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THE MIGHTY THOR

THE COMING OF
KARKAS
--THE MUTATE MARAUDER!



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 & CHIC STONE ✱ G. ROUSSOS, COLORIST ✱ JIM SHOOTER
WRITER / EDITOR ILLUSTRATORS JOE ROSEN, LETTERER CONSULTING EDITOR

RECENT TRAGIC AIR-CRASHES—THE RESULT OF AIRLINES GREEDY FOR PROFIT NO MORE THAN OF MORTAL MEN GREEDY FOR TRAVEL—HAVE RESULTED IN EVER-CLOSER SCRUTINY BY REGULATORY AGENCIES OF THE CROWDED SKIES ABOVE AMERICA'S BUSTLING AIR-PORTS.

DEVIANTS AND DOORMEN!

BY ANY STANDARD, HOWEVER, THE JETLINER WHICH SOARS ABOVE THE SKYSCRAPERS AND TENEMENTS OF NEW YORK CITY THIS DAY WILL DOUBTLESS CAUSE WIDE-OPENED EYES.

FOR, WINGLESS, IT STREAKS AT SUPERSONIC SPEED PROPELLED BY MASSIVE CHAINS HELD BY NONE OTHER THAN THOR, GOD OF THUNDER—

—WHO IN TURN IS CARRIED FORWARD AT BLINDING SPEED BY THE AWESOME POWER OF HIS MYSTIC HAMMER MJOLNIR...!

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ON THE DELICATE INSTRUMENTS AT JFK INTERNATIONAL, HOWEVER, ALL THREE--HAMMER AND IMMORTAL AND AIRCRAFT--REGISTER AS ONE VERY SUDDEN, TOTALLY UNEXPECTED, AND QUITE OMINOUS--

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING! WE HAVEN'T GOT ANY S.S.T.'S SCHEDULED TO--

HEY! YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO TELL ME YOU'VE GOT A UFO ON THE RADAR, ARE YOU?

--BLIP! I TELL YOU, IT JUST APPEARED THERE-- LIKE IT WAS SLOWING DOWN TO TWICE THE SPEED OF SOUND!



IF YOU MEAN A "FLYING SAUCER" NO-- BUT I SURE CAN'T IDENTIFY THIS FLYING OBJECT!

IT SEEMS TO BE A PLANE, BUT ITS PATTERN IS--



WH--? FORGET ABOUT READING THE RADAR PEOPLE!

JUST LOOK OUTSIDE! HURRY!

AND THEY DO--

--MAKING THEM EXACTLY EVEN WITH BOTH THE V.I.P.'S AND THE ECONOMY-FAKE MARCO POLOS IN THE PASSENGER AREA.

HOLY CATS!

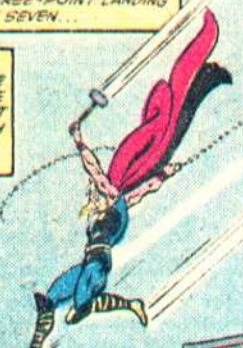
TH--THERE'S A PLANE COMING DOWN-- AND IT'S PUSHING A MAN ALONG IN FRONT OF--

NO! HE'S NOT BEING PUSHED-- HE'S PULLING THE PLANE!



AT THIS DISTANCE AND SPEED, NOT EVEN THE SHARPEST EYES CAN TELL THE PRECISE IDENTITY OF THE COLOR-SPLASHED, NOBLE FIGURE WHO NOW GUIDES COLOMBIAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 53 TOWARD A THREE-POINT LANDING ON RUNWAY SEVEN...

...LET ALONE DIFFERENTIATE THAT IT IS THE HAMMER, NOT THE MAN, WHICH IS THE POWER OF FLIGHT.



HE'S FLYING!

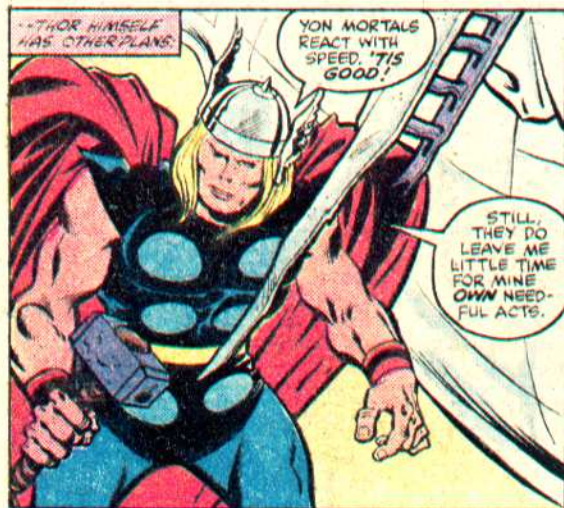
AMERICAN AIR

THE AWESTRUCK OBSERVERS KNOW ONLY THAT, LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED, IT IS UNLIKELY THEY SHALL EVER SEE SUCH A SIGHT AGAIN...

