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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

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THE MIGHTY THOR

"CHAOS AT CANAVERAL!"

FEATURING THE MENACE OF THE MAN-BEAST!

pollard

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!®

"CHAOS AT CANAVERAL"

AFTER DELIVERING THE BI-BEAST TO THE AUTHORITIES, * THOR HAS JOINED IRON MAN AT THE KENNEDY SPACE CENTER IN CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA...

'TIS... AWESOME.

VERILY, OF ALL THE TECHNOLOGICAL WORKS OF MORTAL MAN, THIS BE BOTH THE MOST IMPRESSIVE... AND THE MOST POIGNANT.

THEN THY BUSINESS IN BEHALF OF *STARK INDUSTRIES* IS CONCLUDED, IRON MAN?

RIGHT, THOR, AND I GUESS I'D BETTER GET BACK TO LONG ISLAND-- BUT HOW DO YOU LIKE THE CAPE?

TO BE MORTAL... AND YET TO DREAM OF REACHING THE VERY HEAVENS-- A PERFECT CONCEIT, YET A LAUDABLE GOAL.

USA

*SEE LAST ISSUE. --JIM.

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IF YOU FEEL *THAT* WAY ABOUT IT... CARE TO STICK AROUND AS BLAKE FOR A TOUR? I CAN ARRANGE A V.I.P. PASS...

AYE--BLAKE HAS NOTHING BETTER TO DO UNTIL HIS JOURNEY TO CHICAGO NEXT WEEK.

AND I THINK HE WOULD *ENJOY* SUCH A TOUR.

ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO SUMMON HIM--

--THROUGH THE POWER OF *MJOLNIR*, MINE MYSTIC URU HAMMER...

BOOM

AND THE LAME PHYSICIAN DR. DONALD BLAKE RISES, NO LESS AWED THAN THOR BY THE TECHNOLOGICAL WONDER OF THE CAPE...

HERE'S YOUR PASS, DON. STAY AS LONG AS YOU LIKE.

BEING A STARK EMPLOYEE HAS ITS PERKS EH, IRON MAN? THANKS.

COME ON-- I'LL WALK YOU TO THE VISITORS' CENTER...

BETTER THAN THAT--HERE'S *DIANE*...

IRON MAN-- I DIDN'T KNOW *YOU* WERE HERE!

COMMAND CONTROL

DIANE LAMARR, THIS IS DR. DONALD BLAKE, A FRIEND OF MINE.

HOW DO YOU DO, DOCTOR.

PLEASE-- "DON" IS FINE.

DIANE IS TRAINING TO BE ONE OF OUR FIRST FEMALE ASTRONAUTS...

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE DON THE ROYAL TOUR, DIANE?

I'D BE GLAD TO-- EVEN IF IT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE LAST THINGS I'LL DO AROUND HERE IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY.

AND ON THAT CRYPTIC NOTE, LET'S SHIFT TO A NEARBY SWAMP AT THE EDGE OF THE EVERGLADES...

A LONE CRANE CRIES IN THE DISTANCE AND THEN ALL IS SILENT... SAVE FOR THE WET BURBLE OF AIR BREAKING THE THE THICK SURFACE...

...AIR RISING FROM THE SUB-MERGED SKY-CRAFT OF THE MAN-BEAST WHO NOW LIES UNCONSCIOUS AMIDST THE TWISTED WRECKAGE.

THE MAN-THING, HOWEVER, WHO BOARDED THE CRAFT SHORTLY BEFORE ITS FINAL FLIGHT AND CRASH, *IS FULLY CONSCIOUS...

...OR AT LEAST AS CONSCIOUS AS HIS VAGUE AND TROUBLED MIND CAN EVER BE.

AND RIGHT NOW, AS THE CRAFT FILLS EVER HIGHER WITH SWAMP SLUDGE, THE MUCK-ENCRUSTED GROTESQUERIE FINDS HIMSELF MORE CONFUSED THAN EVER.

*AGAIN, SEE LAST ISSUE. --JIM.

HE IS INTRIGUED BY THIS **MAN-BEAST** CREATURE, FOR HIS NORMAL EMPATHY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO PERCEIVE THE IMPRESSIONS OF FEAR EVINCED BY NEARLY ALL WHO LOOK UPON HIM.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, AN OVERWHELMING IMPRESSION OF A RELATED EMOTION...

