

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

75¢

200

OCT

02458



WIN A TOYS "R" US
SHOPPING SPREE!

GRAND PRIZE MINIMUM VALUE \$3000! DETAILS INSIDE!

©1990 MARVEL
COMICS GROUP

SPECIAL *DOUBLE-SIZED* ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



Stan Lee PRESENTS! THE MIGHTY AVENGERS!

SHOOTER, PÉREZ, LAYTON & MICHELINIE - Dtl / DAVID MICHELINIE - Kttr
 GEORGE PÉREZ & DAN GREEN - Dtl / JOHN COSTANZA - Cltr / BEN SEAN - Colors
 JIM SALICRUP - Cltr / JIM SHOOTER - Editor-in-Chief

The Child is Father To...

FOR GENERATIONS THE SYMBOLIC ROOT VALUES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN EMBEDDED IN THE PHRASE: "MOM, APPLE PIE AND THE GIRL NEXT DOOR." WARMS HAVE BEEN FOUGHT FOR THESE IDEALS; PRESIDENTS HAVE BEEN ELECTED OVER THEM. OBVIOUSLY, MOTHERHOOD MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO MOST AMERICANS.

SO WHY, THEN, DO THESE FIVE HEROES, THESE AVENGERS, SEEM LIPST THAT ONE OF THEIR OWN-- IS ABOUT TO GIVE BIRTH? WHY IS THERE EXCITEMENT TINGED WITH A SUBTLE, SUBCONSCIOUS SHADON--

--OF FEAR?

"I KNOW JOCASTA IS THE RIGHT ONE TO ASSIST DR. BLAKE--HER ACTIONS HAVE THE PRECISION OF A COMPUTER. BUT ISN'T THERE SOMETHING WE CAN DO?"

"EASY, CAP. YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE IT'S NOW WHO'S THE PROUD PAPPY--TO-BE."

MEDICAL EXAMINATION LABORATORY
 AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY



THE AVENGERS® Vol. 1, No. 209, October, 1980 issue. (U.S.P.S. 546-820) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galt, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Application to mail at Special Rate pending at Springfield, Illinois. Published monthly. Copyright © 1980 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 75¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate \$6.00 for 12 issues. Canada, \$7.00. Foreign, \$8.00. 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. THE AVENGERS including all prominent characters featured in the issue, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP.









... AS IN THE LANDSCAPED TERRACE BEHIND AVENGERS MANSION, A QUIET OF A GENTLER SORT BEGINS.

YOU SEEM CALM, MY WIFE, AT EASE WITH YOURSELF.

THAT'S BECAUSE I AM, DARLING, EVER SINCE I RECONCILED MY CONFLICTING EMOTIONS CONCERNING PARENTHOOD, I'VE NOT ONLY FELT MORE PEACEFUL, BUT STRONGER, AS WELL.

THEN YOU FEEL NO REGRETS THAT WE HAVE PRODUCED NO OFFSPRING?

NONE THAT MATTER.

A CHILD IS A THING OF FRAGILE BEAUTY, SOMETHING THAT MUST BE NURTURED AND PROTECTED.

LIKE THIS ROSE...

AND THE LOVE WE FEEL FOR EACH OTHER, WHICH IS, I'VE REALIZED, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN MY WORLD.

AND MY LOVE, IN MINE.

JOCASTA'S SOMETHING WRONG?

--I WAS JUST TRYING TO SORT SOME THINGS OUT. I MEAN, I KNOW I WAS PROGRAMMED FROM HUMAN PERSONALITY PATTERNS-- YOURS, IN FACT--

--BUT THERE'S STILL SO MUCH ABOUT HUMAN EMOTIONS THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

DON'T WORRY, LADY! YOU'RE NOT ALONE. THERE'S STILL A LOT ABOUT HUMAN EMOTIONS THAT WE HUMANS DON'T UNDERSTAND!

WHAT-- OH, WASP, I'M SORRY--

MEANWHILE, IN A WELL-EQUIPPED
RECREATIONAL DEN NEARBY...

EIGHT-BALL
IN THE CORNER
POCKET--THE
HARD WAY!

GREAT SHOT,
HAWKEYE. THAT'S
TWO MALTEDS
I OWE YOU.

THANKS. IT'S
JUST SOMETHING
I PICKED UP
WHEN I WAS
WORKIN' THE
CARNY CIRCUIT.

I, UM, DON'T
SUPPOSE YOU'D
CARE TO MAKE
IT DOUBLE OR
NOTHING?

SURE, HAWK.
I'M A GLUTTON
FOR PUNISHMENT.
RACK 'EM UP!

