



# Soggytown Realm

Book 3

The Reckoning  
R. Neo

**SOJOURN REALM**  
- **BOOK 1 DISRUPTER**  
- **BOOK 2 EVOLVER**  
- **BOOK 3 RECKONING**

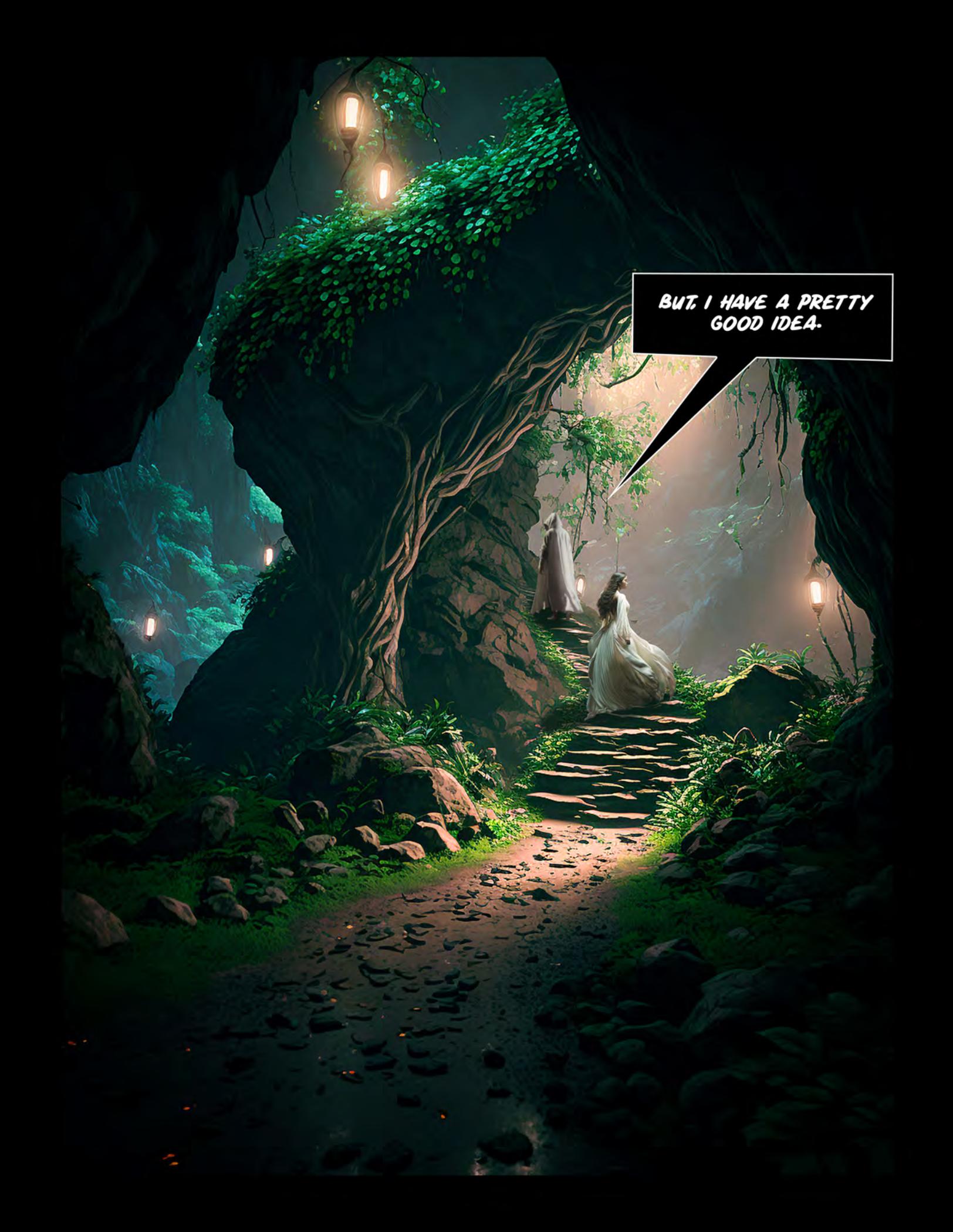
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*THIS WAS NOT HELL...*