IT IS **HATE**--AND EVEN NOW IT SEEMS TO BOIL AND OOZE FROM THE MAN-BEAST'S DORMANT MIND.

BUT HOW COULD IT BE SO STRONG? AND WHAT TO DO WITH HIM--?

LEAVE HIM HERE?-- TO BE ENTOMBED BY THE INVADING SWAMP-STUFF?

NO.

IT WOULD LEAVE TOO MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED, TOO MANY FEELINGS... UNSATISFIED.

AND SO...

...CURIOSITY WINS.

HE WILL TAKE THE MAN-BEAST AWAY SOMEWHERE, PERHAPS FOR FURTHER STUDY... IF HE CAN REMEMBER, THAT IS, WHAT HE WISHES TO STUDY.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN, HE NEVERTHELESS FEELS AN URGENT NEED TO REACH IT, AND INSTANTLY CORRECTS EACH FALSE TURN.

BUT HOW CAN THIS BE? WHAT IS GUIDING HIM?

SIMPLY, AND SADLY, HE DOES NOT KNOW.

INDEED, HE HAS ALREADY FORGOTTEN THAT HE DRAGS THE MAN-BEAST BEHIND HIM, AND MERELY SHAMBLES ON...

YET, A LONG TIME LATER, HE RECOGNIZES THE DESTINATION WHEN HE SEES IT--AND FEELS ITS IMAGE BURNING IN HIS MIND.

RESTRICTED AREA KEEP OUT VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED

BUT NOW WHAT?

AGAIN HE DOES NOT KNOW.

THEN, STUMBLING OVER IT, HE AGAIN BECOMES AWARE OF HIS BURDEN, AND OF SOME VAGUE NOTION ABOUT STUDYING IT...

SO HE SETTLES DOWN INTO CONCEALMENT AND PEERS THROUGH THE BRUSH AT THE MAN-BEAST, KEEPING SILENT VIGIL FOR REASONS UNKNOWN.

--AND EVEN THOUGH THE SPACE SHUTTLE IS LAUNCHED FROM HOUSTON, IT WAS CONSTRUCTED HERE IN FLORIDA, DON.

I SUPPOSE YOU HEARD ABOUT ALL THE TROUBLE WITH THE THERMAL-SHIELD TILES...

YES--THEY SEEM JINXED.

WELL, WE'LL LICK THE PROBLEM YET--SOONER OR LATER.

WE'LL BE LAUNCHING AN EXPERIMENTAL WEATHER SATELLITE TODAY AT TWO. IF YOU'D LIKE, WE CAN LUNCH TOGETHER AND WATCH THE LAUNCH...

I'D LIKE, DIANE--VERY MUCH.

SLOWLY, THE MAN-BEAST COMES TO HIS SENSES, AND FOR A MOMENT HIS CONFUSION RIVALS THE MAN-THING'S...

WH-WHERE--? THE *SPACE CENTER*?!

I WAS HEADED HERE WHEN MY CRAFT WAS BLASTED BY THOR AND IRON MAN, BUT I... I CAN'T REMEMBER A THING AFTER THAT...

THEN, EVEN IN MY DELIRIUM, MY DRIVE--MY HATE--WAS TOO STRONG TO THWART!

STILL CONFUSED, THE MAN-THING MERELY WATCHES FROM CONCEALMENT...

...AS HIS STRANGE, HATE-FILLED OBJECT OF STUDY BOLDLY INVADES CAPE CANAVERAL.

NASA

I MUST HAVE MANAGED TO PILOT THE CRIPPLED CRAFT TO A SPOT NEARBY-- THEN CRASHED AND STUMBLED THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT-- AND FINALLY COLLAPSED RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY DESTINATION.

AND NOW...

NOW NOTHING CAN STOP ME!

WHAT THE--? WHO'S THIS JOKER IN THE HALLOWEEN COSTUME--?

FOOLS! I AM THE *MAN-BEAST*-- MASTER OF HATRED!

AND TO PROVE IT, THE HATE-RAY *BLASTS* FROM HIS EXTENDED HANDS...

...INSTANTLY FORCING ITS TARGETS TO GO FOR EACH OTHERS' THROATS.