...OR PERHAPS EVEN WANT TO.



NOW, HOWEVER, AS THE EVER-READY GROUND CREW GO INTO GALVANIZED ACTION, PREPARED FOR ALMOST ANY EMERGENCY-- EVEN THE SIGHT OF A MYTHICAL DEITY BRINGING DOWN A 747--



--THOR HIMSELF HAS OTHER PLANS.

YON MORTALS REACT WITH SPEED, 'TIS GOOD!

STILL, THEY DO LEAVE ME LITTLE TIME FOR MINE OWN NEEDFUL ACTS.



WELL, JUST AS I SEALED THE PLANE'S SIDE ANEW WHEN I DID RESCUE IT FROM THE CITY OF THE SPACE GODS--

--SO 'TIS BUT A MOMENT'S WORK TO TEAR ITS METAL PLATES ONCE MORE ASUNDER!

* LAST ISSUE. --ROY.



MR. JOHNSON--OR WHATE'ER THY TRUE NAME BE-- I LEAVE IT TO THEE TO EXPLAIN THE FATE OF THY FELLOW PASSENGER, LISA.

WHAT'LL I TELL THEM, THUNDER GOD? THAT I'M A C.I.A. MAN-- AND THAT ONE WOMAN ON BOARD TURNED OUT TO BE SOMETHING SHE CALLED... A DEVIAN'T?

THEY'LL JUST THINK I MEAN SOME KIND OF PERVERT.

MATTER OF FACT, EVEN I'M NOT SURE WHAT I'D MEAN.

THAT MUST BE THY PROBLEM, MORTAL, NOT MINE...



OUT OF THE WAY, PEOPLE!

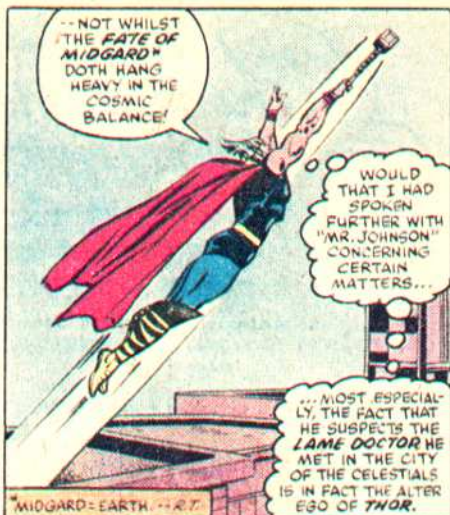
C'MON, GUYS, I'VE GOT A FEW QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK THAT SO-CALLED SUPERHERO!

...THOUGH, IN SOOTH 'TWOULD BE MINE IF I DID REMAIN HERE FOR LONG.



HEY! HOLD UP, THERE!

MINE APOLOGIES, OFFICER, BUT I FEAR I'VE NO TIME FOR TALK--



--NOT WHILST THE FATE OF MIDGARD* DOETH HANG HEAVY IN THE COSMIC BALANCE!

WOULD THAT I HAD SPOKEN FURTHER WITH "MR. JOHNSON" CONCERNING CERTAIN MATTERS...

...MOST ESPECIALLY THE FACT THAT HE SUSPECTS THE LAME DOCTOR HE MET IN THE CITY OF THE CELESTIALS IS IN FACT THE ALTER EGO OF THOR.

*MIDGARD=EARTH. --R.T.



WHY I WONDER, DO I CONCERN MYSELF UNDULY OVER A MORTAL IDENTITY I MAY NE'ER USE AGAIN?

'T WAS, AFTER ALL, NE'ER MORE THAN A DEVICE WHICH ALL-FATHER ODIN DID USE TO TEACH HIS ONLY BLOOD-SON HUMILITY...

...SOMETHING WHICH, METHINKS, MINE OWN S'IRE COULD LEARN BETTER, AS WELL.

BUT, BEST NOT TO DWELL 'PON MY RECENT SELF-BANISHMENT FROM GLEAMING ASSARD.

'T IS THE CHARCOAL-COLORED TOWERS OF NEW YORK WHICH NOW DO INTEREST ME... ONE IN PARTICULAR...



...THAT ONE!

YET I DARE NOT LAND 'PON ITS ROOFTOP THERE TO CHANGE INTO DR. DONALD BLAKE... NOT IN SIGHT OF MORTAL CHILDREN.

BURN 'ER IN THERE, LARRY-BABY!



'T IS PASSING STRANGE! A MOMENT AGONE, I DID THINK THAT IDENTITY UNIMPORTANT TO ME

NOW, HOWEVER, I MUST ADMIT... 'T IS A MOST USEFUL THING FROM TIME TO TIME...



... TO BE ABLE TO **SHED** THESE IMMORTAL TRAPPINGS...



