# FUTURE

Process

by Rupert Smissen

Welcome! Jumping straight in here to show you a bit of the Behind-the-Scenes in the making of *FUTURE*...

Chapter 1, Page 7

This is a really heartfelt moment which tells us a lot about Kay & Murray's relationship, and I wanted it to be big and dramatic, but also quiet and gentle. Initially the script had a few more panels on the page, but we agreed to strip it back and give it over to the main image of the two embracing, allowing this one moment much more weight. We're with these two for the whole book so if the reader isn't sold on their relationship early on, well, it makes the following 100-odd pages something of an uphill struggle.

I love the contrast between K & M here, especially in the linework. I also contrasted the more sombre figures with some sharp backlighting, and the rain gives it a bit of a Bladerunner vibe, which seems fitting for a sci-fi.
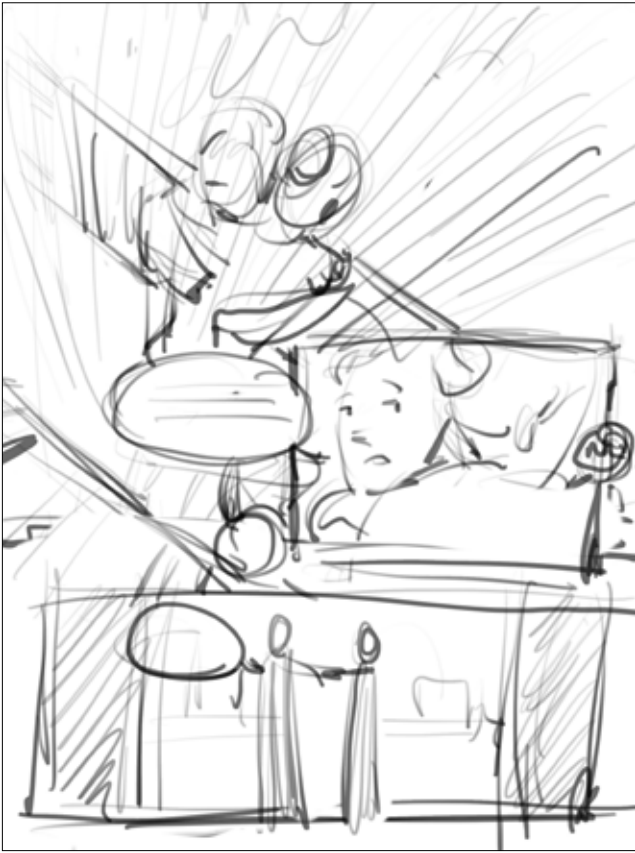
Thumbnail

