

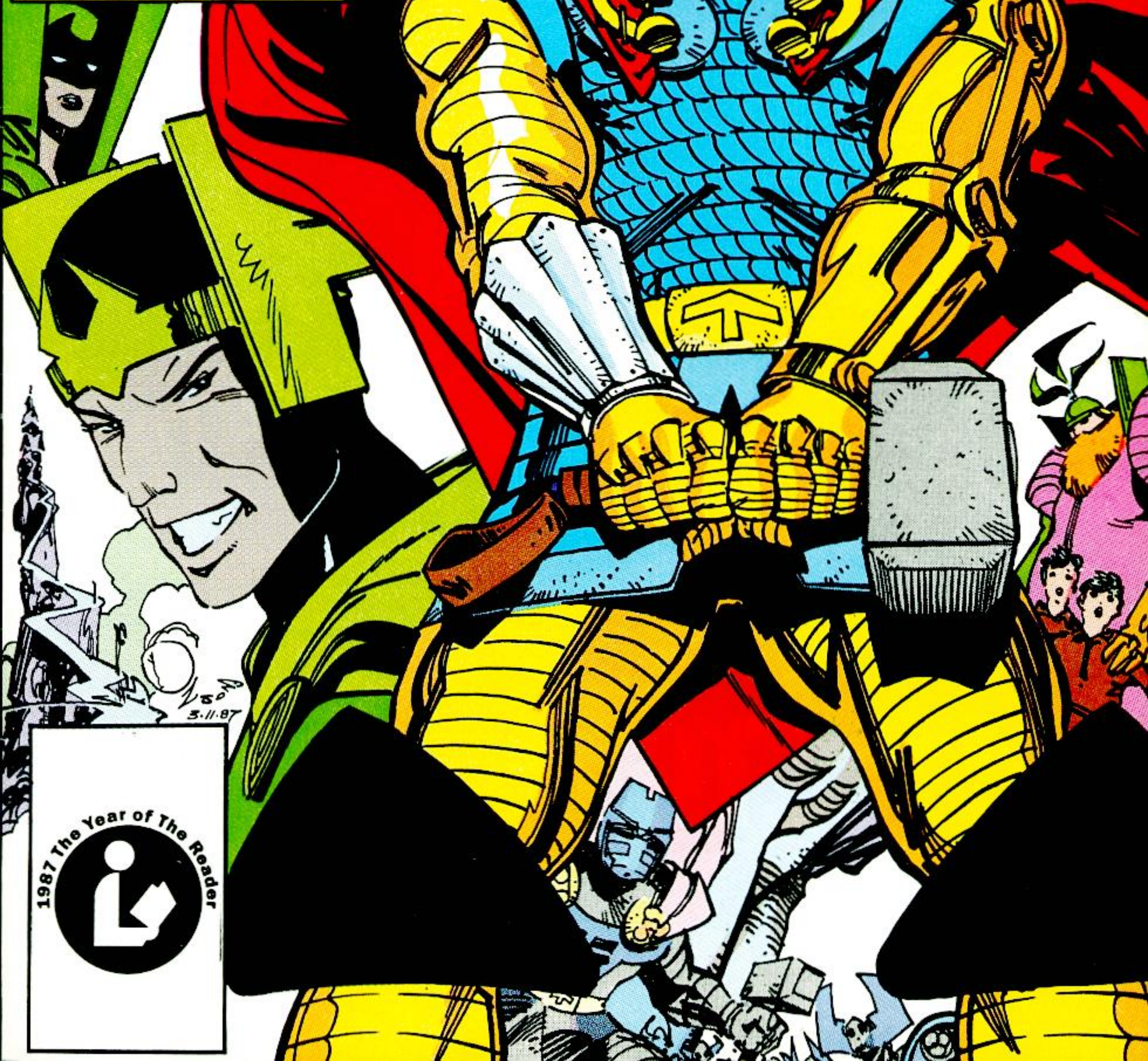


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the mighty THOR

GIANT-SIZED
300TH
ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!



STAN LEE PRESENTS: *the* MIGHTY THOR®

OF ALL THE NINE WORLDS, THERE IS ONE THAT IS SHUNNED BY EVERY LIVING CREATURE. IT IS HEL, THE ABODE OF THE DEAD.

THE RULER OF THAT COLD AND DISMAL REALM IS HELA, GODDESS OF DEATH...

...AND THIS DAY, LOKI LAUFFEYSON IS PAYING HER A VISIT.

IN SPIRIT.

THIS REALLY IS THE MOST DEPRESSING OF KINGDOMS, HELA.

MAYHAP YOU SHOULD ACQUIRE AN INTERIOR DECORATOR.

I'M GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT SOME MORTALS HAVE QUITE THE GIFT.

A JEST FOR EVERY OCCASION, FATHER?

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU LAUGHED AT THOR AND HAD TO EAT THAT LAUGHTER A MOMENT LATER?

HOW MANY CENTURIES HAVE YOU TRIED TO HUMBLE HIM? HUMILIATE HIM? EVEN SLAY HIM?

ALWAYS THE SON OF ODIN HAS ELUDED YOU.

HE MAY NOT HAVE YOUR SHARP TONGUE, NOR YOUR QUICK WITS, BUT HE HAS EVER HAD THE VICTORY.

NO INDEED, FATHER. I HAVE ASKED YOU HERE FOR A FAR DIFFERENT REASON.

I WISH YOU TO WITNESS MY FINAL VICTORY OVER YOUR STEP-BROTHER.

TODAY, THOR SHALL BECOME HELA'S. AND THE VICTORY YOU HAVE NEVER HAD SHALL BE MINE!

I HAVE TRAVELLED ALONG, UNCOMFORTABLE WAY TO BE HERE, CHIL.

I HOPE IT HAS NOT BEEN FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF LISTENING TO A CATALOGUE OF MY DEFICIENCIES.

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JOURNEY INTO

MYSTERY

THE GATES OF DEATH
ARE GUARDED BY
THE HEL-HOUND,
GARM...

CHAINED TO THE LIVING
ROCK BESIDE THE OPEN-
ING, HE PROWLS RELENT-
LESSLY BEFORE THE
MOUTH OF HEL.

HE DOES NOT HINDER
THE ENTRANCE OF
WAYFARERS; HE PRO-
HIBITS THEIR
ESCAPE.

BUT AS THIS NEW STRANGER
APPROACHES, THE HACKLES ON
GARM'S BACK BEGIN TO RISE
AND A WARNING SNARL ISSUES
FROM HIS THROAT.

FOR THIS NEW VISITANT
IS NO DEAD SPIRIT
SWATHED IN THE EX-
HALATIONS OF COR-
RUPTION, BUT A
LIVING THING...

... AND SUCH ARE
NOT PERMITTED
IN HEL.

WHO DARES
TO STAND BEFORE
THE GATES OF HEL
STILL WARM WITH
THE BREATH OF LIFE?

STAND
CLOSER,
LITTLE ONE,
AND GARM
SHALL SPEED
THEE ON
THY WAY INTO
THE ARMS
OF HEL!

WRITING
WALTER
SIMONSON

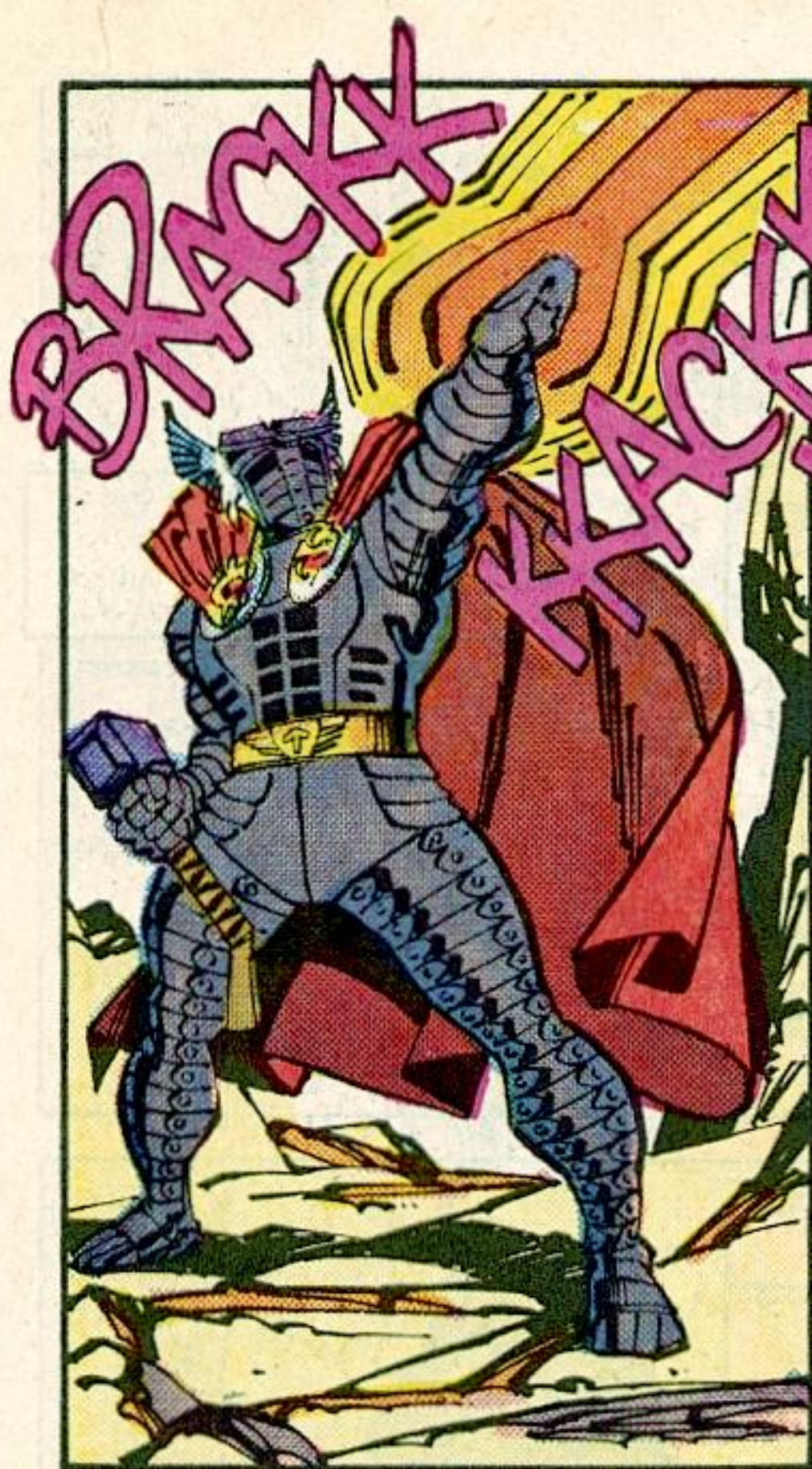
ILLUSTRATING
SAL
BUSCETA

LETTERING
JOHN
WORKMAN

COLORING
MAX
SCHEELE

EDITING
RALPH
MACCHIO

EDITING IN CHIEF
JIM
SHOOTER



FROM THE ENTRANCE OF HEL TO THE ACTUAL BORDERS OF THAT CHEERLESS LAND IS A JOURNEY OF NINE DAYS' TIME.



THE BOR R OF HEL IS
THE RIVE GJOLL ...

... AND HER FRIGID AND
TURBULENT WATERS ARE
SPANNED BY THE GREAT
BRIDGE, GJALLERBRU.

AT THE MOUTH OF THE BRIDGE
STANDS MODGUD, SILENT
SERVITOR OF HELA WHO
GREETES ALL WANDERERS AND
DIRECTS THEM ON THEIR WAY...

DWRACODDUMM!

... AND THENCEFORTH, THEY ARE
LOST FOREVER TO THE LAND OF
THE LIVING.

THE DEAD HOLD
NO TERRORS
FOR HER.

THERE IS
NOTHING
SHE HAS
NOT SEEN.

THERE IS NO
TRAVELER SHE
DOES NOT PRO-
CLAIM.

THIS DAY, THE
TRAVELER WILL
ENTER HEL UN-
HERALDED.

BUT AS THE SOUND OF HEAVY FOOTSTEPS ECHOES THROUGH THE GJALLERBRU...

...IN FAR-OFF ASGARD...

AS WE LOOKED OUT FROM ODIN'S HIGH SEAT...

...WE SAW THE FROST GIANTS OF JOTUNHEIM APPROACHING OUR BORDERS.

AND UTGARD-LOKI, WHO SEEKS DOMINION OVER US ALL, LEADS THEM.*

*ALL LAST ISSUE, CONTINUITY BUFFS --RALF!

I SEE A SILENT AND UNTRUSTWORTHY DARK ELF...

...A FEW CHILDREN, A NOBLE BUT WEAKENED RULER, AND AN AGED THOUGH DOUGHTY WARRIOR...

THE MOMENT OF ASGARD'S GREATEST CRISIS IS UPON US.

BRAVE BALDER, WHAT CAN BE DONE?

THE HOSTS OF ASGARD LIE STRICKEN BY A SICKNESS THAT HAS FELLE THEM SO THEY BE LIKE UNTO STONE STATUES.

AND ONLY WE FEW REMAIN ALIVE!

UHHH...!

BALDER!

BE EASY, VOL-STAGG. KURSE HAS ME.

WE MAY BE ALIVE, BUT I, AT LEAST, AM NOT FULLY RECOVERED.

SO KURSE SHALL BE MY LIMBS TILL MINE OWN ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO BEAR ME.

WE MUST AWAY TO HOME TO DECIDE WHAT WE SHOULD DO.

DO? DO? WHAT CAN WE DO?

...STANDING ALONE AGAINST A HORDE OF MADDED GIANTS!

AND OUR MIGHTIEST WARRIOR, THOR, LOST FROM ASGARD, PERHAPS FOREVER!

"FORTUNATE INDEED WAS ODIN NOT TO LIVE TO SEE THIS DAY WHEN THE FALL OF HIS GREAT REALM WILL BE ENCOMPASSED!"

"WE ARE DOOMED."

AND FAR AWAY IN DEEPEST HEL...

...DOOM INDEED HAS COME A-CALLING.

AT LAST



THOR IS
HERE...

AND NOT
EVEN HIS
NEWLY-FORGED
SUIT OF ARMOR
SHALL SAVE
HIM NOW.

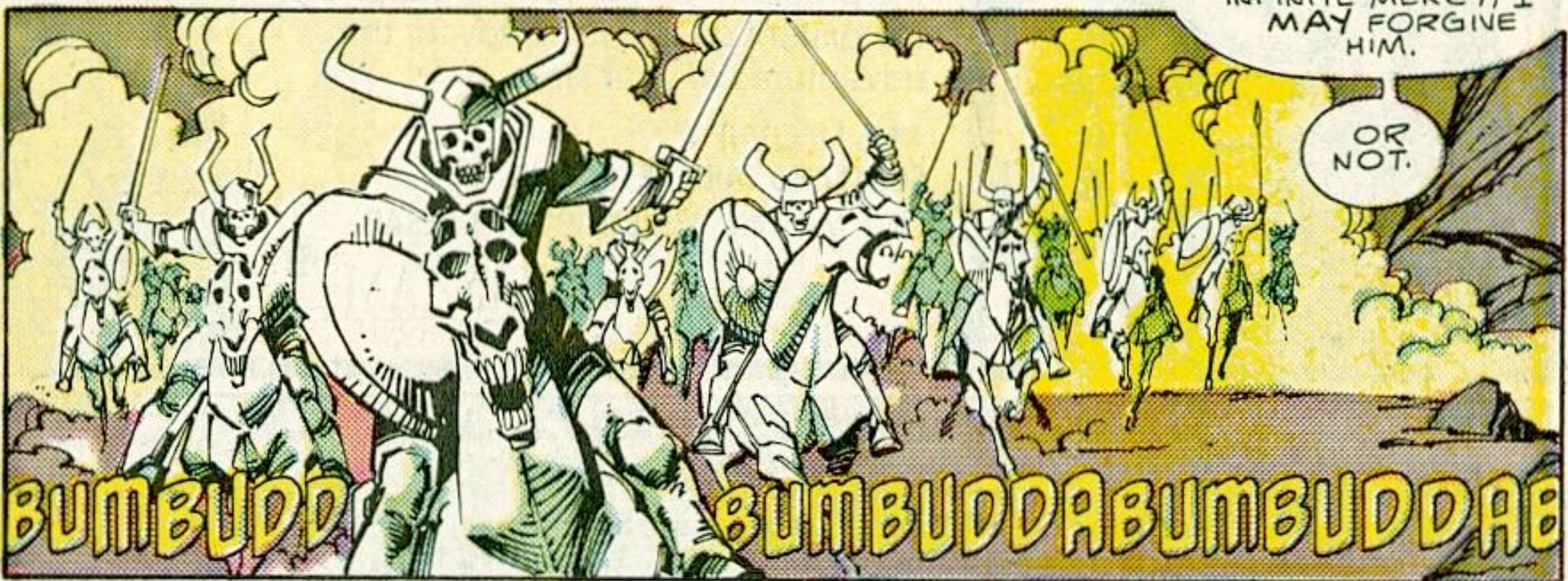


NO?
I HAVE PREPARED
A SUITABLE
RECEPTION,
FATHER!

