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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

THE
MIGHTY

THOR™

CRY OF THE
DEATH-ANGEL!



PLUS:
ALL-NEW
TALES OF
ASGARD!
HOME OF THE LEGENDARY NORSE GODS!



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!**

HARK, THE HERALD ANGEL LIVES!

THE BLEAK DECEMBER WIND GIVES MANHATTANITES SOMETHING ELSE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT BESIDES INFLATION AND SUBWAY CRIME. BUT FOR ONE RESIDENT OF THE CITY, THE MIGHTY THOR, GOD OF THUNDER, IT IS THE KIND OF WEATHER TO SET HIS NORSE BLOOD STIRRING.

'TIS NOW, WHEN SNOW BLANKETS MUCH OF EARTH, THAT I MOST MISS THE SIGHT OF ETERNAL ASGARD--HOME. BUT I HAVE CHOSEN TO REMAIN HERE WITH THE MORTAL HALF OF MY HERITAGE... AND THAT IS A DECISION NOT LIGHTLY MADE.

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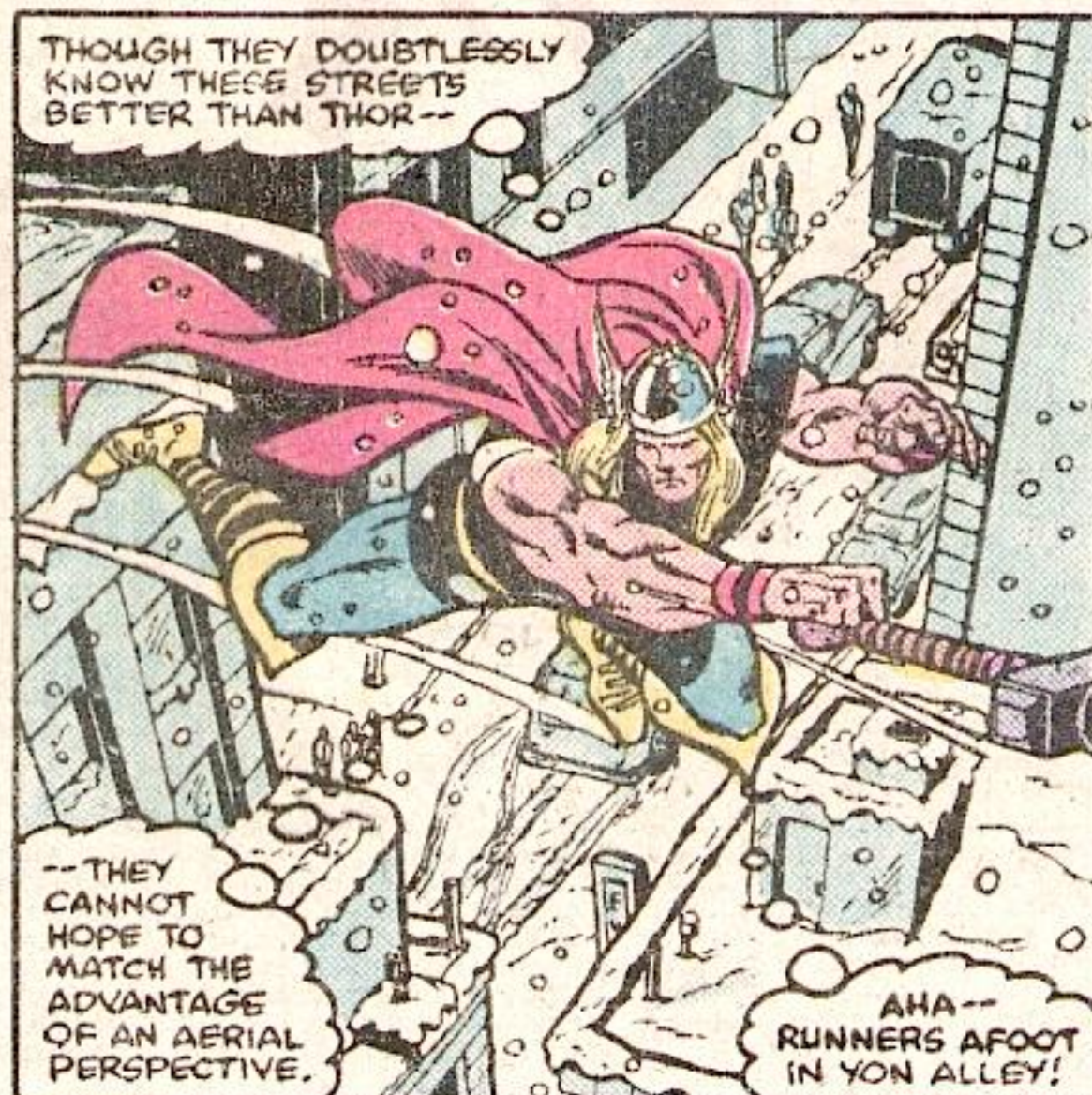
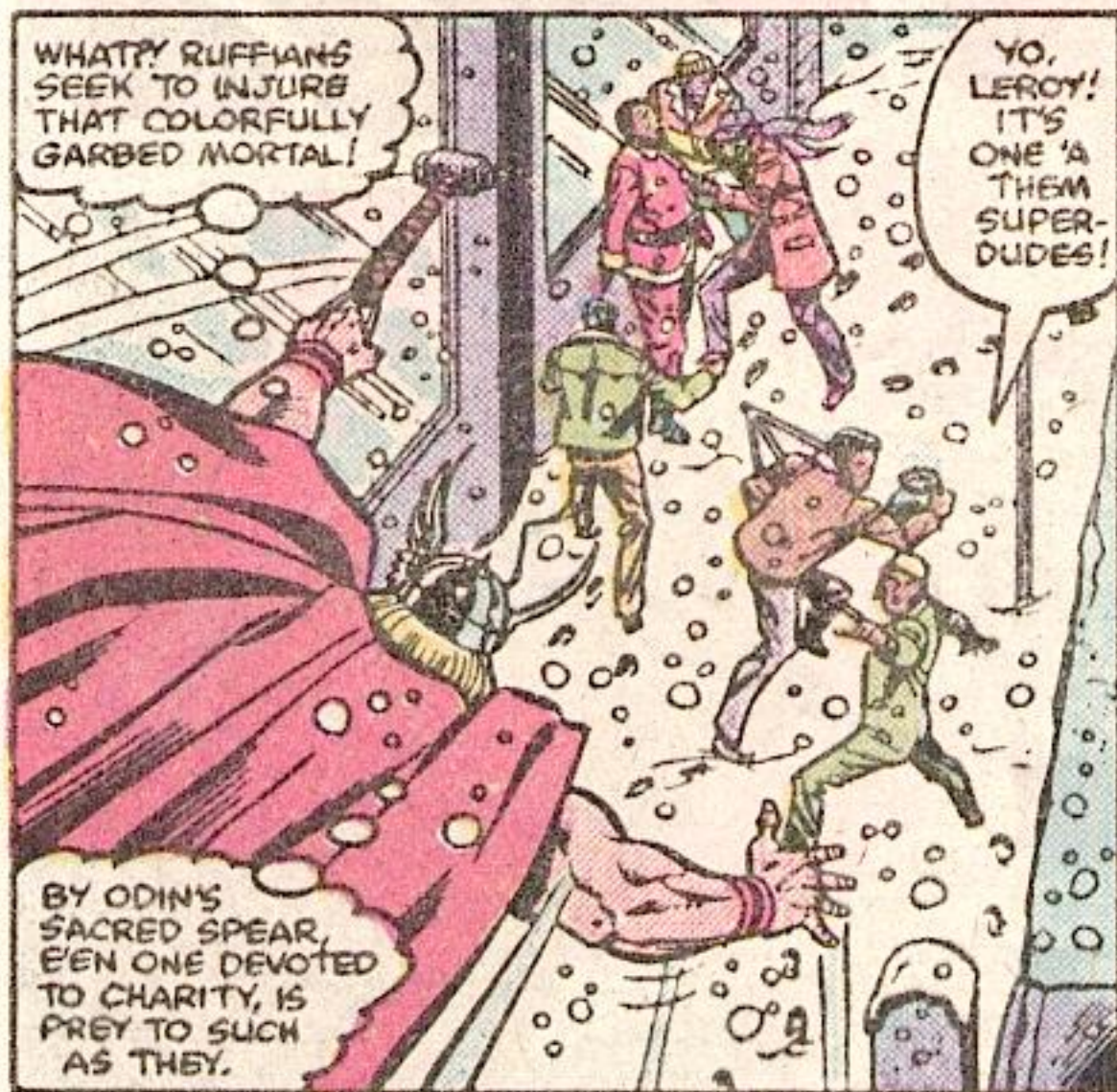
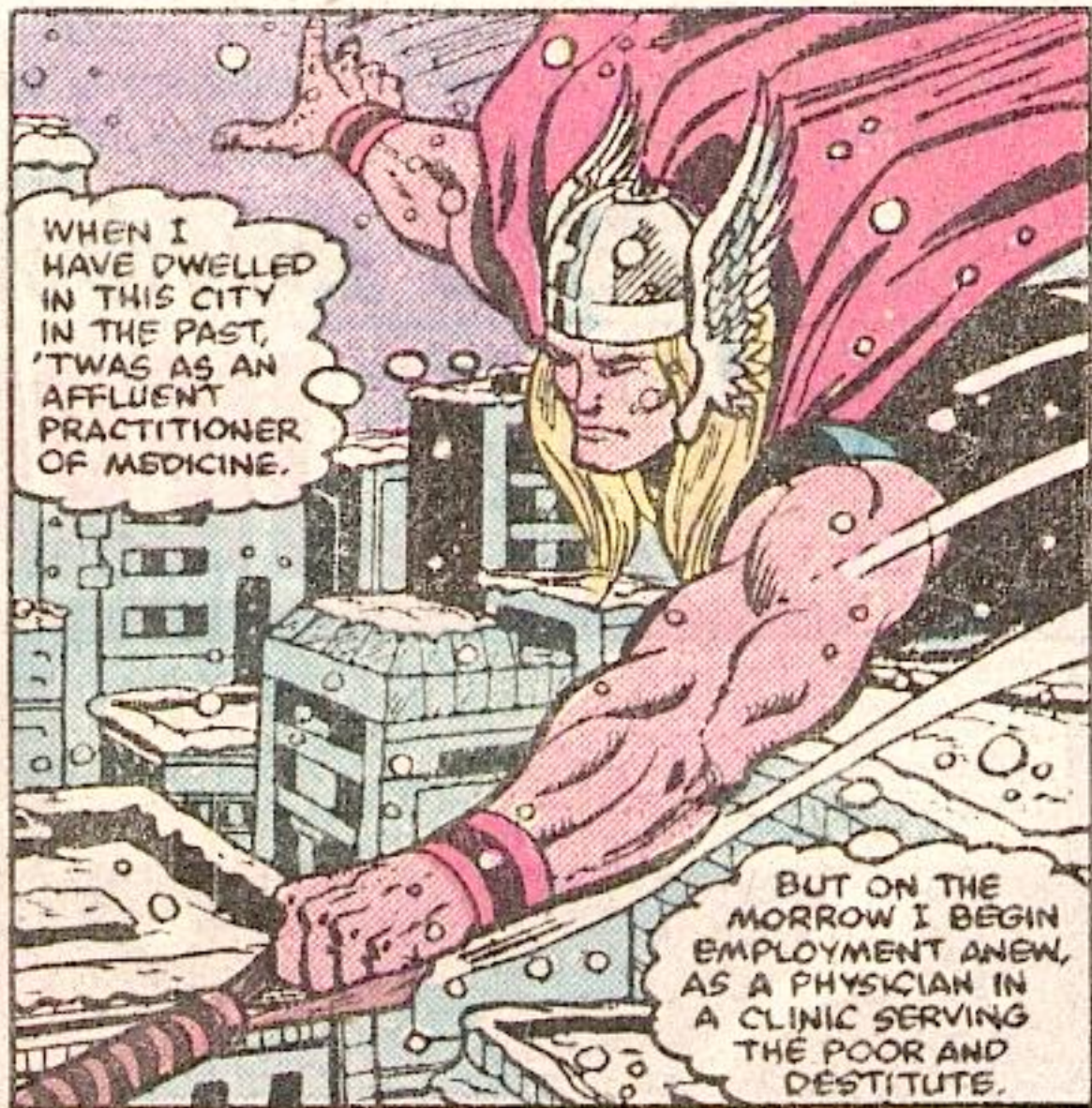
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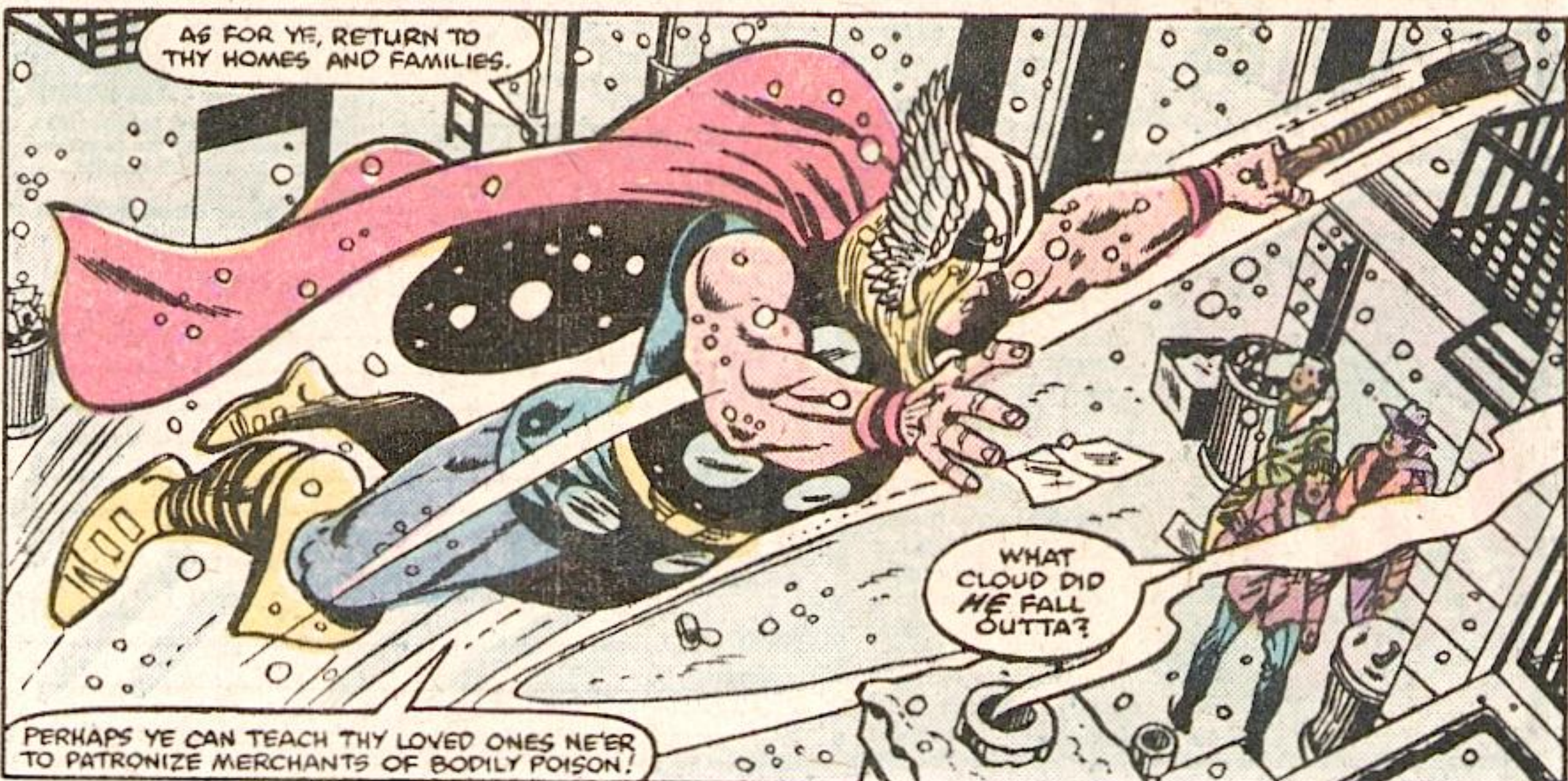
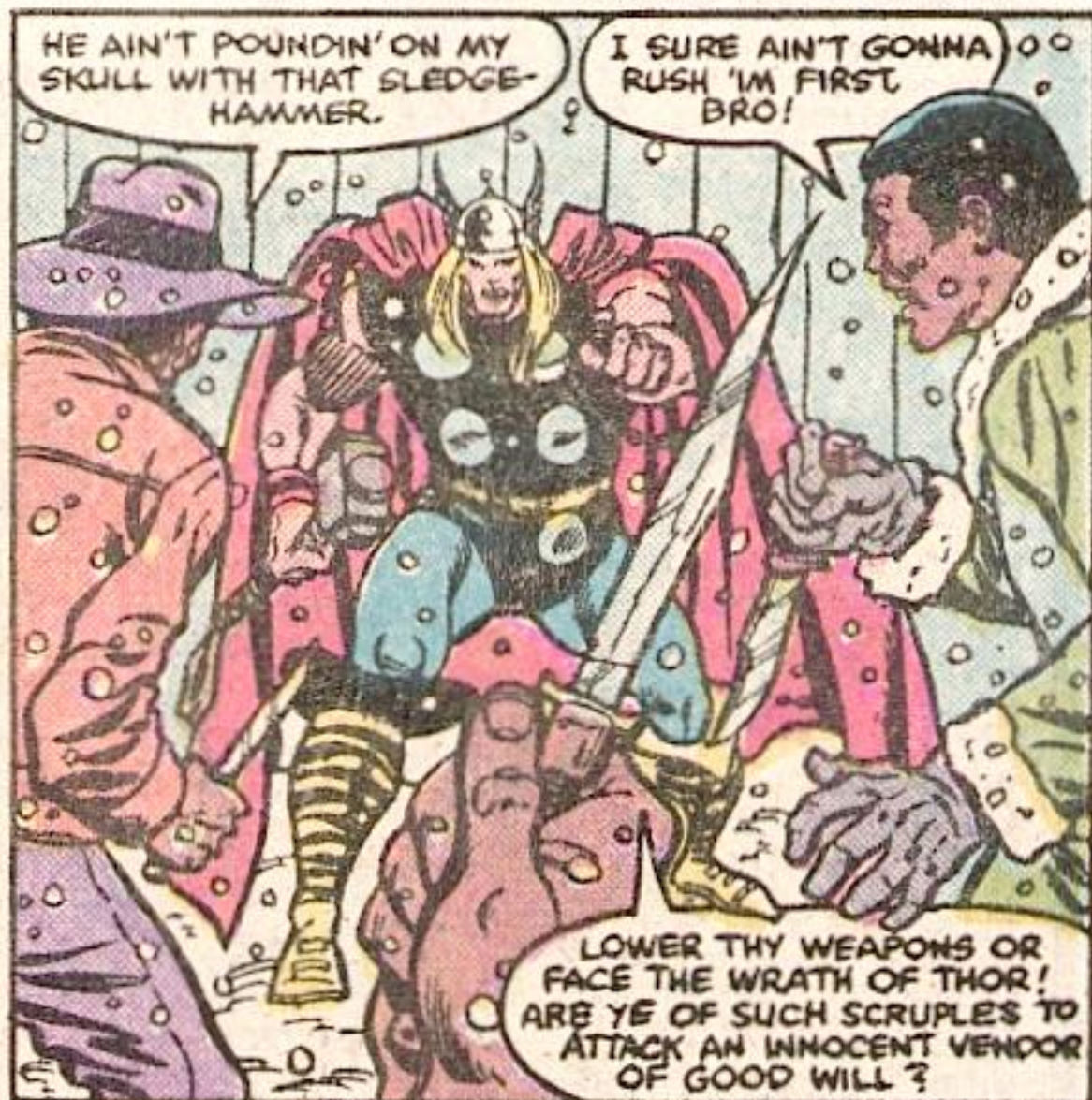
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JIM SHOOTER
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TRUE TO HIS WORD, THOR SEARCHES THE STREETS FOR THE DRUG PUSHER BUT...



VANISHED! 'TWOULD SEEM I CANNOT MAKE GOOD MY VOW TO THE YOUTHS THIS NIGHT, PERHAPS ON THE MORROW.

NOW 'TIS TIME I DID RETURN TO MY TEMPORARY LODGINGS--



--AND ALLOW MY MORTAL FORM SOME MUCH-NEEDED REST. TOMORROW IS AN AUSPICIOUS DAY FOR HIM, AND HE WILL NEED HIS SLUMBER.

STAMPING HIS MYSTIC HAMMER Mjolnir ONCE ON THE FLOOR...

