

CAPTAIN AMERICA: HAIL HYDRA #3
(MASTER, 9-5-2010)

PAGE 1:

1/

We open in China (209 BC) XÚ FÚ, court sorcerer of the Qin Dynasty (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:XuFu.jpg>), stands at the foot of Penglai Mountain (http://www.yantai-life.com/images/yantai_penglai_pavilion_1.JPG), in the presence of the immortal ANQI SHENG. The immortal is unnaturally tall and imposing and smiles benignly.

CAPTION CHINA -209 BC

I . D . CAPTION XÚ FÚ, COURT SORCERER OF THE QIN DYNASTY

XÚ FÚ: This unworthy one is honored to be allowed to stand once more in the presence of the great and glorious immortal, Anqi Sheng.

ANQI SHENG: You are persistent, Xú Fú.

XÚ FÚ: I am dedicated to my cause, Holy One.

ANQI SHENG: When I sent you away the first time I told you that there was a price for that which you seek. Are you prepared to pay that price?

2/

On Xú Fú. We see that behind him there are hundreds of children wearing white robes. They are quiet but clearly frightened. Harsh-faced soldiers stand guard over them. The soldiers are dressed in the armor of ancient China, however their crests are stylized versions of the Hydra symbol.

XÚ FÚ: I am willing to pay any price. As is my master, the Emperor Qin Shi Huang. He has sent me a gift of three thousand children --pure and from the very best families.

XÚ FÚ: They will serve you well, Holy One.

3/

Tighter angle on Xú Fú's face. Even though he is Chinese, there is a clear similarity between him and Dr. Geist.

XÚ FÚ: It is so small a price to pay for the Elixir of Life.

4/

On the faces of the children. Some of them are crying. Others are trying to look brave. Some cling together. They are clearly terrified.

XÚ FÚ (off): Is this humble offering acceptable to you, Holy One?

PAGE 2:

1/

We look past Anqi Sheng as he gestures with one hand to the children and toward the mouth of a vast cave with the other.

ANQI SHENG: The offering is quite acceptable, Xú Fú.

ANQI SHENG: Like you, I serve a greater master. And I have no doubt that he will appreciate the purity and generosity of your...**gift.**

2/

Anqi Sheng produces a small crystal vial filled with a golden liquid. He holds it out for Xú Fú –and the sorcerer reaches for it with greedy and yet tentative fingers. His face is alight with dark joy.

XÚ FÚ: At last...the very Elixir of Life!

3/

On Xú Fú's face as he reacts with sudden disappointment.

ANQI SHENG (voice) Ah...humans. So hasty. So impatient.

ANQI SHENG (voice) This is but one component of the Elixir. You cannot create the Elixir without it, and it is found nowhere else on earth.

ANQI SHENG (voice) But surely you do not expect the secret of eternal life to be handed to you?

4/

On Xú Fú, who is now angry as he clutches the bottle to his chest.

XÚ FÚ: Can we not trust even the gods? Is the universe so corrupt and unjust...?

5/

On Anqi Sheng's smiling, beatific face. He looks like a happy, gentle Buddha. However on the wall behind him we see the shadows of monstrous tentacles coiling above the shadows of startled children.

ANQI SHENG: The universe is not corrupt, Xú Fú—it is complex. And that complexity exists as a pathway, however crooked, from ignorance to complete understanding.

ANQI SHENG: The Gods want man to learn, to aspire. To strive.

6/

Same angle and frame. Same smiling face. But the writhing tentacles obscure the panicking children, as blood splats across Anqi Sheng's smiling face.

ANQI SHENG: This is the pathway to enlightenment.

ANQI SHENG: It is the pathway to eternal life.

PAGE 3:

1/

WAKANDA. We're in T'Challa's lab in Wakanda. The lab is ultra-modern and elaborate. T'Challa wears a lab coat over his Panther costume, but doesn't wear his mask. He is adjusting the wing vanes of the Falcon's new flying costume. The Falcon stands with his arms out like a man getting fitted for the flying apparatus for his costume (from Captain America #171, March 1974). Captain America leans against the table, holding a steaming cup of coffee in a mug; Redwing sits on his shoulder.

CAPTION THE KINGDOM OF WAKANDA

PANTHER This is still an experimental unit, Sam.

