



# Swordquest<sup>TM</sup> 2





# FIREWORLD™

In Earthworld grim, these Twins have fought  
Twelve beasts of Zodiac birth,  
And mastered thieving as they sought  
For Sword of ultimate worth.

Through Fire world's flames they now do rage  
While Time its toll does add—  
To seven days? A year? An Age?  
Who knows, in a world gone mad?



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**One  
moment  
ago:**

**THE SWORD  
OF ULTIMATE  
SORCERY,  
SOUGHT BY  
THE SIBLING  
ADVENTURERS  
TORR AND TARRA  
IN THE UNDER-  
GROUND KINGDOM  
CALLED EARTHWORLD,  
VANISHED DOWNWARD  
IN A SUDDEN BLINDING,  
WITHERING BLAZE...**

**...LEAVING  
THE TWO  
YOUNG AND  
UNWILLING  
THIEVES HOLDING  
MERE METAL  
COPIES OF THE  
SWORD, AND NOT  
THE MYSTIC  
BLADE ITSELF...**



SO NATURALLY, BROTHER  
AND SISTER HAVE PLUNGED  
HEADLONG AFTER IT.\*

OUR GHOSTLY MENTORS  
CHALLENGED US TO ENTER  
THE SECOND WORLD THAT  
LIES BELOW--TO CLAIM  
BOTH THE SWORD AND  
OUR OWN DESTINIES!

WELL, WE'VE  
COME THIS FAR--  
AND BY THE GODS,  
WE WON'T STOP  
NOW!



\*AS SEEN IN OUR COMPANION VOLUME  
"EARTHWORLD!"--SOLD WITH  
GAME ONE OF "SWORDQUEST."

TORR, YOU  
MAY THINK I'M  
MAD, UNDER THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES,  
BUT A CHILL JUST  
RAN DOWN MY  
SPINE--

--AS IF,  
SOMEHOW,  
WE WERE BEING  
WATCHED!

THIS DOES ONE  
ENDING BECOME A  
SECOND BEGINNING.

AND IN HIS CASTLE  
KEEP HIGH ABOVE,  
THE MALEVOLENT  
WIZARD KONJURO  
SMILES.



IT IS A SMILE  
WITHOUT  
HUMOR...A  
SMILE LIKE  
THE GRIN  
OF DEATH...

BOOK TWO

# FireWorld!







...YET A SMILE THAT SWIFTLY FADES, WHEN--

WELL, KONJURO? HAVE YOU LOCATED THOSE TWO THIEVING WHELPS YET?

OF COURSE, MY LORD TYRANNUS. THE POWERS OF KONJURO ARE NOT LONG MOCKED...BY ANYONE.



...IN THE PLACE CALLED FIREWORLD, WHICH LIES FAR BENEATH OUR VERY FEET!

AND IS IT AS YOU SAID?

ARE THEY INDEED THE GOLD-HAIRED ONES WHO, 'T WAS PROPHESED, WILL CLAIM MY VERY THRONE, WITH 'A SWORD SHINING BRIGHTLY AS SUMMER'S SUN 'TIS

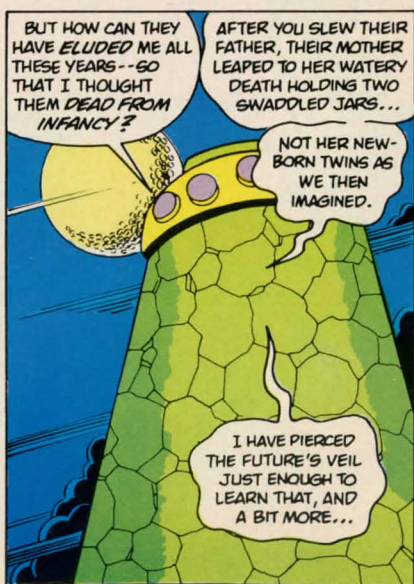
AS YOU CLAIMED THEIR PARENTS' LIVES, AYE, MY KING.



IF THAT WRY COMMENT WAS MEANT FOR YOUR KING, WIZARD, BEST KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE IN YOUR HEAD.

WHERE ARE THEY? HAS YOUR DEMON DISPATCHED THEM YET?

ALAS, THEY ARE BEYOND THE REACH OF MY POWERS...FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST...



BUT HOW CAN THEY HAVE ELUDED ME ALL THESE YEARS--SO THAT I THOUGHT THEM DEAD FROM INFANCY?

AFTER YOU SLEW THEIR FATHER, THEIR MOTHER LEAPED TO HER WATERY DEATH HOLDING TWO SWADDLED JARS...

NOT HER NEW-BORN TWINS AS WE THEN IMAGINED.

I HAVE PIERCED THE FUTURE'S VEIL JUST ENOUGH TO LEARN THAT, AND A BIT MORE...



"...FOR WHEN THEY STOLE NEAR MY TOWER THIS NIGHT, INTENT ON ROBBING ME, THEIR THOUGHTS OF VENGEANCE WERE STRONG...

"...SO STRONG THAT THEY HOVERED WRAITH-LIKE IN THE AIR, LONG ENOUGH FOR MY SPELL TO GATHER AND READ THEM, LIKE SO MANY TEA-LEAVES.

"THEY WERE THINKING OF THEIR WARRIOR-FATHER'S DEATH AT YOUR HANDS, AND OF THEIR OWN ORPHANING WHEN THEIR MOTHER SACRIFICED HERSELF FOR THEM...



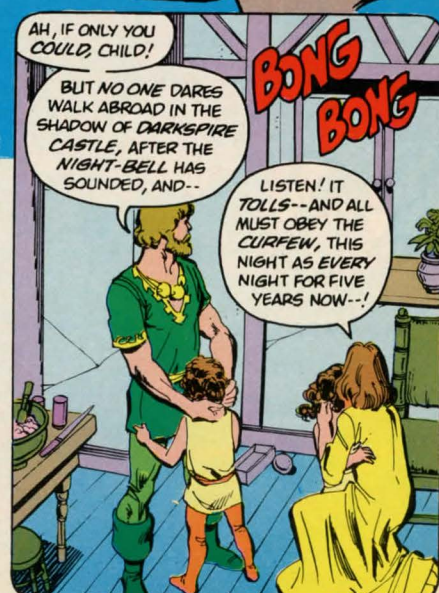
...AS WELL AS OF WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS WHICH FOLLOWED :"

YOUNG TORR GROWS STRAIGHT AND TALL, EH?

NO TALLER THAN TARRA, HUSBAND.

THEY'RE TWINS, AFTER ALL.

MAY WE GO OUT AND PLAY NOW, FELECIA?



AH, IF ONLY YOU COULD, CHILD!

BUT NO ONE DARES WALK ABROAD IN THE SHADOW OF DARKSPIRE CASTLE, AFTER THE NIGHT-BELL HAS SOUNDED, AND--

LISTEN! IT TOLLS--AND ALL MUST OBEY THE CURFEW, THIS NIGHT AS EVERY NIGHT FOR FIVE YEARS NOW--!

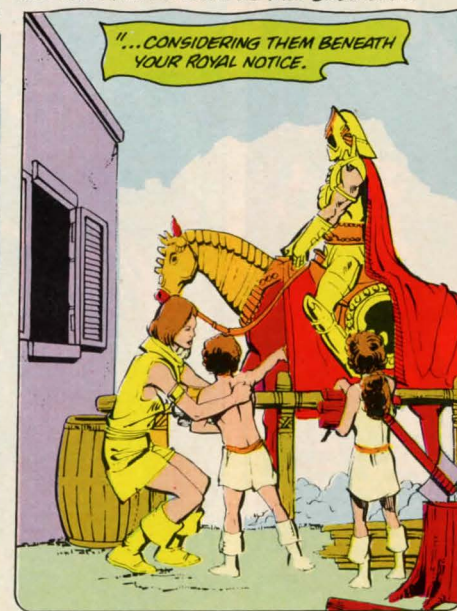
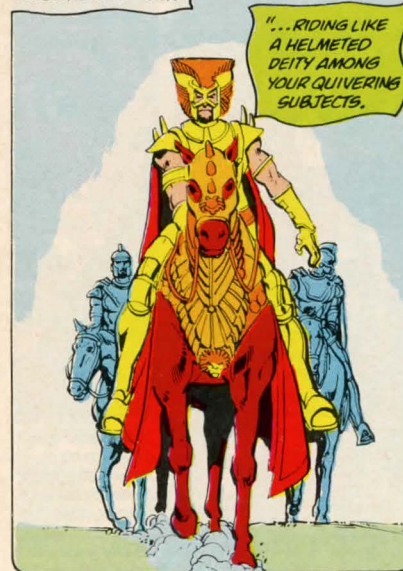
**BONG BONG**



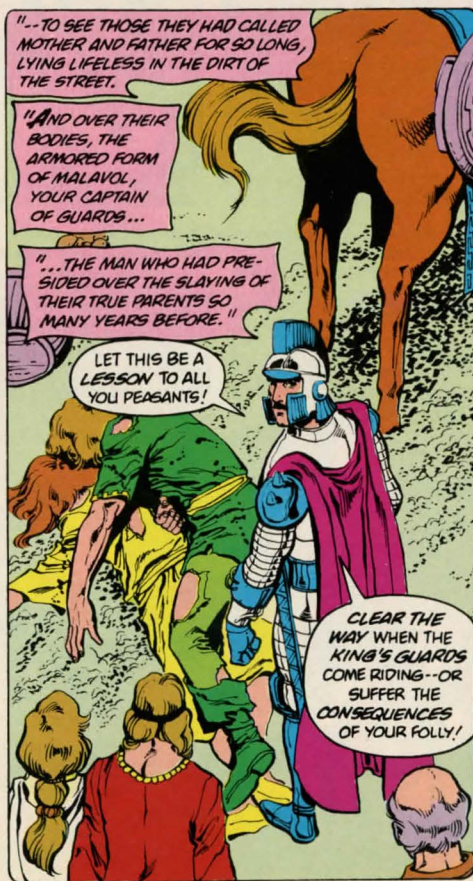


"AND SO, UNKNOWING, YOU HAVE REIGNED FOR NIGH A SCORE OF YEARS, THINKING YOURSELF SAFE FROM THE PROPHECY REVEALED TO ME IN A MAGICAL TRANCE..."

