

JERRY STRATTON
www.jerrystratton.com

BYZANTINE DREAMS #1

Copyright © 1998 Jerry Stratton

“Paris By Night”

Pages: 24 comic, 44 script

NOTE TO PENCILLER: Many times in the panel descriptions I'll give you a description with dual references: Byzantine & Medieval. This is a world in which Byzantium reconquered the Roman world. You're free to combine these references into your vision of what this would become. The end result must be decadent and strong.

This is taking place in the year 1652 by our time (Roman Year 2406) and, except for the addition of fantasy and the lack of firearms, is similar, technologically, to the seventeenth century.

Most men bear swords in public (assume 6 out of 10 do) unless I say otherwise. None of the women carry swords unless specified. *Only* guards will wear armor, and this will be leather (unless specified otherwise on both counts).

Roman cities are very clean, compared to the standard image of seventeenth-century cities. Most areas have plumbing, sewers, and public baths. RAJ lives in a bohemian part of town, with no indoor toilets, so you do have people tossing chamber pots out into the sewers.

The dominant religion is worship of the Greek pantheon, but this covers a lot of ground. There is no Christianity, although there is Judaism. Many 'secret societies' exist, including quite a few Bacchanalian sects.

1. Pictures of lots of Byzantine and Greek stuff.
2. Pictures of lots of seventeenth century European and Arabian stuff.

NOTE TO LETTERER: If you're reading this script, you shouldn't be. I'll be adding in more dialogue when I see the pencils.

SYNOPSIS: Raj escorts the young bride-to-be of a Frankish noble to Frankland. Their marriage will cement a relationship between two families in Frankland and Byzantium. The marriage is opposed by a rival family, and by a naive young man who is in love with this young woman. Raj evades them both, and eventually counsels the young man about how to win the princess' love, or at least her lust.

RAJ, our hero, is a young, dashing Persian (Arabian), very much concerned with appearance and social standing. He dresses in the Roman style. He is a charming and witty individual, tall (5'11"), with a runner's build.

There is only one panel on this page.

[PANEL 1](#). This panel is a full-page view of the Comte Plunzio's ballroom from a high angle. The central feature should be RAJ at a harpsichord chatting with a number of young women, including at least 1 JEWESS, 2 ARABS, and 3 GREEKS. Most of the rest of the people in the ballroom are Greek and Roman. A bit over half of the men have thin, short swords. One of the ARABS crowding around RAJ does also. She's the only female in the ballroom carrying a sword. Many of the people in the ballroom carry small candles in candle holders that look like coffee cups. A few candles have been left (in and out of holders) on the harpsichord. (For your own reference: carrying candles to give to someone else is a custom of Saturnalia.)

For examples of the style of the ballroom and its decorations, see the references for the *Uspenski cathedral* of Moscow, the *Galerie des Glaces* at Versailles, Giovanni Gaulli's *the Triumph of the Name of Jesus* (remember: no Christianity), the *San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane* in Rome, the *San Vitale* in Ravenna, various *kouros* from 600-500 B.C., the *Parthenon* frieze, the *Altar of Zeus* at Pergamon, the *Kertch vase*, and the *Gemma Augustea*. Why don't we get the publisher to fund a research trip? Also, note breasts, buttocks, and penises. The Greeks believed in showing off the human body, although by this time, any penises will be in out-of-the-way places, too high to be touched. Especially those that protrude from statues. You would not believe what people do when they get drunk. Also, a teacher-friend of mine informs me that "Hermaphroditus was also a particularly favorite subject of Roman artists." Sounds good, and it's definitely something this culture and time would have picked up on.

For examples of how the people are dressed, see the references for Frans Hals *Laughing Cavalier*, the *Apollo* on the temple of Zeus (note how the cloths drape over the arms), the Emperor Augustus addressing his army (note the way the sheets are used to wrap around the mid-portion, covering the armor), and Raphael's *School of Athens*. A few young men will be wearing their clothing such that one (doesn't matter which, just one) nipple is showing, in a manner similar to the way simple togas were worn. BASIL is one of these (his right nipple shows.) Servants are clothed in plain togas.

NOTE TO LETTERER: CAPs 1-4 should be in a very stylized, perhaps gothic, script. Also, I'll be adding some conversation in once I see the final pencils.

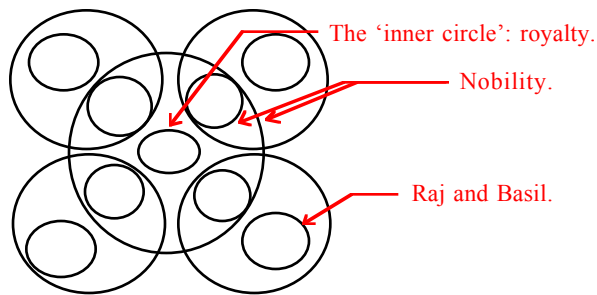
1. CAP: TODAY IS JUSTINIAN 10, 2406.
2. CAP: (IT IS TWO THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED AND SIX YEARS SINCE ROMULUS AND REMUS FOUNDED ROME.)
3. CAP: IN BYZANTIUM, CENTER OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE—

4. CAP: —TRADER’S GATE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.
5. CAP: THE COMTE PLUNZIO HOLDS A SATURN’S EVE BALL, AND ALL THE BEST MUST ATTEND.
6. [VARIOUS BITS OF CONVERSATIONS]

PAGE 2

There are three tiers. Each tier crosses both pages. The dances are in triple-time, and similar to the minuet. If you can show this, you are a genius, and I will be very impressed. Except when dancing with BASIL, RAJ dances very formally, albeit with a twinkle in his eye, a debonair smile on his face, a spring in his step, and the occasional bulge in his pants. Except when spinning someone or stepping back from them, RAJ's right hand will be on his partner's waist, his left hand holding their right: he's leading.

The dance pairs are all dancing in conjunction with each other. That is, if looked at from above, the dancers form intersecting circles. Don't show this clearly until the end of the page, when I call for it.



PAGE 3

TIER 1. A young Greek woman takes RAJ'S hand, and they dance. Use this page to show the opulence of the ballroom, and the great variety of guests. RAJ is a very popular man. Show him dancing with at least two other WOMEN on this tier before he gets to BASIL.

NOTE TO LETTERER: Again, I'll add in most of the conversation once I see the penciling. You shouldn't have gotten this before I do that.

1. VARIOUS BITS OF CONVERSATIONS

LAST PANEL. The last person to take RAJ's hand to dance is BASIL, a dashing young Greek man wearing something suitably frilly, that allows his right nipple to show. A few of the more middle-aged and elderly (including at least one elderly WOMAN and one middle-aged MAN) feign shock at the two men dancing together. RAJ is acting especially suave. BASIL is reluctantly acting serious.

When BASIL and RAJ start dancing, *BASIL* is leading. When holding each other, BASIL's right hand is on RAJ's waist, and BASIL holds RAJ's right hand with his left.

2. RAJ: THE NEW FASHION SUITS YOU WELL, BASIL. DID YOU FINALLY STOP FREQUENTING THAT INTOLERABLE TAILOR FROM THE ENGLISH QUARTER?

3. BASIL: I'M AFRAID I'M HERE ON BUSINESS, RAJ.

TIER 2. Finally you get a panel-by-panel description. Feel free, of course, to vary panel size, spread panels out, or combine panels into a polyptych. Oh, and this tier, like the others, goes across both pages.

