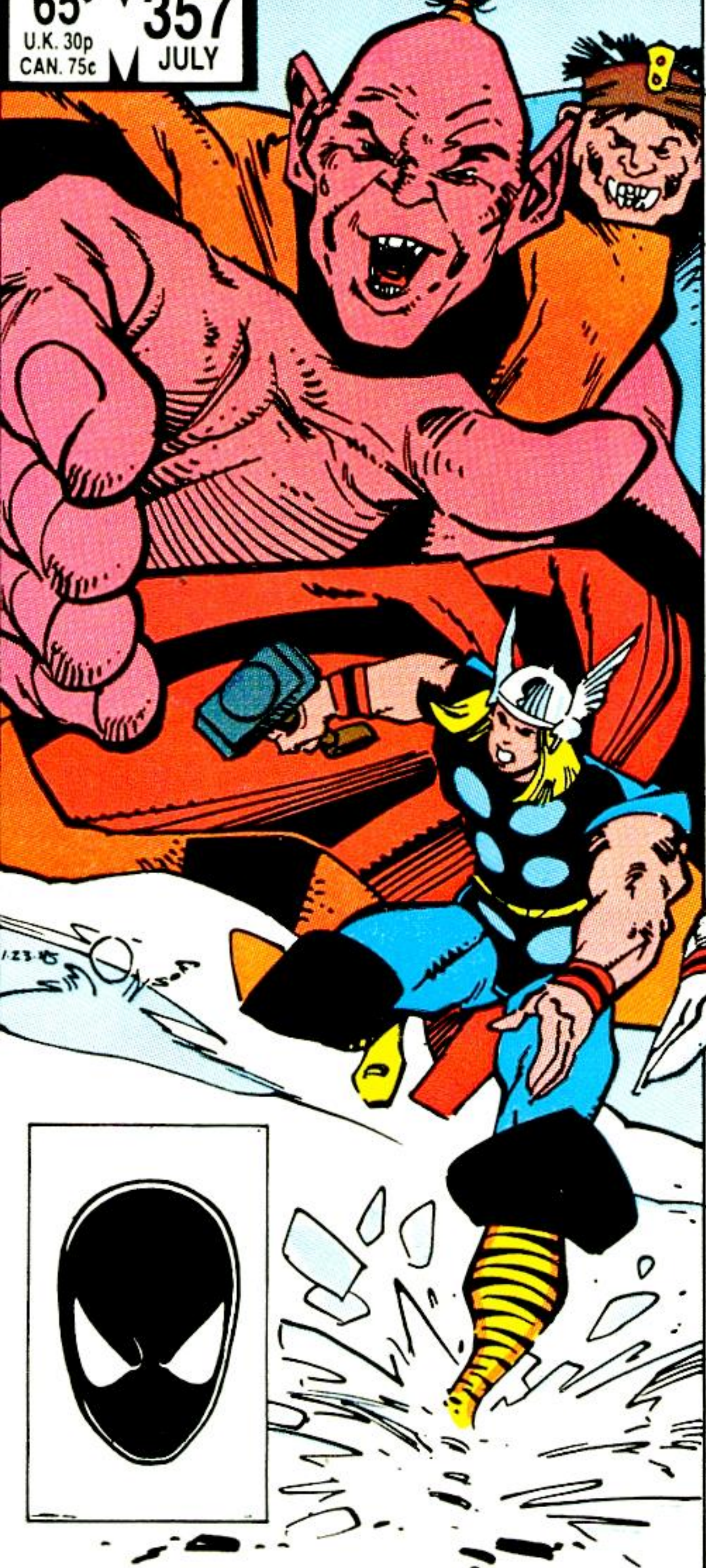




# the mighty THOR

65c  
U.K. 30p  
CAN. 75c

357  
JULY



...and  
BETA  
RAY  
BILL,  
TOO!

STAN LEE  
PRESENTS

# the MIGHTY THOR

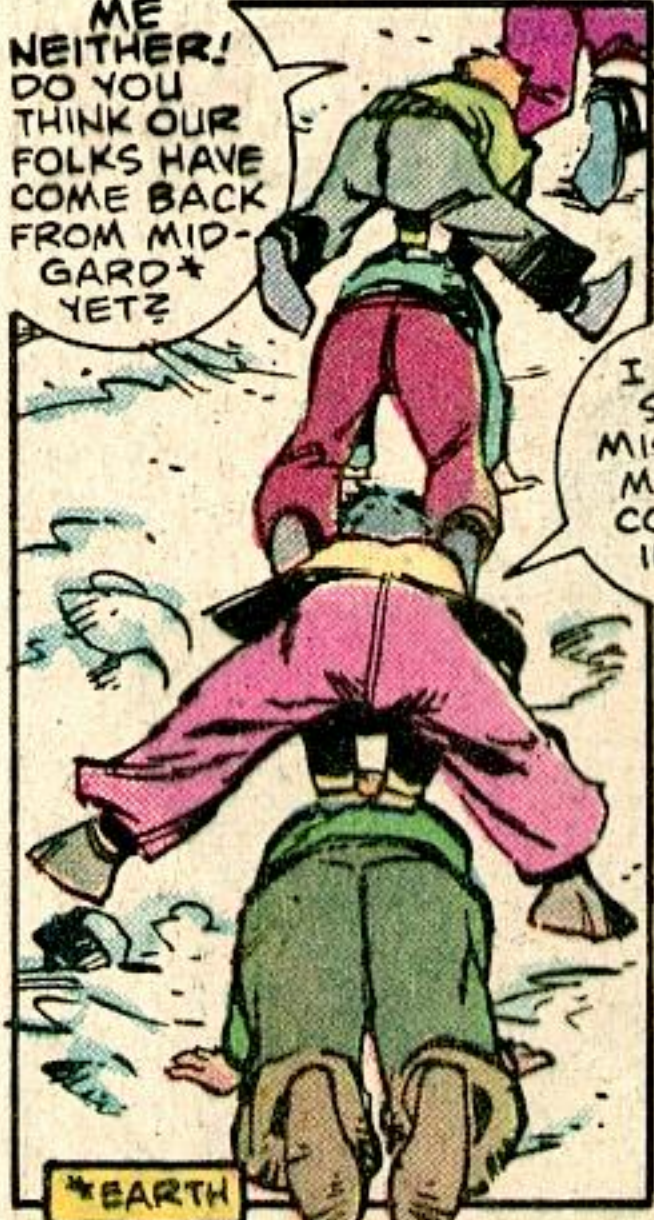
**A NEW  
DEAL FROM  
AN OLD  
DECK OR THE CREDIT  
CARD SOLDIERS**

IN THE FAR REACHES  
OF ASGARD, THE  
CHILDREN OF THE  
GODS DASH THROUGH  
THE SNOW...

... AS THE FROST  
GIANTS, ENEMIES  
OF THE GODS,  
WATCH WITH  
HUNGRY EYES.

BOY,  
I CAN'T  
WAIT  
TO GET  
HOME!

THOR® Vol. 1, No. 357, July, 1985. (ISSN 0274-533X) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright ©1985 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 65¢ per copy in the U.S. and 75¢ in Canada. Subscription rate \$7.80 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, \$9.80. Printed in the U.S.A. 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. 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. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.



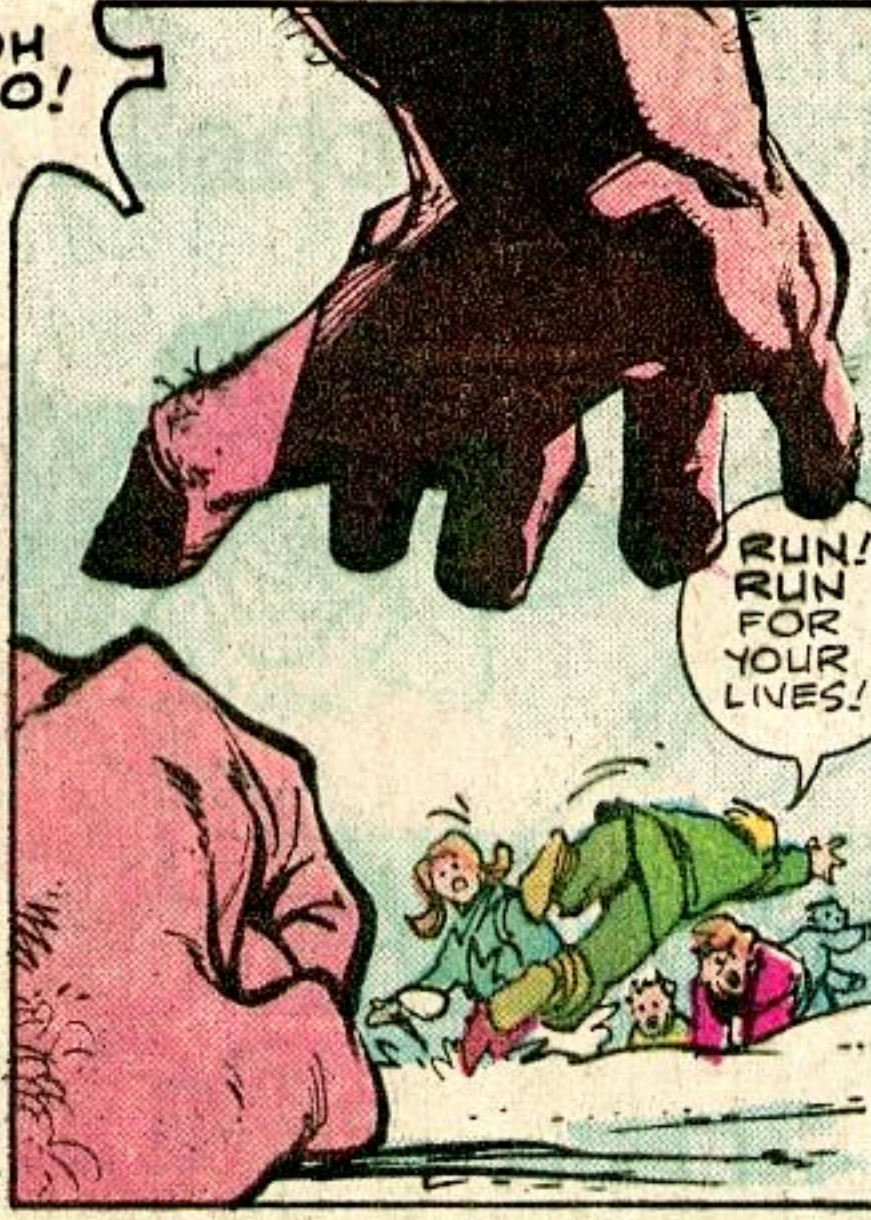
ME NEITHER! DO YOU THINK OUR FOLKS HAVE COME BACK FROM MID-GARD\* YET?

I HOPE SO! I MISS MY MOM'S COOKING!

\*EARTH



C'MON, ARNGRIM! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



OH NO!

RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!



HO! HO! TOO LATE, RABBITS!

AFTER SO MANY DAYS OF ROOTS AND GRUBS, WE FEAST TONIGHT ON FRESH MEAT!

NO LONGER, RABBITS! ODIN, THE ONE-EYED IS GONE!

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. DOES EVERYBODY THINK WE'RE FOOD?

YOU LET US GO OR YOU'LL BE IN BIG TROUBLE!

AND SOON THE GIANTS WILL REIGN SUPREME!



HOW NICE TO SEE THE TRADITIONAL ENEMIES OF ASGARD PLAYING WITH HER CHILDREN!

BUT PERHAPS YOU HAD BEST SET THE CHILDREN DOWN GENTLY, LEST YOUR GREAT HANDS BRUISE THEM UNINTENTIONALLY!!

THOR!

**BARRUM!!!**

YOU WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER, GIANT, NOT TO HAVE SPOKEN OF ODIN BEFORE HIS SON!

**PLAP!**  
**PLAP!**  
**PLAP!**

LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE MJOLNIR RUNG AGAINST THE THICK SKULLS OF MY TRADITIONAL ENEMIES!

TODAY MY HAMMER SHALL SING!

HOLD, THOR.

WHAT, FRIGGA? WOULD YOU HAVE ME SPARE THOSE WRETCHES?

I WOULD, FOSTER SON.

MY HUSBAND, ODIN, IS GONE BEYOND RECALL AND I HAVE HAD MY FILL OF KILLING.

THESE PATHETIC THINGS ARE STARVING. SHALL WE NOT LEAVE A LITTLE OF OUR FOOD FOR THEM TO FIND?

THE GOLDEN CITY IS A LONG WAY OFF AND WE HAVE MANY MILES YET TO TRAVEL.

LET US GRANT THEM PEACE AND BE ON OUR WAY.

IT SHALL BE AS YOU SAY, LADY.

BUT I HOPE I DO NOT LIVE TO REGRET THAT I HELD THE LIVES OF TWO OF OUR ENEMIES IN MY HANDS AND LET THEM GO.

