

"When I first found myself stranded in the past, I figured re-adjusting would be no problem.

"After all, I already lived through the '90s once--as an Air Force brat. Spent my teen years living with my Dad when he was stationed in Europe.

"And now that I've been back here for a while, I know what I miss the most--

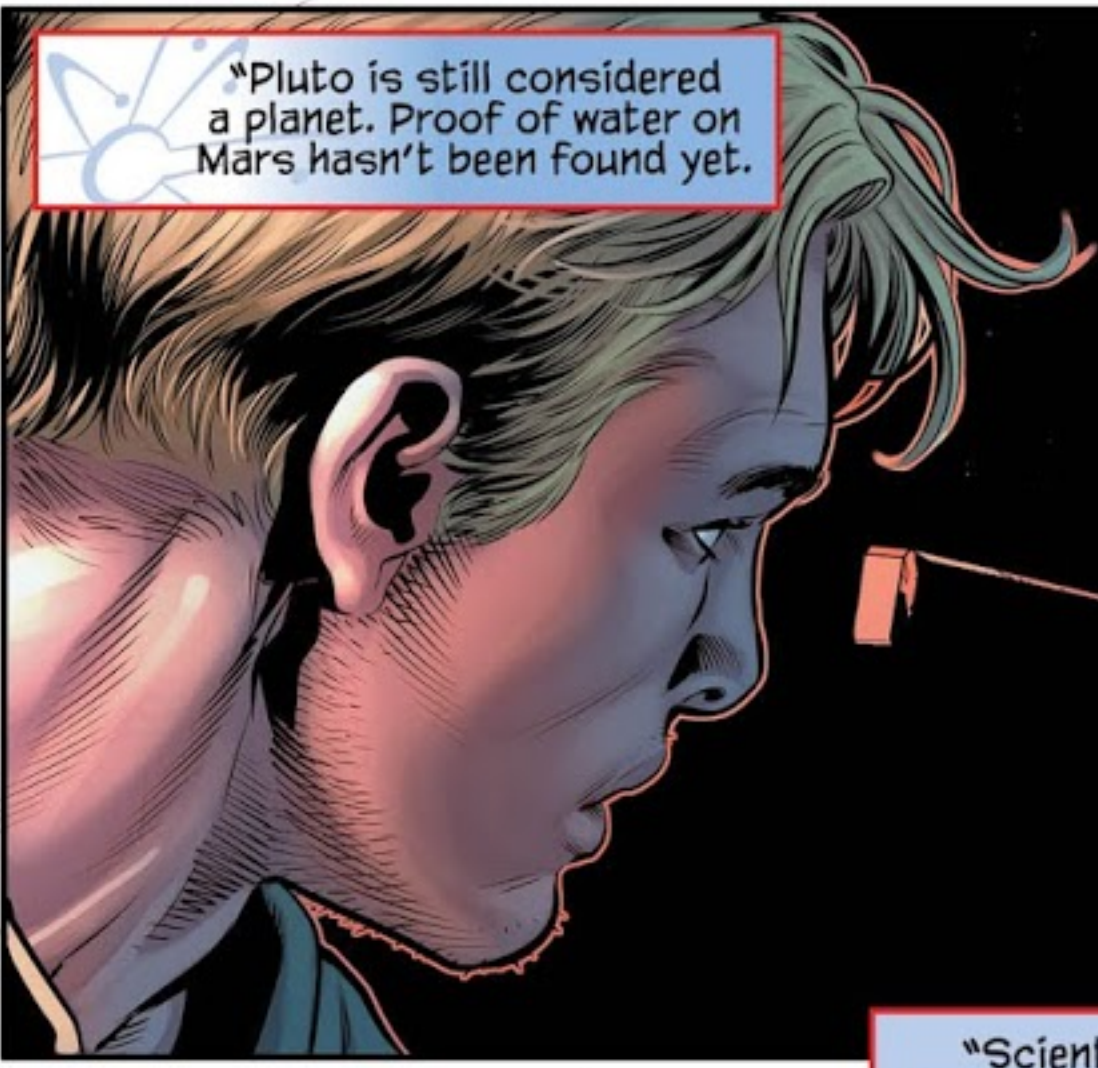
"surprises!"

"When you come from the future, you're cursed with the knowledge of always knowing what's *ahead*.


"No one here would believe the housing market bubble will collapse one day and set off a Great Recession.

