

ASPEN
Vol. 3

#5
OF 10
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



ASPEN
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COVER B

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Fathom Created by
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VOLUME THREE
Issue Five of Ten

FATHOM

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THEY'RE
GONE.



OKAY, IT'S CLEAR.

GOOD THING, TOO, BECAUSE I'M PRETTY SURE THE TWO OF YOU WOULD HAVE FREAKED THEM OUT.

US?

WE'D BETTER HURRY. THAT DAD SEEMED GUNG-HO ABOUT THE FAMILY HIKE, BUT THOSE KIDS LOOKED LIKE THEY HAD ABOUT AN HOUR IN THEM AT MOST.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO BE TAKING A DIP.

NOR IS IT THE TIME TO BE A SMARTASS.

POINT TAKEN.

WHATEVER THAT GUN FIRED... IT TOTALLY SCREWED ME UP. LOOK AT MY ARM.

IT'S BEEN SATURATED WITH SEDIMENT MINERALS, LOCKED INTO SOLID FORM.

IMMERSING IT IN THE WATER SHOULD CORRECT THE LEVELS.

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.

IT'S WORKING.



MUCH BETTER.
IT FELT CREEPY...
LIKE I WAS TURNING
TO *STONE* OR
SOMETHING.

YOU
NEEDN'T
DESCRIBE IT
TO ME. I
KNOW HOW
IT FEELS.

THEY *USED*
ME FOR LOTS OF
EXPERIMENTS DURING MY
CAPTIVITY... TESTING EVERY
POSSIBLE WEAKNESS.
BELIEVE ME, IF I COULD
HAVE KILLED MYSELF, I
WOULD HAVE.

I CAN'T EVEN
BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND
WHAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN
LIKE FOR YOU. I'M SO
SORRY, FINN.


YOU DON'T HAVE
ANYTHING TO BE SORRY
FOR. IN FACT, I NEVER HAD
A CHANCE TO THANK YOU
FOR GETTING ME OUT OF
THAT PRISON.

FINN, YOU'RE
MY BROTHER. YOU
DON'T HAVE TO SAY
THANK YOU. NOT
EVER.



ASPEN!
YOU'D BETTER
SEE THIS.

I THINK
YOUR DAD IS
UP TO SOME
OF HIS OLD
TRICKS.



OUR FATHER?
HE'S ALIVE?

NO, NOT
EXACTLY. WHAT I
MEAN IS...

...WE HAVE A
LOT TO CATCH
UP ON.



SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING, MADAME SECRETARY. I JUST LEARNED OF THIS MEETING AND HAVE BEEN HANDLING THE RECENT *SECURITY BREACH*.



MR. CALLOWAY. I DON'T BELIEVE YOU TWO HAVE MET BEFORE.



MR. PRESIDENT. IT'S AN HONOR, SIR.

GOOD TO MEET YOU, CHRIS. SEEMS WE'VE GOT OURSELVES QUITE A SITUATION.

YES, SIR. WE HAVEN'T LOCATED THE ESCAPED PRISONER, BUT WE DID RECOVER A TIGERSHARK NAMED ANDERSON.



HE'S ONE OF MINE. LOST HIM IN OUR LAST OFFENSIVE.

MAYLANDER? I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON PERMANENT LEAVE. WHEN DID YOU COME BACK?

AS SOON AS EVERYTHING WENT TO HELL.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR UNIFORM, CALLOWAY?



IT WAS DETERMINED THAT A CIVILIAN SHOULD HEAD UP THE OPERATION AFTER THE RECENT SETBACKS. MR. CALLOWAY VOLUNTEERED TO LEAVE THE NAVY IN ORDER TO ASSIST US.

YOU ALWAYS WERE ABLE TO SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE, CHRIS.

I JUST WANTED TO BE PART OF THIS, MAYLANDER.

OKAY, LET'S GET TO THE TASK AT HAND, GENTLEMEN.

EVAC IS STILL UNDERWAY IN FLORIDA. WE'VE ALSO COMMANDEERED SEVERAL COMMERCIAL VESSELS TO ASSIST WITH THE FLORIDA KEYS. IN THE LAST 24 HOURS, WE EXCEEDED ESTIMATES, BUT WE'RE STILL ONLY AT 25%.

AND WHAT ABOUT OFFENSE?

WE KEPT IT QUIET LAST TIME... COVERT. BUT NOW, IT'S GOING TO BE OUT IN THE OPEN. I'LL HIT THEM WITH EVERYTHING THE NAVY'S GOT.

