

SPECIAL
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Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE FABULOUS 50TH ISSUE!**

BONUS DIAGRAM
OF DEFENDERS'
RIDING ACADEMY!

Many and mighty are those who have been Defenders, among them the Sub-Mariner, Dr. Strange, and even the Silver Surfer. Now, in this time of strife and glory, the greatest non-team in history consists of the VALKYRIE, NIGHTHAWK, HELLCAT—and the HULK! Together, they are—

THE DYNAMIC DEFENDERS!

**HULK REMEMBERS YOU! RED MAN ESCAPED
FROM HULK BEFORE--BUT NOW--**

SCORPIO MUST DIE!

WHO
REMEMBERS
SCORPIO?
PART
THREE

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YOU ARE NOTHING IF NOT OVER-CONFIDENT, HULK!

YET, ACCUSTOMED AS YOU ARE TO RIDING ROUGHSHOD OVER YOUR OPPONENTS, I THINK THAT THIS TIME YOU ARE IN FOR A SURPRISE!

NOT ONLY DO I HOLD THE ZODIAC KEY, BUT BEHIND ME STAND--

--THE NEWBORN MEMBERS OF MY OWN--
ZODIAC!



WE CAN SPEAK FOR OURSELVES, SCORPIO! I'M LEO--BEWARE MY CLAWS!



I'M SAGITTARIUS, THE ARCHER--SHARP OF WIT AND OF ARROW!



AQUARIUS IS MY NAME--AND WATER IS MY GAME!



I'M TAURUS, AND I'M GONNA PIN THE HULK TO THE WALL WITH MY RETRAC-TIBLE HORNS! LET'S GET ON WITH IT!



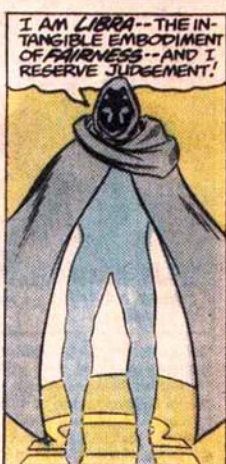
HOW DO WE KNOW HE DESERVES IT? I AM GEMINI--A PARADOX IN PERSONALITY--AND I AM NOT OF ONE MIND ON THIS MATTER!



I'M CANCER, THE LIVING ARSENAL--AND I DON'T LIKE GREENIE'S LOOKS!



HE DESERVES IT, ALL RIGHT! I'M ARIES, AND I'M GONNA RAM HIM FROM HERE TO THE MOON!



I AM LIBRA--THE INTANGIBLE EMBODIMENT OF FAIRNESS--AND I RESERVE JUDGEMENT!



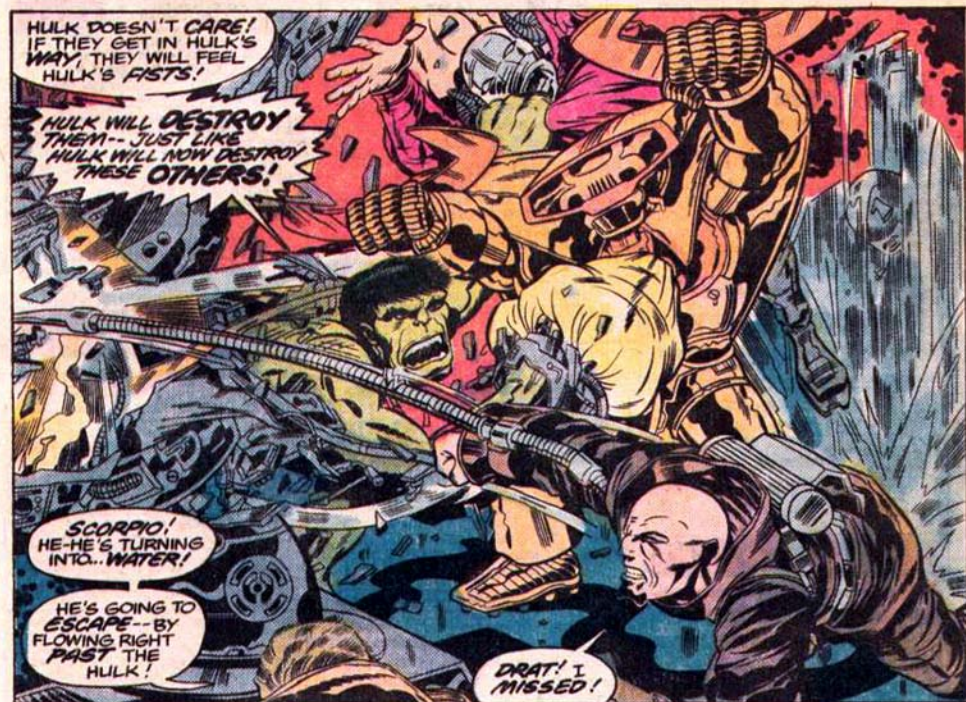
BAH! HULK WILL SMASH ALL YOUR STUPID MEN-- AND THEN HULK WILL SMASH YOU, RED MAN!



