

**THE PAINTED LADY**  
MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

NO.  
NO, NO, NO,  
NO.  
ABSOLUTELY  
NOT.

YOU KNOW, EVEN  
FOR A MERC, THERE  
ARE **STANDARDS**.

THERE'RE ROADS YOU  
DON'T **TAKE**. DOORS  
YOU DON'T **OPEN**.

WHO  
DO YOU THINK  
WE ARE, LITTLE  
PRINCESS?

I AM NOT A  
"PRINCESS." I AM  
A **GENERAL**.

AND SPARING  
HIM MAY NOT BE  
AN **OPTION**, MS.  
THURMAN.

IT MOST  
DEFINITELY **IS**,  
KIDDO.

WE'RE NOT  
**KILLERS**, RIGHT,  
GUYS?

WELL...  
I MEAN...

ARE WE  
TALKING **RECENTLY**  
WITH THIS?

TODAY?  
ARE WE TALKING  
**TODAY**?

BECAUSE YOU TAKE THE WRONG  
GIG, YOU LET THE WRONG  
SCORPION SIT ON YOUR LAP--

--AND PRETTY SOON, YOU  
START **LOSING** THINGS.

**IMPORTANT** THINGS.

LIKE YOUR DIGNITY. YOUR FRIENDS.  
YOUR **NAME**, SUCH AS IT IS.

OUTLAW,  
DIAMONDBACK--YOU TWO  
AREN'T HELPING.

BUT WE'RE  
NOT HUNTING  
THIS GUY.

WE'RE NOT  
**ATTACKING** THIS  
GUY.

YOU  
LISTENING,  
SHOON'KWA?



MY ASSOCIATES AND I ARE HOSTING A FORMAL V.I.P. PARTY.

WE'RE GOING TO *SMILE* AND *DANCE* AND ACT LIKE *NICE LADIES*.

AND WE ARE MOST EMPHATICALLY *NOT* KILLING LONGSHOT.

I BARELY EVEN *KNOW* THE GUY.

OKAY, OKAY.

SO HE USED TO ROCK A *MULLET*.

THAT'S NO REASON TO *KILL* A MAN, IS IT?

MAYBE TAKE A PAIR OF *SHEARS* UPSIDE HIS HEAD...

ROUGH HIM UP A BIT, MAYBE...

NO.

WE'RE NOT *DOING* THIS.



YOU ALREADY NEARLY GOT US KILLED FIGHTING OFF A VAMPIRE APOCALYPSE, SHOON'KWA.

ONLY YOU FORGOT TO MENTION THE VAMPIRES...

I SEE. YOU ARE SQUEAMISH.

R'TASH, FETCH MY WORKING CLOTHES, WON'T YOU?



I WILL PAY YOU. AN OBSCENE AMOUNT.

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD US WHY, "GENERAL."

AND I'M NOT SHOOTING AN INNOCENT GUY ON YOUR GO.

I SEE.



AND DON'T THINK YOU CAN COME ON OUR SLEAZY FLOATING CASINO AND TRY TO INTIMIDATE US BECAUSE WE DON'T--

HMM.

WHAT ARE THOSE POINTY THINGS? JUST WONDERING.



YOU ASKED IF I WAS WAKANDAN, MS. THURMAN.

I AM IN EXILE. MY POLITICS ARE UNWELCOME IN MY HOMELAND.

YOU AND I, WE ARE GOING TO BATTLE.

IF I WIN, YOU TAKE THIS SACRED ASSIGNMENT.



WAIT, THAT'S A BEAR PELT. THERE AIN'T ANY BEARS IN AFRICA!

ARE THERE? WAIT, AFRICA DOESN'T HAVE BEARS, DOES IT?

NO, MS. TEMPLE. IT DOES NOT.



BUT WE DID ONCE. IT WAS CALLED THE **ATLAS BEAR**.

THE ONLY AFRICAN URSINE SPECIES TO SURVIVE TO THE MODERN AGE.

IT WAS **PROUD** AND HAD NO PREDATOR.

UNTIL THE **ROMANS**.

THEY KILLED THEM FOR **SPORT** AND FOR THEIR **ARENAS**.

UNTIL THE LAST ONE ROARED ITS DYING BREATH IN PAIN AND RAGE.

