

ONE

Panel 1: NIGHT. Under the neon lights of Times Square, a tall gaunt man (JAMES) walks with shoulders hunched and hands in the pockets of a coat that is too light for season.

1. LOCATION CAPTION: Times Square, 1972
2. JAMES (CAPTION): It was a bitter February.

Panel 2: Low angle, looking up at huge cab that has stopped inches from hitting James. He doesn't flinch.

Panel 3: James continues down the 1970s city street, passing hookers, dealers, and businessmen out for a good time.

Panel 4: A rundown theater building stands on the corner. On the front side of the building, the marquee has "XXX" and "Bijou" on it. On the side of the building, James enters a nondescript metal door into the theater.

TWO

Panel 1: James walks past a theater usher in a seedy uniform that is too small for him. The two men nod at each other but do not smile.

1. JAMES (CAPTION): I hadn't spoken to anyone in two weeks.

Panel 2: James is up in the theater's small film projection room. There are old movie posters taped to the walls from Universal monster movies and Gojira films.

2. JAMES (CAPTION): I had more human interaction when I was inside.

Panel 3: He loads the X-rated movie film reel onto the projector.

Panel 4: OTS as James looks out of the small window past the light that streams from the now running projector at the fuzzy shapes on the film screen.

THREE

Panel 1: James sprawls in a battered arm chair shoved into the corner of the projection room. He is reading an old sci fi paperback while he waits for the movie to end.

Panel 2: Later, James walks home towards Hell's Kitchen under the huge neon signs in Times Square.

Panel 3: The neon signs loom large over him.

1. JAMES (CAPTION): That night, I started to hear them.

Panel 4: The neon lights seem to be shouting and blinking at James, trying to get his attention.

2. JAMES (CAPTION): Quiet, like voices in the next room.

Panel 5: James leaves the brightest lights behind, entering the smaller neon of the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood.

3. JAMES (CAPTION): At first, I didn't listen.

FOUR

Panel 1: DAY. James at home in his sad one room apartment. Newspaper is taped over the windows to block out the sun because he sleeps all day. He is lying on a narrow single bed, tossing and turning, as daylight filters in around the edges of the newspaper.

Panel 2: The next NIGHT, James is up for his next night shift, standing in the kitchen area. It has a small window that is clear of paper. James stands looking out the window at the rain while he eats a bowl of cereal. The red light from a neon bar sign outside paints his face red.

Panel 3: James watches the light filled raindrops on the window as the phone answering machine behind him picks up a message.

1. RECORDING: James, this is your parole office. Call me ...

Panel 4: Raindrops running down window pane, holding red color in the drops.

FIVE

Panel 1: NIGHT. James is walking from Hell's Kitchen to Times Square in the rain. He wears a black slicker with the hood up.

1. JAMES (CAPTION): The next night the voices were louder, more insistent.

Panel 2: Neon lights reflect off the puddles in the street and car wheels break the reflections as the wheels pass through.

2. JAMES (CAPTION): I could almost make out words.

Panel 3: James shoves back his hood and looks up through the rain at the neon signs shouting at him.

3. JAMES (CAPTION): The voices rose to a crescendo.

Panel 4: James barely dodges a wave of water thrown up on the sidewalk by a passing car.

4. JAMES (CAPTION): And broke over me in a wave of sound.

SIX

Panel 1: Outside the theater, James puts down an open can of tuna for an alley cat.

Panel 2: Inside the dingy theater, he walks down the main aisle, past the empty seats.

Panel 3: Up in projection booth, James stands looking at the projector quizzically, focusing on the light streaming from it.

Panel 4: James puts his ear up to the light, listening, but hears nothing (not neon light).

Panel 5: He shakes his head looking rueful like "what was I thinking, of course the light isn't talking to me."

SEVEN

Panel 1: Later that night, walking home from work. James wanders the streets around 42nd Street, looking wildly around for the source of the voices.

1. THE LIGHTS: *we are losing ourselves*

Panel 2: James stumbles, reeling under the influx of light and sound.

2. THE LIGHTS: *electricity floods us – drowns and excites*

Panel 3: He clutches his head as if he is overwhelmed by the input.

3. THE LIGHTS: *we are confined, isolated, alone*

Panel 4: The large neon signs flash down upon his small hunched form, insistent on communicating, on make a connection.

4. THE LIGHTS: *coated with hate and fear, lust and hope and despair*

EIGHT

Panel 1: James spins wildly, reeling as the lights shout and whisper to him.

1. THE LIGHTS: *rolled under by the rainbow oil slick of human emotions*

Panel 2: His vision is wild and confused like an acid trip.

2. THE LIGHTS: *electrons escape into a wild kinetic dance*

Panel 3: He falls to his knees in a puddle and the reflected lights in the puddle are broken by his fall.

3. THE LIGHTS: *alternating currents keep us apart*

Panel 4: The neon lights reflect off his rain wet face as he looks up at them and holds his hands up to the neon signs, beseeching.

4. THE LIGHTS: *help us help us*

NINE

Panel 1: James stands resolutely under the lights. His body language is firm now, decisive.

Panel 2: James starts to run through the neon streets, west towards the Hudson river.

Panel 3: His shoe comes down towards the light in a puddle, about to break it apart.

Panel 4: As his speed increases, the neon lights pass behind his running form as streaks of light.

Panel 5: At the west side of Manhattan, looking out over the Hudson, an electric power plant looms. James stands tiny in front of its immensity – man against machine.

TEN

Panel 1: The metal cage-like structure of the electric plant rears above him like it is preparing to consume him.

Panel 2: From James' POV, looking up and up at sci fi landscape of it.

Panel 3: James slides between two fence doors that are held together by a loosely chained padlock.

Panel 4: Inside James is a small figure inside the immense and glorious machine.

Panel 5: James stands in front of the big "off" switch. His hand is raised to pull it.

ELEVEN

Panel 1: Aerial view of a rolling black out starting across the city, from east to west.

Panel 2: The lights in Times Square go off.

Panel 3: The dark rolls further west, enveloping the light in its path.

Panel 4: James stands on lonely rundown 1970s pier. He is looking east as a dancing light rolls before the darkness and up into the sky.

Panel 5: In the dancing light that rises up from darkening city into sky, there are spiky electric-like figures (see Warlock from Sienkiewicz's New Mutants) to indicate that there was something living in the light that has now been released.

TWELVE

Panel 1: The figures made of light dance together in the sky. James stands on the pier looking up at the lights. It looks a bit like the northern lights with sketchy figures inside.

Panel 2: Close up of his face with tears running down it. The city behind him is now in total darkness.

1. JAMES (CAPTION): You're so beautiful.

Panel 3: The lights in the sky flare bigger and brighter.

2. THE LIGHTS: UNITED! FREE!

Panel 4: James is now face down on the hood of a police car. A policeman is cuffing his hands behind his back.

Panel 5: Close up of James's face turned to the side on the hood. He looks calm and at peace.