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the mighty

**THOR**

--VS.  
THE EVIL OF  
**LOKI!**



WILL THOR SURVIVE  
"THE  
**WAGER?**"



A CENTURY TO A MORTAL IS BUT A YEAR TO THE GODS; AND SO OUR STORY BEGINS, ONE THOUSAND YEARS PAST, WITH A YOUTHFUL THOR AND HIS CLOSEST COMPANIONS ENJOYING SOME INDOOR SPORT.

STAN LEE  
PRESENTS:

the MIGHTY THOR

# THE WAGER

I BET THREE  
PIECES OF GOLD,  
VALIANT  
COMRADES!

HA! THOU DOST  
THREATEN TO CLEAN  
US OUT WITH SUCH  
A RECKLESS WAGER!

MAYHAP GRIM HOGUN  
WOULD JOIN OUR WILD  
GAMBLING SPREE, WERE  
HE NOT AFRAID OF  
VOLSTAGG'S CUTTHROAT  
BETTING.

'TIS NOT A BET WORTHY  
OF THE LION OF ASGARD!  
THOU DOST BET MORE LIKE  
A CRINGING MORTAL  
EVERY DAY, VOLUMINOUS  
ONE!

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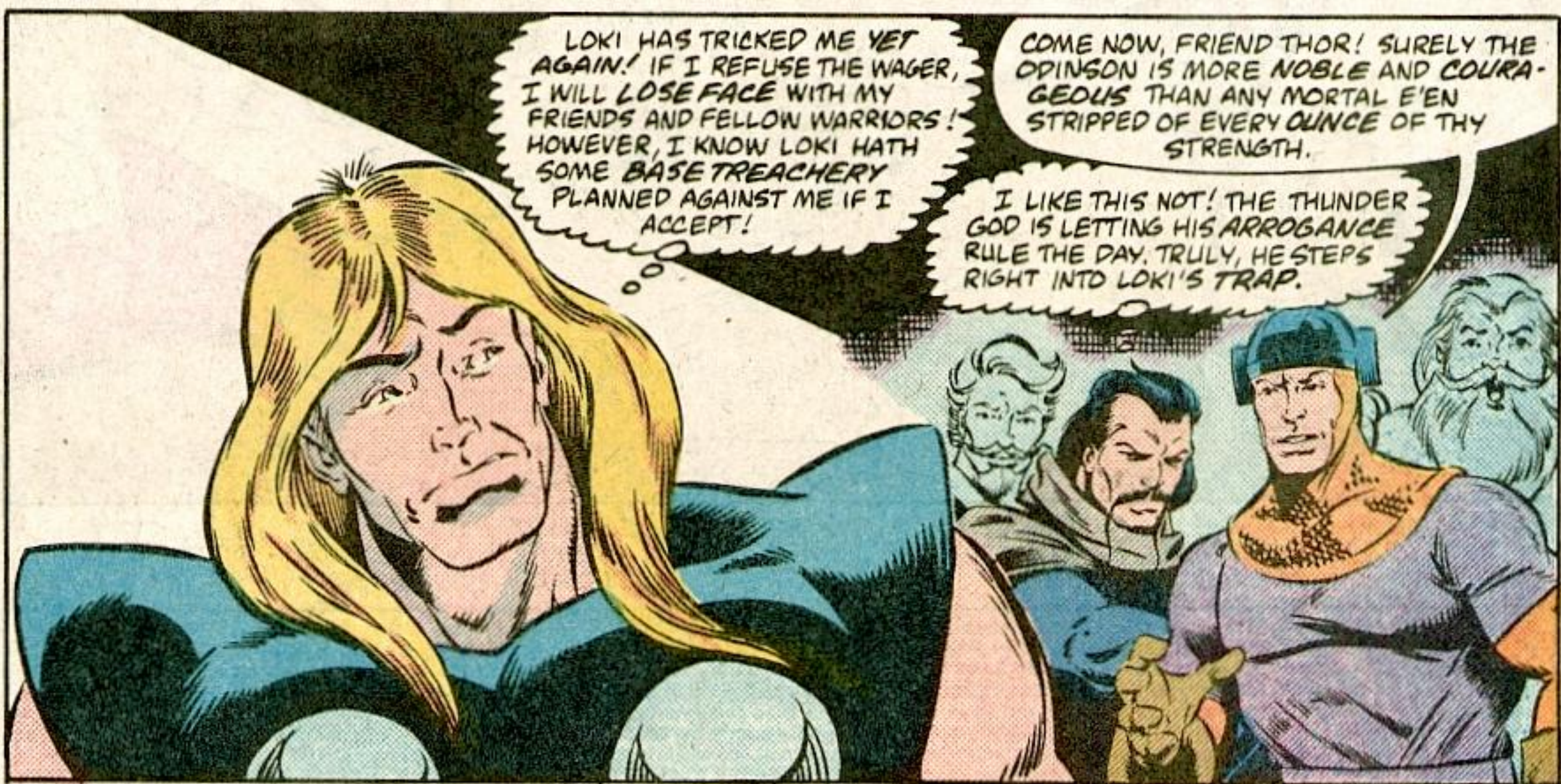
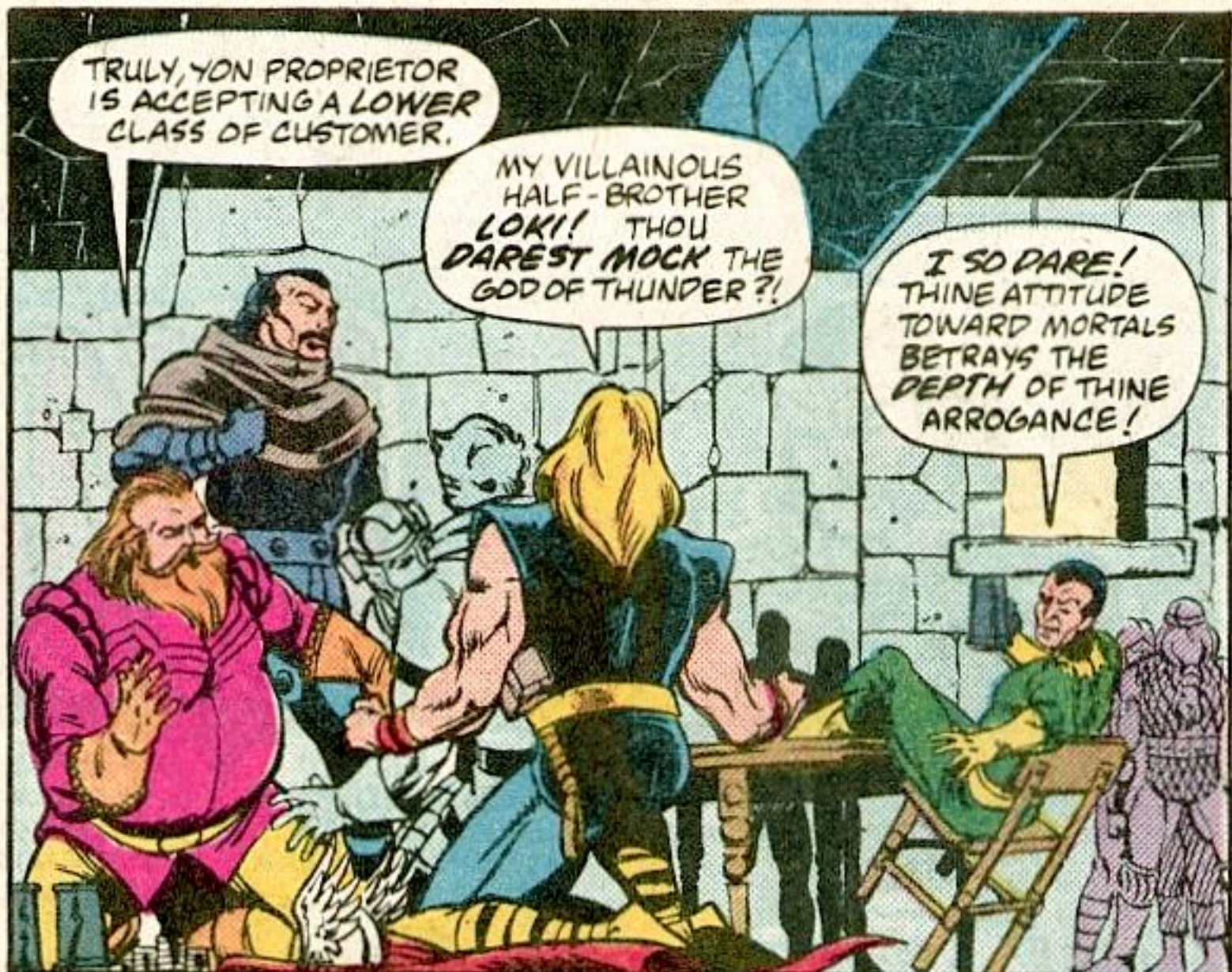
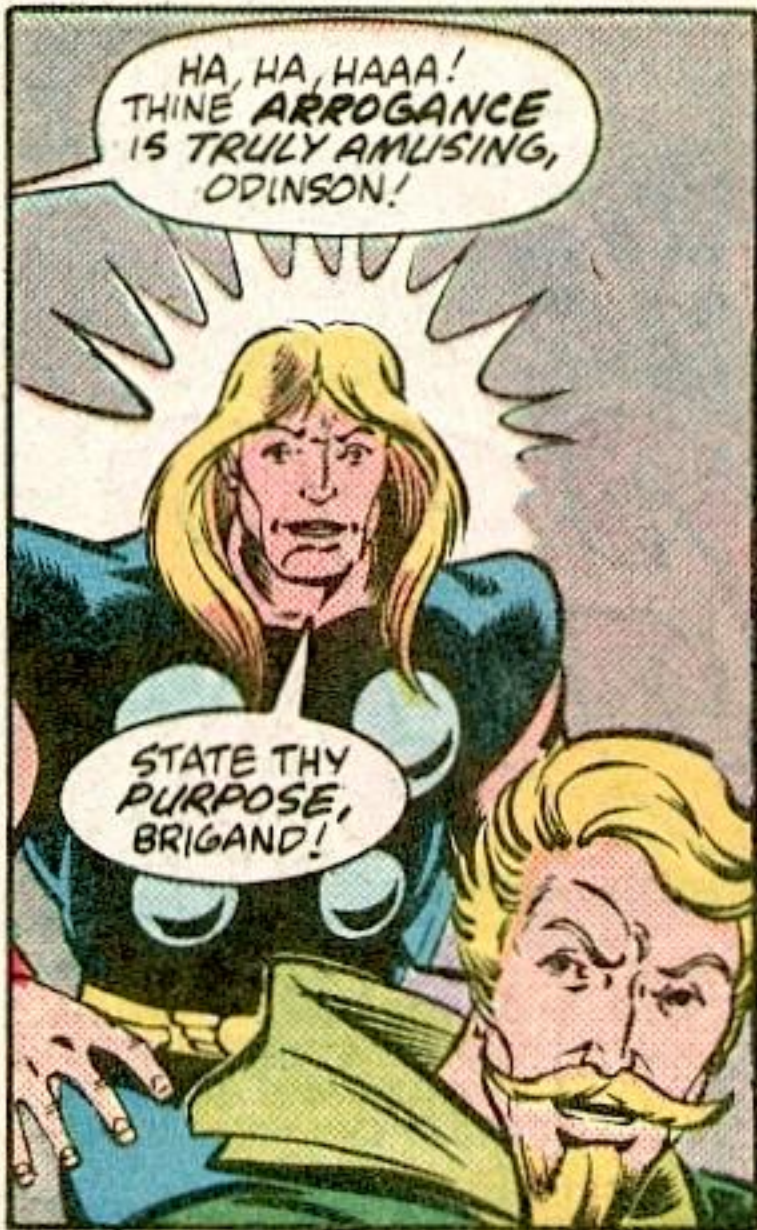
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MAYBE THE NOBLE BALDER WILL BE LESS CERTAIN WHEN MY PROPOSAL IS HEARD.

