

Issue 2 script

Issue title: "Grab the broom of anger and drive off the beast of fear." (Zora Neale Hurston, please note in margin wherever title appears)

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Draft: 4

Characters:

- Murder victim #1: Stevn of the Glacier, By the Wavering Dark
- Murder victim #2: Meile Thorn, who is also the murderer of victim #1
- Green Lantern Sojourner "Jo" Mullein
- An Elderly Nah Woman
- Peace Accountaint (chief) Syzn of the Cliffs, By the Streaking Ice
- Councilor Averrup Thorn, of the Dry Season Thorns
- Councilor Marth of the Sea, By the Wavering Dark, Until the Sun Falls
- A mysterious Nah figure, who kills the Keh-Topli woman

Locations:

- City Enduring Peace Division Headquarters: an interrogation room with adjoined (via two-way mirror) observation room
- The apartment of PA Syzn, in a high-rise floating "highscraper"
- The apartment of Councilor Marth, set into the wall of PEF, which has been made to resemble a cliff-face.

Plot: Jo's investigation of the first murder in 500 years hits a snag when the murderer is murdered. More insight into the people and players. The Nah councilor has a secret.

## Cover

Jo in her City Enduring apartment, chilling on her weird alien couch (probably some kind of chaise longue). She's in a t-shirt, jammie pants covered in a bug-eyed-alien pattern, and socks. Her hair is in fat two-strand twists because she just washed it (a la <https://blacknaps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Plump-Two-Strand-Twists.jpg>), and maybe she's wearing a do-rag to lift them off her face. She's using some kind of City-tech version of an iPad to read fanfiction (if the screen is visible, the text "Fanfic" should be visible) and eating from a pint of some kind of Earth ice cream, which she has acquired... somehow. The apartment is full of a jumble of City tchotchkes and geeky Earth stuff from Time Warner properties. :) Possible examples if allowed: Game of Thrones posters, Harry Potter scarves, maybe some nods to other DC characters, maybe a GL John Stewart bobblehead.

**Page 1**

[**ED NOTE:** I will insert one of these "what came before" recap sequences into the beginning of every "even" issue. Each will namecheck geeky media in some way. This one's meant to evoke "The Matrix."]

1. Small panel: an empty white room.

SFX: Clicking footsteps from off-panel.

2. Small panel: Jo walks into the panel, wearing a green tailored men's suit (with black shirt but green tie) and mirrored shades. It's not her GL uniform, but clearly is made with her GL power.

3. Small panel: Jo uses her ring to materialize an antique chair and a television. She's obviously channeling Morpheus from this scene in the Matrix:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGZiLMGdCE0>

4. Larger panel, across the page. Jo, sitting in the antique chair now, steeples her fingers. Maybe Jo is not centered but left-justified? To make room for a bit of a text dump.

JO: Okay. I'm Sojourner Mullein, the newest human Green Lantern, assigned to a region of the universe that's far outside the Corps' usual jurisdiction. Definitely far from Earth. Just... far.

LINK: It's just me out here. Lone sheriff on the frontier. I like it that way, so far.

LINK: This sector is home to the City Enduring, a metropolis of twenty billion citizens...

LINK: ...which has just had its first murder in five centuries.

5. Wide panel, across the page. This is no longer the white room of the recap. Now Jo is in a corridor of the CEPD, in a continuation of the scene from Issue 1. She's in a full-out run, sheathed in green power, yelling at the

handful of people who are standing or walking in the corridor.

JO, yelling: Code 187 -- damn. Assault with a deadly weapon, suspect down, target on foot, get out of my way!

CAPTION: And my murderer? Just got murdered.

**Page 2**

1. Wide panel. Jo is now "flying" through the corridors (her flying looks like wild running), turning a corner. Corner is centered. Behind her is a chaos of disturbed or knocked-over people. At one end of the corridor/panel, in the direction Jo is flying, a door stands open and swinging -- obviously the door to enter the interrogation room. [Maybe put a sign on the wall in glyphs, and a "translation" nearby: INTERROGATION ROOM]

CAPTION: Need to go faster.

2. PoV from behind Jo's head. At the end of the corridor, small and poorly-glimpsed through lots of people, is a person running, their back toward the "camera." All that's visible of the culprit is a black hoodie/cloak which is pulled up, and Nah fins/tail. Nothing else distinctive.

3. Small panel: Jo in a "winding up to pitch" pose.

CAPTION: Concentrate...

