

THE FIRST ALLY

PART 2

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& VARIANT COVER

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BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE
WITH BILL FINGER

MY SON DOESN'T
BELIEVE IN DEATH.

HE DOESN'T.

RIGHT NOW, IN HIS CAVE, HE IS
WORKING ON A MACHINE THAT
WOULD KEEP HIM ALIVE FOREVER.
WAKE UP A NEW "HIM" EVERY
27 YEARS, FRESH, READY TO
GO BACK TO WAR.

HE'S ALSO WORKING ON
KEEPING ME ALIVE FOREVER. HE
DOESN'T KNOW I KNOW ABOUT
HIS PLANS, BUT I DO. A
PROGRAM CALLED "THE ALFRED
PROTOCOL." A VERSION OF MY
CONSCIOUSNESS UPLOADED TO
THE CENTRAL COMPUTER, TO
BE THE MIND OF HIS OPERATION
IN PERPETUITY.

LOOKING AT IT,
SOMETIMES I WONDER
IF I HAVE FAILED HIM.
PERHAPS I'VE PATCHED
HIM UP TOO MANY
TIMES. HEALED HIM
TOO MANY TIMES...

I WORRY THAT MAYBE,
I'VE MADE HIM THINK...



...THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY OUT.

ALFRED!
THATCH IS DEAD!
SOMEONE GOT HERE FIRST AND...I NEED AN ESCAPE, NOW!



BLOW IT, MATE! BLOW IT, BLOW IT, BLOW IT! COME ON!



I'M LOOKING, BUT IT'S A STEEL BOX. THERE ISN'T--

WHOEVER DID THIS HAD TO GET OUT SOME WAY...



AHOY.

SIR, THE CEILING IS REINFORCED STEEL. WHOEVER DID THIS WOULD HAVE HAD TO CUT--



I'M PLAYING A HUNCH.

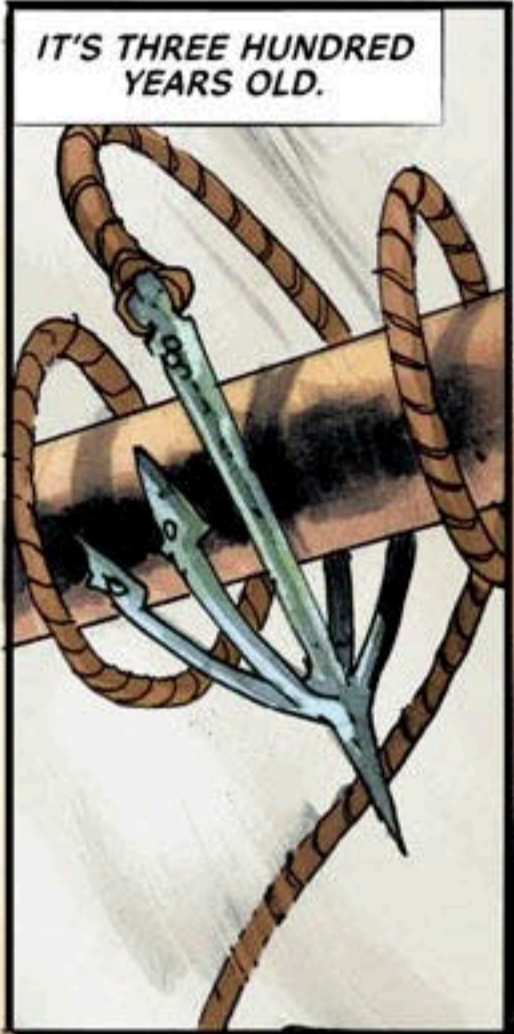


A HUNCH.

THE HOOK IS A GRAPPLING HOOK FROM "QUEEN ANNE'S REVENGE," BLACKBEARD'S SHIP.



IT'S THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD.



THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELIEVE BLACKBEARD REALLY DIED IN 1718. THAT WASN'T HIS HEAD HANGING FROM MAYNARD'S SHIP.



BUT LIKE EVERYTHING WITH BLACKBEARD, IT'S BECOME THE STUFF OF LEGEND.



WASN'T HIS BODY THROWN TO THE SHARKS AND ALLIGATORS. THAT HE FOUND A WAY OUT.

I SEE THE ROPE AS A ROPE. ROTTEN. OLD. ABOUT TO BREAK.



UP TOP!

YOU KILLED THATCH! YOU GONNA PAY, ELLIOT!

