



# SAMURAI'S BLOOD™

1 of 6

WISEMAN  
KIM  
DALTON  
YUWONO



# SAMURAI'S BLOOD

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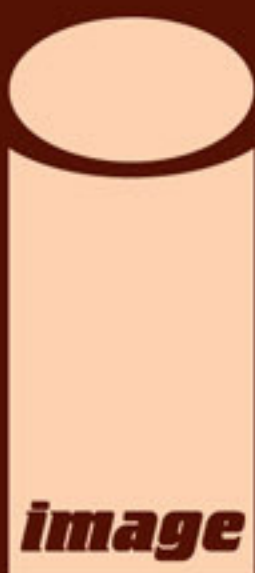


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At the dawn of the Edo Period, when the Tokugawa Clan were consolidating their power, there existed a province ruled by Clan Sanjo. The noble leaders of the clan sheltered their people, and cherished peace even as the world around them was wracked by violence. They raised their children prepared for the uncertain world that they hoped was still far in their future.

Yet no one can truly say when the moment of their fate will arrive...



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DEIVA PROVINCE, JAPAN.  
EARLY EDO PERIOD.  
THE MIDDLE OF THE 17TH CENTURY.



SOME MEN MOVE THROUGH THE WORLD  
LEAVING AS LITTLE TRACE AS A DROP OF  
WATER MOVING THROUGH A STREAM.



OTHER MEN DO NOT.



OTHER MEN ARE ROCKS, RESOLUTE AGAINST  
THE CURRENT, FORCING ALL THOSE MERE  
DROPS TO TURN ASIDE AND PASS THEM BY.

NOT WATER NOR ROCK NOR MAN  
HAS ANY CHOICE IN THE MATTER.  
IT IS A QUESTION OF FATE.

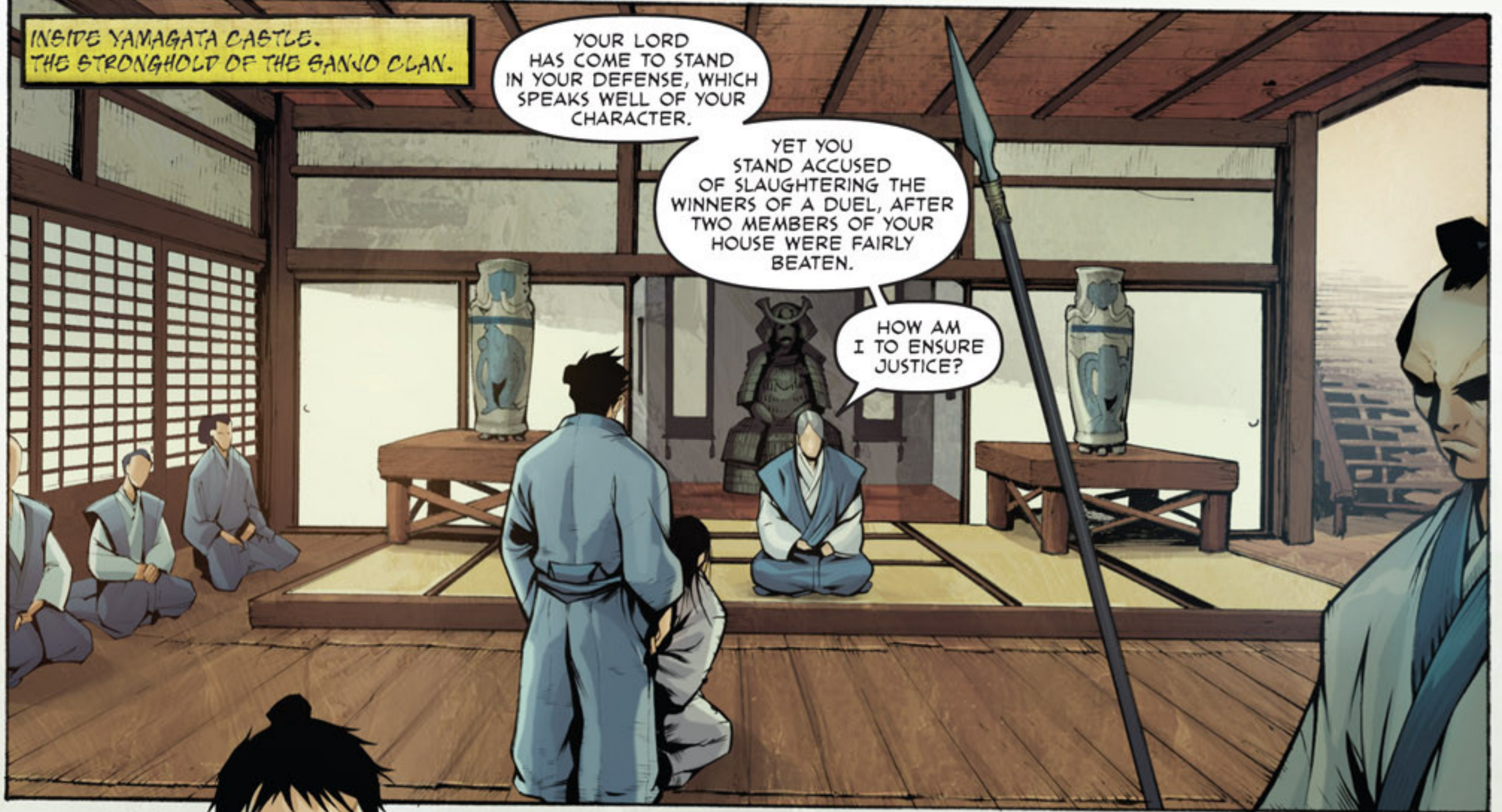


INSIDE YAMAGATA CASTLE.  
THE STRONGHOLD OF THE SANKO CLAN.

YOUR LORD  
HAS COME TO STAND  
IN YOUR DEFENSE, WHICH  
SPEAKS WELL OF YOUR  
CHARACTER.

YET YOU  
STAND ACCUSED  
OF SLAUGHTERING THE  
WINNERS OF A DUEL, AFTER  
TWO MEMBERS OF YOUR  
HOUSE WERE FAIRLY  
BEATEN.

HOW AM  
I TO ENSURE  
JUSTICE?



TO HEAR  
THAT ONE'S FRIENDS  
ARE INVOLVED IN A  
FIGHT AND PRETEND  
NOT TO HEAR IS  
SHAMEFUL.

TO REFUSE  
TO TAKE VENGEANCE  
WOULD SURELY HAVE  
LENGTHENED MY  
LIFE, BUT THIS ALSO  
WOULD BE AGAINST  
THE WAY.

SO INSTEAD I  
THREW MY LIFE AWAY.  
I BEG YOU TO  
EXECUTE ME.



