

.....image comics presents:

The Black Monday Murders.....[06]

Hickman | Coker | Garland | Wootton

.....June 2017



(c)(d)(e)

(a)(b)



(image comics presents:)

SET THE SCALES

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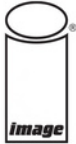


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(e)

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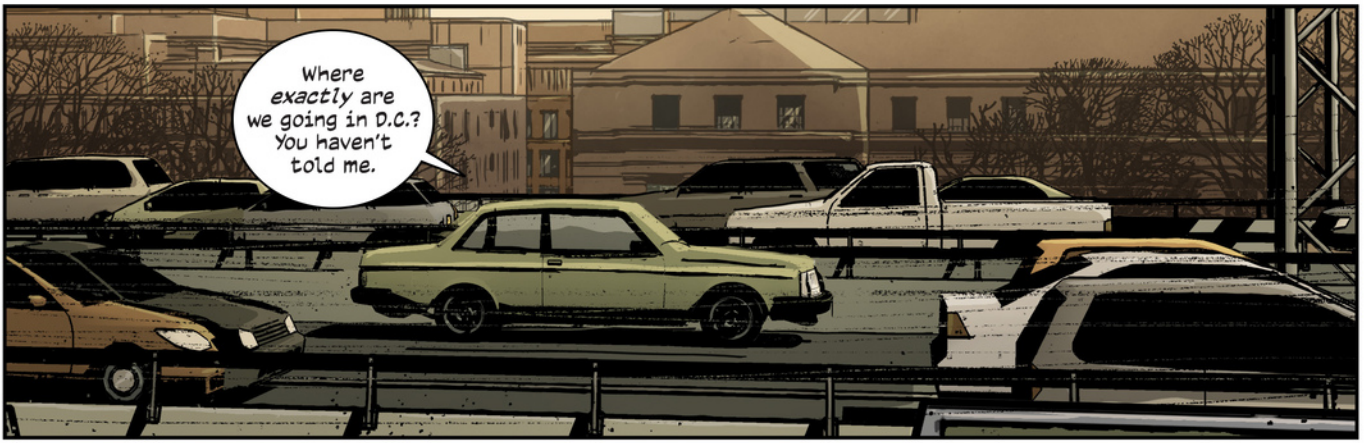
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Where exactly are we going in D.C.? You haven't told me.



Ah. To the very heart of it, Detective Dumas. We journey to the Capitol of all Western capital.

"The thin place where that other world can touch our own."



2 A

EXIT 2B

EXIT 1A

C St S.W.
US Capitol

S Capitol St
1/2 MILE

(image comics presents)

THE BLACK MONDAY MURDERS

CHAPTER SIX . . .

(c)

(s.b.e.d)

(a)

(b.e.d)

Interstate 95.
November 8, 2016.

9:35 a.m.



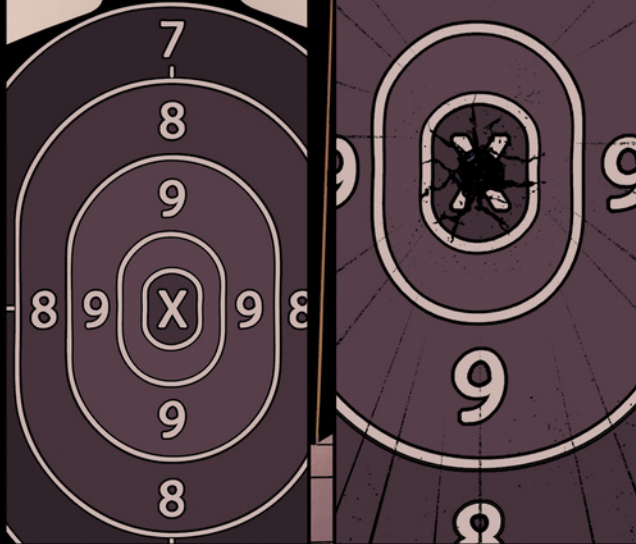
New York City.
November 8, 2016.

11:31 p.m.

BLAM!

Woof!

I'd forgotten how much fun guns are.



It's been years since we've done this, and...

Well...



Somebody's been practicing.



Call it a by-product of having to hunt for your food instead of it being handed to you.



I've seen your shoes, dear...



You really expect me to believe you did a lot of hunting out there in the wild?



Oh, Beatrix.

I would think by now it's obvious I did a lot of eating.



... We have to talk about Viktor.



I sensed that. *Your needing to talk.*

But if you're playing the advocate, you should know that you've taken up a pointless task. It's a waste of your time.