"HOW OFTEN YOU MUST HAVE PASSED CLOSE BY THOSE TWO DARK-HAIRED BRATS AS THEY GREW UP..."







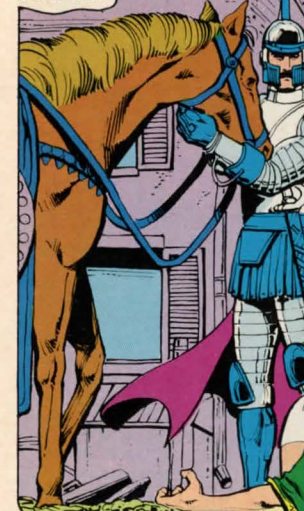
"HOW HORRIFIED AND SPEECHLESS THEY MUST HAVE BEEN, FOR AN ETERNAL MOMENT..."

"...TORN BETWEEN WHAT THEY SAW, AND DESIRED TO DO..."

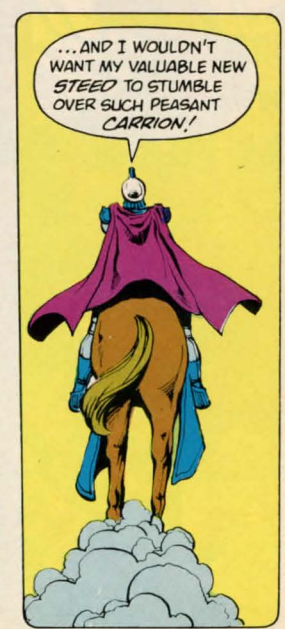


"...AND THE YEARS OF ADMONITION FROM THEIR FOSTER PARENTS TO KEEP HIDDEN, AND GAVE NO OFFENSE TO THE KING OR HIS MEN."

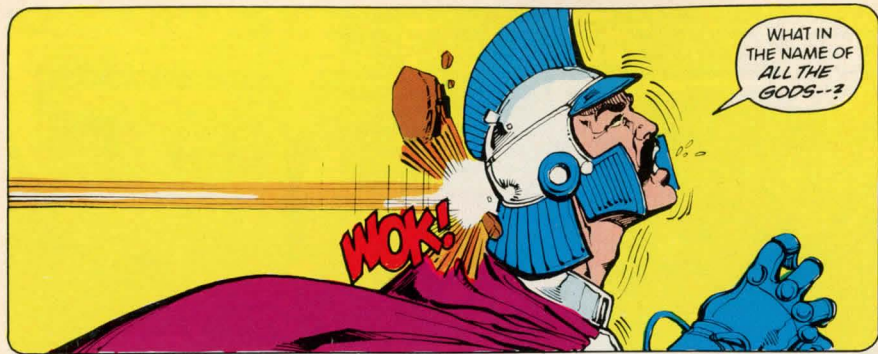
"YET SO INGRAINED IN THEM WERE THE HABITS OF OBEDIENCE THAT NEITHER BOY NOR GIRL LIFTED A HAND AGAINST MALAVOL AT THAT MOMENT..."



"...BUT MERELY EMBRACED THE POOR DEAD FIGURES, AS IF HOPING TO BREATH PRECIOUS LIFE BACK INTO THEM."

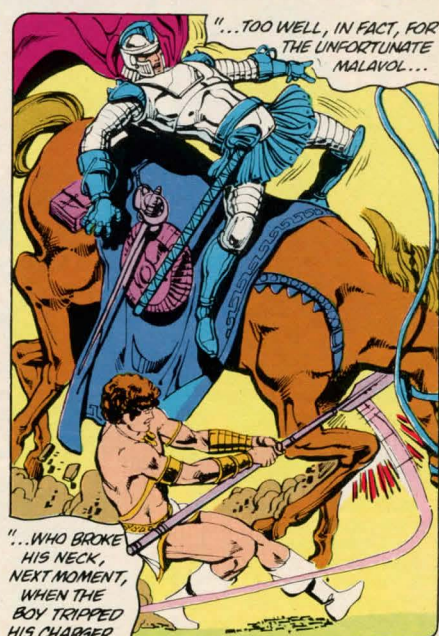
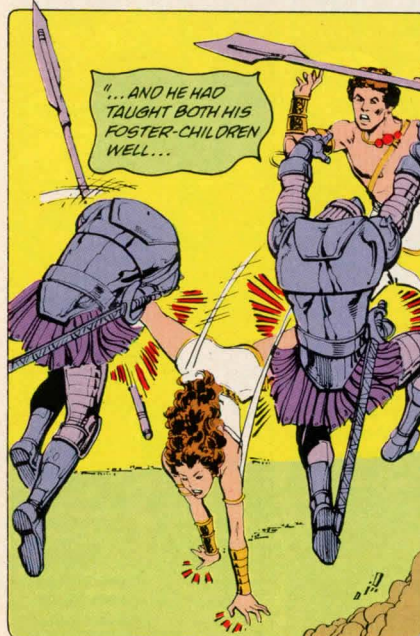
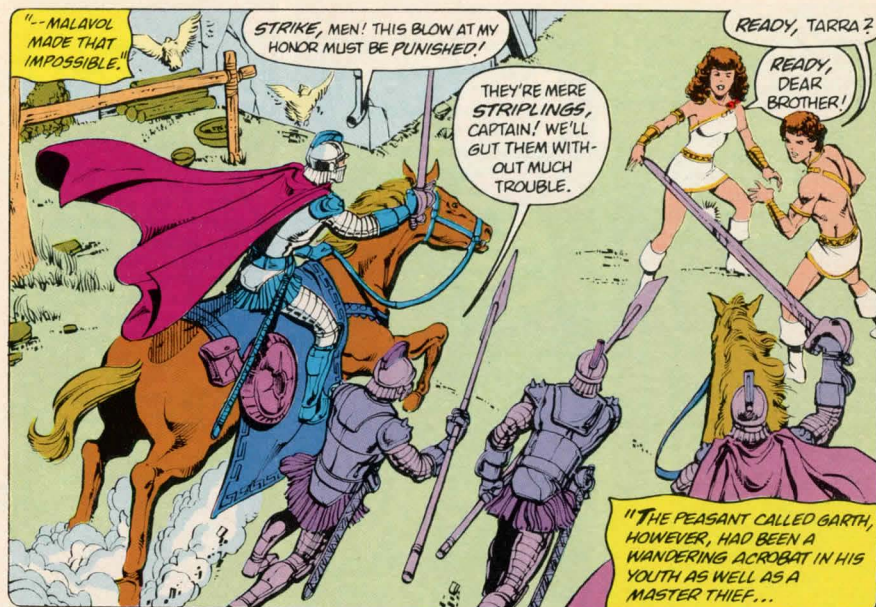






"CONSIDER THE IRONY, MY KING: IF NOT FOR THIS PETTY INCIDENT, THE DISGUISED TWINS MIGHT HAVE LIVED ALL THEIR LIVES, WITHOUT STRIKING A BLOW IN VENGEANCE.

"BUT NOW, WITH A HASTY BLOWING OF HIS SHRILL WHISTLE--"





"FUGITIVES NOW, THE PAIR BECAME THIEVES... AND THUS CAME TO PASS WHERE WE NOW BEHOLD THEM, MY KING. THEY--!"

"THE FLAMES THEY PLUNGE THROUGH DO NOT SEEM TO HARM THEM. I MUST TALK WITH THEM, KONJURO!"

"AS YOU WISH, ROYAL TYRANNUS. SPEAK... AND THEY SHALL INSTANTLY HEAR."



HEED MY WORDS, YE POOR OFF-SPRING OF MY MOST FAITHFUL WARRIOR, MY MOST BELOVED FRIEND, TARR!

SISTER! THAT VOICE-- IT SEEMS TO COME FROM EVERYWHERE-- YET FROM INSIDE MY OWN BRAIN--!

I HEAR IT, TOO.

AND FROM THE WORDS IT SPEAKS -- THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN IT CAN BE--!



AYE, CHILDREN! I AM TYRANNUS-- AND I SPEAK TO YOU AS A FRIEND, WHO HAS SEEN THE FOLLY OF HIS WAYS.

KONJURO SAYS THAT IF YOU WILLINGLY SURRENDER YOUR OWN WILLS TO HIS, HE CAN DRAW YOU BACK FROM THE INFERNO INTO WHICH YOU HAVE RASHLY HURLED YOURSELVES.

DO SO, I PRAY YOU... FOR YOUR OWN SAKES!

TYRANNUS!

THE MAN WHO SLEW OUR TRUE FATHER-- --AND HOUNDED OUR MOTHER TO HER DEATH!



THINK OF WHAT I OFFER-- COMPARED TO WHAT LIES BELOW, EVEN IF YOU SURVIVE YOUR FALL!

TOO TRUE, ALAS... BUT A MAN NOW VASTLY CHANGED AND REPENTANT, AND WILLING TO SHARE HIS THRONE WITH THOSE HE WRONGED IN HIS TRAGIC YOUTH!

DO NOT DOOM YOURSELVES WITH FOOLISH ACTIONS-- WHEN I OFFER YOU TWO-THIRDS OF A TRIPLE CROWN!

Y-YOU EXPECT US-- TO TRUST YOU!?

THINK, MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS-- THINK!

YOU-- WHO, THEY SAY, MURDERED EVEN HIS OWN ROYAL FATHER?

