

DARK DOMINION #0

PAGE ONE (Full-page splash)

Scene

The interior of Michael Alexander's apartment. Here's the floor plan:

Note: No pictures for this script. Sorry.

This is a well-used place—not filthy, but not too tidy. Michael devotes every minute possible to his work, wasting little time on homemaking. This is almost more like a cluttered office than a home. Make the ceiling about 10', and the window fairly large, but not unusually so.

Show Michael, dressed in his usual, casual, somewhat old-fashioned clothes, looking out the window. No sportcoat yet, though. He'll put that on later; he's been up most of the night studying, and working. Mainly, he's a writer for small, poor publishers who don't pay much, so show a (real) typewriter, or if you prefer, an older, small, cheap MacIntosh. He probably does other work, too, from time to time, to make ends meet—anything from manual labor to writing resumé's.

Michael may be pulling up the Venetian blind, or leaning against the window frame. Though he's facing away from us here (so we can see out the window, too), his body language should suggest that he's brooding or contemplating, and that he's tired. Shoot the main room of the apartment. All around the room we see evidence of his work—books about every sort of parapsychology, books about physics and quantum theory, diagrams of the human brain, charts of astronomical (not astrological) info, a few artifacts, such as art and sculpture by Australian aborigines, American Indians and African natives, a statue of Shiva, a Tarot deck, and maybe a few voodoo or south seas totems. There's a globe near where Michael is standing. Somewhere in the foreground have some newspapers in evidence with headlines like "Three Bystanders Wounded in Gang Shootout" and "Corruption Rife in City Hall."

Remember, Steve, this page is really nine trading cards. Try to work something visually interesting into each card.

It is early morning. Michael's window looks east, but don't show the sun. Show shafts of light streaming in, if you like.

Remember, Steve, because this is a card set, when you place the copy, you can't place it on a cut line:

TITLE

None So Blind...

CAPTION

Manhattan, the West Side apartment
of Michael Alexander.

CAPTION

April 26, 1993, 6:59 A.M.

CREDITS

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Series and characters developed by
Jim Shooter and Steve Ditko

Written by Jim Shooter
Drawn by Steve Ditko

Painted by Tim Perkins
Lettered by

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PAGE TWO

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Tight head shot of Michael. He looks thoughtful and tired. He's looking straight ahead here.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Same as previous, except shift his eyes to the right and maybe cock one eyebrow slightly, as if he's just noticed something.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Same as previous, except now his eyes are as far right as they go, and his brow is furrowed with concentration. He's trying to see whatever caught his attention but his head is in the same position as the previous shots. Don't turn his head.

Panel 4

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael whirls around (to face into the room), trying to get a better look at what caught his eye. There's nothing there. Michael accidentally knocks over the globe. Make this action of Michael's as natural looking as you can, Steve—don't have him overacting.

MICHAEL

All right, hold it! Hold still!

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael searches around almost frantically for whatever it was he thought he glimpsed.

MICHAEL

Where are you? Let me get a look at you!

Panel 6

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael is calm now, just standing. Maybe he's got his hand on the back of his neck, still sort of glancing around, but now resigned to the fact that "it" got away. He holds the badly dented globe in the other hand. North America is banged in.

MICHAEL

Hmh. One of these days, I'm going to catch you...whatever you are.

MICHAEL (2nd)

Hmh. Oh, well.

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Out in the hall. Michael is carrying his jacket over his shoulder hooked on one finger. He's locking his door. His next-door neighbor is looking out his own door toward Michael. This neighbor is Adam Corcoran. He's a slightly overweight guy in his late thirties, a nice guy. He's wearing pajama bottoms and a robe, which he's ineffectively holding closed. Bare feet. Michael answers his query deadpan, casually.

ADAM

Are you all right, Michael? I heard a crash.

MICHAEL

North America was flattened. Other than that, no problem.

PAGE THREE

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. As Michael walks down the hall, toward us (maybe we do an upshot here, and we only see his lower legs and well-worn shoes), Adam's wife,

Mary, has joined him in the doorway. She's a short, plump, but pretty-faced woman. She has curlers in her hair and also wears a robe, the silky, frilly type, over a flannel nightgown. Remember, Steve, you asked for a full script. Adam is cheerfully saying good-bye to Michael, Mary is regarding Michael more cautiously, a little suspicious.

Mary

Adam, get back in here! I told you, stay away from that weirdo!

ADAM (Whisper)

Shh! Mary--!

ADAM

See you later, Michael. Have a nice day.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close on Mary and Adam. He's telling her not to worry, but she still is.

ADAM

Michael's just a harmless, eccentric old coot. He comes by the bookstore all the time....

MARY

It's the harmless, quiet ones who go crazy with guns. I don't trust anybody. Not in this city.

Panel 3

Scene

6/9 page shot. Establishing shot of a street in the Times Square area. Lots of people, please, as many different types as one would naturally see. Don't forget, it's morning. Michael is among the crowd. He doesn't stand out. He's approaching a newsstand. Again, Steve, this scene is actually six trading cards, so try to get some visual interest on each section—but don't force it. Steve, please draw real-looking fictional clothes, real-looking fictional cars, and real-looking fictional scenery.

Page Four

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael buys several papers. The newsdealer is an old guy who's been selling Michael papers for several decades. The headlines on papers are "Mother Slays Children," "TLC Commish Denies Bribe," and "Bank Failure Linked to Fraud".

MICHAEL

The news gets uglier every day, Irv.

NEWSDEALER

Nah. How long you been buying those rags from me, Mike? Thirty years? It's always the same. Always bad.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael walks away toward McDonald's. The news guy is also visible in this panel. The newsdealer is looking at a paper.

MICHAEL

It's getting worse. This city is getting worse.

