

MARVEL POP ART PRODUCTIONS

STRANGE TALES

DR. STRANGE, Master of the Mystic Arts

Written by Carlton Donaghe

Eight Pages

Page One

Panel 1.1 takes up the top two-thirds of the page. **Panels 1.2 – 1.4** are the same size, in a row along the bottom third of the page.

The “**Dr. Strange, Master of the Mystic Arts**” logo is across the top of the page.

Panel 1.1

Splash Panel

A tight shot of **Dr. Strange**, from about the chest up, with his gloved hands raised in front of him...

Directly before him, causing a play of light and shadow upon his face, is a huge, black cauldron of fire—the burning fires of Hell!

And rising from the flames of Hell, a figure in unbearable pain, screaming...

Figure:

DEAR GOD PLEASE HELP ME, DR. STRANGE!

Caption (in the shape of a scroll):

MEN CALL HIM DR. STRANGE...
AND THEY SPEAK HIS NAME WITH DREAD—
FOR ONLY THOSE WITH NO HOPE—
NO OTHER PLACE TO TURN—
CALL UPON THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS...!

Panel 1.2

A tall handsome man is leaning over a podium in front of a crowd.

Caption:

A POWERFUL, CRUSADING POLITICIAN—USING HIS OFFICE TO FIGHT
FOR WHAT IS RIGHT!

Man (Reed Ralver):

IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE WITH **REAL** AMERICANS...!

Panel 1.3

The crowd waves and cheers as he waves his fist.

Caption:

THERE ARE DEMONS IN THE SHADOWS THAT PLAGUE HIM...

Man (Reed Ralver):

AND WE'RE GOING TO TAKE OUR COUNTRY BACK...!

Panel 1.4

The man basks in the adoration of the crowd.

Caption:

BUT HE ALWAYS SEEMED TO WIND UP IN THE LIGHT...

Man (Reed Ralver):

GOD BLESS AMERICA...!

Page Two

The page is divided into a nine-panel grid, but the fourth and fifth panels are combined into one, as are the eighth and ninth panels, so that there are actually only seven panels.

Panel 2.1

It is night, and the streetlights cast small oases in the darkness.

A limousine arrives at the Greenwich Village **Sanctum Sanctorum** of **Dr. Stephen Strange**...

The building stands on the right-hand corner of the block.

Caption:

NIGHT IN THE VILLAGE.

Panel 2.2

A polished and well-dressed woman stands at the door. From our vantage point inside the house, we see **Dr. Strange**'s oriental manservant **Wong**, welcoming her. The top of the door is rounded, and the door is set with a large glass window bearing the same design as the skylight on the roof. The arch over the door is ornately carved.

Woman:
IS DR. STRANGE AT HOME...?

Wong:
YES, MA'AM... PLEASE ENTER.

Panel 2.3

Wong leads the woman to a staircase.

Wong:
THIS WAY, PLEASE.

Panel 2.4

(Two panels as one)

We can see from over her shoulder as she looks back from the staircase across the front room. The front room of the **Sanctum Sanctorum** is an enormous open space. The view makes it obvious the house is much larger on the inside than on the outside.

Wong is climbing the stairs, not looking back at the woman.

Woman:
HOW BIG IS THIS PLACE...?

Wong:
THIS ROOM MAKES GOOD USE OF LIGHT AND MIRRORS.

Panel 2.5

As she follows **Wong** up the winding staircase, we can see from her body language that she is pulling herself in tighter. She is looking around at all the strange objects and carvings all around her.

Panel 2.6

Wong is in the background, gesturing forward, towards **Panel 2.7**.

Wong:
YOU WILL FIND HIM RIGHT IN THERE, MADAM.

The woman is in profile, with her chin pulled in against her neck, looking very apprehensive, if not frightened.

Woman:

THANK YOU.

Panel 2.7

(Two panels as one)

The woman is standing outside the doorway looking into a room. We can see the figure of **Dr. Strange** without his cloak, standing beside what looks like a large, covered globe on a pedestal, the **Orb of Agamotto**.

