

THOR

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



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THE MIGHTY

THOR



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THE THUNDER GOD'S GREATEST TRIUMPH... OR TRAGEDY BEYOND COMPARE!

NOW BEGINS WONDER WITHOUT END!



YOU MUST READ... THE DAY THE THUNDER FAILED!



When lame Dr. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic mallet MJOLNIR—and Blake is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm and the Lightning, Heir to the Throne of Immortal Asgard...

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

THE DAY THE THUNDER FAILED!

PORTRAIT OF A SUPER-HERO (NOT TO MENTION NORSE DEITY) TRIUMPHANT!

A VERY REAL THREAT TO EARTH'S EXISTENCE HAS BEEN VANQUISHED... A DANGER ENDED. A MISSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

A TRIO OF TITANS-- RE-TEAMED!

ROY * JOHN & TOM
THOMAS * BUSCEMA & PALMER

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* LAST ISSUE.
-- ROY.

QUERY: WHERE, AFTER TURMOIL AND NEAR-TRAGEDY, DOES A LIVING, BREATHING THUNDER GOD GO WHEN THE SONG OF BATTLE FADES...?

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"... A LAND WHOSE SKY-BRUSHING TREES WOULD HAVE DWARFED THE TOWERING REDWOODS OF THINE OWN EARTH, AS IF THEY WERE THE MEREST SAPLINGS...!"

BY MY SIRE'S EIGHT-HOOVED STEED!

LOKI! WHAT DOST THOU MAKE OF THIS EERIE FOREST WHERE SIZE DOTH RUN RAMPANT?

I WISH ONLY THAT WE'D NOT BECOME LOST, MY BROTHER.

IN SOOTH, WE ARE FAR FROM ASGARD-- AND IT GROWS EVER DARKER, MOMENT BY MOMENT!



BAH! THOU ART NE'ER SO BRAVE, TRICKSTER, AS WHEN SHIELDED ON EVERY SIDE BY ARMED IMMORTALS.

TRULY THUNDER GOD 'TIS AS THE ALL-FATHER OFT HATH SAID:

NOT FOR THOR BE THE COMFORTS OF A FALSE COURAGE... BUT ONLY THAT OF HIS GOOD RIGHT ARM!

THOU ART SORELY LACKING IN HUMILITY.



WHAT USE HUMILITY TO ONE WHO WIELDS THE RAGING LIGHTNING IN HIS MYSTIC HAMMER?

STILL, WE SHALL FIND NO LODGING THIS NIGHT, SO IT BEHOEVES US TO--

HOLD, THOR!

OVER THERE--!



'TIS... SOME SORT OF CAVE!

SURELY 'T'WILL PROTECT US FROM ANY WHO PROWL THE DARK.

AYE-- THOUGH 'TIS STRANGELY SHAPED.

WELL, NO GOOD SHALL COME OF STUMBLING ABOUT THIS FOREST BY NIGHT...





--ODIN'S TRUE SON
DOTH SEE, AS WELL!

'TIS A
GIANT--
BUT ONE FAR
LARGER THAN
ANY I HAVE E'ER
BEHELD, EITHER
IN ASGARD OR
ELSEWHERE!

THEN THE **QUAKING**
WE DID FEEL LAST
NIGHT-- WAS BUT
THE **GIANT'S**
SNORES!



WHATEVER THEY WERE--
LOOK! THE CREATURE
STIRS-- **WAKENS!**

SLAY IT SWIFTLY WITH
THINE ENCHANTED
HAMMER, BEFORE--

WHY? THE
GIANT HATH DONE
US NO HARM.

I WOULD
KNOW **MORE**
ABOUT HIM
AND HIS
LAND.



THEN ASK ME
WHAT YE
WOULD,
GNATLINGS!

SKRYMIR
HEARS YOUR
WORDS...THOUGH
ONLY BARELY!

SKRYMIR--
THOU WHOSE
NAME DOTR
TRULY MEAN
"BIG
FELLOW"--

BECOMING
LOST LAST
EVENING, WE SLEPT
IN YONDER CAVE
UNTIL--

CAVE!?



OH, I SEE!
YOU MEAN
MY **GLOVE**
HERE!

I TRUST IT
KEPT OUT THE
COLD, LITTLE
ONES.

NOW, WHAT DO
YOU WISH
IN THE
LAND OF
UTGARD?



