

25¢ 226 AUG 02450

# THE MIGHTY THOR



I NEED YOUR HELP, THUNDER GOD! WITHOUT IT, I FALL-- AND THE EARTH WITH ME!

AND YON SHADOW BELONGS TO HIM WHO HATH DEFEATED THEE!

BUT, CAN EVEN THOR PREVAIL-- 'GAINST ONE WHO HATH CONQUERED GALACTUS?

WHO STANDS WITH GALACTUS?

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

GERRY CONWAY  
WRITER

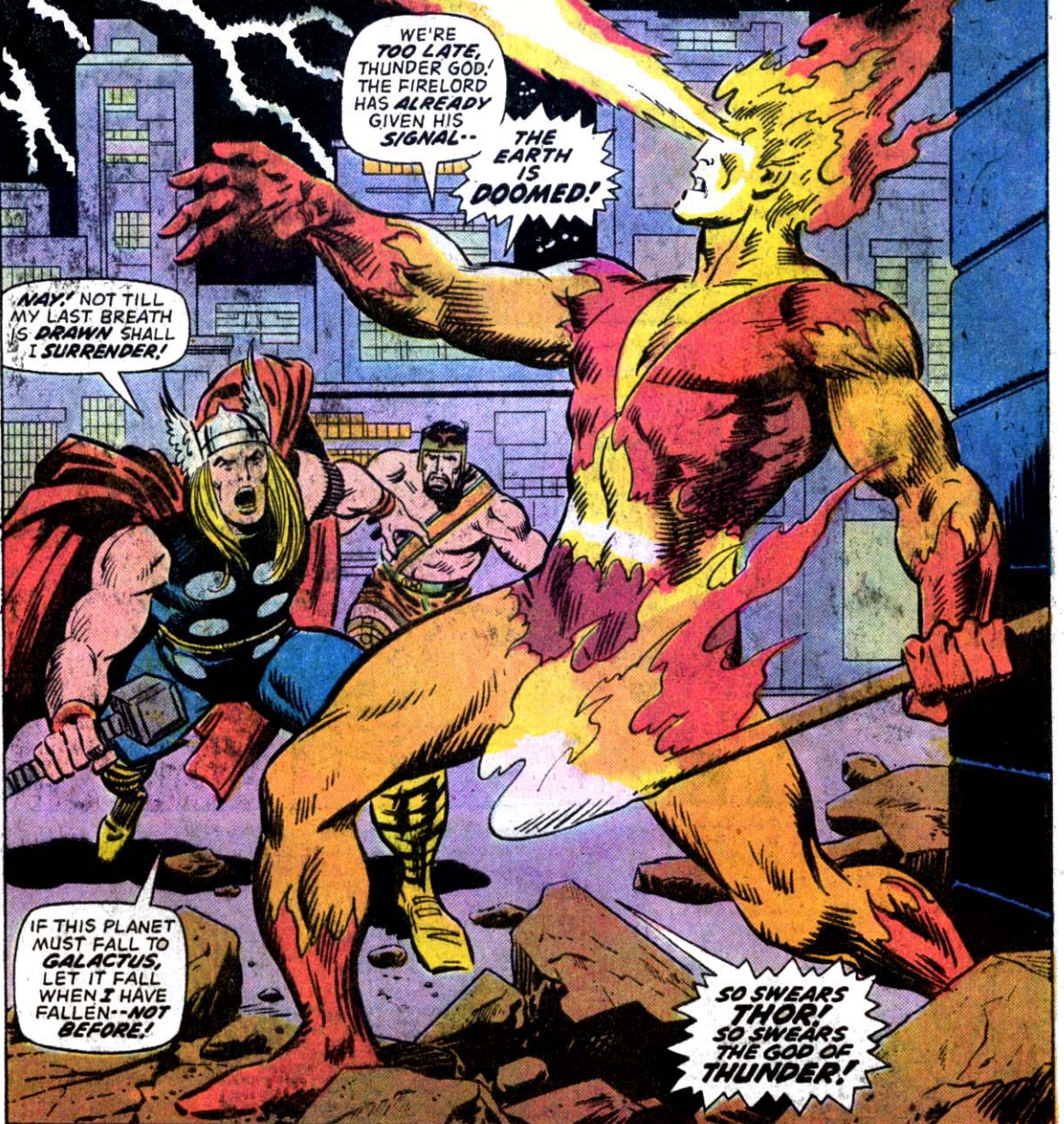
JOHN BUSCÉMA  
ARTIST

MIKE ESPOSITO  
EMBELLISHER

ARTIE SIMEK, LETTERER  
G. ROUSSOS, COLORIST

ROY THOMAS  
EDITOR

# THE BATTLE BEYOND!



WE'RE TOO LATE, THUNDER GOD! THE FIRELORD HAS ALREADY GIVEN HIS SIGNAL--

THE EARTH IS DOOMED!

MAY! NOT TILL MY LAST BREATH IS DRAWN SHALL I SURRENDER!

IF THIS PLANET MUST FALL TO GALACTUS, LET IT FALL WHEN I HAVE FALLEN--NOT BEFORE!

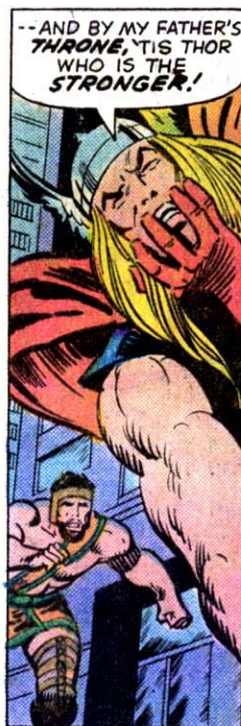
SO SWEARS THOR! SO SWEARS THE GOD OF THUNDER!

THOR is published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1974 by Marvel Comics Group, A Division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1, No. 226, August, 1974 issue. Price 25¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada, Subscription rate \$3.50 for 12 issues. Canada \$4.25. Foreign \$5.50. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the United States of America.



NOW, VARLET-- WE SHALL TEST THE FABRIC OF THY METTLE!

'TIS THOR WHO FACES THEE NOW, NOT HERCULES--



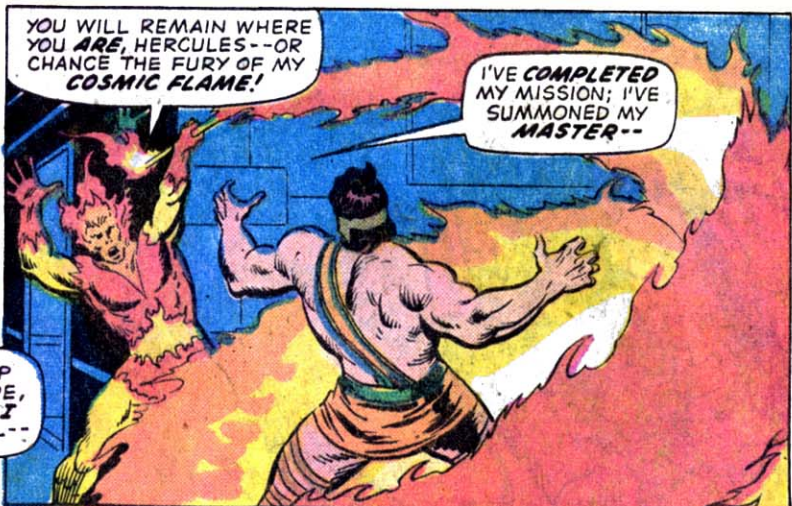
--AND BY MY FATHER'S THRONE, 'TIS THOR WHO IS THE STRONGER!



HA! ASGARDIAN, THE FIRELORD HAST PROVEN THE LIE IN THY WORDS--

NO ONE IS STRONGER THAN HERCULES--NOT EVEN THEE!

STEP ASIDE, AND I SHALL--



YOU WILL REMAIN WHERE YOU ARE, HERCULES--OR CHANCE THE FURY OF MY COSMIC FLAME!

I'VE COMPLETED MY MISSION; I'VE SUMMONED MY MASTER--



--AND MY BUSINESS HERE IS DONE.

DIRECT YOUR RAGE AT GALACTUS, NOT AT ME--



I'M SURE IT WILL AMUSE HIM.

IN THE MEANTIME, BLAME ME NOT FOR MY MASTER'S COMMANDS--



--FOR I WARN YOU, IT WILL BRING YOU ONLY **GRIEF.**

TILL NEXT WE MEET--**REMEMBER.**

I HAVE NO PERSONAL ENMITY... NO ILL WILL TOWARD EITHER YOU OR THIS WORLD--



IN POINT OF FACT, I FEEL ONLY THE GREATEST **APATHY** FOR YOU ALL. YOU'RE SUCH **PATHETIC** CREATURES.

