

VALIANT.

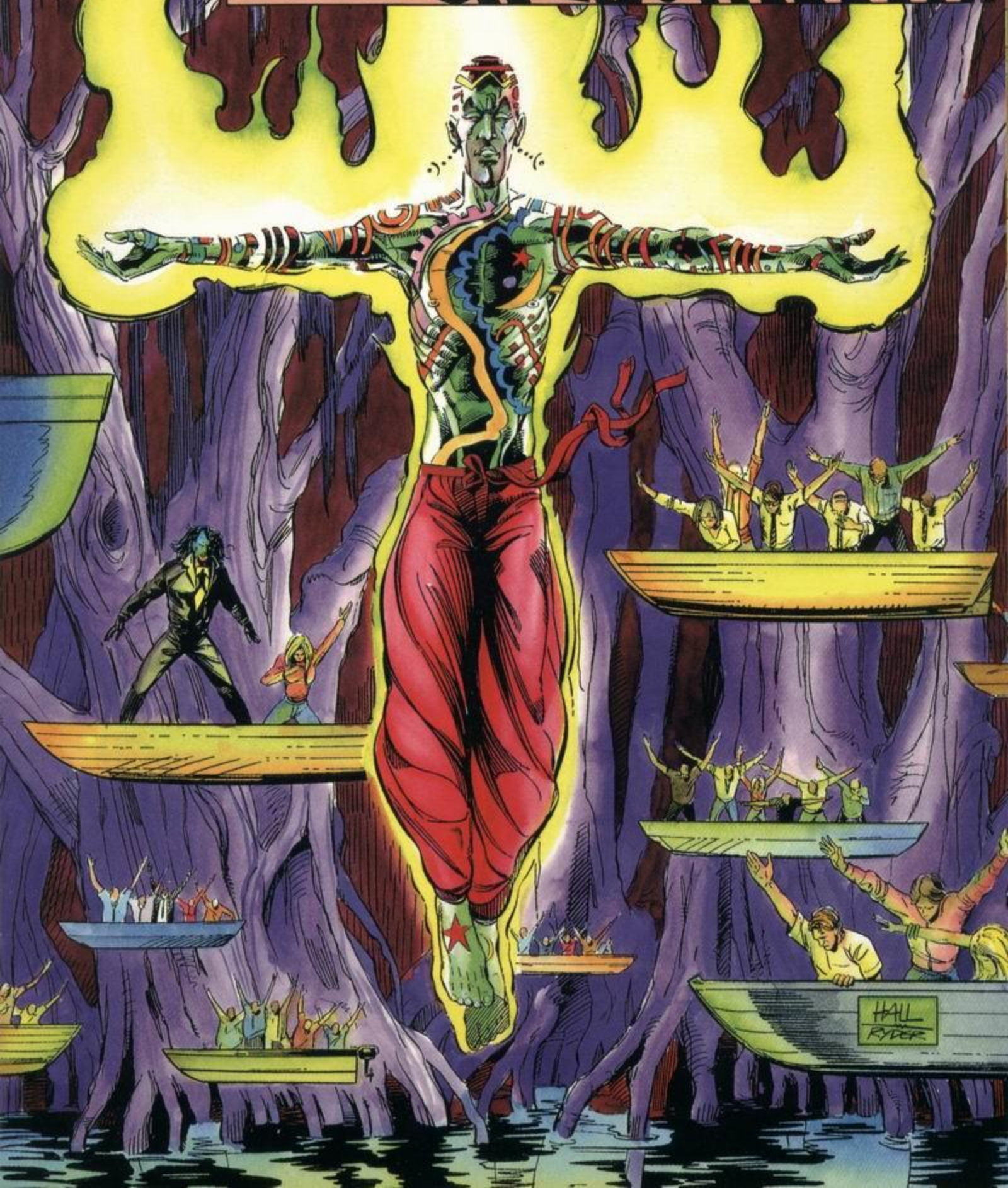


APR NO.12



\$2.50 CAN \$3.15

SHADOWMAN





HE'S RUNNING, ISN'T HE? MR. BONIFACE HAS STARTED HIS DEATH RUN.