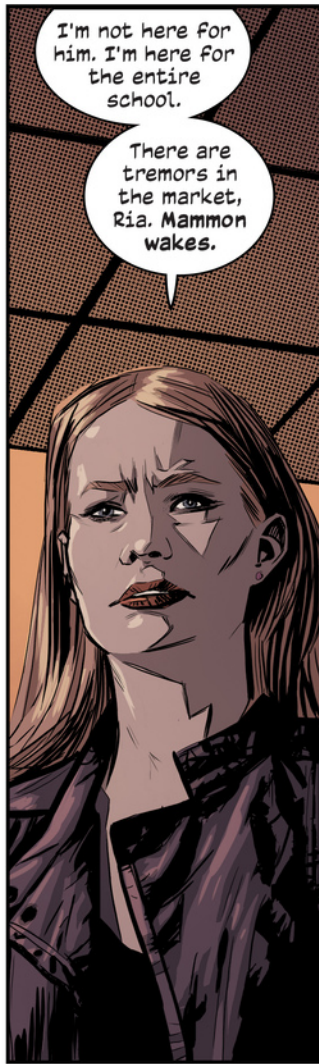


The scales between myself and Viktor are unbalanced -- *you know what that means.*

Talking about it is useless. No one can talk their way out of what's coming.



You've always thought I was petty.



I'm not here for him. I'm here for the entire school.

There are tremors in the market, Ria. Mammon wakes.



It sure feels that way, doesn't it?

What are the words?



"The sheep cry and scream -- there are beasts in the field."



Yes.

And I am one of them.



You have to stop.



SNIFF SNIFF.



Those aren't silver, Beatrix.

Your bullets won't even break the skin.



BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!



But they still hurt, don't they?

Now, you're going to listen to me, Ria...

Dammit.



I'm trying to run a business here, so what I want is for both you and Viktor to stop screwing with my shit...

Or, next time, it will be silver.



But I'm not unreasonable. I'll settle for a temporary cease-fire...

Call it a truce or something of that nature.

You can eat his heart later...



But right now, think of something bigger than yourself for once.

Can you do that?

Yes, Beatrix.

I can.



The National Mall.
November 8, 2016.

2:23 p.m.

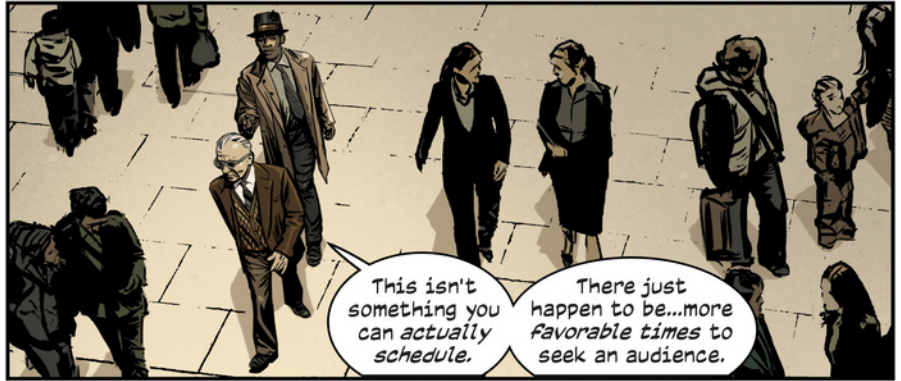


This way, detective.

We have to hurry...we're running a bit behind for our meeting.



What time is our appointment?



This isn't something you can actually schedule.

There just happen to be...more favorable times to seek an audience.



Ahem. While market conditions always fluctuate, some patterns are inevitable.

Think of them as undercurrents that function somewhat like circadian rhythms.



The point being: We want to be seen before the market closes...

It's advantageous not to wake what slumbers.





What were you researching?



Market conditions that could accurately predict a crash. *Specifically*, identifiable microtremors that always precede a failure in the marketplace.



I believed that if we could identify those, it might be possible to minimize the full impact of a major crash.

We could use emerging technology that is now commonplace: an electronic marketplace, algorithm-based trading...*things of that nature*, to mitigate market disasters.



It was an intellectual puzzle, of course, but I also believed that my research would help protect the emerging blue-collar investment class from inevitable fallout.

People like you and me.



So, what did you learn?



Well, for one, I learned that certain institutions -- and a certain class of people -- will always be the early adopters of emerging technologies.

Especially anything resulting in societal paradigm shifts.



They're happy to lead the way to a better tomorrow. They sell it as the future, but all they're really doing is reconfiguring the economy to more easily extract work and obedience.



Well, forgive me for not sounding surprised, doctor, but that just sounds like the history of the world.



It should.

It is.





You mean in there...
The Fed?



Yes, detective.

The holy of holies. The temple immortalis.

The Federal Reserve.