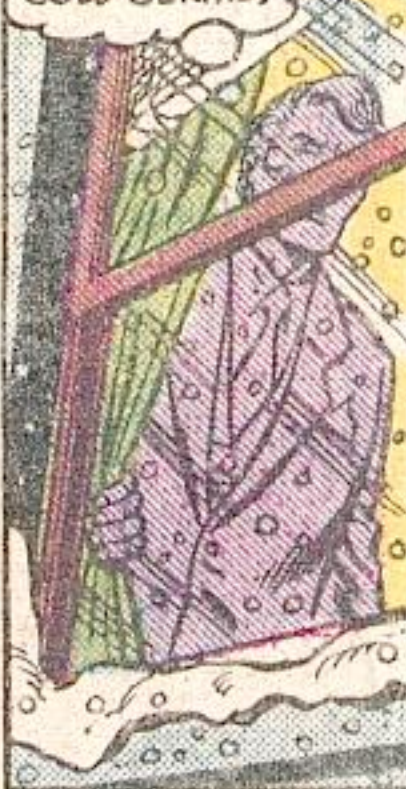


...THE GOD OF THUNDER IS MAGICALLY TRANSFORMED INTO THE LAME DOCTOR DONALD BLAKE...

...HIS HAMMER ASSUMING THE SHAPE OF A WALKING STICK.



I'D BETTER SHUT THIS WINDOW, WHILE THOR MAY BE IMPERVIOUS TO THE COLD, I'M NOT. IT WOULDN'T DO TO START MY FIRST DAY OF WORK AS A DOCTOR SPREADING COLD GERMS!



THIRTY MILES NORTH, IN THE OPEN COUNTRY, GREAT GUSTS OF WIND PILE SNOW DRIFTS UPON A MODEST FARMHOUSE AND ITS DEMOLISHED BARN.



THE FARM BELONGS TO ONE MRS. BEVERLY MATHESON, MOTHER OF ONE, RECENTLY WIDOWED.

SINCE THE BARN WAS MYSTERIOUSLY DESTROYED ONE NIGHT LAST SUMMER, MRS. MATHESON HAS NOT VENTURED NEAR IT.



BUT WERE SHE TO LOOK BENEATH WHERE IT STOOD--

--SHE WOULD BE ASTONISHED TO DISCOVER THE ABANDONED LAIR OF THE MASTER ROBOT-MAKER... MACHINESMITH.*



*DEFEATED IN THE PAGES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA #249--J.S.

THE WORKSHOP IS IN RUINS NOW, THE ROBOTS ALL DESTROYED...

...ALL SAVE ONE OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL CONSTRUCTION, WHOSE EYES HAVE JUST BEGUN TO GLOW WITH THE LIGHT OF REBIRTH.



I AM... GABRIEL THE AIR-WALKER, HERALD OF GREAT GALACTUS, THE WORLD-EATER. WHERE AM I? WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

"I REMEMBER COMING TO THE PLANET EARTH TO TRUMPET THE IMMINENT RETURN OF MY BELOVED MASTER.



"I RECALL CONFRONTING GALACTUS' TREACHEROUS FORMER HERALD THE SILVER SURFER..."

"I SEE MYSELF AS THE SURFER RENDS MY LIFE-SUSTAINING COSMIC CLOAK.



"I SEE MYSELF FALLING TO THE PAVEMENT. I FEEL MY BODY SHATTERING INTO FRAGMENTS.



"I SEE BLACKNESS.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?
HOW COULD I HAVE BROKEN
INTO PIECES LIKE...LIKE AN
AUTOMATON--A MERE
MECHANISM IN THE FORM
OF A MAN?

I AM A MAN--A LIVING
BEING OF FLESH AND BLOOD,
WITH THE POWER COSMIC
WHICH GALACTUS BESTOWED
UPON ME. OR--OR AM I?



NO! I HAVE CHANGED.
I SENSE IT. I AM
NOW INDEED A
MACHINE!

WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN? WHO DID
THIS TO ME? COULD THE ACCURSED
SURFER HAVE TURNED ME INTO A
ROBOT? JUST HOW POWERFUL DID
GALACTUS MAKE HIS FIRST HERALD?

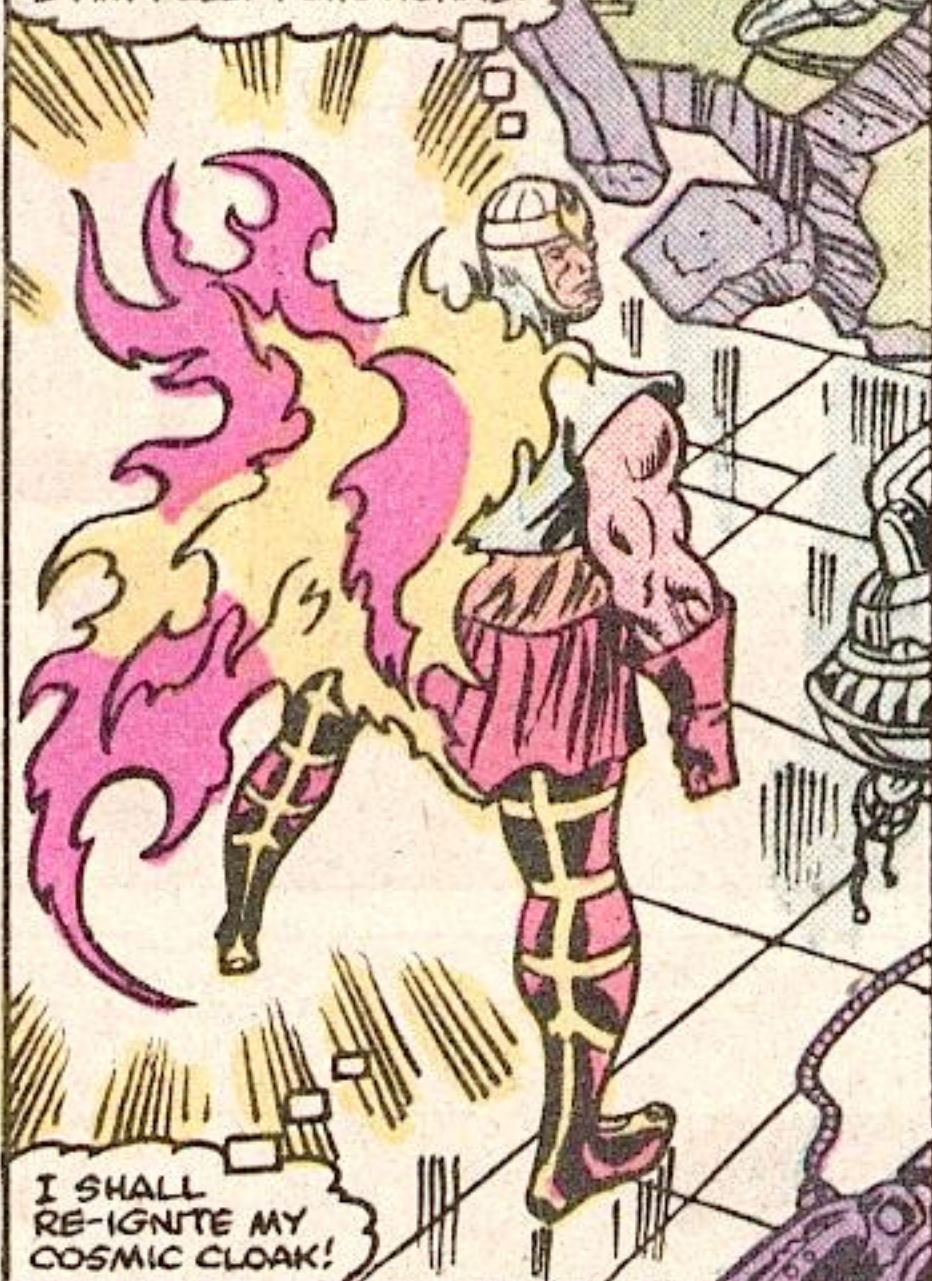
THAT MUST BE IT!
THE SURFER TURNED
ME INTO A ROBOT IN
ORDER TO DEFEAT ME!

BUT WHAT
HAPPENED
THEN?



IT WOULD APPEAR
THAT AFTER MY DE-
FEAT, GALACTUS
ABANDONED ME. SOME
EARTH BEING MUST
HAVE FOUND ME AND
BROUGHT ME TO THIS
ROBOT FACTORY!

THIS UNKNOWN BENEFACTOR
MUST HAVE MANAGED TO
ACTIVATE SOME SORT OF
AUTOMATIC REPAIR CIRCUIT.
AND NOW AT LONG LAST
I AM FULLY FUNCTIONAL!

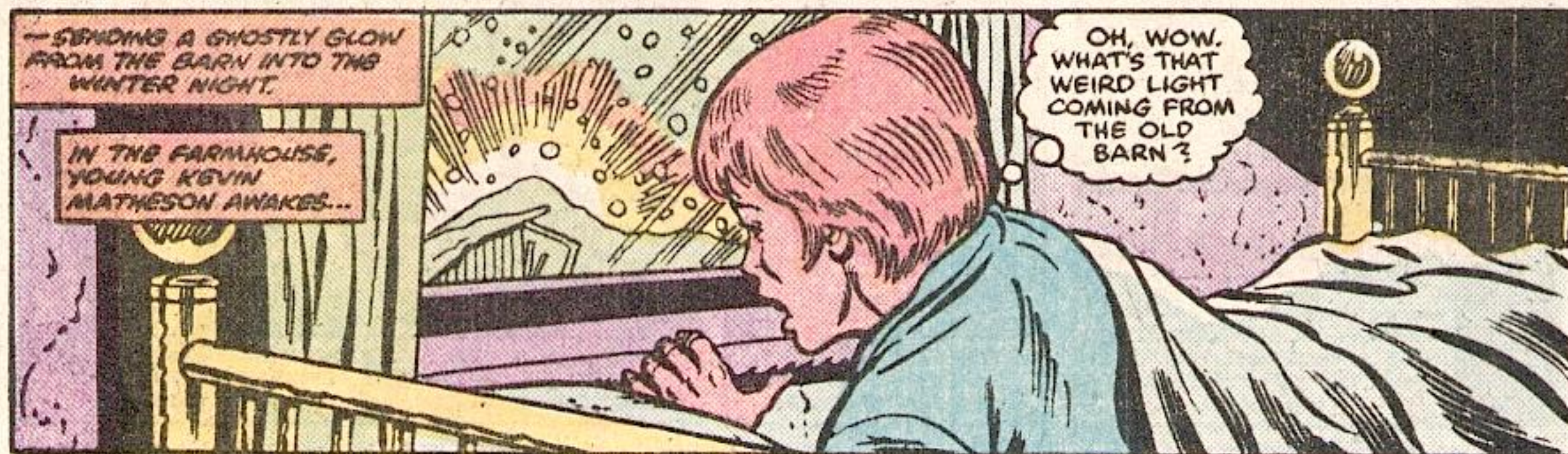


I SHALL
RE-IGNITE MY
COSMIC CLOAK!

A MANTLE OF COSMIC FLAME ERUPTS
FROM THE AIR-WALKER'S SHOULDERS--

SENDING A GHOSTLY GLOW
FROM THE BARN INTO THE
WINTER NIGHT.

IN THE FARMHOUSE,
YOUNG KEVIN
MATHESON AWAKES...



OH, WOW.
WHAT'S THAT
WEIRD LIGHT
COMING FROM
THE OLD
BARN?

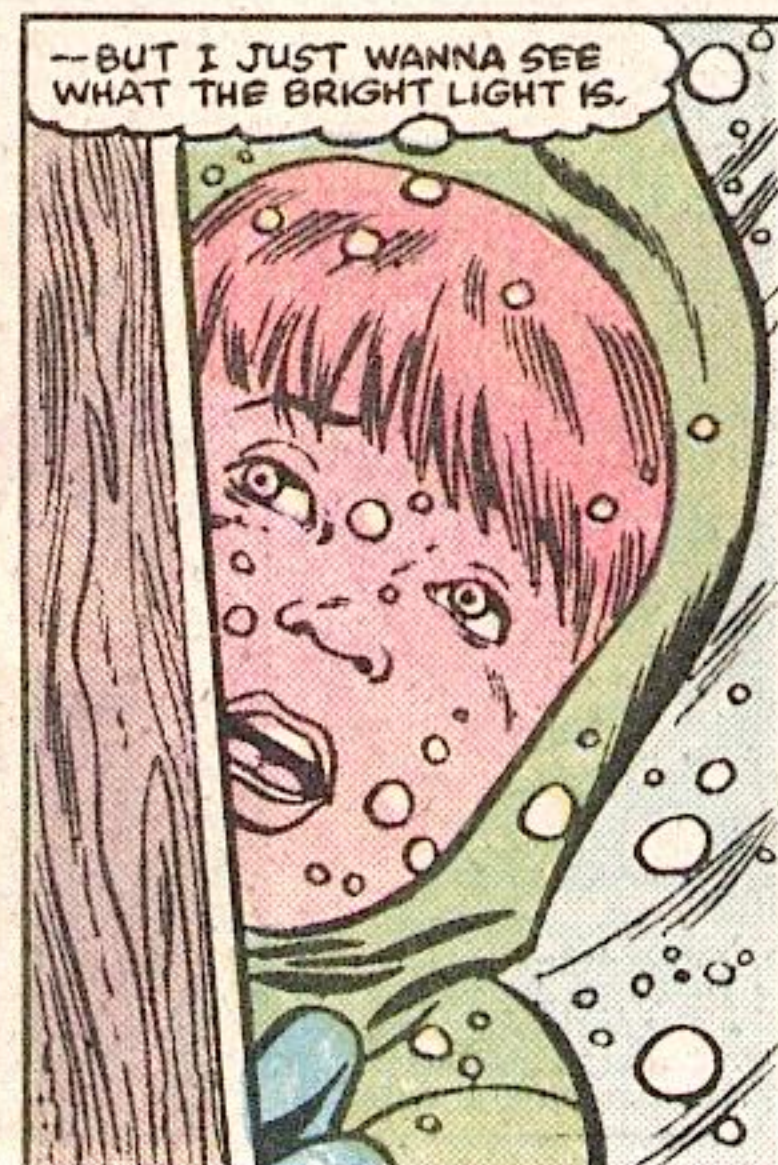
I BETTER GO
SEE. IT MIGHT
BE A FIRE OR
SOMETHING.



MOMMA WOULD
GET REAL MAD
IF SHE KNEW
I WENT NEAR
THE BARN--



--BUT I JUST WANNA SEE
WHAT THE BRIGHT LIGHT IS.



WHEN KEVIN MATHESON WAS STILL TOO YOUNG TO WALK, HIS FATHER USED TO CARRY HIM THROUGH THE CORNFIELDS AT NIGHT, POINTING OUT THE MOON, THE STARS, THE PLANETS, AMONG THE FIRST WORDS HE SPOKE WERE "MOON," "BIG DIAPER," "ORION." WHEN HE WAS BUT FOUR HE SAW STAR WARS FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND SOON THE WORDS "ROBOT" AND "ALIEN" AND "SPACE" WERE PART OF HIS VOCABULARY. HE WAS RAISED ON STAR TREK RERUNS. HIS BEST FRIENDS WERE STAR WARS ACTION FIGURES. HIS FATHER DIED THE NIGHT BATTLESTAR GALACTICA WENT OFF THE AIR.

BECAUSE OF THIS FANTASY ORIENTATION, WHAT HE SEES BURST FROM THE BARN THIS COLD DECEMBER EVE DOES NOT FRIGHTEN HIM. IT DAZZLES AND EXCITES!



I WALK THE AIR ONCE MORE. GABRIEL HAS RISEN.

WHAT IS THIS? A WITNESS—A HUMAN CHILD.

YOU'RE AN ALIEN, AREN'T YOU, MISTER? WHAT PLANET ARE YOU FROM? WHERE'S YOUR STARSHIP?

I AM GABRIEL THE AIR-WALKER.



DO YOU KNOW LUKE SKYWALKER?

NO. TELL ME, WHERE PRECISELY ON EARTH IS THIS?



DON'T YOU KNOW? YOU'RE ON MY MOM'S FARM. WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THE BARN, MISTER?

RESTING.

WHO ARE YOU, CHILD? WHY DO YOU NOT FEAR ME AS THE REST OF YOUR KIND?



MY NAME'S KEVIN. I ONLY GET SCARED OF BAD ALIENS LIKE DARTH VADER.

YOU LOOK LIKE A GOOD ALIEN. I'D LIKE TO BE YOUR FRIEND.



WILL YOU FLY ME ALONG WITH YOU?

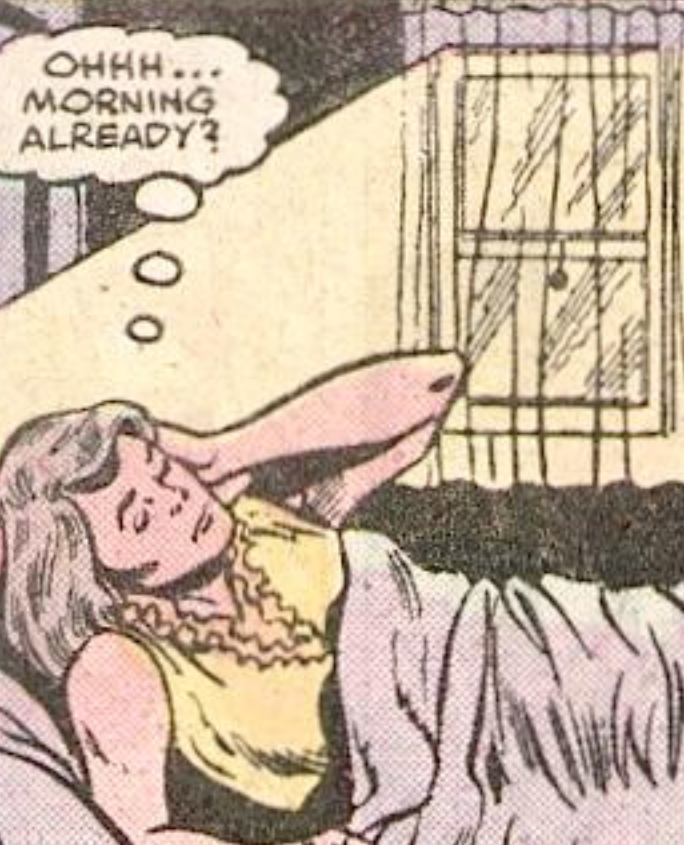
THE HUMAN MAY BE OF SOME USE TO ME IN INTERPRETING THE WAYS OF THIS ENIGMATIC WORLD.

YES, YOU MAY COME WITH ME.



CBOY!

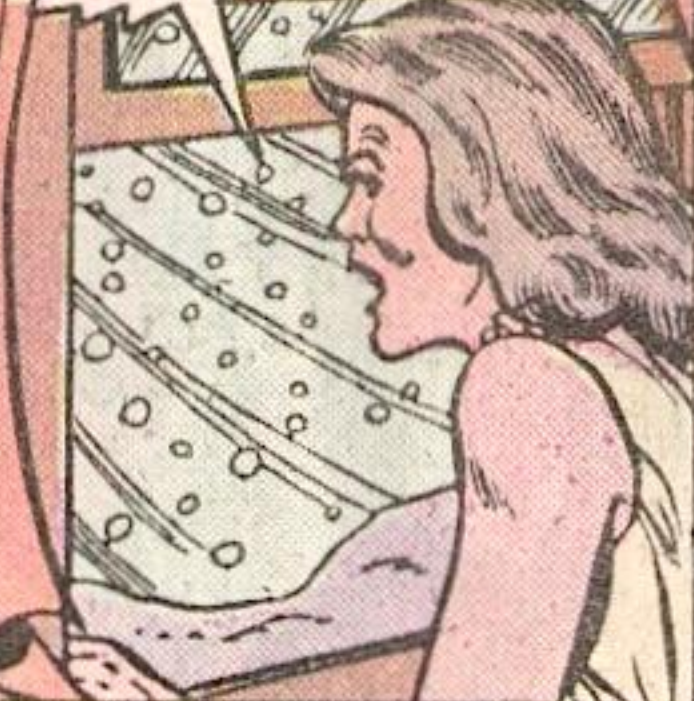
AS GABRIEL AND KEVIN LIFT INTO THE WINTER SKY, THE BRILLIANCE OF THE ROBOT'S COSMIC CLOAK PENETRATES BEVERLY MATHESON'S BEDROOM WINDOW...



OH... MORNING ALREADY?

