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A MARVEL ILLUSTRATED



BOOK IN FULL COLOR!

# DRAGONSLAYER™

THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS ADAPTATION OF  
THE SPECTACULAR PARAMOUNT/Disney MOTION PICTURE!



NOREM

**STAN LEE** presents  
**THE MARVEL COMICS ILLUSTRATED**  
**VERSION OF**

# **DRAGONSLAYER™**



**A MARVEL ILLUSTRATED BOOK**

# DRAGONSLAYER™

THEY ARE DIRE, THESE VISIONS WHICH TORMENT THE OLD MAN, AND SEEING THEM HE FEELS THE CONJURING CHAMBER GROW CHILL AND HEAVY AROUND HIM...

PERHAPS HE WISHES HE LACKED THIS TERRIBLE POWER--THE POWER TO GLIMPSE THE FUTURE. IF SO, THIS IS IN VAIN.

FOR HE IS ULRICH--MAGISTER IPSISSMUS--SEER, ENCHANTER, MASTER OF ALL MAGIC AND HE IS THE LAST OF HIS KIND.

--THE LAST EVER.

IT IS THE SIXTH CENTURY, AND THE DAYS OF THE MAGICIANS ARE NUMBERED, AND THE NUMBER IS SMALL...

DENNIS O'NEIL  
Script  
MARIE SEVERIN  
Pencils & Colors  
JOHN TARTAGLIONE  
Inks  
JIM SHOOTER  
Editor

IT IS NOT TO BE AVOIDED...THE  
MONSTER WILL RISE FROM THE  
DEPTHS OF THE EARTH...



...AYE, FIERCELY WILL  
THE BEAST COME TO  
BRING DESTRUCTION...



GALEN!

GALEN BRADWARDYN! WHAT  
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING,  
LISTENING AT THE MASTER'S  
DOOR! GET AWAY  
FROM THERE.

I'M SORRY,  
HODGE.





YOUNG WHELP...  
MASTER ULRICH'S  
APPRENTICE SHOULD  
HAVE MORE  
RESPECT.

DESTRUCTION  
AND GREAT  
SLAUGHTER...



AT THAT MOMENT...

THERE IT IS--  
CRAGGANMORE,  
HOUSE OF  
ULRICH.

I PRAY HE  
WILL BE  
ABLE TO HELP  
US.



YES. THEY COME  
ON A MATTER OF  
SOME CONSEQUENCE.  
MY DEATH.

YOUR...  
DEATH?

BALISARIUS WORE  
THIS HEADGEAR  
BEFORE HE DIED.  
I ACTUALLY SAW HIM  
CHANGE LEAD INTO  
GOLD.

I NEVER  
COULD DO  
THAT.

SOON, IN THE RECEPTION HALL, A PUFF OF SMOKE, AND--

HARK TO  
MASTER  
ULRICH!

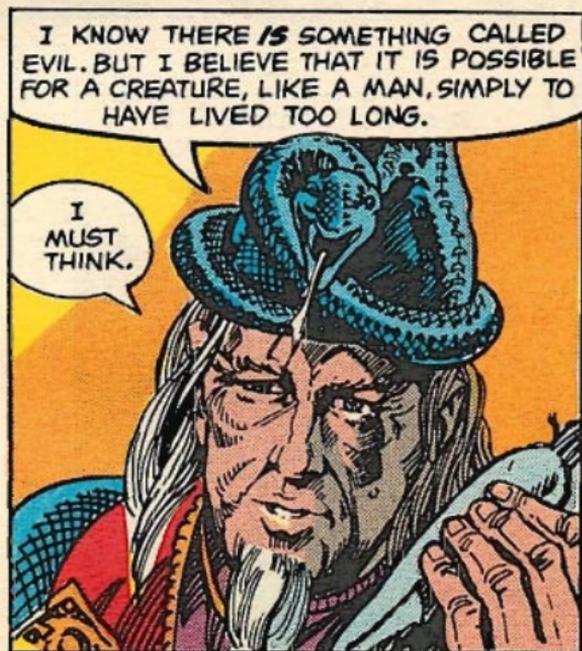
WELCOME TO CRAGGANMORE.  
WHICH ONE OF YOU CALLS  
HIMSELF VALERIAN?

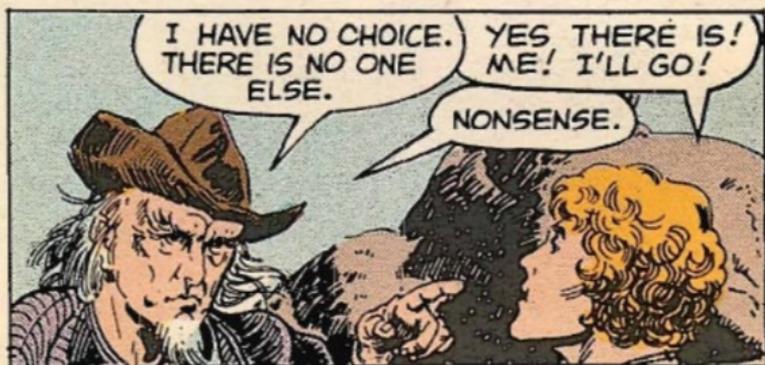
THAT WOULD  
BE ME. WE ARE  
FROM URLAND,  
BEYOND DELVATIA--

--AND WE ARE HERE TO BEG YOUR AID  
IN A GRAVE MISSION. WE WOULD ASK  
YOU TO SLAY AN UNNATURAL CREATURE  
OF FIRE AND STENCH--ONE  
OF YOUR KIND--

IN SHORT,  
A DRAGON.

I, KNOW WHY  
YOU ARE HERE.  
LET'S SEE THE  
ARTIFACTS.









EARLY THE FOLLOWING MORNING...

NO POINT IN DELAYING. I'M  
OFF ON MY JOURNEY.

I'LL FLATTEN THE HIGHEST  
MOUNTAIN. WHAT SAY YOU,  
GALEN?

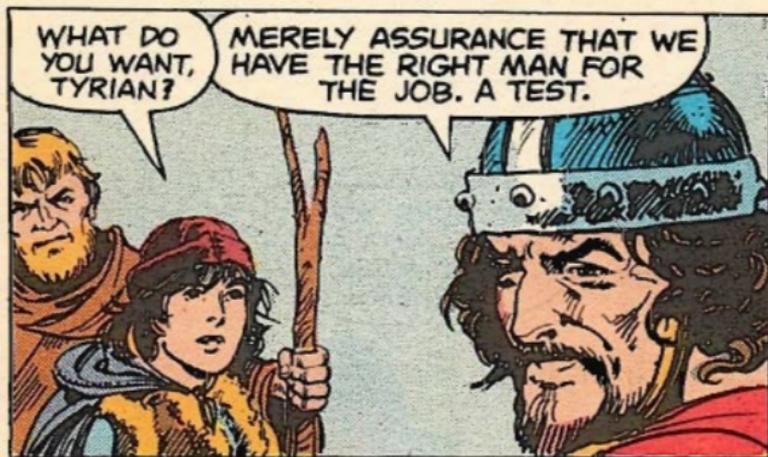
YOU HAVE  
FORSEEN YOUR  
OWN DEATH. YOU  
TOLD ME SO. I  
BEG YOU...  
SEND ME.

LOOK...  
MOUNTED  
STRANGERS  
ARRIVE!

GOOD MORROW  
TO ALL. I AM  
TYRIAN OF  
URLAND.

WORD HAS COME TO ME THAT MY  
YOUNG FRIEND VALERIAN HAS EN-  
LISTED THE AID OF A SORCEROR  
TO SOLVE OUR DRAGON  
PROBLEM.







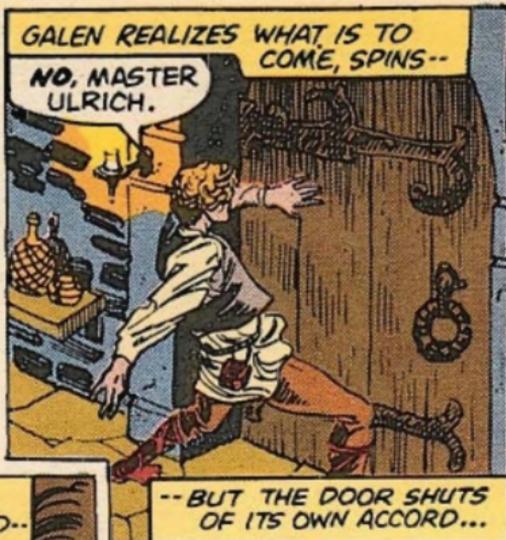


GALEN...GO TO THE IRON BOX.  
FETCH ME THE DAGGER  
WITHIN!



HE CAN'T MEAN *THIS* ONE!  
THIS IS *GENUINE*... A  
MURDER WEAPON!

THROW  
US THE  
DAGGER,  
BOY!