YES, HIS ENERGY IS BEING RELEASED...

...AND ABSORBED... THE EFFECT IS SUBLIME.

DID YOU ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIM?

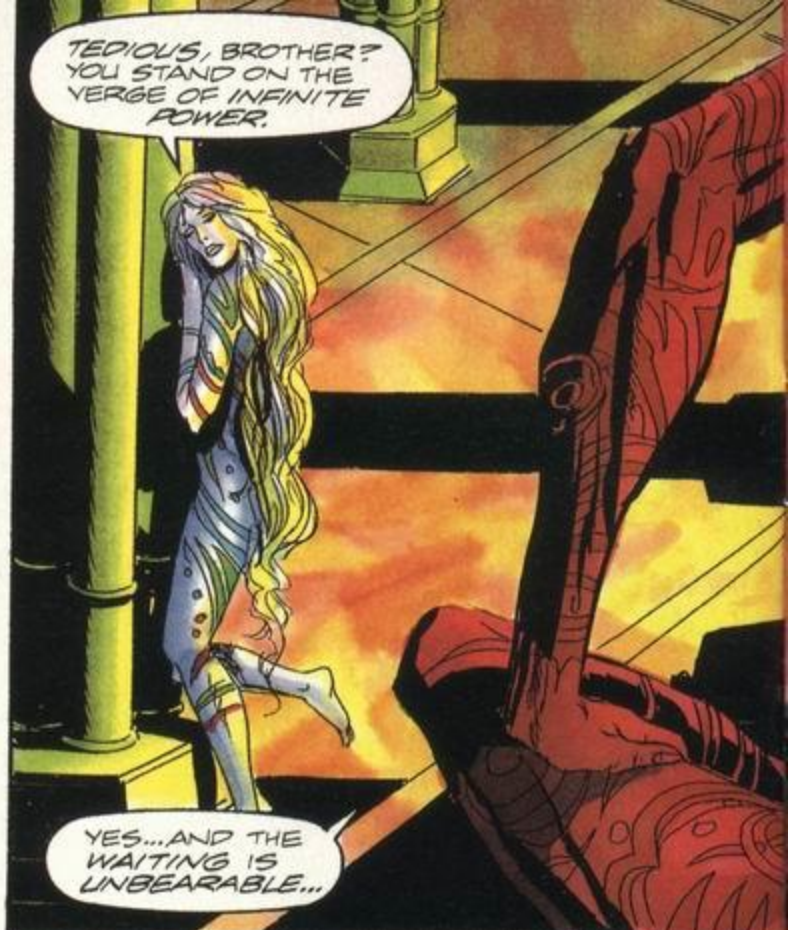
OF COURSE, BROTHER... DOES THAT ANGER YOU?



WHY SHOULD IT? IF HE DIES, I'LL COME TO OWN THE ECSTASY OF HIS UNIQUE ENERGY.

AND IF HE CAN FIND THE SECRET TO LIVE...?

...THEN HE WILL HAVE IGNITED A SMALL SPARK OF INTEREST IN MY TEDIOUS EXISTENCE.



TEDIOUS, BROTHER? YOU STAND ON THE VERGE OF INFINITE POWER.

YES...AND THE WAITING IS UNBEARABLE...



...THREE DAYS, AND NINE MORE DEATHS TO FILL THE TIME BEFORE I AM REBORN.



NINE DEATHS? WHAT IF MR. BONIFACE WON'T PLAY?



MR. BONIFACE IS RUNNING... HE HAS WILLED HIMSELF TO ME... I HAVE FULFILLED HIS DESIRES...

...AND NOW, WE ARE LOVERS IN DEATH.

SURELY, SO DEVOTED A FOLLOWER WILL NOT FAIL ME.

SHADOWMAN



BOB HALL
Story/
Drawings

JOHN DIXON
Inker

MIKE CAVALLARO
Colorist

DARK RAPTURE

I'M
DYING...

IT'S HIGH NOON...
I'M RUNNING TO MY
DEATH AND SHADOW-
MAN CAN'T COME OUT...

GET OUTTA
MY WAY!
I GOTTA
DIE NOW!

