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THE MIGHTY THOR™



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TM

TO FIGHT A FRIEND!
THOR VERUS
HEIMDALL
GUARDIAN OF THE
RAINBOW
BRIDGE!



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!**

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THE WRATH AND THE POWER!

CHICAGO'S YACHT BASIN: THE SILVER CHALICE OF DEFEATED FARBAUTIRIMTHURSGAR LIES IN GLEAMING SHARDS...

THE NORSE ICON HAS BEEN USED TO TRANSFORM FIVE ORDINARY MORTALS INTO A FABLED ASGARDIAN MENAGERIE-- KYRIE THE FALCON-WOMAN, BORNA THE BEAR, GRULT THE BULL-MAN, SLITHGARN THE SERPENT, AND FAIRGOLD THE MERMAID--AND IF IT NOW LIES SHATTERED...

... THEN WE MUST KEEP OUR PRESENT FORMS!

AYE-- AND REMAIN HERE ON MIDGARD TO REAP SUCH VAST PLEASURES AS PRESENT THEMSELVES.

NAY!

A SINGLE WORD... BUT WHEN VOICED BY THOR, IT CONVEYS THE POWER OF THUNDER.

GRULT, ART THOU NOT ASHAMED? THY PRESENT MIEN OF POWER AND FEROCITY MAY SERVE WELL IN THY CHOSEN PURSUIT OF DEBAUCHERY-- BUT WHAT OF MEEK THORNE KIRBY, HE WHOSE FACE AND FORM LIES SUPPRESSED UNDER THY FURY?



AND FAIRGOLD, THOU WERT ONCE NURSE STEVENS, SHE WHO DEVOTED HERSELF TO EASING THE SUFFERING OF OTHERS. CANST THOU TRULY SAY THAT THY PRESENT LECHEROUS FORM IS MORE WORTHY OR IMPORTANT?



AND THOU, BORNA-- WHAT OF THE COMMON MORTAL WHOSE FACE AND FORM THOU HAST USURPED? SHOULD HIS CHANCE FOR NOBILITY-- AYE, AND FOR LIFE ITSELF-- LIE VICTIM TO THY SELFISH NEED?



AND SLITHGARN-- LIKE BORNA, THOU WERT A COMMON WORKER, A "MOVER", BUT CANST THOU TRULY SAY THAT SUCH A MEAN OCCUPATION RENDERS THE MAN UNWORTHY OF SALVATION?



AND THOU, KYRIE... THY SHAME SHOULD TRANSCEND THAT OF ALL OTHERS. WHAT OF SHAWNA LYNDE, THE DOCTOR WHO HAS SHOWN SO MUCH KINDNESS TO DONALD BLAKE? BESIDES, THOU ART THE ONE WHO HAS CHANGED THE LEAST-- WHO REMEMBERS MOST THY FORMER MORTAL LIFE...



ART THOU NOT ASHAMED?

THOR IS RIGHT-- WE *MUST* SACRIFICE OUR ASGARDIAN FORMS, THAT OUR FORMER MORTAL SELVES MAY RESUME THEIR NORMAL LIVES.



AYE... WE SHALL PROTEST NO MORE, THUNDER GOD.

SO BE IT-- I SHALL LEAVE THEE HERE ON MIDGARD WHILST I RETURN FAR-BAUTI TO ASGARD... AND PETITION ALL-FATHER ODIN FOR AID.

BUT EVEN AS THE STRANGE GROUP MOVES FROM THE DOCKS...

HOLD IT, THOR!

WE... UH... WE KNOW YOU'RE A GOOD GUY AND ALL, BUT YOU'VE GOTTA UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION. AND YOU DO HAVE SOME MIGHTY HEAVY EXPLAINING TO DO...



YOU AND THOSE OTHER... AH, FREAKS... WILL JUST HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, SO WE CAN--!



"FREAKS"--?!

DID YON BLUE-CLAD MORTAL DARE CALL US "FREAKS"?!?

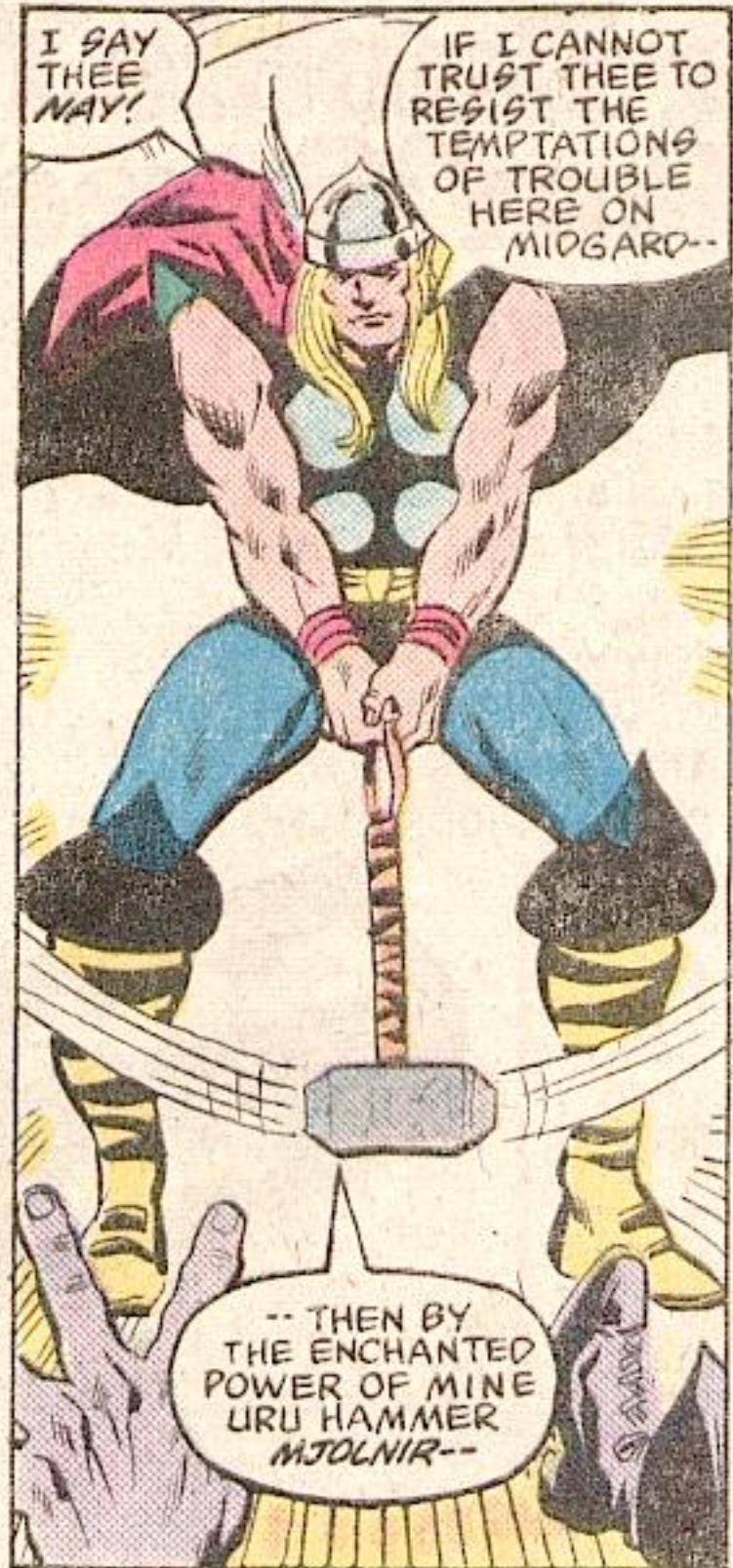
I WARN THEE, GRULT-- STAY THY HAND, LEST I BE FORCED TO BREAK IT!



BUT WOULD THOR HAD ALSO WARNED BORNA...

AYE... AND FOR VOICING SUCH DIRE CALUMNY--!

BIND HIS FOUL TONGUE IN KNOTS, BORNA!



I SAY THEE NAY!

IF I CANNOT TRUST THEE TO RESIST THE TEMPTATIONS OF TROUBLE HERE ON MIDGARD--

-- THEN BY THE ENCHANTED POWER OF MINE URU HAMMER MJOLNIR--



"-- I SHALL TRANSPORT US ALL ACROSS THE YAWNING VOID TO ASGARD!"

HUH--? WH-WHERE... DID... THEY... GO?

AT THIS MOMENT, IN THE HINTERLANDS OF ASSARD,
THE OBJECT OF THOR'S FLIGHT--
ODIN HIMSELF-- SITS ASTRIDE
EIGHT-LEGGED SLEIPNIR...

... WATCHING, HIS ONE EYE
CLOUDED WITH WEARY DISMAY,
AS A FIERCE BATTLE UNFOLDS
BEFORE HIM.

STILL THE
MEANINGLESS FIGHT
RAGES, WREAKING TERRIBLE
HAVOC ON BOTH SIDES OF
THE RIVER. MUST MY REALM
BE FOREVER CURSED
BY SUCH MADNESS?

AND WOULD THAT
MY FORMER LOVE
JOLENA WERE NOT THE
LEADER OF ONE FACTION...
FOR HOW MAY I NOW IN-
TERVENE WITH ANY SEM-
BLANCE OF IMPARTIAL
JUSTICE?

IF ONLY MY SCOUT
CAN RETURN THROUGH
THE LINES OF COMBAT,
MAYHAP THERE WILL
BE SOME HOPE
FOR--

I COME WITH NEWS
OF MY SPYING, ALL-
FATHER! THE WAR HAS
BEEN CAUSED BY A
SCHEMING GROUP OF
CONSPIRATORS FROM
BOTH SIDES!

THEY ARE IN LEAGUE TO MANIPU-
LATE ENMITY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE
RIVER--AND HAVE TRIGGERED THE
CONFLICT, HOPING TO DRAW THEE
INTO IT!

ME?! THEY SEEK TO
INVOLVE ME PERSONALLY
IN THE STRIFE?! 4

AYE-- THUS COULD THEY MAKE A CASE OF THY CONTINUING LOVE FOR JOLENA AND THY INFIDELITY TO THY WIFE FRIGGA, THUS DISCREDITING THEE IN THE EYES OF ALL ASGARD.

BLASPHEMY! MY LOVE FOR FRIGGA IS TRUE!

AYE, ALL-FATHER, BUT THE TRUTH RESIDES IN THY HEART ALONE.

"...AND FAILING IN THEIR ORIGINAL SCHEME, THEY HOPE THE CONFLICT WILL ESCALATE UNTIL THY ARMY-- NOT JUST THEE-- IS INVOLVED..."

"... THEREBY LEAVING THE PALACE ROYAL OPEN AND UNGUARDED FOR SWIFT USURPATION."

THEN... BY MY HIGH STATION I AM THWARTED!

TO ACT IS FOLLY... AND TO HOLD MY ACTIONS, WORSE.

THERE IS NO WAY FOR ME TO WIN... NO WAY TO DO ANYTHING, WITHOUT LOSING.

AND EVEN AS ODIN SPEAKS WITH DARKENED HEART--

-- THOR'S JOURNEY ENDS ON THE RAINBOW BRIDGE BIFROST...

STAND ASIDE, HEIMDALL-- I MEAN TO ENTER WITH PRISONER AND COMPANIONS.

AND I TELL THEE AGAIN, THOR-- MORTALS ARE DENIED ENTRANCE TO ASGARD WITHOUT ODIN'S LEAVE...

... AND SINCE THY MENAGERIE ARE PART-MORTAL--!

* THE FIRST TIME WAS LAST ISSUE.

AYE-- BUT I MEAN TO BREAK THE RULE THIS TIME, GOOD HEIMDALL! THE PROBLEM VEXING ME HAS GONE ON TOO LONG, AND I MEAN TO SOLVE IT IN DIRECT PETITION TO ODIN...

... WHEREVER ODIN MAY BE-- IN HIS PALACE, OR IN THE HINTERLANDS EMBROILED IN SOME MISGUIDED WAR!



AS GUARDIAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE LEADING TO SHINING ASGARD, I MUST DENY THY INTENTIONS!

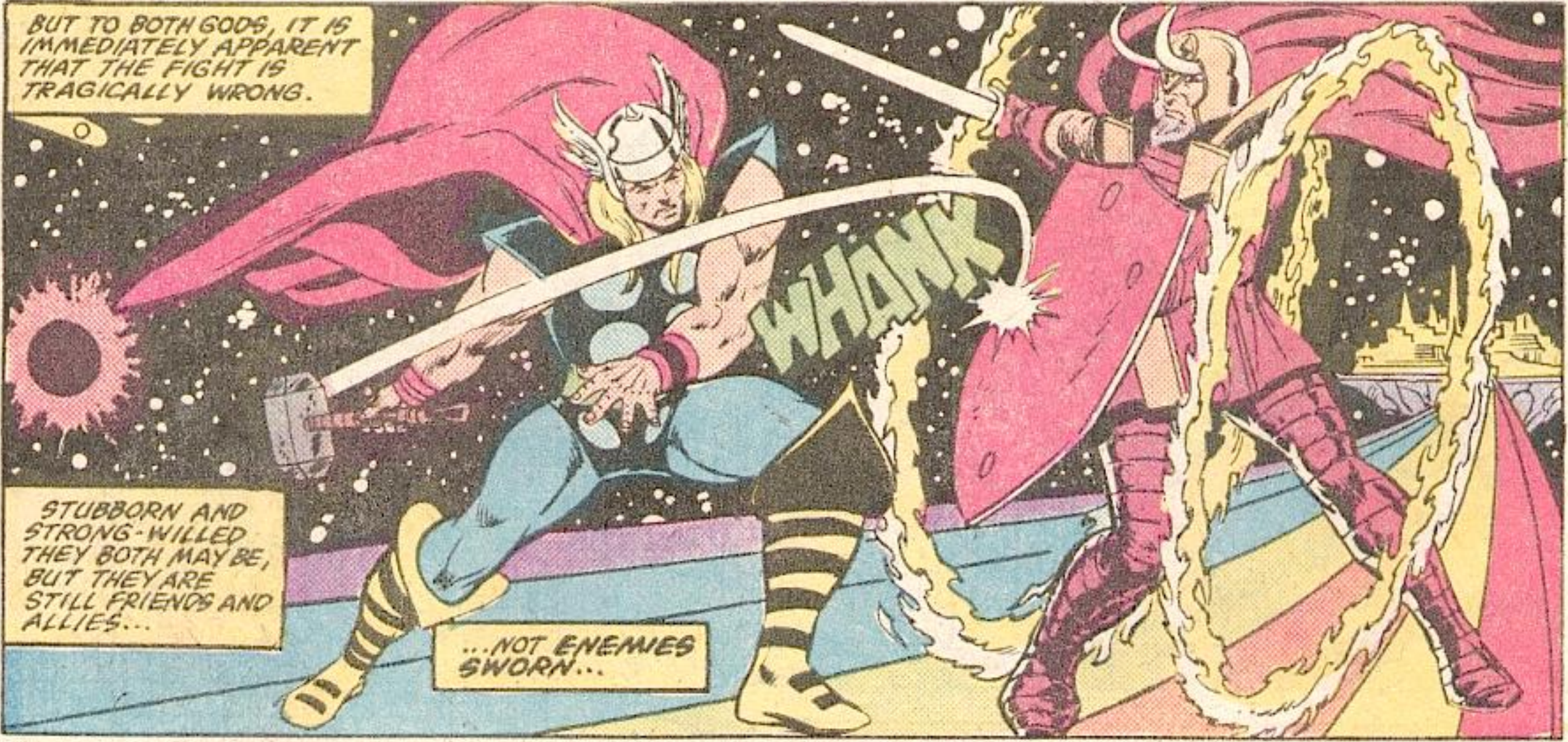
ASIDE, I SAY, FOR THE LAST TIME, FRIEND HEIMDALL--



--LEST YE FORCE ME TO RAISE HAMMER 'GAINST THEE-- LIKE SO!