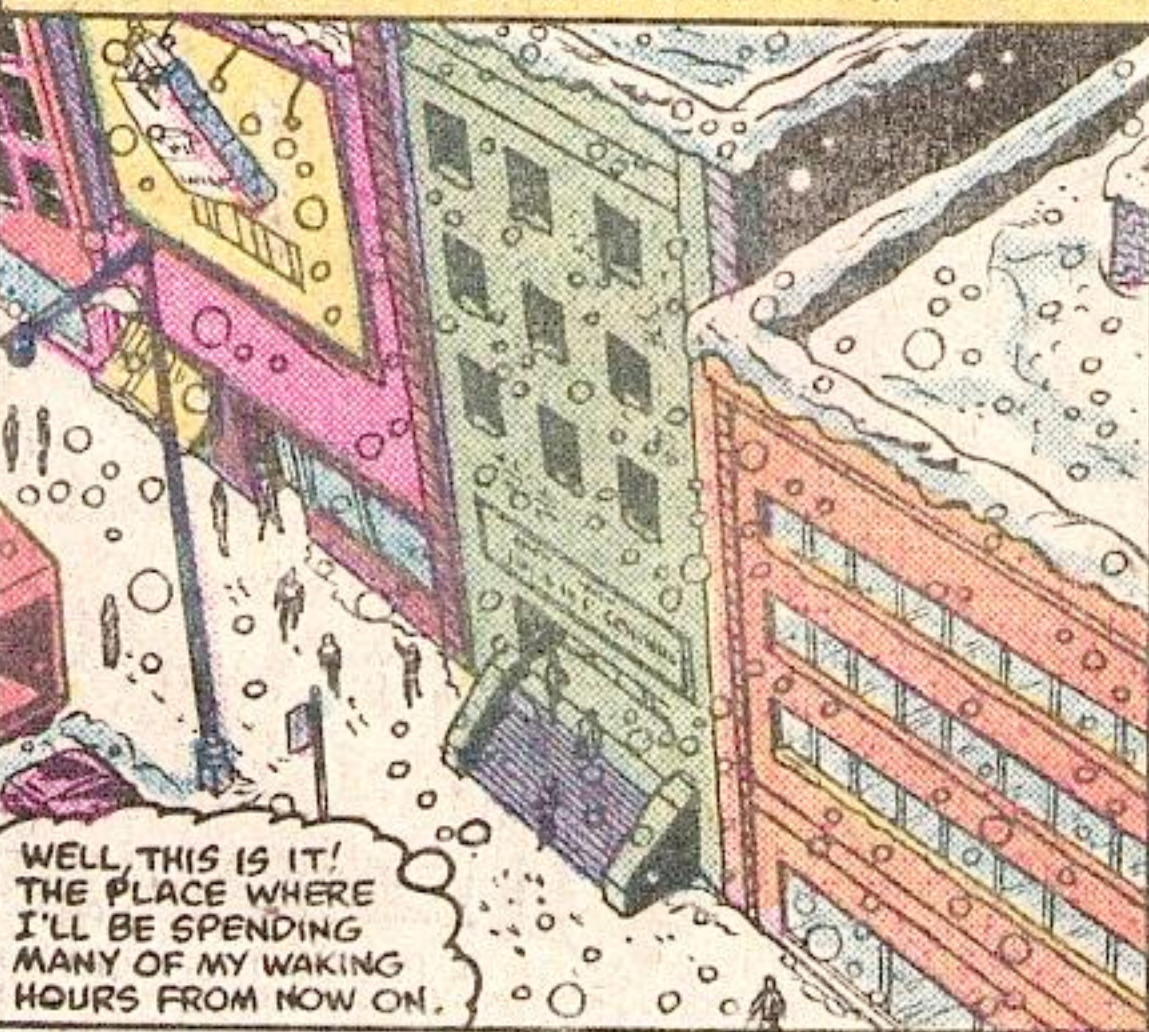
OH, MY LORD!

KEVIN! COME BACK!



BUT THE TWO FIGURES RECEDE FROM VIEW, UNTIL THEY ARE NO LARGER THAN THE SNOWFLAKES THAT FALL.

THE NEXT MORNING IN NEW YORK CITY, THE BLIZZARD CONTINUES AS DR. DONALD BLAKE LIMPS TO THE WESTSIDE MEDICAL CENTER ON BROADWAY AND 99th...



WELL, THIS IS IT! THE PLACE WHERE I'LL BE SPENDING MANY OF MY WAKING HOURS FROM NOW ON.

SOON, INSIDE THE CONVERTED BROWN-STONE, BLAKE IS MET BY HIS EMPLOYER, LIONEL JEFFRIES...



BLAKE, THESE ARE THE CLINIC'S OTHER FULL-TIME STAFFERS... RAMON HERNANDEZ... THERESA CRUZ... AND DEXTER QUENTIN.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, CALL ME DON.

LET'S GO TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM. I'LL BRIEF YOU ON PROCEDURES.

THIS IS MOSTLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF DR. BLAKE. THE REST OF YOU WILL JUST HAVE TO BEAR WITH ME. LET'S DISCUSS WORK SCHEDULES...



I HEAR THAT BLAKE WAS ONCE A HIGH-PRICED SURGEON. WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO BRING HIM DOWN TO THIS?

FOLLOWING THE MEETING...



THIS IS THE EXAMINATION AREA YOU WILL BE SHARING WITH DR. QUENTIN.

A BIT SMALL, I KNOW, BUT YOU'LL BE MOVING AROUND A LOT DURING THE DAY ANYWAY.

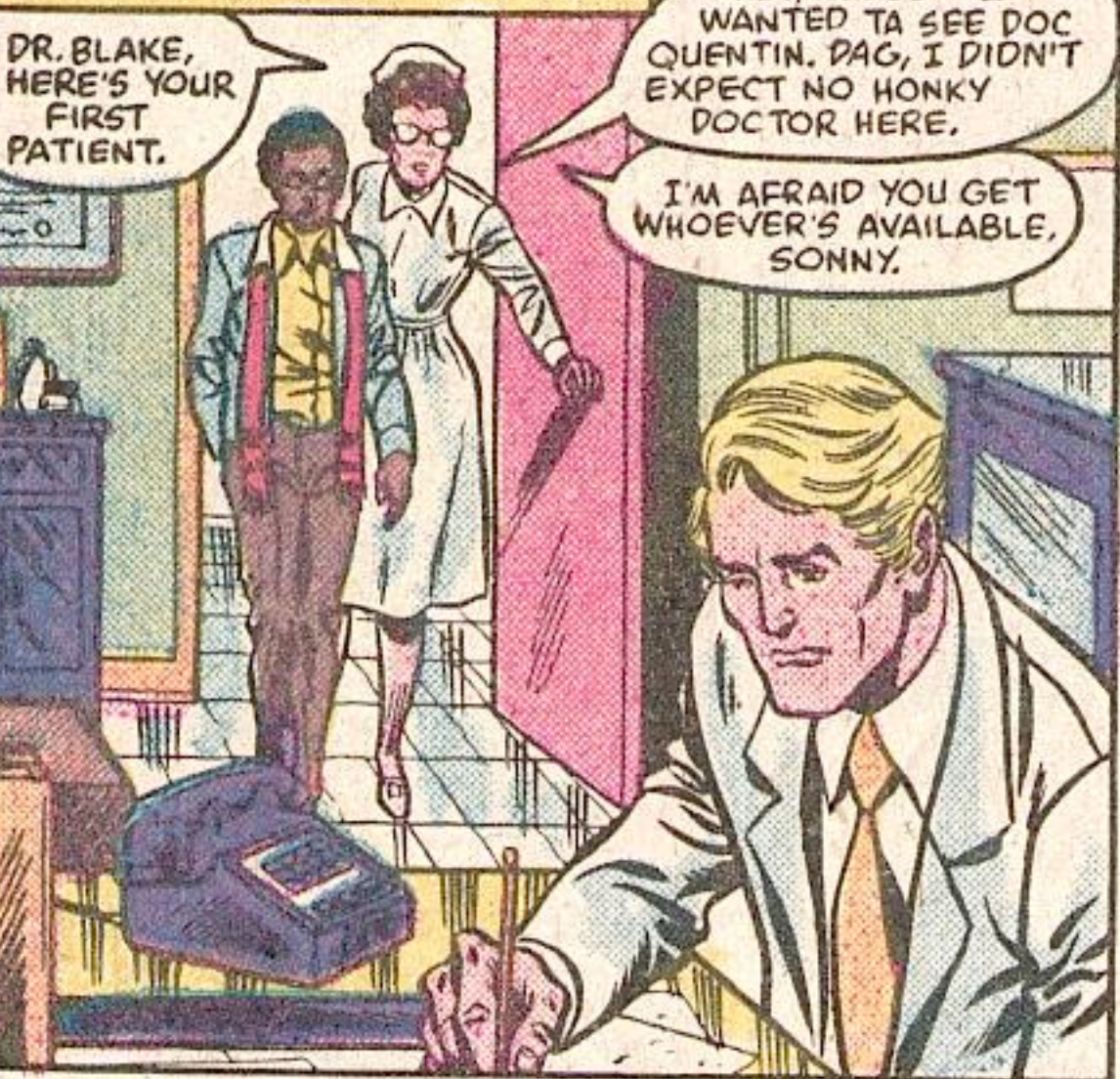
THIS IS QUITE A CHANGE FROM THE PRIVATE OFFICE I HAD ON PARK AVENUE.

NOT QUITE WHAT YOU'RE ACCUSTOMED TO, EH, BLAKE?



IT'S FINE, SIR.

NOT LONG AFTER SETTLING IN...



DR. BLAKE, HERE'S YOUR FIRST PATIENT.

HEY, NURSE-- I WANTED TO SEE DOC QUENTIN. DAG, I DIDN'T EXPECT NO HONKY DOCTOR HERE.

I'M AFRAID YOU GET WHOEVER'S AVAILABLE, SONNY.

TYRONE OWLSLEY, IS IT? WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?

DOC, LISSSEN. I-I GOT THE SHAKES REAL BAD. I THINK I'VE BEEN DOIN' SOME BAD STUFF.

YOU GOTTA GIVE ME SOMETHIN' TA BRING ME DOWN. DOC QUENTIN WOULD.



HMMM, IT LOOKS LIKE THE CASES I'LL BE GETTING ARE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM PARK AVENUE, TOO.

AND WHILE DON BLAKE LEARNS A NEW STYLE OF MEDICAL PRACTICE, THE AWESOME AIR-WALKER AND HIS YOUNG COMPANION LEARN THE WHEREABOUTS OF NEW YORK CITY AFTER A NIGHT OF FRUITLESS SEARCHING...

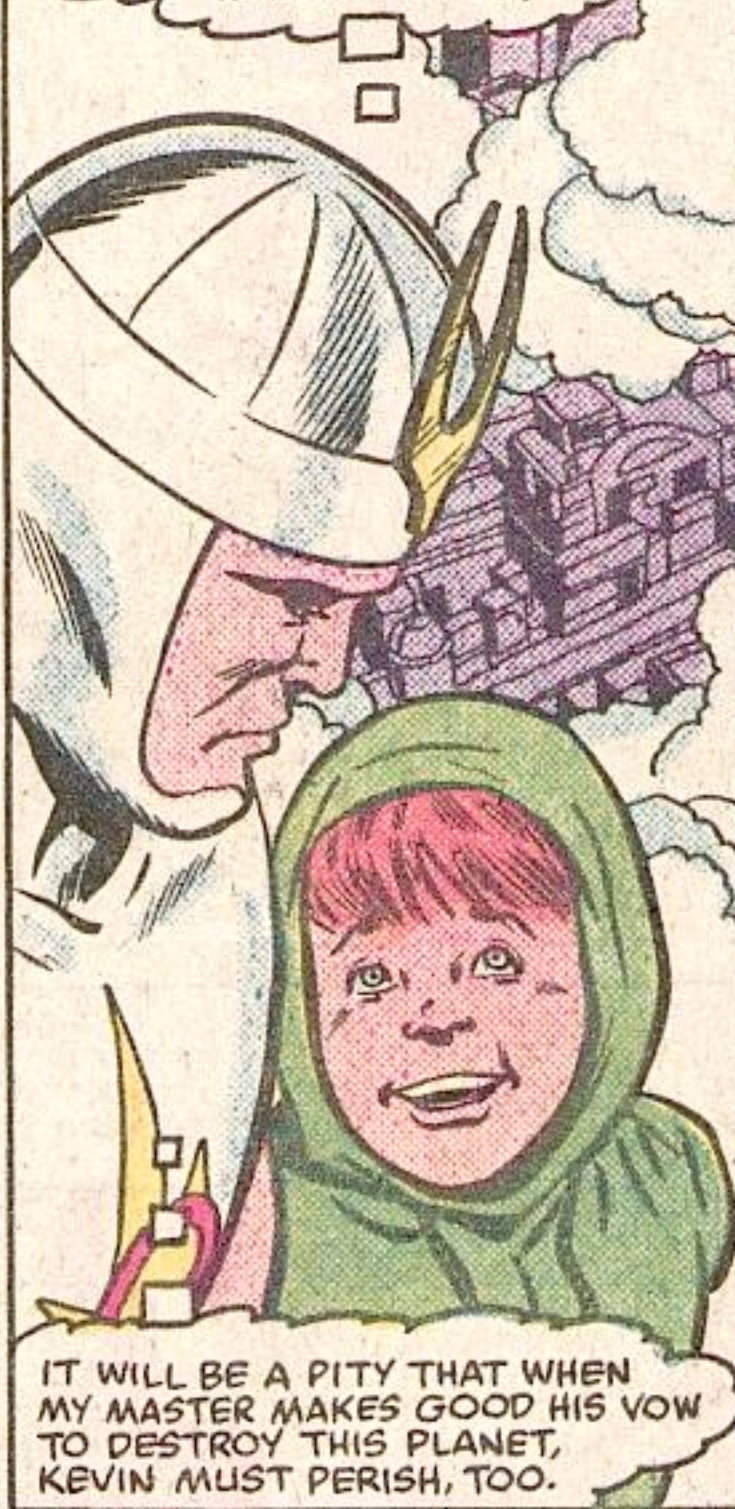
I FIND YOUR WORLD MOST DISORIENTING, KEVIN-- AS I FIND ALL ALIEN WORLDS.



I AM MUCH MORE AT HOME IN THE TRACKLESS VOID OF SPACE.

I THINK I LIKE OUTER SPACE BETTER, TOO, MR. GABRIEL, THOUGH I'VE NEVER BEEN THERE.

HOW STRANGE... I AM ACTUALLY GROWING TO ENJOY THIS EARTHLING'S COMPANY. CAN IT BE THAT GALACTUS' ABSENCE HAS LEFT AN EMPTINESS IN MY SOUL? IF SO, HOW CAN A SMALL HUMAN FILL IT?



IT WILL BE A PITY THAT WHEN MY MASTER MAKES GOOD HIS VOW TO DESTROY THIS PLANET, KEVIN MUST PERISH, TOO.

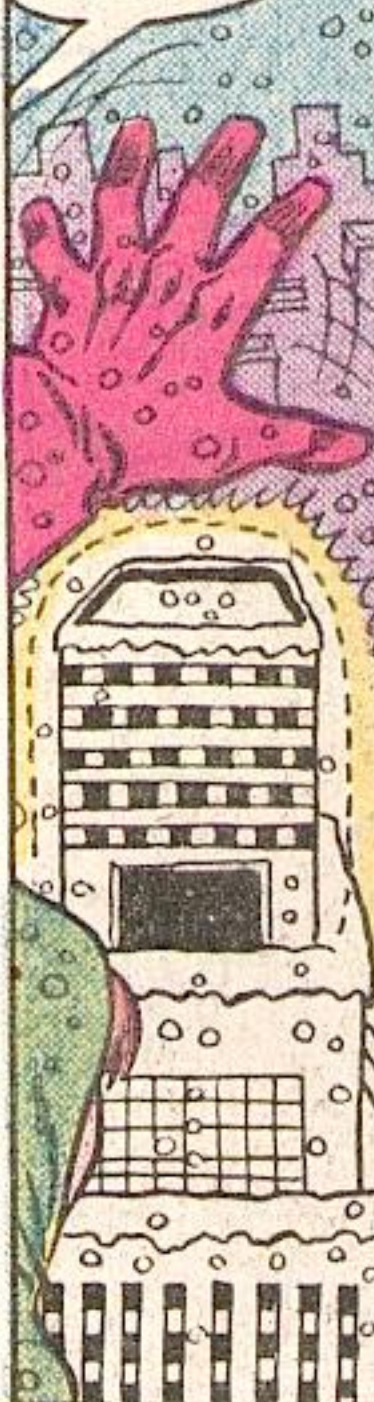
WHERE ARE WE GOING FIRST, MR. GABRIEL?

THAT BUILDING AHEAD LOOKS FAMILIAR. AS I RECALL, IT IS WHERE DWELL MY MASTER'S ENEMIES, THE FANTASTIC FOUR.



THE FF! WE'RE GOING TO VISIT THE FF!?!?

WITH A GESTURE, I SHALL ENCASE THE EDIFICE WITHIN AN IMPENETRABLE BARRIER OF POLLUTANTS AND INERT GASES-- HARDER THAN **STONE**.



INSIDE THE BAXTER BUILDING...

HEY, STRETCHO-- WHAT IN BLAZES IS OUR SECURITY ALARM DOIN' BUZZIN' TA BEAT THE BAND? WE'RE UNDER ATTACK OR WHAT?

I DON'T KNOW, BEN. CHECK THE MONITORS.



REED, BEN-- OUTSIDE THE WINDOW IS THAT AIR-WALKER ROBOT WE ONCE FOUGHT. *HE'S GOT SOME KID WITH HIM!

* FANTASTIC FOUR #123--J.S.

HEAR ME, HUMANS-- I HAVE SEALED YOU WITHIN YOUR DWELLING TO PREVENT YOUR TRIFLING INTERFERENCE. I DESIRE INFORMATION.

WHY SHOULD WE GIVE YA THE TIME A' DAY, CREEP?

DON'T PROVOKE HIM, BEN. THE CHILD MUST BE A HOSTAGE!



WHAT HAS BECOME OF MY MASTER GALACTUS?

GALACTUS HAS BEEN DRIVEN FROM EARTH-- SINCE WE LAST SAW YOU.

THAT IS INCONCEIVABLE-- NONE OF YOU, NO ONE ON EARTH HAS THE POWER TO DEFEAT GALACTUS, HOW--?



UNLESS... THE ACCURSED SILVER SURFER CONSPIRED AGAINST HIM.

AND THE SURFER-- WHERE MIGHT HE BE FOUND?

PRESUMABLY HE'S STILL ON EARTH. WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM HIM IN SOME TIME.

REED--KEEP HIM TALKING. I'LL SEE IF I CAN BURN THROUGH HIS BARRIER!

IT'S NO USE-- MY FLAME JUST SNUFFS OUT!

AIR-WALKER-- IF THAT LITTLE BOY IS HARMED, WE WILL MAKE YOU WISH YOU'D NEVER RETURNED. I SWEAR IT!

YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE THREATS, HUMAN. IT IS I WHO HAVE THE POSITION OF STRENGTH.

I ORDER YOU TO CONTACT THE SURFER. HE AND I HAVE A SCORE TO SETTLE. IF I DO NOT MEET HIM WITHIN ONE HOUR, I SHALL OBLITERATE THE ENTIRE CITY!

STRIDING HAUGHTILY AWAY OBLIVIOUS TO THE FF'S CRIES OF PROTEST...

OEE, MR. GABRIEL. YOU MUST BE AWFULLY STRONG TO LOCK UP THE THING AND THE TORCH. I'LL BET YOU'RE STRONGER THAN ANYBODY!

YOU HAVE YET TO SEE THE TRUE SCOPE OF MY POWER, LITTLE ONE.

BEHOLD, KEVIN-- AS I DEMONSTRATE MY MASTERY OF THE ATMOSPHERE!

I SHALL CAUSE A COSMIC WINDSTORM TO RAVAGE THE CITY. IF THE SURFER IS ANYWHERE NEAR, HE WILL RECOGNIZE SUCH A DISPLAY OF GALACTIC FORCE!

HOLY SMOKE! WHERE'D THAT WIND COME FROM ALLUVA SUDDEN?

IT-- IT'S A HURRICANE!

OUTTA MY WAY-- I'M DUCKING INDOORS!

MY FACE! THE WIND IS BURNING IT!

HAHAHAHA!

THEY RUN LIKE CRAVEN CATTLE!

FEEL THE STORM, KEVIN? AS SAVAGE AS IT IS, IT PALES WITH THE RAGE IN MY SOUL!

WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY, MR. GABRIEL?

WHY, KEVIN?

I RAGE BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN **ABANDONED** HERE ON EARTH—**FORSAKEN** BY THE BEING I LOVED LIKE A FATHER!

I RAGE BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN **TRANSFORMED** AGAINST MY WILL INTO A COLD, LIFELESS MACHINE!

I RAGE BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN **ROBBED** OF MY PURPOSE, MY MEANING, MY DESTINY!

I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU.

AND AS THE GENTLE YOUNG BOY TRIES TO COMFORT A TROUBLED FRIEND, A CERTAIN DOCTOR COMPLETES HIS FIRST DAY OF WORK...

THIS IS ODD. THE WAITING ROOM IS PACKED WITH PEOPLE, MOST OF WHOM DON'T LOOK LIKE THEY'RE HERE FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION.

DR. BLAKE-- I WOULDN'T GO OUTSIDE JUST YET. WEATHER SAYS WE'RE HAVING 180 MILE AN HOUR WINDS OUT THERE! THE RADIO WARNS EVERYONE TO STAY INDOORS AWAY FROM WINDOWS.

180 MILE AN HOUR WINDS-- IN THE CITY?

IGNORING THE RECEPTIONIST'S WARNING, BLAKE GOES OUTSIDE, THROUGH THE PRIVATE REAR ENTRANCE...

BOXING

THESE WINDS JUST CAN'T BE NATURAL! I HAD BEST INVESTIGATE... AS THOR!

