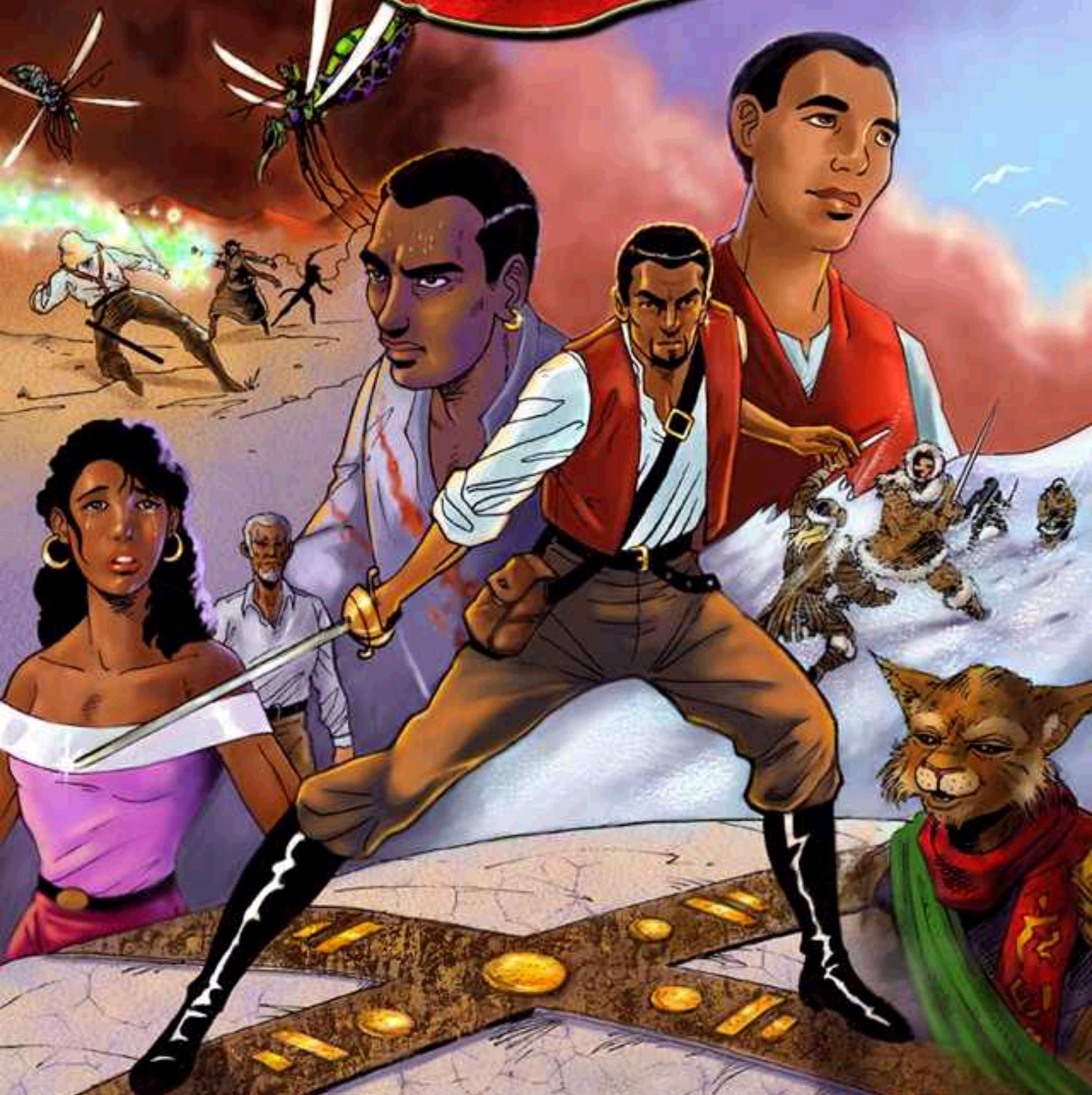


BETHESDA
SOFTWARE

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The Elder Scrolls Adventures REDGUARD



THE ORIGIN OF CYRUS!

PEARSON



THE STORY THUS FAR....

Now:

A MAN CALLED TIBER SEPTIM SEEKS TO RESTORE THE GLORY OF THE CYRODILIC EMPIRE, WHICH HAS LAIN DORMANT FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS. HE WILL USHER IN A NEW ERA, THE AGE OF THE THIRD EMPIRE.

THE EMPIRE'S FORMER SUBJECT-LANDS HAVE TRIED TO RESIST THIS CHANGE, BUT, ONE BY ONE, THEY HAVE FALLEN. ALL OF THE HUMAN KINGDOMS ARE NOW UNDER SEPTIM'S RULE: SKYRIM, HIGH ROCK, AND HAMMERFELL, THE HOMELAND OF THE REDGUARDS.

IT HAS BEEN CONJECTURED THAT, HAD THEY NOT WEAKENED THEMSELVES IN THEIR CIVIL WAR, THE REDGUARDS COULD HAVE HALTED THE EMPIRE'S PROGRESS: THAT, UNITED HAMMERFELL WOULD BE INVINCIBLE.

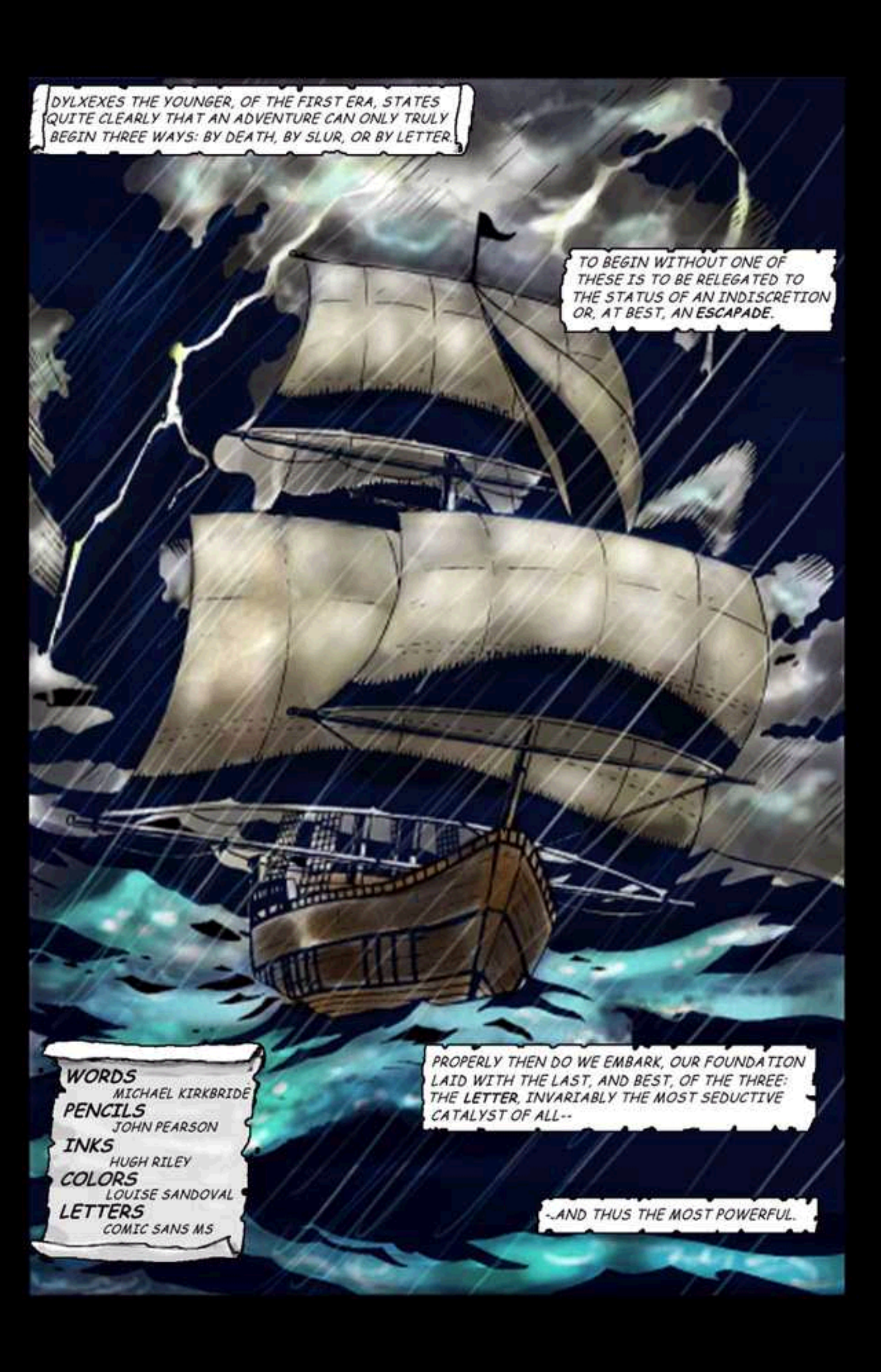
ALAS, WITH THE DEATH OF THEIR HIGH KING, THE REDGUARDS' LONG-DIVIDED CAMPS, THE CROWNS AND THE FOREBEARS, WENT TO WAR. IN THE END, IT SEEMED LIKE THE CROWNS WOULD KEEP THE THRONE FOR THEMSELVES, BUT THE FOREBEARS, BEATEN AND WILLING TO TRY ANYTHING, INVITED THE EMPIRE'S FORCES INTO HAMMERFELL TO HELP THEM.

THE EMPIRE MADE SHORT WORK OF THE CROWNS' DIMINISHED FORCES, DEFEATING THEM AT LAST ON THE ISLAND OF STROS M'KAI.