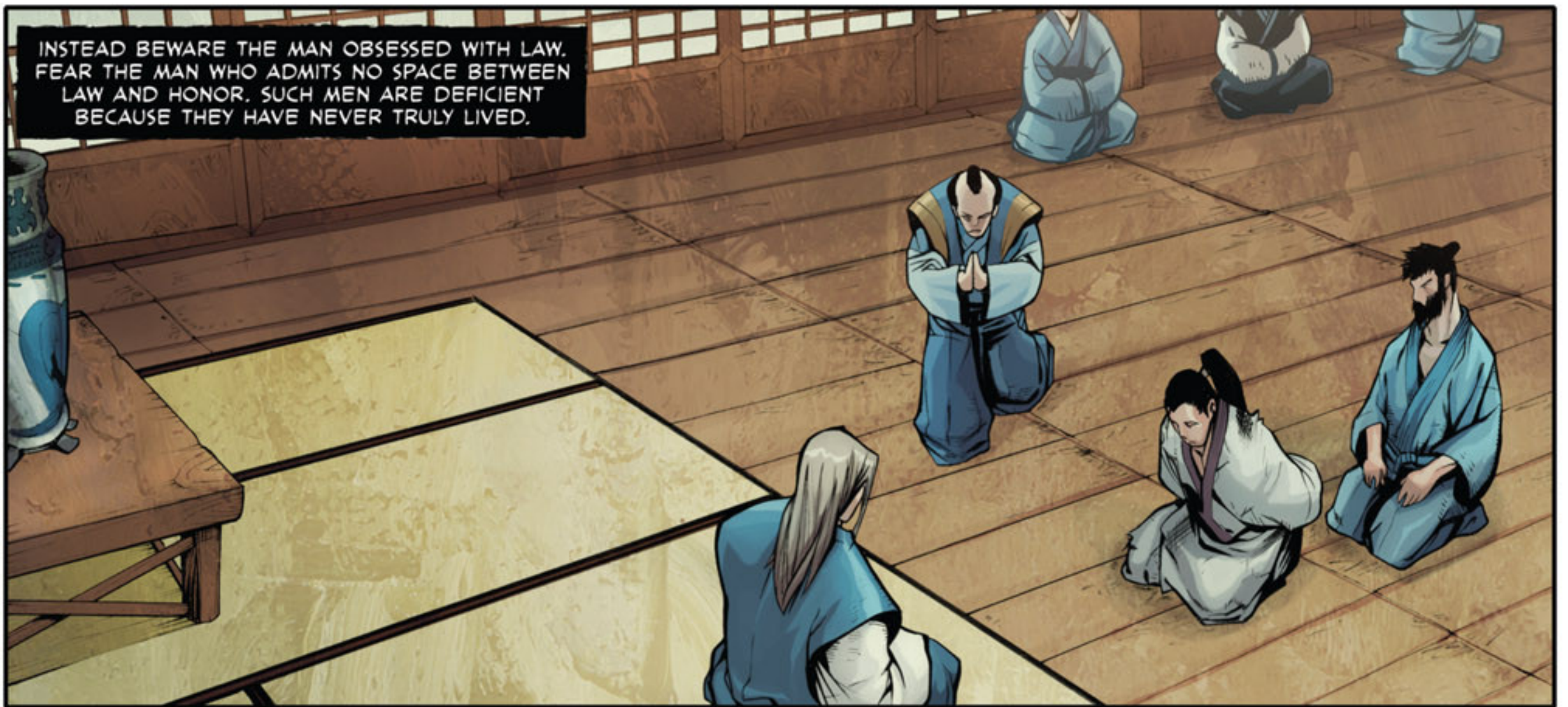
MATSUDAIRA-SAN,  
YOU HAVE A TRUE  
SAMURAI IN YOUR SERVICE.  
PLEASE TAKE HIM HOME  
AND TREASURE HIM.



IT IS NOT THE LAWLESS ONES WHO BETRAY. HOW CAN ONE BETRAY WHEN ONE HAS OFFERED NO ALLEGIANCE?



INSTEAD BEWARE THE MAN OBSESSED WITH LAW. FEAR THE MAN WHO ADMITS NO SPACE BETWEEN LAW AND HONOR. SUCH MEN ARE DEFICIENT BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEVER TRULY LIVED.



UJIMORI-SAN, THIS MAN MURDERED ONE OF YOUR OWN RETAINERS. WILL YOU ALLOW HIM TO ESCAPE PUNISHMENT?

THERE IS ALWAYS USE IN MY LANDS FOR HONORABLE FOLLOWERS OF THE WAY.



YES, MY LORD, BUT HOW WILL THE PEOPLE RESPOND IF SOME ARE ALLOWED TO VIOLATE THE RULE OF LAW AND ORDER?



IF ALL CRIMES WERE PUNISHED WITH DEATH, SOON THERE WOULD BE NO MEN CAPABLE OF GREAT THINGS.

OF COURSE, MY LORD.



THE SWORD IS THE WEAPON OF THE HERO AND THE MURDERER ALIKE.



MY WISHES FOR SAFETY ON YOUR JOURNEY.



THE FROWN AND THE FURROWED BROW ARE THE TOOLS OF BETRAYAL.



WITH SUCH GLANCES DOES FATE DO ITS WORK.



THE FIRST ORDER OF A SAMURAI IS TO SERVE HIS MASTER. A SINGLE BETRAYAL IS MORE SHAMEFUL THAN A THOUSAND MURDERS.



ARE YOU STILL TROUBLED BY MY DECISION, GAKUSHI?

I MUST DISAGREE, MY LORD. THE MAN WAS GUILTY.

THE FOLLOWING DAWN. ATOP THE CASTLE WALLS.



NOW MATSUDAIRA-SAN KNOWS HE IS EXEMPTED FROM YOUR RULE, MY LORD. NEXT TIME--

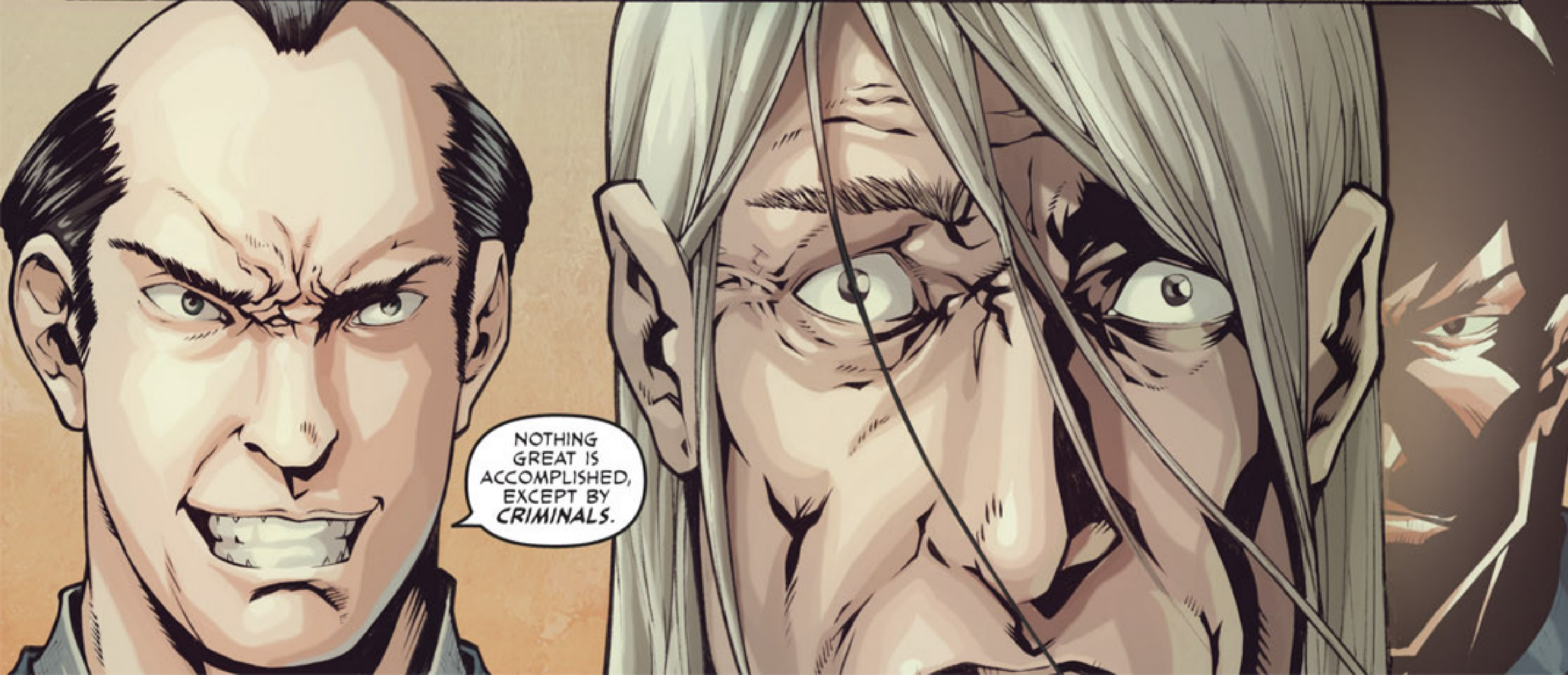


ENOUGH. MATSUDAIRA IS LOYAL.