I.D. CAPTION T'CHALLA - THE BLACK PANTHER - KING OF WAKANDA

PANTHER The flying controls have a biometric interface linked to an A.I. learning CPU. As you learn it, it'll learn from you.

FALCON This is *insane*, man. I can't thank you enough, T'Challa.

I.D. CAPTION SAM WILSON -THE FALCON- PARTNER OF CAPTAIN AMERICA

2/

Small panel as Cap blows across the surface of his coffee cup. In close-up we can see that the mug says: AVENGERS ASSEMBLE.

CAP This is going to bump up your combat efficiency by a couple hundred percent. No more jumping from rooftop to rooftop.

3/

On Falcon, who looks introspective.

FALCON Yeah, Cap...and I need it more than you know.

FALCON When you found me on the Island of the Exiles and talked me into fighting alongside you...I thought you were nuts. I'm just a guy. Who am I to try and be a hero?

FALCON And since then, even though I've held my own in a lot of tussles, I always feel like the weak sister. No powers. No super soldier formula. Nothing to give me a real edge.

FALCON That's all going to change.

4/

Another angle on the lab to reveal that one side of it has huge sliding metal doors that have been pulled back. We can see the high-tech towers of the Wakandan capital city rising above the exotic African jungle foliage. Falcon stands in front of the opening, his back to us. He has one arm raised as he tries to look at the new wings.

PANTHER It's going to take some work to sharpen that 'edge', Sam.

PANTHER This rig is heavier than your old costume, of course, so you'll need to do extensive training to adapt your fighting style to it...and flying is **not** going to be easy, so--.

FALCON Yeah, yeah...just tell me where the controls are...

5/

We look past Falcon to Panther and Cap.

PANTHER **You** are the controls. This is a cybernetic system, Sam, it moves according to your will.

FALCON (small) My 'will'....niiiiice.

PAGE 4:

1/

View from outside the lab as Falcon leaps into the air. A startled Cap and T'Challa lunge to try and catch him –too late.

CAP Sam --no!

T'CHALLA Wait...!

FALCON Then this bird wants to...

2/

Falcon suddenly plummets from view as Cap and T'Challa race to the edge.

FALCON FLYYYYYYYYYYYYYY....Ohhhhhhh.....shhhhhhhhhh--*

3/

View from over Cap's shoulder as we peer over the edge to see Falcon clinging to a piece of decorative sculpture affixed to the side of the building. T'Challa bends down and extends his hand toward Falcon.

PANTHER Hold on –we'll pull you up.

FALCON I'm *–unf--*warning you guys right now. One joke about baby birds or 'blunt edges' and I'll *–oooff--*kill **both** of you.

CAP Wouldn't think of it, Sam.

PANTHER Never entered my mind.

4/

Later. The three of them sit on the edge, feet dangling.

FALCON So...cybernetic interface. Learning curve. Got it.

PANTHER I have a training course set-up at the airfield. We can spend a few weeks getting you--

FALCON **Weeks?** Not going to happen, brother. Cap and I have got too much on our plate right now for that. Give me the crash course.

CAP ‘Crash’ course, Sam? Seriously, you want to go with that word choice?

FALCON I *heard* it, damn it. You know what I mean.

PAGE 5:

1/

We cut to the Wakandan airport. The Falcon is in the air, wobbling through a floating obstacle course made up of small hovering mechanical devices with rings around them like Saturn. The rings are *supposed* to remain horizontal as he navigates through them. However, several of the devices are hanging askew, a few are crumbled in heaps on the ground and one is canting sideways in midair, smoking as if it's on fire. Cap and Panther stand watching this. Panther still has his labcoat on.

CAPTION EIGHT HOURS LATER.

FALCON Getting —ugh—the—ouch!—hang of this...

CAP (shouting) Doing great!

PANTHER Yes—you **almost** missed the last four...

2/

On Cap and Panther, looking up as they whisper to each other.

PANTHER (small) Sam's trying too hard. It's too much too soon.

CAP (small) He's going to kill himself, isn't he?

PANTHER (small) Hard to tell. He's doing better than most of my test pilots.

CAP (small) Why aren't **they** here? He could use some expert advice.

PANTHER (small) The doctor's haven't released them for active duty yet.

