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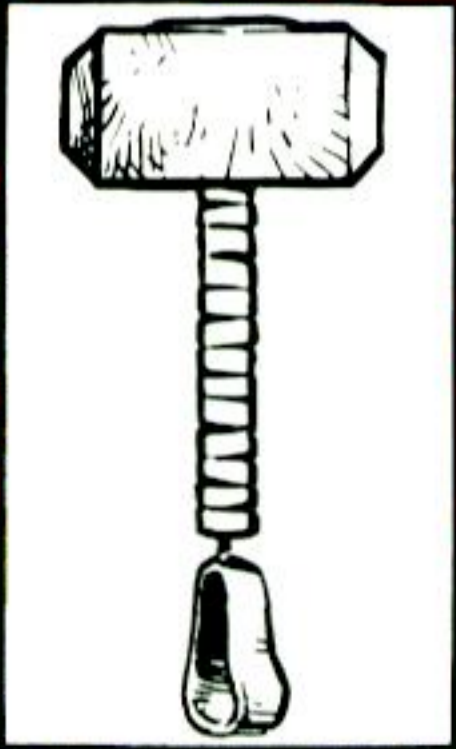


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the mighty THOR

THERE'S NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN, THOR!! THIS IS THE HOUR OF **FIN FANG FOOM!**



12-22-86

STAN LEE PRESENTS *the MIGHTY THOR*

A LONG THE FAR REACHES OF ASGARD, THE WIND IS COLD AND BITTER...

...FOR JOTUNHEIM, THAT GRIM REALM OF FROST GIANTS, BORDERS THE HOME OF THE GODS THERE.

AND IT IS THE STINGING BITE OF THE WIND THAT FINALLY AWAKENS THE SLEEPER IN THE BROKEN FORTRESS OF LOKI.

MY... HOME.

MY LABORATORY!

EVERYTHING!

DESTROYED!

SOMEONE WILL PAY DEARLY FOR THIS OUTRAGE!

THERE WERE GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS

(OR, A DISCOURSE BETWEEN HEROES AND VILLAINS)

WRITING-WALTER SIMONSON DRAWING-SAL BUSCEMA LETTERING-JOHN WORKMAN
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BUT HOW? AND-- -- WHY AM I YET ALIVE?



THE FROST GIANTS BREACHED MY KEEP AND THOUGH I SLEW SEVERAL, THEY HAD O'ERTHROWN ME AND TAKEN ME PRISONER!

SO MUCH I REMEMBER BEFORE I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS!*

*all from last issue.

BUT THE WALLS HAVE SEEN ALL THAT OCCURRED AND THEY STILL STAND.

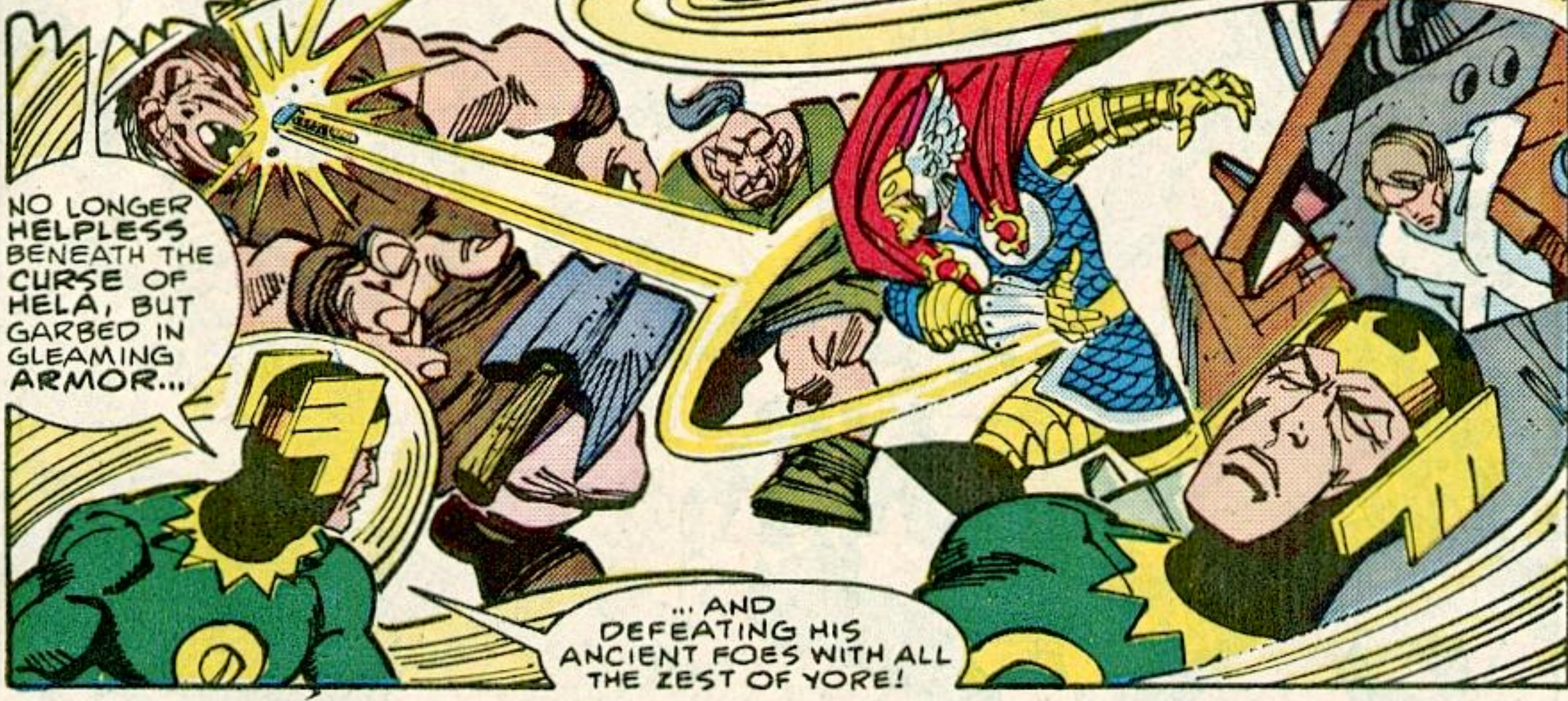


THEY SHALL TELL ME WHAT I WISH TO KNOW.

FOR WITHIN THE HALLS OF LOKI, THE VERY WALLS HAVE EYES!



THOR!



NO LONGER HELPLESS BENEATH THE CURSE OF HELA, BUT GARBED IN GLEAMING ARMOR...

... AND DEFEATING HIS ANCIENT FOES WITH ALL THE ZEST OF YORE!

"HOW COULD I NOT HAVE SHRIEKED ALOUD AT THE TOUCH OF HIS STINKING HONOR, HIS UNENDURABLE NOBILITY AS HE TENDED MY HELPLESS FORM..."



"... AND CARRIED OFF MY ERST-WHILE CAPTIVE, ICEMAN OF X-FACTOR, DOUBTLESS TO RETURN HIM TO HIS HOME ON EARTH?"





OH, THE SHAME OF THIS PERFIDIOUS VISION!

'TIS ALL TOO CLEAR!

MY HATED STEP-BROTHER WHOM I WOULD DESTROY, HATH SAVED MY LIFE!



WOULD THAT MINE EYES HAD BEEN TORN FROM THEIR VERY SOCKETS 'ERE I HAD SEEN THIS SIGHT!



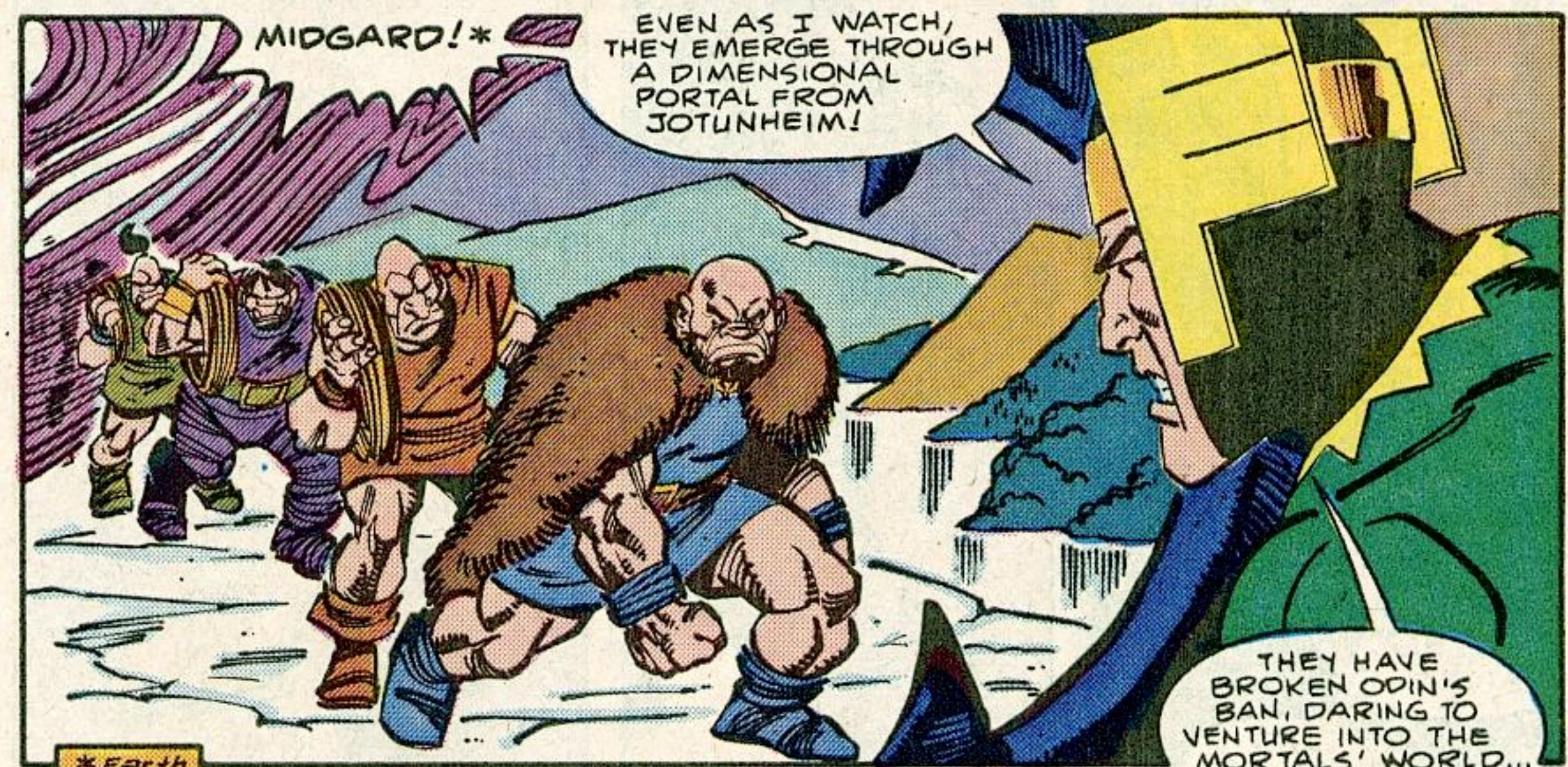
BUT THOR IS NOT MY IMMEDIATE CONCERN.

WHERE ARE THOSE WHOSE HEINOUS TREACHERY PLACED THE LIFE OF LOKI IN DEBT TO THE ONE BEING HE HATES MOST IN ALL THE NINE WORLDS?



WHERE ARE THE FROST GIANTS OF GRUND-ROTH?

SPAKKKK!



MIDGARD!*

EVEN AS I WATCH, THEY EMERGE THROUGH A DIMENSIONAL PORTAL FROM JOTUNHEIM!

THEY HAVE BROKEN ODIN'S BAN, DARING TO VENTURE INTO THE MORTALS' WORLD...

*Earth

"...AND THEY STAND BY ONE OF THE GREAT FJORDS OF NORWAY."

BE CAREFUL WITH THAT LINE! WE MAY NEED EVERY FOOT OF IT!

THANKS TO LOKI, WE KNOW THAT HELA HAS CURSED THOR WITH BRITTLE BONES THAT CAN BE EASILY SHATTERED...

...FOR WE SHALL CALL UP THE OLDEST AND MIGHTIEST OF THOR'S ANCIENT FOES FROM THE SEA...

...AND THEN NOTHING WILL PREVENT THE THUNDER GOD'S TOTAL DESTRUCTION!



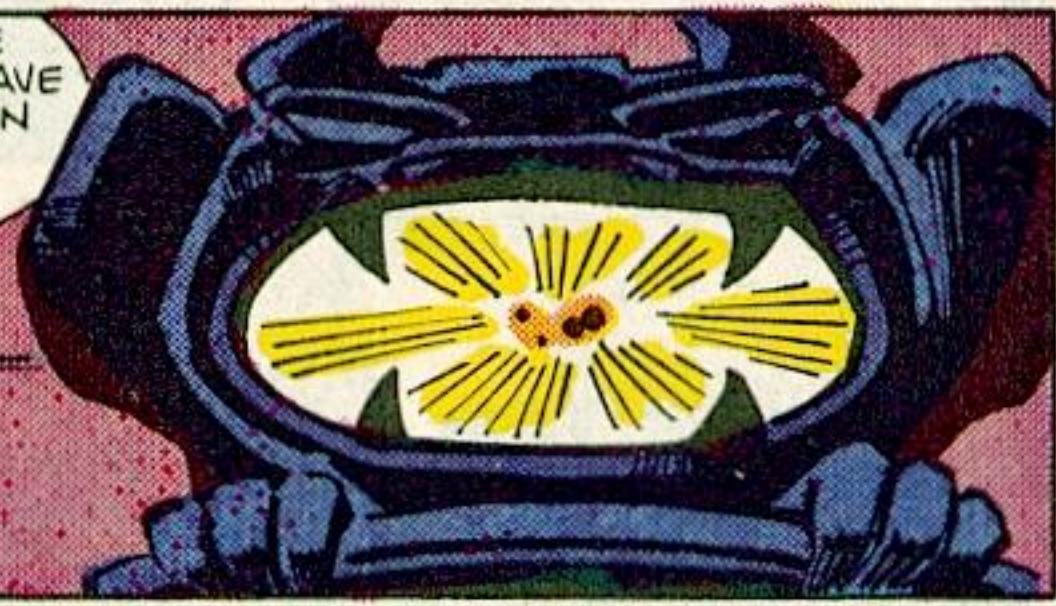
...AND THOUGH HIS ARMOR PROTECTS HIM NOW FROM THE CLUBS OF EVEN GIANTS...

...IT WILL NOT SAVE HIM!



AN EXCELLENT COURSE OF ACTION, GRUNDROTH...

...AND ONE I WOULD HAVE UNDERTAKEN MYSELF IN TIME.