... AND WALK ONCE MORE AMONGST MEN...

THAM!



... AS A MAN.

JUST HOPE I STILL REMEMBER HOW TO PULL IT OFF AFTER SO MANY WEEKS.



FUNNY HOW, THE MINUTE I BECOME DON BLAKE AGAIN, EVEN MY **THOUGHT** PROCESSES SEEM TO CHANGE.

EVEN MENTALLY, THE ASGARDIAN SYNTAX JUST FADES AWAY AS IF THERE REALLY IS A--

DR. BLAKE! YOO-HOO, DR. BLAKE!

EH? WHO--?



SURELY YOU **REMEMBER** ME, DON'T YOU, DR. BLAKE?

OF COURSE, MRS... UH...

MRS. WORTHINGTON FORD III... ONE OF YOUR PATIENTS, UNTIL YOU JUST DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT, LIKE THE MYSTERIOUS MAN YOU ARE!

OH YES, WELL... I'VE BEEN TRAVELING A LOT.

TSK, TSK... SUCH A WASTE, AND YOU SO YOUNG!



YOU REALLY SHOULD BE **HELPING** PEOPLE AND ALL, YOU KNOW, INSTEAD OF GALLIVANTING ABOUT MY ALLERGIES HAVE NEVER BEEN THE SAME SINCE--

PARDON ME, MRS. FORD, BUT I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT IN THIS BUILDING...

WHY, WHAT A SMALL WORLD! IT'S MY BUILDING, TOO.

I'LL JUST WALK YOU TO THE ELEVATOR.

THAT'D BE... NICE.



ACTUALLY, IT WAS A **LUCKY BREAK** RUNNING INTO THAT WOMAN; OTHERWISE, THE DOORMAN PROBABLY HAD LET ME IN... AND I'M ALL OUT OF PRACTICE AT STONEMALLING IT IN THE BIG APPLE.

AMAZING! I'M DON BLAKE FOR TWO MINUTES, AND IT'S AS IF I'M A **DIFFERENT PERSON** FROM THOR, EVEN THOUGH--

WELL, I'D BETTER **SHelve** MY IDENTITY CRISIS TILL THOR AND I SAVE THE EARTH FROM THE **JUDGMENT OF THE CELESTIALS**... IF WE CAN!



AND I'VE NO GREATER LEAD ON A WAY TO SAVE IT... THAN THIS UPPER-WEST-SIDE ADDRESS I GOT FROM DR. DANIEL DAMIAN.

NOK
NOK

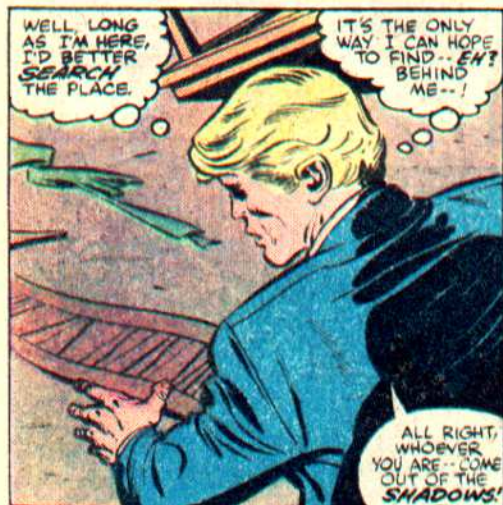
HMMM... NO ANSWER TO BELL OR KNOCK, IT SEEMS.



BUT THE DOOR'S UNLOCKED, SO-- GOOD LORD!

THIS WAS A NICE-LOOKING PAD... ONCE.

NOW IT LOOKS LIKE THE AFTER-MATH OF THE SPINX-ALI FIGHT.



WELL, LONG AS I'M HERE, I'D BETTER SEARCH THE PLACE.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN HOPE TO FIND-- EH? BEHIND ME--!

ALL RIGHT, WHOEVER YOU ARE-- COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS!



YOU ARE FAR TOO SMALL, MY FRIEND, TO SEEK TO GIVE ORDERS TO ONE OF MY STATURE.

WH--? YOU'RE A BIG ONE, AREN'T YOU?

MY NAME IS BLAKE-- DR. BLAKE-- AND I'M LOOKING FOR THE OWNER OF THIS APARTMENT, A MISS SERSI.



AREN'T WE ALL.

BUT, A DOCTOR... THAT'S A NOVEL TWIST

FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD OF MISS SERSI, SHE WAS MORE THE TYPE TO BE ATTRACTED TO A PLAYBOY.

NOW, WHO ARE YOU-- AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE??

