

Streetlights #1

Do Me a Favour?

Written by: Joe Dermo

Page 1:

Panel 1: Establishing shot of a rundown gas station, Rocky Mountain Gas. It's early in the evening, the sun is still out. A figure can be seen walking around the side of the building.

Panel 2: We zoom in on the figure to reveal TRE, a young man looking over his shoulder nervously.

Panel 3: Tre stands by a washroom door, looking to one end of the gas station. A shadow is cast from someone behind him.

Panel 4: We see through the eyes of an unknown character approaching Tre. His shadow casts itself over the sidewalk. Tre, looking the other way, is oblivious.

Panel 5: Wide panel. We zoom in on Tre's shocked face, half in the shadow, as he turns to the unknown figure.

Tre (exclamation bubble): Wha...!

Page 2:

Panel 1: Zoom out slightly on Tre. He calms down a bit.

Tre: Man... don't go creeping up on a guy like that.

Panel 2: Extreme close-up on K-ROCK's face. He's light-skinned, wearing sunglasses and a hoodie, so we see little of his face. His expression is mostly blank, but a slightly furrowed brow hints at something threatening behind it.

Panel 3: Tre tries to hold back his fear with a macho front.

Tre: You hearing me? Show me some cash or get outta my face.

Panel 4: We see from over the shoulder of K-Rock's large, imposing frame. He grabs the collar of Tre's shirt, slamming him into the washroom door.

SFX: SMASH

Page 3

Panel 1: They burst into a messy washroom. K-Rock charges forward, holding Tre off the ground.

Panel 2: Tre is thrown into the wall between two urinals.

SFX: FWUMP

Panel 3: Wide panel from behind K-Rock. Tre's on the floor, propped next to the urinal. Paper towel and toilet paper litter the floor. Though not very noticeable, there's graffiti on the walls: a game of X's and O's, and "J was here".

K-Rock: Trying to start a war, punk?
You're dealing on my turf!

~~Page 4~~

Panel 1: Tre holds his hands up defensively, trying to defuse the situation.

Tre: Whoa... time out, man!

No one told me this was your block!

Panel 2: Small panel. Extreme close-up on the bottom of K-Rock's face, snarling.

K-Rock: No one?

You calling me **no one**?

Panel 3: Tre recoils, face fearful and bargaining, tears in his eyes. In the foreground we see a gun hanging from K-Rock's hand.

Panel 4: Extreme close up on Tre's face. He's sweating, eyes wet with tears.

Tre: Y'want cash? Product? Just take it!

Panel 5: Tre looks up, sitting on the washroom floor across from the large shoes of K-Rock. He's holding out all his cash, a mess of crumpled bills and change spilling from his hand.

Tre: I'm only doing this for money.

Panel 6: CUT TO exterior of Rocky Mountain Gas. A gunshot rings out.

SFX: BANG

Panel 7: Large, wide shot of Tre, eyes wide, consumed by fear. His hands are resting on the floor, a wad of money spilling from the one. He's looking fearfully at a bullet hole next to this head.

Panel 8: Tre sits pathetically in the foreground as K-Rock exits the washroom.

K-Rock: There's your warning. First and Last.

~~Page 5~~

Panel 1: CUT TO wide, bird's eye view of a gymnasium. Two teams are on the basketball court. By the side wall are bleachers of fans, a *Green Timbers Grizzlies* banner hanging above. On the end wall is a scoreboard, showing the visitors (marked as "Away") leading 63-62 with 9 seconds left in the 4th quarter. From the sidelines, the coach of the home team shouts.

Coach (exclamation bubble; extra-large font): **TIME OUT!**

TITLE (stretching across the page):

STREETLIGHTS

Do Me a Favor?

Panel 2 & 3: Large panel. The full panel is split in two with Desmond and Kaiden positioned in one panel each as they jog towards the bench. Kaiden holds out a hand as Desmond gives him a high-five.

SFX: SLAP

Each character has a biography next to them.

Overlay of Kaiden's bio

(He looks cocky and cool in his profile image)

Name: Kaiden Duong

Age: 13

Voted most likely to become a pro athlete

Fierce and determined, some might call Kaiden hot-headed but that fiery passion helped make him the basketball team's MVP.

