

MARVEL



# the mighty THOR

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**BALDER--  
THE BRAVE?**





STAN LEE  
PRESENTS: **the MIGHTY THOR**

# WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BALDER THE BRAVE?

NORNKEEP, THE FORTRESS CARVED FROM  
THE LIVING ROCK OF THE EARTH, HOME OF  
KARNILLA, THE NORN QUEEN.

HERE SHE KEEPS HER  
ANCIENT COURT AND HERE  
SHE GOVERNS HER  
DANGEROUS REALM.

AND IT IS TO THESE GATES  
WHERE NO LIVING MAN  
WOULD DARE TO VENTURE  
THAT THE WOLF HAS COME  
AT LAST.

FOR THOUGH DANGEROUS IS  
THE REALM, STILL MORE  
DANGEROUS IS THE WOLF.

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GUARDSMAN!  
WHAT'S THIS? I  
GAVE NO ORDER  
THAT THE  
PORTCULLIS  
SHOULD BE  
RAISED!

WHAT? LOOK  
YONDER! A  
FELL  
BEAST!  
TO  
ARMS!

CAPTAIN,  
I SWEAR TO  
YOU--!



STAY BACK, YOU  
FOOLS! DO YOU  
NOT RECOGNIZE  
HIM? 'TIS GERI,  
ONE OF ODIN'S  
WOLVES.



HINDER HIM ON  
PERIL OF YOUR  
LIFE! HE  
COMES AS A  
MESSENGER  
FROM AS-  
GARD!



MILADY!  
BEWARE!  
YOUR ENEMIES  
SEEK TO  
DESTROY  
US!

HOW DARE YOU ENTER  
THIS THRONE ROOM?  
DEPART LEST I SUMMON  
THE HOSTS OF HEL TO DRAG  
YOU DOWN TO DOOM!



SAVE YOUR  
SPELLS, O  
QUEEN, FOR  
THEY WOULD  
AVAIL YOU  
NAUGHT.

AND THOUGH I HAD  
HOPED TO LOSE MYSELF  
FOREVER, I CANNOT  
DISOBEY MY LIEGE.

THE CHILDREN  
OF ODIN TRAVEL  
UNDER HIS PRO-  
TECTION AND ARE  
SENT TO SUMMON  
THOSE THE ALL-  
FATHER WISHES  
TO ASGARD.

AS GERI  
HAS BEEN  
SENT TO  
SUMMON  
ME.



FAITHFUL GERI,  
I WILL COME WITH  
YOU.



MEANWHILE, IN THE DARKENED THRONE ROOM OF ODIN'S GREAT HALL, THE RULER OF NORSE GODS SITS AMID THE SILENCE...



UNTIL...



WHO STANDS BEFORE ME IN THE SHADOWS? COME FORTH, THAT I MAY SEE THEE PLAINLY.

YOUR WIFE FRIGGA IT IS WHO HAS COME TO GREET HER HUSBAND.



LONG HAVE YOU SAT AND BROODING ON YOUR GREAT THRONE, MY LORD, ABOUT MATTERS I CAN ONLY GUESS AT.

YOU CARRY A TERRIBLE BURDEN, ODIN. WILL YOU NOT LET ME SHARE IT WITH YOU?



AH, FRIGGA, MY DEAREST WIFE, YOU ARE AS LOVELY NOW AS WHEN WE FIRST MET.

TO SEE YOU ONLY DELIGHTS ME.

I WILL SHARE MY TROUBLES WITH YOU, THOUGH I FEAR RATHER THAN EASING MY BURDEN, IT WILL ONLY DARKEN YOUR RADIANT VISION.



FEAR NOT, HUSBAND, MY CANDLE IS NOT SO EASILY DIMMED.

MY LORD--!

VERY WELL.

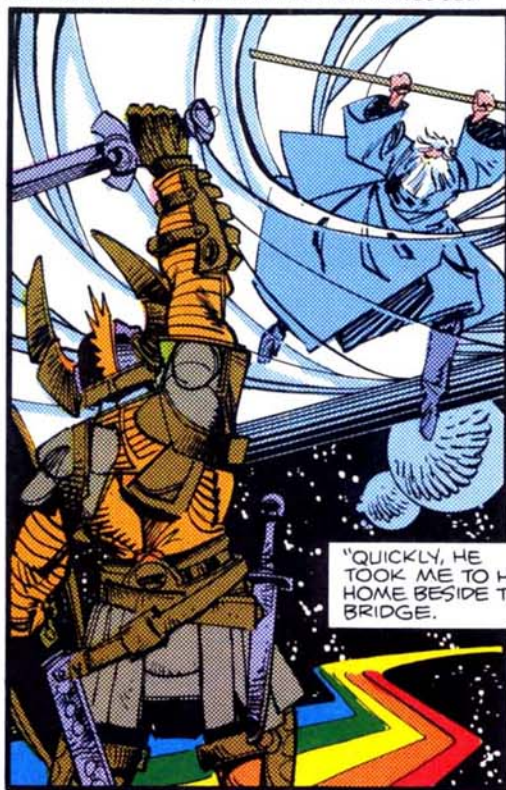
I HAVE SUMMONED BALDER HOME TO ASGARD. FOR HE AND ONLY HE MAY ACCOMPLISH WHAT MUST BE DONE.