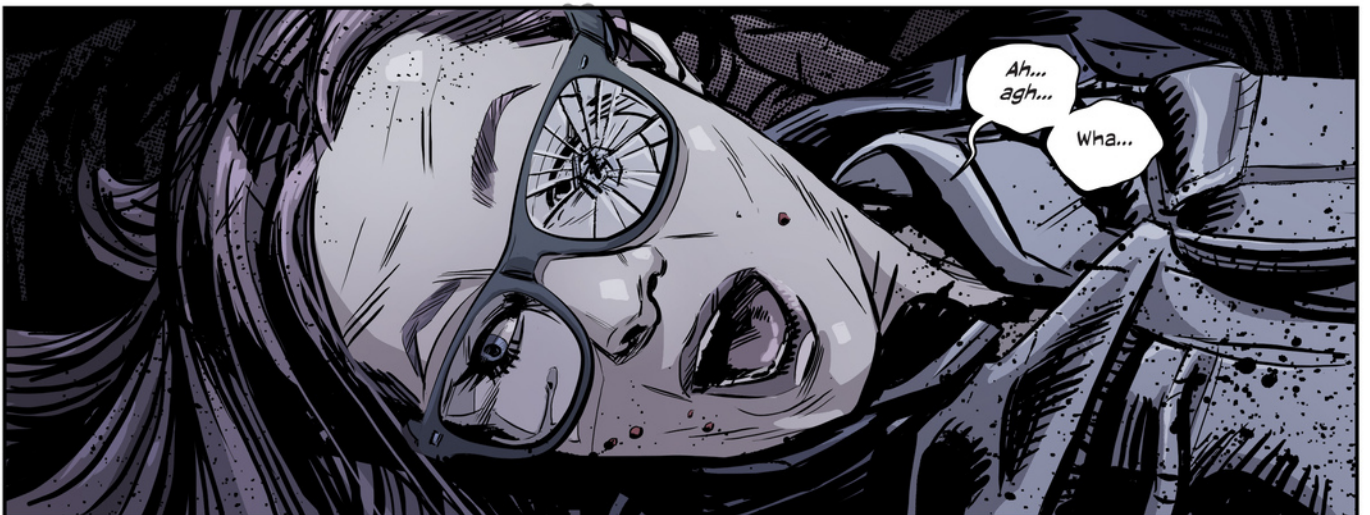
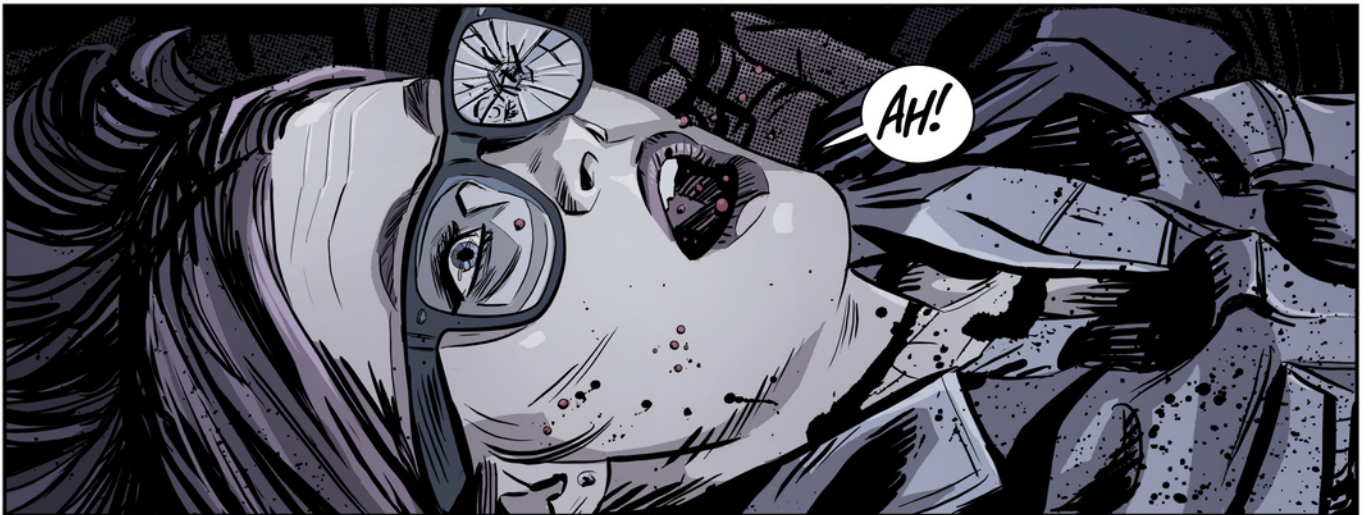
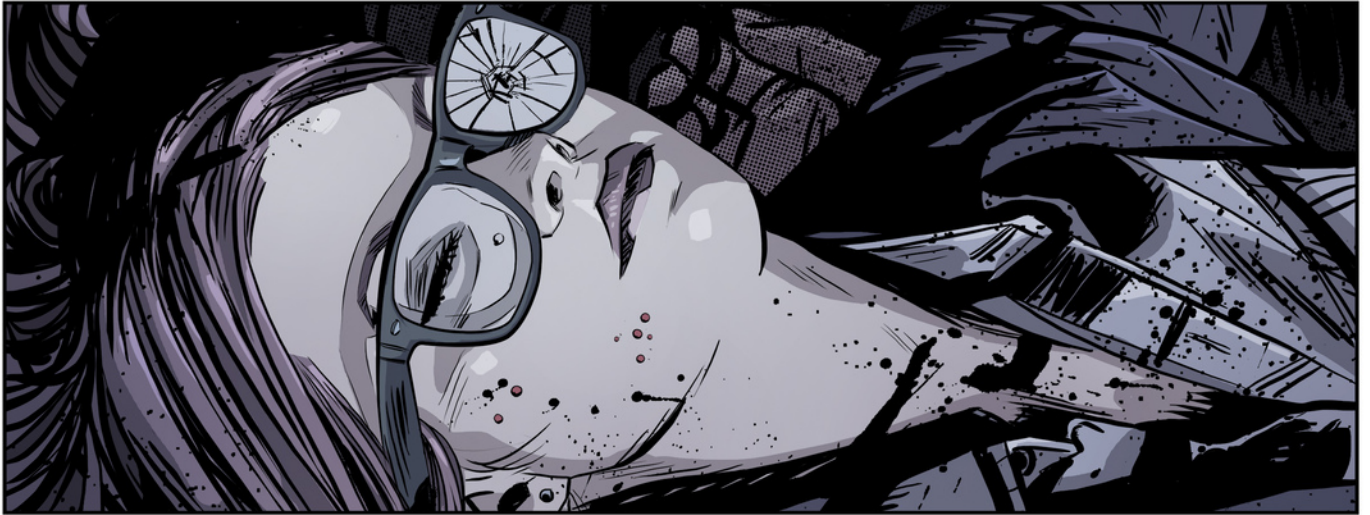