"The BP oil spill is still years away. Ditto Hurricane Katrina.


"There is no 9/11. No Al-Qaeda. The U.S. doesn't have boots on the ground in Iraq or Afghanistan.




"Pluto is still considered a planet. Proof of water on Mars hasn't been found yet."





"Scientists are still trying to map the human genome. The Large Hadron Collider has yet to be built."



"There are no smartphones. No text messages. No Skype."



"There's no Facebook or YouTube. No Twitter, no Yelp."



"GPS hasn't gone mainstream yet. There are no hybrid cars. No Uber."



"But about this *beatdown* I've been taking--I guess it's kind of obvious by now..."

"...the number one difference between the future I came from and life here in the '90s..."



"...there are *no* superheroes."

"Welcome to my world."

PAST IMPERFECT

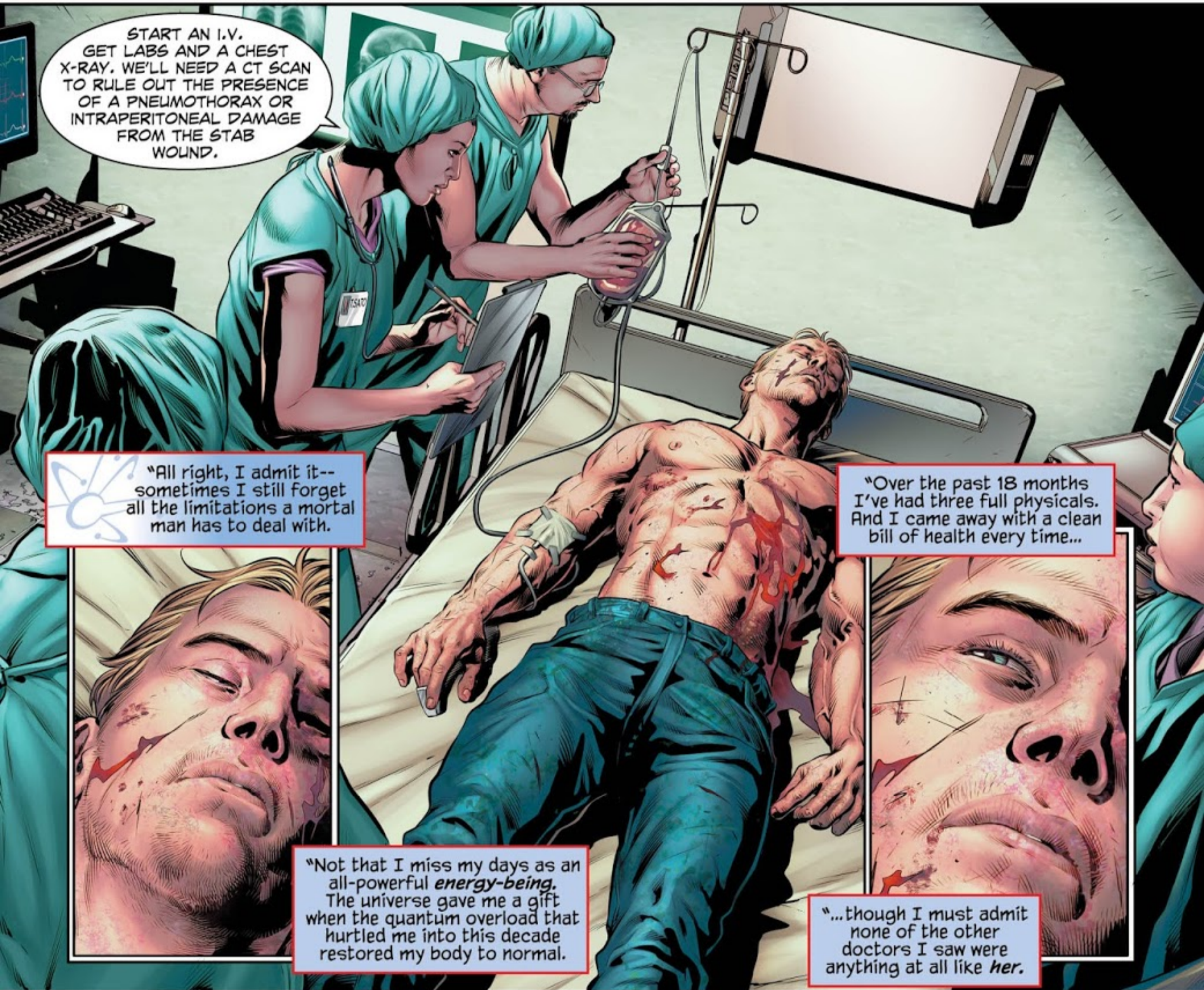


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THE EMTs JUST BROUGHT HIM IN.

