

Dystopians, Issue 1: "Apocalypse, Wow!"

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NOTE: This story takes place on various levels of reality like "Inception" or "The Matrix." There should be stylistic and color differences between the different levels of reality, but this should not be explicitly noted. The story begins in an unreality. This level of reality is relatively undetailed. Sharp lines, but little shading and lots of open space. The color palette is bright and simple and the colors red and pink appear nowhere unless specified.

Panel 1 - Open on a cookie-cutter suburban house with a very green lawn and a white picket fence. The house is pink, bordering on red. The house is two stories and is exactly like the houses on either side of it. One is green. The other is blue. The house has a second-floor window open. Through the window is the top of a Modest Moose poster (a parody of a Modest Mouse poster).

On the sidewalk in front of the house a dog walks into the panel, moving left to right. It is tiny and is a fun, fluffy kind of dog like a Scottie or something like that. You can imagine this dog bouncing along. The dog has a collar and a nametag that, while partially obscured, reads "Jefferson."

Panel 2 - The same view as the previous one, with the only change being that the dog is now in the middle of the panel. A leash trails behind the dog, dragging on the ground.

Panel 3 - Again, the same view, but the front end of the dog has gone past the right border of the panel, so you can only see its back half and the leash trailing behind it. In the open window, a single arm stretches up from an unseen bed, obscuring the Modest Moose poster.

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Panel 1 - Inside the bedroom, the Modest Moose poster fully revealed. The arm belongs to MYA, who sits up and stretches with her eyes closed. She is a 16-year-old white girl. Her hair is bright red. She is athletic and wears pajamas that appear to have Star Wars logos and ships on them, but they say Star Battles. The pop culture that she sees in this world is mostly a bit off, with slight changes from the real versions.

The room is filled with pictures and posters on the walls, books and DVDs on the shelves and a wide array of stuffed and plush animals and characters, all very cute. One poster says "The Mootrix" and has a cow version of the Matrix. A DVD spine on the shelf says "Alienses" in the same green as the Alien movies. An all-black poster says "Darker City." Other DVDs/books include real or slightly off versions of: "American Psycho", Stephen King's "The Mist," "Crisis on Infinite Earths," "The Giver" by Lois Lowry, Labyrinth, "The Island" by Aldous Huxley, "Dead Philosophers" by Freud Faraday, "The Diary of Anne Frank," and a poster of the band The Coup.

Panel 2 - Close on Mya's face, her eyes shoot open and she looks panicked. Over her shoulder is a "Hello Catty" alarm clock, stopped at 8:16.

Mya: Eff! I'm gonna be late for school!

Caption:

Mya

Age 16

Weird

Late for School

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Panel 1 - Mya runs off panel, out of her room, with only her legs and feet visible. In each panel in this sequence, Mya is smiling, playful, fun. Everything is very bright, very few dark colors.

Panel 2 - Close-up of the alarm clock by Mya's bed that still says 8:16.

Panel 3 - Mya in the bathroom, brushing her teeth.

Panel 4 - Close-up of a grandfather clock in a dark hallway, it is stopped at 8:16.

Panel 5 - A silhouette of Mya in the shower.

Panel 6 - Close-up of an old-fashioned kitty wall clock in the kitchen, the type where the tail swings back and forth. It's frozen at 8:16.

Panel 7 - Mya is now fully dressed in her school clothes. She wears bright blue jeans, pink Chucks, and a baggy tie-dye sweatshirt with a hoodie. While obscured in this panel, the sweatshirt says Danny Brown on the front, with four dates/locations on the back:

Tour Festival Extension
4/19 Narnia
4/20 Krypton
4/21 Asgard
4/23 Cleveland

A soft hum begins, Mya doesn't notice.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 8 - View of the alarm clock next to Mya's bed. The clock is now off, as the power is out.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

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Panel 1 - A final full view of Mya's bedroom, Mya leaves the room, her head is already out the doorway. She wears a "Hello Catty" backpack.

