

THOR

MARVEL COMICS GROUP TM



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THE MIGHTY

THOR



FIRE-SWORD
VS.
HAMMER!

GOD
BATTLES
GOD!



... AND ONE MUST FALL!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**™

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HAVING FOUGHT AND DEFEATED ARES, THE GREEK GOD OF WAR, THOR AND HIS COMPANION, HERCULES, DESCEND TO THE DEPTHS OF HELL ITSELF...

HELLFIRE ACROSS THE WORLD!

...THERE TO SEEK OUT PLUTO, LORD OF THE NETHERWORLD, FOR THEIR LAST AND MOST DANGEROUS BATTLE!



WATCH THY STEP, HERCULES. THIS PATH IS UNEVEN AT BEST.

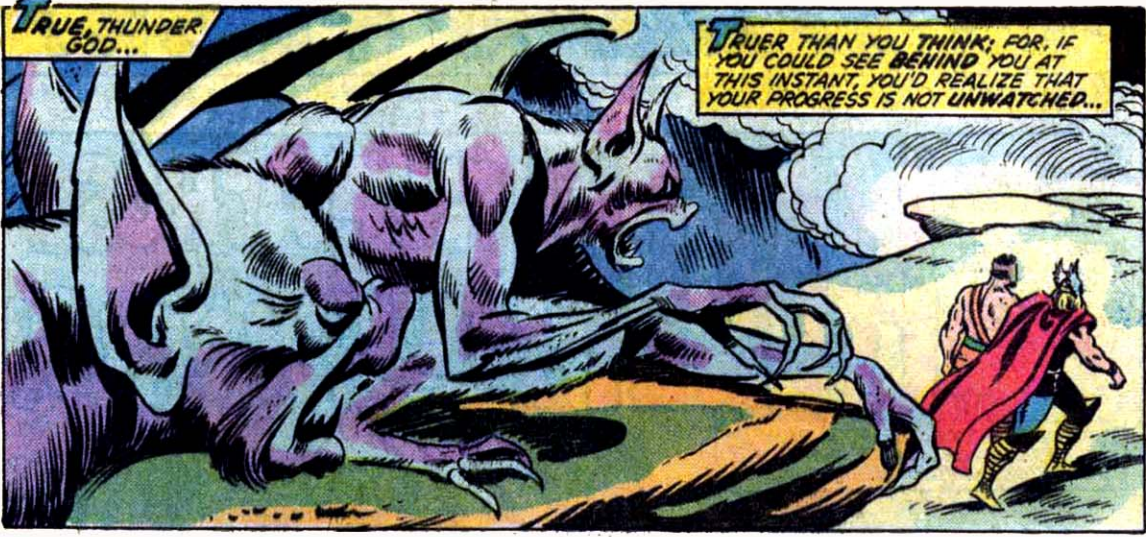
AND IN THIS DARKNESS, ONLY A BAT CAN SAFELY FIND HIS WAY.

THEN LET'S FIND A BAT AND USE HIM AS A GUIDE, ASGARDIAN.

I WANT TO TWIST THE DARK LORD'S NECK--NOT STUMBLE AROUND IN DARKNESS FOREVER.

PATIENCE, HERCULES. ALL WILL COME IN TIME, I ASSURE THEE.

**TRUE, THUNDER
GOD...**



TRUER THAN YOU THINK; FOR, IF YOU COULD SEE BEHIND YOU AT THIS INSTANT, YOU'D REALIZE THAT YOUR PROGRESS IS NOT UNWATCHED...

...THAT, IN FACT, YOUR MEETING WITH THE MINIONS OF PLUTO IS FAR NEARER THAN YOU KNOW...

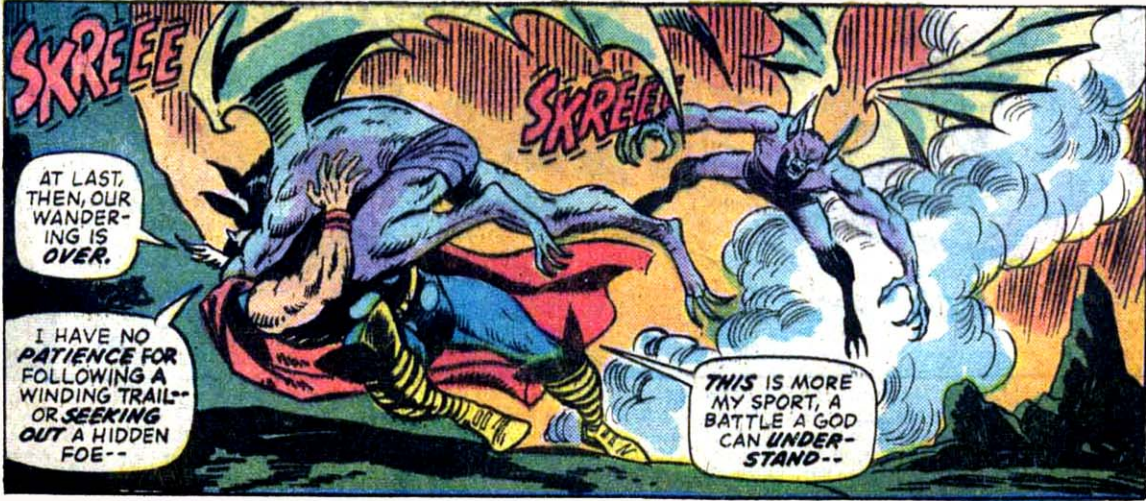


...AND THAT SAID MEETING IS ABOUT TO OCCUR...



Now!

ZEUS! WE'RE ATTACKED, THOR-- BY BATS FROM THE PITS OF NELL!



SKREEE

SKREEE

AT LAST, THEN, OUR WANDERING IS OVER.

I HAVE NO PATIENCE FOR FOLLOWING A WINDING TRAIL-- OR SEEKING OUT A HIDDEN FOE--

THIS IS MORE MY SPORT, A BATTLE A GOD CAN UNDERSTAND--



SPAF!

--A THREAT HE CAN TRULY FIGHT!



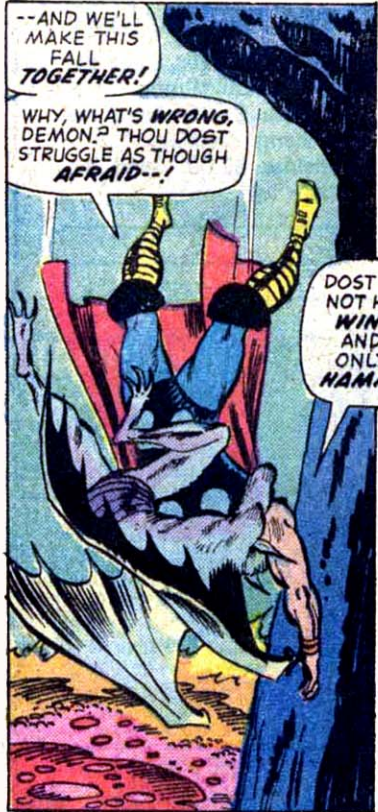
HO! THESE BAT-DEMONS HAVE MORE SPIRIT THAN I'D THOUGHT.

