

IT'S THE ONE
THING NONE OF US
ALLOWED OURSELVES
TO CONSIDER...

...WHAT IF
WE LOSE THE
BATTLE?

Prologue.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.
SIX MONTHS POST-MALEVOLENCE.



OH GOD...
JOHN?!



JOHN!



UNH...NOT...
CONSTANTINE.

DR. OCCULT!
HERE, LET ME
HELP YOU...



...
RICHARD?



ROSE!

RICHARD
IS GONE.



ARE YOU SURE? COULDN'T
HE JUST BE... WHEREVER HE
GOES WHEN YOU TAKE OVER
THE BODY? MAYBE HE'S
JUST TAKING TIME
TO HEAL.

NO.

HE WON'T
RECOVER
FROM THIS,
AND NEITHER
WILL I.



DON'T YOU
SAY THAT! WE'RE
GOING TO GET
THROUGH THIS.

HAVE YOU
HEARD BACK
FROM XANADU
OR MERLIN?




ZEE,
I'M SO
SORRY...

HOW
ABOUT MR. E?
OR THE PHANTOM
STRANGER? I
THOUGHT HE
COULDN'T
DIE.

IT DOESN'T
MATTER. THERE
ARE TOO FEW OF
US LEFT, AND **THE
MALEVOLENCE** IS
TOO POWERFUL.



THEN THERE'S
ONLY ONE THING LEFT
TO TRY. WE GO FOR
THE CONTINGENCY
PLAN.



I DON'T KNOW,
ZEE. WITH RICHARD
GONE... I DON'T KNOW
IF I'M STRONG
ENOUGH TO DO
THIS ALONE.




I'LL BE
FINE.

WHAT IF I DRAIN
YOU COMPLETELY?
YOU'RE ALREADY
WEAK FROM
FIGHTING.

WILL YOU? EVEN
IF THIS WORKS...
OUR REALITY WILL BE
ALTERED. YOU WON'T
KNOW WHAT YOU
GAVE UP. YOU WON'T
REMEMBER ANY
OF THIS.


YOU'RE
NOT ALONE--
YOU'VE GOT
ME. TAP INTO
MY POWER.



THAT'S ALL
RIGHT. **YOU'LL**
REMEMBER. I
HAVE FAITH IN
YOU, ROSE.

BESIDES,
IT'S NOT LIKE
WE HAVE A LOT
OF CHOICES
HERE.

SHE'S RIGHT. AND
WE BOTH KNOW
WHY I HAVE TO BE
THE ONE TO PERFORM
THE SPELL.



ZATANNA'S POWER MANIPULATES
REALITY THROUGH LANGUAGE, AND
LANGUAGE HAS ITS LIMITATIONS.
FOR THIS TO WORK, WE NEED A
DIFFERENT APPROACH...

WE NEED AN
INCANTATION TO UNFASTEN
THE FETTERS OF TIME--
TO UNKNIT BONES AND
UNMAKE FLESH.

AND NOT TO
PRESSURE YOU OR
ANYTHING, BUT WE'D
BETTER HURRY. BECAUSE
THE MALEVOLENCE IS
COMING BACK. WITH
REINFORCEMENTS.

DON'T
WORRY...

DAD? I HAVE ANOTHER HEADACHE.

LAS VEGAS.
SEVEN YEARS PRE-MALEVOLENCE.



Chapter One: The Price of Admission

DAD?

I'M TELLING YOU THAT YOU'RE WRONG, ZATARA. SHE'S GOT THE GIFT.

I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST IN MY DAUGHTER, ROSE, BUT I THINK I WOULD HAVE NOTICED IF SHE HAD ANY APTITUDE FOR OUR ART.

I ADORE MY CHILD, BUT SHE IS UTTERLY MUNDANE.

MY DEAR, IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT? YOU LOOK... TENSE.

I HAVE A MIGRAINE COMING ON.

IS IT BAD? WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME? I HAVE A POTION THAT--

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL BE FINE.

