

THE TEN-SECONDS: GODSEND

Part 1 of 11

By Rob Williams

Page One (Six Panels)

Panel One

We open with what's at stake here. The Earth as seen from space, surrounded by total darkness. Beautiful colour, blue planet. An oasis in the darkness.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"There was a time before the Gods came. I know that. I just can't remember much of it."

MALLOY CAPTION:

"That's... I realise that's odd. But that place is gone now. Forever."

Panel Two

That round globe of Earth now becomes a similarly circular white Communion wafer. Held between the fingertips.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel Three

An old woman, kneeling in Church to take communion. Her tongue out. The wafer being placed towards her tongue by a hand from a person out of shot – a Priest.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"I know there was SOMETHING back then though."

Panel Four

Now we see a younger Malloy in Priest garb, before his face was burnt, handing the communion to the old lady. Fresh-faced, hopeful. Behind him an altar, a senior Priest looking on.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"Something tangible."

Panel Five

Malloy sat up on a hill in civvies overlooking a small English country town – Church spire visible. A small, very old Church, but a pretty one. Lots of greenery here. This looks pretty idyllic. The sun's out and this is a beautiful day. All is right with the world. The type of scene that says there's not a care. He's brought a paperback and some sandwiches with him. A relaxed afternoon. All this will end soon.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel Six

Cut to a different time. Close-up on Malloy's face now, shocked and horrified, tears running down his face, as flames reflect in his eyes and on his face, black smoke

billows past him and ash floats through the air. He looks like he can't believe what he's seeing. Just the colour shift here should tell us that idyllic world has been shattered and burnt. This is the moment his heart breaks and he changes – we'll show what happened here later.

MALLOY CAPTION:

“My name is Paul Malloy and I was born the day the Gods came.”

Page Two (Six Panels)

Panel One

Cut back to happier times. Malloy in his church, and there's a man – middle aged, thick-set, troubled, praying FURIOUSLY, crying, head down – Malloy approaches carefully. Something's not right.

MALLOY CAPTION: "I remember the day I heard the news. The moment."

MALLOY CAPTION: "Everyone remembers where they were..."

MALLOY: Roy?

MALLOY: ...what's wrong?

Panel Two

The middle-aged man looks up at 'us', tears streaming down his face, and they're tears of joy. This jaded middle-aged man looks like a child here. There's something mentally wayward about this man.

ROY: There's a flying man, Father. A flying man in New York.

ROY: I just saw it on the news.

MALLOY CAPTION: "The joy it brought to so many. The hope..."

Panel Three

HERO, the big bad from series one, flies high above Manhattan. A classic Superman type shot. Hope.

MALLOY CAPTION: "There was an explosion of feeling that at last we'd somehow been... delivered."

MALLOY CAPTION: "Flying gods and fast running gods and gods made of fire and lightning and water, they all came. Mostly in America, but they came and we welcomed them."

MALLOY CAPTION: "Many had reservations. I had reservations. But we welcomed them."

Panel Four

Now we cut to a London street and it's carnage with burning buses and cars and smashed buildings and rubble, and the tail end of a 747 is down the street, which plainly caused this damage as it came crashing down. Half an engine is there. Much

fire and dead bodies and carnage. There's police tape stopping punters who've crowded to get a better look getting through and police and ambulances are on the scene.

MALLOY CAPTION: "And then they started fighting."

Panel Five

Small panel. A crushed dead body of an old lady beneath some rubble.

MALLOY CAPTION: "Endless, pointless, repetitive fighting."

Panel Six

Small panel of a burning car with dead bodies in it. Three – a family. One child in a car seat in the back.

MALLOY CAPTION: "The fact that they didn't seem to care how many of us were caught in the crossfire showed what was to come."

Page Three (Six Panels)

Panel One

Cut to Hero, with the President of the United States (and he's got him here by force and the President looks terrified and harried and as if he's building to a brave but futile show of revolt), on the podium of the White House – Presidential seal on the podium as per any Presidential statement. Mach is in the background (from series one), so is The Scientist (not front and centre, lurking in the background, he's basically Reed Richards), Damage is there too, with The Scientist, making sure no one makes a move – he's huge and don't worry if most of him is off panel).

