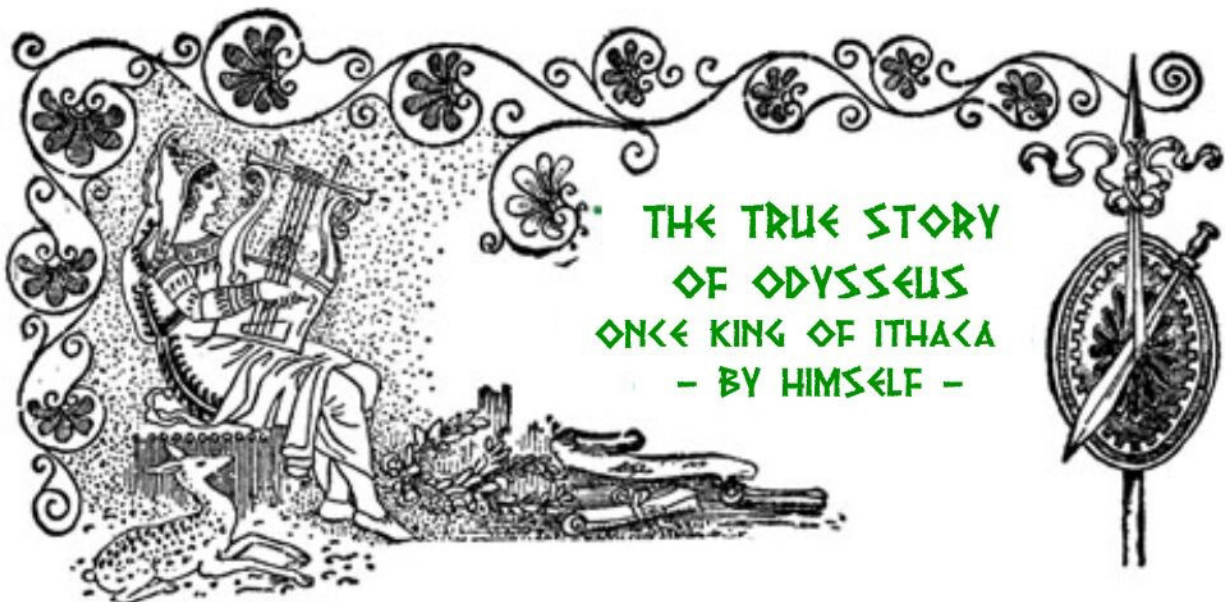


THE TRUE STORY OF ODYSSEUS, ONCE KING OF ITHACA
- BY HIMSELF -

----- BOOK 12 -----
ON THE ISLAND OF THE PHACACIANS







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
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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 PHAEACIANS
BOOK 13	THE RETURN TO ITHACA
BOOK 14	HELEN

SCRIPT AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY PANKO



MIDNIGHT PUBLISHING

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ΑΓΧΟΥ ΚΥΚΛΩΠΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΩΝ ΥΠΕΡΗΝΟΡΕΟΝΤΩΝ,
ΟΙ ΣΦΕΑΣ ΣΙΝΕΣΚΟΝΤΟ, ΒΙΗΦΙ ΔΕ ΦΕΡΤΕΡΟΙ ΗΣΑΝ.
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ΕΙΣΕΝ ΔΕ ΣΧΕΡΙΗ, ΕΚΑΣ ΑΝΔΡΩΝ ΑΛΦΗΣΤΑΩΝ.

Homer, "The Odyssey", vi 4-8

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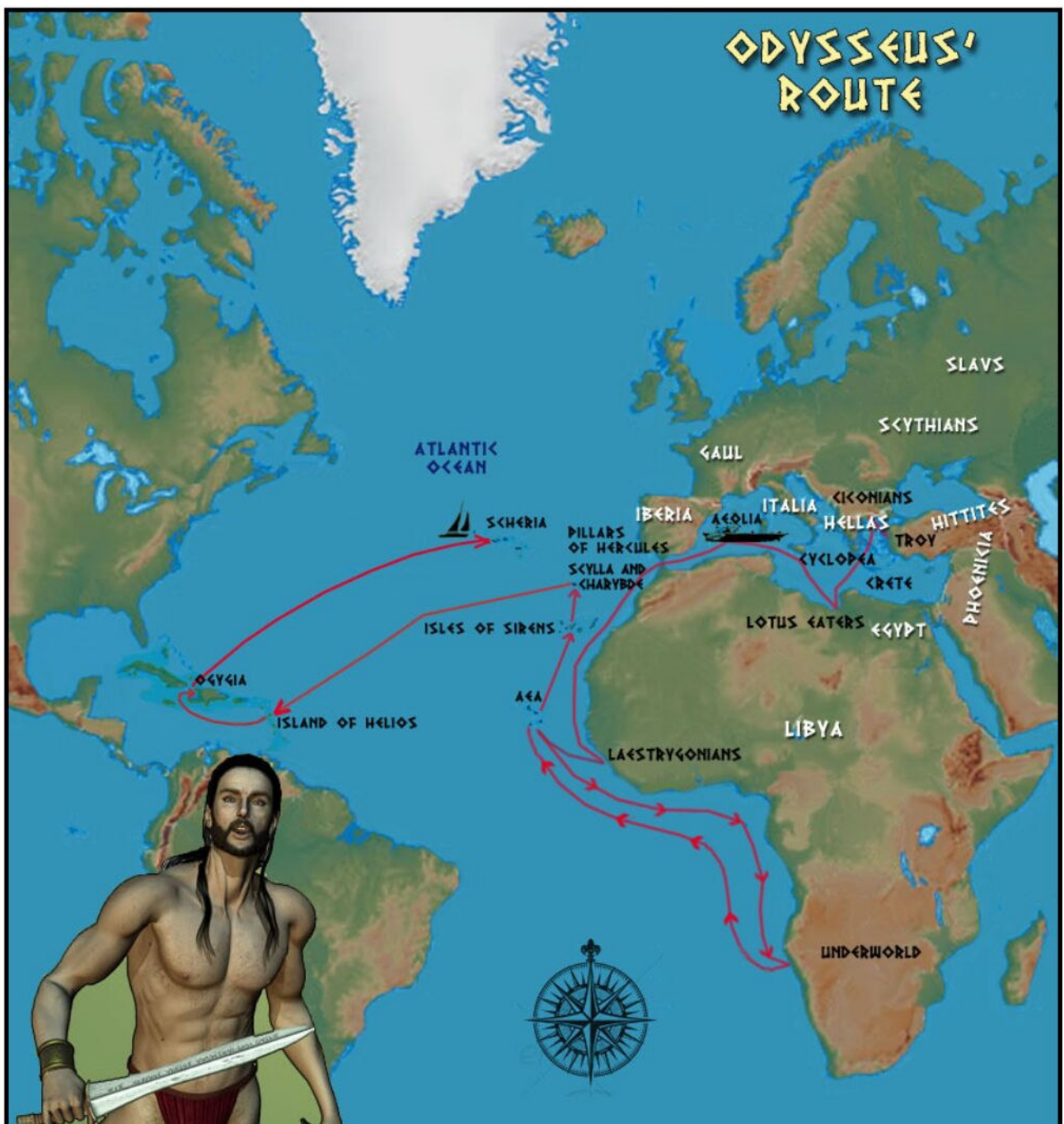
BOOK 12

ON THE ISLAND OF THE PHAEGACIANS

IT WAS WITH GREAT RELIEF THAT I LEFT THE GRIM ISLAND OF CALYPSO WITH ITS DARK RITES AND SECRETS. BARDS IN LATER YEARS HAD WOVEN A SUGAR AND SPICE LOVE STORY OUT OF THAT, MOST STRANGE EPISODE IN MY LIFE. YET IT HAS BEEN ANYTHING BUT THAT.

THE TERRORS I'D BEEN THROUGH IN OGYGIA HAD STOLEN A GOOD PART OF MY SOUL, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND THEY HAD OPENED MY EYES, AS THEY'D HELPED ME GAIN A LARGER PERSPECTIVE IN MY VIEW AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRANGE WORLD OF THE "GODS".

ON THE PHYSICAL ASPECT I ALSO DETECTED A GREAT CHANGE IN MY PERSON. IT WAS TO DO WITH THE WEIRD TREATMENT I HAD RECEIVED AT THE HANDS OF CALYPSO AND HER GHOULISH ASSOCIATES. I NOW FELT STRONGER, HEALTHIER AND WITH A MIND CLEARER THAN I WOULD EVER HAVE BELIEVED POSSIBLE. WAS I ON MY WAY TO BECOMING "IMMORTAL"?





AT NIGHT I WOULD STARE AT THE IMMENSITY
OF THE VELVET SKY AND THERE I COULD SEE,
LIKE BRIGHT OR FADING STARS, THE FACES OF
MY LOVERS APPEARING.



IT WAS AROUND SUNSET ONE DAY THAT I HAD MY FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE ISLAND OF THE PHAEACIANS.



SCHERIA!



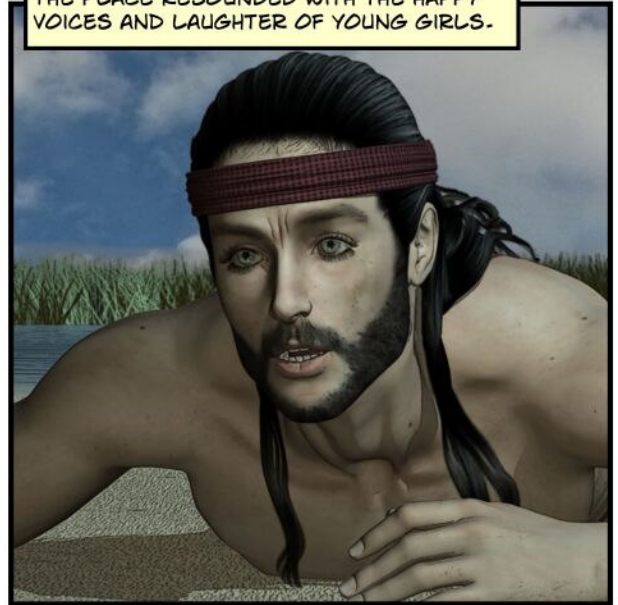
I DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO SECURE THE BOAT WHEN I REACHED THE PROTECTED WESTERN BAY OF THE ISLAND. I JUST FELL UPON THE WARM SAND AND WENT TO SLEEP, HAPPY TO FEEL SOLID GROUND, ONCE AGAIN, UNDER MY BATTERED BODY.



WHEN I OPENED MY EYES AGAIN
IT WAS BROAD DAYLIGHT.

