

T H E E N D

MARVEL  
PG

2 of 6

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T H E E N D

# MARVEL

PREVIOUSLY...



AKHENATEN



THANOS



DR. DOOM



THOR



ZEUS



SILVER SURFER



DR. STRANGE



NAMOR



HULK



CAPTAIN MARVEL

The Fantastic Four, the Avengers, and the X-Men have all been killed...

...murdered by the seemingly-omnipotent Pharaoh Akhenaten, who has returned to conquer Earth and the surrounding star systems as the appointed representative of a mysterious organization known only as the Celestial Order.

Thor of Asgard and Zeus of fabled Olympus have joined forces to put an end to Akhenaten's dark plans, but realize even they do not possess the might needed for the task.

Meanwhile, the mad titan Thanos has recruited Doctor Strange, Namor, the Hulk, Captain Marvel and the Silver Surfer to his covert war against Akhenaten.

And unbeknownst to the dark pharaoh, the nefarious Doctor Doom has secreted a spy camera within Akhenaten's royal palace...

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Evolution  
is nature's method  
of *readying* an  
organism for the  
future.

In a highly  
fluid environment  
one must be  
constantly prepared  
for *change*.

This holds  
*true* whether that  
organism is a single-  
celled creature, an  
individual, species,  
society or even a  
*reality*.

The rule  
is: *adapt* or  
*perish*.

By *challenging*  
the might of the Pharaoh  
Akhenaten, *Thor* of Asgard  
and *Zeus* of Olympus were  
about to have their  
*adaptive resiliency*  
severely tested.

And they  
were to *truly*  
*learn* that all  
things are  
*relative*...



Even the power of the gods.

Here we shall find the aid we so desperately seek.

What be this place, noble Zeus?

Will they truly answer your summons?

Neutral territory, Thor.

A rendezvous point for gods and monarchs.

A locale where differing beliefs matter not.

'Tis also their universe that be imperiled.

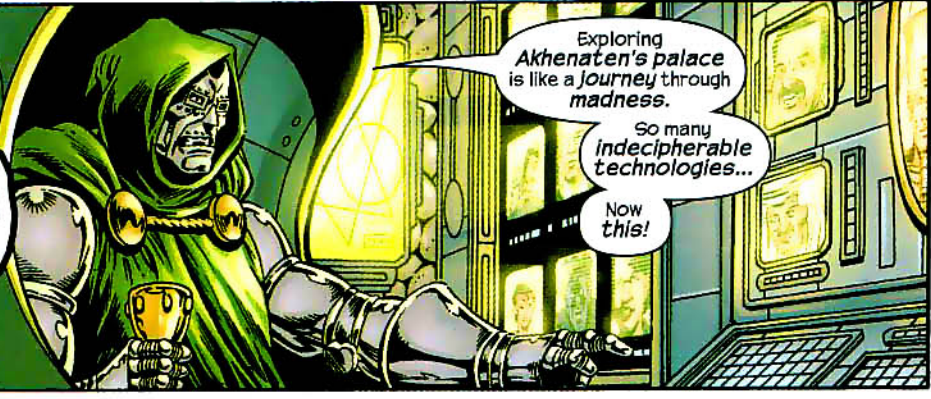


Meanwhile the good Doctor Doom was also having his universe badly shaken.

Exploring Akhenaten's palace is like a journey through madness.

So many indecipherable technologies...

Now this!



"Like *insects* trapped in *amber*."

"The Pharaoh has an impressive *collection* of *time travelers*."

And I am part of this garish *display*, apparently captured at some point in my own *not-so-distant future*.

Which means my *time to act* is *limited*.

But this *hideous tableau* has revealed to me *Akhenaten's* one *fear* and *weakness*.

