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THE MIGHTY



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!**

BLAKE'S MENAGERIE

BEYOND INFINITY, AT THE FAR SPAN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE CALLED BIFROST, AND EVER GUARDED BY VALIANT HEIMDALL, THERE LIES THE SHINING REALM OF ASGARD--ETERNAL HOME OF THE GODS.

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O GOLDEN REALM, O REALM OF ECSTASY,
WHERE THE PLUMED BIRDS WHEEL
IN THE BLOOD RED NIGHT, O LOVE,
TONIGHT, TONIGHT
WE SHALL DRINK FROM FORBIDDEN FOUNTAINS.

COME WITH ME,
LET US RIDE THE BACK OF THE DRAGON,
PULL DOWN THE MOON AND THE STARS;
LET US ENTER THE INFINITE DARKNESS,
AND PARTAKE OF VIOLENCE DIVINE.
--OLD NORSE POEM

AND IN THE PRIVATE QUARTERS OF HE WHO RULES OVER ALL OTHER NORSE GODS, IT CAN BE SEEN THAT NOT EVEN ALL-FATHER ODIN IS ABOVE THE CARES AND TROUBLES OF MORTAL MEN. INDEED, IF MORTAL MAN IS IN TRUTH BORN OF THE GODS, THEN SUCH CARES AND TROUBLES BEGAN IN ASGARD AND, IF ANYTHING, ARE HERE MANIFESTED ON A FAR GREATER SCALE...



YE CAN SEE, VIZIER-- 'TIS AS I FEARED. THE TROUBLE IN THE OUTLYING REGIONS HAS BREWED YET ANOTHER CONFLICT...

TELL ME AGAIN, VIZIER-- WHY MUST ASGARD BE PLAGUED WITH ETERNAL STRIFE?

AS THOU HAST EVER TOLD ME, ALL-FATHER, 'TIS THE WAY OF LIFE. FIGHTING AND DYING IS THE ONLY WAY TO GAIN ENTRANCE TO VALHALLA--



--THE ETERNAL REWARD FOR HAVING LIVED AND DIED FOR A JUST CAUSE.

YET TWO SIDES FIGHT, VIZIER. WHO DETERMINES WHICH SIDE SERVES THE JUST CAUSE?



AS EVER, ALL-FATHER... THOU.

AYE, AS EVER YET THIS TIME THE JUDGMENT IS COMPLICATED BY FEELINGS NORMALLY BEYOND MY CONCERN...

...FOR ONE FACTION FIGHTS UNDER THE BANNER OF THEIR UNWED QUEEN...THE FAIR JOLENA.



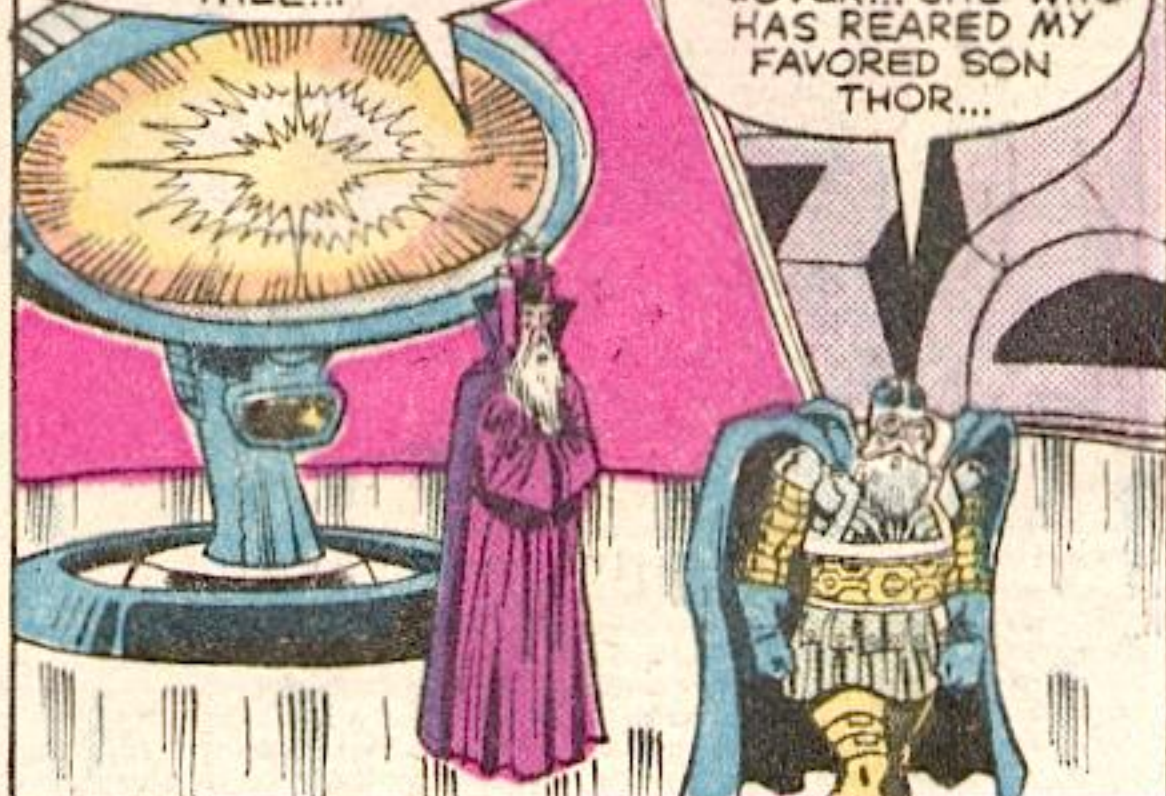
AFTER SO MANY BITTER SEASONS... SO MANY LONG YEARS... AFTER INFINITY ITSELF--

--HER BEAUTY IS UNFADED, ADORNING HER FACE AND FORM LIKE THE FIRST FRESH BUDS OF A NEVER-ENDING SPRING... AND 'TIS ENOW TO SET A GOD'S HEART AFIRE.



HOW TO MAKE *THIS* JUDGMENT, VIZIER... IN THE WINTER OF MINE HEART... IN THE FACE OF SO MANY MEMORIES... AND OF A LOVE WHICH WAS FAR TOO SHORT WHEN IT MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN... FOREVER.

IF THOU WILT EXCUSE THE INTRUSION ON THY THOUGHTS, ALL-FATHER, THE JUDGMENT NEED NOT BE MADE NOW... AND THY QUEEN AWAITS THEE...



MY QUEEN, YES... SHE WHO IS DUTY ITSELF... MY WIFE AND MY LOVER... SHE WHO HAS REARED MY FAVORED SON THOR...

THOR-- HE WHO NOW STRIDES THE LOWER REALM OF MIDGARD IN THE GUISE OF A MERE MORTAL...

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, DON, BUT THE VIKING EXHIBIT IS LEAVING CHICAGO NEXT WEEK, AND SINCE I'M TAKING THE DAY OFF...

NOT AT ALL SHAWNA--IT SHOULD PROVE INTERESTING.

BUT ONCE INSIDE THE FIELD MUSEUM, DR. DONALD BLAKE FINDS HIMSELF ANYTHING BUT ABSORBED...

CONSIDERING WHO I REALLY AM, THIS EXHIBIT SHOULD AT LEAST MAKE ME HOMESICK... BUT I GUESS I'M JUST TOO HAPPY ABOUT THE WAY MY NEW LIFE HERE IN CHICAGO IS SHAPING UP.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE I NO LONGER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE OR--

IT SAYS HERE, DON, THAT THIS SILVER CHALICE BELONGED TO ONE OF THE GODS--AND WAS USED TO DRINK A FORM OF WINE WHICH SOME NORSE SCHOLARS CLAIM WAS RELATED TO THE BLOOD OF MORTALS.

THE CHALICE WAS SUPPOSEDLY CAST DOWN TO MIDGARD, THE NORSE TERM FOR EARTH, WHEN--

BUT YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY GETTING INTO THIS, ARE YOU, DON?

EH--? OH, SORRY, SHAWNA, WHAT WERE YOU SAYING?

ANXIOUS TO OPEN YOUR NEW PRACTICE, AREN'T YOU DOCTOR?

YES, DOCTOR, I GUESS I AM A LITTLE EXCITED ABOUT SEEING MY FIRST PATIENT THIS AFTERNOON...

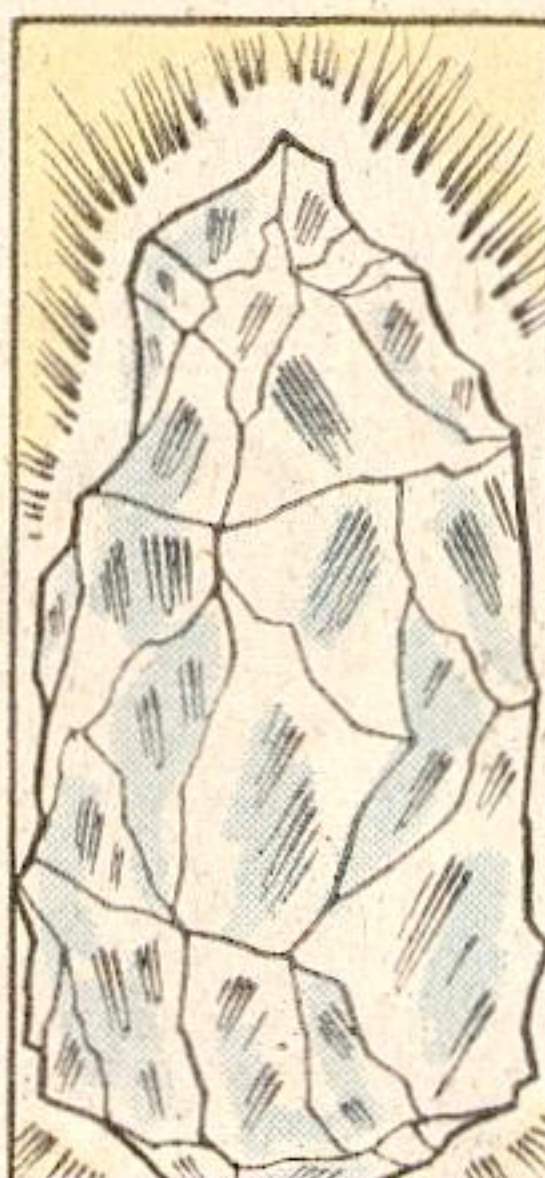
BUT ONLY BRIEFLY-- AND IF ANY OF THE OTHER MUSEUM-GOERS HAVE EVEN NOTICED, THEY ATTRIBUTE IT TO A TRICK OF THE LIGHT, GLINTING OFF THE POLISHED SILVER.

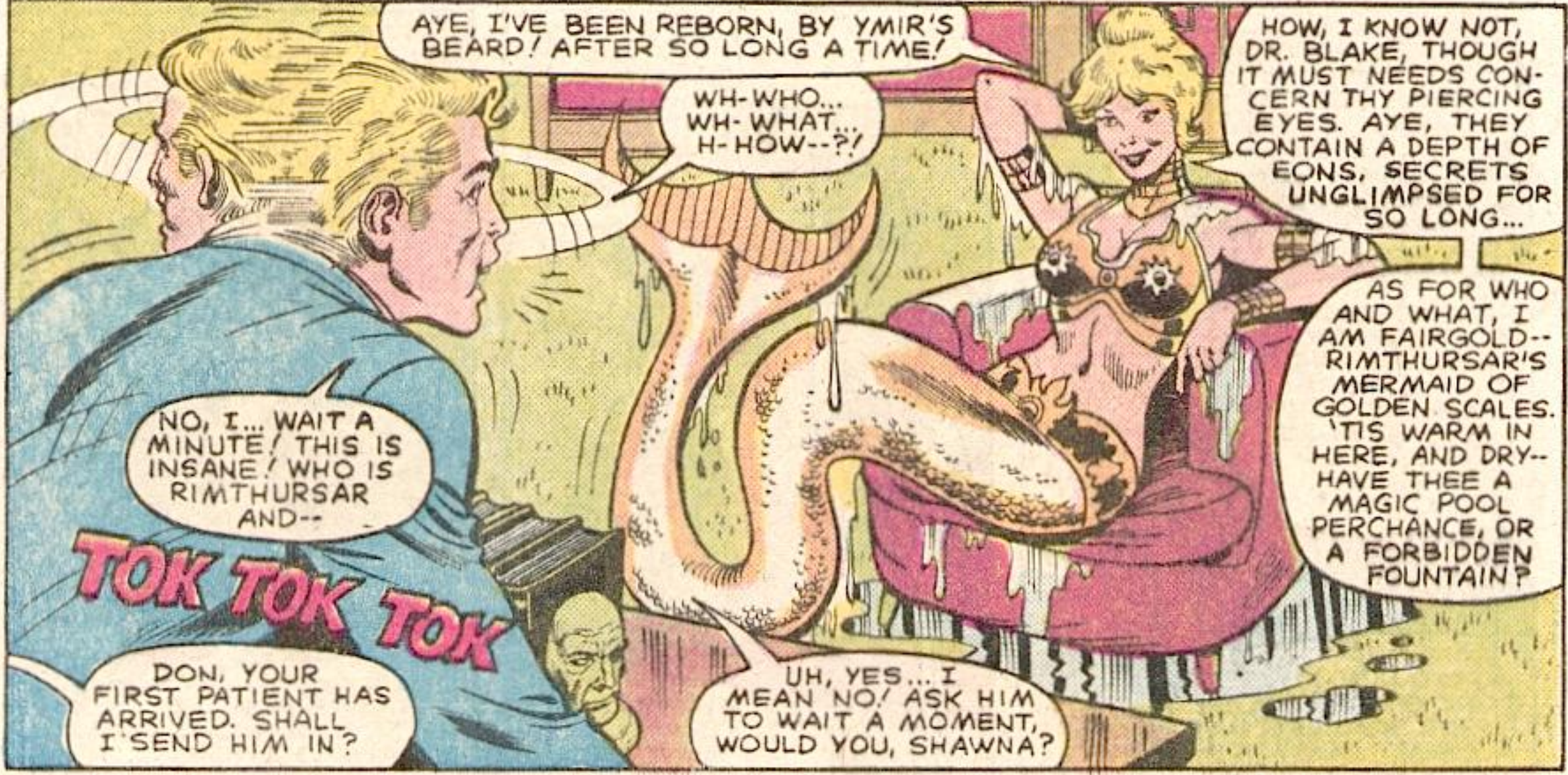
THEN...