SPEAK ON, SCHEMING ONE!!



THE GOD OF THUNDER WILL GO TO MIDGARD \* STRIPPED OF HIS POWERS, AND JOIN AN EXPEDITION TO THE NEW WORLD. HE WILL HAVE MJOLNIR WITH HIM, BUT WILL BE FORBIDDEN ITS USE.

\*EARTH--RALE.



SHOULDEST THOU USE THY POWERS, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, THE WAGER SHALL BE FORFEIT AND THOU WILT AGREE TO EXILE THYSELF TO MIDGARD FOREVER, ABDICATING THY CLAIM TO THE RULERSHIP OF ASGARD.



IF I LOSE, I SHALL EXILE MYSELF TO JOTUNHEIM, LIKEWISE FOREVER.

WHAT SAY THEE, ARROGANT ONE? ART THOU A GOD OR MERELY A BAG OF HOT AIR?



HAVE CARE, INSOLENT ONE! I WILL NOT TOLERATE INSULTS FROM SUCH AS THEE! I WILL TAKE THY WAGER, AND AS ALWAYS, I WILL PREVAIL!



LOKI IS LITTLE MORE THAN A SCHEMING VIPER. I FEAR THE NOBLE THUNDER GOD MAY HAVE EXERCISED POOR JUDGEMENT.

BEWARE THUNDER GOD, YOUR DOOM IS ASSURED!

COME FRIENDS! ATTEND ME WHILST I PREPARE FOR MY JOURNEY TO MIDGARD.

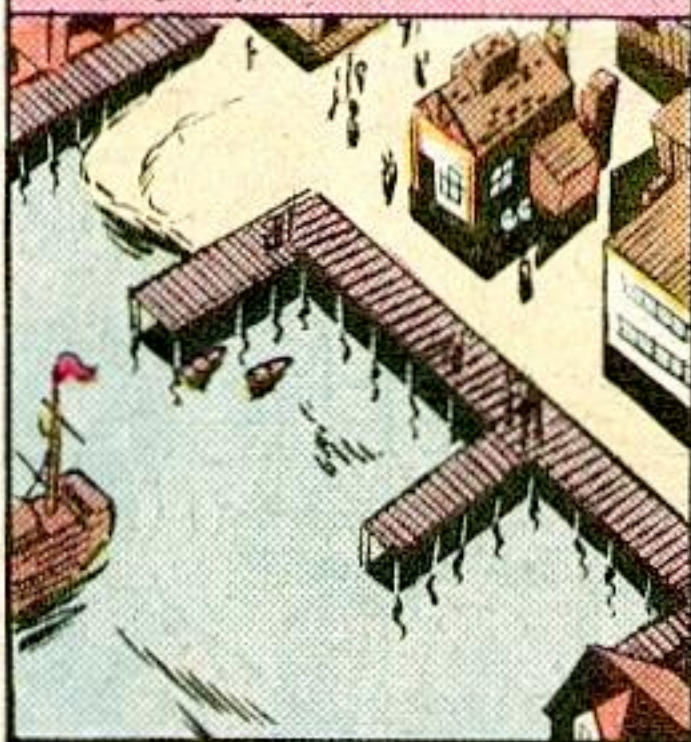
WE SHALL SOON DRINK TO VICTORY, FRIENDS.



MIDGARD: IN MANY  
WAYS THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL OF  
THE NINE WORLDS.



A FISHING VILLAGE IN NORWAY,  
CIRCA 1,000 A.D.



AND AT THE LOCAL INN...

COME, BRAVE WARRIORS!  
SURELY THERE IS ONE  
AMONGST YOU WITH THE  
COURAGE TO DARE THE  
NEW WORLD!

WHAT'S  
IN IT FOR  
US?



TREASURE! VAST TREASURE!  
I'VE GOT ROOM FOR BUT ONE  
MORE BRAVE WARRIOR!

TREASURE???

TREASURE!?



TAKE ME! FOR  
ENOUGH BOOTY,  
I'LL DARE  
ANYTHING!

NO! HE'LL  
TAKE ME, YOU  
COWARDLY  
DOG!!



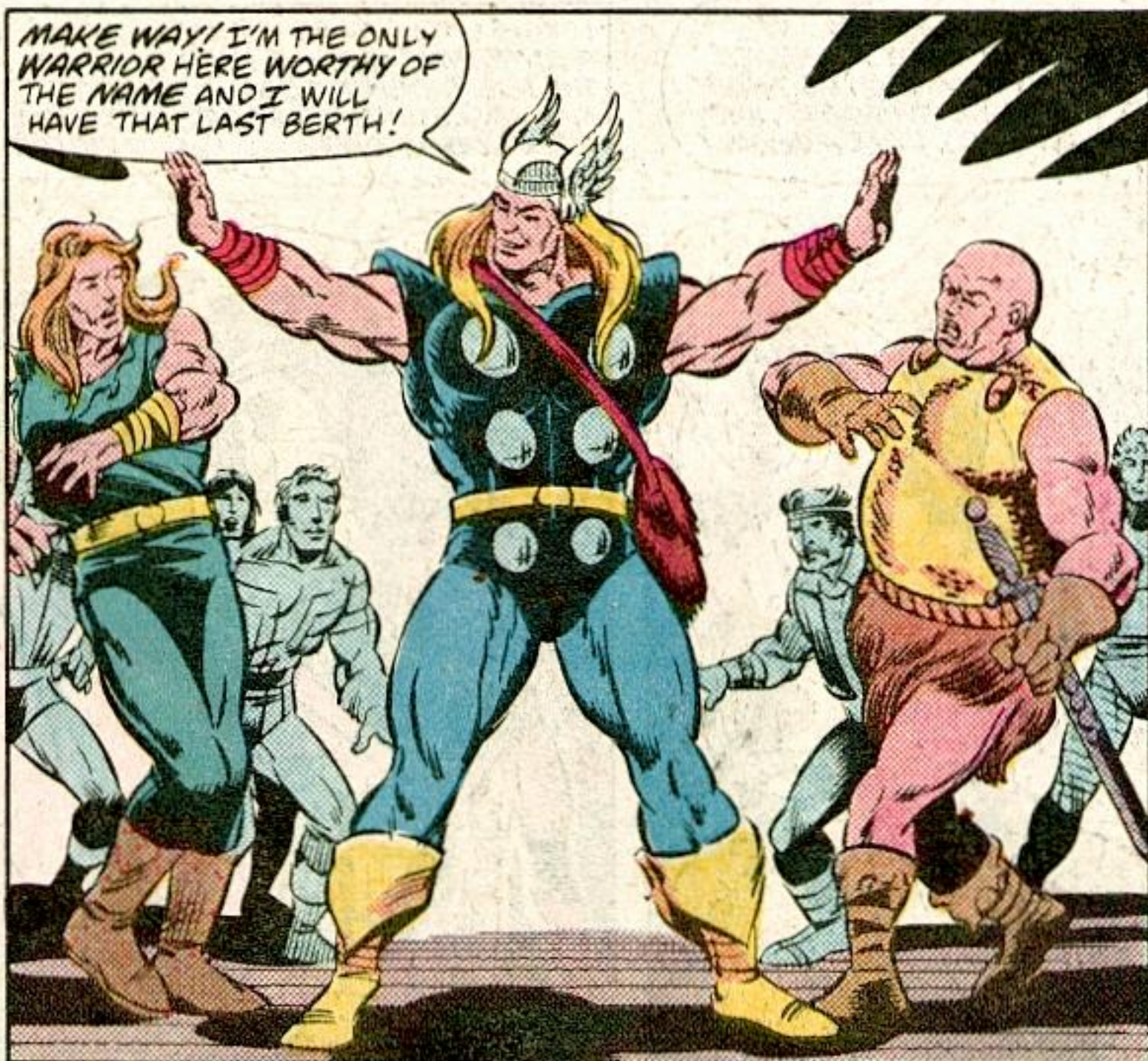
HOLD FOOLS!  
STAND ASIDE!

WHA...??

HUH??



MAKE WAY! I'M THE ONLY  
WARRIOR HERE WORTHY OF  
THE NAME AND I WILL  
HAVE THAT LAST BERTH!







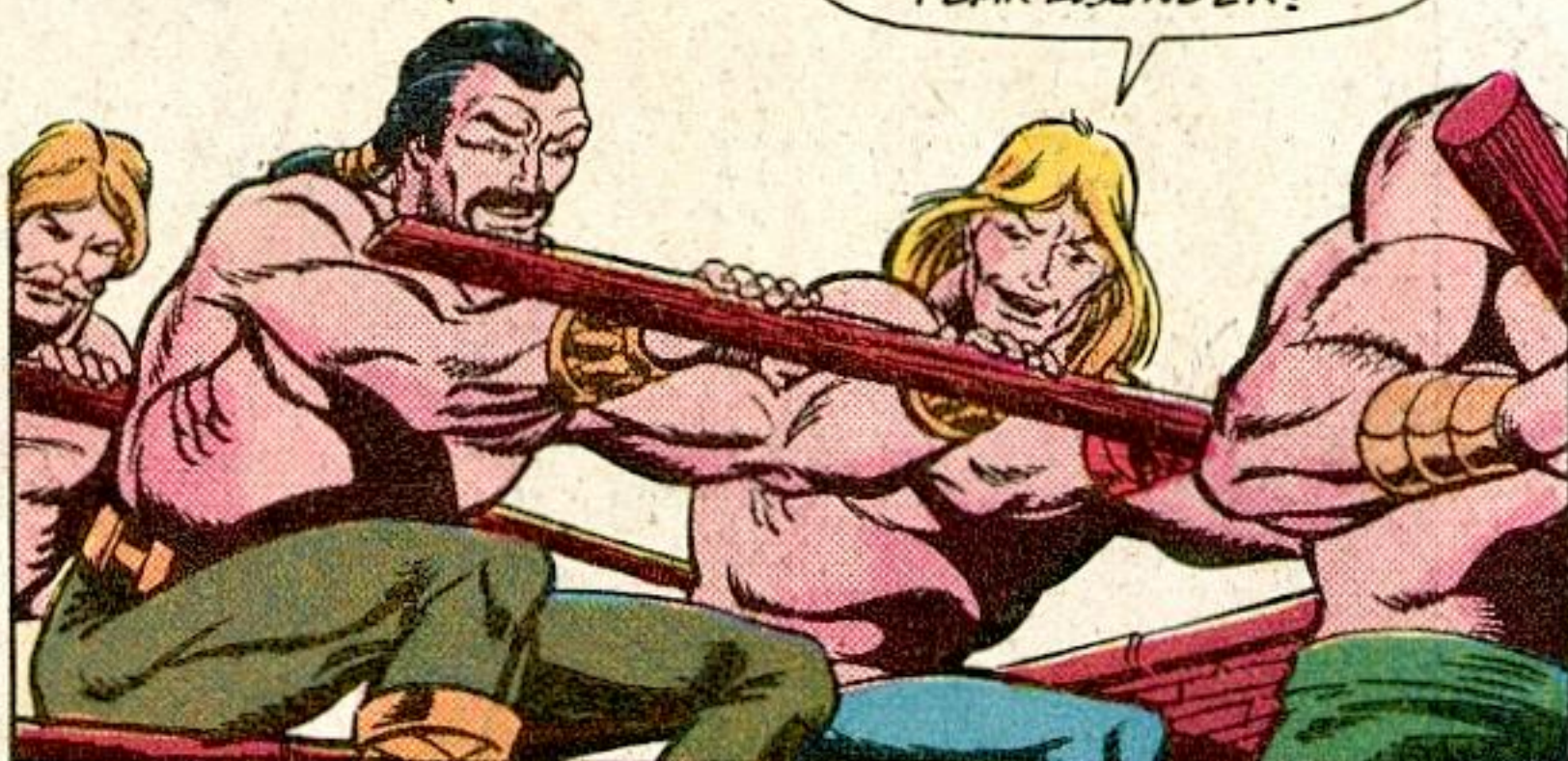


THE VIKINGS MAKE THEIR WAY SLOWLY ACROSS THE NORTH ATLANTIC.

