

THOR

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™



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THE
MIGHTY

THOR

SIDE BY SIDE WITH
HERCULES
--AGAINST THE
WAR-GOD!



BATTLE
AT THE GATES OF
HELL!

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

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WILT THOU **LOOK** AT THEM?
THEY GAME LIKE COMMON
CHILDREN... TESTING
EACH OTHER'S STRENGTH
FOR THE **PRIVILEGE**
OF FACING PLUTO.

LET THEM **FIGHT**.
BUT AN HOUR AGO,
THEY BATTLED IN
EARNEST... 'TIS A
PLEASURE TO SEE THEM
STRUGGLING AS
FRIENDS.

COME, HERCULES-- FINISH
THIS BLOND WEAKLING, AND
WE'LL SETTLE TO SOME
SERIOUS DRINKING.

THE
BEARDESS
PUP CAN'T
BE **THAT**
STRONG.

* LAST ISSUE, FOR
THOSE OF YOU WHO
WERE ELSEWHERE. --ROY.

EITHER SHUT
THYSELF
UP, KRATOS--
OR I'LL DO
IT **FOR**
THEE.

THIS
MATCH IS
SERIOUS...
AYE,
THUNDER
GOD?

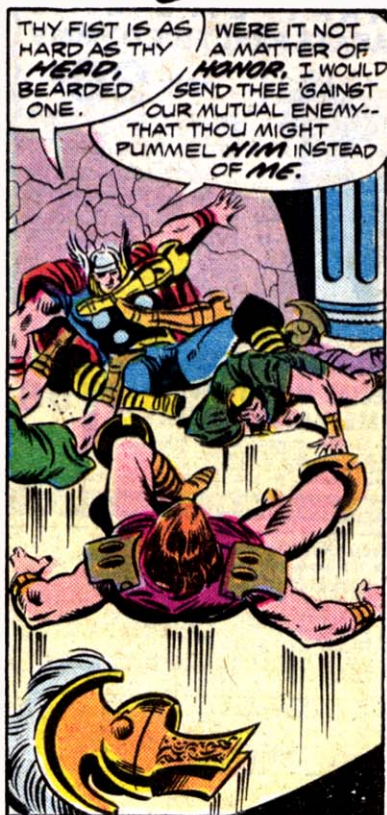
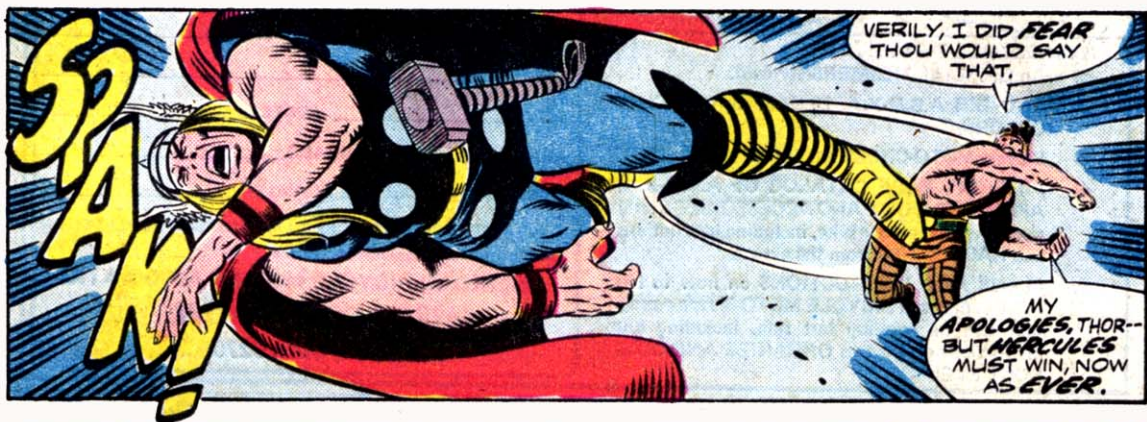
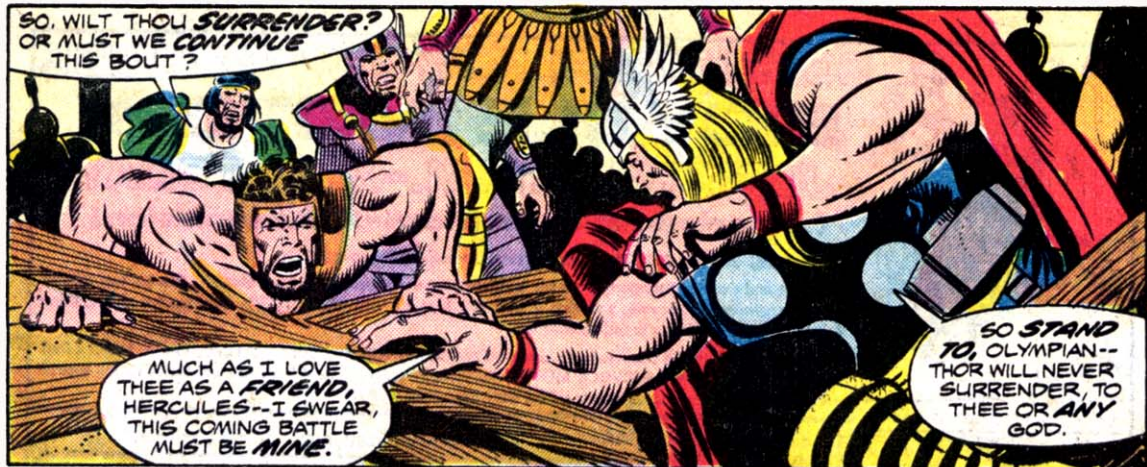
AYE. THOUGH
WE **BOTH**
DESIRE BATTLE
WITH PLUTO, THAT
TRAITOROUS
LORD OF THE
UNDERWORLD...
ONLY **ONE** MAY
STRIKE WITH
HONOR.