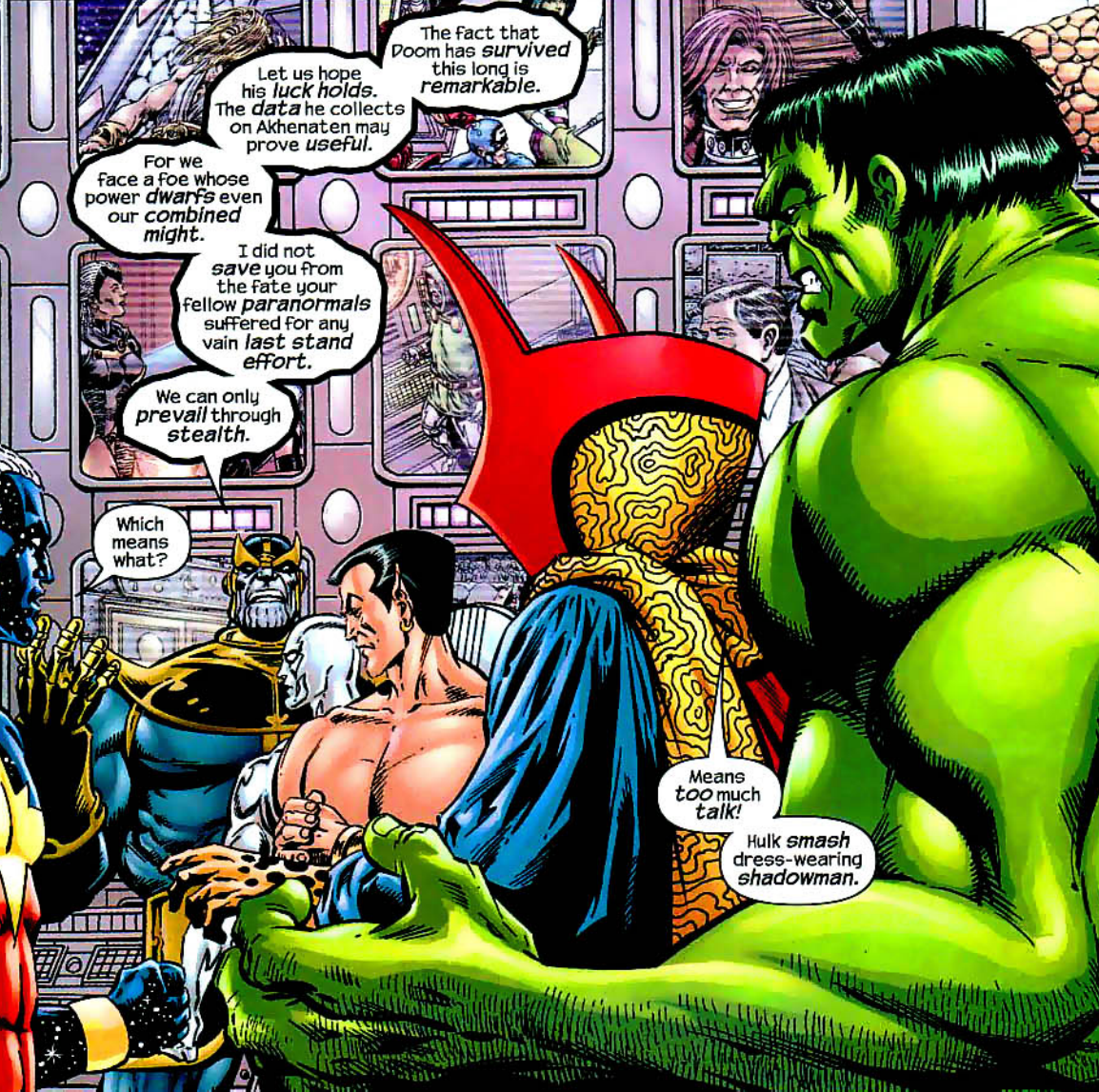
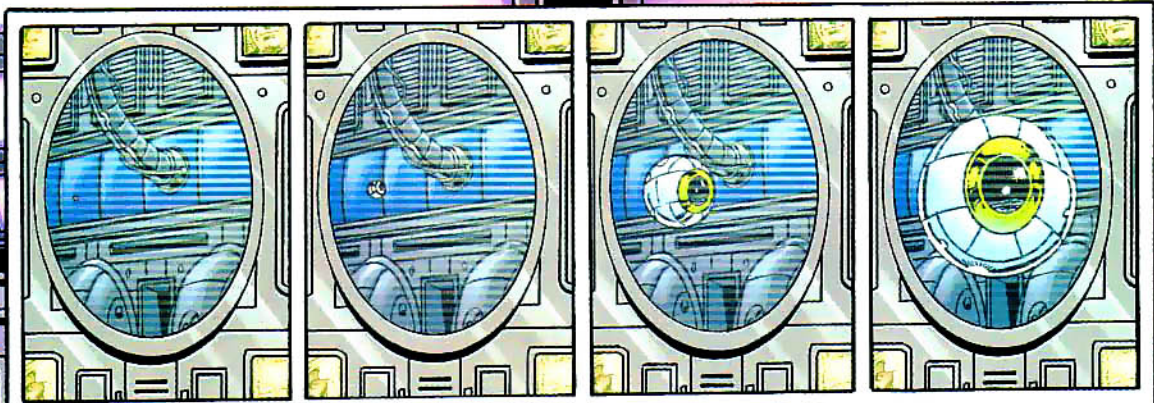
His *past*.

The time *before* he gained the *vast power* he now so ruthlessly wields.

Is it *possible* that he once truly was an ancient *Egyptian Pharaoh*?

But what is that in the corner of the screen?

Magnify.



The fact that Doom has survived this long is remarkable.

Let us hope his luck holds. The data he collects on Akhenaten may prove useful.

For we face a foe whose power dwarfs even our combined might.

I did not save you from the fate your fellow paranormals suffered for any vain last stand effort.

We can only prevail through stealth.

Which means what?

Means too much talk!

Hulk smash dress-wearing shadowman.



That ill-conceived plan will merely get you killed, Hulk.

You say Hulk dies!

Maybe Hulk smash pointy shoulders!

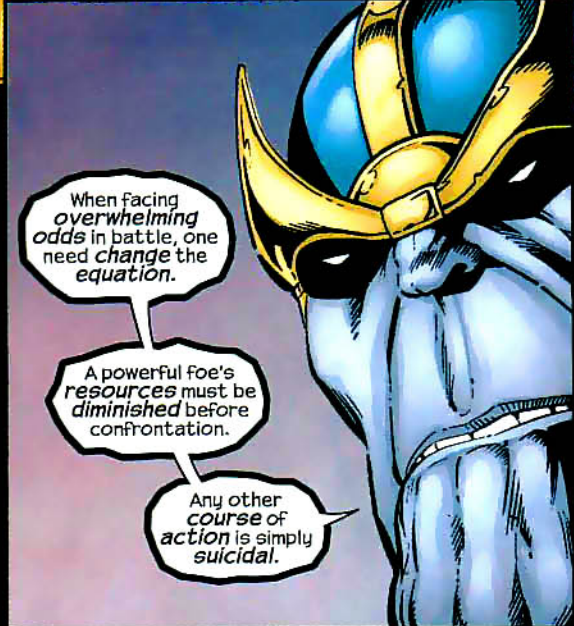
He's not threatening you, Hulk.

Is he always like this, Namor?

Marvel, this is one of his better days.

Strange, leash your dog.

Or I will.



When facing overwhelming odds in battle, one need change the equation.

A powerful foe's resources must be diminished before confrontation.

Any other course of action is simply suicidal.



Odd counsel coming from a supposed nihilist.

A former nihilist, Captain. One who has seen the light and moved on.

Then our plan is...?

Quite simple, really.



We determine the source of Akhenaten's vast might...

And we deprive him of it.



And within a distant actuality, another war council convened.

A gathering of Gods.



My fellow astral regents, I welcome you.

Odd that Lord Horus arrives late to a meet concerning dire peril emanating from Ancient Egypt.

A delay to prepare for this summit, Master Vishnu. Read nothing more into it.



The monarchs of so-called mythological lands.

There was Izanagi of Onokoro.

Vishnu from Nirvana.

Naqsh-I-rustem's Atar.

Horus of the Ennead.

The Mayan God Hunab Ku.

Shou-hsing from the Court of Jade.

Ndrinanahary of the Razanes.

And, of course, Zeus and Thor.



Let us stand united, my brethren.

All present must sense the grave danger we face.

Excruciatingly so.

And that even we may not be powerful enough to stop this conqueror.

There are others that might be called upon.

They of the Forgotten Zone.

Lack of time precludes their participation.

But our knowledge of this foe is dangerously limited.

In that I may be of some assistance.







And speaking of intelligence gathering...

Akhenaten's murdered Reed Richards!

Richards was mine to kill!

That arrogant dog will pay for this effrontery!



And Akhenaten's monstrous ego may have provided me with a road map to vengeance.