AND YET, WHEN ALL IS FINISHED, HE MAY NEVER FORGIVE ME FOR WHAT I AM ABOUT TO DO.

HEAR ME OUT, FRIGGA.



"WHEN I RETURNED FROM MIDGARD YESTER-EVE, I FOUND HEIMDALL, GUARDIAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE, AWAITING ME ANXIOUSLY.



"QUICKLY, HE TOOK ME TO HIS HOME BESIDE THE BRIDGE.

"AND THERE I FOUND MUNINN, MY RAVEN, SORELY HURT. HEIMDALL HAD RESCUED HIM WHILE I WAS GONE AND KEPT HIM FOR MY RETURN.



"OF MY OTHER RAVEN, HUGINN, THERE WAS NO SIGN.



"I SENT HEIMDALL BACK TO HIS POST AND SPOKE WITH MUNINN.

"FOR I HAD SENT MY RAVENS ON A MISSION TO PENETRATE THE BURNING GALAXY AND FERRET OUT ITS SECRET.



"I HAD GIVEN THEM GREAT SIZE AND STRENGTH TO DO SO.

"AND NOW ONLY MUNINN HAD RETURNED.



"HIS MAGIC WAS SPENT, HIS VOICE NEARLY GONE.

"WE SPOKE FOR A LONG TIME, HE AND I...

"...TILL FINALLY I LEARNED...

"...WHAT I MUST KNOW.



"THEN I BROUGHT MUNINN HOME.

NOW, FOR ALL OUR SALES, I MUST SEND LOYAL BALDER INTO THE LION'S DEN FOR ONLY SO CAN THE FATES BE AVERTED AND ALL THAT WE HAVE DONE BE SAVED.

THE DANGER IS EVEN GREATER THAN I FEARED.





MY LIEGE, I HAVE RETURNED TO ASGARD AT YOUR BIDDING. HOW MAY I SERVE YOU?

NOT EASILY, BRAVE BALDER. FOR I WOULD MAKE YOU MY AMBASSADOR TO DELIVER A LETTER FOR ME...

...AND THOUGH THE JOURNEY ITSELF IS DANGEROUS, IT IS THE ONE WHOM YOU SEEK THAT IS THE GREATEST DANGER.

MY LORD! YOU WOULD SEND ME TO THE GOD RESPONSIBLE FOR MY DEATH\*? WHO TRAPPED ME IN HEL WITH THE LEGIONS OF THE DEAD TILL I ESCAPED? WHO DESPISES ME WITH A RANCOR MATCHED ONLY BY HIS HATRED OF THOR HIMSELF?!

I MUST SEND YOU TO... LOKI.

\*THOR # 274.

HOW WELL I KNOW IT. AND YET, IN THIS MATTER, MY BRAVE, ONLY YOU WILL DO.

FOR THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MISSION IS BEYOND TELLING...

...AND THOUGH HE DESPISES YOU, EVEN LOKI KNOWS THAT THE WORD OF BALDER IS THE VERY MEASURE OF TRUTH.

MAYHAP HE WILL BELIEVE YOU AS HE WOULD BELIEVE NO OTHER.

VERY WELL, LORD ODIN, I WILL UNDERTAKE THIS AMBASSADORSHIP.

BUT ON ONE CONDITION. I NO LONGER HAVE THE STOMACH FOR KILLING AND HAVE FORSWORN ALL VIOLENCE. I WILL NOT RAISE A SWORD NOR KILL A SOUL, NOT EVEN FOR ASGARD.

SO BE IT. THESE ARE MATTERS, BRAVE BALDER, OF INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCE. YOU MUST DO AS YOU THINK BEST.

TAKE THIS LETTER. READ IT AND THEN CARRY IT TO MY STEPSON THAT HE MAY BE PERSUADED TO JOIN WITH US.

AND BALDER, NO ONE ELSE IS TO KNOW OF THIS BUSINESS!

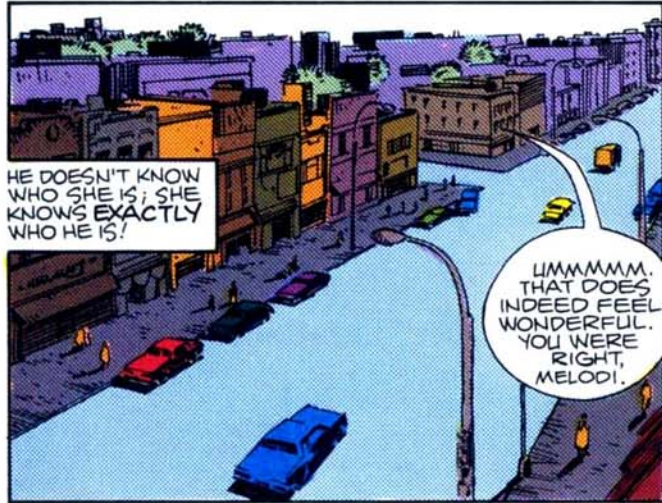
IT SHALL BE DONE, MY LIEGE.