Overlay of Desmond's bio

(He looks cheerful in his picture, holding up a finger to say #1)

Name: Desmond Daniels

Age: 13

Voted most likely to win at life

An unstoppable force, Desmond is determined to be the best at everything: sports, academics, popularity—you name it.

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Panel 1: The focus is on Desmond with both him and Kaiden in view. Desmond's looking back to the crowd.

Desmond: Your parents are a no-show? So much for that ride after the game.

Panel 2: Small panel. Kaiden looks back at the crowd with irritation, and slight sadness.

Panel 3: MAX and EMMA sit next to an empty spot. Max stuffs his face with popcorn. Emma looks at her phone.

Panel 4: CUT TO a wide panel of the locations of Kaiden's parents. His father's eyes sag as he looks at a glowing computer monitor, stacks of papers next to it. The scene bleeds into the next as Kaiden's mom, wearing nurse scrubs, hooks up a patient's IV bag.

Panel 5: CUT TO Kaiden and Desmond huddled in with their teammates, coach, and ZOE. The coach points as he gives instructions to a player. Zoe looks to her clipboard. Kaiden and Desmond are having their own conversation, as Kaiden's looking back to the crowd.

Kaiden: Whatever, I'll ask my cousin.

Panel 6: AJ leans up against the bleachers, too cool to join the crowd. Kaiden's dialogue bubble from the previous panel stretches into this one.

Kaiden: We can count on him.

Panel 7: The team disperses back onto the court. Kaiden looks over at Desmond.

Kaiden: Now let's win.

Page 7

Panel 1: Overhead shot of the teams positioning themselves on the court as a Grizzlies player prepares to throw the ball in-bounds.

Panel 2: Small panel. The ball is passed to the outstretched hands of Desmond.

Panel 3: Desmond guards the ball from an opposing player.

Panel 4: Desmond dribbles between the legs of the opposing player and sprints into the offensive zone.

Panel 5: Small panel. Desmond holds the ball up, looking for a pass.

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Panel 1: Desmond passes cross-court to Kaiden. An opposing player leaps forward to intercept.

Desmond: Heads-up!

Panel 2: The opposing player grabs the ball.

Panel 3: Kaiden intentionally crashes into the opposing player, shoulder-first.

SFX: THUD

Panel 4: The opposing player launches backwards.

Panel 5: The ref blasts his whistle and points to Kaiden whose arms are raised in disbelief. At Kaiden's feet is the downed opponent propping himself up.

SFX: FWEEEEET

Kaiden: What!? Seriously?

That was a **dive!**

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Panel 1: CUT TO Emma, Zoe, and Max hanging out against the outside of the gym. Far in the background are the gym doors—Kaiden and Desmond emerging, having changed out of their uniforms.

Panel 2: Close-up of Max, looking over to Kaiden and Desmond. With his bag of popcorn in one hand, he holds his other arm up to the two.

Max: Kaiden! Desmond!

Panel 3: Large panel. Max runs forward, shovelling popcorn into his mouth, cheeks outstretched as some of it falls out. More popcorn spills from the bag in his other hand.

Max: Mrmph—tha'was an awesh'ome game, guys!

Overlay of Max's bio

Name: Max McKenzie

Age: 12

Voted most likely to laugh at his own jokes

A bright guy who's happy to go with the flow, Max recently self-published his greatest masterpiece: *101 Fart Jokes and Other Toilet-Based Humour*.

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Panel 3: Max, smiling happily, stands next to Kaiden and Desmond. Kaiden has a questioning look on his

face.

Kaiden: Man, you know we lost, right?

Max: Yeah, but the popcorn tonight was crazy good!

Panel 2: Zoom in on Max and Kaiden. Kaiden speaks to Max while Max analyses his bag of popcorn.

Kaiden: You see the ref? That guy had it out for me.

Max: I think it's the butter. They must be using high-quality stuff...

Panel 3: The three boys are grouped together. We focus on Desmond, smiling with good humor as he looks at Kaiden.

Desmond: Y'know, you did bodycheck a player into next week.

