

YOUNG STRANGE

Yes. Yes, I take it back. I didn't see anything.

Donna stares at the fear on her younger brother's face.

DONNA

What are you so afraid of? You've got to get over this, Stevie. There's nothing down there.

Donna takes a deep breath and dives down. Steven YELLS trying to stop her, but he's too late. He dives down after her.

EXT. UNDERWATER - THE POND - DAY

Steven dives down into the murky water, swimming hard, deeper and deeper. The greys turn to blacks, and he can just make out Donna swimming ahead of him --

UNTIL THE LIGHTS GLOW -- a veritable star field in the darkness below, glowing, pulsing, beckoning. Donna swims on, not seeing what we do.

Suddenly, something pulls at her, sucking her into the lights as they FLARE and blind Steven.

When his vision comes back, there is nothing to see but inky blackness.

EXT. THE POND - DAY

Steven surfaces, gasping for breath. He glances in every direction, looking for his sister

YOUNG STRANGE

Donna? Donna!!!

But nothing moves. Nothing stirs. And no matter how much he yells, his sister never surfaces.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE DRAINED POND - DAY

A gaggle of POLICE OFFICERS supervise CONSTRUCTION WORKERS as they finish draining the pond, creating a muddy depression.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A redheaded POLICE PSYCHOLOGIST (30) stands in front of GENE AND BEVERLY STRANGE (50s), sitting on their living room couch, utterly shattered. Beverly's eyes are red from hours of crying. Gene's face is blank, in shock.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Mr. and Mrs. Strange, we've drained the pond. There's no sign of Donna.

BEVERLY STRANGE

What do you mean?

PSYCHOLOGIST

I mean we have yet to find her body, and we're sure she's not in the pond. The police are starting a canvass of your neighbors in case this is an abduction.

GENE STRANGE

In case? What else would it be?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Steven said there were "lights" underwater. That she was pulled into the lights. He insists that's what happened. It could be transference. If there had been an accident. If Steven had done something too horrible to contemplate --

GENE STRANGE

Our son would never do that.

PSYCHOLOGIST

It's my job to explore every possibility.

GENE STRANGE

Then you'd best get to your job, because that is not a possibility. Steven loves his sister more than anything. He'd never do what you're suggesting.

WE MOVE past them, slowly entering the KITCHEN, the next room over, where young Steven sits, hugging his knees and rocking back and forth. He's afraid, broken.

CUT TO BLACK.

DOCTOR STRANGE

INT. HUDSON GENERAL HOSPITAL - EXECUTIVE WING - DAY

We hear him coming before we see him. A parade of footsteps rounds the corner, following the man of the hour. The center of attention.

DOCTOR STEVEN STRANGE. With piercing eyes, carefully trimmed goatee, and the swagger of a demigod, Strange commands attention and respect.

And the ENTOURAGE behind him gives him just that. On Strange's right, DOCTOR ROGER EPPS (60), the nervous and sycophantic Hospital Administrator. On his left, HOLLY WENTWORTH (20s), the hospital's publicity director. She's attractive, fast on her feet, and ambitious.

HOLLY

-- so needless to say we want to hit the ground running, publicity wise. D.C.'s loss is, after all, New York's gain.

EPPS

Hudson General's gain.

HOLLY

Of course. Doctor Strange, is it really true you saved the Vice President's life?

Strange takes his eyes off his surroundings for the first time and regards the people following him around.

STRANGE

My dear, that would be an egregious breach of doctor-patient confidentiality.

(beat)

And it wasn't the Vice President.

HOLLY

Perfect. We've arranged a New York Times Magazine interview for next week. Cover story of course. Tentative title: Strange Medicine.

Strange frowns, fixing Holly with his intense stare.

STRANGE

Really? An entire childhood enduring puns on an unfortunate last name and you want to go with "Strange Medicine?"

Holly scrambles to recover.

HOLLY

We -- could go with "Top Doc." Or "The Brain behind the Brain?" Or --

STRANGE

Holly, right?

(she nods)

You're having what we in neurology call a "brain fart." Please stop talking.

Strange turns away, his attention is drawn to the YOUNG BOY on a hospital bed. The boy twitches every few moments. His left eyelid is closed.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Hey.

BOY

Hey.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

You in pain?

The boy nods. Strange picks up his chart and leafs through it.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

All down your left side?

EPPS

Doctor? Your schedule today --

STRANGE

Get this boy a CAT scan. Deep brain, all angles.

A doctor in the entourage steps forward.

DOCTOR

Um, that's Doctor Breston's patient. He had a growth on his C-4 removed.

STRANGE

I see that. But that's not the problem. The boy's got a deep brain tumor --

DOCTOR

But that's Doctor Breston's patient.

Strange turns and delivers a withering stare.

STRANGE

Do you have any idea the agony that boy's in? I want that scan in one hour.

Epps steps in to relieve the tension.

EPPS
Get it done, Marshall. Now.

INT. STRANGE'S OFFICE - DAY

A corner office. Big, beautiful. Floor to ceiling windows revealing God's POV of the East River. Strange surveys it all, while Epps looks on.

EPPS
Biggest office in the wing. Bigger than mine.

STRANGE
I'll obviously need a decorator.
Preferably not the one who vomited beige all over everything.

EPPS
Done. Hey, about Breton, he is the current head of neurology --

STRANGE
You mean past.

EPPS
Well, while you're getting settled --

STRANGE
Look at me Roger. Understand this. I'm settled, and I'm in charge.

EPPS
Sure. Of course. But Doctor Breton, he's a good man. And to be, well, essentially shoved aside by a younger doctor is bad enough, but if you meddle with his patient --

STRANGE
He missed it, Roger. Plain as the pain on that kid's face and he missed it. What do you want me to do? Give Breton a lollypop?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Epps walks with DOCTOR BRETON (60s) a white-haired man with a scowl on his face. This is a bad day for him.

BRETON
He what?!

EPPS

The boy was in the hall waiting on a room. He just happened to be walking by --

BRESTON

Bullshit! What kind of game is this?

At the end of the hall a group of five RESIDENTS burst out of the medical theater. Two are crying. Two more are hurling curses as they storm off. The last resident, REESE, walks toward Epps and Breston, his head hung low.

EPPS

What is it, Reese? What happened?

REESE

Doctor Strange just let us all go.

BRESTON

What do you mean, "let you go."

REESE

He threw us out of our residency. Told us to find another specialty. Everyone except Acombe, and he's on some kind of probation.

Breston looks shell shocked as the resident sulks away.

BRESTON

Roger --

EPPS

It's just some kind of misunderstanding.

Strange exits the surgical theater as if nothing unusual has taken place.

EPPS (CONT'D)

Doctor Strange -- I was wondering --

BRESTON

What the hell do you think you're doing? Those kids were the top of their class.

STRANGE

They're butchers.

BRESTON

They're learning. That's what residents do. And who the hell do you think you are meddling with one of my patients?!

STRANGE

Heads up.

Strange pulls a folder from under his arm and tosses it at Breston. Breston catches it, half open. He sees the scan inside and his anger fades.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I know. Horrible breach of protocol. How ever will you forgive me?

BRESTON

Jesus.

STRANGE

I'm pretty sure he forgives me.

BRESTON

It's up against the boy's medulla oblongata. He's got -- three months. Six.

STRANGE

He's got more. I'm going to operate.

Strange heads off. Breston hurries after him.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - DAY

Breston grabs Strange and spins him to face him. Five NURSES watch in rapt attention.

BRESTON

You can't. It's inoperable.

STRANGE

I find when a doctor says "inoperable" they usually mean "uninsurable," or perhaps "incapable."

BRESTON

You son of a bitch! You're going to kill that boy!

Strange spins on his heels, anger rising.

STRANGE

No, doctor. Your cowardice was going to kill him, six months down the line. And lucky you, no blood on your hands.

BRESTON

The tumor's too deep. Even with a microscalpel and video assist, it'd take the better part of a day just to reach the tumor, let alone excise it. It can't be done. You're going to cut him open and you're going to kill him.

STRANGE

And what if you're right? What if I'm not as good as I think I am? I will have done, what? Denied him the few months of agonizing life he had left? But what if I'm right? The technique I'm going to use could save thousands of patients. The risk is worth the reward.

BRESTON

Easy to say when the life you're risking is someone else's.

STRANGE

You're welcome to join me in the OR, doctor. So you can see for yourself, I'm not risking anything.

Breston storms off. Epps sighs, shooting Strange a disappointed look. He hustles off after Breston.

That's when Strange notices the nurses. All eyes are on him, until he looks their way. Four of them instantly turn away, pretending to be busy.

But the fifth, NURSE BECCA? She stares right at Strange, biting her lower lip. That look that says, "It's on."

INT. STRANGE'S PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Becca awakens late at night on the lightning blue satin sheets of Strange's large bed. In front of her, a floor to ceiling window showing God's POV of Manhattan, lit up like it's Christmas.

But no Strange. She hears some faint noise coming from the other room and goes to investigate.

INT. STRANGE'S PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Becca finds Strange facing a similar view, hauling ass on a treadmill, set on at least eight. On a computer screen mounted above the treadmill, Strange is reviewing brain scans, even as he passes the twelve mile mark.

BECCA

You don't sleep?

STRANGE

I do. Polyphasic sleep. I sleep thirty minutes at a time, six times every twenty four hours.

BECCA

So -- wait. That's only three hours a day. You don't sleep. You nap.

STRANGE

I'm just not a glutton about it. DaVinci, Edison, they did the same.

BECCA

Seems -- lonely. I mean, no wife, no girlfriend, you've already alienated half the staff and it's only your first day. Why would you punish yourself like that?

Strange stops the treadmill, a far away look in his eyes.

STRANGE

Because that's how you atone.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

A digital clock counts upwards, marking the length of the operation. We're well into the tenth hour.

A brain surgery in progress. There are four doctors here and numerous nurses. Strange is wielding a microscalpel, watching a VIDEO ASSIST, showing an incredibly magnified image of the boy's deep brain. A black tumor looms as large as Saturn.

Behind Strange is Breston. He's taking no pleasure, no gloating. The boy is dying. One of the machines around the surgical table starts BEEPING insistently.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST

Heart rate down to 50! Pull out.

STRANGE

He's not arresting yet. We're never getting another shot at this. I've got just one last strand to remove.

BRESTON

He's dying, Strange. He's been sedated too long. His vitals are on the floor.

STRANGE

He's tough. He's going to hang on until I'm done.

Strange's hand shakes just a millimeter. On the video monitor it looks like an earthquake, coming dangerously close to the grey matter.

And just then, THE MONITOR GOES DARK.

BECCA

What just happened?

Strange freezes his hand. He looks around the room, finding the TECH standing behind the equipment stack.

STRANGE

I've got no eyes! Get the feed back! NOW!

BRESTON

Pull out, Strange. You're blind. You so much as touch his medulla and you'll kill him.

STRANGE

Watch my hands. You tell me if you see a flinch. Get that feed up now!!!

BEEEEEP! The Anesthesiologist goes pale.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST

He's in arrest. Get me the crash cart! Strange, pull out!

STRANGE

No!

ANESTHESIOLOGIST

You don't tell me no! It's my call now and you know it! He's dying.

STRANGE

And if we revive him he's still dying! I can finish this.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST

Doctor, his heart has stopped!

STRANGE

I can restart the plumbing. I'm never getting another shot at the tumor.

BRESTON

That's it. If you won't stop him I will.

STRANGE

Nurse, 50ccs of midazolam.

Becca looks oddly at Strange, confused.

BECCA

A sedative, doctor? But --

STRANGE

You jab that needle into Doctor Breton's neck if he takes one step toward me. I can do this. I can do this!

Something begins to happen. The lights in the surgery seem to surge, growing brighter and brighter until they're blinding. The lights seem to detach from their sources, floating around the room until we --

FADE TO WHITE.

INT. THE BOY'S BRAIN - STRANGE'S POV

The scalpel looms large, like a huge spaceship, cutting through an alien landscape. The tumor is the sky, black as night. A few small strands of black connect the sky to the gray earth of the boy's brain beneath us.

STRANGE (V.O.)

What -- what's happening?

BECCA (V.O.)

Doctor? Doctor?!

BRETON (V.O.)

That's it! I'm taking over. Nurse, mark the time.

The scalpel moves, sweeping through the very tight, labyrinthine area of connection between the tumor and the brain. And with one smooth, fluid move, he cuts the tumor free, without a single grey cell disturbed. FLASH!

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Breton's hand is on Strange's elbow as Strange snaps out of it. The monitor suddenly crackles back to life.

Everyone but Strange stares at it -- the tumor is gone.

BECCA

The tumor --

Breston looks around Strange, at the intact tumor on the end of Strange's scalpel.

BRESTON

I don't believe it. Get that crash cart in here now!

Strange looks stunned as two ORDERLIES rush the crash cart into the room. ZAP. The BEEPING stops, and the familiar rhythm of the boy's heartbeat starts back up.

Everyone is stunned. No one more than Strange.

EXT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Strange bursts out of the OR, in a daze. Breston is right on his heels.

BRESTON

What was that? What the hell happened in there Strange?

But Strange just stares around the hallway as if it's an alien landscape.

BRESTON (CONT'D)

That was the most arrogant, irresponsible act of malpractice I've ever seen! I'm reporting you to the medical board tomorrow. Are you listening to me?

But no, Strange is not. He's grabbing his head, rubbing his eyes. Breston grabs Strange, and Strange whirls around and CLOCKS HIM right in the face.

Breston folds like laundry.

STRANGE'S POV

The hallway is filled with multi-colored glowing lights, floating in space. A brilliant, twinkling star field.

BACK TO SCENE

Strange rushes out of the hallway.

INT. STRANGE'S CAR - NIGHT

A late-model Jaguar. Very nice and stylish. Strange bows his head, gripping the wheel and shutting his eyes tight.

When he looks up and out the windshield, he looks relieved. No lights out there anymore. Just a largely empty hospital parking lot.

He starts up his car and drives off.

INT/EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Strange's Jaguar pulls up to an intersection. To his right, the bright lights of the city beckon. To his left, the darkness of the warehouse district.

The lights to his right FLARE. Strange shuts his eyes. When he opens them he turns left, heading home via a darker route.

INT/EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Strange relaxes as he drives down the dark street --

Until the lights begin to manifest here as well. In moments it's like he's driving through a star field.

He closes his eyes to clear his sight, but when he opens them again --

A YOUNG GIRL IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE CAR!

Strange yanks on the wheel, sending the Jaguar into a skid to avoid the girl --

Who bears a striking resemblance to his sister, DONNA, still age thirteen, and is surrounded by a blue glow.

The Jaguar fishtails. SLAM! The engine block accordions as the Jaguar takes on the power pole head-on.

Airbags erupt on all sides, cushioning Strange against the impact. The airbag in front of him pops and deflates. Strange looks around, amazed to find that he's okay --

And then he notices the electrical wires above, swaying with the damaged pole.

CREAK. The pole falls toward Strange's car. Trapped in the wreckage he can only watch as the heavy metal and arcing wires plummet toward him.

SLAM. Strange throws his hands up, trying to brace the roof and keep the weight from crushing him.

The electricity from the live wires travels right through the roof of the car, sending blue bolts of power shooting through Strange's hands and arms.

Strange SCREAMS in agony, until a massive blast of energy causes him to

BLACKOUT.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

STRANGE'S POV

Lights. Floating lights, blurry and distant. Our focus sharpens and we can see the lights are just slashes of sunlight from the vertical blinds in this hospital room.

Confused, he takes in his surroundings, his gaze eventually falling to his arms, which are wrapped in bandages up to his elbows.

He lifts his right arm, trying to flex the fingers beneath the dressings. His face tightens in pain.

BRESTON (O.S.)

Please don't do that, doctor.

Breston walks in the door, carrying Strange's chart. Breston looks subdued. Sad even.

STRANGE

What -- what happened?

BRESTON

You were in a car accident. The injuries from the accident were relatively minor. But your car hit a power pole. The power line fell on your car. Your body was subjected to over 8000 volts --

STRANGE

Spit it out. What are you saying?

BRESTON

Your arms. Your hands. They sustained severe neurological damage. Your sensory function should return, but motor function will be impaired -- most likely severely.

Strange raises his hand to interject, only to be hit with a bolt of pain.

STRANGE

You'll forgive me for getting a second opinion. I want Lessinger in Philadelphia to perform the surgery.

BRESTON

Doctor, you don't understand. I've already performed the surgery.

STRANGE

You what?!

BRESTON

You fried off eighty percent of your myelin sheathing. You're lucky to be alive. You would've lost both arms if I didn't operate. I'm sorry, doctor.

STRANGE

I doubt that very much. Give me that chart! I'm going to have your medical licence!

Breston puts the chart on Strange's chest.

BRESTON

Do a post-consult with Lessinger. Do a post-consult with everybody you can think of. They'll tell you the same. I know this is hard, Steven, but I saved your hands.

STRANGE

You butchered me!

Breston is stung, but realizes Strange is now just another angry, impotent man in a hospital bed.

BRESTON

Do you have anyone we can contact, to help you through this time? Family, or someone close to you?

Strange doesn't answer. He simply reaches for the charts, every movement of his hand wracking his body with pain.

Strange waits until Breston leaves before he drops the papers, the pain in his arms overwhelming him.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

The light beard on Strange's face tells us it's days later. An ORDERLY cuts the bandages off Strange's hands as Epps stands at the foot of the bed.

EPPS

I'm so sorry, Steven.

Strange doesn't even look at Epps. He can only examine his scarred, alien hands beneath the bandages.

EPPS (CONT'D)

I want you to see an outpatient psychologist. We'll pay for her. She's quite excellent.

STRANGE

Keep your shrink. All I want from you and this hospital is one thing.

EPPS

Name it.

