

THOR

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# THE MIGHTY THOR

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AND, LIVE OR DIE --  
IT'S ALL BEING  
FILMED FOR  
TV!

WHILE BALDER LIES DYING,  
AND A UNIVERSE TREMBLES --  
**THOR BATTLES LOKI!**  
IN THE LAND OF TROLLS!!



When DR. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking-stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic hammer MJOLNIR—and the lame physician is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm, Lord of the Living Lightning—and heir to the throne of eternal Asgard...

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

# A BALANCE IS STRUCK!

ALL IN ALL, IT'S HARDLY BEEN A HAPPY HOMECOMING FOR THE THUNDER GOD, AS HE RETURNS TO FABLED ASGARD-- AND, ALMOST WITHIN A MATTER OF MINUTES--

BALDER-- IS DEAD!

NOW TRULY ASGARD-- AND ALL THE EARTH-- MUST FACE THE DAY OF DOOM!

THE DAY CALLED-- RAGNAROK!

AS FOR THE OTHER ASGARDIANS WHO MULL ABOUT, SHOCKED-- WORDS FAIL THEM--

FOR, WHAT BEGAN AS A MOMENT OF SPORT HAS ENDED IN A TRAGEDY WITHOUT EQUAL--!

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NOW, AS THOR LAYS HIS UNBREATHING FRIEND UPON A GLEAMING BIER, THE EVENTS OF A SOMEHOW UNREAL PAST UNFOLD BEFORE HIS INNER EYE: \*

BALDER'S PLAYFUL BOAST OF INVULNERABILITY WHILE IN ASGARD, BECAUSE OF A VOW MADE BY VIRTUALLY ALL LIVING THINGS NEVER TO HARM HIM...

THE SIGHT OF BALDER LAUGHING, AS THE SPORTIVE GODS HURLED INEFFECTUAL WEAPONS AT HIS UNTOUCHED BODY...

\*EVEN AS THEY UNFOLDED BEFORE YOUR OUTER ONES LAST ISSUE. -- ROY.

THEN, SUDDENLY, THE ARROW FIRED BY THE BLIND GOD HODER, WHICH SOMEHOW PIERCED AND STILLED BALDER'S BRAVE HEART... BEFORE EVEN THOR COULD INTERVENE!

NOW, THOR BOWS A HUMBLE KNEE, AS DO HOGUN, FANDRAL, AND THE USUALLY BOISTEROUS VOLSTAGG.

BUT NOT FOR LONG IN SILENCE!

LOKI--THOU STRUTTING GOD OF EVIL! WILT THOU MOCK E'EN THY FALLEN COMRADE?

IN SOOTH, I DO SENSE THY TALONED HAND IN BALDER'S FATE--AND FOR THAT, THOU SHALT SURELY PAY!



FOOLS! WEEP FOR YOURSELVES, IF WEEP YOU MUST!

FOR, YE KNOW WELL WHAT HATH BEEN FORETOLD TO ALL--FATHER ODIN:

AYE, FREELY DO I ADMIT IT!

'T WAS I WHO GAVE BLIND HODER AN ARROW MADE OF MISTLETOE--

AND, IF GODS CAN PRAY... THEY PRAY.

THAT THE DEATH OF BALDER SHALL BE THE SIGNAL FOR THE IMMINENT END OF ASGARD--AND OF ALL THAT IS!



--THE ONE THING, LIVING OR UNLIVING, WHICH DID NOT SWEAR NEVER TO HARM BALDER!

AND NOW, THOU KNOWEST FULL WELL WHAT SHALL FOLLOW:

"THE DREADED MID-GARD SERPENT SHALL REAR UP FROM THE COILS ABOUT THE EARTH, TO ENGULF AND O'ERWHELM ANY WHO STAND IN HIS SCALY PATH...

"ICE-HEARTED HELA, QUEEN OF DEATH-- AND WHOM SOME HAVE CALLED MY DAUGHTER-- SHALL STRIDE THROUGH ASGARD, SEEKING GODLY SOULS FOR HER DARK DOMAIN...

"AND AT HER SIDE, UNCHAINED AT LAST, SHALL BE THE GREAT WOLF FENRIS.

"AYE, AND THE TROLLS-- BOTH THOSE WHOM MORTALS CALL GIANTS, AND THOSE WHO BE MONSTROUSLY DWARFISH--

"THEY SHALL TRAMPLE THE RAINBOW BRIDGE NEATH THEIR FEET, AS THEY E'ER HAVE LUSTED TO DO.

"AND YE GODS SHALL RISE TO THE DEFENSE SHOUTING NOBLE SLOGANS AND WIELDING WEAPONS ONCE BELIEVED INVINCIBLE!"



"THUS SHALL ASGARD PERISH AT LAST, IN ALL-CONSUMING FLAMES STOKED BY THE FIRE-DEMON SURTUR--"

-- AND NOT ONE OF YE I SEE BEFORE ME SHALL SURVIVE THAT HOLOCAUST TO BUILD A NEW WORLD ON THE SMOULDERING RUINS OF THE OLD!



MOST FIENDISH OF MEN OR IMMORTALS!

DOST THOU THINK TO LIVE-- WHEN THE REALM ETERNAL ITSELF BURNS AND CRUMBLES?

OFT HAVE I SAID IT: IF LOKI DOTH NOT RULE ASGARD--

-- THEN HE WOULD RATHER SEE IT FALL FOREVER!



THOU SHALT NOT LIVE TO SEE IT FALL-- NOT IF HOGUN'S MACE CAN--

HALT, FRIENDS!