OKAY, LOSER GETS
FIRST SHOT. LIKE
ALWAYS--HEY WHAT'S
THAT?

IT'S A T1-S9,
ACTUALLY TOP OF
THE LINE FROM
TEXAS INSTRU-
MENTS. I'M
CALCULATING
THE ANGLES.

AW, C'MON, GET
SERIOUS. POOL ISN'T
SOMETHIN' YOU LEARN
IN ARITHMETIC CLASS.
IT'S A GAME OF
SKILL, OF INSTINCTS,
OF--

WELL, I'LL BE!
I'VE BEEN
SHARKED!

S'RIGHT--
THEY DON'T
CALL ME THE
PETER BENCHLEY
OF 42ND STREET
FOR NOTHING,
PAL!



CARE FOR ONE MORE? SAY, FOR A YEAR'S SALARY?

NO WAY, BEAST!



I ONLY NEED TO GET BURN'T ONCE TO KNOW A FIRE IS HOT!

BUT YOURSELF.



ME, I'M GOING TO CHECK ON HOW MR. MARVEL'S KID IS DOING.



AND SECONDS AFTER A VIDEO CHANNEL HAS BEEN ACTIVATED...

HE WHAT?!

YOU HEARD CORRECTLY, BEAST.

IN THE LAST HOUR, THE INFANT HAS GROWN TO THE SIZE AND MATURITY OF A CHILD TWO YEARS OLD!



HEARTBEAT'S STEADY AND HIS OTHER ORGANS ALL SEEM TO BE FUNCTIONING NORMALLY.

BUT THEN, WHAT COULD CAUSE SUCH AN INCREDIBLE GROWTH RATE, DOCTOR?



I DON'T KNOW, MR. P.M. THIS WHOLE SITUATION IS A NEW ONE ON--



--JUST A SECOND! IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S TRYING TO...SPEAK!



--AND PUTTING EVERY BIT OF THE AWE AND WONDER IN HIS HUGE, BLUE EYES INTO A WHISLE, WHISPERS WORD:

CH...CHANGE

AND THAT INFANT APPEARS TO BE THE CASE, AS THE SWIRLING, CURLY-LOCKED INFANT BEGINS TO MURMUR, SHAPING HIS TINY LIPS--

INTERLUDE I: THAT SAME MOMENT, BLOCKS TO THE SOUTH, AS A GRAFFITI-GRIMED DOUBLE-C LOCAL GRATES TO A HALT AT THE WALL STREET SUBWAY STATION--



--AND EARLY RISER RAOUL KRAMER STEPS OUT ONTO THE PLATFORM.



YAWV: ANOTHER DAY ANOTHER RAPIDLY SHRINKIN DOLLAR.

