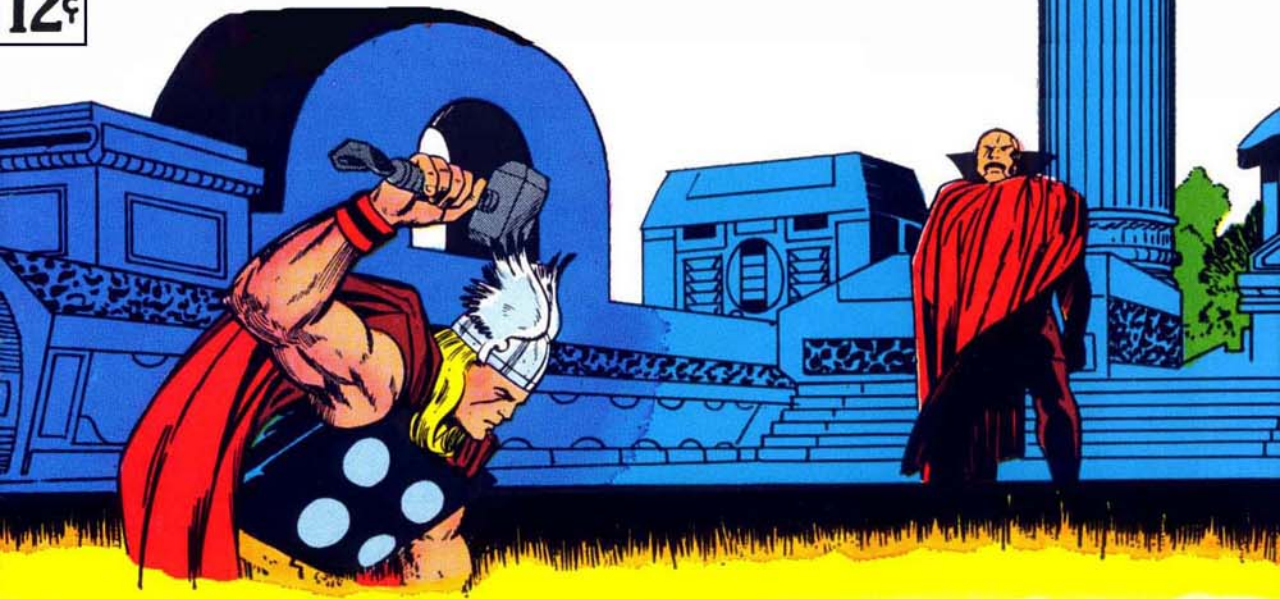




**MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP**

12¢

13



"THUNDER IN THE NETHERWORLD!"

THE MIGHTY THOR!

THUNDER IN THE NETHERWORLD!

PLUTO! LET THY WARRIORS GATHER! LET THINE OWN AWESOME POWERS BE ASSEMBLED! THOR, SON OF ODIN, ACCEPTS THY CHALLENGE!

THE GOD OF THUNDER SHALL BATTLE TO SAVE HERCULES!

CONSIDER WELL, MIGHTY ONE! IF THOU SHOULDST FIND DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF MY SUBJECTS, THEN THOR MUST TAKE THE PLACE OF HERCULES AS RULER OF THE DREADED NETHERWORLD-- FOR ALL ETERNITY!

LET US PROCLAIM A PROUD PAEAN OF PRAISE FOR MARVEL'S MOST PROLIFIC PURVEYORS OF PEERLESS PAGEANTRY--

STAN
THE MAN
LEE,
WRITER

JACK
KING
KIRBY,
ARTIST

VINCE
THE PRINCE
COLLETTA,
DELINEATOR

ARTIE
PUSSYCAT
SIMEK,
LETTERER

IT IS SAID THAT THOU ART *ENEMY* OF HERCULES! WHAT CAUSES THEE, THEN, TO RISK THY LIFE AND LIBERTY FOR THE ARROGANT OLYMPIAN?

THOUGH THE *SON OF ZEUS* HATH DONE BATTLE WITH ME IN THE PAST, HE HATH ACQUITTED HIMSELF AS AN IMMORTAL *SHOULD!*

THE POWER OF HIS ARM DOETH MATCH THE VALOR IN HIS HEART! THOU DIDST NOT DEFEAT HIM IN FAIR COMBAT!



I KNOW NOT WHAT *MADNESS* IS UPON THEE--BUT THE DIE IS CAST!

IT IS NOT *IF* THAT ONE SO VALIANT BE DOOMED--WITH NONE TO BE HIS CHAMPION!

MYSTIC FINGERS OF FLAME--RISING ALL ABOUT ME! THUS DOES EVIL *PLUTO* SEAL HIS COMPACT!

THE *PRINCE OF POWER* IS ALREADY TRAPPED WITHIN THE *SMOLDERING NETHERWORLD!*

AND NOW I SHALL SEND THEE TO JOIN HIM!



THOUGH *HE* IS FORBIDDEN TO DO BATTLE FOR HIS FREEDOM, THOU MUST FIGHT EVERY INCH OF THE WAY--

NEVER HAS A CAUSE BEEN MORE *HOPELESS!* NEVER HAS MAN OR IMMORTAL FACED SUCH AWESOME *ODDS!*



AND NOW--AWAY WITH THEE!

THE ENTRANCE TO MY REALM LIES *THERE*--AT THY FEET! ONE STEP FURTHER, AND THOU SHALT ENTER THE PORTALS OF *BLAZING ENERGY*--TO RETURN *NEVERMORE!*

ENTER, I SHALL! AND RETURN I SHALL!! THUS SPEAKS THE *THUNDER GOD!*



REMEMBER, SON OF ODIN--
WHATEVER FATE BEFALLS
THEE--THOU HAST BROUGHT
IT UPON THINE OWN HEAD!



LET THAT BE THE LAST
THOUGHT THOU SHALT
CARRY WITH THEE--
INTO ABYSMAL DEFEAT!



SLOWLY, SAVAGELY THE
UNSEEN ELEMENTS OF
INFINITY ALTER THEIR
ENDLESS PATTERN--AND
THEN, WITHOUT WARNING
--THE MISTS CLEAR--
AND THOR BEHOLDS--

THE ETERNAL
NETHERWORLD--
THE MOST DREADED
REALM OF ALL!

'TIS HERE I SHALL
GAIN FOR HERCULES
HIS FREEDOM--OR
LOSE MINE OWN
--TILL THE END OF
TIME!



AND THEN, UTTERLY WITHOUT WARNING--

STAND FAST, INTERLOPER!
I BE CERBERUS, GUARDIAN
OF THE DEPTHS!!

NO FURTHER SHALT THOU
GO--UNLESS IT BE ON THY
KNEES, IN ABJECT SUBMIS-
SION AND SURRENDER!

THE CRAVEN
CERBERUS--
WHOSE NAME
IS SPOKEN IN
WHISPERS
THRUOUT THE
UNIVERSE!

ALL WHO
DWELL BELOW
MUST CRINGE
IN FEAR
BEFORE MY
MIGHT!



THE GOD OF
THUNDER DEFERS
TO NONE!

THEN
THE GOD
OF
THUNDER
DIES!



