JOKERS AND THIEVES: A GRAPHIC NOVEL

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

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RESEARCH COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

Research activities involving the use of human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or biohazards must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Texas A&M University regulatory research committee (i.e., IRB, IACUC, IBC) before the activity can commence. This requirement applies to activities conducted at Texas A&M and to activities conducted at non-Texas A&M facilities or institutions. In both cases, students are responsible for working with the relevant Texas A&M research compliance program to ensure and document that all Texas A&M compliance obligations are met before the study begins.

I, Kyle Rively, certify that all research compliance requirements related to this Undergraduate Research Scholars thesis have been addressed with my Research Faculty Advisor prior to the collection of any data used in this final thesis submission.

This project did not require approval from the Texas A&M University Research Compliance & Biosafety office.

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ABSTRACT

Jokers and Thieves: A Graphic Novel

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This thesis breaks down the ideas and processes of an adaptation. It investigates the

methods for adapting artistic materials from one medium to another and how my process

changed the more I learned. Originally this, was to reconcile my own influences but soon

became an observation on how my views on storytelling evolved. The oxford dictionary defines

Adaptation as "changing something, or of being changed, to suit a new purpose or situation."

This is a broad category but as used by this paper it's the repurposing of a work to a new style or

medium. In this thesis, I adapt Bob Dylan's "All Along The Watchtower," into a graphic novel

to further explore the meaning of the word. I chose this work because I find it compelling from a

thematic and visual standpoint but also because it has never been adapted before. Songs have

been commonly adapted into visual form in the past through movies, music videos, and art

pieces. I set myself apart from these mediums by adapting my work into a graphic novel.

Graphic novels don't lend themselves to the fast-paced nature of music videos and require active

participation, but they have benefits to them. They allow for tone setting and storytelling like

music videos but don't have to adhere to a time structure. They allow more in-depth storytelling

with plot and character development, due to their longer form. At first, the research consisted of gathering resources to inspire my graphic novel. These resources included artists' works, other graphic novels, books, short stories, songs, and movies. They gave me an initial base to build the setting of the graphic novel. I changed my development process from research-based to intuition, later in the project, Moving from sources and inspiration to my own knowledge of aesthetics and storytelling. This showed how my views on what adaption meant evolved with the thesis. The final documents go into more detail with these steps and my growth as an artist as well as showing my final product.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contributors

First, thank you to my faculty advisor Professor Sam Woodfin, for his encouragement, guidance, and support throughout this project. He gave me mentorship both in and outside of the project and pushed my skills as an artist and storyteller.

Thank you to my friends and colleges in the Aggie Creative Collective, Cheryl Cruz, Jordyn Goodman, and Jordan Stawski. They gave me input and motivation when I most needed it. This project would not be where it is without them.

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1.   AESTHETIC MOTIVATION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

This research project is a graphic novel adaptation of the song "All Along The Watchtower" by Bob Dylan. This project was originally meant to show the process and outcome of adapting abstract works like songs into visual works like graphic novels. However, the project grew to reflect my learning. This project is now a reflection on adaptation as a process and how my views on it have changed during the creation of this work.

I chose "All Along The Watchtower" because I find this song compelling from a visual, narrative, and thematic standpoint and how it has many different interpretations. Bob Dylan was apprehensive to give meaning to his songs. Whenever asked in interviews he would respond with jokes or leave them unanswered. For example, in one interview Dylan famously said, "I don't write [songs] for any reason, I have no great message," (Dylan). We know this isn't true based on the consistency of his themes and accounts of his writing process. For example, there are 70 biblical connections in his album *John Wesley Harding,* and he was known to consult the Bible when writing the album, (Puschak 4:01-4:12). This ambiguity allowed me to develop my own interpretation of his music and convey them through my work. It also left me room to add my personal influences in the work, later in the development. In my view, "All Along The Watchtower" explores indulgence and classism leading to an ultimate doom and the thought of being trapped in your own circumstances. The story I am adapting the song into is about the aftermath of a malevolent entity taking over the world, subjugating its masses to an endless cycle of tyranny. It's a time loop, hinted at by the song's continuous rhythm and ending the same way it started, yet also a precursor to the apocalypse. Although people try to fight against this threat in the end the apocalypse will still come. It's an allegory to the government and the persistent

societal issues we can still apply today, especially with the recent Black Lives Matter protests mirroring the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

At first, my motivation was to create as faithful of an adaptation as possible. I took these themes at face value. I wanted to create an accurate portrayal of Dylan's work not mine. I have difficulty coming up with ideas on my own. Due to this I've always had to rely on other peopled work to bounce off and viewed adaption as an exercise in faithfulness rather than creativity. These ideas especially bled into this project. The malevolent entity purely reflected the government and the two main characters were representations of Dylan's personality. Even the environment was developed based on my analysis of Dylan's work and his relation of biblical illusions to a middle eastern setting. The only place I took liberties was with the aesthetic. Here I added sci-fi elements based on artists I enjoy such as Syd Mead or Simon Staling.

Before my ideas were put down to a paper, I had sci-fi, Arabian, and biblical images in my head for what these images would look like. The current look by this point leaned heavily into the sci-fi ideas and I lost much of the mystical aesthetics I wanted to go for. I pushed my influences away at many points and returned to form in some areas. These weren't the original ideas, but they were closer. They better melded with my themes and add more aesthetic qualities which I enjoy to the work.