NEWSDEALER

I guess it ain't what it used to be...but, hey, what can you do? Just read 'em and weep, Mike. Read 'em and weep.

Panel 3

Scene

3/9 page shot. Michael enters the McDonald's at 46th and 7th. The usual variety of human types is present. Behind the counter is a nice-looking black guy, Lionel. He's the manager.

LIONEL

Good Morning, Michael.

MICHAEL

No, it isn't, but we have to made the best of it, Lionel.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael counts his money. He doesn't have much. Lionel is ringing up his order.

LIONEL

The usual? Coffee for here and a Sausage McMuffin with Egg to go?

MICHAEL

Let me see if I have enough....Yes. And a quarter to spare.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael sits at a table reading his papers, sipping his coffee. A blind beggar with a seeing-eye dog approaches Michael. Lionel notices. He's irritated.

BLIND MAN

Any change? Spare change?

LIONEL

Hey, you ! Get out of here!

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Lionel has grabbed the beggar. Michael is reaching into his pocket.

LIONEL

I told you not to bother my customers!

BLIND MAN

Give me a break! I'm blind!

MICHAEL

It's okay, Lionel.

MICHAEL (2nd)

Here, I've got a quarter for you.

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael drops his last quarter in the blind man's cup while petting (and looking at) the dog. Lionel isn't happy, but he shuts up.

MICHAEL

I understand about being blind. All of us are. Some a little more so...

MICHAEL (2nd)

Dogs see things we can't. We're all blind compared to you, boy...hnh?

PAGE FIVE

Panel 1

Scene

3/9 page shot. A street corner near Times Square, maybe 44th and 6th. Mercy is sitting talking to thin air; Michael is approaching her with a McDonald's bag in his hand. Steve, let's make Mercy overweight, very grungy, and very unappealing. The point is that she is beautiful of spirit but physically ugly.

CAPTION

Forty-fourth and Sixth, 8:06 A.M.

MERCY

...walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I don't fear no evil A-men! Do you hear me?

MERCY (2nd)

Don't you laugh! Don't you laugh at me!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael talks to Mercy, holding out the bag to her. Mercy utterly ignores Michael. She's still raving at thin air.

MICHAEL

Good morning. I brought you breakfast.

MERCY

The Lord will see the darkness and hear the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth....

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy still raves, still ignores Michael. He sets the bag near her.

MICHAEL

Here. Sausage. You like sausage, right?

MERCY

He'll send an angel to turn you to salt! You'll see.

PANEL 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy still raves, still ignores Michael, but she is pulling the Sausage McMuffin out of the bag. Michael still intently listens to her ranting.

MERCY

I'm not scared of you. Can't hurt me if I'm not.

MERCY (2nd)

Lord'll prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies....

MICHAEL

Will you talk to me today? Will you tell me your name at least?

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy still ignores Michael and continues ranting between bites of McMuffin.

MERCY

Lord'll send an angel to made you stop tormenting this old woman.

MICHAEL

Who's tormenting you? I'm not, am I? Please talk to me. I want to know what you see.

Panel 6

Scene

2/9 page shot. Establish the interior of a bookstore. Adam Corcoran (from page 2 panel 7) is the sales clerk. Michael is entering.

CAPTION

6:46 P.M.

ADAM

Michael! How's it going? Lose any more continents?

MICHAEL

Hmh? Oh. No. But I have the feeling I'm missing most of the world, Adam.

Page Six

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael looks on a low shelf where half a dozen copies of a book he wrote are racked. The title of the book is Beyond the Imaginary Limits. Michael is noticing that it's not selling. Adam looks a little sheepish.

MICHAEL

My book's not selling very well, is it?

ADAM

Um...well, I recommend it to everyone.
I bought one.

Panel

Scene

1/9 page shot. Adam dusts off Michael's books with a feather duster. Michael peruses other books on another shelf but looks annoyed.

ADAM

I think it's, you know, over people's heads. Especially the part where you explain about how reality isn't as real as it's cracked up to be.

MICHAEL

No. Reality is absolutely real.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael reacts with that patented Steve Ditko you're-not-listening expression.

ADAM

Right. But there's more to it than we know about.
Or...something like that.

MICHAEL

Something like that.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Adam explains to Michael why his book doesn't sell. Michael is not paying much attention. He's looking at a history book.

ADAM

Anyway, I know why it's not a best-seller—it's not mystic enough for the New Age types, and it's way too cerebral for regular people....

MICHAEL

Hmh.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Adam goes on trying to console Michael.. Michael replies somewhat sarcastically.

ADAM

I liked your last book better—Dark Dominion. Nice title.

MICHAEL

You sold two of those.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Adam telling how moved he was by Michael's last book.

ADAM

I loved the part about fear being the true root of all evil.
"Evil is forged from fear."

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael has put back the book he was looking at and is preparing to leave. Adam is still waxing eloquent about Dark Dominion.

ADAM

Also the bit about fear being rampant in New York—my wife is always scared.

ADAM

It's like you said, fear and evil are taking over this town.

MICHAEL

Hmh.

Panel 8

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael exits. Adam waves.

ADAM

Anyway, Michael, you inspired me. I try to remember...um..."The absence of fear reveals inner strength." Or...something like that.

MICHAEL

Exactly that. See you, Adam.

Page Seven

Panel 1

Scene

3/9 page shot. It's evening now. Michael is on fictional West Forty-second in a fictional area much like the part of Forty-second where the little theaters are. There's a storefront fortune teller setting on a chair in her doorway (as they often do). Signs tell us she is "Madame Consuela." She's greeting Michael. Michael just happened to be passing by—he's not there to see her—but he says hi anyway. They obviously know each other. The street is busy—lots of people, the usual variety, enjoying a nice evening.