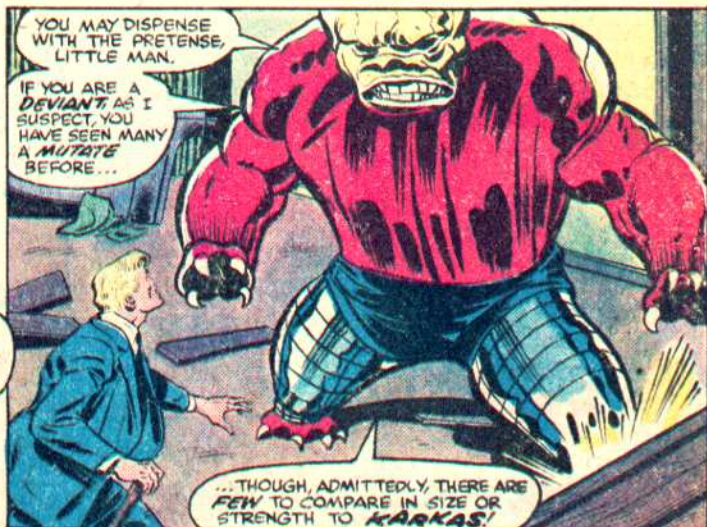
I DON'T KNOW YOUR NAME... BUT WHATEVER IT IS I DON'T RECALL SEEING IT ON THE DOOR.

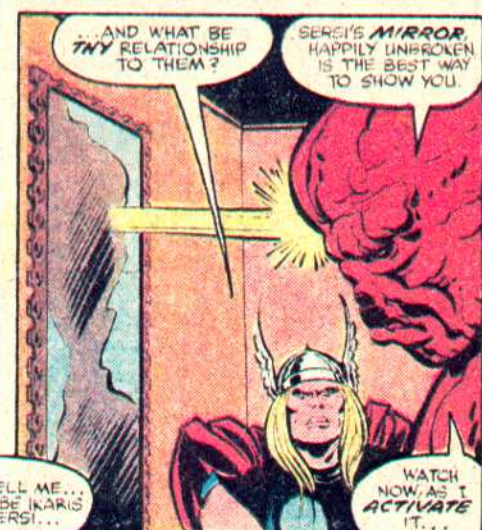
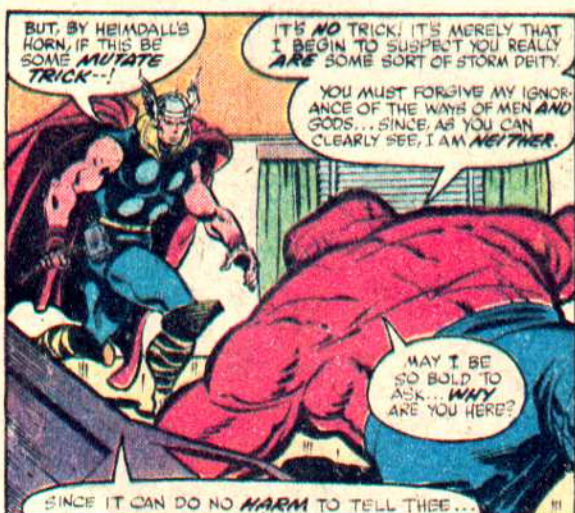
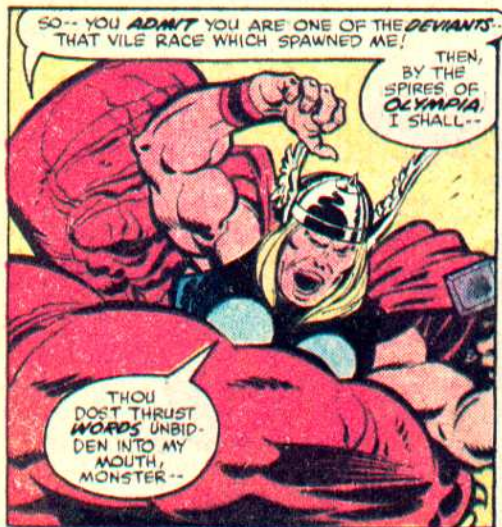


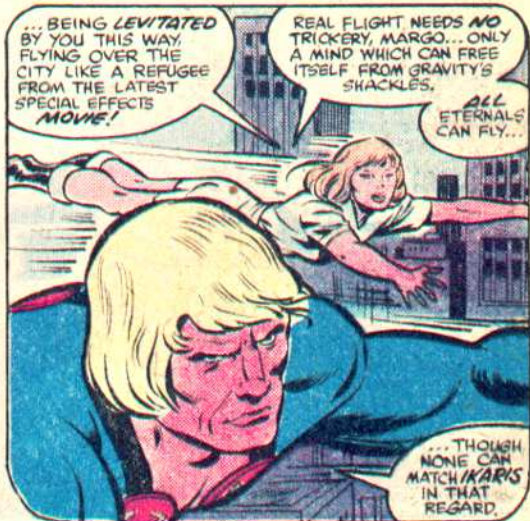
IN FACT YOU LOOK JUST BIG ENOUGH AND MEAN ENOUGH TO BE THE GUY WHO **TOTALED** IT.