STRANGE

Keep a chair warm, because I'm coming back.

INT/EXT. REHABILITATION MONTAGE

- Physical therapy. Strange painfully stretches his forearms with a male THERAPIST. His hands tremor and shake with every move.
- Strange pours over medical papers, writing down the elaborate names of different medications. He looks up and sees THE FLOATING LIGHTS have returned. Strange pinches the bridge of his nose, but they don't go away.
- Armed with a prescription, Strange picks up a small vial from a nearby pharmacy. He takes one the pills, dry.
- More physical therapy. He squeezes a resistance ball, but immediately his hand tremors. He focuses as hard as he can and the tremor stops, for a moment. Behind him, MOVERS pack up one of the works of art on the wall.
- Lines of acupuncture needles streak down both Strange's forearms, balls of moxa curling smoke from their tips.
- Strange picks up several vials from the pharmacy, the bills for the medication nearly a foot long.

- Strange works out, pushing his body. He's getting strong. Lean. Feeling good.

- Strange crushes up exotic dried flowers, adding it to a cup of hot water. His kitchen counters are filled with exotic roots and flowers and powders. But as Strange brings the cup to his lips, his hands quake, spilling some of the concoction.

- With a shaking hand, Strange crosses off the last of possibilities from a huge list in his notes. Again, Strange sees the odd floating lights everywhere, and no amount of hard blinking changes that.

- He sits in lotus position, trying meditation. His concentration only breaks when something is slipped under the door. It's an EVICTION NOTICE. Strange rises and heads to pick it up. As he does so, we can see all the art and nearly all the expensive furniture is gone.

INT. BACKROOM SURGERY - NIGHT

SUPER THE TITLE: **THREE YEARS LATER**

A dimly lit room. In the center lies a LONG METAL TABLE, like the kind you might find in a vet's office. Along one wall, metal shelving units stocked with various surgical and medical supplies.

But we're not really looking around because right now a RUSSIAN MOBSTER has a GUN pointed at us.

We pull back to see that it's Strange under the gun.

RUSSIAN MOBSTER

You fix him now!

Strange doesn't flinch. He doesn't even blink.

STRANGE

Do you see where my right thumb is?

RUSSIAN MOBSTER

What?

STRANGE

My right thumb. Look at it.

We follow the mobster's gaze. Strange's thumb is in a bullet wound in the mobster's UNCONSCIOUS PARTNER, lying on the metal table.

RUSSIAN MOBSTER

What about it?

STRANGE

It's the only thing blocking your friend's carotid artery. With the amount of blood he's already lost, I say without my thumb, he's dead inside three minutes.

The mobster is worried. He moves the gun closer to Strange's temple.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

He's you're boss, isn't he?

RUSSIAN MOBSTER

You fix him!

STRANGE

I can. But I've found in this subset of the medical profession it's wiser to collect my fee up front.

The mobster looks at the man on the table, then back to Strange. He reaches into a black satchel, and pulls out a fat envelope full of money.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

That buys your friend a flu shot. Unless you'd rather take him to a hospital? They'll ask questions but on the bright side they do accept Blue Cross.

The mobster reaches in again. He adds another envelope to the table. Strange shrugs. It's enough.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Hand me the metal canister on the second shelf. Open it for me.

The mobster does as he's told. With his free hand, Strange lifts the canister, and takes a deep swig. Up comes the mobster's gun again.

RUSSIAN MOBSTER

You're drinking!?!

Strange stares right into his eyes.

STRANGE

Steadies the hand. Something you shoving that gun in my face does nothing to help. Now put it down, and get me clamps, gauze, alcohol, and that soldering iron.

RUSSIAN MOBSTER
Soldering iron?

STRANGE
It gets no style points, but for
cauterizing a wound it gets the job done.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Strange's hand tremors, causing him to fumble his keys as he locks up for the night. He exhales deeply, exhausted to his soul. He retrieves the keys and locks the bolt.

When he turns around the floating LIGHTS glow. The same glowing, floating orbs, suspended all around him.

STRANGE
Great. You again.

But then a floating light right in front of Strange does something it's never done before. IT MOVES.

It floats to Strange's left. And not just that one. All of them. Thousands. The entire star-field before him begins slowly, gently flowing down another dark alley, as if carried by a lazy current.

The dark alley beside him is filling with floating, moving light. The lights gather, growing in intensity as they near each other.

Curiosity gets the better of Strange and he follows them.

EXT. ALLEY - DEAD END - NIGHT

The lights converge on one another at a solid brick wall, flaring brighter and brighter as they approximate a miniature sun.

And then they PASS RIGHT THROUGH THE BRICK WALL. Strange is suddenly plunged back into darkness.

He shrugs. So much for that hallucination. He turns to head back to the train --

WHEN THE BRICK WALL EXPLODES OUTWARDS! Shards of brick rip through the alley, knocking Strange to the concrete.

Strange pushes the bricks off him and looks back. The entire warehouse behind him seems to have disintegrated. Only a bare skeleton of girders and rubble remain.

INT. DESTROYED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

At the epicenter of the explosion, Strange finds an old man. We will call him the ANCIENT ONE (80s).

Strange checks his vitals. Dying or dead, tough to tell.

Strange starts CPR -- when suddenly Strange is KICKED from behind. A millisecond later, a dark assailant grabs his head --

AND PLACES AN ANCIENT DAGGER TO HIS THROAT. Strange catches a glimpse of his assailant.

JADE (30s), a beautiful Asian woman, her eyes burning with intensity as she prepares to slice Strange's neck.

JADE

Who are you? What are you doing to the Ancient One?

STRANGE

I just found him. I was calling 911.

Jade can hardly believe it.

JADE

You just stumbled on this place?

Before Strange can answer, she senses something in the shadows. Her body tenses.

JADE (CONT'D)

RUN!!!

Out of the corner of his eye, Strange sees something moving, but when he turns to face it, nothing's there.

STRANGE

What's --

Jade doesn't explain. Instead, she DROP KICKS STRANGE IN THE CHEST, hurling him backward eight feet.

And a second later, the rubble he was standing on is PULVERIZED. Only the spot where the old man lies is untouched, as Jade stands over him, protecting him.

Strange watches in disbelief as Jade fights nothing but air. She's leaping five feet in the air, somersaulting and landing blow after blow on -- something. But something Strange cannot see. Whatever it is, it's smashing everything around Jade and the old man.

Strange rolls onto his knees to run. But as he does, he's face to face with a shard of glass from one of the warehouse's destroyed windows.

And in the reflection, he can see what Jade is battling.

THE REAPER

About twice the size of a panther, and with the same power and speed. But that's where the similarities end. It has at least ten legs, each ending in razor sharp silver claws. It's mouth contains three rows of dagger-like teeth. It's hide is covered in overlapping, armor-like scales.

In the reflection Strange sees it turn to face him, eyes of malice glaring at him.

JADE

Run!!!

Strange doesn't need to be told twice. He runs for his life, clambering over a pile of rubble. Behind him the falling rubble is thrown in every direction as his invisible pursuer gains.

At the top of the rubble pile, Strange sees only one avenue of escape -- a partially collapsed metal staircase, leading up. Strange leaps for the lowest stair, pulling himself up.

SECOND FLOOR

The upper floor is a hazardous maze of collapsed concrete, but Strange can see a path through the wreckage to a still-intact fire escape.

Slowly, cautiously, he starts across the crumbling floor. With each step, a piece of concrete flooring gives way. Strange tightrope-walks across the exposed rebar, the fire escape almost within reach.

SLAM! The floor in front of him erupts as the huge, invisible beast leaps right through it, landing in front of him. As the dust settles upon the Reaper, Strange gets the faintest glimpse of this thing's incredible size.

He runs for the metal stairs, no longer caring about the collapsing floor beneath him. With every step he takes, the floor gives way, the rebar bending and breaking as well. Strange lunges for the metal stair as the entire second floor plummets twenty feet to the ground.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Strange runs out to the rooftop, only to realize he's trapped. He rushes to the edge of the roof as the Reaper breaks through from the floor below.

The unseen beast splashes through a pool of water as it races right for Strange.

He looks in every direction, looking for somewhere to escape. Below him lies a shard of broken glass, and in its reflection he sees the beast's close in, its legs flexing and coiling to strike.

Strange does the only thing he can. He throws up his hands in defense.

And something completely unexpected happens. HIS HANDS GLOW. A momentary bright white light flashes from them, THROWING BACK THE REAPER.

The stunned Reaper howls in fury, but as it goes to strike again Jade swings up from nowhere, landing a flying kick to the creature's midsection, altering its trajectory. It flies clear of Strange, plummeting into the open air.

The arc of its fall sends it right onto a spiked iron fence. Spikes pierce its body, ripping it nearly in two.

The beast's dead body SMOKES, turning into a blue ethereal mist and dissolving away into nothing.

STRANGE

What -- what -- what --

Jade takes up a defensive posture against Strange.

JADE

Stay back. First you say you stumbled on this place, then you blast that Reaper? Stop lying and tell me who you are.

STRANGE

I don't know what you're talking about. I'm just a doctor!

Jade studies the fear on Strange's face. Her mind races.

JADE

Fine. Come with me.

STRANGE

No. I'm not going anywhere --

Jade just frowns and grabs Strange by the arm. She barely twists it at all but it puts Strange in agony, forcing him to follow her back down the rickety metal stair.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Ow! OW! What do you think you're doing?!

INT. DESTROYED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Jade only releases Strange in front of the Ancient One's unconscious body.

JADE

You're a doctor? Fix him or I kill you.

STRANGE

Fix him? Who are you people?

She reaches for his arm again. He yanks it away.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Okay! Okay! But I don't even know what's wrong with him.

Strange kneels down. He opens the Ancient One's tunic. Inside the Ancient One's chest are impossibly deep cuts. Strange probes one of the cuts and discovers discolored, black tissue.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I've never seen tissue damage like this. This man needs an ambulance.

JADE

No. No ambulance. He'll be dead before it gets here. You are his only hope. You will fix him, or --

STRANGE

You'll kill me. Got it.

INT. BACKROOM SURGERY - NIGHT

The Ancient One MOANS as Jade lowers him onto Strange's metal operating table, he's conscious, but in agony.

Strange washes up fast, his mind racing. His hands shake as he dries them. He reaches for the bottle of Scotch, only to find a hand on his elbow. The Ancient One touches him. The old man's eyes are filled with compassion.

ANCIENT ONE

You don't need that. You never did.

The Ancient One seizes in pain, silencing him. Strange notices it then: HIS HANDS ARE ROCK STEADY!

STRANGE

What did you do? What did he do to me?!

JADE

He took away your weakness. Now save him.

STRANGE

I don't know what I can do about that odd tissue damage.

JADE

Let me worry about the Corruption. Just keep him alive.

Strange stares at his hands as if they are alien. Slowly, a smile creeps on his face. Just a hint of his former swagger returns.

STRANGE

Then make yourself useful and wash up.

Strange brandishes his gleaming scalpel and sets to work.

LATER

Strange lifts his hand up, only now instead of a scalpel it holds a surgical needle and thread.

STRANGE

Scissors.

Jade hands them to him and Strange clips the surgical thread. He straightens up.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Guy's built like a tank. He'll make it.

Jade looks down at the Ancient One. His torso is a crisscross of suturing.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Now it's time for a little Q and A, and you'll be providing the A's. What the hell happened back there?

JADE

I can't tell you any more than you know.

Strange shakes his head.

STRANGE

Not remotely acceptable. You're not leaving here until I get some answers.

Jade just shrugs. She reaches out casually, pushing on a pressure point in Strange's neck. Strange folds like a deck chair, instantly unconscious.

ANCIENT ONE

You need to work on your courtesy, my dear.

Jade hurries to the old man's side, helping him up.

JADE

Something's very wrong here.

ANCIENT ONE

Another incursion from the dark dimension, targeting me. I should say so.

JADE

(looking down at Strange)

No. Him. Something's wrong with him. He cast a spell. Repelled the reaper. I saw it with my own eyes.

The Ancient One's eyes twinkle with surprise.

INT. STRANGE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Strange wakes in his bed. He sits up, his head throbbing.

STRANGE

Note to self: no more drinking after 10.

Strange gets up and heads over to the bathroom. He turns on the water, and splashes his face, trying to wake up --

But when he does this HIS FACE TURNS RED. He looks at himself in the mirror, shocked. He looks down at his hands. They are covered in blood. Strange is shocked, remembering what he thought was a dream.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

It can't be.

Strange sees something on the back of the bathroom door --

A CHINESE TAKEOUT MENU. Written in black marker on it:
 "It can be. Join me for lunch and all your questions will
 be answered."

EXT. CHINATOWN - DAY

Fishmongers sell an endless variety of glassy-eyed fish
 in a narrow alley off Canal Street. Strange stares down
 at the flyer.

Then up at the ratty CHINESE RESTAURANT ahead, scrunched
 up in the corner of a dark dead end.

INT. RUN DOWN CHINESE RESTAURANT - DAY

Strange stares at the Health Department's letter grade
 card in the door. A "D."

Inside Strange finds a cramped space filled with what
 appear to be HOMELESS PEOPLE, each huddled over a
 steaming bowl of who knows what.

The fluorescent lighting buzzes and flickers, the floor
 is covered in food stains, Strange thinks seriously of
 turning back around and leaving --

Only to find Jade standing behind him.

JADE

He's in the back. He's expecting you.

STRANGE

You're real?

JADE

Last time I checked.

Strange looks toward the back. Steam pours from huge
 cauldrons, obscuring everything.

He turns back to ask Jade another question, but she's
 completely disappeared.

STRANGE

Maddening.

But he presses on, heading into --

THE BACK OF THE KITCHEN

On the far side of the steam fog, the Ancient One slops
 food into take out containers.

ANCIENT ONE

Ah. The doctor. Here, you try.

The Ancient One hands him a container. Strange stares down at what looks a lot like eyeballs in brown sludge.

STRANGE

Lost my appetite. You promised answers.

ANCIENT ONE

And you shall have them. Come. Help. You carry those.

Strange sees ten plastic bags bursting at the seams with takeout. He looks at the old man like he's crazy.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Come. Help an old man run his errand and you will be rewarded.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - DAY

Strange struggles to keep up with the old man, who hustles up the street in a fast walk, hands laden with an equal number of delivery bags to Strange's.

STRANGE

What -- what happened last night?! Hey!
Old man! I want an--

Strange looks up and sees that the Ancient One is entering an aged, crumbling hospital on the lower East side of Manhattan. He knows where this is.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Bellevue? You're serious? You're delivering to a mental hospital?

ANCIENT ONE

Of course. Hospital food is atrocious.

The Ancient One enters. Strange looks down at the food in the containers.

STRANGE

Not sure this is an improvement.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - DAY ROOM - DAY

As the Ancient One enters, many of the MENTAL PATIENTS stir from their drugged haze. Some even CLAP. The Ancient One smiles as he hands out food to the eager patients.

Strange follows, handing out food with trepidation as a procession of very odd characters come up to him.

Strange gets to the bottom of the bag, where he finds a white TOWEL.

STRANGE

What's this for?

Just then, one of the over-eager patients THROWS HIS FOOD, hitting Strange.

ANCIENT ONE

You.

Strange looks to the Ancient One, shocked, but the Ancient One has already moved on. He's sitting with a particularly disturbed patient at a table in the corner.

Strange wipes himself off with the towel and joins the Ancient One.

STRANGE

Nice trick. You pay that guy to throw his food on me?

ANCIENT ONE

That is one possible explanation.

EDGAR, the disturbed young man in the corner, smiles as the Ancient One hand him a styrofoam bowl of soup.

Edgar's face lights up like a little boy when he sees the Ancient One.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Come. Meet Edgar. Edgar is a very special person. Aren't you, Edgar?

Edgar merely grunts, his eyes sparkling.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Will you show our friend what you can do?

Edgar nods and closes his eyes. Suddenly, he's serene, all his tics gone. Strange turns to the Ancient One.

STRANGE

I've tried meditation --

But when Strange looks back at Edgar, HE'S DISAPPEARED! Strange looks all around. No sign of Edgar anywhere, and precious few places he could've hidden. None close.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Nice. Nice trick.

ANCIENT ONE

Must it be?

STRANGE

"Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." I was a big Holmes fan growing up.

ANCIENT ONE

And I take it you are an expert on what is possible?

STRANGE

I am a rational man if that's your question.

ANCIENT ONE

It is. Then, would you mind telling me how you stumbled upon me last night?

Strange frowns. He wasn't expecting this.

STRANGE

I have -- hallucinations from time to time. I was in a car accident and ever since, I experience false visual images. I see lights.

EDGAR

I see the lights. They're beautiful.

Strange jumps just a bit. There is Edgar, sitting in his chair just as before. As though he was always there. Strange slams his fist down on the table.

STRANGE

What are you trying to pull?

ANCIENT ONE

Was that really the first time you saw the lights? After the accident?

STRANGE

Who have you been talking to? What game are you playing?

ANCIENT ONE

No game. You came here for answers --

STRANGE

And all I get are questions.

ANCIENT ONE

The most important answers always appear that way at first.

STRANGE

You touched my arm and my hand stopped shaking. Tell me how you did that.

ANCIENT ONE

Of all the things you saw last night, that is all you wish to know?

STRANGE

The rest was a hallucination. Or a trick.

ANCIENT ONE

I can see you will allow no other possibility. Let me repay you for your service to me.

STRANGE

Just tell me what you did to me.

ANCIENT ONE

You wouldn't believe me.

STRANGE

You know what? You're right. This was a big waste of time.

Strange storms off.

ANCIENT ONE

The bag.

STRANGE

What?

ANCIENT ONE

Your payment is in the bottom.

Strange stops, realizing he's still holding the empty plastic delivery bag.

