



AH, JUST IN TIME. THANK YOU, MA'AM.



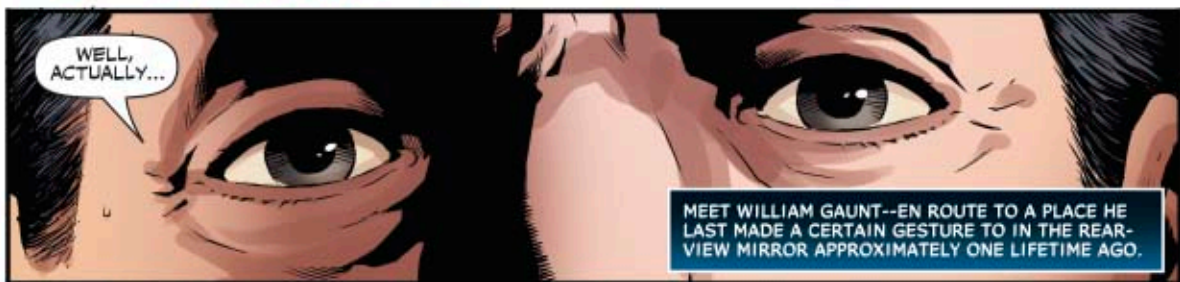
IN TIME FOR WHAT, MISTER GAUNT?

FOR ME TO CONTINUE CHAIN-DRINKING UNINTERRUPTED.



OH, I SEE.

WE'RE BOTH PROFESSIONALS. KEEP AN EYE ON ME, MISS. I'M TRUSTING YOU WITH AN IMPORTANT TASK.





SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

"STUMBLING DISTANCE" PART I



NOTHING LEFT?

SORRY, SON, BUSY WEEKEND. HOLIDAY COMING UP.

THAT WHAT YOU'RE IN TOWN FOR?



NO, JUST A BOOK-SIGNING AT A STORE. I SHOULD BE GONE BY THE TIME PEOPLE START WITH THE GIFTS AND THE NOG.

A BOOK YOU WROTE?



DON'T TELL ANYONE.

DON'T YOU TELL ANYONE. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MISTER GAUNT. AND I'VE READ YOUR BOOKS.



WELL, IN THAT CASE, I WOULDN'T RENT TO ME, EITHER, MISTER...

DAMON. SOME PRETTY DARK STUFF, I GOTTA SAY. DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHERE IT COMES FROM.

WHAT IF I SAID IT WAS FROM *HERE*?