SOME-THING FLICKERS FROM THE CHALICE...

OF COURSE. WHAT ELSE--?

THEN YOU WIN-- LET'S GO. MAYBE I CAN SQUEEZE IN A LONGER VISIT ON SATURDAY.





AYE, I'VE BEEN REBORN, BY YMIR'S BEARD! AFTER SO LONG A TIME!

WH-WHO... WH-WHAT... H-HOW--?!

HOW, I KNOW NOT, DR. BLAKE, THOUGH IT MUST NEEDS CONCERN THY PIERCING EYES. AYE, THEY CONTAIN A DEPTH OF EONS, SECRETS UNGLIMPSED FOR SO LONG...

AS FOR WHO AND WHAT, I AM FAIRGOLD-- RIMTHURSAR'S MERMAID OF GOLDEN SCALES. 'TIS WARM IN HERE, AND DRY-- HAVE THEE A MAGIC POOL PERCHANCE, OR A FORBIDDEN FOUNTAIN?

NO, I... WAIT A MINUTE! THIS IS INSANE! WHO IS RIMTHURSAR AND--

TOK TOK TOK

DON, YOUR FIRST PATIENT HAS ARRIVED. SHALL I SEND HIM IN?

UH, YES... I MEAN NO! ASK HIM TO WAIT A MOMENT, WOULD YOU, SHAWNA?



GOT TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

'FRAID I'M NOT TOO STRONG, BUT--

NAY, DOCTOR, I SENSE THOU ART EXCEEDINGLY STRONG. INDEED, THOU HAST AN ALMOST UNTAPPED INNER STRENGTH. BUT REMEMBER-- I NEED WATER.



HERE, THE THERAPEUTIC WHIRLPOOL-- IT'S BRAND NEW! YOU CAN'T STAY HERE, OF COURSE, BUT AT LEAST IT'LL KEEP YOU WET UNTIL I GET RID OF MY FIRST PATIENT...

OOOH, IT TICKLES!

JOIN ME IN THY MAGIC POOL, DOCTOR. I WILL SHOW THEE AN ECSTASY UNDREAMED--



FLUSTERED, BLAKE PULLS FREE JUST IN TIME...

THIS IS CRAZY! BUT I CAN'T LET IT HAPPEN-- NOT NOW!

CAN'T LET IT RUIN MY NEW PRACTICE BEFORE IT'S EVEN BEGUN!



AH, MR. KIRBY?

YES, DOCTOR-- THORNE KIRBY. I NEED HELP--

UH, I'M SORRY, BUT NOT TODAY, MR. KIRBY-- SOMETHING'S COME UP AND I'M NOT QUITE READY TO SEE PATIENTS YET...



B-BUT I HAVE A PROBLEM, DOCTOR, AND NO OTHER DOCTOR IN TOWN CAN GET RESULTS. TH-THAT'S WHY I CAME TO YOU. I F-FIGURED YOU'RE A NEW DOCTOR FROM NEW YORK AND YOU SAID OVER THE PHONE--

YES, DON, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU WERE SO EAGER TO SEE YOUR FIRST PATIENT, AND NOW--

SAY... IS IT CHILLY IN HERE?



AGAIN: INSTANT FREEZE.

BLAKE GROANS IN DESPAIR AND DISBELIEF...

... AND WHEN THE RIMEFROST THAWS...

AT LAST--
I'M CURED!
AND BOY,
DOES IT FEEL
GREAT! AYE,
I ALWAYS
KNEW THERE
WAS MORE
TO ME THAN
A MEEK
WEAKLING!

BUT HOW LONG
IT HAS TAKEN--!

AYE, GRULT,
'T WAS LONG
AGO THAT
OUR BLOOD
WAS SO IG-
NOMINIOUSLY
SPILT--AND
AND BY OUR
KEEPER, NO
LESS!

BUT NOW THE
SHAME OF IT
IS BURNED AWAY
BY THE JOY OF
NEW LIFE!

SHAWNA... MR.
KIRBY... IT ...
IT CAN'T BE--!

WHAT
IN THE--?!

HEY! WE'RE
FREEZIN'--!

OH NO...! NOT
THEM TOO!

DON'T TELL
ME--IT'S BEEN A
LONG TIME, RIGHT?

HUH? WHAT'RE
YA TALKIN'
ABOUT, DOC?
ARE YOU--

WAIT...
AYE... AYE,
BY RIM-
THURSAR'S
TREACHERY,
A LONG
TIME IT
HAS BEEN!

INDEED.

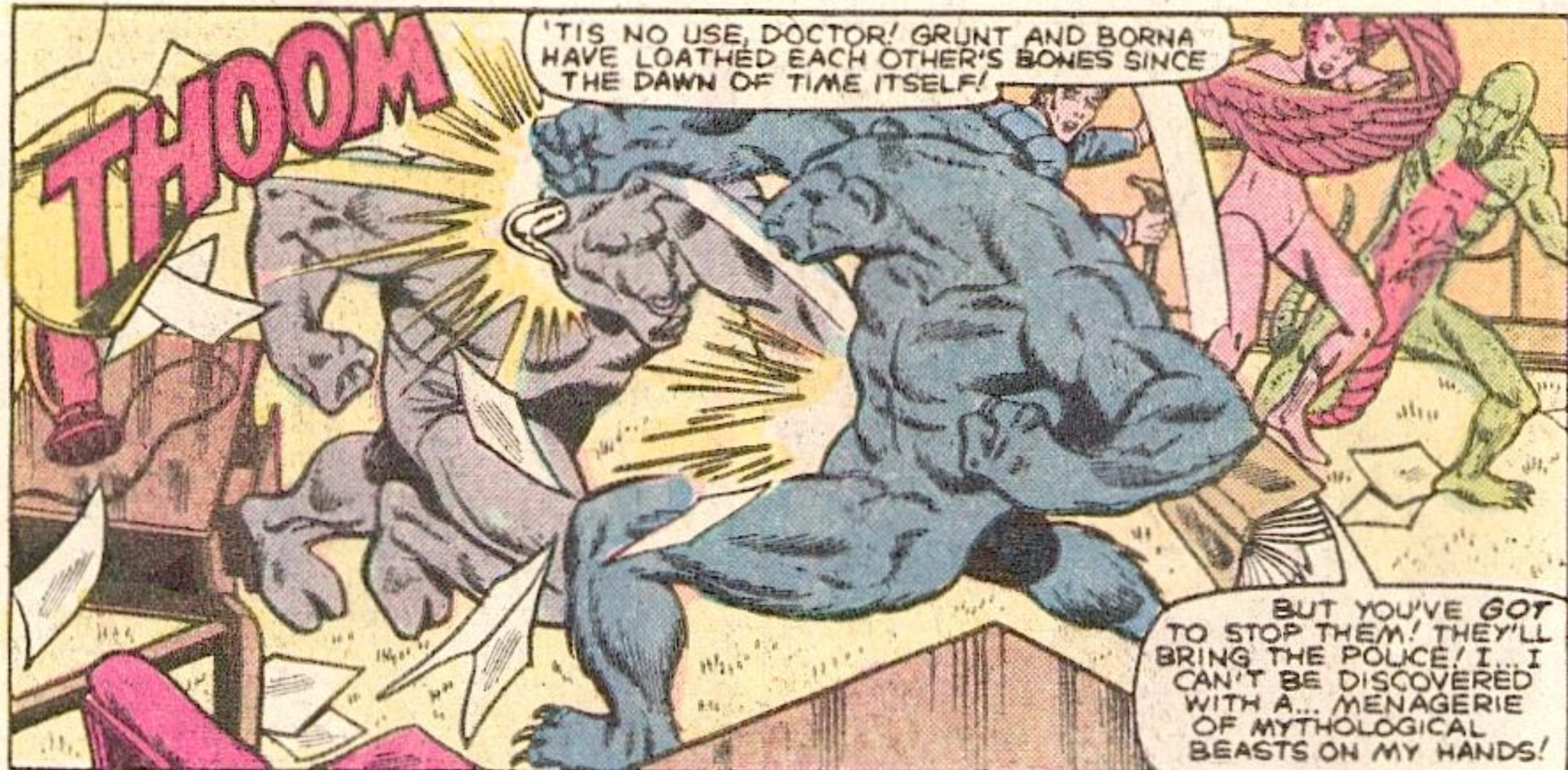
AND
SLITHGARN
HISSES
A LONG,
LUXURIOUS
SIGH.

WOULD THAT IT HAD BEEN MUCH
LONGER IN *THY* CASE,
BORNA THY FILTHY
KNAVE!

GRULT! THOU
ART HERE
TOO? CURSE
THE FATES!

UHHH... YOU DON'T
LIKE EACH OTHER?

STOP IT
YOU HEAR
ME?! *STOP!!*



'TIS NO USE, DOCTOR! GRUNT AND BORNA HAVE LOATHED EACH OTHER'S BONES SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME ITSELF!

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THEM! THEY'LL BRING THE POLICE! I... I CAN'T BE DISCOVERED WITH A... MENAGERIE OF MYTHOLOGICAL BEASTS ON MY HANDS!



EH--? WHY NOT? WE WERE GOOD ENOUGH FOR RIMTHURSAR!

AYE--IN THE BEST MENAGERIE OF THE AGES!

BAM
BAM
BAM



THE DOOR! YOU'VE GOT TO HIDE!

THE MORTAL SPEAKS SENSE--IF HE IS TO BE OUR KEEPER ON THIS STRANGE WORLD, WE MUST DO NOTHING TO JEOPARDIZE HIS STANDING, ELSE HE'LL BE NO GOOD TO US.

NAY, KYRIE-- I'VE LOST TOO MUCH LIVING! I'LL NOT BE CONFINED AGAIN!



PLEASE, GRUNT... DON'T DESTROY WHAT I'VE JUST BEGUN TO BUILD...

OH, ALL RIGHT... BUT ONLY IF YE PROMISE TO LET US OUT LATER.

ANYTHING! BUT JUST GET OUT OF SIGHT NOW!



I COULD CHANGE TO THOR AND DEAL WITH THEM, I SUPPOSE, BUT AT THIS POINT IT'D PROBABLY LEAD TO NOTHING BUT A BRAWL...

BESIDES, THEY MAY RETAIN SOME OF THEIR HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS -- AND I CAN'T VERY WELL LET SHAWNA AND THE OTHERS KNOW I'M REALLY THOR...



OH-- IT'S YOU, MR. LYNX.

I, UH, WAS MOVING SOME NEW OFFICE FURNITURE AND--

YEAH, ME-- YOUR LANDLORD. WHAT'S GOIN' ON IN HERE, BLAKE? SOUNDED LIKE A HERD OF BULLS.

YEAH? AND WHAT ABOUT THE DENTIST DOWNSTAIRS COMPLAINING ABOUT THE LEAK IN HIS CEILING?

LEAK--? THE WHIRLPOOL! I... I'LL SHUT IT OFF, MR. LYNX! MY FIRST DAY HERE-- HAVEN'T QUITE ACCLIMATED, YOU SEE...



YEAH, I SEE. THE INK AIN'T EVEN DRY ON YER LEASE AND ALREADY YOU'RE ITCHIN' TO GET BOUNCED!



NO! NOTHING UNSEEMLY WILL HAPPEN AGAIN, I ASSURE YOU!

IT BETTER NOT, BLAKE! ONE MORE PIECE O' TROUBLE OUTTA YOU AND YOU'RE OUT-- UNNERSTAND?

YES, OF COURSE, BUT UH... IS IT CHILLY FOR YOU?



NOW HE'S COMPLAININ' ABOUT THE HEAT! A FORTUNE IN OIL WE SPEND AND HE COMPLAINS ABOUT THE HEAT!

WHEW--GUESS HE WAS TOO HOT UNDER THE COLLAR FOR IT TO TAKE.

LATER, IN BLAKE'S NEW APARTMENT ADJOINING HIS OFFICES...



AYE, NOW WE'LL HAVE SOME REAL FUN, BY YMIR--NOW THAT WE'RE ALL HERE!

THERE'S ONE TOO MANY HERE, GRULT, IF YE ASK ME!

JUST HOW MANY OF YOU ARE THERE?!

THE MENAGERIE OF RIMTHURSAR IS FIVE, DOCTOR, AND **WE** ARE THOSE FIVE. NOW COME INTO THE ECSTASY OF MY ARMS AND--

FIVE. THEN AT LEAST THE MAILMAN IS SAFE--THANK HEAVEN FOR THAT.