STRANGE

There's noth --

Something glints in the bottom of the bag. An ornate golden medallion. We'll call it the EYE OF AGAMOTTO.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

What --

ANCIENT ONE

It is the most precious thing I possess.

Strange shakes his head in disbelief. As he walks out of the room, the Ancient One speaks to a FIGURE who's suddenly standing behind him.

FIGURE

All we can see is his outline, one of a broad hat and ratty trenchcoat, one that seems to float around him.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Follow him. Keep him safe, but show him the breadth of the possible.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Strange sits on the subway car, eyeing the medallion.

KID

Nice. I'm not sure you can pull it off, but nice.

Strange looks up to see a teenage KID, with his own accumulation of gold chains around his neck. He winks, gets off the train, the doors close, and the train continues on its journey.

Strange leans back, the exhaustion of the last twenty-four hours setting in. As he falls asleep in his seat, the EYE on the medallion OPENS.

EYE OF AGAMOTTO

The eye in the medallion doesn't appear to be made of the metallic material, rather it looks very much like a real eye. It glances this way and that, taking in the surroundings. As it looks right at CAMERA -- BOOM.

CUT TO:

STRANGE

Awakens to a scene of mayhem; people are YELLING, pushing past his legs. Strange sees the FLOATING LIGHTS, streaming into the car almost every direction.

Strange rubs his eyes and looks toward where the crowd's attention is focused; a MAN lies prone on the floor, surrounded by concerned COMMUTERS.

COMMUTERS (O.S.)

It was crazy -- heart attack -- maybe
stroke -- someone call 911 --

Strange gets up, walking toward the prone figure. He turns toward an ELDERLY WOMAN who looks toward the crowd, concerned.

STRANGE

What happened? Is the guy hurt?

The Elderly Woman completely ignores Strange. Strange approaches another HEAVYSET MAN who also watches on.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Hey, buddy. What's up with that guy?

Again, Strange gets completely ignored.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

New Yorkers. Friendliest people in the
world.

Strange pushes through the crowd, toward the man on the floor. As he gets closer, he finally gets close enough for a look at the fallen man's face. IT'S HIS OWN.

Strange is shocked, instinctively taking a step back.

MORDO (O.S.)

That guy doesn't look too hot, does he?

Strange turns to see the figure who was speaking with the Ancient One earlier.

KARL MORDO

Tall and powerfully built, wearing a tattered hat and long cape, he almost seems a figure lost out of time. He eyes Strange like a man who's tread the same path before.

STRANGE

You look like a homeless pimp.

MORDO

You're taking this well. Most of us are
at least somewhat disconcerted their
first time.

STRANGE

Why should I be worried about a dream?

MORDO

Ah. I see.

Mordo suddenly SLAPS Strange hard on the face.

MORDO (CONT'D)

You're the brain expert. You tell me. Can you manifest a strong pain response in a dream?

Strange is shocked, worried.

STRANGE

No. Anxiety, fear -- but not pain. What's going on?

MORDO

You're having an out of body experience.

STRANGE

I'm -- dead? A -- a ghost?

MORDO

Yes on the former, no on the latter. You are astral projecting right now, existing on a plane parallel to our own. To do so, the dead part's a necessary evil. Our consciousness can't be in two places at once. And without consciousness, the meat is dead.

STRANGE

How -- how did this happen?

MORDO

The Eye of Agamotto. The supernatural bling around your neck? It's designed to reveal the truth, no matter what. In your case, it figured you needed to die a little to know the truth.

STRANGE

The old man. He tricked me.

Mordo laughs.

MORDO

You should be flattered. The Ancient One hasn't taken this much interest in someone in -- well -- never.

STRANGE

The "Ancient One?"

MORDO

The old man. Nobody knows his real name, or exactly how old he is. All I know is he once told me some very personal details about Nostradamus.

(beat)

Oh, how rude of me. Karl. Karl Mordo. While you get your sea legs just think of me like the Ghost of Christmas Past.

He holds out his hand for a handshake. Strange is too disturbed to notice.

MORDO (CONT'D)

Come on. We've got to get your consciousness back before that beautiful brain of yours starts dying.

Mordo waves his hand and the floating lights appear. He waves again and multi-colored LEY LINES appear intersecting the lights in hidden pathways.

STRANGE

Wait -- what? How long until my brain starts dying?

MORDO

You hear of those monks who can be buried alive for weeks and come out okay? Well you're not them.

(finds a line he likes)

There. That'll do.

Mordo MUTTERS a language we do not recognize, gesturing in one fluid motion and touching one ley line. The light it's connected to FLARES and we WHITEOUT.

EXT. STONEHENGE - DUSK

A beautiful clear day, the sun setting over English hills. Strange and Mordo appear in the center of the massive stone circle of Stonehenge.

STRANGE

How did we get here --

MORDO

Magic. Quite literally. In the interest of time, I'd like to ask you to save all your questions until the end of our tour.

(MORE)

MORDO (CONT'D)

Did you know that every primitive civilization has the same iconography? The Toltecs, the Egyptians, the Mesopotamians, the Chinese, the Druid Clans of Northern Europe.

A flick of the wrist and Mordo makes stone carvings appear on the massive standing monoliths of Stonehenge. Quetzacoatl, Chinese dragons, Anubis, etc.

MORDO (CONT'D)

All of their earliest art is filled with depictions of demon gods. Reptilian, immensely powerful beings delivering death and destruction upon this world. Well what if they're real? What if there really are godlike beings out there somewhere, seeking nothing less than our total destruction?

With a wave of his hand, DUSK TURNS TO DAWN. Clear skies turn to dark clouds. And Stonehenge itself? It's reconstructed. It is now a 3 story unbroken ring of monolithic stones, glittering with strange golden runes and symbols.

MORDO (CONT'D)

Stonehenge. The Pyramids of Giza. Tikal. Angkor Wat. Easter Island. They're not monuments, or temples, or ancient observatories. They're battlefields.

Five DRUIDS in rough purple robes stand in front of the stones, with flaming RED LEY LINES emanating from them, forming a five pointed star and a circle that mirrors the stone ring. They CHANT in a strange tongue.

STRANGE

What's happening?

MORDO

Don't worry. We're just observers. What you're seeing happened two thousand years before the birth of Christ.

Suddenly, the ground in the center of the circle begins to heave and crack. Something is trying to break through some kind of barrier.

The dark clouds above are sucked down to earth, forming a dark whirlwind, obscuring the center of the circle.

STRANGE

What is that?

MORDO

A powerful entity named Dormammu is trying to break through the barrier to our world. The sorcerers you see are preventing it. The stone circle was built to amplify their power.

One of the Druids falters. He's afraid. He takes a step, and when he does, he breaks the lines of protection surrounding the circle.

The ley lines fade and disappear. The Druid who took a step is sucked into the whirlwind and disappears, SCREAMING. Out of the whirlwind the FIERY HEAD OF DORMAMMU rises. The head alone is twenty feet tall.

STRANGE

And if they lose?

MORDO

They've come close before. Sodom and Gomorrah. Pompeii. Chernobyl. But if the line didn't hold? The end of everything.

But the other Druids simply step forward, closing the circle. They begin to CHANT louder, forcing Dormammu back down into the earth. He howls in FURY Dormammu ERUPTS into a huge explosion!

When the smoke clears, Stonehenge looks as it does in the present day -- a ruin. One of the Druids lies dead.

STRANGE

Why are you showing me all this?

Mordo smiles.

MORDO

Because you're our #1 draft pick.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Strange snaps awake, shocking the Commuters hovering over him. People are stunned as he gets to his feet, just as the train reaches the next station.

STRANGE

Uh. This is my stop.

Strange stumbles off the train, onto the platform. Standing there, waiting for him, is the Ancient One.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I feel like I'm having some kind of psychotic breakdown.

ANCIENT ONE

Why do you think I feed the patients at that hospital? Because that's where those with the Sight usually end up. Come. You're ready for my answers now.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - DAY

Strange follows the Ancient One past the steaming cauldrons in the back. The Ancient One opens a door to the Utility Closet and steps inside.

Strange pauses a moment to read the door, then follows.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THE DOORS - DAY

Strange steps into a huge atrium, a pentagonal space with 99 doors lining the walls. The doors are every color of the rainbow, each covered in unique and strange glyphs.

The floor is polished ancient teak, and the five skylights above the doors -- out them we see snow-capped and jagged mountain peaks.

STRANGE

What --

ANCIENT ONE

It is my Sanctum Sanctorum. My refuge.

STRANGE

But the mountains --

ANCIENT ONE

Tibet. My home. This sanctum stands at a nexus of dimensions. Each of these 99 doors is a portal, providing access to another place. Out one, Chinatown. Out another, the Tree of Life in the Congo. The green ones lead to places on this earth, the other colors, to dimensions beyond our own.

STRANGE

Right. Other dimensions.

ANCIENT ONE

Still skeptical, doctor? Pick one.

The Ancient One motions to the doors. With trepidation, Strange heads to the RED DOOR ahead of him. He puts his hand on the knob. Pauses. He takes a deep breath and opens it. Only he can see what's on the other side.

It takes his breath away. He steps through.

EXT. CRYSTAL WORLD - DAY

Strange steps onto a truly alien plane. The sky is purple, and the landscape is jagged crystals, some reaching miles into the purple sky.

STRANGE

How is this possible?

ANCIENT ONE

All things are possible, doctor.

The Ancient One smiles, standing in the doorway.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THE DOORS - DAY

Strange returns to the Sanctum, shaking his head in disbelief. Then he notices a single black door nearby.

STRANGE

One black door? Ran out of colors?

The Ancient One's face turns grim.

ANCIENT ONE

That one must always remain closed.
Beyond it lies the Dark Dimension.

STRANGE

Dark Dimension. Sounds ominous.

ANCIENT ONE

It is. It is a dimension capable of
corrupting the strongest of souls. That
is all you need know of it for now.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - ANTECHAMBER - DAY

The Ancient One walks with Strange through a chamber whose walls are covered in Buddhist lacquerwork, depicting images of MONKS battling monstrous DEMONS.

ANCIENT ONE

Eastern mystics say that the world is an illusion. That beneath our perception there are hidden pathways of energy that flow through our bodies, and the very land itself.

STRANGE

Feng Shui. Meridians.

ANCIENT ONE

Precisely. Meanwhile, the greatest Western scientists believe in something they call String Theory. That there are numerous hidden dimensions that intersect our own in strange and mysterious ways. East and West, both are correct.

And with a wave of his hand, the Ancient One conjures up the floating lights Strange has been seeing.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

What you have been seeing are the points of intersection between the other dimensions and ours. By aligning body and mind with these points, we can channel their power, and violate every law of our natural world. And we can protect that world from beings like the one Mordo showed you. We call it the Sight, and it is a gift bestowed upon precious few.

Strange's eyes go wide in revelation.

STRANGE

Wait. The lights I see are real?

ANCIENT ONE

The lights you see are real.

Strange is overcome with emotion. His eyes well up.

STRANGE

So -- when I was a child --

ANCIENT ONE

The lights you saw back then were real as well. You weren't responsible for your sister's death.

Strange is so overwhelmed he doesn't bother to ask how the Ancient One seems to know his past.

STRANGE

You don't know what that means to me.

ANCIENT ONE

You built your life around that falsehood. Nothing you ever did would be good enough. No amount of lives saved could ever pay your debt. You were forged in that pain. And today you are free.

STRANGE

What happened to her? Where is she?

ANCIENT ONE

She was taken from this place. Into the beyond. As to where, I have travelled many planes near and far, but I have never encountered her energy.

STRANGE

I need to find her. Teach me how.

ANCIENT ONE

In time, perhaps.

STRANGE

Don't tell me my sister is out there somewhere in one breath and then tell me I can't search for her in the next.

ANCIENT ONE

There are dangers out there beyond your conception. No. You will learn the Art, and when you are ready, you may search for her.

STRANGE

The Art?

ANCIENT ONE

Magic. When you came to me today, all you sought was a way to fix your hands. A way to return to your life as a surgeon.

STRANGE

It's true. I did.

ANCIENT ONE

Doctor, your destiny is far greater than you could ever have imagined. As a surgeon you could save thousands of lives. As a sorcerer, you could save billions.

INT. STRANGE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Strange sits, staring at a piece of parchment lying on the table before him.

ANCIENT ONE (V.O.)

Tonight, you take your first step. It's a simple incantation, a test if you will.

Curiosity gets the best of him and he breaks the seal, revealing a page with two arcane words written upon it.

STRANGE

Anhelum voss.

Strange sits and waits. Nothing happens. He reads the parchment again, changing his pronunciation slightly.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Anhelum voss.

Once again, nothing happens. Strange shakes his head. Then he tries a spooky, 50's era, Boris Karloff tone.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

ANHELUM VOSS!

Still nothing and now Strange feels even sillier.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Great. Now he's got me talking to myself.

Strange goes over and turns out the lights.

BED

Strange pulls down a Murphy bed, flopping down into it. But as he lays there on his back, he spots the GLOWING LIGHTS floating across his line of vision.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I'm tired. Go away.

He closes his eyes. The lights are still keeping him up.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

(as a swear word)

Anhelum Voss.

This time the words seem to reverberate, seeming to ECHO off the walls. Then the glowing lights CONVERGE, glowing so brightly they blind Strange. FLASH.

CUT TO:

INT. HOT SPRING - NIGHT

Strange finds himself UNDERWATER! He quickly pushes himself up to the surface, COUGHING out a lungful of water. Steam rises all around him.

Strange discovers he's in an Onsen, a Japanese hot spring, perched on the side of scenic Mount Fuji.

STRANGE

What!? Where!?

Strange turns to discover a naked and pissed off Jade.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Uh-oh.

Jade strikes, lightning fast, kicking Strange in the face. Strange is back down in the water. Jade grabs him by the hair, lifting him out of the water, standing behind him. She's not giving him another look.

JADE

What are you doing here?

STRANGE

You're asking me?!

Jade shoves his head back down in the water. The girl is strong! She pulls him back up.

JADE

What are you doing here?

STRANGE

I don't know! I was in my apartment. I said -- anhelum voss. And then I was here.

Jade is shocked.

JADE

That's impossible. No one teleports half way across the globe. Not on their first try. Not on their thousandth.

STRANGE

Fine. Then you explain it!

Jade thinks, but she can't.

JADE

Get out of here. Now.

STRANGE
And how exactly do I do that?

JADE
Same way you got here.

STRANGE
I don't even know what I did!

JADE
This is my sanctuary. You are not welcome here. You will leave now, or you will be sorry. Three.

STRANGE
You're not listening.

JADE
Two.

STRANGE
Do I look like somebody who knows what they're doing?!

JADE
One.

Jade makes a fist. Strange closes his eyes and yells --

STRANGE
Anhelum Voss!

CUT TO:

EXT. ANTARTICA - DAY

Strange finds himself in the middle of a snowdrift, half-naked and soaking wet.

STRANGE
Anhelum Voss!!! Anhelum Voss!!!

Strange TELEPORTS again.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A gothic Eastern European mansion amidst the endless Black Forest. Heavy rain pelts down as a FIGURE appears before the mansion's double iron doors.

ALANA MORDO

Dressed in a dark cloak, a more fashionable version of her twin brother's, she stares up at a single lit window.

INT. MANSION - MORDO'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

An ornate sand timer filled with glowing sand. The sand slowly pours into the lower chamber where it glows orange, then red.

Beside the timer lies the body of Karl Mordo, lying lifeless, much like we saw Strange's on the subway.

ALANA (O.S.)

Karl? Karl?

Alana enters. She sees Karl and his sand timer. Red sand. She gestures, igniting magical glyphs in the air, and she lowers her glowing hands upon her brother's chest. His body slightly warms.

ALANA (CONT'D)

What have you gotten yourself into now,
my brother?

Alana looks back over at the sand timer as the last grains fall through the taper. She shakes her head.

ALANA (CONT'D)

Come back to me. Come back to me now!

The final grain slips through the taper, toward the ground on the bottom. Just before it hit Karl LURCHES back to life, gasping for breath.

Alana reaches out to him. In an instant, his face tightens with rage and he GRABS HER NECK, STRANGLING HER.

ALANA (CONT'D)

Karl?! What are you doing?!!!

With superhuman strength, Mordo lifts his sister off the ground.

ALANA (CONT'D)

Karl!! Stop!!!

But Mordo doesn't stop. Alana, on the verge of unconsciousness, manages an incantation. Her hands glow, creating bands of inter-dimensional energy that bind Mordo.

As Alana gasps for breath, the stunned Mordo looks around, his eyes now clear.

MORDO
What hit me? What happened?

ALANA
You tried to kill me.

Mordo looks down at the bands that bind his arms.

MORDO
Bands of Cyttorak. Guess you ain't kidding, Alana.

ALANA
And they'll remain until you give me some answers. Where were you?

Mordo takes a moment before answering.

MORDO
The Dark Dimension.

Alana's shocked. Scared.

ALANA
That's what you've been keeping from me? Karl, you could have been corrupted --

MORDO
I haven't. I've taken no wounds. I took every precaution, and I found it, Alana. The Orb. It's here. It's here on Earth!

ALANA
First the Dark Dimension, and now the Orb? Karl, how many of our precepts are you violating?

MORDO
As many as it takes. The Orb is our only hope and I know how to find it. In the Dark Dimension I found an echo of its energy. I know its pattern, its frequency. We can pinpoint its exact location. And Alana? I'm not the only one looking for it.

ALANA
What do you mean?

MORDO

Someone else has been doing the same thing. Someone is working with Dormammu.

ALANA

Then we've got to tell the Ancient One.

MORDO

He'll stop us, Alana. He might even banish me. You know this.

Alana is unsure. Her eyes search Karl's for answers.

ALANA

Would he be wrong?

