

WARLOCK

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AUG

MARVEL COMICS GROUP



THE POWER OF


WARLOCK



BEWARE
THE SINISTER
SECRET OF THE

STAR-THIEF!





LIKE HALF-FORGOTTEN
DREAMS THEY COME,
SLIPPING OUT OF THE
DARKNESS.

THEY SCREECH
WILDLY AND TEAR
AT THE BONE-WEARY
ADAM WARLOCK,
SEEKING TO STAY
HIM FROM HIS
APPOINTED DESTINY.

HOMECOMING!

STORY AND LAYOUT, **JIM STARLIN**... **STEVE LEIALOHA**, FINISHED ART AND COLORING-
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BACK,
YOU FOUL
DEMONS!

...OR FACE THE WRATH OF
MY SOUL GEM!

BY THE STARS! MY JEWEL
DID MANAGE TO HOLD THEM
AT BAY, YET FAILED TO
STEAL THEIR LIFE
FORCES, AS
IS ITS HABIT!



OF
COURSE...

FOR
THESE ARE
SOULLESS
CREATIONS OF THE STAR
THIEF, MY TRUE FOE.

DIE,
WARLOCK!

KATHOOM!



WHAT?! GONE?



NOT GONE,
MY WINGED
ADVERSARY...

...MERELY
REPOSITIONED.



CURSES!
THEY'VE
REGROUPED
AND ARE
ONCE AGAIN
ATTACKING
EN MASSE!

I'VE NO TIME TO WASTE ON
SUCH A COUNTERPRODUCTIVE
STRUGGLE. I MUST PUT
AN END TO THIS FARCE...



...NOW!

I DID IT!

ALREADY MY ENEMIES
FADE INTO THE
NOTHINGNESS
THEY WERE
CREATED FROM
BY THE...



"...STAR THIEF!"

MY CONGRATULATIONS,
ADAM, ON SURVIVING
THE SECOND LITTLE
ELEMENTAL STRUGGLE
I DEvised FOR YOU.

YOUR CLAIM OF
BEING A TRUE WAR-
LOCK OF FIRE, AIR,
WATER AND EARTH
HAS THUS FAR
PROVEN TRUE.

I'M PLEASED I DECIDED
NOT TO CRUSH YOU OUT-
RIGHT, THOUGH YOU SO
RICHLY DESERVED SUCH
TREATMENT.

THIS UNIQUE TESTING-
OF YOUR SURVIVAL
ABILITIES HAS ALREADY
PROVEN INFORMATIVE
AND AMUSING.

"AMUSING?"

"TO A MIND
AS TWISTED
AS THE
STAR THIEF'S.

"HATE
OF
WHAT
IS.

"YES, I SUP-
POSE IT IS...

"TWISTED
BY HATE.

"HATE
OF
WHAT
HE
WAS.

*ORIGINALLY HE WAS SIMPLY BARRY BAUMAN, AN INCURABLE INVALID IN THE CARE OF HIS THEN-AIDE NURSE, NOW-MENTAL SLAVE TOM VOCCON.

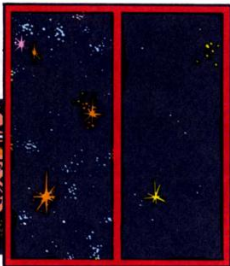
*BARRY DISCOVERED HE COULD OPEN HIS MIND TO GREAT NEW LEVELS OF POWER... AND SO BECAME THE...



"STAR THIEF DEMANDED REVENGE ON AN UNCURING MARKING WHICH HAD FAILED TO CURE THE STRANGE MALADY THAT PLAGUED HIS PHYSICAL FORM.

"HIS VENGEANCE WOULD BE TO SNUFF OUT EVERY STAR IN THE NIGHT SKY... ONE BY ONE.

"HE REASONED THAT THIS WOULD CAUSE ALL HUMANITY TO SUFFER THE SAME FEAR AND ISOLATION THAT HE HAD EXPERIENCED AS A POOR HUMAN VEGETABLE DENIED THE USE OF HIS FIVE SENSES. ACCOMPLISHING THIS, STAR THIEF PLANS TO EXTINGUISH EARTH'S OWN SUN, ABANDONING HIS CORPOREAL FORM AND LEAVING THE DYING EARTH TO ITS FATE.