CAPTION

West 42nd Street, 9:20 P.M.

MADAME CONSUELA

Miguel! How are you?

MICHAEL

I'm surprised you have to ask, Consuela.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Consuela talk.

CONSUELA

I don't. I was just being polite.

CONSUELA (2nd)

Mmm...I see in your aura that you are unhappy...

MICHAEL

Wrong.

Panel 3

Scene

2/9 page shot. More conversation. Consuela strikes a pose as if she were receiving vibes.

CONSUELA

I see...I see...you suffered a world-shaking disaster this morning...and your books aren't selling.

MICHAEL

Very good. Was Adam Corcoran's wife here today by any chance?

Panel4

Scene

2/9 page shot. A very old lady customer approaches Madame Consuela while Michael listens skeptically to Consuela.

CONSUELA

I've told you, I can see the world beyond, of auras and energies. Some need tarot or crystals to focus them, but not me.

OLD LADY

Madame Consuela, do you have time to do a reading?

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael starts to walk away, leaving Consuela and the old lady. Consuela is miffed at Michael and is making a hex sign at him. The old lady waits patiently, obliviously.

MICHAEL

If you could see "beyond," Consuela, why would you waste such a gift on a penny-ante con game?

CONSUELA

Oh, yeah? Well here's a gift for you, Miguel. You're going to get into big trouble tonight...and I hope they hurt you bad.

CONSUELA (2nd)

No charge.

Page Eight

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Later that night Michael is walking East in a dark, narrow street like Forty-third. Very dark, very deserted.

CAPTION

10:59 P.M.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Four young men hanging around a doorway notice Michael, who's across the street, walking along. Put these guys in shadow, make them menacing—but be fictionally realistic, please, in terms of clothes and body types. These are typical street rats.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. The four approach Michael, sort of surrounding him. I'd shoot this from a high angle. At this point the rats are 10 to 15 feet away from Michael, who has stopped and is looking around, seeing his predicament.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. The rats are very close to Michael now, shuffling toward him slowly, enjoying this. Michael is absolutely calm.

RAT #1

Got a light?

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael, dead calm and unafraid, looks Rat #1 in the eye.

MICHAEL

Go home. It's very dangerous for young men like you to be out on the street so late.

RAT #1

Whoa! Listen to him! ¡Un hombre muy bravo!

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael reaches inside his coat, looking as if he might be pulling a gun from a shoulder holster.

MICHAEL

No. Bravery is merely willpower masking fear. I'm not afraid at all.

RAT #1

Hey, man, get your hand away from there.

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael keeps his hand inside his coat. The rats back away.

MICHAEL

You asked for something. You're going to get it.

RAT #1

You got a gun? What are you, a cop?

Panel 8

Scene

1/9 page shot. The rats flee. Michael still stands with his hand inside his coat.

RAT #1

¡Vamanos! Let's jet!

Panel 9

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael has now withdrawn his hand from inside his coat. He's holding one of those little keychain flashlights. (It's on, to show what it is.) The

rats are long gone. No need to show them here if they're far enough away and clearly leaving the previous panel.

MICHAEL

I thought they wanted a light. Hmh.

PAGE NINE

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Long shot of Michael walking toward a bank on the corner of Madison and 42nd. This bank has an ATM foyer. We can't necessarily see her in this shot, but Mercy is in the ATM foyer, where she usually spends her nights.

CAPTION

11:15 P.M.

Panel 2

Scene

2/9 page shot. Through the window, Michael sees Mercy huddled under a blanket inside. Mercy is, as usual, talking to no one. Michael is just checking on her on his way home.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael arrives home, entering his apartment. Please shoot this from just inside Michael's window, that is, all the way from the other end of his apartment. He's got his jacket hooked on one finger over his shoulder, just as he did when he was leaving earlier.

CAPTION

11:29 P.M.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael is sitting at his desk with a cup of tea, writing in his journal.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of what Michael is writing.

JOURNAL COPY

April 26, 1993

(As if continued from previous page) and as I left, Madame Consuela said, "You're going to get into big trouble tonight, and I hope they hurt you bad." An hour-and-a-half later, four young men accosted me. Was it coincidence? Muggings are not uncommon in this city.

It is possible that Consuela hired those boys or somehow encouraged them. Is it possible, too, that she actually has some special insight or communion with the parts of the world that are beyond my senses?

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael, similar to panel 1 page 2. He looks tired. He may be yawning slightly.

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Again, same shot, same angle, and, like panel 2 page 2, he sees something out of the corner of his eye.

MICHAEL

Hmh.

Panel 8

Scene

1/9 page shot. Again, same shot, same angle, and, like panel 3 of page 2, he's got his eyes shifted as much as he can, straining to see.

MICHAEL

There it is again.

PAGE TEN

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael keeps writing. Show him from the back, fairly close.

MICHAEL

You see something move out of the corner of your eye...but when you look, there's nothing there. People say your mind is playing tricks on you.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael keeps writing. Same angle.

MICHAEL

But I don't believe that my mind "plays tricks" on itself. I know my own mind...

MICHAEL (2nd)

...and I believe in my senses. They report reality...and reality is absolutely real.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Same angle, but now Michael has started to turn in his chair to face the room.

MICHAEL

Something is there. Something prevents me from seeing it, except out of the corner of my eye when I'm tired...

MICHAEL (2nd)

...but it's there. And I want to see. I am not afraid. I am not...afraid.

Panel 4

Scene

3/9 page shot. Pull back the camera to show Michael now standing, looking around the room as if seeing it with new eyes. He looks intense, dramatic. We see nothing but the ordinary room, however he's getting his first real look at quantum.

