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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

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ROOM

SPACEKNIGHT

LETHAL LASERIUM!



Two-hundred years ago, the evil Dire Wraiths threatened the peace-loving planet, Gaador. In their homeworld's darkest hour, a thousand brave, young Galadorians sacrificed humanity itself to become Cyborg Warriors, a last desperate line of defense. Though hopelessly outnumbered, these Spaceknights triumphed, and pursued the remnants of the Wraith horde across the universe. Now, alone in the Enemy's mightiest stronghold, on a backward planet called Earth, one Galadorian Warrior faces his most awesome challenge.

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE GREATEST OF THE SPACE KNIGHTS—**ROM!**

BILL MANTLO . **SAL BUSCEMA** . **JOHN COSTANZA** . **GLYNIS WEIN** . **JO DUFFY** . **JIM SHOOTER**
writer . artist . letters . colors . editor . ed.-in-chief

WHEN MOBSTER ARCHIE STRYKER PLANNED THIS JOB HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SIMPLE. KIDNAP THE MANAGER OF THE LASERIUM CORP. GET HIM TO OPEN THE TRIPLE-LOCKED VAULT, AND TAKE OFF WITH THE MONEY INSIDE BEFORE POLICE ARRIVE! NO PROBLEM, UNTIL A GUN-METAL GLEAMING NIGHTMARE CRASHED THROUGH THE SKYLIGHT!

SKRASH!

IT'S--IT'S...
ROM!

SOME KIND OF ROBOT! BUT WHERE'D IT COME FROM? WHAT'S IT WANT?!

I COME SEEKING EVIL! I COME TO EXACT REVENGE!

SECOND COMING!

THIS LANSING, WEST VIRGINIA BECOMES THE SECOND TOWN TO EXPERIENCE THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL TERROR OF... **ROM!**

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THERE ARE NONE BETWEEN US NOW, WRAITH.

W-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME?

SHOW YOU MORE MERCY THAN YOU SHOWED THE ONCE-PROUD STAR FLEET OF GALADOR

PREPARE, WRAITH, TO BE BANISHED!

NO! NOT THAT!

STRYKER, NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO GET OUT OF HERE! WHAT ARE YOU WAITIN' FOR?!

I CAN'T LEAVE THAT POOR GUY TO GET KILLED BY SOME MONSTER!

NOT IF THIS LASER-CANNON DOES WHAT I'M HOPING IT'LL DO!

ARSHH! SEARING FIRE, STRIKING ME FROM BEHIND!

PERHAPS MY CYBORG FORM-- A COMPOSITE OF FLESH AND SPACEKNIGHT ARMOR-- CAN WITHSTAND THIS BEAM OF FOCUSED LIGHT--

--YET THIS IS THE FIRST EARTH WEAPON THAT HAS CAUSED ME PAIN. IT MUST BE DEALT WITH. THE WRAITH WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

SLOWLY THE SPACEKNIGHT TURNS...

NOW, WHILE ROM'S DISTRACTED-- I'VE GOT TO SOUND THE ALARM!

HELLO, OPERATOR--

-- GET ME THE POLICE! "

WHAT'S THAT? ROM, HERE IN LANSING? ARE YOU SURE?

LANSING POLICE DEPT.

ALL RIGHT, DO WHAT YOU CAN! I'LL SEND HELP AS SOON AS I'VE NOTIFIED THE OTHERS!

POLICE CHIEF

MEANWHILE, ARCHIE STRYKER CHALLENGES THE MIGHT OF ROM...

CRIPES, I'VE SEEN LASERS SLICE THROUGH STEEL LIKE IT WAS BUTTER, BUT I'VE GOT THIS CANNON AT FULL-FORCE AND THE ROBOT JUST KEEPS COMING! WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO STOP HIM?!