**SUDDENLY, TYRIAN LUNGES, BURIES THE BLADE IN ULRICH'S CHEST..**



THEN, AFTER A LONG MOMENT,  
HE SLOWLY SAGS FORWARD OVER  
THE DAGGER AND THE HAND  
THAT HOLDS IT...



...AND LIES STILL--

BLIND WITH GRIEF, GALEN AT  
FIRST DOES NOT SEE THE DOOR  
UNLATCH AND SWING WIDE...



WHEN HE DOES, HE  
DOES NOT CARE--

SOON, TYRIAN AND HIS COMPANION  
ARE GALLOPING TOWARD URLAND...

SATISFIED?

SATISFIED  
ENOUGH.



JUST AT DAWN, GALEN AND HODGE  
STAND AT A FUNERAL PYRE. AS  
FLAMES CLAIM THE REMAINS  
OF ULRICH...

...THE KINDEST LORD  
A MAN COULD ASK  
FOR... NOW HE'S  
GONE...





AND, IN THE  
CONJURING  
ROOM...

THE AMULET. I MAY AS WELL  
RETURN IT TO THE JEWEL  
CASSET. I HAVE NO  
FURTHER USE FOR IT--

--NOR HAS  
ANYONE!

HE CLOSES THE  
LID ON THE GLIT-  
TERING BAUBLE--



HOWEVER, A MOMENT LATER...

IT...IS NOT POSSIBLE--!  
THE AMULET, HERE... IN  
A FLASK WHOSE NECK  
IS TOO NARROW TO  
PASS THROUGH...



AN OMEN...A SIGN  
I AM MEANT TO  
COMPLETE MASTER  
ULRICH'S WORK...

A  
JOYOUS  
OMEN!

HODGE...  
PREPARE FOR  
A JOURNEY!



SOON...

FEH! CHEAP TRICKS!  
YOU'VE A LONG WAY  
TO GO BEFORE YOU'RE  
READY TO TAKE  
HIS PLACE.

I HAVE  
HAVE  
TAKEN  
IT!

AT DUSK, GALEN AND HODGE  
OVERTAKE THE PARTY FROM  
URLAND...

PEACE,  
MY  
FRIENDS.

MY LORD ULRICH IS NO LONGER. ALL  
THAT YOU ASKED OF HIM, YOU MAY NOW  
EXPECT OF ME. THE DANGERS HE FACED,  
I WILL NOW CONQUER. THE TASK HE  
WOULD UNDERTAKE I WILL  
NOW FULFILL.



YOUNG SNOT-NOSE,  
COME FOR SPORT AT  
OUR EXPENSE. I  
DON'T WANT TO  
HEAR ANY MORE  
ABOUT SORCERY..





--AND NOW IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN! OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE **LOTTERY**?

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT ON THIS NIGHT A GIRL CHILD IS CHOSEN AS A **SACRIFICE** TO THE BEAST?



"MAY THE GODS HELP WHOEVER'S CHILD IT IS TONIGHT!"

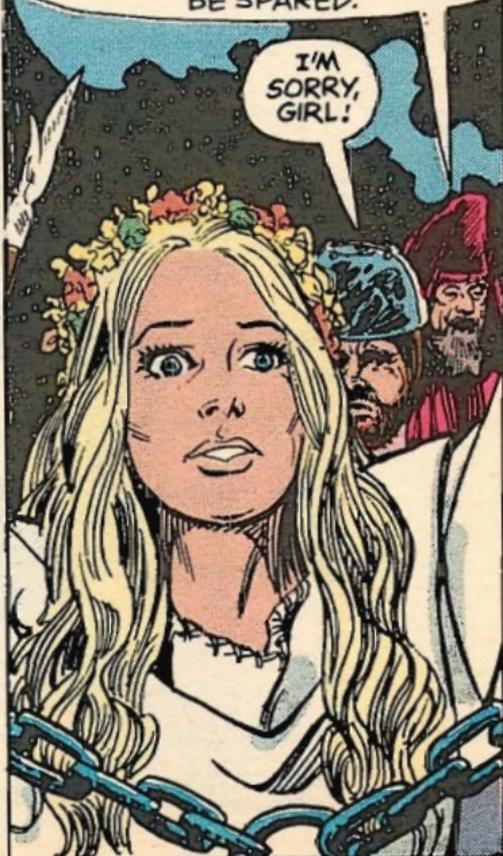


CLOSE ENOUGH. BRING HER OUT.

BE IT KNOWN THAT THIS MAIDEN  
SHALL HEREBY GIVE UP HER LIFE  
FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF URLAND.  
BY THIS ACT SHALL BE SATISFIED  
THE CREATURE THAT DWELLS  
UNDERGROUND--



--AND THE SPIRITS THAT ATTEND  
THERETO, SO THE REST OF US MAY  
BE SPARED.



I'M  
SORRY,  
GIRL!



...AND THE AIR GROWS THICK. A SULPHUR-  
OUS STENCH PERVADES THE NIGHT, MAKING  
EYES STING AND NOSTRILS QUIVER...



THE  
ANIMAL  
WHINNIES  
IN PANIC--

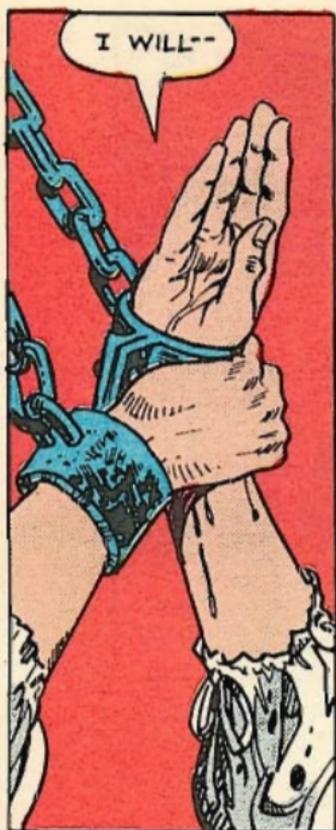
ALONE, NOW, THE GIRL WATCHES SMOKE RISE FROM THE  
CREVICE AND HER CRY IS FULL OF DETERMINATION--



NO!

I WON'T  
LET IT  
HAPPEN  
TO ME--!







THE TREMBLING GROUND BENEATH HER FEET  
IS HOT AND THE SMELL IS OVERPOWERING,  
AND STILL--

I CAN REACH  
THE CART AND  
'FLEE--!



BUT...



AND HER DREAD WELLS FORTH IN A SHRIEK--



--THIS MONSTER WHICH FLINGS HER ASIDE AND  
FILLS HER WORLD WITH THE COLOR OF FLAME...



DESPERATELY, SHE  
SCRAMBLES--



--ONLY  
TO BE  
BLOCKED...

WITH A FINAL, RESIGNED  
WHIMPER, SHE TURNS AND  
GAZES UPWARD, LIKE A BRIDE  
GAZING UPON THE ONE SHE  
LOVES...



...TO BE, AT LAST CONSUMED...



AT DAWN THE FOLLOWING MORNING,  
VALERIAN HAPPENS ON A COOL, CRYSTAL-  
LINE POOL IN A SECLUDED FOREST  
GLADE...



...GLANCES AROUND FURTIVELY AND SEES NO  
HUMAN CREATURE, NOR HEARS ANYTHING EXCEPT  
THE SOFT MURMURS OF THE WOODLAND...

A MOMENT LATER, SIGHS  
IN CONTENTMENT...



MEANWHILE...

FETCH VALERIAN.  
WE'RE READY  
TO BREAK  
CAMP.

I SAW HIM  
HEADING  
INTO THE  
WOODS.



YOU BETTER  
COME ALONG.  
WE'RE  
LEAVING.

YOU GO  
AHEAD. I'LL  
CATCH UP.





AT THAT MOMENT,  
NEAR THE CAMP...



LOOK...  
THE OLD  
RETAINER  
FROM  
CRAGGAN-  
MORE.

"I WONDER WHAT HE  
IS DOING HERE?"









WHAT ARE YOU DO-  
ING WITH THIS?

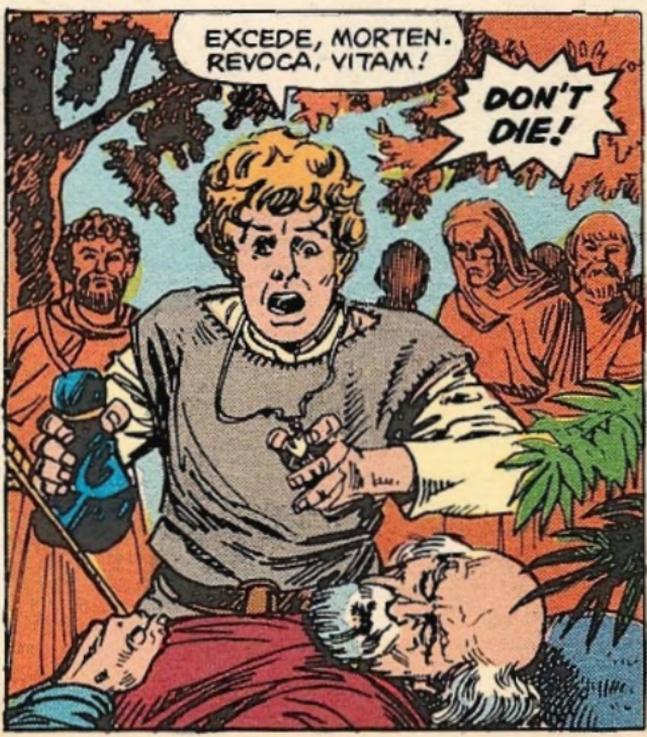
...BURNING  
WATER...

