



STRACZYNSKI

BARNES

PETERSON

# STRANGE





AS I SIT IN HIS PRESENCE FOR THE SECOND TIME, I COME KNOWING THAT ALL THE THINGS I HAVE SEEN, ALL THE THINGS I ONCE THOUGHT UNBELIEVABLE... ARE TRUE.

I THINK OF THOSE I ABUSED, WHO MEANT ONLY TO HELP ME.

AND I AM ASHAMED.

STEPHEN... IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WISH TO SAY?



YES. THAT I AM A FOOL. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A FOOL. I WALKED IN DAYLIGHT AS THOUGH IT FLOWED NATURALLY OUT OF THE UNIVERSE, WITHOUT REALIZING THAT IT EXISTED ONLY BECAUSE OF THE INTERCESSION OF PEOPLE WHO WERE DETERMINED TO SEE IT CONTINUE.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU. AND CLEA. AND WONG.

I'VE SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE CHASING WHAT I THOUGHT MATTERED, WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THAT I WAS SO IN LOVE WITH THE GOLD THAT COVERED THE BARS OF MY LIFE THAT I DIDN'T CARE THAT I WAS LIVING IN A CAGE.

A CAGE OF MY OWN MAKING.

SO I AM A FOOL TWICE OVER.



CLEA DOUBTS THAT I'M THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR, AND I SHARE THOSE DOUBTS. I ONLY KNOW--

--I ONLY KNOW THAT I CAN'T UN-SEE WHAT I'VE SEEN, CAN'T PRETEND I DON'T KNOW WHAT I KNOW NOW.

YOU SAID YOU COULD GIVE ME A CHANCE TO BECOME A HEALER AGAIN, TO HELP PEOPLE, TO HAVE SOMETHING CLEAN TO FIGHT FOR. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M UP TO THIS, IF I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING OR NOT, I JUST KNOW THAT I HAVE TO TRY. SO I'M ACCEPTING YOUR OFFER.





# STRANGE

## PART 5

STRACZYNSKI & BARNES PETERSON DONSOR GENTILE

WRITERS ARTIST COLORS LETTERS

SEDLMER

ALONSO

QUESADA

BUCKLEY

ASSISTANT EDITOR EDITOR EDITOR IN CHIEF PUBLISHER

TEACH  
ME, ANCIENT  
ONE.

PLEASE.

FIVE  
WORDS.

FIVE FINGERS  
ON EACH OF THE  
HANDS THAT  
BETRAYED ME.

FIVE KINDS OF  
TRUTH, AS I  
AM ONE DAY  
TO LEARN.

AND FIVE WEEKS  
OF SHEER HELL  
THAT FOLLOWED  
THAT NIGHT.



I THOUGHT EIGHT YEARS OF MED SCHOOL WOULD HAVE PREPPED ME FOR HOW TO CRAM.

I WAS WRONG.

I SLEEP FOR ONLY ONE HOUR PER NIGHT. THE REST OF THE TIME IS SPENT LEARNING.

LEARNING HOW TO FIGHT.

LEARNING HOW TO THINK.

UNLEARNING EVERYTHING I THOUGHT I KNEW.

STUDYING INCANTATIONS IN BOOKS SO OLD THAT EVERY TIME I TURN A PAGE I'M TERRIFIED I'LL BREAK IT.

ALL THE OTHERS HERE SEEM FASTER AND QUICKER. I FEEL STUPID AND SLOW IN THEIR COMPANY. ESPECIALLY BARON MORDO, WHO SEEMS A NATURAL. I THINK HE ENVIES THE AMOUNT OF TIME THE ANCIENT ONE GIVES ME, NOT UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SLOWEST STUDENT REQUIRES THE MOST ATTENTION.

