

**NOW.**

So yeah:  
Prison.  
I am in it.

And for those of you  
who keep track of  
these things--yeah,  
I *KNOW* this isn't  
the first time!

And I get it,  
incarcerated once,  
maybe it's the system.  
Twice, the problem  
is probably you--

Thing is, I like  
to think I'm  
a good guy!

Don't get me  
wrong, I've made  
my share of mistakes.  
But my heart is in the  
right place, my mom  
always said!

So how does this  
keep happening  
to me? Well,  
one theory--





**THEN.**

--maybe I'm too trusting.

I DON'T LIKE THIS, SMITH. I THINK WE SHOULD GO.

OH, RELAX, GRIZ! EVERYTHING WILL BE JUST FINE. IT'S ONLY A MEETING-- IT'S JUST A COURTESY!

STUFF ANOTHER COUPLE OF THOSE SCONES IN YOUR SUIT. THIS GOES SOUTH, I DON'T WANNA WALK OUT OF HERE EMPTY-HANDED.

WHY COULDN'T WE TELL SCOTT WE'RE HERE, THOUGH?

BECAUSE MR. LANG IS OUR EMPLOYER, GRIZ. AND AS OUR EMPLOYER, HE WOULD NO DOUBT FROWN ON US SEEKING *OTHER OPPORTUNITIES*.

TRUST ME, ONE TIME I MOONLIGHTED FOR BARON VON STRUCKER WHILE I WAS WORKING FOR THE RED SKULL--YOU WOULD NOT *BELIEVE* HOW UGLY IT GOT.

I WAS LIKE, "WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? YOU'RE BOTH EVIL NAZIS--DOES IT REALLY MATTER WHO IMPOSES GLOBAL FASCISM FIRST?"

BUT I LIKE THE JOB I GOT. I GET TO BEAT PEOPLE UP SOMETIMES AND DON'T EVEN HAVE TO GO TO JAIL FOR IT!

AH, THE AMERICAN DREAM. LOOK, I LIKE THE JOB JUST FINE, TOO--EVEN IF IT IS SOMEWHAT BENEATH ME. BUT THE PAY!

MY YEARS IN TERRORISM, I'VE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO A CERTAIN "BOND VILLAIN LIFESTYLE." AND NO BOND VILLAIN HAS EVER HAD TO ASSEMBLE HIS OWN FUTON.

SO WHEN I WAS CONTACTED ABOUT THIS LITTLE OPPORTUNITY, I THOUGHT, HEY, WHY NOT? I CAN AT LEAST HEAR THE NICE GENTLEMEN OUT--

BUT THEY'RE *NOT* NICE!

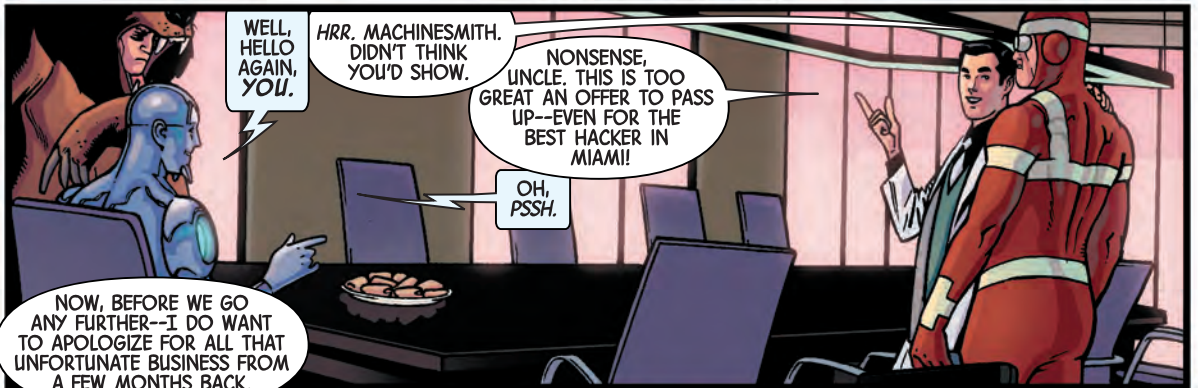
SAY NOW, YOU DON'T KNOW THAT--





--WE HARDLY EVEN KNOW EACH OTHER!

PLEASE, DON'T GET UP--I'M AUGUSTINE CROSS, THIS IS MY UNCLE CROSSFIRE.



