

Chain Mail Order Bride

Story by Al Arcand

Act 1: Proposition

Page 1

Scene: A classy Italian Restaurant in the Bronx of New York, City. Business is well for them.

Panel 1: Shows the outside of the Italian restaurant. The restaurant has it's own valet service.

Panel 2: Shows the inside of the Italian restaurant. The restaurant is full of people. Almost all of the people look like they are pretty well off. At one table is a man reading a newspaper by himself. A waitress is walking towards the table with the man reading the newspaper by himself

Panel 3: The guy reading the newspaper reads aloud to himself. He is reading the Business Section

Man
Hardly a trace of competition.
Jengens Inc is a virtual monopoly.

Panel 4: The man folds the newspaper down revealing his face. He looks up at the waitress who is either off panel or barely seen. The waitress asks for his order.

Waitress (OP)
Would you like
anything to drink, sir?

Panel 5: The waitress writes down the man's order as he recites it to her

Man
Yes.
Can I get
a cup of
coffee?

Waitress
Sure

Panel 6: The waitress walks away from the table to get the man's order of coffee. If the man is seen he resumes reading his newspaper.

Panels 1 and 2: Maurice slowly looks over almost in daydream style at the elderly couple seated a few tables away from the one where he and Akira are sitting.

Panel 3: The elderly couple is having dinner together. They seem to be recurring customers.

Akira (OP) Hey Maurice...

Panel 4: Maurice “snaps” out of his daydream and turns towards Akira.

Maurice Y-yeah.
What's up?

Panel 5: Akira smiles somewhat mischievously as she holds the end of her fork and points it at Maurice. There is some food on the tongs of the fork. Maurice waves his head in a gesture of a way to say “no thanks”.

Akira You have to try
this dish, Maurice.

Maurice No thanks.

Panel 6: Akira watches as Maurice plays around with his own food not eating anything.

Maurice I was just thinking.

Akira About what?

Panel 7: Focus on Maurice looking down at his plate of food as he is feeling timid right now.

Maurice Well we've been dating
for over 3 years now...

Page 4

Panel 1: Akira is about to drink some of the red wine

Akira

And?

Panel 2: Akira listens as she drinks the red wine.

Maurice

Honestly.
I'm afraid to ask.

Panel 3: Akira smiles mischievously as she sets the wine glass down

Akira

Don't be so shy.

Panel 4: Maurice is still looking down and not making eye contact with Akira

Panel 5: Close up of Maurice trying to suppress a smile.

Panel 6: Maurice finally gathers the courage to look up and make eye contact with Akira.

Maurice

Akira...
Do you...

Panels 1 and 2: Close up front view of Akira's eyes first looking straight ahead at Maurice and then shying away and feeling uncomfortable.

Maurice (OP)

Do you want
to get married?

Panel 3: Zoom out to show Akira with one hand on the table trembling slightly

Panel 4: Close up of Akira's hand slightly trembling on the table. She is nervous.

Panel 5: Maurice notices Akira's reaction and is concerned.

Maurice

Is something wrong?

Panel 1: Transitions to a close up of Maurice's hands on the steering wheel of his car. Note: Maurice is sitting in the driver's seat and Akira is sitting next to him in the passenger seat.

Akira (OP) I'm sorry, Maurice...

Panel 2: Zoom out to show Akira looking towards the window rather than her boyfriend Maurice when she talks to him. Maurice isn't looking at Akira either but rather focused on the road.

Akira I didn't...

Panel 3: Maurice still doesn't look at Akira. Maurice is upset that she didn't accept the proposal to get married. He's trying to be calm but might come off as being a little bit cold.

Maurice No it was too soon.

Panel 4: Akira turns her head towards Maurice as she tries to explain herself.

Akira Maurice listen...

Panel 5: Maurice turns off the car ignition using the key. Close up on the steering wheel.

Maurice You're home.

Panel 6: Maurice is looking down at the steering wheel. He feels awkward because he knows Akira is looking at him. Maurice probably thinks she pities him and doesn't want pity. Akira looks at Maurice as if she wants to tell him something but doesn't know what to say.

Panel 7: Similar view as Panel 6. Akira leans over to kiss Maurice but he holds his hand out and prevents her from doing so.

Maurice Don't...

Panel 8: Akira gets out of the car. Profile view of Maurice staring at the steering wheel. He is thinking too himself. Probably full of regret. Focus is on Maurice.

Panel 9: Maurice lets his head fall on the steering wheel as he closes his eyes. Maurice is frustrated.