This is the room with the large, circular skylight. The design on the skylight is the same as on his door, and we will also see it in the mountain home of the **Ancient One**.

Whether or not we can see them, there is a large book behind him, propped up and opened. There is an almost throne-like sitting chair, and a bizarre brazier burning incense, with the fumes drifting throughout the room.

Woman:

DR. STRANGE...?

Dr. Strange:

I AM.

Page Three

The page is divided into a nine-panel grid.

Panel 3.1

Unable to contain herself, the woman blurts out why she has come.

Woman:

IT'S MY HUSBAND! SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO HIM AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT IT'S NOT RIGHT!

Dr. Strange:

I SEE.

Panel 3.2

Dr. Strange strokes his chin, holding his elbow with the other hand. There is a plaintive look on the wealthy, polished woman's face.

Woman:

MY HUSBAND IS REED RALVER, THE POLITICIAN. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT, BUT HE'S CHANGED.

Dr. Strange:

I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED YOU.

Panel 3.3

The woman is looking down, as if she is ashamed.

Woman:

YES, YOU CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT A CHANCE I'M TAKING COMING HERE.

BUT I'M DESPERATE...!

Panel 3.4

Dr. Strange has his arm around the woman and is leading her towards the door.

Dr. Strange:

MS. RALVER, TOMORROW I SHALL FIND THE ANSWER TO YOUR PROBLEMS...!

Panel 3.5

Wong is at the door, and **Dr. Strange** is gesturing towards him, with his other hand at her back.

Dr. Strange:

WONG WILL SEE YOU OUT.

Woman:

YES... THANK YOU, DR. STRANGE...

Panel 3.6

Dr. Strange stands alone in his room.

Dr. Strange:

I SOUGHT TO COMFORT THE WOMAN WITH BRAVE WORDS... BUT I SENSE A DEEP DARKNESS HAS FALLEN UPON HER LIFE...

Panel 3.7

The limousine is driving back up into NoHo.

Thought balloon (coming from the car):

I DON'T KNOW WHY I EVEN WENT THERE...

Panel 3.8

The woman is sitting in the back of her chauffeured car, with the privacy screen up. Her hand is up, covering her mouth. She is distraught.

Woman (thinking):

OH REED... IT'S ALL MY FAULT...

Panel 3.9

We are watching the limousine down on the street below, driving through the night—but the astral form of **Dr. Strange** floats above it...

Page Four

The page is divided into a nine-panel grid.

Panel 4.1

The woman is at the door of a huge house, back in the panel. None of the lights are on in the house. The limousine is in the foreground.

Panel 4.2

She is entering a dark house.

Woman:

REED...?

Panel 4.3

The man is there in front of her, with shadows painting him demonically. His face is twisted in an accusing anger.

The woman is intimidated, recoiling.

Reed:

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN...?!

Panel 4.4

He's grabbing her roughly, pulling her towards him. He's bigger than she is, a tall man. She's almost flinching, bracing to be hit.

Woman:

REED, PLEASE DON'T...!

Panel 4.5

The man has lifted her up, holding her face—she's trying to turn away from him—holding her face up next to his.

Reed:

WHAT'S THE MATTER... ARE YOU AFRAID OF ME...?

Panel 4.6

The shot has pulled back. We see the man holding her, and her turning away from his face, but we also see **Dr. Strange's** astral form coming through the wall. **Dr. Strange's** astral form is looking right at them.

Panel 4.7

The man is pushing the woman away, and looking up, as if he hears or senses something in the room with them.

Reed:

WHAT DID YOU DO...?

WHO'S HERE...?

Panel 4.8

As **Dr. Strange** floats beside them, the man is holding his wife by one arm, bending over her, and she is on her knees.

Reed:

SOMEONE IS HERE WITH US...!

WHERE DID YOU GO?

Dr. Strange:

INCREDIBLE! HE CAN SENSE MY ASTRAL FORM...!

Panel 4.9

We see the man's face, and it has become a mask of evil, with a twisted grin beginning to curl in one corner of his mouth, with fire burning in his eyes.