I later learned the benefit in adding my own experiences in the story. Eventually, I hit a wall with this idea. I was unhappy with my work. It felt stagnant and ingenuine. I realized that I saw the work this way because it wasn't my story, it was somebody else's I was adapting. I pushed past the wall by adding my own themes to the story. I investigated my own struggles and saw where the work reflected them. As the project continued, I understood the value in my won influences and experiences. I later took these themes and interpreted them to make sense in my

own life. I used the malevolent entity to reflect my conflict with my own future and its unknown outcome. The time loop represents my persistence in finding my own path where every time I fail, I will have to get back up and keep on trying. By changing the influences to be introspective on my own struggles I gained more motivation and purpose with the work and was pushed to continue.

As I come close to my graduation, I find a fear of being thrust into the outside world. I saw a kinship with what the characters were going through. I'm only one man yet I must fight against a world that is indifferent towards me, yet I keep pushing forward anyway because it's the only thing I can do. I'm writing about two lone vagabonds fighting against an insurmountable threat because it's the only thing they can do. These ideas came to reflect in how I wrote the dialog and characters. One being an optimist toward their changing situation and one being a pessimist each talking about how they ended up in their situation. These reflected both sides of my mind and how I was both excited and scared to combat my changing reality.

All art is built upon previous works, but I become carried away by this notion. For art to grow and move forward we must add ourselves to the work. We must add our own thoughts, desires, and views so the work is meaningful and not just a lesser of previous works. My creative works offers a path that future creative works can take, showing the issues that show up in direct adaptations and how they can be solved by adding your own influence on the work. Even "All Along the Watchtower" grew past Bob Dylan once it was covered by Jimmy Hendrix. Bob Dylan's song was a comment on classism and greed. Jimmy Hendrix added his own struggles to the song making it into a story of his dissolution with fame and the confusion he felt. He created something arguably more influential than the last. *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, itself a large influence on the direction I took this project, was a mecha show which started like other mechas

before it like *Gundam* or *Gunbuster*. But the creator made it a cultural phenomenon by adding his own thoughts and emotions into the show. He was depressed and used the show make a comment on the human condition, escapism, and what it truly meant to be happy. These and other works showed me a new way to interpret adaptation

I hope in the future artists will see my work and be inspired to make their own works like these works. In the end, the work shows my struggles and views on adaption and how I used a combination of influences and my own intuition to create a work I'm proud of.

2.   HISTORICAL CONTEXT, DISCIPLINARY PARADIGMS, AND AESTHETIC STANDARDS

The act of listening to a song conveys complex emotions and imagery. Songs are commonly adapted through music videos, art pieces, and movies. Each form has its own benefit. Art pieces catch the eye through composition and help show the tone of the music. Historically, Artists like Wassily Kandinsky tried to visually capture music in an abstract way. He arranged shapes on canvases to represent how music could seamlessly convey information and show how visual art couldn't. Music videos also have this benefit but go further in conveying the story and including the song into the final product. Music videos gained popularity in the 1960s with Bob Dylan's song "Subterranean Homesick Blues." Later bands used them to show stories like "Yellow Submarine" by the Beatles and "The Wall" by Pink Floyd. However, I will be setting myself apart from these works and make a graphic novel. Song adaptations of graphic novels aren't as common as the previous two examples although they do happen. Some examples are *The True Lives of the Fabulous Killjoys* by my Chemical Romance, The Gorillaz comics by Jamie Hewlett, and *The Amory Wars* by Coheed and Cambria. Graphic novels don't lend themselves to the fast-paced nature of music videos and require active participation, but they have benefits to them. They allow for tone setting and storytelling like music videos but don't have to adhere to a time structure. They also allow more in-depth storytelling with plot and character development, due to their longer form.

The idea of adaption is nothing new, yet it can be used to bring a new view onto previous work. "Hurt" by Nine Inch Nails is an example of a song that had an adaption arguably more popular than the original. The song was originally written by Trent Reznor and discussed drug

use, suicide, and self-destruction as a core theme. It was later covered by Jonny Cash who repurposed the song to discuss the disillusion of his life as a musical icon. Reznor originally dismissed the cover but later listened to it and said it reminded him of the beauty in music, (2019). Another example is All Along the Watchtower itself. Bob Dylan's song was most likely a commentary on classism and the repetition of history. The more popular version however is Jimi Hendrix's later cover. In his cover, he discusses his dissolution and confusion with fame, adding in powerful guitar riffs to a song that originally only had four chords. This version of the song became so popular Bob Dylan would later say its Hendrix's song now, choosing to play the Hendrix version at concerts, (Polyphonic, 2020). These two examples demonstrate the use and importance of adaption in creating new works. Although they are using the work of someone else, they are building upon it. They repurpose the song to discuss their own views on life.

To start this project research was made into Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower" to create a basis for the visuals. Many of Bob Dylan's songs were left to interpretation. Bob Dylan was apprehensive to give meaning to his songs. Whenever asked in interviews he would respond with jokes or non-answers. For example, in one interview Dylan famously said, "I don't write [songs] for any reason, I have no great message," (Dylan). However, we know this isn't true based on the consistency of his themes and the accounts of his writing process. For example, there are 70 biblical connections in his album "John Wesley Harding" and he was known to consult the Bible when writing the album, (Puschak 4:01-4:12). Many characteristics in the song support this connection with religion, like the joker and the thief, possibly representing the two men crucified with Jesus and the watchtower itself being an illusion to the Tower of Babel. In terms of the story, All Along the watchtower makes many connections to government systems and classism through its lyrics and repetition through its structure. The two lines "Businessmen,

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they drink my wine, plowmen dig my earth" "Princes kept the view, while all the women came and went, barefoot servants too." are direct examples of the classism in the song, (Dylan). The song is only four chords repeated, the ending of the song also being its beginning. On top of this, the lyrics are believed to be out of order, with the final verse in fact being the beginning of the story. The two riders approaching at the end of the song are the two jokers most likely imprisoned at the beginning of the song.