HIS ARMOR SHALL BE
STRIPPED FROM HIM AND
HIS BODY SET NAKED IN
THE DUST BEFORE
MINE EYES!

THEN SHALL HE
GROVEL AT MY FEET,
AND PERHAPS IN MY
INFINITE MERCY, I
MAY FORGIVE
HIM.

OR
NOT.



BUMBUDDA

BUMBUDDA BUMBUDDA



SGKRACK
KKK



KKK REELOWW!



BRACKKAAA!

WHRRACCKKK!

INTERESTING.
I SEE THOR
HATH LEARNED
A TRICK OR
TWO SINCE LAST
WE PARTED.

T'WOULD SEEM,
DAUGHTER, THAT
YOUR GUEST HATH
LITTLE RESPECT FOR
THE VALUE OF THE
REAL ESTATE
OF HEL.

WHAT
MOCKERY
IS THIS?!

THOR
CAN NO
MORE THROW
BOLTS OF
SUBNUCLEAR
ENERGY THAN
A MOUNTAIN
CAN DANCE!

YET I SHALL MAKE
THE MOUNTAINS OF
HEL DANCE, HELA,
AND YOU SHALL EVER
REGRET YOU TOOK
MY NAME IN VAIN.

YOU
SPEAK IN
RIDDLES!
I SEE
NOT THOR,
BUT ODIN
DESTROYER,
LONG SINCE
MELTED
INTO
SLAG!

WHO
ARE YOU
WITHIN
THAT TO
DARE
TROUBLE
THE
REALM OF
HELA?

DO
YOU NOT
RECOGNIZE
THE TOKEN
I CARRY,
HELA?

NAY!
IT
CANNOT
BE!

THE
DESTROYER
I WAS;
THOR I
AM!

IN LIFE
I BORE THIS
HAMMER; IN THIS
LAND, I WIELD IT
AGAINST DEATH!
I HAVE COME FOR
MY BODY'S SAKE!

THOR! MY STEP-
BROTHER! NOW DO
I LOVE THEE
FOREVER!

DO YOU
STILL NOT
SEE, MY
DAUGH-
TER?

THIS IS THOR'S
TRUE GIFT!
NOT ONLY IS
HE THE
GREATEST
WARRIOR IN ALL
THE NINE
WORLDS, BUT
ALSO THE
LUCKIEST!

AND HIS
LUCK CARRIES
HIM BEYOND
THE PALTRY LIMITS
OF THE GODS INTO
THE REALM OF THE
FATES ETERNAL!

NAY, EVEN THE
FATES WOULD FARE NO
BETTER FOR HE SHOULD
CUT THEIR THREADS AND
BIND THEM BEFORE THEY
KNEW HE WAS ABOUT!

BE THOU
SILENT,
LOKI!

*LAST ISH--R

WELL DO I KNOW
THAT ONLY YOU COULD
HAVE LEFT ME IN TORMENT
BENEATH THE DESTROYER'S
PITILESS HANDS!*

BUT IT
IS WITHIN
MY POWER NOW
TO DESTROY EVEN
SPIRIT-SELVES!

MAY THE LUCK OF THE
GODS BE WITH YOU, HELA!
PARTICULARLY
MY LUCK!

新连载!

WHREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

FOR
MINE IS
THE POWER
OF THE GOD
OF THUNDER!

AND THE
POWER OF
GREAT ODIN WHO
MADE THE
DESTROYER!

POWER
UNVANQUISH-
ABLE! EVEN
BY DEATH
HERSELF!

AND AS THE
HILLTOPS
OF HEL
BEGIN TO
DANCE...

...AND THE
ALLIES OF
ASGARD
ARE NO
MORE.

KARNILLA'S
REALM WAS
DESTROYED
BY THESE
SELF-SAME
GIANTS*...

...NOR IS
THERE
TIME TO
SUMMON
OTHER
AID.

HOW SHALL WE
DEFEND A
KINGDOM OF
STONE?

THE WARRIORS
OF ASGARD LIE
LIKE FROZEN IDOLS
BESIDE THEIR POSTS.

I DO NOT
KNOW, BALDER,
BUT THIS I
UNDERSTAND--

* IN THE BALDER
THE BRAVE
LIMITED SERIES

I HAVE
LIVED
TOO LONG TO
DIE A STRAW
DEATH IN SOME
FOREIGN CLIME.

WELL SAID, MY
FRIEND, BUT SHALL
WE WISH SUCH A
FATE UPON OUR
CHILDREN?

SHOULD
WE NOT
PERHAPS SEE IF
THERE IS SOME--?

KRRRR!!
SCHKRASHH!!

'TWOULD
APPEAR
THE TIME
OF DEBATE
IS OVER.

BALDER?

I FEAR
THE GIANTS
HAVE ARRIVED
EARLY, HILDY.

YOU CHILDREN STAY
HERE WITH KURSE. HE
WILL KEEP YOU FROM
HARM.

BUT WE
WANT TO
FIGHT,
TOO!



MY LORD BALDER,
A QUIET WORD
WITH YOU.

KURSE IS A DARK
ELF! A SWORN EN-
EMY OF ASGARD WHO
TRIED TO SLAY THE
MIGHTY THOR!

SURELY
'TIS FOLLY
TO LEAVE
THE CHILDREN
IN HIS HANDS!



AN ENEMY HE
ONCE WAS, MY
FRIEND, WHO
AIDED OUR
CHILDREN.*

AND THOSE
WHO BEFRIEND
THE CHILDREN
ARE EVER
ASGARD'S
FRIENDS.



*A COUPLE OF ISSUES BACK--R.



BESIDES,
WE HAVE NO
CHOICE.

IN THIS HOUR
OF ASGARD'S
DEEPEST NEED,
MAYHAP HER
FORMER ENEMY
IS HER ONLY
FRIEND.

OUT THE BACK
DOOR QUICKLY,
VOLSTAGG, AND
CIRCLE BEHIND
OUR FOES!

SCOUT OUT
THEIR NUMBERS
AND THEIR
POSITIONS AND
RETURN TO
MEET ME HERE.

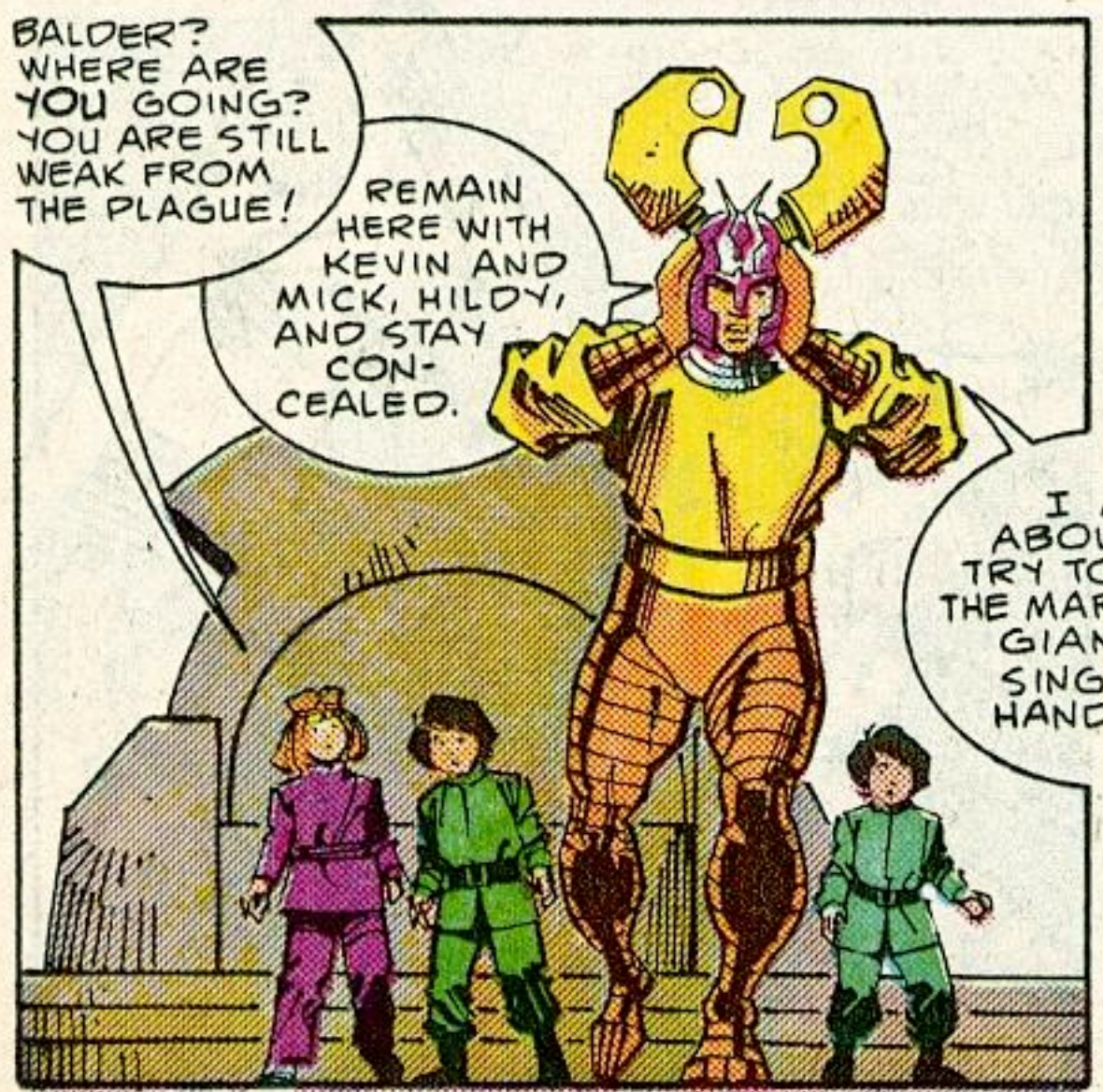


BALDER?
WHERE ARE
YOU GOING?
YOU ARE STILL
WEAK FROM
THE PLAGUE!

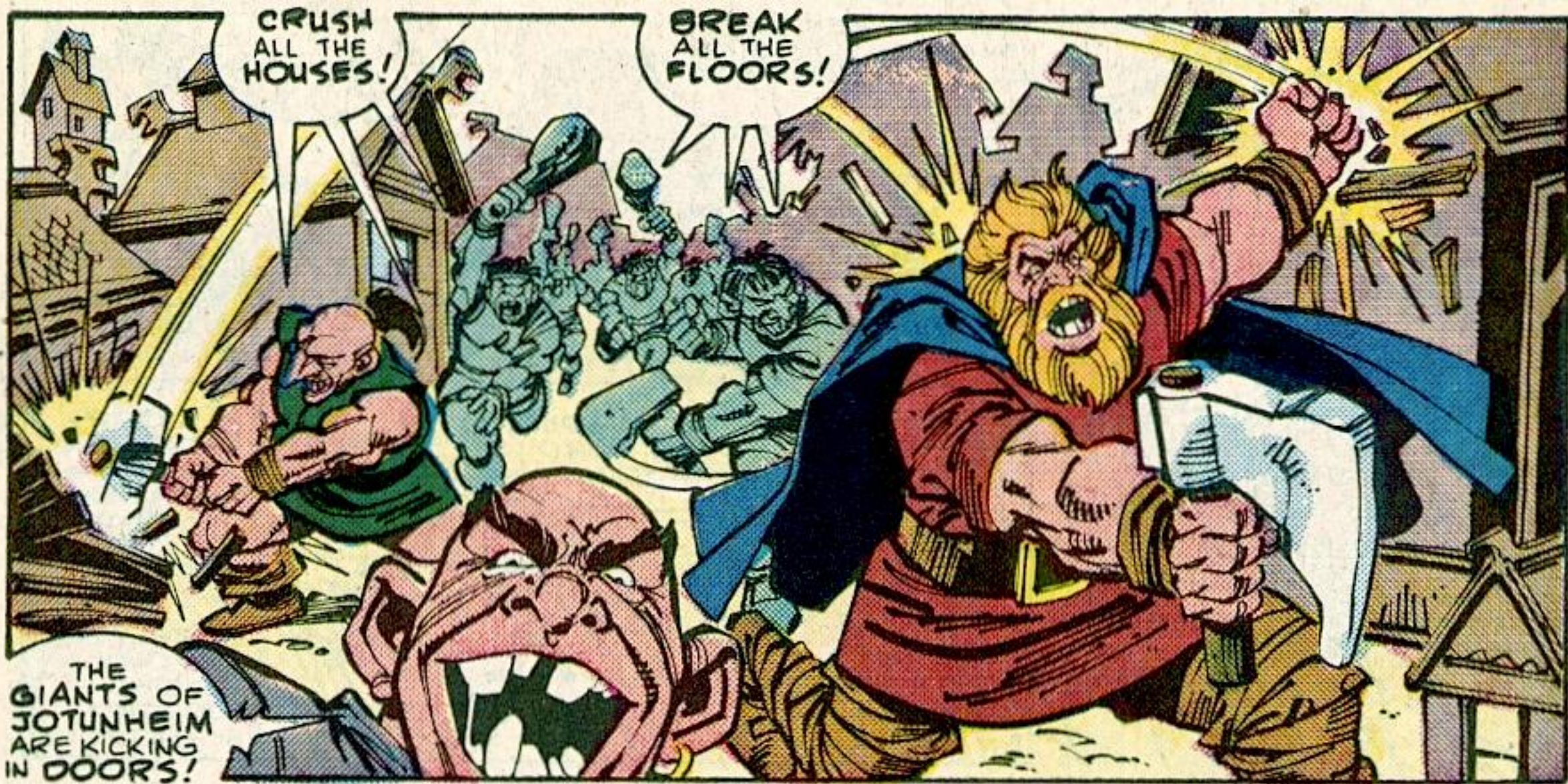
REMAIN
HERE WITH
KEVIN AND
MICK, HILDY,
AND STAY
CON-
CEALED.

I AM
ABOUT TO
TRY TO STOP
THE MARAUDING
GIANTS...
SINGLE-
HANDED!

BUT SAVE
THINE
APPLAUSE
FOR
LATER.



...BALDER!



CRUSH
ALL THE
HOUSES!

BREAK
ALL THE
FLOORS!

THE
GIANTS OF
JOTUNHEIM
ARE KICKING
IN DOORS!



THE DESTRUCTION
OF ASGARD HAS
ALREADY
BEGUN!

AND A
SINGLE
WARRIOR
WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO HALT
THEIR RAMPAGE!

BUT A
SINGLE ACT MAY
SUFFICE IF THE
FATES ARE WITH US!

WELL MET, COURAGEOUS
WARRIORS! THE SIGHT
OF SO MUCH FORTI-
TUDE ATTACKING
EMPTY DWELLINGS IS
AWE-INSPIRING
INDEED!

TRULY, THE GIANTS
OF UTGARD-LOKI
ARE FIGHTERS
WITHOUT PEER!



WHO DARES
TO MOCK THE
SONS OF YMIR--
BALDER!!

BALDER
THE
BRAVE!



HE'S NOT
SICK!

HE WHOSE
VERY BODY
GLOWS LIKE
THE SUN AND
NEARLY
DESTROYED
US IN
JOTUN-
HEIM!*

FLEE!
BEFORE HE
SLAYS US!

*IN HIS LIMITED
SERIES--R.



ALL WILL BE LOST IN A
MOMENT IF I CANNOT
UNDO THIS ROUT!

NOW WHILST
HIS BACK IS
TURNED...

...DEATH TO
BALDER!



UTGARD-LOKI'S AXE!

KRAACK!



WHA--?

DO YOU SEE, YOU COWARDS? BALDER HATH NOT BEGUN TO GLOW!

METHINKS HE CANNOT! PERHAPS THE PLAGUE HATH WEAKENED HIM AFTER ALL!

THE VICTORY IS STILL OURS! FORWARD!

AND SLAY THE SCUM!

ALAS THAT UTGARD-LOKI HATH SEEN THROUGH MY BLUFF!



NOW SHALL BALDER'S WARRIOR METTLE BE TRULY TESTED AS NEVER BEFORE!



AND AT THAT SELFSAME INSTANT, IN FAR DISTANT HEL...

HEAR ME, HELA!



RESTORE MY BODY AND, BY MY WILL, THE DESTROYER SHALL TURN HIS FACE AND THY REALM SHALL BE SPARED.

DENY ME AND AS SURELY AS THE WOLF FOLLOWS THE SUN, WE SHALL DESTROY YOU AND ALL YOUR KINGDOM!

YOUR BODY, THOR, LIES BENEATH MY CURSE FOR WHAT YOU DID TO ME.

