAROL
I'll have that.

PANEL 4

In the background, FAYE and CAROL walk back into the house.
In the foreground, KAREN is now chasing after DWIGHT and DAVID.

PAGE TWELVE

PANEL 1

Shot of STAN and ED as they observe the ongoing battle of KAREN versus DWIGHT and DAVID. The advantage clearly goes to KAREN. KAREN has DWIGHT pinned face first into the ground with a menacing plastic gun pointed at DAVID, who is backing away cautiously.

ED
Is Frankie planning to show up?

STAN
Yes, but I assume he's on California time.

PANEL 2

Closer shot of STAN and ED.

ED
He bringing his wife?

STAN
I imagine so.

DWIGHT (OFF PANEL)
Ow!

PANEL 3

Same panel.

ED
She's a piece of work. During the move,
she begged Frankie to drive with her
Vespa in the back seat. Lucky they
don't have kids. She might have made
them ride in the trunk.

STAN
Did Frankie marry Jayne Mansfield?

DWIGHT (OFF PANEL)
Da-ad!

PANEL 4

Same panel. Both dads look OFF PANEL to where their kids
are playing.

ED
(grimacing, to DWIGHT who is OFF PANEL)
Just pinch your nose and tilt your head
back.

STAN
(to KAREN, also OFF PANEL)
Karen, darling, put the bat down.

PAGE THIRTEEN

PANEL 1

Pull back slightly on STAN and ED. They are both looking at something in the yard, not yet revealed.

STAN

I don't envy Frankie. Although he certainly *wishes* we did. He swears he's the best test pilot they've got at the Pasadena lab.

ED

I heard he broke Yeager's record.

PANEL 2

Pull back a little more on STAN and ED.

STAN

(incredulous)

For about a day, then Yeager took it right back. Frankie brags on it all the same.

PANEL 3

Over the shoulder of ED and STAN, towards the shed. They are observing this normal-looking shed.

ED

The shed. Is it in there?

STAN

Yep. James Webb talked with the contractors personally.

PANEL 4

Same panel.

STAN

They've been working on it before the house was even built— finished last week, right after we moved in.

ED

No kidding.

PAGE FOURTEEN

PANEL 1

(INT THE NORTON'S KITCHEN) CAROL and FAYE lean against the kitchen counter, both with their drinks on the counter – a de facto “housewife bar”. Faye with the iced tea. Carol with a frozen daiquiri (tiny umbrella in her drink). Both with a cigarette in hand. They appear *almost* as a mirror image of each other. Smoking for FAYE is clearly a nervous habit, one she participates in relentlessly.

FAYE

So “the secret ingredient is love,”
huh?

PANEL 2

They smile, both knowing the absurd challenge that is motherhood.

FAYE

I take it Vanessa was being sarcastic?

CAROL

Nothing new. My daughter thinks I’m the
enemy right now.

PANEL 3

CAROL smiles. FAYE looks off.

FAYE

(talking more to herself)
Oh god, the thought of Karen at that
age terrifies me. She’s always been
Stan’s little girl.

PANEL 4

CAROL is curious. FAYE takes a worried drag from her
cigarette.

CAROL

And your son–

PAGE FIFTEEN

PANEL 1

Close on FAYE. She takes a drag from her cigarette.

PANEL 2

Same shot. Exhale.

FAYE

Jimmy. He's desperate for Stan's
attention.

PANEL 3

Close on Carol.

CAROL

(concerned)

So who do you get?

PANEL 4

FAYE pats her belly. The life so typical among military
wives, no house to call their own.

FAYE

Ha. I get the house.

Who knows? Maybe third time's the
charm?

PANEL 5

On the window looking outside. JIMMY approaches VANESSA.
VANESSA is taller than Jimmy.

CAROL (OFF PANEL)

Remember Faye, when they fall down and
need a band-aid. They always come to
us.

PAGE SIXTEEN

PANEL 1

(EXT THE NORTON'S BACK YARD) The same scene viewed through
the kitchen window, only now it's in the foreground. JIMMY

stands in front of VANESSA. For her age, she's beautiful. She stares straight ahead, not wavering. JIMMY has a difficult time making eye contact.

JIMMY

So... uh... what did you do this summer?

PANEL 2

Two shot of JIMMY and VANESSA

VANESSA

I taught myself how to cry on command.

PANEL 3

JIMMY and VANESSA. He doesn't know how to respond to her answer.

JIMMY

You're weird.

PANEL 4

VANESSA and JIMMY look at each other. In the background, DAVID and DWIGHT are running away in terror as KAREN comes after them with a folding chair high over her head.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

PANEL 1

Two shot of VANESSA and JIMMY

VANESSA

I'm weird? Our dads are astronauts—

JIMMY

(interrupting)

Reservists.

PANEL 2

Same shot.

VANESSA

What does that matter?

JIMMY

They probably sit around playing cards all day waiting for Alan Shepard to break his ankle.

PANEL 3

Close on VANESSA.

VANESSA

People respect NASA.

PANEL 4

Over the shoulder of VANESSA, on JIMMY pointing up to the sky.

JIMMY

They respect the ones who've been up there, who've taken some actual risks. With all the moving we've had to do, I'd at least like to be able to brag about something.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

PANEL 1

Close on JIMMY, complaining.

JIMMY

We've had to move three times this past year. Each time, I go to a new school. I make new friends, and then we leave again.

