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THE DARKNESS

COMPENDIUM

VOLUME 1





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EIDOS
CORE
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DREAMER

TOMB RAIDER

Darkness



TAN
01

STEVE



ESTACADO

JACKIE ESTACADO, A YOUNG MAFIA HIT-MAN, INHERITED A POWER ON THE EVE OF HIS 21ST BIRTHDAY. THIS POWER, ALSO KNOWN AS THE DARKNESS, IS PASSED DOWN FROM FATHER TO SON IN THE MOMENT OF CONCEPTION. WHILE THIS MAKES ANY SEXUAL ENCOUNTER A LIFE ENDANGERING RISK, HE DOES GET A BEVY OF DEMONIC FRIENDS AND THE ABILITY TO CREATE A MULTITUDE OF THINGS OUT OF MERE SHADOW. IT ALSO PUTS A CERTAIN CRUEL SIGNATURE ON THE HITS HE STILL PERFORMS FOR HIS UNCLE, THE MAFIA DON.



FREE SPIRITED AND BEHOLDEN TO NO ONE, MULTIMILLIONAIRE ARCHAEOLOGIST LARA CROFT TRAVELS THE GLOBE IN SEARCH FOR ACTION AND ADVENTURE. AS A GIRL, LARA SURVIVED A PLANE CRASH THAT KILLED BOTH OF HER PARENTS. THE BRUSH WITH DEATH LEFT HER FOREVER UNSATISFIED WITH THE QUIET LIFE. LARA'S NOT LIVING UNLESS SHE'S FACING DEATH. AND WHEN SHE COMES FACE TO FACE WITH A MENACE TO SOCIETY, SHE'S NOT AFRAID TO HAND OUT 9MM JUSTICE.

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NYPD DETECTIVE SARA PEZZINI IS THE WIELDER OF THE WITCHBLADE, A SUPERNATURAL WEAPON OF THE STRONGEST FEMALE PSYCHE OF AN ERA. SARA BELIEVES IN HUMANE JUSTICE, BUT INCREASINGLY SHE FACES SITUATIONS THAT THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS ILL-EQUIPPED TO HANDLE. WHEN A GUN AND A BADGE AREN'T ENOUGH FOR THE JOB, SARA COUNTS ON THE POWER OF THE WITCHBLADE.

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DID YOU EVER HAVE ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHERE ALL OF YOUR PLANS JUST WENT AWRY?

WHERE ONE MOMENT YOU'D THOUGHT YOU HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL, AND SUDDENLY YOU DISCOVERED THE REALITY COULDN'T BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH?

I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY HAD ONE OF THOSE DAYS...

...UNTIL NOW.

UMM, DO ANY OF YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS?

NO.

NOPE.

NEGATIVE.

CAN'T SAY'S I DO.

NOT ME.

UH, CHECK PLEASE?

I DIDN'T THINK SO.

I SHOULD'VE EXPECTED THIS...



...AFTER ALL, THIS MISSION SMELLED OF TROUBLE FROM THE MOMENT IT BEGAN...

THIS IS TERRIBLE!!!

HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

OH YE GODS, HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART HAD JUST RECENTLY ACQUIRED A PARTICULARLY VALUABLE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN EXHIBIT FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM...

THAT EXHIBIT WAS NOW TAKING UP MOST OF THE FLOOR...IN PIECES.

YEAH, WE GOT IT PEGGED AS VANDALISM.

AH, YES. BY THOSE TERRIBLE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN HATERS, NO DOUBT.

NO CAMERA
NO FOOD
NO DRINK
NO DOG

THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKING, MS. CROFT. AS I TOLD YOU WHEN I CONTACTED YOU, THE POLICE HAVEN'T PUT A HIGH PRIORITY ON THE ONE MISSING PIECE-- THE SC---!!!

I REMEMBER... THE PENDANT OF CLEOPATRA.

HOW COULD I NOT REMEMBER?