PANEL 1. BASIL pulls a small brown envelope out of his clothes and hands it to RAJ. The envelope is rectangular, tied with light brown (hemp) string, and sealed with a round wax impression of the hermetic symbol of two entwined snakes. While that level of detail is not necessary, don't make it look like a modern letter envelope.

4. BASIL: THE DJELA CHOSE YOU PERSONALLY FOR THIS ONE, RAJ. THIS PACKET MUST BE AT THE FRANKLAND OFFICE ON JUSTINIAN 13.

PANEL 2. BASIL spins RAJ. RAJ is frowning. This panel might work well as an intermediarey panel, partially overlapping panels 1 and 3.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 3. RAJ spins back to BASIL'S arms, and speaks from about three inches in front of BASIL's face.

5. RAJ: BYZANTIUM TO PARIS IN THREE DAYS? THIS ISN'T MAGIC, BASIL, NO MATTER WHAT THE GUILDMASTERS THINK.

PANEL 4. BASIL bends RAJ back. With a thin smile, RAJ throws a glance back at the harpsichord (which doesn't need to be visible, just make sure RAJ is glancing back somewhere).

6. BASIL: YOU'RE TO BE PAID THIS TIME: THREE AUREUS.

PANEL 5. RAJ and BASIL step back from each other as part of the dance. Make this panel a full-body close-up of BASIL, who is still being sadly serious: his favorite lover is leaving town for a long time.

7. RAJ: THE YOUNG LADIES AT THE HARPSICHORD WILL MISS ME.

8. BASIL: I'LL MISS YOU, RAJ. I THINK THEY'LL BE KEEPING YOU IN FRANKLAND FOR SOME TIME.

TIER 3.

PANEL 6. RAJ, overacting, looks thoughtful and disappointed. BASIL is worried. They're dancing close (bodies touching).

9. RAJ: THEY'RE FRIGHTFULLY PALE IN FRANKLAND, AREN'T THEY?

10. BASIL: THERE'S SOME POLITICS INVOLVED.

PANEL 7. RAJ pretends to look confused. BASIL *is* confused by RAJ'S remark. They continue to dance close.

11. RAJ: IN THEIR PALENESS?

12. BASIL: EXCUSE ME?

PANEL 8. Close up on RAJ laughing. RAJ and BASIL have moved apart a bit, holding hands but not waists.

13. RAJ: AH, POLITICS. THAT DOES SWEETEN THINGS. THIS HAS BEEN QUITE A NIGHT: A LITTLE DANCING, A LITTLE INTRIGUE...

PANEL 9. Move back from the two, and show that there is a large group within the much larger group in the ballroom who are dancing in the formation.

14. RAJ: ...ALL IT NEEDS, AS YOUR TAILOR WOULD SAY, IS A LITTLE WOMAN.

15. BASIL: YOU'VE BEEN READING MY MIND AGAIN?

PANEL 10. Move back in, to a close-up of RAJ. He is very sensitive about this, and is angry at BASIL for bringing it up.

16. RAJ (coldly): I DON'T READ MINDS, BASIL. YOU KNOW THAT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

PANEL 11. Close-up of BASIL, who finally gets to smile. He's smiling mischievously. It's not often he gets the best of Raj.

17. BASIL: THE LETTER ISN'T THE ONLY THING YOU NEED TO
DELIVER.

PAGE 4

PANEL 1. Show RAJ's home and the immediate area. RAJ's silhouette is visible in one window. BASIL'S silhouette is visible as well. BASIL is standing behind RAJ, helping him put his leather armor on (in silhouette, it'll look the same as if RAJ were putting a heavy jacket on). The moon is full, and shines down onto the street.

RAJ lives atop a grocer's store. The building is a two-story building. The grocer and his wife live in the lower story, and RAJ in the upper story, about 20 by 30 feet. Similar buildings are on either side. The street is cobblestone.

Outside, a suspicious figure (The KID) is watching from the shadows. Two young lovers walk by. The store is closed for the evening. The KID is a young man of medium size. His geekiness should not be apparent at this time.

1. CAP: "A CARRIAGE WILL BE AT YOUR APARTMENT AT THE SECOND VIGILA. THAT ISN'T MUCH TIME."
2. CAP: "COME HELP ME PREPARE, THEN. IT WILL BE SLOWER WITH TWO."

PANEL 2. RAJ steps out of the building, just as a large, black, wooden carriage pulls up. He is immaculate in silver-lined leather armor, his saber and crossbow by his side. The shadow from the carriage is long and dark, reaching the 25 feet to RAJ. The lantern in RAJ'S room has been extinguished, and BASIL is holding the curtains back to look outside. He should be barely recognizable in the moonlight.

For sources for RAJ's armor, see the references of Donatello's *Erasmus di Narni* and the *Herakles* from the temple of Aphaia.

Not everything described in this paragraph will necessarily be visible. Two ARCHERS with small bows flank the DRIVER, sitting on a bench on the outside, in the front of the carriage. The carriage is pulled by four horses. Purple velvet curtains cover the two windows on this side as well as the one in the back. The ARCHERS are somewhat thin, average-sized Greeks, wearing heavy brownish toga-wrappings. The DRIVER is medium build, with a slight beard, is darker (more classically Arabic than the archers) and wears slightly stained brown Arabic-style robes.

The KID gets splashed by someone next door emptying a chamber pot into the street. (A chamber pot is a crock of shit.) He holds his own hand over his mouth to keep quiet.

3. SFX (POT): SPLURK
4. KID: MMMF!

[PANEL 3](#). CARTILUS and JUNO are sitting in the back bench of the carriage. There are two benches inside, facing each other. At the back of the front bench is a panel that can be moved to talk to the DRIVER up front.

CARTILUS is a chain-mailed, muscle-bound (though his muscles won't be obvious under the chain mail) warrior. JUNO is an immaculately dressed African wizard. He is wearing a tie-dyed toga and has phosphorescent gewgaws tied into his thick black hair. He should look vaguely Rasta. There is a large leather pouch and wooden scroll case by his side. Some herbs hang from his pouch.

[PANEL 4](#). RAJ climbs in to the front bench of the carriage. Sitting in front, awaiting RAJ, is a beautiful LADY wearing a long shimmering dress. She looks at him curiously. He bows as well as he can inside a carriage, and in fact is quite graceful at it.

5. RAJ: GOOD EVENING, LADY.

[PANEL 5](#). RAJ sits down and talks to JUNO. The LADY looks out the window (although the curtain is drawn, and she does not open it). The carriage lurches forward. JUNO smiles.

6. RAJ: JULIUS, WHERE'S THE DROP-OFF POINT?

7. JUNO: JUST OUTSIDE OF THE CITY: PURPLE FAERIE POST.

8. JUNO: AND RAJ, IT'S JUNO.

[PANEL 6](#). Close-up of RAJ smiling, his mind on something else.

9. RAJ: SORRY, JUNE. YOU KNOW ME.

PAGE 5

PANEL 1. Shift to six hours later. RAJ and JUNO are sleeping. CARTILUS has just awoken and is looking out the window.

1. **CARTILUS: SOMETHING'S WRONG...**

PANEL 2. JUNO and RAJ awaken immediately to full alertness. The LADY remains asleep.

