

60c

327

U.K. 25p
CAN. 75c

JAN

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



THE MIGHTY

THOR

©1982 MARVEL COMICS GROUP



TM



ALANS KUPFERBERG AND WEISS



LAST STAND ON EARTH!

2:30 OF A TUESDAY AFTERNOON--
AND DR. DONALD BLAKE'S CHICAGO
OFFICE IS INVADDED BY A MIRACLE
MEANT FOR HIS EYES ALONE

HEAR ME, DONALD
BLAKE, WHO ART IN TRUTH
MY SON THOR-- HEAR ME
AND HEED ME WELL!

THERE BE GRAVE
TROUBLE IN ASGARD, HOME
OF THE GODS AND TRUE LAND
OF THY BIRTH! WE HAVE BEEN
FORCED TO FLEE THE
REALM ETERNAL--

--AND THOU
MUST PREPARE THY-
SELF FOR A VISIT BY ALL
THE MAJOR GODS!

HERE--?
NOW--?
BUT--

WHO ARE
YOU TALKING TO,
DOCTOR? ARE
YOU--

EH? UH...
NO ONE, NURSE
STEVENS, NO
ONE!

JUST...
UH... SOME-
THING I
READ...



NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I JUST REMEMBERED SOME URGENT BUSINESS.

PLEASE CANCEL THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY'S APPOINTMENTS.



VERY WELL, DOCTOR, BUT THE PATIENTS WON'T LIKE IT. ARE YOU SURE IT ISN'T SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH...?

I'M SORRY, NURSE -- THIS IS THE WAY IT HAS TO BE.

ALLLL RIGHT.



IN HERE, ALL-FATHER...

THE PRIVATE ROOMS ADJOINING MY OFFICE...



... WHERE THERE'S ENOUGH PRIVACY FOR THE LAME PHYSICIAN DONALD BLAKE...



... TO TRANSFORM...

BOOM



... INTO THOR THE MIGHTY, LORD OF STORMS, SCION OF ASGARD, AND THY OBEIENT SON.

AND NOW, ALL-FATHER, I AM PREPARED TO RECEIVE THEE AND THINE.

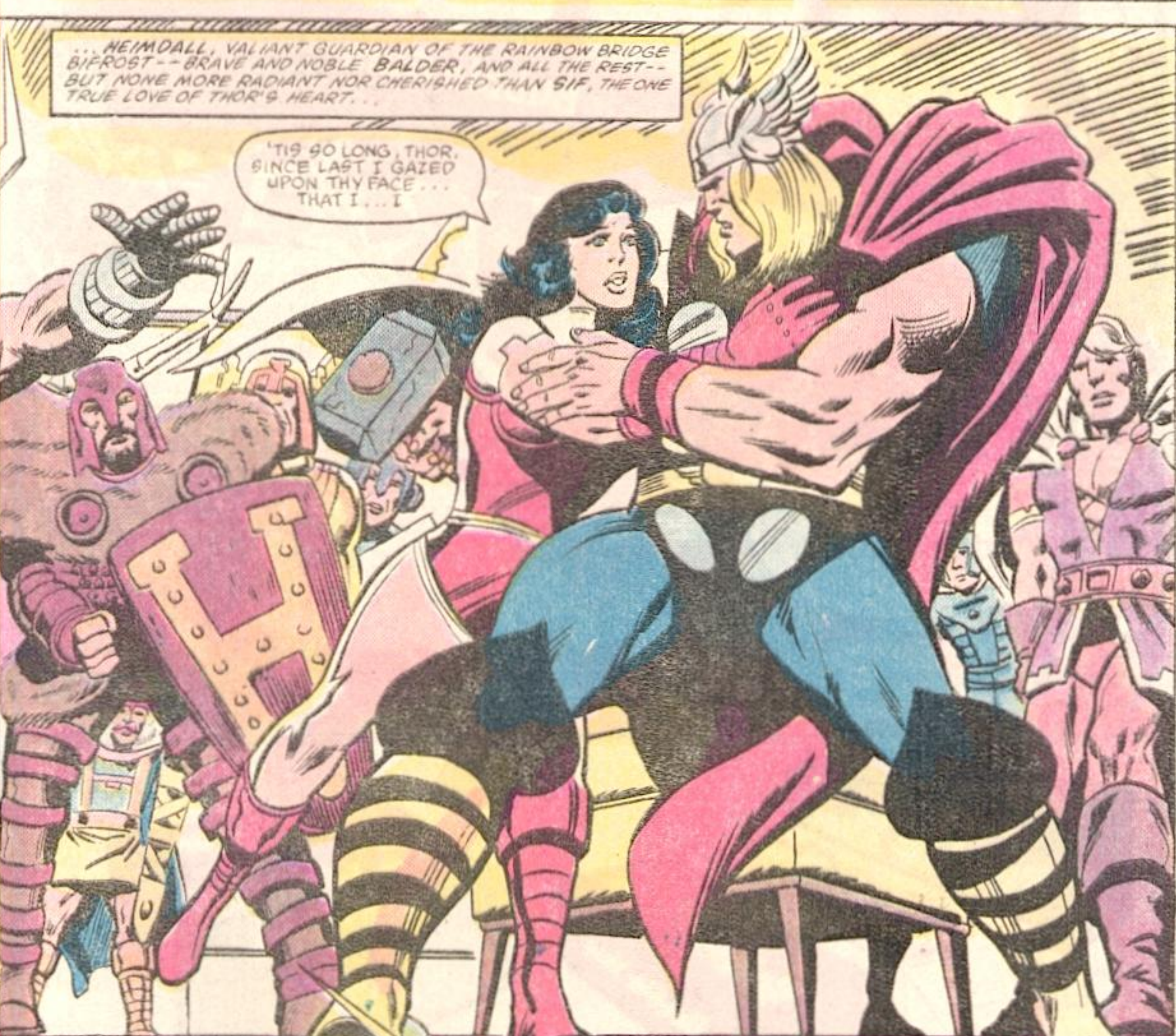
StarLee PRESENTS: THE MIGHTY THOR THE SERPENT OF MIDGARD CONCLUSION: THIS BATTLE-GROUND EARTH!



THE ROOM FLASHES WITH AN EFFULGENCE FROM BEYOND AND THEN THEY ARE HERE, ALL OF THEM -- GRIM HOGUN, DASHING FANORAL, AND VAST VOLSTAGG -- ODIN HIMSELF, WIELDING HIS TRIDENT-SPEAR GUNGNIR...

TIME ENOW FOR LOVE, SIF, WHEN OUR PRESENT PERIL HATH BEEN AVERTED.

FOR NOW, THOR, KNOW THAT THY BROTHER LOKI HATH CONSPIRED WITH THE WAR-GOD TYR TO STEAL THE GOLDEN APPLES OF IMMORTALITY.



... NEIMDALL, VALIANT GUARDIAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE BIFROST -- BRAVE AND NOBLE BALDER, AND ALL THE REST -- BUT NONE MORE RADIANT NOR CHERISHED THAN SIF, THE ONE TRUE LOVE OF THOR'S HEART...

'TIS SO LONG, THOR, SINCE LAST I GAZED UPON THY FACE... THAT I... I

WITHOUT THEM, AS YOU WELL KNOW, EVEN WE -- E'EN THE GODS THEMSELVES -- WILL BEGIN TO AGE... AND ULTIMATELY DIE.

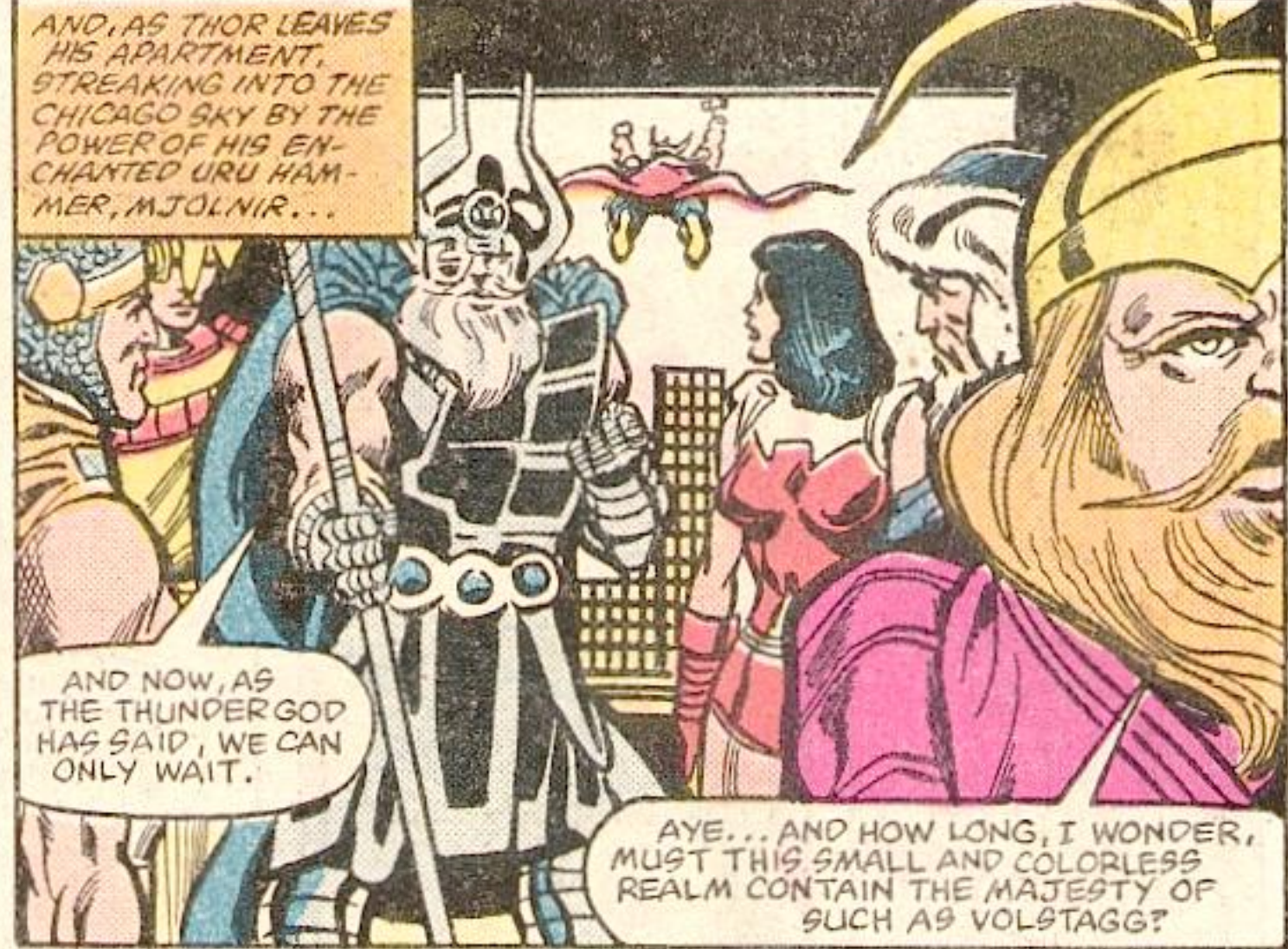
THUS MUST WE REMAIN HERE ON MIDGARD UNTIL A PLAN IS CONCEIVED TO RETAKE ASGARD AND RECOVER THE GOLDEN APPLES.

DOUG MOENCH... SCRIPTER
ALAN KUPPERBERG... PENCILER
JIM MOONEY... INKER
JANICE CHIANG... LETTERER
GEORGE ROUSSOS... COLORIST
MARK GRUENWALD... EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER... EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



AYE, HERE ON MIDGARD, BUT HARDLY HERE IN DONALD BLAKE'S SMALL DWELLING.

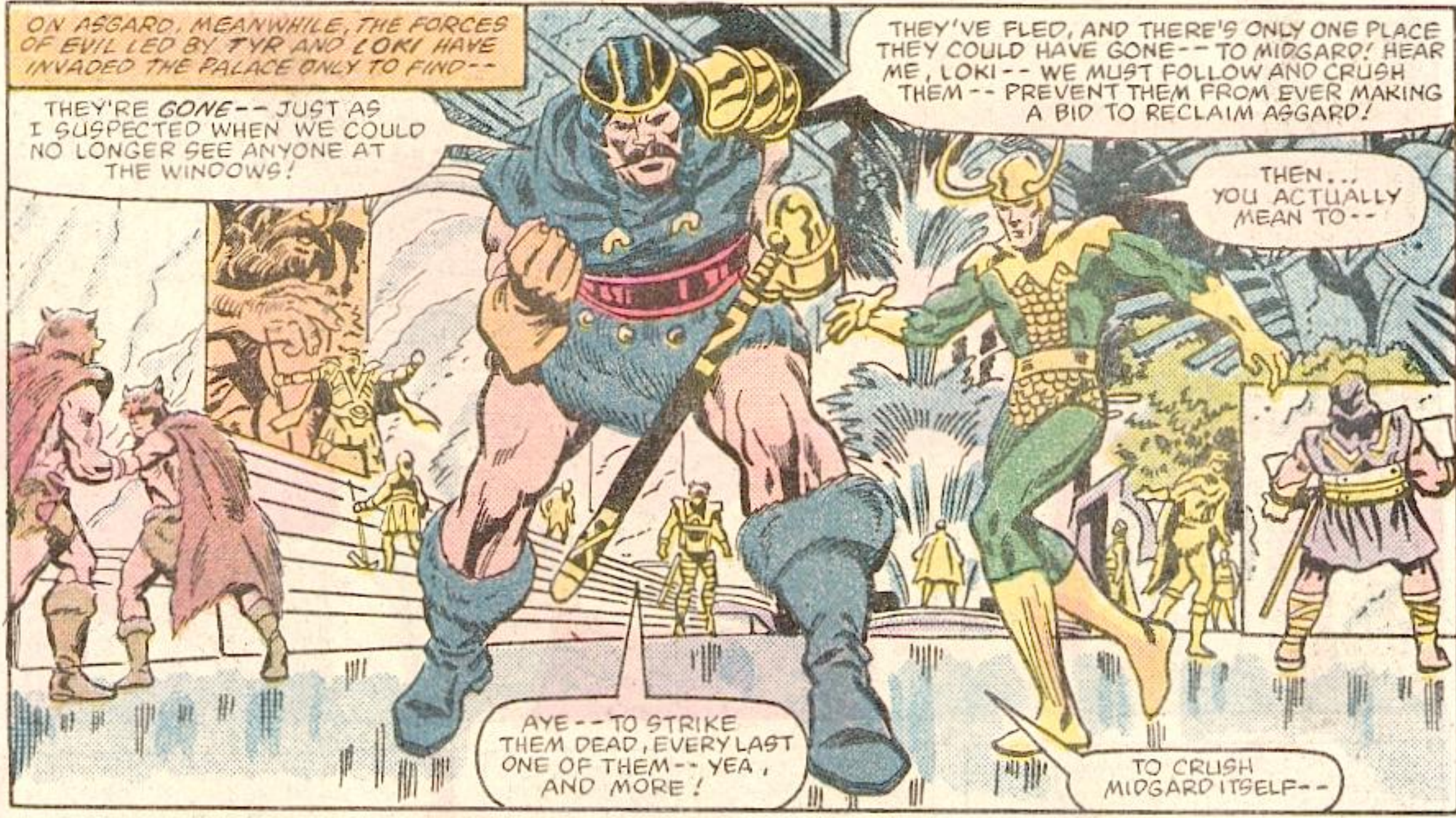
AWAIT ME, THEN, UNTIL I PREPARE A MORE SUITABLE PLACE.



AND, AS THOR LEAVES HIS APARTMENT, STREAKING INTO THE CHICAGO SKY BY THE POWER OF HIS ENCHANTED URU HAMMER, MJOLNIR...

AND NOW, AS THE THUNDER GOD HAS SAID, WE CAN ONLY WAIT.

AYE... AND HOW LONG, I WONDER, MUST THIS SMALL AND COLORLESS REALM CONTAIN THE MAJESTY OF SUCH AS VOLSTAGG?



ON ASGARD, MEANWHILE, THE FORCES OF EVIL LED BY TYR AND LOKI HAVE INVADDED THE PALACE ONLY TO FIND--

THEY'RE GONE-- JUST AS I SUSPECTED WHEN WE COULD NO LONGER SEE ANYONE AT THE WINDOWS!

THEY'VE FLED, AND THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE THEY COULD HAVE GONE-- TO MIDGARD! HEAR ME, LOKI-- WE MUST FOLLOW AND CRUSH THEM-- PREVENT THEM FROM EVER MAKING A BID TO RECLAIM ASGARD!

THEN... YOU ACTUALLY MEAN TO--

AYE-- TO STRIKE THEM DEAD, EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM-- YEA, AND MORE!

TO CRUSH MIDGARD ITSELF--



-- WITH THE SERPENT!