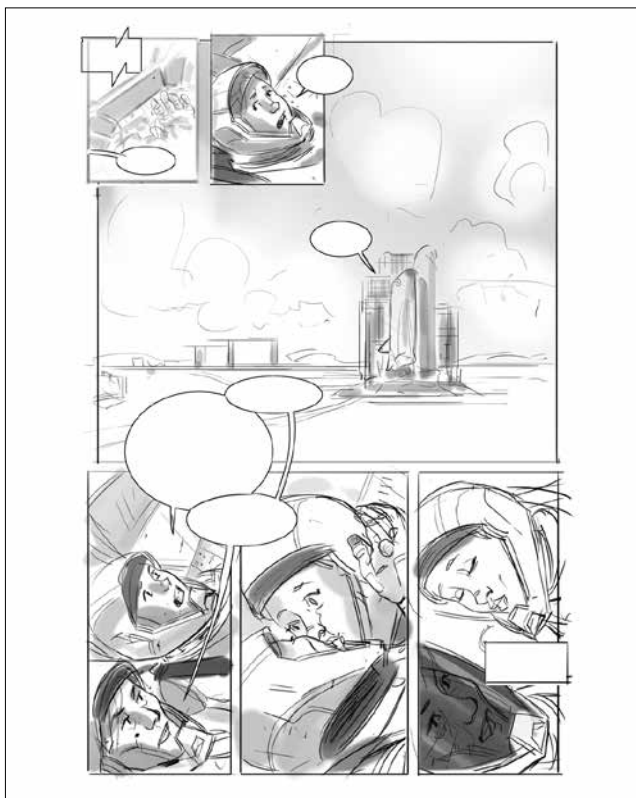*Lineart*

Flat Colour

Final

Chapter 1, Page 17

Tom and I have a solid working relationship, which is good because sometimes pages like this cropped up where we were pulling in two different directions. My first rough for this page saw me focussing on K's line in panel 2, wanting to show her delivering the 'Because I'm fucking terrified' line up close. I was also keen to use the launch apparatus and