At first glance it appears to be just another palace fresco.

Classical Egyptian motifs.

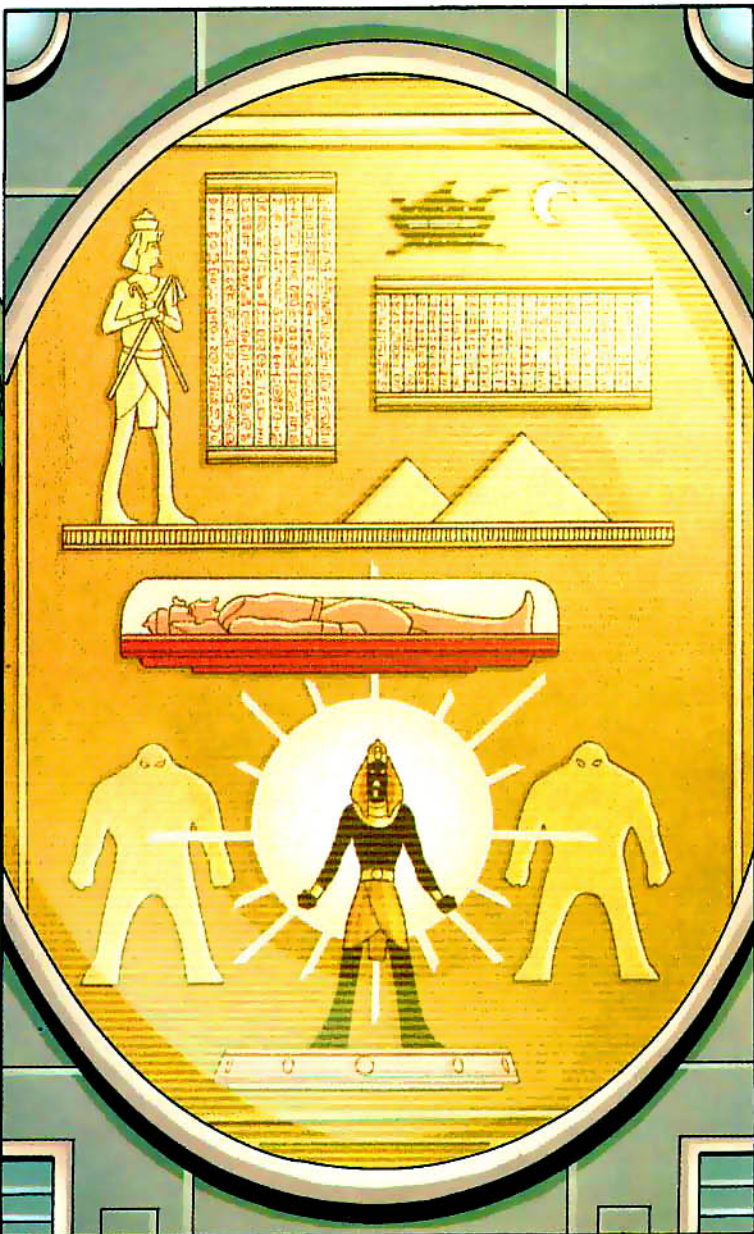
Abduction, death and rebirth.

But no religious myth is this, but rather alien abduction.

The fool has even given me its date and time of day.



And in so doing has gifted me with a possible path to victory.



Honorable  
**Horus**, this  
flame-spouting  
bowl..?

Its  
purpose?

It be  
the **Eye of  
Ra!**

No secret  
can be hidden  
from its gaze.

Not even  
one treasured by  
**Akhenaten** the  
Heretic.

This villain  
is known to  
you?

Aye, **Hunab Ku**,  
when human he turned  
his back on the **old  
gods**.

He forced  
his people to  
worship  
the sun god  
**Aten**.

For this  
blasphemy  
we did curse  
him.

That  
now appears a  
punishment gone  
awry.





A miscarriage we must now set right.

Through knowledge shall come justice.

Let us pray it is so.



Might Akhenaten detect this intrusion?

Let us hope not.

"For even through this medium, can you not sense his power?"

"He has gone far beyond godhood..."

...and now radiates the might of a prime universal force.

"Even his *inner sanctuary* is a *blending of realities*, almost beyond comprehension."

Craven Horemheb, did you actually think *dying* would save you from my *vengeance*?

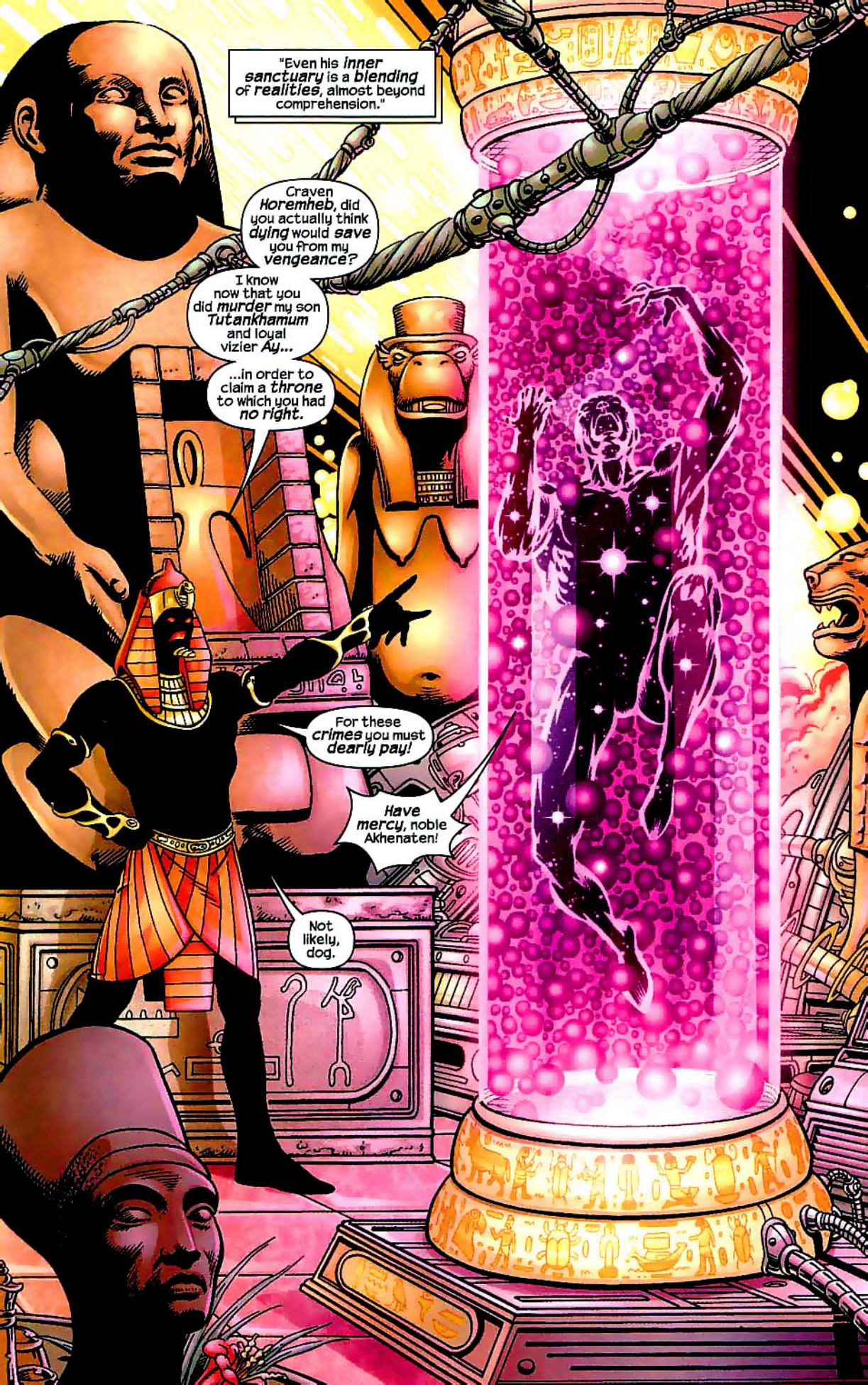
I know now that you did *murder* my son *Tutankhamum* and loyal vizier *Ay*...