F/X *CRUNNNCHH!*

FALCON (off) OUCH! My bad.

3/

Panther's sat-phone rings (in his labcoat pocket). T'Challa reaches for it.

F/X BRRR-RRRRRING!

PANTHER Damn...I told them no calls unless it was an emergency.

4/

On Cap as he watches T'Challa on the phone. In the background, the Falcon is smashing into another floating barrier. T'Challa looks grave and intense.

PANTHER: This is verified? **How many** casualties? Blood of the Panther God!

PANTHER: Very well...quarantine the area and wait for my arrival.

5/

T'Challa starts running toward a parked quinjet, tearing off his labcoat as he goes. Cap is right behind him and the Falcon spots them and is starting to move to follow.

FALCON (yelling) Hey! What's going on?

PANTHER There is a crisis at Solomon's Grotto. It's one of the most sacred sites in my country –and it's under attack!

CAP Who is it? The White Ape? Klaw?

6/

T'Challa explains as the Falcon lands next to Cap, and we see their shocked faces.

PANTHER (off) No...the report is madness. They say that the newly dead from the surrounding villages have risen from their graves.

PANTHER (off) The Grotto is under attack---by *zombies!*

PAGE 6:

1/

CUT TO FLORDIA, 1522 AD. We enter into a scene of absolute carnage. A group of ragged-looking explorers –Ponce de Leon and his men—are being slaughtered by Spanish conquistadors. The attackers wear metal breastplates of the conquistador style (<http://ee.heavengames.com/gallery/Renders/Conquistador?full=1>) with the Hydra symbol embossed on them. A thin, tall man (COUNT DUENDE) wearing the expensive clothes of a Spanish nobleman –jewels, lace and finery, stands watching the slaughter, a please smile on his mouth. He looks exactly like Dr. Geist. The soldiers spear and stab the explorers with merciless efficiency.

CAPTION: FLORIDA, 1522 A.D. THE BANKS OF THE
 CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER

2/

A bedraggled and bleeding man (De Leon) is dragged by two guards before Count Duende.

DE LEON Count Duende---what is the meaning of this madness? I'm your *cousin*! These men are your countrymen! Have you taken leave of your senses?

3/

Duende uses the tip of a dagger to raise De Leon's chin as he bends close to speak with the prisoner.

DUENDE Shhhhhhh... It would disappoint me if the great Juan Ponce de León y Figueroa spent his last moments squealing like these other pigs.

DE LEON What do you **want**?

DUENDE Oh, I believe you know what we want...*cousin*.

4/

On De Leon as he hangs defeated in the brutal hands of the guards. Duende's shadow falls partly across him. De Leon's face, however, is a sneering mask of contempt.

DE LEON The Fountain? That's what this madness is all about? You come all the way here, you slaughter all of these good people because you think we've found the Fountain of Youth?

DE LEON Ha! Then you're as much of a dreamer and as big a fool as me!

DE LEON There is nothing in this God-forsaken place except mosquitoes, alligators and bloodthirsty savages.

5/

Duende rams his dagger into De Leon's body with such force that it lifts the man off the ground and almost out of the grip of the guards; the bloody tip punches out from between De Leon's shoulder blades.

DUENDE Ah...you disappoint me.

DE LEON *Urrrk!*

DUENDE A pity. And to think I used to have such faith in you. Cousin.

6/

Small panel on De Leon's face as he lays dying on the dirt.

DUENDE What a waste of time and money.

DUENDE Tear this place apart. Use hatchets and arrows.

DUENDE They'll think this was all done by **savages**.

PAGE 7:

1/

CUT TO T'CHALLA'S QUINJET. T'Challa is at the controls of his quinjet. Falcon sits in the co-pilot seat, Capt stands behind their seats, leaning on the backrests. Everyone is in full combat rig.

CAPTION OVER WAKANDAN AIRSPACE

FALCON Really? Zombies? George Romero and all that?

PANTHER Hardly. This is the real world, Sam.

FALCON Yeah...but the real world has Gods, aliens and mutants...so, I'm not seeing zombies as that much of a stretch.

CAP I agree...after all, T'Challa, didn't the zombie legend originate in West Africa?

2/

Tight shot of the three men, emphasis on T'Challa.

