

HP. LOVECRAFT'S
**THE HAUNTER
OF THE DARK!**



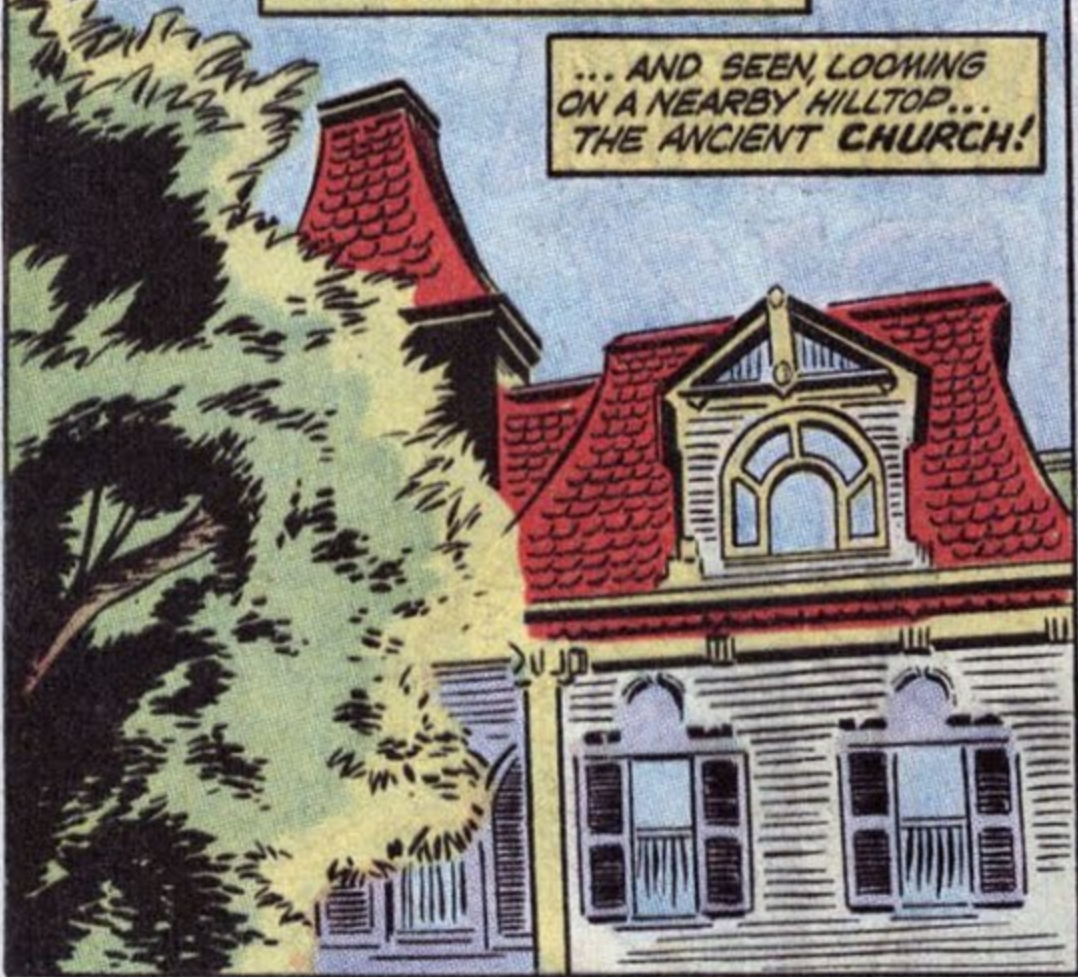
ON A CERTAIN STORMY NIGHT IN PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND, A HUSHED CROWD KEPT A FEARFUL VIGIL AROUND A RUINED OLD CHURCH. THEY WERE AFRAID... AFRAID THAT SOMETHING WHICH LURKED UP IN THE SHADOWY STEEPLE WOULD ESCAPE!

AND IN HIS STUDIO, ROBERT BLAKE SEEMED TO BE WATCHING, TOO.

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BLAKE WAS A WRITER OF THE OCCULT. HE'D MOVED TO A COMFORTABLE STUDIO IN PROVIDENCE THAT SPRING. IT WAS THEN HE HAD FIRST LOOKED OUT FROM HIS GABLED WINDOW...



... AND SEEN, LOOKING ON A NEARBY HILLTOP... THE ANCIENT CHURCH!