FRANK

SO BE IT, THUNDERER! IF THOU MUST FORCE US INTO BATTLE, THEN LET US FIGHT TILL THE STARS FALL FROM THE SKIES!

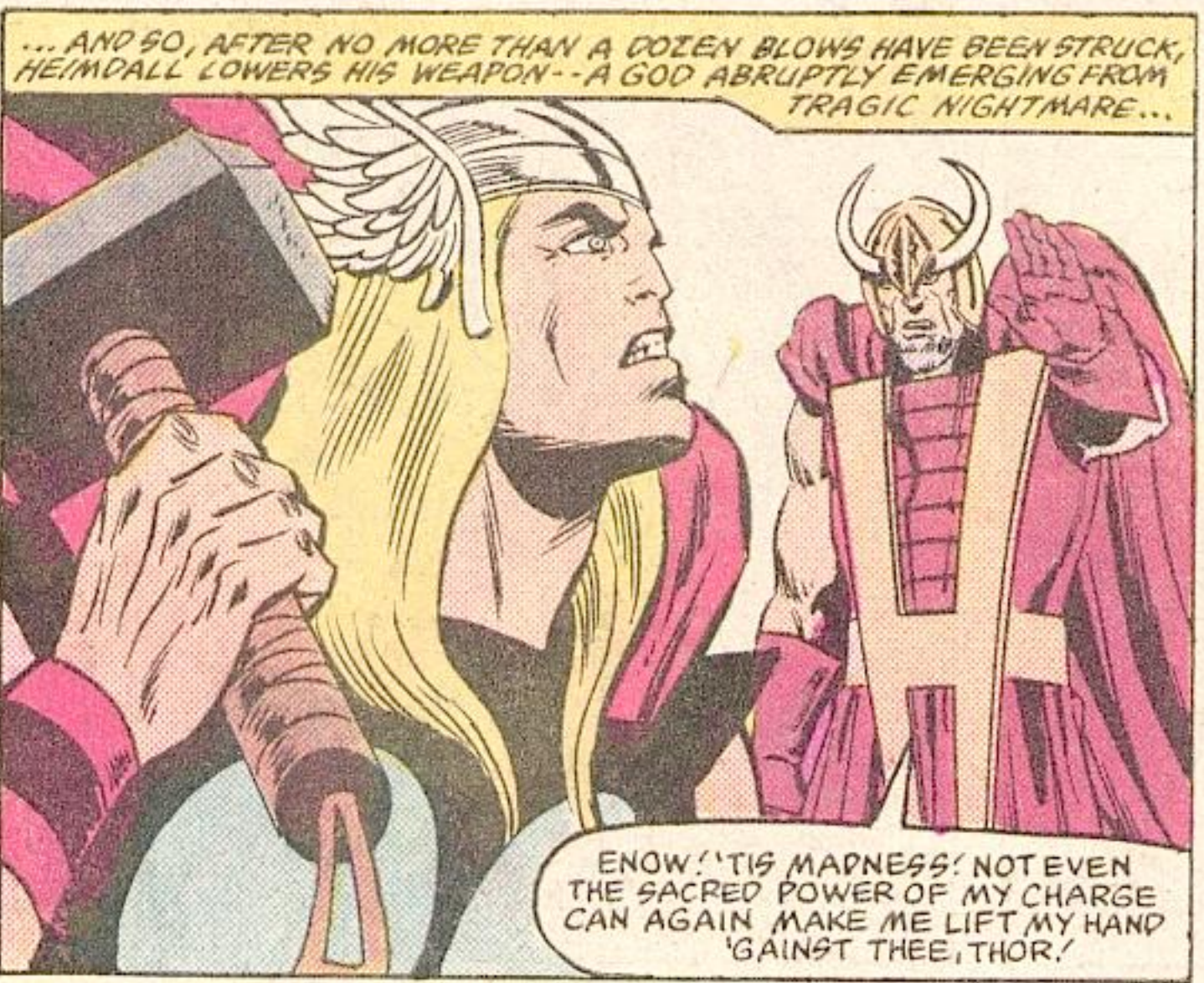


BUT TO BOTH GODS, IT IS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT THAT THE FIGHT IS TRAGICALLY WRONG.

WHANK

STUBBORN AND STRONG-WILLED THEY BOTH MAY BE, BUT THEY ARE STILL FRIENDS AND ALLIES...

...NOT ENEMIES SWORN...



... AND SO, AFTER NO MORE THAN A DOZEN BLOWS HAVE BEEN STRUCK, HEIMDALL LOWERS HIS WEAPON-- A GOD ABRUPTLY EMERGING FROM TRAGIC NIGHTMARE...

ENOW! 'TIS MADNESS! NOT EVEN THE SACRED POWER OF MY CHARGE CAN AGAIN MAKE ME LIFT MY HAND 'GAINST THEE, THOR!



PASS ON, THUNDERER, AND IF ODIN LOOKS UPON THY ACTION WITH DISPLEASURE, I WILL GLADLY BEAR THE BRUNT OF HIS WRATH...

... RATHER THAN PROLONG THIS FOLLY OF ARMS WITH THE NOBLE SCION OF ASGARD! 6

I THANK THEE, FRIEND HEIMDALL--

-- AND I BID THEE USE THY HORN TO SUMMON JAILERS, THAT THEY MAY TAKE MY PRISONER FARBAUTI INTO CHARGE.

'Twill BE DONE, THUNDERER.

DEEP WITHIN ASGARD, A LULL IN THE FIGHTING OCCURS WHILE SURVIVORS RETREAT TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDES OF THE RIVER, THERE TO LICK THEIR WOUNDS...

BUT THERE BE NO HONOR IN THIS WAR-- AND THE REWARD BEYOND WILL ECHO BOTH HOLLOW AND MOCKING! 'TIS A TRAVESTY MOST PROFANE-- AND AN END MUST BE PUT TO IT 'BUT... HOW--?

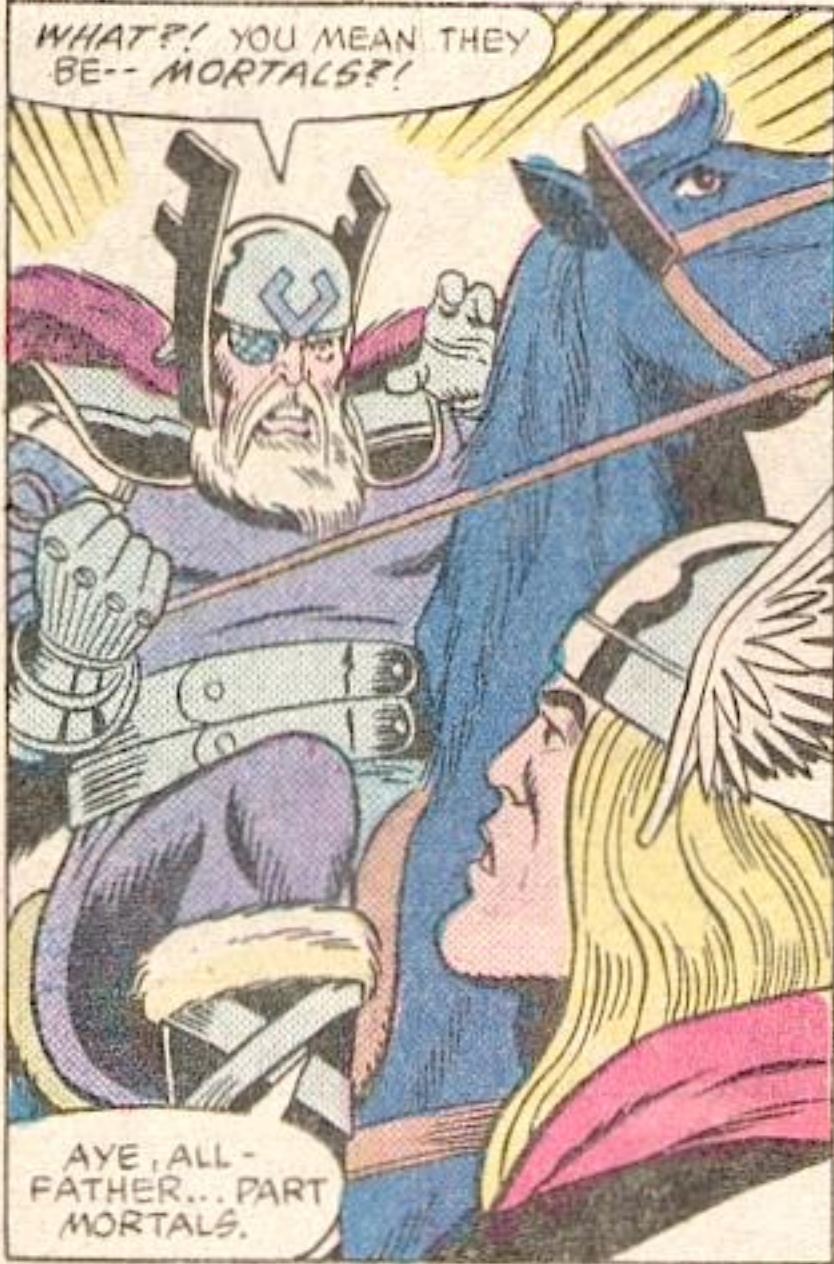
MAYHAP I CAN GIVE THEE AID, MY FATHER...

...AND THE WRAITHLIKE VALKYRIES DESCEND ON THE DEAD AND THE DYING, WHISPERING OF THE SWEET LIFE WAITING BEYOND IN VALHALLA...

THOR-- ?! HERE? BUT I THOUGHT THY HEART NOW BELONGED TO MIDGARD.

'TIS ABOUT MIDGARD I'VE COME TO SPEAK. THESE... BEINGS IN MY COMPANY REPRESENT THE ANCIENT MENAGERIE OF FARBAUTI THE CRUEL-STRIKER, HE WHO WAS ONCE CALLED RIMTHURSAR.

THEY HAVE USURPED THE FORMS OF FIVE MORTALS ON MIDGARD AND--



WHAT?! YOU MEAN THEY BE-- MORTALS?!

AYE, ALL-FATHER... PART MORTALS.



AND THOU DARED USHER THEM TO THE REALM ETERNAL WITHOUT MY LEAVE?!

AWAY WITH THEE-- I SHALL DEAL WITH THY INSOLENT PERFDY LATER! FOR THE NONCE, I HAVE TROUBLES ENOW OF MY OWN!



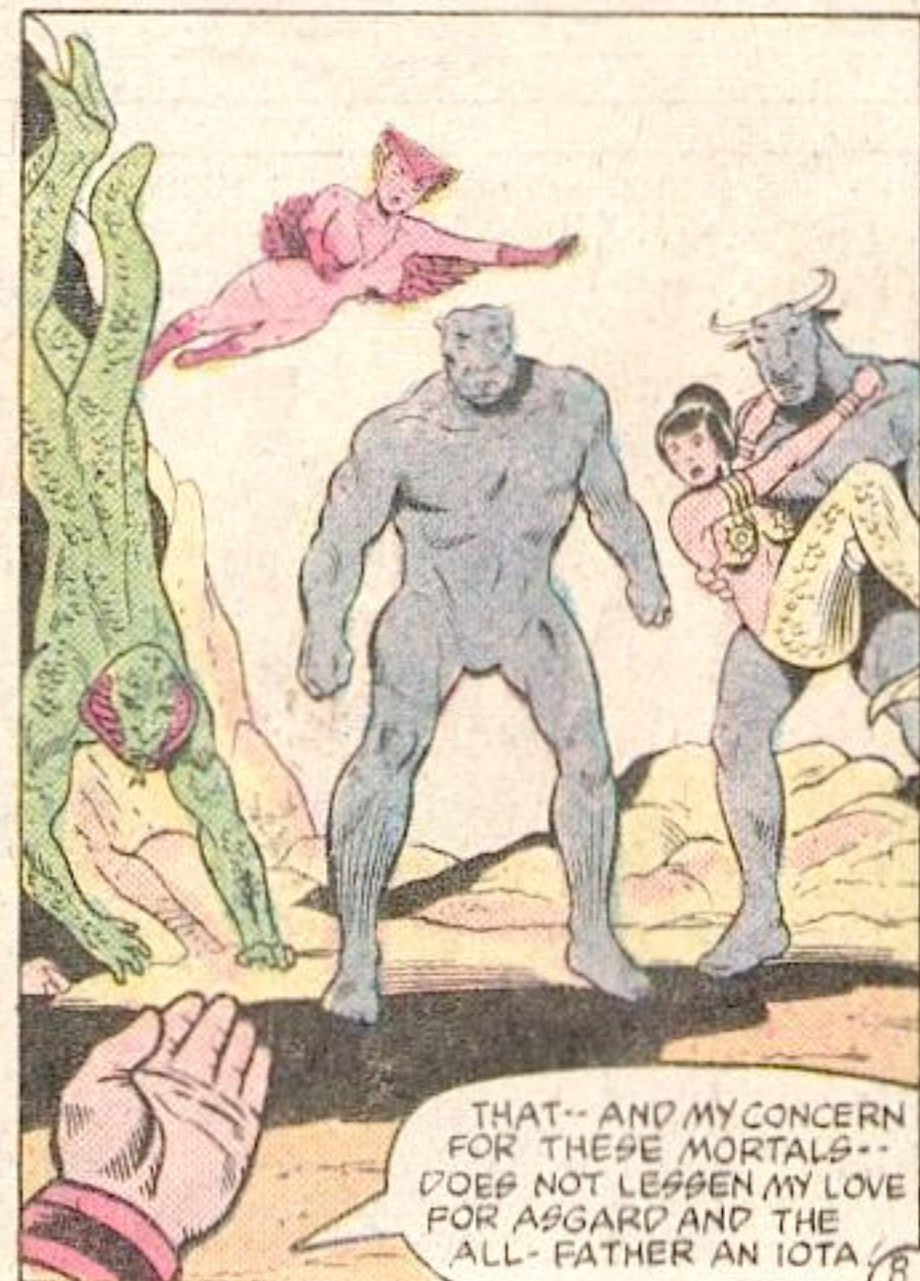
WHAT TROUBLES, MY FATHER?

AWAY WITH THEE!!

NAY-- IF MY FATHER IS BESET WITH TROUBLES I MUST KNOW OF IT!



THOUGH I HAVE CHOSEN TO MAKE MY HOME ON MIDGARD...