I *HATE* YOU-- I'M GONNA *KILL* YOU!

THE MAN-BEAST SNEERS, STRIDING INTO THE INNER COMPLEX.

MEANWHILE, AT THE VISITORS' CAFETERIA...

SO YOU'RE FROM NEW YORK, DON?

YES, AND... UH, WELL... FROM ANOTHER PLACE.

WHAT'S WRONG, DON? WHY DO YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT?

JUST HOMESICK NOW AND THEN-- I GUESS EVERY-ONE'S HOME TOWN SEEMS BETTER THAN IT IS...

...LIKE A SHINING REALM OF SPLENDOR YOU CAN ONLY REVISIT IN THE DREAMS OF YOUR OTHER SELF.

BUT TELL ME, DIANE-- WHAT DID YOU MEAN ABOUT THIS TOUR BEING YOUR "LAST OFFICIAL ACT"?

BUDGET CUTS TO *NASA* ARE GOING TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF ASTRONAUT TRAINEES, DON, AND SINCE WOMEN WERE THE LAST TO BE ADMITTED TO THE PROGRAM WE'VE GOT THE LEAST TENURE AND WE'LL BE THE FIRST TO GO.

SO... MY DREAMS OF ACTUALLY EXPLORING THE MYSTERIES OF SPACE WILL HAVE TO WAIT EVEN LONGER.

IF I WEREN'T SO AFRAID OF BEING "TOO MUCH LIKE A WOMAN," I'D CONFESS THAT IT'S GOING TO BREAK MY HEART. I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO IN THE FUTURE...

I THINK I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, DIANE. MY OWN FUTURE HAS A RATHER UNCERTAIN CAST TO IT...

YOU SEE, I JUST LOST MY JOB TOO-- AT A CLINIC IN MANHATTAN.

YOU DID? THEN YOU REALLY *DO* KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.

TELL ME, DON... HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE FEELING OF--

ATTENTION! THE LAUNCH COUNTDOWN WILL COMMENCE IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

AH, WELL, ENOUGH DEPRESSION.

SHALL WE?

WE CAN'T GET *TOO* CLOSE TO THE LAUNCH-PAD, MISTER. BUT IF I SWING MY WEIGHT AROUND I THINK I CAN ARRANGE THE BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE.

SO SWING IT, LADY. I'M GAME FOR--

A *MONSTER!* WE THOUGHT IT WAS A JOKE-- BUT IT'S *REAL!* SOME KINDA *WOLFMAN IS LOOSE ON THE BASE!*

WHAT THE--?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE BABBLING ABOUT, BUT IF THE LAUNCH IS SCRUBBED I MAY BE *NEEDED!*

SOME KIND OF "WOLFMAN"--?

SORRY, DON-- CATCH YOU LATER!

COULD IT BE THE *MAN-BEAST* AGAIN?

IT'S CERTAINLY NOT A FALSE ALARM-- *SOMETHING* HAD TO CAUSE ALL THAT FEAR AND PANDEMONIUM--

AND IF THERE'S THE LEAST CHANCE THAT IT *IS* THE MAN-BEAST--

--THEN, BY THE POWER OF MJOLNIR--

--THE MIGHTY THOR SHALL STAND READY TO PUT THE VILLAIN DOWN!

AND SO RESOLVED, THE STEEL-THEWED SCION OF ASGARD EMERGES FROM HIS PLACE OF CONCEALMENT...

...ONLY TO FIND--

HATE! I HATE YOU!!

AYE, 'TIS HIM BEHIND THIS--THEY ARE POSSESSED BY THE MAN-BEAST'S HATE!

BUT WHERE *IS* HE?

THEN, SENSING A CALMING PRESENCE IN THE MIDST OF THE BERSERK FUROR--

--THOR TURNS TO FACE... THE MAN-THING.

AND THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE MUCK-MONSTER'S EYES WHICH SEEM TO BECKON HIM...

...SOME KIND OF APPEAL-- OR IS IT THE OPPOSITE? SOME KIND OF... *OFFER?*

ART THOU THE MONSTER THEY FEAR--?

NAY-- THOU ART NO "WOLF-MAN"-- NOR IS THERE HATE IN THEE DO YOU WISH TO AID ME--?