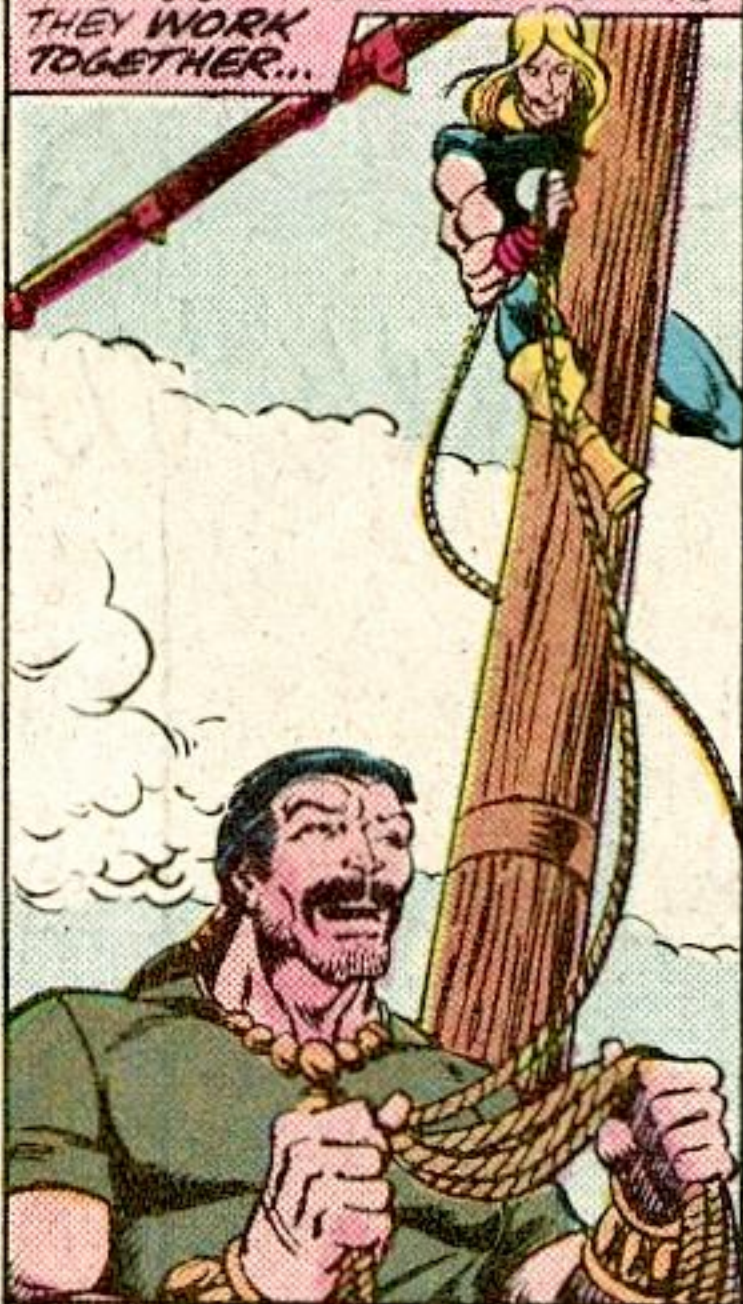


ALL THE WIND ON THIS SHIP, AND NONE FOR THE SAILS, EH, FRIEND! I'M BALDRIC-- HOW ARE YOU NAMED?

I AM CALLED "SIGURD"! WERE WE TO HARNESS ALL THE WIND ON THIS SHIP, THE SAILS WOULD SURELY TEAR ASUNDER!



AS THE DAYS GO ON, BALDRIC AND "SIGURD" BECOME FAST FRIENDS-- AND COMPETITORS AS THEY WORK TOGETHER...



...AND PLAY TOGETHER.

COME NOW, BALDRIC, YIELD TO YOUR BETTER!

NO MAN IS MY BETTER! I'LL YIELD TO NO ONE, FRIEND OR FOE!



AS TIME PASSES, THE NOW MORTAL THOR GAINS RESPECT FOR HIS NEW FRIEND WHO MATCHES HIM TASK FOR TASK!

GROW YOU WEARY YET, BALDRIC?

NAY, SIGURD! MY MUSCLES ARE BUT WARMING UP!



LATER THAT DAY...

LET THE GAME BEGIN, ARROGANT GODLING!

LOOK YONDER, A STORM IS BREWING!

IT GATHERS UNNATURALLY FAST!





IN MINUTES, THE FULL FURY OF THE STORM IS UPON THE EXPEDITION!



SUCH IS THE STORM'S FURY, THAT TWO SHIPS ARE LOST, AND MANY MEN DROWNED. OTHERS ARE RESCUED AND PULLED ABOARD THE REMAINING SHIPS.



WHY? WHY HAVE OUR GODS DESERTED US?

TO BLAZES WITH THE GODS, WE MUST STAND ON OUR FEET LIKE MEN, NOT GROVEL IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY!



I COULD EASILY DISPERSE THIS STORM WITH BUT A FRACTION OF MY POWER AND SPARE THE LIVES OF THESE BRAVE MEN!

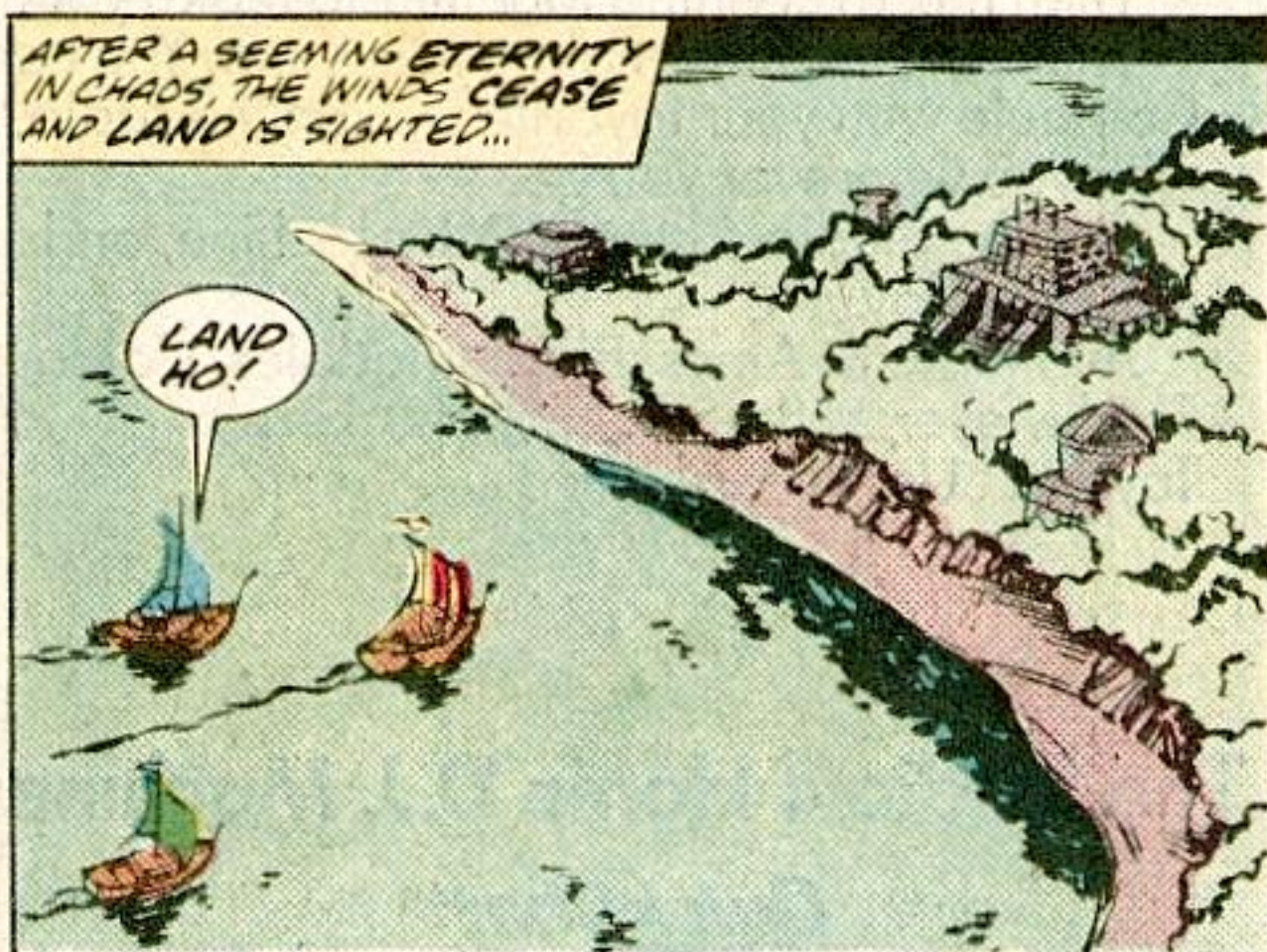
NO! I CANNOT! SHOULD I USE MY UIRU HAMMER TO REGAIN MY POWERS, I'LL FORFEIT THE WAGER AND LOKI WILL ONE DAY RULE ASGARD IN MY STEAD.



LOKI AND HIS CURSED WAGER!! BECAUSE OF MY PRIDE, THESE MEN ARE DYING! BUT I CANNOT UNDO IT, I MUST THINK OF ASGARD AND MY DUTY TO THE ALL-FATHER FIRST!



AFTER A SEEMING ETERNITY IN CHAOS, THE WINDS CEASE AND LAND IS SIGHTED...





AND A LANDING PARTY IS SENT  
ASHORE TO FORAGE FOR FOOD.

RUINS, FAIRLY ADVANCED BY THE LOOK OF THEM. I WONDER WHO COULD HAVE BUILT SUCH MAGNIFICENT DWELLINGS?

LEGENDS SPEAK  
OF A VANISHED  
RACE WHO LIVED  
LONG AGO. PERHAPS  
THIS IS ONE OF THEIR  
CITIES!

SINCE YOU TWO ARE SO INTERESTED, YOU CAN LEAD A CONTINGENT TO CHECK OUT THE RUINS.

AYE! PERHAPS NOW  
WE'LL FIND SOME OF  
THE TREASURE WE  
WERE PROMISED!

MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE  
RAINBOW BRIDGE IN  
FABLED ASGARD

...A GRIM CONFERENCE  
DRAWS TO A CLOSE.

SO GOES THE STORY, MY LIEGE.  
E'EN NOW, THY NOBLE SON  
BATTLES FOR HIS LIFE AS  
A MORTAL. LOKI IS SEQUES-  
TERED IN HIS CHAMBERS AND  
WE SUSPECT HIM OF  
VIOLATING THE TERMS OF  
THE WAGER.

GIVE US LEAVE,  
ALL-FATHER, AND  
WE WILL JOIN OUR  
PRINCE ON MIDGARD  
AND FIGHT AT HIS  
SIDE.