There's a god inside that building, and he's meddling in our affairs.

I want to know why.

Caina-Kankrin.
November 9, 2016.

1:42 a.m.

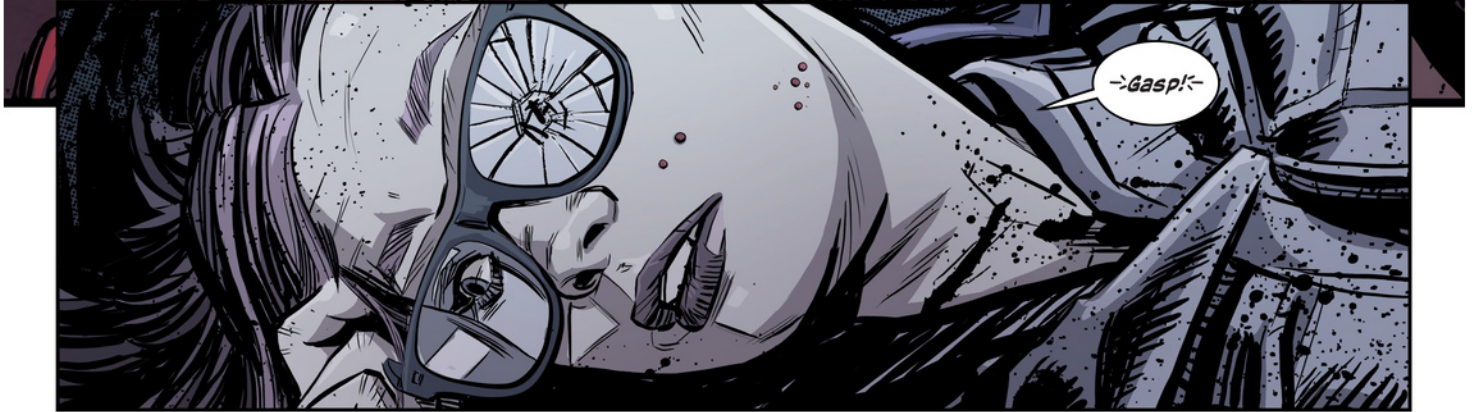




Wha...

Oh, god...
Oh, god...

What
is....