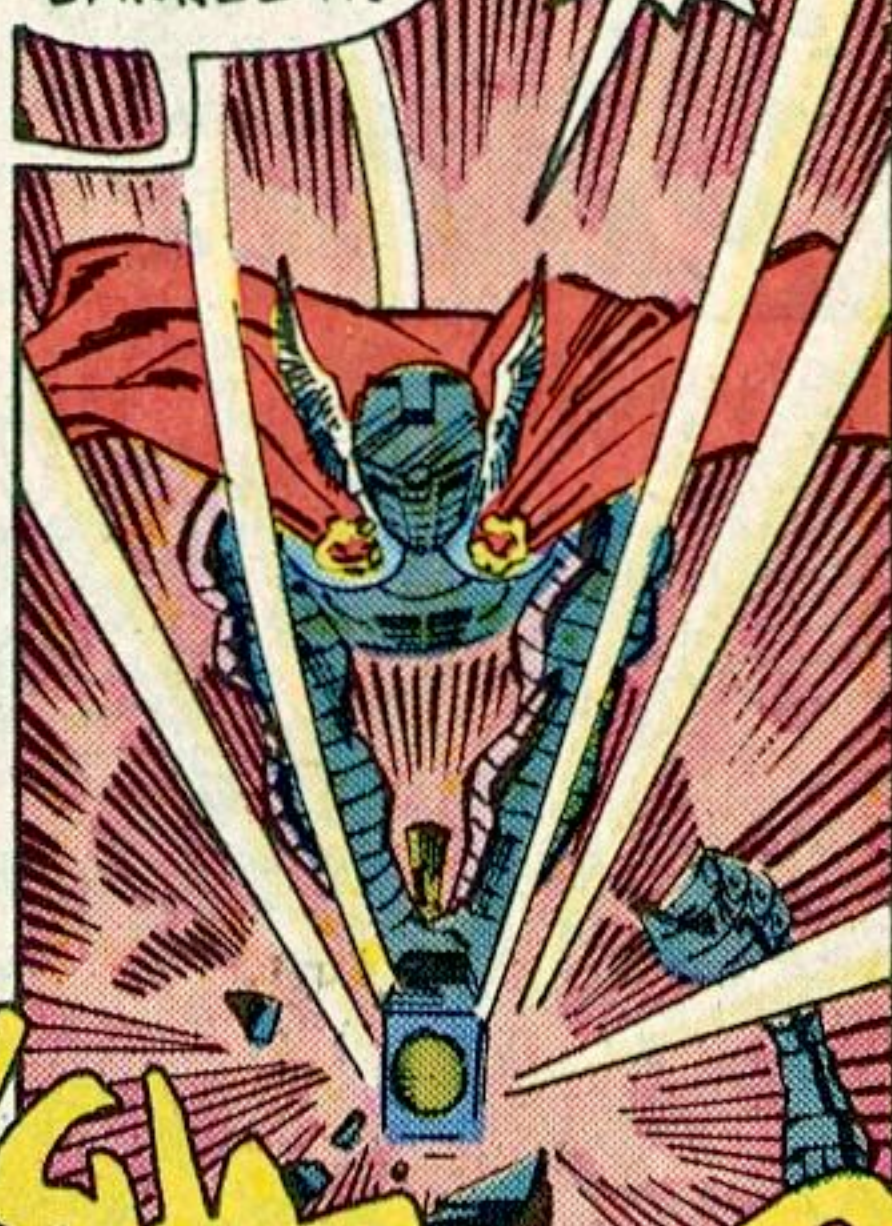


YOU SHALL NEVER DIE, NOR SHALL YOU HEAL UNTIL YOU BEND YOUR KNEE TO ME AND BEG MY FORGIVENESS FOR THE WRONGS YOU DID ME.*

YOU WOULDN'T DARE! TO SLAY ME IS TO DESTROY THE BALANCE OF THE NINE WORLDS!

IF YOUR BODY NOW LIES SOMEWHERE, BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR, YOU HAVE EARNED IT!

SO BE IT!



KSHATTER!

*THERE ARE VARIOUS OPINIONS ABOUT THAT--SEE THOR 362--R.

YOU SEEK TO ALARM ME WITH THIS DISPLAY OF POWER? TO FRIGHTEN HELA INTO CONCEDED DEFEAT!

BUT IN THIS REALM, MINE IS THE POWER SUPREME!

THE MYTH OF THE INVINCIBLE DESTROYER ENDS HERE!

DO THY WORST, LICHES OF THE CLAY!

DEATH HOLDS NO TERRORS FOR THOR...

...NOR MAY ALL THE HORDES OF HEL STAY ME IN MY COURSE!

FOR THE DESTROYER IS BEYOND DEATH!

SSCKRAMMM!

THE DESTROYER IS SUPREME!

THWARRRR!

HERE IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, NO ONE IS MIGHTIER THAN THE DESTROYER!

NO ONE! THWRAMMM!

WHAT NEED HAVE I FOR A MERE HAMMER...

...WHEN THE ENERGIES WITHIN MY FRAME ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DIVIDE EVEN WORLDS IN TWAIN?!

FFWASS!

THE REAL
DEATH HAS
COME TO
HEL!!



MEANWHILE, IN ASGARD...

STAND STILL,
YOU CURSED
JUMPING
JACK!

STAND
STILL AND
DIE!



KURSE DIDN'T MOVE
AT ALL WHEN WE
SNUCK OUT THE
BACK DOOR!



DO YOU THINK
HE EVEN KNOWS
WE'RE GONE?

LOOK!
BALDER GOT
A COUPLE OF
THE GIANTS TO
HIT EACH
OTHER!



MISERABLE
TRICK-
STER!

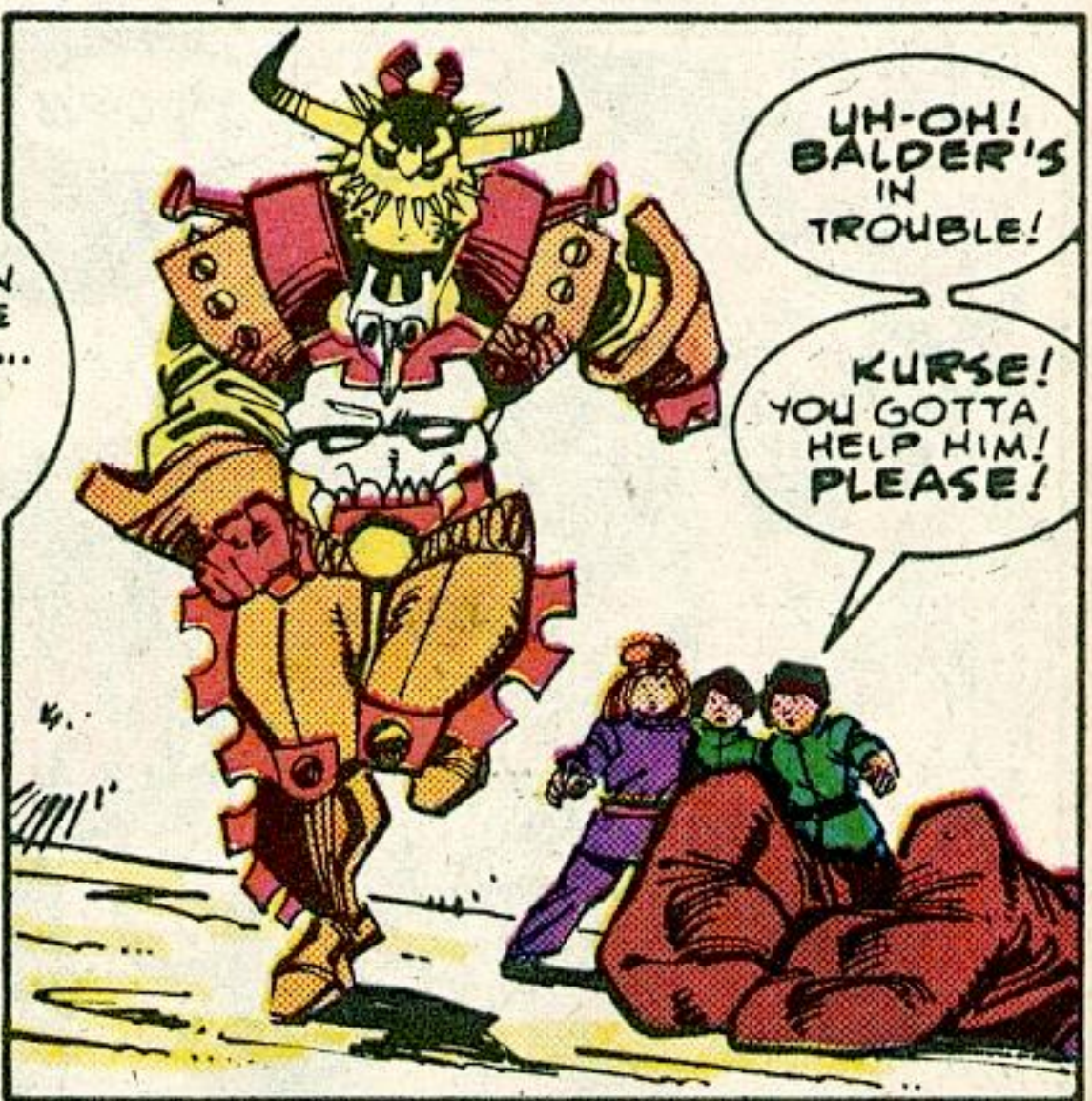
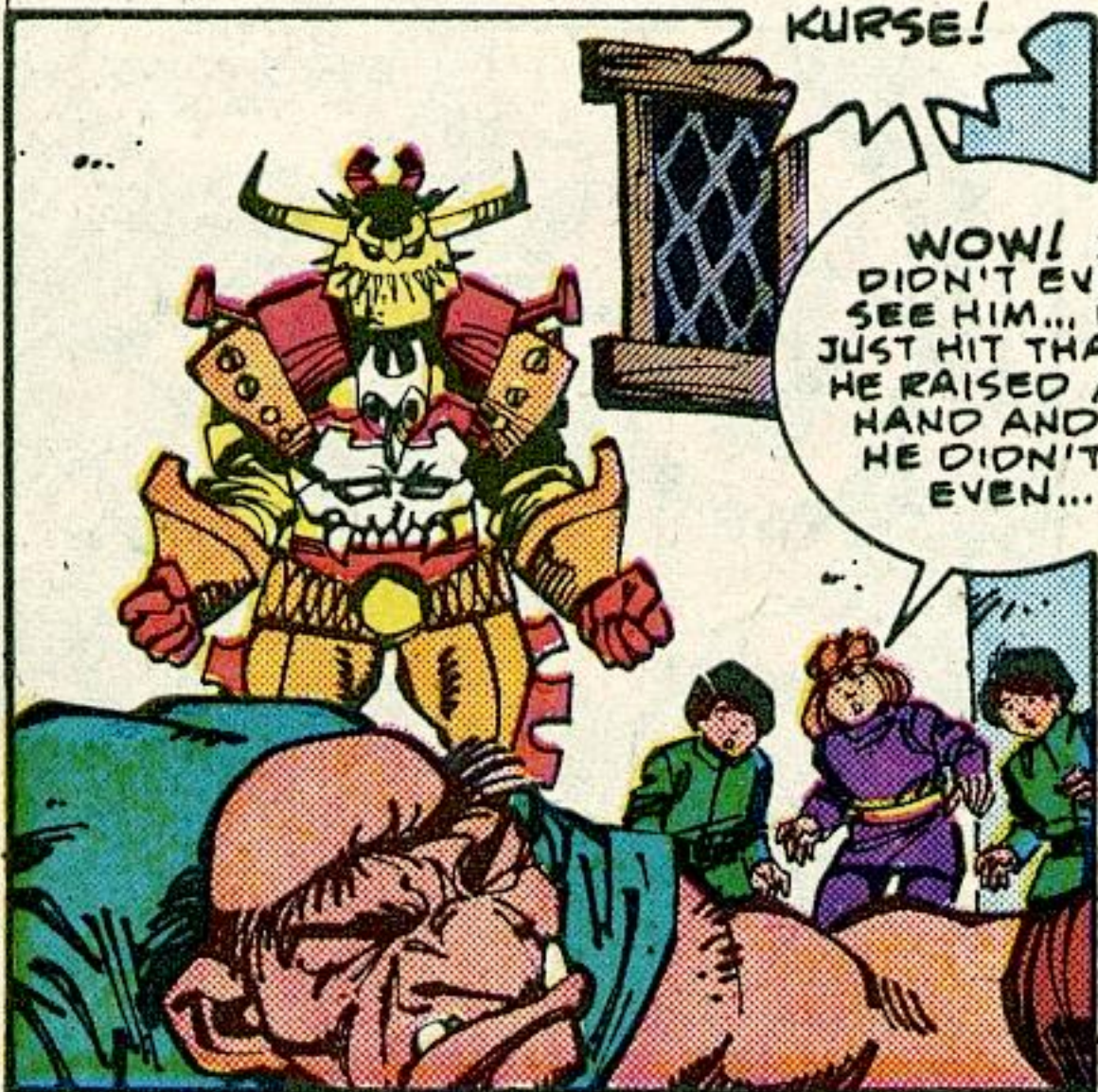
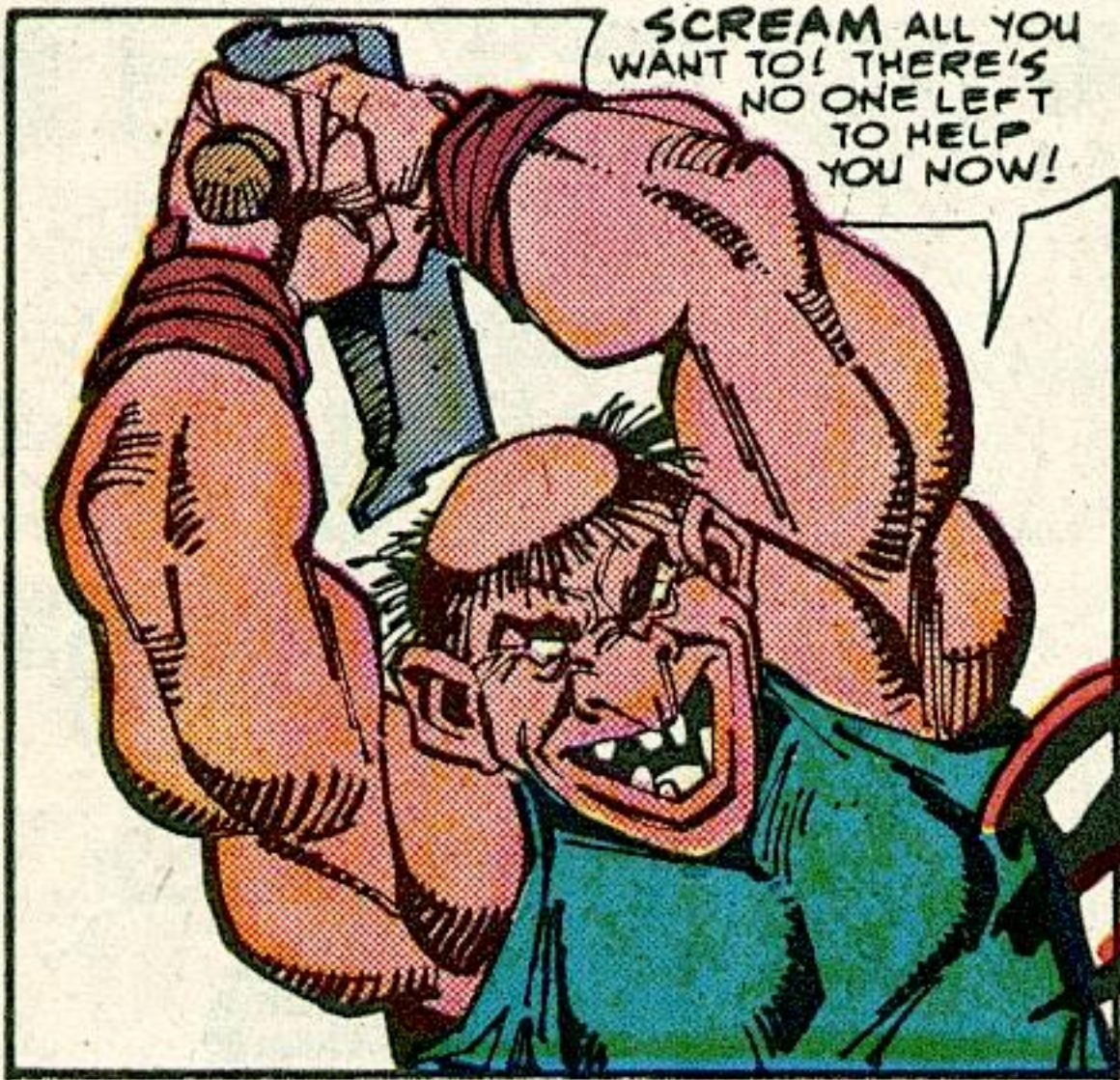
COME
BACK
HERE!