Panel 2 - In the relatively expensive (but not rich) and spacious kitchen, Mya walks towards the refrigerator. On the fridge is a note held by a magnet that reads: "Money on the counter, we'll be back in two weeks! Love, Mommy." Next to the note, magnets hold up an airline itinerary for an Oceanic plane flight and a lottery ticket with the numbers: 4, 8, 15, 16, 23 and 42. Also, there are many, many coupons for a frozen yogurt shop named "YogurtYum!" An envelope lays flat on the counter.

Panel 3 - The fridge is open and Mya grabs the milk, peeking to see if anyone is home.

Panel 4 - Mya drinks straight out of the milk carton. She doesn't notice that the missing child picture on the side is her. It reads: "Have you seen me? My name is Mya."

Panel 5 - Mya holds her stomach with one hand and has a grossed-out look on her face.

Mya: Ugh, I think this is spoiled!

Panel 6 - The fridge is closed and Mya has a milk mustache and a huge smile. She holds the envelope, which has her name on it. In her other hand, she fans a bunch of twenty-dollar bills.

Panel 7 - An outside view of Mya's house, on the sidewalk, she goes in the same direction the dog went.

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Panel 1 - The same view of the outside of Mya's house, she is now gone from the panel. Behind her, barely visible, is a small wisp of white fog.

Panel 2 - Further down the street, Mya enters the left side of the panel. The dog exits the right side. All the other houses on the road look exactly like the one Mya lives in, only the colors vary. The houses have various combinations of lawn furniture, flamingos, gnomes, etc. They all have the same type of decorations, just in different combinations. The houses are nice, but not extravagant.

Panel 3 - From behind Mya, we see that the road approaches a scenic overlook just past the last of the houses. We see the edge of the overlook, but can't see what is beyond it.

Panel 4 - Over Mya's shoulder, we see over the edge of the overlook down upon a pretty standard American small town. To the Eastern side of town is a fair with two ferris wheels, small roller coasters and other rides. The road continues down the side of the mountain towards the fair.

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Panel 1 - View of Mya. For the first time, she isn't smiling or happy. The dog stands in the yard of the last house on the block. The front door is open. In the distance, the fog starts to envelop everything past Mya's house.

Jefferson the Dog: Woof!

Panel 2 - Mya turns and looks at the dog.

Mya: Jefferson? / Is that you, pop-tart?

Panel 3 - Close-up on Jefferson.

Jefferson: Woof!

Caption:

Jefferson

Dog

Named After Jefferson Airplane

Likes Pop-tarts

Panel 4 - Jefferson turns and runs toward the house.

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Panel 1 - From inside the house, Jefferson trots in. Mya follows.

Panel 2 - Mya stands in the doorway, looking into the house. There is some light in the house, enough to make out detail, but it is mostly dark and filled with shadows.

Panel 3 - Mya walks down the hallway. Light comes from a doorway at the end of the hall. Family pictures line the walls. The family bears a striking resemblance to the Obamas.

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Panel 1 - Mya peeks her head into the living room.

Mya: Jefferson?

Panel 2 - Mya walks through the living room. The television is on, dialed to channel 4. Static. A door exits the other side of the room. Jefferson's tail peeks through the doorway.

Panel 3 - From inside the kitchen, Mya enters. A flickering candle sits on the counter.

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Panel 1 - This kitchen has the same layout as the one at Mya's house. The decor is similar, as well. The appliances are the same brand and style, just in different colors.

Sitting on the floor, leaned up against the cabinets below the sink, is JAYN. She is an Asian girl under 10-years-old, who wears a light red, almost pinkish babydoll dress like Courtney Love would have worn in the 90s. Her shoes are black Mary Janes. She holds a depressed-looking, worn stuffed bear. She is afraid.

Panel 2 - Mya kneels down to Jayn's level.

Mya: Hi? / What's your name?

Panel 3 - Over Mya's shoulder, Jayn cowers.

Panel 4 - Mya reaches out a hand to comfort Jayn.

Mya: Are you here alone?

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Panel 1 - Close-up of Mya's face, she has a gentle smile.

Mya: Are you okay?

Panel 2 - A wider view, Jayn is still tense and leans away from Mya. Mya looks around the room.

