

PAGE ONE

PANEL ONE: JUSTIN and LILLI are having sex. She's on top. It's passionate, but unremarkable. Nothing crazy. They're equals.

SFX: *pant pant*

PANEL TWO: A flashback to moments before, what was happening in the last issue. [LILLI collapses into JUSTIN's arms.]

1 LILLI: It's him. It's *Steven*. He won't stop texting me. He's saying awful things. *Threatening me*.

PANEL THREE: Back to the sex. She is folded over him, so that their foreheads touch as she rides him.

2 LILLI: Take the condom off.

PANEL FOUR: Another flashback. [She rests her head on his chest again, less panicked now.]

3 LILLI: I wish someone would *do* something.

PANEL FIVE: More sex. They're rolling over, switching roles. A momentary pause in the intensity. He's about to be on top.

4 JUSTIN: Are you sure?
5 LILLI: *Come on—*

PANEL SIX: Another flashback. [He holds her face in her hands. He's about to kiss her. He looks into her eyes]

6 LILLI: I want to be yours and only yours, but I can't yet. Not until he's out of the picture.
7 JUSTIN: Don't worry. He will be.

PANEL SEVEN: He's on top now, and she's got a crazy look in her eyes as she grabs his face and bears her teeth. Animalistic.

8 LILLI: —*hurt me*.

PAGE TWO - This page is a lot of aspect to aspect. It should feel crowded and claustrophobic.

PANEL ONE: CU. JUSTIN grabs LILLI's wrist.

1 LILLI: I said *hurt* me.

PANEL TWO: He wraps his fingers around her throat. Her eyes are panicked and excited.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL THREE: She grins.

2 LILLI: There we go.

PANEL FOUR: We see JUSTIN as his triceps activate to apply pressure to her throat. He's mostly in shadow, just his forehead and hair in light, sweat dripping off him.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL FIVE: She grabs the back of his neck and pulls him closer.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL SIX: She spits in his face.

SFX: ptoo

PANEL SEVEN: He gets angry—

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL EIGHT: —and slaps her in the face. She smiles wide.

SFX: SLAP

PANEL NINE: Her nails dig into his back.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL TEN: She drags her nails, leaving deep, ragged scratches.

3 JUSTIN: Unngh**FUCK**

PANEL ELEVEN: Down shot. He's on top of her, choking her, pinning her down.

5 JUSTIN: oh *god*—

PAGE THREE

PANEL ONE: FULL PAGE SPREAD. We see them writhe under the sheets. JUSTIN's head hangs down as he supports himself with his hands. He comes.

1 JUSTIN: UNNNNNNGGGGHHHHhhhhhhh
2 Text: No Strings Attached
3 Text: Part Two of Two

PAGE FOUR

PANEL ONE: JUSTIN rolls off of LILLI. He looks up at the ceiling blankly, weighing his options.

1 JUSTIN: *Goddamn.*

PANEL TWO: He sits on the edge of the bed, naked, gathering his clothes.

2 JUSTIN: Listen, I gotta go.
3 LILLI: Where are you going?

PANEL THREE: He looks over his shoulder, in silhouette.

4 JUSTIN: There's...something I have to do.

PANEL FOUR: He finished getting dressed and zips up his pants.

5 LILLI: Now? What are you going to do?

PANEL FIVE: He leans over and looks her dead in the eyes.

6 JUSTIN: Do you trust me?
7 LILLI: ...yes. I trust you.
8 LILLI (whispers): Thank you.

PANEL SIX: He kisses her on the forehead. This should probably be the biggest panel.

9 JUSTIN: I'll be back before you know it.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL ONE: JUSTIN's car speeds down the highway in the dead of night. Street lamps and his headlights create the only circles of light on the empty stretch of road. Trees are silhouetted against the night sky, and behind them, buildings.

SFX: *click*
1 MAKAYLA: mmmhello?
2 JUSTIN: Makayla, listen—

PANEL TWO: Shot of MAKAYLA in bed on the phone. Her girlfriend is asleep on her side, facing away from the reader. MAKAYLA props herself up on one elbow, groggy.