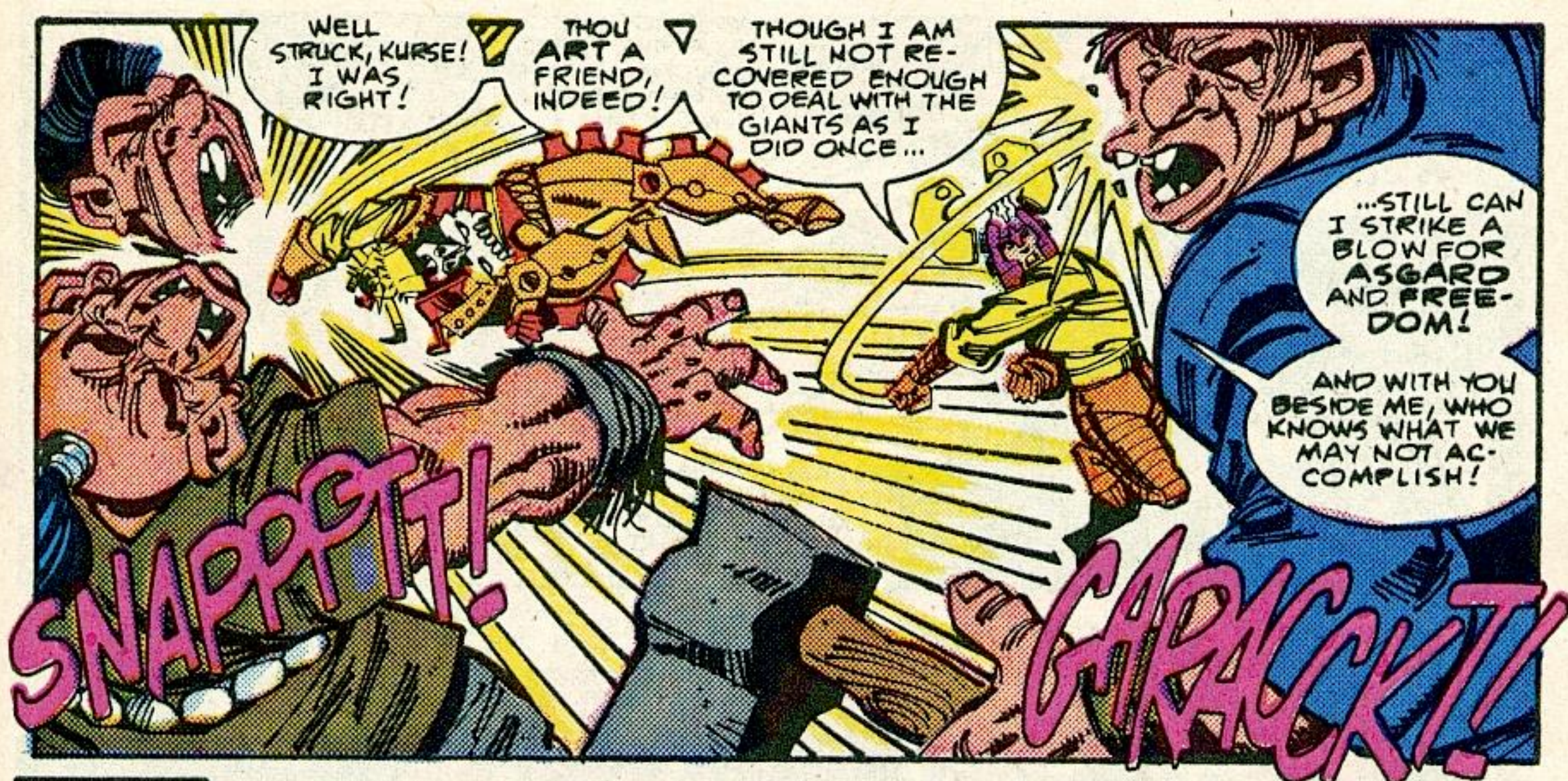
I'LL--!!



BY THE
EYEBROWS
OF YMIR!

UGHH!





WELL
STRUCK, KURSE!
I WAS
RIGHT!

THOU
ART A
FRIEND,
INDEED!

THOUGH I AM
STILL NOT RE-
COVERED ENOUGH
TO DEAL WITH THE
GIANTS AS I
DID ONCE...

...STILL CAN
I STRIKE A
BLOW FOR
ASGARD
AND FREE-
DOM!

AND WITH YOU
BESIDE ME, WHO
KNOWS WHAT WE
MAY NOT AC-
COMPLISH!

SNAPPPITT!

GARACK!!

BUT AT THAT
SELF-SAME
MOMENT,
OVER THE
WALLS OF
THE CITY
COME...

REINFORCE-
MENTS! IT'S ABOUT
TIME!

QUICKLY! SLAY
THOSE TWO AND
OUR VICTORY
OVER THE GODS
SHALL BE
ASSURED!

AND AS FRESH
TROOPS BEAR DOWN
UPON BALDER AND
HIS ALLY...



AND THE NOBLE
THOR'S RESTRAIN-
ING SPIRIT HAS
BEEN SUB-
MERGED TO THE
ORIGINAL PUR-
POSE OF ODIN'S
CREATION!

WHILST THOR
WOULD HAVE
SOUGHT HELA'S
SURRENDER, THE
DESTROYER
SEEKS ONLY
HER DEATH...

...NO MATTER
WHAT ITS
EFFECT ON THE
BALANCE OF
THE NINE
WORLDS!

MY WORST
FEARS ARE
REALIZED! IN THE HEAT
OF BATTLE, THE WILL
OF THE DESTROYER
CANNOT BE DENIED!

HAD I NOT
MANAGED
TO EVADE
THAT BOLT OF
ETHERIC PLASMA,
IT WOULD HAVE
SLAIN EVEN ME!

A BOLT OF ELEMENTAL
TRANSMUTATION,
SHATTERING THE
GROUND AND CHANGING
THE VERY ELEMENTS
OF HEL INTO LIFE-
LESS CLAY!

HAD IT TOUCHED
HELA, SHE TOO
WOULD HAVE GONE
THE WAY OF ALL
MORTAL
FLESH!

NO LONGER
IS THIS A
QUESTION OF
HUMILIATING THOR,
BUT OF SURVIVAL!

THUNDER!

THE GAME
IS OVER!

HELA'S BLAST IS NOT YET
GONE WHEN...

TWO BEAMS OF ENERGY
RACE ACROSS THE DIMEN-
SIONAL BARRIERS BE-
TWEEN THE WORLDS!

EVEN FASTER,
PERHAPS, THAN
LIGHT ITSELF
THEY TRAVEL...

...SCORCHING THE
BARRIERS OF
REALITY IN
THEIR PASSING...

I MUST
RELEASE THE
THUNDER GOD
FROM THE CURSE
THAT BINDS HIS
VERY LIFE TO HIS
SHATTERED BODY!

HE
MUST
DIE
THAT
I MAY
LIVE!

...AND BEARING DOWN
UPON THEIR TARGET IN
LESS THAN A HEARTBEAT!

FOR NEAR THE DELAWARE
WATER GAP IN PENNSYL-
VANIA, UNNOTICED AND
ABANDONED IN THE
SHADOW OF THE
MOUNTAINS...

...LIES ALL THAT REMAINS
OF THE MORTAL SHELL
OF THE MIGHTY THOR.

CRASH!



THOR!!!

THE GAME IS OVER INDEED, HELA, AND YOU HAVE LOST!

I HAVE SEALED THE BODY OF THOR IN A CHAMBER OF IMPENETRABLE CRYSTAL...

...THAT ONLY I CAN BREAK.



THIS ARE THOR'S BODY AND SPIRIT PLACED BEYOND YOUR REACH.

AND THUS DOES THE DESTROYER INSURE HIS VICTORY!

BUT THE DESTROYER RESPECTS A FOE WHO HAS DONE SO MUCH IN THE CAUSE OF DESTRUCTION AND I WILL PAY YOU THIS COMPLIMENT,

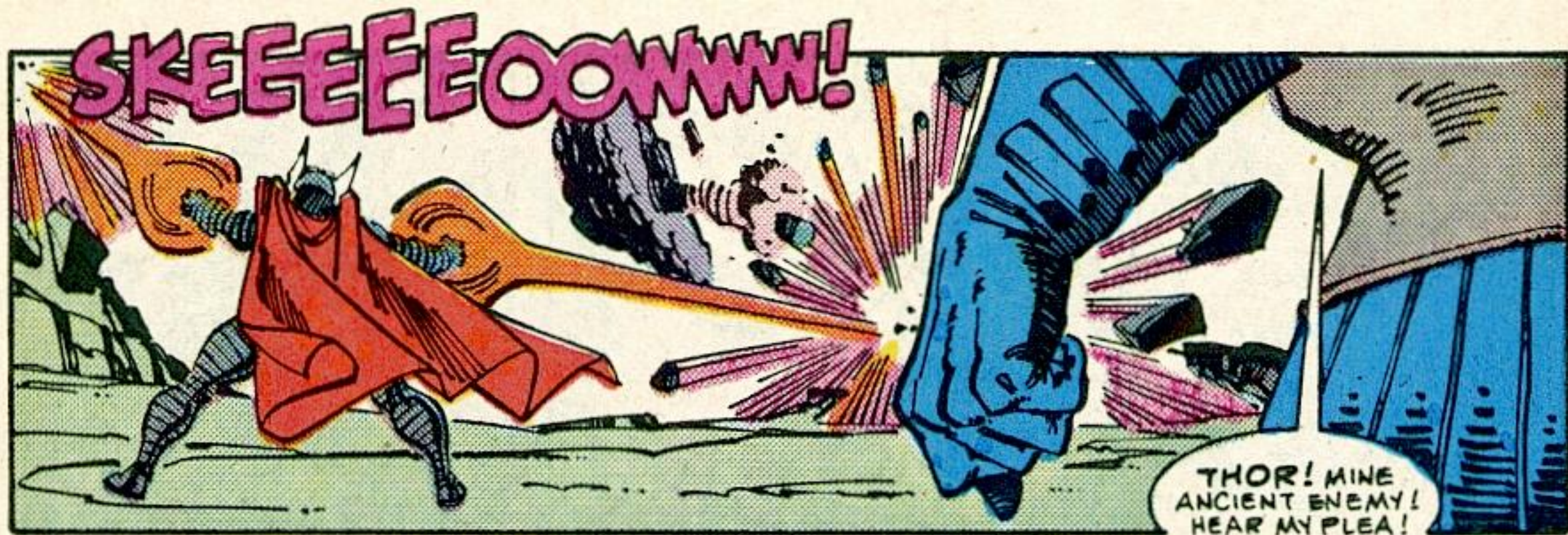
FLAKTH!

YOU MAY LIE THERE AND LIVE A LITTLE LONGER WHILE I COMPLETE THE DESTRUCTION OF THY REALM.

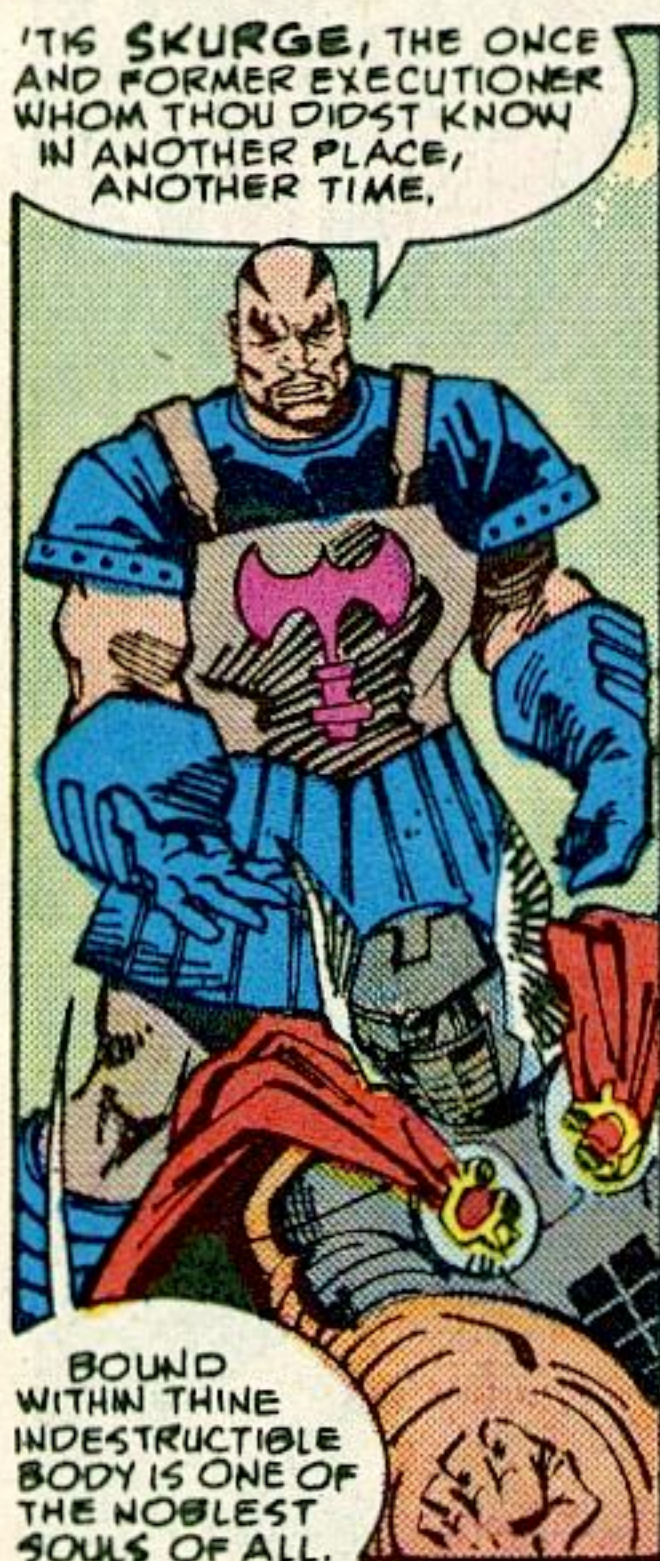
THEN AND ONLY THEN SHALL THE GODDESS OF DEATH HERSELF DIE!

THIS IS MY GIFT TO YOU!





THOR! MINE
ANCIENT ENEMY!
HEAR MY PLEA!



IT'S SKURGE, THE ONCE
AND FORMER EXECUTIONER
WHOM THOU DIDST KNOW
IN ANOTHER PLACE,
ANOTHER TIME,

BOUND
WITHIN THINE
INDESTRUCTIBLE
BODY IS ONE OF
THE NOBLEST
SOULS OF ALL.

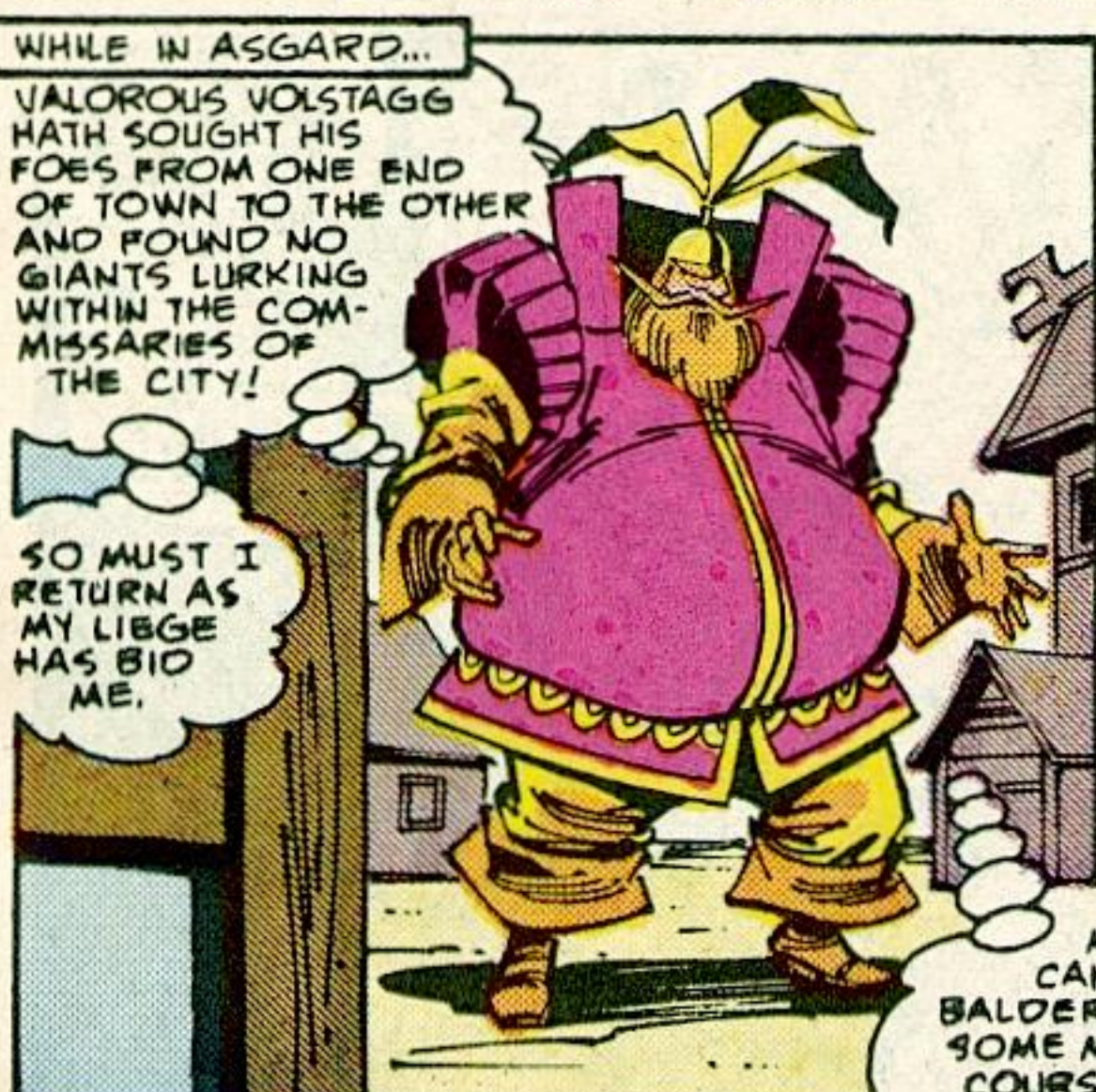


IF ANYWHERE
THERE IS BUT A
TRACE OF THAT
NOBILITY LEFT, LET
IT REACH OUT AND
HALT THIS MAD-
NESS BEFORE
IT IS TOO
LATE.