ONE FALLS, AND ANOTHER REPLACES HIM!



SKREEEE

WELL THEN, DEMON, COME--



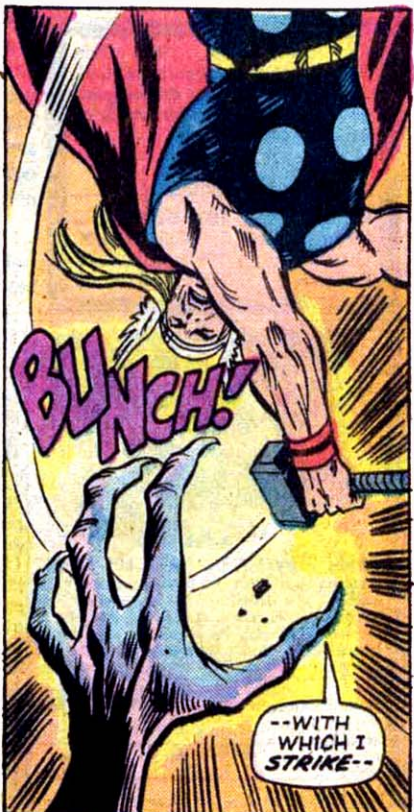
--AND WE'LL MAKE THIS FALL TOGETHER!

WHY, WHAT'S *WRONG*, DEMON? THOU DOST STRUGGLE AS THOUGH AFRAID--!

DOST THOU NOT HAVE WINGS? AND I, ONLY MY HAMMER--

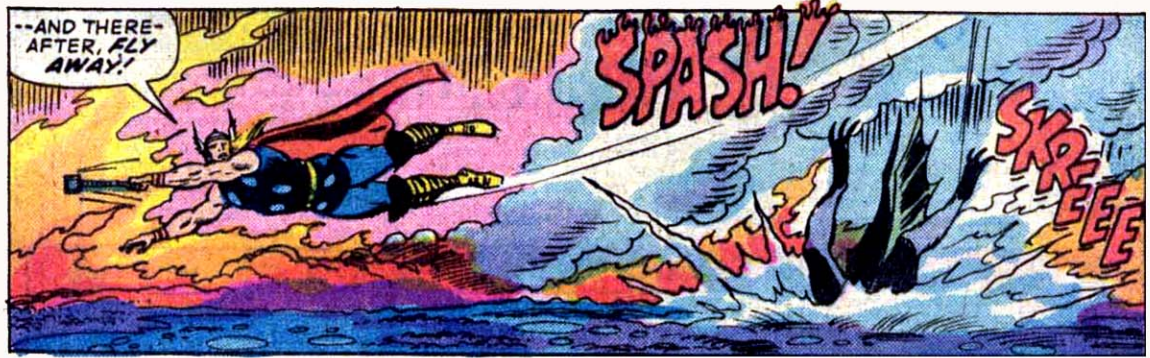


--THAT HAMMER WHICH WAS A GIFT FROM MY FATHER, ODIN--THAT HAMMER CALLED M^JOLNIR--



BUNCH!

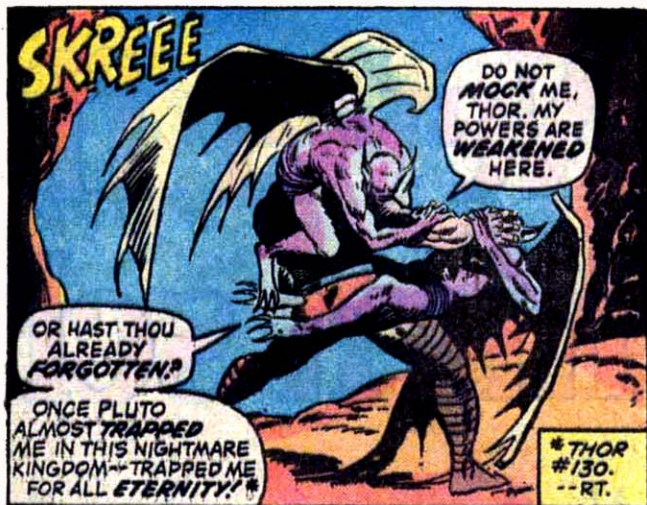
--WITH WHICH I STRIKE--



--AND THERE-AFTER, FLY AWAY!

SPASH!

SKREEEE



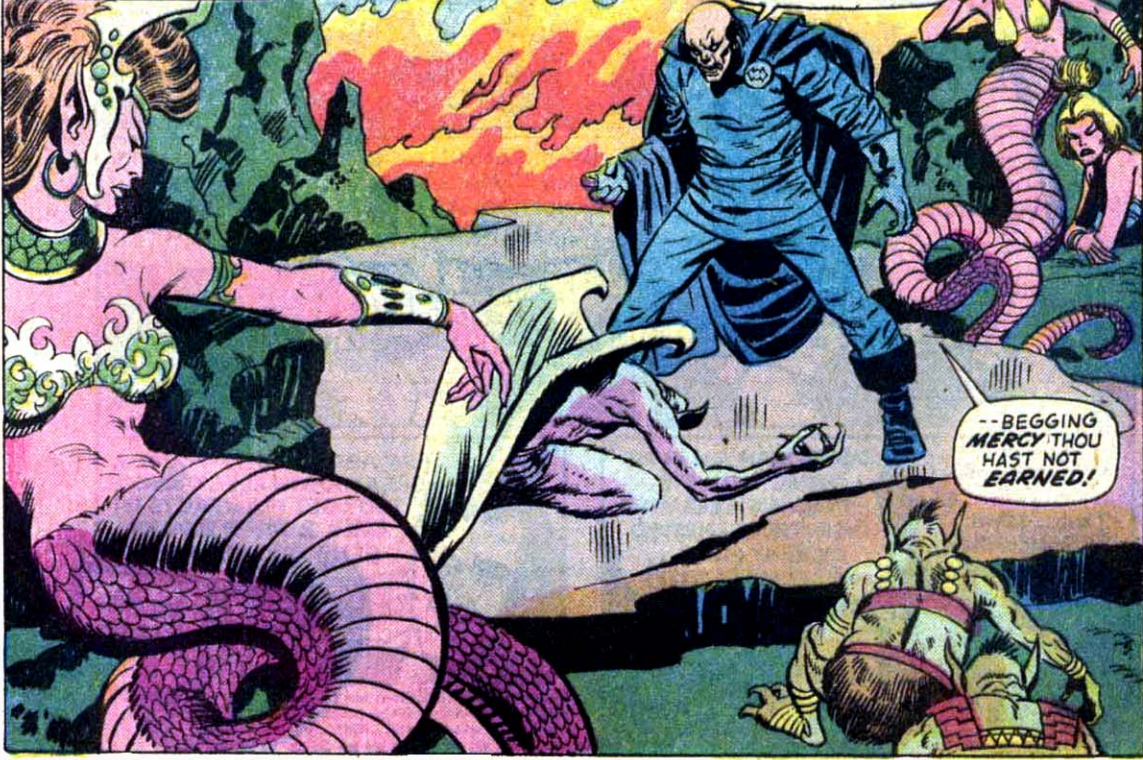
YOU MIGHT WELL IMAGINE, GENTLE READER, THAT THE OBJECT OF OUR HEROES' SEARCH IS EVEN NOW TREMBLING WITH ILL-HIDDEN FEAR...AND IF YOU DO IMAGINE IT...