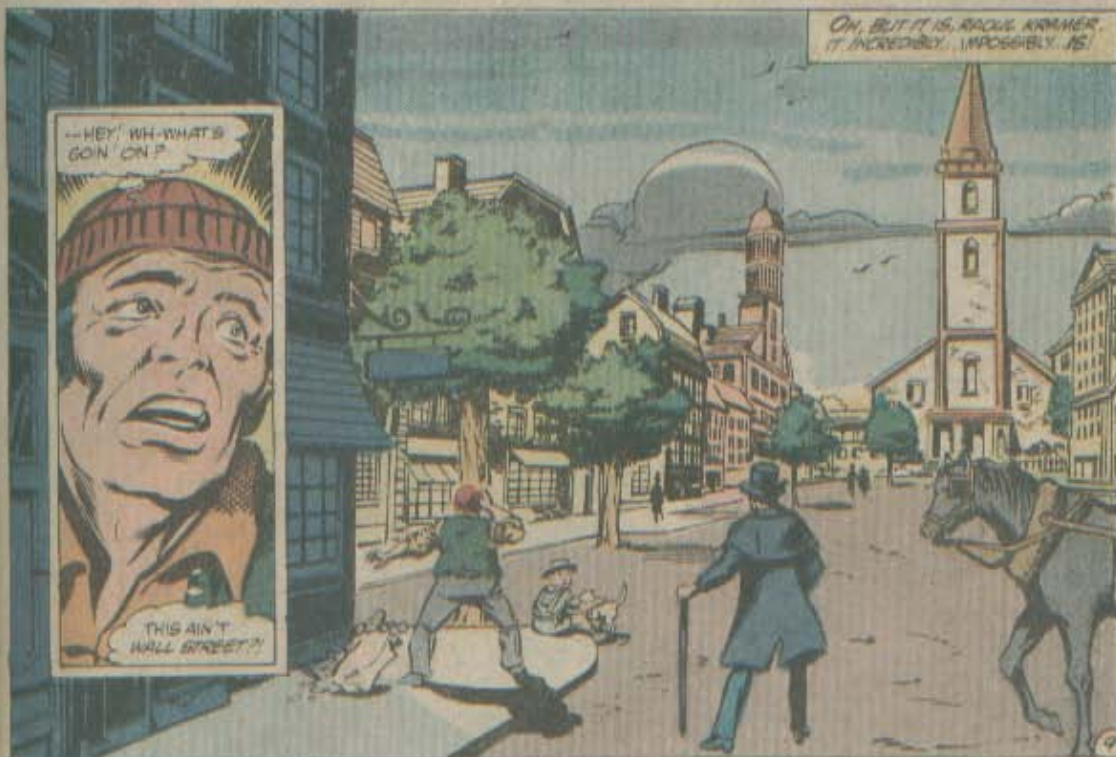


EVERY DAY IT'S THE SAME OL' THING. TAKE THE TRAIN IN, OPEN UP THE CANDY STORE, SELL THE DOW JONES BIKINGS THEIR MILKY WAYS AN' THEIR TIMES.



YA'D THINK THAT IN A BURG THIS SIZE SOMETHIN UNUSUAL'D HAPPEN ONCE IN A WHILE. BUT NOOOO.

DAY IN, DAY OUT, THE SAME OLD--



--HEY! WH-WHAT'S GOIN ON?!

THIS AIN'T WALL STREET!!

OH, BUT IT IS, RAOUL KRAMER. IT INCREDIBLY, IMPOSSIBLY... IS!





HIYA, JUNIOR, JUST LOOK AT ALL THE NIFTY-- OOPS-- PLAYTHINGS I GOT FOR YOU. AREN'T THEY NICE-NICE?

YES, THE ASSORTMENT DOES SEEM RATHER COMPLETE.



BUT I'D REALLY PREFER A LASER TORCH AND WHATEVER ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS YOU COULD SPARE.

YOU... YOU'RE TALKING!

I ASSUME COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH IS SATISFACTORY?



GEEZZ, THAT'S SPOOKY!

THAT IT IS, BEAST. NOT ONLY HAS THE BOY'S PHYSICAL FORM INCREASED TO THAT OF A FIVE-YEAR-OLD--

--BUT HIS INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY HAS GROWN FAR, FAR GREATER!



MY DEVELOPMENT ISN'T ALL THAT PUZZLING, DOCTOR. I'LL BE HAPPY TO EXPLAIN-- ONCE I RECEIVE THE MATERIALS I REQUESTED.

AND BY THE WAY, MY NAME ISN'T "BOY"-- IT'S MARCUS.



ALL RIGHT, MARCUS, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS FIRST.

VERY WELL. I SHAN'T BE AGILE ENOUGH TO OPERATE SOME OF THE MACHINERY I NEED FOR ANOTHER TWENTY MINUTES OR SO, ANYWAY.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?



FOR STARTERS, WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

YES, WE KNOW THAT, BUT... THAT IS, HOW WERE YOU CONCEIVED?

MY MOTHER.

UHHH... BY MY FATHER?

WELL, OF COURSE, BLAST IT! BUT WHO IS YOUR FATHER?

I AM.



NOW SEE HERE, YOUNG MAN--!

EASY, CAP. IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HE'S NOT GOING TO GIVE US ANYTHING HE DOESN'T WANT TO. WHY NOT LET HIM HAVE THE MATERIALS. LET HIM TINKER? MAYBE WE'LL GET SOME ANSWERS THEN.

WELL... ALL RIGHT, BUT I DON'T LIKE IT.



INTERLUDE II: NASSAU COUNTY, JUST WEST OF QUEENS--



--WHERE MS. MARJORIE HANSLEY MAKES HER DAILY TREK TO THE OLIVE HARBOR.

THREE WEEKS AGO, MARJORIE HAD ENTERED A PUBLISHING COMPANY SHEESTAKESS, THE GRAND PRIZE OF WHICH HAD BEEN AN ALL-EXPENSE--AND TRIP AROUND THE WORLD.



NOW, AS SHE RECOGNIZES THE RETURN ADDRESS ON A LONG BROWN ENVELOPE, HER HEARTBEAT BEGINS TO QUICKEN, HER MIND RACING WITH VISIONS OF STRANGE AND EXOTIC PLACES...

...THAT IS, UNTIL SHE TURNS BACK TO HER PLEASANT AND ALMOST-FIND-FOR-SUBURBAN HOME--



--AND REALIZES THAT TRIPS TO STRANGE AND EXOTIC PLACES--

--ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY'RE CRACKED UP TO BE!