PANEL 2

Close on JIMMY, making a face of complete disgust.

JIMMY

Ever since I was little, my dad was in the military and we kept moving and moving. Always busy.

Don't you get sick of it?

PANEL 3

JIMMY is being a grouch. VANESSA has ignored him and is looking at something off panel to the right.

JIMMY

I think it stinks.

VANESSA

I kinda like it.

PANEL 4

Close on VANESSA on the left side of the panel. Follow her gaze (right) to the two dads standing next to the shed.

VANESSA

Something tells me this time will be different.

PAGE NINETEEN

PANEL 1

(EXT IN FRONT OF THE NORTON'S HOUSE) Volkswagen Karmann Ghia convertible is parked alongside the curb.

PANEL 2

FRANKIE and JUDY CAMPBELL in the car. FRANKIE is the youngest of the reservists. He has blonde hair and boyish good looks, carefree hotshot. JUDY, at first glance, appears to be the proto-typical blonde trophy wife. She's stunningly beautiful. However, at deeper examination, JUDY deeply wants to be the happy homemaker. She just doesn't know how to be supportive or nurturing. JUDY is touching up her make-up, looking at herself in a hand-held mirror.

JUDY

So what are their names again?

PANEL 3

FRANKIE gets out of the car. He's excited to be here.

FRANKIE

Jesus! I've told you a thousand times.
Stan and Ed, these are the guys I work
with. You met them before at that NASA
luncheon. Today, we're meeting their
families.

PANEL 4

Angle over JUDY's shoulder to her reflection in the hand-held mirror. She has a look of genuine concern.

JUDY

Sorry. I'm just nervous. Do you think
they'll like us?

PAGE TWENTY

PANEL 1

FRANKIE waits at the front bumper of the car as JUDY,
taking her time, gets out of the car.

JUDY

I mean, those astronaut wives have lots
of children. We don't have children.

PANEL 2

FRANKIE and JUDY walk up to the front door.

FRANKIE

Don't worry. These are different
astronauts. And their wives aren't
forming a club against you.

PANEL 3

JUDY stops and looks at FRANKIE. She's somewhat relieved.

JUDY

I hope not.

FRANKIE

What's the fuss? You're not Mrs. John Glenn. Everything will be all right.

PANEL 4

FAYE and CAROL peer out the living room window, spying on the younger couple (off panel). Both have looks of poised contempt.

FAYE

I don't like her.

CAROL

She didn't even bring a dish.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

PANEL 1

On JUDY and FRANKIE who wait at the front door for someone to answer it.

JUDY

And you're sure I didn't need to bring food or anything?

FRANKIE

Stan said not to worry about it.

PANEL 2

FAYE opens the door. In one hand, she's holding both her drink and a lit cigarette.

FAYE

Hello neighbors! I'm Faye, Stan's wife. It's nice to finally meet you. You're Frankie Campbell and this must be your girlfriend—

JUDY

Wife.

PANEL 3

Reaction shot. Close on CAROL, hand over mouth to stifle a laugh.

PANEL 4

On FAYE as she invites FRANKIE and JUDY in.

JUDY

Sorry. Come in. We've been expecting you. Please excuse the mess. We're still unpacking.

PANEL 5

(INT THE NORTON'S LIVING ROOM) Wide panel. FAYE has led them inside. FRANKIE and JUDY stay close to each other. JUDY makes eye contact with a silently smiling CAROL who leans against the far wall with her drink in hand.

JUDY

Hi.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

PANEL 1

(EXT THE NORTON'S BACKYARD) Large panel. Stan is in front of the shed, KAREN leans against him, and he has his arm casually around her. Everyone else has formed a horseshoe around STAN, all waiting for his announcement.

STAN

I'm glad everyone could make it. I have something special to show you.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

These Cold War heroes were a valuable commodity. They had experience. They had talent.

PANEL 2

STAN opens the door to reveal a large steel hatch in the center of the shed's interior. It has the appearance of a submarine hatch. A sign is directly behind it: FALL OUT SHELTER. This is the entrance to the underground shelter.

STAN

NASA wants to insure our safety... in any situation.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

They were fearless.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

PANEL 1

Close. VANESSA leans over to whisper in JIMMY's ear. JIMMY is stunned at this discovery in his own backyard.

VANESSA

(whispering)

Did you know about this?

JIMMY

(whispering)

No.

PANEL 2

STAN opens the hatch.

STAN

Here. I want everyone to see this. It's huge. Enough room for all the families.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

NASA even built a fall-out shelter to protect them if the Russians ever dropped the Bomb.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

PANEL 1

(INT FALL OUT SHELTER) Everyone stands against the back wall of the shelter. STAN is still making his way down the ladder. Each person has a distinct look of awe.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

I suppose it should have made me feel safe.

PANEL 2

Pull way back. We see the enormity of this shelter. It has everything from rows of bunk beds to a kitchen to a living area and small library. There is a door directly to the right of the kitchen. All planned for practical purposes. Designed by committee. The three families are in the far back. JIMMY is the first to wander off from the group, exploring.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

It had the opposite effect.

PANEL 3

Close. STAN, smiling and proud, holds KAREN whose eyes and mouth are both wide open. FAYE stands next to STAN. She is in dismay, holding an unlit cigarette close to her mouth.

STAN

Isn't this great?