UTGARD? WE DID
NOT KNOW ITS
NAME, **SKRYMIR.**

YET BEING HERE, WE
WOULD KNOW **MORE**
OF IT-- AND, IF THOU
DOST **RULE IT--**

SPEAK FOR
THYSELF,
THOR!

LOKI
WOULD FAIN
BE BACK IN
ASGARD!



QUARREL AMONGST YE AS YE WILL, LITTLE ONES!

SKRYMIR MUST HIE HIM TO THE HALL OF UTGARD BY THE MORROW--

--AND IT BE MANY LEAGUES DISTANT!

WAIT THEE, GIANT!

LET HIM PASS!

WHAT HAVE ASGARDIANS TO DO WITH THE LIKES OF HIM?



AS EVER, THOU DOST THINK WITH THY TONGUE.

WHO SAVE SKRYMIR CAN SHOW US THE QUICKEST, SUREST WAY OUT OF THIS TOWERING FOREST?

ALAS, THY WORDS FOR ONCE HAVE TRUTH'S OWN RING.

LEAD ON-- AND LOKI WILL FOLLOW.

"THE SKY WAS DARKENING WHEN AT LAST WE REACHED THE PRONE GIANT..."



ODIN'S BLOOD! DOTH THIS BEHEMOTH DO NAUGHT BUT SLEEP?

HO, SKRYMIR! THOU HAST LED US A MERRY CHASE THIS LONG DAY.

HAST THOU FOOD ABOUT THY PERSON, PERCHANCE-- FOR WE TWO BE FAMISHED.



FOOD? AYE-- ALL YE CAN EAT, IN YONDER BAG!

TAKE WHAT YE WILL-- BUT I WARN YE DISTURB NOT MY REST WITH MUNCHING!

OUR THANKS TO THEE, TALL ONE.

"ALMOST BEFORE I FINISHED SPEAKING, THE GIANT'S SNORING ONCE MORE ROCKED THE FOREST PRIMEVAL..."

"BUT, MINE INTEREST, AND LOKI'S, WERE ALL IN THE BAG AT HIS FEET..."

'TIS A TIGHT KNOT THE GIANT HATH TIED.

THOU ART A GOD OF MISCHIEF, NOT OF MIGHT.

BEHOLD HOW THE MATCHLESS STRENGTH OF A THUNDER GOD CAN--



EVEN MY POWER CANNOT UNFASTEN THIS SINGLE STRAND!

UNNH!



BY THE ALL-FATHER-- DOTH THIS GIANT SEEK TO STARVE US, OR ELSE TO DRIVE US MAD?

WHAT WILT THOU DO, GOLDEN-HAIR?

DO?



WHY, NAUGHT, ASGARDIAN.

NAUGHT SAVE SCRAMBLE UPON THE GIANT'S PULSING CARCASS--

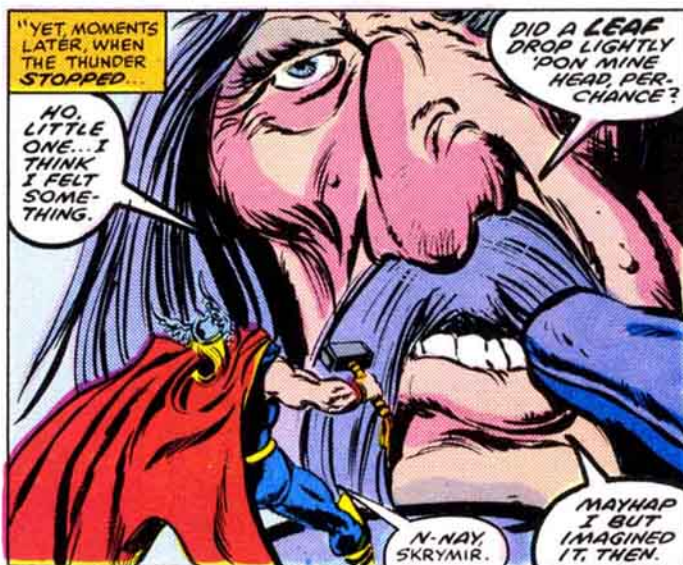
-- TAKE MINE HAMMER IN HAND--



-- AND SMITE HIM WITH THE FORCE OF A HEAVEN-SENT THUNDERBOLT!

THWA-MOM!

"TRULY THE EARTH DID SHAKE -- STORM-CLOUDS ROILED AND RUMBLER--"



"YET MOMENTS LATER, WHEN THE THUNDER STOPPED..."

HO, LITTLE ONE... I THINK I FELT SOMETHING.