FOR A SINGLE SCINTILLATING INSTANT--

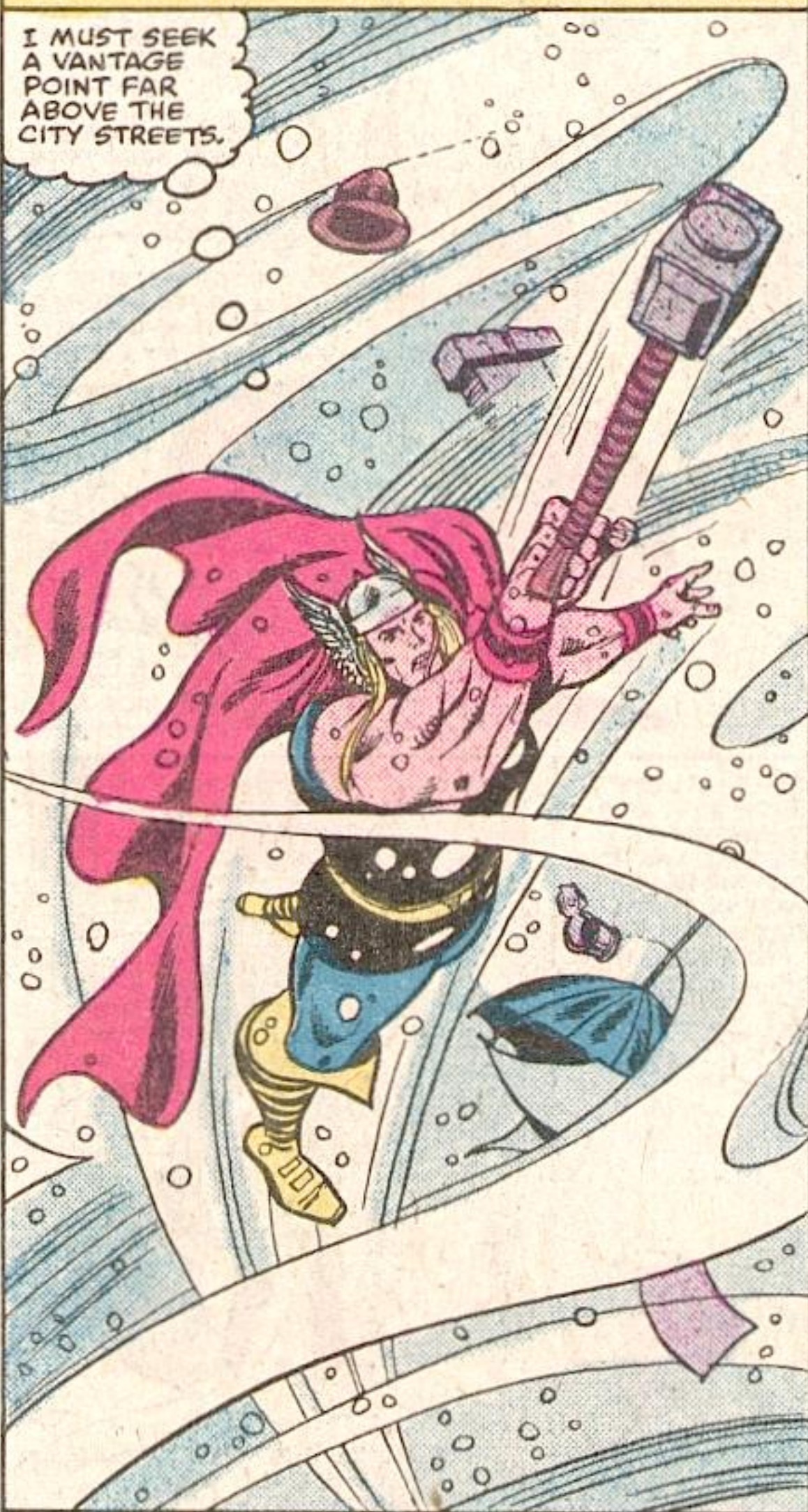
--A BOLT OF LIGHTNING PIERCES THE STORM--

--CHANGING THE LAME DOCTOR BLAKE TO-- THE MIGHTY THOR!

NO STORM, HOWEVER POWERFUL, CAN DETER THOR THE GOD OF STORMS!

INTO THE MAELSTROM HE FLIES, DRAWN BY HIS WONDROUS WEAPON-- THE HAMMER CALLED MJOLNIR...

I MUST SEEK A VANTAGE POINT FAR ABOVE THE CITY STREETS.

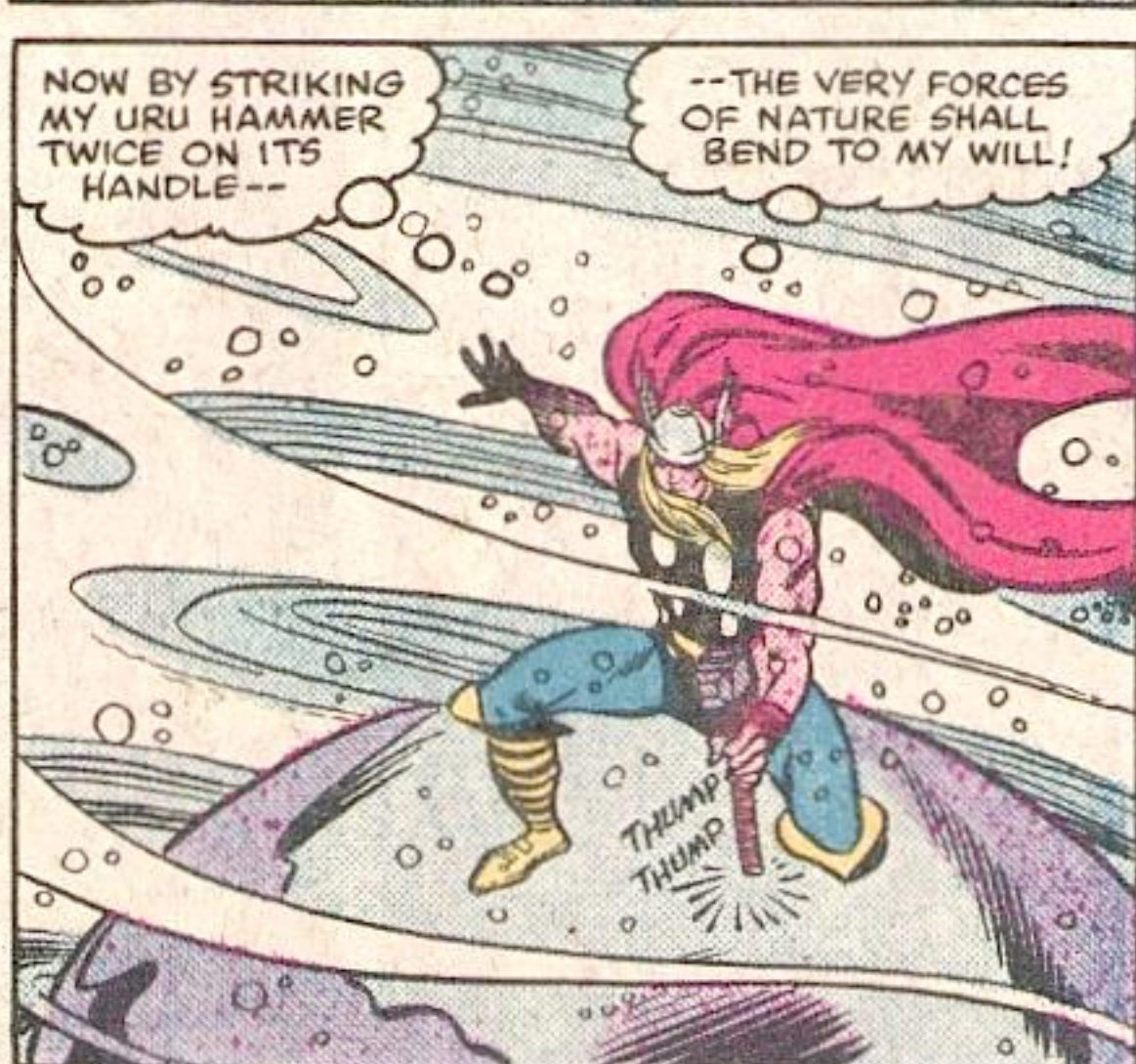


THIS LOFTY SPIRE SHALL SUFFICE!



NOW BY STRIKING MY URU HAMMER TWICE ON ITS HANDLE--

--THE VERY FORCES OF NATURE SHALL BEND TO MY WILL!



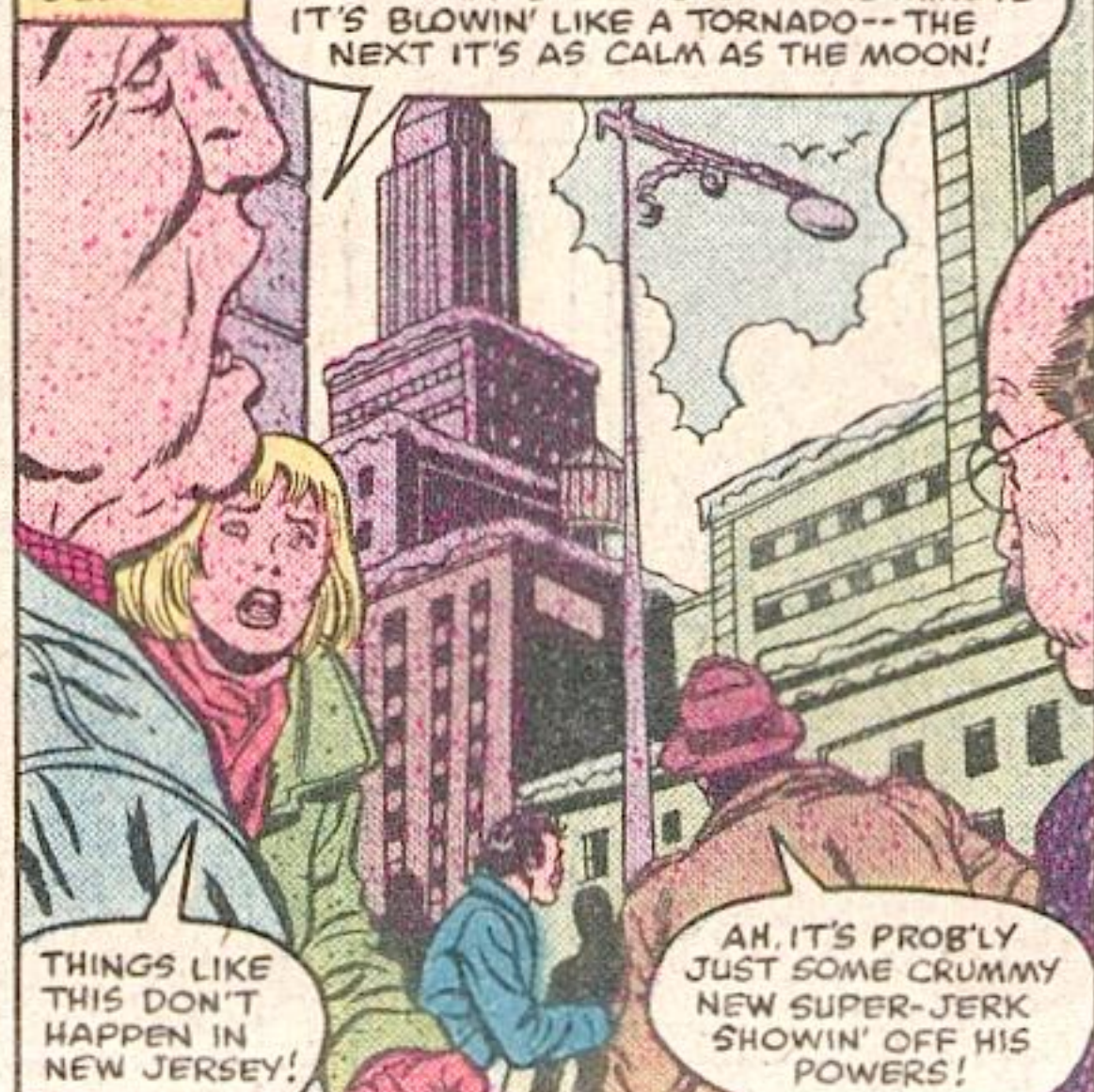
I COMMAND THEE, THOU RAGING TEMPEST! GIVE THY UNFETTERED FURY TO MINE ENCHANTED HAMMER!

FOR AS IT MAY CREATE SUCH TURBULENCE-- SO MAY MJOLNIR DISPENSE WITH IT.



BELOW...

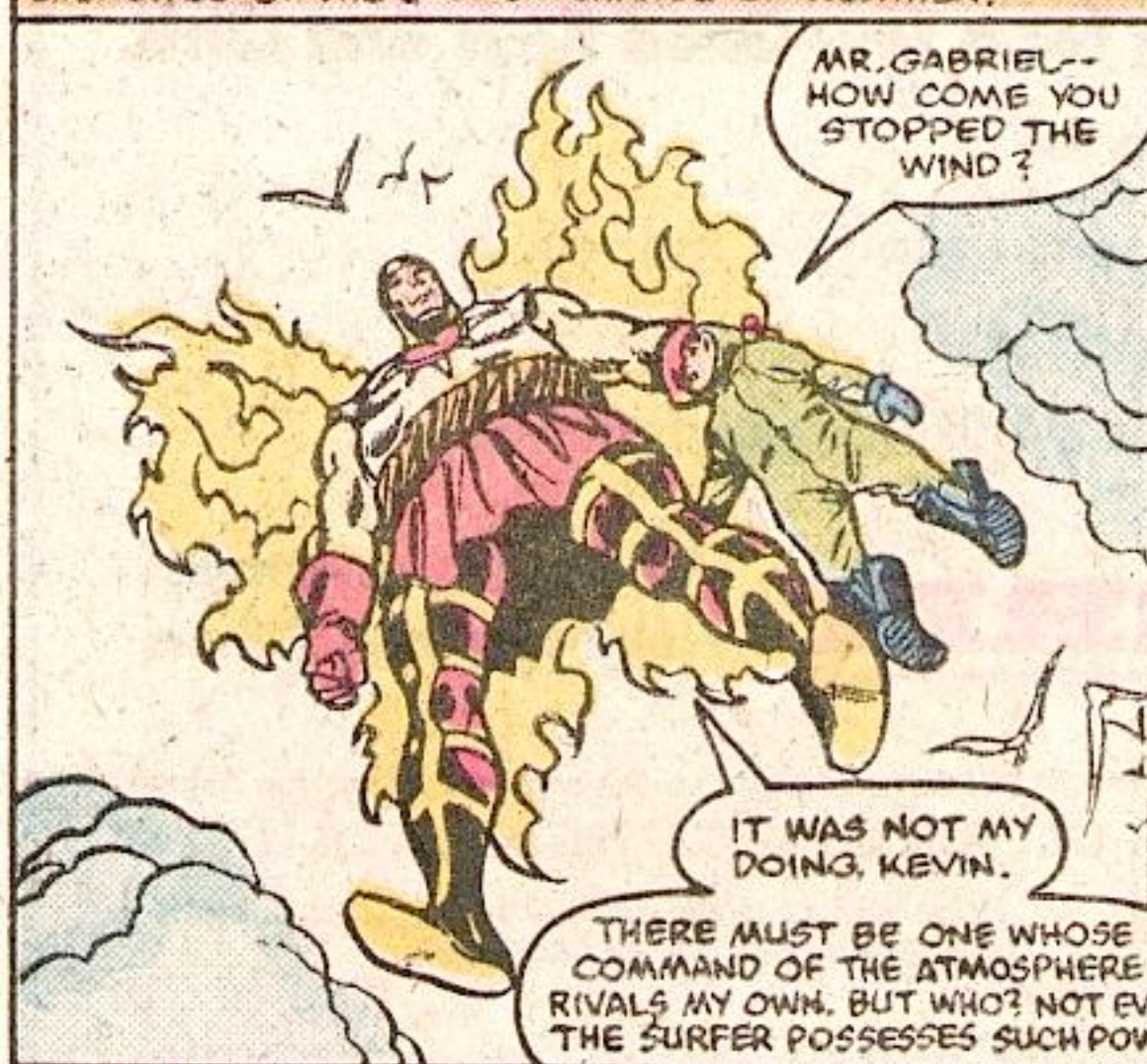
HEY-- WHAT'S GOING ON? ONE MINUTE IT'S BLOWIN' LIKE A TORNADO-- THE NEXT IT'S AS CALM AS THE MOON!



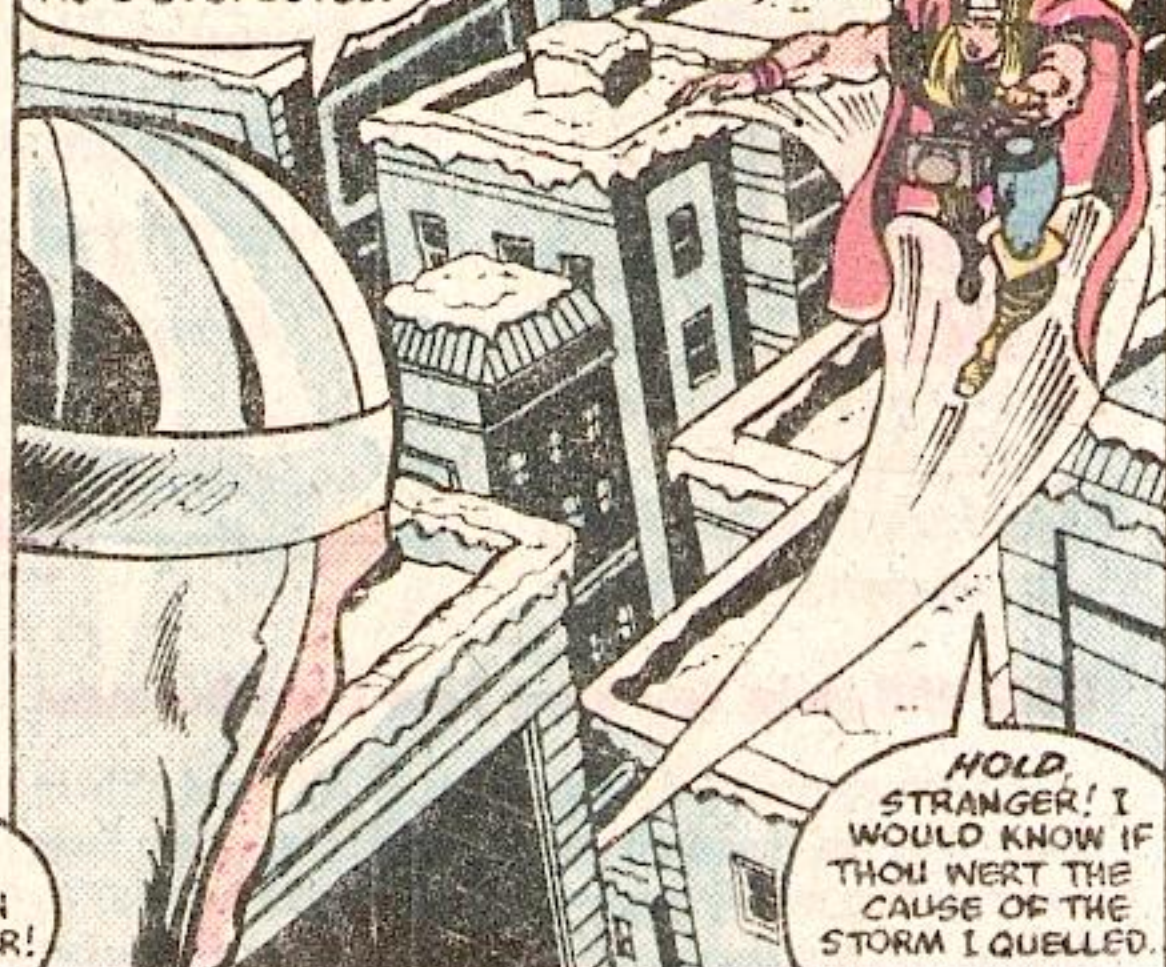
THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T HAPPEN IN NEW JERSEY!

AH, IT'S PROBABLY JUST SOME CRUMMY NEW SUPER-JERK SHOWIN' OFF HIS POWERS!

THE EARTH-BOUND POPULACE ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES
DISMAYED BY THE SUDDEN CHANGE OF WEATHER!

