

THE TRUE STORY OF ODYSSEUS, ONCE KING OF ITHACA
- BY HIMSELF -

----- BOOK 3 -----
ON THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS







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Homer, "The Odyssey", ix 166-169

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BOOK 3

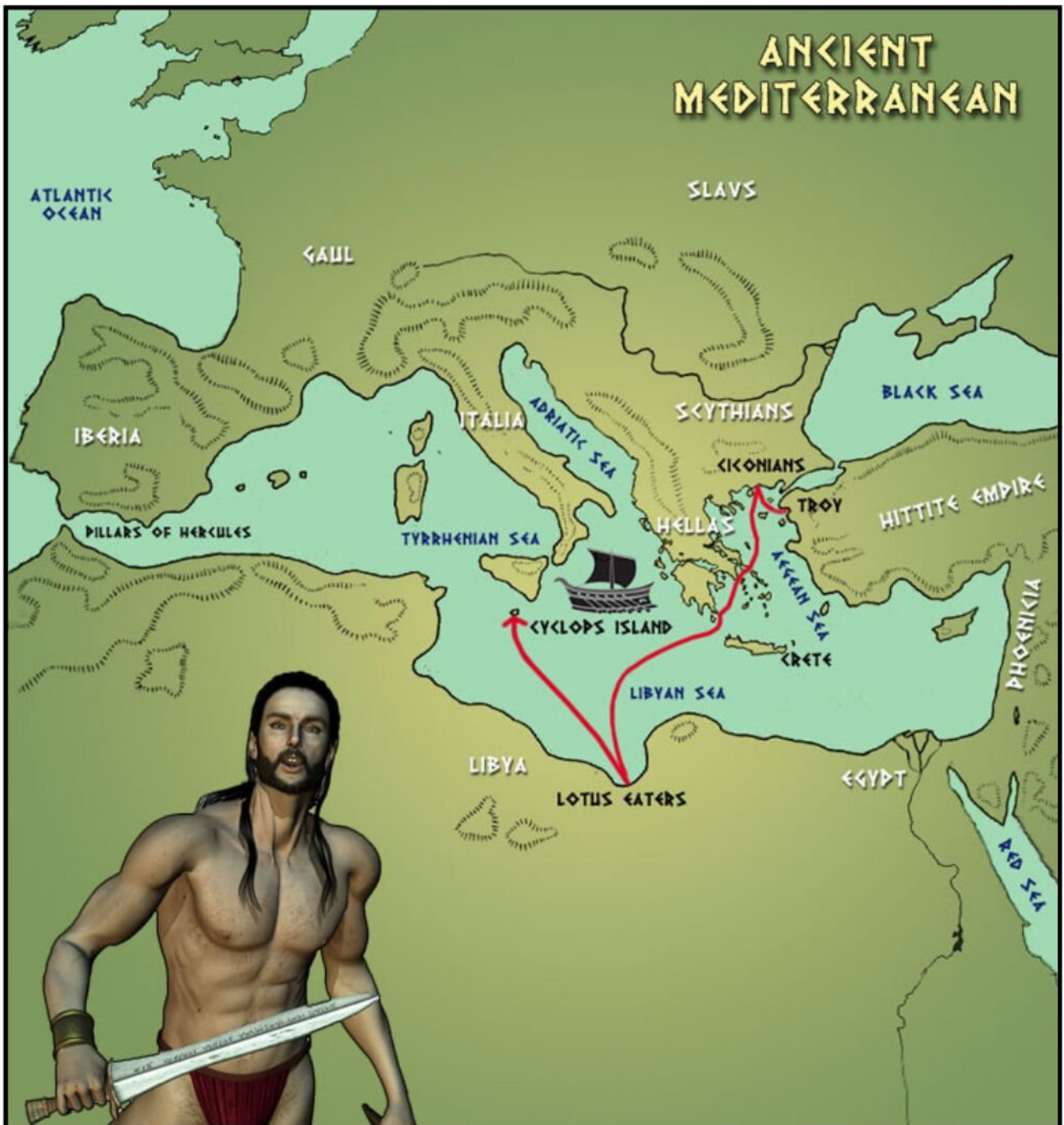
IN THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS

I NEVER LIKED SEAFARING EXCEPT FOR AN OCCASIONAL FISHING EXCURSION IN THE SHALLOW WATERS AROUND MY ISLAND. UP TO THE TIME OF THE TROJAN WAR I HAD NEVER SET FOOT ON A LARGE SEA-GOING SHIP. I'M A MOUNTAINEER WHO LIKES TO FEEL SOLID GROUND BENEATH HIS FEET. I HATE BEING COLD AND WET AND BLOWN AWAY BY ADVERSE WINDS. AND YET FATE DECREED THAT I SHOULD ENDURE ALL THESE HARDSHIPS THAT MAKE UP THE DAILY ROUTINE OF THE PROFESSIONAL MARINER.

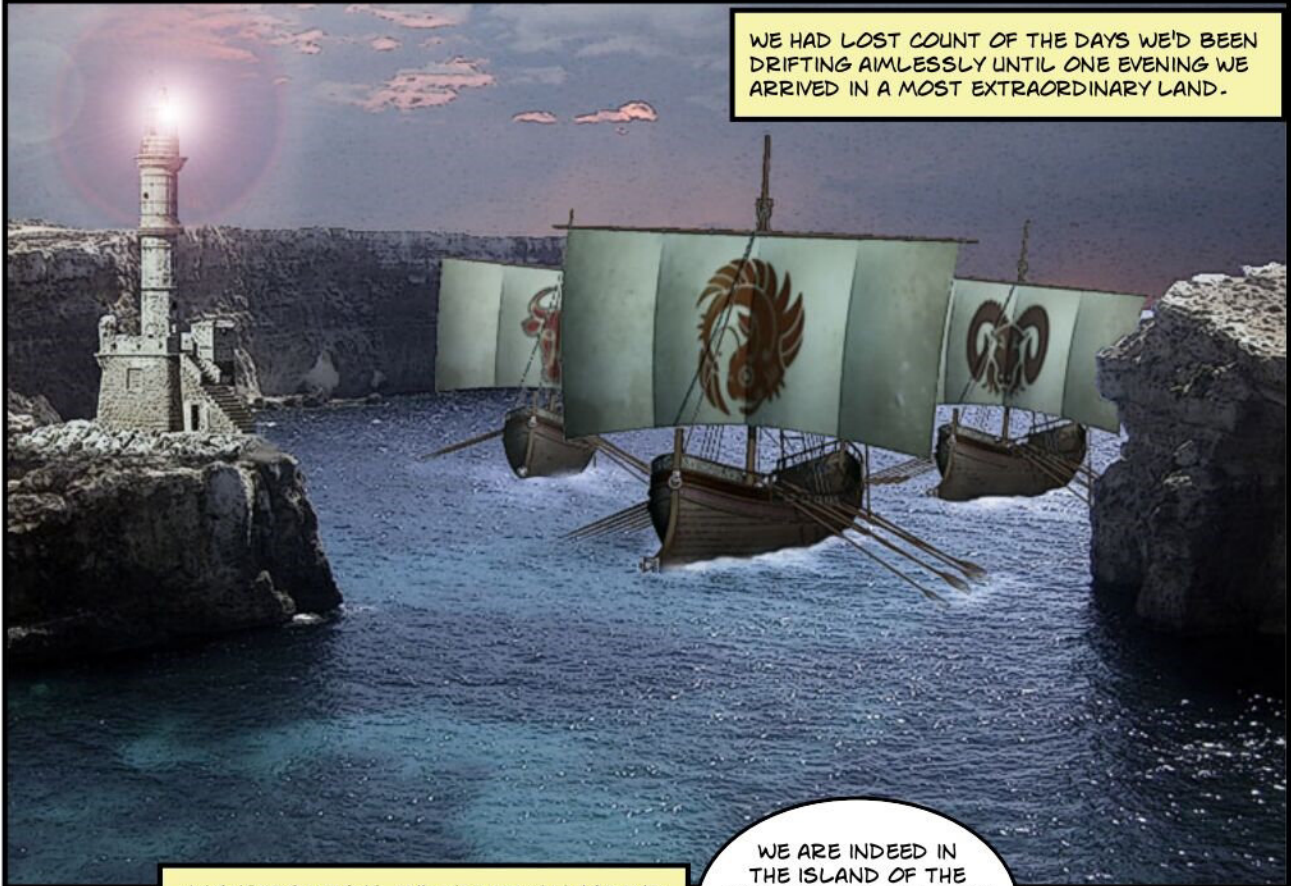


IT IS LUCKY THAT CAPTAIN ON MY SHIP AND CONSEQUENTLY CHIEF CAPTAIN OF THE FLEET IS AN OLD PHOENICIAN SEA-WOLF NAMED HAMON, WHO HAD SAILED IN SEAS THAT FEW MORTAL MEN HAD EVEN HEARD OF.

HOWEVER, EVEN HAMON HAS NO POWER OVER THE WINDS AND SO, SOON AFTER WE LEFT THE BLESSED/ACCURSED LAND OF THE LOTUS EATERS STRONG SOUTH-EAST WINDS PUSHED US ONCE AGAIN INTO UNCHARTED WATERS, FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY FROM HOME -SOMETHING THAT SUITED ME JUST FINE.



WE HAD LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS WE'D BEEN DRIFTING AIMLESSLY UNTIL ONE EVENING WE ARRIVED IN A MOST EXTRAORDINARY LAND.



MY SUPERSTITIOUS AND UTTERLY IGNORANT COMPANIONS PANICKED -AS USUAL-

WE ARE INDEED IN THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS; HOWEVER THIS SHINING EYE IS NOT A CREATURE BUT A DEVICE BUILT BY THE GODS.

THE CYCLOP! THE CYCLOP!

ZEUS HELP US! WE'RE LOST!

