



WHAT DO YOU MEAN...HE'S GONE?! WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN?!

I-IT APPEARS THAT SOMETIME LATE LAST NIGHT, MONSIEUR LEQUINT SUMMONED HIS COACH AND...SET OFF ON A RETURN TO MISSISSIPPI.



HE LEFT ONLY THAT LETTER...ADDRESSED TO HIS EXCELLENCY.

FENCH! WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKEN US? AT LEAST STALL THE DRUNKEN [REDACTED] UNTIL ONE OF US COULD CONFRONT HIM?!

I-I AM SORRY, YOUNG SIR... BUT HIS DEPARTURE WAS MOST FURTIVE AND OCCURRED IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT! I ONLY DISCOVERED IT THIS MORNING--

HE CLAIMS HE CAN NO LONGER SUPPLY THE RAW IRON FOR OUR RAILS. AND BEGS THAT WE OFFER HIM NO ENTREATY TO RECONSIDER. STRANGE...

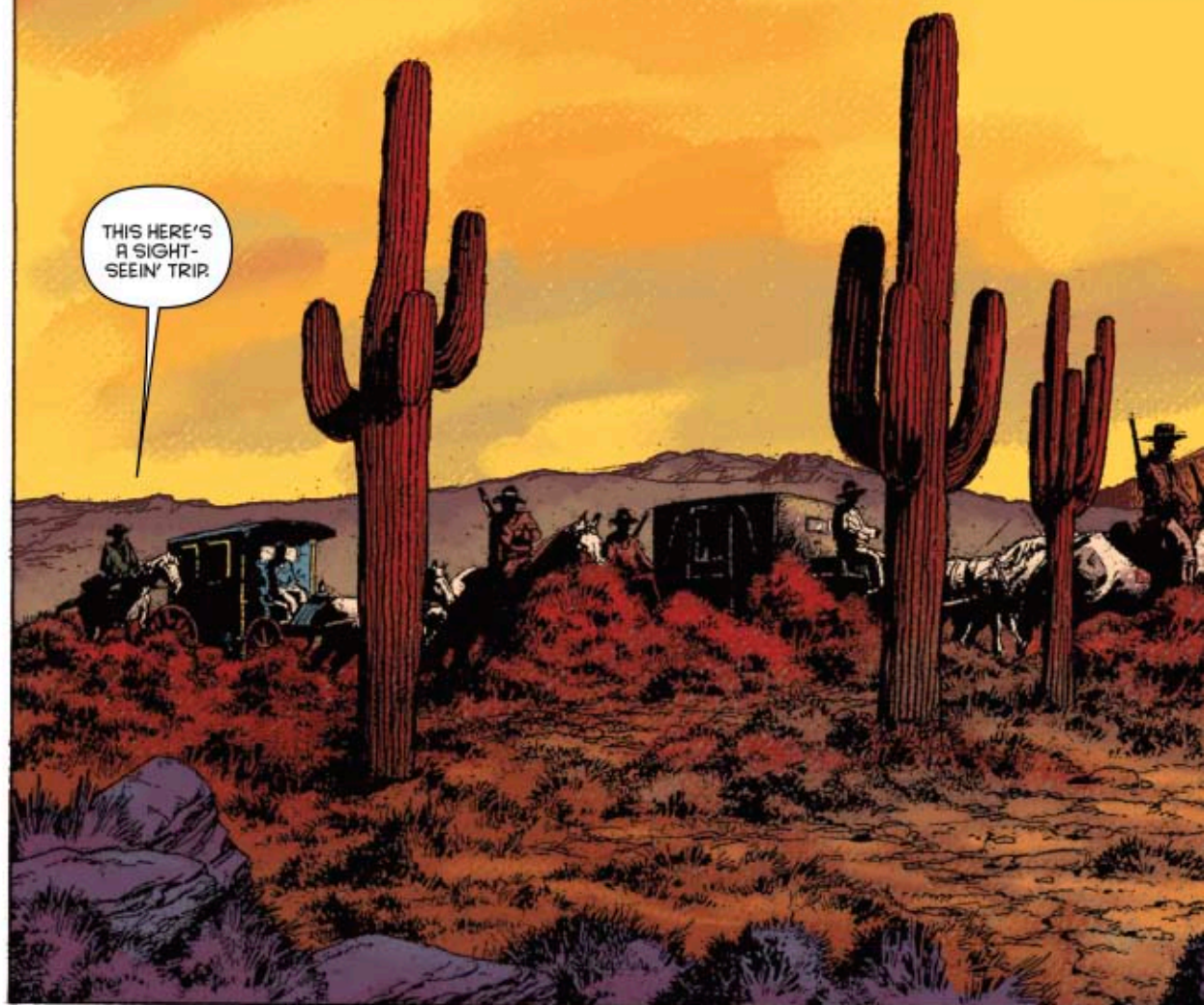


WHATEVER *BOGIE* PUT THE SCARE INTO LEQUINT...IT SUPERSEDED BOTH HIS GLUTTONY AND HIS GREED.

