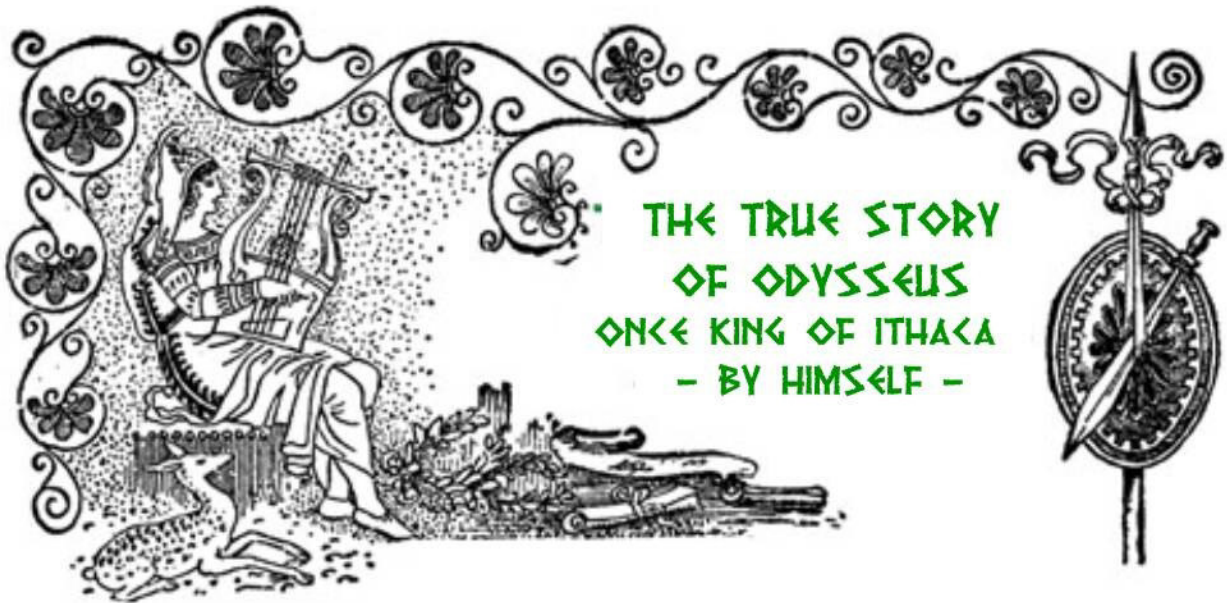


THE TRUE STORY OF ODYSSEUS, ONCE KING OF ITHACA
- BY HIMSELF -

----- BOOK 10 -----
ON THE ISLAND OF HELIOS







BOOK 1	THE EVENTS IN TROY
BOOK 2	.....	IN THE LAND OF LOTUS-EATERS
BOOK 3	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF THE CYCLOPS
BOOK 4	.....	THE FLOATING ISLAND OF AEOLUS
BOOK 5	.....	IN THE LAND OF THE LAESTRYGONIANS
BOOK 6	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF CIRCE
BOOK 7	.....	IN THE UNDERWORLD
BOOK 8	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF THE SIRENS
BOOK 9	.....	SCYLLA AND CHARYBDE
BOOK 10	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF HELIOS
BOOK 11	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF CALYPSO
BOOK 12	.....	ON THE ISLAND OF THE PHACACIANS
BOOK 13	THE RETURN TO ITHACA
BOOK 14	HELEN

SCRIPT AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY PANKO



MIDNIGHT PUBLISHING

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ΙΚΟΜΕΘ'. ΕΝΘΑ Δ' ΕΣΑΝ ΚΑΛΑΙ ΒΟΕΣ ΕΥΡΥΜΕΤΩΠΟΙ,
ΠΟΛΛΑ ΔΕ ΙΦΙΑ ΜΗΛ' ΥΠΕΡΙΟΝΟΣ ΗΕΛΙΟΙΟ.

Homer, "The Odyssey", xii 261-263

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BOOK 10 ON THE ISLAND OF HELIOS

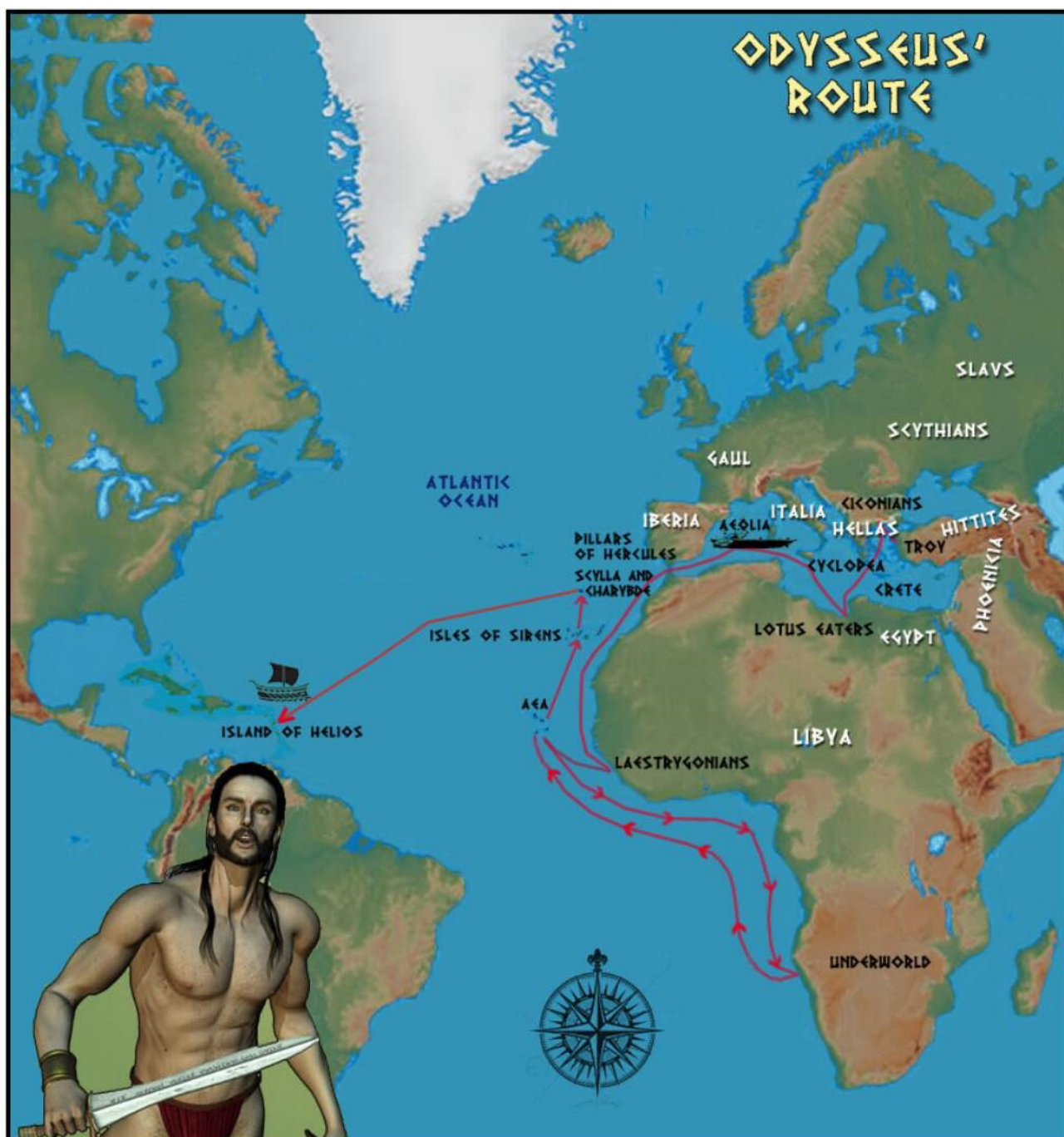
IT WAS FORTUNATE THAT WE HAD HAMON AS OUR CAPTAIN, FOR THE OLD PHOENICIAN KNEW THE SEAWAYS WELL, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE VAST OCEAN, AND THE TREACHEROUS CURRENTS OF THE OPEN SEAS. HIS SEAFARING SCIENCE HAVE BEEN GREATLY ENHANCED BY THE MAPS THAT SCYLLA AND CHARYBDE GAVE US, AS WELL AS BY THIS MYSTERIOUS INSTRUMENT, VERY MUCH LIKE THE ONE AEOLUS HAD GIVEN US, WHICH HELPED OUR ORIENTATION BY ALWAYS POINTING TOWARDS THE NORTH.

IN SPITE OF ALL THESE DISADVANTAGES I REALISED THAT MY CHANCES FOR REACHING THRINAKIA, AND THUS ESCAPING MY PURSUERS' THOROUGH SEARCH, WERE VERY SLIM INDEED.



