



NEW YORK CITY'S MCCARTHY MEDICAL INSTITUTE, LIKE MOST HOSPITALS, IS PERPETUALLY FILLED TO THE POINT OF OVERCROWDING.

WHATEVER HALLWAY YOU TAKE, YOU CAN SEE DOCTORS AND NURSES HARD AT WORK.

HERE'S WHAT A MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS SEES:

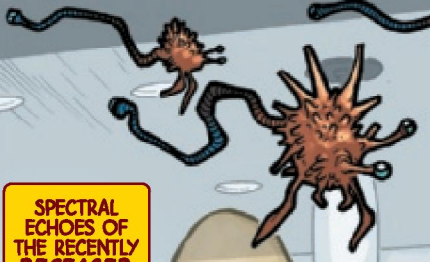


SICKNESS.

DISEASE.

SPECTRAL ECHOES OF THE RECENTLY DECEASED.

INVISIBLE DEMONS WHO FEED ON GRIEF AND SUFFERING.



IF I WORKED HERE FULL-TIME, MY HEART WOULD SHATTER.



NEHPETS ERABEB



OPER  
ROOM



MY NAME IS DR. STEPHEN STRANGE.

BUT I'M ALSO THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEUROSURGEON, AND THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH IS A LIFETIME VOW.

AS EARTH'S *SORCERER SUPREME*, I HAVE A UNIQUE AND DEMANDING RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT IT FROM ANY *MYSTICAL MENACES* THAT MAY THREATEN IT.

SO I'VE REACHED AN ARRANGEMENT WITH THE HOSPITAL:

THEY CALL ME IN ONLY FOR THE OPERATIONS THAT NO ONE ELSE—NO ONE ELSE—HAS THE SKILL TO PERFORM.

THAT SKILL LIES IN MY HANDS AND IN MY MIND, NOT IN *SORCERY*.

I *NEVER* PERFORM MAGIC INSIDE THE OPERATING THEATER. *EVER*.

MOREOVER, SPELLCRAFT REQUIRES *TOTAL CONCENTRATION*.

MAGIC ALWAYS DEMANDS A *PRICE*, AND I DARE NOT TAKE THE RISK THAT THE *PATIENT*, NOT ME, MIGHT GET TAPPED TO *PAY* IT.

WHEN YOU HAVE A *NEEDLE* IN SOMEONE'S *BRAIN*, THAT'S NO TIME TO *MULTITASK*.



DIVIDING MY ENERGIES LIKE THIS DEMANDS A DELICATE BALANCE.

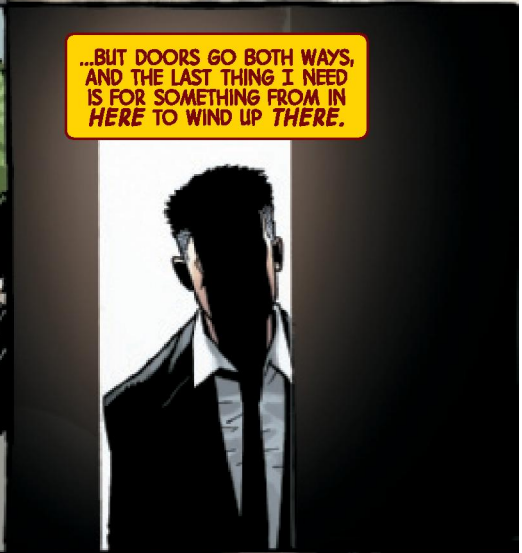
EVERY HOUR SPENT AT MCCARTHY IS TIME NOT SPENT DEFENDING EARTH FROM SHUMA-GORATH OR BARON MORDO, AND VICE VERSA.



I DEVOTED LAST WEEKEND TO FINDING A SPELL THAT WOULD CREATE A 30-HOUR DAY. DOESN'T EXIST.