2. **SFX (Raj and Juno's eyes): POP POP**

3. **CARTILUS: RAJ, TAKE HER TO THE CHECKPOINT.**

PANEL 3. RAJ grabs the LADY by the arm. She awakens with a start.

4. **LADY: HM?**

PANEL 4. Close up of RAJ. He closes his eyes in concentration.

5. **LADY: WHAT'S—**

PANEL 5. RAJ and the LADY disappear. JUNO pushes the door about a foot and a half ajar with his foot, while reaching into his pouch and looking at CARTILUS, next to him.

6. **JUNO: WHAT IS IT, CARTILUS?**

PANEL 6. JUNO tosses some powder to the seat that RAJ and the LADY have just vacated. A cloud of smoke appears where it lands. CARTILUS is peering intently out the side window, holding the curtain open a crack.

When the smoke is done, it'll look vaguely like RAJ and JUNO. While it's still partially formed, it looks sort of like an uninflated balloon picture would, if balloons had the substance of clouds.

7. **CARTILUS: BRIGANDS. DUOS! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ARCHERS?**

PAGE 6

PANEL 1. The carriage is being chased by eight burly, unshaven men in dark leather armor. They ride large, evil-looking, Scythian horses. Each has a curved sword, a bow, and some arrows tied to their horse. The DRIVER of the carriage is ducking down, and lashing the horses so they'll go faster. He has also pulled up a wooden panel shield from his seat. An arrow sticks into it. The ARCHERS both jump off the carriage.

1. DRIVER: C'MON, BABIES, GO!
2. SFX (LASH): CRACK
3. SFX (ARROW): THWOCK
4. DRIVER: HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
5. ARCHER #1: WE'RE JUST CIRCLING AROUND.
6. ARCHER #2: IF WE GO BY WAY OF CAPERNAUM WE CAN TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE.
7. ARCHER #1: DON'T WAIT UP *SNICKER*

PANEL 2. CARTILUS has opened the panel separating the front bench from the DRIVER. He's yelling at the DRIVER. The illusion of RAJ and the LADY is now complete. From this close, the illusion is just slightly transparent.

8. CARTILUS: DETOUR! VEER WEST!

PANEL 3. JUNO is trying to maintain his balance, kneeling in the center of the carriage. CARTILUS is leaning out the panel opening, talking to the DRIVER, so his butt is sticking out next to JUNO'S face. CARTILUS has one eye opened, squinting out the back window. The curtain on the back window has been hastily pulled open. The 'sleeves' on JUNO'S toga are pulled up, showing his skinny arms. His arms and palms are outstretched. He's attempting to cast a spell.

The door is swinging wide open now.

9. JUNO: <ΓΠΕΕΚ ΓΟΒΒΛΕΔΨ-ΓΟΟΚ>
10. JUNO: GET YOUR ASS OUT OF MY FACE AND GET READY TO LEAVE!
11. JUNO: <ΜΟΠΕ ΓΠΕΕΚ ΓΟΒΒΛΕΔΨ-ΓΟΟΚ>

PANEL 4. Shift the view to outside the carriage, and include the pursuers' LEADER. Huge dust clouds are forming in the wake of the carriage.

12. LEADER: DAMN THIS DUST! WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

[PANEL 5](#). A bird's-eye view of the action. The carriage is turning left onto a side road. The dust cloud is behind it. The pursuers are following closely behind, but don't show any indication of turning.

13. LEADER: FASTER, BY DYAUS!

PAGE 7

PANEL 1. The pursuers are coming out of the other side of the dust cloud. The carriage is nowhere to be seen. The LEADER has pulled short in surprise. The rest of the PURSUERS are confused, and muddling about.

1. LEADER: THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE...
2. PURSUER #1: THEY'RE GONE!
3. PURSUER #2: WE PASSED THEM IN THE DUST!
4. PURSUER #3: NO, THEY'VE DISAPPEARED!
5. PURSUER #4: THE DUST CLOUD WAS MAGICAL!
6. PURSUER #5: WE'RE IN THE OTHER WORLD! LISTEN, EVEN THE AIR SMELLS DIFFERENT!

PANEL 2. Everyone except the LEADER is looking at PURSUER #5 in wonder. The LEADER is looking at him in disgust. The dust cloud is settling down, and the side road is visible.

7. PURSUER #4: ARE YOU SURE?
8. PURSUER #1 (whisper): LISTEN TO THE SMELL?
9. LEADER: SMELL MY ASS, YOU BASTARDS! THEY'VE TURNED ONTO ANOTHER PATH.

PANEL 3. A close-up on the LEADER. He's rock-jawed determined.

10. LEADER: THIS WAY!

PANEL 4. The PURSUERS are galloping back the other way. The LEADER is turning onto the side road.

11. PURSUER #4: WHAT ABOUT THE SMELL?
12. PURSUER #5: MAYBE IT'S JUST FEARLESS LEADER.
13. PURSUER #6: WILL YOU TWO SHUT THE FUCK UP?

PAGE 8

This page switches over to RAJ and the LADY.

[PANEL 1](#). RAJ and the LADY are still in the carriage, but back at PANEL 3, PAGE 6. CARTILUS, JUNO and everything are frozen in time.

1. LADY: —HAPPENING?
2. RAJ: THIS WAY, LADY.
3. LADY: MY STARS, WHAT IS HAPPENING?

[PANEL 2](#). RAJ is pulling the LADY by the wrist, practically dragging her along. Everything else is still frozen in time. RAJ is stepping out of the carriage.

4. RAJ: WE HAVE TO MOVE QUICKLY, LADY. SOMEONE IS AFTER YOU.
5. LADY: WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?

[PANEL 3](#). RAJ and the LADY are still moving amongst a frozen scene. They're moving from the road into the forest. The frozen pursuers should be visible, just to make things look cool.

6. LADY: WILL THEY BE ALL RIGHT?
7. RAJ: SURE, THEY'LL BE FINE. I'VE KNOWN JUSTIN AND CARTILUS FOR YEARS.

[PANEL 4](#). A close-up on the LADY. She's whispering under her breath, looking over her shoulder at the carriage.

8. LADY (whispers): JUNO.

[PANEL 5](#). RAJ leads the LADY through the forest. They're *not* moving branches out of their way: they can't, because the branches are frozen in time. No, I don't want to hear anything about 'air molecules.' I can't see air molecules, so as far as I'm concerned they're not a problem.

9. RAJ: CAREFUL OF THE BRANCHES, LADY. THEY AREN'T GOING TO MOVE FOR YOU.

[PANEL 6](#). The LADY'S dress is getting torn by the branches (which, recall, aren't moving). RAJ is looking forward through the trees.

10. LADY: MY DRESS!
11. RAJ: WE CAN WAIT HERE. IT WILL BECOME EASIER TO MOVE IN A MOMENT.

12. RAJ: IT IS A FINE DRESS. WHERE DID YOU HAVE IT MADE?

PAGE 9

Remember that throughout this page, the illusions of RAJ and the LADY are visible in the carriage, and there's a bit of smoke around them as well. Also, it's still night. The full moon is near the horizon.

Panel 3 is inset into panel 2, and panels 5, 6, and 7 overlap, giving an impression of movement that is stronger than the normal side-by-side panel layout.

[PANEL 1](#). Back to the chase. CARTILUS, his body inside the illusion of RAJ, is still yelling at the driver. JUNO is going through his pouch, looking for an appropriate spell. JUNO is also bumping up against CARTILUS because of the rough ride.

