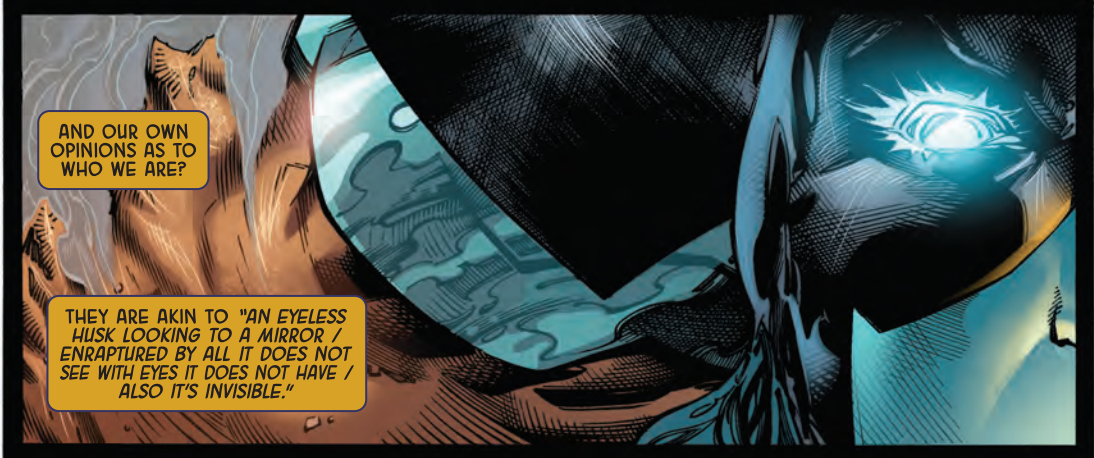


FLORAX, THE KYS'LIAN
POET, WROTE THAT ALL
WE ARE IS WHAT OTHER
PEOPLE SEE.

OUR INNER LIVES, THEREFORE,
MEAN NOTHING.

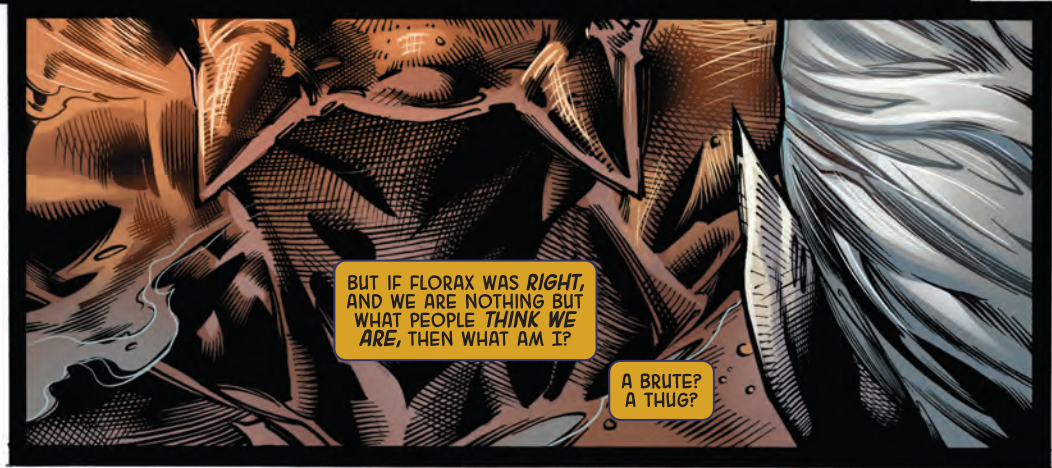


AND OUR OWN
OPINIONS AS TO
WHO WE ARE?

THEY ARE AKIN TO "AN EYELESS
HUSK LOOKING TO A MIRROR /
ENRAPTURED BY ALL IT DOES NOT
SEE WITH EYES IT DOES NOT HAVE /
ALSO IT'S INVISIBLE."



THE KYS'LIANS, IT HAS TO BE
SAID, WERE WIDELY KNOWN TO
PRODUCE SOME OF THE **WORST**
POETRY IN THE UNIVERSE--
SURPASSED ONLY, IN MY
OPINION, BY THE **VOGONS**.



BUT IF FLORAX WAS **RIGHT**,
AND WE ARE NOTHING BUT
WHAT PEOPLE **THINK WE**
ARE, THEN WHAT AM I?

A BRUTE?
A THUG?



A MONSTER?

OUR REBEL HOSTS
IGNORE ME.

THEY TALK TO MY BROTHER
CORVUS WITH CONTEMPT, TO
PROXIMA AND SWAN WITH
CAUTION, AND TO MAW WITH
TREPIDATION--BUT TO ME?