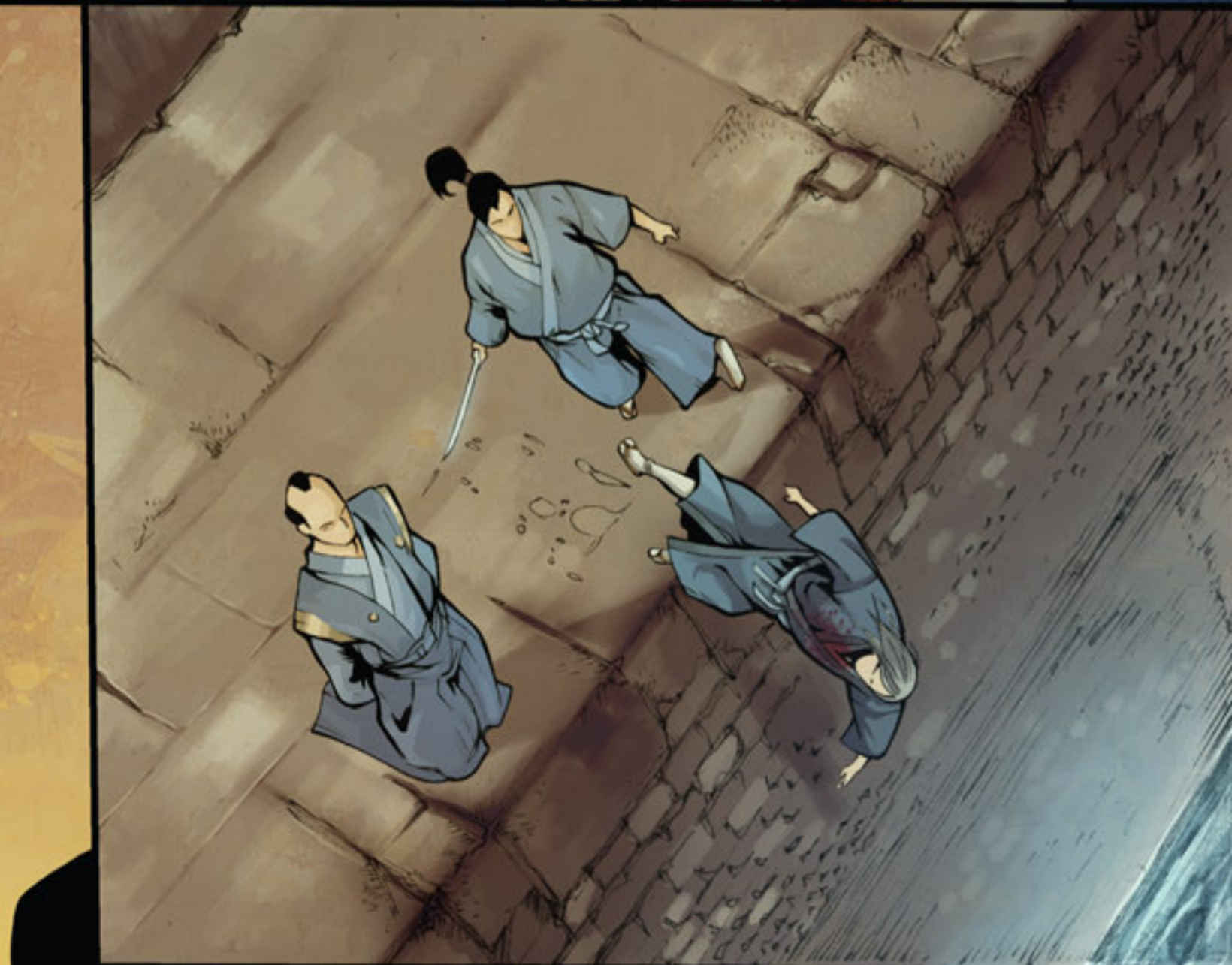
BETRAYAL MAKES WIDOWS OF WOMEN AND MONSTERS OF MEN. THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO SUFFER IT AND THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO COMMIT IT ARE BUT RICE FOR ITS TABLE.

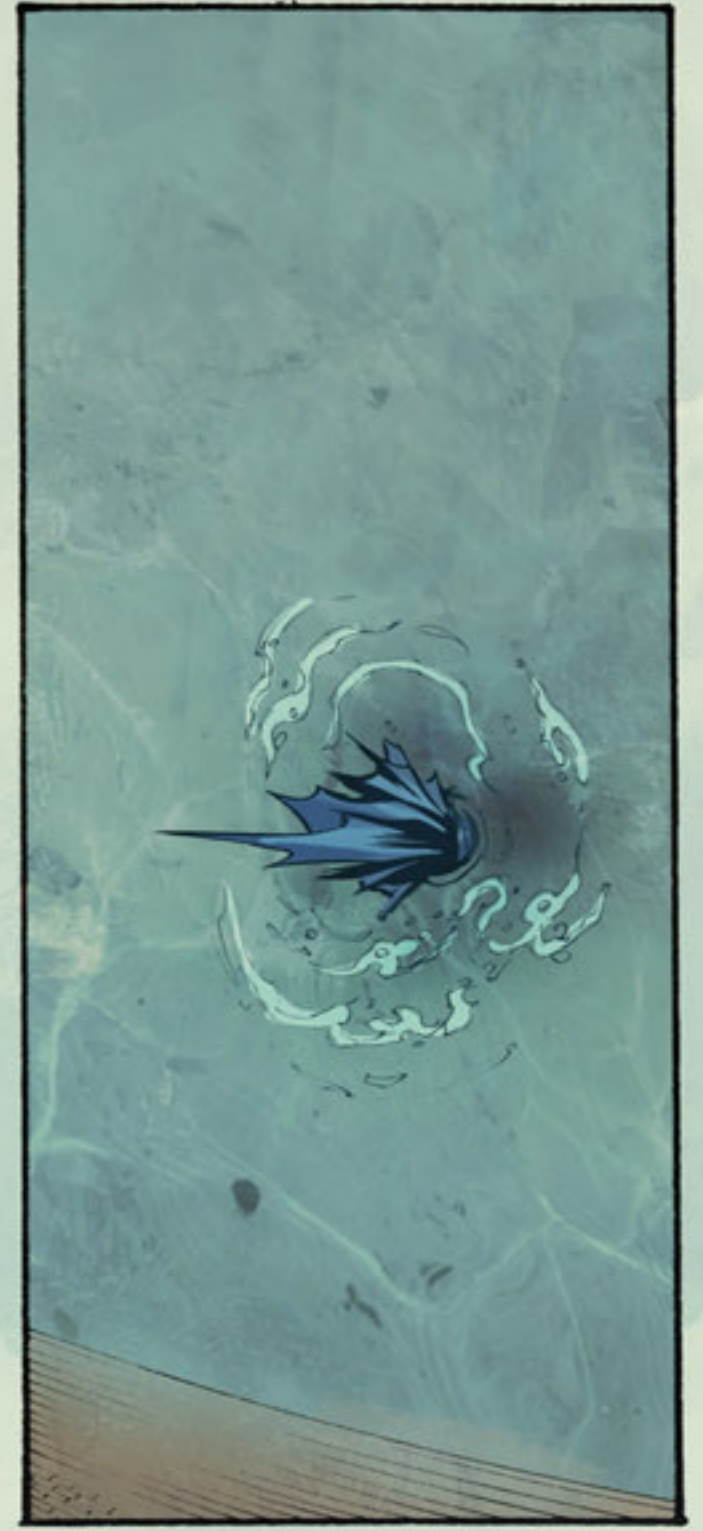
THERE WAS ONE PIECE OF YOUR LESSON I TOOK TO HEART, MY LORD.