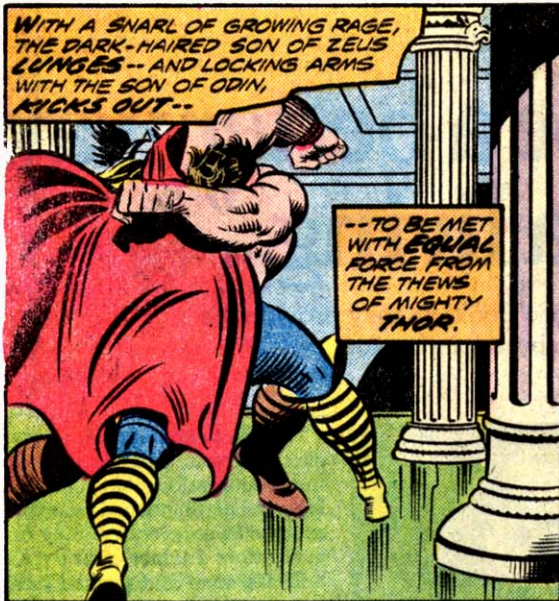
AND--OLD
FRIEND--**THOR**--
WILL--BE--
THAT--
ONE--!



BY MY **SOUL**!
IT SEEMS WE'RE
STRONGER THAN
THIS **TABLE**,
ASSGARDIAN!

IT'S GIVEN
BEFORE **EITHER**
OF US!





PLUTO: THE LORD OF THE UNDERWORLD, THE MASTER OF THE ONE-WINGS. BUT IS HE THE ONLY OLYMPIAN GOD INVOLVED IN THIS AS-YET-UNREVEALED PLOT AGAINST ASGARD? OR IS THERE ANOTHER VILLAIN INVOLVED-- ONE WHOSE IDENTITY IS NOT YET KNOWN TO THOR AND HIS ENTHUSIASTIC COMPANION, HERCULES?

COULD IT BE THIS GOD, PERHAPS, NOW RIDING THROUGH THE DARK FOREST AT THE BASE OF MOUNT OLYMPUS?



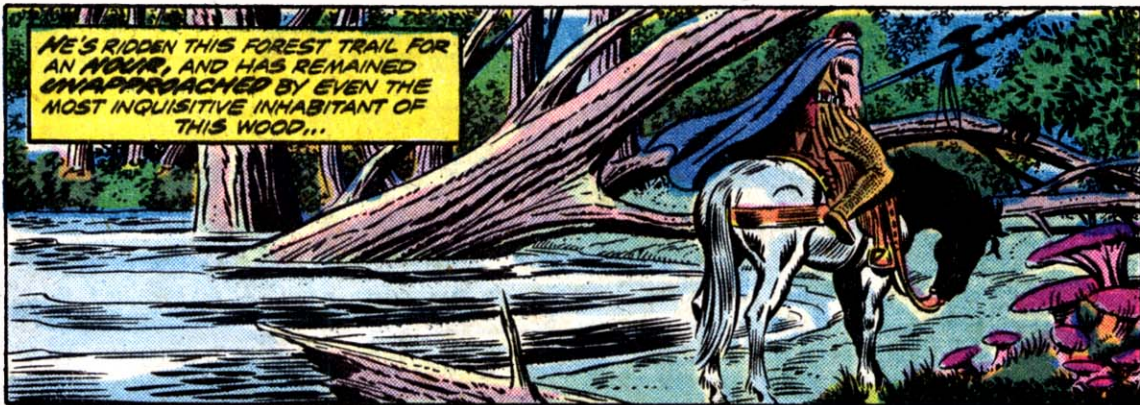
COULD IT BE ARES...



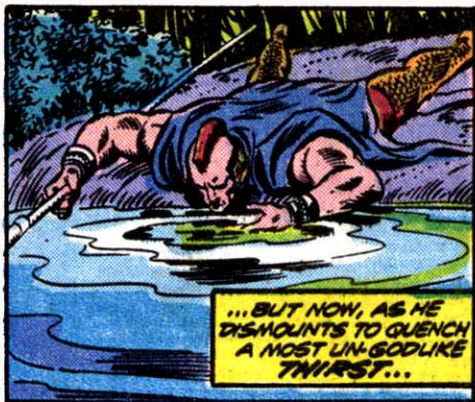
...THE VOLATILE GOD OF WAR?

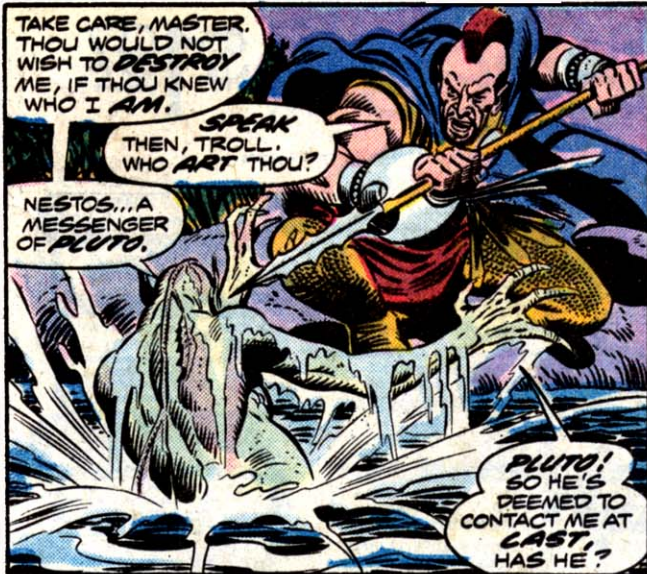


HE'S RIDDEN THIS FOREST TRAIL FOR AN HOUR, AND HAS REMAINED UNAPPROACHED BY EVEN THE MOST INQUISITIVE INHABITANT OF THIS WOOD...