CAN'T STOP
YELLING...
CAN'T STOP
BLEEDING...
CAN'T STOP
RUNNING...





ALL I EVER CARED ABOUT WAS MAKING MUSIC... MY MUSIC...

WANTED TO PLAY MY SAX...



THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME. I STARTED LIKING THE DARK, BEATING UP PUSHERS...

WEARING A MASK...



I BECAME ANOTHER PERSON AT NIGHT. SOMEONE WHO SCARES THE HELL OUT OF ME.

SHADOW-MAN.



THEN I MET DARQUE... HE PROMISED ME I'D BE A SUCCESS... IF I PLEDGED HIM MY LIFE.

I THINK I SAID, "YES," MY MUSIC'S ON THE RADIO... I MUST HAVE SAID, "YES."



AND NOW HE'S KILLING ME!



HURTS!



OH MAMA-- IT HURTS!



BLEEDING NOW!



RUNNING NOW!



KILLING ME!





UHHNNNNN...
AHHHHHHH...
HUUNNH!

DON'T
BECOME
LOST
IN YOUR
REVERY,
BROTHER...

SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING...
I SENSE A
RENT IN THE
FABRIC OF
YOUR GRAND
DESIGN...



THE DAY
OF MY
DEATH!

ELYA TOLD
ME THE DAY
OF MY DEATH!



1999... I DIE
IN 1999!



I DIE A VIOLENT
DEATH, DARGUE...
BUT, NOT TODAY!



NOT TODAY,
DAMN YOU!

I'M NOT
YOURS...



UNNNH!

I WARNED YOU...
MR. BONIFACE
HAS DECIDED NOT
TO DIE, TODAY.

YOU SEE
WHAT COMES
OF WANTING
ULTIMATE
POWER?

I WILL
OPPOSE
YOU ON
THIS,
BROTHER...



WE'VE BOTH
SPENT SEVERAL
LIFETIMES
STUDYING THE
ARCANE...

BUT, WHY
USE YOUR
KNOWLEDGE
TO EXERT
YOUR WILL?

IT'S SURELY
THE MOST
BANAL OF
HUMAN
IDEAS.



BECAUSE
IT AMUSES
ME, AND,
BECAUSE
I CAN.

ON THE THIRD NIGHT,
I CELEBRATE MY
MEETING IN THE
AIR... THE RAPTURE
OF DARQUE.

MY POWER
FADES, THANKS
TO MR. BONIFACE...
BUT MY WISDOM
GROWS WITH THE
EXPERIENCE.



NEITHER JACK
BONIFACE NOR
THE SHADOWMAN
WILL MATTER THEN.

NO LONGER WILL
I ABSORB ENERGY...
ENERGY WILL
EMANATE FROM
ME.



A LAST
WARNING...
DON'T SEEK
THE UNIVERSE
FOR POWER,
LEST IT
FIND YOU.



RUBBISH,
SANDRIA!
I'LL BE
POWER...

...AND I'LL
ENJOY
IT.



11:30 P.M.

SO, JACK, HE WANTS TO GET OUT OF TOWN...AND NETTIE WANTS HIM TO. "DO WHAT'S RIGHT"...I SAY, TO HELL WITH BOTH OF YOU. IT'S NIGHTTIME.

TIME TO VISIT SCOTT... GOOD OLD EX-DRUMMER, DEAD HEAD, INVESTMENT COUNSELOR. SCOTT.

ONCE TOLD ME YA GOTTA PLAY YOUR HAND--

HE AND MARGO WERE TALKING ABOUT THEIR GOOD LUCK, JUST BEFORE SHE STARTED RUNNING... BLEEDING.

DARQUE'S DISCIPLES ALL SEEM TO SCORE GOOD LUCK, BEFORE THEY DIE.

SCOTT...
SCOTT!

-- SOME TIMES THE CARDS AIN'T WORTH A DIE-- YAM... IF YOU--

-- DON'T LAY... HOW?

JACK... HEY, WELCOME... WELCOME INDEED.

SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT MARGO...

BUT, WE ALL GO SOMETIME... THERE'S THE CHANCES... SHE KNEW THAT.



KNEW WHAT, SCOTT?