MEANWHILE, IN BAY RIDGE, BROOKLYN, IN A THIRD FLOOR APARTMENT, WE FIND THOR (IN HIS CIVILIAN IDENTITY) ENTERTAINING LORELEI (IN HER CIVILIAN IDENTITY).

I DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS SO TIRED.

I KNEW IT WOULD BE.



HE DOESN'T KNOW WHO SHE IS; SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHO HE IS!

UMMMMM. THAT DOES INDEED FEEL WONDERFUL. YOU WERE RIGHT, MELODI.



A BACK-RUB WAS JUST WHAT I NEEDED.



OW. GENTLY, PLEASE.

CRYBABY.

OW.

DON'T WORRY, I KNOW JUST WHAT I'M DOING.

THIS IS GOING TO RELAX YOU LIKE NOTHING ELSE EVER HAS.



WHY, WHEN I'M THROUGH, YOU'LL WONDER WHERE I'VE BEEN ALL YOUR LIFE.



HOW ABOUT SOME GOLDEN MEAD TO HELP YOU ENJOY YOURSELF?



HUMMMMM?



SIGURD?



SIGURD!







MEANWHILE, FAR BEYOND THE GREEN FIELDS OF ASGARD...



MY FAITHFUL STEED, OUR JOURNEY IS NEARLY AT AN END. BEYOND THE FAR MOUNTAINS LIES THE LONELY DWELLING OF LOKI.

STILL, THE GREATEST DANGERS ARE YET TO COME.



FORWARD, NOBLE SILVER-HOOF, AND GALLOP AS THE WIND!



FOR IF THE LEGENDS ARE TRUE, NOW THE CHASE BEGINS!



AND SUDDENLY, FROM THE HILLS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE TRAIL, A THUNDEROUS ROAR IS HEARD AS THE MOUNTAINSIDES BEGIN TO TREMBLE.

THE LIVING LANDSLIDE! THE DEADLY BOULDERS THAT CAN CRUSH THE LIFE OUT OF ANY UNWARY PASSERBY, BE HE MORTAL OR GOD!

FASTER, SILVERHOOF! FASTER!

THE ROCKS OVERTAKE US AND OUR MISSION MUST NOT FAIL!

**THUUMBLE!**



**BOONN! BADOONN!**

JUST AHEAD! THE CLIFF THAT MARKS THE END OF THE LANDSLIDE'S TREACHEROUS REALM!

UP, NOBLE STEED! AND LEAP FOR YOUR LIFE! THE BOULDERS ARE UPON US!





WELL DONE, SILVERHOOF! ONCE BEYOND THIS TALUS SLOPE, THE POWER OF THE LIVING LANDSLIDE CEASES!

YET SLACK NOT YOUR PACE, FOR EVEN NOW WE MUST PLUNGE FULL FORCE INTO THE PERILOUS FORBIDDEN FOREST!

ON, SILVERHOOF, ON!

WHERE THE TREES AND VINES LURE THE UNWARY WITH THEIR PLEASANT SCENT AND THEN ENFOLD THEM IN DEADLY EMBRACE!

OUR MISSION FOR LORD ODIN IS TOO VITAL TO LET SUCH ANCIENT EVIL PREVENT OUR PASSAGE.

**SCREEEE!**

**RRIP!**

**SHRIIP!**

THOUGH I AM BUT A SHADOW OF MY FORMER SELF, STILL I AM A SON OF ASGARD AND WILL NOT BE DENIED!

UNTIL THE VINES ARE GROWN AGAIN, THERE WILL BE SAFE PASSAGE THROUGH THAT DANGEROUS PLACE.

STILL, WE WILL WIN THROUGH!

BUT NOW, THE MOST HAZARDOUS PERIL OF ALL AWAITS US. FOR BEFORE US LIE THE LEAGUES OF THE DEADLY DESERT...

...WHERE THE SANDSTORMS RAGE CONSTANTLY AND PRECIOUS WATER CANNOT BE FOUND.

I WILL COVER THY HEAD WITH MY OWN CLOAK AND BE THINE EYES, SILVERHOOF.

ODIN WATCH OVER US THAT WE MAY NOT FALL INTO THE DEADLY PITFALLS OF THE REGION.



THE HOURS DRAG BY AS BALDER AND HIS MOUNT SLOWLY FIGHT THEIR WAY INCH BY INCH ACROSS THE TREACHEROUS SANDS UNTIL AT LAST...

THERE! BEFORE ME IN THE RAGING STORM! IS THAT A SHADOW THAT I SEE OR ONLY ANOTHER ILLUSION OF THE DUST AND WIND?

FOR THESE DRAGON HEADS MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAIL THAT LEADS TO THE END OF OUR JOURNEY.

THEY POINT THE WAY TO THE CASTLE OF LOKI!