3 MAKAYLA: Justin? It's 3 in the morning! Why the fuck are you calling me?

PANEL THREE: JUSTIN, in the car. His hand grips the steering wheel, his arm almost straight. He's intensely focused. He holds the phone in his other hand.

4 JUSTIN: Just *listen*, ok?
5 MAKAYLA: Dude, I have work in the morning—
6 JUSTIN: Seriously, Makayla. Shut the fuck up and listen.

PANEL FOUR: We see JUSTIN through the passenger seat window.

7 MAKAYLA: ...ok.
8 JUSTIN: If anyone, *anyone* asks, I was with you tonight. Got it?

PANEL FIVE: Back in MAKAYLA's room. She's sitting upright now, fully awake.

9 MAKAYLA: Wait, *what*?
10 JUSTIN: Tell them we got drinks and I had one too many and crashed on your couch.
11 MAKAYLA: What are you *doing*? This is some CSI bullshit.

PAGE SIX

PANEL ONE: Back in the car with JUSTIN. He puts the car in park, his hand on the gear shift.

SFX: crr-chuk [what is the sound of putting car in park?]

1 JUSTIN: Just *do* this for me, ok? *Please*.

2 MAKAYLA: Justin, are you ok? Please tell me you're not spiraling again. *Talk* to me.

PANEL TWO: Close up of JUSTIN.

3 JUSTIN: I gotta go.

4 MAKAYLA: Justin, *wait*—*click*

PANEL THREE: JUSTIN's car, parked across the street from a normal house. Even though the reader isn't told, we all know—it's STEVEN's house.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL ONE: Jump cut, JUSTIN bangs on the door repeatedly with his fist.

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

1 STEVEN (thru door): Jesus, I'm coming, I'm coming—

PANEL TWO: The doors opens, and we see STEVEN, over JUSTIN's shoulder.

2 STEVEN: Who the fuck are you?

PANEL THREE: JUSTIN kick in the door.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL FOUR: The door clips JUSTIN in the chin. He stumbles back.

SFX: BAM

PANEL FIVE: STEVEN falls to the ground. [This panel should mirror the scene in the first issue when JUSTIN knocks STEVEN down at the club, except all of JUSTIN's timidness/and surprise are gone. Now it's calculated rage.] STEVEN wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.

3 JUSTIN: You're going to leave her alone.

4 STEVEN: Who?

5 JUSTIN: *Lilli.*

PANEL SIX: Close up of STEVEN. His nose has just started to bleed and his lip is busted.

6 STEVEN: Oh. *You're* that bitch that was with her at the club.

7 STEVEN: I'm surprised. She *always* gets what she wants; she could do better.

PANEL SEVEN: STEVEN gets up, pushing off a side table. [Frame JUSTIN in the triangle created by STEVEN's arm and body.]

8 JUSTIN: I'm serious, man. You're going to stop texting, stop calling. You're never gonna hurt her again.

9 STEVEN: I hate to break it to you, kid, but I have no idea what you're talking about.

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL ONE: JUSTIN points a finger at him, posturing.

1 JUSTIN: Shut the fuck up. I know about the drugs, the cheating, the STD's. She told me about *everything* you did.

PANEL TWO: STEVEN laughs, incredulous.

2 STEVEN: *Jesus*. She told you that? That chink whore hasn't changed. I never did *any* of that.

3 JUSTIN: Do NOT talk about her that way.

PANEL THREE: Flashback. LILLI's doing heroine.

5 STEVEN CAPTION: The drugs? They were hers. Once she started doing coke, she'd try anything. Repeatedly.

PANEL FOUR: Flashback. LILLI stealing money from STEVEN's wallet as he sleeps in her bed, on her stomach.

6 STEVEN CAPTION: She stole from me to pay for everything. And I let her.

PANEL FIVE: Flashback. LILLI fucking some random dude. [This random dude should be the male version of the girl that STEVEN is fucking in the flashback from issue one.]

