

"I AM SURE I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU HOW EXPENSIVE THEY ARE.

"THESE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS.

"WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED, SOMETIMES SINCE BIRTH, TO BE AT ONCE EFFECTIVE AS ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACHES--

"--AS WELL AS SOME OF THE MOST HIGHLY SKILLED AND RUTHLESS ASSASSINS IN THE WORLD.



"BUT APPARENTLY YOU KNOW THAT.

"BECAUSE IT IS VERY CLEAR-- AFTER WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT-- THAT SOMEHOW...

"...YOU HAVE ONE OF YOUR OWN."

"IT WAS THREE WEEKS AGO.

"IN THE CITY OF CARTAGNA.

"MY PEOPLE WERE PREPARING A SHIPMENT OF... PRODUCT... TO THE STATES.

"MY PEOPLE... AND MY BROTHER."

IT NEVER FAILS.

EVERY TIME WE FILL AN ORDER THIS LARGE, I CRUNCH THE NUMBERS--

--AND FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I NEVER UNDERSTAND WHY MY FAMILY DOESN'T SIMPLY CASH OUT OF THIS VILE BUSINESS.

THAT IS CERTAINLY A BRAINTEASER, PEDRO.

PERHAPS IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE POWER THAT MONEY WIELDS.

MAYBE, CICATRIZ, BUT...

...ALL THE MONEY IS WORTHLESS IF YOU ARE NOT ALIVE TO SPEND IT.

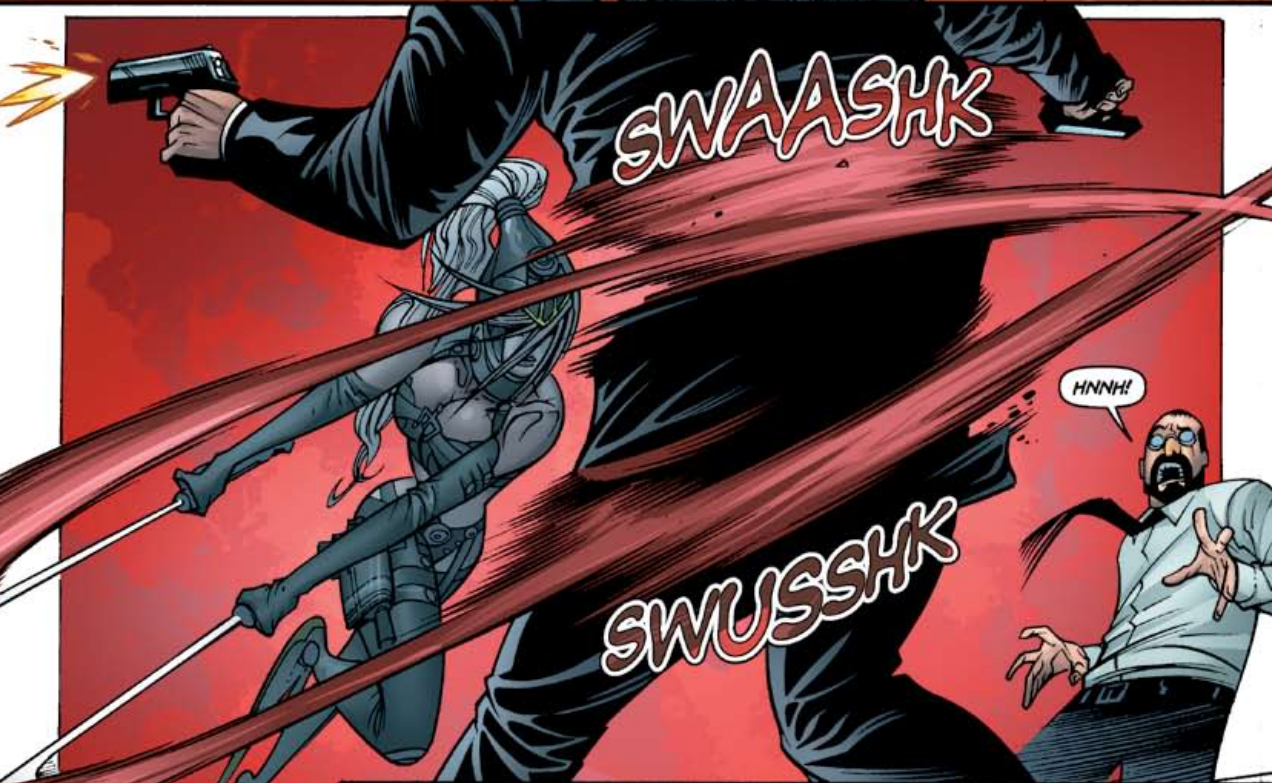
THAT IS WHY YOUR BROTHER HOLDS MY TALENTS IN SUCH HIGH REGARD--

--BECAUSE HE TRUSTS ME TO KEEP YOU ALIVE.

"IMPOSSIBLY..."

"...IT WAS
OVER BEFORE
IT BEGAN."







A MESSAGE FROM MY EMPLOYER.

THE CORDOVA FAMILY IS OFFICIALLY OUT OF BUSINESS.

PASS IT ON.

H-HOW CAN I TELL THEM...

...IF I AM D-DEAD?



GOOD POINT.

YOU CAN'T.

SHUNK



BUT THEY WILL.

"WHICH IS HOW..."

...WE'VE
COME TO
THIS.

P-PLEASE...

WH-WHAT
DOES ANY OF
THIS H-HAVE ~~→KAK!~~
TO DO WITH
M-ME?

PLEASE,
MR. UPWORTH.
CLEARLY YOU ARE
NOT LONG OF
THIS EARTH...



...DON'T SPEND
WHAT LITTLE TIME YOU
HAVE LEFT *INSULTING* ME
ANY MORE THAN YOU
AND YOUR COMPANY
ALREADY HAS.


I'VE NEVER
HEARD OF
YOU PEOPLE,
H-HONEST.

THERE
MUST BE A
MISUNDERSTANDING,
PLEASE!

CLEARLY.



AND YOU
ARE GOING TO
DO YOUR PART IN
HELPING ME TO
SET THINGS
RIGHT.



THE PEOPLE I
WORK FOR? THEY
AREN'T GOING TO
TAKE THIS LYING
DOWN.

IF
ANYTHING
HAPPENS
TO ME--



OF COURSE
SOMETHING'S
GOING TO HAPPEN
TO YOU, VANCE.

LOTS OF
LITTLE, PAINFUL
SOMETHINGS.

NOW, PRAY
QUIETLY TO
YOURSELF...

FLETCH



...UNTIL
WE HEAR
BACK FROM
ORCHID.