THAT HUGE DARK OLD PILE IS FASCINATING. NOT LIKE ANY CHURCH I'VE EVER SEEN. IT'S SO GRIM AND AUSTERE-- LIKE A THING OF EVIL, RATHER THAN HOPE.

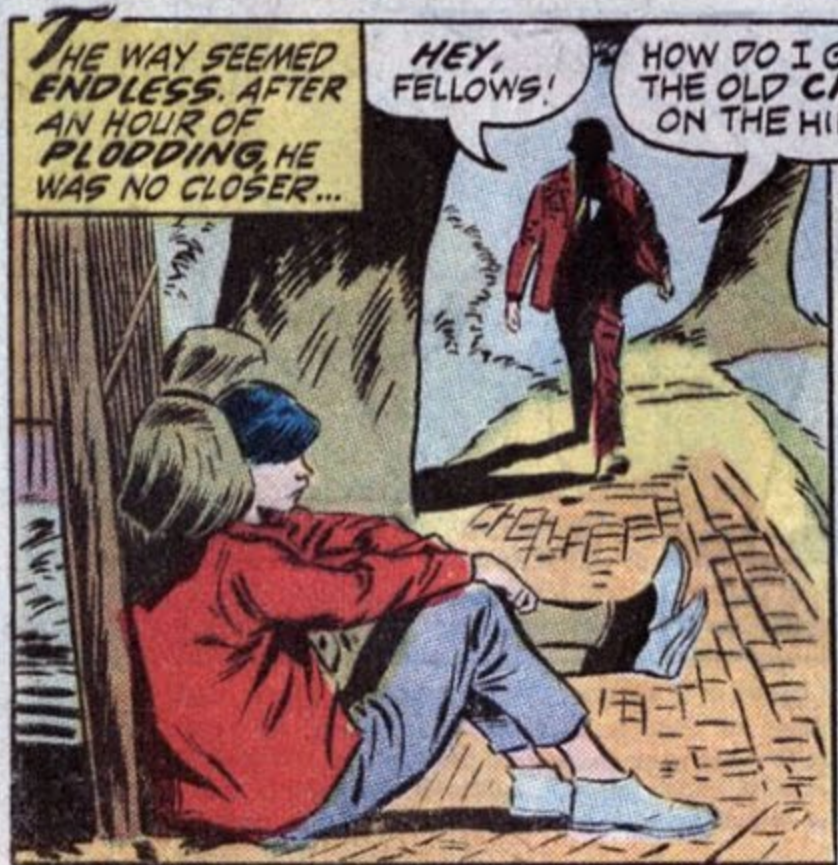


FUNNY THING, TOO -- THE PIGEONS AND SWALLOWS SEEM TO SHUN IT... WON'T GO NEAR THE EAVES.



THERE'S GOT TO BE A GOOD YARN IN THAT CHURCH. I WANT A CLOSER LOOK.

AND SO BLAKE BEGAN HIS FIRST REAL TRIP INTO... THE UNKNOWN.



THE WAY SEEMED ENDLESS. AFTER AN HOUR OF PLODDING, HE WAS NO CLOSER...

HEY, FELLOWS!

HOW DO I GET TO THE OLD CHURCH ON THE HILL?

HUH? THERE'S NO OLD CHURCH AROUND HERE MISTER.

BUT I'VE SEEN IT PLAIN AS DAY. IT --



WELL, YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE. FORGET IT, MAN!



MANY OTHERS, YOUNG AND OLD, REFUSED HIM INFORMATION.

BUT THEN, SUDDENLY--AS HE ROUNDED A SHADOWED CORNER-- HE SAW IT--TOWERING ABOVE HIM...



THERE IT IS-- AT LAST!

I'VE HAD A TOUGH TIME FINDING THIS CHURCH, OFFICER. NO ONE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IT.



IT'S AN EVIL PLACE, SIR. A BAD BUNCH USED IT IN THE OLD DAYS.

PEOPLE HAVE... HEARD THINGS AT NIGHT.

THINGS? WHAT KIND OF THINGS?

JUST... THINGS.



WELL, THANKS FOR THE WARNING!

REMEMBER--IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO STAY AWAY FROM.



A HAUNTED CHURCH, HUH?

THIS I'VE GOT TO SEE!



BLAKE WADED THROUGH TANGLED GROWTHS, AMID ANCIENT HEADSTONES...

DOORS ALL BOARDED UP! AH! BUT THERE'S AN OPEN WINDOW!

