

The Guy Next Door

By Veronica Tomasiello

Page 1

Eight panels of the same size arranged in four tiers, containing two panels each.

Panel 1

It's the night in which Jodie wakes up Petey Caldwell's dad from his coma. Maggie Kane sits in her garden, her back resting against the wall of her house, her knees pulled up. She lights up a cigarette with a Zippo. She is wearing jeans and a sleeveless shirt.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE WITH THE GUY NEXT DOOR?

Panel 2

Maggie takes a drag. Smoke rises from the cigarette.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): YOU KNOW, THE NERDY NEIGHBOR YOU OCCASIONALLY HANG OUT WITH WHEN YOU STILL THINK YOU WANT TO DATE THE COOL BOY ON THE FOOTBALL TEAM...

Panel 3

Over-the-shoulder shot from a low angle. Maggie looks up at Jodie's window. The shutter is rolled up and the lamp is switched on.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): BUT THAT NEVER HAPPENS. YOU SPEND MORE AND MORE TIME WITH THIS **OTHER GUY**...

Panel 4

Move up until we are looking at the window at eye-level. Jodie lies on his bed, reading a comic book.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): AND HE TURNS OUT TO BE SPECIAL. THE PROBLEM IS, **OTHER** PEOPLE START TO SEE IT, TOO.

Panel 5

From Jodie's window, high-angle shot of Maggie in full figure. After getting up, she throws her cigarette on the grass, her face brightening up with a sudden idea.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): THEY ALL WANT A PIECE OF HIM, EVEN IF YOU WERE THERE FIRST. EVEN IF YOU'VE BEEN THERE ALL ALONG.

Panel 6

Close-up of the cigarette. Maggie stomped on it – we can see her walking away in the background. Even if it is crumpled, one end is still burning weakly, producing a wisp of smoke.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): AND THEN HE BECOMES JUST **TOO SPECIAL** FOR YOU.

Panel 7

Cut to Maggie's bedroom. We are looking at her from inside the room as she opens the door and walks in.

Panel 8

Medium shot of Maggie in front of a long full-size mirror hanging from the wall. She is in the process of taking off her T-shirt. Her reflection reveals a cunning smile as she hums to herself.

1. MAGGIE: ♪
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): THIS WAS ME. TWELVE YEARS OLD AND A HEAD FULL OF THAT NEIGHBOR. HE WAS **VERY** SPECIAL. AND I'M NOT BEING **CHEESY**. I'M BEING **REALISTIC**.
3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): HE WAS JESUS. AS IN, THE **SON OF GOD**.

Page 2

The same setup as Page 1, except Panel 5 is larger than Panel 6, which is narrower and taller instead.

Panel 1

Same shot as Page 1 Panel 8. Shirtless, Maggie is busy unhooking her bra. Other than her grin, now we can also see Jodie's window reflected in the mirror. The shutter has been rolled down, though light still filters through the spaces between the slats.

Panel 2

Close up on Maggie's face in three-quarter view. She blushes and her smile is something between sheepish and sly, her eyes lowered.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): WHICH LED ME TO THE INEVITABLE QUESTION...
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): *WILL I GO TO HELL IF I WANT TO MAKE OUT WITH HIM?* (I'd like the lettering italicized to emphasise the difference between the previous captions – Maggie's present thoughts – and this one, representing Maggie's younger self.)

Panel 3

Another close-up of her face, this time in front view. Her eyes widen in shock; use a curvilinear perspective to make her expression look alien. Suddenly, something isn't right with her.

1. MAGGIE: ?
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): IT DIDN'T TAKE A GENIUS TO FIGURE OUT THE EQUALLY INEVITABLE ANSWER.

Panel 4

A kinetic medium shot. Maggie runs to the window; she presses her palms flat over the windowsill and leans towards the glass to look at something down to her right. The light has been turned off in Jodie's room.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): BUT IF I COULDN'T BE HIS GIRLFRIEND, AT LEAST I WANTED TO PROTECT HIM. BE HIS GUARDIAN ANGEL.
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): THERE WERE A LOT OF ANGELS IN THE BIBLE. HOW HARD COULD IT BE?