Reed:

HE'S HERE.

Page Five

The top third of the page is divided into one row of three panels of equal size, just as in a nine-panel grid. The bottom two-thirds of the page is one large panel. There are four panels on the page.

Panel 5.1

The man is standing there, looking around, his face beginning to contort in rage. He's still holding the woman's wrist, as if she were a rag doll.

But he's beginning to change.

Reed:

DR. STRANGE... IT'S YOU THERE! I CAN SMELL YOU...!

Panel 5.2

We are seeing the astral form of **Dr. Strange** as he reacts to what is happening to **Reed**, and there is a look of horrified surprise on **Strange**'s face...

Dr. Strange (thought balloon):

THIS IS EVERYTHING I FEARED...

Dr. Strange:

REVEAL YOURSELF DEMON—NOW!

Panel 5.3

Still holding onto the woman's wrist, the man has grown unnaturally taller and larger, and he's slightly hunched over—with something even larger being pulled out of him.

Voice from Reed:

I'M NOT IN THE HABIT OF TAKING ORDERS FROM YOUR KIND, BUT...
WHY NOT...?

Panel 5.4

(Large, semi-splash panel)

The man is being flung back, with his arms outstretched in a sort of crucifixion pose, and rising out from above him is a laughing, cackling **Mephisto**!

The woman has crumpled to the floor beside the man, barely holding herself up by one arm.

Dr. Strange floats before **Mephisto**.

Mephisto:

DID YOU GUESS WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THIS POOR WOMAN'S HUSBAND?

HAD YOU GUESSED THAT IN EXCHANGE FOR WEALTH AND POWER HE HAD BEEN WILLING TO SELL HIS VERY SOUL—

TO MEPHISTO... LORD OF DARKNESS AND LIES?!

Page Six

The page is divided into a nine-panel grid, but the fourth and fifth panels are combined into one, so that there are actually only eight panels.

Panel 6.1

A giant **Mephisto** is now looking as if he's coming up out of the floor of the room, with his hands flat on the floor, as if he's going to pull himself up. He's not looking at **Dr. Strange**, rather staring off into some point in space. With his torso twisted, his head turned, and his arms bent, there's almost a spiral shape to him.

Mephisto:

ALL THOSE WHO MAKE GREED THE HIGHEST GOOD SERVE ME, DR. STRANGE!

THEIR SOULS ARE MINE!

Panel 6.2

Now the giant **Mephisto** is reaching up to grab **Dr. Strange**'s astral form.

Mephisto:

MY TRAFFIC IN HUMAN SOULS IS REALLY NONE OF YOUR AFFAIR, SORCERER...!

Panel 6.3

The astral form of **Dr. Strange** floats there helplessly as the giant hand, with its thick snakelike fingers stretching out to encircle him.

Mephisto (off panel):

SO NOW—I'LL HAVE TO TAKE YOURS AS WELL...!

Panel 6.4

(Two panels as one)

Mephisto is screaming in pain, unable to touch **Strange**'s astral form.

Mephisto (screaming):

YEEAARRGH!

WHAT THE HELL...?!

Panel 6.5

The astral **Dr. Strange** is staring at **Mephisto**, who's holding his hand as if it had been burned. The look on **Strange**'s face indicates he doesn't understand what has happened.

Mephisto:

TOUCHING YOU... IT WAS LIKE FREEZING COLD...!

Panels 6.6, 6.7, and 6.8 are actually one picture, but divided into panels, with one thing moving through each panel.

Panel 6.6

There is a small light in front of **Mephisto** and the woman on the floor.

Mephisto:

OH, AND NOW WHAT PETTY TRICK IS THIS, STRANGE...?

Panel 6.7

The light has grown larger as it has moved up higher, so that it is now beside **Dr. Strange**.

Dr. Strange:

THIS IS NONE OF MY DOING, DAMNED ONE...

Panel 6.8

The light is now on the other side of the room from **Mephisto**, and has grown into a large, bright light.

Voice from the Light:

AH, MY SON—BUT IT IS... IT IS...!

