

35¢

# 277  
NOV

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

BY THE  
COMICS  
CODE  
AUTHORITY

THOR

THE  
MIGHTY

# THOR

©1978 MARVEL COMICS GROUP



KILL  
THOR--AND  
ASGARD  
FALLS!

ALONE  
I STAND--  
WITHOUT MY  
HAMMER--  
AGAINST THE  
HORDES OF  
HELA!

AND IF I FAIL--  
THE DAY OF  
**DOOM**  
IS UPON US!

JB  
+  
BM





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!

ROY THOMAS \* JOHN BUSCEMA & TOM PALMER \* GLYNIS WEIN, COLORIST \* JIM SHOOTER  
WRITER / EDITOR \* ILLUSTRATORS / IMAGINERS \* JOE ROSEN, LETTERER \* CONSULTING EDITOR



## TIME OF THE TROLLS!

THE DAY OF RAGNAROK IS HARD UPON ETERNAL ASGARD!  
WHAT'S MORE, A TV CAMERA-MAN HAS BEEN TURNED, BY MYSTIC MEANS, INTO THE "NEW THOR"—AND, AFTER DEFEATING OUR GOLDEN-HAIRED GOD IN PITCHED COMBAT, HAS TAKEN THE LADY SIF AND STREAKED OFF TO PARTS UNKNOWN....!

WOE TO ASGARD-- ON THE DAY I DID ADOPT EVIL LOKI INTO MINE IMMORTAL FAMILY!

'T WAS HIS DOING THAT THE RED-TRESSED MORTAL GAINED THE POWER-- AYE, E'EN THE MAGICAL HAMMER-- OF MY MUCH-LOVED SON!

AND 'TIS THE FAULT OF ODIN, THEN, IF THIS BE THE HOUR OF THE GODS' OWN DEATH!!

\* LAST ISH-- BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT! IT'S WAY TOO COMPLICATED TO GO INTO NOW!  
-- ROY.

THOR® is published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. 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 ©1978 by Marvel Comics Group. A Division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Vol. 1, No. 277, November, 1978 issue. Price 35¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate \$4.50 for 12 issues. Canada, \$6.50. Foreign, \$6.50. 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 U.S.A. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. THOR (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP.



A DISTRESSED HARRIS HOBBS, HOWEVER, WOULD DISAGREE WITH THE ALL-FATHER...



JOEY-- DEAD!  
THE LIFE OF  
BALDER--  
HANGING BY  
A THREAD--!

IS-- IS THIS  
WHAT I SET IN  
MOTION-- WHEN  
I SNEAKED INTO  
ASGARD WITH A  
TV CAMERA  
CREW?\*

\*ISSUE #273...R.T.



NOW, ONE OF THOSE I BROUGHT WITH ME LIES DEAD-- AND THE OTHER IS A MURDERER, WHO THINKS HE'S THOR-- AND HAS THE STRENGTH TO BACK IT UP!

ASGARD-- THE EARTH ITSELF-- MAY BE DESTROYED AT ANY MOMENT-- AND IT'S ALL MY FAULT!

NOT SO, HARRIS HOBBS!

EH?  
WHO--?

LOOK BEHIND  
THEE, MORTAL--  
AND REJOICE!



THOR-- ALIVE-- AND STANDING!

AYE... IF  
UNSTEADILY.

MAYHAP  
OTHER GODS...  
WOULD HAVE  
PERISHED...  
'NEATH THE  
ONSLAUGHT  
OF MINE  
ENCHANTED  
HAMMER...

...BUT NOT THE  
TRUE... GOD  
OF THUNDER...!



BE NOT OVERSURE THAT THOU ART THE TRUE THUNDER GOD-- FOR, THERE BE A FLAME-HAIRED ONE THAT NOW DOETH CLAIM THY NAME AND TITLE!

LOKI! DOST  
THOU FEEL  
NO SHAME  
AT ALL-- THAT  
THE FATE OF  
ASGARD  
TEETERS IN THE  
BALANCE, BECAUSE  
OF THEE?

NAY!! 'TIS  
THE DEED  
I WAS BORN  
TO DO--  
SO WHY  
RECENT  
OF IT?



LOKI IS  
BRAZEN  
AS EVER,  
FRIEND  
FANDRAL.

AYE, HOGUN--  
BUT OBSERVE  
HIS NOBLE  
WIFE SIGYN!

SHE DOETH BEAR  
GRIEF ENOUGH  
FOR BOTH.



AND NOW, I KNOW YE ALL WOULD KNOW HOW 'TIS THAT A MERE MORTAL BECAME A NEW, MORE POWERFUL INCARNATION OF THOR HIMSELF!

NOR BE THERE  
ANY TALE  
THAT LOKI  
WOULD  
RATHER  
RELATE.

FOR, THE WORK  
OF EONS  
HATH COME  
TO FRU-  
ITION THIS  
DAY...!



"YET 'T'WAS NOT SO LONG AGO THAT I DID HIE ME TO DEATH'S DUSKY DOMAIN-- TO VISIT HELA, GODDESS OF DEATH, HERSELF!"

HELA-- TIME AND AGAIN HAVE I STRIVEN TO BECOME RULER OF ASGARD-- ONLY TO BE BLOCKED AT EVERY TURN BY ODIN AND THOR.

IF MY PRESENT SCHEME FAILS, 'TIS MY WISH TO CAUSE THE FALL OF THE REALM-- AYE, NO LESS THAN RAGNAROK-- THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS!

LONG HATH HELA WAITED TO HEAR THEE SAY THOSE WORDS, GOD OF EVIL!

THOU HAST COME TO ONE WHO CAN HELP THEE...