WHAT MEANS THAT TO YOU, COMPARED TO THE RICHES AND POWER I WILL GRANT YOU?

AND, BECAUSE THEY ARE ONLY HUMAN, AFTER ALL, TARRA AND TORR DO INDEED THINK-- AND THEY REMEMBER THIS NIGHT'S STRANGE DOINGS--



-- THE ADVENTURE IN KONJURO'S LONELY TOWER, FROM WHICH THEY FLED, PURSUED BY A THING FROM BEYOND.



THEY REMEMBER THE GHOST-LIKE MENTORR WHO APPEARED, AND BADE THEM SEEK OUT THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY--

-- DOWN A DARK-YAWNING PIT WHICH LED DOWN TO THE PLACE CALLED EARTH WORLD.

IT WAS, THE MENTORS SAID, BUT THE FIRST OF FOUR WORLDS THE YOUNG THIEVES MUST FOLLOW IN PURSUIT OF WHATEVER DESTINY IS HELD IN STORE FOR THEM.



YET WHAT A  
WORLD IT  
TURNED OUT  
TO BE!

TWELVE SEPARATE  
AND INTERCONNECTED  
CHAMBERS, EACH  
LORDED OVER BY A  
LIVING INCARNATION  
OF A ZODIAC  
SYMBOL--

--WHO EITHER ATTACKED  
OR AIDED THE YOUTHFUL  
SIBLINGS ON THEIR QUEST  
FOR THE MYSTIC SWORD.

STILL TORR  
AND TARRA  
PERSEVERED--  
AND EVENTUALLY  
TRIUMPHED--

-GAINING NOT  
THE SWORD, BUT  
AT LEAST THE  
ZODIACAL TALIS-  
MAN WITH IT--

--A TALISMAN  
WHICH HAD METAMOR-  
PHOSED, IN  
TURN, INTO TWIN SWORDS  
FOR TWIN  
ADVENTURERS!

SUCH ARE TORR'S AND  
TARRA'S THOUGHTS AS

WELL, MY YOUNG  
FRIENDS? HAVE YOU  
CONSIDERED MY  
GENEROUS OFFER?

AYE,  
TYRANNUS--  
AND WE HURL  
IT BACK IN  
YOUR TEETH!

WE'LL MAKE  
NO DEALS WITH  
THE SLAYERS OF  
ALL THOSE WHO  
LOVED US!

FOR ONCE,  
BROTHER,  
YOU'RE NO MORE  
IMPETUOUS THAN  
I'D BE!

MILORD  
KING...

AND NOW, EVEN THOUGH THEY  
HAVE ENTERED AN ETHEREAL STATE,  
IT SEEMS THEY HOLD IT OVER YOUR  
HEAD, EH, MY KING?

GIVE UP NOT SO EASILY! THE  
WAY BEFORE THE YOUNG THIEVES  
IS LONG AND HARD... AND THEY  
MAY YET FALTER AND FAIL...  
AND DIE.

AS, NO LONGER WITHIN  
EVEN SORCEROUS EAR-  
SHOT OF THE USURPER  
OF DARKSPIRE...

BY THE GODS!  
THE FLAMES DON'T  
REALLY BURN US--  
EVEN SLOW OUR FALL  
-- BUT IT SEEMS WE'VE  
BEEN DESCENDING  
FOREVER.

SO BE IT! BUT KNOW YOU THAT  
MY DEMONS SHALL DOG YOUR  
TRAIL, WHILE YOU SEEK THE  
SWORD OF ULTIMATE  
SORCERY--

--AND EVEN IF  
YOU FIND IT, IT  
WILL EVENTU-  
ALLY WIND UP  
IN MY ROYAL  
HANDS, WHERE  
IT BELONGS--

MY SPELL FADES AS THEY  
PASS FURTHER INTO THE WORLD  
BELOW, AND THEY CAN NO  
LONGER HEAR YOU.

CURSE THOSE  
INFERNAL MEDDLERS,  
MENTOR AND MENTARRA  
--MY FORMER  
COUNCILORS!

IT WAS THEY  
WHO FORGED THAT  
MAGICAL SWORD--

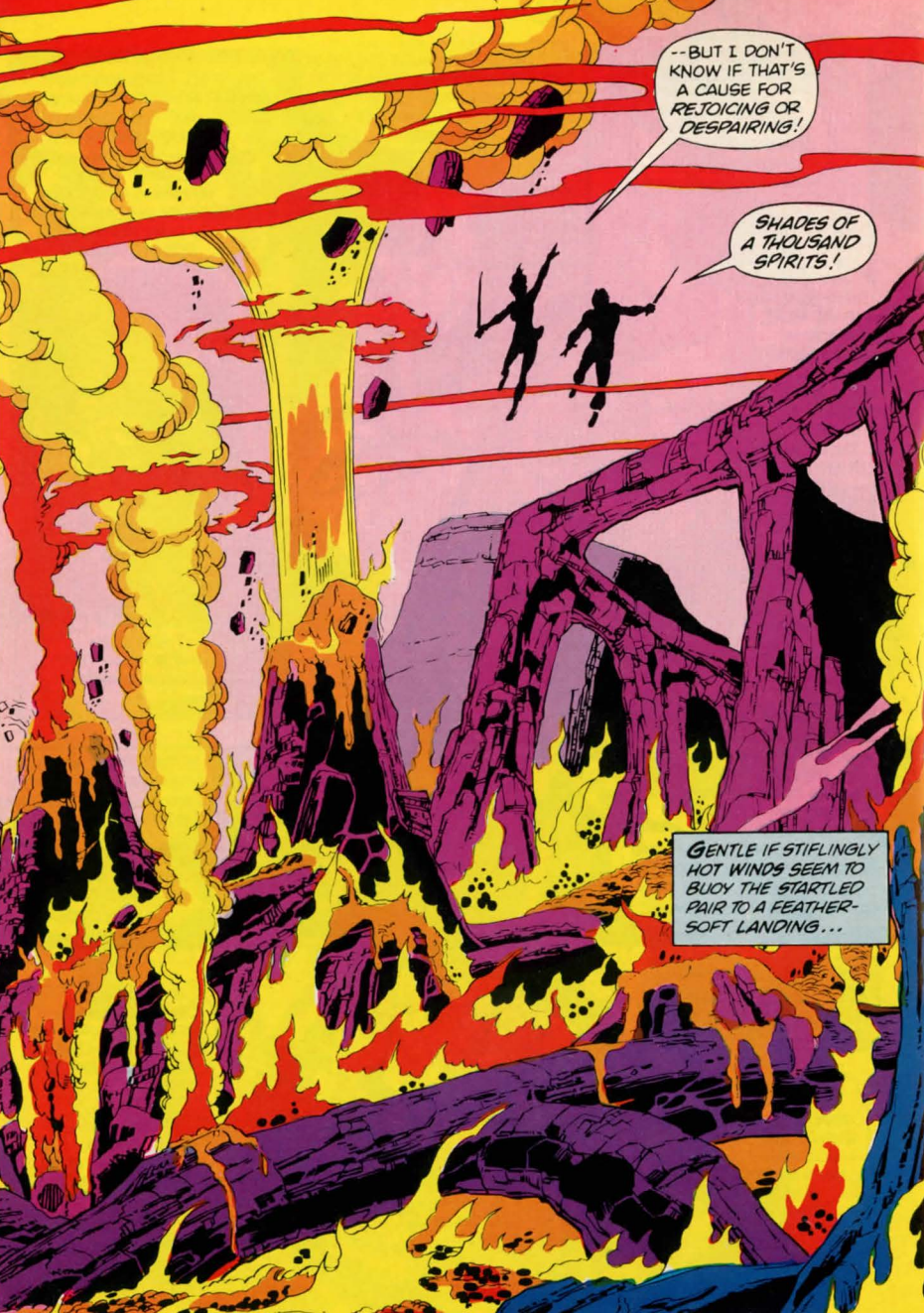
IF THEY DON'T, KONJURO,  
I DEPEND UPON YOU TO  
FIND STILL ANOTHER WAY  
TO REACH AND DESTROY  
THEM.

FOR IF I FALL BEFORE  
THEM AND THE SWORD--  
SO SHALL YOU!

IT'S NO MERE  
LAND OF FLAME  
WE ENTER, TORR--  
BUT OF WIZARDRY  
AND WONDER.

IN FACT,  
IT SEEMS OUR  
DOWNWARD  
PLUNGE IS  
ABOUT TO  
END--





--BUT I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S A CAUSE FOR REJOICING OR DESPAIRING!

SHADES OF A THOUSAND SPIRITS!

GENTLE IF STIFLINGLY HOT WINDS SEEM TO BUOY THE STARTLED PAIR TO A FEATHER-SOFT LANDING...



--IN THE SCARLET WORLD CALLED--

**FIREWORLD!**  
AND NEVER WAS A PLACE MORE APTLY NAMED!

VOLCANOES--  
BLAZING GEYSERS  
--RIVERS OF LAVA--  
AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE!

WE'LL PASS OUT FROM THIS TERRIBLE HEAT--UNLESS WE FIND A COOLER SPOT, AND QUICKLY.

WE'D BETTER TALK THIS OVER, AND FIGURE OUT WHICH DIRECTION WE SHOULD--

NO TIME FOR THAT!



THIS WAY LIES AS OPEN AS ANY! COME ON!

WAIT!  
THAT PATH LOOKS EVEN WORSE TO--

WILL YOU QUIT ARGUING AND FOLLOW ME?



I WILL NOT!

YOU'RE CONSTANTLY ORDERING ME AROUND-- AND I'M SICK AND TIRED OF IT, DO YOU HEAR ME?

I DON'T CLAIM TO KNOW WHICH WAY IS SAFER, OR COOLER, OR WHATEVER--



--BUT I'M GOING THIS WAY, AND YOU CAN DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO FOLLOW ME FOR A CHANGE!

