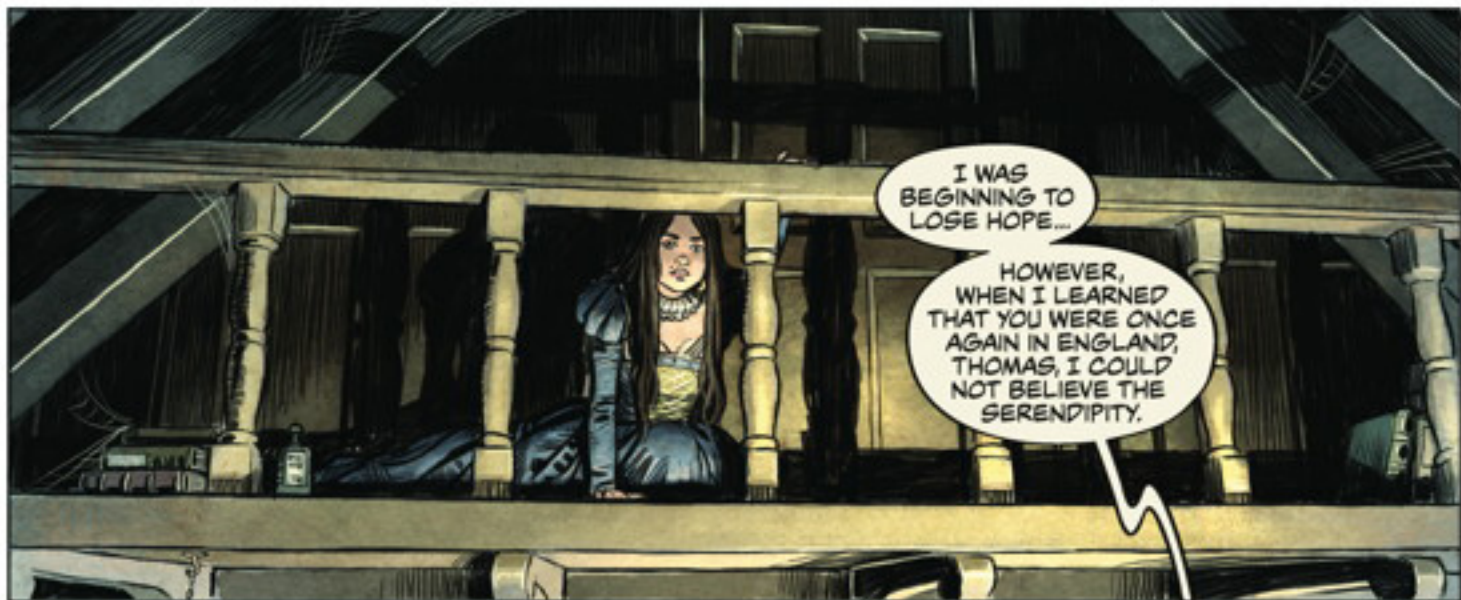




SEEKING COMMUNION WITH THE SPIRITUAL REALM IS A *DELICATE* UNDERTAKING AT BEST.

SO YOU HAVE ATTEMPTED THIS BEFORE, DR. DEE?

TWO OTHERS HAVE CLAIMED SUCH SKILLS AS YOUR OWN, MASTER TALBOT. HOWEVER, THEIR RESULTS DID NOT LIVE UP TO THEIR CLAIMS, AND THEIR ESOTERIC KNOWLEDGE PROVED AS USELESS AS THEIR SCRYING GLASSES--ONE PROVE HIMSELF INSANE SEEING MORE INTO HIS OWN MIND THAN BEYOND IT, AND THE OTHER ATTEMPTED TO DEFRAUD ME!



I WAS BEGINNING TO LOSE HOPE...

HOWEVER, WHEN I LEARNED THAT YOU WERE ONCE AGAIN IN ENGLAND, THOMAS, I COULD NOT BELIEVE THE SERENDIPITY.





I DO NOT PLACE ANY TRUST IN INDISCRIMINATE FATE, JOHN.

I MAKE MY OWN DESTINY.



THOMAS AND I DISAGREE ON THE NATURE OF FATE, DR. DEE. I SEEK ARCAINE KNOWLEDGE TO UNDERSTAND THE ALMIGHTY'S PLAN. YET I BELIEVE WHAT WILL BE, *WILL BE.*



THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE IS THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH, MASTER TALBOT. THERE ARE MANY PATHS. ESOTERIC WISDOM IS MERELY ONE LESS TRODDEN--

AS FOR DESTINY, I AM MORE INCLINED TO TAKE THOMAS'S VIEW-- WE MAKE OUR OWN. OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD THE ALMIGHTY HAVE GIVEN US FREE WILL?



IT IS OUR *OWN CHOICES* THAT GRANT US GRACE, OR INDEED...

