

DR. STRANGE
ANNUAL

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ALL NEW!

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MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS

DR. STRANGE



YOU MIGHT
SAVE YOUR LOVED
ONE FROM
DESTRUCTION,
DR. STRANGE--

--OR PREVENT
MY PLANET'S
DEVOURING
YOU! BUT YOU
CANNOT DO
BOTH!!

"DOOMWORLD!"
DOUBLE-LENGTH
DYNAMITE FROM MARVEL!



Stan Lee PRESENTS: **Dr. STRANGE** MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!™

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE-- BETWEEN TIME THEN AND NOW AND WILL BE, BETWEEN PLANETS AND STARS AND SPINNING GALAXIES-- THERE IS PHASEWORLD-- A SHIFTING, CHANGING LAND MASS FLOATING FREELY THROUGH REALITIES. PLEASE COME WITH US THERE, BUT BE WARNED: ONCE YOU'VE STEPPED 'CROSS ENDLESS SPACE AND TOUCHED THE SURFACE OF THIS LIMBOLAND-- YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN BE THE SAME!

...and there will be worlds anew!



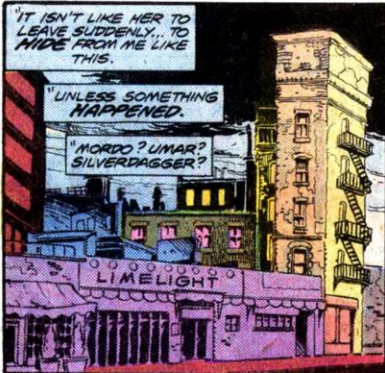
"WHERE IS SHE?
SHE ISN'T WHERE
I LEFT HER--
ACROSS THE CITY,
IN THAT MUSEUM
WHERE I BATTLED
XANDER.



"IT ISN'T LIKE HER TO
LEAVE SUDDENLY... TO
HIDE FROM ME LIKE
THIS.

"UNLESS SOMETHING
HAPPENED.

"MORDO? UMAR?
SILVERDAGGER?



"IS ONE OF MY OLD FOES
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
DISAPPEARANCE OF MY
BELOVED?



"IS SHE ALIVE?
IS SHE DEAD?

LUNC
DINN
SUPP

"BY THE ANCIENT ONE! IF I STILL HAD THE POWERS OF
SORCERER SUPREME, I COULD FIND HER IN MERE MOMENTS.
IF ONLY I HADN'T BEEN REDUCED SIMPLY TO BEING MASTER
OF THE MYSTIC ARTS.

"NO! I MUSTN'T
THINK OF SUCH
THINGS. CLEA
IS ALIVE.

Where New
ve to eat and

"SELF PITY? NO-- THAT
IS SOMETHING WHICH
DIED WITH THE OLD
STEPHEN STRANGE--
THE EGOCENTRIC PHY-
SICIAN. I WILLINGLY
FORSOOK THE MANTLE
OF SUPREME SORCERER
TO REMAIN A MAN--



"--AND NOT TO
JOIN THE STARS
BY THE SIDE OF
MY MASTER.



"AND I WILL PROVE
MYSELF BY FINDING
THE WOMAN I LOVE
WITH MY OWN LIMITED
MEANS.



"FOR IT IS MY FATE TO DO WHAT MUST
BE DONE BY MYSELF-- WITH WHATEVER
TOOLS ARE AT MY DISPOSAL.



"THAT IS THE FATE... AND THE
DESTINY OF-- DOCTOR STRANGE!

"YET, THE DARK NIGHT IS GONE AND IT IS DAWN NOW, AND STILL I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO REACH CLEA'S MIND."

"ODD, FOR THE PAST MONTHS, EVER SINCE I TOOK ON THE MANTLE OF SORCERER SUPREME --WHEN I **SHOULD** HAVE BEEN MOST SATISFIED--I WAS **LOW-EST**. FOR THERE WAS A **SCHISM** BETWEEN CLEA AND I..."

STEPHEN--?

"SHE HAD CALLED OUT TO ME DAYS AGO--**BEFORE** THE MADNESS WITH XANDER BEGAN."

YES, CLEA? IS SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?

IT'S US, STEPHEN. THE PROBLEM IS THE **TWO** OF US--WHAT WE **ONCE** MEANT TO EACH OTHER... **HOW** WE TREAT EACH OTHER **NOW**.

LOVED, STEPHEN. YOU **LOVED** ME **BEFORE**, BUT THERE HAS BEEN SO LITTLE TIME LATELY. AND SO MUCH **YOU** MUST DO.

I HAVE LITTLE TIME FOR **ANYTHING** ELSE.

AND NONE FOR YOURSELF OR FOR **ME**. IT SEEMS, NO, STEPHEN, I **REFUSE** TO BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT THE ANCIENT ONE **INTENDED** WHEN HE GRANTED YOU YOUR POWERS.

I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND. **I LOVE**...

I HAVE MY PROMISES TO THE ANCIENT ONE TO KEEP. YOU UNDERSTAND AS I DO THAT THE **BALANCES** OF GOOD AND EVIL MUST BE MAINTAINED.

TO BE **WHOLE** REQUIRES **MORE** THAN SLAVISH DEVOTION TO WORK.

A **LONG** TIME AGO YOU TOLD ME OF AN EARTH EXPRESSION--"ALL WORK AND NO PLAY..."

REMEMBER THAT, STEPHEN--?

I THEN TURNED INWARDS TO STUDY HER WORDS, AND TO UNDERSTAND MYSELF...

"--AND I DID NOT LIKE WHAT I SAW. IT WAS WHEN I SOUGHT RELIEF BY ASKING CLEA TO JOIN ME IN OBSERVING AMERICA'S PAST, WHERE WE MET FRANCIS BACON AND BEN FRANKLIN--



"--WHERE WE FOUGHT STYBYRO
--AND WHERE
I RELIN-
QUISHED
MY POWERS
AS SORCERER
SUPREME THAT
I BECAME A
MAN AGAIN."

"A MAN CAP-
ABLE OF
FEELING AND
LOVING."



AND NOW I SIT HERE, ALONE, CONTEMPLATING. IT IS SO UNLIKE ME. SELF-DOUBT HAS NEVER BEEN MY WAY BEFORE.

IT MUST NOT BECOME MY WAY NOW. IF CLEA HAS VANISHED--I MUST CONTINUE MY SEARCHINGS--NOT WALLOW IN SELF-DEPRECIATING MISERY.



...MY SON...

IN THE NAME OF THE ETERNAL VISHANTI!

THE ANCIENT ONE... SUMMONING ME!

WARNING YOU, MY SON... LOOK FOR YOUR LOVED ONE...

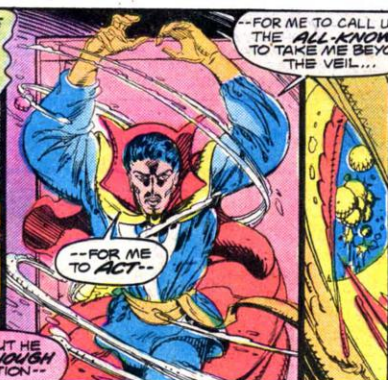


...LOOK BEYOND THE VEIL IN THE TEMPLE OF MAN...

...IN THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE. BUT...



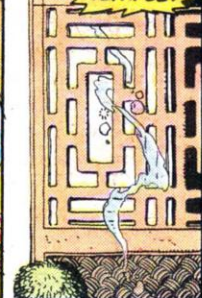
FOLLOW THE PSYCHIC PATHWAYS, MY SON...