1. **CARTILUS: FASTER! WHIP THE HORSES 'TIL THEY FOAM LIKE NEPTUNE HIMSELF!**
2. **JUNO (QUIET): SHIT, WHERE'S THE OTHER PART? EYE OF NEWT, MAGIC CORN, ATHENA'S BONDAGE... HERE IT IS! PIG'S BRAIN!**

[PANEL 2](#). JUNO is holding a vial of really squishy looking stuff (pig's brain), and looking spaced and unfocussed. The vial is glass, bell-shaped like a perfume jar, embossed with the words **acme brains (pig)**. We're looking straight at JUNO, his face half-eclipsed by the vial. Note that [PANEL 3](#) is inset into this panel.

3. **JUNO: EIGHT SCYTHIAN ARCHERS, TWO HUNDRED PACES BEHIND OUR DUST CLOUD. THEY CAN'T SEE US.**

[PANEL 3](#). This panel is inset into [PANEL 2](#). The borders are fuzzy, indicating that this is what JUNO, in [PANEL 2](#), sees through the magic spell. The PURSUERS are in hot pursuit, although they aren't in sight of the carriage yet. A pig's eye, at the center-bottom of the panel, is at the side of the road, in front of the PURSUERS. Dust, thrown up by the horses, obscures the view slightly. Moonbeams are tangible in the dust. We're seeing the whole thing from the pig's-eye's view.

[PANEL 4](#). Outside the carriage, CARTILUS barks out commands to the DRIVER. CARTILUS is taking full command. His face shows a matter-of-fact determination. The DRIVER is scared. Dust flies in the wake of the carriage. They're moving quickly, so there will be motion lines on any scenery around the carriage

4. **CARTILUS: SLOW DOWN JUST AT THAT PASS THERE! WHEN WE JUMP OUT, MOVE AHEAD ANOTHER HALF A MILIA, LEAVE THE CARRIAGE, AND GO HOME ON FOOT!**

[PANEL 5](#). A close-up of CARTILUS, still calm and determined, as he pulls his head back into the carriage and tells JUNO what to do. Panel 5 partially overlaps Panel 6, which partially overlaps Panel 7.

5. **CARTILUS: JUNO, WE'RE LEAVING...**

[PANEL 6](#). CARTILUS jumps out of the slowed carriage, grasping a four foot bow with eight arrows in a quiver attached to it. Panel 6 partially overlaps Panel 7. We're looking up at CARTILUS from about a foot above ground level.

6. **CARTILUS: ...NOW!**

[PANEL 7](#). JUNO jumps out behind CARTILUS, as CARTILUS rolls into prone position behind a medium-sized rock. Dust roils from the wake of the carriage as it leaves. We're still viewing the scene from a foot above ground level, but pull back a bit so we can see more of the scene.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE 10

PANEL 6 is large. Leave room for it.

PANEL 1: The Scythians are fast on the trail of the carriage. The LEADER is standing up in his stirrups, motioning wildly for the rest to follow him.

1. LEADER: MOVE, YOU PINHEADS! I'LL ROAST THEIR HIDES AND STRING THEIR BONES FROM MY HORSE!
2. PURSUER #4 (whisper): EVER SINCE HE DISCOVERED AL-QAHVA, HE'S BEEN SO UPTIGHT.

PANEL 2. Close-up of the two PURSUERS conspiratorially discussing their leader's emotional problems. PURSUER #4 is clearly aghast at the idea that their leader would smoke tobacco. The scenery behind them should have motion lines, and the wind is in their faces.

3. PURSUER #5: I HEARD HE SMOKES THE KILLER WEED—
4. PURSUER #4: TABAC?

PANEL 3. PURSUER #5 is flaring his nostrils, imitating a horse, and laughing.

5. PURSUER #5: —AND SNORTS IT LIKE A HORSE!
6. HORSE (thought): IS HE MAKING FUN OF ME?

PANEL 4. An arrow whistles past PURSUERS #4 and #5, and impales itself in the chest of PURSUER #6, behind them. PURSUER #4 and #5 open their eyes wide in surprise. PURSUER #6 is indignant.

7. PURSUER #6: I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANOTHER WORD—
8. SFX (ARROW): SCHWLOCK

PANEL 5. A big fire explodes in front of them. Note that it doesn't actually burn anything—it's another of JUNO'S illusions. The horses rear back, and everyone except the LEADER panics. The LEADER is merely surprised. This panel should be large and dramatic, showing all the PURSUERS in chaos. PURSUER #6 has fallen face forward on his horse, which is turning around.

9. SFX (EXPLOSION): WHOOSH!
10. HORSES: NEIGH!
11. LEADER: DY AUS!
12. PURSUER #1: AH!
13. PURSUER #2: SHIT!

14. PURSUER #3: HELP!
15. PURSUER #4: IT'S THE END!
16. PURSUER #5: I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU, ELROY.
17. PURSUER #7 (small): WE'RE ONLY HALFWAY THROUGH THE
BOOK. IS MY SHIRT RED?

PAGE 11

PANEL 1. The fire dies down to an ember on the road. PURSUER #4 is aghast at what PURSUER #5 has just said. JUNO is on the left side of the road (PURSUER'S perspective), but not easily seen in the crook of a tree. He's reaching into his pouch. CARTILUS is readying another arrow, but is remaining hidden behind the rock. The LEADER has regained control of his horse, and has his bow pulled out. He's holding onto the horse via the stirrups with his feet. The horse with PURSUER #6 is galloping back the way they came. PURSUER #7 is looking back at it, and trying to duck, while calming his horse.

1. LEADER: I DON'T SEE THE CARRIAGE...
2. PURSUER #4: YOU WHAT?
3. PURSUER #7: WHAT ABOUT THE ARROW?
4. JUNO (THOUGHT): PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME USE THIS...

PANEL 2. Close-up on JUNO hiding in the tree. He's scared, and holding a half inch crystal in his hand.

5. JUNO (THOUGHT): ...IT WOULDN'T BE COST EFFECTIVE TO KILL YOU ON THIS JOB.

PANEL 3. The LEADER is looking at the ground. CARTILUS, behind his rock, has his bow ready in case someone comes around and sees him. He's relaxed and ready to fight. PURSUER #7 is looking around, expecting a volley of arrows at any moment. PURSUER #5 is nudging PURSUER #4 and laughing. PURSUER #4 is shuddering.

6. LEADER: THE CARRIAGE KEPT GOING! MOVE, YOU SLACKARDS!
7. PURSUER #5: ME? I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
8. PURSUER #4: DON'T DO THAT TO ME!
9. PURSUER #7: BUT—!
10. LEADER: NOW!

PANEL 4. The PURSUERS gallop away. Both CARTILUS and JUNO are visible in this scene, as in PANEL 3. This panel is a 'bridge' between panel's 3 and 5, overlapping each.

PANEL 5. Close-up on JUNO as he relaxes. CARTILUS' leather-gloved hand is about to tap him on the right shoulder.

11. JUNO (thought): DONE. NOW TO—

[PANEL 6](#). Head and shoulders of JUNO as CARTILUS taps JUNO'S shoulder. JUNO'S hair stands straight out, and his eyes open wide.