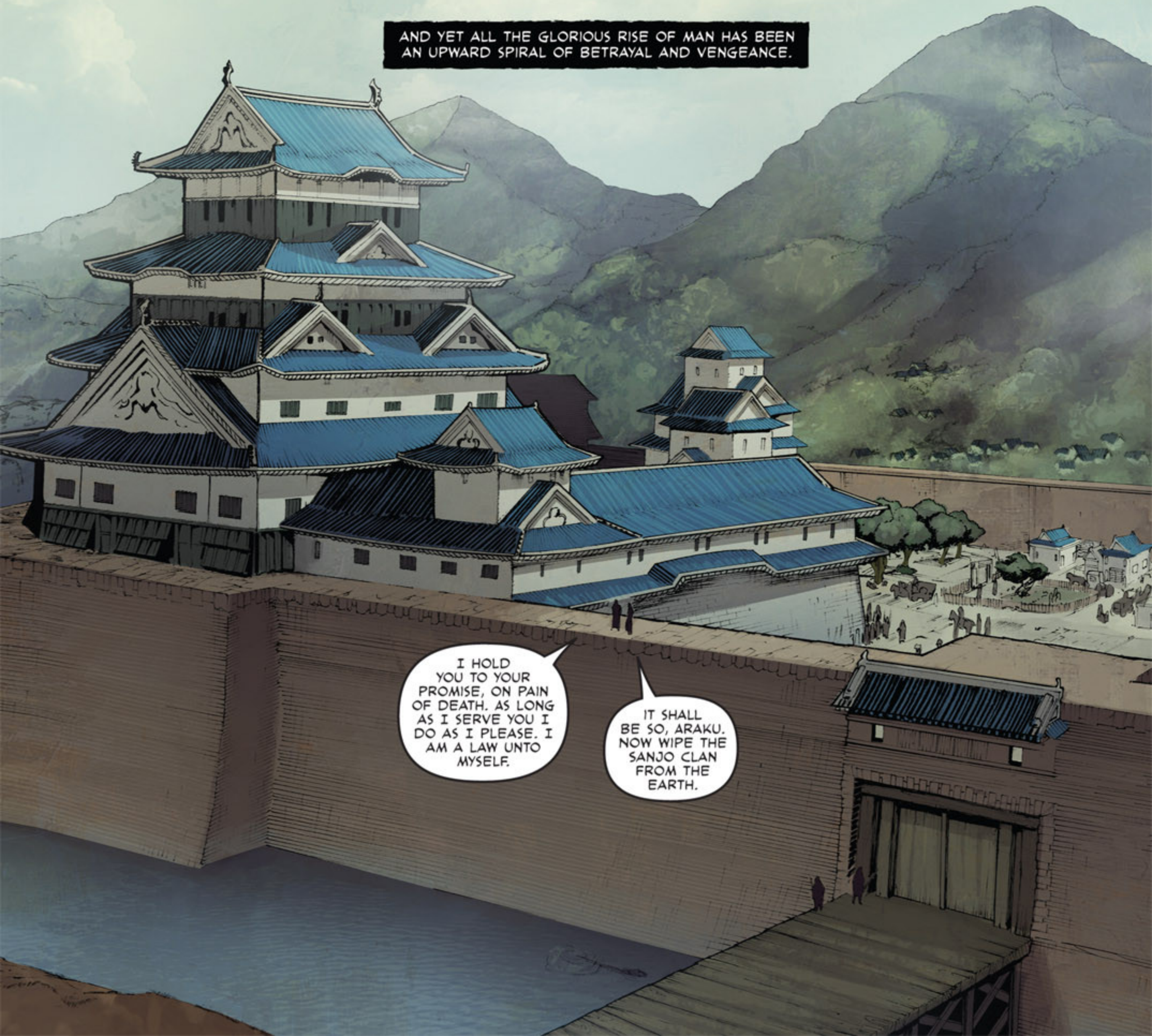
NOTHING GREAT IS ACCOMPLISHED, EXCEPT BY CRIMINALS.







AND YET ALL THE GLORIOUS RISE OF MAN HAS BEEN AN UPWARD SPIRAL OF BETRAYAL AND VENGEANCE.



I HOLD YOU TO YOUR PROMISE, ON PAIN OF DEATH. AS LONG AS I SERVE YOU I DO AS I PLEASE. I AM A LAW UNTO MYSELF.

IT SHALL BE SO, ARAKU. NOW WIPE THE SANJO CLAN FROM THE EARTH.

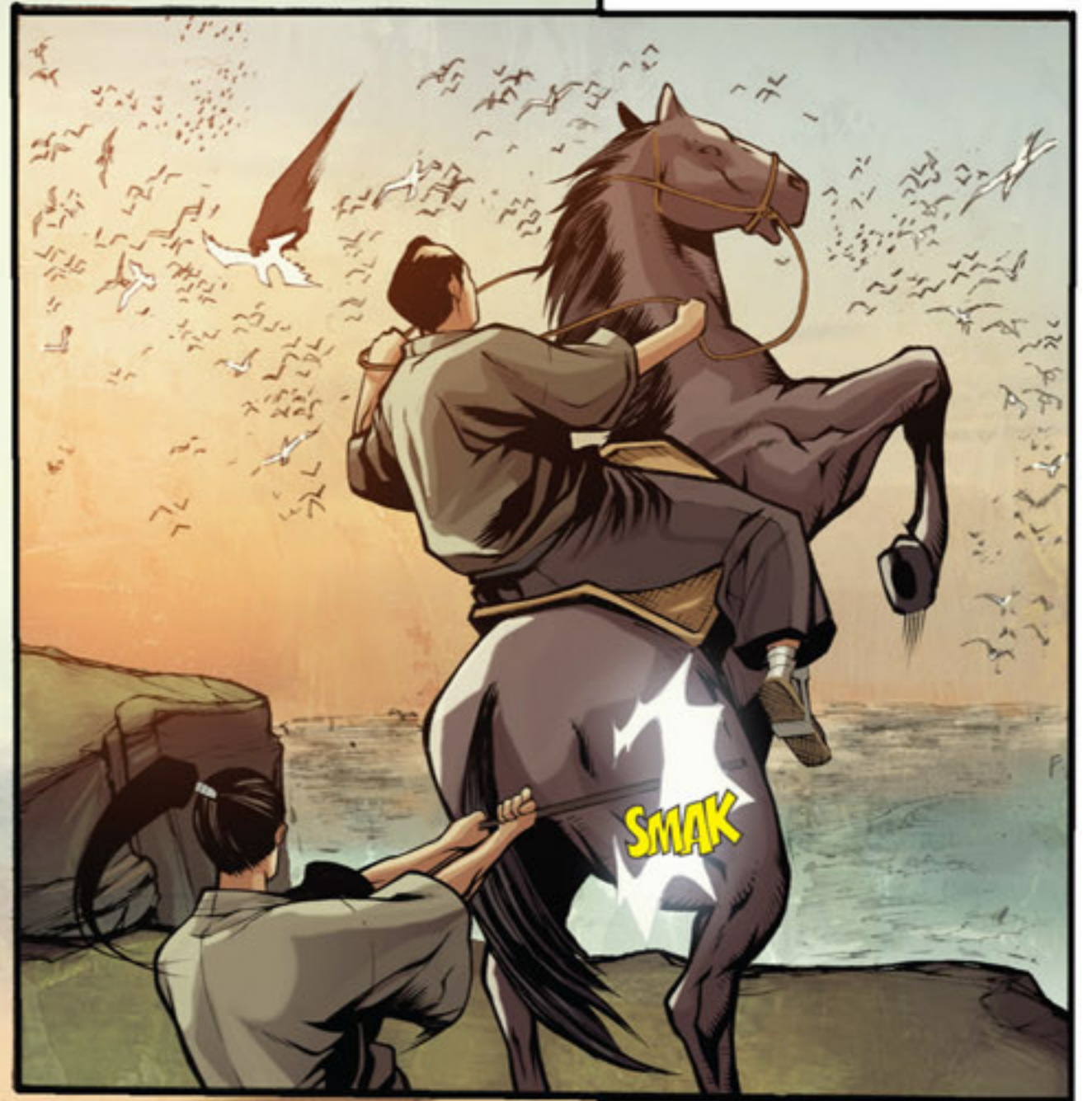
OGA PENINSULA,  
NORTHWEST CORNER  
OF THE SANJO DOMINION.