NOT SO,
MURDEROUS
ABHORRENCE!
'TIS AN
ASGARDIAN
WHO FACES
THEE!

CLANG



THEN LET IT BE AN ASGARDIAN
WHO FALLS BENEATH MY HELMET'S
RAY OF DESTRUCTION!



THE SPEED OF THOR
DOETH MAKE A MOCKERY
OF THEE AND THY
WEAPON!

AND NOW--PREPARE TO
FEEL THE THUNDER OF
MINE OWN HAMMER!



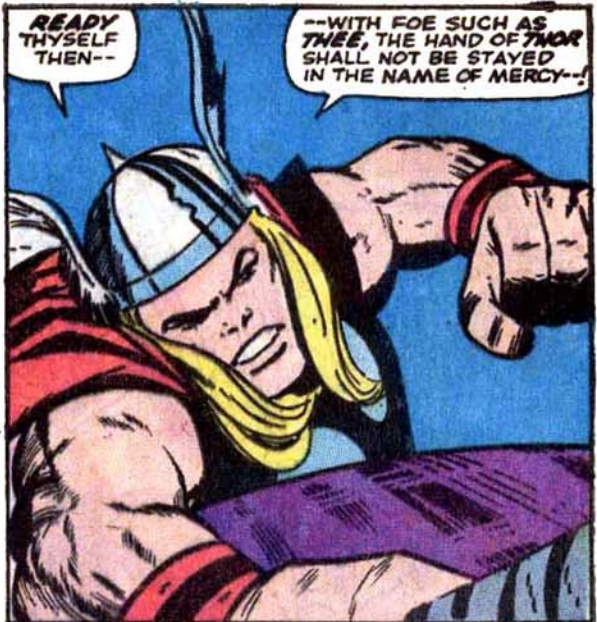
THINE EMPTY THREATS ARE LIKE UNTO THINE OWN *SIZE*, CERBERUS--

--TRULY AWESOME TO BEHOLD--YET, AS *ODIN* IS MY JUDGE, THEY BE WITHOUT SHADOW OR SUBSTANCE!



READY THYSELF THEN--

--WITH FOE SUCH AS *THEE*, THE HAND OF *THOR* SHALL NOT BE STAYED IN THE NAME OF MERCY--!



AT THAT VERY INSTANT, AN INCALCULABLE DISTANCE AWAY, IN A NEW YORK APARTMENT, WE FIND--

SINCE REVEALING HIS *TRUE IDENTITY* TO ME, MY BELOVED HAS GONE TO *ASGARD*, TO RENOUNCE HIS IMMORTAL HERITAGE--SO THAT WE CAN BE *MARRIED* HERE ON EARTH!

WELL! I SEE THAT MY ROMANTIC ROOMMATE IS STILL OBSESSED WITH THOUGHTS OF THE GOD OF THUNDER!

BUT HE SHOULD HAVE RETURNED TO ME LONG BEFORE THIS! AND YET--NOT A *WORD* SO FAR--!



OH, TANA--TANA! I NEVER THINK OF HIM AS THE *THUNDER GOD*! TO ME, HE'S MERELY THE ONLY MAN I COULD EVER SO DESPERATELY *LOVE*--!

LOVE!!

AN EMOTION FIT FOR ONLY *FOOLS*--AND *WEARLINGS*!



TANA! HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH A THING? JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE! SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU--

STOP YOUR BABBLING, JANE FOSTER! I'VE HEARD ENOUGH!

WHERE I COME FROM, LOVE IS AS OUT-DATED AN EMOTION AS **PITY**, OR **SORROW!**

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM--??

WHEN YOU ANSWERED MY NEWS-PAPER AD FOR A ROOMMATE, YOU NEVER **DID** TELL ME WHERE--**OH!!**

THAT WAS CARELESS OF ME, JANE FOSTER! I SHOULD NOT HAVE UTTERED A REMARK WHICH WOULD GIVE YOU CAUSE TO **SUSPECT!**

BUT NOW IT IS **DONE--**

--AND THERE CAN BE NO **TURNING BACK!**

WHAT YOU ARE SENSING NOW IS THE **AURA OF MAJESTY** WHICH I HAVE JUST UN-FETTERED!

YOU CALL YOURSELF **TANA NILE--** YET, WHO--OR **WHAT--** ARE YOU??

THAT YOU SHALL LEARN IN DUE TIME! BUT FIRST, I MUST INSURE THAT YOU CANNOT ALTER MY **PLANS!**

LET YOUR KNEES GROW **WEAK!** LET THE STRENGTH EBB FROM YOUR **BODY!** FROM THIS MOMENT HENCE YOU ARE NO LONGER MISTRESS OF YOUR OWN **WILL!**

I MUST REMOVE YOU FROM THIS PLACE BEFORE THE MIGHTY **TWOR** CAN REAPPEAR! FOR HE--OF ALL WHO LIVE-- MUST NEVER LEARN MY **SECRET!**

THEREFORE, IT IS NECESSARY THAT YOU TAKE A **LONG JOURNEY--** ONE FROM WHICH YOU MUST **NEVER RETURN!**

BUT, WE HAVE DALLIED LONG ENOUGH ON THE SURFACE OF EARTH! WE MUST RETURN AGAIN TO THE SINISTER, STYGIAN NETHERWORLD--WHERE WE FIND--

I'LL NEVER REMAIN CAPTIVE HERE! **MERCULES** WILL FIGHT HIS WAY TO FREEDOM, AS I HAVE EVER DONE THRUOUT THE **AGES!**

LUCKY IT IS THAT THE PRINCE OF POWER HAS BEEN **WEAKENED--**

NOT SO THIS TIME, SON OF **ZEUS!** BY SIGNING THE OLYMPIAN CONTRACT, YOUR OWN **STRENGTH** HAS BEEN ALL BUT SAPPED AWAY!

FOR, EVEN SO, OUR OWN ASSEMBLED **MIGHT** CANNOT FULLY **SUBDUE** HIM!



CEASE THY STRUGGLES, HERCULES!

ONCE THIS CROWN DOETH SIT UPON THY HEAD, THIS WORLD BECOMES THY DOMAIN--AND PRISON AS WELL--UNTIL TIME ITSELF SHALL EXIST NO MORE!

PLACE IT UPON HIM! THE LAW OF OLYMPUS FORBIDS THAT HE RESIST!



HAY! MAY! I AM A WARRIOR BORN! IF I MUST KNOW DEFEAT, LET IT BE IN BATTLE! LET IT BE AT THE HANDS OF A MORE POWERFUL FOE!

BUT NOT THIS! BY THE TOWERING SPIRES OF ETERNAL OLYMPUS--NOT THIS!