4. Jo has "thrown" the projection of a giant green hand, stretching away from her. People in the hall are startled; one or two have been shoved out of the way by the hand. A couple of the PD officers have finally noticed that Shit Is Going Down, but they're still slow to react.

PA SYSTEM: [In a synthesized/tinny voice, some kind of "electronic"-looking font] Attention, Peace Division officers. Please be alert for a suspect, presumed armed and unpeaceful, description forthcoming --

5. The hand is at the end of the corridor, gripping... nothing. There's no one to catch; the suspect has darted down a side-corridor. Meanwhile, near the hand, there are a couple of small disembodied hands -- one hand doing the "live long and prosper" gesture from Star Trek, the other holding up a V for victory -- spins away from the bigger hand.

SFX: spliff spliff [wherever the disembodied extra hands pop up]

CAPTION: Damn it!

**Page 3**

1. Large panel, long shot. Jo has manifested two of the giant green hands, using these to push aside people in the corridor. She's in full flight-pose between these hands, shooting forward, although she's still low to the ground. The spliffing of random hands continues, though less than in the previous panel.

2. Small panel: Jo, rounding a corner, stops short with a frustrated look on her face.

3. Biggest panel on the page: Jo looks up through a cylindrical atrium at the center of the building, ringed about with rail-less platforms and stairways, and full of flying Nah circling up toward an opening in the ceiling. There are a few Nah and non-Nah standing or walking around on the ground, who look at Jo in surprise. Of all the people in the air within the cylinder, Jo can't tell which one might be the assailant. Some are in uniform or just wearing regular clothes, but several are wearing hoods and cloaks as they fly. [**ED NOTE:** it's windy in this atrium, which is why Nah can "fly" within it; ordinarily they just glide.]

**CAPTION:** Who puts an open-air atrium in the middle of a police headquarters building?

**LINK:** People with wings, that's who.

**Page 4**

1. Small panel. Jo crouches, glowing, a fierce look on her face.

CAPTION: I don't need wings to fly. And I have a murderer to catch!

PA SYSTEM: Attention, Peace Division officers --

2. Small panel. Jo lifts off, beautiful "power flying" pose toward the "camera," the people on the ground dwindling beneath her.

CAPTION: Don't look down. Concentrate on the suspect. Nobody could cut through someone's neck like that without some blood -- sap, whatever -- splatter.

3. Small panel. Jo spots a person wearing a black hooded cloak who's about the suspect's size.

4. Small panel. Jo arcs toward this woman, green power trailing behind her.

5. Very small panel. Jo's green-glowing brown hand grabs a woman's black-sleeved brown hand, and --



**Page 5**

1. Small panel. A random elderly woman's face, framed by a black hood, looking mildly surprised.

ELDERLY WOMAN: Oh! Who...?

CAPTION: No blood splatter. No weapon visible. No probable cause --

2. Wider panel: Jo and Elderly Woman in the air. Elderly Woman is mid-glide, graceful, comfortable. Jo is awkward, half-curved with pent tension, chagrined. [**ED NOTE:** They are in motion; Nah can't hover in place.]

ELDERLY WOMAN: You're that Lantern! Oh, you do look a lot like a Nah. You remind me of my granddaughter. She's a bit younger than you, just a girl.

3. Same shot from an overhead angle, emphasizing how high up in the air Jo is (maybe a hundred feet, but it feels like a thousand to her). We notice this in the same moment she notices it.

CAPTION: Oh, fuck. [**ED NOTE:** If this isn't acceptable, can censor.]

4. Jo's face framed/lit from underneath; she's fighting panic.

CAPTION: Concentrate on -- oh God, I've lost the suspect.

LINK: I'm gonna fall -- no, focus on -- oh God --

5. View from the ground floor of the CEPD headquarters, within the atrium that Jo just flew out of. Officers are running about, pressing their ears to speak into little holographic headset-communicators, mobilizing as word spreads that a second murder has just been committed in the City Enduring, and this one in the middle of HQ. Jo and the Elderly Woman are tiny in the sky overhead.

ELDERLY WOMAN: Is something wrong? Oh, you don't have any proper fins, do you? Poor thing. My granddaughter isn't very good at flying, yet, either. Panics on landings.

LINK: Do you need help getting down, dear?

JO: [Very small bubble/text] Yes, ma'am.

**Page 6[combined with former Page 7]**

1. Large wide panel. A brief time-skip has occurred, and now we've moved back into the interrogation room. A tableau amid chaos, somehow desolate and pitiful: the murdered body of the murderer lies undisturbed in the interrogation chair where she died. No one has thrown a cloth over her; no one looks at her, no one mourns her. Meanwhile, around her, PD officers in white sterile suits move about collecting evidence.