...BUT NOW, AS HE DISMOUNTS TO QUENCH A MOST UN-GODLIKE THIRST...





TAKE CARE, MASTER. THOU WOULD NOT WISH TO **DESTROY** ME, IF THOU KNEW WHO I **AM**.

SPEAK
THEN, TROLL.
WHO ART THOU?

NESTOS...A
MESSENGER
OF **PLUTO**.

PLUTO!
SO HE'S
DEEMED TO
CONTACT ME AT
CAST,
HAS HE?



AYE, LORD
ARES... HE SENT
ME WITH A
MESSAGE,
WORDS FOR
THINE EARS
ALONE:

"TELL **ARES**," HE SAID,
"TELL HIM THAT **PLUTO**
AWAITS HIM AT THE
GATES OF HELL..."

"AND THAT **THERE**
WE SHALL BEST
THE **SCION OF**
ZEUS!"



HE SAID **THAT**,
DID HE? HOW
AMID OF LORD
PLUTO...

WHILE I TEMPT THE WRATH OF
ZEUS, HE SITS IN THE SPLENDOR
OF HIS UNDERWORLD **PALACE**...



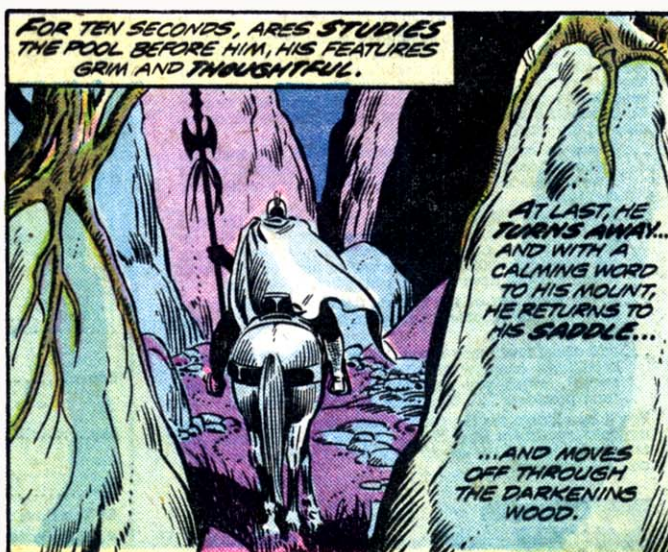
... AND **SEES** FIT TO ORDER
ME AS THOUGH I WERE A
COMMON **SLAVE**.

VERY
WELL.
TELL THY
MASTER
I'LL **MEET**
HIM...



...BUT WARN HIM
THAT HE'LL FACE
MY **RAGE** IF HE
BETRAYS ME...AND
VERILY, **ARES' RAGE**
IS **AWESOME**
TO BEHOLD!

AS THOU
DOST
WISH,
I'LL BE
DONE.



FOR TEN SECONDS, **ARES** STUDIES
THE POOL BEFORE HIM, HIS FEATURES
GRIM AND **THOUGHTFUL**.

AT LAST, HE
TURNS AWAY...
AND WITH A
CALMING WORD
TO HIS MOUNT,
HE RETURNS TO
HIS **SADDLE**...

...AND MOVES
OFF THROUGH
THE DARKENING
WOOD.

MEANWHILE, A COSMOS AWAY,
OTHER MINDS PONDER THE
FORTHCOMING PLIGHT OF
HERCULES... AND ESPECIALLY,
THE PLIGHT OF THOR...

MILORD ODIN, SOMETHING
IS TERRIBLY **WRONG!**
LOOK THEE AT YON
VISI-GLOBE. IS
THAT NOT THOR,
WALKING WITH THE
TRAITOR **HERCULES?**

HAS THE NOBLE THUNDER
GOD BEEN **TRICKED...**
OR HAVE **WE?**

QUIET,
WOMAN. I
MUST **THINK**
ON THIS...

VERILY,
ALL IS NOT
WHAT IT **SEEMS**.

BUT **MY LORD!** THE
GLOBE CANNOT LIE--
AND WHAT IT SHOWS US
IS **MADNESS!**

IS THOR A
TRAITOR
TOO? HAS
HE **BE-**
TRAYED
US?



LADY SIF SPEAKS **MY**
HEART AS WELL, MILORD.