MORDO

I can find it first, Alana. With your help. I've buried too many of our family. I won't just stand by until you and I are called for that sacrifice. I'm going to end this war. With or without the old man.

Alana slowly nods, and with a motion dispells the bands that bind Mordo.

INT. STRANGE'S OFFICE - MORNING

A groggy Strange wakes up in his bed, shivering. His clothes are still soaking wet.

STRANGE

What the hell -- WHOA!

Strange sits up to discover Jade standing there.

JADE

I owe you an apology, doctor.

STRANGE

For what? The kick to my face or the near-drowning?

Strange goes to the closet to change his clothes.

JADE

That place is very special to me. You startled me there. And I could never believe an adept could ever have such power to travel so far.

(lowers her eyes)

But those are excuses.

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

I should have been flattered, not offended. Will you forgive my rudeness?

STRANGE

Flattered?

JADE

Of all the places in the world you could've gone, you came to me.

As he changes shirts, Jade catches a glimpse of Strange's naked torso in the mirror. She quickly looks away.

STRANGE

I hardly think it was my choice.

JADE

That's the only way you teleport. By choice. Shade it any way you like, you were thinking of me.

Jade looks about as uncomfortable as Strange.

STRANGE

A passing thought, maybe.

JADE

It's been a long time since I noticed such flattery.

(stronger)

But you must stop. You must understand I am the Ancient One's protector.

STRANGE

I take it that's not just a day job?

JADE

We are schooled from birth to protect those more gifted than ourselves. We have the Sight, to see the things that come from beyond, but we will never achieve the Art. Sorcerers, like you are to be, are trained in the Art. And we are trained to protect you. It is the highest calling one could imagine, but it allows for nothing else once paired with one's master.

Jade bows and leaves.

STRANGE

Damn shame.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - MEDITATION HALL - DAY

Strange enters to find an odd sight. TWENTY ANCIENT ONES sit in lotus position, floating three feet off the floor, their CLOAKS billowing around them. Their eyes are closed, in deep meditation.

STRANGE

Nice trick. Hard to tell which one is really you.

They all speak in unison.

ANCIENT ONE

We are all me.

STRANGE

I don't understand.

ANCIENT ONE

I have gathered my other selves, from other moments. Sometimes twenty "minds" are better than one. I have heard that your first application of the Art was successful beyond all expectation.

STRANGE

Care to tell me how two little words put me on the other side of the world?

ANCIENT ONE

By reaching out and connecting with another dimension.

With a wave of their hands, the floating LIGHTS appear all around the room.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

What happens in the brain when you say words, doctor?

STRANGE

Different parts of the brain activate.

ANCIENT ONE

And do different words ignite different parts of the brain?

STRANGE

Yes but how --

Another wave of his hand and all the Ancient Ones turn translucent except for their brains and nervous systems, which glow blue with energy.

ANCIENT ONE

Anhelum Voss.

Suddenly, the energy in a few sections of the brain glows brightly, creating a glowing LEY LINE that connects to one of the floating lights.

Each and every Ancient One blinks out of existence and blinks back, in a different, equally spaced pattern.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Properly aligned, the energy of a sorcerer's body and mind can connect to these points. To other dimensions. And in that connection is the power to violate every natural law you've ever learned.

STRANGE

So it's just learning words? The right words that create the right sequence of energy in my mind?

ANCIENT ONE

Actually, more spells are activated through body alignment and gesture.

Suddenly, all the Ancient Ones stand in unison, waving their arms in a fluid motion. THE ENERGY IN THEIR BODIES FORMS LINES THAT RADIATE OUT AND CONNECT WITH THE FLOATING LIGHTS, CAUSING THEM TO GLOW BRIGHT.

One by one they levitate off the floor.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Still others are accessed through objects that have undergone powerful enchantments.

The Ancient One before Strange opens his hands and suddenly he holds the Eye of Agamotto. The eye opens and a red beam of intense light flashes throughout the chamber, erasing the other Ancient Ones until only the one holding the Eye remains.

He returns to normal appearance as he hands the Eye back to Strange.

STRANGE

So you're saying it's a little more involved than "abracadabra."

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THE DOORS - DAY

The Ancient One leads Strange to the center of the room.
With a gesture, one of the Green doors opens.

STRANGE

So where am I going today?

ANCIENT ONE

Cagliostro.

STRANGE

What is that, some alien world?

ANCIENT ONE

No. But sometimes he can seem like that.

The Ancient One motions for Strange to go. As Strange
WALKS THROUGH THE DOOR AND DISAPPEARS, the Ancient One
senses someone else in the room.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

I can sense your disapproval.

Jade steps out from the darkness.

JADE

You're moving so quickly with him.

The Ancient One gingerly sits down on a nearby bench.

ANCIENT ONE

Time and tide wait for no man, and time
catches up with us all. The events of
last night proved as much.

JADE

Don't speak like that. And I don't like
him. We know almost nothing about him.
How could one so gifted been hidden from
us all this time?

ANCIENT ONE

You believe Strange an agent of Dormammu.

JADE

I don't know what he is.

ANCIENT ONE

(smiling)

Indeed.

EXT. THE BLACK FOREST - CAGLIOSTRO'S HUT - DAY

Strange walks out into the middle of a dense and dark green forest. Sunlight only peeks through the thick canopy above in a few small beams, spotlighting clearings as far as the eye can see.

Strange walks forward but immediately trips over something. He looks back to see what he tripped over --

And discovers A DEAD BODY. Eyes and mouth open. Unmoving. Next to the body lies an ornate SAND TIMER, the last bits of red sand pouring into the lower chamber.

Strange feels for a pulse. Nothing. The sand in the timer changes color, turning black. Strange examines the timer.

Suddenly the dead man bolts upright, gasping for breath!

CAGLIOSTRO

Dio mio! What a journey!

Strange jumps back, startled. The dead man's name is CAGLIOSTRO (50) a flamboyant, eccentric Italian mystic.

CAGLIOSTRO (CONT'D)

If you ever want to get away from it all, and I do mean "all," visit the pocket dimension of Bliss. You simply must.

(beat)

Are you the one the Old Man sent?

STRANGE

Doctor Steven Strange.

CAGLIOSTRO

Doctor?

STRANGE

My former profession..

Cagliostro quickly stands and DISROBES.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

What are you --

CAGLIOSTRO

This. Is it okay? Should I be worried?

Cagliostro points to a dark mole on his pale-as-a-ghost buttock. Strange rolls his eyes, but takes a quick look.

STRANGE

Not my area, but I think you're fine.

Still unclothed, Cagliostro hugs Strange, planting big kisses on both of his cheeks.

CAGLIOSTRO

Grazie, doctore! Grazie! Come! We've got much to do!

With a wave of his hand, the forest floor comes alive. The sticks, rocks, and leaves FORM A MODEST HUT, complete with smoke emanating from a chimney.

INT. CAGLIOSTRO'S HUT - DAY

The walls of the hut are covered in a MURAL sketched by a madman. It looks like the scribbles of a schizophrenic. Writing layered over writing, lines crisscrossing each other multiple times, virtually nothing legible let alone intelligible.

The rest of the room is littered with bookshelves. An unkempt library of ancient and dusty tomes.

STRANGE

I love what you've done with the place.

Cagliostro spins to face Strange, eyeing him up with his lazy eye.

CAGLIOSTRO

You are -- how do you say -- smart-ass?

STRANGE

Most definitely.

Cagliostro shrugs as he pulls out a tray of SAND TIMERS. He starts sifting through them, examining each unique device, only to put it back in favor of another.

CAGLIOSTRO

Good! Sour bunch, us sorcerers. You've met Karl Mordo? He's the eighteenth in his line. Those legacy types are too serious to find much amusing. But you? The first? It's all new to you. The first is always the hardest. Sometimes it takes generations to get more than a spark of the gift from them.

STRANGE

I think I may have more than a spark.

CAGLIOSTRO

So I have heard. The Old Man warned me to take the baby steps with you. Said it could be risky to do more. But I say we live dangerously, eh?

Cagliostro opens a cabinet, filled with HOURGLASSES of every possible description.

CAGLIOSTRO (CONT'D)

Which one, which one? Ah, a test! Will you allow me to try my new spell on you, doctore?

STRANGE

New spell?

CAGLIOSTRO

There is science, even in magic, doctore. I experiment with new divinations. To reveal that which is hidden.

STRANGE

Okay, but is it safe?

CAGLIOSTRO

We are altering the very fabric of our reality, doctore! No! Nothing is safe!

And with that, Cagliostro gestures and utters alien words. An instant later, the air around Strange glows a bright and blinding white.

CAGLIOSTRO (CONT'D)

Dio mio! You have a beautiful aura, doctore.

STRANGE

Stop, I'm blushing.

Strange notices he's not the only one glowing. The whole space glows with golden-yellow contrails crisscrossing the space. Cagliostro looks around, surprised and happy.

CAGLIOSTRO

Ah! My spell, she's working! The residue of every spell I cast today, revealed!

(beat)

Back to the matter at hand, doctore. Very powerful aura. Very pure. Ah, I have just the glass for you. Use it well.

Cagliostro hands Strange a simple silver hourglass.

STRANGE

Use it? For what?

CAGLIOSTRO

The astral plane is our great defense. In it we can travel anywhere, we can see what it unseen, we can sense when something has entered our world. But time, she is -- flexible there. If one isn't careful, a second can extend to a lifetime, or eternity can pass in a heartbeat. The hourglass tells you how time passes back in the mundane world. When the sand gets low, it turns orange. When it is almost gone, it turns red. Do yourself a favor, doctore. Come back when it is red.

STRANGE

Come back? I haven't gone anywhere yet.

CAGLIOSTRO

Right, of course!

Cagliostro reaches into a pot on the table and blows a BLUE POWDER in Strange's face. Strange COUGHS and turns away from the blue cloud.

STRANGE

What --

CAGLIOSTRO

The powder's an extract from a very rare mushroom. It's one of the world's most potent neurotoxins.

STRANGE

Neuro --

He figures it out just as his vision clears. He looks back down at the floor of the hut.

HIS BODY LIES THERE, DEAD.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Here we go. I'm dead -- again.

Cagliostro smiles and claps his hands.

CAGLIOSTRO

So you've gone astral before? Excellent! I do find virgins to so overly tedious.

That's when Strange notices the incomprehensible MURAL. Suddenly, it looks radically different. Here, in astral form, the writing juts out from the mural, in three dimensions. The pages of a nearly infinite TOME.

CAGLIOSTRO (CONT'D)

It is the Book of Vishanti, and it can only be seen astrally. In it is written the mystical knowledge of every sorcerer ever to walk this earth. Incantations, gestures, the whole -- how you say? Shebang.

Strange looks overwhelmed, but steps forward, into the light of the mural.

STRANGE

So I have to read that whole thing?

CAGLIOSTRO

Don't be so old-fashioned, doctore.

Cagliostro gestures and the entire astral form of the book lifts off the wall and STREAKS into Strange's eyes.

Strange YELLS OUT as he's blinded by the light.

CUT TO:

STRANGE

He wakes up with a start. His eyes are wide in amazement.

STRANGE

Wow. Where was that spell when I was in medical school?

Cagliostro notices that Strange's hair around his temples has gone completely WHITE.

CAGLIOSTRO

Oh!

STRANGE

What?

CAGLIOSTRO

Nothing. Minor side effect. You hardly notice.

Strange find a mirror, distraught by his new appearance.

STRANGE

I should sue you for malpractice.

CAGLIOSTRO

You should get on your knees and thank me. I saved you ten years of studying. Now, tell me what you know.

STRANGE

I know every spell in that book. Thousands of them.

CAGLIOSTRO

Not quite. You know the recipes, doctore. Learning to cook is a different thing entirely.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRAZILIAN RAINFOREST - DAY

A dense rainforest with trees extending up hundreds of feet. Strange stands before a pygmy shaman named TALO.

TALO

Catch me.

STRANGE

I don't understand.

TALO

Good. Stop understanding. Start catching.

Strange lunges for the diminutive Talo, but just before he reaches him, TALO TELEPORTS and disappears. Strange hears CLICKING. Talo stands behind him. Disappointed.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROOKLYN NAVAL YARD - DECOMMISSIONED AREA - DAY

Karl and Alana Mordo stand with Strange in the center of this huge naval junkyard, with canyons of rusting ships extending in every direction.

MORDO

What do you see around you?

STRANGE

Rusting ships.

ALANA

Really? I see a meadow in spring.

With a flourish of her hand around her head, every ship in her vicinity sprouts white wildflowers until it is all you can see.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOROCCAN DUNE SEA - DAY

A robed mystic, AL FAISAL sits before a ten story sand dune, staring at Strange. He opens his hand to reveal a SINGLE GRAIN OF BLACK SAND.

AL FAISAL

I am here to teach you control. All you need do is find this one grain of black sand.

Al Faisal motions to the sand dune, and suddenly the sand dune rises. Not exactly rises though. EACH AND EVERY GRAIN OF SAND SEPARATES FROM EVERY OTHER UNTIL THEY EACH HOVER IN SPACE, EXPANDING OUT MILES IN EVERY DIRECTION.

Al Faisal exhales and the one grain of black sand floats into the center of the static sand cloud. Then Al Faisal lowers his hand, and the sand returns to its initial form. The dune is entirely undisturbed.

STRANGE

That's a lot of sand.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIBET - MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DUSK

Strange and the Ancient One stand on a snowy plain near the top of the world. They are at the base of a near vertical snow-filled cliff.

STRANGE

Cold.

ANCIENT ONE

Colder if the snow reaches you.

Strange turns as an AVALANCHE races down toward them.

STRANGE

What do I do?

ANCIENT ONE

Stop the avalanche.

Strange tries. He casts a bright white beam of light which vaporizes the nearest falling snow boulders --

And proceeds to BURN A HOLE THAT SHOOTS RIGHT STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN. And a moment later, even more rocks and snow tumble. He's created an avalanche twice as big.

The Ancient One's shoulders sag. He waits until the avalanche is nearly upon them, and THROWS UP AN ENERGY SHIELD around himself and Strange, holding back the snow.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Neither earthquake nor fire affects the mountain, but the humble stream, in time, will reduce its rocks to rubble.

STRANGE

Meaning?

ANCIENT ONE

To do more, you must learn to do less.

EXT. TRAINING MONTAGE

- Strange chases after Talo, successfully teleporting a few times in a row, only to misfire ending up miles away.

- Strange extends his hand, concentrating. SUDDENLY THE ENTIRE SAND DUNE ERUPTS, EXPLODING SKYWARD. A shadow grows as the sand plummets toward Strange. Al Faisal simply pops open a multicolored umbrella as the sand dune rains back down upon them.

- Strange transmutes a ship's crane into a walkway, leading him across a canyon of rusted steel. Alana smiles, then transmutes the walkway into a flock of doves. Strange falls.

- Strange blasts away at falling boulders and ice, controlling his blasts better, nearly defeating the falling danger, until a massive blast unleashes a huge avalanche. This time Strange throws up the shield, angry with himself for his lack of control.

- Al Faisal's watches as Strange levitates and balances section after section of the huge sand dune, rotating it with a simple gesture. Suddenly his hand stops. He makes the tiniest motion with one finger and only a single grain moves. The black grain, deep within the levitated dune, comes right to him.

- Mordo throws a steel rod at Strange. Strange transmutes it into a feather duster. Alana kicks over a lifeboat, tumbling down at Strange, who transmutes it into a balloon. Mordo fills the balloon with water. Strange turns the ground around him into a gust of wind that blows the water away.

- Strange concentrates as hard as he can, staring at the falling boulders and avalanches the Ancient One sends his way. He unleashes small, controlled blasts, knocking out the falling debris one boulder at a time, until finally they're all eliminated.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A large table. Strange is here with every teacher except for the Ancient One. Multiple empty bottles of wine tell us that it's been quite a party.

Cagliostro raises his glass in a toast.

CAGLIOSTRO

(to Strange)

To our newest brother in arms, molte grazie. Because when you said you wanted to take us to dinner in thanks, I thought you meant the Ancient One's restaurant!

ALANA

And you still came? Inedible. That's what it is.

MORDO

All that power, and he can't even make a bowl of egg drop soup to save himself.

AL FAISAL

Let's just say it's an acquired taste.

Alana notices that Strange isn't quite enjoying himself as much as the others. He's got a far away look.

ALANA

You okay, doctor?

STRANGE

I'm fine.

ALANA

Liar.

Alana smiles and winks at Strange.

ALANA (CONT'D)

You're a prodigy. Advancing faster than anyone hoped. Why the long face?

STRANGE

Impatience.

ALANA

For what?

STRANGE

For my sister. She's out there. Somewhere. I know it.

Karl Mordo has been listening with one ear. He leans over to Strange to talk privately.

MORDO

You want to be out there, looking for her. But that would break the rules.

STRANGE

Something like that.

MORDO

Maybe some rules were meant to be broken.

STRANGE

What's that supposed to mean?

Alana and Mordo share a conspiratorial glance.

ALANA

Just that we understand frustration, doctor. And maybe soon we'll be able to help you.

Strange is intrigued, but before he can respond, he notices someone staring at him.

Roger Epps, dining with doctors two tables over.

EPPS

Strange?

Epps is shocked, taking in the colorful cast of characters, including the pygmy Talo. Strange himself is now dressed -- eccentrically.

EPPS (CONT'D)

I almost didn't recognize you. What -- what have you been up to.

Strange is uncomfortable for a moment. He shakes it off.

STRANGE

Career change, Roger. The universe never closes a window, without opening a door.

Epps is speechless. The whole table roars in laughter.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - JADE'S GYMNASIUM

Strange slips inside the door as Jade is performing a *kata*, a complex set of choreographed martial arts movements. Jade leaps, spins and kicks with acrobatic and deadly precision until the *kata* finishes.

