

MARVEL

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DEFENDERS

#4

AL EWING
JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ



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BONUS DIGITAL EDITION — DETAILS INSIDE!

CAST

I



THE SORCERER SUPREME

Doctor Stephen Strange—Master of the Mystic Arts and leader of the Defenders...for now.

II



THE MASKED RAIDER

The mysterious bearer of the **Eternity Mask**, an ancient artifact made from the substance of the cosmic entity **Eternity**. The Raider took up the mask and the mission of its previous bearer, a repentant member of the scientific cabal the **Enclave**.

III



THE SILVER SURFER

Cosmic wanderer and previous herald of **Galactus**, the world-eater.

IV



HARPY

Betty Banner, ex-wife of the **Hulk**, recently re-empowered with gamma after her death and resurrection through the **Green Door**.

V



CLOUD

A **nebula** that gained human form via the influence of a **Cosmic Cube** and a chance encounter with teenagers **Carol Faber** and **Danny Milligan**, whose bodies and senses Cloud combined and co-opted for their own.

VI



TAAIA

A **heroic scienceer** from the Sixth Cosmos and mother of **Galen of Taa**, the infant who will one day become **Galactus the Devourer**.

THE STORY SO FAR...

There have been seven versions of reality before this one. And this Eighth Cosmos is now under threat due to Carlo Zota, a rogue scientist who sent himself back in time to try to fix his mistakes. At the urging of the mysterious Masked Raider, Doctor Strange activated the Tarot of the Secret Flame and summoned a new team of Defenders to hunt down Zota. The spell brought them first to the Sixth Cosmos, where they allied with Taaia, the mother of Galactus, and then to the Fifth Cosmos, a realm of pure magic where the eldritch being Moridun had enslaved the fugitive Zota. Realizing the Defenders were a living spell, Strange channeled the power through Harpy and summoned the mysterious Green Door. The opening of the unnatural portal defeated Moridun, returned Harpy to her human form as Betty Ross, and sucked the Defenders into an even earlier cosmos...



Two lovers were
traveling on a
lonely road.

They met a being that
could not fully be
described in words.
And that being was *me*.

In seeking to *communicate*--
to *understand* the lovers, to
understand *myself*--I adopted
their *shapes*. I had no wish to
choose, so I adopted *both*.

I wanted to save
them--save *everything*.
And...I wanted to know
love. To know *life*.

But I learned that to know
life is to know *pain* and
heartache. To know a world
where the *simplest truths*
of myself are *mysteries*
to those around me.

My name is *Cloud*.
I cannot *fully* be
described in words.
But I *am*.

And more
than anything
else...

Cloud?

...be right
there.

...I am a
being of
love.



We may need your help to speak to this... creature.

I--I'll try...

Really?
Nobody's going to mention who it looks like?



It looks like the *Hulk*-- the man Harpy once loved, and may still. But it's something else.

...

Something that does not speak in words...



...?

I try to say something back. To speak this being's language.

But, as so often happens...



...I cannot make myself understood.

...



I suppose we're in a fight now.

Anyway.



Masked Raider--

Sorry, Strange-- the Eternity Mask can't get a fix on him!

There's too many of him at once--

BANG BANG BANG

KATHOOOM



Can we ever fully know each other? Or are we always *distorted*--flipped and reversed by the distance between us?

A reflection in a concave mirror...

...lovers upside down.



THEN WE'LL MEET "LIKE FOR LIKE" ANOTHER WAY!!

WITH A SOLID ENERGY "MATTER MAP" OF HIS FISTS--

--AND THE
COURAGE
IN OUR
HEARTS!!

SMACK!

Just keep
him busy!

I still can't
control my magic--
but I've learned how
potent it can be in
other hands--

--so if I filter
the all-seeing
Eye of Agamotto
through Cloud's higher
consciousness...

WHOM!!

THUMB!

...then
between us,
we can see the
truth of this
entity.

The "One-
Is-Four"...

It's the closest thing
to their name in human
language. This is an
archetypal being--
a form of primal avatar.

Everything that exists
was once a spark in
the cosmic mind...
an idea...and this...

BANG
BANG

...is
a living
idea.

A highly
dangerous
one.

Strange--

A little
help--

BANG
BANG