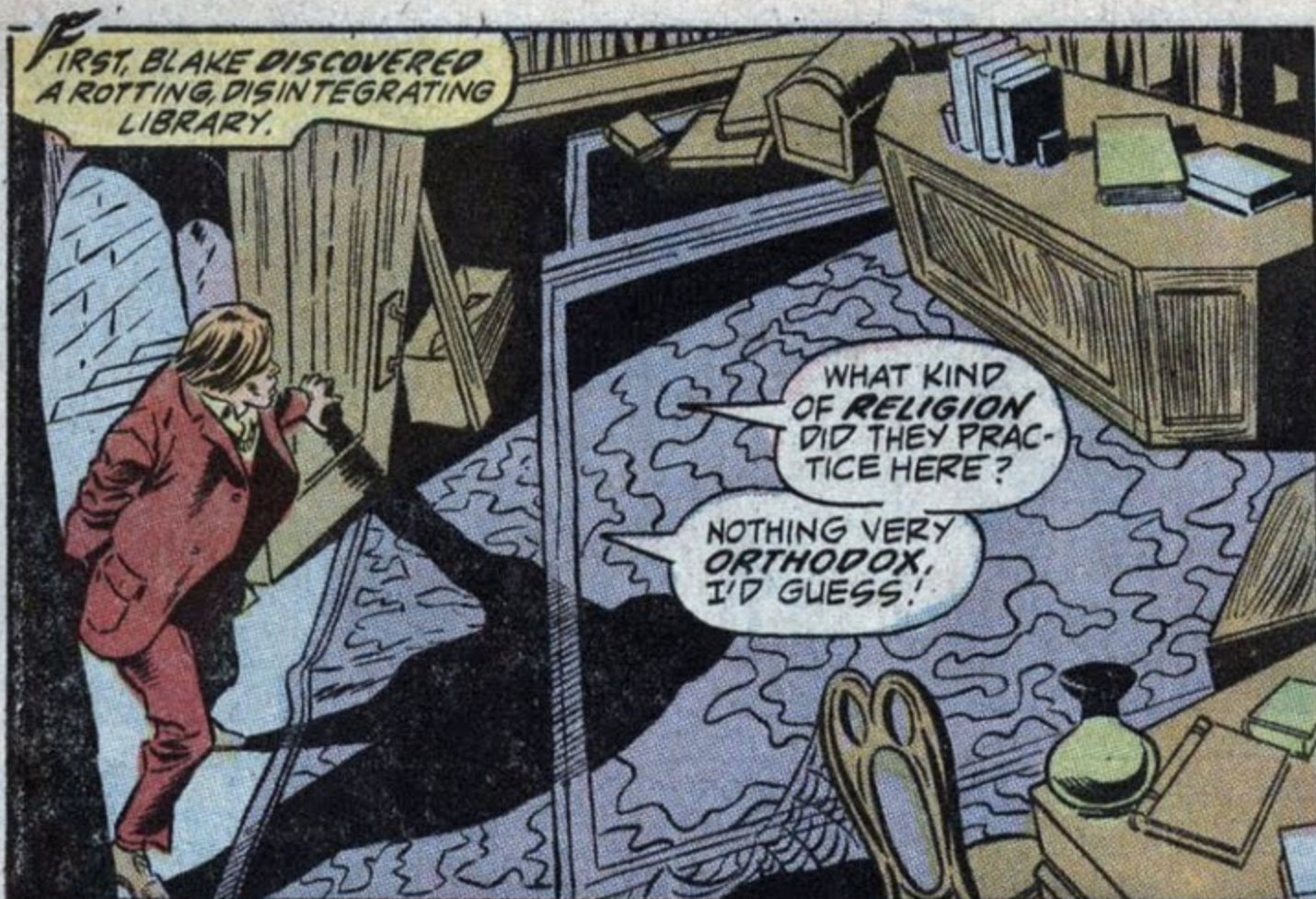


HE CRAWLED THROUGH THE YAWNING OPENING...

...INTO A GULF OF COBWEBS AND DUST... DEBRIS AND OLD BARRELS.



HE BEGAN TO CLIMB THE WORN STONE STEPS...







DURING THE DAYS WHICH FOLLOWED, BLAKE PORED OVER THE BOOKS HE HAD TAKEN. FINALLY HE CRACKED THE CODE...

YES! THIS IS IN THE AKLO LANGUAGE-- AN ANCIENT TONGUE OF EVIL ANTIQUITY!

