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MARVEL

JLA/AVENGERS 1024

JLA ★ AVENGERS

BUSIEK • PÉREZ

1 OF 4



BUSIEK • PÉREZ WITH SMITH

MARVEL COMICS • DC COMICS

NUMBER ONE

JLA AVENGERS

BUSIEK • PÉREZ

KURT BUSIEK
WRITER

GEORGE PÉREZ
ARTIST

TOM SMITH
COLORIST & SEPARATOR

COMICRAFT
LETTERER

.....

AND THERE CAME A DAY
UNLIKE ANY OTHER,
WHEN EARTH'S MIGHTIEST
HEROES WERE UNITED
AGAINST A COMMON
THREAT! ON THAT DAY
THE AVENGERS WERE
BORN -- TO FIGHT THE
FOES NO SINGLE HERO
COULD WITHSTAND!

THE AVENGERS

JLA

INDIVIDUALLY THEY ARE
THE WORLD'S GREATEST
SUPER HEROES -- NOBLE
CHAMPIONS DEDICATED
TO HONOR AND RIGHT-
EOUSNESS. TOGETHER
THEY ARE THE JUSTICE
LEAGUE OF AMERICA,
AND THEY FALL TO NO
ENEMY OR EVIL!

DIRECT EDITION



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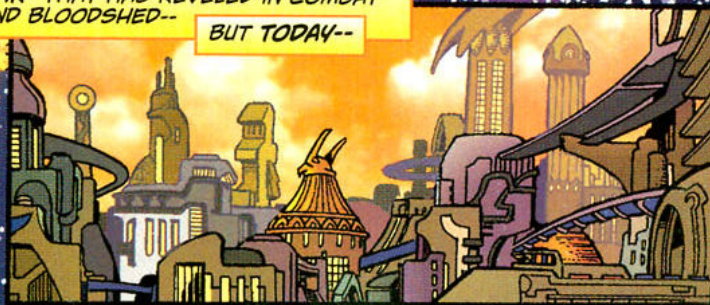
COVER ARTIST: GEORGE PÉREZ

COVER COLORIST & SEPARATOR: TOM SMITH

LOGO DESIGN: JOHN J. HILL

PROLOGUE: THE WORLD IS POLEMACHUS.

IT IS A WORLD THAT HAS KNOWN MUCH WAR--THAT HAS REVELED IN COMBAT AND BLOODSHED--
BUT TODAY--

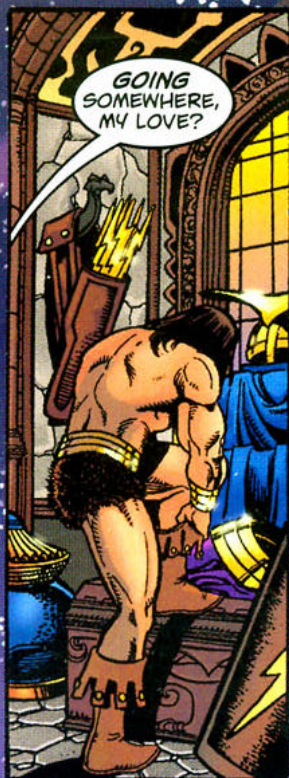


TODAY ITS PROUD CAPITAL CITY KNOWS ONLY JOY AND CELEBRATION. FOR TODAY IS A GREAT DAY--

--THE DAY OF THE IMPERION.



GOING SOMEWHERE, MY LOVE?



I THOUGHT I'D GRAB A WINESKIN, SOME MEAT AND CHEESE FROM THE COOKROOM, AND GO KHEF-HUNTING IN THE HILLS TODAY.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN ME, OF COURSE.



UNLESS YOU'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA?



MMM. MAYBE LATER.



BUT TELL ME--WERE YOU PLANNING THIS MANLY JAUNT FOR BEFORE OR AFTER YOUR SUBJECTS HONOR YOUR ASCENSION TO THE IMPERIAL THRONE?

SIGH: I SUPPOSE IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT TO AVOID IT ENTIRELY. BUT ALL THOSE ENDLESS SPEECHES PUT ME STRAIGHT TO--



MILORD ARKON! LADY THUNDRA! WE ARE ASSAILED!

EH?
VIZIER, WHAT--?



CAN YOU NOT HEAR IT? THE RUMBLES OF FEAR--THE CRIES OF PANICKED POLEMACHANS IN THE AVENUES?

GO TO THY WINDOWS, IMPERION-- AND SEE!



BY THE SACRED RINGS--!





IT IS NOT THE SIZE OF THAT WHICH FILLS THE SKY THAT MAKES IT SO UNNERVING.

IT IS THE GAZE--AN INTELLIGENT, QUESTING, HUNGRY GAZE THAT LANCES THROUGH EACH BEING BELOW.

IT FILLS THEIR HEADS, THEIR MINDS-- QUESTIONING, DEMANDING--



WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE SECRET? WHAT IS THE TRUTH? TELL ME! TELL ME!

»NNH!«

»HKK«



AND WHEN IT DOES NOT RECEIVE AN ANSWER, IT SEEKS--



--AND IN ITS WAKE COMES DEATH.



NO!

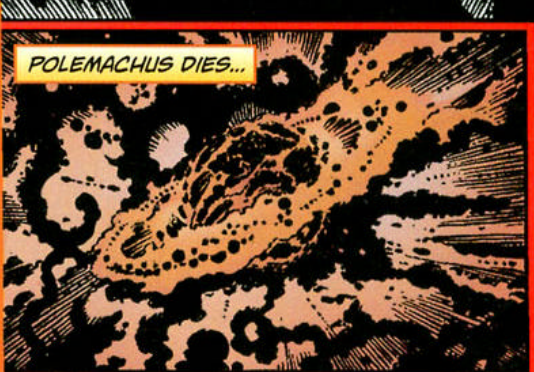
NO!

»NEEE«

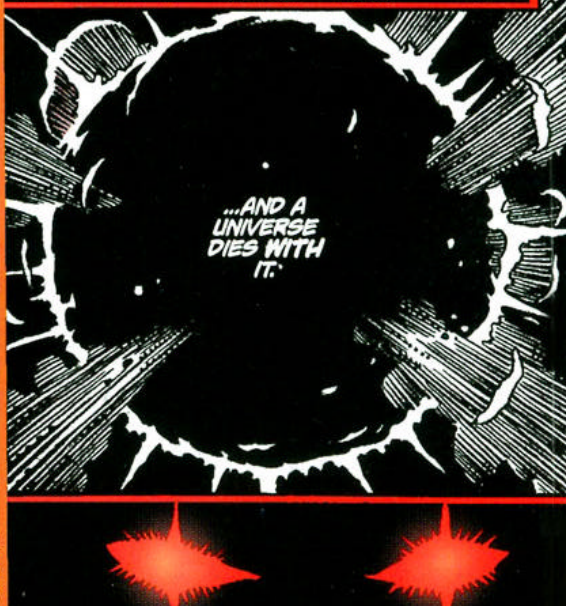


STAND, CREATURE!

STAND AND FIGHT! ARKON THE IMPERION



POLEMACHUS DIES...



...AND A UNIVERSE DIES WITH IT.

ANOTHER UNIVERSE.
OCCUPYING THE SAME
SPACE, BUT A DIFFERENT
VIBRATORY PLANE OF REALITY.

THE WORLD IS QWARD.

IT IS A WORLD THAT HAS
KNOWN MUCH WAR AS WELL.

IT KNOWS IT TODAY.

HOLD THEM
BACK, WEAPONERS!
HOLD THEM
BACK!

GODS
OF CARNAGE, WE
COMMAND THE MOST
DEVASTATING ARSENAL
IN ALL CREATION! SURELY
WE CAN DRIVE OFF
FIVE MERE--

KRAM

CRASH

THOM

HHHHH

WHAT A
DELIGHT,
POWER RING! I
HAD NO IDEA THIS
PLACE EVEN
EXISTED! HOW
DID YOU EVER
FIND IT?

EHH.
JUST BORED,
ULTRAMAN.
SCANNING THE
HEAVENS WITH
THE RING.

THOUGHT
THIS'D MAKE FOR A NICE
AFTERNOON.



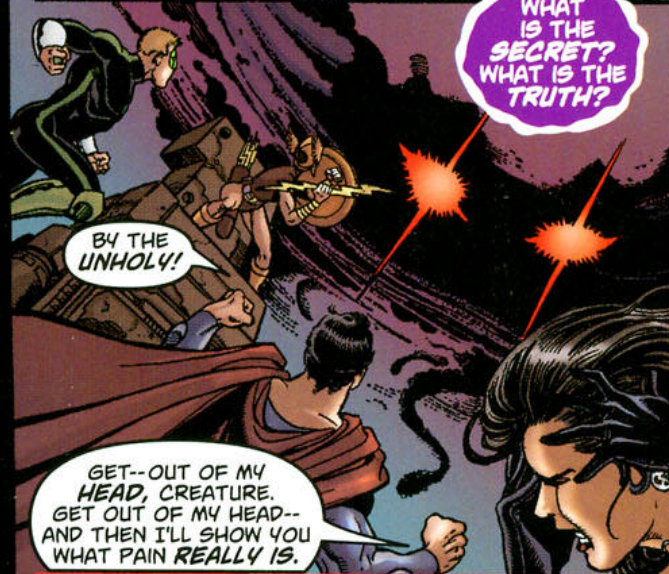
AT LEAST THESE GUYS CAN PUT UP A FIGHT, EH?

MAYBE WE SHOULD LEAVE JUST ENOUGH TO REBUILD, SO WE CAN COME BACK AND--

TELL ME.

EH? DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, QUI--

OHHH...



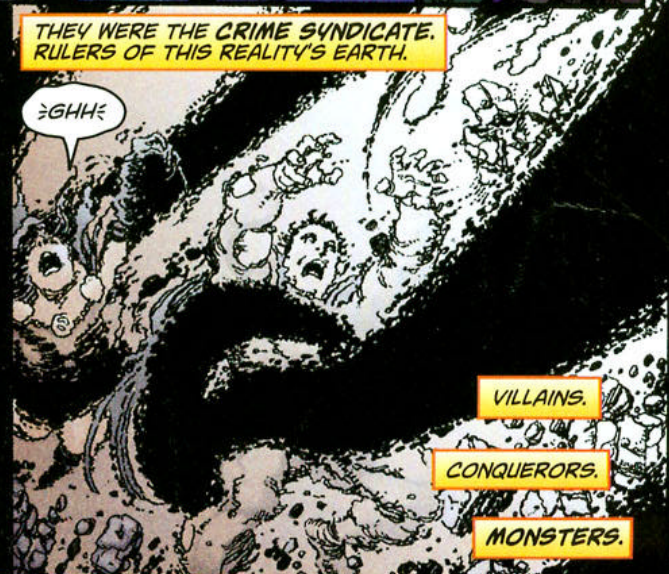
WHAT IS THE SECRET? WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

BY THE UNHOLY!

GET--OUT OF MY HEAD, CREATURE. GET OUT OF MY HEAD-- AND THEN I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT PAIN REALLY IS.

THEY WERE THE CRIME SYNDICATE. RULERS OF THIS REALITY'S EARTH.

GGHH



VILLAINS.

CONQUERORS.

MONSTERS.



BUT NOW THEY, AND THE GUARDIANS, THE WORLD THEY STAND ON AND THE UNIVERSE IT FLOATS IN--

-- ARE NO MORE.

PROLOGUE ENDS.

DC COMICS & MARVEL COMICS PROUDLY PRESENT:



Once Upon a Time...



...there was a
Universe.

THE WORLD'S
GREATEST SUPER HEROES:

THE
JLA

MEET EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES:

THE
AVENGERS

BOOK ONE

A JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY

AND WITHIN
THAT
UNIVERSE...

...A YOUNG
GALAXY SPINS,
A MERE FIVE
MILLION LIGHT-
YEARS FROM
THE EDGE OF
EXPANSION.

AND IT IS
OBSERVED.

HE IS EN DWI
GAST, THE
GRANDMASTER.

HE IS AN
ELDER OF THE
UNIVERSE, ONE
OF THE OLDEST
BEINGS IN THE
COSMOS.

JUST UNDER A
BILLION YEARS
AGO, HE MADE
A BET WITH
ONE OF HIS
BRETHREN ON
THE PREDICTED
FINAL AXIAL
DECLINATION
OF THE OUTER-
MOST PLANET
OF A STAR
SYSTEM THAT
WOULD FORM
NEAR THE HUB
OF THIS GALAXY.

HIS POWER
INCALCULABLE,
HE HAS SPENT
MUCH OF HIS
EONS-LONG
LIFE IN SEARCH
OF DIVERSION--
IN COSMIC GAMES
OF CHANCE AND
SKILL, AND IN
WAGERS ON THE
OUTCOME OF
THOSE GAMES.

TODAY, THAT PLANET
WILL BE FORMED
ENOUGH--FOR THE
BET TO BE WON, OR
LOST.

ANOTHER
TWENTY
SECONDS.

ANOTHER
TEN
SECONDS.

TELL
ME!

THE WORDS ARE NOT
WORDS. HIS SENSES
ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH,
HIS MIND KEEN ENOUGH,
TO SENSE IT.

IT IS A PROBE -- A
BROAD-SPECTRUM
ENERGY PROBE THAT
SPREADS THROUGH
THE UNIVERSE, IN A
QUEST FOR ANSWERS,
FOR INFORMATION.

FOR
TRUTH.

NO
FURTHER,
INTRUDER.

YOUR PROBE
THREATENS THE
VERY FABRIC OF THE
UNIVERSE. I WILL NOT
PERMIT IT FURTHER
ACCESS.

WHO
ARE YOU...
AND WHAT
DO YOU
SEEK?

THE PROBE DRAWS BACK A
MOMENT--PERPLEXED, PERHAPS,
AT THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING
EVEN MOMENTARILY DENIED?