*WHERE AM I?*

*I'M NOT SURE...*



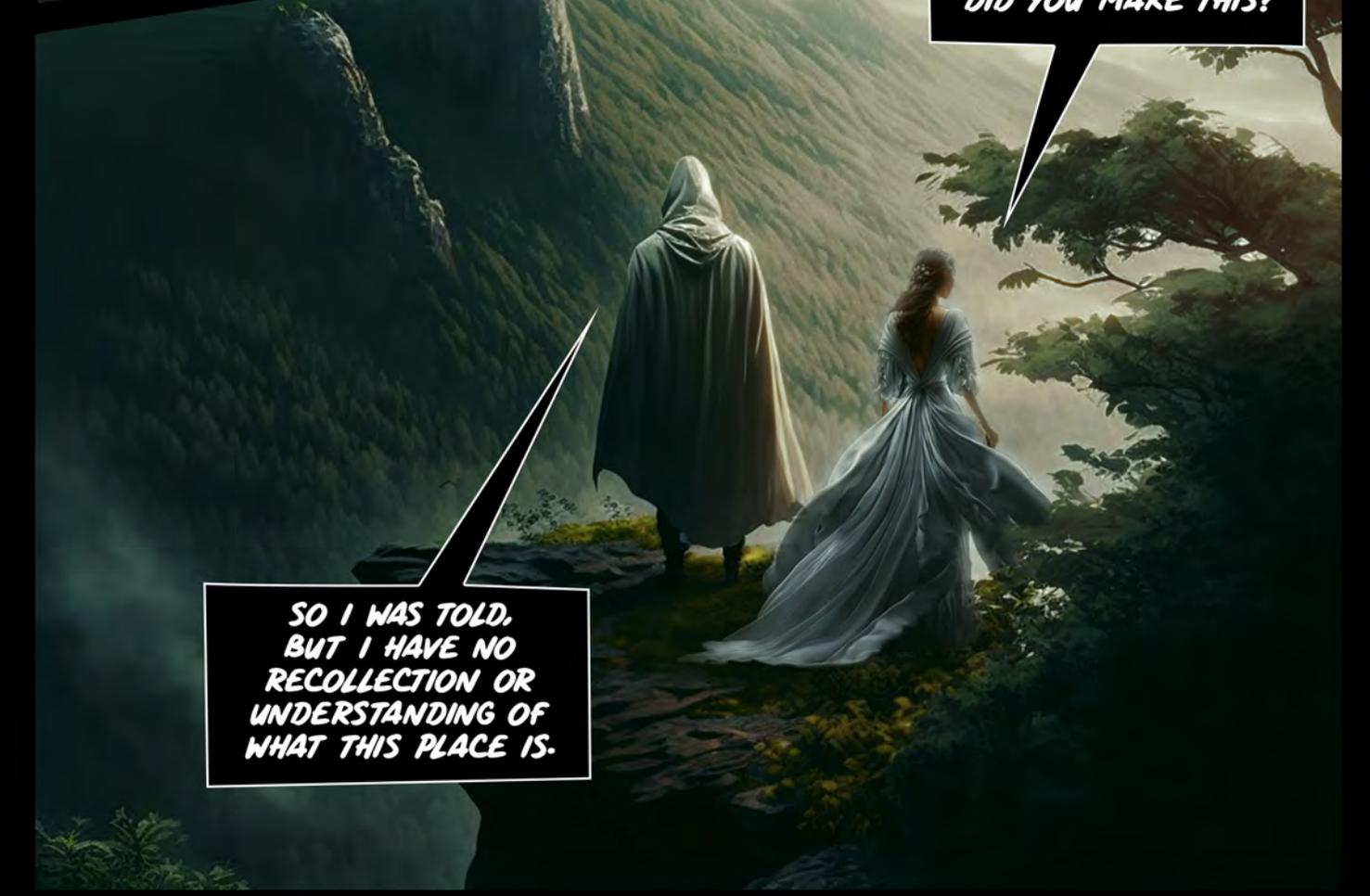
A dark, atmospheric forest scene. A stone path leads up a rocky hillside. A woman in a long, flowing white dress is walking up the path, away from the viewer. The forest is filled with large, gnarled trees and dense foliage. Several glowing lanterns are hanging from the trees, casting a warm, golden light. The overall mood is mysterious and magical.

*BUT, I HAVE A PRETTY  
GOOD IDEA.*



**SERIOUSLY?  
HOW MUCH  
FURTHER?**

**WE'RE JUST AROUND  
THE CORNER.**



**THIS IS BEAUTIFUL.  
DID YOU MAKE THIS?**

**SO I WAS TOLD,  
BUT I HAVE NO  
RECOLLECTION OR  
UNDERSTANDING OF  
WHAT THIS PLACE IS.**



**IN THE AFTERLIFE YOU  
CAN MANIFEST ANY  
REALITY YOU WANT, BUT  
ONLY FOR YOURSELF.**



**I DON'T UNDERSTAND,  
WE BOTH EXISTED IN  
HELL.**

**WE BOTH EXISTED IN  
HELL BECAUSE  
HELL IS A REALM.  
THAT MEANS,  
NO MATTER HOW  
UNLIKELY, THIS MUST BE  
A REALM AS WELL.  
THIS PLACE IS THE  
RESULT OF THE  
STRENGTH OF YOUR  
BELIEF AND POWER OF  
YOUR ACTIONS.**



*ARE YOU SURE?*

*YES, THIS IS REAL.*

*SHE SCOOPED SOIL FROM THE GROUND, AND HELD IT OUT IN FRONT OF HER.*



**WE WERE TRANSPORTED AGAIN, THIS TIME SOMEWHERE FORMLESS AND DREAMLIKE.**

**WHAT HAPPENED? I SEE ONLY EMPTINESS.**

**I UNDERSTAND THIS PLACE NOW. THIS IS A SOJOURN REALM, AN OPTION FOR SOULS NOT READY FOR HEAVEN OR HELL. THE AFTERLIFE HAS CHANGED, AND THE NEWLY ARRIVING SOULS MUST BE INFORMED. THIS REQUIRES ALL OF MY ATTENTION.**

**THEN SHE WAS GONE, AND AS THE EMPTINESS FILLED WITH COLOR, I ASKED MYSELF WHAT SHE MEANT, BUT NO ANSWER CAME TO ME.**

**A NEW LANDSCAPE MANIFESTED IN FRONT OF ME. IF THIS REALM WAS AN EXTENSION OF MYSELF WOULD IT CONTAIN MY FAULTS, AND FAILURES?**

A dramatic scene with a large, gnarled tree. The tree's leaves are glowing with a bright, golden light, suggesting a fire or a powerful energy source. A figure is hanging from a branch of the tree, silhouetted against the bright light. In the foreground, a person in a white hooded cloak stands with their back to the viewer, looking towards the tree. Another figure in a hooded cloak is walking away from the tree in the distance. The overall atmosphere is one of mystery and tragedy.

**AS I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, MY SURROUNDINGS CHANGED ONCE AGAIN, AND I SAW MY ANSWER HANGING FROM A TREE.**