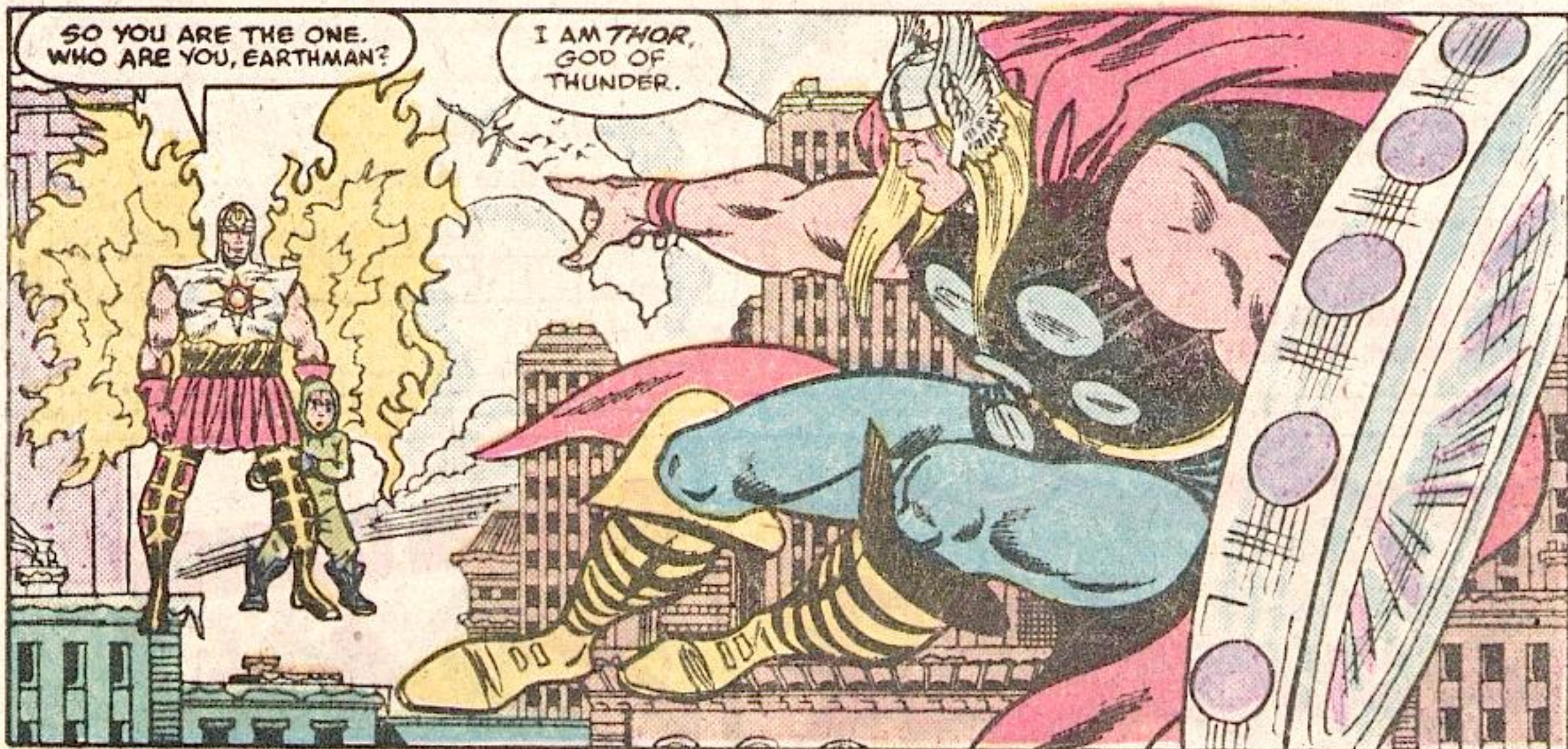


I BEHOLD THE
APPROACH OF A
FLYING FIGURE. IT
IS NOT THE SURFER
AS I SUSPECTED.

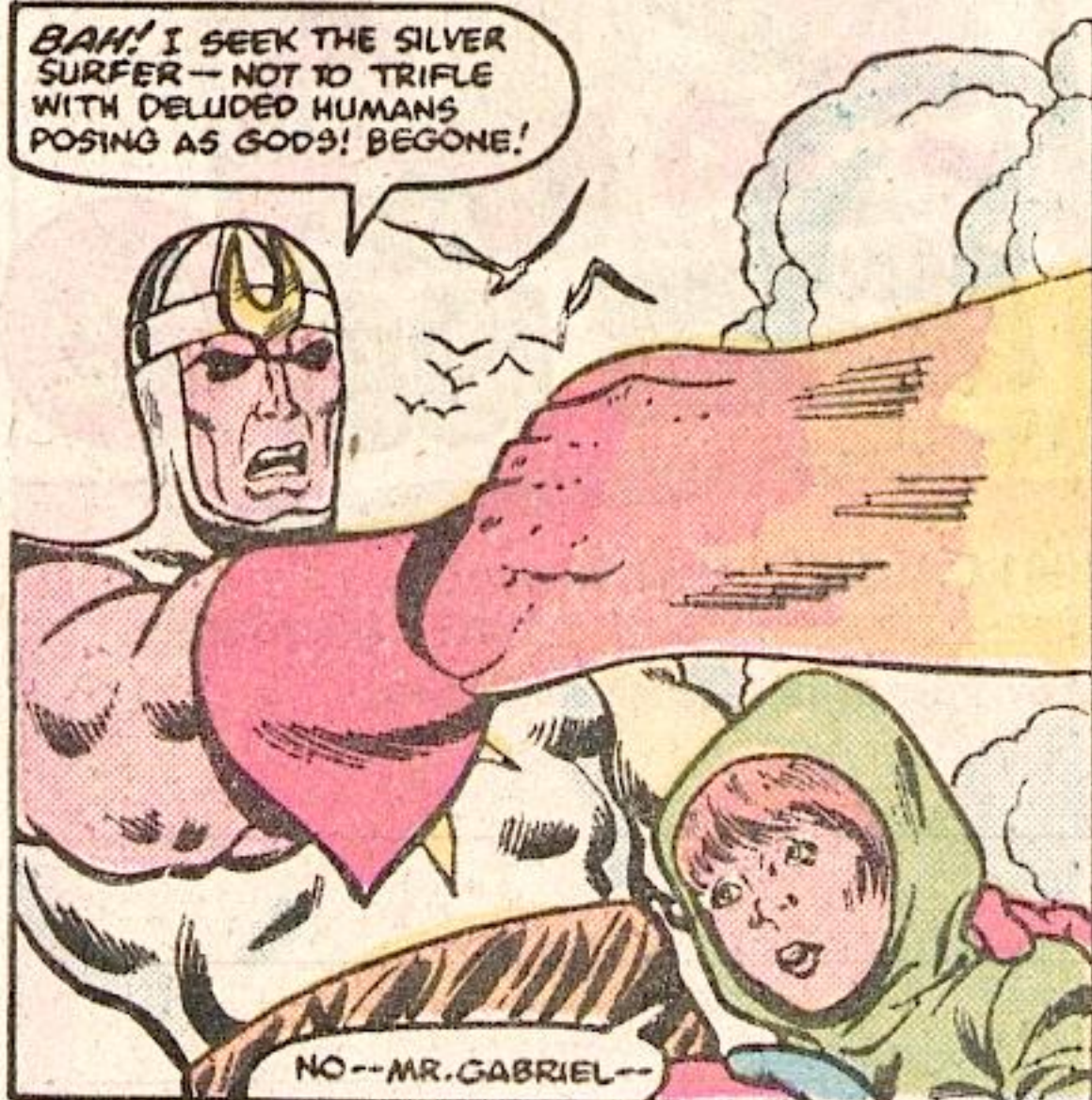


SO YOU ARE THE ONE.
WHO ARE YOU, EARTHMAN?

I AM THOR,
GOD OF
THUNDER.



BAH! I SEEK THE SILVER
SURFER-- NOT TO TRIFLE
WITH DELUDED HUMANS
POSING AS GODS! BEGONE!



I'VE HEARD OF HIM.
HE'S A SUPER HERO!
ONE OF THE STRONGEST!



WITH BUT A SINGLE CONCENTRATED BLAST OF AIR I HAVE DISPOSED OF THE SELF-STYLED GOD OF THUNDER!

HOWEVER, FLOORING THE ENRAGED ASSGARDIAN AND KEEPING HIM THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS...

'TWOULD SEEM I HAVE FOUND THE STORM-BRINGER WHO ENDANGERED THE CITY!

I HAD BEST PROCEED WITH CAUTION THAT I MAY RESCUE HIS YOUNG HOSTAGE!

OH, NO! MR. AIR-WALKER'S BEEN HIT!

IT WAS ENOUGH TO STAGGER HIM! HE HAS LOST CONTROL OF THE LAD!

FEAR NOT, YOUNG ONE--

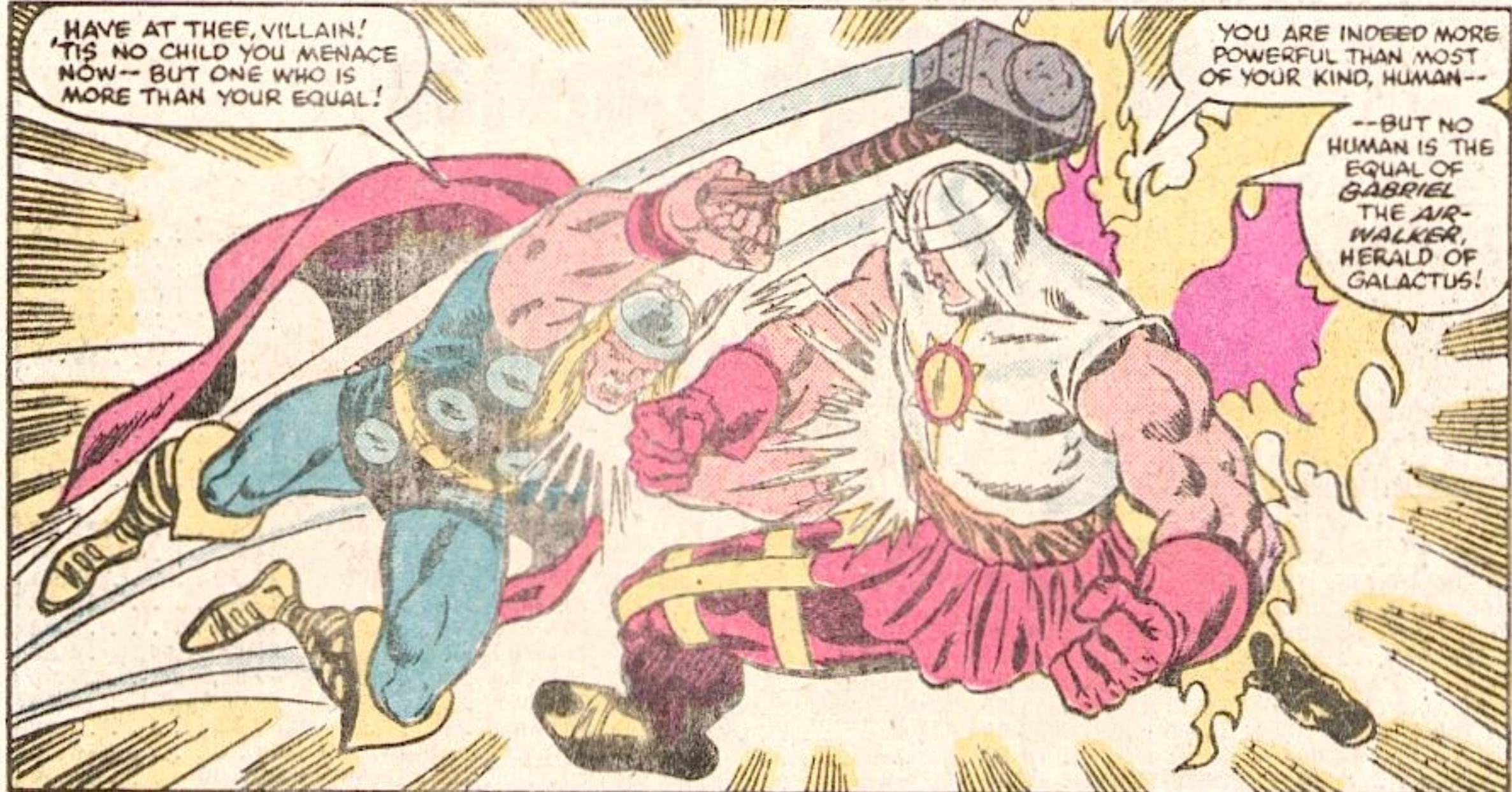
-- THOR SHALL SEE YOU COME TO NO HARM!

YOU SHALL BE SAFE HERE. REMAIN UNTIL I SUBDUDE THE AIR-WALKER AND CAN RETURN THEE TO THY HOME.

THE BOY MUST BE CONFUSED! HE DOES NOT SEEM TO REALIZE THE DANGER!

GABRIEL HATH RECOVERED FROM MY BLOW--!

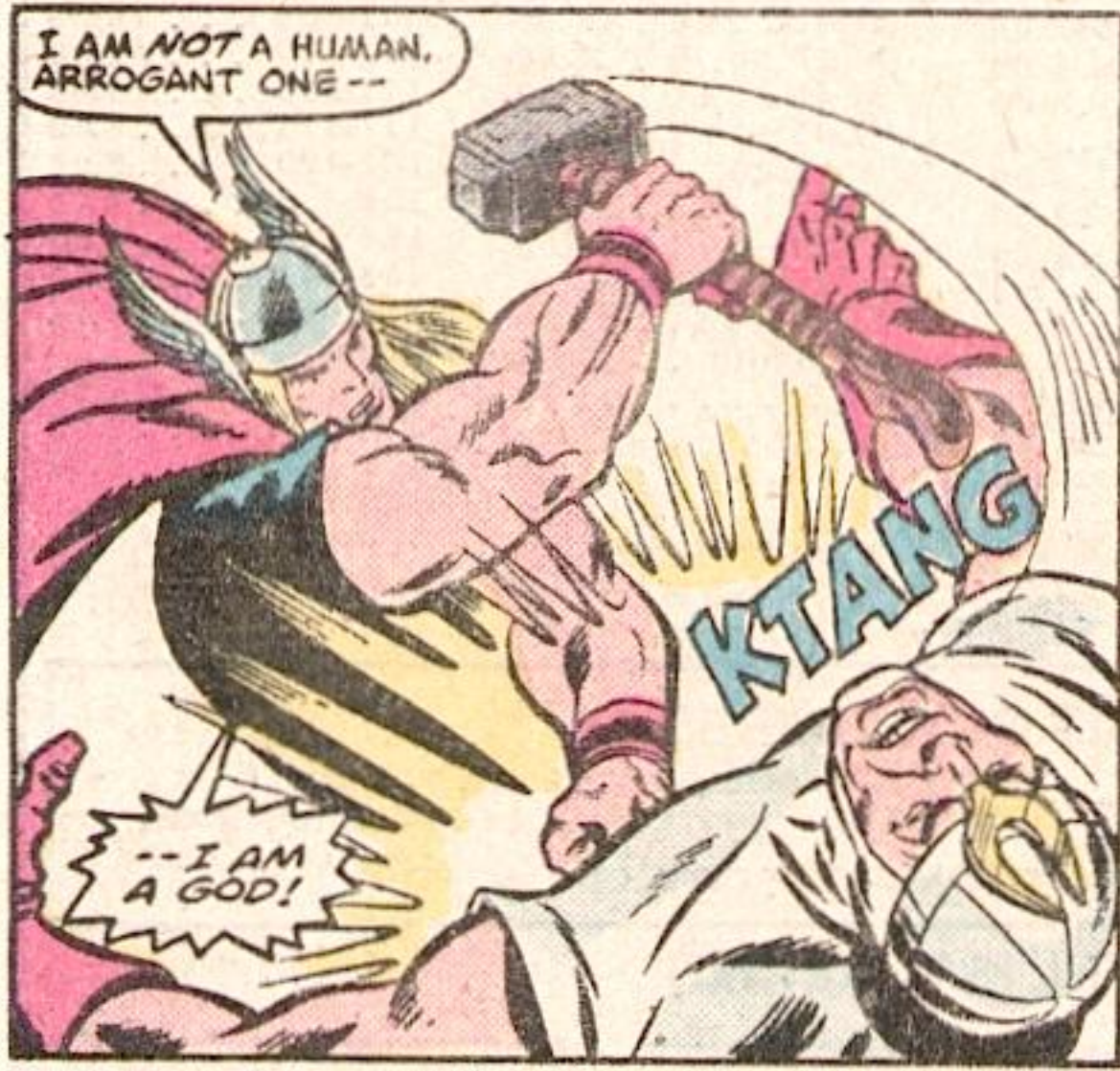
LET ME GO! GABRIEL IS MY FRIEND!



HAVE AT THEE, VILLAIN!
'TIS NO CHILD YOU MENACE
NOW-- BUT ONE WHO IS
MORE THAN YOUR EQUAL!

YOU ARE INDEED MORE
POWERFUL THAN MOST
OF YOUR KIND, HUMAN--

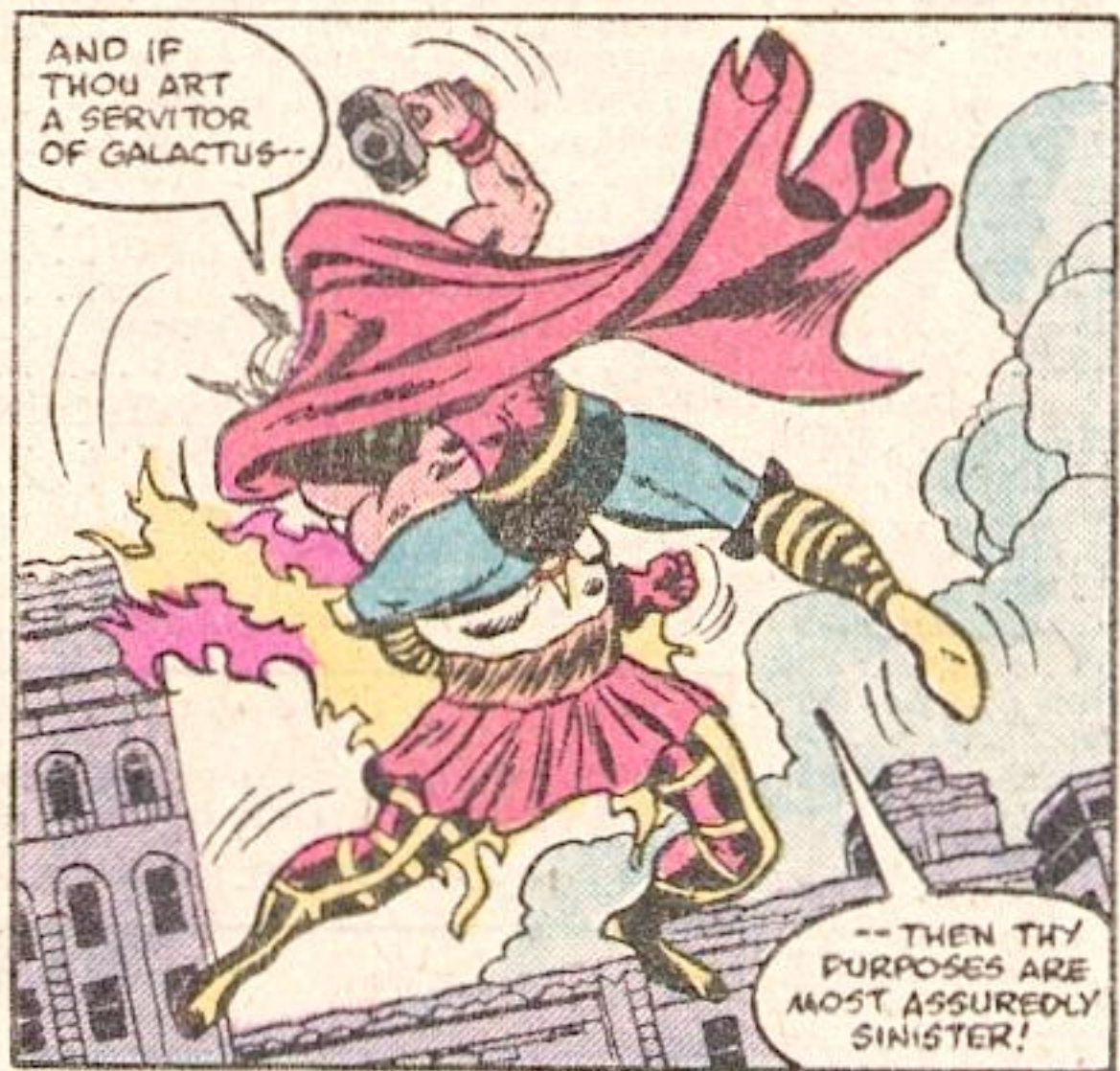
--BUT NO
HUMAN IS THE
EQUAL OF
GABRIEL
THE AIR-
WALKER,
HERALD OF
GALACTUS!