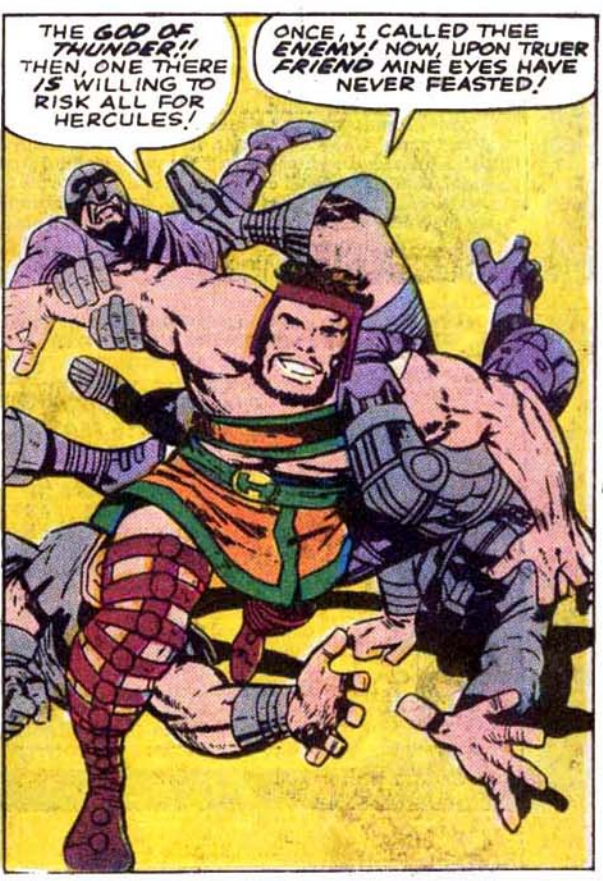
THE PRINCE OF POWER CANNOT RULE THE DREGS OF THE UNIVERSE!! HATH REASON FLED?? HATH JUSTICE PERISHED??



BUT THEN, A BOOMING COMMAND THUNDERS THRU THE GREAT CHAMBER--

STAND AWAY, SCIONS OF EVIL! THE SON OF ZEUS IS NOT YET THINE!

NOT SO LONG AS THE HAMMER OF THOR CAN STRIKE IN HIS BEHALF!



THE GOD OF THUNDER!! THEN, ONE THERE IS WILLING TO RISK ALL FOR HERCULES!

ONCE, I CALLED THEE ENEMY! NOW, UPON TRUER FRIEND MINE EYES HAVE NEVER FEASTED!

BUT, BEFORE THE POWERFUL OLYMPIAN CAN ADVANCE ANOTHER STEP, HE IS STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS BY THE ENCHANTMENT OF THE PACT HE HAS SIGNED!



**DEIST, HERCULES!
IT IS FORBIDDEN
THAT THOU
LIFT THY
HAND IN
BATTLE!
ONLY
ANOTHER
MAY DO SO
FOR THEE!**

MIGHTY THOR--THOUGH I HAVE POWER ENOW TO SHAKE THE UNIVERSE--TIS THEE WHO MUST STRIKE IN MY BEHALF!



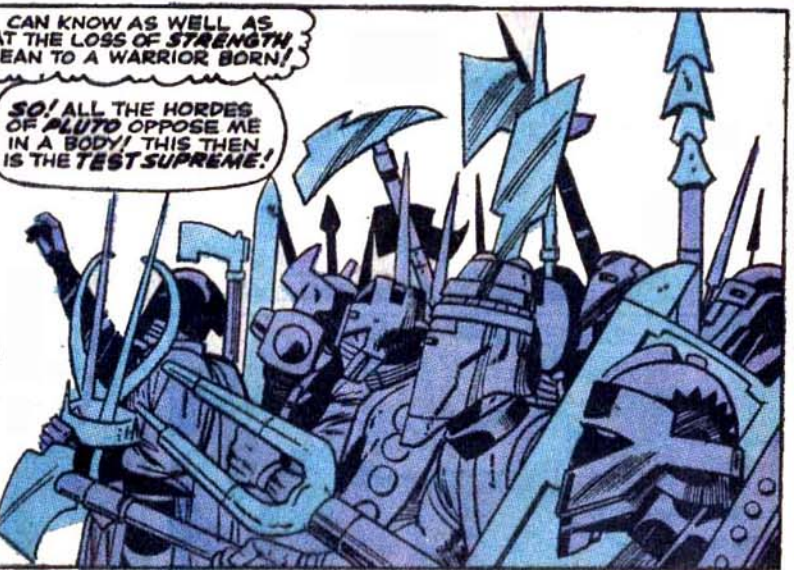
I PRAY THAT THINE ARM BE STRONG, AND THINE EYE BE TRUE! KNOW YOU THAT HERCULES COULD WISH NO NOBLER CHAMPION!

MY HEART GRIEVES TO SEE PROUD HERCULES THUS STRIPPED OF HIS AWESOME POWER!



NONE CAN KNOW AS WELL AS I WHAT THE LOSS OF STRENGTH CAN MEAN TO A WARRIOR BORN!

SO! ALL THE HORDES OF PLUTO OPPOSE ME IN A BODY! THIS THEN IS THE TEST SUPREME!



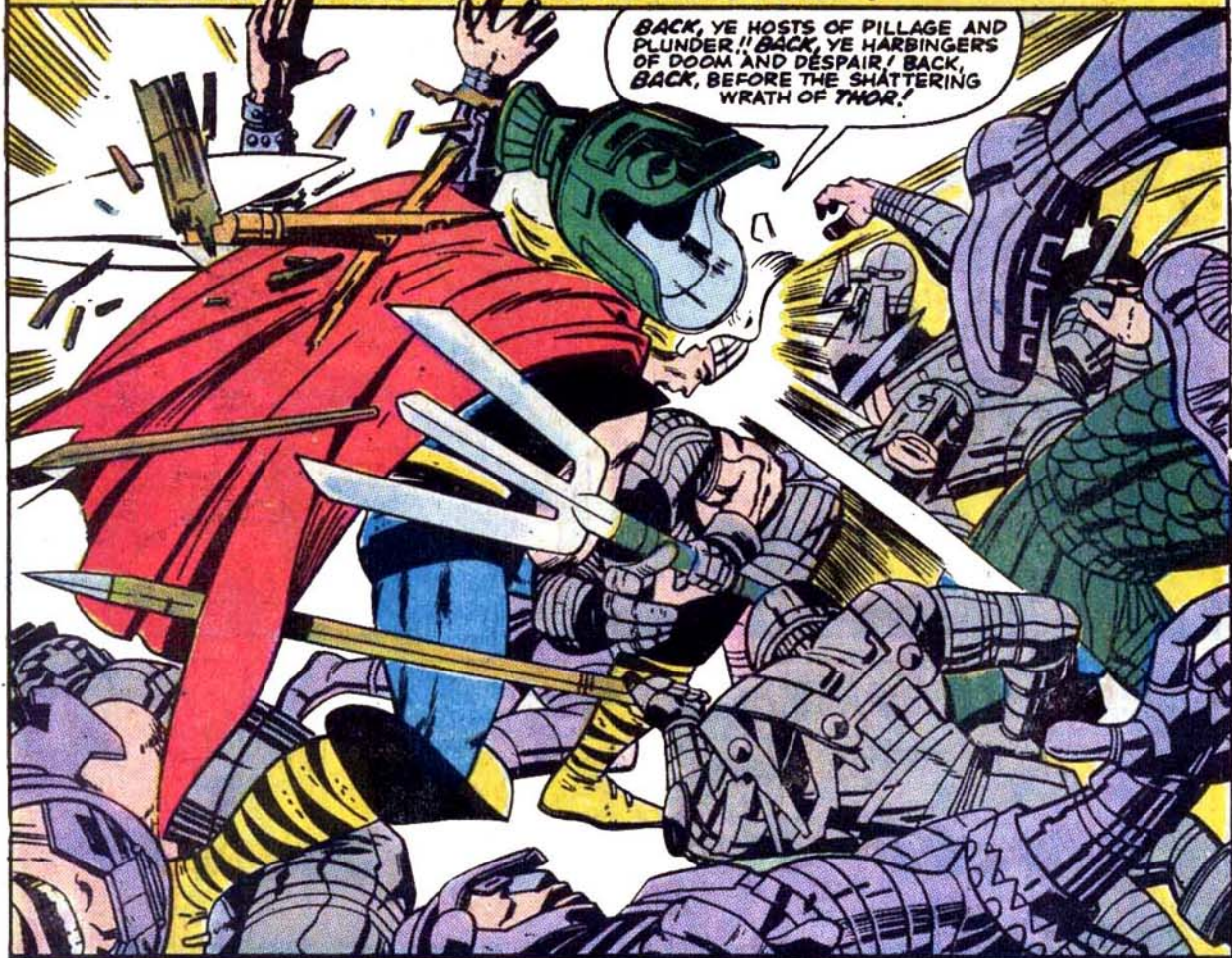
BY THE BRISTLING BEARD OF ODIN-- I SHALL NOT FAIL!