Panel 5

This is a large panel, where we get to see what Maggie sees. It is an over-the-shoulder shot as she looks at the front of Jodie's house. Jodie and Petey Caldwell are talking in conspiratorially hushed tones nearby the front door, standing close together. Caldwell looms over Jodie, aggressive.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): WELL, IT CERTAINLY WAS STRESSFUL.
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): WHAT THE HELL WAS JODIE DOING THAT LATE AT NIGHT WITH **PETEE CALDWELL** OF ALL PEOPLE?

Panel 6

Close-up of Maggie's face in front view. Confused, she raises a questioning eyebrow.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): I HAD A BAD FEELING ABOUT IT.

Panel 7

Get out of her room and back away a little; she leans out of the window, while Jodie and the boy are walking away together. We are looking at the scene from a high angle, with the boys in front of us and Maggie in profile.

1. CAPTION (MAGGIE): I DIDN'T KNOW WHY IT BOTHERED ME SO MUCH, WHICH MADE IT WORSE. I HATED NOT KNOWING.
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): WHAT? I WAS A **TEENAGER**. I HATED A LOT OF THINGS.

Panel 8

Back inside Maggie's room, we are now looking at her in full figure as she stands in front of the window. She rolls down the shutter, her back turned on us. She does it slowly, lost in thought.

1. MAGGIE: ...

Page 3

We have ten panels on this page. On the first tier, there is a single panel on the left and two smaller ones piled on top of each other on the opposite side; the bottom tier is the same, but swap the panels – smaller ones on the left, big one on the right. The remaining two tiers have two panels each.

Panel 1

Maggie is facing us, resting her lower back against the window. She hugs herself to suppress an unexpected shiver, looking down at the floor.

1. ANGEL (OFF PANEL): HEY, KID.

Panel 2

This is above Panel 3. Maggie looks up towards us to stare in shock at a shadow in the foreground, so close to us we can only see the top of their head.

1. MAGGIE: ?!

Panel 3

Reverse shot of the unexpected visitor. It is Angel, the dog. We are looking at him from a high angle, Maggie's point of view. He looks up at us, making a serious face.

1. ANGEL: OH, SPARE ME THE **DRAMA**. WE DON'T HAVE TIME.

Panel 4

Go back to Maggie. She slumps against the window, flailing out her arms in search for support. She is the picture of shock – pale, wide-eyed, and open-mouthed, breathing heavily.

1. MAGGIE: GASP!

2. MAGGIE: WHAT THE FUCK?!

Panel 5

Another shot of Angel from Maggie's perspective. He lets out a huff and lifts an eyebrow, looking much more like a person than an animal.

1. ANGEL: PUT YOURSELF TOGETHER, KID. WE ARE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE HERE.

Panel 6

Pull back. We are looking at Maggie and Angel from behind the dog's shoulders. He is in front of us in the foreground, turning his head to the right to follow Maggie as she runs to the door and slams it shut.

1. MAGGIE: HOW THE HELL DID YOU GET IN? IF MY MOTHER SEES YOU, SHE'S GONNA GET A STROKE.
2. ANGEL: CONSIDERING WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN, A STROKE IS THE **LAST THING** YOUR MOTHER SHOULD WORRY ABOUT.

Panel 7

Front view of Maggie in a medium shot at eye-level. She regains her cool and seems annoyed by the dog patronizing her rather than astonished. She starts putting on a new T-shirt of a non-descript green.

1. MAGGIE: WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?
2. ANGEL: DON'T PLAY DUMB. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. OR **WHO**.
3. ANGEL: JODIE'S GOING TO BRING PETEY CALDWELL'S FATHER BACK FROM THE COMA TONIGHT.

Panel 8

Smaller panel on top of Panel 9. Close-up of one of Maggie's eyes; leave some space on the left for the balloon.

1. MAGGIE: !!!

Panel 9

Under Panel 8. Close-up of Angel's muzzle; the dog's gaze is intense as he watches Maggie.

1. ANGEL: THAT'S WHY I'M HERE TONIGHT, MAGGIE. I'VE COME FOR **YOU**. BECAUSE YOU **KNOW** THIS ISN'T RIGHT.

Panel 10

Pull back again for a medium shot of both Maggie and Angel. We're looking at the dog, so Maggie is turned on us. She opens her arms in a 'hallelujah' sort of gesture. Angel maintains his doggish composure.