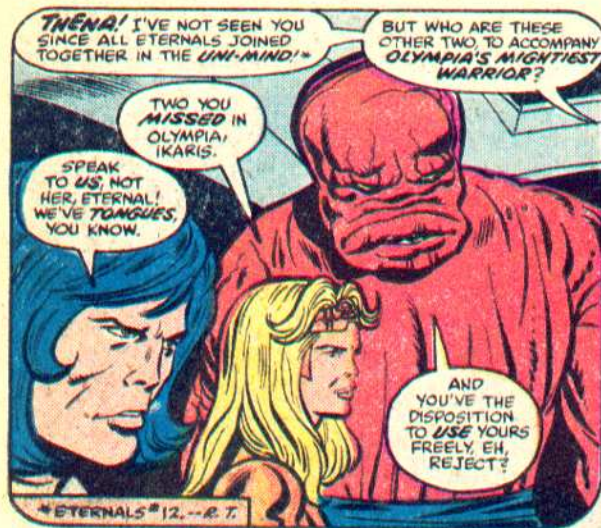
SO IF YOU DON'T MIND, I THINK I'LL JUST HAVE A LOOK AROUND.

I DO MIND.









THENA! I'VE NOT SEEN YOU SINCE ALL ETERNALS JOINED TOGETHER IN THE *UNI-MIND!*

BUT WHO ARE THESE OTHER TWO TO ACCOMPANY *OLYMPIA'S MIGHTIEST WARRIOR?*

TWO YOU MISSED IN *OLYMPIA*, IKARIS.

SPEAK TO US, NOT HER, ETERNAL! WE'VE TONGUES, YOU KNOW.

AND YOU'VE THE DISPOSITION TO USE YOURS FREELY, EH, REJECT?

ETERNALS 12. -- E. T.



THEY ARE BOTH *MUTATES*, GOOD IKARIS... THOUGH ENEMIES OF THE *DEVIANTS* WHO CREATED THEM.

CALL ME *REJECT*, RATHER!

THIS ONE IS INDEED A *REJECT* OF THEIRS, WHOM I PREFER TO CALL "*SWEET PRINCE*."

SO I SHALL... TILL I SEE SOMETHING SWEET ABOUT YOU.



AND THIS IS *KARMA*, WHOSE GARGANTUAN FRAME MASKS A HEART OF GOLD... AND THE SENSITIVITY OF A POET.

THENA DOES ME TOO MUCH CREDIT, I'M AFRAID.

IT SEEMS YOU'VE GATHERED EVERYONE YOU COULD FIND, THENA, EXCEPT FOR *SERSI*.



DON'T MENTION THAT *PURVEYOR OF ILLUSIONS* TO ME, ETERNAL!

WE OTHER FOUR ARE *WARRIORS* ALL-- WHILE *SERSI'S* ONLY SUPER-POWER IS ROUGHLY THAT OF A FRIGHTENED *CHAMELEON*.

YOU DIDN'T SEE HER BATTLING *DROMEDAN* WHEN--



WE'VE MORE *IMPORTANT* THINGS TO DISCUSS THAN A WOMAN WHOSE CHIEF CLAIM TO FAME IS TURNING A BUNCH OF HOMELESS GREEKS INTO *PIGS*, IKARIS.

I'VE LOCATED THE LOCATION OF THE NEW CITY OF THE *DEVIANTS!*

SO THAT'S WHY YOU SCOOPED US UP!

ALL RIGHT THEN, LEAD ON-- EVEN IF IT'S HALF A WORLD AWAY!

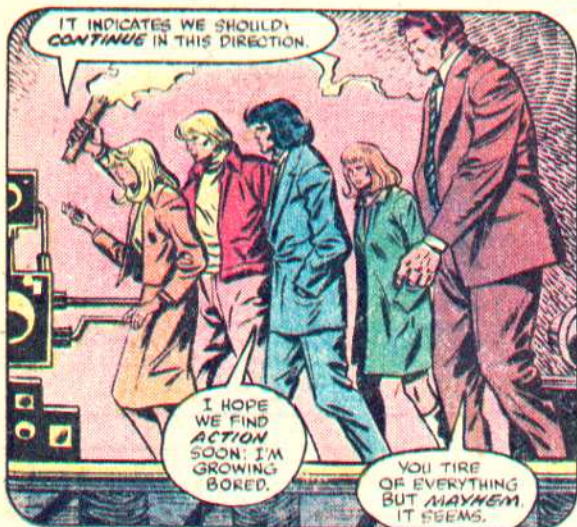
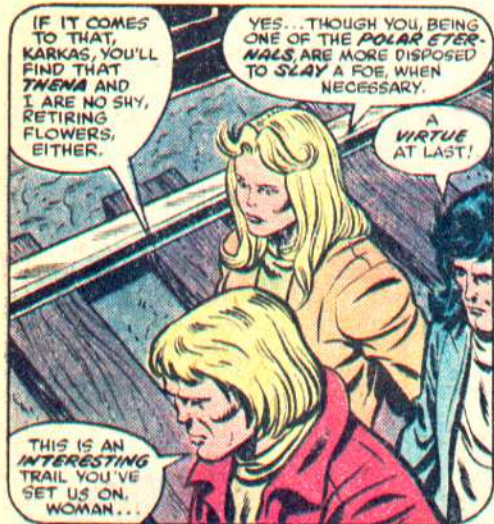


HARDLY LEVITATOR, THE NEW *LEMURIA* IS A GOOD DEAL CLOSER THAN THAT.