'TIS MY
SISTER WHO
SUFFERS
PLUTO'S
CHAINS--

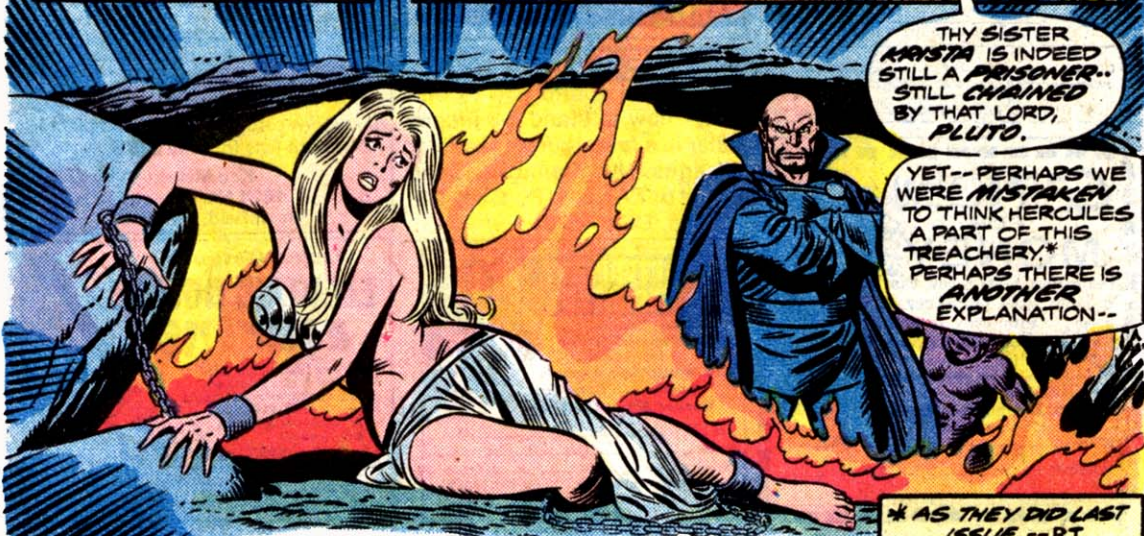
--IF **ANY** HAS A RIGHT
TO AN ANSWER, SURELY
'TIS **I!**

BEHOLD THE **GLOBE**
HILDEGARDE. **THERE**
IS THY ANSWER.



THY **SISTER**
KARSTA IS INDEED
STILL A **PRISONER**--
STILL **CHAINED**
BY THAT LORD,
PLUTO.

YET--PERHAPS WE
WERE **MISTAKEN**
TO THINK **HERCULES**
A PART OF THIS
TREACHERY.*
PERHAPS THERE IS
ANOTHER
EXPLANATION--



* AS THEY DID LAST
ISSUE. --RT.



--ONE THAT MY SON IS **DISCOVERING**, EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

HAVE **FAITH**, WOMEN. THOR HAS **NE'ER** BETRAYED US--NOR DOES HE **NOW**.

THOUGH AT TIMES WE TWO HAVE **DISAGREED**, NEVER HAVE I **DOUBTED** HIS **SINCERITY**...



...AND **THOU** MUST NOT DOUBT IT, IF THOU ART TO PROVE **WORTHY** OF THE NAME **ASGARDIAN**.

WE **BOW** TO THY WISDOM, LORD ODIN.

AS ALWAYS, THOU HAST SHOWN US THE **WAY**.



MY LORD, I AM **CONCERNED**. SOMETHING IN THY TONE **BELIES** THY APPARENT CONFIDENCE.

CAN IT BE THOU DOST HAVE **DOUBTS** THYSELF?

AYE, VIZIER...

WHAT GOD OR MAN IS **EVER** WITHOUT DOUBT? 'TIS THE NATURE OF BEING **ALIVE**.



IN TRUTH, I DO **LOVE** MY SON... YET HOW MAY I LET THAT **BLIND** ME?

THOR IS NOT **ALL-KNOWING**, VIZIER. I WORRY FOR HIM...



"I WORRY THAT HE MAY HAVE LET HIMSELF BE **CONVINCED** OF SOMETHING WHICH IS NOT **TRUE**...

"AND EVEN NOW, MAY BE WALKING INTO A **TRAP**...

"...TO BE FACED BY ANOTHER SHARP **BETRAYAL**."



THIS WAY,
HERCULES?
ART THOU
CERTAIN?

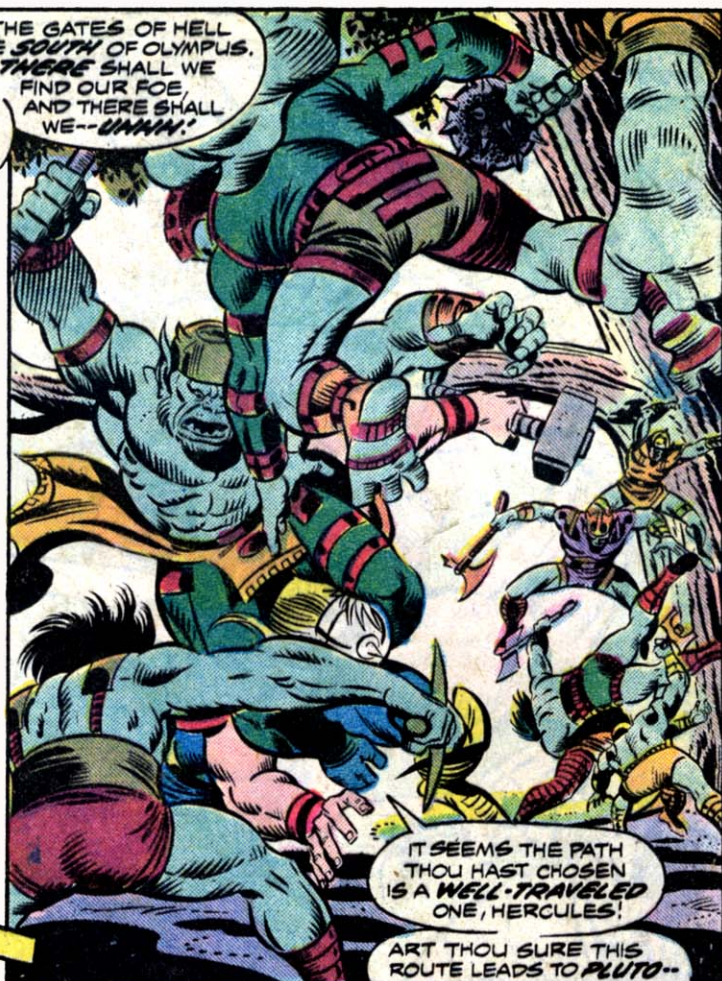
AS CERTAIN
AS I AM OF
ANYTHING,
FRIEND
ASSGARDIAN.

THE GATES OF HELL
LIE *SOUTH* OF OLYMPUS.
THERE SHALL WE
FIND OUR FOE,
AND THERE SHALL
WE--*UHHH!*



--AND NOT MERELY
TO *DEATH*?