Then:

IN THEIR YOUTH, CYRUS AND ISZARA LIVED IN SENTINEL, CAPITAL OF HAMMERFELL. THOUGH IT WAS TRADITIONALLY A FOREBEAR CITY, THE HIGH KING OF THE CROWNS SAT IN ITS PALACE. THIS WAS A TROUBLED TIME, WITH TALK OF OPEN REBELLION EVER IN THE AIR. WITH THE THIRD EMPIRE SUDDENLY STIRRING ON THE BORDERS, HAMMERFELL'S BREAKING POINT WAS NEAR.

AS A FOREBEAR SECESSION LOOMED, AND THEIR OLD CONQUERORS BEGAN TO SURROUND THEM, THE REDGUARDS PREPARED FOR WAR.



DYLXEXES THE YOUNGER, OF THE FIRST ERA, STATES
QUITE CLEARLY THAT AN ADVENTURE CAN ONLY TRULY
BEGIN THREE WAYS: BY DEATH, BY SLUR, OR BY LETTER.

TO BEGIN WITHOUT ONE OF
THESE IS TO BE RELEGATED TO
THE STATUS OF AN INDISCRETION
OR, AT BEST, AN ESCAPE.

WORDS

MICHAEL KIRKBRIDE

PENCILS

JOHN PEARSON

INKS

HUGH RILEY

COLORS

LOUISE SANDOVAL

LETTERS

COMIC SANS MS

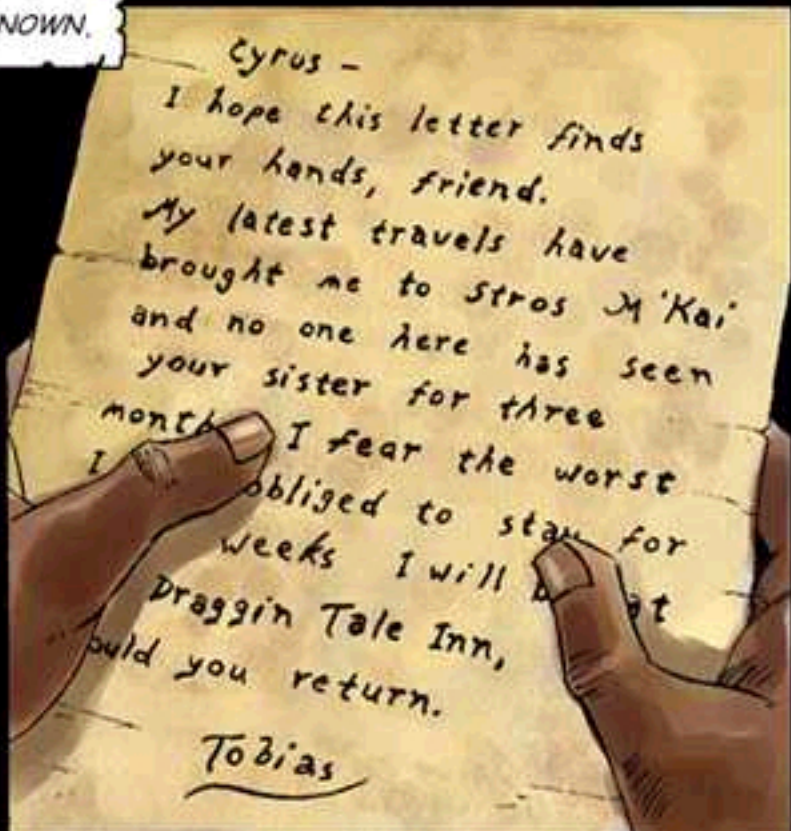
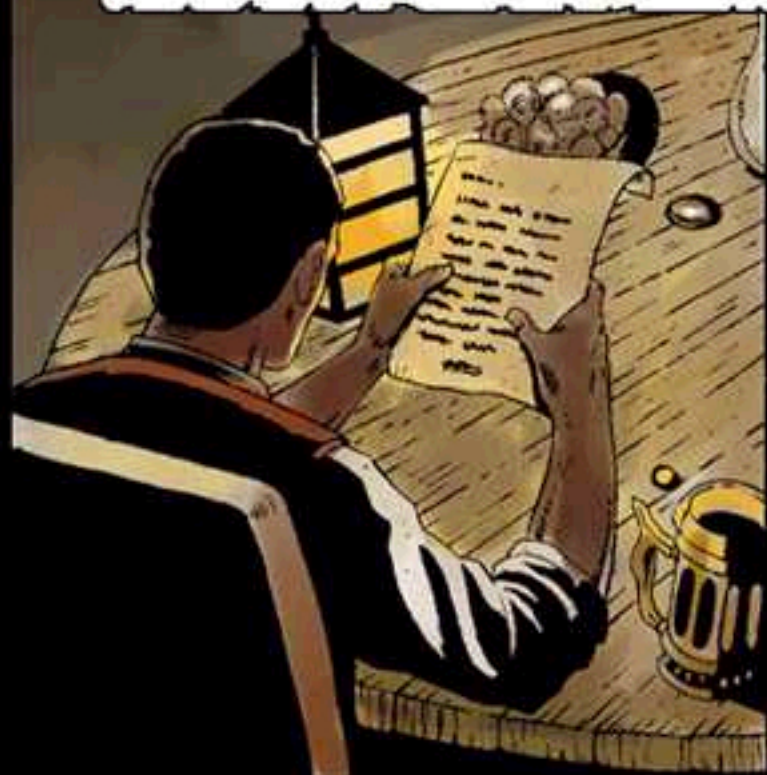
PROPERLY THEN DO WE EMBARK, OUR FOUNDATION
LAID WITH THE LAST, AND BEST, OF THE THREE:
THE LETTER, INVARIABLY THE MOST SEDUCTIVE
CATALYST OF ALL--

--AND THUS THE MOST POWERFUL.

ESPECIALLY IF IT CONCERNS THE BLOOD.



WRITTEN WITHOUT FLOURISH IN A HAND WELL-KNOWN.

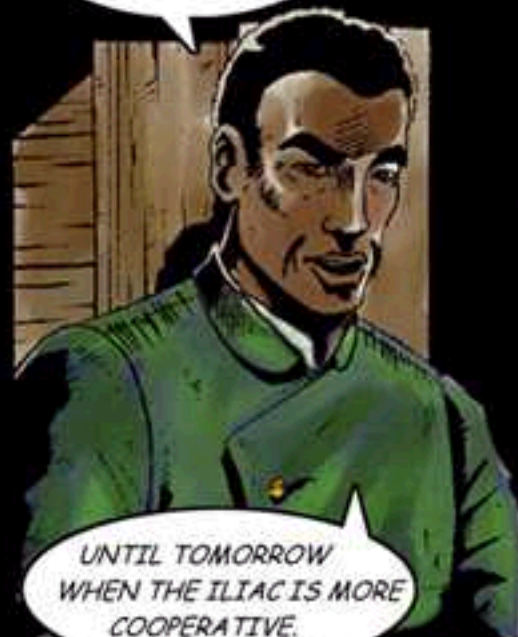


IT'S GETTING A
BIT ROUGH OUT THERE,
SIR...?



CYRUS.

OF COURSE.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD
WAIT, THEN,
SIR CYRUS.



UNTIL TOMORROW
WHEN THE ILIAC IS MORE
COOPERATIVE.



NO,
WE GO ON.

YOU WERE
PAID DOUBLE
TO MAKE SURE.



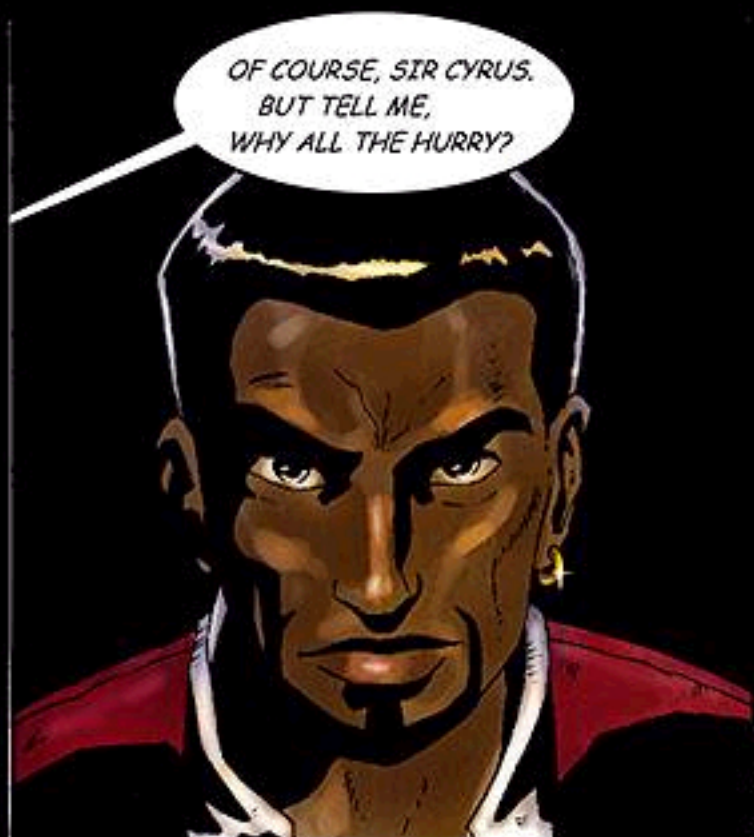
FINE. WET GOLD SPENDS
AS WELL, I SUPPOSE

WHO'S GUIDING
THE SHIP,
CAPTAIN BRENNAN?