CROSSING THE GREAT OCEAN WAS NO MEAN FEAT ANYWAY. ALTHOUGH, ACCORDING TO MY CAPTAIN, HAMON, THE PHOENICIANS MAKE THE TRIP REGULARLY, AS THEY KEEP COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLES WHO LIVED ACROSS THE VAST EXPANSE OF WATER, TO MY KNOWLEDGE NO GREEK SHIP HAD EVER ATTEMPTED THE LONG AND PERILOUS CROSSING.

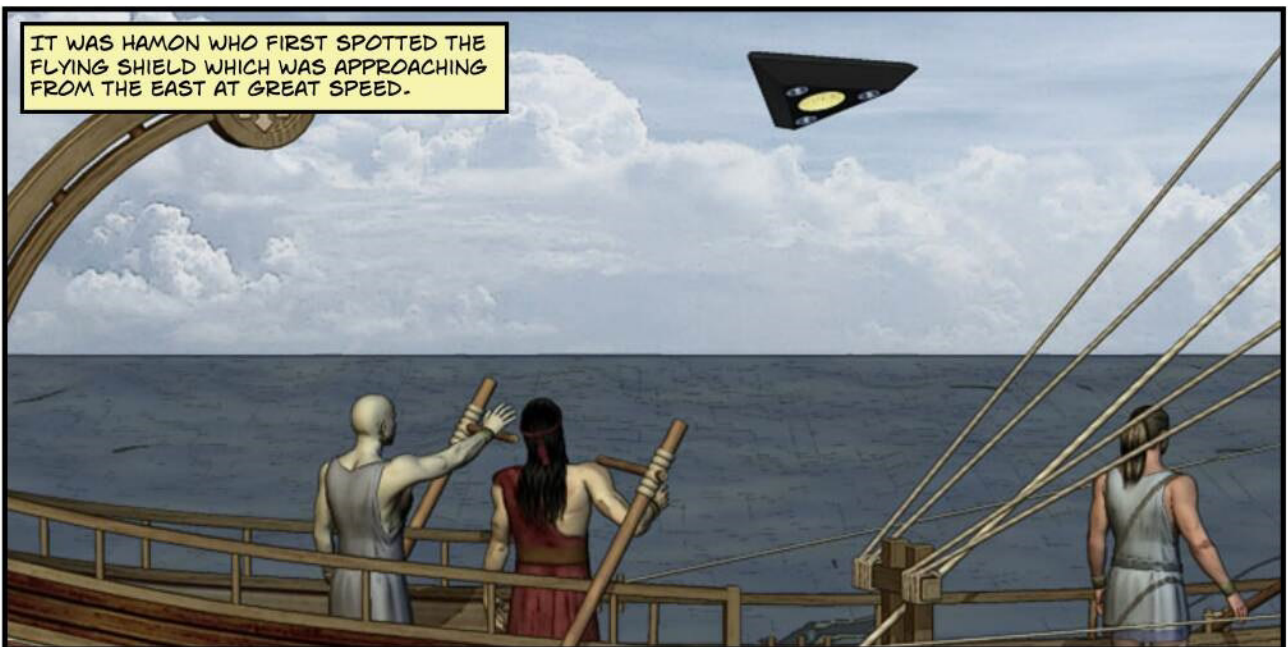
WE KNEW OF COURSE THAT A LARGE CONTINENT EXISTED BEYOND THE OCEAN BUT, FOR SOME REASON, WE HAD DECIDED NOT TO OPENLY ANTAGONISE THE RUTHLESS PHOENICIAN TRADERS. IT WAS ON ME THAT THIS DUBIOUS HONOUR BEFELL.



IT WAS OUR FOURTH DAY OUT IN THE OPEN SEA AND THE WIND HAD DROPPED CONSIDERABLY CAUSING THE SHIP TO DRIFT SLOWLY AS IT WAS CARRIED ALONG BY THE CURRENT.



IT WAS HAMON WHO FIRST SPOTTED THE FLYING SHIELD WHICH WAS APPROACHING FROM THE EAST AT GREAT SPEED.



IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, HAMON.



COULDN'T THIS BE HER, MY KING?

NO. THIS IS A DIFFERENT TYPE OF SHIP.





WITH NO TIME TO WASTE I GAVE HAMON INSTRUCTIONS AND DIVED IN THE WATER, HIDING IN THE STERN, BETWEEN THE HULL OF THE SHIP AND THE RUDDER.



THE HIRED ASSASSINS OF HERA SOON SET FOOT ON THE SHIP, CLIMBING DOWN ROPES FROM THEIR FLYING SHIELD.

WITHOUT A WORD THEY STARTED TO SCRUTINIZE THE MEN OF THE CREW ONE BY ONE.







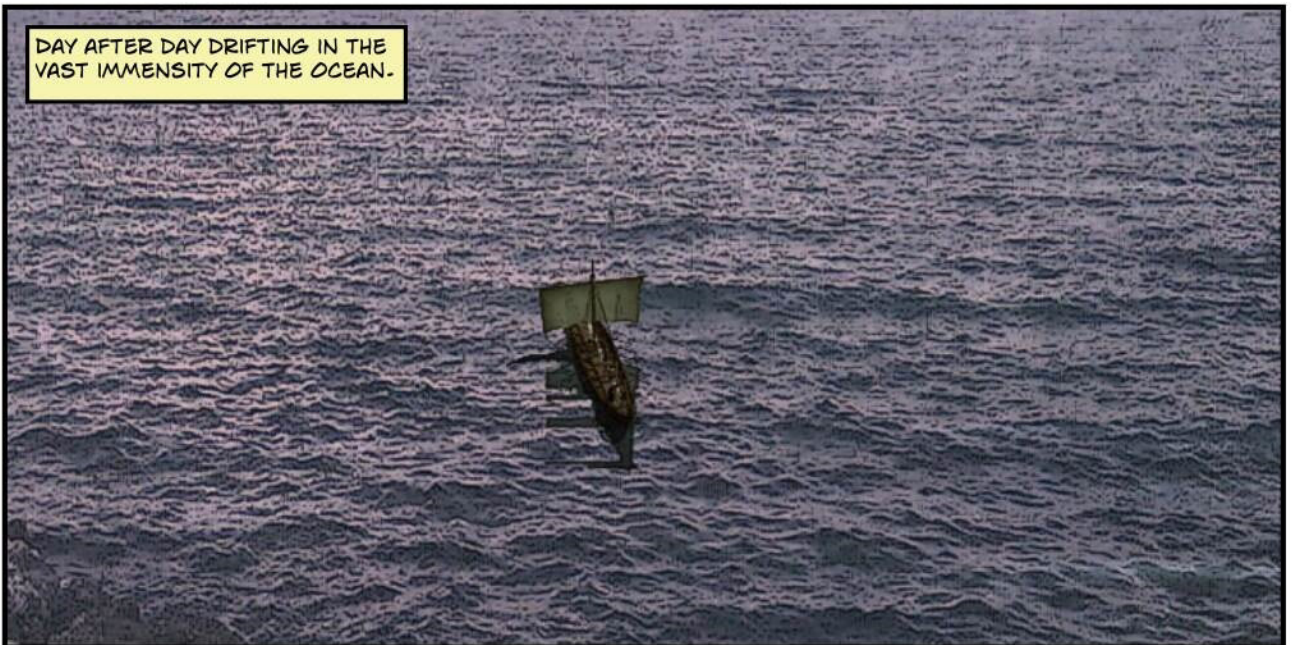
THEY LEFT AS SWIFTLY AS THEY ARRIVED, GOING ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE, THANKS TO THE QUICK THINKING OF HAMON.



