

WARLOCK

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

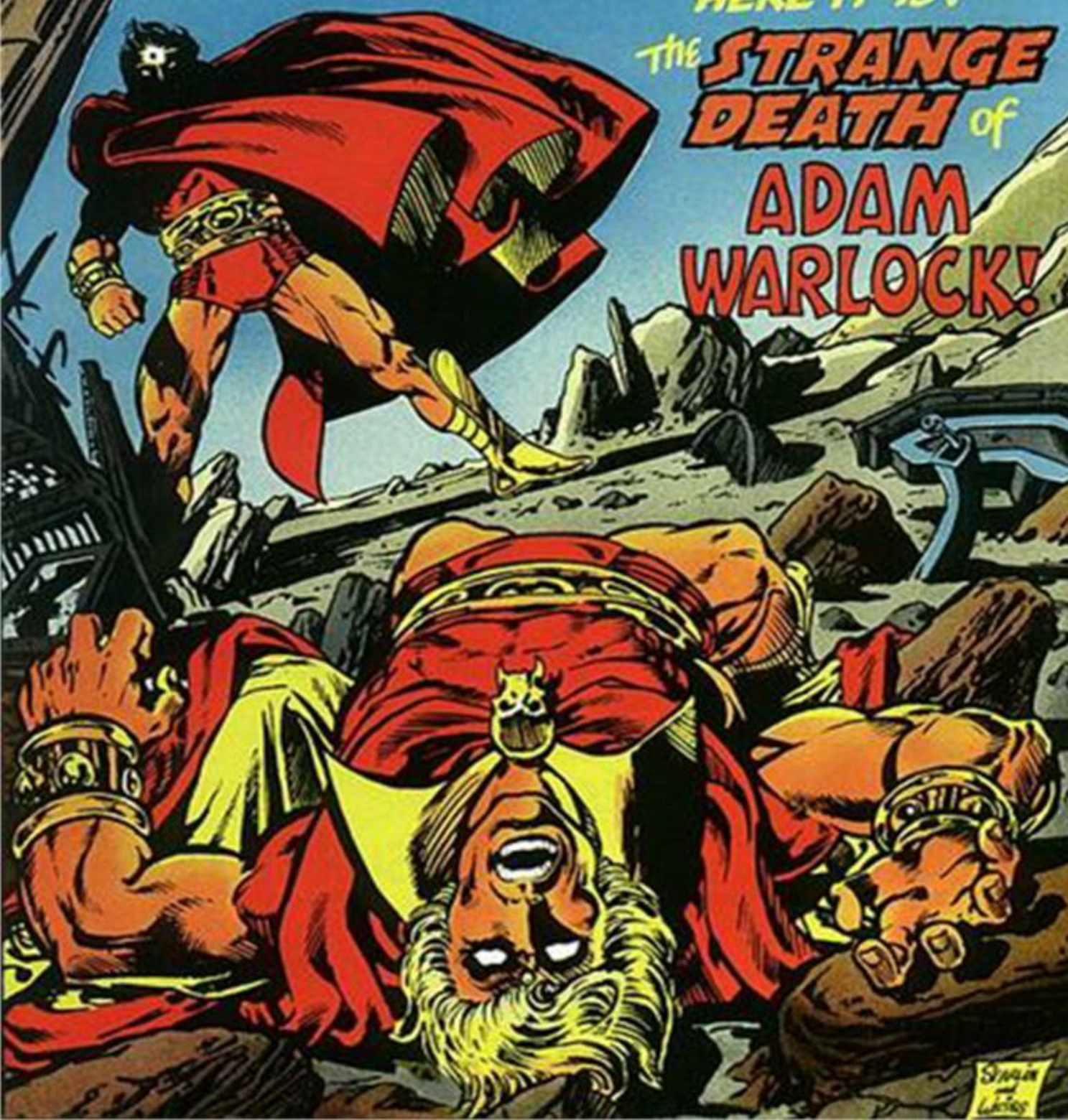
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WARLOCK™

HERE IT IS!
The **STRANGE
DEATH** of
**ADAM
WARLOCK!**



SHAW
and
LAWLEY

HOW STRANGE MY DESTINY

PART 2 • CHAPTER 4

ESCAPE INTO THE INNER PRISON!

