

WAIT  
TEN MINUTES.  
DO NOT WAIT  
ELEVEN.

PLEASE...  
DO NOT KILL  
US.

WHAT?

## "Apocalypse Then"

EAST AFRICA

ONE YEAR BEFORE



JAZAKI  
HAS VOWED  
TO PROTECT THIS  
MAN YOU HAVE  
BEEN PAID TO KILL.  
NO ONE MUST KNOW  
JAZAKI HAS  
BROKEN HIS  
WORD.

THEREFORE,  
WHOMEVER ESCORTS  
THE DEATHSTROKE  
MUST NOT RETURN  
ALIVE.

--JAZAKI WILL KILL  
THEM TO PREVENT THEIR  
SEEKING VENGEANCE  
WHEN THEY BECOME  
MEN.

--  
--I HAD  
SONS...

PLEASE...  
I HAVE SONS.  
SHOULD I BE  
KILLED--

GIVE  
ME YOUR  
MONEY.

WHATEVER  
YOU'VE GOT IN YOUR POCKETS.  
GIVE IT TO ME.

THIS IS A  
CONTRACT.

YOU  
HAVE  
HIRED ME  
TO PROTECT  
YOUR  
FAMILIES  
FROM JA  
ZAKI.



THE  
SWORD.

DRAWN  
ONLY TO BE  
USED.

USED  
ONLY TO  
KILL.

**DEFIANCE**

CHAPTER  
THREE

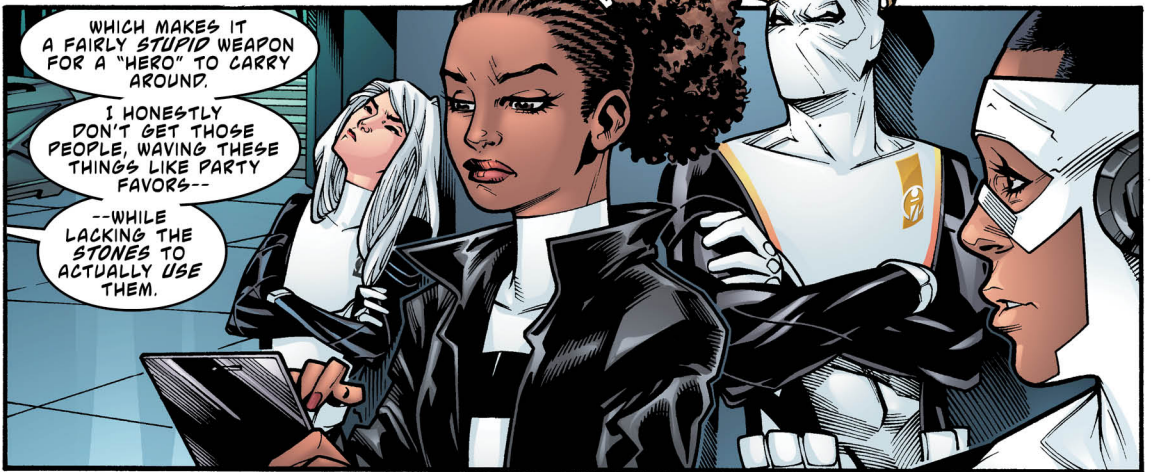
**LIKE FATHER,  
LIKE DAUGHTER!**

**DEATHSTROKE**

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## "Crossed Swords"

DEFIANCE HQ  
TODAY





--RAVAGER.

JUST "ROSE" NOW, SLADE, OR "THE" ROSE, IF YOU MUST.

AND WHAT, EXACTLY, IS THE POINT OF THIS...?

YOU ONCE CARRIED TWO SWORDS. PRESUMABLY BECAUSE IT LOOKED COOL.

JAPANESE SWORDS... CARRIED BY A HMONG GIRL.

YOUR NEW WEAPON IS TRUER TO YOUR HERITAGE--

--BUT YOU RUN AROUND HITTING PEOPLE WITH THE FLAT SIDE OF IT.

WHICH TELEGRAPHS YOUR WEAKNESS TO YOUR ENEMIES.

YOU'VE BEEN RIDING THE FENCE SINCE YOU MET ME.

"HERO" OR "VILLAIN," GUARDIAN OR KILLER.

LONG PAST TIME YOU CHOSE A PATH, ROSE.

YOU TOLD ME ONCE--

--"I'D TAKE YOU MORE SERIOUSLY IF I THOUGHT YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVED IN SOMETHING."\*

DIFFICULT WHEN EVERYTHING I BELIEVE IN TURNS OUT TO BE TAINTED BY YOU.





I ONCE CHOSE YOU.

IT COST ME.

TO PLEASE YOU, I TOOK ON THE NAME OF A BROTHER I'D NEVER MET.\*

\*GRANT WILSON, THE ORIGINAL RAVAGER. --ALEX



THEN I TRAVELED TO VIETNAM--TO MY MOTHER'S VILLAGE IN THE HILL COUNTRY.\*

IT CHANGED ME.

