



STEPHEN STRANGE was a preeminent surgeon until a car accident damaged the nerves in his hands. His ego drove him to scour the globe for a miracle cure but instead he found a mysterious wizard called the ANCIENT ONE who taught him magic and that there are things in this world bigger than himself. These lessons led Stephen to become the Sorcerer Supreme, Earth's first defense against all manner of magical threats. His patients call him...

DOCTOR STRANGE

An abnormal number of supernatural happenings recently had the Sorcerer Supreme concerned that something was with magic. Those suspicions were confirmed when Doctor Strange discovered that someone has been killing Sorcerers Supreme!

Now, in search of a way to protect both the mortal and mystical realms, Doctor Strange has traveled to the submerged Temple of Watoomb where he's found himself face to face with the very threat he's hoping to end...

POUND OF FLESH

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A FEW YEARS AGO.

**KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK**



I USED TO THROW UP A LOT.

**KNOCK
KNOCK**

OH GOD, STEPHEN. WHAT WAS IT THIS TIME?

JUST GET ME INSIDE, WONG. PLEASE.



THEN LATER, THE NIGHTMARES CAME. AND THE ULCERS. THE INFECTIONS, BOTH PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL. THE SOUL-SHATTERINGLY VIOLENT DIARRHEA.

THEN ONE DAY ALL NORMAL FOOD BEGAN TO TURN TO ASH IN MY MOUTH.

GOD, I MISS PIZZA. YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE IN NEW YORK AND NOT BE ABLE TO EAT PIZZA?



WONG, WHY'S IT SO DARK IN HERE? WHY...WHY CAN'T I SEE?



TALK ABOUT HELL.

DOCTOR, YOUR EYES ARE BLEEDING.

OH.

OKAY.

THAT'S NEW.

IT WAS NEVER ENOUGH.

HAD TO STOP DORMAMMU. HAD TO USE ATLANTEAN BLACK MAGIC.

ATLANTEAN BLACK...STEPHEN, THAT SHOULD'VE KILLED YOU.

ARE YOU SURE IT DIDN'T? BEING DEAD COULDN'T POSSIBLY FEEL WORSE THAN THIS.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH I SUFFERED FOR MY ART, NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF MY OWN SOUL AND SANITY AND HEALTH I BARTERED AWAY, THERE WAS ALWAYS MORE OF A PRICE TO PAY.

EVERY PUNCH COMES WITH A COST.

SO EVENTUALLY I HAD TO DEVISE OTHER WAYS OF BALANCING THE SCALES.

IT WAS WORTH IT. SAVED THE WORLD. AGAIN. NOW PLEASE, JUST GET ME TO THE CELLAR.

STEPHEN, YOU CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS. THE CELLAR ISN'T...WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IF YOU CONTINUE TO...

THE CELLAR, GET ME TO THE...