Panel 5

Scene

2/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael's eyes, very intense.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Full figure of Michael, who has grabbed his jacket again and is racing toward the door.

MICHAEL

The old lady...got to talk to her...

PAGE ELEVEN

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Inside the ATM foyer, Mercy is huddled under her blanket. Michael is entering. Mercy doesn't pay any attention to him. As usual, she's talking to the unseen.

MERCY

So? I know the wicked is in great power and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Shut up and get thee hence.

MERCY

And get these maggots off of me. It's disgusting.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael stands very close to Mercy, looking intently where she is looking.

MERCY

My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust. Do you have to harangue me, too?

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy lowers her head into her hands, burying her face in her hands. Michael is staring at the empty space in front of Mercy, where something we can't see is standing.

MERCY

Lord, help me. Wearisome nights...wearisome nights...

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Shoot past Mercy (her head is still buried in her hands) toward Michael. Michael is now looking at Mercy intently.

MICHAEL

Mercy. Your name is Mercy.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy raises her head out of her hands and turns to look up at Michael. No need to show Michael here, just a close-up of Mercy. Steve, in a subtle way, from here on, I'd like you to make Mercy look a little less crazy and perhaps wiser. Subtle! No sudden transformation, please.

MERCY

How do you know?

Panel 6

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael squats next to Mercy, but he's looking intently at the empty space in front of her. She's looking at him, a little surprised/suspicious.

MICHAEL

I overheard your conversation. With...that.

Michael (2nd)

I need to talk to you about...that...and other things.

MERCY

How come you can see him?

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael starts to explain.

MICHAEL

I've spent most of my life trying to peel away the layers of fear that blinded me. I had a breakthrough tonight.

MICHAEL (2nd)

It started when some hoodlums tried to mug me....

PAGE TWELVE

PANEL 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael continues explaining.

MICHAEL

I scared them away just by reaching into my pocket.

MICHAEL

Later, I realized that I was just like them. I was asking for the light of knowledge...

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael continues explaining.

MICHAEL

...but when it came time to face it, I kept expecting to see something terrible...so I never really looked. Until tonight.

MICHAEL (2nd)

How can you see...these things?

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy replies.

MERCY

Me? I'm crazy!

Panel 4

Scene

3/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy continue talking. Pull back here to reestablish the ATM center. Michael is still looking around, amazed at what he now sees.

MICHAEL

Mercy, I want to understand what I'm seeing better. Will you help me?

MERCY

You want me to show you around?

MERCY (2nd)

Lord knows, I know my way. Been all around this town.

Panel 5

Scene

2/9 page shot. Mercy and Michael are outside the ATM center—maybe Mercy is still passing through the doorway. Make this a long shot looking East on 42nd street, so we can see Grand Central Terminal. Remember, Steve, it's dark out, so there's no need to go overboard on detail. Michael is pointing toward Grand Central.

MICHAEL

What is that...huge thing looming over Grand Central?

MERCY

The Growth. It's evil. It grows up from the Bowels...under the station.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael and Mercy. Mercy is regarding Grand Central with revulsion. Michael is grimly fascinated. Just show them here.

MICHAEL

Show me.

MERCY

The bowels ain't no place for tourists. It's the land of darkness and the shadow of death.

PAGE THIRTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy leads Michael into a subway entrance.

MICHAEL

I'm not a tourist. I live here.

MERCY

Okay, okay. Lord help us....

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy leads Michael through a broken grate in a deserted section of the station (before the turnstiles).

MERCY

There are doors to the Bowels all over.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy leads Michael down a long, long flight of stairs. It's very dark. Steampipes drip and hiss.

MERCY

Stay close to me now. Don't you leave me!

MERCY (2nd)

Some bad people and things come here.

Panel 4

Scene

6/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy are on sort of a catwalk or ledge. They're looking down at the main hall of the Bowels. It's sort of like those subway

stations that have several levels of trains, but with collapsed sections and broken floors and walls, revealing the layers. This is an abandoned, forgotten train station. Possibly there's an old, old subway car or two there. Possibly one is derailed, or on its side. Any other train station stuff is welcome also. All over this "landscape" we see homeless people and human refuse, huddled in niches and corners, perched in the ironworks rafters, lying on the floor. Walking or wandering aimlessly. A few may be fighting with fists, bottles, knives. Some lie on the ground, sick, drunk, dead, or catatonic. There are a few electric lights—bare bulbs dangling from cords, jury-rigged from the still-live electrical cables hanging down from holes in the walls. There are also a few fires burning in barrels and in jury-rigged fire pits. The impression we should give is that this is Hell, or as near to it as you'll find on Earth. Michael is awed. Mercy is matter-of-fact. (Steve! Important! Throughout this sequence in the Bowels, feel free to incorporate Bowels resident-wretches in the backgrounds—huddled in hollows and corners, lurking, staring, etc.—wherever it makes sense.)

MERCY

This is the living room.

PAGE FOURTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. We see here the Shanty, which is sort of an underground homeless people's barter store. It was one of those big subway newsstands, once. It has everything, but all used, battered, dented. The guy who runs it, Sal (as in Salvage), will be an important character in upcoming stories, but not here—so make him interesting-looking, even though we're not featuring him in this story. (Steve! Rather than make him a mousy, little shopkeeper type, how about making him big and burly?) Make this a good establishing shot of the Shanty. Mercy and Michael are approaching from the background. Mercy's pointing at the Shanty. Sal is getting ready to close up and pull down his steel shutters.

MERCY

That's the Shanty. Old Sal trades in every commodity...especially recyclables.

MERCY

Uh-oh...

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy, foreground, explains to Michael as Sal, background, closes the steel shutters on the Shanty. Mercy looks worried.

MERCY

Sal's closing up early. He must be very, very scared.