NOTE TO LETTERER: There's a cartoony 'tap' where CARTILUS is tapping JUNO. It should convey how surprising this is to JUNO.

12. SFX: TAP

[PANEL 7](#). Full body of JUNO and CARTILUS. CARTILUS is smiling beatifically. JUNO is hyperventilating.

13. JUNO: FUH-FUCK!

14. CARTILUS: COME ON, JUNO. LET'S GO MEET RAJ.

PAGE 12

This page goes back to the pursuers, who have now found the abandoned carriage.

PANEL 1. The carriage has stopped. The illusions of RAJ and the LADY are visible inside, talking nonchalantly. The horses, archers, and driver are gone. The PURSUERS, led by the LEADER have formed a semi-circle around the carriage. They are no longer on their horses. All but the LEADER have bows trained on it, ready to fire.

1. LEADER: THROW OUT THE WOMAN!

PANEL 2. Silent scene of the carriage and the PURSUERS. The PURSUERS are all holding their breath, except for the leader, who is fuming. There should be smoke coming out of his nose in billows. No reason, just for effect.

PANEL 3. Close-up of the LEADER, angry, tired, and determined.

2. LEADER: RIGHT, THEN. ARROWS!

PANEL 4. The PURSUERS all loose their arrows at the carriage, specifically at the window.

3. SFX (arrows): WHOOSH

4. SFX (arrows): WHOOSH WHOOSH

5. PURSUER #4: SHOULDN'T WE KNOCK FIRST?

PANEL 5. Close-up of the carriage. The arrows mostly embed themselves in the carriage. A few go through the window. RAJ and the LADY are unaffected.

6. SFX (arrows): THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK

7. LEADER (OP): ARROWS!

PANEL 6. A smaller close-up of the carriage, filling up with arrows.

8. SFX (arrows): THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK

PAGE 13

PANEL 1. The carriage is a broken mess, arrows sticking everywhere. The PURSUERS approach it cautiously. RAJ and the LADY are nonchalant, inside the shattered carriage. The LEADER is sniffing the air.

1. LEADER: WHAT IS THAT SMELL?
2. PURSUER #5: I TOLD YOU THE AIR SMELLED DIFFERENT! I'M TELLING YOU—

PANEL 2. The LEADER, kicks at the carriage. It falls apart further. The illusion of RAJ and the LADY disappears into mist.

3. LEADER (pissed at himself): INCENSE...

PANEL 3. The faces of the PURSUERS. PURSUER #1 is worried, looking at the LEADER (who is off-panel). PURSUER #4 is scared, looking at the ground dejectedly. Only PURSUER #5 listens to him.

4. PURSUER #1 (worried): INCENSE? WERE THEY PRIESTS? IS THIS THE WRONG CARRIAGE?
5. PURSUER #4 (dejected): I KNEW WE SHOULDA KNOCKED FIRST.
6. PURSUER #5: CHEER UP, ELROY. WE ALL EXPECTED YOU TO DIE ON PAGE 10.

PANEL 4. The LEADER is furious. PURSUER #7 is spinning around, trying to see the wizards. PURSUER #4 is talking to PURSUER #5. PURSUER #1 is scared, and backs away.

7. LEADER: NOT PRIESTS, YOU IDIOTS! WIZARD SMOKE!
8. PURSUER #1: DY AUS!
9. PURSUER #2: WIZARDS?
10. PURSUER #7: WHERE?
11. PURSUER #4: MY NAME'S NOT ELROY.

PANEL 5. Close-up on the LEADER, still furious.

12. LEADER: YOU'RE ALL OFF YOUR KAFFÉ. IT'S JUST A DAMN ILLUSION.

PANEL 6. A close-up on JUNO, listening to a pig's EAR. The EAR is not attached to a pig.

13. EAR: IT'S NOT GOING TO BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE.

14. JUNO (thought): I MIGHT HAVE A SAY IN THAT...

PAGE 14

The main part of this page is panel 4, the explosion.

PANEL 1. The LEADER, standing next to the demolished carriage, is ordering the pursuers back to their horses. There's a tiny column of SMOKE rising from the carriage.

1. LEADER: BACK ON YOUR HORSES. WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO CATCH UP WITH...
2. SFX (smoke): SSSSSSSSSSS
3. LEADER: EH?

PANEL 2. A close-up of JUNO'S sweating face. He's holding tightly onto the pig's ear, and concentrating very hard.

4. JUNO: NGGH!

PANEL 3. Another close-up. JUNO relaxes completely, collapsing. The pig's EAR vanishes in a puff of flame.

5. SFX (EAR): POOF

PANEL 4. An impressive explosion erupts from the carriage, but it doesn't do much damage to anyone or anything. The only debris is a bit of dust and parts of the pig's brain that used to be in the carriage. Illusionary parts of Raj and the Lady are cast aside in the magical explosion. The LEADER and the PURSUERS are all very surprised. Their eyes are wide open.

6. LEADER: UH-OH.
7. SFX: BOOM

PANEL 5. There is part of a pig's brain hanging from the dejected LEADER. The rest of the PURSUERS are whistling and smiling, wandering about nonchalantly, pretending not to notice.

8. LEADER (thought): "MONEY!" DAD SAID. "GLORY! BYZANTIUM!" HA!
9. LEADER (thought): I WONDER IF THERE'S ANY GOLD LEFT IN THE NEW INDIES...

PAGE 15

[PANEL 1](#). Inside a small but reasonably spacious room, the LADY is sleeping on an ornate wooden bed that even has a mattress. Her dress is torn from branches, and it looks as though she just lay down and fell asleep immediately. RAJ is sprawled, sitting up against the bed, on the floor. Both are sleeping, and look exhausted. There is a window, allowing the light of the full moon to shine in on them. The bed is relatively modern looking, but the backboard will show clear Roman influence. Something like the ivy and plant reliefs, especially the Roman Forum carvings (see references). The top sheet (which she's sleeping *on*, not *under*) is a rich purple, with golden trim.

[PANEL 2](#). Artax diPlixtus, a young, cute but nerdy, Slavic KID, is climbing into the window. He holds a rose in his mouth. He's sixteen. He has no beard, and only the faintest mustache.

1. KID (thought): OH HOW MY LOVE DOTH LIKE THE MOONSHINE
POUR THE NECTAR OF LOVE.

[PANEL 3](#). The KID is stepping gingerly towards the LADY. His face is alight with love. He has a sword by his side and is wearing reasonably fashionable clothing. His shirt is laced up the center front. The rose is still in his mouth.

2. KID (thought): OOH, GOOD LINE. BETTER WRITE THAT ONE
DOWN.

[PANEL 4](#). The KID steps on a cockroach. RAJ opens one eye.

3. KID (thought): MY LOVE IS LIKE THE RED, RED—

4. SFX (cockroach): CRUNCH

5. RAJ (thought): EH?

[PANEL 5](#). RAJ does a handspring over the bed. His other hand is pulling his saber in front of him, so that he can put it at the kid's throat. The COCKROACH skittles under the bed. The KID's mouth hangs open. The rose does not fall out. The LADY just wakes up. The LADY is talking in her sleep.

6. KID: UH-OH...

7. COCKROACH (thought): FAMOUS LAST WORDS. TIME TO BEAT
FEET.

8. LADY (small): DARLING. IT'S SO—

[PANEL 6](#). Close up of RAJ and the KID. RAJ has his saber at the KID'S throat. The KID *has* impressed RAJ with his romantic stupidity. RAJ smiles wryly. The KID is scared witless, and is absolutely sure he's going to die. He has his eyes squeezed tightly shut.

