

T H E E N D

MARVEL  
PG

6 of 6

MARVEL®



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# THE END MARVEL

PREVIOUSLY...



THANOS



LIVING TRIBUNAL



ETERNITY



INFINITY



In all-encompassing stygian darkness, Thanos tells a mysterious listener how our universe came to a tragic end and his part in its demise.

The Mad Titan relates how he gained control of the Heart of the Universe and usurped supreme power.

But the superpowers of this actuality (The Living Tribunal, Eternity and Infinity) refused to submit to Thanos's reign and gathered together an army of heroes to do battle.

The irony of this is that Thanos knows our reality suffers a terminal illness, a breakdown between the barriers of life and death. It's a prize hardly worth fighting over.

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# THE END

## THE CURE

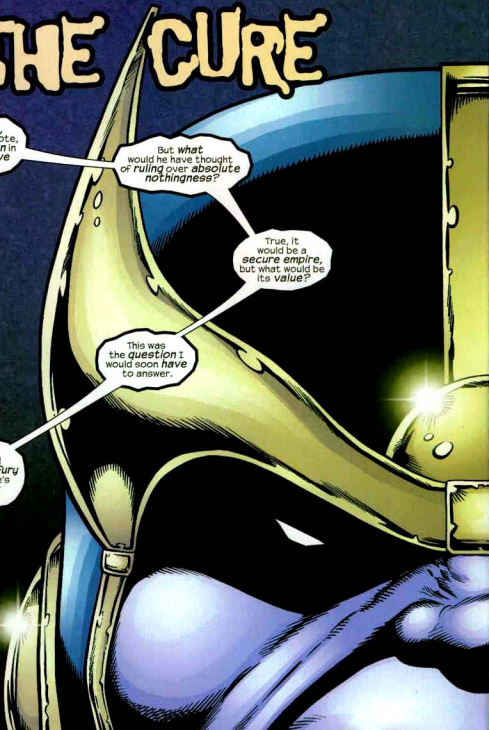
John Milton,  
an Earthman, wrote,  
"Better to reign in  
hell than serve  
in heav'n."

But *what*  
would he have thought  
of ruling over *absolute*  
*nothingness*?

True, it  
would be a  
*secure empire*,  
but what would be  
its *value*?

This was  
the *question* I  
would soon *have*  
to answer.

But *only*  
after I faced  
the *righteous fury*  
of the universe's  
most *heroic*  
warriors.





Of course, even their combined might was nothing compared to my supreme power.





**NOW!**

The others are too close!

They will be protected.

Your compatriots have served well, Captain.

But now this be a war of gods!

A truly impressive display of cosmic force.

But a futile effort against my omnipotence.

Yet still...



It deeply  
and strangely  
angered me.

In  
fact, my *rage* was  
uncontrollable.

How *dare*  
these cretins  
defy their *supreme*  
being?

Was I  
not now the  
*end-all* and *be-all*  
of reality?

Their  
very existence  
was by my  
whim!

Yet  
they had  
the *arrogance*  
to actually  
attack  
me!

A *crimson*  
tide washed  
over me.

Rational thought  
drowned beneath it.

Divine indignation  
seized control.

Such grievous  
insults would not  
go unpunished.

I acted *without thought*,  
as if my response were  
*preordained*.

In retrospect,  
I once again consider  
the *deviousness* of  
my predecessor.

Was this my *moment*  
of triumph or but  
a facet of another's  
grand plan?





Of course, at that  
moment of blind anger,  
it mattered little.



The Living Tribunal, Eternity  
and Infinity resisted being  
absorbed into my being  
longer than the rest.



until this *inferno*  
raged completely  
out of control.



Their stubbornness  
fanned the flames  
of my fury.

Not even the  
sweet *nectar* of  
victory could quiet  
the turmoil  
within me.



For if this band  
could *defy* me...

...might not *others*  
be equally *foolish*?

Could I allow *any* to  
question my *divine*  
*authority*?

No.

So I continued to  
absorb *all* that  
might *threaten*  
my *reign*.

Until...

Nothing  
remained.

Who knows how long I basked  
in the *glory* of my *dreadful*  
triumph.