"FORTUNATELY, I DISCOVERED, AND WAS DETERMINED TO STOP HIS FOUL PLAN.

"UNFORTUNATELY, I FOUND HIS POWER DWARFED MY OWN, AND ONLY THE FACT THAT I INTRIGUED AND AMUSED HIM KEPT HIM FROM DEVASTATING ME WITH A POWERFUL MIND-BLAST.

"INSTEAD, HE'S CHALLENGED ME TO OVERCOME PHYSICAL MIRACLES OF HIS CREATION, SUCH AS HIS MASSIVE STONE MEN...



"...AND REACH EARTH TO STOP STAR THIEF AT THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER."

ONE REASON FOR THIS GENEROSITY MAY BE THE FACT THAT MY TRAVELS OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS HAS CARRIED ME HUNDREDS OF LIGHT-YEARS FROM EARTH...

...SO THAT, EVEN AT THE FASTER-THAN-LIGHT SPEEDS I CAN ACHIEVE IN SPACE, IT WILL TAKE ME WEEKS TO REACH THE PLANET OF MY BIRTH.

BY THEN STAR THIEF WILL HAVE EMPTIED THE NIGHT OF ITS DIAMONDS AND LIFE WILL NO LONGER BE.



YET ONE CHALLENGE REMAINS IF I DARE RISK IT...

...AND WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?

WHAT IS THAT ONE THOUGHT YOUR MULTI-DIMENSIONAL BRAIN SHIELDS FROM MY SCRUTINY?



NOT THAT IT MATTERS...

AGAIN THERE'S THAT CRYPTIC IMPLICATION THAT HE HAS NO FEAR OF MY STEALING HIS SOUL EVEN IF I DO REACH EARTH...



...AND CAN ATTACK HIM AT HIS WEAKEST POINT.

YOU MEAN, MY HUMAN BODY?

YOU'D BE SURPRISED WHY I'VE LITTLE WORRY OF THAT HAPPENING.



VERY SURPRISED.

BY ORION! IF YOU'RE SEEKING TO PSYCHICALLY OVER- WHELM ME WITH SUBTLE INNUENDO YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME!

I'M COMING FOR YOU, STAR THIEF. COMING TO DESTROY YOU!



WE SHALL SEE.

IN THE MEANTIME, I SUGGEST YOU CONCENTRATE ON YOUR OWN SURVIVAL. FOR I THINK ITS TIME FOR ELEMENTAL TEST #3.



BRING- IT ON!

I STAND READY!

THE THIRD THREAT WILL BE AQUATIC. IT'S A FEARSOME CREATURE QUITE POPULAR IN THE IMAGINATIONS OF OUR FELLOW EARTHMEN AND...

ITS SNEAKING UP BEHIND YOU.



WHAT!?

"BACK ON
TELLUS THEY
CALL THIS A..."

"...SHARK!"



BUT I'LL
WAGER IT'S
LIKE NO
SHARK EVER
SPAWNED
ON EARTH.

NO, THIS IS
ANOTHER DEMON
CREATED BY
STAR THIEF FOR
THE SOLE
PURPOSE OF
KILLING ME!



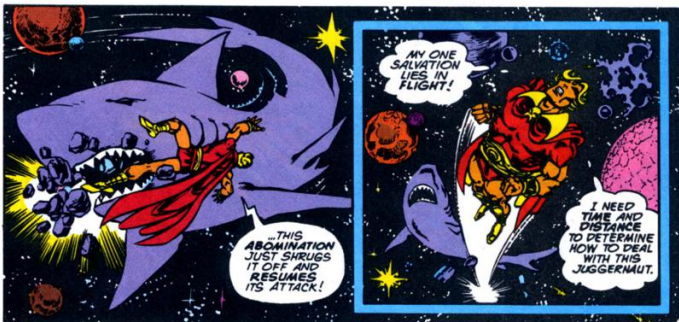
JUDGING BY THE WAY IT JUST SHAT-
TERED THAT SMALL ASTEROID, AND THE
LITTLE EFFECT MY SOUL GEM IS
HAVING ON IT...

... THIS
NEAR-
PERFECT
KILLING
MACHINE
MAY JUST
PROVE MORE
THAN EVEN
A WARLOCK
CAN HANDLE.