27 YEAR-OLD MALE WITH INJURIES TO THE HEAD AND CHEST AND A KNIFE WOUND OF THE LEFT FLANK.



START AN I.V. GET LABS AND A CHEST X-RAY. WE'LL NEED A CT SCAN TO RULE OUT THE PRESENCE OF A PNEUMOTHORAX OR INTRAPERITONEAL DAMAGE FROM THE STAB WOUND.

"All right, I admit it-- sometimes I still forget all the limitations a mortal man has to deal with.

"Over the past 18 months I've had three full physicals. And I came away with a clean bill of health every time...



"Not that I miss my days as an all-powerful *energy-being*. The universe gave me a gift when the quantum overload that hurtled me into this decade restored my body to normal.

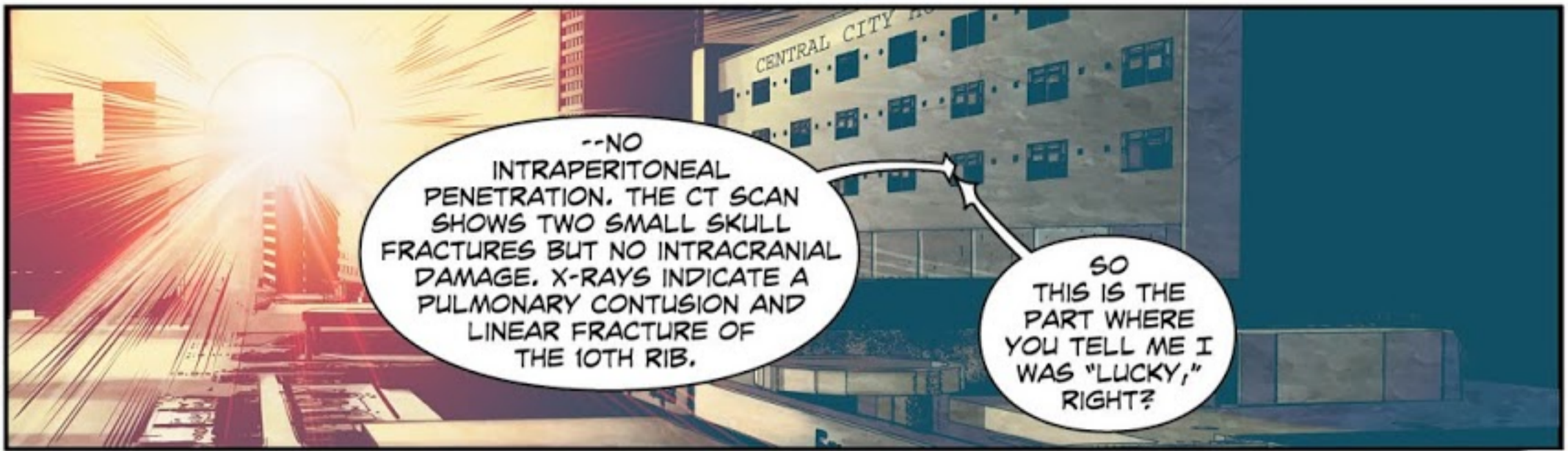


"...though I must admit none of the other doctors I saw were anything at all like *her*.