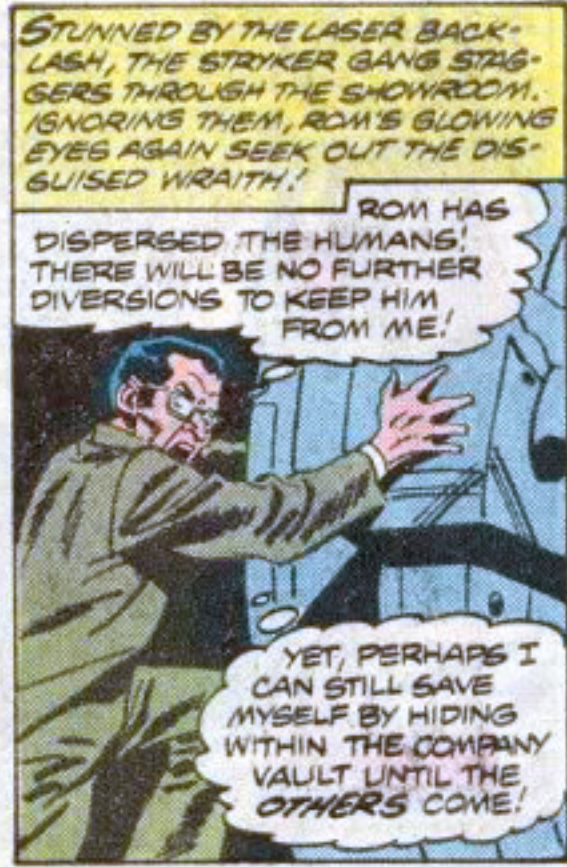
MORE POWER THAN YOUR EARTH SCIENCE HAS YET HARNESSSED, HUMAN! YET EVEN NOW THE DIRE WRAITHS ADD THEIR TECHNOLOGY TO YOURS--



--SO THAT THEY MAY ONE DAY LAUNCH AN EARTH-BASED INVASION AGAINST MY WORLD, BELOVED GALADOR!

PHWREEK!

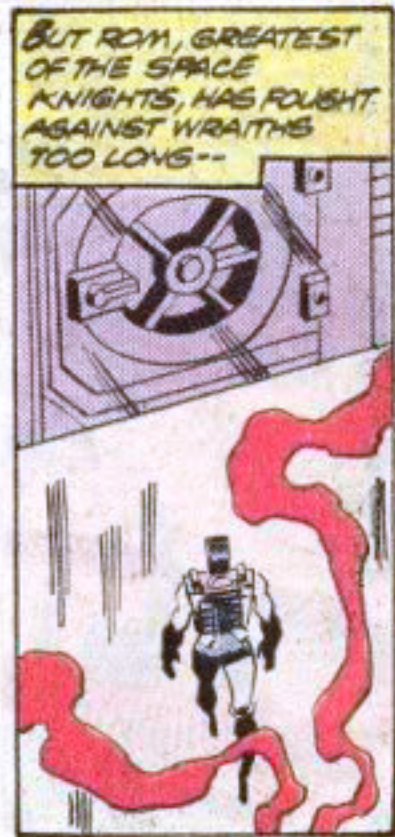
STRYKER, THE ROBOT CAN'T BE STOPPED! FOR THE LOVE OF MERCY, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!



STUNNED BY THE LASER BACKLASH, THE STRYKER GANG STAGGERS THROUGH THE SHOWROOM. IGNORING THEM, ROM'S GLOWING EYES AGAIN SEEK OUT THE DISGUISED WRAITH!

ROM HAS DISPERSED THE HUMANS! THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER DIVERSIONS TO KEEP HIM FROM ME!

YET, PERHAPS I CAN STILL SAVE MYSELF BY HIDING WITHIN THE COMPANY VAULT UNTIL THE OTHERS COME!