HAVE AT THEE, THEN! TO ARMS, ONE AND ALL! THE GOD OF THUNDER STRIKES--!



WE'D LIKE TO LETTER A LOT OF NEW **SOUND EFFECTS** IN THIS FRANKLY FABULOUS PANEL--HONEST! BUT, JUST BETWEEN US, WE CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE ONE THAT COULD DO JUSTICE TO THE IMPACT, THE FURY, THE SHEER CATAclysmic POWER OF THOR'S ATTACK--!



BACK, YE HOSTS OF PILLAGE AND PLUNDER! BACK, YE HARBINGERS OF DOOM AND DESPAIR! BACK, BACK, BEFORE THE SHATTERING WRATH OF THOR!

AND THEN, AT LAST--

THEY SCATTER-- LIKE SEEDS OF GRAIN BEFORE THE WINDS OF MARCH!

AND YET, IN THEIR MANNER, I DO NOT SENSE DEFEAT!

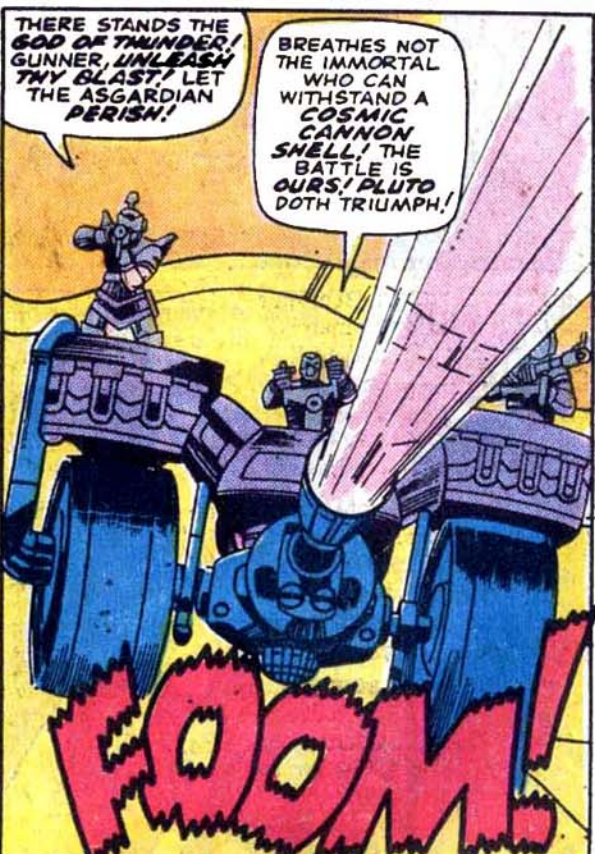
THEY DO BUT LEAVE THE FIELD OF BATTLE TO THE NEXT FORCE THAT I MUST OPPOSE!

AND, IN TRUTH, I DO BEHOLD IT NOW--!



THERE STANDS THE GOD OF THUNDER! GUNNER, UNLEASH THY BLAST! LET THE ASGARDIAN PERISH!

BREATHES NOT THE IMMORTAL WHO CAN WITHSTAND A COSMIC CANNON SNELL! THE BATTLE IS OURS! PLUTO DOTH TRIUMPH!



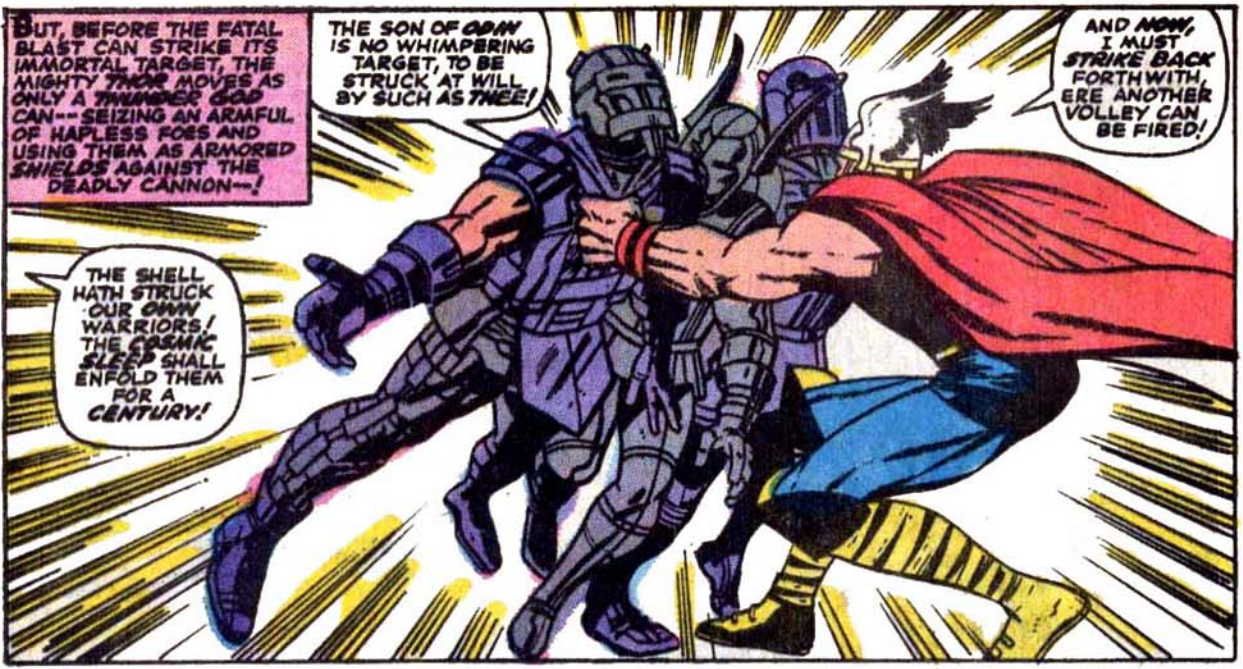
FOOM!