9. RAJ: KID, I'VE IMAGINED MANY A GLORIOUS DEATH. BUT I DON'T RECALL MURDEROUS FLORISTS IN ANY OF THEM.

PAGE 16

[PANEL 1](#). Back away from RAJ and the KID. The LADY is looking appropriately beautiful, even though she hasn't gotten any sleep and in fact looks like she's been living on the streets for a few days. She's sitting up against the wall, pushing herself away from the fight, pulling the bedsheets over her torn dress. The KID has opened one eye. He's beginning to feel hopeful about living. Don't forget the rose is still in his mouth.

1. KID (quiet): YOU'RE NOT KILLING ME...
2. RAJ: IT'S AGAINST MY PHILOSOPHY TO KILL CUTE ASSASSINS BEFORE TORTURING THEM EXTENSIVELY. NOW TELL ME: HOW DID YOU FOLLOW US HERE?

[PANEL 2](#). A close-up of the KID, who has just decided that maybe he'll die after all. RAJ's swordpoint is pressing against the KID's neck.

3. KID (squeak): I'M NOT AN ASSASSIN!

[PANEL 3](#). RAJ uses his saber to snap one of the laces holding the KID'S shirt on. The KID looks down at it fearfully. RAJ is still smiling, but there's a fierceness in his look. The swordpoint or RAJ may work best as an extra inset panel. Your call.

4. RAJ: HOW...
5. SFX (lace): SNAP
6. RAJ: ...DID YOU FOLLOW US HERE?

[PANEL 4](#). A close-up of the KID. The panel extends down enough to show the swordpoint on the *next* lace crossing. Oh, and the KID's chest is smooth.

7. KID (quickly): I DIDN'T FOLLOW YOU, I OVERHEARD YOU AT THE BALL.

[PANEL 5](#). RAJ is a bit surprised, and his sword has drifted upwards, towards the KID's neck. The KID is stretching his neck to bring his head up as high as possible.

8. RAJ (thought): THE BALL? HOW DID THIS DUST STORM GET INVITED TO PLUNZIO'S?
9. RAJ: HOW DID YOU FIGURE OUT WHERE PURPLE FAERIE POST WAS? THE WHOLE POINT OF OUR HAVING THESE STUPID CODE WORDS IS THAT THEY'RE SECRET.
10. KID: MY, UH, UH, I CAN'T...

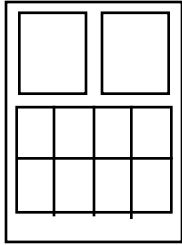
[PANEL 6](#). Move in closer to the KID again. RAJ'S sword drops down and comes back up, snapping the lace's topmost crossing. The KID has his eyes tightly closed in fear.

11. SFX (lace): SNAP

12. KID: YIPE! MY UNCLE TOLD ME. HE DOES STUFF FOR THE COURIERS.
OH HÉRM, HE'S GONNA KILL ME.

PAGE 17

PANEL 1 and PANEL 2 are normal-sized panels, on the top row, meant to establish the scene for the page. The rest of the panels are close-ups of various sorts: two rows, four panels per row. There will be a gutter on all sides of the first two panels, but none between the other eight. Oh hell, here's a picture:



PANEL 1. RAJ moves his sword away from the KID, but keeps it ready. The KID darts a glance towards the LADY, who is looking at him like he's yesterday's stew. Of course, she doesn't look so great either. Imagine Bill the Cat being disgusted. A very *pretty* Bill the Cat.

1. RAJ (thought): **SOME HORSE-MAD IDIOT IS COMPROMISING THE ENTIRE GUILD BECAUSE HIS NEPHEW WANTS A PIECE OF ASS?**
2. RAJ: **WHO IS YOUR UNCLE?**

PANEL 2. The KID puts his hands on his own sword, and twists towards the bed and the LADY, who has pulled the bedsheets completely over her head. RAJ uses his sword to bar the way.

3. RAJ: **STAY AWAY FROM HER! SHE'S NOT YOURS!**
4. LADY (thought): **HERA, THIS PRINCE HAD BETTER BE WORTH IT. HE'D BETTER HAVE A BODY LIKE A KOUROS.**

PANEL 3. Close-up of the KID. He's finally getting a little backbone.

5. KID: **WHERE'S SHE GOING?**

PANEL 4. Close-up of RAJ, smiling like a good father, about to congratulate his son on making the right decision. (Well, maybe if your father is George Hamilton.)

6. RAJ: **SURE, KID. YOU TELL ME WHO YOUR UNCLE IS, I'LL TELL YOU WHERE THE LADY'S GOING.**

PANEL 5. The KID goes wide-eyed. Yes, he'll believe anything.

7. KID: **HONEST?**

PANEL 6. RAJ rolls his eyes up, but good-naturedly. He holds his right hand up in a ‘V’ (with his index and middle finger forming the ‘V’).

8. RAJ (thought): BLOOD MAY BE THICKER THAN WATER, BUT IT’S NOTHING TO SEMEN.

9. RAJ: HONEST INJUN.

PANEL 7. The KID looks down, ashamed.

10. KID (small): CLETUS DISIMEON OF BULGAR...

PANEL 8. The KID looks back up at RAJ.

11. KID: WILL HE LOSE GUILD SUPPORT?

PANEL 9. RAJ crosses his arms in front of him, jauntily. Since he’s holding the sword in his right hand, it will be folded under his left side. His smile is mocking (but good-natured).

12. RAJ: OH, HE’LL LOSE MORE THAN THAT. HE’LL BE LUCKY TO KEEP HIS LIFE.

PANEL 10. The KID freaks. Move the ‘camera’ back just enough so we can see him reaching for his sword.

13. KID: WHAT?! I’LL KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN TELL ANYONE!

PAGE 18

The first three panels are a sword fight. The dialogue is secondary to that.

PANEL 1. RAJ steps back to avoid the KID's clumsy thrust, and is pulling his own sword back into play. Remember that he had his arms crossed a few seconds ago. RAJ is talking to the KID, but paying attention to the KID's sword.

1. RAJ: TOO LATE, KID. I ALREADY TOLD MY SUPERIORS.

PANEL 2. Their swords cross. RAJ is much more professional than the KID. The KID is exerting himself. RAJ is very easy-going.

2. KID: HOW?

3. SFX (SWORDS): CLANG

4. RAJ: WE IN THE GUILD HAVE SPECIAL POWERS. DIDN'T YOUR UNCLE TELL YOU THAT, TOO?

PANEL 3. RAJ parries the KID's thrust and twists the KID's sword right out of his hand, flinging it towards the wall. The wall that the LADY is *not* at. The KID is wide-eyed at the idea of couriers having "special powers."

5. KID: REALLY?

PANEL 4. The KID's sword sticks into the wall, vibrating up and down. The KID has become suspicious. Perhaps what RAJ has just said isn't *really* true.

6. SFX (sword getting stuck in wall): THUNK

7. KID: SO WHAT AM I THINKING?

8. RAJ: YOU'RE HOPING I DON'T NOTICE THE ERECTION YOU GOT DURING OUR FIGHT.

9. SFX (sword bouncing up and down): TWANGGGGG

PANEL 5. The LADY is coming out from under the bedsheets now that the swordfight seems to be completed. She looks so sexy in her current disheveled state. The KID is *trés* embarrassed, adjusting his clothes to hide the, er, bulge.

