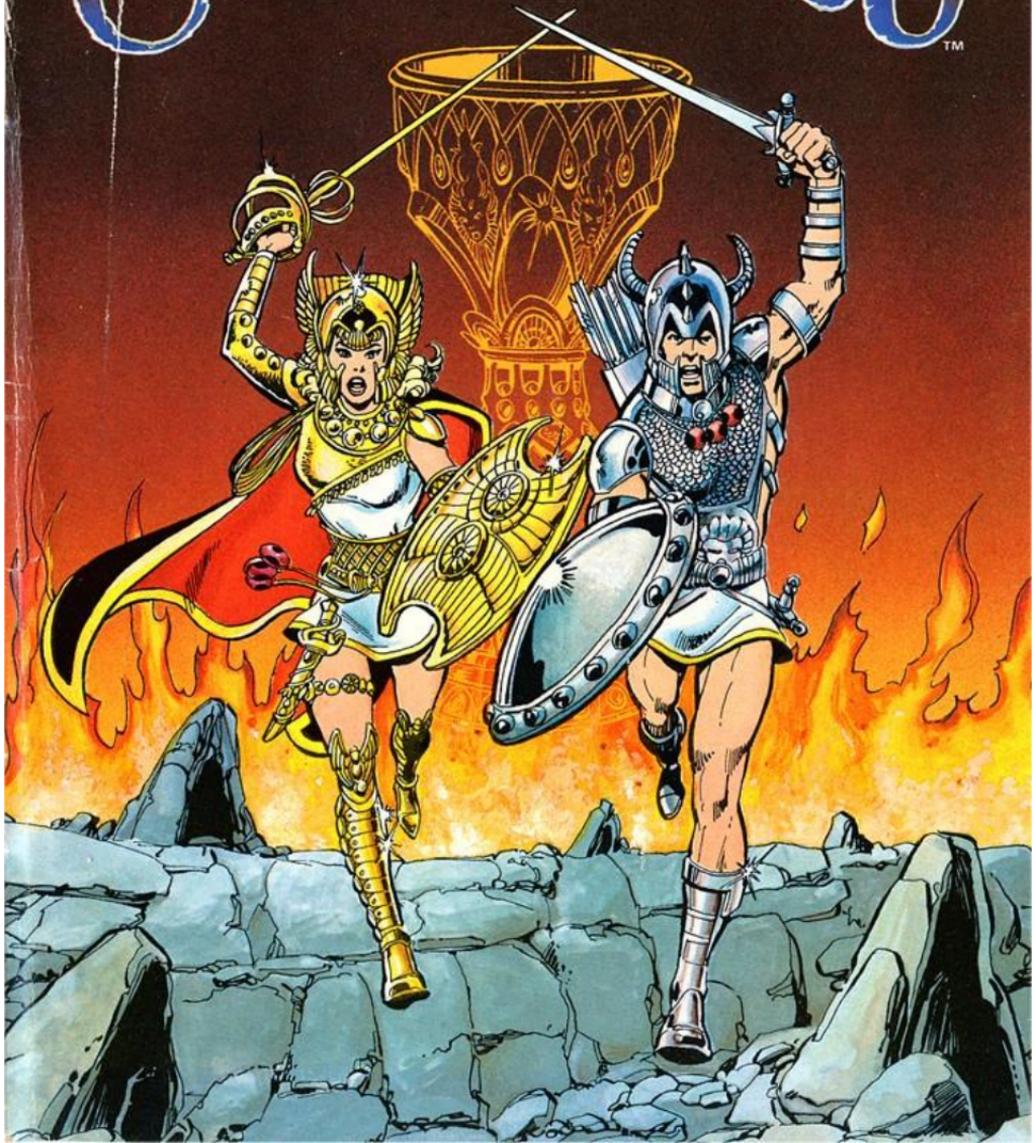


<http://www.replacementdoes.com>

Swordquest²



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?