WHAT, NO *ANSWER*,
MY FRIEND? LET
ME ANSWER THEN--



IT SEEMS THE PATH
THOU HAST CHOSEN
IS A *WELL-TRAVELED*
ONE, HERCULES!

ART THOU SURE THIS
ROUTE LEADS TO *PLUTO*--



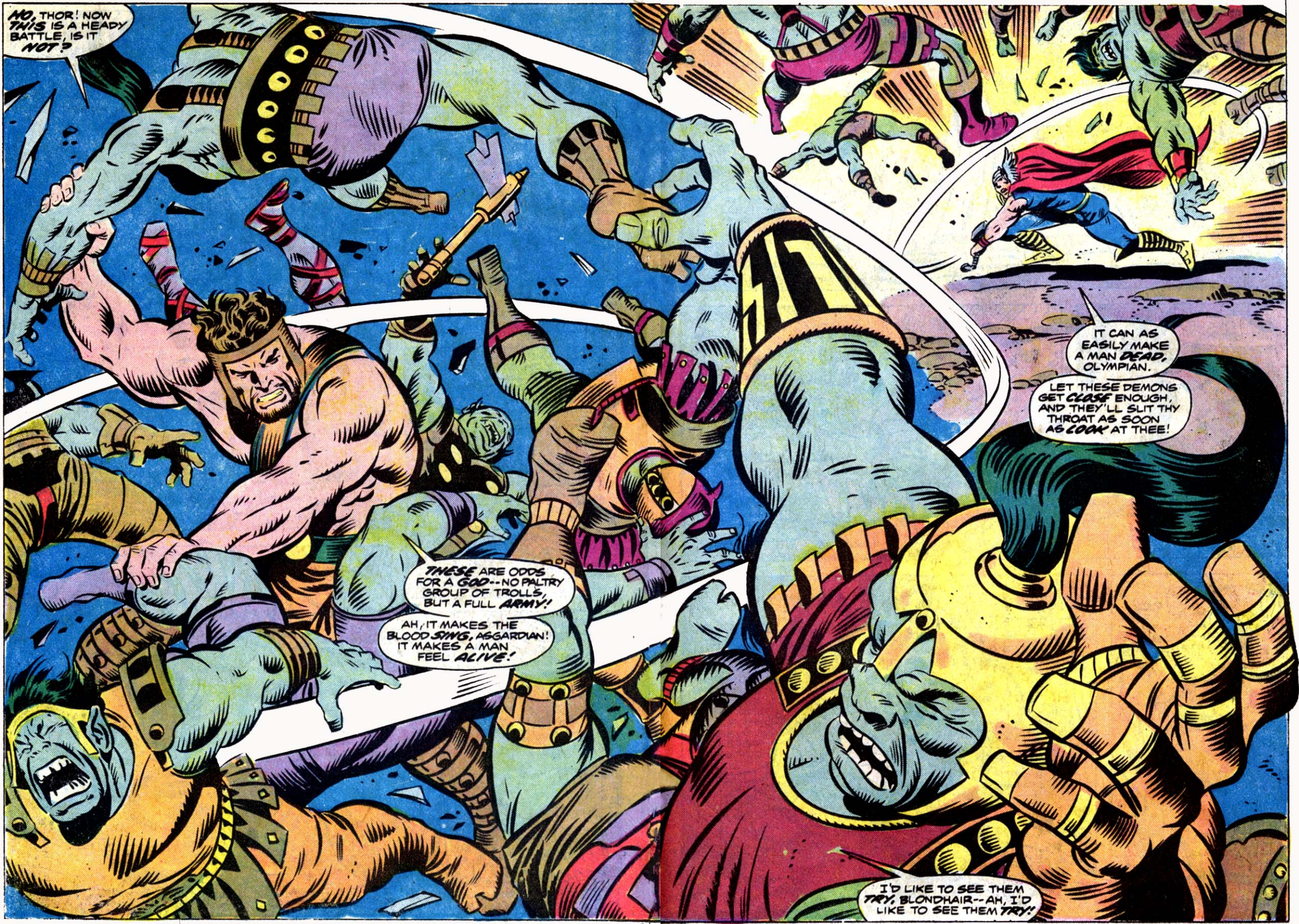
SPAKO!

--AS ONLY
THE GOD OF
THUNDER
CAN!

BACK, YE
VERMIN OF
THE NIGHT!

BACK!
THE SON OF ODIN
COMMANDS IT!

NO, THOR! NOW
THIS IS A HEAVY
BATTLE, IS IT
NOT?



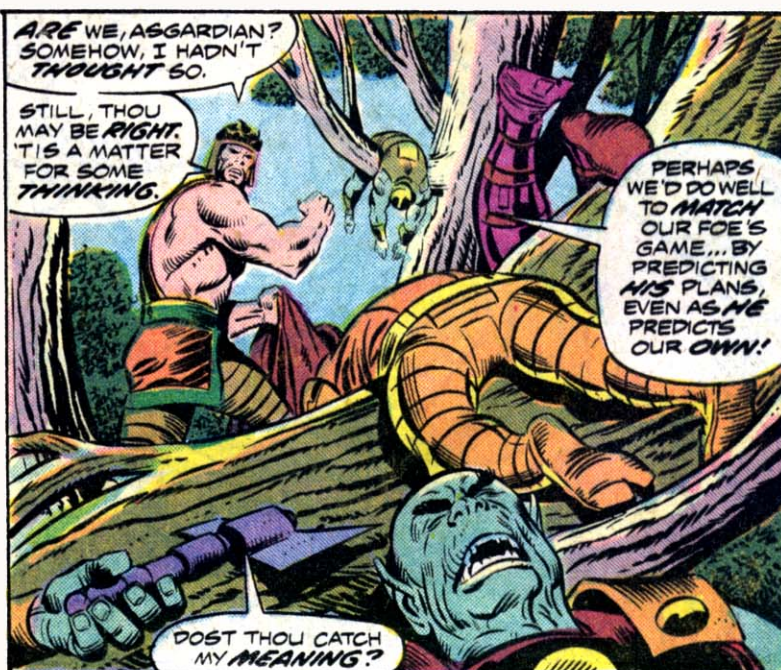
IT CAN AS
EASILY MAKE
A MAN DEAD,
OLYMPIAN.