MY ONE HOPE IS A PHYSICAL DEFENSE.



BUT I
CAN'T BRING
THE FULL
FORCE OF
MY POWER
TO PLAY
WHILE FREE-
FLOATING
IN SPACE.





NO GOOD! ITS
COMING AFTER ME
AND ALREADY
GAINING... uh?

**A MIDGET
COMET!**



MAYBE THEREIN
LIES MY
REDEMPTION.



" IF I CAN
ONLY
REACH IT...

" BEFORE
THE SHARK
REACHES ME! "



MUST CROSS
DIRECTLY
IN FRONT
OF THE
COMET'S
PATH!

**FASTER,
WARLOCK!**

**THE SHARK'S
GAINING!**



IMMEDIATELY
AHEAD OF IT
NOW... THE
HEAT IS
INTOLERABLE...

... COMET
MUST BE
HUNDREDS
OF MILES
ACROSS...

...MUST GET
OUT OF ITS
WAY AND
HOPE...

**...THE SHARK
DOESN'T !!**



AMAZING!

I THOUGHT I HAD HIM THAT
TIME, YET HIS LIGHTNING-FAST
MIND ONCE AGAIN
SAVED HIM.

BUT AT SUCH
A COST...

...THE ORDEAL HAS
LEFT HIM SPENT AND
UNCONSCIOUS...



...HELPLESS AND
DEFENSELESS!

NEVER!

WHAT?



SEEMS I
CAUGHT
YOU WITH
YOUR GUARD
DOWN, STAR
THIEF!

THOUGH YOU DID
MANAGE TO STOP ME, IT
WASN'T IN TIME TO KEEP
ME FROM STEALING A
SMALL PIECE OF YOUR
SELF.

ENOUGH TO
REVITALIZE
AND CHARGE
ME FOR
THE BATTLE
AHEAD.

YOU
FIEND!

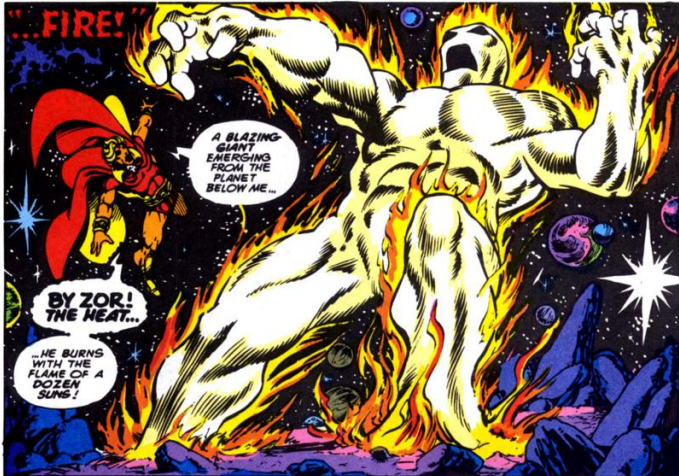
YOU'D DARE TAKE A
PART OF THE ONLY
THING OF VALUE I
TRULY POSSESS...

...MY SOUL.

YOU SHALL PAY WITH
PAIN, ANGUISH,
AND DEATH!

VAMPIRE, FOR
THIS YOU SHALL PAY!

YOU SHALL
PAY BY...



THAT MEANS HE'S TAKEN
THIS NIGHTMARE ON AS
A HOST BODY.

WHICH MEANS
THIS FIERY
BEHEMOTH
HAS A BRAIN,
AND SO A
WEAKNESS!

IT ALSO
HAS A
FLAMING
FOOT THAT'S
ABOUT TO
STAMP ME
OUT OF
EXISTENCE IF
I DON'T...

...ACT
QUICKLY!

THIS SMOLDERING
BOULDER BEHIND
ME, MUST USE IT
TO SHATTER THIS
WALKING INFERNO'S...

...**BRAIN!**

KAT-HOOK!

ONCE AGAIN I'VE UNDERESTIMATED YOUR RESOURCEFULNESS!

I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D REALIZE THE MONSTER'S BRAIN WAS ITS ACHILLES' HEEL.

I BARELY EXITED THAT BURNING HULK IN TIME TO ESCAPE SHARING ITS DEMISE.

YOU'VE PROVEN YOURSELF A TRUE WARLOCK.