ONWARD, MY
DEATH SQUAD!

SLAY ALL
WITHIN THESE
WALLS...

ALL SAVE
ADAM
WARLOCK,
FOR HE
IS MINE!

HOLY
GOOSH!
IT'S THE
MAGUS!

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LETTERING
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QUESTION: WHAT THE BLAZES IS GOING ON?

ANSWER: WAY BACK IN WARLOCK #1 WHEN WE SAW OUR HERO, ADAM WARLOCK, MEET AND BATTLE HIS FUTURE SELF, THE MAGUS.



THANOS, THE FORMER TYRANT OF TITAN, HAS DECIDED, FOR REASONS OF HIS OWN, TO AID ADAM BY USING HIS TIME-PROBE TO CHANGE THE WARLOCK'S FUTURE-MAGUS'S PAST, THUS ALLOWING OUR HERO A CHANCE TO KILL HIMSELF AND AVOID BECOMING THE FIEND HE NOW BATTLES.



UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PLAN ALSO HAS A SNAG IN IT.

WE'VE LEARNED THAT ALL THE DEATHTRAPS WARLOCK HAS SURVIVED SINCE THEN HAVE BEEN CLEVERLY CONDITIONING ADAM, MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY, TO BE TRANSMUTED INTO THE EVIL BEING KNOWN AS THE MAGUS.



FORTUNATELY, THIS PLAN HAS RUN INTO A SNAG.

THAT SNAG'S NAME IS **THANOS!**

THIS SNAG IS CALLED THE **MAGUS** AND HIS **DEATH SQUAD!**



THESE VILLAINS PHASED ABOARD SANCTUARY 1 MERE MOMENTS BEFORE THANOS WAS ABLE TO TRANSPORT WARLOCK INTO HIS OWN TIME-STREAM AND EXPLAIN WHAT HE WAS TO DO THERE!

THAT'S ALL THE ROOM FOR EXPLANATIONS WE'VE GOT NOW...

... WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FILL IN THE BLANK SPOTS AS WE GO ALONG! -- JIM AND MARY.



ONLY IF THIS WALL OF RELIGIOUS FANATICS BEFORE US PREVENTS US FROM REACHING MY TIME-PROBE.



BUT HOW DO WE GET PAST THEM? THESE ZEALOTS CONTINUE TO POUR IN THROUGH THAT PHASING ENTRANCE THE MAGUS CREATED...



EXACTLY! THE MAGUS HOPES TO KEEP US BUSY UNTIL THE IN-BETWEENER'S ARRIVAL WHEN NOTHING WE CAN DO WILL SAVE YOU!



NO, NOT THAT!



YOU MUST!



WITH YOUR VAMPIRE GEM YOU CAN DRAIN THE LIFEFORCES FROM THESE MAGGOTS SO QUICKLY THAT NOT EVEN THE MAGUS WILL BE ABLE TO STOP YOU!



WE CAN THEN USE THE TIME-PROBE TO ELIMINATE THE MAGUS' EXISTENCE COMPLETELY, AND SO SAVE THE STARS FROM EVER FALLING UNDER HIS ENSLAVING YOKE!



BUT... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO USE THIS DAMNABLE GEM!

THIS JEWEL'S VICTIMS DON'T DIE! THEIR SOULS ARE YANKED FROM THEIR BODIES AND COME TO REST WITHIN MY MIND, TO TORTURE ME FOR ENDING THEIR EXISTENCE!



I JUST CAN'T USE IT AGAIN!

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!

WELL, THEN THINK OF THE TORTURE YOU'LL SUFFER IF YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO THE MAGUS!