7 STEVEN CAPTION: The cheating, the chlamydia...Who do you think got it first? Me?

8 STEVEN CAPTION: She gave it to *me*.

PANEL SIX: Back to present. JUSTIN is livid—his blood is boiling. He bares his teeth and his sunken eyes glare at STEVEN.

9 JUSTIN: You're lying.

10 STEVEN: She's lying to *you*, man. She's using you. Just like she used me.

11 JUSTIN: Stop talking.

PANEL SEVEN: STEVEN gets right up in JUSTIN's face.

12 STEVEN: How about you get the fuck out of my house.

13 STEVEN: *NOW*.

PAGES NINE through FIFTEEN. [Page and panel layouts up to the artist.]

Huge, bloody fight scene. The moment this entire story arc has been leading to. It should be gruesome, relentless, and brutal. This isn't fun—this is murder, plain and simple.

PAGE NINE - JUSTIN beats the shit out of STEVEN.

JUSTIN punches STEVEN in the gut.

1 JUSTIN: I said STOP.

JUSTIN gets in a few more good punches as they move into the living room, then he SLAMS STEVEN's head into his knee. The only thing JUSTIN is trying to do is take him out, *fast*.

STEVEN falls to the ground and starts crawling away from JUSTIN, who's PANTING at this point. He almost makes it to the fireplace before JUSTIN is on top of STEVEN, punching STEVEN's bloodied face into the corner of the stone hearth, again and again. JUSTIN's knuckles become more bloody with every blow.

STEVEN's not doing so hot. He reaches out and grabs the fire poker.

PAGE TEN - STEVEN gains some ground.

STEVEN swings the poker around, and it connects with JUSTIN's head, splitting it open. JUSTIN falls back, and STEVEN has a second to breathe while JUSTIN's sight fades in and out.

STEVEN uses the fireplace to struggle to his feet. Pushing off, he pants heavily, standing over JUSTIN. STEVEN raises the poker high. JUSTIN regains only enough lucidity to put up his hands to block the attack.

STEVEN slams the poker down. It hits JUSTIN in the wrist as he tries to block it. Something snaps in his hand. He screams in pain.

PAGE ELEVEN - JUSTIN's only goal is to get STEVEN on the ground.

JUSTIN, on his knees, holds his wrist.

STEVEN, moving sluggishly from what is not doubt a concussion, raises the poker again, readying himself for another attack.

His face is bloody and tears stream down his face, but he's not crying—he's just in pain. Furious, violent pain. He uses this fury as fuel.

JUSTIN lunges at STEVEN's legs, tackling him with force and without any grace. He's only trying to win now. STEVEN falls to the ground, and the poker clatters and spins away from the two of them, just out of reach.

PAGE TWELVE

JUSTIN's back on top of STEVEN, who's wriggling violently, trying not to give in completely. He throws a punch at JUSTIN's nose, and it connects with another snap.

Blood pours from his nose. In JUSTIN's hot fury, he doesn't react. He's just trying to wrap his hands around STEVEN's throat. Now JUSTIN has the upper hand, and a tight grip on STEVEN's muscular neck.

STEVEN is weakened, but still fights back. He pushes on JUSTIN's face, trying to push him off and to hurt him by pressing on his broken nose. JUSTIN doesn't much appreciate that, so he punches STEVEN in the face to break his nose, too.

PAGE THIRTEEN

Now JUSTIN is in complete control of the situation. His hands are wrapped around STEVEN's throat, and he's not letting go. STEVEN is fading fast. He's not pushing on JUSTIN's face anymore; his limbs flap and flail with less and less strength as the darkness creeps in.

Then, in one more moment of clarity, he grabs JUSTIN's face [Just like LILLI grabbed JUSTIN's face on PAGE ONE.]

STEVEN: Don't you get it?

PAGE FOURTEEN

Imagine two images. One (1) is JUSTIN pushing with all his might, down onto STEVEN’s neck, and STEVEN is off-panel. The other image (2) is STEVEN’s bloodied face, his teeth bared, looking up off panel, as JUSTIN’s hands strangle him.