I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

AND NOW IT'S BEEN TAKEN GOD KNOWS WHERE.

AND SOMEHOW I NEED TO FIND IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

DON'T WORRY, DOCTOR SMITH. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.



I NEEDED HELP AND I NEEDED IT QUICKLY.

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THIS!!!

THE POLICE ARE CONTENT TO WAIT FOR THE PENDANT TO TURN UP WHEN THE THIEVES TRY TO SELL IT.

BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY TRINKET.

LUCKILY, I WAS IN NEW YORK AND KNEW EXACTLY WHO TO TURN TO.

SARA PEZZINI,
HOMICIDE DETECTIVE.

I'VE HEARD ABOUT IT. EVERYBODY HAS. THE TIMES HAS BEEN RUNNING STORIES ON THIS EXHIBIT FOR WEEKS.

THE CENTERPIECE OF THE EXHIBIT. THE PENDANT THAT WAS SUPPOSEDLY WORN BY CLEOPATRA— MAKING HER IRRESISTIBLE TO MEN.

IT'S TRUE, SARA. I KNOW IT!

BUT HOW CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT TO ANYONE— ESPECIALLY IN THIS CITY— WITHOUT THEM THINKING YOU'RE DAFT?

KING TUT'S CURSE AFFECTED DOZENS OF PEOPLE. BUT SINCE IT DEFIED LOGIC, IT WAS CHALKED UP TO COINCIDENCE.

THERE ARE SO MANY EXAMPLES OF UNEXPLAINABLE EVENTS— YET PEOPLE REFUSE TO BELIEVE IN THE SUPERNATURAL.

THAT'S WHY TALKING TO YOU IS SO REFRESHING.

YEAH. I'VE BECOME MORE... OPEN MINDED... THESE PAST FEW YEARS.

...AND BEARER OF THE WITCHBLADE. A WEAPON OF IMMENSE POWER— SOMETHING THAT COULD MAKE ANYONE MORE OPEN MINDED ABOUT THE PARANORMAL.

OKAY, LARA. I'VE BEEN LOOKING INTO THIS ROBBERY SINCE YOU CALLED AND WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT IT'S A MAFIA JOB.

GREAT. NOW WHAT DO I DO? WALK UP TO TONY SOPRANO AND ASK FOR THE PENDANT BACK BECAUSE IT MAY BE DANGEROUS?

NO. THAT'S PROBABLY NOT SUCH A GREAT IDEA. BUT I DO KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN.

SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE COMMUNITY AND UNDERSTANDS THE SUPERNATURAL.

"...JUST IGNORE HIM WHEN HE HITS ON YOU."

VROOOOM

I REALLY GOTTA THANK PEZZINI FOR GETTING US TOGETHER.

JACKIE ESTACADO.

I THOUGHT ALL HER FRIENDS WERE COPS!!!

I HAD NO IDEA THAT SHE KNEW SUCH INTERESTING AND BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.

AFFABLE BUT RUTHLESS MAFIA HITMAN.

BUT SERIOUSLY, I HAVE TROUBLE SEEING YOU AS THE WORLD-TRAVELING, DOWN-AND-DIRTY ARCHEOLOGIST TYPE. ALL THAT DUST AND BUGS AND STUFF.

REALLY.

YEAH. AND THE FACT THAT YOU'RE INDEPENDENTLY WEALTHY ISN'T SO BAD, EITHER!

AND, ACCORDING TO SARA, POSSESSOR OF SOME SORT OF IMMENSE MYSTICAL POWER CALLED THE DARKNESS.

OH, OF COURSE NOT.

SO WHATTA VA SAY?

AND FULL-TIME WOMANIZER.

I SAY YOU KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD

WHY? YOU'RE WAY NICER TO LOOK AT. AND THIS IS A RENTAL, ANYWAY--!

OH, YEAH. I KNOW. BUSINESS FIRST.

NO. THAT'S BUSINESS PERIOD

YEAH, YEAH. YOU'RE RIGHT. ONE STEP AT A TIME.