THOR! MY
FRIEND!

AND FOR
A LONG
MOMENT...

...ALL HEL HOLDS
ITS BREATH.



WHILE IN ASGARD...

VALOROUS VOLSTAGG
HATH SOUGHT HIS
FOES FROM ONE END
OF TOWN TO THE OTHER
AND FOUND NO
GIANTS LURKING
WITHIN THE COM-
MISSARIES OF
THE CITY!

SO MUST I
RETURN AS
MY LIEGE
HAS BID
ME.



BY THE
EYE OF
ODIN!

MAYBE I
CAN PERSUADE
BALDER THE BRAVE TO
SOME MORE PRUDENT
COURSE OF ACTION!

THE
GIANTS! THEY
HAVE TRAPPED
BOTH BALDER
AND KURSE!



EVEN IF VOLSTAGG ATTACKED WITH ALL HIS SPEED, HE COULD SCARCELY REACH THE GIANTS BEFORE THEY SLAY THEM!

WHAT CAN I--?



HA HA! HAHA!

ANOTHER GOOSE FOR THE POT! AND SUCH A PLUMP ONE, TOO!

WUFF! UNHAND ME, RECKLESS VARLET!

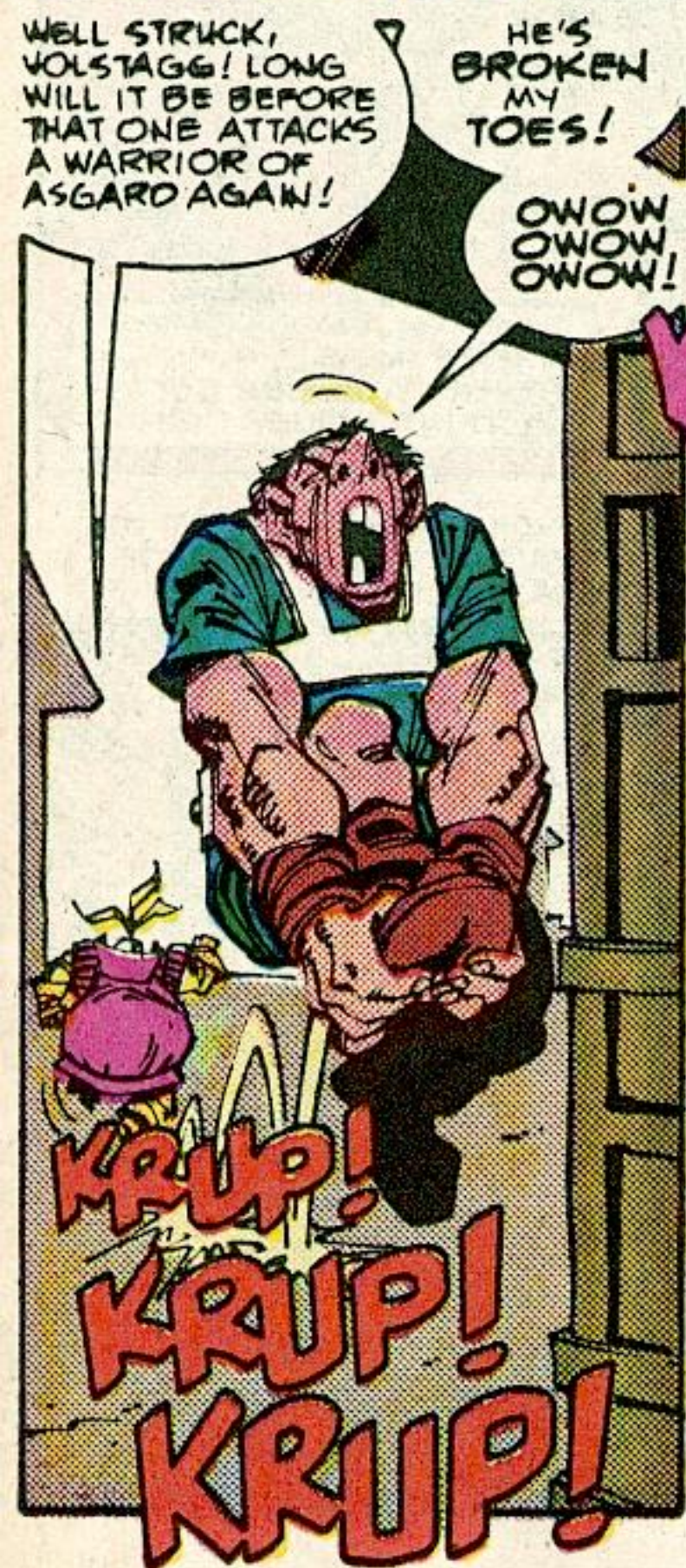
LITTLE YE KNOW THY DEADLY PERIL. UNHAND ME AND I MIGHT STILL FORGIVE THEE!



CEASE SQUIRMING! LITTLE WORM!

CRICKELY BUT THOU ART A HEAVY--OWWWW!!

SNAPP!



WELL STRUCK, VOLSTAGG! LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE THAT ONE ATTACKS A WARRIOR OF ASGARD AGAIN!

HE'S BROKEN MY TOES!

OWOW OWOW OWOW!

KRUP! KRUP! KRUP!

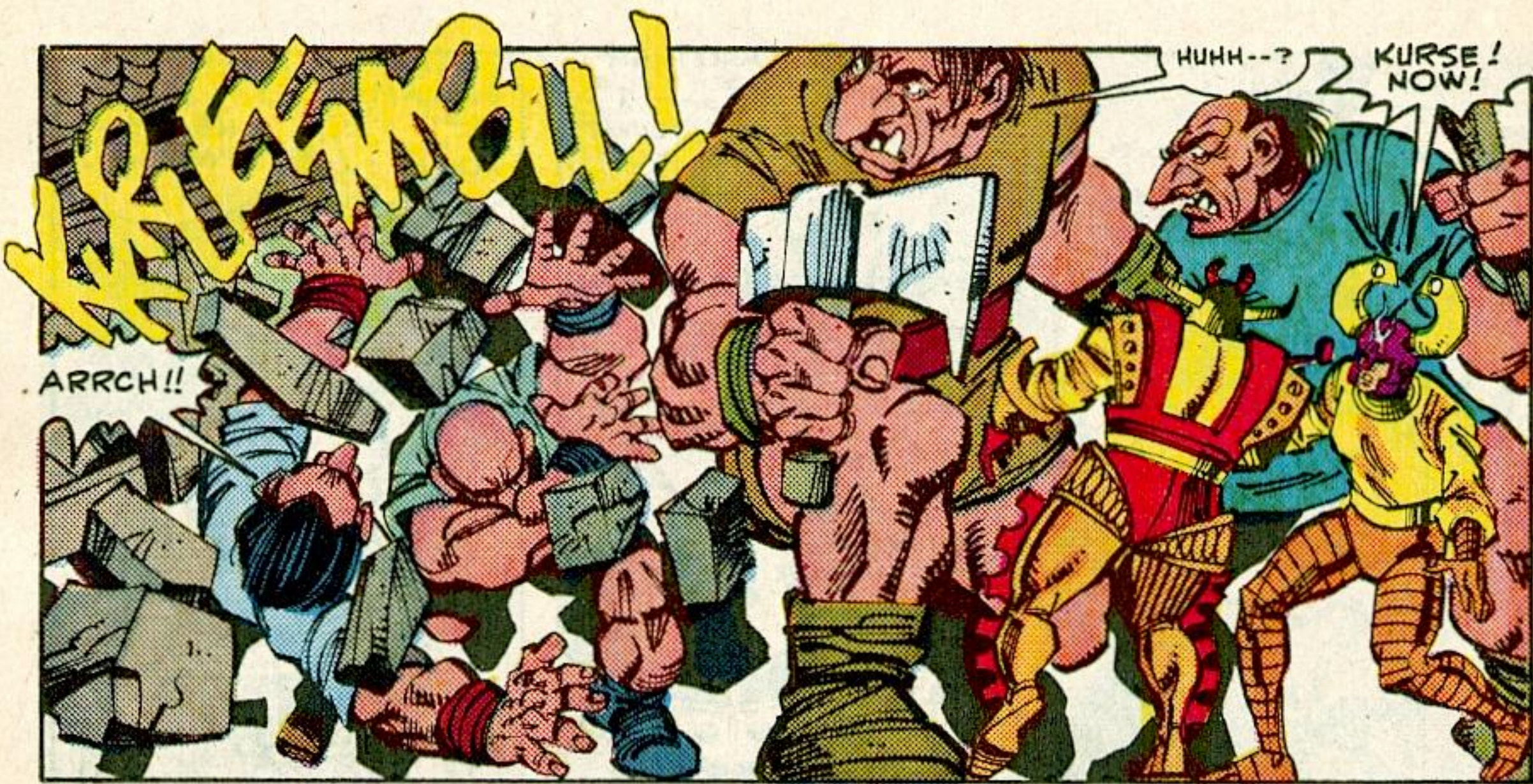


KRERASHH!



WHAT RACKET IS THIS THAT--BEHIND US!!

THE BUILDING TOPPLES!



WELL STRUCK,
KURSE! A BLOW
WORTHY OF THOR
HIMSELF!

IS'T
POSSIBLE
I HAVE
MIS-
JUDGED
THEE?

AND FAR AWAY, SOME-
WHERE IN HEL, AN-
OTHER CALLS HER JUDG-
MENT INTO QUESTION...

THE FEELING
BEGINS TO
RETURN TO
MY LEGS...

...BUT TOO
LATE! THE
DESTROYER
IS UPON
ME!

WOE THAT
EVER I CHAL-
LENGED THOR
AND BROUGHT
US TO THIS
PASS!

BUT NOT A WORD DOES
THE DESTROYER UTTER
AS SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY,
HIS GREAT VISOR BEGINS
TO DESCEND...

...AND THE CRACKLING OF THE AIR ABOUT HIS
HEAD HERALDS THE DEADLY ONSLAUGHT OF
HIS ULTIMATE WEAPON...

...THE DREAD DISINTE-
GRATOR BEAM WHICH
NOTHING THAT EXISTS
CAN WITHSTAND!

BUT IN THAT SPLIT SECOND AS THE VISOR FLASHES UPWARD BEFORE THE TERRIBLE BEAM IS UNLEASHED...



I HAVE ONLY ONE CHANCE!

THE DESTROYER'S OWN INDESTRUCTIBLE CRYSTAL MAY WITHSTAND HIS POWER...

...OR EVEN GRANT ME VICTORY IF THOR'S BODY IS CONSUMED!

AND MAY ODIN FORGIVE ME THAT IT MUST BE SO!



AHHHHH!



THOR'S BODY--FREE AGAIN! THE GAME MAY YET BE MINE!

BUT SO STUNNED AM I, I CAN HARDLY MOVE!

A TOUCH! OH, YOU CRUEL FATES, GRANT ME BUT A SINGLE TOUCH!



WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!

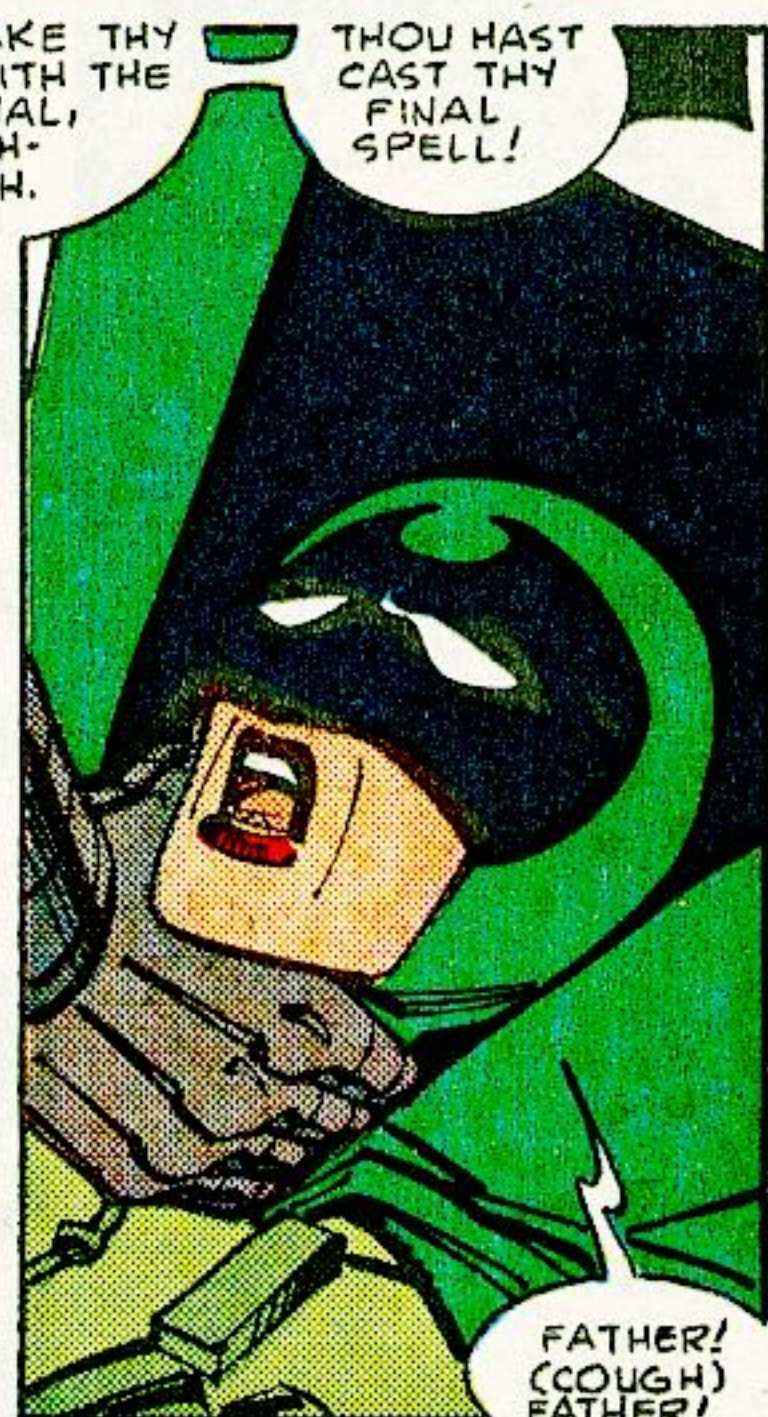
THE MASTER OF DESTRUCTION SALUTES THE MISTRESS OF DEATH.

OWW!



NOW MAKE THY PEACE WITH THE ETERNAL, DEATH-WITCH.

THOU HAST CAST THY FINAL SPELL!



FATHER! (COUGH) FATHER!

YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEAK UP, MY DEAR, I CAN HARDLY HEAR YOU.

HAVE YOU HUMBLERD THOR ENOUGH, DO YOU THINK?

BUT SURELY YOU HAVEN'T CALLED ME HERE TO AID YOU, HELA?

DID YOU NOT SAY I WAS COME ONLY TO WITNESS YOUR FINAL VICTORY?

THE VICTORY I HAVE NEVER HAD?

...FATHER...

ALL TOO TRUE, 'TIS TOUCHING FOR A DAUGHTER TO SHARE HER FATHER'S TRIUMPHS, DON'T YOU THINK?

AND PERHAPS YOU'LL SPEAK LESS DISRESPECTFULLY OF YOUR ELDERS IN THE FUTURE, CHILD.

IF YOU HAVE A FUTURE.

THY FUTURE IS ALL BEHIND THEE NOW, HELA!

AND BETTER SO! FOR THOU HAST NO MORE BRAINS THAN A FLEA!

GAKKKK!

THOR ALIVE AND FIGHTING IN THE NINE WORLDS WAS ALWAYS A GREAT PROVIDER OF NEW BLOOD FOR THEE, HELA!

AND MUCH MORE VALUABLE THAN EVER HE WOULD HAVE BEEN MOPING ABOUT IN HEL AND SHIVERING IN THE DAMP!

THINK OF ALL THOSE FOES OF ETERNAL ASGARD HE HATH SENT HERE IN THINE HONOR!

AND SEE HOW YOU REPAID HIM! TOO LATE FOR THEE NOW!

NO! STILL I HAVE THE STRENGTH TO FREE MYSELF THIS ONE LAST TIME!

AND I MAY YET GIVE THE DICE A FINAL TOSS!

ONE MOMENT OF FREEDOM IS MINE, FOR THE DESTROYER WILL NOT RISK THE BODY OF HIS HOST...



...NOT WHILE I THUS CLASP IT TO MY BREAST!

BUT HE SPOKE TRULY! IN MY BLIND ANGER WITH THOR, I WOULD HAVE CAST AWAY EVERYTHING!

NOW MUST I REDRESS IT ALL, IF I CAN, IN THE SECONDS OF FREEDOM THAT REMAIN!