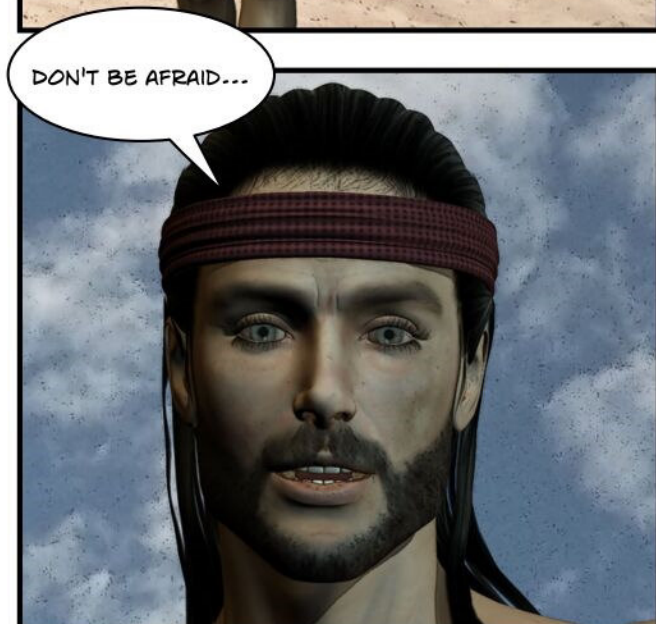
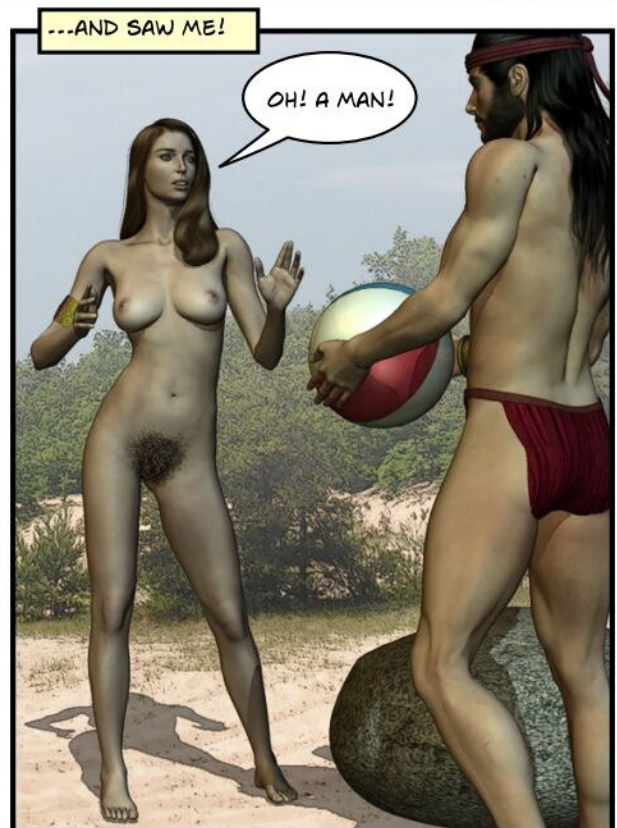
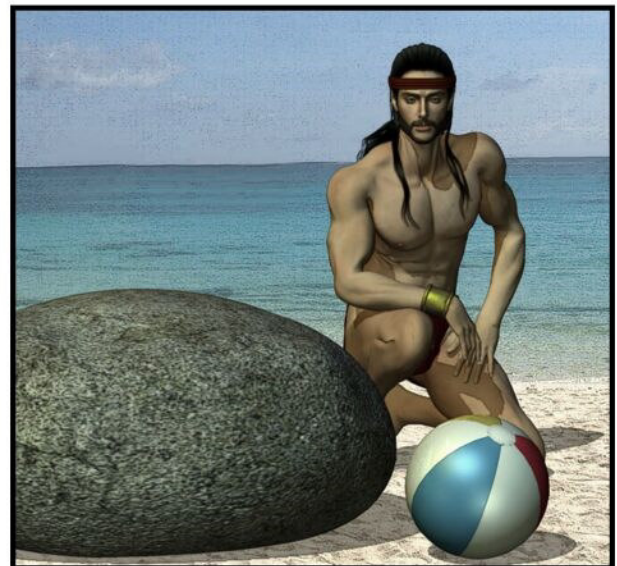


THE PLACE RESOUNDED WITH THE HAPPY
VOICES AND LAUGHTER OF YOUNG GIRLS.



THIS WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
PICTURE MY EYES HAD SEEN IN A
VERY LONG TIME.









AND SO I DID. OMITTING OF COURSE THE PASSAGES THAT WOULD BE TOO GRAPHIC IN NATURE FOR SUCH A YOUNG GIRL.



SHE WAS VERY IMPRESSED.

WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

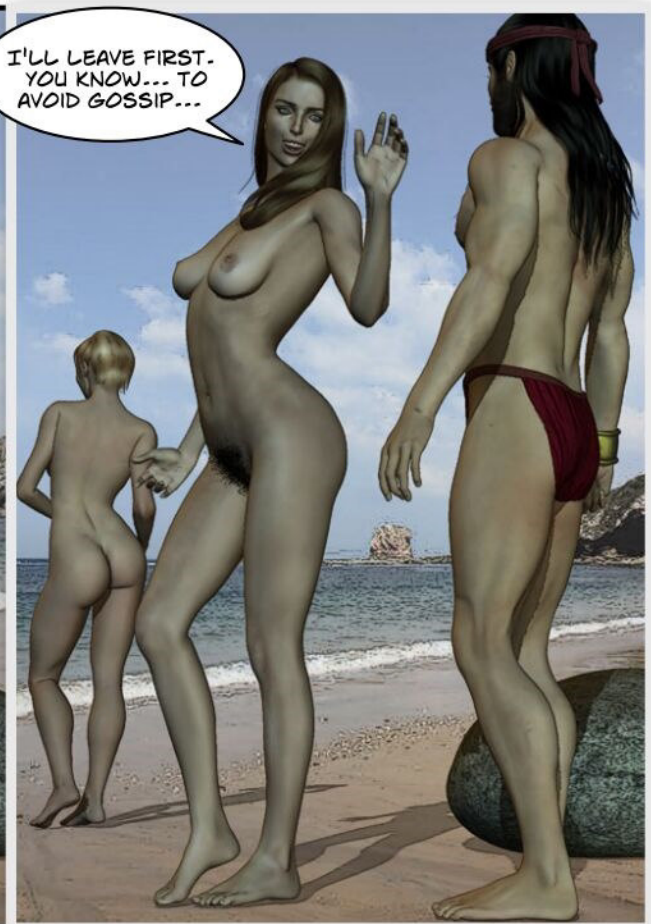


BUT YOU ARE SAFE NOW, IN SCHERIA.



I'M NAUSICAA, THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING.







THE CAPITAL CITY OF SCHERIA EMERGED AS IF
OUT OF A DREAM! STRANGE AND MAGNIFICENT!

THE KING AND QUEEN, ALREADY ALERTED BY THEIR DAUGHTER, RECEIVED ME WITH UNPRETENTIOUS CORDIALITY.



SO, I SAT WITH THEM AND OVER A CUP OF WINE, ONCE MORE, I GAVE THEM A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MY TRIBULATIONS.



THE GOOD, OLD KING SEEMED TO BE DESPERATELY BORED.



HIS QUEEN HOWEVER WAS VERY INTERESTED.



AND THUS, AFTER I HAD BATHED AND RESTED, I WAS ASKED TO SIT AT A RICH BANQUET THE KING GAVE IN MY HONOUR.



I WAS SEATED BETWEEN NAUSICAA AND HER MOTHER, BOTH LOOKING RESPLENDENT.



LATER, DEMODOCUS, THE BARD, STARTED TO SING A TOTALLY FICTIONALISED AND OVERLY DRAMATISED ACCOUNT OF THE TROJAN WAR --IN MY HONOUR I PRESUME.



I REALISED THAT THE LADIES ON MY RIGHT AND LEFT WERE VERY EXCITED.



LEAVE THE DOOR OF
YOUR ROOM UNLOCKED
TONIGHT.



ACROSS THE TABLE, EURYALUS, NAUSICAA'S YOUNGER BROTHER, DIDN'T MISS ANYTHING.



THE WAR IN TROY ENDED SOME 10 YEARS AGO.



SO... IT TOOK YOU A HELL OF A LONG TIME, ODYSSEUS, TO RETURN HOME.



THE HAZARDS OF LIFE HAVE DECIDED SO, MY PRINCE.



DON'T YOU HAVE A FAMILY WAITING FOR YOUR RETURN, ODYSSEUS?

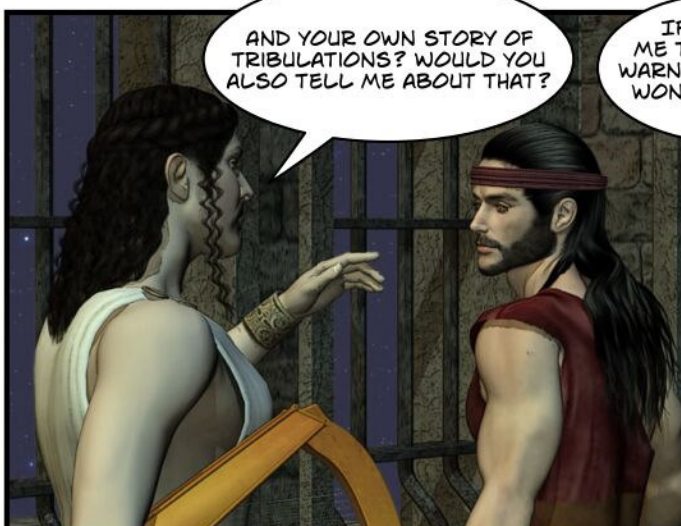


EURYALUS, YOU ARE BEING RUDE.

SORRY MOTHER... I WAS JUST WONDERING...



LATER DEMODOCUS TOOK ME ASIDE.



LATER THAT NIGHT NAUSICAA CAME INTO MY ROOM.



WITHOUT HESITATION
SHE SLID INTO MY BED.

DON'T YOU THINK
THAT THIS IS RATHER
INAPPROPRIATE?

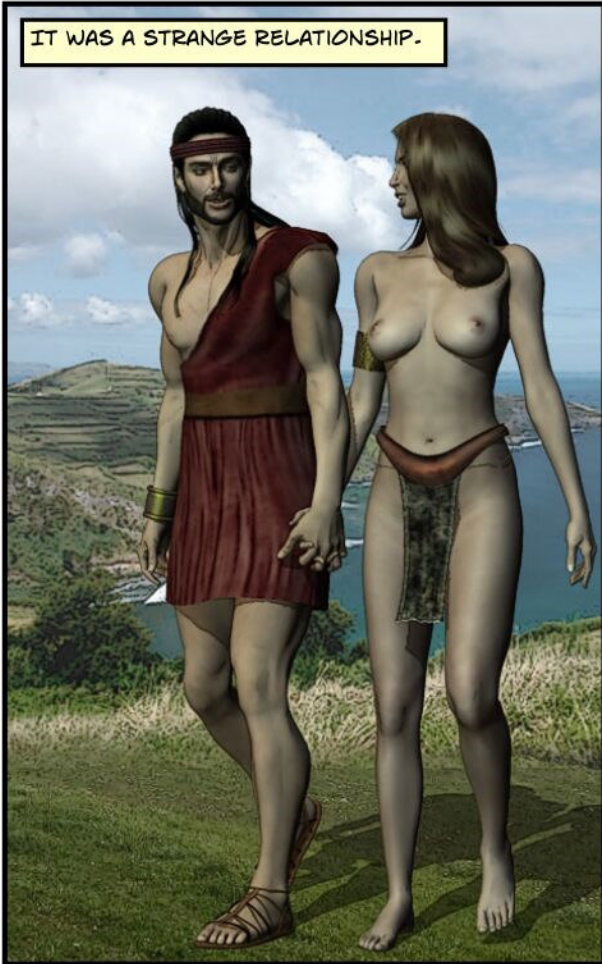


NOT AT ALL. IT IS
OUR CUSTOM TO TREAT
OUR GUESTS WITH
CONSIDERATION.