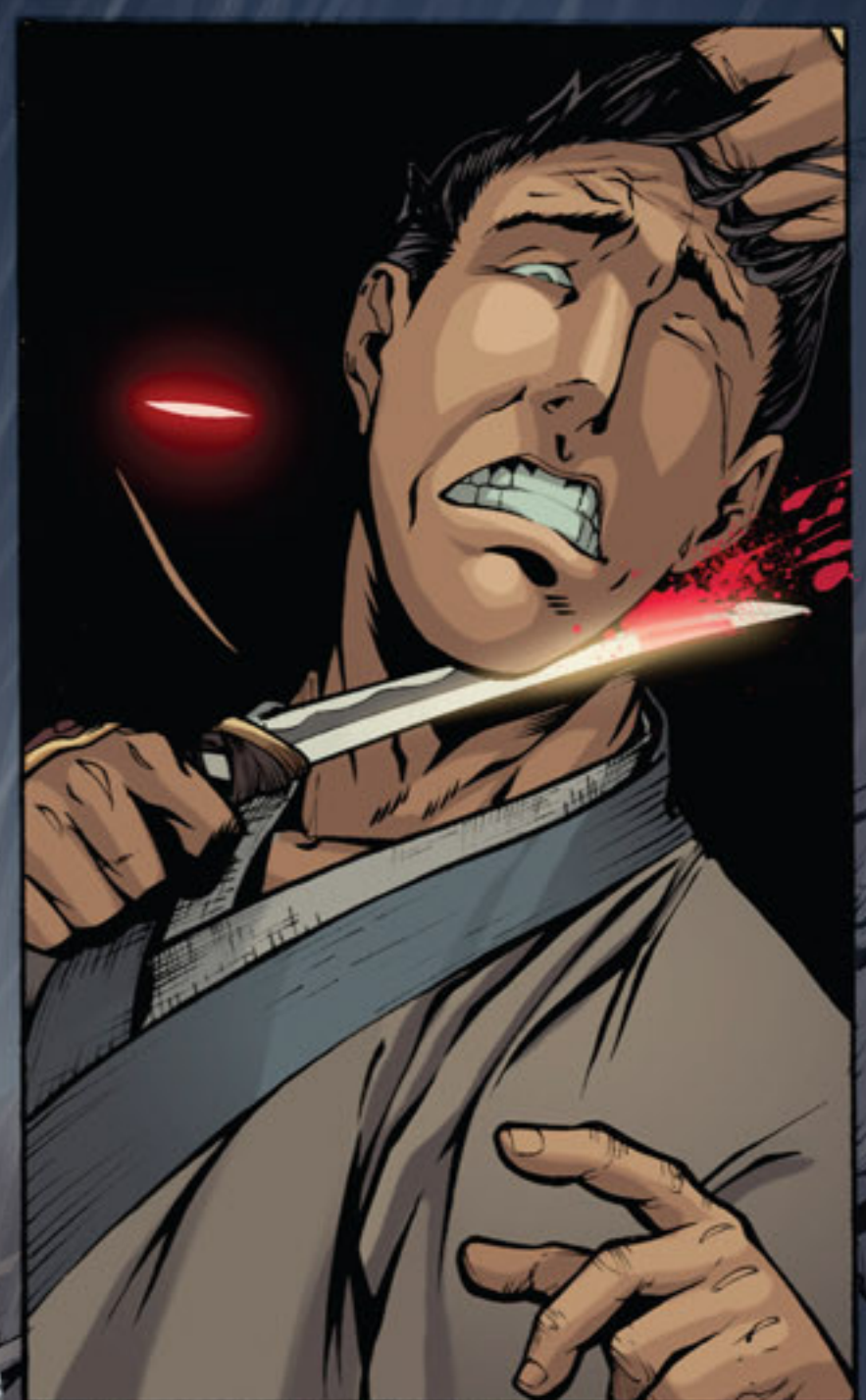
SO IT WAS WITH THE STORY OF THE SANJO CLAN. THE WEAKNESS THAT HAD ALLOWED EVIL MEN TO RALLY TO THE FALCON BANNER DESTROYED IT IN THE END.



SANJO ICHIWARA, LONG RETIRED TO A PEACEFUL CORNER OF THE WORLD, WAS THE FIRST TO FALL AFTER HIS SON. GAKUSHI'S FIRST STRIKES TOOK THE HEAD AND THE HEART.



ELSEWHERE  
AND EVERYWHERE.