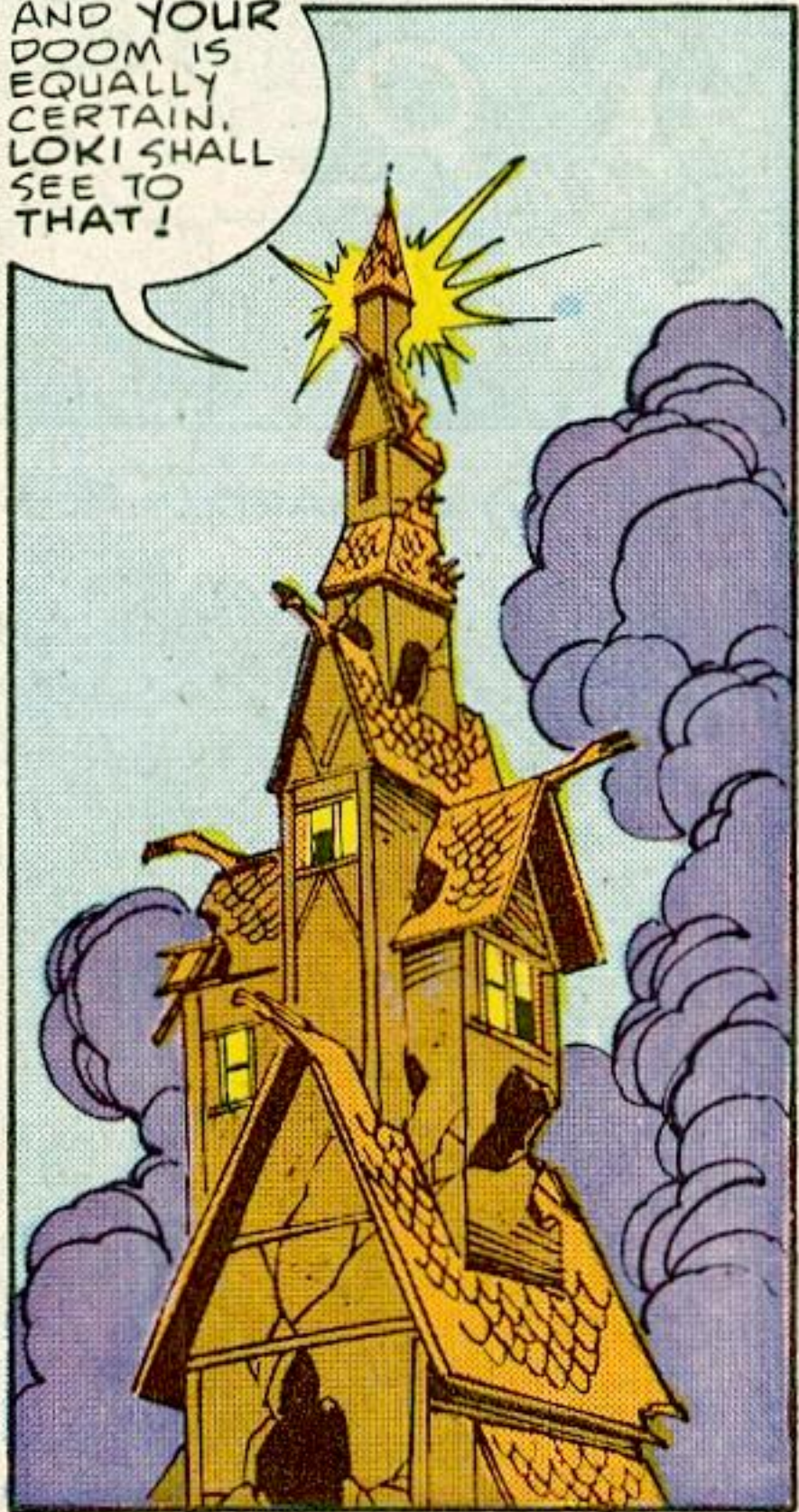


PERHAPS OUR BRIEF LIAISON HAS ACTUALLY PROVIDED YOUR DULL WITS WITH A SPARK OF INSPIRATION.

NO MATTER.



THOR'S EVENTUAL DOOM IS CERTAIN; HELA HATH SEEN TO THAT.



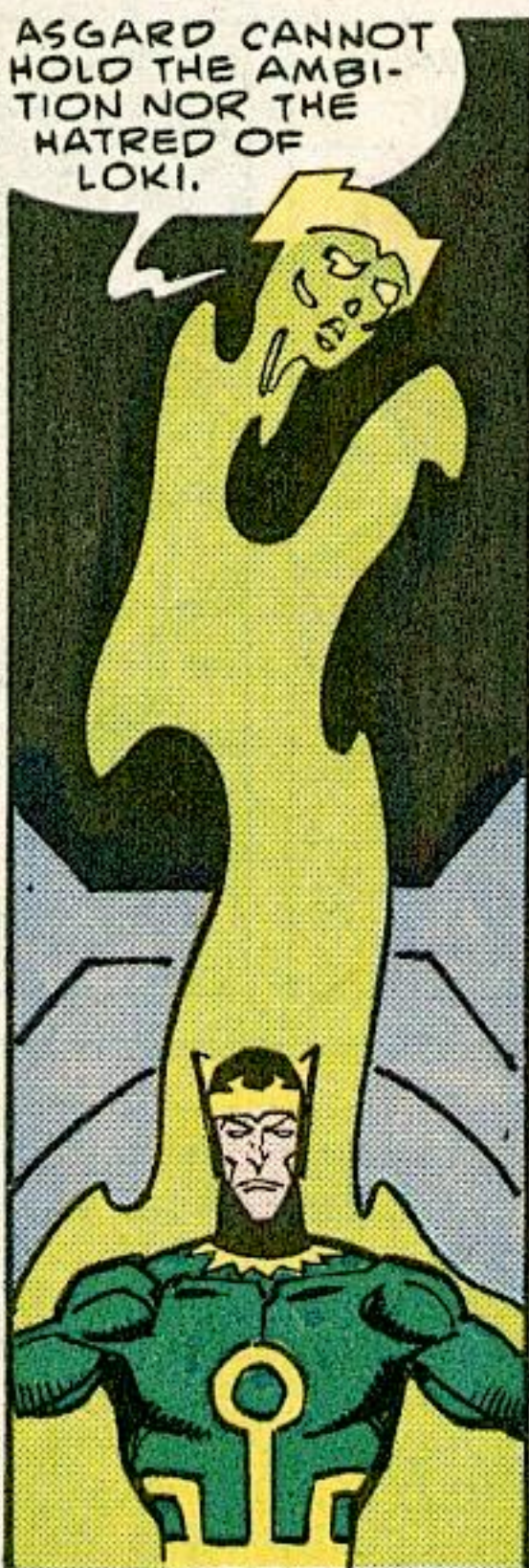
AND YOUR DOOM IS EQUALLY CERTAIN, LOKI SHALL SEE TO THAT!



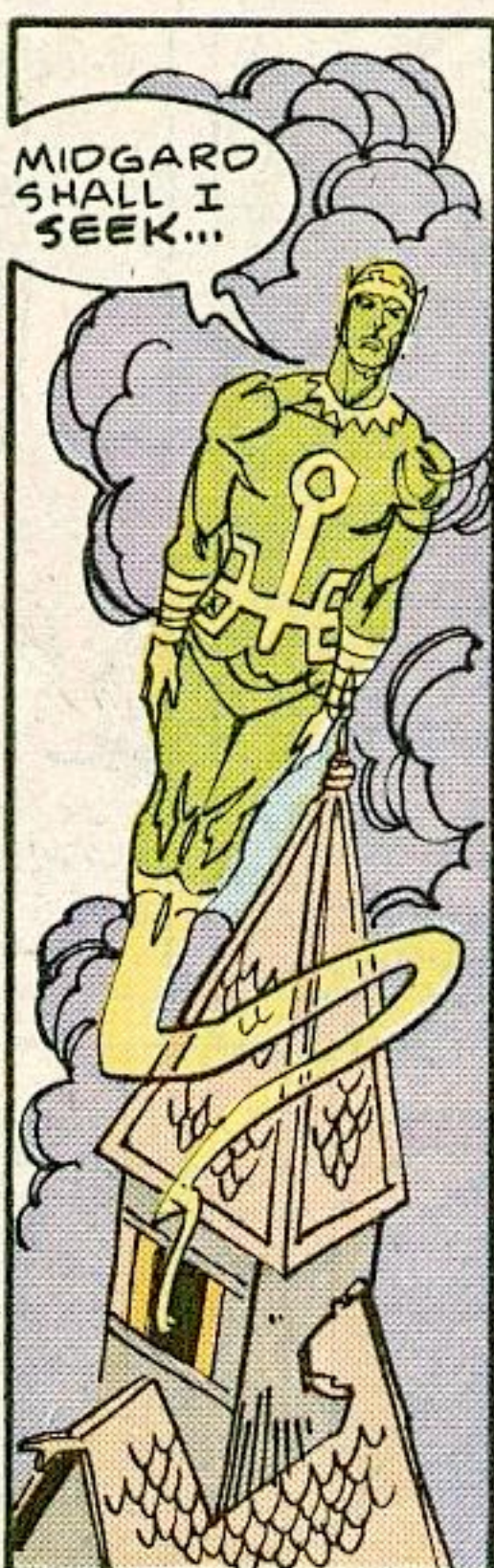
THOUGH MUCH OF MY HALL LIES IN RUINS BENEATH MY FEET...
...THE UTTERMOST TOWER OF SORCERY REMAINS UNTOUCHED...



... PROTECTED BY SPELLS THAT ONLY ODIN HIMSELF COULD UNDO!
AND IT IS FROM HERE THAT LOKI CREATES HIS GREATEST WORKS OF MAGICAL ART.
NOW SHALL I LOOSE THE BONDS OF FLESH FROM THE SPIRIT.



ASGARD CANNOT HOLD THE AMBITION NOR THE HATRED OF LOKI.



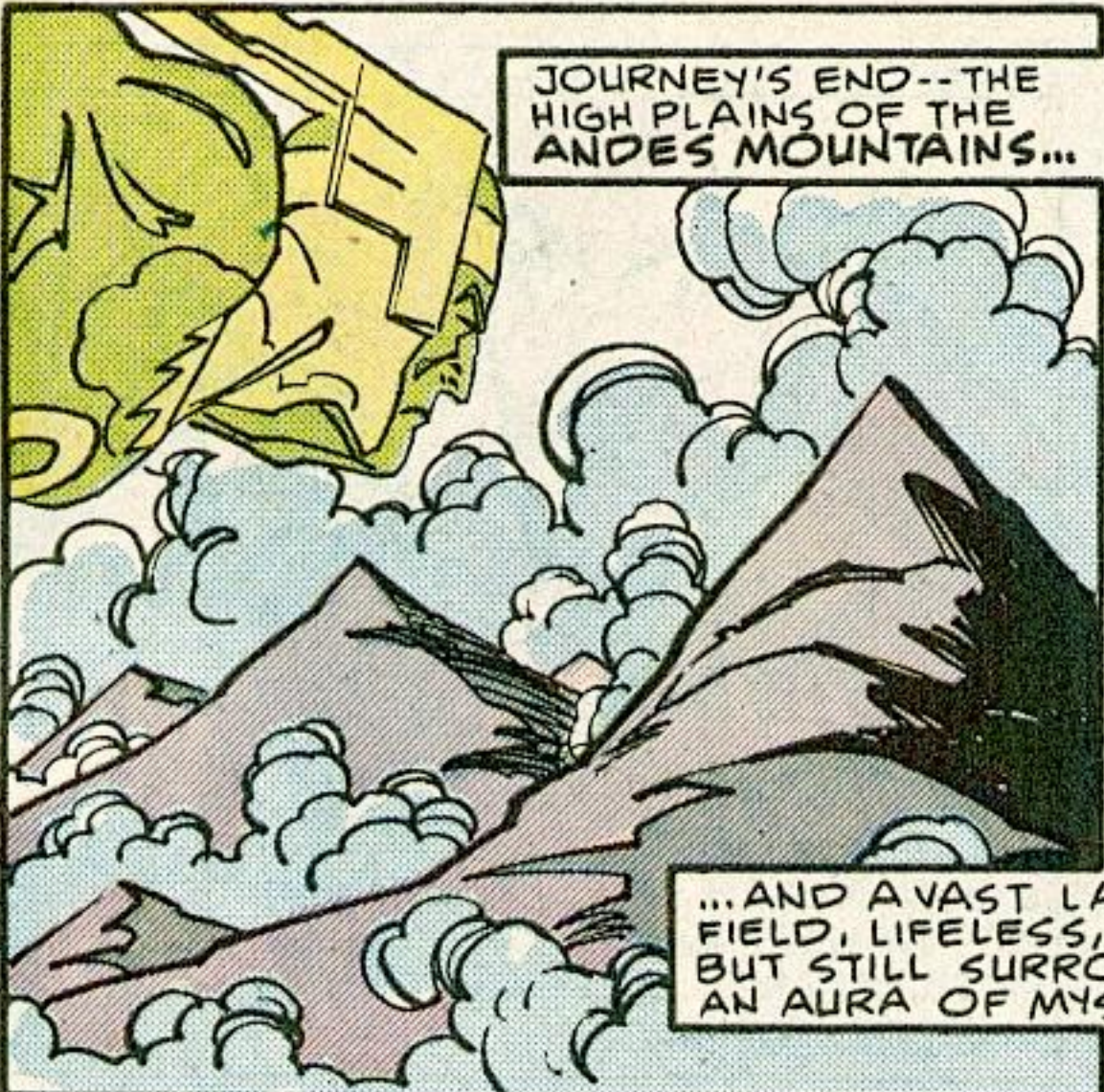
MIDGARD SHALL I SEEK...



THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL IS NOT LIKE THE JOURNEY OF THE BODY...

... MIDGARD SHALL I FIND!

... AND THE MOMENT OF ITS FLIGHT IS LESS THAN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE.



JOURNEY'S END--THE HIGH PLAINS OF THE ANDES MOUNTAINS...

... AND A VAST LANDING FIELD, LIFELESS, ABANDONED, BUT STILL SURROUNDED BY AN AURA OF MYSTERY...



... STILL REVERBERATING WITH THE ECHOES OF MAJESTIC BEINGS WHO STOOD HERE IN THE GREATNESS OF THEIR GLORY.

AND EVEN THE
STEPSON OF
ODIN TREADS
THESE EMPTY
WAYS WITH
CARE.

SOFTLY,
SOFTLY.

THOUGH THE
CELESTIALS HAVE
LONG SINCE DEPART-
ED*, NOT EVEN ODIN
COULD TRULY
FATHOM THEIR
MOTIVES.

AND I MUST DO
NOTHING THAT
MIGHT ALERT THEM
OR AROUSE THEIR
CURIOSITY, WHERE-
EVER THEY MAY
NOW ROAM.

*as long ago as
THOR 300--Raifeth!

BUT THAT WHICH
I SEEK IS HERE AND
THE SOONER I FIND
IT AND DEPART--

--SUCCESS!

YON
GLEAMING
LAKE OF SOLID
SLAG CAN ONLY
BE MY PRIZE!

THE DAYS OF
GRUNDROTH
AND HIS
FOLLOWERS
ARE TRULY
NUMBERED!

...WE TURN TO
ASGARD AGAIN...

...TO THE GREAT HALLS
OF VOLSTAGG...

... AND IN A SILENT
ROOM, WE FIND THE
MIGHTY ENGINE OF
DESTRUCTION, KURSE,
UNMOVING.

ONCE, HE WAS A DARK ELF
WHO FELL TO HIS DEATH
BUT FOUND HIMSELF RESUR-
RECTED BY FATE.

HE HAS SAT SILENTLY IN THIS
ROOM EVER SINCE HEIMDALL,
WATCHMAN OF THE GODS,
BROUGHT HIM HENCE TO
LISTEN TO THE LAUGHTER
OF VOLSTAGG'S CHILDREN...