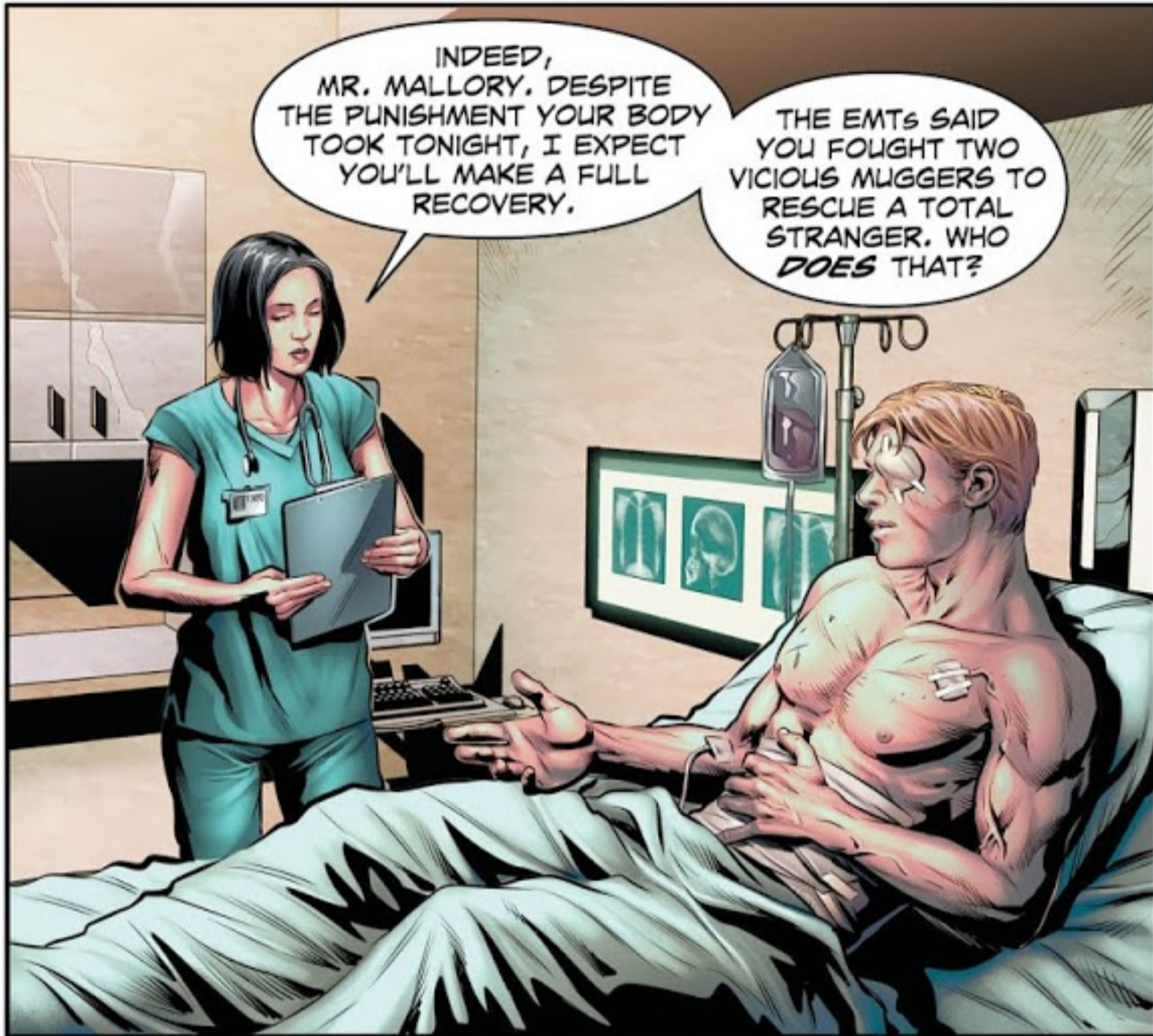
"Love to know what that 'T' stands for..."

--AND CHECK FOR ANY POSSIBLE INTRACRANIAL INJURY FROM THE FACIAL TRAUMA.



--NO INTRAPERITONEAL PENETRATION. THE CT SCAN SHOWS TWO SMALL SKULL FRACTURES BUT NO INTRACRANIAL DAMAGE. X-RAYS INDICATE A PULMONARY CONTUSION AND LINEAR FRACTURE OF THE 10TH RIB.

SO THIS IS THE PART WHERE YOU TELL ME I WAS "LUCKY," RIGHT?



INDEED, MR. MALLORY. DESPITE THE PUNISHMENT YOUR BODY TOOK TONIGHT, I EXPECT YOU'LL MAKE A FULL RECOVERY.

THE EMTs SAID YOU FOUGHT TWO VICIOUS MUGGERS TO RESCUE A TOTAL STRANGER. WHO DOES THAT?



NO ONE CAN BEHAVE LIKE *JAMES BOND* OR *INDIANA JONES* AND NOT END UP SERIOUSLY INJURED--OR WORSE.

