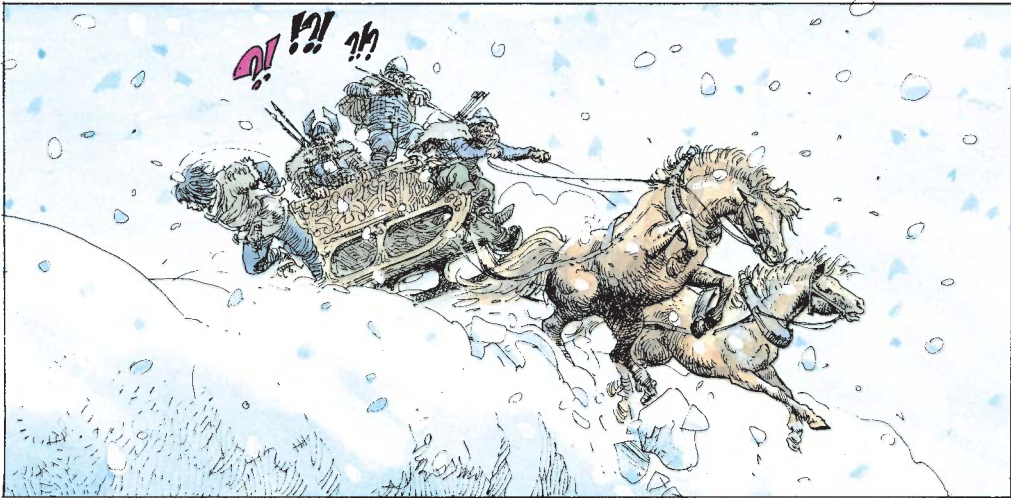


ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

THORGAL

The Master of the Mountains



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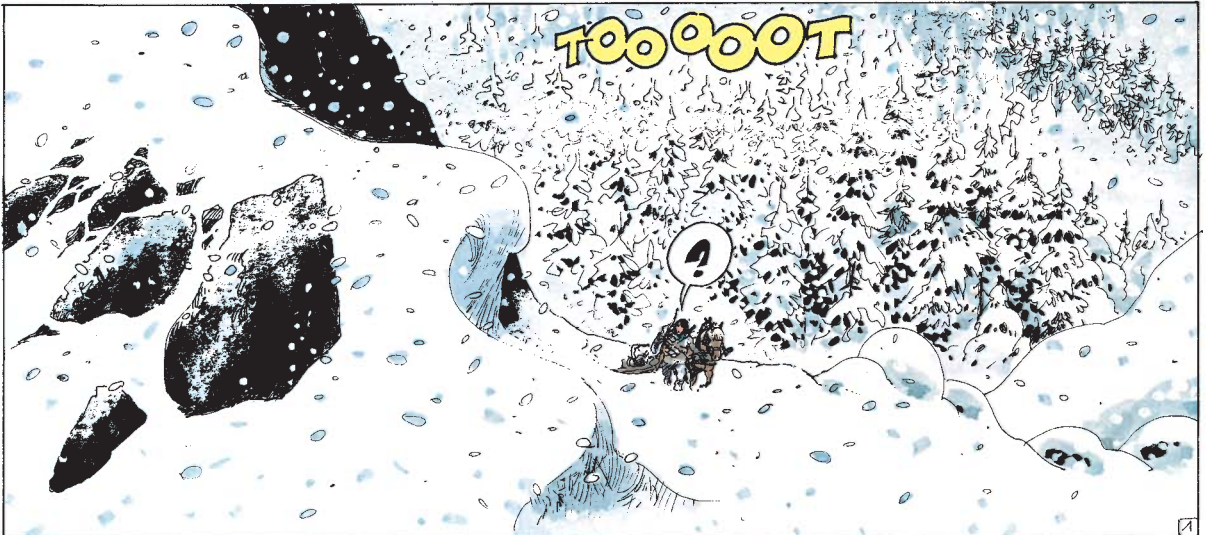
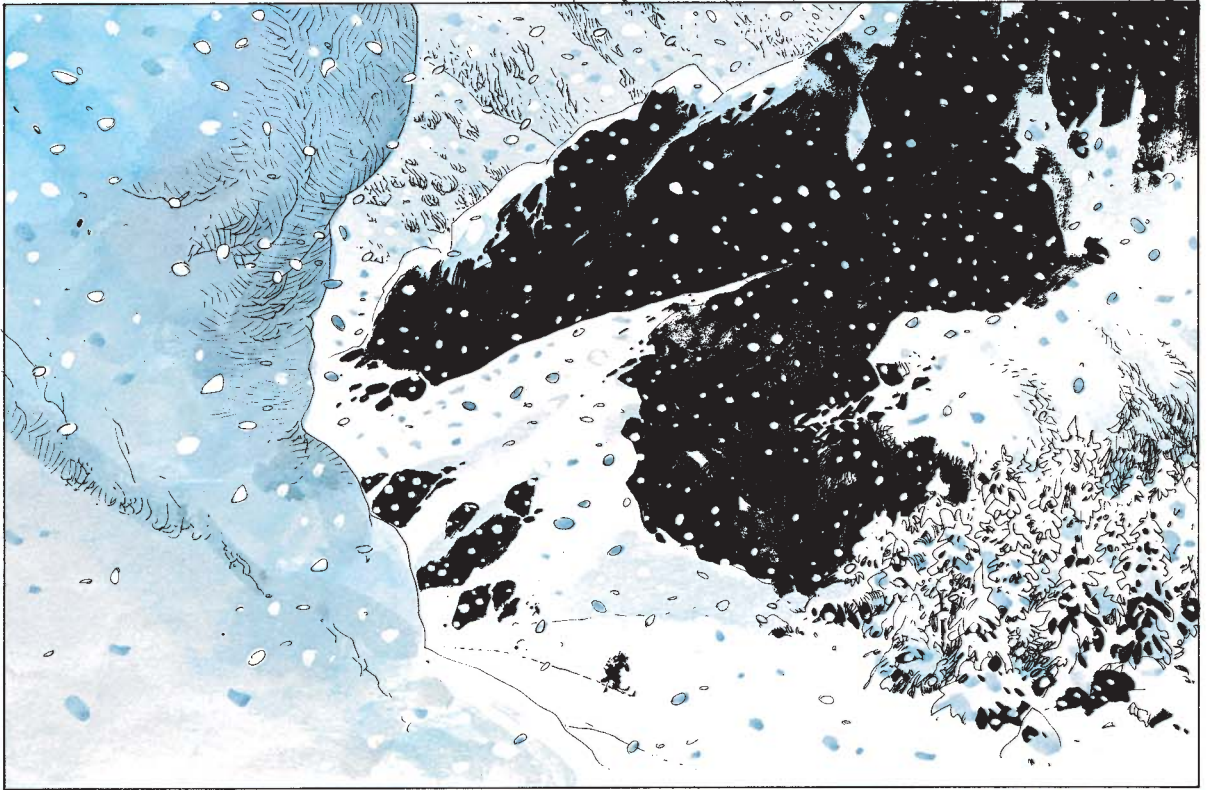
