

JERRY STRATTON
www.jerrystratton.com

NOH #2

Copyright © 1998 Jerry Stratton

"Pipes Around The Moon"

Pages: 8 comic, 16 script

NOTE TO ARTIST: You should be getting a few Xeroxes and pictures along with this script.

- 1) The Mayan God-Mask
- 2) The Greek Comedy/Tragedy Masks
- 3) The Ordered and Chaotic Smoke Plumes
- 4) A Deadhead skeleton

Also, a diagram of the 'curtain effect' for the last three panels of PAGE 1, and a possible panel layout for PAGE 7.

NOTE TO LETTERER: Words that need to be emphasized are underlined.

PAGE 1

Use the 9-panel format for this page. Each panel is the same size. PANELS 7, 8, and 9 use the tapestry format discussed last issue, as well as the curtain effect separately diagrammed.

PANEL 1. YOSHI and JENN are at the beach. They are each lying on their side, backs to each other, reading a paperback book. There are no clouds. The sun is about 45 minutes from setting into the Pacific Ocean. There are only a few other people on the beach -- some children, a jogger. It is windy. Maybe a surfer or two in the water, and a sailboat way off, if there's room in this small of a panel.

1. CAP: LAST MONTH, SAN DIEGO:

PANEL 2. The jogger is gone, as are the children. A beach ball rolls across the panel. The sun is perceptibly lower than in panel 1, five to ten minutes later.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 3. Zoom in on the book YOSHI is reading. There's a bit of sand on the page, obscuring the top.

2. BOOK: As the hollow men,
The stuffed men.

II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are

77

PANEL 4. A gust of wind completely covers the book in sand.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 5. YOSHI'S hand clears the page while turning it.

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 6. The top of the next page is visible. Only a little sand is on it.

3. BOOK: Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing

PANEL 7. Back away from YOSHI and JENN. Sand blows across the pages of their books. The tapestry effect begins on this panel, as if a curtain were closing on the scene. See the diagram. The tapestry effect is only on the curtain (the scene is visible through the curtain—it's tapestry on the curtain, and normal 'inside').

NO DIALOGUE

PANEL 8. Except for the tapestry effect, this panel is nearly identical to panel 1. The tapestry effect covers the panel as if the curtain were half-closed (see diagram). The sun is 20-30 minutes from sundown. The RADIO is along the bottom of the panel.

4. RADIO: "can you hear in the haunted vineyard, sighing.."

PANEL 9. The CREDITS show on the tapestry. The curtain is now closed—the tapestry effect covers the entire panel. The RADIO is at the top of the page, as normal.

5. RADIO: "hear the echo of pipes around the moon."

6. CREDITS

PAGE 2

This continues from the *Noh 1*. There are nine panels. They don't have to be all the same size, but I think that will work best with the previous page. Use a minimum of background—focus on YOSHI and JENN.

PANEL 1. This perspective is from outside YOSHI'S window. The curtain is drawn. JENN and YOSHI are seen in silhouette. JENN is standing up, holding a phone. YOSHI is sitting, looking slightly downwards. The SFX is music from the stereo inside their apartment (which probably won't be visible in the silhouette).

1. CAP: TONIGHT, HOLLYWOOD...
2. RADIO: "Hear the echo of pipes around the moon."
3. YOSHI: I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, JENN.

PANEL 2. We're in Yoshi's apartment now. YOSHI has stood up. JENN is no longer holding the phone, and has moved back so that she's maintained her distance from YOSHI. She's backed against the television and VCR cabinet. YOSHI is worried that he can't explain what happened. JENN is angry at YOSHI, and worried that he's lying.

4. YOSHI: WE TALKED... HE WANTED TO GO HOME TO OREGON.
5. JENN: AND YOU CONVINCED HIM TO?

PANEL 3. YOSHI is searching for a way to explain. JENN is beginning to calm down.

6. YOSHI: NO! I WAS TRYING TO GET HIM TO STAY... BUT...

PANEL 4. YOSHI gives up and practically blurts out what happened. He's pleading, practically, that she should believe it. JENN is wondering if he's lying, practicing some play, or crazy.