WAIT! WHERE ARE THE OTHER THREE?! WHERE ARE SIS, CAPRI, CORN, PIS, S, AND VIRGO?

WHERE?!

WHERE IS... VIRGO?



HULK DOESN'T CARE! IF THEY GET IN HULK'S WAY, THEY WILL FEEL HULK'S FISTS!

HULK WILL DESTROY THEM-- JUST LIKE HULK WILL NOW DESTROY THESE OTHERS!

SCORPIO! HE-HE'S TURNING INTO... WATER!

HE'S GOING TO ESCAPE-- BY FLOWING RIGHT PAST THE HULK!

DRAT! I MISSED!



TSK, TSK, TAURUS-- ALLOW ME TO DEMONSTRATE THE ACCURACY OF AIM OF THE SALTANT SAGITTARIUS!

ZIZZ

ADMIT IT-- I'M TREMENDOUSLY TALENTED!



HOLY SMOKES!

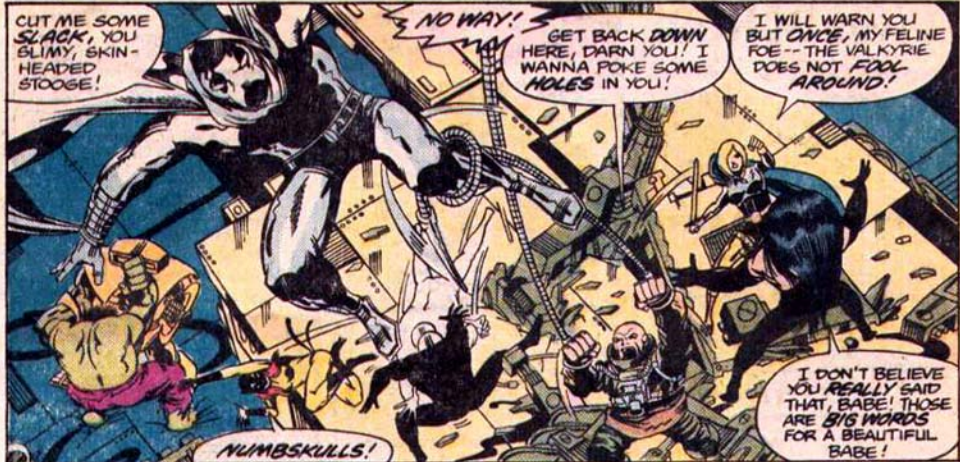
AN ELOQUENT UNDERSTATEMENT, HELLCAT! IT SEEMS SCORPIO HAS BUDDIES!

NO MATTER, MOON KNIGHT, THE DEFENDERS SHALL TRIUMPH!

EH--?