DID A LEAF DROP LIGHTLY 'PON MINE HEAD, PER-CHANCE?

N-NAY, SKRYMIR.

MAYHAP I BUT IMAGINED IT, THEN.



OR MAYHAP IT WAS AN ACORN, OR A BIRD-DROPPING, DOST THOU SUPPOSE?

"I, FOR ONCE, SAID NOTHING."

"FOR, IT WAS BEYOND BELIEF THAT MINE ENCHANTED MJOLNIR HAD FAILED ME."



WELL, IT MATTERS LITTLE, EH?

WILL YE TWO ACCOMPANY ME TO UTGARDHALL?

AYE, SKRYMIR.

FOLLOW ME THEN, AS BEST YE CAN!

"WITH THAT, HE STRODE OFF..."



"NOR WAS THE MAN-MONSTER'S PATH DIFFICULT TO TRACE..."

"FOR, EACH TRACK HE LEFT WAS AS GREAT AS A SMALL CRATER."



THOR! DOST THOU SEE--?

MINE EYES ARE AS STRONG AS EVER THEY WERE, LOKI...

...THOUGH MINE ARM WAS SURELY WEAKER THAN USUAL, WHEN LAST IT STRUCK."



'TIS UTGARDHALL, BEYOND DOUBT-- AND OUR "BIG FELLOW" HATH VANISHED THEREIN.

AN IMPOSING EDIFICE ENOW...

BUT, ARE WE MORTAL, TO TREMBLE BEFORE MERE STONE TOWERS?

"LOKI, QUAKING WITH FEAR BEHIND ME, KEPT HIS SILENCE."

"NOR, TRUTH TO TELL, DID I FEEL SO CONFIDENT AS MY WORDS DID SEEM."

"AND, INDEED, I FELT EVEN LESS SO AS WE DREW NEARER, AND REALIZED THE MASSIVE SCALE OF THE PLACE..."



"YET, I WAS YOUNG... TOO YOUNG TO ADMIT TO FEAR."

BY MIRMIR'S WELL OF WISDOM!

'TIS AN ABODE OF GIANTS, FOR CERTAIN!

FOR MINE OWN PART, I WOULD RATHER WE HAD REMAINED LOST.

IMMORTALS OF ASGARD HAVE NO NEED TO FEAR ANY, EITHER IN HEAVEN OR EARTH.

SEE HOW EASILY WE GAINED ACCESS TO THE CASTLE.



AYE-- BY SQUEEZING OUR WAY BENEATH A CLOSED DOOR, LIKE INSECTS FROM MIDGARD!*

IS SKRYMIR IN SIGHT?

NAY, NOT SKRYMIR HIMSELF...

*MIDGARD: ASGARDIAN NAME FOR OUR EARTH, --ROY.



... BUT ANOTHER, OF SIMILAR STATURE... AND SPORTING A KINGLY CROWN!

HE DOTH NOT SEEM TO NOTICE US.

DO WE NOTE THE ANTS AT OUR FEET?

SPEAK FOR THYSELF, GODLING...



THOR BE NO ANT... NO MEREST INSECT!

THOR BE THE SON OF ODIN... THE GOD OF THUNDER!

HE SHALL NOTICE ME-- AND THAT RIGHT NOW!!

FRUM



"AND INDEED HE DID... THOUGH NOT IN THE WAY I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED..."

WHAT?? DO TINY VERMIN NOW DEMAND AN AUDIENCE OF UTGARD, MASTER OF UTGARDHALL?

WHAT DO YE HERE, FLY-SPECKS?

SPEAK-- BEFORE I SET MY FOOT ON YE!

"THEN, ALL THE PROPER INTRODUCTIONS WERE MADE, AFTER WHICH--

-- OR I'LL GIVE YE DUNGEONS, RATHER THAN DIRECTIONS!

SO, YE GODS OF ASGARD-- PROVE YOURSELVES WORTHY IN FIVE TASKS I SHALL NOW SET YE--

BRING ON ANY WHO BE NOT SO O'ERGROWN AS THEE-- AND WE SHALL VANQUISH HIM!

SO SAYETH LOKI, AS WELL!

'TIS DONE! BEHOLD MY MAN LOGI, WHO SHALL HUMBLE WHICHEVER OF YE DOTH ACCEPT HIS CHALLENGE!

LOGI? HIS NAME BE AKIN TO MINE OWN.

FOR THAT REASON, IT MUST BE LOKI WHO DOTH CONTEST WITH HIM.

