

Pests: "Infestation"
Wendy Despain

PAGE ONE

TITLE: "Infestation"

CREDITS

Panel One

Lucy sits before a computer at a tiny work-station wearing a phone operator's headset. She's early twenties, a little punk but not enough to have anything pierced. She's fiddling with a pack of cigarettes, her eyes on the clock.

1 LUCY CAPTION: I started smoking just to get away from my desk for a few extra minutes.

Panel Two

Lucy standing outside, watching people go by, ignoring the lit cigarette in her hand.

2 LUCY CAPTION: Sometimes the whole thing burns away and I don't even notice.

Panel Three

Pull back a little more to see her standing off to the side of the usual freaky corporate people who come out to smoke, plus a leering janitor or two. They're all a little off. Lucy's watching the people passing by on the sidewalk.

3 LUCY CAPTION: I come for the change of pace. Not the company.

Panel Four

Lucy sees Shoki down the dark, grimy alley by her building and heads his way, curious.

4 LUCY CAPTION: But sometimes I just can't help myself.

PAGE TWO

Panel One

Shoki stomping bugs.
Lucy standing by, watching.

Panel Two

Lucy hasn't moved an inch. Shoki continues to stomp.

1 LUCY: Hi

Panel Three

Shoki stomping bugs (no evidence he heard her)

Panel Four

2 LUCY: What are you doing?

Panel Five

Shoki continuing to stomp

Panel Six

Lucy turns to go, Shoki keeps stomping and doesn't look up.
Stomps punctuate his words.

3 SHOKI: Pixies.

4 SHOKI: Finally found the nest.

5 SHOKI: Looked all over for it last week.

6 SHOKI: Came back today and this time I got em.

PAGE THREE

Panel One

Lucy looks surprised. Shoki still doesn't look up.
Continues stomping.

1 LUCY: Pixies?

2 SHOKI: Like hornets.

3 SHOKI: Can't get rid of em all till you find the nest.

Panel Two

Lucy looks patronizing now. Shoki doesn't notice her at all. Stomping and squishing still punctuate his words.

4 LUCY CAPTION: I have my share of crazy old relatives. I know how to play along.

5 LUCY: How do you know they're here?

6 SHOKI: I don't, till somebody calls me.

Panel Three

Pull back a little more to see more of the trash in the gutters, the rusting fire escape, the dirty brickwork, and the two figures talking.

7 LUCY: How do you get rid of them?

8 SHOKI: Rumor has it there's an incantation.

9 SHOKI: But I don't know it.

10 SHOKI: Sometimes bug spray works.

11 SHOKI: Personally, I prefer the classic application of physical persuasion.

PAGE FOUR

Panel One

On Lucy looking a little disgusted, a little worried about where this might be going. Shoki glances at her sideways, almost menacing.

1 LUCY CAPTION: Of course, there's a point where playing along wears out.

2 LUCY: I don't see anything.

3 SHOKI: Yeah?

4 SHOKI: You're lucky.

5 SHOKI: Nasty little critters. Get into everything. Old buildings especially.

6 SHOKI: Pulled back the wallpaper in one place - nothing left of the walls. Just millions of pixies crawling around in little tunnels through their own feces.

Panel Two

Lucy's definitely disgusted now. Shoki's back to work, stomping.

7 LUCY: So you squish them?

8 SHOKI: It's not glamorous, but it pays the bills.

Panel Three

On Lucy's surprise. Shoki's nonchalance.

9 LUCY: Really? Who pays you?

10 SHOKI: Head of Building Services.

PAGE FIVE

Panel One

Lucy squats to get a closer look. Shoki goes on stomping.

1 LUCY CAPTION: I met the head of BS once on a smoke break. He seemed exactly the type of guy to give an old bum a few bucks for squashing his delusions in the alley.

Panel Two

Close on Shoki's feet. There really isn't anything there.

2 LUCY CAPTION: But this old man didn't sound quite crazy enough to be for real.

3 LUCY: You've got a good act going, but you know.. I don't really believe you see anything there.

4 SHOKI: I don't believe you don't. So we're even.

Panel Three

Shoki leans down with a jar and snaps it over nothing as if he's catching some invisible creature.

5 LUCY: What's that?

6 SHOKI: The queen. They're not affected by physical persuasion.

Panel Four

Shoki picks up the jar and puts a lid on it. Peering inside, his hands cover enough of the jar that we can't see if something is inside.

7 SHOKI: Gotta take her home and get a hex on her.

PAGE SIX

Panel One

Full-page closeup of the jar with a ghastly little pixie trapped inside. It should look like a tiny humanoid with a huge mouth of pointy teeth and grossly-distended body. The skin should be slightly transparent so we can see the skeleton and various organs. There are wings, but they're battered and ugly. It's clawing against the glass to get out. Very termite-like, but also very human. This is a really disturbing picture.

1 SHOKI: See?

Page Seven

Panel One

Pull back to see Shoki with the jar in Lucy's face, Lucy pressed back against the alley wall in horror.

1 LUCY: What's that?

2 SHOKI: A pixie.

Panel Two

Pocket of Shoki's old coat makes a chirping sound. Lucy startles.

3 LUCY: What's that?

4 SHOKI: My cell phone.

Panel Three

Shoki, cell phone in one hand, puts the jar in his coat pocket with the other as he walks away. Lucy watches him go, still grossed-out and jaw-dropped.

5 SHOKI (on phone): Queller. Yeah. I'll be there in ten.

Page Eight

Panel One

Lucy back at her desk, headset askew, not working, still in shock.

1 LUCY CAPTION: It was extra difficult to focus on work that afternoon.

Panel Two

Lucy walking in the door of a tiny, vintage Chicago apartment. Not much furniture. Should be obvious she lives a simple lifestyle because she can't afford to do otherwise.

2 LUCY CAPTION: At home, I tried not to think about the horrible little things that might be living inside the walls.

Panel Three

Lucy cooking dinner in a little kitchen - at a stove, using a saucepan. Not a microwave.

3 LUCY CAPTION: I still wasn't entirely sure what I saw.

Panel Four

Lucy in bed alone, reading a paperback.

4 CAPTION: By bedtime, I had convinced myself I hadn't seen anything at all.

Panel Five

Lucy in the moonlight, asleep but with a deeply disturbed look on her face and tears on her cheeks.

5 LUCY CAPTION: But my nightmares wouldn't let me forget.

PAGE NINE

Panel One

Lucy at work the next day - tired, jittery. Headset on, staring at the computer in front of her.

1 LUCY CAPTION: Between the nightmares and the scratching I was sure I heard in the walls, work the next day was a little surreal.

2 LUCY: Yes, sir. For the new low price of forty-nine ninety-five.

Panel Two

Lucy in the hallway of her building - a boring gray kind of place that hasn't been redecorated since the eighties. Shoki is walking down the hall toward her in the same scruffy old trench coat.

3 LUCY CAPTION: It didn't help matters when I saw him again during my scheduled, five-minute bathroom break.

4 LUCY: What are you doing here?

Panel Three

On Shoki's look of surprise and slight confusion, as if he doesn't recognize her.

5 SHOKI: Got a call about some _____. Haven't seen any, have you?

I think it's just mice this time, but I told him I'd come take a look anyway.

But you were just here about the pixies.

These old buildings tend to pick up a whole collection of
pests over the years.

My card. (Shoki D. Que ller)