...THEN YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE EGO OF PLUTO... LORD OF THE NETHER REGIONS!

GROVELING CUR. I ASSIGNED THEE TO A MISSION-- TO STOP THE GOD OF THUNDER--

--AND THOU DOST RETURN WITH A TALE OF BASE FAILURE--

--BEGGING MERCY THOU HAST NOT EARNED!



WERE THIS ANY OTHER DAY, I'D HAVE THEE TORN APART-- THY LIMBS TOSSED TO THE HOTTEST FIRES OF HELL-- THY BODY RENT BY THE MOST EXQUISITE TORTURE!

BUT SUCH IS NOT TO BE, MORE'S THE PITY...

PLUTO HAS OTHER CONCERNS THAN THY PETTY HIDE.



WITH A SNARL, PLUTO TURNS AND STRIDES TO THE FAR END OF THIS HEAT-MISTED CAVERN...



...WHERE LIES KRISTA, SHE WHO IS THE CAUSE OF THIS DAY'S CONFLICT...

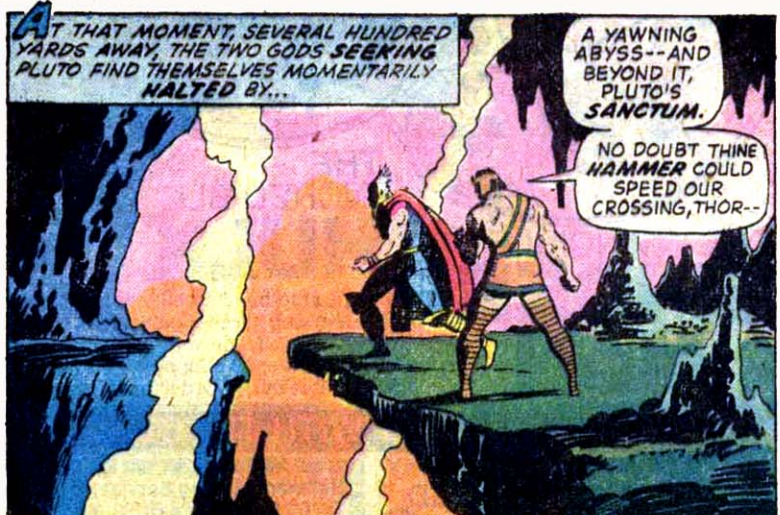
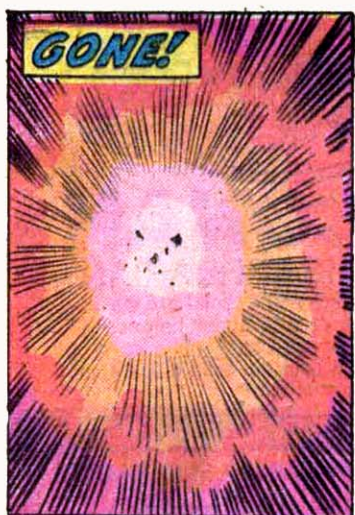
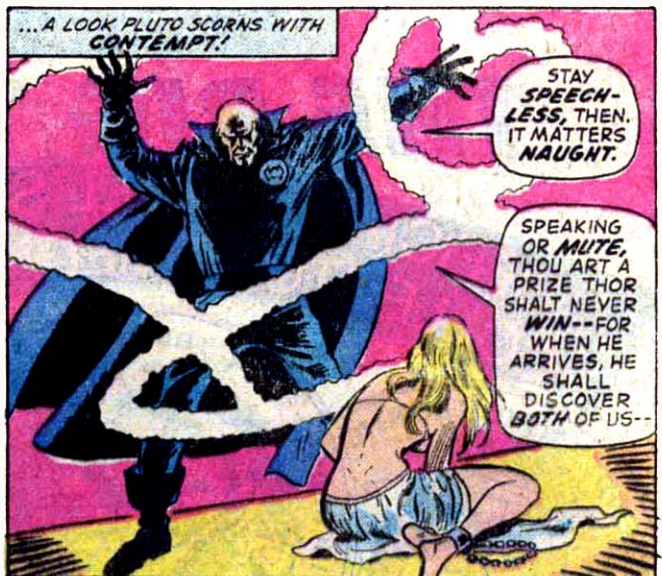
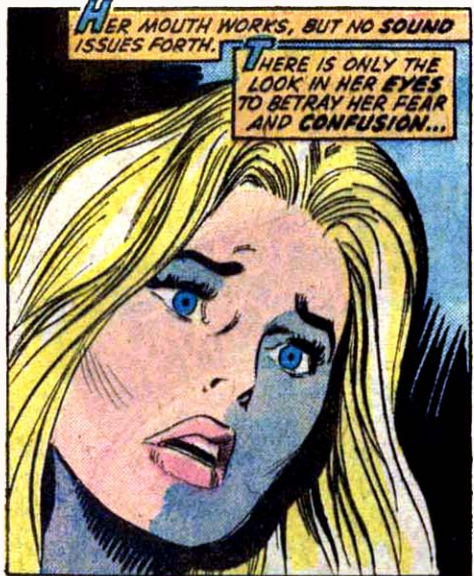
KRISTA, SISTER OF HILDEGARDE, DAUGHTER OF ASGARD... WHOSE HONOR THOR COMES TO DEFEND...

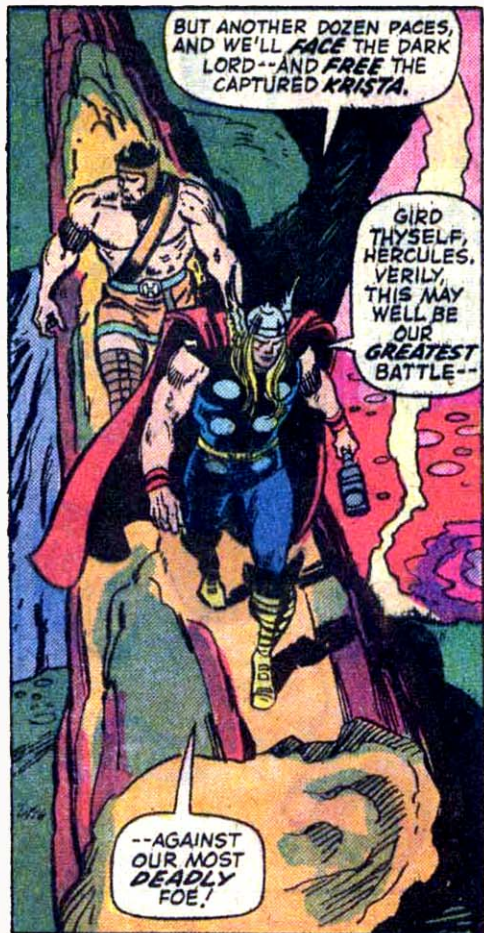


WELL, WOMAN? HAST THOU YET FOUND THY TONGUE?

SINCE THY ABDUCTION, THOU HAST BEEN SILENT--

WILT THOU SPEAK AT LAST?