...in order to claim a *throne* to which you had *no right*.

For these *crimes* you must *dearly pay!*

Have *mercy*, noble *Akhenaten!*

Not likely, *dog*.





He has imprisoned a *spirit* from the far side of the *grand veil*!

A feat beyond my *might*.

And mine.



To him we be what *mere mortals* are to our kind.

But take heart, for *all things* under the stars have a *weakness*.



Akhenaten's shall be revealed to us.



And to another.

Where?



From the *fresco hieroglyphs* I discovered the exact *hour and date* of your *abduction*, Akhenaten.



But *where* were you when the *Celestial Order* recruited you?

Did you show *mercy* to my 17-year-old son, Horemheb?

No.

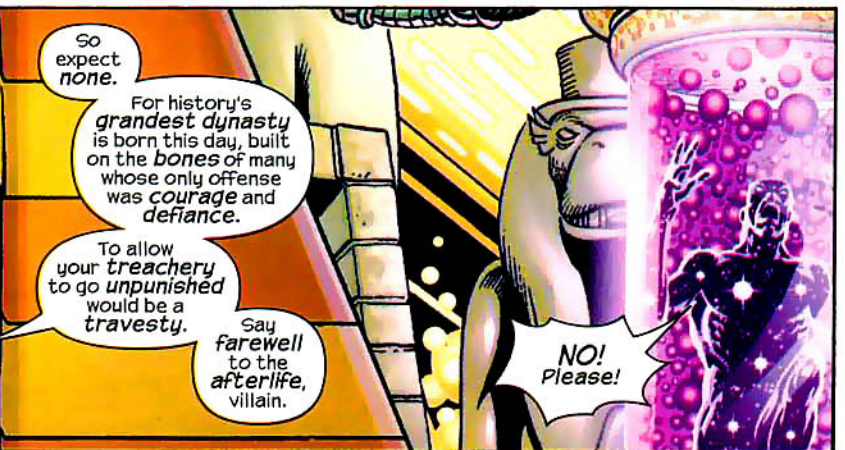


So expect *none*.

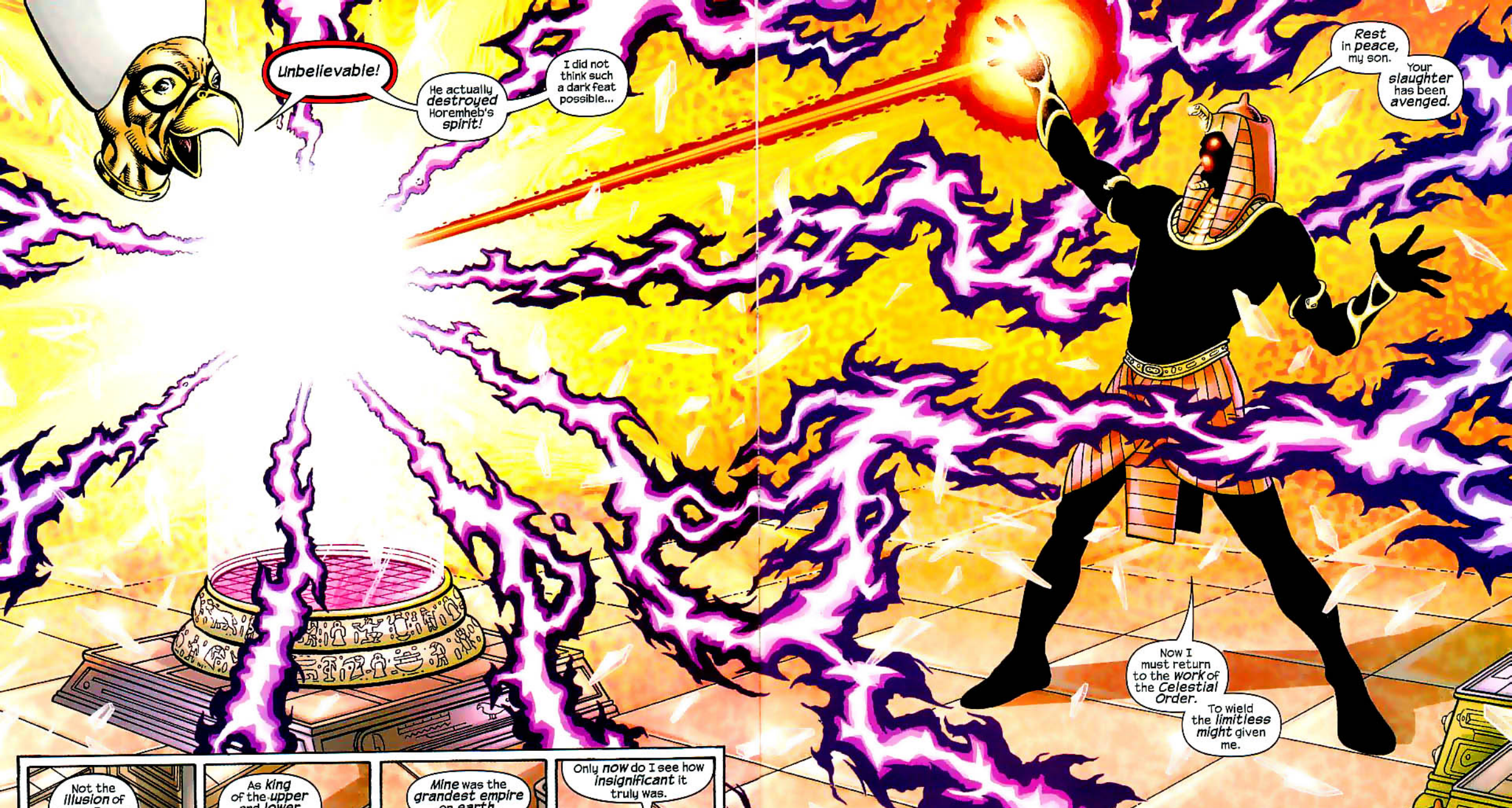
For history's *grandest dynasty* is born this day, built on the *bones* of many whose only offense was *courage and defiance*.