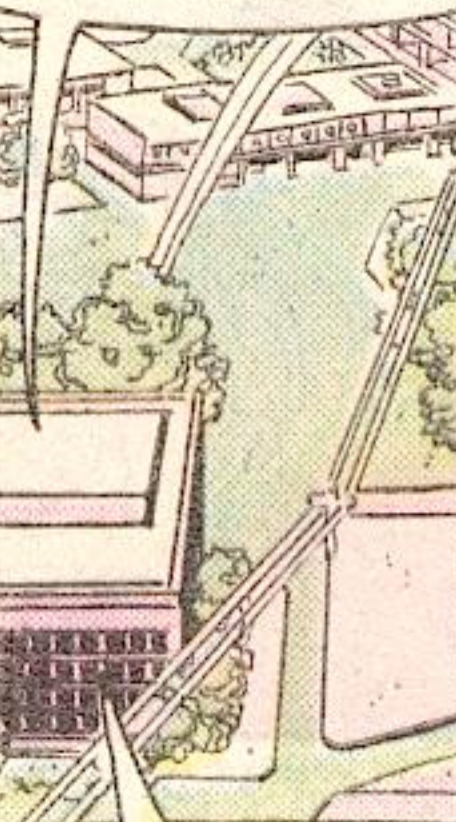
AND SO THEY GATHER AT THE VERY EDGE OF THE SHINING REALM...

HEAR, ME, SERPENT-- THE FINAL DOWNFALL OF THY HATED ENEMY ODIN IS AT HAND!

ENTER NOW THE VAST SEAS OF THE VOID AND SWIM TO MIDGARD! WRAP THY BINDING COILS 'ROUND IT, PREPARING THE WAY FOR OUR INVASION!

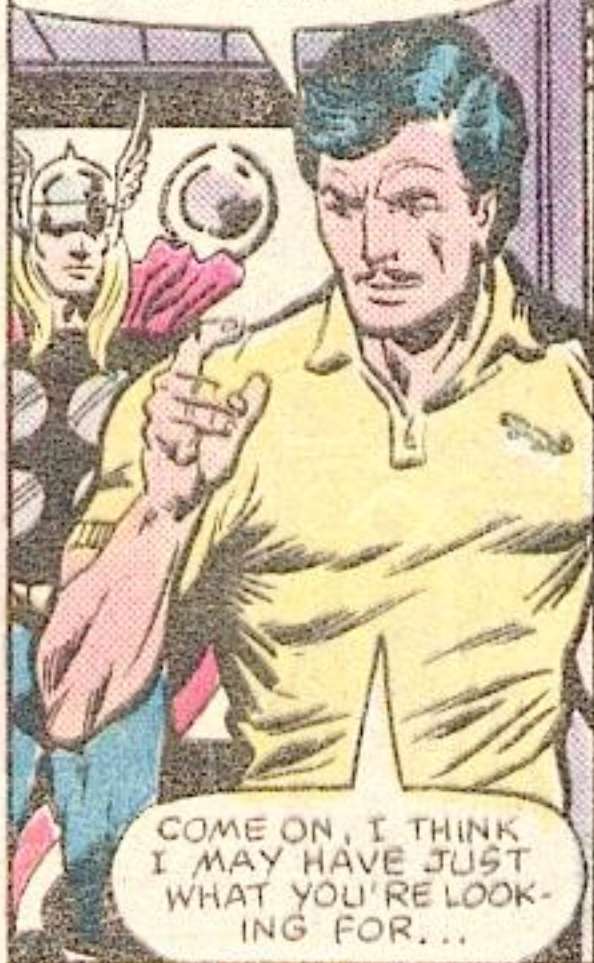
STARK INTERNATIONAL
ON LONG ISLAND...

--AND THAT BE WHAT
I NEED, THOUGH I
CANNOT REVEAL WHY.



NO EXPLANATION
NECESSARY, FRIEND.

WHATEVER THOR WANTS,
THOR'S GOT-- PLUS A
STAFF OF A DOZEN TO
ATTEND TO WHATEVER
ELSE YOU MIGHT NEED.



COME ON, I THINK
I MAY HAVE JUST
WHAT YOU'RE LOOK-
ING FOR...

HOW'S THIS? AN OBSOLETE
COMPUTER COMPLEX-- I
HAVEN'T GOTTEN AROUND
TO TEARING IT DOWN FOR
THE NEW FACILITY YET...



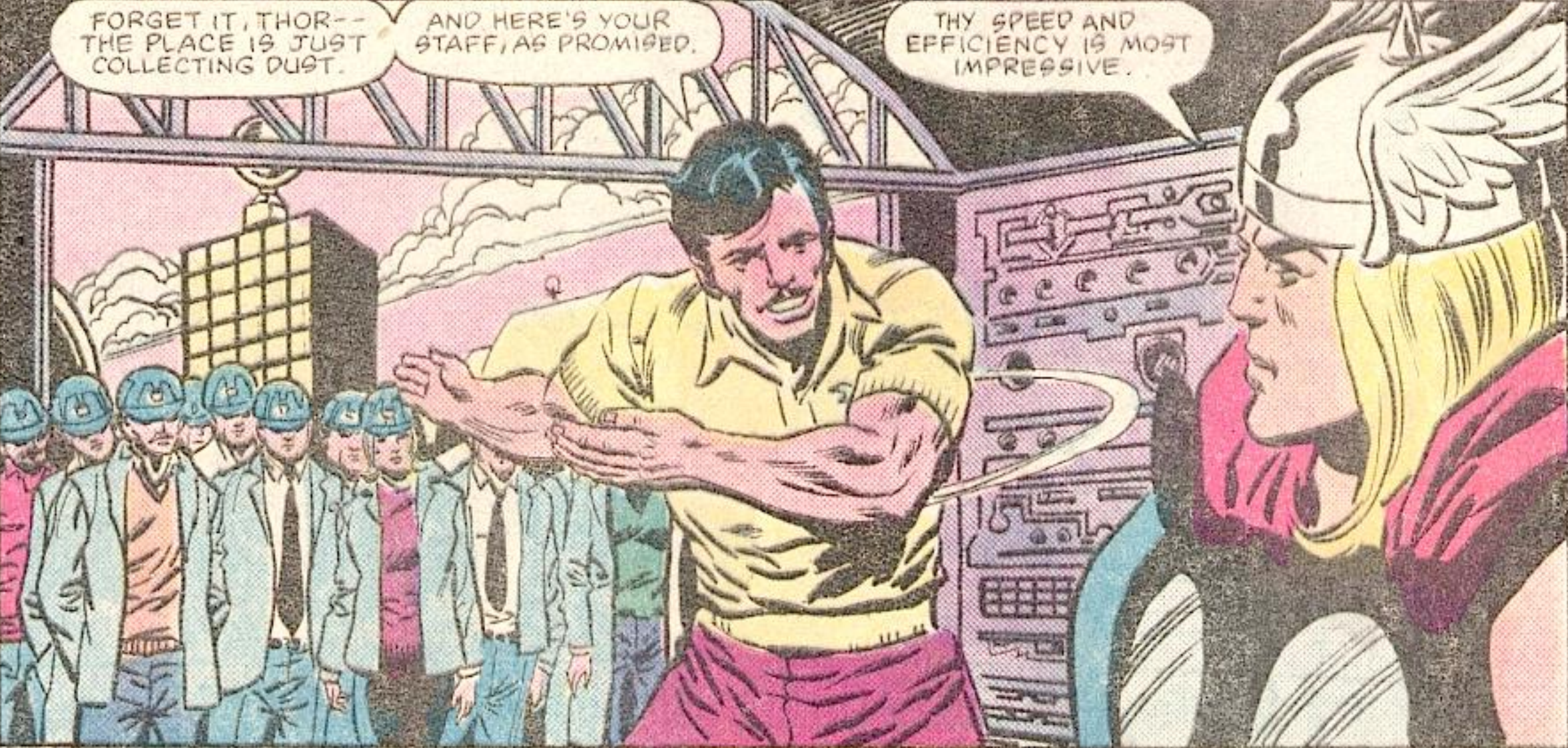
... BUT YOU
CERTAINLY WON'T BE
BOTHERED HERE, IS IT
SUFFICIENT FOR
YOUR NEEDS?

AYE-- AND
THOU HAST MY
THANKS, TONY
STARK.

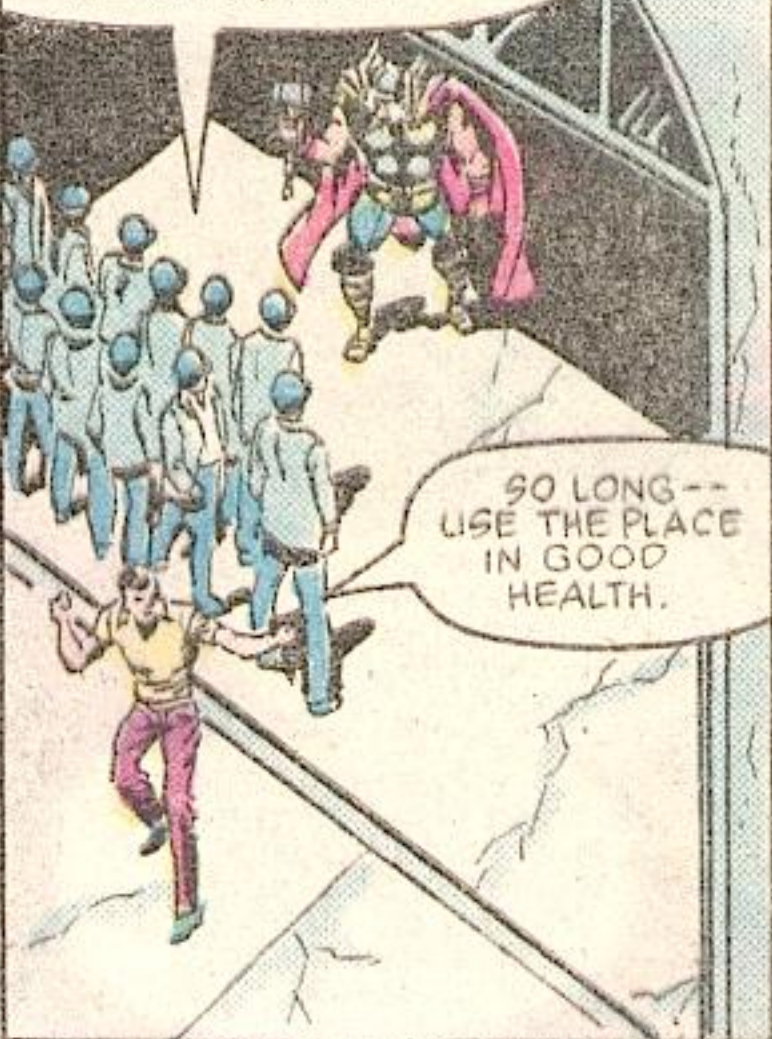
FORGET IT, THOR--
THE PLACE IS JUST
COLLECTING DUST.

AND HERE'S YOUR
STAFF, AS PROMISED.

THY SPEED AND
EFFICIENCY IS MOST
IMPRESSIVE.



YOU JUST HIT ON THE NAME
OF THE GAME IN MY LINE
OF WORK, THOR.



SO LONG--
USE THE PLACE
IN GOOD
HEALTH.

I APPRECIATE THINE AID, MORTALS...
BUT NOW YE MUST PREPARE THY-
SELVES FOR THE LIKES OF WHICH
YE HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE...



HEAR ME, ALL-FATHER! THE
WAY HATH BEEN PREPARED!
THOU MAYEST NOW APPEAR
WITH THE OTHERS!



WH-WHO'S HE
TALKING TO--?

WAIT! THE VERY
AIR-- IT'S SHIMMERING!
AND... AND--

THE GODS APPEAR -- EACH ONE A DAZZLING FORM INSPIRING AWE.

THOU HAST DONE WELL, MY SON -- THIS CHAMBER IS AT LEAST MORE BEFITTING OUR STATURE, AND POTH INDEED CALL TO MIND A NORSE LODGE.

...SAVE FOR AN INVOLUNTARY TWITCH OR TREMBLE HERE AND THERE, THE STAFF OF MORTALS STAND TRANSFIXED.



I'LL SAY ONE THING FOR THIS MIDGARD -- IT CREATES AN AWE-SOME HUNGER.

AYE -- CAN VICTUALS BE PROVIDED FOR ALL?

BUT STILL THE STARK EMPLOYEES STAND ROOTED, MERELY GAPING...



I SAID, MORTAL... CAN YOU PROVIDE VICTUALS FOR ALL?

V-V-VICTUALS... YES, VICTUALS... OF COURSE... AND BY VICTUALS, Y-YOU MEAN --



FOOD! HE MEANS FOOD, DOLT -- IN VAST AMOUNTS!

ULP! O-O OF COURSE!



FOOD! VAST AMOUNTS OF VICTUALS! RIGHT AWAY! LET'S GO!

A TRIFLE THICK ABOUT THE SKULLS, THESE MORTALS, BUT I WARRANT THEY MEAN WELL...

AND, TOO, 'TIS HARDLY EVERY DAY THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO BE NUMBED BY THE MAJESTY OF VOLSTAGG.

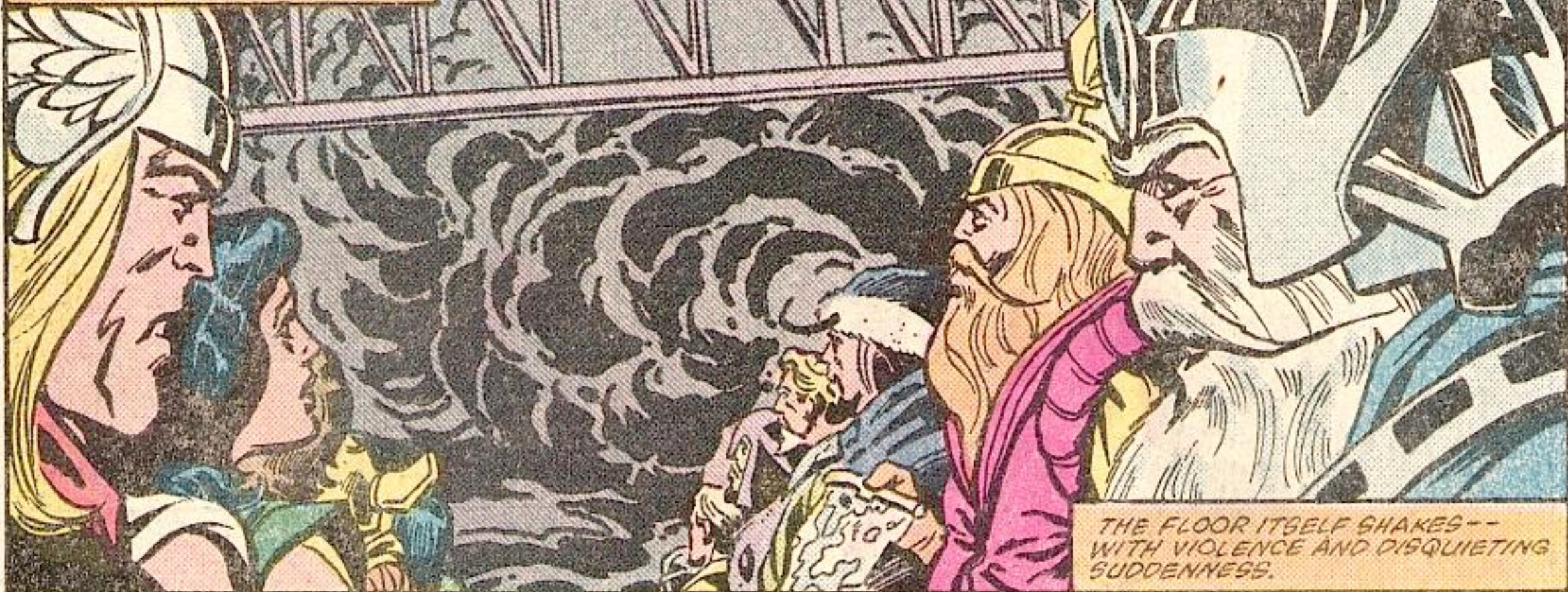
AND NOT LONG AFTER, THE BIZARRE FEAST COMMENCES...



'TIS NOT UNPLEASANT, THIS TASTE -- WHENCE DID THOU SAY THIS DISH CAME?

UH... FROM P-P-PIZZA HUT.

BUT THEN, A STORM ROLLS IN FROM THE NORTH, THOUGH IT SEEMS TO GATHER FROM EVERYWHERE, AND IT'S BOILING GLOOM SPOILS THE FEAST...



THE FLOOR ITSELF SHAKES-- WITH VIOLENCE AND DISQUIETING SUDDENNESS.



IS THE FOOTING HERE ALWAYS SO TREACHEROUS?