TO BLAZES WITH YOU THEN!

I'LL GO MY OWN WAY!



YET, AS TARRA'S LITHE FORM  
VANISHES FROM VIEW...

NOW, WHAT  
MADE ME PICK  
A FIGHT WITH  
HER THAT WAY?

WELL,  
NOTHING TO  
BE DONE FOR  
IT NOW.



MY ONLY HOPE  
IS TO FIND THE  
SWORD, WHEREVER  
IT FELL--

--THEN USE IT  
TO FIND HER, AND  
GET US BOTH OUT  
OF HERE--



--BEFORE WE  
BOTH PERISH OF  
THIS HORRIBLE  
HEAT!

WELL,  
WELL,  
WELL...!



SOON AFTERWARD, UPON THE LEFTWARD  
PATH CHOSEN BY THE HEADSTRONG TORR...

SO HOT--AND GETTING  
HOTTER EVERY MINUTE!

CAN'T SEE FAR ENOUGH  
AHEAD TO KNOW IF I TOOK  
THE RIGHT PATH OR NOT!

WHY DID I  
GET SO PUSHY  
WITH TARRA,  
ANYWAY?

WE SHOULD'VE  
STUCK TOGETHER,  
NOT SEPARATED.



TOO LATE NOW,  
THOUGH, MY WAY BACK  
IS ALREADY BLOCKED BY  
FIRE AND LAVA.

GOT TO KEEP GOING--  
FIND THE SWORD, AND  
THEN TARRA, BEFORE--

GODS!  
NOW THE  
FLAMES ARE  
SHOOTING UP  
BEFORE ME,  
AS WELL!



OH, MENTORS--  
WHERE ARE YOU,  
NOW THAT I  
REALLY NEED  
YOU??



HERMINUS, OLD THIEF, IT  
SEEMS YOU WERE RIGHT TO  
FOLLOW THOSE TWO CUBS!

ONE OF THEM'S LIKELY TO FIND  
THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE  
SORCERY YOU'VE BEEN  
SEEKING FOR SO LONG.



'T'WILL THEN BE  
NO TRICK FOR A  
PROFESSIONAL  
THIEF LIKE YOUR-  
SELF TO WREST  
IT FROM THOSE  
AMATEURS.

BUT...WHICH  
TO FOLLOW?



WHAT SAY WE  
LET THE GODS  
DECIDE?



WAIT! I JUST REMEMBERED  
--THE ZODIACAL TALISMAN  
THAT WE RECEIVED ALONG  
WITH OUR BLADES!



WE KEPT  
THEM WHEN WE  
JUMPED, AND  
PERHAPS--

YOU ARE  
CORRECT,  
TORR.

MENTARRA  
IS EVEN NOW  
APPEARING TO  
YOUR WANDERING  
SISTER--



--BUT MENTOR MAY BE  
OF SMALL SERVICE TO  
YOU.



I HAD NO  
IDEA I COULD  
SUMMON YOU--  
ONCE I REACHED  
FIREWORLD!



ONCE AND ONCE ONLY IN EACH OF THE FOUR WORLDS OF THE ELEMENTS CAN YOU CALL UPON US, LAD.

THIS IS THAT TIME. SPEAK!

C-CAN YOU TAKE ME TO THE SWORD-- OR TO TARRA?

THAT IS A WAY YOU MUST FIND FOR YOURSELF, ALAS.

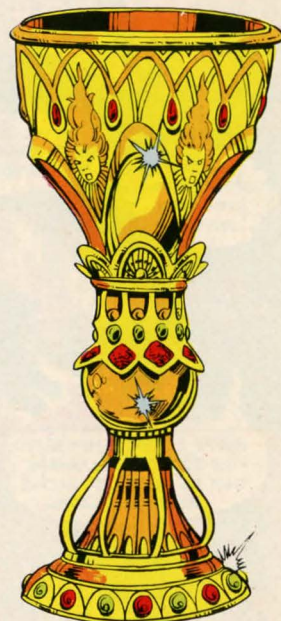
THEN SHOW ME SOMETHING COOL TO QUENCH MY THIRST, I BEG OF YOU... BEFORE I PERISH!

AH, NOW AT LEAST YOU HAVE ASKED THE PROPER QUESTION-- WHICH ALONE IS HALF THE STRUGGLE TO FINDING THE ANSWER.

I SHALL SHOW YOU WHAT YOU ASK, TORR--

--AYE, AND SO VERY MUCH MORE--

--IN THE CHALICE OF LIGHT!



IT-IT'S TRULY A THING OF BEAUTY, MENTOR!

BUT WHERE IS IT? HOW CAN I REACH IT AND QUENCH MY THIRST--SO I CAN STAY ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FIND TARRA AND THE SWORD?

YOU WILL FIND IT WHEN YOU BECOME THE **MIGHTIEST WARRIOR** IN THIS WORLD--AND NOT BEFORE.

YET, IF AND WHEN YOU DRINK OF THE CHALICE OF LIGHT, NOT ONLY SHALL YOU KNOW NO MORE THIRST IN THIS FIERY PLACE--

--BUT YOU WILL BE IMMUNE TO HER FLAMES, AND THUS WILL CONQUER!

NOW, I MUST DEPART...!

HOLD IT! DON'T GO! I'M NOT THROUGH WITH--

BLAST! I SHOULD'VE KNOWN --NOBODY KEEPS MENTOR AROUND WHEN HE DECIDES IT'S TIME TO GO.

JUST SEEING THAT CHALICE GAVE ME STRENGTH--AND HOPE.

I'LL FIND IT--AND I'LL BECOME THE GREAT WARRIOR MENTOR SAID I MUST BE--

--FOR THE SAKE OF THE REVENGE WE SEEK--AND FOR TARRA!

MEANWHILE, HIS SISTER HAS LIKEWISE COMMUNICATED WITH THE FEMININE WRATH MENTARRA, AND NOW--

THIS IS ONE TIME I WAS JUST AS STUPIDLY STUBBORN AS TORR.

CAN'T GO THAT WAY --BUT MAYBE I'LL FIND RESPITE FROM THE HEAT IN THIS CAVE.

WH-WHAT--?

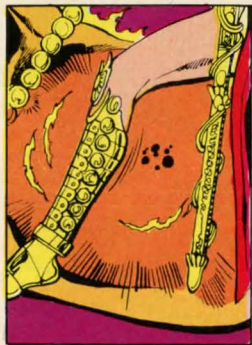
I LET THE STIFLING HEAT IN THIS PLACE WARP MY JUDGMENT.

IT'S NOT REALLY A CAVE AT ALL--









NEXT MOMENT, IT SEEMS AS IF TREASURE CHAMBER, PROFUSELY- SCATTERED WEALTH, AYE, EVEN FIREWORLD ITSELF, HAVE ALL BUT VANISHED FROM TARRA'S FEVERED SIGHT--

--AS THE GLISTENING METALLIC STALLION BUCKS AND HEAVES, AS IF TO HURL ITS HUMAN RIDER TO A FIERY DEATH, A MILLION MILES BELOW AND AWAY!

AND TARRA HANGS ON-- FOR LIFE, FOR VENGEANCE--

--AND PERHAPS MOST OF ALL, FOR THE SAKE OF HER BROTHER TORR!



MEANWHILE, USING THE WORDS OF MENTORR AS THE FOUNDATION OF HIS ACTIONS, TORR HIMSELF HAS WANDERED INTO YET ANOTHER OF THE STRANGE CIRCULAR CHAMBERS WHICH SEEM TO DOT THE CRIMSON FACE OF FIREWORLD...

WARLOCKS AND WIZARDS! I CAME SEEKING A CHALICE TO DRINK FROM-- PERHAPS REFUGE FROM THE NUMBING HEAT--

--AND I'VE FOUND A WEIRDLING ALTAR INSTEAD!

WELL, MIGHT AS WELL SEARCH IT BEFORE I GO ON.

BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE WHOSE ALTAR IT COULD BE IN THIS DEVILISH PLACE...

...FOR I'VE CERTAINLY SEEN NO ONE ABOUT!

LIKE HIS SISTER BEFORE HIM, TORR FINDS ARMOR ENOUGH TO EQUIP A SMALL ARMY...

A KING'S RANSOM WORTH OF SHIELDS AND SWORDS AND BREASTPLATES--AND ALL OF FINE-CARVED SILVER!

IF I'M TO BECOME A WARRIOR--MAYBE IT WAS MEANT THAT I FIND SUCH ARMOR.

AND IF NOT--WHY, I'M STILL CALLED A THIEF BACK IN TYRANNUS' KINGDOM, AFTER ALL.