Pretty sure you're not supposed to do that.

Panel 4: Zoom in on Kaiden smirking. In the background we see Emma as Zoe trails further behind.

Kaiden: Good hit though, eh?

Panel 5: Desmond smiles.

Desmond: Legendary.

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Panel 1: From over Kaiden's shoulder we zoom in on Emma and see Zoe in the background. Emma smiles, somewhat shyly, at Kaiden.

Emma: Hey.

You looked great out there.

Overlay of Emma's bio

Emma's smiles wholesomely in her profile picture

Name: Emma Hewitt

Age: 13

Voted most likely to save a cat from a burning building.

Caring and loyal to a fault, Emma struggles with a difficult home life but always has time to stand up for a friend.

Panel 2: Zoom in on Kaiden smiling nervously back at Emma.

Kaiden: I didn't know you'd—I mean...

I'm glad you came. Means, a lot.

Panel 3: Desmond, Max, and Zoe smirk to each other, as Kaiden and Emma stand in the background staring at one another.

Panel 4: Zoom in on Zoe, rolling her eyes.

Zoe: You guys want to be left alone?

Maybe give us time to puke?

Overlay: Zoe's bio

Zoe looks unimpressed in her profile picture

Name: Zoe Duong

Age: 12

Voted most likely to headline a concert

The manager of the school's basketball team, and Kaiden's little sister. Zoe's the quiet sibling until she gets in front of a mic—then she's part of the town's youngest (and loudest) punk rock band.

Panel 5: Kaiden scowls.

Kaiden: **Shut it**, Z!

Panel 6: AJ pulls up in his truck alongside the kids, window down.

SFX: HOOOONNNNKKKK

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Panel 1: AJ looks out the window.

AJ: What up, runts! Looking for a taxi?

Panel 2: Desmond looks to Kaiden as they scramble towards the truck. Zoe rolls her eyes behind them.

Desmond: It's official, your cousin's the **best**!

Kaiden: Shotgun!

Panel 3: Wide panel. Everyone's piled into AJ's ride. Emma, Zoe, Desmond, and Max are crammed in the back. Kaiden leans over from the passenger seat, pulling the sunglasses off AJ's smiling face to try on (Note: Keep the shades on Kaiden until they leave the truck to McHacketts). Zoe's leaning back, apathetic. Emma's trying not to be squished. Desmond casually looks over the seat and Max spill over it excitedly.

Kaiden: Hey, nice shades!

Max: Forget the shades—look at that stereo!

Panel 4: AJ looks over, smiling.

AJ: Installed it this week. Check'er out.

Panel 5: Small panel of AJ's fingers turning the volume up.

SFX: clik clik clik clik clik

Panel 6: Wide panel. The truck bounces with bass. SFX fill the panel.

SFX: WUB WUB WUB WUB WUB WUB BWAMMMMMMM

Page 13:

Panel 1-4: Wide panel split across the 4 kids in the back seat. They're all vibrating like a rung bell. Zoe's expression is blank and unimpressed. Emma smiles and enjoys the music. Desmond has a big grin, loving the sound. Max grimaces in shock from the bass as he vibrates.

SFX: BWAAAM

Panel 5: AJ's finger turns down the volume.

SF: clik clik

Panel 6: AJ looks back, proud of the attention he's getting.

AJ: 2018 **gold-plated**, limited edition, 2-way, 6 x 9 Lobo Pinnacle S-Type speakers, top of the line XL-

Series **Primo Class**, RMS of one-fifty watts, three hundred peak...

SFX: WUB WUB WUB WUB WUB

Panel 7: Desmond sits next to Max, trying to hear what AJ's saying while Max cracks a joke.

Desmond: What?!

Max: He said you smell like a gold-plated butt.

SFX: WUB WUB WUB WUB WUB

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Panel 1: The truck pulls into McHacketts. A large MC sign is in front, not entirely unlike McDonalds' signage.

SFX: WUB WUB WUB WUB

Panel 2: Everyone's gathered at a table in McHacketts. Zoe's sitting beside Desmond, looking at her clipboard.

Zoe: ...and Desmond leads the league in rebounds.