INDEED, I WONDER WHY GALACTUS **BOTHERS** WITH THE EARTH...

BUT I ASSURE YOU, HE HAS HIS **REASONS.**



FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, THOR AND HIS OLYMPIAN COMPANION CAN ONLY GAPE IN **ASTONISHMENT** AT THE FIRELORD'S RETREATING FORM, AND THEN--

BY ODIN'S BLOOD! I SWEAR, HE IS EVEN MORE **ARROGANT** THAN THEE, FRIEND HERCULES!

THE WAY HE SPEAKS, WE'RE NO MORE THAN **FLEAS!**

THE **HORROR** OF IT IS, MAYHAP TO HIM--

--WE ARE!



**S**OBER WORDS INDEED FROM THE SON OF ODIN, THE SCION OF ASGARD... WORDS WHICH ARE **OVERHEARD** BY EARS NOT MEANT TO HEAR THEM; SPECIFICALLY **THESE EARS...**

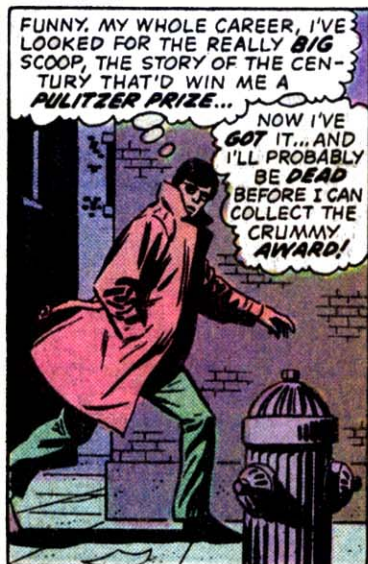
GALACTUS... COMING BACK TO EARTH? BUT... REED RICHARDS TRICKED HIM INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION... DIDN'T HE?\*

\*IN FF #123. --ROY.



NO, IT **CAN'T** BE A MISTAKE--NOT THE WAY THOR AND HERCULES ARE **TALKING** ABOUT IT! IT'S **TRUE...**

...THE ENTIRE WORLD IS **DOOMED!**



FUNNY, MY WHOLE CAREER, I'VE LOOKED FOR THE REALLY **BIG** SCOOP, THE STORY OF THE CENTURY THAT'D WIN ME A **PULITZER PRIZE...**

NOW I'VE GOT IT... AND I'LL PROBABLY BE **DEAD** BEFORE I CAN COLLECT THE **CRUMMY AWARD!**



**A** MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME:

**G**ANG, THAT'S HOW REPORTERS MAKE HISTORY.

**B**UT, WE'LL HAVE TO EXAMINE THE RESULT OF THAT REPORTER'S FORTUITOUS EAVESDROPPING LATER; RIGHT NOW, LET'S RETURN TO OUR HEROES, ARRIVING AT THE WINDOW OF DOCTOR DONALD BLAKE'S OFFICE AT A PRIVATE MIDTOWN HOSPITAL--



VERILY, I DON'T KNOW HOW THESE HUMANS CAN **STAND** SUCH NARROW ROOMS--

FOR SOME, IT **DOES**, FRIEND HERCULES.

IT'S ENOUGH TO CRAMP THE MIND!

STILL, 'TIS NOT OUR CONCERN--

--INDEED, WE HAVE FAR MORE **SERIOUS** MATTERS TO CONTEMPLATE--



--MATTERS WHICH DEMAND THE ATTENTION OF THE **HUMAN** SIDE OF THE SON OF ODIN--



--YOUR FRIEND AND MINE, **DON BLAKE**.

SOUNDS LIKE THERE'S A **COMMOTION** IN THE HALL OUTSIDE, HERCULES...

I'VE GOT A FEELING WE SHOULD FIND OUT WHAT IT'S **ABOUT**, BEFORE WE START MAKING PLANS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH **GALACTUS!**

THE HUMANS SEEM **DISTURBED** --THEY SCAMPER LIKE FRIGHTENED **DEER!**

...ACCORDING TO A REPORTER FOR THE **NEW YORK DAILY BUGLE**, THIS EVENING'S BATTLE BETWEEN THOR AND THE CREATURE CALLING HIMSELF **THE FIRELORD** WAS ONLY A **PRELIMINARY...**

...A **PROLOGUE** TO A MUCH GREATER CONFRONTATION WITH GRAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR US **ALL...**

IT'S THE **TELEVISION** IN THE RECREATION ROOM--

GOOD LORD, **NO!**



...THE **IMMINENT** RETURN OF THE **SPACE-GOD, GALACTUS!**

AS YOU ALL KNOW, **GALACTUS** HAS STRUCK TWICE BEFORE AT THE EARTH-- AND EACH TIME WAS ONLY **NARROWLY** DEFEATED--!



**VISITOR**

THE QUESTION WHICH CONFRONTS US NOW IS-- CAN GALACTUS BE DEFEATED AGAIN?

OR IS THIS THE END OF CIVILIZATION-- IN FACT, THE END OF ALL MANKIND?



THOUGH THE NEWSCASTER CONTINUES HIS SPEECH, THERE'S REALLY NO POINT IN LISTENING ANY LONGER... A FACT ALL TOO BITTERLY APPARENT TO A GRIM DONALD BLAKE...



IN OLYMPUS, WE HEARD OF THIS SPACE-GOD, MY FRIEND--

IS HE TRULY AS POWERFUL AS YON MORTAL PROCLAIMS?

THE WORD POWER DOESN'T DESCRIBE HIM, HERCULES-- IN A WAY, HE'S POWER INCARNATE.

I'D HOPED WE COULD KEEP ALL OF THIS A SECRET, POSSIBLY MEET GALACTUS ON THE FRINGE OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM-- THAT'S WHY I BECAME BLAKE, SO WE COULD TALK WITHOUT DRAWING ATTENTION TO OURSELVES--!



I SEE THAT'S HOPELESS NOW.

YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT GALACTUS, HERCULES? I'LL TELL YOU, THEN-- AND BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THIS IS ALL THE TRUTH--

A NIGHTMARE-- BUT THE TRUTH.



"THE WORLD FIRST LEARNED OF GALACTUS A FEW YEARS AGO--



--WHEN AN ALIEN CALLED THE SILVER SURFER ENTERED THIS QUADRANT OF SPACE...

"THERE ISN'T A PERSON ON EARTH WHO DOESN'T REMEMBER THAT DAY-- THE DAY THE SKY TURNED TO FLAME, GOLDEN FIRE THAT STRETCHED FROM HORIZON TO HORIZON--



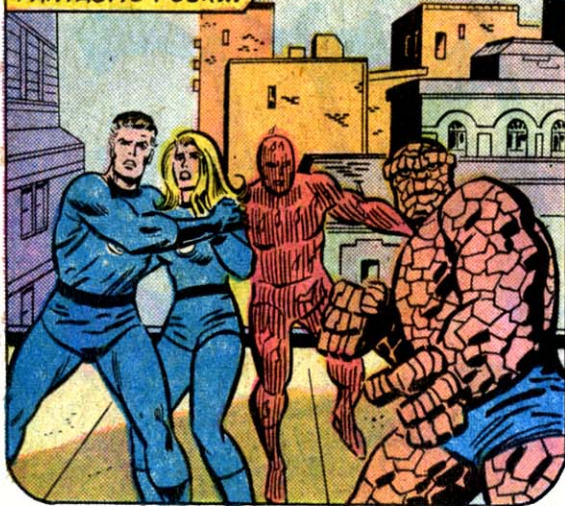
"--ALL OF IT PROJECTED BY THE WATCHER, IN AN EFFORT TO CONCEAL THE EARTH FROM THE SURFER'S SEARCHING EYES.



"THE SURFER, YOU SEE, WAS A COSMIC SCOUT, SEEKING A WORLD ON WHICH HIS MASTER COULD FEED...

"IN HIS OBSERVATION OF THE UNIVERSE, THE WATCHER HAD WITNESSED THIS PROCESS COUNTLESS TIMES...

"...AND BECAUSE THE EARTH WAS SO DEAR TO HIM, HE'D BROKEN HIS WATCHER'S OATH, AND TAKEN AN ACTIVE HAND, BY WARNING THE FANTASTIC FOUR..."