1. MAGGIE: I **KNEW** IT. I KNEW I WAS DIFFERENT. JODIE **CHOSE** ME. WE HAVE A CONNECTION, RIGHT?

2. MAGGIE: I HAVE TO GO HELP HIM.
3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): IT WAS THE EASIEST EXPLANATION, WASN'T IT?
4. ANGEL: SLOW DOWN, KID. IT'S NOT **THAT** SIMPLE. YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

Page 4

Four tiers with two panels each.

Panel 1

Reverse close medium shot. Maggie is in front of us, hands on her hips, pouting.

1. MAGGIE: WHAT? **YOU** SAID WE'RE IN TROUBLE. AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO **DO SOMETHING** ABOUT IT?
2. ANGEL: LISTEN TO YOURSELF. YOU FOUND OUT YOU'RE **SPECIAL** TWO SECONDS AGO AND YOU ALREADY THINK YOU'RE **HOT SHIT**.
3. ANGEL: YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO.

Panel 2

Pull away from Maggie until she is standing in full figure, angry, her hands balled into fists at her sides. In the foreground, closer to us, Angel turns away from her and to us instead.

1. MAGGIE: THEN **TELL ME**.
2. ANGEL: YOU CAN'T JUST GO TO THE HOSPITAL LIKE THAT. JODIE DOESN'T NEED YOUR **PROTECTION**. IF ANYTHING, IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND.
3. MAGGIE: JODIE WOULDN'T...

Panel 3

Close-up of Maggie's face. She is gone from furious to hurt and disbelieving in a matter of seconds. She frowns, her mouth slightly opened, pulled down into a grimace.

1. ANGEL (OFF PANEL): DON'T EVEN BOTHER TRYING TO DENY IT. YOU **KNOW** HE'S DANGEROUS, DON'T YOU? DEEP IN YOUR GUT.

2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): I DID. I FELT SICK THE MOMENT I SAW JODIE AND PETEY TOGETHER.

3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): BUT JODIE WAS MY **FRIEND**. HE WOULDN'T HURT ME... RIGHT?

Panel 4

Pull back even more for a long shot of the room. Maggie and Angel are in profile, facing each other from opposite sides. Maggie rests her lower back against the window again, crossing her arms over her chest, both eyebrows raised.

1. MAGGIE: YOU SAID YOU'VE COME FOR ME. WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HELP ME SAVE JODIE?

2. ANGEL: I'M A MESSENGER. THEY'RE COMING FOR YOU, MAGGIE. THEY'LL TEACH YOU WHAT TO DO.

3. MAGGIE: WHO **ARE** THEY?

Panel 5

Cut to a symbolic representation of two angels. They are turned away from us so that we are looking at the huge white wings on their back. They are jerking their heads in our direction, but their faces are hidden in the dark. Only their eyes are visible, creepy and shiny. The background is dark as well, contributing to the surreal atmosphere.

1. ANGEL (OFF PANEL): THE ANGELS. **UPPER CLASS SHIT**, WITH WINGS AND EVERYTHING. THINGS HAVE STARTED MOVING.

2. MAGGIE (OFF PANEL): YOU MEAN THE ACCIDENT?

3. ANGEL (OFF PANEL): NOT JUST THAT. JODIE ISN'T WHAT THEY EXPECTED. ALL THESE MIRACLES ARE FREAKING THEM OUT.

Panel 6

Go back to the actual scene. A close medium shot of Maggie in front view. She throws her arms in the air in exasperation.

1. MAGGIE: WHAT DO YOU MEAN, **WHAT THEY EXPECTED**? HE'S JESUS, RIGHT?

2. ANGEL (OFF PANEL): DO YOU **REALLY** WANT TO KNOW?

Panel 7

Same shot as Panel 6. Maggie lowers her arms, looking thoughtful and a bit scared.

1. MAGGIE: HE'S MY BEST FRIEND.
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): AND I LOVED HIM.
3. ANGEL: THAT'S A GOOD REASON WHY YOU **DON'T** WANT TO.