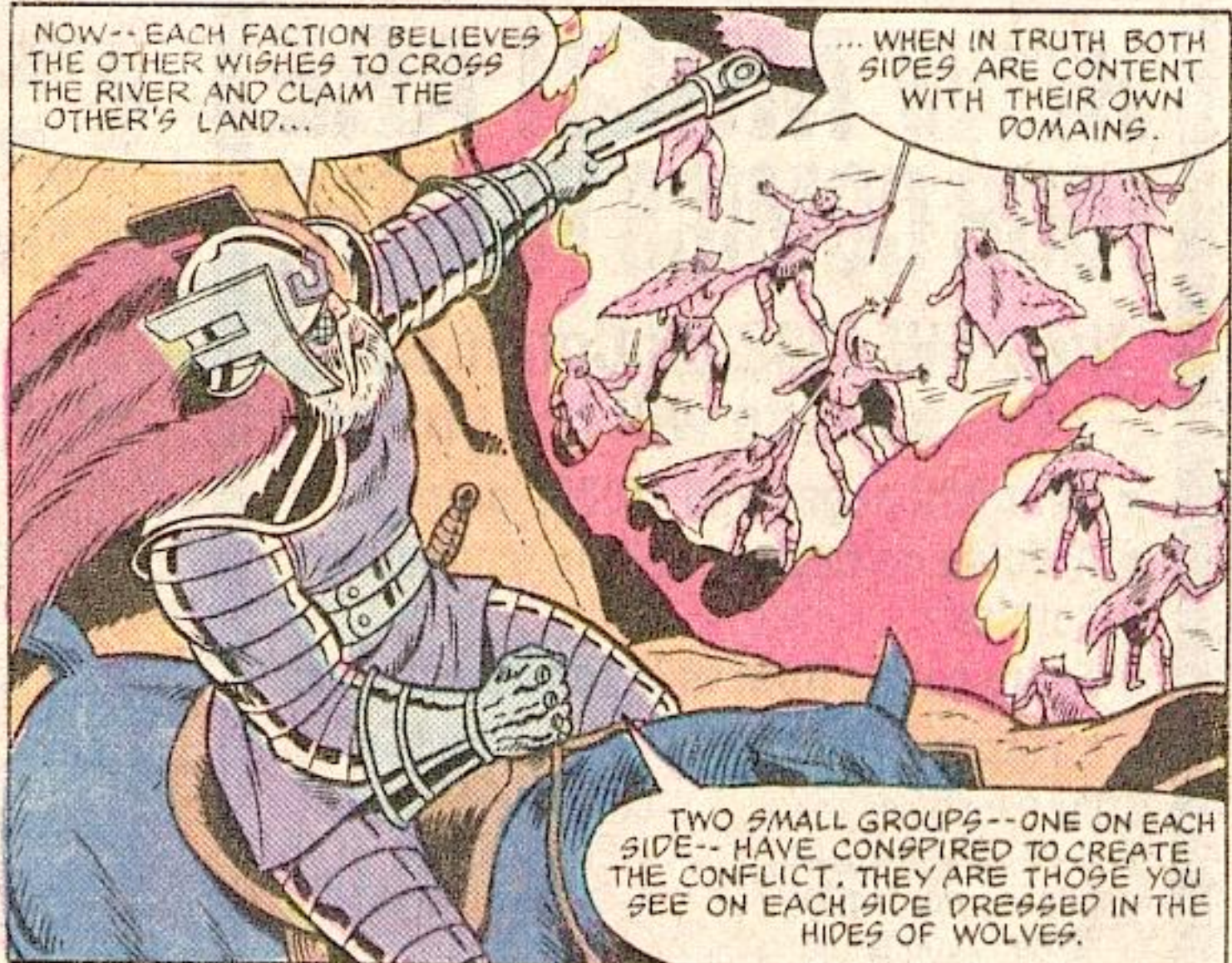
THAT-- AND MY CONCERN FOR THESE MORTALS-- DOES NOT LESSEN MY LOVE FOR ASSGARD AND THE ALL-FATHER AN IOTA



I BEG THEE, FATHER -- TELL ME! MAYHAP I CAN AID!

RISE. I COULD NEVER LONG HOLD IRE TOWARD MY FAVORED SON...

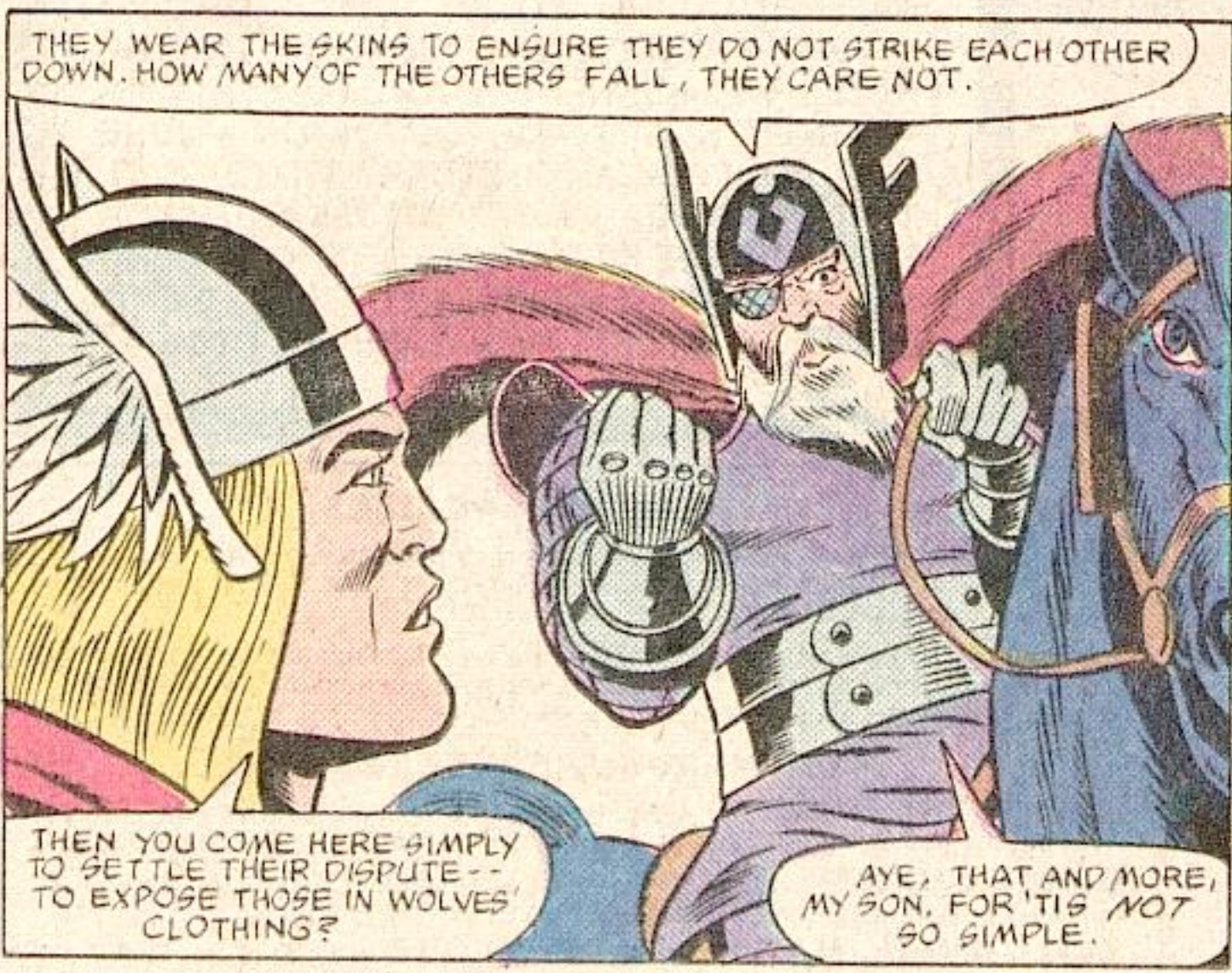
BUT I WARN THEE, THOR -- I'LL NOT FORGIVE THIS MATTER OF THE TRESPASSING MORTALS!



NOW -- EACH FACTION BELIEVES THE OTHER WISHES TO CROSS THE RIVER AND CLAIM THE OTHER'S LAND...

... WHEN IN TRUTH BOTH SIDES ARE CONTENT WITH THEIR OWN DOMAINS.

TWO SMALL GROUPS -- ONE ON EACH SIDE -- HAVE CONSPIRED TO CREATE THE CONFLICT. THEY ARE THOSE YOU SEE ON EACH SIDE DRESSED IN THE HIDES OF WOLVES.



THEY WEAR THE SKINS TO ENSURE THEY DO NOT STRIKE EACH OTHER DOWN. HOW MANY OF THE OTHERS FALL, THEY CARE NOT.

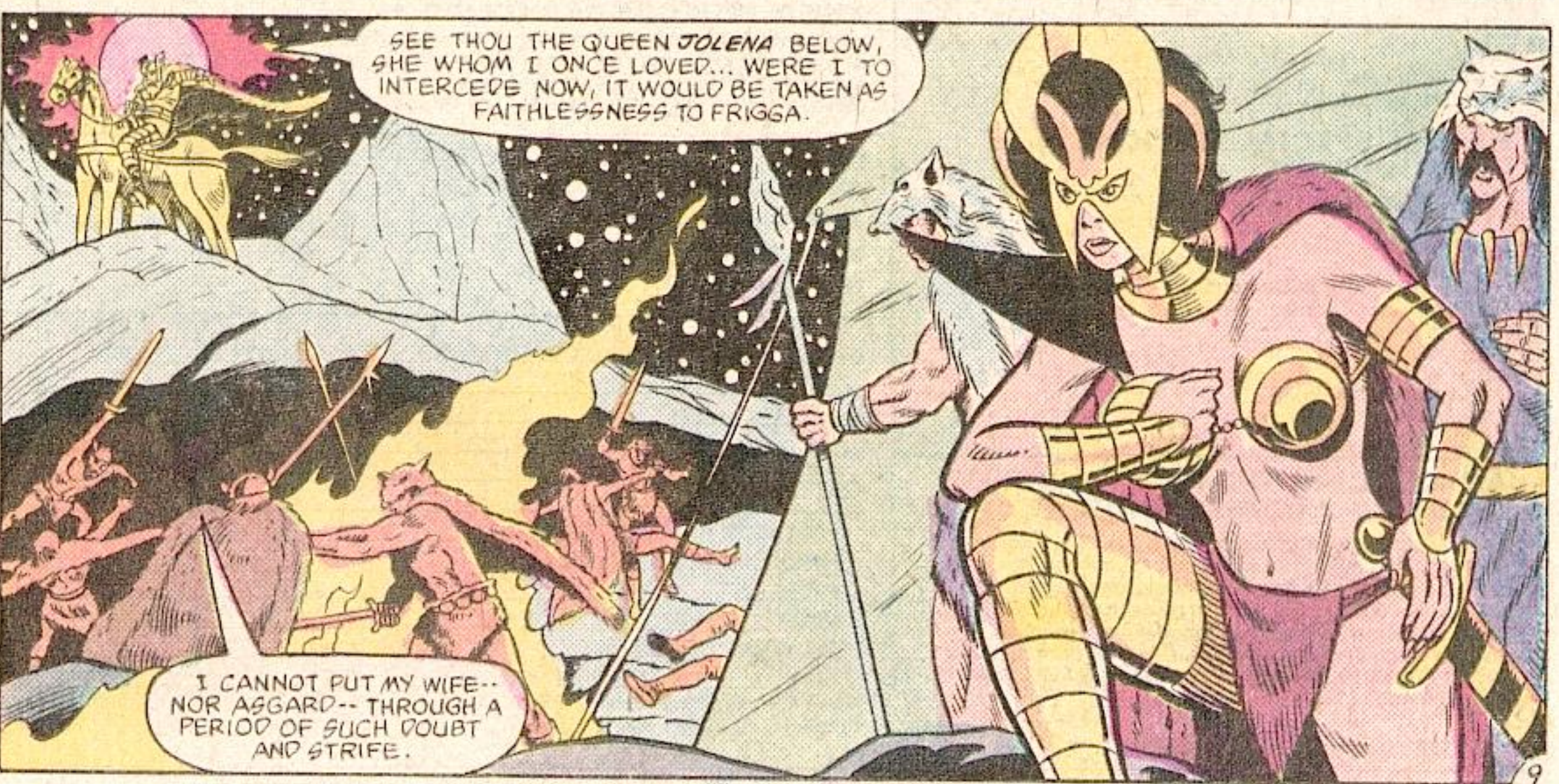
THEN YOU COME HERE SIMPLY TO SETTLE THEIR DISPUTE -- TO EXPOSE THOSE IN WOLVES' CLOTHING?

AYE, THAT AND MORE, MY SON. FOR 'TIS NOT SO SIMPLE.



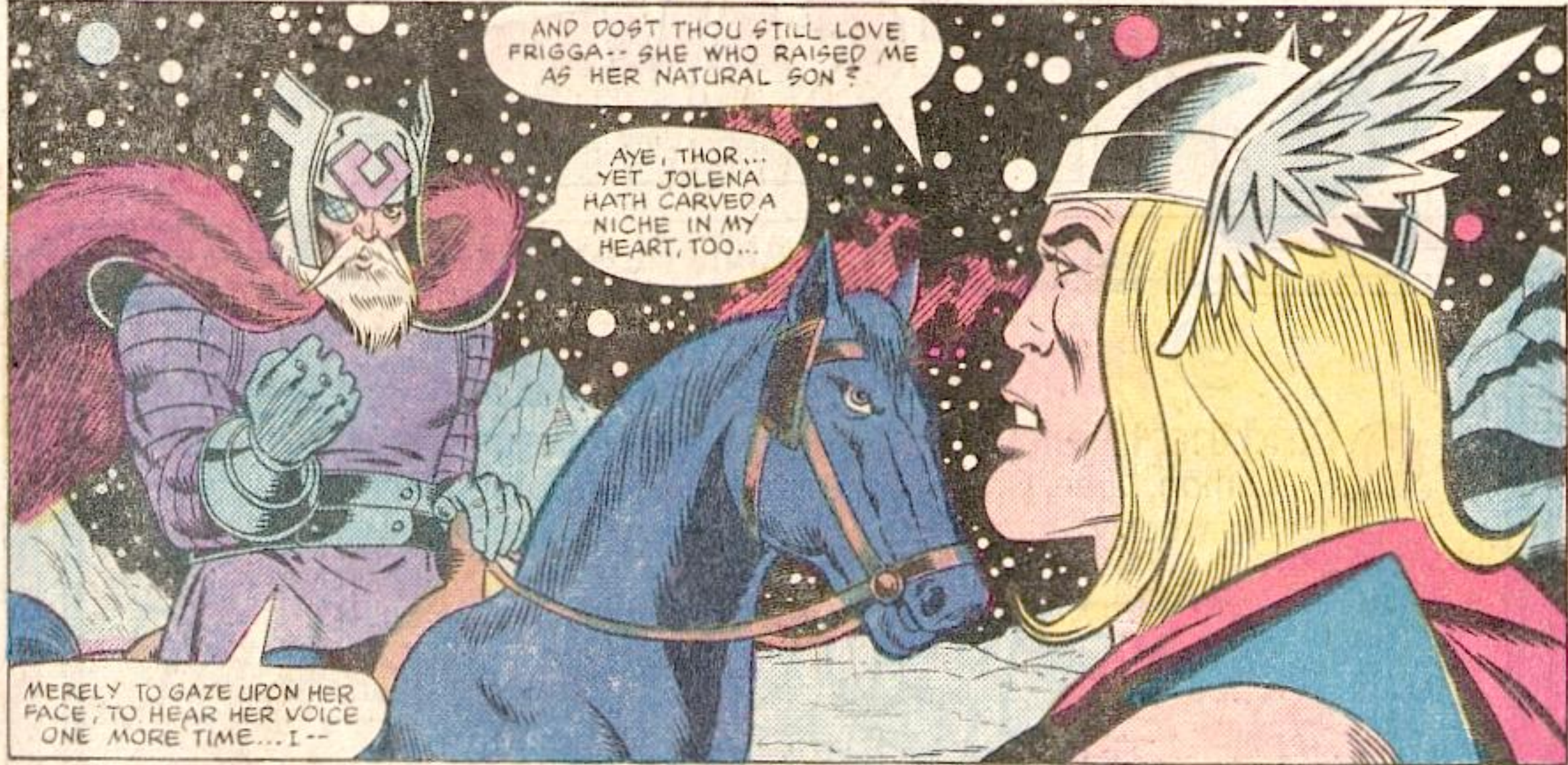
I COULD USE MY VAST POWERS TO FORCE THEM TO HALT THEIR BATTLE... BUT WERE I TO ENTER THE FRAY, IT WOULD SPELL VICTORY FOR THE WOLF-WARRIORS.