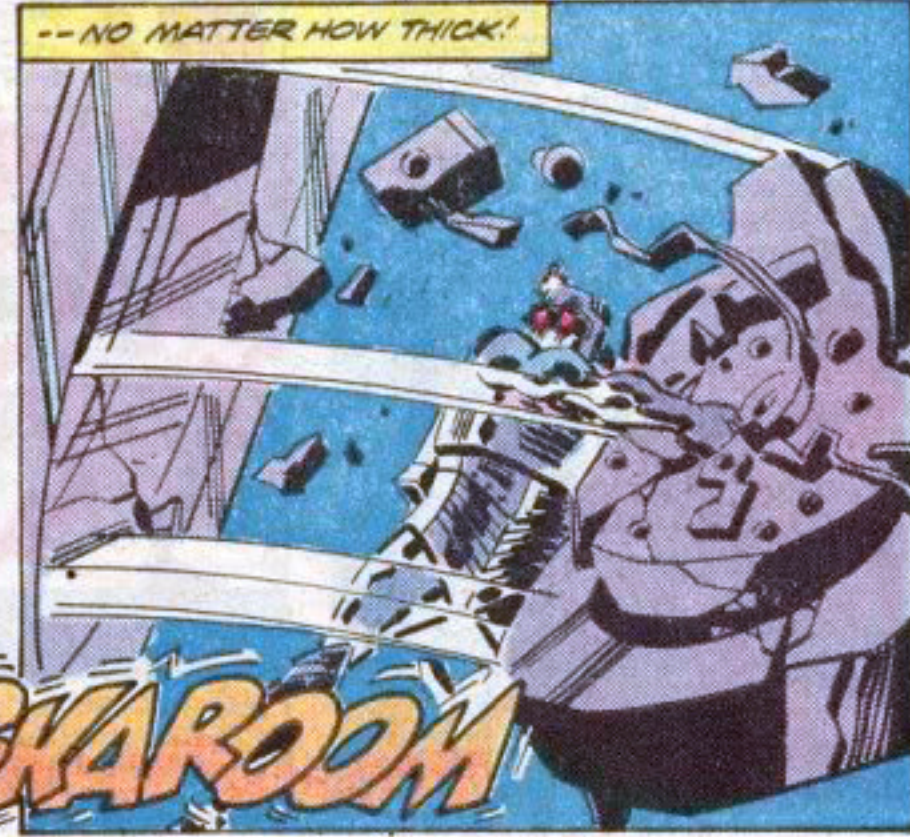


BUT ROM, GREATEST OF THE SPACE KNIGHTS, HAS FOUGHT AGAINST WRAITHS TOO LONG--



-- TO BE DENIED HIS REVENGE BY A MERE STEEL DOOR --

SSSHAROOM



-- NO MATTER HOW THICK!



THERE IS NO PLACE LEFT ON EARTH FOR YOU TO HIDE, WRAITH!

Y-YOU MAY SUCCEED IN ELIMINATING ME, ROM, BUT THERE ARE COUNTLESS OTHERS WHO WILL TAKE MY PLACE!

THEN THEY, TOO, SHALL BE DEALT WITH, EVIL ONE!



STRYKER, THE ROBOT'S NOT PAYIN' ANY ATTENTION TO US! LET'S HIGHTAIL IT OUTTA HERE... NOW!

N-NO!



I-I CAN'T HEAR WHAT THE ROBOT AND THE GUY WE SNATCHED ARE SAYING TO EACH OTHER, BUT I-I JUST CAN'T LEAVE A FELLOW HUMAN IN THE HANDS OF THAT METALLIC...

...MONSTER!

AND, ROCKET-PODS ROARING, ROM THE SPACE-KNIGHT SCARS SKYWARD AS LASERIUM CORP ERUPTS INTO FLAMES BEHIND HIM!



THE PLACE IS GOIN' UP IN SMOKE!

BUT THAT ROBOT'S ESCAPING!

WAROON

THE STRYKER GANG?! I DON'T GET IT, YOU PUNKS ARE BURGLARS, NOT ARSONISTS!



WE DIDN'T TORCH THE PLACE, COPPER! ROM DID!

ROM! YOU SAW THIS-ER... CREATURE DESTROY LASERIUM CORP.?



BLASTED RIGHT I DID! AND WHAT HE DID TO THE POOR MANAGER...

LORD, AS LONG AS I LIVE I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT POOR BUZZARD'S SCREAM AS ROM FRIED HIM WITH SOME KIND OF DEATH-RAY!



I'D DO ANYTHING TO STOP THAT MONSTER FROM KILLING ANOTHER HUMAN BEING! ANYTHING!



HMMM... PERHAPS YOU WILL GET YOUR CHANCE, ARCHIE STRYKER... ONCE I INFORM THE OTHERS!

THE NEXT MORNING DAWN RISES OVER CLAIRTON, A SMALL, SUBURBAN COMMUNITY TWENTY MILES FROM LANSING, WEST VIRGINIA... A TOWN STILL REELING FROM THE FIRST VISITATION OF ROM!



MORNING, MR. CLARK, I'VE COME TO SEE HOW BRANDY'S DOING.

SHE'S CALMER NOW, STEVE. COME ON IN-- SHE'LL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU.

AND INSIDE THE CLARK RESIDENCE...



...I'D SAY YOUR DAUGHTER'S SUFFERED A MILD CASE OF SHOCK, MRS. CLARK.

AND I'M TELLING YOU THAT I'M ABSOLUTELY FINE, DR. PETERS! I KNOW WHAT I SAW, AND NOTHING IN YOUR LITTLE BLACK BAG WILL CHANGE THAT.

BRANDY, LOOK WHO'S HERE!

ROM!!

