

# RAMA

Story – Ron Marz

Art – Michael Avon Oeming

Colors – D. Seshasainan &  
S. Periaswamy

Letters – Sudhir B. Pisal

Thanks to Shamik Dasgupta



IN ARMAGARH, BOYS OF A CERTAIN AGE WHO WISH TO ONE DAY BE *KSHATRIYA* WARRIORS ARE SENT TO THE PERILOUS FOREST OF *DANDAKARANYA*.

WHEN *MY* TIME CAME, MY BROTHER, RAMA, WAS ONLY A FEW YEARS MY ELDER, BUT ALREADY WELL ON HIS WAY TO MANHOOD.

EQUIPPED WITH LITTLE FOOD, AND ARMED ONLY WITH A PRIMITIVE WEAPON, THEY ARE EXPECTED TO PROVE THEMSELVES BY BRINGING BACK A *TROPHY* OR CAPTURED ANIMAL.

HIS OWN TRIAL BEHIND HIM, HE TOLD ME TO HAVE *COURAGE*...

... AND I GET OUT FOR THE WILDERNESS.

FOR DAYS I SEARCHED FOR A TROPHY THAT WOULD BRING ME GLORY, A WILD AND DANGEROUS BEAST THAT WOULD CAUSE MY FATHER TO SMILE UPON *ME* IN THE WAY THAT HE SMILED UPON RAMA.

BUT I FOUND *NOTHING*, ONLY A YOUNG AND PUNY *VANARA*. NOT MUCH OF A PRIZE, BUT IF I COULD CAPTURE IT, I AT LEAST WOULD NOT RETURN HOME WITH EMPTY HANDS.

BUT BEFORE I COULD *CATCH* THE CREATURE...





...MY CHANCES OF RETURNING HOME AT ALL BECAME SLIM.

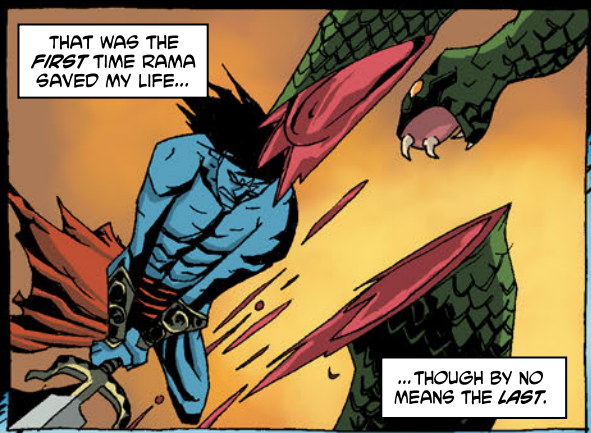
THERE APPEARED AN *AJGAR*, BIGGER THAN ANY I HAD EVER SEEN. THE GREAT SERPENT SWEEPED ME UP IN ITS COILS, AND SOUGHT TO CRUSH ME AS WELL AS THE VANARA...



...UNTIL RAMA APPEARED.



THAT WAS THE *FIRST* TIME RAMA SAVED MY LIFE...



...THOUGH BY NO MEANS THE *LAST*.

HE OFFERED ME THE *AJGAR*'S HEAD, A SPLENDID TROPHY THAT WOULD BRING GREAT ACCLAIM, PERHAPS EVEN MY FATHER'S APPROVAL.



...AND TOLD ME HE PREFERRED THE *VANARA*'S FRIENDSHIP, A THING THAT SOMEDAY MIGHT PROVE FAR MORE VALUABLE THAN A TROPHY MOUNTED UPON A WALL.

I ASKED MY BROTHER IF HE DID NOT WISH TO KEEP SUCH A RARE PRIZE FOR *HIMSELF*. BUT RAMA SMILED IN THAT WAY OF HIS...



RAMA WAS NOT MUCH MORE THAN A *BOY* THEN...

... BUT THAT DAY  
I GLIMPSED  
THE *MAN*...

... AND THE  
*HERO*...

... THAT HE  
WOULD BECOME.







# RAVAN



Story – Ron Marz

Art & Colors – Jim Starlin

Letters – B.S. Ravi Kiran

Thanks to Shamik Dasgupta

WHEN I WAS A BOY, THE MASTER OF MY SCHOOL SENT ME TO THE *GRANTH-GAR*, THE VAULTS OF KNOWLEDGE, AS A PUNISHMENT FOR MY DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IN CLASS.