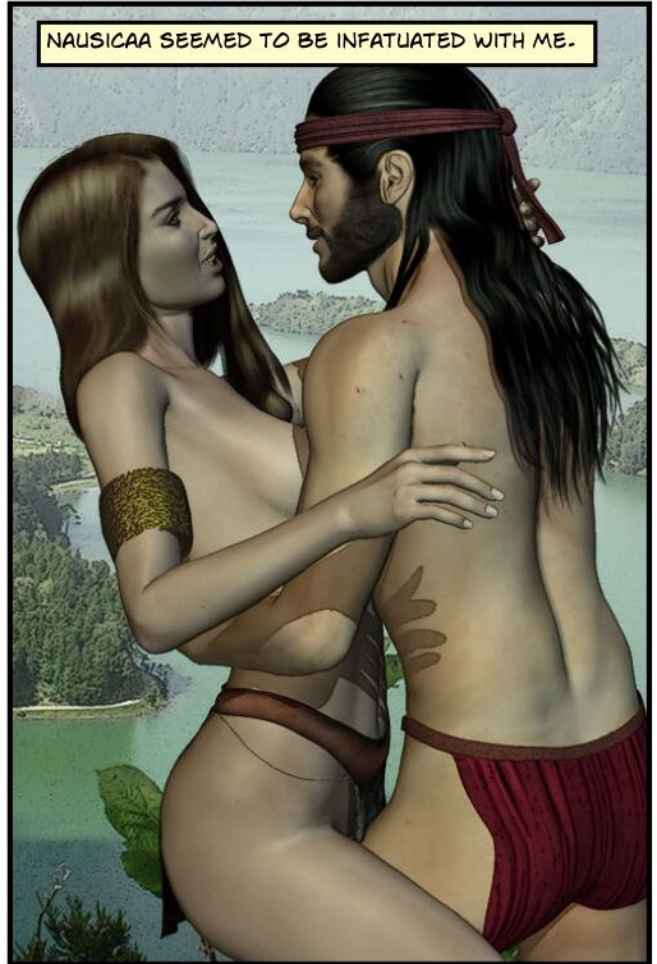




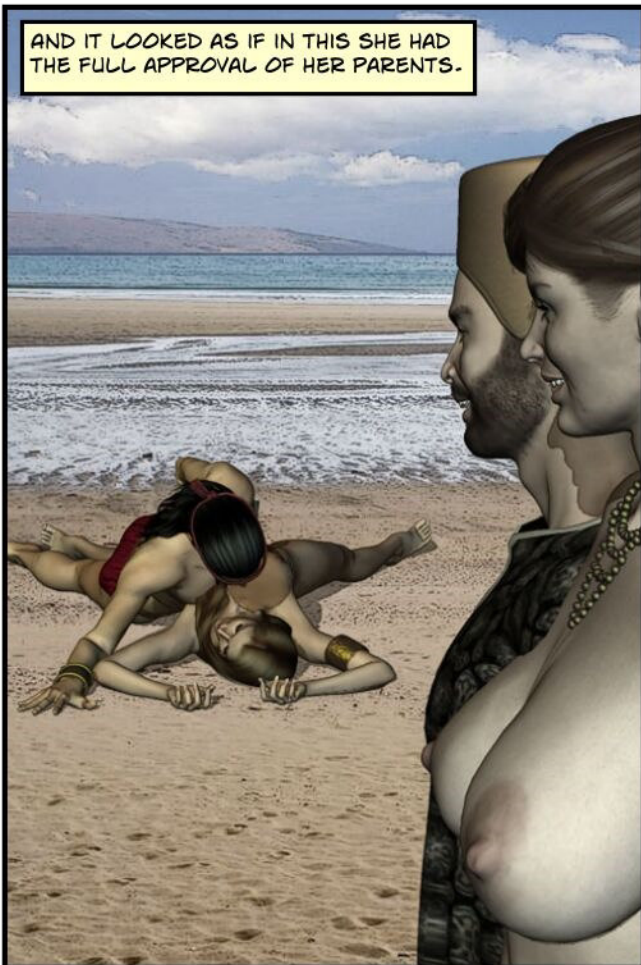
IT WAS A STRANGE RELATIONSHIP.



NAUSICAA SEEMED TO BE INFATUATED WITH ME.



AND IT LOOKED AS IF IN THIS SHE HAD THE FULL APPROVAL OF HER PARENTS.



IT WAS AN IDEAL SITUATION IF A SOMEWHAT AWKWARD ONE FOR ME.



AWKWARD FOR I COULD NOT DISREGARD THE VAST AGE GAP BETWEEN US. IT WAS TRUE THAT NAUSICAA SEEMED INCREDIBLY MATURE FOR A GIRL OF HER AGE, YET TECHNICALLY SHE WAS STILL A CHILD!



ALSO THERE WAS AT LEAST ONE IN HER ENTOURAGE WHO DIDN'T MAKE A SECRET OF HIS OBJECTION TO OUR RELATIONSHIP.



WHEN I QUESTIONED NAUSICAA SHE PROTESTED.

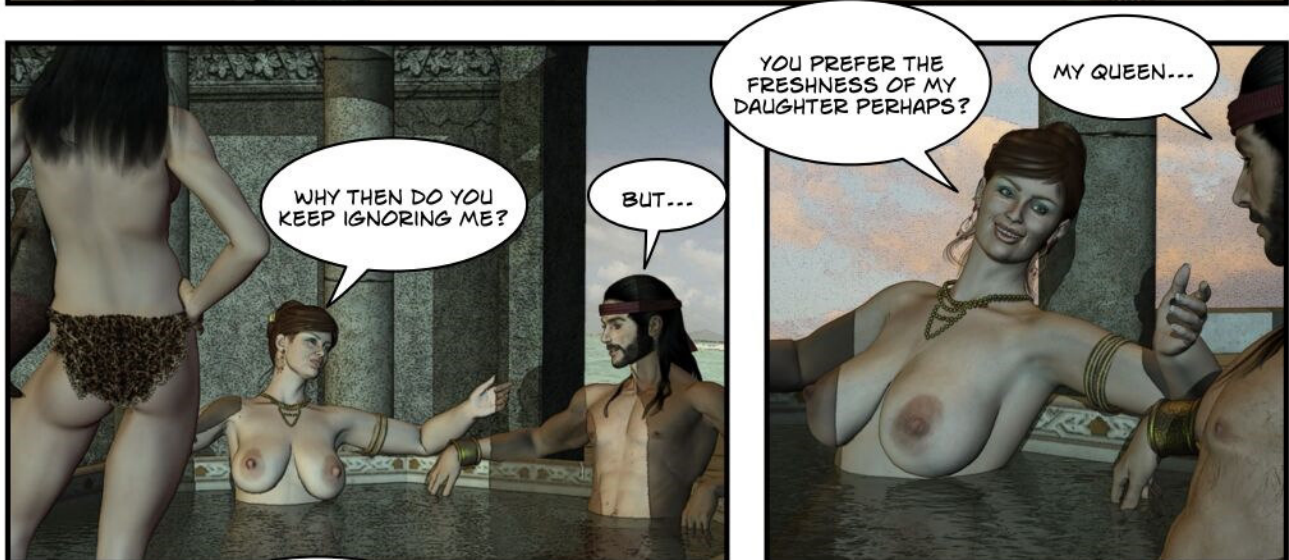
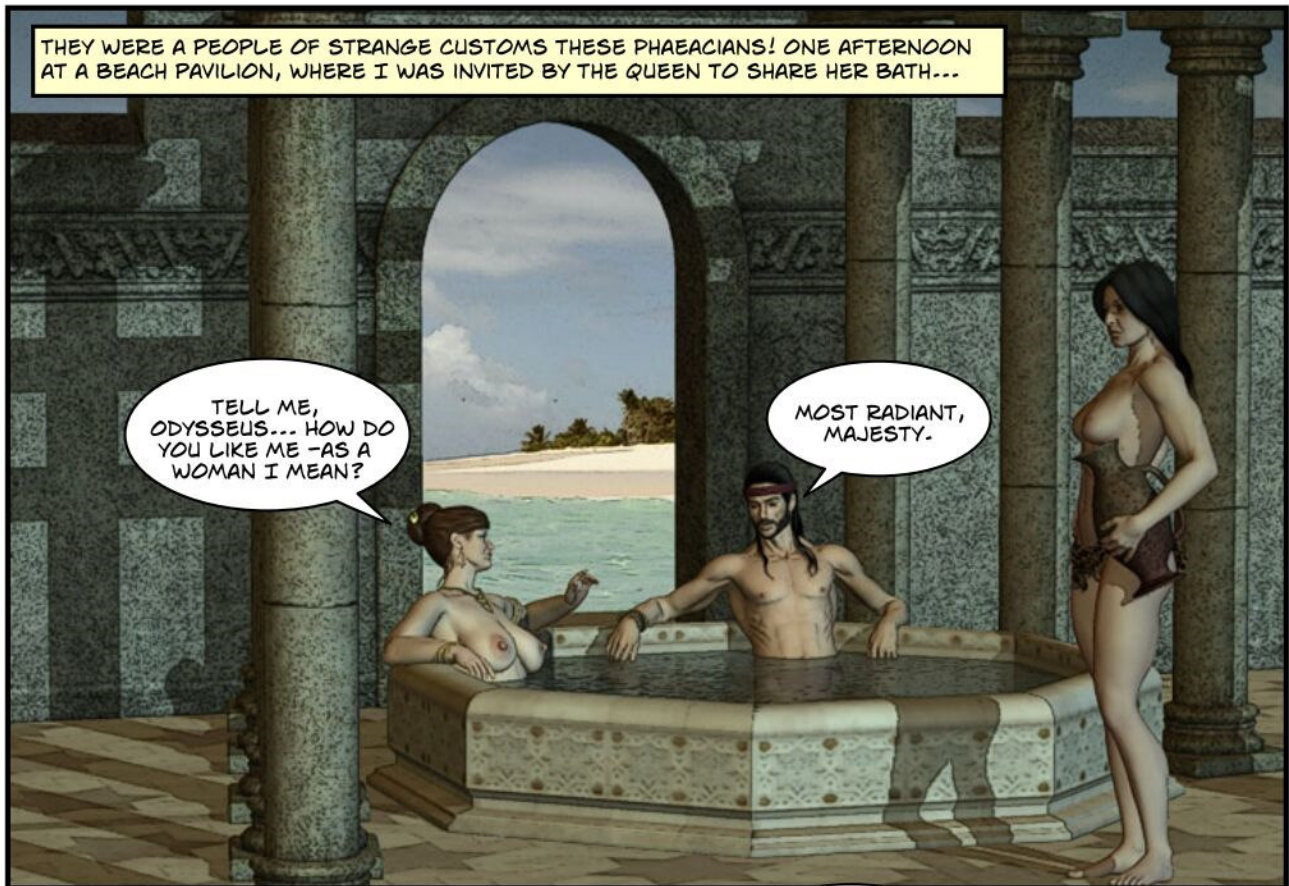
YES, MY BROTHER
AND I HAVE BEEN
LOVERS, BUT IT IS
OVER NOW.

THERE WILL
NEVER BE A PLACE
IN MY HEART FOR
ANYONE BUT YOU,
ODYSSEUS.

NONSENSE. YOU WILL
SOON SEE THINGS
DIFFERENTLY.

NEVER! I KNOW THAT
YOU ARE THE ONLY
ONE FOR ME.