MALLOY CAPTION: "And then there was the Newsflash one night."

MALLOY CAPTION: "And Hero announced that they had decided that the people of the Earth, ALL the nations, should follow them now as they were superior."

MALLOY CAPTION: "They were, after all, GODS."

Panel Two

Same shot but a few moments later and Hero rips out the President's tongue for all to see. Mach smiles (nasty fucker). The Scientist, appalled by such an obvious show, turns away.

MALLOY CAPTION: "And then, when the President of the United States broke rank and urged everyone to fight them Hero pulled his tongue out."

Panel Three

War! Three F-15 fighters zoom in low on an attack run over a major US city and lazer beams shoot two of them out of the air, fired by person out of shot. Explosions below in the streets. Plumes of smoke rising up from the background.

MALLOY CAPTION: "The war began..."

Panel Four

Malloy out on the street of his ordinary street, lots of people out on his street, all staring towards us in horror, all frozen.

MALLOY CAPTION: "At first it seemed so far away. Something that was happening across the Atlantic."

MALLOY CAPTION: "But the telephones and televisions died. The Internet just stopped one day. Cars stalled and didn't restart. Electricity was gone."

MALLOY CAPTION: “A massive electromagnetic pulse, we know now.”

Panel Five

Now we’re behind all these people, looking at what they’re staring at, and on the horizon, relatively small, but rising and unmistakable, is a mushroom cloud from a nuclear explosion.

MALLOY CAPTION: “People panicked. You could see the change occurring in some.”

MALLOY CAPTION: “Then they started nuking major cities.”

Panel Six

A troop of FOLLOWERS. Armed, uniformed (no lycra or anything – real-world militia types) Gods-loving militia soldiers carrying torches, march through Malloy’s village and they’re dragging away some men who they’ve handcuffed. Taking them away for execution.

MALLOY CAPTION: “And The Followers, the people who had turned to the Gods’ side, their numbers grew and grew.”

MALLOY CAPTION: “The UK Resistance called itself The Ten-Seconders because, if you did meet a God, that was the average time you had left to live.”

Page Four (Six Panels)

Panel One

The Followers are dragging and throwing men into Malloy's Church. One of the men being dragged and thrown in is Roy, the man we saw crying earlier. He turns and looks at us in horror, his legs giving out on him. Some Followers are throwing petrol from cans onto the Church.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"But it could easily have described how long it actually took us all to turn on each other."

MALLOY CAPTION:

"Give your next-door-neighbours an opportunity for power and the scared and the weak will take it."

Panel Two

Malloy tries to fight his way through the Followers in utter desperation but they hold him back. The fact that he's a Priest and is in a Priest's outfit saving him here. But there's nasty smiles on the Followers' faces as they hold him back. This is Malloy's pivotal moment – his heart shattering here. The Followers are clearly armed.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"No matter what it costs them."

MALLOY CAPTION:

NO!!!

MALLOY CAPTION:

PLEASE!!!

Panel Three

We're behind Malloy now as The Followers have let him go and, in front of him, Malloy's Church is ablaze, and all those people are inside. This is the scene that we saw Malloy's reaction to earlier. He drops to his knees, crushed.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"It is simply... impossible to keep your faith in such circumstances."

Panel Four

Small panel. A close-up on one of the Church's stained glass windows and there's desperate hands banging on them as the fire engulfs the church.

MALLOY CAPTION:

"Followers of ALL other deities would be wiped out, they said. They weren't tangible and so were proved to be false."

MALLOY CAPTION:

"They moved through towns killing and taking the able bodied, the potential revolutionaries..."

Panel Five

Malloy on his knees on the floor, watching this, the fire reflecting in his face, his mind snapping. Behind him the Followers smile and laugh and one pulls out a pistol, ready to shoot him in the head.

MALLOY CAPTION: “They said I could watch before they shot me. I heard them laughing.”

MALLOY CAPTION: “These weren’t soldiers or Gods. They were ORDINARY men...”