LIKewise, TO SAVE TRANSIT TIME, I ENTERTAINED THE NOTION OF CREATING A DOOR THAT LEADS FROM MY SANCTUM SANCTORUM DIRECTLY TO MY OFFICE...



...BUT DOORS GO BOTH WAYS, AND THE LAST THING I NEED IS FOR SOMETHING FROM IN HERE TO WIND UP THERE.



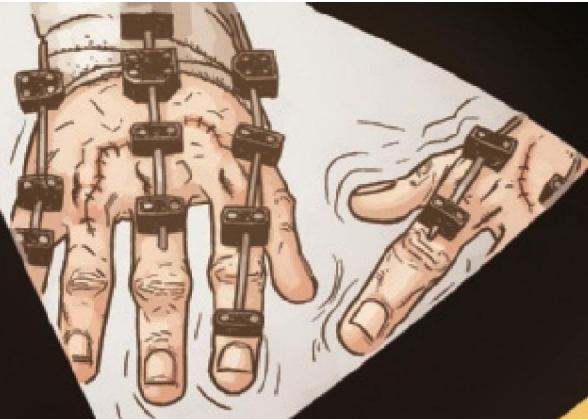
IT'S NOT JUST MY VOW THAT KEEPS ME BARRELING FORWARD. I'D FORGOTTEN HOW EXHILARATING SURGERY IS.



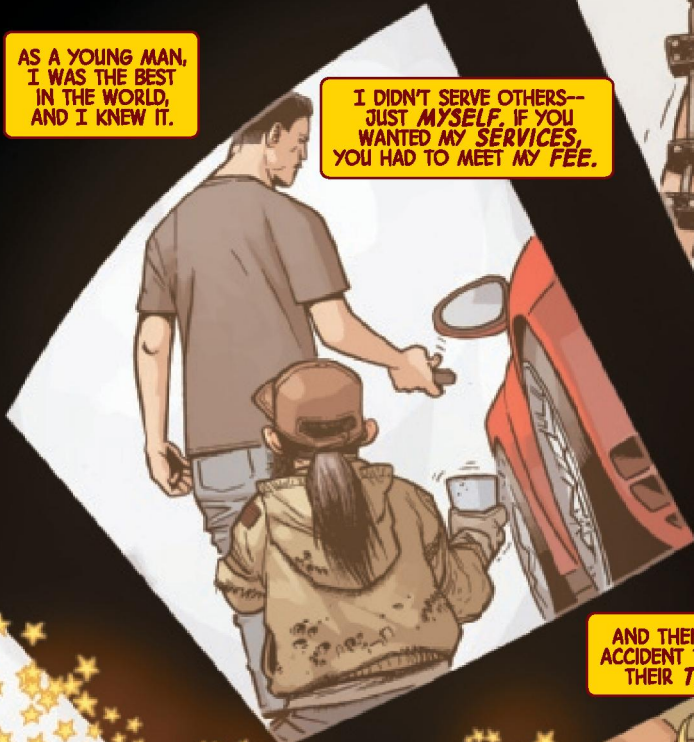
AND HOW DRAINING.

AS A YOUNG MAN, I WAS THE BEST IN THE WORLD, AND I KNEW IT.

I DIDN'T SERVE OTHERS-- JUST *MYSELF*. IF YOU WANTED *MY SERVICES*, YOU HAD TO MEET *MY FEE*.



MY HANDS WERE AS FINE AN INSTRUMENT AS HEIFETZ'S *VIOLIN* OR CLAPTON'S *STRATOCASTER*.



AND THEN AN AUTO ACCIDENT TOOK AWAY THEIR *TALENTS*.