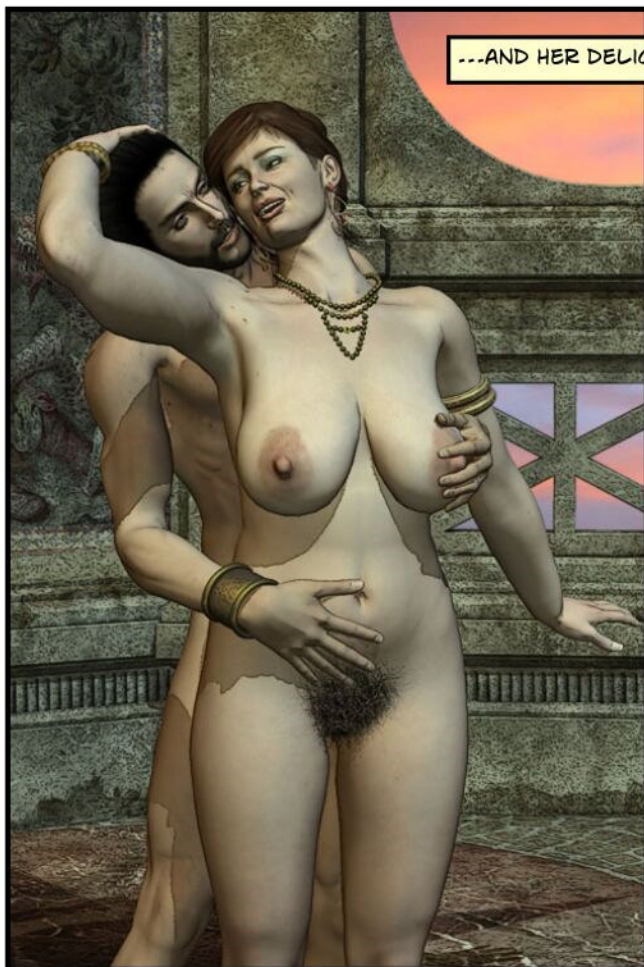
THEY WERE A PEOPLE OF STRANGE CUSTOMS THESE PHAEACIANS! ONE AFTERNOON AT A BEACH PAVILION, WHERE I WAS INVITED BY THE QUEEN TO SHARE HER BATH...



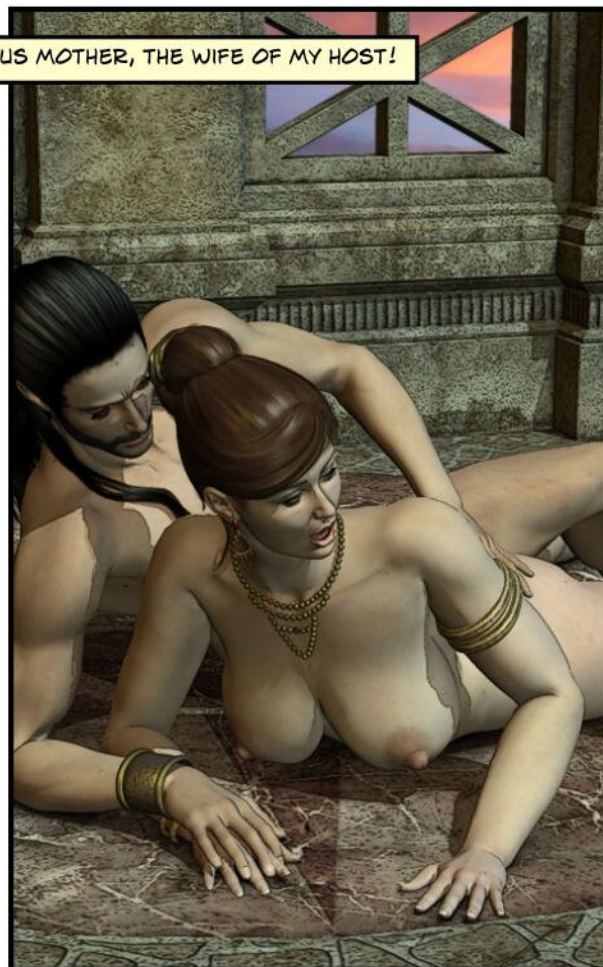


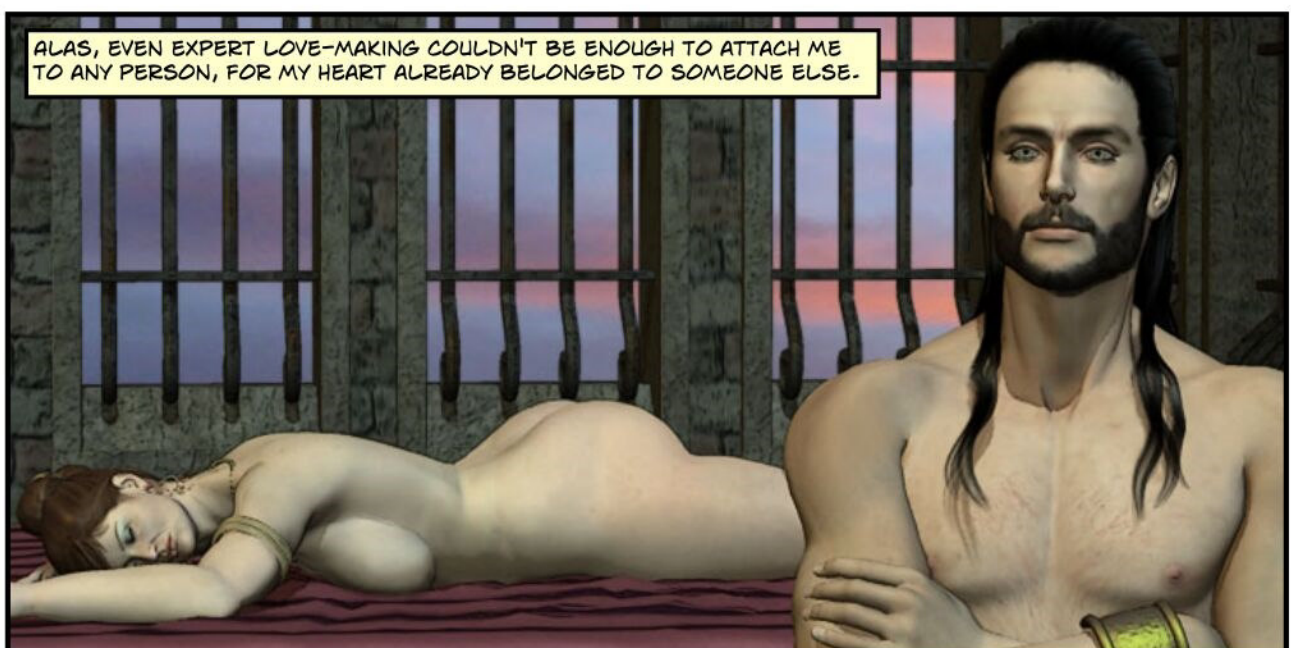
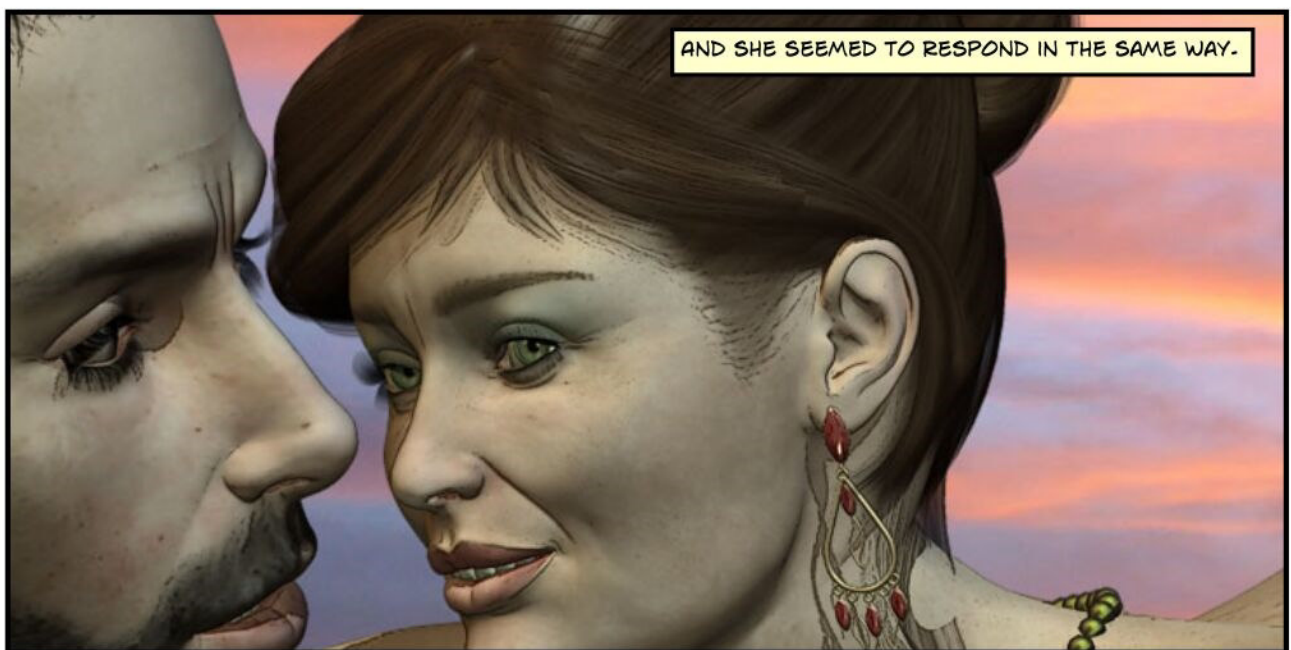


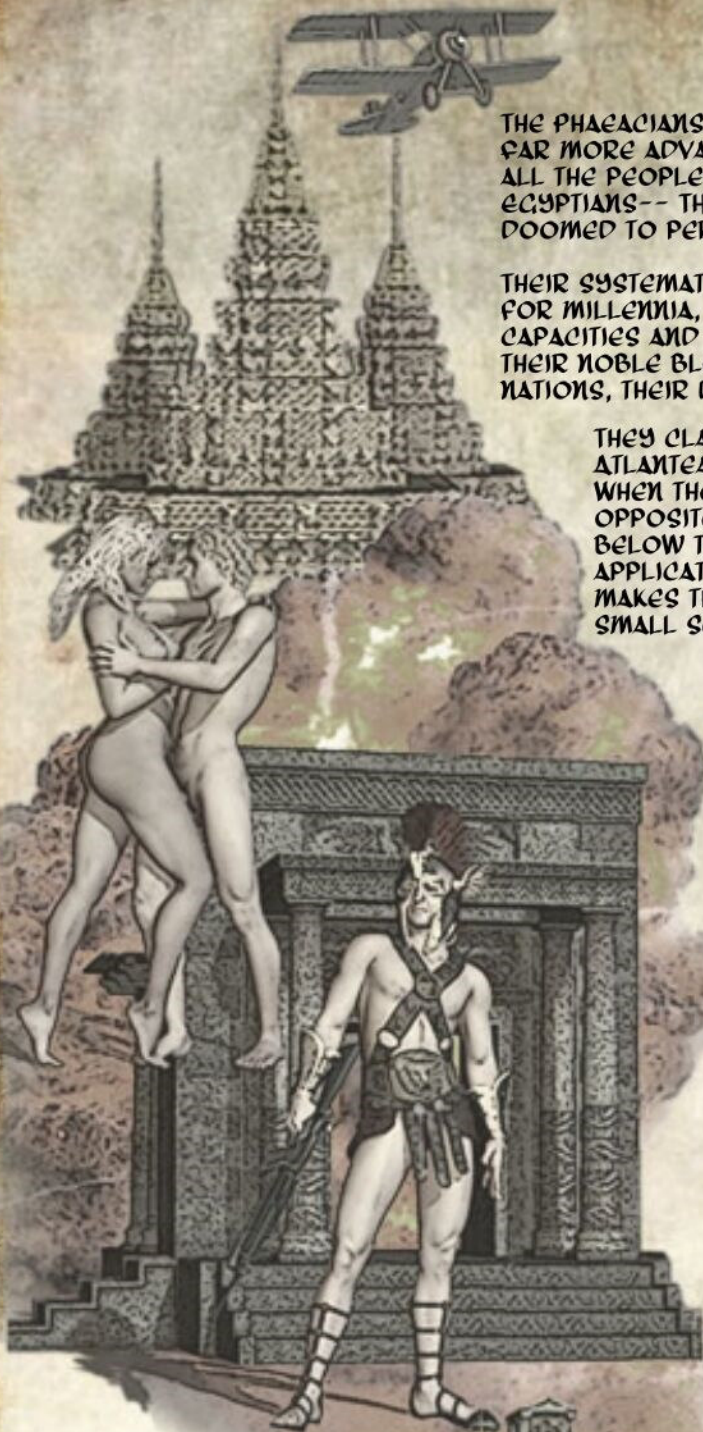
AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, MY TIME WAS DIVIDED BETWEEN TWO BEAUTIFUL WOMEN. THE WONDERFUL NAUSICAA...