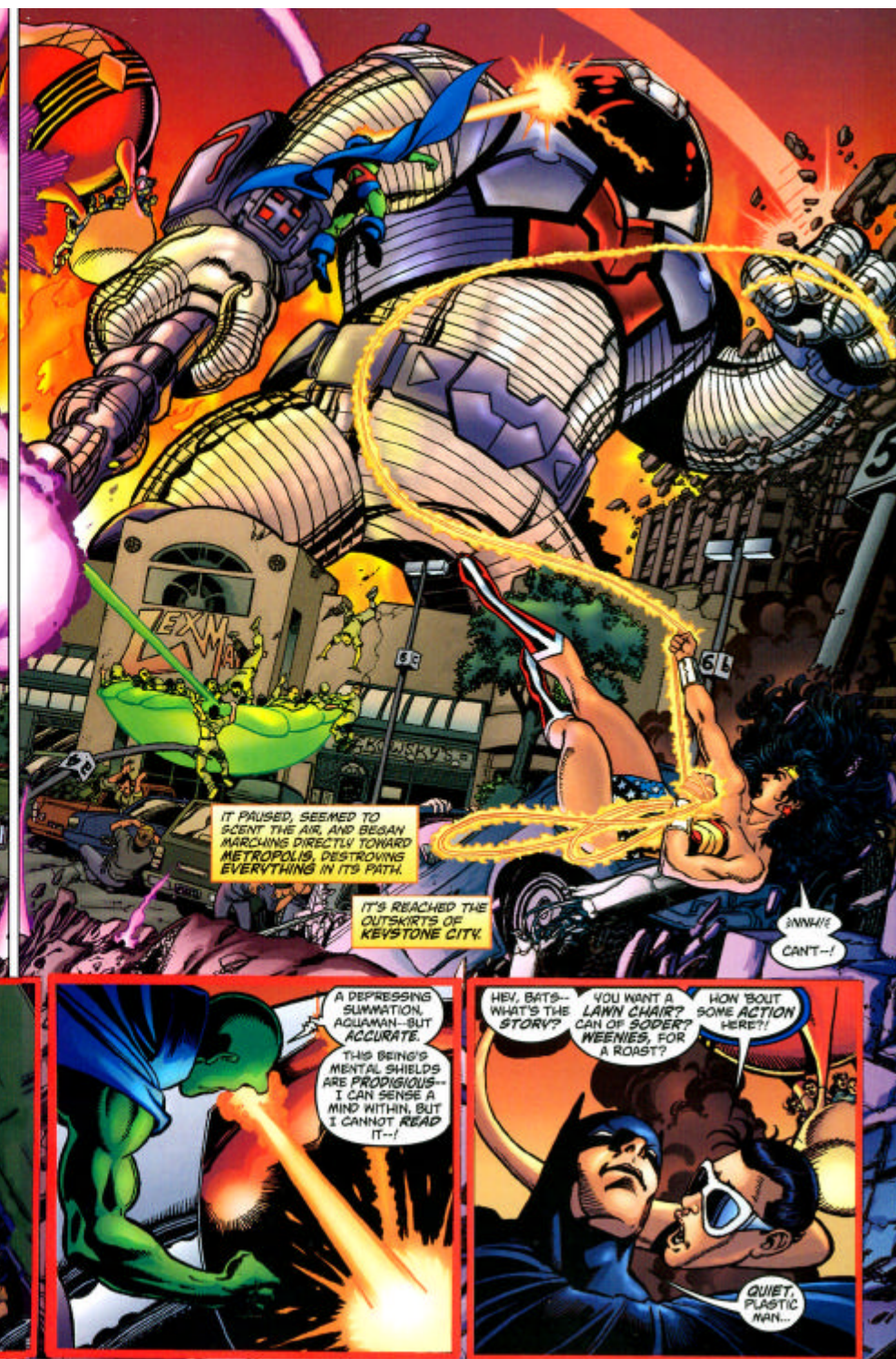
IT PAUSES.
SHIFTS. AND...

WHAT DO I
SEEK?

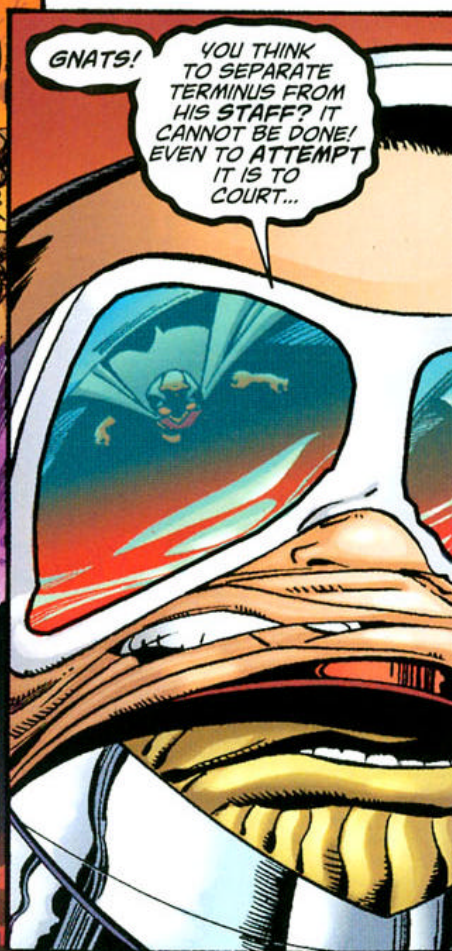
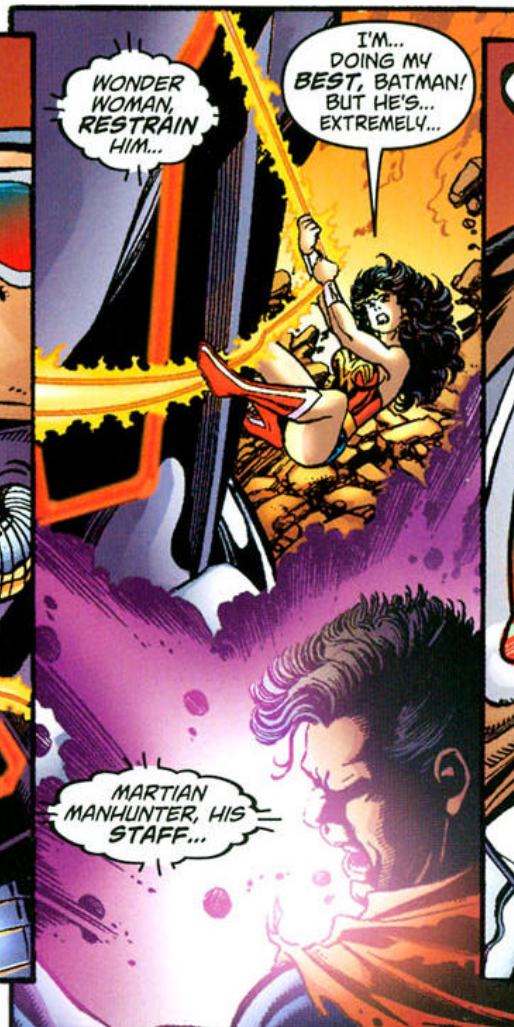
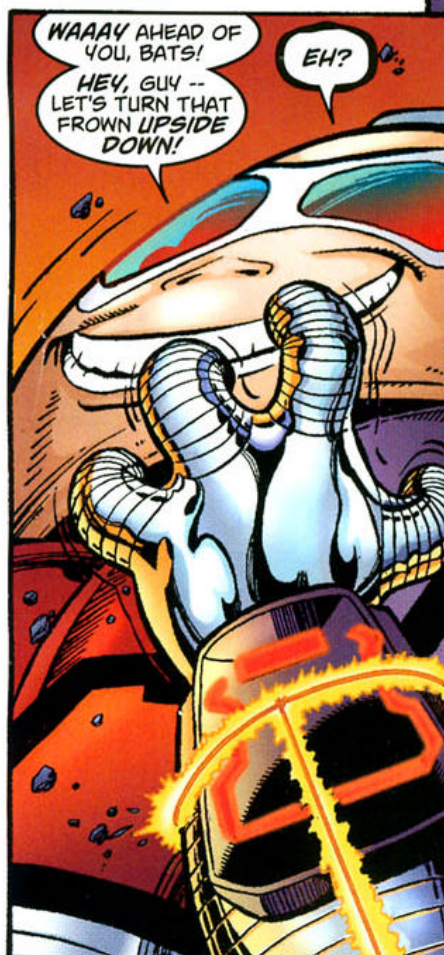
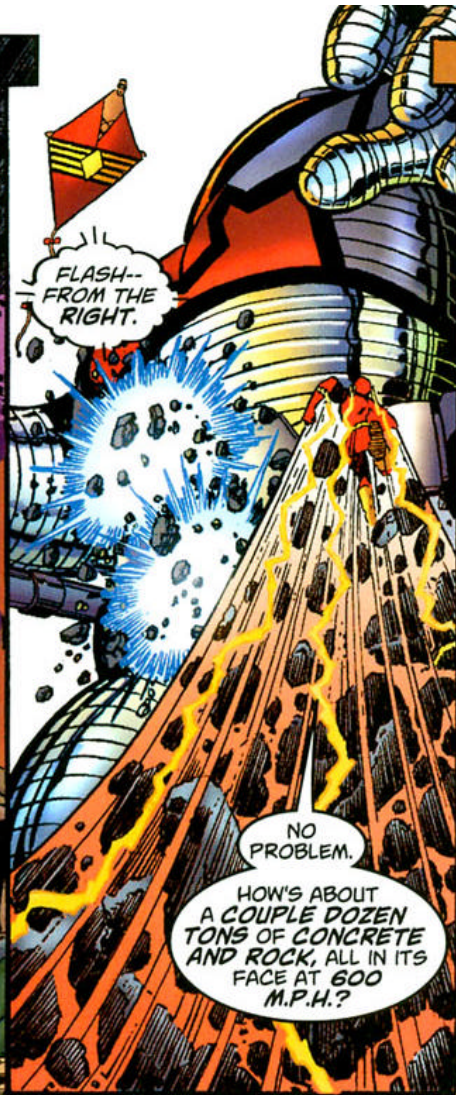
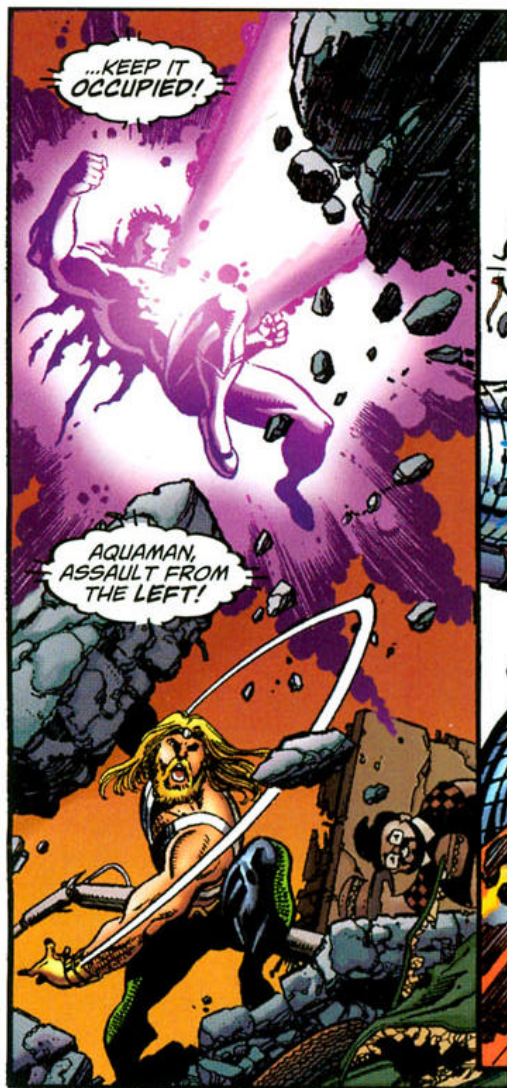
I SEEK
THE ULTIMATE
TRUTH.
WHO AM I?

