

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

HERCULES

LET IT HEREWITH BE
ACCLAIMED THROUGH-
OUT HIGH OLYMPUS
THAT HERCULES --
BORN OF ALMIGHTY
ZEUS, FATHER OF THE
GODS, AND A MORTAL
MOTHER-- HE WHO
BROUGHT DEATH
HIMSELF TO LOW
DEFEAT--

--SLAYER OF THE
MANY-HEADED
HYDRA! CAPTOR
OF CEREBRUS,
GUARDIAN DOG OF
HELL! RETRIEVER
OF THE GOLDEN
APPLES OF ETERNAL
YOUTH! IMMORTAL
PRINCE OF POWER--
IS GRANTED HIS OWN
MAGNIFICENT TRIAL
MAG--

--BECAUSE YOU
REQUESTED IT!

TEN YEARS AGO--IN SPECIAL KING SIZE THOR
ANNUAL #1, 1965-- STAN LEE AND JACK KIRBY
INTRODUCED THE SECOND-BIGGEST IMMORTAL
TO HIT COMICDOM SINCE THE PULSE-POUNING
GOD OF THUNDER!

TODAY--
TEN YEARS
LATER--

BILL MANTLO
WRITER

G. TUSKA
ARTIST

V. COLLETTA
INKER

A. KAWECKI & K. MANTLO
letterers

I. VARTANOFF - colorist

MARV
WOLFGAN
EDITOR

THE GAMES OF RAGING GODS

STARRING **HERCULES** OF THE OLYMPIAN PRINCE OF POWER! CLIMBS ABOARD, TRUE BELIEVERS! MIGHTY MARVEL'S ON THE MOVE AGAIN!

MARIN COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA.

FOREST FIRES ARE A WAY OF LIFE--AND DEATH--ALONG THE NARROW WINDING STRIP OF ROAD KNOWN AS THE PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY... AND THOUGH MEN ACCEPT THE FACT AND FREQUENCY OF NATURE'S FIERY RAGES...

... THEY DON'T ACCEPT THEM LYING DOWN!

THIS IS THEIR LAND... AND THEY'RE GOING TO FIGHT--OR DIE-- TO KEEP IT!

HERCULES!
LOOK!

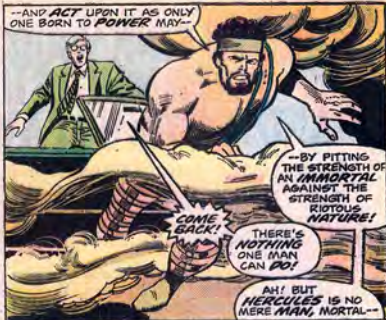
I DO SEE THAT WHICH DOTTH GRIP THY ATTENTION, MORTAL!

HOW COULD I DO OTHERWISE, WHEN IT HATH SENT THY VEHICLE TO SPINNING MADLY OFF THE ROAD?

TOO HOT!
WE GOTTA PULL BACK!

THERE'RE HOUSES BELOW THE FIRE-- PEOPLE TRAPPED INSIDE! WE CAN'T PULL OUT AN' LEAVE 'EM TO FRY!

WE CAN'T!





...CREATING A BARRIER OF FLAMES BETWEEN HIMSELF, THE ROAD...

...AND THE THREATENING ADVANCE OF THE ORIGINAL FIRE.

FURROARRR!

'TIS DONE!
THE TIME OF DANGER IS PASSED!

YOU DID IT! YOU CREATED A WALL OF FIRE--

--STOPPING THE FIRST ONE WITH A STRIP OF BURNT-OUT EARTH!

'T WAS MY INTENTION, MORTAL!

IN THE FACE OF TNY BRAVERY.. I COULD DO NO LESS THAN SUCCEED!

THAT WAS INCREDIBLE, HERCULES!

SIMPLY INCREDIBLE!

THOU DOST PRAISE ME OVERMUCH, FRIEND! HERCULES ACCOMPLISHED MERELY THAT WHICH DID MOST NEED DOING!

HAVE IT YOUR WAY! I'M NOT ABOUT TO ARGUE WITH A GOD!

BUT COULD WE GET BACK TO DRIVING AGAIN...PLEASE?