APPARENTLY, THE GREEN GOLEM ALSO HAS ALLIES!





CUT ME SOME SLACK, YOU BLIMPY, SKIN-HEADED STOOGES!

NO WAY!

GET BACK DOWN HERE, DARN YOU! I WANNA POKE SOME HOLES IN YOU!

I WILL WARN YOU BUT **ONCE**, MY FELINE FOE -- THE VALKYRIE DOES NOT FOOL AROUND!

NUMBSKULLS!

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY SAID THAT, BABE! THOSE ARE **BIG WORDS** FOR A BEAUTIFUL BABE!

UNNOTICED AMID THE MELEE, ARIES HAS SKULKED SILENTLY, AWAITING THIS OPPORTUNITY!



KA-BUNT

SO LONG, HULK! SAY HELLO TO THE MAN IN--



ZOOOSH

"--THE MOON!"

IT HAS BEEN A NECTIC DAY FOR THE HULK! ALREADY, IT IS EARLY EVENING OUTSIDE THE SECRET NEW JERSEY STRONG-HOLD OF SCORPIO...



...AND, QUITE LITERALLY, THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS HAVE BEEN KNOCKED OUT OF JADE-JAWS.

SPLASH!

HE ARCS AWAY FROM BELLE-VILLE, AND PLUMMETS INTO THE NEARBY PASSAIC RIVER...



HULK HAS BEEN IN SAME STINKING WATER BEFORE!*

HULK HATES WATER!

* LAST ISSUE -- ARCHIE.



A MAMMOTH LEAP SENDS THE MIGHTY MAN-BRUTE SOARING BACK, ENRAGED...

HULK WILL FIND MAN WITH HORN HEAD -- AND HULK WILL MAKE HIM PAY!



GANG WAY, GOONS!

HULK'S GONE LOCO AND HE'S HEADING-- OOPS... TOO LATE!

URGG-KK!

BEWARE THE BITE OF DRAGONFANG!

YOW!

SO MUCH FOR THAT SLOW WITTED SLOB!

MY RAZOR SHARP STEEL CLAWS ARE A MATCH FOR ANY SWORD!

MEANWHILE, IN AN ADJOINING CHAMBER, AS YET UNREACHED BY AUGHT BUT THE RESOUNDING DIN OF THE FURIOUS BATTLE RAGING BEYOND ITS METALLIC CONFINES, KYLE RICHMOND -- ALSO KNOWN AS NIGHTTHINK -- STRUGGLES WITH HIS UNYIELDING BONDS. HE HAS BEEN HELD PRISONER HERE SINCE MID-MORNING OF THIS DAY, A WEALTHY PAWN IN SCORPIO'S PLANS FOR A BETTER WORLD. BUT NOW EVENING HAS FINALLY FALLEN-AND NIGHTTHINK'S STRENGTH IS DOUBLED AT NIGHT!



IT'S DUBK AT LAST! I CAN FEEL IT!

GOTTA SUMMON ALL MY STRENGTH!



GOTTA...

...STRAIN!

KEEP...

...STRAINING...



...STRAINING...

...STRAINING...

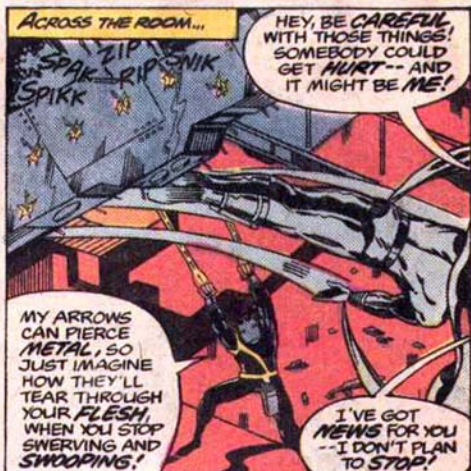


...UNTIL I...



...BREAK...