THOR!? DOST THOU DEFEND LOKI-- WHOM, A MOMENT PAST, THOU DIDST MEAN TO SMITE?

HE DOTH REALIZE NOW, DOLTS, THAT YE BE BUT WASTING PRECIOUS TIME AND STRENGTH--



-- TIME THAT YE SHALL NEED, AND NEED DEARLY, WHEN THE TROLLS DO STRIKE!

LOKI, THIS I DO SWEAR: THE HAND THAT LAYS YOU LOW, ON THAT LAST DAY, SHALL BELONG TO NONE SAVE THOR!



HALT, YE GODS!

ALL-FATHER! WE DID NOT SEE--

LOKI SPOKE THE TRUTH!

WE NEED TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE GATHERING HORDES OF DISCORD AND CHAOS--

-- TIME WHICH CAN ONLY BE HOURS IF BALDER LIVES!



IF HE LIVES, SIRE? WOULD THAT HE DID!

AYE, HE DWELLS NOW IN HELA'S DEATH-REALM, TRUE ENOW.

YET, THERE STILL BE HOPE.

BUT, I SAW HIM DIE-- FELT HIS HEART, AS STILL AS ANY MORTAL GRAVE!

I KNOW THAT ANY OF YE WOULD JOURNEY TO HEL ITSELF, IF I DID ASK THEE TO...

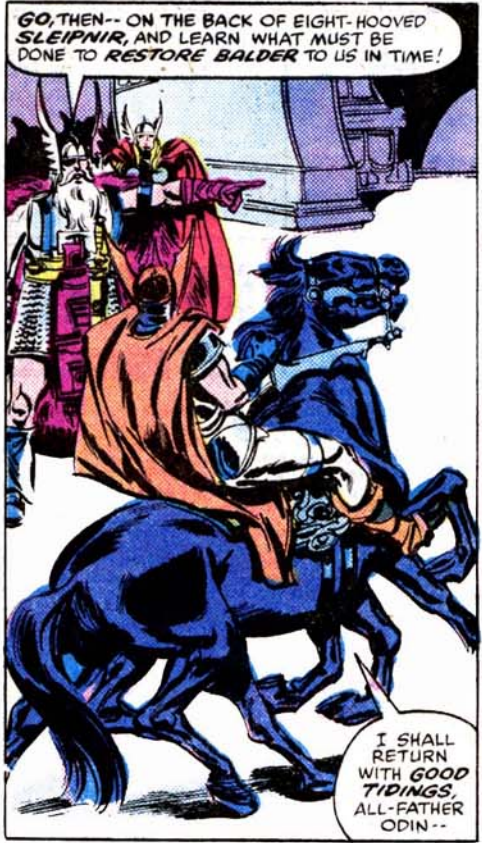


YET, 'TIS WRITTEN THAT HERMOD THE SWIFT SHALL BE THE ONE TO GO!

HERMOD-- FLEET OF FOOT, AND SKILLED RIDER-- WILL YE HASTEN TO HELA'S KINGDOM, AND SEE WHAT MAY BE DONE?

THOU KNOWEST, SIRE.

FOR THIS TASK HAVE I E'ER HELD MYSELF IN READINESS AND TRAINING, SINCE TIME OUT OF MIND!



GO, THEN-- ON THE BACK OF EIGHT-HOOVED SLEIPNIR, AND LEARN WHAT MUST BE DONE TO RESTORE BALDER TO US IN TIME!

I SHALL RETURN WITH GOOD TIDINGS, ALL-FATHER ODIN--



--OR THOU SHALT SEE ME NEVERMORE!

CAN YOU GET A CLEAR SHOT OF THAT GUY ON THE HORSE, RED?

YOU KNOW IT, MR. H.!



NOW, YE GODS AND GODDESSES... LET US GIRD OURSELVES FOR THE BATTLE WHICH STILL MAY COME!

FOR, ONLY THE FOOL LIGHTS CANDLES TO PEACE...

...AND FAILS TO SHARPEN HIS SWORD!

AND, AS THE GODS DIS-PEL, EACH TO HIS APPOINTED TASKS--

--THE MORTALS AMONG THEM ARE LEFT TO PONDER THE FATE OF GODS.

I DON'T GET IT, MR. H./ ODIN AND COMPANY ACT ALMOST LIKE THEY KNOW WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN-- AS IF THEY'RE JUST ACTING OUT PARTS WRITTEN FOR THEM.

MAYBE, IN A SENSE, THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY ARE DOING, JOEY.

IF SO, THEN BEFORE LONG, HERMOD WILL RETURN FROM HIS TRIP TO HELL, OR WHATEVER THEY CALL IT HERE...

...TO GIVE ODIN A MESSAGE FROM HELA:

"IF ALL THE WORLD WILL ONLY WEEP FOR BALDER, HE CAN BE RESTORED TO ASGARD-- AND RAGNAROK WON'T HAPPEN ON SCHEDULE.

"THEN, AS IT WAS PREDICTED CENTURIES AGO, ALL THINGS WILL WEEP... ONE WAY OR ANOTHER..."

"...THOUGH I DON'T KNOW IF ALL THE WORLD IN THIS CASE INCLUDES JUST ASGARD, OR EARTH AS WELL..."

"...ALL THINGS, THAT IS, EXCEPT A SINGLE GIANTESSE... I THINK HER NAME'S THOKK... SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

"SHE'LL REFUSE... ASKING WHAT IN BLAZES BALDER EVER DID FOR HER.

"ACCORDING TO SOME SOURCES, THOKK IS LOKI HIMSELF, IN DISGUISE..."

...BUT, IN THE WORLD OF GODS, WHO CAN TRULY SAY?

