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NOH #1

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"The Sentence for Freedom is Death"

Pages: 9 comic, 16 script

NOTE TO ARTIST: There are three main characters in this story: Noh, Jennifer Wyles (JENN), and Yoshimasa Hosokawa (YOSHI). Yoshimasa is about 5' 10", Asian (Japanese), and handsome. He'll usually be wearing jeans and long-sleeved button-down shirts.

Jennifer is 5' 9", Caucasian, and pretty but not beautiful. She's not model-thin; she's almost plump. She's well-endowed for the real world, but pretty small for a comic-book female. She usually wears a fairly conservative sweater or blouse, and slacks.

NOH (Yoshi becomes Noh) is the same size and build as Yoshi. Noh has four faces—picture a person wearing a white full face mask both front and back, and then picture a person with four faces like this. Noh's skin is almost smooth as porcelain. His foremost face, and his hands, are white. His rear face is black, and his side faces are gray. He has no hair. The front face shows the dominant emotion, and is the only face that Noh consciously talks through. The side faces show subordinate emotions. Noh wears a white robe, no cowl. Centered on the front is a Yin-Yang symbol, and on the back is a simple pine tree symbol. See the pictures.

Occasionally, I'll ask for a Noh's-eye view. Noh sees through each face at the same time, for 360 degrees of vision. Use either a continuous strip, faded at each of the four corners where his peripheral vision is, or use four panels, one for each face. When showing a Noh's-Eye view, use an oriental tapestry style (see the pictures I sent you).

You should receive these additional items with this script:

- 1) Drawing of a Yin-Yan symbol.
- 2) Drawing of a Pine Tree symbol.
- 3) Examples of Japanese tapestries.
- 4) Art Rock catalog, for examples of old rock posters.
- 5) Drawing of a Jainistic swastika.

NOTE TO LETTERER: When Noh speaks (but not when he *thinks*), use a special font. If you can do something that manages to look Chinese/Japanese, do it. Otherwise, use a font that looks powerful and archaic.

Words that need to be emphasized are underlined.

PAGE 1

PANEL 1. One of the few wooded areas in Los Angeles—stunted oak and maple trees, a rickety theater. The last play is still partially listed on the marquee: "T-- Sent-nce -or Fr--dom is De-th". The dashes denote letters that are either partially or fully gone. There is a destitute man climbing in the window. A POLICEWOMAN is coming from off-panel. She is looking at the reader, brandishing her nightstick/flashlight. The police car is off-panel, but reflected in a shard of glass in one of the theater's windows (the headlights are on, but the flashing lights are not). The moon is half full. A single tall palm tree is visible in the distance, behind the oaks and maples. Make most of this scene look like a Japanese tapestry. The police car's reflection and the police officer are a bit of 'reality' intruding on the scene, and should be drawn in a blend of your normal style and the tapestry style. There is a faded poster in one window, to give the letterer somewhere to put the credits.

1. CAP: THERE ARE FEW PLACES IN LOS ANGELES WHERE THE STENCH AND NOISE OF THE CITY DO NOT INTRUDE. IN KYOTO PARK OUTSIDE OF BURBANK, EXHAUST IS OVERPOWERED BY LILAC, AND TRAFFIC IS MUFFLED BY TREES.
2. POLICEWOMAN: YOU THERE! KEEP MOVING!
3. CAP: THE LAST PRODUCTION AT THE ZEAMI THEATER WAS IN 1972.
4. CAP: TONIGHT, THE ZEAMI WILL SEE THE START OF AN ALL NEW PLAY.
5. POSTER: CREDITS (The poster does not have the play's title.)

PAGE 2

PANEL 1. A bird's-eye view of the musty basement of the abandoned Zeami theater. Seen as though through the roof, as if the world were a play and this one of the sets. Odd props lie strewn about. It is cluttered and maze-like. Moonlight enters from a few very small windows.

1. CAP: SHE: OH GOD, I HEARD SOMETHING!
2. CAP: HE: IT'S NOTHING, JENN. DON'T WORRY.

PANEL 2. Straight view of YOSHI and JENN in a secluded corner of the basement. JENN is straightening her dress. It is a flowery print, faded. YOSHI is motioning her to be quiet. His shirt is ruffled, and he is sweating slightly. They have just finished, as a friend of mine remarked, a 'nookie break.' A large white full face mask lies on a shelf, among other oddities, behind them.