NOW--YOU SAY YOU KNOW HOW YOU CAME TO POSSESS THE BODIES OF FIVE HUMANS HERE ON EARTH?

AYE, WE KNOW.

THEN YOU **ALSO** KNOW HOW TO LEAVE--?



AYE, DOCTOR, THAT WE ALSO KNOW--BUT WE CANNOT TELL THEE.

HAVE YE NO CONCEPTION OF THE SACRIFICE IT WOULD BE-- AFTER ENDURING THE SUSPENSION OF OUR LIVES FOR SO MANY EONS?

AYE-- TO DRINK THE LUSTY WINE OF REAL LIFE FOR A MERE PITTANCE OF HOURS, THEN TO RETURN SO QUICKLY TO A COLD EXISTENCE? NEVER!



BUT YOU **CAN'T** STAY HERE! YOU'VE USURPED THE LIVES OF FIVE PEOPLE! THINK OF THEM! THIS WORLD IS NOT FOR YOU!

BUT IT IS FOR YOU, DON'T YOU OVERLOOK ONE POINT-- WE **KNOW** WHO WE ARE. FOR EXAMPLE, I AM SHAWNA LYNDE, DOCTOR. YOU AND I WENT TO MED SCHOOL TOGETHER.

I WAS ENTIRELY HAPPY AS SHAWNA LYNDE-- BUT I MUST ADMIT, I'M EVEN HAPPIER IN MY PRESENT FORM AS KYRIE. YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE FEELING OF HEIGHTENED LIFE, DON'T... OR **CAN** YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT--?

THAT YOU ARE MORE THAN YOU APPEAR-- AND THIS WILL PROVE IT!

KYRIE! SHAWNA--!!

ON SHEER INSTINCT, BLAKE SLAMS DOWN HIS WALKING CANE.

BOOM

AND, IN THUNDER--

-- HE TRANSFORMS TO THOR THE MIGHTY, SON OF ODIN AND LORD OF STORMS.

THEN KYRIE WAS RIGHT ABOUT HIM!

THOR STREAKS DOWN ON THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING -- BUT THEN, JUST AS HE IS ABOUT TO OVERTAKE KYRIE HERE FEET ABOVE THE HARD PAVEMENT...

... THE FALCON WOMAN SPREADS HER WINGS AND--

THOU CANST **FLY**--?!

AYE, THOR-- I CAN RIDE THE WIND AND REACH FOR THE MOON!

'TWOULD BE A PITY, WOULD IT NOT, TO RETURN-- AFTER THIS-- TO THE PALE FORM OF SHAWNA LYNDE?

AND KYRIE, TOO HAS OTHER POWERS--POWERS OF PERCEIVING THE GREATER TRUTHS OF LIFE HIDDEN BENEATH THE SURFACE.



AS SHAWNA LYNDE, I NEVER DREAMED MY GOOD FRIEND DONALD BLAKE COULD BE THOR.

I ACTED TOO HASTILY. THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS ART MORE THAN MERE MASKS, AND INCLUDE POWERS SUCH AS FLIGHT...

YET IF KYRIE ALREADY KNEW MINE TRUE IDENTITY, THEN I HAVE LOST NOTHING.



ONE FACT IS CLEAR--THOU ART FROM ASGARD, AND TO ASGARD I SEE THEE RETURNED!



YE FORGET, THOR, WE NOW BE PART MORTAL... AND MORTALS BE FORBIDDEN FROM ENTERING ASGARD...

...BY LAW OF THINE OWN FATHER ODIN. BUT EVEN **COULD** WE RETURN TO ASGARD, WHAT THEN OF SHAWNA LYNDE, NURSE STEVENS, THORNE KIRBY...



ENOW, SLITHGARN! THY WORDS ART LIKE THY EXISTENCE--VEXING AND TROUBLESOME! YET I SHALL--

TOK
TOK
TOK

THE DOOR YET AGAIN--FORCING ME TO AGAIN RESUME THE MORTAL DONALD BLAKE'S FORM...



BOOM

... BUT IF YOU SO MUCH AS--



WORRY NOT, THOR--THOU ART OUR KEEPER NOW. WE WON'T BLOW YOUR SECRET.

PACKAGE FOR YA.

YES, MORE MEDICAL SUPPLIES. UH... YOU'RE NOT COLD, ARE YOU?

NOPE--HOT AS A PISTOL.



AT LEAST THEY WEREN'T LYING ABOUT BEING ONLY FIVE...



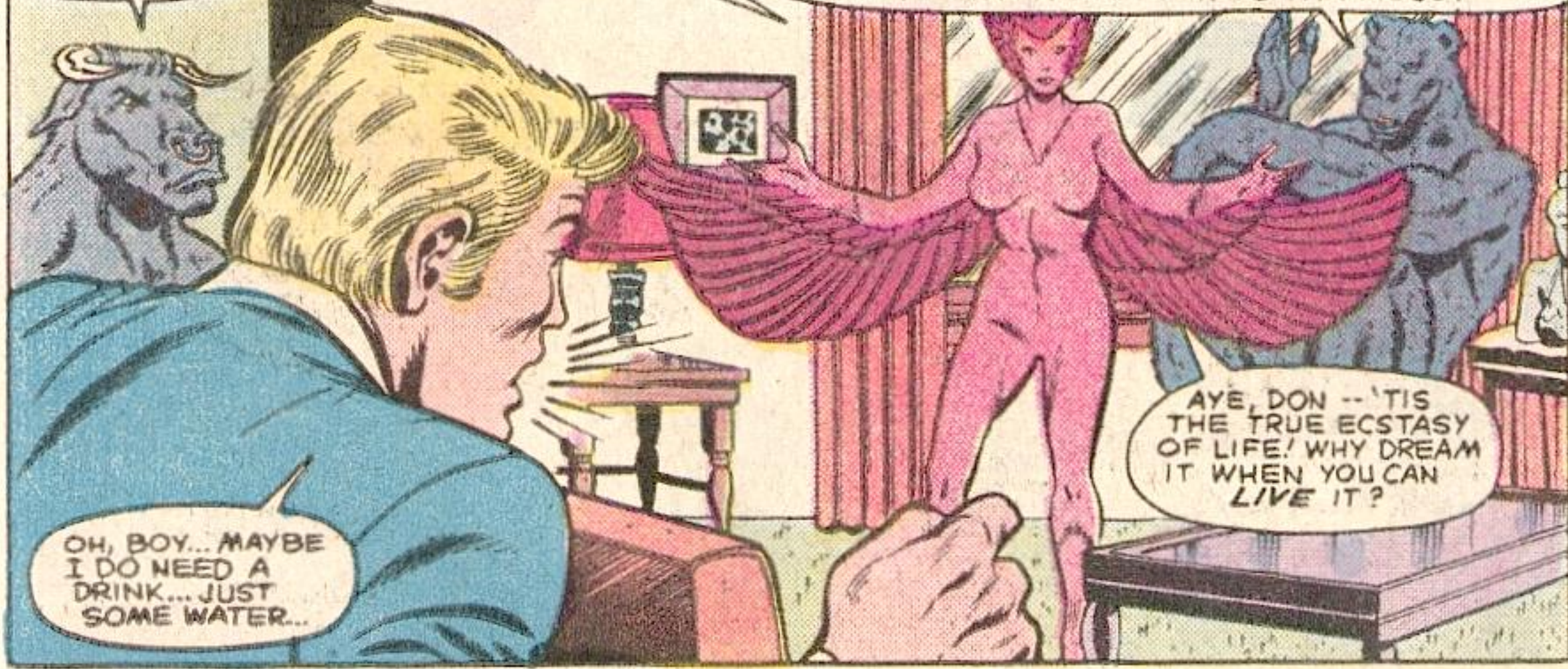
HEY! STOP IT! THAT WINE WAS FOR ENTERTAINING GUESTS!

OVER HERE, SLITHGARN! YE PROMISED ME ANOTHER DRINK!

ARE *WE* NOT
THY GUESTS,
KEEPER BLAKE?

AYE, DON--CHANGE TO THOR
AND JOIN US. DON'T BE
SUCH A WET RAG!

HAST THOU NEVER WISHED TO RIDE THE BACK OF THE
DRAGON? HAST THOU NEVER YEARNED TO PULL DOWN
THE MOON AND THE STARS? WHY ART THOU SO AFRAID
TO ENTER THE INFINITE DARKNESS?



OH, BOY... MAYBE
I DO NEED A
DRINK... JUST
SOME WATER...

AYE, DON -- 'TIS
THE TRUE ECSTASY
OF LIFE! WHY DREAM
IT WHEN YOU CAN
LIVE IT?

NAY, SOMETHING BETTER
THAN WATER, O KEEPER...



ONE OF THY
GOLDEN SCALES,
FOR SPICE,
FAIRGOLD--



HERE, KEEPER--
THE NECTAR OF
THE GODS!

EH? OH,
WELL...



...WHY
NOT?



HAH! NOW, WHILST OUR KEEPER
TAKES HIS REST, 'TIS TIME
TO ENTER THE NIGHT AND
REVEL TILL DAWN!



POOR DON,
I WONDER IF
HE'LL EVER
UNDERSTAND.

WAIT! YE
CAN'T LEAVE
ME BEHIND!



'T WAS *MY* GOLDEN
SCALE WHICH PUT HIM TO
SLEEP AND GAINED THY
FREEDOM! COME BACK!

WAIT FOR A RAIN, WENCH--
THEN SWIM THE STREETS
AFTER US.

AH WELL... AT
LEAST I HAVE THE
KEEPER'S HAND--
SOME FACE TO
GAZE UPON...

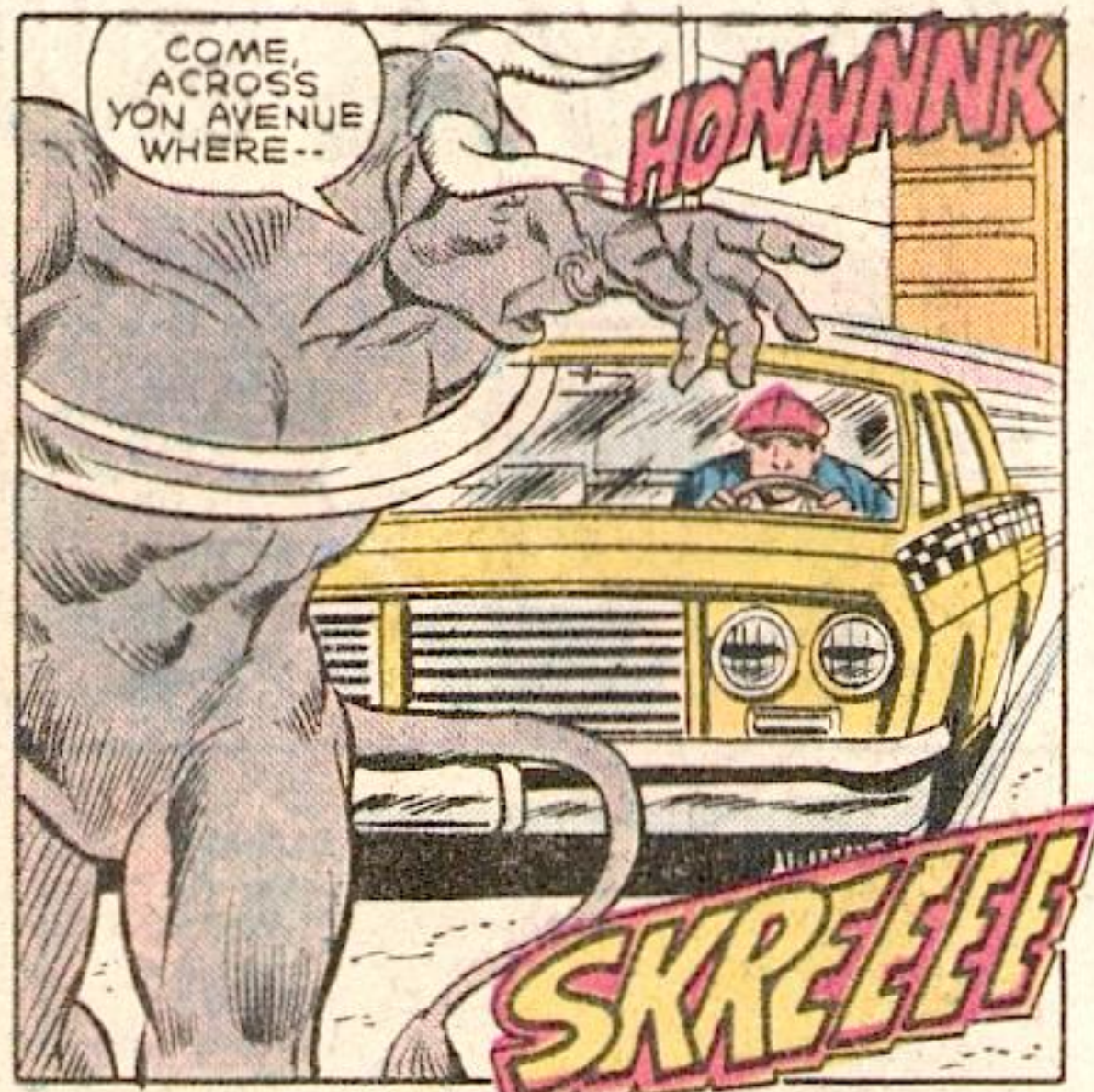




HAH! SEE HOW THE LITTLE MORTALS CRINGE AT OUR PASSAGE!