A SMALL PART OF THAT WHICH IS YOU WILL SURVIVE ON AFTER YOUR METAMORPHOSIS, AND IT WILL BE FORCED TO WITNESS THE EVIL THE MAGUS IS AND WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR!



YOU'LL SIT AND WATCH YOUR DEATH SQUAD RIP MY LOVELY ASSISTANT GAMORA APART, LIMB BY LIMB...



AND YOU'LL SEE YOUR FRIEND PIP SHOT DEAD BEFORE YOUR ONCE AND FUTURE EYES-- AND YOU'LL KNOW YOU COULD HAVE SAVED THEM!



WILL YOU LISTEN TO OL' ROCK-PUSS?!



NO! I'LL NOT BE FORCED TO USE THIS EMERALD DEVIL AGAIN. NO MATTER WHAT THE COST!

FINE SENTIMENTS, MY GOLDEN SAINT, BUT HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU JUST WHO WILL PAY FOR YOUR LOFTY CONVICTIONS?



YOU?

NO! IT WILL BE THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE YOU SHALL ENSLAVE, AS THE MAGUS, WHO WILL PAY!



"LISTEN TO HIM!"

IT WILL BE THE THOUSAND WORLDS YOUR UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF TRUTH CONQUERS WHO SHALL PAY FOR YOUR HIGH MORAL STANDARDS.



"YES, LISTEN!"

IT WILL BE THE ZEN WHO BEARIS YOU GENOCIDE AND THE NON-PRODUCTIVES YOU MASSACRE WHO SHALL FOOT THE BILL FOR YOUR--



NO!

"YES! RELEASE ME!"

THERE IS A ROAR, AND A FLASH, THEN SUDDENLY WARLOCK REALIZES HE HAS UNLEASHED...

...THE POWER OF THE

SOUL GEM!







QUICKLY, WARLOCK, INTO THE TIME PROBE!
IT'S PRESET TO TAKE YOU WHERE IT MUST!

BUT ONCE
THERE,
WHAT
SHALL
I DO?

THAT YOU SHALL
KNOW UPON
YOUR ARRIVAL!



ALL KNOWLEDGE YOU REQUIRE RESIDES
WITHIN THE MEMORIES YOU'VE BEGUN, OF
LATE, TO SHARE WITH THE MAGUS!

HOLD UP A SEC, GOLDY! I
THINK WITH YOU THINGS MAY BE...



...SAFER!

WHAT THE
DEUCE
IS THIS?

IT'S
KISMET,
PIP!

THIS IS MY LIFE'S PATH...
MY FATE... TIME CYCLE...
THIS IS THE EVERYTHING
ABOUT ME AND THE
NOTHING THAT IS ME!



YES, PIP, THIS IS MY
OWN PERSONAL
KISMET TRAIL...



...AND I'M
HERE TO
DESTROY
IT!



I REALIZED BACK ON
THANOS'S SANCTUARY I
THAT THE ONLY WAY TO
END THE MAGUS'S VILE
EXISTENCE IS TO
TERMINATE MY OWN
NOW TWISTED AND
CONFUSED LIFE!

YOU SEE, PIP, THAT'S
WHAT I'VE COME HERE
FOR! I'M HERE TO COMMIT
COSMIC SUICIDE!

MEANWHILE, BACK ON SANCTUARY I...

YOU PLANNED ALL THIS, DIDN'T YOU? THE PROTECTIVE
SCREENS BEING DOWN SO I COULD ATTACK... WARLOCK
WIPING OUT MY FORCES,
RUSHING HIM INTO THE
TIME STREAM BEFORE
HE COULD TRULY
REALIZE WHAT HE'S
ABOUT TO DO... IT
WAS ALL PLANNED!

WHY!?

... ALLOW
ME TO
GRANT
YOU A
MOST
EXQUISITE
DEATH!



THOOOM!

...YET MORE THAN AN INFINITY AWAY, THE DESTINY OF THE STARS IS ABOUT TO BE DECIDED BY...