AND NEARBY, EVEN AS CAPTAIN AMERICA TURNS TO QUESTION JONAS...

VISION?
MAY I
COME IN?

CERTAINLY,
JOCASTA. I
THINK YOU
MIGHT FIND
THIS OF
INTEREST.

I'VE RUN A MICRO-
RADIATION ANALYSIS ON THE
BOY CALLED 'MARCUS',
AND PRELIMINARY
FINDINGS POINT TO A
SUBTLE ENERGY ALIAS
THAT IS GROWING AS
THE CHILD GROWS.

FURTHER, ITS FLOW IS AN
OUTWARD ONE, INDICATING
THAT ITS SOURCE IS WITHIN
MARCUS, AND COULD WELL
BE THE REASON FOR HIS
ASTONISHING GROWTH RATE.

YOU'RE VERY
RESOURCEFUL,
VISION. PERHAPS
I COULD HELP
TO--

DARLING, I'VE-- OH,
I'M SORRY IF I INTER-
RUPTED, JOCASTA. I
DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE
HERE. VISION, YELLOW-
JACKET SENT ME OVER
WITH THESE LATEST
READINGS ON MARCUS'
PHYSIOLOGY.

YES. GOOD.
THIS IS JUST
WHAT I
NEEDED.

WANDA, I'VE DEVELOPED
A MOST FASCINATING
THEORY AS TO THE NATURE
OF MR. MARVEL'S CHILD.
I MUST TELL YOU ABOUT
IT.

... SO MUCH SO THAT NEITHER SHE
NOR THE VISION EVEN NOTICE WHEN
JOCASTA FLURRS AND ROFTLY, LEAVES
THE ROOM.

SMILING IN HER HUSBAND'S WELL-MODEL-
LED TONES AN ENTERTAINMENT THAT WOULD
BECOME MOST OTHERS, THE SCARLET WITCH
LISTENS INTENTLY...

AND THAT, THINKING THE
METALLOID WOULD BE
AVENGER, IS THE HARDEST
HURT OF ALL...



WHILE HALF A MILE AWAY, IN THE MAIN HALL...

JAN?

WHY, MS. MARVEL! A-ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE WELL ENOUGH TO--

I'M FINE, JAN, PHYSICALLY.



BUT IN MY HEART, I FEEL LIKE A FOOL. I'M SO SORRY I SNAPPED AT YOU LIKE I DID. IT'S JUST THAT, WITH WHAT I'VE SEEN THROUGH LATELY...

FORGET IT, CAROL. IF IT HAD HAPPENED TO ME, I'D BE IN A RUBBER ROOM BY NOW! COME ON--



--LET'S GO SEE YOUR KID.



MOMENTS LATER...
DR. BLAKE, MS. MARVEL WOULD LIKE TO SEE MARCUS. IS IT OKAY?

I DON'T SEE WHY NOT, IF SHE'S UP TO IT.



BUT EVEN CAROL DANCES HERSELF DOESN'T KNOW THAT, AND SO SHE STEELS HERSELF, BRACING FOR A RESURGENCE OF THE LOATHING AND HUMILIATION SHE HAD FELT BEFORE, WAITING FOR THE SWELL OF FEAR AND ANGER SHE KNOWS WILL FOLLOW--



--BUT DOESN'T. FOR AS SHE STEPS FORWARD TO FACE THE SLENDER YOUNG MAN WHO AWAITS HER, SHE FEELS, INSTEAD AN ODD SENSE OF CALM... ALONG WITH AN UNEXPLAINABLE, AND UNDENIABLE ATTRACTION.

HELLO...



...MOTHER.



-- OR OUR BACK
YARD HAS TURNED INTO
A BATTLEFIELD!

AND AN AWESOME BATTLEFIELD IT IS!
SLEEK SPACESHIPS, CHUTTERING
BIPLANES, AND AN OBVIOUSLY ANGRY
SPECIMEN OF TYRANNOSAURUS REX, ALL
LASHING OUT IN A COMBAT THAT WOULD
RIVAL THE LOGIC OF A LLANYC'S
MISADVENTURE!