BUT ANOTHER DOZEN PACES, AND WE'LL FACE THE DARK LORD--AND FREE THE CAPTURED KRISTA.

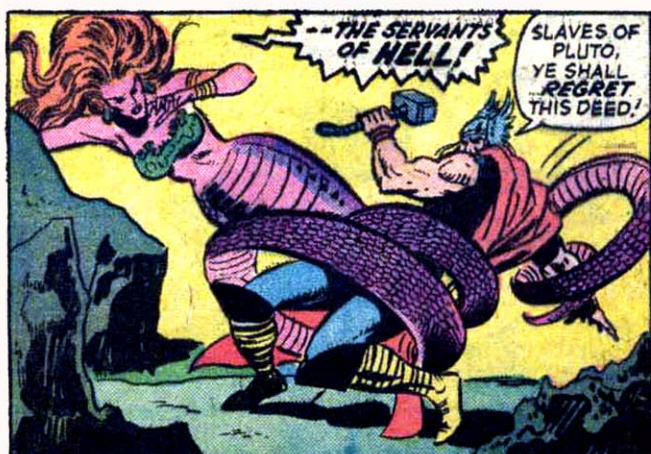
GIRD THYSELF, HERCULES. VERILY, THIS MAY WELL BE OUR GREATEST BATTLE--

--AGAINST OUR MOST DEADLY FOE!



PERHAPS, BLONDE ONE-- IF THOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY.

BUT FIRST, THOU MUST FACE US--



--THE SERVANTS OF HELL!

SLAVES OF PLUTO, YE SHALL REGRET THIS DEED!



HOW SO, ASGARDIAN? 'TIS THOU WHO ART TRAPPED--!

THOU--AND THY BLUSTERING COMPANION, THE FOOL HERCULES!

THOR, THEIR COILS ARE EVERYWHERE--!



THY FRIEND DO TH SPEAK THE TRUTH.

NEITHER HE NOR THEE SHALL SURVIVE THIS ATTACK--EH?



WITHOUT A WORD, THE GOD OF THUNDER SWINGS HIS MYSTIC MALLET-- FORMING A VORTEX ABOUT BOTH HIMSELF AND HIS REPTILLIAN ASSAILANT.

FOR SEVERAL SECONDS THE CHURNING AIR SPINS, MASKING A FEMINE CRY OF FEAR. AND THEN--



ENJOY THYSELF, VIXEN. THE VORTEX GROWS TIGHTER WITH THY STRUGGLING...SO STRUGGLE AWAY!

THOR HATH MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS TO CONCERN HIM THAN SUCH AS THEE.



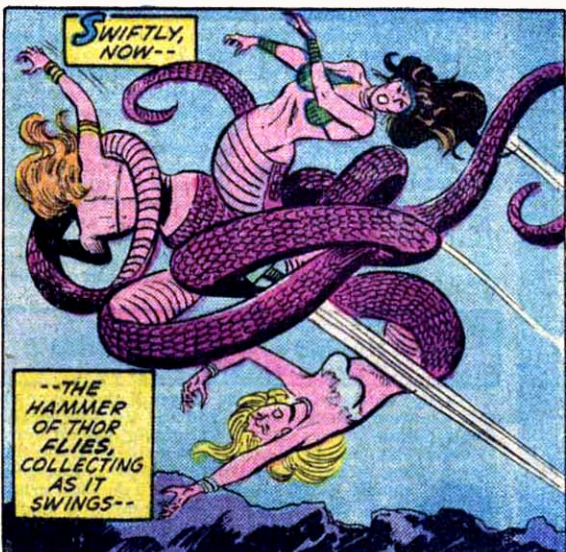
'TIS GOOD TO HEAR, THOR.

BEFORE ATTENDING THOSE MATTERS, COULDST THOU--?



AH, ODINSON...THOU ART A FRIEND INDEED. IF THIS PLACE DIDN'T DRAIN MY POWERS SO, I'D BE OF MORE ASSISTANCE...

...BUT WHAT IS, IS. AND THAT'S SOMETHING I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY.



SWIFTLY, NOW--

--THE HAMMER OF THOR FLIES, COLLECTING AS IT SWINGS--



EEEEEE

--FINALLY RELEASES ITS BURDEN--



--AND RETURNS TO ITS MASTER'S WAITING HAND.

NOW, THOR?

NOW.



BY THE STARS--!

PLUTO'S GONE --AS THOUGH HE WERE NEVER HERE!



I SENSE *PERFIDY* IN THIS, THUNDER GOD...*AYE*, I CAN SMELL THE DARK LORD'S *TRICKERY*.

WHILE WE FOUGHT HIS *SERVANTS*, HE STOLE OUT ANOTHER *WAY*.

TAKING THE GIRL WITH HIM!



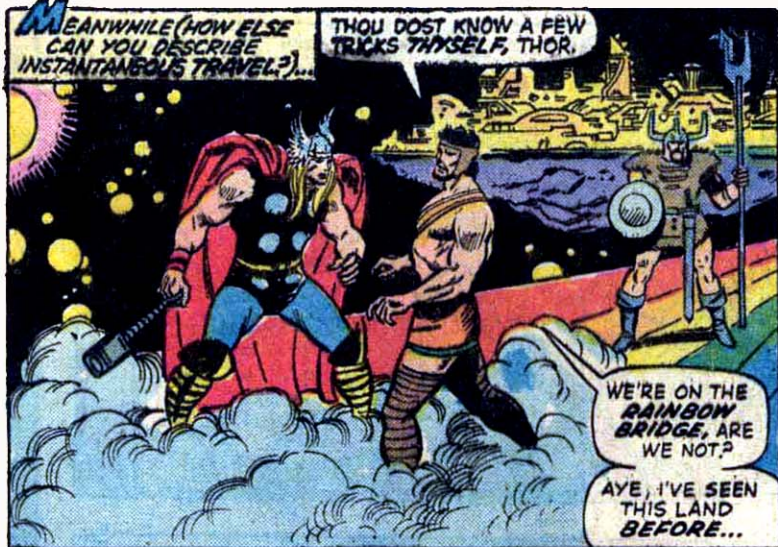
SO IT SEEMS.

THE QUESTION IS--*WHERE* HAS HE TAKEN HER?

IT'S A QUESTION WE CAN'T ANSWER--



--BUT THE *ALL-FATHER* CAN!



MEANWHILE (HOW ELSE CAN YOU DESCRIBE INSTANTANEOUS TRAVEL?)...

THOU DOST KNOW A FEW TRICKS THYSELF, THOR.

WE'RE ON THE RAINBOW BRIDGE, ARE WE NOT?

AYE, I'VE SEEN THIS LAND BEFORE...