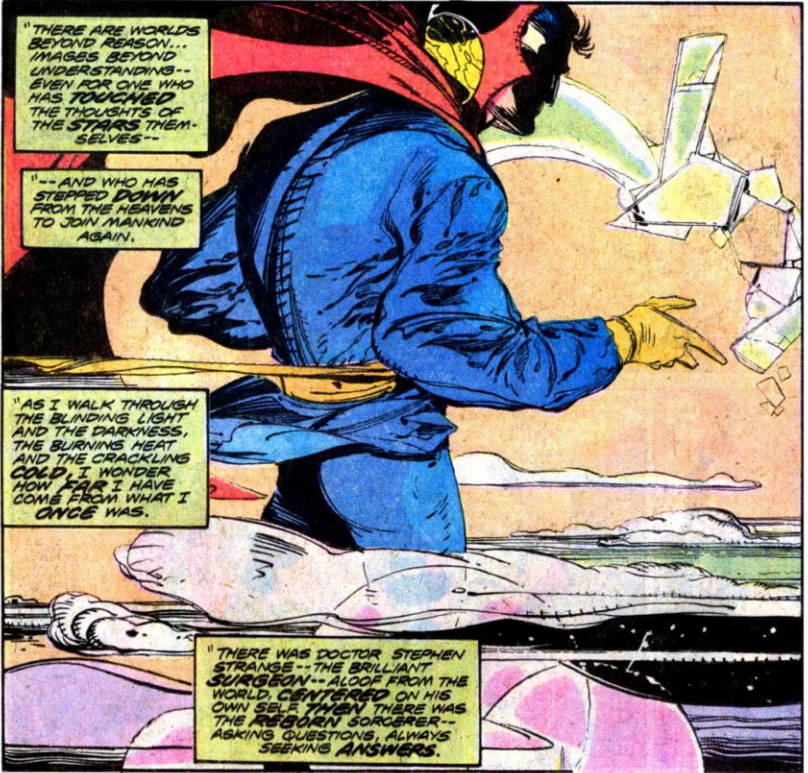
--FOR ME TO CALL UPON THE ALL-KNOWING TO TAKE ME BEYOND THE VEIL...

--FOR ME TO ACT--

...BEYOND THOUGHT--
--TO THE TEMPLE.



GONE-- BUT HE GAVE ME ENOUGH INFORMATION--



"THERE ARE WORLDS
BEYOND REASON...
IMAGES BEYOND
UNDERSTANDING--
EVEN FOR ONE WHO
HAS TOUCHED
THE THOUGHTS OF
THE STARS THEM-
SELVES--

"-- AND WHO HAS
STEPPED DOWN
FROM THE HEAVENS
TO JOIN MANKIND
AGAIN.

"AS I WALK THROUGH
THE BLINDING LIGHT
AND THE DARKNESS,
THE BURNING HEAT
AND THE CRACKLING
COLD, I WONDER
HOW FAR I HAVE
COME FROM WHAT I
ONCE WAS.

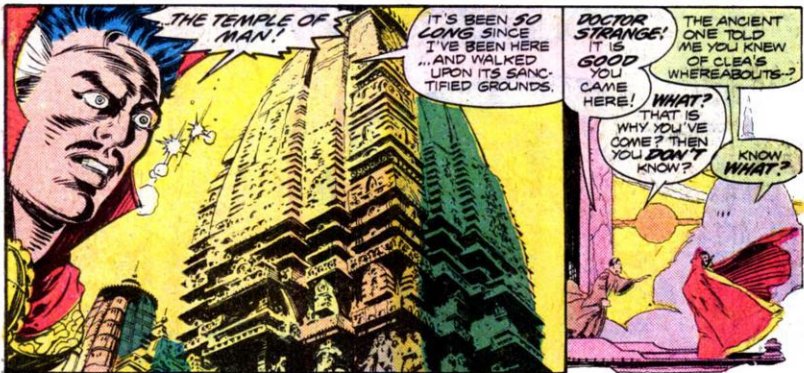
"THERE WAS DOCTOR STEPHEN
STRANGE--THE BRILLIANT
SURGEON--ALOOF FROM THE
WORLD, CENTERED ON HIS
OWN SELF, THEN THERE WAS
THE REBORN SORCERER--
ASKING QUESTIONS, ALWAYS
SEEKING ANSWERS.

"BUT WHEN THE ANSWERS
WERE HANDED TO ME,
I SAW THEY WERE NOT
WHAT I WAS SEARCHING
FOR AT ALL. I HAD KNOW-
LEDGE, BUT I KNEW
LITTLE. I MET GOD, BUT
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND
MYSELF. I LOVED A
WOMAN, BUT I TRIED TO
MOLD HER TO MY
OWN IMAGE--

"...WHEN SHE HAD HER OWN
SHADOW TO STAND BESIDE.

"NOW, ONCE AGAIN, I
ASK QUESTIONS. IT IS
A CIRCLE... AN
ENDLESS CIRCLE.

"BUT--ENOUGH!
THERE--AHEAD
OF ME... HIDDEN
IN THE MISTS..."



JUST SARGOR--
KEEPER
OF THE BOOKS,
STRANGE.

"HIS FACE IS
LONG, GRO-
TESQUELY
SHADOWED
IN THE FAINT LIGHT."

THE ONLY
SURVIVOR OF THIS
CATASTROPHE,
I MIGHT ADD.

AND I KNOW
THERE ARE NO
CLUES TO BE
FOUND IN THE
LIBRARY--FOR,
WHEN THE
PRIESTS DIED
THE MYSTIC
WRITINGS
CEASED.

THERE
MAY
STILL
BE CLUES,
SARGOR.
I MUST
SEE THE
BOOK.

VERY WELL
STRANGE. IF
YOU INSIST, BUT,
I WARN YOU,
THE TIME SPENT
IN MY DUSTY
CATACOMBS
WILL BE FRUIT-
LESS.

"HIS WORDS ANNOY ME, YET I FOLLOW HIM
DOWN THE ANCIENT STEPS, PAST MARBLE
COLUMNS WHICH WERE CARVED BEFORE MAN
SET FOOT-TO-DIRT ON THIS PLANET."

"I AM WORRIED.
CLEA HAS DIS-
APPEARED. THE
PRIESTS OF THE
TEMPLE OF MAN
HAVE BEEN
SLAIN--"

"THE NIGHT CROWDS
CLOSE AND THE
COLDNESS OF THE
CATACOMBS FORCES
ME TO PULL MY
CLOAK AROUND ME
FOR HEAT. THEN
SARGOR STOPS, HIS
EYES GLINTING MAD-
LY IN THE BLACKNESS."

YOU LEAD THE WAY
NOW, STRANGE. BEFORE
YOU IS THE LIBRARY,
AND I'LL NOT TAKE
THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR WHAT HAPPENS
INSIDE.



"I IGNORE HIM. PERHAPS A FINAL EMBER
OF MY ARROGANT EARLY YEARS FLICKERS
OVER ME AS I ENTER THE CRYPT WITHOUT
PAUSE."



"--AND I FEEL MANIPULATED...
A MOTH DRAWN BY FLAME
INTO A DARK MYSTERIOUS
DEATH."



YOU SAY
YOU CAME
HERE TO
FIND YOUR
WOMAN
CLEA?


THE ANCIENT ONE TOLD
ME I'D FIND HER HERE.
PERHAPS HE *KNEW*
OF THE PRIESTS' DEATH
AS WELL?

WHICH MAKES
ME WONDER *WHY*
HE DIDN'T TELL ME
OF IT.

YET, THESE *TWO*
OCCURRENCES--BOTH
MERGING *HERE*, ARE
TOO MUCH A COIN-
CIDENCE. PERHAPS
MY DISCIPLES DIS-
APPEARANCE IS
LINKED WITH THE
DEATHS.


THE VELVET-LINED WALL SHIMMERS AS MY CLOAK BRUSHES AGAINST IT, AND THE TWINKLING
GLITTER *ASTOUNDS* ME. SOMETHING IS *WRONG*... SOMETHING IS DREADFULLY *OUT OF*
PEACE. YET, I STILL FAIL TO UNDERSTAND WHAT BOTHERS ME.