PANTHER Only in Hollywood. There is no hard evidence that the zombie legend began here. They're part of the vodou beliefs of Haiti.

FALCON Yeah, history is cluttered and confused. After all, slaves weren't encouraged to keep records of their own cultures. In the new world, a lot of things got smashed together.

PANTHER Exactly. The name 'zombie' is a bastardization of the Niger-Congo snake god *lwa Damballah Wedo*, and the Kikongo word *nzambi*.

PANTHER Mind you...we have monsters here in Africa...just not *that* one.

3/

Another angle, emphasis on Cap and T'Challa.

CAP The place we're going, 'Solomon's Grotto' –what is it?

PANTHER You heard the legends that Solomon left great deposits of treasure in secret places here in Africa? It wasn't just gold and diamonds. He also created a repository of vast and ancient secrets.

CAP What kind of secrets?

PANTHER Ancient codices said to contain the alchemical formulae for the Elixir of Life. Solomon believed that no human should possess that secret. Immortality is no gift...it is a terrible curse.

4/

Small panel. On Cap, who looks haunted by T'Challa's words.

PANTHER Imagine the horror of living forever and seeing everything you love wither and die...

CAP (small) Yes...

PANTHER Solomon entrusted these secrets to someone he believed could protect them. One of my ancestors....a Black Panther.

4/

At ground level we can see a scene of chaos and carnage as zombies (of the Haitian variety) attack the remaining guards who are trying to defend the opening to a grotto (an artificial cave with an ornate archway. The keystone of the archway has the Seal of Solomon ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Moroccan_4_Falus_Coin_\(AH_1290\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Moroccan_4_Falus_Coin_(AH_1290).jpg)). The quinjet is descending from the sky toward this scene. The zombies wear pants with tribal embroidery; and are either bare-chested or wear vests. They are African, but their skin is ashy and pale, their eyes are milky white. They are not eating the flesh of their victims, but are instead strangling them. The guards are fighting back with spears and automatic weapons –but neither seems to be doing much good. Bodies lay on the ground.

CAPTION THE GROTTO OF SOLOMON – SOUTHWESTERN WAKANDA

PANTHER (voice) No one is supposed to even **know** about the Grotto.

PANTHER (voice) And I will **not** allow anyone to break that ancient trust.

PAGE 8:

1/

Big scene as Cap, Falcon and Panther leap out of the hovering quinjet. Cap in the center, The Panther –claws out—to his left; and Falcon to his right. One of the zombies turns to look up, the others are too busy attacking the guards. All of the Grotto guards wear SWAT-style armor with a Panther head overlaying the Seal of Solomon.

FALCON Then the bad guys picked the wrong day to try.

CAP Take ‘em down –**hard!**

ZOMBIE #1 Unnnh?

2/

Cap smashes into a zombie, slamming shield-first into the creature and driving him to the ground with a bone-snapping crunch. An injured and startled guard staggers back from the collision.

F/X CRUNNNCH!

CAP Whatever these things are, they’re not indestructible.

3/

The Falcon soars over the Panther’s head as T’Challa delivers a savage flying side thrust to a zombie who is attacking a young soldier. Falcon snatches the soldier out of the zombie’s hands just as the Panther lands his kick.

FALCON Got him!

PANTHER Falcon –brilliant save!

FALCON I think I’m getting the hang of these wings.

4/

However the Falcon crashes hard onto the ground, sending the guard sprawling. Half a dozen zombies close in on him.

F/X WHUMP!

FALCON Unnnnhh --DAMN!

CAPTAIN AMERICA: HAIL HYDRA #3

5/

In the background, Cap prepares to throw his shield to defend Falcon, but Falcon does a sweep kick to knock down three of the zoms.

CAP Sam –head’s down!

FALCON I got this!

PAGE 9:

1/

Cap's shield slams into two of the remaining zoms, while Falcon rises to his feet and nails one under the chin with a rising palm strike (http://combativewarriorarts.com/images/image51_big.jpg).

F/X KRUNCH!

FALCON They have the numbers, but they're not exactly top of the line fighters. We can take out the whole mess of them. Five minutes--

2/

Dramatic pause as Falcon, Cap and Panther stare at the zombies they'd just taken out. The one Falcon hit under the chin has a clearly broken neck, the one Panther kicked has caved-in ribs, and the ones smashed by Cap's shield are getting to their feet despite clear muscular and bone damage. Despite the terrible damage the zoms are ready to attack again.