ALL I CARE ABOUT IS HAVING AN UPPER WEST SIDE TO GO BACK TO WHEN THIS LUNACY IS OVER.

YOU'RE ASKING ME!?

IF RAGNAROK COMES, WILL IT DESTROY EARTH, TOO-- OR NOT?

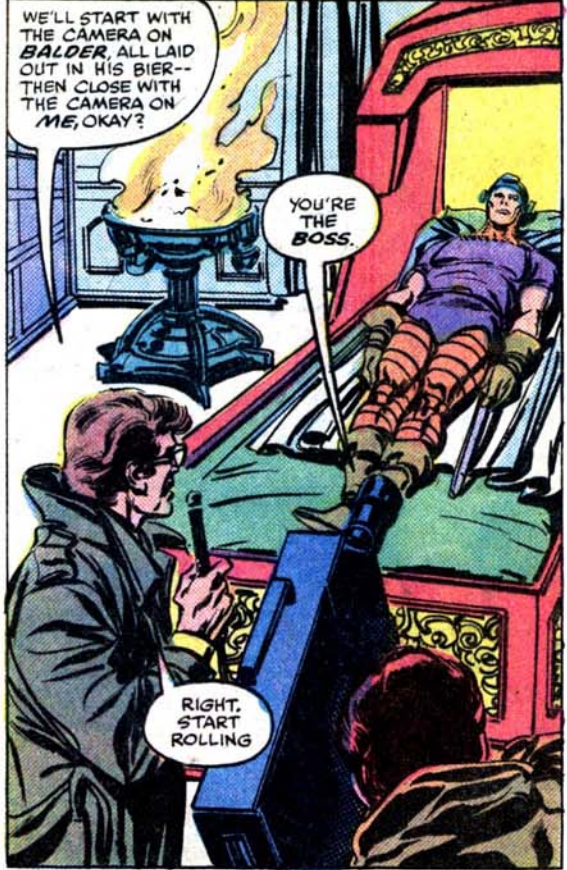
I'M NOT EVEN SURE WE'RE REALLY HERE.

GREAT! IT'S JUST DANDY TO BE SHOOTING THE GREAT-EST TV SPEC OF ALL TIME-- AND NOT BE SURE THERE'LL BE A NETWORK TO PUT IT ON!

AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED, RED, THERE STILL IS.

AND WE'RE GOING TO CONTINUE UNDER THAT ASSUMPTION.

YOU TWO BRING YOUR EQUIPMENT OVER HERE; IT'S TIME I DID A REMOTE.



WE'LL START WITH THE CAMERA ON **BALDER**, ALL LAID OUT IN HIS BIER-- THEN CLOSE WITH THE CAMERA ON **ME**, OKAY?

YOU'RE THE BOSS.

RIGHT, START ROLLING



IN A STARTLING TRAGEDY HERE, EARLIER TODAY, **BALDER**-- THE ASGARDIAN WHO CONFORMS MOST CLOSELY TO THE ANCIENT **NORSE GOD OF LIGHT**-- WAS CUT DOWN BY AN ALLEGEDLY **ENCHANTED ARROW** FROM THE BOW OF A **BLIND GOD**.

IT SOUNDS LIKE THE STUFF **STORYBOOKS** ARE MADE OF... BUT, HERE BEYOND THE FABLED **RAINBOW BRIDGE**, **BALDER'S** DEATH IS ALL TOO FRIGHTENINGLY **REAL**.

WHAT'S MORE: THE ASGARDIANS HAVE THEIR OWN-- MYTHS WHICH MAINTAIN THAT THEY **CREATED** OUR EARTH--

--AND THAT WHEN THEY GO, WE GO, AS WELL!



THUS, **BALDER'S** DEATH IS A TRAGEDY FOR **ASGARD**, CERTAINLY.

BUT--A TRAGEDY FOR THE **EARTH**, AS WELL?

ONLY **TIME** WILL TELL.



THIS IS **HARRIS HOBBS**... **ASGARD**.

OKAY, THAT'S A **WRAP**.



YOUR PARDON, MORTAL-- BUT, THOUGH I HAVE OFT BEEN TO EARTH, I AM STILL A **STRANGER** TO ITS WAYS.

THINE **EMPLOYER** DOETH BEHAVE AS THOUGH HE KNOWS THE **FUTURE**, AND WHAT IT HOLDS IN STORE.

YEAH, WELL... HE LIKES TO **THINK** HE DOES, ANYWAY, **LADY SIF**.

ME, I JUST POINT THE **CAMERA**, Y'KNOW?





I SEE. YET, ALL THIS TALK OF DOOM--

LOOK, ALL I KNOW IS A GOOD-LOOKING LADY WHEN I SEE ONE.

AND YOU SURE BEAT ANYTHING I'VE SEEN LATELY IN ANY SINGLES BAR!

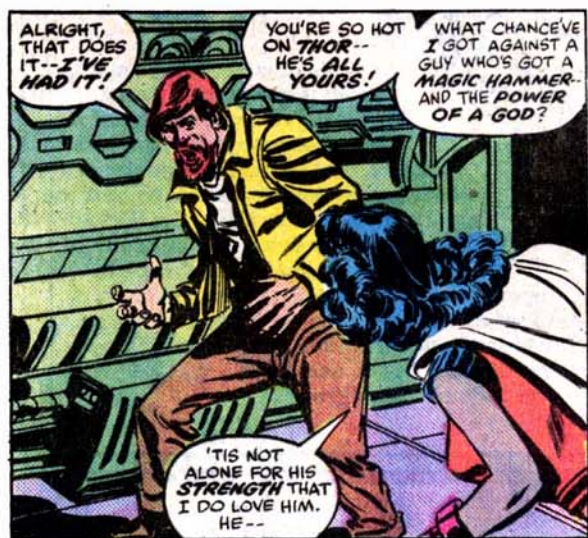
WHY DON'T YOU DITCH GOLDILOCKS, AND WE CAN--



HEY!!