ELI, THE GOOD WATER-LOGGED LAD.
BOY NEEDS A BIT MORE WEIGHT ANYWAY.

STROS M'KAI
BY MORNING,
CAPTAIN.



OF COURSE, SIR CYRUS.
BUT TELL ME,
WHY ALL THE HURRY?



WHY THE HURRY, LADDIE?



THE SEAS WAIT LONG
AND YOU'RE A LITTLE SHORT
YET FOR A MARINE.

YOU MEAN
PIRATE
TOBIAS!

I GUESS I AM A BIT FAR
FROM FATHER'S FAIR SKYRIM,
AIN'T I THEN, EVEN WITH
HER COLORS RAISED.



BUT IT'S CALLED
FOREIGN RELATIONS
IN BETTER QUARTERS.

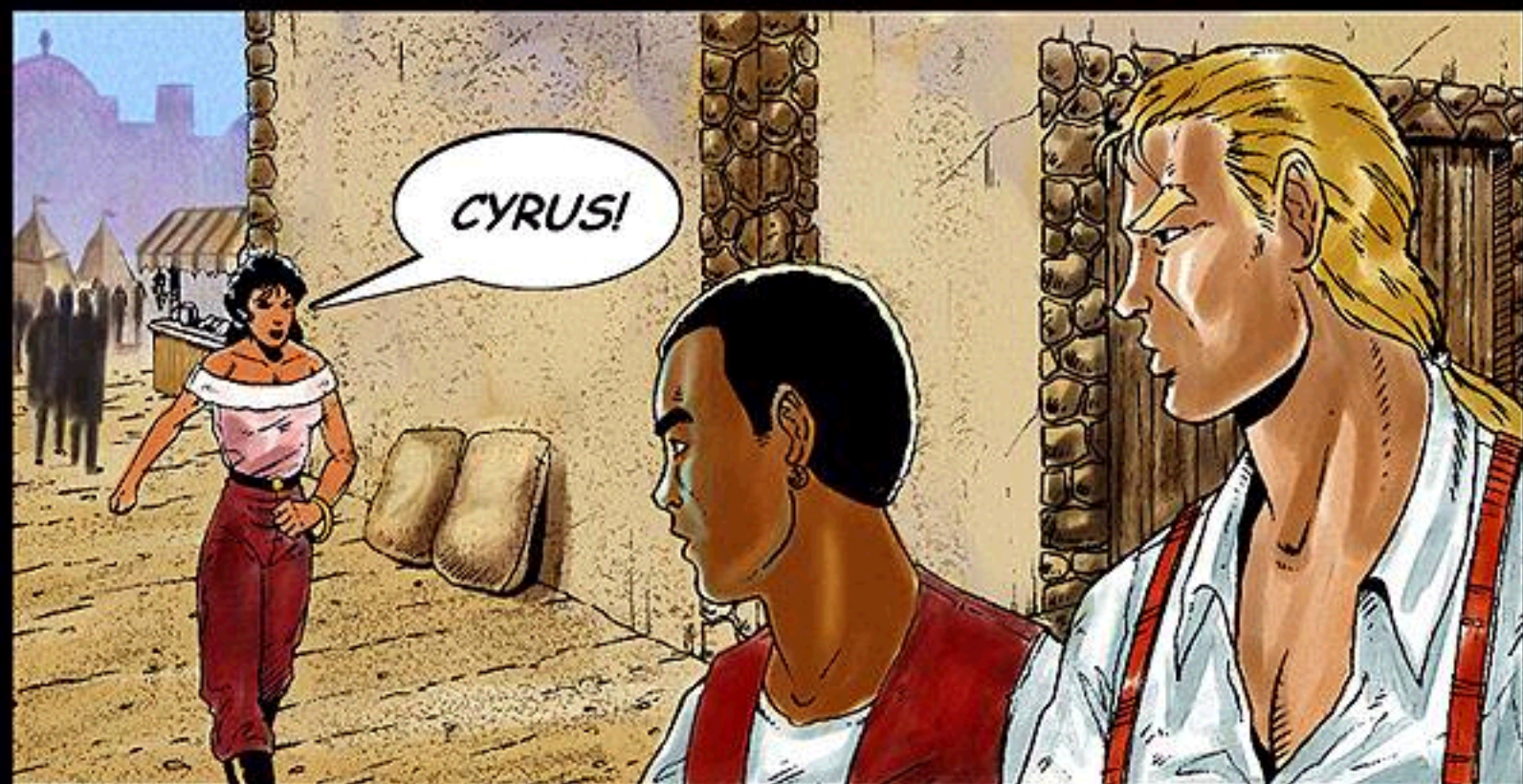
CAPTAIN.



IT'S CALLED DESERTION
AND MERCENARY WORK
AND I WANT IN.

I CAN FIGHT.
YOU'LL NEED ME.

THERE'S A WAR ON
EVERY COAST THESE DAYS



CYRUS!

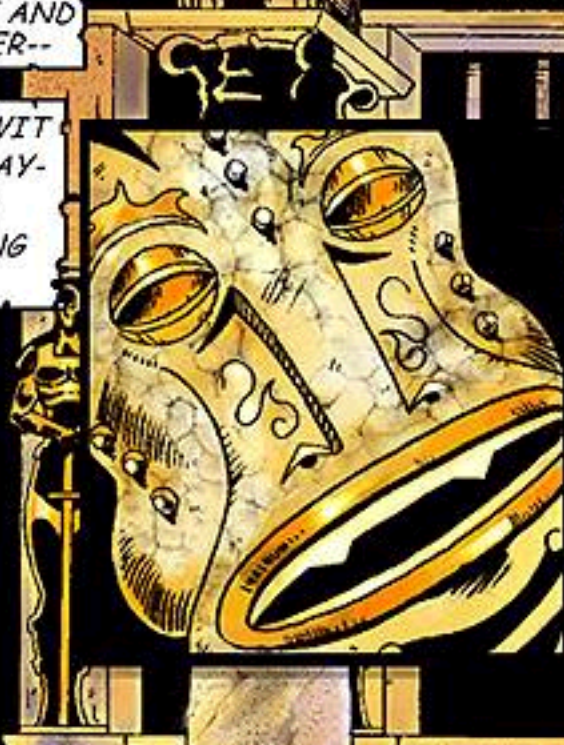


IT IS OPENING NIGHT AND THEIR FATHER'S FARED WELL.

THE CROWD IS LARGE AND LOUD WITH LAUGHTER--

A TESTAMENT TO HIS WIT AND SKILL: A CROWN PLAY-WRIGHT IN A FOREBEAR CITY, AND HE'S BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE.

SENTINEL BELONGS TO HIM--



THERE IS A CLAMOR FOR HOURS--



--ALL STAGE SWORDS AND FLASH--

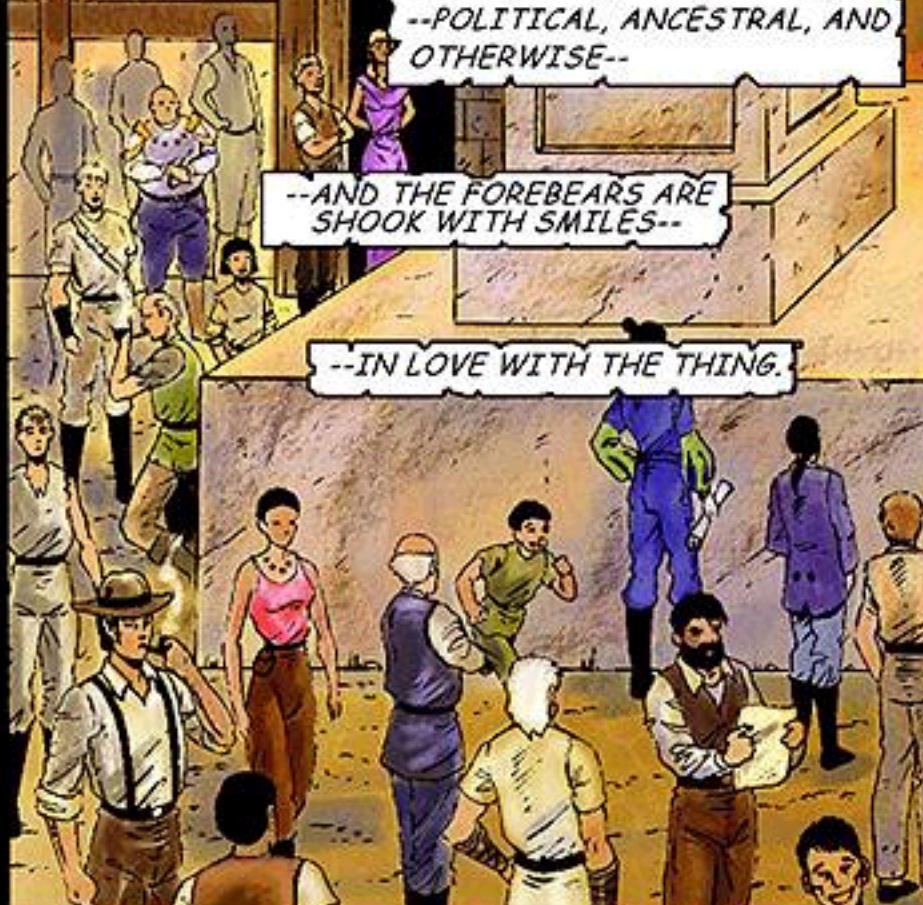
--WHEREIN THE HIGH KING, EVER A CROWN, PAYS HEAVILY FOR HIS FAULTS--



--POLITICAL, ANCESTRAL, AND OTHERWISE--

--AND THE FOREBEARS ARE SHOOK WITH SMILES--

--IN LOVE WITH THE THING.