I used these themes as a basis for the rest of the research, finding sources of both visual and story inspiration I could reference to expand the work. My inspiration itself would set me apart from previous art pieces. Many of the visual components of my story were inspired by concept art for video games and movies as well as real-world references. Much of the media used had medieval or Arab influences. Dylan's original story made references to Babylon and the bible, both stories set in the middle eastern area, and I wanted to make clear reference to this. Games were used like Team Ico's *The Last Guardian* or *Shadow of The Colossus* as well as *Journey* by Thatgamecompany. Movies and TV shows were used such as *Laurence of Arabia*, *Prince of Egypt*, and Ghibli's *Nausicaa* and *Tales of Earth Sea*. I thought the art for these movies were beautiful, from the color design, to the landscapes to the costumes. I wanted to tap into this beauty in the hopes it would translate into my own work.

With these ideas I created a platform in developing my question and creating the visual component of the thesis. They helped me understand a creative lens through which I could think about influences and how I could implement them in my final work. A starting point was also developed from which I could think about my work in a more focused manner than if I were to start from nothing.

3.   EXPLANATION OF EXHIBIT

The thesis will be exhibited in an online format as opposed to physical printing. Each page will be largely black and white drawn with pen on Bristol paper and assembled in Photoshop and InDesign.

The project was originally meant to be 30-40 pages, but the scope was whittled down to six and later four. This was for multiple reasons. First, it allowed me to have time to complete the project. I had completed almost 30 preliminaries, before I soon realized the length they would take to ink, the little time I would have to ink them, and the materials I would have to buy. These preliminaries can be seen in Figures A.7-A.8 in the Appendix. Even then I underestimated the work. I originally thought each page would take around a day to ink with no other work. Once I started, I realized two days would have been more ideal but kept to one as best as I could. Due to me being a visualization major I had little free time with this and other projects, so it would have taken around a week per page at the height of the semester. I originally compressed the pages down to 6 and placed a hard cut off on making any more to make sure I had enough time to complete the project to the finish I wanted. I later extended this cut off to four as the deadline approached so I wouldn't compromise on other areas of the project. Second, to compress the story for better readability and to emulate the French comic inspiration that went into the project. Tintin comics became a large influence for me in the latter half of the project. Each page is extremely compressed with up to 12 panels a page as opposed to my original 6, seen in Figures A.9 of the Appendix.

Originally, I wanted to physically print the pages but opted for an online presentation instead due to the shorter page length among other reasons. The comic would have been two

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pages front and back once printed, with the final work being four pages. The time I would have needed to put in to figure out printed no longer seemed worth the outcome, so I scrapped the idea for the project just being presented in the thesis paper itself in Figures A.10-A.13 In the end, it was the easiest and most elegant option to do.

The pages were created with pen and ink on cropped pieces of 18x24 bristle paper. I based the cropping on a bleed guide I found online for comics. I then cropped the pages with an Exacto knife to get a cleaner cut that scissors or a paper cutter would have given. After the cropping, I moved on to penciling. I did a first round of penciling lightly with a simple HB pencil. A ruler was used to make sure all the boxes were consistent and correct. The first pass of penciling included getting the cropping and paneling in place as well as getting roughed forms blocked in on each panel. A second pass on penciling was then done to add more detail to the first pass. A third and final pass was done to block in shadow shapes over the complex forms. Many of these lines were darker than the original pass to confidently show where I wanted certain shapes to be. After this the drawing were finalized with ink. For inking, I primarily used a .01 Micron pen but occasionally switched to a Pilot fountain pen and Micron brush pen when needed. The Pilot was used for lines that needed to be darker and the brush pen was used for large dark sections. I chose the Microns because they're cheap, have a good quality for their price, and are easy to find and use. I have a lot of practice with these pens and can get a variety of line weights out of them. I didn't start using the pilot pen until recently as it was given as a gift, but it has shown to produce a dark high-quality line. Finally, I scanned the pages into a PNG format using a paper scanner provided in the Evan's library at Texas A&M campus. Each scan was done in black in white with base brightness and contrast settings and print levels of quality. These scans were brought into photoshop to prepare them for the final presentation.

These methods were decided on after research into the construction of comics earlier in the project. My thesis advisor Professor Samuel Woodfin gave me the assignment to create two final pages for the project. This was to be a test run to figure out what I needed when I created the final pages. I did research into the creation of comics to understand the standard methods of creating them. This is also how I came across the bleeds and cropping I used for the project. There are two primary ways of producing comics, either using the programs InDesign and Photoshop or making them physically and scanning them digitally later. I already knew before researching that I wanted to do the project physically but found that many of the artists I followed had a similar mindset. These videos helped me to understand the proper timing and materials I would need in creating the final pages. I had the ability to create these digitally, but I thought they would look better physically with the style I was going for. Creating art physically is a much more intuitive process and I have more control over things like link line weight and movement. I created these first two pages similarly to how I do them now. I use the same bleeds and pencil to ink workflow the only difference were the preliminaries used.