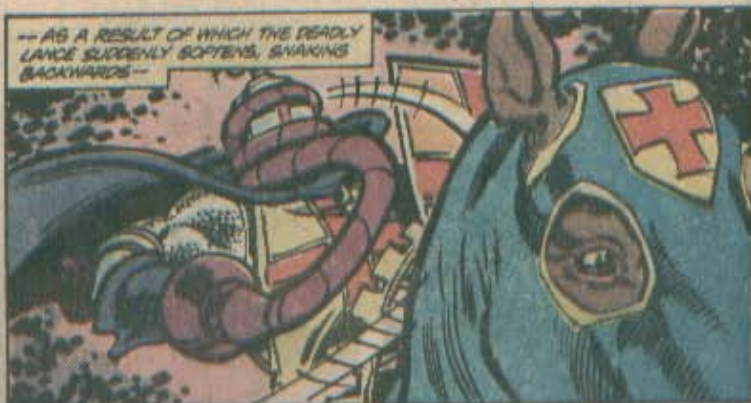




--AND SENDS IT STREAKING OUT-
WARD IN A PROBABILITY-ALTERING
NEXT CONFIGURATION--



--AS A RESULT OF WHICH THE DEADLY
LANCE SUDDENLY SOFTENS, SNAKING
BACKWARDS--



--AND THROWING THE WOULD-BE
ATTACKER RUDELY, IMPROVISELY,
TO THE COLD STONE FLOOR.



WHILE CONTINGUOUSLY.



CONTINUE
YOUR ASSAULT,
IRON MAN--



--I'LL SEE
THAT THESE
FLYING COATS
CEASE TO
ANNOY YOU.

THANKS,
VISION!

THAT'LL GIVE
ME TIME TO
FINISH MY ONE-
TWO CONVER-
SATION--



--AND SEND THIS
OVERGROWN
ALLIGATOR TO
SAURIAN
SMOCCELAND!



AS INSIDE, BEFORE RELEASING
REINFORCEMENTS CAN REACH
AN EXIT.

HEY! WHAT
THE BLAZES--

BLAZES
IS RIGHT,
BEAST! THOSE
ARE FIRE
ARROWS!

BLAST! I TOLD YOU
THAT KID WAS GONNA
CAUSE TROUBLE!

WE'VE NO PROOF THAT
MARCUS IS THE CAUSE
OF THIS, ARCHER! NOW
FORGET YOUR PREJUDICES--

--AND STRING YOUR
BOW! WE'VE GOT TO
KEEP THESE INVADERS
FROM REACHING
THE OTHERS!

TINY ARROWS
IN THE AIR...

SURPRISE!
ALL IT'S
NATURAL
POKE-A-
MONTUS
WEEK!

I DON'T CARE WHAT
CAP SAYS, MARCUS AND
HIS FREAKY MACHINE
ARE BEHIND THIS! AND
IF NO ONE ELSE IS
GONNA DO ANYTHING
ABOUT IT--

--THEN
I WILL.



WHILE A HUNDRED FEET ABOVE...

TELL YOU WHAT, IRON MAN, YOU DON'T LET CAP KNOW I'VE GONE A.K.A., AND I'LL WIPE THESE SPACESHIPS OUT IN NO TIME FLA--



--AAATT!



YOUR INTENTIONS WERE NOBLE! SIMON WILLIAMS



--BUT IN YOUR ZEAL YOU NEGLECTED TO NOTE THE FUTURISTIC FORTIFICATIONS THAT HAVE APPEARED ON THE HIGHWAYS OF OUR NATION. THEIR PRESENCE THERE IS DANGEROUS--