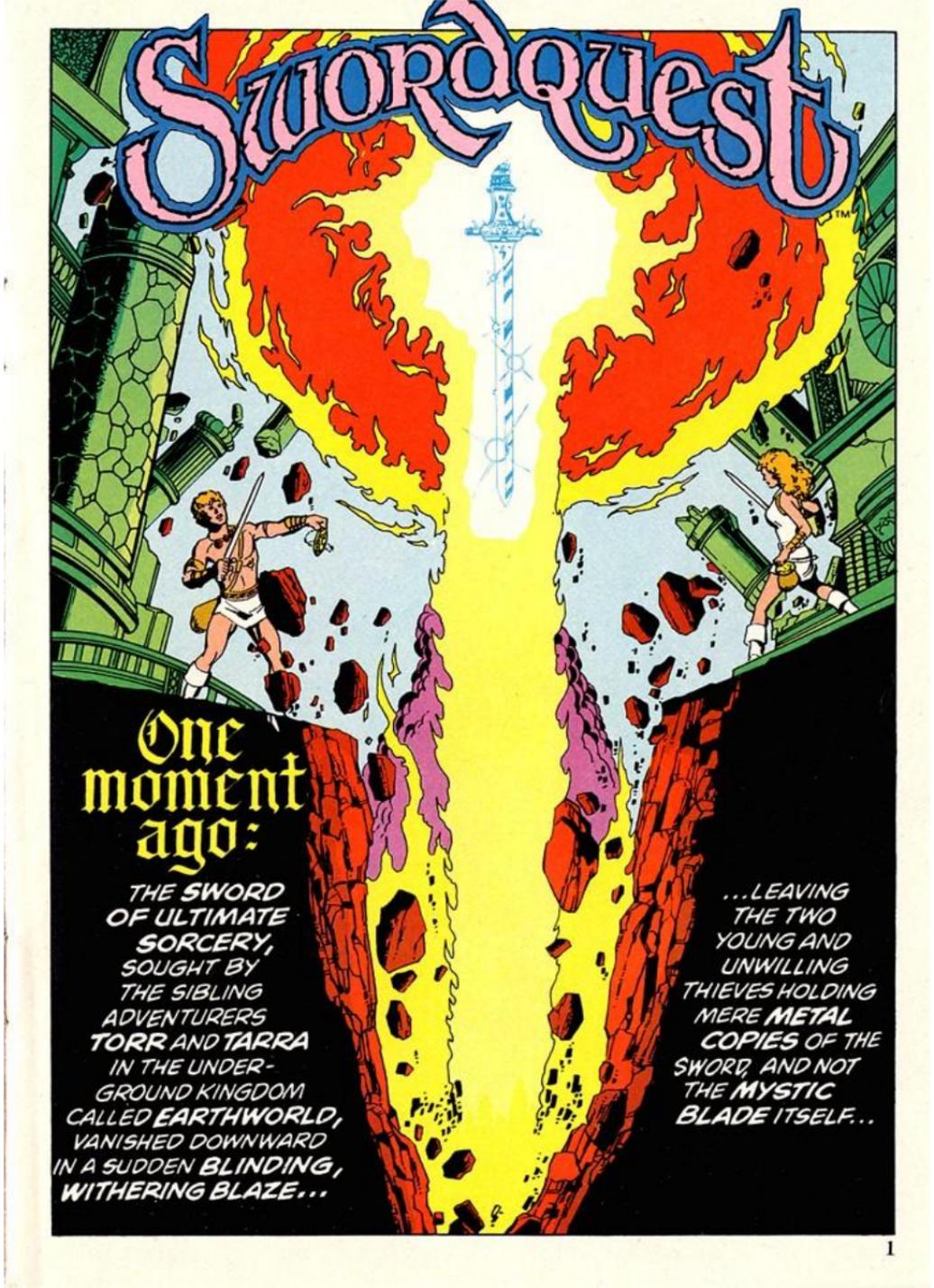
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Swordquest