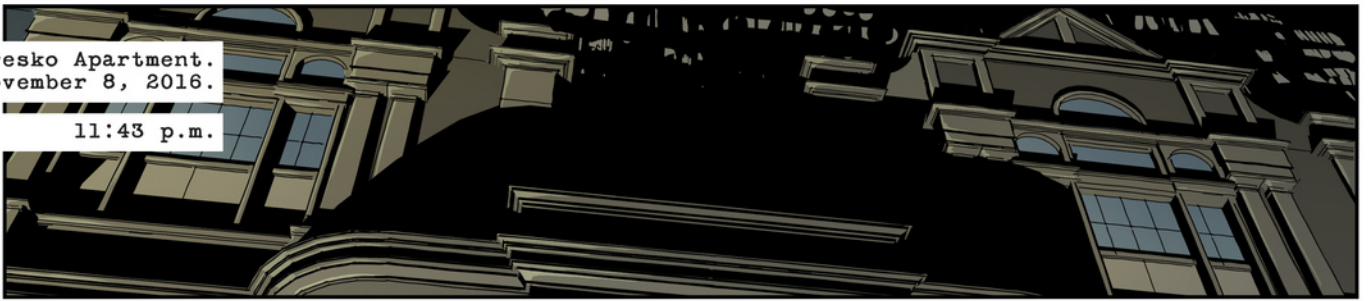
-Gasp!

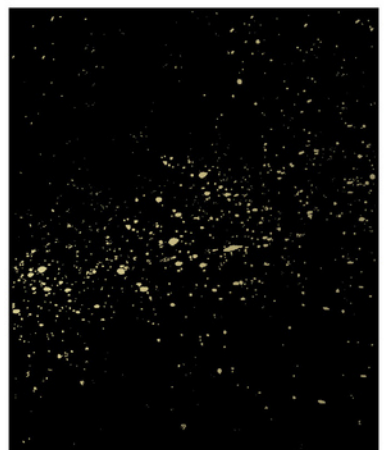


UOO

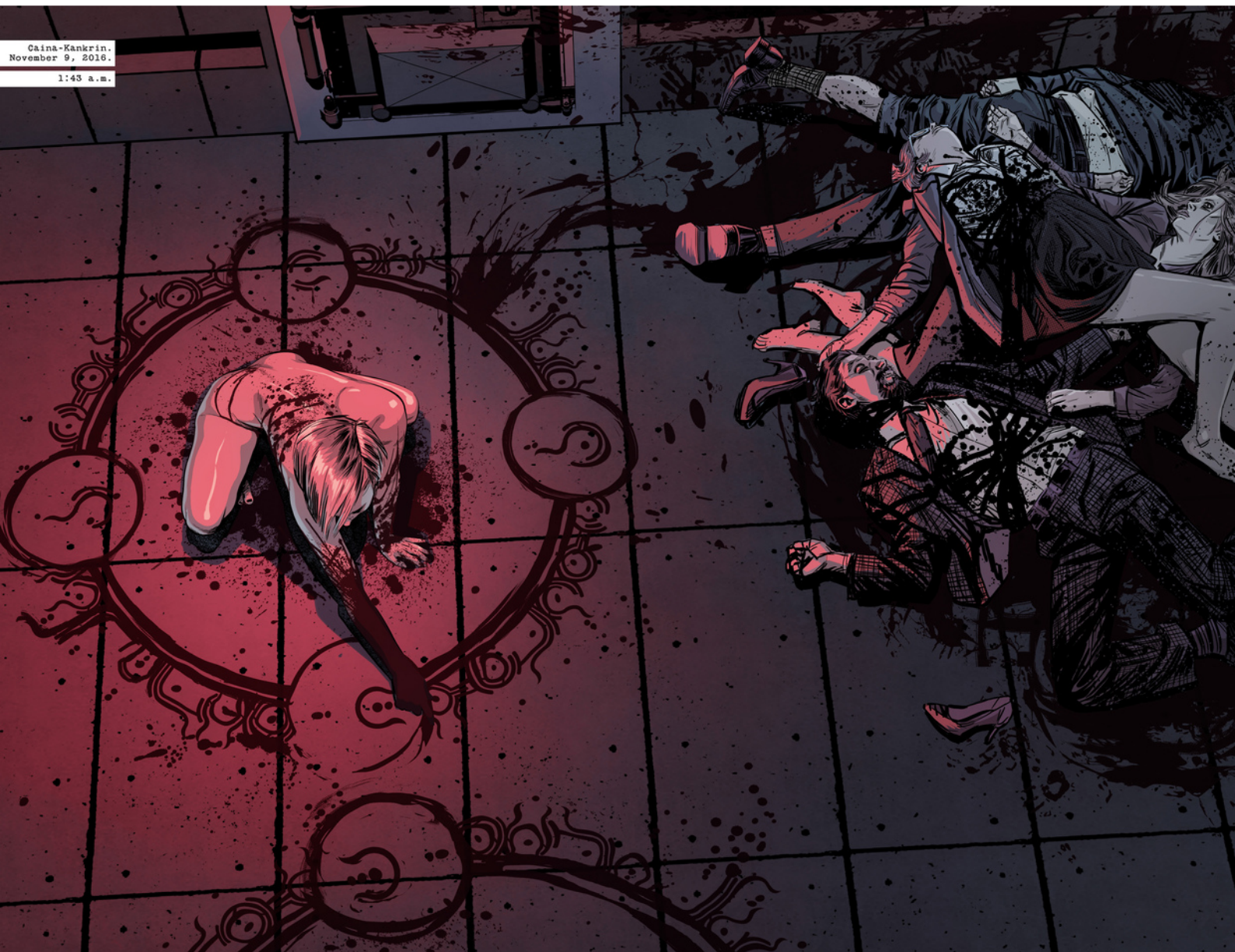
Eresko Apartment.
November 8, 2016.

