

GREAT. JUST GREAT. THIS DAY STARTED OFF IN THE TOILET AND ONLY GOT WORSE FROM THERE.

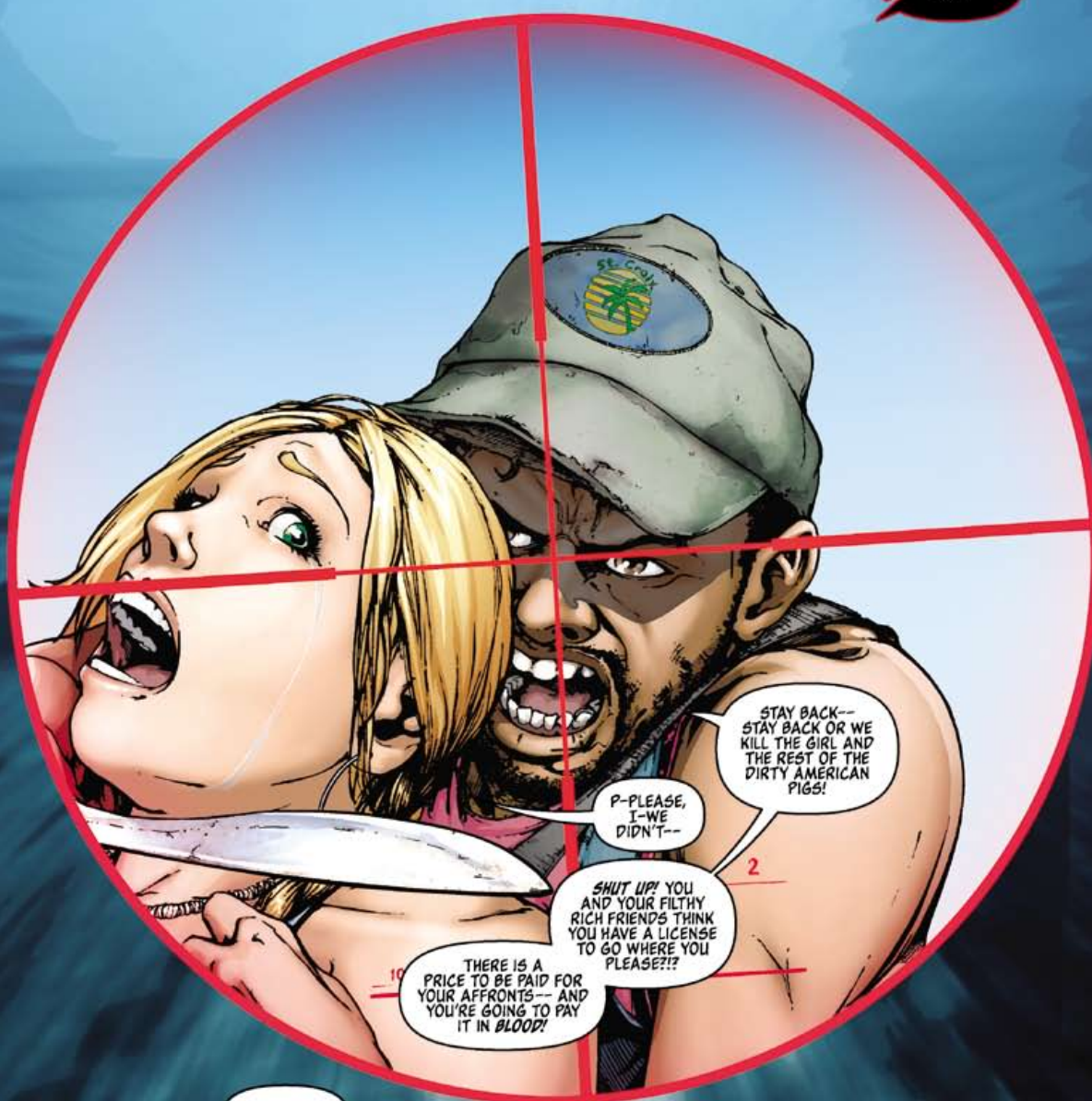
DON'T MIND ME, SON. WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

ALPHA TARGET IS LOCKED.