HE IS CONFUSED, SENSING THAT HE HAS SOMEHOW BEEN USED BY THE MAN-BEAST FOR EVIL PURPOSES, AND HE WISHES TO REVERSE WHAT HE HAS DONE. BUT WILL THIS ONE SHOW FEAR--? NO.. FOR WHAT-EVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH...

...AND THIS DOES *NOT* BURN.

IN THE LAUNCH CONTROL CENTER...

COUNTDOWN T-MINUS 300... 299... 298...

WHAT?! SECURITY HAS BEEN *BREACHED*--? THEN WE'VE GOT TO HALT THE COUNTDOWN-- SCRUB THE LAUNCH!

BUT BEFORE THE TECHNICIANS CAN REACT TO THE NEWS--

BLASHH

--THE MAN-BEAST CRASHES THE FINAL BARRICADES, SPRAYING HATE-RAYS BEFORE HIM...

STOP IT, YOU FOOL! I TELL YOU THE LAUNCH MUST BE SCRUBBED!

OVER MY DEAD BODY, YOU STINKING SNAKE!

...284... 283... 282...

AND THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES, AS THE MAN-BEAST CROWS IN TRIUMPH...

HUMAN FOOLS! NOTHING CAN STOP ME-- *NOTHING*, I TELL YOU!

IN LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES, MY DREAM OF HATE WILL HAVE BEEN SERVED! IN LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES, I SHALL LEAVE THIS CURSED EARTH BEHIND ME!

HOW LONG I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS *MOMENT*--HOW MUCH I MUST SAVOR ITS GLORY! DO YOU KNOW WHERE I *COME FROM*, FOOLS? DO YOU KNOW WHAT I *AM*?!

I AM THE *MAN-BEAST*, A PERFECT SYNTHESIS OF THE HIGHER AND LOWER ORDER OF LIFE!

BORN OF SCIENCE, I WAS CREATED BY THE HATED *HIGH EVOLUTIONARY OF COUNTER-EARTH*-- HE WHO TOOK LOWLY BEASTS AND EVOLVED THEM TO THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL!

"I WAS KNOWN AS THE *SUPER-BEAST* THEN, WHEN I FIRST BATTLED THOR ONLY TO SUFFER BASE DEFEAT AT HIS HANDS...

"BUT THE CRAVING FOR VENGEANCE-- THE *HUMAN* QUALITY WITHIN ME WAS TOO STRONG TO BE CONQUERED, AND SO I CAME BACK!

"INDEED, I THOROUGHLY CORRUPTED COUNTER-EARTH-- THAT NEARLY TWIN WORLD ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SUN--

"--BEFORE THE *WARLOCK* TREACHEROUSLY REVERTED ME TO MY ORIGINAL WOLF FORM...

"BUT YEARS LATER I TRIUMPHED YET AGAIN--

"--REGAINING MY INDOMITABLE EVOLVED FORM!

"I EVEN MASTERED THE POWERS OF THE *HATE-RAY*--

"--AND, AS THE *HATE MONGER*, I VERY NEARLY DESTROYED THE VAUNTED *SPIDER-MAN!*

"AND ALL ALONG I MAINTAINED MY SECRET PARTNERSHIP WITH THE *BI-BEAST*, CUNNINGLY AWAITING THE MOMENT OF FINAL VENGEANCE ON MY MAKER!"

AND NOW THAT MOMENT HAS COME! NOW I SHALL USE YOUR WEATHER SATELLITE TO ONCE AGAIN REACH COUNTER-EARTH-- AND *DESTROY IT FOREVER!**

* WHAT THE MAN-BEAST DOES NOT KNOW, HOWEVER, IS THAT COUNTER-EARTH HAS BEEN *MOVED* FROM ITS ORIGINAL ORBIT ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN. SEE *MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE* #61-63.--JIM.

SLOWLY, TORTUOUSLY, THE MAN-THING HAS COME TO A DECISION: IF THIS NEW BEING DOES NOT BURN, IF HE FEELS NO FEAR--

--THEN PERHAPS HE CAN CONTEND WITH THE *OTHER* FEARLESS BEING.

MOREOVER, THIS NEW BEING RADIATES WAVES OF OTHER IMPRESSIONS...