10. KID: YOU STILL OWE ME. WHERE ARE YOU TAKING HER?

11. RAJ: PARIS. IT'S A BACKWATER TOWN IN THE BACKWATER COUNTRY FRANKLAND, NORTH OF THE PROVINCE OF LOMBARDY.

12. KID: BUT THAT'S...

PANEL 6. Close up of RAJ. He's using his sword's point to indicate the distance of Paris and the height of the mountains. He's moving it in the direction of the window.

13. RAJ: OVER THE MOUNTAINS AND FAR AWAY.

PANEL 7. RAJ is pointing out the window. We can see JUNO and CARTILUS walking towards the inn.

14. RAJ: NOW, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT BY MY FRIEND
DOWN THERE WITH THE FUNNY CLOTHES, I SUGGEST YOU
MAKE YOUR ABSENCE CONSPICUOUS.

PANEL 8. Close-up of RAJ whispering conspiratorially in the KID's ear.

15. RAJ (whisper): HE'S A BACCHANALIAN WIZARD.

PAGE 19

Note that the page shifts from the real world to RAJ'S dream world on PANEL 6.

PANEL 1. The KID is trying to grab his sword out of the wall. He's pulling *real* hard.

1. KID: I'LL STOP YOU SOMEHOW! YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF ARTAX DIPLIXTUS!

PANEL 2. The KID yanks the sword free and falls backwards out of the window.

2. RAJ (quietly): GOOD LUCK, KID.

PANEL 3. RAJ is looking out the window. The KID has fallen onto a load of hay, and is being carted off to Zeus knows where.

3. RAJ: LADY, DO YOU KNOW THAT JESTER?

PANEL 4. RAJ, tired, is getting onto the bed in order to sit down with his back against the wall. The LADY, confused, is moving away from him.

4. LADY: HE SEEMS FAMILIAR. HE'S KIND OF CUTE IN AN INEPT WAY.

5. RAJ: I NOTICED. LISTEN, I NEED TO RELAX. THEN WE CAN GET BACK TO SLEEP.

6. LADY: I'M NOT—

PANEL 5. RAJ looks almost, but not quite, like he's sleeping. His eyes are closed and his arms are folded in front of him.

7. LADY: —THAT KIND OF WOMAN.

8. LADY: BUT PERHAPS YOU'RE NOT THAT KIND OF GENTLEMAN.

PANEL 6. RAJ is sitting in an ornate bathtub filled with soapy foam. He is holding a tall, conical, carved glass of wine in his hand. EVAN Markus is sitting on a marble bench next to the bathtub, holding a long, curly-cued glass of wine. EVAN is dressed in a stark white toga. If you have any more space, the area is filled with Greek statuary and flowing plants. Lots of gaudily painted *kouros* and *kore*.

9. EVAN: COURIER AB'D'ALLAH, I AM UNIMPRESSED WITH YOUR CHOICE OF MEETING PLACE.

10. RAJ: YOU WON'T HAVE TO STAY LONG, EVAN. THE PACKAGE IS AT THE FIRST POST, AND MY COMPANIONS HAVE JUST REJOINED US.

[PANEL 7](#). EVAN looks quizzically at the glass he's holding. RAJ waves aside Evan's question.

11. EVAN: THERE WAS A PROBLEM?
12. RAJ: A MINOR SCUFFLE. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THE LADY HAS AN... ADMIRER... WHO ACQUIRED OUR CODE WORD FOR THIS POST FROM A RELATIVE, ONE CLETUS DISIMEON.

[PANEL 8](#). A close-up of EVAN. He has a serious, almost sinister look.

13. EVAN: I'LL HANDLE THE LEAK. IF THERE'S NOTHING ELSE?

[PANEL 9](#). A close-up of RAJ. There are soap bubbles rising above his face, and he's also raising his glass in salute.

14. RAJ: NO. HERMES SMILES ON US.

[PANEL 10](#). Backup to a full view of the scene again. It's starting to fade out, breaking apart in a bubbly sort of way. EVAN has to get in one last point, and RAJ mischievously shakes his head and laughs Evan's concerns away.

15. EVAN: BE CAREFUL, THEN. HERMES HAS AN ODD HUMOR. OH, AND RAJ? MAKE SURE SHE ARRIVES INTACT.
16. RAJ: YOU WOUND ME! BESIDES, MY DISCRETION IS LEGENDARY.

PAGE 20

The lady's head has fallen onto RAJ's lap. JUNO arrives. RAJ and the LADY go to sleep. RAJ invites her into a balloon.

PANEL 1. The LADY has fallen asleep, and her head has fallen into RAJ's lap. There's a knock at the door.

1. CAP: I'M SURE IT IS. HOWEVER, THOSE PAPERS YOU CARRY DESCRIBE HER CURRENT CONDITION... PRECISELY.
2. SFX: KNOCK KNOCK
3. RAJ: COME IN, JUNO.
4. LADY: MMMPH.

PANEL 2. JUNO has stepped into the room. He's laughing good-naturedly. *It's just like our Raj to be in bed with someone already.* The door is closed. RAJ is rolling his eyes at JUNO.

5. JUNO: RAJ, YOU'RE A WONDER. APHRODITE MUST HAVE SPECIAL SERVANTS JUST TO KEEP TRACK OF YOU.
6. RAJ: THE LADY'S SIMPLY TIRED, JUNO.
7. JUNO: HEH. I'M SURE SHE IS. CARTILUS AND I WILL BE IN THE NEXT ROOM.

PANEL 3. RAJ's eyes are closed. He's *very* tired.

8. RAJ (thought): HERMES. I AM SO TIRED. HOW LONG CAN THIS GO ON?
9. RAJ (thought): NOW, TO BRING THE LADY TO THE MOUNTAINS.

PANEL 4. This is a transition to RAJ's dream. Superimpose the dream world onto the real world. RAJ is standing next to a riding balloon. His armor and sword are brighter and cleaner than in the real world. The LADY is sleeping on the grass, covered in a blanket of posies. It is daylight, although the sun is not visible. The balloon part of the balloon is covered in stars, moons, planets with rings, and clouds. The wicker carriage under the balloon is covered in flowers and vines. Vines tie the balloon and carriage to the ground.

PANEL 5. RAJ silently stretches out his hand, inviting the LADY to step into the carriage. Show the LADY's motion from her sleeping position to holding RAJ's outstretched hand prior to stepping into the carriage. This is all very elegant. This scene is also superimposed on the inn room, giving the impression that the LADY steps out of her body. Her dress in the dream is very bright and clean, and posies fall from her as she stands.

PANEL 6. The balloon rises, leaving the superimposed inn room. A pink gas is introduced into the room via a tube peeping inauspiciously through the window.

10. SFX (TUBE): SSSSSSSSSS

PAGE 21

The balloon carries RAJ and the LADY up into small, bright, silvery clouds. A beautiful fey mountain rises before them, covered in crystals and beautifully colored forests. Tropical-style birds abound in the skies—there are always two or three birds in the sky along with the balloon. It is daylight here, and the sun has a short curly hair with jauntily-placed ferns in a headband (like a happy Julius Caesar).

PANEL 1. RAJ and the LADY stare into space.