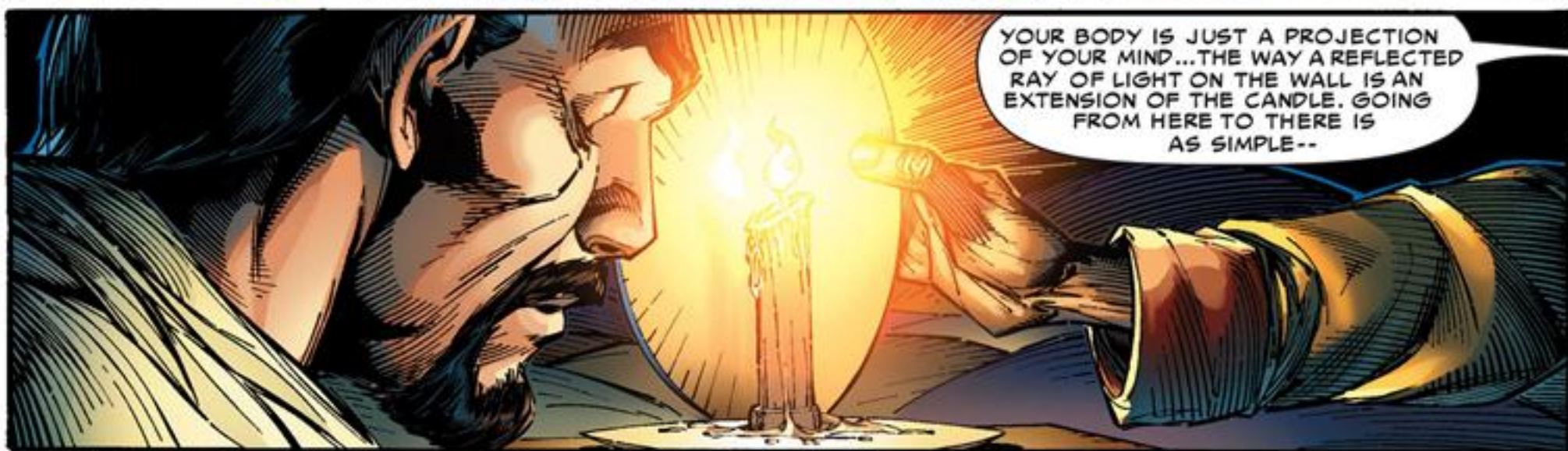




AND SOME DAYS  
I FEEL SO SLOW...  
SO STUPID....

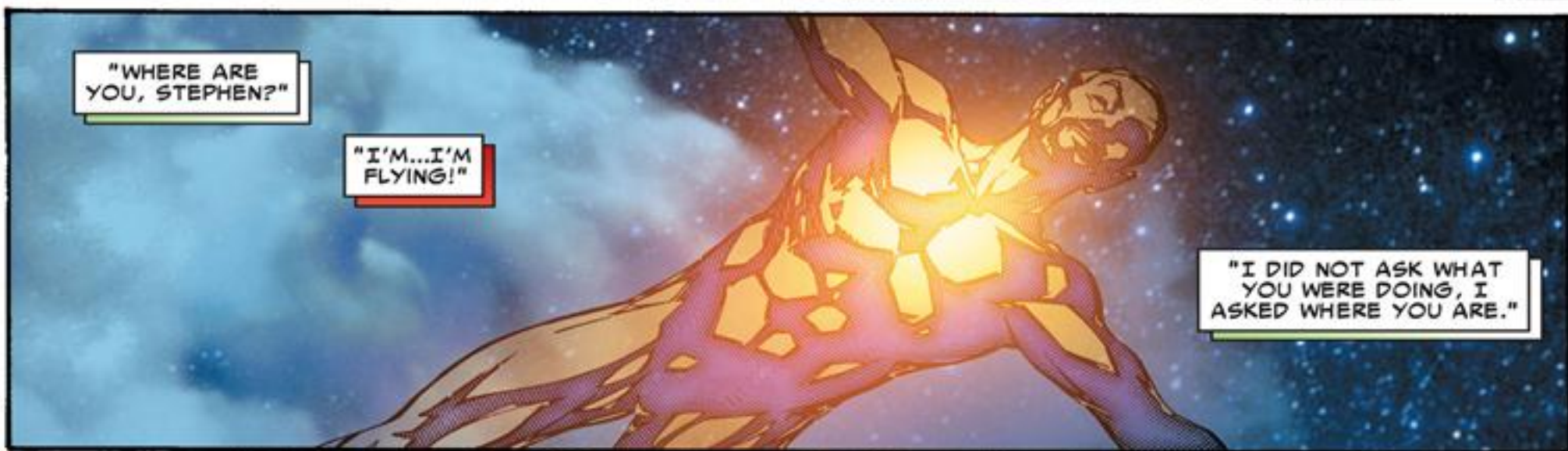
I'M  
SORRY, I  
DON'T SEE  
ANYTHING,  
I--

IT'S ALL  
RIGHT, STEPHEN,  
JUST TRY IT AGAIN.  
SEE YOURSELF  
BREATHING IN...  
FEEL YOURSELF  
EXHALE...



YOUR BODY IS JUST A PROJECTION  
OF YOUR MIND...THE WAY A REFLECTED  
RAY OF LIGHT ON THE WALL IS AN  
EXTENSION OF THE CANDLE. GOING  
FROM HERE TO THERE IS  
AS SIMPLE--

--AS TURNING THE MIRROR THE OTHER WAY.



"WHERE ARE  
YOU, STEPHEN?"

"I'M...I'M  
FLYING!"

"I DID NOT ASK WHAT  
YOU WERE DOING, I  
ASKED WHERE YOU ARE."



"HOME...  
I'M HOME."



"I SEE MY PARENTS...  
MY BROTHER, DAVE...  
AND MY SISTER,  
RACHEL...I MISS  
THEM SO MUCH, I--"