FOR LONG SECONDS, BRANDY CAN THINK OF NOTHING TO SAY.

BUT, WHILE HER HEAD SAYS THAT IT IS MADNESS, HER HEART TELLS HER TO TRUST THE COLD, BLEAMING BEING BEFORE HER.

IT HAS BEEN TWO CENTURIES SINCE HE CEASED TO BE A HUMAN.

SHE LISTENS TO HER HEART.

Y-YOU... CAME BACK!

AGAIN SHE QUESTIONS HER SANITY.

BUT ROM DOES NOT SPEAK!

YET HE HAS NOT FORGOTTEN HOW IT FEELS TO HOLD A WOMAN IN HIS ARMS!

WHEN HE BREAKS HIS SILENCE, HIS WORDS REVEAL NOTHING OF HIS THOUGHTS.

I... HAVE RETURNED BECAUSE YOUR WORLD IS SO NEW TO ME, SO STRANGE. I NEED INFORMATION.

OH, I... I SEE.

SHE IS HURT. DID SHE THINK HE'D RETURNED FOR SOMETHING... MORE?

I HAD TRACKED A DIRE WRAITH TO ITS LAIR! YET, AS I SOUGHT TO BANISH THE CREATURE TO LIMBO... A HUMAN, A HARDENED CRIMINAL, DISPLAYED MISGUIDED VALOR BY ATTEMPTING TO SAVE THE WRAITH FROM MY VENGEANCE!

HE PROBABLY THOUGHT: IF YOU WERE KILLING A FELLOW HUMAN BEING, ROM!

IT ALL SOUNDS SO INSANE, YET I SAW THE WEAPON THE WRAITHS TRIED TO DESTROY YOU WITH!

THE NIGHTMARE IS REAL!

THE WRAITHS ARE ON EARTH-- BUT HOW CAN WE HUMANS HELP YOU DEFEAT TO Foe WE CAN'T EVEN RECOGNIZE?

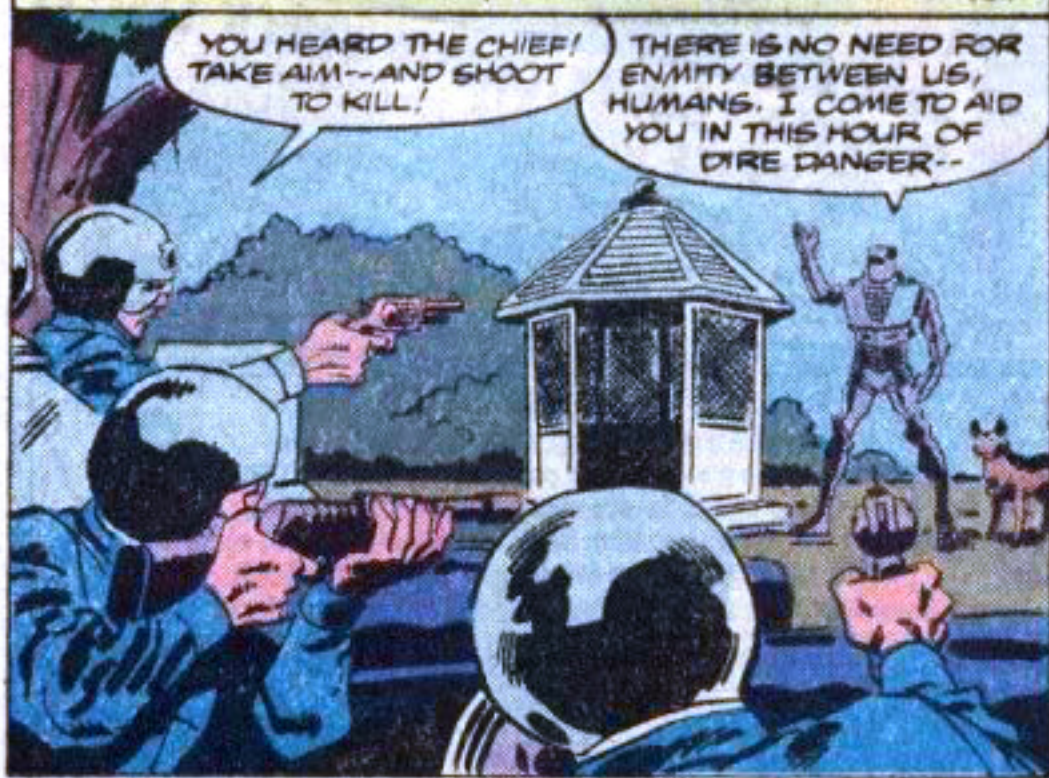
I DON'T BELIEVE IT. I CAME BACK TO TALK TO BRANDY... AND FOUND HER CASUALLY CONVERSING WITH THAT...