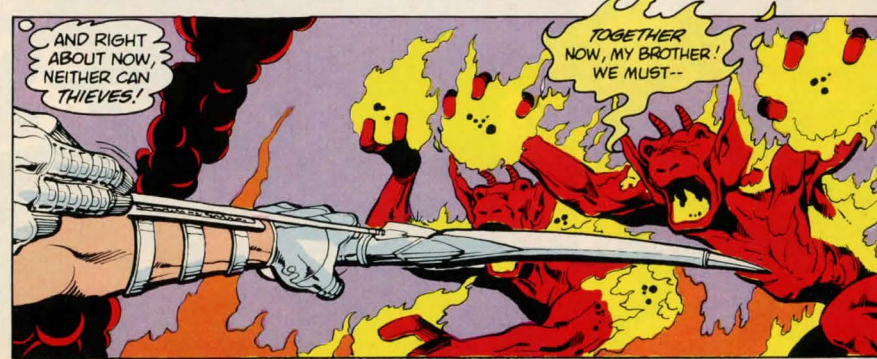
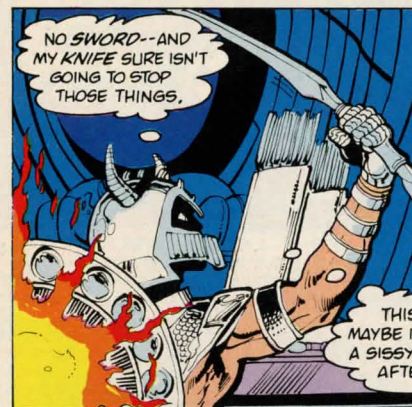
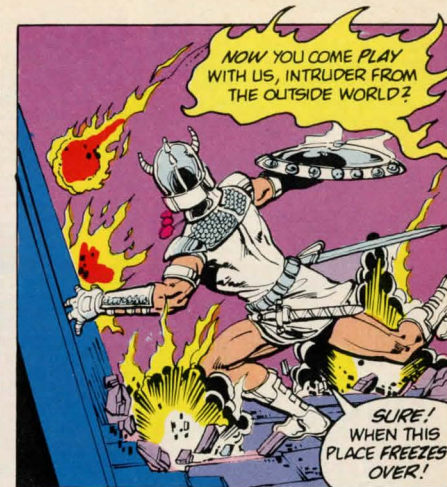
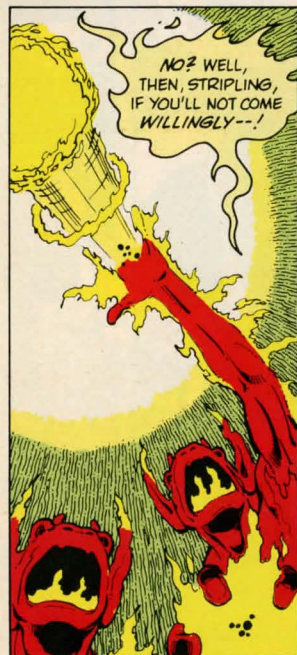
THIS HELMET-- INDEED, ALL THE ARMOR-- FITS ME LIKE A WELL-TAILORED GLOVE!

IT'S AN OMEN, ALL RIGHT--AND WHO AM I TO DISREGARD AN OMEN?

THE BOWS AND ARROWS I CAN DO WITHOUT-- THEY'RE THE WEAPONS OF COWARDS AND WEAKLINGS, BUT--

WHAT--?







THE FIRE-GOBLINS CRY IS CUT OFF IN MID-SHOUT, HOWEVER, AS--TO TORR'S GREAT SHOCK--THE ICE-ARROW STRIKES HOME--



AND WHEN CLOUDS OF STEAM AND SMOKE HAVE BLOWN AWAY--



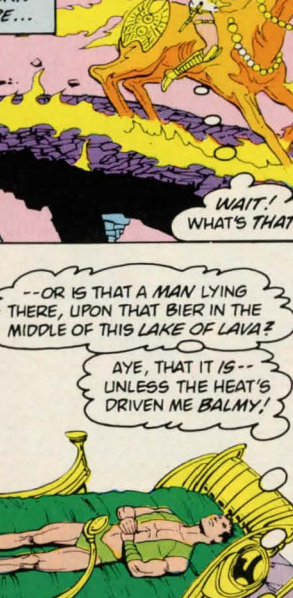
ALL RIGHT--YOU FUGITIVES FROM A FIREPLACE--COME AHEAD!



THE SNOW-SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT NOW, ISN'T IT?



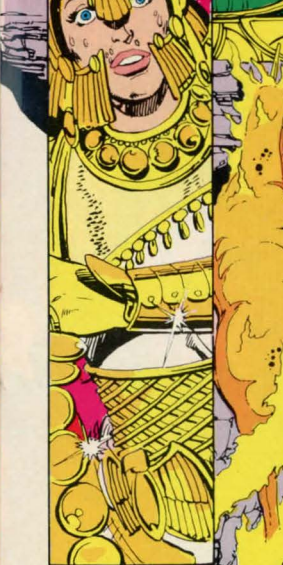
ELSEWHERE, A YOUTHFUL FIGURE WITH ARMOR TO MATCH HER GOLDEN TRESSSES SITS ASTRIDE A GALLOPING UNICORN WITH MANE LIKE FIRE...



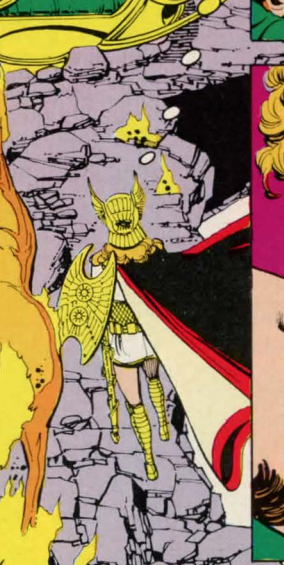
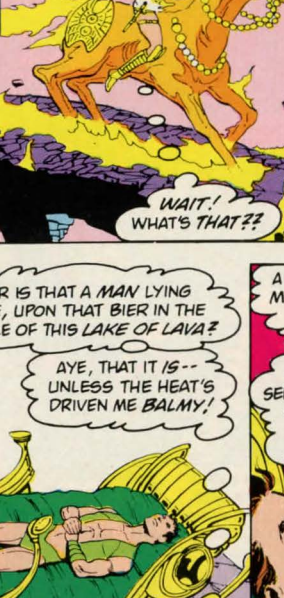
WELL, AT LEAST IT'S STOPPED TRYING TO TOSS ME INTO THE LAVA, THANK HELIOS FOR SMALL FAVORS! IT EVEN RESPONDS TO MY COM-MANDS ALREADY, AND--



IS IT JUST THAT OVERWHELMING HEAT GETTING TO ME--BAKING ME INSIDE THIS ARMOR--



--OR IS THAT A MAN LYING THERE, UPON THAT BIER IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS LAKE OF LAVA?



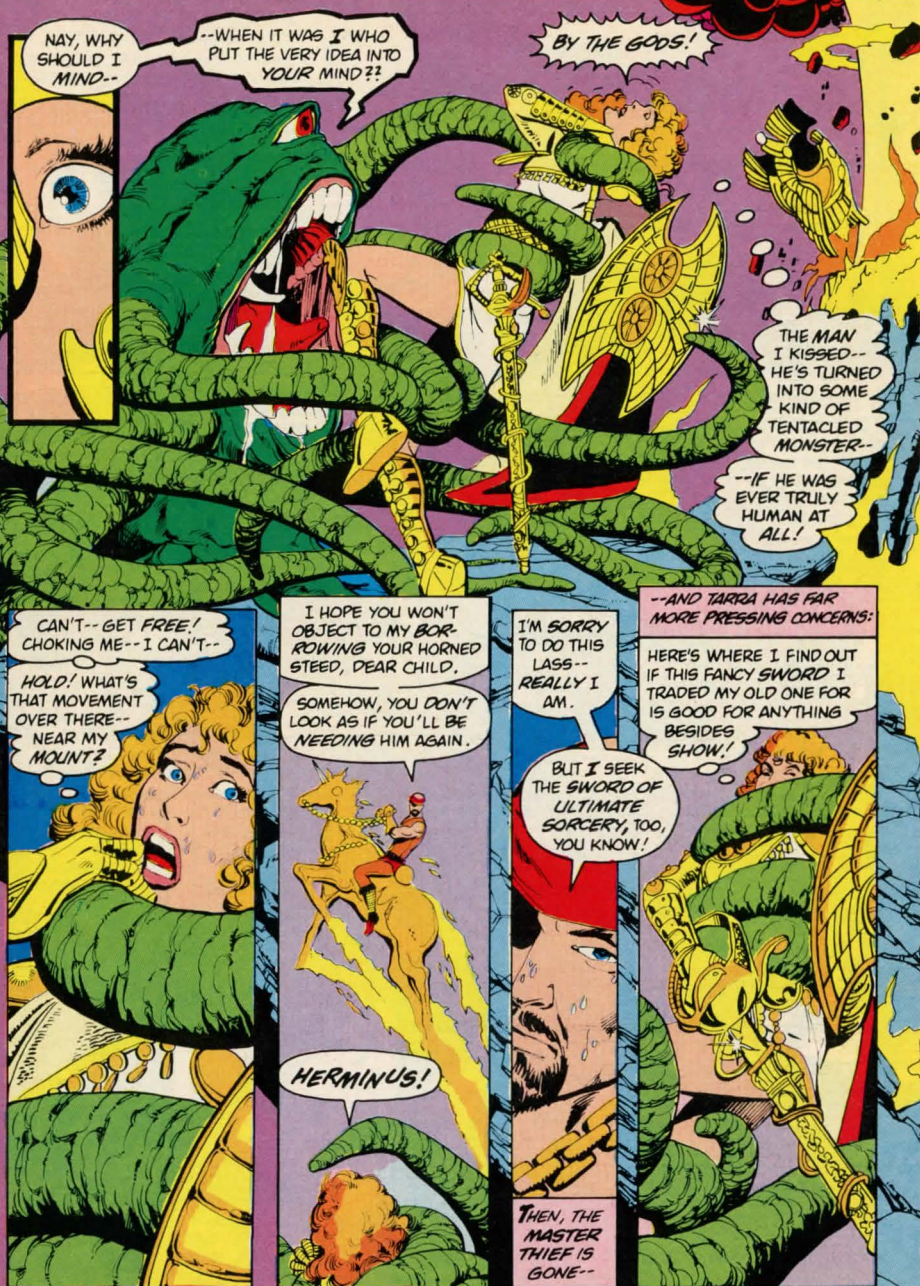
A HANDSOME LAD, TOO--FULL OF MANLY BEAUTY--A STRANGE SORT OF HARMONY ABOUT HIS FEATURES, SOMEHOW.



I...DON'T KNOW QUITE WHY...







NAY, WHY SHOULD I MIND--

--WHEN IT WAS I WHO PUT THE VERY IDEA INTO YOUR MIND??