Page 8

Panel 1: Shows a picture frame lying down facing upwards on a coffee table. The picture is of Akira and Maurice at the beach. Akira's hand just barely touches the picture.

Panel 2: Akira is lying down on her couch in her apartment's living room. In front of the couch is the coffee table with the picture on it. Akira barely touches the picture. Akira feels guilty.

Panel 3: Akira retracts her hand from the picture.

Panel 4: Akira still lying on the couch (she is lying on her back) looks at some family photos that are framed and on the wall of the room.

Panels 5 and 6: Zoom in to show pictures of Akira and her family. In the photos the “mom” changes three times. In other words Akira has had 1 biological mother and two step mothers.

Panels 7 and 8: Akira looks disappointingly at the pictures. This shows that she declined Maurice's proposal because she has very little faith in marriage working (because her dad got remarried twice.)

Page 9

Panel 1: Maurice climbs a set of stairs to get to his apartment. His steps are heavy.

Panel 2: Maurice is standing in front of his door.

Panel 3: Maurice leans his hand forward on the door and is looking at the ground. He's feels terrible.

Maurice ...

Panel 4: Maurice is surprised when the door starts to move forward (the door swings inward).

Panel 5: Shows a clearer view of the door had swung inward. In other words the door was unlocked already.

Page 10

Panel 1: Shows the outside of Akira's apartment complex.

Panel 2: Akira is laying on the couch

Panel 3: Reluctantly Akira decides to get up from the couch

Panel 4: Akira sits upright on the couch thinking to herself. She grips the edge of the couch with both hands.

Panel 5: Akira leans forward to grab her cell phone on the coffee table situated in front of the couch.

Akira

I should call
Maurice...

Panel 6: Akira dials Maurice's number

Panel 7: Akira holds the phone to her ear and waits for Maurice to answer. She's nervous.

Panel 1: Shows the opened door to Maurice's apartment. It can already be seen just a little that the room has been ransacked.

Panel 2: Inside the room it can be seen that the room was ransacked and practically torn apart.

Panel 3: The “camera” heads towards Maurice's bedroom.

Panel 4: Shows someone sitting on Maurice's bed inside the ransacked bedroom. This person is clearly not Maurice but rather someone who almost looks like they could be in the mafia. He wears black slacks and polished black shoes. If it can be seen he wears a black suit and tie. The person is sitting on the side of the bed apparently waiting for the phone to ring. Note the person's face isn't seen. The person is named Michael Toln.

Sfx (phone) ring ring

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Panel 5: Same view as Panel 4. Michael Toln picks up the phone. His face is still not seen.

Panel 6: Back at Akira's place she is surprised and a little disturbed when she hears that Maurice doesn't answer but instead someone else. She's surprised because she called Maurice.

Michael Toln (OP) Hello.

Akira ?!

Panel 7: Shows Michael Toln's face. He has a very “civilized” demeanor to himself. Almost bourgeoisie. As if he thinks real highly of himself. He speaks coolly and confidently.

Akira (OP) I'm sorry.
I must have dialed
the wrong number...

Michael Toln Actually I was awaiting
your phone call...Akira.

Panel 8: Akira is now fully disturbed that this person knows her name. She's nervous and cautious.

Akira ...

Page 16

Panel 1: Michael Toln smiles thoughtfully

Michael Toln

Some of us quit
and found other
sources of “income”.

Panel 2: Close up of Akira. She knows Michael Toln means criminal activities and she isn't pleased.

Panel 3: Shows a newspaper stand outside of the Liquor Store.

Michael Toln (OP)

A good number of men
want Felix Jengans dead.

Panel 4: Close up on the newspaper reads “*Former Jengans Employee Attempted Murder on Boss*”

Michael Toln (OP)

Though doing so
proves difficult.

Panel 5: Close up of Akira

Michael Toln (OP)

That's where you
come into play.

Panel 6: Over the shoulder view of Michael Toln looking at Akira

Michael Toln

Jengans is rich
but also lonely.

Panel 7: Shows Michael Toln looking at Akira (who is OP) as he drinks some oatmeal stout

Michael Toln

Understand?

The End of Act 1

Chain Mail Order Bride

Story by Al Arcand

Act 2:

Page 1:

Panel 1: The scene changes to the next day at Felix Jengan's mansion. Parked in front of the gates is a black limo.

Michael Toln (flashback narration)

Jengans is a much hated man.
Countless men want him dead.

