

THE NETHER REALMS.

SEARCHING THE REALMS AS THE HERALD OF GALACTUS IS A FAR MORE PERILOUS JOB THAN ONE MIGHT THINK.

SOME ENCOUNTERS ARE VIOLENTLY HOSTILE.

OTHERS ARE IMPENETRABLY DISMISSIVE.

I HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SUBJECT MYSELF TO REALITIES UNLIKE ANY I HAVE EVER KNOWN.

MY FRANTIC GOAL IS TO FIND FOR THE WORLD-EATER A NOURISHING PLANET DEVOID OF SENTIENT LIFE.

IN THE REALM OF *DGG'QUARM*, A BEING FINALLY LENDS SOME RELIABLE GUIDANCE. SHE SPEAKS OF THE PLAIN OF *SHAMELPRETH*.



THERE, **YKOLON**, THE CAPTAIN OF AN EVER-SHIFTING **ORPHIC STORM**, OFFERS AID.

HE SAYS HE KNOWS OF A BARREN WORLD TEEMING WITH A SUITABLE VITALITY.



ALARMED BY THE STAKES, HE DOESN'T HESITATE TO GUIDE ME THERE HIMSELF--



--THROUGH A MAZE OF DOMINIONS INCREASINGLY MORE LIFELESS.



THERE. THE FIRE YOU SEEK BURNS WITHIN.



HE IS TRUE TO HIS WORD. BARREN, THE PLANET NEVERTHELESS CRACKLES WITH DARK ENERGY.

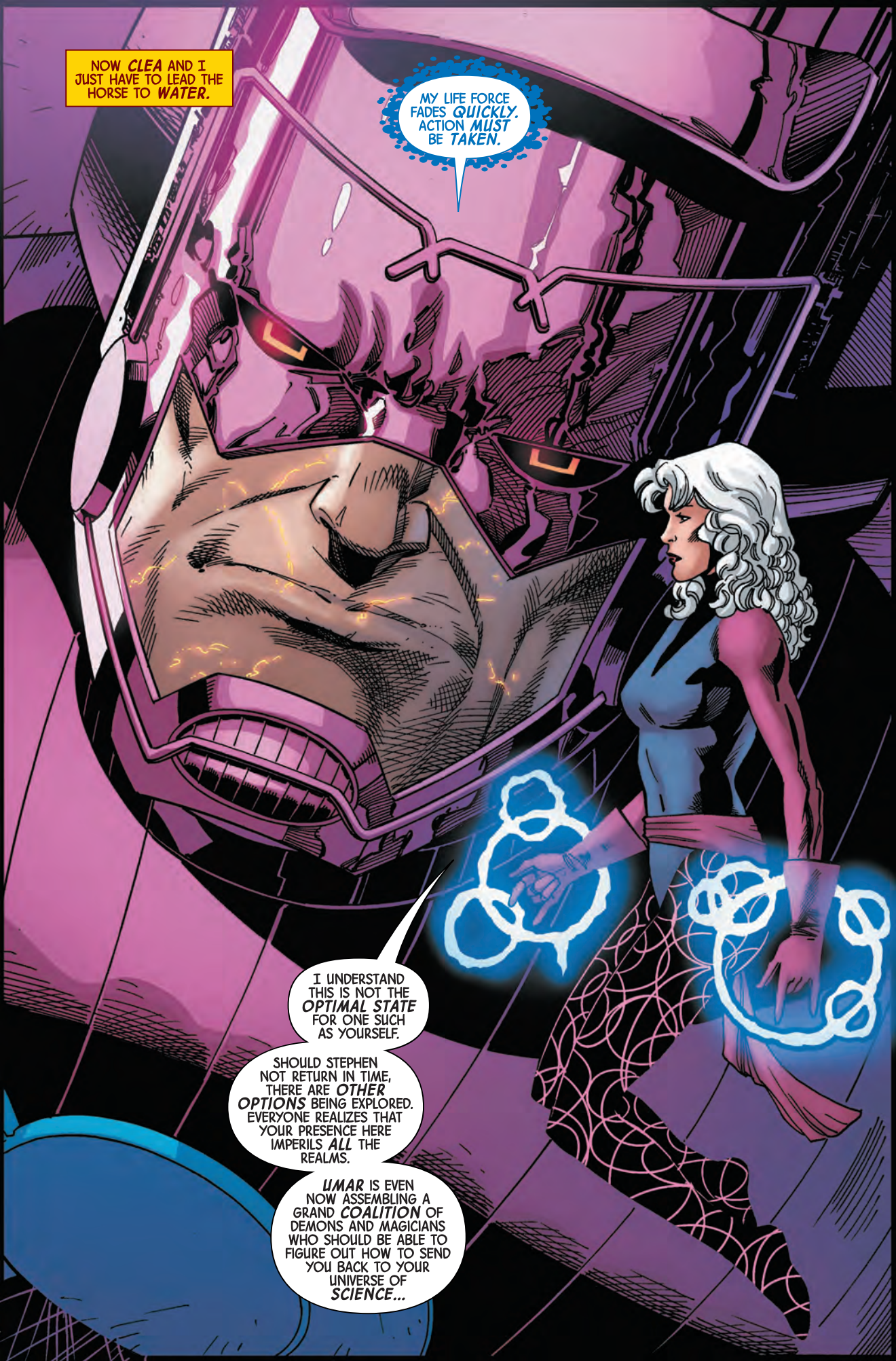
NOW *CLEA* AND I
JUST HAVE TO LEAD THE
HORSE TO *WATER*.

MY LIFE FORCE
FADES *QUICKLY*.
ACTION *MUST*
BE TAKEN.

I UNDERSTAND
THIS IS NOT THE
OPTIMAL STATE
FOR ONE SUCH
AS YOURSELF.

SHOULD STEPHEN
NOT RETURN IN TIME,
THERE ARE *OTHER*
OPTIONS BEING EXPLORED.
EVERYONE REALIZES THAT
YOUR PRESENCE HERE
IMPERILS *ALL* THE
REALMS.

UMAR IS EVEN
NOW ASSEMBLING A
GRAND *COALITION* OF
DEMONS AND MAGICIANS
WHO SHOULD BE ABLE TO
FIGURE OUT HOW TO SEND
YOU BACK TO YOUR
UNIVERSE OF
SCIENCE...



"...PROVIDED THEY WORK TOGETHER!"

ABSOLUTELY NOT, THIS IS BENEATH MY NOTICE.

THE REALM OF NIGHTMARE COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE ON GALACTUS' MENU.

IT IS EPHEMERAL-- AS MUCH A STATE OF MIND AS OF EXISTENCE, UMAR.

IT IS UNIQUE AMONG THE MAGICAL KINGDOMS, TRUE.

BUT YOU ARE FOOLISH TO THINK YOURSELF SAFE FROM THE WORLD-EATER. SO ALIEN IS HE TO THE NONMORTAL VEIL THAT HE DESTABILIZES ALL.

AGAIN...YOUR CONCERN, NOT MINE. FOR ALL I KNOW, THE TERRORS HE CREATES WILL FORTIFY MY DOMAIN.

PERHAPS I'LL SEE YOU BOTH IN YOUR DREAMS.

FATUOUS DOTARD. MAY YOU BE THE FIRST HE DESTROYS.