WARLOCK,
LOOK!

NO! YOU CAN'T BE HERE ALREADY?!


BECAUSE YOU ARE A CREATURE OF
CHAOS AND ORDER... PURPOSE... **LIFE!**

SO, BEING A CREATURE OF VAST
POWER, YOU MAY SOMEDAY OPPOSE
THAT WHICH I WORSHIP!

FOR I AM A
DREAMER OF
TRANQUILITY...
NON-PURPOSE...
DEATH!

THEN,
IN THAT
CASE...

THUS, TITAN AND GOD
CLASH WHILE, LESS
THAN A
HEARTBEAT...



BUT ALAS, IT IS I... I, WHOSE SOLE REASON
FOR EXISTENCE IS TO ABDUCT YOU TO MY DARK,
SOUL-NUMBING REALM AND DO WHAT MY
MASTERS, CHAOS AND ORDER, HAVE BID ME DO!

FOR, I AM TRULY THEIR
IN-BETWEENER!

THEN PREPARE
YOURSELF FOR
A STRUGGLE OF
COSMIC
CONSEQUENCE!

FOR AS TWISTED
AS THIS LIFE HAS
BECOME, IN-BETWEENER,
IT YET REMAINS
MINE TO CONTROL...

...AND I'LL
DIE BEFORE
REINQUISHING
THAT POWER!

CHAPTER 5

THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADAM WARLOCK!

THERE WILL BE NO STRUGGLE, ADAM WARLOCK!

CONFLICT IS NOT THE WAY OF THE IN-BETWEENER. I LEAVE SUCH THINGS TO THOSE WHO WALK THE CORRIDORS OF REALITY OR ILLUSION.

I AM ONE APART FROM SUCH NOTIONS.

FORTUNATELY, I AM NOT!

LIKE SO!

YET I CAN, FOR I AM TRULY THE IN-BETWEENER, HE WHO WALKS BETWIXT ALL CONCEPTS SUCH AS...

LIFE AND DEATH...
REALITY AND ILLUSION...
GOOD AND EVIL...
LOGIC AND EMOTION...
GOD AND MAN...

THEN YOU WON'T MIND MY TESTING- THIS LITTLE THEORY OF YOURS...

LET US SEE HOW "ONE APART" HANDLES HAVING HIS SOUL RIPPED LOOSE FROM HIS BODY!

WHAT?!
HOW CAN'T BE'S NO LIVING BEING- CAN RESIST THE POWER OF MY SOUL GEM WHEN RELEASED!

ALL THESE THINGS DO I KNOW AND CAN AFFECT, YET NEVER DO THEY TOUCH ME!

YES, IN FIVE SHORT MINUTES THE IN-BETWEENER SHALL CARRY WARLOCK OFF TO HIS MAD REALM, AND MY EXISTENCE-- AND YOUR DOOM-- SHALL BE ASSURED!

OF THIS I FEEL SECURE. FOR, THOUGH YOU'VE PROJECTED HIM INTO OUR OWN TIME CENTER, WARLOCK WILL NOT HAVE THE TIME OR KNOWLEDGE TO CHANGE OUR DESTINY!...

--A DESTINY DESIGNED SO THAT YOU AND I MIGHT CLASH!

FOR I NOW REALIZE THAT YOU ARE THE CHAMPION OF DEATH I WAS CREATED TO BATTLE!

EXACTLY! I HAD ORIGINALLY HOPED TO STOP YOU BEFORE YOU EVER EXISTED, BY HAVING WARLOCK ABORT YOUR CREATION. I WOULD THEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SLAY YOUR FAR-LESS-POWERFUL OTHER SELF AT MY LEISURE!

BUT AS IT TURNS OUT, I BELIEVE PERSONALLY CRUSHING YOU SHALL PROVE MUCH MORE SATISFYING!