Panel 2: Inside the limo seen from behind Akira and looking across diagonally at Luis Rodriguez

Michael Toln (flashback narration)

Because of the constant danger
he rarely ever leaves his house
so his love life is non existent.

Panel 3: Luis Rodriguez is staring coldly at Akira

Panel 4: Shows Akira is holding a gun and trembling. Focus on the gun and her hands

Panel 5: Luis is looking out the window of the limo.

Luis Rodriguez

Try to relax.
You're too tense.

Page 2

Panel 1: Akira looks up and has a deep bitter glare

Panel 2: Luis is unmoved

Panel 3: Luis leans forward to speak

Luis

You're disgusted
by our kind, yes?

Panel 4: Akira is silent but there's clearly a lot of hatred and loathing in her eyes

Panel 5: Luis laughs a little to himself

Luis

Heh

Panel 1: Luis has a sad smile while he looks out the window of the limo

Luis

Well I don't consider
us to be saints or anything...

Panel 2: Luis is still looking out the window but no longer smiling

Luis

But I think you'll
soon learn, Miss Saheed...

Panel 3: When Luis turns to look at Akira he has a really serious look

Luis

That we're far from
the worse of the worse.

Page 4

Panel 1: Akira feels very uneasy about Luis's words

Panel 2: Akira nervously looks down at the gun in her hands

Panel 3: Shows the gun from Akira's perspective

Panel 4: Akira raises the gun up from the same view she is aiming it at Luis Rodriguez however this is a flashback

Michael Toln (OP)

I want you to shoot
him in the heart...

Panel 5:

Michael Toln

Just as you'll do
to that bastard Jengans

Page 6

Panel 1: Close up of Akira waiting nervously

Panel 2: Akira looks off to the side

Panel 3: Shows some large dogs silently staring down Akira

Panel 4: Akira is looking at the dogs trying to hide her fear

Panel 5: Close up on the dogs. It's as if they can see past the lies

Panel 6: Akira breaks eye contact

Panel 7: Looking down at the ground Akira tries to hold her tears of fear and frustration back

Page 7

Panel 1: Flashback

Michael Toln

Because of the constant danger
he rarely ever leaves his house
so his love life is non existent.

Panel 2:

Michael Toln

At least in public

Panel 3:

Michael Toln

Truck loads of women
are brought to him
from across the globe

Panel 4:

Michael Toln

He has...quite the appetite.
And whatever he wants...

You can be sure he gets it.

Panel 5:

Michael Toln

And right now...
He wants you, Akira.

Page 8

Panel 1:

Akira Saheed

I don't even know him.

Michael Toln

That is true...

Panel 2:

Michael Toln

Ahem...Luis?

Panel 3: Luis types something into a laptop

Panel 4: Luis shows the laptop to Akira who is disgusted and horrified.

Michael Toln

But I believe he knows you.

Akira Saheed

That's...that's me!
What the...how the!?

Panel 5:

Akira Saheed

Those were private pictures!
How the hell did you get...

Michael Toln

Calm down.

Page 9

Panel 1:

Michael Toln

You need to calm down.

Panel 2

Michael Toln

Your boyfriend's life depends on it

Panel 3:

Akira (OP)

Maurice!

Panel 4:

Michael Toln

Naturally, he can't hear you.
Nor can he see you either.

Panel 5:

Akira

You're a monster.

Panel 6:

Michael Toln

Hehehehe

Page 10

Panel 1:

Luis

hahahaha

Panel 2:

Akira

?

Panel 3:

Michael Toln

Oh? I'm disgusting?
That's really quite
humorous actually.

Panel 4:

Michael Toln

Of all the hundreds
of women brought
to Mr. Jengans...

Panel 5: Shows a worried Akira Saheed

Page 11

Panel 1:

Michael Toln

Take a guess
how many
LEAVE?

Panel 2:

Akira

!...

Panel 3:

Michael Toln

There's no need
to worry, Miss Saheed.

Panel 4: Michael Toln hands Akira a gun

Michael Toln

For it is quite
simple what
you must do

Panel 5:

Akira

I...I've never
used a gun
before.

Page 12

Panel 1:

Michael Toln

Well now you can learn.

Panel 2:

Michael Toln

I want you to shoot him in the heart.
Just as you'll do to that bastard Jengans.

Akira

But I can't just...

Panel 3:

Michael Toln

I understand. You've never killed before.

Panel 4:

Michael Toln

Perhaps a demonstration.