**I SAY THEENAY!!  
IN HIS PRIDEFUL ARRO-  
GANCE, MY SON HAS NOT  
ONLY ENDANGERED HIM-  
SELF, BUT THE FUTURE  
OF THE REALM  
ETERNAL AS WELL!**

**BEGONE, LOYAL WARRIORS! MY SON HAS SOWN THE WIND, AND HE SHALL REAP THE WHIRLWIND! THOU ART FORBIDDEN TO INTERFERE!**



MEANWHILE, ON EARTH, "SIGURD" AND A CONTINGENT OF VIKINGS ENTER THE RUINS...



FORWARD, MEN! LET US FIND WHATEVER ADVENTURE AWAITS!

LET US NOT FORGET THE TREASURE, EH, SIGURD?

THIS SIGURD LEADS LIKE A WARRIOR BORN!

THE VIKINGS FOLLOW THE WINDING CORRIDOR EVER DOWNWARD, WITH ONLY THE SPLUTTERING TORCHES BETWEEN THEM AND TOTAL DARKNESS!



I LIKE THIS NOT! WE HAVE BEEN WALKING THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR AND HAVE NOT COME ACROSS ANYTHING EXCEPT THIS STRANGE WRITING.

WE CAME NOT TO READ SIGNS, FRIEND SIGURD, BUT TO FIND WEALTH AND TREASURE.

ALL I'VE GOTTEN SO FAR ARE ACHING BONES FROM THE DAMPNESS AND A CASE OF THE CHILLS!



SUDDENLY...

**SCRATCH SCRATCH**

WHAT IS THAT INFERNAL NOISE!

IT SOUNDS LIKE RATS! LARGE ONES!



THE CORRIDOR OPENS INTO A SMALL ROOM!

PERHAPS 'TIS THE ECHO THAT MAKES THE RATS SOUND SO LARGE!

**SCRATCH SCRATCH**


A YE! AND I'M A STORM GIANT FROM JOTUNHEIM!



THAT INSTANT...!

THE DOOR! IT CLOSES BEHIND US, SEPARATING US FROM OUR COMRADES!

WHAT THE...?!



I HATE BEING THE HARBINGER OF BAD NEWS, BUT WE ARE NOT ALONE IN HERE!

A YE, AND WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S MOVING CLOSER!

STAND READY COMRADES! WE HAVE NOWHERE TO GO BUT FORWARD!

IT WOULD TAKE A MOUNTAIN OF TREASURE TO MAKE THIS WORTHWHILE.

**SQUEAK SQUEAK**



AS THE SHADOWS RECEDE, THE SPUTTERING TORCHLIGHT REVEALS...

RATS!  
GIANT  
RATS!!!

SPREAD OUT AND  
MOVE FORWARD  
TOGETHER! IF THE  
VERMIN SURROUND  
US, WE'RE DOOMED!

FRIEND SIGURD,  
YOUR TALENT FOR  
UNDERSTATEMENT  
IS TRULY  
UNNERVING.

SURELY, NO  
TREASURE IS  
WORTH THIS!



BACK, FILTHY CREATURE!  
BY ASGARD, I'LL NOT BE A  
RODENT'S DINNER THIS  
DAY!



BUT SOME THERE ARE WHOSE  
FUTURE IS NOT SO CERTAIN!

AIEEEH!



BALDRIC!  
BEHIND YOU!  
LOOK OUT!

UH  
OH!



SEEING THE OPPURTUNITY FOR A MEAL,  
THE RATS CLOSE IN ON BALDRIC QUICKLY.

CURSE YOU,  
VERMIN! YOU'LL  
NOT FIND ME AN  
EASY KILL!



BALDRIC!!  
I'LL NOT  
STAND AND  
WATCH SUCH  
VALIANT  
WARRIORS  
MEET THEIR  
END!

THOR REACHES FOR  
Mjolnir, KNOWING  
HE CAN PUT AN END TO  
THIS SLAUGHTER  
IN SECONDS...



...BUT REMEMBERS THE TERMS OF THE WAGER AND DECIDES TO FIGHT LIKE A MAN!



AWAY, VERMIN!  
YOU'LL NOT FEAST ON  
A WARRIOR AS NOBLE  
AS BALDRIC WHILE TH--  
ER, SIGURD LIVES!!

THOR QUICKLY JOINS  
HIS FALLEN COMRADE...



BALDRIC! HOW  
FARE YE, MY  
FRIEND?

NOT TOO BADLY,  
ALL THINGS CON-  
SIDERED! THOSE  
RATS WERE  
GETTING A BIT  
TOO INTIMATE  
FOR MY TASTE!

SUDDENLY, THE MORTAL GODLING  
IS SEIZED WITH AN INSPIRATION!



THAT DRIPPING  
WATER! THERE  
MUST BE A  
CISTERN ABOVE  
US. THE CENTURIES  
HAVE ERODED THE  
MORTAR AND  
THE STONES ARE  
LOOSENING.



IF I CAN  
JUST GET  
A FINGER  
HOLD!

SIGURD, HAVE  
YOU GONE DAFT?  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING?

I'M TRYING TO SAVE  
YOUR STUBBORN  
BACKSIDE AND  
MAYHAP MY OWN  
IN THE BARGAIN.

THOR'S VISE-LIKE FINGERS FIND  
A TENUOUS HOLD ON THE CRUMBLING  
STONE AS HE MOUTHS A SILENT  
PRAYER TO THE ALL-FATHER.



SIGURD,  
HURRY! I'VE  
NO DESIRE  
TO BECOME  
RAT FOOD.

UHHNG!



THEY'RE ALMOST  
UPON US, JUST  
ONE MORE  
SECOND...

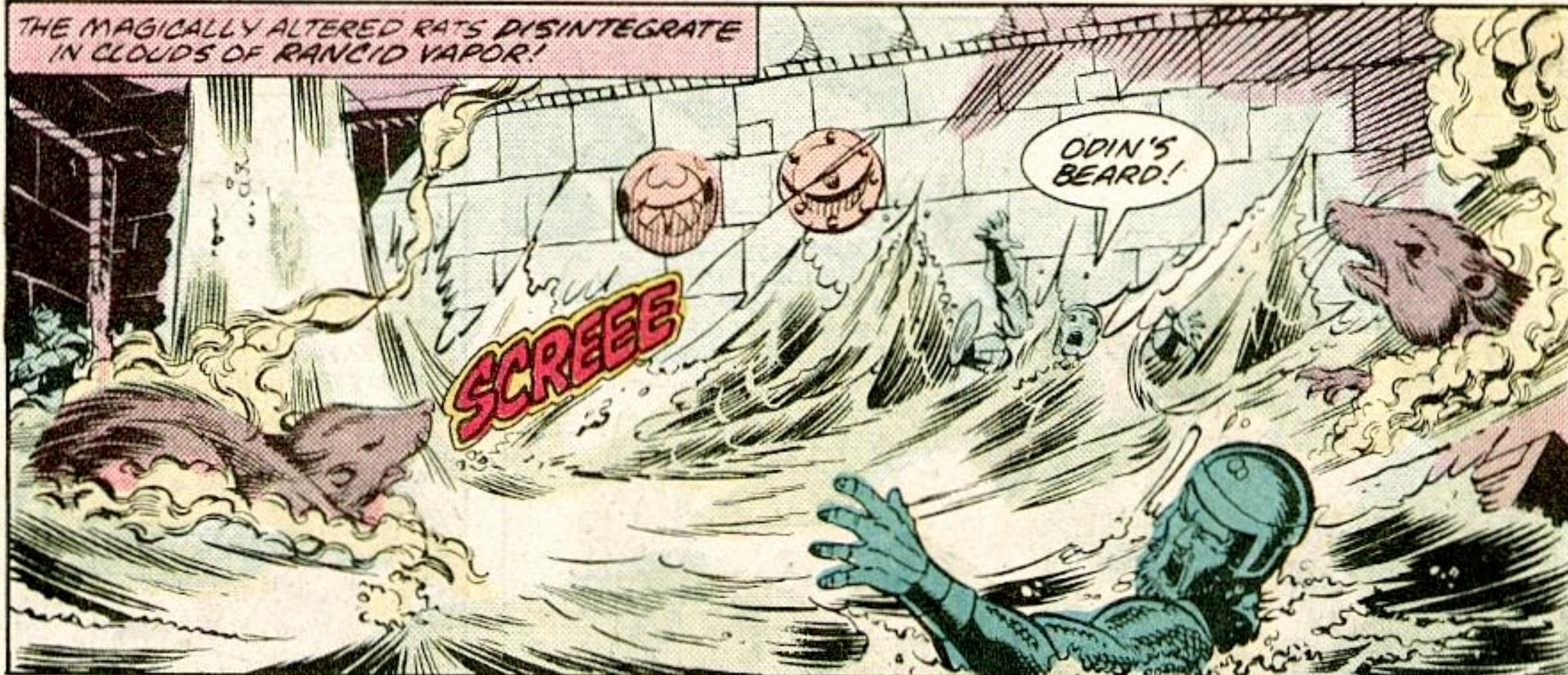


WITH A MIGHTY HEAVE, THOR  
PULLS THE CRUMBLING STONE  
DOWN, AND PUTS IT TO GOOD  
USE!

CRUNCH



THE MAGICALLY ALTERED RATS DISINTEGRATE  
IN CLOUDS OF RANCID VAPOR!



AS THE RUSHING  
WATERS SUBSIDE...

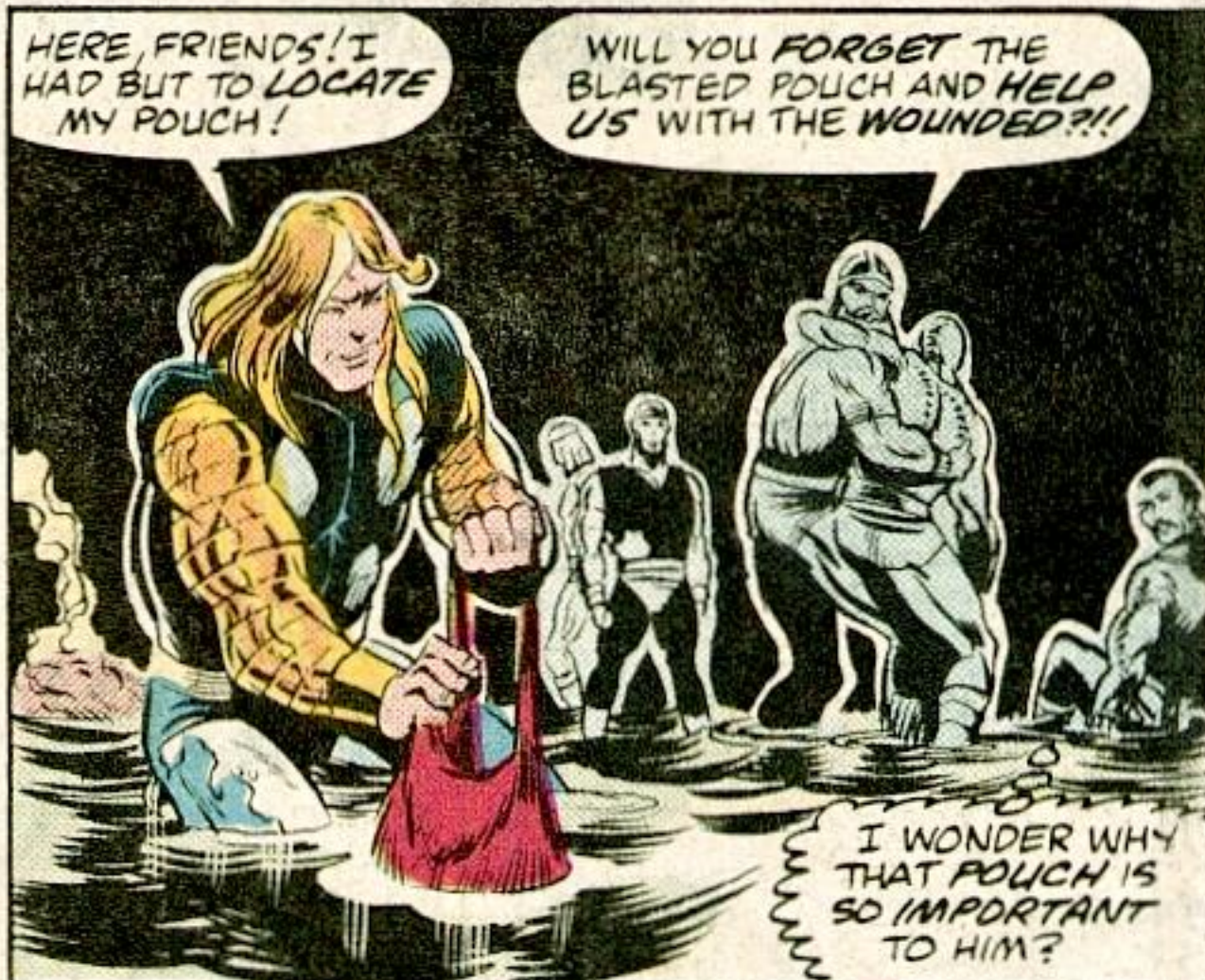
HOW FARE YE,  
BALDRIC?