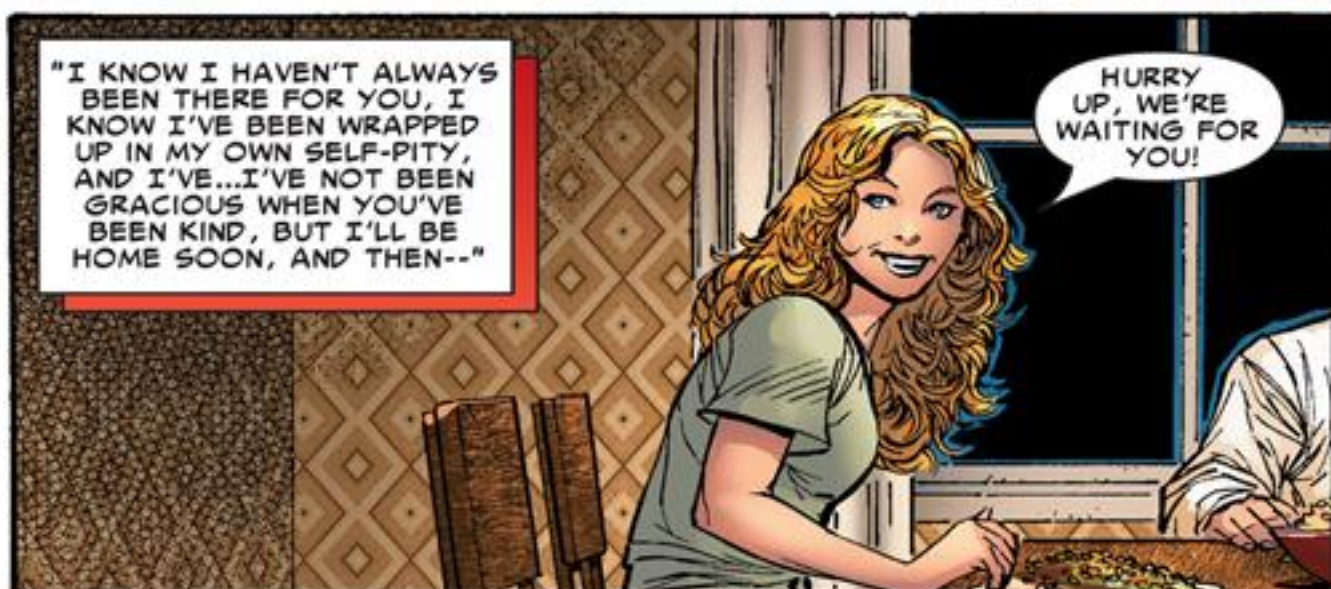
"GO TO THEM,  
STEPHEN. TALK  
TO THEM."

"WILL THEY  
HEAR ME?"



"I KNOW I HAVEN'T ALWAYS  
BEEN THERE FOR YOU, I  
KNOW I'VE BEEN WRAPPED  
UP IN MY OWN SELF-PITY,  
AND I'VE...I'VE NOT BEEN  
GRACIOUS WHEN YOU'VE  
BEEN KIND, BUT I'LL BE  
HOME SOON, AND THEN--"

HURRY  
UP, WE'RE  
WAITING FOR  
YOU!



RACHEL? YOU...  
YOU CAN HEAR  
ME? BUT I  
THOUGHT--

"WHAT MATTERS  
IS THE SAYING,  
NOT THE HEARING."

"HI MOM...DAD...  
DAVE...RACHEL...  
GOD, I'VE MISSED  
YOU GUYS."



I WANT  
YOU TO SIT  
BESIDE ME,  
OKAY?



NO...NOT TALKING TO  
ME, BUT SOMEONE  
ELSE...BUT WHO  
WOULD--

I WOULDN'T  
WANT TO BE  
ANYWHERE  
ELSE.



NO!







COME BACK, STEPHEN...COME BACK....





WHAT DID YOU SEE?

DEVON... HE WAS WITH MY PARENTS! THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT HE IS, WHAT HE CAN DO--

IT IS ONLY A POSSIBLE REALITY, STEPHEN, NOT THIS REALITY. NOT YET.



I HAVE TO GO TO THEM.

YOU'RE NOT READY.

I WANT TO HELP THEM.

UNFORTUNATELY, SOMETIMES WHAT WE WANT TO DO ISN'T THE RIGHT THING TO DO.



OUR ENEMIES CANNOT TOUCH YOU DIRECTLY, CANNOT ENTER HERE BECAUSE OF THE FORCES THAT PROTECT THIS PLACE. SO THEY COME AT YOU THROUGH WHAT YOU LOVE.

THEY ONLY HAVE AS MUCH POWER OVER YOU AS YOU WILL ALLOW.

THE TRUE POWER IS YOURS, TO ALLOW IN, OR KEEP OUT. WHAT HAPPENS TO ANY OF US IS EITHER INVITED INTO OUR LIVES OR SENT AWAY.

TRUE POWER... IS THE POWER TO CHOOSE WISELY. AND THAT YOU ALREADY POSSESS.

YOU ARE LIKE THE MAN WHO SITS ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, BEGGING FOR PENNIES, WITHOUT REALIZING THAT HE'S SITTING ON A BOX OF GOLD.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED IS ALREADY AROUND YOU AND WITHIN YOU.