...AND HER DELICIOUS MOTHER, THE WIFE OF MY HOST!







THE PHAECIANS ARE A DYING RACE. FAR MORE ADVANCED, ESPECIALLY IN SCIENCE, THAN ALL THE PEOPLES OF THIS WORLD --INCLUDING THE EGYPTIANS-- THEY ARE HOWEVER A SOCIETY DOOMED TO PERISH.

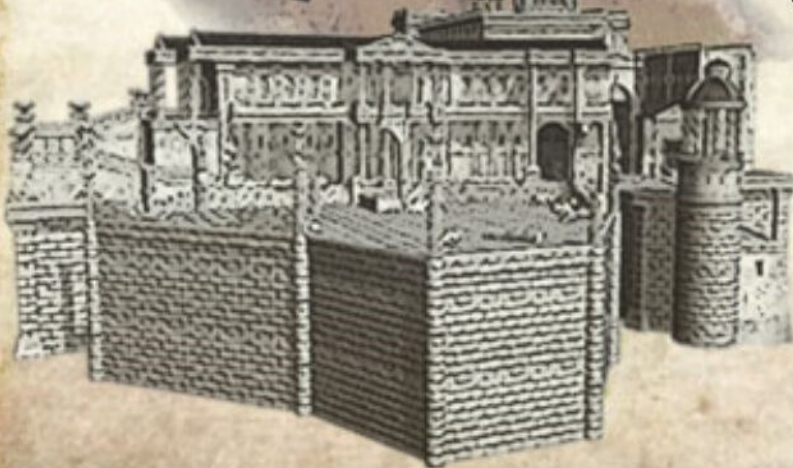
THEIR SYSTEMATIC INTERBREEDING, WHICH WENT ON FOR MILLENNIA, HAS SAPPED THEIR REPRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES AND THUS, THROUGH THEIR REFUSAL TO MIX THEIR NOBLE BLOOD WITH THAT OF THE NEIGHBOURING NATIONS, THEIR DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

THEY CLAIM TO DESCEND FROM THE MIGHTY ATLANTIC RACE THAT ONCE RULED THE WORLD. WHEN THEIR VAST CONTINENT, BRIDGING THE OPPOSITE SHORES OF THE OCEAN, SANK BELOW THE WAVES, THROUGH A FAULTY APPLICATION OF THIS SAME SCIENCE THAT MAKES THEM PROUD TODAY, ONLY SOME SMALL SCRAPS OF LAND REMAINED INTACT.

SCHERIA WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THOSE AND THE ONE THAT SUFFERED FEWER DAMAGES.

HAVING LEARNED FROM THIS CRUEL LESSON THE PHAECIANS APPLIED THEMSELVES TO HARNESS THIS DANGEROUS SCIENCE AND THEY SUCCEEDED. THEY ALSO ADOPTED A PACIFIST ATTITUDE, WHICH IS ANOTHER PECULIAR CHARACTERISTIC SETTING THEM OUT FROM ALL THE OTHER NATIONS OF THIS WAR-TORMENTED WORLD. THEY ARE PEACEFUL AND ART-LOVING, NEVER INVOLVING THEMSELVES IN THE QUARRELS OF THEIR NEIGHBOURS AND NEVER SEEKING TO GAIN MORE THAN WHAT THEY ALREADY POSSESS.

THEY LIVE IN CITIES. THERE ARE TWELVE OF THEM, EACH RULED BY ITS OWN KING, WHILE ALKIMOOS, REPRESENTING THE CENTRAL POWER, PRESIDES OVER THEM ALL.



FROM
ODYSSEUS'
NOTEBOOK

THEIR SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS ARE INCREDIBLE, BUT AS I HAVE PROMISED NEVER TO REVEAL THEIR SECRETS IN THIS DOMAIN, I SHALL REMAIN SILENT. I WILL ONLY MENTION THEIR SHIPS, THAT MOVE LIKE ARROWS UPON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER, WITH NO OARS OR SAILS, AND ARE CAPABLE OF COVERING HUGE DISTANCES AT A FRACTION OF THE TIME THAT OUR OWN PRIMITIVE VESSELS REQUIRE.

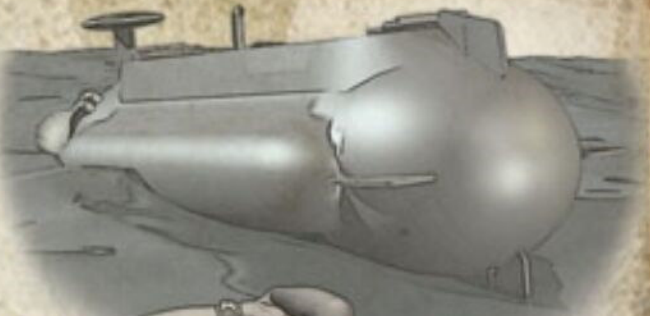
THEY SPEAK TWO LANGUAGES. THE LANGUAGE OF THE GODS AND THAT OF THEIR ANCESTORS, THE STRANGE WHISTLING TONGUE WHICH I HAD ALREADY HEARD SPOKEN ON THE ISLAND OF THE SIRENS.

THE WOMEN ARE STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL AND THEY LIKE TO SHOW THEIR BODIES HAVING ADOPTED A FASHION, NOT DISSIMILAR TO THAT OF OUR OWN CRETAN WOMEN, LEAVING THEIR BREASTS NAKED. (WHICH IS ALSO THE CUSTOM OF THE "GODDESSES").

THEIR CUSTOMS ARE STRANGE AND AT TIMES RATHER SHOCKING TO A PERSON COMING FROM THE STRICT AND IN MANY ASPECTS CONSERVATIVE HELLENIC WORLD. WOMEN HERE ENJOY EQUAL RIGHT WITH MEN, THEY CAN OWN PROPERTY, CHOOSE THEIR HUSBAND OR LOVER AND CHANGE SEXUAL PARTNERS AS OFTEN AS THEY PLEASE WITHOUT ANYONE OBJECTING TO THIS -- NAUSICAA'S YOUNGER BROTHER BEING A NOTABLE EXCEPTION).

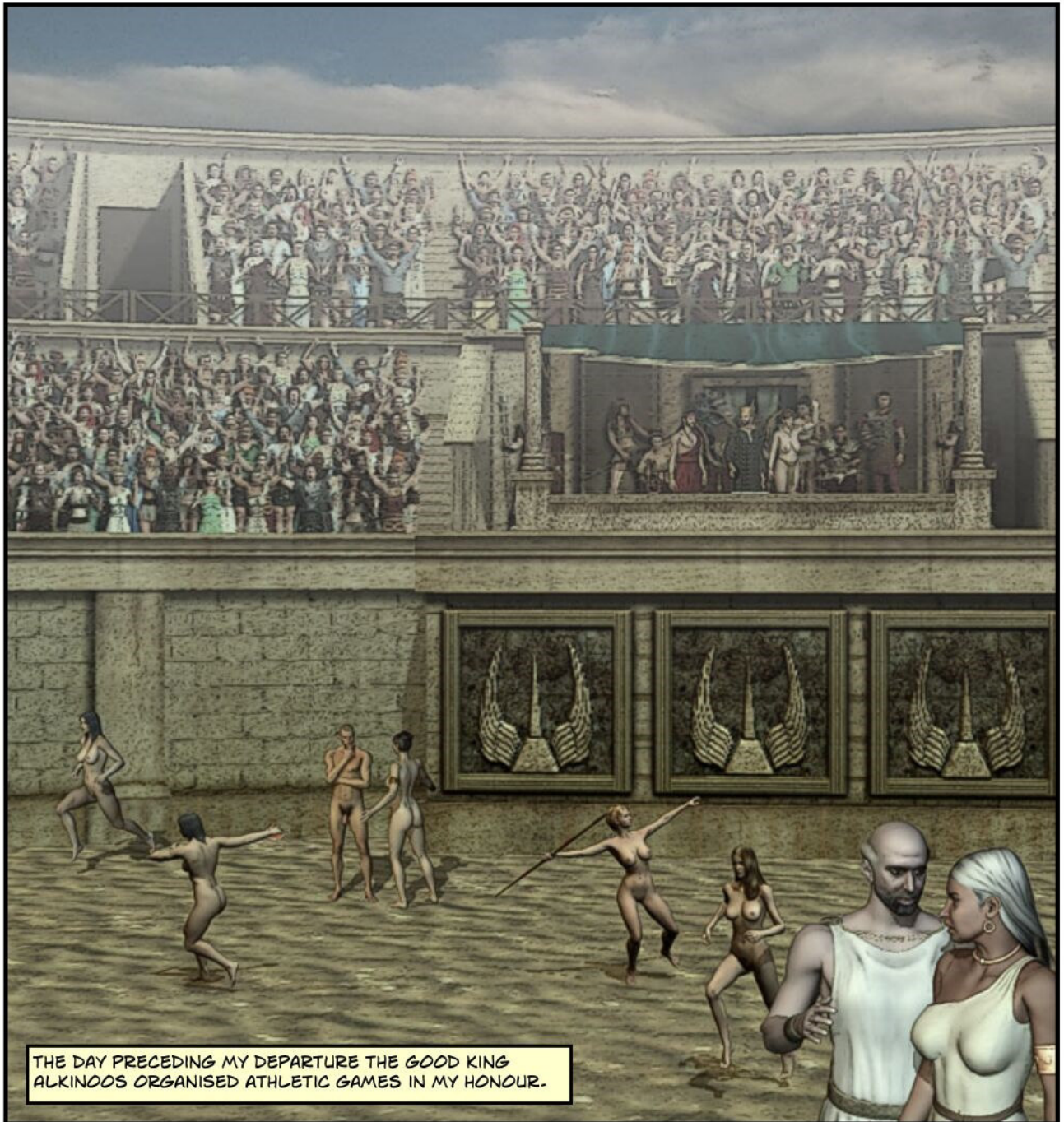
IN ALL THEY ARE A REMARKABLE RACE AND LIFE AMONG THEM COULD BE VERY PLEASANT FOR A PERSON OF A LESS RESTLESS DISPOSITION THAN ME.