PRAISE ODIN!  
THE WIND ABATES  
AND I SEE THAT WE  
HAVE AT LAST  
REACHED THE END  
OF THE DEADLY DESERT.

THE SILENCE OF THAT DESOLATE REGION IS ENDLESS. SAVE ONLY THE CAWING OF SOME WINGED CREATURE TOO HIGH FOR THE NAKED EYE TO SEE...

...AND THE SOUND OF SILVERHOOF'S HOVES UPON THE STONES.

NOW, BROTHERS!  
TAKE HIM!

BUT SLAY HIM NOT!  
THE MASTER WANTS HIM ALIVE!

WAIT!  
THESE ARE NO TROLLS!  
THESE ARE--!

CLOP  
CLOP CLOP

WHEN SUDDENLY...

TROLLS!  
BUT HOW  
COME THEY  
HERE, EVEN  
AT THE EDGE  
OF ASGARD!



ELSEWHERE, FAR BEYOND THE FIELDS WE KNOW...



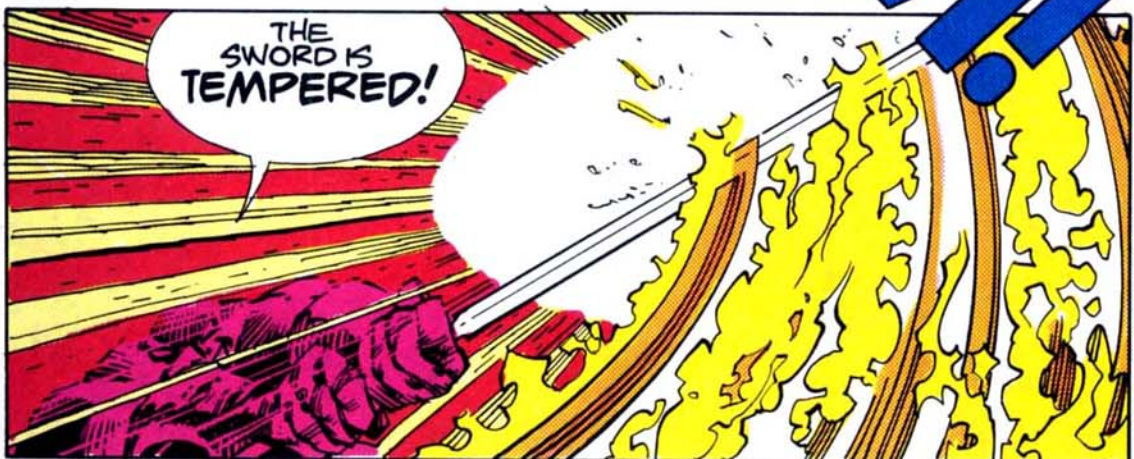
...A GREAT FIGURE  
TURNS FROM THE  
ANVIL BEFORE HIM  
AND STRETCHES  
FORTH HIS HAND.



LAKES OF BRIMSTONE  
SPRING UP  
ON EVERY SIDE...



...AND  
THEN...



THE  
SWORD IS  
TEMPERED!



MEANWHILE,  
INSIDE THE  
CASTLE OF...

LOKI! I  
MIGHT HAVE  
KNOWN THESE  
WERE YOUR  
CREATURES.

ONLY YOU WOULD BE  
BOLD ENOUGH TO  
HARBOR DEMONS OF  
THE FIRE WITHIN THE  
BOUNDARIES OF  
ASGARD!

RELEASE ME!  
I COME AS AN  
AMBASSADOR  
FROM ODIN  
HIMSELF!

ODIN  
DOES NOT  
RULE HERE.  
NOR IN FACT  
ARE THE  
DEMONS MINE.

BUT I HAVE  
A MESSAGE  
OF THE VERY  
HIGHEST  
IMPORTANCE.

YOU ARE  
NOT THE FIRST  
SUCH AMBAS-  
SADOR TO REACH  
ME. STRANGE THAT  
LOKI'S AID SHOULD  
SUDDENLY BE SOUGHT  
BY SO MANY.

PERHAPS YOU  
REMEMBER THE ONE  
WHO STANDS BESIDE ME.  
HE WHOM ODIN DID  
BANISH TO THE LIMBO  
OF ENDLESS NIGHT  
SO MANY AGES AGONE.

MAY I  
PRESENT  
MALEKITH,  
THE DARK  
ELF.

THE GENTLE-  
MEN HOLDING  
YOU ARE PART  
OF HIS  
ENTOURAGE.

THIS UNSEEMLY  
OUTBURST DIS-  
PLEASES US, MY  
DEMONS. GAG  
HIM!

LOK--  
MMMMPH!

MALEKITH!  
BUT 'TIS HE  
AND HIS  
MASTER WHO  
WOULD  
DESTROY US  
ALL!

LOKI,  
YOU MUST  
LISTEN TO  
ME!

AH, BALDER,  
EVER THE  
TOOTHLESS  
UNDERSTRAP-  
PER OF THE  
NOBILITY OF  
ASGARD.