BUT AS THOR WONDERS WHETHER OR NOT HE HAS DONE THE RIGHT THING, WE TURN TO DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN WHERE...



...TWO TOURISTS WANDER THROUGH THE CITY, TAKING IN THE SIGHTS...



... AND DOING A LITTLE SHOPPING.

BILL, LOOK!



WHAT IS IT, MILADY SIFZ?

NOW DON'T BE STUFFY MILORD BETA RAY.



JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE AN ALIEN SPENDING A BRIEF SOJOURN ON EARTH DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T ENJOY YOURSELF.

I HAVE BEEN THE WARRIOR-GUARDIAN OF MY PEOPLE FOR A LONG TIME, SIF.



I HAVE NOT HAD TIME FOR LAUGHTER.

THEN IT'S TIME YOU DID.

AND THESE WOULD BE PERFECT FOR YOU.



I THINK YOU LOOK VERY DISTINGUISHED IN GLASSES.

HMMMM.



I'M NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THIS IS HOW AS-GARDIANS OUGHT TO COMPORT THEMSELVES WHEN THEY'RE VISITING A FOREIGN COUNTRY.

YOU'LL LEARN!

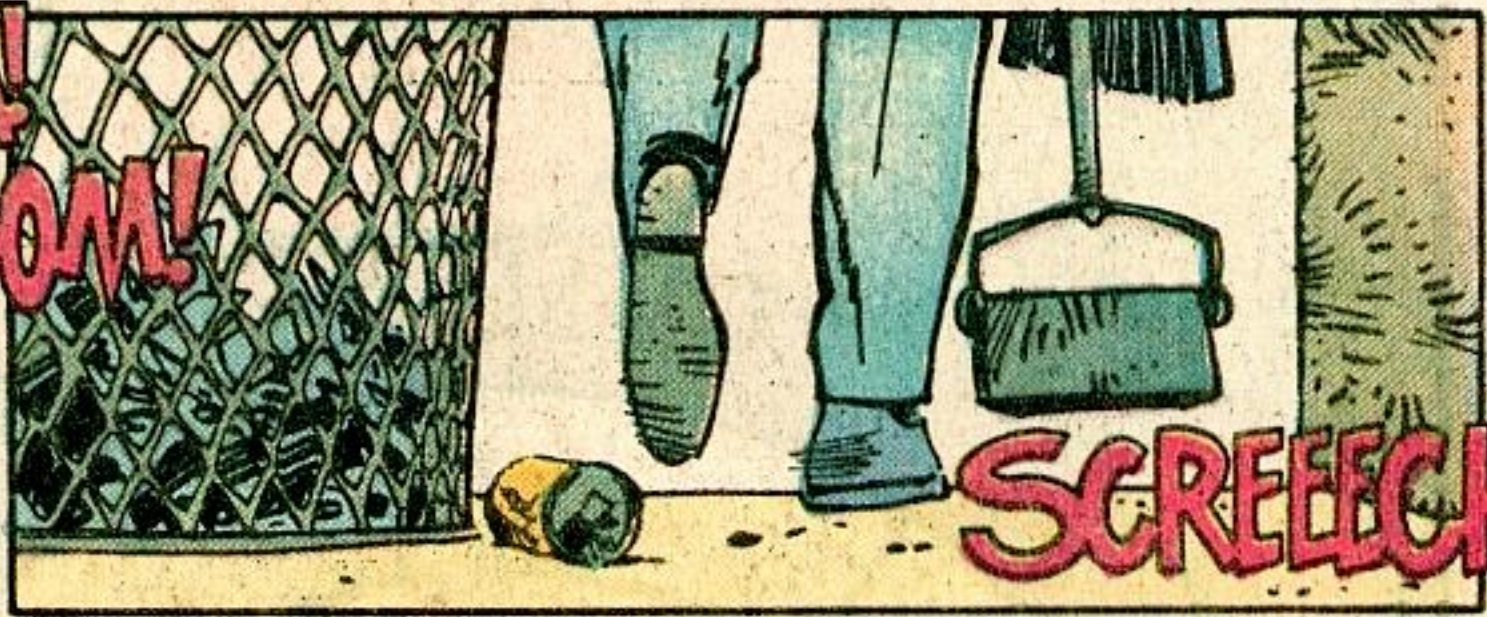
MEANWHILE, ONLY A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM BILL AND SIF AT THE MAIN OFFICE OF THE NEW FEDERAL BANK OF NEW YORK...

BEEP!

HONK!  
HONK!



VROOOM!  
VAROOM!



SCREEECH!



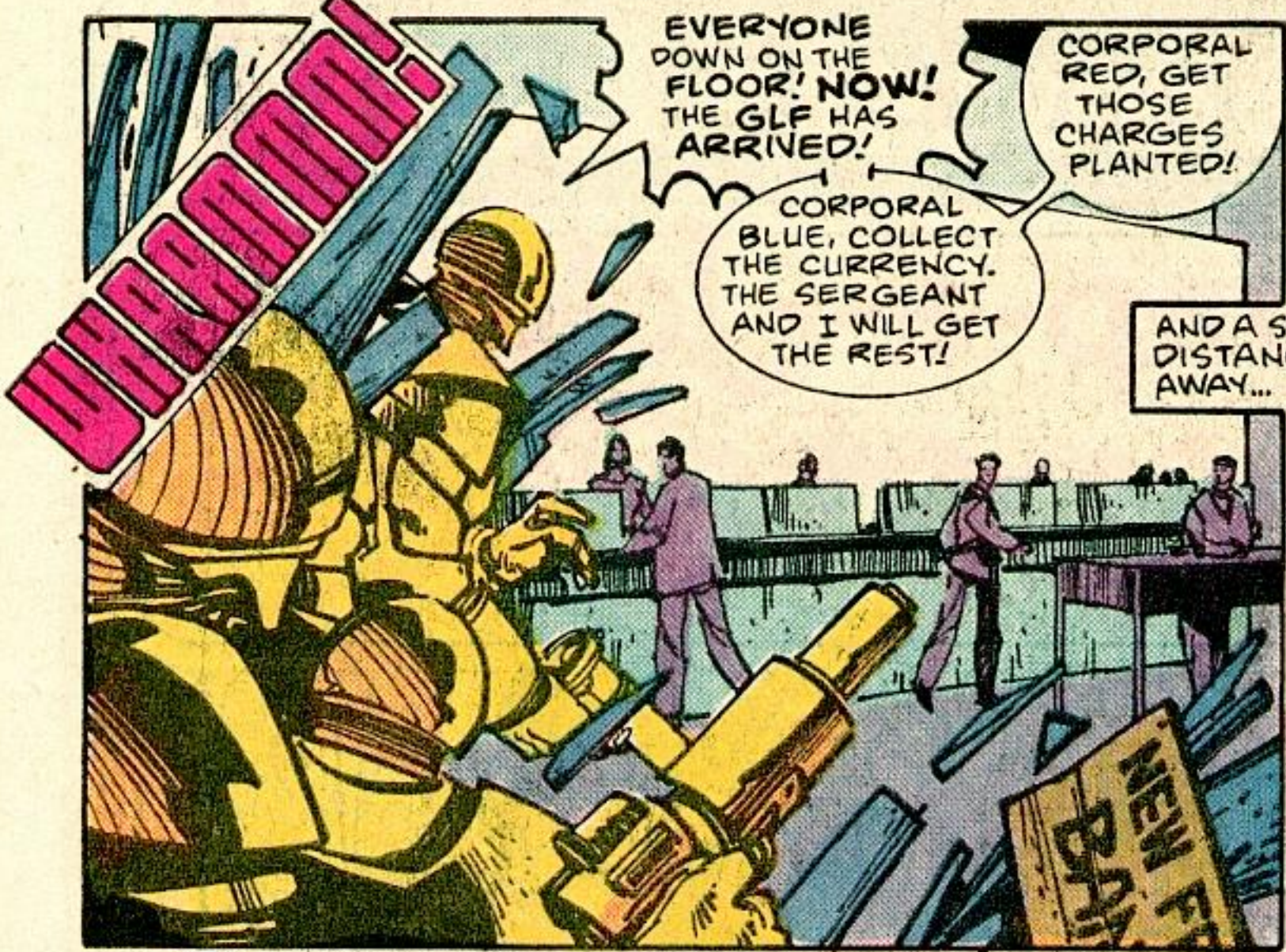
SWITCH!

# SKKATADOOM!



TROOPS,  
DEPLOY  
ACCORDING  
TO PLAN!

HIT 'EM  
HARD AND  
DON'T STOP  
FOR ANY-  
THING!



EVERYONE DOWN ON THE FLOOR! NOW! THE GLF HAS ARRIVED!

CORPORAL BLUE, COLLECT THE CURRENCY. THE SERGEANT AND I WILL GET THE REST!

CORPORAL RED, GET THOSE CHARGES PLANTED!

AND A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...



I THINK I'M SEEING A SIDE OF YOU I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE, BILL. BALD MEN ARE SO...SENSUAL.



SIF, DID YOU HEAR IT?

BOOM! THAT WAS AN EXPLOSION!

WE'D BEST SEE IF WE CAN HELP!



KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, BUSTER, AND YOU WON'T GET HURT!

THAT EXPLOSION WILL DESTROY THE BANK'S RECORDS COMPLETELY!

BY THE TIME THEY'VE RECONSTRUCTED THEIR LOSSES, WE'LL HAVE DISPOSED OF ALL THE NEGOTIABLE BONDS AND LAUNDERED THE MONEY!

SZAPPI!

SZAPPI!

THEY'LL NEVER CATCH US!



OUT-LAWS, BILL!

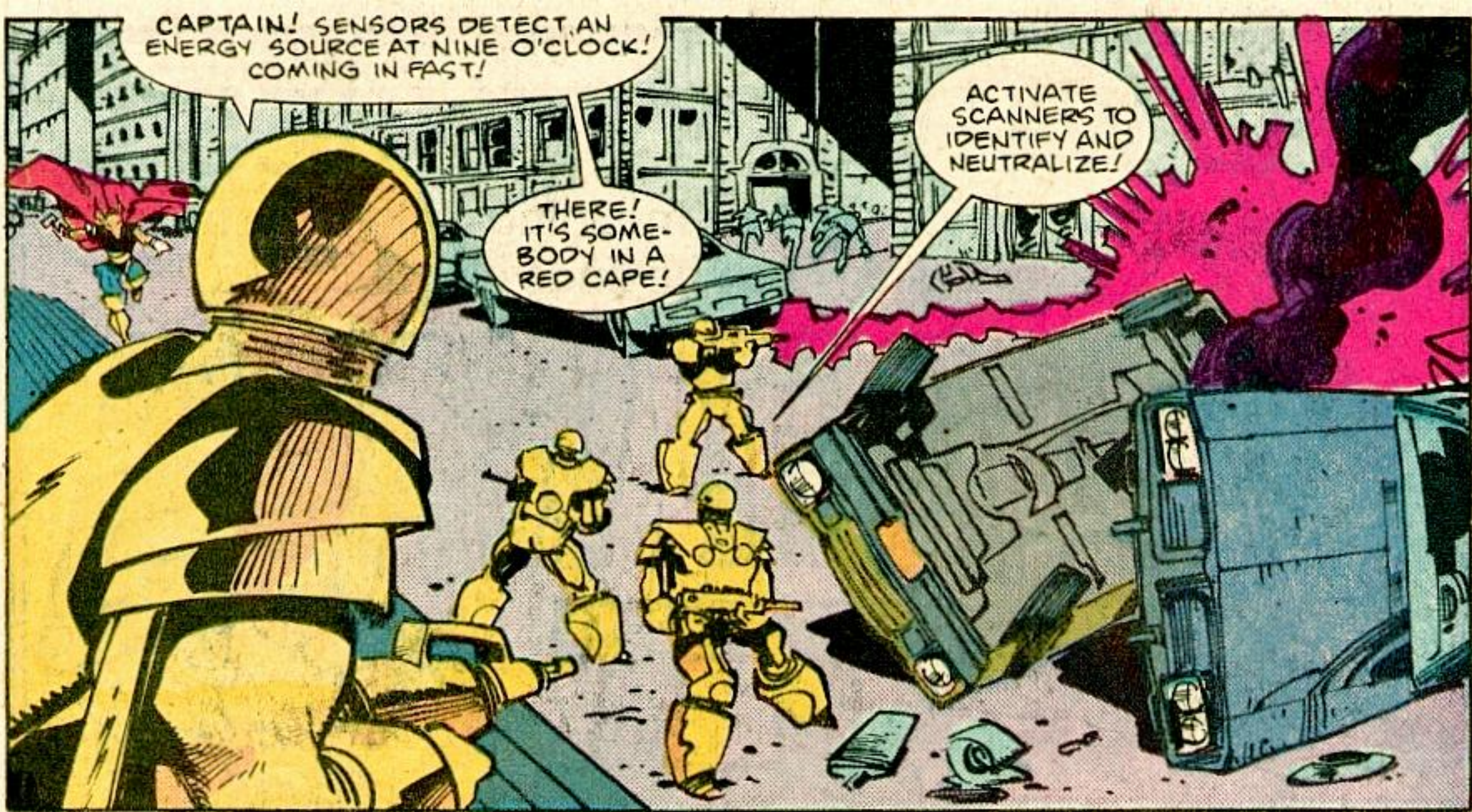
AND ARMED FAR BEYOND THE ABILITY OF THE MORTAL MEN-AT-ARMS TO COPE WITH!