HODGE!  
DON'T DIE!



EXCEDE, MORTEN.  
REVOCA, VITAM!

**DON'T  
DIE!**



BUT NEITHER THE AMULET NOR THE WORDS OF EN-  
CHANTMENT ARE OF ANY USE...



HODGE IS DEAD, AND SORROW CLOSES IN ON GALEN...?

**END OF PART ONE...**

## PART II

WIND WHIPS THE LEADEN WAVE-TOPS ON THIS VAST, RAINY LAKE. THE TRAVELERS HAVE BEEN ROWING FOR MOST OF A DAY NOW...



GALEN BROODS IN THE BOW, AWARE OF THE OTHERS' EYES UPON HIM, FEELING LIKE AN IMPOSTOR. THE GREIL CRIES--

URLAND  
AHEAD!



COME ON.  
DON'T  
DAWDLE.

THE  
WHOLE  
KINGDOM  
IS LIKE  
THIS?

NO.

KEEP MOVING.  
WE'RE NEAR  
THE DRAGON'S  
LAIR.

WE'RE IN  
NO DANGER  
IF WE KEEP  
MOVING.







IT'S  
WORKING!  
TAKE COVER!  
I'VE CAUSED  
A--

LANDSLIDE!

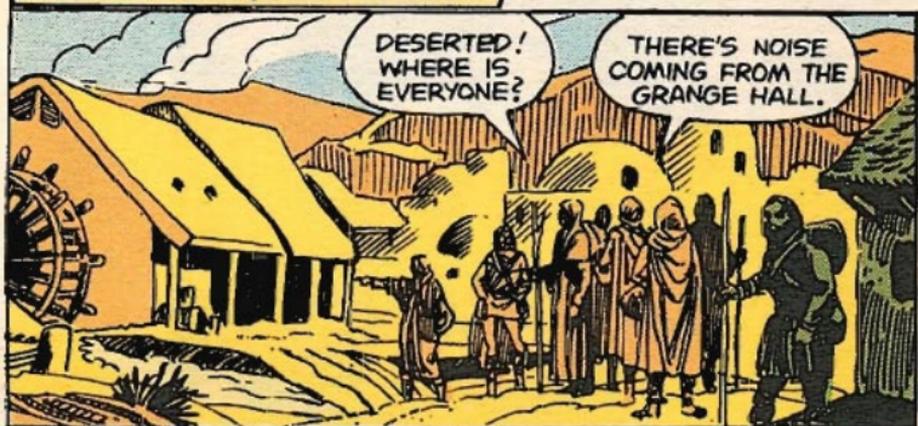
MINUTES PASS BEFORE THE  
DUST CLOUD LIFTS TO REVEAL...

THE LAIR...  
UNDER **TONS**  
OF ROCK.

THE DRAGON  
IS BURIED...  
**FOREVER!**



A BRIEF JOURNEY BRINGS THEM  
TO THE VILLAGE OF SWANSCOMBE...

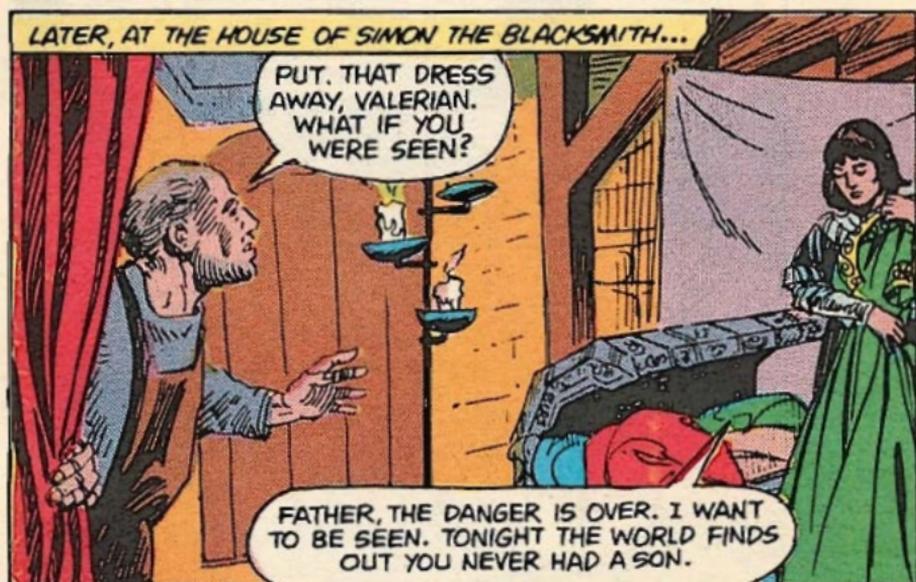


A HALL THAT HAS BECOME A CHURCH...

...PURIFIED IN SPIRIT AND SO  
PROTECTED AGAINST ALL EVIL!







AND THE WORLD DOES, AT THE CELEBRATION.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN UP TO A LITTLE SORCERY YOURSELF. DANCE?  
OR IS IT WITCHCRAFT?



I THINK IT WAS MUCH EASIER BEING A BOY.

THE DAMNEDEST THING IS, SHE WAS TWICE THE MAN OF ANYONE ELSE IN THE VILLAGE. NOW SHE'S TWICE THE WOMAN.



WOULD THAT I HAD BEEN AS CLEVER AS HER FATHER.

OUTSIDE...

A  
CELEBRATION,  
LORD  
TYRIAN.



YOUNG GALEN, THE KING WOULD MEET WITH  
YOU AND OFFER HIS GRATITUDE TO THE MAN  
WHO HAS SUCCEEDED  
WHERE SO MANY  
HAVE FAILED.

WHAT SORT OF  
GRATITUDE? A  
KNIFE IN THE  
BELLY?



I'D AS SOON DISPATCH YOU AS I DID THE OTHERS, AND FOR THE SAME REASON. BUT HIS MAJESTY WOULD LIKE A COZY CHAT AND COMMANDS OTHERWISE.









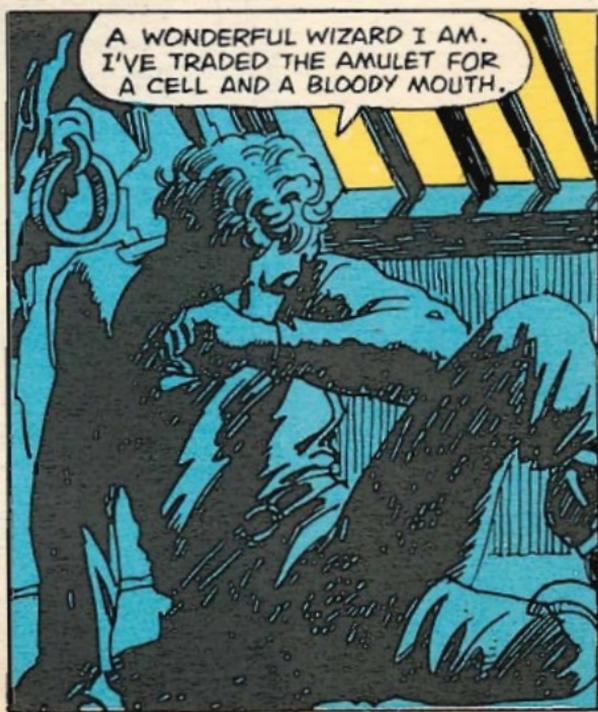
I THINK YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A BOY, AN ACOLYTE  
AT BEST. IF YOU DO ENGAGE IN NECROMANCY, IT IS  
SURELY NOT BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU ARE. BUT  
BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU HAVE.

THIS AMULET!









UNKNOWN TO GALEN, HIS PAIN  
AND HUMILIATION HAVE HAD  
A WITNESS...



OUTSIDE, DARK CLOUDS SLIDE  
ACROSS A PALE SUN AND SOON  
FAT ROPLETS OF RAIN ARE  
SPLATTERING THE ROCKS ABOVE  
THE DRAGON'S LAIR. WITH EACH  
SPLASH, THERE IS A SIZZLE AND  
A PUFF OF STEAM...