THE  
YEARS HAVE  
NOT BEEN KIND  
TO YOU, BRAVE  
BALDER. YOU  
WERE HAND-  
SOME ONCE.

SEND A SPINELESS,  
OVERWEIGHT FLUNKY  
TO CURRY THE FAVOR  
OF HIS STEP-SON...

IS  
THIS THE  
BEST THAT  
ODIN CAN  
DO?

...WHEN ALL  
KNOW THAT  
ODIN REGRETS  
EVER HAVING  
ADOPTED LOKI  
IN THE FIRST  
PLACE!



REMEMBER, LOKI. WHEN THE POWERS THAT BE HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, THERE WILL BE PLENTY LEFT OVER FOR THOSE RUTHLESS AND BOLD ENOUGH TO SEIZE IT!

AND AS A TOKEN OF MY GOOD FAITH, LET ME PRESENT YOU WITH A VERY SPECIAL GIFT...



...THE HEAD OF BALDER THE BRAVE.

KILL HIM!

UMMMMPH!



UGGKKH!



HOLD HIM! HE'S BREAKING LOOSE!

OWWW!



CATCH HIM, YOU FOOLS! HE MUST BE SLAIN!



LOKI! STOP THEM! PLEASE!



HIS BONDS! HE'S SLIPPED FROM HIS BONDS!

AFTER HIM! HE LEAPS INTO THE COURTYARD!



HE CAN'T ESCAPE US ALL!

LOKI! HEAR ME OUT! YOU KNOW I CANNOT FIGHT THESE DEMONS!





LOKI! HEED MY PLEA!



UMMPH!

SEEK NOT MY DESTRUCTION UNTIL YOU KNOW THE TRUTH! THEN GLADLY WILL I DIE!



THE VERY FATE OF THE UNIVERSE DEPENDS UPON MY WORDS!



NOW WE HAVE HIM. CLOSE IN, BROTHERS, AND WE WILL SPLIT THE ASGARDIAN LIKE A RIPE FRUIT.

SO IT IS TRUE. BALDER THE BRAVE HAS BECOME A SPINELESS MILKSOP!



AFRAID TO KILL EVEN THE DEMONS OF HEL!

LOKI! PLEASE! MY MISSION MUST NOT FAIL!



COME, MALEKITH, YOU AND I HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS.



I DON'T SUPPOSE WE'LL EVER LEARN WHAT ODIN'S MESSAGE WAS NOW.

PITY!



LOKI!

NOW BY MY HAND DIES BALDER THE BRAVE!



NO! DO NOT MAKE ME DO IT!



KILL HIM!



KILL HIM!





MEANWHILE, IN NEW YORK CITY, AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE ON THE HUDSON RIVER, WHERE THOR WORKS IN-  
COGNITO AS SIGURD JARLSON...



BROTHER, WOTTA MESS!  
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE  
GONNA HAVETA START  
OVER AGAIN AFTER  
ALL THAT WORK.

WHAT DID  
WE EVER DO TO  
THAT DRAGON TO  
HAVE HIM KNOCK  
APART OUR  
BUILDING?\*

\*THOR 341 GAVE THE  
DEPRESSING DETAILS.



YOU KNOW,  
SIGURD, IT MAKES  
A GUY WONDER  
WHY HE  
BOTHERS.

SURELY  
YOU  
JEST.

YOU'D PAY \$300 A MONTH  
AT A HEALTH AND RACKET  
CLUB FOR THIS SORT OF  
EXERCISE AND CALL IT  
PHYSICAL FITNESS  
THERAPY!

YO,  
JARLSON!



HELLO,  
JERRY,  
HOW ARE  
YOU?

JUST SWELL,  
CONSIDERIN'  
WE'RE STARTIN'  
OVER.

YOU'D BETTER GIT YER  
HARDHAT ON. INSURANCE  
GUYS'LL BE ALL OVER THIS SITE  
FOR AWHILE AND WE DON'T  
WANT TO GIVE 'EM A  
HEART ATTACK,  
DO WE?

OH,  
CERTAINLY.  
I GUESS I  
HAVEN'T GOT IT  
ALL DOWN YET.  
BUT I'LL TRY. BE  
RIGHT BACK.



LOOKIT 'IM,  
LEAPIN' ACROSS  
THE SITE LIKE  
A JACKRABBIT.

AND THE WAY  
HE WENT UP  
THE BUILDIN' TO  
RESCUE THAT  
GIRL, MELODI\*,  
WITHOUT EVEN  
BREATHIN'  
HARD!

NO NORMAL  
JOE COULD DO  
THAT. HE AIN'T A  
CONSTRUCTION  
WORKER.

HOLY COW,  
THAT'S IT!  
JARLSON'S NO  
ORDINARY  
GUY.

HE'S HERE  
UNDER-  
COVER! AND  
THE WAY HE  
MOVES! IT'S  
GOTTA  
BE!

AN' HE WAS  
SENT HERE BY  
COUSIN NICK WHO  
WORKS FOR SOME  
SUPERSECRET  
SPY GUYS.