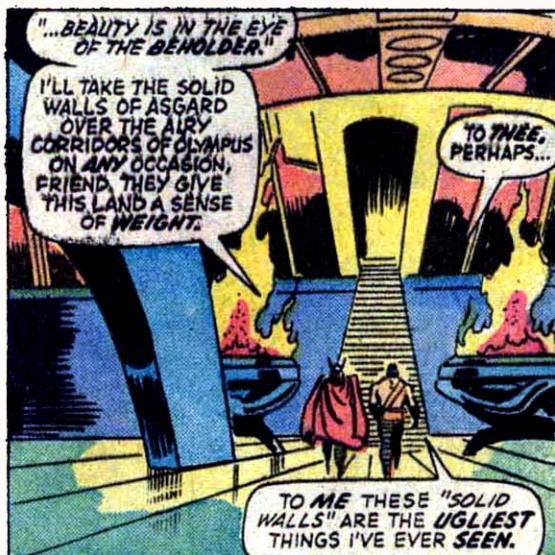
...*ASGARD!*

NOT A VERY *HANDSOME* PLACE, THOR...NOT AT ALL LIKE *OLYMPUS*.

WHERE ARE THE *SPIRES*, THE GRACEFUL *COLUMNS*? BY MY BEARD, WHERE'S THY SENSE OF *TASTE*?

BETTER TO ASK, WHERE IS *THINE*?

AS A *MORTAL* ONCE SAID...



"...*BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER*."

I'LL TAKE THE *SOLID WALLS* OF *ASGARD* OVER THE *AIRY CORRIDORS* OF *OLYMPUS* ON *ANY OCCASION*, FRIEND, THEY GIVE THIS LAND A SENSE OF *WEIGHT*.

TO *THEE*, PERHAPS...

TO *ME* THESE "*SOLID WALLS*" ARE THE *UGLIEST* THINGS I'VE EVER SEEN.



HOLD THY TONGUE. WE APPROACH THE ODIN CHAMBER.

NO DOUBT, WE'LL HAVE TO FORCE OUR WAY IN.

WHAT ELSE?

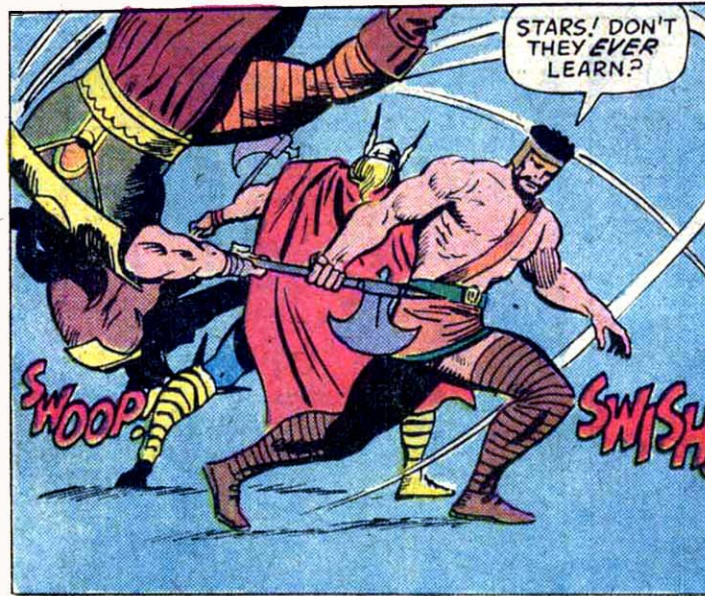


IN ALL THE YEARS I'VE LIVED, I'VE NEVER YET KNOWN A GUARD WHO HAD MORE BRAINS THAN A FISH.

WILT THOU STAND ASIDE--OR MUST WE STRIKE?

WE HAVE OUR ORDERS, ODINSON:

NONE MAY ENTER--NOT EVEN THEE.



STARS! DON'T THEY EVER LEARN?

SWOOP! SWISH!



AND SO, SHORT SECONDS LATER, THE TWO GODLINGS STAND IN THE PRESENCE OF ODIN, LORD OF ASGARD, FATHER OF THE THUNDER GOD...YEA, ALL-FATHER SUPREME...

FATHER, I--

SILENCE! THOU HAST BETRAYED THY HERITAGE!

LIKE A TRAITOR MOST FOUL, THOU HAST BROUGHT AN ENEMY INTO THE PRESENCE!

IN THE NAME OF MY ETERNAL MAJESTY, THIS SHALL NOT BE!



FATHER, I BEG THEE: HEED MY WORDS. HERCULES IS NOT THE ENEMY WE THOUGHT HIM TO BE-- 'T WAS ARES AND PLUTO WHO CONSPIRED AGAINST US, AND ARES WE HAVE FOUGHT--AND BEATEN.

ONLY PLUTO REMAINS--BUT HE HAS DIS-APPEARED.

I SEE. FORGIVE ME, MY SON... I HAVE OFFENDED THEE.

#THOR#221.--RT.



LET ME SET THE MATTER RIGHT, BY LOCATING THE PRINCE OF HADES...

...AS SWIFTLY AS I CAN.



AH. HE'S GONE TO EARTH, MY SON... TO THE VILLAGE CALLED MANHATTAN.

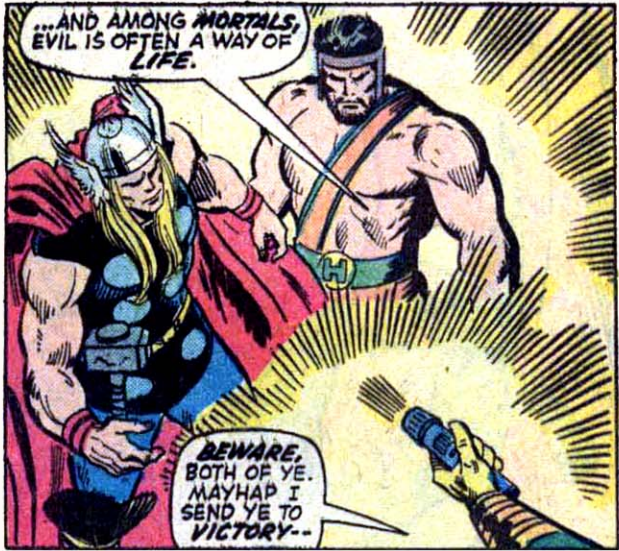
LOOK THEE TO THE VISI-SCREEN. DOST THOU RECOGNIZE THE PLACE?



I DO, FATHER. PLUTO IS MAD, IF HE THINKS TO DEFEAT ME THERE.

BEYOND THE REALM OF DARKNESS, HIS POWER SURELY MUST BE HALVED.

PERHAPS... BUT DO NOT FORGET, HE THRIVES ON EVIL...

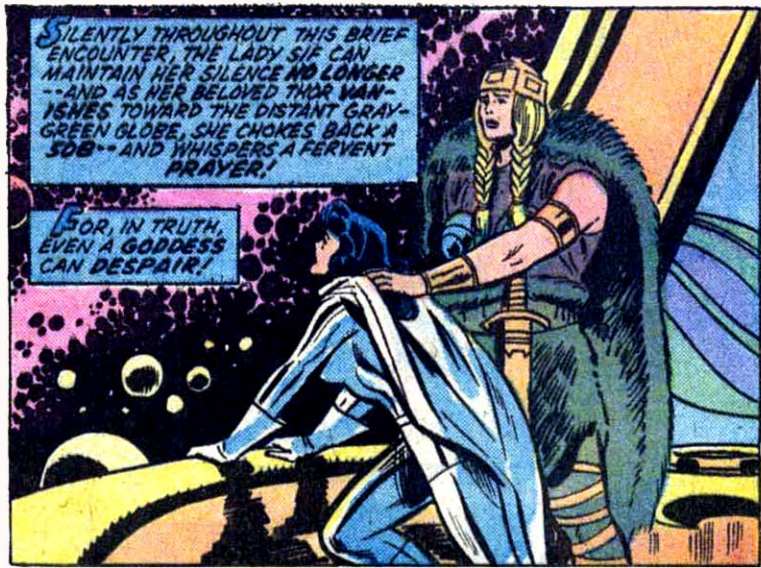


...AND AMONG MORTALS, EVIL IS OFTEN A WAY OF LIFE.