...ONE WHO PROFITS GREATLY BY THE DEATHS OF GODS OR MORTALS.

WATCH NOW AS I RAISE THE PROPHETESS VOLLA FROM THE DEAD!

VOLLA! WHEN THOU DIDST LIVE, THOU DIDST PREDICT THE DREADED DAY OF RAGNAROK.

NOW, I COMMAND THEE-- TELL US NOW RAGNAROK MAY COME TO PASS!

THOU DOST COMMAND, O HELA-- AND, BECAUSE I AM DEAD--

ALREADY DO YOU KNOW THAT, FIRST, EXTREME COLD MUST BLANKET THE EARTH...

AND THERE MUST BE WARS-- BROTHER TURNED 'GAINST BROTHER...

DONE, THESE TWO WINTERS PAST! SAY ON!

--I MUST OBEY THEE NOW, AS NE'ER I DID IN LIFE!

BEYOND THY FONDEST DREAMS, OLD WOMAN-SHADE!

NOW, VOLLA-- TELL US MORE THAN THOU DIDST TELL ODIN!

DRAW ASIDE THE VEIL-- FURTHER THAN 'T'WAS DRAWN BEFORE!

KNOW THAT FIRST BALDER MUST DIE-- DIE THE DEATH FROM WHICH THERE BE NO REPRIEVE...

...NOR MAY THAT OCCUR UNTIL A MORTAL MAN HATH DREAMT OF ASGARDIAN THINGS WHICH HE ALONE, OF MORTALS, HATH SEEN!

I... CANNOT RESIST THEE, GODDESS.

MY PLEASURE!

ONLY ONE MORTAL MALE HATH BEEN TO ASGARD.

HIS NAME WAS... HARRIS HOBBS!



"THUS," SAYS HELA, "WE DID SEND *EERIE DREAMS* TO HARRIS HOBBS-- BOTH OF THINGS HE HAD KNOWN AND FORGOTTEN, AND OF THINGS HE *COULD NOT KNOW*."

"IN THAT WAY," ADDS LOKI, "WE HELPED BRING ABOUT THE PROPHECY OF VOLLA..."

... I HAD ALREADY SET IN MOTION THE EVENTS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO RAGNAROK!

ONLY HELA AND I COULD HAVE REVERSED THEM THEN.

AND NOW-- NO ONE CAN!

LOOK THEE, FANDRAL, HOW ODIN DOTH GROW WEARY, WEEPING INWARDLY OF THE EVIL HIS ADOPTED SON HATH WROUGHT!

BUT NOT EVEN THE ALL-FATHER CAN ERASE WHAT THE MOVING HAND HATH WRIT LARGE.

AYE, NOR SHALL E'EN THE REALM OF THE GODS STAND FOR LONG, IT SEEMS-- FOR, BEHOLD--

... SO THAT, WHEN MY LAST PLAN FAILED, DESPITE THE AID OF THE ENCHANTRESS AND THE BRITISH EXECUTIONER...

"... AND I WAS BANISHED TO EARTH, STRIPPED OF ALL GODLY POWERS..."

\*\*\*267. --ROY.

--THE FIERY ODINSHIELD ABOUT THE BIER OF MARTYRED BALDER DOTH BURN LOWER, E'ER LOWER-- E'EN THOUGH POWERED BY ODIN'S OWN ESSENCE!

AND, IF E'ER IT DOTH DIE-- BE IT TODAY, OR A THOUSAND EONS HENCE--

--THEN TOO SHALL RAGNAROK TRULY OCCUR, AND ASGARD PERISH!



LOKI CONTINUES:

OTHER PROPHECIES, TOO, WE WRUNG FROM THE MIRTH OF VOLLA, BY MEANS BEST LEFT UNSUNG.

FOR, WE DID WISH TO KNOW MORE DETAILS CONCERNING THOSE THINGS SHE DID REVEAL WHEN SHE DID RESIDE IN DOOMED ASGARD ITSELF... \*

-- AND, THESE THINGS SHALL HAPPEN, WHICH WERE NOT KNOWN TO VOLLA BEFORE--

-- BUT WHICH SHE MAY SEE IN DEATH, THAT SHE COULD NOT SEE IN LIFE...!

\* IN THE IMMORTAL 200th ISSUE. -- R.

"SHE TOLD US," LOKI GOES ON TO DESCRIBE OF THE DEATH OF HEINRALL, GUARDIAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE--

"THEN SHE DID SAY AGAIN THAT THOR AND LOKI WOULD MEET IN FINAL COMBAT, AMID AN ASSARD IMPERILED--

"THE THUNDERER, SHE SAID, SHALL DIE BENEATH THE GREAT FANGS OF THE MIDGARD SERPENT--

"-- AND THAT, THOUGH LOKI SHOULD FALL-- THOR WOULD ALSO DIE!

"-- A TELLING EVER DEAR TO MY HEART!

"GLADLY SHALL I DIE-- IF THOR DOETH NOT OUTLIVE ME!

"-- WHICH, IN PERISHING ITSELF FROM WOUNDS INFLICTED BY THOR, SHALL TAKE ALL ASGARD DOWN TO RUIN WITH IT..."

-- SO THAT THE GOLDEN REALM, WHICH WOULD NOT BEND THE KNEE TO LOKI, SHALL SURVIVE HIM NOT!

HAH! I SEE BY THINE EYES, DEAR "BROTHER"--

-- THOU DOST KNOW I SPEAK THE TRUTH!

I KNOW ONLY THAT THOU DOST BELIEVE IT TO BE TRUTH, GOD OF EVIL--

-- AND THAT BE ENOUGH FOR ME TO DESPISE THEE, AS FEEN I'VE NEER DONE BEFORE!