AND NOW, IT HAS COME **BACK**.

IN ME.



... OKAY. YOU TELL A GOOD STORY.

AND MAYBE IT'S **TRUE**.



YOU COUNT YOURSELF AS BLESSED, MS. THURMAN.

COME TRY YOUR LUCK AGAINST **ME**.

THIS IS THE THING. SOMETIMES...

...SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO **KNOW**.

ALL RIGHT, GENERAL.

LET'S SEE WHAT'S SHAKIN', POOH BEAR.

I WOULDN'T NORMALLY FIGHT KIDS. EVEN SASS-MOUTH SPOILED **BRATS** LIKE BOO-BOO HERE.

I WILL **ATTEMPT** TO INFLECT ONLY **NONLETHAL** INJURY.

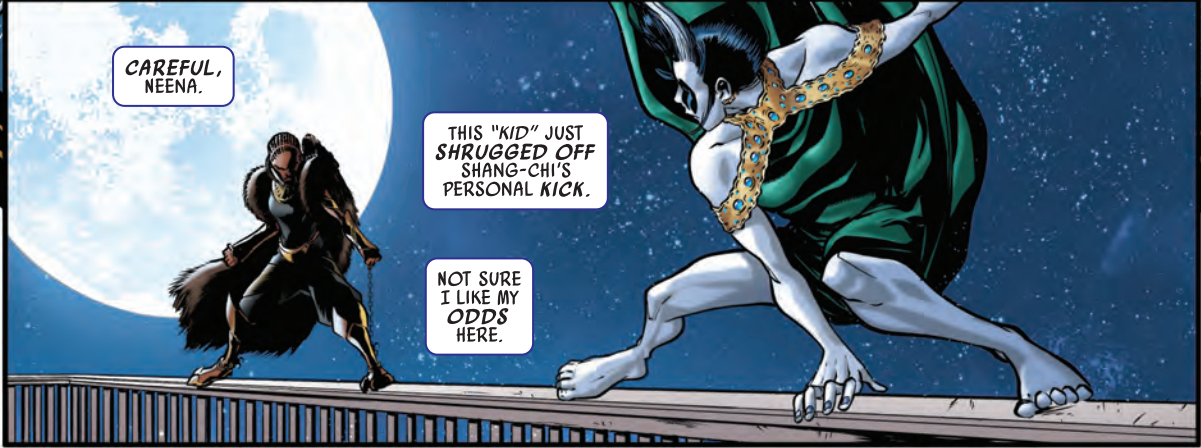
YEAH.

YOU'RE **SWEET**.

BUT TONIGHT, AFTER THE WHOLE ALMOST-GOT-ATE-BY-**VAMPIRES** THING?



I MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION.



CAREFUL, NEENA.

THIS "KID" JUST SHRUGGED OFF SHANG-CHI'S PERSONAL KICK.

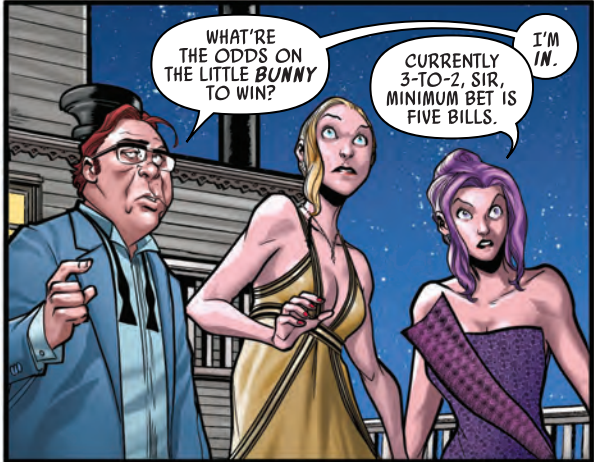
NOT SURE I LIKE MY ODDS HERE.



HOW OLD'S THE KID, AGAIN?

SIXTEEN, I THINK.

KIND OF A REGAL THING, ISN'T SHE?



WHAT'RE THE ODDS ON THE LITTLE BUNNY TO WIN?

CURRENTLY 3-TO-2, SIR, MINIMUM BET IS FIVE BILLS.

I'M IN.