I MUST STRIKE MY CANE UPON THE GROUND...



...THAT BETA RAY BILL MAY LIVE AGAIN!



**IDENTIFICATION TRACK:**  
VERSION 8-2

SUB-MARINER  
 SUNFIRE  
 SUNSPOT  
 THING

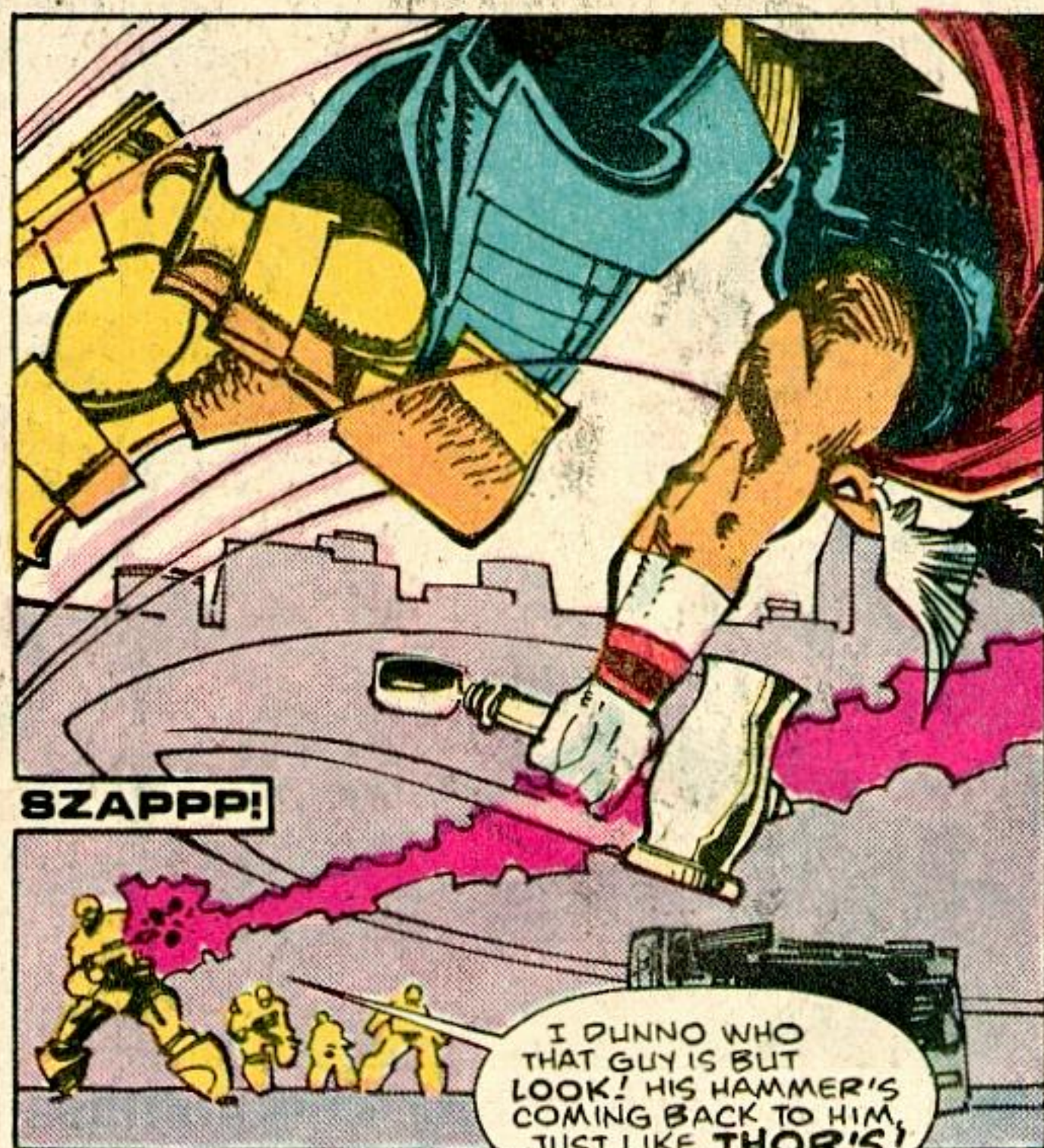
**THOR**

TIGRA  
 UNION JACK

**PRECISE IDENTIFICATION IMPOSSIBLE.**

CLOSEST APPROXIMATION:  
 THOR - 72.39% PROBABILITY.  
 NO FURTHER ENHANCEMENT.

OPTIONS:  
**TAKE COVER**







SO YOU KNOW WHO UGLY OVER THERE IS, DO YOU?

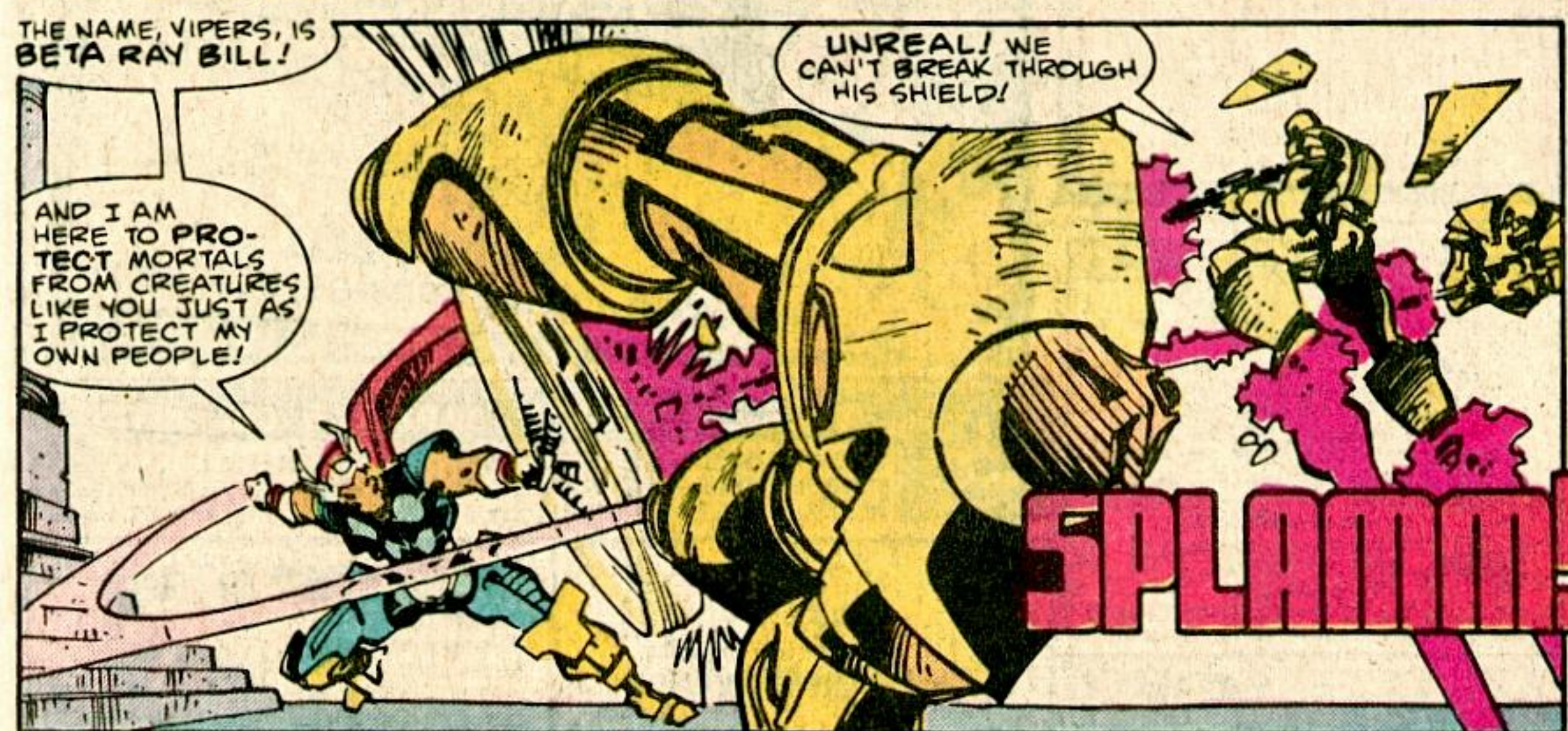


THEN MAYBE WE BETTER HAVE A CHAT, SISTER.



I AM NOT YOUR SISTER, MORTAL! AND YOU HAD BEST REMEMBER THAT!

OKAY! OKAY! I BELIEVE YOU!



THE NAME, VIPERS, IS BETA RAY BILL!

UNREAL! WE CAN'T BREAK THROUGH HIS SHIELD!

AND I AM HERE TO PROTECT MORTALS FROM CREATURES LIKE YOU JUST AS I PROTECT MY OWN PEOPLE!

**SPLAAM!**



THIS IS CAPTAIN BLACK CALLING THE COMMANDER ON SCRAMBLE FREQUENCY!

HE LOOKS LIKE A BAD IMITATION OF THOR BUT HE'S NO CUT RATE VERSION!

HE SEEMS TO HAVE ALL OF THOR'S STRENGTH AND POWERS!

I AM MONITORING YOUR CURRENT STATUS! WHO IS THAT CREATURE?

WE SHALL DEBATE THAT LATER!

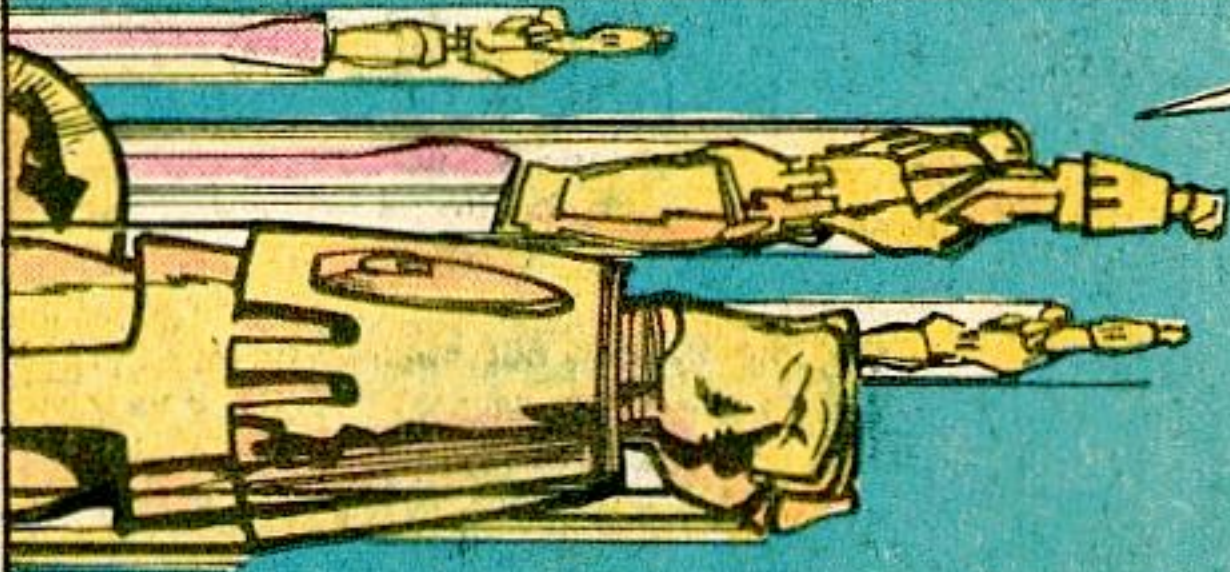
ATTENTION ALL TROOPS, EXECUTE ESCAPE MANEUVER IO DELTA IMMEDIATELY!



AND WITHOUT HESITATION...

AROUND THE CORNER QUICKLY!

**VARROOUAM!**



ON MY SIGNAL, CO-ORDINATE CARD-SHUFFLE--



--NOW!

**SKREEEAKK!**



WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM? THEY JUST VANISHED!