2. Back in the PD corridors. Jo is doing a West-Wing style walk-and-talk with Syzn. Other PD officers are walking around them, occasionally talking to each other or taking notes via headset or tablet.

JO: This doesn't make any sense. You don't cover up a crime by bringing more attention to it.

SYZN: Initial screening shows that Meile Thorn -- that's our dead woman, who noshed on our dead man -- had the Emotion Exploit, of course. It operates on the genetic level for keh-Topli and Nah. But those genes had gone dormant.

LINK: Which means she must have been on Switchoff for weeks. She was tweaking. Drowning in feelings. Maybe her killer was in the same state. That's what's so evil about this drug.

SFX: Small indistinct speech bubbles to indicate that the other officers are chatting amongst themselves.

3. Small panel. Jo's face in profile; she's grimacing uncomfortably. They're passing the observation room that's attached to the interrogation room. The door is open, and a figure can be glimpsed inside.

JO: Look, I know this may seem weird to you, but having emotions doesn't automatically make you crazy.

4. Small panel. The observation room, seen through its door (as if from Jo's PoV as she passes the room). Inside, Avertup Thorn stands, back to the door, gazing through the two-way mirror at the body and crime scene beyond.

CAPTION: Huh.

5. Small panel. Overhead shot, maybe? Jo peels off from the walk-and-talk, toward the interrogation room.

JO: Hey, let's catch up after your people have compiled the surveillance feeds.

SYZN: What? Uh, okay. [small text] Not crazy. Sure.

6. Panel centered on Averrup. The room is darkened; light comes from the interrogation room. Averrup seems relaxed, maybe hands in pockets if he has pockets. However, his presence communicates that something more is going on.

AVERRUP: (without turning) Hello again, Lantern Mullein.

JO: Councilor.

**Page 7**

1. Wide panel, long silence. Suggestion: a shot of their faces through the interrogation room glass, with images of the crime scene investigation reflected on the glass and superimposing them. Mood matters more than appearance here; whatever works. Jo and Averrup in light and shadow, bearing witness while a murderer's death is catalogued.

2. Silhouette of Jo from behind, with the interrogation room business continuing beyond her.

JO: Her name was Thorn. Any relation?

AVERRUP: (out of panel) No. Thorn is a common name. We only bother using surnames for the comfort of aliens.

LINK: Sorry. People who aren't Keh-Topli.

3. Overhead framing of both.

JO: Hey, I'm from a species that's still wrapping its head around the idea that we're not alone in the universe. It's a process.

AVERRUP: My people must have been like yours, once. We also evolved alone on our world. There were... misunderstandings, in those first years of contact.

LINK: It was difficult to remember that these creatures, so bold and bright, were not for eating.

4. Another view from within the interrogation room. A tech is bent over the body, using some kind of device to scan the wound across the woman's throat. It projects a small holographic image into the air of a kind of weapon: an oddly-shaped curving knife. In the background is the observation mirror. Averrup and Jo cannot be seen through it in the interrogation room, but we know they're there.

JO: So you think this was... Switchoff-induced predation?

AVERRUP: I wouldn't presume to suggest a motive, Lantern.

5. Overhead view of the interrogation room. The techs have opened the victim's blouse; her "sideways smile" is completely visible now. There's still a dark smudge visible through the translucence of her green skin, near the bottom of where her stomach would be in a human. Unspoken: this is what's left of Stevn of the Glacier, the Nah man she killed. The techs are being impersonal, not disrespectful, but there's still something vulgar about the whole scene.

AVERRUP: Still... It must have been hard for her. Surrounded by so much healthy prey, knowing herself alone and empty.

**Page 8**

1. Small panel. Jo has turned to face Averrup; she's frowning, nonplussed and uncomfortable.

JO: Alone?

AVERRUP: I forget you're new.

2. Close-up of Averrup's face. He smiles with his eyes -- crows' feet, a twinkle, and the beginnings of laugh lines are visible around his nose. His clothes rustle faintly, though, because it's his ginormous sideways razor-toothed mouth that's actually smiling, out of sight. It's creepy as fuck.

AVERRUP: Imagine yourself hollow, Lantern Mullein. Aching with emptiness. Cold with it. Alone inside your own skin.

LINK: And in the moment that you feed... warmth. Something fills you. Not merely flesh, but a presence. Another soul, as bright and strong as your own...