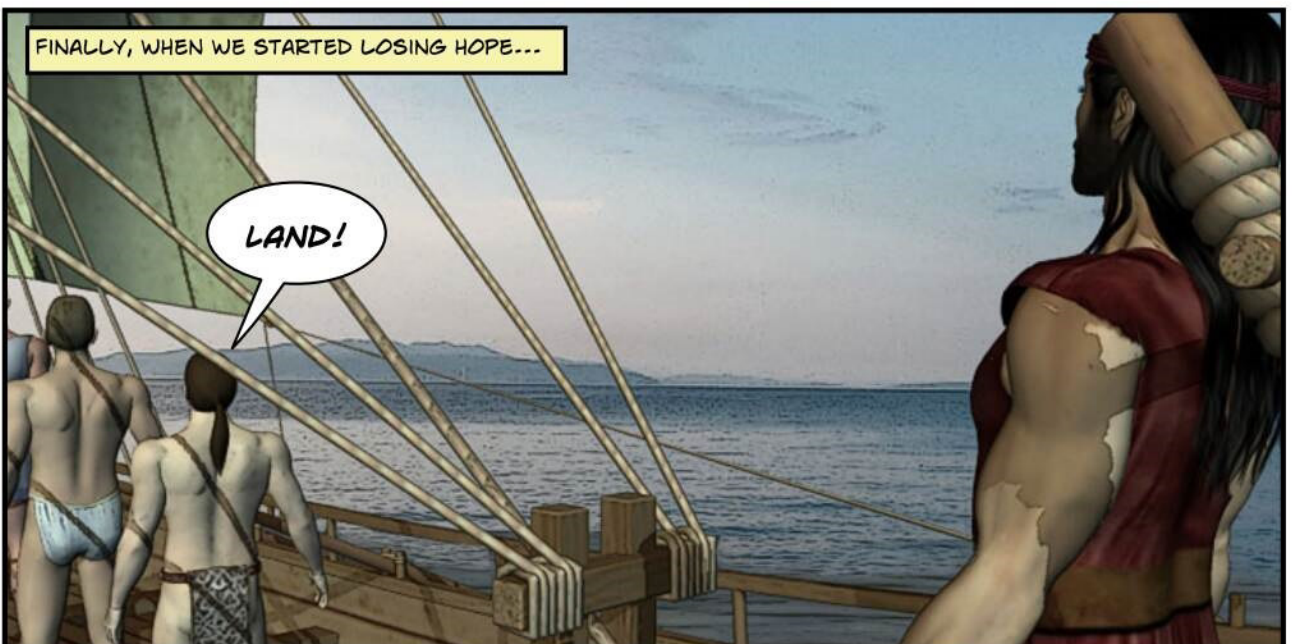
WE RESUMED OUR CROSSING
WITHOUT ANY FURTHER INCIDENTS.

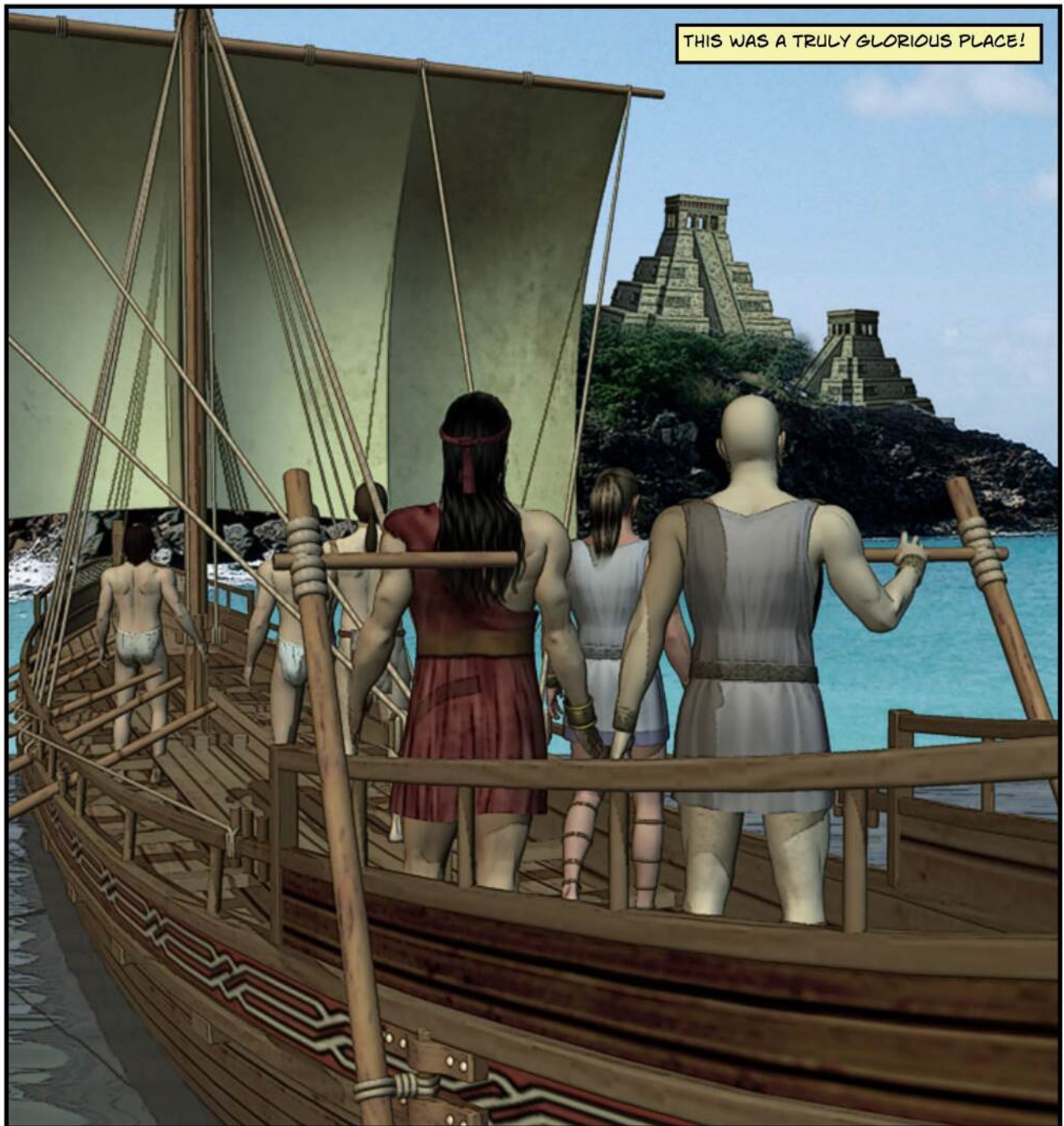


DAY AFTER DAY DRIFTING IN THE
VAST IMMENSITY OF THE OCEAN.



FINALLY, WHEN WE STARTED LOSING HOPE...





I LEFT THE CREW ON THE BEACH, NEAR A STREAM OF CLEAR WATER AND A GREAT VARIETY OF FRUIT BEARING TREES AND I HEADED TOWARDS THE NEAREST OF THE STEP PYRAMIDS.



IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO REALISE THAT THIS WAS A WONDERFUL AND PEACEFUL LOOKING PLACE.



I SOON CAME UPON A PLAIN WHERE A SMALL HERD OF STRANGE LOOKING BUFFALOES WAS GRAZING.



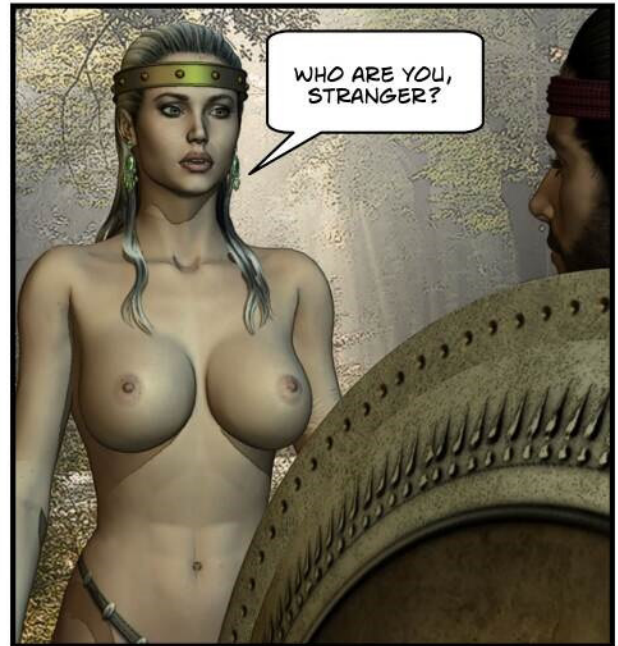
I WALKED AROUND THE PLAIN IN
ORDER NOT TO DISTURB THE BULLS.



I HAD THE UNEASY FEELING
OF BEING WATCHED.



SUDDENLY, ON A TURN OF THE PATH... AN
EXTRAORDINARY LOOKING YOUNG WOMAN.