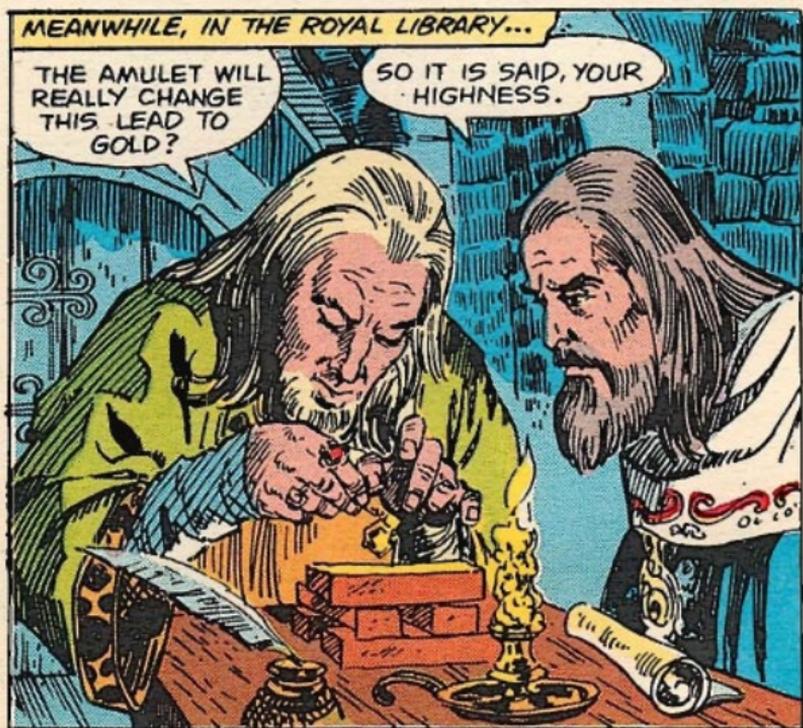


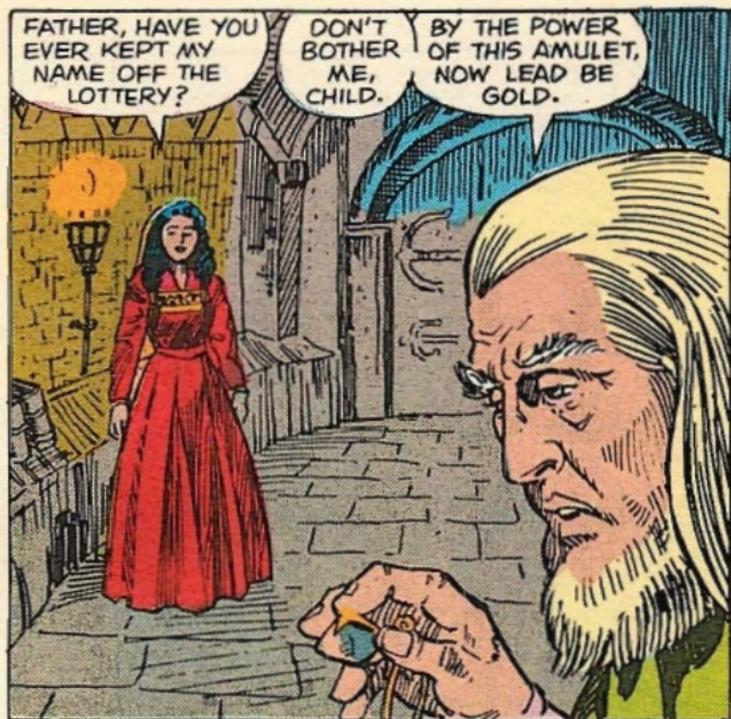
FENESTRA  
PARVA  
APERIRE!

OPEN  
UP!













--TO RESUME A MOMENT LATER WITH  
THE FULL VIOLENCE OF AN EARTH-  
QUAKE.



IN THE  
VILLAGE--

--AND IN THE DRAGON COUNTRY,  
ABOVE THE MONSTER'S LAIR,  
BOULDERS GRIND AND SHIFT...  
AND BREAK LOOSE--



FINALLY--

IT STOPPED.

SOMEONE'S  
OPENING THE  
DOOR.





--AND AS HE TOPS THE STAIRS, THE SHAKING INCREASES...

IF I CAN GET PAST THE THRONE ROOM, I CAN ESCAPE.



HOWEVER...

YOU LITTLE MEDDLER. THIS IS YOUR DOING, ISN'T IT?

I THOUGHT WE'D AGREED THAT I'M NOT MUCH OF A MAGICIAN.



DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME. I SHOULD HAVE SKEWERED YOU WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE. BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE.



GALEN HESITATES A FEW SECONDS...

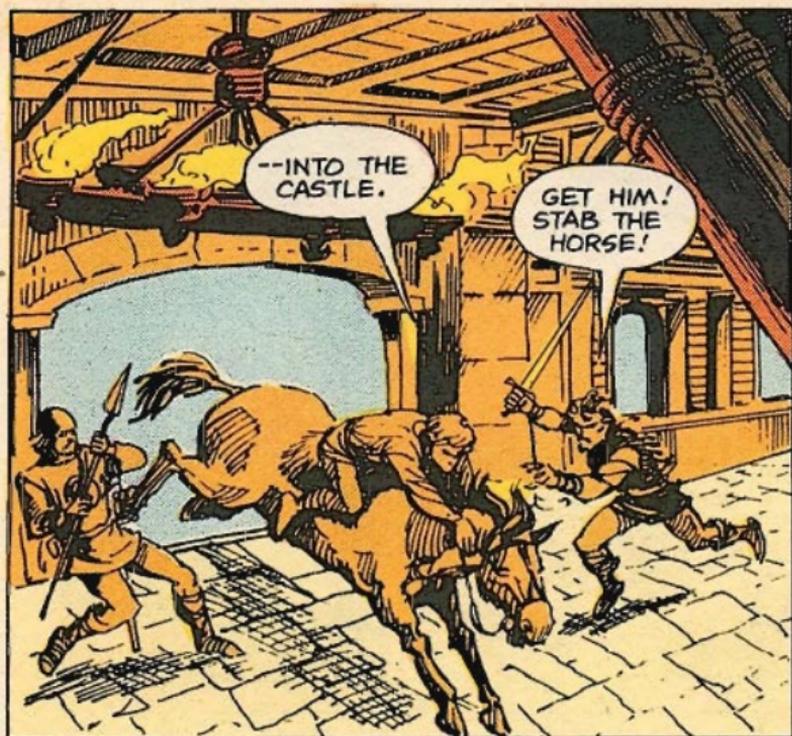
...BEFORE SPINNING AND...





BUT THE KING'S MEN ARE MOMENTARILY CONFUSED. THEY DO NOT COMPREHEND TYRIAN'S COMMAND UNTIL GALEN HAS REACHED ONE OF THE MOUNTS AND SPRINGS TO ITS BACK--









--AND A WEAKENED SECTION OF THE ARCHED WINDOW CRUMBLES WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE QUAKE TO CEASE--



GALEN PRODS THE HORSE OVER THE LOW SILL TO FREEDOM!



AT TWILIGHT, THE EARTH IS STILL OCCASIONALLY TREMBLING AS THE VILLAGERS GATHER AT THE BASE OF THE LANDSLIDE AND BROTHER JACOBUS INTONES...

PRAY WITH ME, BRETHREN, AND OUR FAITH WILL SEND THIS CREATURE STRAIGHT TO HELL.



THE MOMENT OF OUR FEAR IS THE HOUR OF OUR TRIUMPH.

THAT RUMBLING...



THE GROUND IS SPLITTING UNDER OUR FEET--

RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

YOU CALL YOURSELVES CHRISTIANS? WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?



THE TREE, BROTHER...

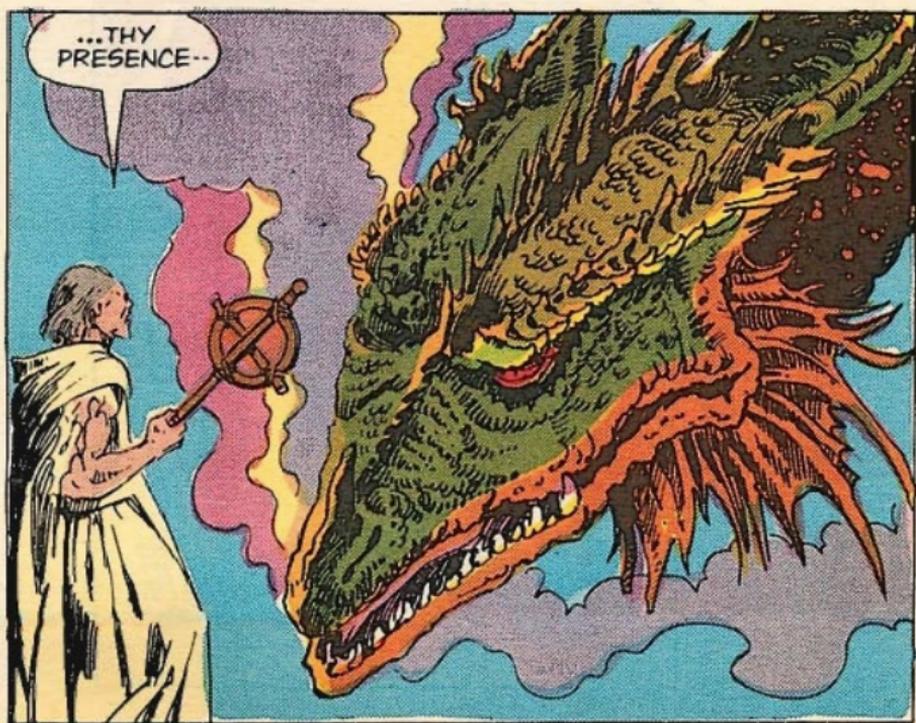
I AM NOT AFRAID.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD..."