7. YOSHI: I WAS DIZZY. I LOST... REALLY LOST CONTROL. EVERYTHING FELL AWAY.

PANEL 5. YOSHI continues. JENN is moving towards him, to comfort him.

8. YOSHI: I REMEMBER HEARING NATE, AND THINKING HOW FAR AWAY HE IS, AND THEN...
9. JENN: YOSHI...

PANEL 6. YOSHI is animated. He stands up straight, holding his arms out. JENN steps back.

10. YOSHI: THEN THIS GUY—THAT RIGHT-WING SUPERVILLAIN—THE USHER. HE'S IN FRONT OF ME. AND HITS ME! IT HURTS, BUT LIKE I'M ON DRUGS—IN THE DISTANCE, RIGHT?

PANEL 7. YOSHI is trying hard to remember. He's looking at the ceiling. JENN is looking at him, stunned.

11. YOSHI: I... BUT NOT ME... HIT HIM. AND HE'S GONE. I THOUGHT MAYBE
EVEN DEAD. BUT THAT... WOULD'VE BEEN IN THE NEWS.

PANEL 8. JENN is backing away from YOSHI, towards the exit. She is angry, and trying not to cry. YOSHI is desperately thinking of something to do to keep her from leaving. He is finally looking at her.

12. JENN: CALL ME—CALL ME WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE TELLING THE TRUTH.

13. YOSHI (thought): I'VE GOT TO PROVE IT!

PANEL 9. Aim the panel at JENN, leaving YOSHI off-panel. JENN is at the door. Remember that NOH's *voice* uses the special font decided on last issue.

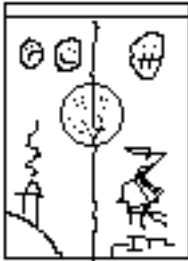
14. YOSHI (OP, thought): IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN. I—

15. NOH (OP): **JENNIFER. WAIT.**

PAGE 3.

In the center of this page is the full moon. The man in the moon is clearly (but naturally) visible. The two panels flank it, divided with a wavy line as if it were a closed curtain. The top of the panels use 'normal' art. The bottom use the tapestry style. In between, it blends.

NOTE TO LETTERER: There is a CAPTION spanning the top of both panels. See the diagram below. None of the CAPTIONS or DIALOGUES within the panels are enclosed in balloons. Attribution will have to be inferred from where the words are on the page.



1. CAP: the echo of pipes around the moon.

PANEL 1. MELPOMENE and THALIA are the tragedy/comedy masks of Greek theatre. See the pictures I've sent. MELPOMENE (tragedy) is on the left. THALIA (comedy) is on the right. A star twinkles to the upper left of MELPOMENE (reader's left); the remaining stars are drowned out by the light of the moon. A single, large, ranch house stands on a hill. The hill slopes down to a valley on the right panel, PANEL 2. Smoke rises from the chimney in a smooth, flowing pattern (see the enclosed picture).

2. CAP: MELPOMENE AND THALIA

3. MELPOMENE: BLOSSOM, I BELIEVE HE'S BEEN TOO WEAKENED.

4. THALIA: HE'LL SURVIVE TO THE CLIMAX, SISTER.

5. MELPOMENE: BUT WILL HE KNOW WHEN HE GETS THERE?

PANEL 2. The mesoamerican mask I've sent you a picture of (bulbous eyes, bared lips and teeth, fangs going up and down) is at the same height as the MUSES in PANEL 1. Some stars show above and to the right of the mask. There's a village in a valley below the mask. It looks European, like a postcard. Smoke rises from the chimneys, starting smooth, but joining together in a chaotic mess.

6. CAP: A GOD LONG FORGOTTEN...

7. FORGOTTEN GOD: THERE IS TIME. IF THIS ONE FAILS, WE WILL HAVE OTHER CHANCES.

8. CAP (Bottom of panel): MEANWHILE...

PAGE 4

This page continues from PAGE 2. YOSHI has become NOH, and is trying not to talk like NOH.

NOTE TO LETTERER: ***Boldfaced plus italicized*** words use the NOH font. Otherwise, they use the standard font.