--AND IT IS OBSCURE,



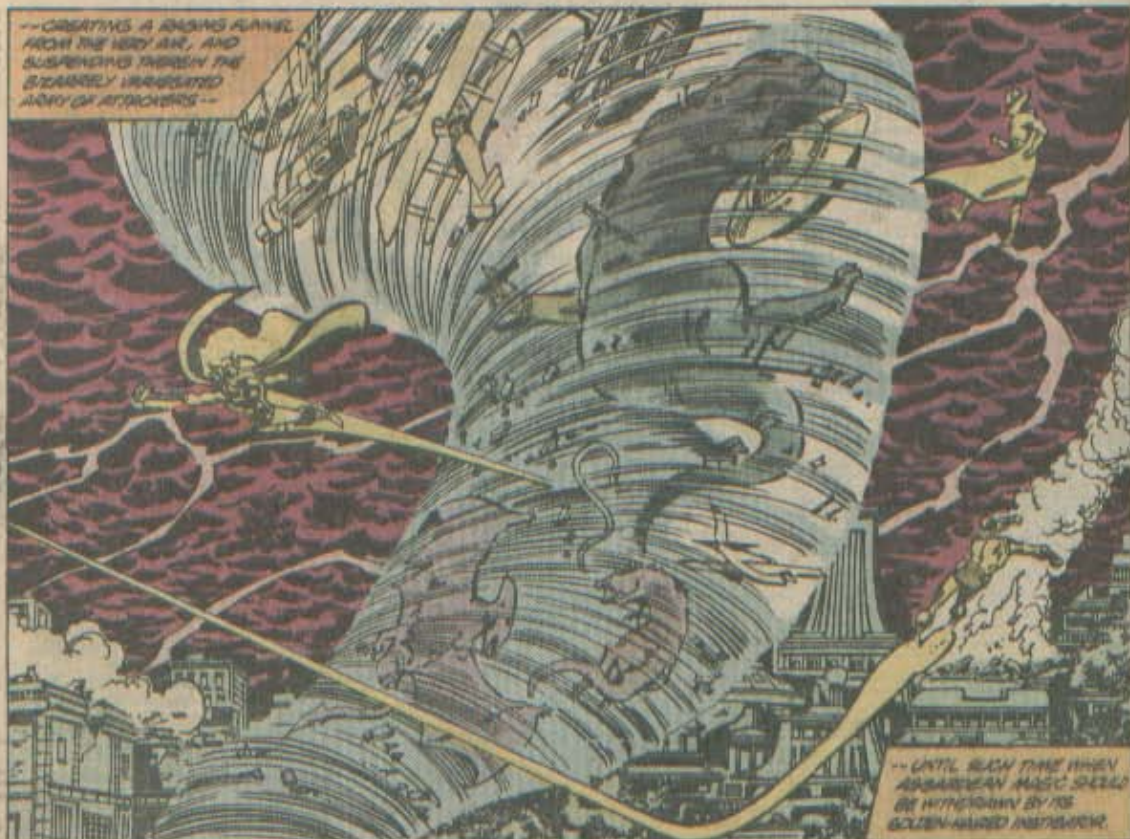
"WHEN? MAYBE I SHOULD GO BACK TO BEING A COWARD. THIS HERO BY DOGS HAVE ITS DRAWBACK--

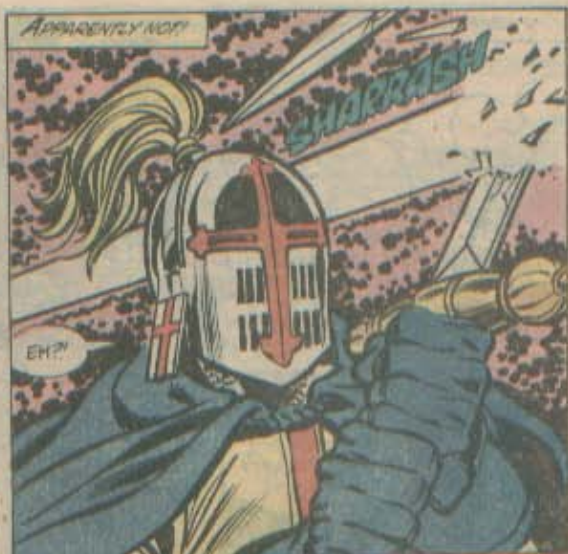


--HUN? SOME SORT OF PREHISTORIC SNAKE! WRAPPING ALL AROUND ME!

YUCK.















I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU--BUT I DO KNOW YOU, SOMEHOW. AND I SENSE THAT YOU'D NO MORE TAKE A LIFE GRATUITOUSLY THAN AN AVENSER WOULD.



WELL, Y-YOU'RE WRONG! SO YOU'D BEST TELL YOUR COMRADES TO DEFEND THEMSELVES, B-BECAUSE I'LL DESTROY ANYONE WHO GETS IN MY WAY! I WILL!

IN THAT CASE, MARCUS--



--YOU CAN START WITH ME.

WH... YOU?!



YES, THESE ARE MY FRIENDS. AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH ME TO GET TO THEM.

BUT--!



OH, CAROL, WHY? I WASN'T REALLY GOING TO KILL THEM. I ONLY WANTED THEM... TO KILL ME!

YOU WHAT?

I COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF GOING BACK, OF LIVING LIKE I HAVE EVER SINCE MY FATHER LEFT... EVER SINCE THE LAST DAYS OF--



--IMMORTUS!



IMMORTUS?

AYE, AND CURSE ME FOR NOT NAMING THE RESEMBLANCE SOONER, FOR 'TWAIS NOT SO VERY LONG AGO THAT THE TIME LORD AND I LAST CLASHED. #



BUT, MARCUS, I--I'VE NEVER EVEN MET IMMORTUS! HOW COULD HE--?

HE DIDN'T.

I DID.

IN THOR #282, TO BE EXACT--TJL.

30

PLEASE, HEAR ME... AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND.