BY THE GODS!

THE MAN I KISSED-- HE'S TURNED INTO SOME KIND OF TENTACLED MONSTER--

--IF HE WAS EVER TRULY HUMAN AT ALL!

CAN'T-- GET FREE! CHOKING ME-- I CAN'T--

HOLD! WHAT'S THAT MOVEMENT OVER THERE-- NEAR MY MOUNT?

I HOPE YOU WON'T OBJECT TO MY BORROWING YOUR HORNE STEED, DEAR CHILD.

SOMEHOW, YOU DON'T LOOK AS IF YOU'LL BE NEEDING HIM AGAIN.



HERMINUS!

I'M SORRY TO DO THIS LASS-- REALLY I AM.

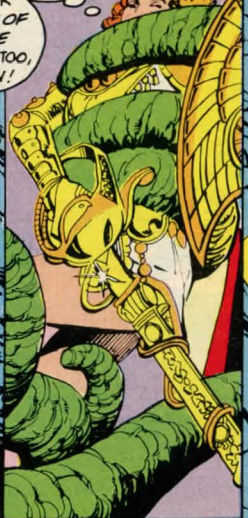
BUT I SEEK THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY, TOO, YOU KNOW!



THEN, THE MASTER THIEF IS GONE--

--AND TARRA HAS FAR MORE PRESSING CONCERNS:

HERE'S WHERE I FIND OUT IF THIS FANCY SWORD I TRADED MY OLD ONE FOR IS GOOD FOR ANYTHING BESIDES SHOW!



APPARENTLY NOT!

SKRAK

THE OCTOPOID'S STRENGTH! MY OWN'S LIKE A CHILD'S BESIDE IT!

IT'S DRAWING ME TOWARD IT-- INTO ITS GAPING MAW!

MY SHIELD-- IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE!



YAAARRG

I-- I DID IT!

IT'S HUGE JAWS CRUSHED THE SHIELD --SHATTERED IT-- BUT THE JAGGED EDGES ARE HURTING ITS SOFT INSIDES!



IT'S SCUTTling BACK INTO THE MOLTEN LAVA WHERE IT MUST LIVE!

IF ITS PAIN HADN'T DISTRACTED IT-- IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN ME WITH IT!

THE MONSTER MUST HAVE READ MY MIND SOMEHOW-- USED AN IMAGE OF MANLY BEAUTY BURIED THERE-- TO LURE ME.

WELL, I SURVIVED ITS ATTACK-- JUST BARELY--



--BUT I LOST MY UNICORN-- MY WEAPONS-- EVERYTHING!



STILL SO HOT-- AND WEARIER THAN EVER-- BUT I CAN'T GO ON WITHOUT A SWORD.

MUST GO BACK TO THE CHAMBER OF SPLENDOR-- FOR MY OLD ONE--

--AND IF IT ISN'T THERE-- I'M IN DEEP TROUBLE!





AS, ON ANOTHER OF THE MYRIAD ROCK-BRIDGES WHICH FORM THE SOLE ROADWAYS OF FIREWORLD...

SO! I THOUGHT YOU TWO FIRE-GOBLINS HAD ALL GONE SKITTERING BACK INTO THE LAVA POOL.

TOO SCARED EVEN FOR THAT, HUH?



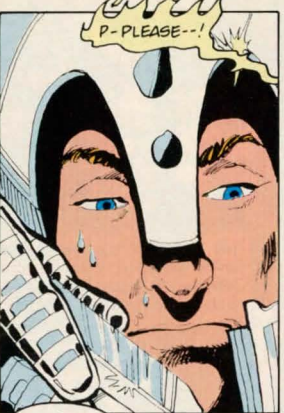
PLEASE-- D-DON'T HURT US, MASTER!

WE JUST W-WANTED TO PROTECT OUR L-LAND!



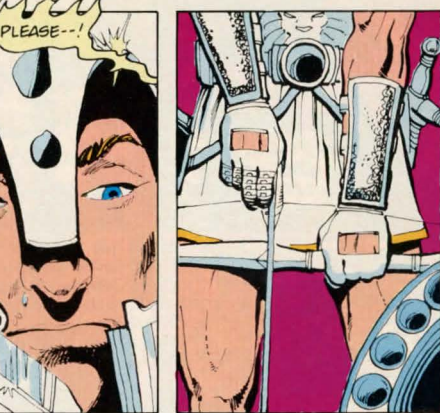
OH, THANK YOU, MASTER! WE--

NOW DON'T GET MAUDLIN ON ME, OR I'M LIABLE TO CHANGE MY MIND.



P- PLEASE--!

GET AWAY FROM THERE! YOU WANT TO SET MY BOOTS ON FIRE?



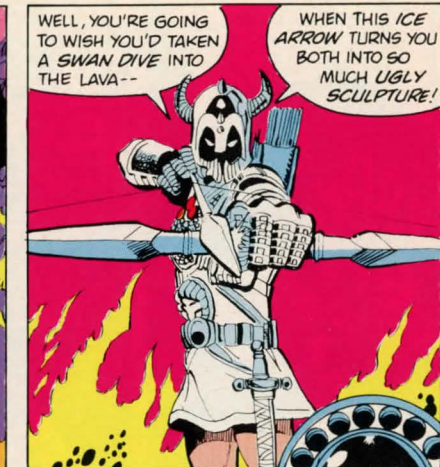
DON'T KNOW WHY I SHOWED YOU GUYS ANY MERCY-- UNLESS IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT USED TO WINNING FIGHTS.

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SHOW ME SOME GRATITUDE--

--OR JUST A PLAIN DRINK OF--

--YOU CAN POINT ME TO MY SISTER TARRA--OR THE CHALICE OF LIGHT--

--OR JUST A PLAIN DRINK OF--

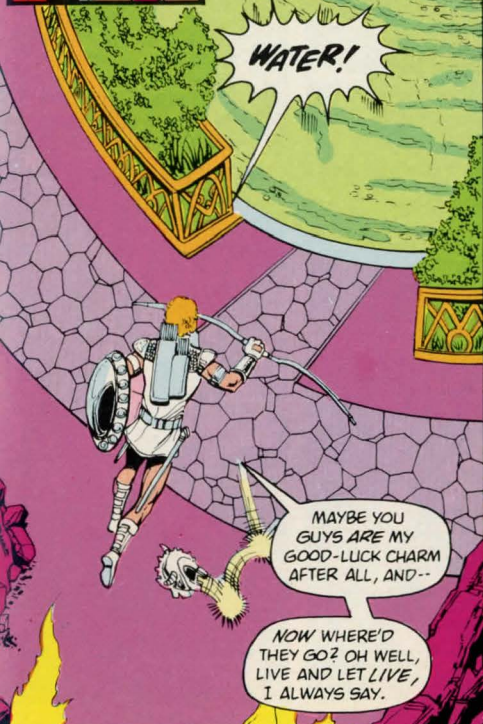


WELL, YOU'RE GOING TO WISH YOU'D TAKEN A SWAN DIVE INTO THE LAVA--

WHEN THIS ICE ARROW TURNS YOU BOTH INTO SO MUCH UGLY SCULPTURE!



EH--?



WATER!

MAYBE YOU GUYS ARE MY GOOD- LUCK CHARM AFTER ALL, AND--

NOW WHERE'D THEY GO? OH WELL, LIVE AND LET LIVE, I ALWAYS SAY.

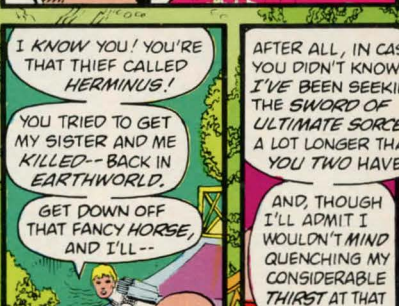


BY THE GODS, THIS FEELS GOOD--AND COOL! IT'S NOT THE CHALICE OF LIGHT, BUT IT'LL DO.

JUST HOPE TARRA'S FOUND SOMEPLACE LIKE IT! IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HER--!



DO YOU ALWAYS TALK TO YOURSELF THIS WAY, BOY?



I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THAT THIEF CALLED HERMINUS!

YOU TRIED TO GET MY SISTER AND ME KILLED-- BACK IN EARTHWORLD.

GET DOWN OFF THAT FANCY HORSE, AND I'LL--

I'VE REALLY NO TIME, BOY.



AFTER ALL, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, I'VE BEEN SEEKING THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY A LOT LONGER THAN YOU TWO HAVE.

AND, THOUGH I'LL ADMIT I WOULDN'T MIND QUENCHING MY CONSIDERABLE THIRST AT THAT FOUNTAIN--

I'VE REALLY NO TIME, BOY.



--BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL SETTLE TILL I FIND THE SAME CHALICE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!

WAIT! HOW'D YOU LATCH ONTO--A UNICORN THAT FLIES?

WE MASTER THIEVES DON'T DIVULGE OUR SECRETS TO RANK AMATEURS, BOY.

FARE YOU WELL!

THAT GUY'D STEAL THE COINS OFF A DEAD MAN'S EYES!

NICE-LOOKING UNICORN, THOUGH. WISH I HAD--

HUH??

THERE'S SOMETHING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FOUNTAIN--SOME KIND OF ROLLED-UP PARCHMENT!

DON'T LIKE WASTING TIME WHEN I MIGHT BE LOOKING FOR TARRA OR THE SWORD.

BUT WHO KNOWS? THE WAY THINGS GO IN THIS UNDER-GROUND WORLD...

... MAYBE THAT SCROLL WILL TELL ME HOW TO FIND THEM.

BESIDES, A FAST, COOL DIP WOULD SURE FEEL GOOD RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

A FEW MINUTES AGO, MY TONGUE WAS HANGING OUT LIKE A DOG'S FROM THE HEAT...

AND NOW...