...FREE!



MEANWHILE, JUST OUTSIDE THE ZODIAC CHAMBER...

PISCES! 'CAPRICORN!' THEN MY WORST FEARS ARE REALIZED! I KNEW IT WAS A MISTAKE TO ACTIVATE THE ZODIAC PREMATURELY!

I KNEW IT, DAMMIT-- I KNEW IT!

?GASP?

IS... IS THAT... YOU... SCORPIO?

WHAT ELSE COULD I DO? I HAD TO DO SOMETHING, DIDN'T I?

SCORPIO... WHAT HAPPENED? YOU HAVE THE ANSWERS... WE ALL KNOW YOU HAVE THE ANSWERS...

...BUT THIS PAIN... IT WAS NOT... PART OF OUR PROGRAMMING.

SCORPIO... AM I... DYING...?

NO, PISCES-- NO! DON'T DIE! I WON'T ALLOW IT! WHY IS IT THAT WHENEVER I REALLY CARE ABOUT SOMETHING AND REALLY WANT IT TO SUCCEED... IT ALWAYS FAILS, INSTEAD?

PISCES, DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I CARE ABOUT YOU-- AND EVERYTIME I CARE, I GET HURT.

PISCES?

I WANTED TO SHARE BEERS AND LONG TALKS WITH YOU AND THE OTHERS, WHILE WE TRIED TO SET THE WORLD SANE... AND VIRGO-- FINALLY, A WOMAN WHO--

VIRGO!

NO, PLEASE-- DON'T LET IT BE! DON'T LET ANY-THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO MY--

-- VIRGO!

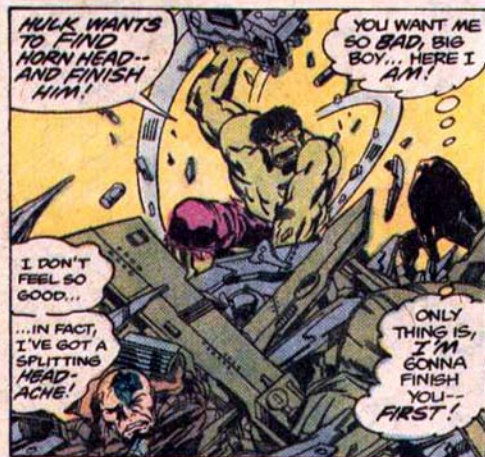
YOU WERE MY LAST CHANCE TO BE... NORMAL. I LOVED YOU, VIRGO-- EVEN THOUGH I NEVER REALLY KNEW YOU.