BEWARE, BOTH OF YE. MAYHAP I SEND YE TO VICTORY--



--MAYHAP, TO THY DOOM!



SILENTLY THROUGHOUT THIS BRIEF ENCOUNTER, THE LADY SIF CAN MAINTAIN HER SILENCE NO LONGER --AND AS HER BELOVED THOR MARCHES TOWARD THE DISTANT GRAY-GREEN GLOBE, SHE CHOKES BACK A SOB-- AND WHISPERS A FERVENT PRAYER!

FOR, IN TRUTH, EVEN A GODDESS CAN DESPAIR!

AS WE'VE POINTED OUT BEFORE, TIME IS MEANINGLESS WHEN TRANSPORTATION IS INSTANTANEOUS, SO WE'LL REFRAIN FROM USING OUR NORMAL TRANSITIONAL "LATER"...

INSTEAD, LET'S JUST PICK UP ON THOR AND HERCULES AS THEY MATERIALIZE IN TIMES SQUARE...



...AND LEAVE THE TIME-CONCERNS TO THE PHILOSOPHERS.



FAR OUT. I ALWAYS WONDERED IF I'D GET TA SEE THOSE DUDES UP CLOSE--IT'S LIKE BUMPIN' INTA PAUL NEWMAN, OR ROBERT REDFORD, OR--

WHATEVER IT'S LIKE, IT'S INSANE!



THY FATHER SERVED US WELL, THOR.

WE NEED SEARCH NO FURTHER THAN THE BY-WAY AHEAD.

DOST THOU SEE HIM P ON YONDER BUILDING?



PLUTO, PRINCE OF HELL-- LORD OF THE DEAD!

I'M FLATTERED...



...THAT SO LORDLY A PERSONAGE AS THE GOD OF THUNDER SHOULD FIND SOMETHING OF INTEREST IN THE LOWLY CARE-TAKER OF HADES!

CAN IT BE I HAVE SOMETHING THOU DOST WANT?

CAN IT BE THOU HAST COME TO SEIZE THIS OBJECT-- LIKE A COMMON BRIGAND OR THIEF?

VERILY, THOU HAST NOT DISAPPOINTED ME, EITHER OF THEE... FOR I EXPECTED THIS BEHAVIOR...



...AND I AM NOT UNPREPARED!

BEHOLD, THE POWER OF PLUTO:



FROM THE AIR ITSELF, I CAN SHAPE A WEAPON FORMED OF HATE...



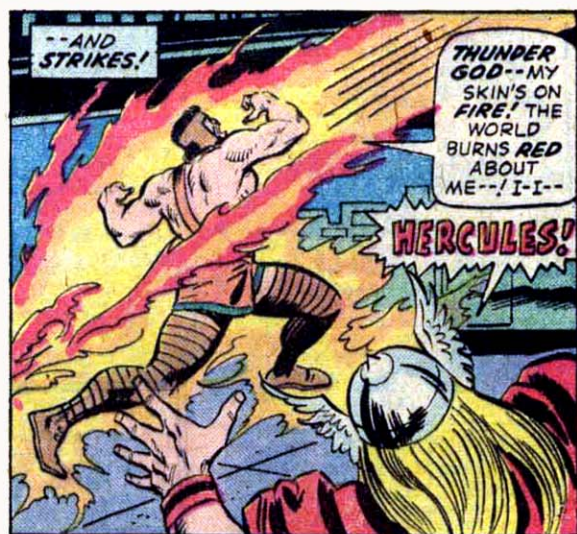
...A SPEAR OF FIRE, POSSESSING SOME UNUSUAL PROPERTIES...



...AYE, SOME MOST UNUSUAL PROPERTIES INDEED!



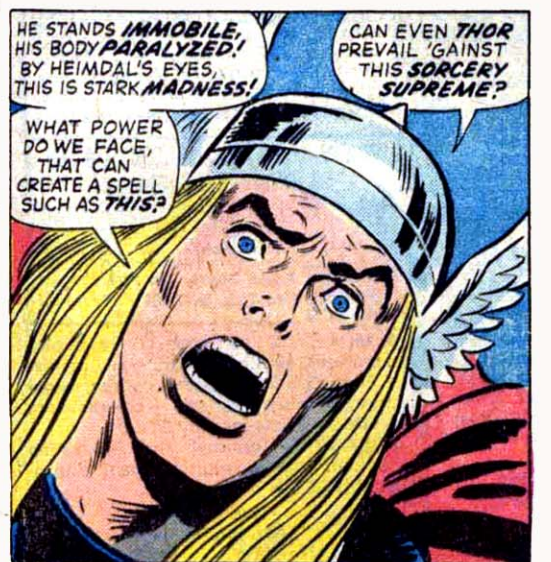
SPITTING OUT A LAUGH TINGED WITH INSANITY, THE DARK LORD HURLS THE THROBBING SPEAR OF FLAME--IT ARCS THROUGH THE COOL NIGHT AIR--



--AND STRIKES!

THUNDER GOD--MY SKIN'S ON FIRE! THE WORLD BURNS RED ABOUT ME--! I-I--

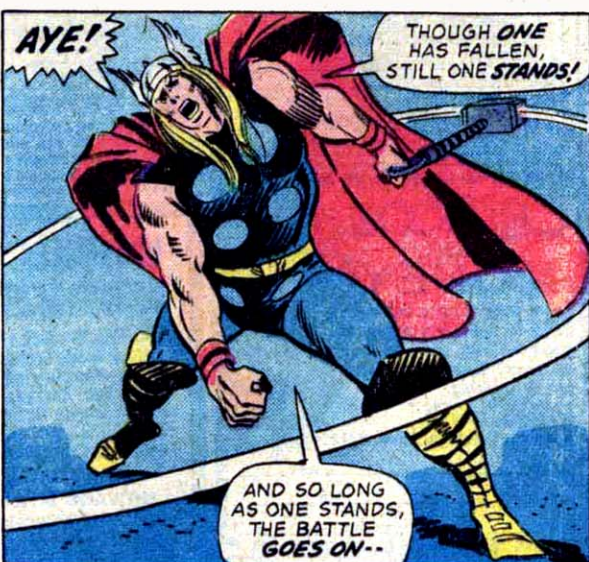
HERCULES!



HE STANDS IMMOBILE, HIS BODY PARALYZED! BY HEIMDAL'S EYES, THIS IS STARK MADNESS!

CAN EVEN THOR PREVAIL 'GAINST THIS SORCERY SUPREME?

WHAT POWER DO WE FACE, THAT CAN CREATE A SPELL SUCH AS THIS?