Mya: Where is everyone?

Panel 3 - Jayn's face, afraid.

Panel 4 - Mya pulls back her hand.

Panel 5 - Standing up, Mya scans the room. An exclamation point appears above her head.

Mya: Would you like a cup of tea?

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Panel 1 - Jayn shakes her head to the left.

Panel 2 - She shakes her head to the right, pulling her bear closer.

Panel 3 - Close-up of Mya's face, another exclamation point above her head.

Panel 4 - The same close-up of Mya's face.

Mya: Is that your bear? I like him, he's very fwee.

Panel 5 - Jayn smiles and holds the bear up proudly with two hands.

Jayn: His name is Tibbers!

Panel 6 - Mya rubs the bear's head.

Mya: Hi, Tibbers! / Are you here alone? What's your name?

Caption

Tibbers
Stuffed Teddy Bear
Takes Zoloft

Panel 7 - Mya holds hands with Jayn, who is now standing.

Jayn: I'm Jayn. / My Mommy and daddy didn't come home.

Mya: Neither did mine.

Caption:

Jayn
Age 8
Her first time ever being alone

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Panel 1 - Mya walks back into the living room. Only her hand, still holding Jayn's, and her leg are still visible. Jayn follows along with Tibbers in tow.

Mya: Maybe something happened? Maybe we should check the TV?

Panel 2 - Mya and Jayn sit on the couch. From behind them, Mya points the remote control at the static-filled television, which is currently on channel 8.

Panel 3 - The same view, except the television is on channel 16 and the screen shows an old-fashioned "we'll be right back" technical difficulties TV card.

Panel 4 - The same view, except now the channel is 23, and we see a news desk with no one at it. Unattended papers are blown into the air.

Panel 5 - The same view, except now the channel is 42, and we see another old-fashioned technical difficulties TV card. The humming from before is back, but is very soft.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

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Panel 1 - Same view as before, but the television is now on channel 4, which is still static. The girls' hair stands up from static electricity. The hum is louder than before.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 2 - Same view as before, but now the lights and the television are off. The girls' hair still stands up.

Mya: I think I'm going to be sick.

Jayn: They're gone. All of them.

The hum gets louder.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 3 - Mya leads Jayn out the front door, holding her hand.

Mya: Let's get out of here.

The hum is even louder.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

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Panel 1 - Outside now, the girls stare to the right, at a large bank of fog. The hum comes from the fog and is louder. Their hair still stands up even further. Jefferson sits at the edge of the left side of the panel. His fur stands up, as well.

Jefferson: WOOF!

SFX: HMMMMMM...

Panel 2 - Jefferson has walked halfway off the panel, leash trailing behind. Mya and Jayn follow while, looking back at the fog.

Mya: Where is that fog coming from?

SFX: HMMMMMMMM...

Panel 3 - Close-up on Jayn's face, which is emotionless. Her eyes are a little blacker than before.

Jayn: That's not fog, it's haze. / Mostly.

Panel 4 - The girls start to walk down the road, away from the haze. Mya looks nauseous and has one hand on her stomach and one hand over her mouth. They are further away from the haze and the hum is softer.

Mya: I really don't feel so well.

SFX: HMMMMMM...

Panel 5 - Close-up of Jayn, who now has her hand over her mouth, too.

Mya: What are you...

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Panel 1 - Further down the mountain road, Mya stands stiff, her eyes have gone black, and she shows no emotion. Jefferson still leads the way, further down the road. The haze is barely seen.

Caption: Mya! Go now! He needs you!

Panel 2 - Close-up of Mya.

Mya: Who are you, don't we know each other?

Panel 3 - Close-up of Jayn, looking toward Mya.

Jayn: Who are you talking to?

Panel 4 - Mya grabs Jayn's hand and moves down the road. Her eyes are no longer black, having reverted to their natural green.

Mya: I don't know.

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Panel 1 - A wider view with Jefferson, Mya and Jayn further away from the haze, which now completely covers all the houses behind them. The further away from the haze, the quieter the hum gets.

Jayn: What IS that buzzing sound?