3. YOSHI (whispered): ISN'T THIS A GREAT PLACE?
4. JENN (whispered): COME ON, YOSHI.

PANEL 3. JENN drags YOSHI by the hand. YOSHI grabs the mask.

5. YOSHI: LOOK AT THIS, JENN.
6. JENN: YOU'LL PICK UP ANYTHING

PANEL 4. YOSHI pulls JENN to him and caresses her butt with his free hand. He holds the mask in his other hand, behind her back.

7. YOSHI: UH HUH. HEY, MAYBE TOMORROW NIGHT WE CAN DO IT AT DISNEY WORLD, HMM?

PAGE 3

PANEL 1. It is about noon in Hollywood, at the corner of Hollywood and Vine. There are stars on the sidewalk. A newspaper stand holds newspapers with the following headlines: "DR. LAIRD JOINS SENTINELS", "USHER BURNS COMIX", "SERBS IGNORE UNITED NATIONS". In the background, YOSHIMASA and his friend NATHAN talk. NATHAN is wearing a t-shirt and ripped jeans, and has a guitar on his back. YOSHI is wearing a dark suit and has his hair slicked back, Mafia-style. Behind the stand is the street.

1. CAP: THE NEXT DAY...
2. NATHAN: ...JUST TOO MUCH FOR ME.
3. YOSHI: BUT YOU'RE SO GOOD WITH YOUR GUITAR, NATE.

PANEL 2. A bird's-eye view of this area, centered on the newsstand. Cars on Vine (parallel to the newsstand) move by (including a black limousine). A man with a VHS video camera is filming the rear of the news stand, from across the street. People are everywhere, as normal.

3. NATHAN: IT'S A BUYERS' MARKET, YOSHI. I JUST CAN'T AFFORD TO PLAY ANYMORE.
4. YOSHI: NATHAN, YOU'VE JUST GOT TO STICK WITH IT.

PANEL 3. A view of what the cameraman is filming. Between cars, there is graffiti on the back of the newsstand. "FTC", "TDK", "NIK RULES", and assorted scrawls.

5. NATHAN: I JUST DON'T...
6. YOSHI: YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND SOMETHING.
7. NATHAN: IT'S NOT JUST THAT. IT'S THE WHOLE 'LA' SCENE.

PANEL 4. Still from the cameraman's view, a man in a theater usher's costume drops in front of the camera. He's wearing the following buttons: "BUSH '92", "SMUT" (in a circle with a slash through it).

8. USHER: DO YOU HAVE A LICENSE FOR THAT CAMERA?
9. SOMEONE (OP): HUH?
10. CAMERAMAN (OP): WHO?
11. YOSHI (OP): NATE, MY EYES!
12. NATHAN (OP): GOD, YOSHI! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU?

PANEL 5. The USHER grabs the video camera and crushes it. NATHAN is backing away in fear from YOSHI (who, as NOH, is still off-panel). The CAMERAMAN is afraid for his life (as he should be, the liberal swine).

NOTE TO LETTERER: Remember to use the special font for NOH.

13. USHER: DIDN'T THINK SO, JERK. LET'S SEE, FILMING WITHOUT A
LICENSE... IT'S MY LUCKY DAY! YOUR SENTENCE IS DEATH.

14. CAMERAMAN: I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND..

15. NOH (OP): **WE RETURN.**

16. NATHAN: YOSHI, WHAT-?.

PAGE 4

PANEL 1. YOSHI is gone, and NOH is in his place. NOH jumps, and lands between the USHER and the CAMERAMAN. The CAMERAMAN faints. NATHAN runs away with many other people in the crowd. Some of the crowd remains.

1. NOH: **YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO JUDGE, ENEMY-OF-MINE.**
2. USHER: **ENEMY? WHO ARE YOU? GET OUT OF MY WAY.**
3. EXTRA #1: **CAN YOU SEE? LOOK AT THEM. A SUPERHERO!**
4. EXTRA #2 (to boy with boombox): **TURN IT UP, KID!**
5. NATHAN (thought): **OREGON WAS NEVER LIKE THIS.**

PANEL 2. The USHER punches NOH, sending him flying face first into a pile of garbage across the street. The garbage cans are crushed by the impact of the blow. Use normal font for NOH'S thoughts from now on, and the special one when he speaks. The RADIO is spewing music along the bottom of the panel, almost like a caption.