BUT WHY, FATHER?



SEE THOU THE QUEEN JOLENA BELOW, SHE WHOM I ONCE LOVED... WERE I TO INTERCEDE NOW, IT WOULD BE TAKEN AS FAITHLESSNESS TO FRIGGA.

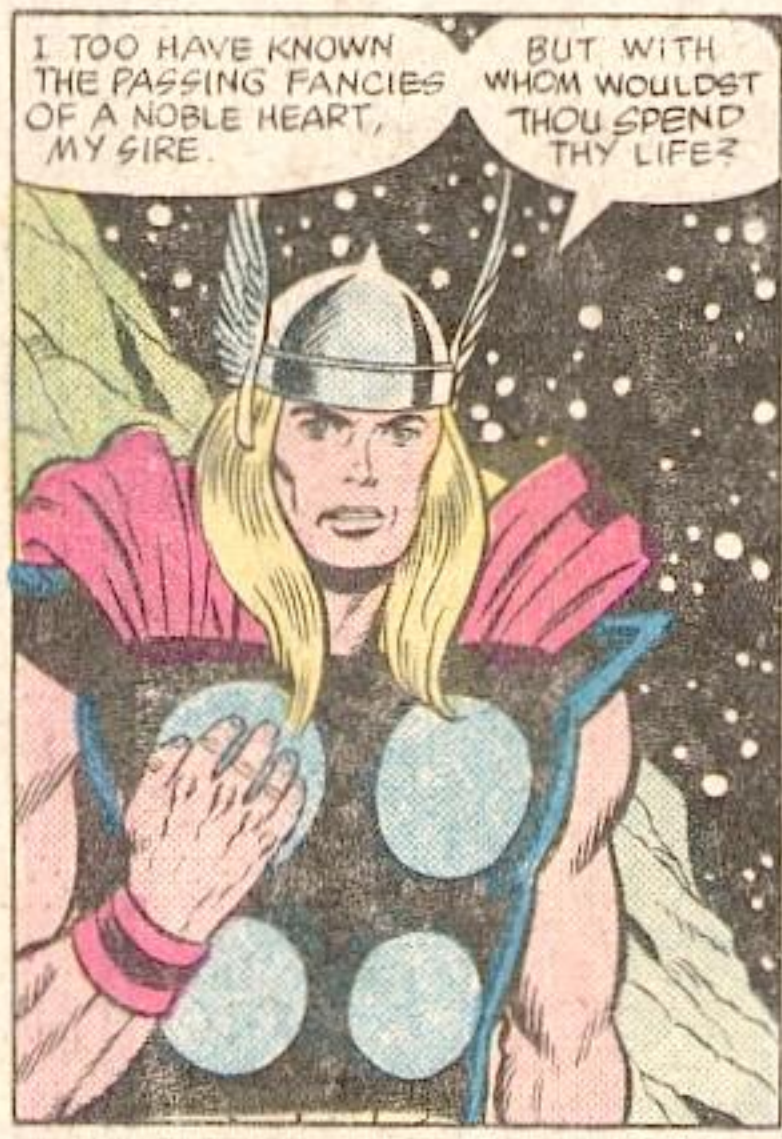
I CANNOT PUT MY WIFE -- NOR ASGARD -- THROUGH A PERIOD OF SUCH DOUBT AND STRIFE.



AND DOST THOU STILL LOVE FRIGGA-- SHE WHO RAISED ME AS HER NATURAL SON?

AYE, THOR... YET JOLENA HATH CARVED A NICHE IN MY HEART, TOO...

MERELY TO GAZE UPON HER FACE, TO HEAR HER VOICE ONE MORE TIME... I--



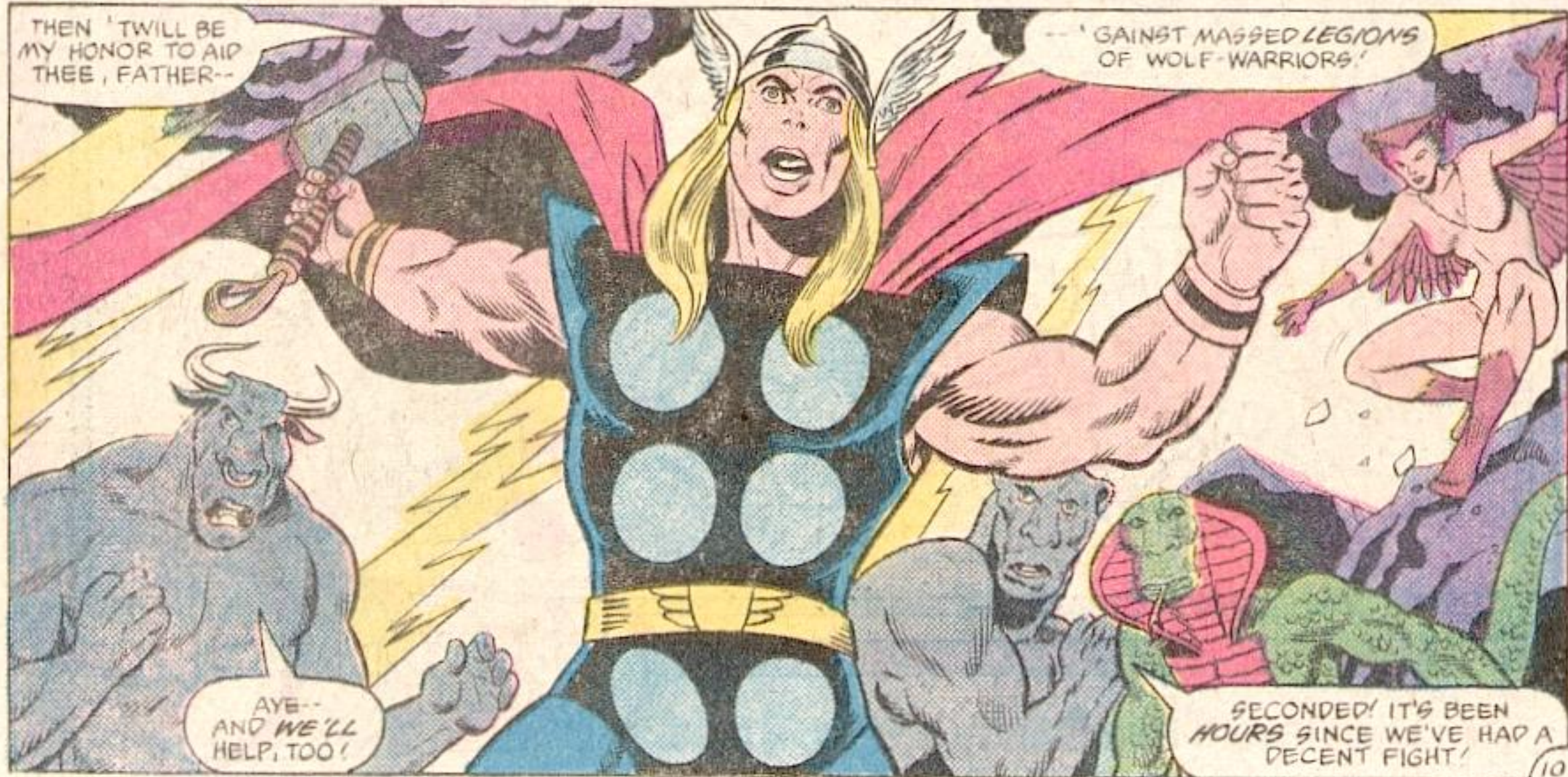
I TOO HAVE KNOWN THE PASSING FANCIES OF A NOBLE HEART, MY SIRE.

BUT WITH WHOM WOULDST THOU SPEND THY LIFE?



THE CHOICE WAS MADE LONG AGO, MY SON...

... AND I DID CHOOSE... FRIGGA.

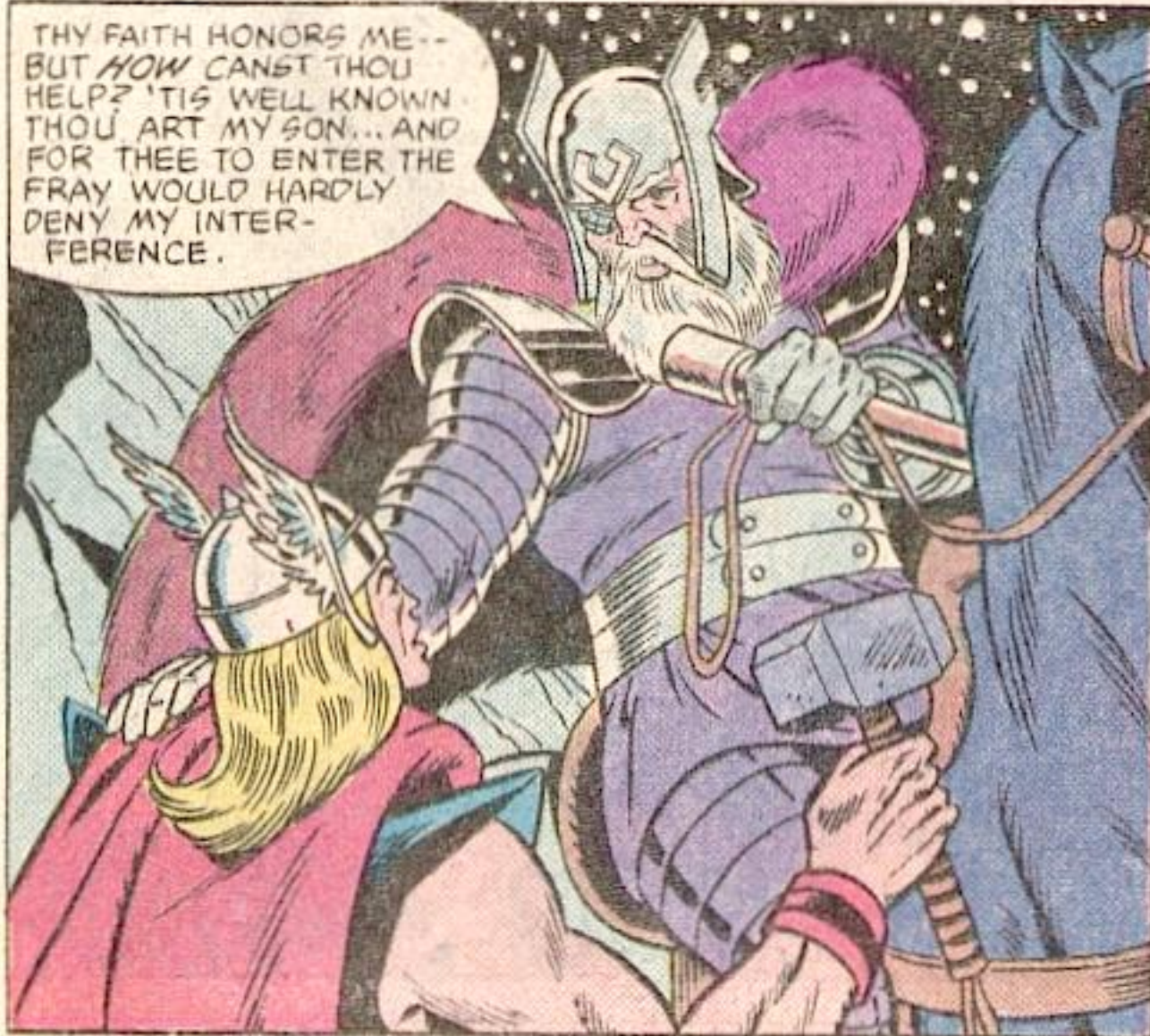


THEN 'T WILL BE MY HONOR TO AID THEE, FATHER--

-- 'GAINST MASSES LEGIONS OF WOLF-WARRIORS!

AYE-- AND WE'LL HELP, TOO!

SECONDED! IT'S BEEN HOURS SINCE WE'VE HAD A DECENT FIGHT!