THEY CRINGE, GRULT, BECAUSE THOU ART SO UGLY.

TO THINK WE WERE ONCE AS MEEK...



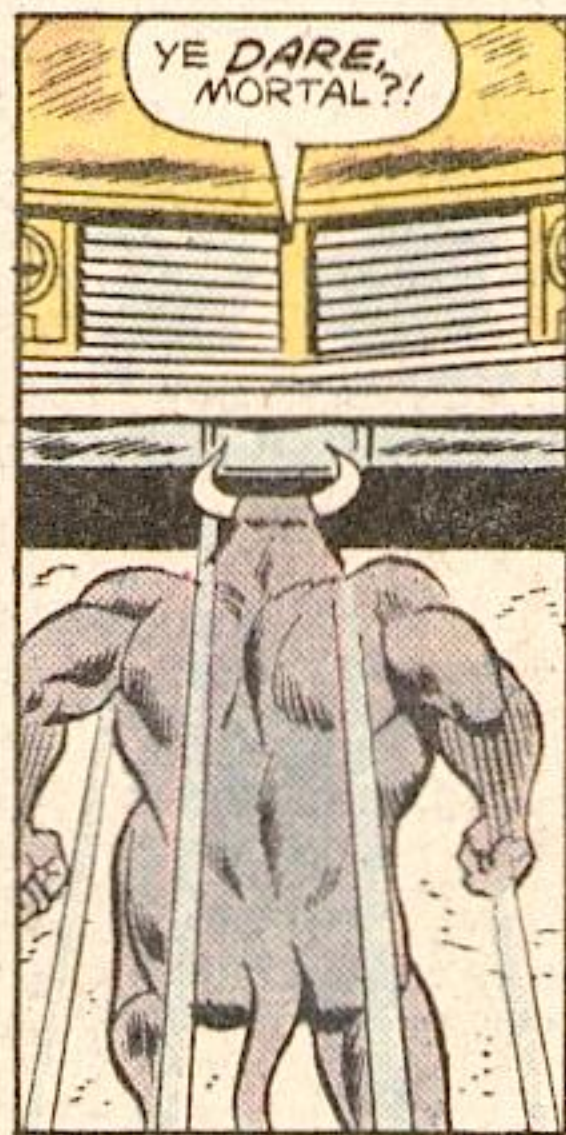
COME, ACROSS YON AVENUE WHERE--

HONNNNK

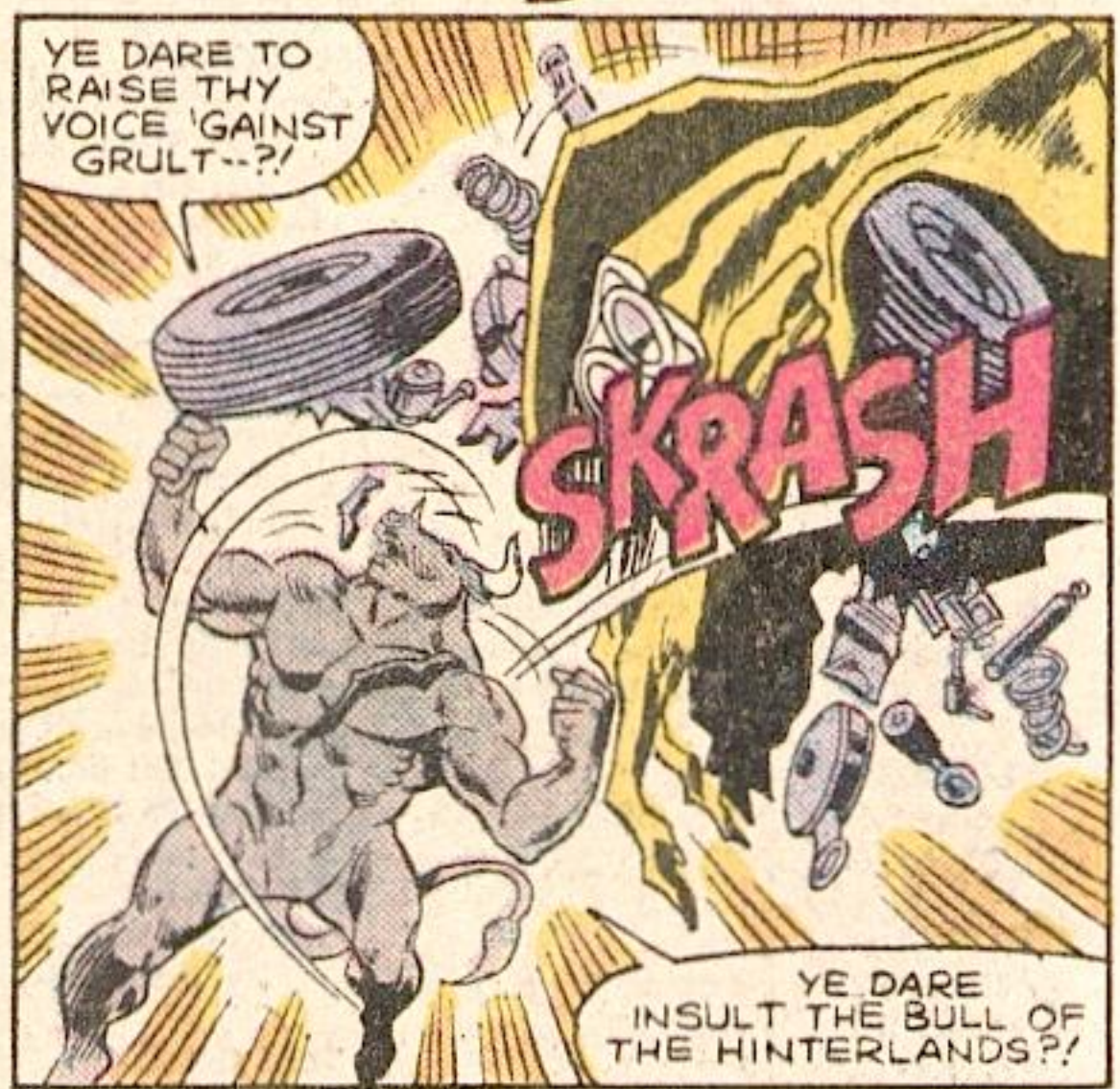
SKREEEE



YA THINK HALLOWEEN HAPPENS EVERY DAY, BUB? TAKE OFF THE STUPID MASK WHEN YOU'RE CROSSIN' THE STREET AND MAYBE YA WON'T BE SO BLIND!



YE DARE, MORTAL?!



YE DARE TO RAISE THY VOICE 'GAINST GRULT--?!

SKRASH

YE DARE INSULT THE BULL OF THE HINTERLANDS?!



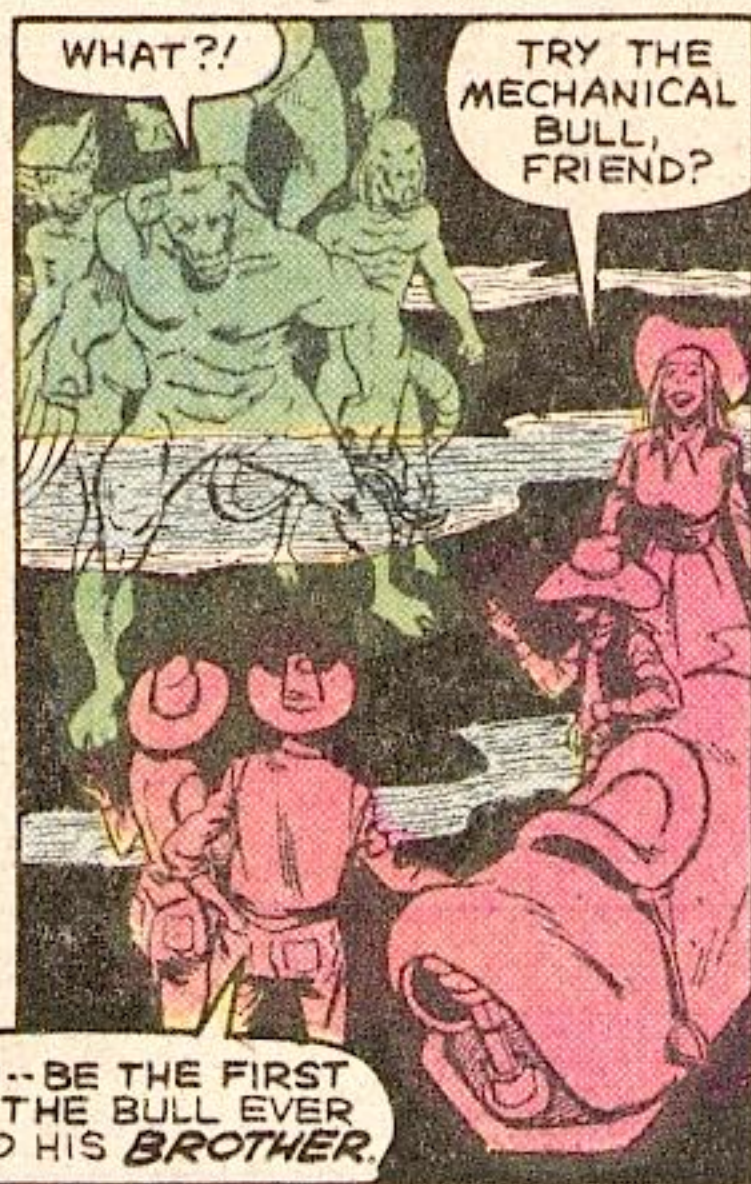
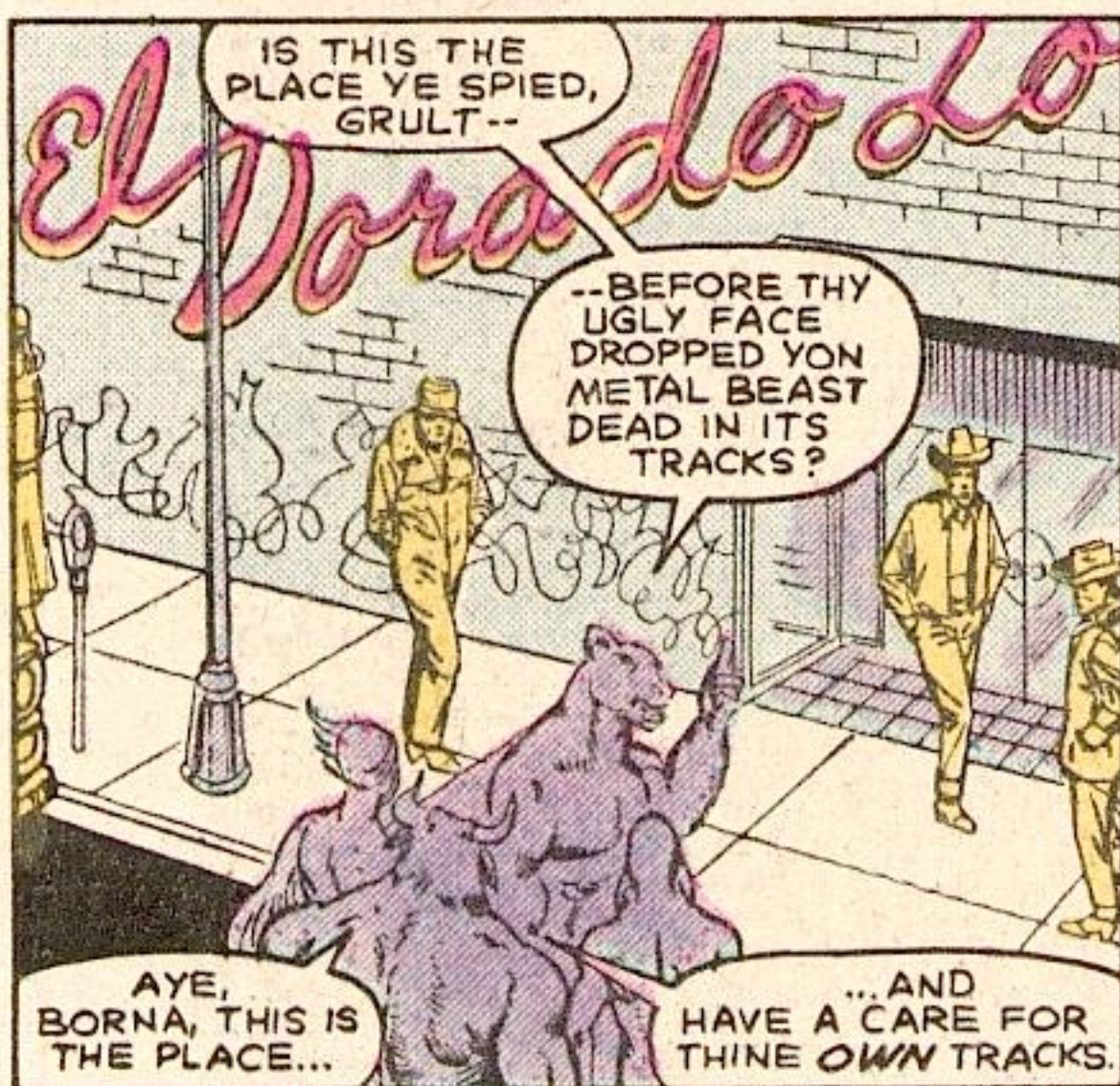
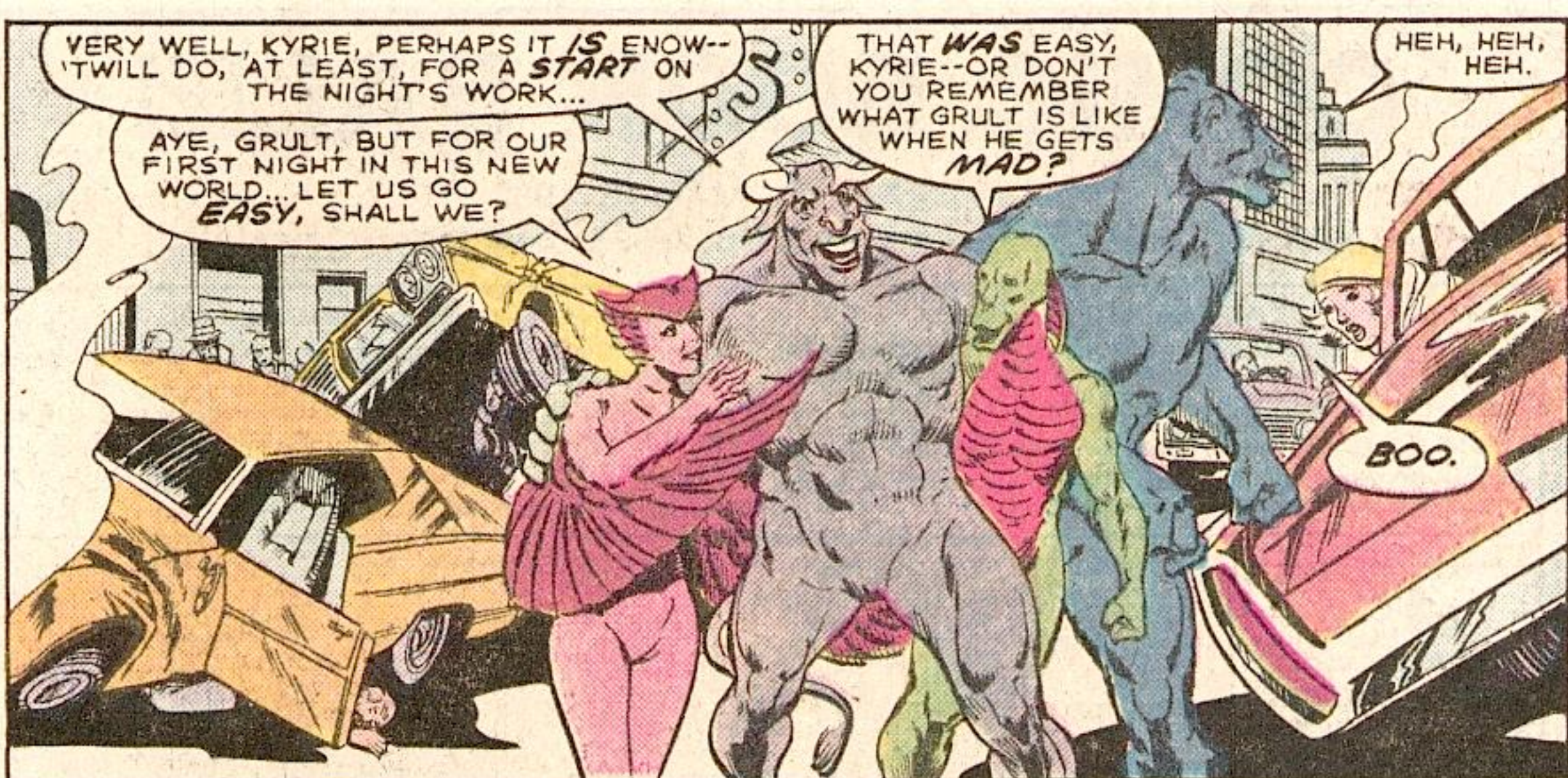
SKROOM