FALCON --tops?

FALCON (small) Uh oh.

FALCON I thought you said that zombies weren't real?

PANTHER What perversity is this?

3/

The zombies rush at them: a line of very scary, very unnatural-looking monsters.

ZOMBIES Unnnnhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

4/

Big panel as Cap, Falcon and Panther tear into the zombies.

CAP Whatever these things are --they aren't human. Don't hold back!

FALCON Not a chance.

PAGE 10:

1/

Panther stands with his back to the entrance of the Grotto. Falcon launches himself into the air for a low aerial assault on zombies. Falcon hits the zombies hard enough to tear some of them apart.

PANTHER Don't try to fly high. Go low and hard!

FALCON Like—**THIS?**

F/X KA-ROOOMMMM

2/

Cap throws his shield so that it decapitates a whole line of zoms. Dead Wakandan soldiers la on the ground.

F/X SLLLASSSSHHHHHHHHHHH!

CAP These aren't human beings. We can't afford to show them mercy.

3/

Falcon snaps flies out over a cliff and drops two zombies into a deep, deep crevasse.

FALCON These things killed a lot of innocent people, Cap.

FALCON 'Mercy' was never on my to-do list

4/

Falcon makes a wobbly landing at the edge of the cliff. T'Challa grabs his arm to pull him to safety.

PANTHER Sam...that was too risky. You haven't mastered those wings yet!

FALCON Yeah, yeah, save it for when I give a damn. Right now we have some undead ass to kick.

4/

Big panel as Cap, Falcon and Panther stand over a pile of destroyed zombies. Their uniforms are torn, they're each bloody, and they look exhausted and battered. It's clearly a narrow-won victory.

CAPTION TWENTY MINUTES LATER

FALCON Damn...

PAGE 12:

1/

CUT TO HYDRA LAB. We look out from inside a fishtank at Dr. Geist and a group of young scientists in lab coats. Geist's face is human, but the rest of him is a rather clunky robot. It's sleeker than the version in issue #2 but not really 'modern' looking. Maybe still a bit Steampunk-ish. Each scientist has a small Hydra symbol embroidered on the left breast of their labcoat. the scientists. Hanging in the water are several small hydras. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hydra001.jpg> .

CAPTION HYDRA LAB 133 – LOCATION: CLASSIFIED

GEIST Beautiful, are they not?

I.D. CAPTION DR. GEIST – Chief Scientist of Hydra's
Infinitas Agenda

GEIST The simple hydra...tiny predatory animals belonging to the phylum Cnidaria and the class Hydrozoa. But do you know what is remarkable about this tiny creature? Do you know why we revere it so?

GEIST Not merely for its remarkable regenerative ability...no..the hydra does not appear to undergo **senescence**.

2/

Tighter on Geist as he leans close to the tank like a man viewing the object of his deepest desire.

GEIST It does not age.

GEIST It is perfect in design, pure in purpose. Selected and engineered by nature to be self-renewing.

GESIT Immortal.

3/

On the faces of the scientists now as the shadow of the hydra falls across them.

GEIST (off) But...why? Why this tiny creature and not man? Why would God, who made us in His image, not share with us that same grace?

GEIST (off) Unless it was a test. A puzzle that we must solve in order to prove that we are worthy of the next step in human evolution.

4/

Geist turns to the scientists and we can see that he is quite insane.

GEIST It is your task...*our* task...to solve that puzzle. To defeat death.

GEIST To purify the human species.

GESIT To become...gods.

PAGE 13:

1/

CUT TO Avengers headquarters. Captain America is in discussion with Thor, Iron Man, Scarlet Witch, Black Panther, and the Falcon. (Note these costumes should fit with Avengers #121, March 1974).

CAPTION AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS - TWO DAYS LATER

IRON MAN --but these were zombies, Cap. Nothing like the German Resurrection Corps we fought a few years ago.

I.D. CAPTION TONY STARK -AKA IRON MAN

THOR Aye --they were Alps -- fierce, intelligent monsters from Aryan legends.

I.D. CAPTION THOR - ASGARDIAN GOD OF THUNDER

CAP I know...but we can't ignore the connection.