JARLSON  
IS REALLY  
SPIDER-MAN!



MEANWHILE, IN THE HOUSE OF LOKI...

STAND BACK, PLEASE. LEAVE ME ALONE!

I'LL NOT HARM YOU!

HE'S OURS! FORWARD, BROTHERS!

RICHLY WILL REWARD THE ONE WHO SLAYS BALDER THE BRAVE!

DEATH TO THE ASGARDIAN!

I BEG OF YOU! CEASE NOW AND PREVENT THIS TERRIBLE THING FROM HAPPENING!

I'LL LET YOU LIVE! I SWEAR IT! MY MISSION IS WITH LOKI!

thup!

UGGH!

FIRST BLOOD! WE'VE DRAWN FIRST BLOOD! HIS LIFE IS FORFEIT!

thup!

thup!

thup!

NOOOOOO!

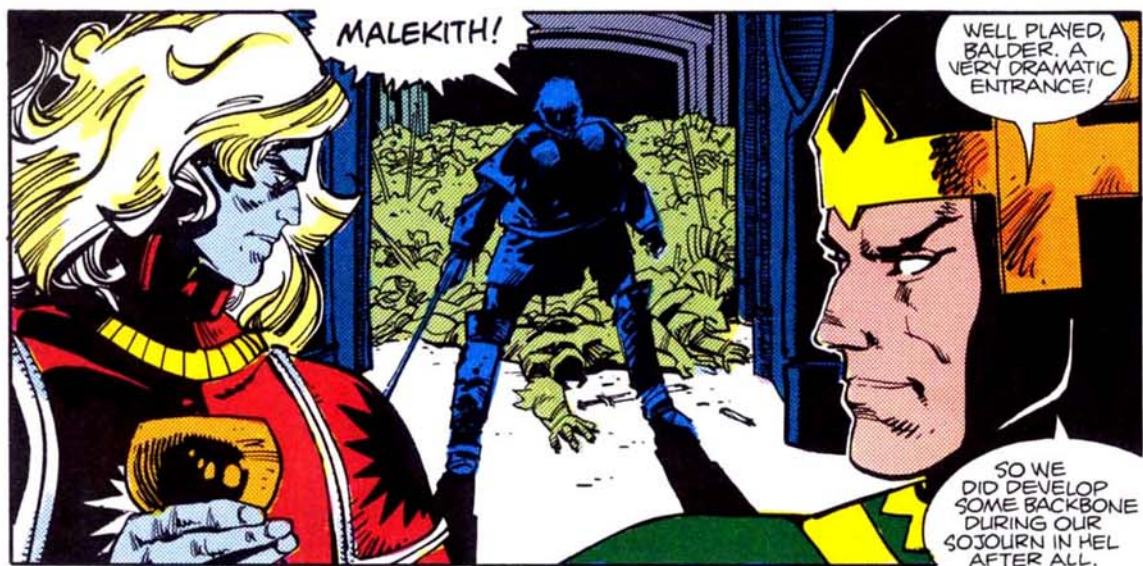
KILL HIM! FOR MALEKITH! AND THE BURNING FLAMES!

DEMONS! I FORESWORE THE SWORD FOREVER!

BUT BILLIONS OF INNOCENTS WILL PERISH IF MY MISSION FAILS!

CONSCIENCE, I CAST THEE ASIDE! DEATH SHALL BE MY HELPMATE!







MALEKITH, FOUL CREATURE. FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME THIS DAY, YOU WILL LIE WITH YOUR DEMONS TONIGHT IN HEL!



SLASSTH!

WHA--!

HE'S GONE. AND ONLY HIS CLOAK REMAINS.



FOOLISH BALDER. DO YOU NOT REMEMBER THE POWER OF THE DARK ELF, TO ENTER THE SHADOWS AND VANISH...

...TO TRAVEL WHERE HE WILL AND EMERGE EVEN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE.



HE HAS ESCAPED YOU.



BUT NOT PREVENTED ME FROM FULFILLING MY DUTY.

HERE IS THE LETTER, LOKI. THOUGH IT COST ME MY SOUL, I HAVE COMPLETED MY MISSION. FOR MY LORD ODIN.



THE FATE OF THE UNIVERSE HANGS IN THE BALANCE.



YOU ARE A FOOL, BALDER, TO THINK THAT A MESSAGE FROM MY STEP-FATHER COULD POSSIBLY BE OF CONCERN TO ME.

WHAT?!

I HAVE ALREADY DECIDED TO ACCEPT MALEKITH'S OFFER.



AFTER ALL, I HAVE THE BLOOD OF GIANTS IN MY VEINS, AS MY STEP-FATHER NEVER TIRES OF REMINDING ME.



BUT IT WAS SO DELIGHTFUL TO WATCH A PACIFIST SLAY HIS THOUSANDS THAT I SIMPLY COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO MENTION IT BEFORE THIS.



WHY, IT WOULD HAVE SPOILED THE FUN.