IN THE HILLS ABOVE SWANSCOMBE...

FIELDS AND TREES...  
**BURNING.** AND THE  
VILLAGE, TOO.

WHAT IS  
THAT IN THE  
SKY?



IT GROWS RAPIDLY  
INTO A HUGE,  
HORRID SHAPE--



WITH A THUNDEROUS RUSH  
OF AIR THAT ALMOST BLOWS  
GALEN FROM THE SADDLE,  
THE DRAGON HURTTLES BY...





AND, THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT VALERIAN'S FATHER'S SHOP--

WE'RE SEARCHING FOR THE MAGICIAN.

SEARCH AWAY. HE'S NOT HERE.



IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW THAT THE KING HAS CALLED FOR A NEW LOTTERY.

I'VE NEVER TAKEN PART IN YOUR LOTTERY.

I WANT TO. I WANT TO BE IN IT.







SOON...

HERE IT IS--THE BEST  
I EVER MADE.

GIRL-CHILD, WHEN YOU  
WERE BORN, I KNEW I HAD  
TO DO SOMETHING--SOME-  
THING TO SAVE YOU.



SO I SET ABOUT FASHIONING  
A WEAPON--AN EXTRAORDINARY  
WEAPON. "SECARIUS DRACONUM"  
--DRAGONSLAYER. I HAD THE  
THE SKILL TO MAKE IT...

...BUT NOT  
THE NERVE  
TO USE IT.



IT DOESN'T  
MATTER.  
WHAT YOU  
WANT TO  
KILL ISN'T  
FLESH  
AND  
BLOOD.

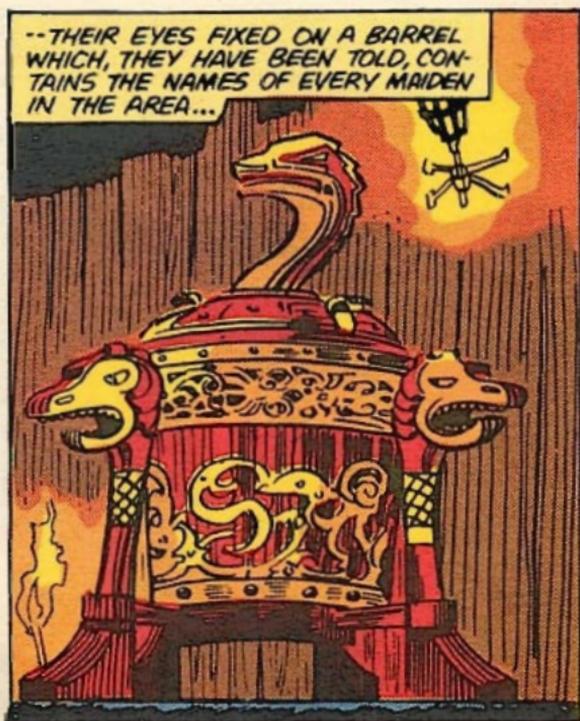
OH, IT'LL  
BLEED, ALL  
RIGHT.

I'LL STILL  
NEED THE  
AMULET.

NIGHT, AT THE CASTLE...THE VILLAGERS GATHER, NERVOUS AND EXCITED, THEIR MURMURS EDGED WITH HYSTERIA, AS THOUGH THEY WERE SPECTATORS AT A POTENTIALLY LETHAL SPORT--



--THEIR EYES FIXED ON A BARREL WHICH, THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD, CONTAINS THE NAMES OF EVERY MAIDEN IN THE AREA...



THEN, THE CROWD GROWS QUIET AS  
THE KING AND HIS DAUGHTER APPEAR...

YOU SEEM  
STRANGELY  
SILENT,  
ELSPETH.

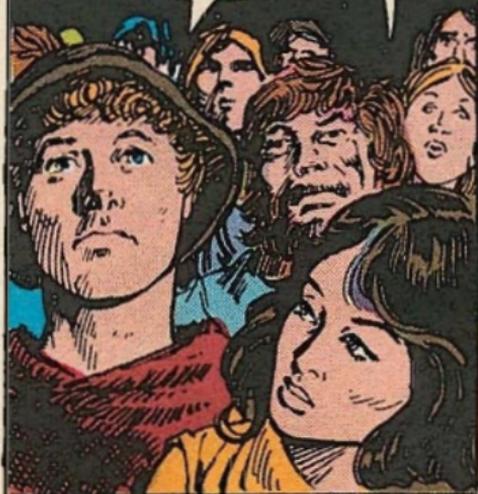
DO I,  
FATHER?



AMONG THE ONLOOKERS, VAL-  
ERIAN AND GALEN, IN DISGUISE...

LOOK AT HER.  
THE PRINCESS.

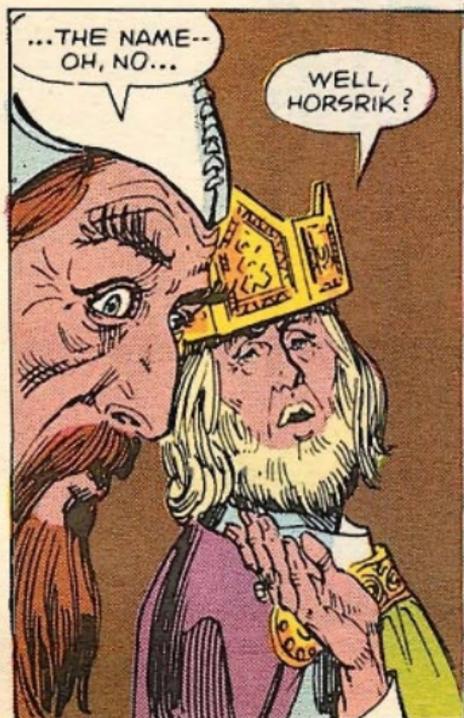
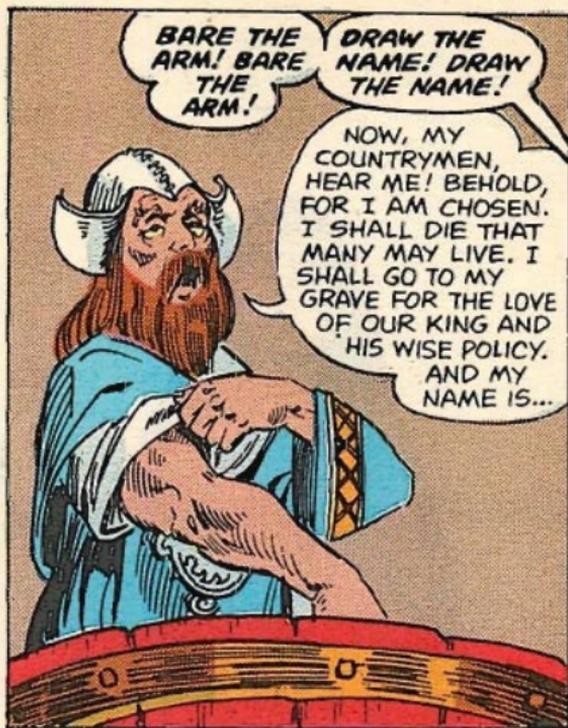
WE'VE  
MET.