3. Small panel. Averrup and Jo stand side by side. Jo is staring at him, lip curled and eyes wide. Averrup's eyes have slid to the side, noticing her expression.

4. With Jo in the foreground still radiating horror, Averrup turns to go.

AVERRUP: My apologies. I... forget you're new.

5. Perspective shift: Now Averrup is in the foreground, his back to Jo. The viewer can see his face, expression placid once again. Behind him, Jo is visibly fighting disgust, shoulders up a little, stance uncomfortable... but she is trying to understand.

JO: So you're saying that without the Emotion Exploit, all Keh-Topli might chow down on their fellow citizens because... they're lonely?

Page 9

1. Averrup has turned back to face Jo. Now his expression is sad, above his shirt collar. Jo had been treating him like a person, and now she's looking at him as if he's a monster, and it bothers him. Even though he is a monster.

AVERRUP: No. We might 'chow down' because you smell delicious, Lantern.

LINK: But at least with the Emotion Exploit, we ask, first.

2. Focus on Jo's face. She's overcome her disgust and is thoughtful, now, though she has one eyebrow raised.

AVERRUP, off panel: I'll be happy to provide further insight into my people later, Lantern, should you wish. Until then... I have some rooting around of my own to do. Good evening.

[Sound of a door closing.]

3. Wide panel. The Cityscape, quiet in the pre-dawn darkness. The overhead projection sky is starting to brighten at one corner, as if with imminent sunrise.

CAPTION: Two bodies. Two murderers, one of whom got away. Three signs of the City Enduring going wrong.

CAPTION: Damn, I'm tired. Maybe there's a cot around here where I can get some sleep.

CAPTION: ...These people make no sense.

4. Wide panel. Time has passed. The same City-scape, now daytime-bright and busy. The sky is cloudy -- not rainy, but gray and dreary, clouds hanging low. [**ED NOTE:** remember, the sky is a composite image formed by the gestalt consciousness of the City denizens. The murders have them troubled.]

5. Exterior of an apartment building. Most of the apartments have ledges and open doorways or stairways on



the outside; flying Nah come and go and a few flying vehicles drift nearby. An insect-like vehicle is in the middle of walking up the outside wall of the building. The building is unremarkable by City standards, but it has a "solarpunk" aesthetic -- lots of plants and trees growing from the walls and ledges.

**Page 10**

1. Interior scene: a nice apartment (Syzn's). Jo sits at a breakfast bar. Syzn is in the kitchen, doing something with what looks like an elaborate chemistry set and some kind of heating element. Both are now in casual clothing; they're off-duty. Jo's shirt, whatever it looks like, has had its wing-slits clumsily stitched up in the back. Jo's got her chin propped on her fist, and her hair is in a loose 'fro held back with a headband or headcloth. She looks sleepy.

2. Small panel. Close-up of a strange-looking mug -- double-handled, shaped sort of like a gravy boat. In it is a murky bluish liquid. It's thick. There might be chunks.

CAPTION: There's no coffee in the City Enduring. God help me.

JO, off-panel: Uhhhhhm.

SYZN, off-panel: Just try it, Jo. It's better than last time.

JO, linked from previous: Good. [smaller text] Last time, it was toxic.

3. Syzn leans casually against the counter/kitchen island where Jo is sitting, across from her. Jo's smiling. Syzn isn't, but there's something subtly inviting in her body language.

SYZN: [smaller text] Listen, I had no idea your species couldn't handle cyanide.

LINK: Drink up.

CAPTION: So, like, for the first month or two after I got here, I was convinced that Syzn was flirting with me.

4. Closer version of the last panel. Just Jo's face and Syzn's, both relaxed. There's chemistry here.

JO: Well, I did give my medical records to the city health unit, I guess...

SYZN: The bravery of the Green Lantern corps is known throughout the 3600 Sectors.

LINK: Drink. It.

CAPTION: Turns out she was flirting. So, uh, we tried it. Didn't work out. We're just friends now.

5. Focus is on Jo, who has lifted the "cup" and closed her eyes as she drinks.

JO: 'The bravery of the corps.' That's low, Siz. [**ED**  
**NOTE:** Not a typo, an affectionate abbreviation.]

CAPTION: Yep. Just friends. Extenuating circumstances.

LINK: This is the worst thing I've ever tasted.

6. Small panel. Profile. Jo's half-smiling, half-grimacing.

JO: Not bad.