THE STICK ABOUT THE HEAD OF THE ENEMY, RELENTLESS.

IN THE CENTER, THOUGH, THE DEAD SERIOUS HEART OF ALL COMEDY: THE POINT--

ALL TOO OFTEN, LIKE THIS NIGHT, MISSED COMPLETELY.

ONLY AN UNBRIDLED AND OPEN LOYALTY COULD HAVE PRODUCED SUCH AS THIS IS--

--THE BELITTLED KING--

--SO UTTERLY BELOVED--

SO HERE IS THEIR FATHER'S REAL TRIUMPH-- A CELEBRATION OF A CROWN BY THE VERY CITY THAT HATES HIM-- A JESTER'S BEST PARABOLA--

-- A SATIRE REFRACTED--

--OF FOOLS ONLY TO THE FOOLISH!

FOR CYRUS THE ONLY GLITTERING THINGS ARE THE SWORDS.

FOR ISZARA--

--THE MALE LEAD--

--CLAD IN FOREBEAR STRIPES--

--HIS FOOT IN THE ASS OF OF THE HIGH KING'S HORSE.

HIS NAME IS HAKAN AND THEY WILL MARRY.





MY HURRY NEEDN'T CONCERN YOU, CAPTAIN.

I'LL HAZARD IT'S THE CIVIL WAR, OR THE EMPIRE.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT EITHER.

TROUBLE IN THE HEARTLAND. THAT'S MY GUESS, ANYWAY....

IF IT SUITS YOU.

no one has seen your sister for three months



<YOUR SISTER'S DISAPPEARANCE DRAWS A SHUDDER.>



I NEED A SHIP.

<THE PORT IS FULL OF THEM AND S'RATHRA'S NAME GOES FAR TOWARDS THE PRICE OF PASSAGE.>



MONEY, TOO.



<KEEP DUADEEN'S RETAINER. IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR, AFTER ALL.>

<TELL S'RATHRA, WHY DID YOU NEVER MENTION YOUR SISTER BEFORE..?>

<WHAT KIND?>

WE HAVEN'T SPOKEN IN TEN YEARS. THERE WAS TROUBLE.

I KILLED HER HUSBAND.



INVARIABLY THE MOST SEDUCTIVE.

ESPECIALLY WHEN IT CONCERNS THE BLOOD.



'EY, IT'S THE REDGUARD--!

WHERE'RE YOU GOIN'? WE LEAVE SOON.



TELL YOUR LORD I RESPECTFULLY DECLINE HIS OFFER.

TELL HIM YOURSELF.



DUADEEN. I MUST AWAY ELSEWHERE IT SEEMS....

I HAVE A SIGNATURE SOMEWHERE--

-- THAT SAYS OTHERWISE.

MY SISTER'S GONE MISSING.

IS THAT ALL..!?

TOO OPEN AN EXCUSE, AND UNLIKELY.

THUGS MUSN'T HAVE TIES TO ANYTHING BUT INK AND THE GLIMMER OF GOLD.

YOU FORGET THE GENERAL MYSTERY OF DANGEROUS MEN.

A SISTER'S SO DOMESTIC.

AYE.

MERCENARIES DON'T HAVE FAMILIES.

THEN YOU WON'T BE MISSED.

I'M READY TO KILL YOU ALL.

THAT WOULD BE REDUNDANT.

MEN, LET HIM THROUGH.

DON'T COME BACK TO HIGH ROCK, CYRUS.

I CAN'T EVER COME BACK
TO HAMMERFELL, CAPTAIN.

EVENTUALLY, LAD.

SO BEGINS THE MERCENARY
TRANSLATION--

THEY WHISPER MORE THAN
HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT.

THOUGH THEY DO NOT SCARE
HIM, HE WAITS MOSTLY IN
HUSH. SILENT EXCEPT TO
CONFIRM ORDERS.

AND THEY TAKE
WHAT GOLD
THEY CAN--

SOMEWHERE AN EMPEROR IS WAITING
TO CLEAR HIS THROAT--

THE WHOLE OF THE WORLD
IS IN TURMOIL IT SEEMS--

--AND EVERYONE
NEEDS A FEW
EXTRA SWORDS.

...WHO DO THEY
WANT US TO KILL?

ACH..!
PROBABLY SOMEONE
WHO'S DEAD,
ALREADY--

THEY WORK WHEREVER THEY CAN--
--IN ARGONIA, SAVING
DIPLOMACY'S FOOLS--

--SOME DIGNITARY SENT TO MAKE
A HASTY ALLIANCE AGAINST THE
INEVITABLE.

IMPERIAL EXPANSION.

I'M BETTIN' THEY
ATE 'IM DAYS AGO.

FOR YEARS THE CAT'S ASSASSINS--

CYRUS DESPERATELY TRYING TO DISPLACE THE GUILT OF THE PAST IN THE BLOODY DEEDS OF THE PRESENT--



--DOING WHATEVER DIRTY WORK IS REQUIRED OF THEM.

MORROWIND?
YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR MIND--!

OH, BOY.

NO, MORE LIKE GETTING BORED OF OUR LITTLE BAND--

--TIME TO GET RID OF THEM.



<S'RATHRA THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE A CHANGE OF PACE...>

<EXAGGERATION.>

I'LL GO.

FORGET IT, CYRUS!

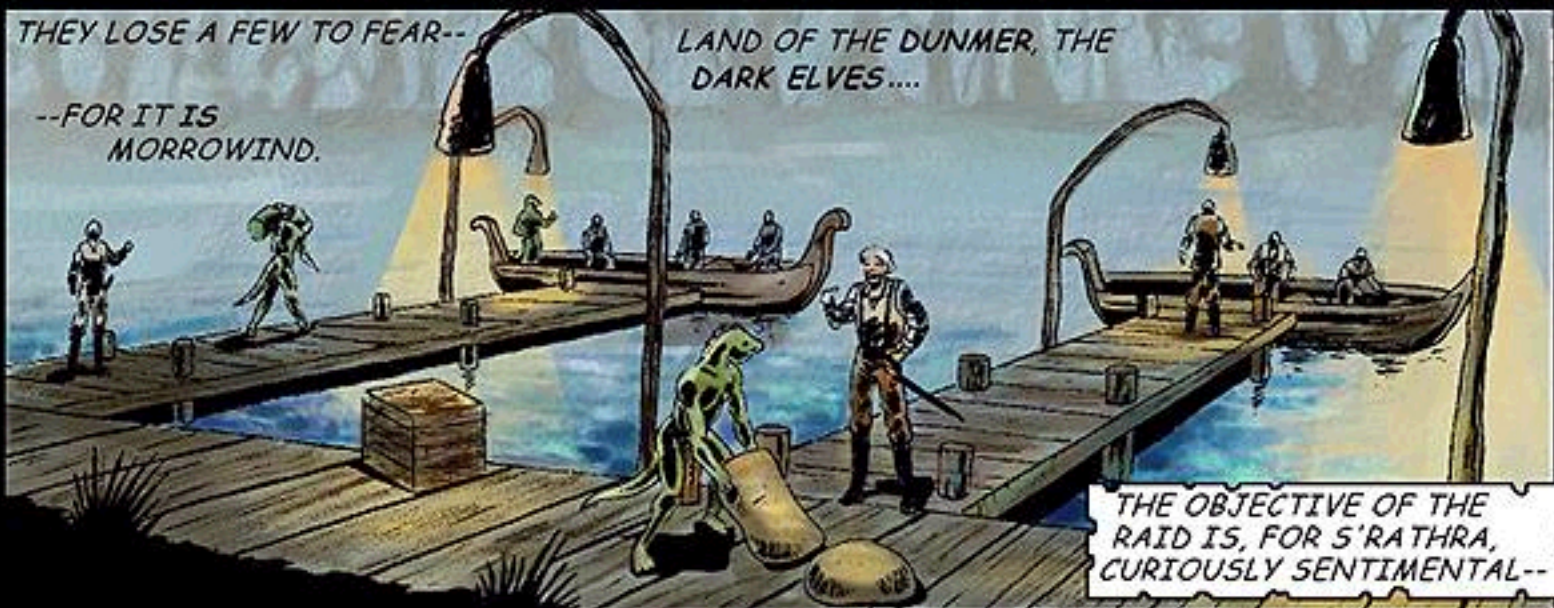
HE'S RIGHT, LAD.

<WEIRD IS RELATIVE.>

YOU DON'T KNOW MORROWIND--

THE PLACE IS... WEIRD--



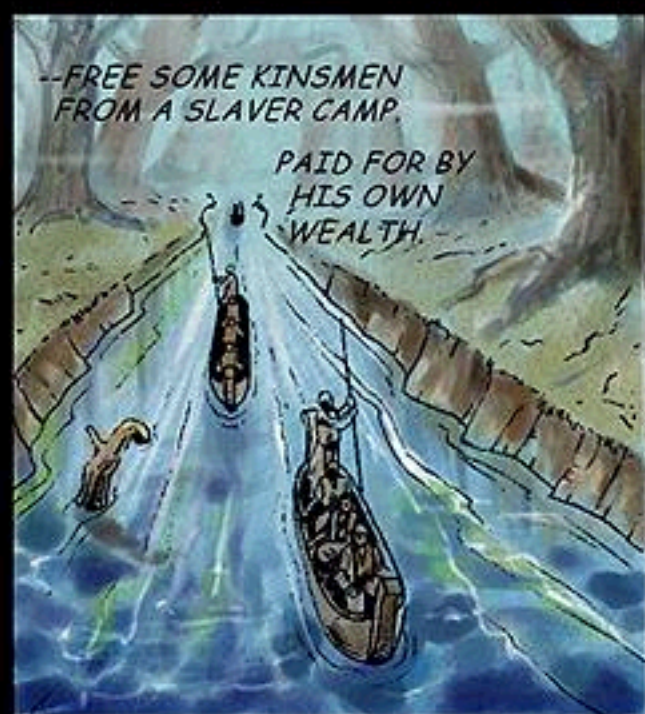


THEY LOSE A FEW TO FEAR--

LAND OF THE DUNMER, THE
DARK ELVES....