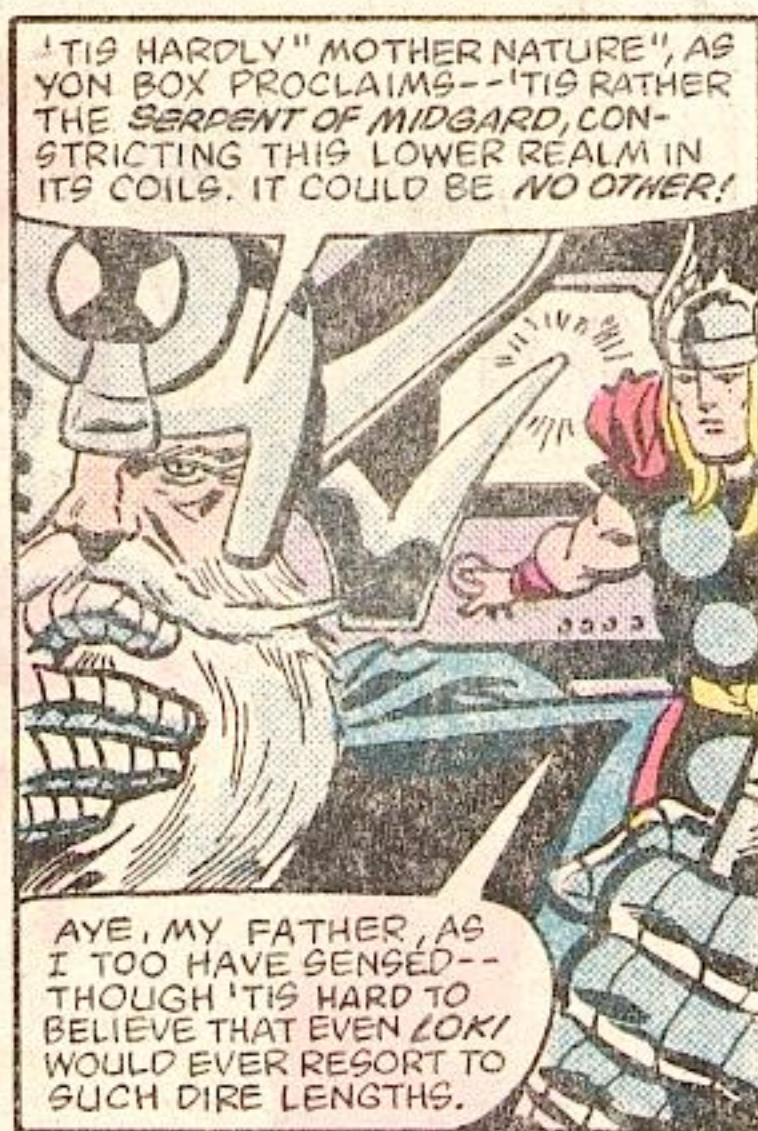
'TIS CALLED AN EARTH-QUAKE, VAST ONE.

QUICKLY STEPPING TO A BANK OF VIDEO MONITORS, THOR LOCATES A COMMERCIAL CHANNEL...



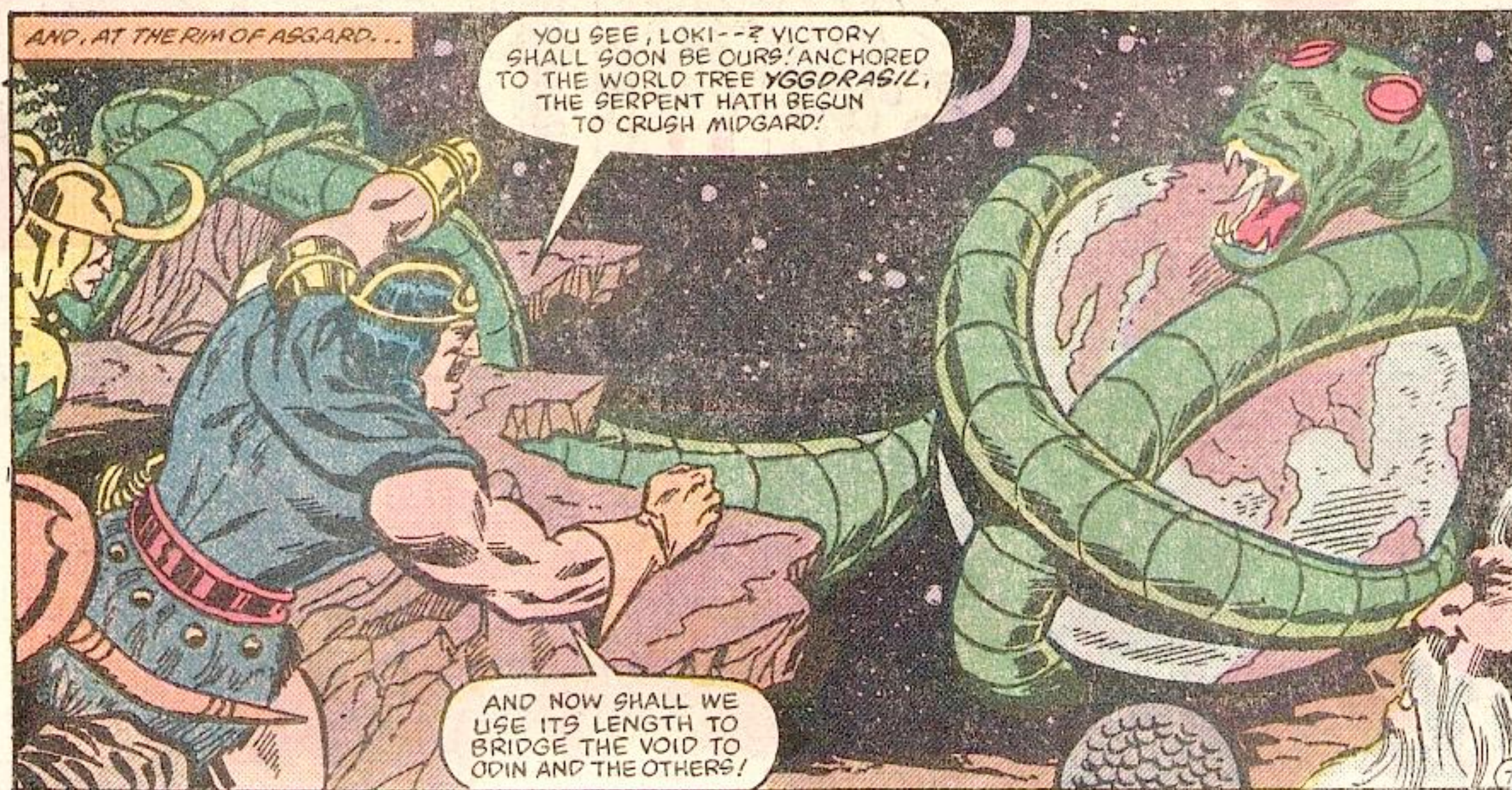
-- WORLDWIDE WEATHER HAVOC, AS SEVERE STORMS AND FLOODS BREAK ON EVERY CONTINENT, FOLLOWED BY QUAKES, BRUSHFIRES, MUD-AND-LANDSLIDES.

MOTHER NATURE IS CERTAINLY GIVING THE OLD PLANET A REAL BEATING...



'TIS HARDLY "MOTHER NATURE", AS YON BOX PROCLAIMS-- 'TIS RATHER THE SERPENT OF MIDGARD, CONSTRICTING THIS LOWER REALM IN ITS COILS. IT COULD BE NO OTHER!

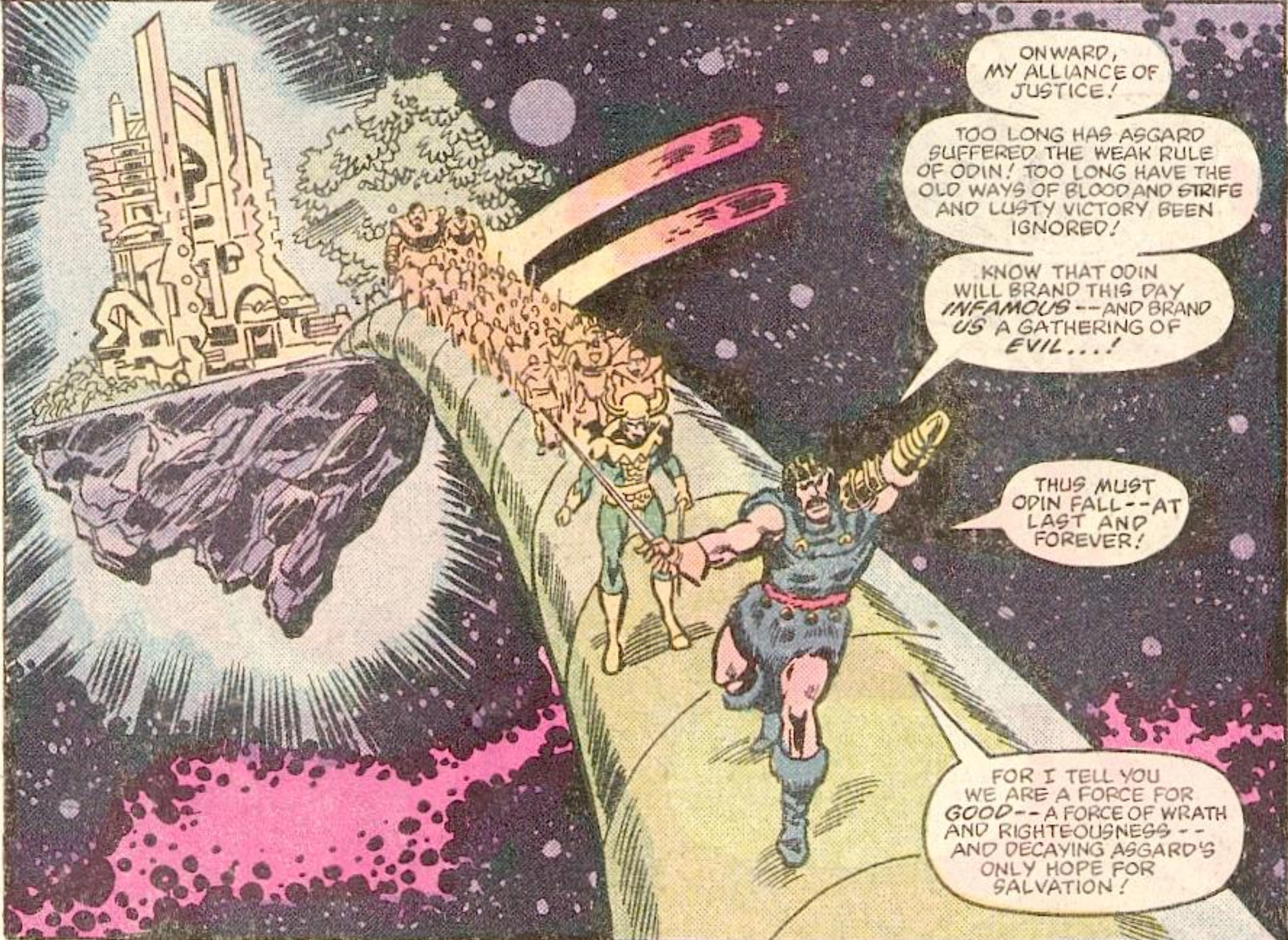
AYE, MY FATHER, AS I TOO HAVE SENSED-- THOUGH 'TIS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT EVEN LOKI! WOULD EVER RESORT TO SUCH DIRE LENGTHS.



AND, AT THE RIM OF ASGARD...

YOU SEE, LOKI--? VICTORY SHALL SOON BE OURS! ANCHORED TO THE WORLD TREE YGGDRASIL, THE SERPENT HATH BEGUN TO CRUSH MIDGARD!

AND NOW SHALL WE USE ITS LENGTH TO BRIDGE THE VOID TO ODIN AND THE OTHERS!



ONWARD,
MY ALLIANCE OF
JUSTICE!

TOO LONG HAS ASGARD
SUFFERED THE WEAK RULE
OF ODIN! TOO LONG HAVE THE
OLD WAYS OF BLOOD AND STRIFE
AND LUSTY VICTORY BEEN
IGNORED!

KNOW THAT ODIN
WILL BRAND THIS DAY
INFAMOUS -- AND BRAND
US A GATHERING OF
EVIL...!

THUS MUST
ODIN FALL -- AT
LAST AND
FOREVER!

FOR I TELL YOU
WE ARE A FORCE FOR
GOOD -- A FORCE OF WRATH
AND RIGHTEOUSNESS --
AND DECAYING ASGARD'S
ONLY HOPE FOR
SALVATION!



I FEEL HIM...
EVEN NOW... IN
MY BONES...

THE SERPENT --? BUT...
ART THOU CERTAIN,
ALL-FATHER...?



AS IF ON CUE, LOOMING FROM THE STORM,
THE HIDEOUS MAN YAWNS WIDE...

'TIS TYR THE WAR-
GOD -- AND LOKI!

AYE, THOR... AND
STORM GIANTS, AND
TROLLS, AND FIRE-
DEMONS, AND --

AND ALL THE EVIL
ASGARD CAN SUMMON,
GRIM HOGUN.

INTO THE RAGING STORM, ODIN'S FAITHFUL WARRIORS STRIDE.

TYR'S HARSH VOICE BELLOW'S FROM THE ROLLING THUNDER...

THY RUNNING ENDS HERE, ODIN! HERE--WHERE THY GODLY BLOOD SHALL FLOW! AND ONCE ASGARD IS MINE, SO TOO SHALL THIS LOWER REALM OF MIDGARD TREMBLE AT MY TOUCH!

ODIN IGNORES THE WAR-GOD, TURNING HIS BALEFUL GLARE INSTEAD ON THE GOD OF MISCHIEF-- ON HIS OTHER SON--

I KNEW THOU WERT BEHIND THIS, LOKI, BUT NEVER DID I DREAM THAT EVEN YOU COULD BRING IT TO THIS...

... TO THE UNTHINKABLE POINT WHERE THOU WOULDST ACTUALLY SEEK THE DEATHS OF THY FATHER AND BROTHER!

LOKI LOOKS AWAY, AND IT IS TYR WHO SPEAKS FOR HIM...

AND WHY WOULD HE NOT? THY TIME IS PASSED, ODIN! THOU ART COMPLACENT-- WHEN ALL KNOW 'TIS A GOD'S WAY TO LIVE UNDER THE RULE OF FIRE AND BLOOD AND ETERNAL STRIFE!



AND LOKI NOW STANDS AT MY SIDE IN THE GREATEST STRIFE OF ALL...

... HAST THOU NOT, LOKI?



STILL LOKI REMAINS SILENT, FOR A SPAN OF TEN HEART-BEATS...

THEN --

NO.





I BEGAN THIS CAMPAIGN THINKING ODIN HAD BETRAYED HIS WIFE FRIGGA FOR THE LOVE OF QUEEN JOLENA.

BUT I WAS WRONG ABOUT MY FATHER--AND I STAND NOW READY TO PAY MY PENANCE.



MISCHIEF IS ONE THING, TYR-- AND A THING I REVEL IN...

BUT I HAVE RENOUNCED SHEER, NAKED EVIL!

AND YOURS HAS GONE TOO FAR!



I BEG FORGIVENESS AS I STAND READY TO BE THE FIRST TO FALL ON THE SIDE OF ALL-- FATHER ODIN--

--FAITHFUL LORD AND RULER OF SHINING ASGARD, THE REALM ETERNAL!



THEN THOU SHALT RUE THIS DAY FOREVER, TRAITOR!

THOU SHALT DIE IN SQUIRMING AGONY.

BUT EVEN AS TYR'S WRATH IS REFLECTED IN THE STORM ABOVE--

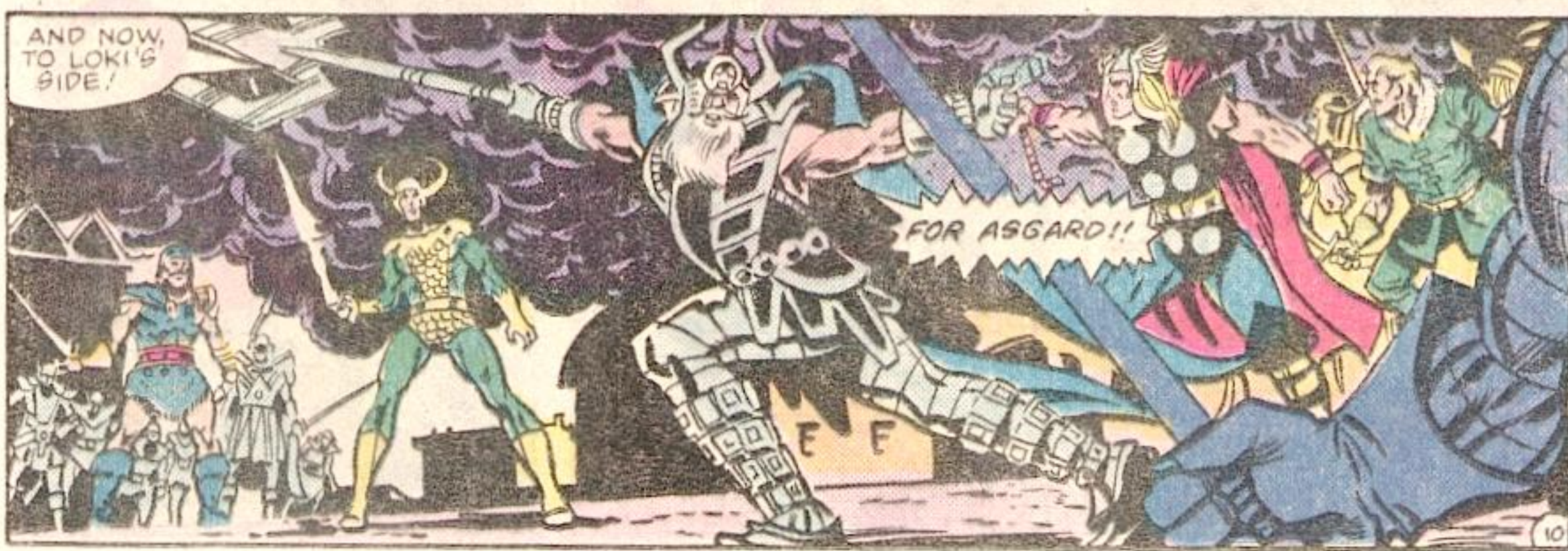


-- THOR FEELS NOTHING BUT THE RELIEF OF PRIDE.