... THAT MONSTER!

... AND A FATEFUL ORDER IS GIVEN EVEN AS ROM RAISES HIS HAND IN THE OPEN-PALMED, UNIVERSAL GESTURE OF PEACE!

YOU HEARD THE CHIEF! TAKE AIM--AND SHOOT TO KILL!

THERE IS NO NEED FOR ENMITY BETWEEN US, HUMANS. I COME TO AID YOU IN THIS HOUR OF DIRE DANGER--



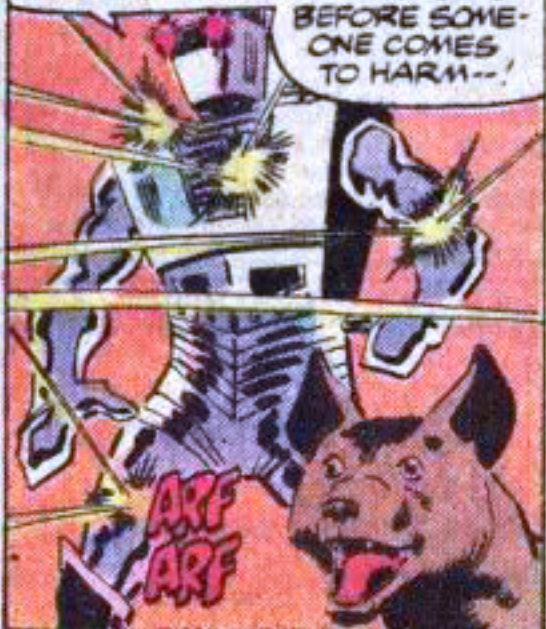
WHATEVER ELSE ROM INTENDED TO SAY, IT IS LOST AMIDST THE DIN OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE!

BRANDY, GET BACK! THOSE BULLETS ARE RICOCHETING ALL OVER THE PLACE!

STEVE, NO! LET ME GO! ROM NEEDS ME!

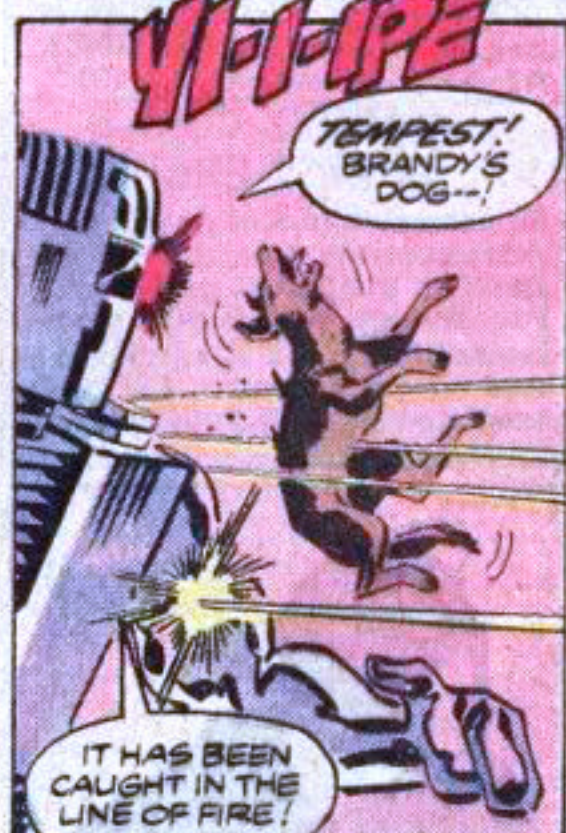


BRANDY, BEING DRAGGED OFF BY THE ONE SHE CALLED STEVE! GOOD! HE SHALL REMOVE HER FROM THIS SCENE OF SENSELESS VIOLENCE! IF ONLY HER FELLOW HUMANS WOULD LISTEN TO ME BEFORE SOMEONE COMES TO HARM--!