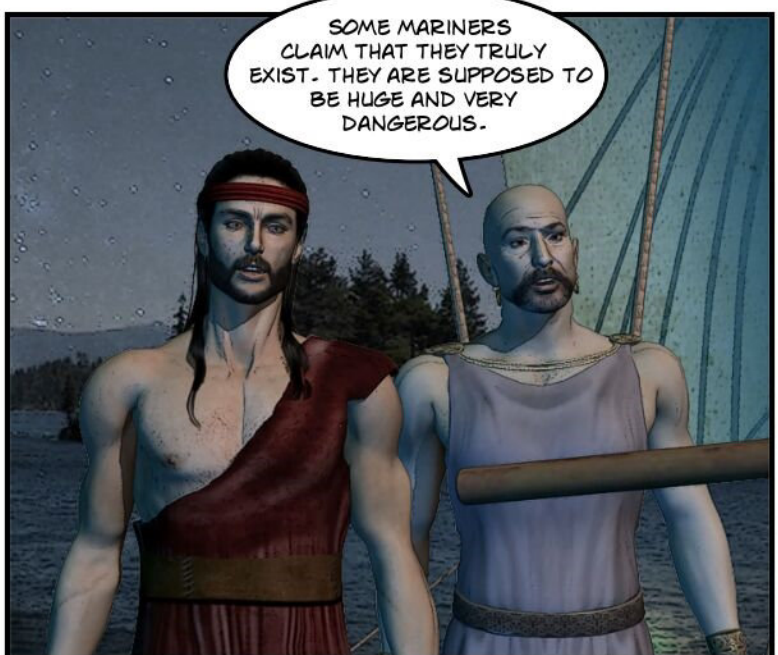
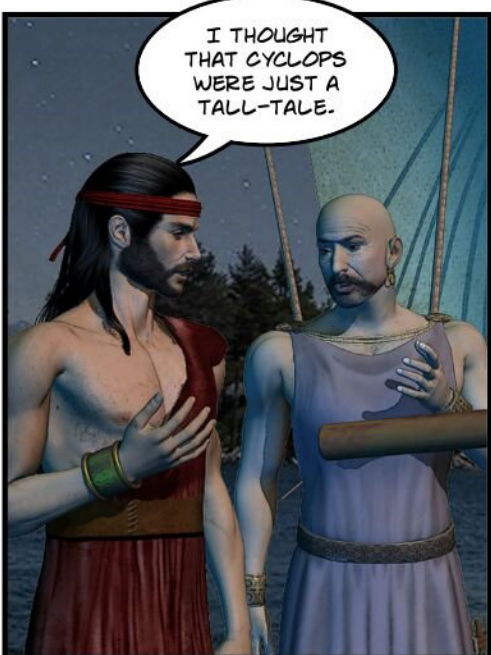
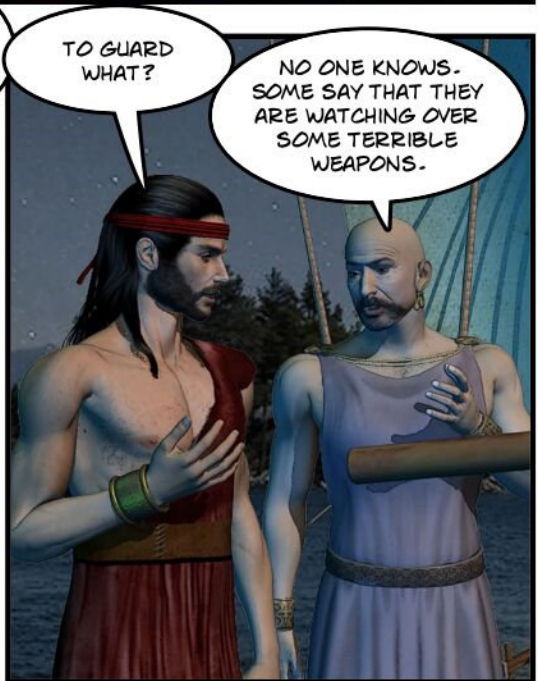


A BEACON TO GUIDE THEIR FLYING SHIPS AT NIGHT, SOMETHING WE FIND IN OTHER AREAS AS WELL.

HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE, HAMON?

NO, FOR IT IS OFF LIMITS FOR HUMANS. BUT I KNOW OF THE PLACE FROM OLD PHOENICIAN MAPS.



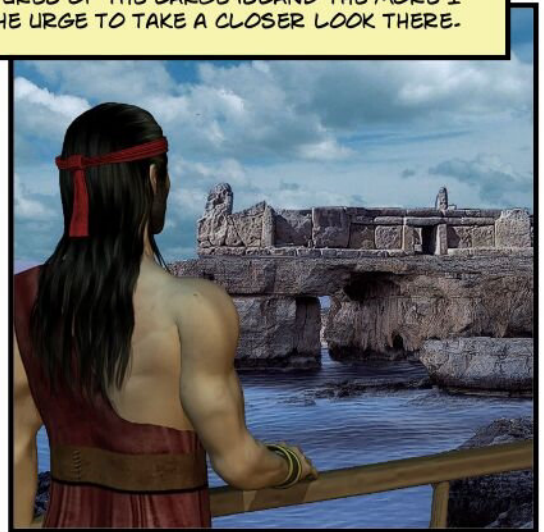
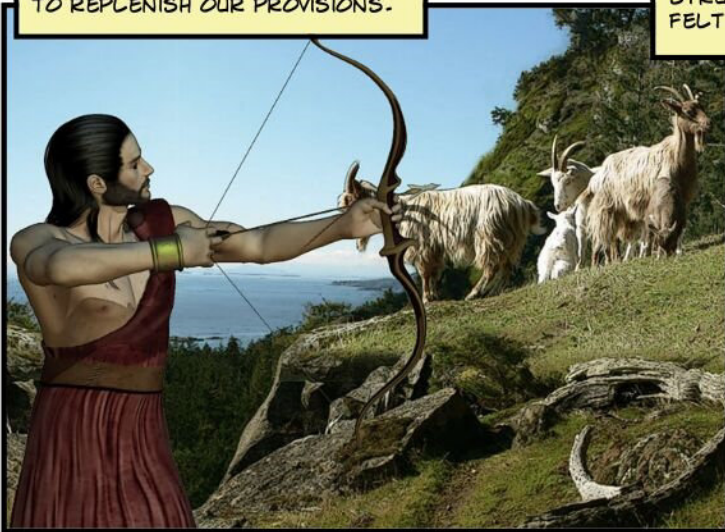


AND SO WE ANCHORED OUR SHIPS ON THE SMALL ISLAND AND WENT ASHORE WHERE WE SPENT THE NIGHT BATHED IN THE LIGHT OF THE GODS' BEACON.



IN THE MORNING WE DISCOVERED A STREAM OF FRESH WATER AND A FLOCK OF FREELY GRAZING GOATS. WE HAD ALL WE NEEDED TO REPLENISH OUR PROVISIONS.

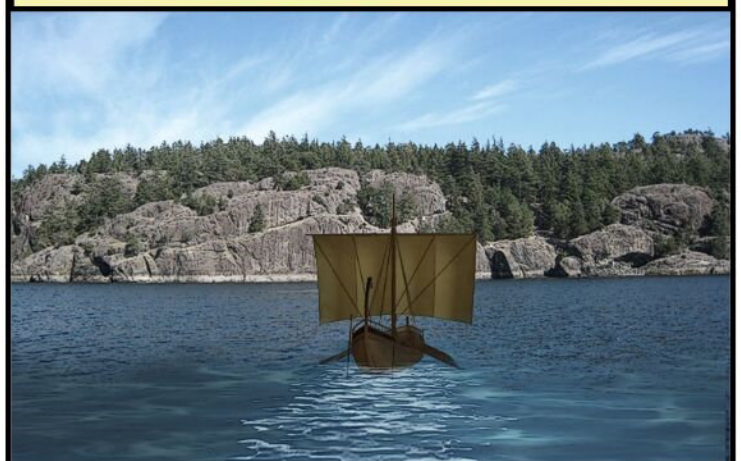
AND YET, MY CURIOSITY HAD BEEN NAGGING ME. THE MORE I LOOKED AT THE STRANGE MEGALITHIC STRUCTURES OF THE LARGE ISLAND THE MORE I FELT THE URGE TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK THERE.



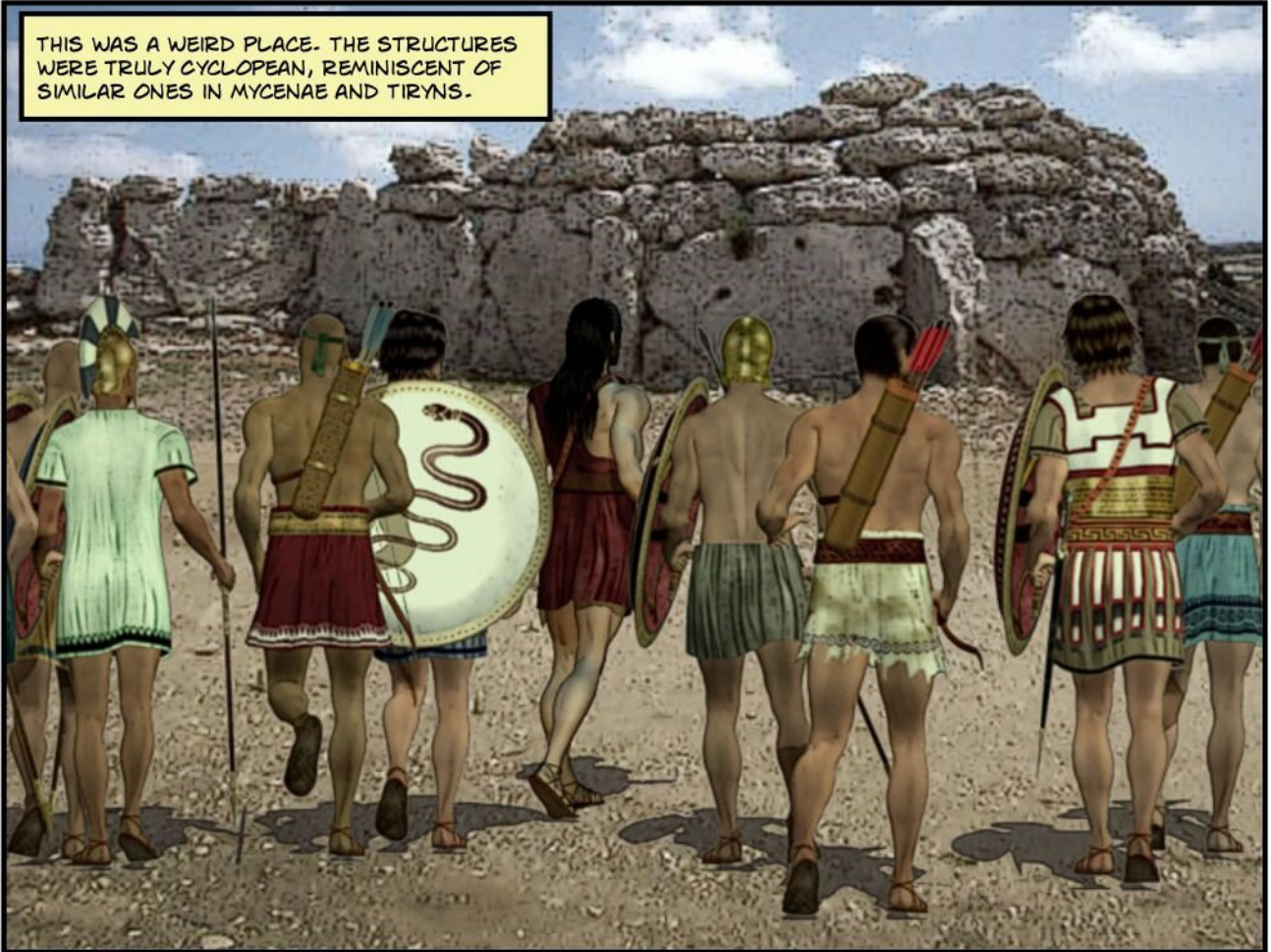
HAMON TRIED TO DISSUADE ME.



IN VAIN. I DECIDED TO CROSS THE BAY WITH MY SHIP ALONE.



THIS WAS A WEIRD PLACE. THE STRUCTURES WERE TRULY CYCLOPEAN, REMINISCENT OF SIMILAR ONES IN MYCENAE AND TIRYNS.



THEN I NOTICED SMOKE COMING UP FROM A SPOT INLAND.

LET'S GO AND CHECK IF WE CAN FIND SOMEONE.

YOU ARE MAD! THIS IS THE LAND OF THE CYCLOPS!

THEY'LL EAT US FOR BREAKFAST.



BUT I KNEW HOW TO MAKE THEM CHANGE THEIR MIND.

