



BLACK BOLT #4



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BLACK BOLT

is the king of the Inhumans, an off-splinter of humanity imbued with amazing abilities. But these gifts sometimes come with a price: Black Bolt's slightest whisper can shatter mountains. His voice has destroyed many lives, but it has saved countless others.

When the Silent King speaks, the world hears him.

But now no one can hear him. Black Bolt finds himself trapped in a strange alien prison. His treacherous brother, Maximus the Mad, was meant to be the one imprisoned here, but he used his psychic powers and image-altering technology to send Black Bolt in his place. A deranged, incalculably powerful being known only as the Jailer suppresses the inmates' natural abilities and tortures them until they die—then resurrects them to face their crimes again and again.

Black Bolt and his fellow prisoners—Metal Master, the Absorbing Man, Raava and Blinky—overpowered their guard and regained their powers. They tracked the Jailer to a machine that harnesses the inmates' pain: He's been feeding on them. Together they took out the device, but the creature behind it was more horrible than they could have imagined. Driven to protect his new allies, Black Bolt attacked head-on.

He failed.

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SILENCE! SILENCE AND PENANCE IN DEATH!

YOU HEAR THAT IN HIS VOICE? IT'S DIFFERENT. **HARDER**. I... I THINK HE MIGHT WASTE US FOR GOOD THIS TIME. SO YOU GOT A PLAN OR WHAT?

I...

I...DO NOT. I AM SORRY. I HAVE FAILED. AND NOW IT WOULD SEEM WE ARE BOTH GOING TO DIE HERE.

THIS IS IT THEN, **HUH?** I SWORE I WOULDN'T DIE IN THE JOINT. MY MA ALWAYS SAID--

BEEEP

RIGHT. THE OXYGEN. I SHOULD SHUT MY TRAP.

JUST...I DUNNO, I DON'T WANNA GO JUST SITTING HERE, STARING OFF INTO THE DARK, LISTENIN' TO MYSELF DIE, YA KNOW?

AYE. I DO KNOW. SPEAK ON THEN, CRUSHER CREEL. LET US NOT DIE QUIETLY.



"THEY GOT ME ON AGGRAVATED ASSAULT AND EXTORTION, AND THEY SENT ME UPSTATE.

"THAT FIRST STRETCH IN PRISON--THAT WAS TOUGH. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW THE JOINT WORKED. ALL I SAW WAS GUYS DOING THE MOST HORRIBLE THINGS TO EACH OTHER.



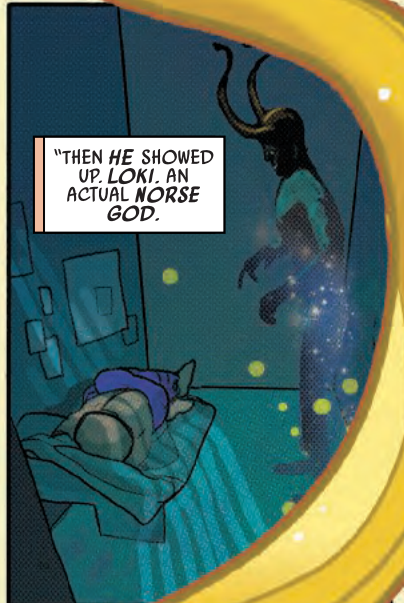
"I THOUGHT I WAS A TOUGH GUY, BUT I CRIED THOSE FIRST COUPLE NIGHTS, I AIN'T ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT.



"I WAS BIG AND I COULD FIGHT. I HAD IT EASIER THAN A LOT OF GUYS IN THERE. BUT I STILL HAD DUES TO PAY.



"I GOT KNOCKED AROUND. GOT MY NOSE BROKEN. BUT EVENTUALLY I LEARNED TO HOLD MY OWN.



"THEN HE SHOWED UP. LOKI. AN ACTUAL NORSE GOD.



"HE GAVE ME A MAGICAL POTION-- STILL SOUNDS GOOFY SAYING THAT ALL THESE YEARS LATER. THE POTION IS WHERE I GOT MY ABSORBING POWERS.



"I DON'T KNOW WHY HE PICKED ME OUT OF ALL THE OTHER MUGS IN THAT PRISON. MAYBE HIM BEING A LUNATIC HAD SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH IT. BUT I WAS SURE AS HELL GLAD HE DID.



"BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS FREE AND TUSSLIN' WITH THOR HIMSELF. AND YEAH, HE KNOCKED ME ON MY ASS A FEW TIMES.