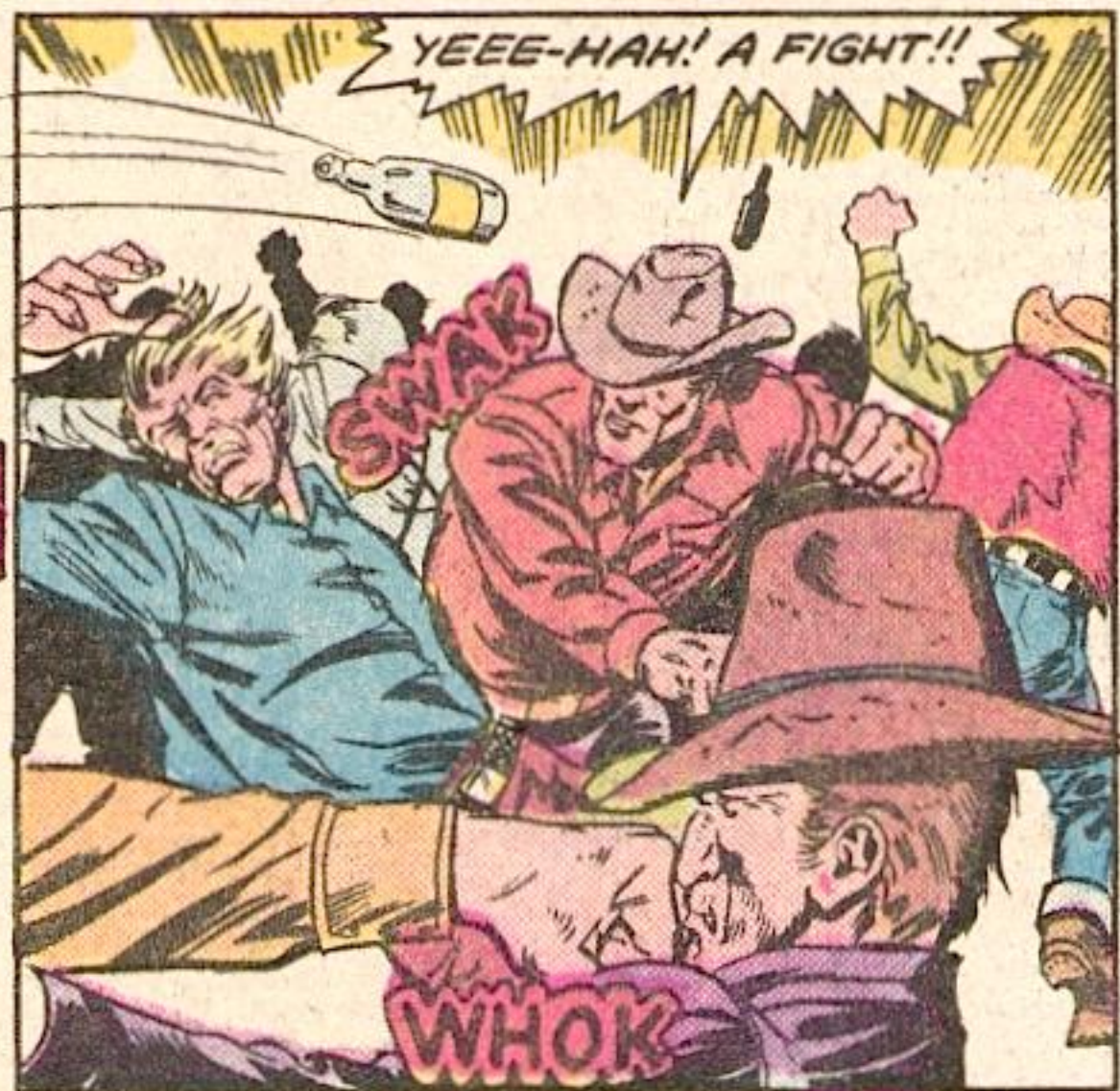
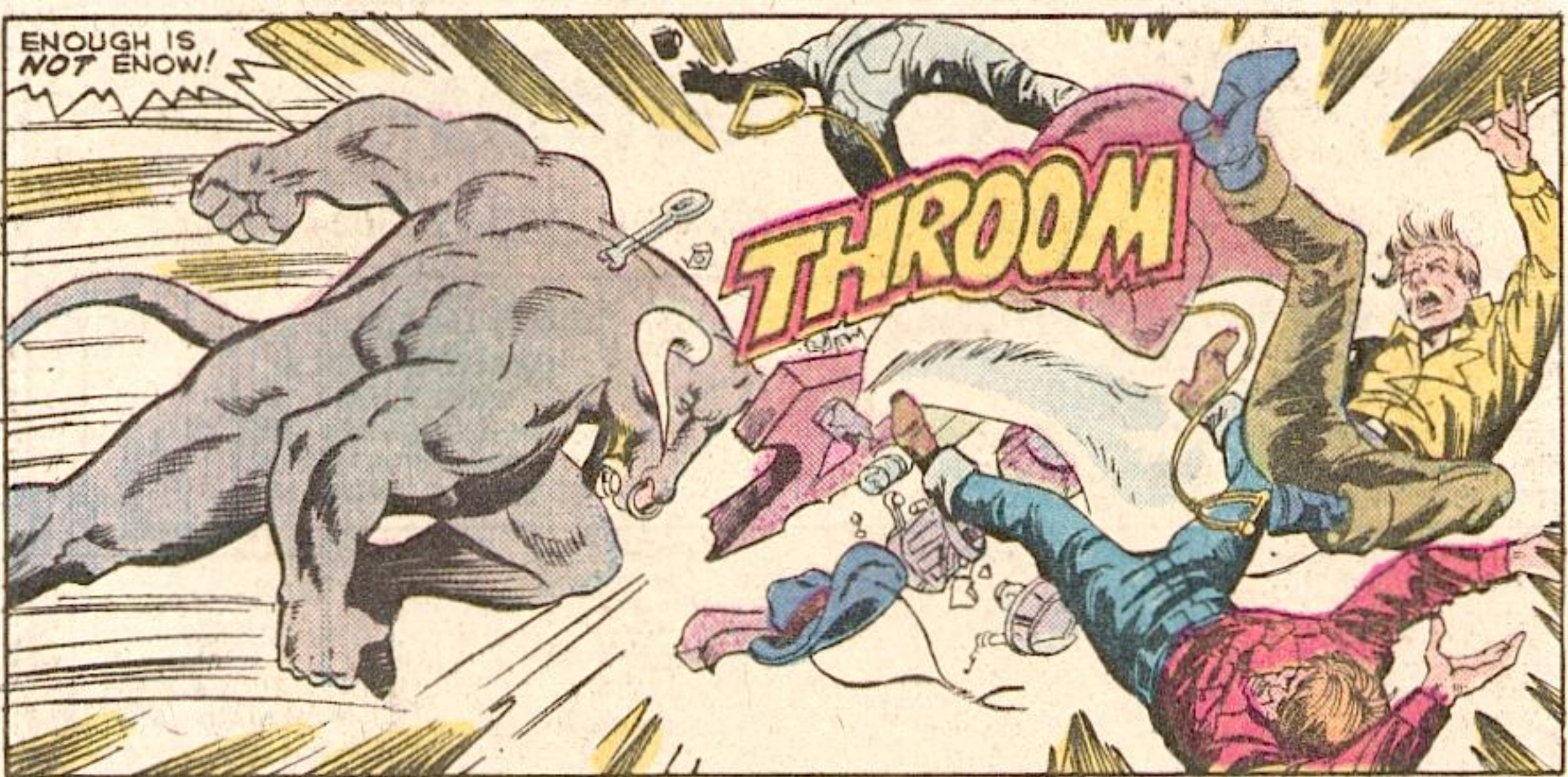


ENOUGH, GRULT-- LEST YE INJURE ONE OF THEM!

NAY! 'TIS NEVER ENOW WHEN SUCH KNAVES ARE AT BLAME!

BUT THEY'RE HELPLESS AGAINST THEE, GRULT! THEY BE MERE MORTALS...





MEANWHILE, BACK AT DON BLAKE'S NEW APARTMENT ON MICHIGAN AVENUE...

BLUB-BLUB!
WHAT IN THE--?!

FISH!

HOW DID I GET IN HERE?!

'T WAS NOT EASY, DOCTOR...

I HAD TO CRAWL ACROSS THE FLOOR DRAGGING THEE THE WHOLE WAY!

FAIRGOLD!
WHERE ARE THE OTHERS--?

OH, THEY WENT OUT FOR THE NIGHT TO HAVE SOME FUN-- LEAVING US HERE IN PRIVACY FOR OUR **OWN** FUN...

LET GO OF ME!

OH, NO--!

THEY'RE LIABLE TO DEMOLISH THE ENTIRE CITY!

GOT TO CHANGE TO THOR AND **STOP** THEM!