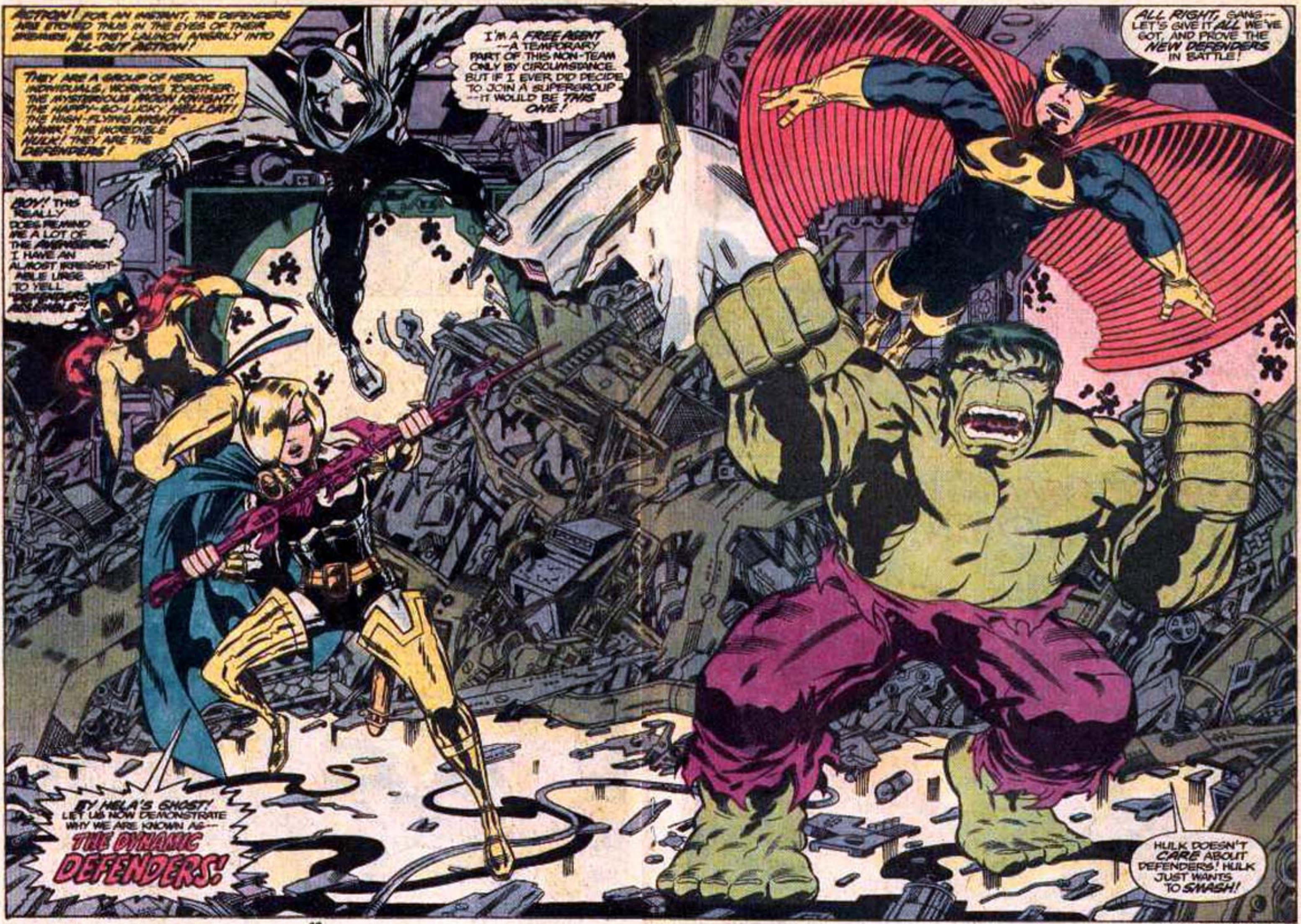
STILL BORN.

NOT ONE BREATH OF LIFE.

I'LL NEVER HEAR YOU SIGH, VIRGO... NEVER FEEL YOUR CARESS OR KNOW YOUR EMBRACE.

VIRGO, HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?





ACTION! FOR AN INSTANT, THE DEFENDERS ARE ETCHED TILLY IN THE EYES OF THEIR ENEMIES, AS THEY LAUNCH ANGRILY INTO ALL-OUT ACTION!

THEY ARE A GROUP OF HEROIC INDIVIDUALS, WORKING TOGETHER: THE MYSTERIOUS IRON KNIGHT! THE HAPPY-GO-LUCKY HILLLOTT! THE HIGH-FLYING AVIANT-HAWK! THE INCREDIBLE HULK! THEY ARE THE DEFENDERS!

BOY! THIS REALLY DOES REMIND ME A LOT OF THE AVENGERS! I HAVE AN ALMOST IRRESISTIBLE URGE TO YELL "DEFENDERS ASSEMBLE!"

I'M A FREE AGENT -- A TEMPORARY PART OF THIS NON-TEAM ONLY BY CIRCUMSTANCE. BUT IF I EVER DID DECIDE TO JOIN A SUPERGROUP -- IT WOULD BE THIS ONE!