**One
moment
ago:**

THE SWORD
OF ULTIMATE
SORCERY,
SOUGHT BY
THE SIBLING
ADVENTURERS
TORR AND TARRA
IN THE UNDER-
GROUND KINGDOM
CALLED **EARTH**WORLD,
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! *X

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," -- GOLD WITH
GAME ONE OF "SWORDQUEST. "



*THIS DOES ONE
ENDING BECOME A
SECOND BEGINNING.*

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

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

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

*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 LONGS 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, 'TWA'S PROPHESED, WILL CLAIM MY VERY THRONE, WITH "A SWORD SHINING BRIGHTLY AS SUMMER'S SUN"?

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--

**BONG
BONG**

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



"AND WE KNOW FULL WELL WHY FREEMAN AND SLAVE ALIKE WERE FORCED TO HIDE THEIR FEARFUL HEADS INDOORS FROM DUSK TO DAWN, DO WE NOT, TYRANNUS?"

"TO FORESTALL POSSIBLE REBELLION AGAINST YOUR RULE, YOU BADE ME UNLEASH TWO SWORD-WIELDING NETHER DEMONS EACH DAY AS THE SUN DIED BURNING IN THE WEST..."

"... DEMONS WHO COULD NOT BE PERCEIVED BY HUMAN EYE..."

"... YET WHO APPEARED TO THE CRINGING POPULACE AS A SINISTER MIST WHICH SNAKED ITS WAY THROUGH STREET AND ALLEYWAY OF THE CITY BELOW..."

"...BRINGING A HIDEOUS DEATH TO ALL WHO COULD NOT REACH HOME AND HEARTH IN TIME!"



"WHILE, WITHIN ONE OF THOSE HOVELS..."

IF ONLY WE DARED REVEAL THEIR TRUE SELVES, FELECIA -- INSTEAD OF HIDING THEIR GOLDEN LOCKS BENEATH THAT CRUDE, DARK DYE--

THEY'RE BUT CHILDREN, GARTH--NOT WARRIORS LIKE THEIR SIRE.

--THE PEOPLE MIGHT RISE AGAINST TYRANNUS, AND BRING HIM DOWN!

WOULD YOU SEAL THEIR DEATH WARRANTS?

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

"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..."

"...RIDING LIKE A HELMETED DEITY AMONG YOUR QUIVERING SUBJECTS."



"...CONSIDERING THEM BENEATH YOUR ROYAL NOTICE."



"WHEN THEY WERE OF AN AGE TO UNDERSTAND SUCH THINGS, THEY WERE TOLD OF THEIR TRUE HERITAGE..."

"THEY MERELY WORKED AT THE HOMELY TASKS THEIR PSEUDO-PARENTS SET FOR THEM, TILL ONE DAY QUITE RECENTLY--"

"... BUT STILL, HAVING NEVER KNOWN THEIR REAL PARENTS, THEY DID NOT HATE."

TORR...!?

I-- I HEARD IT, MY SISTER-- CRIES FROM THE STREET BELOW!

IT SOUNDED LIKE--



LOOK!

IT-- IT CAN'T BE--!

"IF I WERE A NORMAL MORTAL, MY KING, I MIGHT ALMOST SYMPATHIZE WITH THE TWO WIDE-EYED STRIPLINGS, AS THEY GAZED OUT THE WINDOW--"

"-- TO SEE THOSE THEY HAD CALLED MOTHER AND FATHER FOR SO LONG, LYING LIFELESS IN THE DIRT OF THE STREET."

"AND OVER THEIR BODIES, THE ARMORED FORM OF MALAVOL, YOUR CAPTAIN OF GUARDS..."

"... THE MAN WHO HAD PRESIDED OVER THE SLAYING OF THEIR TRUE PARENTS SO MANY YEARS BEFORE."

LET THIS BE A LESSON TO ALL YOU PEASANTS!

CLEAR THE WAY WHEN THE KING'S GUARDS COME RIDING--OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR FOLLY!