To allow your *treachery* to go *unpunished* would be a *travesty*.

Say *farewell* to the *afterlife*, villain.



**NO!**  
Please!



Unbelievable!

He actually destroyed Horemheb's spirit!

I did not think such a dark feat possible...

Rest in peace, my son. Your slaughter has been avenged.

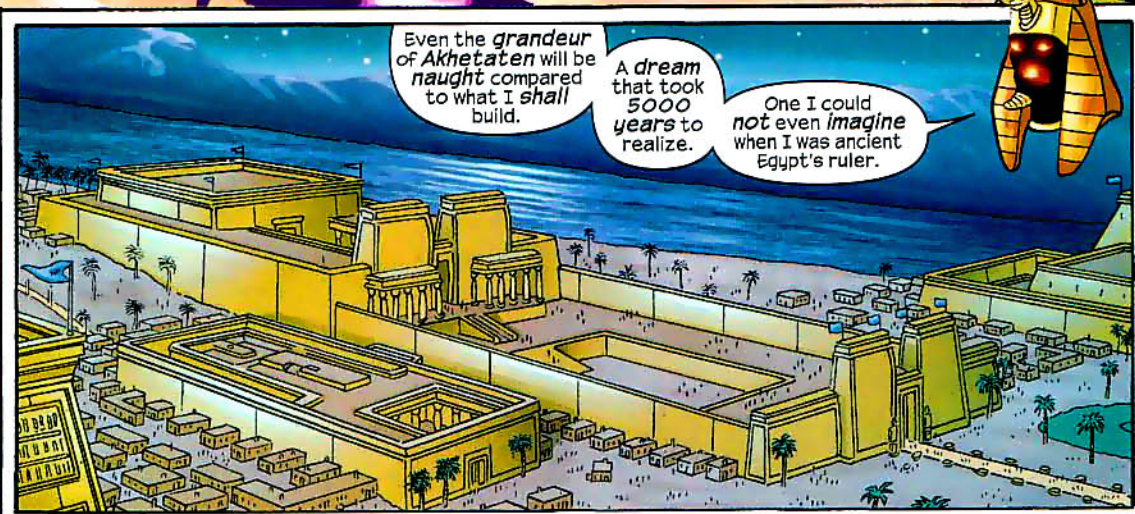
Now I must return to the work of the Celestial Order. To wield the limitless might given me.

Not the illusion of power I once possessed, but true power.

As king of the upper and lower Nile I was so proud.

Mine was the grandest empire on earth.


Only now do I see how insignificant it truly was.



Even the grandeur of Akhetaten will be naught compared to what I shall build.

A dream that took 5000 years to realize.

One I could not even imagine when I was ancient Egypt's ruler.



"How *childish* of me to think my power *supreme* back then.

"True, the *life* and *death* of *hundreds* of *thousands* was mine to decide.

"But I believe even then I knew *wider horizons* awaited me.



"With beautiful *Nefertiti* at my side, I was determined to take the *glory* of Egypt to *loftier heights*.


"No mere *pyramid* would I leave as *legacy*.

"The very *soul* of the *empire* I would *fortify*.



"True, the *priests* of *Amun* railed against my decision to make the worship of *Aten* the *state religion*.

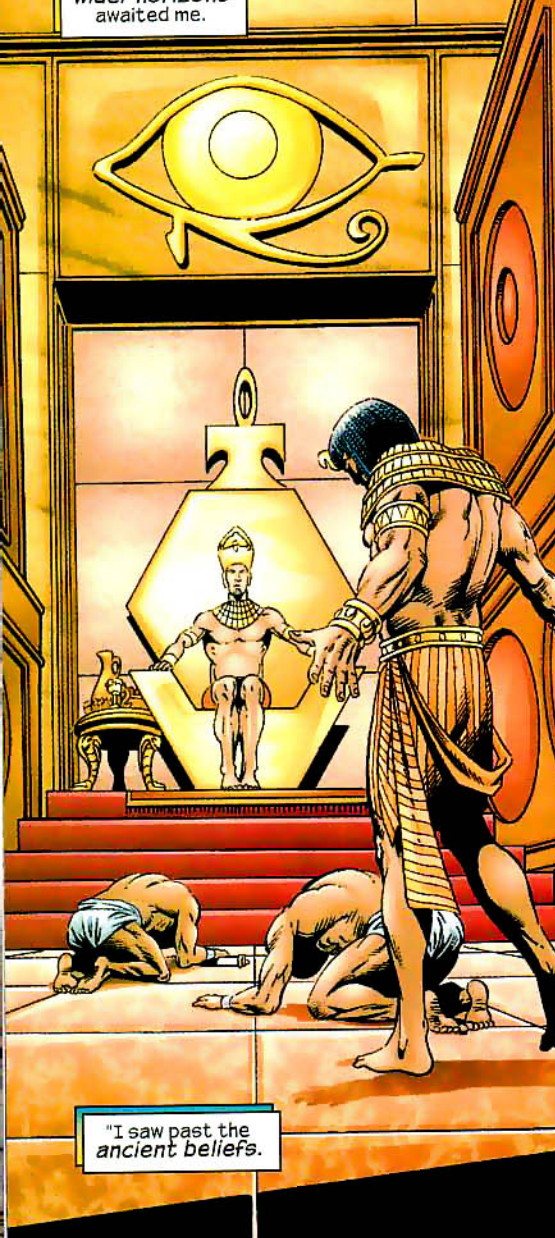
"But it proved the *wisest order* I ever issued.