**Page 11**

1. Biggest panel. Focus on the "chemistry set," which Syzn has turned to face; she tinkers with something. Jo is in the background, making a Calvinface now that Syzn's back is turned.

[<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/d2/ec/c7/d2ecc7ad49a23f51ca9e58a7775075f2.jpg>] Syzn looks pleased and is smiling slightly.

SYZN: I distilled juice from a desert plant to get the "caffeine" you crave so. And because you described the pleasant smell of coffee, I blended in the essence of an aromatic hardwood that I like.

CAPTION: It tastes like a distilled dead animal. With dookie breath.

2. Focus is on Syzn, who has turned to face Jo again and is now leaning back against the counter that holds the "chemistry set." She's started eating daintily from a small plate. Her fork is only two-pronged, and whatever she's eating looks like a fried spider, or soft-shelled crab. PoV is from behind Jo. Jo has her chin propped on her hand and is gazing at Syzn wistfully.

SYZN: You're lucky you can get any nourishment from our proteins at all, you know.

JO: Yeah, I know. Guess that's why Councilor Thorn said I smelled tasty.

3. Small panel. Close up on Syzn's eyes. She's still in the middle of trying to eat spindly fried legs, but she's paused to look at Jo silently, significantly.

4. Close-up of Jo. She's shrugging, with a smile. It doesn't reach her eyes.

JO: I mean, technically it wasn't a threat.

5. Small panel. Syzn has reached back to put down her plate of fried spider. Her eyes are closed; she's sighing.

Page 12

1. Whole page. Angled shot of Syzn, from underneath and to one side. There's something perpetually off-kilter about the City Enduring, and at times we (and Jo) will feel it more than others. This shot of her face is overlaid by a series of flashback vignettes, sepia-toned. Flashbacks can include the following as suggestions, or whatever else you want to illustrate from the Worldbuilding: HISTORY document:

-A lush rainforested place -- the Keh-Topli homeworld. One Keh-Topli, in its natural form, stands over another Keh-Topli, who's obviously been attacked and partially eaten. Other Keh-Topli linger nearby, either waiting for their turn or watching; they do not interfere. (Per Worldbuilding: PEOPLES, body is sort of gourd-shaped, with a bulblike head; the head has more than 2 eyes and no mouth, and three or four tentacles curl forth from it, some tipped with little crablike claws; they walk on masses of roots. Down the length of the gourd-body is the "sideways smile," sharp teeth now open and stained.)

-First contact. In a modern-ish room (because this would have happened once either Nah or keh-Topli society had become spacefaring), a Nah man and keh-Topli -- the latter making a noticeable effort to reshape themself into a more Nah-like form -- shake hands. Nearby, another keh-Topli looms near the Nah man, sharp teeth opening.

-A moment of "communion." Beneath an alien sky, a keh-Topli -- in humanoid shape, but unclothed -- holds up their hands, expression blissful. Within the keh-Topli's body, a recent meal is visible. A Nah hand should be discernable.

[OR -- add whatever you want here. Keh-Topli and Nah have had interplanetary relationships for millennia at this point. They've fought against each other, fought side-by-side against the Cloud Kratocracy when it took over, and fought each other again. Some Nah have married keh-Topli; some Nah even offer themselves to keh-topli, if they're ill or subscribe to the keh-topli idea of communion and immortality through consumption. The keh-Topli miss the days of communion, and every Nah knows it. Any images which get at this long, blood-spotted history will fit.]

SYZN: [Speech bubbles to one side to clear space for the flashbacks] The keh-Topli evolved to prefer other thinking beings as food. Before contact between our world and theirs, they ate each other. After they got to know the Nah, they ate us, too.

SYZN: It's a... spiritual thing. The ultimate interpersonal connection.

SYZN: 'You smell delicious' means Averrup respects you. That's a useful connection and you should take advantage of it.

LINK: But it also means he wants to eat you. Don't ever forget that.

**Page 13**

1. Also slightly-off-kilter focus on Jo, who is side-eying Syzn warily.

CAPTION: Friends don't let friends get chomped by sentient carnivorous plants.

2. From outside of Syzn's apartment, which has a wide "bay window" type view of the city-platform's edge. Jo and Syzn are just visible within the apartment.

JO: You know, though...

SYZN: Hmm?

JO, linked from previous: Averrup doesn't scare me as much as you think. I mean... every person in this city is just as creepy to me, on some level.