BUT, BEFORE THE FATAL BLAST CAN STRIKE ITS IMMORTAL TARGET, THE MIGHTY THOR MOVES AS ONLY A THUNDER GOD CAN-- SEIZING AN ARMAFUL OF HAPLESS FOES AND USING THEM AS ARMORED SHIELDS AGAINST THE DEADLY CANNON--!

THE SON OF ODIN IS NO WHIMPERING TARGET, TO BE STRUCK AT WILL BY SUCH AS THEE!

AND NOW, I MUST STRIKE BACK FORTHWITH, ERE ANOTHER VOLLEY CAN BE FIRED!

THE SHELL HATH STRUCK OUR OWN WARRIORS! THE COSMIC SLEEP SHALL ENFOLD THEM FOR A CENTURY!



ASGARD FOREVER!!



STRIKING THE AWESOME CANNON DEAD CENTER, THE HAMMER OF THOR RENDS IT IN TWAIN, AS THE MADLY-SPINNING IRON WHEELS INEXORABLY HURTLE THRU THE WALLS THEMSELVES--

ANOTHER CHALLENGE HATH BEEN MET! BUT, THE DEADLY PITFALLS OF THE NETHERWORLD ARE VERILY WITHOUT LIMIT!

EVEN NOW, THE MINIONS OF PLUTO CONTRIVE TO CRUSH ME WITH SOME NEW DEVICE!



AND, THE PROPHETIC MUSINGS OF THOR BEAR FRUIT. A SPLIT-SECOND LATER--



THE WEAPONS OF THE NETHERWORLD ARE WELL-NIGH INEXHAUSTIBLE, THUNDER GOD--

--AS YOU SHALL FORTHWITH SEE!

THE LEVER HE PUSHES! WHAT DREAD DANGER DOETH THAT PORTEND?



THE FLOOR BENEATH MY FEET HATH DROPPED AWAY! A GLASS-LIKE CAGE NOW SURROUNDS ME!

I AM BEING SWIFTLY, SILENTLY, LOWERED-- BUT-- TO WHENCE--?

PREPARE TO BE RENDERED HELPLESS, DOOMED ONE-- FOR THOU ART FINALLY TRAPPED-- WITHIN A SHATTERPROOF TURBULENCE CHAMBER!

PLUTO'S TURBULENCE TRAP!! ARTIFICIAL WIND PRESSURE DESIGNED TO SLAY ANYTHING THAT LIVES!



AND SO FAREWELL, IMMORTAL OF ASGARD --FAREWELL-- FOR THE FINAL TIME!

WHOOOSH



WHILE, BACK IN NEW YORK--AT THAT SELFSAME SECOND--

ALL OF A SUDDEN--I FEEL A COLD CHILL-- AS THOUGH AN ICY WIND IS CLUTCHING MY HEART!

PUT EVERY OTHER THOUGHT OUT OF YOUR MIND! YOU MUST OBEY ONLY ME!

NOW-- DEPART!

I MUST OBEY-- ONLY YOU--!



GO! AS FAR FROM HERE AS POSSIBLE! DO NOT LOOK BACK! DO NOT RETURN! THOR MUST NEVER FIND YOU AGAIN!

THOR MUST-- NEVER-- FIND ME-- AGAIN--!

GO! GO! GO!

I DO NOT-- UNDERSTAND-- AND YET-- I KNOW --I CAN NEVER-- DISOBEY YOU--!



IF HE LIVES, I KNOW THAT THE THUNDER GOD WILL RETURN FOR THE ONE HE LOVES!

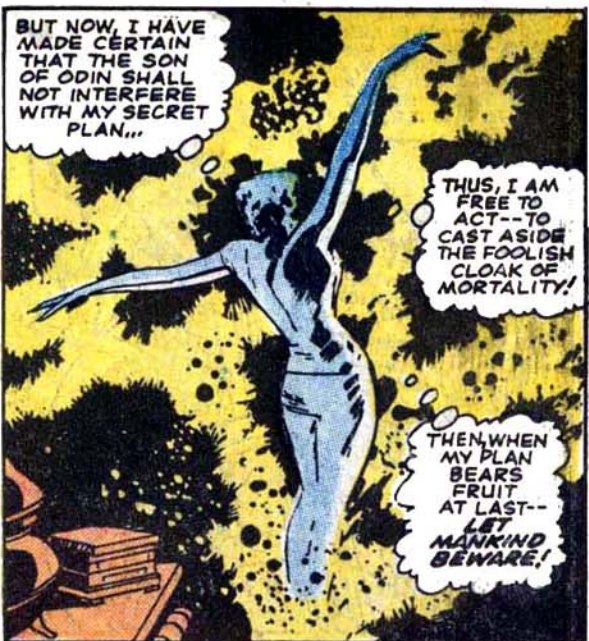
BUT, WHEN HE FINDS HER GONE, HE WILL LEAVE! HE WILL SEARCH THE FARTHEST REACHES OF SPACE FOR HER! AND THUS MUST IT BE!

THE FATE OF JANE FOSTER DOES NOT MATTER, SHE IS MERELY A PAWN-- IN A FAR GREATER GAME OF CELESTIAL CHESS!



LOOK AT THEM, SCAMPERING IN THE STREET BELOW! POOR UNSUSPECTING MORTALS! SO PITIFULLY WEAK--SO TOTALLY HELPLESS!

OF ALL THOSE TEEMING MILLIONS, NOT ONE IS AWARE OF THE DARK DESTINY WHICH SO SURELY AWAITS THEM!

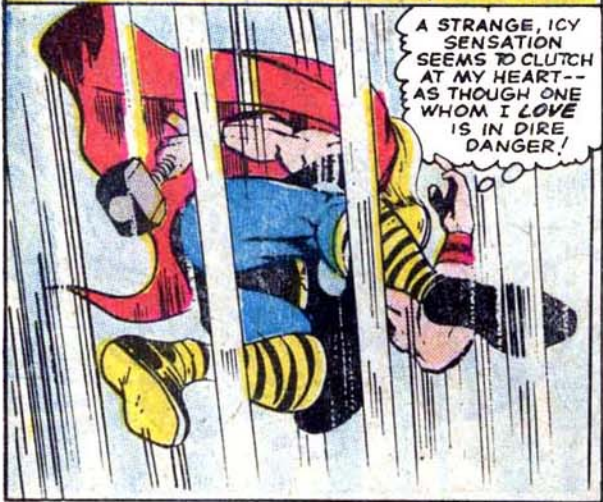


BUT NOW, I HAVE MADE CERTAIN THAT THE SON OF ODIN SHALL NOT INTERFERE WITH MY SECRET PLAN...

THIS, I AM FREE TO ACT--TO CAST ASIDE THE FOOLISH CLOAK OF MORTALITY!