THIS TONY CUGLIANTI'S KINDA QUICK TEMPERED—SO JUST STAY COOL AND FOLLOW MY LEAD.

WHATEVER YOU SAY, BOSS.



YOU KNOW THE DRILL, ESTACADO.

THAT I DO.

THESE GENTLEMEN ARE NOT TOUCHING ME.

THEN YOU DON'T SEE MIST—



HANG ON.

IS THIS GOOD ENOUGH?

SHYEAHH!!!

LOOKS LIKE THE LADY'S PACKIN'!

SHYEAH.

HE'S BY THE POOL.



VA KNOW, YOU'RE IMPRESSING ME MORE AND MORE, MS. CROFT.

THANKS.



KEEP YOUR MIND ON THE JOB, ESTACADO, OR I'LL KICK YOUR ASS!



AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE THAT, BUSINESS FIRST, OKAY?

BUT PLEASE SAY "AH-99" AGAIN FOR ME WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER.

I MUST ADMIT, HE DID HAVE A CERTAIN CHARM ABOUT HIM...IN AN IGNORANT, MORONIC KIND OF WAY.

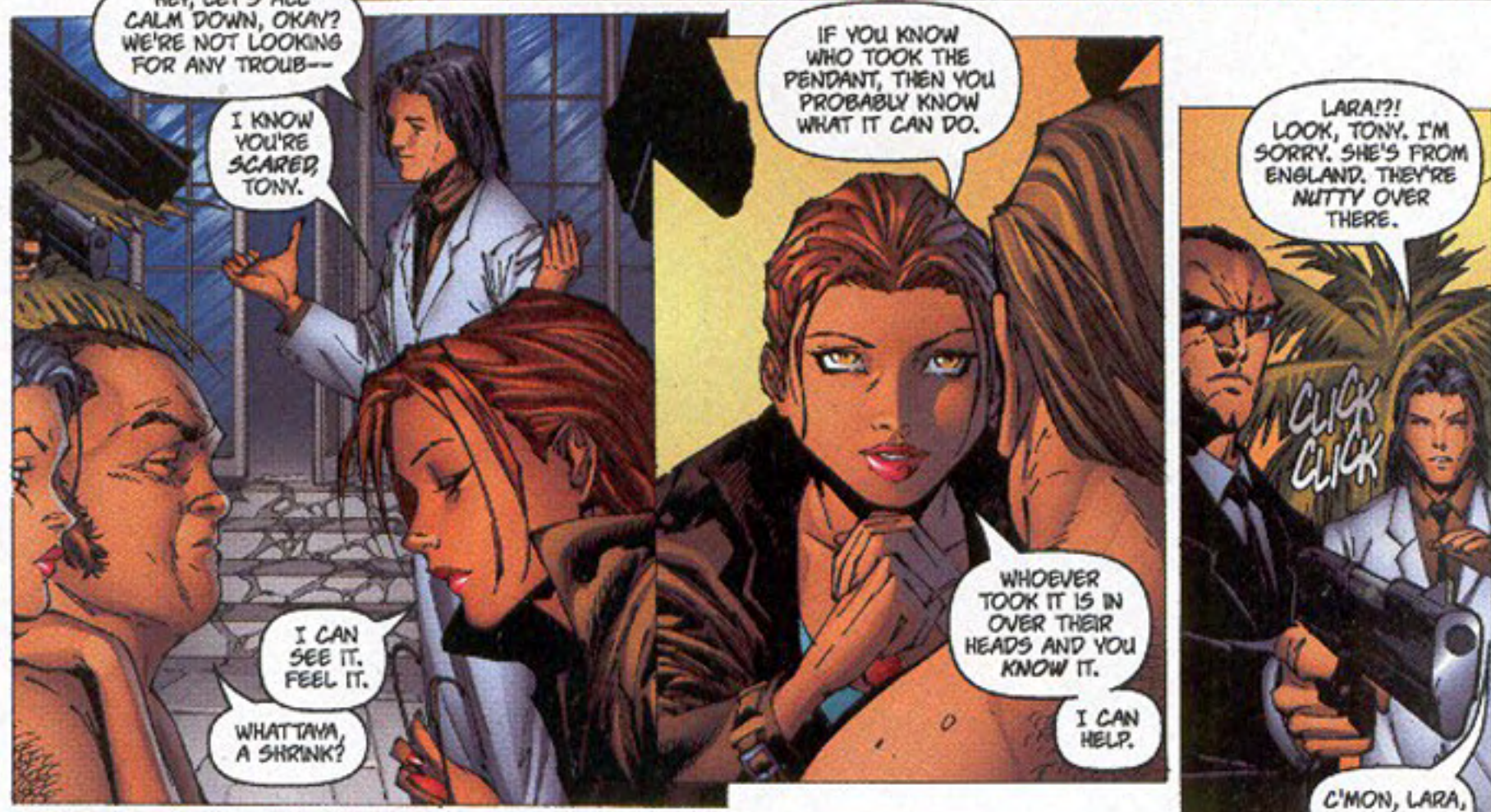


JACKIE ESTACADO.
AND FRIEND.

I HEAR YA BEEN ASKIN' ABOUT THE MUSEUM JOB AND CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT'S WHY YA WANNA TALK TO ME.

IF I'M RIGHT, THEN YOU'D BEST JUS' KEEP ON WALKIN'. CUZ I KNOW NOTHIN'.

NOTHIN'!



HEY, LET'S ALL CALM DOWN, OKAY? WE'RE NOT LOOKING FOR ANY TROUB--

I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED, TONY.

IF YOU KNOW WHO TOOK THE PENDANT, THEN YOU PROBABLY KNOW WHAT IT CAN DO.

I CAN SEE IT. FEEL IT.

WHATTAYA, A SHRINK?

WHOEVER TOOK IT IS IN OVER THEIR HEADS AND YOU KNOW IT.