BOOM

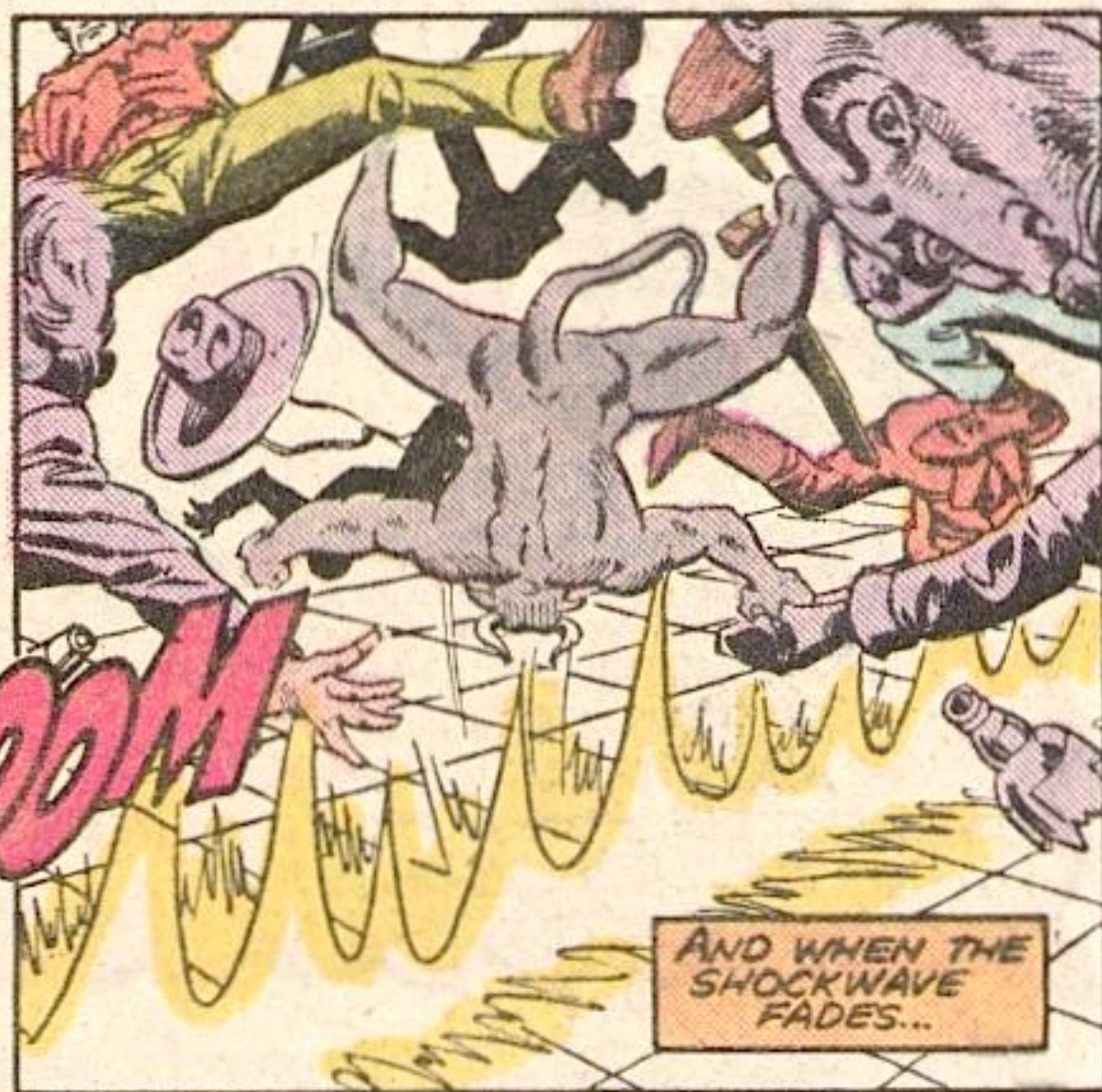
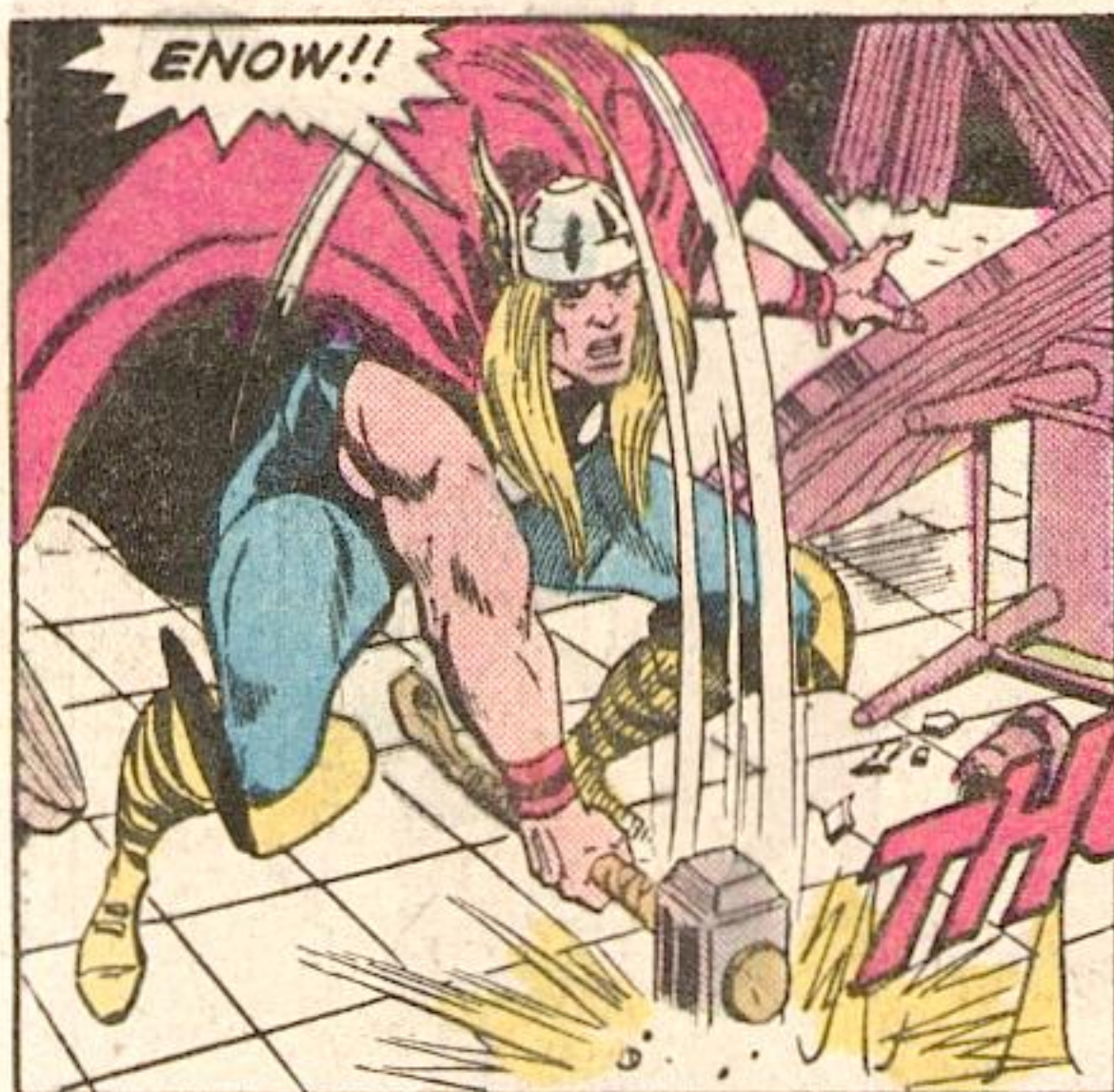
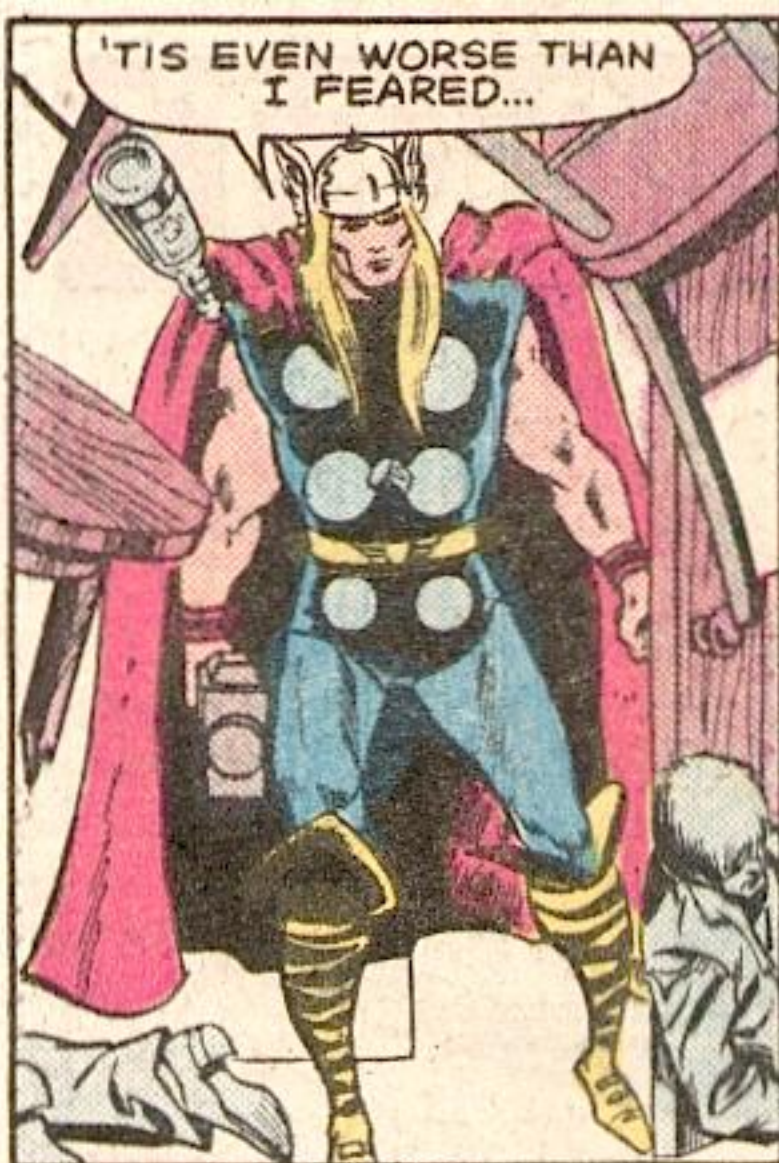
SOON, HIGH OVER RUSH STREET...

AYE-- THEY'VE PASSED THIS WAY.

THE SIGNS COULD HARDLY BE MORE CLEAR...

SKRASH

THEN AGAIN, MAYHAP I UNDER-ESTIMATE THEM.



THIS IS NOT ASGARD, WHERE SUCH FURY MAY BE SPENT 'GAINST THY EQUALS! THIS BE **MIDGARD**, WHERE MORTALS BLEED AND **DIE!**

CANST THEE NOT SEE THAT THIS FRAGILE REALM WAS NOT MADE FOR THE LIKES OF THY KIND?!

AND, AFTER A LONG, HUMBLING SILENCE...

YES, THOR, I CAN SEE-- AND I THINK THE OTHERS NOW UNDERSTAND AS WELL.

'TIS TIME TO RETURN TO THE MUSEUM AND DEPART THIS REALM FOREVER.

YOU REALLY **WEREN'T** LISTENING, WERE YOU? THE SILVER CHALICE IN THE VIKING EXHIBIT-- THAT IS THE KEY-- THAT AND **THOU**, THOR.

THE MUSEUM--?

QUICKLY, BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVE-- FETCH FAIRGOLD WHILST I TAKE THE OTHERS TO THE MUSEUM.

AYE, KYRIE-- AND I THANK THEE WITH ALL MY HEART.

AND SO... TO THE FIELD MUSEUM, DRIVER-- SWIFTLY.

THIS TIME O'NIGHT? WHAT ARE YA-- THE NEXT EXHIBIT?

"NAY-- THE PRESENT ONE."

MINUTES LATER...

AYE, FAIRGOLD-- I AM **CERTAIN** THOU MUST RETURN WHENCE THOU CAME.

VERY WELL, THOR -- THEN AT LEAST THIS ONE FLIGHT IN THY ARMS HAS GIVEN WORTH TO MY BRIEF STAY IN THIS STRANGE REALM...

...AND HAS GIVEN ME, TOO, SOMETHING GOLDEN TO DREAM ON FOR ALL OF ETERNITY.

ENOUGH, FAIR-GOLD! INSIDE-- QUICKLY BEFORE THE NIGHT-WATCH REVIVES...

THOR FINDS THE OTHERS WAITING AT THE VIKING EXHIBIT, WHERE KYRIE BEGINS SPEAKING WITH A HEAVY HEART...

