

.....image comics presents:

The Black Monday Murders.....[01]

Jonathan Hickman | Tomm Coker.....August 2016

(a) (b)

(c) (d) (e)



(image comics presents:)

A STORY OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

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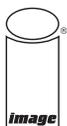


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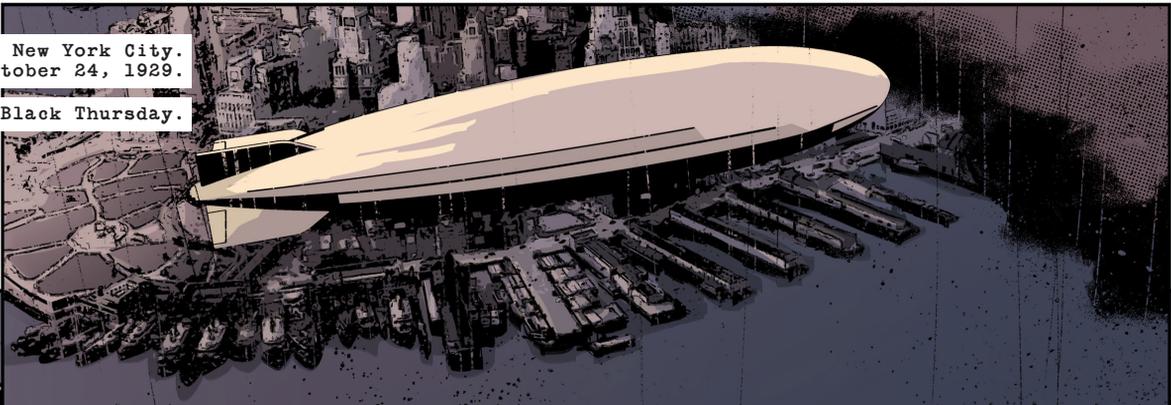
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1929

- THE CRASH -

New York City.
October 24, 1929.
Black Thursday.



The New York
Stock Exchange.
9:42 a.m.



Caina
Investment Bank.

10:24 a.m.

Your tea, Mister
Ackermann, and the
early report
from the trading
floor.

Would
you like a
bit of brunch
as well?

No, thank
you, Robert.
This is
fine.

Wait...

Are these
correct?

I'm
afraid
so, sir.
Portends to
be quite a
day.

Perhaps, but losing
your nerve before
lunch is simply bad
practice...

Like buying high, or
counting coin before
the market's
close.

Yes. *Of
course, sir.*
Never good to
press one's
luck.



Hrmp!

Unlike my
partners, I've
earned everything
I have with my
own two hands,
Robert.

I found the
climb perilous,
as not once has
fortune seen
fit to favor
me.

So,
luck?...



Luck has
nothing to
do...
with...



U U O



Seventy-four. Seventy-four a share.

Come on. Seventy-two. I've got GM for...

Fo--



U U U



Are you sure I can't help, sir?

You're bleeding quite a bit... Perhaps I should call for a doctor.



It's not me, you damned fool...



It's the money.



I see the blood -- I know it's real.

But can you tell? Is this a correction or worse?

Are there more signs? Are there other omens?

Well, you're leaking like a stuck pig, my boy. How's that for an omen?

We have five hours and thirty-three minutes until the market closes.

Which would make this the earliest incident since the foundation of the Exchange.

I'm sorry, Charles. Just look at you. It's a crash.

Can't be anything else.

Do we have any flexibility here?

☹☹☹





Then it can't be helped.

Mister Bischoff, please tell the traders to start with the brokers. Seniority applies, of course.

You can't...



You made a deal. We all did. We traded one thing for another and got rich doing so.

But all that power -- all that money -- can't buy our way out of the original transaction.



We pay what we owe. It just so happens that today you're the one sitting in the Stone Chair. So you lie in the balance.

Are you ready, old friend?



Go to hell.



Not before you, Charles.



And you...not alone.

FSHWZZZ!



A dramatic comic book illustration showing a man in a dark suit and light shirt falling from a high-rise building. He has a shocked expression with wide eyes and an open mouth. His arms are outstretched. Numerous sheets of paper are flying through the air around him. The background consists of the skeletal structure of a skyscraper under construction, with a blue and grey color palette. The overall style is high-contrast and detailed.

Tomorrow, the day after,
or even years from now,
when the people are trying
to understand the cause
of what came to be...



They'll tell stories of
the once well-monied,
who gambled and lost.
Reckless men who leapt
to their deaths,
unwilling to face
their failure and what
was to follow.

The people will believe
these stories. As in
the aftermath, they,
too, will have lost
everything.



But it won't
be real. It won't
be what *actually*
happened.



You see, part of
what makes it magic
is the illusion...



And, oh how
the poor love
the lie.

DEATH MARCH

A business term describing the often futile practice of increasing the number of employees working on a project in the hopes of achieving an unlikely goal.

Commonly referred to as 'throwing bodies at the problem.'

(www.forums.investorscoven.com/threads/why-so-many.80872/#post-1899332)

Here's the thing, I think it's getting easier everyday to rewrite history. Not because people are more gullible, or a failure of education, but because, basically, the truth has become an easy mark.

(And look, I'm not referring to urban legends that reinforce the fringe, like staged moon landings or men on the grassy knoll. I'm talking about lies that get repeated often enough by 'respected sources' that they become accepted truth.)

Which brings me to my plan. I know this is shitty, and kinda evil, but I think it's something we could do and probably make some money. I've even talked to a friend of a friend who works at an investment bank and she said they'd probably be interested in funding something like this. Anyway, here's the thing:

I want to make a website where people can go to fact-check supposed urban legends. I want it to appear to be completely aboveboard. Open-source documentation, superusers who can edit articles, etc. We'll literally traffic in openness and the truth.

Except when we don't. When we want a lie to become the other thing, we'll disseminate that lie through the site. Because our reputation is perfect, and above reproach, people will believe us. I think something like that has real value, and I think some people would pay a premium.

It's like that Mark Twain quote, "A lie can travel halfway around the globe before the truth puts on its shoes." Except, you know, it wasn't him that said it, and this time it's both things.

So what do you guys think?

(www.thetruthisoutthere.com/debunked/1929-wall-street-suicides/)

CLAIM: In the Stock Market Crash of 1929, did Wall Street investors jump off buildings?