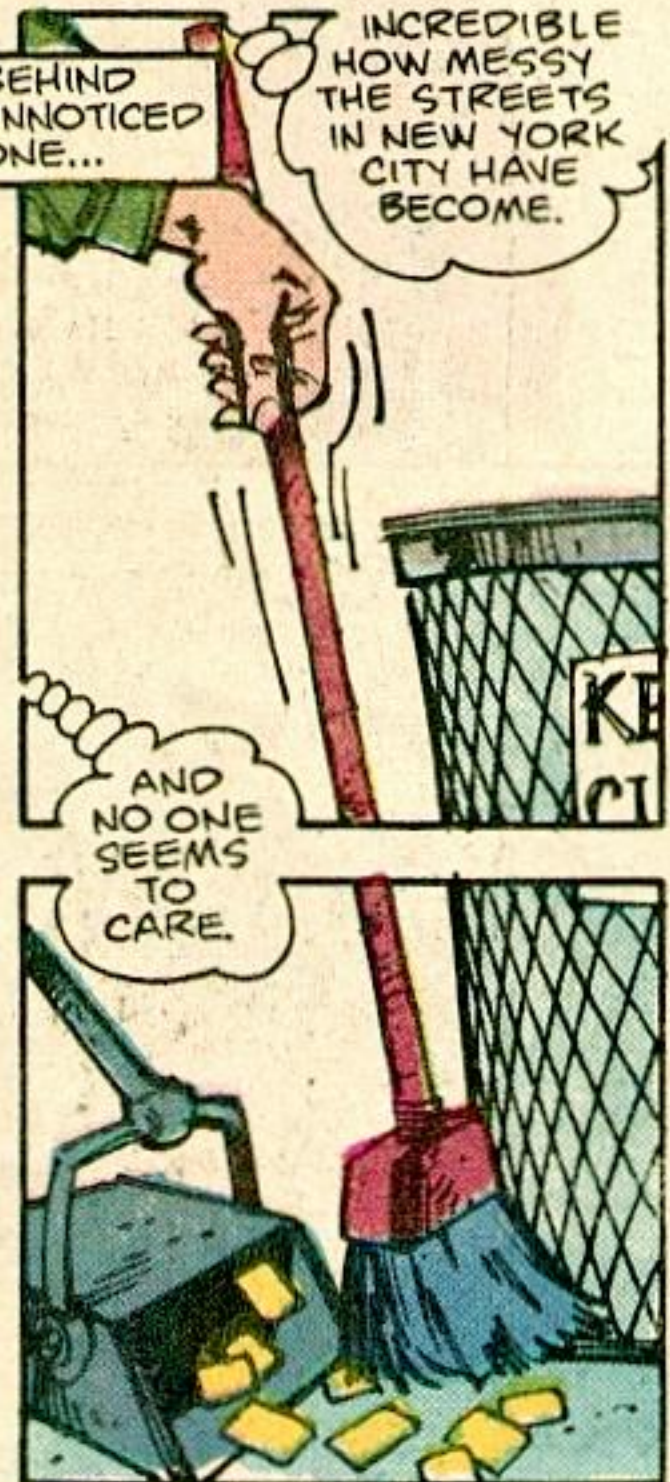
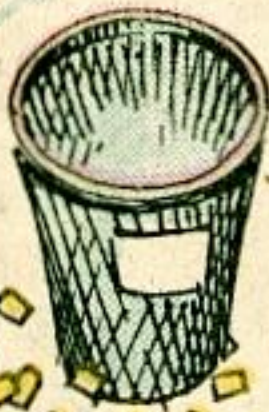
I DON'T KNOW EITHER! THE FLASH OF LIGHT BLINDED ME MOMENTARILY!

BUT THEY'RE TOO WELL TRAINED AND TOO DANGEROUS TO LET ESCAPE LIKE THAT!

I'LL TAKE TO THE AIR AND SEE IF I CAN LOCATE THEM AGAIN!



WHILE BEHIND THEM, UNNOTICED BY ANYONE...



INCREDIBLE HOW MESSY THE STREETS IN NEW YORK CITY HAVE BECOME.

AND NO ONE SEEMS TO CARE.

MEANWHILE, ON  
MANHATTAN'S  
UPPER WEST  
SIDE...

'TIS A  
FAIR CITY,  
FRIEND  
VOLSTAGG.

I REMEMBER  
THE LINES I ONCE  
GAVE AN OLD  
FRIEND A LONG  
TIME AGO...

...THE CLOUD-  
CAPP'D TOWERS,  
THE GORGEOUS  
PAVILIONS... OF COURSE,  
HE IMPROVED UPON  
THEM A BIT  
IN THE END.

BUT  
THEY WELL  
DESCRIBED  
THIS EN-  
CHANTED  
FAIRY-  
LAND.

FANDRAL,  
MY LITERARY  
FRIEND, WHAT  
ARE THE CHAT-  
TERINGS OF  
POETS TO ME?

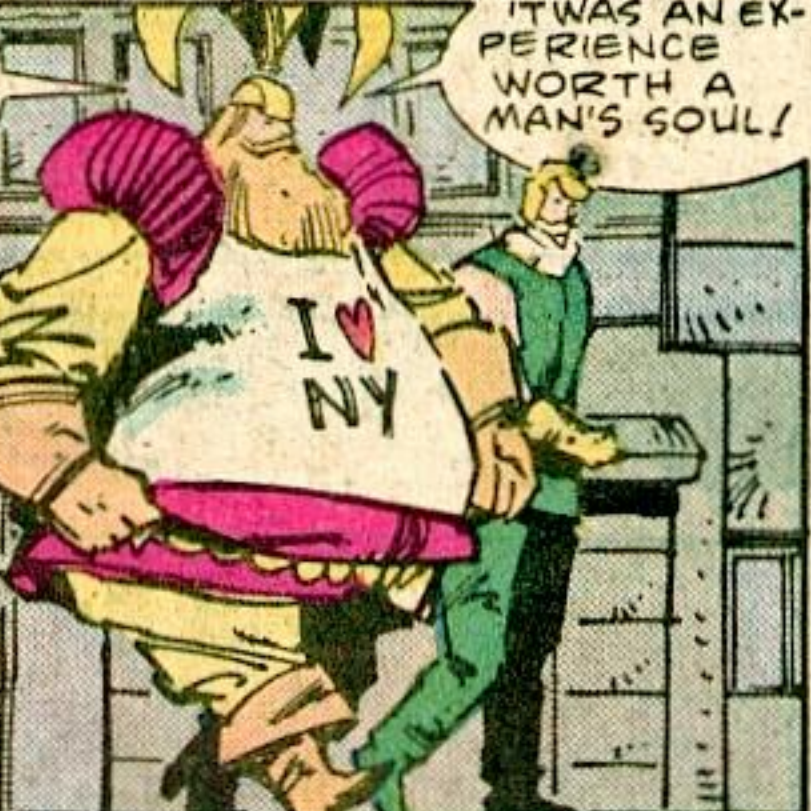
FAR MORE  
DO I RELISH  
THE FIELD OF  
BATTLE, THE  
STENCH OF  
FEAR AND  
DEATH!

FOR THESE  
ALONE DOTH  
THE LION OF  
ASGARD  
LIVE!

WHY, I RECALL THE TIME  
WHEN I FOUGHT IN A CITY SO  
LARGE AGAINST FOES SO VAST  
AS TO MAKE THIS PLACE SEEM  
A MERE HAMLET BY  
COMPARISON.

IT WAS AN EX-  
PERIENCE  
WORTH A  
MAN'S SOUL!

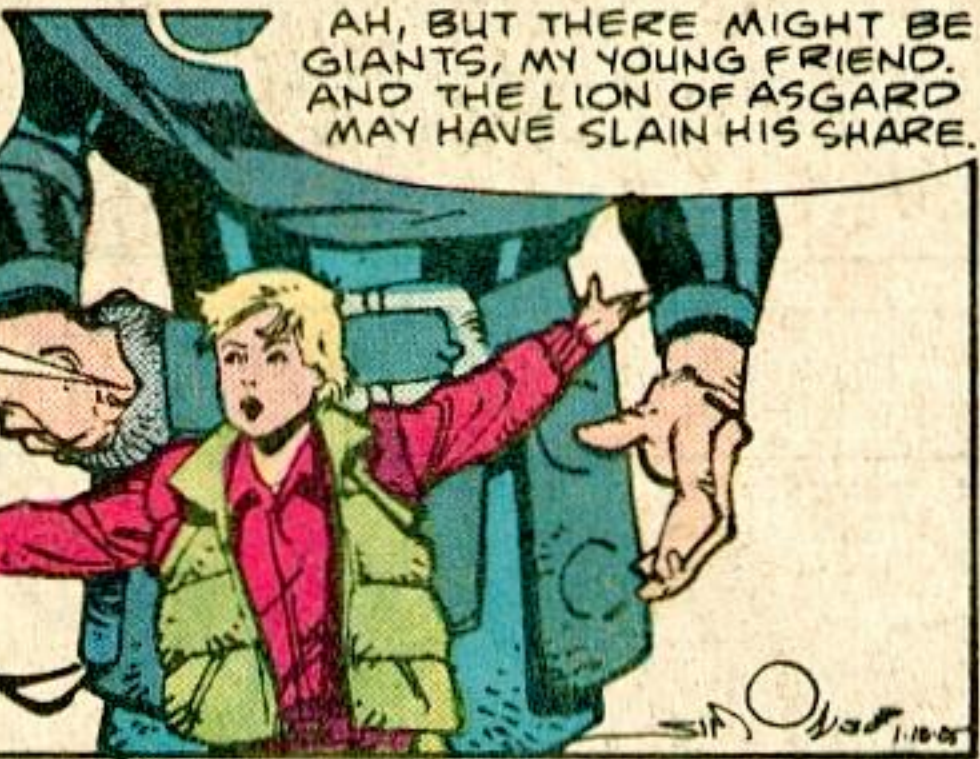
LEFT, RIGHT,  
LEFT, RIGHT, I  
LAID THE FOE  
ABOUT ME AND  
SLEW A THOUSAND  
GIANTS SINGLE-  
HANDED.



GEE, DO  
YOU REALLY  
THINK HE  
KILLED A  
THOUSAND  
GIANTS?

GROW UP,  
KATIE! NO-  
BODY COULD  
BEAT THAT  
MANY GUYS.

BESIDES,  
EVERYBODY  
KNOWS  
THERE'S  
NO SUCH  
THING AS  
GIANTS!

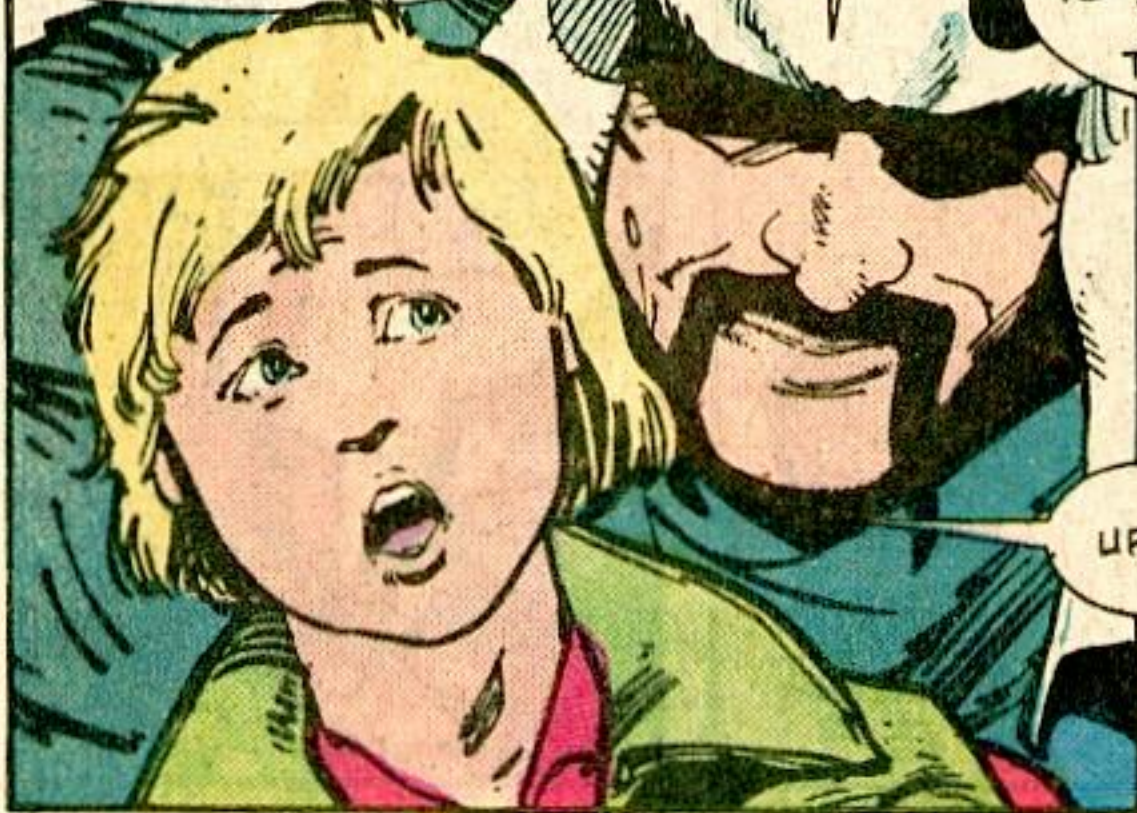


AH, BUT THERE MIGHT BE  
GIANTS, MY YOUNG FRIEND.  
AND THE LION OF ASGARD  
MAY HAVE SLAIN HIS SHARE.