PANEL 1. YOSHI has become NOH, standing in the middle of the room, between the sofa and the television set. JENN has pretty much forgotten her anger, momentarily. NOH'S side face is pouting.

1. JENN: YOSHI, HOW DID YOU DO THAT?
2. NOH: ***DO WHAT? WHAT DO YOU—WHAT DO YOU MEAN?***

PANEL 2. JENN moves towards NOH, to feel what YOSHI has done to his face. The side face is still pouting.

3. JENN: WHY'RE YOU TALKING LIKE THAT?
4. NOH: ***IT'S HARD... TO TALK... NORMAL. AND MY SIGHT!***

PANEL 3. JENN touches NOH'S face, feels down it, almost a short caress. She's confused. The side face is emotionless. If the back face is visible, it's happy. NOH (Yoshi) is worried.

5. JENN: ***IT FEELS SO... REAL... YOSHI?***
6. NOH: ***WHY WOULDN'T IT BE... REAL?***

PANEL 4. Realization that it is real dawns on JENN. NOH (Yoshi) wonders what the fuss is about. The side face is scared. JENN turns slowly, almost dreamlike, to run.

7. JENN: ***MY GOD! WHAT ARE YOU?***

PANEL 5. NOH is shocked as JENN runs. He's starting to run after her. NOH'S side face is ecstatic. NOH is reflected in the television set, and turns to face it (having seen it out of a side face). NOH'S side face is snickering. If the rear face is visible, it's yawning and tired. JENN is gone.

8. NOH: ***WAIT!***
9. NOH (thought): ***IS THAT ME? I NEED A MIRROR.***

PANEL 6. NOH has run into the bathroom, and is looking in the mirror. There's a sticker of a skeleton playing a guitar (sort of a neo-deadhead style, see reference) in the lower left hand corner of the mirror. NOH is surprised and scared. Since there's a mirror, it may be possible to see all four faces. If so, the rear face is smug and confident. His left face is crying. His right face is sexually ecstatic.

11. NOH: I'VE GOT FOUR FACES!

12. NOH (disembodied thought): *Yoshimasa, We have work to do.*

PANEL 7. NOH transforms to YOSHI. His features melt away as if it were actor's make-up that miraculously gave him the four faces. YOSHI is angry. The faces are faded from PANEL 6.

13. YOSHI (yelling, to mirror): GO AWAY!

PAGE 5

When NOH talks on this page, he's a disembodied thought balloon. He's still using the special font.

PANEL 1. YOSHI is sleeping on his bed. The bed has room for two people, and has two pillows. YOSHI sleeps on 'his' side of the bed (the right side) out of habit.

1. CAP: MIDNIGHT. SCREAMS HAUNT THE STREETS. NOBODY CARES: IT'S JUST ANOTHER NIGHT IN THE CITY OF ANGELS.

PANEL 2. YOSHI is accepting an Oscar from John BELUSHI for best male actor.

2. BELUSHI: AND FOR "THE SENTENCE FOR FREEDOM," YOSHIMASA HOSOKAWA.

3. YOSHI: THANKS, JOHN. I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK—

PANEL 3. NOH stands up in the audience. YOSHI holds his hand up to BELUSHI, to excuse himself for a moment. BELUSHI makes a side comment to the audience.

4. NOH: **YOSHIMASA, AWAKEN. THERE IS AN EVIL TO ATTEND TO.**

5. YOSHI (to Belushi): EXCUSE ME.

6. BELUSHI (aside): IGNORE ME, YOSHI. I'M JUST A FUCKIN' DREAM ANYWAY.

PANEL 4. YOSHI sits up in bed. and rubs his eyes. He's still not quite awake (but he is really sitting up, not dreaming it).

7. YOSHI: WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?

8. NOH: I NEED YOU, TO LIVE.

PANEL 5. YOSHI is fully awake.