3. Jo and Syzn are walking side-by-side, retiring from the kitchen over to a living room couchlike thing. Syzn is sipping the leftovers from Jo's gravy boat, holding it one-handed like it's a teacup. Syzn's apartment is smallish but pleasant -- bright and airy, with lots of plants in trenchers and pots growing everywhere. A few of the plants float, and have long dangly legs or fronds. Various appliances and furnishings also look grown. It's hard to tell what's plant and what isn't.

SYZN: Me. As creepy as a hungry Keh-Topli. Thanks ever so much, Sojourner.

JO: [sighs] It's the emotionless thing, all right? It's just... ugh. Hard to explain.

4. Jo has sat down on the couch. Syzn has bent to offer her the gravy boat. Long-suffering, Jo has lifted her hands to receive it.

SYZN: Huh. And here I've been creeped out by you all this time.

JO: Where I come from, emotionlessness is -- wait. What?

**Page 14**

1. Jo's PoV. Syzn is close, and half in shadow because she's bent over; her face is slightly above Jo's. It's an intimate posture, but Syzn's cool/indifferent expression kills its potential.

SYZN: It's just that I expected you to be wilder. Less rational, more impulsive. Like we must have been, at the time of Burnover.

LINK: Instead, you're rational when you need to be and impulsive when you need to be. You're in control of your emotions, even though you're exempt from the Exploit.

2. Small panel. Syzn's PoV. Jo's sitting on the couch, face tilted up, and she's beautiful. The lines of her cheekbones, the curve of her lashes. This is how Syzn sees her. Syzn has put a hand on her cheek, just cupping it for a moment.

3. Long panel. Back to Jo's PoV. Syzn has turned away, going over to the bay window. From this PoV she seems distant, though lovely. If Jo is in frame, she's just looking, and wishing.

SYZN: It scares me, I suppose, that you don't need the Exploit. Because I do.

JO: Switchoff? You've tried it?

4. Now the "camera" focuses on Syzn's face. Jo can't see the way she's lowered her gaze, or the resigned set of her mouth.

SYZN: I'd never touch that filth. But even through the Exploit, I feel... such rage, sometimes. Such sadness. Just a hint. Muted. But enough.

5. Jo's perspective, but now Syzn is silhouetted against the bay window and the light from outside.

SYZN: The Emotion Exploit has given this city peace for centuries. And even though I regret not being given a



choice about it... I'm grateful for the strength it lends me.

LINK: That you go through life just trusting yourself... I wish I could do that, Jo. Really.

6. Tiny panel, just a sliver of Jo's face in reaction to this: resignation. It's clear now that these are the "extenuating circumstances"/why a relationship didn't work out between them. Also clear that Jo's feeling a little lonely, here in this city of people who are incapable of feeling loneliness themselves. She may look Nah, but she will never fit in, and she will never think like the people of the City. That will always be a double-edged sword for her.

Page 15

1. Wide panel. The City-scape; night has fallen again. The sky-image has gotten patchy with the fall of dusk, showing (reality) the other platforms and some of the very thin cables that hold the whole Dyson swarm together. Where the (projected) sky is visible, however, it's cloudy.

CAPTION: I need a lead. Something I can pinch between my fingers and pull, to unravel this mess.

2. Back in CEPD HQ. Wide shot. Jo is in a darkened room, looking at a floating hologram: this is footage from the interrogation room. Still images from the moment of Meile Thorn's murder surround her. In the images, we can see the murderer walking into the room, swinging the weird-looking knife mentioned on p. 8 like an axe, and maybe Meile's look of shock just before the knife strikes. Jo -- on duty again, in GL uniform -- stands amid these images, arms folded, brows drawn in a frown, thoughtful and frustrated.

CAPTION: Sometimes it doesn't matter how advanced the technology is. Bad camera angles are still bad camera angles.

3. Shift to an outdoor fountain surrounded by glassy flooring. A sculpture standing in the middle of the fountain is an impressionistic image of a Nah, a Keh-Topli, and an @At joining hands in friendship. Nearby an @At man in some kind of menial-labor uniform is using a futuristic floor buffer, not bothering to look up as he works. His "mittens" are alight with glyphs and code, blending into the handles of the floor buffer. Jo stands out of the way as she speaks to him.

JO: CEPD tells me you found the body.

MAN: [Brief unintelligible gibberish, which should appear as a speech bubble full of the City-script.]\*

**ED NOTE** to be written on the edge of the frame: \*Some City denizens speak obscure or regional dialects. Jo's translator needs a moment to catch up.

JO: What?

MAN, link from previous: [Gibberish again, although abruptly in mid-bubble it turns into "English."] -- why you're asking me, alien. I told them I didn't see anything.