AWAY, MORTAL! DOST THOU PRESUME TO LAY HANDS UPON THE CHOSEN OF THOR?

BE GLAD, RATHER, THAT I DO NOT SMITE THEE WITH MINE OWN SWORD!



ALRIGHT, THAT DOES IT-- I'VE HAD IT!

YOU'RE SO HOT ON THOR-- HE'S ALL YOURS!

WHAT CHANCE'VE I GOT AGAINST A GUY WHO'S GOT A MAGIC HAMMER-- AND THE POWER OF A GOD?

'TIS NOT ALONE FOR HIS STRENGTH THAT I DO LOVE HIM. HE--



YEAH, SURE! HE'S MORE THAN JUST THE ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER OF THE NORSE-GOD SET, HUH?

YOU DIG HIM 'CAUSE HIS HEART IS PURE, RIGHT?

NUTS! I NEED SOME AIR!



THOU DOST SWALLOW THY PASSION TOO EASILY, MORTAL.

HUH? OH-- LOKI! I'M SURPRISED YOU HAVEN'T SPLIT BY NOW.

YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY MR. POPULAR AROUND HERE.

MAYHAP NOT-- BUT THOU MIGHT WELL BE, IF--



WADDA YOU MEAN? DON'T TRY ONE OF YOUR CONS ON ME!

THOU CANST HAVE SUCH POWER AS THOR DOTH POSSESS-- IF THOU WILT LISTEN TO LOKI.

FOR THE SAKE OF BEAUTEOUS SIF, WILT THOU PLACE THYSELF IN MY HANDS?



SURE-- WHY NOT? I'VE BEEN WAITIN' ALL MY LIFE FOR SOMETHING LIKE HER--

AND, THUNDER GOD OR NO THUNDER GOD, RED NORVELL DOESN'T GIVE UP EASY!

WHAT'VE YOU GOT IN MIND?

FIRST, RETRIEVE THY CAMERA!



AND NOW-- WE MUST BE GONE!

GONE? BUT-- WHERE TO??

THOU SHALT SEE SOON ENOW, MORTAL. AYE, TRULY--



-- THOU SHALT SEE!

PWOOF!



ALL-FATHER! A WORD WITH THEE, I PRAY!

SPEAK THY PIECE, MILADY SIF-- WHILST MINE ARMORERS GIRD ME FOR THE FINAL BATTLE!

LOKI HATH VANISHED-- TAKING WITH HIM THE MORTAL CAMERA-MAN!

I THINK IT BODES NO GOOD TO THE REALM.



LOKI HATH NE'ER MEANT GOOD FORTUNE TO ASGARD, I FEAR.

OFTTIMES, I THINK 'TWOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO LOSE BOTH MINE EYES THAN TO HAVE ADOPTED THE PRINCE OF EVIL AS MINE OWN SECOND SON. \*

\*AS SEEN IN "JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY" #112. -- ROY.



YET, WHAT IS DONE... IS DONE.

COME, MILADY! BETWEEN MY FAITHFUL WOLVES LET US GO--

-- TO MEET OUR ENDS, LIKE GODS TRUE-BORN!



YE FAITHFUL OF ASGARD-- HEAR NOW THE WORDS OF ODIN!

'TIS WAR WE FACE-- WAR WITH THE GATHERED FORCES OF DARKNESS--  
'TIS WITH A HEAVY HEART, YET A PROUD ONE, THAT I DO LEAD THE CREAM OF THE REALM FORTH TO THE COMING STRUGGLE.



--AND GLAD I AM THAT TYR, GOD OF WAR, BE WITH US!

I WOULD SMITE THE FENRIS-WOLF, SIRE--

-- THAT FERAL DEMON WHICH ONCE DID DEVOUR MY HAND!



LORD ODIN! LET ME SPEAK, IF IT PLEASE THEE!

HODER! WHAT HAST THOU TO SAY, BLIND ONE?

ALL HERE KNOW THAT 'T WAS MINE ARROW WHICH, AGAINST MY WILL, DID FELL POOR BALDER...



SLAY ME, I PRAY, WITH MINE OWN BOW-- THAT MY SIN MAY BE THAT LITTLE ATONED!

RISE, VALIANT HODER!

THOU HAST BUT PLAYED THY PART, AS DO WE ALL.



IF MEN ARE PAWNS OF THE GODS-- WHY THEN, THE GODS THEMSELVES MAY BE BUT PUPPETS OF SOME HIGHER, UNKNOWN POWER.

THOU ART GUILTLESS! I'LL NOT SLAY THEE!

THEN LET MINE ARROWS STRIKE FOR ASGARD THIS DAY!

IF ONLY THERE WAS ONE WHO COULD GUIDE MY YET-SKILLED HAND--!