**JOHN, IS THAT YOU?**

**JOHN DIED IN THAT TREE.  
I AM ALL THAT IS LEFT OF HIM: I AM HIS RAGE.**

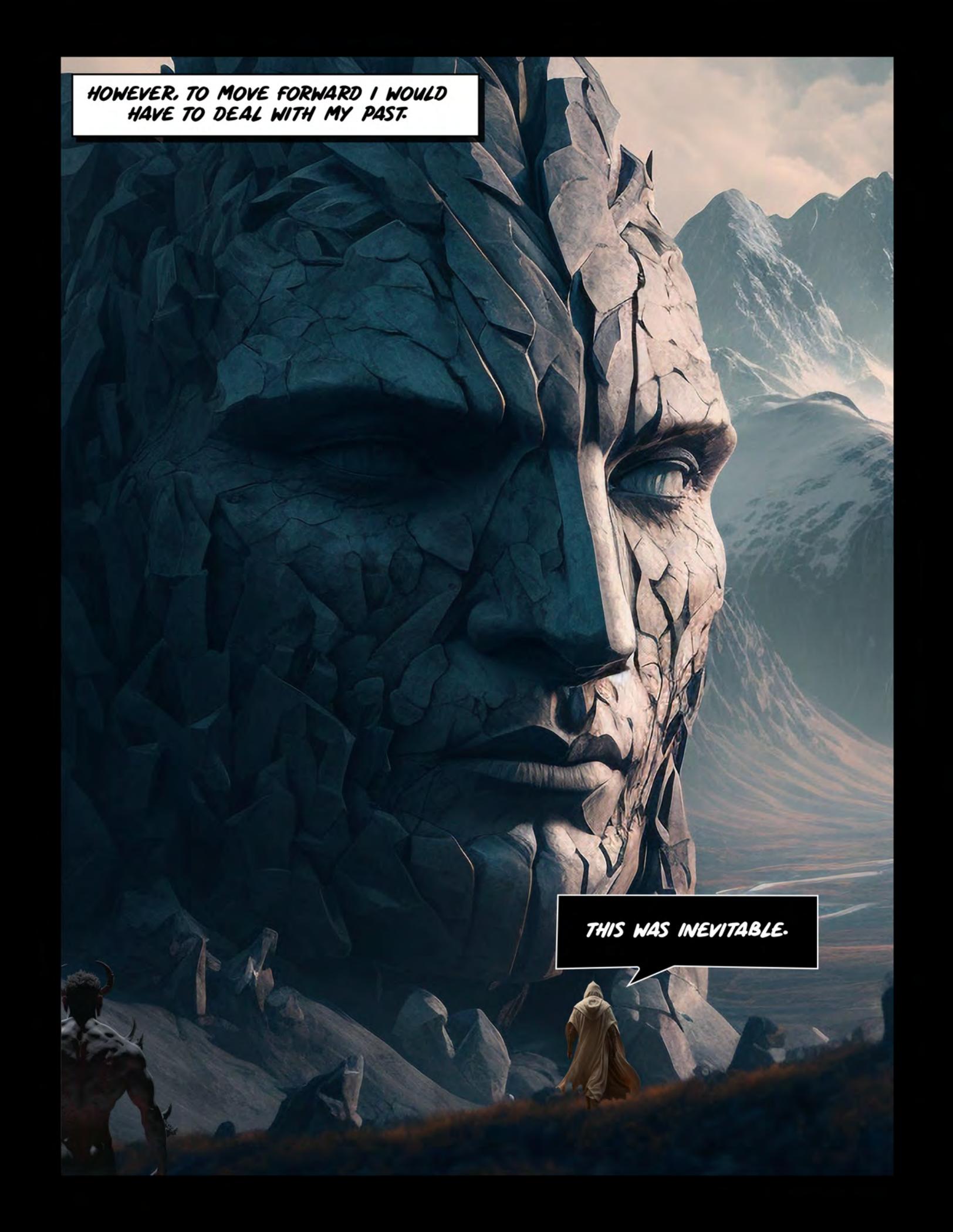
**I FAILED JOHN, HE NEEDED MORE THAN PURPOSE. HE HAD EVERY RIGHT TO BE ANGRY.**

**A MOMENT LATER, I WAS  
STANDING IN A VAST  
DESERT. MY PAST SELVES  
LOOMED BEHIND ME...**



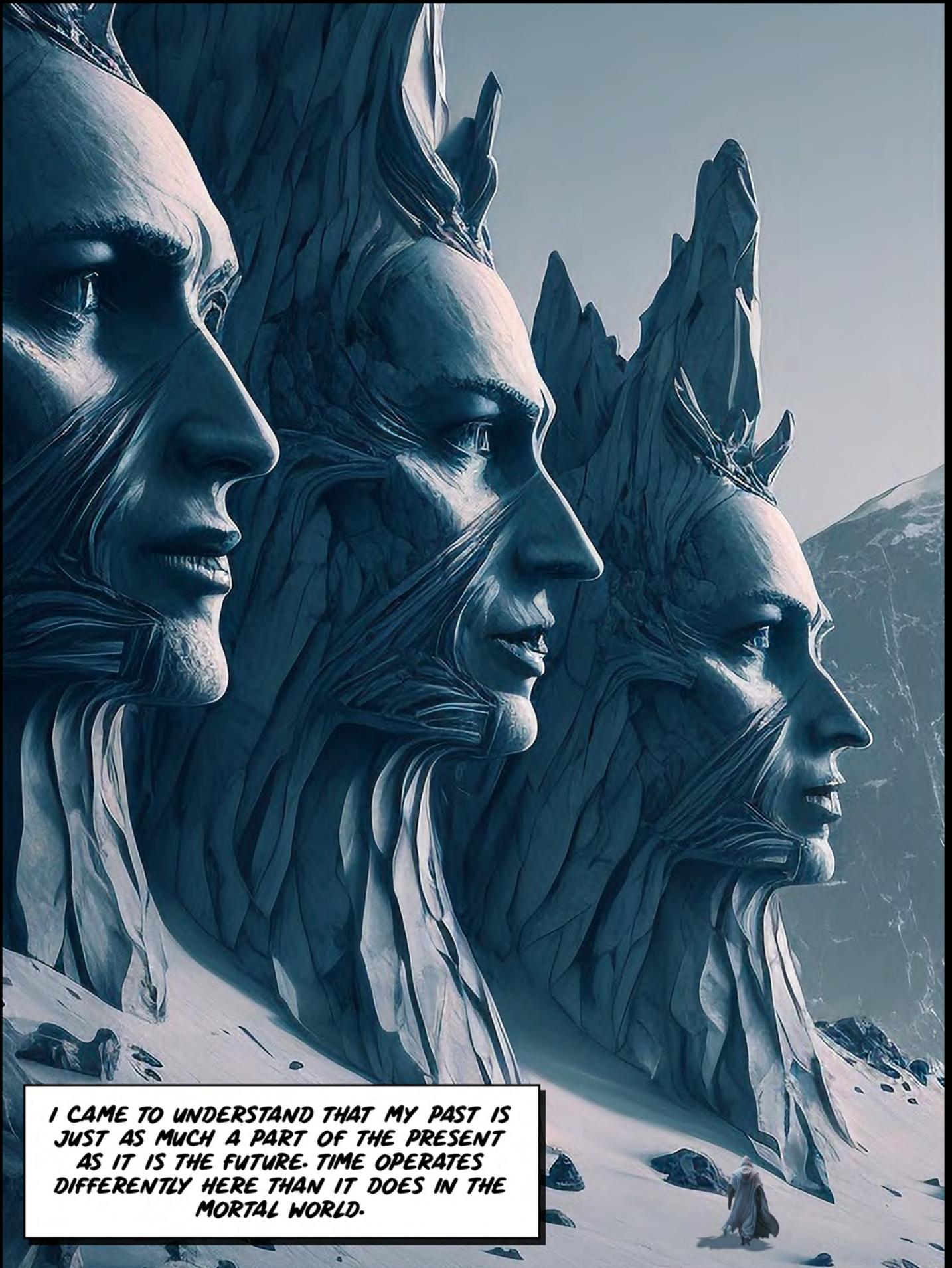
**...AND A LIMITLESS FUTURE  
AHEAD.**



A large, ancient stone face carved into a cliffside, with a hooded figure and a horned creature in the foreground.

*HOWEVER, TO MOVE FORWARD I WOULD  
HAVE TO DEAL WITH MY PAST.*

*THIS WAS INEVITABLE.*



***I CAME TO UNDERSTAND THAT MY PAST IS  
JUST AS MUCH A PART OF THE PRESENT  
AS IT IS THE FUTURE. TIME OPERATES  
DIFFERENTLY HERE THAN IT DOES IN THE  
MORTAL WORLD.***



**IT MAKES SENSE MY FATHER WOULD BE HERE. I ACCEPTED THAT OUR DIFFERENCES WOULD NEVER BE RESOLVED LONG AGO, BUT HIS INFLUENCE AND MEMORY ARE A PART OF ME, WHETHER I LIKE IT OR NOT.**