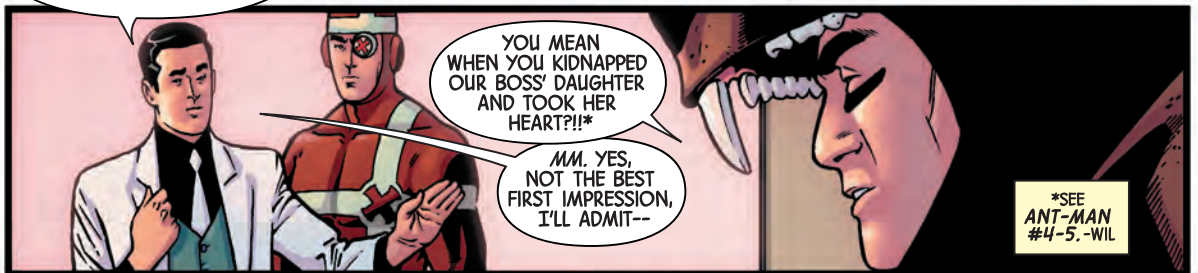
WELL, HELLO AGAIN, YOU.

HRR. MACHINESMITH. DIDN'T THINK YOU'D SHOW.

NONSENSE, UNCLE. THIS IS TOO GREAT AN OFFER TO PASS UP--EVEN FOR THE BEST HACKER IN MIAMI!

OH, PSSH.

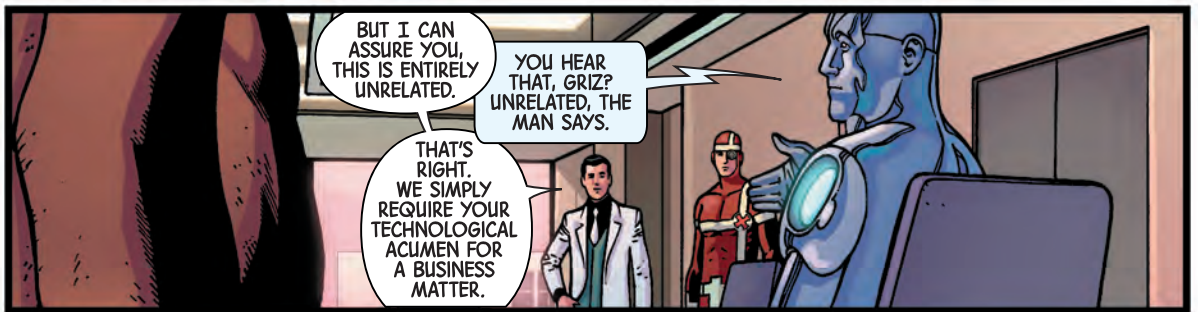
NOW, BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER--I DO WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THAT UNFORTUNATE BUSINESS FROM A FEW MONTHS BACK.



YOU MEAN WHEN YOU KIDNAPPED OUR BOSS' DAUGHTER AND TOOK HER HEART?!\*

MM. YES, NOT THE BEST FIRST IMPRESSION, I'LL ADMIT--

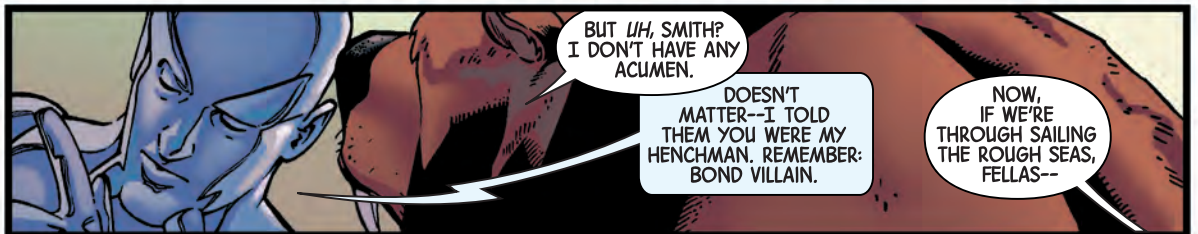
\*SEE ANT-MAN #4-5. -WIL



BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU, THIS IS ENTIRELY UNRELATED.

YOU HEAR THAT, GRIZ? UNRELATED, THE MAN SAYS.

THAT'S RIGHT. WE SIMPLY REQUIRE YOUR TECHNOLOGICAL ACUMEN FOR A BUSINESS MATTER.



BUT UH, SMITH? I DON'T HAVE ANY ACUMEN.

DOESN'T MATTER--I TOLD THEM YOU WERE MY HENCHMAN. REMEMBER: BOND VILLAIN.

NOW, IF WE'RE THROUGH SAILING THE ROUGH SEAS, FELLAS--





--LET'S GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS, SHALL WE?