"For it was duly *noted* and *approved* by some beyond the empire's borders.

"Of course I *didn't know* this until that fateful night in the *Valley of the Kings*.

"They came for me in the *guise* of a *star*.



"I saw past the *ancient beliefs*.



"A speck of light..."



"...that grew to a cosmic destiny."



"A holy calling."



"A dream fulfilled."



"The heavens beckoned."



"I answered."



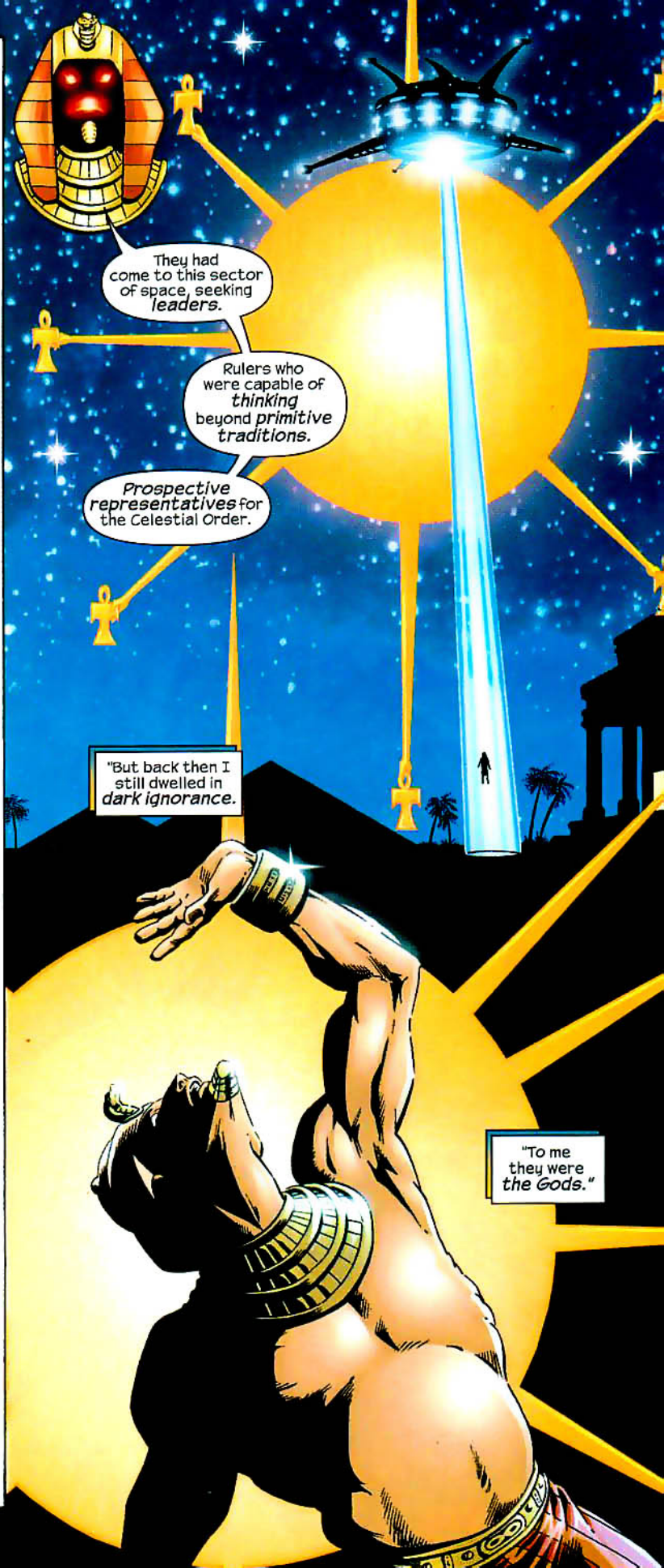
They had come to this sector of space, seeking leaders.

Rulers who were capable of thinking beyond primitive traditions.

Prospective representatives for the Celestial Order.

"But back then I still dwelled in dark ignorance."

"To me they were the Gods."







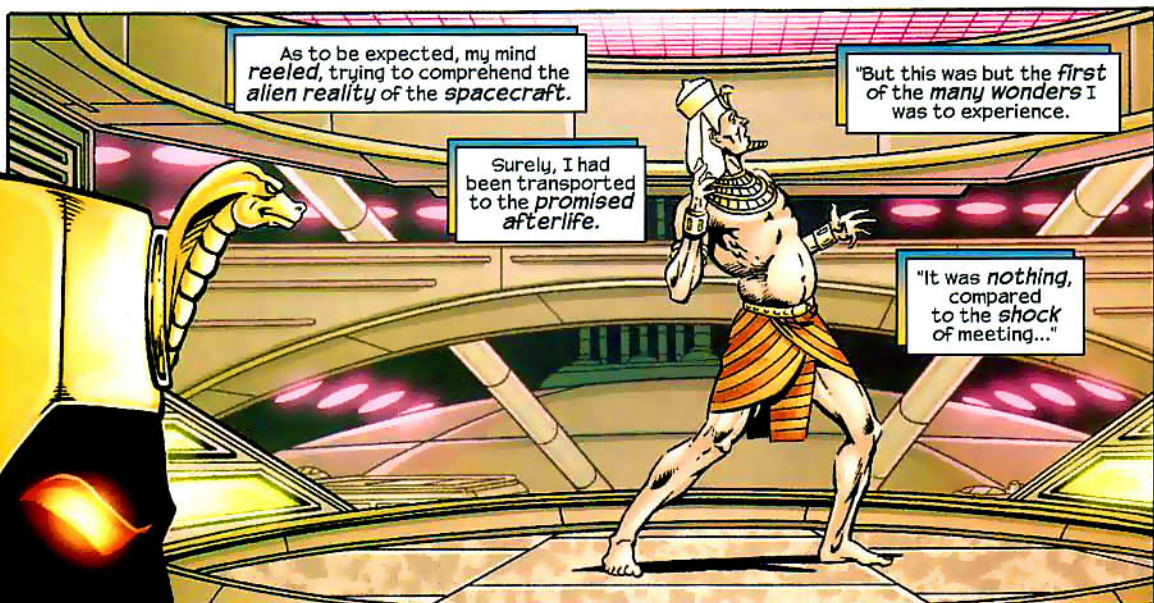
You have mused yourself into defeat, Akhenaten.