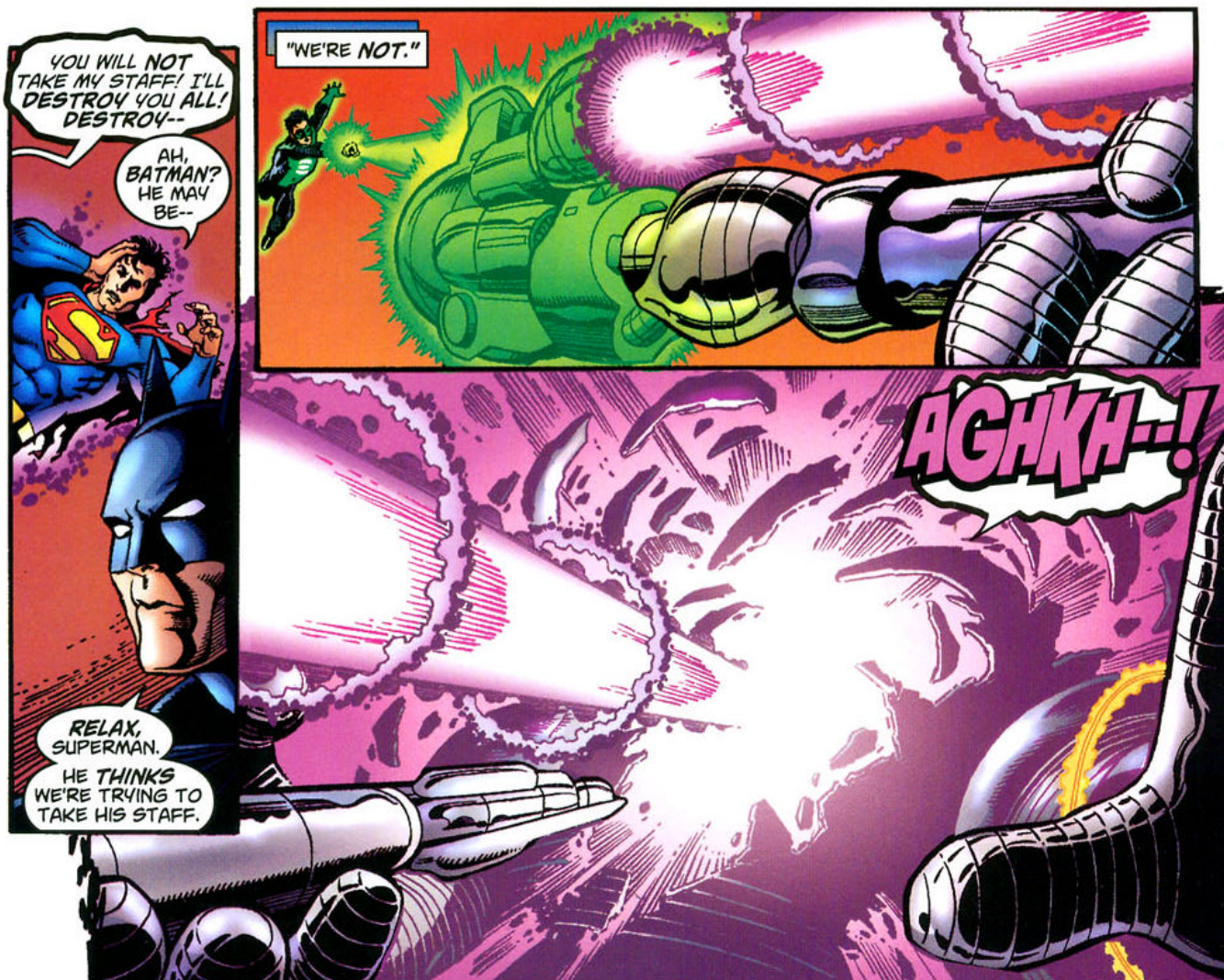
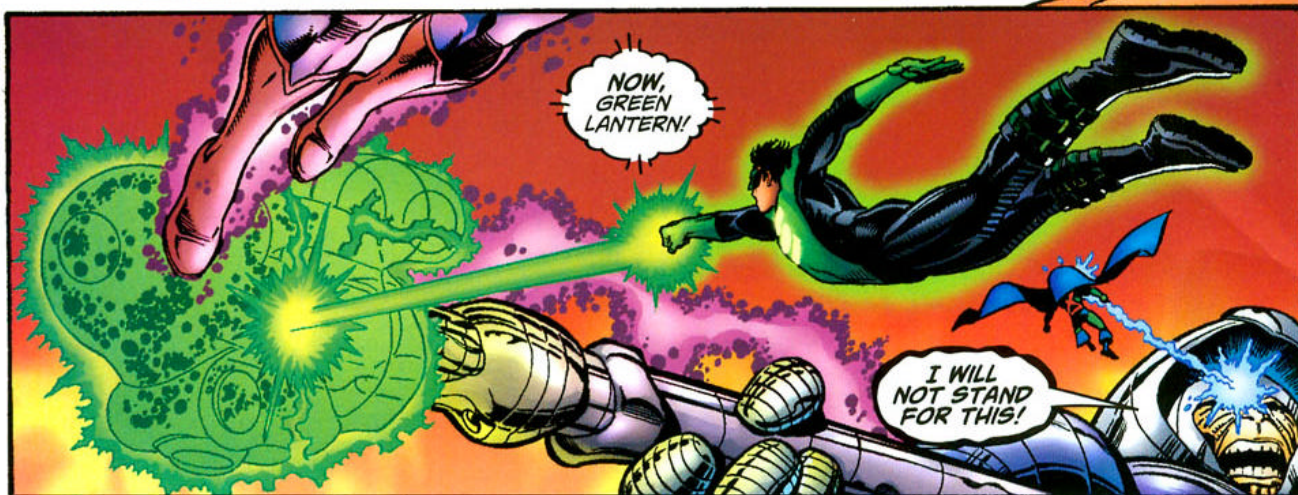
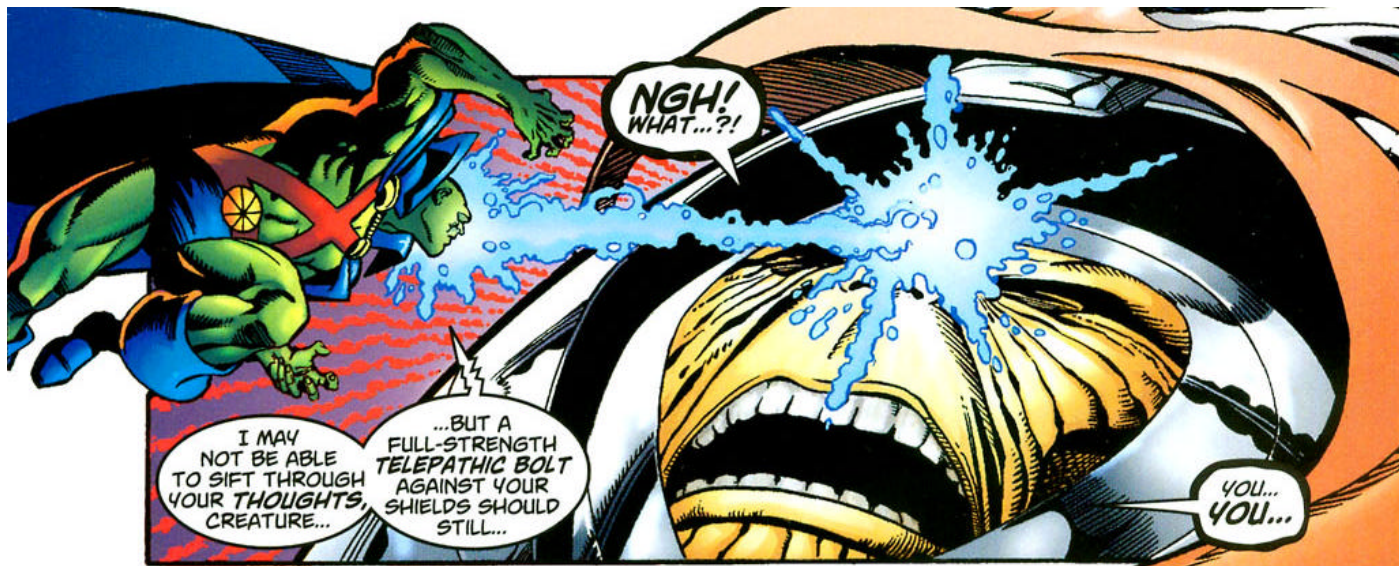
I AM
KRONA.

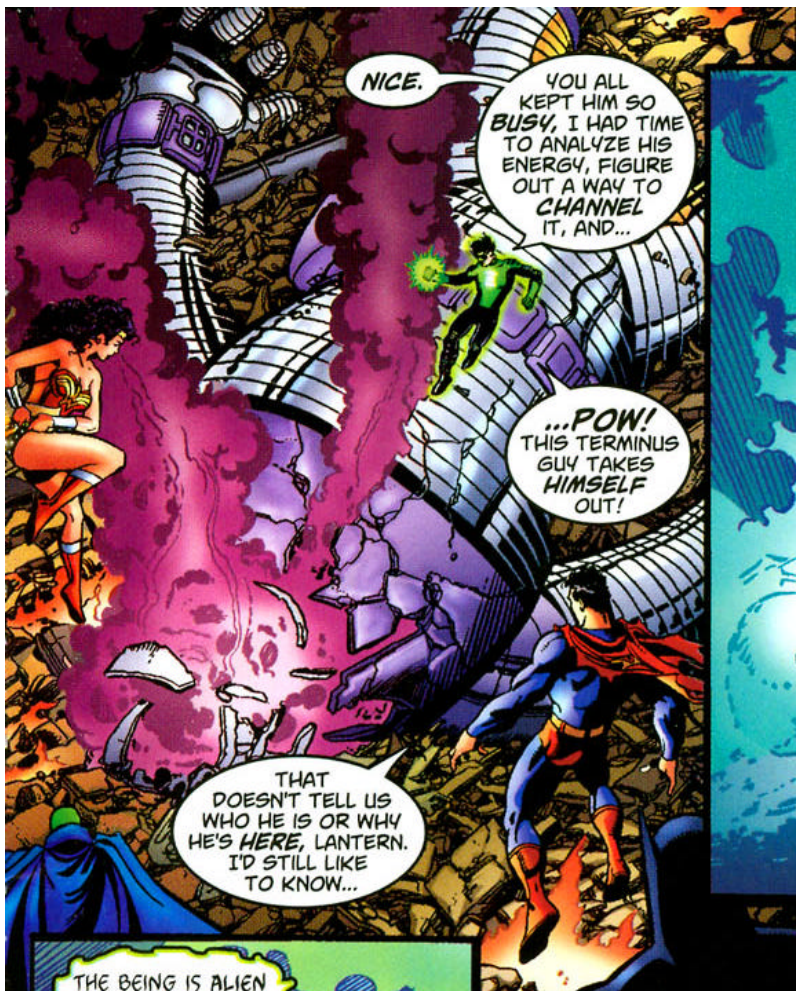
AND I
WILL NOT BE
DENIED.











NICE.

YOU ALL
KEPT HIM SO
BUSY, I HAD TIME
TO ANALYZE HIS
ENERGY, FIGURE
OUT A WAY TO
CHANNEL
IT, AND...

...POW!
THIS TERMINUS
GUY TAKES
HIMSELF
OUT!

THAT
DOESN'T TELL US
WHO HE IS OR WHY
HE'S HERE, LANTERN.
I'D STILL LIKE
TO KNOW...



YOU NEED
NOT CONCERN
YOURSELF,
SUPERMAN.

GOOD
LORD, THAT
VOICE!
IT'S--!

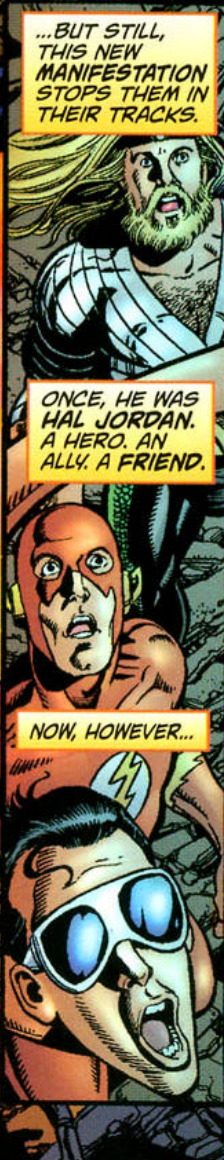


THE BEING IS ALIEN
TO THIS PLANE OF
EXISTENCE.
IT DOES
NOT BELONG
HERE...

HAL...?

THEY ARE THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE
OF AMERICA...

...THEIR WORLD'S
GREATEST SUPER-
HEROES...



...BUT STILL,
THIS NEW
MANIFESTATION
STOPS THEM IN
THEIR TRACKS.

ONCE, HE WAS
HAL JORDAN.
A HERO. AN
ALLY. A FRIEND.

NOW, HOWEVER...



...AND IT
WILL BE
DISPOSED
OF.

...HE IS ONLY...
THE SPECTRE.



MAN. I'LL
NEVER GET USED
TO THAT. I'VE HAD
COFFEE WITH HIM,
HUNG OUT WITH HIM,
AND NOW...NOW HE'S
WHAT, THE HAND
OF GOD?

WE KNOW
HOW YOU FEEL,
KYLE. BELIEVE
ME, WE
KNOW.

ENOUGH.

THERE ARE
STILL PEOPLE
TRAPPED IN THE
RUBBLE, JUSTICE
LEAGUE. LET'S
GO.



A FOR ANALYSIS, THOR--
BUT NOTHING WE HIT IT WITH
IS MAKING IT EVEN FLINCH!

IRON MAN!
JACK
OF HEARTS!

YON
CYCLOPEAN
SEA-BEAST IS
THE WELLSPRING
OF THIS THREAT!
STRIKE AT THE
SOURCE--AND
END IT!

AND WITH EVERY
SECOND THAT PASSES...
...MORE OF THESE
THINGS FALL!

GET
AWAY!

HOW DO WE STOP
THESE THINGS? HOW
DO WE EVEN FIGHT
THEM?!

I DON'T KNOW,
WARBIRD...JUST KEEP
AT IT!

SORRY,
SIR.

HOPEFULLY,
YOU'LL BE ABLE
TO THANK ME FOR THIS,
LATER!

WE MUST ADOPT A NEW
STRATEGY, AVENGERS.
FOR EVERY PARASITE
WE DESTROY, DOZENS
MORE FALL.

WE CANNOT STOP
THEM ALL, AND
EVENTUALLY, EVEN
OUR MIGHTIEST
WILL--

OH, NO.

THEY GOT THOR.
BAD, BAD NEWS.

SPLAMM

UHH!

PIETRO?

PIETRO, FIGHT IT!

YOU CAN
DO IT--YOU'RE
STRONG! YOU
CAN BEAT IT, **BREAK FREE!**

I'M SURE
YOUR BROTHER'S
DOING HIS **BEST**,
WANDA. BUT NOW
THAT YOU'VE SLOWED
HIM DOWN--MAYBE
HE COULD USE A
LITTLE HELP.

BZAT

GO, **WARBIRD!**
I'LL HANDLE
THINGS
HERE!

GET THAT
THING OFF
QUICKSILVER'S
FACE--WE
NEED HIS
POWER!

YOU
GOT IT,
CAP.

ZAMM

GHH!

HUHH!

DON'T KNOW IF IT'S
DEAD...OR JUST
UNCONSCIOUS...

BUT AT LEAST IT'S
LETTING...

SPLHKK--!

I WAS...
I WAS **LINKED**...
TAPPED INTO ALL
OF THEM, INTO
IT!

IT THINKS...
THINKS OF ITSELF
AS THE **STAR
CONQUEROR!**
ALL IT WANTS...
IS **TOTAL
CONTROL!**

TIDES OF
ORDER, YOU
SAY?

THEN
PERHAPS
WE CAN
DEFEAT
IT.

I HAVE A
THOUGHT...

ITS MIND...
SO VAST, SO
CALM...SLOWLY,
IRRESISTIBLY
POWERFUL, LIKE
A GREAT
OCEAN!

TIDES OF
ORDER...OF
CONTROL...WE
CAN'T HOPE TO
DEFEAT IT!



HORTLY...

WHATEVER
YOU HAVE IN
MIND, VISION,
DO IT
FAST!

WE'RE RUNNING
OUT OF BREATHING
ROOM HERE!