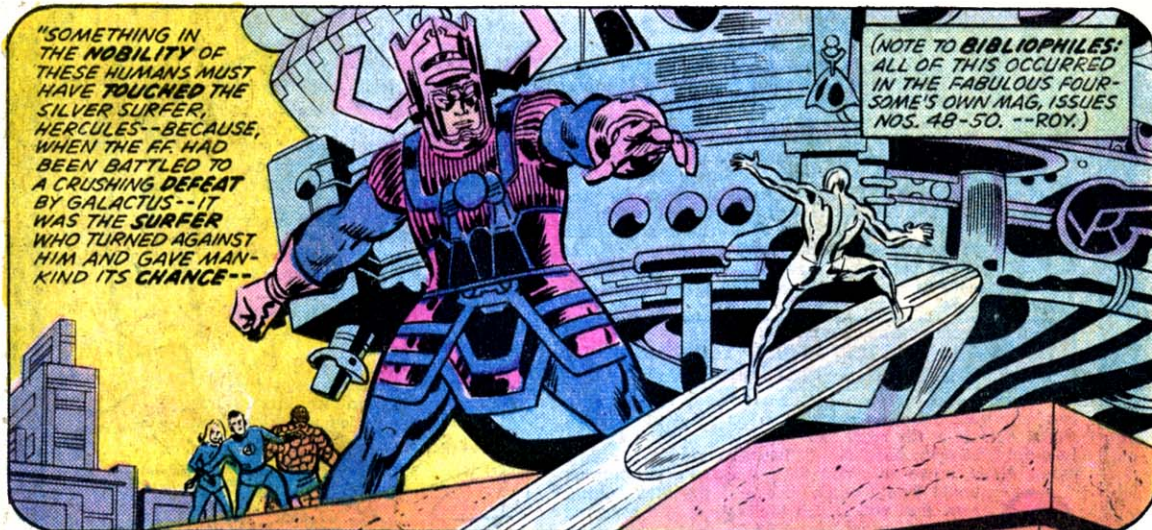


"...WHO THEN FACED GALACTUS WHEN HE LANDED ON THE EARTH'S SURFACE, AND PREPARED TO CONSUME THE ENTIRE PLANET, TO POWER HIS DRIVING LIFE-FORCE!"



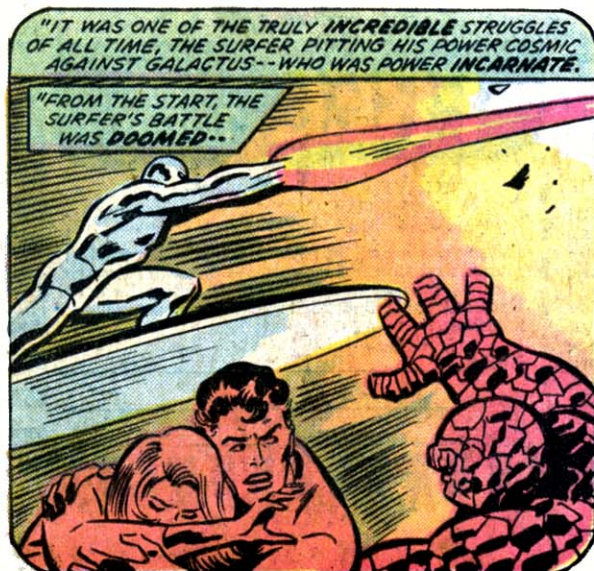
"SOMETHING IN THE NOBILITY OF THESE HUMANS MUST HAVE TOUCHED THE SILVER SURFER, HERCULES--BECAUSE, WHEN THE FF HAD BEEN BATTLED TO A CRUSHING DEFEAT BY GALACTUS--IT WAS THE SURFER WHO TURNED AGAINST HIM AND GAVE MANKIND ITS CHANCE--"

(NOTE TO BIBLIOPHILES: ALL OF THIS OCCURRED IN THE FABULOUS FOUR--SOME'S OWN MAG, ISSUES NOS. 48-50. --ROY.)



"IT WAS ONE OF THE TRULY INCREDIBLE STRUGGLES OF ALL TIME, THE SURFER PITTING HIS POWER COSMIC AGAINST GALACTUS--WHO WAS POWER INCARNATE."

"FROM THE START, THE SURFER'S BATTLE WAS DOOMED--"

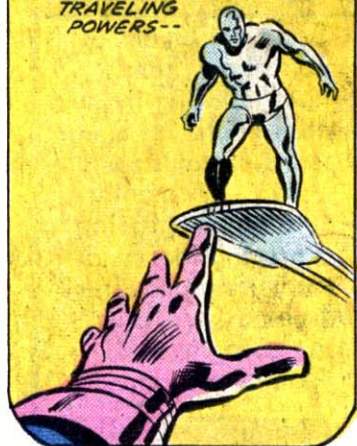


"-- BUT IT GAVE THE FF TIME TO STEAL A WEAPON FROM GALACTUS, A WEAPON WHOSE POWER WAS BEYOND THE COMPREHENSION OF MORTAL MINDS-- AND TO THREATEN GALACTUS WITH THE USE OF THAT WEAPON--"



"-- FORCING HIM TO RELINQUISH HIS CLAIM ON EARTH FOR ALL TIME."

"AS FOR THE SURFER--HE PAID THE PRICE FOR HIS BETRAYAL; GALACTUS CONDEMNED HIM TO ETERNAL EXILE ON EARTH--AND REMOVED HIS SPACE-TIME TRAVELING POWERS--

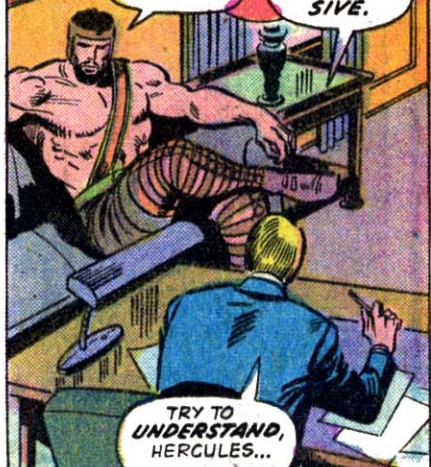


"--FOR THE WRATH OF GALACTUS IS SURE, AND PAINFULLY SWIFT."



I SEE. THOU DIDST FACE HIM THYSELF, DIDST THOU NOT?

I DID, AS THOR--BUT AGAIN, THE BATTLE WAS INCONCLUSIVE.



TRY TO UNDERSTAND, HERCULES...

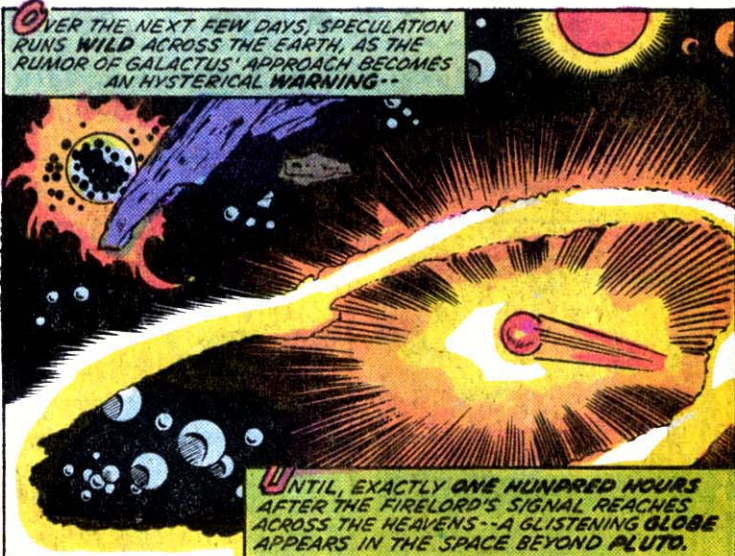
...GALACTUS' TRUE STRENGTH HAS NEVER BEEN TESTED.

IF IT EVER IS, I WONDER IF ANYONE--MAN OR GOD--COULD STAND AGAINST HIM.



AND, MY FRIEND, IN A MATTER OF HOURS, OR DAYS--WE'LL FIND OUT.

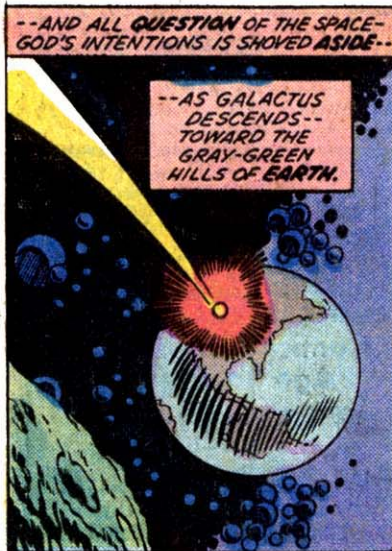
OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS, SPECULATION RUNS WILD ACROSS THE EARTH, AS THE RUMOR OF GALACTUS' APPROACH BECOMES AN HYSTERICAL WARNING--



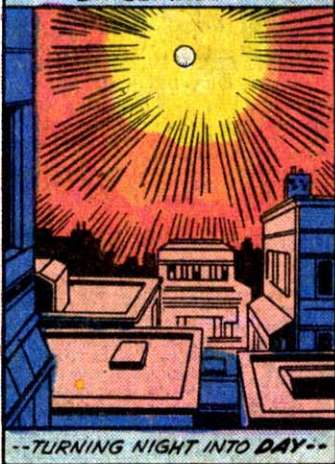
UNTIL, EXACTLY ONE HUNDRED HOURS AFTER THE FIRELORD'S SIGNAL REACHES ACROSS THE HEAVENS--A GLISTENING GLOBE APPEARS IN THE SPACE BEYOND PLUTO.