"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 ROSTER PARENTS TO KEEP HIDDEN, AND GIVE 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."

"AND SO IT MIGHT HAVE REMAINED, HAD MALAVOL POSSESSED THE GOOD SENSE TO KEEP HIS OWN MOUTH SHUT."

OH,
FATHER...
FATHER...!

MOTHER...



"BUT OF COURSE HE DID NOT."

YOU TWO! BE SURE THESE CARCASSES ARE BURIED AT ONCE...



FOR, I'LL BE RIDING BACK THROUGH HERE IN A LITTLE WHILE...



...AND I WOULDN'T WANT MY VALUABLE NEW STEED TO STUMBLE OVER SUCH PEASANT CARRION!





WHAT IN THE NAME OF ALL THE GODS--?

WOK!



WHO THREW THAT STONE?? SPEAK!

DON'T TRY TO HIDE OR I'LL BURN DOWN THE WHOLE CITY, TILL I FIND--



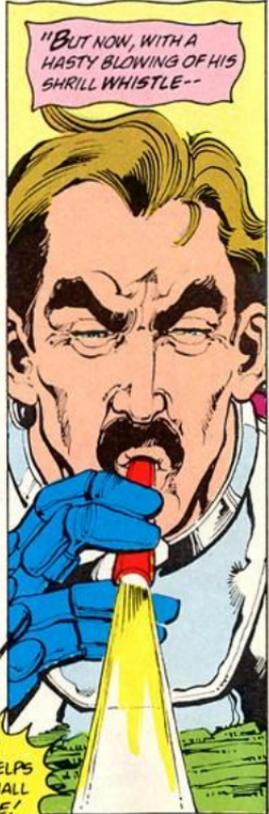
I THREW IT, YOU LAPDOG TO A MURDEROUS TYRANT!

NO! IT WAS I!

TARRA--NO! YOU'LL JUST GET YOURSELF KILLED--LIKE THEY WERE!

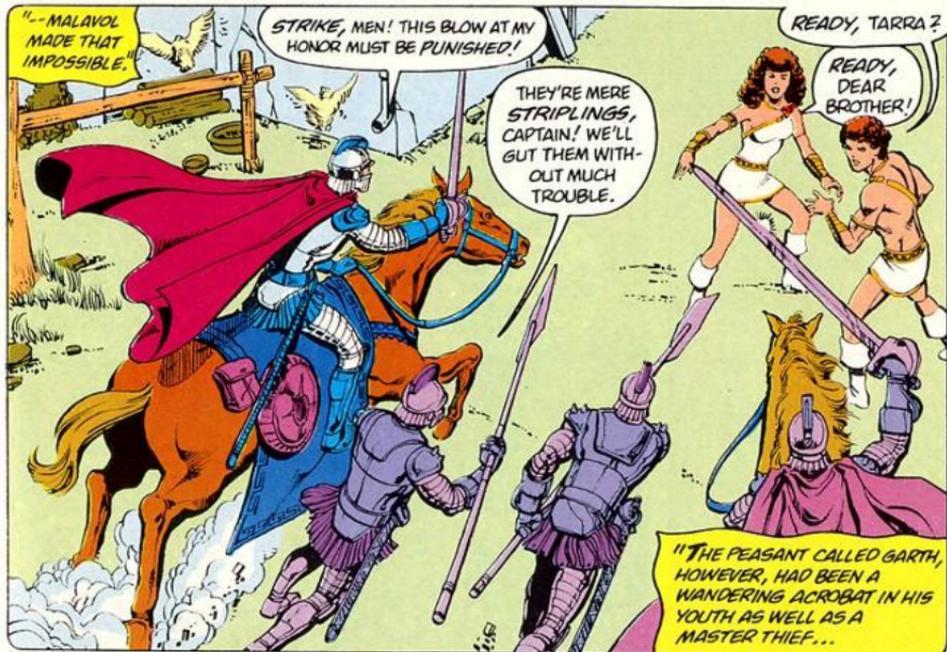
DO YOU THINK I CARE--WHILE THE MAN WHO SLEW GARTH AND FELECIA LIVES?