THEREFORE, I REMAIN SILENT AS WE TREAD SOFTLY THROUGH THE SACRED CORRIDORS. HOW-
EVER, EVEN AS I WALK, I CAN HEAR THE MUFFLED FOOTFALLS OF SARGOR BEHIND ME."



YES, THIS
IS THE
BOOK OF
KNOWLEDGE.

"SARGOR'S LOOSE CLOTHING RUSTLES CLUMSILY
AS HE GLIDES TOWARDS US."



THE INFORMATION I
SEEK *SHOULD* BE IN
HERE, AND PERHAPS
BEFORE THE NEXT
DAWN I WILL LEARN
WHAT TRULY HAS
TRANSPIRED HERE.

ONCE I AM CERTAIN THERE
WILL BE NO *FURTHER*
ATTEMPTS ON MY LIFE,
THAT IS.

BACK,
TREACHEROUS
SARGOR--YOU'VE
BEEN *DISCOVERED*!



WHAT?!

"SARGOR IS SILENT TO MY QUESTIONS, SO I CALL ON THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO--"

"-- THE
PIERCING
EYE OF
TRUTH!"

SPEAK NOW! TELL
ME WHAT HAS
HAPPENED HERE!

CLEA HAS BEEN TAKEN...
TAKEN... BEYOND THE VEIL...
BEYOND TO... PHASEWORLD...

PHASEWORLD?
TELL ME MORE! QUICKLY
MAN--SPEAK!

I-I... CAN SAY...
NO MORE... BEYOND...
BEYOND...

HIS MIND IS EMPTIED
-- AND I AM LEFT...

...STILL
UNDERSTAND-
ING NOTHING.

BUT, I HAVE MY DIREC-
TIONS NOW... AND THAT
IS ALL I
NEED.

FAREWELL, SARGOR...
FAREWELL ACOLYTE.
FAREWELL!

"PHASE
WORLD! I
HEARD ITS NAME
WHISPERED IN
LEGENDS,
SPOKEN IN
HUSHED TONES.
EVEN THE
VENERATED ANCIENT
ONE RARELY
SPOKE OF IT..."

"... AND WHEN HE DID, HIS VOICE
QUIETED. IN FEAR? IN AWE? IN
HORROR? I SHALL SOON LEARN
FOR MYSELF.

THE LAND FLOATS
THROUGH THE VOID. ITS SMELLS
ARE OF SULPHUR AND PERFUME.

"SPACE IS
COLD
AROUND ME
AND I SHIVER
IN RESPONSE.
THEN I GAZE
OUTWARD
TOWARDS THE
BECKONING
STARS AND
SEE THE
SERENITY
THE BLACK-
NESS OFFERS."

... STEPHEN
STRANGE...
STEPHEN
STRANGE...

EH? WHO CALLS
FOR ME?

DEMONS
OF DENIAK!

NO!

THE VERY
GROUND
ERUPTS
ABOUT ME--
VINES
GRAB
AT MY FLESH.

"THE WORLD COMES ALIVE, AND, GIVEN LIFE, IT
CLAWS AND RIPS AND SUCKS AT MY LIFE!"



"I STRUGGLE AS THE ROOTS
DRAG ME INTO THE LIVING
MIRE THAT IS THE EVER-
SHIFTING PHASEWORLD. I
STRUGGLE, BUT THE
BATTLE IS WASTED."

"THE PLANET IS FAR MORE POWERFUL
THAN I. BUT THEN--"

STEPHEN
STRANGE...
YOU'VE COME
AT LAST!

"SHE STANDS
BEFORE ME,
PROUD, HAUGHTY,
ARROGANT,
AND EVEN
BEFORE SHE
SPEAKS, I
KNOW SHE
IS THE
ENEMY."

WHO
ARE
YOU?

I AM
LECTRA...

...EMPRESS OF
PHASEWORLD.

AND YOU, SWEET
STEPHEN STRANGE--
YOU ARE MY
SLAVE!



"HER HANDS COIL LIKE A SERPENT UNLEASHING ITS VENOM, THEN HER THOUGHT BOLTS LASH OUT, BUT I AM STILL TOO DEEP IN THE MIRE TO MOVE."

WHAT? WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO PHASEWORLD?

"INSTEAD, I SCREAM, FOR THE PAIN WENDING ITS WAY THROUGH ME RIPS MY MIND AND BODY ASUNDER, BUT SUDDENLY, I AM FREE."

IT'S GONE...
VANISHED
BEFORE MY EYES
AS IF IT NEVER
EXISTED.

"FLOATING HEAD OVER TOE I CAN NOT
RIGHT MYSELF. INSTEAD, I AM PULLED
ALONG SPACIAL TIDES WHERE I FALL..."

"FALL..."

FALL...


FALL...

"...UNTIL I AM WHIPPED
ABOUT IN A PSYCHIC
WHIRLPOOL."

"AND THEN..."

ENOUGH, SORCERER
SUPREME?
DO YOU
ACKNOWLEDGE MY
POWER TO
CONTROL
YOU LIKE A
HELP-
LESS
PUPPET?

"I FREEZE AT WHAT LURKS BEHIND HER WORDS..."



NO, LECTRA-- **NOTHING** YOU CAN DO WILL FORCE ME TO CALL YOU EMPRESS.

TORTURE ME, KILL ME IF YOU CAN, DO WHATEVER YOU CAN DO, BUT I'LL NEVER SCRAPE AT YOUR FEET--


"TOO LONG HAVE I REMAINED PASSIVE IN THIS STRUGGLE. TOO LONG HAVE I ALLOWED MYSELF TO BE TARGET FOR THIS STRANGE WOMAN. BUT NOW, AT LAST, I STEEL MYSELF... TUNE MY MIND ONCE MORE.

-- I'LL NEVER BOW LIKE YOUR HUMBLE PET!



"FORCE MY CONSCIOUSNESS TO RISE TO THE SURFACE-- FORCE MYSELF TO ACT!

"MY BODY LIFTS ITSELF FROM THE SPECTRAL EYE OF LECTRA, IT BREAKS FREE FROM THE SWIRLING EARTH AND MUD WHICH CLINGS TO ME.



"I SHUT OUT THE HORRORS OF THIS PHASEWORLD...

DO YOU STILL THINK YOU ARE MY BETTER, LECTRA?



"... FORCE THE PAIN AND TORTURE FROM MY MIND...

"UNTIL I AM FREE!"



"YOU'VE FREED YOURSELF?"



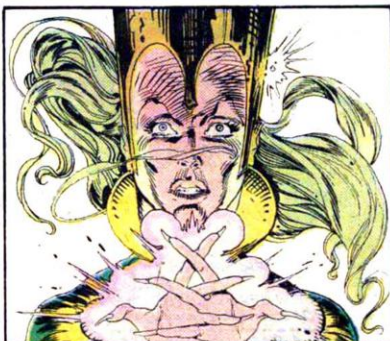
I DIDN'T THINK
IT POSSIBLE.



YET, IT HARDLY MATTERS. I HAVE
MORE THAN ENOUGH POWER TO
HUMBLE YOU.



AND I HAVE POWER
ENOUGH TO STOP
YOU.



"MY EYES BECAME ONE WITH THIS WOMAN WHOM I HAD NEVER SEEN OR KNOWN OF
BEFORE TODAY, AND WE PREPARE OURSELVES IN RITUAL FOR BATTLE. OUR
MINDS ARE READY, OUR POWERS HONED TO THEIR SHARPEST.



"AND THEN WE ATTACK!"



WE'VE **COUNTERED**
EACH OTHER'S SPELLS,
STEPHEN--WE'VE **PROVEN**
WE'RE ALMOST **EQUALS**--



--BUT **ONLY** AS FAR
AS **SORCERY** IS
CONCERNED.

FOR, I AM **STILL** THE MORE POWER-
FUL OF US TWO, STEPHEN--BEYOND
MAGICKS, BEYOND SORCERY, I **RULE**
THIS WORLD AND EVERY
ORGANISM THAT **GROWS** UPON
ITS SHIFTING SURFACE!