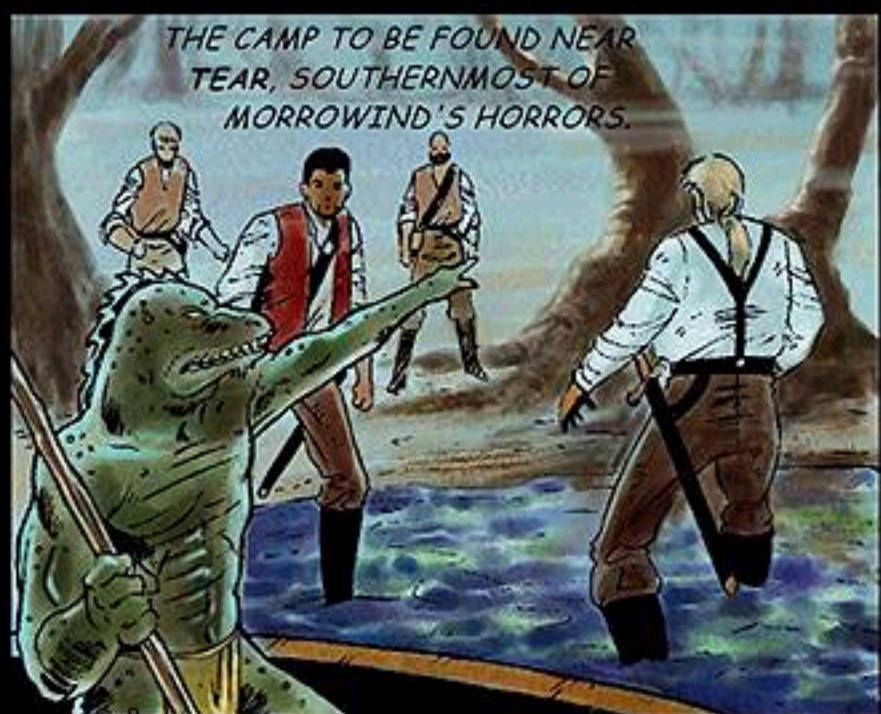
--FOR IT IS
MORROWIND.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE
RAID IS, FOR S'RATHRA,
CURIOUSLY SENTIMENTAL--



--FREE SOME KINSMEN
FROM A SLAVER CAMP.

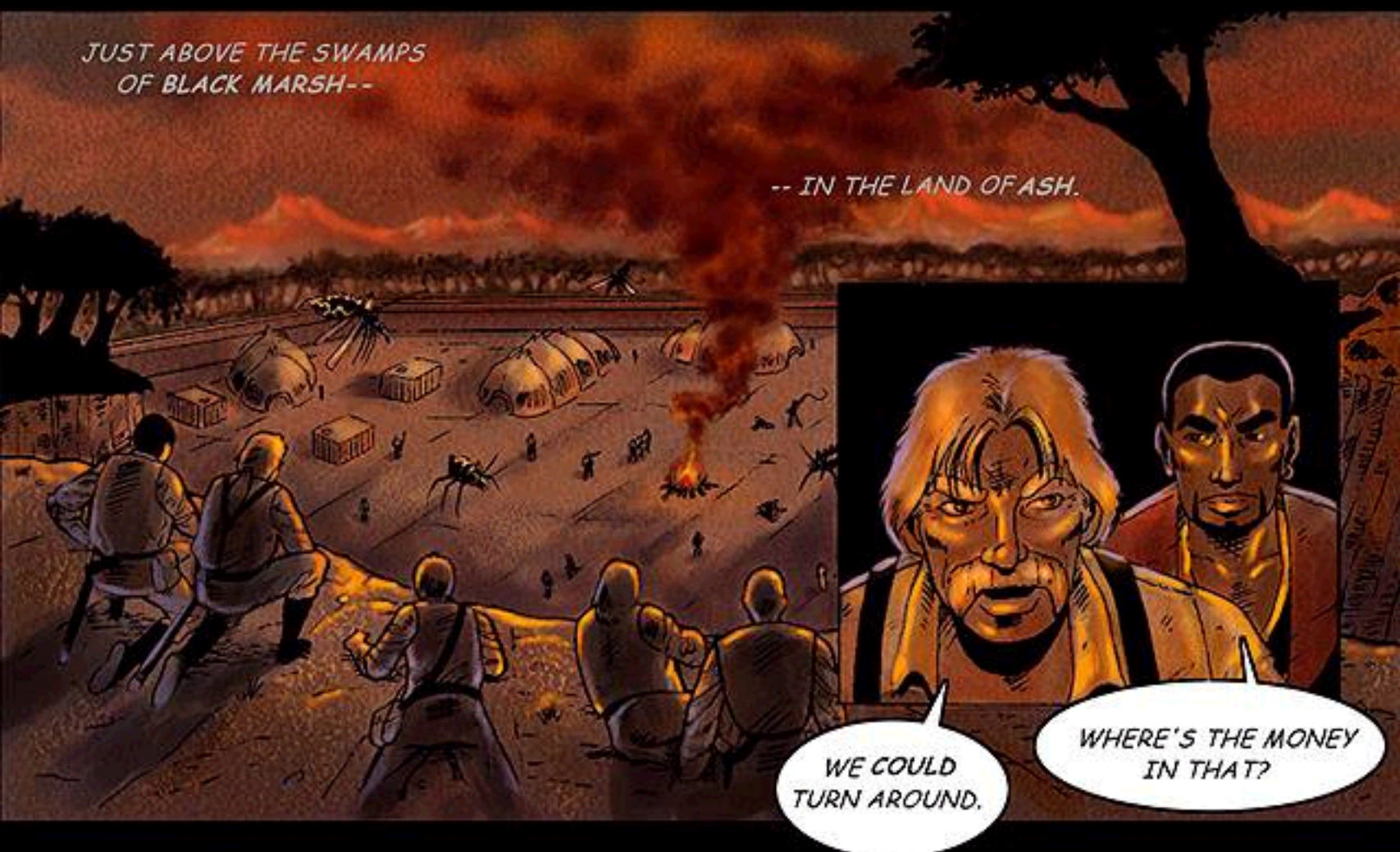
PAID FOR BY
HIS OWN
WEALTH.



THE CAMP TO BE FOUND NEAR
TEAR, SOUTHERNMOST OF
MORROWIND'S HORRORS.

JUST ABOVE THE SWAMPS
OF BLACK MARSH--

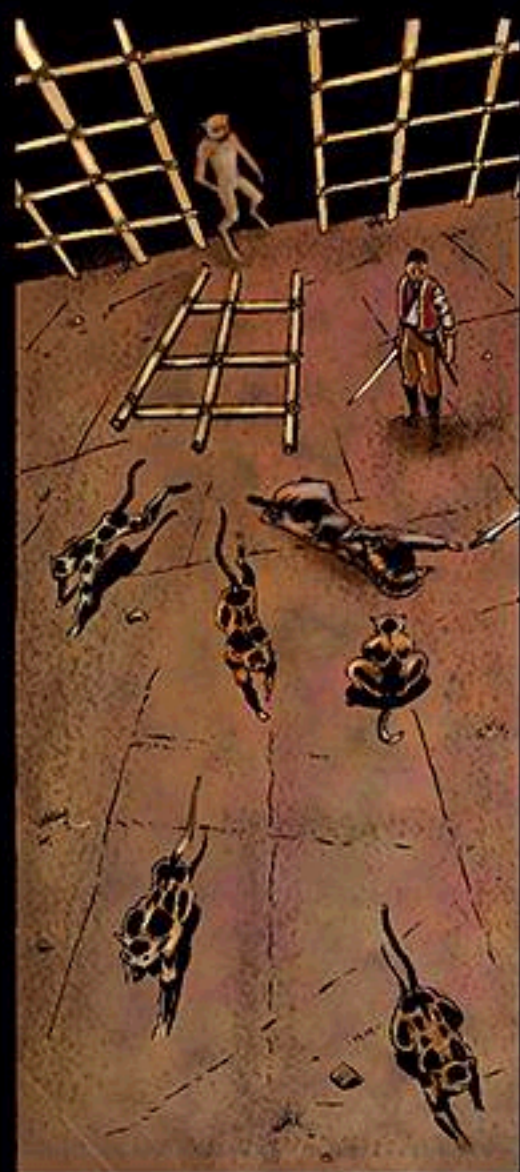
-- IN THE LAND OF ASH.



WE COULD
TURN AROUND.

WHERE'S THE MONEY
IN THAT?