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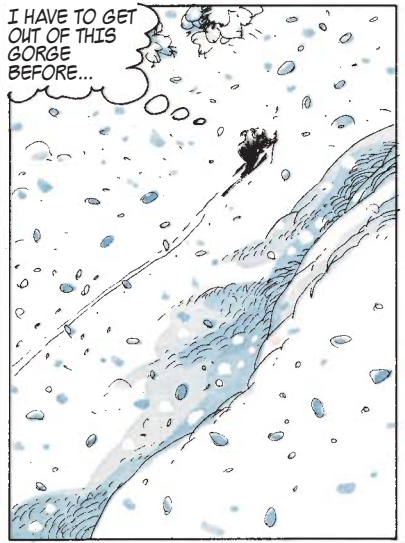




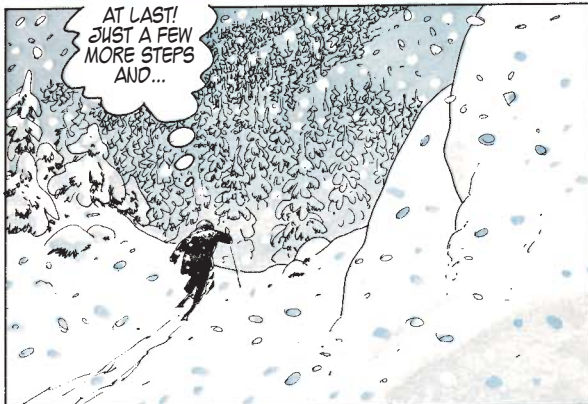
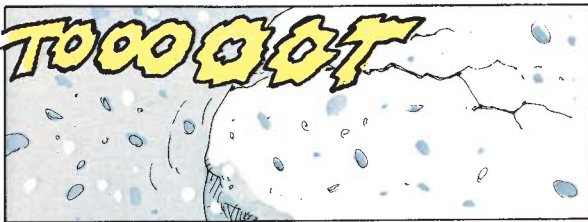
WHAT MADMAN IS PLAYING THE TRUMPET IN THE MOUNTAINS? THAT COULD START AN AVALANCHE...



