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PUNISHER SOVIET

GARTH ENNIS
JACEN BURROWS
GUILLERMO ORTEGO
NOLAN WOODARD



MAXCOMICS



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RIVERA

WHEN HIS FAMILY WAS KILLED IN A HAIL OF MOBSTER BULLETS, FRANK CASTLE DIED, AND OUT OF THE ASHES WAS BORN THE VIGILANTE KNOWN AS THE PUNISHER. WAGING A RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME, THE PUNISHER HAS PUSHED COUNTLESS HARD MEN INTO THEIR GRAVES AND OTHERS TO THE BRINK.

PUNISHER SOVIET

PREVIOUSLY...

THE PUNISHER MET VALERY STEPANOVICH WHEN THEY WERE BOTH PURSUING KONSTANTIN PRONCHENKO. CASTLE WAS AFTER PRONCHENKO'S GANG. STEPANOVICH'S MOTIVES WERE PERSONAL. WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG SOLDIER IN AFGHANISTAN, A COMMANDING OFFICER-- PRONCHENKO--SOLD OUT HIS MEN. VALERY'S COMPANY WAS AMBUSHED, HIS FRIENDS WERE SKINNED ALIVE, AND HE HAD TO WATCH THEM DIE.

FRANK AND VALERY AGREED TO WORK TOGETHER, STARTING BY QUESTIONING PRONCHENKO'S WIFE, ZINAIDA SEBROVNA. WHILE HER HUSBAND'S MEN, INCLUDING HIS THREE SONS, TRACKED HER, SHE REVEALED PRONCHENKO'S PLANS TO BRIBE A U.S. SENATOR. IN THE END, ZINAIDA THREW HERSELF OFF A CLIFF INSTEAD OF GOING BACK. FRANK AND VALERY NEXT FOUND AND CAPTURED THE SONS, BUT GOT CORNERED BY A HELICOPTER. VALERY TOOK FATAL INJURIES SHOOTING IT OUT OF THE SKY.

GARTH ENNIS
JACEN BURROWS
GUILLERMO ORTEGO
NOLAN WOODARD
ROB STEEN

WRITER
PENCILS
INKS
COLORS
LETTERING

PAOLO RIVERA
TAKASHI OKAZAKI
& MORRY HOLLOWELL

COVER
VARIANT COVER


JAY BOWEN
ANTHONY GAMBINO
KATHLEEN WISNESKI
NICK LOWE
C.B. CEBULSKI

LOGO
DESIGN
ASSOC. EDITOR
EDITOR
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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**6: I'M COMING NOW,
I'M COMING TO REWARD THEM**



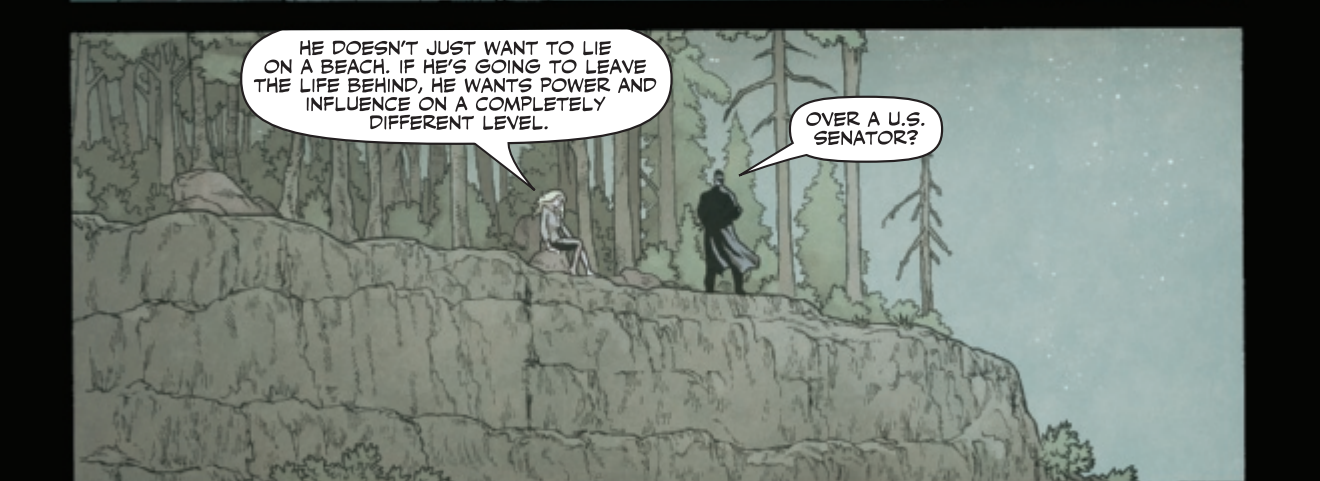
BY THE SUNDAY NIGHT
PRONCHENKO WOULD HAVE
GOTTEN WORD ABOUT HIS
BOYS, BUT I KNEW HE'D TELL
THE SENATOR NOTHING.

MENTIONING ME WOULD
KILL THEIR PARTNERSHIP
STONE DEAD.



THERE WAS THE BILLION
TO ONE CHANCE THAT
ZINAIDA HAD SURVIVED.

BUT SHE'D HAVE
REASONS OF HER OWN
FOR KEEPING QUIET.