MICHAEL

Of what?

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy wants to flee to the surface. Michael is gently holding her back.

MERCY

Maybe Clunk and Skewer are out playing tonight. Maybe worse, I don't know. Sal never closes early.

MICHAEL

Maybe he's just tired. What are Clunk and...whatever?

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up as Michael talks to fearful Mercy.

MERCY

Athletes. Let's go back.

MICHAEL

Mercy, show me more. Please. I want to see the roots of the Growth.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy, somewhat reluctantly, leads Michael on, deeper into the Bowels—maybe down a ramp or stairs. Michael looks around as they go, vigilant, on guard.

MERCY

All right. But let's hurry. I have a feeling that the wicked walk on every side.

Panel 6

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael points to thin air ahead and to one side. He's pointing at a gnarled vine of the Growth, but we can't see that yet. Mercy is looking where Michael is pointing as they hurry along.

MICHAEL

Amazingly large thorns on these tendrils of the Growth. They're like spears.

MICHAEL (2nd)

Good thing they're not solid...

MERCY

To us. They're real solid to the demons. I hide among the thorns sometimes when the demons really annoy me...

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy continue down. Now Mercy points to something on the Growth vine.

MERCY

...but there's something disgusting about touching the Growth. It gives me anxiety attacks.

MERCY (2nd)

And I can't stand the stench of those ugly little flowers. Boy, they're in full bloom tonight!

PAGE FIFTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

3/9 page shot. Mercy shows Michael the Steampit. The Steampit is a place where scalding steam pours out of some huge, broken, underground pipes. Steve, if you remember the big steampipe explosion in Gramercy several years ago, where seven or so people died and others were horribly scalded, this is like a continuous, ongoing version of that. This is the most hellish place in our "Hell," the inferno, the most hideous place of death. People thrown into the Steampit have their flesh cooked right off their bones in seconds—like overcooked chickens. Make this big, impressive, scary. I picture the steampit as being a squarish pit the size of our entire DEFIANT office. Michael and Mercy are probably on some overlook, so we can get some scope into this shot.

MERCY

This is the Steampit. Fall in there, it'll cook the flesh off your bones like an overdone chicken.

MERCY (2nd)

Lots of murders here. Lots of bodies get dumped here. Lots of bones in the pit.

MICHAEL

The roots of the Growth go down into the pit. Does it...feed on death?

MERCY (3rd)

No. Fear.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy sees something (Clunk and Skewer—don't show them here, though) and pulls Michael back behind a pillar or wall so as not to be seen.

MERCY

Get back! Hide! Quick!

MICHAEL

What? Why?

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Now we, and Michael, see Clunk and Skewer. Clunk is a big, strong, but overweight-looking guy (picture Babe Ruth, only bigger) wearing a baseball outfit that's too small and carrying a baseball bat. Skewer is a tall, strong, but lean, lanky type (picture me in shape) wearing a track-and-field outfit, i.e., shorts and a tank top. He carries a javelin. The two of them are dragging a body, one holding each arm. They're about to throw the body into the pit. Maybe show them medium and Michael and Mercy background.

MERCY

Clunk and Skewer have been out playing. Now they're disposing of the body.

MERCY (2nd)

Lord help us if they saw us!

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Clunk and Skewer, background, pitch the body into the billowing steam. Foreground, Mercy drags Michael back the way they came. Michael is still watching in horror/fascination.

MERCY

They'll take the front way out. Let's head up the back way.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy hurry along upward toward the surface.

MICHAEL

I should have tried to help that poor guy.

MERCY

He was already dead. Couldn't you see that his light was gone?

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy continue. Make this a closer shot. Mercy looks concerned by something she sees up ahead.

MICHAEL

No light inside means...dead?

MERCY

Yes.

MERCY (2nd)

Uh-oh.

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy flattens herself, and with one arm Michael, against the wall to avoid being seen by something (Chasm) up ahead.

MERCY

Lord God, Chasm is in the Bowels tonight!

MERCY (2nd)

Now I understand why Sal closed up.

PAGE SIXTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Mercy runs (back toward where Clunk and Skewer are!). Michael is still looking at Chasm, fascinated. Don't show Chasm—shoot toward Michael, close up, so behind him we see Mercy running.

MICHAEL

Who is Chasm?

MERCY

The wickedest of those that rebel against the light! Let's go!

Panel 2

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael stays out of sight but watches. Mercy's gone. Establish in this shot the tableau Michael is seeing—Chasm in human form is calmly standing and looking on as Skinner (the big hit-man guy we used to call Shooter) is torturing some poor, wretched, homeless guy. Chasm is elegantly dressed in an expensive dark suit. Skinner had a jacket on but took it off; it's hanging up on something nearby. Skinner has a real-looking gun in a shoulder holster. He's torturing the guy, using a pair of electrodes wired into a hanging lamp or some of the dangling live wires we saw before. Make these look heavy-duty, like automobile jumper cables. In this shot, Skinner's not shocking the victim—he's standing by, waiting for the order from Chasm. Skinner's enjoying this. The victim is writhing in agony, tied down to something. He's wearing only ragged pants. They've stripped off his other rags and shoes, which might be lying on the floor. This scene takes place in some area that used to be part of a subway platform. All kinds of appropriate debris could be lying around.

SKINNER

Again?

CHASM

Take your time, Skinner. Let him contemplate the pain....

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Skinner applies the electrodes again. Shoot this so that we can't really see the grody stuff, sort of like this:

CHASM

Now.

VICTIM

Ahhh!

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael's face, starkly lit by the electrical flashes. He's intense, angry, horrified.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael crouches to pick up a brick to use as a weapon but never takes his gaze off of the torture scene. No need to show the bad guys here.