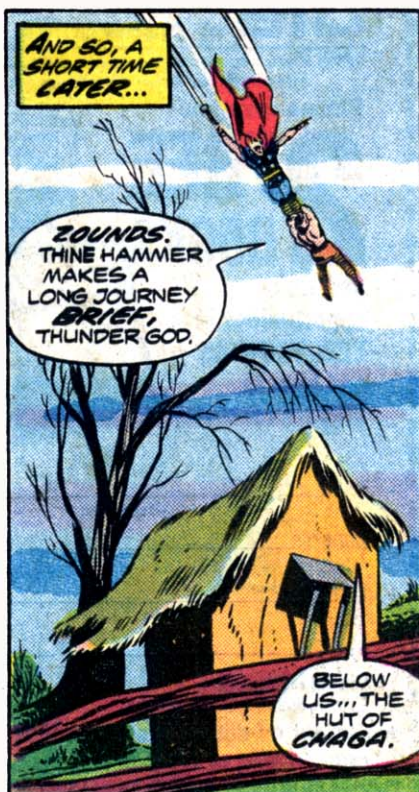
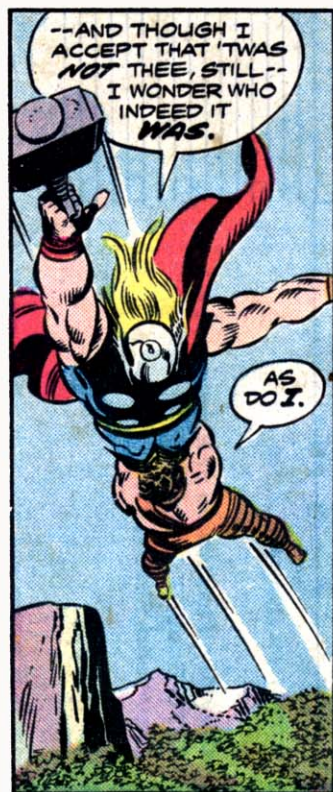
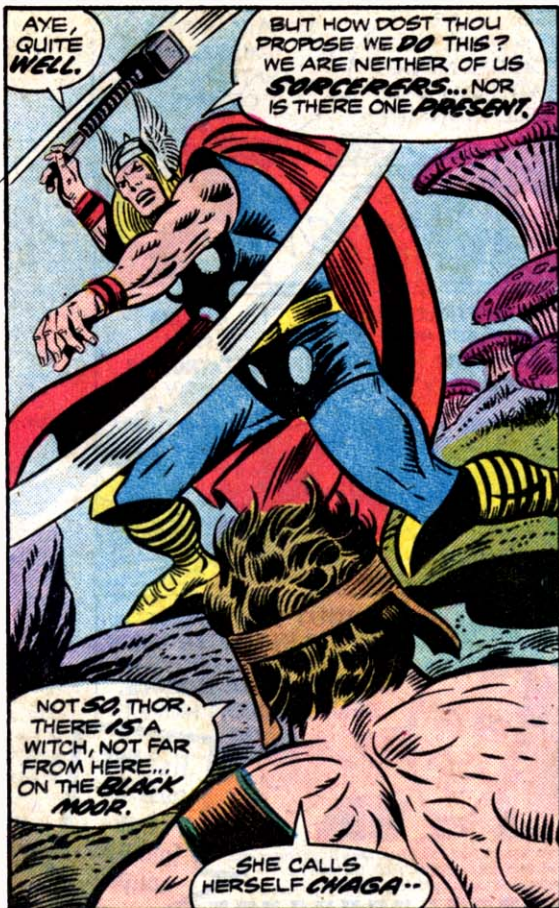
LET THESE DEMONS
GET CLOSE ENOUGH,
AND THEY'LL SLIT THY
THROAT AS SOON
AS LOOK AT THEE!

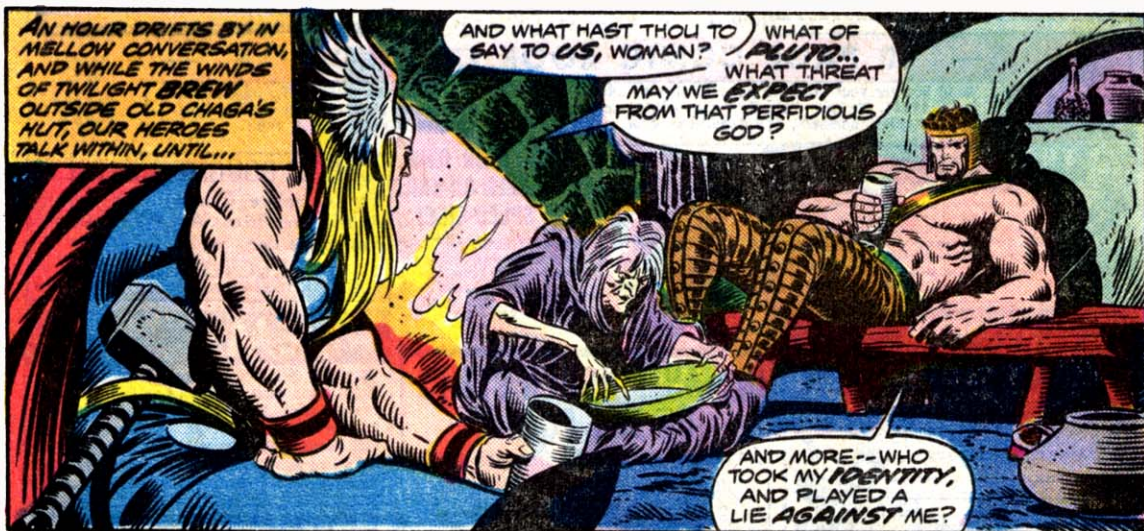
THESE ARE ODDS
FOR A GOD--NO PALTRY
GROUP OF TROLLS,
BUT A FULL ARMY!