FOR AFTER HARDLY A WEEK IN THIS PEACEFUL PLACE I WAS ALREADY EAGER TO MOVE ON.

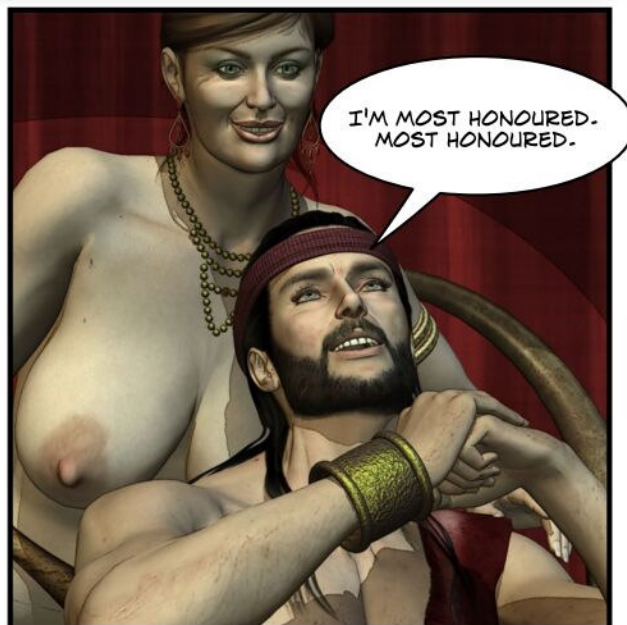
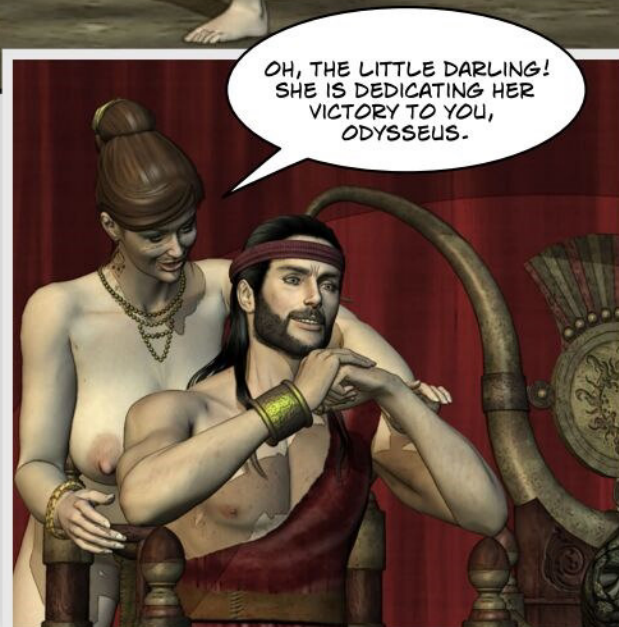


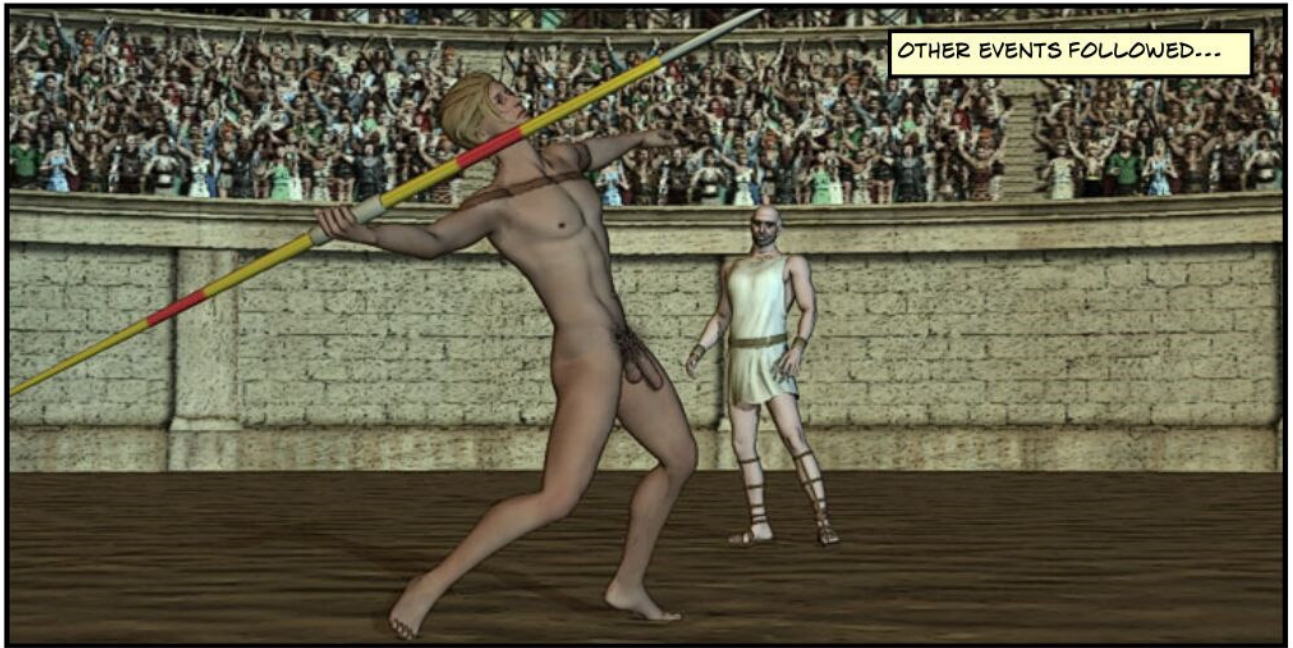
NAUSICAA DIDN'T FAIL TO NOTICE MY PREFERENCE FOR HER MOTHER AND SHE WASN'T VERY HAPPY ABOUT THIS.



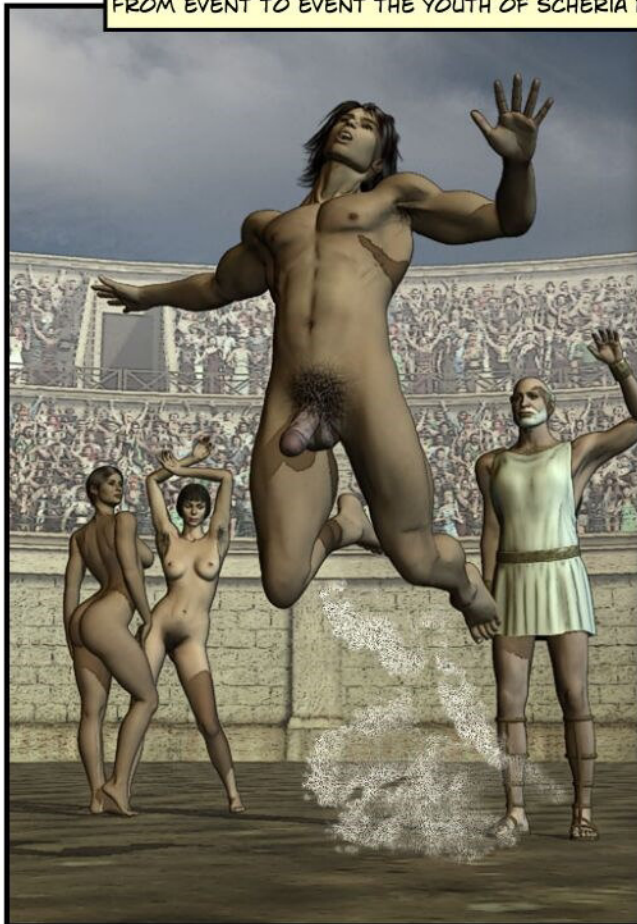


THE GAMES STARTED WITH THE SPRINT EVENT FOR YOUNG GIRLS IN WHICH NAUSICAA TRIUMPHED.





FROM EVENT TO EVENT THE YOUTH OF SCHERIA PROVED TO BE SUPERB ATHLETES.



THE GIRLS WENT THROUGH THE SAME ROUTINES AS THE BOYS.



INCLUDING THE TOUGHER
DISCIPLINES SUCH AS BOXING.



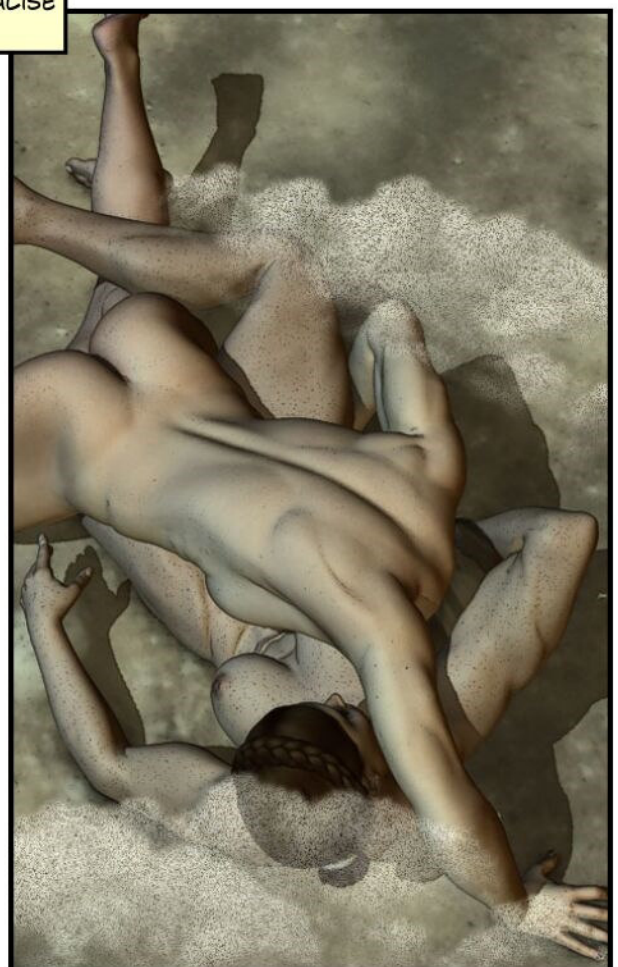




WRESTLING WAS PARTICULARLY EXCITING.