The final thesis will be exhibited using these approaches. I will be making much of the work physically but submitting the final work in a digital format with an explanation of the process accompanying it. This works with how my thesis has evolved from a focus of the work itself to comment on the changes in mindset that come with the process.

4.   REFLECTION

When I started this project, I knew I wanted to create something relating to all "All Along the Watchtower." I saw a whole world in that song I wanted to bring to life. Every time I listened to it, I saw images of two horsemen riding to a glowing city from a cold dessert or two prisoners talking in a torcher chamber. The song was dense with a story that had an eeriness as if it described the apocalypse. It spoke to me, so I decided to use this project as an opportunity to adapt it. Originally the song was going to be adapted into an animatic. The music was to be a direct part of the piece by acting as a backdrop to the visuals I would create. I began thinking of the question I wanted to explore in my thesis and decided on the creation of music videos and how they reflect the music they come from. I began on a script and started to develop rough visual sketches brainstorm. The first script was different from the one today, seen in section 4.1.2 of the Appendix. It was going to accompany the song, so the dialogue decided, and the rhythm of the story needed to match the song's timing. The visuals in my head were heavily inspired by medieval Arabic culture, like something you'd see in biblical etchings However, when transferred them into physical sketches I decided to add a sci-fi touch to them. Sci-fi authors were large influences at the time, and I wanted to add that visual flair to the piece to create a new style for the world being built.

As the project grew with the sketches and script, I decided to change it from an animatic to a graphic novel adaptation. The story wasn't developing how I wanted it to, and I had to pad out uninteresting sections of the script to meet the time requirements of the song. The inspiration to create a graphic novel by my peer Jordan Stawski. He was creating a graphic novel for his thesis and I liked the idea. Graphic novels aren't restricted by time and have greater freedom

with pacing. I continued to work on my script and started on preliminary drawings. These can be seen in Section 4.1.2 and Figures A.1-A. 2 in the Appendix. The drawings were made to brainstorm what I wanted the world I was creating to look like so the script could reference them. They were small and were meant to dictate tone and major story beats. Based on the script and sketches I began watching films and reading books to inspire the narrative. I was interested in two ideas cosmic horror and time loops. Bob Dylan's song had hopelessness to it as if the heroes were continually fighting a villain they could not beat. I saw similarities with these themes and cosmic horror, the fear of fighting something that is so far beyond you it's indifferent towards your existence. I read a lot of Lovecraft but wanted to find other stories to influence the idea. After watching animation on it I was inspired to read the *Mysterious Stranger* by Mark Twain. It had a mystical quality to it and achieved such a level of underlying horror. I read the first half of the book and although I enjoyed it, I'm not sure if I needed it much. I wasn't sure how to translate the imagery into my story. I also read through the book *Uzumaki* by Junji Ito but ran into a similar issue. I think I was already familiar enough with the tropes of cosmic horror that I no longer needed to gain influence for it, or my story did not require as much cosmic horror as I had originally thought. Consuming media on indirect storytelling helped the development of my story. Originally the story had the characters in a pocket dimension with multiple instances of the same characters existing in the same reality in different moments. This reflected how the song was written in that it pulls out of a scene of two men talking with the same two men riding towards a city. After watching films like *Memento* and *Groundhog's Day* I decided to change the story to a more traditional time loop but had the main character still aware of his past lives like *Groundhog's Day*. Later after watching *Inception* I became interested in how Christopher Nolan constructed stories. I watched an interview on how he wrote *Memento*, and everything clicked

into place. He discussed how the story within the movies were two stories converging towards a center point, switch between each other with each scene. It pushed me into developing my story with two separate storylines, one in the future and one in the past, both slowly revealing information. I knew how I wanted to handle my time loops and adjective my script accordingly.

At this point in time I began to feel burnt out from my project. In the time I had worked on it, it had changed so much, and I wasn't sure if I liked the direction it went. The world felt dull and uninspired. I felt like I enjoyed the ideas of it more back when it was just a thought rather than a story. I had imagined this dark mysterious landscape, set in a setting like Arabian nights. Mysterious cloaked figures wintering the streets, and two men watching a glowing city from a distant cliff. My project had far evolved from this point and I didn't like what it had become. I realized at this point what an adaption was supposed to be. It wasn't a soulless combination of influences you feel would combine to make an accurate story. It's the reapplication of a work to better represent your life and experiences. Using the work as a message rather. With this revelation I decided to re-do part of my script to better match what I had originally wanted from the project namely the part of the two men talking on the cliff near at multiple points in the story. My original imagining were the two characters hanging from chains in a jail cell. With the setting hanged to outdoors I didn't know what to do with them, so I had them sit on a cliff watching over the slaves working on the tower. I changed it from them sitting to them hanging from crosses. It made more sense and added a little bit more of the biblical references I enjoyed when started out the story and lost as it developed into more of a science fiction area. It was a small change, but it helped me realize in the end my work was what I wanted it to be and it helped me finish the project.