AND WHAT ABOUT SUPPORT FROM THE OTHER ARMED FORCES?

BEST TO KEEP THEM OUT OF THIS FOR NOW. THEY'LL BE NEEDED ELSEWHERE IF THIS TURNS BAD...

...WHICH IT PROBABLY WILL.

ADMIRAL, JUST HOW ARE WE GOING TO FIGHT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

THE SAME WAY WE'D FIGHT ANY ENEMY, MR. PRESIDENT.

YOU JUST NEED
TO KNOW WHERE
TO AIM.





SHARKS ONE-EIGHT AND ONE-NINE. MOST LIKELY, YOU'LL LOSE RADIO CONTACT WHILE PENETRATING THE ORB. MAINTAIN AUDIO ACCOUNT FOR FLIGHT RECORDER.

ROGER, COMMAND. SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE.



YOU READY, DIAMONDBACK?

ROGER THAT. LET'S DO THIS.



ENTERED MASS. AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, IT'S JUST WHAT IT SEEMS TO BE... A GIANT FLOATING BALL OF WATER.

EXPERIENCING INTERFERENCE. UNABLE TO GET ACCURATE READINGS.

RELYING SOLELY ON VISUALS.



NO SIGN OF HOSTILES WITHIN THE ORB.

I SEE LIGHT UP AHEAD. MIGHT BE JUST ON THE FAR SIDE OF THIS WATER MOON.



INCOMING!
BREAK LEFT!

DIAMONDBACK!!!

COMMAND,
WE'VE LOST SHARK
ONE-EIGHT. ENGAGED
WITH ENEMY. TAKING
EVASIVE ACTION.



SHARK
ONE-NINE,
WHAT IS
IT?

I... I DON'T
KNOW. IT'S SMALL,
SINGLE MAN CRAFT...
BUT IT DOESN'T SEEM
LIKE A SHIP AT ALL.
LOOKS LIKE...
ARMOR.

FIGHTERS.
ENGAGE!





LAUNCH
RESCUE.

PULL BACK
VIKINGS FOUR,
FIVE, AND SIX FOR
SUPPORT.

ADMIRAL,
WE'VE GOT INCOMING...
MULTIPLE TARGETS. EIGHT
MILES OUT. SPEED
SEVENTY KNOTS.

LAUNCH
REMAINING
FIGHTERS TO
INTERCEPT.

ALL FIGHTERS,
AVOID HUMAN
AIRCRAFT. DO NOT FIRE
ON THEM. REMEMBER,
WE'RE NOT HERE FOR
THE HUMANS...



...WE'RE
HERE FOR THE
BLACK.


SIPHON,
YOU SHOULD
HOLD BACK UNTIL WE
GET THIS UNDER
CONTROL.



CANNON, IF I
DIDN'T LISTEN TO THE
ENTIRE COUNCIL WHEN I
MADE THE DECISION TO
INTERVENE AGAINST THE
BLACK, WHAT MAKES YOU
THINK I'M GOING TO
LISTEN TO YOU?



WITH ALL
DUE RESPECT, HIGH
COUNSELOR... THEY
CAN'T KICK YOUR
ASS. I CAN.



THIS IS
VIKING-NINE. NEW
CONTACTS ARE NOT
HOT, SIR. THEY'RE NOT
RETURNING FIRE.
JUST A FLYBY.



CANNON, WE'LL
KEEP THE BLACK
OCCUPIED WHILE YOU GO
AFTER THEIR GIANT
WATER ORB.



I'LL
DO WHAT I
CAN.



UNLOAD ON
THEM. DON'T
GIVE THEM TIME TO
REGROUP IT MAY
BE OUR ONLY
CHANCE.



FOOLISH
MEDDLERS.

COMMAND,
THE NEW BOGEYS
ARE TAKING THE
FIGHT TO THE INITIAL
THREAT. ADVISE.

ALL FIGHTERS
FOCUS ON THE
PRIMARY TARGETS.
WE'LL DEAL WITH
THIS ONE THREAT
AT A TIME.





THE HUMANS
ARE FLANKING OUR
FIGHTERS.

THEY KNOW
HELP WHEN THEY
SEE IT.

WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED A
DAY WHEN I WOULD STAND
AGAINST OUR VERY HERITAGE.
BUT, THIS IS NOT SOME MYTHIC
BATTLE TOLD OF IN VERSE.