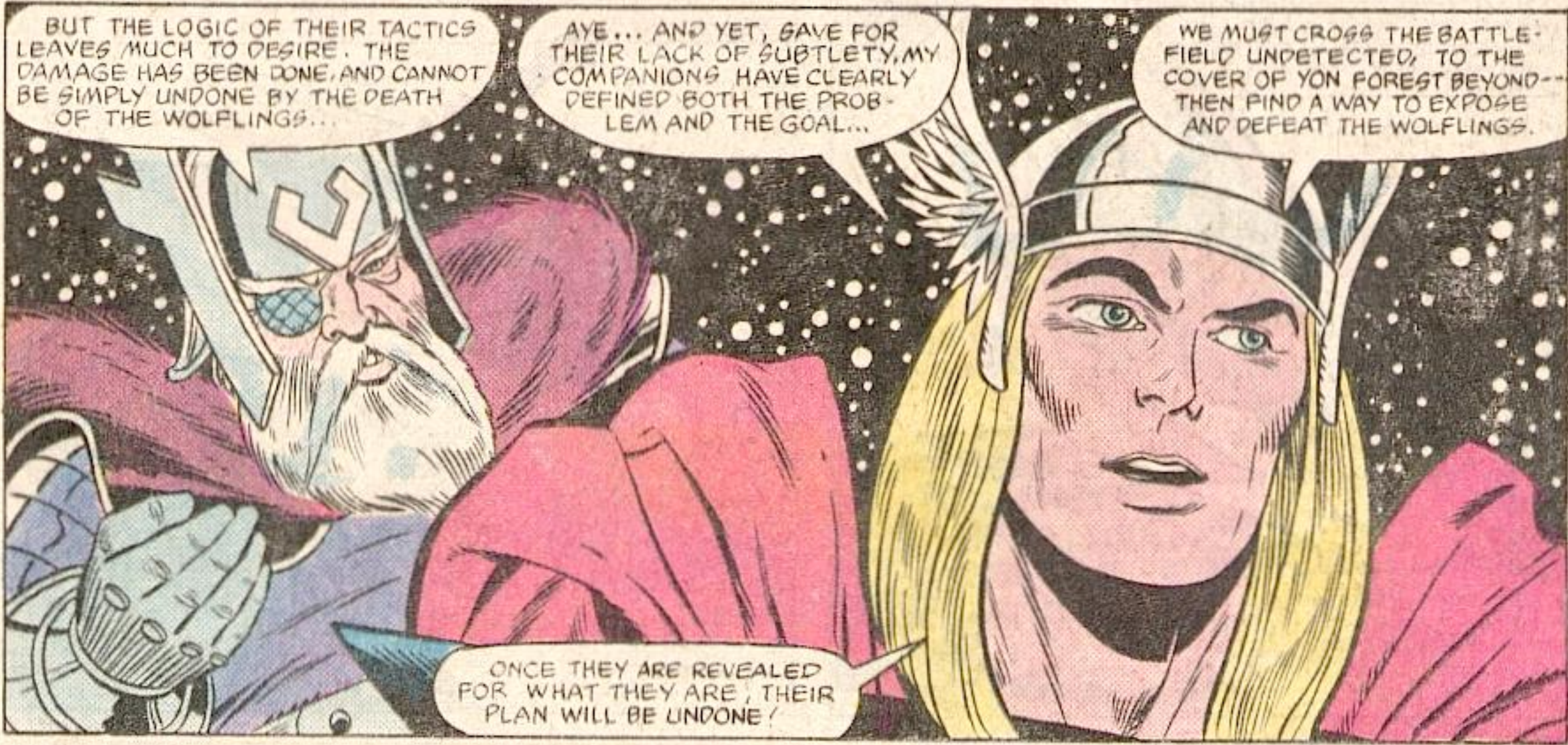
THY FAITH HONORS ME-- BUT HOW CANST THOU HELP? 'TIS WELL KNOWN THOU ART MY SON... AND FOR THEE TO ENTER THE FRAY WOULD HARDLY DENY MY INTER-FERENCE.



THEN LET US CLEAR THE RIVER OF BLOOD-- BY CRUSHING EVERY WOLFLING WARRIOR IN SIGHT!

THE ZEAL OF THY COMPANIONS IS ADMIRABLE, THOR--

-- INDEED WONDROUS FOR THOSE WHO TRULY BE MORTALS.



BUT THE LOGIC OF THEIR TACTICS LEAVES MUCH TO DESIRE. THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE, AND CANNOT BE SIMPLY UNDONE BY THE DEATH OF THE WOLFLINGS...

AYE... AND YET, GAVE FOR THEIR LACK OF SUBTLETY, MY COMPANIONS HAVE CLEARLY DEFINED BOTH THE PROBLEM AND THE GOAL...

WE MUST CROSS THE BATTLE-FIELD UNDETECTED, TO THE COVER OF YON FOREST BEYOND-- THEN FIND A WAY TO EXPOSE AND DEFEAT THE WOLFLINGS.

ONCE THEY ARE REVEALED FOR WHAT THEY ARE, THEIR PLAN WILL BE UNDONE!



KYRIE--CANST THOU PROVIDE A DISTRACTION?

AYE-- WITH FAIRGOLD'S HELP.



YOU ENTER THE RIVER, FAIRGOLD, AND ONCE I FLY OVER YOUR SHADOW, RELEASE THE MAGIC OF YOUR GOLDEN SCALES.

OF COURSE, KYRIE-- I'D DO ANYTHING FOR HANDSOME THOR!



THEY BEGIN A NEW CLASH IN EARNEST! IF EVER THY BOLD SCHEME IS TO BE LAUNCHED, THE TIME IS NOW, ERE MORE LIVES ARE NEEDLESSLY LOST!

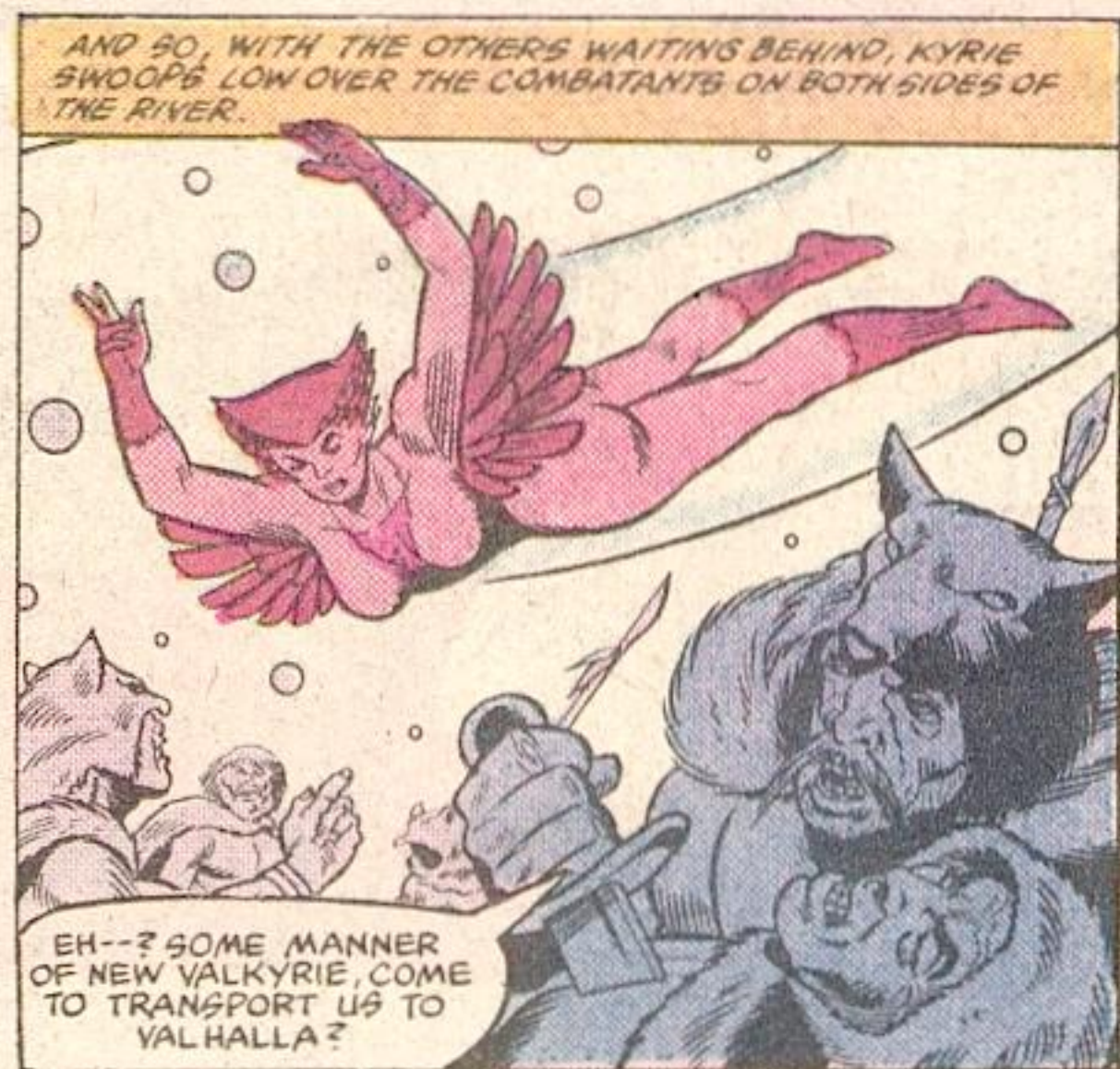
AYE! COME, FAIRGOLD-- THOU ART THE FIRST TO BEGIN.

IF I AM TO GO WITH THEE, THOR, I HOPE IT NEVER ENDS.



BUT AFTER MERE MOMENTS OF ECSTASY IN THOR'S BRAWNY ARMS, THE MERMAID OF THE GOLDEN SCALES IS DEPOSITED FAR UPRIVER...

START THE OTHERS, THOR-- I SHALL COMPLETE THE DOWNRIVER SWIM TO THE BATTLEFIELD IN A TWINKLING.



AND SO, WITH THE OTHERS WAITING BEHIND, KYRIE SWOOPS LOW OVER THE COMBATANTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER.

EH--? SOME MANNER OF NEW VALKYRIE, COME TO TRANSPORT US TO VALHALLA?



NAY-- THOUGH MY NAME IS INDEED KYRIE, I KNOW NOTHING OF LIFE BEYOND IN VALHALLA...

RATHER, I AM THE KEEPER OF WEALTH AND HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE!



VEERING OVER THE RIVER, SHE MAKES A DRAMATIC GESTURE WHICH IS IN FACT NO MORE THAN A SIGNAL TO WAITING FAIRGOLD...

BEHOLD-- AS I CONVERT THY DISPUTED RIVER INTO A FLOWING RIBBON OF GOLD!

NOW FAIRGOLD-- NOW!

UNDERWATER, FAIRGOLD PLUCKS A GOLDEN SCALE FROM HER TAIL...



DO THY SORCERY, CHARM OF GOLD-- TO AID GOLDEN THOR HIMSELF!

AND, ABOVE...



GOLD! THE RIVER HAS TURNED TO GOLD!

INSTANTLY, THE FIGHTING COMES TO A HALT, WEAPONS FALLING FROM HANDS EAGER TO SIFT GLITTERING DUST FROM SHIMMERING WATER.



QUICKLY-- WE MAKE OUR STEALTHY MOVE NOW...

...WHILE THEY ARE TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH THEIR GREED AND THE ILLUSION OF GOLD TO NOTICE US!

USE THY HAMMER TO JOIN KYRIE, THOR-- WE CAN MAKE OUR OWN WAY!



TO THE FOREST, KYRIE-- AND THE SHELTER THERE-- IN!

AYE, BUT NO NEED FOR HASTE, THOR...

THE GREED DAZZLING THEIR EYES CLOAKS US IN INVISIBILITY.



AND YET...

THE TRUCE WAS A BRIEF ONE!

NOW THEY FIGHT WITH TOOTH AND NAIL OVER THE RIVER'S GOLD, RATHER THAN THE LAND BOUNDING ITS BANKS!

AYE, BUT THE DISTRACTION HAS WELL SERVED ITS PURPOSE-- THEY ARE STILL TOO PREOCCUPIED TO NOTICE US.

SOON, GATHERED ON THE RIVER IN THE FOREST...



NOW WHAT?

NOW, BORNA, WE WAIT... FOR--

"-- NIGHTFALL."



"GOLD"-- HAH! WHAT MANNER OF GOLD FADES AFTER BUT AN HOUR, LEAVING NOT EVEN DROSS?

AYE-- BUT WHAT WAS THE MEANING OF SUCH AN ILLUSION? THE HAND OF LOKI--OR SOME OTHER MAGICIAN? OR HAS ODIN FINALLY INTERCEDED, IN DEVI- OUS MANNER?



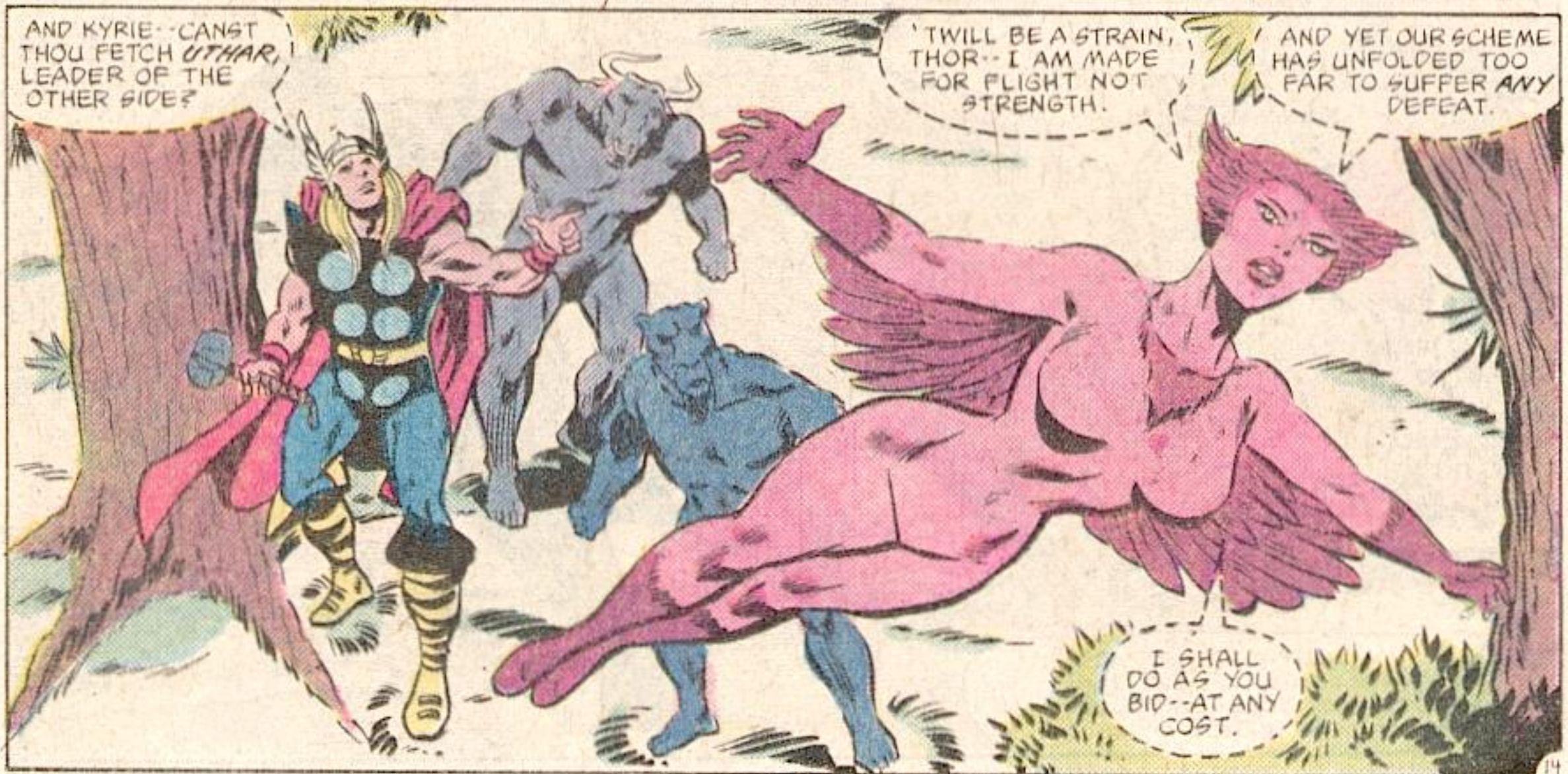
FOOL! THAT IS WHAT WE GO NOW TO DISCUSS WITH OUR FELLOW WOLFLINGS ON THE OTHER SIDE!

AND BE SILENT-- LEST WE ARE SPOTTED AND UNCOVERED AS CONSPIRATORS!



THIS IS OUR CHANCE! SLITHGARN--HIE THEE TO QUEEN JOLENA AND FETCH HER BACK TO THIS GATHERING OF WOLVES, THAT SHE MAY HEAR THEIR TREACHERY WITH HER OWN EARS.