shuttle to structure the page, which was almost pure artistic vanity.
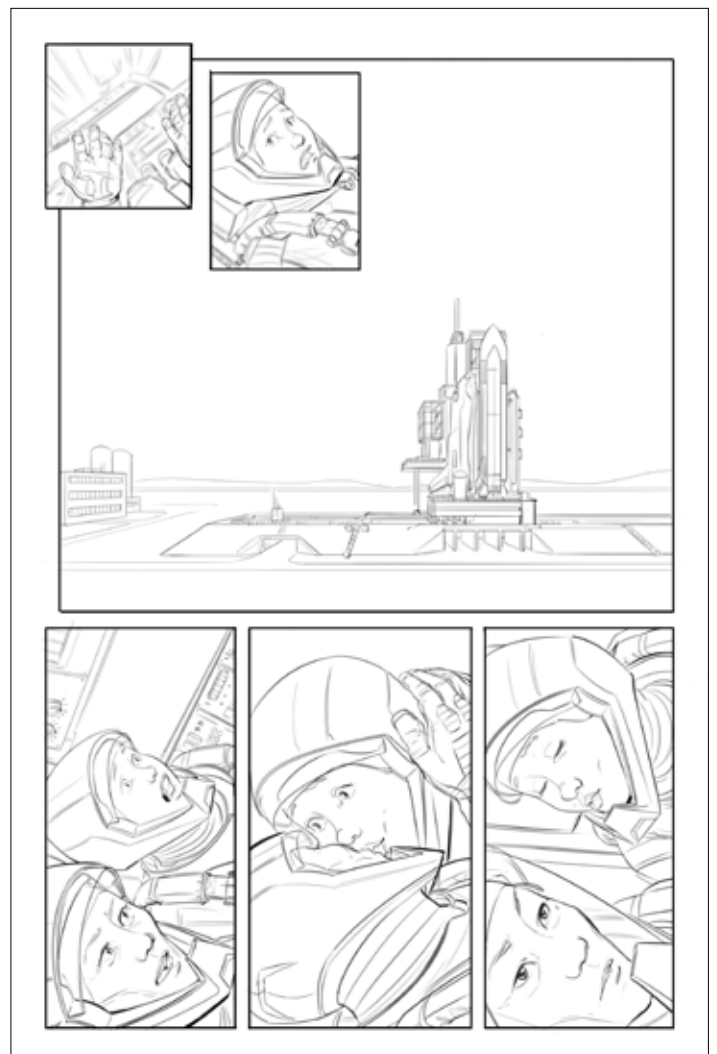
Tom correctly pointed out that crash-zooming out for panel 3 to show a wide shot of the shuttle against a nice fiery sky had more comedic impact. But now I've picked apart the joke, so it's died. Hopefully you're reading this having finished the book...
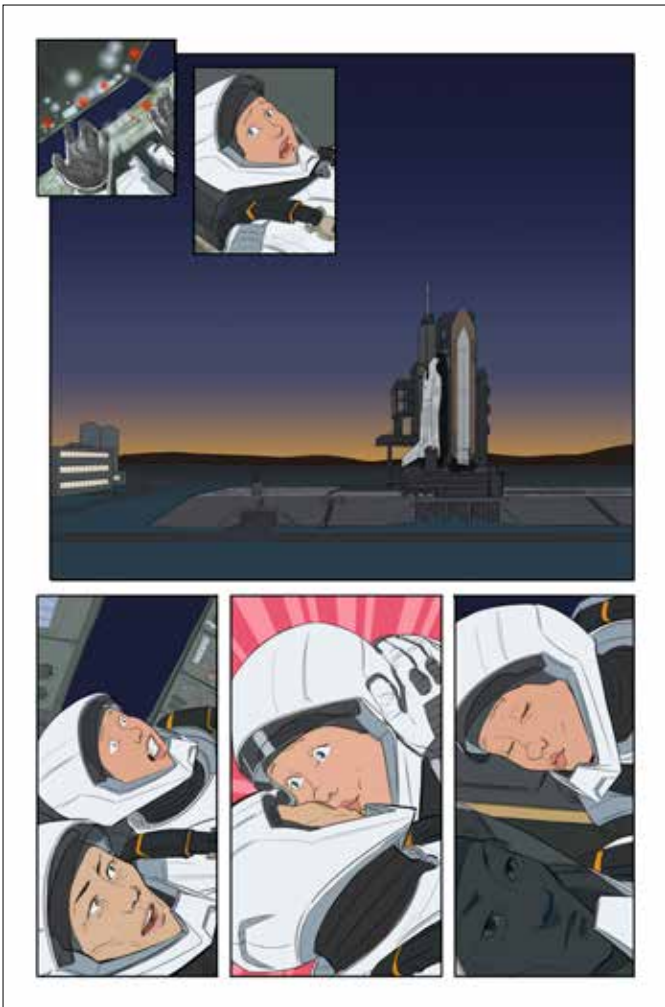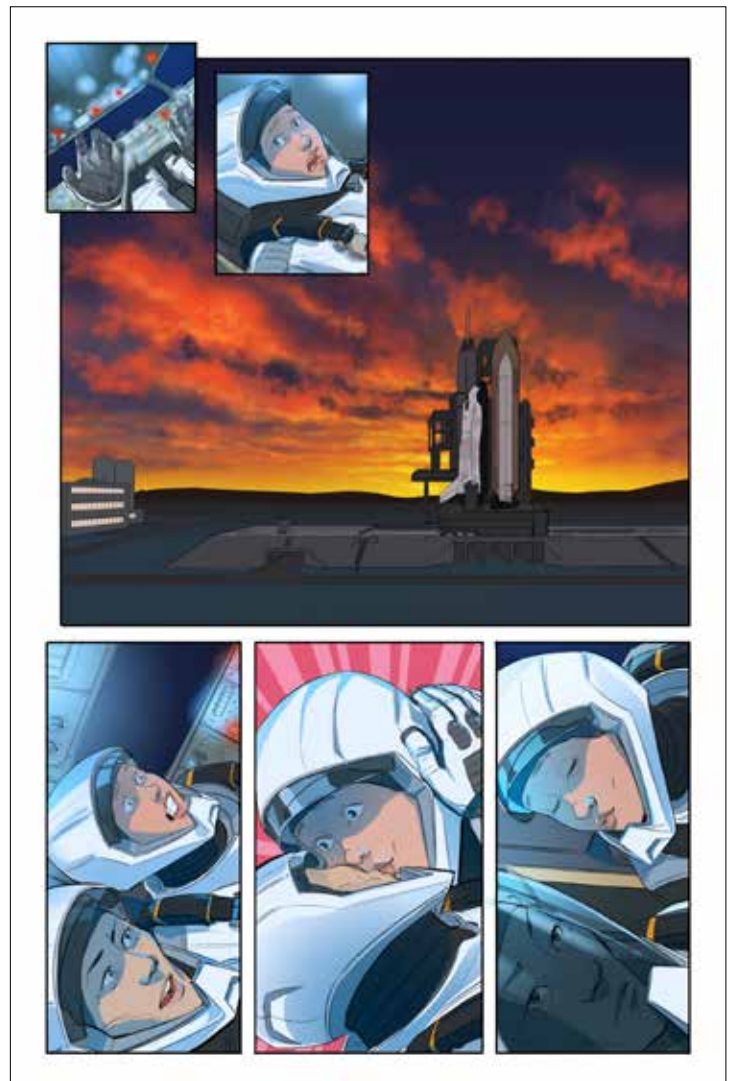