4. Another wide panel. Back in the alley (page 1, Issue 1), where Stevn of the Glacier was killed. The body is gone, and the blood has been cleaned up. It's not raining anymore. However, Jo has used her ring to cast an image of the murder scene onto the alley, at the moment of the murder. Stevn of the Glacier -- who looks like a portly, thirtysomething white guy, balding, with a fringe of black hair around his head, in working clothes -- stumbles back and raises one arm defensively. Meile Thorn, shirt flapping loose, lunges forward with her "sideways smile" fully open, about to take the fatal chomp.

CAPTION: Can't tell if he had time to scream. No one heard it, regardless. In space... ugh. Yeah.

5. Inset of panel 4. Jo's face, thoughtful and scowling at the recreation of the crime.

CAPTION: Gotta switch this up somehow. There's something I'm not getting, here.

Page 16

1. Half-page panel. Deeper night-time. The City's sky is still clouded, though stars peek through in patches. Slanting shot of one of the outermost walls of Platform Ever Forward, which form a many-meters-high rim.

[NOTE FOR ARTIST: The platforms of the city are basically shaped like hexagonal dinner plates that are slightly curved. (Hex dinner plates: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55add04ae4b0e4c581b57170/5866d1f63e00be540c392332/586c651746c3c4f91fabe2d7/1483498781179/Screen+Shot+2016-09-16+at+7.53.56+PM.png?format=500w>) If the City keeps growing and they add more platforms, it will become a Dyson sphere shaped something like a soccer ball.

For now, the walls of the platforms are made of "future tech" on the outside (the side that faces space). The edges of the platforms do look like they could be locked together. On the interior, City-ward side, the walls are layered over with chunks of rock taken unaltered from the homeworlds that the Trilogy species once lived on. Many of these "cliffs" and "mountainsides" have been built into; the surfaces are dotted with regular holes and ledges, and it's obvious that many Nah prefer to live here. There are some apartments built into the rock for @At or Keh-Topli on the ground level, if visible in this image. Most of the people visible are Nah, walking or gliding. A very few are climbing steps built up the side of the cliff/mountain.]

POV is Jo's, as she is riding in a flying vehicle -- a cab -- toward one of the uppermost ledges on the wall. It's noticeable even from a distance that this ledge is very large, and that the dwelling built into it (and partially out of it, basically a mansion set into the wall) is fancier than most, with lots of carved stone and metal and marble projecting from the cliff-face.

2. A landing platform on this uppermost ledge. It's windy. Jo walks along a short walkway lined with lights. Behind her, the cab she came in has lifted off. A Nah man, elegantly but simply dressed, obviously a servant, stands in front of the mansion to greet her. He's white, blond, with one arm and finn extended in welcome as he bows in a courtly manner.

SERVANT: Lantern Mullein, how unexpected. Councilor Marth has been notified of your arrival.

JO: Well, the Councilor did invite me to come by.  
[smaller] Two days ago.

SERVANT, link from previous: I'm sure it won't be a problem. Please follow me.

3. Interior. Marth's bedroom. It is unnervingly like a throne room, with a semicircle of steps (maybe 5) leading up to an elevated dais. Atop this, Marth lies on his side amid a vast pile of tumbled cushions. He's reading a fancy, gold-tasselled scroll. His locks are loose, and slightly curly. He's wearing something loose and flowy but elaborately patterned with abstract wind and sky motifs -- stylized clouds, etc. The whole scene is very much "the wealthy lord of the manor at rest." Jo and Servant stand at the edge of the room. Servant has bowed and is gesturing toward Marth. Jo's back is to the viewer, her face unreadable in this moment.

CAPTION: You have got to be kidding me.

SERVANT: Lantern Mullein, Councilor.

MARTH: Thank you, Vrasith. That will be all.

4. Wide shot, further showcasing the tasteful opulence of the room. On one side of the room is a beautifully-worked archway that is open to the outside, although there is a kind of glass or energy screen over the opening to keep out wind. This leads to Marth's own private balcony/landing platform. Jo's put a hand on her hip, skeptical, if she's big enough for her expression to show.

JO: Sorry I'm late, Councilor. Busy trying to catch a murderer.

MARTH: I told you to call me Marth. And it's no trouble. I'm thrilled to see you now, in fact.

JO, link from previous: Oh?

5. Small panel. Jo's face in close-up, eyes narrowed.

CAPTION: I never noticed how many "feeling" words there were in everyday language until I came here. They still use a few -- a holdover from the old days.