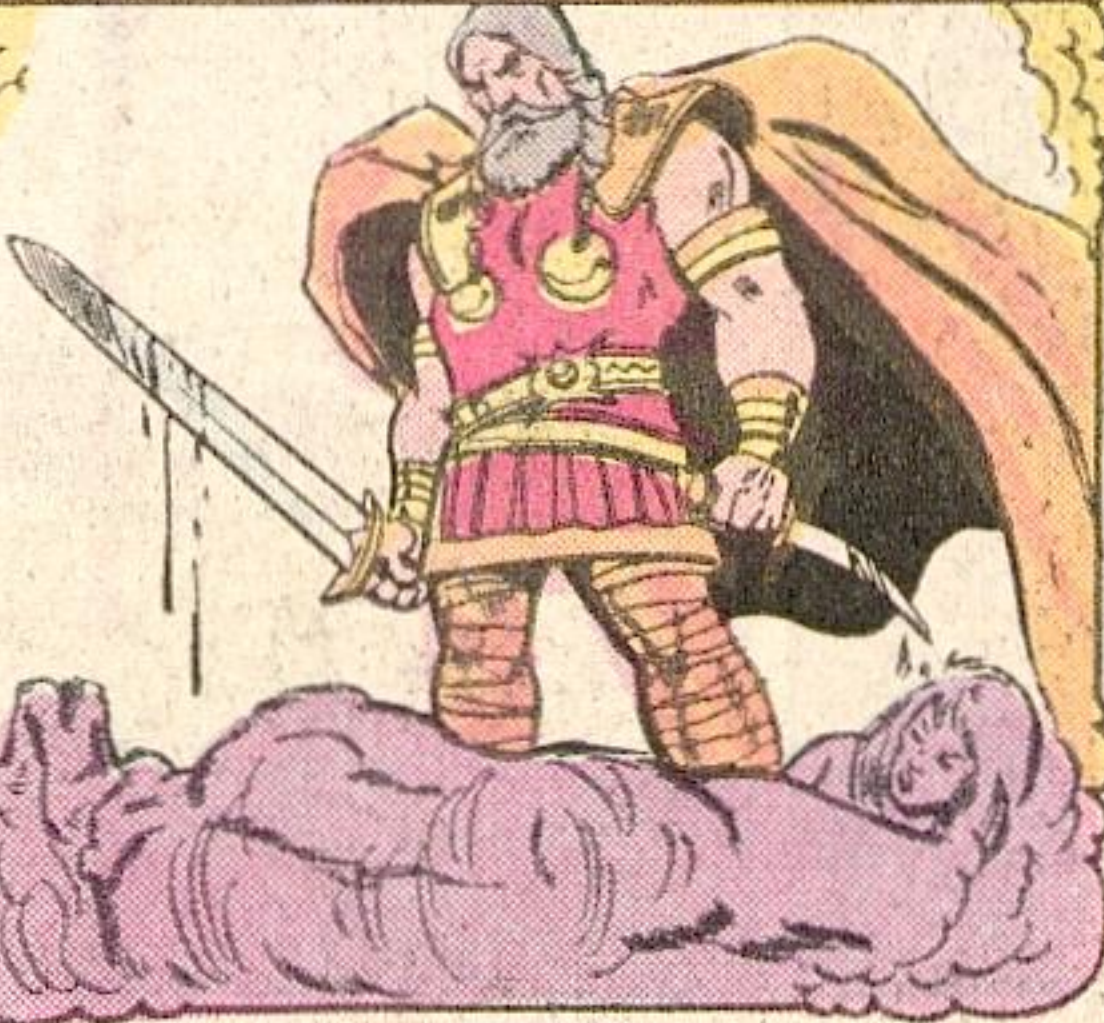
'TIS TIME TO EXPLAIN, THOR, THE HOW AND WHY OF OUR COMING...

"IN ASGARD, LONG BEFORE EVEN YOU WERE BORN, THOR, WE WERE COLLECTED BY THE GRIM GOD RIMTHURSAR, AND FOR A TIME WE WERE CONTENT ENOUGH IN HIS MENAGERIE...

BUT THEN HE BECAME AMBITIOUS AND SOUGHT TO USE US IN A CAMPAIGN AGAINST ODIN HIMSELF.

"WHEN WE REFUSED TO ACT AS HIS QUISLINGS, RIMTHURSAR SLEW US ALL IN A RAGE.

"SEALING OUR SOULS EACH IN A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD. HE THEN STAINED THE BOTTOM OF HIS SILVER CHALICE WITH THE FIVE DROPLETS, FREEZING US FOREVER IN SILVER.



"THEN, IN A FINAL PIQUE OF FURY, HE CAST US OUT FROM ASGARD, HURLING THE CHALICE DOWN TO THE LOWER REALM OF MIDGARD, OR 'EARTH'...

...BY THY GAZE, THOR, EVEN THOUGH YOU LOOKED UPON US IN THY MORTAL GLISE OF DONALD BLAKE.

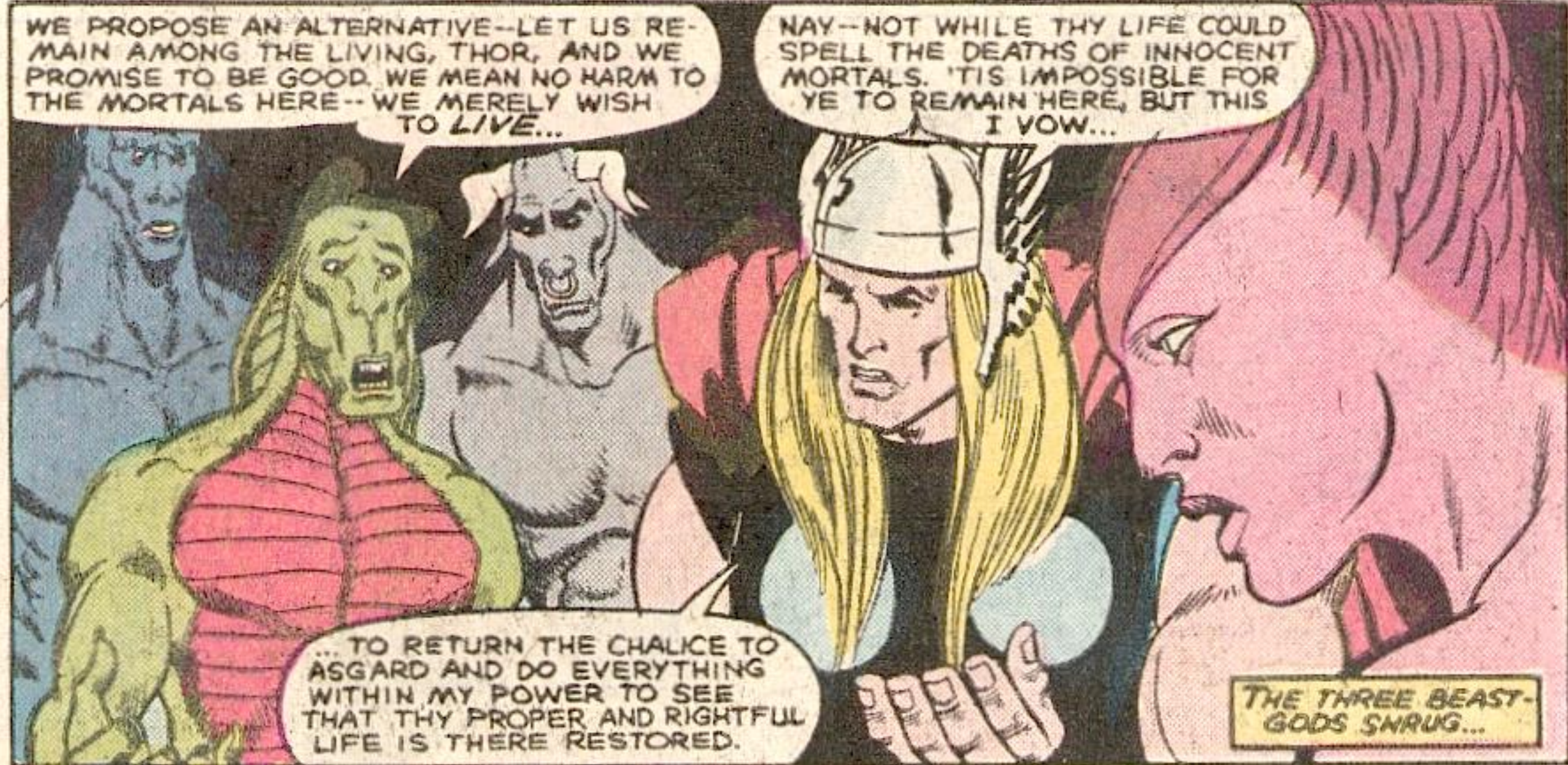
AND HOW MAY YOU RETURN TO THE CHALICE?

AYE-- BUT WE'VE DECIDED AGAINST THIS PLAN OF RETURN-- OR THREE OF US HAVE, AT LEAST...

*...AND HERE WE REMAINED TRAPPED, UNTIL OUR SOULS WERE THIS MORNING THAWED BY THE GAZE OF A KIND GOD.

BY THE POWER OF ANY ASGARDIAN ENCHANTMENT--INCLUDING THE POWER OF THY URU HAMMER MJOLNIR--FOCUSED THROUGH THE CHALICE.





WE PROPOSE AN ALTERNATIVE--LET US REMAIN AMONG THE LIVING, THOR, AND WE PROMISE TO BE GOOD. WE MEAN NO HARM TO THE MORTALS HERE-- WE MERELY WISH TO LIVE...

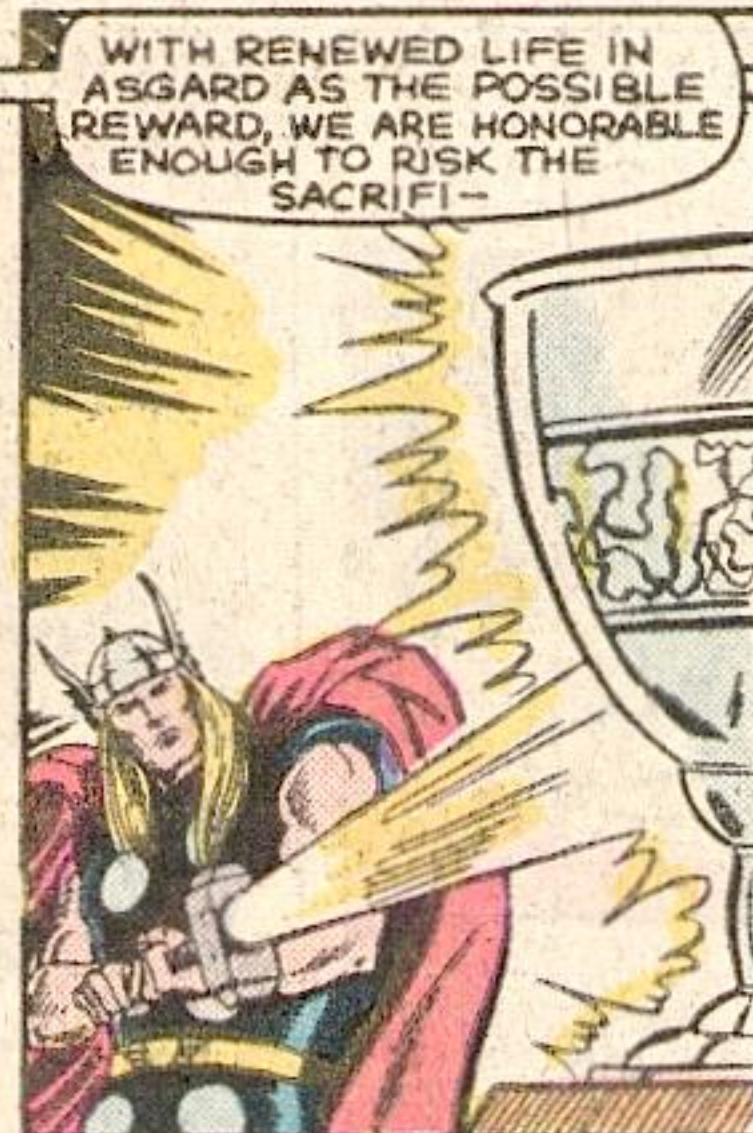
NAY--NOT WHILE THY LIFE COULD SPELL THE DEATHS OF INNOCENT MORTALS. 'TIS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YE TO REMAIN HERE, BUT THIS I VOW...

... TO RETURN THE CHALICE TO ASGARD AND DO EVERYTHING WITHIN MY POWER TO SEE THAT THY PROPER AND RIGHTFUL LIFE IS THERE RESTORED.

THE THREE BEAST-GODS SHRUG...



AT LEAST WE TRIED, SLITHGARN-- AND IF THOR KEEPS HIS WORD, OUR LOT WILL SURPASS EVEN *THIS* EXISTENCE.



WITH RENEWED LIFE IN ASGARD AS THE POSSIBLE REWARD, WE ARE HONORABLE ENOUGH TO RISK THE SACRIFI--



EH? THE POWER OF THE URU HAMMER-- LANCING OUT FROM THE CHALICE-- FILLING ME WITH.. WITH..

WAIT! SOMETHING IS WRONG! IT SINGLES OUT BORNA--!



...WITH **RAGE**, FOUL THUNDER GOD!



AND WITH THE LUST FOR VENGEANCE ON HE WHO WOULD DARE REPEAT THE **CRIME OF RIMTHURSAR!**

HE... HE'S **MAD!**



THE SILVER CHALICE OF RIMTHURSAR IS *HELL*, THUNDER GOD!

THROK

'TIS A PLACE OF COLD, UNENDING DARKNESS AND DESPAIR!

'TIS A LIMBO OF SCREAMING SOULS!

NEVER SHALL BORNA AGAIN SUBMIT TO SUCH A PLACE!



SOMEHOW THE ENCHANTMENT HAS GONE WRONG--TURNING BORNA MALEVOLENT! WE MUST HELP THOR!

HELP AND SPOIL THE AMUSEMENT OF A GOOD FIGHT? ART THOU *ALSO* MAD, KYRIE?

AYE, AS THORNE KIRBY WOULDST SAY--YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING! *ME* HELP BORNA? I LOATHE THE BEAR'S VERY PELT--AND HOPE THOR SKINS IT FROM HIM ALIVE!