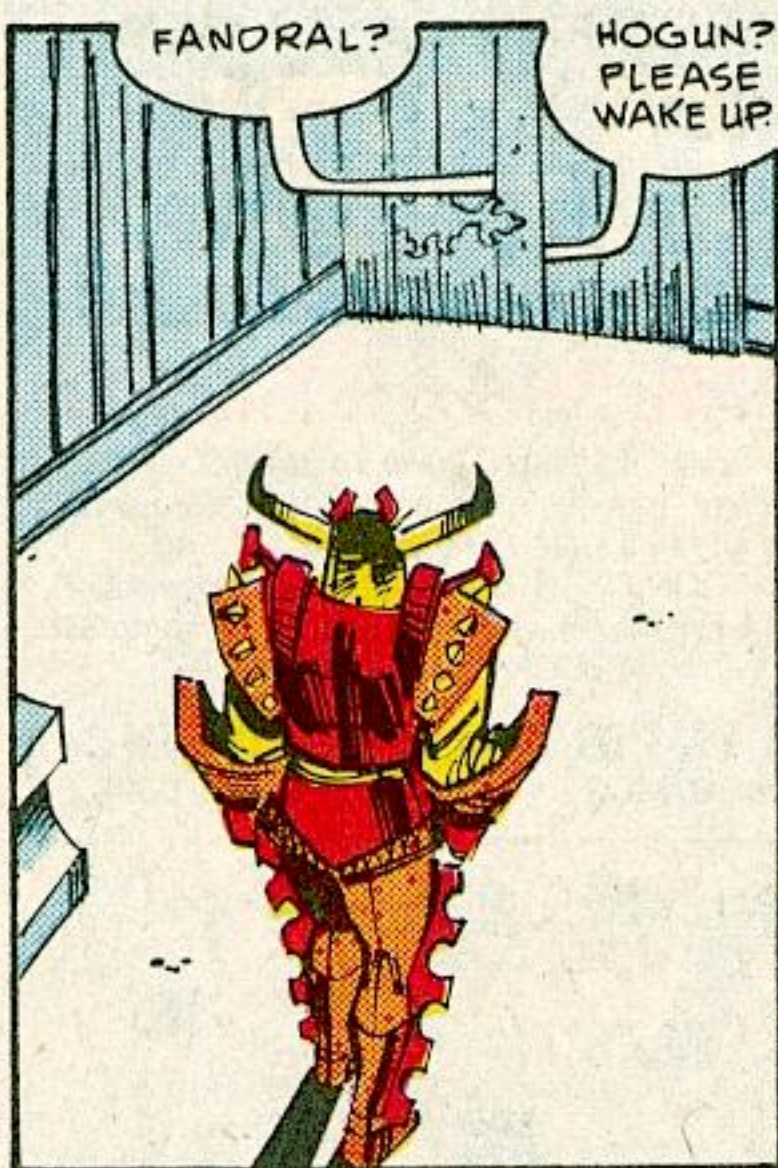
BUT EVEN
CHILDREN'S
LAUGHTER
DID NOT
AROUSE
HIM.

BUT AS LOKI
GLOATS
QUIETLY
OVER THE
SHINING
METAL...

HE SLEW HIS
GREATEST
FOE* AND
CEASED TO
CARE FOR
LIVING.

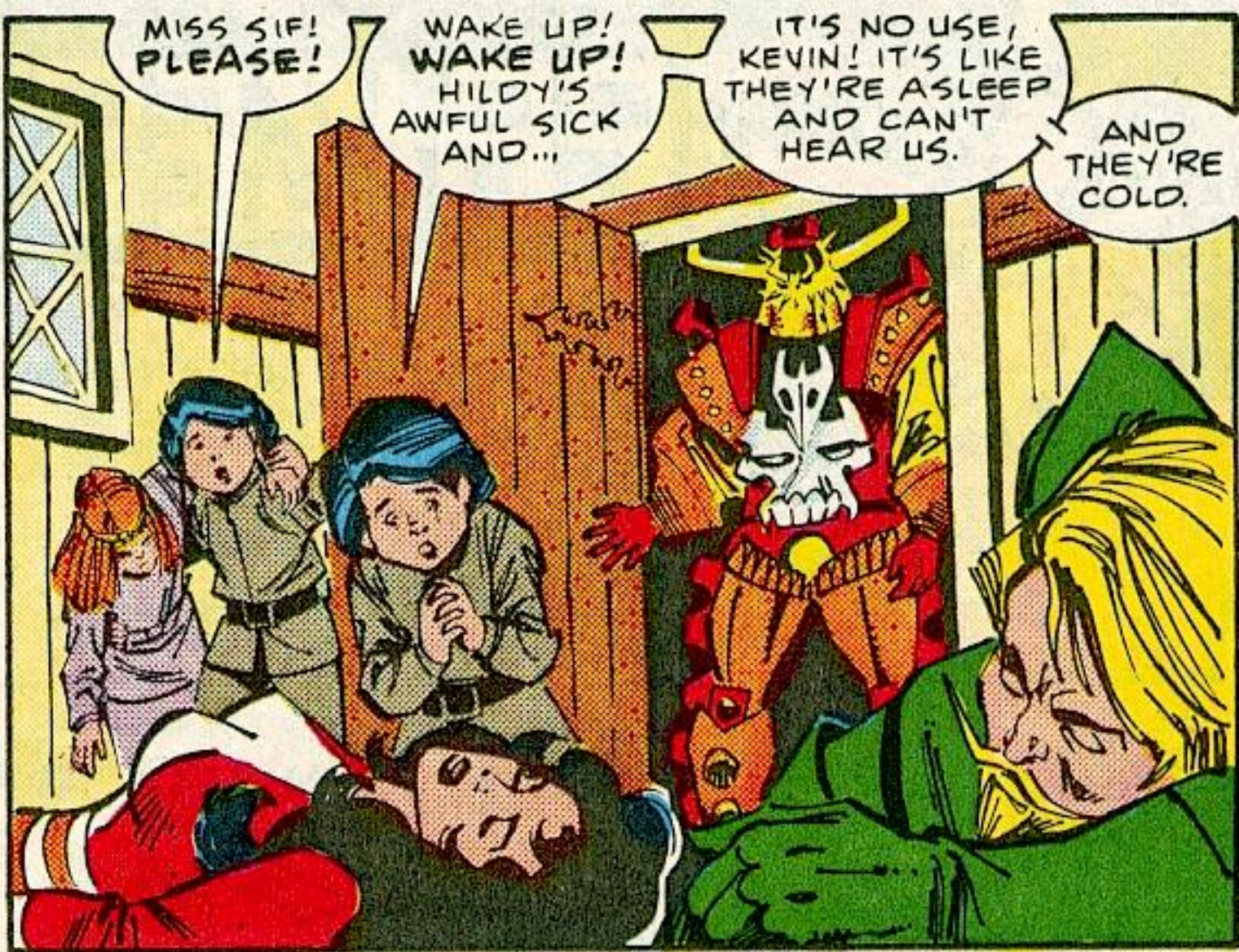
NOW...HE HEARS
THEM CRYING.

*three guesses, no peek-
MALEKITH--but



FANORAL?

HOGUN?
PLEASE
WAKE UP.



MISS SIF!
PLEASE!

WAKE UP!
WAKE UP!
HILDY'S
AWFUL SICK
AND...

IT'S NO USE,
KEVIN! IT'S LIKE
THEY'RE ASLEEP
AND CAN'T
HEAR US.

AND
THEY'RE
COLD.



SO'S HILDY!
MICK,
WHAT'RE WE
GONNA--?

LOOK! IT'S
ANOTHER
ASGARDIAN!
AND HE'S NOT
SICK!

MISTER,
PLEASE,
YOU'VE
GOTTA
HELP US.



HILDY'S REAL
BAD AND SO'S
EVERYBODY
ELSE!

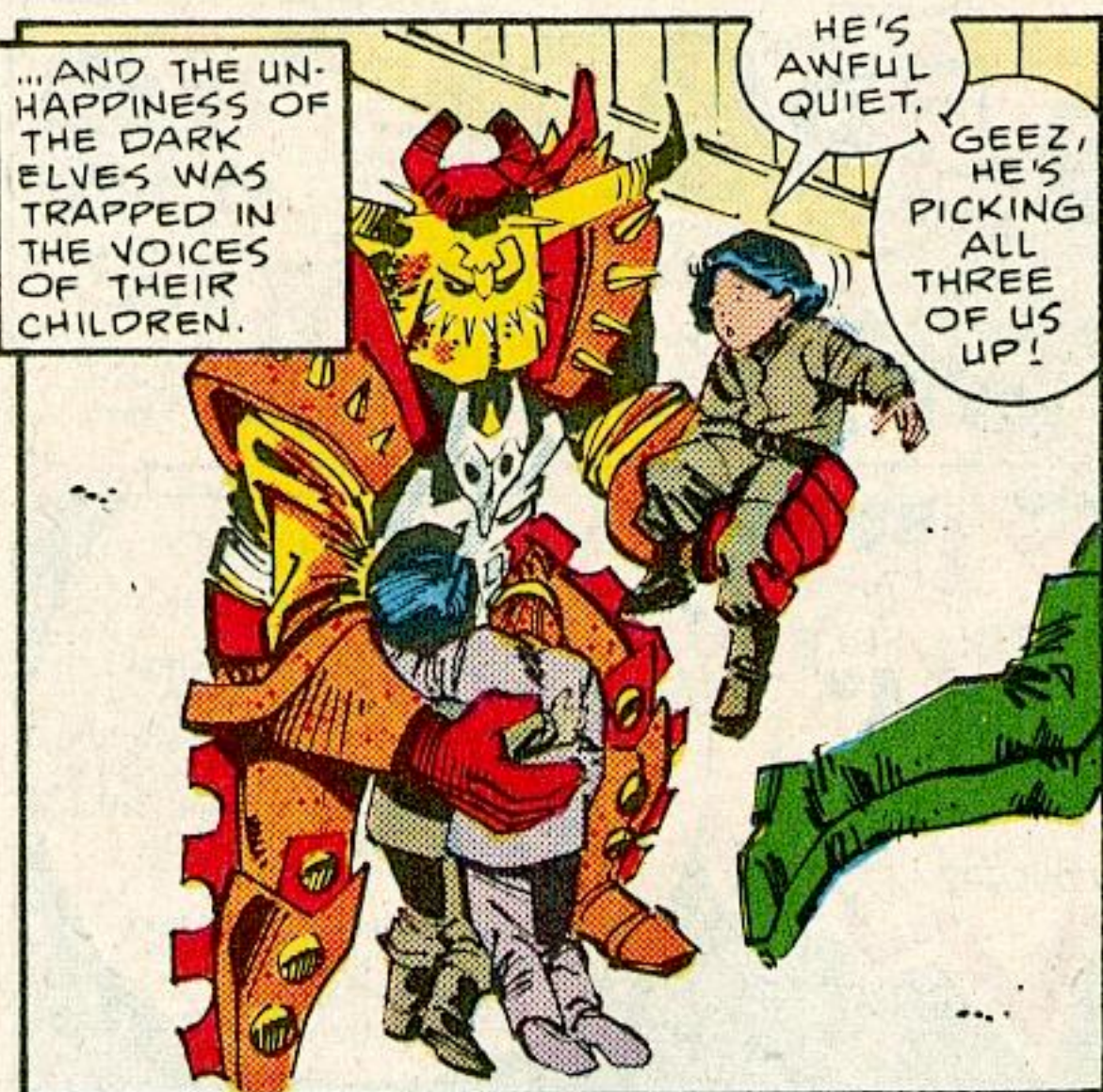
WE GOTTA GET
HELP AND MAYBE
BALDER'LL KNOW
WHAT TO DO AND
WE GOTTA GET
THERE AND--



THE LITTLE VOICES, BRIMMING WITH UNHAPPINESS AND FEAR, ARE NOT UNLIKE THE VOICES KURSE REMEMBERS FROM LONG AGO...

...WHEN HE WAS
SOMEONE ELSE
IN ANOTHER
LIFETIME...

--MISTER?



...AND THE UNHAPPINESS OF THE DARK ELVES WAS TRAPPED IN THE VOICES OF THEIR CHILDREN.

HE'S
AWFUL
QUIET.

GEEZ,
HE'S
PICKING
ALL
THREE
OF US
UP!



DO YOU KNOW
HOW TO GET TO
BALDER'S, MISTER?
HE'S PRESIDENT
OF ASGARD!

HE'S
GOT TO
KNOW
WHAT TO
DO!

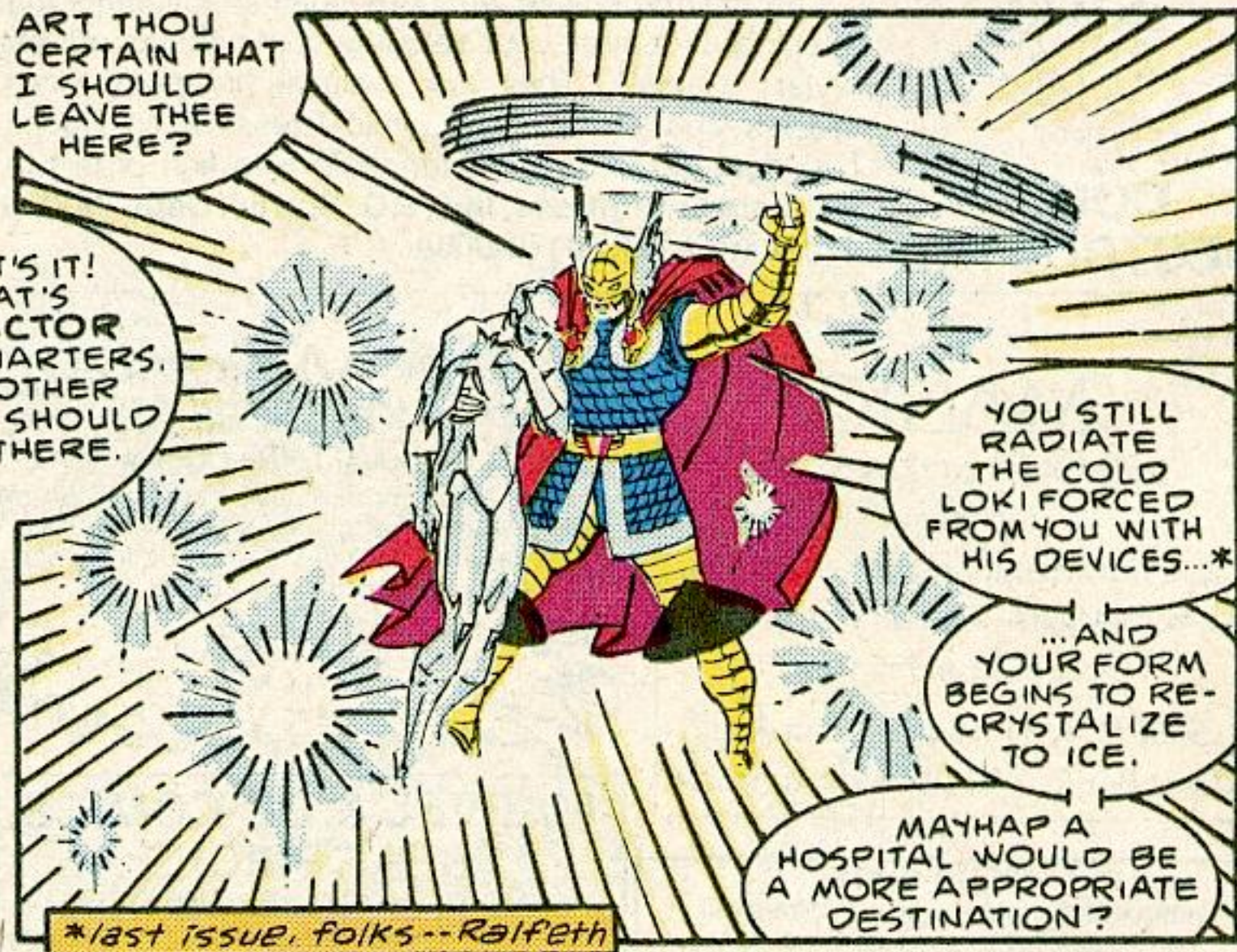
AND AS THE GREAT FORM OF KURSE WALKS FROM THE SILENT HALLS OF VOLSTAGG...



...ON MANHATTAN ISLAND, ALONG THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON RIVER...

THAT'S IT! THAT'S X-FACTOR HEADQUARTERS. THE OTHER GUYS SHOULD BE THERE.

ART THOU CERTAIN THAT I SHOULD LEAVE THEE HERE?



YOU STILL RADIATE THE COLD LOKI FORCED FROM YOU WITH HIS DEVICES...*

...AND YOUR FORM BEGINS TO RE-CRYSTALIZE TO ICE.

MAYHAP A HOSPITAL WOULD BE A MORE APPROPRIATE DESTINATION?

*last issue, folks -- Ralfeth

I... DO FEEL A LITTLE SHAKY STILL, BUT I CAN'T REALLY GO TO A HOSPITAL.



AT LEAST NOT LIKE THIS.

THE OTHERS... THEY'LL HELP ME... I CAN HEAR THEM COMING NOW.