ALMOST
READY,
CAPTAIN
AMERICA.

SHE IS WANDA
MAXIMOFF--
BETTER
KNOWN AS
THE SCARLET
WITCH.

SHE IS A
MUTANT, AND
A SORCERESS.

WANDA,
YOU CAN'T--
THERE **MUST**
BE ANOTHER
WAY!

VISION,
THINK! WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!

SINCE BIRTH, SHE HAS
CHANNELED CHAOS-
MAGIC. SUMMONED IT,
BENT IT TO HER WILL.



ONLY
WHAT I
MUST,
PIETRO.



BUT--SHE'S YOUR
EX-WIFE, VISION!
MY SISTER! SHE
COULD--YOU DON'T
EVEN KNOW IF THIS
WILL WORK!



I KNOW.
BUT WE
MUST TRY.
NOW,
WANDA.

NOW, AS
IT TAKES
YOUR
MIND.

NOW, SHE TAPS INTO
HER WORLD'S SEETHING
STORE OF CHAOS-MAGIC--



--TAPS INTO IT, AND SENDS
IT FLOODING UPWARD
THROUGH HER MIND. THROUGH HER--AND
INTO THE GREAT, ORDERED
CALM ABOVE.



CHAOS, PURE,
WILD, INCHOATE
CHAOS POURS
UPWARD...

AND THE STAR
CONQUEROR
SCREAMS.



⇒PFEAUGH!←
THAT WAS...
THAT WAS MOST
STRANGE.



I FELT A
BLAST OF...OF SHEER
MADNESS...

... FOLLOWED BY
PAIN AND RAGE AND
INCOMPREHENSION.
AND THEN...

BE IT
OVER, IRON
MAN?

OVER?
YES, THOR...



"... I THINK
IT IS."



⇒PTHOO!←
I MAY NEVER
LOOK AT CALAMARI
THE SAME WAY
AGAIN...!

UH, HANK...
CALAMARI IS
SQUID...

OH, WHO
CARES?

JUST GET ME A GALLON
OF LISTERINE AND A
BUCKET OF BREATHMINTS!
THAT TASTE...!



ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT,
WANDA?

I'M... I'LL BE FINE,
PIETRO. BUT I THINK
I LEARNED
SOMETHING.

I MADE CONTACT WITH
THE STAR CONQUEROR'S MIND,
AND MANAGED TO STAY
MOSTLY IN CONTROL.

I FELT...
CONFUSION,
SOMETHING VERY
WRONG.



I DON'T THINK IT'S FROM
THIS UNIVERSE. IT DIDN'T
KNOW HOW IT HAD COME
HERE, BUT IT KNEW IT
DIDN'T BELONG...

EXCUSE
ME...

... BUT I'M RECEIVING
A TRANSMISSION.
IT SEEMS... URGENT.
IT'S FROM QUASAR...





AVENGERS MANSION.

--THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THIS.



I'VE BEEN AT THE DEEP SPACE MONITORING STATION IN THE ASTEROID BELT--

--CHECKING IN ON THE SENSOR STATIONS I'VE SET UP THROUGH KNOWN SPACE.

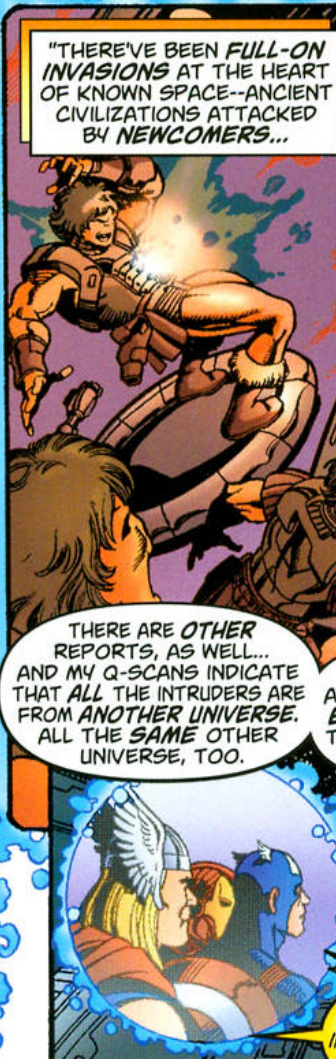


AND I'VE BEEN GETTING, WELL...
...TROUBLING DATA.



"AN INTRUDER IN THE HEART OF THE SHI'AR EMPIRE, FOR INSTANCE. JUST APPEARED, WITHOUT RHYME OR REASON.

"AND EVEN THEIR IMPERIAL GUARD'S BEEN HARD-PRESSED TO CONTAIN HIM.



"THERE'VE BEEN **FULL-ON INVASIONS** AT THE HEART OF KNOWN SPACE--ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS ATTACKED BY **NEWCOMERS...**

"...WHO SEEM TO HAVE POPPED OUT OF **NOWHERE.**"

THERE ARE **OTHER** REPORTS, AS WELL... AND MY Q-SCANS INDICATE THAT **ALL** THE INTRUDERS ARE FROM **ANOTHER UNIVERSE.** ALL THE **SAME** OTHER UNIVERSE, TOO.

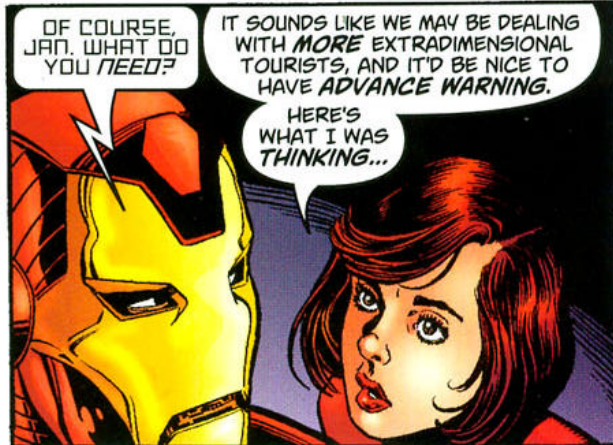
THERE WAS A FLARE-UP ON **EARTH** LESS THAN AN HOUR AGO...



YES, WE CAN FILL YOU IN ON THAT ONE.



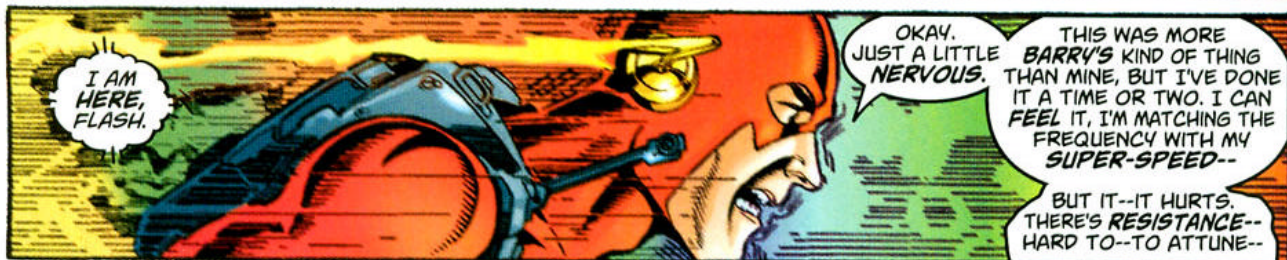
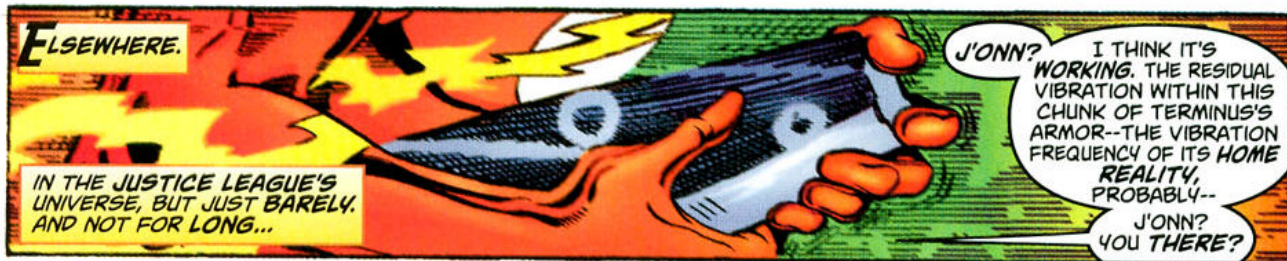
AH, IRON MAN? THOR AND CAP CAN PROBABLY HANDLE THAT, SO...

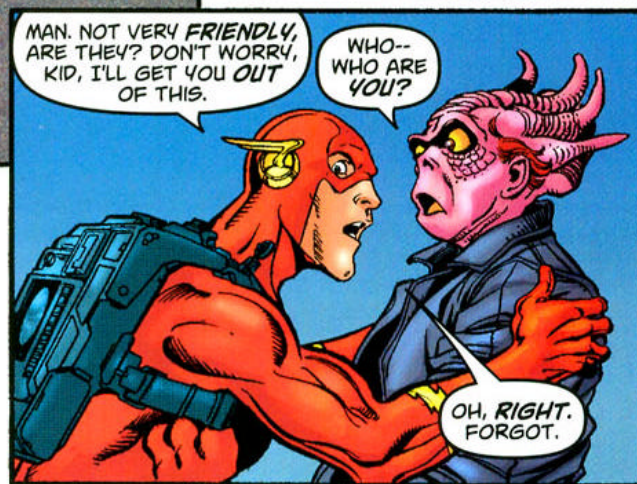


OF COURSE, JAP. WHAT DO YOU NEED?

IT SOUNDS LIKE WE MAY BE DEALING WITH **MORE** EXTRADIMENSIONAL TOURISTS, AND IT'D BE NICE TO HAVE **ADVANCE WARNING.**

HERE'S WHAT I WAS THINKING...





THE JLA WATCHTOWER.
ON THEIR EARTH'S MOON.

UH-OH.
THANAGAR
UNDER ATTACK
BY GREEN
UGLIES--

--MONGUL
GETTING PIG-
PILED BY, UH, BY
WHATEVER THOSE
ARE--

I MEAN,
NOT THAT IT COULD
HAPPEN TO A NICER
GUY, BUT THIS DOESN'T
LOOK GOOD...

YOU
WERE RIGHT,
BATMAN.

IT'S NOT
AN ISOLATED
INCIDENT. SO
WHAT IS
IT?

WE
WON'T KNOW
UNTIL FLASH GETS
BACK, AND WE HAVE
MORE DATA. COULD BE
ACCIDENTAL, COULD BE
INTENTIONAL--
WE CAN'T BE
SURE.

WE WILL
STOP IT, BATMAN.
WHATEVER IT IS. IF IT
IS A COSMIC RIFT,
WE'LL HEAL IT...

AND IF
IT'S AN INVASION,
WE MEET IT, AND
REPEL IT. FLASH'S
SCANS WILL--

UH, GUYS?
GUYS, HE'S
BACK.

MAN,
WALLY, WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU?

TELL YOU
LATER. MEANWHILE...
DON'T MESS WITH
ANGRY ROTARIANS.

I'LL SAY THIS MUCH,
THOUGH. IF I LIVED OVER
THERE? I'D WANT TO
GET OUT, TOO.

I BARELY DID...AS MY
POWERS FADED, MY
VIBRATIONAL RATE WENT
BACK TO NORMAL...AND
I POPPED BACK INTO
KEYSTONE.

STILL, THE PEOPLE
THERE...YIKES! THERE
WAS THIS KID, AND--

RTBRR!

HUH?



"--THERE!"

DO NOT
WORRY ABOUT
THE **WATCHER**.
HE RARELY
ACTS--
--CHOOSING
INSTEAD ONLY
TO OBSERVE AND
RECORD.

HE
MANIFESTS
FOR THE MOST
MOMENTOUS
EVENTS--

LANTERN.
CONTAIN
HIM.



--LIKE THIS
ONE.

ISN'T IT ALWAYS THE WAY? YOU
GO **DAYS** WITHOUT SEEING
ANY GIANT INEXPLICABLE
COSMIC GUYS--

--AND THEN
TWO OR THREE
ARRIVE **ALL**
AT ONCE!

I'M
SUPERMAN.
I GREET YOU
IN THE NAME OF
THE **JUSTICE**
LEAGUE.

WHO ARE
YOU AND WHAT
BRINGS YOU TO
OUR WORLD?

I AM KNOWN AS THE
GRANDMASTER.
I HAIL FROM THE
SAME UNIVERSE AS
THE VARIOUS...
INTRUDERS YOU
ARE CONCERNED
ABOUT.

BUT IT IS NOT
IN MY NATURE TO
SEE ANY CONTEST
BE AN **UNEVEN**
ONE--

--SO I HAVE
COME TO TELL
YOU OF THE **PERIL**
YOU FACE.

OOO,
SPACE
REFEREE.

J'ONN?
CAN YOU
VERIFY
THAT?

SADLY,
SUPERMAN, I
CANNOT.

FOR THE
THIRD TIME TODAY,
MY POWERS CANNOT
REACH INTO A MIND
THAT STANDS
BEFORE ME.

IT IS
BEGINNING TO
GROW ANNOYING.



PERHAPS
THE GOLDEN
LASSO OF
GAEA?

NO ONE WHO
LIVES CAN BE
ENCIRCLED BY IT
AND STILL SPEAK
FALSEHOOD.



OF
COURSE.

SOON...

ARE YOU NOW CONTENT THAT I SPEAK THE TRUTH? VERY WELL.

WHAT YOU'VE SEEN THUS FAR IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. YOUR WORLD AND MINE FACE DEVASTATION, DANGER...EVEN UTTER DESTRUCTION.

I DO NOT WARN YOU LIGHTLY.

THE BARRIERS BETWEEN OUR WORLDS HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY WEAKENED.

NEITHER WORLD WILL SURVIVE THE STRAIN.

BUT THERE IS ONE WAY TO LESSEN--OR EVEN PREVENT--THE DAMAGE.

WAIT. THAT WAS "WEAKENED"?

TWELVE ITEMS...

ITEMS OF POWER, SIX FROM EACH UNIVERSE. THEY MUST BE ASSEMBLED...

...OR COUNTLESS BILLIONS WILL DIE.