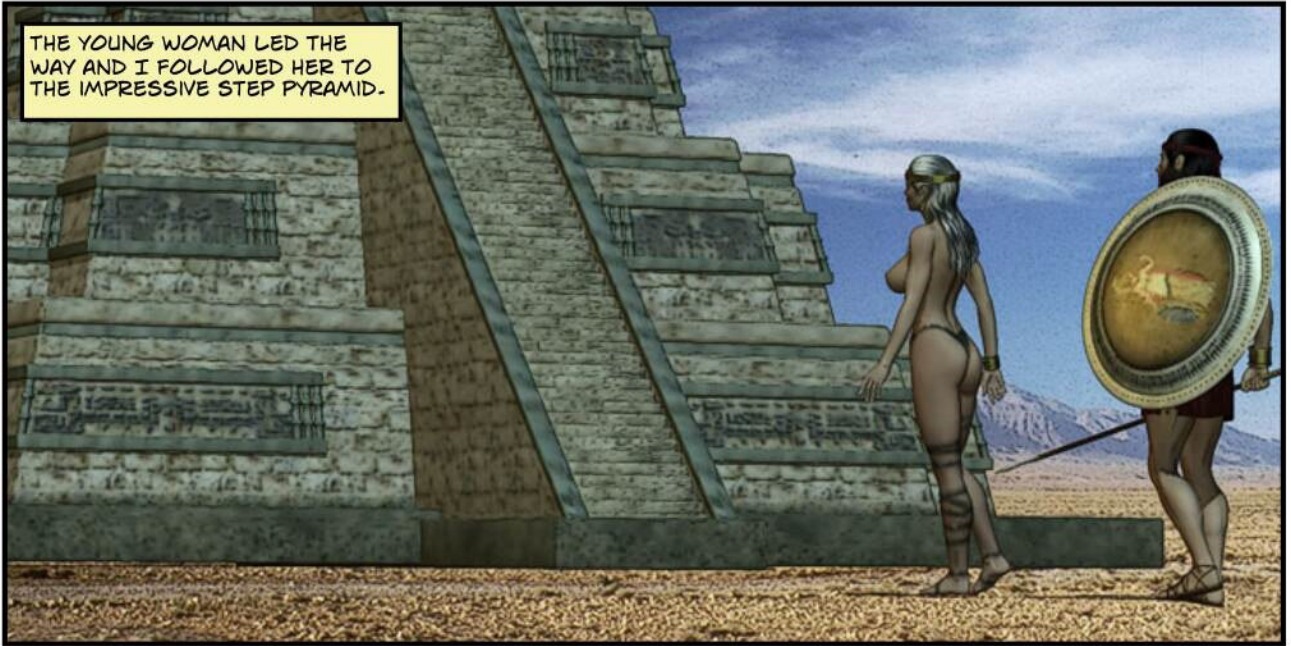


I REPLIED IN THE SAME TONGUE
-THE GODS' LANGUAGE.

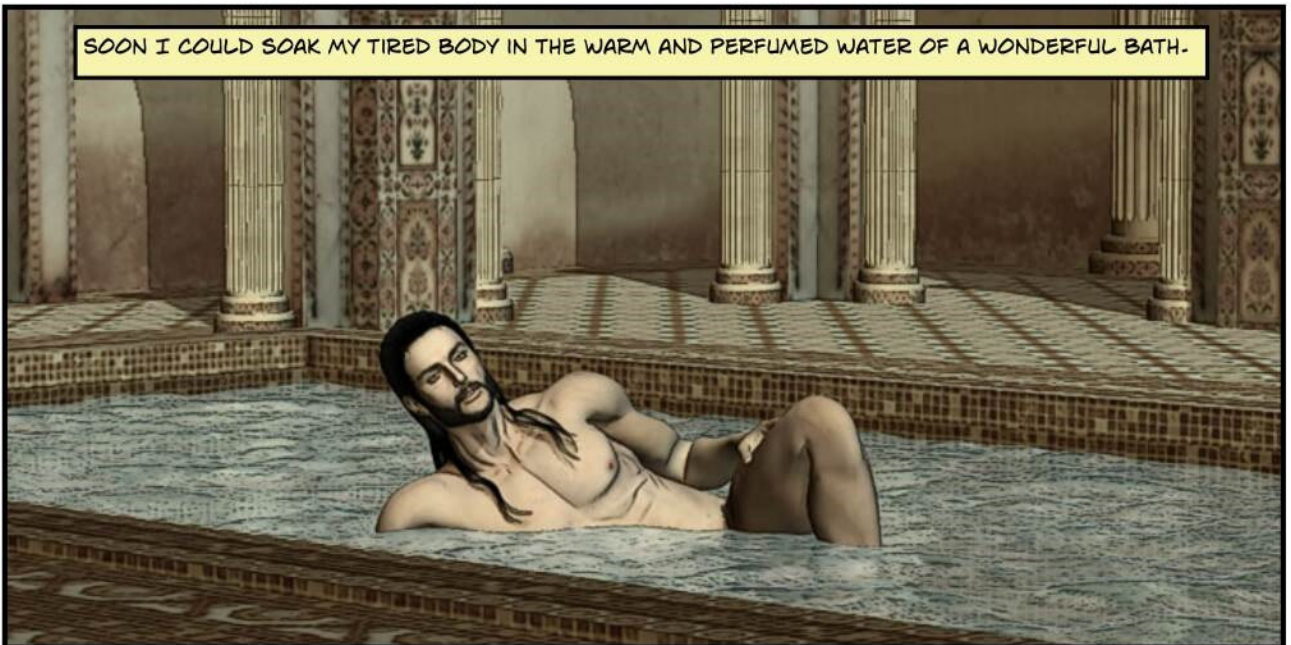




THE YOUNG WOMAN LED THE WAY AND I FOLLOWED HER TO THE IMPRESSIVE STEP PYRAMID.



SOON I COULD SOAK MY TIRED BODY IN THE WARM AND PERFUMED WATER OF A WONDERFUL BATH.



I DRIFTED INTO A DEEP SLEEP A FEW MINUTES LATER.



I WOKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT
AND FOUND MYSELF LYING ON A SOFT BED
-A LUXURY, AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME.



SILVER MOONLIGHT BATHED THE ROOM EERILY AND
I JUST LAY THERE WATCHING THE SILVERY DISK
UNTIL I DRIFTED BACK INTO SLUMBER ONCE AGAIN.



IN THE MORNING, WELL RESTED AND REFRESHED, I WENT TO SEE PHAETHOUSSA.

DID YOU SLEEP WELL, ODYSSEUS?

LIKE I NEVER HAVE BEFORE.

YOU ARE SAFE HERE. COME. I'LL SHOW YOU THE ISLAND.

SHE TOOK ME UP TO THE TOP TERRACE OF THE PYRAMID.

THIS IS A TRULY WONDERFUL PLACE!

OVER THERE, ON THE WESTERN STATION LIVES MY SISTER LAMBETO.

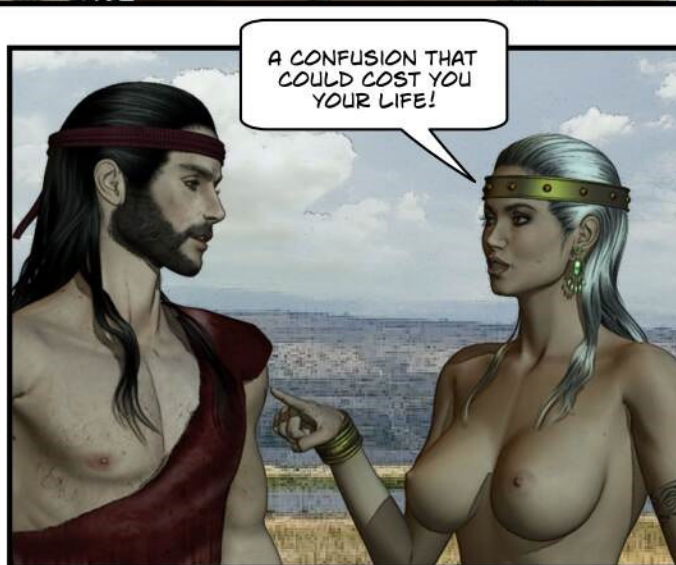
WE'LL PAY HER A VISIT SOON. SHE IS DYING TO HEAR YOUR STORY.



THE "OLD HAG" BEING THE QUEEN OF THE GODS I PRESUME?