COME ON, JACK. YOU'RE IN THIS TOO. THAT SONG, OF YOURS? ON THE RADIO? DON'T TRY TO PRETEND THAT WAS JUST LUCK.

NO-- YOU'RE RIGHT! IT WAS HIS DOING.

THAT'S BETTER. SO WHAT YOU WANT? YOU WANT TO RIDE WITH ME TOMORROW?

MEETING IN THE AIR MAN-- MEETING IN THE AIR!

UH, SURE... I WANT A RIDE SCOTT... O.K.?



TOMORROW JACK, JUST AFTER DARK...

YOU'RE RIGHT SCOTT, I SHOULD BE ONE OF YOU... I SHOULD BE DEAD NOW...



SCOTT'S GONE BACK
INSIDE... I CAN PUT ON
THE MASK NOW.

WHAT FOR? DOES IT
MAKE ME FEEL LESS
LIKE BONIFACE?

SO SCOTT'S A DISCIPLE...
DEADHEAD TO
DARGUEHEAD...

MEETING IN THE AIR...
IS THAT WHERE ALL THIS
HAS BEEN LEADING?

HOW DOES DARGUE
COMMUNICATE WITH
HIS FOLLOWERS? HOW
DID I KNOW I HAD
TO DEATH RUN?

JESUS!

...I WAS...
PAUL... NA...
NADOUR.

HEL... P
MEE...



HAR...D... TO TALK...
THIS... Y...

I WANT YOU
TO... MAKE
ME... DEAD...

PLEASE...
DO AS HE
SAYS.

UH... SHE
ASKED ME
TO HELP... UH
I HOPE THAT
WAS... UH...

YOU WANT TO
DIE? DO IT!
WHAT'S IT TO
DO WITH ME?



A ZOMBIE CAN'T
END HIS OWN LIFE,
MR. BONIFACE.



SEE, SHE
TOLD ME
WHO YOU
WERE AND
THAT'S
HOW WE
FOLLOWED
YOU...
SEE...



PLEASE... TA...KE...
PITY ON ME...



I... I CAN'T DO
IT MYSELF... I
LOVE HIM TOO
MUCH TO--

--I
CAN'T



SO, YOU'RE
JACK
BONIFACE...

UH... GREAT
SONG YOU
GOT ON THE
RADIO...

...UH...



I WILL... TELL
YOU MANY
THINGS... ABOUT
DARQUE... IF
YOU... WILL...
HELP ME...
DIE.



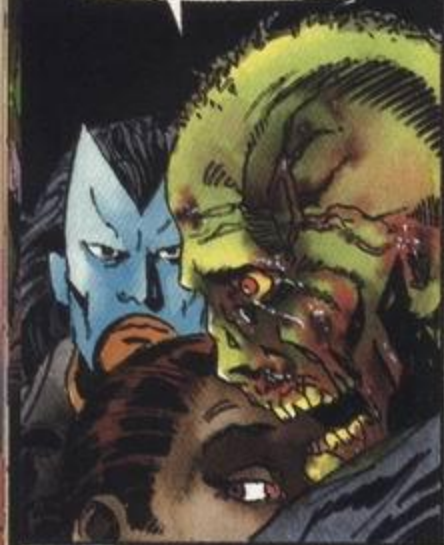
I'LL DO
WHAT YOU
WANT--

--NOW
TELL
ME!

11:53 PM.

12:27 A.M.

I'VE... TOLD YOU ALL
I KNOW... MR. BONI-
FACE... I PRAY... IT...
HELPS... YOU.



NOW... HELP
ME... TO A
TRUE DEATH...



LIGHT...
THE
TORCH...



PAUL N'DOUR WAS A
GOOD MAN... AND NEITHER
DEATH NOR DARQUE'S
POWER COULD CHANGE
HIM...

MAYBE
THERE'S
HOPE
AFTER
ALL...



N'DOUR SAID 24 PEOPLE
HAVE DIED TO GIVE DARQUE
POWER...

...AND THAT
IF THREE
MORE DIE
TOMORROW
NIGHT HIS
POWER WILL
BE UN-
LIMITED.



SOMEHOW,
I WON'T
LET THAT
HAPPEN!