**THE THOUGHT OF  
SITUATIONS  
UNRESOLVED  
TRANSPORTED ME TO A  
WASTELAND OF  
FROZEN PEOPLE,  
SEALED IN TIME.**



**I REMEMBERED WHEN I  
WAS YOUNG, THAT MOST  
UNRESOLVED  
SITUATIONS RESULTED  
IN VIOLENCE.**



**THE THOUGHT OF VIOLENCE  
BROUGHT ME TO RUINS OF OLD  
BATTLES. MY DEMONS DEFEATED  
AND LONG FORGOTTEN.**

**HAD MY HASTE TO VIOLENCE  
IN MY YOUTH CAUSED  
MISS OPPORTUNITIES?**

**THE ANSWER APPEARED AS A  
PORTAL IN THE RUINS.**

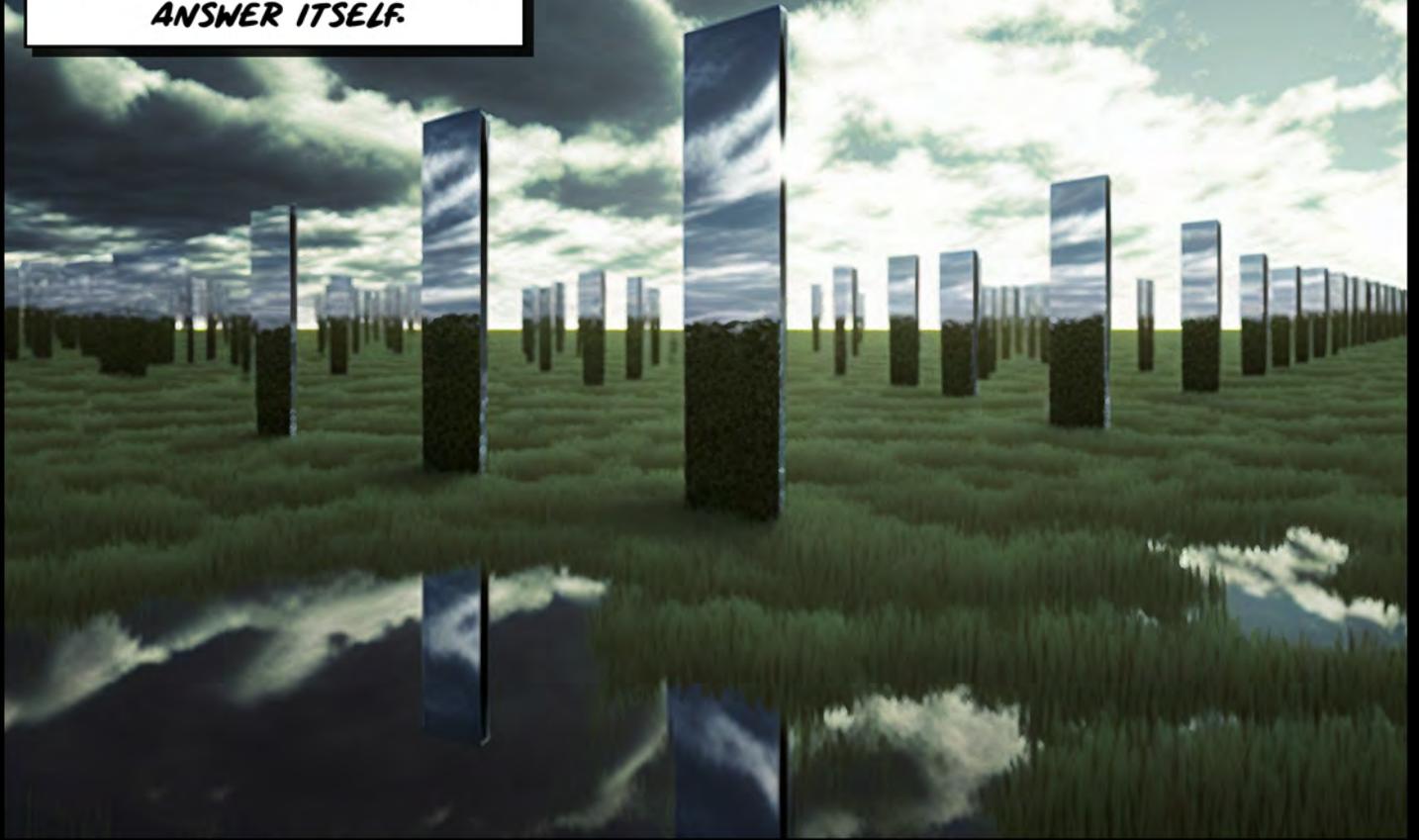


*BUT, THE ANSWER WAS NOT CLEAR.*



*I REALIZED THAT ANSWERS IN MY AFTERLIFE, LIKE IN MY MORTAL LIFE BEFORE IT, DO NOT ALWAYS COME EASILY OR QUICKLY.*

**AS I WALKED, I REMINDED MYSELF THAT THE JOURNEY TO FIND THE ANSWER WAS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS THE ANSWER ITSELF.**



**THAT THE PLACES I TRAVELED WERE SIGNIFICANT, EVEN IF THEIR MEANING WAS NOT OBVIOUS TO ME YET.**



**I FELT DRAWN TO A MIRROR THAT REFLECTED MY PAST EXPERIENCES IN THE AFTERLIFE.**



I SHOULD HAVE LEFT YOU  