...TRANSCENDENT FEELINGS OF VALOR AND NOBILITY--QUALITIES THE MAN-THING HAS NEVER BEFORE PERCEIVED TO SUCH A DEGREE.

YE WOULD HAVE ME *FOLLOW* YOU--?

PERHAPS THEY CAN CANCEL THE OTHER'S HATE, AND THUS UNDO THE EVIL HE HAS HELPED BRING ABOUT.

MEANWHILE, AS DIANE LaMARR REACHES LAUNCH CONTROL...

NASA

THEN IT... IT'S TRUE! IT *IS* SOME KIND OF MONSTER!

...234...233... 232...

KILL... WANT TO *KILL* YOU!

IT'S INSANE-- THE WHOLE THING!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THEM, BUT THEY'LL TEAR ME APART IF I SET FOOT IN THERE!

THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP THE LAUNCH!

AND THAT MONSTER WAS HEADING FOR THE LAUNCH GANTRY-- MAYBE TO SABOTAGE THE SATELLITE!

I CAN'T LET IT HAPPEN!

IF THE SPACE PROGRAM SUFFERS *ANOTHER* MAJOR FOUL-UP, THEY'LL *REALLY* CUT THE BUDGET...

SO IF I CAN'T STOP THE LAUNCH... THEN I'VE GOT TO STOP THE MONSTER!

NASA

THERE HE IS--CLIMBING RIGHT UP THE GANTRY.

WITH ANY LUCK, THE ELEVATOR BEAT HIM TO THE TOP!

...198...197... 196...

THE GANTRY ELEVATOR RISES SMOOTHLY, SWIFTLY, BUT NOT SWIFTLY ENOUGH FOR DIANE LAMARR...

SHE POUNDS THE WALL WITH IMPATIENCE.

THE MONSTER WAS CLIMBING FASTER THAN SHE COULD HAVE DREAMED POSSIBLE--HE MUST BE NEARING THE CAPSULE BY NOW...

AH! THE ENTRANCE HATCH--AND MY MEANS TO FINAL REVENGE!

THE ELEVATOR COMES TO A HALT--BUT IS SHE IN TIME?

THE DOORS SLIDE OPEN, AND--

YES!

WHAAAT--?!

YON ROCKET, MAN-MONSTER--IS THIS WHERE YOU WOULD LEAD ME?

IN RESPONSE, AND ONLY AFTER SUPREME EFFORT, THE MAN-THING POINTS...

AYE--I SEE HIM, NEAR THE TOP...

'TIS IN TRUTH THE VILLAINOUS MAN-BEAST...

"BUT WAIT! THERE IS ONE OTHER--ONE HE ATTACKS!"

HUMAN FOOL!

SWAP

HOW DARE YOU ASSAULT THE MAN-BEAST?!

NO! STAY AWAY! I WON'T LET YOU SABOTAGE THE LAUNCH!

AND HOW WILL YOU *STOP* ME, HUMAN? THERE IS *NOTHING* WHICH CAN STOP ME FROM PILOTING THIS ROCKET TO COUNTER-EARTH-- *NOTHING!*

WRONG.

SPROKK

RUNCH

THOR AGAIN! AM I CURSED TO BE PLAGUED BY THE FOOL *FOREVER--?!*

NO MATTER! I SHALL *DESTROY* HIM-- JUST AS I SHALL DESTROY *ANYTHING* WHICH GETS IN MY WAY!

THE RAYS SIZZLE DOWN TO CHEW THE PACKED MACADAM, AND AGAIN MAN-THING FEELS THE OVERWHELMING HATE...

YET HE SENSES, TOO, THAT THE HATE WILL DO NOTHING TO SLOW DOWN THE GOLDEN HAIRED ONE...

NOTHING AT ALL.

...123 ...122 ...121...

THOU HAST DONE THY BEST, VILLAIN, TO WREAK HAVOC WHEREVER THOU HAST TREAD!

BUT NOW, FOR THE FINAL TIME -- *THOR SAYS THEE NAY!*

WHRAM

CAREFUL, THOR! HE'S TRYING TO SABOTAGE THE SATELLITE!

AYE, MORTAL, AND *MORE...*

HIS ESSENCE OF HATRED WOULD SABOTAGE THE VERY NOBILITY OF LIFE ITSELF!