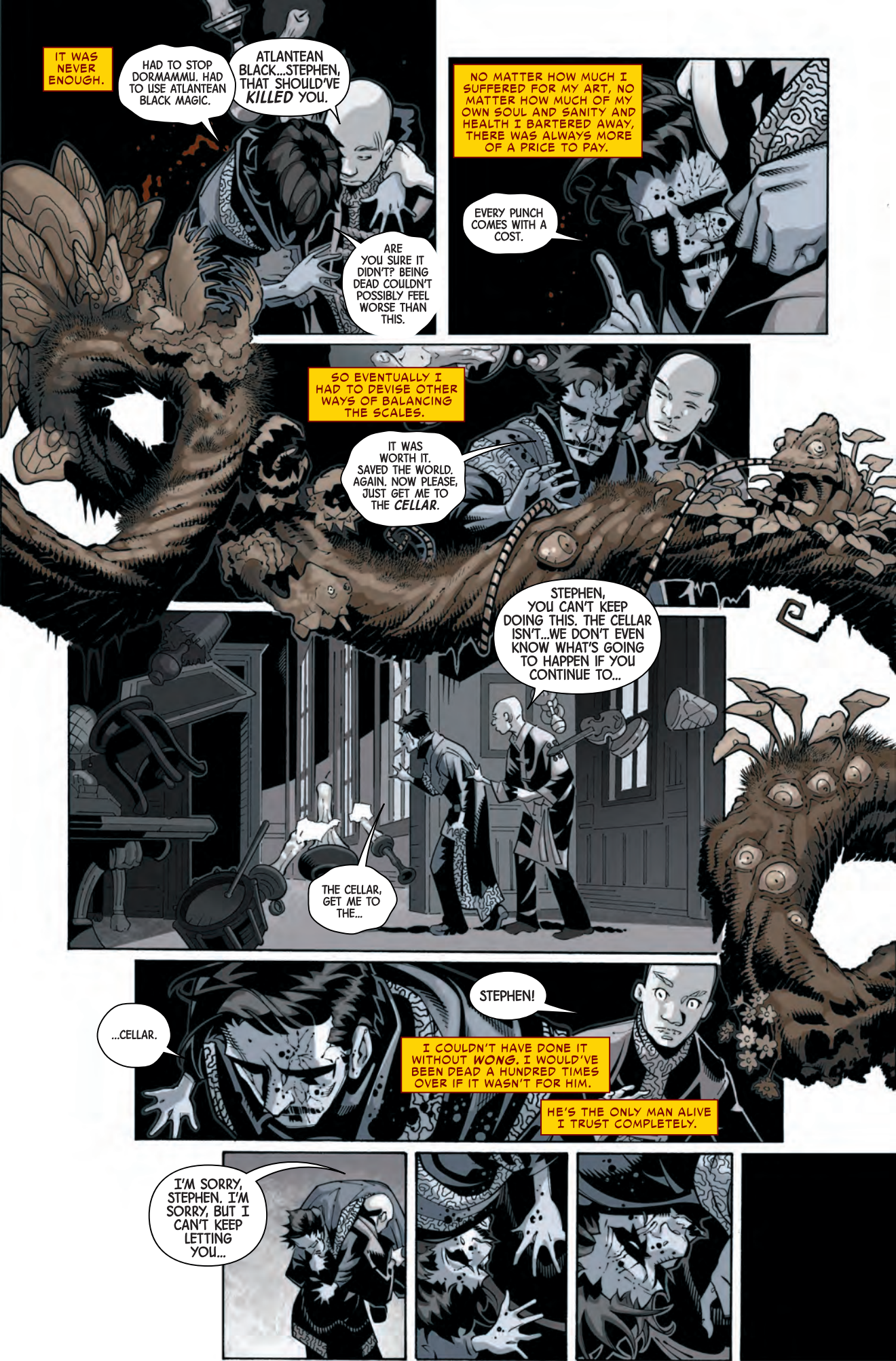
...CELLAR.

STEPHEN!

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT WONG. I WOULD'VE BEEN DEAD A HUNDRED TIMES OVER IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM.

HE'S THE ONLY MAN ALIVE I TRUST COMPLETELY.

I'M SORRY, STEPHEN. I'M SORRY, BUT I CAN'T KEEP LETTING YOU...





WHUH



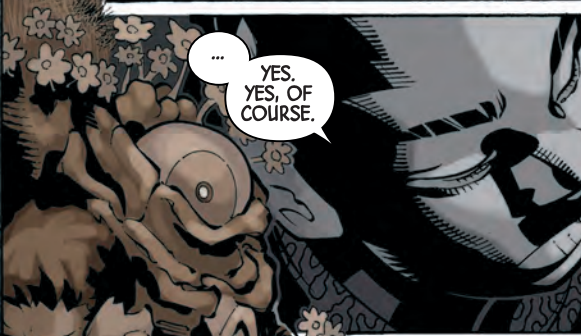
GAW, I FEEL...

WOW. AMAZING.

SEE, I TOLD YOU THE CELLAR WAS A GOOD IDEA.



YOU DID TAKE ME TO THE CELLAR, RIGHT?



...
YES, YES, OF COURSE.



HA! WHO'S HUNGRY FOR PIZZA? I ALWAYS HAD PIZZA FOR BREAKFAST IN MEDICAL SCHOOL.

STEPHEN, YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T EAT PIZZA ANY--

YEAH, BUT THE CUTE LADY AT THE CORNER PIZZA PLACE DOESN'T KNOW THAT. I THINK SHE COULD USE A LITTLE *MAGIC* IN HER LIFE, DON'T YOU?



"YOU NEVER TOLD HIM THE TRUTH, DID YOU?"