"BUT EVENTUALLY I WON, DAMMIT. I CLEAN K.O.'D A GOD."



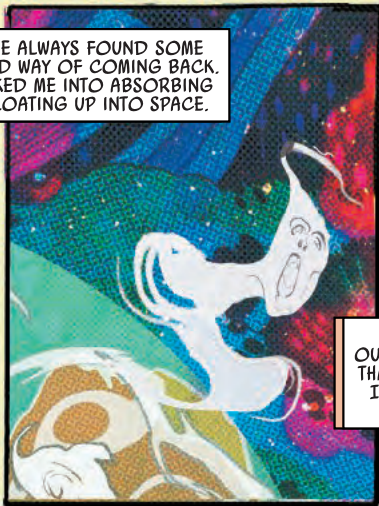
"YOU KNOW WHAT THAT FELT LIKE? CARL CREEL FROM THE BRONX, STANDING OVER THE GOD OF THUNDER?"



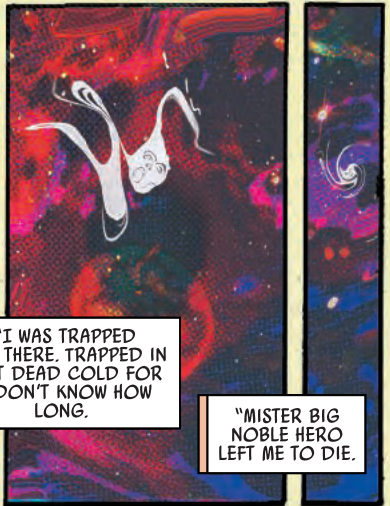
"I COULDN'T EXPLAIN IT IF I TRIED."



"BUT THOR? HE ALWAYS FOUND SOME SNEAKY BASTARD WAY OF COMING BACK. HE ONCE TRICKED ME INTO ABSORBING HELIUM AND FLOATING UP INTO SPACE."



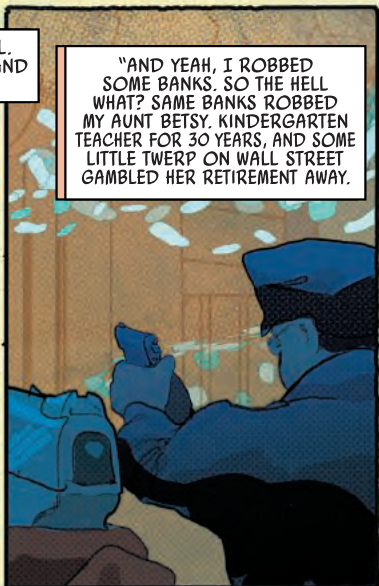
"I WAS TRAPPED OUT THERE. TRAPPED IN THAT DEAD COLD FOR I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG."



"MISTER BIG NOBLE HERO LEFT ME TO DIE."



"BUT I'M HARD TO KILL. I GOT BACK TO EARTH AND BACK INTO THE LIFE."



"AND YEAH, I ROBBED SOME BANKS. SO THE HELL WHAT? SAME BANKS ROBBED MY AUNT BETSY. KINDERGARTEN TEACHER FOR 30 YEARS, AND SOME LITTLE TWERP ON WALL STREET GAMBLER HER RETIREMENT AWAY."



"THERE'S DIRTIER WAYS TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE THAN ROBBIN' BANKS. WISHBONE, I'LL TELL YA THAT."

THEN AGAIN, YOU'RE A KING, RIGHT? YOU PROBABLY NEVER HAD TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE. PROBABLY ALWAYS HAD SOMEONE ELSE DOING IT FOR YOU.

YOU EVER EVEN COOKED YOURSELF A MEAL?



I... I HAVE NOT.



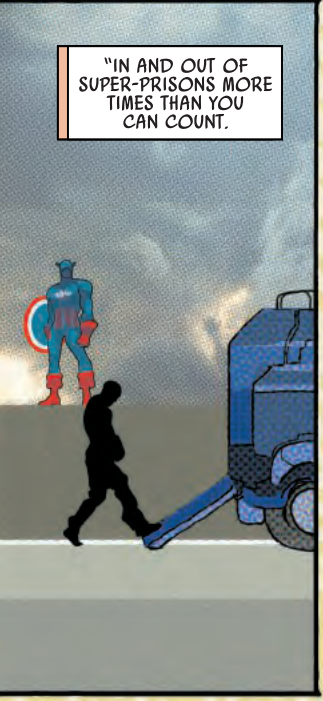
THEY GAVE US A COOKING CLASS IN THE JOINT ONCE. I DIDN'T LET ON THEN, BUT I KINDA LIKED IT. WHEN MY LADY GOT SICK, I HAD TO COOK FOR HER. WE EVER GET OUT OF HERE, YOU SHOULD LEARN. AT LEAST FRY YOURSELF AN EGG, FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD. TO SAY YOU DID IT, Y'KNOW?