OBSERVE NOW,
STEPHEN--
OBSERVE!



"SHE MOVES QUICKLY. HER BOLTS SLASH AT ME, FORCING ME TO DEFEND MYSELF RATHER THAN TO ATTACK."

"BUT I KNOW I CAN NOT ALLOW HER TO USE HER CONTROLS OVER THIS WORLD. I MUST STOP HER BEFORE SHE CAN SUMMON ALL HER MYSTIC FORCES."

"A PAINFUL MOMENT IS NEEDED FOR CONCENTRATION, TO CALL ON THE ETERNAL VISHANTI FOR ASSISTANCE, AND THEN--"

IT'S OVER, LECTRA, I'VE SET UP SERAPHIM'S UNSHATTERABLE SHIELD TO HOLD BACK YOUR PLANET--TO KEEP IT FROM HELPING YOUR ATTACK.

IT'S ONLY THE TWO OF US NOW.



OH, NO, DEAR STEPHEN-- NOT JUST THE TWO OF US--HARDLY THAT.

YOU THINK I BROUGHT YOU HERE SIMPLY TO WAGE A MINDLESS BATTLE?

YOU THINK I CREATED THE IMAGE OF THE ANCIENT ONE TO LURE YOU TO PHASEWORLD JUST TO PROVIDE SPORT?

YOU'VE MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT THE WAYS OF LECTRA, STEPHEN--AND YOU WILL HAVE TIME TO LEARN EVERYTHING.

FOR NOW THE BATTLE CEASES--

CHAPTER 2 A PLANET IN TURMOIL!

--OR YOUR
BELOVED
CLEA DIES!

PUT DOWN YOUR
HANDS, STEPHEN.
STOP STRUGGLING.
COME WITH ME,
LEARN WHY I
HAVE SUMMONED
YOU, AND CALL
ME EMPRESS--

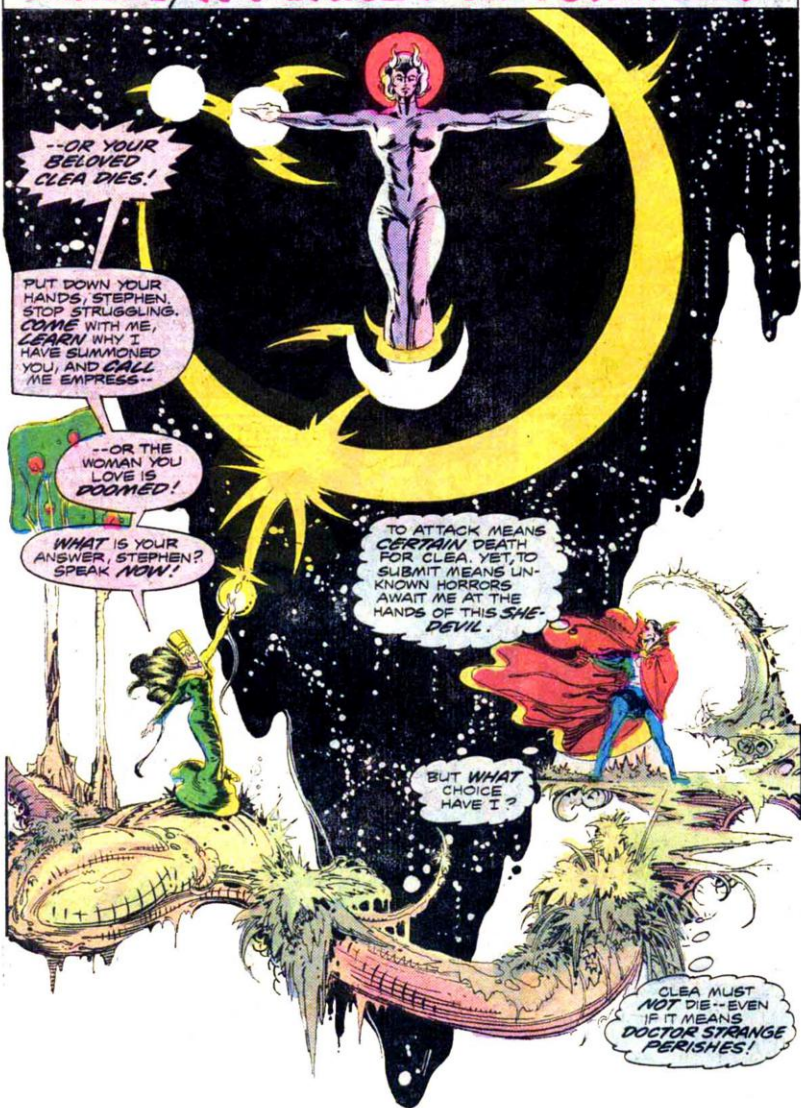
--OR THE
WOMAN YOU
LOVE IS
DOOMED!

WHAT IS YOUR
ANSWER, STEPHEN?
SPEAK NOW!

TO ATTACK MEANS
CERTAIN DEATH
FOR CLEA. YET, TO
SUBMIT MEANS UN-
KNOWN HORRORS
AWAIT ME AT THE
HANDS OF THIS SHE-
DEVIL.

BUT WHAT
CHOICE
HAVE I?

CLEA MUST
NOT DIE--EVEN
IF IT MEANS
DOCTOR STRANGE
PERISHES!





AS I THOUGHT,
EVEN A **SORCERER
SUPREME** SHOWS
A FATAL WEAKNESS
WHEN IT COMES TO
LOVE.

"MY WORD GIVEN, I AM BOUND TO FOLLOW THIS
MADWOMAN, AND I FEAR THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT
LECTRA IS."



"UNTIL NOW I
BELIEVE I
HAVE
ONLY
SEEN THE
TIP OF THE
ICEBERG..."

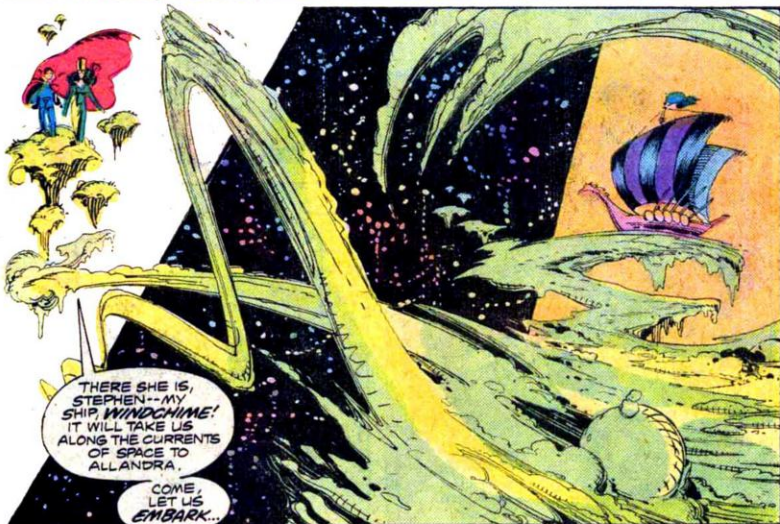
"...WHILE HER
OVERWHELMING
EVIL IS STILL
HIDDEN BENEATH
THE SURFACE.
THEREFORE, I
WALK ALERT,
MY SENSES
READY."

I CARE **NOTHING**
FOR ARCHITECTURE,
LECTRA. I'M **ONLY**
CONCERNED WITH THE
LIFE AND WELFARE
OF CLEA.

IN DUE TIME,
SWEET STEPHEN.
ALL IN DUE TIME.

IT'S A **LONG** JOURNEY
TO MY ISLAND OF ALLANDRA,
BUT I BELIEVE YOU WILL
APPRECIATE THE PALACE
GROUNDS ONCE YOU HAVE
SEEN THEM.

"I DO NOT LIKE THE WAY SHE SAID THAT, AND THE HAIR AT THE
NAPE OF MY NECK BRISTLES IN WARNING."