THIS IS GOING TO BE SOMETHING, JACK... THE WOOD-STOCK OF THE 90'S.

THE NEXT NIGHT.
10:43 P.M.

SCOTT'S PRACTICALLY IN A TRANCE... DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE WHEN I THREW HIS "DEAD" TAPES OUT THE WINDOW.



WE'RE HEADING TOWARD THE BAYOU?

NATCH... HEY, I WONDER HOW MANY OF US THERE ARE? MAYBE HUNDREDS? MAYBE THOUSANDS?



GOT MY MASK INSIDE MY JACKET. BUT, I CAN'T WEAR IT IN FRONT OF SCOTT...

ALTHOUGH, HEY-- EVERYONE SEEMS TO KNOW WHO I AM...

THIS THE LAST BOAT I GOT. THEY ALL RENTED TONIGHT.

THERE SOME WEIRD PARTY OR SOMETHIN'?

YEAH SOMETHIN'...



I THINK I KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING.

SOMEHOW I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

THIS WAY, JACK...

...HEY, LOVE YOUR TEE SHIRT.



THE GIANT CYPRESS... WHERE I FOUND "UNITY", AND WHERE I LOST ELYA.

ALL PATHS LEAD ME BACK TO THIS PLACE.

N'DOUR SAID DARGUE HAD UNTIL MID-NIGHT TO COMPLETE HIS CEREMONY... A UNIQUE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY...

TO BECOME A GOD.



MY GOD, THERE ARE
HUNDREDS OF THEM...

...ALL WAITING FOR SOME-
THING TO HAPPEN...

...FOR THE U.F.O.S
TO COME...

OR THE SECOND
COMING.

11:45 P.M.

WAITING
FOR HIM...

DON'T LOOK SO
ASTONISHED, MR.
BONIFACE.

WHERE
DID YOU
COME
FROM?

DO YOU HAVE
YOUR MASK?
I LIKE YOU
BETTER WITH
THE MASK.

HE'S VERY
IMPRESSIVE
DON'T YOU
THINK...?

THE HOUR
HAS ARRIVED
FOR ME TO
GIVE THIS
WORLD A NEW
BEGINNING.

YOU HAVE
DONE THIS
FREELY
AND OF
YOUR OWN
WILLS...

COME
TO ME...

SHARE,
FOR ONE
MOMENT,
THE POWER
YOU HAVE
GIVEN
ME.

HE'S MAD
WITH
POWER.

11:47 AM.

AND NOW THE
TIME HAS COME
TO KNOW THE
ECSTASY OF
SACRIFICE.

ALL OF YOU
ARE DESERVING;
BUT ONLY THREE
MAY BE CHOSEN.

MY ENERGY
WILL SEEK
OUT THE
ONES WHO
OFFER
THEMSELVES
WITH THE
PUREST
ZEAL.

AND HIS
SISTER
SEEMS TO
THINK
THIS IS
SOME
SORT OF
GAME.

YOU HAVE 13
MINUTES
MR. BONIFACE...

ARE YOU
GOING
TO DO
SOMETHING?

YOU HAVE
OFFERED
ME YOUR
LIFE
ENERGY,
THAT I
MAY
UNDERTAKE
THIS
TASK.

AND I AM
PLEASED.



11:54 P.M.

YES, ME... JOE MASON!
THANK YOU, OH YES,
THANK YOU!

COME TO ME...
LET YOUR
SPIRIT LIVE
IN ME.

THESE FOOLS
WILL DO
ANYTHING
FOR HIM--

NOW
MASTER!
TAKE ME
NOW!



--ANYTHING--



AAAAHHHHH!

--EVEN
DIE.