The final part of the project development was the symposium presentation and the Q&A session. My presentation was done remotely through an online video recording during the spring semester of 2021. The presentation was a good opportunity to compile my thoughts up to this point it the project. I had been working on the project for nearly a year by that point and being able to look back on how far I've come was enlightening and invigorating. It reminded me that my project had direction and that I was still working towards an end idea. As an extraction it was nice to see other reactions to my thoughts through the Q&A. Seeing that others not only understood my thesis but enjoyed my presentation was nice to hear and gave the project more worth in my mind. The only issues I had with the presentation that were brought up were formality issues with the video recording and citations on the presentation slides. In the end it didn't help me discover a new direction like previous exercises, especially since my work has been set in stone by that point, but it was good for revising my final document.

This work took a year to develop. This year wasn't necessarily spent working on the final product but towards it through researching, practicing, and iterating. Looking back, I am happy with how far I've come. The project started with little direction and purpose but through trial and error it developed a clear direction in the nature of adaptation. If I would change anything, I would have working more on the final product but I'm happy with what I have and how my message has developed.

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APPENDIX: CREATIVE ARTIFACT

Jokers and Thieves

Preliminary Sketches
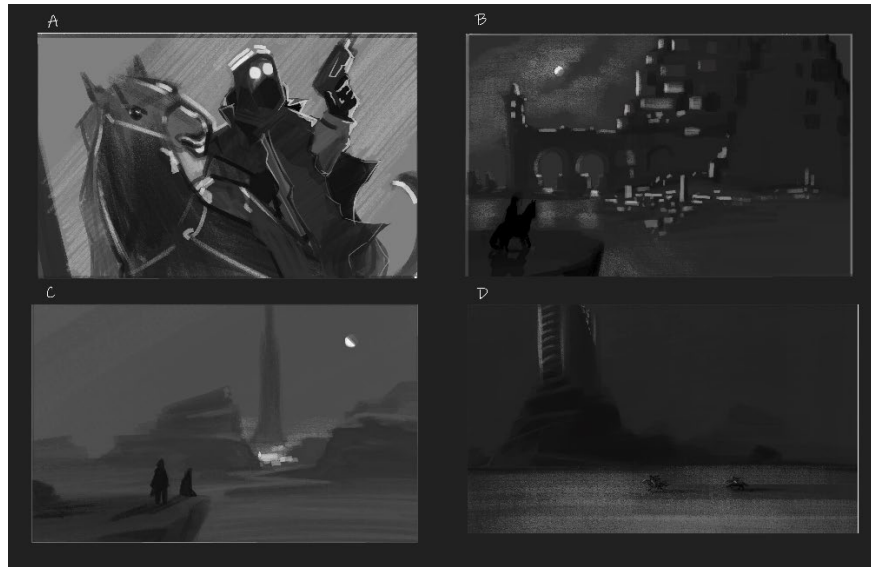
Figure A.1 A-D: The first four preliminary sketches made for the ideation process.

Figure A.2 A-D: The second four preliminary sketches made for the ideation process. These were made to further understand what I wanted from character, environments, and story beats.

Script

Int. The Wasteland

Close up on closed eyes.

Suddenly they dart open. The audience is met with the joker's face as he lays in the sand. He darts up looking out in the distance.

We are met with a seemingly endless decaying desert.

Destroyed skyscrapers and ruins half-buried in sand dot the landscape.

They're the only thing there to break up the silhouette of monotonous rock formations and dunes.

A city in the distance, hazed over with light, is revealed.

An ominous tower looms over everything, reaching into the heavens.

The sky is an evening with dark clouds in the distance.

The Joker gets up before checking a small device on his belt. The screen is broken.

Text: (Joker)

Damn, How long has it been like that?

The Joker puts the device back on his belt before starting back at the tower in the distance.

Text: (Joker)

How long have I been here?

The thief walks over a sand dune, joining the joker in sharing at the tower.

Text: (Thief)

What are you on about?

The joker looks up at the thief with tired eyes as the thief confidently looks at the tower.

Text: (Joker)

Don't worry about it.

The thief smirks.

Text: (Thief)

Alright, well, let's get going.

The Thief Walks back over the dune mounting his horse.

His horse rears as he gallops to the Joker.

Text: (Joker)

I'm sure We'll get 'em this time!

The Joker hesitantly walks over, mounting his horse and riding off with the Thief towards the

tower.

::

<u>Int. Construction Site</u>

The audience is once again met with two eyes darting open before the scene is revealed.

Camera dollies across the construction site.
Countless slaves toil in the background to fix damages and build monuments to the tower.

Robot centuries loom overhead. They look humanoid but their stance is spider-like as they watch

over the landscape.

The sky continues to thunder as dark clouds loom overhead.

The camera stops focusing on two figures in the foreground.

The Thief stands on a mound looking over the area as the Joker sits in the back.

Both men are in tattered clothing, collars wrapped around their necks.

It begins to rain. The Thief walks back towards the Joker before sitting next to him.

The Thief looks over at the Joker. The joker's eyes are jaded as he stares into the distance at the tower.

Text: (Thief)

Be honest with me, How long have we been here?

::

<u>Int. City Outskirts</u>

Panels of eyes opening

The desert is still as the two men approach the city.

The joker suddenly has a face of recollection before his head snaps towards the city walls.

Text: (Joker)

Here they come!

The Joker yells to the Thief as a row of lights shine from atop of the city walls.

Cut to the Construction site

Text: (Joker)

I don't know. I couldn't tell you even if I wanted to.

As much as I try to push on, we remain in the same place

Toiling uselessly, I feel like it's a waste of time.