...87... 86... 85...

THIS PLACE -- WITH ALL ITS MANY ROCKETS AND MACHINES -- ASPIRES TO A HIGH GOAL...

...PERHAPS THE HIGHEST MORTAL MAN HAST EVER KNOWN!

AND THOR WILL NOT STAND BY TO SEE IT PERVERTED TO EVIL ENDS!

JUST TRY TO STOP ME, THUNDER GOD -- ONCE I HAVE SMASHED YOU INTO THE DUST!

FWUMP

...55... 54... 53...

THIS TIME YOU'RE DOOMED, THOR-- AS ALL OF YOUR KIND ARE DOOMED IN THE END!

AS A GOD, YOU SERVE AS AN IDEAL FOR ALL THE FINER INSTINCTS OF MEN...

...23...22... 21...

AND YET, WHEN THE MOMENT OF TRUTH ARRIVES, MAN'S FINER INSTINCTS EVER ALTER-- AND BECOME BASE! SO IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN-- AND SO IT SHALL BE! MAN IS AT HEART NO BETTER THAN A *BEAST!*

AND I AM THE *MAN-BEAST*--THE SUM TOTAL OF ALL THE COWARDICE AND TREACHERY AND HATRED THAT LURKS IN THE HEART OF MAN! I AM THE *REAL AND TRUE IDEAL OF MAN!*

NAY, VILLAIN--NOT SO LONG AS THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE AND NOBILITY OF A HIGHER PURPOSE BEATS IN THE HEART OF BUT A SINGLE MAN *OR* GOD!

SWOKK

FOOL! DON'T YOU *UNDERSTAND?!* HATE IS MY *STRENGTH*--

--AND SO LONG AS I *HATE* YOU, I *CAN NEVER* BE BEATEN!

...16...15...14...

...10...9... 8...

MINE HAMMER-- MJOLNIR!

HURRY, THOR-- THE LAUNCH CAN'T BE ABORTED! YOU'VE GOT TO *STOP HIM!*

AYE, MORTAL-- AND STOP HIM THOR *SHALL!*

SPUNCH

...7...6...5...

BUT AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT--

FHWAM

...4...3...2...

...1...ZERO.

THE HATCH-- 'TIS CLOSING!

LIFTOFF!

AND MINE HAMMER-- MJOLNIR IS STILL *INSIDE!*

AND NOW BEGINS A DIFFERENT KIND OF COUNTDOWN--A COUNTDOWN IN REVERSE...

16 17

...A COUNT UP TO SIXTY PRECIOUS SECONDS SPANNING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

18 19

IF I DO NOT REGAIN MY HAMMER WITHIN THE SIXTY SECONDS ALLOTTED BY MY FATHER ODIN—

20

—I SHALL REVERT TO MY MORTAL FORM OF DR. DONALD BLAKE!

21

HE IS COMMITTED NOW.

US AIR FORCE

THERE IS IS NO TURNING BACK.

22

AND BY THEN--

23 24

--THIS ROCKET WILL HAVE CARRIED ME INTO THE AIRLESS VOID OF *SPACE*...

25

US AIR FORCE

NO TURNING BACK.

26 27

HAH! FAREWELL, VILE EARTH!

AT LAST THE MAN-BEAST HAS TRIUMPHED -- AND SOON COUNTER-EARTH SHALL FEEL THE WRATH OF MY VENGEANCE!

28

NO HOPE...

US AIR FORCE

...NOTHING IN FACT, SHORT OF A *MIRACLE*.

THOR LEAPS FROM THE GANTRY, DESPERATELY STRIVING TO OVERTAKE THE RISING PILLAR OF FIRE...

... WHERE DONALD BLAKE CANNOT SURVIVE FOR EVEN A SINGLE HEART BEAT!

29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 39

EH--? THOR'S HAMMER!

EXCELLENT--NOW I HAVE BOTH A SOUVENIR OF PAST TRIUMPH AND A WEAPON FOR THE COMING CONQUEST!

IF ONLY THE MORTAL DIANE LAMARR WERE NOT INSIDE THE ROCKET--THEN I COULD MERELY *SMASH* MY WAY TO MJOLNIR...

WHAT THE--? NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I CAN'T *LIFT* THE THING!