ALL RIGHT, GANG -- LET'S GIVE IT ALL WE'VE GOT, AND PROVE THE NEW DEFENDERS IN BATTLE!

BY HELA'S GHOST! LET US NOW DEMONSTRATE WHY WE ARE KNOWN AS -- **THE DYNAMIC DEFENDERS!**

HULK DOESN'T CARE ABOUT DEFENDERS! HULK JUST WANTS TO SMASH!



GET READY, GROUP--
THE HISTORIONICS ARE
OVER, HERE THEY
COME!

BIG DEAL,
EXCEPT FOR THE
HULK, THEY'RE
PUSHOVERS!

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT THE HULK,
I'LL TAKE CARE
OF HIM!

SEE
THAT YOU
DO.



LEAPIN'
LIONS!

AS FOR ME,
I'M BORED
WITH THE
OVERBLOWN
BLONDE WITH
THE MACHO
HANG-UPS!

THE
ARROGANT
ESOTIST
DOES NOT
WISH TO ADMIT
THAT HE HAS
MET HIS
MATCH
WITH THE
VALKYRE!



INSTEAD, HE
LEAVES ME TO
FACE THE ON-
SLAUGHT OF
YET ANOTHER
MEMBER OF
THE ZODIAC!

HULK WILL KEEP
PUNCHING UNTIL
STUPID CRAB-MAN
IS NO MORE!

YOU WISH, FEA BRAIN!
MY ARMOR CAN WITHSTAND
YOUR BLOWS FOREVER--
AND MY ARSENAL CAN
DESTROY YOU!

SOONER OR
LATER, LADY, YOU HAVE
TO STOP SPINNING THAT
MAKESHIFT STAFF--



-- AND WHEN YOU DO-- YOU
DIE!"

THE
BRASSA-
DACCIO IS
KIND OF
DEEP,
DON'T YOU
THINK?

YOU SEEK
TO MASK
WHAT IS
REALLY
ON YOUR
MIND,
GEMINI.

TRUE,
LIBRA, WE
WONDER WHICH
ARE REALLY
WORTHY OF
GEMINI'S
SYMPATHY
AND AID.

I SAY--
THE
DEFENDERS!

I SAY--
THE
ZODIAC!



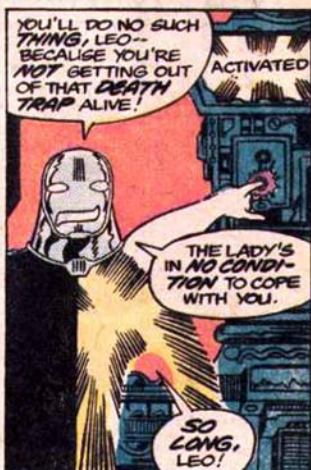
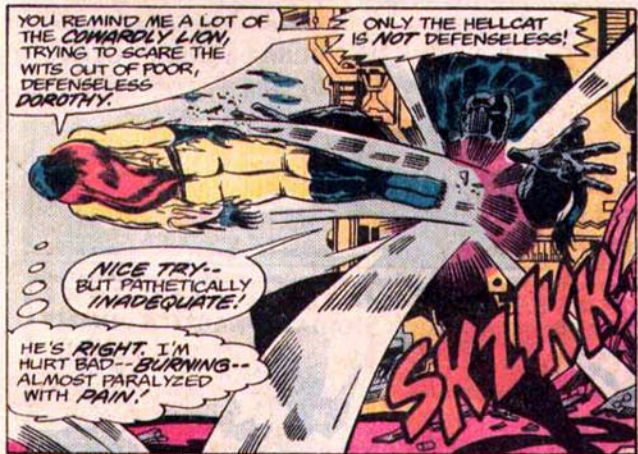
WE TWO MUST MERGE
WITHIN OUR HOST BODY
AND BECOME AS ONE,
TO REACH THE
RIGHT DECISION!