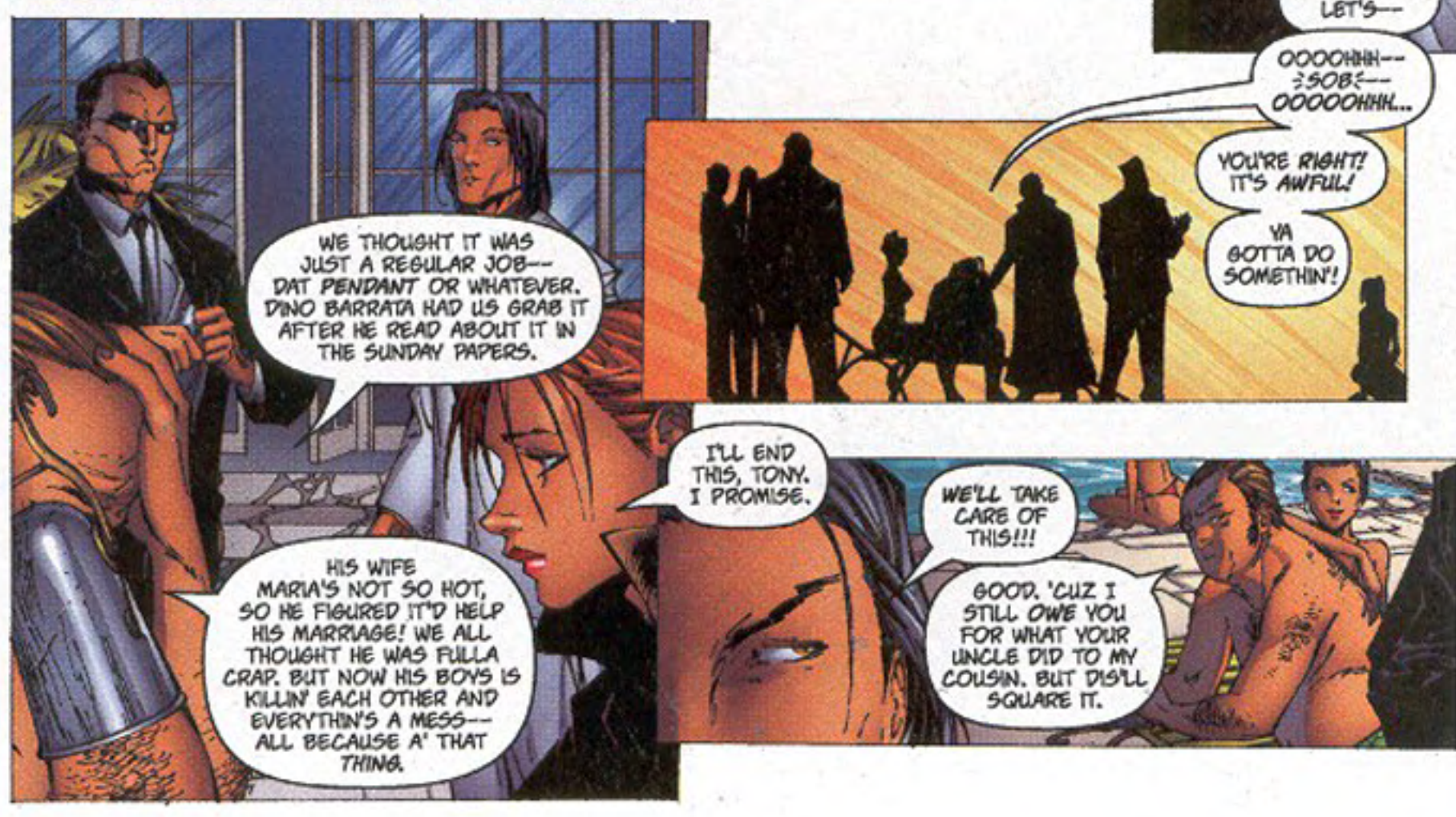
I CAN HELP.



LARA?! LOOK, TONY. I'M SORRY. SHE'S FROM ENGLAND. THEY'RE NUTTY OVER THERE.

CLICK
CLICK

C'MON, LARA, LET'S--



WE THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A REGULAR JOB-- DAT PENDANT OR WHATEVER. DINO BARRATA HAD US GRAB IT AFTER HE READ ABOUT IT IN THE SUNDAY PAPERS.

HIS WIFE MARIA'S NOT SO HOT, SO HE FIGURED IT'D HELP HIS MARRIAGE! WE ALL THOUGHT HE WAS FULLA CRAP. BUT NOW HIS BOYS IS KILLIN' EACH OTHER AND EVERYTHIN'S A MESS-- ALL BECAUSE A' THAT THING.

I'LL END THIS, TONY. I PROMISE.

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!!!

GOOD. 'CUZ I STILL OWE YOU FOR WHAT YOUR UNCLE DID TO MY COUSIN. BUT DIS'LL SQUARE IT.

OOOOHHH--
SOB?
OOOOHHH...

YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S AWFUL!

YA GOTTA DO SOMETHIN'!

LATER...

EN ROUTE TO BARATTI'S HOUSE, OUR RIDE WAS BLISSFULLY SILENT. I'D BEGUN TO THINK THAT ESTACADO WAS BECOMING NERVOUS AS OUR ENCOUNTER DREW NEAR...

HMMM.

YEAH— THAT'S RIGHT!

SALVADOR!

WHAT?

SALVADOR— TONY'S COUSIN! I TOOK HIM OUT AT A YANKEE GAME!!! I WAS ALWAYS PROUD'A THAT ONE.

JUST TAKE ME TO THE PENDANT AND LET ME OFF. I DON'T WISH TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR DREADFUL CAREER OR THE MEN YOU "WHACKED—"

I LOVE THE WAY YOU SAY THAT "WHACKED." AND I ONLY GET THE BAD GUYS, BY THE WAY.