THEN I SHALL AWAY. FOR THE THUNDER GOD HAS MUCH TO THINK ABOUT AND LITTLE TIME NOW FOR THE CONCERNS OF MORTALS.



BOBBY! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?

YOU... YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME IF I TOLD YOU, HANK!

I AM UNCERTAIN ABOUT LEAVING THAT YOUNG MAN.

BUT ROBERT DRAKE'S COMRADES WILL SURELY SEE TO HIS NEEDS.



AND I BLAME HIM NOT.

*But YOU can learn all about it in X-FACTOR 17! --R.

I KNOW THAT THE FEAR AND MISTRUST OF MUTANTS INFECTS MANY HERE ON EARTH, INCLUDING THOSE WHO MINISTER TO THE SICK.

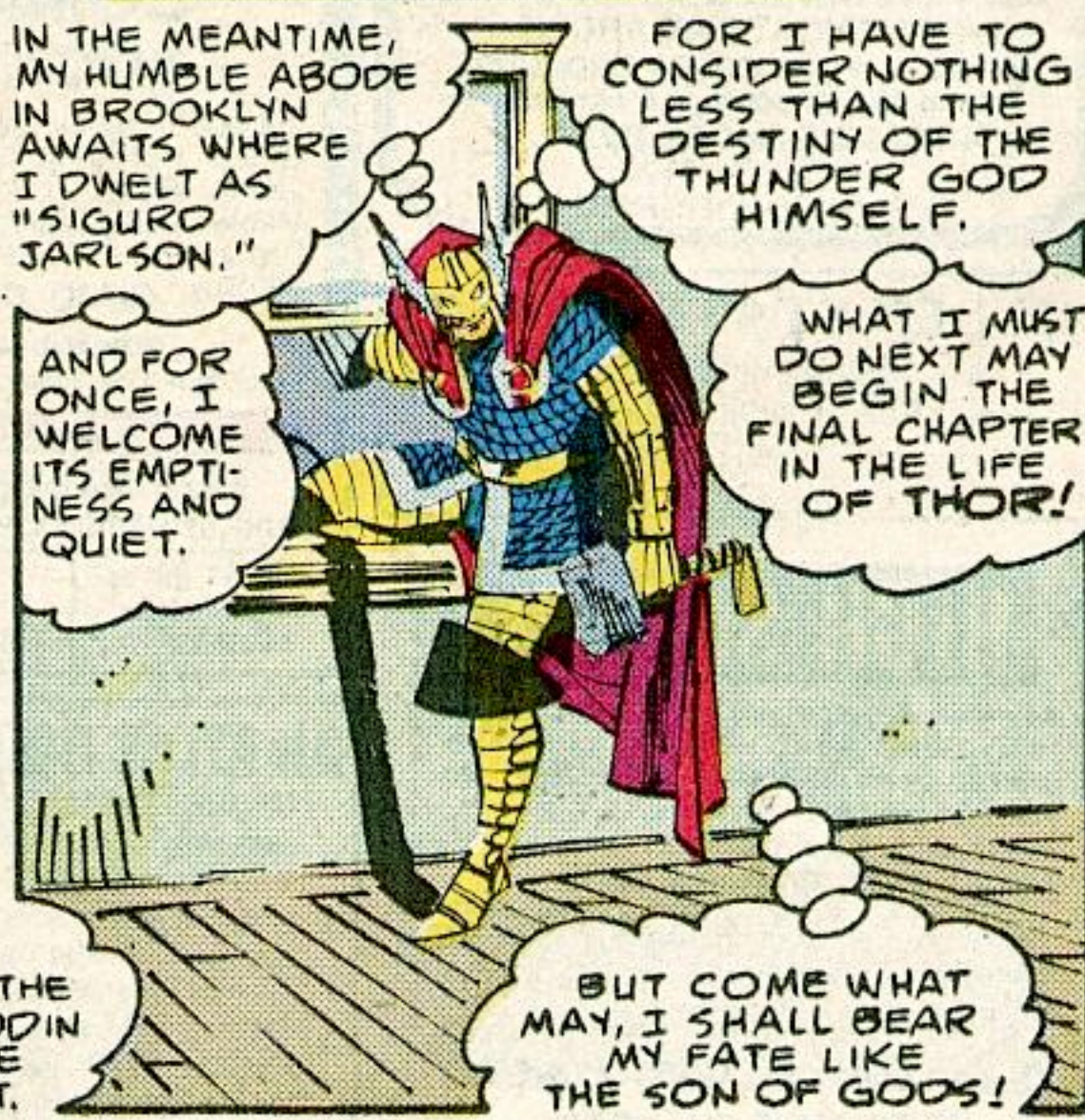


FOR SUCH IS THE NATURE OF HUMANS THAT THEY ARE ALWAYS SUSPICIOUS OF THOSE WHO DIFFER FROM THEM...

...AND NOT EVEN THE POWER OF ODIN COULD HAVE CHANGED IT.

IN THE MEANTIME, MY HUMBLE ABODE IN BROOKLYN AWAITS WHERE I DWELT AS "SIGURD JARLSON."

AND FOR ONCE, I WELCOME ITS EMPTINESS AND QUIET.



FOR I HAVE TO CONSIDER NOTHING LESS THAN THE DESTINY OF THE THUNDER GOD HIMSELF.

WHAT I MUST DO NEXT MAY BEGIN THE FINAL CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF THOR!

BUT COME WHAT MAY, I SHALL BEAR MY FATE LIKE THE SON OF GODS!

AND ELSEWHERE, AT THE END OF A GREAT GLACIER ON THE FAR NORTHERN COAST OF NORWAY...

...THE GREAT GIANTS OF JOTUNHEIM STAND ABOVE THE ROILING SEA.



ONE BLOW IS ALL IT WILL TAKE, GRUNDROTH.

**SKAGGRA
CCCKCKK!**

SPLOOOOOSH!



THE LABOR IS DONE QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY...



**CHOP CHOP!
THUNK!
KRUNCK!**

...AND A FEW MOMENTS LATER...

...THE GREAT VESSEL OF ICE GLIDES SILENTLY PAST THE BARREN BANKS OF THE FJORD...



...AND OUT ALONG THE COAST TOWARD THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS...

FAR ENOUGH. HERE THE CURRENTS OF THE MAELSTROM FLOW ABOUT THE ISLANDS AND TELL US THAT THE ONE WE SEEK IS BENEATH US, STIRRING.

TO YOU, SNOTRI, GOES THE HONOR OF SUMMONING THE GREAT ENEMY OF THOR WHO SHALL DESTROY HIM FOR US.



UGGH?

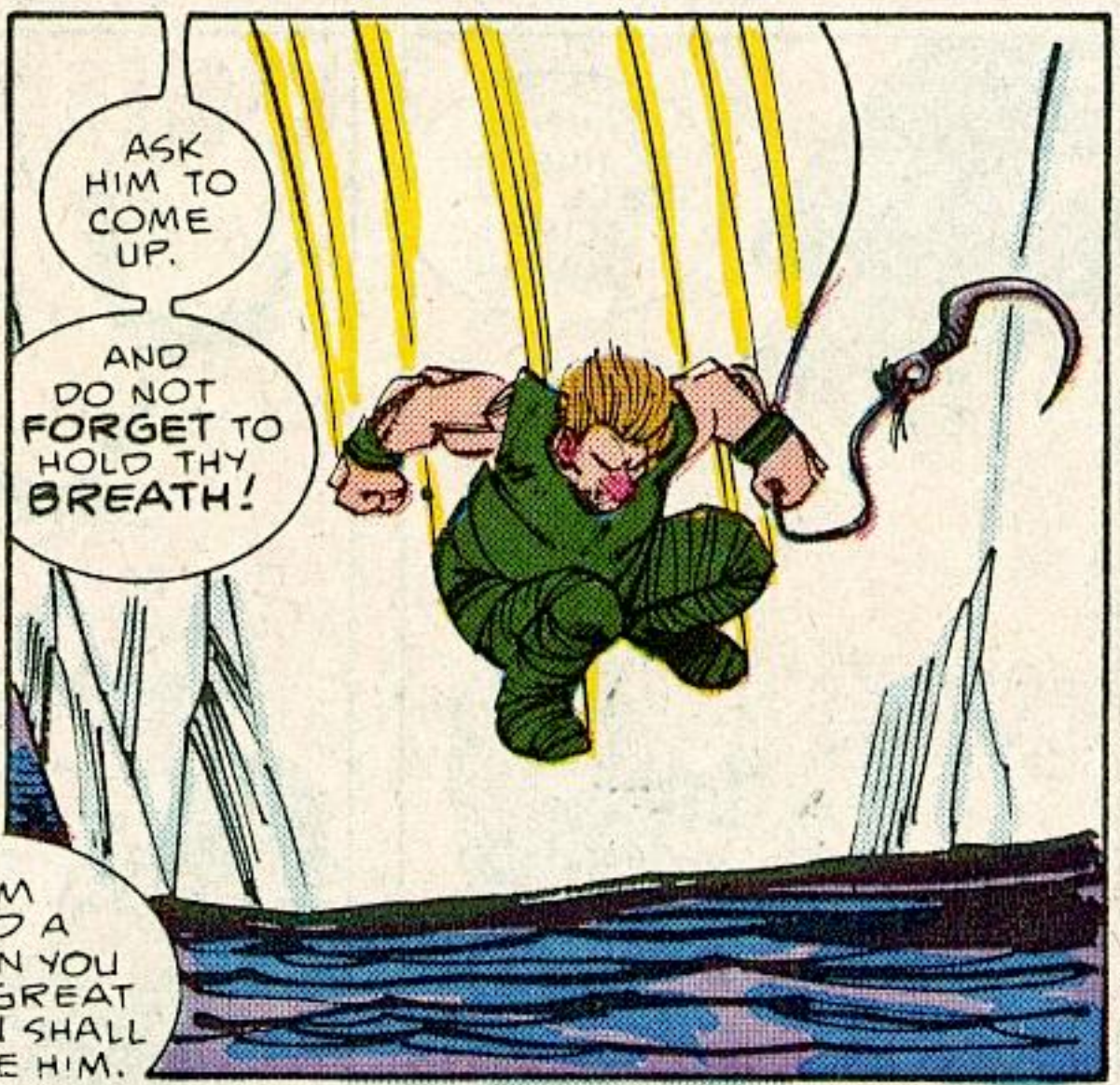
TAKE THE END OF THIS CABLE AND CARRY IT TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

DUH--?

SWIM AROUND A BIT. WHEN YOU FIND THE GREAT ENEMY, YOU SHALL RECOGNIZE HIM.

ASK HIM TO COME UP.

AND DO NOT FORGET TO HOLD THY BREATH!



AND IN FAR-AWAY ASGARD AT THAT MOMENT...

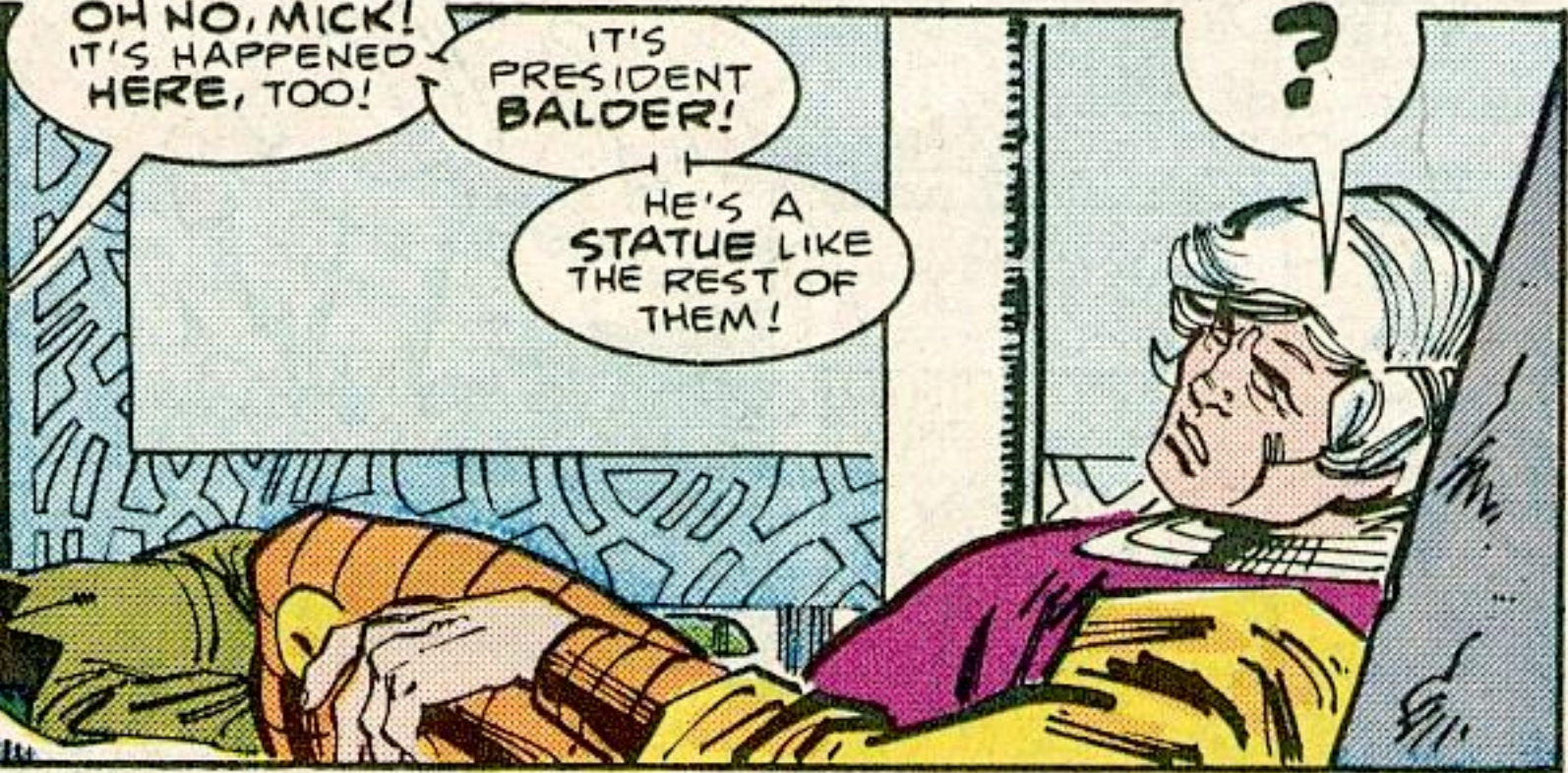
HE DID IT, KEV! HE BROUGHT US TO BALDER'S PLACE!



OH NO, MICK! IT'S HAPPENED HERE, TOO!

IT'S PRESIDENT BALDER!

HE'S A STATUE LIKE THE REST OF THEM!