IT'S A LONG WAY BACK TO UCLA, AND YOU'VE A LECTURE TO DELIVER ON THE QUESTIONABLE GENEALOGIES OF A FEW OF YOUR FELLOW OLYMPIANS!

BUT, AS RICHARD FENSTER MOTORS HIS HEAVENLY COMPANION AWAY FROM THE STILL-SMOLDERING SCENE OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A DISASTER...

...TWO PAIRS OF SINISTER EYES FOLLOW THEIR DEPARTURE...A LOW, BUTTERAL GROWL UTTERS FROM THE THROAT OF THE MORE MASSIVE OF THE TWO...

...AND THE SMOKE FROM THE GOD-QUENCHED FIRE TWINES SERPENTINE ABOUT THE SHADOWED FORM OF...

... TYPHON!



IT IS HE, CYLLA!
THE ACCURSED SPAWN
OF ZEUS!

THE LAST OF THE TREACHEROUS OUTCAST
TITANS WHO HAD DARED DEFEAT ALMIGHTY
ZEUS, FATHER OF THE OLYMPIAN GODS, IN
THE DIM, DARK RECESSES OF A MYTH-
RIDDEN PAST!

TYPHON, WHOM THE ANCIENTS HAD CLAIMED POS-
SESSED THE HEADS OF A HUNDRED LOATHSOME DRAGONS
IN FEARFUL TRIBUTE TO HIS VICIOUS SAVAGERY!

HERCULES!

DO YOU HEAR
ME, WITCH-WOMAN?
IT IS HE--WHOSE NAME
I DID BREATHE IN BLASEST
HATE AS THE SMOKE OF
HATES DID WAFT
ABOUT ME!

HAVE A CARE,
MIGHTY TYPHON!

LEST THY BOUNDLESS
RAGE DO TH COME BE-
TWTX THEE AND THE
REVENGE THOU DOST
DESIRE!

I DO MARK
THEE, WITCH! BUT
THOU KNOWEST THE
DEPTH OF MY
WRATH!

"YES..."
ANGERS
CYLLA. "I
DO KNOW
IT!"

"I KNOW THOU WAST RULER, FOR A TIME, OF HIGH
OLYMPUS, AFTER THOU DIDST PUT OUT THE SACRED
PROMETHEAN FLAME, BANISHING THE DEATHLESS
GODS TO LIMBO!"



"I KNOW ALSO THAT 'THY RULE
WAS CHALLENGED BY HERCULES,
THE SON OF MISHY ZEUS..."

"... AND THOU WAST DEFEATED BY HIM
AND HIS ONCE-FELLOW AVENGERS!"



HEY!
WATCH IT,
FELLA!

THOSE ARROWS
MAY NOT LOOK LIKE
MUCH-- BUT THEY
DOST PLENTY!

"WAY BACK LONG AGO, WHEN HERC, HAWKEYE,
GOLIATH AND THE WASP MADE UP THE
ROSTER OF EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES
... AVENGERS 49 & 50 -- MARVELOUS MARY.

"ENOUGH, WITCH! THINKEST THOU I DO NOT RECALL MY SENTENCING BEFORE ZEUS? MY SHAME BEFORE THE ASSEMBLED GODS?"

THY PLEAS FOR MERCY WILL AVOID THE NAUGHT USURPER!

NO QUARTER DIDST THOU GRANT OTHERS ... AND NONE CANST THOU EXPECT!

KIRATOS! BIA! TAKE THOU THE PRISONER--

-- CAST HIM DOWN THE PIT OF HADES!

AYE, MY LIEGE!

NO, MERCIFUL ZEUS! HADES IS AN ABODE FOR THE DEAD!

--NOT FOR ONE WHO IS IMMORTAL! NOT FOR ONE WHO SHALL LANGUISH THERE FOREVER!

"I DO REMEMBER THAT FEARFUL FALL, CYLLA... DOWN THE STEAMING SHAFT INTO THE STYSIAN REPTHS OF THE BREAD DOMAIN OF PLUTO!

A CURSE UPON THEE, LORD OF OLYMPUS!

TYPHON WILL RETURN!

"BUT HADES WAS NOT THE HELL THOU DIDST IMAGINE IT TO BE, MY LORD TYPHON! FOR I, CYLLA, DID DWELL THEREIN!"