CHASM

Well-done, Skinner. His fear is at a crescendo.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Shoot this so that we see a little part of the victim, all of Chasm, and all of Skinner, who face the camera, and fifteen or twenty feet behind them, Michael, who's sneaking up on them with brick in hand.

CHASM

Continue working on him....

SKINNER

You going now?

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Same camera angle. Michael is closer now, but he has a look of puzzlement/amazement on his face because Chasm is fading away! (Just draw

him, Steve—we'll fade him out in the ink and color). Skinner has seen Chasm fade out before, so he's not surprised. He's probably looking at the victim here.

CHASM

Keep him and his fear alive until I'm finished.

SKINNER

Yeah. Yes, sir, I mean.

Panel 8

Scene

1/9 page shot. Same camera angle. Chasm has completely vanished. (He's gone into the Quantum Plane. Michael can still see him, of course, but we can't.) Michael looks shocked and amazed. He's stopped in his tracks. Skinner is about to zap the victim again. Michael is even closer behind Skinner and the invisible Chasm by this time.

SKINNER

Pretty spooky, isn't he?

SKINNER (2nd)

Time to scream again. You're going to be begging for the Steampit in a minute, boy.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

3/9 page shot. A scream from off panel (Mercy's) causes Michael to turn. Skinner turns, too, seeing Michael!

MERCY (Off-panel)

Eeeeeee!

SKINNER

Sounds like somebody's killing an old lady...

SKINNER (2nd)

Hey, whatta we got here? A geezer with a brick!

MICHAEL

Mercy!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael starts to turn to run to Mercy's aid, but before he can take a step, Skinner grabs him roughly by the arm or jacket, causing him to drop the brick.

SKINNER

Mercy? You came to the wrong place, pal.

MICHAEL

Let go!

Panel 3

Scene

2/9 page shot. Chasm is reappearing. Again, Steve, just draw him; we'll do the "fade in." Skinner holds Michael roughly, so that he's helpless. Don't forget, Skinner is a foot taller than Michael.

SKINNER

What are you doing down here? You're no Bowels bum.

CHASM

Don't let him slip away, Skinner!

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Chasm approaches Michael, who's being firmly held by Skinner.

CHASM

Let the other one go, and tie him down.

CHASM (2nd)

Fear runs purer in those whose lives are not already filled with suffering.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Chasm looks closely at Michael (still being held fast), into his eyes. Michael shows no fear.

CHASM

Wait...

CHASM (2nd)

This one...has no fear. There is no fear in him.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Skinner drags Michael away (toward the Steampit). Skinner is obviously amused.

CHASM

Maybe we'll teach him to fear before he dies. Throw him in the Steampit.

Skinner

Good. Good!

CHASM (2nd)

No delays, Skinner. Make it fast and sure.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Skinner drags Michael toward the Steampit—it's not far, but not in direct sight of Chasm. We should see the Steampit just ahead. Michael's looking back over his shoulder at something we can't see.

SKINNER

No fear, huh? Let's see if you scream while your butt boils off.

MICHAEL

That's pain, not fear.

MICHAEL (2nd)

Looks like your boss is checking up on you. There's a big, ugly thing following us. Can't you see it?

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Skinner doesn't turn his head, but he can't help glancing out of the corner of his eye. Michael takes advantage of the distraction: He's about to bite Skinner's hand!

SKINNER

No. Shut up.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. This is the instant after Michael has bitten Skinner's hand and broken away. Skinner is holding the wounded paw and bellowing. Michael is scrambling away, but there's really nowhere to run—he's more or less trapped between Skinner and the Steampit.

SKINNER

Ahhh!

SKINNER (2nd)

Urg...gd...dmm...cannibal!

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Skinner looms menacingly before Michael, who's right on the edge of the Steampit, trapped. Skinner has shrugged off the pain of his wounded paw, though it's bleeding. Michael is reaching into his inside jacket pocket, just like he did when the kids tried to mug him.

MICHAEL

Go home. It's very dangerous for a young man like you to be out so late.

SKINNER

Nice try. If you had a gun, you wouldn't have picked up a brick before.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael pulls out his flashlight. Close-up, please, so we can see what it is.

MICHAEL

Hmh. It's better than a gun...here in the dark.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael shines his light into Skinner's eyes. Because the Bowels are gloomy and dark, it blinds Skinner. Handle this as realistically as possible, please.

SKINNER

Ahh!

Panel 7

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael kicks Skinner as hard as he can in the groin.

SKINNER

Hwwkk!

PAGE NINETEEN

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Skinner lies on the ground, writhing, holding his groin. Michael has advanced a few feet past him, away from the edge of the Steampit, and is now clawing at the air as if trying to grab an invisible grizzly bear. He's trying to grab the Quantum monster Chasm sent along to monitor Michael's murder, but, of course, since Michael's in physical form here, he can see it but he can't grab it.

MICHAEL

Hold it! Hold still!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael is running after the invisible Quantum thing, still trying frantically to grab it.

MICHAEL

I wish I could get my hands on you!

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Again, Michael is chasing, grabbing at the id monster futilely.

MICHAEL

I've got to find Mercy...

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael starts to become Quantum, and the demon starts to become visible. As with Chasm's fade-ins and outs, Steve, just draw it—we'll do the fade. Michael is starting to get a grip on this huge, wicked, ugly thing in this panel.

MICHAEL (Q-BALLOON)

...and I don't need you warning Chasm...(*)

NOTE! FROM THIS POINT ON WE'RE IN QUANTUM! SIMPLIFIED BACKGROUNDS, Q-STUFF INKED "REAL," HUMANS AND OTHER REAL-WORLD LIFE-FORMS INKED AS SILHOUETTES.