BETA, GAMMA— LOCKED.

WAITING ON YOUR ORDERS, SIR.

SIR?



STAY BACK-- STAY BACK OR WE KILL THE GIRL AND THE REST OF THE DIRTY AMERICAN PIGS!

P-PLEASE, I-WE DIDN'T--

SHUT UP! YOU AND YOUR FILTHY RICH FRIENDS THINK YOU HAVE A LICENSE TO GO WHERE YOU PLEASE???

THERE IS A PRICE TO BE PAID FOR YOUR AFFRONT-- AND YOU'RE GOING TO PAY IT IN BLOOD!

BLAH BLAH BLAHDY BLAH BLAH.

DO EVERY ONE OF THESE PIRATES READ FROM THE SAME PLAYBOOK, OR WHAT?

YOUR ORDERS?

SIR?

MY "ORDERS" DON'T MEAN JACK.

IF IT WERE UP TO ME, WE WOULD HAVE BLASTED THE WHOLE YACHT OUT OF THE WATER A HALF AN HOUR AGO AND LET THE SHARKS SORT 'EM OUT.

BUT NOW IT'S A GODDAMNED INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT AND WE'RE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES AWAY FROM A C.N.N. NEWS COPTER BROADCASTING THIS FUSTERCLUCK ALL OVER THE AIRWAVES.

SO, UNTIL I GET AUTHORIZATION FROM THE BRASS, I AIN'T ORDERIN' NOTHING.

AYE, SIR.

PULL YOUR BOATS BACK, NOW!

LET US LEAVE AND WE'LL GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF YOUR PEOPLE!

YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE BEFORE I START CUTTING THESE PEARLY-WHITE THROATS!

CAPTAIN? HIS HAND IS TREMBLING.

I THINK HE MEANS IT.

BALLS.

CAPTAIN?

NOW WHAT?

YOU NEED TO SEE THIS. UPPER DECK, REAR...



...THEY  
HAVE ANOTHER  
HOSTAGE.



OH,  
C/MON!

THAT DISTRESS  
CALL SAID THERE  
WERE ONLY SIX  
STUDENTS ON  
THAT YACHT!

I-I DON'T  
KNOW WHERE  
SHE CAME FROM,  
CAPTAIN.

YOU SAID WE  
HAD GOTTEN  
EVERYONE!

WHO IS  
THIS?!

I-I  
DON'T KNOW!  
HONEST!

WELL SHE SURE  
AS HELL DIDN'T  
SWIM OUT HERE  
ON HER OWN!

FINE! YOU  
THINK THIS IS  
A GAME?!

KILL HER!  
KILL HER  
NOW!

MMMM...  
...NO.



I CAN CONTROL WATER.

MOVE IT FROM HERE TO THERE.

**SPLASH**

SNAP IT LIKE A WHIP. USE IT LIKE A BATTERING RAM.

-GLUK!-

-ECK!-

I'VE EVEN USED IT TO KNOCK OVER A BATTLESHIP.

WHOA.

-MUPH!-

IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE FACT I'M PRACTICALLY MADE OF WATER MYSELF.

**FWISH**

HONESTLY, THERE ARE A LOT OF MYSTERIES ABOUT ME THAT I DON'T HAVE THE ANSWERS TO YET.

THE ONLY THING I REALLY KNOW FOR SURE ABOUT MY ABILITY TO MANIPULATE WATER...

...IS THAT IT IS SO AWESOME.

I'M ASPEN MATTHEWS.

I'VE MADE MY SHARE OF MISTAKES. WHO HASN'T?

BUT ONCE IN A WHILE-- TODAY FOR EXAMPLE-- I GET IT RIGHT.



SO, CAN I CALL YOU SOMETIME?

AGAIN, NO.

C'MON ROMEO, LETS GET THAT ARM TREATED.

WATER? REALLY?  
WHO ATTACKS SOMEONE WITH WATER?



WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

HM?



