THE CHURCH

written by
Vaclav Urbanek
urbanek@writingbubbles.com



The panel descriptions and the number of panels on each page present a basic structure for the story. If you wish to tweak them a bit, go for it. You are the visual artist, after all. I would, however, like to preserve the flow of the individual pages, the story beats on them, and what happens before and after a page turn.

PAGE 1 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

BIG PANEL, EXTERIOR, NIGHT. We see an old village church on top of a hill. The church is not necessarily old itself, but it's an old type of church, since this story takes place around the 17th century in America. Though dark outside, there is some light coming from the church itself. We will later find out that the source of this light are dozens of candles.

In front of the church stands a figure - a MAN - shrouded in darkness, with only his silhouette recognizable, mostly thanks to the light coming from the church.

PANEL 2

INTERIOR. There is a PRIEST inside the church, lighting up the candles. The church itself is small, but not necessarily modest. It seems there are some valuable ornaments here, golden chalices and such. This doesn't have to be apparent right away, but later we'll see the Priest has some expensive rings on his fingers.

PANEL 3

In the <u>foreground</u> we see the PRIEST standing next to the church altar, minding his work, but also noticing there is someone behind him. In the <u>background</u> we see the MAN, standing in the now opened door of the church. He is fully dressed in black and in a long coat.

PANEL 4

I would imagine this as a WIDE PANEL, so that we could see both characters: the PRIEST on the <u>left</u> and the MAN on the <u>right</u>, closing the door behind him.

PRIEST Can I help you, my son?

Our door is always open, though I must admit we do

not get many visitors at such late hours.

MAN Ah, don't mind me, Father.

I was just walking by...

PANEL 5

SMALL PANEL, focus on the MAN. He is young with long black hair, pale face and a witty smirk.

MAN ...thinking I should say hello.

PAGE TURN

PAGE 2 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

The MAN is walking towards the PRIEST, who is still standing by the altar.

PRIEST Well, I...

MAN I've wanted to meet you for some time now, Father.

You've made quite the reputation for yourself.

PANEL 2

SMALL PANEL. More focused on the PRIEST.

PRIEST Lord's work never ends.

But I do not think you are a part of my flock. Are

you from a different village? A nearby town,

perhaps?

PANEL 3

SMALL PANEL. More focused on the MAN.

MAN Something like that.

PANEL 4

The MAN is looking around the church. We may or may not see the Priest in this panel.

MAN From what I've heard, you seem to be protecting your

flock pretty thoroughly.

So much so that outsiders started avoiding your

village altogether.

Travelers, merchants, and such.

PANEL 5

The PRIEST has made a few steps towards the MAN, but still remains near the altar.

PRIEST We live in dangerous times, my son. The Devil's

disciples are everywhere.

One must root out the evil however he can.

MAN Oh, I've heard the stories, Father. Don't be modest.

PAGE 3 - PANELS: 7

PANEL 1

The MAN is now trying to get a little closer to the PRIEST.

MAN

Lynching, burning, drowning...

Seems like your village has the highest number of witches, Devil worshipers, and other enemies of God,

in the entire county.

Maybe in the entire state.

PANEL 2

Focus on the PRIEST, his expression now cautious and cold.

MAN (OP)

So many evildoers, hiding in plain sight, until you

exposed them and dealt with not only them...

PANEL 3

SMALL PANEL, a close-up of a golden chalice.

MAN (OP)

...but also their lands...

PANEL 4

SMALL PANEL, a close-up of the PRIEST's hand, with some seemingly expensive rings on most if his fingers.

MAN (OP)

...and possessions.

PANEL 5

The PRIEST is heading back to the altar. The Man may or may not be visible in this panel.

MAN (OP?)

All those travelers wanting to share the news of the World.

All those women yearning for more in life than just being in a man's shadow.

All those less fortunate, not able to donate to the House of God as much as the rest.

All those children...

PANEL 6

Focus on the PRIEST, who has his back turned to the Man (OP?) so that the Man can't see him grabbing a crucifix from the altar.

PRIEST

Who are you?

PANEL 7

SMALL PANEL, focused on the MAN, grinning and showing Vampire teeth.

MAN

Like you said, Father. I'm not from around here.

PAGE 4 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

BIG PANEL. The PRIEST is now pointing the crucifix at the MAN, as you would at a Vampire. But the Man seems to be unphased.

PRIEST Curse you, demon!

PANEL 2

More focused on the MAN, though we may still also see the Priest's hand dangling the crucifix in front of his face. The Man is still unphased, bored, even.

PANEL 3

SIMILAR PANEL.

MAN See, here's the thing, Father.

When someone strays away from God as much as you

have...

PANEL 4

Basically a reverse shot, focused on the PRIEST's now horrified face, with the crucifix still in his hand.

MAN (OP) ...then a crucifix becomes nothing more than a

trinket.

And a Church...

PANEL 5

WIDE PANEL. We see BOTH CHARACTERS and also more of the church.

MAN ...nothing more than a tomb of empty words.

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK

PAGE 5 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

Focus on the horrified PRIEST.

PRIEST What...

...what are you going to do to me?

PANEL 2

Focus on the MAN.

MAN Me? Not a thing.

But I did want to introduce you to some of my...

SFX KNOCK KNOCK

MAN ...friends.

PANEL 3

This could be another WIDE PANEL, with the PRIEST on the $\underline{\text{left}}$ and the MAN on the $\underline{\text{right}}$, now walking back towards the door (on the $\underline{\text{far right}}$, maybe OP).

MAN You see, Father. You were so focused on the

presentation of your punishments that you became

sloppy in their execution.

When you drown or burn somebody, it often takes some

time for them to die.

PANEL 4

The MAN is now approaching the door.

MAN So on few occasions I managed to catch a quick word

with some of those poor souls.

To give them... a proposition.

And let me tell you, Father.

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK

MAN They were **really interested** in what I was going to

offer them.

PANEL 5

Focus on the PRIEST, leaning against the altar, trying to go back even farther, even though he can't. Even though he is trapped in his own church.

MAN (OP) Some of them even thought that the Big Man himself

sent me to save them. That **He** is actually in my

corner.

And who knows. When you put me against you on the

scales...

PAGE 6 - PANELS: 3

PANEL 1

SMALL PANEL. Focus on the Man's hand grabbing the door handle.

MAN (OP) ...maybe they're right.

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK

PANEL 2

Focus on the horrified PRIEST who has now dropped his crucifix on the floor.

MAN (OP) Forgive me, Father...

PANEL 3

The Man (may or may not be in the panel) has opened the door. Outside we see a series of figures. A WOMAN in wet clothes and with wet hair and remnants of a rope around her. An emaciated MAN, looking almost like a ghoul, covered in dirt, as if he crawled his way out of a shallow grave. Another WOMAN, burned to the point that we may even see parts of her skull. A SMALL BOY (if you really want to include something like that). Maybe a few others if you think of something - perhaps some black slaves.

They are all pale, with otherworldly sparkle in their eyes (maybe a sparkle that even the Man shares in some panels). Some of them are smiling, showing their sharp Vampire teeth.

MAN (OP?)for you have sinned.

THE END