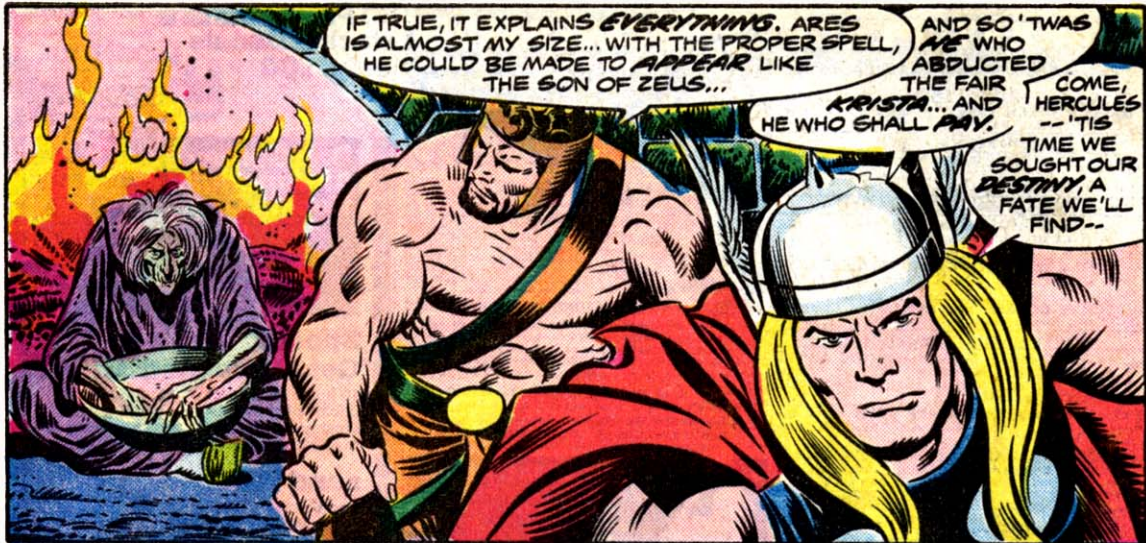
AH, IT MAKES THE
BLOOD SING, ASGARDIAN!
IT MAKES A MAN
FEEL ALIVE!

I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM
TRY, BLONDHAIR--AH, I'D
LIKE TO SEE THEM TRY!









IF TRUE, IT EXPLAINS **EVERYTHING**. **ARES** IS ALMOST MY SIZE... WITH THE PROPER SPELL, HE COULD BE MADE TO **APPEAR** LIKE THE SON OF ZEUS...

AND SO 'T'WAS **HE** WHO ABDUCTED THE FAIR **KRISTA**... AND HE WHO SHALL **PAY**.

COME, **HERCULES** -- 'TIS TIME WE SOUGHT OUR **DESTINY**, A FATE WE'LL FIND--



"--AT THE BLOOD-DARK GATES OF **HELL**."



MORE THAN **DESTINY** WILL THE ASSARDIANS FIND BEFORE THAT HAUNTED ENTRANCE. FOR, EVEN AS THEY FLY **SOUTH**, ONE THERE IS WHO WAITS FOR THEM...



...HIS GRIM EYES BURNING WITH COLD **INSANITY** AS HE WATCHES THE NORTHERN SKY, AND AT LAST...



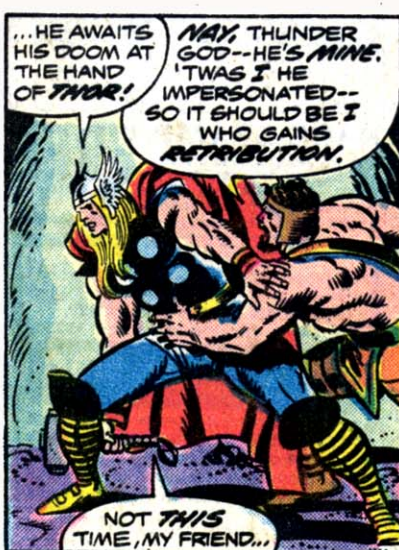
...SEES THEM.

TIGHTLY, HE SMILES... AND HIS SMILE IS ONE OF **TRIUMPH**.



THERE, **HERCULES**.