MY FATHER--  
LOKI HATH  
TOLD ME  
MUCH, BUT  
SCARCELY  
ALL!

I STAND PREPARED TO  
PERISH, IF PERISH I MUST,  
IN DEFENSE OF ASGARD--  
BUT STILL I WOULD KNOW:

HOW DID A  
MERE MORTAL--  
E'EN ONE WEARING  
MY BELT OF  
STRENGTH  
AND IRON  
GLOVES--



--GAIN MINE OWN  
POWERS, MINE IDENTITY--  
E'EN MJOLNIR ITSELF,  
WHICH BE MY RIGHT ARM?

TELL ME, ALL-FATHER--  
I BEG IT OF THEE!

BUT, ODIN SAYS NAUGHT... ONLY  
CONTINUES TO CONCENTRATE,  
GRIMLY, ON THE EVER-LESSENING  
FIRES OF THE ODINSHIELD.



ASGARDIANS! TAKE  
THEE THE PRISONER--  
TO THE APPOINTED PLACE  
OF PUNISHMENT!!

THOU CANST NOT, OR WILL NOT  
SPEAK THEN, SO BE IT!

THY  
DECISION  
BE NOT  
MINE TO  
QUESTION.



ONE THING, HOWE'ER,  
I SHALL DO, E'EN IF IT  
FLIES IN THE FACE OF  
VOLLA'S PROPHECIES--!

I SAY THEE  
MAY! IT  
CANNOT BE!



I MUST BE  
FREE, TO PLAY MY  
PART IN THE END  
THAT NEARS!

AND, IF THE  
NORN-FATES  
WILL NOT  
SET ME  
FREE--

--THEN LOKI  
SHALL FREE  
HIMSELF!!



YMIR'S  
BLOOD!

HE HATH BURST  
HIS BONDS!

AYE! AND, WHILE I  
SENSE THAT MYSTIC  
FORCES KEEP ME  
FROM FLEEING  
ASGARD--

STILL, NO  
POWER E'EN  
HERE CAN  
REACH ME TO  
HARM ME--





-- WHEN I BE ENCASED IN ENCHANTED STONE!



EYE OF THE ALL-FATHER!

TRULY, IT BODES EVIL FOR THE REALM ETERNAL, WHEN LOKI CAN EVADE OUR JUST WRATH--



-- BREAKING ASGARDIAN BONDS LIKE WREATHS OF GRASS, AND USING POWERS LONG DENIED HIM BY ODIN HIMSELF!

KRUTCH!

E'EN OUR OWN AXES, FORGED ON GODLY ANVILS, CANNOT SHATTER VON MONOLITH.

STAND YE BACK THEN, GODLINGS!



MAYHAP THINE AXES BE UNAVAILING--

MAYHAP I MYSELF STAND BEREFT OF M.JOLNIR--

STILL, THE STRENGTH OF THE THUNDER GOD IS A FABLE TOLD THROUGH UNENDING AGES, E'EN BEFORE THE VIKINGS DID KNOW OF IT--



AND, FOR THE DEATH OF BALDER--

-- FOR THE PLOTTING OF RAGNAROK--



-- FOR A THOUSAND THOUSAND HEINOUS CRIMES--

-- LOKI SHALL BE PUNISHED!



SHRAKK!

'TIS BEYOND ALL BE-LIEVING!



E'EN WITHOUT THINE URU HAMMER, THOU STILL HAST SHATTERED MINE ENCHANTED SHIELD--

-- AS IF 'TWERE MERE MARBLE QUARRIED ON MIDGARD!





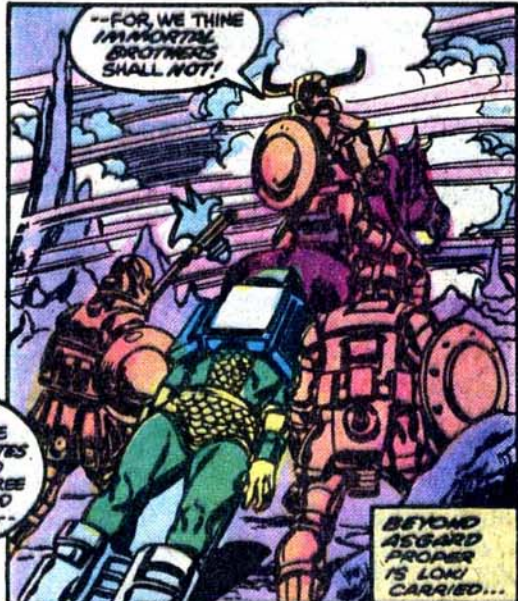
TAKE HIM TO THE APPOINTED PLACE!

AYE, MILORD THOR!

NAY! THIS CANNOT BE! RAGNAROK DOTH DRAW NIGH, MOMENT BY MOMENT--

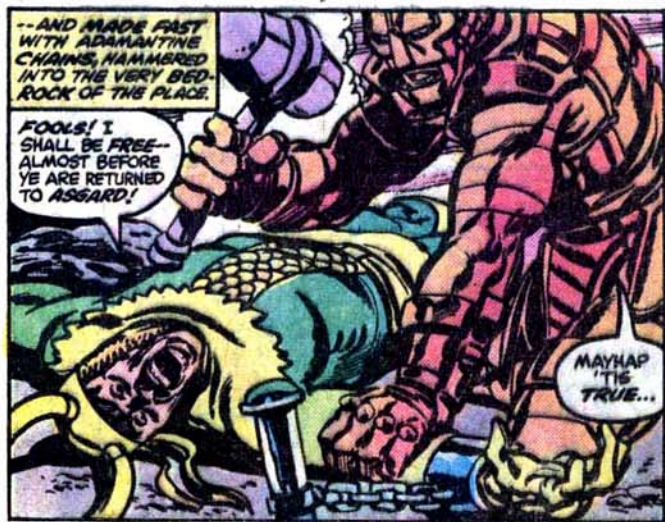
--AND 'TIS WRITTEN THAT LOKI SHALL BE FREED IN THAT HOUR!

