

THE END OF TIME...

HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN DOING THIS--SAILING FROM NOTHING TO NOTHING, ACROSS A SEA OF NON-TIME?

MAYBE IT WOULD'VE BEEN BETTER IF WE'D DIED BACK THERE, ON THAT DEAD ROCK THAT WAS ONCE THE EARTH.*

NO, I CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT. I'M A HEALER--I TOOK A SACRED VOW TO SUPPORT LIFE--AND THE OTHERS ARE DEPENDING ON ME.

THIS SHIP--OR SHOULD I SAY THIS ENCHANTMENT IN THE FORM OF A SHIP--IS THE ONLY THING THAT'S ALLOWED US TO SURVIVE; AND IF I DON'T STAY FOCUSED ON THE SPELL...

...IT WILL DISSOLVE--ALL OF US DISSOLVING WITH IT.

*IN JLD #37.

YOU TOLD US WE'D FIND A NEW UNIVERSE BEYOND THE EDGES OF THE OLD, NURSE.

CARE TO REVISE YOUR PREDICTION?

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, BENNETT--FEEL FREE TO TAKE A FLYING LEAP OVERBOARD. IN FACT, I'D BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU.

BOTH OF YOU STOP IT. TURNING ON EACH OTHER'S NOT GOING TO HELP ANYTHING.

LET THEM BE, FRANK. THEY'RE JUST LETTING OFF STEAM. AND I CAN'T REALLY BLAME--

--THEM...

ASA...?

I'M... I'M ALL RIGHT.

YOU MAY BE--BUT YOUR ENCHANTMENT IS WEAKENING!

LOOK! PARTS OF THE SHIP ARE LOSING SUBSTANCE!

IS THAT FEAR IN THE VAMPIRE'S VOICE--OR RELIEF? BENNETT'S A STRANGE ONE; BUT, THEN, WE'RE A STRANGE COMPANY: FOUR MONSTERS...

...ALL OF US CLINGING TO SOME FORM OF IMAGINED HUMANITY.



WAIT! DO ANY OF YOU FEEL THAT?

FEEL WHAT, HOLLAND?

IT'S LIKE... LIKE THE FULL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE GREEN--

--BUT MULTIPLIED A THOUSAND--NO, A MILLIONFOLD.



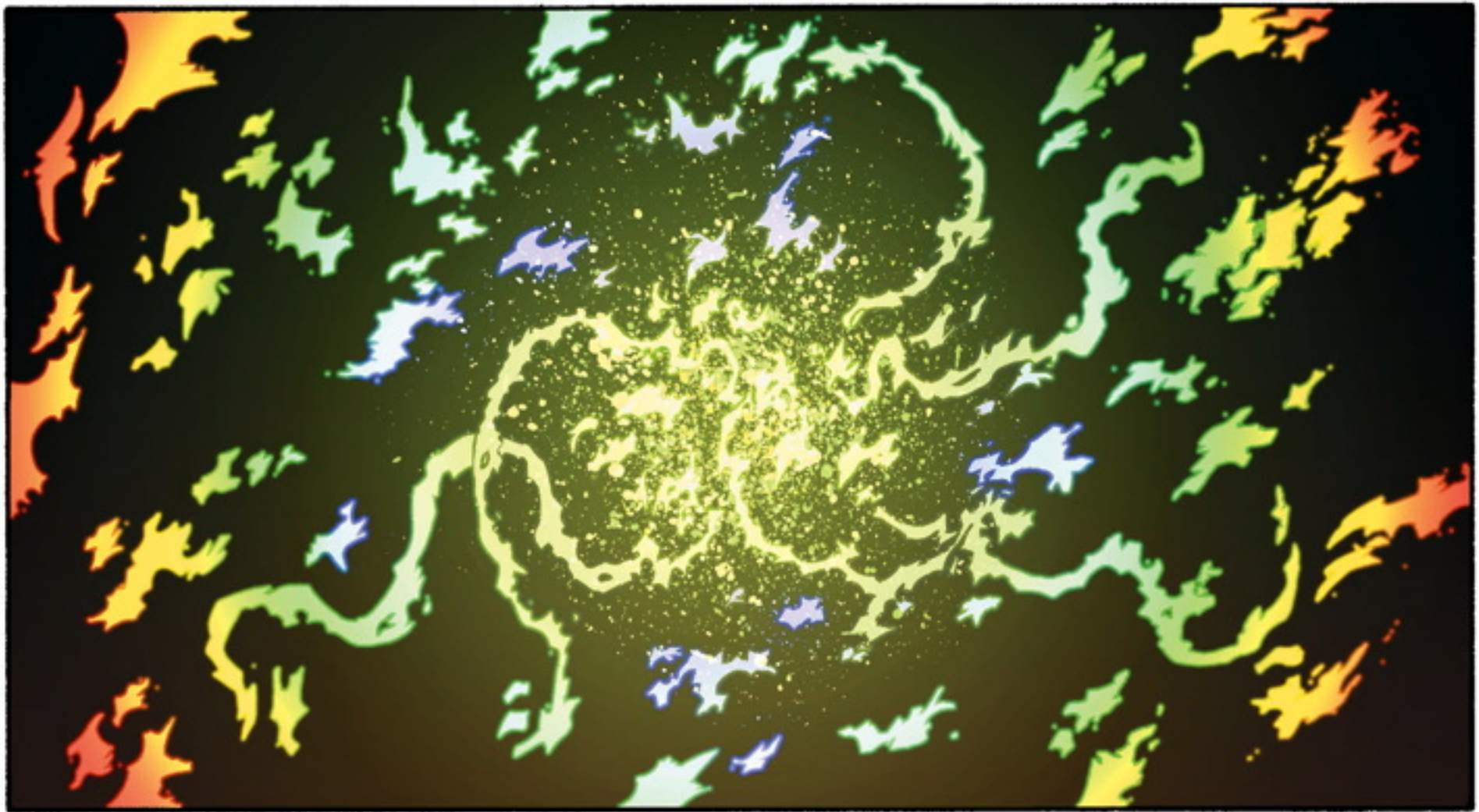
I FEEL IT, TOO. AN...AWARENESS-- WASHING OVER ME--

--PUSHING INTO ME.

THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE AND IT--



IT'S COMING.



...MY GOD...

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT GOD--SPENT TOO MANY YEARS WORKING THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET--BUT I DO KNOW THAT THE THING THAT'S MANIFESTING OUT THERE IN THE DARKNESS...

...HAS POWER ENOUGH TO TEAR US TO PIECES.

WHAT THE HELL IS IT?

WHATEVER IT IS, BENNETT--

--IT'S HERE TO HELP US!

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT!

YES, I DO!

IT'S ALIVE! IT'S BENEVOLENT! AND IT'S SPEAKING TO ME!

I HAVE TO REACH OUT...JOIN WITH IT!

AND SO DO YOU!

MAYBE THE SWAMP THING'S RIGHT--OR MAYBE HE'S COMPLETELY LOST IT. IN ANY CASE, THE CHOICE ISN'T OURS!

THE TREE--IF THAT'S WHAT IT IS--SNATCHES US UP, YANKS US OFF THE SHIP...

...JUST AS MY SPELL DISINTEGRATES.

THAT AWARENESS (SO ALIEN, SO INTIMATE) FLOODS MY MIND, RIPS THROUGH MY SOUL.

A FIRE ERUPTS
IN MY HEART,
LIGHTING EVERY
DARK CORNER.



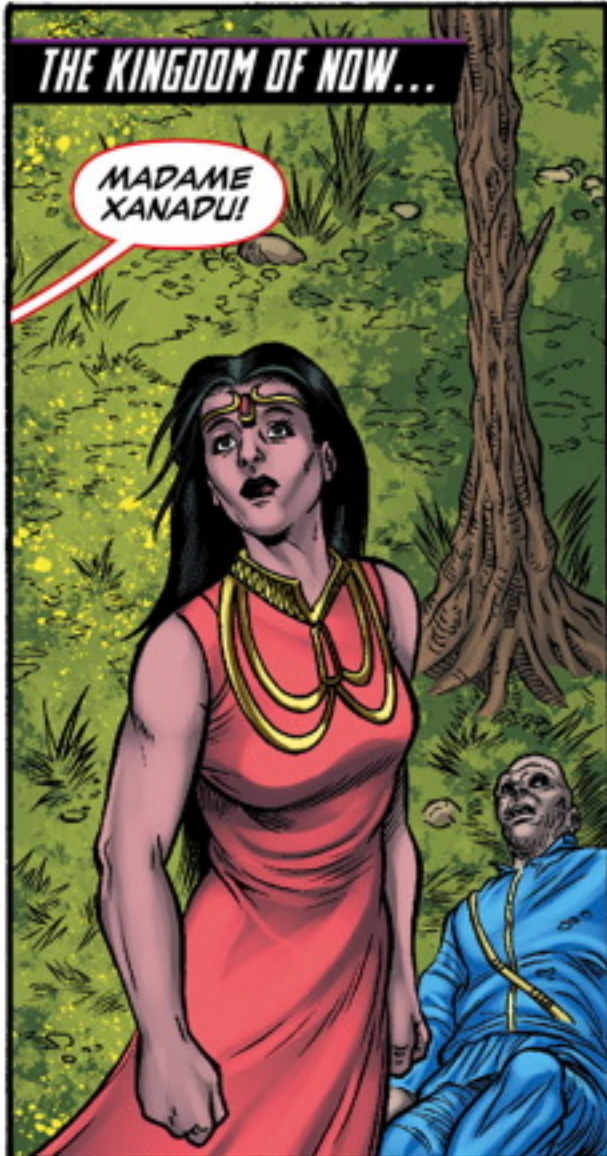
AND THEN THE
FIRE DIES--AND
THE LIGHT...



...GOES
OUT.

THE KINGDOM OF NOW...

MADAME
XANADU!



DEADMAN...
ORCHID--WHAT
IS IT? WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

SOMETHING
BROKE THROUGH THE
BARRIER OUT BY THE
BEYOND--

--AND
IT'S RIGHT
BEHIND
US!



SO I
SEE.

IT WAS ONE THING
THINKING I MIGHT
SPEND THE REST
OF MY LIFE IN THIS
REALM WHERE ALL
EXISTENCE TAKES
PLACE WITHIN ONE
ETERNAL MOMENT...



...BUT I NEVER
CONSIDERED THE
POSSIBILITY...

...THAT I WOULD
DIE HERE.

IT CAN'T
HURT ME--I'M
ALREADY
DEAD--

--BUT THE
REST OF YOU HAVE
T'FIND SHELTER
BEFORE--

THERE'S
NO TIME!

MAKARIA'S
RIGHT! A FEW MORE
SECONDS AND THAT
WAVE-THING'S GOING TO
ENGULF THE CITADEL,
THE ISLAND--