AND HIS SLIGHT STATURE HATH NAUGHT TO DO WITH THY SUDDEN COURAGE, EH, HALF-BROTHER?

SILENCE! HE WHO DOTH DEVOUR THE GREATER PORTION OF YONDER MEAL SHALL BE THE VICTOR!

HAN! ALONGSIDE LOKI'S HUNGER GAUNT ONE--

-- THINE OWN SHALL BE AS THE GNAT TO THE LEVIATHAN.

LOOK THEE!

OF THIS BANQUET SO MAGICALLY CONJURED-UP, I EAT EVERY MORSEL-- DRINK EVERY DROP!

WHO CAN HOPE TO BEST THAT?

"BUT, WHEN THE GIANT UTGARD CREATED A SECOND MEAL, EQUAL TO THE FIRST--

SURELY, THIS BE SORCERY UNFETTERED!

GODS AND GOBLINS! THAT SKIN-AND-BONES DEVOURS ALL-- EVEN THE WOODEN PLATES AND OAKEN TABLE!

THOU SHOULDST HAVE YIELDED THE FIRST CONTEST TO THOR, LOKI.

ARE YOU READY TO ADMIT DEFEAT-- AND ACCEPT IMPRISONMENT?

OR WILL ONE OF YE RUN A RACE FOR ME?

I SHALL--

NAY! LOKI WOULD REDEEM HIMSELF-- AND MY SWIFTNES DOTH OUTSTRIP EVEN MY FORMER HUNGER.







MOTHER!
COME FORTH
AND SHOW THESE
UPSTARTS THE
TRUE POWER OF
THOSE WHO DWELL
IN UTGARDHALL!

WHAT?
DOTH HE
NOW SEND
OLD WOMEN
AGAINST
US?

STAND
ASIDE,
THOR, AND
LET LOKI--

I SAY THEE **NAY!** I'LL
NOT HAVE YOU **HARM**
THOSE GREY HAIRS, IN THY
FEAR OF **IMPRISONMENT.**



COME WITH ME
WILLINGLY,
WOMAN, AND
NO ONE SHALL--

**BY THE GIRTH OF
VOLSTAGG!** SHE BE AS
IMMOVABLE AS
WAS THE **CAT!**

OH, I
AM A WEE BIT
STRONGER
THAN IT
WAS, LAD...



...OR HADST
THOU NOT
NOTICED?

HER **GRIP!!** 'TIS
BEYOND ALL
BELIEVING!

I--
CANNOT
**BREAK
FREE!**



EVEN **LOKI** STANDS
IN **AWE!** MIGHTY
THOR-- BROUGHT
TO HIS **KNEES**
BY AN AGED
CRONE!?

I THANK THE **NORN-FATES**
THAT MINE ALL-FATHER **ODIN**
BE NOT HERE TO SEE HIS SON'S
INGLORIOUS **DEFEAT!**

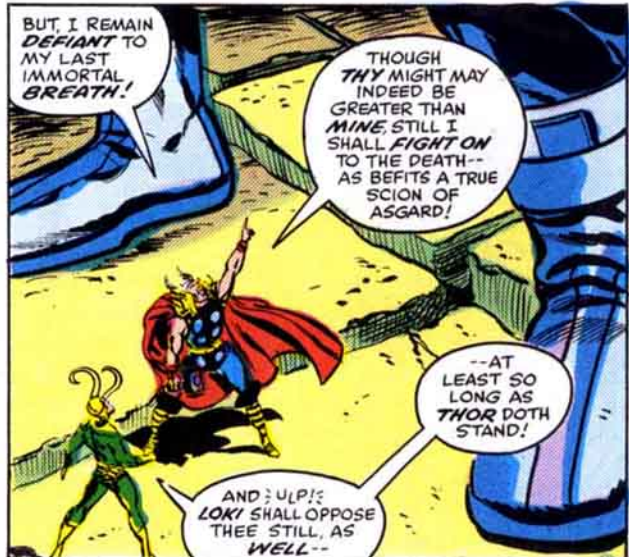
MOMENT
BY MOMENT--
I GROW
WEAKER--
MORE **FAINT!**
I--



ENOUGH!

RELEASE HIM, MOTHER,
AND BEGONE-- FOR,
THEY ARE NOW
LITGARD'S
TO DEAL WITH!

SO
WE ARE
GIANT--



BUT, I REMAIN
DEFIANT TO
MY LAST
IMMORTAL
BREATH!