I AM NOT A HUMAN,
ARROGANT ONE --

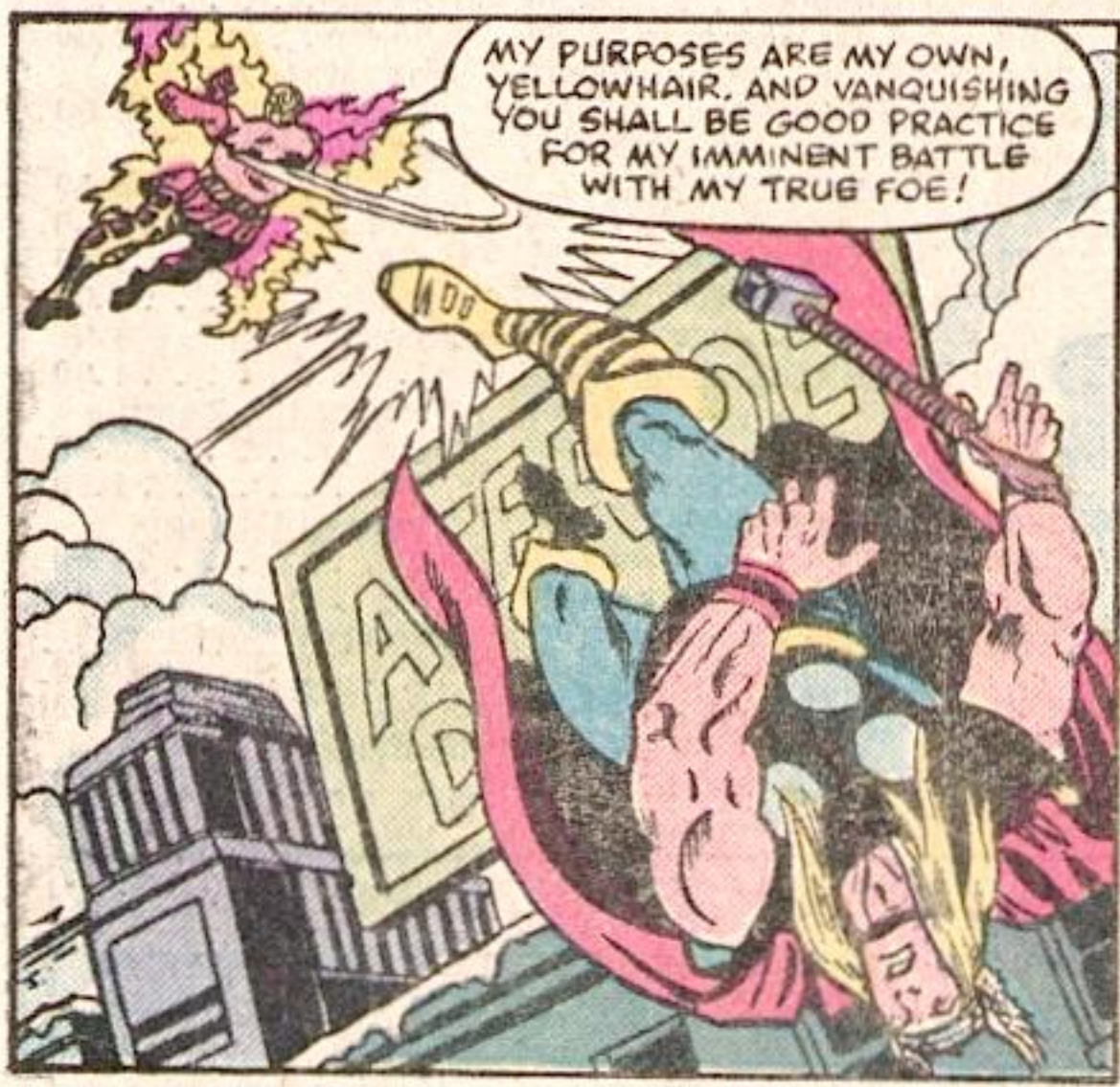
KTANG

--I AM
A GOD!

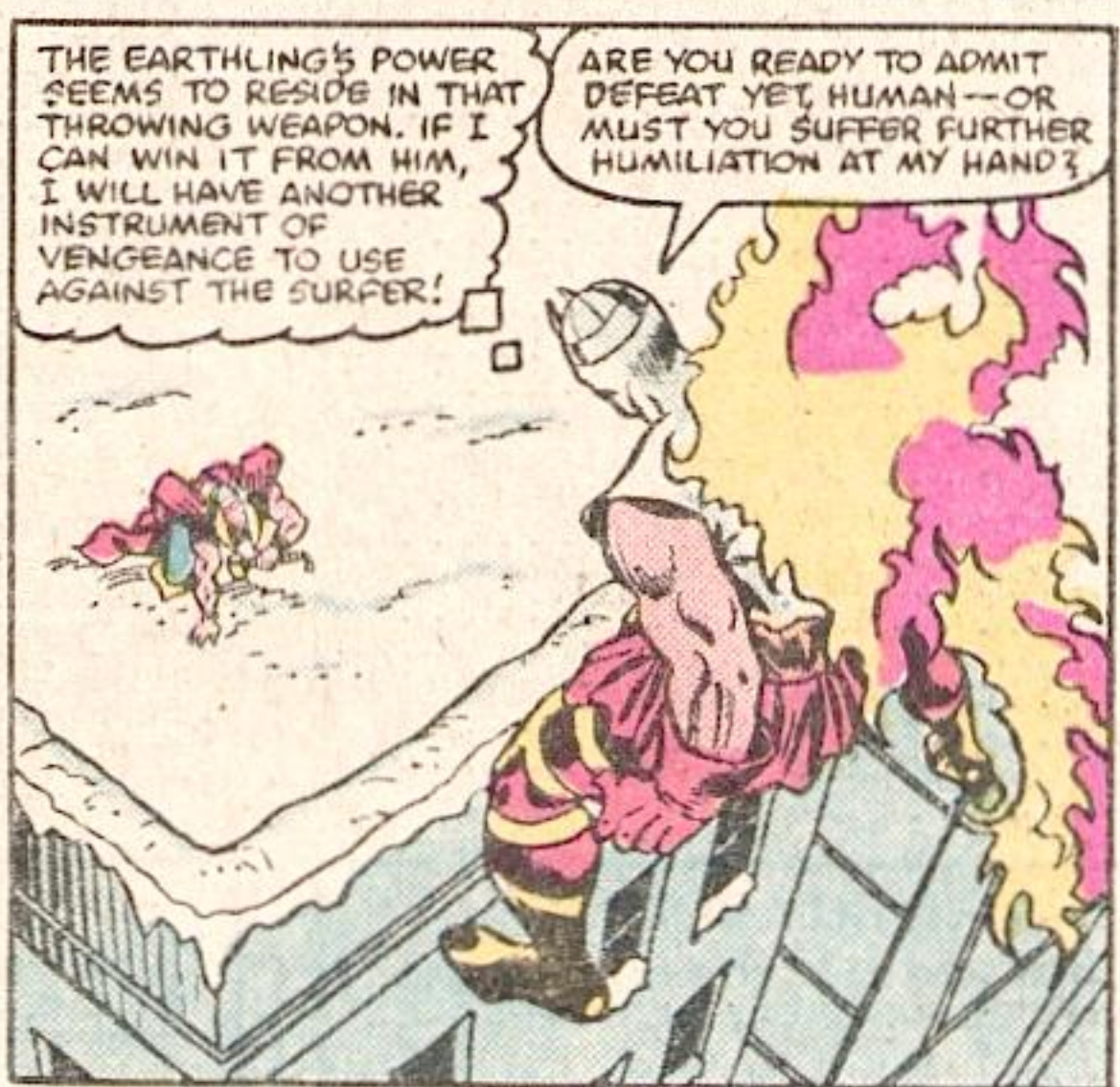


AND IF
THOU ART
A SERVITOR
OF GALACTUS--

-- THEN THY
PURPOSES ARE
MOST ASSUREDLY
SINISTER!

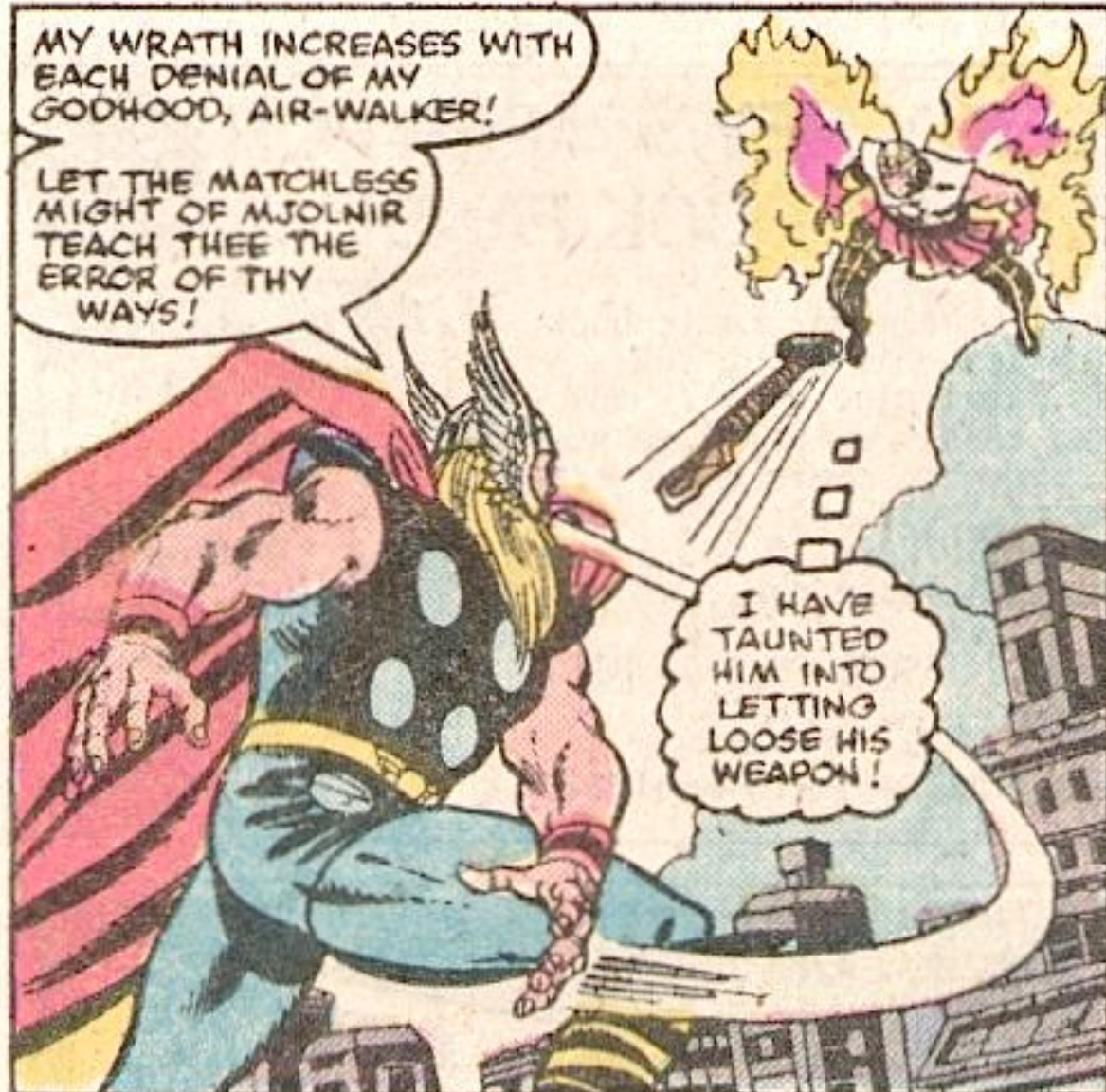


MY PURPOSES ARE MY OWN,
YELLOWHAIR. AND VANQUISHING
YOU SHALL BE GOOD PRACTICE
FOR MY IMMINENT BATTLE
WITH MY TRUE FOE!



THE EARTHLING'S POWER
SEEMS TO RESIDE IN THAT
THROWING WEAPON. IF I
CAN WIN IT FROM HIM,
I WILL HAVE ANOTHER
INSTRUMENT OF
VENGEANCE TO USE
AGAINST THE SURFER!

ARE YOU READY TO ADMIT
DEFEAT YET, HUMAN--OR
MUST YOU SUFFER FURTHER
HUMILIATION AT MY HAND?



MY WRATH INCREASES WITH EACH DENIAL OF MY GODHOOD, AIR-WALKER!

LET THE MATCHLESS MIGHT OF MJOLNIR TEACH THEE THE ERROR OF THY WAYS!

I HAVE TAUNTED HIM INTO LETTING LOOSE HIS WEAPON!



HA! NOW IT IS I WHO HOLD THE HAMMER!

WHAT--?

THOON



GABRIEL HATH CAUGHT MY HAMMER??? BUT HOW--? THE ENCHANTMENT OF ALL-FATHER ODIN DECREES--

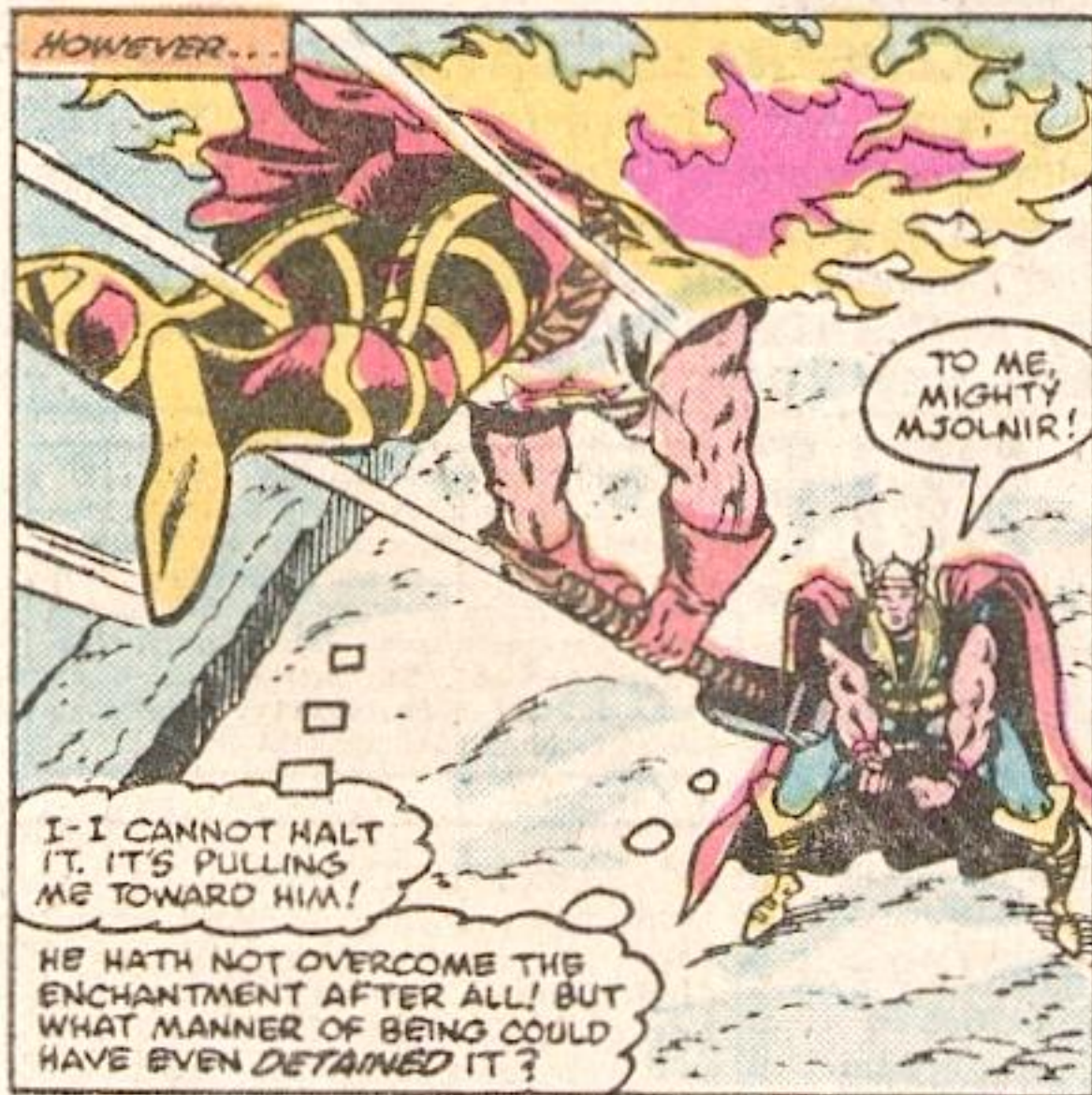
-- NO LIVING BEING CAN LIFT MJOLNIR SAVE THOR! NOT EVEN GALACTUS' POWER CAN ALTER THAT!



THE HAMMER QUAKES IN MY GRASP LIKE IT WERE ALIVE! SOMETHING MUST COMPEL IT TO RETURN TO MY FOE'S HAND!



BUT BY GALACTUS' HUNGER, I SHALL PREVENT IT! I... SHALL... NOT... LET... GO!



HOWEVER...

TO ME, MIGHTY MJOLNIR!

I-I CANNOT HALT IT. IT'S PULLING ME TOWARD HIM!

HE HATH NOT OVERCOME THE ENCHANTMENT AFTER ALL! BUT WHAT MANNER OF BEING COULD HAVE EVEN DETAINED IT?



THOUGH I COULD NOT THWART YOUR HAMMER'S RETURN, THOR--

--I SHALL NOW WREST IT FROM YOU BEFORE IT CAN BE THROWN AGAIN!

SO BE IT! YOU SHALL NOT FIND THOR LACKING!

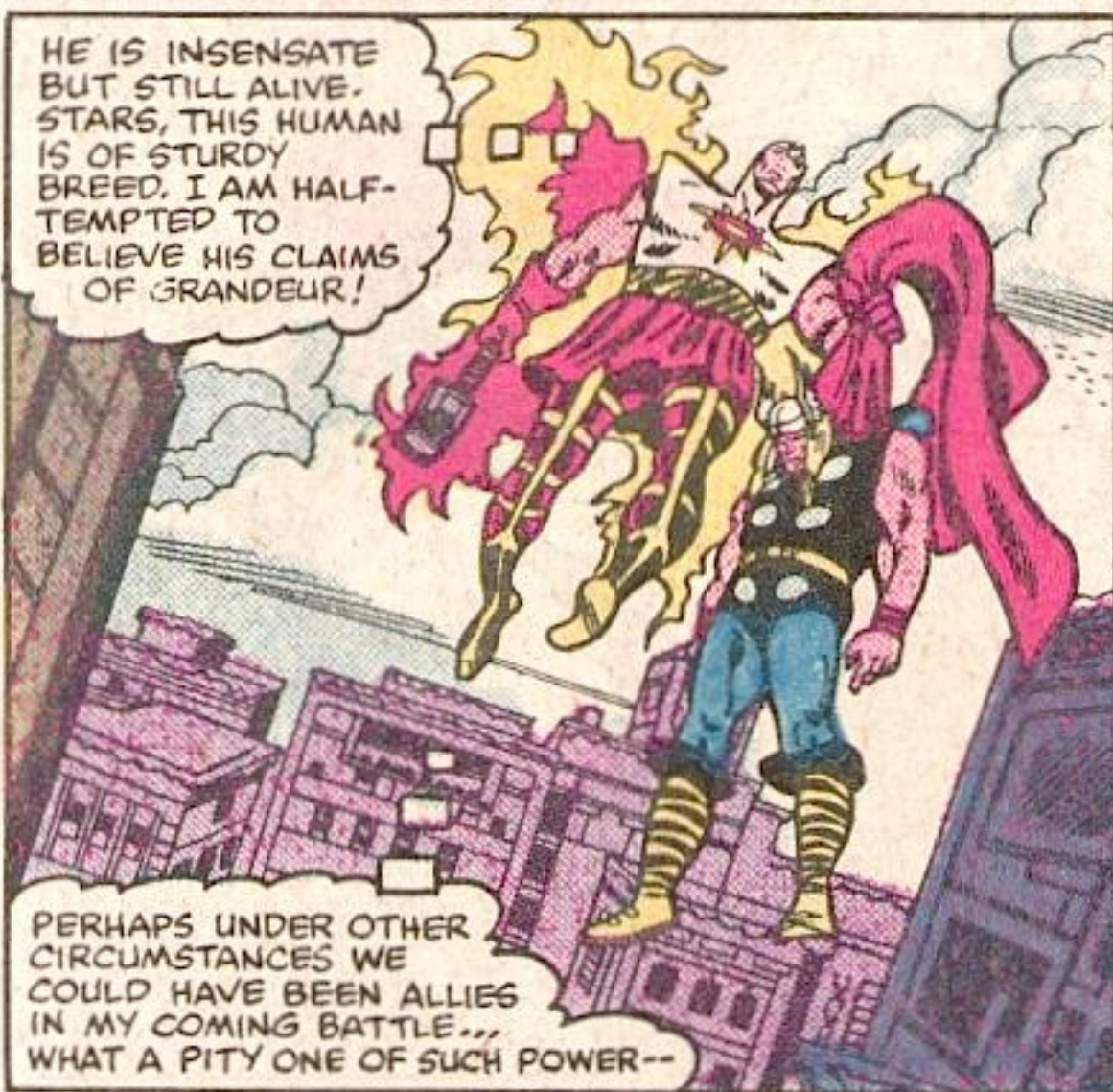


UGH! YOUR CLOAK WRAPS ABOUT MY FACE-- STEALING MY BREATH!

AND ALLOWING THE CHANCE TO STEAL YOUR HAMMER AS WELL...



...WITH WHICH I SHALL PUT AN END TO THIS CONTEST BY DEFEATING YOU.



HE IS INSENSATE BUT STILL ALIVE. STARS, THIS HUMAN IS OF STURDY BREED. I AM HALF-TEMPTED TO BELIEVE HIS CLAIMS OF GRANDEUR!

PERHAPS UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES WE COULD HAVE BEEN ALLIES IN MY COMING BATTLE... WHAT A PITY ONE OF SUCH POWER--



--MUST DIE! AND WITH A SENSE OF SUPREME IRONY-- I'LL USE HIS OWN WEAPON TO SLAY HIM.

FAREWELL, EARTHLING!