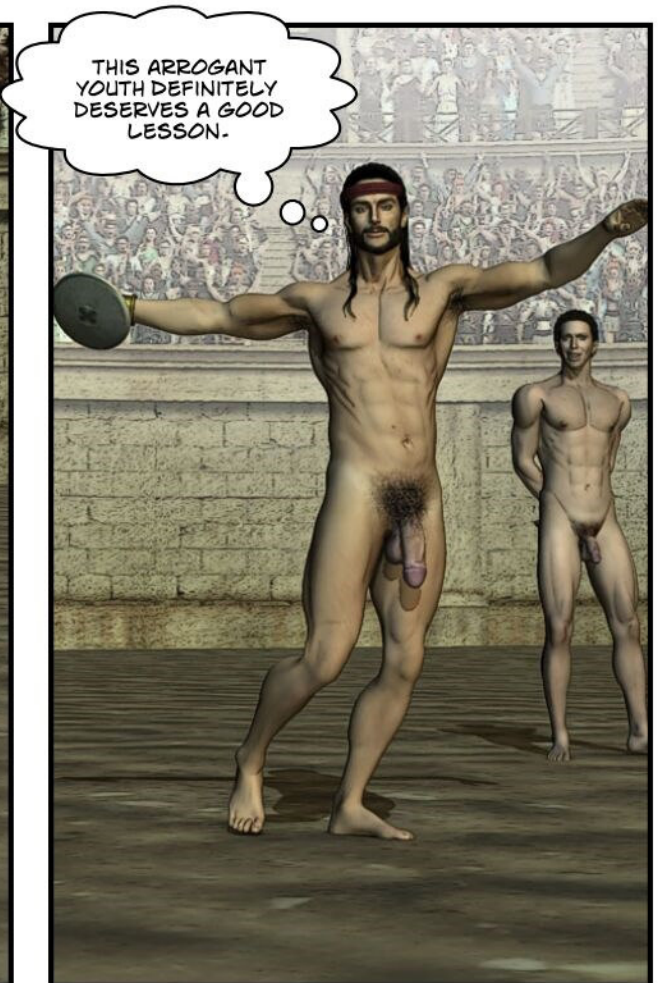
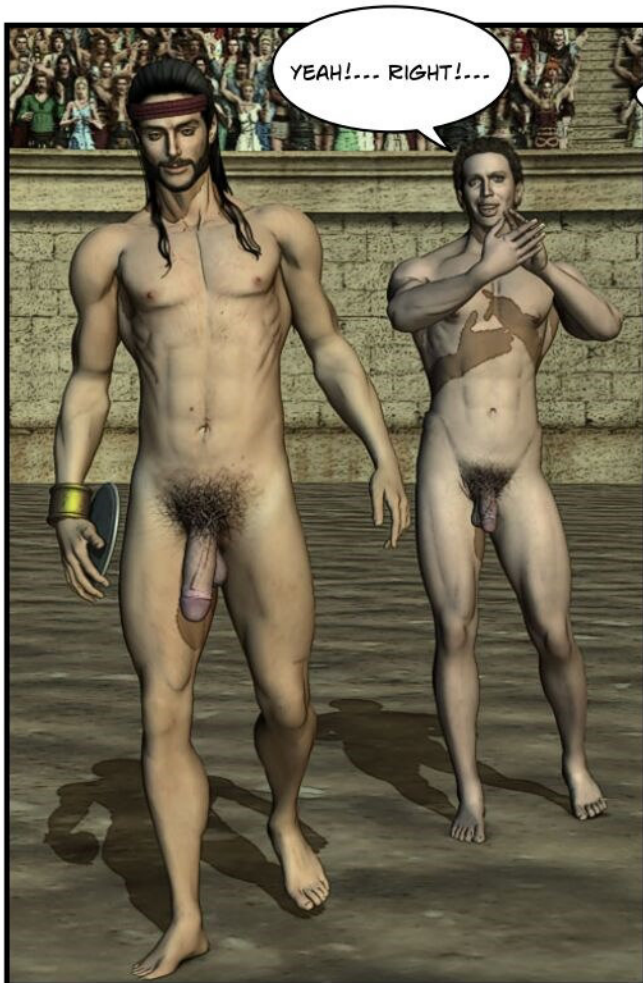
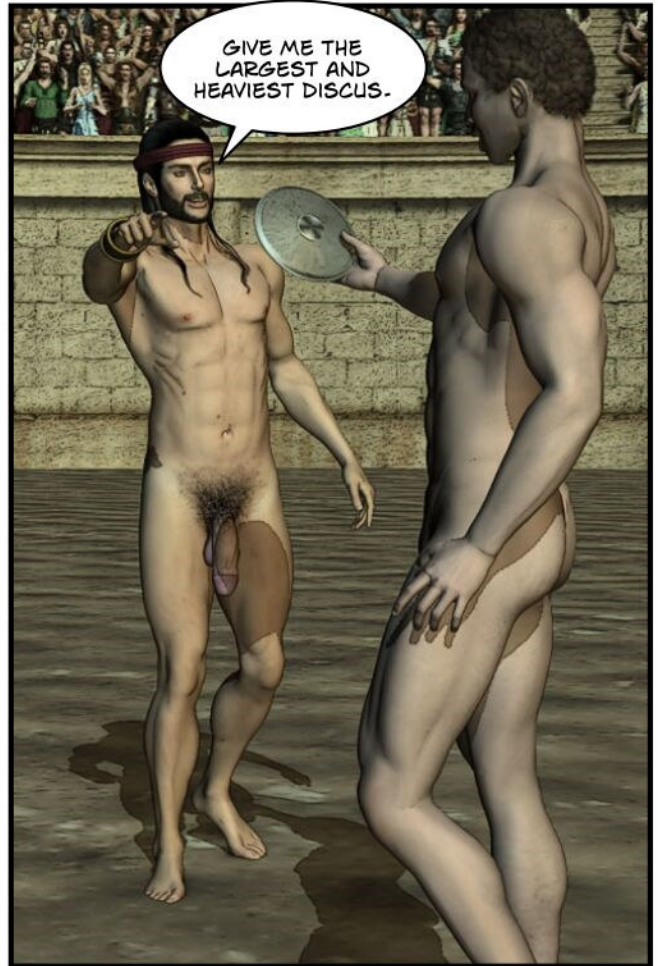


AND I WISHED I WERE AN ARTIST SO AS TO IMMORTALISE THE MOVEMENTS OF THOSE YOUNG BODIES.





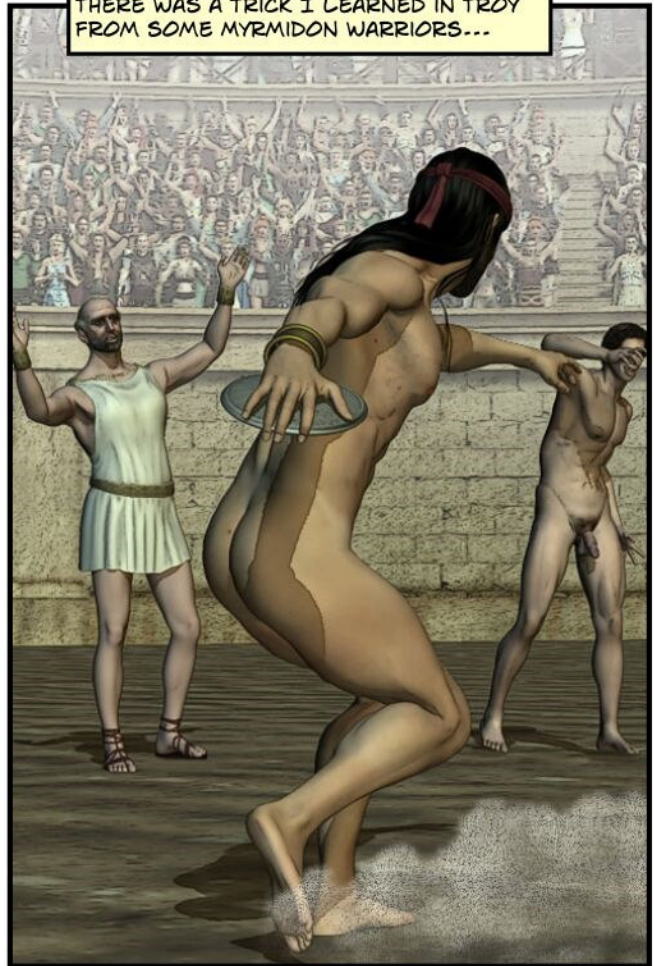




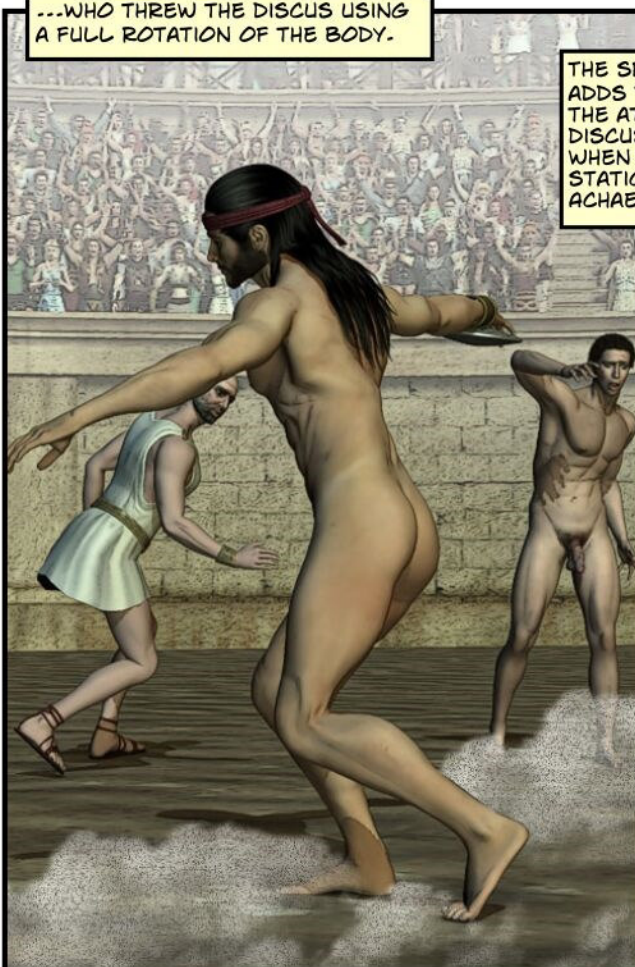
IT WAS GOOD TO COMPETE AGAIN AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME.



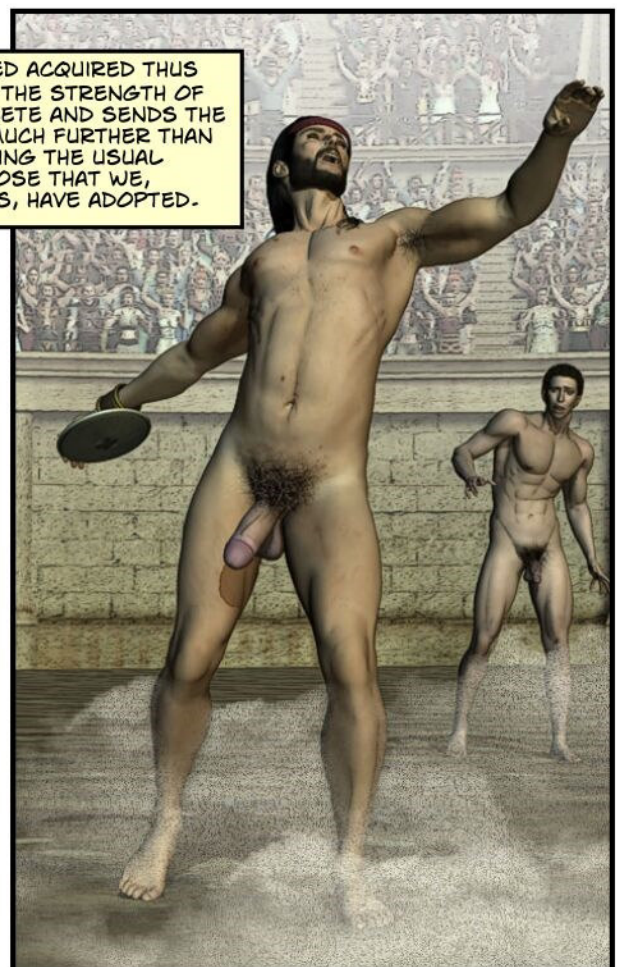
THERE WAS A TRICK I LEARNED IN TROY FROM SOME MYRMIDON WARRIORS...