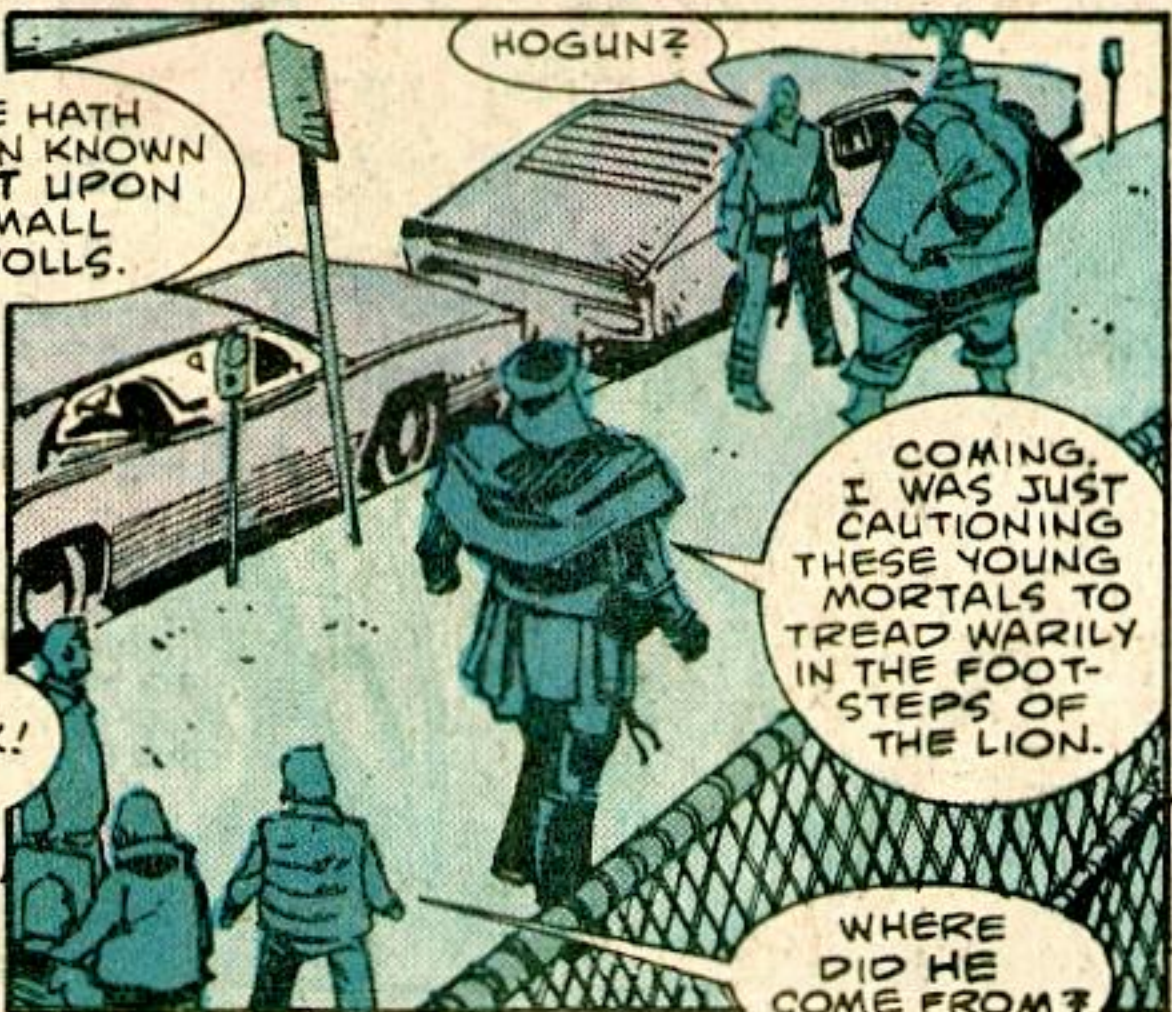
HAVE A CARE. LEST HE  
HEAR AND LOOK TO SEE  
WHO MAKES LIGHT OF  
THE DEEDS OF THE  
MIGHTY.

FOR HIS WRATH IS  
TRULY AWESOME.

HE HATH  
BEEN KNOWN  
TO SIT UPON  
SMALL  
TROLLS.



URK!



HOGUNZ?

COMING.  
I WAS JUST  
CAUTIONING  
THESE YOUNG  
MORTALS TO  
TREAD WARILY  
IN THE FOOT-  
STEPS OF  
THE LION.

WHERE  
DID HE  
COME FROM?

SOME TIME LATER, AS FOUR GOGGLE-EYED CHILDREN ARE TELLING THEIR PARENTS ABOUT GIANTS AND TROLLS...

... ATOP THE NORTH TOWER OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER...

DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO LOCATE THEM IF THEY STRIKE AGAIN?

MY HAMMER, STORMBREAKER, IS NOW ATTUNED TO THE ENERGY RELEASE THAT HERALDED THE APPEARANCE OF THE BANDITS.

SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO STRIKE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THIS METROPOLIS, WE SHALL KNOW.

THEY SEEM LIKE BAGER THIEVES. I DO NOT THINK WE SHALL HAVE LONG TO WAIT.

DO YOU REMEMBER, BILL, OUR TALK IN ASGARD BEFORE LORD ODIN CREATED STORMBREAKER FOR YOU?

YOU SAID YOU HAD SURRENDERED YOUR HUMANITY TO BECOME THE GUARDIAN OF YOUR PEOPLE.

YOU WERE WRONG.

I HAVE LIVED A LONG TIME, BILL. I HAVE NEVER ENCOUNTERED ANOTHER WHO WAS SO POWERFUL, YET SO VULNERABLE.

I WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED IT POSSIBLE IN A MORTAL.

AND WHY DO YOU SMILE, LADY?

BECAUSE I FIND THAT I HAVE MORE SYMPATHY NOW FOR THOR AND HIS ROMANCE WITH A MORTAL THAN I EVER DID LIVING IN ASGARD.

IT IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS I MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT.

MORTALS LIVE SO SHORT A TIME.

PERHAPS THIS IS WHY ODIN FORBADE THOR'S LOVE FOR JANE FOSTER\*.

IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO RENOUNCE ONE'S HERITAGE.

\*A LONG TIME AGO!

MEANWHILE IN ASGARD AT THE EDGE OF THE WASTES...

I AM ALWAYS SURPRISED, LOKI, TO DISCOVER THAT YOUR AERIE IS SO... HANDSOMELY APPOINTED.

I THOUGHT SORCERERS LIVED LIVES OF AUSTERITY, MORTIFYING THEIR FLESH AND SUFFERING.

MANY DO, LORELEI. ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE NOT PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL.

AND BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL, THEY MEASURE THEIR SUCCESS IN ATTAINABLE GOALS, SUCH AS POVERTY, WANT, AND HUNGER.

A DEPRESSING BREED. CERTAINLY NOT WORTH EMULATING.

AND YOU?

...AM MODESTLY RETICENT ABOUT MY ACHIEVEMENTS.

BUT MY GOALS ARE CLEAR.

SO IS YOUR AURA OF POWER, LOKI, HOWEVER RETICENT YOU MAY BE.

I CAN FEEL ITS HEAT ABOVE THAT OF THE FIRE. IT... IS FASCINATING.

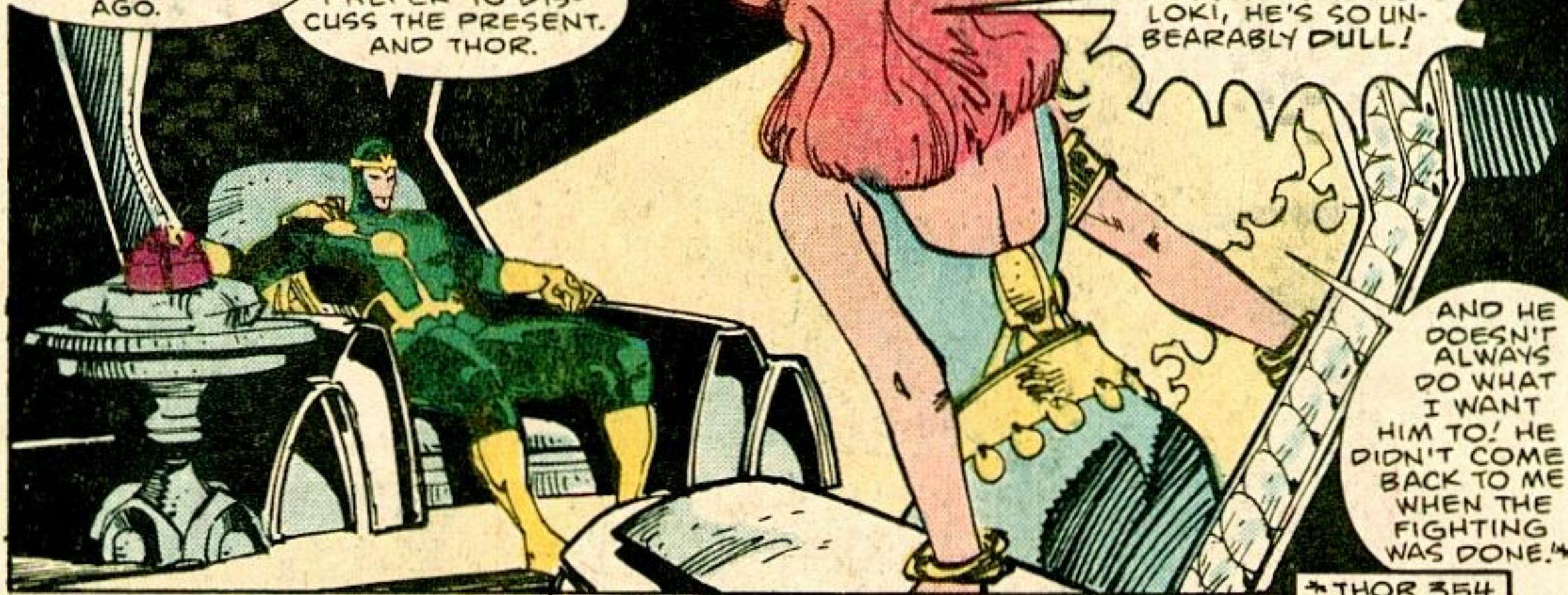
I HAVE NEVER FELT ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE.

TELL ME, DID YOU NOT ONCE HAVE A WIFE?

HA. THAT, MY DEAR, WAS OVER LONG AGO.

BUT I WOULD PREFER TO DISCUSS THE PRESENT. AND THOR.

THOR! THOR! ALWAYS THOR! LOKI, HE'S SO UN-BEARABLY DULL!



AND HE DOESN'T ALWAYS DO WHAT I WANT HIM TO! HE DIDN'T COME BACK TO ME WHEN THE FIGHTING WAS DONE.

THOR 354

BUT HE WILL, MY DEAR. HE WILL.

BEFORE, HE THOUGHT YOU WERE A MORTAL WOMAN NAMED MELODI.

WHEN YOU HAVE USED THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOX, THOR WON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE...



HE WILL BE YOURS...FOREVER!

ARE YOU SURE? WHAT IS IT?

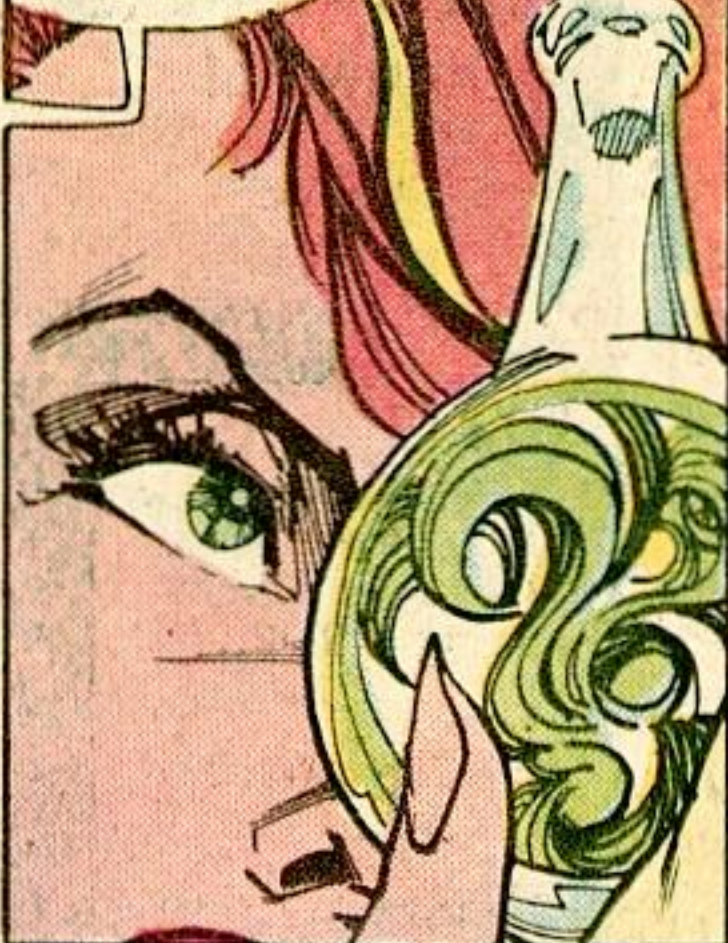
A...GIFT FROM LOFN, THE GODDESS WHO INSPIRES PASSION IN MEN OR GODS, TO HEIGHTS UNDREAMED OF!