1. LADY: WHAT A BEAUTIFUL WAY TO TRAVEL...

PANEL 2. A brightly colored, vaguely South American BIRD flies towards the balloon. RAJ is looking at the LADY. The LADY is leaning over the edge of the balloon, looking at the bird. The bird talks to her with musical symbols.

2. RAJ: IT IS... ONE OF DAVINCI'S LATER DESIGNS.

3. BIRD: [MUSICAL SYMBOLS]

PANEL 3. The LADY tries to speak to the bird, but musical symbols come out of her mouth. The bird is surprised and jumps away.

4. LADY: [MUSICAL SYMBOLS]

PANEL 4. A close-up of the LADY, inset into Panel 3. She is holding her hand to her mouth as if stifling a burp. She is happy and surprised. Some musical symbols try to escape from behind her hand.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 5. Some DUDE outside the window of the hotel, standing next to the hose that's going into the window. There is a small bellows attached to the hose, and the DUDE is working it.

5. DUDE: THE SENSUAL GAS WILL ENSURE THAT THE BRIDE IS USELESS TO THE PRINCE.

6. DUDE: TOO BAD I CAN'T STAY AND WATCH...

PANEL 6. Inset into PANEL 5 is a small panel with RAJ and the LADY standing side-by-side with their arms around each other, laughing. The bird is gone. They don't see the edges of the thick, dark cloud that has just built up in their path.

PANEL 7. The balloon passes into a dark cloud. RAJ and the LADY hold each other close. They're visible only in that white-on-black used to show people in the dark.

7. LADY: WHAT'S... WHAT'S HAPPENING?

[PANEL 8](#). JUNO and CARTILUS are in their own room in the inn. CARTILUS is still armored, although he has his footwear and gloves off, and is wiggling his toes. He is sitting in a chair and has his ear to the wall. He is holding a handful of sugar-coated coffee beans, and munching on a few. JUNO is taking his own boots off, sitting on the cot.

The room is sparsely furnished. There are two cots and two chairs. There is a bag of sugar-coated coffee beans on a table. An open window shows the night sky.

8. **CARTILUS:** **GEE, I DON'T HEAR ANYTHING. DO YOU THINK HE'S LOSING HIS TOUCH?**
9. **JUNO:** **HE HAD BETTER BE ASLEEP BY NOW.**
10. **JUNO:** **HAND ME A FEW OF THOSE KAHVEH BEANS, OR I'LL FALL ASLEEP.**

PAGE 22

These two pages are a two-page polyptych of the Faerie lands of RAJ's dream, and RAJ and the LADY's *rencontré d'amour*. The mountain in the background grows larger as their encounter reaches its climax, after which it drops off, leading to the final panel, which is not part of the polyptych.

The sky is dotted with black, rolling clouds, which cut off some of the light of the moon and stars. Lightning flashes occasionally, and the balloon rocks about in the wind. The few birds in the sky have to fight this wind as well.

PAGE 23

PANEL 1. RAJ and the LADY pause and look at each other with lust in their eyes. Now would be a good time for a lightning flash. Their hair is whipped about by the high winds. RAJ puts his right hand lightly on the LADY'S waist.

1. LADY: I FEEL...

PANEL 2. They are kissing passionately, their bodies touching. RAJ is holding onto one of the ropes with his left hand, to steady himself, and holding the LADY with his right. His hand is on the small of her back. She caressing the backs of his legs with both hands. The storm continues wildly.

PANEL 3. RAJ and the LADY sink down into the basket, RAJ'S hand still grasping the rope.

An embarrassed, toucan-like bird flies by with an attaché case in one wing-hand. It is looking away, embarrassed, using the other wing-hand to stifle a cough. It wears a bowler hat. There is a tiny "San Diego" sticker on the attaché case. The BIRD is straining to move through the wind and rain.

2. SFX (BIRD): COUGH

PANEL 4. This panel is a collection of thin panels, as RAJ's hand moves slightly up and down the rope, and is occasionally joined by the LADY's hand. At least once, the LADY's head (just her hair, and RAJ's other hand) is visible from over the lip of the balloon's basket.

I suggest these subdivisions:

1. RAJ's hand moves up
2. it moves down
3. it is joined by the LADY's hand
4. the reader's view to it is blocked by the LADY's head (and RAJ's other hand)
5. and finally, his hand tightens on the rope.

Remember that there's a huge storm in the area. I want wind, rain, and lightning.

[PANEL 5](#). RAJ's hand gone from the rope. The kids are still laying in the basket, so all we see is the balloon blowing about in the wind.

[PANEL 6](#). This panel is not part of the polyptych, and is located in the lower right hand part of the page. The balloon starts dropping over the other side of the mountains. The sun just barely shines over the mountain peaks. RAJ and the LADY are kissing, sitting in the basket. Oh, they are *so* cute.

As small as you can make it, some birds are discussing the matter.

3. BIRD 1: ARE THEY DONE YET?
4. BIRD 2: NO MORALS. I'M TELLING YOU, THESE HUMANS—
5. BIRD 3: I THOUGHT IT WAS QUITE AN ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE.
6. BIRDS 1 & 2: !?

PAGE 24 IT WAS ALL A DREAM.

Each tier is a separate group of people. Make that obvious, using heavier horizontal borders, or some kind of design in the gutter between the tiers.

PANEL 1. RAJ and the LADY fade out and disappear from their bed in the inn.

PANEL 2. RAJ and the LADY reappear in a rocky cleft of the mountains. It is morning. The LADY tries to hurriedly lace her dress, only to discover that it is still completely on.

1. SFX (LADY): ?

PANEL 3. A WIZARD, looking at the still steaming entrails of a baby pig, shakes his head in confusion. The DUDE is looking at the mess curiously.

2. WIZARD: ZEUS' PISS! HOW CAN SHE STILL BE INTACT IF THEY DID COPULATE?

3. DUDE: PERHAPS THE PIG IS WRONG?

PANEL 4. A close-up of the WIZARD. He is stroking his pointed beard, thinking. One eye is brown, the other green.

4. WIZARD: PIG ENTRAILS NEVER LIE. HE MUST HAVE SOME MAGIC THAT I COULD NOT DETECT.

5. DUDE (quiet): PERHAPS HE HAS SPARTAN BLOOD...

6. WIZARD: COME, IGNATZ. WE HAVE WORK TO DO.

PANEL 5. The KID is at the wharf, talking to a grizzled old English sea CAPTAIN. They are standing next to a large sailing ship (carrack, see references). Sailors are raising the mainsail up the halyard. The ship's name is "Crom's Wind".

7. CAPTAIN: NO, PARIS ISN'T ON THE COAST. IT'S UP RIVER. I CAN DROP YOU OFF AT THE BAY.

8. KID: SURE, THAT'S FINE.

9. CAPTAIN: NOW, ABOUT THE FEE...

PANEL 6. The KID whips out a small coin bag. The CAPTAIN is taken aback, and looks around as he chastises the KID. One of the sailors happens to look down at then, and his eyes open wide.

10. KID: HOW MUCH?

11. CAPTAIN: ADONIS' BLOOD, KID, DO YOU HAVE A DEATH WISH? YOU JUST DON'T CARRY THAT KIND OF MONEY DOWN HERE.

12. CAPTAIN: WHY DON'T YOU LET ME STORE IT FOR YOU...