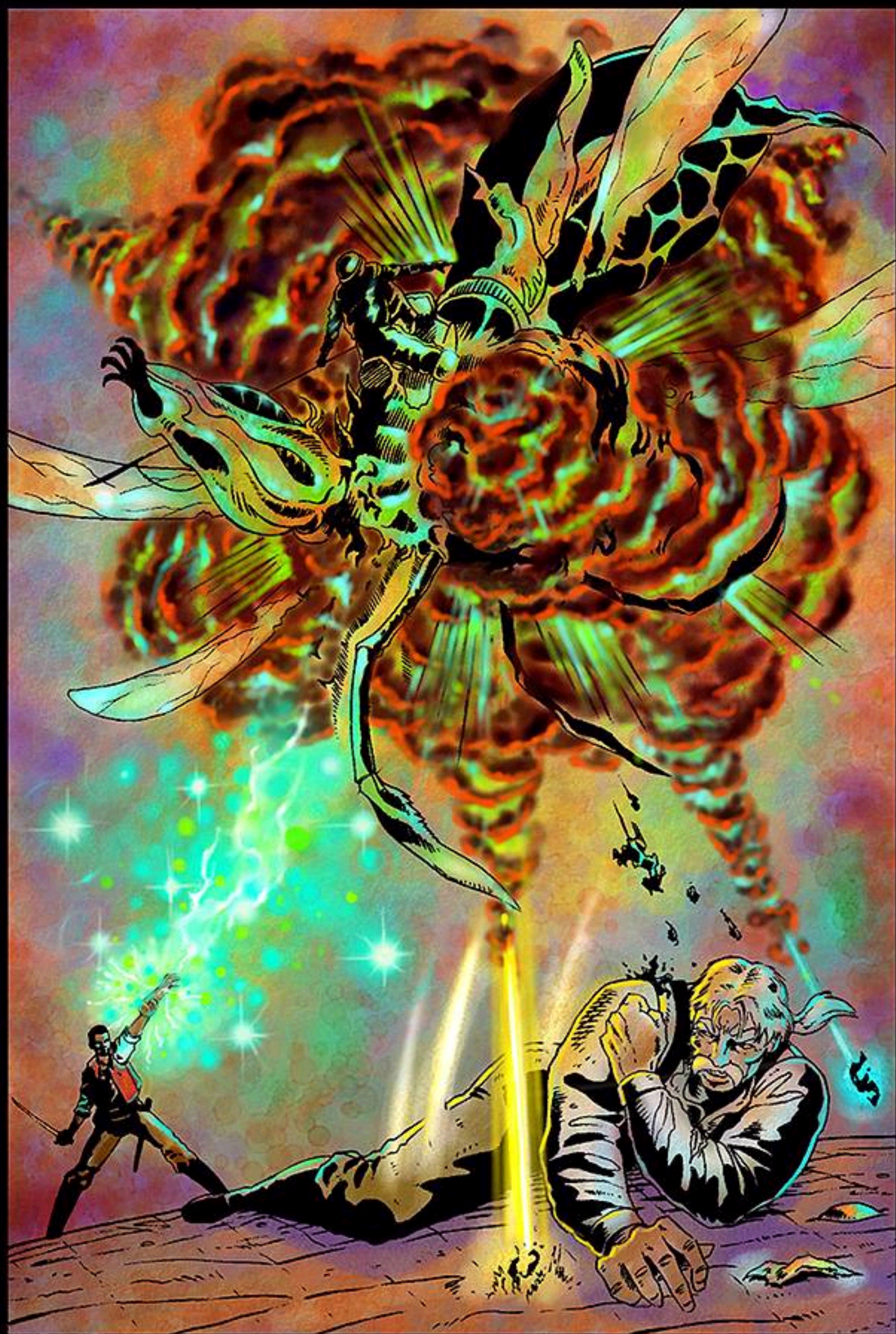






哈哈哈哈哈哈哈







SOMETHING IS SURPASSED IN THAT MOMENT. FROM THEN ON HE WILL WORK MORE OR LESS--

...ALONE

RESOLUTE IN THE MAD RUSH TO THAT WHICH HE CANNOT YET NAME.



...SIR CYRUS?

THE ISLAND'S IN SIGHT, SIR CYRUS. LET'S LET THE BOY GET SOME SLEEP.



STROS M'KAZI! JEWEL OF HAMMERFELLI!

GLAD TO BE BACK?



I WILL BE, IF I FIND HER.



HAVE YOU FOUND HER, THEN?

NO.



YES.

THERE, HAKAN.

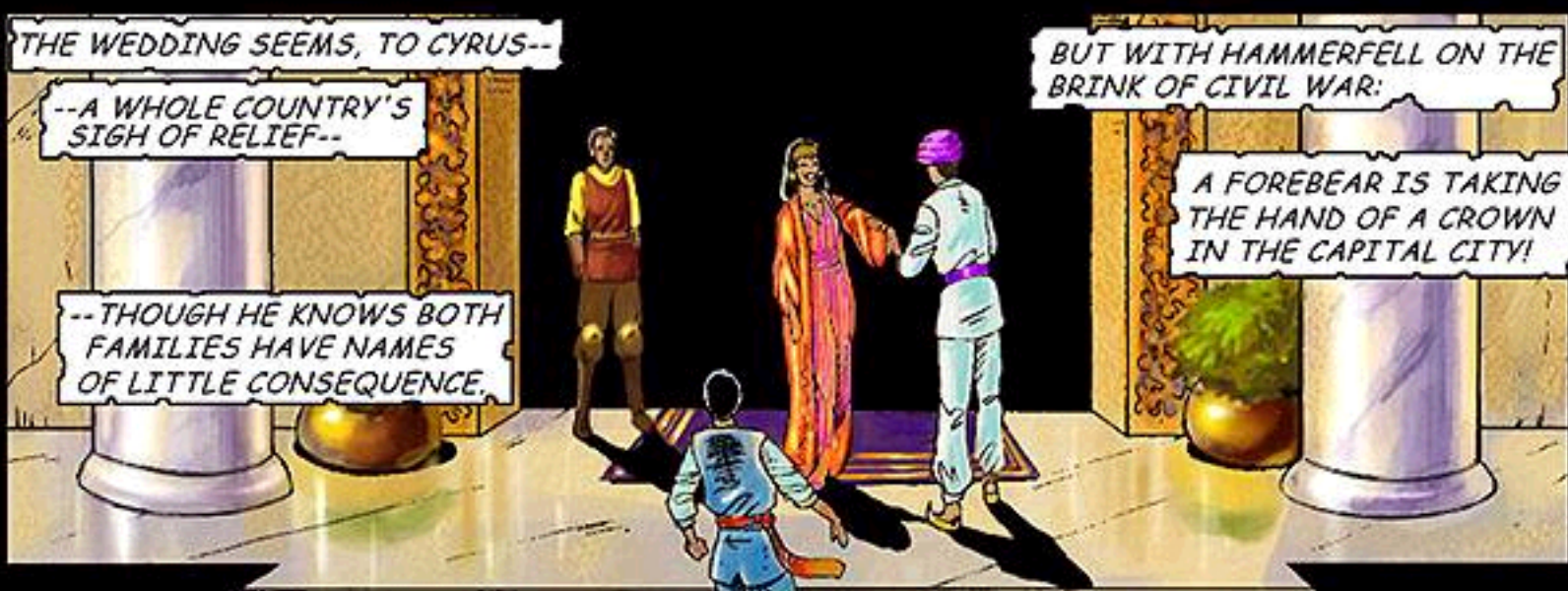
THE WEDDING SEEMS, TO CYRUS--

--A WHOLE COUNTRY'S
SIGH OF RELIEF--

BUT WITH HAMMERFELL ON THE
BRINK OF CIVIL WAR:

A FOREBEAR IS TAKING
THE HAND OF A CROWN
IN THE CAPITAL CITY!

--THOUGH HE KNOWS BOTH
FAMILIES HAVE NAMES
OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE.



AND THOUGH EVERYONE KNOWS
THERE IS NOTHING PROPHETIC
ABOUT THE UNION--

--NOR IN ITS SIGHT SHALL
THE KINGDOM TAKE MEASURE--

--FOR TO PERHAPS SIMILARLY ALIGN
WITHIN AGAINST THE ENEMY WITHOUT,
THERE IS STILL GENUINE AND HEARTFELT
CHEER IN THE CROWD.

A BRACE FOR THE KINGDOM'S
SHAME, A SINGLE BRIGHT
SPOT TO LOOK BACK ON--

--IN THE WAKE AND
LAMENTATION OF
THE END.

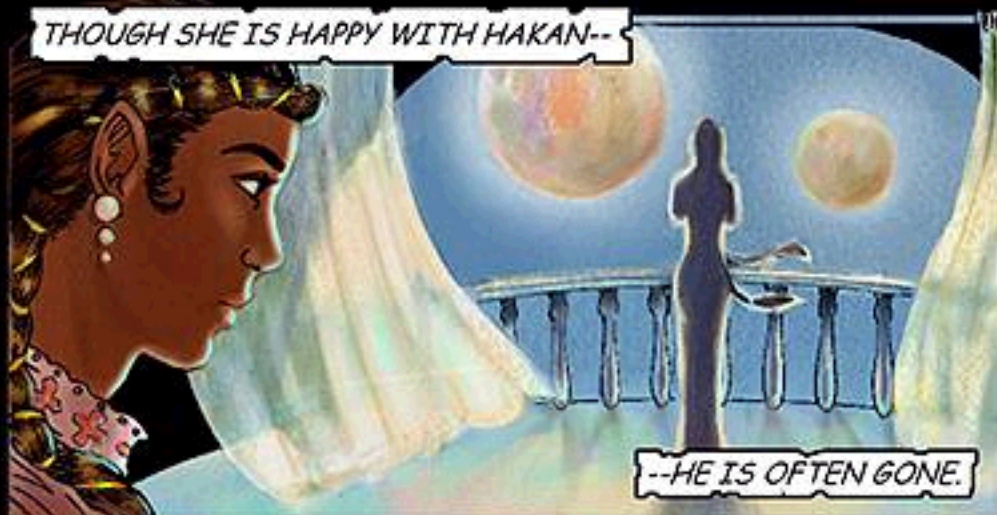
IT'S ALMOST AS IF SUCH CEREMONY
MUST TAKE PLACE FOR THE FULL
REGRET TO COME LATER--

A HAPPINESS INVENTED--
TO GIVE THE GRIEVING, LATER,
MORE SORROW STILL.