THIS CLAIM IS: FALSE

This urban legend gained most of its traction from the attributed quote below. When he was visiting New York, Winston Churchill was awakened by the noise of a crowd outside the Savoy-Plaza Hotel the day after Black Tuesday. He wrote:

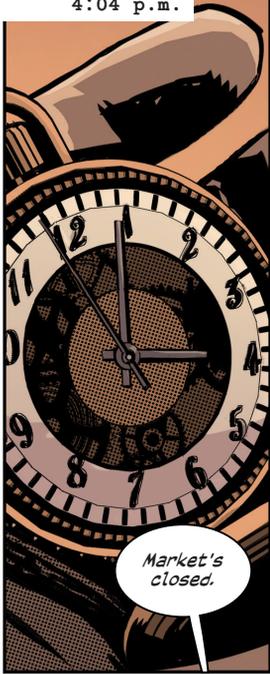
"Under my very window a gentleman cast himself down fifteen storeys and was dashed to pieces, causing a wild commotion and the arrival of the fire brigade."

Unfortunately, Churchill had mistaken a window washer for a stockbroker as later verified by his obituary.

See other examples.

Caina
Investment Bank.

4:04 p.m.



Market's
closed.



Down twelve
percent. How did
we not see this
coming?

How did
you miss it,
Milton?



I don't know.
Perhaps I was
looking in the
wrong
direction.



Be it the way
I was pointed
or not. How
bad are our
losses?



It cost us every Broker in
the firm. Worse, toward
the end there, the junior
partners had to start
throwing out
Traders.

I would call our
losses, at best,
unimaginable.

But are they
irrecoverable?

It'll be close...
but, no. We'll make
it. We've paid in
full, and unlike
the market, our
position is
stabilized.



The early word
from the runners
is that Whitney
and the charlatans
at the other
banks are making
strategic buys.
Trying to firm
things up.

He made
a bid for
U.S. Steel.
Who knows...
maybe it'll
work.



It won't. The
greater scales
remain unbalanced.
The damage is
systemic. This
was just the
first day.

Now the
sickness will
spread.



Well, I don't give a damn if they drown in it. All that matters is this institution, and that we are made whole.

How do we proceed?

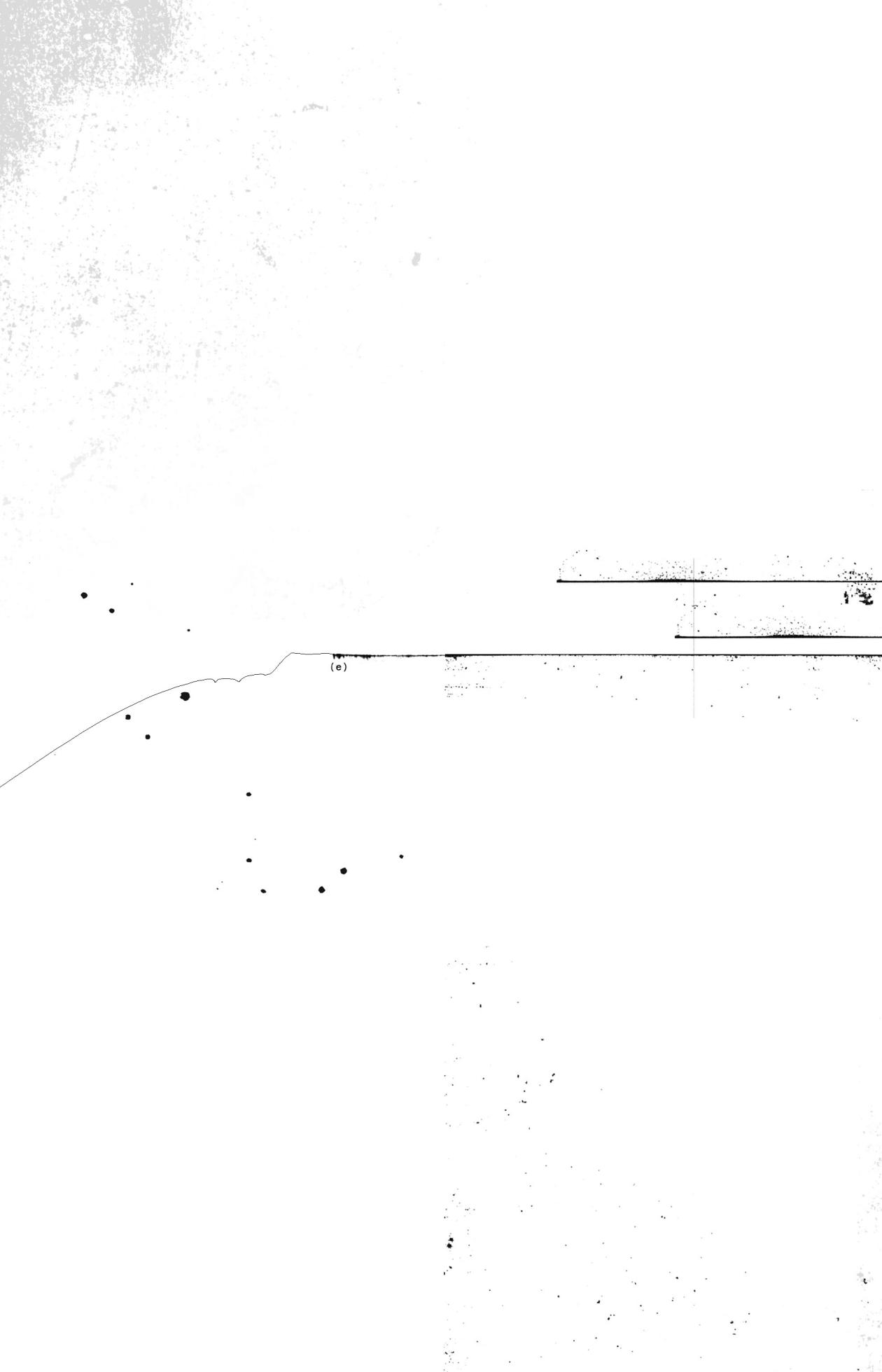
First comes the great flood and the loss of faith in the market.

Then they will panic, Mister Bischoff. And panic always produces a bottom.

Watch. They will all sell. They always sell. And when the time comes -- when they can be had for pennies -- we will buy it all.



- ALL HAIL GOD MAMMON -



(e)

(a)

(image comics presents:)

(b,c,d)

THE BLACK MONDAY
MURDERS

CHAPTER ONE....