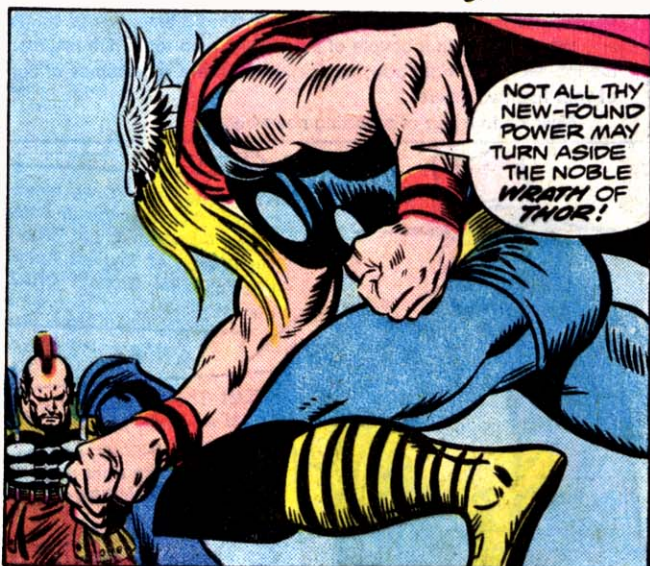
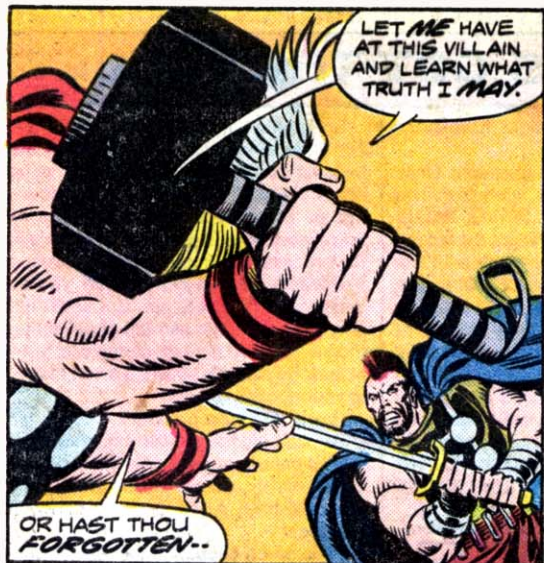
THE WITCH WAS **RIGHT**... HE WAITS.

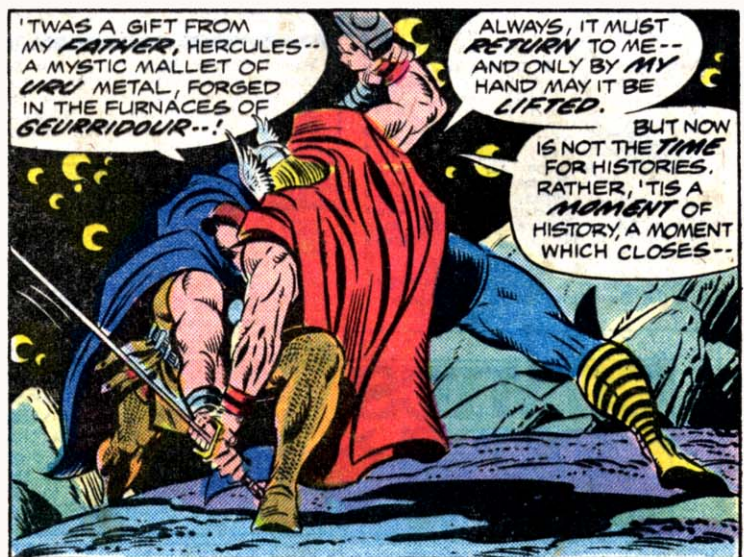
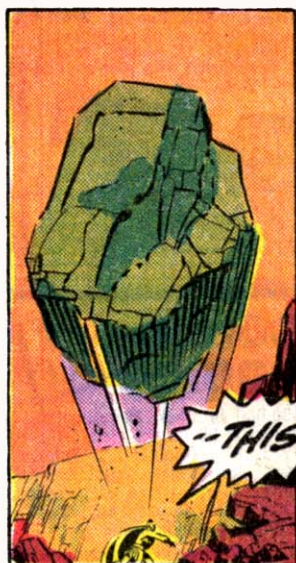
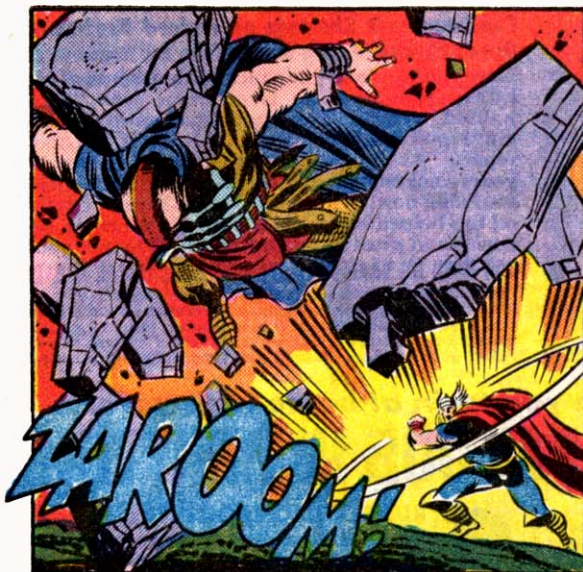


...HE AWAITS HIS DOOM AT THE HAND OF **THOR**!

NAY, THUNDER GOD--HE'S **MINE**. 'T'WAS **I** HE IMPERSONATED--SO IT SHOULD BE **I** WHO GAINS **RETRIBUTION**.

NOT **THIS** TIME, MY FRIEND...







-- NOW?

STARS! AT LAST
THE MYSTERY
COMES **CLEAR**.
AT LAST I KNOW
THE WICKED
SOURCE OF
THY UNEARTHLY
POWER--



-- A SOURCE I SHOULD
HAVE **GUESSED** IN THE
FIRST MOMENTS OF
THIS STRUGGLE--



**PLUTO, LORD OF
THE UNDERWORLD...
KING OF THE
DARK DOMAIN!**

I CANNOT
LIE,
THUNDER
GOD--



-- FOR THOU HAST
FOUND ME OUT!

A PITY THE
KNOWLEDGE
WILL AVAIL THEE
NAUGHT, FOR
IN A THRICE
THOU SHALT
BE **DEAD**--



-- SLAIN BY THE
HAND OF **ARES**--

-- A DEATH
THAT WILL BE
LAID AT THE
DOOR OF
ZEUS--

-- AND THUS
BEGIN A WAR
WITH **ASGARD!**



BUNT!

NEVER!

WHILE
BREATH
REMAINS
IN MY
BODY--