THE JOY LASTS BUT FEW SEASONS. INITIALLY ALL IS WELL, WITH IZARA ONLY MOVING TO AN ESTATE ACROSS TOWN IN THE MERCHANT QUARTER.

THOUGH SHE IS HAPPY WITH HAKAN--



--HE IS OFTEN GONE.

TRAINING WITH THE FOREBEAR UNDERGROUND.



EVERYWHERE, A LOUDER TALK OF TROUBLE.



OF SENTINEL'S SECESSION.

IZARA'S DISTRESS BEGINS SLOW. SHE AND HAKAN ARE WISE ENOUGH--



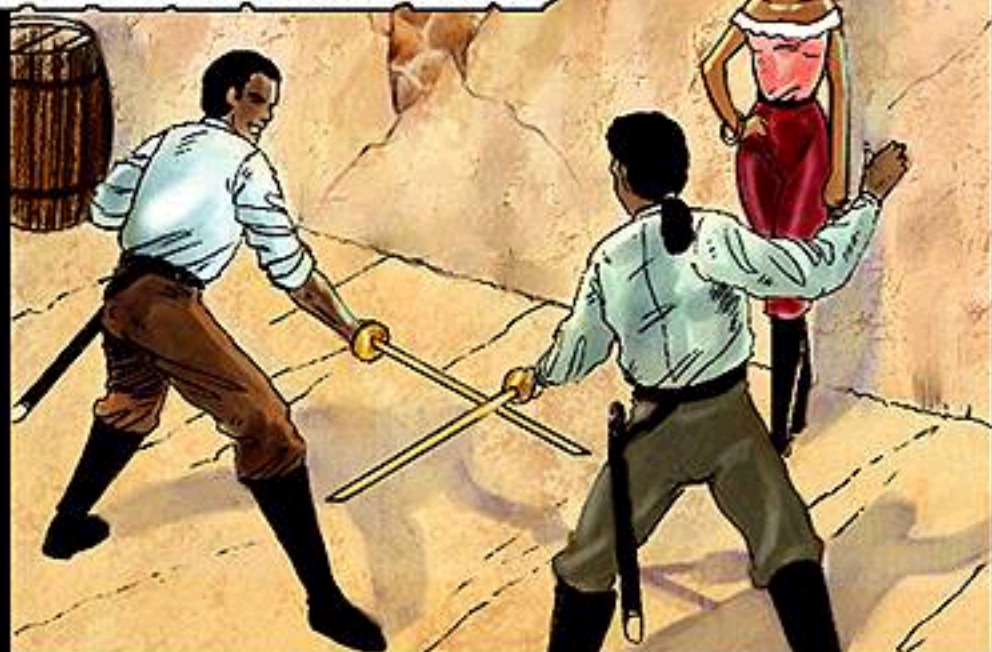
CLOSE ENOUGH THAT CYRUS CAN STILL KEEP HER COMPANY.

--NOT TO MENTION THE MATTER TO HER FATHER WHEN THEY VISIT.

HIS OWN PATRIOT SHADE RUNS DEEP.



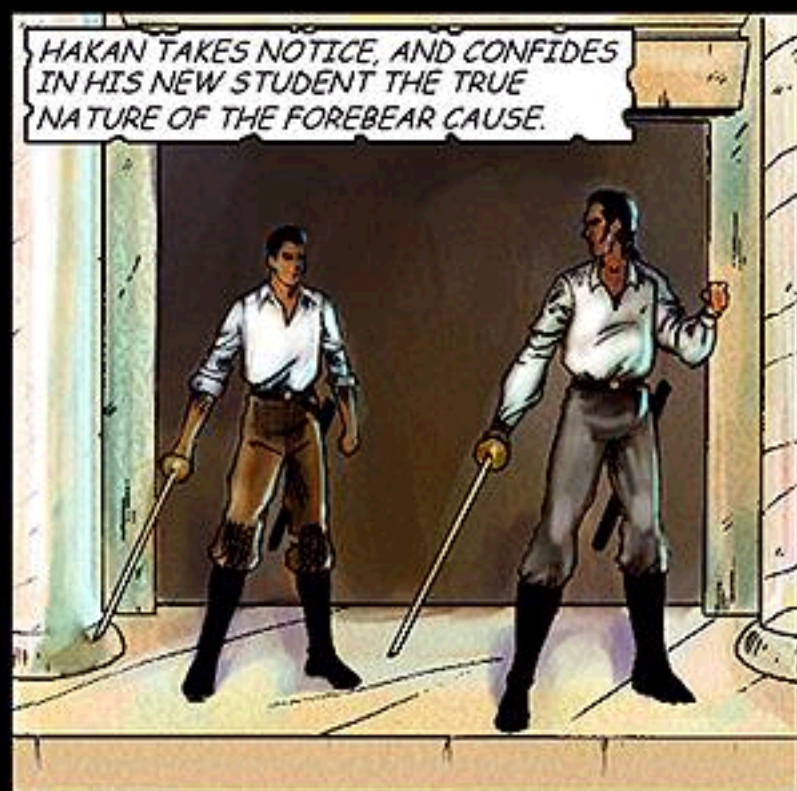
CYRUS DOESN'T CARE, AND HASSLES HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW TO NO END TO SHOW HIM THE SWORD TRICKS THAT HAVE BEEN LEARNED WHILE PREPARING THE HIDDEN MILITIAS.



MORE EXCITING THAN WORKING THE HARBORS, THAT'S FOR SURE, THESE RUMORS OF WAR.



HAKAN TAKES NOTICE, AND CONFIDES IN HIS NEW STUDENT THE TRUE NATURE OF THE FOREBEAR CAUSE.



WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUS FOUNDATION UPON WHICH THIS COUNTRY RESTS.

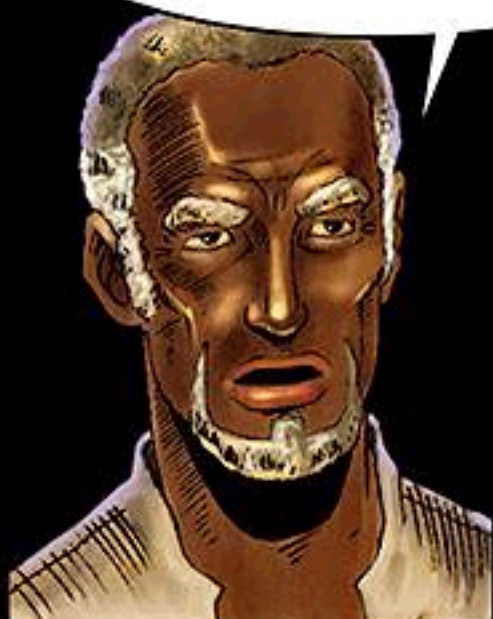


AND WE HAVE TOO LONG SUFFERED ITS WEIGHT.

WHERE DID YOU HEAR THIS?



AND WHY WOULD YOU SHAME YOUR ANCESTORS SO? WE ARE CROWNS, CYRUS, AND THE WEIGHT THEY SPEAK OF IS THE KING, A NOBLE BURDEN TO BE SURE.



BUT YOU MAKE FUN OF THE KING IN EVERYTHING YOU'VE WRITTEN.



SO THE FOREBEARS ARE RIGHT IN NOTHING?

IN COMPLAINT? YES.

IN DEMAND FOR RAPPROCHEMENT?

IN SOME CASES.

SON.



MY MOCKERY OF HIM IS THE MOCKERY OF THE MOCKERY OF HIS ENEMIES.

IN SECESSION? NEVER. IT IS NOT THE WAY FOR US.

AND IT WILL NOT BE THE WAY FOR YOU.

AND IF THE KING IS CHALLENGED WE--I, YOU, YOUR SISTER, OTHERS-- SHALL RISE ALIKE AS HE TO MEET IT--

NAHA 'MEI DOGO RA GADA LONHE TRAI, SURA.



--FOR WE ARE CROWNS ALIKE AS HE.



WHAT..?

IT MEANT, 'THE FOREBEARS KNOW THEIR PLACE, CYRUS.'
AND IT WILL BE THE LAST TIME HE IS UNCLEAR.
HE WRITES IT IN A NIGHT...



IT IS AN EPIC OF THE RA GADA--
THE ANCESTORS OF THE FOREBEARS--
FROM WHOM THE REDGUARDS GOT
THEIR NAME--

A BLOODY AND THRILLING ACCOUNT OF
THAT HOLY INVASION, WHERE THE
RA GADA DROVE THE ORCS FROM HAMMER-
FELL TO MAKE WAY FOR THE KING AND
HIS ROYAL FAMILY--

A STORY THREE THOUSAND YEARS OLD--

WHEREIN THE FOREBEARS ARE CAST
RIGHTLY IN THE ROLES OF HEROES--

--STALWART FIRST CHAMPIONS OF
THE THRONE, AND THE KING'S FINEST,
BEST MEN.