DONE, THUNDERER!



AND KYRIE--CANST THOU FETCH UTHAR, LEADER OF THE OTHER SIDE?

'T WILL BE A STRAIN, THOR-- I AM MADE FOR FLIGHT NOT STRENGTH.

AND YET OUR SCHEME HAS UNFOLDED TOO FAR TO SUFFER ANY DEFEAT.

I SHALL DO AS YOU BID--AT ANY COST.

THE BEATING OF WINGS, A SUDDEN
BLOTTING OF STARS, AND--

UHN! 'TIS
EVEN HARDER
THAN I
IMAGINED!

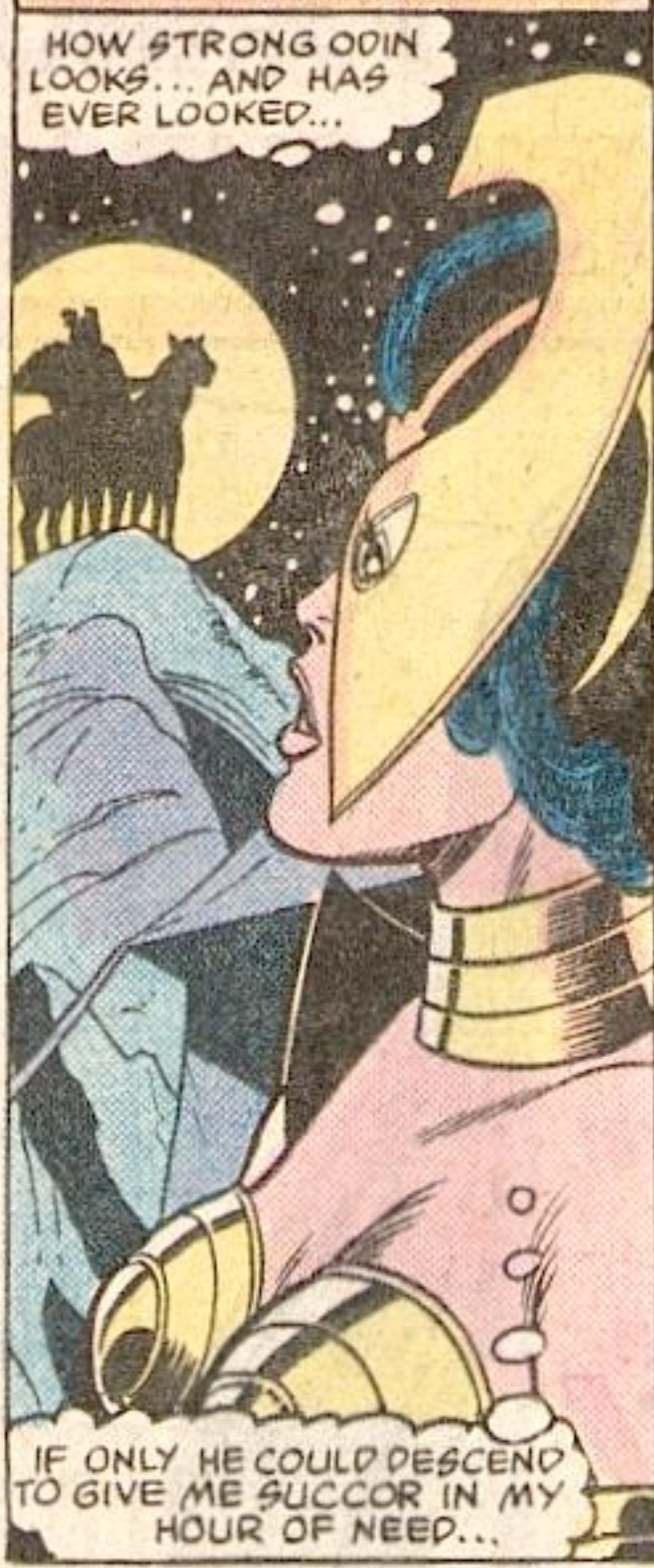


WHO--?!
PUT ME
DOWN!

PLEASE--YOU MUST
TRUST ME! I MEAN
THEE NO HARM AND
WOULD SAVE THY
MEN'S LIVES!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
RIVER, QUEEN JOLENA GAZES
AT THE SILHOUETTE LINED
ON THE HILL...

HOW STRONG ODIN
LOOKS... AND HAS
EVER LOOKED...



IF ONLY HE COULD DESCEND
TO GIVE ME SUCCOR IN MY
HOUR OF NEED...

WHO--?!

THE NAME IS
SLITHGARN,
MILADY, AND I
HAVE KNOWL-
EDGE FOR
THEE...



...IF YE DARE
PARTAKE OF IT.

FOLLOW ME-- THIS
WAY-- QUICKLY!



WARY, AND WITH
SWORD DRAWN,
JOLENA SUCCUMBS
TO THE MYSTERY...

AND IN A SECLUDED GLADE
NEARBY...

WE MUST IGNORE THE ILLUSION
OF GOLD... OR, BETTER YET,
WE SHALL RETURN TO JOLENA'S
FORCES AND BRAND IT A TRICK
CAUSED BY YOUR LEADER
UTHAR.



AND WE SHALL
RETURN TO UTHAR'S
MEN AND BLAME IT
ON JOLENA!

AYE-- AND IN THIS WAY, WE USE
THE HAPPENING TO ACTUALLY
FURTHER OUR COMMON CAUSE!

I... I DARE NOT
BELIEVE MINE EYES!
FULLY HALF OF YON
MEN BE IN MY
SERVICE--



-- AND YET THEY
CONSPIRE WITH MEN
FROM JOLENA'S
FORCES!

BUT HOW LONG MAY WE HOPE TO PROLONG THIS DECEPTION? SOONER OR LATER, EITHER JOLENA OR UTHAR WILL BEGIN TO SUSPECT...

THE FOUL VILLAINS! THEY BE IN LEAGUE!

I PROMISED THEE HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE, JOLENA.

AYE, AND NOW THAT IT IS MINE--

-- 'TIS TIME TO BRING IT INTO THE OPEN!

JOLENA!

AND UTHAR AS WELL! WE ARE UNDONE!

NAY-- NOT IF WE SLAY BOTH LEADERS BEFORE THEY CARRY THE NEWS TO THEIR MEN!

STAND FAST, WOLF-LINGS--

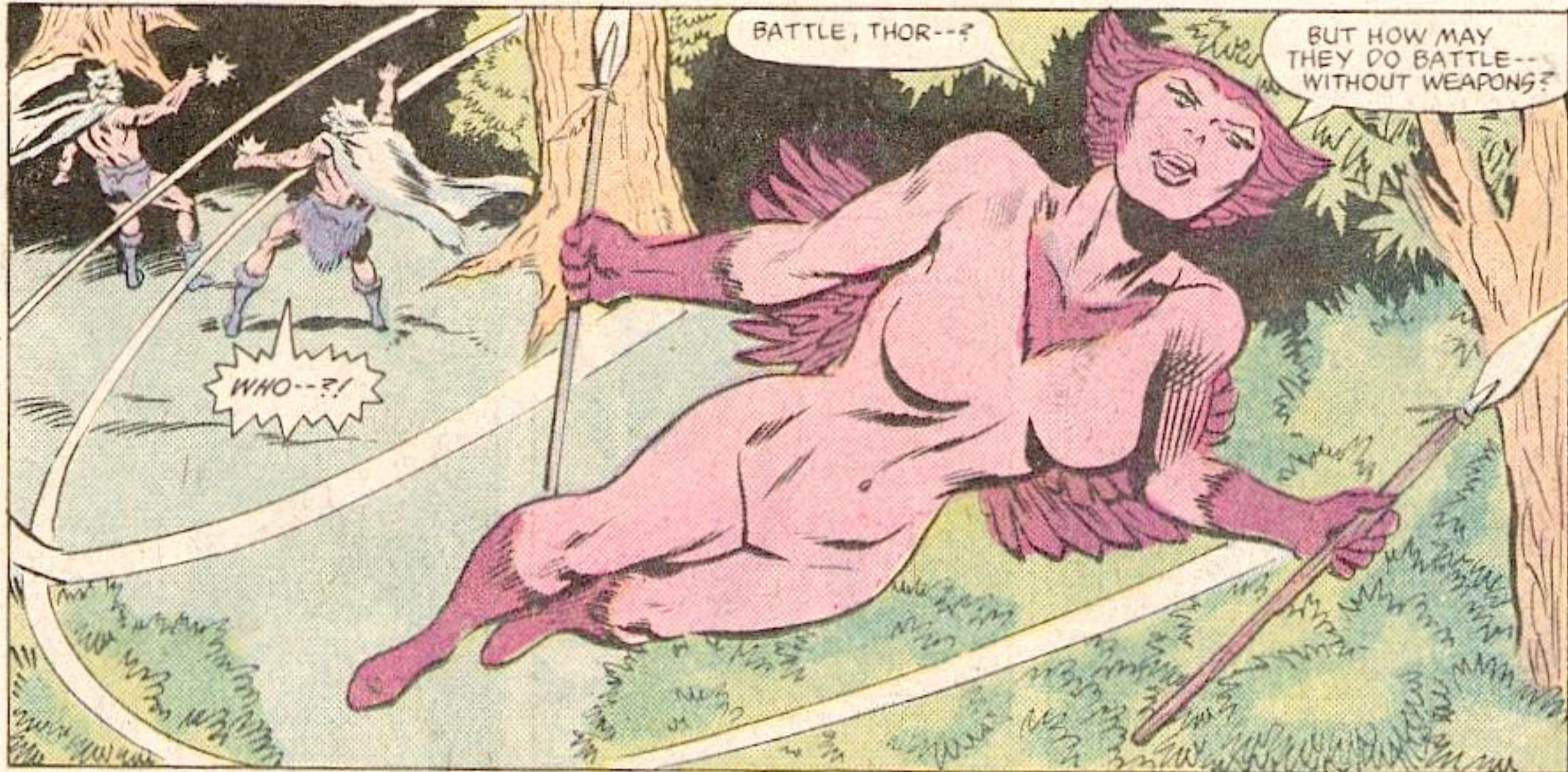
-- LEST YE BEAR THE BRUNT OF MJOLNIR'S MIGHT!

AT LAST! I BEGAN TO DESPAIR THAT OUR CUE WOULD NEVER SOUND!

YET, EVEN FACED WITH THE RIGHTEOUS MIEN OF THOR AND HIS MENAGERIE, THE WOLFLINGS CARRY OUT THEIR DESPERATE SURGE... UNTIL--

THOOM!

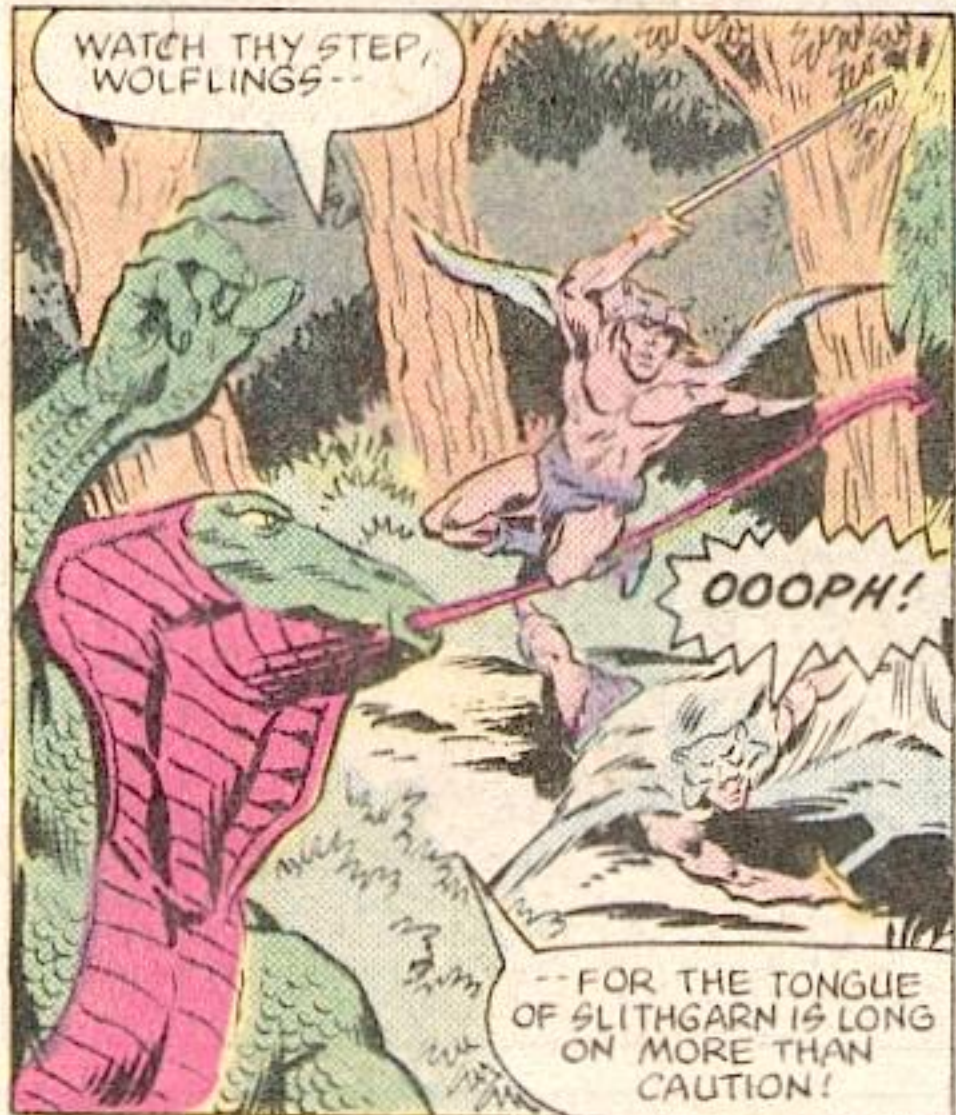
NOW, COMRADES-- NOW MAY YE SATE THY THIRST FOR BATTLE!



BATTLE, THOR--?

BUT HOW MAY THEY DO BATTLE-- WITHOUT WEAPONS?

WHO--?!



WATCH THY STEP, WOLFLINGS--

OOOPH!

-- FOR THE TONGUE OF SLITHGARN IS LONG ON MORE THAN CAUTION!