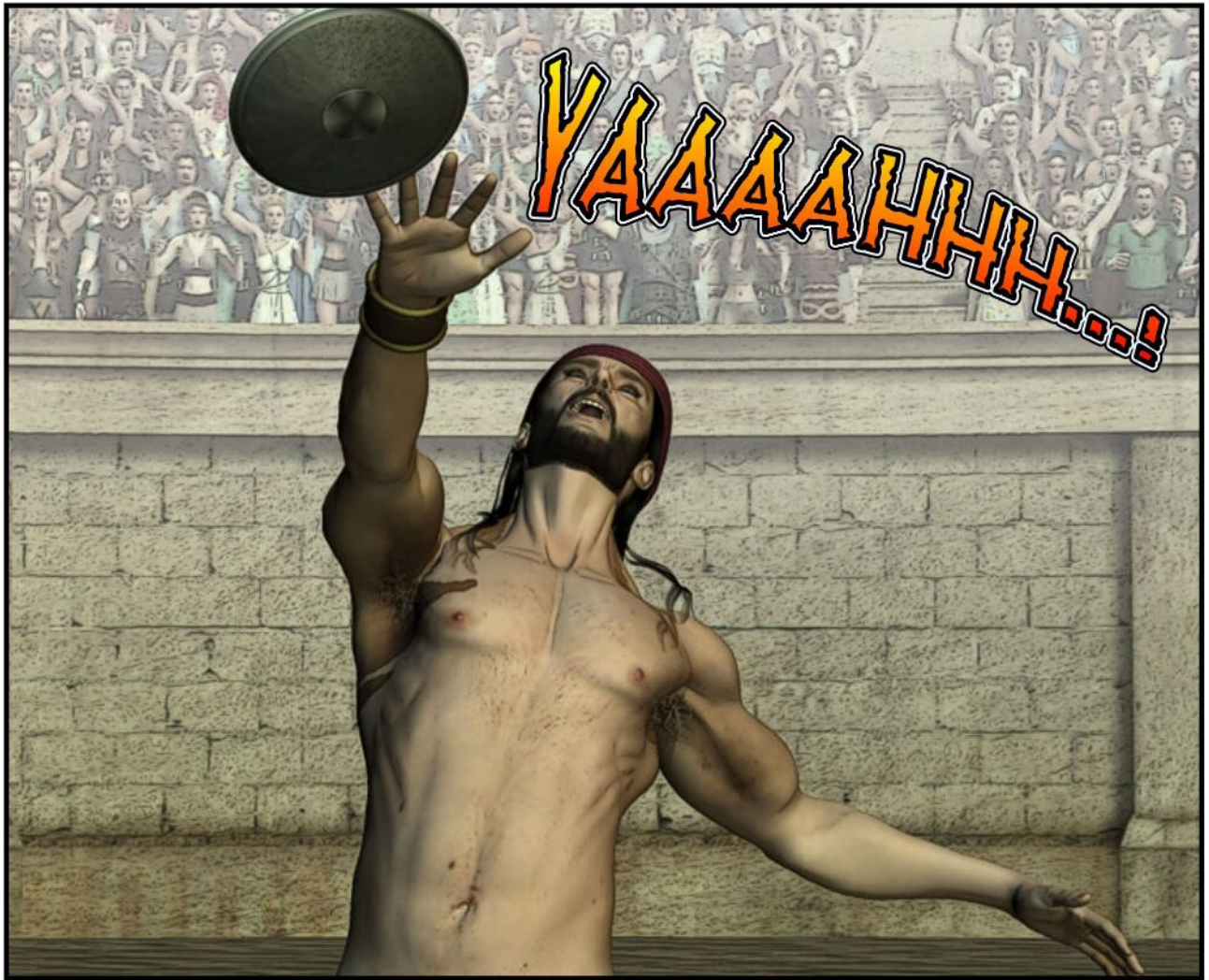


...WHO THREW THE DISCUS USING A FULL ROTATION OF THE BODY.



THE SPEED ACQUIRED THUS ADDS TO THE STRENGTH OF THE ATHLETE AND SENDS THE DISCUS MUCH FURTHER THAN WHEN USING THE USUAL STATIC POSE THAT WE, ACHAEANS, HAVE ADOPTED.

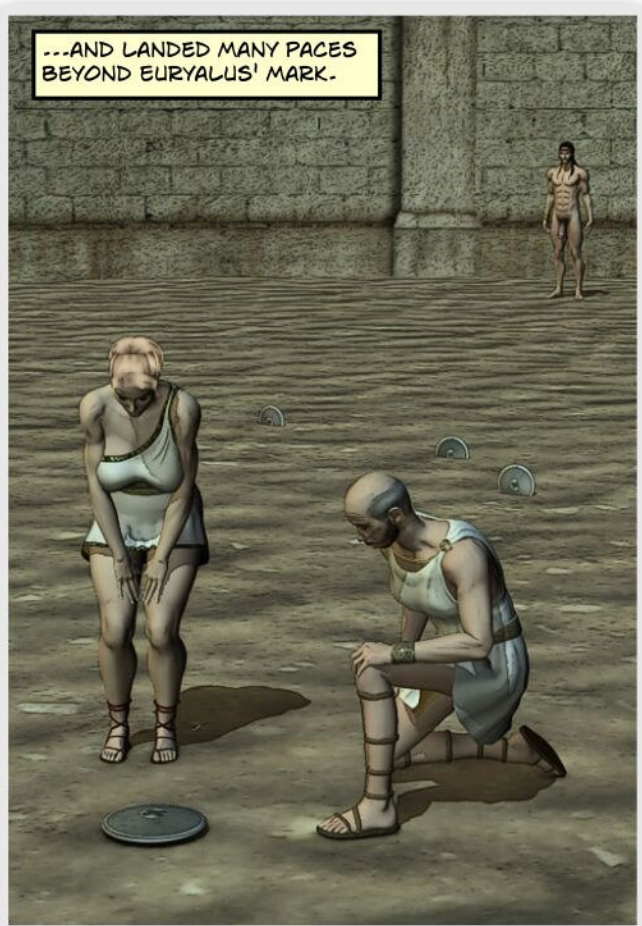


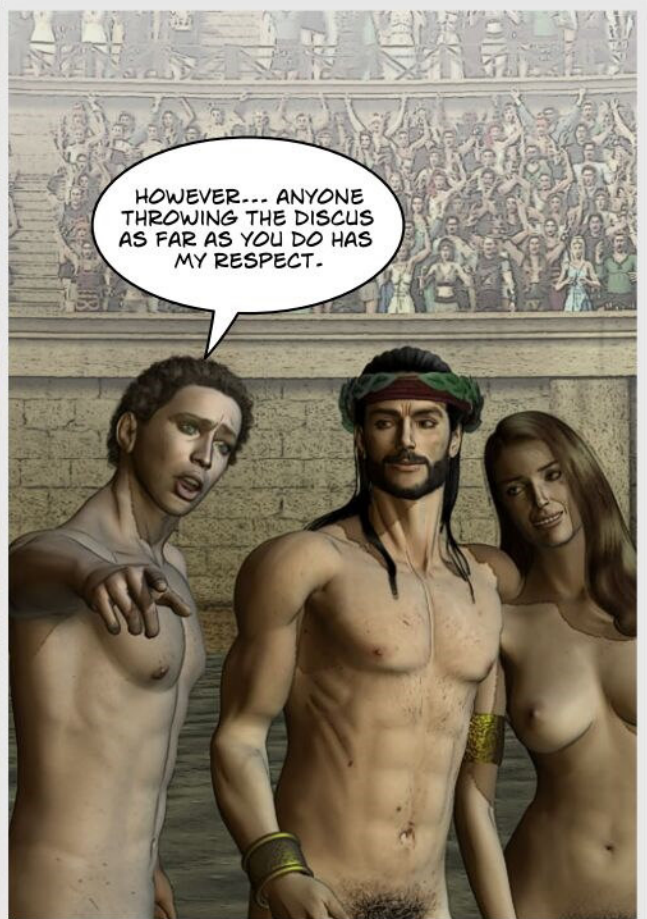


THE DISCUS SAILED THROUGH THE AIR
LIKE A FLYING SHIP OF THE GODS...

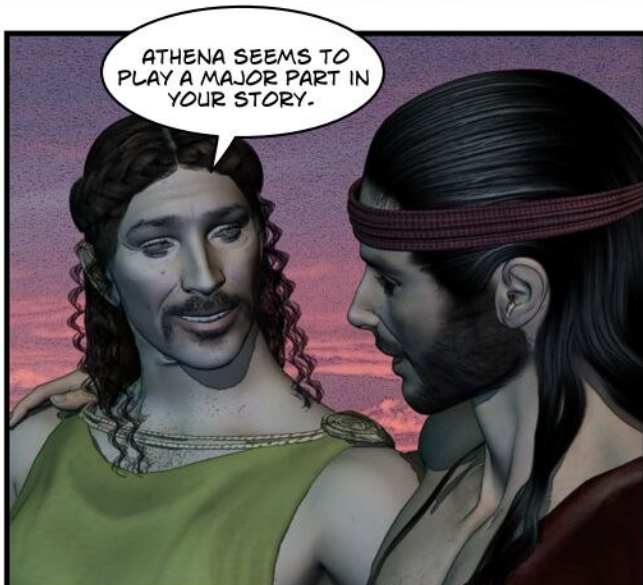
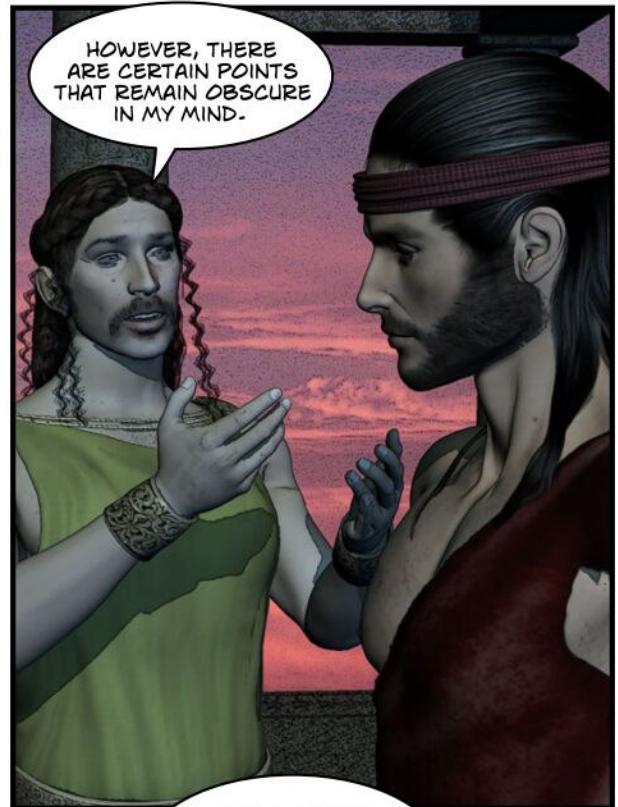


...AND LANDED MANY PACES
BEYOND EURYALUS' MARK.





LATER THAT EVENING, AFTER THE CELEBRATIONS, DEMODOCUS, THE BARD, TOOK ME ASIDE.



LATER, NAUSICAA AND I SAID GOODBYE.

I SHALL NEVER FORGET
YOU, ODYSSEUS.

NEITHER WILL I, MY
LOVELY. NEITHER WILL I.





WITH THE FIRST LIGHT OF THE DAY NAUSICAA TOOK ME DOWN TO THE DOCKS WHERE THE STRANGEST CRAFT I HAD EVER SEEN WAS WAITING.



TONIGHT YOU'LL BE BACK ON YOUR ISLAND.

ONE MORE GOODBYE. ONE MORE MISSED CHANCE TO START OVER A NEW, HAPPIER LIFE.