Panel 5: Michael Toln shoots Luis in the heart

Page 13

Panel 1:

Akira

aieeee!!

Panel 2: Akira is panting heavily and nervously

Michael Toln

See?

Panel 3:

Michael Toln

All you have to
do is aim and shoot.

Akira

You...you...you just...

Panel 4: Luis slowly gets up

Panel 5:

Akira

You're alive?

Michael Toln

Kevlar, my dear.

It works wonders.

Panel 6:

Luis

Still hurts like a bitch

Page 14

Panel 1:

Michael Toln

Luis, watch your words
in front of the lady.

Luis

Yeah ok.
Whatever.

Panel 2:

Michael Toln

Now...your turn.

Panel 3:

Luis

Just...don't shoot me
in the head. Por favor.

Panel 4:

Narration

The thought hadn't actually
crossed her mind until then.

Panel 5

Narration

And even when it did
she knew it would do
her more harm than good

Page 15

Panel 1:

Narration

Maurice's life
was at stake.

Panel 2:

Narration

As the reader you
might ask if she
was still in love

Panel 3:

Narration

And maybe Akira
was asking her self
that very same question

Page 16

Panel 1:

Luis

Are you ready?

Panel 2:

Akira

...pew

Narration

But whatever Akira
felt towards Maurice.

She knew right from wrong.

Panel 3:

Narration

At least she thought she did

Akira

Yeah.

The end of Act 2

Chain Mail Order Bride

Act 3

Story by Al Arcand

Page 1: Luis presses the intercom button and speaks into it. There is no response which makes Akira a bit nervous but after a few moments the gate automatically opens and both Akira and Luis walk through.

Luis

The “package”
has arrived.

Page 2: Luis and Akira walk down the long brick path to the mansion. The large dogs are off leash and watch Luis and Akira very carefully. The dogs are incredibly calm and do not even growl. However they are definitely not friendly. Akira is about to look at them but Luis nudges her and tells her not to. After that they walk past some trees.

Luis

Don't look
at them.

Akira

O..ok.

Page 3: Akira feels her heart drop when she realizes that someone was behind her and Luis.
Luis is not as worried and plays it cool. There are three guards who have their guns aimed at them.

Guards

Stop.

Akira

!!

Luis

Stay still.

Guards

Quiet.
From now on
do not speak.
Unless asked.

Any attempt from either of you
to move or communicate
and we'll shoot you both.

Luis

Heh

Akira

!...

Page 4: The guards put a blindfold on Luis and Akira. Akira is then escorted to the front door while Luis has to stay behind. Luis is calm but Akira is trembling and moves slowly which irritates the guards.

Guards

Wear this.

C'mon hurry up!

Akira

!...

Guards

Ok take it off.

Page 5: Akira takes off the blindfold and sees that two guards both have their guns aimed at her head. The guards pat her down which makes Akira really really really nervous

Guards

Are you armed?

Akira

No...

Guards

If you are lying.
You will die.

If you have any weapons.
You will die.

It's that simple.

So are you
armed?

Akira

...

Page 6: The guards find something on Akira's person. Which makes it seem like she has been found out. But it turns out to just be a cell phone. The guards stomp on the phone and destroy it.

Guards

Is this...

What I think
it is...?

Akira

...

Guards

I sure hope not.
For your sake.

Akira

...

Guards

A phone.
Not a weapon.

SFX (stepping on the phone)

CRUNCH

Guards

But still a no-no.

Page 7: The guards leave Akira after they threaten her.

Guards

Let's make things clear here.
You belong to Mr. Jengans now.

Your purpose in life is to
please Mr. Jengans.

If you don't. We'll shoot you.
You may not see us.
But we see you.

Don't forget that.

Page 8: Akira's hand shakes when she reaches for the doorbell. She is too terrified at first and retracts her trembling hand and holds it while she begins to cry. But then she remembers Maurice and knocks on the door loudly. The door slowly creaks open.

Page 9: Behind the door is a woman wearing handcuffs and ankle cuffs that are chained together. The woman is very silent. Logically this would be because she wears a metal mask that is chain locked to her face. However even if this woman were to have her mask removed it is unlikely she would talk. The metal masked woman makes no attempt at eye contact (though the distorted design of the mask make it futile anyways) but instead turns around and slowly walks back inside. Cautiously Akira follows her.