ONCE HE HAS BEEN CLOAKED IN ITS SCENT, THOR WILL BE YOUR SLAVE. YOUR MEREST WHIM WILL BE HIS IRONCLAD COMMAND!

AND WITH ODIN GONE, AND THE THRONE OF ASGARD EMPTY, WHAT BETTER TIME TO RULE HIS SON?



IF YOU BUT SUGGEST THAT HE MIGHT SUPPORT LOKI IN HIS BID TO GAIN THE CROWN...



... WHY, HE WOULD WALK THROUGH FIRE TO SEE THAT IT IS DONE!

AND ONCE THE THRONE IS LOKI'S, WHO KNOWS WHAT FOUL ACCIDENT MIGHT BEFALL THE NOBLE SON OF ODIN!



AND ONCE THOR IS MINE...

...WHO KNOWS WHAT HIS POWER MIGHT ACCOMPLISH AT MY COMMAND!

NIGHTFALL, AS AMONG THE  
RUINS OF THE GREAT CITY OF  
THE GODS...

ASGARD  
AT LAST!

THOUGH THE  
RAINBOW BRIDGE  
IS BROKEN, MY EN-  
CHANTMENTS  
HAVE BROUGHT  
ME HOME!

BUT ONLY  
BARELY.  
THE RIFT  
BETWEEN  
MIDGARD AND  
ASGARD IS  
ALREADY  
WIDEN-  
ING!



I CAN SCARCE BE-  
LIEVE MY EYES! THE CITY  
LIES IN RUINS! THE STRUG-  
GLE HERE WAS GREATER  
THAN WE KNEW!

AND ODIN!  
MY MAGIC  
CANNOT DETECT  
HIS POWER  
AT ALL!

'TIS AS THOUGH  
HE WAS SWAL-  
LOWED UP AND  
NEVER EXISTED!

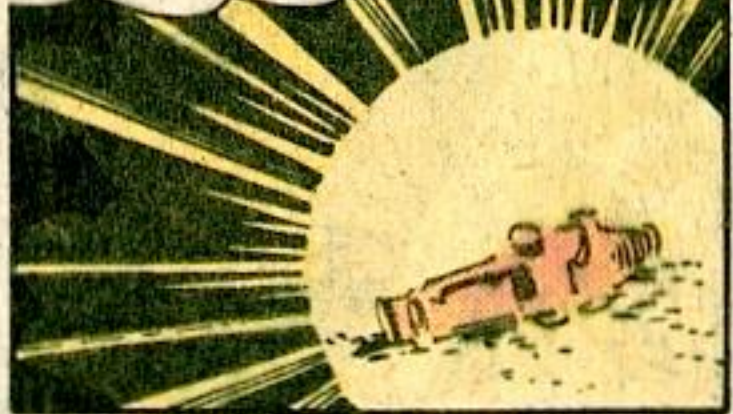
SO THIS  
IS HOW  
THE WAR  
ENDS.

WELL,  
I'VE NO  
LOVE LOST  
FOR ODIN  
AND DO NOT  
LAMENT HIS  
PASSING...



AND  
SO YOU  
SHALL.

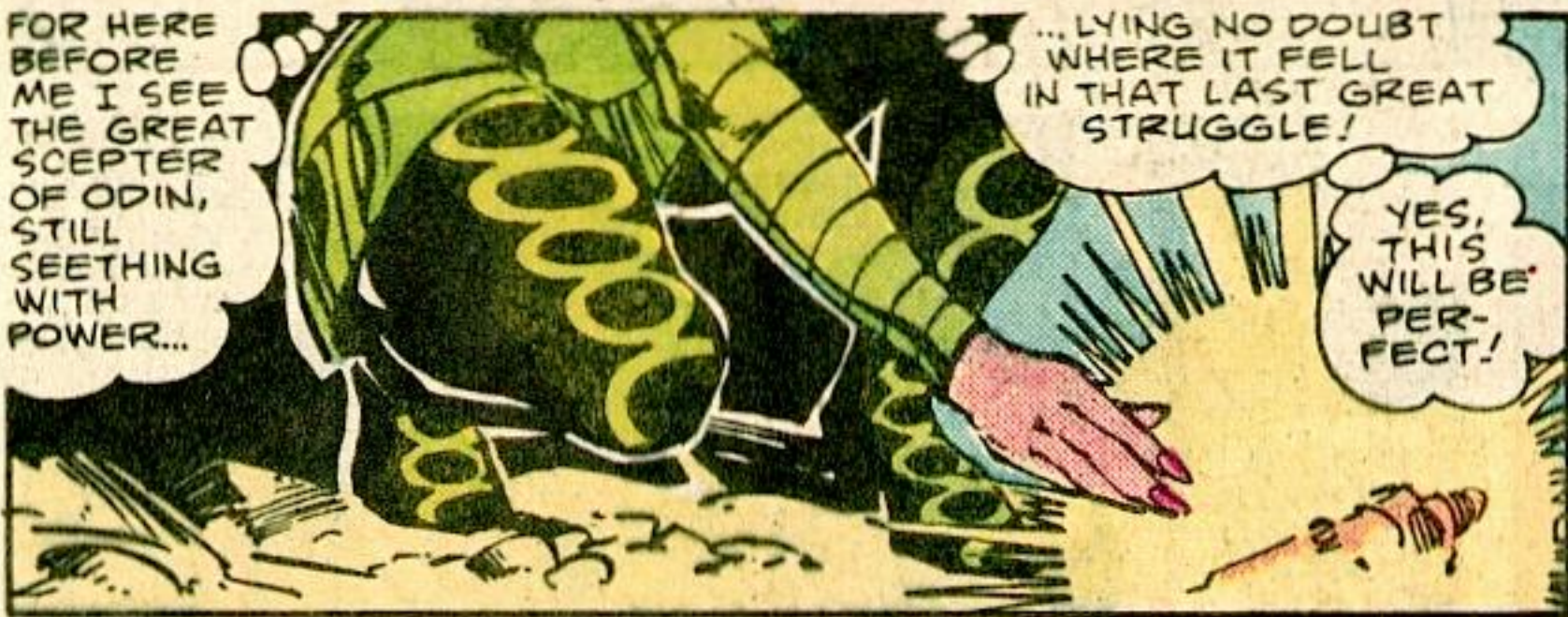
... BUT I SWORE,  
SISTER, THAT YOU  
WOULD RUE THE DAY  
YOU REFUSED TO AID  
US IN OUR STRUGGLE  
AGAINST THE SONS  
OF MUSPELL.



FOR HERE  
BEFORE  
ME I SEE  
THE GREAT  
SCEPTER  
OF ODIN,  
STILL  
SEETHING  
WITH  
POWER...

... LYING NO DOUBT  
WHERE IT FELL  
IN THAT LAST GREAT  
STRUGGLE!

YES,  
THIS  
WILL BE  
PER-  
FECT!



YOU HAVE  
SOUGHT THOR,  
LORELEI. YOU  
SHALL FIND  
SOMEONE  
ELSE!

SOME-  
ONE YOU  
DESERVE!

FOR IT TAKES NO  
FORESIGHT TO KNOW  
WHO WILL SEEK OUT  
THE SCEPTER WITH  
ODIN GONE!

AND WHEN  
HE DOES, SIS-  
TER, YOUR  
FATE WILL BE  
SEALED!



DAYLIGHT IN THE SNOWY HILLS OF ASGARD AS WE FIND...

IT WAS THE STRANGEST THING, FRIGGA.



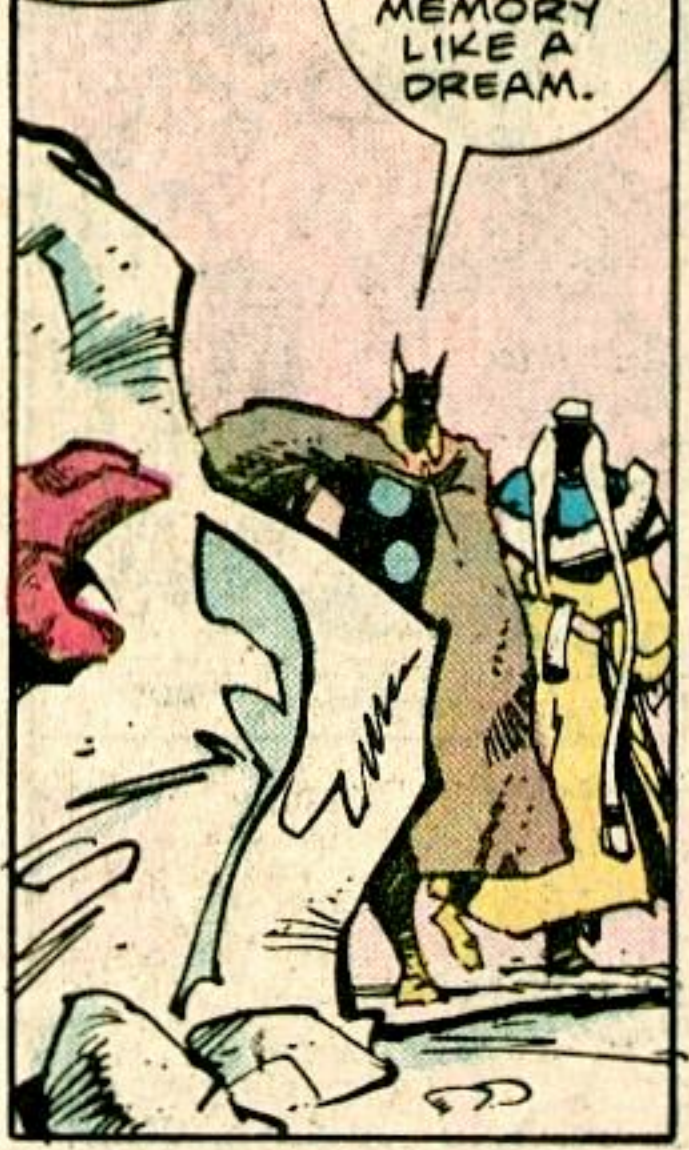
SHHH.

HERE THEY COME!

GET READY!

I LOVED THIS MORTAL WOMAN, MELODI, WITH ALL MY HEART, SUDDENLY, FURIOUSLY, LIKE A STORM.

AND YET, AS THE WEEKS HAVE GONE BY, HER FACE RECEDES FROM MY MEMORY LIKE A DREAM.



AND I BEGIN TO WONDER IF PERHAPS I WAS NOT DREAMING. STILL--

OH, EXCUSE ME A MOMENT.



WHITH!

WHITH!

WHITH!



WHAT HAVE WE HERE? BE THESE THE FORCES OF THE EVIL FROST FAERIES BEHIND THIS WALL OF SNOW?

YOW!



LOOK OUT!



OR MERELY SOME UNRULY CHILDREN WHO LOOK TO RECEIVE A SNOW BATH?





AND YET, I DO NOT SEE GUNN-HILD AMONG YOUR NUMBER!



SALATI!



GOT HIM!

GREAT SHOT!

NICE GOING, HILDY!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

YOU COULD HAVE AVOIDED THAT SNOWBALL, THOR.



I KNOW.

BUT IF THEY WERE NOT ENCOURAGED WITH SOME SMALL DEGREE OF SUCCESS, THE CHILDREN WOULD SOON TIRE OF THE GAME...



... AND THE ROAD HOME WOULD SEEM THAT MUCH LONGER.



AND YOUR ROAD, THOR?

I NO LONGER SEE IT CLEARLY, FRIGGA.

FOR AS THE FACE OF MELDI RECEDES FROM MY SIGHT, THE VISAGE OF SIF SEEMS SHARPER AND CLEARER.

I DO NOT REGRET THAT SHE WENT WITH BILL. SHE CHOSE WELL.



MIDGARD AND ITS CONFINES ARE NOT FOR HER.