Now, imagine each panel split into three vertical panels, and then split up to alternate. So it would look like this:

(1) (2) (1) (2) (1) (2)

JUSTIN and STEVEN are being overlaid. They exist in the same space. They’re the same.

1 STEVEN: You’re *me*.

PAGE FIFTEEN - STEVEN’s death knell.

This page should be mostly moment to moment, devoted entirely to JUSTIN squeezing all the life out of STEVEN. JUSTIN’s eyes are crazed. He doesn’t let up.

As his heart slows down, the spurts of blood from STEVEN’s head and face become less violent. His arms flap less and less. His legs kick less and less.

STEVEN: KKKKKKKkkkkkkkkkhhhhhhhh—*

He stops kicking. His eyes lose their focus, then turn grey.

He’s gone.

PAGE SIXTEEN

PANEL ONE: Downshot. JUSTIN has let go of STEVEN's neck. His bloodied body is angular and lifeless, his back thrust out. JUSTIN is still straddling him, looking down at what he's done.

NO DIALOGUE

PANELS TWO-SEVEN: Then, a bunch of tiny panels. Aspect to aspect:

The poker; STEVEN's lifeless eye, STEVEN's claw-like, frozen hand; JUSTIN's hands, the knuckles worn down almost to the bone; a close-up of JUSTIN, panting.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL EIGHT: JUSTIN stands and wipes blood from his face.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL NINE: He leans up against the wall, away from STEVEN's body. He's in silhouette, but you can still see his eyes and the blood on his face.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL TEN: Holding his injured arm, he limps out the door.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE SEVENTEEN

PANEL ONE: We jump ahead in time. JUSTIN's at LILLI's door now. He's bloody, and a trail of blood is smeared on the wall behind him, where he dragged along as he made it up the stairs to her door. His finger is on the bell.

SFX: ding ding ding ding
1 JUSTIN: Come on, Lilli...

PANEL TWO: Inset, from the other side of the door. LILLI's delicate hand turns the doorknob.

SFX: click

PANEL THREE: JUSTIN falls into her arms through the now-open door.

2 LILLI: Justin!
3 JUSTIN (weak): I did it, baby. I actually did it.

PANEL FOUR: CU of JUSTIN, we look down at him over LILLI's shoulder.

4 LILLI: What did you do? Let me hear you say it.
5 JUSTIN: Steven. He's gone. For good.

PANEL FIVE: She whispers in his ear, one last time.

6 LILLI (whispers): Thank you.

PANEL SIX: As LILLI holds her crumpled lover in her arms, kneeling on the ground with him, she reaches around and grabs her keychain, which is clipped onto a belt loop. On her keychain, a small canister of Mace. [Or should it be her purse?]

7 JUSTIN: Now we can finally be together—

PANEL SEVEN: She whips the Mace around and empties the canister into all the cuts on his face and his eyes.

8 JUSTIN: AAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaaaaaa

PAGE EIGHTEEN

PANEL ONE: LILLI stands over JUSTIN, who's writhing in pain on the ground between her feet. She's pulled out a lighter and a box of cigarettes from her back pocket.

1 JUSTIN: Jesus fucking *Christ*—
2 LILLI: Well. I appreciate all the help. I really do. I couldn't have done it without you.

PANEL TWO: She lights the cigarette, cupping her hand around the flame. We see JUSTIN try to look up at her from over LILLI's shoulder.

3 JUSTIN: *cough cough* what the FUCK—
4 LILLI: You still don't get it?

PANEL THREE: She exhales smoke.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL FOUR: She stands, her hips cocked, the cigarette balanced in her hand. She looks down at JUSTIN.

5 LILLI: I've been *using* you.

PANEL FIVE: JUSTIN, on the floor, writhing in emotional pain as well as the physical.

6 JUSTIN: What? But—he threatened you—

PANEL SIX: LILLI crouches down and looks at JUSTIN.