NOTE TO LETTERER: Include notes to show that the radio is music. Yes, the music is in lower case.

6. NOH (thought): **WHAT AM I DOING?**
7. USHER: **WAIT FOR ME, FREAK!**
8. RADIO: **He cried bitch**

PANEL 3. The USHER jumps in front of NOH and gloats. NOH'S rear face cowers in fear.

9. USHER: **YER TOO ARTY TA LIVE, FREAK. HOPE YER REAR WINDOW CAN SEE MY FIST!**
10. NOH (thought): **OH BOY... I CAN SEE HIM. WHAT DO I DO?**
11. RADIO: **she answered him sir!**

PAGE 5

Page 5 consists of three panels. Panel 1 is the largest. Panel 2 is going to be quite wide.

PANEL 1. NOH stands up and punches USHER across the street, over a building, and out of sight. Both are surprised. NOH'S side face (whichever side you decide to show) is ecstatic. This does happen quickly enough for one panel to cover it, but if you want to divide this panel into a group of smaller panels that look really neat, try it.

1. SFX (PUNCH): THWOCK!
2. USHER: GAAH!!
3. NOH (thought): JEEZ!
4. RADIO: and his life slowly fled to the street...

PANEL 2. A NOH'S-eye view of the area. In front of NOH, on the other side of the street, someone is helping the cameraman. To his right, on the corner (near the newsstand) a small crowd (including the kid with the boombox) are staring at him with wonder and a touch of fear. Graffiti on the wall behind him, somewhat covered in strewn garbage, reads "TDK", "SCREW YOU", and other things. To his left, there is a homeless person, oblivious to the whole thing.

5. EXTRA #3 (to cameraman): HEY, YOU ALL RIGHT?
6. EXTRA #4 (in crowd): WHAT KIND OF SUPERHERO IS THIS?
7. HOMELESS PERSON: MAN, YOU GOT A QUARTER?
8. NOH: LET MY ENEMIES BEWARE.
9. NOH (thought): WHAT AM I SAYING?

PANEL 3. NOH runs away down Hollywood Boulevard. He leaves a barely visible 'wake' behind him, of strange, transparent faces.

10. NOH (thought): WHAT DO I DO NOW?
11. HOMELESS PERSON: FUCK YOU, MAN.
12. NOH (mumbled, left face): FORSOOTH, WHAT LIGHT...

PAGE 6

PANEL 1. NOH is running, slightly faster than the automobile traffic, and weaving in and out of other pedestrians on the sidewalk. Most people pay no attention to him, except for the occasional dark glance from those he nearly runs into. Frederick's of Hollywood (a garish pink 2-story building) is on his left. NOH is frantic. His rear face is gloating. His side face (again, whichever you decide to show) is sad. The WAKE is less visible here than before, because of all the pedestrian traffic.

1. NOH (thought): SHOULD I LOOK FOR THE USHER? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?
2. EXTRA (in suit): WATCH IT, JERK!

PANEL 2. NOH reverts to YOSHI, and YOSHI loses his balance.

3. NOH/YOSHI (thought): NO, I DON'T... GAAH!

PANEL 3. YOSHI falls and lands, sitting up, in a recessed storefront, against the wall. In the window behind him are chains, jewelry, rock posters (Tommy, Beatles -- see pictures), and some t-shirts. One of the t-shirts has "Seduction of the Innocent" written on it. YOSHI is afraid and embarrassed. The WAKE rises off of YOSHI like smoke, still barely visible.

4. YOSHI (thought): ...

PANEL 4. LACY LADON, wearing leather and chains, and rollerblades, helps Yoshi up. The left side of her head is shaved. She's tall and lanky. Other people are shaking their heads in disgust (at YOSHI, not LACY). The WAKE is floating off of YOSHI and onto LACY.

5. YOSHI (thought): OH, GOD... WHAT TIME IS IT?
6. LACY: HEY FLASH, YOU OKAY?
7. YOSHI: UH, YEAH. THANKS.

PANEL 5. YOSHI, embarrassed, waves his thanks to LACY as he walks away, back the way he came. She waves back, bemused. The WAKE is completely gone.