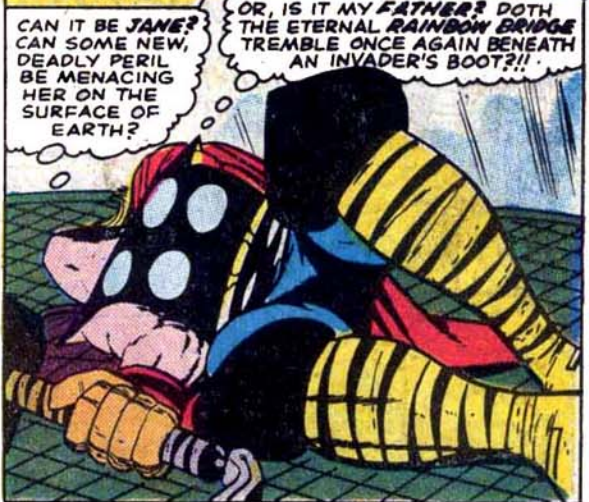
THEN, WHEN MY PLAN BEARS FRUIT AT LAST--LET MANKIND BEWARE!

AND, AT THE SAME INSTANT THAT THE LOVELY JANE FOSTER FELT THE MYSTERIOUS COLD CHILL--BACK WITHIN THE TURBULENCE CHAMBER, WE FIND--



A STRANGE, ICY SENSATION SEEMS TO CLUTCH AT MY HEART--AS THOUGH ONE WHOM I LOVE IS IN DIRE DANGER!

THUS IT IS THAT THOR DOES NOT RISE TO HIS FEET WHEN THE TURBULENCE ENDS--FOR HIS BRAIN STILL IS SEETHING--



CAN IT BE JANE? CAN SOME NEW, DEADLY PERIL, BE MENACING HER ON THE SURFACE OF EARTH?

OR, IS IT MY FATHER? DO TH THE ETERNAL RAINBOW BRIDGE TREMBLE ONCE AGAIN BENEATH AN INVADER'S BOOT?!!

NAY! I MUST BANISH SUCH THOUGHTS FROM MY BRAIN! THERE IS BATTLE STILL TO BE WON, HERE IN THE KINGDOM OF PLUTO--!



THE THUNDER GOD LIES MOTIONLESS!

HE HATH BEEN OVER-COME!

SEIZE HIM! THE VICTORY IS OURS!

BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER MOVE CAN BE MADE--



CLANG!

HE LIVES! THOR STILL LIVES!

HIS HAMMER HATH FREED HIM WITH BUT ONE BLOW!



BEHOLD HIS FIGHTING STANCE-- HIS BLAZING EYES-- THE WAY HIS LIMBS DO STRAIN, AS THOUGH ANXIOUS TO HURL THEMSELVES INTO BATTLE!

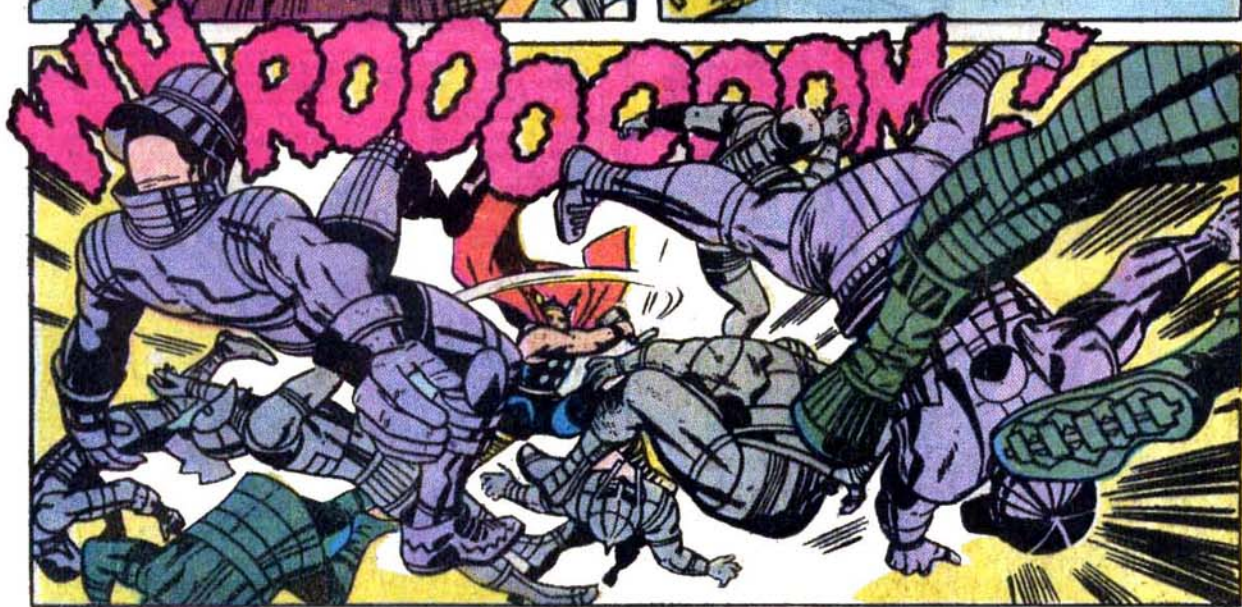
LOOK TO THY DEFENSES, EVIL ONES--!

NEVER HATH THE NETHERWORLD KNOWN HIS LIKE!



IN THE NAME OF IMPERIAL ASGARD-- BY THE GRACE OF OMNIPOTENT ODIN--

NOW STRIKES THOR!!



WH ROOOOON!!



ARMS ALONE CANNOT STOP THE GOLDEN-HAIRC'D IMMORTAL! LET THE CRUSHER APPEAR!!

NOTHING CAN BREAK THE CRUSHER'S GRIP!!

HOLD THY TONGUE, INSOLENT ONE! THOU KNOWEST NOT THE POWER WHICH IS MINE!