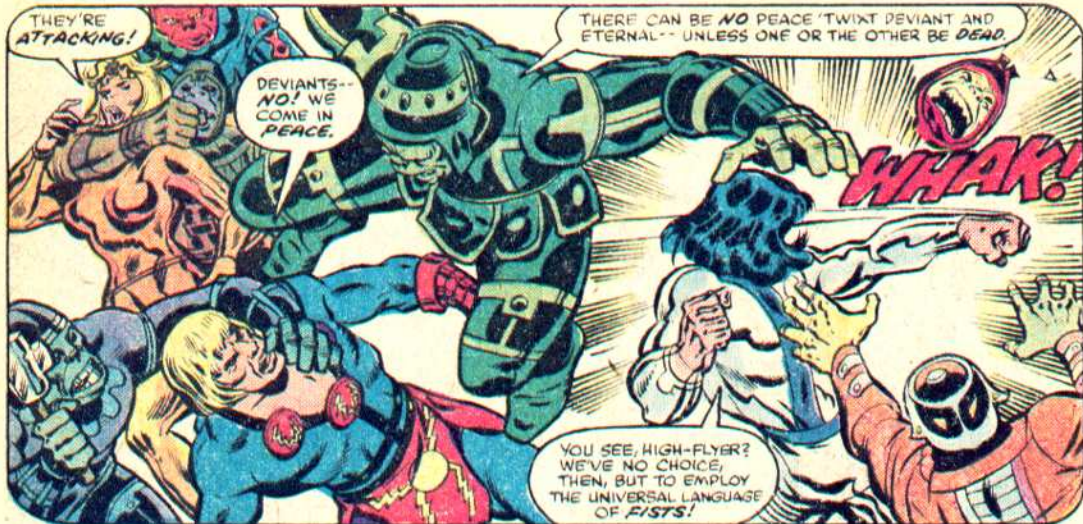
I'LL SHOW YOU... AS SOON AS I MAKE THIS HOVERCRAFT *INVISIBLE*.

MY FATHER *ZURAS* LOANED THIS SHIP TO ME...

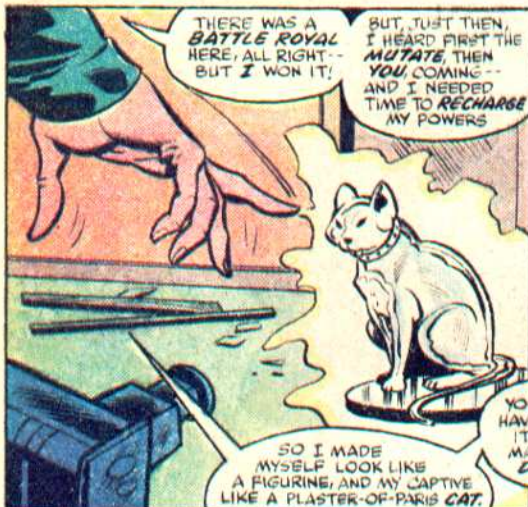
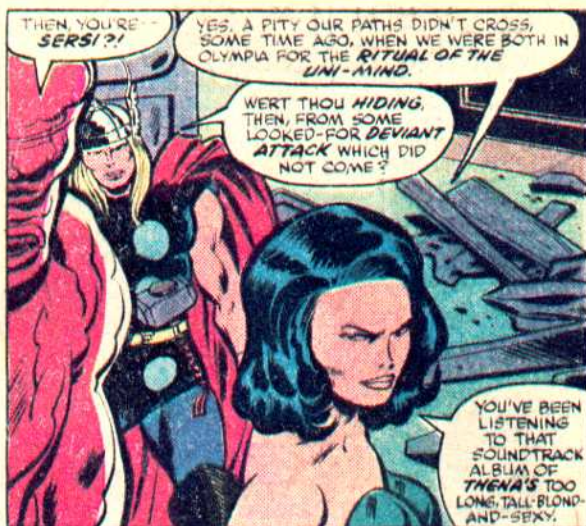