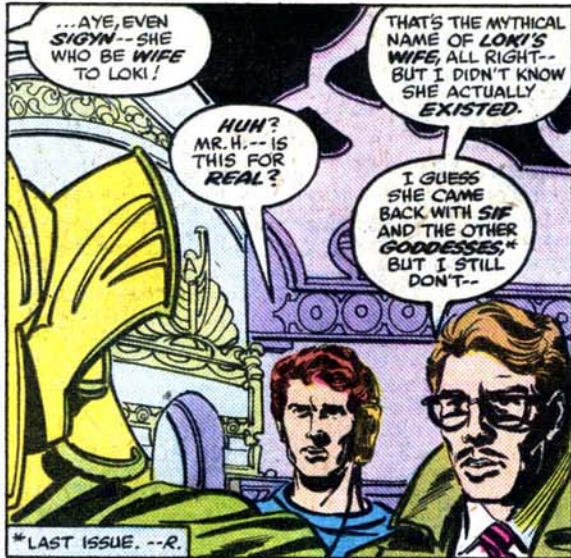
I SHALL!



I WILL STAND BESIDE THEE, HODER, AND POINT OUT TARGETS FOR THY RIGHT-EIOUS VENOM.

I--I SEEM TO KNOW THAT VOICE! YET IT CANNOT BE SHE--!

'TIS INDEED SHE WHOM THOU DIDST LEAST EXPECT, GODLING...



...AYE, EVEN SIGYN-- SHE WHO BE WIFE TO LOKI!

HUH? MR. H.-- IS THIS FOR REAL?

THAT'S THE MYTHICAL NAME OF LOKI'S WIFE, ALL RIGHT-- BUT I DIDN'T KNOW SHE ACTUALLY EXISTED.

I GUESS SHE CAME BACK WITH SIF AND THE OTHER GODDESSES,\* BUT I STILL DON'T--

\*LAST ISSUE. --R.



LET NONE IN ASGARD DOUBT SIGYN'S LOVE FOR HER HUSBAND, THE GOD OF EVIL!

SIGYN IS A TRUE WIFE, NOW AND ALWAYS-- YET, I WILL GUIDE THE SURE HAND OF MODER--

--EVEN IF THAT BOW-HAND BE TURNED TOWARD LOKI HIMSELF!

SO BE IT!

\*MORE ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION IN THOR ANNUAL \*7, ON SALE SOON. --R.T.



BUT NOW, THERE BE NAUGHT TO DO BUT WAIT FOR THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE HORDES OF HEL.

HOLD! WHERE BE THOR, AMID THIS VALIANT THROG?

WHERE BE ODIN'S ONLY BLOOD-SON, AMONG YE GODS WHO BE ALL SONS OF ODIN, IN SPIRIT?



H--HE WAS SEEN CONVERSING WITH MIMIR AT THE WELL OF WISDOM, ALL-FATHER-- WHILE WE OTHERS READIED FOR BATTLE.\*

THEN HE DID FLY FROM ASGARD-- AND EVEN SWIFT VOLSTAGG COULD NOT HAVE O'ERTAKEN HIM.

AND OUR POWER BE HALVED-- TILL HIS RETURN!

\*MORE ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION IN THOR ANNUAL \*7, ON SALE SOON. --R.T.



RISE UP, YE TROLLS AND DWARVES!

THE HOUR IS COME!!

WE SHALL KNOW FULL WELL AS THERE WHEN THE HOUR IS COME, CUNNING ONE.

AYE! THE MOMENT IS NOW-- BUT 'TIS NOT QUITE YET!

WHILE, IN A LAND AS FAR FROM GLEAMING BIFROST AS IT IS FROM OUR OWN EARTH--

THIS IS **WILD!** SPECIAL EFFECTS LIKE THESE WOULDVE COST **LUCAS** OR **SPIELBERG** A FORTUNE!

SURE, THEY'RE A **REPULSIVE** LOT--BUT I'M A **NEWSMAN**, NOT A **JUDGE!** I'M JUST HERE TO--

**LOKI!** HAST THOU BROUGHT THIS MORTAL HERE, MAYHAP, TO **SPYON** US WITH YON **STRANGE DEVICE?**

UH OH!

LET HIM ALONE, MISBEGOTTEN ONE! HE IS A **FRIEND OF LOKI**, AND--

**LIAR!** THOU HAST NO FRIENDS, HERE OR ELSEWHERE!

YOU--  
**HERE--!**

AYE, SCION OF SHADOWS!

WHERE **LOKI** WALKS, SHALL **THOR** FEAR TO FOLLOW?

THIS TIME HAST THOU DARED **TOO MUCH, THUNDERER!**

THOU SHALT **NOT** RETURN THIS DAY FROM **JOTUNHEIM**, LAND OF GIANTS!

I VOWED TO **SLAY** THEE, ON THE DAY OF **RAGNAROK**. THUS, IF 'TIS **COME--!**

THOU DOST SPEAK **BRAVELY**, WHILST HOLDING THINE ACCURSED **HAMMER!**

**VILLAIN!** CHOOSE THINE **OWN WEAPON--** OR I'LL FACE THEE WITH **NAKED HANDS!**

NO NEED, DEAR "BROTHER"--

**LOKI** HATH WELL **PREPARED** FOR THIS FINAL RECKONING-- AND NOW FROM **LIMBO** DO I CALL FORTH--

-- THE VERY **AXE** WITH WHICH THY FATHER **ODIN** DID SLAY THE **FROST-GIANT YMIR**, EONS AGO!

THE WORLD WAS **YOUNG** INDEED WHEN LAST THIS **GLEAMING AXE** WAS **USED--**

THUS, 'TIS MEET THAT IT BE USED AGAIN WHEN RAGNAROK HATH COME ROUND AT LAST--



UNNH--

--TO SLAY THE LAST OF THE GODS, AS ONCE IT SLEW THEIR FIRST FOE!

THAT WAS TRULY A FAR MIGHTIER BLOW THAN ANY THOU HAST E'ER STRUCK ME!