THERE SHE IS,
STEPHEN--MY
SHIP, **WINDCHIME!**
IT WILL TAKE US
ALONG THE CURRENTS
OF SPACE TO
ALLANDRA.

COME,
LET US
EMBARK...

...AND RELAX WHILE
MY CREW OARS US
ACROSS THE BLACK
GULF.

"A GALLEY OF CORPSES LIFT
THEIR MOTTLED HEADS AND
SMILE AS THEIR SINEWY ARMS
PULL THE CARS TO SWEEP US
ACROSS THESE SPACE-
STRADDLING WATERS.

"FOR A MOMENT, I LET MY INNER
VIBRATIONS CALM THEMSELVES. THEN--"

IT MUST BE
DRIVEN
AWAY--!

DEMONS
OF DENAK!
A SERPENT--!!

IT IS
BROTAN,
STEPHEN.

NO, YOU FOOL. BROTRAN
GUIDES
OUR WAY!

BUT--) --TOO LATE!
YOU'VE
WOUNDED HIM.
NOW I MUST FINISH
THE MURDEROUS
DOINGS.

THAT THING
WISHES OUR
HIDES!

BROTAN GUIDES
OUR WAY THROUGH
THE COMING
TURBULENCE,
BUT NOW WE'VE
GOT TO PILOT
OUR **OWN**
COURSE.

I **WARN**
YOU NEVER TO
ACT ON YOUR
OWN HERE ON
PHASEWORLD,
YOU KNOW NOTHING
OF OUR WAYS.

FOLLOW **MY** LEAD,
DO AS I COMMAND.
IT WILL **BOOE** BETTER
FOR YOU, STEPHEN.
MUCH BETTER.



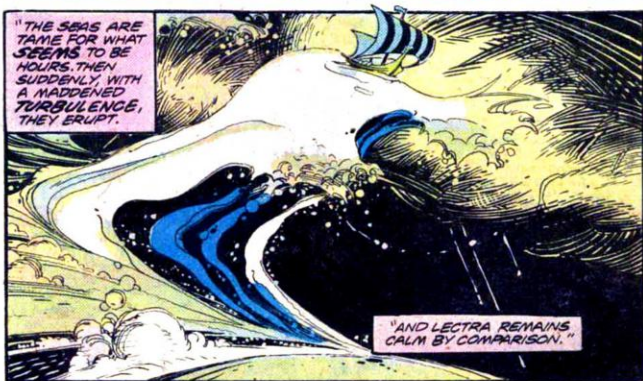
"HER WORDS **STING**
WITH A MAD TRUTH. I
ALLOWED MYSELF THE
PRIVILEGE OF ACTING
BEFORE UNDERSTAND-
ING..."



"...OF ATTACKING WITHOUT
REASON. I WAS WAITING
FOR A BATTLE, AND I LASHED
OUT AT WHAT **SEEMED** TO
BE A MENACE. **ANOTHER**
LESSON IN CONTROL. I MUST
LEARN TO CALM THE RASHNESS
OF MY SUDDEN IMPULSES.



"THE SEAS ARE
TAME FOR WHAT
SEEMS TO BE
HOURS, THEN
SUDDENLY, WITH
A MADDENED
TURBULENCE,
THEY ERUPT.



"AND LECTRA REMAINS
CALM BY COMPARISON."

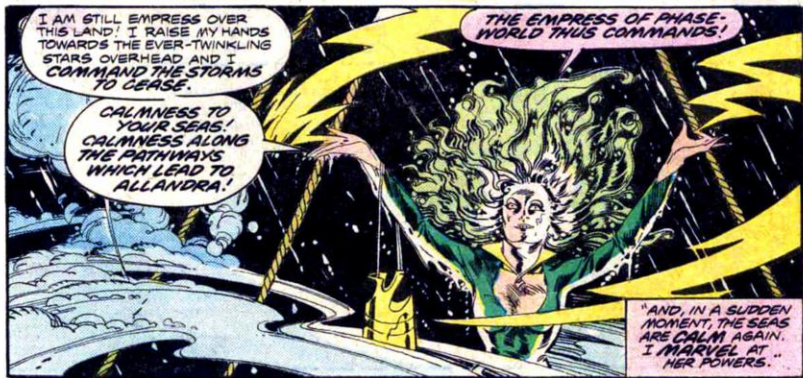
THERE IS **STILL**
A WAY THROUGH
THESE ELEMENTS,
STEPHEN--THOUGH
IT **WEAKENS**
ME DESPERATELY.



I AM STILL EMPRESS OVER
THIS LAND! I RAISE MY HANDS
TOWARDS THE EVER-TWINKLING
STARS OVERHEAD AND I
COMMAND THE STORMS
TO **CEASE**.

CALMNESS TO
YOUR SEAS!
CALMNESS ALONG
THE PATHWAYS
WHICH LEAD TO
ALLANDRA!

THE EMPRESS OF PHASE-
WORLD THUS COMMANDS!



"AND, IN A SUDDEN
MOMENT, THE SEAS
ARE CALM AGAIN.
I MARVEL AT
HER POWERS."



DO YOU
APPRECIATE
MY POWERS
NOW, STEPHEN?

I DO, AND I **WORRY** FOR
THEIR USE, LECTRA.

YOU HAVE ABILITIES, BUT
YOU **USE** THEM SOLELY
FOR YOURSELF.

AND **WHAT**
IS WRONG WITH
THAT, SWEET
ONE?

HOW **WASTEFUL** TO
SPEND TIME HELPING
OTHERS WHEN YOU
CAN MAKE YOURSELF
MISTRESS OF A WORLD.

BUT ENOUGH--
WE ARE **HERE!**



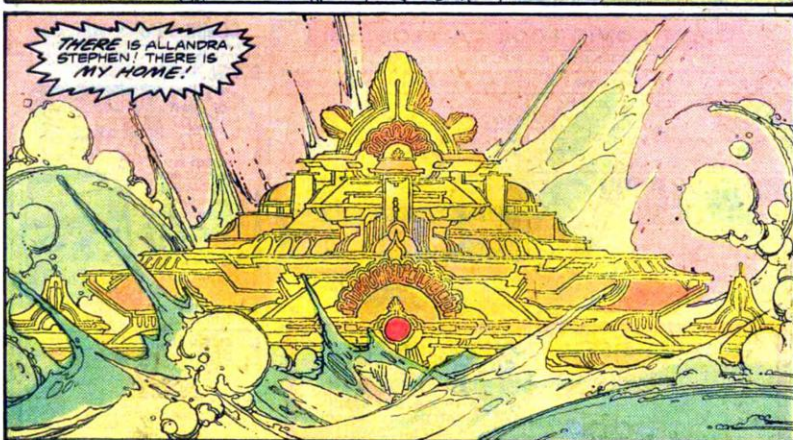
I SEE
NOTHING.



OH, ARE YOU SO **CERTAIN**
YOU DON'T SEE THE WATERS
BUBBLING WITH GLEE AT
MY RETURN?



OR THE CITY **RISE**
FROM THE SEA TO
GREET ITS EMPRESS?



THERE IS ALLANDRA,
STEPHEN! THERE IS
MY HOME!

"PASTEL COLORS SURROUNDED BY THE EBONY OF SPACE, MUSIC BORDERED WITH THE HARSH SCREAMINGS OF A DEAD CREW. MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF ALLANDRIA ARE CONTRADICTIONS."

"HOW COULD ONE AS CORRUPT AS LECTRA BE EMPRESS OVER A LAND OF BEAUTY?"

COME NOW, STEPHEN. WE ARE EXPECTED, AND MY WARRIORS AWAIT US.



THERE ARE FESTIVITIES UNDERWAY. PARADES WE MUST OBSERVE.

YOU FORGET I'M HERE ONLY TO RESCUE CLEA.

WE CAN DISPENSE WITH THE GLITTER.

NONSENSE, MY SWEET ONE. THERE IS A TIME AND PLACE FOR EVERYTHING. NOW IS THE MOMENT FOR PLEASURE.