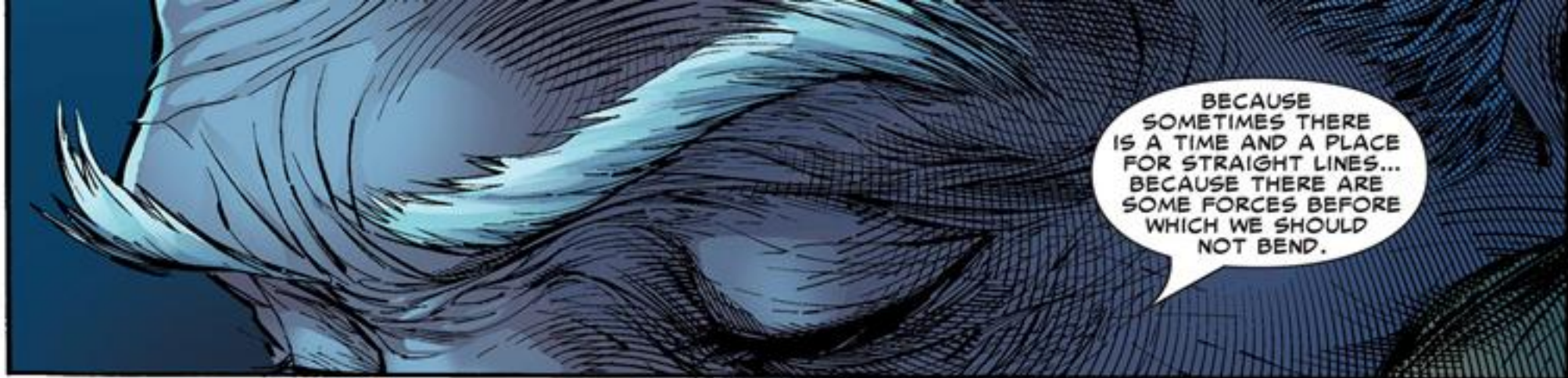
IF THAT'S SO, THEN WHY IS EVERYTHING THAT COMES NATURALLY TO PEOPLE LIKE BARON MORDO SO DIFFICULT FOR ME?

YOU COME FROM THE WORLD OF WESTERN THOUGHT, MORDO FROM THE WORLD OF EASTERN THOUGHT. YOUR SOUL IS RIGID, MADE UP OF STRAIGHT LINES. HIS SOUL IS FLEXIBLE, IT HAS NO STRAIGHT LINES.

THEN WHY NOT MAKE HIM THE INHERITOR OF YOUR WORK?







BECAUSE SOMETIMES THERE IS A TIME AND A PLACE FOR STRAIGHT LINES... BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME FORCES BEFORE WHICH WE SHOULD NOT BEND.



AND WHEN THE NIGHT-WIND COMES, MORDO, I FEAR...WILL BEND.



DO NOT FEAR, STEPHEN. YOU WILL LEARN, YOU HAVE THE SKILLS. YOU LACK ONLY THE CONFIDENCE TO USE THEM, AND THE TIME TO EXPLORE YOUR TALENT.

UNFORTUNATELY, I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO SEES YOUR POTENTIAL.



OUR ENEMY KNOWS ALL TOO WELL WHAT YOU ARE CAPABLE OF BECOMING. THAT IS WHY HE SENT DEVON.

YOU MEAN DEVON ISN'T THE ONE I SHOULD BE MOST AFRAID OF?

HE IS ONLY A FOOT SOLDIER IN OUR ENEMY'S ARMY...BUT EVEN A SOLDIER CAN DO GREAT HARM, ESPECIALLY IF HE ENTERS UNDER THE FLAG OF FRIENDSHIP.