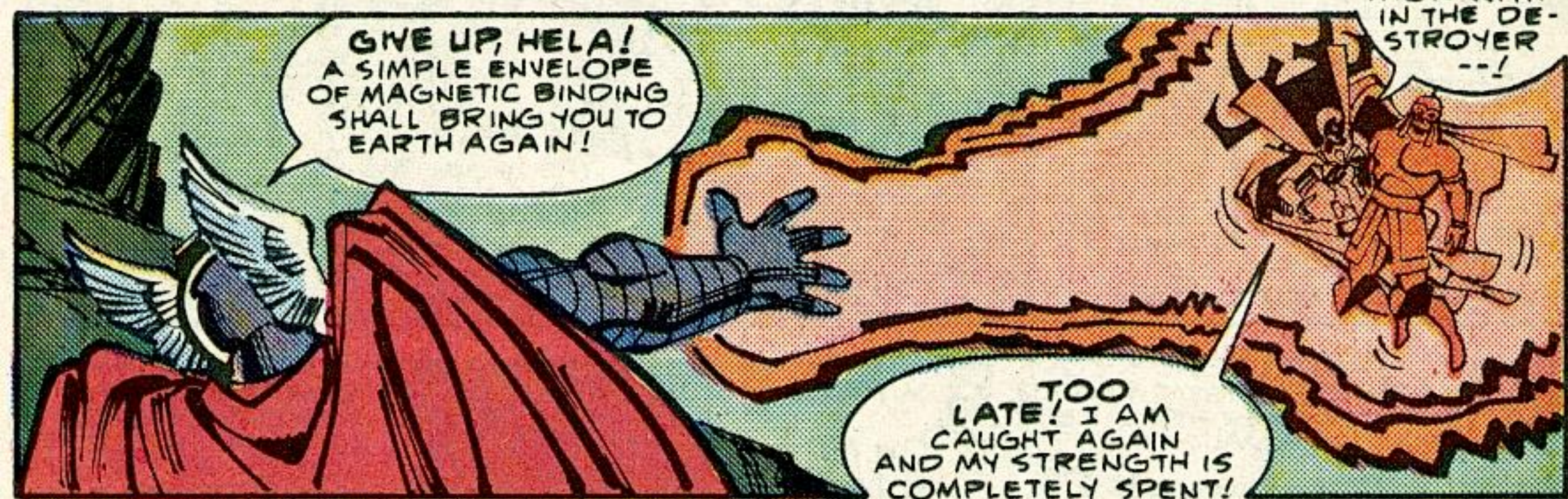
THOR, NOBLEST WARRIOR OF ALL...

...THE TOUCH OF DEATH SHALL BE THE BREATH OF LIFE TO THEE...



...EVEN AS "HELA" SHALL BECOME "HEAL" AND ALL THY WOUNDS MADE WHOLE!

IF I CAN BUT REACH THE SOUL OF THOR WITHIN THE DESTROYER --!



GIVE UP, HELA! A SIMPLE ENVELOPE OF MAGNETIC BINDING SHALL BRING YOU TO EARTH AGAIN!

TOO LATE! I AM CAUGHT AGAIN AND MY STRENGTH IS COMPLETELY SPENT!



YOU ARE MINE!

BUT WHAT'S THIS?

WITHIN THE ARMOR, A LIVING BEING!

DEATHGODDESS! WHAT HAST THOU DONE?

A BODY NO LONGER OF GELATIN, BUT OF SUBSTANCE! OF STRUCTURE!

HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
AT LAST!

THE BLOOD OF
ODIN IS NOW
BEHOLDEN TO
THE BLOOD OF
LOKI!

...AND MY
GRATITUDE
KNOWS NO
BOUNDS!

MAY ODIN,
WHERE E'VE HE IS,
BLESS THEE,
LOKI'S DAUGHTER!

WHAT?!

I KNOW
THAT
LAUGHTER!

THAT
CAREFREE,
RECKLESS
SPIRIT!

AT THY SERVICE, MADAME.
THE DESTROYER'S RAGING
SPIRIT IS STILL SAFELY
RESTRAINED BY MY WILL
AND ALWAYS HAS
BEEN.

THOU HAST
GIFTED THE
GOD OF
THUNDER
WITH HIS
SOREST
TRIAL,
MILADY.

THE TRIAL,
ODINSON,
IS NOT
CONCLUDED!
THE PRIDE
OF HELA--

'TIS NOT THE
DESTROYER
AT ALL
BUT THOR!

BUT
RIGHT
GLAD AM
I TO FIND
MYSELF
IN HEALTH
AGAIN.

THE IRON-
MONGERY
I WEAR NOW
IS A GOOD DEAL
MORE TROUBLE-
SOME THAN THAT
WHICH I HOLD.

--HAS ALREADY COST
HER HER KINGDOM. SHALL
IT COST HER HER LIFE,
DEAR DAUGHTER?

WHAT?

SURELY A MERE
GLANCE IN ANY
DIRECTION WILL
SUGGEST THAT YOUR
...STOCK WILL BE IN
CONSIDERABLE
NEED OF REPLEN-
ISHMENT FOR SOME
TIME TO COME.

THE LOGIC
THOR SPOKE
WITH EARLIER IS NOT
WITHOUT MERIT, MY DEAR.

I SHOULD PAY
PARTICULAR
ATTENTION
TO HIS REMARKS
ABOUT PROVIDING
A SUPPLY
OF...NEW BLOOD.

AND IT MAY BE THAT THIS IS
PRECISELY THE TIME TO
RECOUP A FEW OF YOUR
LOSSES.

SPEAK PLAINLY,
TRICKSTER! WHEN
THE VOICE OF
LOKI DRIPS
HONEY, THE
BEES ARE LIKE
TO DIE OF
POISON!



ALWAYS A
MISTRUSTFUL
SOUL, EH, THOR?
OR IS IT SIMPLY
RUSTIC CHARM?

I MERELY
BRING A TALE
THAT SHOULD
GLADDEN THE
HEART OF ANY
WARRIOR EAGER
FOR BATTLE!



THE HOSTS
OF ASGARD HAVE
BEEN STRICKEN
BY SOME UNKNOWN
MALADY AND UNINVITED
GUESTS NOW WALK THE
STREETS OF ASGARD
VIRTUALLY UNOPPOSED.

"I BELIEVE YOU KNOW
THIS GENTLEMAN."

"UTGARD-
LOKI!"

YOU
STUPID
CRETINS!



BACK OFF
FROM THOSE
ASGARDIANS
AND CLASP
MY ARMS!

THE SORCERY
OF JOTUNHEIM
SHALL PREVAIL
OVER A PAIR
OF TINY WAR-
RIORS, NO
MATTER
WHAT
THEIR
STRENGTH!



LET THE ICY COLD OF
YOUR BLOOD AND LIMBS
BE JOINED WITH MINE AND
FROM MINE ENCHANTED
AXE, BLOW A WINTRY
GALE SUCH AS NEVER
BLEW ON ASGARD
BEFORE!

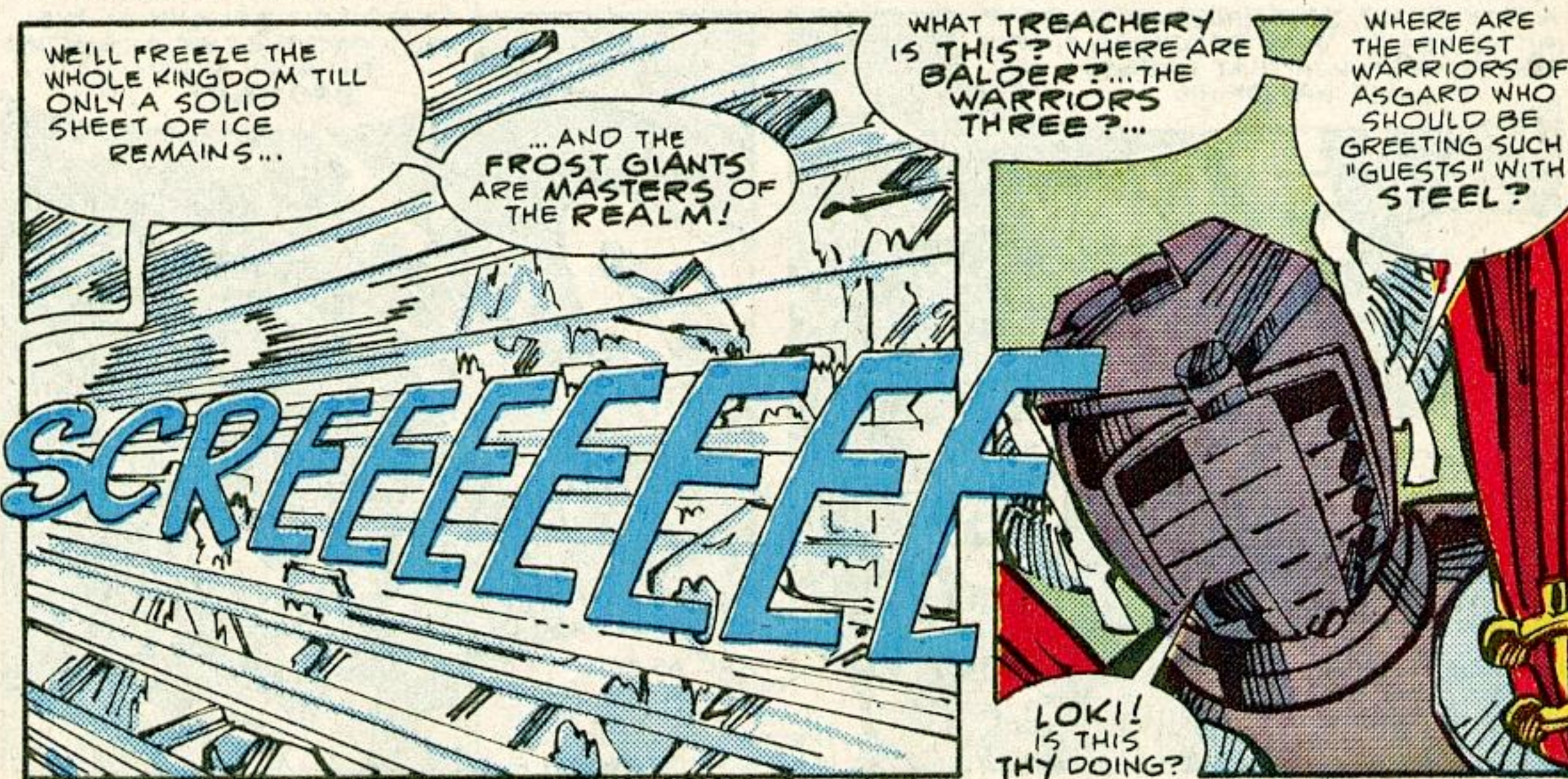
WE'LL FREEZE THE
WHOLE KINGDOM TILL
ONLY A SOLID
SHEET OF ICE
REMAINS...

...AND THE
FROST GIANTS
ARE MASTERS OF
THE REALM!

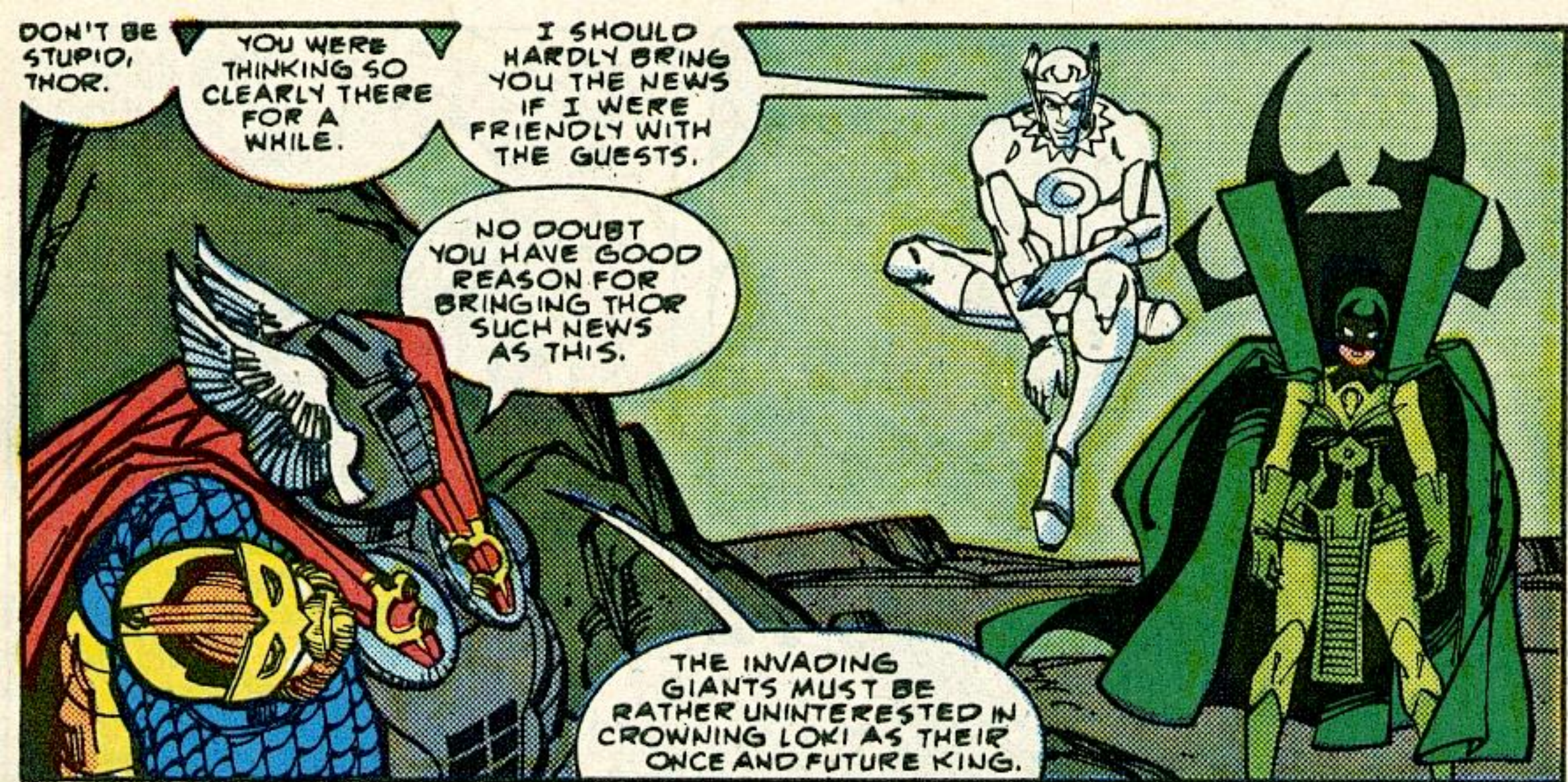
WHAT TREACHERY
IS THIS? WHERE ARE
BALDER?...THE
WARRIORS
THREE?...

WHERE ARE
THE FINEST
WARRIORS OF
ASGARD WHO
SHOULD BE
GREETING SUCH
"GUESTS" WITH
STEEL?

SCREEEEEEEE



LOKI!
IS THIS
THY DOING?



DON'T BE STUPID, THOR.

YOU WERE THINKING SO CLEARLY THERE FOR A WHILE.

I SHOULD HARDLY BRING YOU THE NEWS IF I WERE FRIENDLY WITH THE GUESTS.

NO DOUBT YOU HAVE GOOD REASON FOR BRINGING THOR SUCH NEWS AS THIS.

THE INVADING GIANTS MUST BE RATHER UNINTERESTED IN CROWNING LOKI AS THEIR ONCE AND FUTURE KING.

I SHALL RETURN TO ASGARD IMMEDIATELY AND WE'LL SPEAK FURTHER OF THESE MATTERS IF AND WHEN I AM VICTORIOUS.

YOU WILL BE, YOU DEMON! YOU ALWAYS ARE, BLAST YOU!

PROBABLY. BUT MY CURIOSITY MAY KILL ME. WHY DID YOU BOTHER TO INTERVENE ON MY BEHALF?

AND WHY HELP THOR NOW? DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT HE HAS SLAIN THE WORLD SERPENT... YOUR SON AND MY BROTHER?*

AND YOU, DAUGHTER? HAVE YOU RECONCILED YOURSELF TO LIVING AGAIN?

*IN THE NOW-CLASSIC THOR 380 --RALF THE MODEST

A PITY ABOUT JORMUNGAND, MY DEAR, BUT HE REALLY WAS BECOMING SIMPLY TOO POWERFUL IN THAT LARGE, CLUMSY WAY OF HIS.

I DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE OLD PROPHECIES ANY MORE THAN MY STEP-BROTHER!

WHO KNOWS WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE BROKEN IF HE HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO REACH HIS FULL GROWTH.

AND AS FOR THOR--WHEN THE TIME COMES, I WANT THE SATISFACTION OF KILLING HIM MYSELF.



AND IS THOR READY TO DEPART AS WELL?

I DID NOT BREAK THE GATES OF HEL IN ORDER TO LEAVE THE BUSINESS BETWEEN US UNFINISHED, HELA.

WHAT BUSINESS?

THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD THAT ARE RIGHTFULLY YOURS SHOULD BE YOUR CONCERN, HELA. NO LESS... AND NO MORE.



THAT WAS YOUR CHARGE AGES AGO; IT SHOULD BE YOUR CHARGE STILL. I WANT YOUR OATH ON IT.



LEAVE THOSE POOR SOULS ALONE WHO BELONG ELSEWHERE. THERE WILL BE SOULS ENOUGH FOR YOU HERE.