WE SHALL FIND TIME FOR YOUR WITCH LATER.

BUT NOW A CITY WISHES TO GREET YOU.

COME... COME. LOOK AND SEE!

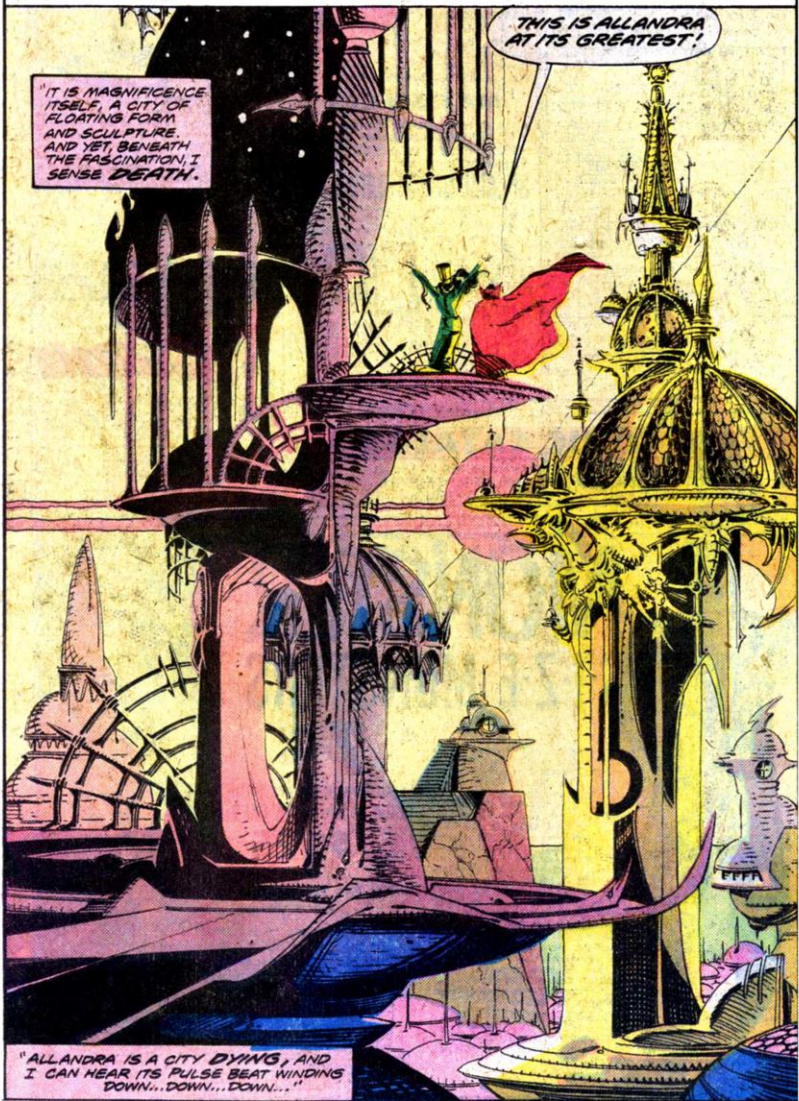


CHAPTER 3 > A CITY BORN IN TEARS !

"IT IS MAGNIFICENCE
ITSELF, A CITY OF
FLOATING FORM
AND SCULPTURE.
AND YET, BENEATH
THE FASCINATION, I
SENSE **DEATH**."

THIS IS ALLANDRA
AT ITS GREATEST!

"ALLANDRA IS A CITY DYING, AND
I CAN HEAR ITS PULSE BEAT WINDING
DOWN...DOWN...DOWN..."





AND NOW, STEPHEN, IT IS TIME TO SPEAK OF WEIGHTIER THINGS.

THE REASONS *WHY* YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT HERE.



YOU SEE, MY SWEET ONE, *TOGETHER* WE ARE ABLE TO RULE *EVERYTHING*.

WHAT? YOU'RE MAD!



THINK ON IT, STEPHEN, AND YOU WILL REALIZE THE IDEA IS *NOT SO MAD* AFTER ALL.

I AM EMPRESS OF A POWERFUL LAND, WHILE *YOU* ARE THE SORCERER SUPREME.

WHAT AN *UNDEFEAT-ABLE* COMBINATION WE WOULD BE.

YOU HAVE MADE *TWO* MISTAKES, LECTRA.

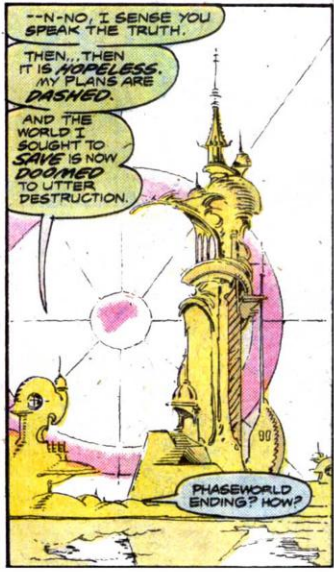


TO THINK I WOULD *WANT* TO RULE A WORLD, MUCH LESS AT *YOUR* SIDE, IS INSANITY ITSELF.

I RELINQUISHED THE POWER TO STAND BESIDE MY LOVE.

AND MORE, YOU CALL ME SORCERER SUPREME, BUT I *NO LONGER* HOLD THAT HONOR.

WHAT? YOU LIE! I CHECKED... I OBSERVED YOU IN BATTLE. I--



--N-NO, I SENSE YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH.

THEN... THEN IT IS *HOPELESS*. MY PLANS ARE *DASHED*.

AND THE WORLD I SOUGHT TO *SAVE* IS NOW *DOOMED* TO UTTER DESTRUCTION.

PHASEWORLD ENDING? HOW?

OH YES, MY SWEET--
TOTALLY DOOMED
TO A FATE WHICH
WOULD MAKE
YOUR HELL
SWEET BY
COMPARISON.

WHY DO YOU THINK
I LURED YOU HERE?
WHY DID I GO TO
SUCH **ELABORATE**
MEASURES TO MAKE
YOU MY **CONSORT**?

THE
DEATH OF
MY WORLD
IS... IMMINENT,
STEPHEN.

"HER VOICE **QUIVERS** AS SHE SPEAKS.
I SENSE THE **LIE** FORMING IN HER
WORDS, BUT FASCINATED, I STILL LISTEN."

YOU DID NOT TELL
ME **HOW** YOUR
WORLD IS ENDING,
LECTRA.



NOT "**HOW**"
DEAR ONE--
WHY. IT IS
MY EVIL SISTER
PHAYDRA
WHO CAUSES
PHASEWORLD'S
DECAY!

AYE
STEPHEN!

EACH DAY
SHE STEALS
MORE AND
MORE OF
PHASEWORLD'S
GLORY!

SISTER?

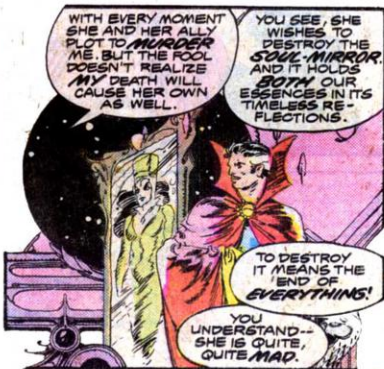


WITH EVERY MOMENT
SHE AND HER ALLY
PLOT TO **MURDER**
ME. BUT THE FOOL
DOESN'T REALIZE
MY DEATH WILL
CAUSE HER OWN
AS WELL.

YOU SEE, SHE
WISHES TO
DESTROY THE
SOUL MIRROR.
AND IT HOLDS
BOTH OUR
ESSENCES IN ITS
TIMELESS RE-
FLECTIONS.

TO DESTROY
IT MEANS THE
'END OF
EVERYTHING!

YOU
UNDERSTAND--
SHE IS QUITE,
QUITE **MAD**.