(a,b,c,d)



Western Schools of Economics

Western schools are defined by their traditional four-pillar foundational framework and shared/rotating power structure. While these characteristics are also commonly associated with both the Hyperpyron and Nomisma sects of European schools, the Protestant-Catholic stratagem conducted for centuries by the Black Popes of Rome have successfully prevented unification of these institutions.

Notable Academies:

Post-Tudor Consolidation:

Barclays (1690)
BOE (1694)
Lloyds (1765)

Post-Expansion:

BNY (1784)
J.P. Morgan (1799)
State Street (1792)
Citi (1812)
Caina (1857)
Goldman Sachs (1869)

(October 24, 1929)

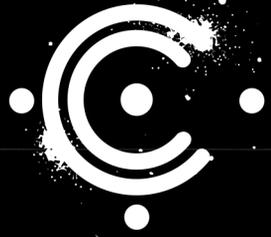
- (a)  [Fyr | The Watcher].....BISCHOFF
- (b)  [Aer | The Ascendant Seat].....ROTHSCHILD
- (c)  [Water | The Scales].....DOMINIC
- (d)  [Eorthe | The Stone Chair].....ACKERMANN

The Four Pillars of Caina

Based on a rotating twelve-year schedule, the board members of Caina spend three years at each station per cycle. Partial terms do occur and are most commonly attributed to either death or leave of absence.

In 1989, the board members of Caina permanently relinquished the Stone Chair to the Kankrin Troika during the Caina-Kankrin merger. A sabbatical replaced the three year Stone Chair term normally served by Caina members. The Kankrin Troika also lobbied for a seasonal portion of the Watcher's functions, which was granted but with generational conditions.*

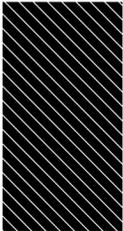
*Must be renegotiated upon the passing of a board member if that member is currently holding the Watcher position.



CAINA INVESTMENT BANK
Founded 1857

Board Structure as
of January 1, 1929

(a)

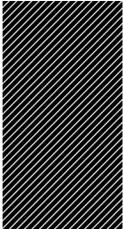


J.W. BISCHOFF
[Fyr | The Watcher]

A trader and a teacher. Measures the coming and going of the gifted.



(b)

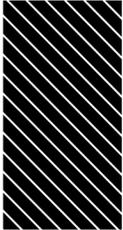


MILTON ROTHSCHILD
[Aer | The Ascendant Seat]

The spear. The voice of Mammon on the Caina board. The de facto head of the Academy. The Ascendant Seat may cast a second vote to break a tie.



(c)



RAYMOND DOMINIC
[Water | The Scales]

Works with the Ascendant Seat to gauge volatility in the market.

Has the ability to perceive 'balance.'



(d)



CHARLES ACKERMANN
[Eorthe | The Stone Chair]

The sacrificial altar. The blood price.

The one who pays when Mammon takes his portion.



STONE CHAIR HOLDERS
FROM 1929 TO PRESENT



Charles Ackermann
(1929)
Gloria Ackermann
(1929-1931)

J.W. Bischoff
(1932-1934)

Milton Rothschild
(1935-1937)

Raymond Dominic
(1938-1940)

Gloria Ackermann
(1941-1943)

J.W. Bischoff
(1944-1945)

Hannah Bischoff
(1945-1946)

Milton Rothschild
(1947-1949)

Raymond Dominic
(1950-1952)

Patrick Ackermann
(1953-1955)

Hannah Bischoff
(1956-1958)

Milton Rothschild
(1959-1961)

THE DOMINIC
SLAUGHTER

Raymond Dominic.....1962
Piers Dominic...1962-1963
Alastair Dominic.....1963
Annabel Dominic.....1963
Hugh Dominic.....1963
Isla Dominic-Day.....1963
Duncan Dominic.....1963
Callum Dominic.....1963
Thad Dominic...1963-1964

Cynthia
Ackermann-Bane
(1965-1967)

Raven Bischoff
(1968-1970)

Milton Rothschild
(1971-1973)

Thad Dominic
(1974-1976)

Wynn Ackermann
(1977-1979)

Raven Bischoff
(1980)
Beatrice Bischoff
(1980-1982)

Daniel Rothschild
Grigoria Rothschild
(1983-1985)

Marco Dominic
(1986-1988)

Wynn Ackermann
(1989)

KANKRIN TROIKA
(1989-current)





2016

- THE SECOND SIN -

New York City.
October 31, 2016.



1st Precinct.
NYPD.

10:12 a.m.



**KNOCK
KNOCK**



We got a body, Theo.



Time to get back to work.



Really?

Thought I was riding a desk until things blew over.



Yeah, well... the location bothers me. It's Nassau and John. The Trair Building overlooking the Financial District. I have people there already, but...

Do me a favor and check it out. See if it's one of yours.

I don't know what that means, Captain.

And yet...



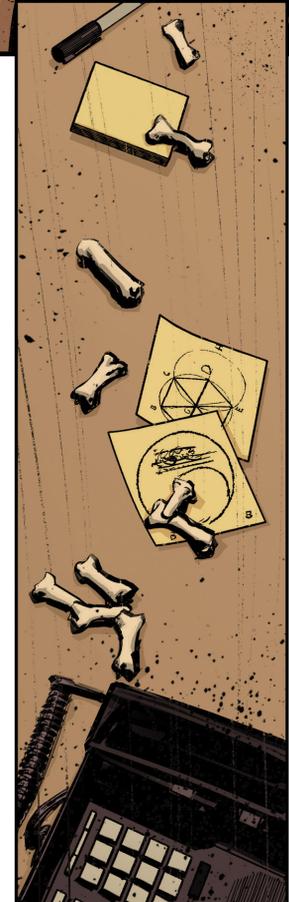
Okay. And if it is? One of mine?

Then do your job, detective.



Just this once, Pappy. Talk to me.

DAKA.
DAKA.
DAKA.



All right, then.