A GOOD DEAL CLEANER  
THAN I'D LIKE TO BE,  
BUT OTHERWISE, FINE!  
WHERE IS SIGURD?



HERE, FRIENDS! I  
HAD BUT TO LOCATE  
MY POUCH!

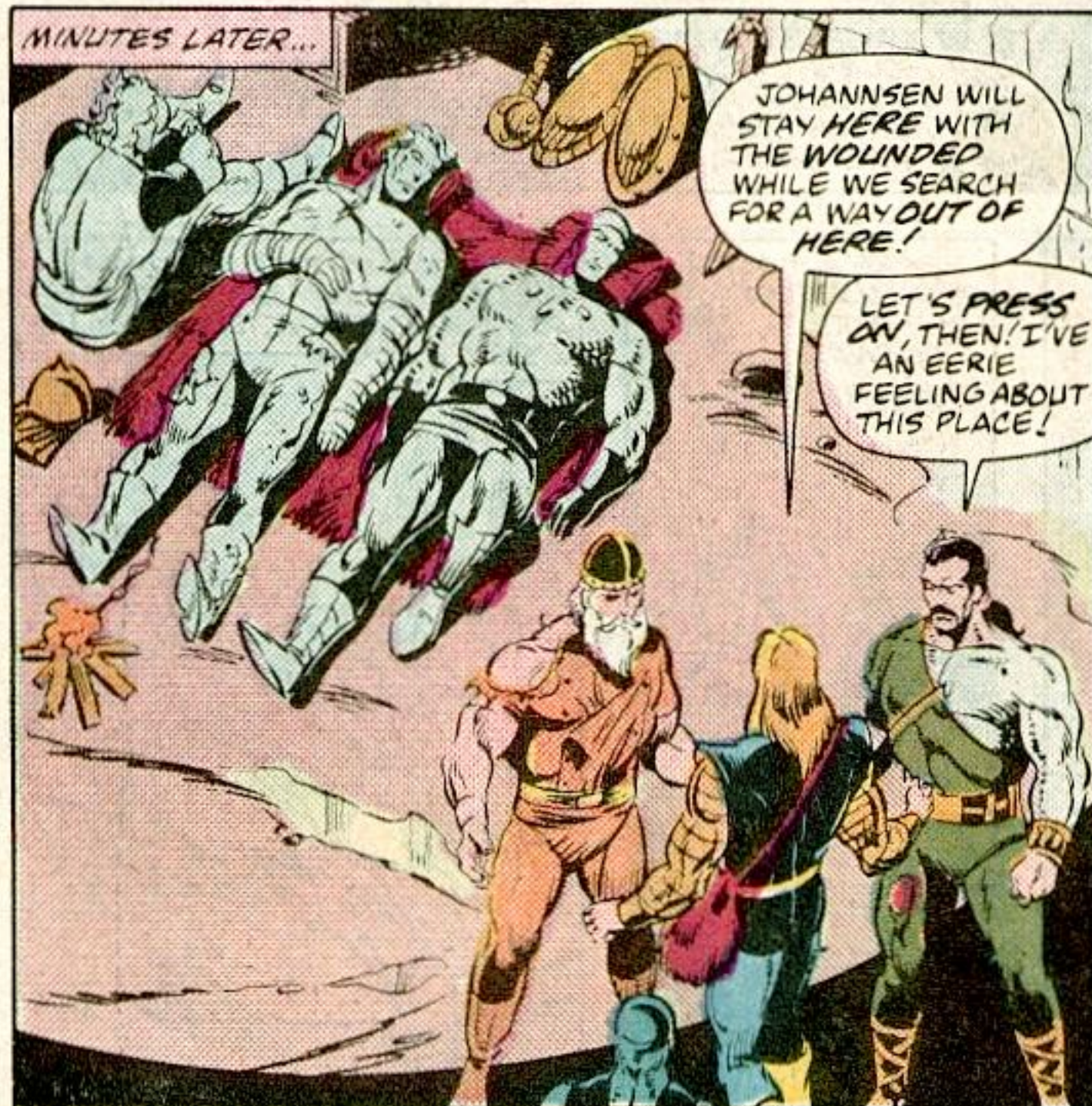
WILL YOU FORGET THE  
BLASTED POUCH AND HELP  
US WITH THE WOUNDED?!!



MINUTES LATER...

JOHANNSEN WILL  
STAY HERE WITH  
THE WOUNDED  
WHILE WE SEARCH  
FOR A WAY OUT OF  
HERE!

LET'S PRESS  
ON, THEN! I'VE  
AN EERIE  
FEELING ABOUT  
THIS PLACE!



IF WE HOPE TO FIND  
OUR WAY OUT, SHOULD  
WE NOT BE HEADING  
UPWARD?

WE HAVE NO OTHER  
CHOICE-- THE WAY  
BACK IS BARRED!  
WE CAN ONLY HOPE  
THAT WE SOON FIND  
A PASSAGE THAT  
WILL LEAD TO THE  
SURFACE!







'TWOULD APPEAR TO BE SOME KIND OF MASS BURIAL CHAMBER! BUT FOR WHOM?

I CARE NOT! MY INTEREST IS IN TREASURE AND IT LOOKS LIKE WE MAY BE ABLE TO FIND SOME HERE!



PERHAPS A CLOSER INSPECTION WILL PROVIDE A CLUE AS TO WHERE THE TREASURE MAY BE HIDDEN.



I'M GLAD MY MUMMY WASN'T THIS UGLY OR I'D DOUBTLESS BE A LOT MEANER THAN I AM! NO SIGN OF ANY VALUABLES...



SUDDENLY--

WHAT THE--!!

GRRRRR!!



OO'S BLOOD!! THEY LIVE! THEY LIVE!!

BY HELA, ALIVE OR NO WE'LL DISPATCH THEM BACK TO THE PIT THAT SPAWNED THEM!

FROM WHERE I SIT, THAT MAY BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE!





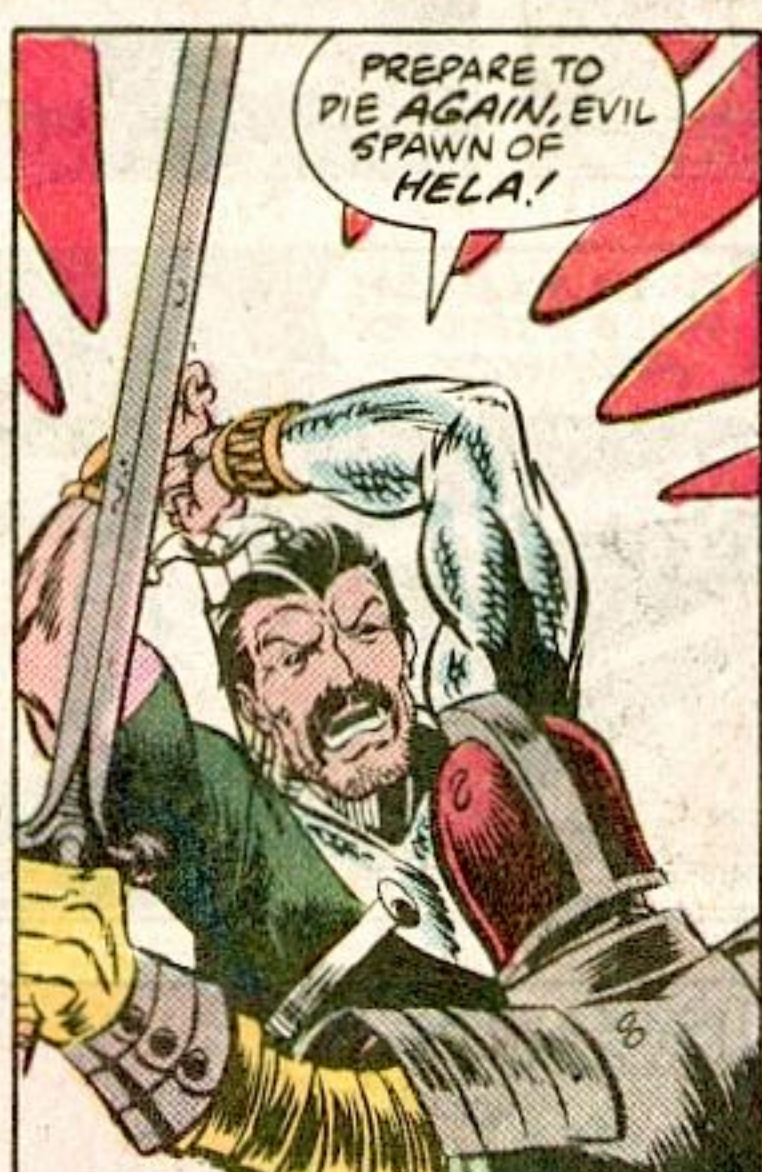


THIS "SPORT" IS FAST GETTING TIRING! IT SEEMS THAT FOR EVERY ONE I DEFEAT, THERE ARE TWO MORE TO TAKE ITS PLACE!

TAKE HEART! IT COULD BE WORSE, THEY COULD BE SKILLED WARRIORS!



AYE, SIGURD! BUT WHAT THEY LACK IN SKILL, THEY MAKE UP FOR IN PERSISTENCE!



PREPARE TO DIE AGAIN, EVIL SPAWN OF HELA!



SKRRRTH



BALDRIC! OUR COMRADE IS COMING AROUND, HE APPEARS TO BE ALL RIGHT!

UHHHHH...