"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--

IF IT'S DEATH YOU COURT, WHELPS --THEN DEATH SHALL YOU BOTH HAVE!



"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!

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!?

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?

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

THINK, MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS-- THINK!

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 EARTHORLD.



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!

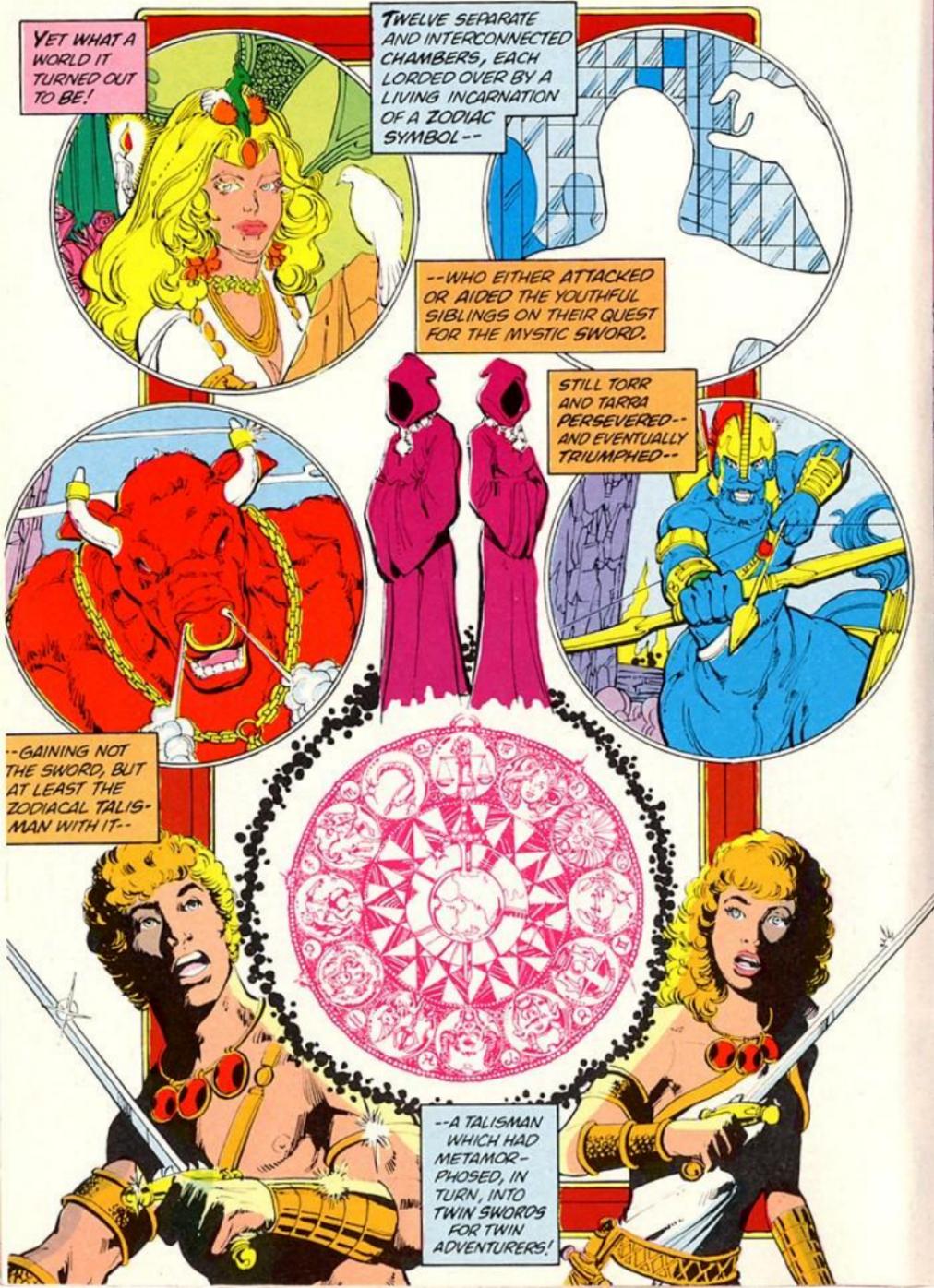
TWELVE SEPARATE
AND INTERCONNECTED
CHAMBERS, EACH
LORDED OVER BY A
LIVING INCARNATION
OF A ZODIAC
SYMBOL--

--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!