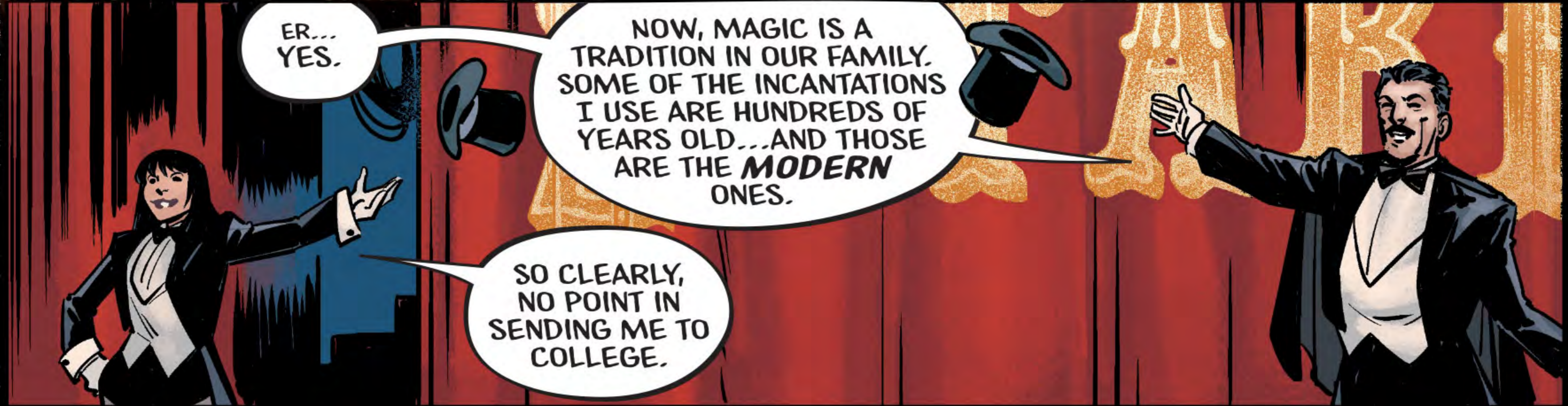
Stage Entrance





WELCOME, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TO AN EVENING THAT WE HOPE WILL BE TRULY MAGICAL.

AND NOT HOPELESSLY AND UTTERLY MUNDANE, RIGHT, DAD?



ER... YES.

NOW, MAGIC IS A TRADITION IN OUR FAMILY. SOME OF THE INCANTATIONS I USE ARE HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD...AND THOSE ARE THE **MODERN** ONES.

SO CLEARLY, NO POINT IN SENDING ME TO COLLEGE.



NO MORE AD-LIBBING. STICK TO WHAT WE REHEARSED.

DON'T WORRY, I WON'T MESS UP THE ACT.

BUT YOU KNOW **TEENAGERS**. ZATANNA HAS TO DO THINGS HER WAY... **BACKWARD!**

DNA UOY NAC TSUJ OG OT LLEH!



OH, WEIRD, THAT FEELS REALLY...

HER BURGEONING
POWER, FUELED BY
RAGE AND HURT, RIPS
A HOLE BETWEEN
WORLDS.

AAAGH!!

THIS IS
EVEN BETTER
THAN PENN AND
TELLER'S
SHOW!

WHOA!
COOL!

MACHLIF
MAKOM!

TELL
ROSE SHE
WAS RIGHT.

DAD!!

...DAD?



OMIGOD-
OMIGOD-
OMIGOD!

ZATANNA?



OKAY, SO THAT
HAD TO BE SOME
KIND OF NEW TRICK.
ONLY IT WENT WRONG.
WHERE'S THE STAGE
MANAGER?

OKAY, TAKE
A DEEP BREATH.
I NEED YOU TO
CALM DOWN AND
LISTEN TO
ME.



LADY, I DON'T KNOW
WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU
NEED TO GET OUT OF
MY WAY. MY DAD'S IN
SOME KIND OF
TROUBLE HERE,
AND I...

...I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO...



BUT YOUR
FATHER DOES. I
KNOW THIS IS ALL
NEW AND SCARY,
BUT YOU HAVE TO
TRUST ME.

I'VE KNOWN
YOUR FATHER
FOR YEARS, AND
HE'S GOTTEN OUT
OF FAR WORSE
PICKLES THAN
THIS ONE.



PICKLE? YOU CALL THIS A
PICKLE? A BUNCH OF DEMON
THINGS POPPED OUT OF THIN
AIR AND DISAPPEARED
WITH MY DAD!

OH GOD. NONE
OF THIS MAKES
ANY SENSE. I'M
LOSING MY
MIND.

NO, YOU'RE NOT.
YOU'VE JUST COME
INTO YOUR POWER,
ZATANNA. YOU HAVE AN
INCREDIBLE GIFT, AND
YOU'RE GOING TO DO
AMAZING THINGS
WITH IT...



...ONCE
YOU LEARN
CONTROL.

THIS...THIS
ISN'T A TRICK,
IS IT?

ONLY ONE
WAY TO FIND
OUT.

FOLLOW
ME.