MAYHAP THERE IS HOPE FOR MY HALF-BROTHER YET!

UNLESS THIS IS A TRAP... OR SOME OTHER MANNER OF DECEIT.

NO DECEIT, GRIM HOGUN. MY SON HATH SIMPLY COME LATE TO HIS SENSES...



AND NOW, TO LOKI'S SIDE!

FOR ASGARD!!



FOR ASGARD!

FOR THE REALM ETERNAL!

AND SO, IN THUNDER AND LIGHTNING AND LASHING RAIN, GODS AND MONSTERS CLASH -- SWORD UPON SWORD, MACE AND HAMMER AND SPEAR WIELDED AGAINST FERAL FANG AND CLAW...

THERE ARE GIANTS HERE -- FIERCE DEMONS, AS WELL -- AND TITANS WHOSE POWER IS ONLY DREAMED BY MORTAL MAN...

IT IS A TABLEAU LONG ISLAND HAS NEVER BEFORE HOSTED, NOT EVEN IN THE STEAMY PAST WHEN AWESOME LEVIATHANS CALLED DINOSAURS CONTESTED THIS LAND.

THEY SENSE WHICH SIDE BATTLES IN VALOR AND WHICH SIDE FIGHTS WITH SAVAGERY -- WHICH FACTION IS BLESSED WITH NOBILITY AND WHICH IS GREEDY AND GRASPING.

... IT IS ENOUGH TO MAKE A MERE MORTAL BRAVE HELL.



AND IT IS A SIGHT WHICH EVEN THE SEASONED EMPLOYEES OF STARK INTERNATIONAL, LONG ACCUSTOMED TO THE DRAMATIC APPEARANCE OF AN INVINCIBLE IRON MAN -- WILL NEVER FORGET.



AND WHEN ONE OF THE NOBLE ONES -- EVEN ONE SO IMPROBABLE AS VOLSTAGG -- IS IMPERILLED...



BEHIND YOU!

EH? VALIANT VOLSTAGG AIDED BY A MORTAL WOMAN?

DEEP WITHIN THEIR AWE, UNDER THE FEAR AND BEYOND THE WONDER, THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT TRANSPIRES BEFORE THEM -- THEY KNOW, TOO, WHO IS DESERVING OF THEIR SYMPATHY.



AYE-- AND HER COURAGE GOES NOT UNNOTICED BY ODIN!

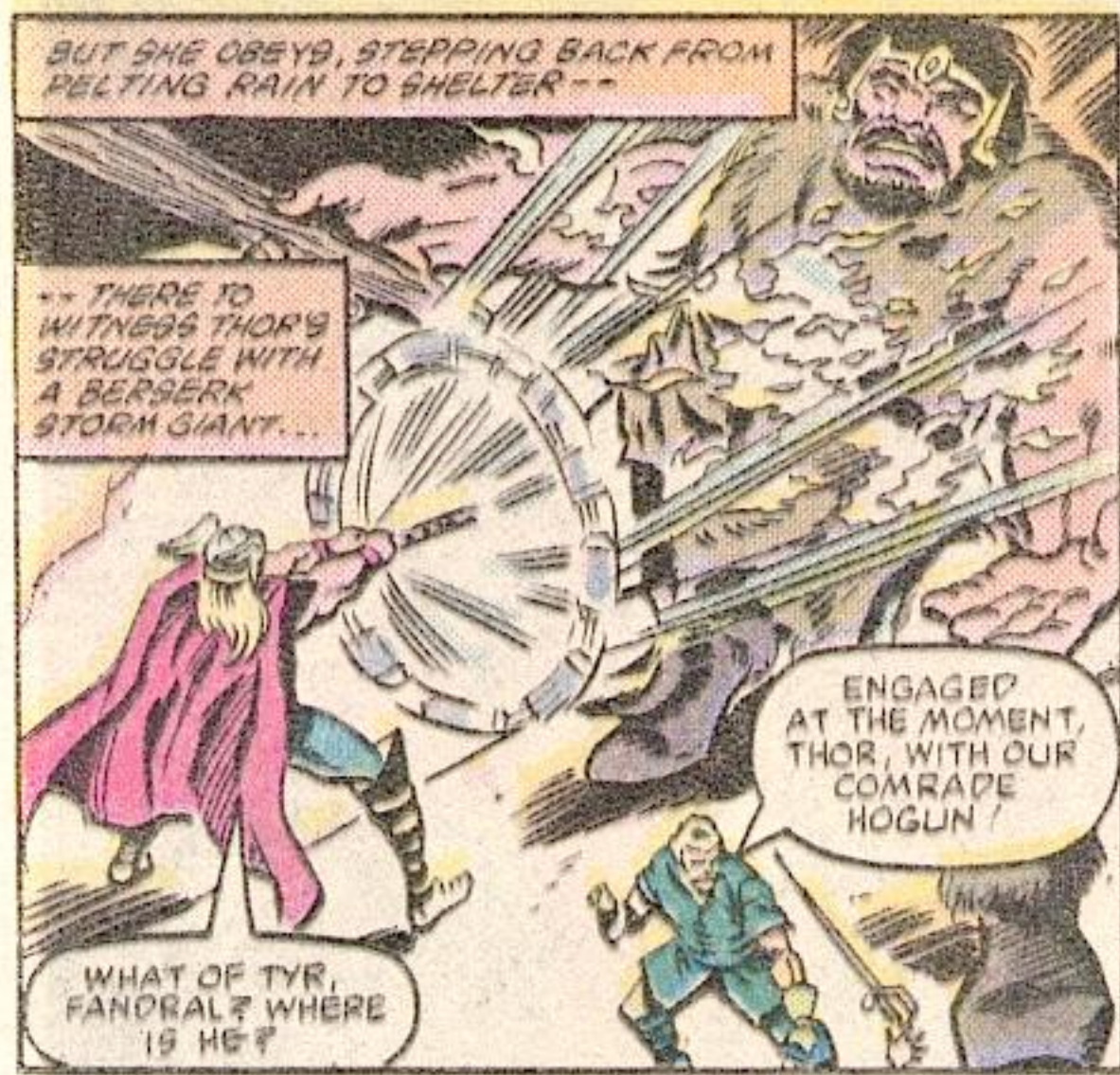
ZOOOSH



STAND BACK, MORTAL -- THY SACRIFICE IS NOT NECESSARY.

THIS DAY THE GODS STAND READY TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES FOR THY SAKE.

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO DESCRIBE THE EFFECT OF ODIN'S CELESTIAL TOUCH AND STIRRING WORDS -- HER SOUL SHIVERS.



BUT SHE OBEYS, STEPPING BACK FROM PELTING RAIN TO SHELTER --

-- THERE TO WITNESS THOR'S STRUGGLE WITH A BERSERKER STORM GIANT...

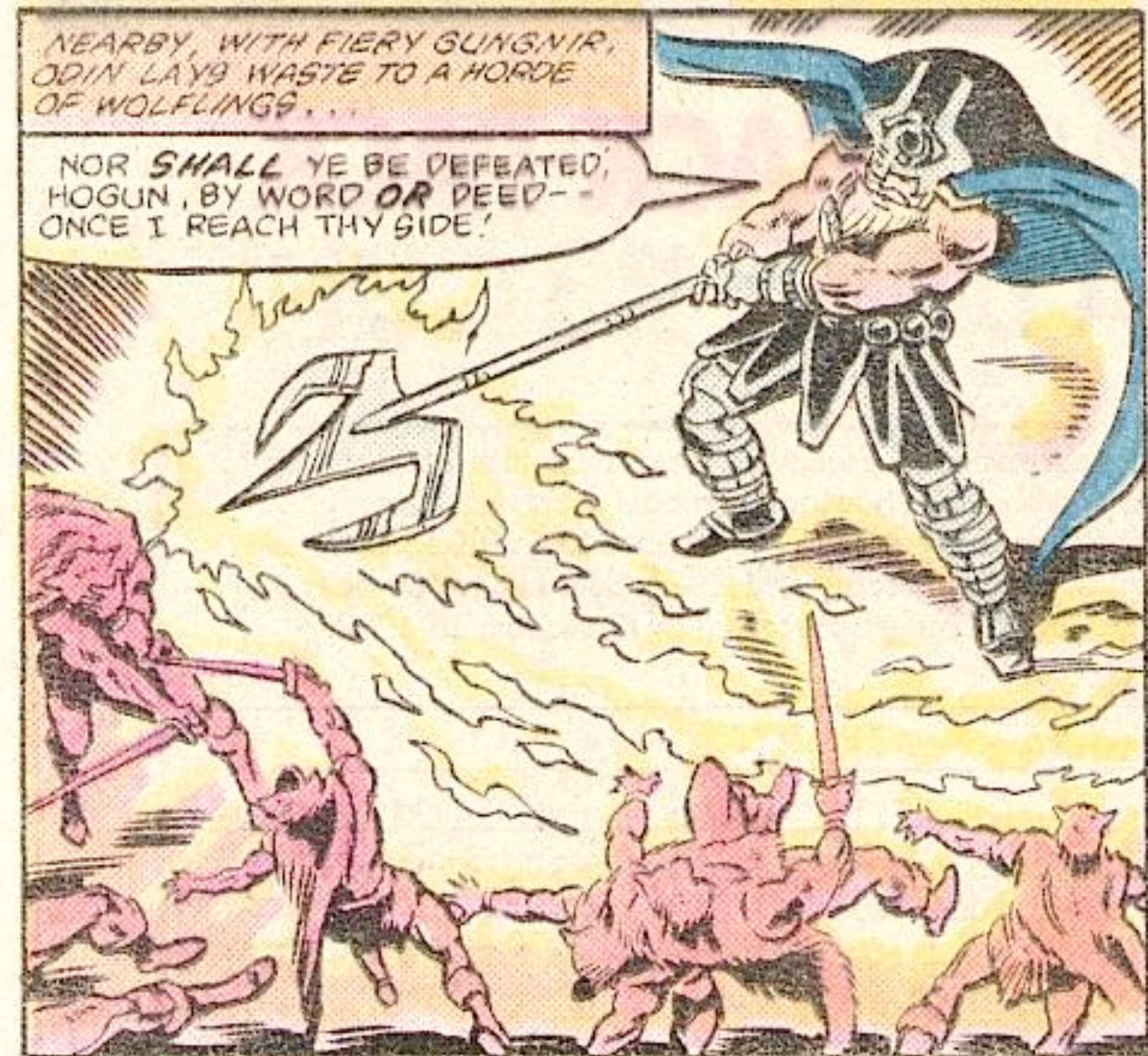
ENGAGED AT THE MOMENT, THOR, WITH OUR COMRADE HOGUN!

WHAT OF TYR, FANDRAL? WHERE IS HE?



AYE, THE GRIM ONE BATTLES ME -- IN A CAUSE DOOMED LONG ERE HE HEFTED HIS MACE!

I HAVE YET TO BE DEFEATED, TYR, BY MERE WORDS.



NEARBY, WITH FIERY GUNGNIR, ODIN LAYS WASTE TO A HORDE OF WOLFLINGS...

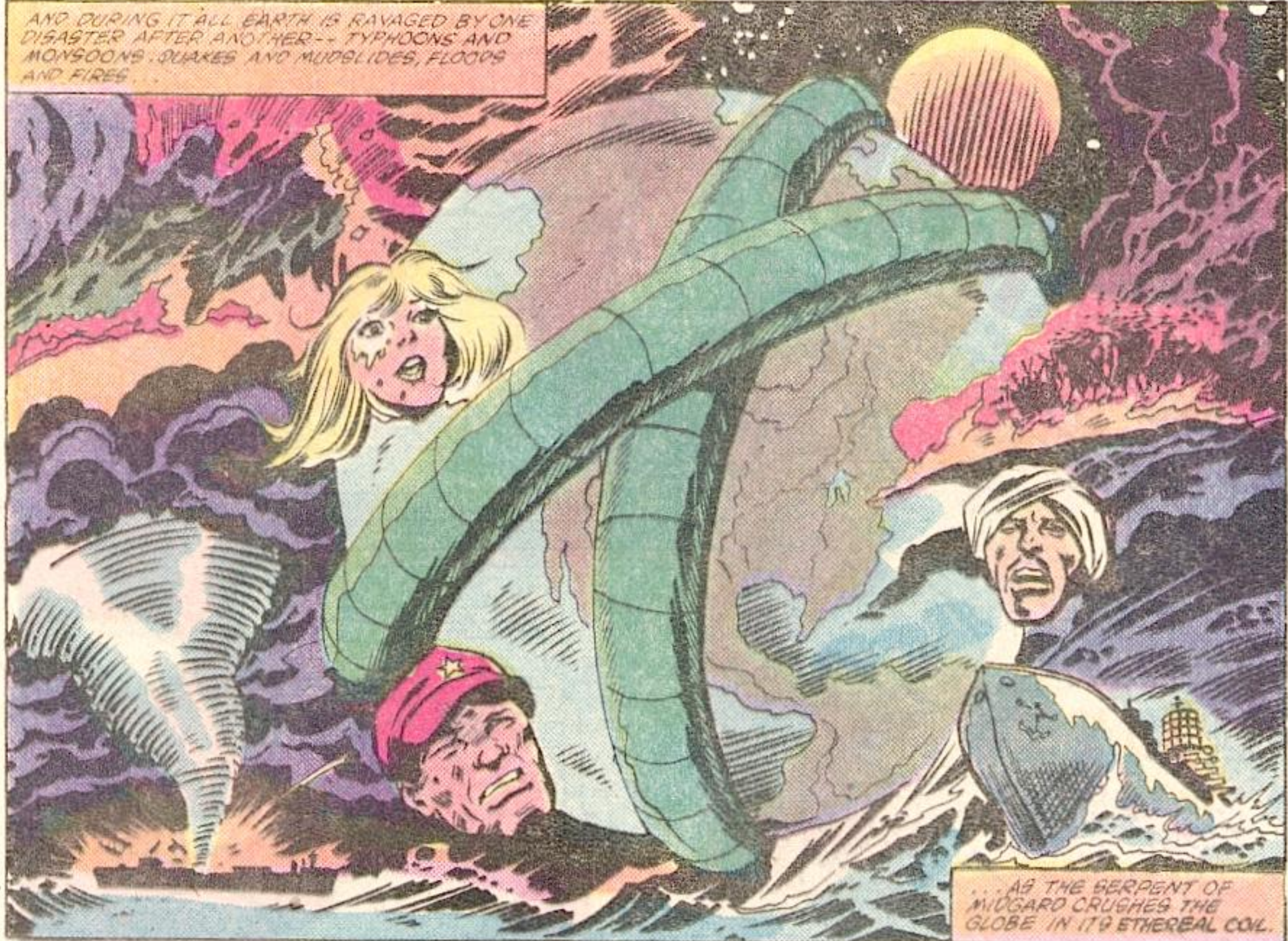
NOR SHALL YE BE DEFEATED, HOGUN, BY WORD OR DEED -- ONCE I REACH THY SIDE!



ONWARD, BALDER -- FOR ASGARD!

AYE, SIF -- FOR ASGARD AND MIDGARD!

AND DURING IT ALL EARTH IS RAVAGED BY ONE DISASTER AFTER ANOTHER-- TYPHOONS AND MONSOONS, QUAKES AND MUDSLIDES, FLOODS AND FIRES.



... AS THE SERPENT OF MIDGARD CRUSHES THE GLOBE IN ITS ETHEREAL COIL.