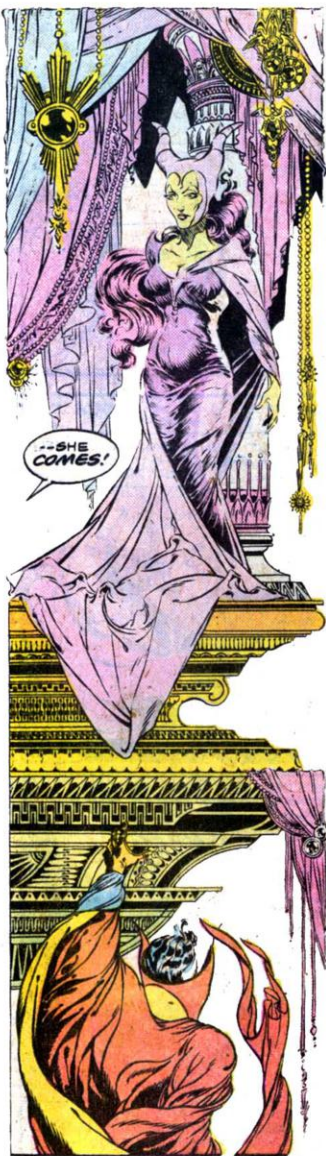


I WANT TO MEET
HER, LECTRA.
TO **SPEAK**
TO HER.

HOW CAN I HELP
SAVE A WORLD
WITHOUT KNOW-
ING **WHO** IS DESTROYING IT.

THEN YOU **WILL**
MEET HER, STEPHEN.
LOOK **BEHIND** YOU--





"PHAYDRA GLIDES LIKE CHIFFON, AND I STARE TRANSFIXED, FOR HER EYES ARE DEEP AND SORROWFUL. THEY SPEAK TO ME, BESEECHING ME. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HER."

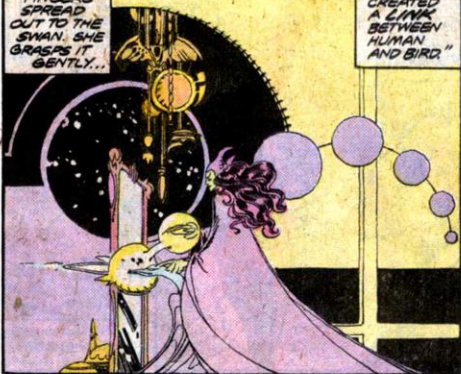
MY SISTER PHAYDRA, STEPHEN. THE WITCH OF ALLANDRA.

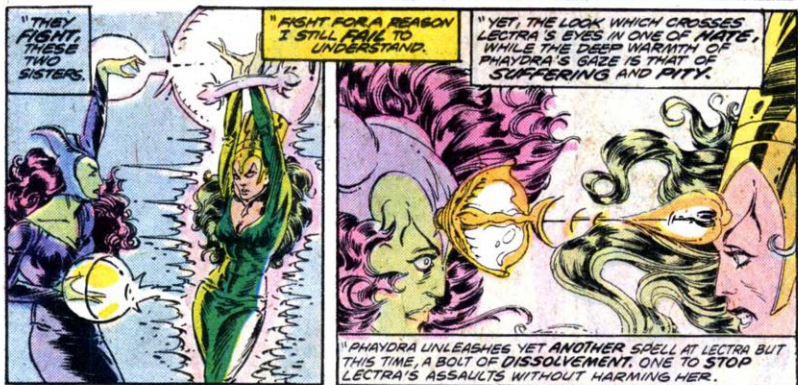
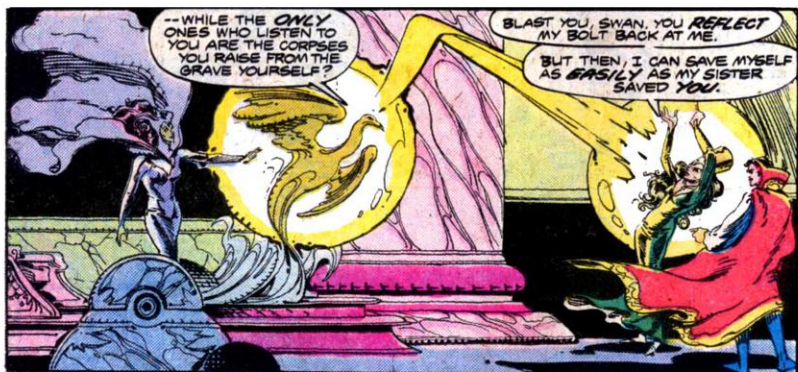
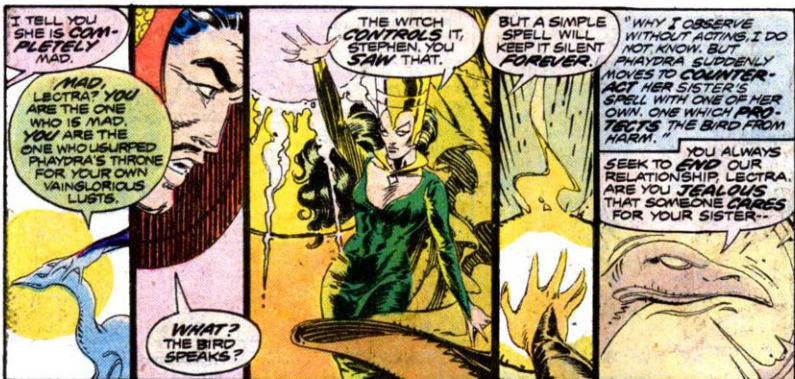


I TELL YOU SHE MUST BE WATCHED. SHE CAN BE EVER SO CRAFTY--EVER SO VILE.

"EVER SO SILENT. WITHOUT A WORD, HER LONG DELICATE FINGERS SPREAD OUT TO THE SWAN. SHE GRASPS IT GENTLY..."

"...AND A RUBY GLOW CROSSES BETWEEN THEM. SHE HAS CREATED A LINK BETWEEN HUMAN AND BIRD."





"IT IS A SPELL THAT **TUGS** AT LECTRA'S SOUL... THAT **DIGGS** ITS WAY INTO HER SISTER'S CONSCIOUSNESS.

"WHAT POWER CAN IT TRULY HOLD?"

"THEIR EYES MEET AS MY OWN CATCHES THE GLINT OF SOMETHING... ELSE.

"THE MIRROR!"

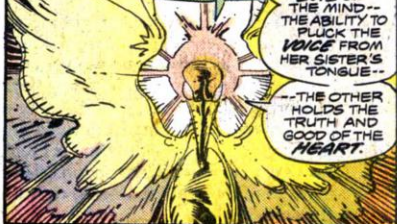


LECTRA TOLD YOU THE **TRUTH** OF THE MATTER, STRANGE. THE MIRROR HOLDS THEIR COMBINED ESSENCES. FOR, YOU SEE, THEY MAY BE **TWO** BEINGS, BUT THEY SHARE A COMMON HEART, A COMMON SOUL.

THEY EXIST APART, BUT ALWAYS THEY ARE **TOGETHER**.

AND WHERE **ONE** POSSESSES THE **EVIL** OF THE MIND-- THE ABILITY TO PLUCK THE **VOICE** FROM HER SISTER'S TONGUE--

--THE OTHER HOLDS THE **TRUTH** AND **GOOD** OF THE **HEART**.



AND YOU, SWAN--?

I SPEAK FOR PHAYDRA BECAUSE SHE NO LONGER CAN. I SPEAK FOR HER BECAUSE I HAVE TOUCHED HER HEART AND I **LOVE** HER.



AND I ONLY WISH TO **PROTECT** HER. BUT, IT SEEMS, AS LECTRA'S EVILNESS FORCES ALL ANDRA TO DECAY, THEIR ETHERAL FIGHT BECOMES **MORE** UNCEASING THAN EVER.



THEN THIS MADNESS WILL STOP **NOW!**

WITH AN ENCHANTMENT THAT **NONE** CAN RESIST!