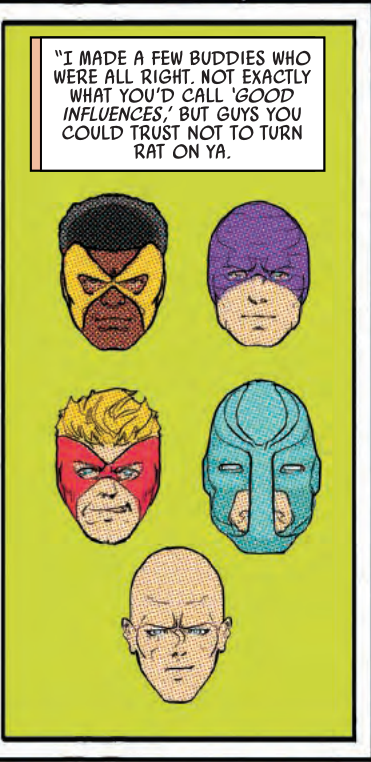
"ANYHOW, I SPENT YEARS LIVING THAT LIFE--DOING JOBS FOR MANIACS IN MASKS, PUMMELIN' GUYS IN TIGHTS, GETTIN' PUMMELED BY GUYS IN TIGHTS.



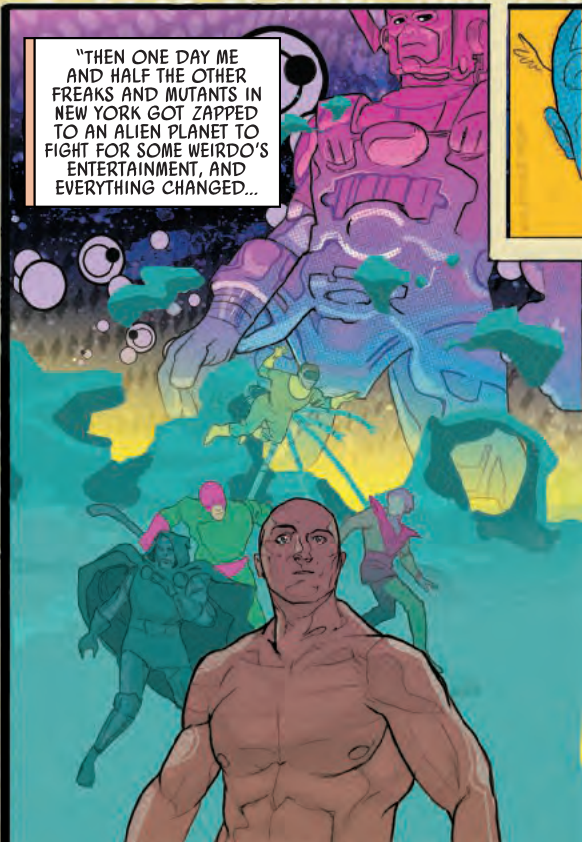
"IN AND OUT OF SUPER-PRISONS MORE TIMES THAN YOU CAN COUNT.



"I MADE A FEW BUDDIES WHO WERE ALL RIGHT. NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL 'GOOD INFLUENCES,' BUT GUYS YOU COULD TRUST NOT TO TURN RAT ON YA.



"THEN ONE DAY ME AND HALF THE OTHER FREAKS AND MUTANTS IN NEW YORK GOT ZAPPED TO AN ALIEN PLANET TO FIGHT FOR SOME WEIRDO'S ENTERTAINMENT, AND EVERYTHING CHANGED...





"... 'CUZ THAT'S WHEN I MET MARY. IF YOU CALLED HER MARY, OF COURSE, SHE MIGHT BREAK YER FACE. TO MOST PEOPLE SHE'S TITANIA.

"AW, YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HER, WISHBONE. NEW TO TUSSLIN', BUT KNOCKIN' GOODY-GOODY BOZOS OUT LEFT AND RIGHT. THE MOMENT I SAW HER, I KNEW--THIS WAS THE KINDA DAME YOU MEET ONCE IN A LIFETIME.