16 Ericsson Place
New York, NY, 10013-2411

Precinct: (212) 334-0611
Community Affairs: (212) 334-0640
Crime Prevention: (212) 334-0603
Domestic Violence: (212) 334-0618
Youth Officer: (212) 334-0618
Auxiliary Coordinator: (212) 334-0618
Detective Squad: (212) 334-0618



| | |
|-------|------------------------|
| NAME: | THEODORE JAMES DUMAS |
| SEX: | MALE |
| AGE: | 47 |
| DOB: | 03/27/1969 |
| SS#: | 250-71-9822 |
| RANK: | DETECTIVE, FIRST-GRADE |

SUPPLEMENTARY COMPLAINT REPORT

Complainant's name: [REDACTED]

Complainant's address: [REDACTED]

Incident date: August 16, 2016
Incident location: [REDACTED]

Subject: INTERVIEW OF [REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED] stopped the car and got out [REDACTED] approached, the victim [REDACTED] firing five or six shots [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED] before the detective shot the man, she believed she heard him say something like, "I see you," or "I can see you." The victim smiled at him and then the detective shot [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]

Caina-Kankrin
Investment Bank.

10:29 a.m.



You cannot change a thing into what it is not.

Which is why you want to be aggressive. For it is the defining characteristic of the market.

Understand?
Good.

Now, I want to leave you with one final thing to consider before we are done here today.

This company, like any other, has an institutional history. There is what came before, and what you see now.

We started as two separate entities. Caina was of the Western school, and Kankrin was of the East. When the Berlin Wall fell, most people spoke of that event in terms of liberty, reunification, or the end of communism.

But what it truly marked was the birth of a global market. An inevitable single financial reality which, with each passing day, comes closer to being realized.

And we saw it first.

Caina-Kankrin was a union a decade ahead of its time. An institution that is the embodiment of the aggression that defines the market, and why we are now the largest investment bank in the world.

Of course, there are some who would describe our company in less flattering terms.



They call us predators. A contagion. A cancer... But pay them no mind. These are the dying words of weak men. In this place we deal only in power.

Okay. I'll take a few questions if you have them.



You. Go ahead.



Any advice on what we should be looking out for? Failures that are frequently made or obvious mistakes to avoid?

Most of what you will experience in your first six months here will be intentionally remedial.



Petty coin in a controlled environment because you have not yet earned the right to wager more.



Hold out your hand.



But I suppose, if you have the ears to hear it, I could offer you something for the days ahead of you.



How did...



The one you started with. The one you're paying for. The one for profit.



Remember this.



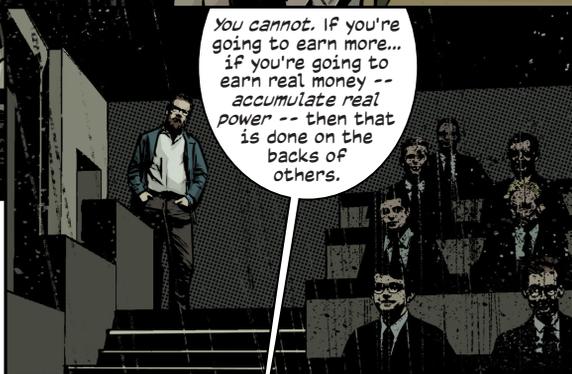
So, you want real advice? Here it is.



The first million dollars you make is self-financed. You earn it with your own blood. The cost is your health, your family, your friends.

You pay, understand?

The most common mistake is believing that you can accrue *even more* by continuing this behavior.



You cannot. If you're going to earn more... if you're going to earn real money -- *accumulate real power* -- then that is done on the backs of others.



Call them workers, call them proles, even call them slaves. *I do not care.* Just know, it is they who you will sacrifice for gain.

This sounds callous, I know.



But you're going to learn very quickly how insignificant the rules you have lived by truly are.

What we do falls outside all societal norms...

This is the older pact. *Man's very first trade.*



I can't tell if you're joking or not...

I mean, there are laws.

People go to jail all the time for insider trading, collusion... embezzlement.



Those things do exist, but...

That is for them.



I don't follow.



A great deal of planning has brought us to where we find ourselves today...



It would be a mistake to think regional laws and other complications supersede... inevitability.



Look. I wanna be rich. I admit it. I want the car, the house, the whole show...



But the idea that some global financial whatever exists independent of public and political accountability seems... naive. At best.

Public opinion matters. Government regulations matter.



Young man...

We finance culture. We buy entire nations.



But even that is just manifestation... it's not real power.

No. It doesn't even hint at the deeper lure. But I won't be sharing that with any of you today.



For you have not yet earned it.



Okay. We are done. Go Now.



You look like a storm, my friend.



The purpose of a *guest lecturer* is to advise those I am molding.

One could argue, however, that too much honesty makes the clay *less malleable*.

You could have shown some restraint, Viktor.



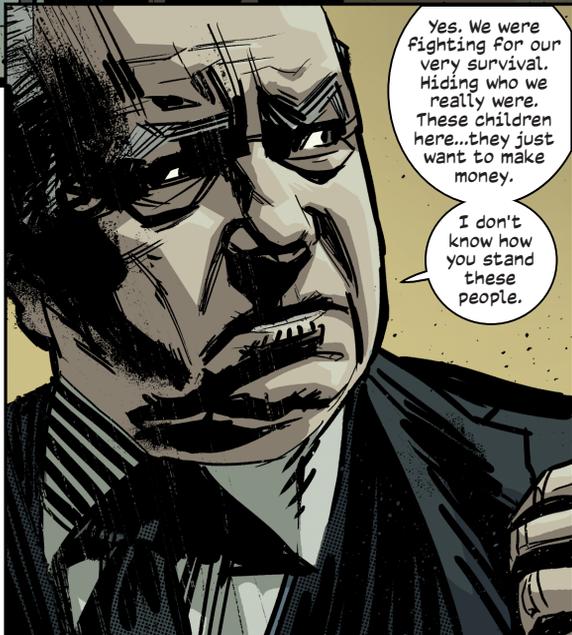
If the truth would kill a man, Alexi...then that man must die.



You have, what, sixty students this semester? And in one year, ten of them, probably fewer, will have eliminated -- *consumed* -- the balance of their class.

Delicacy is wasted on blunt instruments.

Times change. Methodologies evolve. It's different from when you and I were their age.



Yes. We were fighting for our very survival. Hiding who we really were. These children here...they just want to make money.

I don't know how you stand these people.



Oh, I appreciate the absence of duplicity. I always found all that dancing around we did in Moscow tiresome.



Not sure I believe you, Alexi. I remember your Troika.

What is it that really troubles you?



I have just come from an emergency meeting of the board.

Something has happened.

What?