Page Seven

The top two thirds of the page are one large panel. The bottom third of the page is a row of three equal-sized panels, as in the nine-panel grid. There are four panels in all.

Panel 7.1

In the top right hand of the panel, the light has become the **Ancient One**, in a brilliant white astral form, and giant, equal to **Mephisto**. Our vantage point is up here, with the Ancient One, whom we see in profile, or almost from slightly behind.

Down in the middle of the panel is **Dr. Strange**, his floating astral form turning to look up at the **Ancient One**.

Across the room from us, down in the left-hand bottom corner of the panel, in the background, is **Mephisto**, still rising up out of the floor, at just below his waist. The man is on his knees on the floor, with his wife beside him.

The Ancient One:

STEPHEN STRANGE WILL NEVER BE YOURS TO TAKE, MEPHISTO—
FOR HE HAS LEFT HIS OLD WAYS BEHIND AND FOUND A NEW LIFE!

AGAIN AND AGAIN HE HAS SHOWN HIS WILLINGNESS TO LAY DOWN
HIS VERY LIFE TO SAVE OTHERS...

AND FOR THIS—HE SHALL NEVER BE YOURS!

Dr. Strange:

THE ANCIENT ONE!

Mephisto:

YOU...!

Panel 7.2

Mephisto sneers and grins, his fist clenched but for his little finger, which sticks out straight.

Mephisto:

YOU MAY BE OUT OF MY REACH, BUT YOU HAVE NO AUTHORITY
OVER ME, MORTAL!

Panel 7.3

Dr. Strange's astral form is looking angrily at **Mephisto**, off-panel to our left, and pointing down at the woman on the ground, who is looking up at him.

Dr. Strange:

THIS WOMAN IS ALSO OUT OF YOUR REACH, OLD SCRATCH—
BECAUSE SHE CAME TO ME, NOT FOR HERSELF, BUT FOR HER LOVED
ONE!

Panel 7.4

There is an almost sheepish look on **Mephisto**'s face, who turning his head slightly, holding one hand up to his face, fingers slightly bent, palm out.

Mephisto:

OH, YOU CLEVER MORTAL, I MUST GRANT YOU THAT VICTORY...

Page Eight

The page is divided into a nine-panel grid, but with the first and second panels combined into one panel, so that there are only eight panels.

Panel 8.1

Mephisto is laughing loudly, holding up his hand, the back to us, with **Reed Ralver** impaled on his fingers—though without gore or any real tearing of skin or clothes.

Mephisto:

BUT DON'T YOU EVER THINK I'M GOING TO LEAVE HERE EMPTY
HANDED...!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

Panel 8.2

The woman is reaching out to her husband, screaming.

Woman:

REED OH GOD NO!

Panel 8.3

The man is looking down at the woman, his hands clasped, almost as if he is pleading with his wife.

Reed:

LIBBY, NO—DON'T WEEP FOR ME...! THIS IS WHAT I DESERVE—! I'VE
BEEN A LIAR AND A HYPOCRITE... AND I'VE BETRAYED EVERYTHING
I'VE EVER BELIEVED IN...!

Panel 8.4

Dr. Strange is looking up at the **Ancient One**.

Dr. Strange:

MASTER IS THERE NOTHING WE CAN DO?

Ancient One:

HE HAS CHOSEN HIS FATE!

Panel 8.5

In front of them all, the man stands there almost peacefully as he is consumed in flames.

His wife screams.

Reed:

MONEY WAS MY GOD.

Woman:

REED—NOOOOOOO!

Panel 8.6

Mephisto is gone, as is the **Ancient One**, with the woman on the floor, staring at a charred spot on the floor. **Dr. Strange**'s astral form floats there across from her.

Woman:

OH, REED... NO.

Panel 8.7

The same scene. The woman is alone. The charred spot and **Dr. Strange** are both gone.

Woman:

NO...!

Panel 8.8

We see **Dr. Strange** sitting cross-legged on the floor of his room in the **Sanctum Sanctorum**, beneath his circular skylight.