--AND ALL QUESTION OF THE SPACE-GOD'S INTENTIONS IS SHOVED ASIDE--

--AS GALACTUS DESCENDS--TOWARD THE GRAY-GREEN HILLS OF EARTH.



LIKE A SECOND SUN, IT GROWS IN THE TWILIGHT SKY, FILLING THAT SKY WITH BRILLIANCE--



--TURNING NIGHT INTO DAY--

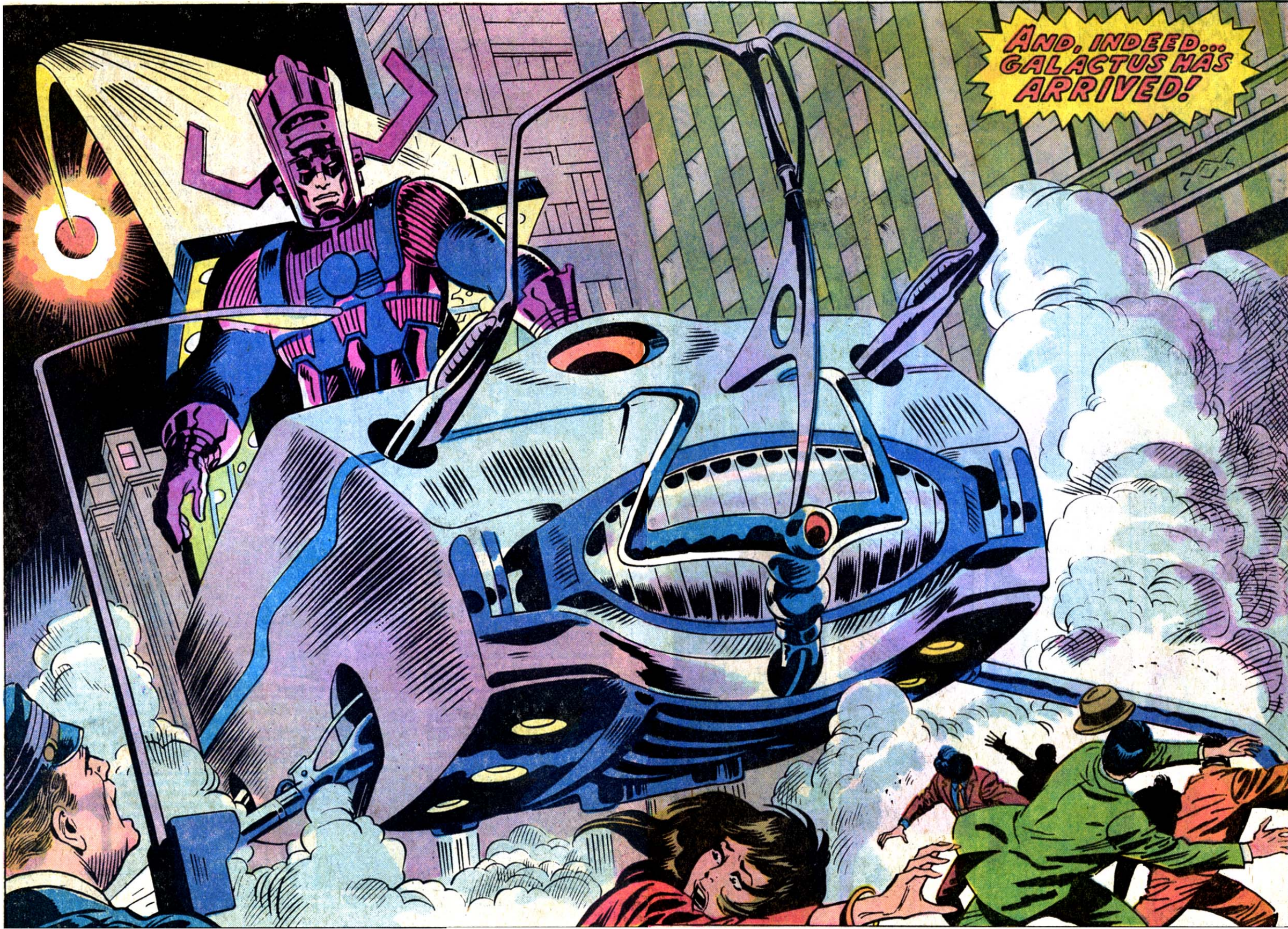
--AND FOR A THOUSAND BILLION SOULS--MARKING THE DAWN OF THE APOCALYPSE!

THERE'S NOWHERE WE CAN RUN! HE'S HERE, HEAVEN HELP US--

HE'S HERE!







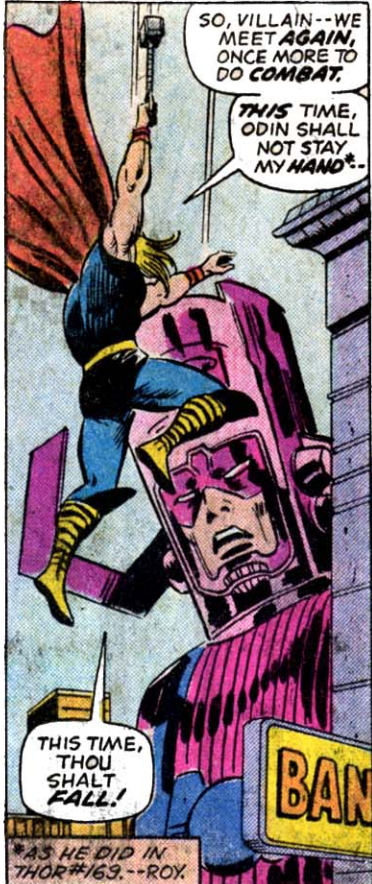


AWAY FROM ME, PUNY HUMANS. YOUR PITIABLE LIVES DO NOT INTEREST ME THIS DAY.

I COME IN SEARCH OF THOR, WHO CALLS HIMSELF A GOD OF THUNDER--



--AND IT SEEMS MY SEARCH HAS BEEN REWARDED, AT LONG LAST.



SO, VILLAIN--WE MEET AGAIN, ONCE MORE TO DO COMBAT.

THIS TIME, ODIN SHALL NOT STAY MY HAND--

THIS TIME, THOU SHALT FALL!

\*AS HE DID IN THOR #163.--ROY.



WAIT, ASGARDIAN--WE HAVE NO QUARREL.

I COME TO SPEAK WITH YOU--NOT TO BATTLE.



THE MONSTER LIES, THOR. LET ME FORCE THE TRUTH FROM HIS LIPS--

HE'LL NOT STAND LONG 'GAINST HERCULES!

HOLD, MY FRIEND. LET US HEAR HIM.

GALACTUS IS MANY THINGS-- BUT NOT A LIAR.



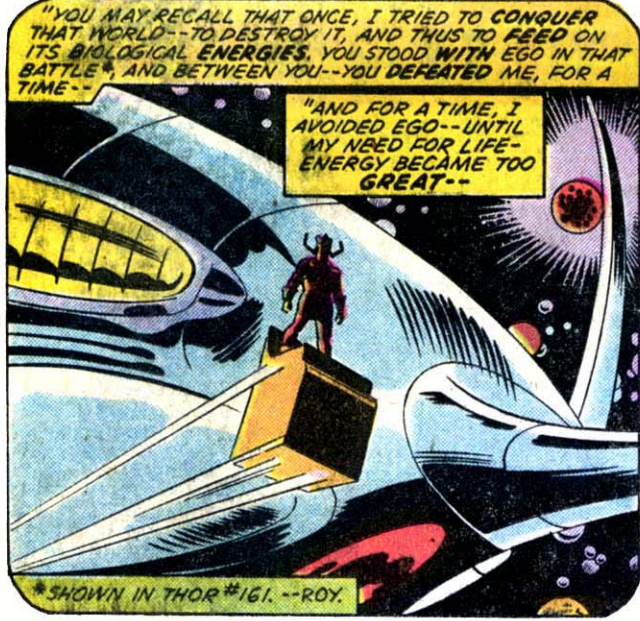
I THANK YOU FOR THAT, ASGARDIAN. IT SEEMS YOU HAVEN'T COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN OUR LAST MEETING--

--AND WHAT I TOLD YOU THEN OF MY LIFE-LONG AGONY.