MUST BE... SOME KIND OF *MAGIC*... ATTACHED TO IT...

40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48

BAH! I HAVE NO *NEED* OF THE THING!

LET IT LAY!

'TIS HOPELESS --I CANNOT ACT WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE MORTAL!

AND SO, SHE HERSELF IS MINE ONLY HOPE...

BESIDES, IT'S TIME TO BYPASS THE CRAFT'S AUTOMATIC GUIDANCE SYSTEMS--

--SO I CAN ASSUME FULL CONTROL MYSELF!

HE'S SABOTAGING THE SATELLITE! GOT TO SEAL MY SUIT--ANCHOR MYSELF TO THE BULKHEAD...

...AND STOP HIM THE ONLY WAY POSSIBLE!

WHAT?! THE HUMAN FEMALE-- SHE'S STILL ABOARD THE CRAFT! I FORGOT ABOUT HER!

52 53 54 55 56

AND THE ONLY WAY POSSIBLE IS TO--

TEK

...57...

--BLOW THE HATCH!

...58...

AN EXPLOSIVE ROAR RIPS THROUGH THE CAPSULE, AND THE PURGING OXYGEN SUCKS EVERYTHING MOVEABLE-- URU HAMMER, MAN-BEAST, AND DIANE LAMARR HERSELF-- TOWARD THE VAST VACUUM BEYOND THE BLOWN HATCH...

FOR A MOMENT, ANCHORED BY HER STOUT UMBILICAL LINE, DIANE FEELS THE GIDDINESS OF DARING SUCCESS...

...59...

BUT THEN--

...60!

NO! MY LIFELINE-- IT SNAPPED! I UNDERESTIMATED THE VIOLENCE OF DEPRESSURIZATION!

MJOLNIR IS MINE! THE CHANGE TO MORTAL BLAKE HAST BEEN AVERTED!

AND SO, IN A WAY SHE CANNOT FATHOM--AND IN A WAY WHICH DOES HER LITTLE IMMEDIATE GOOD--DIANE LAMARR HAS SUCCEEDED.

--BUT THE MAN-BEAST HAST MANAGED TO GRIP THE SPACECRAFT'S HULL--

THE CURSED THUNDER GOD AGAIN--HE MUST HAVE BEEN CLINGING TO THE CAPSULE ALL ALONG!

--WHILE DIANE LAMARR HURTLES HELPLESSLY INTO SPACE!

BUT PERHAPS IT'S BETTER THIS WAY... FOR HOW CAN I TAKE SATISFACTION IN MY VENGEANCE ON COUNTER-EARTH--

--IF I'VE LEFT BEHIND UNSETTLED SCORES FROM *EARTH ITSELF?!*

NO! HE'S HURTING THOR--AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO HELP -- NO WAY TO GET *BACK THERE!*

AND NOW, IN TRIUMPH AND HATE, THE MAN-BEAST SHALL DELIVER THE *KILLING BLOW...*

BUT THE MIGHTY THOR IS FAR FROM READY TO FOLD AND DIE...

NAY! I WILL NOT PERMIT THIS BASE CREATURE TO PREVAIL--NOT WHILST THE PRIDE OF ASGARD YET COURSES THROUGH MY VEINS!

WHAT--? HE RE-COVERED?!

AND, IN HATE AND FURY, THE MAN-BEAST REDOUBLES HIS FIERCE ONSLAUGHT.

HE MUST BE USING THE BEASTLIKE CLAWS OF HIS FEET TO GRIP THE CRAFT'S HULL AND-- *WHAT?!*

NOW HE RIPS UP A SECTION OF THE CRAFT ITSELF--

--TO *HURL AT ME!*

ENOW, I SAY!

WITH EVERY MOMENT I TARRY IN BATTLE WITH THE MAN-BEAST--

--THE MORTAL DIANE LaMARR FLOATS FARTHER AND YET FARTHER FROM SALVATION!

'TIS TIME TO END THE CHARADE--

--NOW-- WHILST HE HAST SURRENDERED HIS GRIP ON THE HULL--

--BY STRIKING HIM WITH ALL THE FURY OF A GOD ENRAGED!

UHN!

NO--! HE CAN'T WIN! HE CAN'T--! MY VENGEANCE--HE CAN'T DENY IT NOW! NOT NOW--!