MALLOY CAPTION: “Human beings.”

Panel Six

Malloy bolts for the burning church, to try and save the people inside, screaming as he goes. The Followers laughing at him. If he wants to run into a burning Church to do, let him...

MALLOY: Suh... suh...

MALLOY: SAVE THEM!!!

MALLOY: I... I’ve got to... I’ve GOT TO...

Page Five (Six Panels)

Panel One

Malloy, utterly panicked and desperate, banging on the burning church doors, the roof above him starting to crash down.

MALLOY CAPTION: "Save..."

MALLOY CAPTION: "... them."

Panel Two

The burning roof comes down and crashes on top of him, he puts his arms up to try and block it but he's going to be badly burned and knocked out from this. He'll survive though.

MALLOY CAPTION: "Someone pulled me clear later. I never found out who."

MALLOY CAPTION: "The Followers had left. They thought I'd died."

MALLOY CAPTION: "Sometimes I think they were right."

Panel Three

Cut to now. A strong, front of establishing shot of Malloy as per the end of series two. And he's pointing a pistol right at us. He looks more like a man of war than of God now. And his outfit shows no hint that he was ever a Priest. Burnt face on one side which has long since healed but the scars remain, but whereas in this flashback story thus far, he was fresh-faced and idealistic, there's a steel and a grimness about him now. He stands before us, looking at us in the Kansas wheat field, the wheat blowing around him, his hair blowing. He looks like he's been through a war. He could be a hero, he SHOULD be the hero of our story and this is a hero establishing shot. But he's not, and it'll all go very wrong as we progress. The road to hell being paved with good intentions. Let's give the sky in the background a nice pink/red tinge, like this is evening and it's going to be a sunny day tomorrow.

LOCATOR: KANSAS, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

LOCATOR: NOW.

Panel Four

Standing across from Malloy now, smiling at him, emerging from the door of the Spaceship at the close of series two, is THE SCIENTIST, and he smiles. This is all playing out exactly how he'd planned.

IDENTIFIER: THE SCIENTIST.

SCIENTIST: Do you remember when you captured me in London, Malloy? That seems so long ago.

SCIENTIST: I told you that, if you brought me to America, I'd show you how to rid this world of the Gods.

Panel Five

In the field now, approaching, we can see HARRIS, KANE (the special-ops Batman archetype) and JEN. There's a plume of smoke rising in the background from the jet fighter that crashed at the close of series two.

SCIENTIST: You and your little band of oh-so-brave resistance fighters...

Panel Six

Malloy, snarling, points the pistol right at The Scientist's head - he is completely unbothered by it. Looking up into the sky, past Malloy.

SCIENTIST: Never let it be said that I am not a God of my word...

MALLOY: What did I do in that ship? If I activate the Core they'll come, you said? WHO will come?

SCIENTIST: Look to the heavens, Malloy.

Page Six (Two panels)

Panel One

Large panel, virtually a splash. Up in space now, the Earth below, and the edge of a FUGGING HUGE SPACESHIP comes into view – and it's BIGGER than the planet Earth. And it's a big cosmic-looking thing. Nothing sleek and human-designed. This is a ship designed by and ridden by GODS. Real gods, not superheroes. Go as Kirby as you like here. And in the bottom of panel, looking down at the Earth below, we can see the HUUUUUGE metallic feet of one of THE FATHERS, like they're perched on the edge of the ship, gazing down at their target.

SCIENTIST CAPTION: “Your people worshipped us as deities when we first arrived but naughty petulant teenagers was all we ever were, really.”

SCIENTIST CAPTION: “I suppose you could use the analogy that we stole the family car and went off into town to raise a little hell.”

Panel Two

Malloy, amazed, as he looks up at the sky as the sight of the ship starts to emerge. The Scientist looks up too and pulls a somewhat sarcastic scared face. He's not scared at all. He wants the ship here.

SCIENTIST: And, thanks to you, Malloy, our parents have now arrived to get us.

SCIENTIST: I bet they're REALLY angry.

END OF EPISODE ONE