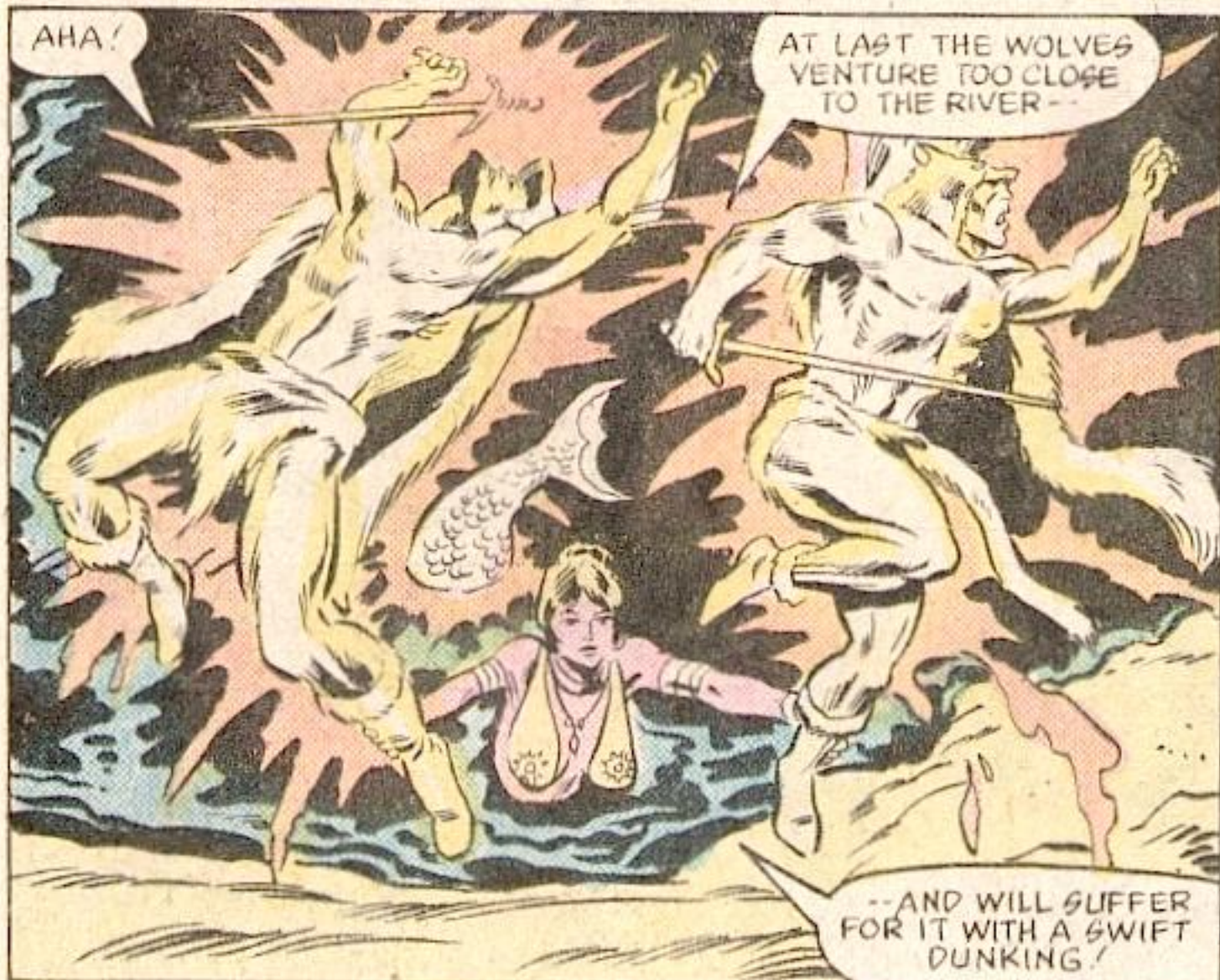


WE'VE LOST NO LOVE IN THE PAST, GRULT--

BASH

-- BUT FOR ONCE OUR FURY WORKS IN TANDEM.

AYE, BORNA-- MAYHAP THOU ART NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL!



AHA!

AT LAST THE WOLVES VENTURE TOO CLOSE TO THE RIVER--

-- AND WILL SUFFER FOR IT WITH A SWIFT DUNKING!



AND FINALLY, AS THE SOUNDS OF RAGE FADE TO WEAK MOANS...

DID WE DO WELL, THOR?

AYE, FAIRGOLD-- LIKE WARRIORS BORN!

AND WHEN THE DEFEATED WOLF-LINGS HAVE BEEN DRAGGED ONTO THE BATTLEFIELD, JOLENA AND UTHAR ADDRESS THEIR MEN...

THESE ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE SELFISHLY DECEIVED US, CAUSING A WAR WITHOUT REASON!



AYE-- QUEEN JOLENA SPEAKS THE TRUTH!

OUR DISPUTE HATH BEEN MANUFACTURED AND MANIPULATED BY THOSE IN THE GUISE OF WOLVES-- AND HAVE NOW BEEN EXPOSED BY THESE FIVE MAGICAL BEINGS AND BY THOR, SON OF BELOVED ODIN!



LAY DOWN THY ARMS, IN PEACE!

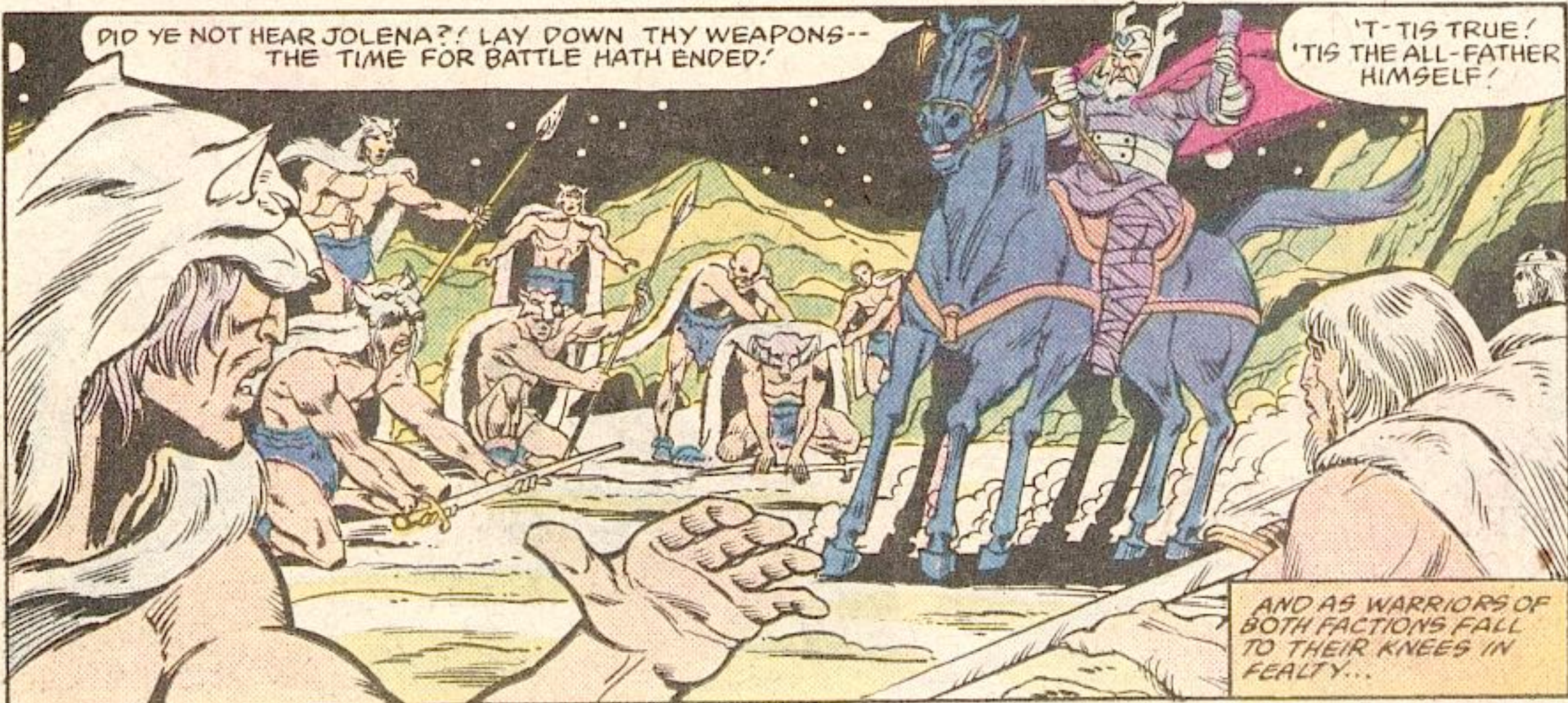
BUT... CAN IT BE TRUE--?

NEVER WAS A TRUTH MORE RINGINGLY TOLD...



DID YE NOT HEAR JOLENA?! LAY DOWN THY WEAPONS-- THE TIME FOR BATTLE HATH ENDED!

'T-TIS TRUE! 'TIS THE ALL-FATHER HIMSELF!



AND AS WARRIORS OF BOTH FACTIONS FALL TO THEIR KNEES IN FEALTY...

JOLENA...

AYE, MY LOVE-- I AM HERE.



THEN APPROACH ME, FAIR QUEEN-- FOR THE TROUBLE, AT LAST, IS ENDED.

AND AT THE SIGHT OF SUCH TENDERNESS, A GASP OF NEAR-HORROR ESCAPES FROM THE KNEELING WARRIORS...



HEAR ME, WARRIORS OF THE HINTERLANDS! YOU KNOW MY POWER IS VAST! SO IS MY LOVE! AND, LIKE ANY GOD, I MAY LOVE MORE THAN ONE WOMAN-- BUT HEED THIS WELL ...



THE FACT THAT I SHOW A TRACE OF MY FORMER LOVE FOR JOLENA DOES NOT MAKE ME UNFAITHFUL TO FRIGGA! IT MERELY MAKES ME... FALLIBLE.

INDEED I HAVE EVEN LIED. I TOLD THEE I WOULD NOT FORGIVE THY TRANSGRESSION, THOR, AND YET... WHAT ELSE MAY I NOW DO? THOU HAST VALIANTLY AIDED ME IN MY TROUBLES...



SO WHAT, THEN WAS THY TROUBLE WITH THESE MORTALS WHICH CAUSED THEE TO PETITION ME?

THEY WISH TO BE RESTORED FULLY TO THEIR TRUE MORTAL FORMS.



CAN THIS BE TRUE? THEY WOULD FORFEIT THEIR MAGICAL FORMS AND POWERS FOR THE DULL LIVES OF MORTALS?

TO THEIR EVERLASTING CREDIT, THERE IS BUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION...

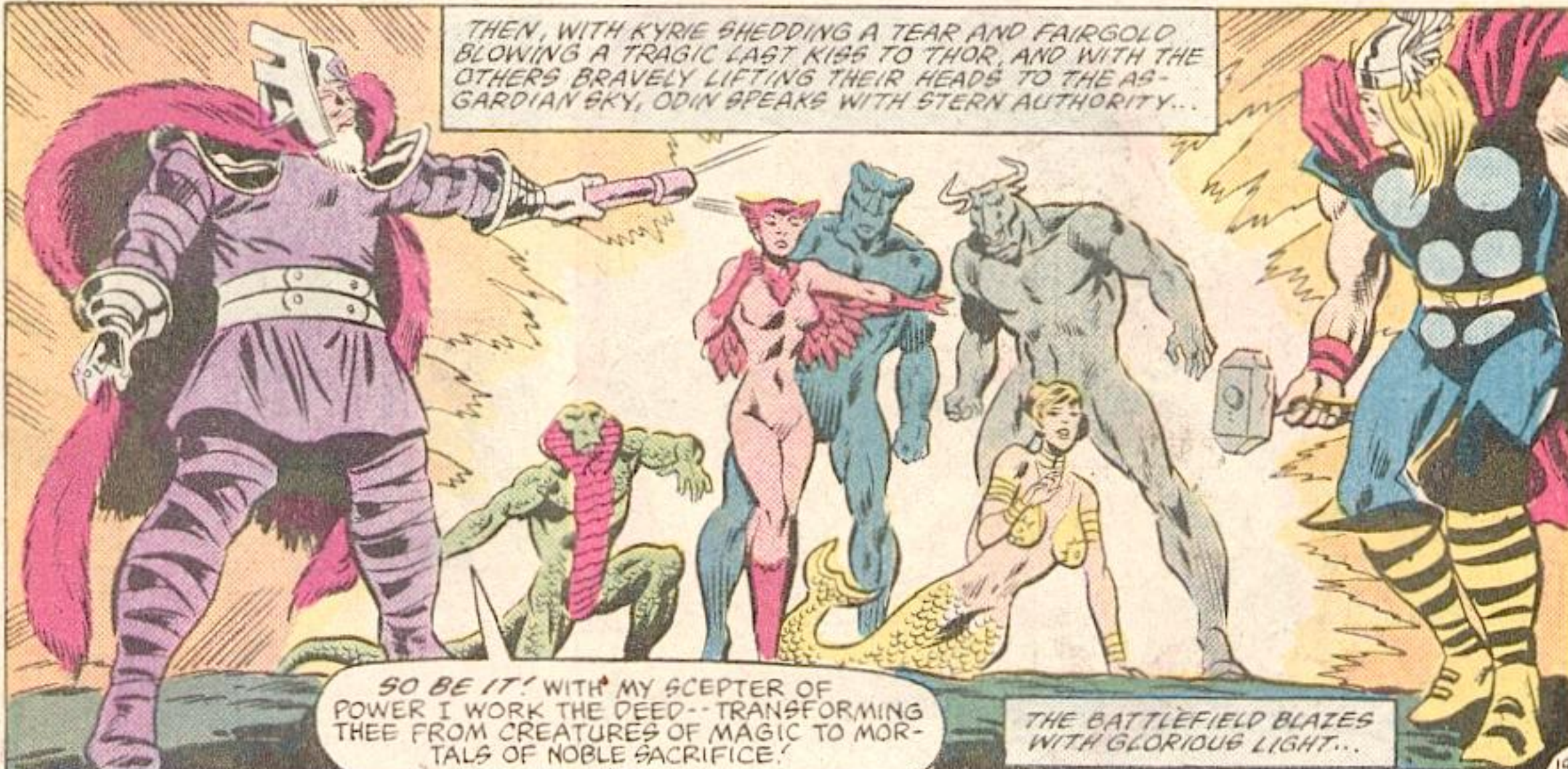
THOR HAS SHOWN IT TO BE THE ONLY JUST COURSE.

AYE-- AND THE SACRIFICE WILL BE NOBLE AT LEAST.



AND WHAT A WAY TO END OUR BRIEF EXISTENCES-- WITH THE BEST BATTLES WE'VE EVER TASTED!

THEN, WITH KYRIE SHEDDING A TEAR AND FAIRGOLD BLOWING A TRAGIC LAST KISS TO THOR, AND WITH THE OTHERS BRAVELY LIFTING THEIR HEADS TO THE AS-GARDIAN SKY, ODIN SPEAKS WITH STERN AUTHORITY...



SO BE IT! WITH MY SCEPTER OF POWER I WORK THE DEED-- TRANSFORMING THEE FROM CREATURES OF MAGIC TO MORTALS OF NOBLE SACRIFICE!

THE BATTLEFIELD BLAZES WITH GLORIOUS LIGHT...

... AND WHEN THE LAMBIENT SHEEN FADES, THERE STANDS HORNE KIRBY, SHAWNA LYNDE, THE TWO MOVERS, AND NURSE STEVENS.

I... I NEVER REALIZED HOW TRULY... MEEK... A-AND MUNDANE... I WAS...

YES... AND ESPECIALLY HERE IN ASGARD-- THE CHANGE, THE LOSS, IS ALL THE MORE EVIDENT... AND OPPRESSIVE.

HARD TO BELIEVE... THAT I WAS ACTUALLY A... A BEAUTIFUL MERMAID.

FEAR NOT-- FOR YE WILL REMEMBER NOTHING OF WHAT YE HAVE LOST!