STILL, MJOLNIR WAS FORGED LIKE NO WEAPON, BEFORE OR SINCE--

--IN THE FIERY FURNACE OF THE TROLL GEIRRODUR--



--AND NOT EVEN THE ALL-FATHER E'ER HATH WIELDED ITS EQUAL!

THUNDER!

FOR LONG MOMENTS, LIVING LIGHTNING CASCADES ABOUT DARK JOTUNHEIM-- LIGHTING THE LAND OF GIANTS AS THOUGH IT WERE ETERNAL DAY--



YET, WHEN THE FIRE HAS FADED ONCE MORE...

HAH! 'TIS TRUE THAT MJOLNIR BE SUPERIOR TO THIS STOLEN AXE, ASGARDIAN.

BUT, I'VE WOVEN SPELLS, LONG SINCE-- DESIGNED TO WEAKEN THEE BY HALF, SHOULDST E'ER THOU STALK JOTUNHEIM AGAIN--



--AND, WITH THY POWER BUT A SHADOW OF ITS FORMER SELF, THOU ART FOREDOOMED!!

WHAT'VE YOU LET YOURSELF IN FOR, RED, OL' BUDDY?

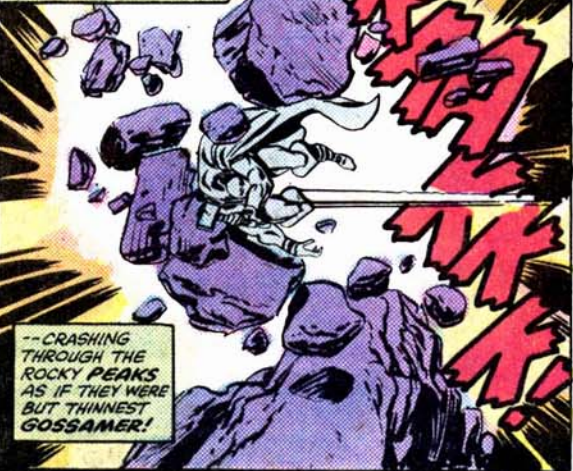
IF THOR WINS, HE'S LIABLE TO KICK YOUR TAIL ALL THE WAY BACK TO EARTH--

--AND IF LOKI WINS, I, MAY NOT HAVE AN EARTH TO BE KICKED BACK TO!

THEN, AS TROLLS, DWARVES,  
AND STAR-STUCK MORTAL  
WATCH, BOTH MYSTIC WEAPONS  
COME TOGETHER--



--AND, WONDER OF WONDERS,  
IT IS THOR WHO IS HURLED  
BACKWARD BY THE  
MURDEROUS IMPACT--



--CRASHING  
THROUGH THE  
ROCKY PEAKS  
AS IF THEY WERE  
BUT THINEST  
GOSSAMER!

ODIN'S BEARD! LOKI'S  
CAREFULLY-PREPARED  
TREACHERY HATH TRULY  
WEAKENED ME-- AS THE  
TROLLS THEMSELVES  
COULD NE'ER HAVE DONE!

YET HIS OWN  
VAINGLORIOUS  
PRATING HATH  
BETRAYED HIM!



FOR, A FOE  
FOREWARNED  
BE A FOE  
FOREARMED--



AND THOR CAN DOUBLE  
HIS STRENGTH FOR A  
TIME-- RESTORING ALL  
THAT WHICH LOKI'S  
SPELL HATH TAKEN  
AWAY--

--BY  
CALLING  
FOR THAT  
WHICH E'ER  
HATH AWAITED  
MY SUMMONS  
IN FAR-OFF  
ASSGARD:



MY BELT OF  
STRENGTH!\*

\*LAST SEEN IN ISSUE #91. --ROY.

I LIKE NOT BEING FORCED  
TO WEAR AN ENCHANTED  
BELT DESIGNED TO INCREASE  
MY POWER WHEN I WAS BUT  
A GODLING, NOT YET  
POSSESSED OF MY FULL  
STRENGTH.

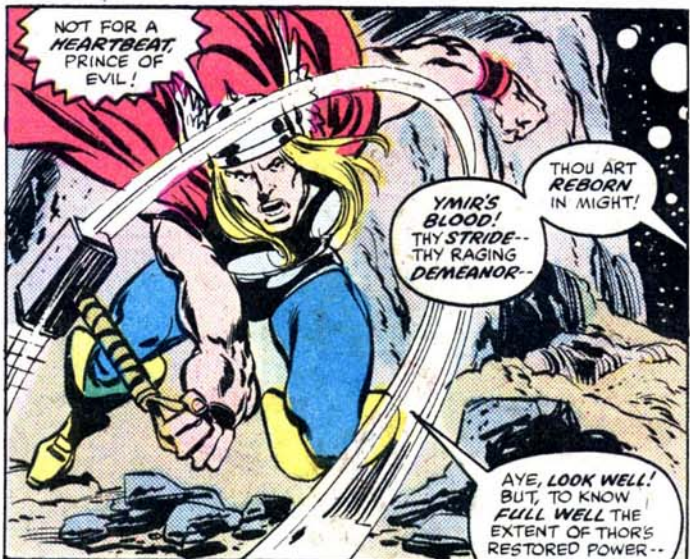
BUT, ALL  
ASSGARD--  
PERHAPS A  
UNIVERSE,  
AS WELL--DOETH  
DEPEND ON ME  
THIS DAY--

--SO I  
DARE NOT  
FAIL!



WHAT NOW, COWARD?  
WOULDEST THOU DELAY  
OUR FINAL, FATAL  
CLASH?