THIS IS OUR LIVES,
AND WE DO WHAT
WE MUST...

...OR WE DIE.



RESISTANCE
IS POINTLESS.

THE COUNCIL WANTED TO
STAY OUT OF THIS WAR
ALTOGETHER. BUT, I
BELIEVE THAT THE
ACTIONS OF THE BLACK
COULD BE DESTRUCTIVE
FOR THE ENTIRE PLANET.



THE BLACK WERE CONSIDERED
GODS WHEN I WAS A BOY. WE
ALL LEARNED OF THEIR DOLES
AS OUR ANCESTORS... COMING
BEFORE EVERYTHING ELSE...
AND THE BLUE FOLLOWING IN
THEIR IMAGE.



YOU ATTACK US? YOU CHOOSE TO
SIDE WITH THESE... HUMANS? WE
ARE YOUR BROTHERS. AND YET
YOUR EVERY DECISION MOVES YOU
FURTHER AWAY FROM OUR HOME.

YOU TURN FROM YOUR SOURCE OF LIFE.
YOU CLOUD YOUR MINDS AND DILUTE
YOUR SPIRITS. LOOK AT YOU. FLAILING
ABOUT IN SUCH CONTRAPTIONS NOW,
LOCKED WITHIN YOUR PETTY SHELLS.

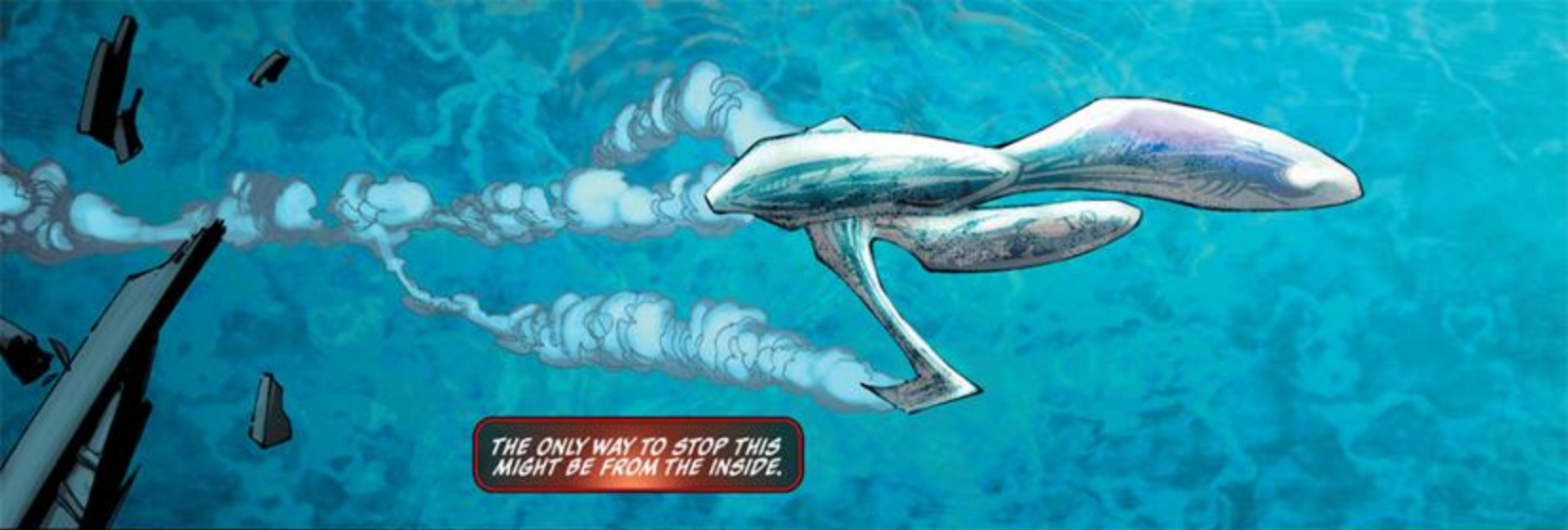


YOU ARE NO
BETTER THAN
THE HUMANS.



YOU ARE
NOTHING.

PERHAPS YOU
DESERVE THE
SAME FATE.



THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THIS
MIGHT BE FROM THE INSIDE.



THE CONTROL OVER SUCH
A MASS IS INCREDIBLE.



THE ENERGY OF THE BLACK
COURSES THROUGH THIS
ENTIRE FIELD OF WATER.