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

Chapter break page. Black page. Lower right hand corner: Carol's covered dish.

PAGE TWENTY-SIX

Chapter break page. Black page.

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

NOTE: Full page shot.

PANEL 1

(INT NASA NATATORIUM – AFTERNOON) The three reservists stand next to an Olympic sized swimming pool, each wearing tight swimming trunks with either a towel in hand or over the shoulder (from left to right FRANKIE CAMPBELL, ED KELLY, STAN NORTON). The mood is light and friendly.

FRANKIE

There's a reason why I became a pilot.
I fly. I don't swim.

ED

If you haven't noticed, Frankie, NASA
likes to drop our capsule in the middle
of the ocean.

STAN

As long as we're astronauts, we swim.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

Astronauts train their whole career for
a few moments in space. Whenever I
asked where Dad was, the answer was
always the same, "He's training."

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

PANEL 1

FRANKIE dabs his big toe in the water to check the
temperature.

FRANKIE

It's ice cold!

PANEL 2

ED can't resist. He pushes FRANKIE in.

ED

Time to join the Coast Guard, you
throttle jockey!

FRANKIE

Hey!

PANEL 3

FRANKIE in the water, suffering in the cold. LAB DIRECTOR
with clipboard walks onto the scene.

LAB DIRECTOR

I can see you all are anxious to begin.

PANEL 4

Close on the LAB DIRECTOR. He's holding a stop watch.

LAB DIRECTOR
...and go.

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with a single inset panel (2).

PANEL 1

Underwater shot. Angle from the pool's bottom. All three astronauts float underwater in the fetal position, as though weightless in space.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
To an astronaut, to my Dad, everything
was a game, *especially* training.

PANEL 2

STAN makes eye contact with ED floating several yards from him. The competition is on.

PAGE THIRTY

PANEL 1

FRANKIE resurfaces, gasping for air. The LAB DIRECTOR is in the background.

FRANKIE
Damn! Started to black out.

LAB DIRECTOR
Two minutes.

PANEL 2

STAN and ED continue their underwater battle of wills. Both are struggling, pained tight expressions on their face.

PANEL 3

Now ED surfaces. FRANKIE sits by the side of the pool drying off. The LAB DIRECTOR still keeping record.

LAB DIRECTOR
Three minutes, eleven seconds.

PANEL 4

STAN, still underwater. His eyes roll into the back of his head.

PAGE THIRTY-ONE

PANEL 1

ED and FRANKIE keep stoic watch over the pool, standing next to the LAB DIRECTOR. STAN's limp body is floating on the surface.

PANEL 2

ED turns to the LAB DIRECTOR

ED
So if he goes unconscious, I win.
Right? He's disqualified.

PANEL 3

Both ED and FRANKIE pull STAN out of the water. The LAB DIRECTOR, scratching his head, observes STAN.

FRANKIE
I think the question is: Did he black out before or *after* you surfaced?

ED
Shut up, Frankie.

PANEL 4

As the LAB DIRECTOR checks the unconscious STAN's pulse on his wrist.

LAB DIRECTOR
Both of you, shut up.

PAGE THIRTY-TWO

PANEL 1

The LAB DIRECTOR's palm on STAN's chest, with his fingers interlocked, poised to perform CPR. STAN, fortunately, is groggy but awake.

LAB DIRECTOR
How do you feel?

STAN
A little nauseous.

PANEL 2

A NASA EMPLOYEE in button up shirt, short sleeves, black tie enters into a nearby door of the natatorium. He looks deathly worried. STAN, ED, FRANKIE, and LAB DIRECTOR look at him, waiting for what he has to say.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
America's finest train so they may be prepared for anything.

PANEL 3

Same shot.

NASA EMPLOYEE
On the radio. About five minutes ago.
Someone shot Kennedy.

PANEL 4

Now STAN with his peers nearby, he throws up on the floor. His back to the audience, it is merely implied. No vomit is actually seen.

STAN (SFX)
Huarrghh!

CAPTION (JIMMY)
Prepared for even the worst case scenarios.

PAGE THIRTY-THREE

Title page. Black background. White font.

TAG: Chapter Two. November 1963.
Smoking Lessons.

PAGE THIRTY-FOUR

PANEL 1

(INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM – NIGHT) JIMMY looks out his open window with the telescope. His room is dark. The open bedroom door spills in light from the hallway.

PANEL 2

Closer on JIMMY. He jumps at the sound of his sister's voice.

KAREN (OFF PANEL)
What are you doing?

JIMMY
Ah!

PANEL 3

KAREN stands at the doorway to her brother's room. She is dressed as a princess, long sparkled dress and a tiara.

KAREN
Mom and I are in the living room watching the news. Wanna join us?

PANEL 4

JIMMY angrily motions to the telescope.

JIMMY
What does it look like I'm doing? I'm busy, geez! I'm tired of watching TV.

PAGE THIRTY-FIVE

NOTE: Three wide panels.

PANEL 1

KAREN steps into the room further. JIMMY stands beside his telescope.

KAREN
(displaying much wisdom)
Are you sad that man shot the
President?

JIMMY
'Course, I am.

PANEL 2

KAREN moves a little closer. JIMMY stands unmoved.

KAREN
Was that man a communist?

JIMMY
That's what they say.

KAREN
I hate communists.

PANEL 3

KAREN
Do you think he would ever try to shoot
dad?