BUT MY PAST IS NOT YOUR CONCERN, OR TRULY MINE. THERE IS A MENACE ABROAD IN THE UNIVERSE, BEFORE WHICH EVEN I STAND POWERLESS--



--THE MAD LIVING PLANET-- CALLED EGO!



"YOU MAY RECALL THAT ONCE, I TRIED TO CONQUER THAT WORLD--TO DESTROY IT, AND THUS TO FEED ON ITS BIOLOGICAL ENERGIES. YOU STOOD WITH EGO IN THAT BATTLE-- AND BETWEEN YOU--YOU DEFEATED ME, FOR A TIME--"

"AND FOR A TIME, I AVOIDED EGO--UNTIL MY NEED FOR LIFE-ENERGY BECAME TOO GREAT--"

\*SHOWN IN THOR #161. --ROY.



"-- AND I FACED THE LIVING PLANET ONCE MORE."

HUMANOID FOOL! HAVEN'T YOU YET LEARNED?

NONE MAY STAND AGAINST EGO-- AND SURVIVE!



I STAND AGAINST YOU, EGO. I, WHO CAN MOVE WORLDS--

I, GALACTUS --WHO MUST LIVE, WHATSOEVER THE COST.

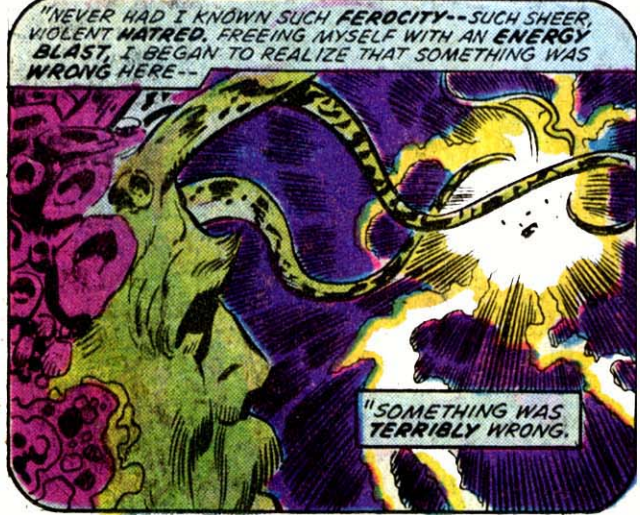
DO WHAT YOU WILL, I WILL NOT TURN BACK!



THEN YOU WILL DIE, YOU ANTHROPOMORPHIC IMBECILE!

YOU WILL DIE-- AS ALL HUMANOIDS WILL SOMEDAY DIE--

--BEFORE THE MIGHT OF EGO!



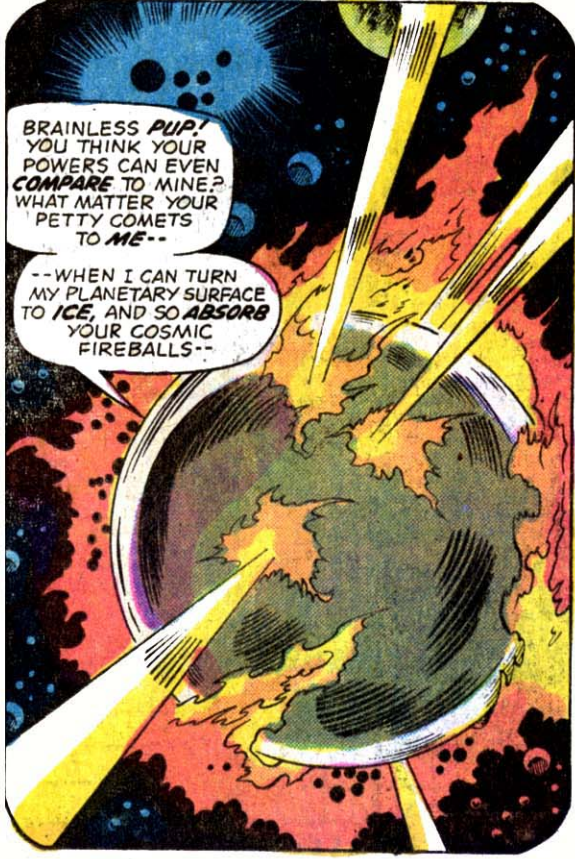
"NEVER HAD I KNOWN SUCH FEROCITY--SUCH SHEER, VIOLENT WRATH. FREEING MYSELF WITH AN ENERGY BLAST, I BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG HERE--"

"SOMETHING WAS TERRIBLY WRONG."



"TO GIVE MYSELF TIME TO THINK, I LAUNCHED A BARRAGE OF COMETS AT THE LIVING PLANET--"

"--KNOWING FULL WELL EGO COULD AND WOULD AVOID THEM--!"



BRAINLESS PUP!  
YOU THINK YOUR  
POWERS CAN EVEN  
COMPARE TO MINE?  
WHAT MATTER YOUR  
PETTY COMETS  
TO ME--

--WHEN I CAN TURN  
MY PLANETARY SURFACE  
TO ICE, AND SO ABSORB  
YOUR COSMIC  
FIREBALLS--



--AND SEND  
THEIR POWER  
BACK AT YOU--  
AS ONLY  
EGO CAN!

I WARN YOU,  
SPACE-GOD...  
YOUR TIME WILL  
COME ALL THE  
SOONER, IF YOU  
CONTINUE YOUR  
FUTILE ATTACK.

IF YOU  
VALUE YOUR  
PATHETIC  
LIFE, FLEE  
NOW--



--AND GAIN YOUR-  
SELF A FEW MORE  
MONTHS OF  
EXISTENCE, BEFORE  
THE CURTAIN FALLS  
ON YOUR PERSONAL  
DRAMA--FOREVER!

"NEVER HAD  
I FELT SUCH  
POWER.  
NEVER HAD I  
FELT SUCH  
RAGE.

"IT EQUALED--NO,  
SURPASSED MY OWN.  
BEFORE EGO, I HAD  
BECOME NO MORE  
THAN A DUST MOTE--

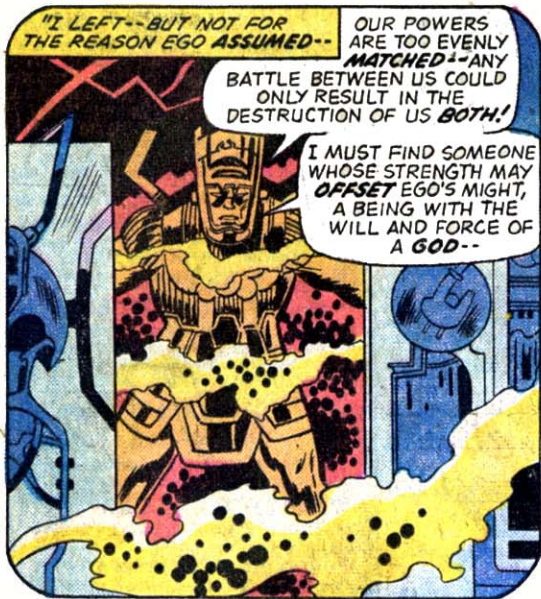


"--AND FOR THIS, AND ONE OTHER, GREATER  
REASON, I DID AT LAST TURN AWAY--AND  
SUFFERED EGO'S ECHOING MOCKERY.

VERY GOOD,  
GALACTUS--  
RUN! RUN  
FROM YOUR  
MASTER!

SOON, THE  
UNIVERSE  
ITSELF  
WILL  
SCURRY  
BEFORE  
ME--

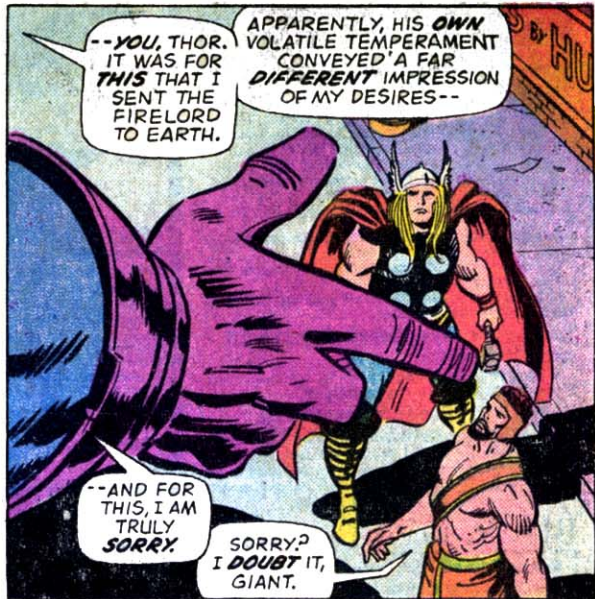
--AND EGO  
WILL RULE  
OVER ALL!