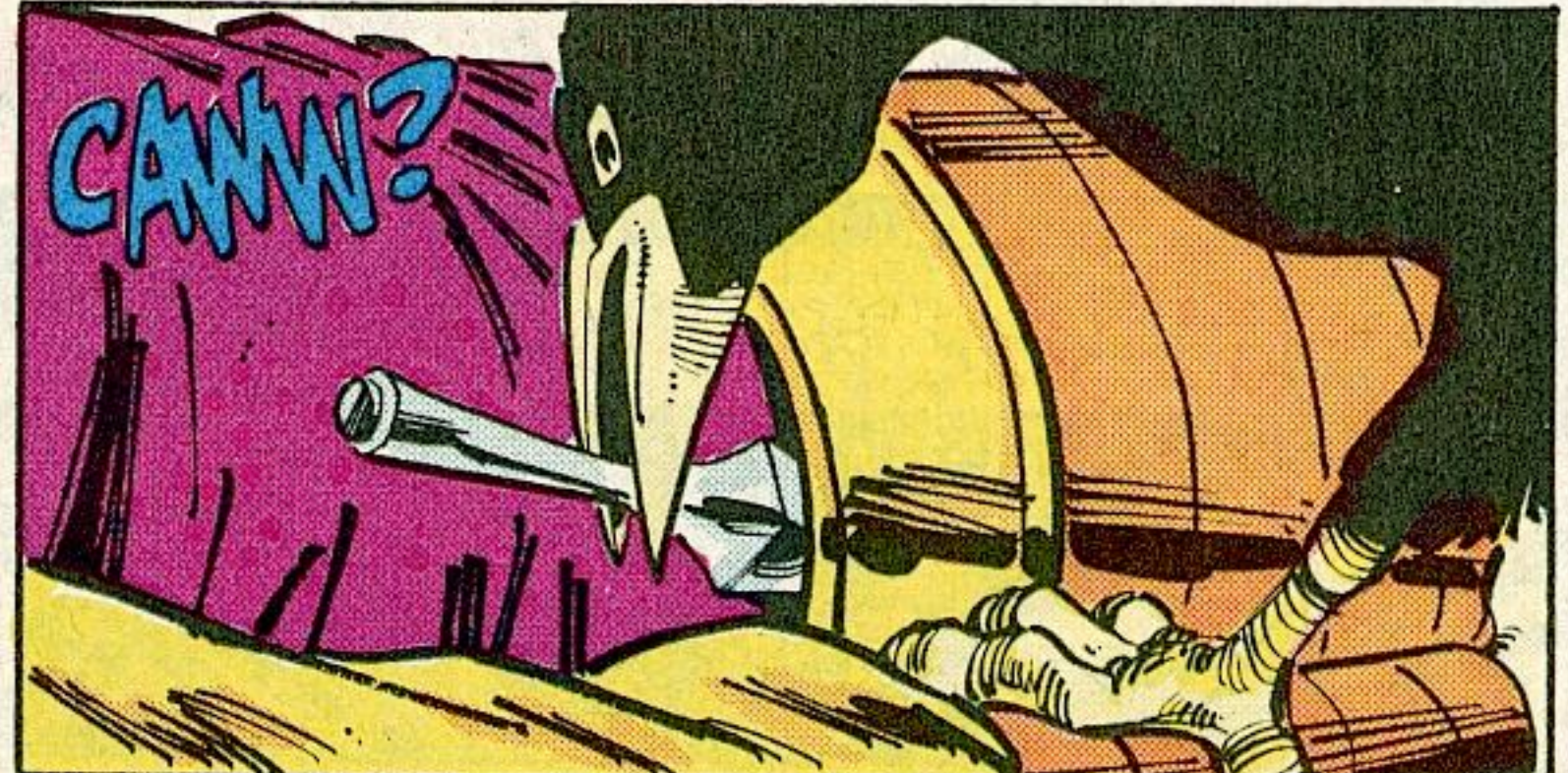
CRACKCK! CAWW!

HE'S STILL ALIVE! BUT HE'S GONE CRAZY!



CRACKCK!

CAWW!
CAWW!



CAWW?



THEY'RE TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING!

CAWW!
GRACKK!



CAW! CAWW!

BUT... I CAN'T TALK BIRD TALK!



MICK-- WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH IT?

AND IN THE ICY WATERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY...

WHAT'S TAKING THAT FOOL SNOTRI SO LONG?



WE CANNOT STAY HERE UNTIL THE MIDNIGHT SUN SETS!

HUH?

BY THE EYEBROWS OF YMIR, THE LINE IS TAUT! THE GREAT ENEMY HAS TAKEN THE BAIT!



THONNG!

PULL, YOU MISBEGOTTEN SONS OF FROST-BITE!

PULL, AND BY THE SNOWS OF JOTUNHEIM, WE'LL YANK HIM TO THE SURFACE BEFORE HE KNOWS WHAT WE'RE ABOUT!



PULL!



CRACK!



YOU'RE NOT BIG ENOUGH! YOU CAN'T BE HIM!

WHO ARE YOU?

THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD!

SSTHRAASHHH!

A FOUL-TASTING SNOWBALL AWAKENS ME OUT OF A SOUND SLUMBER...

...SOME RAGGED FISHERMEN TRY TO CATCH ME WITH A CLOTHESLINE THAT WOULDN'T HOOK A MINNOW...

...THEY INSULT MY APPEARANCE...

...AND THEN FAIL TO RECOGNIZE ME!

RARELY HAVE I ENCOUNTERED SUCH ILL-MANNERED FOOD SO EAGER TO BE EATEN!

BUT PERHAPS A MIDNIGHT SNACK WOULD BE JUST THE THING TO RESTORE MY GOOD HUMOR!

WE ARE NO FOOD! GRUNDROTH AM I, LEADER OF THE FROST GIANTS!

AND WE SEEK THE GREAT MIDGARD SERPENT ITSELF, ENEMY OF THOR!

NOT SOME GARRULOUS REFUGEE FROM THE FISHERIES OF EARTH!

WATCH YOUR TONGUE, LITTLE MAN! FIN FANG FOOM AM I, OLDEST OF DRAGONS, AND YOU ARE LESS TO ME THAN FISHBAIT!

BUT WHAT, PRAY TELL, IS A THOR? IS HE WORTH YOUR LIVES?

HE'S THE GOD OF THUNDER, MIGHTIEST WARRIOR OF THE ASGARDIANS...

...AND WIELDER OF THE HAMMER, MJOLNIR, THAT WOULD MAKE FISHBAIT OUT OF YOU!!

DREAMER. AND WHY DO YOU SEEK THIS MIDGARD WHATEVER?

JORMUNGAND IS THE WORLD SERPENT WHO ENCIRCLES EARTH! AND HE IS THOR'S MORTAL ENEMY!

NOW AS NEVER BEFORE, HE HAS A CHANCE TO DESTROY HIS HATED FOE.

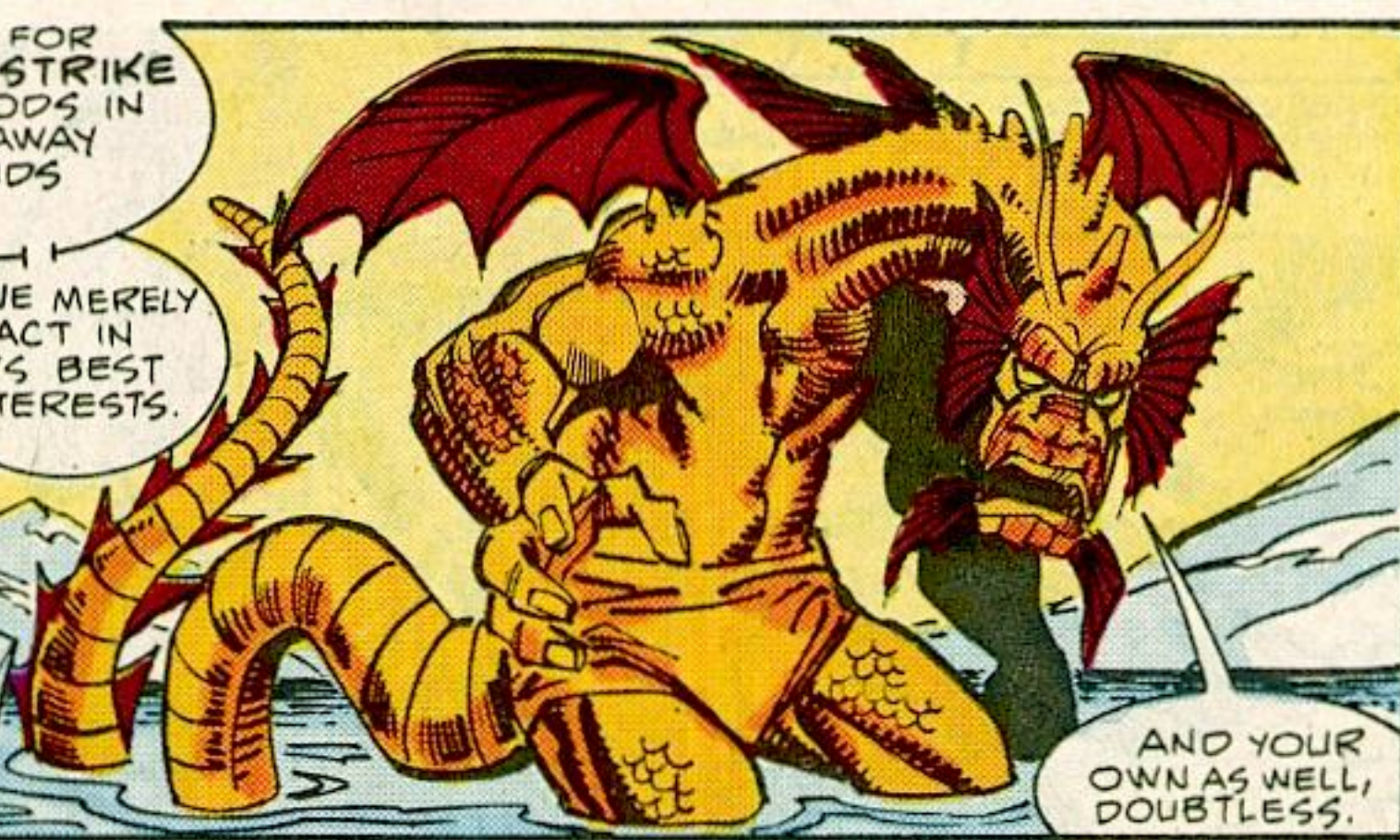
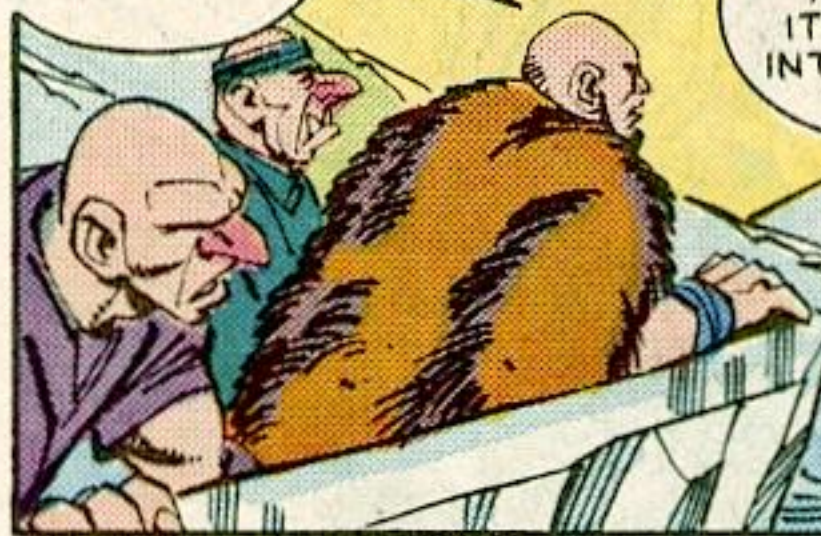
INDEED?



HELA, THE GODDESS OF DEATH, HAS CURSED THOR WITH OLD MAN'S BONES THAT CAN BE SHATTERED!

THIS IS THE TIME FOR THE SERPENT TO STRIKE WHILE THOR BROODS IN NEW YORK, FAR AWAY FROM HIS FRIENDS IN ASGARD.

WE MERELY ACT IN ITS BEST INTERESTS.



AND YOUR OWN AS WELL, DOUBTLESS.



BUT I SHOULD LIKE TO MEET THE WARRIOR WHO WIELDS A WEAPON MIGHTY ENOUGH TO DEFEAT THE POWER OF FIN FANG FOOM!

AND IF HE PROVES AMUSING, PERHAPS I WON'T DEVOUR THE REST OF YOU WHEN I RETURN!

GRUNDROTH! WHO WAS THAT?

HE CANNOT POSSIBLY BE THE ONE WE SOUGHT.



MY FEELING IS THAT OUR FISHING MAY NOT HAVE BEEN IN VAIN AFTER ALL.

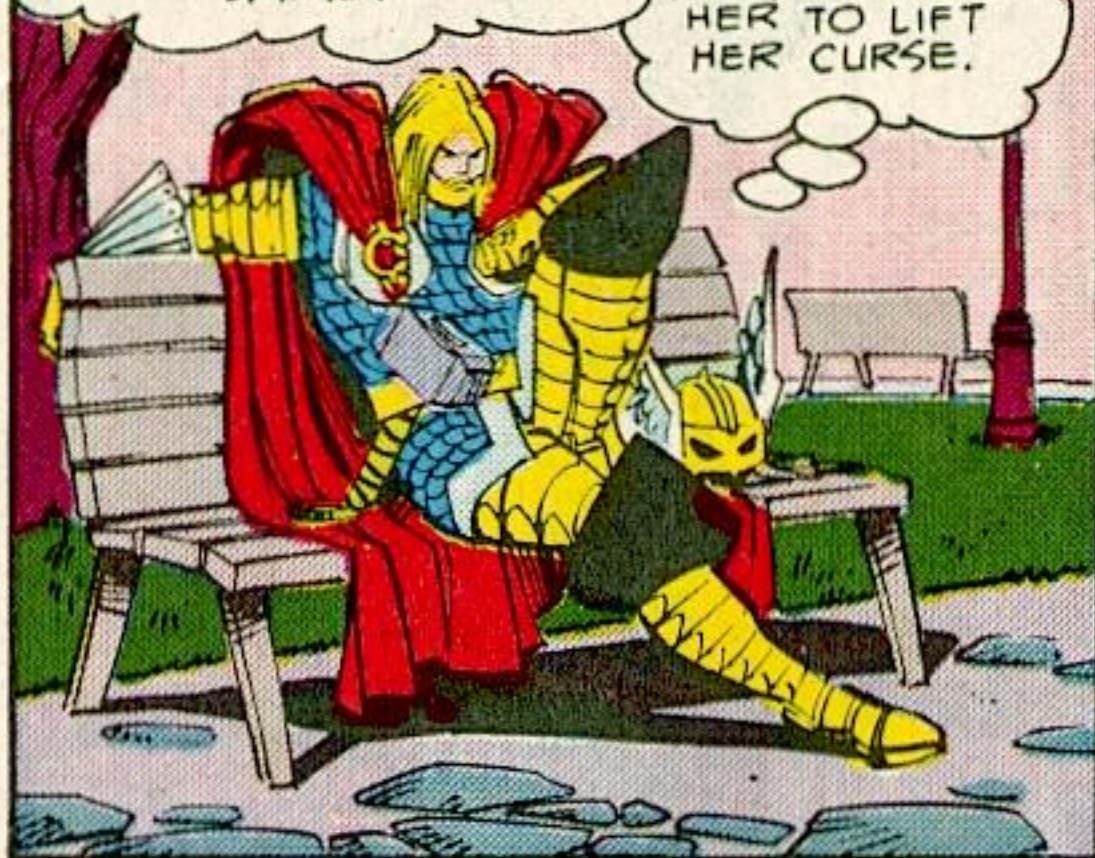
I WONDER IF WE SHOULD HAVE DESCRIBED THOR'S NEW APPEARANCE TO HIM?



SOME TIME LATER, IN A SMALL PARK IN THE BAY RIDGE SECTION OF BROOKLYN...