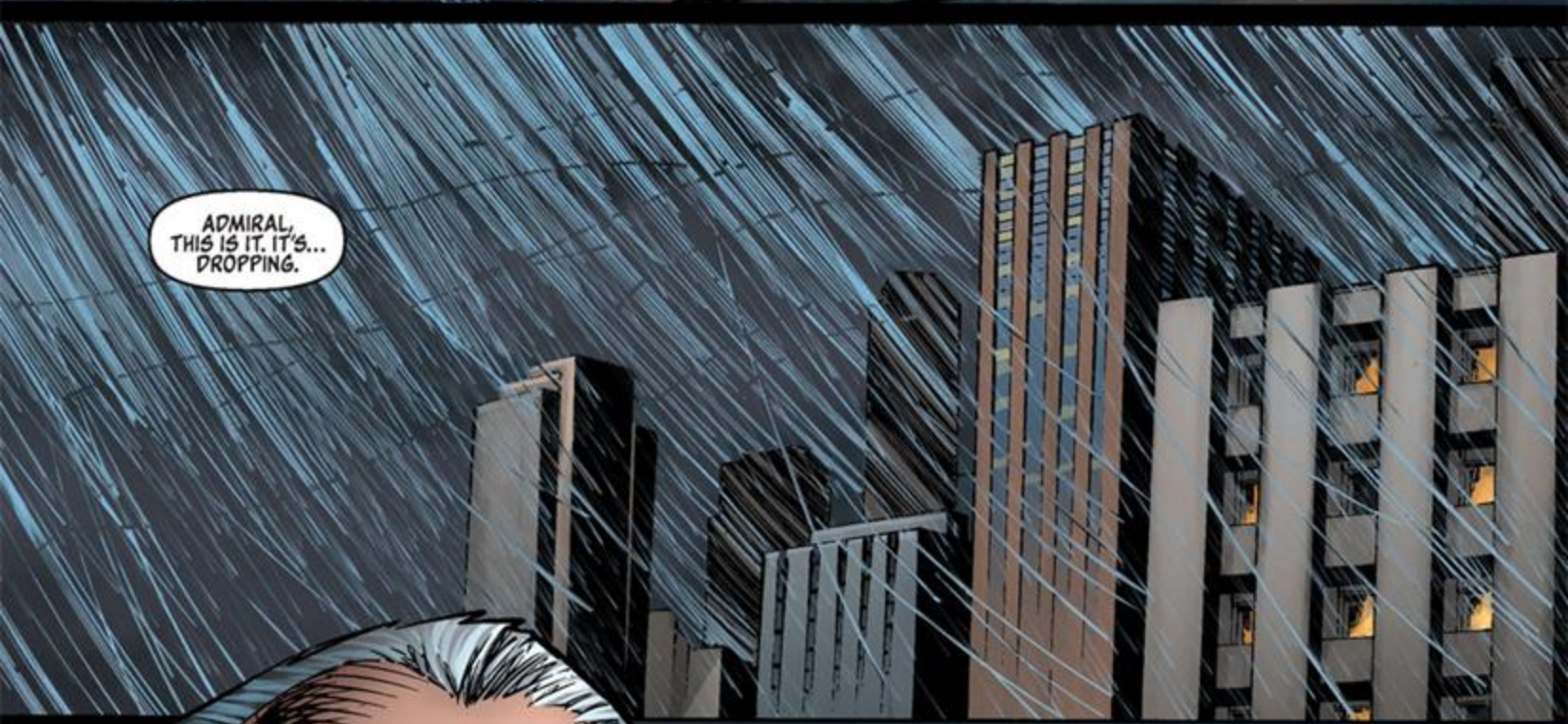
THERE IS NO WAY I CAN
CONTROL SUCH VOLUME...
BUT MAYBE I CAN DO
SOMETHING.



NNNNN...



AAAAH!!



ADMIRAL,
THIS IS IT. IT'S...
DROPPING.



NO. IT'S
FALLING, BUT
NOTHING LIKE IN RIO.
NOWHERE NEAR AS
DESTRUCTIVE.

I'LL BE A
SON-OF-A-BITCH.
THEY SAVED
US.

ANDER



CANNON DID IT!
THE BLACKS' POWER
IS DISSIPATING.



SIPHON,
THEY'RE
FLEEING.

I WISH.
THERE'S A DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN RETREATING
AND LEAVING.