9. YOSHI: WHO ARE YOU?

10. NOH: **I LIVE IN THE EYE OF THE POET, THE HANDS OF THE PLAYWRIGHT. I AM NOH, AND I AM NOT.**

11. YOSHI: WHY ME?

12. NOH: I DO NOT KNOW. ASK SEAMI.

13. NOH: **COME, YOSHIMASA.**

PANEL 6. YOSHI lays back down, and talks to the ceiling.

14. YOSHI: IF I HELP, WILL YOU GO AWAY?

15. NOH: WE ARE BOUND, NOW AND UNTIL YOU NO LONGER WALK THE EARTH.

16. YOSHI: THEN SCREW OFF.

PANEL 7. YOSHI turns over on his side and shuts his eyes, trying to force himself to sleep.

17. NOH: **SEVEN DAYS, THEN. ONCE THE USHER IS DEFEATED, I'LL NOT RETURN FOR SEVEN DAYS.**

18. YOSHI: ONE WEEK?

19. YOSHI: OKAY, THEN...

PAGE 6

PANEL 1. PIERRE ARMAN is unconscious, with broken ribs, in his study. He's lying on the floor. The book "THE TAO OF POOH" is lying beside him. There's a small light (alarm light) flashing under his desk (which we can see, because we're looking in low).

1. CAP: THE HOME OF DIRECTOR PIERRE ARMAN.

PANEL 2. The USHER is in a hallway of the same house. He's punching a bust of Leonardo da Vinci. There are paintings on the wall. He's holding a van Gogh-like print.

2. CAP: SOME PEOPLE DO THEIR BEST WORK AT NIGHT.

3. USHER (thought): SUPERHEROES! THERE AREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE ANY OUT HERE. NOW I'LL HAVE TO MOVE TO SEATTLE OR SOMETHING.

PANEL 3. The USHER has moved down the hallway into a pool room. He's taking a picture of dogs playing poker from the wall.

4. USHER: HERE'S A NICE PAINTING. BET IT'S WORTH SOMETHING.

PANEL 4. A Police OFFICER has burst into view from the entrance to the pool room. He's pointing his gun at the USHER.

5. OFFICER #1: FREEZE, CLOWN!

6. USHER: YIPES!

7. USHER (thought): WHOOPS. TALK LIKE THE COMICS!

PANEL 5. The OFFICER fires on the USHER as the USHER moves menacingly towards the OFFICER. The SFX are for the OFFICER'S gun being fired, and the bullets bouncing off of the USHER. Another OFFICER comes into view behind the first one.

8. USHER: YOUR WEAPON CANNOT HARM ME!

9. USHER (thought): SHOULD'VE SAID 'PUNY.'

10. SFX: POW! POW! TZING! TZING!

11. USHER: SCUM LIKE ARMAN ARE RUINING AMERICA WITH THEIR PANSY 'ART.'

12. OFFICER #2: IT'S THE USHER!

PANEL 6. The OFFICERS are running away through the front door. The USHER leaves through a wall. There are three police cars, and 5 police officers, total. The lights are flashing, but the sirens are not on. The other OFFICERS (Officers #3-#5) are taking up positions behind their cars.

13. USHER (thought): SHOULD I SMASH A CAR? WHY NOT...?

PANEL 7. OFFICERS #1 and #2 jump behind their cars, but at the same time, the USHER jumps *onto* one of the cars, caving in the top. The two OFFICERS behind that car scatter backwards. There is MUSIC along the bottom of the page, in very small letters, much like the radio stuff in the last issue.

NOTE TO LETTERER: Make the MUSIC as small as possible and still legible.

14. USHER (thought): GOTTA LOVE IT!

15. NOH (OP): **SURRENDER, USHER. ART HAS A CHAMPION NOW.**

16. USHER (very quietly): MOMMY...

17. MUSIC: can you hear his laughter in the darkness...

PAGE 7

Yeah, there's a lot of stuff going on this page. Remember that even though this is a fight scene, the fight isn't that important: the dialogue is.

PANEL 1. The USHER is atop the police car. NOH is warily circling him, flying upright.

1. OFFICER #3: A SUPERHERO?!
2. OFFICER #4: HIT 'IM ONE FOR MY CAR!
3. USHER: WHO ARE YOU?
4. NOH: **I AM NOH. WHAT YOU STAND FOR, I DESPISE.**
5. MUSIC: ...can you see the painted bird take flight?