"AND LIKE MANY ANOTHER ... THOU DIDST FIND THIS WITCH MOST-- ENCHANTING!"

I MUST ESCAPE, CYLLA! THERE MUST BE A WAY TO THE VENGEANCE I DO SEEK!

IS IT SO HARD SHARING HELL WITH ME, MY TITAN? NAY, DO NOT ANSWER!

I DO KNOW THAT OTHER FLAME THAT DOTH BURN WITHIN THEE-- AND MAYHAPS IT DOTH COINCIDE WITH A PASSION OF MINE OWN!

THOU DIDST NOT CHOOSE THIS LIVING DEATH, MILORD! YET I DID FALL TO HADES OF MY OWN ACCORD--

--WHEN A CERTAIN PRINCE DID REJECT AN OFFER I DID MAKE HIM...

NEVER AGAIN WILL HERCULES TURN AWAY THE LOVE OF A DELPHIC ORACLE! WATCH, TYPHON!

WATCH! CYLLA WAS NOT BOUND BY DECREE TO HELL!

AND IF SHE DOTH CHOOSE TO LEAVE, WHO IS TO SAY THE WITCH MAY NOT TAKE HER PRESENT LOVER WITH HER?

"A SIMPLE SPELL DID I CAST..."





"AND SO FIERCE WAS THE HEAT OF OUR COMINGS..."

"... THAT THE WOOD INTO WHICH WE DID DESCEND..."

"... DID BURST INTO RAGING, UNEARTHLY FLAME!"



THE AXE DOETH STILL REMAIN FUSED TO MY HAND!

'TIS A HATEFUL, BURNING LIMB THAT WILL NOT BE OFF!

CYLLA! HELP ME!



I CANNOT, MY LOVE!

THE FLAME THAT DID BIND THEE TO THY WEAPON WAS A FLAME OF THE HOLY GODS! NO MERE WITCH MAY COUNTER SUCH A FORCE!

BUT ORACLE I BE-- AND PROPHECY MAY BE OF SOME SMALL HELP TO THEE!

ONLY THE BLOOD OF THY WORST ENEMY WILL RELEASE THEE FROM THY BAND, TITAN! THAT AND NOTHING ELSE!



"THEN I WILL SOON BE FREE, CYLLA! FOR E'EN NOW HE WHO DOETH FIT THY PROPHECY DOETH COME IN VIEW! THE SUZZLING, GRINNING, JACKKNIFE OF AN IMMORTAL IS HERE! HERCULES COMES-- AND NONE BUT HE IS TYPHON'S FOE!"

"NONE BUT HIS BLOOD WILL FREE ME FROM MY CURSE!"

AH! THE FRUIT OF THIS MENDICINO GRAPE IS AS SWEET AS THE NECTAR OF THE GODS, FRIEND FENSTER!

I'M SURE GLAD YOU'RE NOT DRIVING, HERCULES! IF A COP WAS TO STOP US NOW-- YOU'D BREAK RECORDS ON BALLOON TESTS FOR YEARS TO COME!



DOS OF A GOD!
DOST THOU HEAR ME, OLYMPIAN?

TYPHON SEEKS THY BLOOD; AND HAVE IT HE SHALL!

WHOOH!



HURL TO THY DEATH, HERCULES!

WHEN THE ROCKS BELOW CLAIM THEE -- THEN WILL TYPHON BE FREE OF HIS HATED CURSE!

WHOOH!
I KNOW NOT FROM WHENCE THOU COME, VILLAIN--



-- BUT 'T WILL TAKE MORE THAN THY COWARDLY ATTACK TO FELL THE PRINCE OF POWER!

BUT FIRST MUST THE MORTAL BE SAVED!

HERCULES DRAGS HIS UNCONSCIOUS LECTURE AGENT FROM THE PLUMMETING VEHICLE...



... AND SECONDS LATER ...

KER-WHAM!

... THE CAR BECOMES JUST ANOTHER STATISTIC FOR RICHARD FENSTER'S INSURANCE COMPANY!



THE SHOCK DIDST CAUSE THE MORTAL TO LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS!

'T IS JUST AS WELL! HE WOULD BE OF LITTLE USE IN THE BATTLE TO COME!

AND TYPHON DOTH ONCE MORE HOLD HIS BATTLE-AXE! 'T WILL BE NO EASY VICTORY, I FEAR!