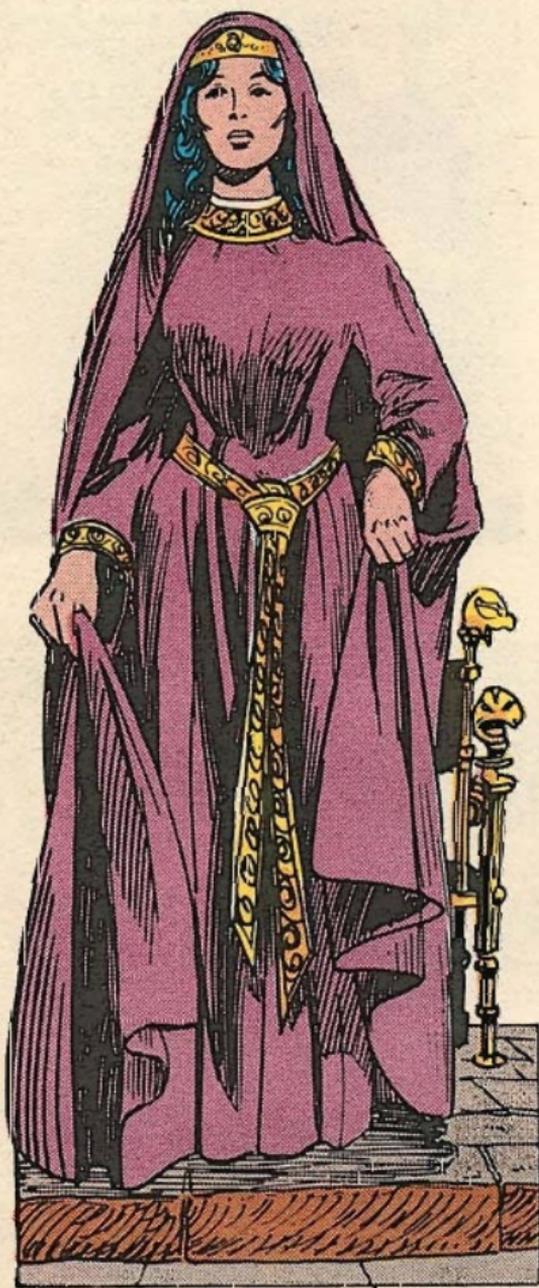


PEOPLE OF URLAND! WHEREAS THE PEACE OF THE KINGDOM HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BY THE MISCHIEF OF AN INTERLOPER; AND WHEREAS THIS INTERLOPER BEING FLED; AND HOW, THEREFORE, HIS MAJESTY THE KING HEREBY PROCLAIMS THE SUM OF THIRTY DUCATS TO BE PAID TO ANYONE PRODUCING THE MISCREANT GALEN BRADWARDYN, FRAUD ENCHANTER...





I ACCEPT  
THE  
HONOR.







FOR A MOMENT, THE CROWD IS DUMBFUNDED. GRADUALLY, VOICES ERUPT IN A CACOPHONY OF SHOUTS, WHISTLES AND EXCITED CONVERSATION.



GALEN SEES HIS CHANCE. HE DRIFTS TOWARD AN UNGUARDED DOOR--

--AND SLIPS INSIDE THE PALACE...

IT HAS TO BE HERE SOMEPLACE.



THE AMULET **MUST** BE AMONG THESE TREASURES--!



BUT IT ISN'T.

WITH THE TUMULT FROM THE  
COURTYARD ECHOING IN HIS EARS,  
GALEN EASES PAST A GUARD WHO  
IS ENTHRALLED BY THE SPECTACLE  
BELOW--



--THE SIGHT OF A STOIC PRINCESS  
AND A KING ON THE VERGE OF  
TEARS...





UPSTAIRS, GALEN CONTINUES  
TO SEARCH FEVERISHLY--



-- WHILE THE KING AND HIS LIEUTENANT  
DRAW NEAR...

YOU,  
TYRIAN--SURELY YOU'LL  
DO SOMETHING. IF NOT  
FOR ME, OUT OF LOYALTY  
TO THE KINGDOM.

BUT THAT'S JUST IT,  
YOUR MAJESTY. MY  
FIRST DUTY IS  
LOYALTY TO THE  
KINGDOM!









NUNC, PER POTESTATEM  
HERMETICUM--EX FLAMMIS,  
FERRUM SA GRINARIUM!



AS GALEN SPEAKS THE  
ENCHANTMENT, THE  
LANCE GLOWS WITH UN-  
EARTHLY LIGHT--

SILENT AND FORGOTTEN, VALERIAN SEES  
GALEN'S RESOLVE AND, WATCHING SADLY  
FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, MOVES OUT THE  
DOOR...



ONCE OUTSIDE, HER STEP QUICKENS  
AND WITHIN THE HOUR SHE 'IS  
SEARCHING THE GROUND NEAR THE  
DRAGON'S LAIR...

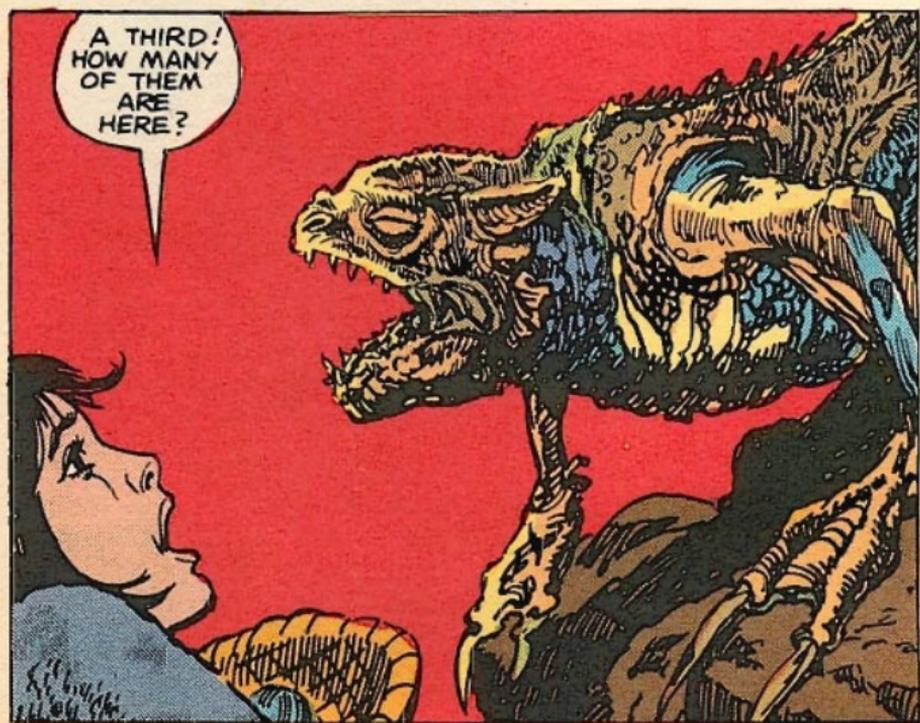


AH,  
HERE'S  
ONE--

A HISS FROM BETWEEN  
TWO ROCKS AND--

A BASILISK...A  
BABY DRAGON--  
HIDEOUS!











AS THE SUN CLIMBS TO ITS ZENITH, GALEN IS HIKING THROUGH ROUGH COUNTRY, MUTTERING...

I WISH I COULD HAVE SAID GOOD-BYE TO VALERIAN...

EH--? SOMETHING CLATTERING DOWN THE SLOPE...

A SHIELD... FASHIONED FROM DRAGON SCALES!

I MADE IT.

MIGHT KEEP THE FIRE OFF YOU. MIGHT NOT. YOU KNOW, YOU'RE AN IDIOT. YOU'RE GOING TO DIE TONIGHT. THIS IS THE LAST TIME I'LL EVER SPEAK TO YOU.



BY NIGHTFALL, THAT WIND HAS BE-  
COME COLD. IT WAILES MOURNFULLY  
THROUGH THE ROCKS NEAR THE  
DRAGON'S LAIR AS WORKMEN MAKE  
GRIM PREPARATIONS...



NO WORD IS UTTERED--



--UNTIL THE LOVELY SACRIFICE  
IS BROUGHT FORTH TO RECEIVE  
HER MANACLES AND HER  
DESTINY...



THEN HORSRIK MUTTERS--

BE IT KNOWN THAT THE  
PRINCESS, HAVING BEEN  
CHOSEN BY A DEED  
OF FORTUNE--

EH--? THE SCROLL'S  
BURNING...BUT WHERE  
DOES THE FLAME  
COME FROM?















INTO THE EYE-STINGING MURK OF THE CAVE, HE PLUNGES, CALLING HOARSELY--

**ELSPETH!**

SOMETHING LYING ON THE GROUND...



ELSPETH'S SLIPPER--! SHE'S COME THIS DIRECTION...



WHAT'S THAT?