MY FATHER WAS AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL MAN. HE RULED THE LAND OF LIMBO, A REALM OF NO-TIME WHERE THINGS NEVER CHANGE. HE WAS ALSO THE UNDISPUTED MASTER OF TIME. A RESPONSIBILITY AS AWESOME... AS IT WAS LONELY.



ONCE, HIS SOLITUDE GREW SO OPPRESSIVE THAT HE DETERMINED TO TEMPER THAT EMPTINESS BY TAKING A MATE FROM THE WORLD OF HIS ORIGIN-- EARTH.



AND TO THAT END HE TRAVELED THE TIME-STREAM, EVENTUALLY COMING UPON A SCENE OF TRAGEDY-- AND UPON A FEMALE VICTIM WHO, HE KNEW FROM VIEWING THE FUTURE, WAS NOT DESTINED TO SURVIVE.



HE PULLED THAT WOMAN FROM THE CHILL WATERS, SAVING HER... AND, SO HE THOUGHT, HIMSELF.



ONCE BACK IN LIMBO, THROUGH A COMBINATION OF GRATITUDE AND THE SUBTLE MANIPULATIONS OF MY FATHER'S INGENUOUS MACHINES, THE WOMAN FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM.

MY FATHER THEN CREATED WITHIN LIMBO A POCKET OF CHANGE-- A BUBBLE WHERE TIME FLOWED NATURALLY.

IT WAS THERE THAT I WAS CREATED.



BUT HOW? I MEAN I WAS THE ONE WHO BORE YOU! WASN'T I...?

YES, IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING. BUT LET ME CONTINUE...

... MY FATHER ELECTED TO RAISE ME IN THE POCKET OF CHANGE, SO THAT I COULD DEVELOP, COULD GROW. HE SEEMED HAPPY BUT THERE WAS ONE FACTOR HE HADN'T TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION--



... THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE MIGHT BE A LIMIT TO THE TIME THAT MORTALS COULD SPEND IN LIMBO-- THOUGH HE SEEMED TO ACCEPT IT QUITE STICALLY WHEN MY MOTHER WAS RIPPED BACK THROUGH SPACE-TIME TO HER OWN WORLD.



"I'M AFRAID I WASN'T SO COMPLACENT YEARS LATER, HOWEVER, WHEN IMMORTUS HIMSELF DISAPPEARED, NEVER MORE TO RETURN!"



* THIS ASPECT OF IMMORTUS' PERSONA "DIED" WITH KANG BACK IN AVENGERS #123 -- TIM.

"I WANDERED THE UN-CHANGING VISTAS OF LIMBO FOR WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN AN ETERNITY, FEELING LOST, BETRAYED... AND TERRIBLY ALONE.



"EVEN ESCAPE TO MY PARENTS' WORLD WAS DENIED ME, FOR AS A PRODUCT OF LIMBO, MY MERE PRESENCE ON EARTH WOULD CAUSE AN IRREPARABLE DISRUPTION OF THE LOCAL TIME-STREAM.

"BUT THEN I HIT UPON A PLAN! SINCE I HAD BEEN BORN INTO LIMBO, WHY COULDN'T I BE BORN INTO EARTH? AND BY ACCELERATING BOTH THE BIRTH AND MATURITY PROCESSES--



... PERHAPS I COULD NEGATE THE TIME FLUX DISTORTION BEFORE IT BECAME IRREVERSIBLE.

"I KNEW THAT AN EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG WOMAN WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR SUCH AN UNDERTAKING AND THROUGH NUMEROUS TIME-SCANS I DETERMINED THAT MS. MARVEL, THE POWERFUL COMBINATION OF KREE AND HUMAN STRENGTHS, WOULD BE THE PERFECT VESSEL.



"THUS I PLUCKED YOU FROM THE FLYING CRAFT YOU WERE OPERATING OVER WHAT YOU CALL 'NEW JERSEY'--"



* IN ISSUE #197 -- TIM.

"-- AND BROUGHT YOU TO LIMBO. AND WHILE I KNEW IMMORTUS' DEVICES COULD SEND YOUR WILL TO MINE, I DIDN'T WANT YOU THAT WAY. AND SO I SET ABOUT... WINNING YOU.



33



"TO AID MY PURPOSE, I BROUGHT OTHERS IN FROM EARTH'S TIME CONTINUUM. I HAD SHAKESPEARE WRITE YOU A SONNET, AND BEETHOVEN PERFORMED AN ORIGINAL PRELUDE IN YOUR HONOR, WHILE MARIE ANTOINETTE HERSELF CLOTHED YOU IN THE FINEST OF SATINS AND SILKS.