Panel 3: Max excitedly reaches over Desmond and his meal, pointing at Zoe's stat sheet.

Max: But Kaiden's got the most technical fouls. Woo!

Panel 4: AJ holds a huge burger as he playfully nudges Kaiden with an elbow. Kaiden looks up with admiration. Emma, mostly out of frame, sits next to Kaiden.

AJ: Hah! Y'got fire in ya, kid—must take after your cousin.

Panel 5: Large panel with the focus on AJ as he stands up, arms spread out, gloating proudly. All the kids—except for Zoe—smile, taking AJ seriously. A couple of young women look over with skepticism, giggling.

AJ: I was unstoppable on the court. Y'know what they called me? Y'know what? They called me **The Tanker!**

Young Woman #1 (whispering to Young Woman #2): More like the wanker...

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Panel 1: Two police officers, RYAN and ANGIE, sit in their car, looking into the window of McHacketts.

Panel 2: Small panel. Angie pulls the car radio to her mouth.

Angie: We've got eyes on him. Over.

Panel 3: The police officers watch the group as they leave McHacketts.

Panel 4: The police car is in the foreground. Further back we see AJ getting into his truck. The kids are inside, except for Max who is climbing up and Desmond planted behind him.

AJ: Alright, runts, let's get you home.

Desmond: Gross, what's that smell?

Max: It's not my fault, that salmon burger was toxic.

Panel 5: The police officers talk as Ryan pulls up a police report on the center monitor.

Ryan: He's trouble for every one of those kids.

Angie: Another wanna-be gangster. You think he's recruiting them?

Ryan: If not, he will be soon. We'd better keep tabs on him.

Panel 6: We zoom in on a police report of AJ in Ryan's hand.

Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit

Suspect Profile

(police image of AJ looking upset)

Khaut, Alexander John

Aliases: AJ, Tanker, Tank

Date of Birth: 03-06-1998

Nationality: Canadian

Sex: Male

Height: 6'1"

Weight: 210

Eye Colour: Brown

Hair Colour: Brown

Tattoos: Left forearm, dragon

Right shoulder, army tank

Gang Affiliation

Member of the North Side Crew (current), affiliated to gang leader Naseem "Gator" Virk

Criminal Offences

Possession for purpose of trafficking (2016)

Trafficking in controlled substances (2017)

Aggravated Assault (2017)

Possession of property obtained by crime x2 (2018)

Charged: Weapons possession, assault with a weapon

Conditions: Not to possess weapons

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Panel 1: The sun is going down as we sink into the late evening. AJ's truck stops at Kaiden and Zoe's house on Windsor Crescent. It's a nice, middle-class home.

Panel 2: AJ sits in the driver's seat of the truck, looking over to where his passengers are.

AJ: Last stop! Kaiden and Zoe, move your butts. And say hi to your folks for me.

Panel 3: Zoe gets out of the backseat.

Panel 4: AJ looks over to his phone, vibrating on the dashboard.

SFX: BZZT BZZT

Panel 5: The cellphone sits in AJ's hand.

Cell phone text:

Incoming Call...

Boss

Answer

Ignore

Page 17

Panel 1: AJ has the phone up to his ear, looking uneasy. Kaiden is about to exit from the passenger side door.

AJ: Hey... what's going on? Everything cool?

Panel 2: Kaiden looks back, up towards AJ.

Panel 3: Close-up of AJ's mouth with the phone next to it.

AJ: Man... gotcha. I can handle it.

For real. I'll go there now.

Panel 4: AJ tosses the phone back onto the dashboard, looking determined.

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Panel 1: Kaiden stands just outside the truck, his door still open. He looks to AJ.

Kaiden: What's going on?

AJ: Work stuff.

Kaiden: What kinda work stuff?

AJ: Kind that needs a strong arm.

Panel 2:

Kaiden looks out the door towards his house. Zoe's waiting for him.

Panel 3:

Kaiden hops in, closing the truck door.

Kaiden: I'm coming.

Panel 4: Close up on AJ, chuckling.

AJ: Hah! You are, are ya?

Panel 5: AJ looks down with some amusement at Kaiden, who's now the one looking determined.

AJ: Alright, runt. But don't tell your parents.