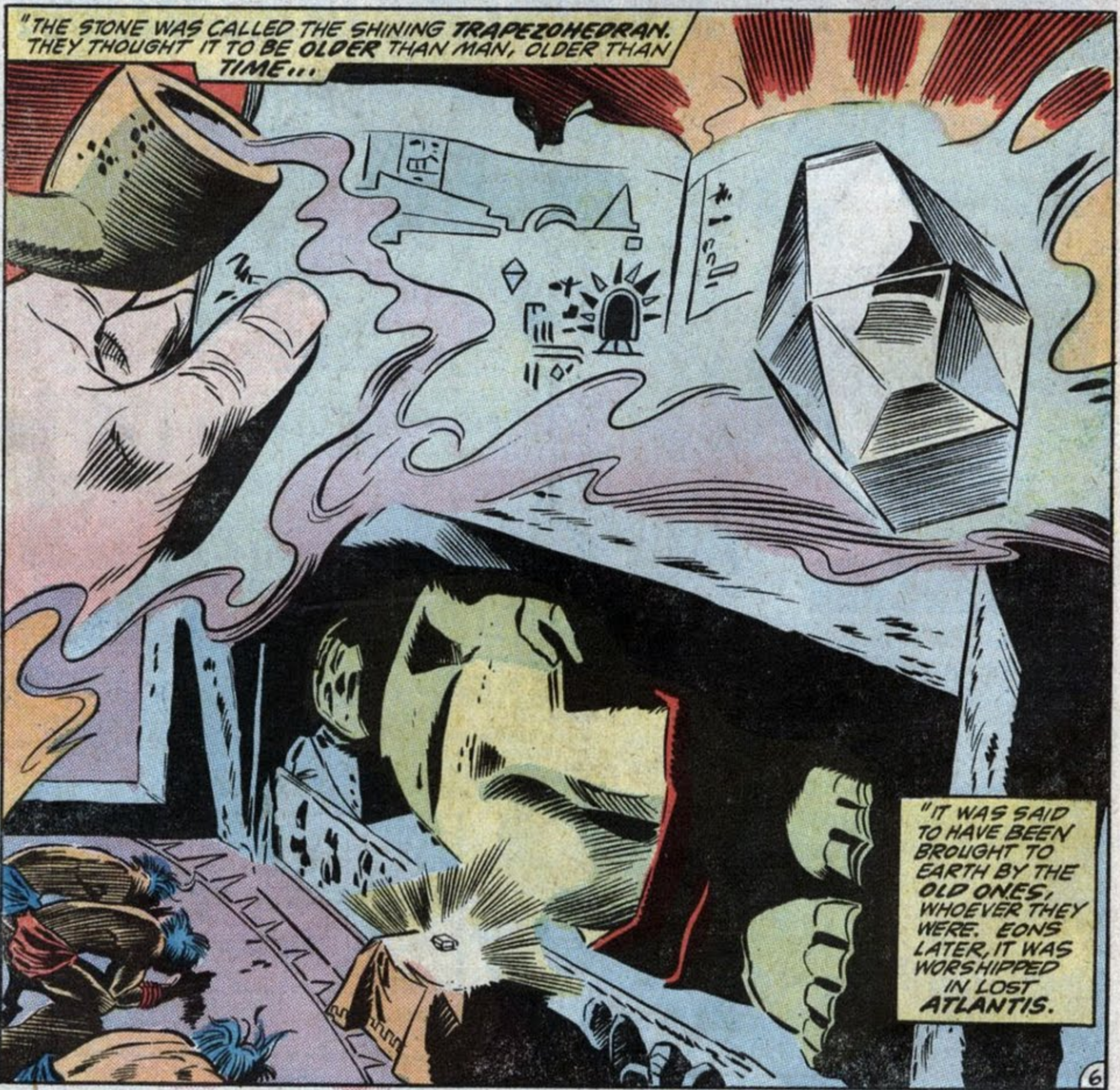


IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAST CENTURY, THE STARRY WISDOM CULT TOOK OVER THE OLD CHURCH.



THEY BELIEVED IN A HAUNTER OF THE DARK-- WHICH COULD BE AWAKENED...

...BY GAZING INTO THE JEWEL!



"THE STONE WAS CALLED THE SHINING TRAPEZOHEDRAN. THEY THOUGHT IT TO BE OLDER THAN MAN, OLDER THAN TIME..."

"IT WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO EARTH BY THE OLD ONES, WHOEVER THEY WERE. EONS LATER, IT WAS WORSHIPPED IN LOST ATLANTIS."