There has been a murder...



The Wheel is broken.



Are you sure, Alexi?



Yes. It happened at one of our properties. The police are there now, but they called us first.

The board has...issued orders. I leave shortly for the airport.



They suspect you? I cannot believe...

But then why else would they send you away?



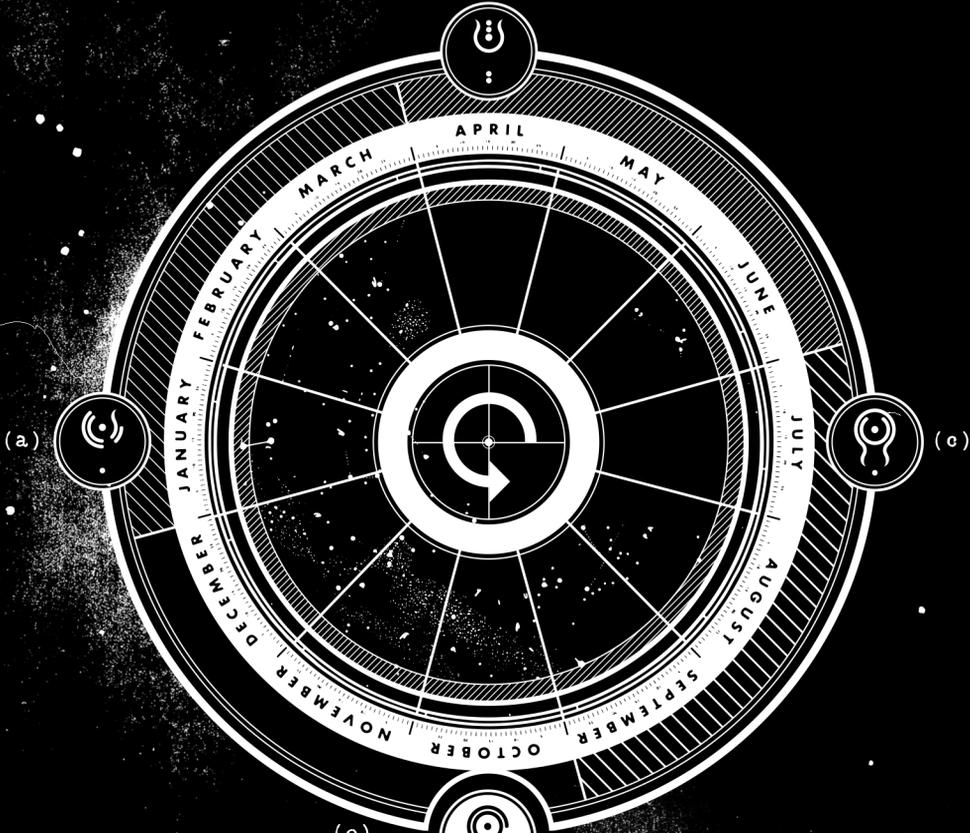
That's the thing...

They're not sending me anywhere, Viktor. I have to pick someone up.

It seems Grigoria Rothschild has been called home.

CAINA

(b)



KANKRIN



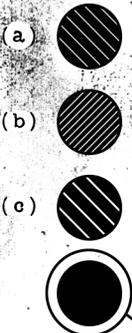
(d)

(f)

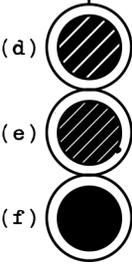
THE WATCHER

THE ASCENDANT
SEAT

THE SCALES



THE STONE
CHAIR



VIKTOR ERESKO

ALEXI MALKIN



The Train Building.

10:42 a.m.

Detective Dumas?

Uh-huh.

Follow me...

Only access to the penthouse is by private elevator or emergency stairs, both of which we've locked down. Crime scene guys and the other detectives are already working.

So who found the body?

Maid working in the apartment below called the super, who called building security, and now we're here.

Seems the victim's blood was seeping through the floor to the ceiling. Raining blood. Some truly biblical shit, sir.

That was frogs.

Sir?

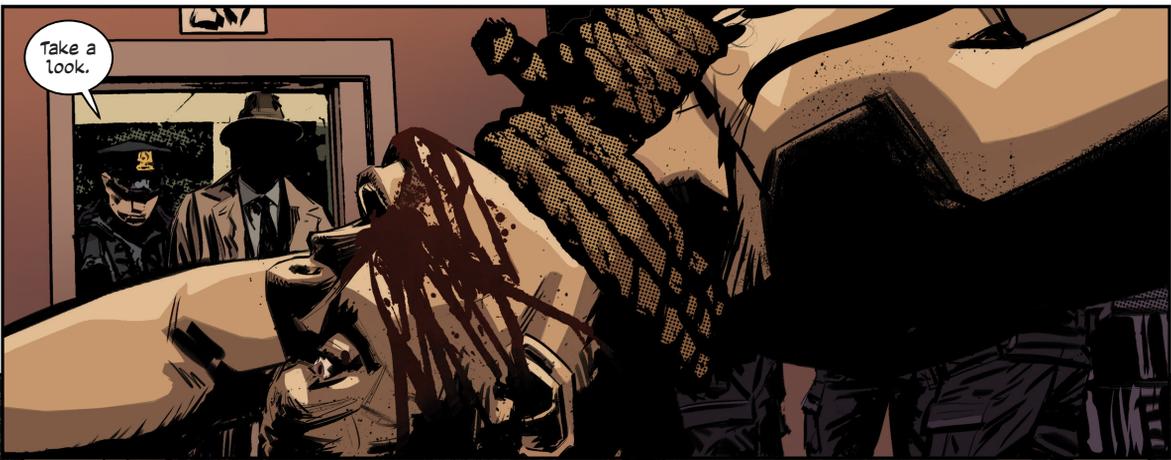
In the Bible, the rivers turned to blood. What rained down were frogs. This? This just sounds like gravity.

Anything else I should know before we get up there?

Overheard the other detectives talking. They were saying something about the scene being staged.

And why would they think that?

45
PH
DING



Take a look.



Talk to the building manager yet?

I did. Security footage is going to take a little more work.

We got a murder, and they're giving you a hard time?

Red tape.
The management company operating the building also runs three others. Apparently, each building's on-site cameras dump their footage to off-site storage.

It's a secondary location, and they're choking on tenant NDAs. They want a warrant before they'll even consider letting us have a look.