So it was the Valley of the Kings you were kidnapped from, was it?

Your vaunted might is lost to you, foolish pharaoh.



To be stolen before you ever savored its thrill.

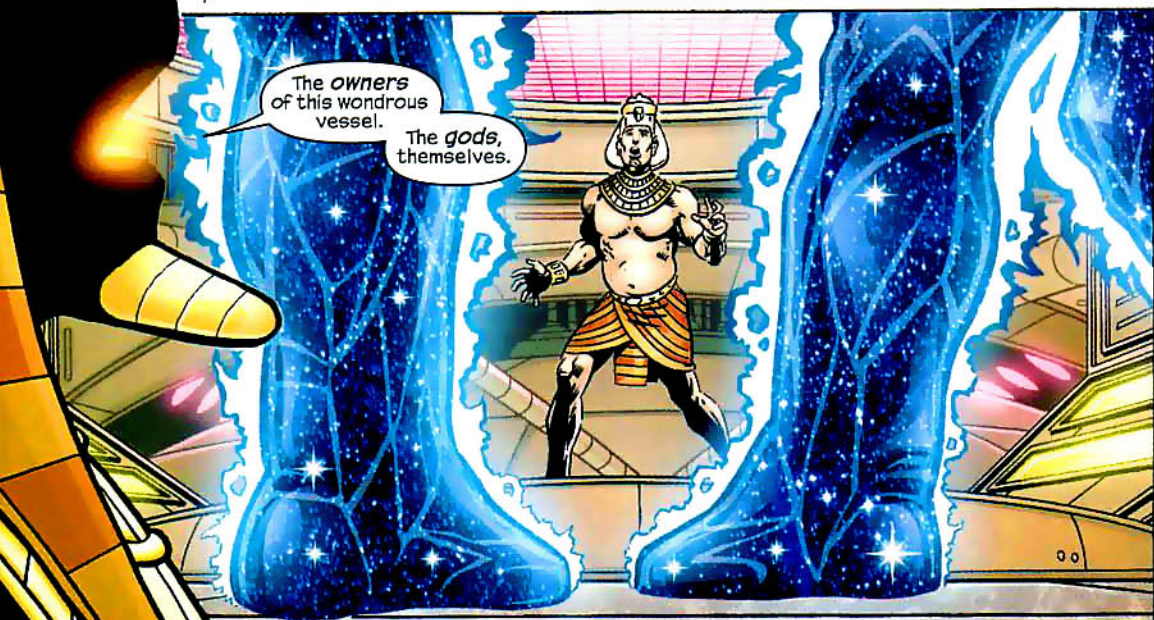


As to be expected, my mind reeled, trying to comprehend the alien reality of the spacecraft.

"But this was but the first of the many wonders I was to experience.

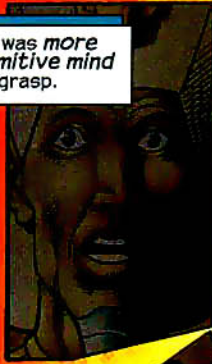
Surely, I had been transported to the promised afterlife.

"It was nothing, compared to the shock of meeting..."



The owners of this wondrous vessel.

The gods, themselves.



I admit, it was *more* than my *primitive mind* could grasp.



As I would later learn, the *Celestial Order* had spent the past *two centuries* scouring the heavens for *unique local inhabitants*, such as myself.

They had discovered the *ultimate power* and chose to use it to press *peace* onto a chaotic universe.

Under their rule *thousands of wars* throughout the stars would come to an end.

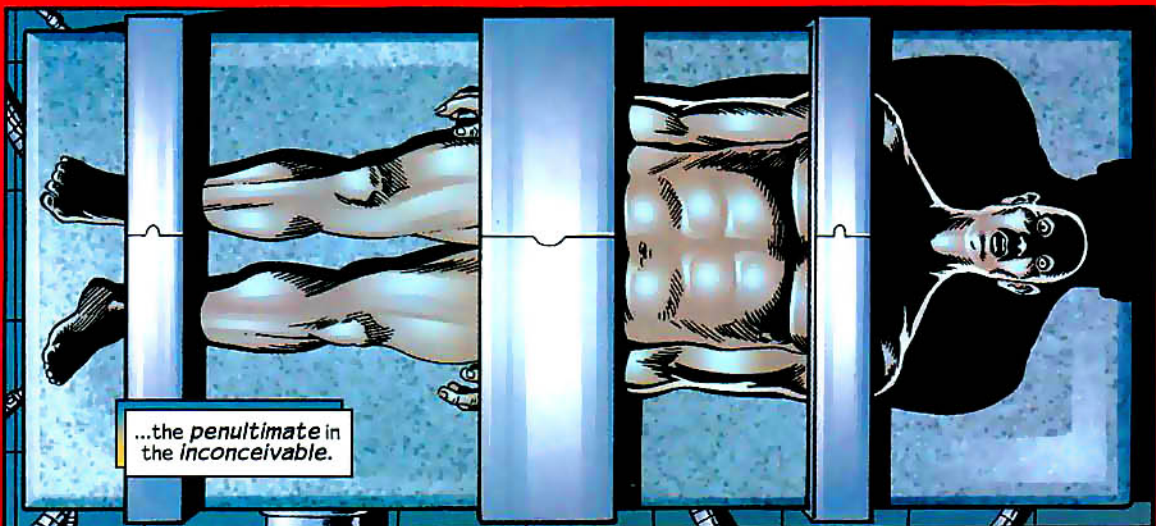
*Illness, want and injustice* would become but *bad memories*.

To ease the *transition from hell to heaven* they decided each conquered space would be ruled by an *enlightened local citizen*.