11:43 p.m.





Caina-Kankrin.
November 9, 2018.
1:43 a.m.





Mrrpph!

Mrrrghh!



Mrrrphhh!



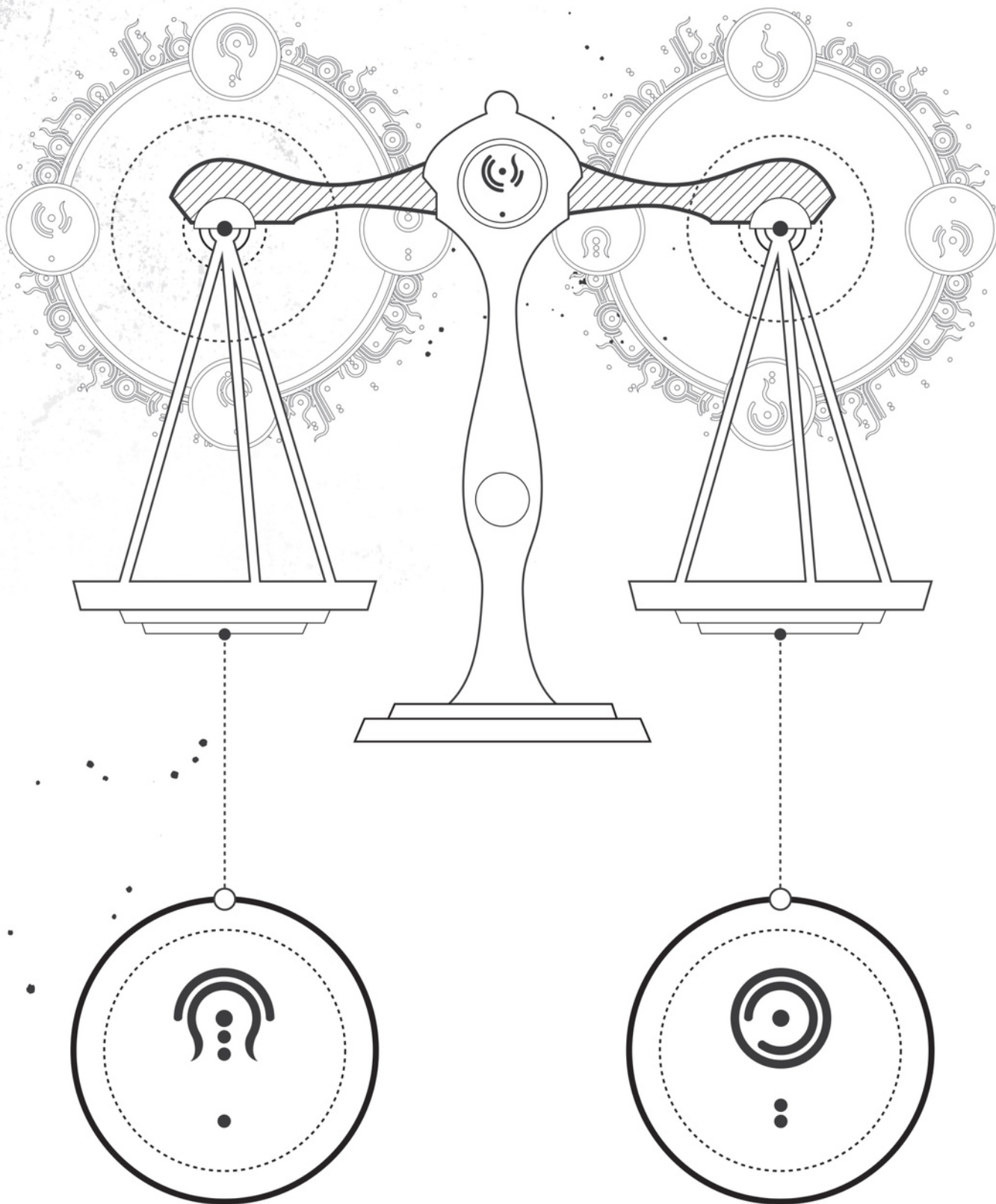


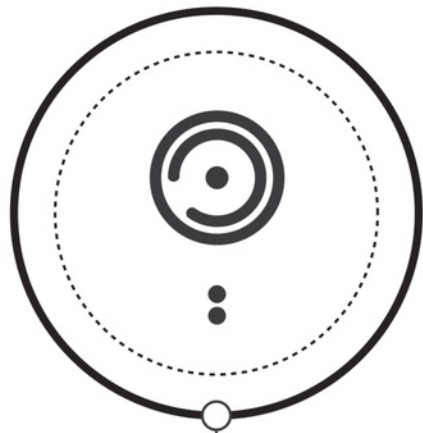