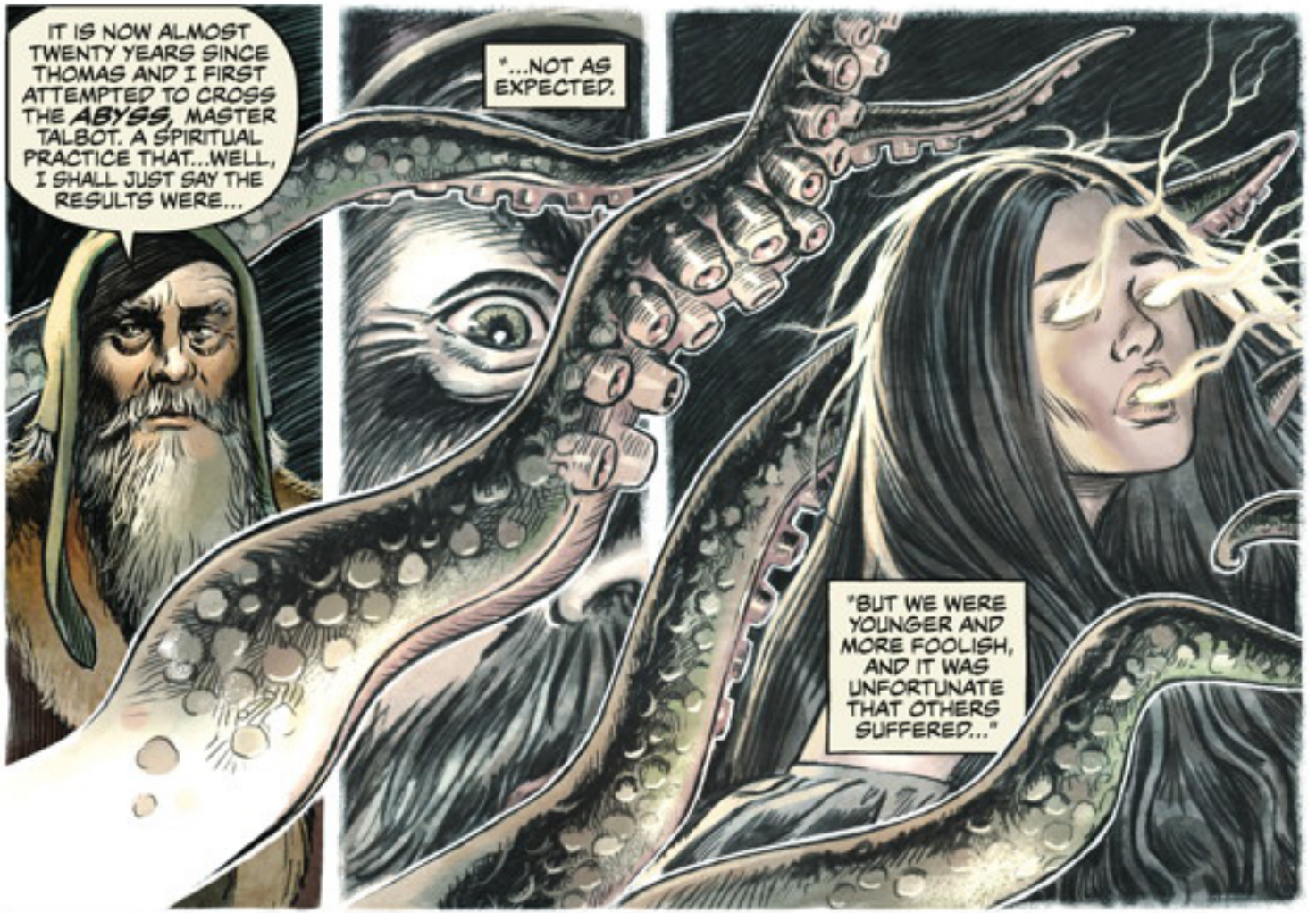


...DAMN US.



BUT I DID NOT ASK YOU HERE TO DISCUSS SUCH VAGARIES. HOW YOU PERCEIVE THE WORLD DOES NOT MATTER TO ME. IT IS YOUR *SKILLS* THAT I SEEK.





IT IS NOW ALMOST TWENTY YEARS SINCE THOMAS AND I FIRST ATTEMPTED TO CROSS THE **ABYSS**, MASTER TALBOT. A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE THAT...WELL, I SHALL JUST SAY THE RESULTS WERE...

\*...NOT AS EXPECTED.

"BUT WE WERE YOUNGER AND MORE FOOLISH, AND IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT OTHERS SUFFERED..."



LOSS IS DIFFICULT TO LIVE WITH, AND GUILT EVEN MORE SO...

WE TAPPED INTO A POWERFUL CURRENT ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. A DOORWAY INTO THE **ASTRAL PLANE**. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THAT CURRENT CAN BE ACCESSED AGAIN! BUT GREAT STRENGTH WILL BE REQUIRED TO CONTROL WHAT WE MAY FIND THERE.

WE WERE **NOT** STRONG ENOUGH THE FIRST TIME. DO YOU HAVE THOSE SKILLS, MASTER TALBOT? FROM YOUR OWN LIPS I WISH TO HEAR YOU SAY IT--**ARE YOU STRONG ENOUGH?**



I AM, DR. DEE!

THE DOORWAY IN FRONT OF US NEEDS ONLY ONE MORE THING-- A KEY!

IT'S TIME TO REACQUAINT YOURSELF, THOMAS, WITH SOMETHING YOU MAY HAVE CONSIDERED **LOST**.











"ALL THE DEATH  
AND BLOOD. ALL..."

"...THE  
**SACRIFICE!**"

"THE AZTECS  
WORSHIPED  
BLOOD, AND  
REMOVED THE  
HEART TO REUNITE  
IT WITH THE SUN.  
HEATHENS! IT  
WAS OUR DUTY TO  
WIPE THEM OUT..."

AND THE  
SHADOW GLASS  
WAS THERE! IMAGINE  
WHAT TALES IT MIGHT  
TELL! IT HAS ABSORBED  
ALL THAT **DEATH** AND  
**TERROR**, GAINING A  
POWER FAR BEYOND  
ANY OTHER SCRYING  
GLASS I HAVE COME  
ACROSS.

AND I  
CAME TO REALIZE  
SOMETHING--AS  
YOU LOOK INTO THE  
MIRROR, IT ALSO  
LOOKS BACK...  
**SOMEHOW** IT  
LOOKS BACK.