ENDLESSLY FIGHTING AND DYING  
IN HELL. I SUPPOSE ITS MY  
FAULT. I WAS BORED AND  
WANTED TO SEE WHAT YOU  
WOULD DO WITH BELIEF.



LUCIFER, I AM  
GUESSING THIS HAS TO  
DO WITH MY REALM,  
ONE THAT I DID NOT  
ASK FOR OR WANT.

DENIAL MEANS NOTHING.  
PERHAPS I SHOULDN'T BE  
SURPRISED, SINCE  
PURGATORY ABANDONED  
HER REALM TO BURN  
WITH ME. SOMETHING LIKE  
THIS WAS AN  
INEVITABILITY. IT IS JUST  
THE WAY OF THINGS.

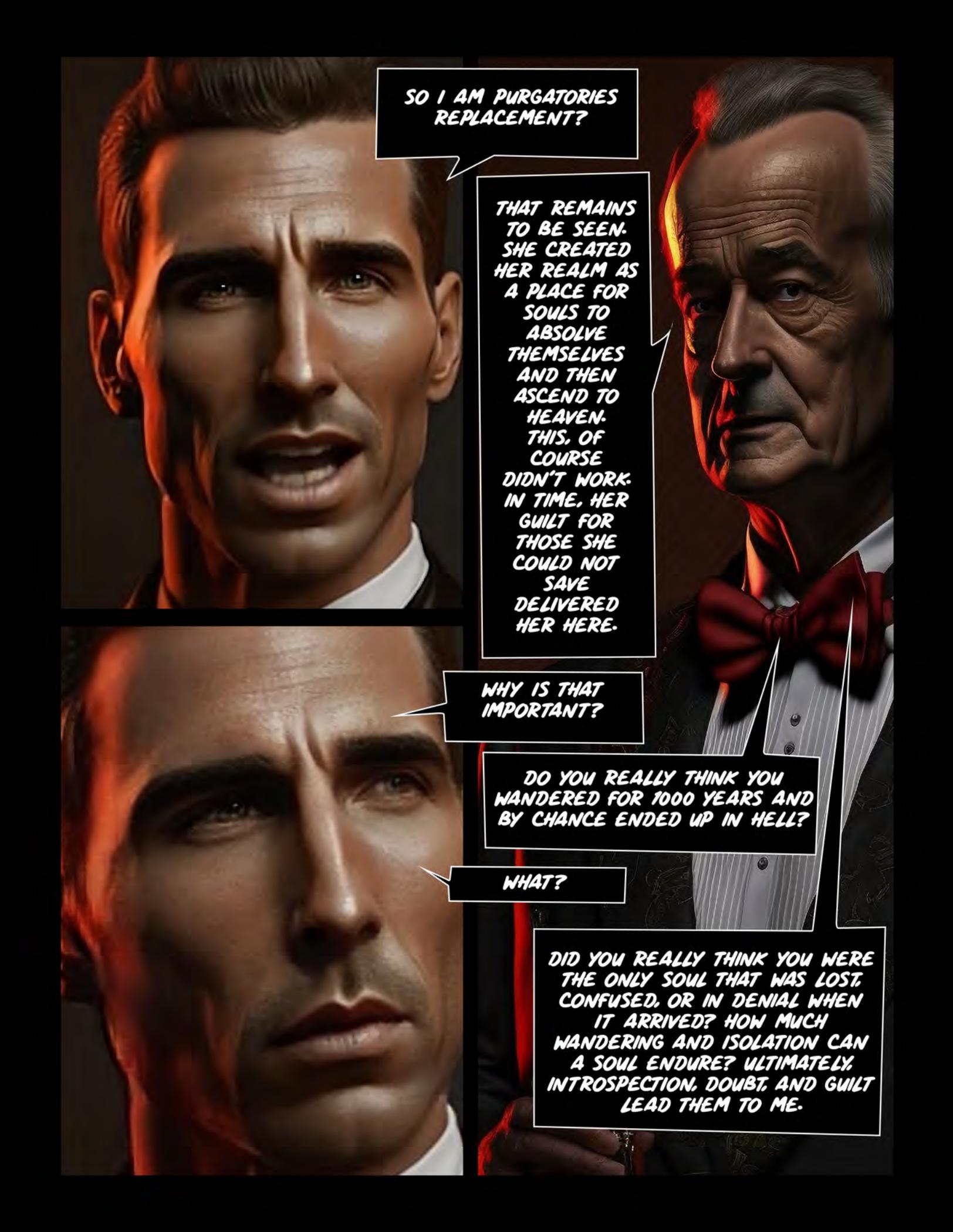
**IN MY REALM YOU WILL  
SHOW RESPECT.  
I EXPECT FORMAL  
ATTIRE.**

**A DRESS CODE IN HELL?  
FINE. NOW, WHY AM I  
HERE?**

**LET ME GIVE YOU YOUR  
FIRST LESSON.  
THOUGH YOU CONTROL  
YOUR REALM AND  
EVERYTHING ABOUT IT,  
YOU CANNOT WILL SOULS  
AWAY. THE ONLY WAY  
THEY CAN LEAVE IS IF  
THEY RESOLVE WHATEVER  
QUESTION OR PROBLEM  
THAT BROUGHT THEM  
THERE.**