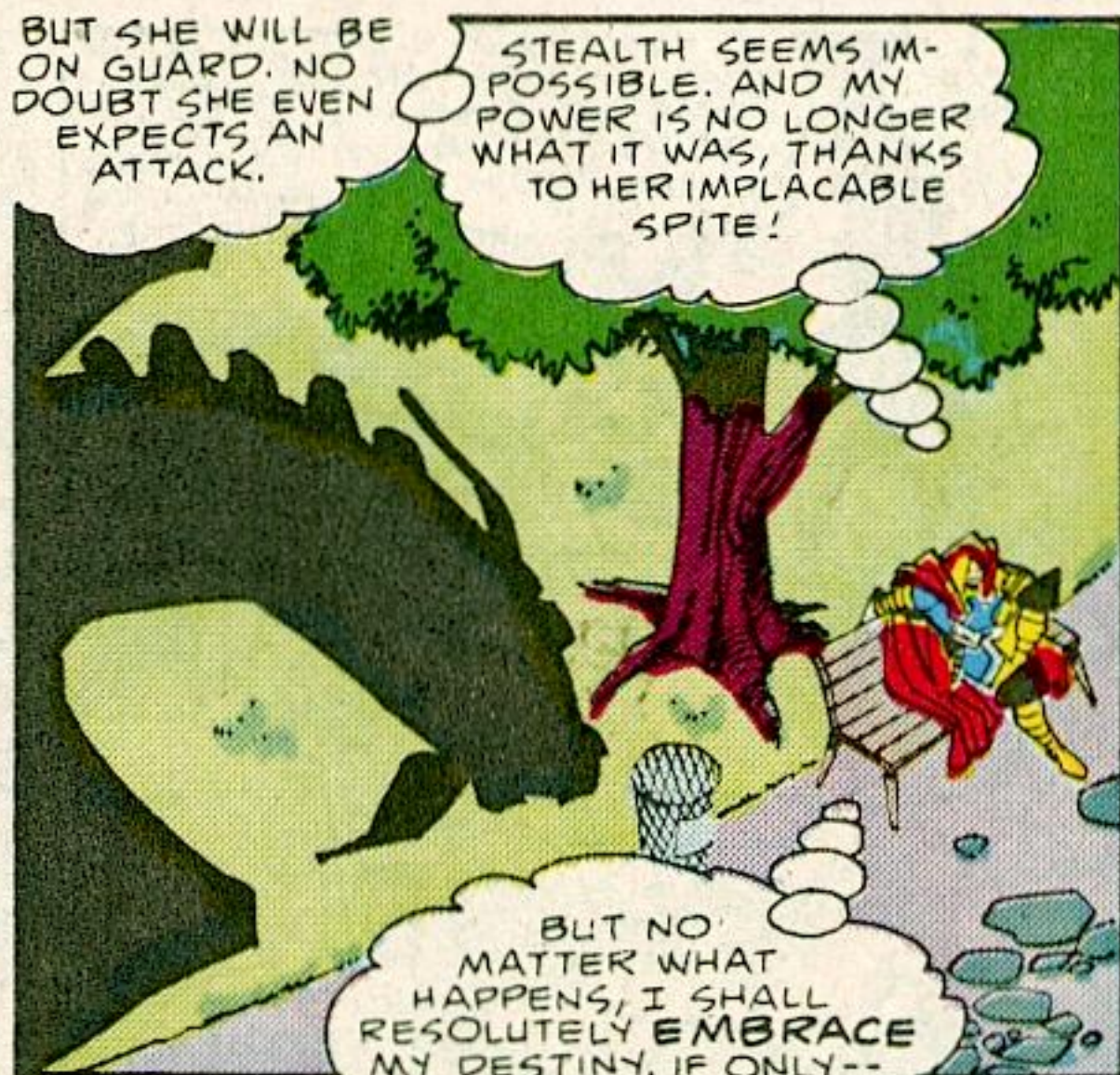
NO MATTER HOW I CONSIDER THE MATTER, THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS THE SAME.

I MUST RETURN TO HEL AND FACE HELA. FORCE HER TO LIFT HER CURSE.



BUT SHE WILL BE ON GUARD. NO DOUBT SHE EVEN EXPECTS AN ATTACK.

STEALTH SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. AND MY POWER IS NO LONGER WHAT IT WAS, THANKS TO HER IMPLACABLE SPITE!



BUT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I SHALL RESOLUTELY EMBRACE MY DESTINY. IF ONLY--

HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT DESTINED TO LEARN ANY MORE ABOUT THE MUSINGS OF THOR, FOR AT THAT MOMENT...



NOW, LITTLE ONE, TURN AND STARE INTO THE FACE OF DEATH!

FOR I AM FIN FANG FOOM AND THE SON OF ODIN WILL LEARN TO HIS ETERNAL REGRET--



--OH! I BEG YOUR PARDON!

I FEAR THAT I MISTOOK YOU FOR SOMEONE ELSE. THE RED CAPE, YOU KNOW.

ACTUALLY, THERE ARE QUITE A FEW OF THEM WORN IN MY LINE OF WORK.

I TAKE IT YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR?

PERHAPS I MIGHT BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE?

I AM FAIRLY FAMILIAR WITH MOST OF THE OTHER WEARERS OF SUCH CAPES.



AND THAT IS--?

THE ODD JOB OF REMOVAL HERE AND THERE.



WHOM DO YOU SEEK?

THOR THE THUNDERER, SON OF ODIN!

SNORTT!



NOT A SOCIAL CALL, I PRESUME?

HARDLY. THOR IS AN ANCIENT ENEMY...



... AND I HAVE RECENTLY DISCOVERED THAT HE IS SUFFERING UNDER A CONSIDERABLE HANDICAP!

ONE HATES TO DO THE DISHONORABLE THING AND TAKE UNFAIR ADVANTAGE BUT REALLY, HISTORY ONLY LOVES WINNERS, CUSTER AND THE ALAMO EXCEPTED.

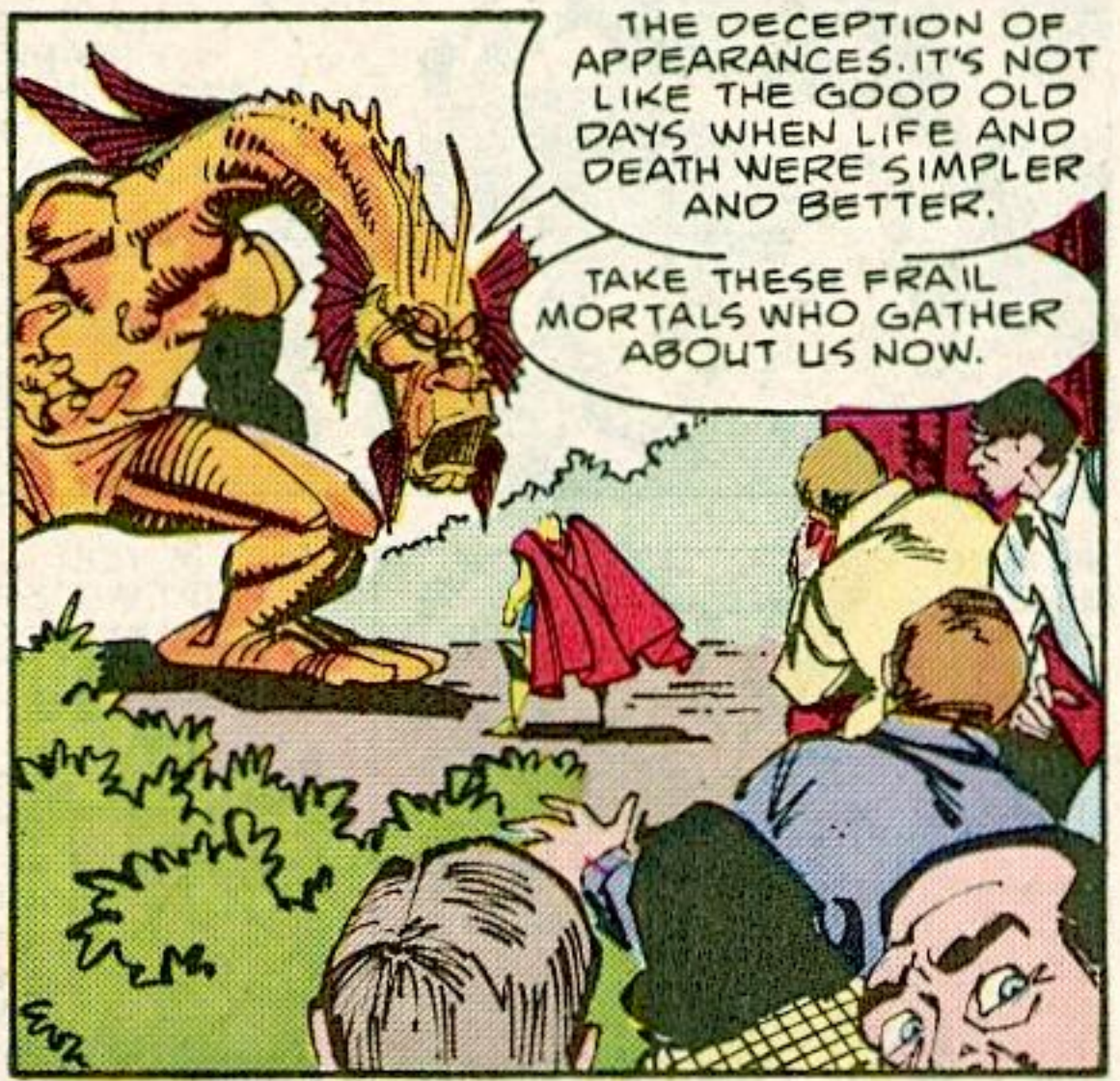
AND HISTORIANS CARE NOTHING FOR THE MORAL NICETIES OF THE VICTORS, ESPECIALLY IN THIS DAY AND AGE.



A PITY, REALLY, BUT IF THE OLD STORIES ARE TRUE, THOR AND I ARE DESTINED ONE DAY TO SLAY EACH OTHER IN A FAIR FIGHT.

POPPY-COCK, BUT I INTEND TO FORESTALL ANY SUCH POSSIBILITY.

I KNOW OF THIS THOR, YOU HARDLY LOOK LARGE ENOUGH TO PROVIDE HIM A WORTHY OPPONENT.



THE DECEPTION OF APPEARANCES. IT'S NOT LIKE THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN LIFE AND DEATH WERE SIMPLER AND BETTER.

TAKE THESE FRAIL MORTALS WHO GATHER ABOUT US NOW.



WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THEY WOULD HARNESS POWER ENOUGH TO ONE DAY CHALLENGE THE GODS THEMSELVES?

THE LESSON OF THE ANTS; STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

THE NAME "FIN FANG FOOM" IS UNFAMILIAR TO ME.



MERELY A NOM DE GUERRE. * BUT I'VE HALF A MIND TO LAY WASTE TO THESE CREATURES AND THEIR HOVELS RIGHT NOW!

A SUITABLE DEMONSTRATION OF MY POWER FOR THE DOUBTING THOMAS BEFORE ME.

* a pseudonym.

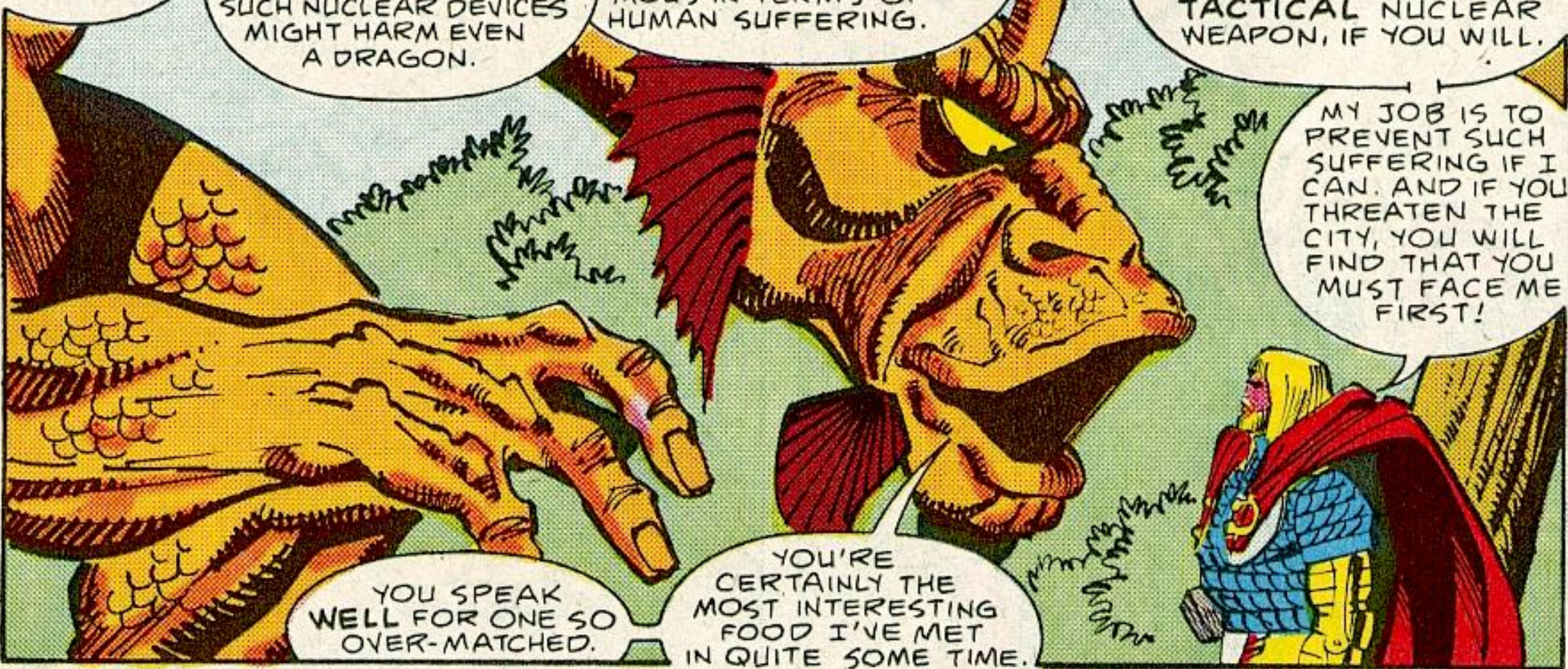
I THINK YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER.

'TIS TRUE THAT MANKIND HAS HARNESSSED THE POWER OF THE ATOM AND SUCH NUCLEAR DEVICES MIGHT HARM EVEN A DRAGON.

BUT THE COST, SHOULD YOU REMAIN WITHIN THE CITY, WOULD BE ENORMOUS IN TERMS OF HUMAN SUFFERING.

I MYSELF AM A SO-CALLED SUPER HERO. AN EXTREMELY LOCAL VERSION OF A TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPON, IF YOU WILL.

MY JOB IS TO PREVENT SUCH SUFFERING IF I CAN. AND IF YOU THREATEN THE CITY, YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU MUST FACE ME FIRST!



YOU SPEAK WELL FOR ONE SO OVER-MATCHED.

YOU'RE CERTAINLY THE MOST INTERESTING FOOD I'VE MET IN QUITE SOME TIME.



I MUST REMEMBER TO THANK THOSE LITTLE GIANTS BEFORE I EAT THEM.

WOW! TIME TO ALERT THE MEDIA!