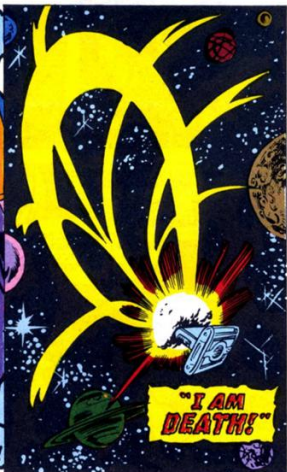
YOU SPOUT FUTILE BRAVADO, MY CRAGGY FOE!

SURELY YOU MUST REALIZE I WAS CREATED TO BE YOUR SUPERIOR...

...CREATED TO HALT YOUR MAD SCHEME OF TOTAL STELLAR GENOCIDE!

MY SUPERIOR? NEVER!

FOR I AM THANOS!



"I AM DEATH!"

MEANWHILE, AT THE OPPOSITE END OF SANCTUARY I'S
FAST INTERIOR...



AND, BACK ON WARLOCK'S KISMET
TRAIL...

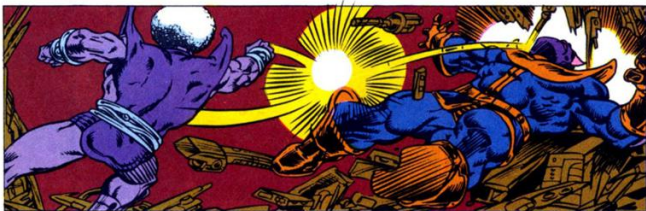




...CLEANSE THIS LIFE!



THEN, ONCE PURIFIED...



...IT MUST BE DESTROYED!



AT LAST, WE SEE THAT
LIFE IS TRULY
STRONGER THAN DEATH!

IS THAT SO?

THE MAGUS
HAS PROVEN
TRIUMPHANT!

I SUGGEST YOU LOOK AGAIN, MAGUS!

**NO! I'M BECOMING
TRANSPARENT...
FADING FROM EXISTENCE!**



**WARLOCK IS
SUCCEEDING-
IN BLOCKING-
MY CREATION!**



**HE MUST BE
STOPPED!**

**THE IN-BETWEEER, MECHANICALLY STEPS FORWARD TO DO WHAT HE HAS BEEN CREATED TO DO! THANOS
ROARS VILE LAUGHTER AS THE MAGUS BEGINS A FUTILE DASH TOWARD THE TIME PROBE TO INTERCEPT
WARLOCK, WHO NOW RACES ALONG THE SHORTEST OF HIS LIFE'S PATHS!**



**ADAM RECALLS THANOS'S WORDS: "IT IS NOT YOUR LIFE, BUT RATHER YOUR SOUL, WHICH IS DESTINED TO
BECOME OUR FOE!" THE MAGUS'S PATH HAS BEEN DESTROYED, AND NOW A NEW LIFE MUST BE CHOSEN
BEFORE THE IN-BETWEEER, CAN REACH AND THWART ALL ADAM HAS ACCOMPLISHED!**



**BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK, YET TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IS INSURING THAT THE SOUL OF THIS NEW
LIFE IS NOT ALLOWED TO BE PERVERTED INTO A FUTURE MAGUS! THIS SHALL PROVE TO BE THE
MOST DIFFICULT PART!**



SOMEWHERE... A YEAR -- MAYBE TWO YEARS -- IN THE FUTURE!

YOU... SO MY TIME HAS REALLY COME!

YOU KNOW WHY I AM HERE?! THEN YOU MUST ALSO REALIZE I'VE NO DESIRE TO DO WHAT I MUST NOW DO!

OF COURSE I UNDERSTAND YOU IDEALISTIC BUFFOON! ARE NOT YOU AND I ONE AND THE SAME PERSON!

MY FINAL MOMENTS ARE UPON ME! I AM DYING AND YOU HAVE COME TO STEAL MY SOUL SO THAT IT WILL NEVER BECOME THE FOE I DEFEATED THOSE LONG MONTHS AGO!

