

# SLEEPING BEAUTIES

Based on the novel by Stephen King and Owen King  
Script by Rio Youers

## ISSUE ONE

### **PAGE ONE** (Three panels)

#### **Panel 1.**

We open with a half-page extreme closeup of our hero (or our *antihero*, depending on which side of the gate we're standing on). She has no name, really, although we come to know her as EVIE BLACK. She's from... somewhere else, an emissary from the gods, and this strength and wisdom can be seen in her beauty. And she *is* beautiful. Olive skin, shoulder-length black hair, almond eyes. She looks to be about 30 years old. There are no lines on her skin. There are no pouches beneath her eyes or creases at the edges of her lips. She appears to have been sent from the heavens... and heck, maybe she *has* been. In this opening shot, Evie stares directly at the reader--those big brown eyes jumping right off the page. There's a small smile on her face and her eyes sparkle.

The shot is almost entirely of Evie's face, maybe with a few tendrils of her black hair coming in at the edges.

1. EVIE:           Hello, gorgeous.

#### **Panel 2.**

A side view of Evie, still closeup. We can see one naked shoulder, though, with her black hair pooling onto it. Her right hand is also in the shot, close enough that we can see a moth perched on the edge of her finger, and the distinct gray and brown coloring on its wings. Evie's smile has grown. She may even be laughing a little bit--she is entirely enchanted by the little moth.

In the background, a suggestion of trees--luscious leaves, twisty vines.

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### **PAGE ONE (CONTINUED)**

#### **Panel 3.**

A closeup of Evie's hand, and the moth, which has just taken flight. Its delicate wings are a blur.

2. SFX (small):       FLUTTER

### **PAGE TWO** (Five panels)

**Panel 1.**

Evie, seen from above, as if we are viewing her from the branches of the tree she is kneeling beneath. This is the MOTHER TREE, an exceptionally important feature in our story. For now, we see just a glimpse of it--of the pale, greenish-gray trunk rising up behind Evie. It appears comprised of many smaller trunks, entwined and twisted together, not unlike a banyan tree. The roots are thick and similarly entwined, mapped out beneath Evie, reaching to the edges of the shot. Vibrant, fern-like leaves sway in an upper corner. Evie is as naked as a jaybird. Her left hand is draped loosely in her lap. Her right is still raised. It is only moments since the moth took flight. She is looking up at it, still smiling.

The moth is in the foreground, flying higher. This is the focal point of the shot, although eagle-eyed readers might notice the head of a thick red SNAKE emerging from a shadowy crevasse within the Mother Tree's trunk.

**Panel 2.**

Front and center on Evie, who is standing now. The moth has flown away and Evie is not smiling anymore, although her eyes are still alive and glistening. The Mother Tree's trunk forms the background--broad, twisted, and quite beautiful. We get the sense that this is an immense tree, and that we are still only seeing a portion of it. The snake is in full view now, slithering down the trunk beside Evie. It has a thick, powerful body, lightly patterned, the color of blood.

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***PAGE TWO (CONTINUED)*****Panel 3.**

A closer shot of Evie, perhaps from the shoulders up. The snake shares the spotlight here, its wide, spade-like head poised close to Evie, as if it might attack (although it surely knows better). The snake's dark eyes are full of mischief. Its long, forked tongue flickers from the scaled crack of its mouth.

Evie exhibits no fear, of course. She regards the snake with a sideways glance, her eyes narrowed, her upper lip slightly curled. It is an expression of distrust. She and the snake clearly have history.

**Panel 4.**

This shot from behind Evie. She is in the middle distance, walking away... walking toward a stand of very normal trees, the kind one might find in any Appalachian forest. The snake watches her leave, positioned to one side of the frame. The most noticeable aspect of this panel is Evie's FOOTPRINTS. They are larger in the foreground, getting smaller as Evie walks away, over the thick snarls of roots, toward the forest proper. We can see that her footprints are white, glowing softly in the morning light. They appear to be made up of delicate strands of webbing.

**Panel 5.**

The forest, seen from above. Leafy chestnuts and oaks, all shades of green, punctuated by pines and spruce (no sign of the Mother Tree). The ground rises in the distance. There's a strip of morning sky, pale blue, touched with pink. And here's the little moth again, flying high above the treetops. It is not alone. Dozens of moths trail behind it, and behind these... what must be *thousands* more--an entire shifting, swirling cloud of moths that has lifted from the trees, into the sky.

**PAGE THREE** (Six panels)**Panel 1.**

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We open with a head and shoulders shot of REE DEMPSTER. Ree is a white woman, 24 years old, with bleached, tight curls and three deep, parallel scars across one side of her forehead, like a grill mark. There is a hollowness in her expression, although it's possible to see the sweet, misguided woman who lives beneath. There are a few photographs taped to the wall behind her-- people, places, and pets. Ree is wearing a brown shirt of some description, although we can't see more than that. It also appears that she is on a bunkbed, her hands on the protective rail. She is looking at something on the floor.

1. REE:            You ever watch that square of light from the window? It starts out on the wall, then slides down, down, over the surface of the desk, and finally makes it to the middle of the floor.

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**PAGE THREE (CONTINUED)**

**Panel 2.**

A close shot of JEANETTE SORLEY. Jeanette is African-American, 36 years old, another ghost-eyed beauty with a dim, drifting light on the inside, and dressed in the same brown shirt as Ree. Jeanette's head is on a thin pillow. Her dark, wavy hair is pulled back from her brow, so that we can clearly see her drawn face and hooded eyes. There are photographs of her young son, Bobby (about 10 years old), on the wall beside her. She is looking at one of these photographs now, pressing the tips of her fingers to it.