"THE STONE SANK WITH ATLANTIS AND REMAINED IN THE SEA FOR CENTURIES, UNTIL..."

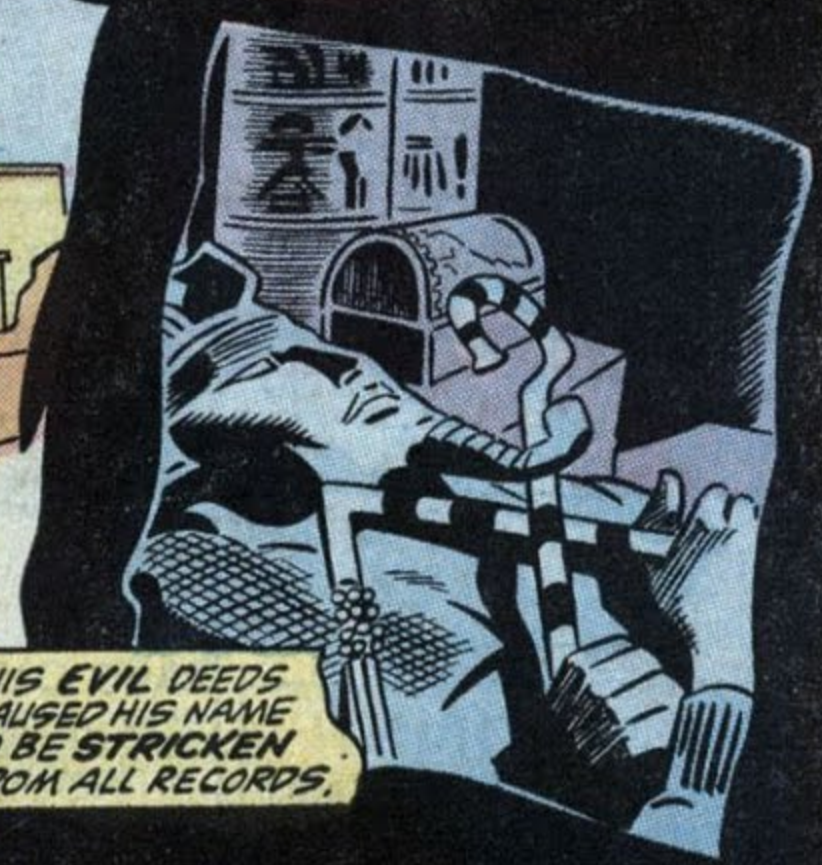


"... A MINOAN FISHERMAN NETTED IT AND SOLD IT TO A MERCHANT."



"IT WAS BROUGHT BY THE PHARAOH NEPHREN-KA, WHO ORDERED IT TO BE BURIED WITH HIM."

"HIS EVIL DEEDS CAUSED HIS NAME TO BE STRICKEN FROM ALL RECORDS."



"THE STONE SLEPT UNTIL THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WHEN ARCHEOLOGISTS ONCE MORE BROUGHT IT FORTH TO CURSE MANKIND."

"THE STONE FINALLY BECAME THE PROPERTY OF THE STARRY WISDOM CULT. THEY WORSHIPPED IT IN THE CHURCH UNTIL ..."

"... THEIR STRANGE RITES AND RUMORS OF BLOOD SACRIFICES CAUSED THEM TO BE DRIVEN FROM TOWN IN THE 1880'S."

NOW WHAT ABOUT THAT REPORTER WHOSE BONES I FOUND? WHAT KILLED HIM?

ACCORDING TO THIS, HE WENT THERE IN 1897. AND HE CLOSED THE JEWEL BOX...

I am certain the stone encloses some alien entity, some timeless demon known as the Haunter of the Dark. The thing, possibly ancient and completely evil, thrives on darkness. I believe it can stand much light. Perhaps made a mistake in closing that chest.

HE SAYS, "SINCE THE THING THRIVES ON DARKNESS, IT WAS A MISTAKE TO SHUT THE CASKET. I MUST GO BACK AND OPEN IT--LET IN THE LIGHT!"

THAT'S HIS LAST ENTRY. HE WENT BACK AND...

BUT I WON'T RETURN THERE!

EACH NIGHT, BLAKE SUFFERED TERRIBLE DREAMS...

UNHOLY SHADOW-SHAPES STALKED HIM THROUGH CRUMBLING RUINS.

GOOD LORD! I CLOSED THE BOX TOO!

