

*For a long, long time, it was called the void.*

*The vast emptiness of space.*

*But in our nexus, in our manifestation, it was never that.*

*It was home to the rays that began this glittering age.*

*It was home to destroyers and their heralds.*

*And it was home to the Celestials.*



*Beings so powerful that they are known primarily for their actions and for functions in the universe so grand that we can only guess at their purpose.*

*Even these beings, whom gods fear, have predators.*

*Beyonders and Hordes and dark, malicious brothers.*



*It is said that when the Earth was merely primordial sludge, one of their number died there, and that spark began life on Earth.*

*And it is said that when these beings so choose, it will be their hand which ends it.*



*And they have been watching.*

*And their judgment is cold.*







MY NAME IS RACHEL LEIGHTON.

OTHERWISE KNOWN AS DIAMONDBACK.

I'M GOOD WITH EXPLOSIVES. LIKE, EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD.

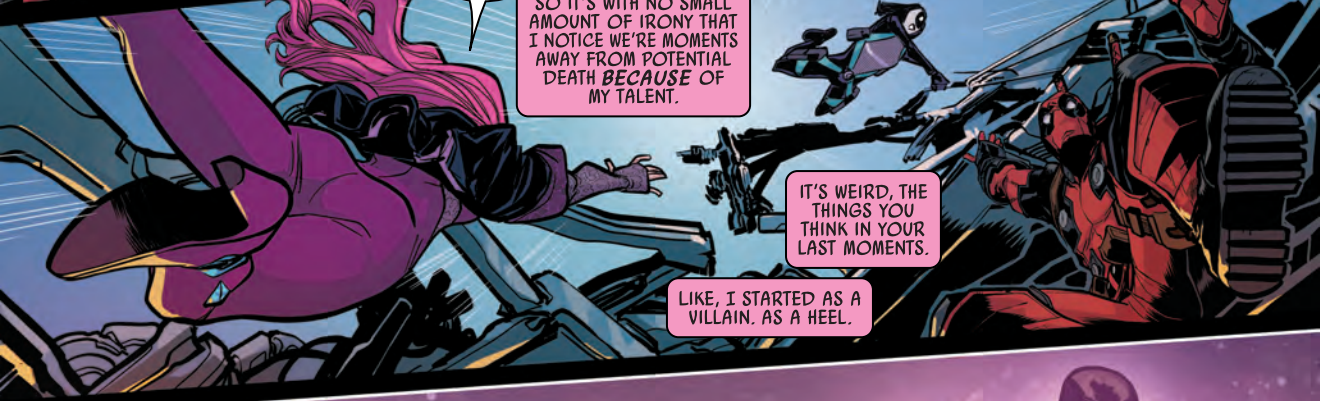
HANG ON! I CAN'T HOLD YOU!

NEENA!

SO IT'S WITH NO SMALL AMOUNT OF IRONY THAT I NOTICE WE'RE MOMENTS AWAY FROM POTENTIAL DEATH *BECAUSE* OF MY TALENT.

IT'S WEIRD, THE THINGS YOU THINK IN YOUR LAST MOMENTS.

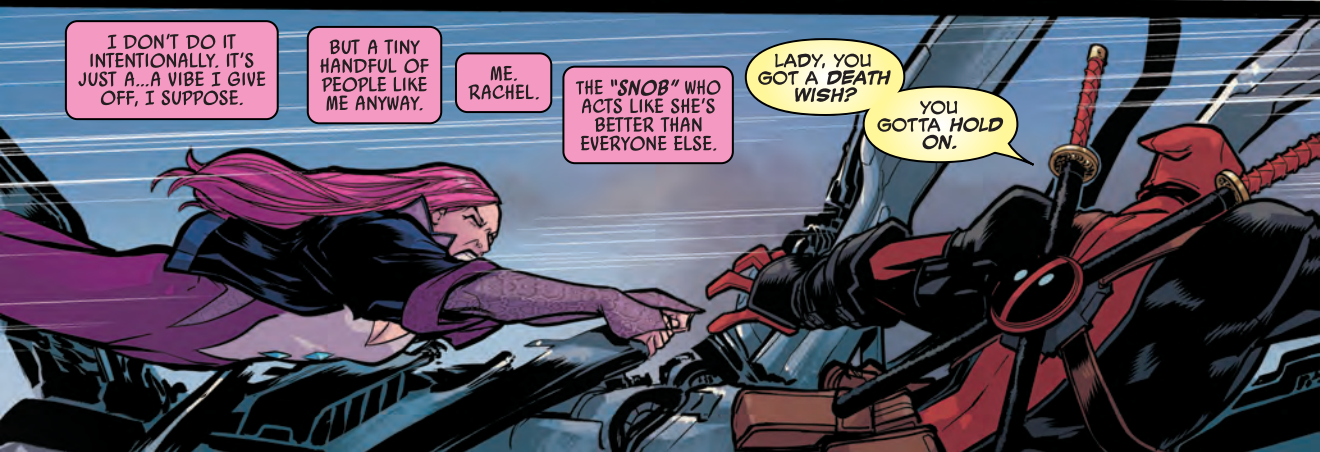
LIKE, I STARTED AS A VILLAIN. AS A HEEL.