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 EVENTUALLY WIND UP IN MY ROYAL HANDS, WHERE IT BELONGS--

MILORD KING...

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

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

IT WAS THEY WHO FORGED THAT MAGICAL SWORD--

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.

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!

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.

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 STINGINGLY
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...!



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?



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??

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 WRAITH MENTARRA, AND NOW--

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

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

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

WH-WHAT--?

IT'S NOT REALLY A CAVE AT ALL--

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white dress and a red bow, stands in the center of a vast, ornate treasure chamber. The room is filled with gold, jewels, and ancient artifacts. A large red and yellow umbrella is suspended from the ceiling. A speech bubble above her contains the text: --IT'S A TREASURE CHAMBER!

--IT'S A
TREASURE
CHAMBER!



EVEN KONJURO'S SEA KEEP DIDN'T POSSESS SO MUCH GOLD--SO MANY SPARKLING JEWELS!

STILL, THEY WON'T GET ME THE CHALICE MENTARRA TOLD ME ABOUT.

I'VE GOT TO BECOME A WARRIOR IF I WANT TO QUENCH MY THIRST-- LET ALONE TRIUMPH!

THIS SWORD --SO MUCH LOVE-LIER THAN THE ONE I GAINED ABOVE--



AND THIS ARMOR! PERHAPS IT'S TIME I LOOKED NO MORE LIKE A STARVELING THIEF--



--AND MORE LIKE THE DAUGHTER OF THE GREATEST WARRIOR OF THE OUTER WORLD.

NO-- NOT JUST HIS DAUGHTER-- BUT A WARRIOR IN MY OWN RIGHT!

THIS ARMOR-- SHIELD --SWORD-- SO RICH AND GLEAMING-- I FEEL I REALLY COULD CONQUER THIS WORLD OF FIRE!



STILL HOT, THOUGH--SO THIRSTY. I'D BETTER FIND THE CHALICE QUICKLY, BEFORE--

EH?



WHAT'S THAT-- IN THAT SECOND CHAMBER BEYOND, FRAMED BY A CRIMSON BLAZE?





IT'S
ALIVE!!

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 TYRANNIUS' 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--?



LOATHSOME MONSTERS, ALL AFLAME AND LEAPING FROM OUT OF THE VERY FIRE!

AND WHERE ELSE SHOULD FIRE-GOBLINS DWELL, PRAY?

COME! PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPONS, AND WE'LL TAKE YOU HOME WITH US TO SEE, EH?



NO? WELL, THEN, STRIPLING, IF YOU'LL NOT COME WILLINGLY--!

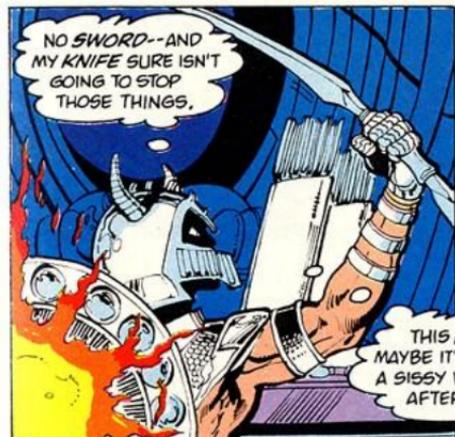


BALLS OF FLAME-- LEAPING FROM THEIR VERY FINGERTIPS!