HM?

THE BELL, THE WHEEL, AND THE JAR?

THAT'S THE MEDUSA MASK!

THE SPEAR OF DESTINY.

THE ETERNITY BOOK.

OOH, I KNOW, I KNOW!

METAMORPHO'S WHATSIT-- THE ORB OF RA!

MY--MY POWER BATTERY?!

AND I ASSURE YOU, THE ITEMS FROM MY REALITY ARE EQUALLY POWERFUL. ONLY THESE ITEMS, BROUGHT TOGETHER, CAN END THE DANGER. FAIL TO ASSEMBLE THEM--



--AND A UNIVERSE DIES.

NOT GOOD ENOUGH. WHAT CAUSED THIS THREAT?

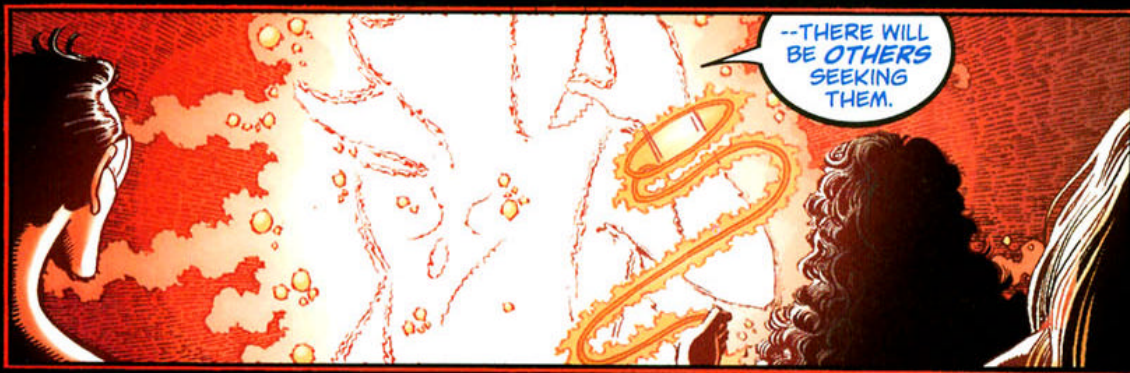
HOW WILL THE ITEMS BE USED? WHO WILL WIELD THEM, AND--



MY APOLOGIES, I HAVE TOLD ALL I WILL TELL.

BUT I PLACE IN YOUR MINDS THE LOCATION THE ITEMS, IN THE TWIN WORLDS.

WHAT YOU DO WITH THE KNOWLEDGE IS UP TO YOU. JUST BE WARNED--



--THERE WILL BE OTHERS SEEKING THEM.



GONE.

WHAT HE SAID WAS THE TRUTH--I KNOW THAT MUCH. BUT THERE WAS MORE BEHIND IT, SOMETHING HE WASN'T SAYING...

SO NOW WHAT? DO WE BELIEVE HIM? SOME GUY WE'VE NEVER MET, NEVER HEARD OF BEFORE? HE CAN POP INTO THE WATCHTOWER AT WILL--
--CAN HE BEAT THE LASSO, TOO? AND WHO ARE THESE OTHERS?



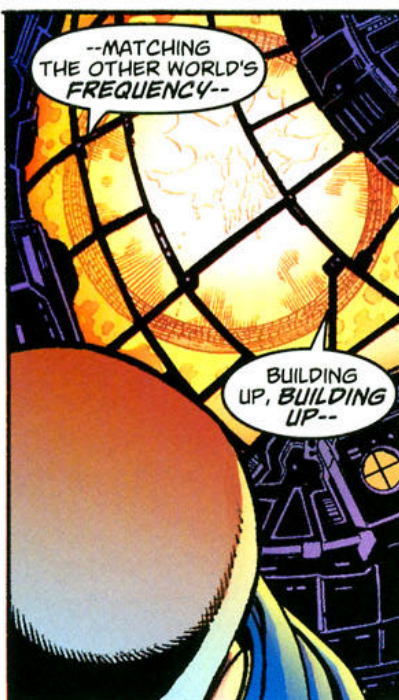
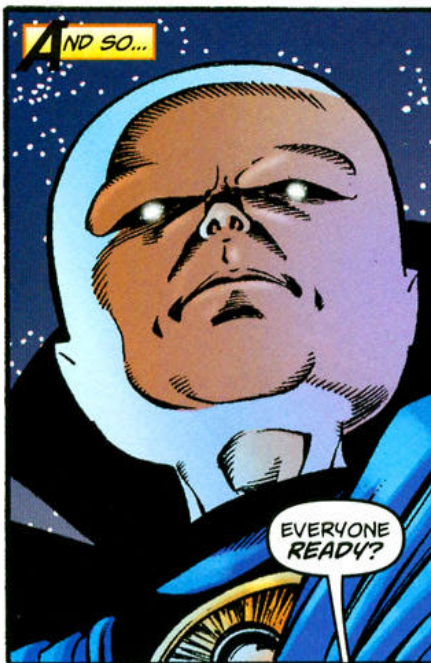
I DON'T LIKE IT. DOING SOMETHING WE DON'T UNDERSTAND, JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE TELLS US TO.

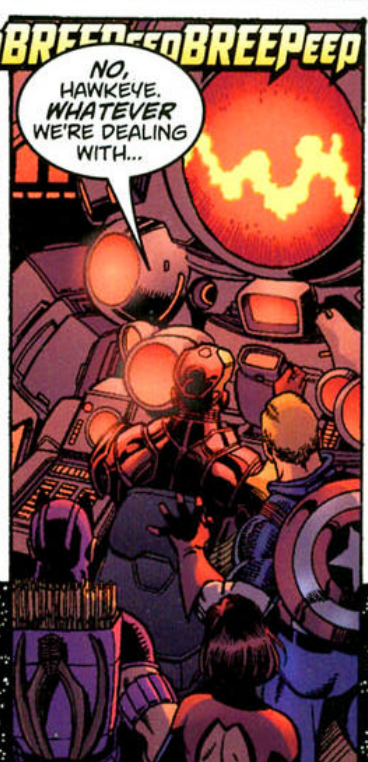
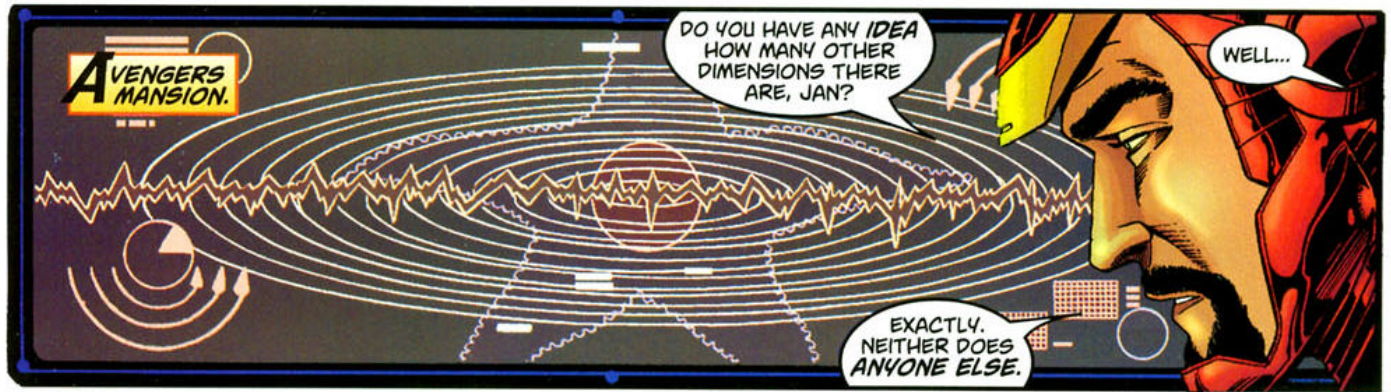
AS OPPOSED TO DOING THE TELLING, HM?

STILL, WE ARE BEING INVADED BY THIS OTHER WORLD. AND BELIEVE ME, FROM WHAT I SAW, IT'S NOT A NICE PLACE.

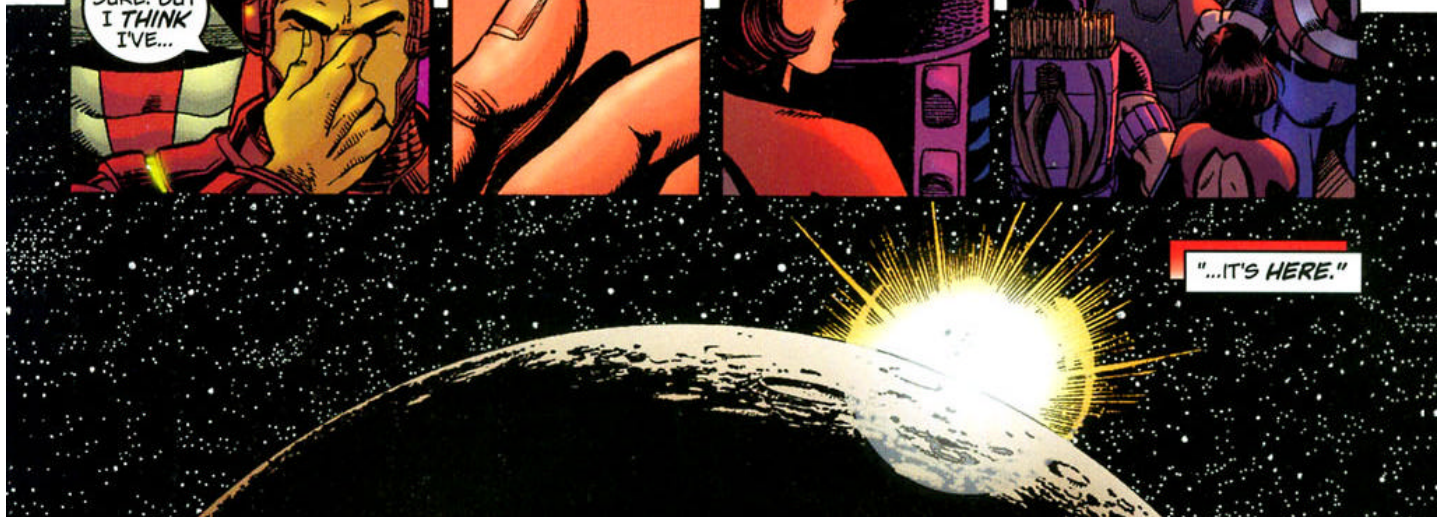
WE HAVE TO INVESTIGATE, AT THE VERY LEAST.

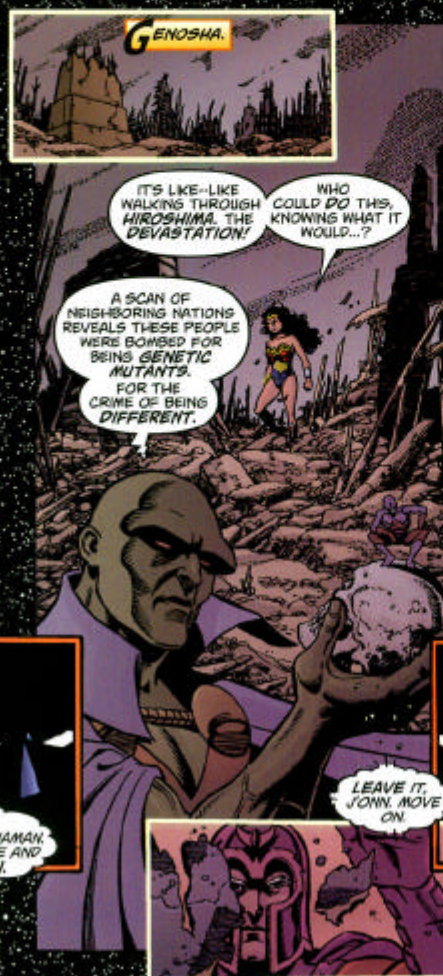


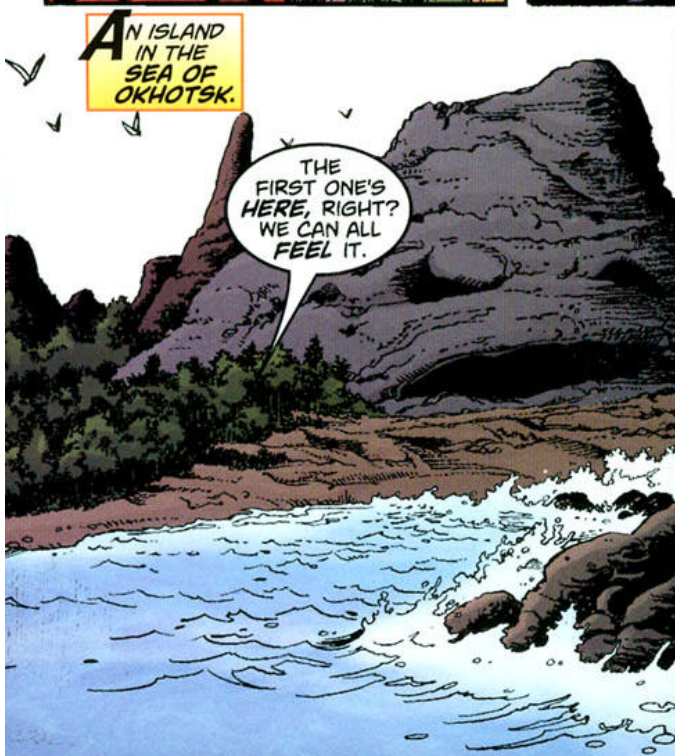
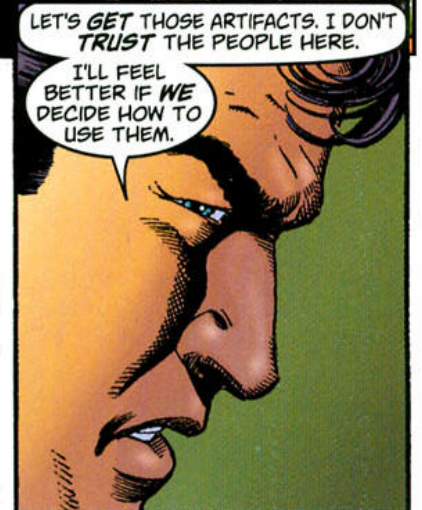
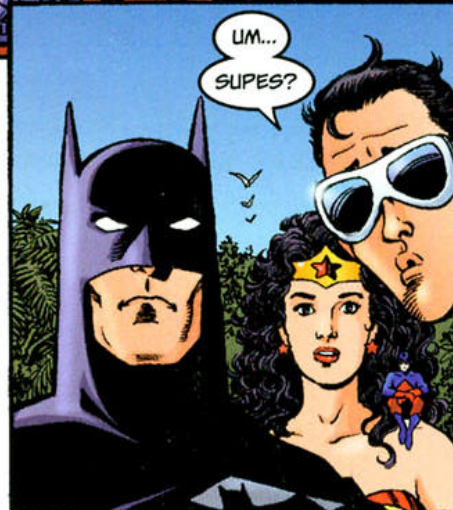