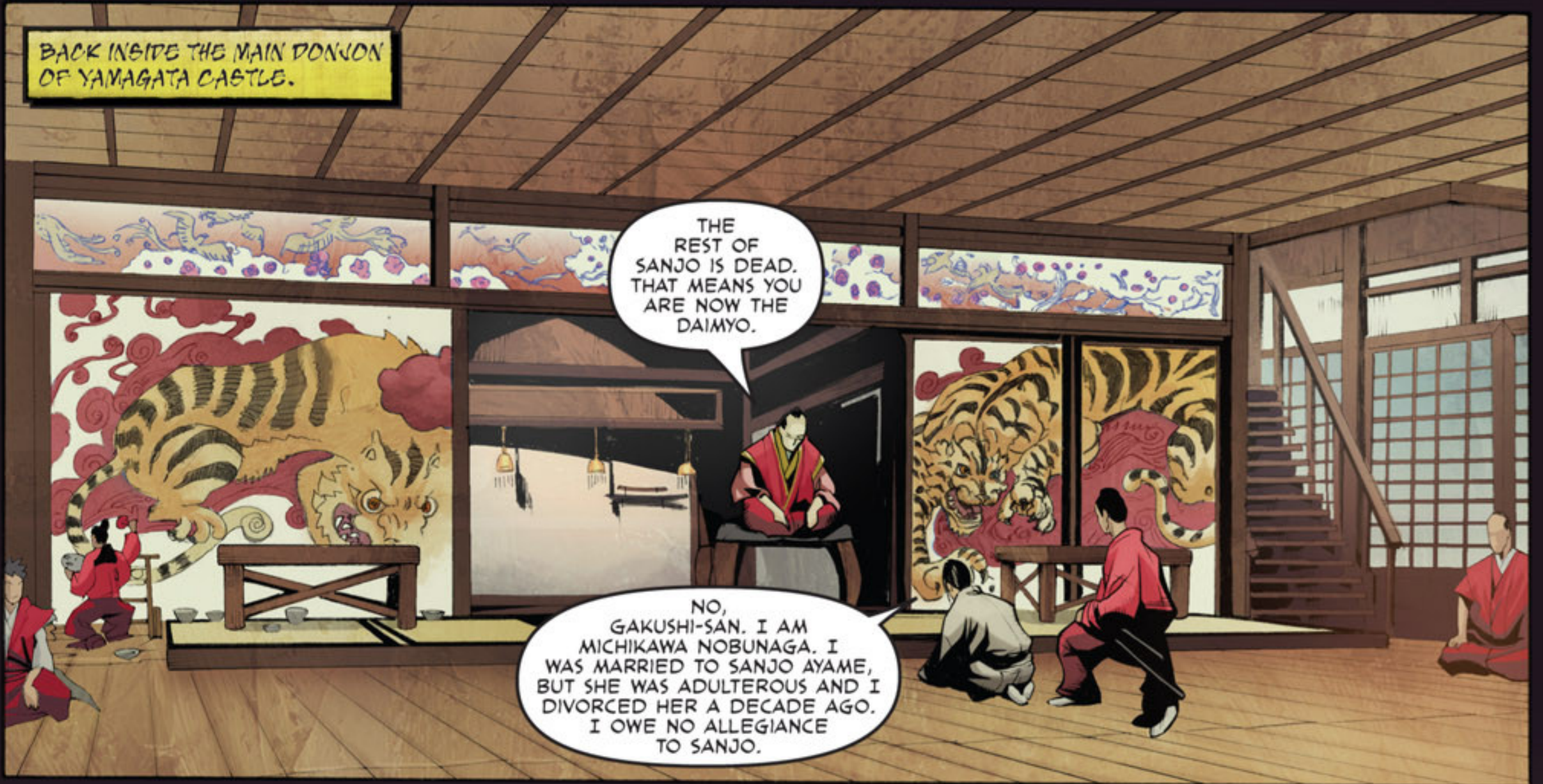


A THOUSAND TENDRIL ECHOES OF GAKUSHI'S BETRAYAL  
SPREAD THROUGH THE REALM, AND REDUCED THE SANJO  
CLAN TO THE ASHES FROM WHICH A SAMURAI WOULD RISE.

YOU ARE  
THE LAST ONE.  
YOU WILL COME  
WITH ME.



BACK INSIDE THE MAIN DONJON OF YAMAGATA CASTLE.



THE REST OF SANJO IS DEAD. THAT MEANS YOU ARE NOW THE DAIMYO.

NO, GAKUSHI-SAN. I AM MICHIKAWA NOBUNAGA. I WAS MARRIED TO SANJO AYAME, BUT SHE WAS ADULTEROUS AND I DIVORCED HER A DECADE AGO. I OWE NO ALLEGIANCE TO SANJO.



YOUR NAME IS SANJO GORO. YOU ARE THE FIFTH SON OF SANJO TEROTOMI. IT IS WRITTEN HERE, PLAIN AS DAY.

PLEASE, SANJO GORO LIVES IN EIWA! HE HASN'T RETURNED IN TWENTY YEARS!



SEND SOME MEN TO FINISH IT.



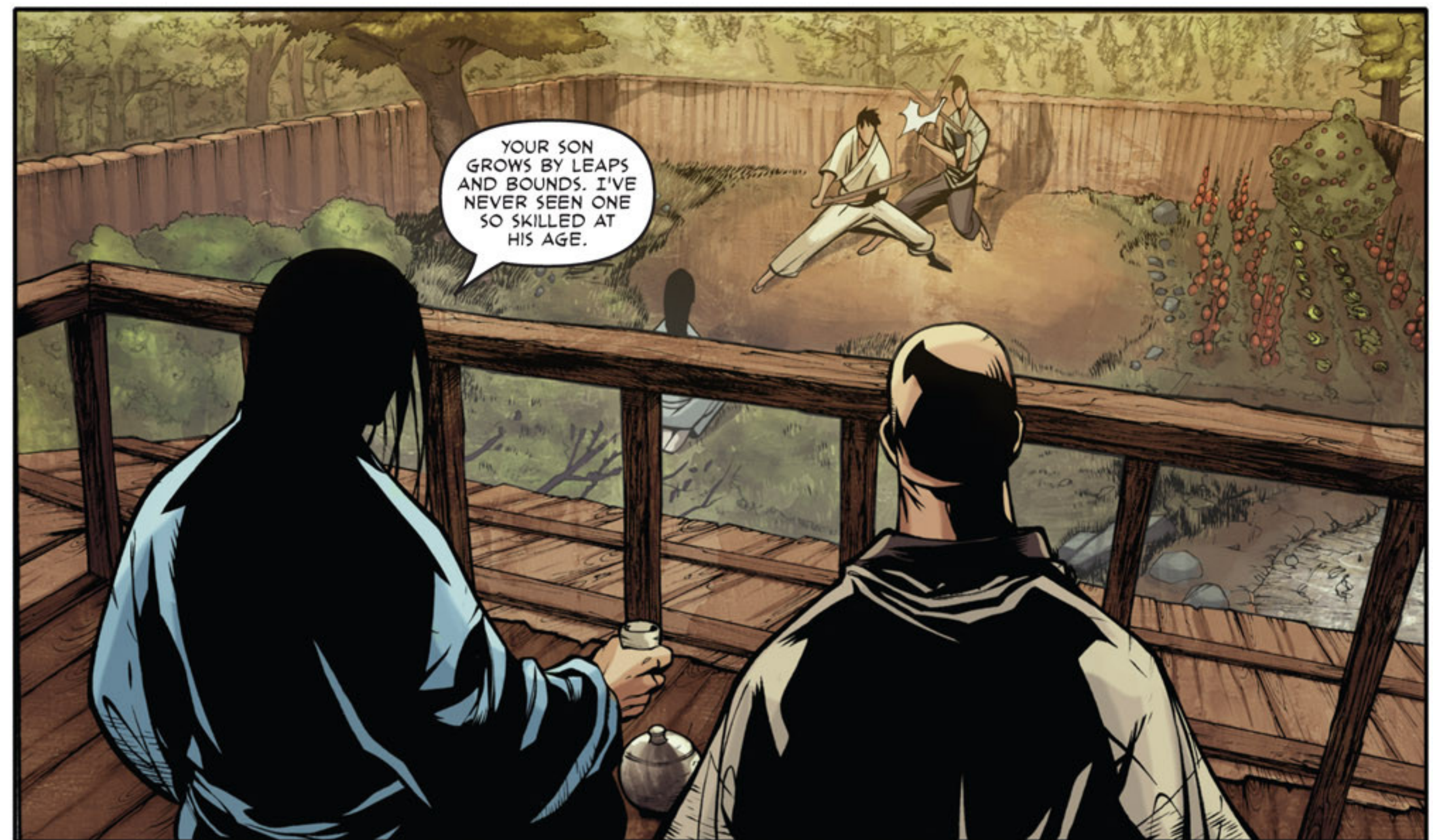
NO, GAKUSHI-SAN, PLEASE!



WITH THAT STROKE THE DICE WERE CAST. BUT THOSE WHOSE LIVES HUNG ON THEIR TUMBLING COULD NOT HEAR THEM CLACKING ACROSS THE FLOOR.











YOU HAVEN'T BEEN OUT OF EIWA IN TWENTY YEARS.

I STILL KNOW GREATNESS WHEN I SEE IT. EVERY DAY HE GROWS MORE DETERMINED.



I HAVE MADE HIM SWORDS.

WILL YOU TELL HIM THE TRUTH?