OH NO!

SOME KIND OF GIGANTIC REPTILE--IT MUST'VE BEEN LYING IN WAIT BENEATH THE FOUNTAIN FLOOR!

IT'S GOT MY LEG--PULLING ME DOWN--!

GLOMP!



IN THE MEAN-  
TIME, TORR'S  
GOLD-HAIRED  
TWIN HAS  
RETRIEVED A  
SECOND OUT-  
FITTING FROM  
THE CHAMBER  
OF SPLENDOR,  
AND...

SPEAK OF  
THE DEVIL!

THERE'S A FULL  
SUIT OF ARMOR--  
HANGING ON THAT  
BLAZING TREE--

--AND IT LOOKS AS  
IF IT WOULD FIT ME  
PERFECTLY!

NO! WHAT IN  
THE NAME OF  
THIS TERRIBLE  
HEAT AM I  
THINKING OF?

NOW I GET IT! THIS  
PLACE JUST THROWS ONE  
TEMPTATION AFTER  
ANOTHER AT YOU--LIKE  
THE "SLEEPING PRINCE"  
BEFORE, AND NOW THIS--

--TAKING IMAGES  
FROM MY MIND, AND  
USING THEM TO  
DISARM ME!

THINGS  
SHOULD GO  
A BIT MORE  
SMOOTHLY  
FROM HERE  
ON.

MAYBE  
I COULD  
JUST--

THIS TIME,  
I CHOOSE MY  
WEAPONS FOR  
STURDINESS,  
NOT SHEEN.

TOO BAD  
THERE WASN'T  
A SECOND SUIT  
OF ARMOR LYING  
AROUND, BUT--  
BY THE  
GODS!

I'D TAKE OFF THIS  
BIT OF ARMOR, AND  
THEN BE TOTALLY  
UNPROTECTED  
IF--

OWWWWW

THAT BLAST OF  
HEAT! WH-WHERE'D  
IT COME FROM??



SKRAWWWK

I HAD  
TO ASK!?

THIS PLACE  
NEVER GIVES UP,  
DOES IT?

UNICORNS--  
HYPNOTIC  
OCTOPOIDS--  
AND NOW THIS  
FIRE-HAWK!

WELL, AT LEAST  
THIS ARMOR'S  
PROTECTING ME  
BETTER THAN THE  
OTHER DID--

--BUT THAT LAST  
PASS BY THE HAWK--  
LEFT ME SO FAINT--  
FROM ITS SHEER  
UNRELENTING HEAT!

ANOTHER  
ONE LIKE IT--  
AND I'M  
DONE FOR--







--UNLESS I TAKE THE BULL BY THE HORNS--

OR, IN THIS CASE, THE BIRD BY THE BEAK--



--AND SEE IF THIS FEATHERED FIRE-BALL WILL OBEY A RIDER AS READILY AS THE UNICORN DID.



WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW? IT DOES!

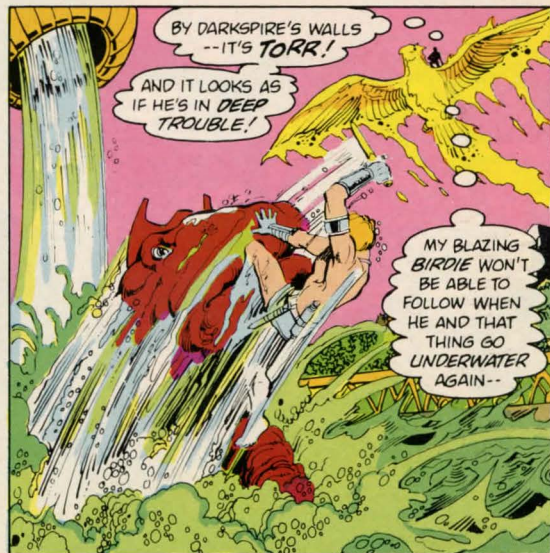
MAYBE I AM ON MY WAY TO BECOMING THE WARRIOR MENTARRA TALKED ABOUT, AFTER ALL!

BEST THING IS-- FROM UP HERE, MAYBE I CAN CATCH A GLIMPSE OF TORR, IF HE'S--



HUH? THOSE WEIRD LITTLE CREATURES BELOW-- GESTURING FRANTICALLY AT ME, AS IF THEY'RE TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING!

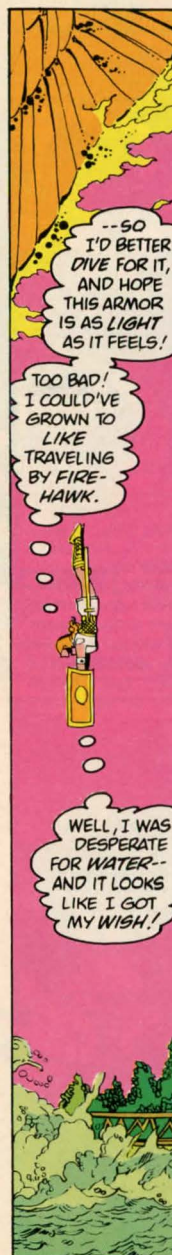
BETTER TAKE A LOOK OVER WHERE THEY'RE--



BY DARKSPIRE'S WALLS --IT'S TORR!

AND IT LOOKS AS IF HE'S IN DEEP TROUBLE!

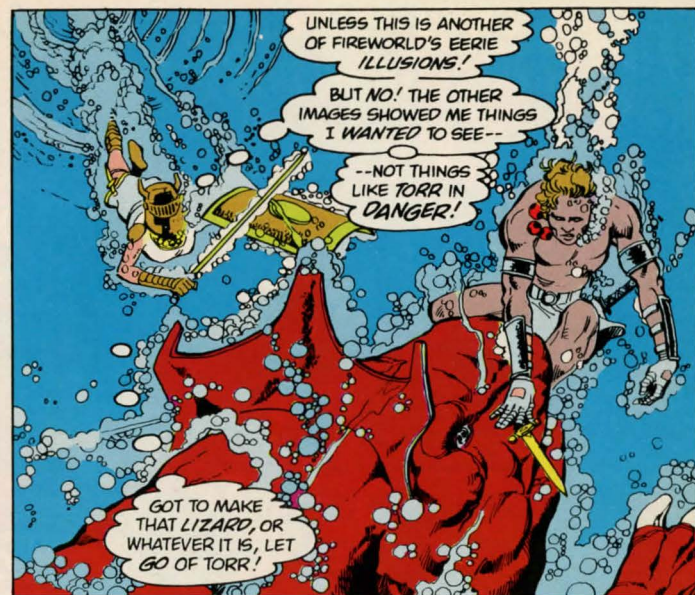
MY BLAZING BIRDIE WON'T BE ABLE TO FOLLOW WHEN HE AND THAT THING GO UNDERWATER AGAIN--



--SO I'D BETTER DIVE FOR IT, AND HOPE THIS ARMOR IS AS LIGHT AS IT FEELS!

TOO BAD! I COULD'VE GROWN TO LIKE TRAVELING BY FIRE-HAWK.

WELL, I WAS DESPERATE FOR WATER-- AND IT LOOKS LIKE I GOT MY WISH!



UNLESS THIS IS ANOTHER OF FIREWORLD'S EERIE ILLUSIONS!

BUT NO! THE OTHER IMAGES SHOWED ME THINGS I WANTED TO SEE--

--NOT THINGS LIKE TORR IN DANGER!

GOT TO MAKE THAT LIZARD, OR WHATEVER IT IS, LET GO OF TORR!



THIS ARMOR'S LIGHT, ALL RIGHT! I'M POPPING UP LIKE A CORK.

NOTHING LIKE THE DIRECT APPROACH!

**GRONK**



GOOD THING I DIDN'T TRADE IT IN.



TORR-- ARE YOU--?

I WON'T FEEL--LIKE GOING SWIMMING --FOR A WHILE-- BUT OTHERWISE--

SAME OLD BROTHER-OF-MINE, ALL RIGHT--THANK THE GODS!





WELL? WHAT'S WRONG, TORR?  
AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME?

WHAT ARE  
YOU GAPING  
AT?

--BUT  
NOT  
THAT!

YOU,  
SISTER--  
YES--

WOULDN'T  
YOU JUST KNOW  
IT--IN A FIRE-HAPPY  
PLACE LIKE THIS--

--THAT THING  
WOULD BE A FIRE-  
BREATHER!?



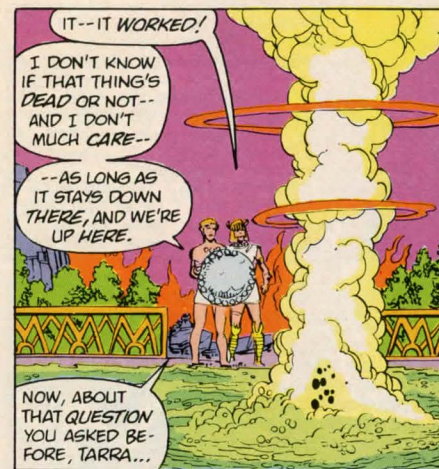
TORR!  
WILL YOUR  
SHIELD--?

I DON'T KNOW!

BUT OUR ONLY  
HOPE--IS TO FIGHT  
FIRE--WITH FIRE--



--AND  
PRAY!



IT--IT WORKED!

I DON'T KNOW  
IF THAT THING'S  
DEAD OR NOT--  
AND I DON'T  
MUCH CARE--

--AS LONG AS  
IT STAYS DOWN  
THERE, AND WE'RE  
UP HERE.

NOW, ABOUT  
THAT QUESTION  
YOU ASKED BE-  
FORE, TARRA...



I HOPE THIS  
SHOWS YOU I'M  
GLAD TO SEE  
YOU!

OH, TORR, MY BROTHER--  
WE WERE MAD TO ARGUE!