DEVILSPAWN! WAS IT NOT ENOUGH THAT YOU KILL ME AND SEND ME DOWN TO HELL?



NOW YOU DESTROY WHAT LITTLE LIFE I HAD LEFT!

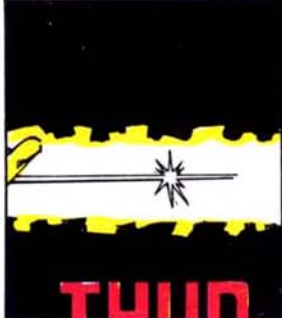
ASGARD MAY YET PERISH BY THE SWORD BUT NOT BEFORE I RID THE WORLD OF THE DEADLIEST SERPENT IN HER HALLS!

THREATEN ME NOT, THOU SAPLESS WEAKLING.



THOU HAST NOT THE METTLE FOR THE DEED!

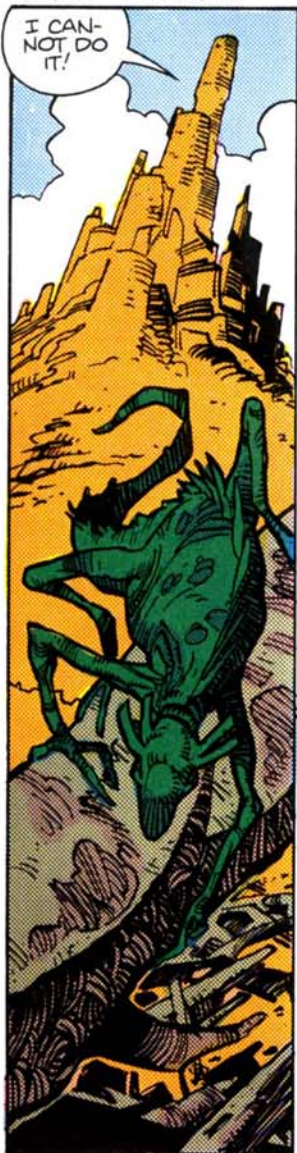
LIAR!





ELSEWHERE, IN THE FORTRESS OF KARNILLA...

I CAN NOT DO IT!



EVEN HERE, IN THE CHAMBERS OF MY GREATEST SORCERY, MY MAGICKS CANNOT PIERCE THE MYSTIC SCREENS SURROUNDING LOKI'S DOMAIN.

AND BALDER'S FATE REMAINS UNKNOWN TO ME.

SURELY, MISTRESS, LOKI WOULD NOT DARE TO HARM BALDER WHEN HE IS ON A MISSION FOR ODIN.

I DO NOT TRUST THE SLY ONE. HE WOULD BETRAY ANYONE IF IT SUITED HIS PURPOSE.

HE IS SO UNPREDICTABLE, HIS GAMES SO TWISTED THAT--



WEEEO  
OOOO  
OOOO

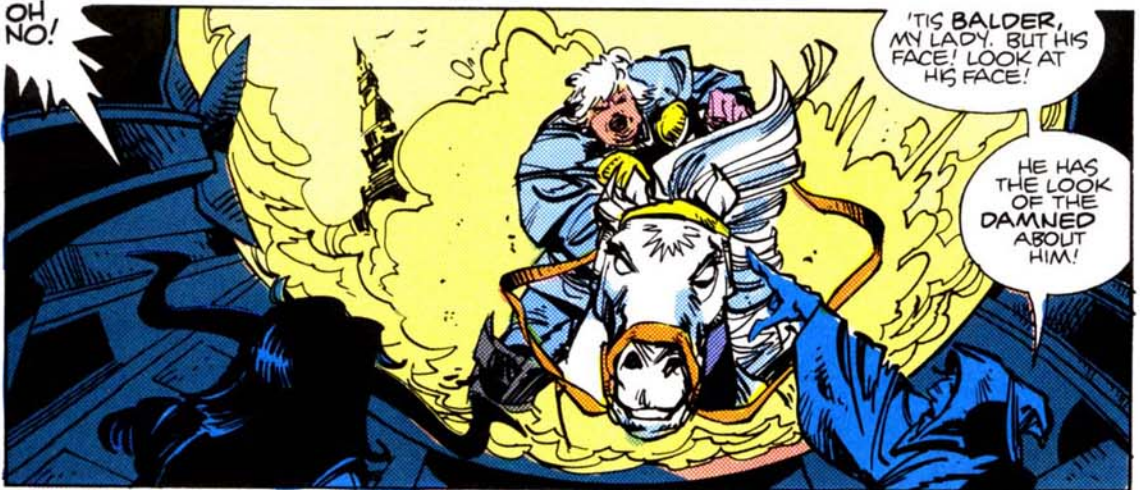
THE ALARM! SOMEONE HAS EMERGED FROM THE MISTS SURROUNDING LOKI'S CASTLE!



OH NO!

'TIS BALDER, MY LADY. BUT HIS FACE! LOOK AT HIS FACE!

HE HAS THE LOOK OF THE DAMNED ABOUT HIM!