I'VE ATTACKED YOU WITH AGENTS OF EARTH, WATER, FIRE AND AIR.

THAT ALONE IS REASON ENOUGH THAT YOU SHOULD DIE...

THEREFORE, WARLOCK, PREPARE TO BE...

YET YOU'VE SURVIVED, FOR YOU ARE TRULY A MASTER OF SUCH THINGS, AND SO A FOE TO BE RECKONED WITH.

...ADD THE FACT THAT YOU'VE STOLEN A PART OF MY BEING, AND THE VALUE OF KEEPING YOU ALIVE FOR ENTERTAINMENT'S SAKE BECOMES NEGLIGIBLE.

WHAT!? AGAIN HE'S...

"...GONE."

I'VE ONLY SECONDS BEFORE STAR THIEF LOCATES ME.

HOPEFULLY THAT WILL BE ALL THE TIME I NEED.

THE MOMENT HAS COME FOR ME TO ATTEMPT SOMETHING NO LIVING CREATURE HAS EVER ACCOMPLISHED!

YET NO OTHER BEING HAS EVER HAD SO MUCH RIDING ON HIS SURVIVAL.

NOR HAS ANY BEFORE ME HAD THE COMBINED MINDS OF SEVERAL PERSONS TO SEE HIM THROUGH THIS.

YES, PERHAPS MY INTELLECT, LINKED WITH AUTOCLYLUS'S NAVIGATIONAL SKILL AND THE NIAGUS'S DARK KNOWLEDGE...

...WILL ALLOW ME TO ENDURE A TRIP THROUGH...

...A BLACK HOLE IN SPACE!

IT'S BELIEVED THAT THESE BLACK HOLES MIGHT BE SPACE WARPS, PLACES WHERE THE UNIVERSE FOLDS AND MEETS...



...THOUGH NONE THAT HAS ATTEMPTED TO PROVE THIS HAS EVER BEEN HEARD FROM AGAIN.

I HOPE I'LL NOT END UP SHARING THEIR FATE.

FORTUNATELY, EVER SINCE MY VAMPIRE SOUL GEM DESTROYED THE MAGUS...



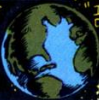
... I'VE SHARED MANY OF HIS MEMORIES AND ALL HIS PERCEPTIVE POWERS.

IDEALLY, THESE ULTRA-SENSSES SHOULD LEAD ME TO AN EXIT HOLE THAT WILL DROP ME OFF WITHIN THE MILKY WAY.



THAT WAY I'LL ONLY BE A SHORT DISTANCE FROM EARTH...

AND MAY BE ABLE TO CATCH STAR THIEF UNAWARES AGAIN.



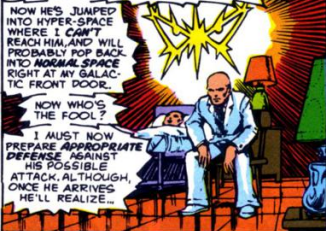
"I SHOULD HAVE DESTROYED THAT TROUBLESOME ADAM WARLOCK WHILE I HAD THE CHANCE..."

... BUT NO, I HAD TO FLAUNT MY MENTAL POWERS AND TOY WITH THIS 'HELPLESS FOOL'.

NOW HE'S JUMPED INTO HYPER-SPACE WHERE I CAN'T REACH HIM, AND WILL PROBABLY POP BACK INTO NORMAL SPACE RIGHT AT MY GALACTIC FRONT DOOR.

NOW WHO'S THE FOOL?

I MUST NOW PREPARE APPROPRIATE DEFENSE AGAINST HIS POSSIBLE ATTACK. ALTHOUGH, ONCE HE ARRIVES HE'LL REALIZE...



... HE CAN'T HARM ME WITHOUT KILLING EVERYONE ON EARTH.



AND SO BARRY BAUMAN, A.K.A. THE STAR THIEF, ONCE AGAIN SENDS HIS MIND INTO SPACE, BUT AS HE DOES...

HE'S GONE!



ONCE AGAIN I'M FREE...



FREE TO ACT...



... FREE FROM HIS CONTROL!

... AND ACT I SHALL!

MEANWHILE, AERE
LIGHT YEARS AWAY...



I'VE
MADE
IT!

I'M BACK IN
THE MILKY WAY!