HERCULES DOES LIVE YET, TITAN! HIS BLOOD IS NOT YET THINE!

HAVE IT I MUST, SON OF ZEUS!



AND HAVE IT I WILL!

WHOOH!
THOU DOST USE THINE AXE TO SHATTER THE VERY ROAD, TITAN!





NO TEMPTRESS! HIS DEFEAT IS TO BE MINE -- AND MINE ALONE!

YOU WOULD SPEAK THUS TO ME, TITAN?

TO THE ONE THAT DIDST SAVE THEE?



THERE BE NOT THE TIME FOR THAT NOW, WOMAN!

ALL THAT BE OF ANY IMPORTANCE IS THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE OF POWER!

FIE UPON THEE, KNAVE!



THINKEST THOU HERCULES BE SOME JELLY-KNEED SERVING WENCH THAT A GLOWER FROM THY FEARSOME COUNTEINANCE WOULDST CAUSE HIS STRENGTH TO LEAVE HIM?

I SAY THEE NAY, VILLAIN! AND ONCE FREE OF THIS ENTANGLING VEGETATION--

RIPPP



-- THE SON OF ZEUS WILL MAKE THEE WISH THOU HADST NEVER LEFT THE DARK DOMAIN OF PLUTO!

KA-WHOOM!

GET THEE BACK TO HADES, TITAN!



MY HEART DOETH SCREAM FOR VENGEANCE AGAINST BOTH MY ERSTWHILE LOVERS!

YET UPON WHICH SHALL CYLLA LEVEL HER CURSES? WHICH IMMORTAL SHALL DIE BEGGING THE ORACLE'S FORGIVENESS?

THE ANSWER TO THAT MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION WILL HAVE TO WAIT A SECOND OR TWO...

... AS WE CAST OUR GAZE OVER THE CLIFF-SIDE AT THE EDGE OF THE NARROW HIGHWAY...

... AND SEE, WITH SLIGHT CURIOSITY, THE AWAKENING OF RICHARD FENSTER, A MAN OF SCHEDULES AND PAPERWORK...

HOLY JOE!
I'M STILL
ALIVE!

IF YOU CAN CALL HANGING ONTO THE SIDE OF A CLIFF LIKE A REFUGEE FROM A SCENE OF KING KONG LIVING!

... WHO, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS SOMEWHAT COMMON-PLACE LIFE...



JIMINY CRICKET!
I'M NOT CUT
OUT FOR THE
PART OF
TARZAN!

AND MY
THROAT GETS
RAW IF I EVEN
TRY THE WAR-
CRY OF A
BULL APE!

... IS ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING VERY, VERY, EXTRAORDINARY!



WILL YOU
LOOK AT
THAT?!?

HERCULES IS
TRYING TO HOLD
OFF THE BIG UGLY
GUY WITH THE
CLEAVER--

-- WHILE THAT WIERD
HIPPI-CHICK WAVES
HER HAND AT THE ROAD--

-- TURNING
IT INTO--

QUICKSAND,
OLYMPIAN!

BY
THE GODS!

NO, SCION
OF ZEUS! NOT
BY THE GODS!

'TIS A WITCH
THAT WILL BE
THE DEATH
OF YOU!

WRONG,
WENCH!

'T WILL BE
A TITAN THAT
DOETH SLAY
HIM!

THINE AXE
DOETH CLEAVE
EMPTY AIR,
BOASTFULL ONE!

AND THO' I BE
MIRED TO THE SPOT BY
THE WITCH'S SPELL--

-- 'TIS STILL THE
PRINCE OF HIGH OLYM-
PUS THAT WILL TRIUMPH
THIS DAY!