AND WHERE THE KING IS A MAN
WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

THERE IS NONE OF THE COMEDY FOR
WHICH THE AUTHOR IS KNOWN, ONLY
A CELEBRATION OF THE TRUTH
OF OLD BLOOD--

--AND THE LINES THEY HAVE
SINCE ESTABLISHED.

THERE IS NO SUBTLETY IN THE MESSAGE.

JUST ADMONITION FROM AN HONORABLE PAST.



HIS SHORTEST WORK IS
THE WIDEST SEEN--

AND IT HAS IMMEDIATE EFFECTS.

THE REDGUARDS ARE REMINDED OF
WHEN THEY STOOD TOGETHER
AGAINST THE UNKNOWN.

AND WITH THE EMPIRE AS CLOSE AS
SANCRE TOR, AND EVEN BENDING THE
NORD KINGS TO THEIR WILL--

--THE REDGUARDS WONDER WHEN
HAMMERFELL'S TIME WILL COME.

BARON VOLAG, HOLDER OF SENTINEL'S
OUTLYING TERRITORIES, AND THE
CHOSEN SPOKESMAN OF THE FOREBEARS,
STRIKES AN ACCORD WITH THE KING.

WITH THE CROWNS.

SOME SAY IT IS AN EPHEMERAL TRUCE--

--THAT WILL LAST ONLY SO LONG AS THE
OLD FEELINGS STIRRED BY AN EMBROIDERED
HISTORY STAY STRONG.

BUT IT WORKS FOR A MEASURE--

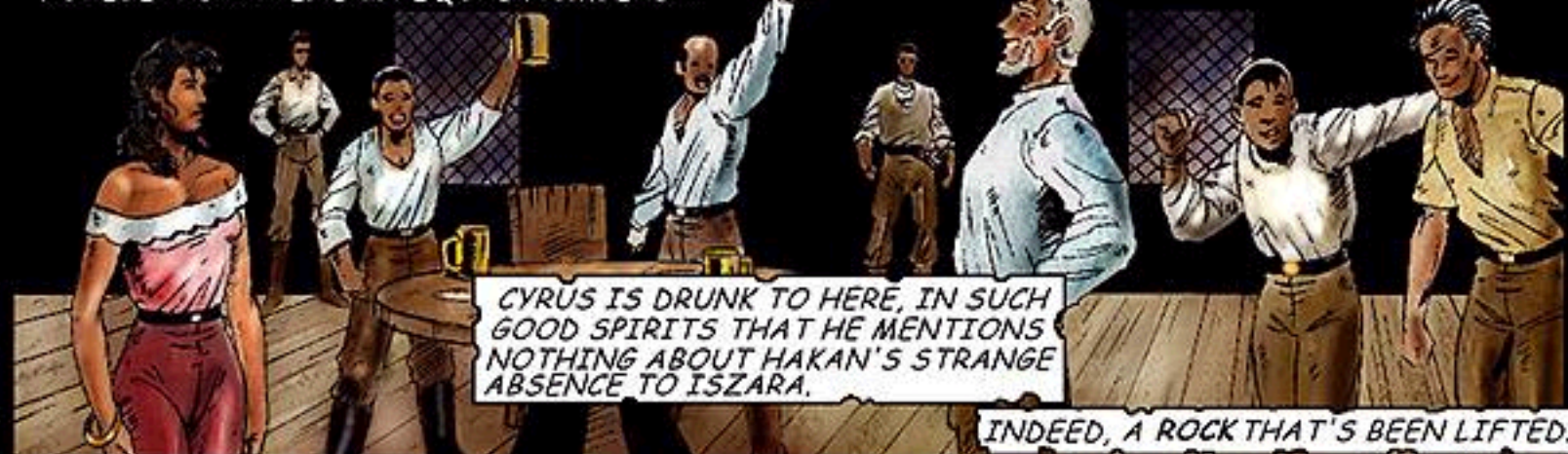
--AND THE MILITIAS DISBAND TO
JOIN VOLAG'S MEN IN THE PLAINS OF
THE DRAGON STAND.

AND FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT
GO, IT TURNS BITTER.

A SLOW ROT THAT REALIZES
IT'S BEEN MADE TO MARRY THE
THE DEVIL'S OWN DAUGHTER.

A CELEBRATION OF THE PLAYWRIGHT IS HELD, AND THE CROWNS AND FOREBEARS ATTEND IN EQUAL NUMBERS--

DRINKS AND LAUGHTER AND THE SENSE OF SOMETHING LIFTED--



CYRUS IS DRUNK TO HERE, IN SUCH GOOD SPIRITS THAT HE MENTIONS NOTHING ABOUT HAKAN'S STRANGE ABSENCE TO ISZARA.

INDEED, A ROCK THAT'S BEEN LIFTED.

AND THE SNAKES HAVE SCURRIED OUT.

TUKTA-MAB'RO *

G'YE**

NO LO'IGRA***

*STORYTELLER

**FABRICATOR

***DECEIVER

LIAR.



HAKAN, NOT THIS--

SO IT BEGINS--



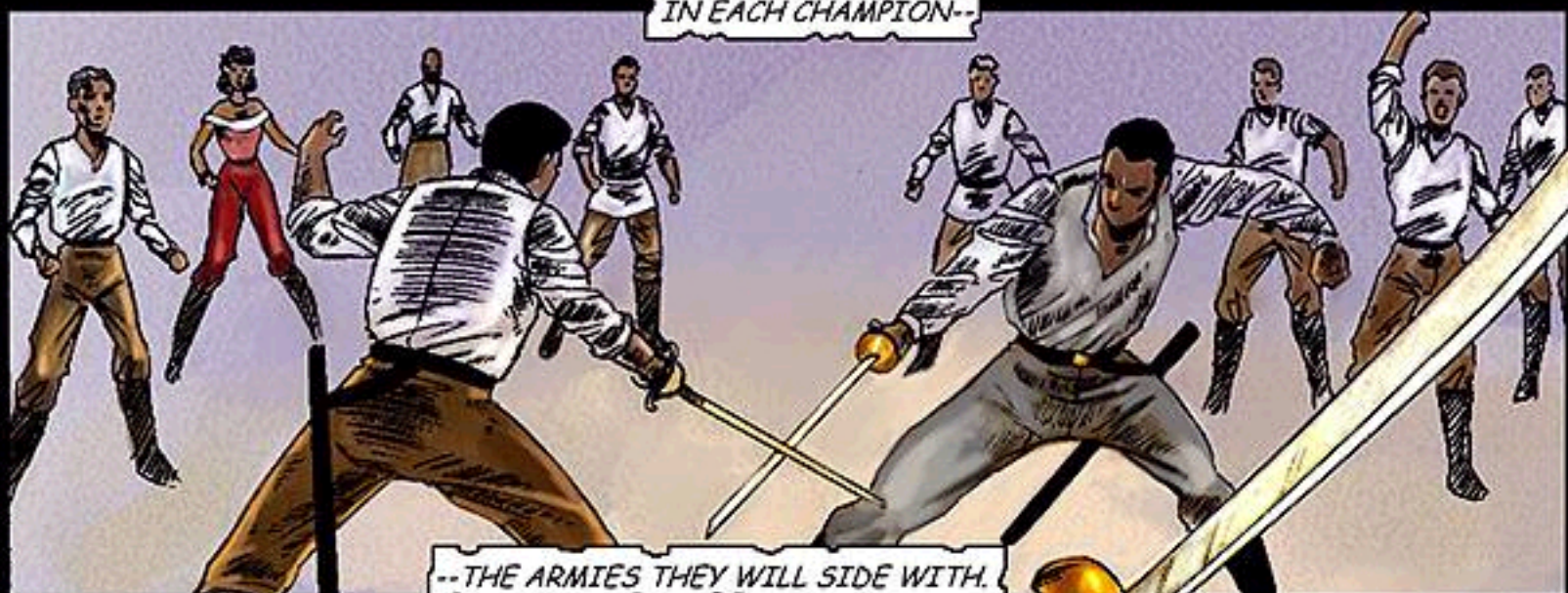
THE CIVIL WAR THEY THOUGHT SUPPRESSED, EMBODIED NOW IN THE DRUNKEN YOUTHS BEFORE THEM.



IN THIS ONE DUEL THEY SEE THE INEVITABILITY OF WHAT WILL COME.



IN EACH CHAMPION--

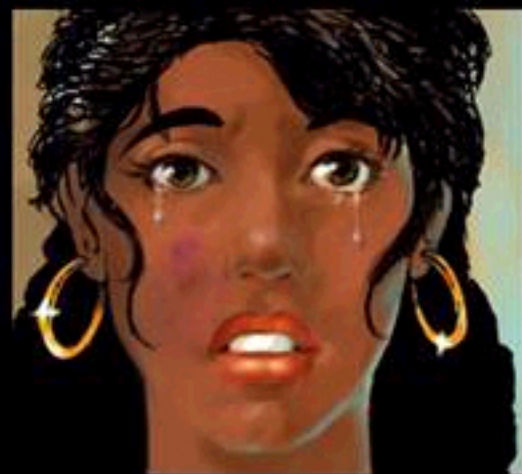


--THE ARMIES THEY WILL SIDE WITH.

SOONER OR LATER EVERYTHING BROUGHT TO STAVE OFF THIS FATE.



WILL BE CUT DOWN.



RUN, HE THINKS

IT'S ALL HE CAN THINK



.... ACH ...
GET ON, THEN ...

I CAN'T EVER COME BACK
TO HAMMERFELL, CAPTAIN.



EVENTUALLY, LAD.

NEXT ISSUE: THE SEARCH FOR ISZARA BEGINS!