7 LILLI: ...Did he?

PAGE NINETEEN

PANEL ONE: Extreme close-up. JUSTIN's eye, battered and puffy as it may be, opens wide.

1 JUSTIN: So...everything he said...

PANEL TWO: She takes another drag from her cigarette.

2 LILLI: Oh, honey... ...it doesn't matter.

PANEL THREE: She blows smoke in his face.

3 LILLI: No one will believe you.

PANEL FOUR: Still kneeling next to him, she pulls out her phone and starts dialing.

SFX: beep boop beep

4 LILLI: Oh, and thanks for being so *rough* with me last night. I *loved* it.

PANEL FIVE: She puts the phone up to her ear.

5 LILLI: I wonder what the police will think of that.

PANEL SIX: The same shot as before, but now she's talking to the 911 operator on the phone.

6 Operator: Grand Rapids Police Department. What is the location of your emergency?

PANEL SEVEN: She grins.

7 LILLI: I'm at my house, you *have* to *HELP* me—

PAGE TWENTY

PANEL ONE: Establishing shot. Police vehicles outside of LILLI's apartment, the red and blue lights flashing. Cops are everywhere. From inside, we hear JUSTIN.

1 JUSTIN: NO!

PANEL TWO: JUSTIN and two police officers come out the door with force. The officers are restraining a crazed JUSTIN.

2 JUSTIN: Wait! She's LYING—

PANEL THREE: The officers slam JUSTIN on the hood of the cop car. He's crying, his chest heaving. LILLI can be seen behind them, talking to another officer.

3 JUSTIN: LILLI!

PANEL FOUR: She looks over, her face stained with tears. The cop she was talking to is walking away. Her expression is shocked, fearful.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL FIVE: Same as the last panel, except now she grins, waving at JUSTIN.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL SIX: The two officers try to stuff JUSTIN into the cop car, but he's resisting, trying to turn towards LILLI.

4 JUSTIN: LILLI! I LOVE YOU!

PANEL SEVEN: He presses his face against the glass of the car door window, now muffled a bit by the glass.

5 JUSTIN (small): I LOVE YOU LILLI!

PANEL EIGHT: The car drives away, the headlights cutting into the night. JUSTIN presses his face against the back windshield, still screaming.

6 JUSTIN (smaller): I LOVE YOU!

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

PANEL ONE: LILLI and two plainclothes detectives walk into a police station bullpen. She's crying, her back hunched, one of the detectives raincoats around her.

1 DETECTIVE A: It's going to be all right. We've got him, you're ok.

PANEL TWO: Detective B sits down at a messy desk, and LILLI sits on a chair at the end of the desk. Detective A walks towards a coffee machine.

2 DETECTIVE B: All we're doing is getting a statement. You're gonna be ok.
3 LILLI: snf snf...ok. ok.

PANEL THREE: Detective A comes back with a coffee and hands it to LILLI. Detective B pulls out an old style tape recorder.

4 DETECTIVE A: Here. It'll help.
5 DETECTIVE B: Where did I put..ah, here we go. You ready?
6 LILLI: I...I think so.

PANEL FOUR: He hits record on the recorder.

SFX: clck
7 DETECTIVE B: Ok, this is Detective Parker. The date is...December 17th, at 4:32 am. We're taking a statement from a woman who's been assaulted by a man she claims has killed someone tonight.

PANEL FIVE: He continues talking.

8 DETECTIVE B: Please state your name for the record.
9 LILLI: It's, uh, LILLI.
10 DETECTIVE A: Your *full* name, sweetheart.

PANEL SIX: CU on LILLI.

11 LILLI: Oh. *snff* Ok.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

PANEL ONE: FULL PAGE SPREAD. LILLI looks dead ahead. She has the faintest smirk, almost imperceptible. She looks cold, emotionless—to the layman, she looks like she’s trying to block out all her emotions from the horror of the night, the only traces of emotion left are the mascara that’s dried on her face from the crocodile tears. But we know she’s trying not to reveal what she knows—that she got away with it.

1 LILLI: My name is Lillith Dixon.
2 TEXT: End of Part Two