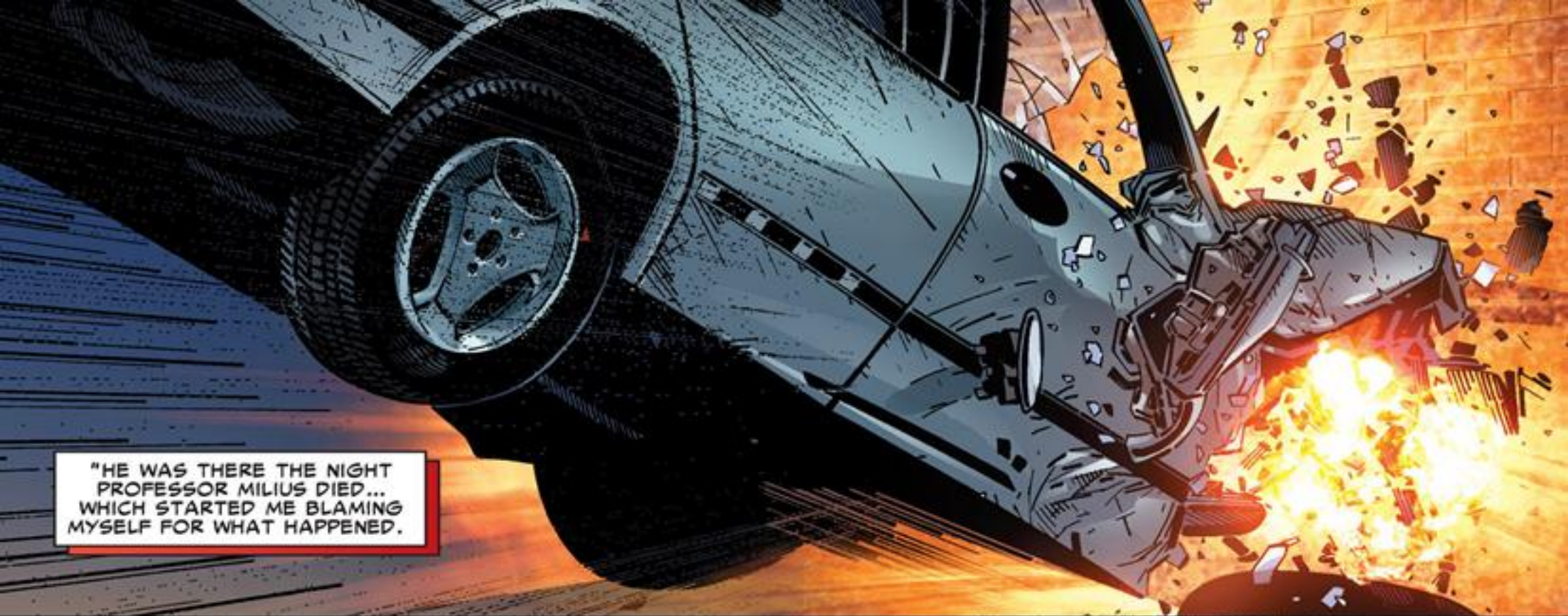


BECAUSE THAT PUTS THE ENEMY THERE AT THE MOMENTS OF TRANSITION. HAVE YOU HAD SUCH MOMENTS?

HE... YES, HE WAS MY BEST FRIEND SINCE WE WERE KIDS.

--WAIT A MINUTE...IT'S ALL STARTING TO FIT--





"HE WAS THERE THE NIGHT PROFESSOR MILIUS DIED... WHICH STARTED ME BLAMING MYSELF FOR WHAT HAPPENED.



"AND HE WAS THERE THE NIGHT OF MY ACCIDENT...THE NIGHT I LOST THE USE OF MY HANDS.

"AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO SAID--



I THINK YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT, AND IF THAT MEANS TAKING ON THE WHOLE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST, YOU'RE JUST THE MAN TO DO IT.

"HE WAS RECRUITING ME... THE WHOLE TIME I KNEW HIM, HE WAS DRIVING ME TOWARD HIS SIDE, AND I DIDN'T REALIZE IT."



HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO BLIND?

BECAUSE YOU ONLY BELIEVED WHAT YOU SAW WITH YOUR OWN EYES. WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGING THAT. I ONLY WISH--



--I ONLY WISH I HAD MORE TIME. BUT LET'S NOT TALK OF SUCH THINGS NOW, I AM TIRED. THEY DON'T CALL ME ANCIENT FOR NOTHING, YOU KNOW.

IT HAS BEEN A GOOD DAY, WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH.

YES, MASTER.

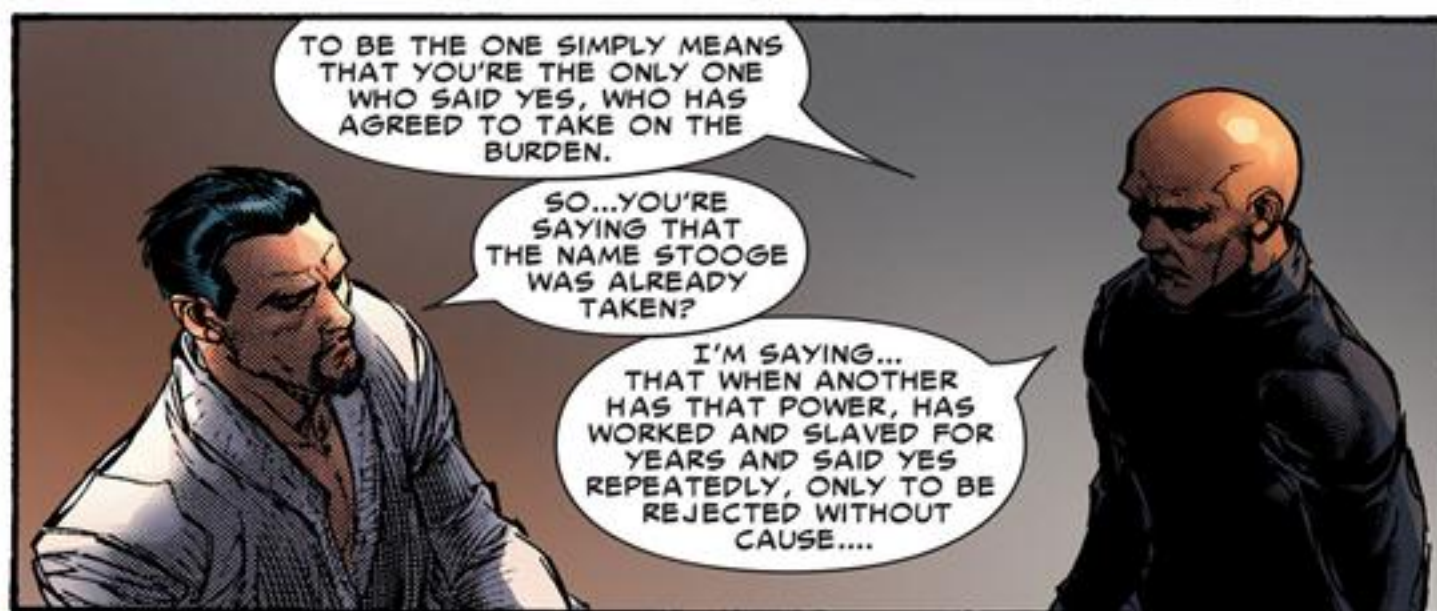


I'LL MISS YOU, STEPHEN.