**WHY WOULD I TRUST  
YOU, AND WHAT DOES  
PURGATORY HAVE TO DO  
WITH THIS?**

**THERE IS NO COINCIDENCE IN  
YOUR QUEST FOR PURPOSE IN THE  
AFTERLIFE AND THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF YOUR  
REALM.**



**SO I AM PURGATORIES  
REPLACEMENT?**

**THAT REMAINS  
TO BE SEEN.  
SHE CREATED  
HER REALM AS  
A PLACE FOR  
SOULS TO  
ABSOLVE  
THEMSELVES  
AND THEN  
ASCEND TO  
HEAVEN.  
THIS, OF  
COURSE  
DIDN'T WORK.  
IN TIME, HER  
GUILT FOR  
THOSE SHE  
COULD NOT  
SAVE  
DELIVERED  
HER HERE.**

**WHY IS THAT  
IMPORTANT?**

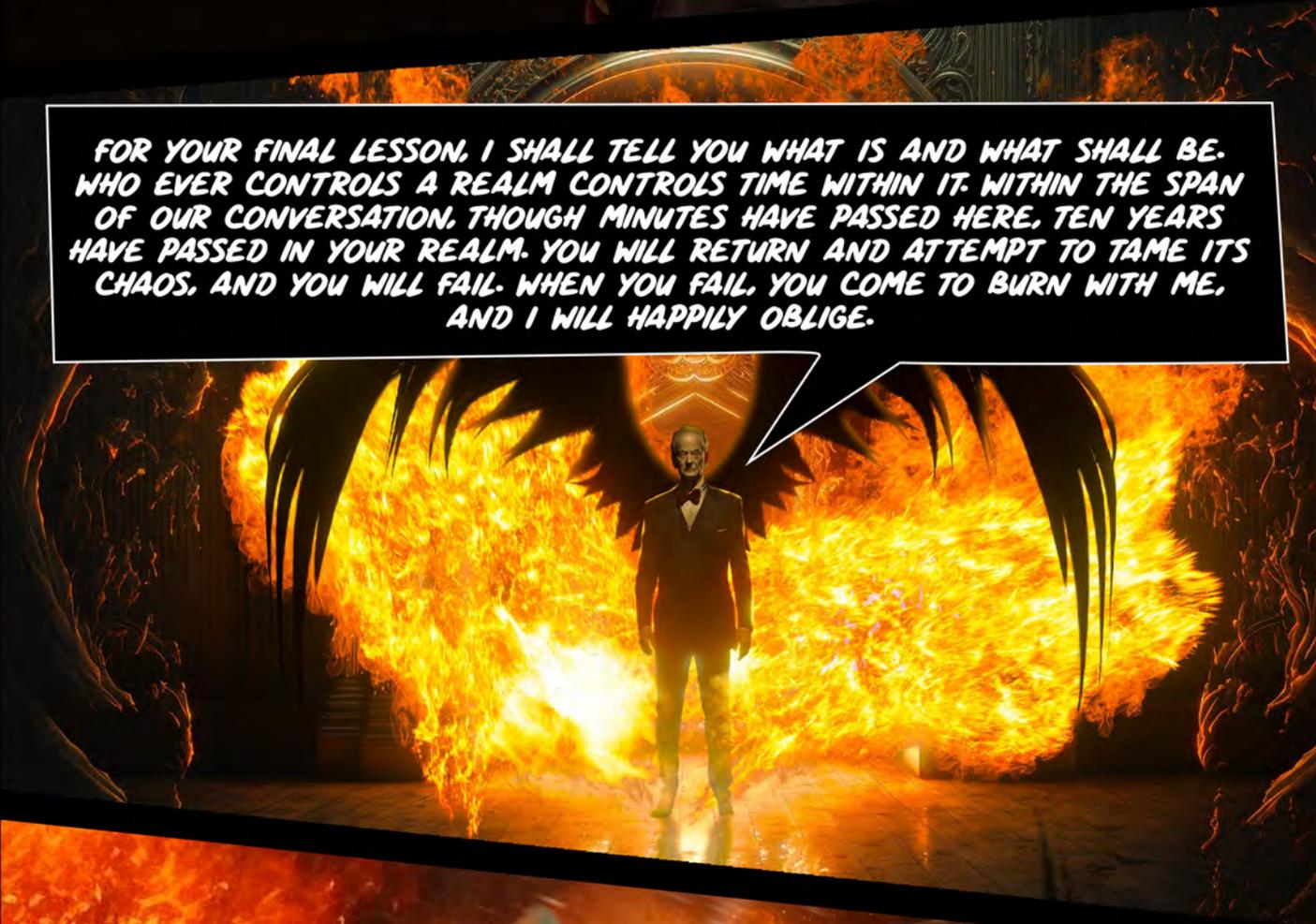
**DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU  
WANDERED FOR 1000 YEARS AND  
BY CHANCE ENDED UP IN HELL?**

**WHAT?**

**DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU WERE  
THE ONLY SOUL THAT WAS LOST,  
CONFUSED, OR IN DENIAL WHEN  
IT ARRIVED? HOW MUCH  
WANDERING AND ISOLATION CAN  
A SOUL ENDURE? ULTIMATELY,  
INTROSPECTION, DOUBT, AND GUILT  
LEAD THEM TO ME.**



**IN OUR TIME HERE,  
BELIEF HAS DELIVERED  
COUNTLESS SOULS TO  
YOUR REALM, WHICH  
WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE  
COME TO ME.**