Kaiden: They're working.

Page 19 Panel 1: The camera shifts to behind Zoe. She's looking at the truck.

Zoe: Kaiden, come on. Kaiden!

Panel 2: Kaiden looks out the truck window, sticking his tongue out.

Panel 3: Large panel. The trucks drives off down the street as Zoe looks on.

SFX: VWOOSH

Panel 4: Zoom in on Zoe, frustrated with Kaiden's decision.

Zoe: Idiot.

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Panel 1: Establishing shot. AJ's truck drives down a rough looking street, exhaust billowing from the tailpipe.

Panel 2: Kaiden looks out the window at a row of dilapidated houses.

Panel 3: A homeless man fishes through a garbage can, curling his nose as his two fingers pluck a pair of briefs from the refuse. AJ's truck blows by in the background.

Panel 4: AJ's truck parks at a worn-down house. The curtains to a wide picture window are open a quarter of the way.

Panel 5: Small panel. Trent's face peeks out from the curtains with uncertainty.

Panel 6: AJ stands in the open door of the truck, looking over to Kaiden.

AJ: Duty calls. Wait here.

Kaiden: But...!

AJ: Wait. Here.

Panel 7: AJ grabs brass knuckles from between the seat and the center console and hides it in his jacket

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Each panel on this page is full width, equal sizes. (I can provide an example, if needed.)

Panel 1: The view is from inside the truck, though we can see from the windows. Kaiden mopes as AJ walks up to the door.

Panel 2: Zoom in. Kaiden looks out the window as the door to the house slams behind AJ.

SFX: K-CHOOM

Panel 3: Zoom in. We see Tre in the window, backing up, hands raised, as if trying to call for calm.

Panel 4: Zoom in. Though AJ is hidden from behind the curtain, we see his hands gripping at Tre collar.

Panel 5: Zoom in. An angry AJ is face-to-face with a terrified Tre. AJ seems to shouting something.

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Panel 1: AJ's fist, fitted with brass knuckles, strikes Tre across the face.

SFX: KA-POW

Panel 2: Close up of Kaiden. His eyes go wide with surprise.

Panel 3: AJ walks out of the house, angry.

Panel 4: AJ climbs into the driver's seat of the truck.

Panel 5: Kaiden looks up to AJ, somewhat nervously.

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Panel 1: AJ, still angry, looks straight ahead as he drives.

Panel 2: Kaiden looks out the window, awkwardly.

Panel 3: AJ, angry, looks over at Kaiden.

Panel 4: AJ punches the dash of his truck.

SFX: THWACK

Panel 5: Zoom in on AJ, looking grumpy, staring ahead.

AJ: Another screw-up!

Page 24

Panel 1: Head-on view of AJ and Kaiden. AJ looks ahead as Kaiden, uncertain, looks up to him and listens.

AJ: These boys I hired got jelly for spines. Someone stares at 'em funny and they drop dollars and run.

Panel 2: AJ's truck speeds down the road. An outdoor ice cream stand is ahead.

SFX: VWUUUM

AJ: They're making me look bad, like I can't run my own crew.

Panel 3: Close-up on AJ looking glum.

AJ: If this keeps up, someone's gonna have to pay.

Panel 4: Kaiden looks down at his feet.

Kaiden: I don't want you to get hurt.

Panel 5: AJ looks genuinely touched as he looks over at Kaiden.

AJ: Heh... you're a good kid.

Panel 6: AJ's truck pulls into a lot by the ice cream stand.

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Panel 1: Overhead. AJ and Kaiden walk from the truck. Although it's not the focus, three men can be seen from a distance—K-Rock and two gang members. One gang member points towards AJ.

AJ: Y'know, maybe ya can help me.

Panel 2: Kaiden looks up to AJ with curiosity.

Kaiden: Really?

Panel 3: AJ hands some cash to the girl waiting the ice cream stand as she holds out a cone to him.

AJ: Yeah. You're smart. Tough. And I can trust ya more than the losers working for me.

Panel 4: AJ, with a serious expression, looks down at a contemplative and unsure Kaiden.

AJ: I **can** trust you, hey?