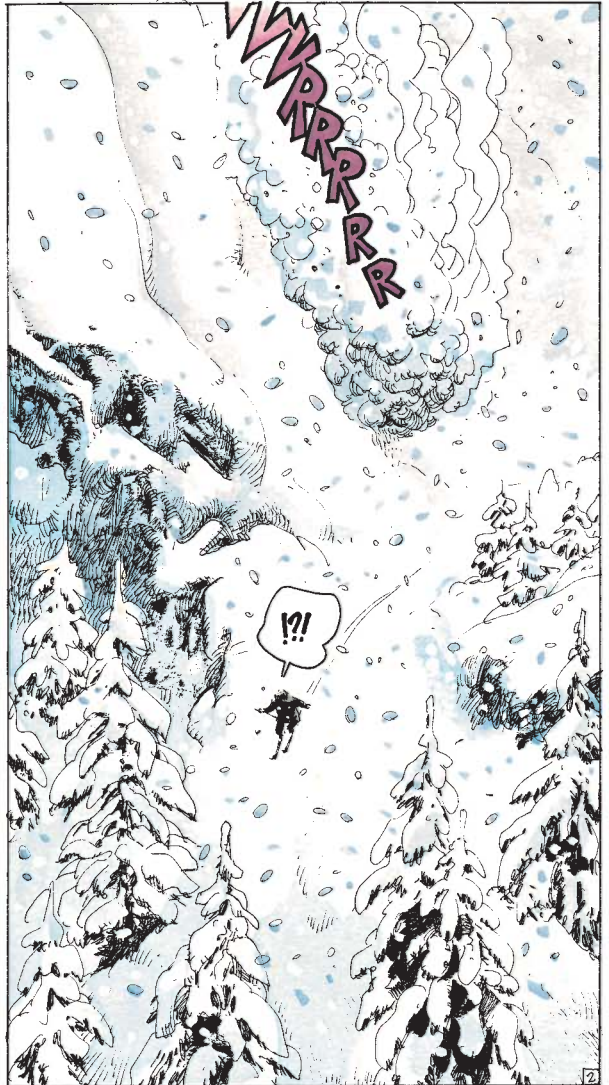
Tooooooot



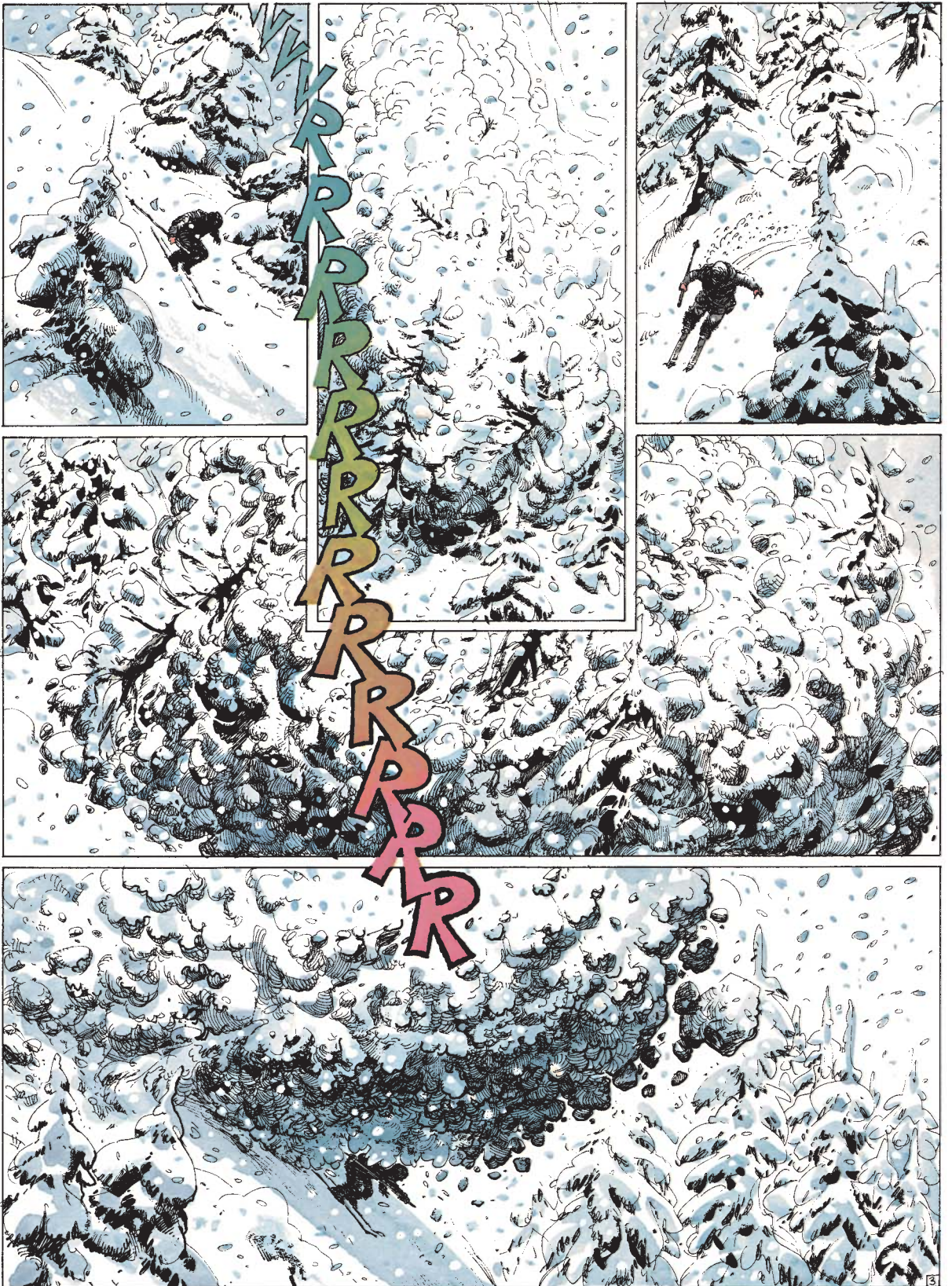
I HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS GORGE BEFORE...