**FOR YOUR FINAL LESSON, I SHALL TELL YOU WHAT IS AND WHAT SHALL BE.  
WHO EVER CONTROLS A REALM CONTROLS TIME WITHIN IT. WITHIN THE SPAN  
OF OUR CONVERSATION, THOUGH MINUTES HAVE PASSED HERE, TEN YEARS  
HAVE PASSED IN YOUR REALM. YOU WILL RETURN AND ATTEMPT TO TAME ITS  
CHAOS, AND YOU WILL FAIL. WHEN YOU FAIL, YOU COME TO BURN WITH ME,  
AND I WILL HAPPILY OBLIGE.**



**LOOK WHO FINALLY  
ARRIVED, TEN YEARS  
LATE.**



**THE ANGEL OF HELL WAS  
RIGHT, CHAOS HAD CONSUMED  
MY REALM.**



*THE VALLEY OF FACES SEEMED TO  
MOCK ME AS I FLEW PAST.*



**SOULS FROM PLACES I COULD NOT  
YET FATHOM RESIDED AMONG MY  
FROZEN MEMORIES, CLAIMING  
THEM AS THEIR OWN.**

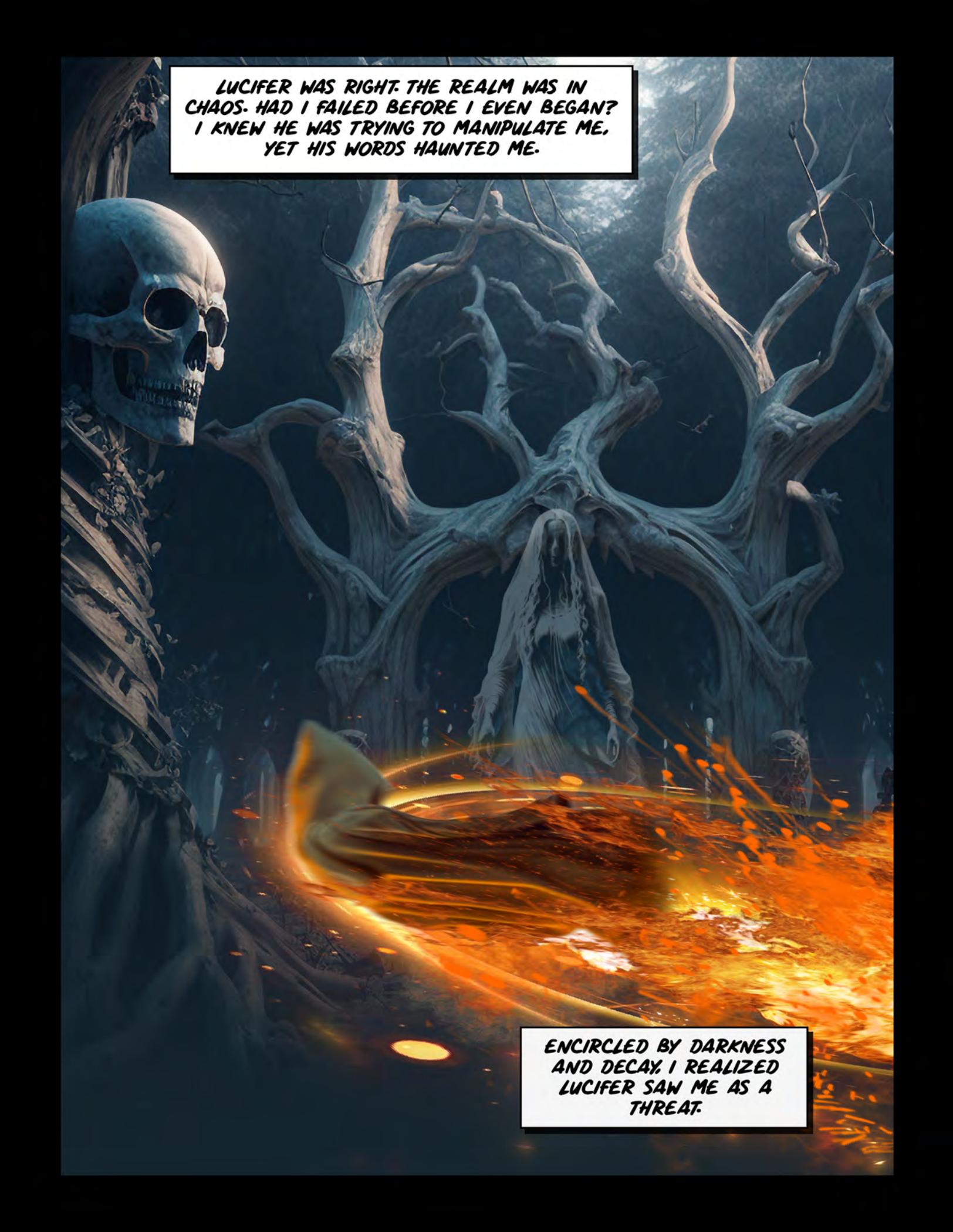


**BATTLES WAGED IN RUINS  
NOT MY OWN.**



**THE FIELD OF MIRRORS WAS NO LONGER EMPTY. STAKED SKELETONS STARED AT REFLECTIONS OF THEIR PAST, AS IF THEY WERE WAITING FOR SOMETHING.**





**LUCIFER WAS RIGHT. THE REALM WAS IN  
CHAOS. HAD I FAILED BEFORE I EVEN BEGAN?  
I KNEW HE WAS TRYING TO MANIPULATE ME,  
YET HIS WORDS HAUNTED ME.**

**ENCIRCLED BY DARKNESS  
AND DECAY, I REALIZED  
LUCIFER SAW ME AS A  
THREAT.**

**AND HOW IMPORTANT THIS REALM  
ACTUALLY WAS TO THE AFTERLIFE.**



**THERE YOU ARE.**

**I WAS IN HELL, FOR WHAT  
FELT LIKE TEN MINUTES.**

**I ALWAYS BELIEVED YOU  
WOULD RETURN.**





**LUCIFER TRICKED ME. I WOULD HAVE NEVER LEFT YOU ALONE.**

**HE TRICKED ME TOO. OVER THE YEARS, I HAVE THOUGHT A LOT ABOUT WHAT YOU DID, WHAT YOU RISKED FOR ME. I HAVE ALSO COME TO REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT THIS REALM IS. THIS IS A NEUTRAL GROUND FOR SOULS ENTERING THE AFTERLIFE.**