THOUGH
THY MIGHT MAY
INDEED BE
GREATER THAN
MINE, STILL I
SHALL **FIGHT ON**
TO THE **DEATH--**
AS BEFITS A TRUE
SCION OF
ASGARD!

--AT
LEAST SO
LONG AS
THOR DOTH
STAND!

AND **UPL!?**
LOKI SHALL OPPOSE
THEE STILL, AS
WELL--

YOU WOULD STRIVE ON, AGAINST ALL ODDS-- E'EN AFTER YOUR FIVE DEFEATS?

THEN, I HAVE WRONGED YE BOTH-- AND MAYHAP 'TIS TIME TO REVEAL THE TRUTH.

TRUTH? WHAT--?

FIRST, KNOW THAT I, UTGARD, AM ALSO SKRYMIR, WHOM THOU DIDST ENCOUNTER IN THE FOREST...

"THE BAG YE SOUGHT IN VAIN TO OPEN, IN SEARCH OF FOOD, WAS SEALED BY MAGIC, OF A SORT NO GOD NOR GIANT COULD UNDO.

"AND, WHEN THOU, THUNDERER, DIDST STRIKE AT SLEEPING SKRYMIR WITH THY MYSTIC MALLET--

--'T WAS NOT MY HEAD THOU DIDST STRIKE, BUT A MOUNTAIN, WHICH WAS DULY SHATTERED...!

"AGAIN, MINE OWN MAGIC KEPT FROM THEE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HAD TRANSPIRED.

THEN-- WE HAVE BEEN ENCHANTED, ALL ALONG-- AND SAW NOT WHAT WE THOUGHT?

THOU HAST SAID IT.

BUT WHY DIDST THOU TRICK THOR SO?

HIS DECEPTION WAS NO MORE COMPLETE THAN THINE OWN, WHINER.

THOU DIDST THINK TO OUT-EAT THE GAUNT LOGI--

BUT, NEITHER WAS HE WHAT HE SEEMED...

"THOU DIDST CONTEST NOT WITH A LIVING THING-- BUT WITH FIRE IT-SELF, WHICH CONSUMED FOOD AND PLATES AND ALL!

"FOR, WHO CAN DEVOUR THINGS BETTER THAN FIRE?

"NOR WAS NUGI A MERE SWAIN, AS HE APPEARED..."

"... BUT YOUR OWN THOUGHTS, WHICH FLY AT A SPEED BEYOND ALL RECKONING.

"NOT LIGHTNING ITSELF CAN OUTSTRIP THE POWER OF THOUGHT.

"AND THOU, GOD OF STORMS, DIDST BROOD BECAUSE THOU COULDEST NOT LOWER THE LEVEL OF WATER IN MINE ENORMOUS HORN.

"LITTLE DIDST THOU SUSPECT--

"-- THAT THE HORN'S NETHER END WAS SET IN THE GREAT OCEAN ITSELF!

"IN FACT, THOU DIDST LOWER THE LEVEL OF THE WATERS DOWN TO EBB-TIDE!

"AND THE CAT THOU DIDST STRIVE TO LIFT WAS NO CAT AT ALL--

"-- BUT THE GARGANTUAN MIDGARD SERPENT WHICH GIRDLES THE EARTH AND HOLDS THE SEA IN PLACE!

"HOW I DID INWARDLY TREMBLE WHEN THOU DIDST LIFT THE CREATURE ALL UNKNOWING, EVEN THE SLIGHTEST BIT!"

"LOKI ASKED THEE," SAYS THOR, "AND NOW I ASK THEE: WHY DIDST THOU TRICK THUS OUR SIGHT AND SENSES?"

WHY? BECAUSE I DESIRED TO TEST THE METTLE AND MERIT OF YE GODS!

IF YE WERE NOT STRONG OR BRAVE ENOUGH TO STAND, WE GIANTS WOULD INVADE ASGARD AT ONCE--

-- AND THE DREADED DAY OF RAGNAROK WOULD OCCUR MILLENNIA SOONER THAN THE NORN-FATES PREDICT!

"WHEN YE FOUGHT ON, EVEN IN THE FACE OF FOUR DEFEATS, I SENT OLD ELLI AGAINST THEE..."

"UNKNOWN TO THEE, SHE DID AGE THEE... AND THUS WEAKEN THEE!"

"ELLI, SHE WHO IS THE PERSONIFICATION OF OLD AGE ITSELF!"