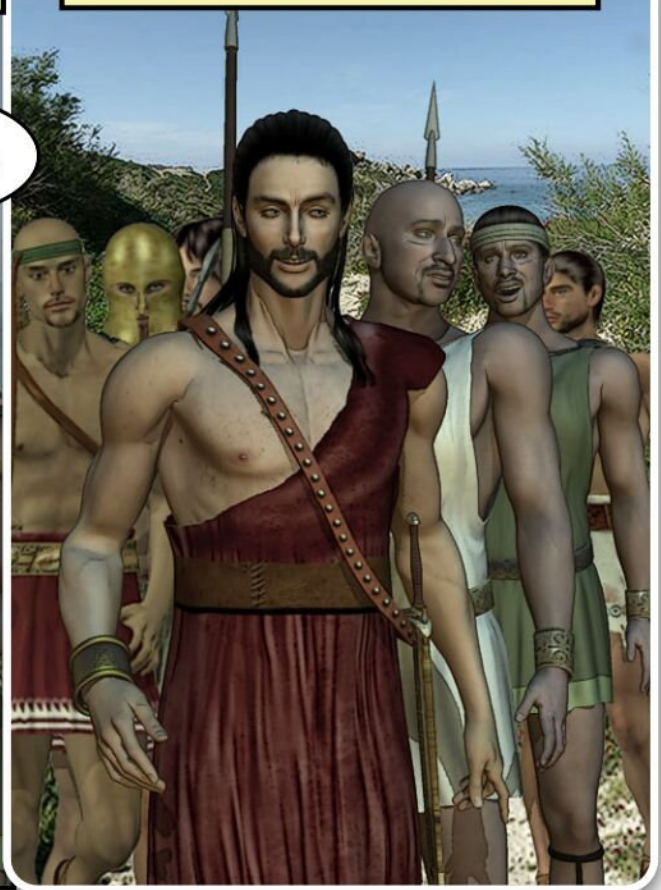
THINK OF THE RICHES WE MAY FIND THERE.

YES. ODYSSEUS IS RIGHT.

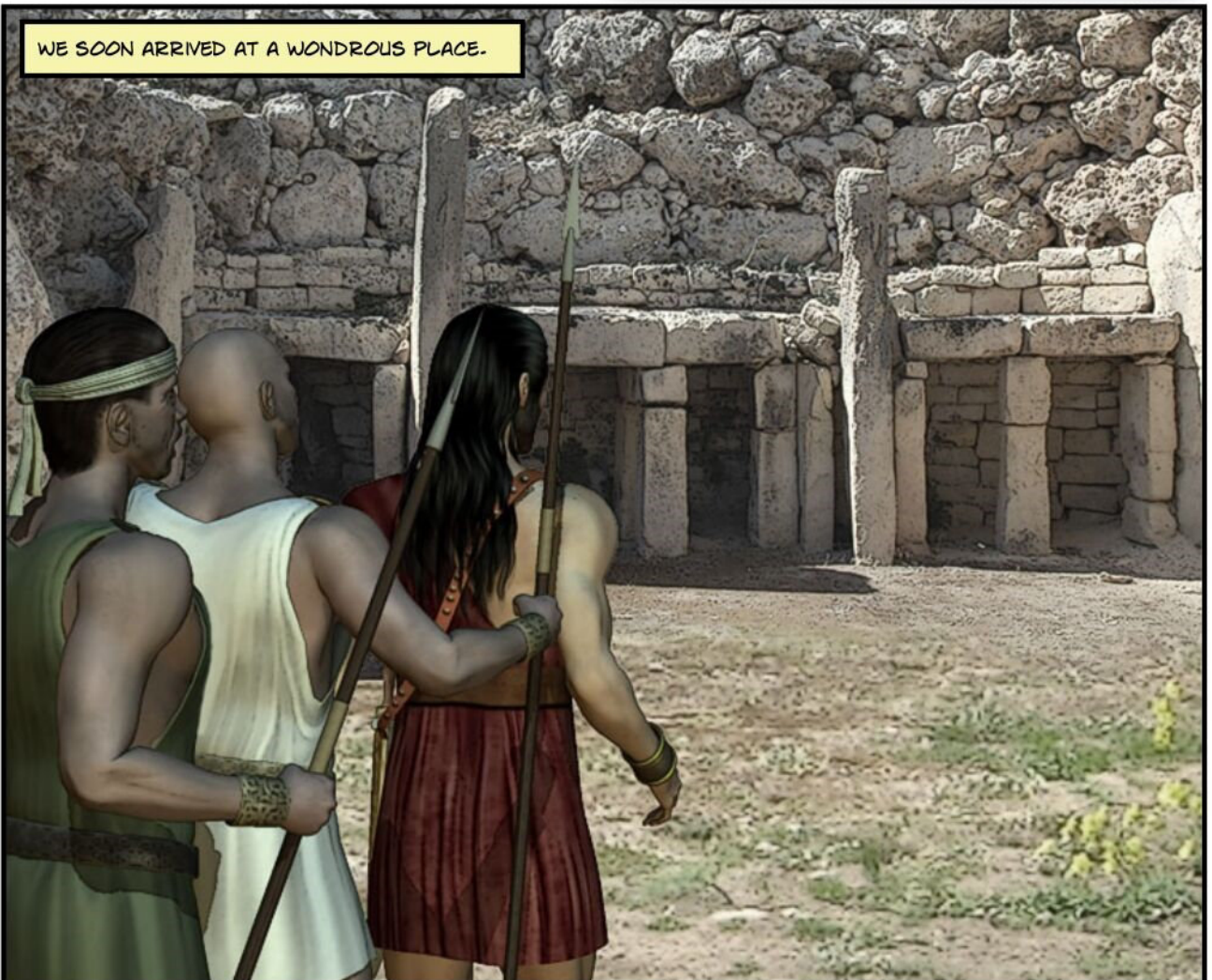
LET'S GO. WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

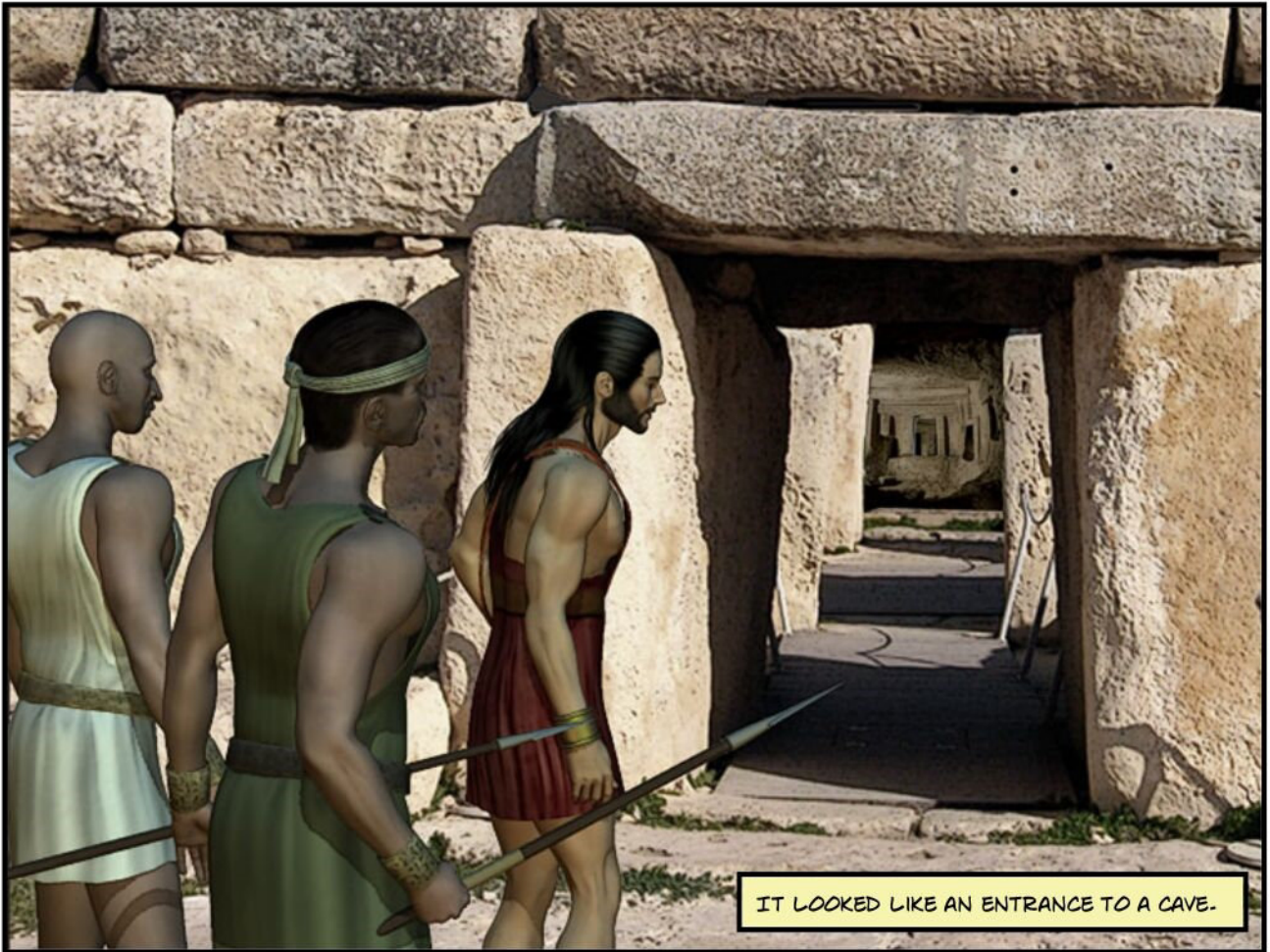


AND THUS WE MOVED TOWARDS THE SMOKE.



WE SOON ARRIVED AT A WONDROUS PLACE.





IT LOOKED LIKE AN ENTRANCE TO A CAVE.



AND A HUGE CAVE THIS WAS! A CAVE CURVED INTO THE ROCK BY HUMAN -OR WAS IT CYCLOPEAN?- HAND.

THERE WASN'T A LIVING SOUL AROUND, BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE PLACE WAS INHABITED.

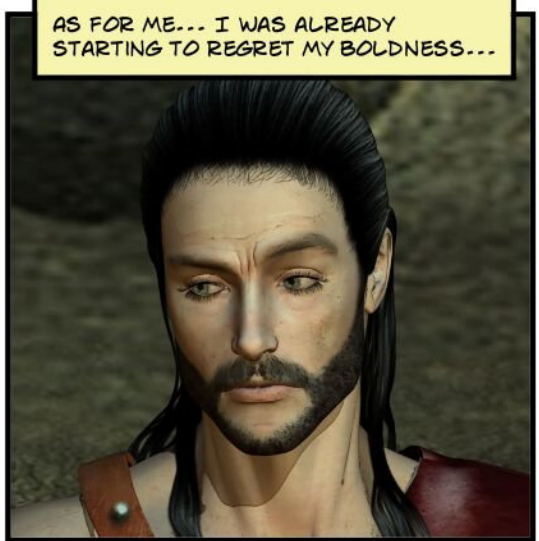


THE COMPANIONS GAVE FREE WAY TO THEIR GREED, LOOTING WHATEVER THEY THOUGHT WAS OF VALUE.