HE TURNS TOWARD A SCRATCHING SOUND AND GAGS--

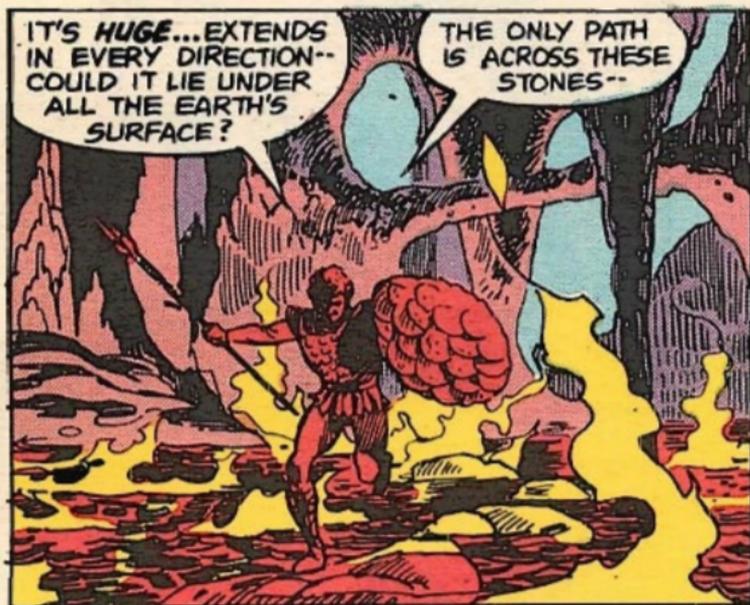












**NO, NOT ANOTHER EARTHQUAKE...**



**...RATHER, THE CAUSE OF  
THE PREVIOUS ONES...**



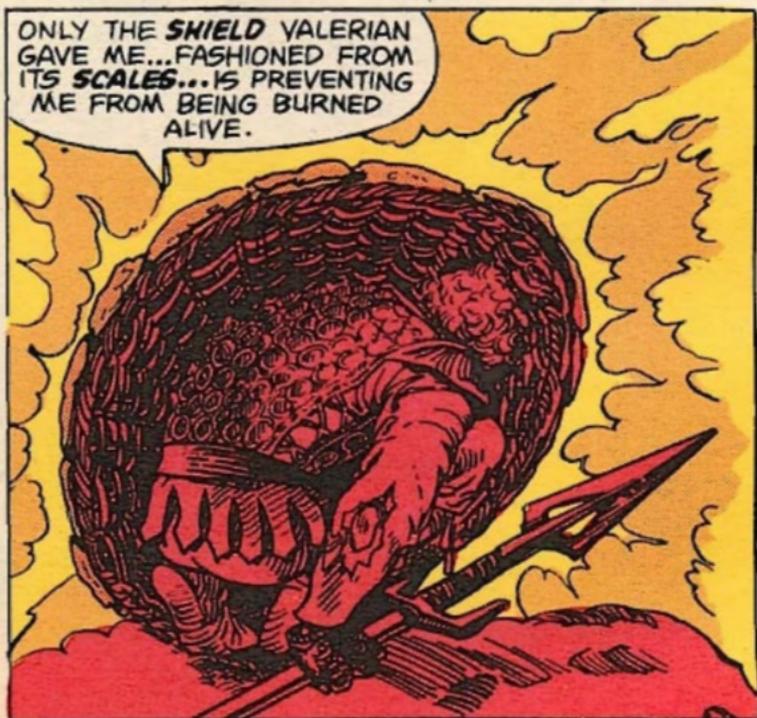
**GALEN'S HEART POUNDS  
AND HIS BREATH IS TRAPPED  
IN HIS THROAT...**



...FOR A SHAPE  
RISES FROM THE  
BOTTOMLESS DEPTHS  
OF NIGHTMARE--



THIS IS  
VERMITHRAX!

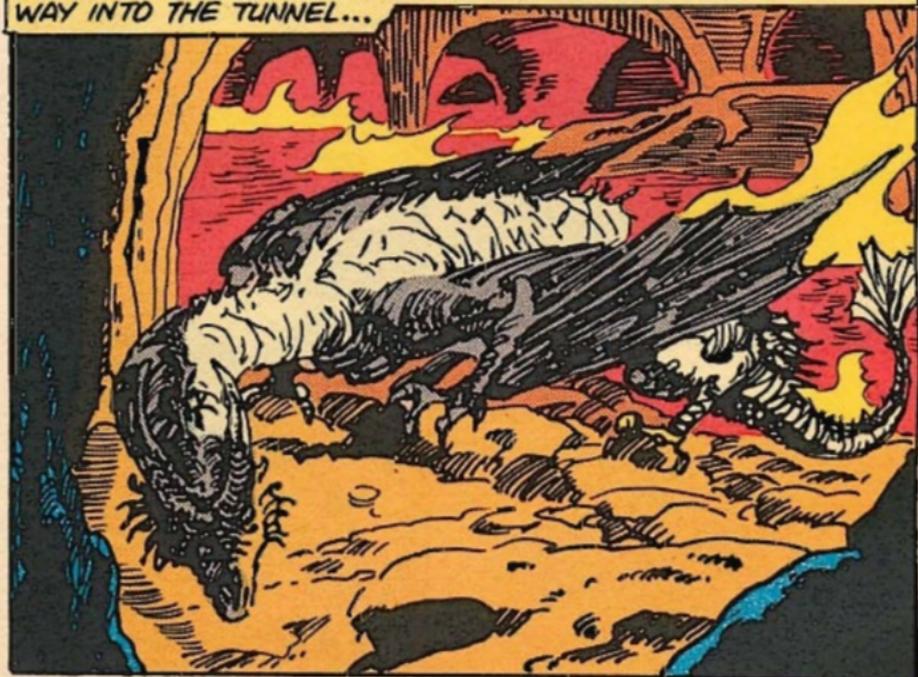




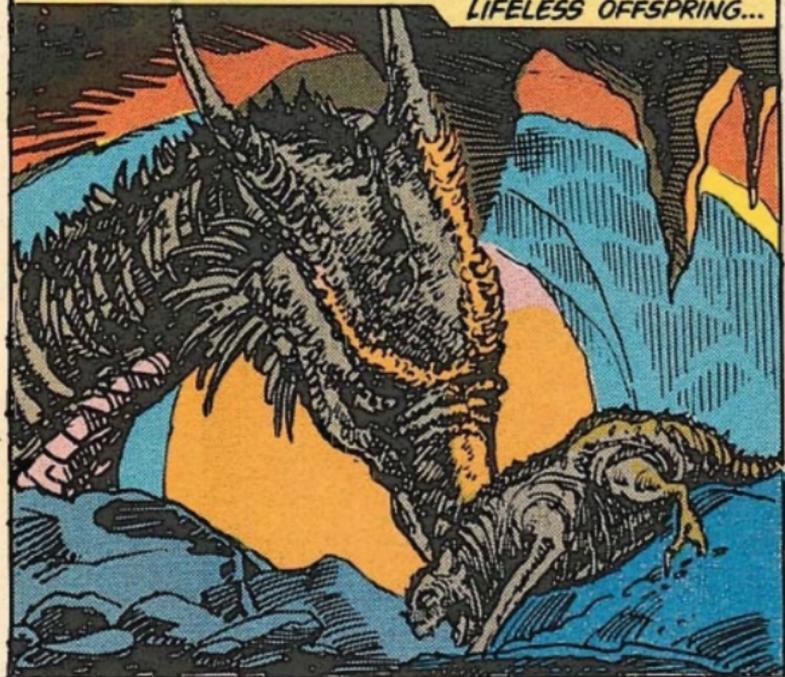
COUGHING AND WEeping,  
GALEN TRIPS OVER THE BODY  
OF A BABY DRAGON--



A FEW SECONDS LATER, VERMITHRAX SQUIRMS AND CLAWS ITS  
WAY INTO THE TUNNEL...



THEN IT PAUSES, AND SNIFFS AND NUDGES AT ITS  
LIFELESS OFFSPRING...



--AND GALEN LUNGES FROM HIS HIDING PLACE  
WITH THE FEROCITY OF A MAN PUSHED BEYOND  
DESPERATION...



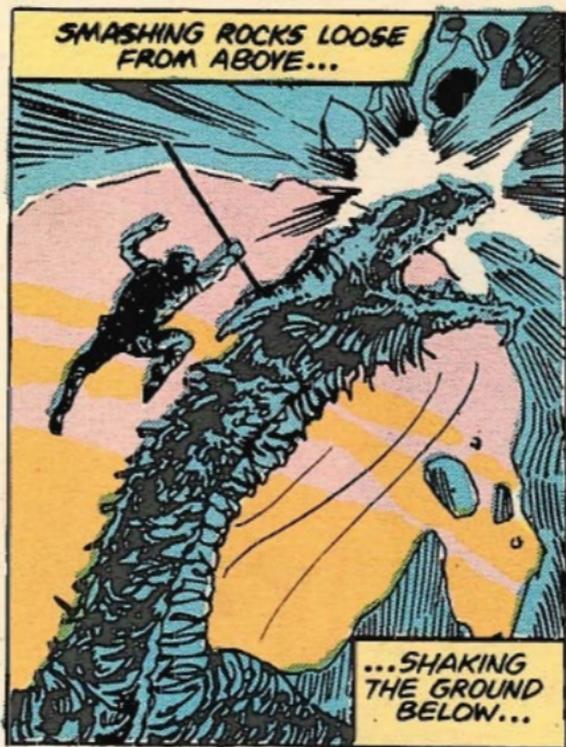
INSTINCTIVELY, HE STABS  
BETWEEN THE SCALES  
OF THE DRAGON'S NECK--



WITH AN UNEARTHLY SHRIEK,  
THE CREATURE FLING ITS  
HEAD BACK AND UPWARD--



SMASHING ROCKS LOOSE  
FROM ABOVE...



...SHAKING  
THE GROUND  
BELOW...

THE LANCE SNAPS IN HALF  
GALEN IS HURLED SPRAWL-  
ING...



...FLAMES REACH THROUGH THE  
CASCADING DEBRIS AND WASH  
OVER HIM...



AT DAWN'S FIRST LIGHT, VALERIAN  
IS ALREADY SEARCHING, TRYING  
NOT TO FEEL HOPE...