"STILL THOU WOULDST NOT SURRENDER-- AND THUS, IN A SENSE, THOU DIDST WIN, NOT LOSE, THE ENCOUNTER."

"THY RIGHTFUL STATE DID RETURN, THE MOMENT OLD ELLI LEFT THEE..."



THUS, YE BOTH HAVE PROVEN THY GODLY RACE WORTHY TO RULE THE COSMOS-- AT LEAST FOR THIS PRESENT AGE-- AND MAY DEPART IN PEACE!

THOU WOULDST TRICK US, THEN DISMISS US-- LIKE SCUM BENEATH THY FEET?

A THOUSAND TIMES MAY!

LET THERE NOW BE TRUE BATTLE BETWEEN US-- NO MORE MAGIC!



MINE ENCHANTMENTS WILL NO LONGER PREVAIL, NOW THAT THOU ART AWARE OF THEM!

THUS, LET THE FINAL, REMAINING MAGIC BE DISPELLED--



-- THE ENCHANTMENT WHICH BE UTGARDHALL ITSELF!

"BEFORE I COULD WIELD MINE AWESOME HAMMER, THERE WAS SUDDENLY A BLINDING BURST OF LIGHT--

BY ALL THE IMMORTALS!



"AND, WHEN OUR SIGHT RETURNED TO US--

THUNDER! THE CASTLE BE GONE-- E'EN THE MIGHTY FOREST WHICH DID SURROUND IT!

MAYHAP IT WERE NEVER THERE, EVIL ONE.

YET, UTGARD HIMSELF WAS REAL ENOW-- AYE, AND HIS SIZE AND POWER!

THUS, IN A WAY, WE DID DEFEAT THE GIANT-- AND YET--

HAD WE BUT FALTERED, THEN TRULY WOULD THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS HAVE FALLEN AT ONCE OVER FAIR ASGARD!

MAY THIS DAY'S EVENTS E'ER REMIND ME THAT, STRONG THOUGH MINE ARM AND HAMMER BE, THERE STILL BE A BILLION BILLION WORLDS AND BEINGS BEYOND MY YOUTHFUL KEN.

AND WHO IS SO GREAT, SO MIGHTY, THAT SOME DAY, SOMEWHERE, HE WILL NOT MEET HIS MASTER?

THIS IS IT WRITTEN--



--THUS SHALL IT EVER BE!

IS THAT ANYTHING LIKE "THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER"?

AYE, AND HAST THOU LEARNED ANYTHING FROM MY TALE, JOEY?

YEAH, I... I THINK MAYBE I DID.

WHATSAT, KID? YOU GONNA WAIT'LL YER BIG ENUFF TA LICK THAT BULLY THOR CHASED AWAY?

THAT AIN'T THE POINT'A THE STORY.

EVEN IF I DO BEAT 'IM UP SOMETIME, THERE'LL ALWAYS BE SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE, WHO'S STRONGER 'N ME.

SO I'M JUST GONNA WORK ON TAKIN' CARE OF MYSELF...

...AND KEEP ON PUTTIN' ONE DAY RIGHT AFTER THE OTHER.

JOEY, THOU ART WISE BEYOND THY YEARS.

WELL, SEE YA, THOR.

LIKE THEY SAY-- THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!

AND WITH THEE LAD... WHAT'E'ER THOU DOST MEAN.

NOW, THERE BE MATTERS ELSEWHERE THAT I MUST--

THOR! HOLD IT, OLD BUDDY!

I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU, FOR WEEKS!

EH? VERILY, THOU DOST LOOK FAMILIAR, BUT--

IT'S HOBBSIE, DON'T YOU REMEMBER?--

--HARRIS HOBBS-- THE GUY YOU TOOK UP TO ASGARD SEVERAL YEARS BACK, WHEN I WAS JUST A HUMBLE REPORTER!

AH YES! THOU HAS AGED GRACEFULLY, OLD FRIEND.

YEAH! WELL, I'M IN TV NEWS NOW-- AND I NEED A FAVOR.

IF 'TIS WITHIN MY POWER TO GRANT.

*EPOCHAL EVENTS RECORDED IN JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #123, WAY BACK WHEN. --ROY.

IT SURE IS, OL' BUDDY! I'VE PROMISED MY NETWORK THAT I'M GONNA SHOOT THE FIRST TV SPECIAL EVER ABOUT YOU REAL-LIFE NORSE GODS--

--AND I'M GONNA DO IT ON LOCATION-- IN ASGARD!

NEXT ISSUE: **SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW BRIDGE!**