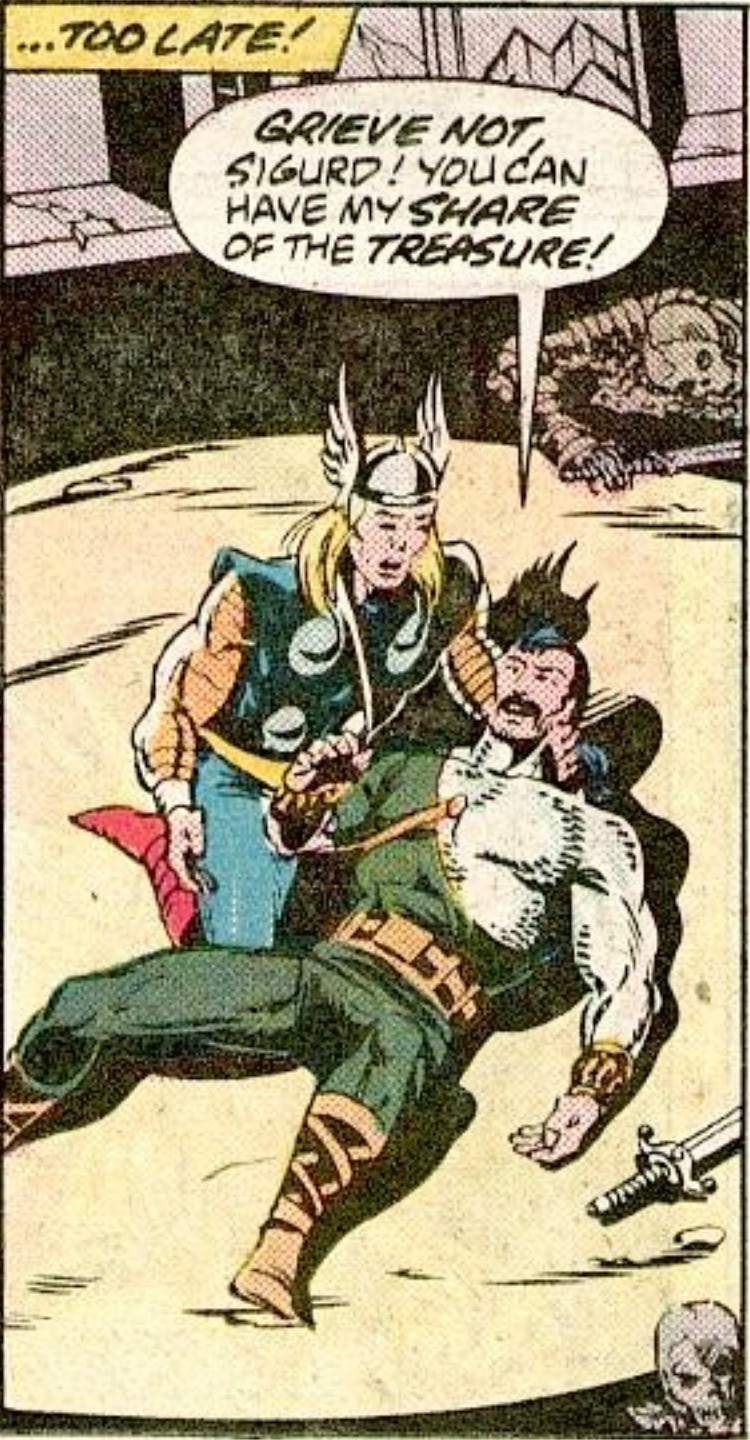


GOOD MAN! CAN YOU FIGHT?

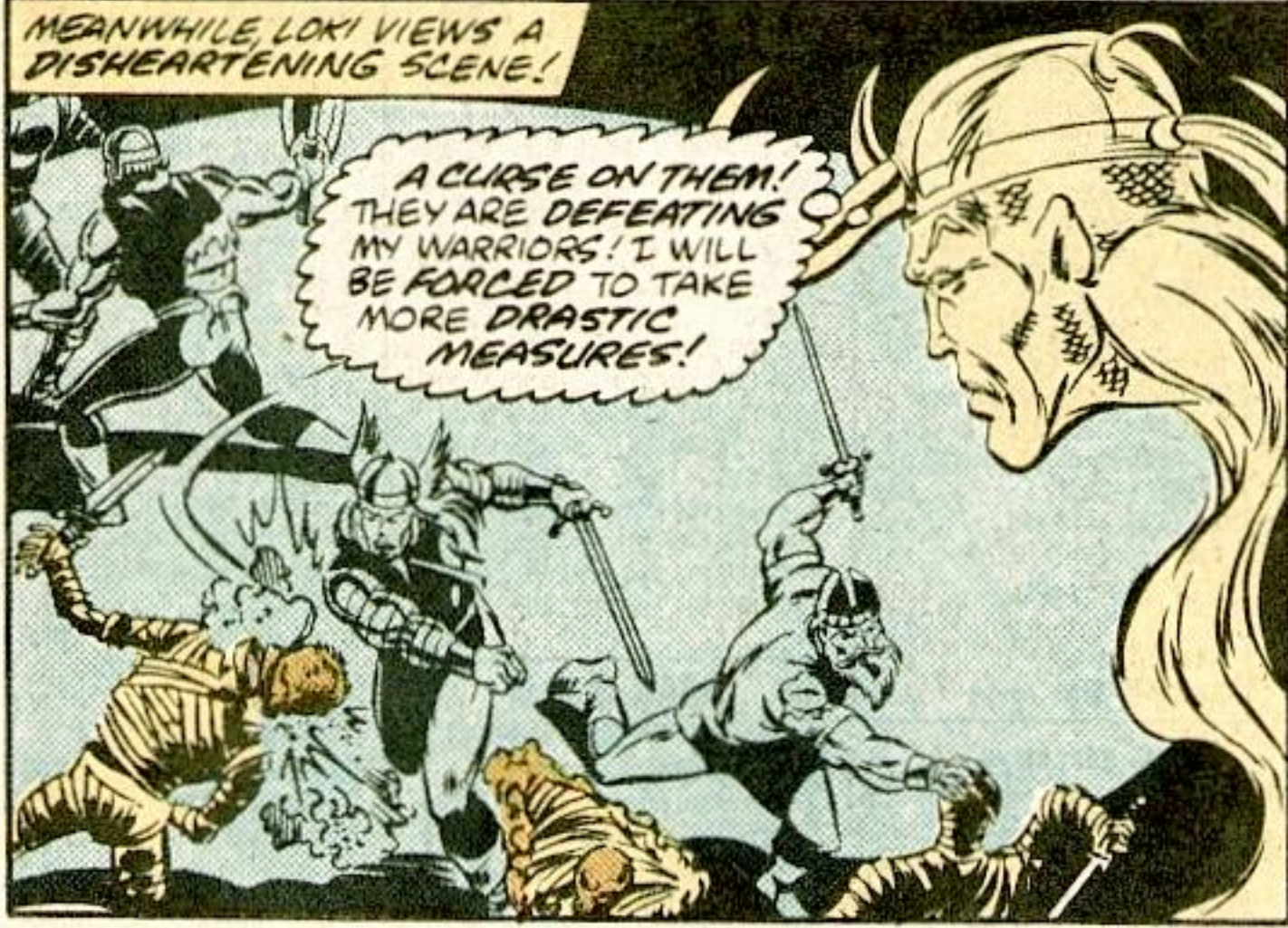
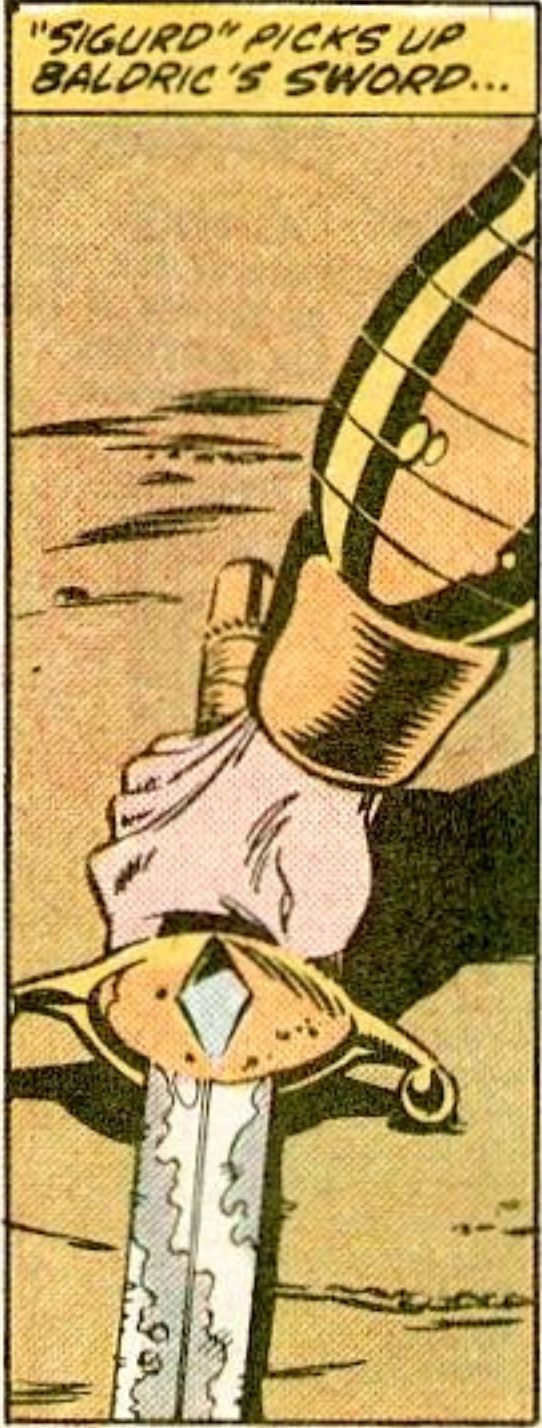


BALDRIC! LOOK OUT!!!