THEY WILL SEE AND HEAR NOTHING UNTIL THEY RETURN TO MIDGARD-- AND THEN IT WILL ALL BE AS IF IT HAS NEVER PASSED.

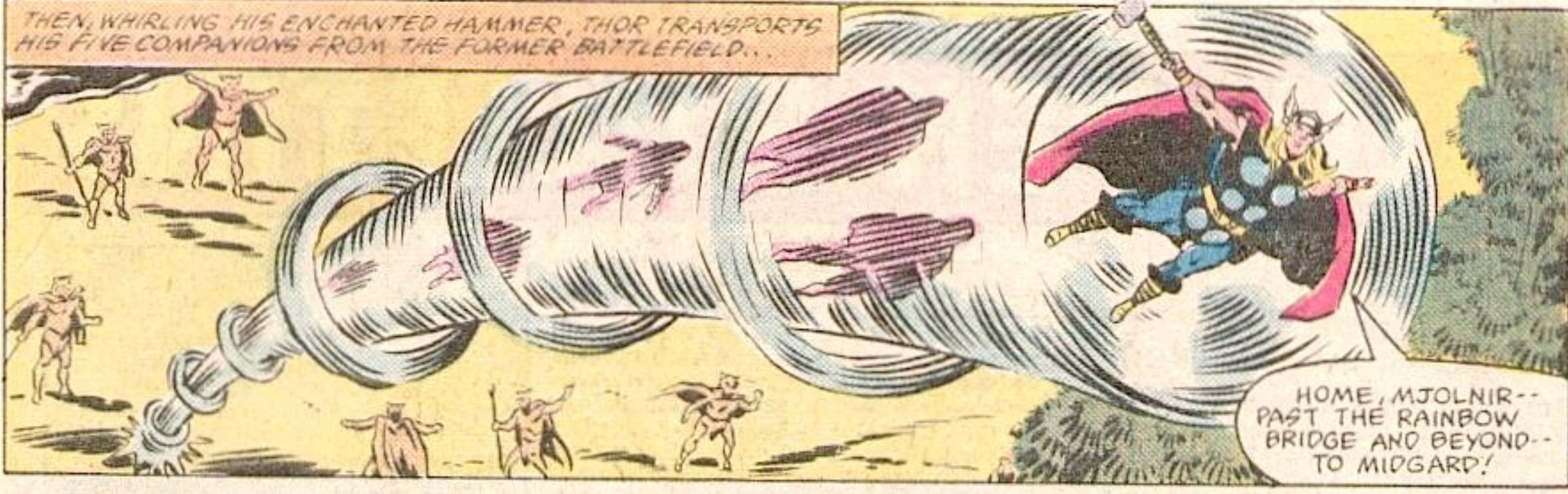
AS FOR THY MEMORY, THOR, I BESEECH THEE... THINK NO LESS OF ME FOR MY UNCONTROLLABLE LOVE.

ANOTHER PASS OF THE SCEPTER, AND THE FIVE MORTALS STAND FROZEN IN A TRANCE OF STATUES...

NAY... MINE IS NOT TO QUESTION HE WHO TRANSCENDS ALL OTHERS... FOR THINE IS THE GLORY AND THE POWER.

FAREWELL, MY FATHER.

THEN, WHIRLING HIS ENCHANTED HAMMER, THOR TRANSPORTS HIS FIVE COMPANIONS FROM THE FORMER BATTLEFIELD...



HOME, MJOLNIR--
PAST THE RAINBOW
BRIDGE AND BEYOND--
TO MIDGARD!

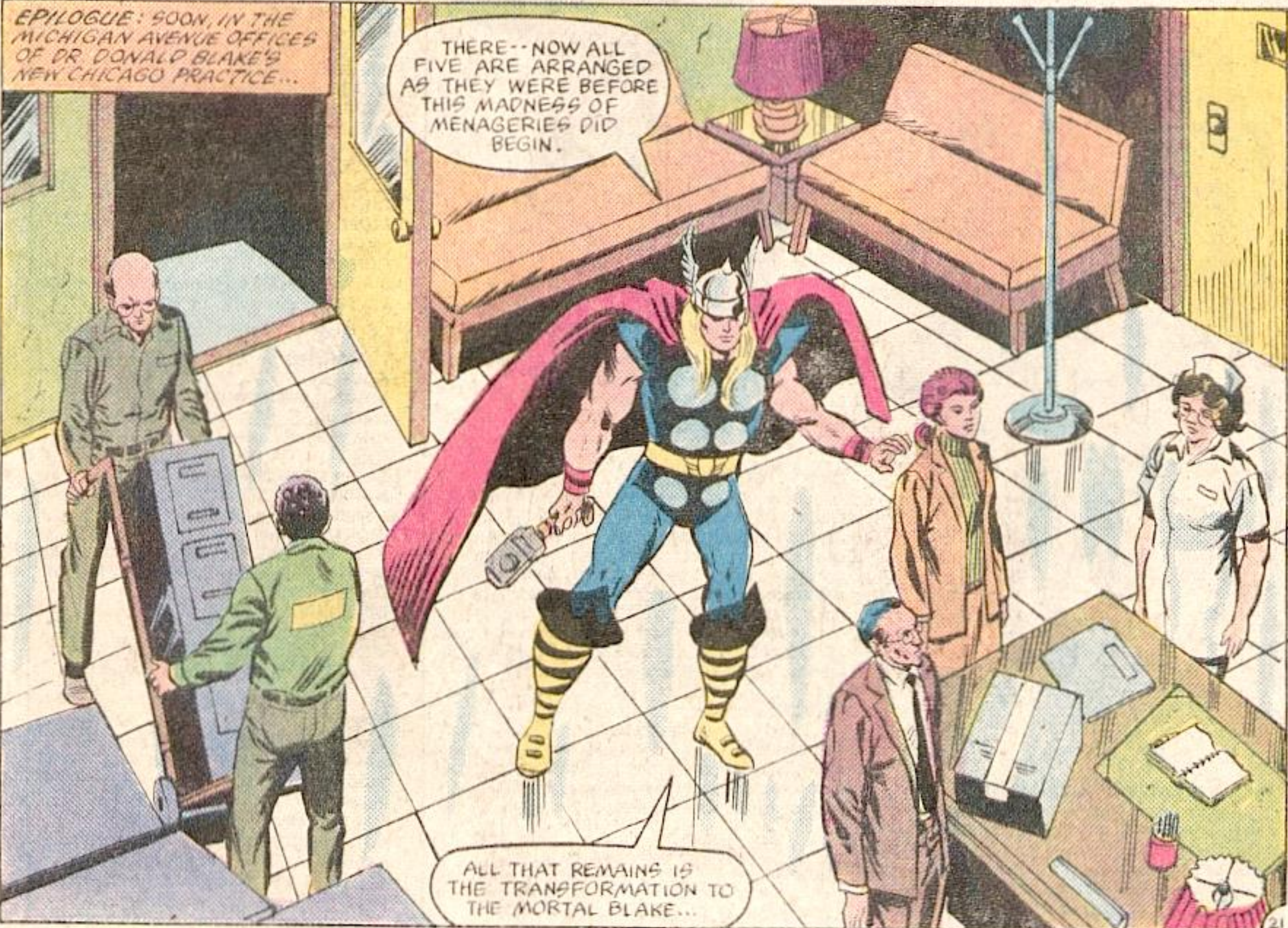
FAREWELL, BRAVE HEIMDALL--



--AND FEAR THE
BRUNT OF NO WRATH!
IF ANYTHING, THOU
WILT ENDURE A
SURFEIT OF
LOVE.

AS I SUSPECTED,
FRIEND THOR-- FARE
THEE WELL!

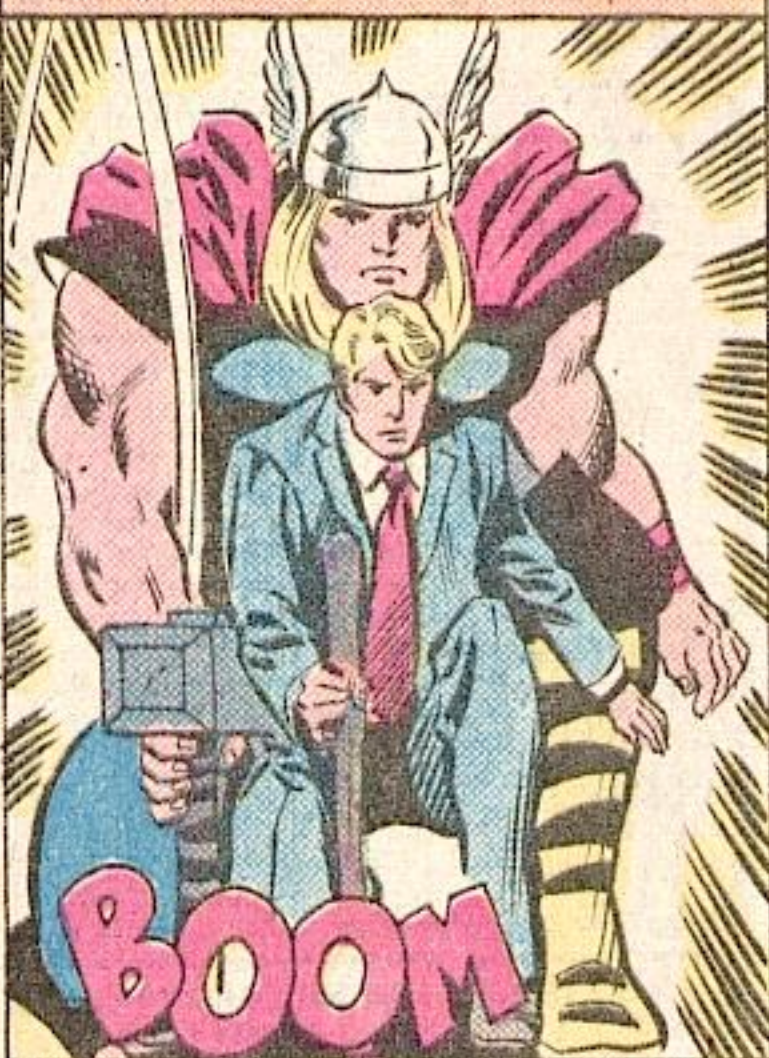
EPILOGUE: SOON, IN THE
MICHIGAN AVENUE OFFICES
OF DR. DONALD BLAKE'S
NEW CHICAGO PRACTICE...



THERE--NOW ALL
FIVE ARE ARRANGED
AS THEY WERE BEFORE
THIS MADNESS OF
MENAGERIES DID
BEGIN.

ALL THAT REMAINS IS
THE TRANSFORMATION TO
THE MORTAL BLAKE...

AND, IN A CLASH OF THUNDER, AS HAMMER STRIKES FLOOR...



BOOM

IT WORKED-- THEY CAME BACK TO LIFE AS SOON AS I CHANGED!



DR. LYNDE BLAKE M.D.

AH! MY NEW OFFICE FURNITURE! JUST SET IT ANYWHERE, MEN-- IF I DON'T LIKE THE ARRANGEMENT, I'LL CHANGE IT LATER.



EXCUSE ME, I'M NURSE STEVENS-- I'VE COME TO SEE ABOUT THE POSITION, AVAILABLE...



YES-- HERE'S DR. BLAKE NOW.

GLAD TO MEET YOU, MS. STEVENS-- WE'LL CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW IN MY INNER OFFICE.

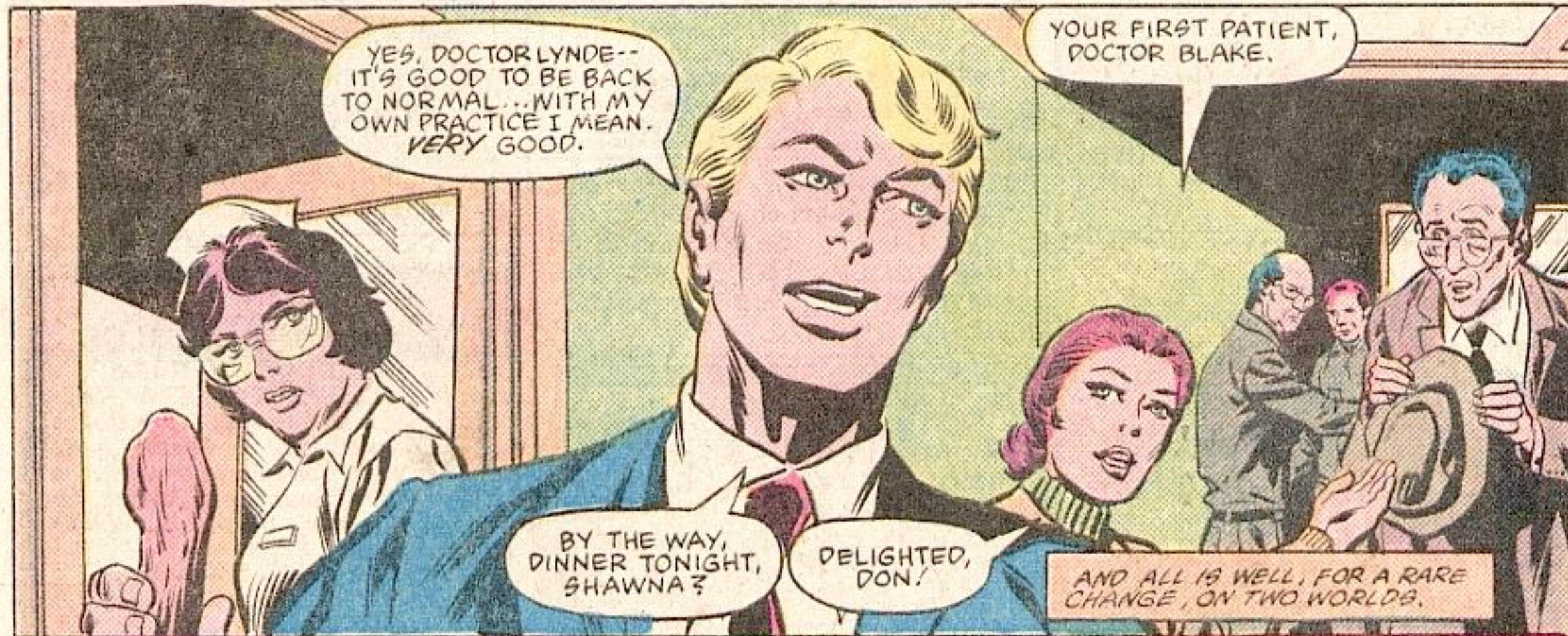


UH... DOCTOR? EXCUSE ME, BUT I... I'M THORNE KIRBY. I... I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOU.

YOU SEE, I... I'M AFRAID I'M... WELL, I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO ASSERT MYSELF...

YES, DOCTOR LYNDE-- IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK TO NORMAL... WITH MY OWN PRACTICE I MEAN. VERY GOOD.

YOUR FIRST PATIENT, DOCTOR BLAKE.



BY THE WAY, DINNER TONIGHT, SHAWNA?

DELIGHTED, DON!

AND ALL IS WELL, FOR A RARE CHANGE, ON TWO WORLDS.

NEXT

AN UNTOLD TALE OF THOR'S YOUTH!