Original Layout
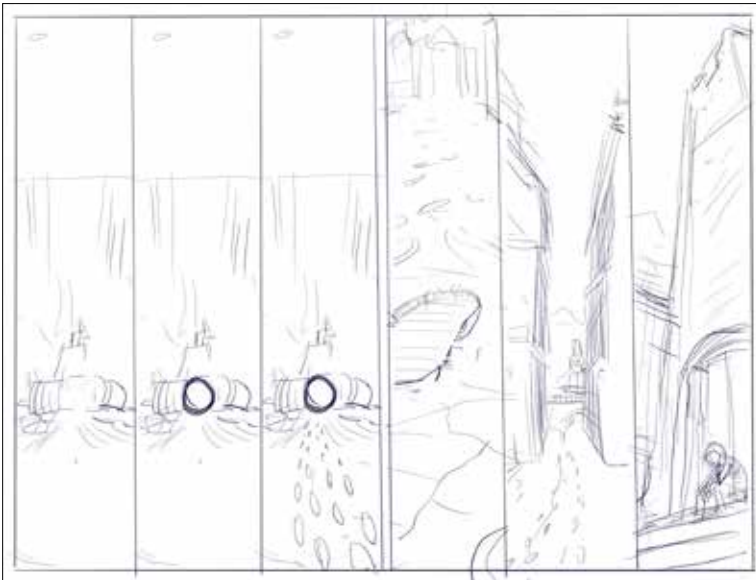

Thumbnail

Lineart

Flat Colour

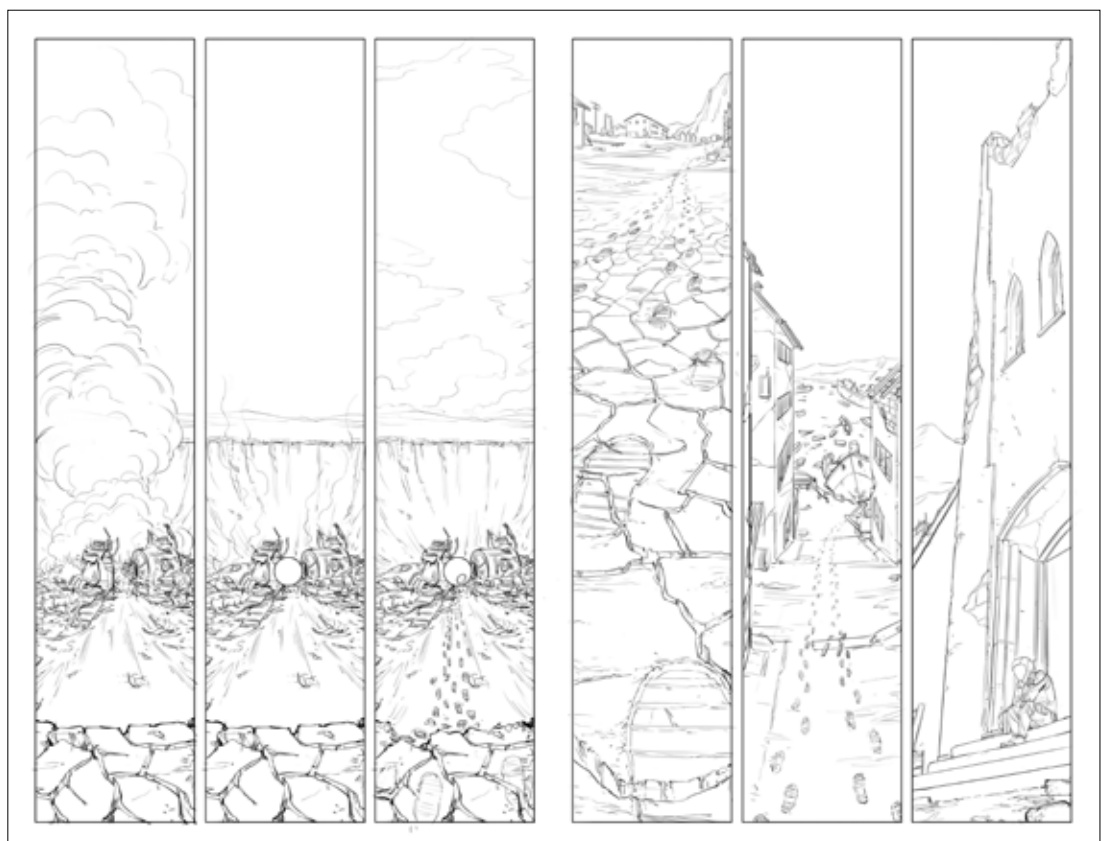*Final*

Chapter 3, Pages 2 – 3

I really enjoy working in stretched out panel formats. A lot of time is passing in these two, and initially I saw this as stretching in super-mega widescreen over the two pages. But then I thought that putting them side by side would show the skyline and light changes a bit better, and I could avoid sticking the centre of each panel in the gutter. Plus I'd already used the widescreen gambit in the previous page. And the one before that. I am a multi-trick pony.