LINK: But thrilled catches my attention.

6. Marth now stands before the opening to the outside, framed within its arch. Back is to the viewer/Jo. His arms are lazily upraised, head tilted back. His finns are at rest and possibly hidden within the folds of his robe/curly of his locks.

MARTH: What an amazing night. Isn't it?

**Page 17**

1. Wide panel, centered on Marth's blissful, light-bathed face. Behind him, Jo faces Marth's back, her expression suspicious.

JO: I was hoping you could help me, Coun -- Marth. Since you're the spokesman for the Nah. I want to speak to the family of the victim.

LINK: Uh, the Nah victim.

2. Same shot as before. It's as if he hasn't heard her speak.

MARTH: Would you dance with me, Lantern? [smaller] May I call you Jo?

JO: Uh. [smaller] Yeah, I guess so.

3. Marth now stands in front of a device that's obviously of Keh-Topli derivation: it looks like a bundle of woody vines grown together into a knot, although there are small extrusions from the wood's surface that makes it clear at least some part of this is cybernetic/high tech. Marth has touched some weird bit of it or another.

SFX: The wood instrument begins to emit music.

MARTH: The Keh-Topli are masters of harmony and percussion.

4. Marth stands boldly, shoulders back and head high, offering Jo his hand. Jo's visible, face neutral.

JO: I'm afraid I don't know any dances that are popular in this sector.

MARTH: I would be happy to introduce you to such delight as you are willing to accept, from me.

5. Same panel as 4; comedic beat.

JO: Damn, you are not subtle.

MARTH: I really don't know how to be.

[Author note: I hope this works, using two repeated panels on the same page. I want the pacing to feel stuttered, off-kilter, the way Jo is feeling in this scene. If it doesn't work, do whatever feels right.]



**Pages 18-19**

[Double-page splash. No dialogue on this page. Depict however you like, but basically Marth leads Jo into something like a waltz for a while. Maybe it meanders across the page. Jo starts out uncomfortable, but grows to like it. By the end, he does something overtly flirty and playful, like spin her away or dip her, and she laughs out loud.]

**Page 20**

1. Small panel. They stop, facing each other. It's a Moment. Maybe they'll banter. Maybe kiss.

2. Small panel. Jo turns slightly away. Marth's in the same position, but his smile has turned rueful with disappointment.

JO: [SFX: Clearing throat]

MARTH: You want to talk to the family of Stevn of the Glacier.

JO: Right.

3. Marth has moved to a side-table in the room and is now holding one of the tablets mentioned on p. 6. [Author note: these will be used a lot. Might as well standardize their look.]

MARTH: I had prepared for you this dossier on the victim. Family and network, career aptitudes, last three months' surveillance and medical data.

LINK: Stevn was of my shipclan, but there are... politics involved. I think you'll have better luck if you approach the family directly.

4. Close-up on Jo's hand as she accepts the tablet.

CAPTION: Shipclan: After Burnover, the survivors had no home but refurbished space stations and a few ships that could still fly. Over time, each of these became... nations, in essence.

LINK: They had lovely, poetic names. "The Sentinel of Quiet." "The Streaking Ice." The survivors fought each other, stole, and sold their own children to keep those things flying.

LINK: Lot of bad blood left over from those days.

**Page 21**

1. Panel focused on Jo's face. She's facing the tablet as if skimming its contents (maybe they light her face? appear on a heads-up display nearby?), but she's still side-eying Marth.

JO: Thanks. I'll reach out to them.

LINK: So, you seem... different.

MARTH, offscreen: Do I?

2. Small panel: Marth has moved behind Jo, subtly circling. Maybe it's an idle gesture, or maybe he's scoping her ass. She's trying to pretend nonchalance.

3. Small panel, close-up profile of both. Marth has returned to face Jo. Jo's eyes are narrowed.

MARTH: Perhaps the stress of being kept waiting so long has unhinged me.

4. Biggest panel on the page. Jo's face, eyes wide with alarm; she's gone tense.

CAPTION: Oh, hell. This man is a goddamn problem.

LINK: He's on Switchoff.

**Page 22**

1. Whole page. Marth's face, still lolled to one side, smiling. He's flirting, he's relaxed, he's having a good time. He has also very subtly become threatening to Jo, now that she's realized he's gone off the Emotion Exploit and is fully as dangerous as the ancient Nah who destroyed a world.

MARTH: So, Jo... let's talk about murder.

END