THEN, LET THE NOON-FATES OR DEAD VOLLA FREE THEE, GOD OF EVIL--



--FOR, WE THINE IMMORTAL BROTHERS SHALL NOT!

BEYOND ASGARD PROPER IS LOKI CARRIED...



--AND MADE FAST WITH ADAMANTINE CHAINS, HAMMERED INTO THE VERY BED-ROCK OF THE PLACE.

FOOLS! I SHALL BE FREE--ALMOST BEFORE YE ARE RETURNED TO ASGARD!

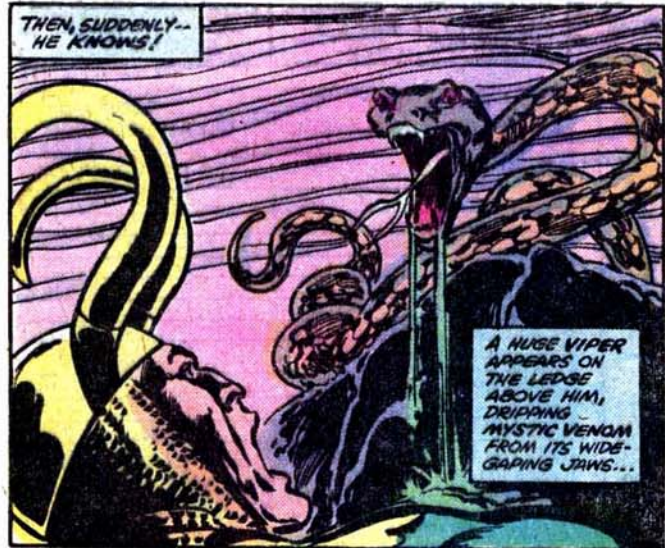
MAYHAP 'TIS TRUE...



... BUT, 'T'WILL NOT BE WE WHO WILL FREE YOU.

NOR SHALL THY STAY, WHETHER LONG OR SHORT, BE UNEVENTFUL.

FOR A MOMENT, FORGETFUL OF PROPHECY, LOKI WONDERS WHAT THE DEPARTING GODS MEANT.



THEN, SUDDENLY-- HE KNOWS!

A HUGE VIPER APPEARS ON THE LEDGE ABOVE HIM, DRIPPING MYSTIC VENOM FROM ITS WIDE-GAPING JAWS...



AND, WHEN IT TOUCHES THE FACE OF LOKI--

IT BURNS LIKE THE FLAMES OF MISPELLS-HEIM!

YAA



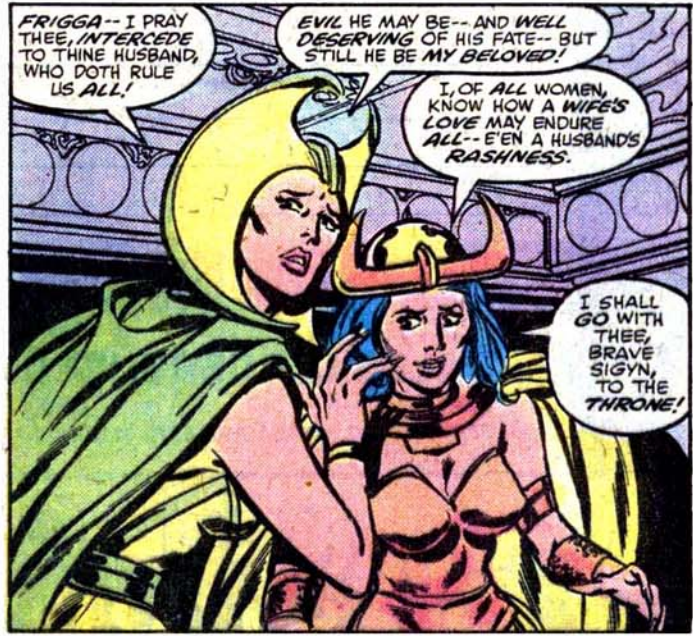


THOR! SEE HOW, WHEN LOKI SHAKES FROM PAIN, ALL ASGARD QUAKES!

AYE! E'EN VALIANT VOLSTAGG CAN SCARCELY STAND.

BUT STAND YE DO, BOTH-- AND ASSGARD, AS WELL!

'TIS A GOOD OMEN!



FRIGGA-- I PRAY THEE, INTERCEDE TO THINE HUSBAND, WHO DOTHS RULE US ALL!

EVIL HE MAY BE-- AND WELL DESERVING OF HIS FATE-- BUT STILL HE BE MY BELOVED!

I, OF ALL WOMEN, KNOW HOW A WIFE'S LOVE MAY ENDURE ALL-- E'EN A HUSBAND'S RASHNESS.

I SHALL GO WITH THEE, BRAVE SIGYN, TO THE THRONE!



SIRE-- ALL-FATHER, AND AUSTERE AND NOBLE HUSBAND MINE-- THY SPOUSE FRIGGA DOTHS BESECH THEE--

LET SIGYN GO TO RELIEVE LOKI OF AT LEAST A PART OF HIS DECREED TORMENT-- IN THE NAME OF WIFELY LOVE!

ODIN GIVES NO OTHER SIGYN... BUT NODS, EVER SO SLIGHTLY.