BALANCING THE SCALES. (a,b)

(c,d,e,f)

(g,h)

THE PRINCIPLES AT PLAY
IN THE TRANSFER OF POWER



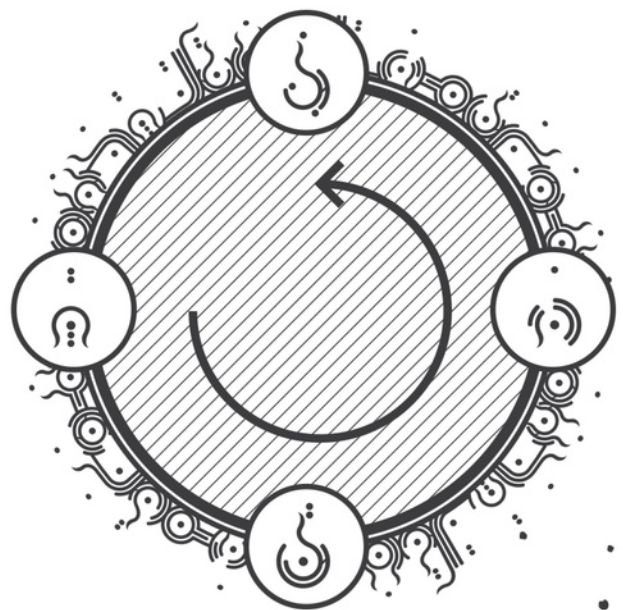
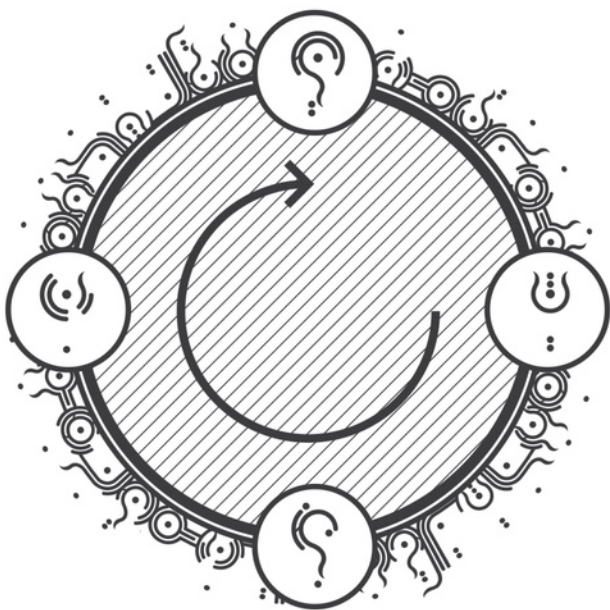