IN THE NAME OF THE ETHERAL VISHANTI-- **CEASE!**



"SILENCE OVERWHELMS THE PALACE, THEN PHAYDRA GLANCES IN MY DIRECTION AND COMES TO ME, AS HER HAND TOUCHES MINE I KNOW SHE IS THE ONE TO BE PROTECTED, BUT THE QUESTION IS... HOW?"

SO, YOU'VE SIDED AGAINST ME, STEPHEN? I OFFERED YOU POWER AND YOU REFUSED IT. I GAVE MYSELF TO YOU, AND YOU SPURNED ME.

I ASKED FOR NOTHING AND I TAKE NOTHING. ALL I WANT IS CLEA. WHERE IS SHE?

WHERE IS SHE, STEPHEN? YOU'LL NEVER KNOW.

BECAUSE, BY MOVING AGAINST ME, YOU'VE FORCED ME TO SLAY YOU.

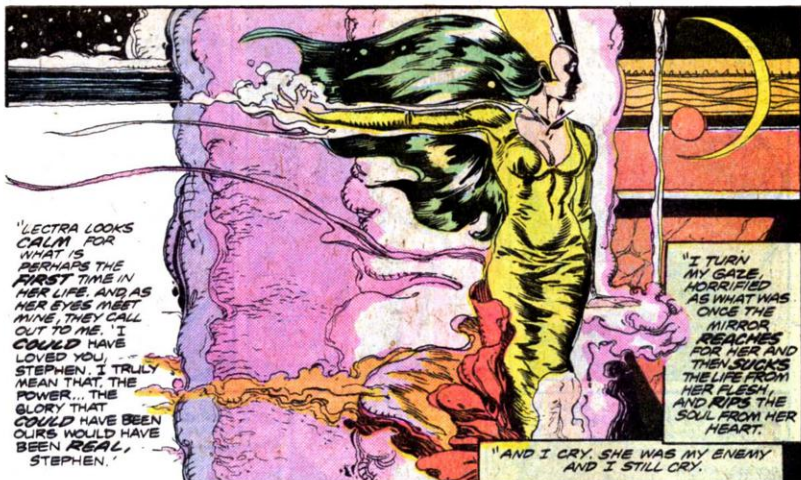
NO, LECTRA. YOU'LL SLAY NO MAN TONIGHT.

WHO--?

IT IS I LECTRA.

"A FAINT GLOW PIERCES THE SOFT LIGHTS WHICH BATHE LECTRA. IT IS A LIGHT OF CHANGE AND GROWTH, AND THE SPARK WHICH SPoke FOR THE LOVELY MUTE, WHICH CHAMPIONED HER CAUSE, SHIMMERS IN THE PULSING LIGHT, THEN STRETCHES ITS FEATHERED WINGS OUTWARDS, AND THE FEATHERS FADE AND FLESH GROWS, AND FROM THE BIRD THERE METAMORPHOSIZES-- A MAN."

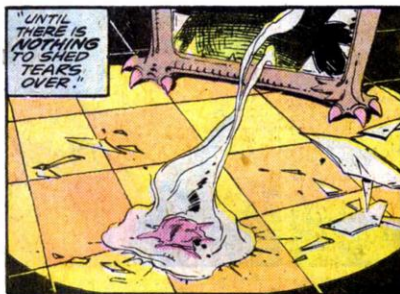




"LECTRA LOOKS CALM FOR WHAT IS PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE. AND AS HER EYES MEET MINE, THEY CALL OUT TO ME. 'I COULD HAVE LOVED YOU, STEPHEN. I TRULY MEAN THAT. THE POWER... THE GLORY THAT COULD HAVE BEEN OURS WOULD HAVE BEEN REAL,' STEPHEN."

"I TURN MY GAZE, HORRIFIED AS WHAT WAS ONCE THE MIRROR REACHES FOR HER AND THEN SUCKS THE LIFE FROM HER FLESH, AND RIPS THE SOUL FROM HER HEART."

"AND I CRY. SHE WAS MY ENEMY AND I STILL CRY."



"UNTIL THERE IS NOTHING TO SHED TEARS OVER."



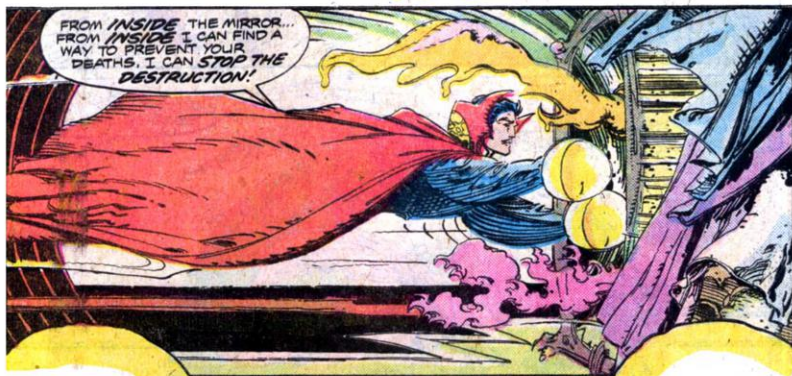
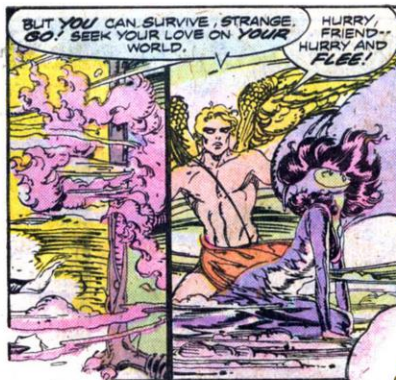
IS SHE DEAD?

WE ALL ARE, STEPHEN STRANGE!



LECTRA WAS PHASEWORLD. HER ESSENCE CONTROLLED IT, WITH HER GONE, SO MUST EVERYTHING ELSE WE HOLD DEAR.

AND SO MUST PERISH THE WORLD I LIVE ON, AND THE WOMAN I LOVE.

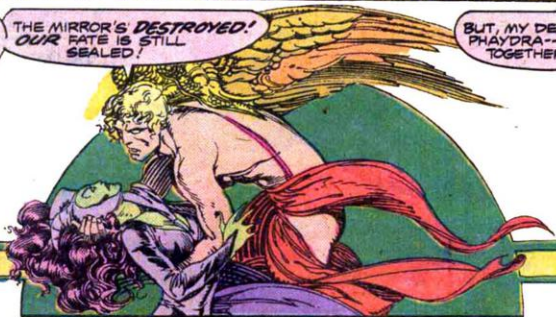




WHY?
WHY DID
YOU EVEN
TRY?

THE MIRROR'S DESTROYED!
OUR FATE IS STILL
SEALED!

BUT, MY DEAR, MY SWEET
PHAYDRA-- ~~WE~~ WILL DIE
TOGETHER... WE WILL--



PHAYDRA?



PHAYDRA

NO!

I AM ALONE NOW. ALONE
IN A WORLD THAT WILL
CRUMBLE IN ON ITSELF.
A WORLD THAT WILL DIE...

...EVEN AS I
MUST DIE.

TAKE ME,
ALLANDRA!
SWEEP ME
AWAY IN YOUR
MIGHTY ARMS!

TAKE ME
AND RE-UNITE
ME WITH MY
LOVE!

THE VOID IS DARK AND
SILENT NOW. THEN THERE
IS THE WAILING CACAPHONY
OF CRIES AND FALLING
MORTAR! SOMEPLACE
OFF IN THE DISTANCE, ALLAN-
DRA DIES AND PHASEWORLD
SHIFTS AND SIGNS ONE LAST
TIME. AND THEN... THEN
THERE IS ONLY SILENCE.



"AND I TAKE
THE SILENCE
WITH ME AS
I RETURN
HOME AND,
WITH PRAYERS,
--HOME TO
MY LOVE."