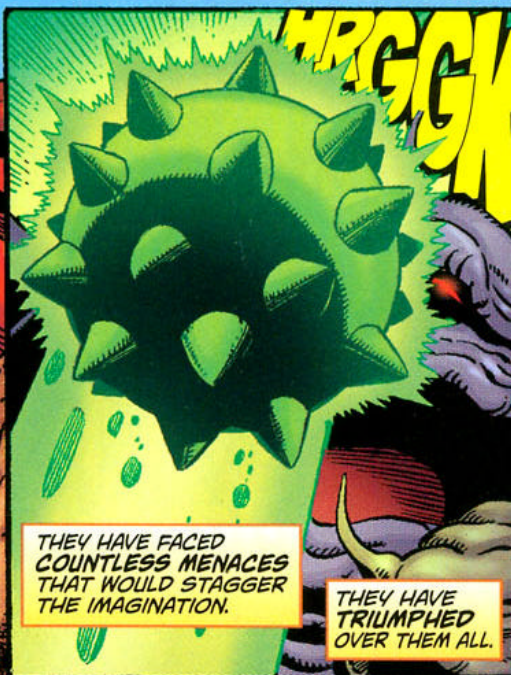
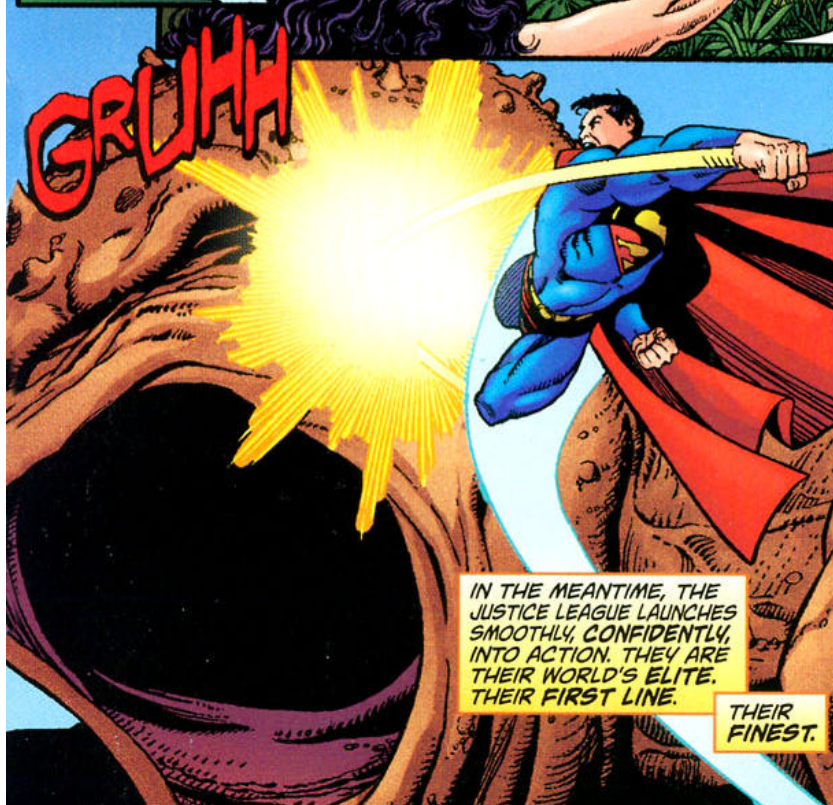
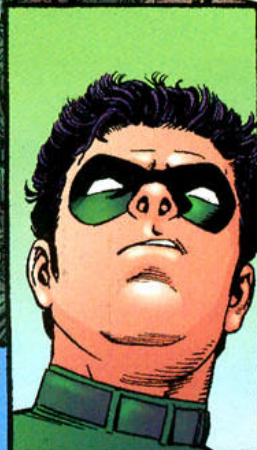
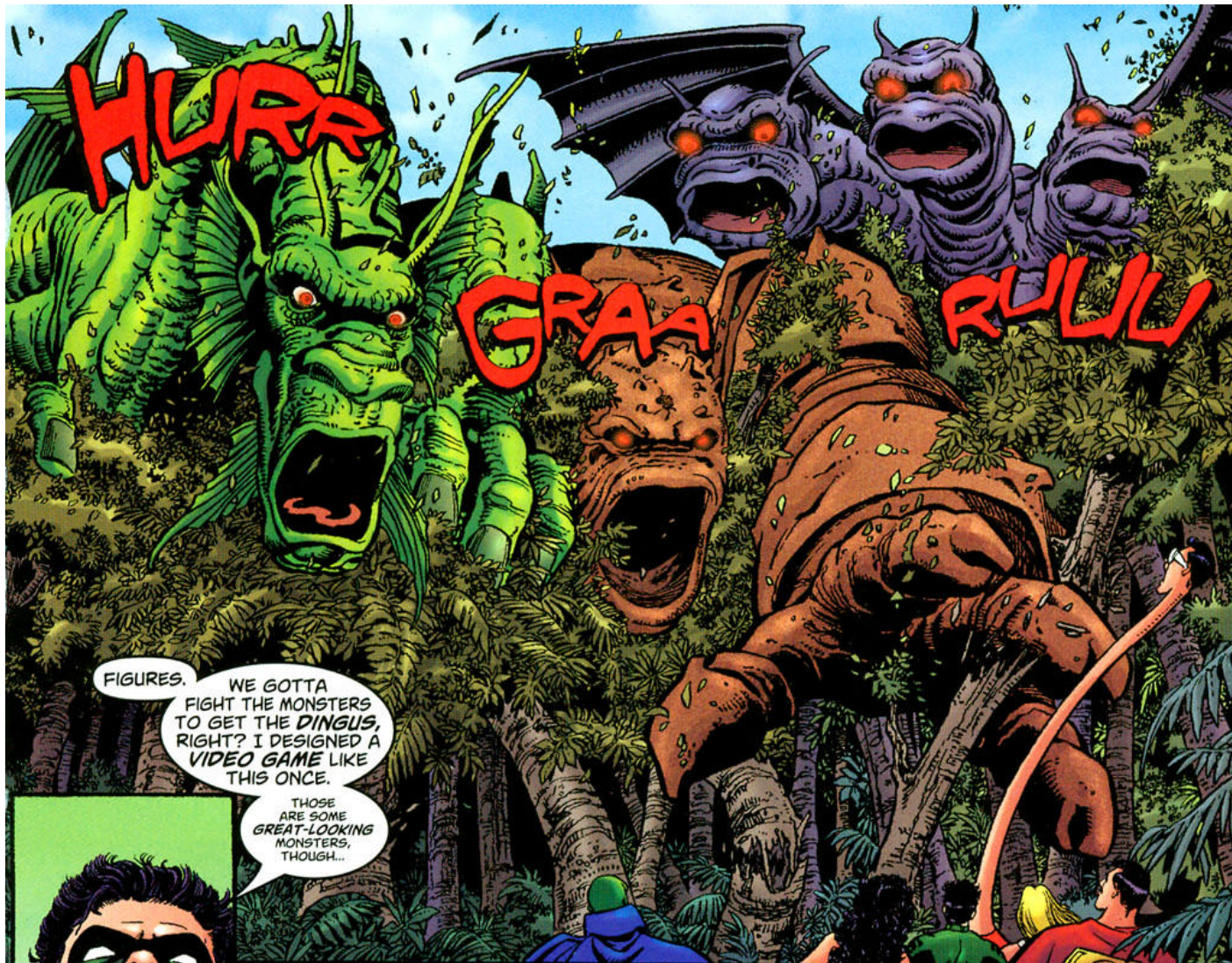


"...IT'S HERE."







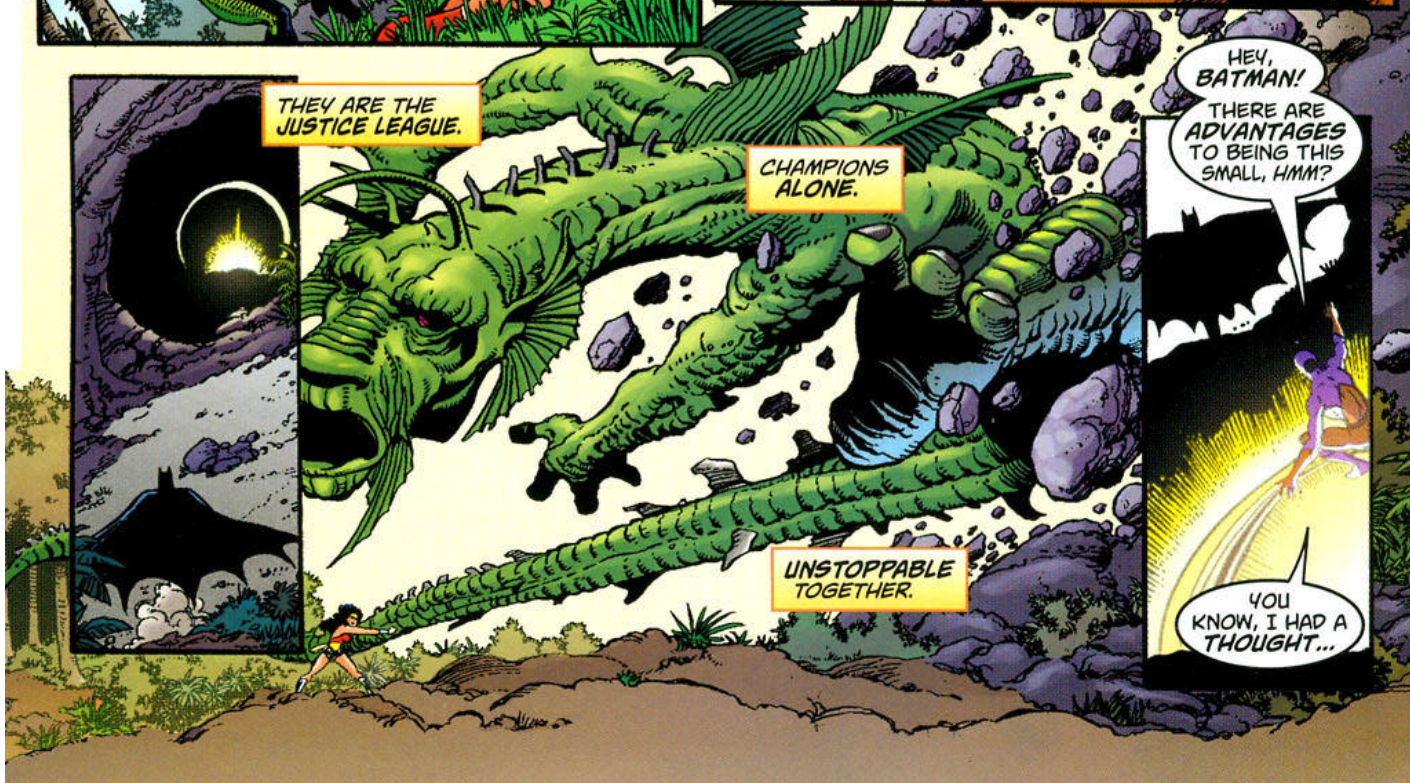
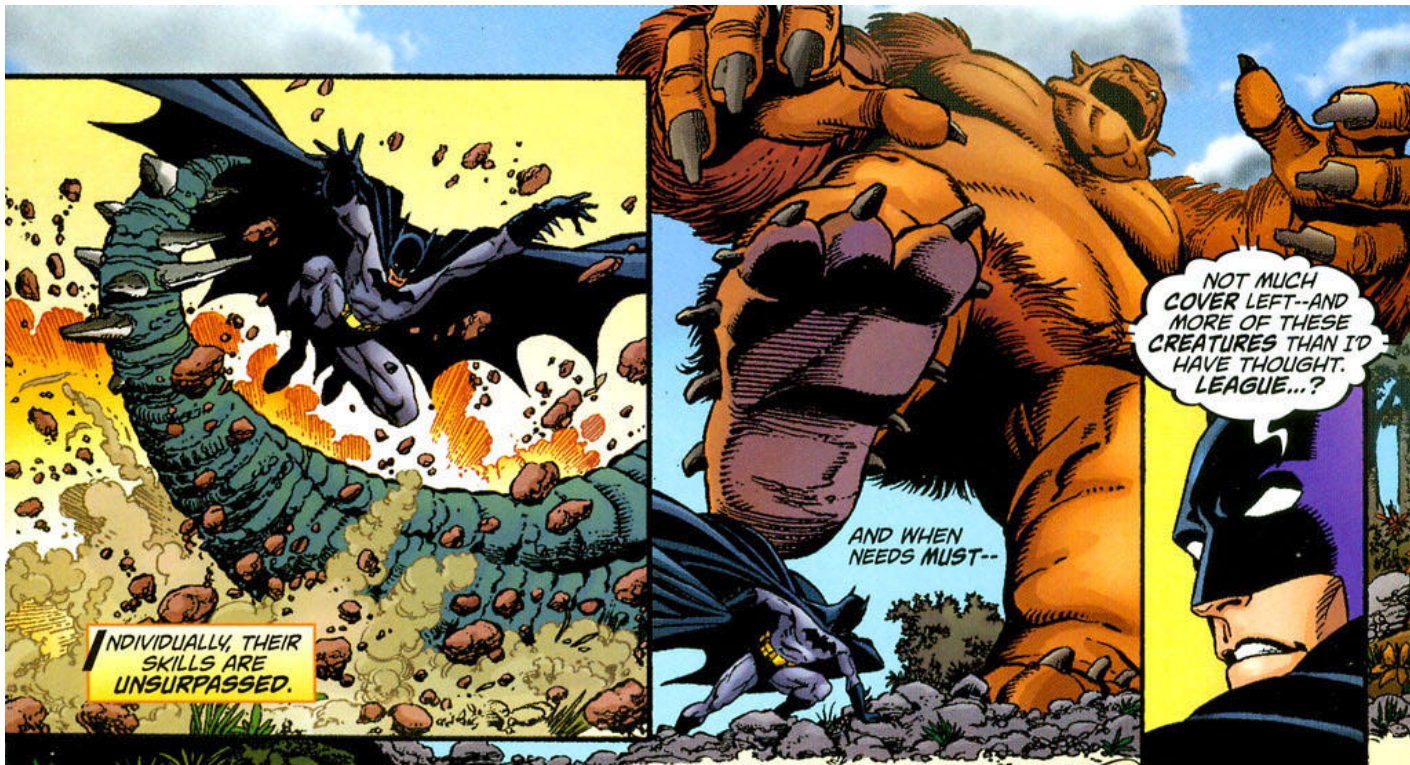