SHE FINDS  
THE BROKEN  
LANCE AND  
HER PULSE  
QUICKENS--

THEN SHE SEES A STILL, FORLORN  
FORM AND SHE WHISPERS--







AT NOON, THEY STOP TO REST, AND...

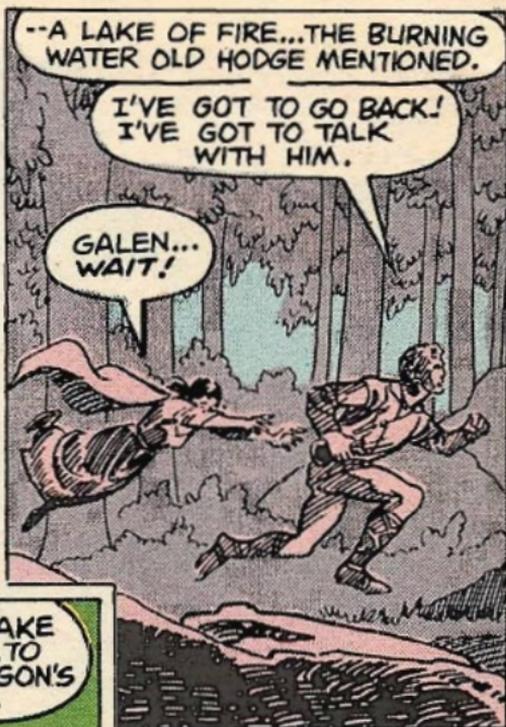
I'M  
SUDDENLY  
COLD.

THE LIGHT IS  
DIMMING...AND  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
ODD IN THE AIR.

WHAT IS THAT...  
A BLACK DISC...  
SLIDING ACROSS  
THE SUN--!

IT'S CALLED  
AN ECLIPSE.

LOOK AT  
HOW IT MAKES  
THE WATER  
GLINT! LIKE A  
LAKE--



UNNOTICED BY EITHER GALEN JR  
VALERIAN, A DARK AND GRACEFUL  
SHAPE SAILS THROUGH THE SKY...







ROCKS  
FALLING...  
BEING  
KNOCKED  
LOOSE! BY  
WHAT--?

SHE GAZES UPWARD AND WANTS  
TO SCREAM. BUT SHE CAN'T.



AT THAT MOMENT, IN  
THE GRANGE HALL...

BE CALM. HE WATCHETH OVER US  
LET US PRAY FOR A SIGN, FOR  
MIRACLES ARE POSSIBLE...



MIRACLES...

WONDER OF WONDERS. HE'S BACK!  
I THANK THE POWERS THAT MADE ME!



ULRICH! MAGISTER!  
OVER HERE--



NOT SO  
LOUD. I'M NOT  
DEAF, YOU  
KNOW.





TIME SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED. OVERHEAD, THE MOON IS LOCKED IN FRONT OF THE SUN.



SUDDENLY,  
VALERIAN  
RECOVERS  
AND RUNS--

--NOT FAR ENOUGH...



I'M TRAPPED!

I WON'T CRY  
FOR HELP! I  
WON'T! I WON'T!  
ENDANGER  
GALEN BY  
BRINGING HIM.  
I WON'T...

HE IS ON HIS WAY NONETHELESS...

I THOUGHT I WAS  
A SORCEROR, BUT  
I'M NOT. YOU SAID  
TO BE STRONG,  
BUT I WASN'T.

BUT YOU WERE,  
MY BOY. AND  
YOU WILL BE  
STRONGER YET.

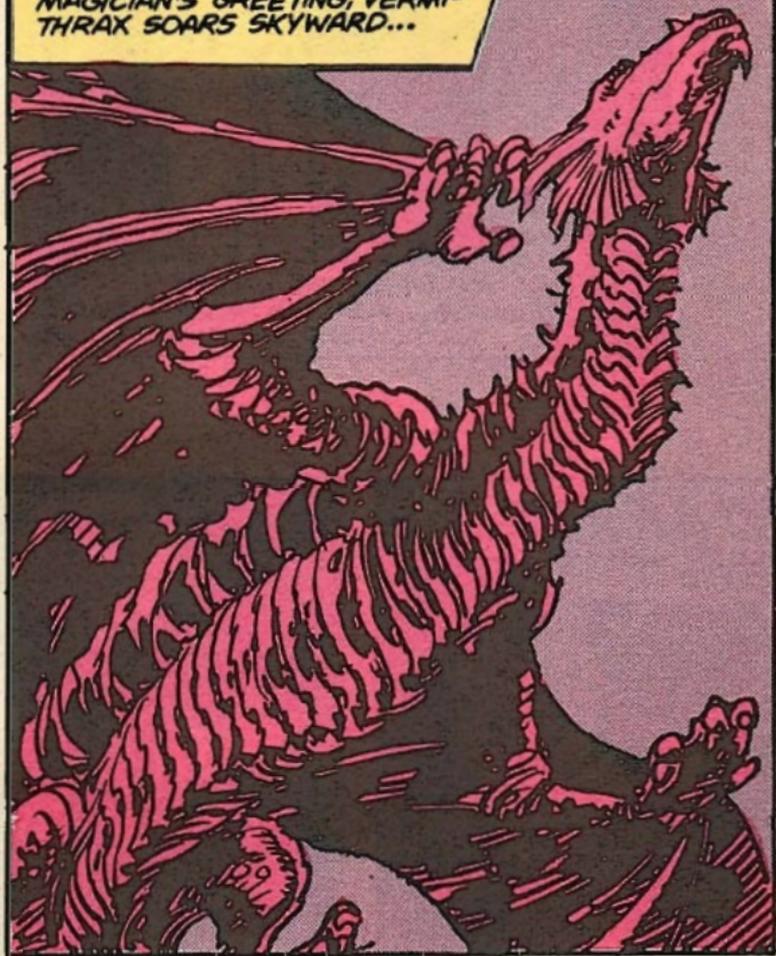


AY, YES. AT LAST I MEET  
MY COUNTERPART, THE  
DRAGON.

DRACO  
DRACONUM...



AS THOUGH INCENSED AT THE  
MAGICIAN'S GREETING, VERMI-  
THRAX SOARS SKYWARD...





A BITTER WIND WHIPS THE CHURNING CLOUDS AND THUNDER BOOMS AND ECHOES AS ULRICH FLOATS HIGHER THAN THE HIGHEST CRAG TO MINGLE HIS VOICE WITH THAT OF THE STORM--



NIMBE!  
TEMPESTAS!  
FULMEN!

A SUDDEN STILLNESS AND--



SO! WE  
KINDRED SPIRITS  
JOIN IN THE FINAL  
CONFLICT--!

THE  
CHRISTIANS  
SAY, "LOVE  
THY ENEMY!"





--YOU CAN ONLY PREVENT HIS DEATH BEING IN VAIN!

THERE IS A LINK BETWEEN HIM AND THE AMULET--

YES, AND THE DRAGON, TOO. DESTROY ONE AND ALL ARE DESTROYED--





**GALEN!**



--AS A GLOWING OB-  
JECT IS SHATTERED  
INTO BITS--



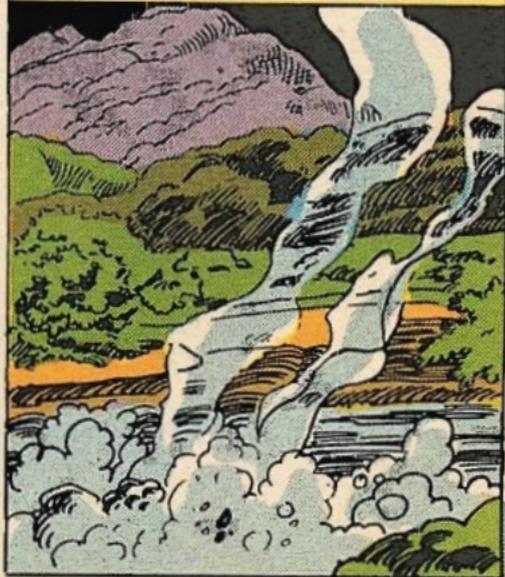
--AND, SIMULTANEOUSLY,  
ULRICH'S EARTHLY FORM  
EXPLODES AGAINST THE  
BELLY OF THE BEAST.



--A FLUTTERING THING THAT  
SPASHES INTO A POND. STEAM  
ERUPTS WITH A SOUND LIKE A  
SIGH--



--AND RISES INTO THE RAYS OF A  
SUN FREED FROM DARKNESS  
SHINING NEW AND BRIGHT UPON  
A GREEN AND GLEAMING LAND...





I SUPPOSE  
IT WAS AN  
HONOR.

IT WAS A TASK,  
GALEN-- **YOUR**  
TASK. AND NOW  
IT'S DONE.

LATER...

WE THANK THEE, LORD, FOR THIS DEVINE DELIVERANCE. VERILY IS THY PRESENCE AMONG US, FULLY MANIFEST IN THIS, THY GREAT WORK.

ARISE, CHILDREN OF THE LORD, AND FORSAKE EVERMORE THE PAGAN MYSTERIES!