JADE

(not turning around)

Don't you have more important things to do?

STRANGE

I invited you to dinner. You didn't RSVP. I thought you Japanese were a polite people.

JADE

I'm Chinese. And you're drunk, or bleeding.

Jade motions to a red splotch on his shirt.

STRANGE

Neither. Cagliostro spilled on me -- actually on half the table. Turns out some Italians can't hold their wine.

Jade towels sweat from her body. She turns and catches Strange watching her closely.

JADE

I told you not to look at me that way. It's inappropriate.

STRANGE

My bad. I'll cover my eye.

Strange puts a hand over the Eye of Agamotto.

JADE

You're getting comfortable here. That's a good thing. And more importantly, people are getting comfortable with you.

STRANGE

You should try it sometime. Could be fun.

JADE

Am I supposed to find this attractive?
Well I don't, any more than I believe
you've mastered the occult.

STRANGE

Listen, it's not brain surgery.

JADE

No! It's infinitely more difficult! Do
not be cavalier with your gift, and do
not be cavalier with me!

Strange's smile disappears. Jade lowers her head,
embarrassed by the strength of her outburst.

STRANGE

I take this very seriously. It's the
power to save billions.

JADE

Or kill billions.

STRANGE

I get that too. It just would've been
nice to see you at dinner tonight.

JADE

The Ancient One was searching the Astral
tonight. I had to --

STRANGE

Yeah. Your duty. I get it.

Strange nods a goodnight, and backs out of the room. Jade
grimaces. That didn't go the way she wanted it to.

INT. CAGLIOSTRO'S HUT - MORNING

Strange steps through the door at the sanctum and into
Cagliostro's home. He's carrying a bag with him.

STRANGE

You forgot your doggy-bag last night. Day
old Puttanesca is almost better than --

Strange stops, shocked by what he sees. The room looks
like a tornado struck it, tables overturned, the walls
scorched with flame marks.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Master Cagliostro?

Strange looks beyond the overturned table and spots Cagliostro's DEAD BODY, burnt and torn.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Oh no.

Almost instinctively, around Strange's chest, the Eye of Agamotto OPENS. WHOOSH.

VISION - EYE OF AGAMOTTO

Suddenly, we see a GHOSTLY Cagliostro lying on the bed. A sand timer trickling down on the bedstand nearby.

Cagliostro awakens with a start.

GHOSTLY CAGLIOSTRO

Madre de dio.

The image of Cagliostro FADES AWAY, only to reappear standing beside his collection of ancient tomes. He starts frantically pulling them off the shelf.

GHOSTLY CAGLIOSTRO

(CONT'D)

Where have I seen it before? The Book of Oshtur? The Thanatosian Tomes?

Again the image of Cagliostro FADES AWAY, only to reappear at the far end of the shelf, crouched over a ANCIENT TOME whose cover looks like tanned human skin.

CAGLIOSTRO

I must warn the Ancient One.

But as Cagliostro turns to leave, he stops as a DARK FORM appears at the doorway. Strange tries to make out what the form is, but it's shrouded, obscured.

STRANGE

Why can't I see that?

But Cagliostro's face says he can -- and he's screwed.

GHOSTLY CAGLIOSTRO

It cannot be.

Suddenly a surge of unbelievable energy rips through Cagliostro's body. He YELLS IN PAIN, his ghostly form fading from sight -- near to where his corpse now lies.

BACK TO SCENE

THE EYE CLOSES and Strange is left there, stunned. He doesn't notice something behind him, a serpent-like form rising out of the rubble.

OBSIDIAN DEMON

Rising to over six feet, barbs cover the creature's scaly, jet black skin. Appendages with razor-sharp claws line either side of its body. It coils, ready to strike, baring silver teeth the shape of needles --

JADE (O.S.)

Look out!!

Just as the demon launches itself at Strange, Jade comes out of nowhere, knocking Strange out of the way. The demon SMASHES into the table, ripping the thick wood to shreds like it was paper.

Strange quickly makes his way to his feet, beside Jade.

STRANGE

What are you doing here?

JADE

Breaking the rules.

The obsidian demon circles around them, coiling for another strike. This time Strange is more prepared. He gestures and unleashes a BLAST OF ENERGY --

That the Demon easily evades. The blast rips through the walls of the hut. Then Jade takes her shot, pulling out a katana. She attacks the demon head on, but its obsidian hide is hard as steel, and her strikes harmlessly CLANG aside. The demon's tail WHIPS out, smashing Jade across the chest.

STRANGE

Jade!!!

Strange quickly steps between the demon and Jade, casting a spell which rips up the ground at the demon's feet. The creature simply leaps aside, evading the attack.

THE CREATURE SLASHES DEEPLY INTO STRANGE'S ARM, both cutting and burning him with inter-dimensional energy.

JADE

Get out of my way!!!

Jade shows she's not that badly injured by shoving Strange aside, engaging the demon with a flurry of attacks. Nothing works, and the demon knocks Jade aside.

Jade lands hard as the obsidian demon follows up by SHOOTING one of its rows of teeth at her prone body.

A thousand razor-sharp needles race toward Jade. At the last second, Strange tosses a spell at the onslaught --

And the needles transform -- into raindrops. The water splashes harmlessly to the ground.

The Demon turns for Strange, lashing out again. It tears at Strange's coat for a brief second until Strange TELEPORTS.

The Demon searches for him, finding him standing on a rafter above. Strange smiles down at the creature.

STRANGE

Game over.

Jade dives out of the way as Strange unleashes a BOLT OF LIGHTNING that hits the pool of water the Demon stands in. Electricity arcs over the creature until it EXPLODES.

CUT TO:

INT. CAGLIOSTRO'S HAMLET - LATER

The Ancient One stands looking down at Cagliostro's dead body, his face full of sadness.

ANCIENT ONE

Goodbye, old friend.

JADE

First a reaper attack on you, and now this demon kills Cagliostro. These aren't random incursions. They're targeting us. Why?

The Ancient One looks around the hut, discovering the sand timer, sand still drifting down its chambers.

ANCIENT ONE

Cagliostro was travelling the Astral. Perhaps he was searching for something. Something the demon wished to learn.

Strange looks over at Cagliostro's table, remembering his vision from before.

STRANGE

The book! Just before he was attacked Cagliostro searched his library for --
(MORE)

STRANGE (CONT'D)
 (heads to the table)
 It's gone. It was right here.

ANCIENT ONE
 Would you recognize it if you saw it?

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - LIBRARY - DAY

Shaped like a well, the Ancient One's library is a tight circular stair descending a vertical tunnel with curved bookshelves on every inch of wall.

Strange climbs down, staring at each book in turn, until he locates the one. An exact match for the one Cagliostro had. He climbs back up to the --

INT. STUDY - DAY

He hands the tome over to the Ancient One, a grim look on the old man's face.

ANCIENT ONE
 It it as I feared.

He flips the book open to the SYMBOL OF LIGHT, an unusual five pointed star, within a perfect circle.

STRANGE
 What is it?

ANCIENT ONE
 The symbol of the Orb of Agamotto.

STRANGE
 Is it like the Eye?

JADE
 Yes. And no.

The Ancient One shows Strange another page in the book, one that displays three GOD-LIKE CREATURES. Strange is surprised as the images on the book MOVE, animated by an ancient magic.

ANCIENT ONE
 Agamotto is one of the Vishanti, the most powerful beings in the multiverse. He is an enchanter, giving a shard of his own power to mystical objects. Yes, the Eye is one of his enchantments. As you've seen, it seeks out truth among obfuscation.

Strange glances down at the Eye.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

But the Orb of Agamotto -- is the
enchantment we wish he never created.

STRANGE

What does it do?

ANCIENT ONE

In some ways it is simply a crystal ball.
It allows one to see any time, any place.
Past, present, or future. The problem is
one can change anything they see.

STRANGE

What's so bad about that?

JADE

To change the past, present, or future?
To make the world whatever you wish,
without limits? It's a temptation to
become a god.

The Ancient One turns the page. Displayed in full motion
is a SORCERER, holding a luminous ORB, battling against a
host of DARK CREATURES.

ANCIENT ONE

It is the reason sorcerers are forbidden
from the Dark Dimension. There was a
sorcerer with the bad fortune of coming
into being in the Dark Dimension. His
people were on the brink of extinction at
the hands of all manner of horror.
Reapers, demons, and creatures far worse.

STRANGE

Worse?

ANCIENT ONE

The Dark Dimension was once ruled by the
Mindless Ones, a race of nearly
indestructible creatures of pure chaos.
And when this sorcerer tried to escape
his dimension, he drew the attention of
an even more malevolent entity, the
dreaded Shuma Gorath, demon of a thousand
worlds. There was but one path to
survival. The Orb. At great personal
sacrifice he found it. And he used its
power to shut out Shuma Gorath, and to
contain the Mindless Ones. He tamed the
reapers and the demons.

Again the Ancient One turns the page, this time showing an image of the Sorcerer immolating entire armies with waves of fire.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

But the power of the Orb called to him. It called him to change more. To vanquish his enemies. To remake the dimension as he saw fit. It seduced him, and he fell prey to it. Before long, he was not merely content being the tyrant of his dimension. He sought to remake other worlds. He sought to remake ours. I believe you witnessed one of the first times he attempted to cross over.

STRANGE

Dormammu? You're talking about Dormammu?

The next page shows as mystical fire envelops the head of SHRIEKING Sorcerer, his face peeling away until only the flames remain.

ANCIENT ONE

His corruption was so complete that all of the Dark Dimension radiates it, and ours would too, if not for the sacrifice of our greatest sorcerers who stole the Orb from him.

STRANGE

So who has the Orb now?

ANCIENT ONE

It is safe for the moment. But Dormammu has had six thousand years to plan its retrieval, and I fear his plans are in motion. Should he get the Orb, he would create a permanent gate between our worlds. Dormammu would be unstoppable.

Suddenly, Strange notices himself sweating profusely. So does Jade.

JADE

Are you okay?

STRANGE

I'm fine. I just --

Strange lifts up the sleeve of his shirt, to where he was struck by the demon. The wound looks festered, an ink-like venom dripping from it.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

That's not good.

Suddenly, Strange passes out.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - HEALING ROOM - NIGHT

A thousand candles burn around Strange, lying unconscious on the floor. The smoke from each candle is of a different color, and they rise in odd helix patterns.

The Ancient One runs his hands above Strange's body. Jade looks on, worried.

ANCIENT ONE

The Corruption is wrapping itself around his very bones, burrowing deeper. It was no lesser a wound that almost took me.

JADE

Can you restore him?

ANCIENT ONE

Perhaps. But only if his spirit proves willing.

The Ancient One raises his hands and the candles burn like an inferno, the smoke flows horizontally, encircling Strange and the Ancient One.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Cast off, blood and bone. Cast off, spirit and flesh.

Strange's body begins to tremble and tremor. It looks like he's going into arrest.

Strange thrashes to and fro, knocking many candles from the circle. His body flops like a rag doll in torment.

Strange's eyes flutter awake as his face contorts in agony. With a wave of his hand, the Ancient One extinguishes each and every candle.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Tend to him. I have much to investigate.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - STRANGE'S ROOM

Strange wakes up in his bed. He looks around, discovering Jade standing at the foot of the bed.

STRANGE

(weakly)

You wouldn't have any aspirin, would you?

JADE

You don't need aspirin.

Jade pushes Strange over on his side.

STRANGE

Thanks for the diagnosis, but I think
I'll get a second -- OW!

Jade digs her thumb deeply into Strange's back.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

That hurts!

JADE

Don't be a baby. I'm helping you.

STRANGE

Please stop helping me!! Please?!

Jade just digs her finger in deeper.

JADE

Stop whining. It's just acupressure.

Jade finally stops pressing.

JADE (CONT'D)

Now roll over. How does it feel?

Strange rolls over onto his back, wincing but not as bad
as before.

STRANGE

Amazing. Better. That's a lot better.

JADE

We're not done yet.

Jade then straddles him and starts massaging his temples
and other pressure points of his face. As she leans over
Strange, her hair brushes against his chest, her face now
close to his own.

They speak with their mouths inches apart.

JADE (CONT'D)

You know you are dumbest smart person I
have ever come across?

STRANGE

That's some bedside manner you have.

JADE

You do not protect a protector. That is the greatest waste I can think of. You are a sorcerer. You have a gift too precious to sacrifice.

STRANGE

A few years back I operated on the President. He was surrounded by some of the bravest sons of bitches I've ever met, and they talked much like you did. I wouldn't have traded any of them for the guy on my operating table. People capable of that kind of sacrifice? In my experience they're better than those they protect.

JADE

You're brave. But still very, very dumb.

Jade and Strange lock eyes -- and then their lips meet.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - ANCIENT ONE'S CHAMBER - LATER

The room is spartan, holding only a simple cot and a simple Tibetan CHOSHOM, or boxed shrine. Jade enters to find the Ancient One floating in midair, his cape fluttering. His eyes are closed, deep in meditation.

ANCIENT ONE

Our good Doctor needs a protector.

JADE

No one has ever been given a protector this early. He's not even titled.

ANCIENT ONE

Yet somehow he was all too deserving of your attention.

Jade blushes.

JADE

I'm sorry, master.

ANCIENT ONE

For what? Being human? What are we fighting for if not to protect that precious gift?

Jade nods, understanding.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

And it is that fight upon which I must
now focus, not Strange's tutelage.

Jade looks surprised.

JADE

What are you saying?

ANCIENT ONE

I intended to make sure before I shared
my fears with you. But now I am certain.
Cagliostro was not killed by that demon.
The demon was left behind to kill
Strange. Cagliostro wounds were magical.
He was killed by a sorcerer. One of our
own. Perhaps even more than one.

JADE

More than one?

For a moment, the Ancient One looks weary.

ANCIENT ONE

Perhaps. The truth is I can no longer see
much of what is coming, and that is
dangerous. The good doctor healed the
flesh, but the spirit wanes.

JADE

Don't say that, master. You'll be fine as
always.

ANCIENT ONE

I am the Ancient One, child. Not the
Eternal One. My time comes as for any
other. That is why Strange must have a
protector of his own. Someone we can
trust beyond any and all doubt.

Jade thinks a long moment.

JADE

Wong is ready.

Now it's the Ancient One's chance to look surprised.

ANCIENT ONE

Wong left the Order years ago, in such
fashion as to not suggest return.

JADE

In our Order there is no other life. He is ready.

Jade walks over to the corner of the room. She picks up a mallet and strikes a GONG there.

EXT. THAILAND BEACH - PARTY - NIGHT

The infamous Full Moon Party is in full swing. Nubile young bodies partying, dancing, drinking, making out. The latest in techno beats spinning. The party you wish you were invited to.

At an open air bar, BENJAMIN WONG (20s) is having the time of his life. Two bikini clad BLONDES hold alcohol bottles over him as they mix a drink in his mouth.

Then they take turns kissing him to share the drink.

WONG

WOO!!! Yeah! I love full moons!

BLONDE 1

Do it again.

WONG

What am I, your trained monkey?

BLONDE 1

You do it again, and I'll do whatever you want.

She smiles. His eyebrow raises. It's on. He puts his back to the bar, measuring the distance. He then crouches down and BACKFLIPS onto the bar, landing on his head, balancing perfectly, before he flips his body upright. And the crowd goes WILD! The Blondes are all over him.

And then Wong hears a GONG sounding in the distance.

WONG

What was that?

BLONDE 1

What was what?

Again, the GONG sounds. Louder this time.

WONG

You can't hear it? It's a -- no.

GONG! Louder still. It's drowning out the techno.

WONG (CONT'D)

No! No, no, no, no, NOOOO!!!!

The Blondes look at him like he's just gone psycho. Wong reaches up to his head --

And his hair falls out in huge clumps. The Blondes SHRIEK and run away. A moment later, Wong is completely bald.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THE DOORS - DAY

Wong enters the Sanctum, pissed beyond words. Jade and the Ancient One stand before him, expecting him.

WONG

Which part of "I never want to see you people again" are you hazy on?

JADE

You've been called. It is the greatest honor -- have you been drinking?

WONG

Don't even start with me. You have no right, NO RIGHT --

ANCIENT ONE

Caligostro has been killed, by the hand of one of our number. These are dire times, and all but a handful of us remain. I cannot foresee the outcome.

This staggers Wong.

WONG

Who do you want me to protect? Mordo? Al Faisal?

ANCIENT ONE

Not exactly.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - JADE'S GYMNASIUM - DAY

Strange enters to see Jade and Wong waiting for him.

JADE

Steven, I want to introduce you to Benjamin Wong. He will be your Pu-Biao.

STRANGE

Pu-Biao? Manservant?

WONG

He didn't just go there --

Jade silences him with a gesture. Wong is pissed.

JADE

The words have many translations. The oldest is protector.

STRANGE

Protector? Like you?

JADE

Yes. He will lay down his life for you if need be.

STRANGE

Thanks, but I'll pass.

Strange turns to leave. Jade and Wong are shocked. No one ever said anything like this.

JADE

This is an honor, Steven. Only the Sorcerer Supreme and the Council of Seven are given protectors.

STRANGE

I won't have anyone dying for me.

WONG

Great. Bye now.

But Jade gets in Wong's way.

WONG (CONT'D)

You want me to put my life on the line for this Doctor Dickhead *piyan*?

JADE

It's your duty. Or would you choose to dishonor your family?!

(turns to Strange)

And you! You think your life is simply yours? You chose this path, and with it comes responsibilities.

STRANGE

I don't need a protector.

JADE

Oh really?

In one quick motion, she grabs a SPEAR off her weapons rack and launches herself at Strange.

Strange throws a transmute spell her way and the spear turns to a broom. THWACK! She still hits him with the handle, knocking him down.

STRANGE

Take it easy!