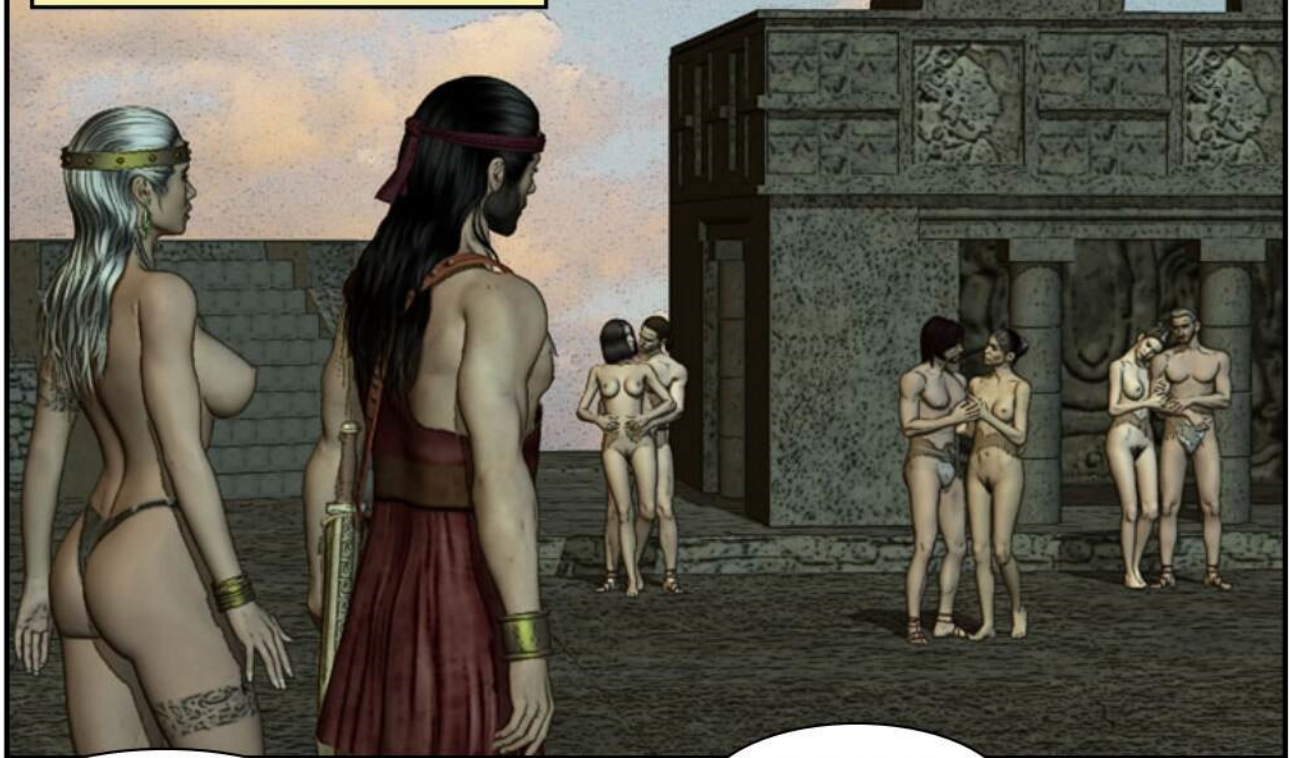
WELL, SHE ISN'T AN OLD HAG. RATHER A GREATLY MISUNDERSTOOD LONELY WOMAN.







PHAETHOUSSA TOOK ME DOWN TO THE VILLAGE OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE, WHERE SHE HAD SETTLED THE CREW AND I COULD SEE FOR MYSELF HOW WELL THEY FARED.



HEY, ODYSSEUS! ARE THESE THE ELYSIAN FIELDS?



I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I DON'T INTEND TO MOVE MY ARSE FROM HERE.

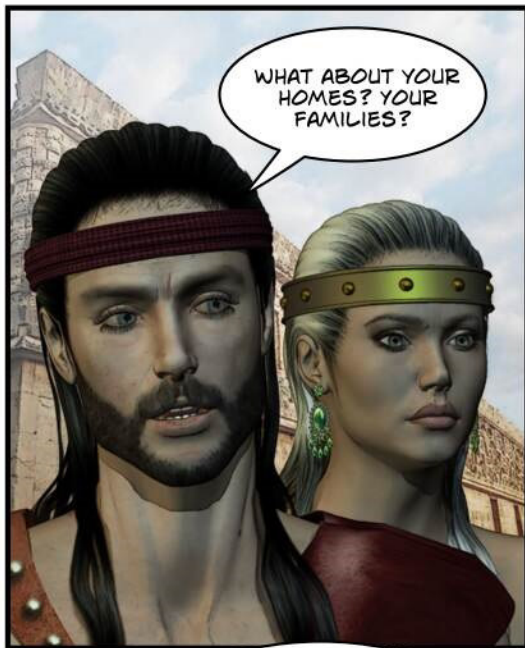


SAME GOES FOR ME. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.



THEY ARE RIGHT, ODYSSEUS. WHY DON'T WE SETTLE IN HERE?





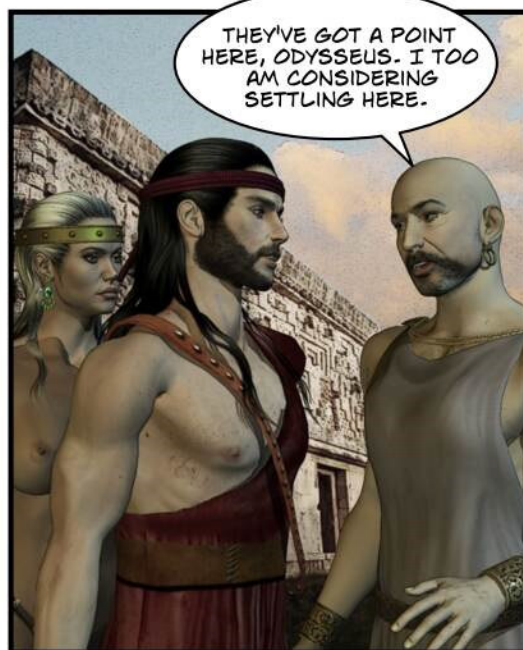
WHAT ABOUT YOUR HOMES? YOUR FAMILIES?



BAH! GOING BACK TO THIS OLD HAG, MY WIFE, WHO'S GOING TO TURN MY LIFE INTO LIVING HELL? NO, THANKS.



HERE WE COULD LIVE LIKE KINGS! BACK IN ITHACA WE'LL BE WHAT? SHEPHERDS?



THEY'VE GOT A POINT HERE, ODYSSEUS. I TOO AM CONSIDERING SETTLING HERE.



WELL... THIS IS NOT ENTIRELY UP TO ME TO DECIDE... PHAETHOUSSA?...



NO PROBLEM, ODYSSEUS. YOU CAN STAY IF YOU SO WISH.

AND SO THIS WAS THE END OF THE ROAD FOR MY COMPANIONS. ONE WEIGHT OFF MY SHOULDERS.

AND YOU, ODYSSEUS? AREN'T YOU CONSIDERING SETTLING DOWN AT LAST?



I WOULD LOVE TO, PHAETHOUSSA, HOWEVER, I'M AFRAID IT'S NOT UP TO ME.

YOU'LL BE MOST WELCOME, YOU KNOW.



THANK YOU, BUT I WAS THINKING OF A "HIGHER POWER" THAT IS AT WORK.

HERA AND HER ASSASSINS.



YES. THEY WON'T GIVE UP.

THEY WON'T DARE TO BREAK THE RULES, BELIEVE ME.



I DIDN'T WANT TO CONTRADICT HER, BUT SOMETHING TOLD ME THAT THIS WASN'T THE END OF MY TRIBULATIONS. THAT EVENING WE DINED TOGETHER.



AND AFTERWARD WE SHARED THE SAME BED.





LAMBETO OFFERED US A WONDERFUL DINNER AND THEN THE TWO GIRLS ASKED ME TO TELL THEM MY STORY.



WE STAYED TALKING UNTIL LATE....



AND THEN WE SPENT THE REST OF THE NIGHT TOGETHER..



FROM
ODYSSEUS'
NOTEBOOK



I HAVE ALREADY REFERRED A NUMBER OF TIMES TO THE INVENTIVENESS OF THE BARDS AND POETS WHO TAKE A SIMPLE EVENT AND TURN IT INTO A FANTASTIC STORY, WHICH CHALLENGES HUMAN LOGIC AND SETS THE BASE FRAME FOR THE CREATION OF MYTH. THE CASE OF MY ADVENTURES ON THE ISLAND OF HELIOS FALLS INTO THIS CATEGORY.

THERE WAS TALK OF MY COMPANIONS SLAYING THE SACRED BULLS OF THE GOD -- SOME EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO SUGGEST THE RAPING OF THE HERDSWOMEN-- ACTS THAT TRIGGERED THE WRATH OF THE GOD WHO PUNISHED US BY SINKING OUR SHIP AND DROWNING ALL BUT ME. NOTHING IS FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

THE ISLAND IS AN ADVANCED POST OF THE DOMAIN OF HELIOS, WHICH THE "GODS" REFER TO AS "AREA 3". IT CONTAINS TWO CONTROL STATIONS MANNED BY PHAETHOUSSA AND LAMBETO, MUCH LIKE THE ONE WHERE SCYLLA AND CHARYBDE ARE STATIONED.

AS FOR THE "SACRED BULLS" THESE ARE HERDS OF SEMI-WILD BISONS WHICH GRAZE FREELY AND WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO HUNT. NO SAILOR OF MINE EVER TRIED TO SLAY ONE OF THESE ANIMALS. THERE WAS NO SUCH NEED ANYWAY FOR THEY WERE VERY WELL PROVIDED BY OUR GRACIOUS HOSTS.