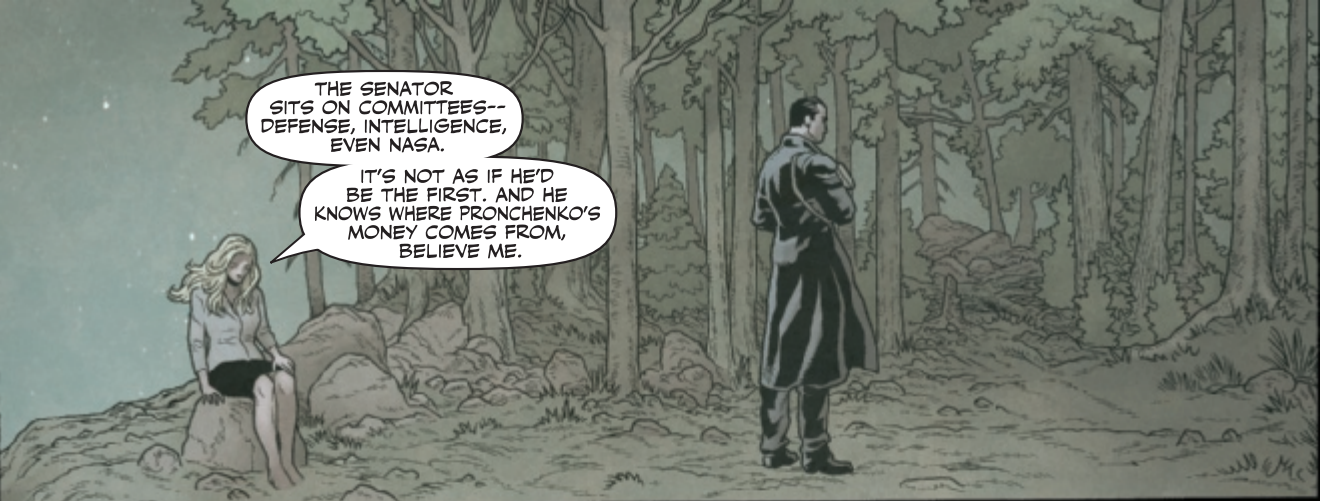
HE DOESN'T JUST WANT TO LIE
ON A BEACH. IF HE'S GOING TO LEAVE
THE LIFE BEHIND, HE WANTS POWER AND
INFLUENCE ON A COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT LEVEL.

OVER A U.S.
SENATOR?



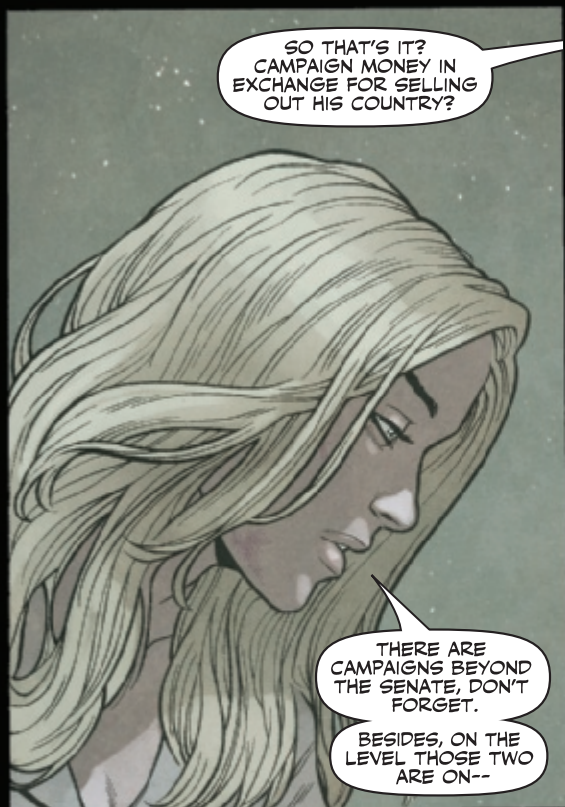
NOT JUST FOR
PROTECTION.

THERE ARE
PEOPLE BACK
HOME WHO WOULD
THANK HIM AS
WELL.



THE SENATOR
SITS ON COMMITTEES--
DEFENSE, INTELLIGENCE,
EVEN NASA.

IT'S NOT AS IF HE'D
BE THE FIRST. AND HE
KNOWS WHERE PRONCHENKO'S
MONEY COMES FROM,
BELIEVE ME.



SO THAT'S IT?
CAMPAIGN MONEY IN
EXCHANGE FOR SELLING
OUT HIS COUNTRY?

THERE ARE
CAMPAIGNS BEYOND
THE SENATE, DON'T
FORGET.

BESIDES, ON THE
LEVEL THOSE TWO
ARE ON--



DO PEOPLE
EVEN HAVE COUNTRIES
ANYMORE?



YOU SAID PRONCHENKO
THINKS YOU DON'T
KNOW ABOUT THE
MEETING.

THAT'S WHERE HE'S GOING TO
TELL THE SENATOR WHAT HE REALLY
WANTS, THAT IT'LL BE MORE THAN
JUST INVITING US TO COCKTAIL
PARTIES ON THE HILL.

PROBABLY THINKS I CAN'T
HANDLE IT. SOLICITING HIGH
TREASON WOULD BE TOO MUCH
LIKE TEMPTING FATE.



SO HOW DO YOU KNOW?

HOW DO YOU THINK?

SAME REASON THE SENATOR'S ALREADY WELL AWARE WHAT'S GOING TO BE ASKED OF HIM.



...YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH HIM.

THERE'S NOTHING YOU WON'T DO TO SEAL THE DEAL, BECAUSE ONCE HE'S ON BOARD YOU'RE ON A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEVEL. TREASON DOESN'T SCARE YOU FOR A SECOND.



IF PRONCHENKO FINDS OUT?

MOOT POINT.

YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME, AREN'T YOU?



YOU GET TO THE END OF ONE OF THESE THINGS, AND YOU CAN'T HELP IT.