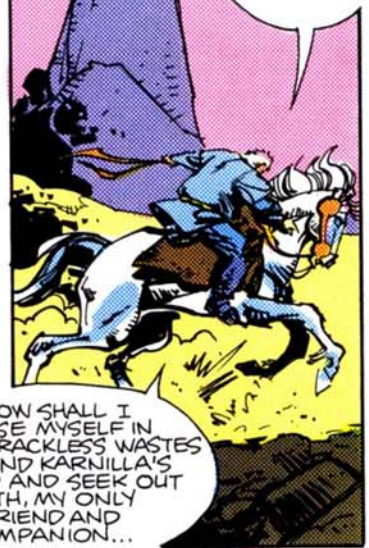
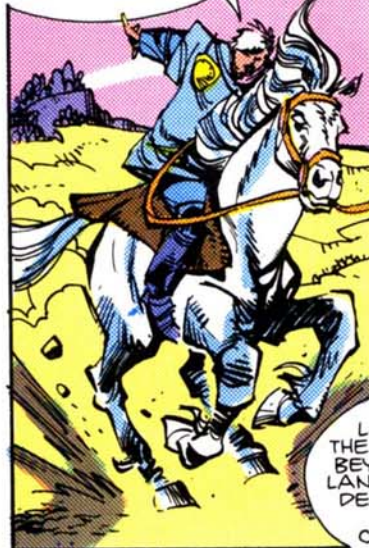
**ARRRGGH!**

RIDE ON! RIDE ON, SILVER-HOOF!

BETTER THAT I HAD DIED AND STAYED IN HEL THAN RETURN TO THIS EXISTENCE WHICH TORTURES ME BEYOND ENDURANCE!

...THAT I MIGHT END THIS AGONY OF LIVING AND REJOIN THE SERRED RANKS OF THE DEAD!

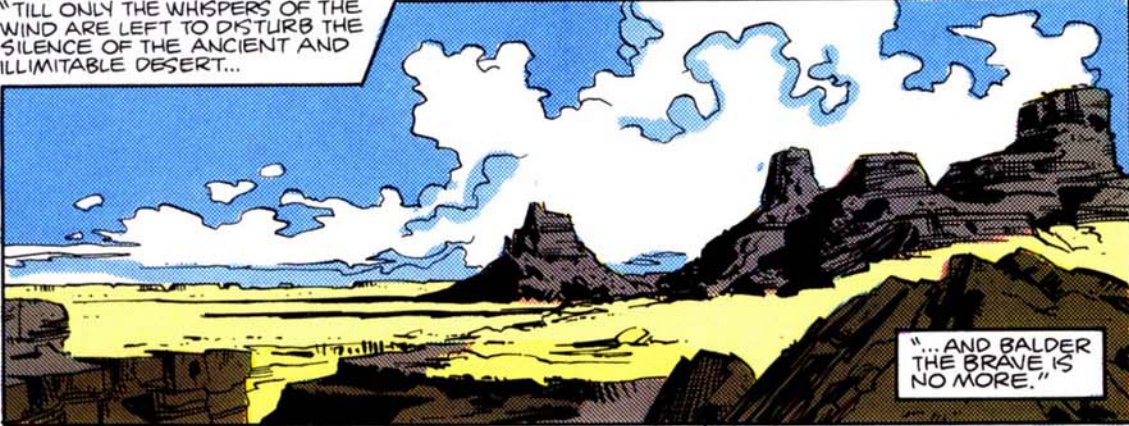
MAY IT BE SOON!



NOW SHALL I LOSE MYSELF IN THE TRACKLESS WASTES BEYOND KARNILLA'S LAND AND SEEK OUT DEATH, MY ONLY FRIEND AND COMPANION...

RIDE ON, SILVER-HOOF! RIDE ON!

"TILL ONLY THE WHISPERS OF THE WIND ARE LEFT TO DISTURB THE SILENCE OF THE ANCIENT AND ILLIMITABLE DESERT...



"... AND BALDER THE BRAVE IS NO MORE."



WHILE BEHIND THE FLEEING BALDER IN THE CASTLE OF LOKI, ALL IS QUIET.



AH, HERE WE ARE.



UNBRUISED, TOO. I MUST SAY THAT I NEVER THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE THE STOMACH FOR IT.



ALAS, POOR BALDER!— I KNEW HIM, HORATIO.

A GOD LACKING ANY SENSE OF HUMOR WHATSOEVER!



AN EXCELLENT JEST. WELL WORTH THE PRICE OF A STIFF NECK FOR A DAY OR SO.



AFTER ALL, THE FIRST THING A SORCEROR OF QUALITY LEARNS IS TO MAKE HIMSELF AS DIFFICULT TO KILL AS POSSIBLE!

AH, BALDER, THY NAME IS LAUGHTER!

next: **DINNER FOR TWO**  
or **THAT WAS NO LADY!**

RETURN WITH US NOW TO MIDGARD... IN WHICH ONE MAN'S JOURNEY ENDS IN DEADLY ECSTASY, AND THE THUNDER GOD ENJOYS A FREE MEAL!