TOOLS WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE ARE A DANGEROUS THING. ONCE HE HAS SWORDS, HOW MUCH LONGER WILL HE BE SATISFIED AS THE SON OF A BLACKSMITH? HIS BLOOD CRIES OUT FOR HIS MIND TO AWAKEN. TELL HIM, MY FRIEND.



IF I DO HE WILL NOT STOP UNTIL HE HAS ALL MY SECRETS.



A MAN MUST KNOW WHO HE IS IN THIS WORLD. IF YOU CANNOT TELL HIM THE TRUTH ABOUT HIS FATHER, AT LEAST TELL HIM THE TRUTH ABOUT HIMSELF.

LATER. IN THE HOME OF SANDO GORO.



THESE ARE FOR YOU, SON.



FOR ME? BUT...



THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL, FATHER. THANK YOU.





A SWORD IS A WEAPON OF HONOR, BECAUSE TO USE IT, YOU MUST APPROACH YOUR ENEMY CLOSE ENOUGH TO FEEL HIM BLOW HIS LAST BREATH. THINK ON THAT.

TOMORROW, WE LEAVE FOR THE MOUNTAINS. YOU HAVE A LONG ROAD AHEAD BEFORE THOSE ARE PUT TO THEIR BEST USE.



HOW LONG WILL WE BE GONE?



THAT DEPENDS ON HOW QUICKLY YOU LEARN, KATASHI.

STILL LATER.  
AFTER THE RICE.



KATASHI,  
YOU WORK  
QUICKLY AND  
WITHOUT FEAR.  
THERE IS NO WASTED  
MOTION. VERY  
GOOD FOR A  
WARRIOR.

MAYUKO,  
EXCELLENT SMOOTH  
CURVES. SHARP CURVES  
IN A WOMAN'S WRITING ARE  
UNPLEASANT. YOURS HAVE  
THE FLAVOR OF A SPARROW'S  
FOOTSTEPS. FEMININE.  
IMPERMANENT. VERY  
GOOD, INDEED.



MY SON,  
YOU ARE AN ARTIST.  
MY BROTHER HIMSELF  
WOULD BE ENVIOUS, AND  
UJIMORI HAS MASTERED SO  
MANY STYLES OF WRITING  
HE CAN USE THEM  
AS A CODE IN  
BATTLE.



YOU  
SHOULD BE  
CAREFUL.



YOU CAN  
HURT YOURSELF  
IF YOU DON'T KNOW  
WHAT YOU'RE  
DOING.

PERHAPS  
YOU SHOULD  
GIVE ME SOME  
LESSONS.

I HAVE  
BEEN TOLD THAT  
HAY IS A GOOD THING  
TO PRACTICE  
ON.

VERY LATE THAT NIGHT, AFTER THE VILLAGE IS ASLEEP.

I'VE DECIDED I'M NOT LETTING YOU LEAVE. YOU'LL HAVE TO TELL YOUR FATHER YOU'VE CHANGED YOUR MIND.

I'M WAITING FOR HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND.

HE KNEW WHEN HE LET YOU TRAIN THAT YOU WANTED TO BE A SAMURAI.

MY FATHER'S PERMISSION CANNOT MAKE IT SO, AND NEITHER CAN SWORDS.

WHEN WE GET TO UJIMORI'S COURT, YOU WILL BE A SAMURAI... IF YOU STILL WANT TO COME WITH ME.

WILL YOU WAIT FOR ME? WILL YOU WAIT UNTIL I GET BACK?

OF COURSE I'LL WAIT FOR YOU! ONLY... STAY HERE WITH ME TONIGHT.

YOU'LL GET IN TROUBLE.

THEN I'LL GET IN TROUBLE. JUST STAY WITH ME... PLEASE.

DAWN.

ALL THINGS GOOD AND EVIL ARE UNDER THE WAY. EVEN BETRAYAL IS BUT A RIPPLE THROUGH THE WEAVE OF HUMAN DESTINY.

YOU TWO!  
SENTRIES!





WE  
MUST WAKE  
JUN.

A SAMURAI'S FATE IS DETERMINED AT THE  
MOMENT OF HIS BIRTH. BUT, SINCE THE  
SAMURAI CANNOT KNOW THIS FATE UNTIL  
IT ARRIVES, HIS LIFE IS STILL UNDER HIS  
OWN CONTROL.



SANJO  
GORO!!!









YOU WANT ME?

YOU WANT MY DEATH?



HERE I AM! TAKE IT!

MEET DEATH WITH THE SAME HEART AND THE SAME MIND AS ONE USES TO DO ANYTHING ELSE. THE MOMENT OF DEATH IS NO DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER.



SO TOO MEET LIFE IN THIS SAME SPIRIT. AS IF DEATH WERE ALWAYS AT HAND, YET AS IF ONE WERE AN IMMORTAL.



SHOW NO MERCY TO ONE'S SELF, BUT EVEN LESS TO ONE'S ENEMIES, FOR YOUR FATE AND HIS HAVE BOTH BEEN WRITTEN SINCE BEFORE THE FIRST DAWN.

MINORU-SAN?

YOUR SISTER IS IN THE BARN. TAKE HER AND RUN. THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO NOW BUT SURVIVE.

SHIK





COME ON!  
ARE NONE OF YOU  
MAN ENOUGH TO  
FINISH ME?!