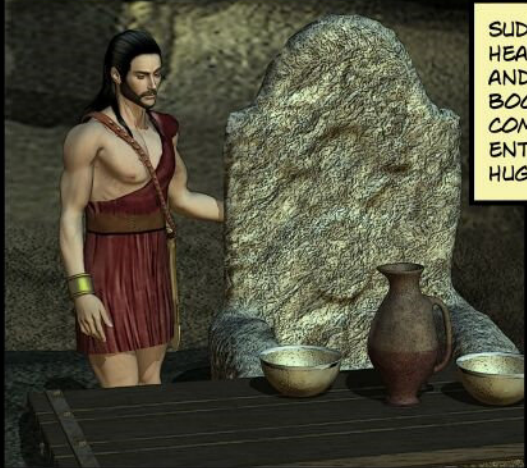


FOR JUDGING FROM THE SIZE OF THE FURNITURE AND THE EVERYDAY OBJECTS, THE OCCUPANTS OF THIS PLACE HAD TO BE OF A TREMENDOUS SIZE.

AS FOR ME... I WAS ALREADY STARTING TO REGRET MY BOLDNESS...



SUDDENLY WE HEARD HEAVY FOOTSTEPS AND THE SOUND OF BOOMING VOICES COMING FROM THE ENTRANCE OF THE HUGE CAVE.



Thosok hil-guh u ghata.

Int dejem huma.





QUICKLY! HIDE YOURSELVES WHEREVER YOU CAN.



WE HID AND WAITED WITH OUR HEARTS BEATING WILDLY.

WE DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG...



Inhi ser fishu kura ha 'lili akhar fard?

Huh?... Bhal dejjem.

THE MONSTROUS CREATURES TALKED AMONG THEMSELVES IN A GUTTURAL TONGUE UNKNOWN TO US.

I raden I ser irgad
mhux mthi'f'sa
mill-gdid.

Mhuxi'k
gust.

ALL OF A SUDDEN THE MALE SNIFFED THE AIR AND LOOKED AROUND. I KNEW THEN THAT HE HAD SENSED US AND DECIDED TO TAKE A CHANCE.

OUT OF MY HIDING PLACE I CAME AND ADDRESSED THEM IN GREEK, HOPING THEY'D UNDERSTAND ME.



Hi haddi kuwa
hawn.



GREETINGS, OH
CYCLOPS, BELOVED OF
THE GODS!

??!



THEY DID.

WHO ARE YOU, LITTLE MAN?



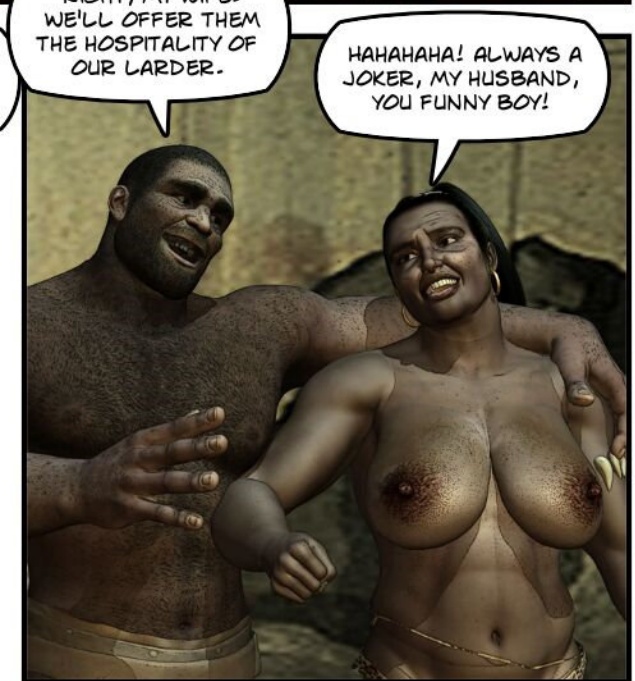
WE ARE TRAVELLERS, FRIENDS OF THE GODS, SEEKING YOUR HOSPITALITY, IN THE NAME OF ZEUS.



THE MONSTERS LAUGHED HEARTILY.

DO YOU HEAR, AETHEROPE? THEY ASK FOR HOSPITALITY.

AND THEY'LL GET IT. RIGHT, MY POLYPHEMUS?



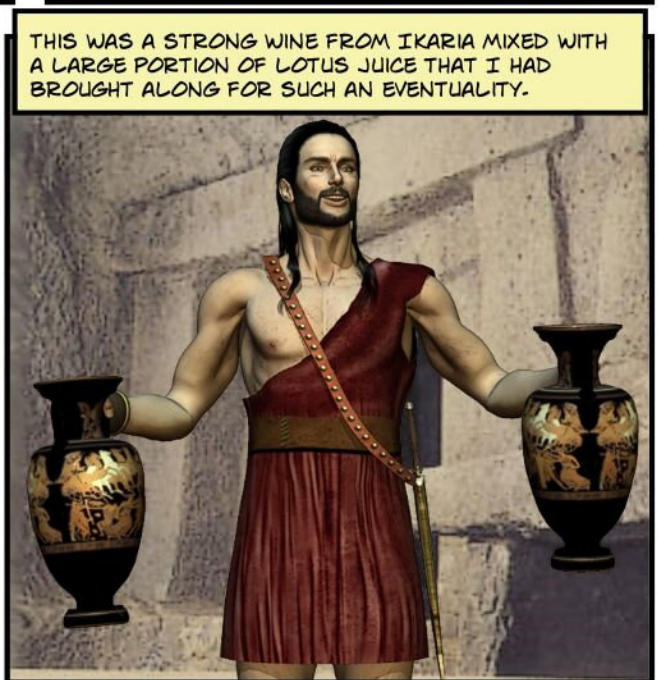
RIGHT, MY WIFE. WE'LL OFFER THEM THE HOSPITALITY OF OUR LARDER.

HAHAHAHA! ALWAYS A JOKER, MY HUSBAND, YOU FUNNY BOY!



THINGS DIDN'T LOOK SO GOOD. I TRIED A RUSE.

WE BROUGHT YOU SOME WINE YOU MIGHT LIKE, POLYPHEMUS.



THIS WAS A STRONG WINE FROM IKARIA MIXED WITH A LARGE PORTION OF LOTUS JUICE THAT I HAD BROUGHT ALONG FOR SUCH AN EVENTUALITY.

THE HUGE CREATURES GRABBED A FLASK EACH AND DRUNK AVIDLY.

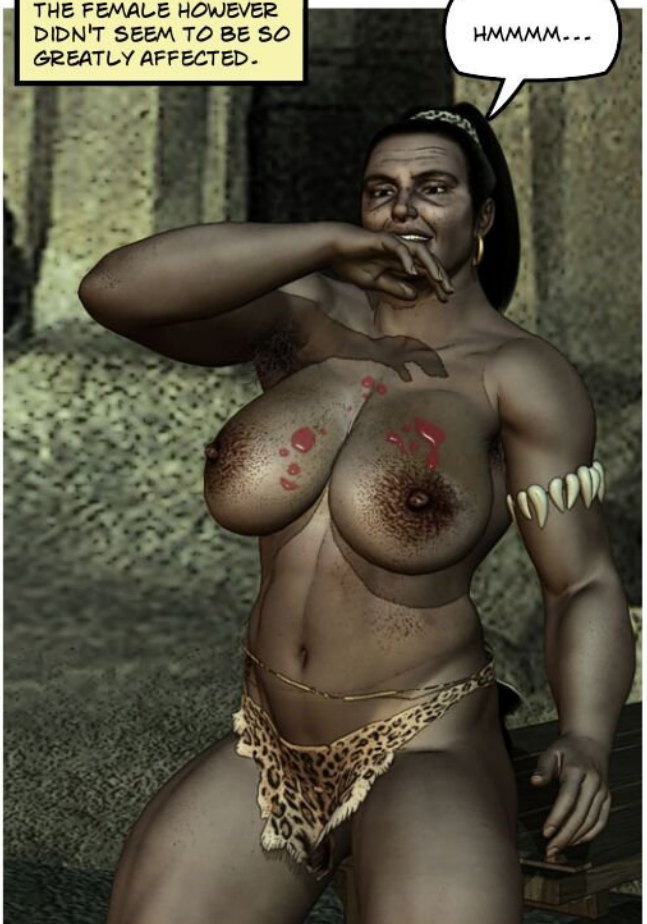


THE DRUG HAD AN IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON POLYPHEMUS, WHO FELL ASLEEP ON THE SPOT.



THE FEMALE HOWEVER DIDN'T SEEM TO BE SO GREATLY AFFECTED.

HMMMM...



THERE WAS A SPARKLE IN HER EYE AS SHE LOOKED AT US THAT I DIDN'T LIKE AT ALL.



YOU ARE QUITE HANDSOME, STRANGER. YOU ALL ARE.



SHE GRABBED ANTIFOS WHO HAPPENED TO BE THE CLOSEST TO HER.

AND YOU? DON'T YOU FIND ME ATTRACTIVE, LITTLE MAN?



HUH... YES, MY QUEEN... VERY ATTRACTIVE...

WHAT SHE DID NEXT WAS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED.



THE MONSTROUS FEMALE PROCEEDED THEN IN A SHAMELESS COPULATION WITH OUR UNFORTUNATE COMPANION IN FRONT OF OUR EYES.



WHEN SHE FINISHED SHE CAST HIM ASIDE.



AND TURNED TO US.

NEXT... QUICKLY,
NOW THAT I'M HOT.





FRIGHTENED AND HORRIFIED MY COMPANIONS COMPLIED ONE BY ONE.



THE FEAR FOR THEIR LIFE GIVING THEM STRENGTH TO SATISFY THE INSATIABLE CYCLOP WOMAN.



IT WAS WEIRD, HORRIFIC AND FASCINATING AT THE SAME TIME.



THEN, INEVITABLY, MY TURN CAME.



YOU SHOULD BE THE BEST OF THEM ALL. THAT'S WHY I LEFT YOU LAST.

IT WAS THE MOST HORRIFIC EXPERIENCE I EVER HAD.



AND YET, COPULATING WITH THIS MONSTROUS WOMAN HAD A CERTAIN PERVERSE FASCINATION.



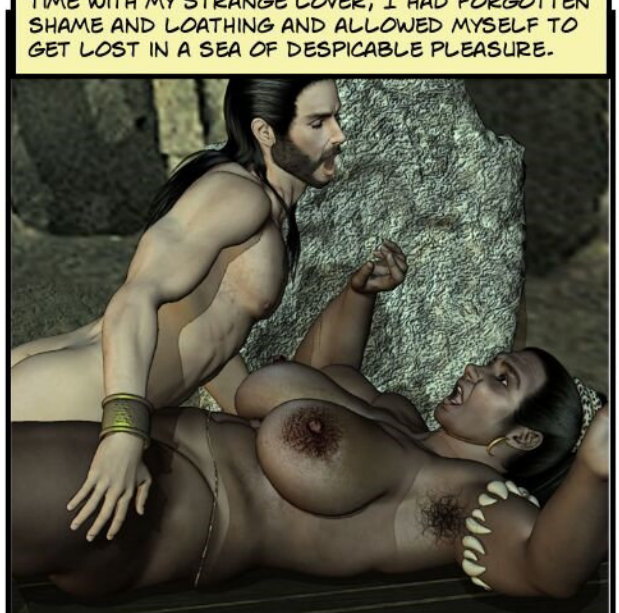
SOON I FOUND MYSELF TO BE SO AROUSED THAT I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT.