THEY SAY NOTHING
TO ME. I STAND
THERE AND ALL THEY
SEE IS THE **BLACK
DWARF**, A WALKING
SLAB OF VIOLENCE.

THIS
**WORMHOLE
TECHNOLOGY**, KRANNIG--
I HAVE NOT SEEN ITS
LIKE BEFORE.

AND IF
YOU THINK WE'RE
SHARING IT WITH
YOU--
SCYTHE.

THE TECHNOLOGY WAS
DEVELOPED ON MY HOMETORLD,
BUT ATTICAN STOLE IT WHEN
HE CONQUERED US.

NOW HE CAN
OPEN A DOORWAY
TO ANY PART
OF THE UNIVERSE--AND
THROUGH IT, THE
SINNARIAN EMPIRE
WILL SPREAD
UNCHECKED.

UNLESS
HE IS
STOPPED.

TELL US
MORE OF THIS
**BOW OF
GABRIEL**.

"IT NEVER
MISSES.

"THE SPEED OF ITS ARROWS
INCREASES AS THEY FLY, BUT
THE ARROWS THEMSELVES...

"THEY ARE CARVED FROM AN ULTRA-
RARE METAL CALLED **ONDUCIUM**
AND ENGRAVED WITH BIOLOGICAL
INFORMATION, COORDINATES AND
OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES.



"GABRIEL THE AIR-WALKER USED THEM TO MAKE THE WORLDS GALACTUS DEVoured **HYPER-NUTRITIOUS** AND TO SAP THE POPULATION OF ITS WILL TO RESIST.

"BUT EMPEROR ATTICAN ENGRAVES SLIGHTLY **DIFFERENT DIRECTIVES** INTO HIS ARROWS.



"HE OPENS A WORMHOLE TO A NEW QUADRANT OF SPACE AND LETS AN ARROW FLY.



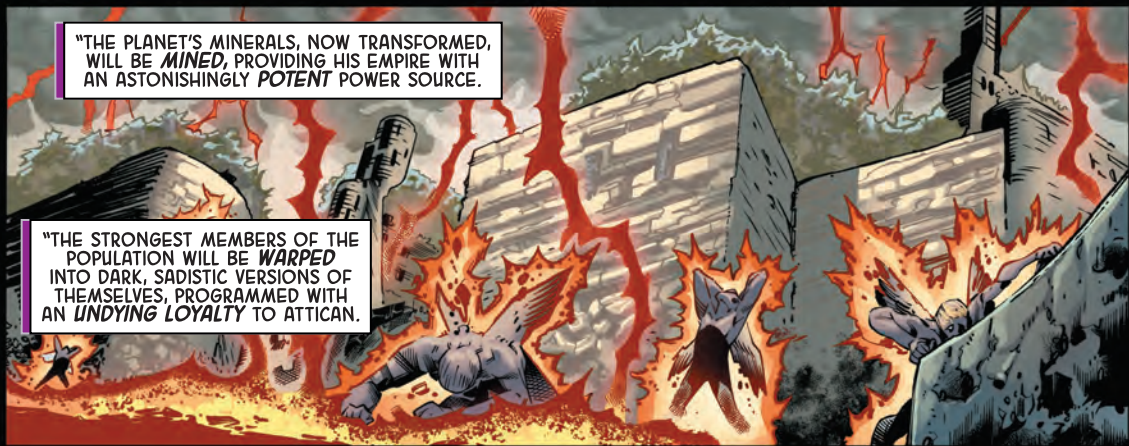
"IT FINDS ITS TARGET, BURROWS INTO THE PLANET'S CORE AND RELEASES THE **DARK TIDE**.

"THE DARK TIDE AFFECTS **EVERYTHING**--THE GROUND, THE ATMOSPHERE, THE ARCHITECTURE, THE LIFE-FORMS--ALL ACCORDING TO ITS **DIRECTIVES**.



"THE PLANET'S MINERALS, NOW TRANSFORMED, WILL BE **MINED**, PROVIDING HIS EMPIRE WITH AN ASTONISHINGLY **POTENT** POWER SOURCE.

"THE STRONGEST MEMBERS OF THE POPULATION WILL BE **WARPED** INTO DARK, SADISTIC VERSIONS OF THEMSELVES, PROGRAMMED WITH AN **UNDYING LOYALTY** TO ATTICAN.



"THOSE WHO DO NOT MEET THIS CRITERIA BECOME **MONSTROSITIES**. THEY DON'T LAST LONG.

"THE WARPED TEND TO HUNT THEM DOWN WITHIN THE FIRST FEW DAYS.



"IT'S A SLAUGHTER."



OKAY, SERIOUSLY NOW.