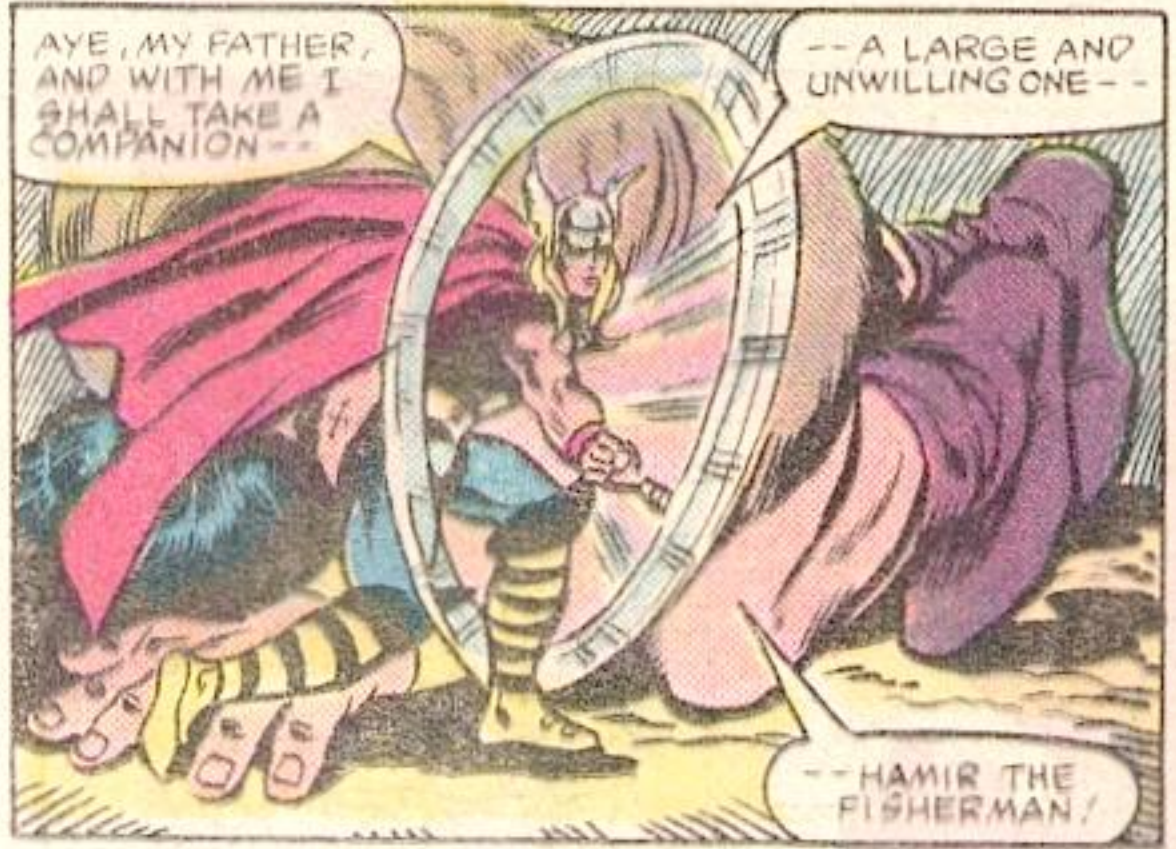
'TIS FUTILE, ODIN! EVEN IF OUR BATTLE IS WON, MIDGARD SHALL BE LOST!



I MUST VENTURE TO AGGARD AND DEAL WITH THE SERPENT--ERE IT CRUSHES THIS SPHERE!



THEN WE SHALL FIGHT ON IN THY ABSENCE, MY SON! GO WITH SPEED AND RETURN WHEN THOU CANST!



AYE, MY FATHER, AND WITH ME I SHALL TAKE A COMPANION--

-- A LARGE AND UNWILLING ONE--

-- HAMIR THE FISHERMAN!



THUS, BY THE POWER OF ENCHANTED MJDLNIR, THOR TRAVERSES THE LENGTH OF THE SERPENT TO ITS ROOT...

... AGGARD-- THE SHINING REALM NOW BEREFT OF ITS RULING GODS.

ONCE THERE, THOR SWIFTLY STREAKS TO HAMIR'S ABODE ON A FJORD NEAR THE DARK SEA...



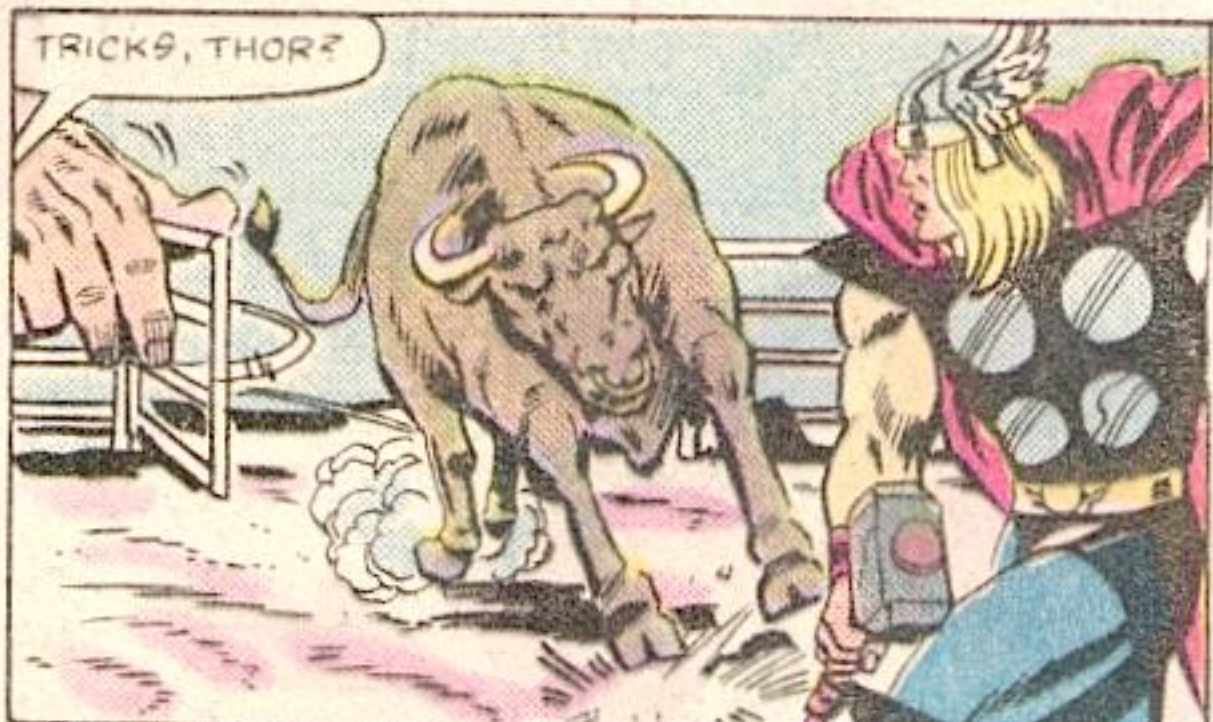
NOW, HAMIR -- THOU WILT TAKE ME OUT ON THY SHIP INTO THE SEA OF ETERNAL DARKNESS -- WHERE I SHALL FIGHT FOR THE SERPENT OF MIDGARD!

VERY WELL, THOR -- YOU'VE DEFEATED ME SOUNDLY IN FAIR FIGHT, AND I AM FOR THE NONCE BOUND TO THY THRALL...



BUT FIRST I MUST PREPARE FOR THE TREACHEROUS VOYAGE.

NO TRICKS, HAMIR, OR--



TRICKS, THOR?

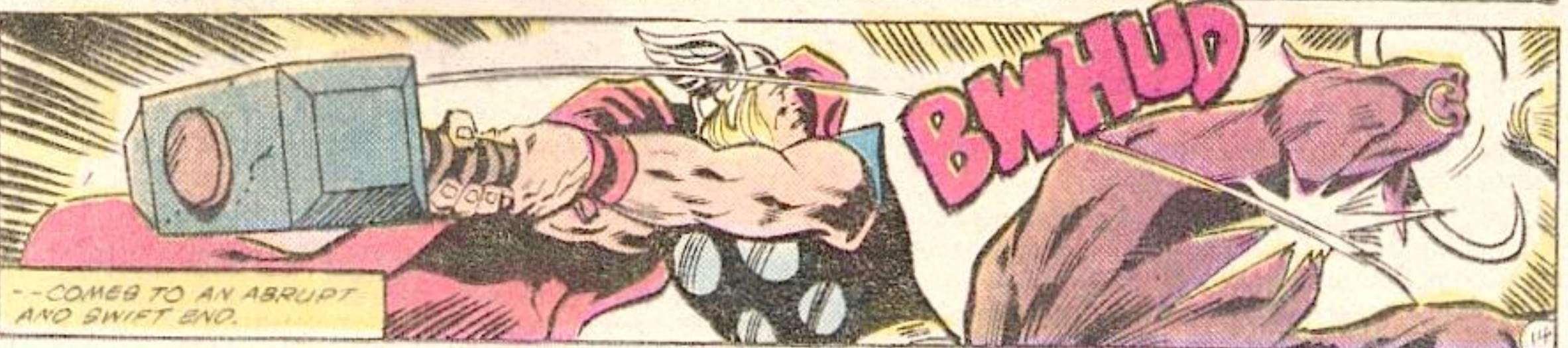


WHY, SUCH WOULD NEVER ENTER MY MIND!



HA HA HA HA

BUT THE GIANT'S ROARING LAUGHTER--



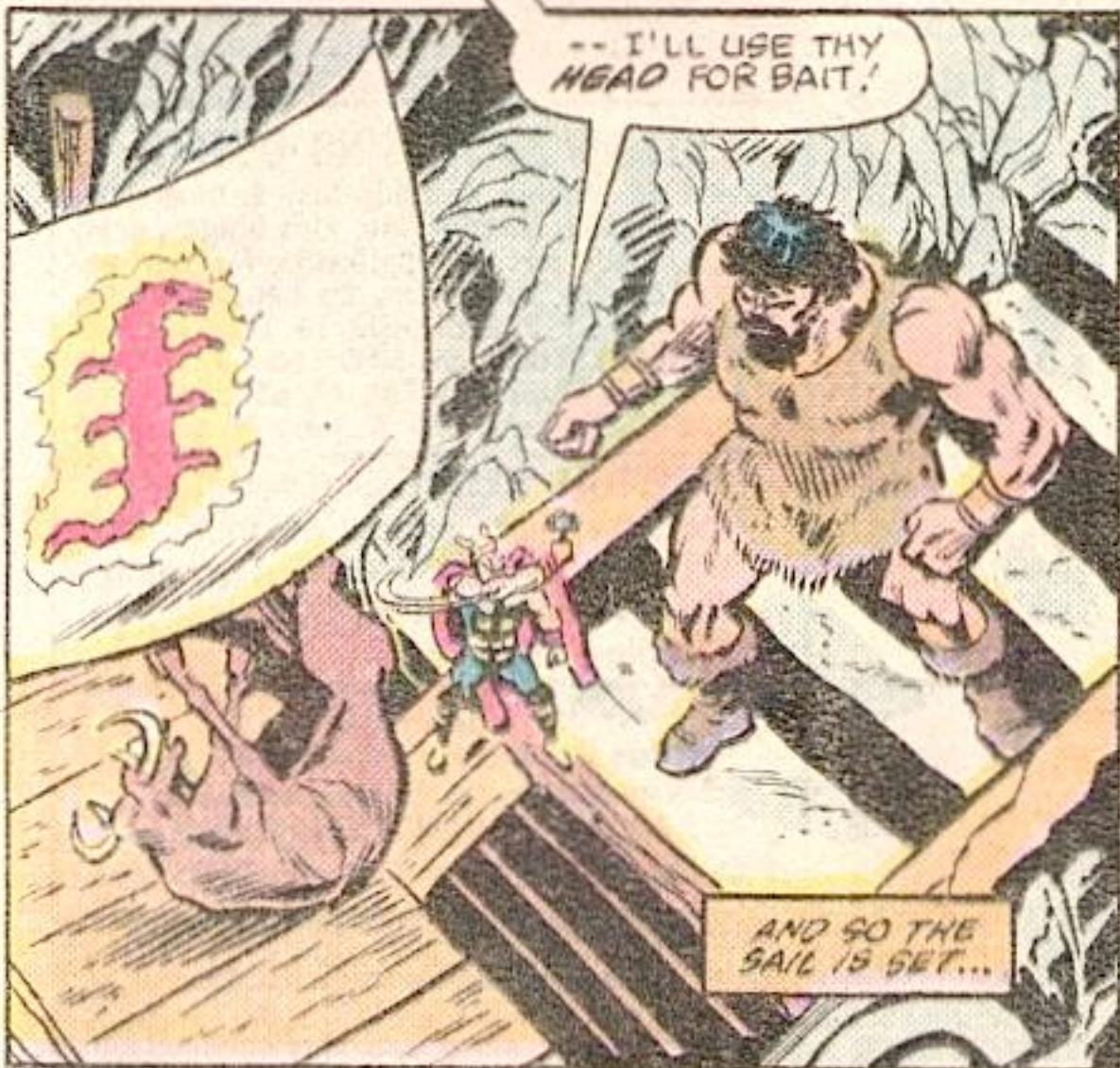
-- COMES TO AN ARRUP AND SWIFT END.

I AM PLEASED YOU WERE MERELY PROVIDING ME WITH THE BAIT, HAMIR... AND NOT ATTEMPTING TRICKERY.



BUT SHOULDST THOU CHANGE THY MIND AND ATTEMPT ANY SERIOUS DECEIT--

-- I'LL USE THY HEAD FOR BAIT!



AND SO THE SAIL IS SET...

... AND THEY GLIDE OUT THROUGH THE MAJESTIC FJORD TO THE VERY EDGE OF THE OCEAN--

-- THENCE INTO THE YAWNING VOID 'TWIXT ASGARD AND MIDGARD.



AND THERE, THE SHIP SAILS ON, AND EVER ON...

... UNTIL --

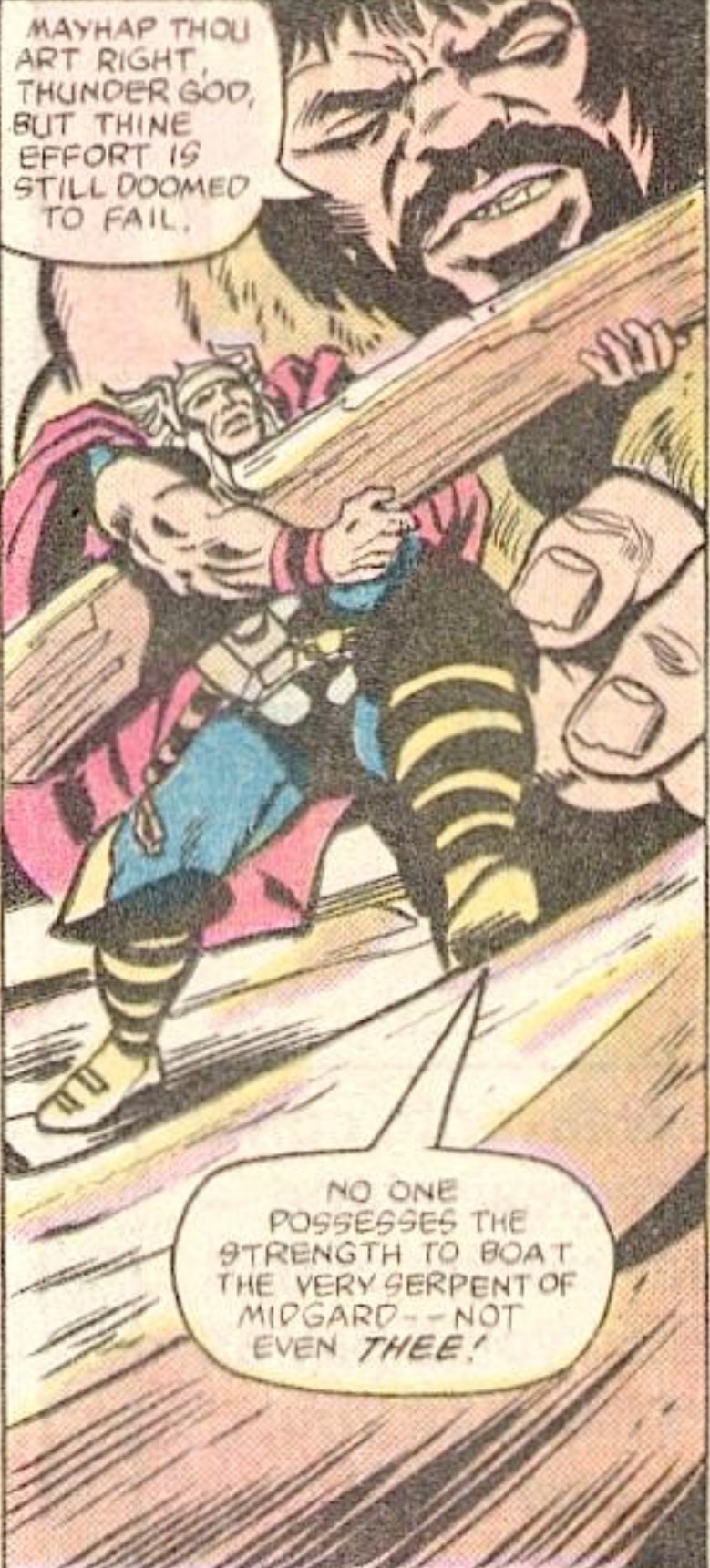
NOW HAMIR, THOU SHALT SEE A DEMONSTRATION OF THE PRIME WEAKNESS AFFLICTING THEE AND THY KIND...