JIMMY
No, the police have Oswald now.

KAREN
Oh.

PAGE THIRTY-SIX

PANEL 1

KAREN leaves JIMMY's bedroom.

KAREN

But what if he escapes?

PANEL 2

Front shot of JIMMY watching his sister leave. He's sad his sister is so hurt. The open window is directly behind him.

PANEL 3

Same shot, except now VANESSA appears – sticking her head through the open window into his room and scares the hell out of JIMMY.

VANESSA

I bet Cuba hired Oswald to do it.

JIMMY

Aaaah!

PANEL 4

JIMMY shouts at VANESSA.

JIMMY

What is it with you girls?! Stop sneaking up on me!

PAGE THIRTY-SEVEN

PANEL 1

VANESSA leans further into the room.

VANESSA

Hey. Wanna sit on my roof?

JIMMY

Sure?

PANEL 2

(EXT THE KELLY'S HOUSE) Thus, VANESSA and JIMMY are sitting on the roof. VANESSA lies back. JIMMY with his knees pulled up close. He's looking up at the stars. A ladder leans against the edge of the roof.

PANEL 3

VANESSA looks over at JIMMY.

VANESSA
Did your dad ever meet Kennedy?

JIMMY
Nope. The reservists? I don't think so.

PANEL 4

Close on VANESSA as she ponders.

VANESSA
My dad has Kennedy's speech, the one about how we should go to the moon. He has it typed out and keeps it on his nightstand.

PAGE THIRTY-EIGHT

PANEL 1

Past JIMMY and VANESSA up towards the night sky.

VANESSA
I've been thinking. It's a shame we built an Atom Bomb before we built the first space rocket. You know?

Just proves we're more about war.

PANEL 2

Over the shoulder of JIMMY, he's looking at the shed in his backyard next door.

JIMMY
Even NASA is fighting a war.

PANEL 3

JIMMY looks at VANESSA.

JIMMY
Kennedy wanted to go the moon, because the U.S. was afraid the commies would

get there first. We built the bomb
because the Germans were already
working on one.

VANESSA
I guess so.

PANEL 4

Closer on JIMMY.

JIMMY
(frustrated)
It's all a big game.

PAGE THIRTY-NINE

PANEL 1

Large panel, taking up the top third of the page. High
aerial view of the two kids on the roof.

PANEL 2

VANESSA changes to a mock-serious tone on JIMMY.

VANESSA
Then we only have one solution.

JIMMY
What's that?

PANEL 3

Shot follows the hand of VANESSA pointing to the shed.

VANESSA
The roof is no good anymore. We've got
to seek shelter.

PANEL 4

VANESSA looks out the corner of her eye, checking for any
eavesdroppers, being silly. JIMMY half-smiles.

VANESSA
(whispering)

Sputnik is watching us.

PAGE FORTY

PANEL 1

(EXT THE NORTON'S BACKYARD) VANESSA and JIMMY are outside the shed, beginning to open the door.

JIMMY

Are you sure this is such a good idea?
My dad would kill us.

VANESSA

He'll never know.

PANEL 2

(INT THE SHED) VANESSA and JIMMY struggle to turn the wheel to the hatch, in order to get into the shelter.

VANESSA

Come on. Pull harder.

JIMMY

I'm trying.

PANEL 3

After some grunting and pulling the wheel, some success on turning the wheel.

VANESSA

Ugh!

PANEL 4

JIMMY opens the hatch and motions to VANESSA

JIMMY

Ladies first.

VANESSA

Not this time. You go.

PAGE FORTY-ONE

PANEL 1

(INT FALL OUT SHELTER) JIMMY and VANESSA stand at the base of the ladder, looking once again at the abnormally large fall out shelter hidden underneath the Norton home.

JIMMY
Isn't this great?

PANEL 2

JIMMY'S POV. VANESSA walks away from the ladder, twirling around, arms out, in awe of it.

VANESSA
You could live here forever. Eat canned tuna everyday and read old copies of National Geographic over and over again.

PANEL 3

JIMMY gets into the game and walks toward VANESSA with his arms stretched forward, sticking his tongue out, imitating a zombie. VANESSA playfully tries to hold JIMMY back.

JIMMY
You'd forget the world above and go crazy!

VANESSA
No! The surface dwellers would find a cure for the canned tuna crazies.

PANEL 4

JIMMY stumbles into VANESSA's "personal space." Still playful.

VANESSA
Help! Morlocks!

PANEL 5

Same shot. They share an awkward moment as they make close eye contact.

PANEL 6

Same shot.

VANESSA

I stole my mom's cigarettes. You ever
smoke before?

PAGE FORTY-TWO

PANEL 1

JIMMY and VANESSA now sit at the kitchen table of the fall
out shelter. Each hold an unlit cigarette. JIMMY does not
quite know what to do with his cigarette. There is an
ashtray on the table.

VANESSA

You've never stolen anything from your
mom?

JIMMY

No, never.

PANEL 2

VANESSA holds a match to JIMMY's cigarette, now clinched
tightly between his puckered lips. JIMMY stares cross-eyed
at the tip of the cigarette.

VANESSA

You need to inhale for it to light.

PANEL 3

JIMMY gags on his attempt to inhale. He coughs wildly.
VANESSA laughs.

JIMMY

Ack! Koff! Koff! Oh god... koff! Koff!