JADE

Your enemy won't and next time I may not be there. What if you have multiple opponents? Ones that strike at both your front and flank? Are you expected to have eyes in the back of your head?

Jade grabs three CHAKRAM, or edged throwing discs, and throws them full force -- but not at Strange. Two of them rebound off the walls and converge on Strange from different directions. Strange teleports ten feet away.

BAM! His shirt gets sliced by the third chakram right across his chest. That was close, too close.

STRANGE

Hold on a second! Just -- take it easy!!

Jade looks at Wong. Wong stares right back.

WONG

I know what you're trying to do. It won't work. Cut him into sushi for all I care.

Jade picks up a POLEARM. She attacks Strange with twice her previous intensity, forcing him back into a corner.

STRANGE

Okay -- I get it!!! I get it!!!

WONG

(flatly)

He gets it. Stop. Please. Oh please.

But Jade doesn't stop, pushing her advantage. Wong, meanwhile, grows more uncomfortable simply standing by. Jade finally strikes flesh with one of her blows.

STRANGE

Owww!!! Are you crazy?! Stop!!!

But Jade simply prepares for another strike. But as her pipe comes forward, suddenly WONG IS THERE, BLOCKING HER. With a second blow, he knocks the polearm from her hand.

JADE
It's about time.

The two square off in hand to hand combat, a flurry of martial arts strikes and parries nearly impossible to follow with the naked eye.

Wong proves himself every bit Jade's equal, a whirling dervish of martial arts skill.

Before long they've battled to a standstill, each winded. Jade just smiles at Wong.

JADE (CONT'D)
Someone taught you well.

WONG
I really can't walk away, can I?

JADE
For better. For worse. Your destinies are intertwined.
(to Strange)
Still think you don't need him?

Strange sheepishly gets to his feet.

STRANGE
You make a persuasive, if psychotic argument.

JADE
I'll leave you to get better acquainted.

And with that, Jade leaves. The two men, now alone, are awkward around each other.

STRANGE
So --

WONG
We don't need to cheapen this with a lot of talk. I protect you. I help you when I can. So -- how can I help?

STRANGE
There are other spell books besides the Book of the Vishanti?

WONG
Dozens.

STRANGE
I'd like them in Word format.

Wong is dumbstruck.

WONG

You want me to take the secret knowledge of the universe, and import it into Microsoft Word?

STRANGE

That would be great, thanks.

WONG

And I thought Cagliostro was nuts.

STRANGE

Cagliostro's dead. Killed by a demon.

WONG

I just heard it wasn't a demon. He was killed by a sorcerer. The demon was left there afterwards, for you.

Strange is shocked.

INT. CAGLIOSTRO'S HUT - DAY

Strange hurries into Cagliostro's hut, followed by Wong.

WONG

What are we doing here?

Strange ignores Wong and heads to Cagliostro's desk, rifling through his papers and arcane materials.

WONG (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to work a little on our communication, you know that? If you tell me what you're looking for, maybe I could help you. I hung out here a lot as a kid.

STRANGE

You?

WONG

Cagliostro was kinda like my history professor. And my sex-ed teacher. Let's just say I didn't exactly have a normal childhood.

Strange finds the PARCHMENT Cagliostro was working on when they first met.

STRANGE

Got it.

Strange begins the incantations from the parchment. Wong watches in awe as Cagliostro's spell takes effect.

Each one of the spells and counter-spells cast during the attack on Cagliostro appear. Bursts of energy, protective shields and other arcane manifestations FLARE UP and then FADE AWAY.

WONG

Are those spells?

STRANGE

Every spell cast in the last day. If he was killed by a sorcerer before I arrived -- there. Look at that. That's an attack.

Strange focuses a bright contrail of energy leading from where Cagliostro fell to the doorway. At the doorway, a dark veil seems to hover, obscuring everything.

WONG

It's a cloak. A spell to prevent pretty much exactly what you're trying.

EXT. CAGLIOSTRO'S HUT - DAY

Strange steps outside, casting Cagliostro's spell again. The same dark veil bleeds out here as well --

But at the other side of the clearing, there's another contrail, flaring bright.

STRANGE

There. That's where he arrived.

Strange gestures, dimming the residue of the spell, changing its color as well. Slowly, the outlines of a face are visible. Strange stares at it until he recognizes the face.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Oh no.

Strange gestures --

WONG

No! If you teleport I can't --

and TELEPORTS.

WONG (CONT'D)

-- follow you.

INT. MORDO'S MANSION - PARLOR - NIGHT

Strange blinks into existence right in front of Alana, who look worried.

STRANGE

I need to speak to your brother.

ALANA

You can't.

STRANGE

I have to. Now. Or would you rather me talk to the Ancient One.

Alana shudders. She's afraid.

ALANA

You don't understand.

STRANGE

I hope that's true. Take me to him.

INT. MORDO'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

ECU HOURGLASS: The last grains of sand run out of upper chamber into the glass below.

Mordo's dead body lies on the floor. Strange is shocked.

STRANGE

How long since his timer ran out?

ALANA

Five minutes.

STRANGE

Five minutes!? How could you let this happen?!

Strange straddles Karl, administering CPR chest compressions. He stops for brief seconds to check vitals.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

He's not responding.

ALANA

Please -- do something.

STRANGE

I need a defibrillator.

Strange looks around desperately. He ends his search at his own hands.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I have to try something. Back away.

Alana does. Strange stands up over Karl. He mutters a spell, his hands CRACKLING WITH LIGHTNING.

He concentrates, making the lightning smaller and smaller. When he thinks it is right --

HE TOUCHES KARL'S CHEST WITH HIS HANDS. Karl's body heaves upwards from the shock.

MORDO

COUGHS AND AWAKENS with a start. Alana immediately grabs her brother, tears of joy filling her eyes. Mordo coughs, his eyes finding Strange's.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

You'd better have some good answers or you're gonna wish I let you die.

Mordo nods.

CUT TO:

MORDO'S CHAMBER - LATER

Mordo sits on his bed, his chest being iced down.

MORDO

I didn't kill Cagliostro, but I may be the reason he's dead. He learned what we were doing when he used his new spell astrally. And I went to him to explain what I found.

STRANGE

What did you find?

Mordo conjures up a ball of light that expands out and fills the room. Floating in space is the Earth, and crisscrossing it are RED GLOWING LEY LINES, interconnecting four points.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

What is it?

MORDO

A grid. Tuned to the frequency of the Orb. It took somebody years to lay this down, to find the perfect ley points.

STRANGE

How do you know what it is?

MORDO

Because I was looking for the Orb too. Because I went to the Dark Dimension, and I retrieved the same frequency.

STRANGE

I don't understand. You're looking for the Orb --

MORDO

But somebody's beat us to it. And when Cagliostro used his spell to try and figure out who -- somebody killed him. One of us is working with Dormammu.

STRANGE

Then why don't they have the Orb?

MORDO

Because the grid isn't done. It's a five point geometry. A star. Whoever did this is just one ley point away from pinpointing the location of the Orb.

STRANGE

Why should I believe you? You went to the Dark Dimension. You're searching for the Orb. You're violating every rule --

MORDO

Because the risk is worth the reward!

STRANGE

The risk is your corruption. Or making this place into another Dark Dimension.

MORDO

No, doctor. That's the risk if we do nothing. That druid who died at Stonehenge? The one who prevented Dormammu from entering our world? That was my ancestor. Back then sorcerers numbered in the hundreds, defending a million souls. Now we're just a handful defending billions. It's a war of attrition, and we're losing.

(MORE)

MORDO (CONT'D)

But with the Orb we can seal off this dimension from Dormammu forever.

STRANGE

What makes you think you can control the Orb? It's impossible. It controls you.

MORDO

When you were a doctor, did anyone ever tell you that? Did anyone ever tell you something was impossible, but all they meant was it was impossible for them. I can do this, Steven. I can find the last ley point, and complete the grid Dormammu's agent built. I can find the Orb, and I can end the war!

Strange is unsure.

STRANGE

The Ancient One hasn't been wrong yet.

Mordo frowns. He didn't want to bring this up.

MORDO

Maybe he has. He told you you'll have to wait to find your sister. If we had the Orb, it could show us where she is now.

(beat)

I don't know what it's like to lose a sister, Steven. A big reason I'm doing this is so that I won't have to.

STRANGE

What do you want from me?

MORDO

A day. Two at the most. In that time I'll locate the final ley point and I'll find the Orb. Can you give me a day, Steven?

EXT. THE PYRAMIDS AT GIZA - ASTRAL PLANE - NIGHT

The Ancient One stands before the Great Pyramid, hands blazing with magical energy. He reaches down and touches the ground.

The energy reveals a RED BALL OF ENERGY from which radiate two red LEY LINES extending out over the horizon.

FLASH. Talo appears.

TALO

There is an anchor at Tikal as well.

ANCIENT ONE

Where are the others?

TALO

I thought I would be last. They haven't returned?

EXT. TREE OF LIFE - CONGO - NIGHT

A massive mystical tree, glowing with life force. Atop its highest branch, a red ball of energy radiating ley lines -- and at its root, the signs of a battle. A SORCERER lies dead, ambushed by one of his own.

EXT. ANGKOR WAT TEMPLE - CAMBODIA - NIGHT

Another red ball radiating ley lines. A similar battle. Another SORCERER dead.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THE DOORS - MORNING

Strange enters to find Jade and Wong in training. When they spar it's like a ballet, such grace and precision.

They stop when they see Strange.

WONG

Look who's back.

JADE

You can't leave your protector, Steven. It defeats the purpose.

STRANGE

Yeah. Sorry. My mistake.

Jade's eyes narrow. Something's different. Strange is evasive. She corners him away from Wong.

JADE

What's going on?

STRANGE

Nothing.

JADE

Is this about yesterday? I didn't mean to hurt you.

STRANGE

You swung at me. With a poleaxe.

JADE

I pulled my strikes. I just needed to show Wong that his calling was unavoidable.

STRANGE

Like yours? Sounds like a death sentence.

Before Jade can answer a LOW, REVERBERATING HORN echoes through the hall. Jade and Wong are surprised.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

What is that?

WONG

The horn. The Ancient One has called a conclave.

STRANGE

A conclave of what?

JADE

Every sorcerer on the planet. They are only called in the event of an imminent attack.

Now it's Strange's turn to be concerned. A green door in the corner of the room glows.

EXT. NEW YORK - SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - DAY

One by one, SORCERERS teleport atop the skyscraper. Talo, Al Faisal, and numerous others we've never met before. Strange, Wong and Jade step through a portal, arriving.

Mordo and Alana appear. Strange hurries to them.

STRANGE

What's going on?

MORDO

I know as much as you.

The Ancient One appears before them all.

ANCIENT ONE

My friends, we have a traitor among us.

Shock. Protestations. No one can believe it. Mordo and Alana share concerned looks.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

I have known for some time that one of our number has been searching for the Orb of Agamotto. But I have just learned that they are now working with Dormammu himself to locate it.

Strange is shocked. He looks to Mordo who cautiously shakes his head.

STRANGE

How have you learned this?

ANCIENT ONE

Look around. Do you see how many of us are missing? Once I learned the Orb was being sought, I selected a handful of sorcerers to help uncover who is violating our edicts. Only one of those sorcerers still breathes. Someone on this plane has been killing those who would reveal their treachery.

SORCERER #1

Who? Who has done this?

ANCIENT ONE

That is what we are here to discover. The killer among us has travelled to the Dark Dimension and been corrupted by Dormammu.

The Ancient One gestures, conjuring up a glowing ball of energy that floats before him. It moves forward, stopping in front of each sorcerer, one at a time.

As it does so, its energy changes color slightly.

ALANA

What's the meaning of this?

ANCIENT ONE

That should be plain. It is a test, to detect the taint of Dormammu.

Alana looks over at her brother, who angrily stares back, offended by her insinuation. She looks concerned ---

Until the glowing sphere turns BLACK, in front of AL FAISAL. He looks as shocked as everyone else.

AL FAISAL

A trick! I've never been to the Dark Dimension!

ANCIENT ONE

The Divination of Cyttorak says
otherwise.

AL FAISAL

I've killed no one. This is a trick of
Dormammu!

The sorcerers all turn toward Al Faisal, gathering
energy, preparing for battle.

Al Faisal gestures to teleport -- but he simply reappears
right where he was standing.

ANCIENT ONE

Going somewhere, Al Faisal?

AL FAISAL

You've trapped me? You put up a barrier?

ANCIENT ONE

You trapped yourself.

DORMAMMU

As did you.

Al Faisal falls to his knees, his face contorting in pain
as his skin seems to MELT AWAY ON HIS BODY. When his
disfigured face looks up, his eyes reveal pure malice.

ANCIENT ONE

Dormammu.

Speaking through Al Faisal, the voice of Dormammu is cold
and lifeless, save that of absolute rage.

AL FAISAL/DORMAMMU

Give me the Orb, or your world dies.

ANCIENT ONE

The rest of us will not be corrupted.

AL FAISAL/DORMAMMU

Then this is your end.

The entire top of the skyscraper glows. The sorcerers
look around. What just happened?

Suddenly, the stone facade of the entire building shifts
and moves. It rises up, forming a massive stone creature
standing atop the skyscraper, five stories tall itself.

It's body is impenetrable stone, except for one large
eye, glowing fiery red. It is a

GIANT MINDLESS ONE

STRANGE

What is it?

WONG

A Mindless One. It'll attack for all eternity if we don't stop it.

STRANGE

What are its weaknesses?

WONG

That's just it. It doesn't have any.

Al Faisal stands before the creature.

AL FAISAL/DORMAMMU

Destroy them!

The creature's eye turns to Al Faisal, its glow growing in intensity.

A huge blast of light and fire shoots forth. Al Faisal simply LAUGHS MANIACALLY as he's immolated alongside THE NEAREST TEN SORCERERS.

The other sorcerers immediately begin casting spells to defend their ranks. But as their blasts of energy strike the Mindless One, they ricochet off its rock hide, some of them hitting other nearby buildings.

The Mindless One smashes the roof of the skyscraper with a stone fist, buckling the surface. The shock wave sends the remaining sorcerers FLYING OVER THE EDGE.

The Ancient One hovers with his cloak of levitation, but the rest plummet toward the city below.

Fiery blasts of its eye take out several of the falling sorcerers before they can defend themselves.

Mordo and Alana teleport to safety on a nearby rooftop, but Strange has Wong to think about. He sees Wong tumbling in midair. He casts a quick telekinesis spell, pulling Wong toward him, as the ground races at them.

He grabs Wong with one hand, and with the other dashes off his own teleport spell. One second before impact, Strange and Wong blink away!

Only to appear back on the top of the destroyed roof, the Mindless One looming overhead!

ANCIENT ONE

Strange!

Strange ducks as a massive FIREBALL passes overhead and explodes. Flaming shrapnel race right at him --

Until Wong leaps in the air, a sweeping kick altering the shrapnel's trajectory.

Strange and Wong find the Ancient One and Jade in the middle of the firestorm.

STRANGE

How many are left?

ANCIENT ONE

Unknown.

ALANA (O.S.)

Help me!

MORDO

Jade and Wong rush over to discover Mordo in the wreckage of the roof, his body burnt in several places, being tended to by Alana.

ALANA (CONT'D)

He's badly burned.

Strange and the Ancient One throw off the wreckage with a series of gestures, but when they uncover Mordo, he lets loose an energy bolt aimed right between them. The blast hits the Mindless One that was bearing down on them all.

The blast knocks it back, but the MAJORITY OF THE BLAST RICOCHETS OFF ITS HIDE AND GRAZES STRANGE'S CHEST.

STRANGE

Aaah!

MORDO

Strange!

Strange sees a bad laceration across his ribcage.

STRANGE

It's not that deep. I'm okay.

The Mindless One delivers a massive BLAST OF FIRE at Mordo and Alana. The light of the fire is blinding.

Strange and the Ancient One teleport themselves and their protectors to a nearby roof just as the roof they were on EXPLODES in a fireball.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Mordo? Alana?

ANCIENT ONE

We will follow them if we cannot stop the Mindless One.

HELICOPTERS approach.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Doctor, get them out of here before --

Suddenly, a News Chopper EXPLODES, hit by the Mindless One's fiery beam.

Strange steps out onto the roof and with a wave of his hand, a huge wind whips up and pushes the gathering helicopters out of harm's way.

Several sorcerers on the next skyscraper over are blasting away at the Mindless One, to little effect. It turns its eye on them and LEAPS A HUNDRED YARDS, landing on that roof, sending the sorcerers falling once again.

It's eye ignites again, preparing to fry the falling sorcerers. Strange gestures --

WONG

Strange!

But it's too late. Strange teleports to the other rooftop and delivers a telekinetic blast that knocks the Mindless One off the roof, but not before its fiery blast fries the falling sorcerers.

And then Strange realizes what he's done. The twenty ton Mindless One plummets right toward a busy city street.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A large crowd is gathered, staring up at the fires atop the skyscrapers. They see no mystical creature, just the results of its destruction.

Suddenly, the Ancient One appears in the crowd, throwing his hands wide. A shock wave throws the crowd in every direction, just as something massive craters the asphalt, disappearing below --

And taking the Ancient One with it.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Strange teleports over to the first roof, grabbing Jade and Wong, and teleports again.

INT. THE CRATER - DAY

Ruptured steam pipes pour obscuring steam everywhere as Strange, Jade, and Wong appear in the dark depths. Down here there are numerous tunnels: subway, electrical, access, etc.

STRANGE

Where is he?

JADE

Down there.

She points down one of the tunnels, into the darkness.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - DAY

Strange, Wong, and Jade find the Ancient One, still alive, but trapped beneath rubble.

ANCIENT ONE

Go.

JADE

We won't leave you.

Something glows in the darkness behind them. The massive eye of the Mindless One.