Thief:

Don't say that. Today may look grim but we can try again. Somedays we step forward.

Somedays we move back. But it's about making those steps forward count. In the end, they're

worth something.

All I have are distant memories, like from a dream.

<u>Cut to City Outskirts</u>

Panels of eyes opening

The still feeling is suddenly disturbed. Artillery fires at the two men from the city walls. Red beams flashing through the air as desert sand and cinder swirl around them. The two men weave through the artillery fire as they continue.

Soon they approach the doors to the city.

<u>Cut to the Construction site</u>

Text: (Thief)

Didn't you have a log with you?

Text: (Joker)

I did but It's broken. I don't know how long ago.

<u>Cut to City Outskirts</u>

Panels of eyes opening

The front entrance to the city is large and grand. A Pair of large tablets towering above the

desert, guarded by a handful of robotic centuries.

A wall stretches from either side of the door in either direction. More centuries line these walls,

ready to fire on anyone who dares approach.

As the two men enter the city the centuries that were once firing at them begin to pour off the

wall in pursuit. Like a mass of robotic spiders.

Figure A.3: Page one of the first set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic This original set of pages I created based on an earlier version of the script. These preliminaries were also larger and done purely with pen and ink rather than Copic marker. Many of the story beats and panels carried over to later iterations but my process has greatly evolved.
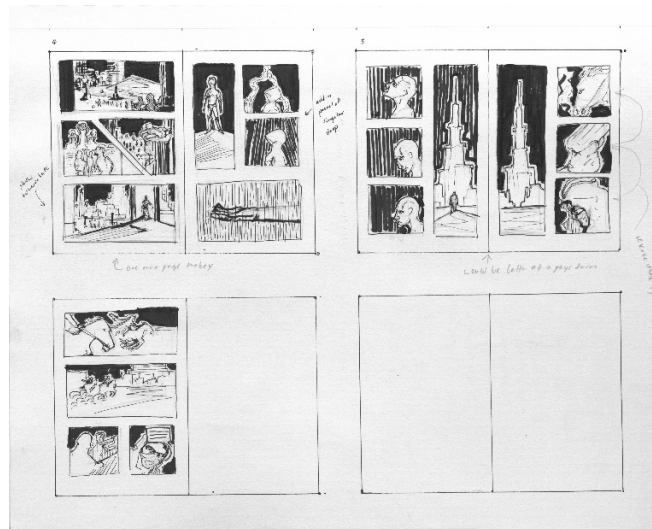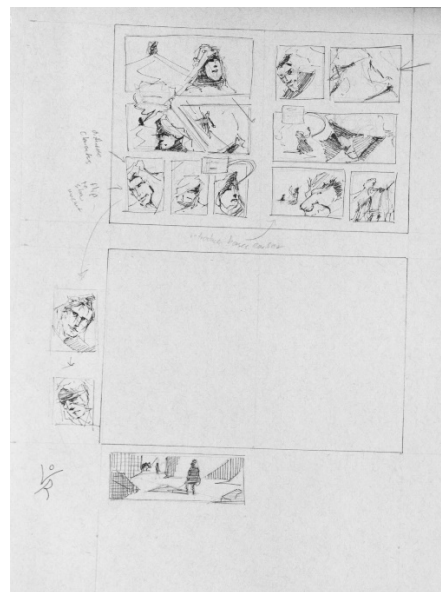

Figure A.4: Page two of the first set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic This original set of pages I created based on an earlier version of the script. These preliminaries were also larger and done purely with pen and ink rather than Copic marker. Many of the story beats and panels carried over to later iterations but my process has greatly evolved.
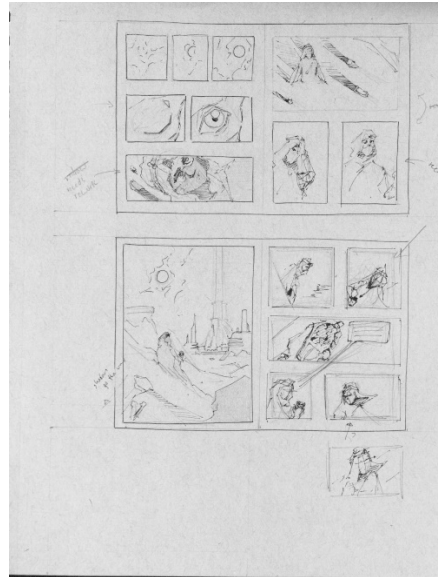
Figure A.5: Page one of the second set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic. This second set of pages were done much faster and were made from the most recent script. They were still large and made with pen, but I opted for pure line drawing rather than shading to convey my ideas.