**LUCIFER TOLD ME THAT THERE ONCE WAS THE REALM OF PURGATORY, AND THAT SHE FELL VICTIM TO HER GUILT BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT SAVE EVERYONE. WHEN THAT HAPPENED, PURGATORY DISAPPEARED. NOW SHE BURNS IN HELL AND LIVES HER GUILT FOR ETERNITY.**

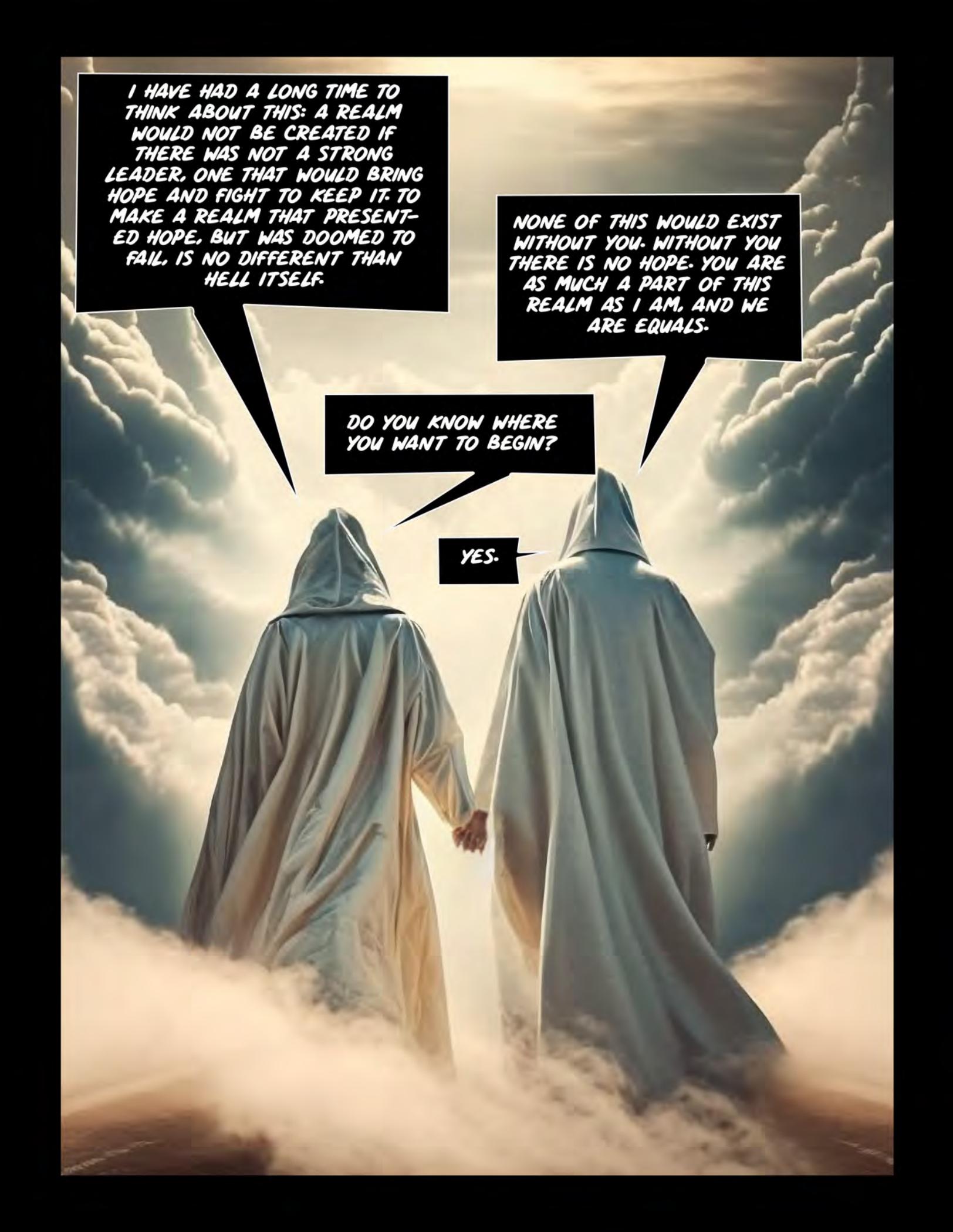
**I REMEMBER HER, ALTHOUGH I DID NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. ONE DAY SHE WAS GONE AND ALL OF PURGATORY WENT TO HELL. THAT WON'T HAPPEN TO YOU.**

**WHY NOT?**



**BECAUSE YOU HAVE A STRONGER RESOLVE. YOU FOUGHT THE DEMONS AS THEY REPEATEDLY RIPPED YOU APART, NEVER GIVING UP. GIVING UP IS NOT IN YOUR NATURE. I THINK THAT IS WHY THIS REALM EXISTS.**



A dramatic scene featuring two figures from behind, walking on a path of white, billowing clouds. They are wearing long, flowing white robes with hoods that obscure their faces. The background is a vast, bright sky filled with soft, white clouds, suggesting a heavenly or ethereal environment. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a sense of hope and transcendence. The figures are holding hands, symbolizing partnership and shared purpose.

**I HAVE HAD A LONG TIME TO THINK ABOUT THIS: A REALM WOULD NOT BE CREATED IF THERE WAS NOT A STRONG LEADER, ONE THAT WOULD BRING HOPE AND FIGHT TO KEEP IT. TO MAKE A REALM THAT PRESENTED HOPE, BUT WAS DOOMED TO FAIL, IS NO DIFFERENT THAN HELL ITSELF.**

**NONE OF THIS WOULD EXIST WITHOUT YOU. WITHOUT YOU THERE IS NO HOPE. YOU ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THIS REALM AS I AM, AND WE ARE EQUALS.**

**DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU WANT TO BEGIN?**

**YES.**