VANESSA

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha

PANEL 4

JIMMY looks up at her. His eyes are bloodshot. He looks sick. VANESSA lights her own cigarette.

JIMMY
That was awful.

VANESSA
You just can't do it right. Here,
watch.

PAGE FORTY-THREE

PANEL 1

Close on VANESSA. She inhales the cigarette, head tilted slightly upward.

PANEL 2

Same shot. She blows out the smoke in a manner of mock-elegance.

PANEL 3

Same shot. She looks down at JIMMY (off panel).

VANESSA
Ta-da!

PANEL 4

Long panel showing the kitchen area and the closed door to the right. VANESSA motions with the pack of cigarettes to JIMMY. He adamantly refuses.

VANESSA
It takes practice. Here, try it again.

JIMMY
No way.

PAGE FORTY-FOUR

PANEL 1

Same long panel as on panel 4 with the previous page.
VANESSA points to the door.

VANESSA
Do you know where that door goes?

JIMMY
Do you?

PANEL 2

Doorknob's POV. (Yes, you heard me correctly.) Low angle up at JIMMY and VANESSA who are starting down at the doorknob.

JIMMY
Probably a closet.

VANESSA
Or maybe it's a secret passageway to
NASA headquarters?

PANEL 3

Close on the doorknob.

JIMMY (OFF PANEL)
You read too much Nancy Drew. How could
a door in plain sight be a secret
passageway?

VANESSA (OFF PANEL)
It's a secret passageway, because
everything down here is secret.

PANEL 4

Front shot of JIMMY and VANESSA. They've opened the door and look in, curiously.

PAGE FORTY-FIVE

NOTE: One panel inset, upper left corner (1) on a full page shot (2).

PANEL 1

Close on VANESSA. Reaction shot.

VANESSA

Maybe it *is* NASA headquarters?

PANEL 2

JIMMY'S POV. It's a meeting room with a large table in the center and several chairs positioned around. On the walls are maps of the USSR, Cuba, and China with dashed orbital lines arcing across the map from east to west. The maps mark important cities and military outposts. On the table are three file folders stuffed with information. Also, aerial photos are scattered across the table. In the corner, an American flag stands straight in its post.

PAGE FORTY-SIX

PANEL 1

VANESSA examines the photos on the table.

VANESSA

What's all this stuff?

PANEL 2

JIMMY opens the file folder of information.

JIMMY

I don't know.

PANEL 3

JIMMY'S POV. The file folder he's holding has a cover sheet that reads: THE ODYSSEUS PROGRAM – TOP SECRET in large typed letters.

PANEL 4

VANESSA is now looking at the USSR map.

VANESSA

The map has pins marking missile sites.

PAGE FORTY-SEVEN

PANEL 1

JIMMY, in awe, reads from the file folder.

JIMMY

Listen to this. It's a flight log.
"Edward Kelly - 34 hours, stationary
orbit over Moscow for 20 hours. Stanley
Norton - 40 hours, stationary orbit
over Leningrad - 22 hours. Franklin
Campbell - 35 hours, stationary orbit
over Kazan - 21 hours."

PANEL 2

VANESSA looks at the file folder JIMMY is holding. JIMMY
stares, still completely trying to register it all.

VANESSA

Our dads have been in space?

JIMMY

They've been spying on Russia

PANEL 3

Now JIMMY gets excited.

JIMMY

Forty hours! That's longer than Gordon
Cooper was up there.

PAGE FORTY-EIGHT

PANEL 1

JIMMY and VANESSA. The realization of this discovery causes
them to pause.

VANESSA

Do you think our moms know?

PANEL 2

JIMMY raises an eyebrow, giving a doubtful look.

JIMMY

My mom has no idea.

PANEL 3

Close. VANESSA and JIMMY look at each other, yet another awkward adolescent moment.

PANEL 4

Same shot. VANESSA moves in a little bit closer. Will they kiss?

PAGE FORTY-NINE

PANEL 1

And no. Same shot as last panel on previous page.

JIMMY
It's getting late. We better go.

PANEL 2

VANESSA is slightly embarrassed.

VANESSA
We need to make sure we put everything
back where we found it.

PANEL 3

JIMMY puts down the folder with both hands, smiling.
VANESSA stands nearby, keeping a look out.

VANESSA
Our dads are super astronauts.

JIMMY
We don't know that for sure.

PAGE FIFTY

PANEL 1

(EXT THE NORTON'S BACKYARD – NIGHT) Shot of the shed. Door closed.

PANEL 2

(INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM) JIMMY crawls back into his room through the window.

PANEL 3

FAYE walks down the hallway to JIMMY's room. His door is open.

FAYE
Jimmy?

PANEL 4

FAYE's POV. JIMMY is in his bed, faking to be asleep. Light from the hallway spills into the dark room. FAYE's shadow stretches along the floor towards the foot of his bed.

FAYE (OFF PANEL, NO POINTER)
Sleep well, Jimmy.

PAGE FIFTY-ONE

Chapter break page. Black page. Lower right hand corner: The opened pack of cigarettes, two cigarettes are out.

PAGE FIFTY-TWO

Chapter break page. Black page.

PAGE FIFTY-THREE

NOTE: Full page shot.