WE'VE GOT  
TO STICK  
TOGETHER  
AGAINST THIS  
INSANE  
WORLD!



...SO THE WAY I FIGURE IT, I  
GAINED SOME SORT OF UNDER-  
STANDING OF FIREWORLD, AND  
THAT'S WHAT ENABLED ME TO  
MASTER THE FIRE-HAWK.

I GOT A LITTLE BIT  
WISER MYSELF--WHEN  
I LEARNED I'M NOT THE  
BIG STRONG LONER I  
PRETENDED TO BE.



AND IF THIS  
GATEWAY IS ANY  
EVIDENCE-- I'M  
NOT SURE WE'RE  
GOING TO!

IT'S LIKE A  
ROARING FURNACE--  
THE GREATEST INFERNO  
WE'VE ENCOUNTERED  
YET!

BUT NOW THAT  
OUR PATHS HAVE  
JOINED--OUR GOAL  
MUST BE JUST  
BEYOND IT! IT  
MUST!

WE STILL DIDN'T FIND THE CHALICE,  
THOUGH, LET ALONE THE SWORD...





WE CAN'T HAVE COME SO FAR, GOTTEN SO CLOSE--ONLY TO FAIL--

--CAN WE?

YOU DIDN'T LET ME FINISH BEFORE, TORR-- TELLING YOU ABOUT MY UNDERSTANDING OF FIREWORLD.

I MASTERED THE FIRE-HAWK BECAUSE I'D BEATEN THE OCTOPOID, DON'T YOU SEE?

CONQUER ONE ASPECT OF THIS WORLD--AND YOU CONQUER IT ALL!

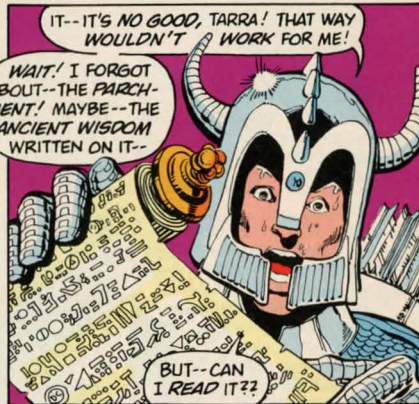
I'D HAVE STOOD UP TO THAT DRAGON, TOO--IF I HADN'T PANICKED.



BUT WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH--TARRA! STOP!

NO! THE FLAMES CAN'T HURT ME--IF I DON'T BELIEVE THEY CAN!

FOLLOW ME, TORR! HURRY!



IT--IT'S NO GOOD, TARRA! THAT WAY WOULDN'T WORK FOR ME!

WAIT! I FORGOT ABOUT--THE PARCHMENT! MAYBE--THE ANCIENT WISDOM WRITTEN ON IT--

BUT--CAN I READ IT??



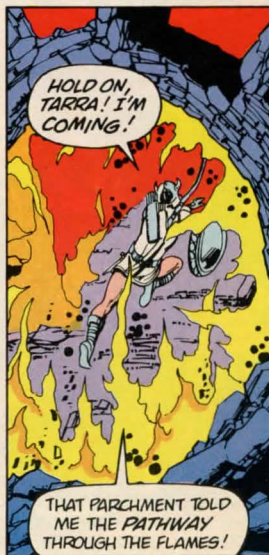
TORR'S RIGHT! HE COULDN'T HAVE COME WITH ME.

HE'D HAVE BEEN BURNED--EVEN IF I'M NOT.



MUST GO ON--FIND OUT WHAT'S AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY!

THEN I'LL GO BACK FOR TORR, AND--



HOLD ON, TARRA! I'M COMING!

THAT PARCHMENT TOLD ME THE PATHWAY THROUGH THE FLAMES!



SOMEHOW, THE WATER I SWALLOWED BACK AT THAT WEIRD FOUNTAIN GAVE ME THE WISDOM TO--

HUH??

DON'T TELL ME--LET ME GUESS--!

THE CHALICE OF LIGHT!

JUST THINK, TORR--ONCE WE DRINK FROM IT, WE WON'T FEEL THE HEAT ANY MORE--WE WON'T FEEL ANY THIRST!

WE'LL HAVE CONQUERED FIREWORLD, JUST AS WE DID EARTHWORLD--

--AND BECOME THE WARRIORS OUR MENTORS TOLD US WE COULD BE!





I'LL DRINK TO THAT-- A NICE LONG GULP OF WATER!

YES, AND ALL WITHOUT SLAYING ANYBODY TO GET TO IT, TOO!



AS A MATTER OF FACT--SO WILL I!

HUH? WHO--?



KRAASH

THE CHALICE-- IT SHATTERED INTO A MILLION PIECES!



THAT IT IS, MY HEARTIES, A CROWN THAT WAITS FOR ME-- IN THE THIRD WORLD WHERE HIDES THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY!

HE'S GETTING AWAY-- ON THAT WEIRD UNICORN!

LET HIM.



AFTER ALL, WE'VE GOT THE CHALICE, RIGHT?

AND IF WHAT HAPPENED IN EARTHWORLD WAS ANY CLUE, IT SHOULD BE THE KEY TO OUR NEXT DESTINATION.

I GUESS SO... BUT I DON'T TRUST THAT HERMINUS!

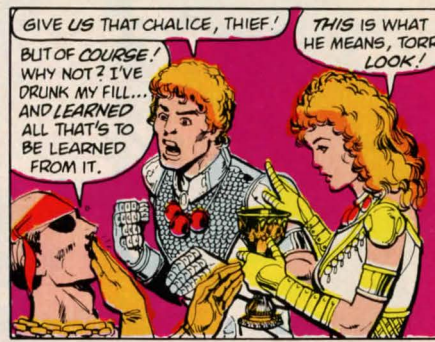


THEN I'M BETTING--IT WASN'T THE REAL CHALICE OF LIGHT AT ALL!



AYE, LAD AND LASS-- HERMINUS, AND DRINKING A JOLLY TOAST TO THE BOTH OF YOU!

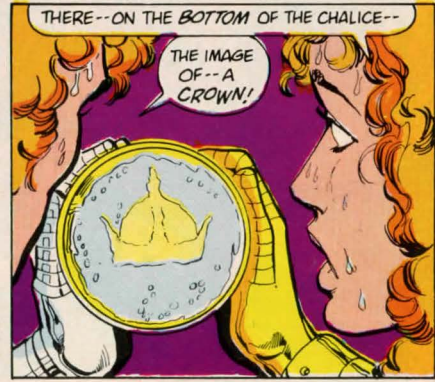
FACT IS, I WAS QUITE THIRSTY, AND SINCE THIS TRUE CHALICE NEVER GETS EMPTY--



GIVE US THAT CHALICE, THIEF!

BUT OF COURSE! WHY NOT? I'VE DRUNK MY FILL... AND LEARNED ALL THAT'S TO BE LEARNED FROM IT.

THIS IS WHAT HE MEANS, TORR. LOOK!



THERE--ON THE BOTTOM OF THE CHALICE--

THE IMAGE OF--A CROWN!



WHY SHOULD YOU? HE'S A THIEF, ISN'T HE--JUST LIKE US!

NOT LIKE US! WE'RE WARRIORS NOW, REMEMBER?

AND WE WANT THE SWORD TO DEFEAT TYRANNUS, NOT JUST BECAUSE IT'S VALUABLE! WE--

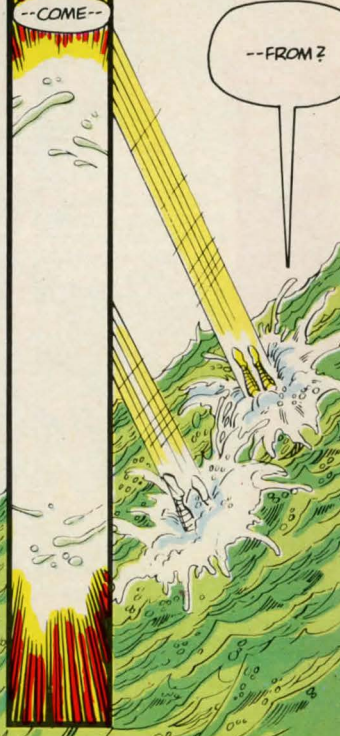


TARRA! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING-- TO THE CHALICE!

IT'S GETTING BIGGER--RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES!



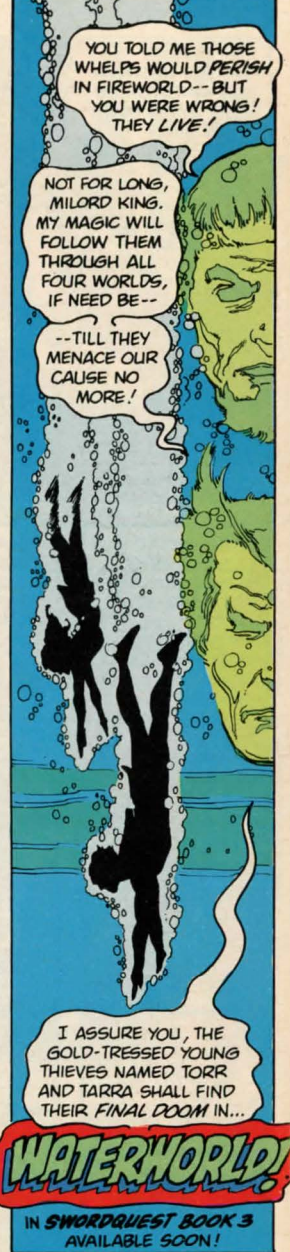
HUH? WHERE'D ALL THIS WATER--



--COME--

--FROM?





DID YOU MISS EARTHWORLD? HUSTLE DOWN TODAY TO YOUR FAVORITE ATARI CARTRIDGE DEALER AND GET SWORDQUEST#1: EARTHWORLD.





ATARI

CO19252