\*ISSUE #9. --ALEX

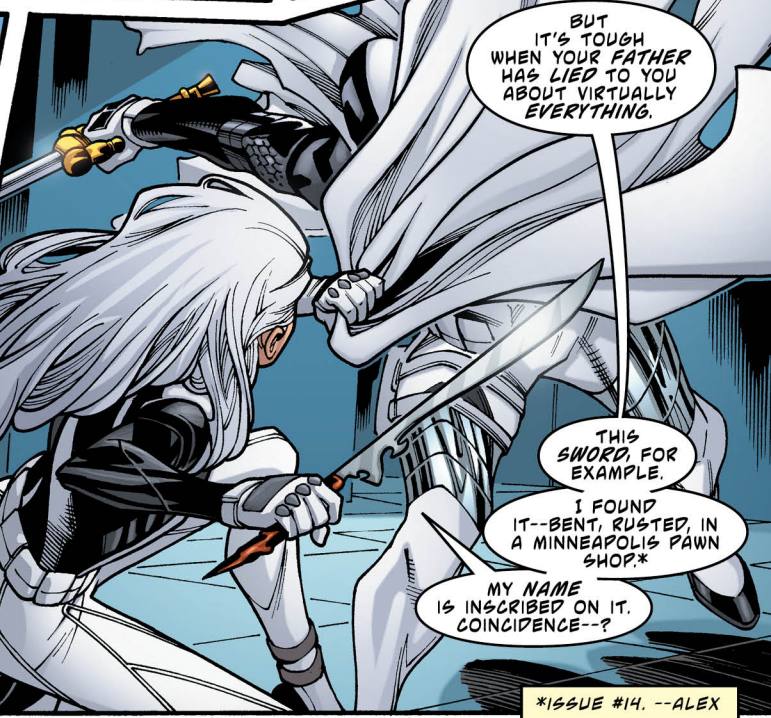


I'M TRYING TO BELIEVE THIS "GLADE THE HERO" NOISE YOU'RE SELLING--

--AND THIS "PROJECT DEFIANCE" RUN BY YOUR EX-WIFE WHO ONCE HIRED A GUY TO PRETEND TO BE MY BOY-FRIEND--

--WHO THEN TRIED TO HAVE ME KILLED.\*

\*ISSUES #3 AND #8. --ALEX



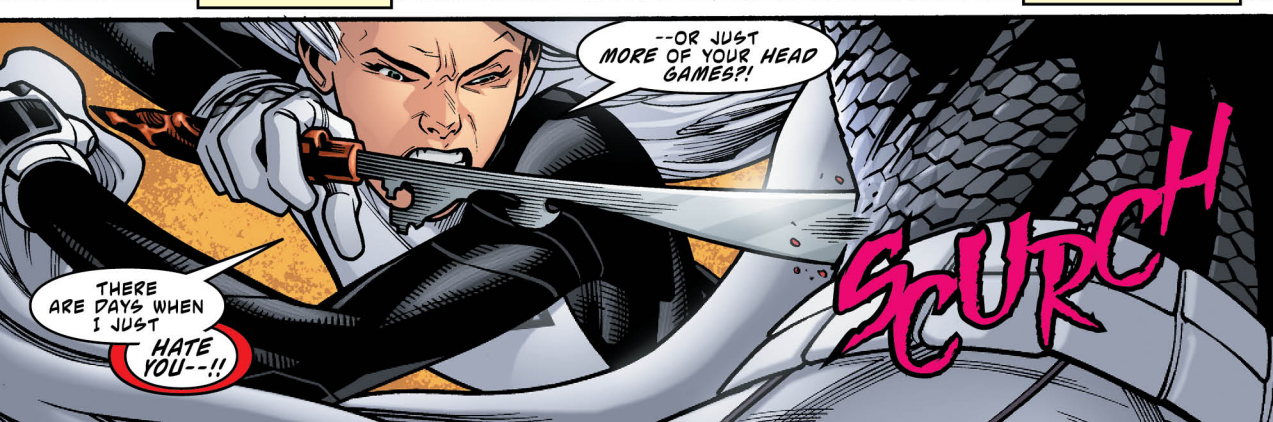
BUT IT'S TOUGH WHEN YOUR FATHER HAS LIED TO YOU ABOUT VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING.

THIS SWORD, FOR EXAMPLE.

I FOUND IT--BENT, RUSTED, IN A MINNEAPOLIS PAWN SHOP.\*

MY NAME IS INSCRIBED ON IT. COINCIDENCE--?

\*ISSUE #14. --ALEX



--OR JUST MORE OF YOUR HEAD GAMES?!

THERE ARE DAYS WHEN I JUST HATE YOU--!!

SCURCH