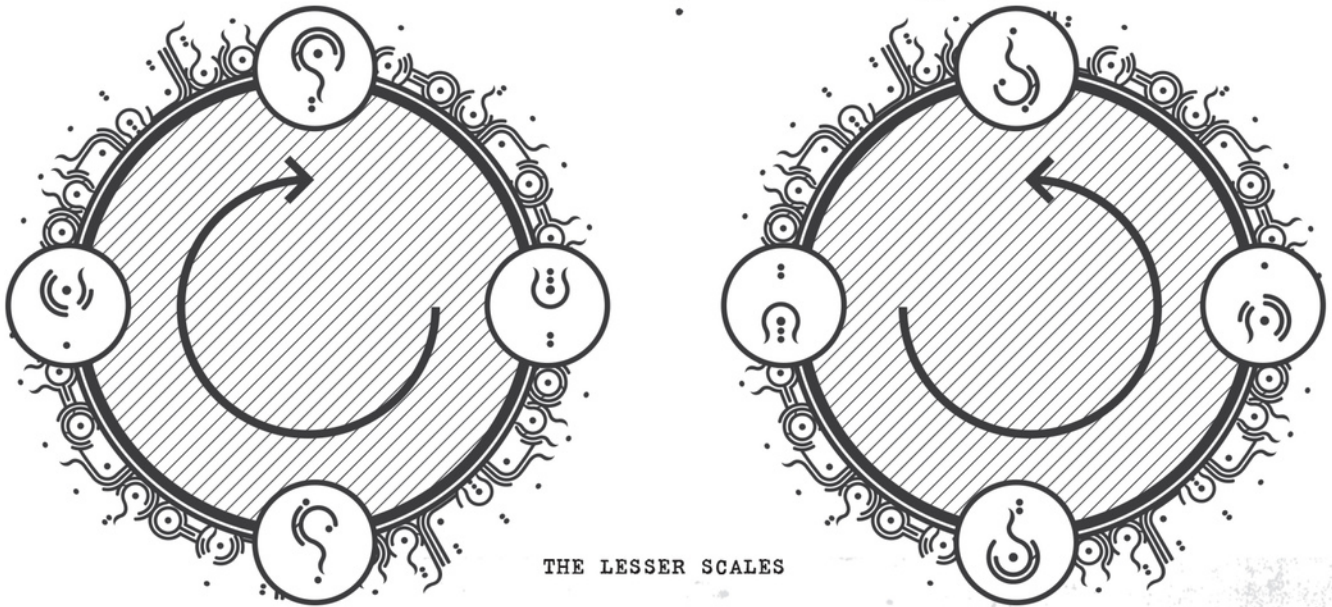
THE GREATER SCALES

Commonly understood to be a term encompassing the entirety of all transactions between this earthly realm and the other - are the physical manifestation of the eternal fluctuations of universal expansion.

Like any well-managed market that eliminates old, poorly performing companies and replaces them with younger, more vibrant ones, we now understand that the erroneous belief in red shift (universal contraction) was a failure of both scale and vision. What appeared to be an observed - and provable - theory was actually just a blip on a longer timeline.

The following are constant: The universe always expands. The market always wins.





THE LESSER SCALES

Commonly understood to be a term encompassing all singular transactions between practicing members of various schools, is the physical arena in which practitioners engage in both hostile and mortal takeovers.

(Neither of these are to be confused with "The Scales," which is a rotating position held in some Western schools. This position carries with it a physical totem capable of measuring the activity of both the Greater and Lesser Scales.)

(In the arena of the Lesser Scales.)

- 1.) A challenge can only be initiated by blood.
- 2.) A challenge can be refused without penalty.
- 3.) The challenger may not withdraw a challenge.
 - a.) A challenger may be replaced by a familiar.
 - b.) If replaced, the familiar will operate at half capacity (this is often referred to as a "familiar sacrifice," and usually occurs in challenges between juvenile practitioners).
- 4.) Once agreed upon, a challenge does not begin until both practitioners have passed over the Scale walls.
- 5.) A challenge does not end until there is a victor.
- 6.) To the victor go the spoils.
 - c.) In the case of surviving progeny, the victor may choose to impart seed capital if the children are allowed to stay within the school. If the children are exiled, the victor must provide a generational stipend to all survivors.

When the world becomes the arena,
who will stand for you in the circle?



////////// (a) DRAMATIS PERSONAE: (c)

(b,c,d)

(e) CAINA
1929

Charles Ackermann
(The Ackermann seat)
J. W. Bischoff
(The Bischoff seat)
Raymond Dominic
(The Dominic seat)
Milton Rothschild
(The Rothschild seat)
Abigail
(Rothschild Familiar)

KANKRIN
1985/Current

Irena Kozloy
(The Judge)
Alexi Malkin
(The Body)
Viktor Eresko
(The Executioner)

CAINA
1985/Current

Wynn Ackermann
(The Ackermann seat)
Beatrice Bischoff
(The Bischoff seat)
Marco Dominic
(The Dominic seat)
Daniel Rothschild
(The Rothschild seat)
Grigoria Rothschild
(The Rothschild seat)
Abby
(Rothschild Familiar)

Thomas Dane
(Head of Security)

NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Theodore Dumas
(Detective)
Michael Caffey
(Detective)
Susana Moreno
(Detective)
William Merritt
(Captain)

OTHER

Dr. Tyler Gaddis
(Professor of Economics,
Fordham)

(a,b,c,d)



ALL HAIL GOD MAMMON



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RATED M / MATURE

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