"Naturally, she can only point to movie heroes...as if I needed another reminder superheroes don't exist here yet."

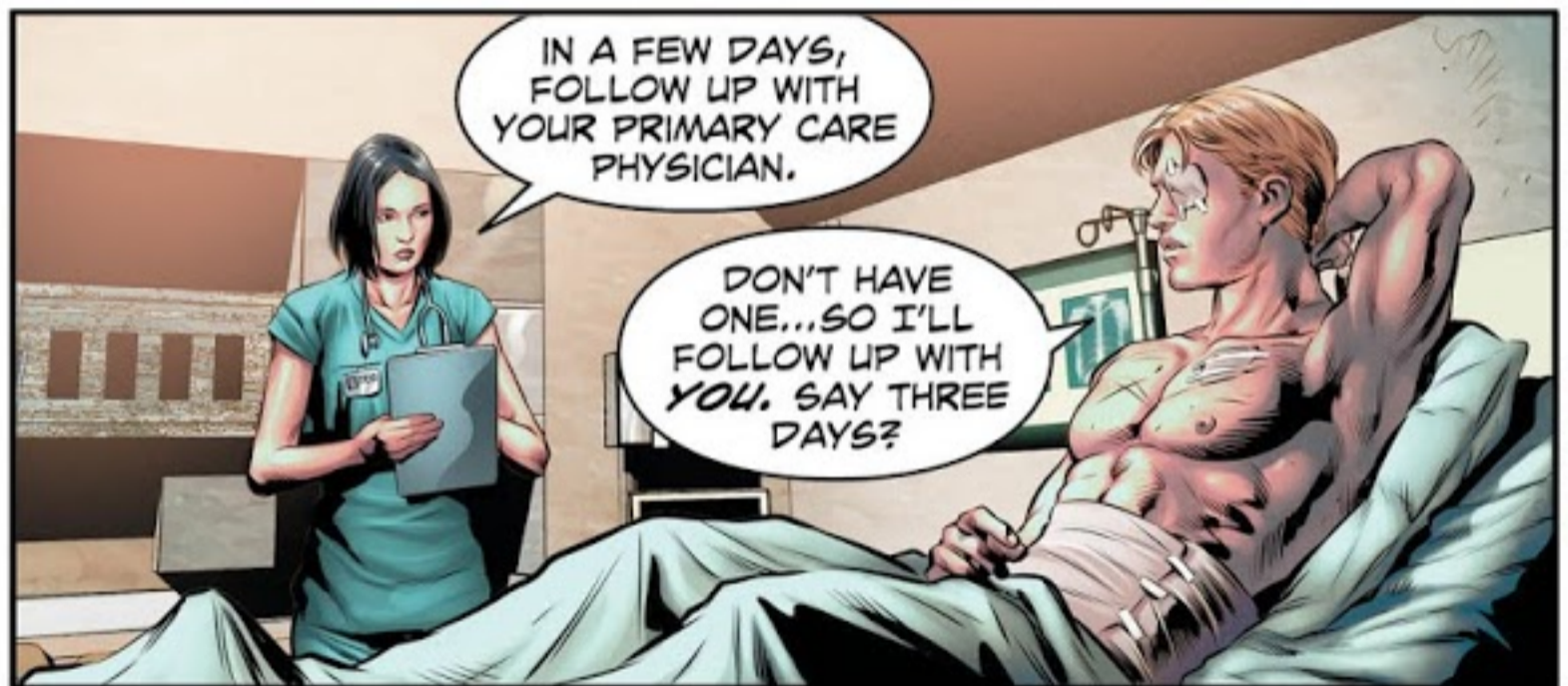


ACTUALLY, I WAS GOING FOR *ROCKY*.

I'M SERIOUS, MR. MALLORY. YOU CAME WITHIN CENTIMETERS OF A FATAL STAB WOUND.

DULY NOTED, DOCTOR. BUT PLEASE, CALL ME VINCE.

WE'LL SEND YOU OFF WITH A SHORT COURSE OF P.O. ANTI-BIOTICS AND PAIN MEDS.



IN A FEW DAYS, FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN.

DON'T HAVE ONE...SO I'LL FOLLOW UP WITH YOU. SAY THREE DAYS?



FIVE DAYS. AND IT'S *TAKARA*, BY THE WAY.

HOW'S THAT?



JUST IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT THE "T" IS FOR.