AYE!

THOUGH ONE HAS FALLEN, STILL ONE STANDS!

AND SO LONG AS ONE STANDS, THE BATTLE GOES ON--

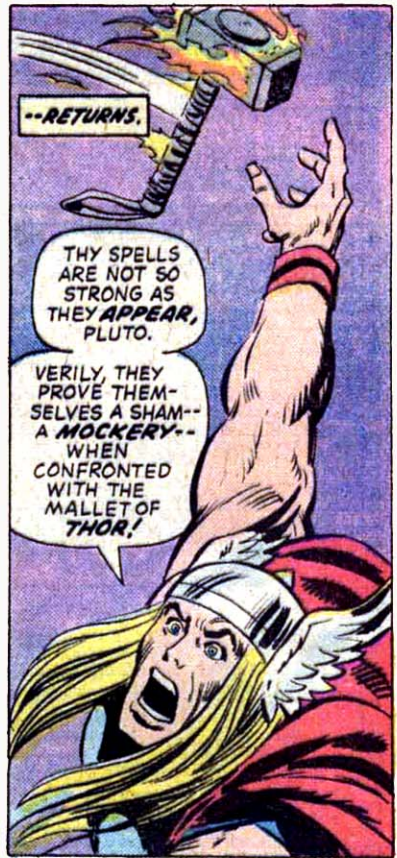


--TILL THE DARK LORD'S DEATH-- OR THE END OF TIME!



A GRAY BOLT IN THE NIGHT, THE THUNDER GOD'S HAMMER FLIES UPWARD, STRAIGHT AND TRUE--

--AND WHEN IT CONNECTS, IT ABSORBS THE DEADLY FLAME OF PLUTO'S SECOND SPEAR OF FIRE-- AND QUENCHING THAT FLAME--



--RETURNS.

THY SPELLS ARE NOT SO STRONG AS THEY APPEAR, PLUTO.

VERILY, THEY PROVE THEMSELVES A SHAM-- A MOCKERY-- WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE MALLET OF THOR!



LET'S SEE HOW WELL THOU DOST STAND, WHEN SIMILARLY CONFRONTED--

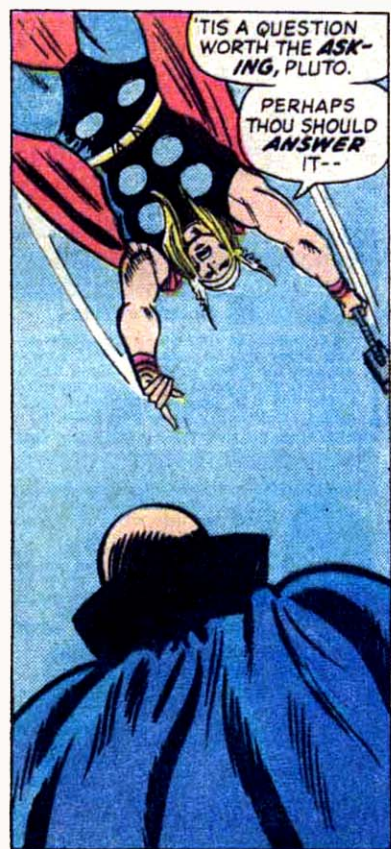
--NOT BY THE MYSTIC MJOLNIR-- BUT BY THE SON OF ODIN--

--THE GOD OF THUNDER, THE MASTER OF THE WORLD'S WIND!



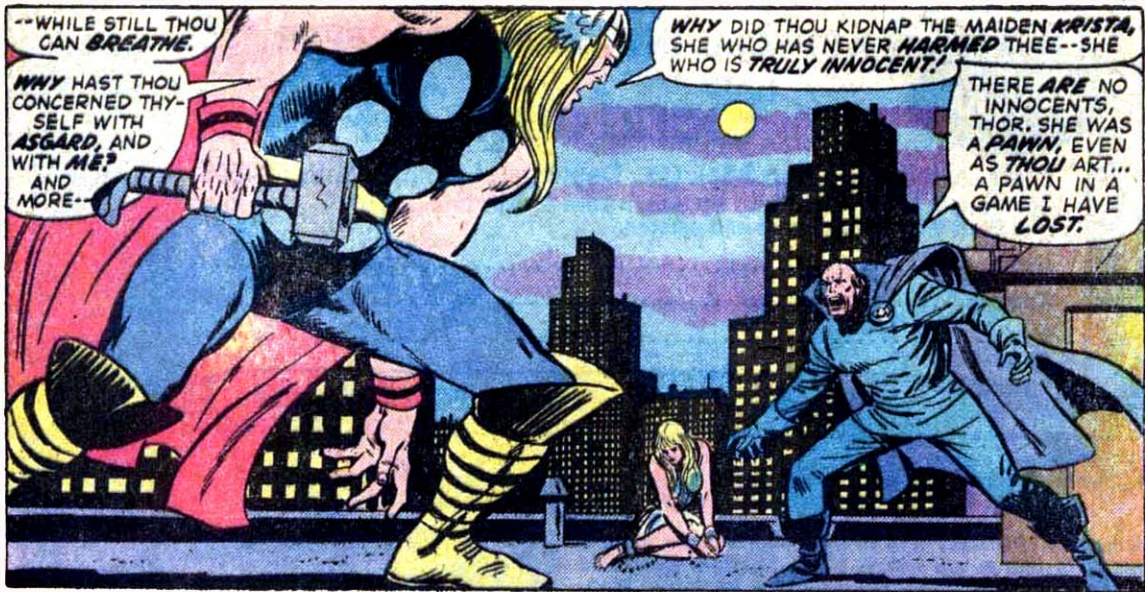
THY THREATS ARE WITHOUT SUBSTANCE, GODLING. THOU DOST SPEAK TO PLUTO, WHO RULES A WORLD, WHOSE WORD IS LAW...WHOSE THOUGHT IS POWER.

WHAT CARE I FOR THE PETTY PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE SON OF ODIN? WHAT CARE I OF THEE-- WHO ART BUT AN ANT IN MINE EYES?



'TIS A QUESTION WORTH THE ASKING, PLUTO.

PERHAPS THOU SHOULD ANSWER IT--



--WHILE STILL THOU CAN BREATHE.

WHY HAST THOU CONCERNED THYSELF WITH ASGARD, AND WITH ME? AND MORE--

WHY DID THOU KIDNAP THE MAIDEN KRISTA, SHE WHO HAS NEVER HARMED THEE--SHE WHO IS TRULY INNOCENT!

THERE ARE NO INNOCENTS, THOR. SHE WAS A PAWN, EVEN AS THOU ART... A PAWN IN A GAME I HAVE LOST.



I HOPED TO ANGER ODIN BY HER ABDUCTION--TO ENRAGE HIM, BY MAKING IT SEEM AS THOUGH HERCULES WERE MY ALLY.

--WAR, BETWEEN ASGARD AND OLYMPUS--



SKRAK!

--AND WHEN THAT WAR WAS DONE--



--AND THE GODS OF BOTH LANDS HAD DECIMATED EACH OTHER--

SWOOSH!