ANCIENT ONE

Go!

With a wave of his hand, Strange, Wong, and Jade are telekinetically thrown down the tunnel, just as the Mindless One unleashes an inferno.

But the inferno never reaches the Ancient One. Strange teleports over the Ancient One, throwing up a shield at the last second.

The inferno blasts through the shield, but is stopped by a second shield, this one cast by the Ancient One.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A CITY REPORTER stands before a camera as the people in the street panic.

REPORTER

Early reports suggest a gas main rupture. It's unclear whether that's related or unrelated to the fires we see atop the three skyscrapers above. Early reports are the fires are isolated --

Suddenly, every manhole cover on the block shoots into the sky, followed by a column of flames.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Or not.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - DAY

With a gesture, Strange throws the rubble off the Ancient One as the Mindless One rushes them. Strange unleashes a huge energy bolt that harmlessly bounces off it, ripping a hole in the tunnel wall.

STRANGE

What is that thing made of?!

ANCIENT ONE

Solid rock. From a dimension impervious to our magics. And at its center, the energy of a small sun. We must lead it away from the city.

STRANGE

Are you crazy? We'll die trying.

ANCIENT ONE

Then that is how it must be.

The Mindless One charges again, letting loose another blast. Both sorcerers throw up a shield. They stop the flames, but not the Mindless One. Its fist shatters the shields and threatens to pulverize the Ancient One.

Jade steps in its way, using every ounce of her strength to deflect the massive blow. The fist rips into the wall of the tunnel, piercing a WATER MAIN.

A huge wall of water blasts into the tunnel. In seconds, they're underwater. Strange sees Jade, unconscious, sinking to the bottom. The Mindless One still advances on them, threatening to crush Jade beneath its feet.

Strange gestures, causing a tunnel collapse between the Mindless One and Jade, giving Wong enough time to swim over and pull her to the surface.

The Mindless One BLASTS through the obstruction as Jade, Wong, The Ancient One, and Strange cough and sputter in the narrowing air bubble at the top of the tunnel.

STRANGE

It's unstoppable.

ANCIENT ONE

Nothing is unstoppable. But yes, this is close.

STRANGE

It's like a mountain of --

Suddenly Strange gets an idea.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

That's it. It's like a mountain. The humble stream --

Strange dives down into the water, facing the Mindless One, charging right for him. Its eye sends a flame spurt narrowly past him, vaporizing a column of water.

Strange releases a spell at the Mindless One --

And at first nothing happens. And then, little by little, water turns to ice. The Mindless One blasts again. Strange teleports a few feet out of the way, and continues the spell.

CU - The gaps between its rocky hide expand as the water there turns to ice. The rocks begin to crack. The ice expands outward, encasing the Mindless One and the entire section of tunnel.

It blasts again, but more water, turning to ice, pours in the tunnel it vaporizes.

Its surface cracks more, squeezed by the expanding ice. Behind Strange, the Ancient One can see what he's doing.

WONG

It's working!

ANCIENT ONE

No! Not here!

Suddenly, Mordo and Alana teleport in.

WONG

You're alive?

MORDO

My sister has developed an unusually strong Shield of the Faltine.

Mordo transmutes the water in this part of the tunnel to air and they drop to the ground. The Ancient One can barely move.

ANCIENT ONE

Strange! Stop!

Strange does as he's told. But the spell has a mind of its own. The ice continues to grow. Continues to squeeze the Mindless One. The inferno in its eye glows brighter with each passing second.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

It will destroy the city!

Strange gestures wildly.

STRANGE

I can't stop it!

The cracks in the Mindless One grow. The glow of the energy at its core blinds. Alana makes a decision.

ALANA

I can.

MORDO

No!

But it's too late. Alana steps past Strange, to the wall of ice, and she unleashes a massive shield that completely encircles herself -- and the Mindless One. She gives her brother one last melancholy look, and braces the bubble-like shield --

AS THE MINDLESS ONE EXPLODES WITH THE FORCE OF A SUPERNOVA. THE GLOBE GLOWS IMPOSSIBLY BRIGHT, THE ENERGY STRAINING AGAINST IT, BUT AS ALANA DIES, THE GLOBE HOLDS.

As the explosion dies they are all plunged into darkness.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The survivors emerge onto the street to find FIRE CREWS battling the blazes and destruction left behind.

Jade carries the injured Ancient One. Wong tries to help Strange with his burned side, but Strange rejects him.

Mordo stands alone, in shock.

STRANGE

Karl, I'm --

MORDO

You're what? Sorry, doctor? What are you sorry for? For dabbling like a child with powers beyond your comprehension? For nearly killing this entire city? Or just for killing my sister?

ANCIENT ONE

He didn't kill her, Mordo.

MORDO

No. You're right. You did.

JADE

What?

ANCIENT ONE

Mordo. We grieve for your sister. She gave her life honorably.

Mordo laughs a cold and bitter laugh.

MORDO

I wonder how many generations of Mordos had to stand by and listen to those very words? How many?

ANCIENT ONE

Your family has given more than most --

MORDO

More than most? More than most?! We've given EVERYTHING! And all the while, you stand there and do NOTHING.

ANCIENT ONE

What would you have us do?

MORDO

You know what I would have you do. I would have you use the Orb! Alana would have you use the Orb! Hell, even your golden boy would have you use it!

The Ancient One turns his critical eye toward Strange. He turns back to Mordo.

ANCIENT ONE

You've been searching for it as well.

MORDO

I won't let my sister and the rest of my family die in vain. I will finish this.

And with that, Mordo disappears.

INT. ANCIENT ONE'S ROOM - LATER

The Ancient One lies resting in his bed, bandaged in several places. Strange enters, but is stopped by Jade.

JADE

He needs his rest.

STRANGE

I need to speak with him. To explain.

Jade grabs Strange and pulls him away from the bed, her voice low but urgent.

JADE

There is no explanation for what you did.

STRANGE

There is. You just won't hear it. What if we could end this fight tomorrow? Close off our dimension once and for all. Then you'd be free. Free from this sense of duty that sucks up every moment of every day. Free to have a life.

JADE

A life? Like the one you led before you came here? Before your accident?

STRANGE

(shrugging)

I was happy.

JADE

I don't believe you know the meaning of the word, doctor.

STRANGE

What is that supposed to mean?

ANCIENT ONE (O.S.)

You are driven by a darkness.

Ancient One now stands beside his bed, looking worse for the wear. Jade runs quickly to his side.

JADE

I'm sorry we woke you. You must rest.

ANCIENT ONE

I'm strong enough for what needs doing.

The Ancient One motions Strange forward.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Each day you get stronger. Each day your mastery grows. And yet each day I despair more for you, doctor.

STRANGE

I made a mistake. I kept things from you.

ANCIENT ONE

Yes. You have from the beginning.

STRANGE

I don't understand.

ANCIENT ONE

The demon.

STRANGE

The first demon I ever saw was the day I met you.

ANCIENT ONE

No. Your demon, doctor. The one that drives you still. As a doctor you played with forces beyond your control, to atone for your sister's death.

STRANGE

But I'm not atoning anymore. I know I'm responsible what happened.

ANCIENT ONE

And yet, you still reach for power beyond all limits. Why?

Strange doesn't answer.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

To find her. To save her. And so the darkness in your remains. And until you release it, I have no use for you.

STRANGE

What? You need me.

ANCIENT ONE

No. As you are, I have no use for you.

STRANGE

Are you insane? You just sent Mordo packing. I don't know how many others just died. How deep a bench could you possibly have?

ANCIENT ONE

I have taught you limitless power, but you have failed to learn your limitations. Without that, you have nothing.

The Ancient One carefully lowers himself back into bed. Strange, frustrated, looks over at Jade.

STRANGE

This is crazy. This is what you want?

Jade doesn't answer. Strange walks out.

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Strange walks down the alleyway, away from the restaurant, eyes fixed on the ground. Suddenly he stops.

STRANGE

Stop following me.

Strange starts up again, walks a few feet and stops.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I said to stop following me.

Dropping down from seemingly out of the sky is Wong.

WONG

Maybe I was just heading the same way.

STRANGE

Fine.

Strange turns and heads the opposite direction. Wong eventually follows.

WONG

Don't take it personally. It's my duty.

STRANGE

Not anymore. You'll just have to find someone else to watch over, I was just shown the door.

Wong looks shocked as Strange walks off.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Strange sits at the bar, staring at an untouched drink.

STRANGE

When are you going to get the message?
Just leave me alone.

WONG (O.S.)

Sorry. Force of habit.

From out of the shadows steps Wong. A couple of the other BAR PATRONS look shocked -- no one saw him there.

STRANGE

I told you. You're off duty, for good.

WONG

Maybe I'm doing this for myself.

Strange looks at Wong like he's crazy.

STRANGE

What is it with you people? Can't you think of anything you'd rather do than protect me?

WONG

About a million. And half involve at least two women at the same time.

STRANGE

So get to it, Romeo.

WONG

It doesn't work that way. While I didn't think much of you at first, in fact "douchebag" would be an accurate description, things have changed. I've seen what you can do. And although I can't even imagine these words coming out of my mouth -- I think you should fight for a way back in.

Strange winces in pain where Mordo's blast caught him.

STRANGE

Find yourself those two girls. I'm done.

Strange gets up and leaves, his drink untouched.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - ANCIENT ONE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Jade looks over to see the elderly man rising from his bed, a painful proposition.

JADE

You must rest.

ANCIENT ONE

A battle is coming. Time enough for rest in the grave.

The Ancient One summons a walking stick from across the room into his hand. He looks over at Jade.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

I've rarely seen you look so troubled.

JADE

These are troubling times.

ANCIENT ONE

So it has always been, but this time it is different.

JADE

What do you mean?

ANCIENT ONE

Because of him. Because of Strange.

Jade doesn't answer.

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

Perhaps you question my judgement in regard to him. That I was wrong to send him away in such a time of need.

JADE

It's not my place to question you. You are like a father to me.

ANCIENT ONE

You have been the one constant in my life, Jade. You have saved me countless times, and sacrificed your own happiness to do so. You are more the parent than I.

(MORE)

ANCIENT ONE (CONT'D)

And perhaps that is the way of things, as one grows old. At some point the child finds themselves the caretaker of the parent, as the life light dims.

JADE

You are still strong, master.

The Ancient One kneels to pray before the simple choshom.

ANCIENT ONE

It is a gentle lie, but a lie nonetheless.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HUDSON GENERAL - DAY

Strange enters the bustling emergency room, looking uncomfortable. He heads down a long hallway.

ADMITTING NURSE

Hey there buddy, where do you think you're going?

Strange turns to the ADMITTING NURSE at the desk, head buried in a chart. She looks up and double-takes.

ADMITTING NURSE (CONT'D)

Doctor Strange?

She eyes him, taking in his odd clothes and appearance.

STRANGE

Is Becca on duty?

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

Becca enters and nearly LAUGHS out loud.

BECCA

I'm sorry. You just -- look different.

Strange pulls aside his cloak and shirt to reveal a nasty laceration down his right side.

STRANGE

If you'd just bring me some supplies --

BECCA

You're still cute, but you're not cute enough to lose my job over. Wait here.

Becca leaves and Strange wanders over to the window, looking out on normal, ordinary New York.

REESE (O.S.)

What seems to be the -- you gotta be kidding me.

Strange turns to see Reese, his former Neurology resident. One of many he fired.

STRANGE

I made a mistake. I'll be going.

REESE

Not on my watch. Sit down.

Strange reluctantly sits. Reese lifts up Strange's shirt, taking a look at the laceration.

REESE (CONT'D)

Jesus. How did you get this?

STRANGE

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

REESE

I doubt that. I switched specialties to Emergency Medicine. Doesn't take long before you see it all down here.

Reese inspects the wound more closely.

STRANGE

I'm sorry -- about what happened before.

REESE

I doubt that. I think you mean you're sorry you had to see me again, under these circumstances.

STRANGE

I could've handled things differently. It turns out I was the one with a lot to learn.

REESE

Ship sailed, doc. I made the best of it. I may not have the hands of an artist but a twelve year old gunshot victim last night didn't seem to mind. And you, with all your talent, where did you end up? Besides juggling blowtorches it seems.

Reese frowns as he probes the wound deeper.

STRANGE

What is it?

REESE

Some kind of -- black tissue. Never seen it before.

Strange looks at the wound as Reese holds it open. Sure enough, the beginnings of the same corruption that happened to him earlier is there. His eyes go wide.

STRANGE

Mordo's corrupted.

INT. MORDO'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Mordo carefully places his hourglass on the bedstand, turning it over. The sand begins to fall. He lies down.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHERNOBYL - DAY

Mordo walks down an abandoned street. A town, now overgrown with vegetation still stands. Hovering lights twinkle everywhere.

On every door, a RADIATION SYMBOL. Mordo looks to the sign on the road into town. The letters are Cyrillic, but you can still read it: CHERNOBYL.

Mordo pulls up his floating map of red ley lines. In his hands he generates a RED GLOWING SPHERE. Instantly, two RED LEY LINES blast out and over the horizon.

MORDO

(to himself)

The fifth point of the star. Of course it would be where his energy remains the strongest.

The map becomes a FIVE POINTED STAR, just like the Symbol of Light in the Ancient One's book. At the center of the symbol, a pentagram, with another star inside it, with another pentagram inside it, and so on into infinity.

MORDO (CONT'D)

Show me where it is.

With a wave, we zoom in on the tightening pentagrams, showing the location of the Orb. Mordo can't believe it.

MORDO (CONT'D)
The Sanctum? It's not possible.

DORMAMMU (O.S.)
It is. He had it all along.

Mordo spins to see -- nothing.

MORDO
Where are you? Show yourself!

DORMAMMU (O.S.)
I'm right here, Mordo. I have been for a long time.

Mordo's head is struck with a burning pain. As he reaches for his head -- FLASH.

VISION - MORDO AND THE ANCIENT ONE

Mordo shadowing the Ancient One as he searches the empty warehouse. Mordo unleashes a blast of energy at the Ancient's One back.

DORMAMMU (CONT'D)
Each time you came to my dimension, more of myself travelled back with you. And while you've searched for the Orb, I protected you.

MORDO

Back in the present, Mordo falls to his knees.

MORDO
No!

DORMAMMU (O.S.)
We have been working together all along. I simply spared you the horror of it. You thought Al Faisal had fallen. Al Faisal thought it was you. But all along, both of you were in my service.

MORDO
I'll never help you get the Orb.

DORMAMMU (O.S.)
You already have, Mordo. You've already killed for it.

VISION - MORDO AND CAGLIOSTRO

Cagliostro turns towards his door, only to find Mordo blocking his path, his eyes wild.

CAGLIOSTRO

It cannot be.

Mordo unleashes a TORRENT of inter-dimensional energy at the unsuspecting Cagliostro.

MORDO

Back in the present, Mordo removes his hands from his head, his eyes filled with tears.

MORDO

NO!!!

DORMAMMU (O.S.)

With the Orb, we will end this war. One last battle, Mordo. To end the war.

When Mordo looks up again, there's something different. He's serene. Resolute.

MORDO

To end the war.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - DAY

A trail of colored energy flows with the Ancient One's hands as prepares himself for battle. Jade watches on, concerned, even as she arms herself.

EXT. EASTER ISLAND - DAY

The massive heads stare out at the blue Pacific. Mordo stands before one, staring at it with amusement.

With a wave of his hand he shows the ley lines here, connecting each head on the island, forming a ring of protection around its center.

MORDO

Shuma Gorath, you have slumbered long. I call you forth.

Suddenly, Mordo delivers a blast that utterly destroys the head nearest him. A second blast pulverizes another.

The ley line circle flickers and fades completely. And the EARTH BEGINS HEAVING!

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - DAY

Strange enters through one of the doors to find Wong waiting for him.

WONG

You came back.

STRANGE

It's not just Al Faisal. Mordo is corrupted too. Where is the Ancient One?

The place seems deserted. Nothing moves, except for one door, swinging lazily in the breeze. Strange and Wong share a look, then rush out the door.

EXT. EASTER ISLAND - DAY

Strange comes through the other side of the door and into a scene of chaos.

Writhing out from the massive tear is a huge, tentacled monster with a single eye, SHUMA GORATH. Each time one of its tentacles touches the ground, the surrounding vegetation turns black and dies.

Battling against the skyscraper-sized monster is the Ancient One, flying several hundred feet above the island with help of the Cloak of Levitation.

The Ancient One sends blast after blast of mystical energy at the creature, hoping to push it back across the tear. Shuma Gorath responds by simply opening its maw and releasing a half dozen REAPERS out of its mouth.

The Reapers leap towards the Ancient One, only to be intercepted by Jade. With a flurry of attacks, she beats the Reapers back, buying the Ancient One more time.

STRANGE

What is that thing?

WONG

Unfriendly, I'm guessing.

Wong rushes to Jade's side, beating back a Reaper before it hits her from behind. She offers him a thankful smile and they start battling the Reapers together.

ANCIENT ONE

He dodges one of the massive tentacles, only to find another right before him. Suddenly, a blast of energy SLICES the tentacle in half.

The Ancient One looks down to see Strange on the island below. Another blast from Strange severs another tentacle and the Ancient One dives down to where Strange is.

STRANGE

Figured you might need some assistance.

The Ancient One nods.

ANCIENT ONE

Shuma Gorath can't be defeated on this plane. I must travel astrally and close the rift between the Dark Dimension and our own. But his form must not escape this island, or even that will fail.

STRANGE

You keep him here. I'll go through.

The Ancient One shakes his head.

ANCIENT ONE

No. It is too dangerous. The power of the Dark Dimension --

STRANGE

I can handle it. You can't go this alone anymore. Trust me!

For just a moment the Ancient One pauses. Then he throws off his cloak, which whips through the air, and comes to rest around Strange's shoulders.