2/

On a computer screen we can see the hydra in the crystal disk and the Hydra symbol placed side-by-side. We see Cap's faint reflection on the screen overlapping both images.

CAP This is a Hydra operation.

3/

On Iron Man and Scarlet Witch.

IRON MAN So this is about Hydra trying to crack the secret of immortality?

SCARLET WITCH That...and defeating death. Two agendas with similar aims.

I.D. CAPTION WANDA MAXIMOFF AKA THE SCARLET WITCH

SCARLET WITCH But...surely the zombies and the Resurrection Corps can't be the end-game. Not for Hydra. Immortality wouldn't be worth living if you had to be a monster.

4/

Cap is still standing in front of the computer screen, but he looks over his shoulder at her.

CAP No. Like the many-headed hydra itself there are different aspects to this thing.

CAP An old friend of mine died bringing me coded research notes from a German scientist named Homler. Hank Pym spent years trying to crack those notes. He was only partly successful.

CAP There were dozens of references to ancient people and places. Gilgamesh, Alexander the Great, Achilles, Xú Fú ...

5/

On Thor.

THOR These names are all tied to the quest for immortality. Many have made sacrifices to the All-Father Odin in the vain hope of receiving the gift of godhood. My father always scorned such requests. Gods are gods, and men are men.

PAGE 14:

1/

Thor lays his hand on Cap's shoulder.

THOR But I believe you are right, Captain. When last we met these Alps, they shot at me with an arrow. You tried to deflect it and as a result we were both merely injured.

THOR I have brooded upon this. No mortal arrow should have so easily cut my flesh. Hydra must have used an enchanted missile, and I do not believe that it was my life they sought.

THOR But rather my blood. The blood of a god.

2/

On the Falcon.

FALCON Yeah—that makes sense. If they're trying to brew up some kind of Elixir of Life, then the blood of an immortal might give it the right kick.

3/

Another angle on Iron Man and the Scarlet Witch.

IRON MAN I have to agree. And it explains why they wanted the Solomon Codex. It's a guide to making that Elixir. Good thing they didn't get it.

SCARLET WITCH We may not be in the clear. There are other codices out there. Solomon wasn't the only one with access to ancient secrets.

4/

The Panther holds up the small leather pouch.

PANTHER Sadly, that's true. And Hydra may be trying to hedge their bets by looking for alternative methods to conquer death.

PANTHER The compound in this pouch includes the neurotoxin tetrodotoxin, found in certain species of puffer fish, as well as toxins from *bufo marinus* cane toad and the *osteopilus dominicensis* treefrog. Better known as *coupe poudre*.

PAGE 15:

1/

CUT TO HAITI. An Avengers quinjet flies over the dense Haitian jungle. Below we see a tiny airport and a small utilitarian block-house.

PANTHER (voice) It's what Haitian *bokors* use to create **Zombies**.

CAPTION HAITI - FIVE HOURS LATER

2/

The quinjet stands on the tarmac of the tiny airport. A young Haitian man in a lab coat (DR. CYRIL LEWIS), with dreadlocks and wire-frame glasses grins as he shakes Cap's hand. The Falcon is beside cap.

DR. LEWIS This is such an honor. Captain America and the Falcon! When I received your call I thought it was a joke. Zombies in Wakanda?

I.D. CAPTION DR. CYRIL LEWIS -ETHNOBOTANIST, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

FALCON It's no joke, Doc. These were actual reanimated corpses. Half-rotted, but the managed to slaughter over thirty soldiers.

3/

Small panel. On Dr. Lewis's shocked face.

DR. LEWIS Oh my god!

DR. LEWIS Recently there have been some reports of zombie attacks here in Haiti...but I dismissed them. Over the years every zombie report has turned out to be nothing. Haiti is a very superstitious country, I'm afraid.

4/

Small panel. Dr. Lewis takes a sheet of paper and the pouch of *coupe poudre* from Cap, glancing at the paper as he does so.

CAP This is an analysis of the *coupe poudre* we recovered. There was a pouch like this in the chest of every zombie.

DR. LEWIS Yes...this is a classic formula. Well...almost classic.

DR. LEWIS There are some elements missing...