Page 10: The first thing Akira notices is the spiral staircase. Then on the ceiling is a chandelier. The chandelier is carved into the shape of a horde of crying angels. Throughout the house are small idol statues from various African and Orient cultures. There is an eerie silence that fills the room. The sound of her own foot steps seem to haunt Akira

SFX (Akira walking)

TAP TOP TAP TOP TAP TOP

Page 11: Akira studies a series of sketchy paintings which depict a dead female corpse rotting away and being consumed by rats. Akira is startled when the metal masked lady unexpectedly tugs at her dress to get her attention. Akira sees a basement door open and stairs that lead to darkness.

Page 12: Mechanical noises creep up from beneath the basement. Akira looks over at the metal masked lady almost as if to ask her if she should go. But the metal masked lady just stands facing the ground. Akira looks back towards the climbing darkness. She is afraid but she steels herself ready.

Sfx

ka dunk thunk ka dunk thunk

Page 13: As Akira climbs down the stairs with both hands on the railing she slowly disappears into the darkness of the basement.

The end of chain mail order bride chapter 3

Chain Mail Order Bride

Act 4

“The Chains of Tartarus”

Page 1: The page is entirely black

Page 2: In the darkness a small streak of light appears as a match is lit.
In the utter darkness a voice is heard.

Voice

Please,
Follow me.

Page 3: The match light reveals an elderly man with sunken eyes and a narrow jaw.
His eyes are lifeless even as he looks directly at the reader (Akira's perspective)

Elderly Man

The master
has been
awaiting you.

Pages 4-5: Akira is feeling very uncomfortable but she nods her head and follows the Elderly Man down a long passageway with only torches along the stone walls to light the way.

Creepy demonic statues line the walls including one of Medusa's head and another with a goat's head and four grotesque human heads connected to it by chains. They give Akira a very uneasy feeling

Page 6: Akira inquires about the statues though the Elderly Man keeps walking at a steady pace which doesn't give Akira much time to analyze the statues.

Akira

What's with
all these statues?

Elderly Man

The Master is a fond
collector of stone images.

Now come quickly.
We mustn't let the
Master wait long.

Akira

S..sorry.

Page 7: The Elderly Man and Akira reach two large and heavy doors which instead of handles have two gold Cherubim each holding a “flaming” sword (the sword is not actually on fire but is carved as if it were). The Elderly Man grabs each of the sword's hilts and with much effort manages to push open the door. Akira is amazed to see that within is a beautiful garden

Page 8: Akira comments on the garden but as she turns around the Elderly Man has already vanished. While the Elderly Man was very creepy his absence makes Akira even more nervous

Akira

It's beauti...

Hm?

Akira

.He's gone...

Page 9: Akira bites her nails nervously before entering the garden. She takes a look around and is partly curious but also very afraid that someone or something may be lurking within. The garden is underground and in the shape of a dome. At the apex of the dome is a window in which light enters. Directly below that window are two large trees. The dome is made of a thick light blue glass but where it meets the floor it becomes a white crystal wall that goes around the whole perimeter. There are four streams of water which the trees grow from and if seen from above divide the floor into six sections. Also seen from above is a circle of bookshelves that surround the two trees, a larger circle which encircles that circle and finally an even larger circle that encircles that. These are filled with books. Finally between the two trees is a stone podium which was used to hold another book but the book is not there.

Page 10 Akira then sees Mr. Jengans sitting below one of the two trees eating a quince fruit and reading the book which belongs on the stone podium. The book reads "The Secret Book of John". Mr. Jengans is too busy reading to notice Akira and Akira is trying to see what he is reading.

Page 11: The Elderly Man appears behind Akira and nearly gives her a heart attack.
Mr. Jengans smiles and holds out some of the Quince fruit that he was eating as if to offer some.

Elderly Man

Mr. Jengans.
The guest
is here.

Akira

gasp!

Mr. Jengans

Do not be afraid
my beautiful
Queen of Heaven.

Akira

Um...

Mr. Jengans

I beseech you.
Come closer.

Page 12: Akira takes a quick glance at the Elderly Man who remains expressionless. She then walks towards Mr. Jengans and sits next to him. Mr. Jengans takes a hold of one of Akira's hands and places the fruit in her hand and then guides it to her mouth so that she takes a bite. Akira can't help but be fearful even as much as she is trying not to. Mr. Jengans speaks in a strangely kind voice.

Mr. Jengans

You're a brave women.
I can see it in your eyes.

You've come here alone
into the darkness

But it is in the darkness
that we find the shining
light of knowledge.

The End of Chain Mail Order Bride Act 4