"I LEFT-- BUT NOT FOR THE REASON EGO ASSUMED--

OUR POWERS ARE TOO EVENLY MATCHED-- ANY BATTLE BETWEEN US COULD ONLY RESULT IN THE DESTRUCTION OF US BOTH!

I MUST FIND SOMEONE WHOSE STRENGTH MAY OFFSET EGO'S MIGHT, A BEING WITH THE WILL AND FORCE OF A GOD--



-- YOU, THOR. IT WAS FOR THIS THAT I SENT THE FIRELORD TO EARTH.

APPARENTLY, HIS OWN VOLATILE TEMPERAMENT CONVEYED A FAR DIFFERENT IMPRESSION OF MY DESIRES--

-- AND FOR THIS, I AM TRULY SORRY.

SORRY? I DOUBT IT, GIANT.



KEEP YOUR DOUBTS, OLYMPIAN-- BUT COME WITH ME TO EGO, AND VIEW FOR YOURSELF THE MAD MONSTER HE'S BECOME.

IT CAN DO NO HARM--

-- AND IT MAY WELL SAVE A UNIVERSE.

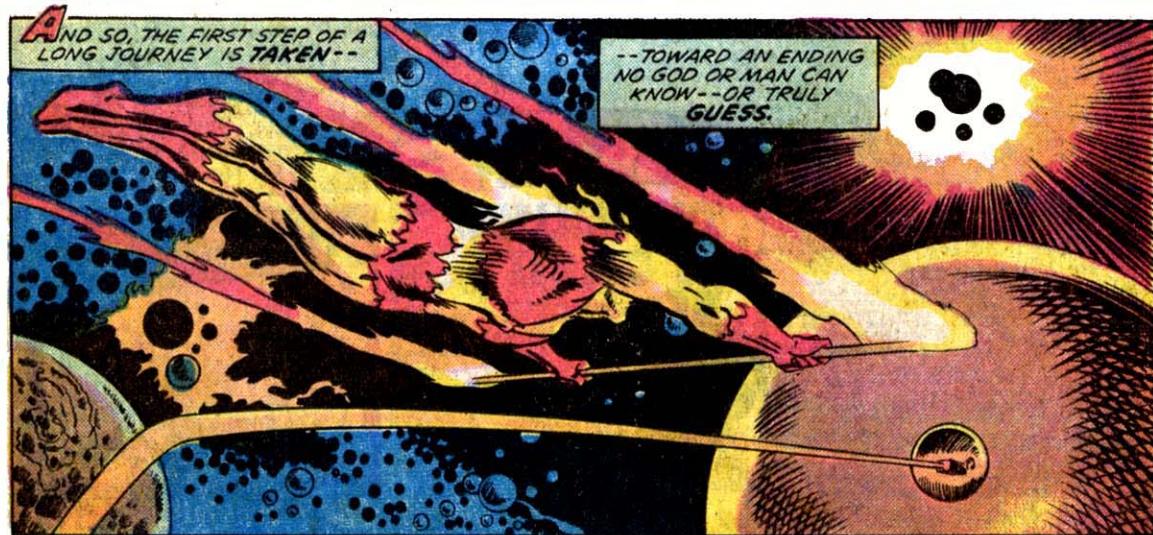


WE SHALL COME, IF ONLY TO FIND ANSWERS TO UNANSWERED QUESTIONS.

NOW LET US BE OFF--

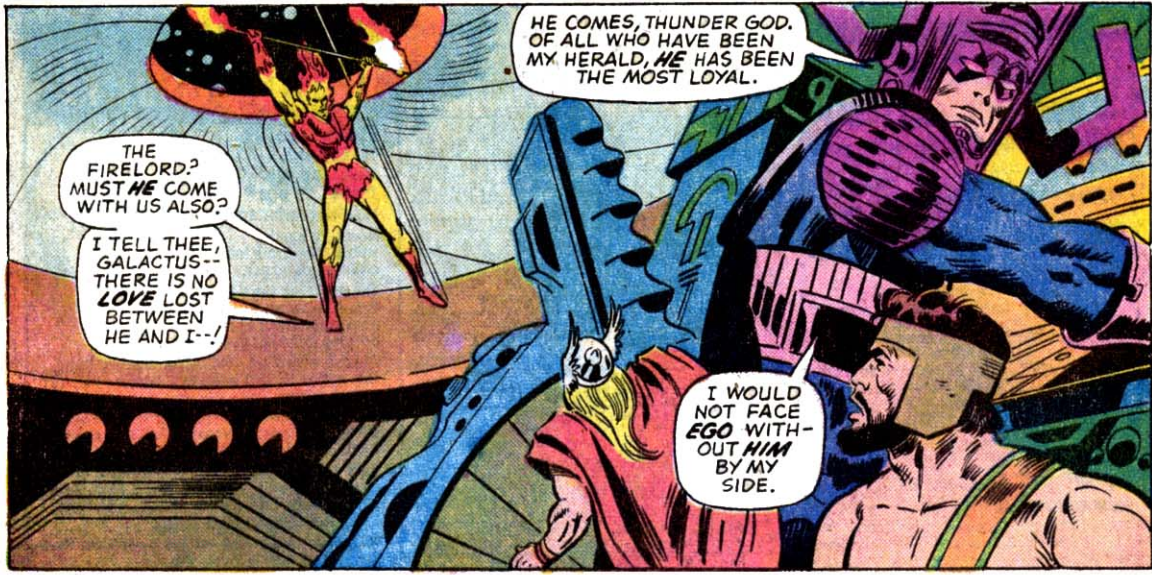


-- BEFORE WE HAVE TIME TO THINK, AND CHANGE OUR MINDS!



AND SO, THE FIRST STEP OF A LONG JOURNEY IS TAKEN--

-- TOWARD AN ENDING NO GOD OR MAN CAN KNOW-- OR TRULY GUESS.

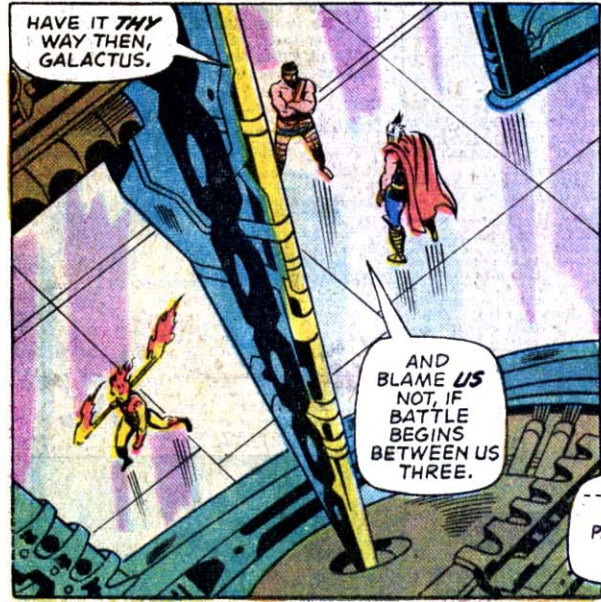


HE COMES, THUNDER GOD. OF ALL WHO HAVE BEEN MY HERALD, HE HAS BEEN THE MOST LOYAL.

THE FIRELORD? MUST HE COME WITH US ALSO?

I TELL THEE, GALACTUS-- THERE IS NO LOVE LOST BETWEEN HE AND I--!

I WOULD NOT FACE EGO WITH-OUT HIM BY MY SIDE.



HAVE IT THY WAY THEN, GALACTUS.

AND BLAME US NOT, IF BATTLE BEGINS BETWEEN US THREE.

STAY, HERCULES. BATTLE WILL BE OURS SOON ENOUGH, I FEAR.