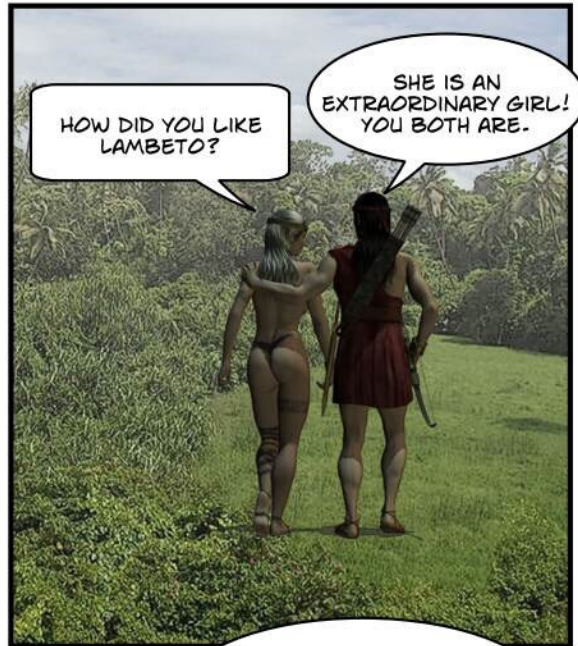
THE NEXT MORNING, PHAETHOUSSA AND I STARTED ON OUR WAY BACK TO THE EASTERN STATION.

I SHALL COME TO VISIT YOU SOON.



HOW DID YOU LIKE LAMBETO?

SHE IS AN EXTRAORDINARY GIRL! YOU BOTH ARE.



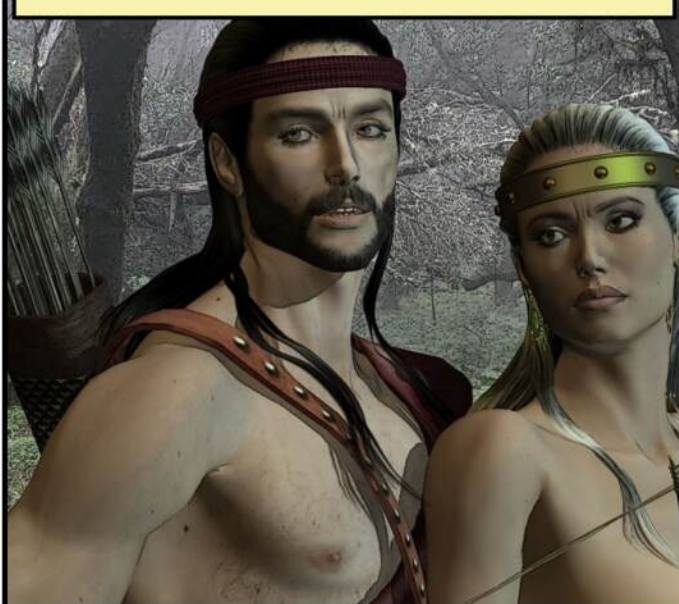
WILL YOU CONSIDER STAYING ON THEN? WOULDN'T IT BE WONDERFUL TO LIVE TOGETHER, THE THREE OF US?



MORE THAN WONDERFUL, MY BEAUTY. IT WOULD BE A DREAM-LIKE SITUATION.



SUDDENLY MY EARS CAUGHT SOME UNUSUAL WHISPERING COMING FROM SOMEWHERE AHEAD OF US.



SHUSH! HIDE! QUICKLY!

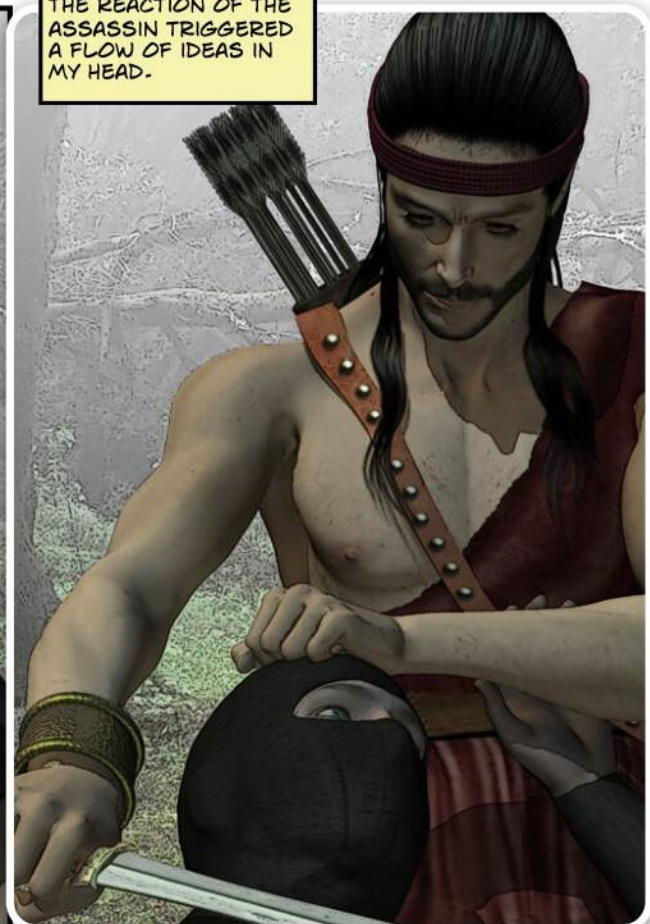


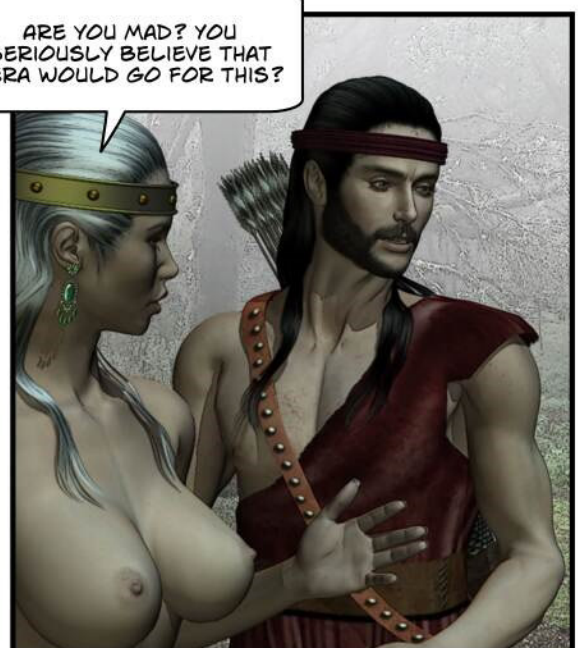


BEFORE THE THIRD ASSASSIN HAD TIME TO RECOVER FROM THE SHOCK I WAS UPON HIM WITH MY SWORD AT HIS THROAT.



THE REACTION OF THE ASSASSIN TRIGGERED A FLOW OF IDEAS IN MY HEAD.







IT DEPENDS ON HOW DESPERATE SHE IS TO CLOSE THIS AFFAIR.

BUT... IT'S HOPELESS!



I'M TIRED OF RUNNING, PHAETHOUSSA. ONE WAY OR ANOTHER THIS HAS TO COME TO AN END.



YOU THINK SHE WILL COME?



OH, YES, SHE WILL COME. CAN YOU ARRANGE FOR A SAFE PASSAGE FOR HER?



YES, BUT STILL I CAN'T SEE HOW YOU INTEND TO HANDLE THIS.