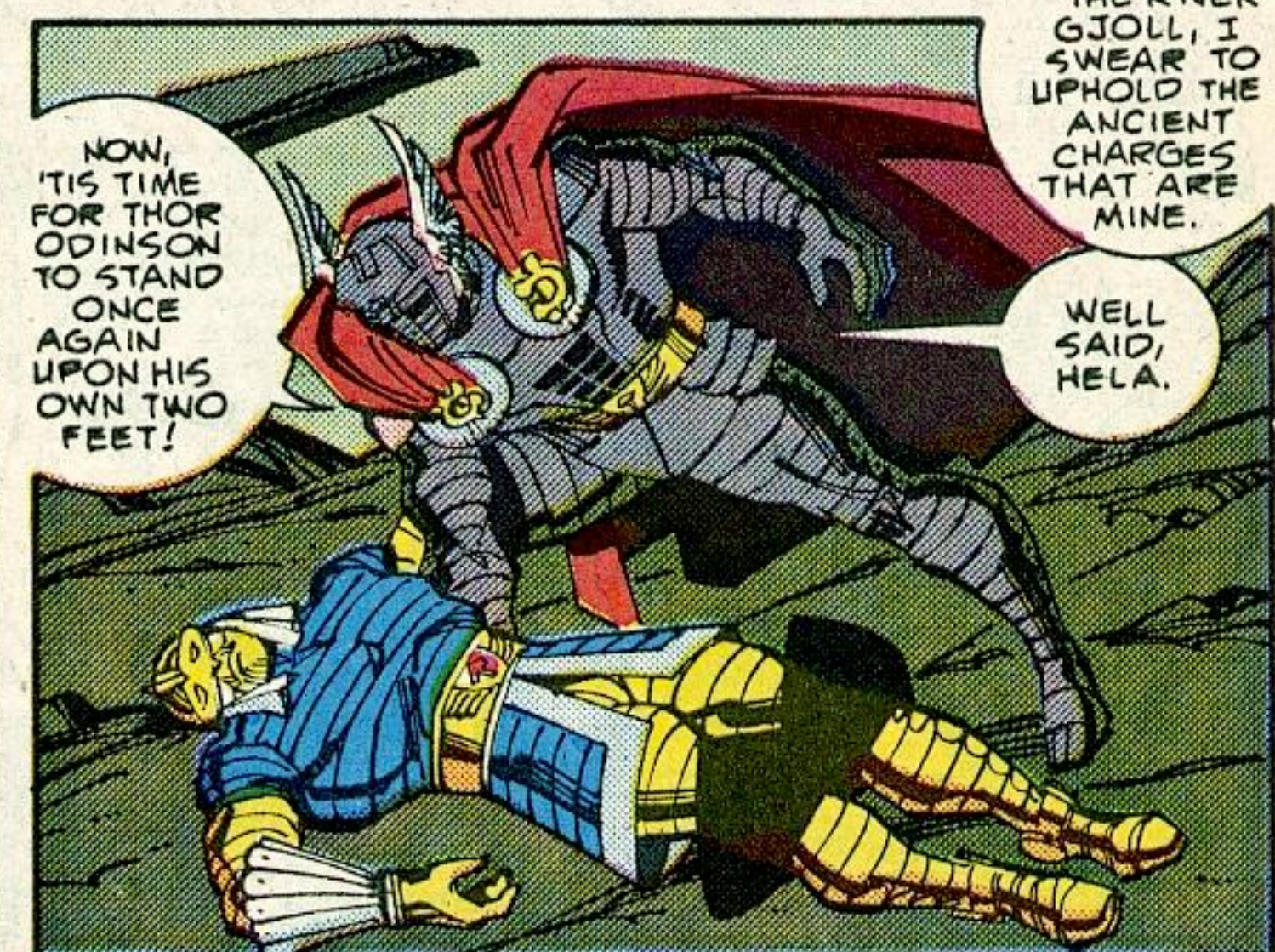
I DO NOT WISH TO RETURN TO HEL AGAIN.



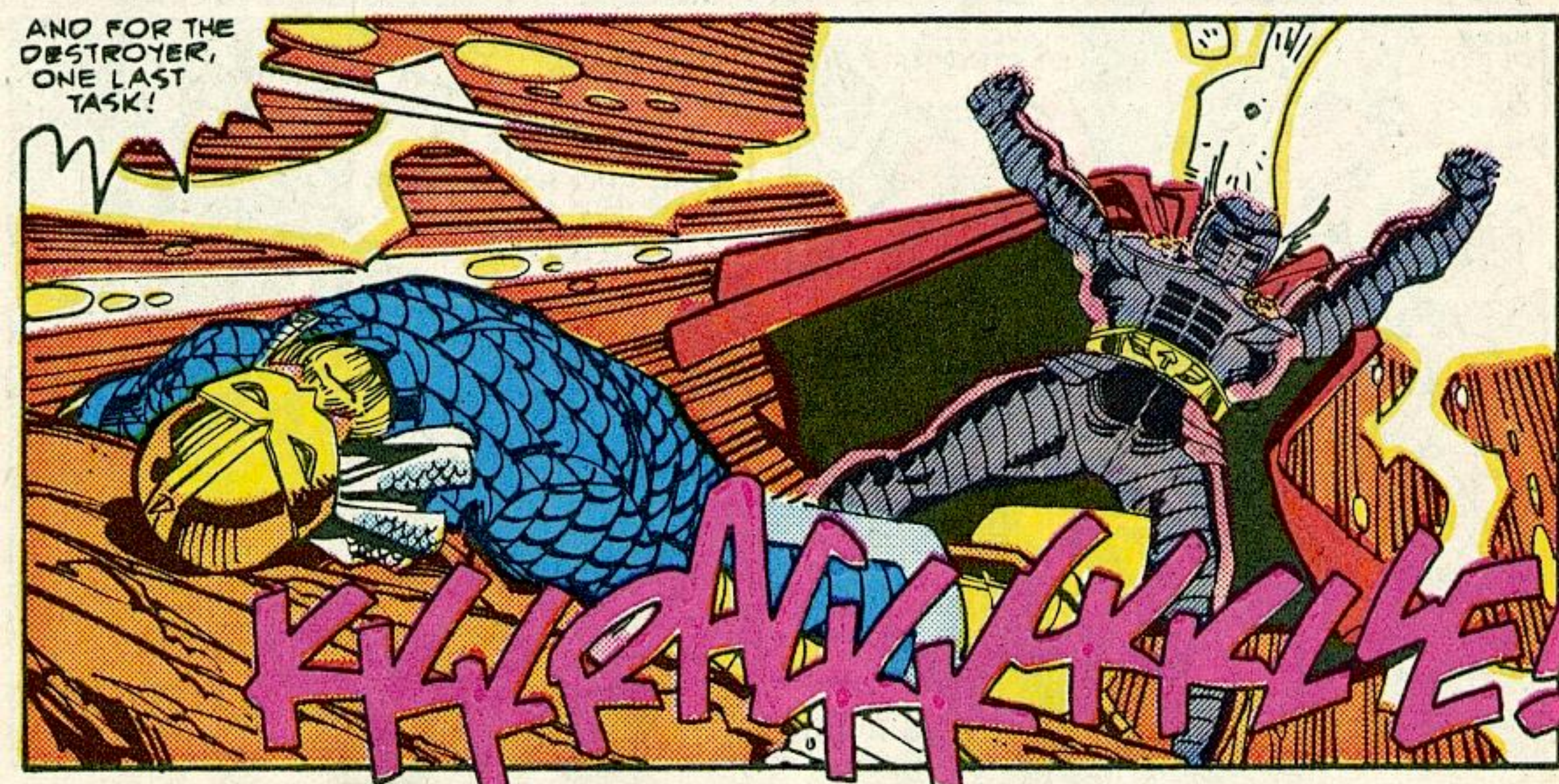
I HAVE HAD LITTLE JOY IN THIS ONE.

VERY WELL. BY THE RIVER GJOLL, I SWEAR TO UPHOLD THE ANCIENT CHARGES THAT ARE MINE.

WELL SAID, HELA.



NOW, 'TIS TIME FOR THOR ODINSON TO STAND ONCE AGAIN UPON HIS OWN TWO FEET!



AND FOR THE DESTROYER, ONE LAST TASK!

KKKRAAKKLE!

IN HONOR OF THY
SOLEMN OATH, HELA,
I SHALL LEAVE THEE
A GIFT AND A
FINAL CHARGE...

SGHREEEACCHH!!

THE ROCKS
OF HEL
QUAKE...

...THE SURVIVING
SOULS OF HELA
FLEE...

KARARRRAHHAKKKKK!!

...AND A MOMENT
LATER, ALL IS
QUITE SILENT!

THE
DESTROYER IS
EMBEDDED IN A HUGE
CRYSTAL SUCH AS HE
CREATED EARLIER!

THOR?

HERE,
DEATH-
GOD-
DESS.

AT LONG
LAST, THOR
HATH COME
HOME.

AND THE
DESTROYER?

... A REMINDER TO ITS
RULER OF THE FOLLY
OF PRIDE...

... AND A TOKEN TO
COMMEMORATE HER
OATH AND HER HONOR,
TO REMAIN UNDER
HELA'S GUARDIAN-
SHIP FOREVER.

ENCAP-
SULATED
BEYOND
THE REACH
OF THOSE
WHO WOULD
POSSESS
HIM OR BE
POSSESSED.

HE SHALL BE
AS A MONUMENT
TO ALL OF HEL...

NOW
ONE LAST
TASK
REMAINS.

EXECUTIONER THAT WAS,
THOR BEGS THY FOR-
GIVENESS.

I STRUCK THEE
WITHOUT CAUSE
TO MAINTAIN THE
DECEPTION OF
THE DESTROYER'S
SUPREMACY.

THOR STANDS
READY TO OFFER
REPARATION.
NAME IT.

I AM NOT
SURPRISED,
THUNDERER.
I GUESSED
THE DESTROYER
MIGHT NOT BE
HIS OWN MASTER.

INDEED?

WHEN HAS
HE EVER
STRUCK A
FOE AND LEFT
HIM LIVING?
EVEN A
DEAD MAN.

BUT IT
HARDLY
SEEMED
THE TIME
OR PLACE TO
TALK ABOUT
SUCH
THINGS.

HAVE YOU AND BALDER
HAD THAT DRINK TO
SKURGE THAT BALDER
ONCE PROMISED?

NAY, WE
HAVE NOT.
TIME HAS
EVER BEEN
AGAINST
US, IT
SEEMS.

THEN THAT SHALL BE
MY PRICE. TAKE BALDER
AND THE WARRIORS
THREE AND ANY OTHER
WHO WILL AND HAVE
THAT DRINK IN PEACE.

REJOICE IN
LIVING FOR IT IS
MORE WONDERFUL
THAN CAN BE
DREAMT. AND
REMEMBER
SKURGE.

I SHALL
NEVER
FORGET
HIM.

NOW MUST
THOR DEPART,
FOR TIME
PRESSES!

WAIT! ONE MORE
THING THOU SHOULD
KNOW!

AS LONG AS THOSE
WHO DWELL IN THE
GOLDEN REALM ARE
STONE, FEW OF
THEIR NUMBERS
SHALL BE ADDED
TO THE RANKS
OF HEL.

AND THEY BRING
A SPECIAL WARMTH
TO THE COLD
CORNERS OF
HEL.

BUT OF
COURSE, LIKE
FATHER, LIKE
DAUGHTER.

THEY
SERVE
BEST WHO
SERVE
THEM-
SELVES.

YOU
DARE--?

'T WAS LOKI
HIMSELF WHO
VISITED THE
PLAGUE ON THE
ASGARDIANS!

IN
TRUTH?
AND WHY
REVEAL THY
FATHER'S
PERFDY
NOW?

I WOULD DARE MOST ANYTHING, HELA, AS THOU HAST LEARNED.

BUT ONE FINAL THING I MUST HAVE TO MAKE THE DARE WORTH THE CHALLENGE.

RESTORE THAT WHICH THOU DID TAKE FROM ME.

FOR WITHOUT IT, A HERO IS ONLY AN ETERNAL MANNIKIN FOR WHOM BRAVERY IS AN EMPTY WORD.

THE VIKINGS OF OLD FEARED TO DIE STRAW DEATH, A DEATH NOT IN GLORIOUS BATTLE, BUT IN DECAY AND DISSOLUTION.

THEY KNEW THAT WITHOUT THE BITTER GIFT OF DEATH, A HERO LEADS ONLY A STRAW LIFE.

SWEET APPH!

FEAR NOT, THOR. I SHALL SEND THEE HOME DIRECTLY AND WHEN YOU ARRIVE, YOU SHALL BE A REAL ASGARDIAN ONCE MORE.

RETURN TO ME THE GIFT OF DEATH ITSELF, LADY.

GONE. AND WITH HIM, THE LAST BREATH OF LIFE IS LOST TO HEL.

NOT SO, SKURGE. YOU YOURSELF, THOUGH BOUND HERE FOREVER, HAVE NEVER FORSAKEN THE SPIRIT OF LIVING, FOR IN THAT SPIRIT IS COURAGE UNMATCHABLE.

I SAW IT WHEN I SAW YOU STAND UNARMED AND UNAFRAID BEFORE THE DESTROYER, SOMETHING EVEN HELA WOULD HAVE FEARED TO DO.

YOU WERE MAGNIFICENT, NOT UNLIKE THOR.

SUCH COURAGE AS YOURS IS TOO FULL OF LIFE FOR THIS CHEERLESS REALM, BUT SHOULD DWELL WITH OTHER KINDRED SPIRITS.

I KEPT YOU HERE BECAUSE I HONORED YOUR BRAVERY IN THE PAST; I RELEASE YOU NOW TO VALHALLA FOR THE SAME REASON.

MAY BE THAT THOR WILL GREET THEE THERE AND YOU CAN SHARE HIS DRINK. WOULD THAT I COULD DO THE SAME.

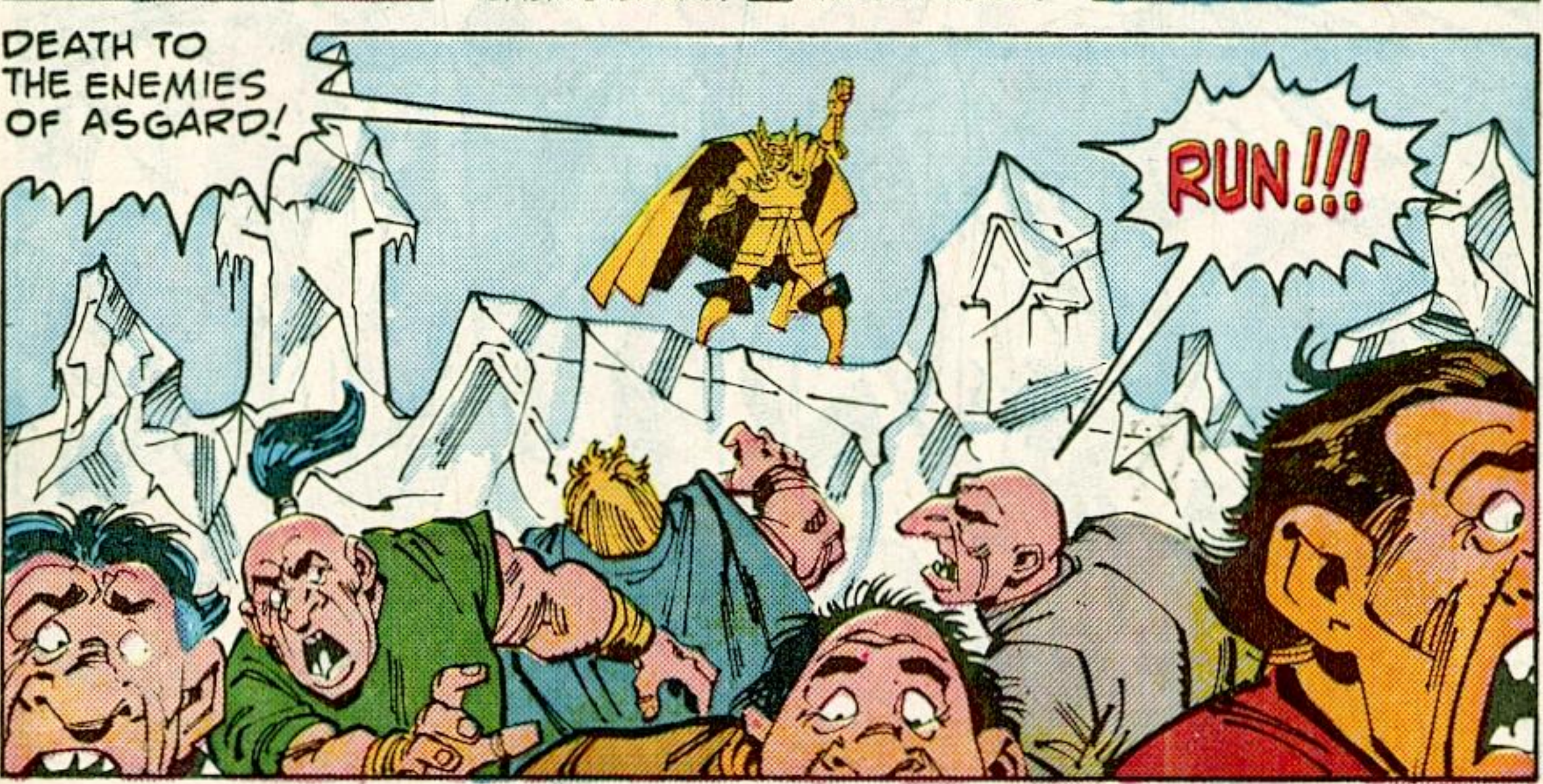
IS IT POSSIBLE THAT BENEATH THE FROZEN BREAST OF HELA HERSELF...