I THANK THEE, BE-LOVED! GO NOW, GOOD SIGYN-- AND FEAR NO INTER-FERENCE!

LOVE IS A POWER THAT E'EN THE GODS CANNOT BIND!



LOKI, DEAREST! I HAVE BROUGHT THEE THIS VESSEL-- ALL I COULD FIND--!

THEN HOLD IT, WOMAN, OVER MY FACE-- AYE, AND QUICKLY--!



FOR, THE VENOM OF THE SERPENT IS AN EVER-RENEWING THING--

--AND THE PAIN OF IT IS MORE THAN I CAN STAND!

HASTEN, WOMAN, AGAIN IT FALLS TOWARD ME--!!





I HAVE IT, MILORD!

THANK HELA! I COULD NOT HAVE--

SPLAT!



WAIT! SIGYN-- WHERE DOST THOU--?

THERE IS SO MUCH OF THE VILE LIQUID, HUSBAND--

ALREADY, THE BOWL IS FILLED!

I MUST EMPTY IT--!



AND WHILE SHE DOES-- STILL MORE OF THE LETHAL VENOM SPLATTERS THE FACE OF THE GOD OF DECEPTION AND TREACHERY--

AAAAA



--SO THAT ASGARD DOTH TREMBLE ONCE MORE, AS 'TIS WRITTEN IT SHALL NEER DO TILL THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS DRAWS NIGH--



--A TWILIGHT DOOMSDAY WHICH THOSE OUTSIDE THE REALM MAKE READY TO HASTEN!

STAND YE READY, TROLLS-- BOTH YE OF GREAT SIZE, AND YE OF SMALLER STATURE!

AYE, GREAT HELA!

ALL THE FUR-ORNNED HORDES STAND PREPARED TO DO THY BIDDING, GODDESS OF DEATH!



THEN WE DARE WAIT NO LONGER FOR THE ABSENT LOKI TO JOIN US!

FOR, I CAN SENSE THAT THE ODINSHIELD WHICH PRESERVES THE QUASILIFE OF BALDER DOTH BURN LOWER STILL-- AND, IN A FEW MOMENTS MORE, MAY PERISH ENTIRE!

WE MUST STRIKE-- E'ER THE TIME OF RAGNAROK SHALL HAVE PASSED, PERHAPS NEER TO COME AGAIN!

FORWARD, YE TROLLS!!

ROLLING LIKE SOME GREAT, OBSCURE WAVE, THE FORCES OF DARKNESS STALK TOWARD ASGARD-- DEATH-GODDESS AND TROLLS AND GREAT WOLF FENRIS, AT LAST UNBOUND.

AND NOW, FROM THE MIASMIC MIST BEHIND THEM, THE MIDGARD SERPENT REARS ITS HUGE, WEDGE-SHAPED HEAD--

--THAT HEAD WHICH IS FORE-DESTINED TO DEVOUR THOR, EVEN AS HE CAUSES ITS DOOM.

FOR, WHAT FEAR CAN EVEN DARK-SOME DEATH HOLD-- FOR THOSE WHO ARE THEMSELVES DEATH INCARNATE?

WHILE, ON A WORLD FAR DISTANT IN TIME AND SUB-SPACE...

OKAY, GIRLIE-- THIS IS IT, I GUESS.

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIUM OR THREE!

ONCE, THIS MAN WAS "RED" NORVELL, TV CAMERA-MAN.

A BIT CRUDE HE WAS, PERHAPS... BUT HE SEEMED AS GOOD AS ANY.

BUT THEN, LOKI USED HIS DESIRE FOR THE LADY SIF TO SEDUCE HIM INTO BATHING IN THE FIRE OF GEIRRODUR-- AND NOW HE HAS BECOME AS ONE WITH THE THUNDER GOD HIMSELF--

SET ME FREE, MORTAL-- I BEG THEE!

--EVEN TO DEFEATING HIS BLOND NAMESAKE, AND TAKING HIS BE-LOVED-- AND HIS MAGIC HAMMER!

ASGARD DOTH NEED ALL ITS CHAMPIONS!

DON'T CALL ME MORTAL, MISSIE!



I'M NOT A MORTAL-- NOT ANY MORE! I'M THE GOD OF THUNDER-- THOUGH I'LL ADMIT I DON'T KNOW QUITE WHAT THAT MAKES YOUR EX-BOYFRIEND

SO, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET USED TO--

WELL THEN THERE NOW, AS JAMES DEAN USED TO SAY...

WHAT HAVE WE HERE?

PEACE AND GREETINGS, OUTSIDER! WE ARE THE L-JOS, ALFAR, OR BRIGHT-ELVES...

...AND THIS IS OUR HOME... ALFHEIM, BY NAME.

WE HAVE COME TO WELCOME YOU ON YOUR VISIT TO OUR LAND.

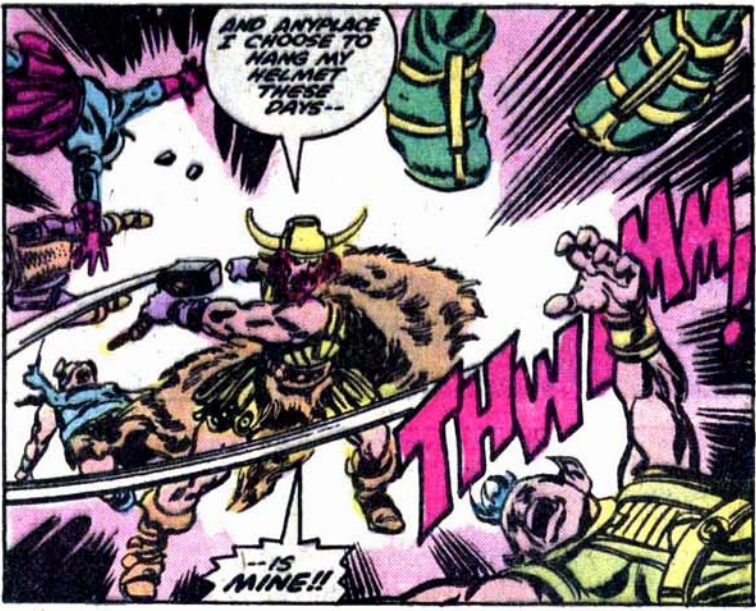
SO WADDA YOU AN' YOUR GNOME-BUDDIES WANT, SHORTIE?

