

DEAD@17: ROUGH CUT, VOL. 2

THE SPARROW

written by David Hopkins

SYNOPSIS:

Sara with her infant daughter Nara shows up at Pastor Winston's church. She needs Winston to find a good family to raise her daughter. It is of the utmost important that no servants of Bolabogg find her. Winston takes Nara. Sara leaves.

A few days later, three servants of Bolabog, the Feeders, show up at Winston's church to find Nara. Winston tries to fight them off in order to save Nara. He is badly beaten. Just before the servants take Nara, Malachi appears to ward them away. Malachi cannot save Winston from dying, so instead he takes Winston's place.

A few weeks later, Winston/Malachi is at the adoption center watching Nara's foster parents take her home. He walks off.

NOTE:

We have eight pages to completely blow the reader's mind, and give them a story they'll remember. I want to attempt the story without using any expository dialogue whatsoever. Instead, it'll be completely silent with the exception of the Gospel song "His Eye is on the Sparrow". It will require us to communicate all the information visually.

PAGE ONE

1 - A beautiful black woman named Gracie (reference Lauryn Hill with her dreads) stands next to the pulpit in a church-- large cross behind her. (The church as seen in Dead@17:Blood of Saints #3). She sings passionately. Winston (introduced in Blood of Saints #3) sits in a wooden chair off to the right and slightly behind her. He's wearing a minister's black robe with a white stole.

GRACIE (singing): Why should I feel discouraged? And why should
 the shadows come?

2 - Exterior. Nighttime. A young woman holding a small baby walks up to the small country chapel (reference: Dead@17: Blood of Saints #3, page twelve, panel 5). It's Sara, Nara's biological mother (as partially seen in Dead@17: First Series #3 page 13). She holds the infant Nara.

3 - Close up on Sara holding the swaddled baby. Sara looks over her shoulder, to make sure no one notices her. Sara's eyes have dark lines under them as though she hasn't slept in days.

CAPTION (GRACIE): Why should my heart feel lonely and long for
 heaven and home?

4 - Interior of the chapel. Winston, in his long sleeve polo shirt, stands in the empty chapel, the altar in the background. Sara hands the baby to him. NOTE: If you notice how Josh Howard draws Winston, the character has this calm and expressionless peace about him in every single panel. Unless otherwise noted, Winston has this calm demeanor.

5 - Close up on our Gracie, the gospel singer.

GRACIE (singing): When Jesus is my portion, a constant friend is He--

PAGE THREE

1 - Close on the Feeder grabbing Winston's fist.

2 - The Feeder holds Winston by the throat, lifting him off the ground.

CAPTION (GRACIE): And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears.

3 - The Feeder throws Winston across the room into the bookshelf.

4 - Winston is on the ground in a fetal position. From left to right, one Feeder is standing with arms folding, watching the beating; one Feeder is clawing at Winston; and one Feeder is kicking Winston in the back. His long demon-tongue hangs out.

CAPTION (GRACIE): Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see.

PAGE FOUR

1 - Same scene as page one, panel 1. Gracie sings her gospel song with pastor Winston sitting nearby.

GRACIE (singing): His eye is on the sparrow--

2 - From out of nowhere, Malachi stands in front of the bassinet. The baby Nara floats in mid-air to the left, underneath Malachi's hand (palm up). All over the infant Nara's body are the heavenly symbols that we've seen in Blood of Saints #4, page 19.

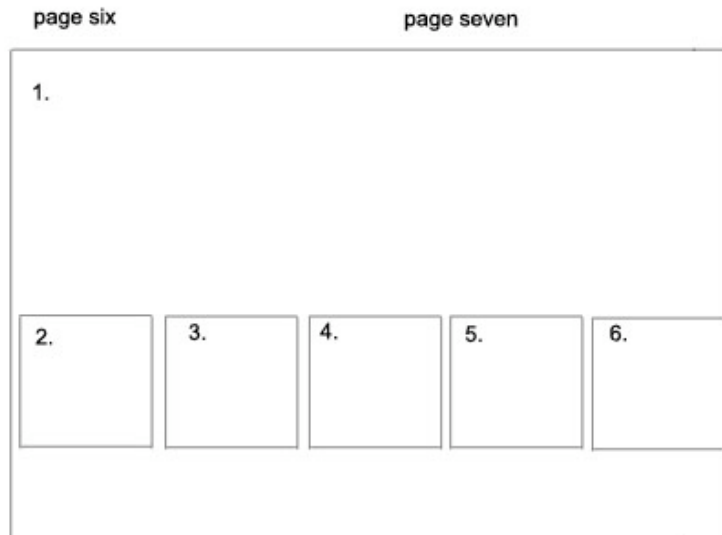
CAPTION (GRACIE): --and I know He watches me.

3 - Malachi's POV. The three feeders look up, towards the reader. On the floor is the unconscious Winston. The feeders are hungry and unafraid of Malachi.

4 - Large panel, if possible. Channeling Nara's power, Malachi blasts the three feeders with a bolt of energy. They brace against the blast in futile defense.

PAGES SIX AND SEVEN

(TWO PAGE SPREAD PANEL LAYOUT)



1 - Gracie singing in front of the church. Winston sits nearby, listening to the sweet music. Before them is the congregation of a few faithful in the pews.

GRACIE (singing): --I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free.

2 - Malachi, kneeling next to the body, places his hands on Winston's head.

CAPTION (GRACIE): His eye is on the sparrow

3 - Same shot. Light begins to emit from Malachi's hands. Winston's eyes are now wide out except they are without an iris and also glowing.

4 - Same shot. The light shines everywhere. All we see is a vague outline of the two figures, Malachi and Winston, within the light.

CAPTION (GRACIE): And I know

5 - Same shot. The light fades. The figure on the ground is gone-- a thin mist of smoke rises from the floor. Instead of Malachi kneeling, it's now Winston there. Malachi has taken Winston's place.

6 - Same shot. The light is gone. Winston is on his hands and knees exhausted.

CAPTION (GRACIE): He watches me.

PAGE EIGHT

1 - Establishing shot. Exterior. The Darlington Hills Adoption Center. There's a sign out front bearing the name.

2 - Interior. A social worker wearing thick glasses and in a business suit hands the infant Nara to her happy new foster parents (as introduced in Blood of Saints #1).

CAPTION (GRACIE): I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free.

3 - Winston walks down the hallway of the adoption center. In the background at the end of the hallway, the two foster parents hold their new daughter.

CAPTION (GRACIE): For His eye is on the sparrow

4 - Same shot as panel one-- with Winston walking away from the building. There is a slight glow around him.

CAPTION (GRACIE): And I know He watches me.