These pages (and the 2 preceding them) are some of the scant few that don't have K or M in them, last panel of this sequence aside. This also helped to slow the action down and settle us slowly in the new landscape, a pretty dramatic change from the cool blue of space. Feels a bit self-centred of me to say I like how quiet these panels are, but I do. Tom's hand is still at work here though, the contents of each panel lyrically described in the script. He could've just said "A few panels of desert, real nice looking. Just have fun with it". But he never would.
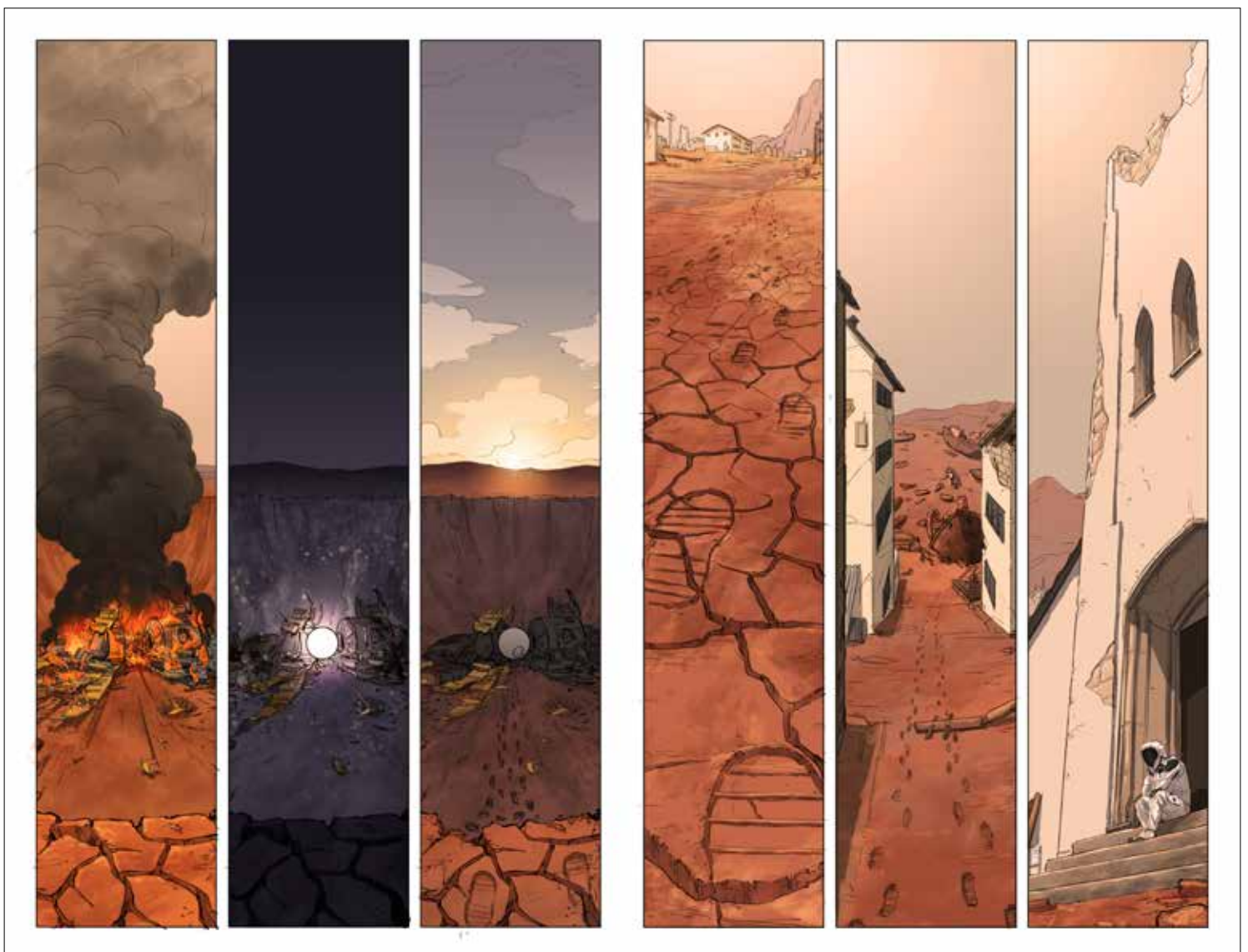