AS A MEMBER OF THE SERPENT SOCIETY.

I HAD A SNAKE NAME FOR AN ALIAS. THOSE WERE THE RIGOROUS STANDARDS FOR RECRUITMENT.

EVEN THEN, THEY THOUGHT I WAS A BIT OF A SNOB.



I DON'T DO IT INTENTIONALLY. IT'S JUST A...A VIBE I GIVE OFF, I SUPPOSE.

BUT A TINY HANDFUL OF PEOPLE LIKE ME ANYWAY.

ME. RACHEL.

THE "SNOB" WHO ACTS LIKE SHE'S BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE.

LADY, YOU GOT A DEATH WISH?

YOU GOTTA HOLD ON.



THAT WORD HAS FOLLOWED ME SINCE KINDERGARTEN. MY TEACHERS CALLED ME THAT.

AND DOMINO, THE ONLY WOMAN WHO SEES MORE IS ABOUT TO FALL TO HER DEATH.

AND I KNOW ONE INESCAPABLE TRUTH...

BRACE YOURSELVES.

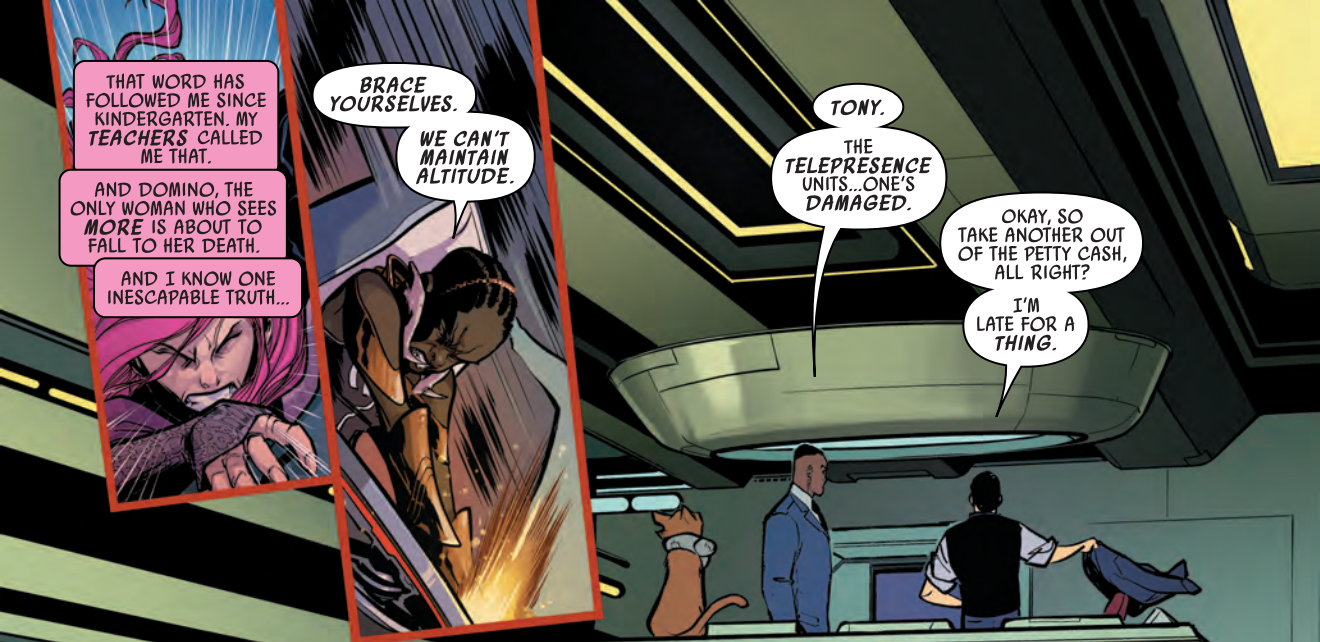
WE CAN'T MAINTAIN ALTITUDE.

TONY.

THE TELEPRESENCE UNITS...ONE'S DAMAGED.

OKAY, SO TAKE ANOTHER OUT OF THE PETTY CASH, ALL RIGHT?

I'M LATE FOR A THING.



TONY, THEIR SHIP IS GOING TO CRASH.

AND THOSE UNITS DON'T HAVE THE LIFT POWER TO STOP IT.

OH NO.



HOW MANY?

WHAT?

HOW MANY ON BOARD, RHODEY?

TONY, YOU DON'T GET IT.





An aerial, top-down view of a city, likely Buenos Aires, showing a large, fiery, and metallic object falling from the sky. The object is surrounded by a bright orange and yellow glow, suggesting it is on fire or emitting intense heat. The city below is depicted with green trees, blue water, and various buildings. The scene is framed by a swirling, greyish-white border with white motion lines, giving a sense of rapid movement or a high-speed camera pan. Several dark, sleek, futuristic aircraft are visible in the sky, some appearing to be in pursuit or observation of the falling object. The overall color palette is dominated by the fiery oranges and yellows of the object, the blues and greens of the city, and the greys of the swirling border.

"IT'S HEADED FOR  
BUENOS AIRES."

"IT'S A DEAD STICK AND  
IT'S COMING IN LIKE A  
DROPPED ROCK."