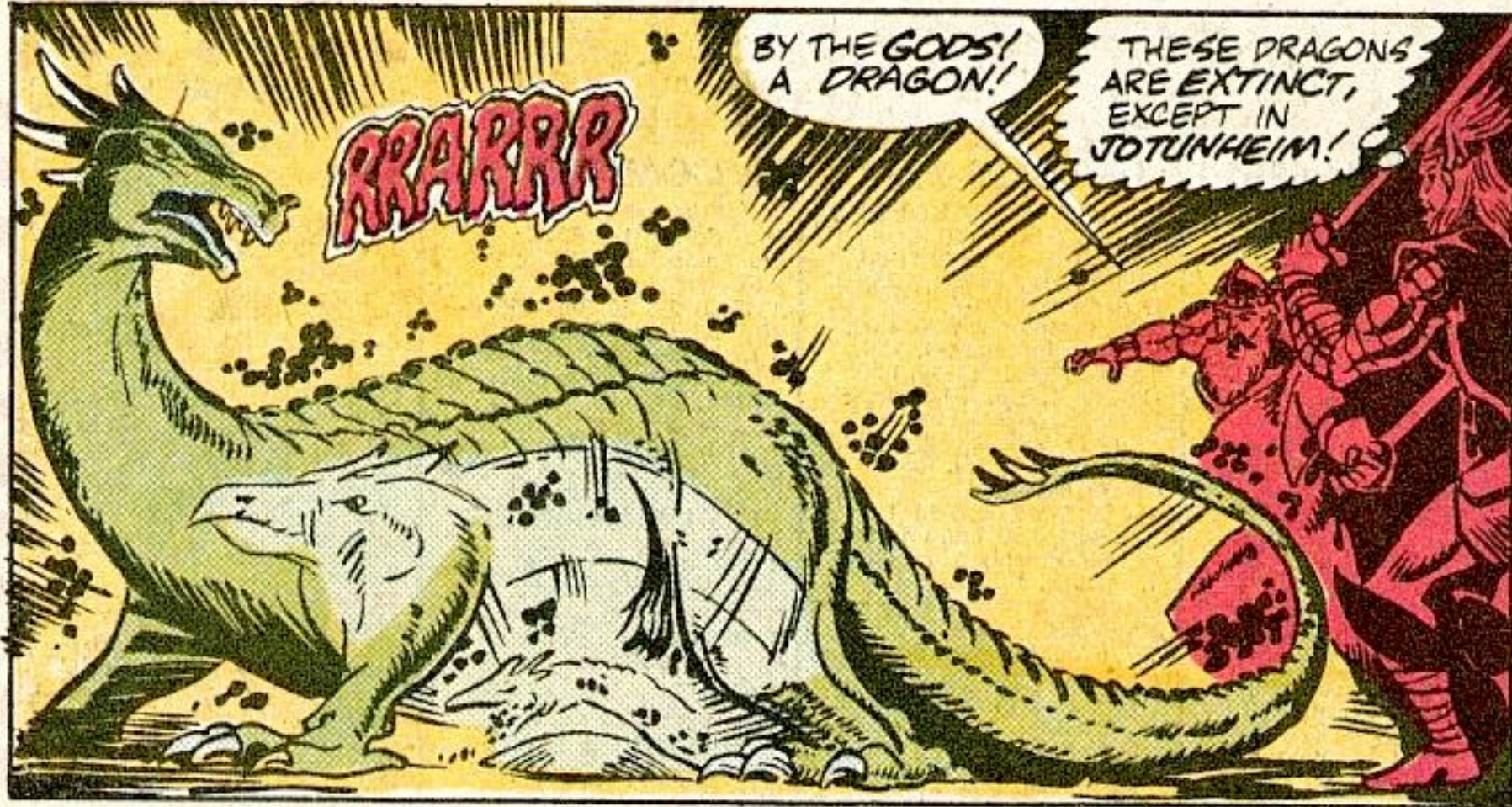






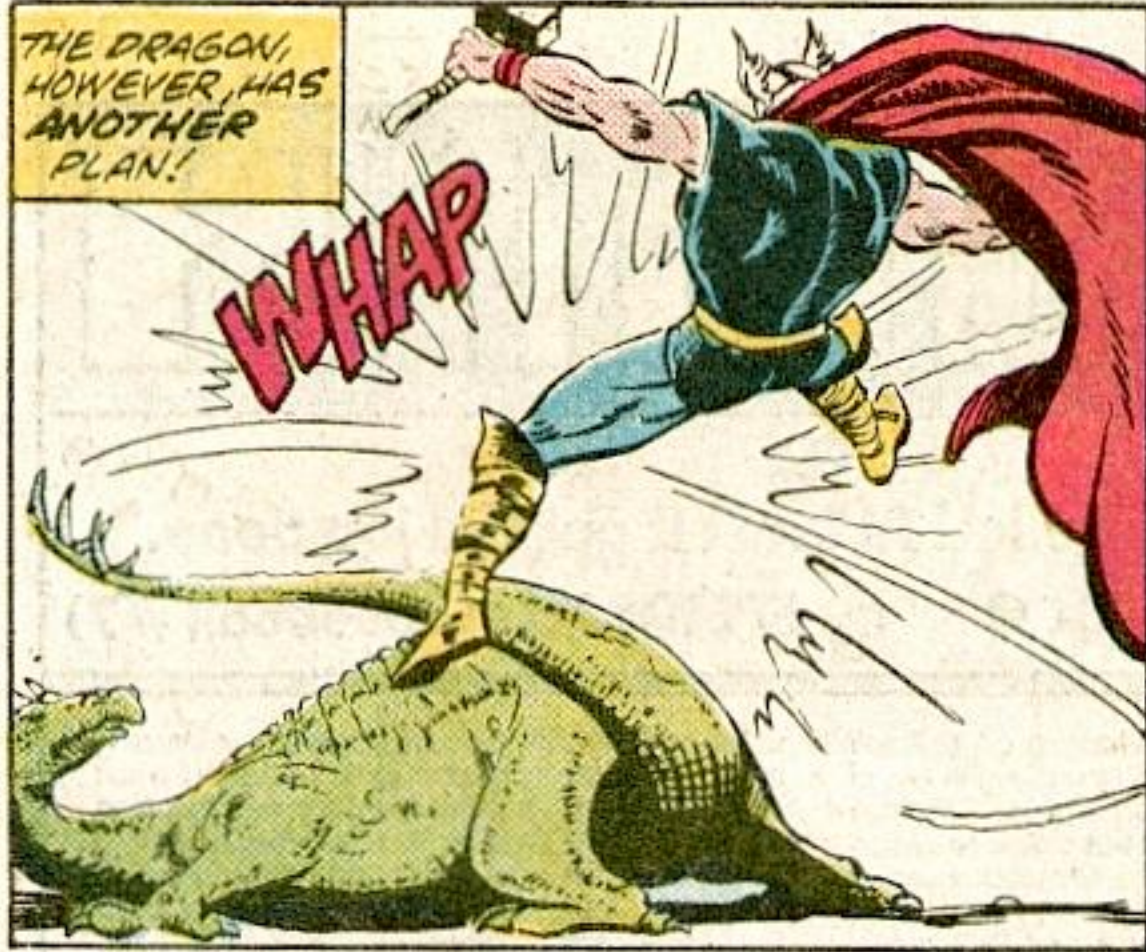






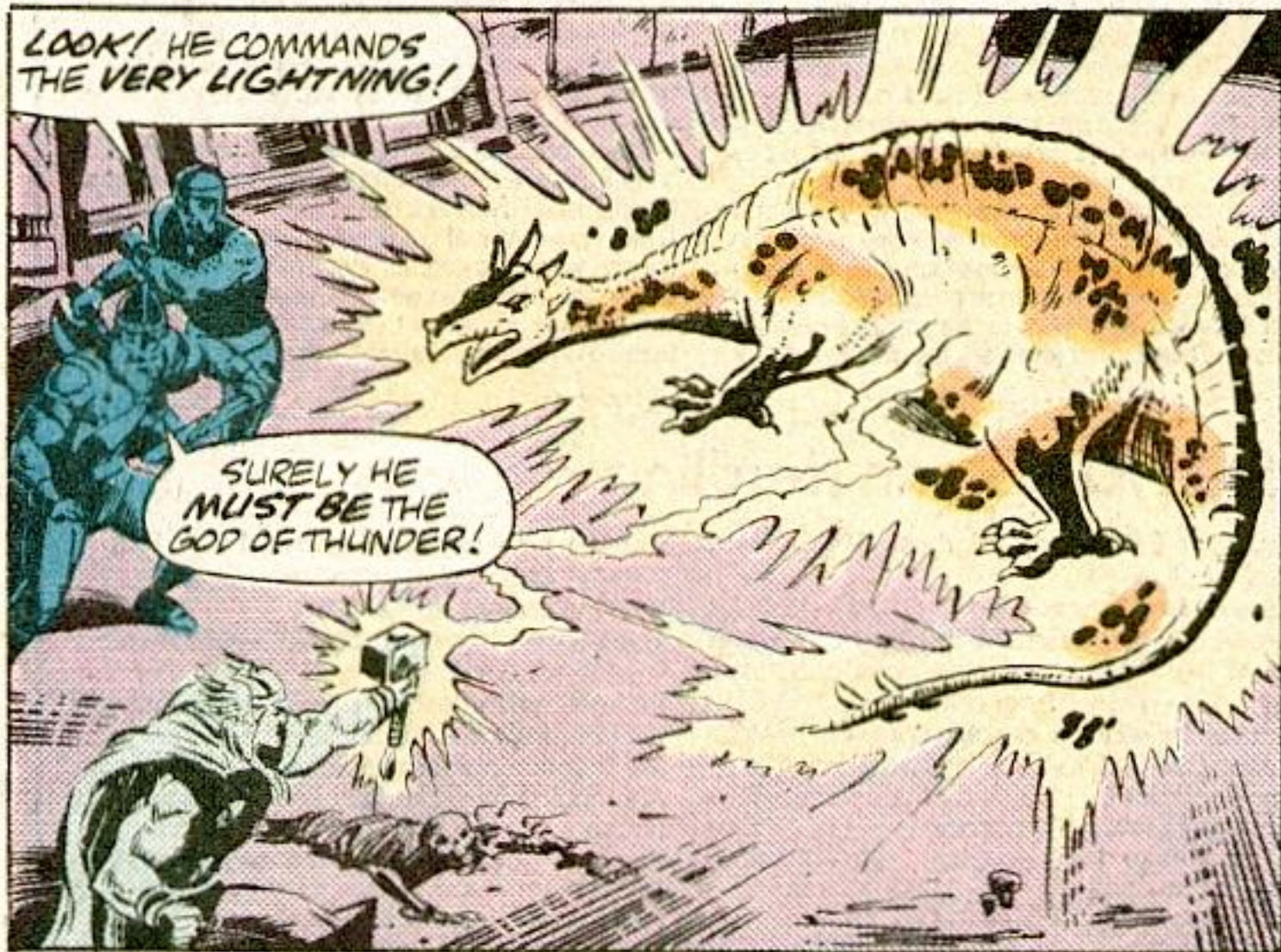


THE DRAGON, HOWEVER, HAS ANOTHER PLAN!



DO THY WORST, FIERY ONE! THOU CANST NOT DEFEAT THE GOD OF THUNDER!

LOOK! HE COMMANDS THE VERY LIGHTNING!



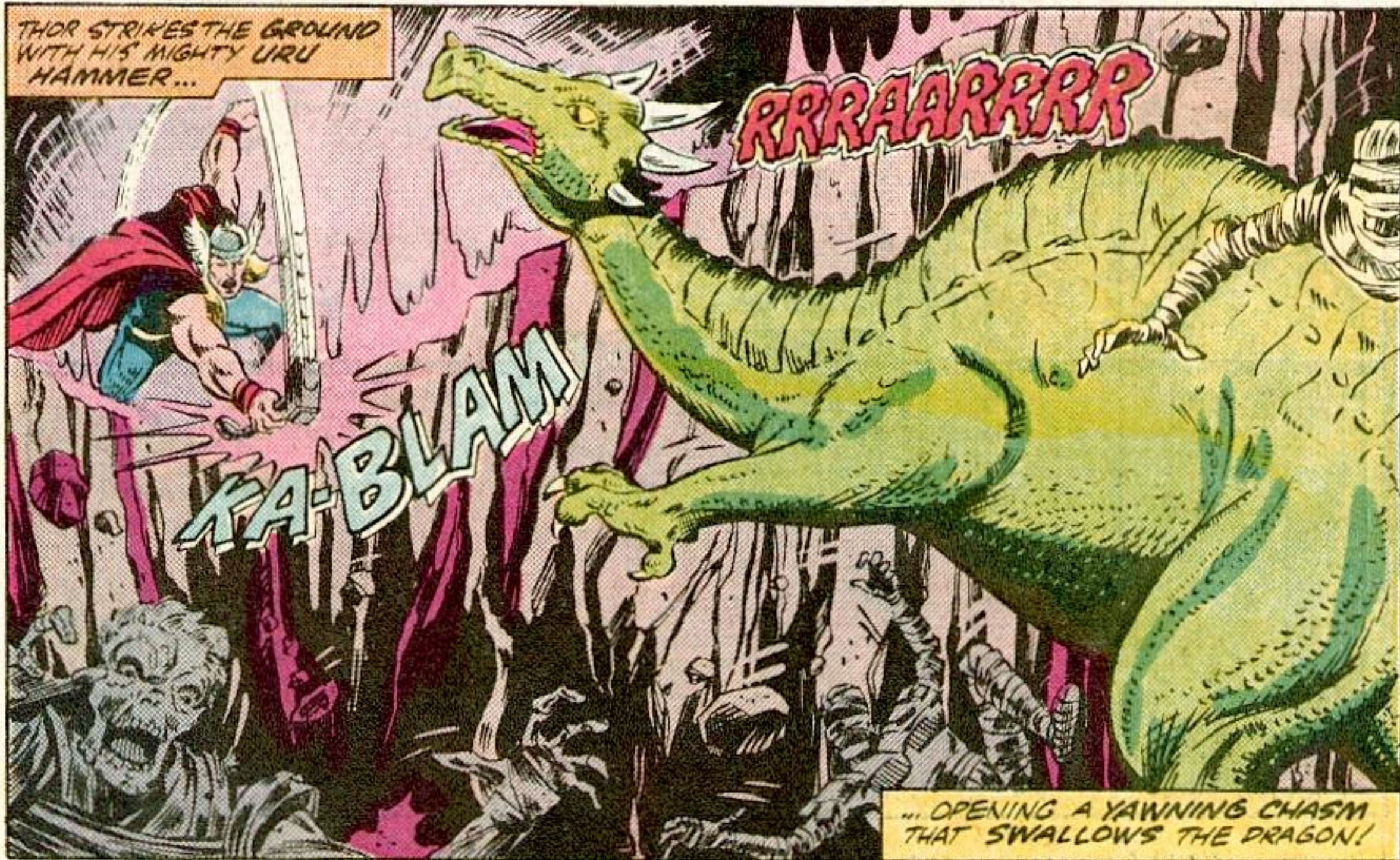
SURELY HE MUST BE THE GOD OF THUNDER!