ELVES, SIRE, WE ARE THE BRIGHT-ELVES, AS I SAID.

VISIT? YOUR LAND?? LIKE BLAZES IT IS, TWERP!

MAYBE YOU'VE HEARDA' ME. THE NAME'S THOR

AND ANYPLACE I CHOOSE TO HANG MY HELMET THESE DAYS--



--IS MINE!!

SURELY, THE SHEER POWER INHERENT IN THE BELT OF STRENGTH-- THE IRON GLOVES-- AND ALMIGHTY MJOLNIR-- HATH DRIVEN HIM MAD!



THERE! I GOT A HUNCH THEY KNOW WHO'S THE BOSS AROUND HERE, FROM NOW ON.

THEY'LL MAKE A GREAT BUNCH'A GOPERS, NOW THAT I THINK OF IT.

SIFE, BABY? DIDN'T I TELL YOU I'D TREAT YOU RIGHT?

IF THOU WOULDST DO THAT THEN FREE ME--



--TO STAND OR DIE WITH ASGARD IN ITS HOUR OF PERIL!





YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING! WE JUST GOT HERE.

NOW, WHY DON'T YOU JUST SIT A SPELL, AND--?

I SAY THEE MAY!

I CAME AWAY WITH THEE PERHAPS TO SAVE MY BELOVED'S LIFE--

--BUT I'LL HAVE NAUGHT TO DO WITH ONE WHO BE BUT THE SHADOW OF THE THUNDER GOD!

MAYHAP, IF I KEEP HIM DISTRACTED--

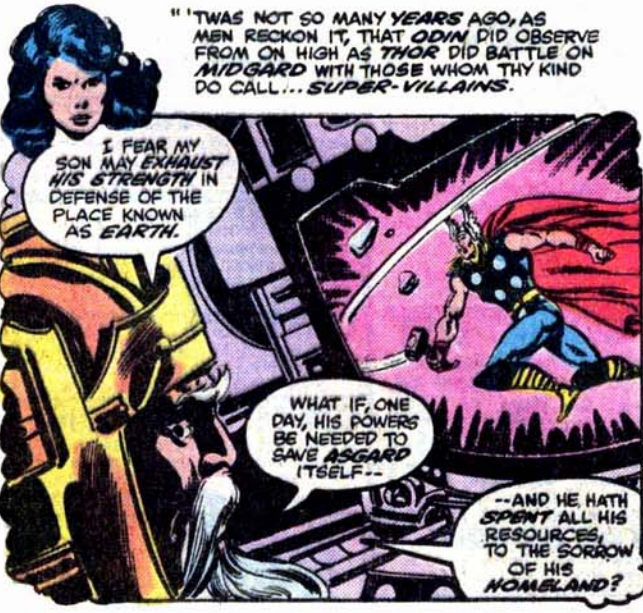


Y'KNOW, I BEEN WONDER-ING ABOUT THAT, MISSIE.

NOT TO LOOK A GIFT-HORSE IN THE MOLARS, BUT I'M STILL NOT SURE JUST NOW I BECAME ANOTHER THOR!

I BELIEVE I KNOW.

THEN TELL ME, ALREADY!



"T'WAS NOT SO MANY YEARS AGO, AS MEN RECKON IT, THAT ODIN DID OBSERVE FROM ON HIGH AS THOR DID BATTLE ON MIDGARD WITH THOSE WHOM THY KIND DO CALL... SUPER-VILLAINS.

I FEAR MY SON MAY EXHAUST HIS STRENGTH IN DEFENSE OF THE PLACE KNOWN AS EARTH.

WHAT IF, ONE DAY, HIS POWERS BE NEEDED TO SAVE ASGARD ITSELF--

--AND HE HATH SPENT ALL HIS RESOURCES, TO THE SORROW OF HIS HOMETLAND?



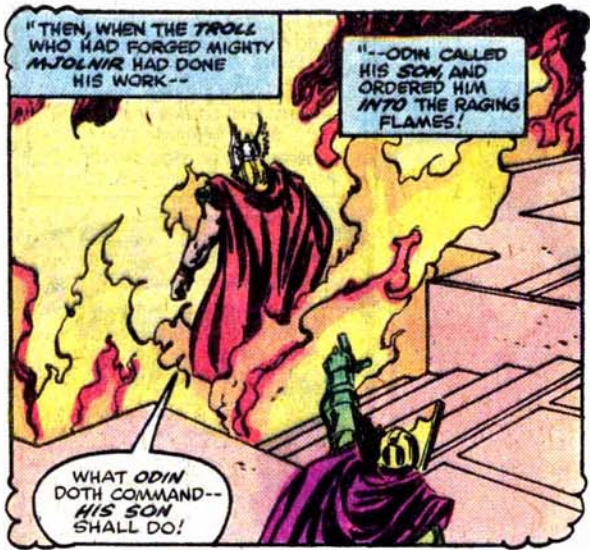
WHAT MEANEST THOU, ALL-FATHER?