ONCE AGAIN I SALUTE YOU, ADAM
WARLOCK. TO MY KNOWLEDGE,
YOU ARE THE FIRST TO CROSS
HYPER-SPACE SUCCESSFULLY.

I AM TRULY
IMPRESSED!



STAR
THIEF...

...AND STILL
TOYING WITH ME!

YES, SINCE I AM NOW
PREPARED TO DESTROY YOU
MENTALLY AT A MICRO-SEC-
OND'S NOTICE, I'VE DECIDED
TO INDULGE MYSELF AT YOUR
EXPENSE A BIT LONGER.

BY THE WAY, WOULD
YOU BE SO KIND AS TO
GLANCE TO YOUR RIGHT?



IT'S
THE
STAR
SOL!

I'M
HOME!

HOME, AND
NOW IN THE
PERFECT
POSITION
TO DESTROY
YOU!



I'M
COMING
FOR YOUR
SOUL,
STAR
THIEF--

--AND
NOTHING'S
GOING TO
BE ABLE TO
STOP ME!

IF THIS IS
ANOTHER OF
YOUR MACABRE
TRICKS, STAR
THIEF, I'M NOT
ABOUT TO FALL
VICTIM TO IT!



NO MATTER
WHAT YOU
THROW
AGAINST ME,
I'LL YET
REACH EARTH!

NO?

WHAT?! I'VE OVERSHOT
MY SOLAR SYSTEM!



NOW? I WASN'T
GOING THAT FAST!

THEN I'LL...
UH? WAIT!
IT CAN'T BE
...BUT IT IS...



HOW?

HOW?

HOW CAN IT BE THAT MY HOME
PLANET BEFORE ME IS NO LARGER
THAN MY FINGERNAIL?!

MYSELF...
I STAND AN
INTANGIBLE
PHANTOM—
AFFECTING
NEITHER THE
GRAVITY NOR
LIGHT OF
THE PLANET
I WAS
BORN ON.

CAN
THIS TRULY
HAVE
COME TO
PASS,
OR...

...HAVE I
LOST
ALL TOUCH
WITH
REALITY?



NO, WARLOCK, REALITY IS STILL WITHIN YOUR GRASP.

HAVE YOU NEVER HEARD OF THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE THEORY?

EXPANDING UNIVERSE?

YES, IT HAS BEEN SPECULATED THAT THE ATOMS OF ALL SPACE DOM ARE CONSTANTLY EXPANDING OR DRIFTING FARTHER APART SO THAT ALL SPACE IS CONSTANTLY EXPANDING.

YOU'VE JUST PROVEN THIS EXPANSION IS *NOT* UNIFORM THROUGHOUT THE STARS.

SOME SECTORS OF SPACE EXPAND AT A MORE RAPID RATE THAN OTHERS.

YOU HAVE BEEN THOU- SANDS OF LIGHT YEARS FROM EARTH, AND SO HAVE GROWN AT A QUICKER PACE THAN YOUR HOMEWORLD.

SO, NOW, TO EARTH, YOU ARE NOTHING- MORE THAN A GIANT WRAITH.

TO YOU, EARTH IS AN UNREACHABLE DESTINATION.

TO ME, TELLUS IS A SANCTUARY, FOR YOU CAN NEVER ATTACK ME HERE WITHOUT DESTROYING ALL THE PEOPLE OF YOUR NATIVE PLANET...

...PEOPLE, I SENSE, YOU COULD NEVER WANTONLY HARM, DESPITE THE FEAR AND LOATHING THEY FEEL FOR YOU.

"... I KNOW YOU FORCED ME TO DO 'THINGS.'"

I'M FREE NOW, BARRY, AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO...

SO YOU SEE, ADAM, I'VE WON!!

I'M ALSO AWARE YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE *VANISHING STARS.*

STILL, GIVEN TIME, YOU MIGHT UNDO MY VICTORY, SO...

... I MUST NOW DESTROY YOU!

YES... I KNOW ALL THE WRONG YOU HAVE DONE, AND MUST NOW PUNISH YOU FOR BEING BAD...

YES. BAD.

...SO BAD.

WAIT!

I'VE SOME DISTURBING NEWS FOR YOU, STAR THIEF!

YOU'VE WON NOTHING!



BLAM!