Panel 8

We are still looking at Maggie, but from further away. All of a sudden, she digs her fingers into her head, her eyes wide and bloodshot. She screams in pain. She is having a vision, which we are looking at in the background of the panel – she sees Jodie in the hospital room, leaning over Petey's father. Behind him, big, dark, and creepy, looms the shadow of a monster, the Antichrist. A lightning bolt strikes horizontally across the middle of the panel to emphasize the suddenness of the vision.

1. MAGGIE: !!!
2. MAGGIE: AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

Page 5

The first two tiers have two panels each, then we have a frameless panel bleeding all over the bottom of the page, occupying the remaining two tiers.

Panel 1

Maggie collapses on her knees, her body wrecked by shivers. She doubles over, her head in her hands, wailing wildly. Angel runs to her side, his tongue hanging from his mouth and his tail lashing at the air. This is a kinetic shot, with speed lines tracing both Maggie's and Angel's movements.

1. MAGGIE: NO! **NOOOOOOOO!**
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): JODIE'S POWERS RESONATED SO LOUDLY I THOUGHT HE'D KILL ME. IT FELT LIKE LISTENING TO THE ANGELS... AND THEY WERE **CRYING**.
3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): FINALLY, I KNEW WHAT ANGEL MEANT. **I FELT IT DEEP IN MY GUT.**

Panel 2

Close-up of Maggie's face from a high angle. She is curling on her side, tears streaking her cheeks and dripping on the floor. Angel bends his head down to nuzzle her forehead in an attempt at comfort. Maggie's tears bleed over Panel 3 and merge with the rain in the next scene.

1. MAGGIE (WHISPER): JODIE...
2. ANGEL: I'M SORRY, KID...

3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): HOW COULD THEY EVER HAVE BELIEVED JODIE WAS A **SAVIOR**? I DIDN'T CRY FOR THEM, THOUGH. I WAS NEVER THAT SELFLESS. I CRIED FOR **HIM**.

4. CAPTION (MAGGIE): HE HAD NO IDEA...

Panel 3

Cut to the following scene, some years in the future, the same time when Jodie leaves for the Holy Land. From the inside of an airport, we are looking at the landing field through the glass walls. It is raining heavily. Two people dressed in black are standing outside under a black umbrella. Maggie is one of them; the other is a tall man. An airplane is landing.

1. MAGGIE: IS THAT **HIS** PLANE?

2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): I HAD TO WAIT UNTIL THEY TOOK JODIE AWAY BEFORE THEY CAME FOR ME. THE ANGELS COULDN'T RISK ALERTING HIS **FATHER**.

3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT JODIE WOULD DO WHEN HE FOUND OUT. I HOPED HE'D KILL HIMSELF AND AT THE SAME TIME I DIDN'T.

Panel 4

Medium shot of Maggie and her companion from a three-quarter perspective. They are both watching the landing. Maggie frowns; the man's face is unreadable. He is holding the umbrella. Maggie's hair are shorter than it used to be.

1. MAN: YES.

2. MAGGIE: ... **FUCK**.

3. MAN: ARE YOU READY FOR THIS?

4. CAPTION (MAGGIE): NOW I WONDER WHAT HE'LL DO WHEN HE FINDS OUT ABOUT **ME**. MAGGIE KANE, **RIGHT HAND OF GOD**? IT STILL SOUNDS WEIRD. EVEN TO ME.

Panel 5

Final scene. A huge close-up of half of present Maggie's face on the left, and of past, younger Jodie's face on the right. She is under the umbrella, grave and solemn – also, a bit sad – while the rain is pouring heavily between her and us. Jodie's side is sunny instead and he smiles brightly. Both of them stare at us.

1. MAGGIE: SURE. LET'S GO WELCOME MY OLD NEIGHBOR.
2. CAPTION (MAGGIE): HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE WITH THE GUY NEXT DOOR? I WAS. TURNS OUT HE'S THE **ANTICHRIST** AND I'M THE ANGEL CREATED TO KILL HIM.
3. CAPTION (MAGGIE): SO MUCH FOR CLICHED **TEENAGE LOVE**.