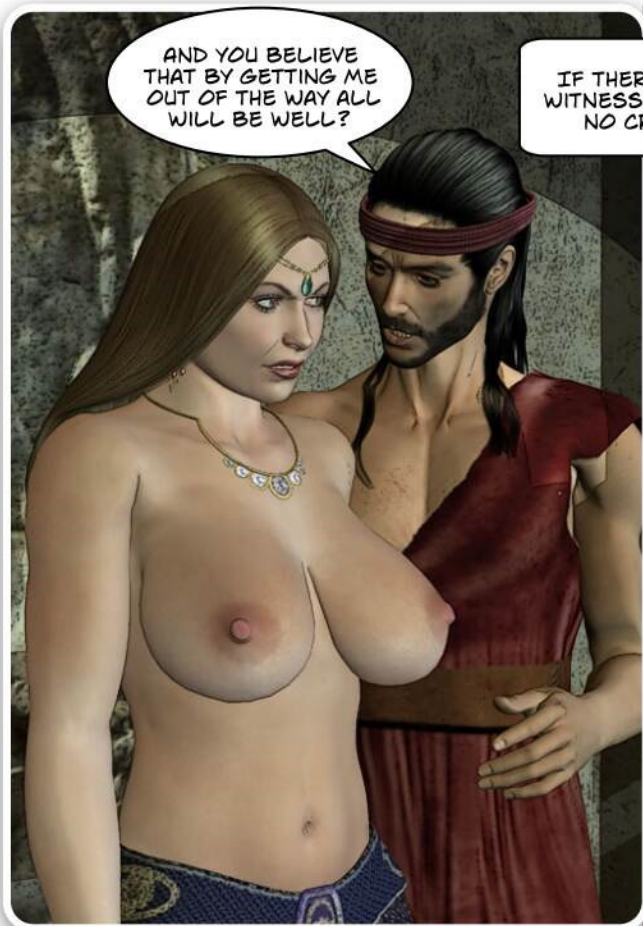


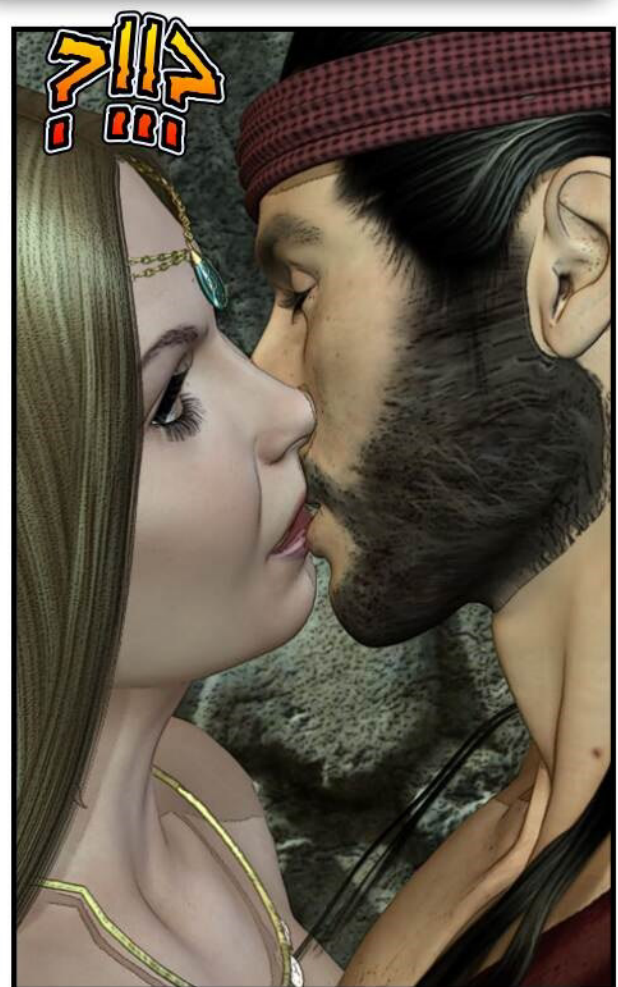
TO BE HONEST, NEITHER DO I.











I FELT HER ENTIRE BODY TENSING.



AND THEN...



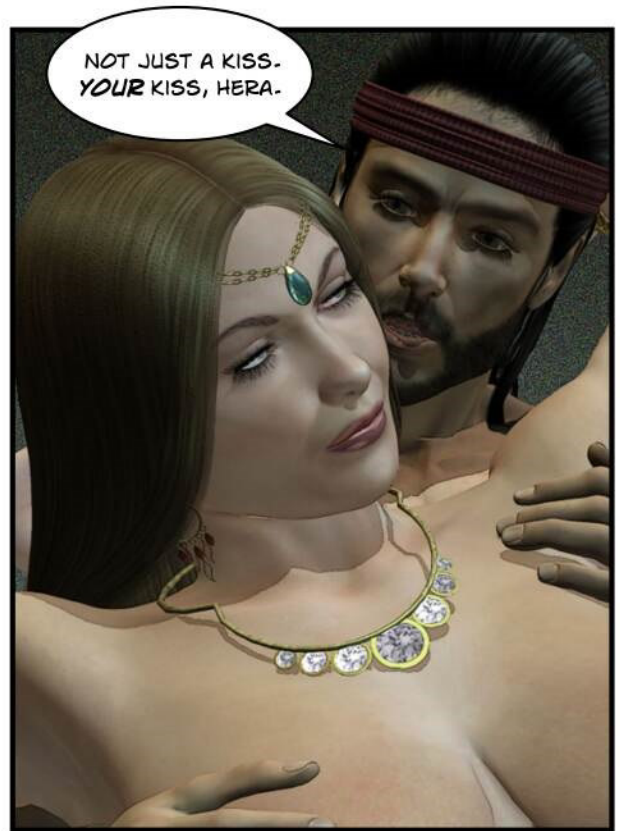
BECAUSE THIS ONE BROUGHT ME SO CLOSE TO DEATH.



IT WAS A KISS LIKE NO OTHER KISS I'VE TASTED.







WE SPENT THAT NIGHT AT THE TEMPLE AND IT WAS LIKE RELIVING A DREAM.



AS DAYLIGHT STARTED TO BREAK ON THE EAST...

YOU ARE THE FIRST
AND ONLY HUMAN
LOVER I EVER HAD
YOU KNOW.

AND YET YOU WANT
ME DEAD.

DON'T BE STUPID.
HOW COULD I? HOW
COULD I NOW?

THEN HOW ARE YOU
GOING TO DEAL WITH
YOUR LITTLE CONJUGAL
PROBLEM?

I'LL STRIKE A DEAL
WITH HIM. HE CAN DO
AS HE PLEASES IF
I'M ALLOWED THE
SAME LIBERTIES.

WOULD HE ACCEPT
YOU THINK?

OH, YES. HE WILL. YOU
CAN BET HE WILL.



PHAETHOUSSA COULDN'T BELIEVE HER EYES WHEN SHE SAW ME COMING BACK ALIVE.

IS IT REALLY YOU OR
SOME KIND OF A GHOST?



WHAT KIND OF A MAN
ARE YOU, TO SO
EASILY CHANGE THE
MIND OF THE GODS?!!!



AND SO LIFE RESUMED ON THIS PLEASANT
ISLAND WITH PHAETHOUSSA AND LAMBETO
MAKING MY DAYS WONDERFUL...



...AND THE NIGHTS SO PLEASANT.



UNTIL ONE NIGHT WHEN I WAS
SLEEPING ALONE AS THE GIRLS
HAD GONE OVER TO THE MAINLAND
ON SOME SERVICE BUSINESS.

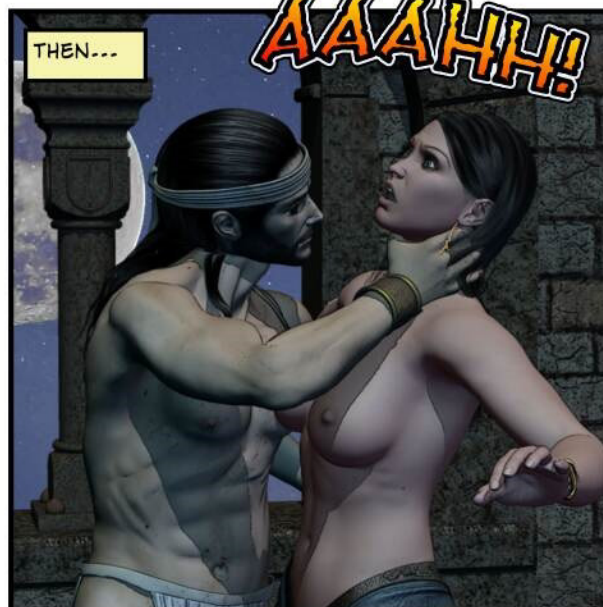


I PRETENDED
TO BE ASLEEP.