So they need a little show.



Yeah.

We might get it later today, but probably it'll be tomorrow morning.



All right. What about the room? Who owns the place?

It's a corporate box. Security said various people are in and out of here all the time.

Multinationals being multinational. I also got the impression they're paid not to ask too many questions...

But the name on the lease is something called Hydan Holdings.



Okay.

So, no ID. No nothing.

Not even a hint...

All right, pal. Who are you?



It's Daniel Rothschild.



...
Hello, Theo.



Does the Captain know you're out and about?

Captain sent me.



So you're back?

It would seem so.



Back from where?



You're new, Detective Moreno, so you may not have heard, but Theo here has solved quite a few unsolvable cases over the past couple of years.

His methods are... unorthodox to put it mildly, but, well, he gets the job done. So we all tended to look the other way until he got out of his car one day last month and shot an unarmed civilian walking down the street.

Is he...



Dead? Absolutely. And what happened next? Was it 'so long detective, enjoy the rest of your shitty, short life in prison?' That's what we were all thinking until we searched the guy's apartment and found eight--

Eight and a half.

Excuse me. Eight and a half heads in the freezer, and his next victim tied to the bed.



Turns out murdering a serial killer in cold blood is one of those *gray areas* of law enforcement.



The Captain thinks he has a gift, some kinda special access to hidden knowledge. Me? I dunno...

So what is it, Theo?

What's your secret?



You want to know? Okay.

Here's what I got:



When all else fails, be good at your job.



For example: You're both New York City detectives working the Financial District.

Yet somehow, neither of you knows what the managing partner of the largest investment bank in the world looks like.



Even when his body is right there in front of you.

Instead of prison, you get suspended. And, apparently, for only about a month.

But you gotta wonder. How did he know? Just like, how did he somehow know who this rich guy was simply by walking in the room? I mean, no one's that lucky. *Right?*



All right. I'll tell the Captain I'm taking the case over when I get back to the station, but if you could finish things up here and stay on top of the security footage, that would be a big help.

Oh. And tell the forensic guys that after they take the body, I want the place sealed up tight. No one gets in until I come back this evening.

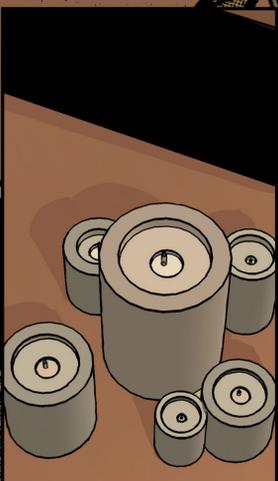


Why are you coming back tonight?

Because we're here too early.

Look at what's surrounding the body:

Three glasses. Six candles. Nine books. Twelve chess pieces.





It's a clock.

And Mister Rothschild is telling me to return here at eight. So that's when I'll be back.



Why eight?



It's what time is on the clock.

That's not what I...

Shut up, Moreno. What I mean is, why that time exactly?



Could be any number of reasons, but if I had to guess...

I'd bet it was the Nikkei.

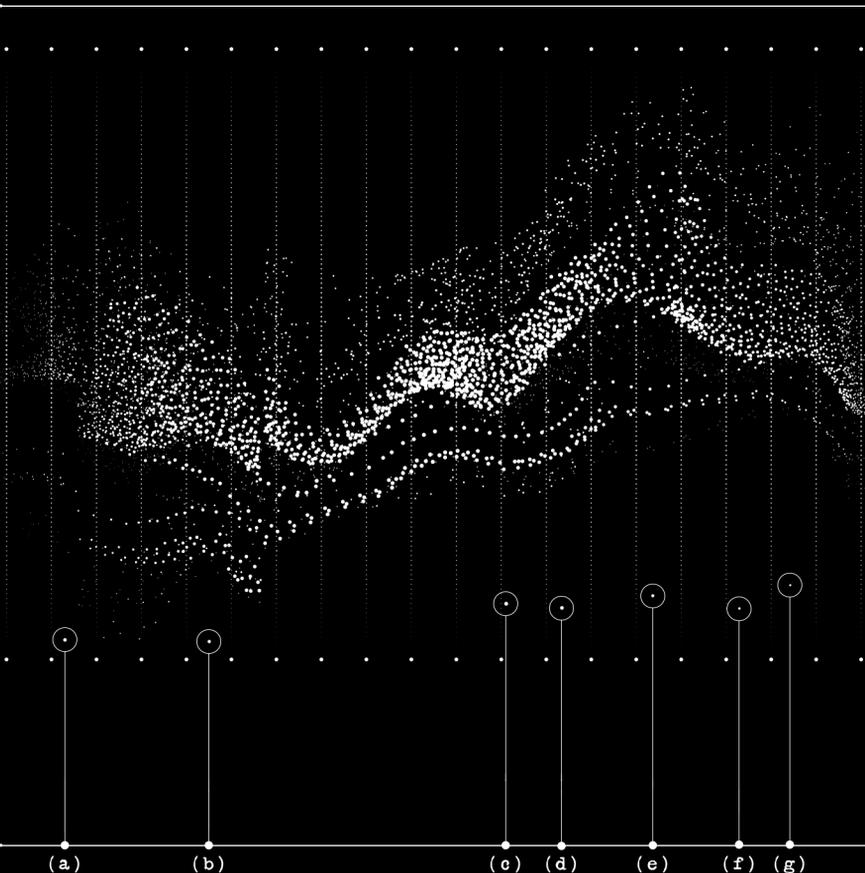


8 PM Eastern is when the Japanese stock market opens.

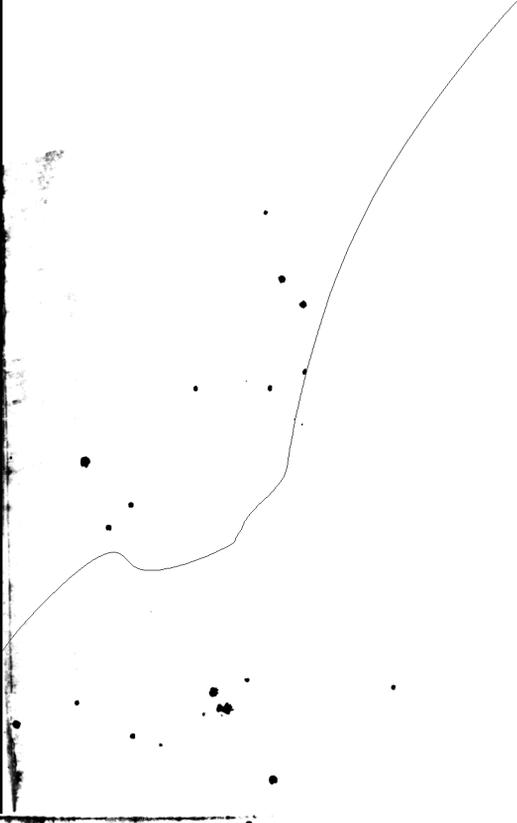
There's blood in the streets, detective...