...THERE BEATS A LIVING HEART?

RAAASSK!

THEN PERHAPS I, TOO, HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING SINCE I CAME TO HEL.

ANOTHER
MOMENT
AND ASGARD
WILL BELONG
FOREVER TO THE
FROST GIANTS!



YOU, UTGARD-LOKI, SHALL BE THE FIRST TO FEEL THE HOT BLAST OF GARM'S BREATH BEFORE THE GATES OF HEL!

COMMEND THY SOUL TO THY FATHER, YMIR!

THOR! STAY THY HAND!

WHO WOULD DENY MJOLNIR THE TASTE OF BLOOD?

'TIS BALDER THE BRAVE, NOBLE THOR.

I AM IN NAME THY LIEGE, BUT I AM IN TRUTH THY FRIEND.

HEAR MY WORDS.

OUR KINFOLK LIE STRICKEN BY A DEADLY PLAGUE, NOT UNLIKE THE ONE UTGARD-LOKI LOOSED UPON THE INNOCENTS OF NORNHEIM.*

AND IF THE LOOSING OF SUCH A PLAGUE IS WITHIN HIS POWER, PERHAPS THE CURING OF IT MAY BE AS WELL.

*BACK IN THE BALDER THE BRAVE LIMITED SERIES, ME BUCKOS!---RALF.

THOR! BALDER! HEAR ME!

THOUGH I KNOW NOT WHAT PLAGUE AILS THE GODS, I HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH MAGIKS!

I WILL SEND WHAT HELP I CAN IF YOU LET ME RETURN TO JOTUNHEIM!

UMMMMM.

METHINKS A DEAD GIANT IS BETTER THAN A LIVE ENEMY IN JOTUNHEIM.

MY FRIEND, THINK AGAIN. BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, NO ATTACKING GIANT FORCE COULD WIN AGAINST THE GODS.

AND WE MAY YET RECEIVE SOME GOOD FROM OUR ANCIENT ENEMIES IF YOU SPARE HIM.

MY BETTER JUDGMENT TELLS ME OTHERWISE, BALDER, YET I AM BUT RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE LAND OF THE DEAD MYSELF...

VERY WELL, UTGARD-LOKI! YOU AND YOUR COMRADES MAY DEPART IN PEACE ON CONDITION YOU SEND WHAT HELP YOU CAN.

...AND IN TRUTH IT IS A BITTER PLACE.

BUT YOU MUST SWEAR BY THE RIVER GJOLL TO AID US. AND IF YOU BREAK THAT OATH, YOU WILL HAVE TO ANSWER TO HELA HERSELF!

I SWEAR IT, BY THE RIVER GJOLL.

REMEMBER, SHOULD YOU THINK OF FORSAKING THIS VOW, THAT I, TOO, WILL SWEAR AN OATH.

SHOULD YOU BREAK YOUR BOND, I SHALL SET MJOLNIR TO BREAK EVERY GIANT HEAD IN JOTUNHEIM!

NOW BEGONE!

BALDER... MY BELOVED COMPANION.

MUCH BETTER, NOW THAT HER GREATEST DEFENDER HATH RETURNED.

AND SO COLORFULLY ATTIRED, AS WELL.

WHAT GREETING SHALL I GIVE THEE HERE AT THE END OF THIS ADVENTURE AT LAST? MAYHAP ...HOW FARES THE REALM ETERNAL?

THOR? HEY, THOR!

WOW, IT IS YOU!

WELL MET, CHILDREN.

HAVE A CARE, THOR. THESE ARE NOT ORDINARY CHILDREN.

THEY ARE AMONG ASGARD'S BRAVEST DEFENDERS! THEIR COURAGE AND VALOR SHALL BE SUNG IN BALLADS FOR AGES TO COME.

AND KURSE HELPED, TOO! HE WAS GREAT!

BUT WHERE
IS ASGARD'S
FINEST
WARRIOR?

YOU SPEAK AS
THOUGH VOLSTAGG
WERE A LEAF THAT
TREMBLED AT THE
SIGHT OF A FEW
GIANTS...

...WHEN I
MERELY NEEDED
A MOMENT TO CATCH
MY BREATH BEFORE
REENTERING THE FRAY!

FOR WHERE
HILDY LURKS,
CAN VOLSTAGG
BE FAR BEHIND?

INDEED
THEY
HAVE.

PITY. I WAS
JUST BEGINNING
TO ENJOY MYSELF.

TRULY, THOU
HAST THE
HEART OF AN
ASGARDIAN!

COME, YOU
GREAT-HEARTED
WARRIORS. THOUGH
WE HAVE MUCH TO
DO TO SET THE
KINGDOM TO
RIGHTS, SUCH TASKS
MAY WAIT A
MOMENT
LONGER.

AND WE MUST
CELEBRATE OUR
VICTORY.

'TIS TIME
WE TOASTED
THE VALOR OF
SKURGE...

NOW, KURSE,
WE SHALL
TEACH YOU TO
BE A PROPER
ASGARDIAN.

AND YOU SHOULD HAVE A PROPER ASGARDIAN NAME. "KURSE" IS NO FIT COGNOMEN FOR SUCH A FINE WARRIOR!

"VALGOTH" IS MORE
SUITED TO ONE
LIKE THEE! A
MIGHTY WARRIOR
OF THE DEAD!

THE MESSENGER FROM JOTUNHEIM ARRIVED WITH WORD FROM UTGARD-LOKI WHO WISELY CHOSE TO UPHOLD HIS OATH...

...AND WITH THE PASSAGE OF DAYS, WHEN THE TOASTS ARE DONE...

...MANY HURTS WERE HEALED AND PEACE REIGNED THROUGHOUT THE LAND.

CHILDREN! SUPPER-TIME!

C'MON, KEVIN! BETCHA YOU GUYS CAN'T OUTRUN A GIRL!

OH, YEAH?!! LET'S GO, MICK!

AND THE SUN SHONE ROUND ABOUT THE KINGDOM IN GLORY...

...EXCEPT, OF COURSE, IN THAT CORNER WHEREIN LOKI HID HIS MALICE...



FOR IN HIS DARK HEART, THE SUN NEVER SHONE.



GREETINGS, BROTHER. A PENNY FOR THY THOUGHTS?

OR IS THE PRICE TOO HIGH?



THOR!

JUST A CHAT,
BROTHER JUST
A FRIENDLY
CHAT.

WE STILL
HAVE SOME
DEBTS BETWEEN
US AND NOW
SEEMED LIKE
AS GOOD A
TIME AS ANY
TO SQUARE
THEM.

'THE
PERFECT
ENDING TO AN
OTHERWISE
DREARY DAY!
WHAT DO
YOU WANT
HERE?

SO? AND HOW
DO YOU RECKON
THIS? I SAVED
YOUR LIFE NOT
LONG AGO FROM
THE RAMPAGING
GRUNDROTH
AND HIS ANGRY
MOB OF GIANTS.*

WHATEVER
DEBTS
THERE WERE
BETWEEN US,
STEP-BROTHER,
ARE SETTLED.

*THOR 378--R

AND I SAVED
YOUR VERY SOUL
WHEN THE
DESTROYER
WAS RECREATED
AND ENABLED
YOU TO PLEAD
YOUR CASE
PERSONALLY
WITH HELA.

PERHAPS
IT WAS
NOT
WHAT I
INTEND-
ED, BUT
WHAT
DOES IT
MATTER?

I MAY HAVE BEEN
INDEBTED TO YOU,
BUT THAT ACCOUNT
IS BALANCED AS
FAR AS LOKI IS
CONCERNED!

THE PAST IS
OVER; MY
CONCERN IS
WITH THE
FUTURE.

YOU STAND HERE
NOW, WHOLE AGAIN,
BECAUSE OF ME.
NEVER FORGET THAT.

AND
WHAT
DOES
THE FUTURE
HOLD FOR
THE SONS OF
ODIN, LOKI?



DO YOUR SORCER-
OUS POWERS FORE-
SEE WHAT IS HID-
DEN FROM ALL
OTHER EYES?

SHALL YET
ANOTHER
PLAGUE BE
VISITED UPON
THE REALM?
FOR I SHALL
FIND ITS CURE
NEXT TIME.

AND MORE
QUICKLY NOW
THAT I HAVE
DISCOVERED THE
SOURCE OF
CONTAGION.

OH? YOU'RE
OUT OF YOUR
DEPTH THERE,
STEP-BROTHER.
THERE'S NOTHING
CAN BE
PROVEN.

AND AS FOR
THE FUTURE, I
RECOGNIZE
NO DEBT!

YOU HAD
BEST WATCH
YOUR BACK FOR
THE FAR-SEEING
EYE OF LOKI
WILL EVER BE
UPON YOU AND
WHEN YOU
LEAST EX-
PECT IT...



...IT WILL
BE LOKI'S
SHADOW IN
THE DARK
BEHIND
YOU!

YOU
MISTAKE
ME, LOKI,
AS YOU HAVE
SO OFTEN
IN THE PAST.

I HAVE NOT COME HERE
AS A REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE LAW BUT AS
YOUR BROTHER...AND
YOUR EQUAL.



AND THOUGH
IT WOULD APPALL
GOOD BALDER,
I HAVE COME
TO MATCH YOU
THREAT FOR
THREAT!

YOUR CHILD,
THE MID-
GARD
SERPENT, IS
DEAD AND I
AM STILL
ALIVE.



THE TIME
WILL SURELY
COME WHEN THE
AGENTS OF GOOD AND
EVIL WILL MATCH THEIR
STRENGTHS AND ON THAT
DAY, LOKI HAD BETTER
WATCH HIS FRONT!

YOU HAVE MUCH
TO ANSWER FOR,
LOKI, OVER LO,
THESE MANY
YEARS.

AND YOU
HAVE TAUGHT
ME MUCH AS
WELL, FOR-
BEARANCE
NOT LEAST
AMONG THY
GIFTS.

BUT EVEN
THE PATIENCE
OF THOR IS
NOT WITHOUT
ITS LIMITS.

AND LATELY,
I HAVE BEEN
THROUGH HEL
AND BACK, THANKS
IN PART TO THEE.

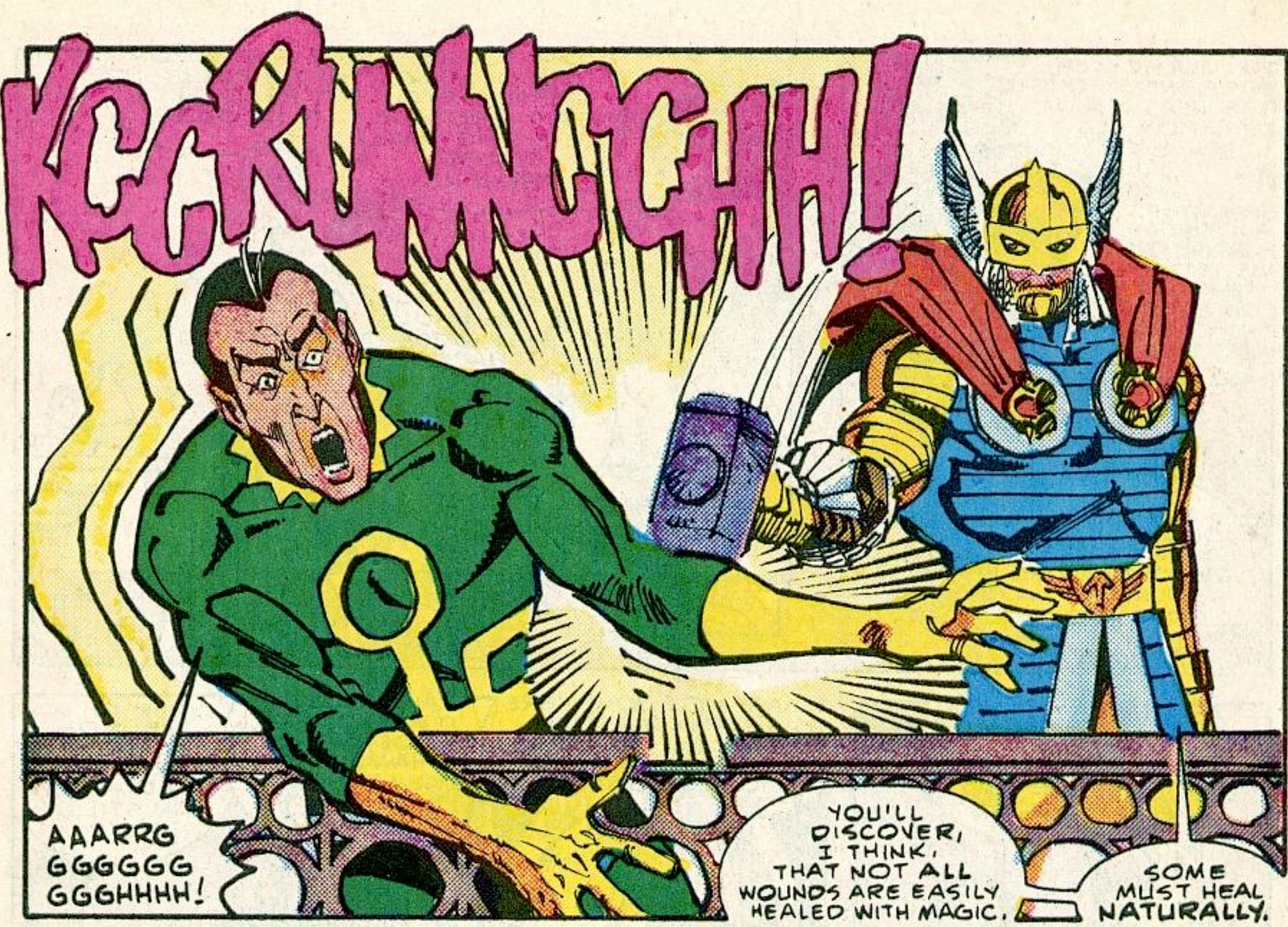


NAY, MY STEP-
BROTHER. I INTEND
TO DEPART THIS
CHEERLESS
PLACE.

GOOD.

SO WHAT
DO YOU INTEND
TO DO? BORE
ME TO
DEATH?

BUT I
WOULD
LEAVE A
LITTLE
SOME-
THING BE-
HIND, A
MEMENTO
OF MY
SOJOURN
TO HEL.



AAARRG
GGGGGG
GGGHHH!

YOU'LL
DISCOVER,
I THINK,
THAT NOT ALL
WOUNDS ARE EASILY
HEALED WITH MAGIC.

SOME
MUST HEAL
NATURALLY.

AND WHILE IT HEALS,
I HOPE YOU WILL RE-
FLECT UPON THE CON-
SIDERABLE TIME THOR
SPENT ENCASED IN
HIS IRON
SHELL...

HELA'S
VENGEANCE,
HOWEVER MIS-
DIRECTED,
WAS GUIDED BY
A SENSE OF
PRIDE OF
PLACE.

...A VICTIM
OF LOKI'S
HATRED!

MAY THIS
TOKEN OF MY
ESTEEM REMIND
YOU NEVER
TO CONFUSE
FOREBEARANCE
WITH WEAKNESS!

BUT LOKI'S
SOUL WAS
EVER INSPIRED
BY PURE
MALICE.

MY ARM!
YOU'VE
BROKEN MY
ARM!

AS ALWAYS,
HIS CUNNING
MIND PIERCES
TO THE
HEART
OF THE
MATTER!

AND THE HEART IS
THIS: ONLY ODIN'S
FOREBEARANCE
WAS INFINITE!



THERE
SPEAKS THE
WILY LOKI
AT LAST!



FARE-
WELL,
BROTHER!

MY HEART IS LIGHTER
THAN IT HATH BEEN IN
MANY A LONG DAY!

MAYHAP
I SHOULD
VISIT MY STEP-
BROTHER MORE
OFTEN.

LOOK OUT,
YOU GIANTS AND
TROLLS! BEWARE,
YOU DENIZENS OF THE
DEPTHS AND DWELLERS
IN THE FORTRESSES
OF EVIL! GIRD UP
THY LOINS, YOU
HARBINGERS
OF DEATH AND
DESTRUCTION!

LET THOSE
IN DIREST
NEED LIFT UP
THEIR VOICES
THAT I MAY
HEAR THEM!

THE GOD OF
THUNDER IS
LOOSE AND WOE
TO THOSE WHO
WOULD HARRY THE
INNOCENT AND
THE WEAK! FOR
THEY SHALL HAVE
A CHAMPION!

SO
BE
IT!

AND GLEAMING IN THE SUNLIGHT, THE
MIGHTY THOR SOARS ACROSS THE
SKY LIKE A BRIGHT STAR.

MAY HIS HAMMER EVER STRIKE
IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE.

SO SAY
WE ALL.