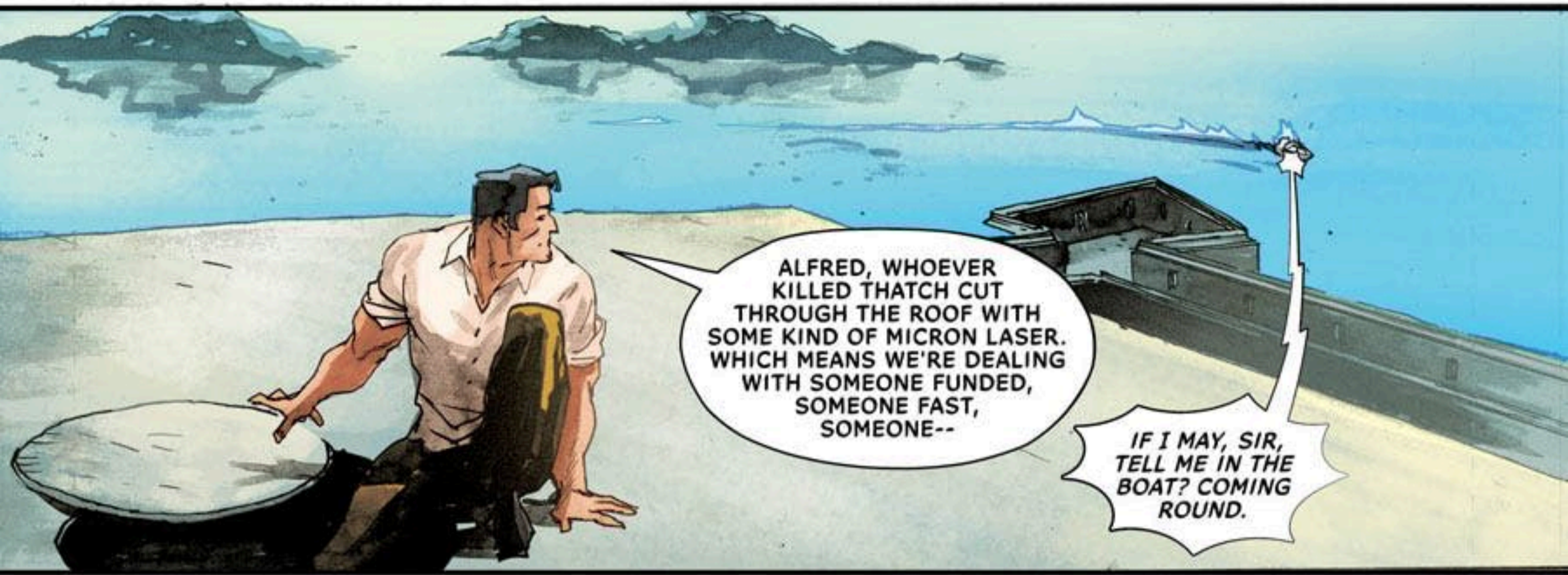
BRUCE... DOES NOT.



COME ON, COME ON...WHERE DID YOU...



THERE!



ALFRED, WHOEVER
KILLED THATCH CUT
THROUGH THE ROOF WITH
SOME KIND OF MICRON LASER.
WHICH MEANS WE'RE DEALING
WITH SOMEONE FUNDED,
SOMEONE FAST,
SOMEONE--

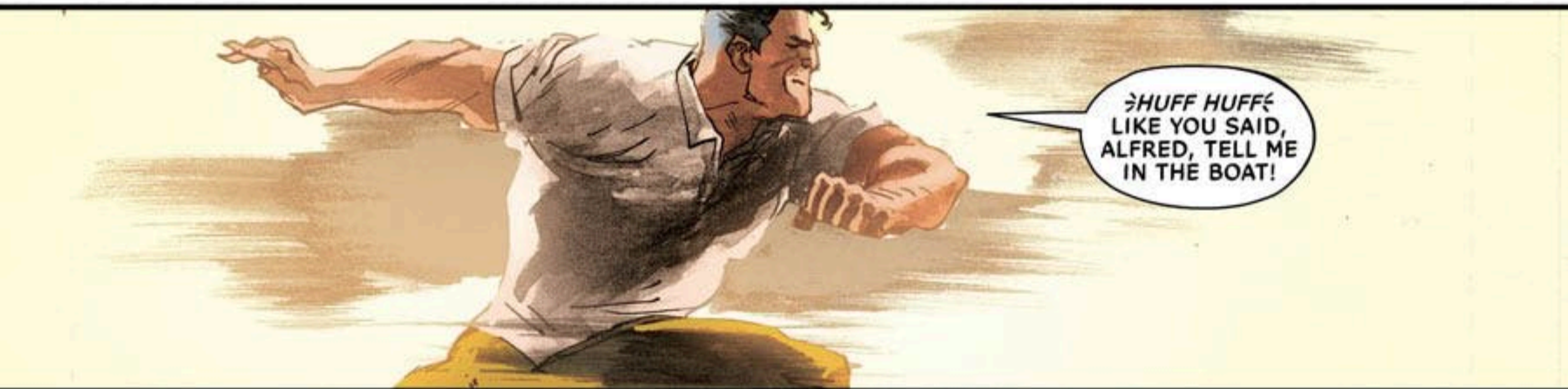
IF I MAY, SIR,
TELL ME IN THE
BOAT? COMING
ROUND.