I'VE LITTLE PATIENCE FOR THE LIKES OF THEE, MONSTER! I SHALL END THY THREAT--

--THEN LIKEWISE DEAL WITH THE GOD OF EVIL THAT DIDST CREATE THEE!

THOR STRIKES THE GROUND WITH HIS MIGHTY URU HAMMER...



RRRAARRRR

KA-BLAM

... OPENING A YAWNING CHASM THAT SWALLOWS THE DRAGON!



AS THE TREMORS CEASE  
AND THE EARTH SUBSIDES...!

BY THE ALL-  
FATHER, WHAT ART  
THOU DOING?

O, MIGHTY  
THOR! YOU HAVE  
ANSWERED OUR  
PRAYERS!

FORGIVE  
US, MIGHTY  
ONE, FOR NOT  
RECOGNIZING  
YOU SOONER!

ARISE, MY FRIENDS, BOW NOT  
BEFORE ME! THY COURAGE AND  
NOBILITY HAST EARNED THEE  
THE RIGHT TO STAND AS MY  
EQUALS!

NOW I MUST FIND LOKI!  
HE HAS CAUSED MUCH  
DEATH AND DESTRUCTION  
THIS DAY AND MUST PAY  
FOR HIS CRIMES! BY ODIN  
THIS SHALL NOT GO  
UNPUNISHED!

MINUTES LATER,  
IN THE MAJESTIC  
HALL OF ODIN.

LOKI,  
PREPARE  
THYSELF!!!





**THERE SHALL BE  
A RECKONING!!**  
THOU SHALT JOIN THY  
DAUGHTER IN  
HEL!!



**STAY THY  
HAND, THUNDER  
GOD!**

**FATHER,  
WHAT  
MEANS  
THIS?**



**THOU ART AS MUCH TO BLAME  
AS LOKI! THOU DIDST FOOL-  
ISHLY JEOPARDIZE THYSELF  
AND THE FUTURE OF THE  
REALM ETERNAL FOR THE SAKE  
OF A CURSED WAGER!!**

**SURELY THY PRIDE AND  
ARROGANCE ARE AS MUCH  
A CAUSE OF THE EVENTS  
THIS DAY AS LOKI'S DIS-  
HONORABLE BEHAVIOR!**



**THE ALL-FATHER SPEAKS  
TRULY, MY BROTHER! NONE  
FORCED THEE TO ACCEPT  
THE TERMS OF MY WAGER!  
AND WHAT OF THE  
MORTALS? THEY SHOWED  
NOBILITY AND COURAGE  
EQUAL OF THINE OWN!**







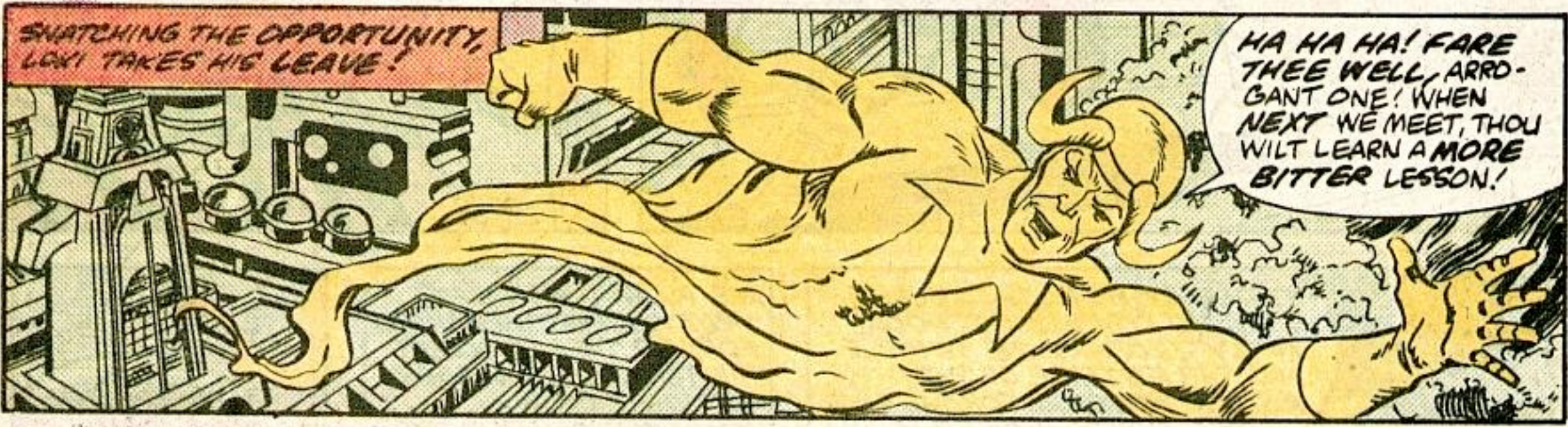
AS ALWAYS, FATHER, THY WORDS ARE WISDOM ITSELF. THOU ART SPARED THIS TIME LOKI, BUT BE WARNED, I WILL NOT TRIFLE WITH THEE IN THE FUTURE!



LOKI SHAMES ME, FATHER. HE IS RIGHT! I FOUND MORTALS TO BE POSSESSED WITH A GREAT COURAGE AND TENACITY, E'EN IN THE FACE OF HELA HERSELF!

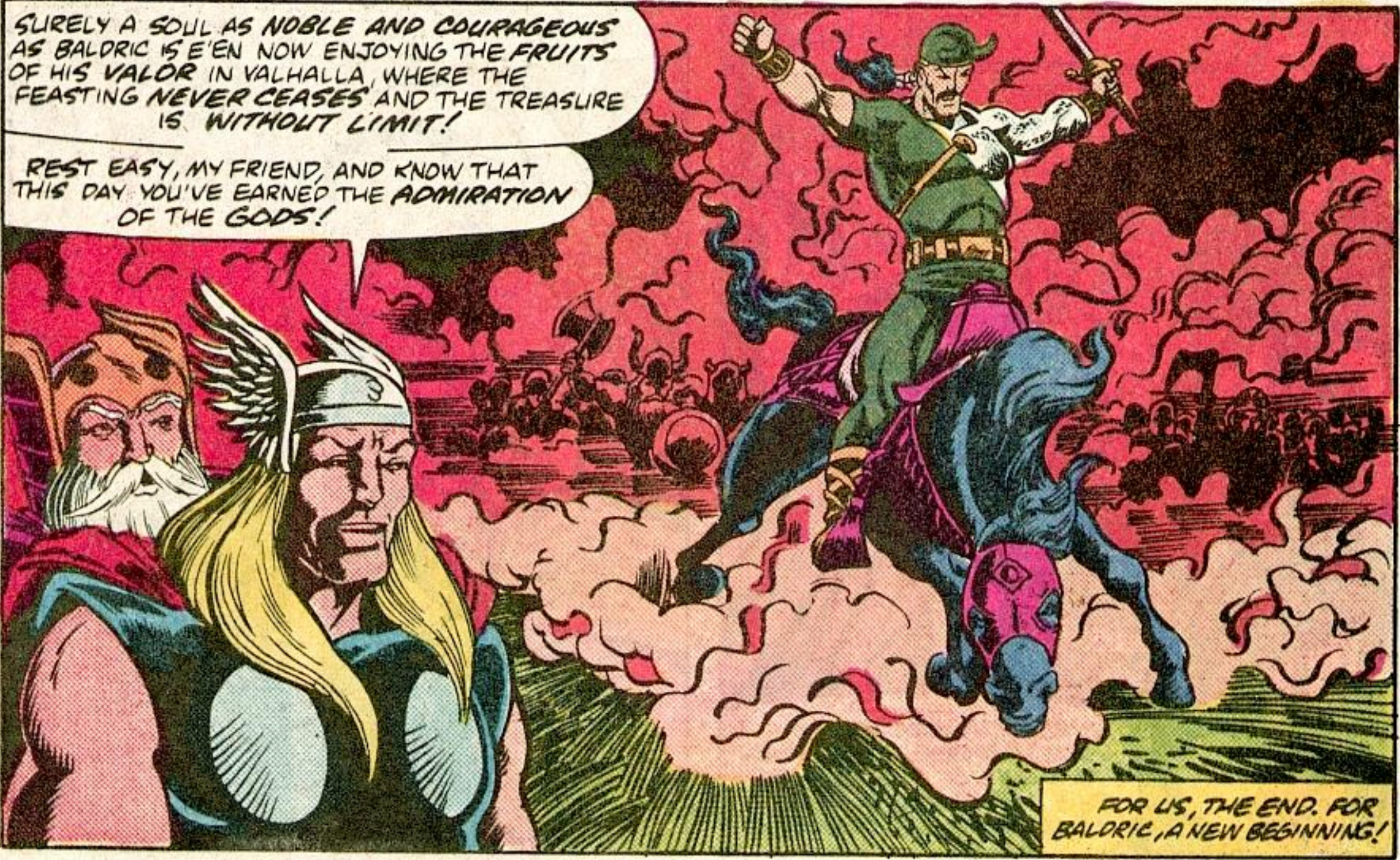
THEY ARE WORTHY OF OUR RESPECT AND PROTECTION! THE SEED OF GOODHOOD GROWS IN THEIR BOSOM AND MUST BE NURTURED!

THOU HAST LEARNED A GREAT LESSON, MY SON! THE BEHAVIOR OF A GOD HAS FAR-REACHING EFFECTS EVEN ON MIDGARD. THOU SHOULDST ALWAYS CONSIDER THY ACTIONS WITH THE UTMOST CARE!



SNATCHING THE OPPORTUNITY, LOKI TAKES HIS LEAVE!

HA HA HA! FARE THEE WELL, ARRD-GANT ONE! WHEN NEXT WE MEET, THOU WILT LEARN A MORE BITTER LESSON!



SURELY A SOUL AS NOBLE AND COURAGEOUS AS BALDRIC IS E'EN NOW ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF HIS VALOR IN VALHALLA, WHERE THE FEASTING NEVER CEASES AND THE TREASURE IS WITHOUT LIMIT!

REST EASY, MY FRIEND, AND KNOW THAT THIS DAY YOU'VE EARNED THE ADMIRATION OF THE GODS!

FOR US, THE END. FOR BALDRIC, A NEW BEGINNING!