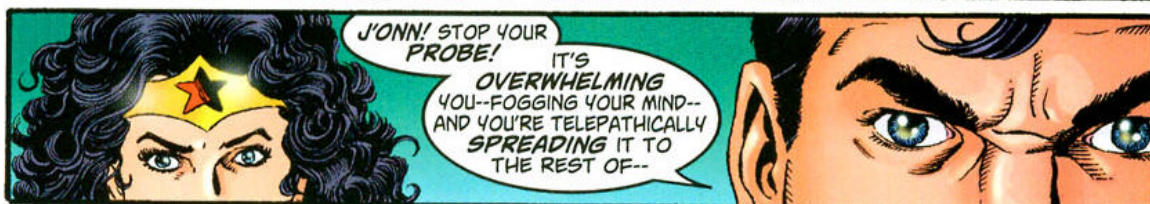
IN THE MEANTIME, THE JUSTICE LEAGUE LAUNCHES SMOOTHLY, CONFIDENTLY, INTO ACTION. THEY ARE THEIR WORLD'S ELITE. THEIR FIRST LINE.

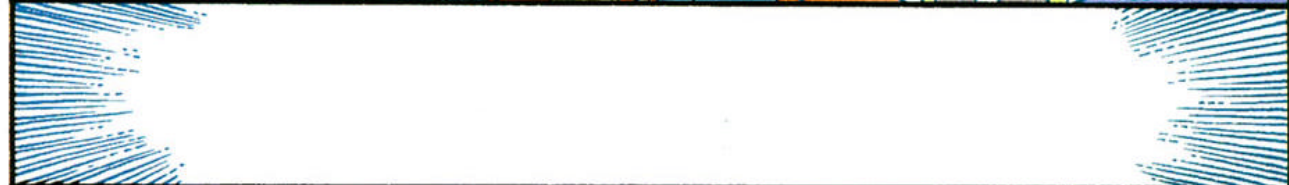
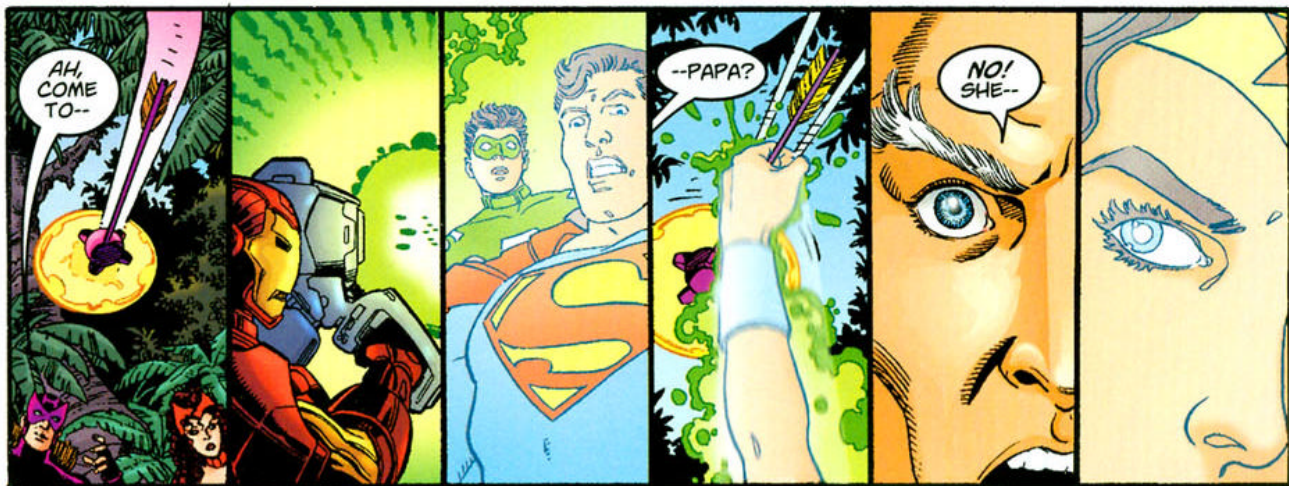
THEIR FINEST.

THEY HAVE FACED COUNTLESS MENACES THAT WOULD STAGGER THE IMAGINATION.

THEY HAVE TRIUMPHED OVER THEM ALL.







OKAY. I'M GUESSING THEY WERE THE "OTHERS" THE BLUE GUY WARNED US ABOUT. BUT WHERE'D THEY GO? THEY SHOT THAT THING AT US, AND--

THEY DIDN'T GO ANYWHERE, PLASTIC MAN. WE DID. WE'RE STILL IN THE KURIL ISLANDS, BUT BACK IN OUR HOME UNIVERSE.

I CAN SEE METROPOLIS, STAR CITY, ST. ROCHE...

THEY CAST US OUT OF THEIR UNIVERSE? WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A WORD? OF ALL THE CONTEMPTUOUS...

PRETTY RUDE, ALL RIGHT.

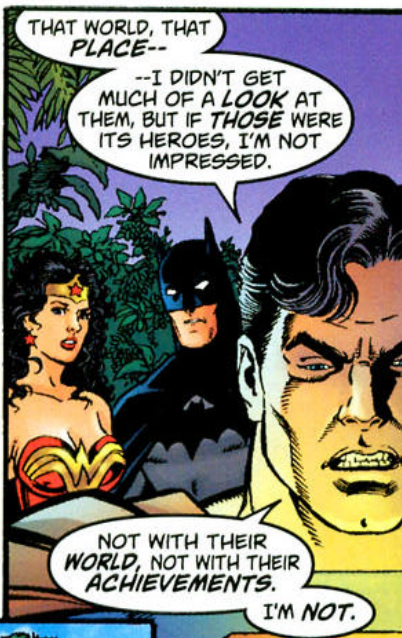
YEAH! WE SHOULD GO BACK AND--

NO. WE HAVE WHAT WE WENT THERE FOR. NO NEED TO FIGHT IF THERE'S NO POINT TO IT.



I FEAR IT MAY COME TO FAR MORE OF A FIGHT THAN WE THINK.

THERE ARE FIVE MORE ITEMS OF POWER IN THAT WORLD--WE CAN ALL FEEL IT.



THAT WORLD, THAT PLACE--

--I DIDN'T GET MUCH OF A LOOK AT THEM, BUT IF THOSE WERE ITS HEROES, I'M NOT IMPRESSED.

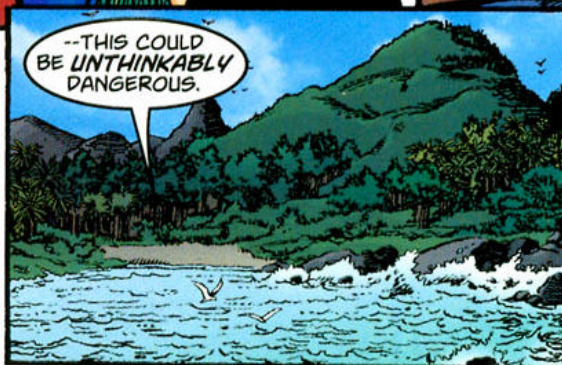
NOT WITH THEIR WORLD, NOT WITH THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.

I'M NOT.

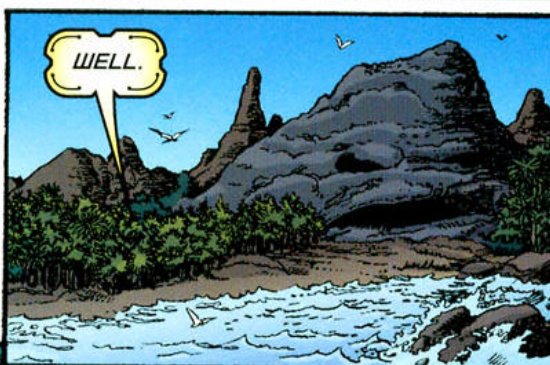


LET'S GET BACK TO THE WATCH-TOWER.

THE ARTIFACT WE HAVE IS BAD ENOUGH. IF THOSE PEOPLE HAVE MORE--



--THIS COULD BE UNTHINKABLY DANGEROUS.



WELL.



THE SIGNATURE MODULATOR WORKED PERFECTLY--STRENGTHENING THEIR CORE ENERGY PATTERNS, RESTORING THEM TO THE WORLD THEY CAME FROM-- BUT--



I THOUGHT THE NULLIFIER WAS CLEAR WHEN I FIRED. BUT THAT WOMAN-- SHE MOVED SO FAST--

MORE INTRUDERS-- THIS TIME, STEALING FROM OUR WORLD. BUT WHY...?



IT MATTERS NOT, QUICKSILVER. THEY HAVE THE ULTIMATE NULLIFIER ITSELF. E'EN MIGHTY GALACTUS DOTH RIGHTLY FEAR ITS POWER.

THEY ARE A THREAT TO ALL LIFE, AND MUST BE DEALT WITH!

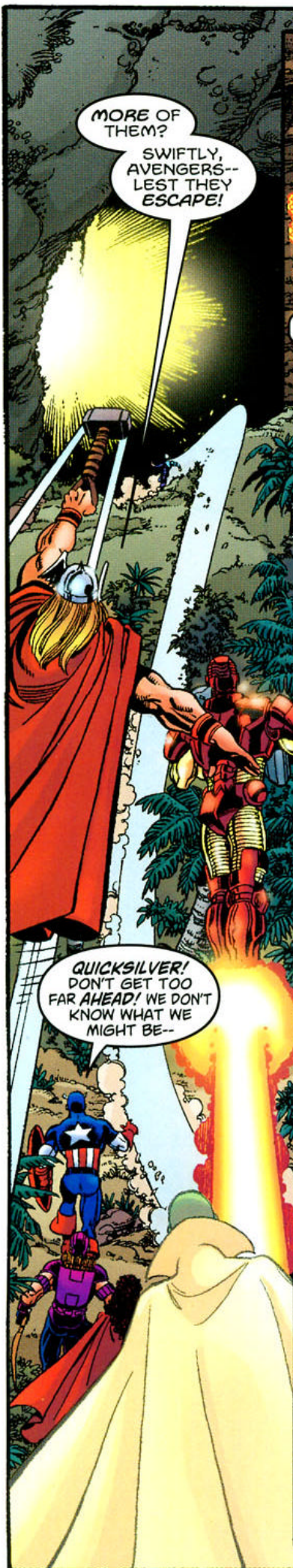
YOU KNOW, THERE WAS SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THEM...



AVENGERS!

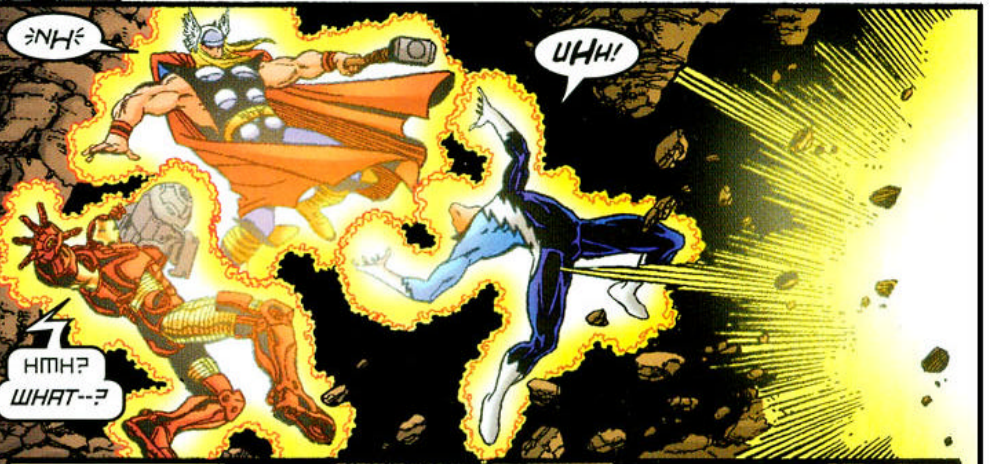
I HAVE INCREASED THE SENSITIVITY OF MY AUDIO RECEPTORS, AND I SENSE RESPIRATION!

WE ARE BEING WATCHED--FROM THERE!



MORE OF THEM?

SWIFTLY, AVENGERS--
LEST THEY
ESCAPE!



YH!

UHH!

HMM?
WHAT--?

A FORCE FIELD!
AND EVEN WHEN I
WILL MY ANDROID
FORM TO FULL
INTANGIBILITY,
I CANNOT --

IT'S A
TRAP.

THEY
LEFT BEHIND A
TRAP, AND WE
BLUNDERED INTO
IT LIKE--

I'M
NOT SO SURE,
HAWKEYE. NOT
UNLESS THEY LEFT
ONE OF THEIR
OWN BEHIND,
AS WELL.



GOOD
AFTERNOON,
CAPTAIN
AMERICA.