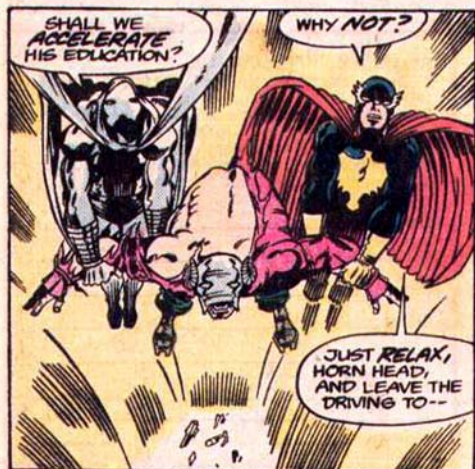
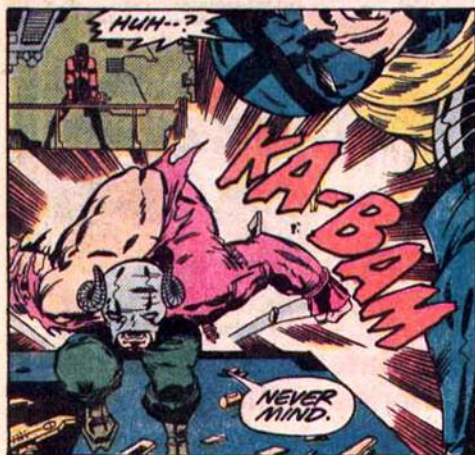
THE CHOICE
IS MINE
TO MAKE.



CHOOSE CAREFULLY,
GEMINI-- YOURS IS THE
ABILITY TO ALTER THE
ODDS AND TO AFFECT
THE OUTCOME OF THIS
BATTLE!

REASON
FAVORS THE
ZODIAC. EMOTION
FAVORS THE
DEFENDERS. I
YIELD TO EMOTION;
GEMINI FAVORS
THE DEFENDERS!







THERE! NOW ADMIT THE VALKYRIE HAS BESTED YOU FAIRLY IN BATTLE!

I ADMIT NOTHING, LEAST OF ALL-- DEFEAT!



WITHOUT MY ARROWS, I SIMPLY SHANT SUBMIT TO ANY FURTHER HARANGUES FROM A HOT-BLOODED HAG!

I'D BE A FOOL TO RISK MY OWN FREEDOM--

--JUST FOR A CHANCE TO PUNCH YOU IN THE MOUTH AND SHUT YOU UP!



WE SHALL MEET AGAIN, SAGITTARIUS. YOU MAY BE CERTAIN OF IT. AND THEN, WE SHALL SEE WHO STRIKES WHOM IN THE MOUTH!

SO SWEARS-- THE VALKYRIE!



THAT'S IT! KNOCK HIS BLOCK OFF, HULK, OLD PAL! DON'T LET HIM GIVE YOU ANY GUFF!

BASH



VENT YOUR HULKISH HOSTILITIES WITH A VENGEANCE!

BOMP!



YEAH! WAY TO GO, GREENIE!

NOW, HAVE I GOT A BAD HEAD-ACHE!



NOT NEARLY AS BAD AS YOU'RE GONNA HAVE, BALDY!

WELL, SO MUCH FOR THE ZODIAC!



SCORPIO IS STILL ON THE LOOSE, MOON KNIGHT-- AND SO IS THE FURY LMD!

WE'VE GOT TO FIND THEM, JACK-- FAST!

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE OLD
FACTORY...



I JUST HAD TO
HEAR LITTLE JUDY
SING "SOMEWHERE,
OVER THE RAINBOW"
ONE LAST TIME.

DON'T TALK LIKE THAT,
JAKE! YA CAN'T CALL IT
QUITS NOW-- NOT AFTER
ALL WE WUZ PLANNIN'!