'TIS CALLED GREED.

AND THE SERPENT, NOT CONTENT WITH A WHOLE WORLD, IS HOOKED.





MAYHAP THOU ART RIGHT, THUNDER GOD, BUT THINE EFFORT IS STILL DOOMED TO FAIL.

NO ONE POSSESSES THE STRENGTH TO BOAT THE VERY SERPENT OF MIDGARD-- NOT EVEN THEE!



YOU THINK SO, HAMIR?

WHAT DOES A MERE GIANT--



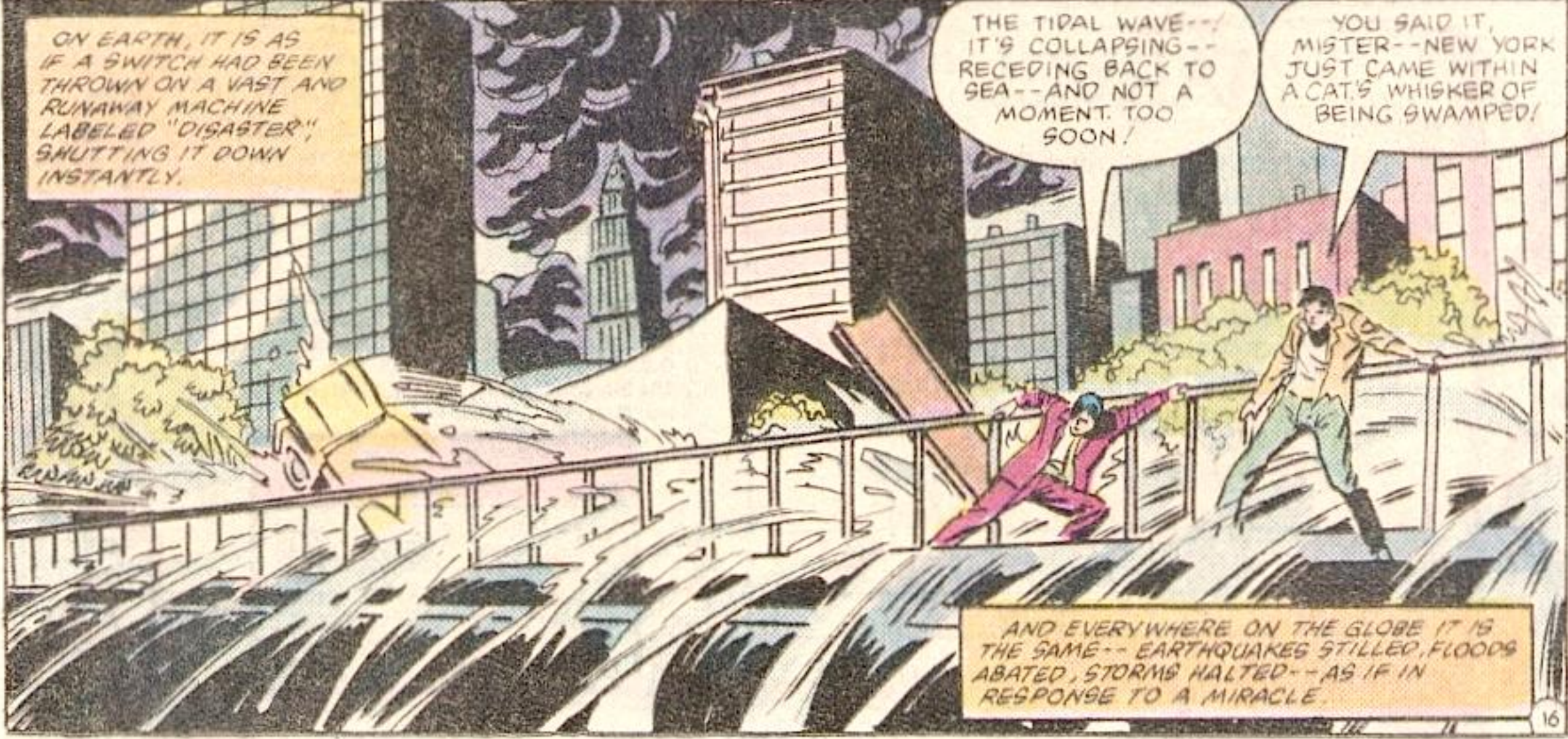
-- KNOW ABOUT STRENGTH?

THUS ANGERED BY HAMIR'S SCOFFING, THOR STRUGGLES WITH EVER GREATER DETERMINATION.

...AND WITH THE INDOMITABLE STRENGTH AND WILL OF ONE BORN... A GOD!



ULTIMATELY, THE SERPENT'S GRASP IS SHATTERED.

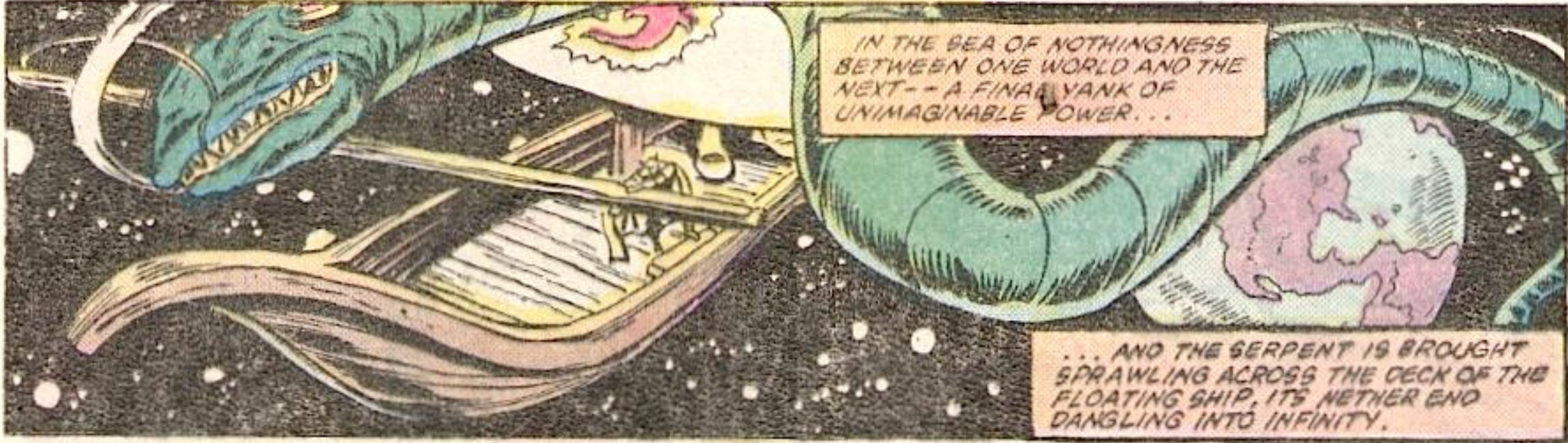


ON EARTH, IT IS AS IF A SWITCH HAD BEEN THROWN ON A VAST AND RUNAWAY MACHINE LABELED "DISASTER", SHUTTING IT DOWN INSTANTLY.

THE TIDAL WAVE--! IT'S COLLAPSING-- RECEDING BACK TO SEA-- AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!

YOU SAID IT, MISTER-- NEW YORK JUST CAME WITHIN A CAT'S WHISKER OF BEING SWAMPED!

AND EVERYWHERE ON THE GLOBE IT IS THE SAME-- EARTHQUAKES STILLED, FLOODS ABATED, STORMS HALTED-- AS IF IN RESPONSE TO A MIRACLE.



IN THE SEA OF NOTHINGNESS BETWEEN ONE WORLD AND THE NEXT-- A FINAL YANK OF UNIMAGINABLE POWER...

... AND THE SERPENT IS BROUGHT SPRAWLING ACROSS THE DECK OF THE FLOATING SHIP, ITS NETHER END DANGLING INTO INFINITY.



THOR! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT WOULD BE THE GOLDEN-HAIRED ODIN-SON...

I HAVE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS ENCOUNTER-- AND NOW, LET IT BEGIN!

THE SERPENT SNAPS ITS JAWS, SWALLOWING BAIT AND HOOK ALIKE...



... AND THOR RISES, LIKE A BOLT OF CRIMSON AND BLUE, WHIRLING MJOLNIR THE DESTROYER BEFORE HIM!

HERE IN THE VOID, WHERE SPACE AND TIME KNOW NO NATURAL BOUNDS, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY HOW LONG THE BATTLE ENDURES...



A SPLIT SECOND ON EARTH CAN HERE SEEM AN ETERNITY...

THOOM



ON LONG ISLAND, ANOTHER BATTLE STILL RAGES...

FIGHT ON, HOGUN-- I WILL SOON REACH THY SIDE!

AYE-- BUT WHAT OF THOR, ALL-FATHER? WE CANNOT MAINTAIN SUCH FURY FOREVER! OUR FOES ARE FRESH-- WHILE WE GROW WEAKER BY THE MOMENT! MIMIR LIED, CURSE HIM, WHEN HE CLAIMED WE WOULD HAVE NO NEED FOR THE GOLDEN APPLES HERE ON MIDGARD!



KEEP THE FAITH, GRIM ONE-- THOR SHALL YET PREVAIL! SEE YOU NOT THAT THE STORM HAS ABATED?

AYE, THOR HATH SUCCEEDED ALREADY-- OR AT LEAST DISTRACTED THE SERPENT FROM ITS RAVAGING OF THIS REALM!

FIGHT ON, GODS OF ASGARD-- AND TAKE HEART THAT THE THUNDERER SHALL SOON RETURN!

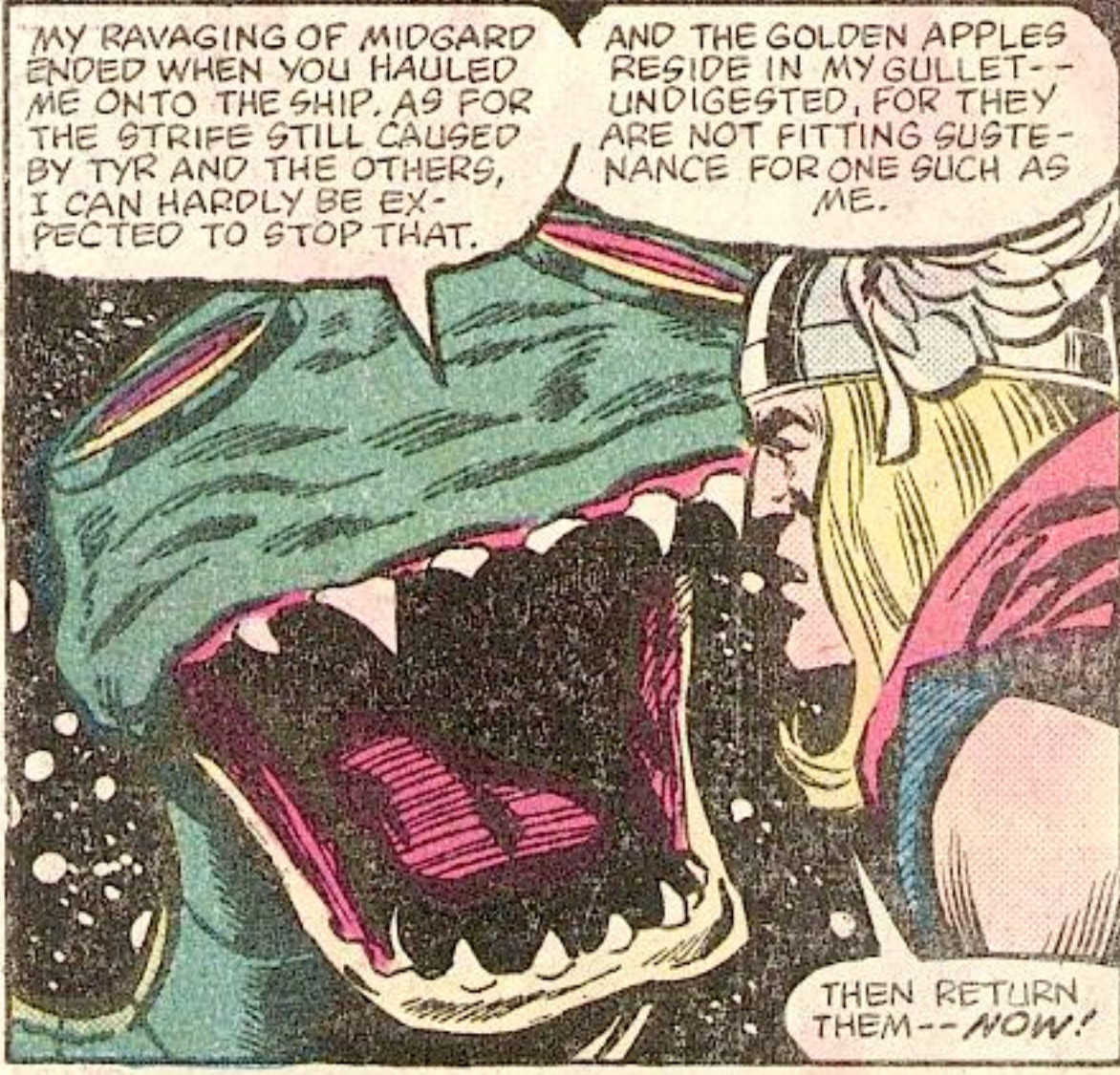


INDEED, ONLY MOMENTS LATER, THOR'S CONTEST COMES TO AN END...

ENOUGH, ODIN-SON-- I LOSE INTEREST IN THIS BATTLE WHICH CAN NEVER END.

NEITHER OF US CAN BEAT THE OTHER-- THAT MUCH IS CLEAR-- AND TO CONTINUE IS FOLLY, NOW WHAT IS IT YOU WANT?

AN END TO THE STRIFE ON MIDGARD-- AND RETURN OF THE STOLEN APPLES.



MY RAVAGING OF MIDGARD ENDED WHEN YOU HAILED ME ONTO THE SHIP, AS FOR THE STRIFE STILL CAUSED BY TYR AND THE OTHERS, I CAN HARDLY BE EXPECTED TO STOP THAT.

AND THE GOLDEN APPLES RESIDE IN MY GULLET-- UNDIGESTED, FOR THEY ARE NOT FITTING SUSTENANCE FOR ONE SUCH AS ME.

THEN RETURN THEM-- NOW!