PANEL 2. USHER punches NOH, who flies into Armand's wall, which partially collapses. NOH is surprised, but not seriously hurt. He's partially in the house.

6. SFX (punch): THWOCK!
7. SFX (crashing into house): CRASH!
8. NOH: **OOF!**
9. USHER: WHAT I STAND FOR?

PANEL 3. They're in the house now. USHER punches at NOH, but NOH blocks it (standard American brawling block, not a 'martial arts' block).

10. NOH: **YOU ARE THE ENEMY OF ART. I AM ART!**
11. MUSIC: can you feel the heat of a thousand years...

PANEL 4. NOH counterattacks and punches USHER, sending him flying straight up through the roof.

12. SFX (punch): SOCK!
13. SFX (Usher going through roof): Crash!

PANEL 5. USHER falls back through the roof, and lands clumsily on the floor.

14. SFX: THUD
15. USHER: YOU'VE- YOU CAN'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING ON THE NEWS, MAN.
16. MUSIC: swept before the night...

PANEL 6. USHER is standing again. NOH hits him, sending him flying backwards (he'll land in the bathroom).

17. NOH: **THE MUSES CRY OUT. YOU THOUGHT THEY WERE DEFENSELESS. THIS HAIKU FIGHTS BACK!**

18. SFX (punch): THWOCK!

19. MUSIC: swept before the night?

PANEL 7. USHER is lying with his back to the toilet. His lip is bleeding. He's fairly well beat up. He tries to kick out at NOH, but NOH blocks the kick with his hands.

20. NOH: **YOU ARE REPRESSION AND CENSORSHIP.**

21. USHER: I'M BLEEDING! I'M A MAN IN A SUIT!

PANEL 8. NOH prepares to strike at USHER'S head. USHER is holding his hands over his face. His watch says 11:35.

NOTE TO LETTERER: YOSHI'S dialogue should be in a disembodied thought balloon.

22. NOH: **NOW—!**

23. YOSHI (thought): WAIT!

24. USHER: **OGODI'MGONNADIE!**

PAGE 8

PANEL 3 should take up about a quarter of the page.

PANEL 1. Two director's chairs in blankness, one labeled "YOSHIMASA H." and the other "NOH". The dialogue, not in balloons, is on the side of its owner's chair.

1. NOH: **HE MUST BE DESTROYED.**
2. YOSHI: YOU CAN'T KILL HIM! I DIDN'T AGREE TO THAT.
3. NOH: **THEN WHAT?**
4. YOSHI: LET THE COPS DO IT! THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE FOR.
5. NOH: **THE AUTHORITIES ARE RARELY WITH US.**
6. YOSHI: LOOK, IT'S HOW IT'S GOT TO BE DONE.
7. NOH: **HE MUST BE PUNISHED.**
8. YOSHI: PUNISHED?
9. NOH: REMEMBER OUR CONTRACT.
10. YOSHI: OKAY... NO... OKAY. JUST... BE CAREFUL.

PANEL 2. USHER is standing up, stumbling just a little, trying to get away. NOH punches him *hard*. Add as many panels as you feel necessary to show him flying through the house, through walls, out to the police car (see next panel).

11. NOH: **THE SYSTEM YOU SUPPORT SHALL CHARGE YOU FOR YOUR CRIMES.**
12. USHER: OHHHHH
13. MUSIC: can you feel the darkness of his vision...

PANEL 3. Police lights are flashing. USHER is laying face up on the hood of a police car. While he's not dead, he pretty much looks it. The house is in shambles. There are policemen standing around with radios. A small crowd of 5-10 people are watching. NOH is almost off panel, flying away. His WAKE of darkness with disembodied masks peering out is slightly more visible here than when he was running, last issue. The moon is shining through the Los Angeles mist... smog.

14. MUSIC: ...can you hear the echo of his feet?
15. MUSIC: can you hear the crying of the helpless,
16. MUSIC: boots upon the street, boots upon the street?