THEN, AS KYRIE STEPS FORTH ALONE--

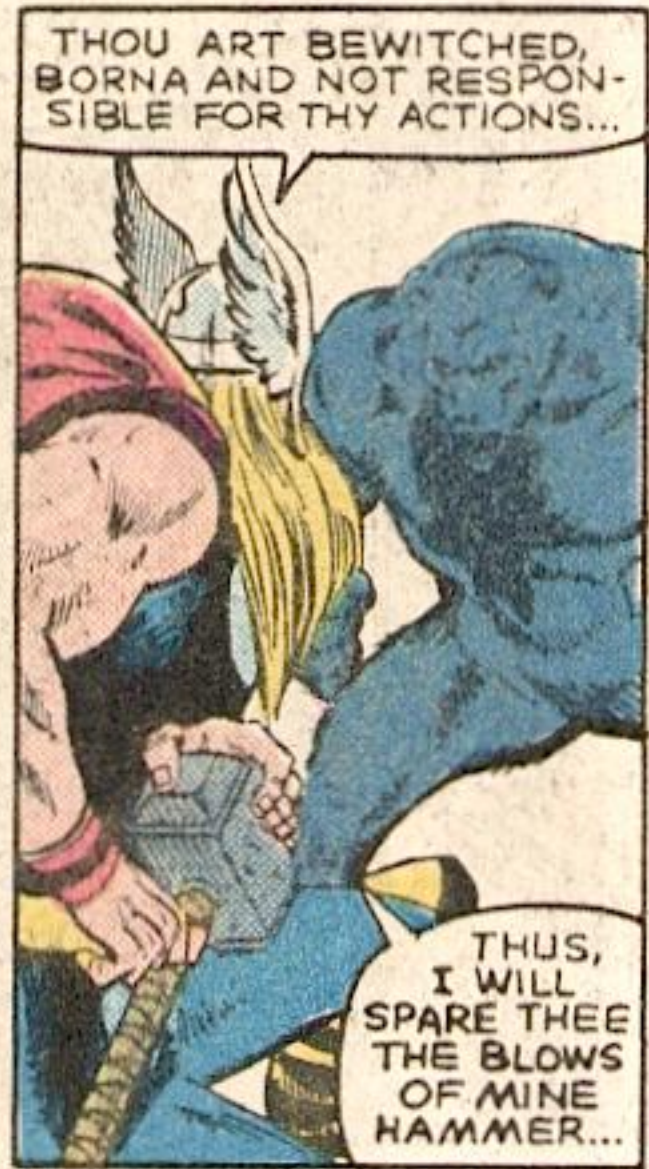
FRACK

STAND YE BACK, FALCON-WOMAN! THOR NEEDS NO HELP IN HIS FIGHTS!



A LARGE BOAST, THOR--FOR SUCH A SMALL THUNDER GOD!

SHROKK



THOU ART BEWITCHED, BORNA AND NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THY ACTIONS...

THUS, I WILL SPARE THEE THE BLOWS OF MINE HAMMER...

NOR DO I WISH TO
INFLECT *ANY* HARM
UPON THEE...

WUMP

...BUT THE
WITCH-HATE
INFESTING THY
MIND LEAVES ME
NO RECOURSE.

AGAIN
YE BOAST,
THOR--
BUT DO
YOU KNOW
HOW MANY
BOASTING
BULLIES
THORNE
KIRBY HAS
LONGED
TO PUNCH--?

OR HOW MANY
TIMES BORNA
THE BEAR HAS
DREAMED OF
AVENGING
RIMTHURSAR'S
CRAVEN ACTS OF
ENSLAVEMENT
AND MURDER?!

NAY, BORNA,
I KNOW NOT--
BUT WELL
CAN I
IMAGINE...

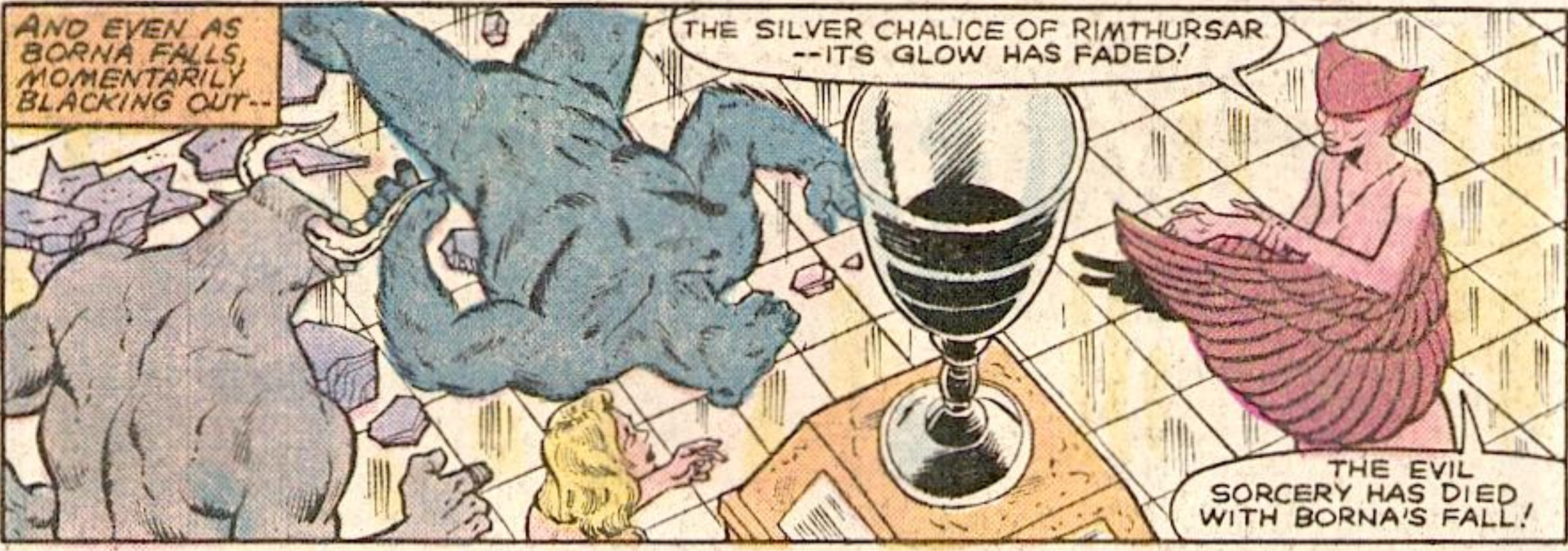
AND I HAVE TOLD THEE--I
WILL DO ALL IN MY POWER
TO UNDO THE INJUSTICE
DEALT THEE...

BUT FIRST MUST I UNDO THE INJUSTICE
CAUSED BY THEMSELVES...

SPLOOM

FIRST MUST I
FREE THE FIVE
MORTAL BODIES YE
HAVE USURPED!

AND EVEN AS BORNA FALLS, MOMENTARILY BLACKING OUT--



THE SILVER CHALICE OF RIMTHURSAR --ITS GLOW HAS FADED!

THE EVIL SORCERY HAS DIED WITH BORNA'S FALL!

THEN, AS THE GROGGY BEAR-GOD REVIVES...

D-DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME... BUT C-COULDN'T HELP MYSELF...

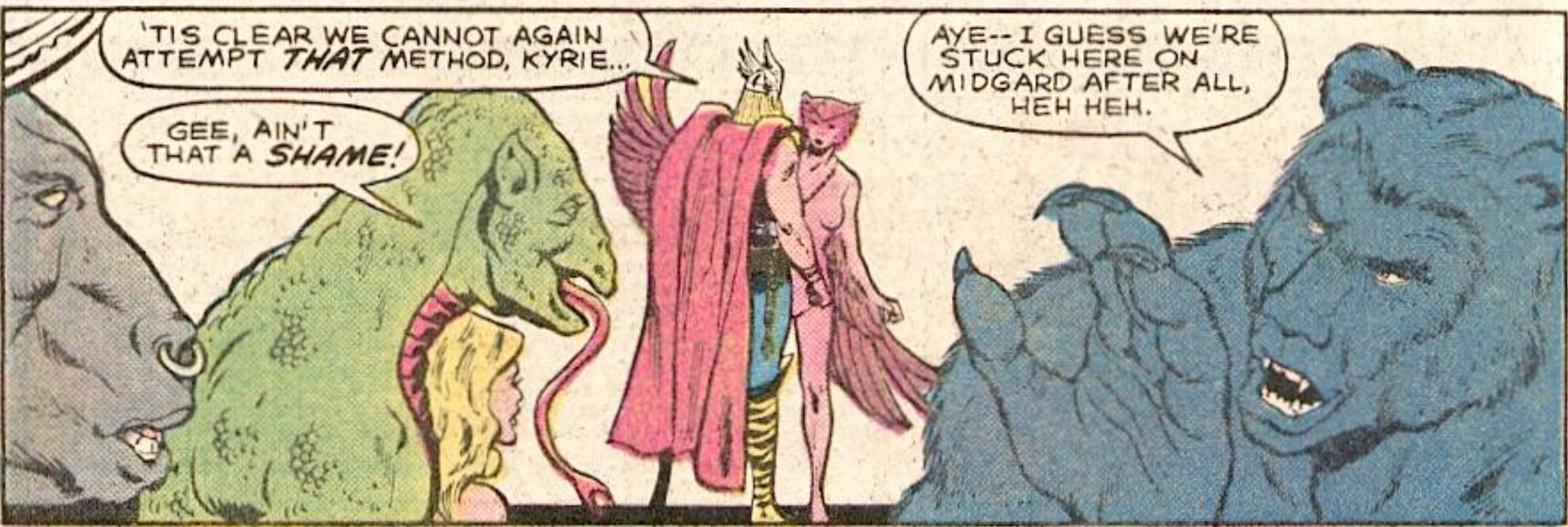


...DIDN'T MEAN TO ATTACK THEE THOR... BUT THE BETTER GOD WON ANYWAY...

'TIS CLEAR WE CANNOT AGAIN ATTEMPT *THAT* METHOD, KYRIE...

GEE, AIN'T THAT A *SHAME!*

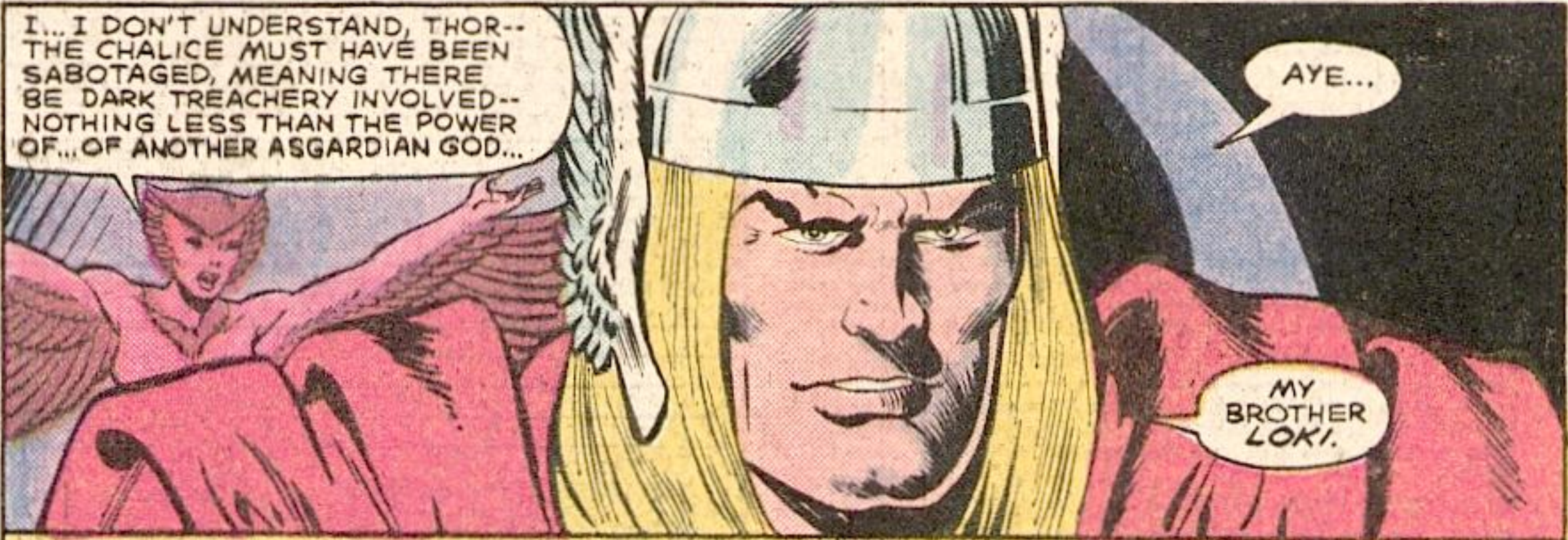
AYE-- I GUESS WE'RE STUCK HERE ON MIDGARD AFTER ALL, HEH HEH.



I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND, THOR-- THE CHALICE MUST HAVE BEEN SABOTAGED, MEANING THERE BE DARK TREACHERY INVOLVED-- NOTHING LESS THAN THE POWER OF... OF ANOTHER ASGARDIAN GOD...

AYE...

MY BROTHER LOKI.



NEXT ISSUE:

A SHOCKING SURPRISE AWAITS THOR IN ASGARD-- AS WELL AS OMINOUS CHANCES FOR KYRIE, BORNA, SLITHGARN, FAIRGOLD, AND GRULT HERE ON EARTH. AND BEHIND IT ALL--

THE MAGICKS OF MENACE!