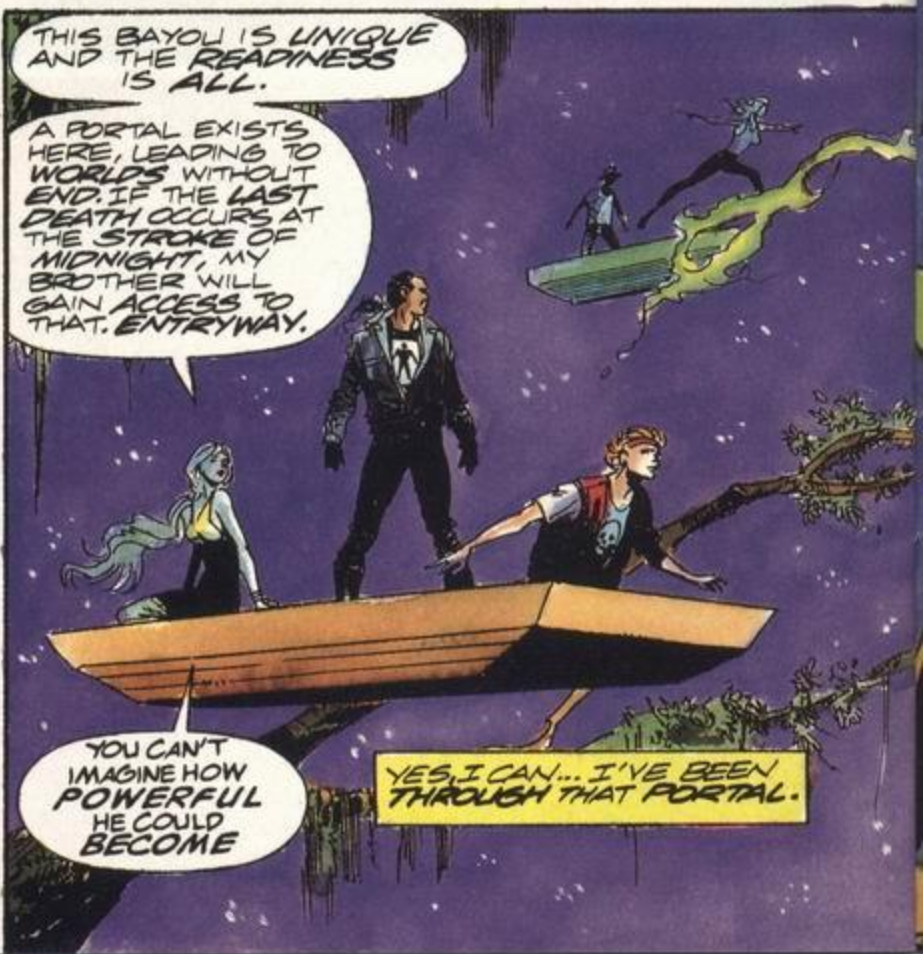
JUST AS JACK
WOULD HAVE
DONE.



YEESSSS.
IT FILLS ME.

THE NEXT.
I MUST HAVE
THE NEXT.

COME
TO ME...
NOW!



THIS BAYOU IS UNIQUE
AND THE READINESS
IS ALL.

A PORTAL EXISTS
HERE, LEADING TO
WORLDS WITHOUT
END. IF THE LAST
DEATH OCCURS AT
THE STROKE OF
MIDNIGHT, MY
BROTHER WILL
GAIN ACCESS TO
THAT. ENTRYWAY.

YOU CAN'T
IMAGINE HOW
POWERFUL
HE COULD
BECOME

YES, I CAN... I'VE BEEN
THROUGH THAT PORTAL.



MY BROTHER MUST NOT BECOME A GOD...



HE DOESN'T KNOW YOU ARE HERE. I'VE SEEN TO THAT--

--AND YET, HE WILL FEEL YOUR SINGULAR ENERGY, AND REACH OUT TO THIS VESSEL FOR HIS FINAL SACRIFICE.



AND YOU WILL DO--- WHAT YOU KNOW TO BE RIGHT.

WHY MIDNIGHT? WHY DOES THE THIRD DEATH HAVE TO OCCUR AT MIDNIGHT?

IT'S A MAGIC SPELL, MY DEAR... AND THOSE ARE THE RULES OF THE GAME.



AND NOW I CALL THE LAST. THE THIRD OF 27-- THREE-TIMES-THREE, TIMES THREE THE CHOSEN ONE.

COME TO ME...

11:57 P.M.