AND NOW, LET HIM SEEK HIS EVIL ENDS WITHOUT THE AID OF THIS SPACECRAFT...

NOT NOW... HE CAN'T CAN'T... CAN'T...

...WHILE MY CONCERN RESTS WITH YON INNOCENT DRIFTING INTO THE TERROR BETWIXT THE STARS...

FLY TRULY, MJOLNIR--

--AND CARRY US ALL SAFELY TO THE END OF THIS MATTER!

THE ENCHANTED MALLET STREAKS THROUGH THE ETERNAL DARKNESS, A SHINING MESSENGER OF HOPE FOR DIANE LAMARR...

...HOPE WHERE NONE SEEMED TO EXIST.

SHE REACHES UP AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT--

--AND GRABS--

--JUST BEFORE MJOLNIR MAKES ITS ORDAINED RETURN TO THE HAND OF ITS MASTER...

SIMILARLY, THOR STABS UP AT THE PASSING HAMMER--

--FILLING HIS HAND WITH THE FAMILIAR LEATHER-THONGED GRIP--

--AND BOTH MORTAL AND GOD RIDE MJOLNIR'S SUPERNATURAL POWER BACK TOWARD THE BECKONING ATMOSPHERE OF EARTH.

HE *DID* IT! THOR *SAVED* ME!

I THOUGHT IT WOULD TAKE A MIRACLE--BUT THOR *DID IT*!!

AT CAPE CANAVERAL, SHAKEN WORKERS AND TECHNICIANS SLOWLY RISE FROM THEIR LONG BOUT WITH MADNESS...

SATELLITE IN ORBIT--LAUNCH SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

WH-WHAT--? BUT HOW? WHAT *HAP-PENED*?!

THE EFFECTS OF THE MAN-BEAST'S HATE-RAYS HAVE WORN OFF.

THOR! AND THERE'S SOMEONE WITH HIM--AN *ASTRONAUT!*

AYE--'TIS DIANE LAMARR.

DIANE--?! BUT... BUT *HOW?!* I... I THINK YOU'D BETTER *EXPLAIN*, THOR...

AND, AFTER THE EXPLANATION HAS BEEN RENDERED...

THAT WAS A MIGHTY COURAGEOUS ACT YOU TOOK, MS. LAMARR.

YEAH--THAT SATELLITE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE UNMANNED, BUT IT SURE WASN'T "*UNWOMANNED*"!

YES... WELL, AT LEAST I MADE IT OUT INTO SPACE *ONCE*...

AND YOU'LL DO IT *AGAIN!*

WHAT? I... I... YOU MEAN--

BY JUPITER, AFTER WHAT YOU'VE DEMONSTRATED TODAY, WE COULD *NEVER* LET SOMEONE OF YOUR CALIBER LEAVE THE SPACE PROGRAM!

NASA

THIS WHOLE MATTER HAS MADE ME AWARE OF ONE OVERRIDING FACT WE TECHNOPHILES SOMETIMES OVERLOOK--*PEOPLE* ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF *ANY* SYSTEM.

WE'LL FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO CUT.

AND DIANE BEAMS.

TH-THANK YOU, THOR... BUT NOW... IF YOU'LL ALL EXCUSE ME...

...I'D BETTER GO FIND A FRIEND I ABANDONED RATHER ABRUPTLY.

THANKS TO YOU, THOR, MAYBE SOME OF MY LUCK WILL RUB OFF ON *HIM*.

AND DIANE LAMARR HEADS ACROSS THE MACADAM, FEELING TEN FEET TALL.

IT'S BEEN A DAY SHE WILL NEVER FORGET...

BUT AS FOR THE MUCH ENCRUSTED MAN-THING--HE WHO IN MANY WAYS, HAS SERVED AS THE CATALIST FOR THIS DAY'S EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS...

...WELL, HE SIMPLY SHAMBLES OFF TOWARD THE SOOTHING SHADE OF A NEARBY CYPRESS GROVE...

...THE ENTIRE AFFAIR LOCKED SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE DIM RECESSES OF HIS MURKY MIND--EFFECTIVELY FORGOTTEN.

NEXT ISSUE

THE MANIAC CRAVES BLOOD!