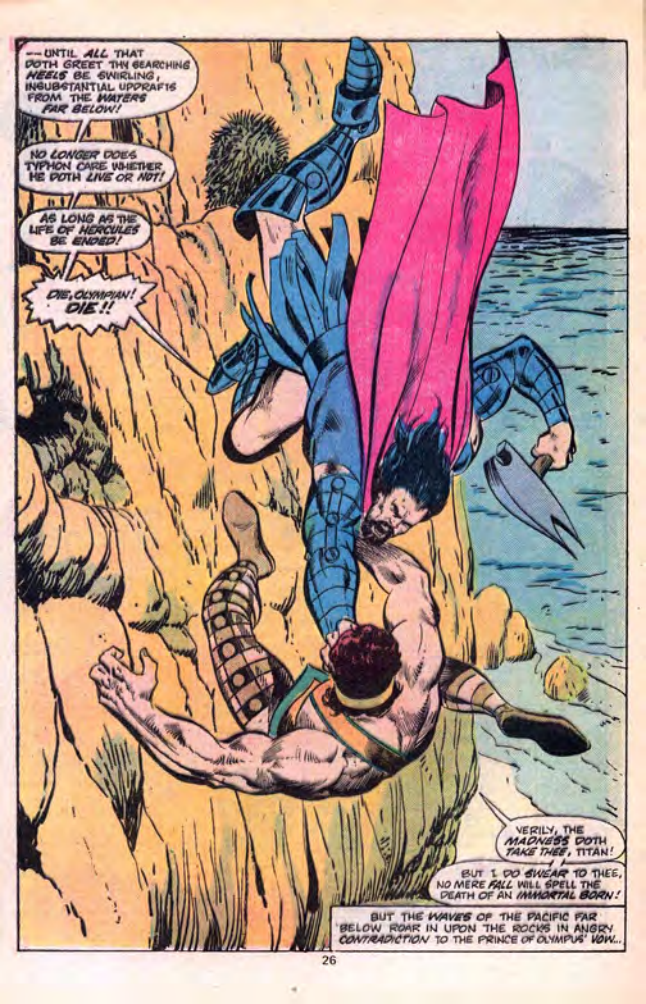
HERCULES
SOUNDS SO
SURE! SO
CONFIDENT!

BUT HE'S
SINKING DEEPER
EVERY SECOND--
WHILE THE OTHER
ONE GETS CLOSER
WITH EVERY SWEEP
OF HIS AXE!

I'VE GOT TO DO
SOMETHING! BUT WHAT?







— UNTIL ALL THAT
DOTH GREET THY SEARCHING
HEELS BE SWIRLING,
INSUBSTANTIAL UPDRAFTS
FROM THE WATERS
FAR BELOW!

NO LONGER DOES
TYPHON CARE WHETHER
HE DOTH LIVE OR NOT!

AS LONG AS THE
LIFE OF HERCULES
BE ENDED!

DIE, OLYMPIAN!
DIE!!

VERILY, THE
MADNESS DOTH
TAKE THEE, TITAN!

BUT I DO SWEAR TO THEE,
NO MERE FALL WILL SPELL THE
DEATH OF AN IMMORTAL BORN!

BUT THE WAVES OF THE PACIFIC FAR
BELOW ROAR IN UPON THE ROCKS IN ANGRY
CONTRADICTION TO THE PRINCE OF OLYMPUS' VOW...

... AND THE ENBUING SPLASH DROWING OUT ANY FURTHER WORDS OF THE DEATH-LOCKED COMBATANTS!

FMMKUSHH--

AND, FOR A FEW MOMENTS, ALL IS SILENCE.

GOVE! BOTH OF THEM!

THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF LIFE FOR--

-- WAIT! WHAT THE HECK IS THAT??

FROTH AND FUME AND OCEAN SPRAY, RICHARD FENSTER...

... BUBBLING FROM BENEATH THE SEA-GREEN OCEAN DEPTHS.

BBBBRRRRP

IT WOULD SEEM THAT EITHER ONE OR BOTH THE SUBMERGED IMMORTALS...

... LIVES!

SPRAMM!

AND FROM THE FORCE WITH WHICH THE TITAN IS HURLED FROM BENEATH THE WAVES ... IT SEEMS BOTH WOULD BE A FAIR ENOUGH GUESS.

AND, IF ONE MORE GUESS WERE TO BE ALLOWED ... IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE BATTLE IS OVER.

I-- I YIELD, ZEUS' SON!

IN THE NAME OF MERCY-- SPARE ME!

THOU HAST THAT WHICH THOU DOTH ASK, CRAVEN ONE--

-- FOR AS LONG AS THINE ANE DOTH REMAIN JOINED TO THY HAND THOU ART SURELY CURSED!

HERCULES ASKED NOT FOR THIS BATTLE-- AND ME-- THINKS THE FIGHT BE DONE!