5/

Inside Dr. Lewis's lab. It's crude but well-stocked. Cap and the Falcon stand watching as Dr. Lewis scrawls formulae on a chalkboard. (It's not important that we see the formula).

DR. LEWIS There are at least twenty different formulae for *coupe poudre*. There are certain elements in all of them –like the tetrodotoxin— but none of them are exactly the same. Old family recipes.

DR. LEWIS That's really what I'm doing here. Collecting them all.

DR. LEWIS It's my goal to collate all of the information to create the perfect *coupe poudre*.

6/

Small panel as Falcon seems to loom over the doctor.

FALCON And...*why* would you want to do that, Doc.?

7/

Lewis gives him a bright smile.

DR. LEWIS Why...for the advancement of science, of course.

PAGE 16:

1/

Count Duende –now ‘FATHER DUENDE’ –is much older and is dressed in the austere robes of a high inquisitor. He is seated behind a high desk, with two other inquisitors flanking him, overseeing the interrogation of a man who wears a stained white shirt and breeches (clearly expensive clothing, now soiled and stained with dirt and blood). The accused man kneels on the floor between burly guards wearing conical black hoods and trousers (no shirts).

CAPTION SPAIN, 1537 AD. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE HOLY
OFFICE OF THE INQUISITION

FATHER DUENDE Dr. Garibaldi...I must confess admiration for your tenacity. We have all of your so-called ‘research’ and yet you steadfastly refuse to confess your guilt.

GARRIBALDI Guilt? No, Father...I cannot confess guilt when I am innocent.

FATHER DUENDE So you keep saying...and yet your workshop is filled with evidence of alchemical experiments. Your notebooks are crammed with heretical explorations into what you call ‘**science**’.

2/

On Garibaldi, whose face is bruised and bloody, but who shows firm resolution in his eyes.

GARRIBALDI Alchemy is not a sin against heaven. If God’s gifts include our intellect and free will, then how is it heresy to use those to try and understand God’s own universe? Quote me the scripture forbidding me from using what God Himself has bestowed!

3/

On Duende, who leans forward over the edge of the desk, his eyes intense, his face frightening.

FATHER DUENDE You seek to unlock the mysteries of eternal life!

4/

On Garibaldi.

GARRIBALDI I do...for the betterment of mankind. To defeat sickness, to preserve life! That work **is** holy. **It is work that serves God!**

GARRIBALDI Condemn me if you want, and be damned to you!

5/

Small panel showing Duende about to light a candle that sits inside an ornate metal lantern. We can't (yet) see what shape the grillwork on that lantern is.

FATHER DUENDE Ah, my dear Doctor...you have shown your true nature.

6/

On the Duende and his judges as the candle light flares and we see that the grille of the pattern is in the shape of a hydra.

FATHER DUENDE I will not condemn you. Rather the reverse.

FATHER DUENDE I would like to offer you a job.

PAGE 17:

1/

Cap points to Dr. Lewis's blackboard.

CAP I can understand the drive to advance science, Dr. Lewis, but in light of what's been happening, you may be playing with fire.

DR. LEWIS But...

FALCON He's right, Doc. Unless you want to see real zombies up close and...

2/

The wall explodes inward as a horde of zombies burst into the lab.

FALCON ... personal?

F/X CRAAAASSSHHHH!

DR. LEWIS Oh my GOD!

3/

Cap uses his shield to slam into the zombies as Falcon shoves Dr. Lewis back from the monsters.

CAP SAM! Protect the doctor...

FALCON 'While you do the actual fighting'. Yeah. Got it.

4/

Falcon flies at the zoms, smashing several backward hard enough to snap their spines.

FALCON But that's not in today's playbook, Cap!

F/X KRAK!

5/

Cap is pulled outside by many clutching hands. Significantly, two of them are white.

PAGE 18:

1/

Cap sprawls on the ground, partially held down by zombies. Standing above him is ERLKING. He is bare-chested and we can see the full Hydra tattoo on his chest and neck. Behind him we see a mix of Haitian zombies and the Hydra ALPS.

ERLKING Surprised, my brother?

CAP Not even a little. I've been expecting you to show your face for months, Erlking.

2/

On Erlking. He seems very happy.

ERLKING Expecting...or hoping?

3/

Cap smashes two of the zoms face-first into each other.

CAP Hoping.