Through *time and space* they searched for their *chosen few*.

I perfectly fit their *requirements*: a man accustomed to *ruling* with a *certain ruthlessness*, and *vision* to see beyond the *now*.

So when I eventually *regained my wits*, my eyes opened to see...



...the *penultimate* in the *inconceivable*.

"They called it the *Heart of the Infinite*.

"From *it* they drew their *power*.

"Power they chose to *share* with me.

"Not an *easy gift* to accept.

"For nearly *two thousand years* my mind danced with *insanity*.

"The *scope* of such *astral revelations* takes time to *digest*.

"My *term of adjustment* was quite *quick*, compared to that of other *alien representatives*.

"Another century passed unnoticed as I *learned* to master the *gift* the Order blessed me with.

"But even then my *access* to the *heart's might* was *restricted*...

"Until my *indoctrination* into the Celestial Order's *mysteries* and *protocols* was complete.

"It took me *two thousand years* to earn their *trust*, for something about the *human psyche* eludes their understanding.

"*Personal ambition* is a trait they only *vaguely comprehend*.

"A *flaw* I shall someday *capitalize on*.

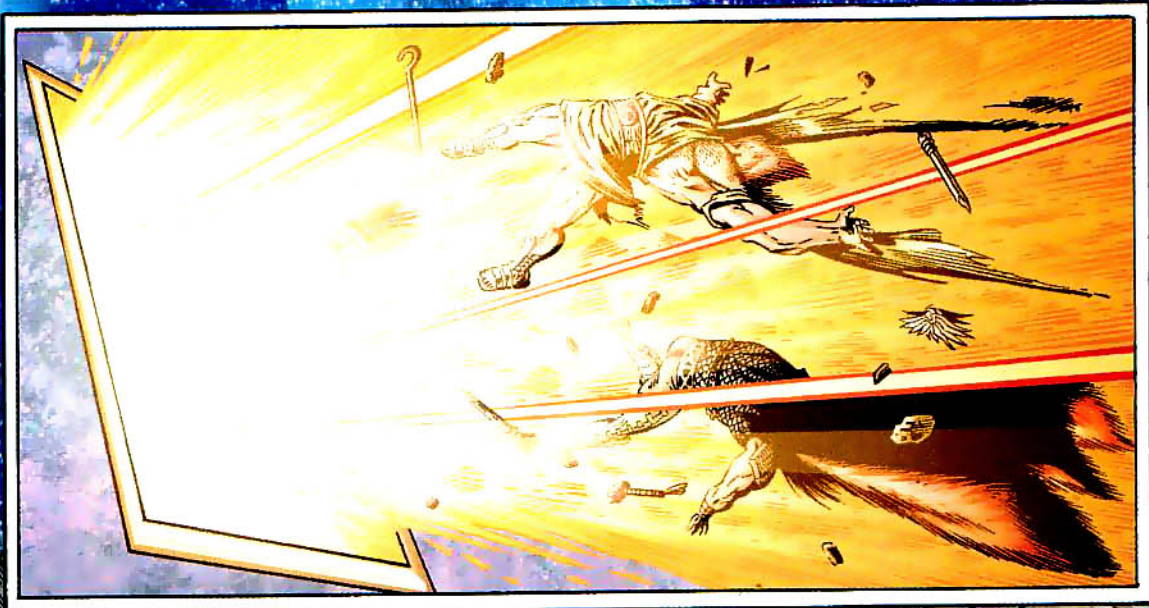
"But in the meantime I shall *act* as their *agent* and add this galaxy to the *Order's membership*.

"For with *infinite power* comes *infinite patience*.

"*My day* shall eventually be realized.

"Only *then* will all be set *right* within the universe."





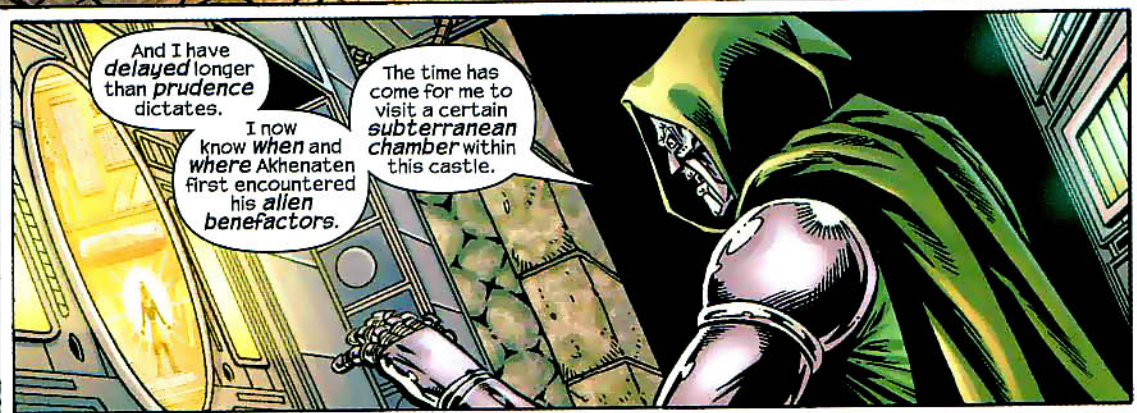
"I've lost the transmission."


"But I suspect this Horus, whoever he might have been, lost far more."

And I have *delayed* longer than *prudence* dictates.

I now know *when* and *where* Akhenaten first encountered his *alien benefactors*.

The time has come for me to visit a certain *subterranean chamber* within this castle.





Akhenaten,  
*omnipotence* is  
about to be *lost*  
to you.

And with a bit  
of *guile* and *good*  
*fortune*, your treasure  
might yet fall into the  
*grasp* of  
**DOCTOR DOOM!**

Like myself,  
Doom was a man  
who *understood*  
and had a *taste*  
for power.

Considering  
the *limits* of his  
*understanding*  
of the *cosmic*, his  
was rather an  
*ingenious*  
plan.

Of course, it  
was destined  
to *failure*.

Perhaps deep  
in his heart *Doom*  
*realized*  
this, but still he  
*persevered*.

You have to  
*admire* such *grim*  
*determination*, even  
if it is only backed  
by *unrealistic*  
*optimism*.

For *no one*,  
at that moment,  
had any inkling that  
in *this struggle*  
there would be  
*no winner*.



**TO BE CONTINUED...**