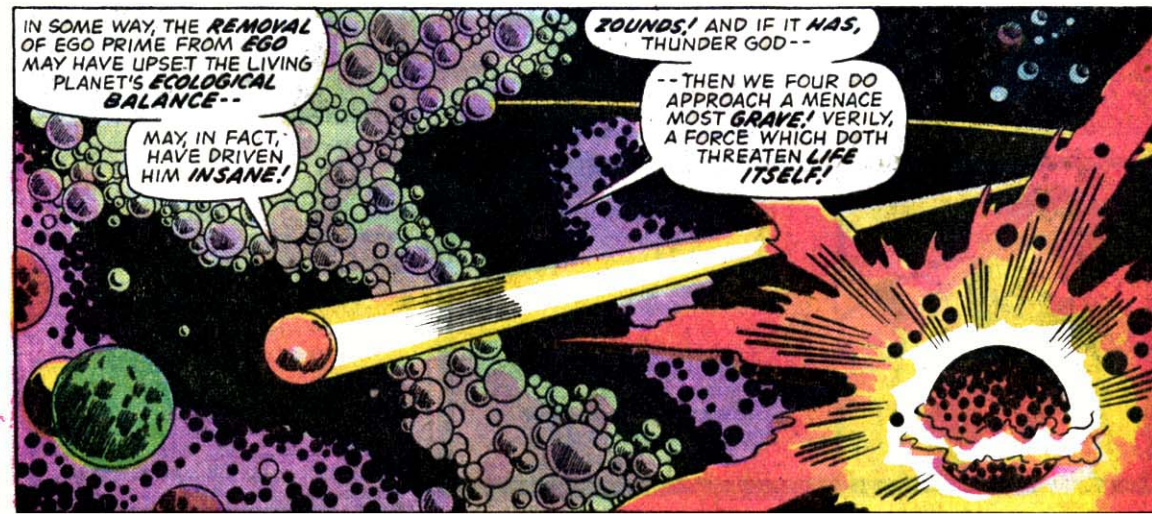
SO WE WERE-- YET EGO MAY HAVE CHANGED, AFTER ALL.

THEN YOU BELIEVE GALACTUS, THOR? BUT-- BY MY FATHER'S BEARD, I THOUGHT YOU AND EGO WERE ALLIES ONCE AGAINST THE SPACE-GOD!\*

A FEW MONTHS AGO THE COLONIZER, TANA NILE, DID TAKE A SAMPLE FROM THE LIVING PLANET\*\*\*

-- A SAMPLE WHICH BECAME A RAM-PAGING MONSTER CALLED EGO PRIME!

\* THOR #161.  
\*\* THOR #202. -- ROY.



IN SOME WAY, THE REMOVAL OF EGO PRIME FROM EGO MAY HAVE UPSET THE LIVING PLANET'S ECOLOGICAL BALANCE--

MAY, IN FACT, HAVE DRIVEN HIM INSANE!

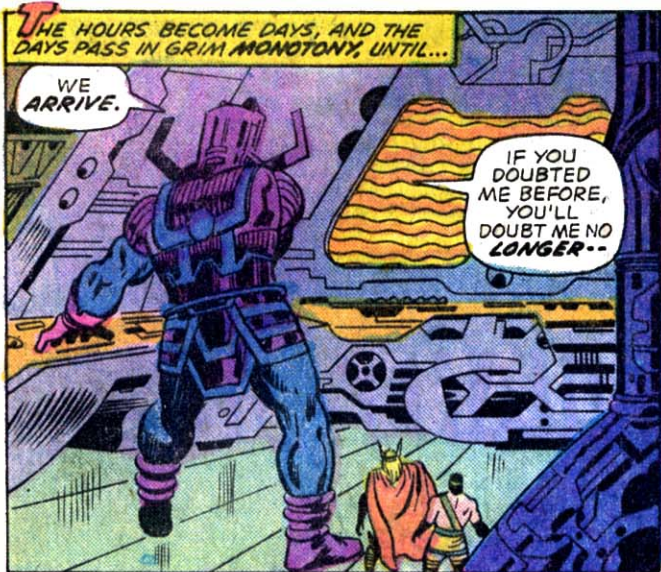
ZOUNDS! AND IF IT HAS, THUNDER GOD--

-- THEN WE FOUR DO APPROACH A MENACE MOST GRAVE! VERILY, A FORCE WHICH DOTHTHREATEN LIFE ITSELF!

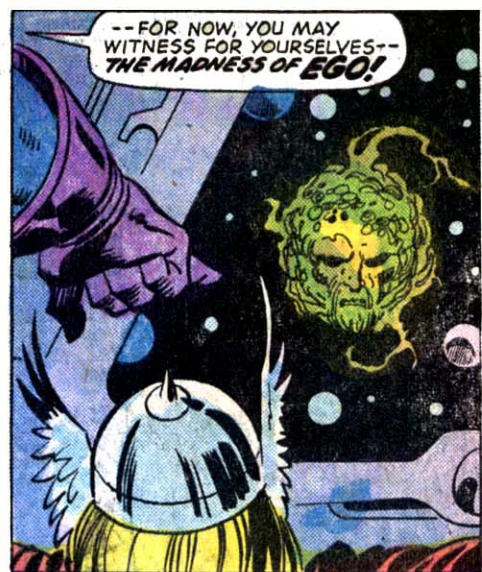
**THE HOURS BECOME DAYS, AND THE DAYS PASS IN GRIM MONOTONY, UNTIL...**

**WE ARRIVE.**

**IF YOU DOUBTED ME BEFORE, YOU'LL DOUBT ME NO LONGER--**

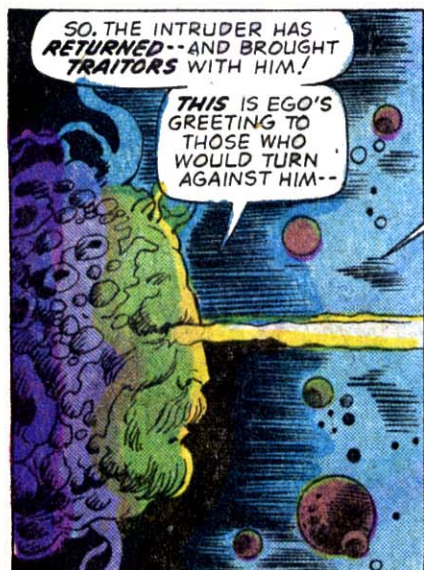


**-- FOR NOW, YOU MAY WITNESS FOR YOURSELVES-- THE MADNESS OF EGO!**



**SO, THE INTRUDER HAS RETURNED-- AND BROUGHT TRAITORS WITH HIM!**

**THIS IS EGO'S GREETING TO THOSE WHO WOULD TURN AGAINST HIM--**



**TOTAL, OVERWHELMING DESTRUCTION!**

**ZZIITTT!**



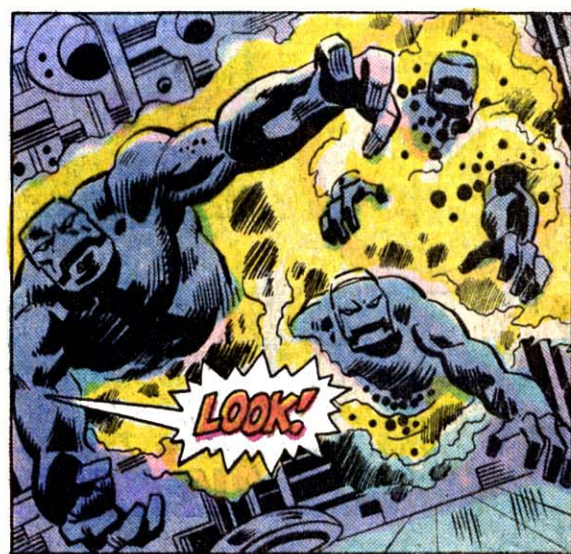
**BY HEIMDAL'S EYES! 'TIS SOME SORT OF ELECTRO-MAGNETIC WARP-- PERMEATING THE ENTIRE SHIP!**

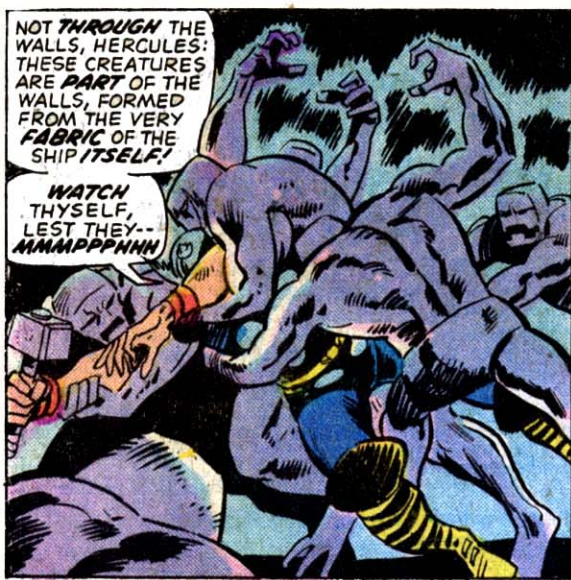
**HOLD FAST, FRIEND HERCULES-- IT CANNOT LAST FOR LONG!**

**THE FIREWORKS DON'T FRIGHTEN ME, THUNDER GOD-- BUT THOSE CREATURES COMING THROUGH THE WALLS OF THE SHIP DO!**



**LOOK!**





NOT THROUGH THE WALLS, HERCULES: THESE CREATURES ARE PART OF THE WALLS, FORMED FROM THE VERY FABRIC OF THE SHIP ITSELF!

WATCH THYSELF, LEST THEY--  
MMMMPPPHH



WHAT ELSE WOULD THOU HAVE ME DO, ASGARDIAN.?