DON'T THINK ANYTHING YOU DID HERE EXCUSES YOUR RECENT PAST, YOUNG LADY.

I WANT TO REPLY, BUT WHAT DO I SAY?

"SORRY" DOESN'T SEEM NEARLY ENOUGH.

SO I SAY NOTHING.



YOU HURT A LOT OF PEOPLE-- YOU AND THE REST OF YOUR KIND.

IT WAS WAR. I GET IT.

BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST STAY UNDERWATER WHERE YOU BELONG!

WHERE I BELONG?



THAT'S ONE WAY  
OF PUTTING IT.

BUT HONESTLY— DO  
I TRULY "BELONG"  
ANYWHERE? DOES  
ANYONE?

YES, I WAS BORN HERE BENEATH  
THE WAVES. THE DAUGHTER OF  
TWO ANCIENT RACES... THE BLUE  
AND THE BLACK.

BUT I WAS RAISED  
ABOVE. AS A HUMAN.



I THINK LIKE  
THEY DO.

LISTEN TO ME—  
LIKE I NEED TO  
JUSTIFY MY  
HUMANITY.

TO WHO?  
ME?

THE ONLY THING I  
KNOW FOR SURE?

I HAVE TO STOP WITH THE  
INTERNAL MONOLOGUES.

IT'S NOT  
HEALTHY.





**THE UNIVERSITY OF OCEANIC STUDIES, MIAMI, FLORIDA.**

THAT FEELS BETTER.

BUT SWIMMING AT A HUNDRED KNOTS IS GOING TO CLEAR ANYONE'S HEAD.

IT'S BEEN NEARLY A MONTH SINCE I SET FOOT ON LAND AFTER WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THE COAST GUARD AND I.\*

HELL, THERE ARE SMALL BUT VOCAL MINORITIES THAT THINK OF ME AS A WAR CRIMINAL.

AND IF I WAS ON THE SIDE THAT LOST? WHO'S TO SAY I WOULDN'T FEEL THE SAME WAY.

\*SEE FATHOM VOLUMES TWO AND THREE FOR MORE DETAILS!



CAN I BE BLAMED FOR BEING NERVOUS ABOUT COMING HERE TODAY?

WHEN I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT?

ASPEN MATTHEWS?



HELLO, YOU ARE--?

JUDITH BANYASKI, I'M A STUDENT HERE-- ASSIGNED TO SHOW YOU AROUND TODAY.

I BROUGHT YOU A CHANGE OF CLOTHES, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T WANT TO DO YOUR GUEST LECTURE IN A BIKINI.

WHICH, PERSONALLY, I THINK WOULD BE HOT.

HA. I LIKE THIS ONE ALREADY.



LIFE BENEATH THE SURFACE IS A LOT LESS... SPITEFUL, I GUESS IS THE WORD.

EVEN THE FOOD CHAIN BEING WHAT IT IS-- WHO EATS WHOM, CIRCLE OF LIFE-- THERE IS AN ORDER TO THE OCEAN THAT DOESN'T EXIST HERE.

A RESPECT.



SOMETIMES I WONDER, WHY I BOTHER WITH--

ASPEN?



COLLIN, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

LET'S JUST SAY IT'S BEEN LONG ENOUGH THAT YOU FORGOT YOU CALLED ME ONE OF YOUR LAZIEST STUDENTS. EVER.

WELL, YOU WERE A FRESHMAN AND I WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT, SO THAT MEANS ABOUT--

HA HA-- I NEVER SAID ANY SUCH THING.

I SAID YOUR HEAD WAS OFTEN IN THE CLOUDS.

CLOSE, YOU WERE ONLY OFF BY ABOUT THIRTY THOUSAND LEAGUES.



BUT SERIOUSLY, ASPEN, I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE HEADLINES.

THIS HAS BEEN ONE HECK OF A YEAR, YOU OKAY?

IT TOOK ME A WHILE, BUT...

YEAH, I'M FINE NOW.

DR. MATTHEWS, DR. WORETH?

THE LECTURE BEGINS IN FIVE.