MAYHAP, LADY SIF... AND MAYHAP NOT.

BRING GEIR-RODUR THE TROLL TO ME!

SURELY THE POWER OF THOR IS A BEACON WHICH SHALL SHINE FOREVER.

THE MIND OF ODIN DOTH CONCEIVE A PLAN.



"THEN, WHEN THE TROLL WHO HAD FORGED MIGHTY MJOLNIR HAD DONE HIS WORK--

"--ODIN CALLED HIS SON, AND ORDERED HIM INTO THE RAGING FLAMES!

WHAT ODIN DOTH COMMAND-- HIS SON SHALL DO!



"AND, WHEN HE CAME OUT AGAIN..."

THE FIRES FELT PASSING STRANGE, SIRE-- BUT DID NOT HARM ME.

I PRAY THEE, WHAT BE THEIR PURPOSE?

I WILL TELL THEE ANOTHER DAY, MY SON... WHEN IT BE TIME.





"THEN, WHEN THOR HAD RETURNED TO EARTH..."

BEHOLD, MILADY SIF-- THOU WHO DOST LOVE AND HONOR THE SON OF ODIN--

CANST THOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THY BELOVED--



--AND YONDER IMAGE, WHICH BE THE ESSENCE OF THOR-- AS IT DOTH EMERGE FROM THE FIRES OF GEIRRODUR?

'TIS ANOTHER THOR-- LIKE HIM IN ALL THINGS, SAVE THE POSSESSION OF AN URU HAMMER!

MJOLNIR BE ONE THING WHICH, BY MINE OWN DECREE, CAN NEER BE DUPLICATED, IN ANY SPACE OR TIME.

STILL, THIS IMAGE BE SOLID-- WITH THE POWER OF THE THUNDER GOD RESIDING WITHIN IT!



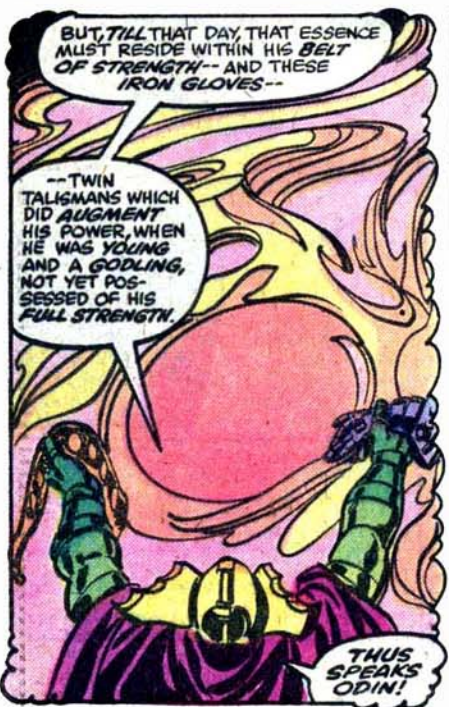
AND ITS PURPOSE, SIRE?

ONE DAY, WHEN THE REALM DOTH FACE A DIRE SOME FOE, AND THOR BE NOT AT HAND--

--I MAY CALL UPON THIS ESSENCE, SO LIFE-LIKE, YET ITSELF UNLIVING--

--PLACING THAT IMMORTAL ESSENCE INTO ANOTHER, LESSER GOD-- OR PERCHANCE E'EN A CHOSEN MORTAL.

THUS MAY THOR ACT TO PROTECT ASGARD, E'EN IN HIS ABSENCE.



BUT, TILL THAT DAY, THAT ESSENCE MUST RESIDE WITHIN HIS BELT OF STRENGTH-- AND THESE IRON GLOVES--

--TWIN TALISMANS WHICH DID AUGMENT HIS POWER, WHEN HE WAS YOUNG AND A GODLING, NOT YET POSSESSED OF HIS FULL STRENGTH.

THUS SPEAKS ODIN!



HE DID LIKEWISE TELL ME THAT HE WHO DID PUT ON THE ESSENCE OF THOR-- WOULD HAVE A SPECIAL AFFINITY FOR MJOLNIR ITSELF.

'TIS WHY, DOUBTLESS, THOU WERT ABLE TO WREST IT FROM HIM, IN THE SHOCK OF BATTLE.

BUT, THAT ESSENCE CAN BE PUT ON ONCE ONLY-- BY ONE MAN OR GOD--



THUS, THOU HAST DEBASED AND MIS-USED THE PLAN OF ODIN--

--FOR THINE OWN SELFISH PURPOSES!

SO WHAT'D BIG DADDY ODIN EVER DO FOR ME?

NOW, LEMME ALONE FOR A WHILE, OKAY?

I GOTTA DIGEST ALL THIS NEWS...



THE EARTHLING'S DIGESTION SOON TRAILS OFF INTO SEPULCHRAL SNORRS...

HE SLEEPS-- KNOWING I CANNOT LEAVE THIS PLACE WITHOUT HIS AID.



I KNOW I CANNOT LIFT THE HAMMER OF THOR...

BUT PERCHANCE, IF I COULD REMOVE THE BELT OF STRENGTH FROM HIM, WITHOUT HIS AWAKENING--



--I COULD FORCE HIM TO RESTORE ME TO ASGARD, ERE IT DOTHS FALL.

SILENTLY WITH DEFT FINGERS THE WARRIOR-LADY BEGINS TO UNDO THE GOLDEN BELT.

AND, PERHAPS SHE WOULD ACCOMPLISH HER PURPOSE...

HOWEVER, AT THAT VERY MOMENT--

THE GROUND-- IT TREMBLES SO--!