SHUSH.

DOES THIS MEAN OUR DATE IS OFF—?

SHUSH.

CAN I TELL YOU THAT WE'RE HERE?

WELL GOOD-BYE, THEN, MR. ESTACADO.

YOU'RE NOT GOIN' IN THERE ALONE.

FINE. THEN JUST STAY BEHIND ME.

AND WHEN I TELL YOU, AVERT YOUR EYES.

WHY?

LOOK AROUND YOU, ESTACADO. THESE ARE MEN WHO FELL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE PENDANT. I DON'T WISH FOR EITHER OF US TO END UP LIKE THEM.

THANKS, LARA. I TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT.

WHATEVER.

IN RETROSPECT, I PROBABLY SHOULD'VE LEFT HIM OUTSIDE.

BUT I DON'T THINK I TRULY UNDERSTOOD HOW INSIDIOUS AND POWERFUL THE PENDANT WAS.

NOT UNTIL THIS VERY MOMENT...

...SEEING THE CARNAGE...

...AND THE WOMAN WHO INADVERTENTLY CAUSED IT.



I-- I THINK YOU SHOULD LEAVE NOW, JACKIE.

THE PENDANT CAN'T AFFECT ME.



WHOA.

I KNOW. IT'S AWFUL. AND IT MUST END NOW--

SHE IS HOT!!!

OH, NO. JACKIE. PLEASE--



HELP ME.





ESTACADO?

JACKIE?



DAMN.

PLEASE HELP ME GET IT OFF!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THIS THING... I KNEW IT WAS STOLEN... BUT DINO... OH, DINO...

GOD IS PUNISHING ME.

HIS OWN MEN KILLED HIM-- AND EACH OTHER-- FOR ME!!!



OH, POOR BABY. LET ME HOLD YOU.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SEEING...



BUT I MUST PUT A STOP TO THIS NOW!



NO!!!!





I—
MMPPHH—!!!

MMMMPPLLLL

SLRRRRRIPP

I'M SO
SORRY...



THWAP

I THINK YOU
SHOULD LEAVE THE
LADY ALONE!

UULPHH

YEAH!



SARA HAD TOLD ME THAT
JACKIE'S DARKNESS POWER
WAS A SIGHT TO BEHOLD.



BUT YOU REALLY
HAVE NO IDEA...

...UNTIL YOU'RE
THE TARGET OF IT.



WOW--- THAT'S A PAIR A... GUNS!!!

YEAH--- QUITE A HANDFUL!

BOSS, YA WANT WE SHOULD TAKE CARE OF HER?



LOOK, I HAVE NO TIME FOR THESE GAMES!

UH, NOW'S THE PART WHERE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TA BE SCARED.

THIS IS NO FUN IF YOU AIN'T SCARED!



JUST KILL HER ALREADY.



OR I'LL DO IT MYSELF!



I NEED SOME TIME ALONE WITH MY NEW LADYFRIEND AND THAT BRIT CHICK'S BUMMIN' ME OUT.



WAIT.

SOMETHIN'S AMISS HERE.



YOU'RE, LIKE, HOT.

BUT THE BOSS IS ALL INTO HER...AND SHE'S A PIG---



WHAP

THAT WASN'T NICE.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

OH, I DON'T CARE-- I'LL KICK ALL OF YOUR ASSES!!!

SILRRPILL

AND THAT'S HOW I GOT INTO THIS PREDICAMENT.

NOW I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO DO...

MY GUNS!!! PLEASE!!!

THEY WON'T HELP, BUT BE MY GUEST...

PLEASE STOP...

OH, I'LL STOP, MY LOVE.

JUST GIVE ME A FEW MORE SECONDS...

UNGH!!! LET GO!!!

PAM PAM

THE LITTLE CREATURE WAS RIGHT. THAT DIDN'T HELP...

...BUT...

...HMMM...

THIS SEEMS LIKE A LAME SCHEME, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE...



END.