AND SO THE APPLES OF IMMORTALITY ARE DISGORGED--

-- COLLECTED IN ONE OF HAMIR'S FISHING NETS --

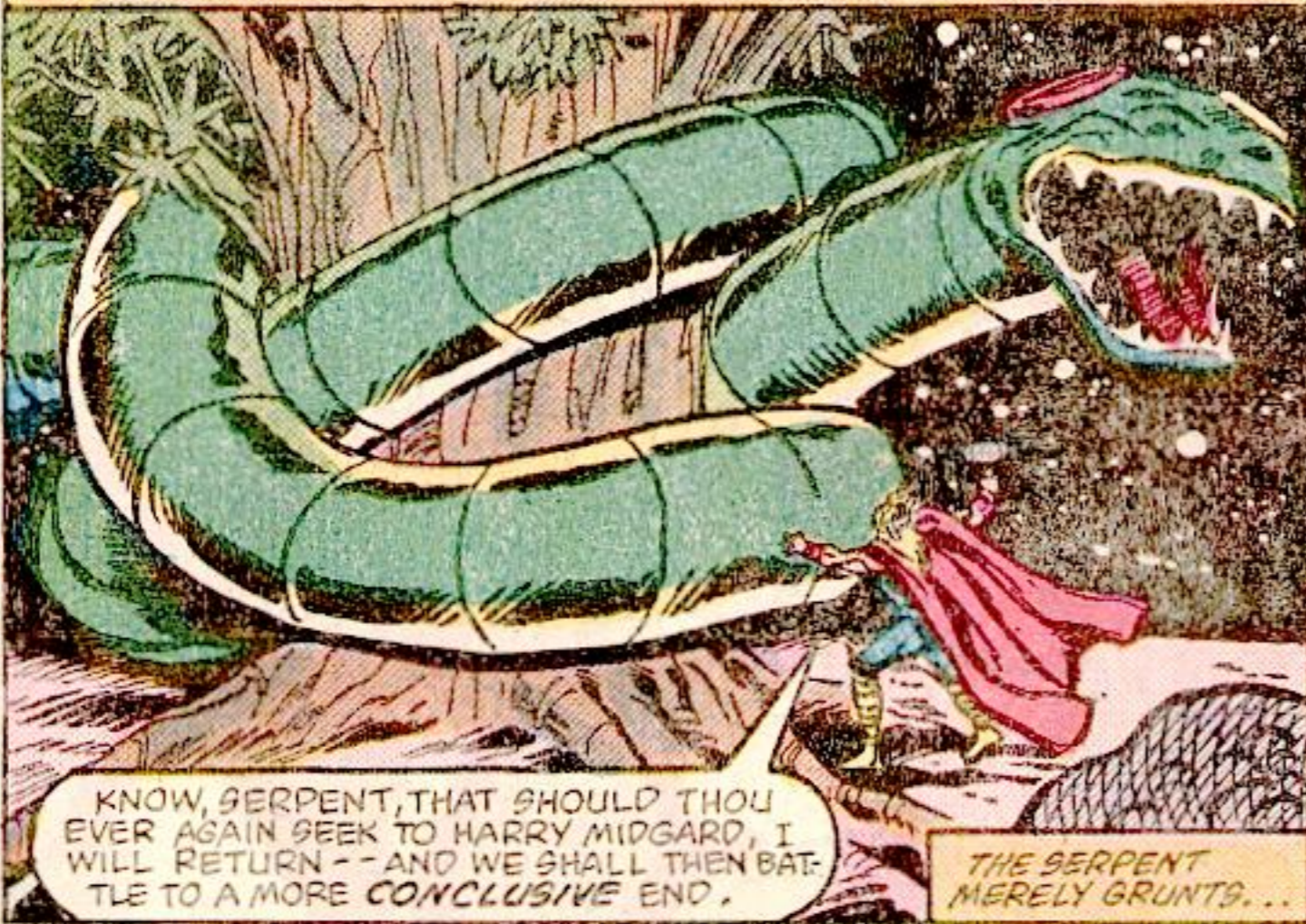


-- AND TRANSPORTED, WITH THE BEATEN SERPENT TO THE WORLD TREE YGGDRASIL...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN TO DO WITH ME, ODIN-SON?

I MEAN TO RESTORE THINE AMBITIONS TO THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE, SERPENT-- A PLACE OF FUTILITY.

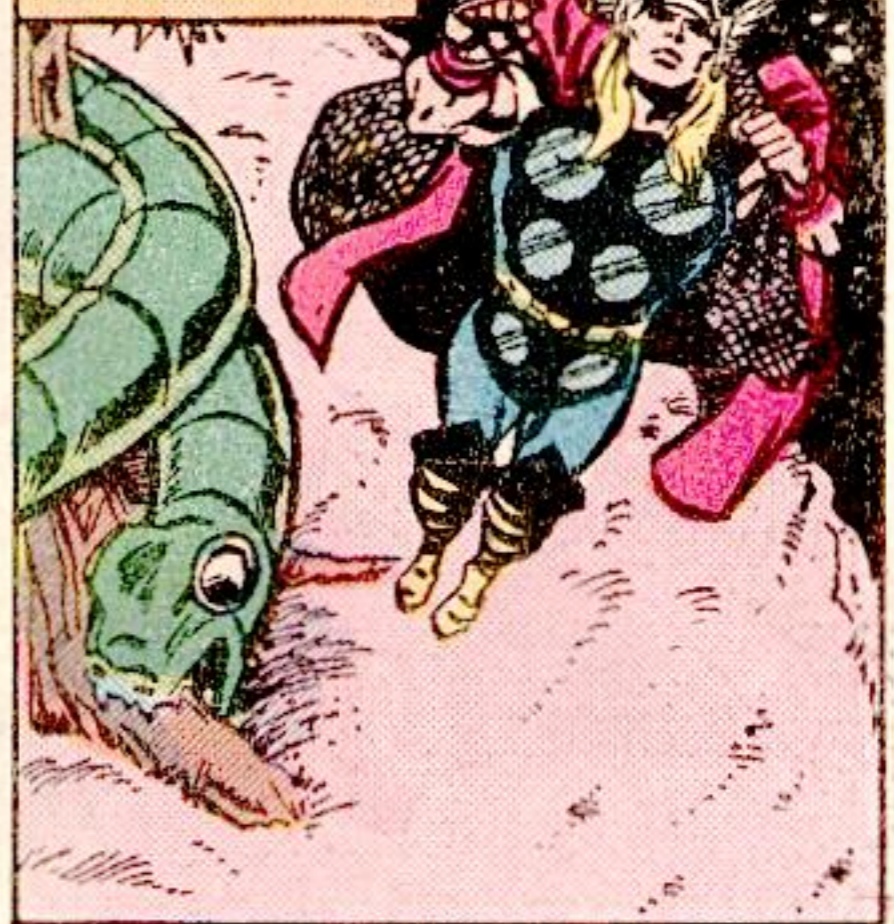
TURNING A DEAF EAR TO THE SERPENT'S MANY PROTESTS, THOR BINDS HIM TO THE TREE'S ROOTS, THEREBY LASHING HIM TO THE COSMIC AXIS...



KNOW, SERPENT, THAT SHOULD THOU EVER AGAIN SEEK TO HARRY MIDGARD, I WILL RETURN -- AND WE SHALL THEN BATTLE TO A MORE CONCLUSIVE END.

THE SERPENT MERELY GRUNTS...

... THEN RESUMES HIS LONG-INTERRUPTED TASK OF GNAWING YGGDRASIL'S THIRD ROOT.



ON EARTH, THOR'S RETURN IS LIKE A THUNDERCLAP--AND HIS WORDS ARE LOUD AND BOLD, STILLING THE FRAY...



HEAR ME, FAITHFUL OF ASGARD! THE GOLDEN APPLES ARE AGAIN THINE!

YOU MAY NOW RETURN TO ASGARD, THERE TO RESUME THINE IMMORTAL STATUS!

WHAT--?!

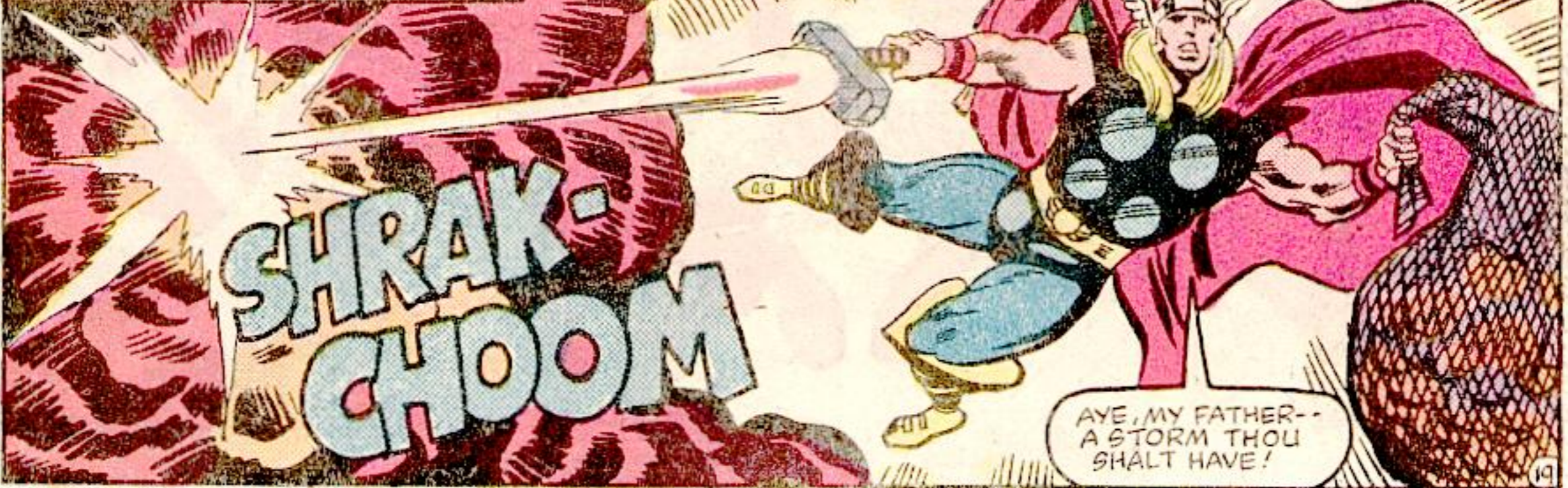
A YE, MY SON-- BUT FIRST WE MUST WIN THE BATTLE HERE ON MIDGARD--ERE ENTERTAINING ANY THOUGHTS OF ASGARD!



AND METHINKS THE WEATHER HATH TURNED TOO FAIR FOR SUCH WORK, THOR.

SUMMON YE A STORM TO MATCH THE FIRE IN OUR BLOOD!

AND THE THUNDERER IS NOTHING IF NOT AN OBEDIENT SON...



SHRAK-
CHOOM

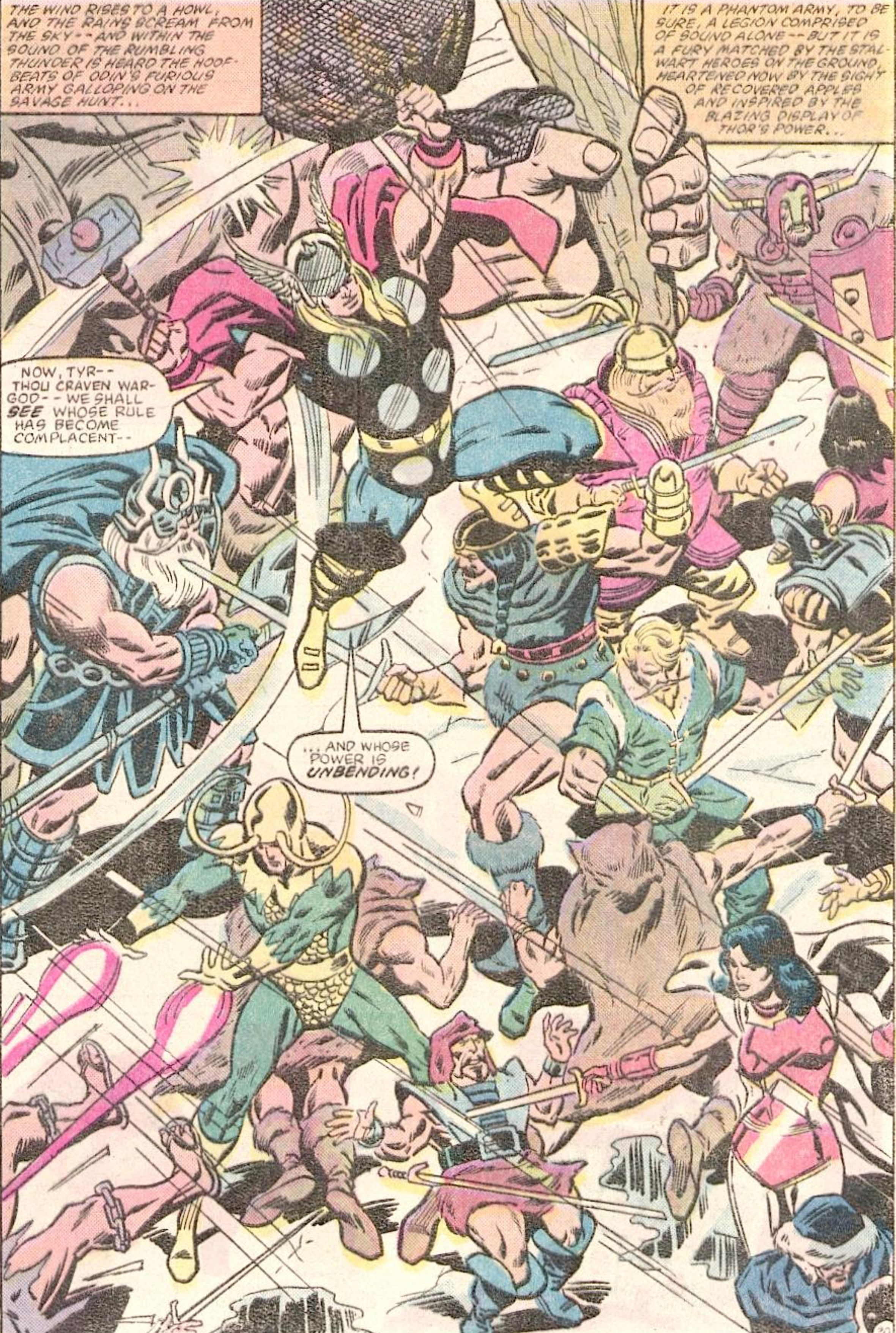
A YE, MY FATHER-- A STORM THOU SHALT HAVE!

THE WIND RISES TO A HOWL,
AND THE RAINS SCREAM FROM
THE SKY-- AND WITHIN THE
SOUND OF THE RUMBLING
THUNDER IS HEARD THE HOOFF-
BEATS OF ODIN'S FURIOUS
ARMY GALLOPING ON THE
SAVAGE HUNT...

IT IS A PHANTOM ARMY, TO BE
SURE, A LEGION COMPRISED
OF SOUND ALONE-- BUT IT IS
A FURY MATCHED BY THE STAL-
WART HEROES ON THE GROUND,
HEARTENED NOW BY THE SIGHT
OF RECOVERED APPLES
AND INSPIRED BY THE
BLAZING DISPLAY OF
THOR'S POWER...

NOW, TYR--
THOU CRAVEN WAR-
GOD-- WE SHALL
SEE WHOSE RULE
HAS BECOME
COMPLACENT--

... AND WHOSE
POWER IS
UNBENDING!

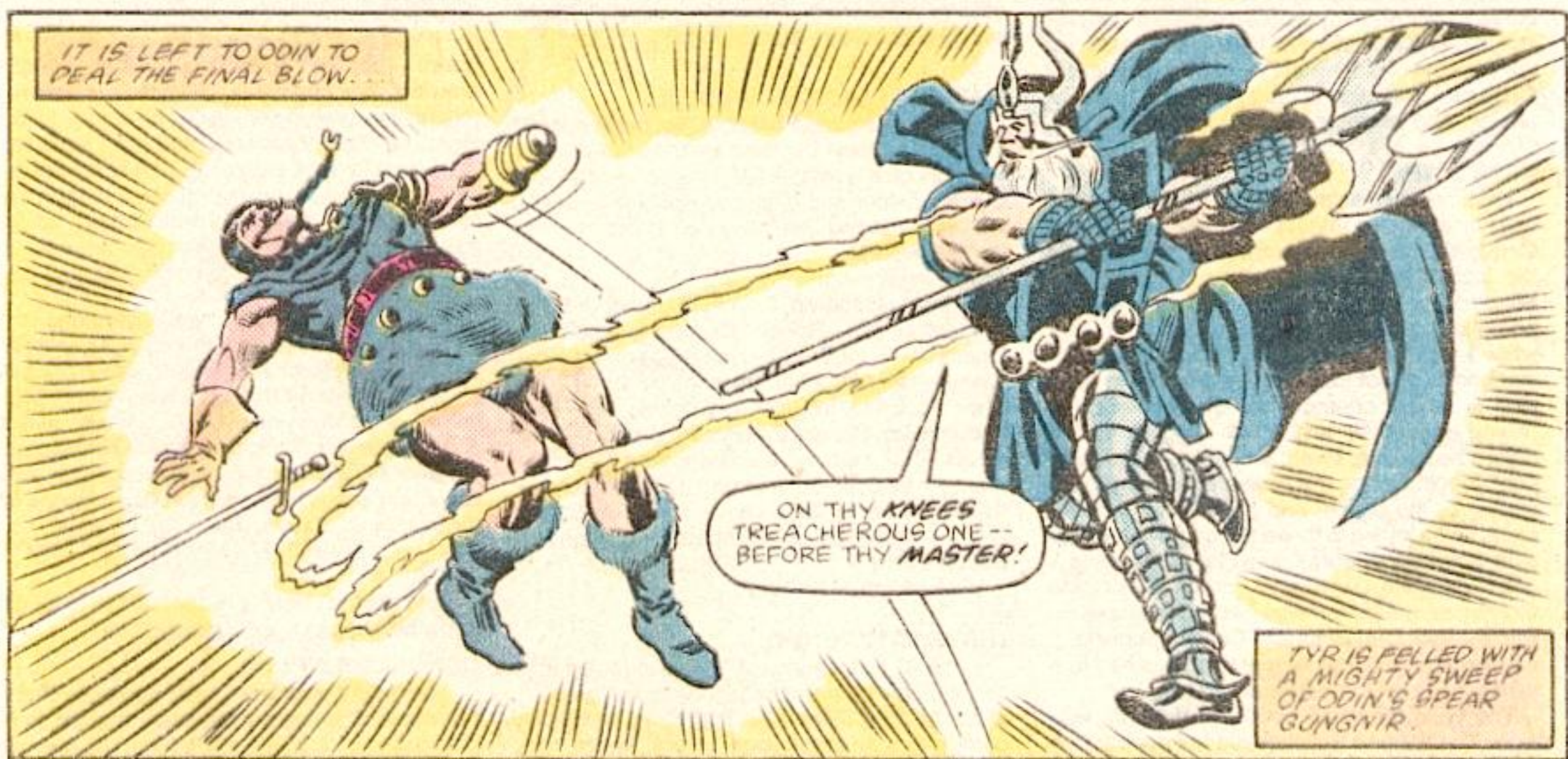




DO... DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

YEAH... BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL ADMIT IT LATER-- NOT WHEN I GO HOME TO THE REAL WORLD.