AT THAT INSTANT, A SMALL VOICE STRAINS TO BE HEARD BY THE VICTORIOUS AIR-WALKER...

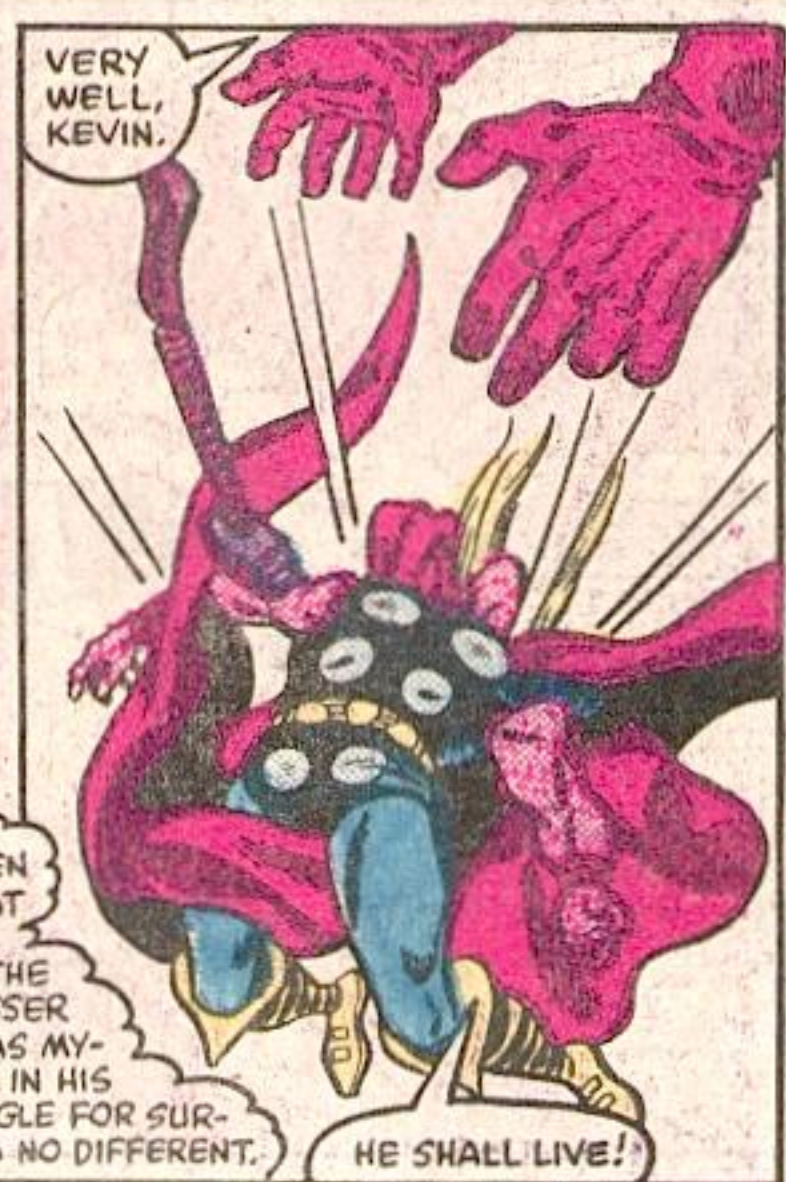
MR. GABRIEL! IT'S ME-- KEVIN! DON'T DO IT!

DON'T HURT HIM! ONLY BAD ALIENS KILL PEOPLE!



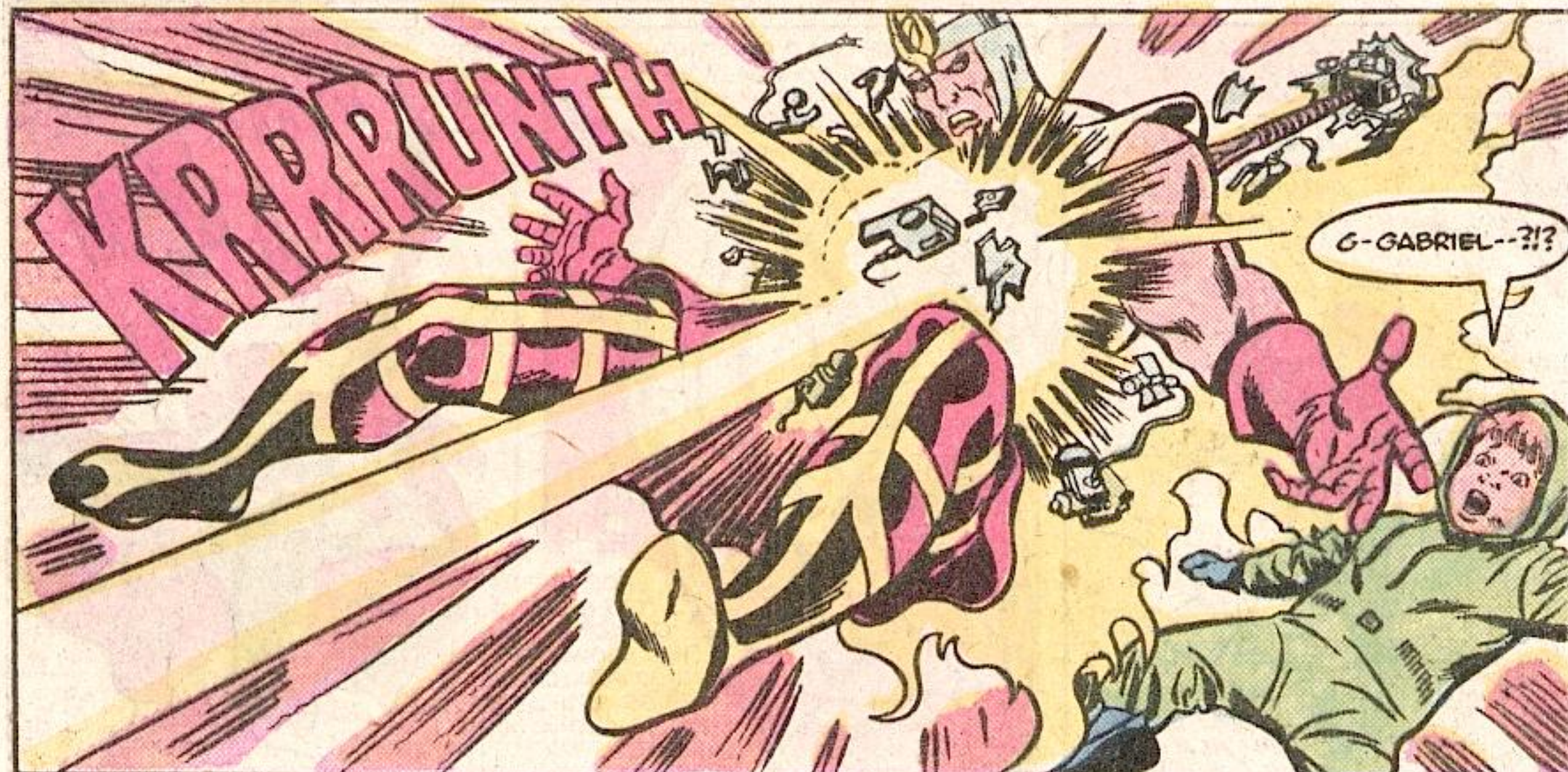
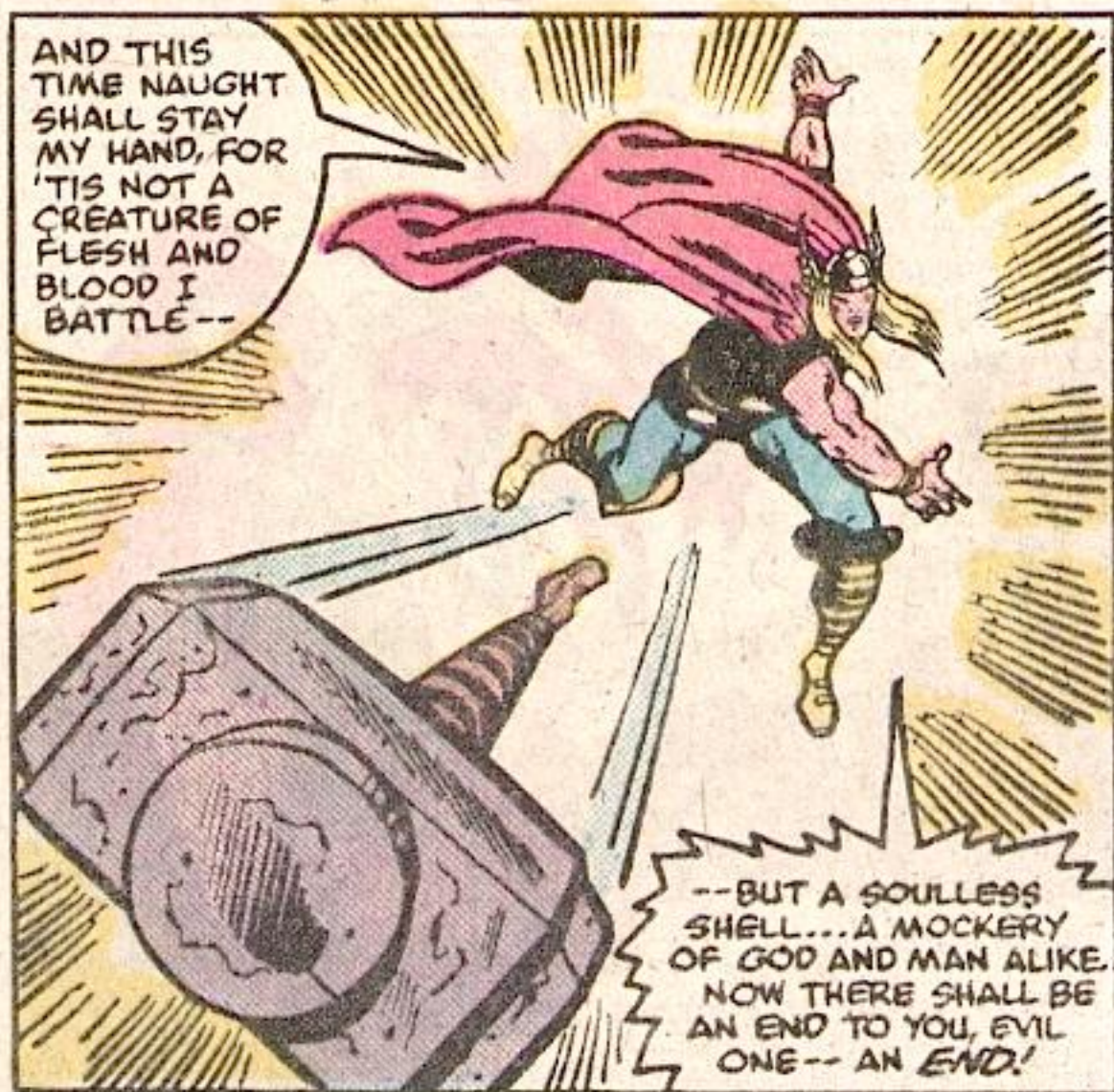
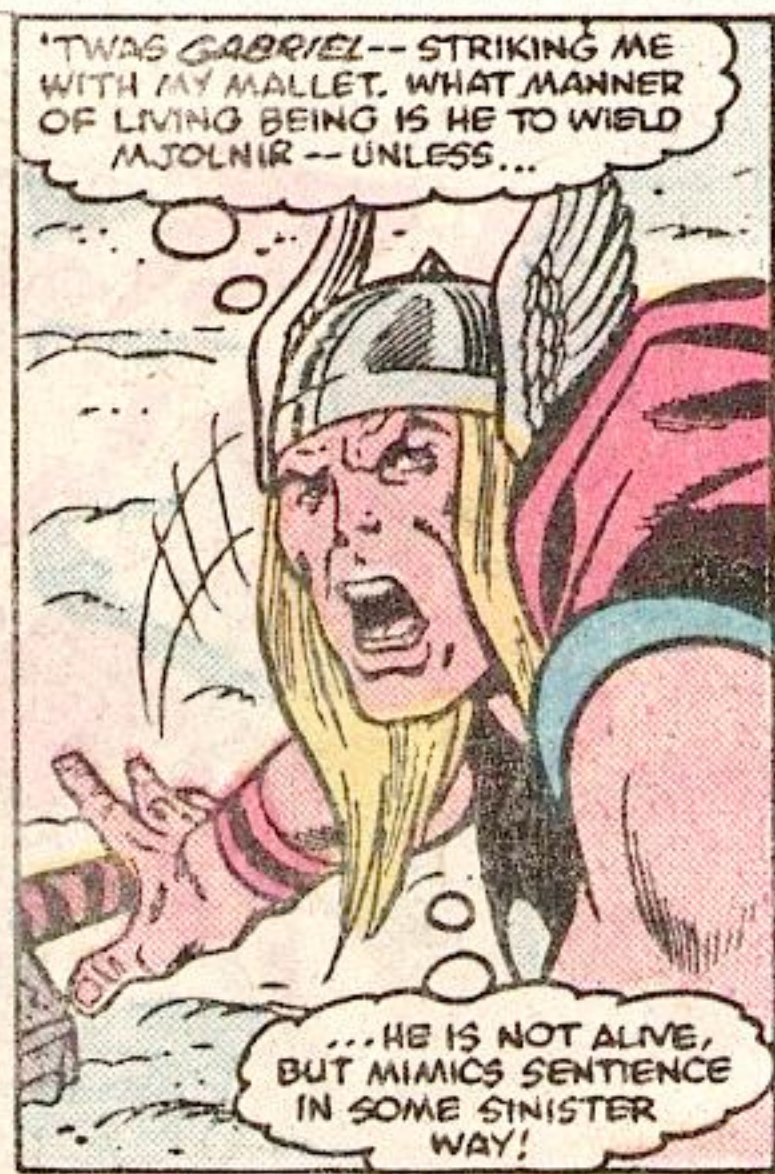
WHAT-- THE CHILD, PLEADING FOR THE HUMAN'S LIFE. HOW EASY TO TURN AND IGNORE HIS PITIABLE CRIES-- AND YET I MUST NOT...

...FOR EVEN THE GREAT GALACTUS HAS KNOWN THE NEED FOR LESSER BEINGS SUCH AS MYSELF TO AID HIM IN HIS AWESOME STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL. SURELY, I AM NO DIFFERENT.



VERY WELL, KEVIN.

HE SHALL LIVE!

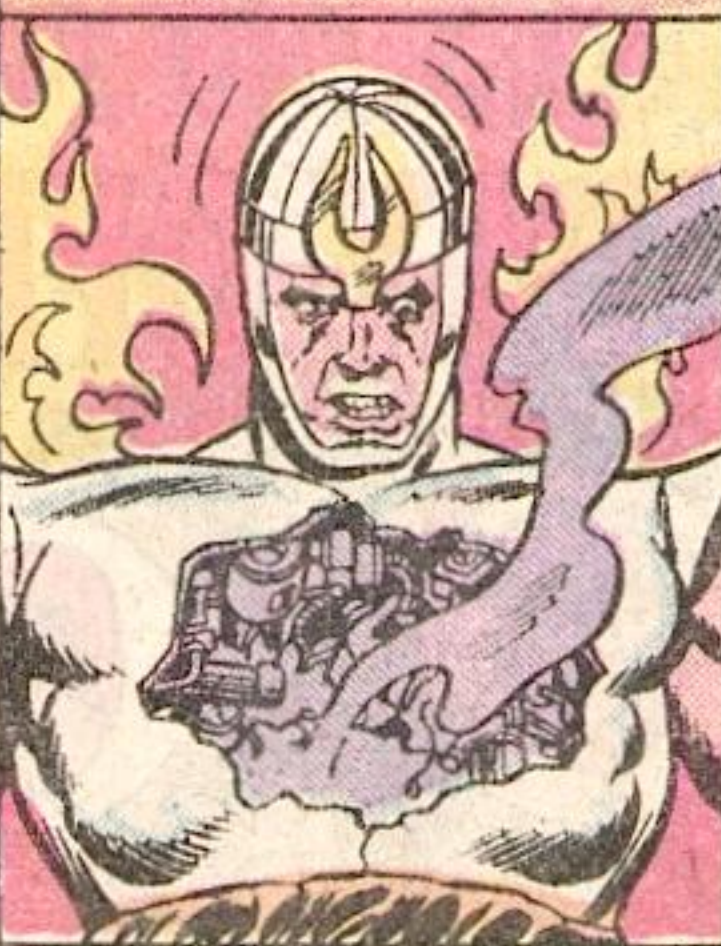


I WAS NOT DECEIVED. THE AIR-WALKER WAS BUT AN UNLIVING MACHINE IN THE GUISE OF A MAN!



IT SHALL BE SIMPLE TO POSITION MYSELF TO CATCH THE CHILD.

GABRIEL STARES WITH DISBELIEF AT THE GAPING HOLE IN HIS CHEST AS HIS FIRE-CLOAK BEGINS TO FLICKER...



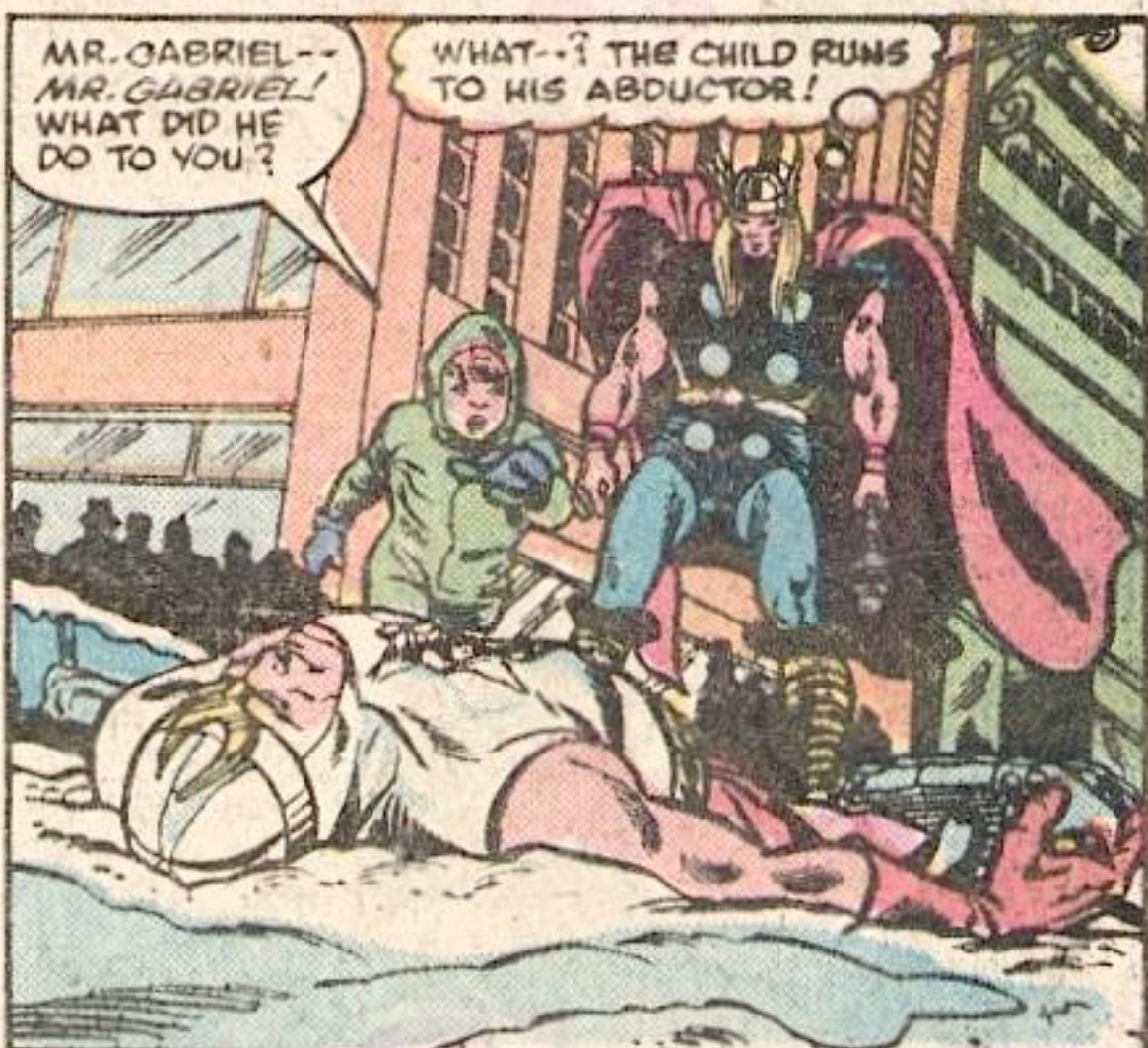
THEN OBLIVION CLAIMS HIM.



FEAR NOT, SMALL ONE. I HAVE THEE ONCE AGAIN!



MR. GABRIEL-- MR. GABRIEL! WHAT DID HE DO TO YOU?



WHAT--? THE CHILD RUNS TO HIS ABDUCTOR!

HE'S DEAD! JUST LIKE DADDY.

WHY DID YOU HAVE TO KILL HIM, THOR? HE WASN'T A BAD ALIEN.



HE WAS MY FRIEND.

