



DAVID MARQUEZ • MARISSA LOUISE • DC HOPKINS

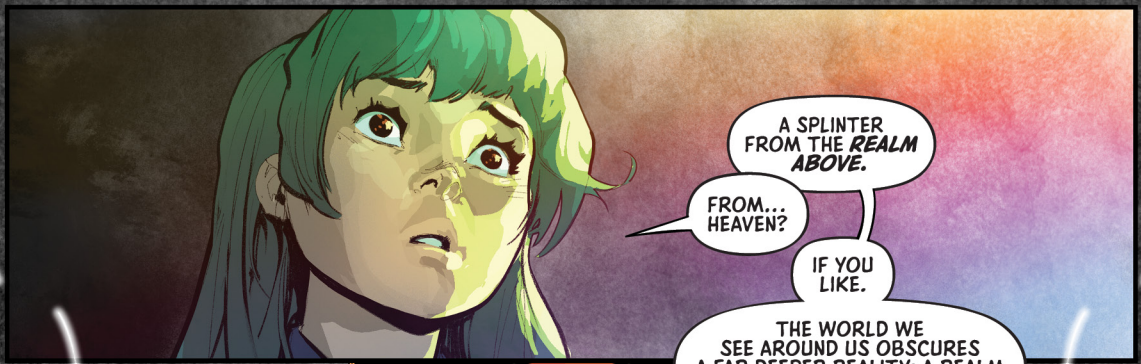
THE UNCHOSEN





THIS
IS...

...THE
SHARD.



A SPLINTER
FROM THE **REALM**
ABOVE.

FROM...
HEAVEN?

IF YOU
LIKE.

THE WORLD WE
SEE AROUND US OBSCURES
A FAR DEEPER REALITY: A REALM
WHERE THOUGHT AND CREATION
ARE ONE AND THE SAME.



"THERE HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN THOSE AMONG US
WHO KNEW THERE WAS
MORE TO THE WORLD
THAN WHAT THEIR
EYES COULD SEE.

"THROUGH DREAM
AND RITUAL, THEY
REACHED OUT
TO THIS HIDDEN
WORLD..."



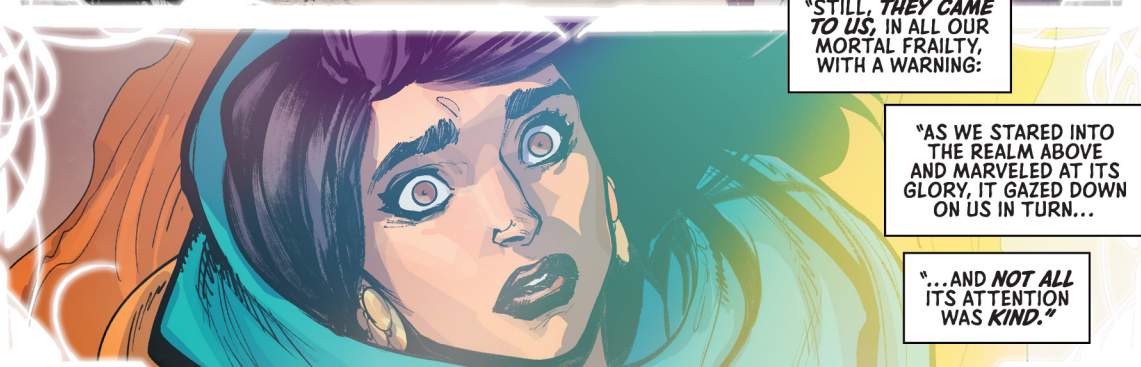
"...AND **SOMETHING**
REACHED BACK.



"WE ARE NOT ALONE,
AIDA. THESE OTHERS
ARE BEYOND OUR
ABILITY TO FULLY
COMPREHEND.

"THEY ARE THOUGHT
AND LIGHT AND DREAM AND
COLOR AND SOUND AND--AND
WORDS ULTIMATELY FAIL.

"STILL, **THEY CAME
TO US**, IN ALL OUR
MORTAL FRAILTY,
WITH A WARNING:



"AS WE STARED INTO
THE REALM ABOVE
AND MARVELED AT ITS
GLORY, IT GAZED DOWN
ON US IN TURN..."

"...AND **NOT ALL**
IT'S ATTENTION
WAS **KIND**."



"WITH THIS
WARNING CAME
A *GIFT*."

"THESE OTHERS
CANNOT *FIT* IN OUR
WORLD. WHAT YOU
SEE OF *THE SHARD*
IS BUT A SLIVER, A
REFLECTION OR ECHO
OF THE OTHER SIDE.

"THEY OFFERED US
A UNION, OUR FLESH
TO HOUSE THEIR
BEING. UNITED AS
ONE, ABLE TO WALK
HERE *AND* ABOVE.

"*THE GIFT* IS OUR ONLY HOPE
TO DEFEND OURSELVES IF THOSE
OTHERS THAT WISH US HARM
WERE TO ACT. WE HAVE PREPARED
FOR CENTURIES, FOR *MILLENNIA*."



WE HAVE
GROWN COMPLACENT.
DIMINISHED.

VULNERABLE.