CAP We have unfinished business.

4/

Cap is on his feet, squaring off against Erlking. The other zombies —of both kinds—are clustered around, and some are climbing through the wall to get inside the lab.

ERLKING Then come, my brother...let us step away from this necessary carnage and speak. As one immortal to another.

ERLKING There are so many things that I must tell you.

5/

Cap shuts Erlking up with a left cross to the jaw that spins the Alp halfway around and into another zom.

CAP The only thing I want to hear from you are answers.

CAP What is Hydra's goal? Why the obsession with immortality? Why go to such lengths?

PAGE 19:

1/

Erlking nails cap with a side thrust kick of considerable force.

ERLKING Don't be a fool!

ERLKING You of all people know the answer to this. You...the 'super soldier'. The uber-mensch of the New World Order.

ERLKING Look at all that you —one man—have done to protect your world? You have fought kings and gods and monsters from dark dimensions. A single superior man.

2/

Inside the lab Dr. Lewis is stuffing his notes into a satchel. Falcon, meanwhile, is fighting a bunch of zoms of both kinds, and it doesn't look like he's winning.

DR. LEWIS Falcon—we have to protect this research. We can't let it fall into their hands.

FALCON Really, Doc? No —ungh—kidding.

3/

Cap slashes at Erlking's legs, but the Alp leaps nimbly over the edge of the shield.

CAP The Super Soldier formula was created for the betterment of mankind...and to oppose a genocidal madman.

ERLKING Politics is so small-picture, my brother. The formula that courses through your blood could never have been invented in the few short months that the war had raged.

ERLKING It was **years** in the making. Long before Hitler rose to power.

4/

Erlking swings a branch at Cap, who takes the blow on his shield. The heavy branch shatters.

F/X

CRUNNNCH!

ERLKING

You were not made for **war**, Captain...you were **made** for eternity.

5/

The Falcon comes flying through the hole in the wall, carrying Dr. Lewis in his hands and straining to do so. Dr. Lewis clutches the satchel to his chest.

FALCON

Cap—I got the doc and the research. Let's split this scene before—

6/

Small panel as Erlking's hand rises up to snatch Dr. Lewis out of Falcon's grip.

PAGE 20:

1/

Erlking holds Dr. Lewis by the throat while using him as a shield. Other zoms close in. Behind him Falcon crashes into the branches of a tree.

ERLKING Listen to me, my brother....

ERLKING You survived being frozen in the arctic oceans for many years. No one else would have survived such a catastrophe. You believe that this is a side-effect of the Super Soldier formula...

2/

On Cap's face. He looks shocked.

ERLKING My masters at Hydra have studied the surviving notes of the Super Soldier program. There is nothing there to explain how you escaped a frozen death.

ERLKING Moreover...longevity was never part of that formula.

ERLKING So, my brother, ask yourself...why have you not aged a day since the Avengers pulled you out of the water?

3/

On Erlking as he backs away, still holding the satchel. Falcon falls from the tree behind him.

ERLKING But remember...when we first met...Dr. Geist injected you with **our** formula.

ERLKING Did we make you a hero or a monster?

ERLKING Or a god?

4/

Erlking bolts into the jungle. Cap lunges for him but collides with a mass of zoms. Falcon is on his feet, holding a hand to his head and looking at the fleeing Alp.

CAP Sam! Don't let him get away!

5/

As the Falcon flies into the forest, Cap slashes viciously with his shield, his face a mask of almost animal ferocity.

CAP

No, dammit....**NO!**

PAGE 22:

1/

Cap and the Falcon stand at the top of the waterfall. Dr. Lewis is slightly behind them, holding his satchel.

FALCON We did it, Cap! We kicked their asses...

FALCON And **man** it felt **GREAT**. It didn't feel like I was wearing a rig. It felt like I was flying.

FALCON Like I **could** fly.

FALCON This is a whole new game now, Cap. Everything's going to change.

2/

Falcon notices that Cap isn't responding.

FALCON Cap? Hey...Steve...what's wrong?

3/

Cap looks down into the watery depths.

CAPTION "...my brother, ask yourself...why have you not aged a day since the Avengers pulled you out of the water?"

4/

Tight view of Cap's eyes. In his irises there is the faintest outline of the Hydra symbol.