2. JEANETTE:        Really, Ree? I was daydreaming for a moment there, in paradise, with my son. And your big mouth blew it up.
3. REE (OP):        What?
4. JEANETTE:        I just can't be bothered with a square of light.

**Panel 3.**

Another closeup on Ree. She is propped on one elbow, twirling a finger nonchalantly through her tight curls. Her blue eyes are rolled to the ceiling.

5. REE:            I say you can't **not** be bothered by a square of light!

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**PAGE THREE (CONTINUED)**

**Panel 4.**

We pull back here to see that we're in one of the cells of the DOOLING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR WOMEN, and it looks... well, it looks like a cell. The smooth walls are the color of oatmeal. There's an uncomfortable looking bunkbed, a shared toilet/sink, and a metal desk against the wall, strewn with a couple of dog-eared paperbacks and a Bible. The one remarkable thing (and it is, sadly, fleeting) is a brilliant square of sunlight on the gray cement floor, beamed there through a small window on the wall opposite the metal desk. Ree and Jeanette are lying on their respective bunks (Ree on top). Their matching brown shirts are the top half of their oh-so-attractive prison browns--the standard uniform for Dooling Correctional inmates. Ree now has her head on the pillow. She is no longer looking at the square of light.

6. REE:            How about game shows? You think you can be on a game show if you have a criminal record?

7. JEANETTE: I think there should be a game show where you can only play if you **do** have a criminal record. We could call it **Lying for Prizes.**

8. REE: I **like** that a lot! How would it work?

**Panel 5.**

Close on Jeanette again. She has her eyes closed, with one hand pressed wearily to her forehead.

9. JEANETTE (weak): >sigh<

10. JEANETTE: I don't know, Ree. You think about it, and I'll think about it, and we'll exchange notes later.

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**PAGE THREE (CONTINUED)**

**Panel 6.**

Exterior shot of the DOOLING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR WOMEN. It is a drab red-brick building, single story, except for one wing (B-Wing), which has a second floor. The facility is surrounded by two imposing chain-link fences. Both fences are topped with savage coils of razor wire. We probably can't see from this angle, but there's a small parking lot, and--behind yet more fencing--a recreation yard with a running track, where the inmates can get some much-needed fresh air and exercise. In the foreground, a strip of blacktop leads to the main gate. There is a security station and a sign that clearly reads: DOOLING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR WOMEN, and beneath this: MAIN ENTRANCE. An American flag ripples colorfully from a clean white flagpole. Birds sprinkle the blue sky, as if flaunting their freedom.

11. CAPTION (V/O): "After all, we've got all the time in the world."

**PAGE FOUR** (Five panels)

**Panel 1.**

We're back with Evie. She has her back to us, walking down a rutted woodland path. Moths flicker and buzz around her. Just ahead of her, clear in the shot, is a dirty old prefab SHED with battered panels, a single, grimy window, and a dented, rusted door. There are moths on the shed roof. We can see that the path continues past the shed, but we can't where it leads... as yet. Patches of blue sky can be seen through and above the branches of the surrounding trees.

Evie's cobwebby footprints are fainter now. (They appear to fade the farther she gets from the Mother Tree.)

**Panel 2.**

The shed is a METH SHED. A particularly disgusting meth shed. There'll be a fuller description in the next panel. For now, the shot is from inside, focusing on Evie, who stands--somewhat in silhouette because of the light behind her--in the doorway. The door is most of the way open, and Evie has pulled aside a thin net curtain that hangs in the doorway. To the right, we can see part of a countertop littered with detritus: grimy test tubes, an equally murky filtering flask lying on its side, a single rubber glove, perhaps a couple of porno mags. There are a few dusty posters on the wall. The kind of posters we might expect to see hanging in a redneck's meth shed: pickup trucks, a confederate flag, a topless model wearing a ballcap, holding a wrench.

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**PAGE FOUR (CONTINUED)**

**Panel 3.**

The meth shed in all its glory. It is a dim, dingy workplace. Walter White would *not* be happy here. A gas stove dominates the space. Yellowish tubes snake from behind it to a pair of white PROPANE CANNISTERS. There are empty bottles and dented cans on the floor, perhaps a few moldering magazines. There's a dirty utility sink and a single lawn chair. The chair has a beer bottle propped in the cupholder and a gray checked SHIRT draped over the back of it. We can see the countertop in full now, with all the detritus we saw in the previous panel, and more besides: a metal tray, an open package of Ziploc bags, lengths of rubber tubing, spent matches, more dirty test tubes and filtering flasks, a cloudy boiling flask on a support stand, a one-hitter meth pipe with a blackened bowl. A few more redneck posters are tacked across the walls, as if they will make the place more homely. Moths flutter here and there.

**Panel 4.**

Close shot of the gray checked shirt draped over the back of the lawn chair. Evie (perhaps just her arm extending into the frame) grabs it.

**Panel 5.**

Front and center on Evie, who has slipped into the shirt and is in the process of buttoning it up. It offers a degree of privacy, dropping as it does to her thighs. It is not a clean shirt, though. There is a California-shaped mayonnaise stain running down the front of it.

Evie has a moth in her hair.