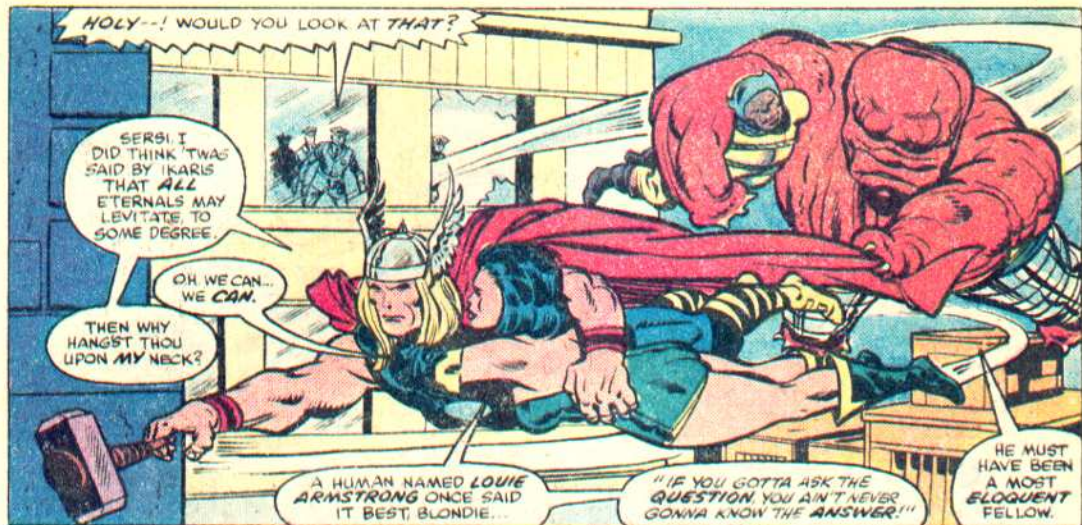












HOLY--! WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT?

SERSI I DID THINK TWAS SAID BY IKARIS THAT ALL ETERNALS MAY LEVITATE TO SOME DEGREE.

OH WE CAN... WE CAN.

THEN WHY HANGST THOU UPON MY NECK?

A HUMAN NAMED LOUIE ARMSTRONG ONCE SAID IT BEST, BLONDIE...

"IF YOU GOTTA ASK THE QUESTION YOU AIN'T NEVER GONNA KNOW THE ANSWER!"

HE MUST HAVE BEEN A MOST ELOQUENT FELLOW.



WE MAY TALK HERE UNDIS-TURBED MANY BLOCKS FROM THY DWELLING.

MAYBE SERSI'S CAPTIVE CAN TELL US A MORE SECRET APPROACH TO THE CITY OF THE DEVIANTS.



IF HE DOESN'T, THERE'LL BE ONE MORE TV ANTENNA ON THIS ROOFTOP.

WORSE YET; I'LL TURN HIM INTO A HUMAN FOR GOOD!

NO-- NOT THAT, ETERNAL!

THEN TALK!



TH-- THERE 'S AN LINGUARDED EN-TRANCE-- BENEATH A CERTAIN BOULDER IN CENTRAL PARK.

I'LL SHOW YOU TO IT-- BUT PLEASE DON'T TURN ME INTO A HUMAN BEING!

THEY'RE SO UNSPEAKABLY HIDEOUS...!



THIS WILL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO REDEEM MYSELF IN THE EYES OF THE LADY THENA-- YES, EVEN IN THOSE OF REJECT.

I'LL SHOW THENA MY TRUE WORTH!

THOSE BE BUT PETTY GOALS, BESIDE OUR TRUE ONE!

TO PERSUADE THE DEVIANTS TO JOIN US, IN SAYING THIS WORLD WE ALL DO SHARE!



WHILE, HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW WHERE THESE THREE STAND...

HAN! COME ON IN, ALL OF YOU-- BE YOU MUTATE, ETERNAL, OR ASGARDIAN!

THE SUBTERRANEAN WATER IS FINE-- FOR DYING!

NEXT: DOOM IN THE DOMAIN OF THE DEVIANTS!



Dear Asgardians,

Another fill-in? This could get monotonous. However, THOR #281 was anything but boring. Although the Space Phantom isn't one of your best villains, and Thor was a bit too quick to believe him, the story was nonetheless pretty good. But the artwork was fantastic! Keith Pollard and Pablo Marcos did a stunning job. Thor really looks like he should: a confused but noble figure, even in the mysterious dimension of Limbo (a place also very well drawn). Likewise, that last page was a powerful picture indeed.

But best of all was the action! Here, the thunder god was truly the mighty Thor, wading through every weapon a technologically advanced race could throw at him and coming back to smash every man built machine that stood in his path. When Thor molded that makeshift hammer out of a huge tank, it was especially impressive. This kind of action is the sort of fast-paced excitement that Marvel initiated well over a decade ago. THOR #281 is the kind of issue I look over time and again, and it looks each time as great or better than before.