Figure A.6: Page two of the second set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic. This second set of pages were done much faster and were made from the most recent script. They were still large and made with pen, but I opted for pure line drawing rather than shading to convey my ideas.
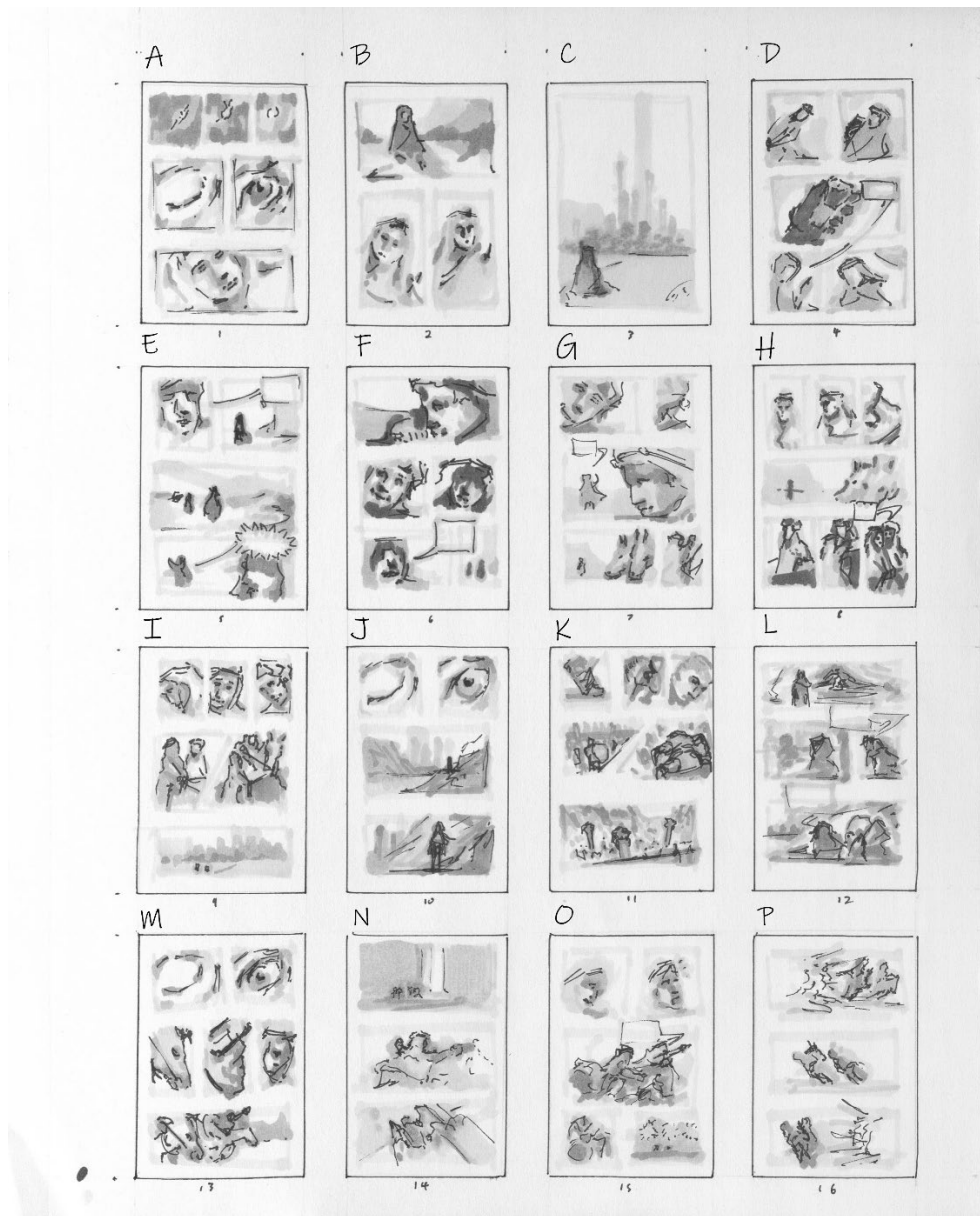
Figure A.7 A-P: Page one of the third set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic. After watching videos on how other artist handles preliminary pages, I changed how I handled them. I scaled down the preliminaries so more could fit on a page and timed the process to speed up the planning. I also changed from pen to marker as it looked better for sketching.

Figure A.8 A-H: Page two of the third set of preliminary pages made for the planning of the comic. After watching videos on how other artist handles preliminary pages, I changed how I handled them. I scaled down the preliminaries so more could fit on a page and timed the process to speed up the planning. I also changed from pen to marker as it looked better for sketching.