* ALSO NOTE! I THINK FROM THIS POINT ON WE SHOULD GIVE QUANTUM SPEAKERS SPECIAL BALLOONS. JJ SHOULD DESIGN.

PANEL 5

SCENE

1/9 page shot. Michael is Quantum now, and he has a firm grip on the demon, which is now fully visible and starting to fight back. In the background we should now see the huge, thick, thorny tendrils of the Growth.

MICHAEL (Q-BALLOON)

...that I got away!

MONSTER

...kill you. Crush out your light...

Panel 6

Scene

3/9 page shot. With apparent, prodigious strength, Michael has shoved the monster, and it is falling back and being impaled on the spear-like thorns of a tendril of the Growth (which is about as thick as the main suspension cable on a

bridge). This action is the equivalent of a small man shoving a very large grizzly bear fifteen feet.

MICHAEL (Q-BALLOON)

I'm not afraid of you.

MONSTER (Q-BALLOON)

Ylkk!

PAGE TWENTY

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. The monster, foreground, melts into Slymooze. In the background, Michael is heading off to find Mercy.

MICHAEL (Q-BALLOON)

Mercy...!

Panel 2

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael is making a spectacular leap—30 or 40 feet—from one level to another, perhaps across a chasm. He's so intent on racing to Mercy's aid, he's not even thinking about what he's doing. Note: Feel free to put in the occasional background bum (glowing silhouette), rat (ditto), insect (ditto), or whatever. The scenery is the same as before we switched to Quantum, but now we see tendrils of the Growth and Quantum creatures as well.

Panel 3

Scene

3/9 page shot. Michael (Quantum) arrives on the scene. Mercy (glowing silhouette) is huddled in a little hidey-hole—maybe a small crawl space formed by some collapsed walls or somesuch. Skewer (glowing silhouette) stands by watching while Clunk (glowing silhouette) is trying to drag Mercy out. He might be poking her with his bat. Note: Clunk and Skewer might have small Quantum worms or snakes on them.

CLUNK

...buy me some peanuts, and crack her, Jack! Hehh.

MERCY

Lord! Lord! Let not the hand of the wicked remove me!

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael (Quantum—from now on I'll call him Glimmer when he's in this form) is pounding on Clunk's back. Being a Quantum phantom, Glimmer has no effect on Clunk, who is totally unaware of him. Clunk has grabbed Mercy's ankle and is dragging her out. Mercy sees Glimmer!

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

Leave her alone!

MERCY

There you are! I told you stay close to me. Hey, you're all aglow.

CLUNK

Come on out here, Missy. You a Yankee fan?

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer circles around Clunk, trying to maneuver to hit him in the face. Clunk now has Mercy all the way dragged out. He's still holding her by the ankle with one hand and rearing back to hit her with the bat in his other hand. She looks at Glimmer. Glimmer is becoming normal/non-Quantum here. Again, Steve, we'll handle the transformation.

CLUNK

Batter up.

MERCY

Mine enemies are lively, and they are strong! But the Lord has sent a glimmer of hope.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Back to normal backgrounds. Michael, normal now and right in front of Clunk, shoves his hand into Clunk's face in sort of a palm-strike motion. Clunk is surprised more than hurt by this guy Michael appearing out of thin air and poking him. Clunk loses his grip on Mercy here.

MICHAEL

Ah! Now I can hit you!

CLUNK

Muhf! Hey, where'd you come from?

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Back to Quantum phase backgrounds and Michael as Glimmer. The glowing silhouette of Clunk is looking around for Michael, who is invisible. Skewer (glowing silhouette) is looking right at where Michael was (and Glimmer is) but can't see him.

CLUNK

Where'd he go?

SKEWER

He disappeared! I was looking right at him...!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Still Quantum. Clunk and Skewer (glowing silhouettes) are running away. Clunk has dropped his bat! Glimmer, still instinctively in a

ready-to-fight pose, watches. Mercy (glowing silhouette) sits up, calmly watching, speaking to Glimmer.

SKEWER

I...I'm getting out of here!

CLUNK

Ahh...ahh...!

MERCY

They think you're a ghost.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up as Mercy (glowing silhouette) talks to Glimmer.

MERCY

But you are the Glimmer of hope the Lord has sent!

MERCY (2nd)

Thank you, Lord. Upon Earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer reaches down to help Mercy up. Of course, being Quantum, he can't touch her. Mercy's hand goes right through his.

MERCY

You're as hard to get ahold of as a needleskeeter.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

Sorry. I can't touch you when I'm like this, can I?

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up as Glimmer and Mercy (glowing silhouette) sort of look into each other's eyes.

MERCY

Lord knows why you'd want to help an ugly old woman.

GLIMMER

What? Mercy, you're beautiful!

Panel 6

Scene

3/9 page shot. Glimmer is blasted in the back by a burst of Quantum fire. He's hurt.

GLIMMER

Aahhh!

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

Panel 1

Scene

3/9 page shot. Glimmer is lying on the ground, in pain, trying to gather himself. Chasm approaches menacingly. Mercy is terrified. Steve! From this point on, in both Quantum phase and real-world phase, Michael's clothes are scorched/ partly burned.

MERCY

Chasm!

MERCY (2nd)

He speaks fire!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer scrambles away as Chasm causes a burst of Quantum fire to erupt right where Glimmer was. Steve! We may need to discuss how Chasm uses his fire-ability. I picture it sort of as a casual gesture. See sketch.

CHASM (Q-BALLOON)

Welcome to the Substratum.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Chasm "fires" again. Glimmer leaps superhumanly high (15 feet?) to avoid the fire.

CHASM (Q-BALLOON)

I knew the minute I looked into your eyes that you'd be trouble...