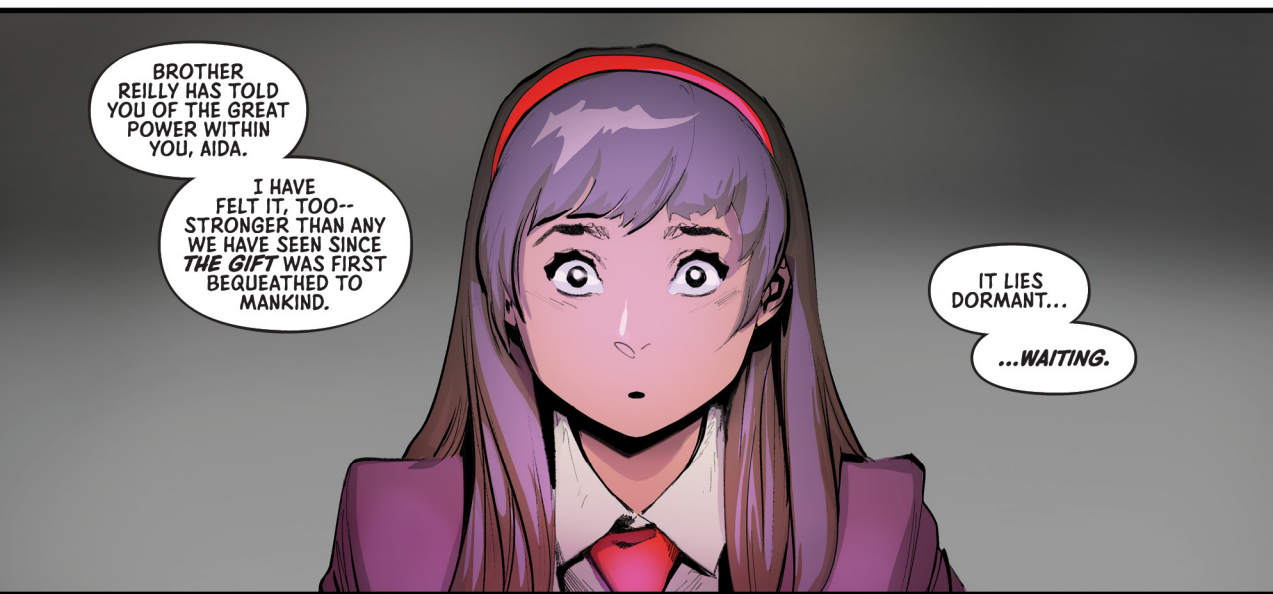
THERE ARE
SIGNS THAT THE GREAT
ENEMY KNOWS THIS, HAS
PLANNED FOR IT.

NONE OF
US WIELD THE FULL
POWER OF *THE GIFT*.
BUT IN *YOU*...



AIDA,
THE GIFT IS AN
INHERITANCE. PASSED
DOWN FROM GENERATION
TO GENERATION.

IT IS
INTRINSIC
TO WHO
YOU ARE.

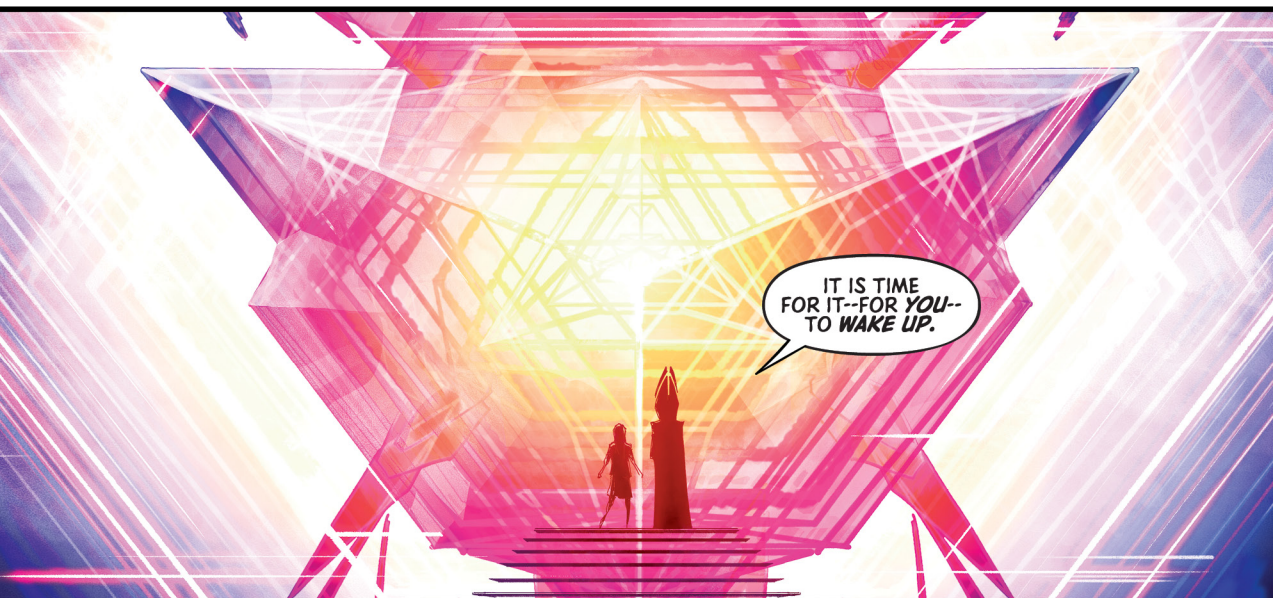


BROTHER
REILLY HAS TOLD
YOU OF THE GREAT
POWER WITHIN
YOU, AIDA.

I HAVE
FELT IT, TOO--
STRONGER THAN ANY
WE HAVE SEEN SINCE
THE GIFT WAS FIRST
BEQUEATHED TO
MANKIND.

IT LIES
DORMANT...

...WAITING.



IT IS TIME
FOR IT--FOR **YOU**--
TO WAKE UP.