I AGREE--  
IN TERMS OF  
THE NUMBER--

SMITH,  
YOU CAN'T  
REALLY BE DOIN'  
THIS! THESE GUYS  
TRIED TO KILL  
SCOTT--

ACTUALLY,  
THAT WAS MY  
FATHER. BUT  
QUIBBLING  
ASIDE--



PERHAPS *THIS* WILL  
SUFFICE FOR AN  
APOLOGY?

WHOA...

AND YOU  
CAN KEEP THE  
BRIEFCASE! NOBODY  
EVER MENTIONS  
THAT.



AND ON  
TOP OF ALL  
THIS--I'M PREPARED  
TO CEDE TO YOUR  
DEMAND FROM  
OUR CALL,  
MR. SMITH--

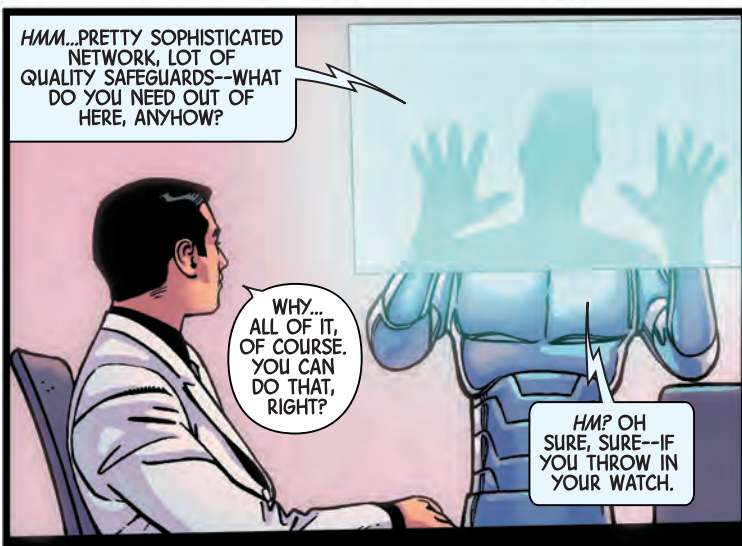
--AND SWEAR  
IN WRITING THAT  
OUR COMPANY WILL  
NEVER AGAIN SEEK TO  
DO ANY HARM TO  
SCOTT LANG OR HIS  
LITTLE GIRL.

SEE, GRIZ?  
AND YOU THOUGHT  
I DIDN'T CARE! I DID  
IT FOR HIM! THAT'S  
CALLED **ALTRUISM**.  
YOU KNOW, THEY  
ALWAYS SAY THAT KIND  
OF KINDNESS IS ITS  
OWN REWARD--



BUT IT'S NICE  
WHEN IT ALSO  
COMES WITH  
A **REWARD**  
REWARD.

WONDERFUL!  
IT SOUNDS LIKE  
WE HAVE A DEAL THEN.  
SHALL WE HAVE A  
LOOK AT OUR  
TARGET?



HMM...PRETTY SOPHISTICATED  
NETWORK, LOT OF  
QUALITY SAFEGUARDS--WHAT  
DO YOU NEED OUT OF  
HERE, ANYHOW?

WHY...  
ALL OF IT,  
OF COURSE.  
YOU CAN  
DO THAT,  
RIGHT?

HM? OH  
SURE, SURE--IF  
YOU THROW IN  
YOUR WATCH.



SMITH, THIS THING HE'S ASKING YOU  
TO DO--IT'S ILLEGAL, RIGHT? LIKE, WE  
COULD GET ARRESTED?

->SIGH< RELAX,  
GRIZZLY--



"--NOBODY'S GOING BACK TO PRISON!"

Free as a bird! That's me these days. Or, you know, free as a flying ant.

You're probably thinking, "Scott--how many flying ants are there anyhow?"

What matters right now is I've got a hot new lead on a job for my burgeoning little security company! And it couldn't have come at a better time--

I know Griz and Smith are getting a little tired of the office kitchen being stocked with nothing but ramen and Tang. I didn't even know they still made that stuff!\*

\*THEY DON'T.

Yes sir, feeling optimistic!

I mean, sure, my daughter still hates me for not being around as much as I used to be.\*

\*AT ALL.

But I'm only trying to keep her safe!

And, sure, my boss is still fuming over what went down at the museum last week\*--

\*SIXTEEN MILLION DOLLARS IN PROPERTY DAMAGE, THREE PENDING LAWSUITS.

But that Whirlwind guy came out of nowhere! That's what super villains do!

So yeah, I may have my doubters--

--but I don't believe in giving up. Every day is a chance to turn things around, right?

You can't just expect all your problems to disappear, like--

MAGIC!