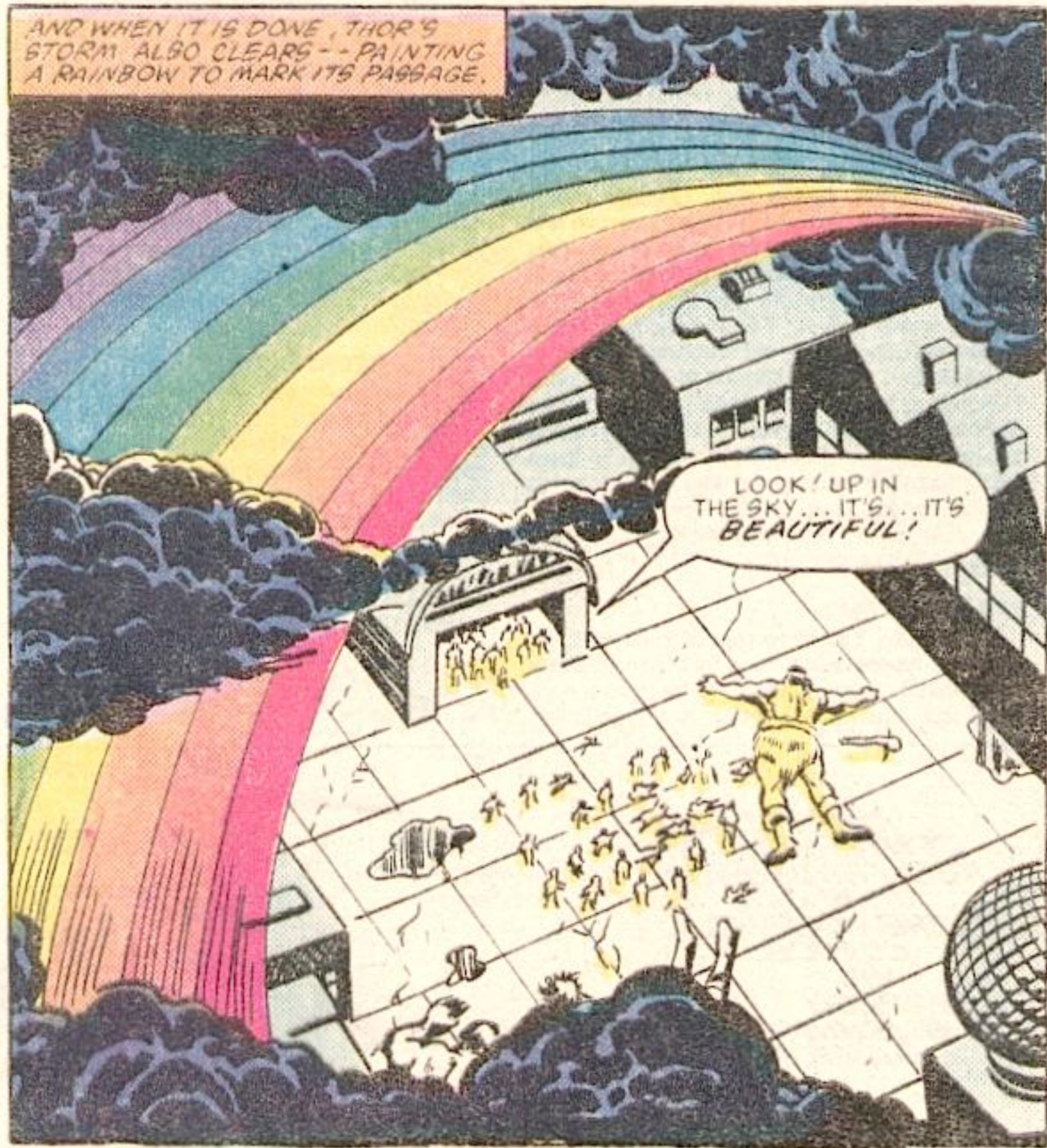
SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT BY TOMORROW... WE WON'T EVEN MENTION IT TO EACH OTHER.



IT IS LEFT TO ODIN TO DEAL THE FINAL BLOW.

ON THY *KNEES* TREACHEROUS ONE -- BEFORE THY *MASTER!*

TYR IS FELLED WITH A MIGHTY SWEEP OF ODIN'S SPEAR GUNGNIR.



AND WHEN IT IS DONE, THOR'S STORM ALSO CLEARS -- PAINTING A RAINBOW TO MARK ITS PASSAGE.

LOOK! UP IN THE SKY... IT'S... IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

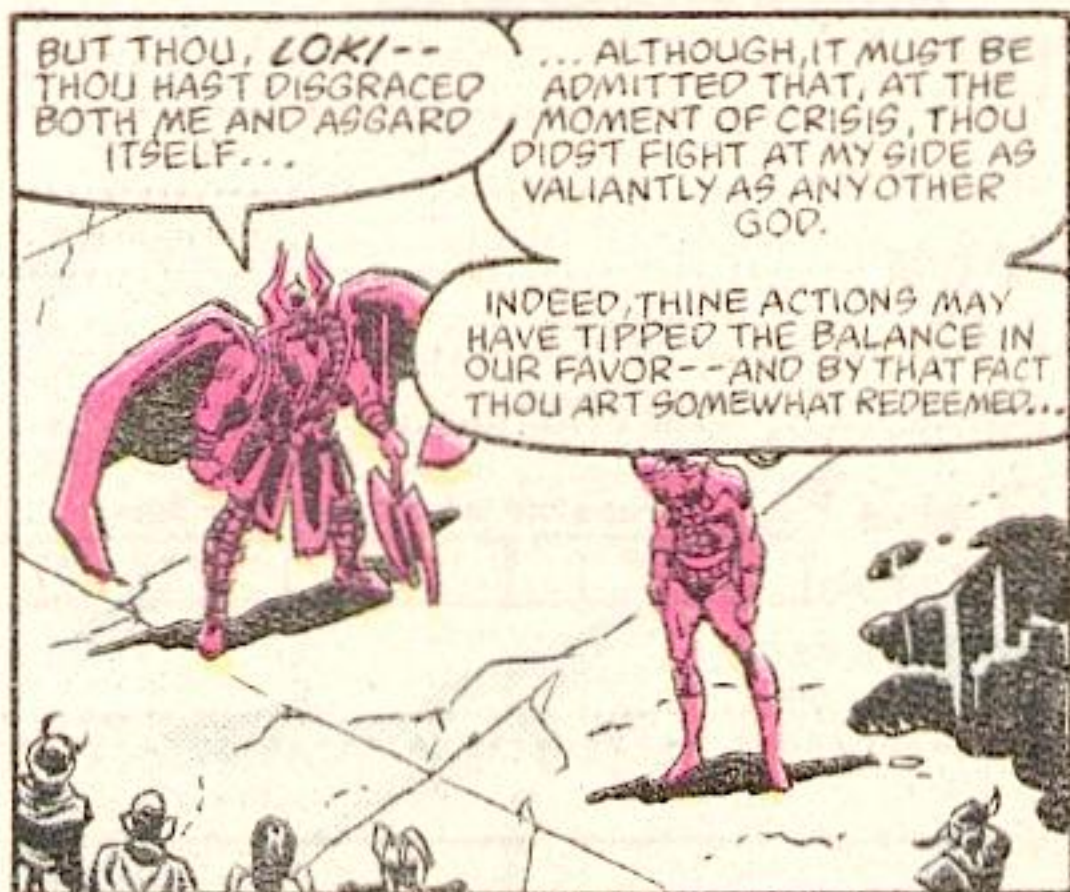


THY LONG ORDEAL IS FINALLY ENDED, MORTALS -- AND YOU HAVE BEEN GRANTED A GLIMPSE OF THE PATHWAY TO HEAVEN...

... THE BRIDGE TO SHINING ASSGARD ABOVE!



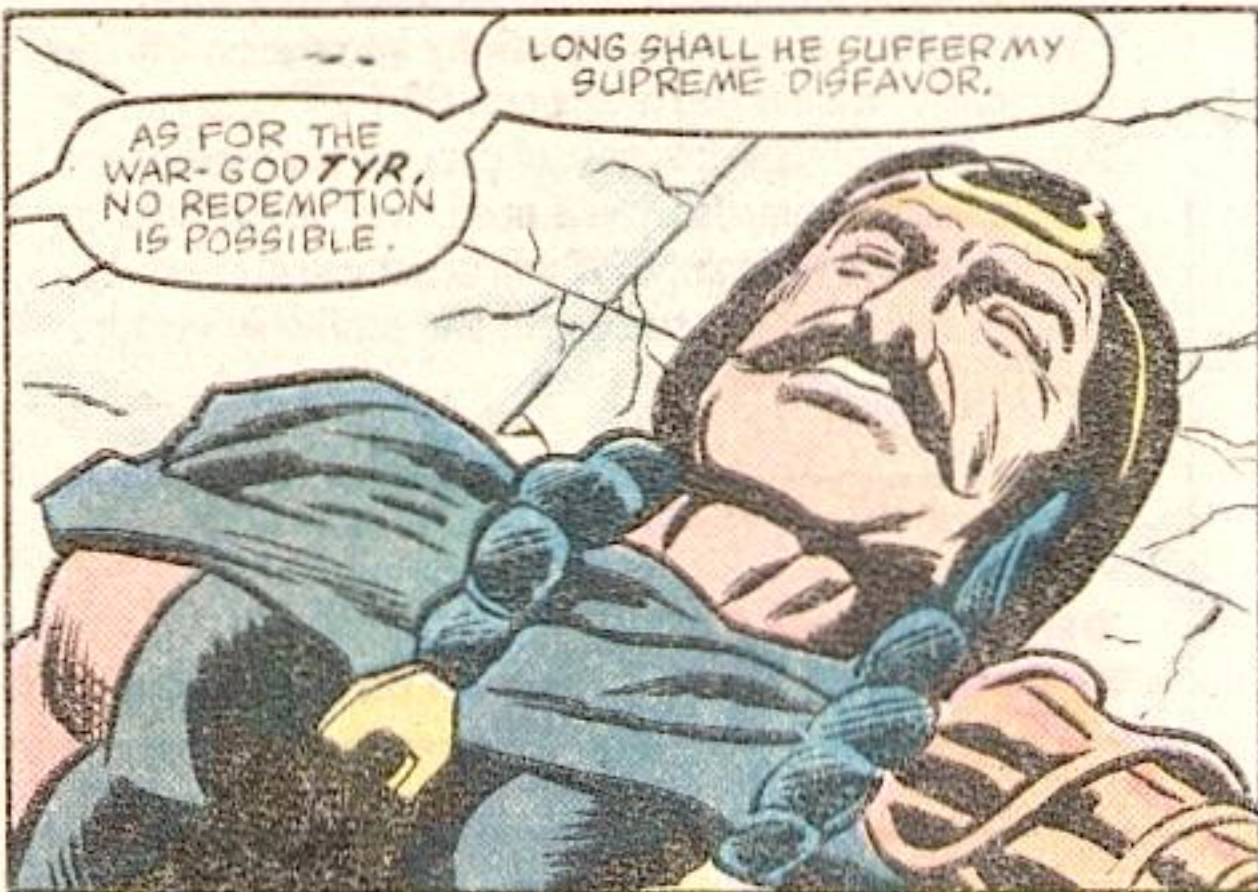
AND AFTER WITNESSING THE VALOR OF A MORTAL WOMAN I BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND, AT LEAST A BIT, THINE ABIDING PASSION FOR THIS LOWER REALM.



BUT THOU, LOKI-- THOU HAST DISGRACED BOTH ME AND ASGARD ITSELF...

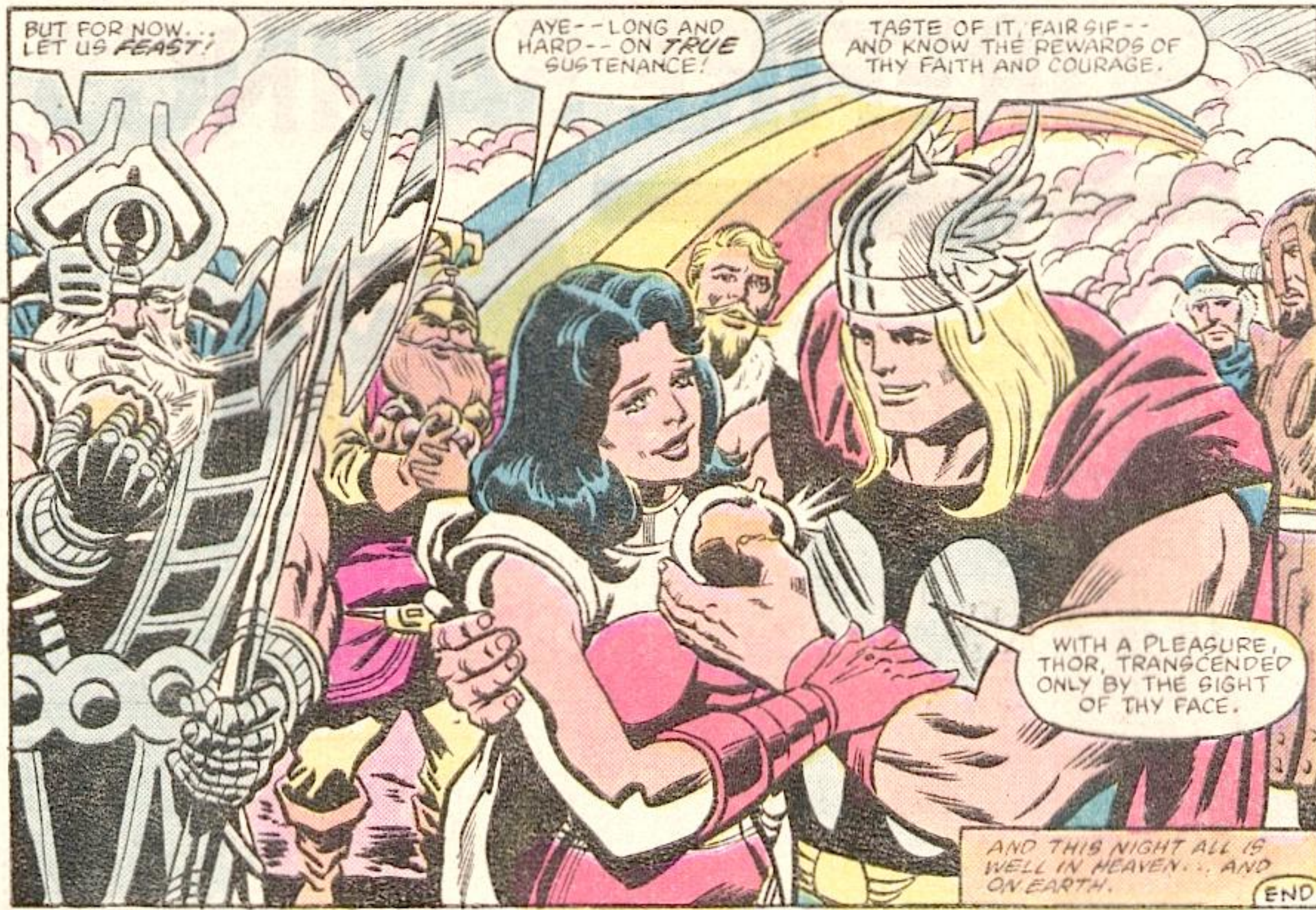
... ALTHOUGH, IT MUST BE ADMITTED THAT, AT THE MOMENT OF CRISIS, THOU DIDST FIGHT AT MY SIDE AS VALIANTLY AS ANY OTHER GOD.

INDEED, THINE ACTIONS MAY HAVE TIPPED THE BALANCE IN OUR FAVOR-- AND BY THAT FACT THOU ART SOMEWHAT REDEEMED...



LONG SHALL HE SUFFER MY SUPREME DISFAVOR.

AS FOR THE WAR-GOD TYR, NO REDEMPTION IS POSSIBLE.



BUT FOR NOW... LET US FEAST!

AYE-- LONG AND HARD-- ON TRUE SUSTENANCE!

TASTE OF IT, FAIR SIF-- AND KNOW THE REWARDS OF THY FAITH AND COURAGE.

WITH A PLEASURE, THOR, TRANSCENDED ONLY BY THE SIGHT OF THY FACE.

AND THIS NIGHT ALL IS WELL IN HEAVEN... AND ON EARTH.

END