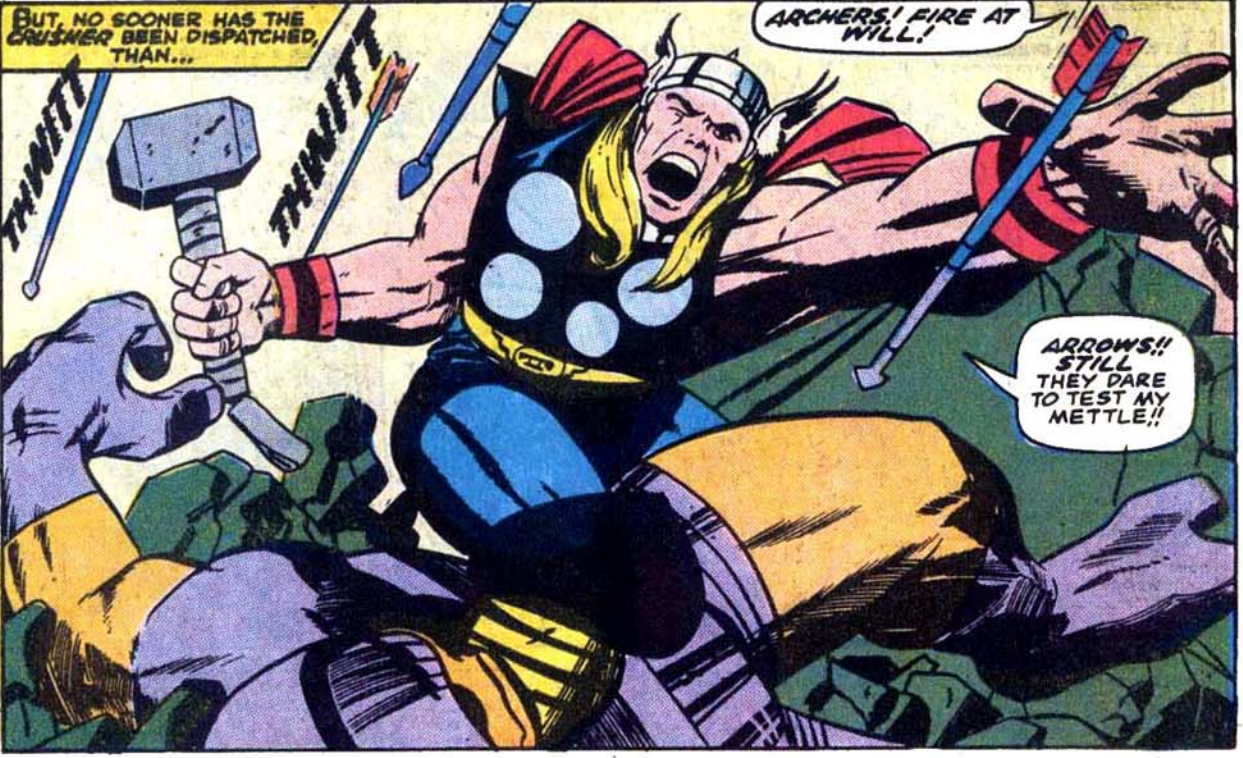
WITH THOSE WORDS, THE FIGHTING-MAD ASGARDIAN HURLS THE SO-CALLED CRUSHER FROM HIM AS A MIGHTY STALLION WOULD THROW AN UNWARY RIDER--!

BEGONE, THOU GROTESQUE CARICATURE OF A WARRIOR!

BUT NO SOONER HAS THE CRUSHER BEEN DISPATCHED, THAN...

ARCHERS! FIRE AT WILL!

ARROWS!! STILL THEY DARE TO TEST MY METTLE!!



THE MARKSMEN STAND ATOP YON STONE DEMON IDOL--WHILE THOR SEEMS DEFENSELESS BELOW!

BUT, IF THE IDOL ITSELF SHALL CRUMBLE--THEN THE ARCHERS TOO MUST TOPPLE INTO BLEAK DEFEAT!

SO BE IT!!

KARRA KARRA



YET STILL THE RUTHLESS,
SEEMINGLY UNENDING
ATTACK CONTINUES--

NOW I AM CONFRONTED
BY AN ARMY OF FLAME-
THROWERS! BUT,
MY SWIRLING HAMMER
SHALL DISPEL THEIR
FIERY BLASTS!

WHOOSH!

DO THY
WORST
CREATURES OF
THE DARK! THY
REALM ITSELF
SHALL CRUMBLE
ERE THE GOD
OF THUNDER
TASTES
DEFEAT!

SUDDENLY,
A NEW
VOICE
RINGS
OUT--

ENOUGH! LET
THE COMBAT
CEASE!!

PLUTO!

WITHIN A MATTER OF
MINUTES, YOU HAVE TORN
DOWN WHAT IT HAS TAKEN
ME AGES TO CREATE!

I CAN WITNESS NO
FURTHER DESTRUCTION
TO THE REALM I HAVE
RULED SINCE THE
DAWN OF TIME!

MY SUBJECTS WOULD
FIGHT TO THE END IF
I WISH IT-- BUT YOUR
POWER IS TOO GREAT!
IT WOULD AVAIL ME
NOTHING!

THY PLACE IS HERE,
PLUTO! THOU WOULDST
NOT HAVE FOUND
CONTENTMENT IN THE
WORLD ABOVE!

YOU ARE RIGHT,
THUNDER GOD!
I KNOW THAT NOW!

I SHALL FREE THEE OF THY FATE, OLYMPIAN!

THEN-- MIGHTY THOR
HAS TRIUMPHED?!!

AY! THE ORDEAL
IS ENDED!

"THE FATEFUL CHANGE!"

MY GLORIOUS RECORD PROVES THAT VOLSTAGG KNOWS NOT THE MEANING OF FEAR! BUT, WHY DO WE RACE SO QUICKLY INTO A LAND WHERE DEATH LURKS EVERYWHERE?

YON CITY OF MUSPELHEIM HAS FALLEN TO THE HORDES OF HAROKIN! WE MUST LIBERATE THE LAND WHILE WE CAN!

TRUE, HOGUN! YET, I PERCEIVE NO SIGNS OF BATTLE! HOW DID HAROKIN ACHIEVE HIS CONQUEST?

THERE CAN BE BUT ONE ANSWER, FANDRAL...

... HAROKIN HAS SEIZED THE ENCHANTED HVALLOCK'S EYE! POSSESSING IT, NONE CAN STAND AGAINST HIM!

SCRIPT:
STAN LEE
ART:
JACK KIRBY
INKING:
VINCE COLLETTA
LETTERING:
SAM ROSEN
COSTUMES:
ASGARD HABERDASHERY

SEE HOW HAROKIN'S BARBARIANS DISPORT THEMSELVES IN FIERCE AND SAVAGE MANNER!

YET, NO TRACE OF THE DEFENDERS OF MUSPELHEIM DO I SEE! IN TRUTH, THE VICTORS HAVE CONSIGNED THE VANQUISHED TO THE DUNGEONS!

HAIL, HAROKIN, CONQUEROR OF ALL! HAIL WARLOCK'S EYE, WHEREIN LIES HIS MATCHLESS POWER!

ENOUGH SPEECH-MAKING! 'TIS A TIME FOR WILD CAROUSING!



TO THE DUNGEONS WITH YOU!! FIND THE IMPRISONED GARRISON, AND SET THEM FREE!

BUT, WHAT OF THEE, GOD OF THUNDER?

I SEARCH FOR HAROKIN! SO LONG AS HE POSSESSES THE WARLOCK'S EYE, NONE THAT LIVE CAN SAFELY SLEEP!



GRIM HOGUN... BEHOLD! WE HAVE FOUND THE VANQUISHED GARRISON!

BE STOUT OF HEART, CAPTIVE ONES... VALIANT VOLSTAGG IS HERE!

MOVE YE THEN!

THE JAILER HATH BEEN TRULY DISPATCHED!