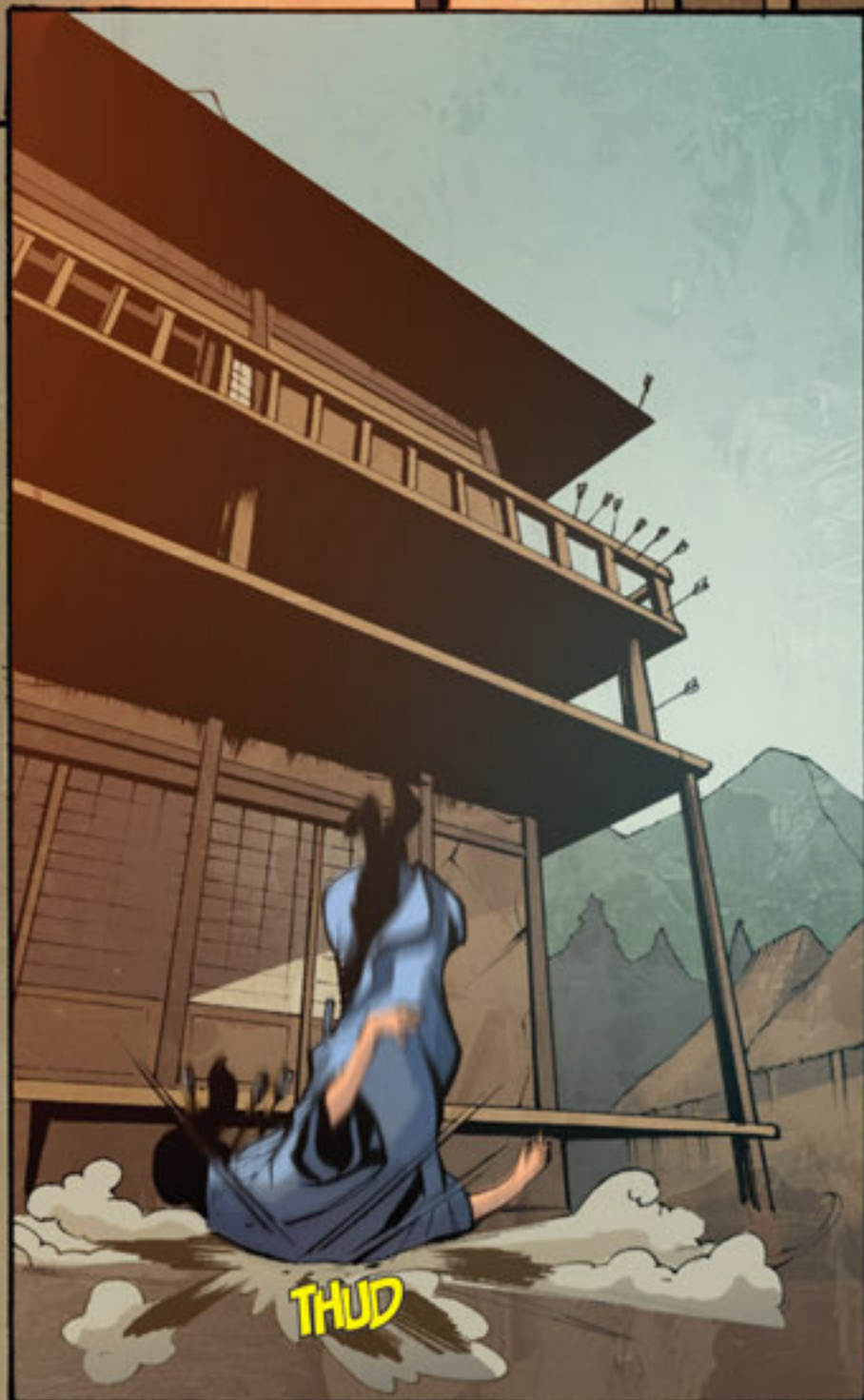


KATASHI!



UGHH!

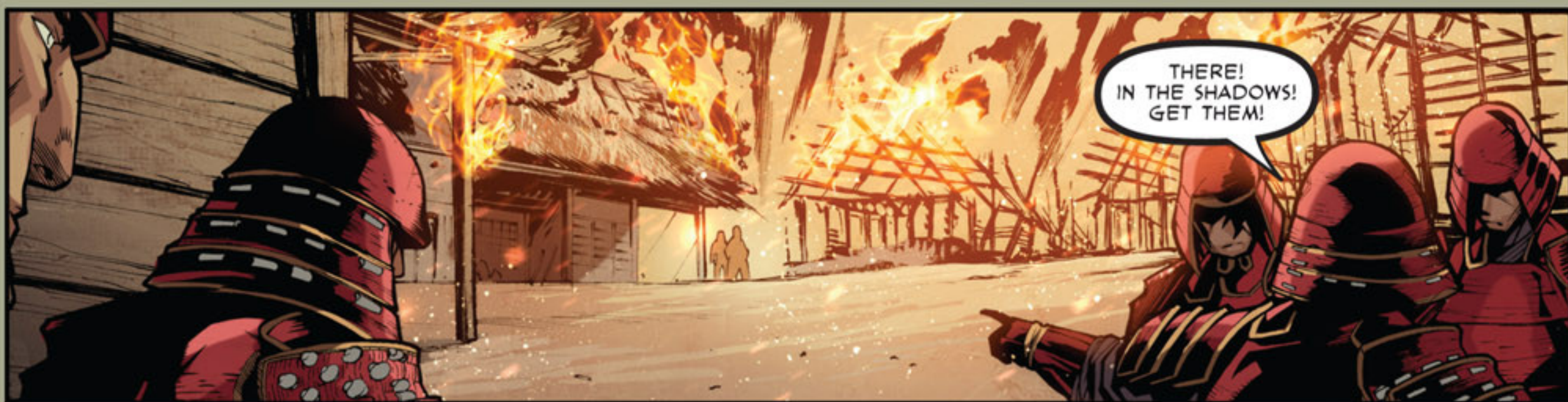
AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH,  
RESOLVE TO DIE FACING  
ONE'S ENEMY.




THUD



EVEN A CORPSE  
SHOULD NOT RETREAT.





EVEN IF IT SEEMS CERTAIN THAT YOU WILL LOSE, RETALIATE.

NEITHER WISDOM NOR TECHNIQUE HAS A PLACE IN THIS.

A REAL MAN DOES NOT THINK OF VICTORY OR DEFEAT.

AT LEAST YOU ARE MEN ENOUGH TO PUT DOWN YOUR BOWS AND FACE ME WITH STEEL!

COME ON, THEN! WE WILL DIE IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS!

HE PLUNGES RECKLESSLY TOWARDS AN IRRATIONAL DEATH.

BY DOING THIS, YOU WILL AWAKEN FROM YOUR DREAMS.



A MAN EXISTS FOR A GENERATION. HIS NAME LASTS FOR ALL TIME.

DO NOT BREAK THE BONDS OF FAMILY.

WE'RE ALL THAT'S LEFT. THE ENTIRE CLAN IS DEAD.

THEN YOU'RE THE DAIMYO NOW.

CAREFUL. THERE ARE TWO SENTRIES. STAY LOW.

FROM THIS MOMENT, YOU ARE MY SAMURAI. YOUR FIRST ORDER IS TO GET US TO SAFETY.

WHEN THE SENTRIES DIE, FOLLOW ME THROUGH THE FIELD.

WE WILL ALWAYS BE BEHIND YOU, MY LOVE.







WHEN VENGEANCE IS REQUIRED...

TAKE IT.

WHEN COMFORT IS REQUIRED...

GIVE IT.



YOU'VE SET US A DANGEROUS PATH. MY LOVE KNOWS HE IS YOUR SAMURAI, BUT SOON HE WILL DISCOVER HE IS NO LONGER YOUR FRIEND.

THAT'S WHY YOU MUST HELP ME GUIDE HIM.



KILL HIM!!!


IN ALL THINGS, DO EVERYTHING THAT IS REQUIRED, AND DO NOTHING ELSE.



WE MUST HAVE OUR DAY OF VENGEANCE, JUN.



AS YOU SAY, SISTER, SO DO I SWEAR. UNTIL MY LAST BREATH.



LOOK FOR DESTINY AND IT DOES NOT  
EXIST. FOCUS YOUR MIND ON LIVING,  
AND DESTINY WILL APPEAR.

NEXT ISSUE:  
*The Rise of  
Haniya Toshimitsu.*

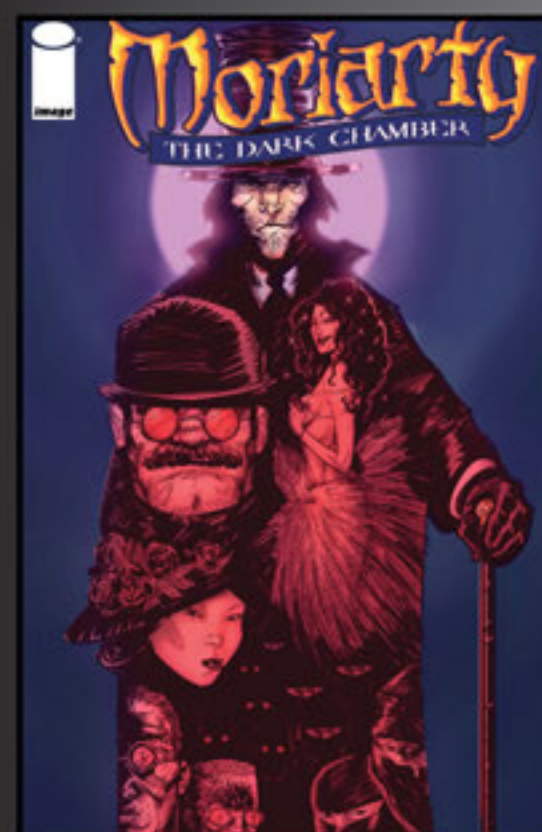
# DON'T MISS THE! NEXT ISSUE!



**SAMURAI'S BLOOD #2**  
ON SALE JULY 2011



**BLUE ESTATE #3**  
ON SALE NOW



**MORIARTY #2**  
ON SALE NOW



**UNDYING LOVE #3**  
ON SALE NEXT WEEK