LIFE IS CRUEL, NICK.
IT FEEDS ON YOUR
HOPES AND AMBITIONS
AND ENTHUSIASMS--
AND USES THEM TO
DESTROY YOU.

THE BATTLE
IS GOING
BADLY. I
FEAR ALL
IS LOST.



I COULD USE THE
ZODIAC KEY TO
TELEPORT ME AWAY...
BUT WHY? WHAT'S
THE USE?



ALL MY LIFE, EVERY TIME
I'VE EVER BELIEVED IN ANY-
THING, OR HAD FAITH THAT
THE FUTURE WOULD GET
BETTER FOR ME, I'VE HAD
THAT FALSE HOPE KNOCKED
OUT OF ME... AND FOUND
MYSELF BACK ON MY KNEES
IN DESPAIR.



HERE, JAKE--HAVVA
SCHLITZ. IT'LL MAKE
YA FEEL BETTER. I
FOUND IT ON THE FLOOR
BACK THERE, AN' SAVED
IT FOR YOU!



YOU DARE OFFER
ME A BEER--NOW?
WHY? SO I CAN
DROWN MY
SORROWS... IS
THAT IT? HOW
VERY, VERY MUCH
LIKE MY
BROTHER!

YOU'VE ALWAYS
DESPISED ME AS
A WEAKLING.



MAYBE YER
BLASTED BROTHER
DESPISED YOU,
JAKE!

--BUT I
NEVER
HAVE...NOT
EVEN WHEN
YA TREAT
ME AS IF I
WUZ HIM!

I RESPECT
YA, JAKE--I REALLY
DO--AN' YOU
BETTER BELIEVE
IT!



I KNOW THE LAYOUT OF
THIS WHOLE SET-UP, AND
I KNOW WHERE TO FIND
THE TWO OF THEM--IF
THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY
SKIPPED OUT!

LEAD ON,
JOCKO--I'VE
GOT A PER-
SONAL SCORE
TO SETTLE
WITH SCORPIO!



I'M SORRY, NICK,
BUT I DON'T
BELIEVE IT. I'M
52 YEARS
OLD... AND IT'S
ALL OVER
FOR ME.

I HAVE
NOTHING
LEFT TO
BELIEVE IN
OR TO LIVE
FOR...

...NOT EVEN
MYSELF.



NO, AND NOT EVEN MY LONG-SOUGHT REVENGE ON MY BROTHER, IT ALL FUTILE. I SEE THAT NOW.

NICK, GIVE ME YOUR GUN.



WHAT IN 5 PLACES?! YA GOTTA BE KIDDIN'!



THE GUN, NICK.



YA KNOW I WOULDN'T BE HANDIN' YA THIS BLAMED POP-GUN IF I HAD ANY FREE WILL OF MY OWN!

I KNOW.



A MAN MUST MEET HIS OWN FINAL DEFEAT WITH CLASS. WITH PANACHE. HAVEN'T I ALWAYS SAID THAT?

I GUESS, AT LEAST AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THIS IS ONE SURE WAY TO SOLVE THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS... AND MY OWN.

GOODBYE, NICK.



KA-BANG
KA-BANG
POOP-KA-BANG

SOUNDS LIKE A-- GUNSHOT!

GET A MOVE ON, MAN!



FROM THE LOOKS OF THAT MESS, THE SCORE HAS ALREADY BEEN SETTLED WITH SCORPIO.

PERMANENTLY.

THE LMD MUST HAVE BLOWN A FUSE AND-- AND JUST-- KILLED HIM!



...TOO BAD! BUT WHO'LL MISS A MANIAC LIKE SCORPIO, ANYWAY?

UH... WELL...

I WILL.

NEXT ISSUE:
THE DYNAMIC DEBUT OF THE RINKY-DINK
RINGER!
PLUS:
VAL GOES TO COLLEGE!
JACK GETS A JOB!
HULK EATS A HOT DOG!
ALL THIS-- AND LOTS MORE FUN GALORE!