NO MATTER. WE WILL FIND ANOTHER ORE SUPPLIER. IN THE MEANTIME, WE MUST PUT THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THIS DESERTION.

"WE'VE STILL GOT THREE OTHER,
EVEN *FATTER*, BIRDS TO PLUCK."

THIS HERE'S
A SIGHT-
SEEIN' TRIP.



DON'T SEE YOU
NEEDIN' A *BODYGUARD*,
GOT ALL THESE *SOLDIERS*
TAGGIN' ALONG.

YOUR
PRESENCE HERE
IS MERELY *A*
RUSE, MY DEAR
D JANGO.

TODAY,
YOU MUST ACT AS
MY *SECONDARY*
EYES AND EARS.

GET ME THE *TRUE*
STORY OF THE ARCHDUKE'S
OPERATIONS... FROM THE
NATIVES, THOSE WHO ARE
REALLY BUILDING HIS
PRECIOUS RAILROAD.

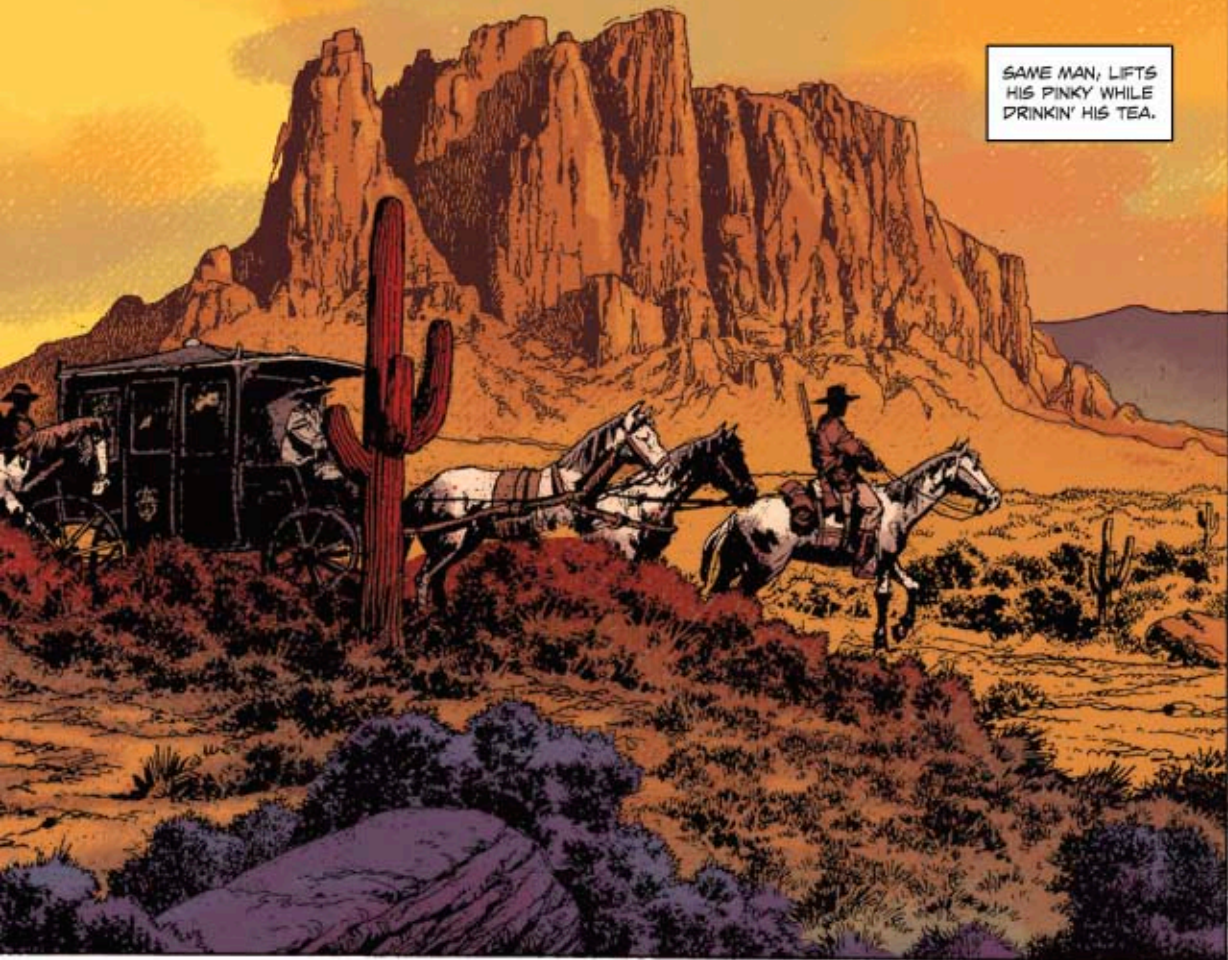


YOU ASK *ANY* BLACK MAN... WE GOT WHAT Y'MIGHT CALL A *NATURAL AVERSION* TO MEN WEARIN' MASKS.