8. YOSHI: UH... SEE YA.
9. YOSHI (thought): OKAY, NEED TO FIND NATHAN, THEN GET BACK TO THE SET.
10. LACY (thought): WOW...

PAGE 7

PANEL 1. YOSHI is on the set of a cheap gangster film. He's talking with the DIRECTOR, a thin, short man with unkempt hair and a megaphone in his hand.

1. DIRECTOR: A LITTLE MORE ACCENT THIS TIME. REMEMBER, YOU'RE NATIVE YAKUZA.
2. YOSHI: SURE. LIKE YOU DISHONA US. CONTLACT BLOKEN.
3. DIRECTOR: PERFECT. YOU'RE A GENIUS. PLACES, EVERYONE!
4. YOSHI (thought): IT WAS A JOKE!

PANEL 2. YOSHI is standing in front of a prone Asian GANGSTER, who is on the ground. YOSHI holds a revolver.

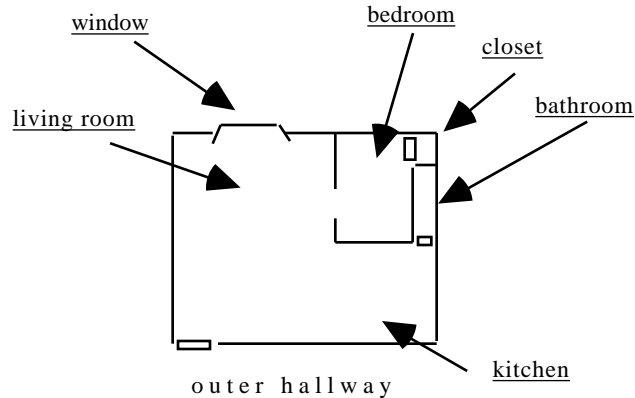
5. YOSHI: ...CONTLACT BLOKEN.
6. GANGSTER: NO, NO! PLEASE, I FIX!

PANEL 3. YOSHI shoots the GANGSTER.

7. YOSHI: TAKE TIS, YOU DITTY LAT.
8. SFX (Yoshi's gun): CLICK CLICK CLICK
9. YOSHI (thought): OKAY, NEED TO PICK UP SOME POPCORN AND A MOVIE, THEN MEET JENN FOR DINNER.

PANEL 4. The dead GANGSTER gets up, and he and YOSHI walk off the set.

10. DIRECTOR: OKAY, THAT'S A WRAP.
11. GANGSTER: YOSHI, A COUPLE OF US ARE HITTING THE CLUBS TONIGHT. WANT TO COME?
12. YOSHI: THANKS, LEE, BUT I'VE GOT A DATE WITH JENN.
13. YOSHI (thought): OR MAYBE I COULD JUST GO TO THE BEACH AND BURY MY HEAD IN THE SAND FOR A FEW DAYS...



PANEL 5. JENN and YOSHI step into YOSHI'S apartment. The mask is half visible propped against the wall, between the living room and the kitchen. There are a few stuffed animals on the back of the couch: a bear and a dog. These are JENN'S. YOSHI and JENN are laughing. YOSHI holds a video rental (a video tape, no label).

14. CAP: AFTER DINNER...

15. YOSHI: MAYBE WE COULD TAKE OFF FOR A FEW DAYS?

16. JENN: SURE. FOR WHAT, DON JUAN?

PANEL 6. YOSHI puts the videotape halfway into the machine. JENN lounges on the couch. Again, the radio's part runs along the bottom of the panel.

17. YOSHI: JUST TURN THE RADIO ON. I'LL POP SOME CORN.

18. JENN: IT'S NOT LIKE WE'LL DO ANYTHING WE DON'T DO HERE.

19. YOSHI: OR IN BASEMENTS, HMM?

20. RADIO: KLNH FM...

PAGE 8.

Music runs along the bottom of each panel on this page. (It's pop music, if you can show that.) Panels 2 through 5 are smaller than the rest, and either on the same line or the same block—they should be read as a group.

PANEL 1. YOSHI is in the kitchen, punching buttons on a microwave that's built in to the wall. Yes, the music doesn't actually run along the bottom this time. It will next panel, I promise.

1. JENN: GOD, THAT WAS SCARY!
2. YOSHI: LIVE DANGEROUSLY, JENN...
3. RADIO: which of us is not a stranger...
4. YOSHI: ...AND LEAVE A GOOD-LOOKING CORPSE.