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. As Glimmer comes down, Chasm slugs him. No exaggerated comic-book action poses, please. Make it look the way it would look.

CHASM (Q-BALLOON)

...but I never expected that you'd learn to enter this plane so quickly.

GLIMMER

Quickly...?! Uff!

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer lands in a heap. He's struggling to pull himself together. Chasm approaches for the kill, walking right through Mercy (glowing silhouette), who's futilely trying to stop him, though he's a phantom to her.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

All my life...trying to learn. Quickly? Hmh!

MERCY

Leave him alone! Oh, Lord...!

Panel 6

Scene

2/9 page shot. Chasm grabs Glimmer with one hand. Glimmer looks pretty limp and helpless. Chasm is making his characteristic fire-making gesture (like holding a brandy snifter) with his other hand.

CHASM (Q-BALLOON)

Still no fear. Too bad. I make things from fear.

CHASM (Q-BALLOON)

Let's see if I can coax a little out of you as you die.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

Panel 1

Scene

2/9 page shot. Glimmer is turning back into Michael! Again, Steve, we'll handle the transition. Chasm, taken by surprise, looks it. Glimmer/Michael is already getting up and passing through Chasm—that is, Chasm being Quantum can't grip Glimmer/Michael as he becomes solid.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

I'm not afraid of you.

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael quickly picks up Clunk's bat! Real backgrounds now, please, no more Quantum—and Chasm is now invisible!

MICHAEL

If you want me...

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael, with the bat ready, faces off with Chasm (invisible). Mercy looks on, watching Chasm's every move. Steve, try to make it clear from where Michael and Mercy are looking that Chasm's there, though we can't see him.

MICHAEL

...get real.

MERCY

Yeah. Then many sorrows shall be to the wicked!

Panel 4

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael relaxes slightly. So does Mercy. Chasm has left. Michael's looking around, cautiously.

MERCY

Where'd he go?

MICHAEL

I don't know...but he's gone.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy wend their way upward, headed out of the Bowels.

MERCY

That was all much more exciting than I like.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. I'll take you home now.

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy exit Grand Central. It's very early morning, just after dawn.

MICHAEL

I wish I could buy you breakfast this morning, Mercy, but I'm afraid I'm broke.

MERCY

Oh, no problem...

Panel 7

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael and Mercy arrive at her ATM foyer. Michael is surprised by what Mercy says.

MERCY

...I've got four thousand dollars in my sock. I'll buy today.

MICHAEL

What?

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael and Mercy talking.

MICHAEL

If you've got money, why don't you take better care of yourself?

MERCY

I told you, I'm crazy!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael heads home, waving good-bye to Mercy, who's entering the ATM foyer, waving good-bye to Michael.

MICHAEL

I'll meet you around nine at McDonald's, okay?

MERCY

See you, Glimmer.

MICHAEL (2nd)

My name's...

MERCY (2nd)

Glimmer. Glimmer of hope.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Inside Madame Consuelas's storefront fortune-telling parlor. Consuela lives in an apartment behind the storefront. Consuela is wearing a tacky nightgown and a tacky robe and curlers in her hair. She's bleary-eyed, having been rudely awakened by banging on her door—and she's headed for the door.

CONSUELA

Bastante! Bastante! What loco pounds on somebody's door at this hour?

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Consuela has opened the door a crack. Michael is outside. Do this close up, please.

CONSUELA

You. I knew it.

MICHAEL

I doubt it.

Panel 5

Scene

2/9 page shot. Pull back. Michael points east down 42nd. Shoot this so we see buildings in the distance and sky. Michael is pointing at the Growth, but it's invisible here.

MICHAEL

Can you see that?

CONSUELA

What?

Panel 6

Scene

1/9 page shot. Michael walks away, triumphantly. Consuela looks puzzled.

MICHAEL

Then you're a fraud. Just as I thought.

Panel 7

Scene

2/9 page shot. Michael walks down his hallway toward his apartment. Adam Corcoran is leaning out his door to pick up his newspaper. Adam wears a robe and pajama bottoms, same as we saw before.

ADAM

Michael! Good morning. How are you?

MICHAEL

Hmh? Oh, I'm fine Adam. Never better, in fact. Tired, though.

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Adam stares at Michael, who has passed him by now. Adam sees Michael's burned back. Michael is getting out his keys.

ADAM

Michael, what happened to your back?

MICHAEL

Got burnt. Other than that, no problem.

Panel 2

Scene

2/9 page shot. Inside Michael's apartment. He tosses his jacket toward a chair and walks toward the window.

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael, very similar to page 2 panel 1.

Panel 4

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael, very similar to page 2 panel 2. He's noticing something out of the corner of his eye.

Panel 5

Scene

1/9 page shot. Close-up of Michael, very similar to page 2 panel 3 except that Michael is becoming Quantum. We'll do the transition, Steve.

Panel 6

Scene

3/9 page shot. Glimmer whirls around, as he did on page 2, trying to grab the Q-critter he sees out of the corner of his eye. We see Quantum backgrounds here, and we also see the Q-critter, which is a Gnawer. It's trying to skitter away.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

All right, hold it! Hold still!

PAGE TWENTY-SIX

Panel 1

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer grabs the Gnawer!

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

Gotcha!

Panel 2

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer holds up and examines the squirming Gnawer.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

You've been annoying me for a long time!

Panel 3

Scene

1/9 page shot. Glimmer tosses the Gnawer out the window. The window is open already. We'll presume that Michael did this after he came into the apartment and before he became intangible.

GLIMMER (Q-BALLOON)

Out you go.

Panel 4

Scene

6/9 page shot. Similar to page one, but of course we're in Quantum phase now. Glimmer looks out the window. This time he can see the Growth outside, looming over the city!

END CAPTION

The Beginning.