Figure A.9 A-H: Final Set of Preliminary pages. After looking at Tintin comics for reference I compressed many of the pages from the previous preliminaries down to these. Each page is roughly three pages from the previous set of preliminaries. This process greatly streamlined my story and removed all the filler content. It also was more manageable for the final inking.
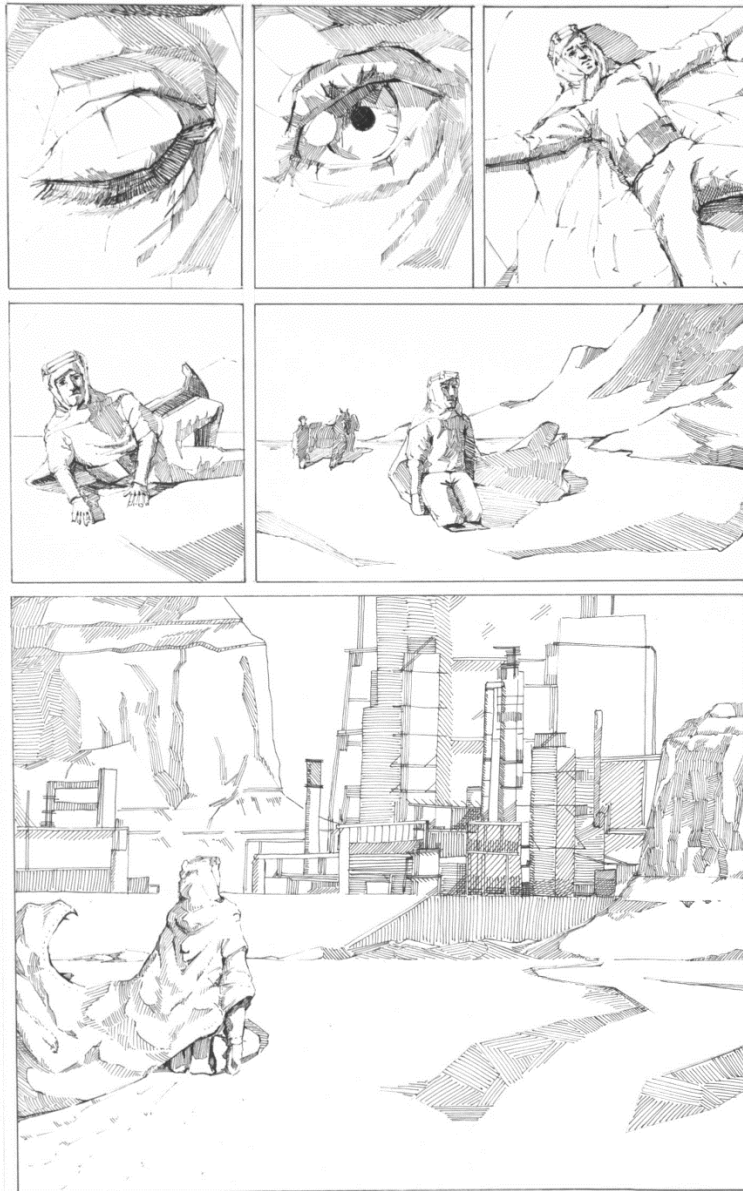
Figure A.10: Page one of final comic
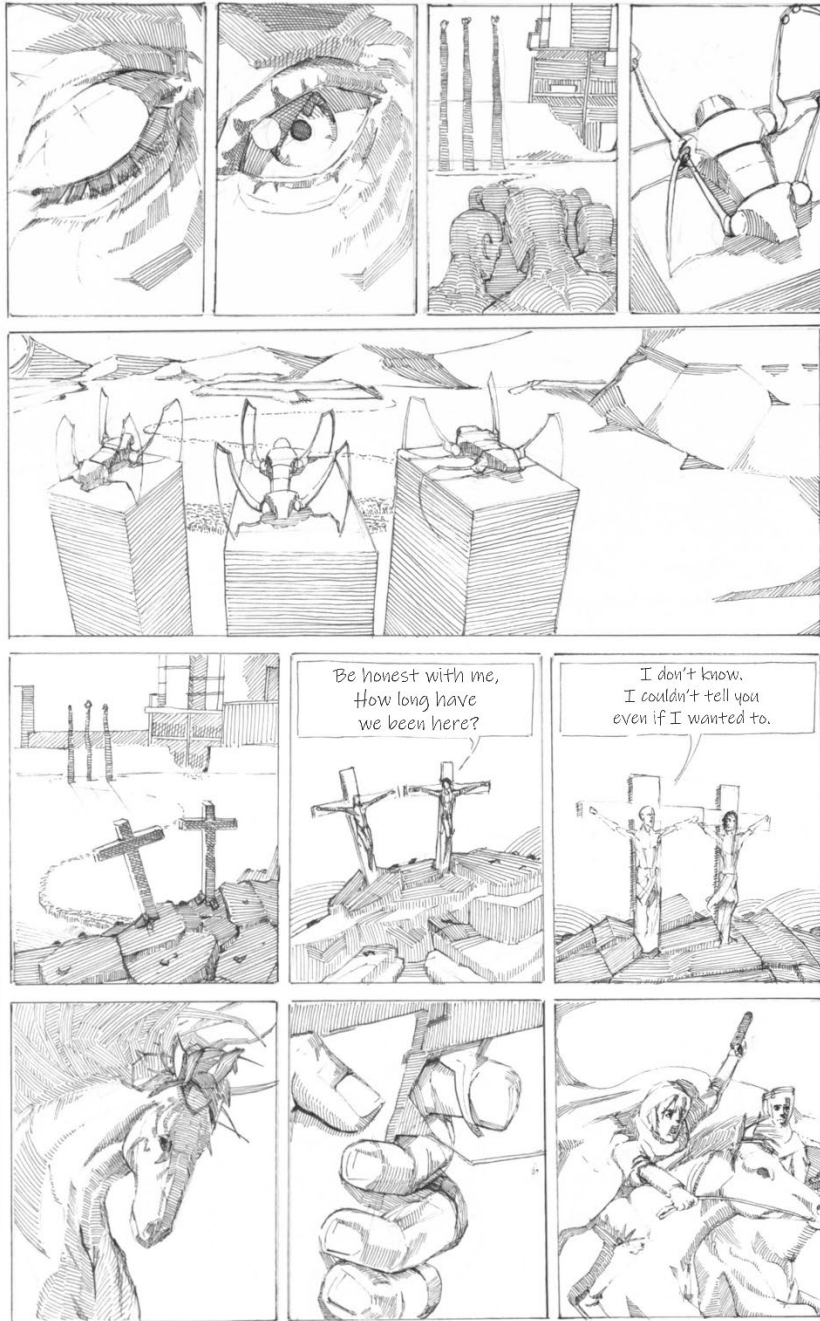
Figure A.11: Page two of final comic

Figure A.12: Page three of final comic

Figure A.13: Page four of final comic