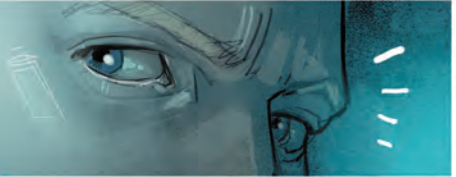




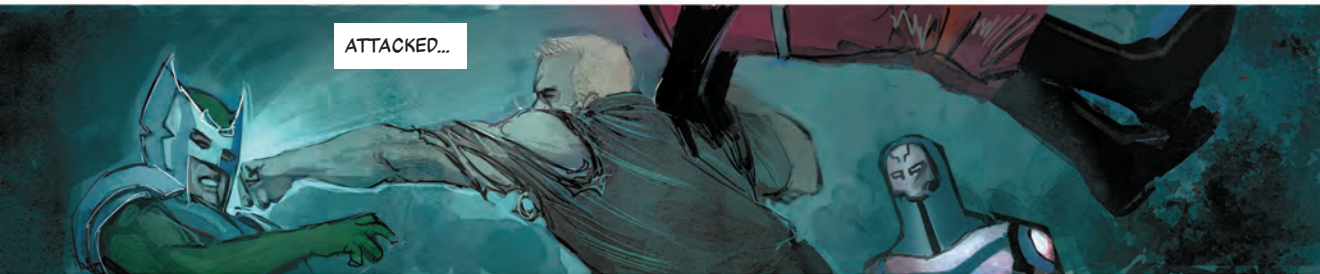
WE WERE  
BESET  
BY EVIL.

# SNAP!

DANGERS  
LURKED AROUND  
EVERY CORNER.



WE WERE  
OUTNUMBERED...



ATTACKED...



OVERCOME.



WE  
REALIZED,  
IF WE  
WERE TO  
SURVIVE  
THIS--

HEY THERE,  
FRIEND...





...WHO ARE YOU TWO, THEN?

I IMAGINE WE'RE JUST LIKE YOU...



...COUPLE OF TRAVELERS, TRYING TO MAKE SOME SENSE OF THIS PLACE.

BOTH OF US FIGURED OUT EARLY ON, ALL THE DANGERS LURKING AROUND-- DIDN'T HURT TO HAVE SOMEONE WATCHING YOUR BACK.



THAT'S A GOOD IDEA--I'VE BEEN...ON MY OWN OUT HERE FOR A WHILE.

WELL, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ANYMORE.

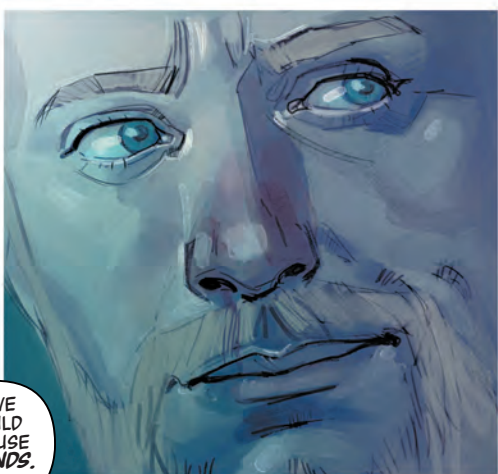
THAT'S RIGHT. WE WERE GONNA HEAD A LITTLE BIT FARTHER UP THE HILL, THEN MAKE CAMP. YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN.



I--I DON'T KNOW. I FEEL LIKE--LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING I'M SUPPOSED TO DO--

AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE TO DO IT ON YOUR OWN? IT'S YOUR CALL, STRANGER, BUT IN MY EXPERIENCE--

--WE COULD ALL USE FRIENDS.



AND SO, IN THE MIDST OF THE DARKNESS, WE FOUND HOPE IN FRIENDSHIP--

--IN FAMILY.

# SECRET EMPIRE

STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, HAS CLAIMED THE UNITED STATES FOR HYDRA. THE HANDFUL OF HEROES WHO ESCAPED HIS INITIAL ATTACK DISCOVERED THAT A COSMIC CUBE WAS BEHIND STEVE ROGERS' SINISTER CHANGE OF HEART, AND MIGHT BE ABLE TO CHANGE HIM BACK--IF THE SCATTERED PIECES COULD BE REUNITED.




TONY STARK AND HIS TEAM CONVINCED SAM WILSON TO SMUGGLE THEM OUT OF THE COUNTRY, BUT THEIR DESTINATION WAS MORE DANGEROUS THAN HE LET ON. CAPTAIN AMERICA IS AFTER THE CUBE AS WELL, AND TO GET THE FIRST SHARD, BOTH FACTIONS WILL HAVE TO TANGLE WITH ULTRON HIMSELF.

MEANWHILE, BLACK WIDOW AND HER GROUP OF YOUNGER HEROES ARE CLOSING IN ON A LESS MERCIFUL WAY TO DEAL WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA.

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