PANEL 1

(INT NASA LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT) STAN NORTON sits alone in a small locker room wearing his space suit, circa Mercury-Gemini. His helmet is close by his side. STAN stares at a photo in his hands, deep in thought. A quiet moment before take-off. Door to the hallway on the left.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

Every astronaut knows the risks involved. In a single moment, your life could burst into flames, high above the earth.

PAGE FIFTY-FOUR

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with three panel inserts (2-4) tiered on the right side.

PANEL 1

Same shot as the previous page.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

For the reservists, the pay was unremarkable. The demands were ridiculous.

Why risk it? Sacrificing your family.
Your life.

PANEL 2

FRANKIE opens the door to the locker room. He's wearing normal civilian clothes.

FRANKIE

(boisterous)

Hey, space cadet, you ready to make the world safe for democracy—

PANEL 3

Oops. FRANKIE realizes he burst into a quiet moment.

FRANKIE

Sorry.

PANEL 4

FRANKIE is curious about STAN's preflight ritual.

FRANKIE

You all right?

PAGE FIFTY-FIVE

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with two panel inserts (2-3) tiered on the right side.

PANEL 1

FRANKIE stands at the open door. STAN still sits at the bench, looking at the photo. Unmoving.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

The fame? Not in my dad's case. No one knew about the Odysseus Program.

STAN

Frankie, you and Judy planning to have children someday?

FRANKIE

Someday.

PANEL 2

Closer on FRANKIE and STAN, still looking at the photo in his hands.

STAN

That's good. But I'm going to lie to you. Are you ready? It doesn't make these launches any more difficult. Not one bit.

FRANKIE

Roger that. And test pilots live forever.

STAN

They sure do.

PANEL 3

STAN's POV. We see a photo of his family, everyone in their Sunday finest.

PAGE FIFTY-SIX

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with three panel inserts (2-4) tiered on the right side.

PANEL 1

STAN walks to the hallway door. FRANKIE holds it open for him.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
Recently, I asked my dad why he chose
to be part of that program.

PANEL 2

FRANKIE watches STAN walk down the long hallway to the rocket launch pad. Those in the hallway stop, in respect, as he walks by.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
The answer was simple.

PANEL 3

ED walks up behind FRANKIE.

ED
Is Stan ready?

FRANKIE
Yeah.

CAPTION (JIMMY)
"Because the United States asked me
to."

PANEL 4

Same shot. FRANKIE smiling, points to STAN (off panel) down the hall.

FRANKIE
They need to put that guy on the cover
of LIFE magazine, and me too.

ED
What about me? Asshole.

FRANKIE

You can take the picture.

PAGE FIFTY-SEVEN

Title page. Black background. White font.

TAG: Chapter Three. December 1963.
The Evening Ride.

PAGE FIFTY-EIGHT

PANEL 1

(INT THE NORTON'S HOUSE – NIGHT) Large panel, takes up the top 2/3 of the page. Shot over the television to KAREN and JIMMY sitting on the living room couch, watching a show. KAREN is dressed as an alien/astronaut hybrid. She wears a silver jumpsuit and a head band with two springs and fuzzy balls at each end to simulate antennas. In the background, FAYE sits in the kitchen reading a copy of LIFE magazine (<http://www.life.com/Life/covers/1963/cv121363.html>), smoking a cigarette – still very pregnant.

NOTE: Let me know if this layout is possible. Depending on how you design the house, we may need to re-position the characters.

FAYE

Jimmy, have you finished your homework?

JIMMY

Yes, ma'am.

PANEL 2

Wide panel. From the kitchen, FAYE reads. The phone rings.

FAYE

Because you know you can't watch TV
until—

JIMMY (OFF PANEL)

Yes, ma'am.

SFX

Brrrrring!

PAGE FIFTY-NINE

PANEL 1

FAYE answers the phone. They don't get many calls.

FAYE
Hello? ..yes ..oh, of course ... hold on.

PANEL 2

FAYE holds the phone against her chest and shouts.

FAYE
(to Jimmy)
The phone is for you. It's Mrs. Kelly's
daughter, from next door.

PANEL 3

JIMMY hurriedly grabs the phone from his mother.

JIMMY
I got it.

FAYE
(whispering)
I think she likes you.

PANEL 4

KAREN follows after JIMMY.

KAREN
(shouting)
Jimmy has a *girlfriend?!!*

PAGE SIXTY

PANEL 1

KAREN dances around JIMMY. He holds his hand over the phone.

KAREN

Jimmy has a girlfriend! Jimmy has a girlfriend!

PANEL 2

JIMMY is horrified by this sibling torture.

JIMMY

Mom!

KAREN

(still singing)

They are going to kiss and make babies.

PANEL 3

FAYE trying to stifle her laugh. KAREN dancing. JIMMY still holds his hand over the phone.

FAYE

Honey, let Jimmy talk to his girlfriend.

JIMMY

(not amused)

It's not funny.

PANEL 4

JIMMY turns away from his mom and sister.

JIMMY

(talking into the phone)

Hello?

PAGE SIXTY-ONE

Panel 1

(INT THE KELLY'S HOUSE) VANESSA is on the phone in her kitchen. Her two twin brothers DWIGHT and DAVID are just standing there, staring at her.

VANESSA

Jimmy! I've got something amazing to—

PANEL 2

VANESSA looks over at her two brothers. She doesn't want to divulge the secret.

PANEL 3

VANESSA snarls at them. They are shocked.

VANESSA

Leave now or I tell mom how the hamster really died.