AN' THERE AIN'T *NO REGULATOR* EVER GAVE A DAMN ABOUT SOMEONE DEALIN' IN SLAVES OR MISTREATIN' WOMEN.

STILL...HARD TO BELIEVE THAT *AVENGER* I SAW LAST NIGHT MIGHT BE THE SAME MAN THAT HIRED ME TO *PROTECT* HIM.

SAME MAN, LIFTS HIS PINKY WHILE DRINKIN' HIS TEA.

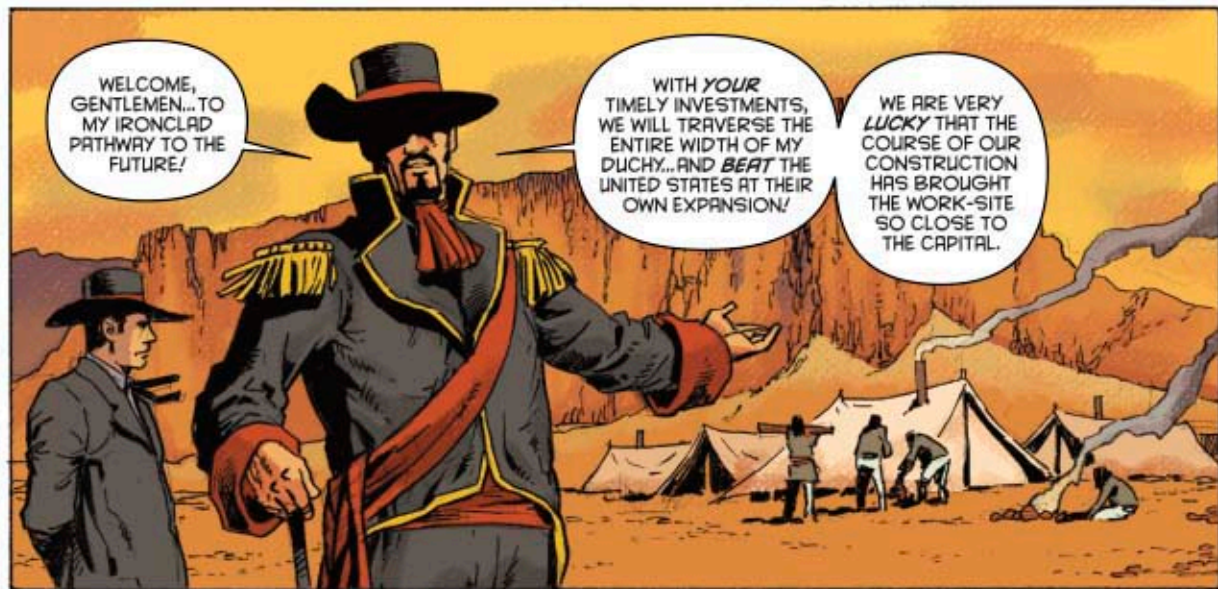


THOSE WHO WOULD *NEVER* SPEAK OPENLY TO ONE OF HIS PEERS!

OKAY...I GOTCHA.

NAH, COULDN'T BE...*COULD* IT?





WELCOME, GENTLEMEN... TO MY IRONCLAD PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE!

WITH YOUR TIMELY INVESTMENTS, WE WILL TRAVERSE THE ENTIRE WIDTH OF MY DUCHY... AND **BEAT** THE UNITED STATES AT THEIR OWN EXPANSION!

WE ARE VERY **LUCKY** THAT THE COURSE OF OUR CONSTRUCTION HAS BROUGHT THE WORK-SITE SO CLOSE TO THE CAPITAL.



CHRIST-ONNA-STICK... MY [REDACTED] FEELS LIKE TEN MILES OF TANNED LEATHER!

I SHARE YOUR DISCOMFORT, SIR! ARE THERE NO **PROPER** ROADS IN THIS WRETCHED WILDERNESS?!



SAY, THIS LOOKS LIKE GOOD PROGRESS, LANGDON! BUT HOW THE HELL YOU GET THROUGH ALL THESE **MESAS**?!

AGAIN, YOUR EXCELLENCY... I MUST **INSIST** ON KNOWING THE REASONS FOR MR. LEQUINT'S ABSENCE!

AS I EXPLAINED, MR. LIPSHAW. APPARENTLY, **URGENT BUSINESS** DEMANDED HIS ATTENTION AT HOME.