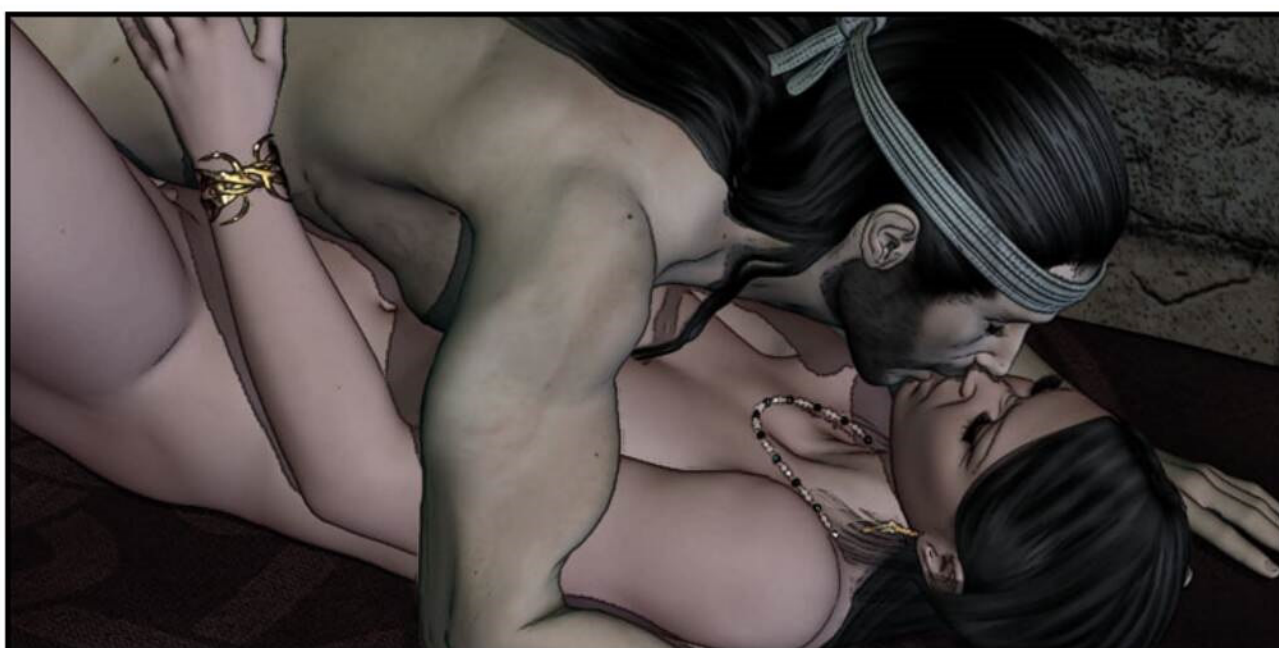


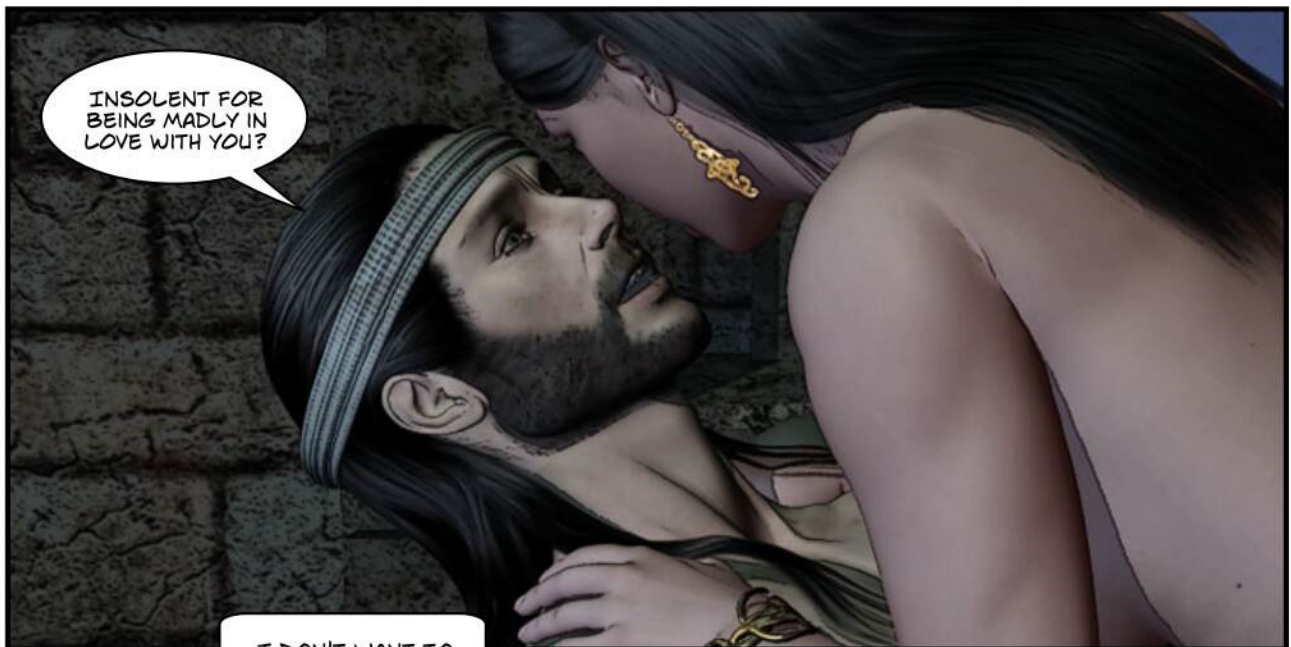
THEN...

AAAAHHH!!













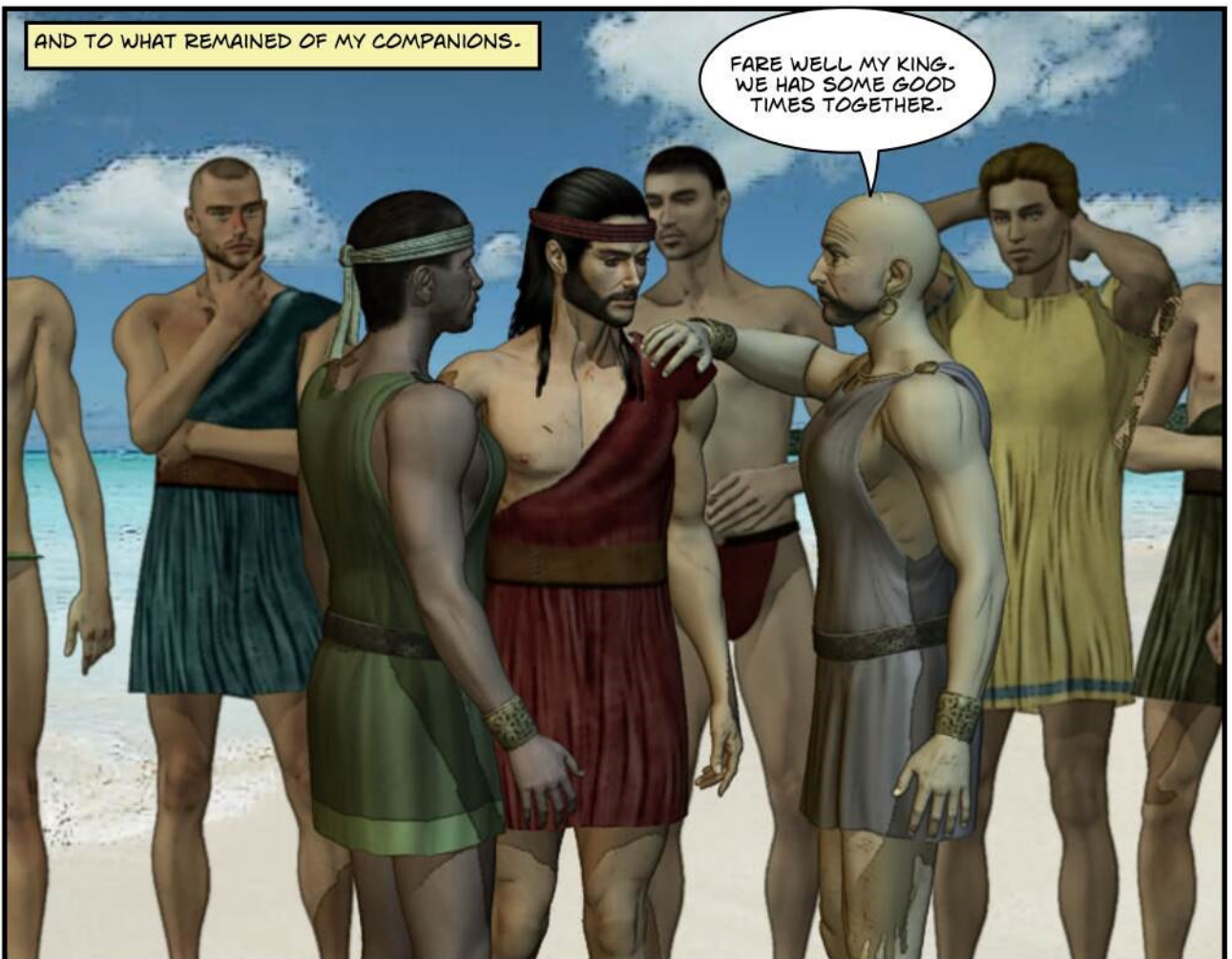


I BID GOODBYE TO MY GRACIOUS HOSTESSES.



AND TO WHAT REMAINED OF MY COMPANIONS.

FARE WELL MY KING.
WE HAD SOME GOOD
TIMES TOGETHER.



TWO DAYS LATER I LEFT THE PEACEFUL ISLAND OF HELIOS, PHAETHOUSSA, LAMBETO AND MY COMPANIONS, HEADING NORTH, TOWARDS THE MYSTERIOUS OGYGIA, ABODE OF THE "STRANGE" NYMPH CALYPSO.