It's the start of a brand new day of buying and selling.

NORTH AMERICAN STOCK MARKET CRASHES



- (a) 1907 | U.S. market panic.....October 14
- (b) 1929 | Wall Street CrashOctober 24
- (c) 1987 | Black Monday.....October 19
- (d) 1989 | Airline bailout mini-crash.....October 13
- (e) 1997 | Global mini-crash.....October 27
- (f) 2002 | Global downturn.....October 9
- (g) 2007 | Bear market of 2007-2009.....October 11



THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

Historically, almost all major and minor North American stock market crashes occur, or begin, in the month of October.

Prominent October market crashes have occurred in the years 1907, 1929, 1987, 1989, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

SAMHAIN

Samhain is celebrated from sunset on October 31st to sunset on November 1st.

While traditionally not celebrated by the Western Schools of Economics, the merger of the Caina and Kankrin Academies has resulted in the normalization of the Eastern School holiday. Samhain is now considered a Greater Sabbat of the North American Western School.

Of particular note is Samhain's occurrence at the midpoint of the autumn equinox and the winter solstice, during the monthlong Feast of Mammon, when the veil between this world and the the other is at its thinnest, and communion with God is possible.

NOVEMBER 1ST

The Market has never opened down on November 1st.

Teterboro
Airport.

5:36 p.m.

Welcome home,
Ms. Rothschild.

Hmm.

Okay. What
happened?

Of course
they didn't
tell you...

I don't
quite know
how...that
is, I'm sorry
to be the
one...

Daniel
is dead.



I know that. I felt it.

But that doesn't explain what happened...

Or why I'm here.



You've been recalled, Grigoria, because the board needs a new chairman.

The Rothschild seat remains ascendant, and now it returns to you, as your brother had no heirs.



Such is the risk one takes when trafficking in cock. You might want to keep that in mind, Alexi...

But I want to know how he died. If it was the money. Surely you have a hunch.



Intuition is a Western indulgence -- an extravagance. You wish to talk precursors? Resonance in after-market tremors? Okay. Good. This I can speak to. But a hunch?

You embarrass yourself, Grigoria.

Perhaps it would be best to let the Rothschild line end at your brother.



Well, you don't have that luxury, Alexi.

I happen to know that Wynn Ackermann has disappeared...

So you don't have anyone else to fill the seat. I'm your only option.



And unless you have grown to love exile, this opportunity is yours. Understand...

We expect compliance. We expect gratitude.



⓪⓪
: .

Now, Alexi. While it is possible I might choose to retake my rightful place at the table, it is a sure fucking certainty that I won't be treated the way I was before.



I expect appreciation. I expect sincerity.

I see I took the wrong tack. Forgive me, Ria. It's good that you have come home. Even better that you return like this... *fully formed.*



And I'm sorry, but I don't know what happened to your brother. I do, however, fear the worst.

Well. Thank you for that.

So...I understand you've become a teacher.



I have to say, I was surprised when I heard, but it seems to suit you. You look well.

I admit, I like it more than I thought I would.



And how does this year's crop of future titans look?



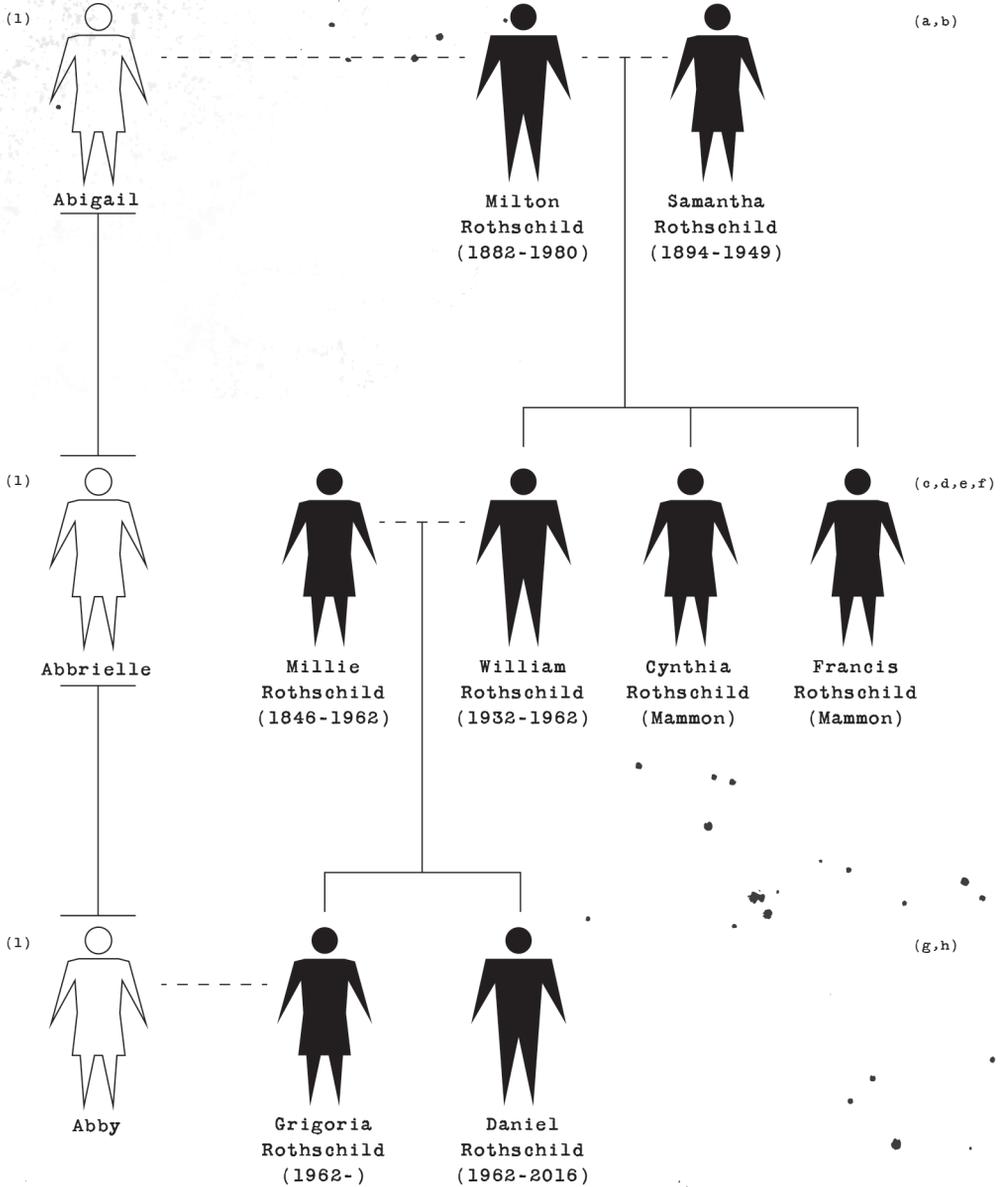
Oh. Smart. They are smarter every year, it seems. But they are, unfortunately, a flawed generation. Children of the summer, you see.