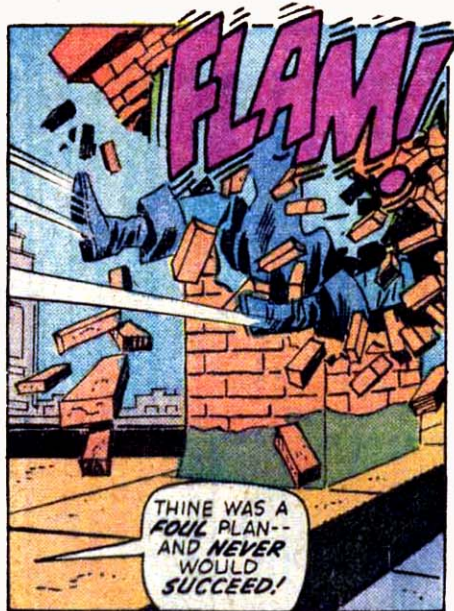


--ONLY PLUTO WOULD BE FIT TO RULE; ONLY PLUTO WOULD HAVE AN ARMY TO COMMAND--AND PLUTO WOULD TRIUMPH OVER THEM--AS I HAVE TRIUMPHED OVER THEE!



SPABOOM!

I SAY THEE NAY!

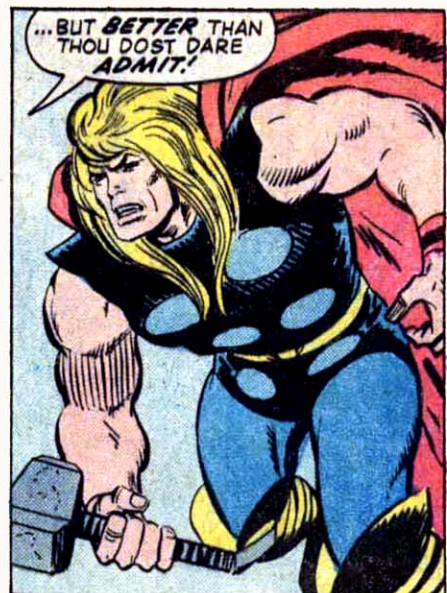


THINE WAS A FOUL PLAN-- AND NEVER WOULD SUCCEED!



OH? THEN WHY DID ODIN SEND THEE TO OLYMPUS, THOR? AND WHY DID THOU BATTLE HERCULES--AS AN ENEMY DESPISED?

IT SUCCEEDED, THUNDER GOD... NOT AS I WISHED...



...BUT BETTER THAN THOU DOST DARE ADMIT!



SO THINK WELL, THOR, BEFORE THOU DOST CURSE ME.

THUNK!

THOU HAST PROVEN THYSELF QUICK-TEMPERED, AND MORE--



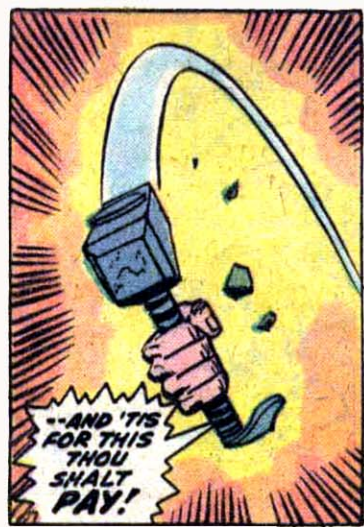
--THOU HAST SHOWN HOW LITTLE TRUST THOU DOST HAVE FOR THY FRIENDS--

AND GODLING, THAT'S A SAD REVELATION INDEED!



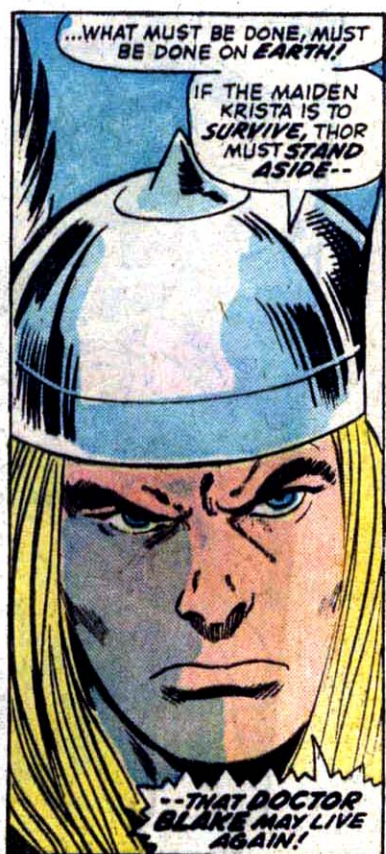
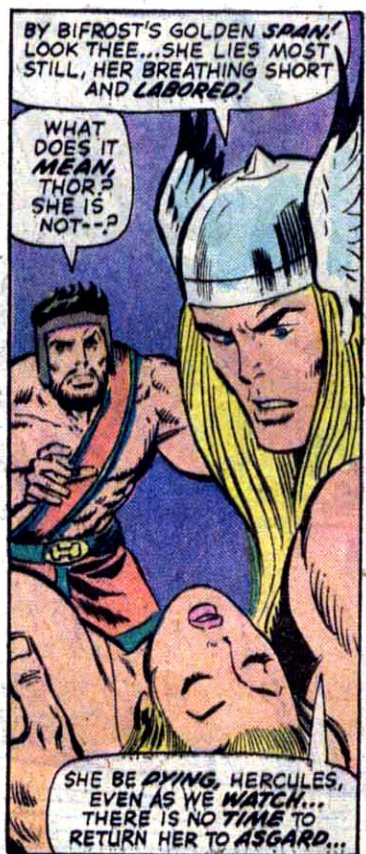
VILLAIN! 'T WAS THY DOING, 'T WAS THY TREACHERY!

NOT ALL THY LIES CAN CHANGE THIS--



--AND 'T IS FOR THIS THOU SHALT PAY!





NAY, NO **MIRACLE**, HERCULES. WITH PLUTO VANISHED, HIS SPELLS MUST VANISH **ALSO**.
STILL, I **WAGER** WE'LL MEET THE PRINCE OF HELL AGAIN--WHEN, I CANNOT SAY.
WHY **WORRY**, ASGARDIAN? ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, I SAY.
HOW FARES THY **KIDNAPPED MAIDEN?**
BY BIFROST'S **GOLDEN SPAN!** LOOK THEE...SHE LIES MOST STILL, HER BREATHING SHORT AND **LABORED!**
WHAT DOES IT **MEAN**, THOR? SHE IS NOT--?
SHE BE **DYING**, HERCULES, EVEN AS WE **WATCH...** THERE IS NO **TIME** TO RETURN HER TO **ASGARD...**
...WHAT MUST BE DONE, MUST BE DONE ON **EARTH!**
IF THE MAIDEN KRISTA IS TO **SURVIVE**, THOR MUST **STAND ASIDE--**
--THAT **DOCTOR BLAKE** MAY LIVE AGAIN!

NEXT ISSUE: AN OLD FRIEND RETURNS...AS WELL AS ONE OF THE THUNDER GOD'S MOST DEADLY FOES! YOU'LL HATE YOURSELF FOREVER, TRUE BELIEVER, IF YOU MISS...

NO ONE CAN STOP..THE DESTROYER!