I savored the  
sweet *silence* of  
oblivion.



But eventually *sanity*  
crept back into *influence*.

And the *full impact*  
of what I had done  
sank in.

What *lunacy* had  
seized control of me?

The *trap* was so painfully  
obvious and yet I had stepped  
into it, *blinded* by *injured ego*.



Never before  
had I acted so  
*precipitously*.

*Impulse* was not part  
of my structure.

Yet still I had *followed*  
a course charted by  
*another's hand*.

The *master manipulator*  
had been *tricked*.



I was still trying to come to terms  
with this *realization* when you made  
your *dramatic entrance*.



A  
mystic  
portal?

Who?







Thanos,  
what have you  
done?

ADAM  
WARLOCK, only  
you could somehow  
miss the end of  
the universe.

Of course,  
you and *Gamora*  
were outside this reality,  
tending young *Atleza*,  
this actuality's  
cosmic anchor.

A task  
that unexpectedly  
terminated.

What has  
transpired?

...and that  
is *how* the universe  
came to an end.

What  
next?

Next  
requires *time*  
and *space*, which  
no longer exist.

Only  
*you* and I  
remain.

And I  
suppose I am  
*extremely*  
temporary in your  
judgment.

Adam  
Warlock, you have  
always been *part*  
of this universe but  
*inexplicably apart*  
from it.

That  
saved you,  
for the moment,  
from *joining* your  
comrades in  
oblivion.

But I  
see *no reason*  
you should now  
not *share* their  
*fate*.



Except then no one would *witness* your *grand* gesture.

I was *not* aware that I had one *planned*.

The *security* of the *void* is not your way, Titan.

Did you know, Warlock, that I have always found your *self-assuredness* your most *annoying* trait?



My *unique status* in this universe has always gained me *insights* denied to others.

That is why I *understand* you, better than, perhaps, you do *yourself*.

Why I have *trusted* you so many times in the past.



Grand gestures are a *costly* affair.

And *this* one more so than I am *willing* to pay.

Thanos, your *past madness* has caused the slaughter of *millions*.

But you have also *saved* billions when *universal doom* threatened.

*Noble* deeds motivated by *necessity*.

Were they?



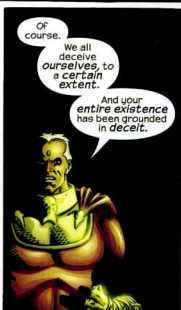
Or were you *assisting* in righting the *imbalance* between *monsters* and those who would do the *right thing*?



No one has ever before *accused* me of *altruism*.

An *emetic* notion.

Have I been *deluding* myself in believing my entire life has been based on *self-interest*?



Of course.

We all deceive *ourselves*, to a certain *extent*.

And your *entire existence* has been grounded in *deceit*.



Look to your *recent actions*, Titan.

After the affair of the *Infinity Gauntlet*, you supposedly *foreswore* universal domination or *destruction*.

You claimed to seek a *peaceful existence* but feared *old enemies* might seek *vengeance* over past *wrongs*.

So you sought to *strengthen* your own hand so that *none* might *threaten* you.



But look *where* this latest quest for *power* led you.

*Not* what you *expected*, is it?

No, *this* I did not intend.



I was... was...



*Tricked!*

As much by *yourself* as by *He* whose *power* you coveted.

Life should be about *more* than pandering to one's *paranoia*.

You would so *mock* me?!





I only  
*point out*  
what you already  
know in your  
heart.

Thanos,  
you have spent  
centuries chasing the  
*shadows* of what  
you thought you  
should crave.

Each  
end achieved  
has proven a  
*disappointment*,  
has it not?

Have ever  
you known *true*  
satisfaction?



You seek  
to *measure* me  
in terms that apply  
to *lesser beings*,  
Adam Warlock.

I am  
*Thanos of*  
Titan, unique  
unto myself!

My *name*  
itself means  
death.



Are  
you not  
*more* than a  
name?

I sense  
you are.



What  
does it matter  
now?

It is  
*this moment*  
I must deal  
with.

*Sacrifice*  
or the void are  
apparently my  
options.