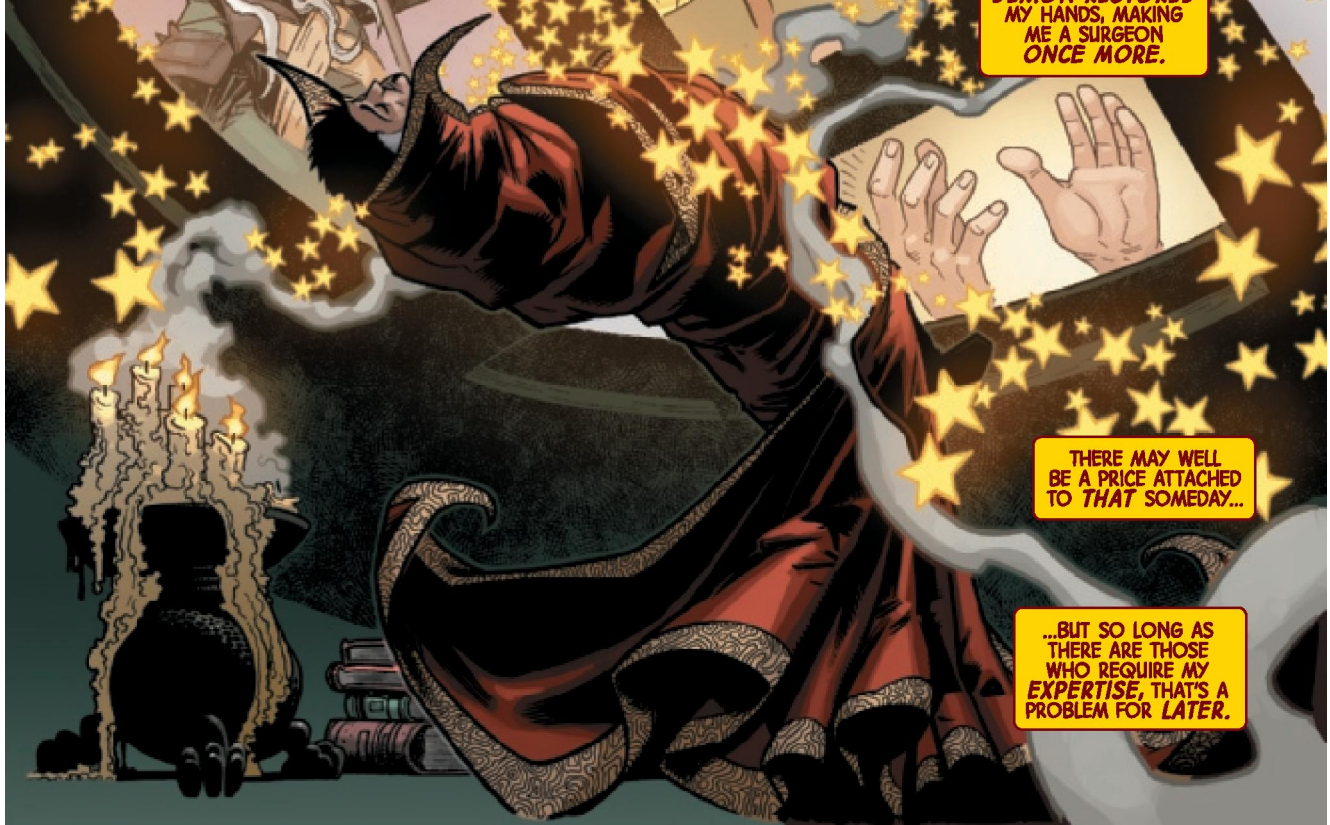
DESTITUTE, SEARCHING THE WORLD FOR SOME SORT OF *CURE*, I ENCOUNTERED AN ANCIENT CONJURER.

HE SHOWED ME A *NEW PATH* TO FULFILLMENT.

HEALING THE WORLD THROUGH *SORCERY* RATHER THAN *SCIENCE*.



RECENTLY, HOWEVER, A BARGAIN WITH A *DEMON* RESTORED MY HANDS, MAKING ME A SURGEON *ONCE MORE*.



THERE MAY WELL BE A PRICE ATTACHED TO *THAT* SOMEDAY...

...BUT SO LONG AS THERE ARE THOSE WHO REQUIRE *MY EXPERTISE*, THAT'S A PROBLEM FOR *LATER*.