AT LAST! JUST A FEW MORE STEPS AND...



!?!





WHAT DID I TELL YOU, MY FRIEND... A FEW HUNDRED MORE PAGES, AND WE'D BE UNDER THAT.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT IT'S TOO LATE TO TRY GETTING AROUND THAT TODAY.

WELL, AT LEAST IT HAS STOPPED SNOWING.



BUT A SHELTER FOR THE NIGHT WOULDN'T BE UNWELCOME. I'M SOAKED. MAYBE THERE'S ONE IN THE VILLAGE UP THERE.



JUST A BIT FURTHER, MY FRIEND! I CAN ALREADY SMELL SOME GOOD SUPPER, SERVED FIRESIDE BY A CHEERFUL MOUNTAIN MAIDEN WITH PLUMP ARMS...



?





MY... MY NAME IS TORRIC. YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT, DO YOU? I'M DYING OF HUNGER.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL JUST PUT MY HORSE IN THE SHEEPFOLD NEXT DOOR, AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE MEAL.



A RABBIT I SHOT THIS AFTERNOON. THERE'S ENOUGH FOR TWO HERE. SO, WHO IS THIS SAXEGAARD YOU SEEM SO AFRAID OF?



PEOPLE AROUND HERE CALL HIM THE MASTER OF THE MOUNTAINS. HE'S THE CHIEF OF A BAND OF PILLAGERS WHO'VE BEEN HOLDING THE WHOLE REGION TO RANSOM. EVEN THE COASTAL VIKINGS AVOID COMING TO MEET HIM IN HIS MOUNTAINS.

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM. BUT I LEFT THIS COUNTRY A LONG TIME AGO.

HE'S BUILT HIMSELF A SORT OF FORTRESS FIVE DAYS FROM HERE AND LEADS HIS MEN LIKE A REAL ARMY. WHEN SAXEGAARD DEEMS THAT THEY NEED SOME EXERCISE, HE SENDS THEM OUT TO PILLAGE ONE TOWN OR ANOTHER, TO MASSACRE THE INHABITANTS WHO TRY TO RESIST THEM.

THE LEAST UGLY WOMEN AND THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AS SLAVES. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS OLD. A SLAVE IN THE KITCHENS, THEN IN THE FORGE. UNTIL FIVE DAYS AGO, WHEN I MANAGED TO ESCAPE AFTER STEALING SOME SKIS.



FREEDOM IS THE ONLY THING WORTH FIGHTING FOR. WHAT DOES THIS SAXEGAARD LOOK LIKE?



I DON'T KNOW. I'VE ONLY EVER SEEN HIM FROM A DISTANCE. BUT THERE'S ONE THING I'M SURE ABOUT: ANYONE AS DANGEROUS AS HIM CAN ONLY BE HORRIBLY UGLY.

OH, I'M SORRY. I... I DIDN'T LEAVE YOU ANY...

I SAW. TOMORROW MORNING I'LL TRY TO KILL TWO RABBITS! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HAND?



LAST NIGHT I WAS ATTACKED BY TWO WOLVES THAT MUST HAVE BEEN AS HUNGRY AS ME. I MANAGED TO PUSH THEM BACK, BUT ONE OF THEM NEARLY RIPPED OFF MY TWO FINGERS.



SHOW ME.