You were  
*chosen* because  
of your *will*,  
Titan.

Chosen  
and *tricked*.

A *poisonous*  
trinket was offered  
and I *foolishly* leapt  
for it.

A ploy  
you've used  
on *many*  
others.



Not  
easy being  
on the *receiving*  
end, is it?

A situation  
I have not yet  
*accepted*.

Really?

I am  
still seeking  
that *proverbial*  
loophole.

Really?

*Point*  
taken.



If *He*  
went to all  
this *trouble* to  
ensnare me, there  
will be *no out*.

*Check*  
and mate.



Time  
to find  
*grace* in  
defeat.

Not  
my strong  
suit.

Thanos,  
the *role* you  
play can have *no*  
understudy.

What must  
now be done,  
you *alone* can  
accomplish.

Take  
*pride* in  
that.



Spare me,  
your *nauseating*  
sentimentality  
and pity!

I chose  
to play the  
game and will  
accept the  
outcome!

Do not  
try to bestow  
sainthood  
upon me!

Defeat is  
humiliation  
enough!



True enough,  
the *universe* will  
be a better place  
*without* you.



yet I  
shall still  
*regret* your  
passing.

There has  
*always* been  
something of the  
*fool* in you, hasn't  
there?

It will  
*not* be as  
it *was*, you  
know.

*Death*,  
I mean...



Death  
will now be  
permanent.

Never  
again will there  
be any *miraculous*  
resurrections.

No fooling  
or bargaining  
with the *great*  
divide.

Heroes  
will no longer be  
recycled.

From  
this point on,  
when they fall *another*  
will have to take  
their place.



The  
*same* will be  
true for *you*.

I  
can *accept*  
that.

In many  
ways it will be  
a *blessing*.

Through  
*Gamora* I am  
now learning the  
value of a life *well*  
spent.



I  
envy you that,  
Adam.

I have  
accomplished  
*much* in this  
existence...



...but  
*one goal*  
always eluded  
me.

It is  
*not you* I  
hoped to spend  
my *final moments*  
with.

But our  
*individual prides*  
were too great a  
*barrier* to  
breach.



Her  
*station* was  
also a *severe*  
*impediment* I never  
managed to  
circumvent.

And in  
all honesty,  
the *approaches* I  
chose were rather  
*ill-conceived*.



I  
thought I  
had put this  
*sorrow* behind  
me.

Thanos,  
*always* the  
deceiver.

Especially  
to his *own*  
heart.





But  
enough *maudlin*  
*sentiment*.

I--

There was  
*another* you  
overlooked in your  
*mad frenzy* of  
*absorption*,  
Titan.

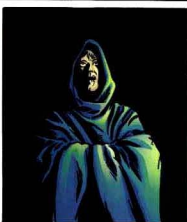
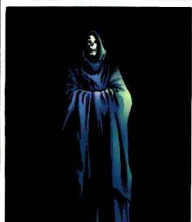
For she,  
too, exists in a plane of  
actuality *outside* this  
*poor reality*.



Sometimes  
trying *too hard*  
is the *problem*.

Sometimes  
*surrendering* is  
the only path to  
victory.

MISTRESS  
DEATH!





Perhaps *that* is what I truly spent my entire life seeking.

It will have to be.

Is it enough?



Step back, Adam Warlock.

The time has come for the *final* resurrection.



The *patterns* will be set right.

The *cancer* will be eradicated from the patient.

All shall be as it *should* be.



How *ironic* that, in the end, what *Thanos* of *Titan* did best was...



...be a *healer*.





Yes, I can sense the universe resuming its full glory and scope.

The icons have returned to their lofty stations and the scales leveled.



All who fell are once again whole.

But the Titan was devilish in his reconstruction, devious to the end.

Determined that none should ever think well of him.

For what has transpired is remembered by none.



No memory is there of the resurrected Pharaoh Akhenaten or anything that occurred after his spectacular debut.

For in this newly minted reality such horrors never happened.



Even the most cosmically astute are unaware of the Titan's sacrifice, his final grand gesture.

Only I remember.

An oversight? I wonder...









...Thanos,  
himself.

THE  
END