I WAS TO RESEARCH... SOMETHING OR OTHER. BUT I LOST INTEREST, AND INSTEAD STUMBLED UPON *FORBIDDEN FILES*, KNOWLEDGE ONLY FOR THE EYES OF THE ELDERS.



IN THE THIRD AGE OF MAN, THE SEVEN NATIONS OF THE EARTH FELL UPON ONE ANOTHER IN THE *GREAT GLOBAL WAR*.

THE OLD WORLD WAS SWEEPED AWAY IN THE BLOOD AND FIRE OF THE *MAHAVINAASH*.

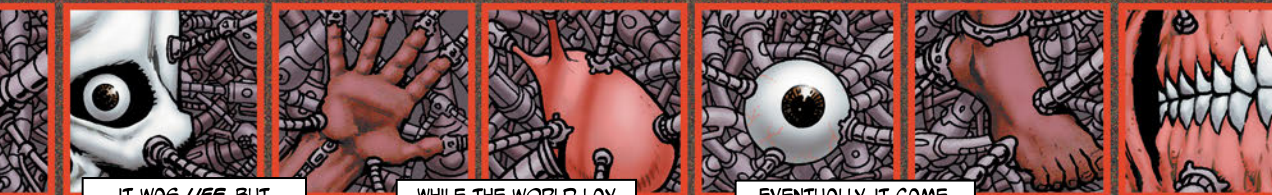
BEFORE ITS DESTRUCTION, ONE NATION HAD SUCCEEDED IN THE CREATION OF A TRUE *ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE*, A MERGING OF FLESH AND MACHINE.

WHILE MANKIND PERISHED, THE SENTIENCE SURVIVED...

... AND *FLOURISHED*.



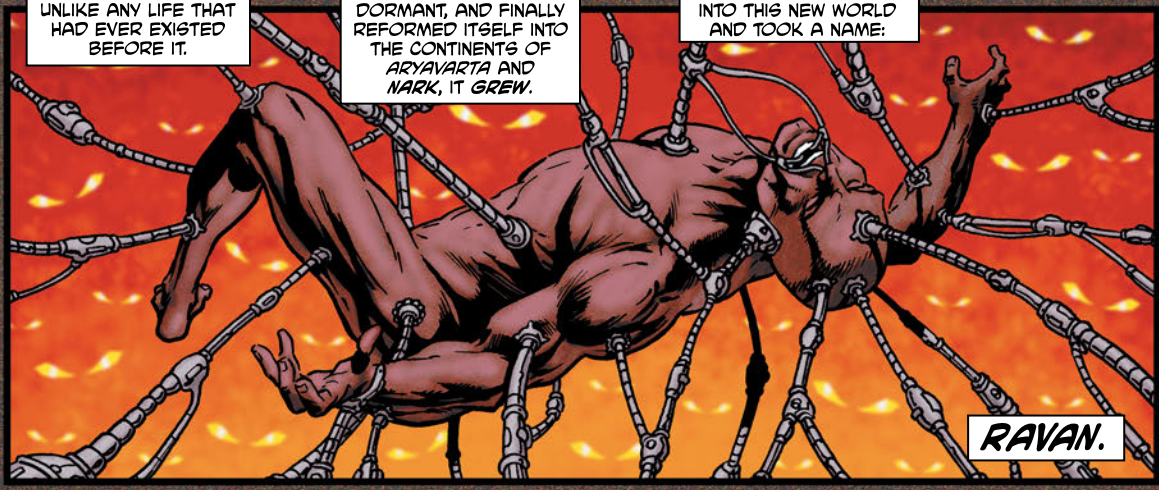




IT WAS LIFE, BUT UNLIKE ANY LIFE THAT HAD EVER EXISTED BEFORE IT.

WHILE THE WORLD LAY DORMANT, AND FINALLY REFORMED ITSELF INTO THE CONTINENTS OF ARYAVARTA AND NARK, IT GREW.