Thumbnail

Lineart
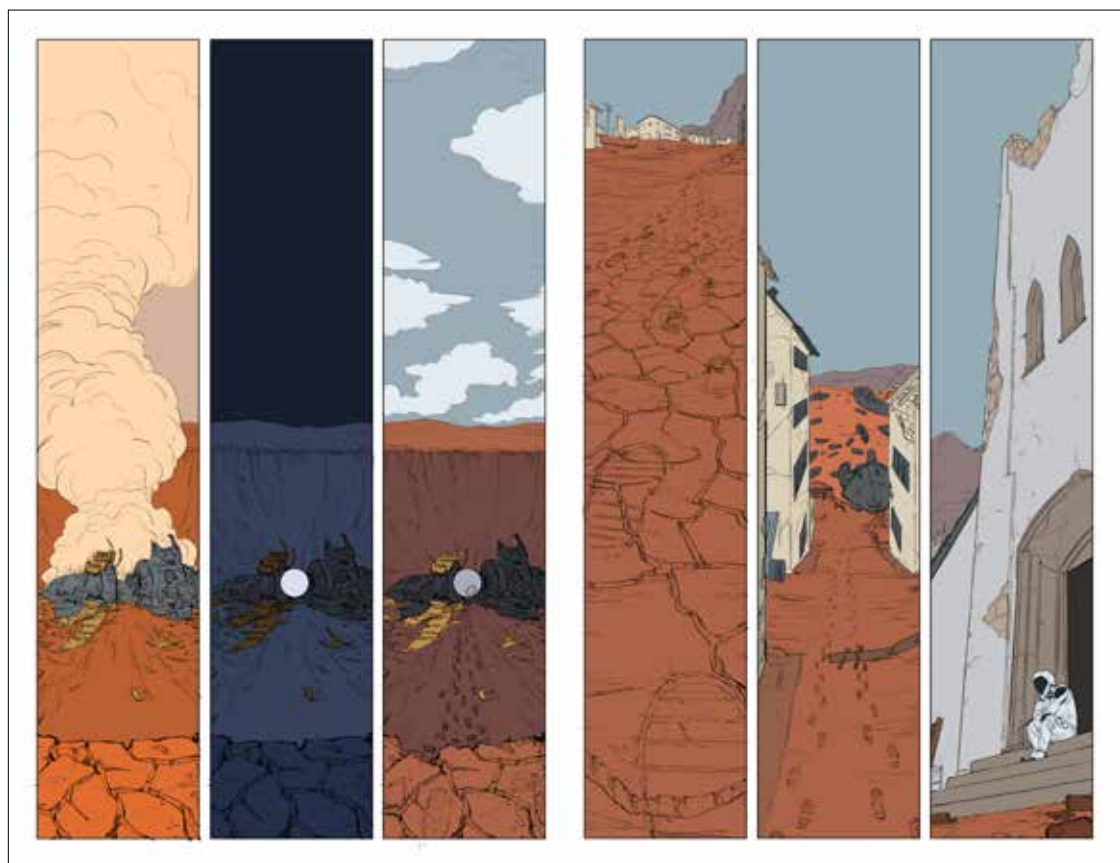
Flat Colour

Final

Chapter 4, Pages 14 – 15

First, a clarification. Tom and I made this book in chapters. There are 5, and they're distinct from one another in tone, colours and a bunch of other stuff. Like acts in a film, they sit end to end but aren't given title cards, because we aren't Tarantino. This page is from chapter 4, in which Kay finds the Svalbard seed vault and Murray takes a major underwater trip into the past. There's a sense throughout Murray's wanderings that everything that happens is real, and none of it is. As we moved from seabed to memory, I wanted the worlds to blend into one another, no hard cuts.

Anyway, to the pages! This spread feels quite cinematic, kicking off with a close up, the camera moving from Murray to Murray to Murray revealing the next scene. The colours really tied this spread together, with trippin' spacesuit Murray in cool underwater blue fading between scenes in the same setting. Explaining it now, it all feels super obvious, but I still really like how this one flows.