Kaiden: Well, yeah.

Panel 5: AJ, smiling (without betraying his true nature), squats down, close to Kaiden's height, and hands him the cone. Quite a ways behind him are K-Rock and the two gang members coming their way.

AJ: This is just what I—just what **both** of us need!

So whadya say...

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Panel 1 (full page): Close-up of AJ as if he's looking out (and down slightly) to the reader. He's trying to appear friendly, but there's something just slightly unnerving about his expression.

AJ: Could ya do me a **favor**?

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Panel 1: Kaiden holds his ice cream cone, looking up with a hint of uncertainty.

Kaiden: You mean, like...

Panel 2: AJ and Kaiden walk to a picnic bench by the ice cream stand. Kaiden loosens up slightly, appearing matter-of-fact.

AJ: It's simple stuff. Deliver a package, collect some cash. No biggie, right?

Kaiden: Sounds easy.

Panel 3: AJ stands tall, looking proud. About 15 feet behind him are K-Rock and the two gang members walking his way, sneering, laughing.

AJ: Totally. Before you know it, you'll be sporting a new phone, new kicks, getting some scrap to take Emma out.

Panel 4: AJ's head whips around as K-Rock speaks.

K-Rock: Well, lookie here...

Panel 5: Zoom in on K-Rock and his men. The two gang members laugh at K-Rock's joke. One gang member has bear spray hooked on his belt.

K-Rock: AJ's brought the daycare out for ice cream.

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Panel 1: Kaiden stands back and to the side of AJ. They both look angry, attempting to put on tough faces. K-Rock, pointing a thumb towards AJ, squats down to Kaiden's level.

K-Rock: Careful who you pal around with, kid. Stomping this guy's delivery boys is a hobby of mine.

Panel 2: K-Rock and AJ are face-to-face. K-Rock continues to mock him while AJ stewes angrily.

K-Rock: Aww, sorry, bud. Am I ruining ice cream time?

Panel 3 - 5: A large panel displays K-Rock's face, menacing, as he holds up two large fists. On the top-corners of the panel are two smaller panels—one showing an angry AJ and one showing Kaiden, appearing intimidated.

K-Rock: Well, I got a new flavor for you. Y'want one scoop or **two**?

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Panel 1: A cop car squeals up to AJ, Kaiden, and K-Rock's gang, sirens blaring.

SFX (by back tires): Squeeee

SFX (by sirens): Weeeeeooo

Panel 2: Kaiden jumps back, startled.

Panel 3: Exterior view of the police car but we see Ryan in the driver's seat, stern and tough, holding a mic to his mouth, controlling the PA system.

Ryan (exclamation bubble coming from the speakers of the car): Break it up.

(larger font) **NOW!**

Panel 4: K-Rock sneers, looking on with his gang.

K-Rock: You getting saved by the cops now, AJ?

What's next, mommy gonna break up fights for you?

Panel 5: AJ, annoyed, looks back as he walks away with a slightly distressed Kaiden.

AJ: Pfft, they're lucky. I woulda wrecked em.

Panel 6: Close-up of Ryan's eyes, stern and steely.

Panel 7: Close-up of AJ's eyes, sternly looking right back.

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Panel 1: AJ and Kaiden climb into the truck. Kaiden looks nervous.

AJ: Don't worry about all that, okay?

Kaiden: I'm fine. It's no problem.

Panel 2: AJ smiles.

AJ: Good.

Panel 3: Small panel. Key turning the ignition.

Panel 4: Kaiden looks out the window as AJ speaks.

AJ: Just remember what I told ya—deliver packages, get some cash.

No big deal, right?

Panel 5: K-Rock looks back menacingly, his men on each side of him.

Panel 6: Ryan and Angie stand outside of their car, each on one side by their doors. Ryan still has a stern, determined look on his face. Angie appears concerned.

Panel 7: Close-up of Kaiden, overwhelmed.

Kaiden: Right. No big deal.

Panel 8: Angie and Kaiden's eyes lock.

END

COMING SOON: **STREETLIGHTS ISSUE #2**

Kaiden falls hard into the gang life, sending shockwaves through his group of friends and dragging them into a world of danger.