ENOUGH TO WAKE ME UP-- JUST IN TIME, IT LOOKS LIKE!

**RRMMB!**

WONDER WHAT CAUSED THAT QUAKE, ANYHOW?!



CANST THOU NOT GUESS, VILLAIN OF VALHALLA?

IT CAN ONLY BE--

"THE GJALLARHORN OF VALOROUS HEIMDALL WHICH HE DOTHS SOUND TO SIGNAL THE COMING OF THE TROLLS!



"THE DAY OF RAGNAROK BE UPON US, AT LAST--

"I CAN SEE IT ALL CLEARLY, IN MY MIND'S OWN EYE!



"THE VALIANT STAND OF HEIMDALL-- MY BROTHER-- AS THE HORDES OF HELA DO POUR FROM BLACK ABYSSSES ONTO THE RAINBOW BRIDGE!

"THEY DO NOT COME STEALTHILY, THIS TIME, SO THAT NONE BUT MY SIBLING COULD HEAR THEM.



"THIS DAY, THEY CHARGE BRAZENLY-- THE SURE OF VICTORY BECAUSE OF THY BASE ACT--



"--AN ACT WHICH HATH LEFT THOR, AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE GODS, TO FACE ASGARD'S FOES BEREFT OF HIS ENCHANTED HAMMER!"

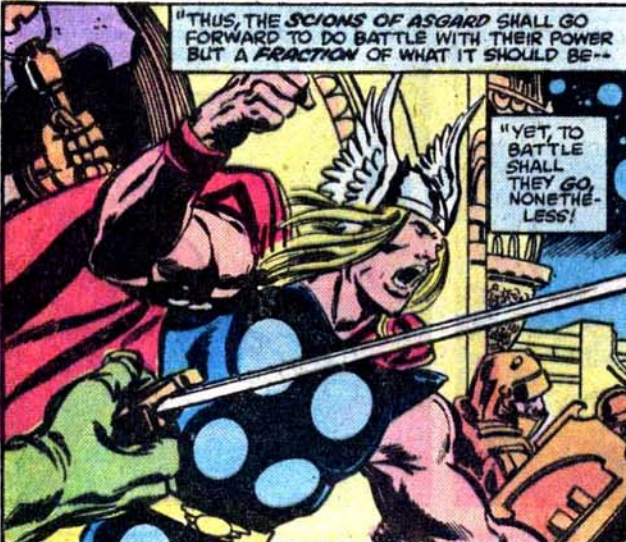
"WITHOUT MJOLNIR, THE POWER OF THOR BE HALVED..."

"NOR MAY GREAT ODIN TAKE A STAND, UNTIL ATTACKED BY THE SNARLING FENRIS WOLF ITSELF, AS IT HATH E'ER BEEN DECREED."



"AND THE POWER OF MIGHTY THOR BE HALF THE POWER OF THE REALM ITSELF!"

"FOR HE MUST KEEP THE BIER OF BALDER BURNING, AS LONG AS POSSIBLE."



"THUS, THE SCIONS OF ASGARD SHALL GO FORWARD TO DO BATTLE WITH THEIR POWER BUT A FRACTION OF WHAT IT SHOULD BE--"

"YET, TO BATTLE SHALL THEY GO, NONETHE-LESS!"



"AND, NE'ER KNOWING WHETHER HE DOTH RECORD THE GLORIOUS COMBAT FOR AN EARTH WHICH SHALL SURVIVE ASGARD'S FALL, OR NO--"

"--THE MORTAL CALLED HARRIS HOBBS WILL DOUBTLESS STRIVE TO FILM IT ALL, E'EN THOUGH HE STANDS ALONE."



"HE IS, HOW'E'R A MORTAL, AFTER ALL-- A GOOD MAN WHO DOTH KNOW THAT HIS AMBITION HATH CAUSED ONE MORTAL'S DEATH--"

"--THINE OWN TURNING TOWARD THE PATH OF EVIL--"

"--AND, IN A WAY, RAGNAROK ITSELF!"

"IT SHALL SURPRISE ME IF HE DOTH NOT WEEP MORE THAN HE DOTH FILM."



"AND, AT LENGTH-- AS THE FIERY ODINSHIELD WHICH ALONE DOTH HOLD BALDER BACK FROM THE FINAL DEATH BURNS LOWER, AND FLICKERS OUT--"

"--THERE SHALL BE NAUGHT TO KEEP HELA'S OBSCENE HORDES FROM THE SHINING TOWERS OF ASGARD ITSELF!"



A dynamic comic book illustration of Thor leading his Asgardian warriors. Thor, in his iconic blue and gold armor with a red cape, is in the center, shouting and holding a sword aloft. He is surrounded by other Asgardians, some with horns and armor, who are also shouting and holding weapons. The background is filled with bright yellow and white light, suggesting a battle scene. In the top left corner, a woman with dark, wavy hair looks on with a serious expression. The overall style is classic comic book art with bold lines and a rich color palette.

"THEN, WITHOUT ODIN BESIDE HIM-- AND WIELDING MERELY A SWORD INSTEAD OF HIS MYSTIC MALLET, THE TRUE GOD OF THUNDER SHALL LEAD THE SONS OF THE REALM FORWARD TO WHAT HE KNOWS SHALL BE THEIR FINAL GLORY--

"--BECAUSE OF YOU, MORTAL! BECAUSE OF YOU!"

FOR ASGAAARD!

STRIKE, BROTHERS! IF THIS BE THE DAY THAT ASGARD MUST FALL--

NEXT ISSUE:

--LET NONE SURVIVE THE DAY OF RAGNAROK!