Mya: Let's not wait around to find out.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 2 - Mya and Jayn are close to the bottom, while the haze has only just started to creep down the slope. The hum is smaller. Their hair no longer stands on end.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 3 - Mya and Jayn stand at the bottom of the hill, on the outskirts of the fair.

Mya: What's THAT?

Panel 4 - They walk inside the fair, surrounded by games and rides. They seem to be alone. A disembodied voice comes from speaker boxes throughout the fairgrounds.

Preacher: What we've seen here, as terrible as it is, could be miniscule if, in fact...

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Panel 1 - Mya and Jayn walk past a carousel.

Mya: Let's be careful. I don't like any of this.

Preacher: ...God continues to lift the curtain and allow the enemies of America to give us what probably we deserve.

Panel 2 - Jefferson runs off, only the back end of his body and the leash can be seen. Mya reaches after him in futility. She whispers his name.

Mya: Jefferson!

Preacher: I think we've just seen the antechamber to terror...

Panel 3 - The girls follow in Jefferson. The voice is louder.

Preacher: ...we haven't begun to see what they can do.

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Panel 1 - Mya and Jayn watch Jefferson run underneath a set of bleachers. A large crowd stands on the other side. Mya's hand rests on Jayn's shoulder and she whispers. The hum is present, but very quiet.

Mya: Let's get a closer look.

Preacher: There's a lot of blame to go around for this.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 2 - Mya and Jayn creep along beneath the bleachers. They approach an opening.

Preacher: Throwing God out of the public square, out of the schools. The abortionists have got to bear some burden for this...

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 3 - Mya and Jayn are at the opening. Over their shoulders, we can see the crowd, but can't quite see what they are looking at.

Preacher: ...because God will not be mocked and when we destroy 40 million little innocent babies, we make God mad...

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

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Panel 1 - Mya stands up and peers over the crowd, which is diverse in terms of race, gender, clothing style, etc. At the front of the crowd is a stage. A bald man wearing a black t-shirt that is designed to look like a Catholic priest's outfit stand between two cages. This is THE PREACHER. Each cage is guarded by large men in security guard uniforms.

Preacher: I really believe that the pagans...

Panel 2 - A close up view of the Preacher shows that he is a white man in his 40s, who looks mean and nasty. He wears jeans and cowboy boots. In the cage to the left a light-skinned Black man's arm hangs through the bars. The right cage shows the feet of a different man laying prone.

Preacher: ...and the abortionists and the feminists...

Panel 3 - A close up the Preacher, looking crazed.

Preacher: ...and the gays and the lesbians...

Panel 4 - From over the Preacher's shoulder, the crowd stares in rapture. They number in the dozens and all of them have black eyes, but this isn't obvious in the broad view. Mya and Jayn are in the background.

Preacher: ...who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, all of them who try to secularize America...I point the finger in their face and say you helped this happen.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

Panel 5 - The crowd cheers the preacher on. Crowd members say things like "yeah," "you said it," "preach," and "yeah, kill him!" It is very clear that all of their eyes are black now. The hum is louder and the haze can be seen in the distance behind Mya and Jayn.

Preacher: When the nation is on its knees, the only normal and natural and spiritual thing to do is what we ought to be doing all the time, calling on God.

SFX: Hmmmmmm...

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Panel 1 - The Preacher stands with his arms raised, gesturing to the cages. The guards are armed. One of them has a large key ring on his belt.

Around the stage, a lot of film equipment is visible, including boom stands, cranes, movie cameras and things like that.

The man laying in the cage to the Preacher's right is dead. Bright red blood flows through the bars of the cage.

At the side of the crowd, one of the audience members vomits.

The cage to the Preacher's left holds ROSKO. Rosko is a light-skinned Black man in his 20s. He has a mohawk and wears bright red-colored glasses. He wears a black shirt that says The Ramoons and has a crescent moon in the upper right hand corner. Sitting nearby on the stage is a backpack that has a baseball bat sticking out of it.

Preacher: God has listened—and he's coming!

Caption:

The Preacher
Real Name: Bradworth Bennett
Film Director
Completely Insane

SFX: HMMMMMM...

End.