SHE HAD LOST THE SAVOR OF LIVING AND BILL AND HIS NOBLE QUEST PROVIDED IT.

YET MY HEART MISGIVES ME THAT I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET HER GO, THAT I MAY HAVE LOST HER FOREVER.



AH, EXCUSE ME AGAIN.

BUT AS THOR DUCKS ANOTHER BARRAGE OF FLYING MISSILES, ON EARTH IN A SECRET SANCTUARY...

I COULD HAVE HIRED TOUGHER INVALIDS!

A MONSTROUS IMITATION OF THOR AND A YOUNG WOMAN MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE AMATEURS!

YOUR BATTLE SUITS MAKE YOU THE EQUAL OF ANY OF THE SO-CALLED SUPER-HEROES THAT INFEST THIS VERMIN RID-DEN CITY.

IF YOU'RE SO SURE OF THAT, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE 'EM ON!

DO NOT ANGER ME, CAPTAIN BLACK!

WE'LL MEET AT 1300 HOURS TO DISCUSS OUR NEXT TARGET!

UNTIL THEN, YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR WEAPONS PRACTICE.

IDIOTS! THE FINEST EXOSKELETON AUGMENTED ARMOR PRODUCED AND STILL THEY ARE UNABLE TO DEFEAT A SINGLE ENEMY.

YET THERE MAY BE SOMETHING IN WHAT THEY SAY. PERHAPS I SHOULD VENTURE FORTH TO MEET THIS THREAT TO THE PLAN.

STEP FORWARD, SERGEI.

YOUR DEVICES HAVE DONE WELL SO FAR. I AM PLEASED.

NOW YOU WILL PREPARE THE SCREENING GRID. I SHALL BE NEEDING IT.

BUT WE HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO TEST IT FULLY.

NEVERTHELESS, PREPARE IT!

I AM SURE THE DEVICE WILL FUNCTION PERFECTLY...

...OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT I HOLD THE LIVES OF YOUR PARENTS IN MY HAND!

I... HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN.

SEE THAT YOU DO NOT.

NOW LEAVE ME. FOR I WOULD ENERGIZE MY OWN SUIT TO THE PEAK OF ITS CAPACITY.

skitter

skitter

skitter

skitter

THE RUINS OF ASGARD, NIGHT-TIME...

... AND EVEN THE SHADOWS DRAW BACK AS THE CLOAKED FIGURE GLIDES SILENTLY ACROSS THE RUBBLE.

AH. I HAVE FOUND IT.

ODIN'S SCEPTER OF POWER.

WITHIN MY GRASP, JUST AS THE THRONE WILL BE.

CURIOUS. FOR A MOMENT I FELT A TINGLE AS THOUGH--

--BUT NO. 'TIS MERELY THE POWER OF THE SCEPTER ITSELF FLOWING THROUGH ME.

A FEELING I HAVE LONG WAITED TO SAVOR.

A FEELING I SHALL SOON SAVOR FOREVER!

GREETINGS, LOKI.

HEIM-DALL!

MY THANKS FOR RECOVERING THE GREAT SCEPTER.

'T WAS MY PLEASURE, HEIMDALL. THE GUARDIAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE SHOULD HAVE SOME DUTIES NOW THAT THE BRIDGE NO LONGER EXISTS!

AND THERE ARE NONE SO TRUSTWORTHY AS YOURSELF TO GUARD THE SCEPTER.

CONSIDERING THOSE WHO REMAIN IN ASGARD, LOKI...

WITH ODIN GONE, IT MUST BE HELD CAREFULLY IN TRUST UNTIL ANOTHER GOD SITS UPON THE HIGH SEAT.

...YOU HAVE VOICED MY THOUGHTS EXACTLY.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT DUSK, A TIRED BAND OF TRAVELERS REACHES THE HEIGHTS OVERLOOKING THE ASGARDIAN REALM...

...AND STANDS A MOMENT IN SILENCE.

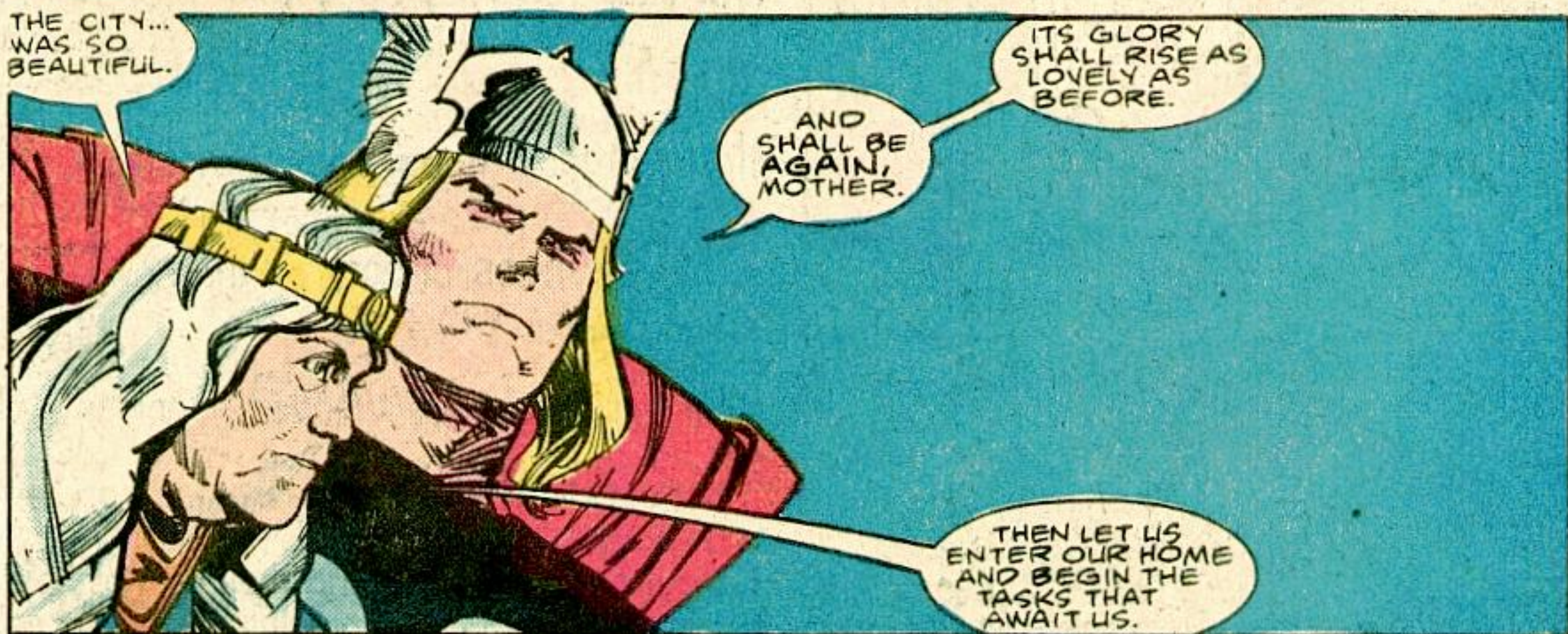


THE CITY... WAS SO BEAUTIFUL.

ITS GLORY SHALL RISE AS LOVELY AS BEFORE.

AND SHALL BE AGAIN, MOTHER.

THEN LET US ENTER OUR HOME AND BEGIN THE TASKS THAT AWAIT US.



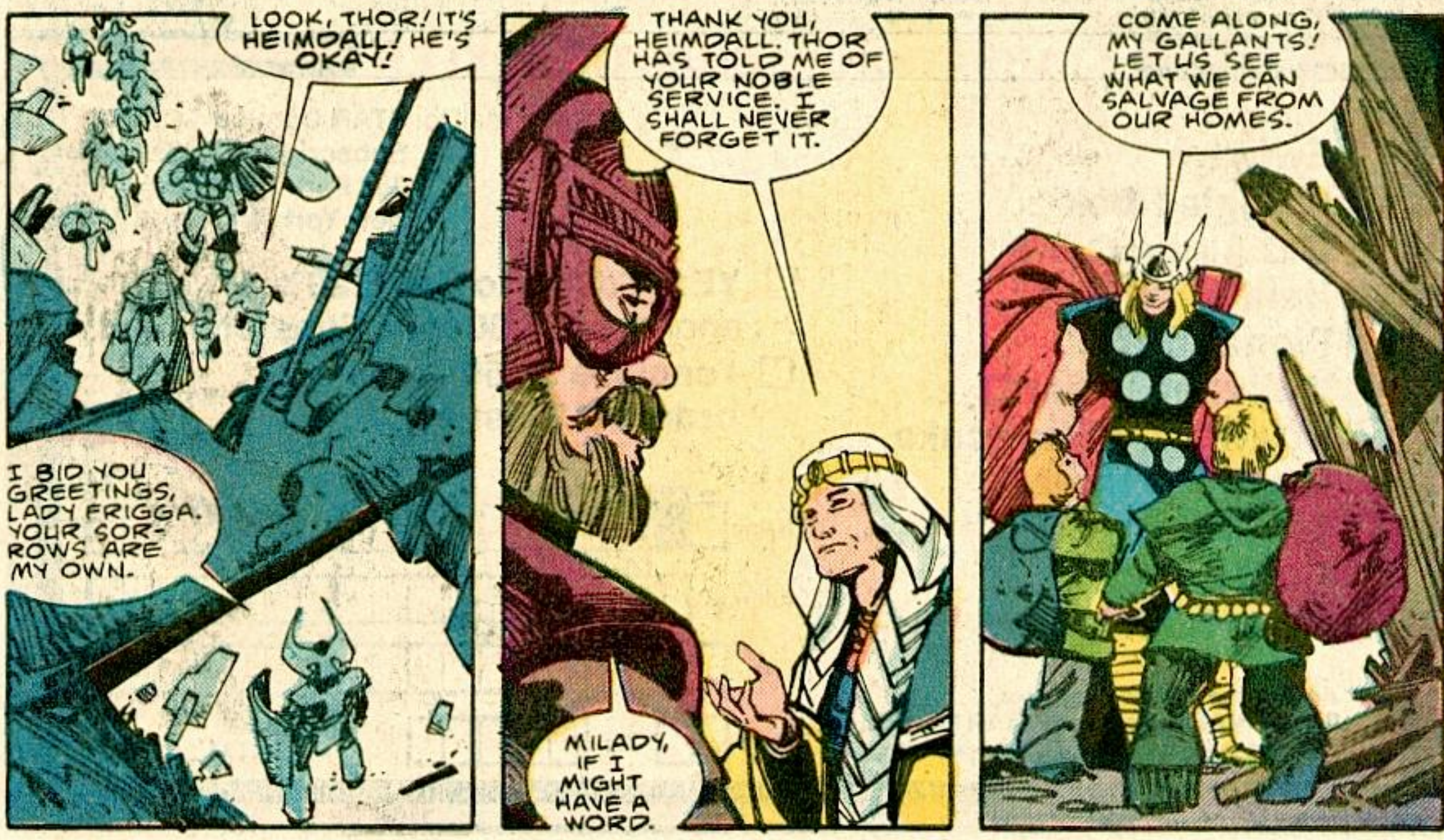
LOOK, THOR! IT'S HEIMDALL! HE'S OKAY!

THANK YOU, HEIMDALL. THOR HAS TOLD ME OF YOUR NOBLE SERVICE. I SHALL NEVER FORGET IT.

COME ALONG, MY GALLANTS! LET US SEE WHAT WE CAN SALVAGE FROM OUR HOMES.

I BID YOU GREETINGS, LADY FRIGGA. YOUR SORROWS ARE MY OWN.

MILADY, IF I MIGHT HAVE A WORD.