PANEL 4

DWIGHT and DAVID run off. Score one victory for VANESSA.

PANEL 5

VANESSA continues her conversation on the phone.

VANESSA

Jimmy, before dinner, I snuck into the you-know-where. I found a schedule. There's going to be a launch. Tonight! We have to go.

PAGE SIXTY-TWO

PANEL 1

(INT THE NORTON'S HOUSE) JIMMY hunches over while talking on the phone, secretive.

JIMMY

Really? Where?

PANEL 2

Same shot. JIMMY listens, his eyes widen in excitement.

PANEL 3

Past JIMMY. He looks at his mom and sister now sitting down watching TV.

JIMMY

(whispering)

I'll be there in a few minutes.

PANEL 4

JIMMY leans over the couch to talk to FAYE. KAREN pantomimes a "kissy-face".

JIMMY

Mom, Vanessa needs help with a science project. We share a class. May I go over to help her with it, please?

KAREN

Aaaaawww... kissy, kissy.

FAYE

Sure, that will be fine.

PAGE SIXTY-THREE

PANEL 1

(EXT THE KELLY'S HOUSE) JIMMY meets up with VANESSA outside her front door. He is wearing a backpack, with the small end of his telescope sticking out.

VANESSA

Did you bring *all* the supplies?

JIMMY

Yes. How are we going to get there?

VANESSA

I've got a plan.

PANEL 2

(EXT THE CAMPBELL'S HOUSE) Est. shot of the Campbell's home. Two shadowy figures (VANESSA and JIMMY) sneak up the front lawn to the large windows.

NOTE: Probably need a street lamp somewhere between the reader and our two characters to justify any shadowy-ness.

PANEL 3

JIMMY and VANESSA hide in the bushes (backs to the reader), staring into the living room window. We probably get a slight reflection of them staring back at themselves. No one is in the living room.

JIMMY

This is a bad idea.

VANESSA

Shhh... you go around to the backyard.
I'll open the garage.

JIMMY

This won't work.

PANEL 4

VANESSA makes her way to the garage and looks back at JIMMY who is still helpless in the bushes. He is unhappy about the plan.

VANESSA

(through her teeth)

Go!

PAGE SIXTY-FOUR

PANEL 1

(INT THE CAMPBELL'S HOUSE, BATHROOM) JUDY is in the bathtub, bubble bath. Lying back, with eyes closed, bubbles to her shoulders. She's snarling and gesturing with her hands.

JUDY

(mocking tone)

"Hello neighbors! I'm Faye, Stan's *perfect* wife. I think I'm so *perfect*, because I have two *perfect* kids. Frankie, this must be your *stupid* girlfriend. Nah, nah, nah."

PANEL 2

Close on JUDY. Eyes open. She's terrified by a noise.

SFX

Bang!

PANEL 3

JUDY, out of the tub, wet hair. Towel around her. Nervously, pigeon-toed, she waddles forward.

JUDY
Who's there?

PANEL 4

JUDY pulls a handgun (colt 38 snub nosed revolver) out of a side table drawer in the bedroom.

JUDY
If there's anybody out there, you- you-
better- watch it!

PANEL 5

JUDY in the living room with her gun. The entrance to the backyard is a large slide glass door. We see her reflection in the window.

SFX
Bang!

JUDY
I'm- not- kidding.

PAGE SIXTY-FIVE

PANEL 1

(EXT THE CAMPBELL'S HOUSE) Front of the house, VANESSA stands at the garage door. She looks behind her cautiously.

PANEL 2

VANESSA opens the garage door, which reveals a Vespa scooter.

PANEL 3

VANESSA's POV. In the garage, close on the Vespa.

PANEL 4

(EXT THE CAMPBELL'S BACKYARD) Shot of the back porch. There is a metal bucket on the porch.

PANEL 5

JUDY enters onto the back porch, gun leading the way.

JUDY
You- better- go on home! Whoever you-
are!

PAGE SIXTY-SIX

PANEL 1

JUDY looks down at the bucket on her porch.

JUDY
Huh.

PANEL 2

JUDY'S POV. Inside the bucket is a duel-strand of Black Cat firecrackers. The fuse is burning.

PANEL 3

The bucket explodes with noise. JUDY screams, waving the gun in the air.

SFX
!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!

JUDY
AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

PANEL 4

Reaction shot. Close on JIMMY hiding in the back yard. His eyes just got very large.

PANEL 5

Close on the towel now at her ankles. Feet dancing in panic. The Black Cats in the bucket still firing.

SFX
!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!

PAGE SIXTY-SEVEN

PANEL 1

(EXT THE CAMPBELL'S HOUSE) JIMMY, running around to the front of the house, his eyes wide, wide open.

SFX
(from the backyard)
!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!bang!!

JIMMY
Oh god.

PANEL 2

VANESSA is at the curb with the Vespa. Garage door closed in the background. JIMMY runs up to VANESSA.

JIMMY
Go! Go! Go!

PANEL 3

In the background, VANESSA and JIMMY on the Vespa zip down the street, leaving the Campbell house in the foreground. JIMMY sits behind VANESSA, arms around her waist.

VANESSA
Did it work?

JIMMY
I think so.

PANEL 4

(INT THE CAMPBELL'S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM) JUDY curled into a ball on the couch, sitting upright. She is frazzled into a frozen state of shock, heart still in her throat. The towel is oddly wrapped around her.