WHY? I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

FOR A MAN WHO HAS JUST STARTED A LONG JOURNEY, THAT'S A VERY ODD THING TO SAY--





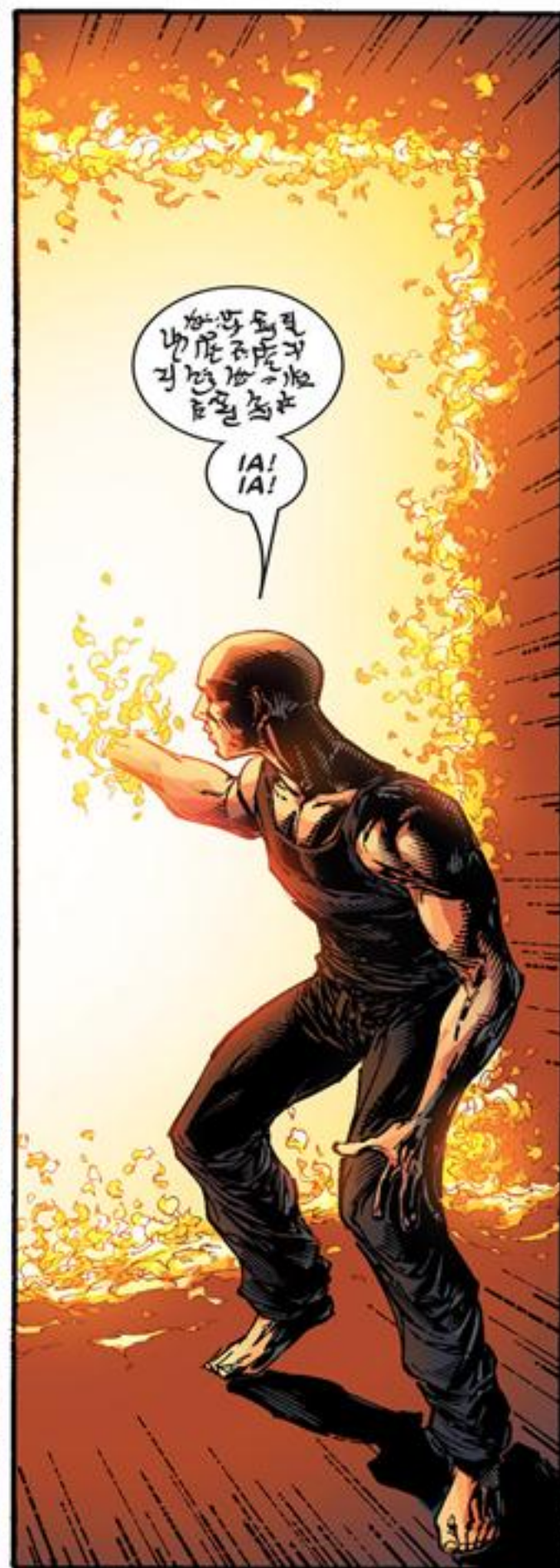




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YOUR  
WORDS HAVE  
REACHED ME.

COME.





I HAVE  
COME BECAUSE  
I WISH TO MAKE  
A--

WE KNOW  
WHAT HAS BROUGHT  
YOU HERE, MORDO. WE  
HEAR THE WISH OF YOUR  
MOST SECRET HEART...THE  
FIRE OF YOUR RAGE IS  
TO US AS A ROARING  
TORRENT.

YOU  
HAVE BEEN  
MISJUDGED...  
MISUSED.



THE ANCIENT  
ONE FAILS TO  
PERCEIVE YOU  
FOR WHAT YOU  
ARE...WHAT YOU  
CAN DO.

HE HAS  
GROWN OLD AND  
FOOLISH...GETTING  
WEAKER BY THE DAY,  
SO MUCH THAT REASON  
HAS LEFT HIM. HE GIVES  
OVER TO A FOOL WHAT  
SHOULD BE MINE BY  
RIGHT.

LET THE  
OTHERS DO  
WHAT THEY WISH...  
I WILL NOT SERVE  
HIM, WILL NOT  
BOW DOWN TO  
HIM.