SOMETHING
TELLS ME THAT THE
BLACK ARE JUST
MOVING ON.



WE DIDN'T
WIN, BUT WE
STOPPED THEM
FOR NOW.



THANKS TO
CANNON.



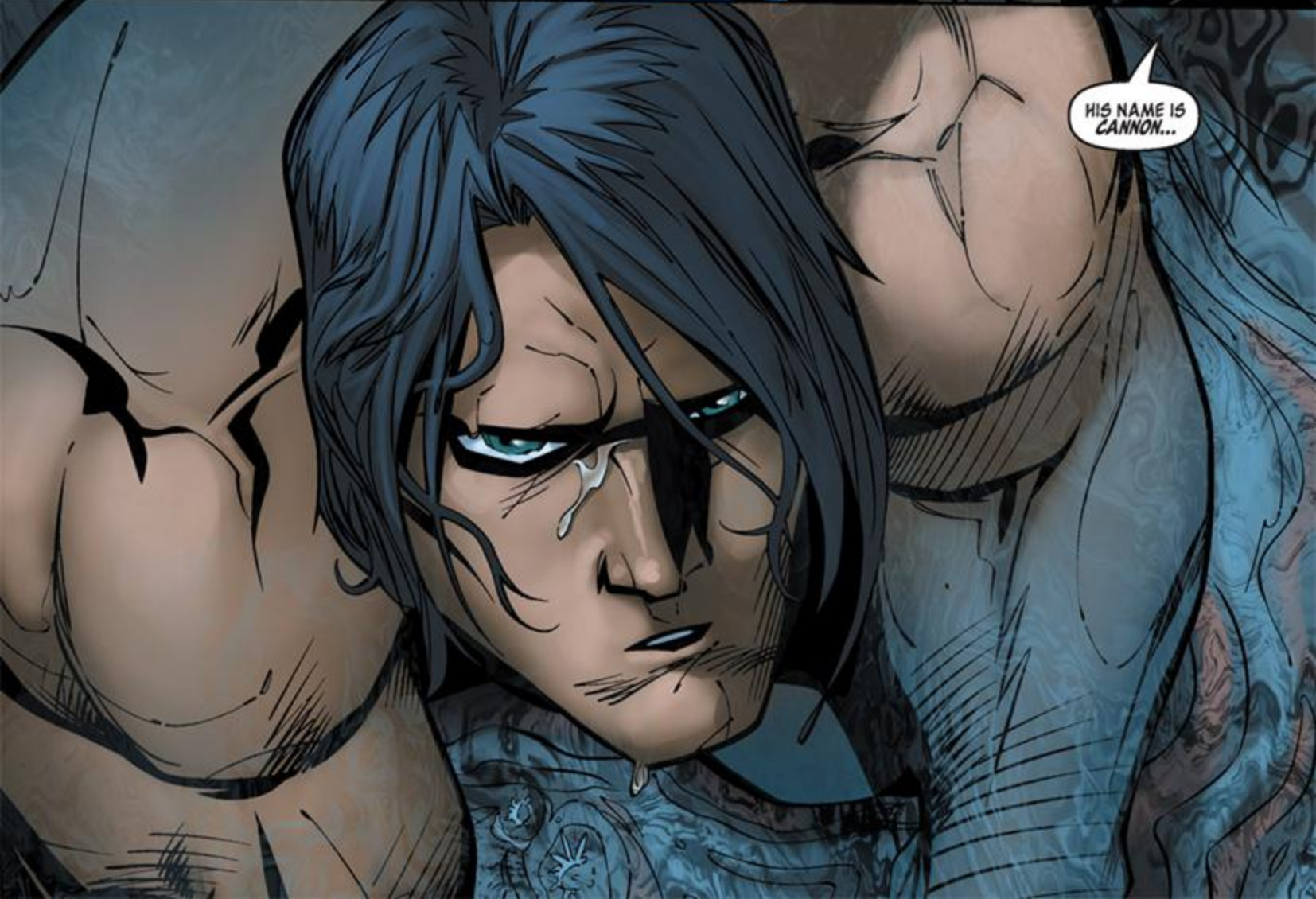
MY
GOD!



WHAT
THE HELL IS
THAT???

F- FREEZE!

WHA...
WHO ARE
YOU?



HIS NAME IS
CANNON...

...AND
MY NAME IS
SIPHON. WE ARE
THE BLUE.



To Be Continued...



Darkness