PAGE SIXTY-EIGHT

PANEL 1

(EXT A COUNTRY ROAD) Large panel. Quiet evening. Full moon. Angle on VANESSA and JIMMY as they cruise an empty country road.

PANEL 2

Wide panel. Level shot on VANESSA and JIMMY riding down the road.

PANEL 3

Move closer on the couple. JIMMY feels at peace with VANESSA.

PANEL 4

Closer. He rests his head on her back as they ride.

PAGE SIXTY-NINE

PANEL 1

VANESSA and JIMMY continue their evening ride.

PANEL 2

VANESSA and JIMMY turn down a dirt road marked with a sign: PRIVATE GOVERNMENT PROPERTY – VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED.

PANEL 3

As they coast down this road on the Vespa, off to the left side is a simple barbed wire fence and an open field. In the far distance (at least half a mile away) is a launch pad and rocket, floodlights illuminating the area.

PANEL 4

They stop on the side of the road.

PAGE SEVENTY

PANEL 1

VANESSA and JIMMY quietly hide the Vespa on the side of the road.

PANEL 2

VANESSA crawls under the barbed wire fence. JIMMY is on the other side, holding the lowest wire up for her.

PANEL 3

They walk up to a fallen tree in this open field. The launch pad, half a mile away, is directly in front of them.

VANESSA
I can't believe it.

PANEL 4

JIMMY pulls his telescope out of the backpack.

JIMMY
We can get a better look.

PAGE SEVENTY-ONE

PANEL 1

JIMMY steadies the telescope, holding it, as VANESSA looks through it.

VANESSA
Your dad! It's your dad! He's suited up
and getting in the rocket.

PANEL 2

JIMMY quickly takes the telescope to look for himself.

JIMMY
Let me see!

PANEL 3

JIMMY's POV through the telescope. (I'd prefer a square/rectangular panel with the telescopic circle inside the square.) STAN, in space suit, as he enters in the

capsule. Two workers on either side are there to assist him in.

PANEL 4

Close on JIMMY as he pulls the telescope away from his eye.

JIMMY
(in awe)
My dad's a real astronaut.

PAGE SEVENTY-TWO

PANEL 1

Wide panel. VANESSA and JIMMY sit on the fallen tree trunk. Waiting. The launch site is in the distance.

VANESSA
When I called your house, your sister
called me "your girlfriend."

JIMMY
You heard that?

PANEL 2

VANESSA and JIMMY look at each other.

VANESSA
I'm not your girlfriend.

JIMMY
You don't have to tell me.

PANEL 3

Closer.

VANESSA
I'm not!

JIMMY
I know!

PANEL 4

They begin to stand up on the dead tree.

VANESSA
Did you feel that?

JIMMY
The ground is shaking.

PAGE SEVENTY-THREE

PANEL 1

Wide panel. VANESSA and JIMMY stand on the fallen tree. The launch site is in the distance. Smoke billows from the rocket.

PANEL 2

Close on VANESSA's and JIMMY's hands. Their hands move closer to each other. Almost touching, wanting to be held.

PANEL 3

Hands move even closer to each other. Barely touching. More "barely", the better.

PANEL 4

VANESSA and JIMMY stand on the tree. Hands outstretched, barely touching. The smoke continues to billow from the rocket. Lift off is imminent.

PAGE SEVENTY-FOUR

NOTE: Full page shot (1) with one panel insert (2) in the lower right corner.

PANEL 1

Lift off! The rocket breaks from the earth and rises into the sky with an amazing burst of fire, which lights up everything. The smoke blankets the entire ground of the launch area. While the rocket dominates the panel, in the foreground are the silhouettes of VANESSA and JIMMY standing on the dead tree almost holding hands. They look

up, with the reader, at this amazing sight of human invention. This image should be iconic for this story.

PANEL 2

Close on VANESSA and JIMMY's hands. They clasp tightly to each other.

PAGE SEVENTY-FIVE

PANEL 1

VANESSA and JIMMY look at each other. The rocket's fire illuminates their faces.

PANEL 2

VANESSA and JIMMY as they now look up in the sky. The rocket is further up.

PANEL 3

JIMMY immediately turns away from VANESSA. His forearm over his face.

VANESSA
What's wrong?

PANEL 4

JIMMY sits back on the tree, buries his hand in his hands. VANESSA stands behind him.

JIMMY
Nothing.

VANESSA
Come on.

PAGE SEVENTY-SIX

PANEL 1

VANESSA's POV. JIMMY turns to look at VANESSA. He's crying.

JIMMY

I'm- not- a- a sissy! It's only that-

PANEL 2

VANESSA moves closer putting a hand on his shoulder.

VANESSA

It's beautiful. Isn't it? The rocket.

JIMMY

I feel so stupid.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

My dad had an obligation to his country.

PANEL 3

Move away from the tree and the couple. The rocket is further in the sky, almost out of sight.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

The Odysseus Program would protect America from the worst case scenarios.

PANEL 4

Move further away from the tree and the couple.

CAPTION (JIMMY)

In the process, he would leave his family far behind when we needed him most.

UNDER PANEL 4

CAPTION

Continued in Book Two

PAGE SEVENTY-SEVEN

Chapter break page. Black page. Lower right hand corner:
A duel-strand of Black Cat firecrackers.