ONLY MY SILVER SHIELD SAVES ME FROM THEM, EVEN FOR THE MOMENT--



--AND MY SWORD--



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?

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW!! HE'S FROZEN STIFF!

GOOD! THEY'RE ALL FLEEING-- THOSE WHO STILL CAN, ANYWAY.

I DIDN'T CARE MUCH FOR ICING YOU DOWN, OLD BUDDY, BUT YOU OUGHT TO BE MORE HOSPITABLE TO STRANGERS.

I WILL SAY THIS, THOUGH--

--EVEN WHEN YOUR MOUTH'S AS DRY AS THE DESERT, VICTORY STILL TASTES SWEET!

YOU'LL PROBABLY MELT BACK TO NORMAL IN A LITTLE WHILE--

--BUT I WON'T BE HERE TO SEE 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 STOPPED TRYING TO TOSS ME INTO THE LAVA, THANK HELIOS FOR SMALL FAVORS!
IT EVEN RESPONDS TO MY COMMANDS ALREADY, AND--

WAIT!
WHAT'S THAT??

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?

AYE, THAT IT IS-- UNLESS THE HEAT'S DRIVEN ME BALMY!

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

I FEEL-- I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE, SOMEWHERE-- BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

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

... BUT I CAN'T RESIST KISSING HIM.

AH! HE'S WAKING UP!

I HOPE HE WON'T MIND THAT I--

MIND, LASS?!

RESIST? NAY-- I WANT TO KISS HIM!



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 HORNED 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!

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!



I--I
DID
IT!

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



IT'S SCUTTILING 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?

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!



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

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



P- PLEASE--!



OH, THANK YOU,
MASTER! WE--
NOW DON'T GET
MAUDLIN ON ME,
OR I'M LIABLE TO
CHANGE MY
MIND.

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.

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

IF YOU REALLY
WANT TO SHOW
ME SOME
GRATITUDE--

--OR JUST A
PLAIN
DRINK
OF--



EH--?



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?



YOU!?

WATER!



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 --

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--

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.

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!



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 OUTFITTING 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--

THINGS SHOULD GO A BIT MORE SMOOTHLY FROM HERE ON.

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

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--

OWWWW

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

SKRAWINK!

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 IT'S 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!

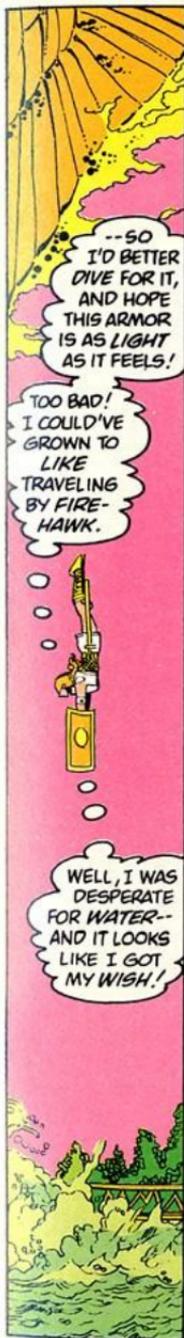
BETTER TAKE A LOOK OVER WHERE THEY'RE--



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!



NOTHING
LIKE THE
DIRECT
APPROACH!

GRONK

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



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!

GRAARRR

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

WHAT ARE
YOU GAPING
AT?

YOU,
SISTER--
YES--

--BUT
NOT
THAT!

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!

FROOSH!



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 BEFORE, 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 UNDERSTANDING 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.

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



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 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--?



THE CHALICE-- IT SHATTERED INTO A MILLION PIECES!

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!



AH, BUT YOU ARE A PERCEPTIVE WENCH, AREN'T YOU?

IT'S HERMINUS!

--I'M TOO WATER-LOGGED EVEN TO RUN FROM YOU!

THERE-- ON THE BOTTOM OF THE CHALICE--

THE IMAGE OF-- A CROWN!



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!