**HOGUN! BEHIND THEE! WE HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED!
THE LEGIONS OF HAROKIN ATTACK!**

**DEATH TO THE INTRUDER!
NOT AN ASGARDIAN SHALL
REMAIN ALIVE!**

**'TIS THOU
WHO SHALL
TASTE DEFEAT..
THOUGH THY
NUMBERS BE
ENDLESS!**

**KNOW YOU 'TIS HOGUN, THE
GRIM YOU FACE! HOGUN,
DOTH LIVE FOR BATTLE!**

**LET HIM WHO HATH
TIRED OF LIFE
ADVANCE-- ADVANCE
TO FEEL THE POWER
OF HOGUN'S BATTLE
MACE!**

**NAY, GRIM ONE! THOU MAY NOT
HAVE ALL THE COMBAT TO THYSELF!
FANDRAL WOULD SHARE THE
EXALTATION WITH THEE!**

**THOUGH MY EVERY
LIMB ACHES TO
JOIN THEE, I MUST
MAKE THE SUPREME
SACRIFICE AND TURN
MY ATTENTION
ELSEWHERE!**

**FOR ANOTHER
HATH NEED OF
VOLSTAGG'S AWE-
SOME MIGHT!**

**SHOULDST THOU NEED HELP,
DASHING FANDRAL ... SAY BUT
TO THYSELF: "WHAT WOULD
MIGHTY VOLSTAGG DO IF
HE WERE SORELY PRESSED?"**

**NOW MUST I HASTEN
TO THE SIDE OF THE
GOD OF THUNDER!**

**WE SHALL FOLLOW
THEE SOON, GARGANTUAN
ONE! NONE IN THIS
MOTLEY GROUP ARE
WORTHY METTLE FOR
OUR SKILL!**

BUT, WHILE THE LUMBERING VOLSTAGG SEARCHES IN VAIN, THOR HAS ALREADY FOUND THE ONE HE SOUGHT...

GOD OF THUNDER OR NO... THOU CANNOT MATCH THE BATTLE PROWESS OF HAROKIN!

FI! A DOZEN LIKE THEE CAN I DEFEAT WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST EXERTION!



YOU LIE, THUNDER GOD!

NONE SPEAK THUS RUDELY TO THE SON OF ODIN!!

WOK!!



I HAVE FELLED HIM...YET, THE BATTLE IS NOT YET ENDED!

I MUST RECOVER THE WARLOCK'S EYE... THOUGH ONLY HAROKIN MAY COMMAND ITS APPEARANCE...

STRANGE... I HAD NOT EARLIER NOTICED HIS APPEARANCE! IN TRUTH, HE DOTH RESEMBLE ME!



I BEGIN TO PERCEIVE THE GLIMMER OF A PLAN! IF NONE BUT HAROKIN CAN ORDER FORTH THE WARLOCK'S EYE...

... THEN WHY SHOULD NOT THE GOD OF THUNDER ACTUALLY BE HAROKIN?



THUS, MOMENTS LATER...

WE MUST TELL HAROKIN OF THE DANGER THAT THREATENS OUR LEGIONS!

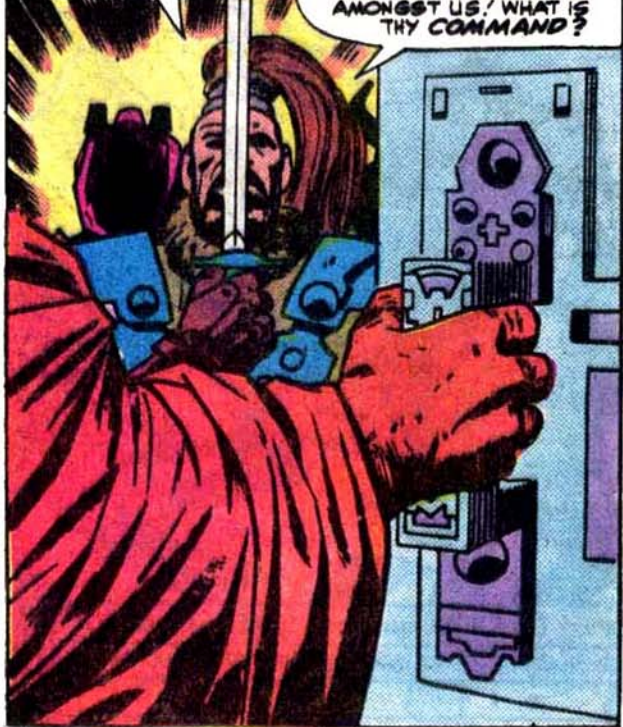
THERE IS NOT A MINUTE TO LOSE!

IF TWO ASGARDIANS BE AMONG US ... HOW MANY OTHERS MAY ALSO BE LYING IN WAIT?



MASTER OF BARBARIANS, WE SALUTE THEE!

WE ARE UNDER ATTACK, HAROKIN... THERE BE WARRIORS OF ASGARD AMONGST US! WHAT IS THY COMMAND?



THERE CAN BE BUT ONE RESPONSE...

WE MUST EMPLOY THE WARLOCK'S EYE! WITH SUCH A WEAPON, EVEN ASGARD SHALL CRUMBLE BENEATH OUR HEELS!



NEXT:
"THE WARLOCK'S EYE!"



BENOLD! WITH MY OWN HANDS, I TEAR THE OLYMPIAN CONTRACT! PLUTO SHALL REMAIN LORD OF THE NETHERWORLD!

GOD OF THUNDER--ONCE I CALLED THEE UNWORTHY TO BATTLE HERCULES! TRULY, THE MADNESS MUST HAVE BEEN UPON MY BROW!

'TIS OF NO FURTHER CONSEQUENCE!



BUT NOW-- I AM FREE! FREE!

ALREADY, I FEEL THE INVISIBLE BONDS OF ZEUS SLIP FROM MY LIMBS!

MY STRENGTH IS RETURNED TO ME!

HERCULES IS PRINCE OF POWER ONCE MORE!



HAVE A CARE, OLYMPIAN--LEST YOU AGAIN INCUR THE WRATH OF PLUTO BY CAUSING CARNAGE IN HIS REALM!

UNHAND ME, THUNDER GOD! NONE TELL HERCULES--NO!

YOUR PARDON THOR! IN TRUTH, I DID FORGET MY MONUMENTAL DEBT TO THEE!



BUT, WHAT OF HIM WHO DECEIVED ME?? IS THE EVIL PLUTO NOT TO FEEL THE TERRIBLE VENGEANCE OF HERCULES?

HAVE A CARE, SON OF ZEUS! IN THE NETHERWORLD, 'TIS MY POWER WHICH IS SUPREME!

LET THERE BE NO FURTHER BATTLE! ONLY THE WEAKLING SEEKS TO PROVE HIS STRENGTH AT EVERY TURN!



THY WORDS HAVE WISDOM, THOR--EVEN AS THY LIMBS HAVE POWER ENOW TO MAKE HERCULES PAUSE!

HENCEFORTH, I CALL THEE FRIEND!

AND I THEE!



WHAT RIOTOUS REVELS WE SHALL ENJOY TOGETHER! WHAT BATTLES WE SHALL SHARE, AT EACH OTHER'S SIDE!

ALAS, OLYMPIAN--REVELS ARE NOT FOR SUCH AS ME--

AND, MY HAMMER SWINGS ONLY FOR JUSTICE--NEVER FOR THE THRILL OF BATTLE ALONE!



BUT, WHAT GOOD THEN TO BE A GOD?

THY CARELESS QUERY, HERCULES, IS FAR MORE PROFOUND THAN THOU SUSPECT!

NEXT ISSUE:

THE STRANGE SECRET OF TANA NILE!

WE HAVE SPOKEN!