BUT HE WAS A **VITAL** PART OF THIS ENDEAVOR, WAS HE NOT? WHAT WILL NOW OCCUR--

¡JESÚS, MARÍA Y JOSÉ!



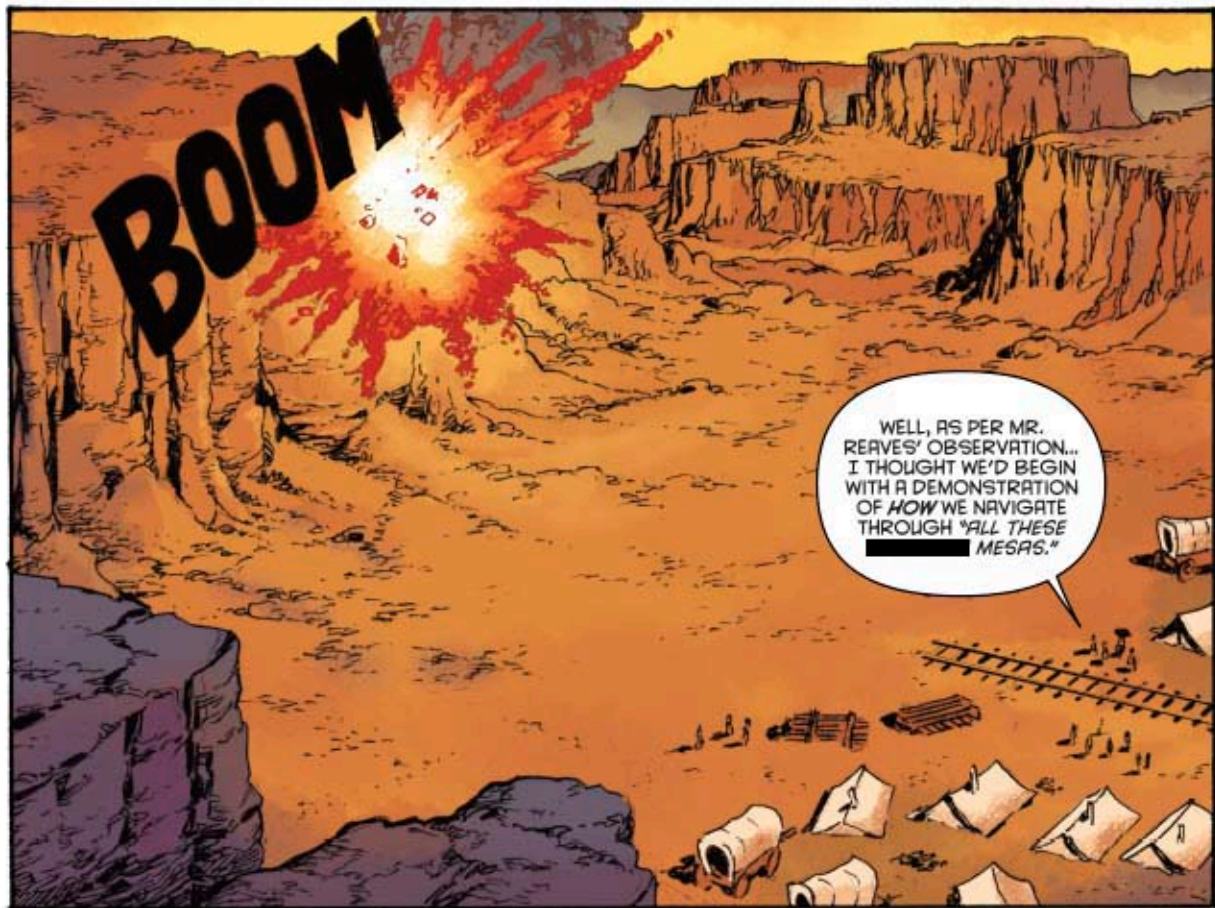
BETWEEN THE DUST AND THE HEAT, I FEEL AS IF I'VE BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE A POTTERY KILN... AND WILL SOON EMERGE AS A PORCELAIN VASE!

FOR FAVOR, YOUR EXCELLENCY... LET US BE ABOUT THIS GUIDED TOUR WITH THE *UTMOST* HASTE!



OF COURSE, DON DIEGO. I REALIZE THAT THIS ENVIRONMENT IS ILL-SUITED TO ONE OF YOUR...*DELICATE* NATURE.

OH! THE SACRIFICES ONE MUST MAKE IN PURSUIT OF POTENTIAL PROFIT! WHAT IS *FIRST* ON OUR AGENDA, SEÑOR?



WELL, AS PER MR. REAVES' OBSERVATION... I THOUGHT WE'D BEGIN WITH A DEMONSTRATION OF *HOW* WE NAVIGATE THROUGH "ALL THESE MESAS."