SOMETHING IN THE DEPTHS OF MY MIND HAD CLICKED IN A VERY STRANGE AND UNEXPECTED WAY.



AND WHEN I REACHED ORGASM, AT THE SAME TIME WITH MY STRANGE LOVER, I HAD FORGOTTEN SHAME AND LOATHING AND ALLOWED MYSELF TO GET LOST IN A SEA OF DESPICABLE PLEASURE.





I WAS RIGHT TO BELIEVE THAT YOU WERE A SPECIAL ONE. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

MY NAME IS NOBODY.



SO, NOBODY, YOU I'LL SAVE TO BE EATEN LAST. AND NOW I'LL NEED MY BEAUTY SLEEP.



I COULDN'T MOVE AND COULDN'T SLEEP THAT NIGHT, CURSING MY CURIOSITY THAT PUT US ALL INTO THIS DESPERATE SITUATION.

IN THE MORNING THE COUPLE OF THE CYCLOPS LEFT AFTER THEY LOCKED THE HUGE GATE OF THE CAVE BEHIND THEM, TRAPPING US INSIDE LIKE RATS.



NOW I KNOW WHAT THE MAIDENS CALL "A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH".



DAMN YOU, ODYSSEUS, AND YOUR BRIGHT IDEAS.

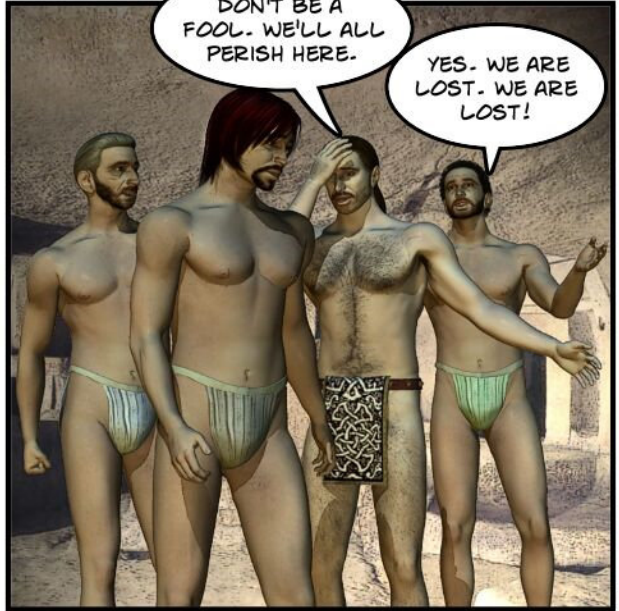


MAYBE IT'S A GOOD THING THAT AETHEROPE TOOK SUCH A FANCY TO YOU. MAYBE YOU CAN PERSUADE HER TO LET US FREE.

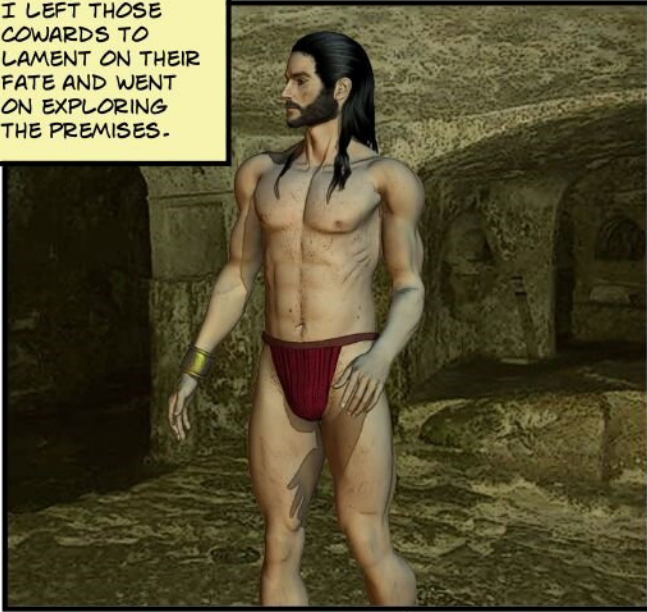


DON'T BE A FOOL. WE'LL ALL PERISH HERE.

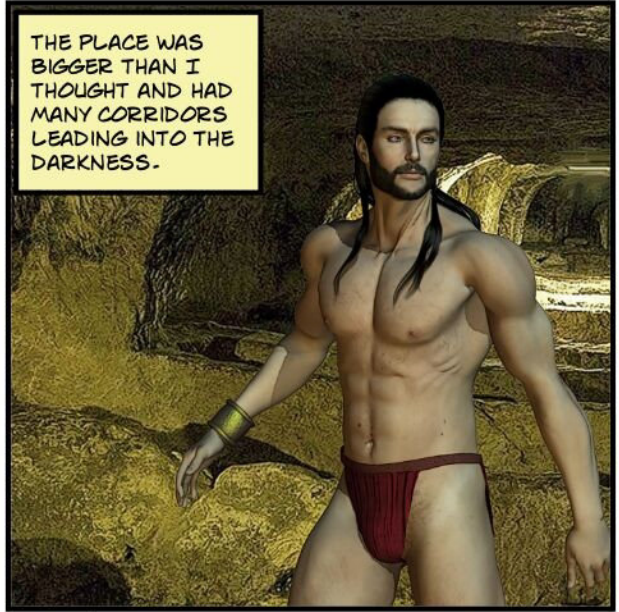
YES. WE ARE LOST. WE ARE LOST!



I LEFT THOSE
COWARDS TO
LAMENT ON THEIR
FATE AND WENT
ON EXPLORING
THE PREMISES.



THE PLACE WAS
BIGGER THAN I
THOUGHT AND HAD
MANY CORRIDORS
LEADING INTO THE
DARKNESS.



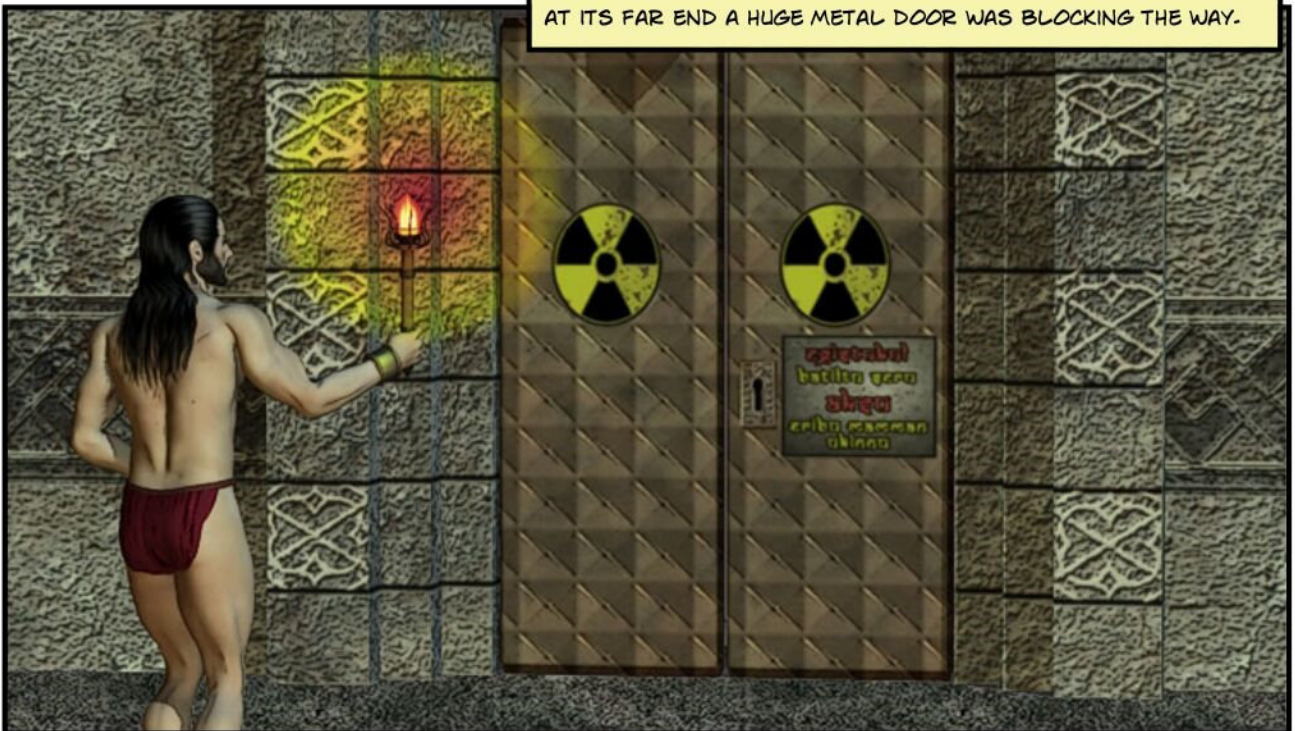
I GRABBED A TORCH AND
STARTED TO EXPLORE THEM
SYSTEMATICALLY. THEY ALL
LEAD TO DEAD-ENDS.



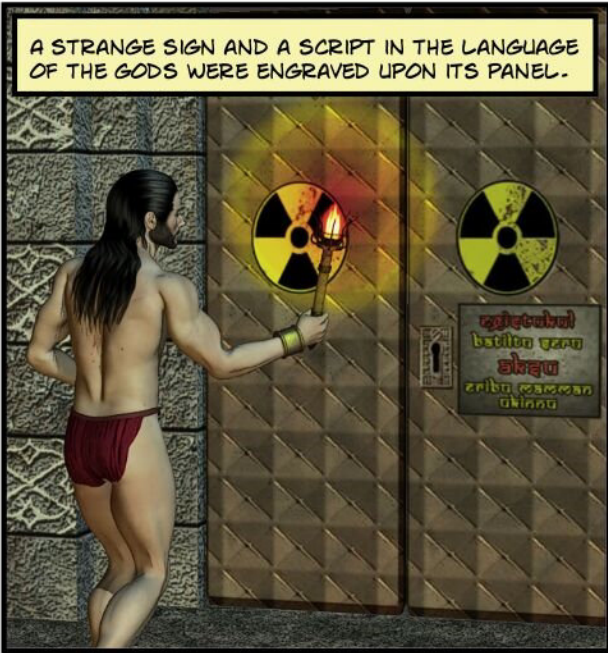
EXCEPT FOR ONE.



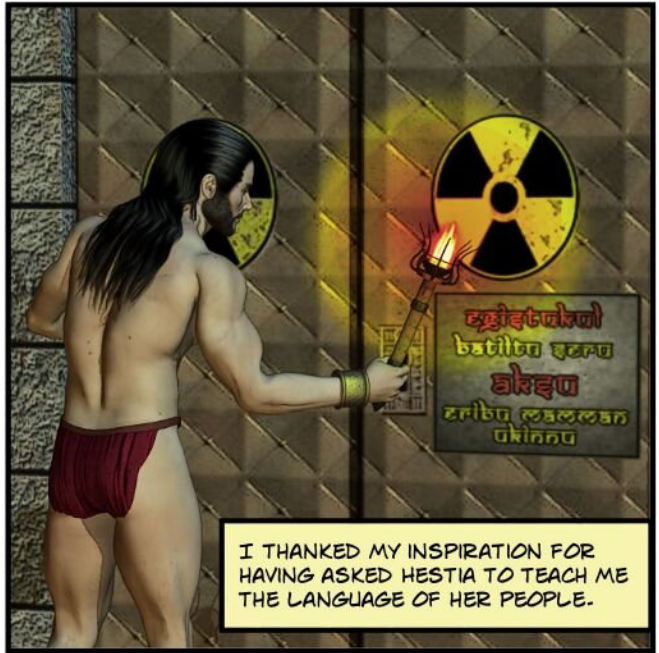
AT ITS FAR END A HUGE METAL DOOR WAS BLOCKING THE WAY.