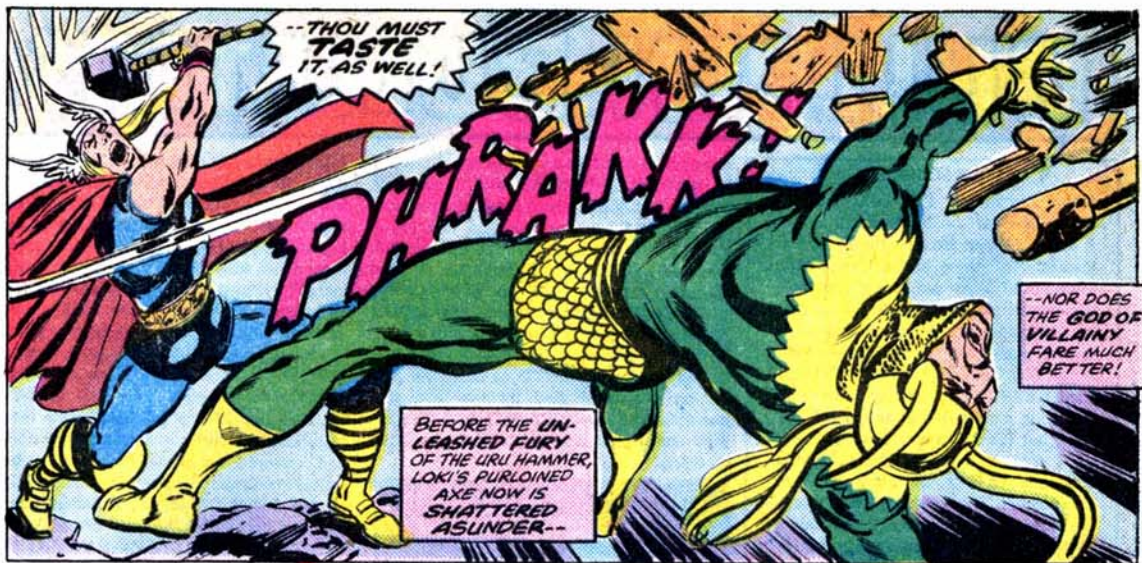
NOT FOR A  
HEARTBEAT,  
PRINCE OF  
EVIL!



YMIR'S  
BLOOD!  
THY STRIDE--  
THY RAGING  
DEMEANOR--

THOU ART  
REBORN  
IN MIGHT!

AYE, LOOK WELL!  
BUT, TO KNOW  
FULL WELL THE  
EXTENT OF THOR'S  
RESTORED POWER--







LOKI SHALL DO NO HARM-- EVER AGAIN!

NOW, MORTAL-- BRING HITHER THINE INFERNAL GADGET--



--AND I'LL HIE US ALL TO THE GLEAMING REALM!

AS MAGIC Mjolnir BRIDGES WHAT LESSER MINDS CALL HYPERSPACE, THE SON OF ODIN SAYS NOTHING--

--HIS MIND FILLED WITH IMAGES OF BALDER THE BRAVE, HOUERING AT BEST BETWEEN VIBRANT LIFE AND ETERNAL DEATH.



THEN-- ASGARD!

THANKS, FRIEND-- BUT LOOK, I HOPE YOU DON'T THINK I WAS PART OF ANY PLOT TO--

NAY, BUT THINE ILK WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR WHAT THOU WOULDST TERM-- A SCOOP.

HERE! HOLD MY BELT OF STRENGTH, UNTIL AND UNLESS I DO ASK FOR IT!



AND PRAY THAT I DO NOT-- FOR THAT WILL MEAN THAT RAGNAROK BE UPON US AT LAST!

BELT... OF STRENGTH...?

TIME PASSES AT A DIFFERENT RATE IN THE LAND OF GODS THAN ELSEWHERE.

THUS, IN THE TIME THOR AND THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN GONE, HERMOD HAS JOURNEYED FORTH TO HELA AND BACK...



...AND ALL HAS GONE, ALAS, JUST AS HARRIS HOBBS PREDICTED:

--BUT, BECAUSE THE GIANTESS THROKK WOULD NOT WEEP, BALDER IS FOREVER LOST TO US!

CAN NOTHING, THEN, STAVE OFF THE GATHERING TWILIGHT, SIRE?

FOR, THOUGH I SCATTERED THE TROLLS, THEY WILL SOON RE-GROUP IN NUMBERS BEYOND COUNTING.

CAN NAUGHT PUT OFF THE DAY OF DOOM?

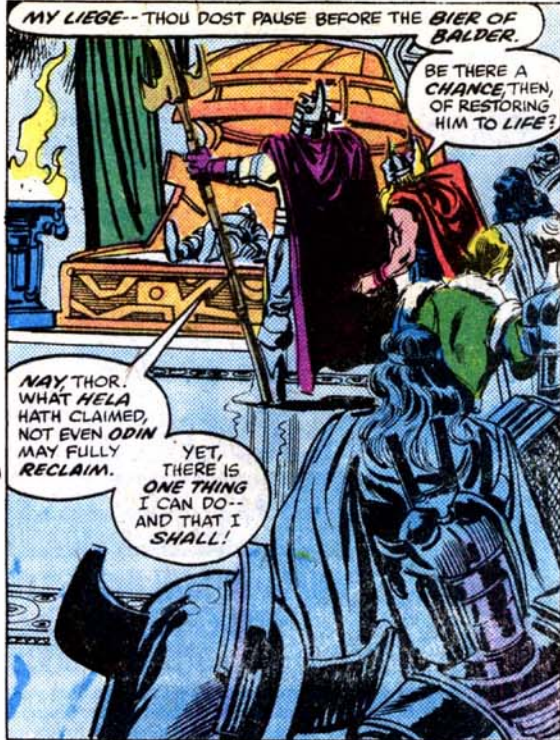


MAYHAP... IT CAN, MY SON.