EVENTUALLY, IT CAME INTO THIS NEW WORLD AND TOOK A NAME:



**RAVAN.**



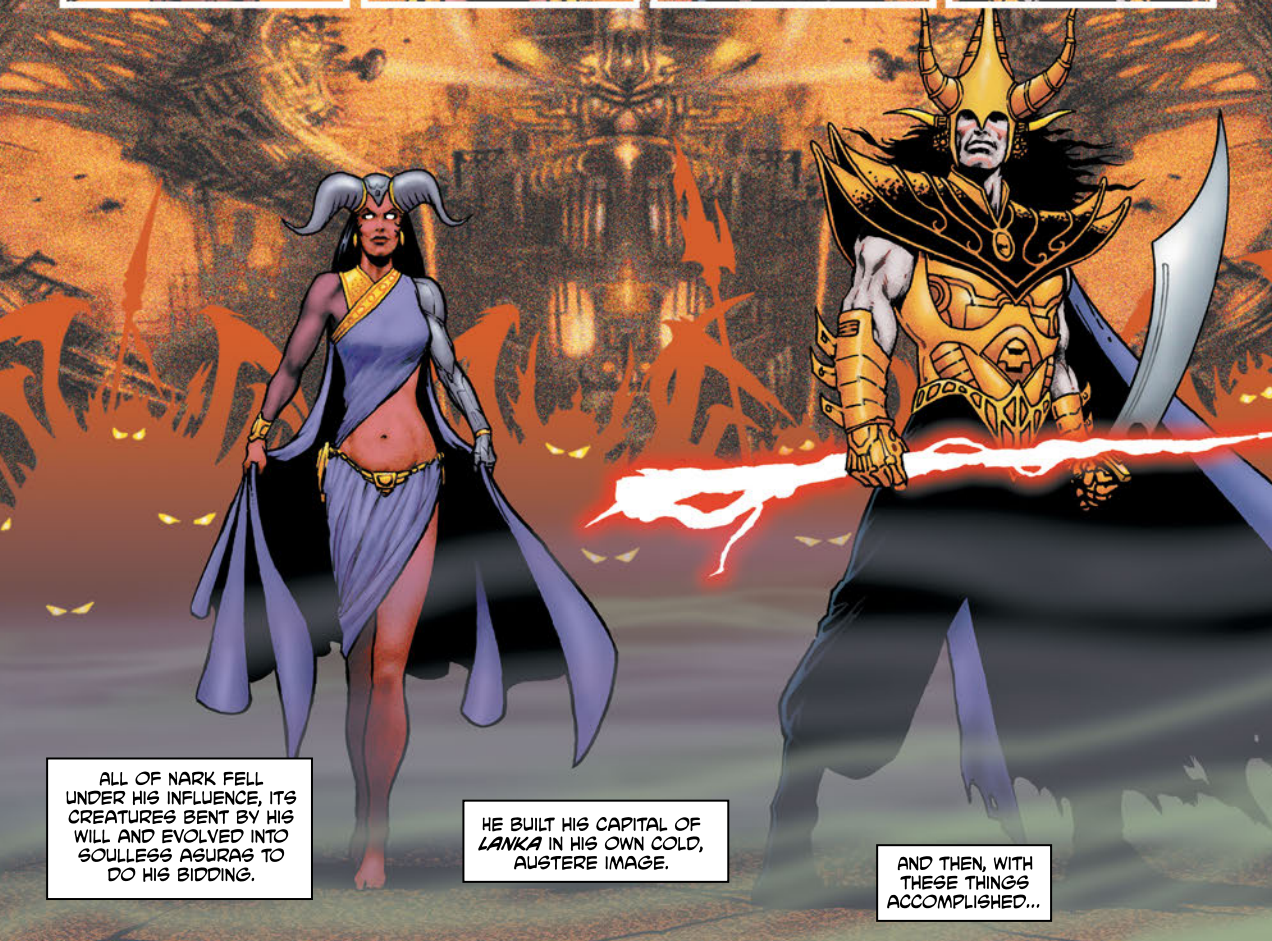
NOT BOUND BY MERE FLESH...



...RAVAN WAS ABLE TO SHIFT HIS SHAPE...



...TRYING AND DISCARDING MYRIAD FORMS.



ALL OF NARK FELL UNDER HIS INFLUENCE, ITS CREATURES BENT BY HIS WILL AND EVOLVED INTO SOULLESS ASURAS TO DO HIS BIDDING.

HE BUILT HIS CAPITAL OF LANKA IN HIS OWN COLD, AUSTERE IMAGE.

AND THEN, WITH THESE THINGS ACCOMPLISHED...