"FINALLY, AFTER RELATIVE WEEKS OF SUCH EFFORTS--AND, ADMITTEDLY, WITH A SLIGHT BOOST FROM IMMORTUS' MACHINES -- YOU BECAME MINE.



"AND IN THE POCKET OF CHANCE...WE BECAME ONE.

"THROUGH THE ELECTRONIC WONDERS AT MY COMMAND, AND WITH MY OWN INHERITED POWERS, I WAS ABLE TO ARLANT MY ESSENCE WITHIN YOU, CAUSING A CONDITION THAT RESEMBLED PREGNANCY.



"AND THEN, EVEN AS MY CORPORAL FORM FADED INTO OBLIVION--

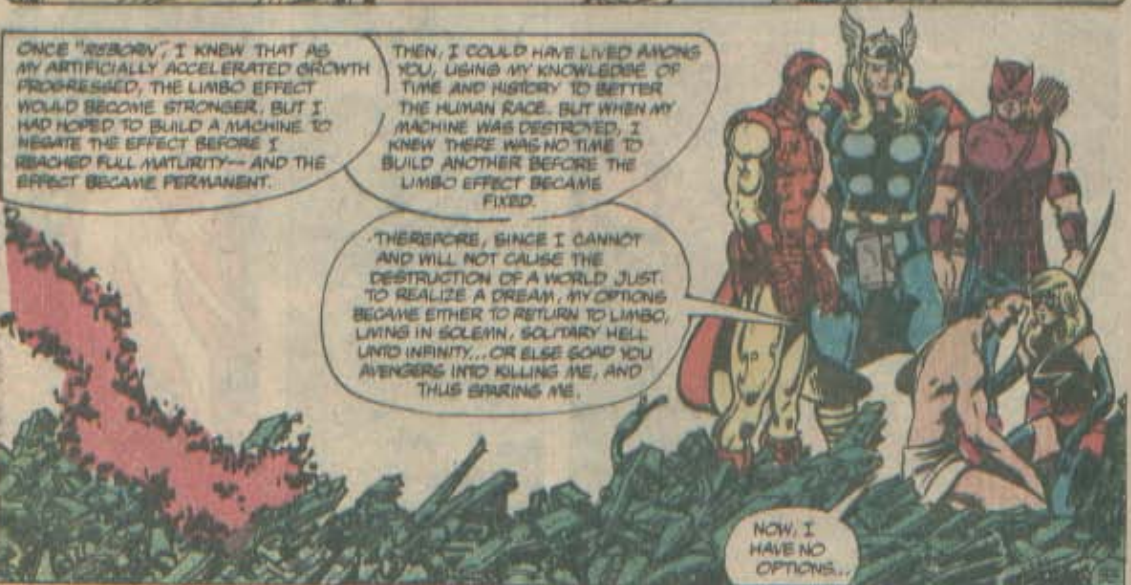
"--MY FATHER'S PRE-SET MECHANISMS AWAKED YOUR RECENT MEMORIES, AND TRANSPORTED YOU BACK TO YOUR FLYING CRAFT A MERE SECOND AFTER YOU HAD LEFT IT."

ONCE "REBORN", I KNEW THAT AS MY ARTIFICIALLY ACCELERATED GROWTH PROGRESSED, THE LIMBO EFFECT WOULD BECOME STRONGER, BUT I HAD HOPED TO BUILD A MACHINE TO NEGATE THE EFFECT BEFORE I REACHED FULL MATURITY-- AND THE EFFECT BECAME PERMANENT.

THEN, I COULD HAVE LIVED AMONG YOU, USING MY KNOWLEDGE OF TIME AND HISTORY TO BETTER THE HUMAN RACE. BUT WHEN MY MACHINE WAS DESTROYED, I KNEW THERE WAS NO TIME TO BUILD ANOTHER BEFORE THE LIMBO EFFECT BECAME FIXED.

THEREFORE, SINCE I CANNOT AND WILL NOT CAUSE THE DESTRUCTION OF A WORLD JUST TO REALIZE A DREAM, MY OPTIONS BECAME EITHER TO RETURN TO LIMBO, LIVING IN SOLENN, SOLITARY HELL UNTO INFINITY... OR ELSE GOAD YOU AVENGERS INTO KILLING ME, AND THUS SAVING ME.

NOW, I HAVE NO OPTIONS...







NEXT ISSUE: THE CLEAN-UP... AND
THE RETURN OF AN OLD AND ATTEMPT
VILLAIN. DON'T MISS CHAPTER
ONE OF...

THIS EVIL UNDYING!