

## **THE SHIFTERS**

written by

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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: 4

PANEL 1

EXTERIOR, NIGHT. We see The Earth from orbit. Specifically the United States, with the power grid shining through the night.

NARRATION                      None of the movies really prepared us for what the alien invasion would actually be like.

PANEL 2

Now we're much closer. An areal shot of a larger city.

NARRATION                      It was **quiet**.

It was **covert**.

PANEL 3

Even closer, now looking at a mostly empty street in the middle of the night.

NARRATION                      And when we finally noticed, it was already too late.

PANEL 4

We see a dark blind alley. There's a HOMELESS MAN sleeping on the ground under some blankets and/or newspapers. There's a big trash container further down the alley.

NARRATION                      We didn't see any alien ships.

They just started appearing **among us**.

PAGE TURN

PAGE 2 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

SIMILAR PANEL. A SHIFTER now appears from behind the trash container. It should be mostly covered in darkness, but even then you can go wild with the general look and/or shape.

NARRATION                      They started with picking out homeless people, hitchhikers and such.

PANEL 2

The SHIFTER is now closer to the HOMELESS MAN. Even though it's still mostly covered in darkness, we can see some sort of alien tentacles or long arms/fingers/antennas closing in on the homeless man. And even though the Shifter isn't really touching him, it's still somehow able to drain the life out of him.

NARRATION                      Before they killed them, they sort of absorbed their essence. Their **life energy**, if you will.

PANEL 3

We now see the SHIFTER standing over the dead body of the homeless man. Even though it is still covered in darkness to the point that we basically see just its silhouette, it now looks significantly more human. You can still spot that it's not really a human, but there certainly is an "improvement".

NARRATION                      To certain extend, this allowed them to mimic our appearance. To **shift** into humanoid form.  
  
We started calling them **The Shifters**.

PANEL 4

EXTERIOR, NIGHT. A SHIFTER is grabbing a female jogger on a dark street. It is disguised in a long coat with a hood (so maybe a raincoat or a winter jacket?), but we are still able to see its "face" that does not look human at all. So far this Shifter was able to mimic just the general shape of a human, but not any specific details. We also see the tentacles/arms ready for (or in the middle of) the absorption process.

NARRATION                      The more people they were able to grab and absorb, the more human they started to appear.

PANEL 5

INTERIOR, NIGHT. We see a SHIFTER, now mimicked as the jogger, in the jogger's house. It's standing in a hallway as a more or less human shaped silhouette, looking inside a bedroom at "her" husband and two children, all sleeping.

NARRATION                      And the more human they appeared, the more of us they were able to absorb.

PANEL 1

EXTERIOR, NIGHT. A general scene of chaos. Riots, burning cars, a couple of heavy-duty officers still trying to keep things in order. There can be some graffiti around, maybe saying "Shifters" or "They're everywhere". Feel free to add your own if you think of any.

NARRATION                      People **panicked**.  
Countries started to go to war with each other.  
Nobody knew what was going on. Nobody trusted anybody.

PANEL 2

The city is in ruins. We see TWO PEOPLE running away from THREE SHIFTERS that now look basically human.

NARRATION                      The world turned into a **nightmarish hellscape**. We became a pray for **alien hunters** that looked just like us.

PANEL 3

The THREE SHIFTERS were able to catch the TWO HUMANS and are now absorbing their life energy.

NARRATION                      We thought humanity was over.  
But then **something changed**.

PANEL 4

A destroyed empty street with several human-looking SHIFTERS standing around, doing nothing.

NARRATION                      With so many of us either dead or hiding..  
...there were, at one point, probably more Shifters on planet Earth than actual humans.

PANEL 5

More focused on TWO SPECIFIC SHIFTERS standing close to each other. We can still see there's something wrong with them. They still don't look perfectly human.

NARRATION                      They started to loose track of the rest of us. They stopped evolving. They were **stuck**.

PANEL 6

SIMILAR PANEL. The TWO SHIFTERS are now using their tentacles/antennas on each other. Not to drain energy, but to mimic.

NARRATION                      So they started to **mimic each other**.

PAGE 4 - PANELS: 5

PANEL 1

EXTERIOR, NIGHT. We are in the blind alley from the start of this story. We see the SHIFTER disguised as the homeless man looking at himself in a broken mirror. He now looks worse than the Shifters we saw on the previous page. Like the weirdest looking AI image you've seen recently.

NARRATION                      But none of them could pass for a human 100%. Each of them still had flaws, **abnormalities**, deviations. A strange expression. Eyes too close to each other. Wrong number of fingers on each hand. And when they started mimicking each other..

PANEL 2

Focus on the "HOMELESS MAN". Feel free to highlight any abnormality you'd like.

NARRATION                      ..these abnormalities grew **exponentially**.

PANEL 3

The "HOMELESS MAN" is now looking even less human. It's mutating. We can also notice that it's now a bit brighter around. The Sun is slowly rising.

NARRATION                      They couldn't learn anything new anymore. They started degrading, **mutating**. Each day it was easier and easier to tell the difference between a human and a Shifter.

PANEL 4

The SHIFTER (that now just barely resembles the homeless man) notices that somebody is standing behind it. We can probably see some shadows cast by the morning Sun.

NARRATION                      And it was right at that moment..

PANEL 5

BIGGER PANEL. The way out of the blind alley is now blocked by a group of humans. They look tired, dirty, maybe wounded, but they are definitely humans, armed with anything from baseball bats to frying pans. The SHIFTER is now turned to them, realizing it can't escape.

NARRATION                      ..when we were finally able to **fight back**.

THE END