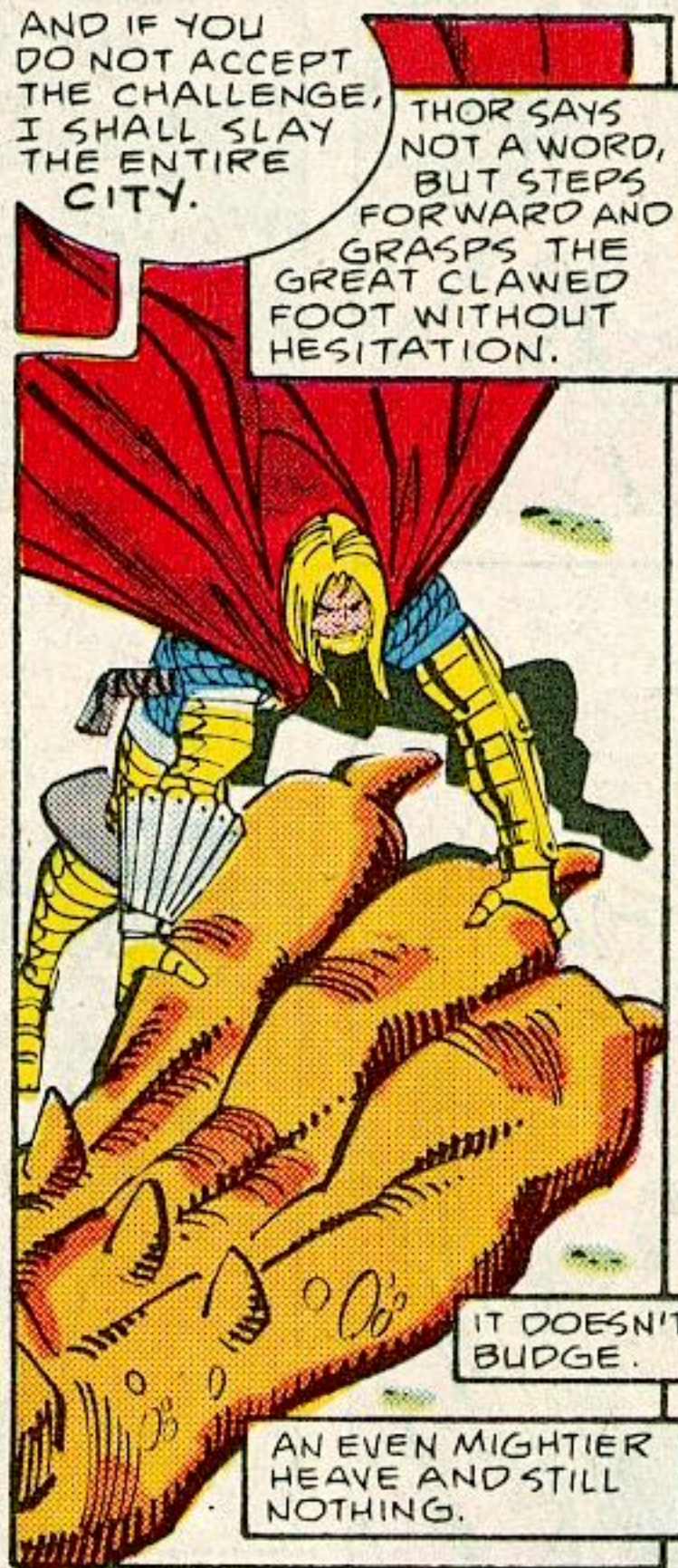
THERE'S A \$50 PRIZE FOR CALLING IN A SCOOP TO WCRP RADIO!



BUT WE DRAGONS ARE NOTHING IF NOT SPORTING. I'LL MAKE YOU A BARGAIN.

IF YOU CAN LIFT MY FOOT, LITTLE HERO, WE SHALL GO AND FIND SOME PLACE FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD AND I WILL KILL YOU THERE, IN PEACE AND QUIET.

BUT IF YOU FAIL, I SHALL KILL YOU HERE, ALONG WITH THOUSANDS OF YOUR FELLOW ANTS!



AND IF YOU DO NOT ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE, I SHALL SLAY THE ENTIRE CITY.

THOR SAYS NOT A WORD, BUT STEPS FORWARD AND GRASPS THE GREAT CLAWED FOOT WITHOUT HESITATION.

IT DOESN'T BUDGE.

AN EVEN MIGHTIER HEAVE AND STILL NOTHING.



THE MIGHTY THOR PLANTS HIS FEET FIRMLY ON THE GROUND.

SHOULDERS AND SINEWS CRACKLING UNDER THE STRAIN...

...THE SWEAT POURING FROM HIS BROW...

...THE THUNDERER CLENCHES HIS TEETH AND CALLS UPON EVERY OUNCE OF HIS PRODIGIOUS STRENGTH...

...AND THIS TIME, **VICTORY!**



UGGGG
GHHH!



OH, WELL
DONE,
LITTLE
ONE!

CLIMB
UPON MY BACK
AND WE SHALL
DEPART THIS
NOXIOUS CITY FOR
THE GREEN
HILLS OF
EARTH AND A
CLEANER
BATTLEFIELD...

...WHERE
AN HONEST
WARRIOR
MIGHT
PERISH IN
GLORY!

A MOMENT WHILST
I RETRIEVE MY
HELMET.

YOU SEEM QUITE
SURE OF YOUR-
SELF AND YOUR
POWERS, OH
DRAGON OF
LEGEND.

DO YOU NOT
REMEMBER THE
APHORISM ABOUT
THE MILLS OF
THE GODS?

'TIS SAID
THEY GRIND
SLOWLY BUT
EXCEEDINGLY
SMALL.



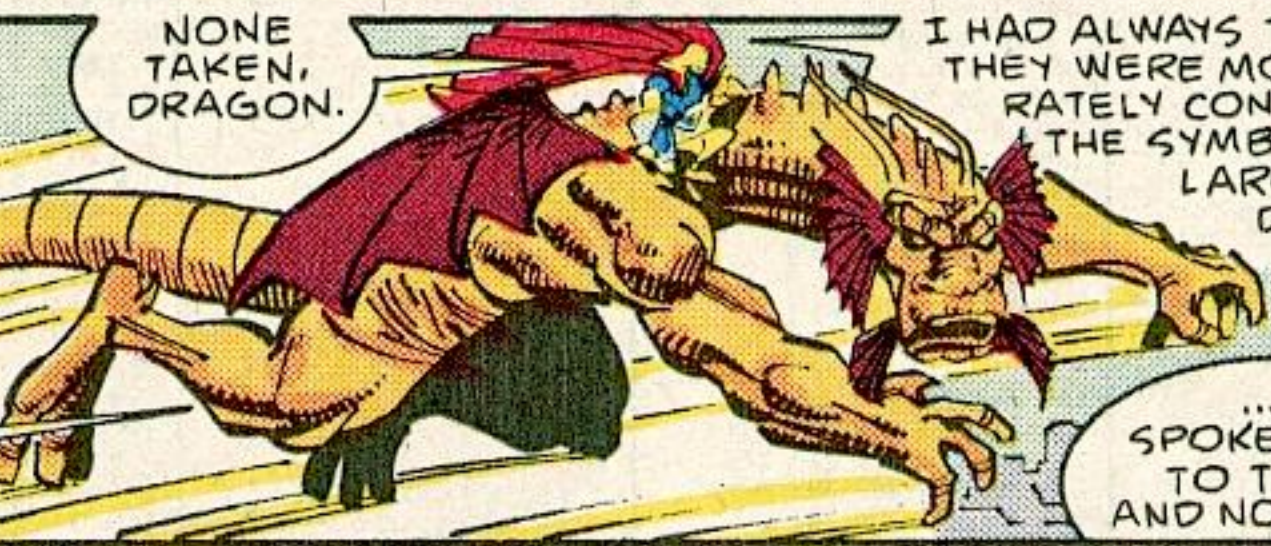
I HAVE ALWAYS
THOUGHT APHORISMS
WERE THE REFUGE OF
MINDS TOO SMALL
TO ENCOMPASS AN
ORIGINAL THOUGHT,
HERO.

NONE
TAKEN,
DRAGON.

I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT
THEY WERE MORE ACCU-
RATELY CONSIDERED AS
THE SYMBOLS OF A
LARGER WIS-
DOM...



NO
OFFENSE
INTENDED,
OF COURSE.



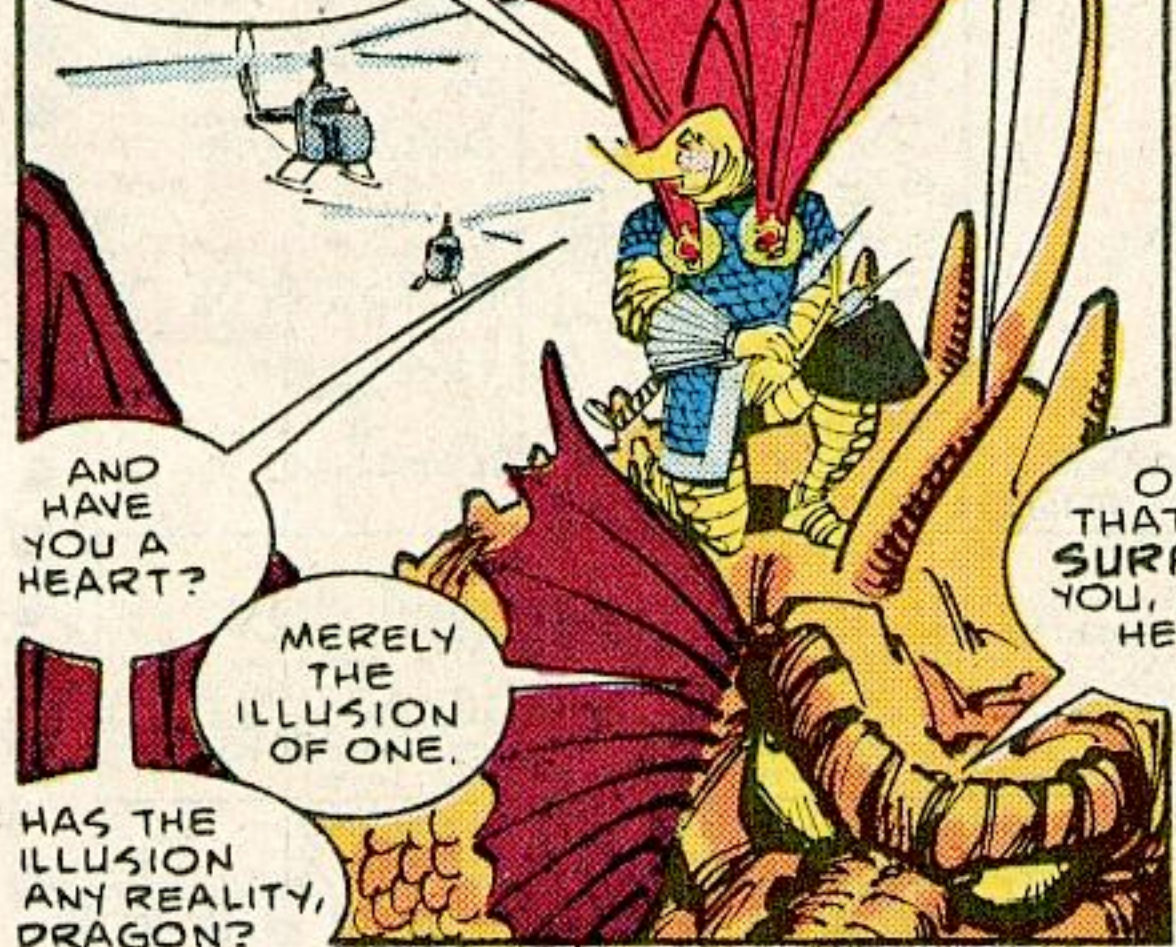
...THAT
SPOKE DIRECTLY
TO THE HEART
AND NOT THE MIND.

BUT OF COURSE,
THERE ARE THOSE
TO WHOM SYMBOLS
THEMSELVES ARE
ANATHEMA.

ONLY TO
THOSE WITH
NO HEARTS.

WE ARE
FOLLOWED.

DOUBTLESS BY
THOSE TO WHOM
SYMBOLS ARE THE
VERY BREAD OF
EXISTENCE, THE
PRESS.

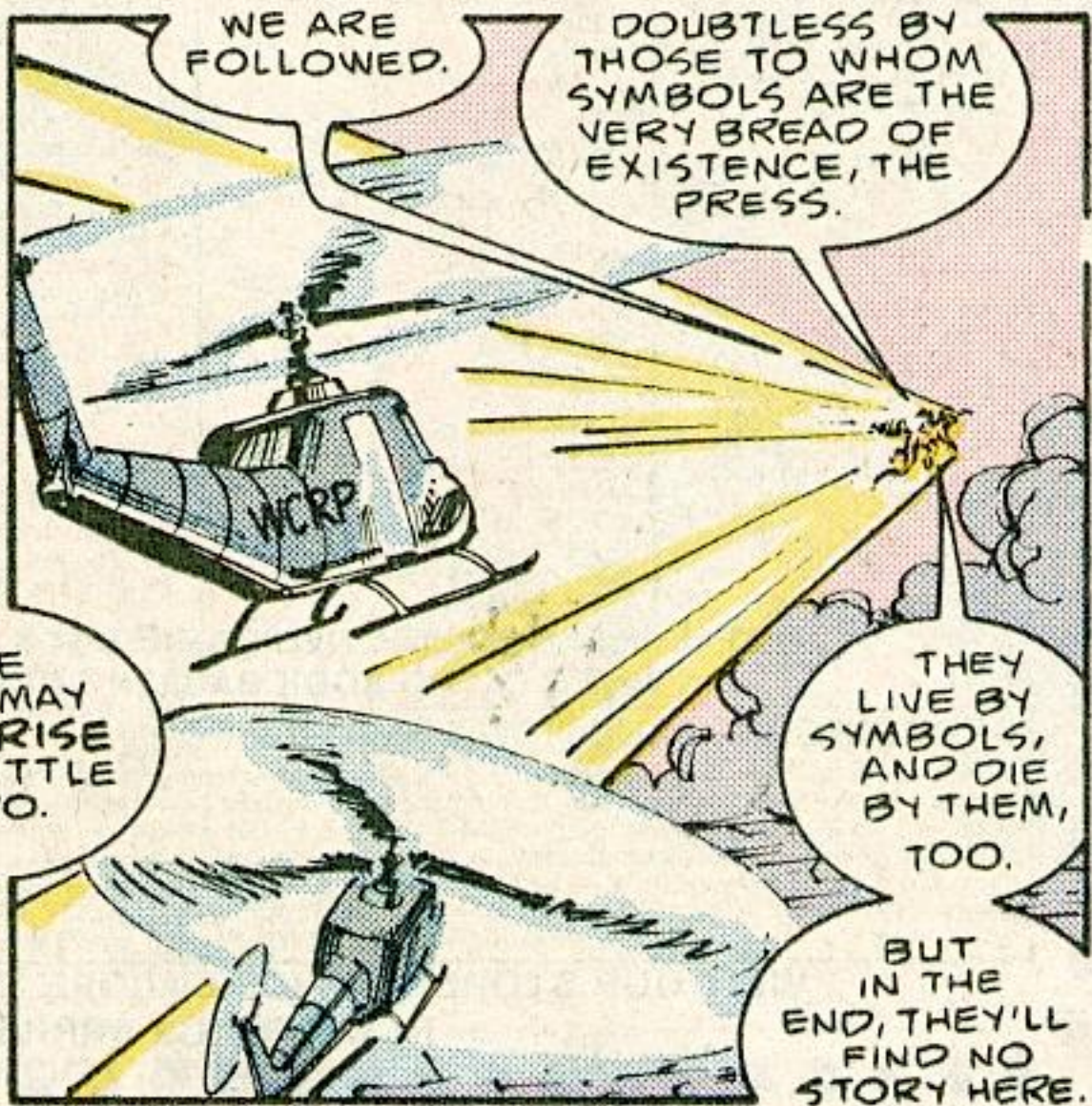


AND
HAVE
YOU A
HEART?

MERELY
THE
ILLUSION
OF ONE.

HAS THE
ILLUSION
ANY REALITY,
DRAGON?

ONE
THAT MAY
SURPRISE
YOU, LITTLE
HERO.



THEY
LIVE BY
SYMBOLS,
AND DIE
BY THEM,
TOO.

BUT
IN THE
END, THEY'LL
FIND NO
STORY HERE.



ONLY THE ILLUSION OF ONE.

YOU SPEAK GLIBLY OF ILLUSIONS, DRAGON. IS THERE NOTHING YOU BELIEVE IN?

THAT QUESTION IS RARELY ASKED OF DRAGONS, HERO.



OUR OVERWHELMING PRESENCE IS ENOUGH TO SILENCE THE MOST CURIOUS TONGUE.

A DRAGON BELIEVES ONLY IN HIMSELF.



BUT YOU HAVE LIFTED MY FOOT AS HAS BEEN DONE ONLY ONCE BEFORE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME...