Thumbnail

Lineart

Flat Colour

Final

Chapter 5, Page 17

I'm gonna paraphrase Tom's instructions for this page here. Actually, no, let's go verbatim, words are important. Instructions as follows:

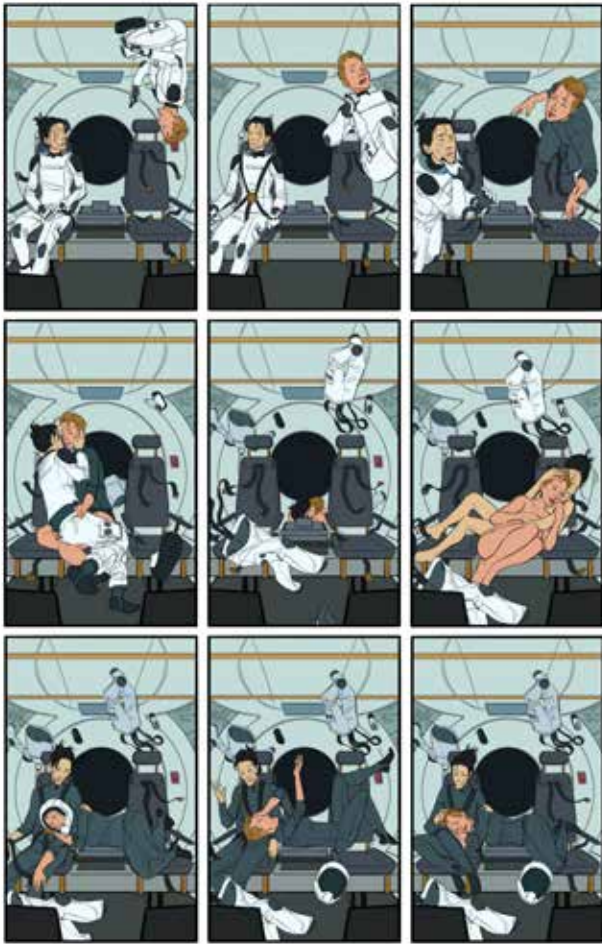9-PANEL GRID! ALL SAME ANGLE! DO IT! HOORAY!

Obviously what followed was a stream of meticulous panel descriptions for me to work from, but the grid was important to him goddamit so I went with it. Strangely calming after approaching most of my pages with a "Hmmm, how do I split this blank rectangle into 7 in an exciting yet legible way..." Coming from a storyboarding background, I tend to see everything in widescreen at first, so the 9 panel grid never really appealed, but it really works here. It gives it a sense of them both in a pretty confined space as time marches on, and I liked the problem solving element of moving them around the pod whilst leaving room for speech. No big closeups, they had to feel similar, but my personal favourite is the central panel where they disappear behind the seats.

Thumbnail

Lineart

Flat Colour

Final