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--

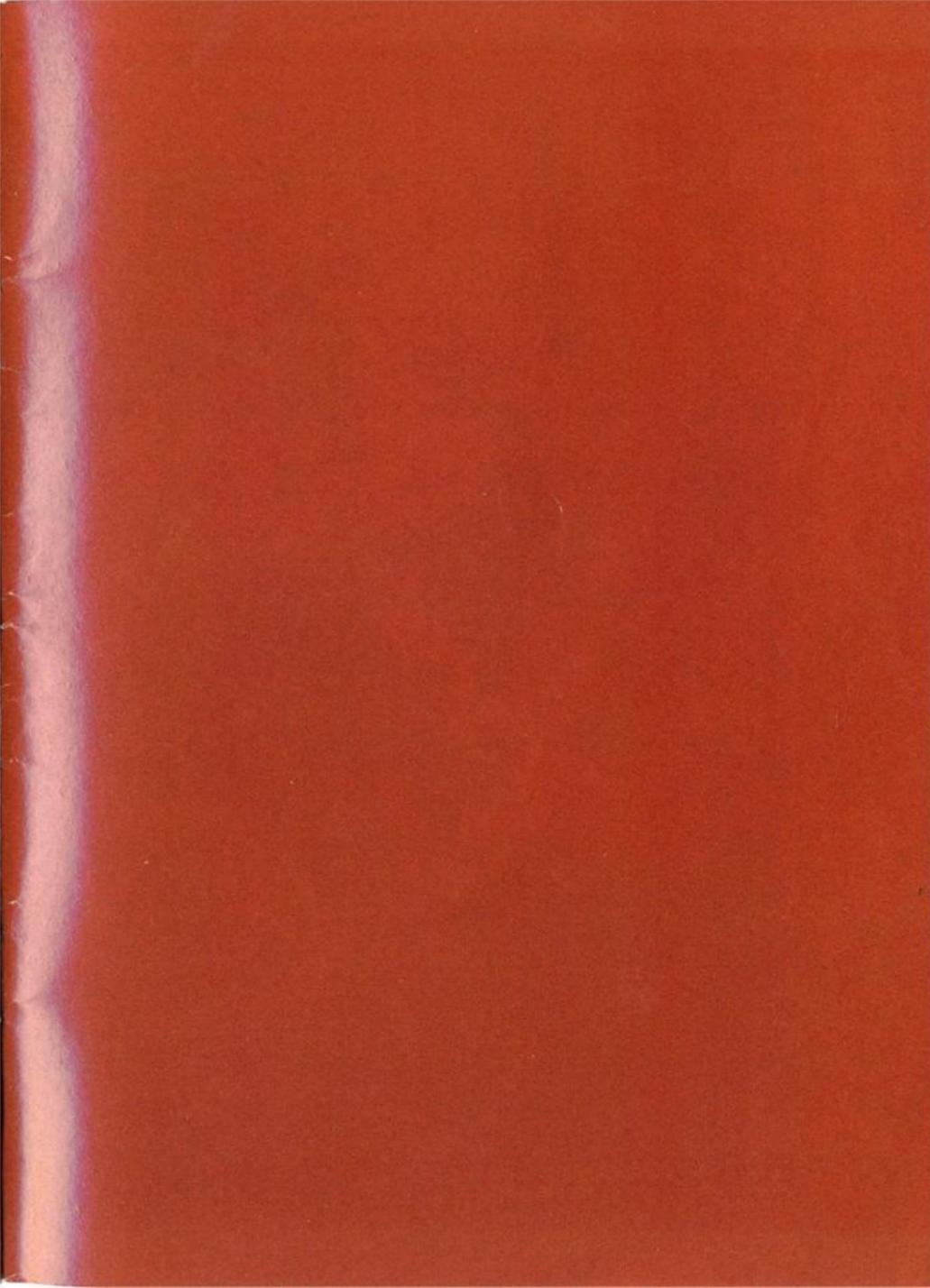


--COME--

--FROM?



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





ATARI

CO19252