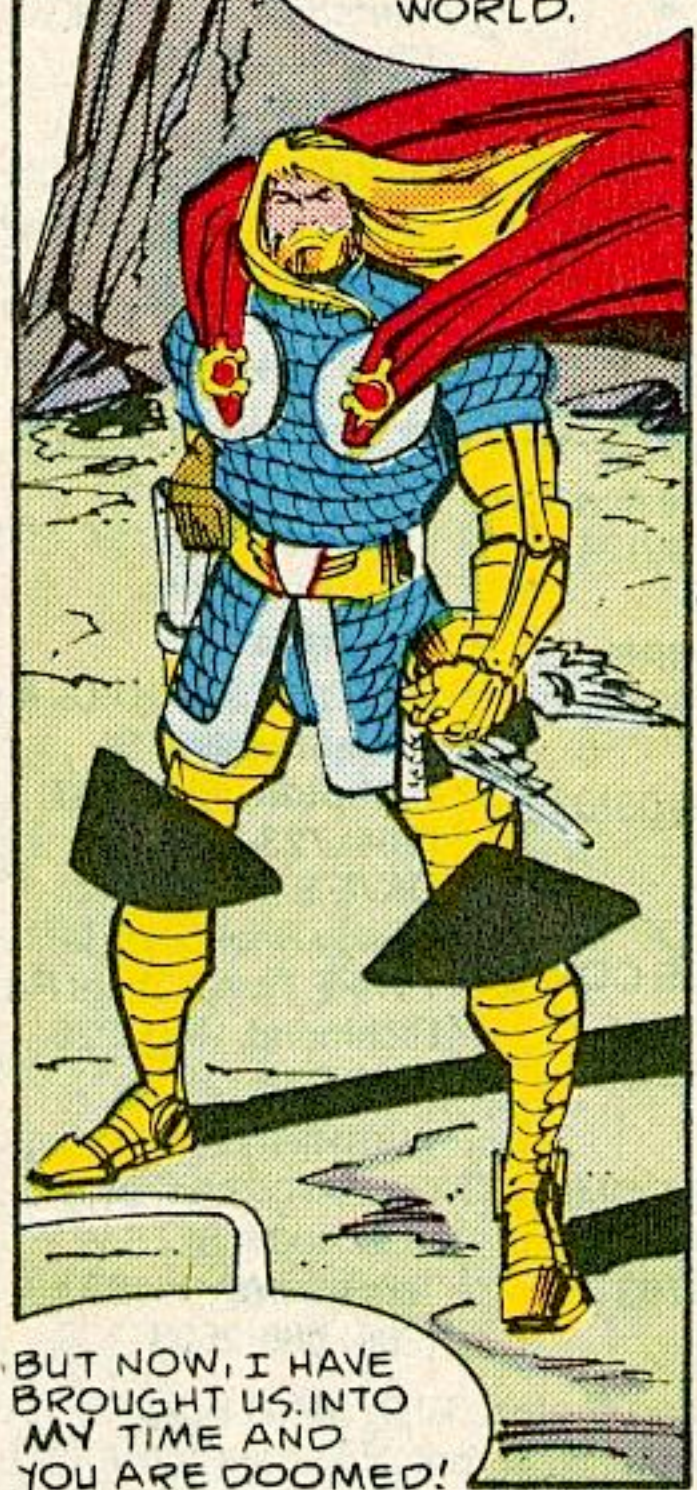
...I WILL TELL YOU MY NAME BEFORE I DESTROY YOU.

...AND OUT OF RESPECT FOR THAT FEAT, I WILL GRANT YOU A BOON.



MY TRUE HOME IS IN THE DEEPS OF TIME BEYOND THE REACH OF CLOCKS.

I KNOW MUCH ABOUT ILLUSIONS, LITTLE HERO. EVER AND ANON, I WEAR THEM AS I WANDER IN THE WORLD.



BUT NOW, I HAVE BROUGHT US INTO MY TIME AND YOU ARE DOOMED!



NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU LIFT A LIMB NOR DRAW A BREATH. NO BREEZE SHALL CARESS THY CHEEK, NO DAWN ANOINT THY BROW WITH LIGHT.

THE TIME OF ILLUSION HAS PASSED...

...AND THE NAME
OF THE ILLUSION IS
JORMUNGAND!

FOR I AM TRULY
**THE WORLD
SERPENT!**

AND THE TRUTH
SHALL BE THY DEATH
KNELL. YOU ARE
NOTHING! A SIMPLE-
MINDED HERO
WHO SPOKE SO
WELL AND KNEW
SO LITTLE!

TILL HEIMDALL'S
HORN DOTH SOUND
ON THAT FINAL DAY AND
ODIN IS SWALLOWED BY
THE WOLF, THE LIFE
OF JORMUNGAND IS
DEATHLESS!

MY WYRD*
LIES IN THE
HANDS OF THE
THUNDER GOD
OF THE VIKINGS
AND IN HIS
HANDS ONLY...

...AND NONE OTHER
DOES THE MIDGARD
SERPENT FEAR!

BUT THOR
IS ALREADY
A MERE
SHADOW OF
HIS FORMER
GLORY.

ON
THE DAY
I FIND HIM,
I WILL BREAK
THE ANCIENT
PROPHECIES
AND SLAY HIM!

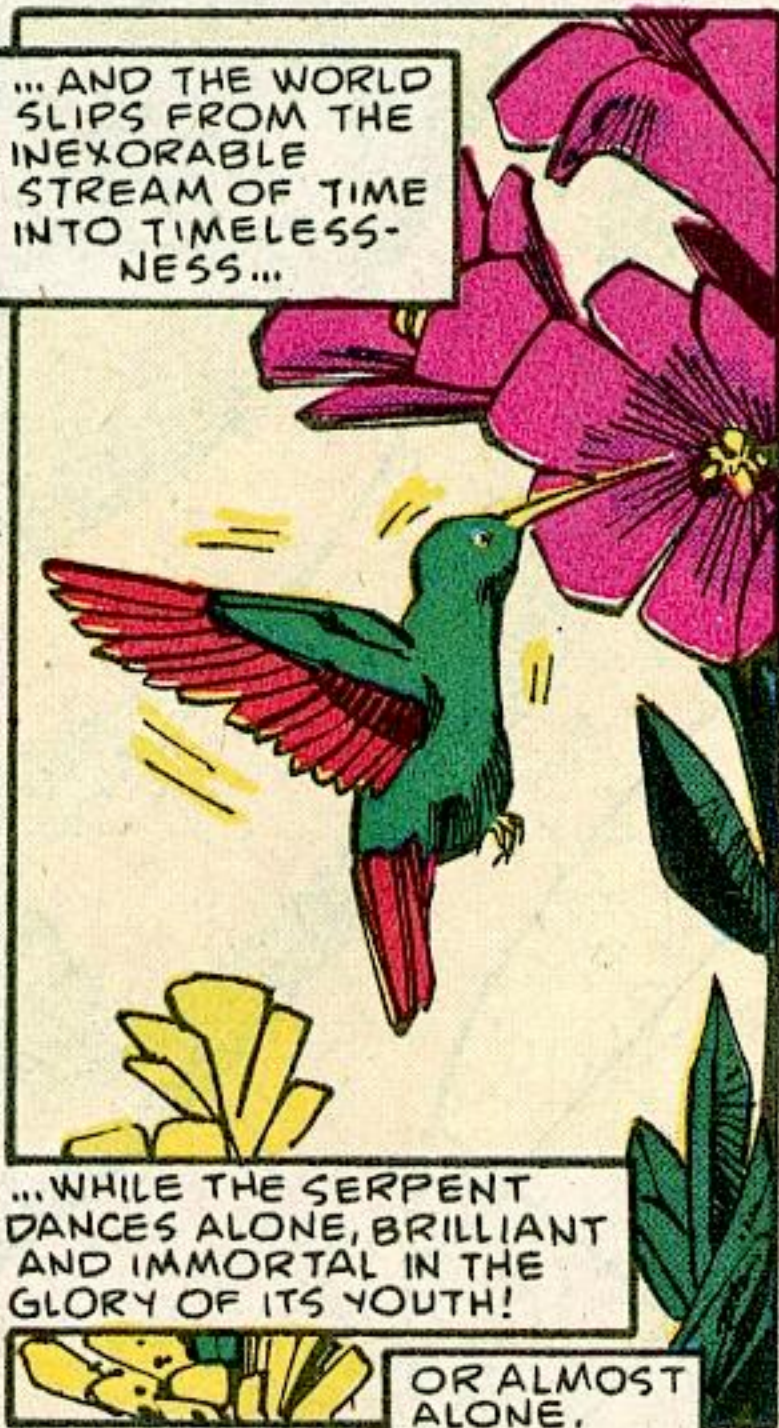
THEN WILL
JORMUNGAND
TOWER
ABOVE THE FATES
THEMSELVES!

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD,
AS THE SNAKE SHEDS
HIS SKIN...



... ALL THINGS
ARE SUD-
DENLY
SILENT...

... AND THE WORLD
SLIPS FROM THE
INEXORABLE
STREAM OF TIME
INTO TIMELESS-
NESS...



... WHILE THE SERPENT
DANCES ALONE, BRILLIANT
AND IMMORTAL IN THE
GLORY OF ITS YOUTH!

OR ALMOST
ALONE.

FAR AWAY, THE DANCE CONTINUES AMONG A FEW MEMBERS
OF A RACE THAT WAS OLD WHEN THE SERPENT WAS NEW.



GRUND-
ROTH,
WHAT'S
THIS?

THE BIRDS
HAVE FROZEN
IN THEIR FLIGHT!
THE WIND NO
LONGER
HOWLS!

IT CAN-
NOT BE!
BUT...
IT IS!

IT CAN
ONLY MEAN
ONE
THING!

TIME
HAS
STOPPED
IN ITS
ETERNAL
COURSE!

AND THAT MEANS
THE WORLD SER-
PENT IS
LOOSE!

FOR ONLY MYTHIC CREATURES
MOVE IN THE TIME OF THE BEGIN-
NING WHERE ALL THINGS MORTAL
CEASE THEIR ENDLESS SPIN-
NINGS!

THE
DRAGON!
THAT
BABBLING
IDIOT! HE
WAS TRULY
JORMUN-
GAND!

AND IF
HE HAS
SHED
HIS
ILLU-
SIONS,
THEN HE
MUST HAVE
FOUND
THOR!



QUICKLY,
GIANTS! OUR
GREATEST
ENEMY IS
DOOMED!

AND WE
MUST SEE IT
WITH OUR OWN EYES!

AND AS THE GIANTS RACE
ACROSS THE ICY WASTES...

WHAT
A PITY,
LITTLE
ONE.

I NEGLECTED
TO ASK YOUR NAME
BEFORE I SHED
THE CLOAK OF
ILLUSION AND
REVEALED MY-
SELF IN ALL MY
GLORY.

NEVER
MIND. WHEN
YOU ARE DEAD,
I SHALL TAKE
ANOTHER GUISE
AND GATHER
THY FRIENDS
IN MOURNING.

THE WOMEN
SHALL WEEP
THEIR LAMENTA-
TIONS AND
CRY THY
NAME ALOUD.
AND I SHALL
KNOW MY
FOE.

BUT
NOW
YOU
MUST
FACE
YOUR
GODS
NAME-
LESS AND
AFRAID.

WHAT?!

ONLY
A FOOL
HAS NO FEAR,
SERPENT, AND
I AM NO FOOL.

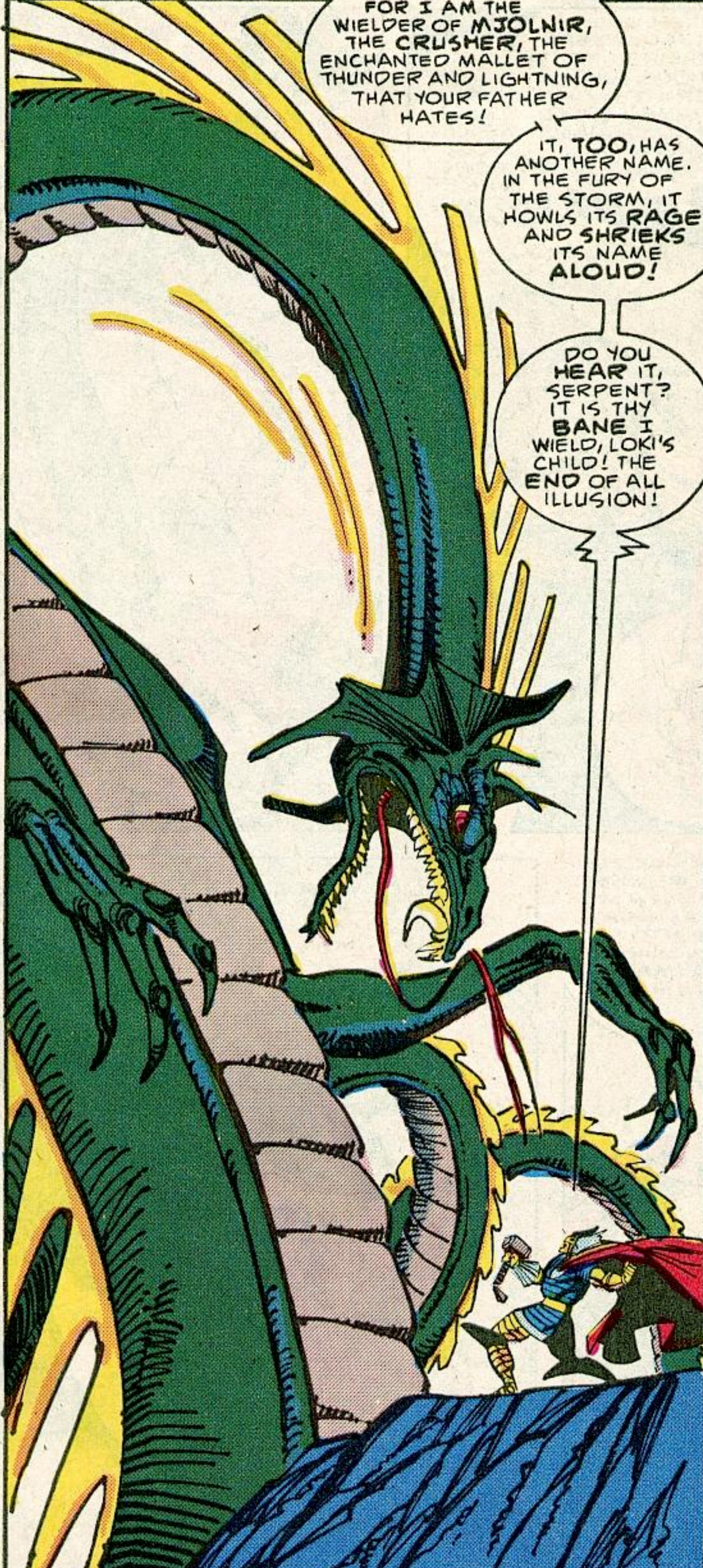
BUT I HAVE MANY NAMES,
SERPENT, EVEN AS YOU,
VINGTHOR THE HURLER,
LONGBEARD'S SON, HAVE
I BEEN CALLED.
HROOR'S FOE-
MAN, TOO.

IN TYR'S ANCES-
TRAL HOME, WISEST
HYMIR KNEW MY
NAME AS VEUR;
UNHAPPY
HRUNGNIR'S
PLAYMATE
SOME HAVE
CALLED
ME.

MY FATHER
CALLED ME SON.
MY MOTHER
CALLED ME
DARLING.

EAST OF
ELVIGAR
IN GIANTHOME
THEY WHISPER
HLORIDDI'S
NAME.

AND BENEATH
THE VAULTS
OF HEAVEN, I AM
THOR ODINSON,
THE THUNDERER,
JORMUNGAND'S
FEAR!



FOR I AM THE
WIELDER OF MJOLNIR,
THE CRUSHER, THE
ENCHANTED Mallet OF
THUNDER AND LIGHTNING,
THAT YOUR FATHER
HATES!

IT, TOO, HAS
ANOTHER NAME.
IN THE FURY OF
THE STORM, IT
HOWLS ITS RAGE
AND SHRIEKS
ITS NAME
ALOUD!

DO YOU
HEAR IT,
SERPENT?
IT IS THY
BANE I
WIELD, LOKI'S
CHILD! THE
END OF ALL
ILLUSION!



THE HAMMER SINGS
THE DEATH OF
JORMUNGAND!

NEXT: THOR
AGAINST HIS
GREATEST
FOE... **THE MIDGARD SERPENT!** 'NUFF SAID!