MONTHS... I DIDN'T REALIZE IT HAD HAPPENED SUCH A SHORT TIME AGO!

SHORT TIME?! YOU FOOL! IT'S BEEN AN ETERNITY!

DURING THAT TIME, EVERYTHING I'VE EVER CARED FOR OR ACCOMPLISHED HAS FALLEN INTO RUIN! EVERYONE I'VE EVER LOVED NOW LIES DEAD!

MY LIFE HAS BEEN A FAILURE!

I WELCOME ITS END!

"I WELCOME ITS END!" BUT IF THAT'S TO BE MY FATE, SO BE IT! BETTER THIS THAN WHAT HAS COME BEFORE! THUS, I NOW ALLOW MY SOUL GEM TO FEAST, AND MY UNIVERSE TO...

"--END!"

"THEN TO BE REBORN AGAIN, WITHOUT THE DARK STAIN OF THE MAGUS HAVING EVER MARKED IT!"

**"LET THIS BE A PLACE
WHERE NO UNIVERSAL
CHURCH OF TRUTH
HOLDS REIGN!"**

**"LET THIS BE A
PLACE OF PEACE!"**

MASTER, IT IS OVER!

**YES, GAMORA, THE
MAGUS'S EXISTENCE
HAS BEEN
TERMINATED!**

YET, I STILL REMEMBER HIM!

**AS WILL WARLOCK
AND PIP, BECAUSE,
LIKE US, THEY WERE
AT THE VERY EYE
OF THIS EXPLOSIVE
RESHUFFLING OF
TIME -- AND SO WILL
RECALL WHAT ALL
OTHER LIVING
BEINGS WILL
NEVER KNOW!**

**THUS IT HAS COME TO PASS THAT
THE FORCES OF LIFE HAVE NO
HERO TO CHALLENGE THANOS,
THE CHAMPION OF DEATH!**

**EVERYONE, WITHOUT
KNOWING IT, LOSES
THIS DAY --
SAVE DEATH!**

**FOR NOW, NOTHING CAN HALT MY
ULTIMATE PLAN FOR TOTAL
STELLAR GENOCIDE!**

**SOON, ALL WHO MUST
SUFFER THROUGH THAT
WHICH IS CALLED LIFE
SHALL BE GRANTED
THE PEACE THAT
ONLY PASSING THE
GREAT DIVIDE
CAN BRING!**

**YES, I SHALL GRANT THEM THIS
TRANQUILITY, FOR AM I NOT
THANOS?**

**AM I NOT THE
DARK SIDE?**

**AM I NOT
DEATH?**

**COME,
GAMORA,
WE'VE MUCH
TO DO!**

MEANWHILE, BACK AT, OF ALL PLACES, THE PLANET CALLED HOMEWORLD...

BACK TO REALITY, YIPPEE! I GUESS!

YES, PIP, BACK TO A UNIVERSE THAT'S NEVER KNOWN A MAGUS OR A UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF TRUTH!

BUT AS I SUSPECTED, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT IF YOU DESTROY ONE FALSE GOD THAT MEN WORSHIP, IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE...

...THEY FIND ANOTHER TO BOW TO!

WE'LL AIN'T THAT A KICK IN THE ...

AWW... THE DEVIL WITH IT ALL, AT LEAST IT AIN'T YOU THIS TIME!

WHAT SAY WE GO ON DOWN TO MAMA ALPHA'S! I'LL BUY YOU A MUG OF AMBROSIAN WINE--

--AND TREAT MYSELF TO A STINGER, AND A REVERSED BOWL OF GRUD!

IMPOSSIBLE!
NOT HER!

ADAM, YOU COMING?

HEY, WHO WAS THAT? SOMEONE YOU KNOW?

NO, NO ONE REALLY, JUST A MEMORY!

LET'S GO HAVE THAT DRINK, PIP!

I COULD USE IT!