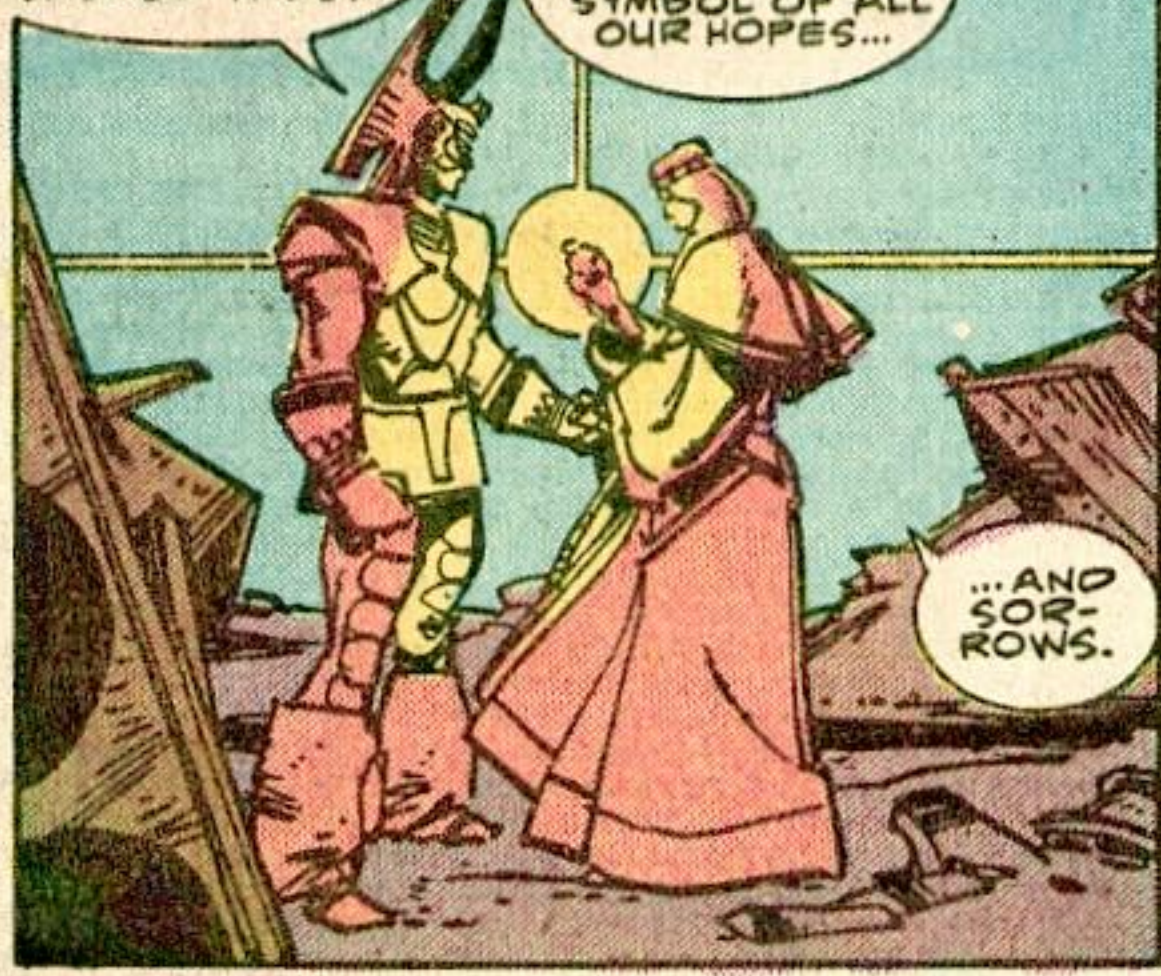


SOONER WOULD I HAVE CUT OFF MY ARM THAN GIVE THIS GIFT, MILADY.



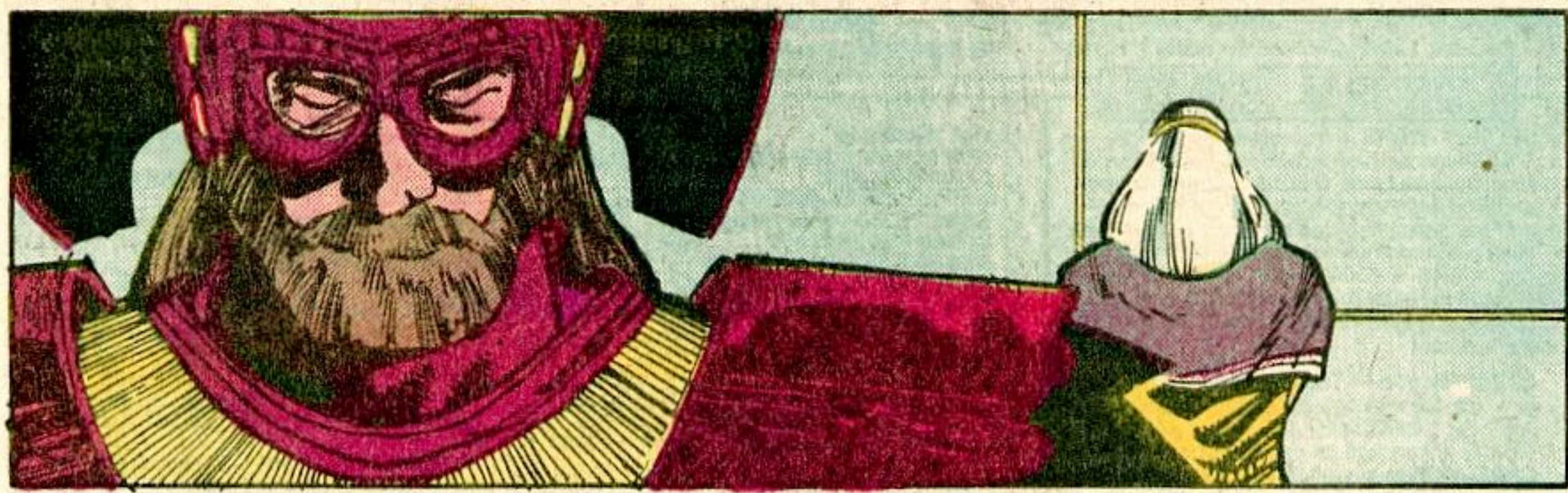
BUT THERE IS NO HELP FOR IT NOW.

AND NO ONE IS MORE WORTHY TO HOLD THIS SACRED TRUST.



THE GREAT SCEPTER, MILADY. THE SYMBOL OF ALL OUR HOPES...

...AND SORROWS.



FRIGGA! FRIGGA!

MY HOUSE IS GONE! AND I CAN'T FIND MY SKATES ANYWHERE!

WHERE'S MY MOMMY? I WANT MY DADDY!

WHY AREN'T THEY HERE?



SHUSH, MY LITTLE ONE, AND DRY YOUR TEARS.

YOUR PARENTS WILL BE HOME SOON, I PROMISE.



BUT NOW, I WANT YOU ALL TO STAY WITH ME UNTIL EVERYBODY'S PARENTS COME HOME.

WE SHOULD START BY TRYING TO FIND SOME SUPPER, DON'T YOU THINK?

BUT AS DUSK FALLS ON ASGARD, TWO SOULS IN MANHATTAN SPEAK QUIETLY IN THE GATHERING GLOOM WHILE THE EVENING WRAPS THEM IN SHADOW...



WHEN WILL YOU BE LEAVING EARTH, BILL?

WHEN THOR RETURNS, I SHALL DEPART FOR MY OWN PEOPLE.

I MUST STILL GUIDE THEM TO THEIR NEW HOME.



OH, IT HURTS!

SIF?

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT A VICTORY COULD CHANGE SO MUCH?

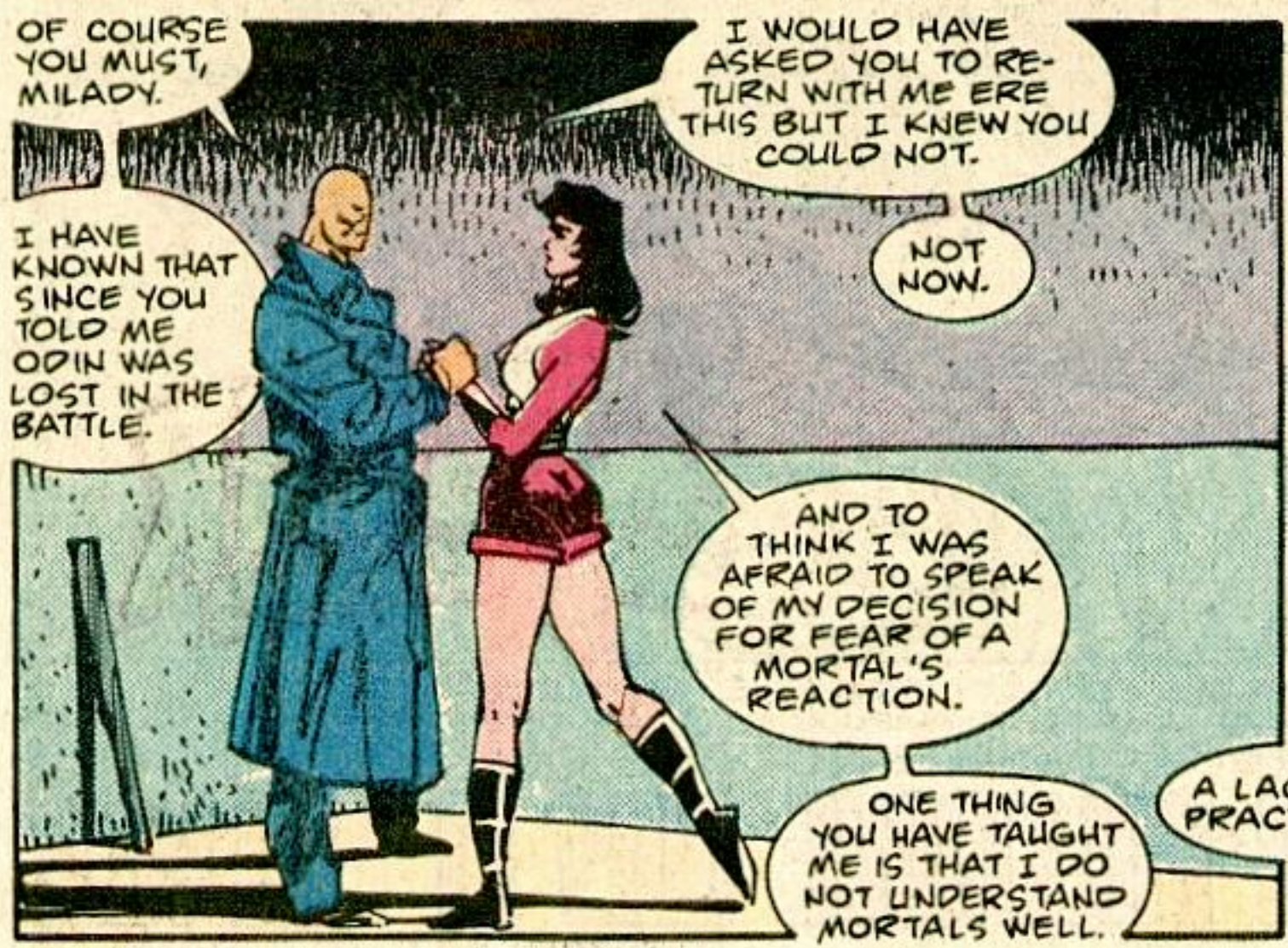
ASGARD WILL BE IN CHAOS WHEN THE WARRIORS RETURN HOME AND LEARN THAT ODIN IS GONE.



AND I AM SURE THAT LOKI IS ALREADY PLANNING TO SIT UPON THE HIGH SEAT IN ODIN'S STEAD.

AND THOR? HE HAS LOST HIS FATHER. HOW CAN I STAY AWAY?

DON'T YOU SEE? I MUST GO BACK.



OF COURSE YOU MUST, MILADY.

I HAVE KNOWN THAT SINCE YOU TOLD ME ODIN WAS LOST IN THE BATTLE.

I WOULD HAVE ASKED YOU TO RETURN WITH ME HERE THIS BUT I KNEW YOU COULD NOT.

NOT NOW.

AND TO THINK I WAS AFRAID TO SPEAK OF MY DECISION FOR FEAR OF A MORTAL'S REACTION.

ONE THING YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME IS THAT I DO NOT UNDERSTAND MORTALS WELL.

A LACK OF PRACTICE?



YOU ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO MAKE ME SMILE.

I HAVE THOUGHT OF A WAY TO RETURN OUR TROOPS TO ASGARD, BILL.

I MUST GO BACK TO THE GOLDEN REALM... AND THOR.

AND SPEAKING OF THOR...

I THINK THAT GUARDING A FLOCK OF CHILDREN IS MORE TIRING THAN FIGHTING A HOST OF FROST GIANTS.

IT WAS KIND OF HEIMDALL TO OFFER TO STAY WITH THE CHILDREN AND FRIGGA TONIGHT.

I NEED SOME TIME ALONE.

FORTUNATELY, MY OWN HALLS WERE ONLY SLIGHTLY DAMAGED IN THE FRAY.

BUT I NEVER THOUGHT THAT ASGARD WOULD EVER SEEM SO EMPTY, SO UTTERLY EMPTY WITHOUT MY FATHER'S PRESENCE.

I GUESS I NEVER THOUGHT THAT ASGARD WOULD BE WITHOUT HIM.

SHATTER!

HELLO, THOR.

WHAT? WHO?

SIF, IS THAT YOU?

WHEN I AM FINISHED WITH YOU TONIGHT, MY HANDSOME ONE, YOU WILL NEVER THINK OF SIF AGAIN!

MELODI!

**NEXT:** IS THOR BECOMING A ROMANCE COMICE HAS MARVEL'S FABULOUS, ROCK 'EM-SOCK 'EM BOOK DEGENERATED INTO NOTHING MORE THAN PUERILE SOAP OPERAZ WILL KISSING BECOME THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION? IS NOTHING SACRED?

DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH!! AND DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE!



**WHEN DALLIANCE WAS IN FLOWER!**