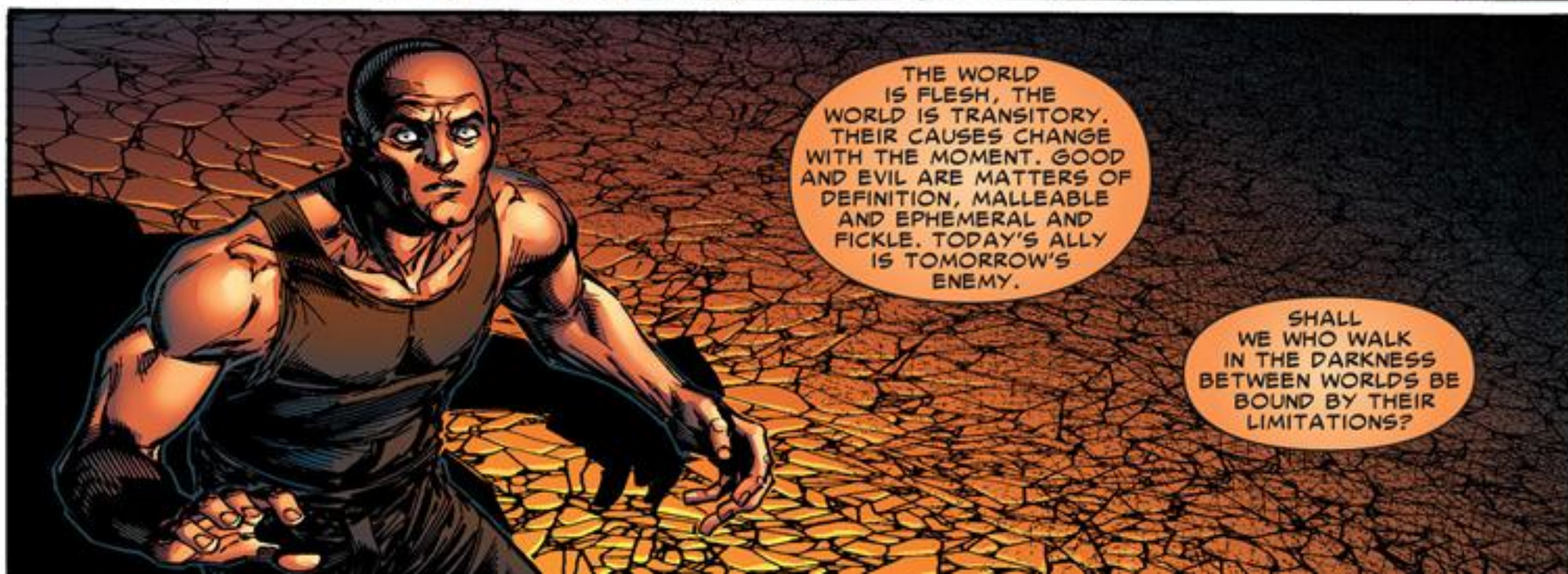
YES...  
YOU ARE  
WISE IN  
THIS.



YOU HAVE  
DEMONSTRATED  
GREAT WISDOM  
IN ALL OUR  
CONVERSATIONS.

FOR WHAT  
IS TO BE GAINED  
BY CONTINUING  
THIS WAR BETWEEN  
US? NOTHING. IT  
CANNOT BE  
WON.

WHY,  
THEN, SHOULD  
WE FIGHT?



THE WORLD  
IS FLESH, THE  
WORLD IS TRANSITORY.  
THEIR CAUSES CHANGE  
WITH THE MOMENT. GOOD  
AND EVIL ARE MATTERS OF  
DEFINITION, MALLEABLE  
AND EPHEMERAL AND  
FICKLE. TODAY'S ALLY  
IS TOMORROW'S  
ENEMY.

SHALL  
WE WHO WALK  
IN THE DARKNESS  
BETWEEN WORLDS BE  
BOUND BY THEIR  
LIMITATIONS?



HISTORY TURNS ON MOMENTS. IF YOU DO NOT ACT SOON YOU WILL BE MATCHED STRENGTH FOR STRENGTH...AND THE MOMENT WILL BE LOST. YOU MUST STRIKE HARD, NOW, TODAY. TAKE FROM THE ANCIENT ONE WHAT YOU DESERVE.

THEN, ONCE YOU HAVE ACHIEVED YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE, WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO END THIS STAND-OFF. BECAUSE WE WANT THE SAME THINGS. TO BE STRONG. POWERFUL. UNCHALLENGED.



BUT IF I FAIL...I WILL BE ALONE. THE SANCTUM IS PROTECTED BY WARDS AND SPELLS WHOSE MYSTERIES I HAVE NOT YET DISCOVERED. YOU CANNOT ENTER.

NO... BUT YOU CAN.

TAKE THIS WITH YOU, AND USE IT IF THERE IS A NEED. IT IS PART OF A LARGER INCANTATION, BUT UNTIL THE REST IS SPOKEN, IT WILL REMAIN DORMANT AND UNDETECTABLE. WHEN THE INCANTATION BEGINS, THAT SENTENCE WILL END WHERE THIS IS.



AND WHERE THIS IS, I AM.













FROM THIS NIGHT ON, YOU WILL BE BANISHED... YOUR POWER HALVED. IF YOU ARE WISE, YOU WILL STOP NOW. I HAVE NO DESIRE TO KILL YOU.

THAT IS...MOST UNFORTUNATE...



...BECAUSE I HAVE NO SUCH HESITATION!

조금도  
hesitation  
가 없다

NO, YOU FOOL--



이것이  
바로  
정통  
의 힘이다

--DORMAMMU!

NO!



WHAT--  
CLEA, WHAT  
IS IT--?

I DON'T  
KNOW, WONG,  
I--



NO!