A STRANGE SIGN AND A SCRIPT IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE GODS WERE ENGRAVED UPON ITS PANEL.



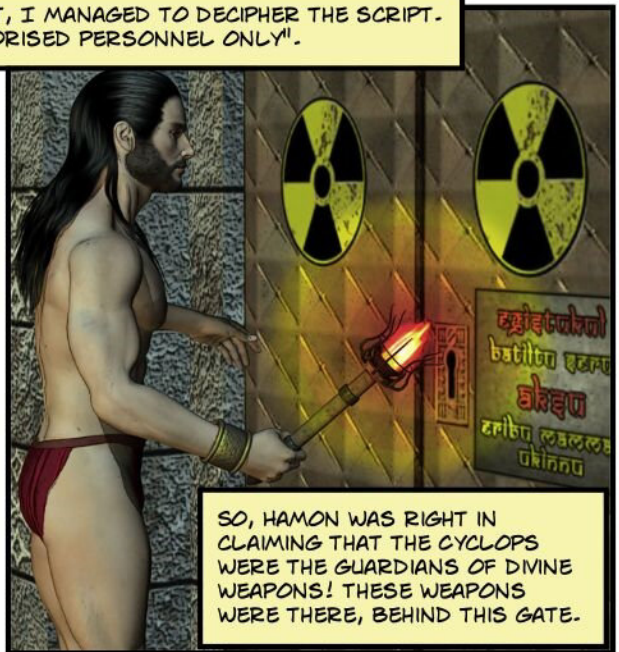
I THANKED MY INSPIRATION FOR HAVING ASKED HESTIA TO TEACH ME THE LANGUAGE OF HER PEOPLE.



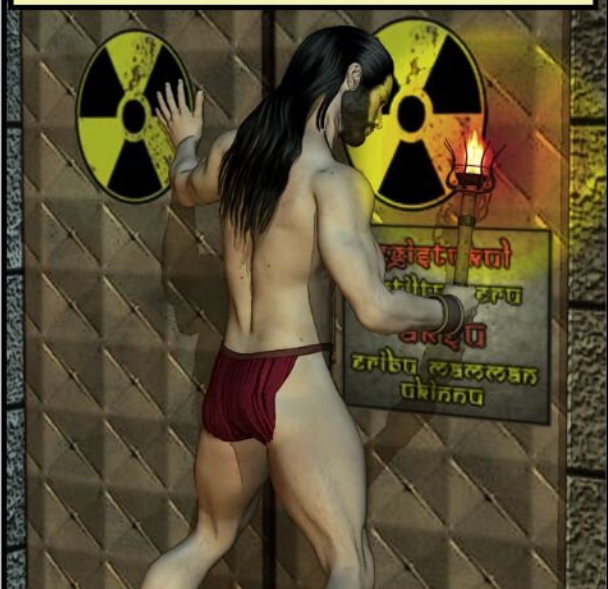
WITH SOME DIFFICULTY, FOR I WASN'T YET FLUENT, I MANAGED TO DECIPHER THE SCRIPT. IT READ: "ARMORY - KEEP OUT - DANGER - AUTHORISED PERSONNEL ONLY".



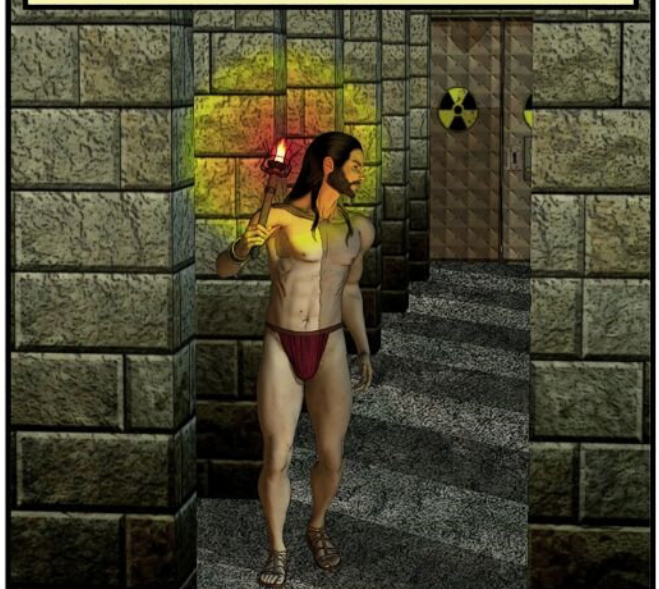
SO, HAMON WAS RIGHT IN CLAIMING THAT THE CYCLOPS WERE THE GUARDIANS OF DIVINE WEAPONS! THESE WEAPONS WERE THERE, BEHIND THIS GATE.



I TRIED TO PUSH IT BUT I SOON REALISED THAT IT WAS LOCKED.



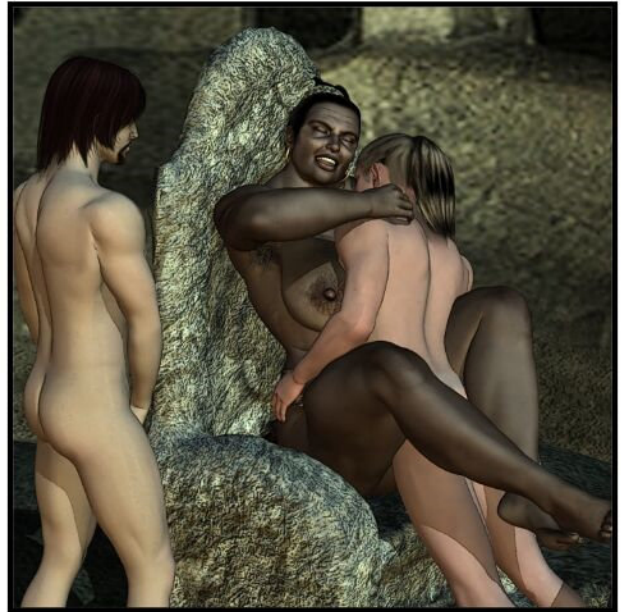
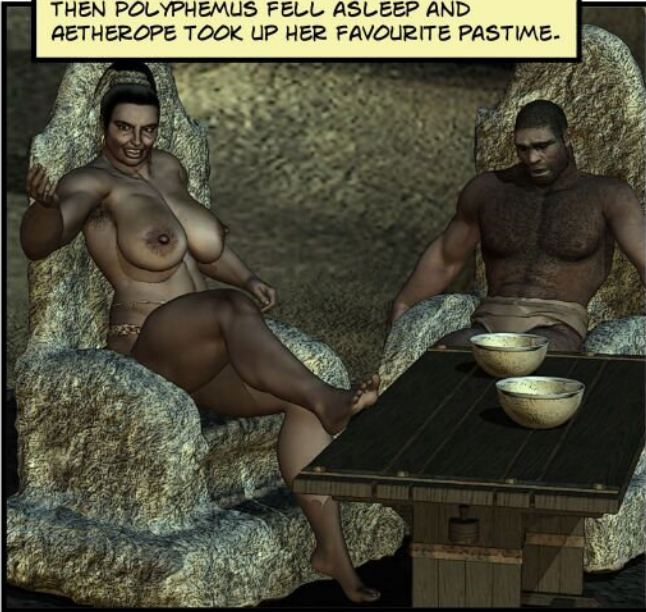
I RETURNED TO MY COMPANIONS DEEP IN THOUGHT. HOWEVER I TOLD THEM NOTHING OF MY DISCOVERY.



WHEN THE CYCLOPS RETURNED THE ROUTINE OF THE PREVIOUS DAY WAS REPEATED. THEY ATE AND DRANK THROWING US SCRAPS OF LEFTOVERS AS IF WE WERE DOGS.



THEN POLYPHEMUS FELL ASLEEP AND AETHEROPE TOOK UP HER FAVOURITE PASTIME.



THIS TIME HOWEVER I TOOK SPECIAL CARE TO PROLONG AND ENHANCE HER PLEASURE.



FOR I HAD A PLAN.

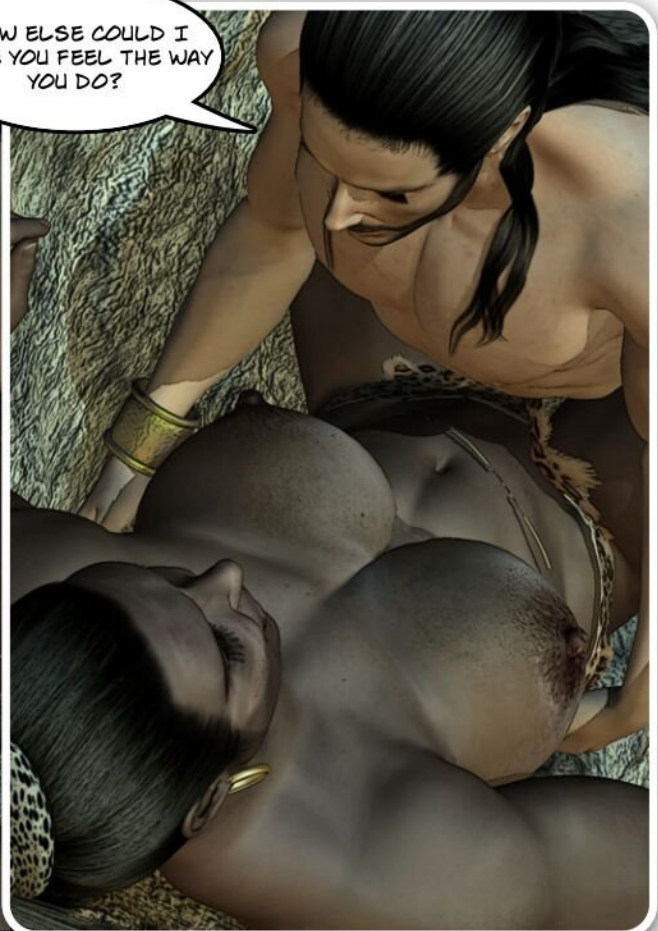


YOU ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS, NOBODY. THEY DO IT IN ORDER TO STAY ALIVE, BUT I KNOW THAT THEY LOATHE ME. YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, SEEM TO ENJOY IT.

MAYBE IT IS BECAUSE YOU AROUSE MY SENSES, AETHEROPE.



ARE YOU TELLING THE TRUTH?



HOW ELSE COULD I MAKE YOU FEEL THE WAY YOU DO?

SHE REMAINED SILENT FOR A WHILE, DEEP IN THOUGHT.

THEN...



MAYBE I'LL KEEP YOU AFTER ALL... YOU'LL BE MY LOVER.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND?



THIS USELESS SLOB? I'LL KILL HIM IN HIS SLEEP. THUS WE COULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER YOU AND I.

AND MY COMPANIONS?



WE'LL KEEP THEM AS SLAVES - IN A CAGE.



WHAT IF THE GODS OBJECT?

AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE GUARDIANS OF THEIR SECRETS?

WHY SHOULD THEY?



DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. YOU'LL TAKE POLYPHEMUS' PLACE AND EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE FINE.





SHE TOOK A KEY FROM THE WALL AND LED ME TO THE GATE WITH THE STRANGE SIGNS. THERE, AS IF CAUGHT BY A THOUGHT, SHE PAUSED.





THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS WAS THE STRANGEST PLACE I EVER SAW IN MY LIFE. THESE "GODS" WERE A TRULY AMAZING RACE!



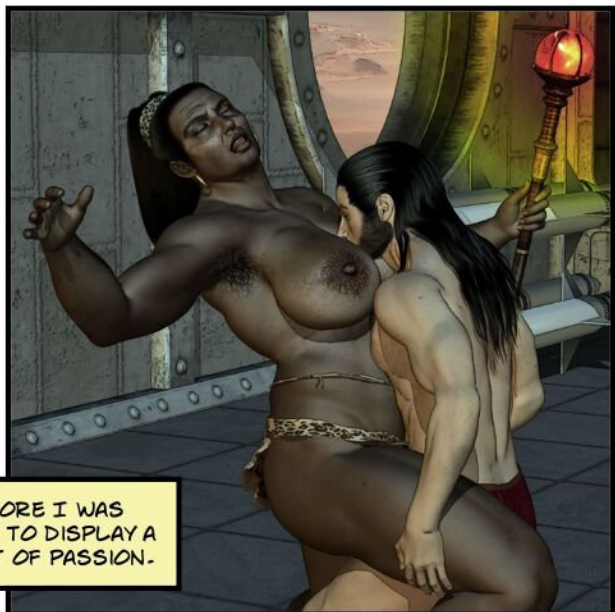
AND WHEN WOULD THIS BE?

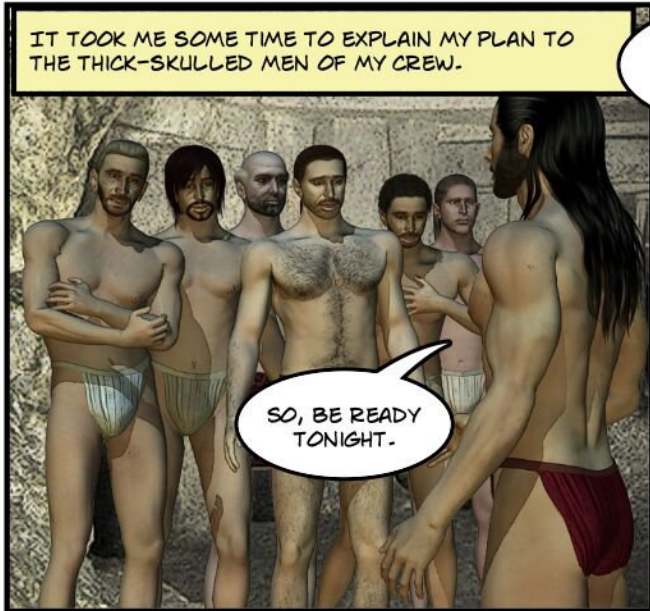


LOVELY!



I CAN'T WAIT!





IT TOOK ME SOME TIME TO EXPLAIN MY PLAN TO THE THICK-SKULLED MEN OF MY CREW.

SO, BE READY TONIGHT.



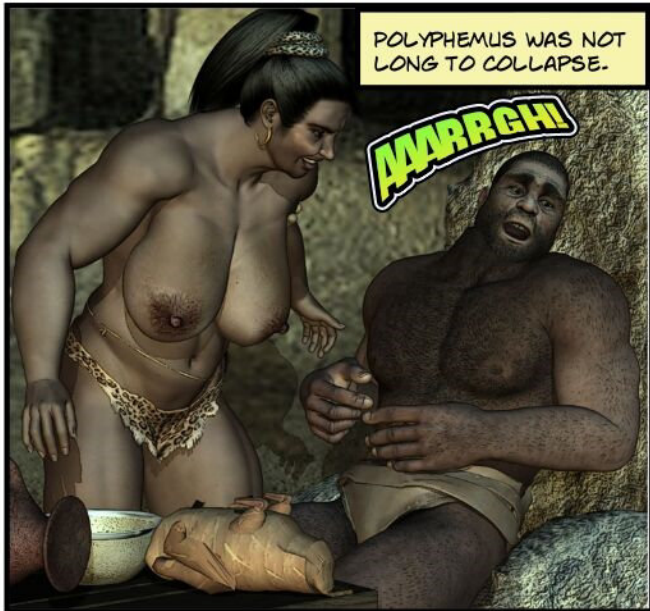
WE'LL PERISH! THE MONSTERS ARE GOING TO KILL US ALL.

SHUT UP, YOU COWARDS, AND DO AS YOU ARE TOLD.



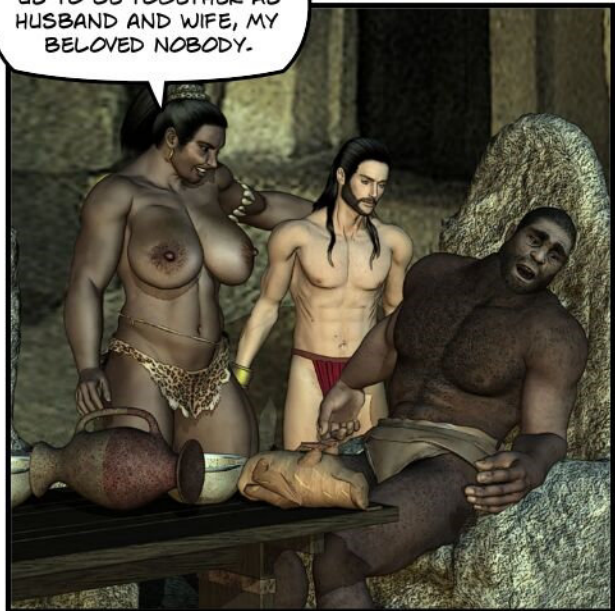
AETHEROPE PROCEEDED TO EXECUTE HER MORBID PLOT. SHE WINKED AT ME AS SHE WAS PUTTING THE POISON INTO HER HUSBAND'S FOOD.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO BE TOGETHER AS HUSBAND AND WIFE, MY BELOVED NOBODY.



POLYPHEMUS WAS NOT LONG TO COLLAPSE.

AARRGH!



SHE THEN PICKED A HUGE POINTED POLE AND DROVE IT THROUGH THE HEART OF POLYPHEMUS WHO DIED INSTANTLY.



IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO ACT.



SHE COLLAPSED WITHOUT A SOUND ON TOP OF HER SLAIN HUSBAND.





QUICKLY!
LET'S GET OUT
OF HERE.

WAIT A MINUTE!
HOW ABOUT THE
RICHES THEY STORE IN
THE SECRET
CHAMBER?

I RUSHED TO THE
ENTRANCE AND
UNBOLTED THE GATE.



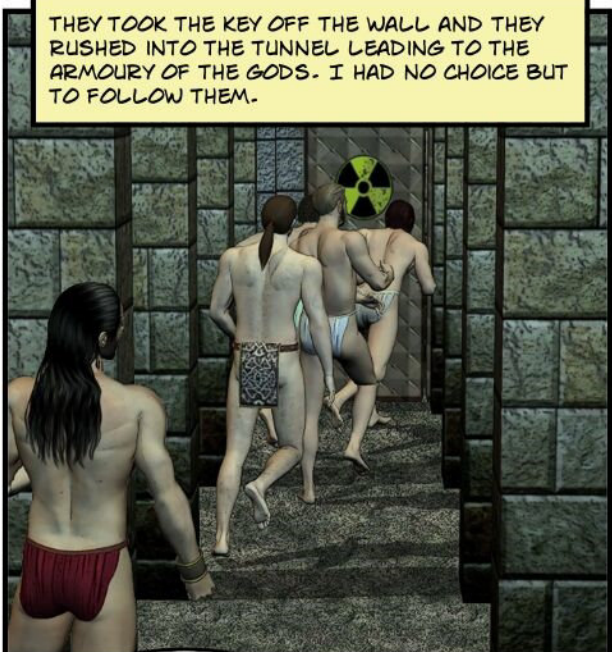
BUT I COUNTED WITHOUT THE GREED AND STUPIDITY
OF THE THICK PEASANTS THAT FATE GAVE ME TO LEAD.

YES! LET'S
GET THEM!



STUPID
PEOPLE! THERE
AREN'T ANY RICHES
THERE -ONLY
DEATH!

WE SHALL
SEE ABOUT
THAT.



THEY TOOK THE KEY OFF THE WALL AND THEY
RUSHED INTO THE TUNNEL LEADING TO THE
ARMOURY OF THE GODS. I HAD NO CHOICE BUT
TO FOLLOW THEM.



WHAT!??
WHERE IS THE
GOLD?

THERE IS NO
GOLD THERE,
STUPID FROGS.



OH YEAH? MAYBE
YOU WANT IT ALL FOR
YOURSELF...

SUDDENLY A TERRIBLE ROAR MADE THE WALLS OF THE CAVE TO TREMBLE.

NOBODY! WHERE ARE YOU?

IT'S AETHEROPE.
QUICKLY... GET
OUT...



BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THE CYCLOP WOMAN WAS
ALREADY UPON US, TERRIBLE IN HER FURY.

**NOBODY!
YOU... TRAITOR!**



SHE STARTED TO STRIKE RIGHT AND LEFT,
KILLING WHOEVER HAPPENED TO BE IN HER WAY.

AAARGH!

AHHHHH!

OOHH!



I SAW MY MEN FALLING AND THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO.

DIE!... DIE!

AHHHHHH!!!



SUDDENLY A BODY HIT A CONSOLE NEAR WHICH I WAS STANDING. IMMEDIATELY A PIERCING, REPEATING SOUND WAS HEARD...

EEEEEEEH... EEEEEEEH...



...AND A PANEL WITH FLASHING CHARACTERS CAME ALIVE. I LOOKED AT IT AND MY HEART SANK. IT READ "10 MINUTES BEFORE SELF-DESTRUCTION".

AETHEROPE SAW IT AT THE SAME TIME AND AN EXPRESSION OF HORROR TRANSFIGURED HER BRITISH FACE.

EEEEEEEH... EEEEEEEH...



**CURSED YOU BE, NOBODY!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!... WHAT
HAVE YOU DONE!**

FORGETTING ABOUT US SHE RUSHED AT THE CONSOLE AND STARTED TO PUNCH BUTTONS FRANTICALLY.



WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS DISTRACTION TO RUSH OUT OF THIS DEADLY PLACE AS FAST AS WE COULD.



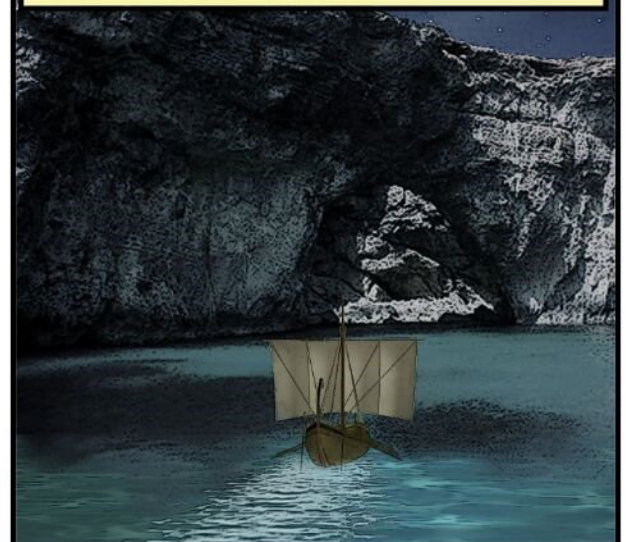
WE RAN AS WE HAD NEVER RAN BEFORE.