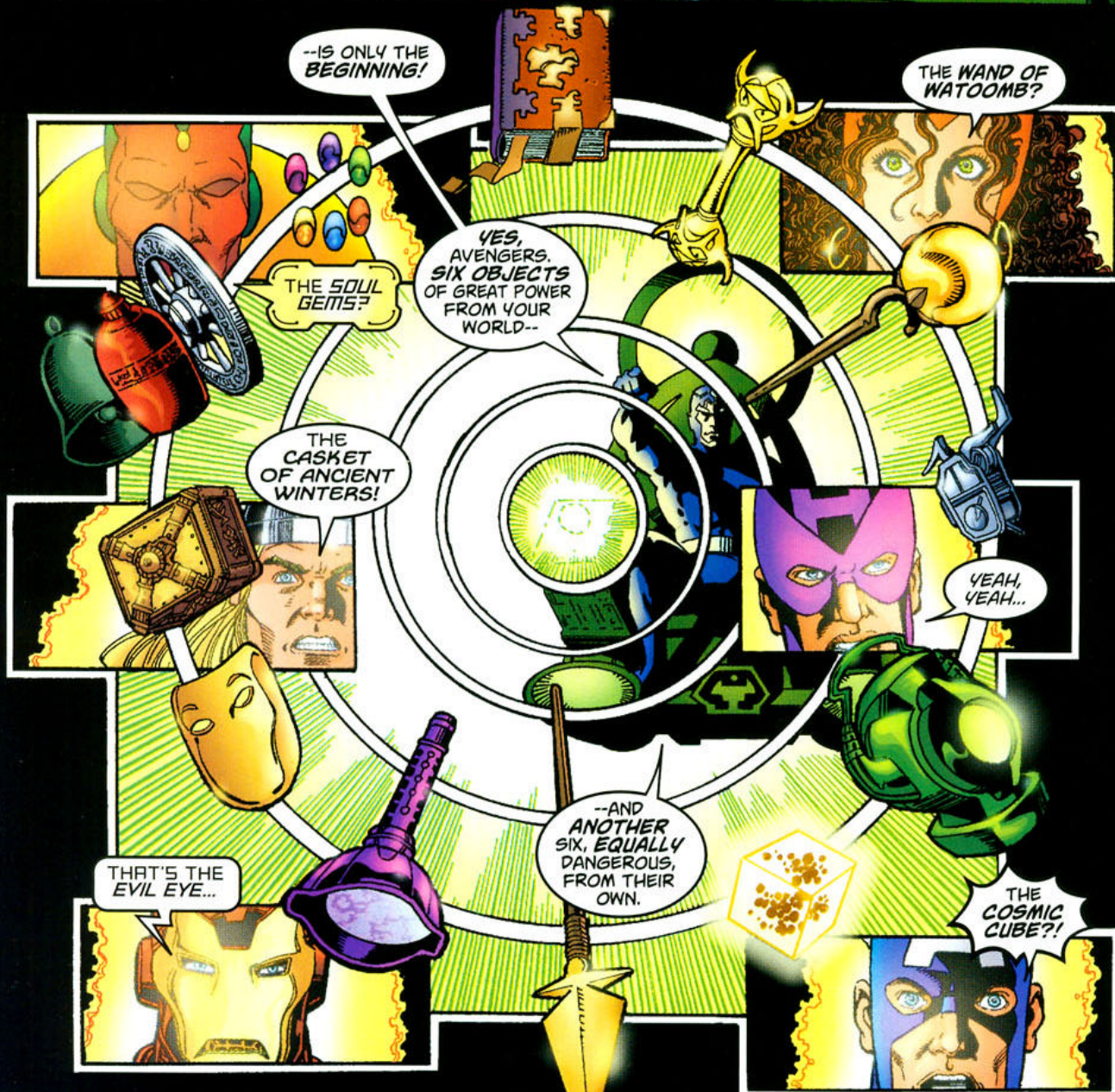
YOU ARE
RIGHT TO BE
CAUTIOUS. BUT THIS IS
NOT A TRAP. I MERELY
WISHED TO SPEAK TO
YOU WITHOUT UNDUE...
EXCITEMENT.

YOU
MAY CALL ME

METRON!



QUICKSILVER!
DON'T GET TOO
FAR AHEAD! WE DON'T
KNOW WHAT WE
MIGHT BE--





IF THIS BE TRUE, THEN THESE VARLETS MUST BE STOPPED! AYE--

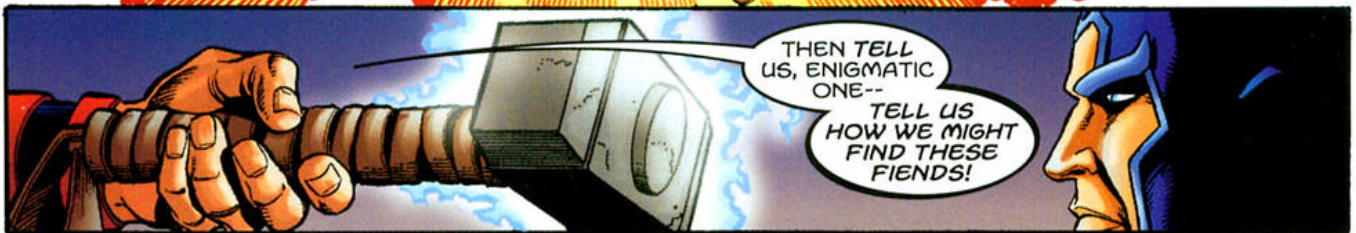


--AND SWIFTLY!



UFF! LITTLE WARNING NEXT TIME, THUNDER GOD--?

WE'LL NEED A WAY TO FOLLOW THEM-- BACK TO THEIR WORLD--



THEN TELL US, ENIGMATIC ONE--

TELL US HOW WE MIGHT FIND THESE FIENDS!



SKIP IT, THOR--I'M SURE HE'S TAKEN A "VOW OF MYSTERY," OR SOMETHING--THESE TYPES ALWAYS DO. MAYBE I CAN ADAPT THE MODULATOR...
...INFUSE US WITH THEIR WORLD'S BASE SIGNATURE, AND...

IT IS NOT NECESSARY, IRON MAN...

...ANY MORE THAN ARE THOR'S THREATS. HERE, SHE WILL AID YOU.

AND NOW...



SHE...?

HE'S ESCAPING! QUICKSILVER! GO!



I SEE NO REASON TO TRUST THIS METRON... BUT IF HIS CLAIMS CAN BE VERIFIED...

YOU SAID IT, VIZH. ANYONE PLAYING WITH THE ULTIMATE NULLIFIER--LET ALONE THE REST A' THAT STUFF--IS PLAYIN' WITH FIRE, BIG TIME!

WE'VE GOT TO GET IT BACK, AND SHUT THEM DOWN--PRONTO!



I'LL CALL THE MANSION, LET THE WASP AND THE OTHERS KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON. IRON MAN, CAN YOU ANALYZE THAT GADGET? IS IT ANY USE...?

SORRY, CAP. GONE.



I DON'T... DON'T THINK IT'S A "GADGET," CAP. SHE'S MORE... ALIVE.

SHE'S... SPEAKING TO ME... THROUGH MY ARMOR, THROUGH MY HEART. SHE'S CALLED A MOTHER BOX... AND SHE AND I... WE CAN...

PNG PNG-PNG PNG

SHORTLY--IF SUCH A
WORD EVEN APPLIES,
ACROSS REALITIES--
--IN METROPOLIS--

ANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLANGLA

YOU SEE,
MYRNA? IT'S JUST
LIKE I TOLD
YOU--
--WHEN
YOU WORK WITH
LOOPHOLE, YOU'RE
GUARANTEED
SUCCESS!

ANOTHER BANK BEFORE
WE DEPART, PERHAPS? WITH
SUPERMAN OUT OF TOWN ON
JLA BUSINESS, THERE'S
NO ONE TO STOP
US FROM--

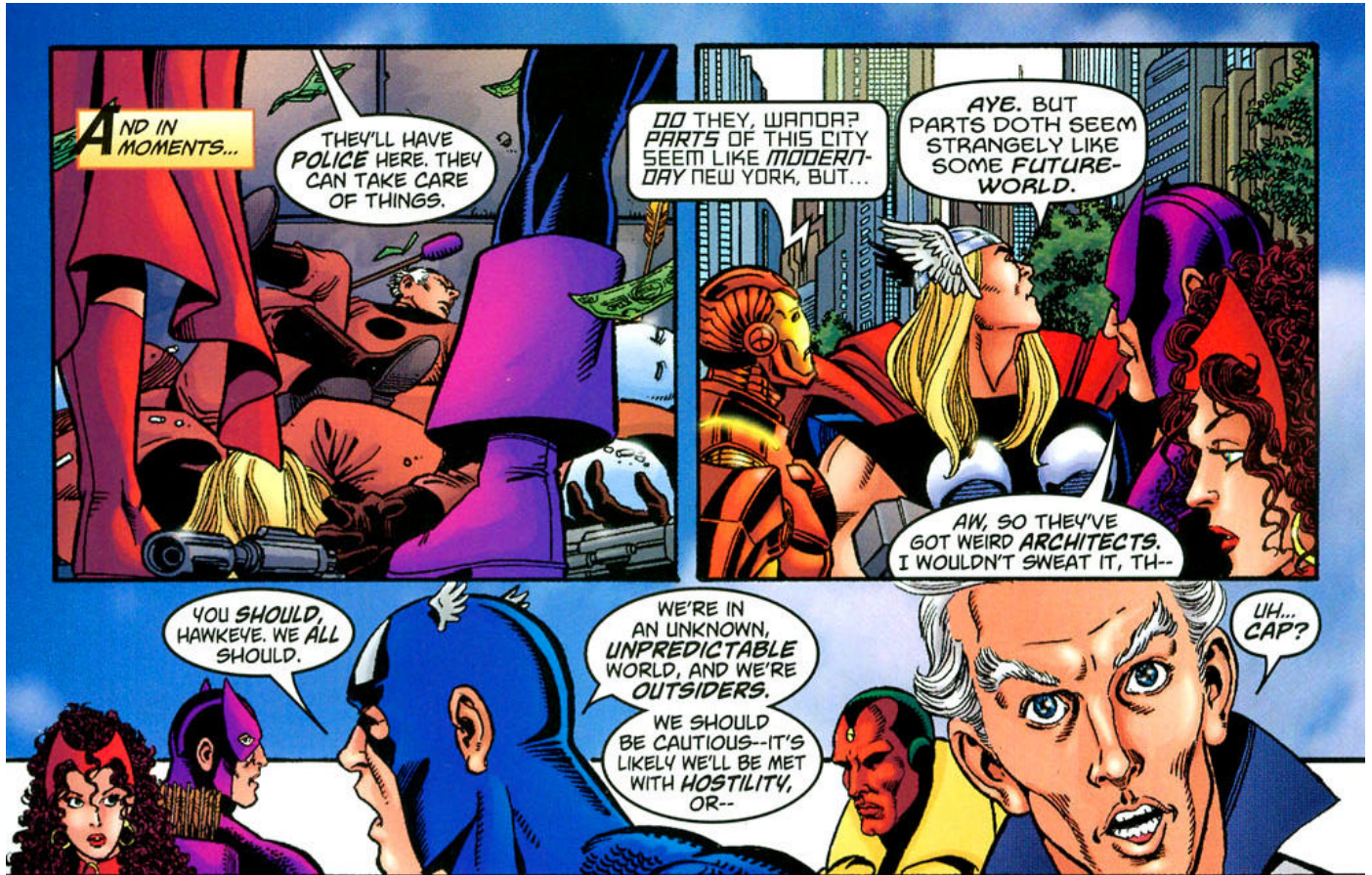
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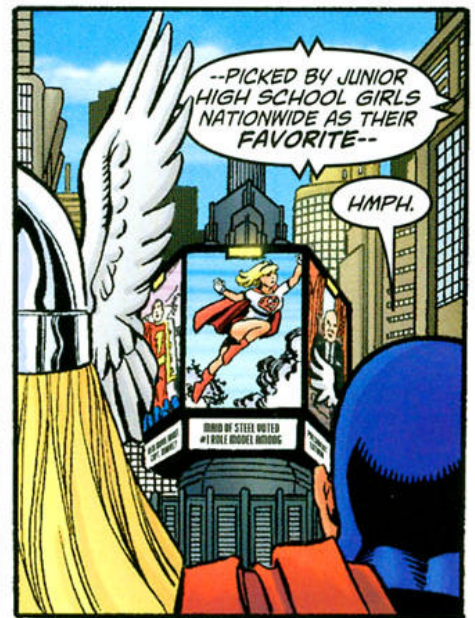
WH-WHA--?

ALL RIGHT,
AVENGERS--
--BE
READY FOR
ANYTHING!

I-- --AH-- --THEY-- --KILL THEM!

OH,
LOOK.
THE
WELCOME
WAGON.









"-- LET US *SHOW*
THESE CAITIFFS
WHAT WE THINK
OF THEM!"

GH-UHH!



ELSEWHERE...

AND SO IT
BEGINS.

THEY DO NOT KNOW THEY
PLAY A GAME--A GAME OF
MY DEVISING.
BUT THE
CONFLICT IS WELL
ESTABLISHED--

--AND THE
STAKES, QUITE
REAL.

YES--

--BUT YOU
REALIZE, I
HOPE--

--THAT
KRONA HAS NO
INTENTION OF
ABIDING BY YOUR
RULES.

IF HE
WINS, HE WILL
CLAIM HIS PRIZE. IF
HE LOSES-- HE'LL DO
WHATEVER HE MUST
TO GAIN WHAT HE
SEEKS.

TRUE. NEITHER
UNIVERSE MAY
SURVIVE, IN
THE END.

BUT THIS
WAS THE
ONLY WAY
TO DELAY
HIM.

TO
BUY SOME
TIME.

SO EVENTS
WILL HAVE TO
PLAY OUT AS
THEY WILL.

AND FOR
THE SAKE OF TWO
UNIVERSES, LET US HOPE
KRONA DOES NOT DISCOVER--

--THAT I AM
SIMULTANEOUSLY
PLAYING A DEEPER
GAME--!

END of BOOK ONE

NEXT: WHEN TITANS CLASH!

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