They all believe money falls from the sky. Not that it is pulled from the Earth.



But they will learn. They always do.

THE ROTHSCHILD LINE
OF THE 20TH CENTURY





- EPILOGUE -

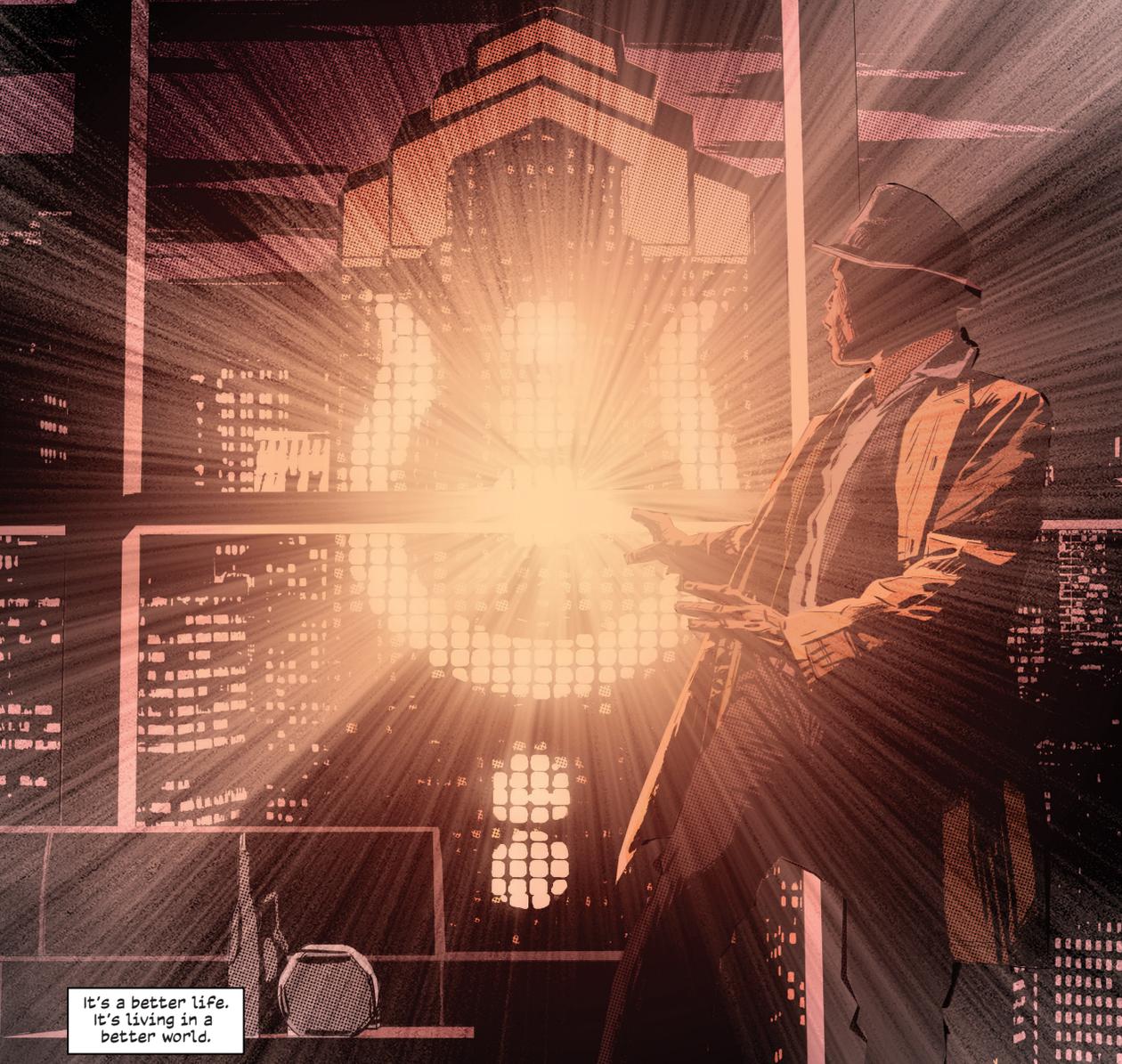
The Trair
Building.

7:59 p.m.

The oldest relationship
in the world is the one
man has with money.

It's the dirty little
secret we all share...

Just how much
we love it.



It's a better life.
It's living in a
better world.



For money is power.
It is influence.



So when someone asks,
do you have a price?

Everyone -- and I
mean *everyone* -- knows
the answer is yes...

The only question
remaining is...what are
they gonna have to pay?



POWER |'pou(-ə)r|
noun

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
• the ability to influence the behavior of others or alter the natural course of events: having power over another | she had me under her power.

MONEY |'mənē|
noun

• a medium of exchange | the substitution of coin for something of similar value.
• a physical manifestation of influence or power.

MAGIC |'majik|
noun

• the power to influence using supernatural forces: do you believe in magic? | suddenly, as if by magic, the words appeared.

(a)

(b, c, d)

(a, b, c, d)

(e)

WELL, DO YOU BELIEVE...

OR DON'T YOU?





ALL HAIL GOD MAMMON

