

MERGER

by
RAMSEY ESS

SCENE FOUR: GALA KIDNAPPING

PAGE 1 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - WIDE. A big panel. We're at a fancy gala, held on the top floor of Institute Prime. Large, circular windows overlook Ordo at sunset. Several groups of GUESTS have clustered off, but at the center stands GADSHILL.

As he impersonates Rouen, he has immaculate posture and the tousled hair of a Roman emperor. He wears a more muted robe and stole than at work, with matching cravat. Behind him stands ATHENA, wearing elegant business attire and her ever-present glowing tablet. She allows herself a glass of wine, but still listens attentively to Gadshill's conversation. On the fringes of the panel stands Rouen's wife, TRUDÉ.

NOTE: Whereas earlier Gadshill's impression of Rouen was developing, going forward it's in full effect -- there's no slouching and, except where noted, he's got the facial mannerisms down.

CAPTION

Day 9

GADSHILL

...but then, and I vow every word is the truth: he kept speaking to us!

Panel 2 - On GADSHILL. He holds a stem-less glass of wine near his face, about to sip. He's completely at home here.

GADSHILL

So I told him that if I sought to hear his opinions so incessantly, I would have seen him appointed as a Judge at The Institute North!

HIGHMASTERS

(off panel)

HA HA HA HA!

Panel 3 - We see two extended arms holding laser rifles pointed into the air, firing skyward.

NOTE: These should seem worn and a little out of date. Perhaps a bit clunkier than your standard 3W3M laser rifle.

SFX

ZZZAKKKKKKK! ZZZAKKKKKKK!

Panel 4 - At the main entrance of the gala, a few GUESTS cower and make space as THREE KIDNAPPERS enter and scan the room. They all wear angular domino masks and slightly mismatched, all-black outfits. They are:

SAYE, at left, is in her 40s. She's short, strong, and imposing and holds a rifle in front of her with both hands. In the middle, CASCA, is thin and in her 30s. OSRIC, at right, rests a recently fired rifle on his shoulder, looking off panel. He is in his late 60s, but still in good shape for his age.

NOTE: These are the same Eskapi seen in the background of Gadshill's dressing room in Scene One.

OSRIC
PHILIPPI ROUEN!

Panel 5 - A group of party guests cower and avert their gazes. Among them, GADSHILL begins to stand and lifts his hand. His posture and expression says, "Oh, I guess that's me..."

GADSHILL
I am he.

Panel 6 - Looking at CASCA and SAYE from OSRIC'S position as they flank GADSHILL and begin to walk. CASCA puts a hand on Gadshill's back as he tries to remain stoic.

GADSHILL
Cool heads, all. Let's give them no reason for conflict.

SAYE
Move faster.

PAGE 2 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - WIDE SHOT. In the hallway outside the gala, OSRIC leads the way as CASCA and SAYE pull a frightened GADSHILL. In the distance, a few curious gala ATTENDEES watch timidly by the entrance.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Closer on the group still moving in a different portion of hallway. GADSHILL now runs freely beside CASCA and SAYE. He speaks through gritted teeth and tilts his head towards his left to subtly indicate.

GADSHILL
 (small)
 Left here.

Panel 3 - Closer on GADSHILL and OSRIC who are now at the front of the group in a stairwell designed for industrial use. Behind them, CASCA uses a railing to vault down the stairs. SAYE looks up and points her rifle at the floor above.

GADSHILL
 Hold at the next corner, Osrlic.
 Security station isn't far.

Panel 4 - On all four of them, backs against the wall. Beyond this wall we see the building's glass, half-circle first floor entrance.

OSRIC holds the rifle ready as he looks around the corner. GADSHILL's head is tilted towards the ceiling, eyes closed. "We're almost there."

OSRIC
 I think we're clear.

GADSHILL
 One last twist of the pick and the lock is open.

SAYE
 Same old Gad wasting time picking
 when we just broke the chain!

Outside, everybody!

Panel 5 - Outside. The four of them have slowed to a jog. OSRIC, CASCA and SAYE have big smiles on their faces. GADSHILL'S expression indicates his guard is still up. In the background we see the imposing front of Institute Prime. Casca points forward.

CASCA
 Our transport is that one in front.

PAGE 3 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - GADSHILL takes a big step up into the opening of a large, cylindrical vehicle. It's a six-seater; the Ordo-equivalent of a rusted out, anonymous van with no windows.

On the ground, OSRIC offers an arm to help GADSHILL in while CASCA and SAYE look out, standing alert.

OSRIC

Keep yourself strapped in tight.

We have a couple other Eskapi up ahead to keep the route clear, so we're going to--

Panel 2 - On GADSHILL. Complete shock. Blood has splattered on his face. His face is lit by laser fire in the evening dusk.

SFX

ZZZAKKKK!

Panel 3 - In the foreground, GADSHILL spins to look towards CASCA and SAYE. Behind him, they are taking laser blasts directly to their heads, knocking them backwards and off of their feet.

SFX

ZZZAKKKK! ZZZAKKKK!

Panel 4 - BIGGER PANEL. GADSHILL stands outside the transport, looking towards the ground at the bodies of his three accomplices. It is not an incredibly gory scene, but some blood has begun to pool from each of them.

SIX INSTITUTE SECURITY OFFICERS form a semi-circle across the bottom of the image. They wear refined, dark, tactical outfits with asymmetrical cloaks. They all have weapons drawn and look in different directions, sweeping the area.

GADSHILL is fighting the sadness of this moment, attempting to return to full Rouen.

GADSHILL

Thank you, boys. Excellent work.

As always.