ANCIENT ONE

The Cloak will speed your journey, and the Eye will help light the way back.

Strange nods and pulls the Eye out his pocket. He takes the amulet and fastens it to the Cloak's clasp. STRANGE NOW LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE HIS CLASSIC COMIC FORM.

WONG AND JADE

finish off the last of the Reapers they face. Strange comes levitating down from above.

STRANGE

(to Jade)

I need to borrow him, if that's okay.

Jade barely smiles, but her eyes alight seeing Strange's.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

(to Wong)

I've got to go astral. I'd really appreciate it if my body were in one piece when I get back.

WONG

It will be. Master.

Strange winces.

STRANGE

Don't ever call me --

WONG

No, never again. I was just trying -- it was weird for me too.

CUT TO:

STRANGE - ASTRAL PROJECTING

Strange soars towards the rift, fighting upstream against the outflux of magical energy. Inter-dimensional energy crackles all along Strange's body.

Strange pushes forward, his hand reaching out for the edge of the rift. Just as he touches the band --

CUT TO:

EXT. DARK DIMENSION - THE POND - NIGHT

Strange breaks the surface of the water, gasping for breath. Confused and drowning at the same time, he swims for shore.

Strange pulls himself out of the water, chest still heaving. He looks back over the water.

STRANGE

I know this place.

It looks exactly like the pond next to his family home. Suddenly the surface of the water begins to ripple. A figure begins to emerge from underneath the water.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Donna?

DONNA steps out of the water. She looks exactly as she did the day she died.

CUT TO:

EASTER ISLAND

The Ancient One conjures bands of energy that bind Shuma Gorath's tentacles, only to see that beast SMASH out of them.

The Ancient One is nearly crushed by one of the tentacles, when Jade suddenly appears, knocking the massive tentacle aside.

ANCIENT ONE

You must go to Wong.

Jade looks over to see Wong in a battle against two REAPERS, protecting Strange's prone body.

JADE

I won't leave you. Last time I did you almost died.

ANCIENT ONE

You cannot save us both, Jade. Go.

Before Jade can argue, the Ancient One disappears, TELEPORTING somewhere else. Left alone, she races back to help Wong.

Next to Wong's feet, Strange's sand timer has already turned orange.

CUT TO:

EXT. DARK DIMENSION - THE POND - NIGHT

Strange rushes to the water's edge. Donna stands in shallow water.

STRANGE

You're not real. You're some kind of trick.

DONNA

Why would I be that?

Strange looks to the sky, a dark night's sky with a huge RIP in it.

STRANGE

To distract me. From what I'm supposed to do.

DONNA

Are you sure, Stevie? Are you sure?
You've been waiting for this moment all
your life. Can you really turn away now?

In Strange's hand is the hourglass. He doesn't notice that the sand pours out incredibly quickly. Time is passing too fast here.

EXT. EASTER ISLAND - DAY

Jade and Wong fight back to back. Massive reaper attacks come from all directions. Only their incredible coordination fights them all off.

At their feet, Strange's hourglass turns red. It's almost out of sand.

INT. DARK DIMENSION - THE POND - CONTINUOUS

Strange looks down at the water. In the reflection HE'S TEN YEARS OLD AGAIN. His behavior is that of a ten year old too, like something here has regressed him.

STRANGE

Please -- get out of the water.

DONNA

Why?

STRANGE

Because we've got to get out of here. I'm going to get you of here.

DONNA

Why? All I did was follow you, little brother. You brought me here. This is where I belong.

Strange face is a mask of child-like confusion.

STRANGE

Tell me what to do, Donna. I don't know what to do.

DONNA

Forget your troubles and join me here in the water. It's nice and cool.

Strange takes a step forward, but then he notices something else in the reflection. The rip in the sky isn't there.

He looks up. The rip looms overhead.

STRANGE

This isn't real. You're showing me what you want me to see.

DONNA

Come to me. How can you forgive yourself if you don't at least try?

Donna reaches out, but Strange steps back. He no longer looks childish, but alert.

STRANGE

I'm working on that. But this is who I am. A sorcerer, a protector. I lost my sister because of it, but it won't be in vain. I'll fight, because that's what she would have wanted.

DONNA

Stevie --

STRANGE

The name is Strange. Doctor Strange. And you are not my sister.

He lifts moves the cloak away, revealing the Eye.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I ask for the truth. Reveal to me what you are!

The Eye activates, blasting the dark scene with light, revealing --

THE DARK DIMENSION

Almost like a distant moon, the rocky landscape of this world is barren, lifeless. Donna is actually a SUCCUBUS CREATURE, dark talons whisking around its obsidian body.

Strange looks around and spots an endless number of DARK CREATURES that are climbing up the surrounding rocky spires towards the GLOWING BAND that is the inter-dimensional tear.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Time to go.

Strange levitates up, just as the dark creatures rip through to spot he once stood. HE BLASTS THE RIFT, CLOSING IT AS HE APPROACHES.

Until he suddenly feels TUGGING on his cape. The Succubus, a disturbing mix of Donna and demon, pulls on the edge of his cape, pulling him down.

SUCCUBUS

Stay here!! Stay here with me, brother!!!

Strange just focuses harder, pushing his way upward towards the light. He's getting closer, but stalls only inches from reaching the tear.

Then the tear begins to CLOSE UP.

STRANGE

No!!

CUT TO:

EASTER ISLAND

Wong and Jade battle against the Reapers, the creatures desperate to get to Strange's body. One very nearly does, until Jade leaps in at the last second, running the creature through with her polearm's blade.

Only then does she notice that Strange's sand timer has just RUN OUT.

JADE

Oh no. Steven.

Jade looks up to the closing tear, seeing Shuma Gorath turning its attention to Strange's body. Its tentacles lash out, racing right for them.

JADE (CONT'D)

Wong!

WONG

We can't fight that!

At the last second, the Ancient One appears, throwing a shield over them, protecting them from the onslaught --

BUT HE'S NOT INSIDE THE SHIELD HIMSELF! Jade can only watch as the tentacles grab the Sorcerer Supreme and drag him into its massive jaws.

JADE

NO!!!

CUT TO:

DARK DIMENSION

Strange's astral aura DIMS as he feels his form begin to separate from his body.

STRANGE

I'm out of time.

Strange discovers his astral form is being dragged down, the tear falling further from his grasp. Suddenly, he spots an ethereal hand, reaching for him.

He turns to see who it is --

IT IS THE ANCIENT ONE.

ANCIENT ONE

This is not the end of Steven Strange.
You have much more to accomplish.

HE PULLS STRANGE THROUGH THE COLLAPSING TEAR.

ANCIENT ONE (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

The future is now yours, Sorcerer
Supreme. Shape it well.

CUT TO:

EXT. EASTER ISLAND - DAY

The tear above the island collapses upon itself, severing Shuma Gorath from its source of power.

The giant creature HOWLS in fury as it DESICCATES into nothingness, its dusty remains sucked back across into the Dark Dimension.

With a reverberating CRASH, almost like a sonic boom, the portal closes.

JADE AND WONG

The Reapers Wong is battling also vanish with the closing of portal. Wong wearily smiles.

WONG

It's about time you fools went home.

Wong turns to see Jade cradling Strange's inert form. He rushes to her side.

WONG (CONT'D)

Is he -- is he stuck over there?

Jade simply caresses Strange's face.

JADE

Come back to us, Steven.

Strange's eyes open.

STRANGE

Hey there.

Jade smiles, reaching down to kiss Strange's lips.

WONG

You gotta be kidding me.

Strange gets to his feet.

JADE

The Ancient One --

STRANGE

I know.

WONG

How?

STRANGE

He came for me. Pulled me out of the Dark Dimension. He called me Sorcerer Supreme.

Suddenly, THE SUN FADES. Strange looks to the sky. There isn't a single cloud, but still the sky darkens, the sun dims, and the world slowly goes black.

WONG

What is that?

STRANGE

It's Mordo. He's brought the corruption of the Dark Dimension here.

JADE

What? We have to find him.

STRANGE

He's at the Sanctum. This whole battle was a diversion to empty it, so he could get the Orb. It's there.

Jade and Wong look stunned as Strange waves his hand. Nothing happens.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

The door. It isn't manifesting.

Strange makes a different gesture. He blinks out of existence -- and a second later reappears.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

He's sealed off this island. I can't teleport off.

JADE

What do we do?

STRANGE

I can get there, but I can't take you with me.

Jade and Wong nod. It has to be this way.

EXT. DARK SKIES - DAY

Strange's Cloak billows all around him as he flies through an alien grey sky.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Pedestrians in the street look skyward as the light of the sun dims.

PASSERBY

Must be some kind of eclipse or something.

PASSERBY #2

Don't look like no eclipse I ever seen.

Just as they gaze upward, Strange flies above them, high overheard, silhouetted by the dimming sun.

PASSERBY

What the hell was that?

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - DAY

Strange floats down to earth in the alleyway outside the restaurant. Everything is eerily quiet.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - DAY

The main room of the Sanctum is a maelstrom. Black tendrils of energy pour forth from the BLACK DOOR. It isn't open, but still something is breaking through. The tendrils latch on to every other door, shaking them on their hinges. And one massive tendril extends into another room.

Strange follows it, hearing incantations.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - ANCIENT ONE'S CHAMBER - DAY

Mordo stands before the choshom, hurling powerful incantations which strike a powerful protection spell with massive sparks of inter-dimensional energy.

STRANGE

Mordo.

Mordo spins around, noticing the Ancient One's cloak around Strange. He seems different, his eyes now filled with menace.

MORDO

You? He made you Sorcerer Supreme?

STRANGE

Just before your efforts got him killed.

Mordo shows only a hint of regret, his rage stoked.

MORDO

Centuries of service, and the honor goes to a wet behind the ears neophyte. The old man's judgement really left him in his final days.

STRANGE

How could you have gotten the title, Karl? You've been corrupted.

MORDO

No. I've been enlightened.

STRANGE

Then let there be light.

Strange blasts him with the Eye, revealing tendrils of black energy swimming around the sorcerer's aura. Mordo is visibly shaken by the image.

MORDO

It's not -- this is a trick. I'm not this corrupted.

STRANGE

You see only what he wants you to see. He's got control of you Karl. But not all of you --

MORDO/DORMAMMU

Enough!

Mordo's face registers intense pain. Mystical flames begin to erupt all over his body, searing his flesh. Mordo tries to fight back, but Dormammu's power is too great.

Mordo/Dormammu becomes a pillar of flame, his raw power melting the walls around them. With a single sweep of his arm, he sends out a powerful blast that knocks Strange off his feet.

Mordo/Dormammu then turns his attention towards the Ancient One's vault. With a single powerful incantation he blasts open the choshom's doors.

THE ORB OF AGAMOTTO

Inside the choshum, atop a pedestal sits the Orb, its surface shimmering with white light. It glows with such power that the air ripples around it like water.

As Mordo/Dormammu reaches out to pick it up, suddenly the entire choshum slides away from him, out of his reach. Mordo/Dormammu turns to see Strange standing behind him.

STRANGE

We're not done here yet.

Strange blasts Mordo/Dormammu with energy bolts from both hands. But the blasts barely phase him, and Mordo/Dormammu simply takes Strange's energy and aims it right back at him.

Strange puts up a protective shield at the last possible moment, deflecting the blasts. But right on the heels of that attack Strange hears a creaking sound from above, and looks skyward just as Mordo/Dormammu drops the entire roof in on Strange's head.

Mordo/Dormammu turns to retrieve the Orb, only to see Strange holding it.

MORDO/DORMAMMU

You are a fast learner, Sorcerer Supreme.

STRANGE

Karl, I don't want to destroy you. You've got to fight Dormammu's influence.

MORDO/DORMAMMU

But not fast enough!

His red eyes gleam with fury as Dormammu TELEPORTS close enough to reach out and grab Strange's arms.

The Orb falls as pain surges down Strange's forearms as Mordo/Dormammu's fiery grip burns his skin.

MORDO/DORMAMMU (CONT'D)

A familiar feeling, isn't it, Strange?

Mordo/Dormammu throws Strange aside, pancaking him into the wall. Suddenly the wall itself morphs into strong IRON BANDS that wrap Strange, pinning his hands and arms.

His hands bound, Strange can no longer cast spells to fight back.

MORDO/DORMAMMU (CONT'D)

An eternity waiting for this moment.

Mordo/Dormammu grasps the Orb. It glows and surges with energy.

STRANGE

Fight him Karl! This isn't what you want!

Once Mordo/Dormammu touches the Orb, the air becomes filled with the glowing lights, all them streaming in towards the Orb, drawn to it like a magnet. The Orb begins to glow with power, the air crackling all around Mordo/Dormammu.

With a wave Mordo/Dormammu opens all 99 doors that surround the Sanctum, including the one to the Dark Dimension.

MORDO/DORMAMMU

Your time is over, Strange.

Beneath his wooden bonds, Strange struggles to release his hands. But he needs more time.

STRANGE

Karl, listen! You can't let him walk through that door! Don't you know what will happen?!

MORDO/DORMAMMU

We will change history. We will save the Mordo family.

STRANGE

You won't! Everything you are, everything your family fought for will be lost if you allow him to walk through that door!

That one stops Mordo/Dormammu. The flames engulfing him flare.

MORDO/DORMAMMU

I just want to stop the killing.

STRANGE

Walk through that door, and it will never end. Deep down, you know that's true.

We can see an uncertainty growing in Mordo/Dormammu eyes. Still, Strange struggles to free himself.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Fight your way back, Karl. Don't give up. Don't let him win.

Mordo/Dormammu takes one more step toward the black door, but again he hesitates. His face twitches in pain.

MORDO/DORMAMMU

No!

Mordo/Dormammu's hands begin to quake as the battle for control of his body rages. Flames burns away much of the remaining flesh as Mordo desperately fights for control.

Just then, Strange gets a hand free, casting a spell that OBLITERATES the bonds that held him fast.

MORDO'S BURNT BODY FALLS TO THE GROUND, BUT NOT BEFORE HURLING THE ORB AT THE DARK DIMENSION! STRANGE EXTENDS HIS ARM -- STOPPING THE ORB IN MIDAIR JUST INCHES FROM THE DARK DIMENSION.

The Orb flies across the room, into Strange's hands.

STRANGE

Holding the Orb in his hands, he feels an almost limitless surge of power.

STRANGE
Incredible. All that power.

Mordo struggles to speak. He's in unspeakable agony.

MORDO
Use it. End the war. Find your sister.

Strange looks down at the blazing Orb, and within its glittering confines appears the object of his desire, Donna.

STRANGE
My sister.

MORDO
Set her free. Set yourself free.

STRANGE
I could.

Strange's eyes become glazed, almost far off.

MORDO
You must, or all this was for nothing.

For a moment Strange seems tempted, until he shakes it off.

STRANGE
I can't. Not at this cost. We aren't gods. Our power must have limitations.

Strange looks back at the door to the Dark Dimension.

STRANGE (CONT'D)
I have to send him back, Mordo. And you along with him.

MORDO
Do it.

STRANGE
You'll be lost there along with him.

MORDO/DORMAMMU
DO IT!

Strange looks at Mordo's tortured face as Dormammu struggles to take him over again. Strange realizes the dark destiny that awaits his friend.

STRANGE

Someday I'll find a way to bring you
back. You and my sister.

And with that, Strange uses the Orb to unleash a powerful
blast of energy that throws Mordo/Dormammu through the
door to the Dark Dimension.

As Mordo drifts off into darkness, Strange sees the
sorcerer oddly at peace, accepting his fate. With a
single motion of his hand, Strange sweeps shut all 99
Doors.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - JADE'S ROOM - DAY

The room is nearly empty as Jade packs the last of her
meager belongings. Strange stands at the door, sad.

STRANGE

Don't go.

JADE

My job here is done. Yours is just
beginning. You don't need another
distraction.

STRANGE

But I do! I need exactly your kind of
distraction.

Strange makes his move. He wraps his arms around her and
plants a kiss on her. She responds in kind.

WONG (O.S.)

Time to go!

Jade breaks off the kiss quickly and grabs her bag.

STRANGE

How long will it take you?

JADE

It's a twelve hour flight into Hong Kong,
then another ten hours on barges and
buses. Let's just say my village isn't
exactly right off the freeway.

STRANGE

I could get you there a lot sooner, if
you'd let me.

JADE

No. It's time I started living my life as everyone else does. I've got a lot of catching up to do in that regard.

STRANGE

And if I need to find you?

JADE

You are the Sorcerer Supreme of the Earth. I think you'll find me if you need me.

He nods. Jade leaves. Strange moves in for another kiss, only to be blocked by Wong.

STRANGE

Problem?

WONG

Do I have a problem with you groping my mother right in front of me? Yes. Yes I do.

Strange is shocked.

STRANGE

Mother!? You're his mother?!

Jade glances back for a brief second, winking, and then keeps walking. Both men stare at her as she leaves.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Your mother?

WONG

One whisper of the word "milf" and I will kill you.

STRANGE

(under his breath)

It's a little late for that.

WONG

What?

STRANGE

Nothing.

Wong glares at him, but Strange doesn't break.

WONG

So -- what do we do now?

STRANGE

Now? We renovate. Time to make this place
feel more like home.

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - DAY

The floating lights gather around the Chinese Restaurant
at the end of the alley.

WONG (O.S.)

Renovate? Like, redecorate?

FLASH. Suddenly, the restaurant is gone, replaced by a
brick wall. Nobody here seems to notice.

STRANGE (V.O.)

Not exactly.

EXT. BLEEKER STREET - DAY

FLASH. Suddenly a beautiful three story TOWNHOUSE appears
where an empty lot once laid.

STRANGE (V.O.)

Abracadabra.

FADE OUT.