LONG HAVE I DELAYED MY NEXT ACTION, HOPING AGAINST HOPE THAT SOME OTHER WAY WOULD BE FOUND.

BUT NOW, I KNOW THAT WAS NOT TO BE.

COME THEN, YE GODS AND GODDESSES!



MY LIEGE-- THOU DOST PAUSE BEFORE THE BIER OF BALDER.

BE THERE A CHANCE THEN, OF RESTORING HIM TO LIFE?

NAY THOR. WHAT HELA HATH CLAIMED, NOT EVEN ODIN MAY FULLY RECLAIM.

YET, THERE IS ONE THING I CAN DO-- AND THAT I SHALL!



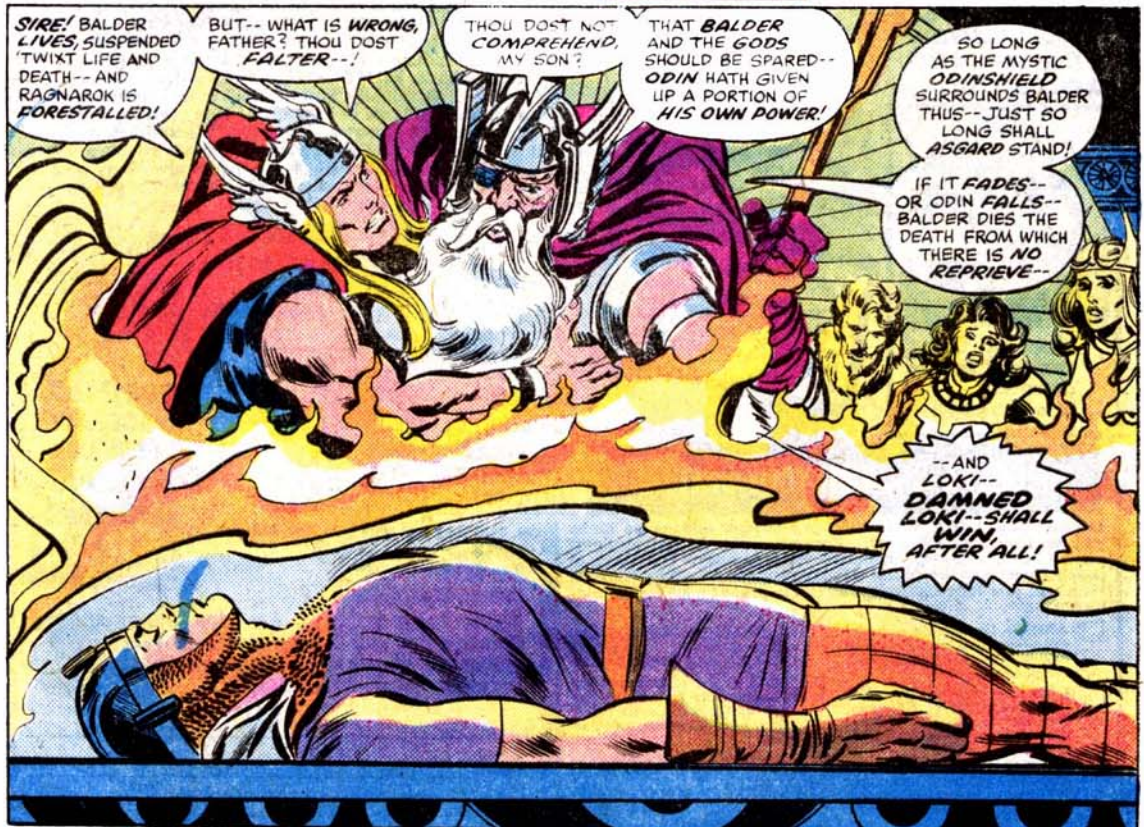
BY THE HAFT OF MY SPEAR GUNGNIR--

--THAT, IF HE MAY NOT TRULY LIVE, THEN NEITHER SHALL HE WHOLLY DIE!

--LET THE ODINPOWER BE DRAINED FROM ME, TO FLOW FREELY INTO AND ABOUT THE DORMANT FORM OF BALDER THE BRAVE--

THEN, AS THE FOREMOST OF ASSGARDIANS SOLEMNLY INTONES, RIVERS OF VISIBLE ENERGY FLOW FROM HIS SACRED SPEAR-- INTO THE UNMOVING FORM LAID OUT BEFORE HIM--

--TILL, WITHOUT WARNING-- BALDER BREATHES!



SIRE! BALDER LIVES, SUSPENDED 'TWEEN LIFE AND DEATH-- AND RAGNAROK IS FORESTALLED!

BUT-- WHAT IS WRONG, FATHER? THOU DOST FALTER--!

THOU DOST NOT COMPREHEND, MY SON?

THAT BALDER AND THE GODS SHOULD BE SPARED-- ODIN HATH GIVEN UP A PORTION OF HIS OWN POWER!

SO LONG AS THE MYSTIC ODINSHIELD SURROUNDS BALDER THUS-- JUST SO LONG SHALL ASGARD STAND!

IF IT FADES-- OR ODIN FALLS-- BALDER DIES THE DEATH FROM WHICH THERE IS NO REPRIEVE--

--AND LOKI-- DAMNED LOKI-- SHALL WIN, AFTER ALL!

NEXT ISSUE: **THE TRIAL OF LOKI!** PLUS: PERHAPS THE MOST STARTLING NEW SUPER-VILLAIN OF ALL!