Of course, an issue in that terrific Marvel tradition has to have a no-prize somewhere in it. In the case of THOR #281, it's the fact that pages 16 and 17 were reversed; check surrounding pages to see what I mean. It's nice to know some things never change.

Matt Kaufman
303 W. Pennsylvania
Urbana, IL 61801

Nice for you, maybe, Matt—and for the many other Marvelites who spotted the printers' goof of turning around pages 16 and 17. Ralph, Mark, Keith, and Pablo were a bit less happy about it. Matter of fact, if we gave a nefarious no-prize to everyone who spotted that goof, we'd have to spend the next two weeks licking postage stamps!

Oh, and this might be as good a place as any (and better than most) to mention that, starting with our very next issue, Kinetic Keith Pollard, artistic choreographer of all that fabulous action you lauded above, will be taking over as penciler of THOR on a regular basis. 'Twould seem that Big John Buscema is so busy these days chronicling the adventures of Conan (in CONAN THE BARBARIAN, THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, the 1979 ANNUAL, and another forthcoming double-size mag as well) and Red Sonja (in a giant-size COLOR SPECIAL, plus regular adventures for SAVAGE SWORD and elsewhere) and the forthcoming color spectacular of WEIRDWORLD to continue as penciler. After the job Keith did on issues #281-282, however, we figure he's the perfect replacement—and his enthusiasm for the current Thor/Eternals storyline seems to match Roy's own!

Meanwhile, John B. has penciled another Thor adventure or two for our long-awaited second Thor mag, of which more in a near-future issue... so the many Buscemaphiles among you (and that includes Ye Editor, but definitely) aren't about to be permanently deprived of J.B.'s version of immortal Asgard.

Now, as someone used to say (we think it was Smilin' Stan Lee): "Is everybody happy?"

Dear Thunder-makers,

"This Hammer Lost" is actually better than your average fill-in. The Space Phantom is more sinister than ever, planning Thor's end as no more than a plug between universes. What an ignominious end for the thunder god! I didn't know Gruenwald and Macchio could write so well!

The art was fabulous, as well. Pollard and Marcos combined to create a Thor which hasn't been seen since Buscema and Palmer did him (which is before the False Ragnarok epic ended). The last page was especially stunning... a masterpiece. The mag

still looks good, despite fill-ins. Keep up the good work!

Joel D. Cochran
7 Partridge Rd.
Lexington, MA 02173

Who should keep it up, Joel—Mark and Ralph, who did such a good job on issues #281-282 that Rascally Roy has asked them to do another fill-in one of these first days; Keith and Pablo, who have gone their separate ways but continue to turn out first-rate work for Mighty Marvel; or Roy Thomas and Jim Shooter, who as editors turned the above-named foursome loose in the first place? Or did you mean Roy and John, who were slated to take the book over again with #283? Well, no matter... they'll all be doing their best, on one mag or another.

Matter of fact, though we may have mentioned it elsewhere, Mark and Ralph (in their capacity as Marvel assistant editors) have sent page upon page of suggestions to Ye Editor/Writer concerning the Thor/Eternals epic; and Roy, knowing a good thing when he sees one, plans on acting on nearly all of them, tying them in with his own plans for the saga. Now that's teamwork!

Dear Roy,

The second page of THOR #280, in which the Son of Odin thinks, "Perhaps as Dr. Don Blake I should stroll these streets... yet I feel so little affinity for that role" greatly saddened me. At that moment I longed for the old JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY days when Dr. Blake shared so much of the limelight with the thunder god, and Thor was in love with a mortal woman.

Stan Lee abandoned Thor's secret identity almost completely. As the strip progressed, we saw more stories of Thor in Asgard than you could shake an Uru hammer at. Now you, Roy, are staying along those same lines, and so it is that for the past 150 issues or so, Dr. Don Blake has been slowly fading into nothing.

Don't let it happen, Roy! Give Dr. Blake a chance to live again! Thor's 200th anniversary ish is coming up, and that would be as good a place as any to change the direction of the strip for the better. Long live Dr. Donald Blake!

Hooman Mehran
44 Florence Dr.
Chappaqua, NY 10514

He's still alive and kicking (albeit with one lame foot), as you could see in this very issue, H.M.! Only thing is, after the de-emphasis on his Don Blake identity which began a decade ago under Lee and Kirby and which climaxed with the astonishing and unique-for-comics revelation that the good doctor was merely an identity which All-Father Odin dreamed up to teach Thor humility, we felt we couldn't just suddenly have Blake reappear on earth and start making house-calls... or even become a sort of "storefront doctor" such as Len Wein had in mind during his own writing stint on the strip.

Thus, Roy decided to grapple with the problem over a period of time, working up to it in his own (he hopes) inimitable way. But if you think he's about to reveal in advance the creative direction his mind is taking—well, you just don't know the Rascally One all that well. Just stick around a while, huh, and all will be revealed unto you. Probably.

