



YOUR MAJESTY, MY BROTHER HAS RETURNED!

OH, OH, FINALLY...HELLO, BIG ANGRY!



HAIL TO THE ALMIGHTY ATTICAN!

WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT "ALMIGHTY" BUT...WELL, OKAY, LET'S LEAVE IT. SO THE, UH--WHAT WERE THEY CALLED?



THE BLACK ORDER.

THE BLACK ORDER, YES. THEY'RE ALL DEAD, BIG ANGRY? DID YOU DO YOUR USUAL SMUSHING?



BLACK ORDER IS SMUSHED.



WELL THEN, THAT IS GOOD NEWS. GIVE THE ORDER, KLEPO--LET YOUR BROTHER'S SHIP LAND, AND PREPARE A FEAST OF UNTOLD--  
YOUR DIET, EMPEROR.



AH. NO FEAST, THEN. JUST LET HIM LAND. MAYBE GIVE HIM A VOUCHER...?



I'M SURE THAT WILL BE MORE THAN ENOUGH, MAJESTY.

YOU'RE FREE TO LAND, BROTHER.



THANK YOU.

SINNAR IS A PLANET AT WAR WITH THE SPACE AROUND IT.



**SINNAR,**  
HOME TO THE  
SINNARIAN  
EMPIRE.

THE ENERGY GENERATED  
BY THESE ARTIFICIAL  
WORMHOLES SHOULD  
TEAR IT APART--

--BUT EACH WORMHOLE HAS  
BEEN CAREFULLY PLACED TO  
COUNTERACT THE EFFECTS OF  
THE ONES AROUND IT.

IN WAR, BOTH SIDES  
USUALLY STRIVE FOR  
VICTORY--BUT HERE,  
VICTORY FOR *ONE* WOULD  
MEAN DEFEAT FOR *BOTH*.

EITHER THE PLANET  
WOULD BE *DESTROYED*,  
OR THE WORMHOLES  
WOULD *DESTABILIZE*.

THIS IS  
A STRATEGY  
OF PRECISION.  
OF PATIENCE.  
IT IS NOT A  
*VIOLENT WAR*,  
BUT IT IS *WAR*  
NONETHELESS.



I CAN  
APPRECIATE  
THAT.



I AM  
PROXIMA  
MIDNIGHT.

AND WAR  
IS MY LIFE.

ENEMY COMBATANTS ON DOCK 4.  
REBELS NEVER LEARN.  
DEPLOY STANDARD COUNTERMEASURES.

MOVE. DO NOT LET THEM FLANK US.

WE'VE ALL STORMED PALACES BEFORE, CORVUS.

IT IS ALL I HAVE EVER KNOWN. CONFLICT. COMBAT. THE STRUGGLE.

WAR IS WHAT I WAS BORN INTO, AND WAR IS WHERE I WAS RAISED.

THE OLD WARRIORS KNOW THAT NOTHING IN THIS UNIVERSE IS WORTH ANYTHING IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT FOR IT.

IN THE BATTLEFIELD OR THE BEDCHAMBER, IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE.

TEYOWW  
TEYOWW

MOVE ASIDE, PROXIMA...

...I HAVE NEW TOYS TO PLAY WITH.

POODOM  
POODOM

MY HUSBAND UNDERSTANDS THIS.

SOMETIMES HE WILL LOSE, SOMETIMES I WILL. THIS CONSTANT FLOW OF STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS, OF STRATEGIES SOUND AND LACKING...

THE TROOPS SHOULD HAVE CONVERGED ON US BY NOW. SOMETHING IS...

SUCH IS THE WAY OF MARRIAGE.

SUCH IS THE WAY OF LIFE.

THE BRIDGE. GET OFF THE--

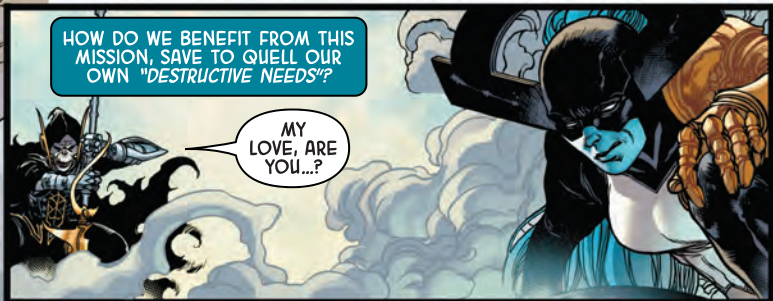
BUT THIS COURSE WE HAVE BEEN SET UPON--A COURSE THAT IS NOT OUR OWN--IS CONFLICT FOR CONFLICT'S OWN SAKE.

**ZZRAKKK**

NYAAAGGHH!



THAT WAS... SURPRISING.

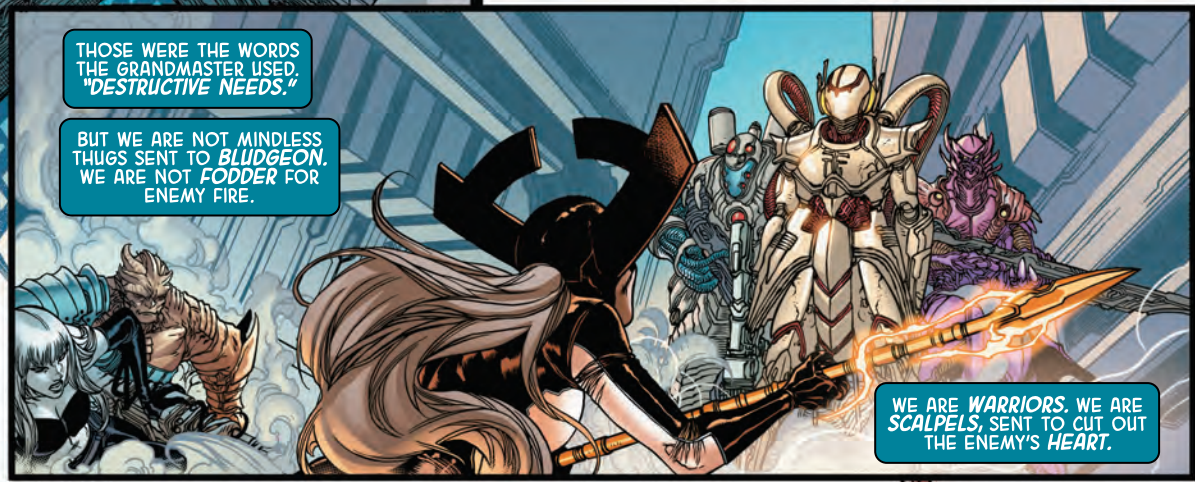


HOW DO WE BENEFIT FROM THIS MISSION, SAVE TO QUELL OUR OWN "DESTRUCTIVE NEEDS"?

MY LOVE, ARE YOU...?

THOSE WERE THE WORDS THE GRANDMASTER USED, "DESTRUCTIVE NEEDS."

BUT WE ARE NOT MINDLESS THUGS SENT TO *BLUDGEON*. WE ARE NOT *FODDER* FOR ENEMY FIRE.



WE ARE *WARRIORS*. WE ARE *SCALPELS*, SENT TO CUT OUT THE ENEMY'S HEART.



BUT IF, INSTEAD, OUR HEARTS ARE CUT OUT?

IF WE DIE AT THE WHIM OF AN UNCARING OMNIPOTENCE? WHAT ARE WE THEN?



**WHACK**

WHAT AM I?