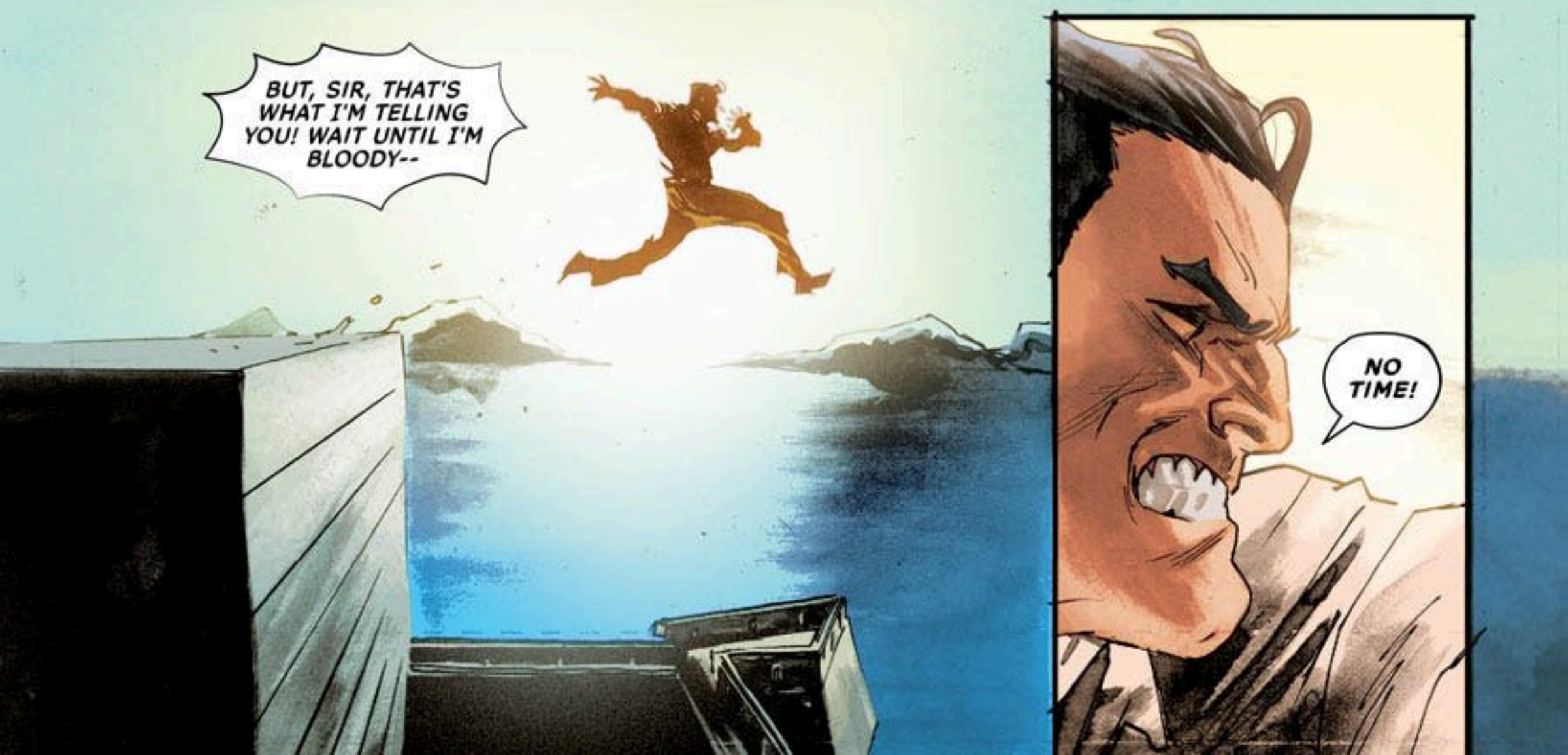
FAIR
ENOUGH.

COMING
FOR YOU,
HUSH...

BUT, SIR,
WHATEVER YOU DO,
WAIT UNTIL I'M CLOSE! THE
WATERS HERE, THATCH HAD
IT STOCKED WITH NILOTICUS
CROCODILES FOR PROTECTION.
HE'S SAID TO HAVE USED THEM
TO DISPOSE OF THE BODIES OF--



SHUFF HUFFÉ
LIKE YOU SAID,
ALFRED, TELL ME
IN THE BOAT!



BUT, SIR, THAT'S
WHAT I'M TELLING
YOU! WAIT UNTIL I'M
BLOODY--

NO
TIME!