STAND AND LET THESE DWARVES OVERRUN ME? NO, FIRELORD-- WHAT OF THEE?

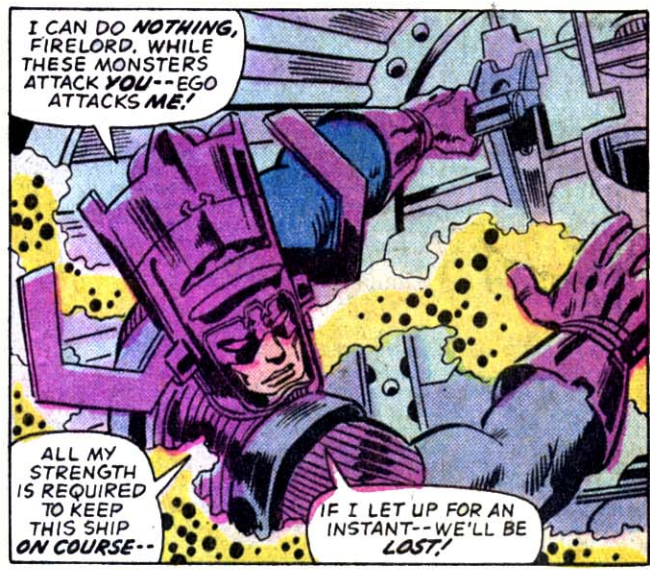


WILL THOU STAND OR ATTACK--?

IF ATTACK, THEN ATTACK QUICKLY!

MASTER, THE DEMONS SEEM TOO MUCH FOR OUR GODLIKE COMPANIONS--

CAN YOU HELP--OR MUST WE BATTLE THEM ALONE?



I CAN DO NOTHING, FIRELORD. WHILE THESE MONSTERS ATTACK YOU--EGO ATTACKS ME!

ALL MY STRENGTH IS REQUIRED TO KEEP THIS SHIP ON COURSE--

IF I LET UP FOR AN INSTANT--WE'LL BE LOST!



THEN STAND FAST, GALACTUS!

THESE CREATURES WILL BE DISPATCHED--



NOW!





BY THE EVERLASTING STARS, THUNDER GOD!

NO MATTER HOW OFTEN WE STRIKE-- THE DEMONS KEEP RETURNING! IN TRUTH, THEY CANNOT BE TIRED!



THEN LET'S NOT TRY TO TIRE THEM, HERCULES.

LET'S SIMPLY DISPOSE OF THEM--

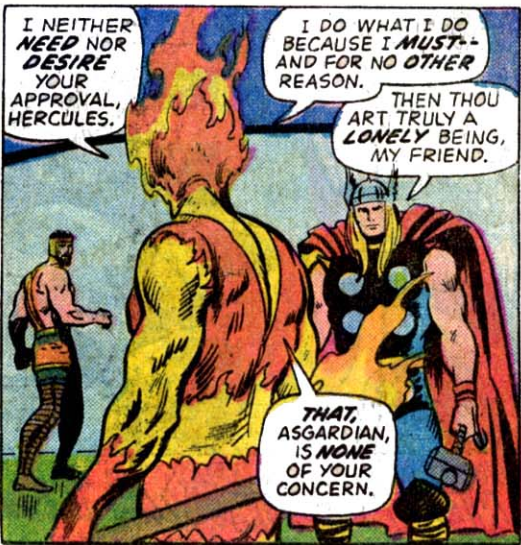
--THROUGH THE COSMIC FLAME OF THE FIRESTAFF!



"ZOUNDS! 'TIS A MIRACLE, THOR-- THE FIRELORD DID BUT TOUCH THEM WITH HIS FLAME, AND THE LITTLE MONSTERS HAVE DISSOLVED INTO VAPOR!"



"BY MY EYES, IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE ME ADMIRE THAT HAUGHTY, FLAME-HAIRED VILLAIN!"



I NEITHER NEED NOR DESIRE YOUR APPROVAL, HERCULES.

I DO WHAT I DO BECAUSE I MUST-- AND FOR NO OTHER REASON.

THEN THOU ART TRULY A LONELY BEING, MY FRIEND.

THAT, ASGARDIAN, IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN.



**BE STILL,  
ALL OF  
YOU!**

WE PASSED THROUGH THE LIVING PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE WHILE YOU FOUGHT EGO'S MINIONS...

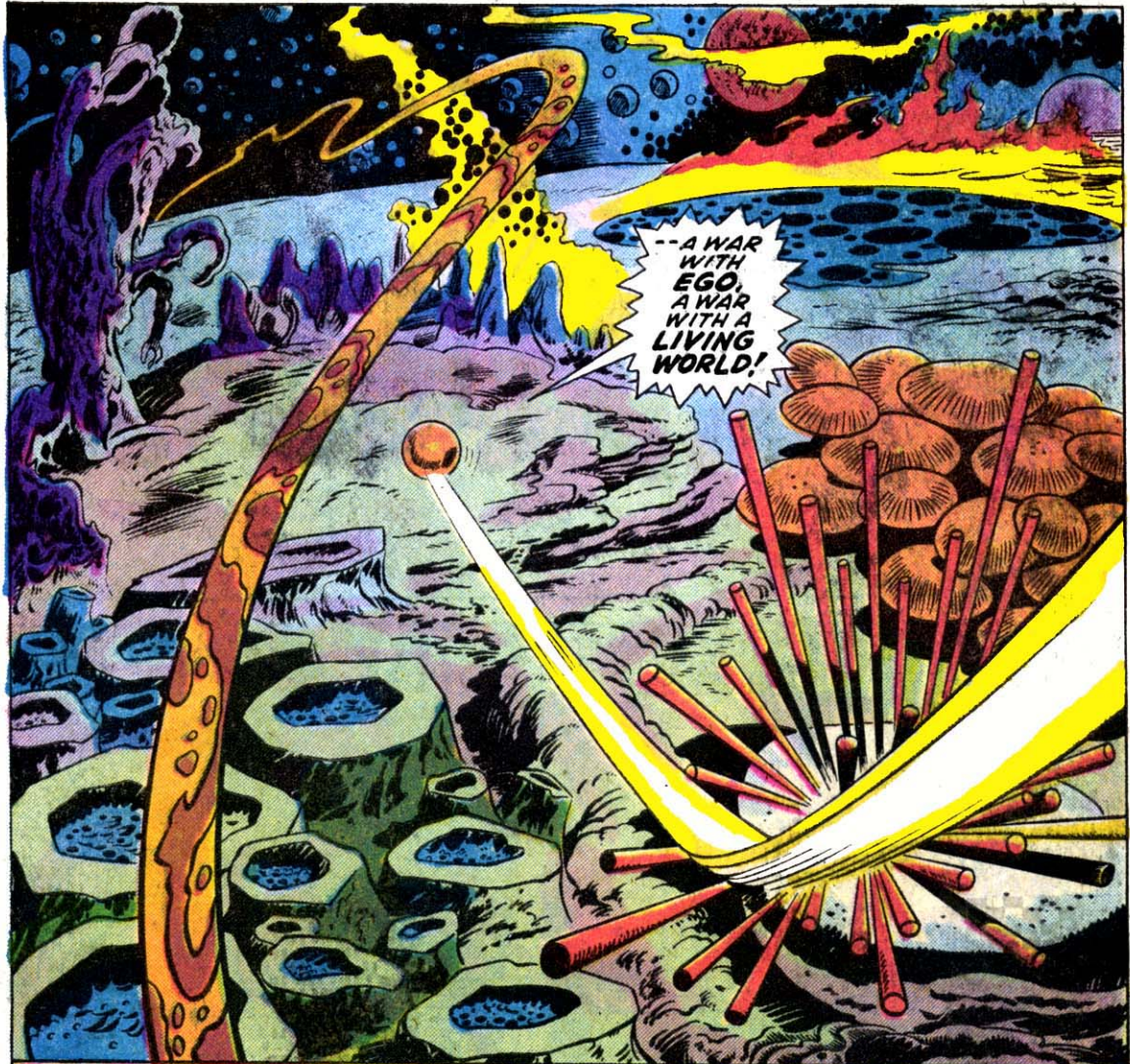
EVEN AS WE SPEAK, WE APPROACH THE WORLD'S SURFACE...



...AND OUR FATEFUL CONFRONTATION... WITH DESTINY.

THEN LET US GO TO THAT CONFRONTATION AS GODS-- WITHOUT FEAR OR TREPIDATION.

THIS MAY BE OUR STRANGEST BATTLE--OUR MOST UNCANNY STRUGGLE--



--A WAR WITH EGO, A WAR WITH A LIVING WORLD!

**TO BE CONTINUED... NEXT ISSUE: A TIME OF FEAR!**