PANEL 2. YOSHI and JENN are sitting at the couch. They are looking into each others' eyes. A bowl of popcorn is on the coffee table. The movie has not started yet, nor is the television even turned on (although this doesn't have to be visible).

5. JENN: ...AN AWESOME ONE, YOU MEAN.
6. RADIO: ...which of us is not alone?

PANEL 3. YOSHI and JENN are kissing.

7. RADIO: who has never feared to find...

PANEL 4. YOSHI is reaching around JENN'S back, getting in a better position for some heavy smooching. There's a stuffed TIGER propped on the couch where the stuffed dog and bear used to be. Those toys are gone. The TIGER looks vaguely like Hobbes, of Calvin & Hobbes—nice, cute, but bland. It also has a stylized swastika on it's solar plexus (see picture).

8. RADIO: ...what lies beneath the unturned stone?

PANEL 5. YOSHI and JENN are kissing. YOSHI is reaching up JENN'S shirt.

9. RADIO: ...NO NEWS YET ABOUT THE NEW SUPERHERO IN TOWN.

PANEL 6. YOSHI jumps back from JENN, and stands up. JENN is surprised, and about to be angry.

10. YOSHI: OH, SHIT!
11. JENN: WHAT'S WRONG?
12. RADIO: ...WITNESSES CLAIM HE HAD FOUR FACES.

PANEL 7. YOSHI reaches for the phone. JENN is now angry and confused. The RADIO'S part is smaller—its lettering should become less obtrusive.

13. YOSHI: I'VE GOT TO CALL NATE. I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT.

14. JENN: AND YOU REMEMBER NOW?!

15. RADIO: ...GIVES TALKING TO YOURSELF NEW MEANING, RIGHT, BILL?

PANEL 8. YOSHI is on the phone. JENN is straightening her shirt. She's only slightly angry now, more resigned.

16. JENN: SOMETIMES YOU'RE TOO FREAKY. I'M GOING HOME...

17. YOSHI: GEEZ, HE'S DISCONNECTED!

18. JENN: ...WHAT?

19. RADIO: ...TASTES GREAT!

PAGE 9.

PANEL 9 is the main panel here. Use the other panels to build down to it. It should give the reader a sense of being confined and trapped, so probably the panels should get smaller towards PANEL 9. Last page, homer!

PANEL 1. YOSHI is dialing the phone.

1. YOSHI: I'M CALLING HIS PARENTS.
2. JENN: WHY ARE YOU SO WORRIED?
3. RADIO: ...NO CALORIES!

PANEL 2. YOSHI is on the phone. JENN is half-heartedly arguing with him.

4. JENN: I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE...
5. YOSHI: YEAH, IS NATE THERE?... SURE.
6. JENN: HE'S THERE?! WHY'D HE GO BACK TO OREGON?
7. RADIO: BOB, YOU'RE SO SEXY!

PANEL 3. YOSHI is on the phone, but talking to JENN.

8. YOSHI: OH, GOD. IF HE LEFT BECAUSE OF THAT...
9. JENN: WHAT? GEEZ, YOSHI, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
10. RADIO: BECAUSE I USE THE PRODUCT!

PANEL 4. YOSHI shoves the phone to JENN.

11. YOSHI: YOU TALK TO HIM.
12. JENN: YOSHI, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
13. RADIO: NOW, HAUNTED VINEYARD.

Panel 5. JENN is on the phone. YOSHI is worried.

14. SFX: Little marks from the phone indicating that Nathan is talking.
15. RADIO: BY ALAN MORY.

PANEL 6. JENN is on the phone. YOSHI is sitting down.

16. JENN: WHAT DID YOSHI DO?
17. RADIO: ...spent the night in the

PANEL 7. JENN is on the phone. YOSHI is standing up.

18. SFX: Little marks from the phone indicating that Nathan is talking.

19. RADIO: ...haunted vineyard, crying...

PANEL 8. JENN is holding the phone, looking at it.

20. JENN: HE HUNG UP... WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED WITH YOU TWO?

21. RADIO: ...woke up screaming

PANEL 9. YOSHI falls back to the sofa, frustrated. JENN is still holding the phone, looking at him.

22. YOSHI: JENN...

23. YOSHI: YOU AREN'T GOING TO BELIEVE THIS.

24. RADIO: ...for Gods I never knew.