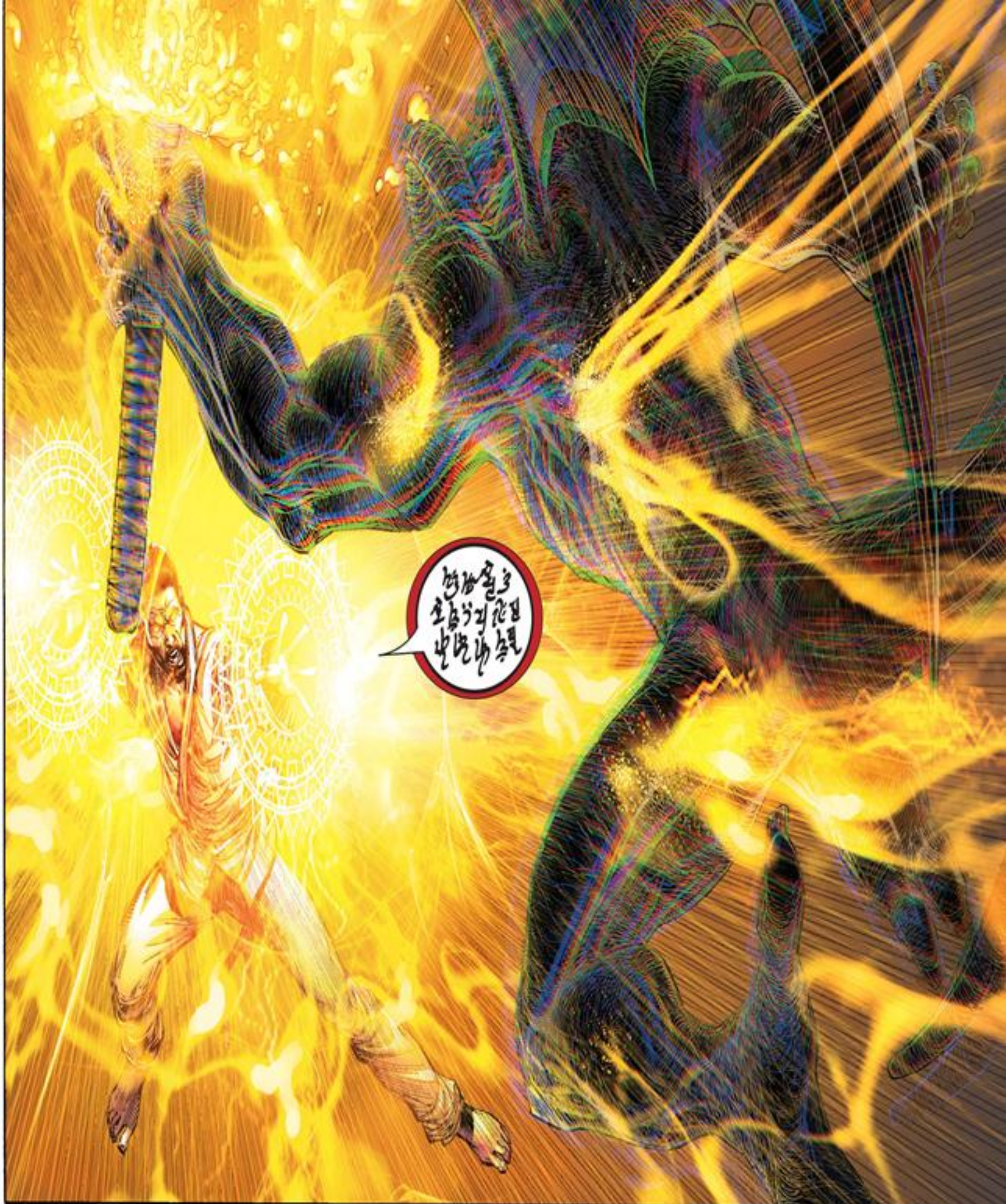








--I  
줄거릴  
때다--



현상속의  
소용의리  
현상속의



HUNH...HUNH...  
TOOK EVERYTHING...  
OUT OF ME...BUT  
HAVE TO...KEEP  
GOING--

STEPHEN!  
ARE YOU  
THERE?



WONG?

NEVER  
MIND ME! GET  
TO THE ANCIENT  
ONE! HURRY--



"--WE DON'T  
HAVE MUCH  
TIME!"

YOU'RE  
OUT OF TIME,  
OLD ONE.

NO...NOT  
YET, I CAN  
STILL--





AAAAHHHHH!



IT IS  
RIGHT THAT  
YOU SHOULD END  
YOUR LIFE ON  
YOUR KNEES...  
TO ME....



NO...

...TO  
US.



KEEP  
GOING! DON'T  
SLOW DOWN! AND  
WHATEVER YOU  
DO--



--DON'T  
LOOK  
BEHIND  
YOU!





MORDO!  
WHERE'S THE  
ANCIENT ONE? WE  
HAVE TO GET  
HIM TO--

DON'T  
WORRY, CLEA.  
WHAT NEEDED TO  
BE DONE...HAS  
BEEN DONE.



WHAT...  
WHAT ARE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?

THE ANCIENT  
ONE HAS BEEN  
SUPPLANTED BY A  
GREATER AUTHORITY...  
AND HIS POWER WILL  
SHORTLY BE MINE TO  
COMMAND.



YOU SON  
OF A--

STEPHEN,  
NO, NOT UNTIL  
WE KNOW WHAT  
WE'RE--

IT'S ALL  
RIGHT. LET HIM  
COME TO HIS  
DOOM.



HE WILL  
NOT TONIGHT BE  
THE ONLY ONE  
TO DIE--





--AT THE  
HANDS OF  
BARON MORDO  
AND THE DREADED  
DORMAMMU!

To be concluded.