I HAD NO IDEA OF WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, BUT I FELT IT WOULDN'T BE GOOD.



WE REACHED OUR SHIP AND RAISED THE ANCHOR IN RECORD TIME.



HELP! HELP!
CATCH THE RASCAL WHO
KILLED MY HUSBAND AND
TAMPHERED WITH THE
BOLTS OF ZEUS.

WHO DID THIS?

AS WE PULLED OFF THE COAST
WE HEARD AETHEROPE CALLING
ON HER NEIGHBOURS TO HELP.

NOBODY DID
IT. NOBODY.

AH, WELL
THEN... GO BACK
TO SLEEP...



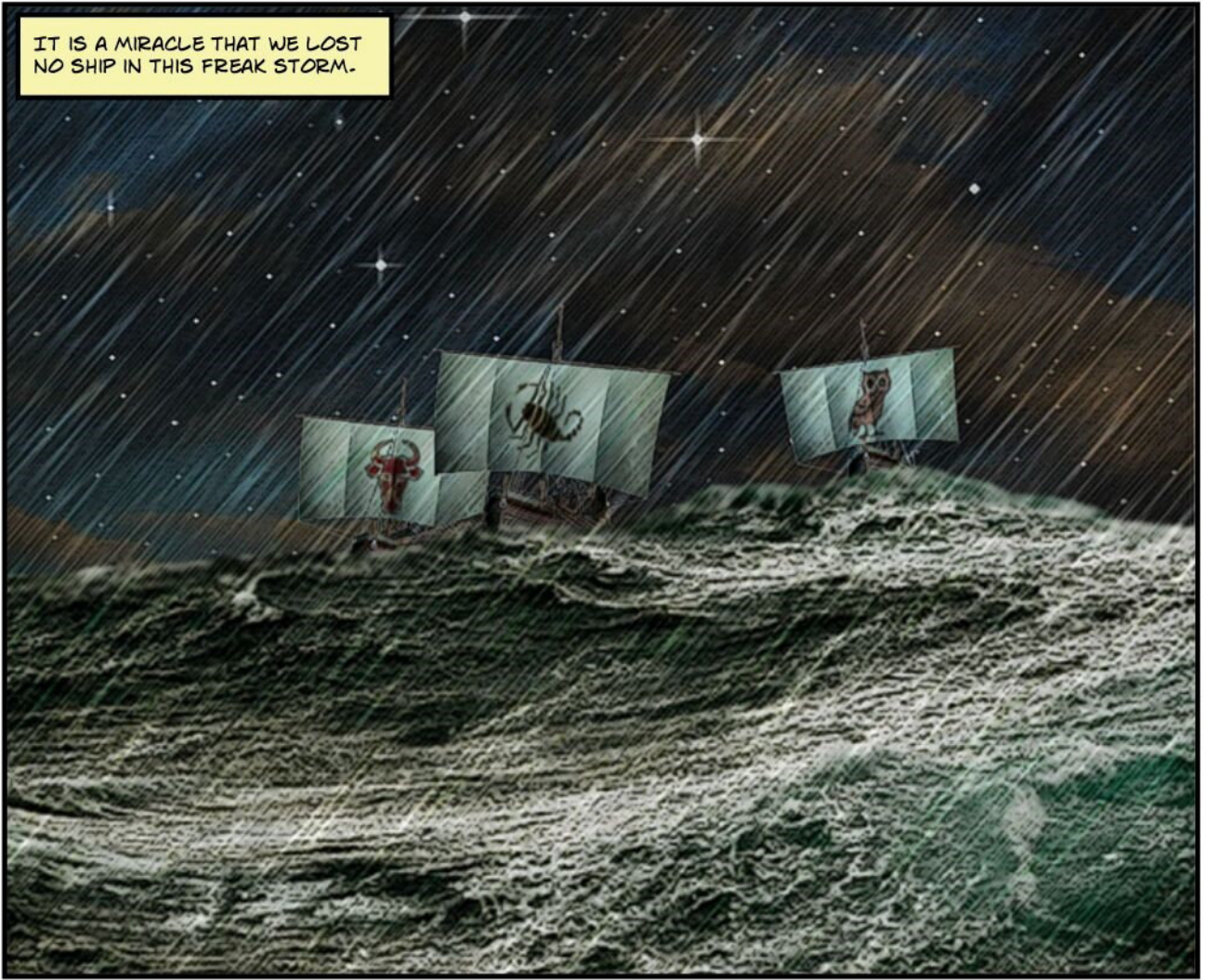
ALMOST AT ONCE A TERRIBLE WIND-BLAST HIT US WITH VICIOUS FORCE AND THREW US FAR OUT IN THE OPEN SEA.



HUGE WAVES PUSHED US AT A SPEED DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE.



IT IS A MIRACLE THAT WE LOST
NO SHIP IN THIS FREAK STORM.



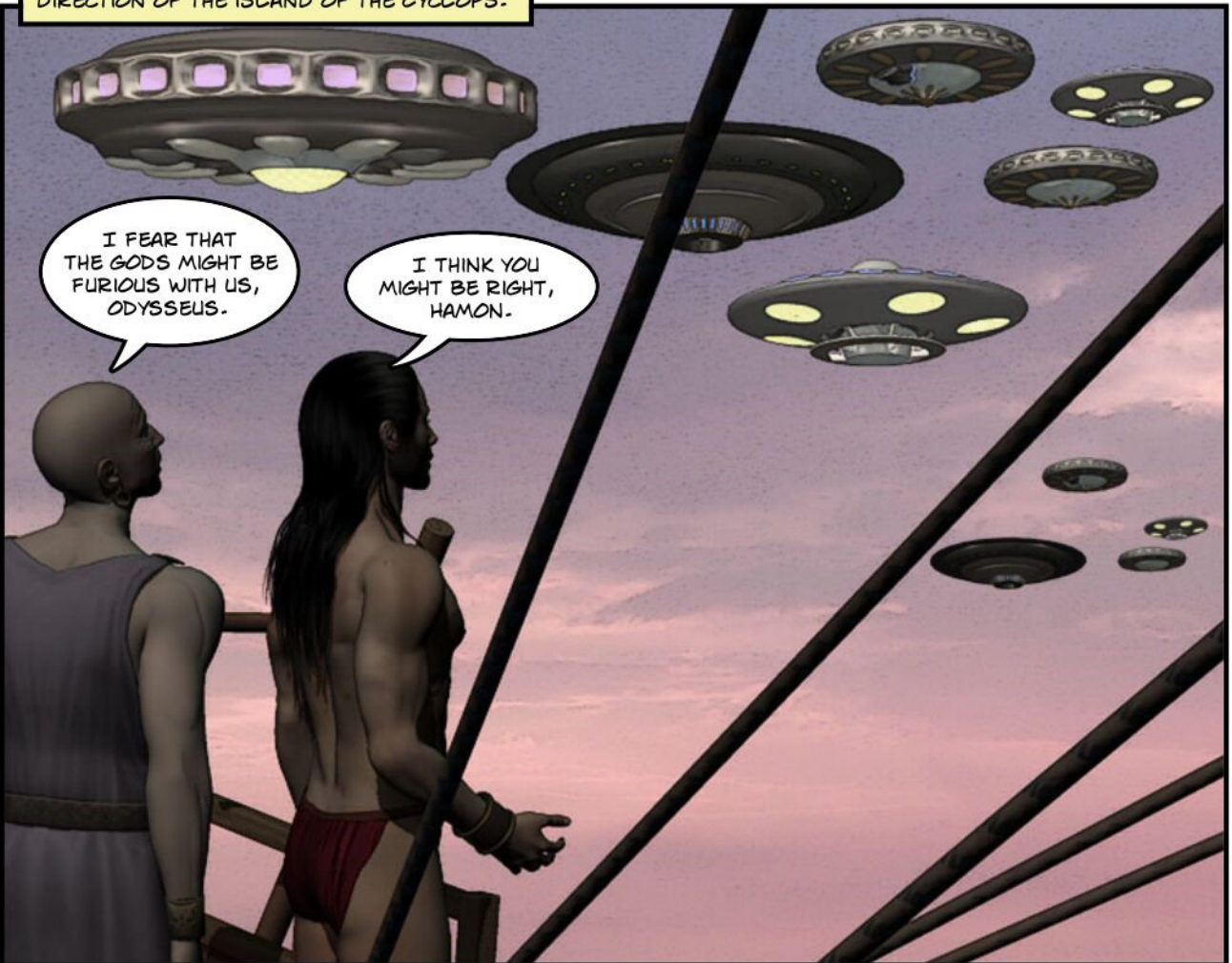
WE BATTLED WITH WAVES AND RAGING WINDS ALL NIGHT.



IT WAS ONLY TOWARDS NOON OF THE FOLLOWING DAY THAT THE WEATHER STARTED TO CALM DOWN.



I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MANY FLYING SHIELDS SAILING IN THE SKY, ALL HEADING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS.



I FEAR THAT THE GODS MIGHT BE FURIOUS WITH US, ODYSSEUS.

I THINK YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT, HAMON.



MANY YEARS LATER I HAPPENED TO COME ACROSS A GREAT NUMBER OF SONGS, POEMS AND TALES OF THE EVENTS THAT OCCURRED IN THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS. THEY TALKED OF US ESCAPING TIED UP IN THE BELLY OF GOATS (!), OF BLINDING POLYPHEMUS WHILE DESCRIBING THE CYCLOPS AS HUGE MONSTERS (WHICH THEY WERE) WITH A SINGLE EYE ON THEIR FOREHEAD!

NOT ONE OF THE BARDS AND CHRONICLERS EVER MENTIONED AETHEROPE, HER INSATIABLE SEXUAL APPETITE, HER BETRAYAL OR THE BLOWING UP OF THE BOLTS OF ZEUS. WAS THIS OUT OF PRUDISHNESS OR OF SELF-CENSORSHIP IN A SOCIETY THAT WASN'T READY YET TO HANDLE SHOCKING TRUTHS? PERHAPS IT WAS.

HOWEVER, WHEN I REACHED THE LAND OF THE PHAEACIANS I GAVE OLD DEMODOKUS THE FULL STORY OF THESE EVENTS, WITHOUT OMITTING ANYTHING AND WITHOUT ATTEMPTING TO EMBELLISH ON THE TRUTH. BUT I NEVER CAME ACROSS THE STORY AS I TOLD IT, EITHER IN WRITING OR IN THE FORM OF A SONG.

AS FOR THE OATH I MADE TO AETHEROPE, THAT I WOULD NOT LEAVE HER AS LONG AS SHE LIVED, I DARE SAY THAT I KEPT IT FAITHFULLY. I WAS STILL ON THE ISLAND, OR ITS WHEREABOUTS, AT THE MOMENT SHE WENT UP IN SMOKE WITH THE REST OF ITS INHABITANTS.

END OF BOOK 3