YI-I-IPE

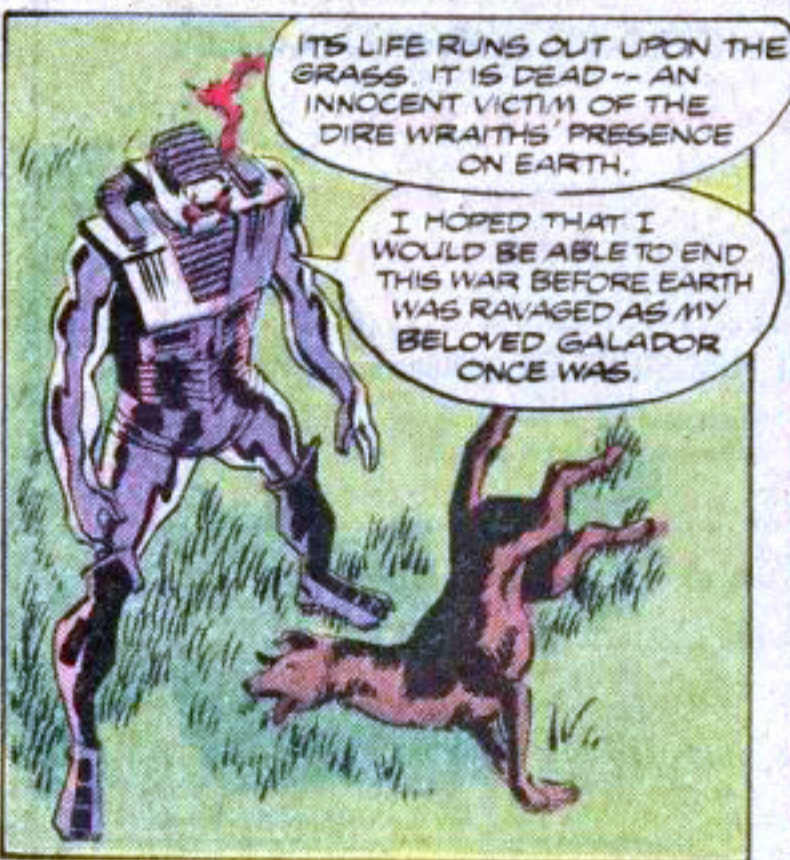
TEMPEST! BRANDY'S DOG--!



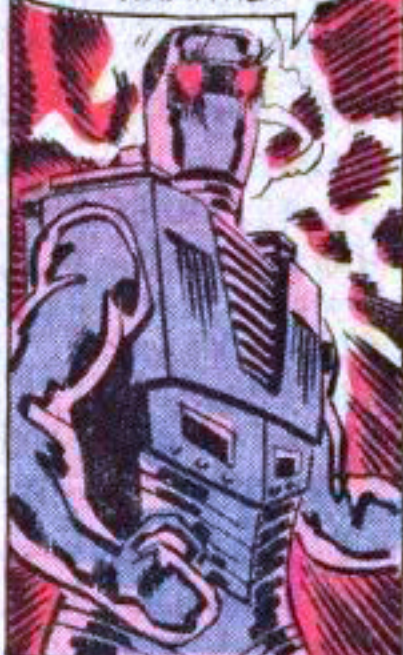
IT HAS BEEN CAUGHT IN THE LINE OF FIRE!

ITS LIFE RUNS OUT UPON THE GRASS. IT IS DEAD-- AN INNOCENT VICTIM OF THE DIRE WRAITHS' PRESENCE ON EARTH.

I HOPED THAT I WOULD BE ABLE TO END THIS WAR BEFORE EARTH WAS RAVAGED AS MY BELOVED GALADOR ONCE WAS.



BUT I DID NOT START THIS WAR, NOR BRING IT TO EARTH! THAT HAPPENED BY THE DESIGN OF THE DIRE WRAITHS!



AND, I SWEAR, THEY SHALL PAY FOR EVERY INNOCENT CREATURE THAT PERISHES BECAUSE OF THEM!



HE IS ROM, GREATEST OF THE SPACEKNIGHTS, AND GRIEF MINGLES WITH ANGER WITHIN HIM.

HE STRIKES
FROM OUTER
SPACE...

...CLEAVING
THROUGH THE SKY
LIKE A FIERY
SWORD OF JUSTICE...

...HURLING
EARTHWARD
ON HIS DREAD
MISSION OF
COSMIC
VENGEANCE!

AND NOTHING CAN STOP HIM!!

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

ROM

SPACEKNIGHT



ROM--BLAZING NEW PATHS
OF GLORY IN THE MARVEL
UNIVERSE--IMAGINEERED BY
BILL MANTLO &
SAL BUSCEMA!

FIND HIM...
BEFORE HE
FINDS YOU!