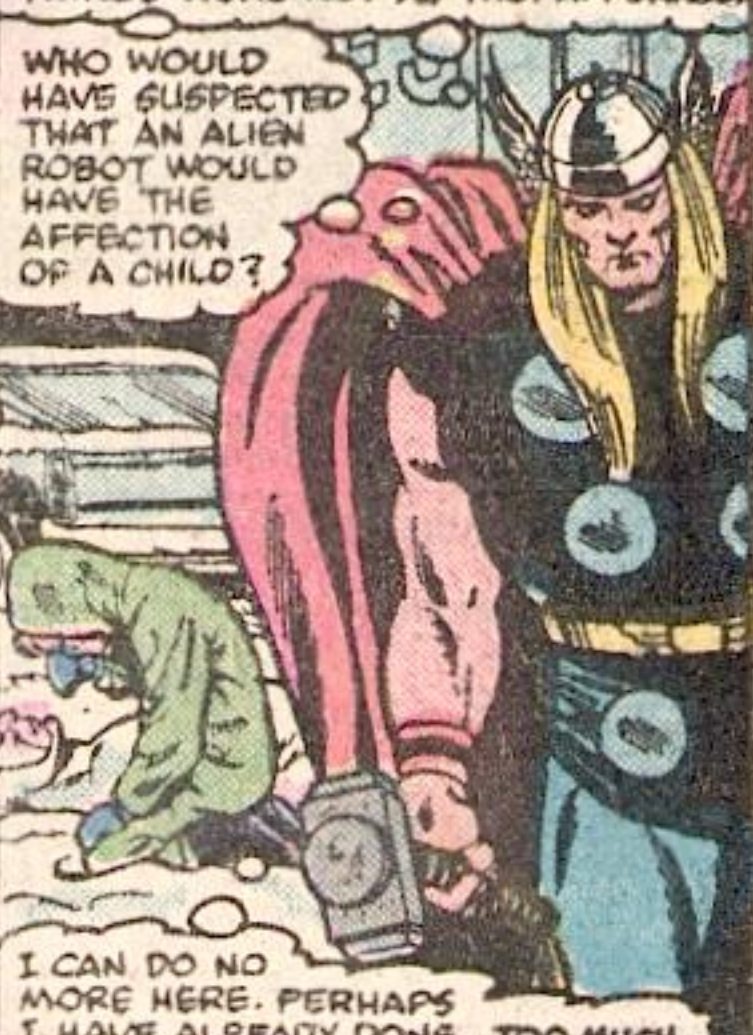
NOW HE'S DEAD AND YOU KILLED HIM! I HATE YOU, THOR!



GET AWAY FROM ME!

'TWOULD SEEM THAT ONCE AGAIN THINGS WERE NOT AS THEY APPEARED.

WHO WOULD HAVE SUSPECTED THAT AN ALIEN ROBOT WOULD HAVE THE AFFECTION OF A CHILD?



I CAN DO NO MORE HERE. PERHAPS I HAVE ALREADY DONE... TOO MUCH.

TO AVENGE A FALLEN FRIEND!

THE SORCERESS AND THE SACRIFICE!

DEEP WITHIN THE CAVERN-KINGDOM OF MORNHELM, ITS EVIL RULER VIEWS A FARAWAY SCENE IN ASGARD. SHE SMILES, PLEASED BY WHAT IS SEEN... WEARING THE LOOK OF A PREDATOR SECONDS FROM DEVOURING ITS PREY.

THERE, QUEEN KARNILLA, MY SPELLS HAVE FOCUSED ON THY BELOVED BALDER, WANDERING AMIDST A MARKETPLACE... AS WE INTENDED.

AYE, MAGG, MY "BELOVED" BALDER -- WHO FOR YEARS SPURNED MINE OFFERINGS OF LOVE BECAUSE HE BELIEVES I AM NOT VIRTUOUS ENOUGH TO BE HIS.

WHEN LAST WE MET, I DID ALMOST SLAY HIM FOR HIS CALLOUS REJECTION, THOUGH IN THE END MY HEART WOULD NOT PERMIT IT. STILL, I SWORE THAT BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY, I WOULD YET MAKE THE BRAVE POOL MY MATE. ♀

NOW, THROUGH OUR SORCEROUS INTERFERENCE, BALDER WILL MAKE AN ACQUAINTANCE... ONE WHICH SHALL INSURE THE SUCCESS OF MY PLAN TO ENSNARE HIM.

MARK
GRUENWALD
& RALPH MACCHIO
WRITERS

KEITH & CHIC
POLLARD & STONE
ARTISTS

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GEORGE ROUSSOS, COLORIST

JIM SALICRUP, EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-
CHIEF

*LAST ISSUE.-- J. S.



WITH THE SIMPLEST OF SPELLS-- LET THE TRAP BE SPRUNG.



HOW STRANGE... THOUGH I AM STOCKED FULL OF PRODUCE, I FELT ALMOST COMPELLED TO COME TO THE MARKET THIS DAY.



OH! THE HANDLE ON MY BASKET HAS BROKEN. MY PARDON, SIR.



I AM **BALDER**. ALLOW ME TO AID THEE, MILADY--?



NANNA.

ONE SO YOUNG AND LOVELY SHOULD NEER BE SLAVE TO SUCH CHORES.



THOU SPEAK KINDLY. WILL THOU WALK WITH ME AWHILE... BALDER?

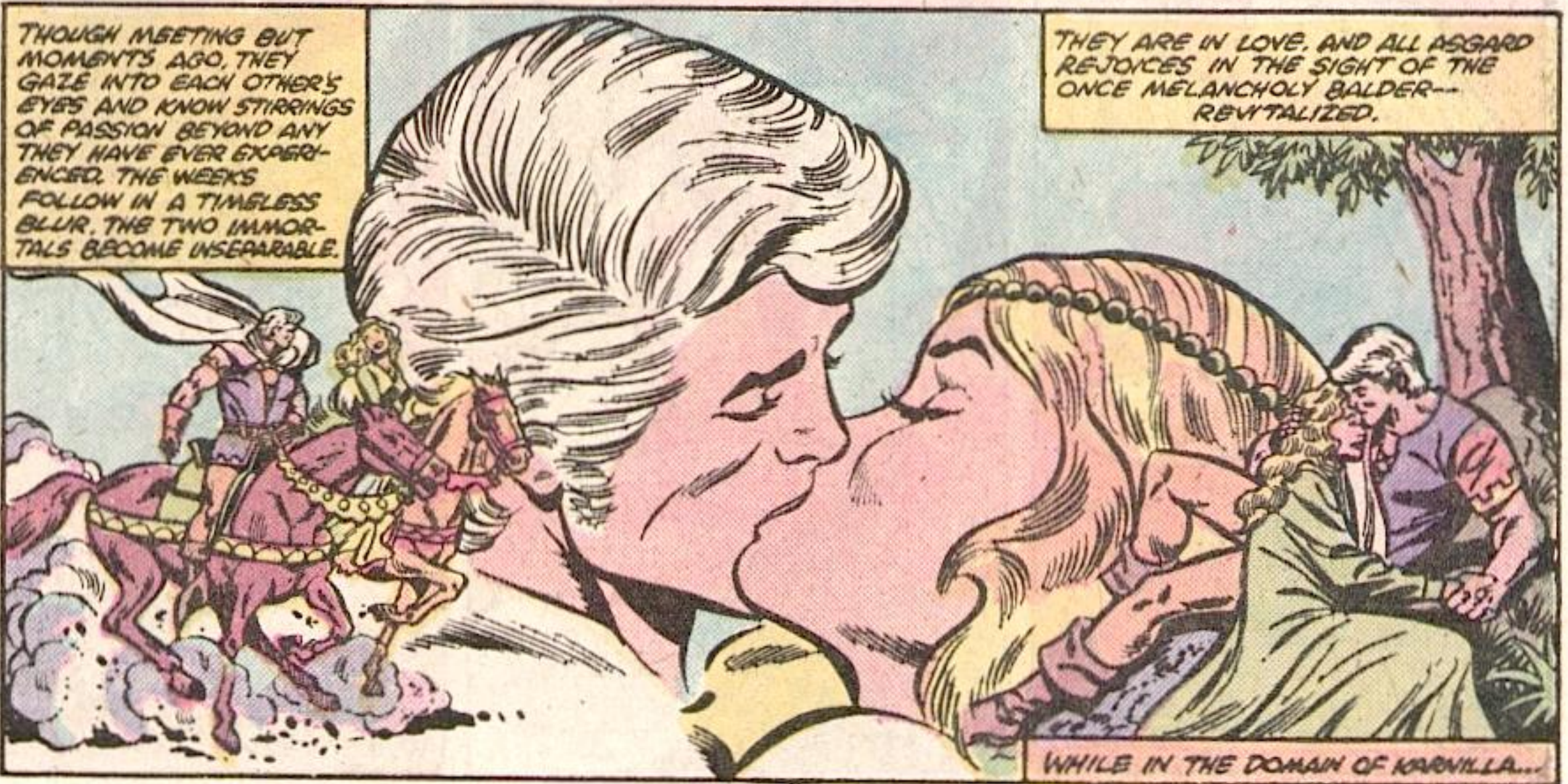
'TWOULD TAKE A ROYAL DECREE TO PREVENT IT, MILADY.

AND A SHORT WHILE AFTER LEAVING THE CROWDED MARKETPLACE...



THIS IS MY DWELLING. MAY I PRESUME 'PON THEE TO JOIN ME INSIDE FOR A MEAL?

I WOULD BE HONORED, FAIR ONE.



THOUGH MEETING BUT MOMENTS AGO, THEY GAZE INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES AND KNOW STIRRINGS OF PASSION BEYOND ANY THEY HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED. THE WEEKS FOLLOW IN A TIMELESS BLUR. THE TWO IMMORTALS BECOME INSEPARABLE.

THEY ARE IN LOVE. AND ALL ASGARD REJOICES IN THE SIGHT OF THE ONCE MELANCHOLY BALDER-- REVITALIZED.

WHILE IN THE DOMAIN OF KARNILLA...

ALL GOES AS EXPECTED, MY QUEEN. BALDER'S "CHANCE" MEETING WITH NANNA-- WHICH WE ARRANGED, DID SET THE STAGE FOR HIS GROWING INFATUATION WITH HER. HE TRULY CARES FOR HER NOW, AS HE DOES FOR NO OTHER WOMAN.

THUS, I MAY USE THOSE DEEP FEELINGS TO MY ADVANTAGE. THOUGH BALDER IS BEYOND MY WOOING... HE IS **NOT** BEYOND MY WINNING.

NOW BY THE POWER OF NORNHELM WHICH IS MINE TO COMMAND... LET A MYSTIC SPELL OF TRANSFERENCE CARRY THEM TO THIS LAND!

BALDER! WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHERE ARE WE? INSTANTS AGO, WE STOOD TALKING IN ASGARD... NOW-- NOW WE ARE HERE!?

HEE HEE HEEEEE!
AYE, KARNILLA.

STAND FAST, MILADY. THIS HELLISH TERRAIN HATH AN EERIE FAMILIARITY TO ME. I HAVE JOURNEYED HERE BEFORE.

THIS IS NORNHELM, KINGDOM OF THE SORCESS-- KARNILLA! IT MUST HAVE BEEN THROUGH HER MAGICKS WE WERE BROUGHT HERE.

THE NORN QUEEN!

BUT WHY, MY BELOVED?

I KNOW NOT, NOR SHALL WE STAY TO SEEK HER DEVIOUS MOTIVES. COME...

...WE SHALL RETURN TO ASGARD THROUGH THE FOREST OF THORNS, AND REPORT THIS TO ALMIGHTY ODIN.

OH! BALDER-- I HAVE FALLEN IN A BOG! HELP ME, BELOVED!



EH? NANNA—
SINKING
IN THE
SWAMP!



DON'T STRUGGLE, MY LOVE. 'TWILL
BUT DRAG THEE DOWN MORE
QUICKLY. I HAVE THEE NOW.



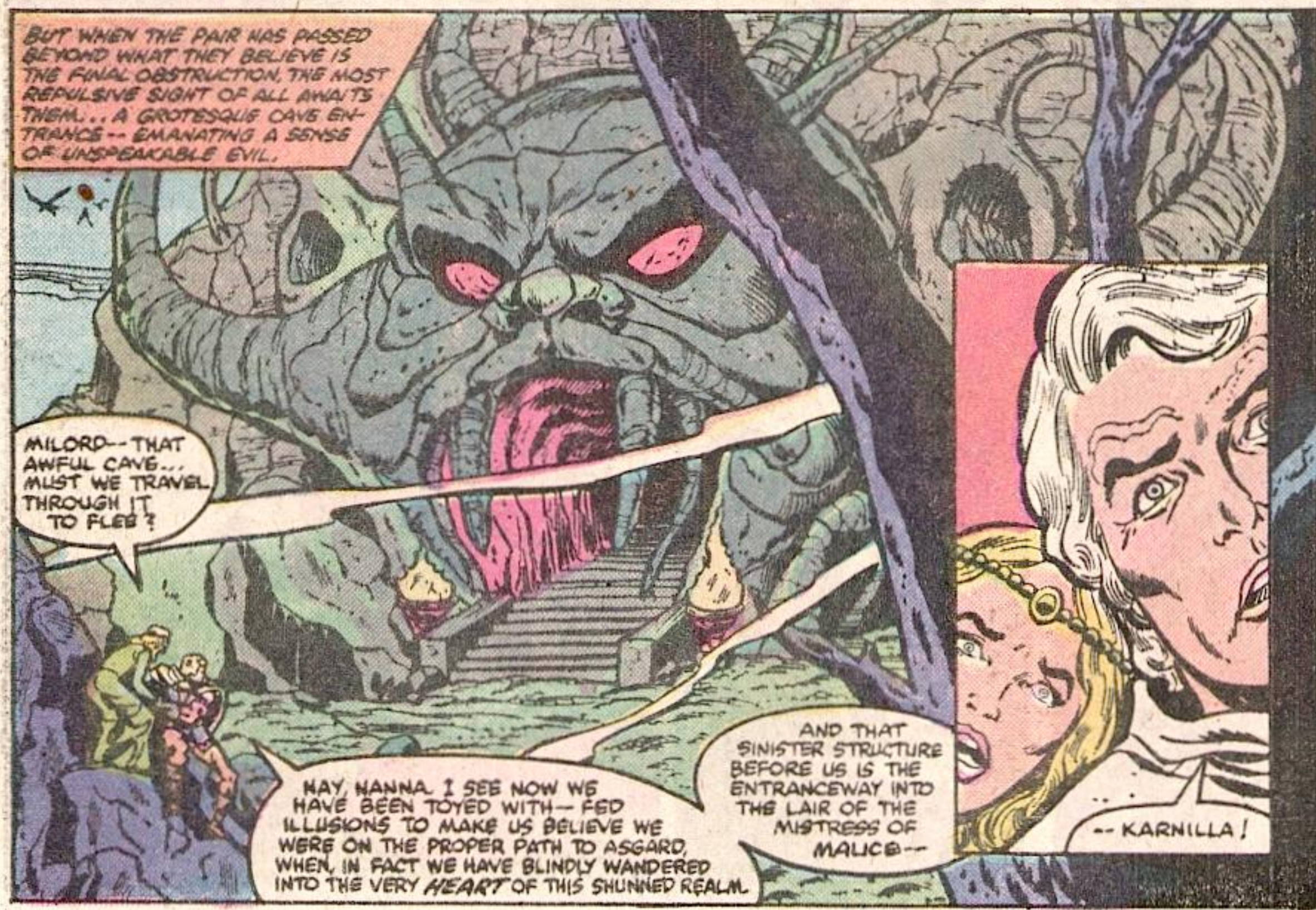
BALDER... WILL WE E'ER AGAIN SEE
THE SPIRES OF ASGARD, OR WILL WE
DIE ON THIS BLEAK LANDSCAPE
WITHOUT E'EN KNOWING WHY?

NAY, MILADY. WE SHALL SURVIVE.
I SWEAR THIS TO THEE.



FOR WHAT SEEMS
LIKE HOURS, THEY
TRAVERSE THE
FOREBODING NORN-
HELM, SKIRTING ITS
PERILS—DRIVEN BY
AN UNSWERVING
URGE TO RETURN
HOME.

TAKE HEART, NANNA. JUST
AHEAD, 'ROUND THIS ROCKY
OUTCROPPING LIES THE
OUTER LIMITS OF NORNHELM.
I AM CERTAIN WE ARE BUT
MOMENTS FROM FREEDOM.



BUT WHEN THE PAIR HAS PASSED
BEYOND WHAT THEY BELIEVE IS
THE FINAL OBSTRUCTION, THE MOST
REPULSIVE SIGHT OF ALL AWAITS
THEM... A GROTESQUE CAVE EN-
TRANCE-- EMANATING A SENSE
OF UNSPEAKABLE EVIL.

MILORD-- THAT
AWFUL CAVE...
MUST WE TRAVEL
THROUGH IT
TO FLEE?

NAY, NANNA. I SEE NOW WE
HAVE BEEN TOYED WITH— FED
ILLUSIONS TO MAKE US BELIEVE WE
WERE ON THE PROPER PATH TO ASGARD,
WHEN, IN FACT WE HAVE BLINDLY WANDERED
INTO THE VERY HEART OF THIS SHUNNED REALM.

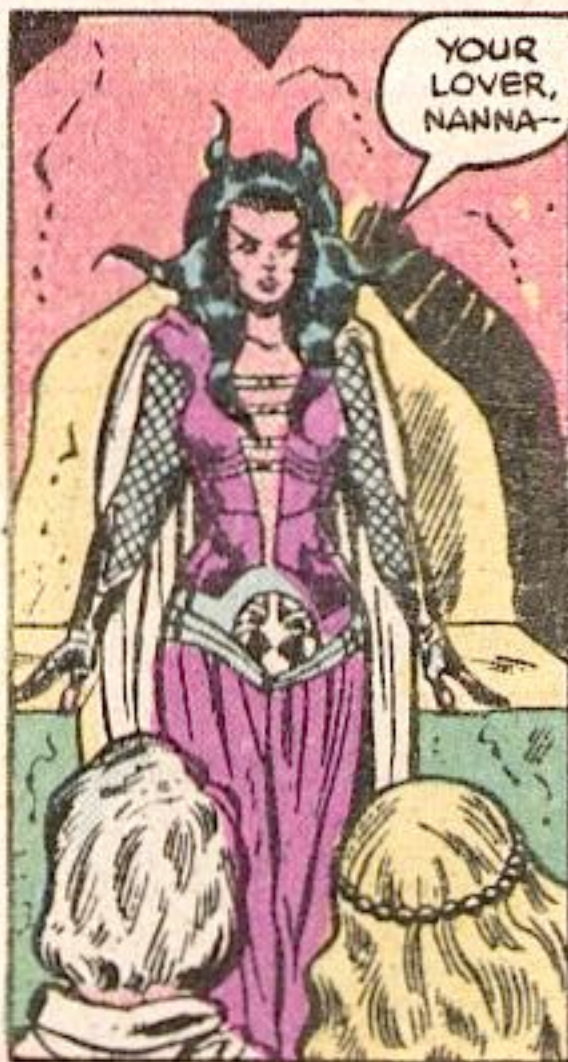
AND THAT
SINISTER STRUCTURE
BEFORE US IS THE
ENTRANCEWAY INTO
THE LAIR OF THE
MISTRESS OF
MALICE--

-- KARNILLA!

KARNILLA...WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS ABDUCTION? HAVE YOU NOT YET UNDERSTOOD OUR TIME TOGETHER IS OVER? WHATE'ER FEELINGS I ONCE HAD FOR THEE ARE NO MORE. THERE IS NOTHING BETWEEN US ANY LONGER.



YOUR LOVER, NANNA--



-- WHO IS NOW MY PRISONER TO PREVENT ANY PREMATURE DEPARTURE.



CALM THYSELF, CHILD. YOUR SAFETY AND FREEDOM WILL BE QUICKLY ASSURED... WHEN BALDER HAS CHOSEN TO BECOME MY HUSBAND.



NAY, KARNILLA! NEVER WILL I CONSENT TO BE THY BRIDEGROOM. I WOULD SOONER SPEND ETERNITY IN A SERPENT'S PIT.



VERY WELL, THEN, NANNA WILL DIE.

I FEAR NOT DEATH. GLADLY WILL I SACRIFICE MYSELF THAT THOU NOT BE BOUND TO THE NORN QUEEN.



I...I CANNOT. MY LOVE FOR THEE IS TOO GREAT. ALL THAT I ASK IN RETURN FOR MY CONSENT, KARNILLA, IS THAT NANNA BE RETURNED TO ASGARD SAFE...

...AND AT NO TIME THENCEFORTH SHALL HARM BEFALL HER BECAUSE OF THEE.

AGREED. I DO SWEAR, BALDER... IF IN ANY MANNER I BRING ABOUT YOUR BELOVED'S INJURY OR DEATH-- OUR MARRIAGE IS DISSOLVED.



THEN, WITH THAT PROMISE, WITCH QUEEN... I AM THINE.

AYE, BRAVE ONE. THOU ART MINE AT LONG LAST. NOW AND FOREVERMORE--



--THOU ART MINE!

NEXT THE WEDDING OF BALDER!