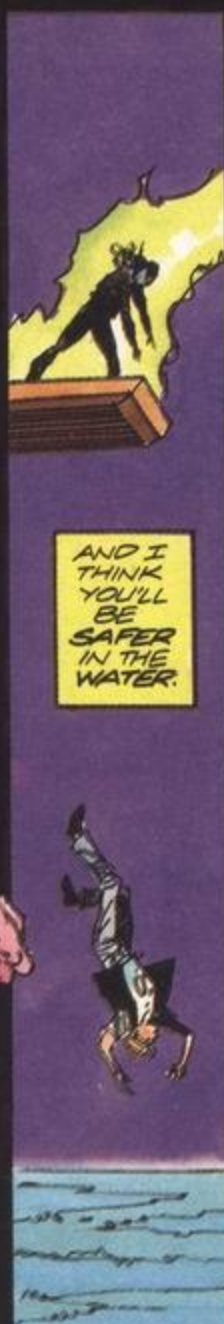
YES!
YES!
YES!!

DO WHAT I KNOW TO BE "RIGHT"!--SO WHY DO I THINK I'M BEING USED?

AAH--TO HELL WITH IT.



SORRY SCOTT, BUT THIS IS ONE TRIP YOU'RE NOT TAKING.



AND I THINK YOU'LL BE SAFER IN THE WATER.



ALRIGHT DARQUE!-- YOU WANT MY "LIFE FORCE" TRY AND TAKE IT!

11:58 P.M.



BONIFACE!!

SANDRIA-SISTER! THIS IS YOUR DOING!

I'VE ALWAYS COVETED YOUR MENDACITY.

YOU BLOCKED ME FROM RECOGNIZING BONIFACE, BUT YOU LED ME TO HIS ENERGY--



AND NOW HE'S TOUCHING ME--- TOUCHING ME!



11:59 P.M.

THE TIME IS NOW. I NEED TO REACH OUT TO ANOTHER FOLLOWER, NOW!

BUT I CAN'T CONCENTRATE, BECAUSE THIS FOOL IS TOUCHING ME!



THE PORTAL IS CLOSING, MR. BONIFACE... LET ME GO, AND I WILL SHOW YOU THE FUTURE!

I'VE ALREADY SEEN IT!



12:00 A.M.

AND YOU CAN GO TO HELL!

THAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY SHALL!

THE MOMENT FOR GREATNESS HAS FLED MR. BONIFACE... DID YOU FEEL IT GO?



THE PORTAL
HAS CLOSED,
BUT THE RITUAL
IS NOT ENDED.



MY FOLLOWERS
EXPECT A BLOOD
CEREMONY--

--AND THEY
SHALL HAVE
IT.

DOCTORS, LAWYERS,
SCHOLARS, ARTISTS--
THE BEST MINDS IN
NEW ORLEANS--

"ALL OF THEM
WILLING
SACRIFICES."



"THESE
ENERGIES
WILL SUSTAIN
MY POWER
FOR SOME
TIME--"



"MONTHS--
EVEN
YEARS--
AND
THEN--"



"PERHAPS
I'LL DO IT
ALL AGAIN."

YOU HAVE MADE
THIS A MOST
STIMULATING
EPISODE, MR.
BONIFACE...

UNTIL
NEXT
TIME.

THE UNITY PORTAL---
IF I'D JUST LET HIM
OPEN IT... MAYBE I
COULD HAVE GONE
BACK?... FOUND
ELYA...

...DON'T
THINK
ABOUT
IT...

THAT
LOOKS
LIKE
SCOTT
UP
AHEAD.

HE'S ALIVE.

THE ONLY
SURVIVOR---
GOOD OLD
DEAD HEAD
SCOTT--

SLEEPING
LIKE A...

...IT'S HER...

WHAT ARE YOU STARING
AT? IS THIS SOME KIND
OF GAME TO YOU?

SOME
KIND OF
DAMNED
GAME?

YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO HAVE
DIED
FIFTEEN
YEARS
AGO...

WHAT
ARE
YOU?

GONE...

TRUTH OR
ILLUSION,
JACK?

TRUTH OR
ILLUSION...

THE
LOUISIANA
BAYOU...
SEVENTEEN
MINUTES
PAST
MIDNIGHT.