

THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH

BY BROCAL REMOHI



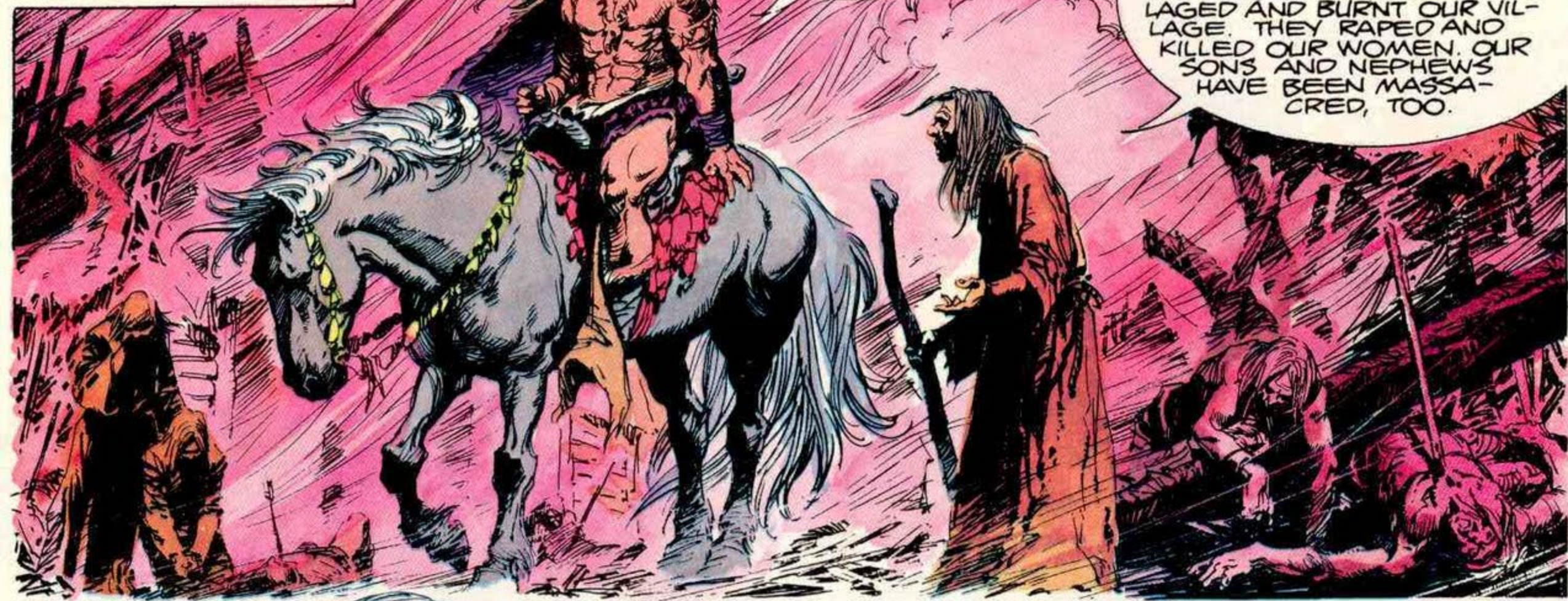
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IN THE DISTANCE, THE SKY WAS AWESOME WITH RED AS THE FLAMES AND SMOKE ON THE PLAIN QUICKLY SPREAD.

ARCANE RODE ON HIS HORSE AMONG THE RUINS OF THE VILLAGE. DISASTER AND DEATH WERE EVERYWHERE.

WHO DID THIS, OLD MAN?

OH, SAVIOR... IT'S TOUGAR AND HIS WARRIORS. FOR SEVERAL MOONS NOW, THEY HAVE BEEN TEARING APART THE REGION. THEY HAVE PILLAGED AND BURNT OUR VILLAGE. THEY RAPED AND KILLED OUR WOMEN. OUR SONS AND NEPHEWS HAVE BEEN MASSACRED, TOO.



ONLY A FEW OLD MEN HAVE ESCAPED THE MASSACRE. THEY TOOK MOST ALL OF US. ONLY THE DEAD ARE LEFT. LEAVE US TO UNITE OUR ASHES WITH THEIRS.



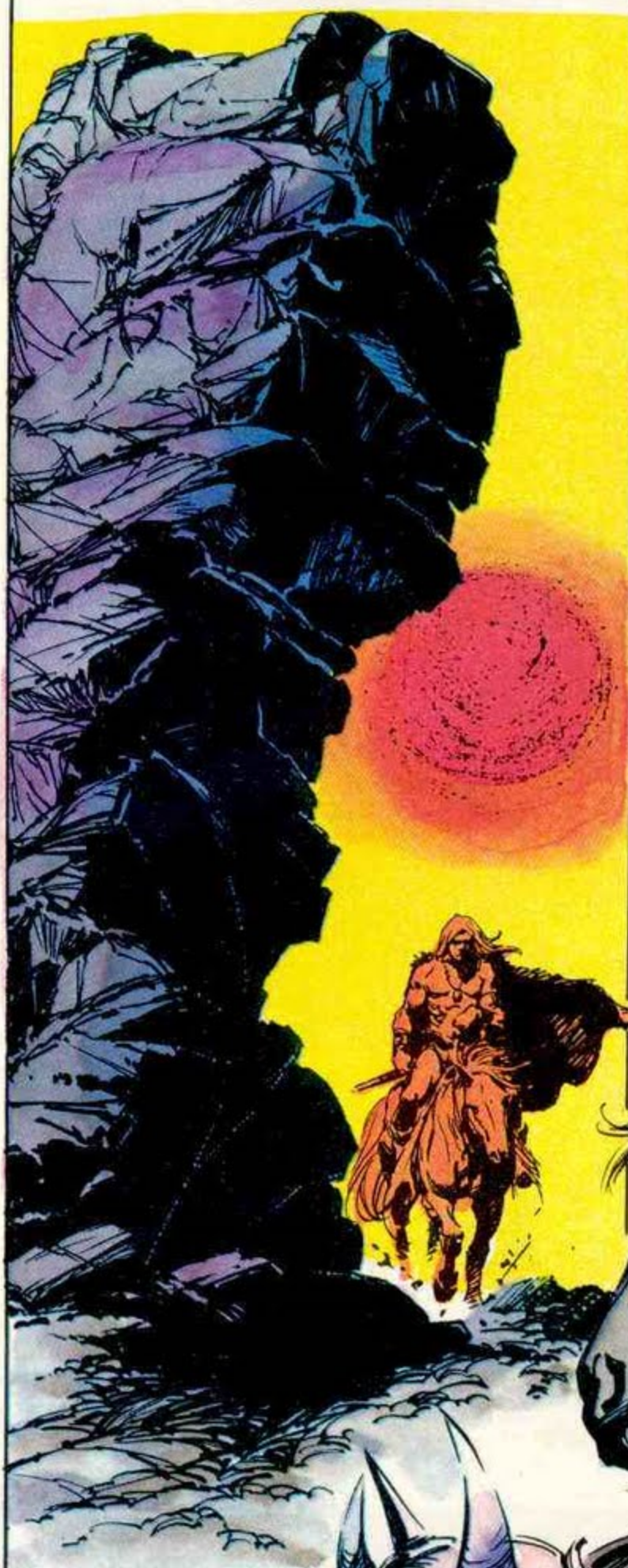
RESPECTING THE WILL OF THE SURVIVORS TO PERISH IN THE FLAMES, WITH THEIR PEOPLE, ARCANE CONTINUED ON HIS PATH...

HE TRAVELED THROUGH THE SAVAGE LANDS UNDER THE BURNING RAYS OF THE SUN.

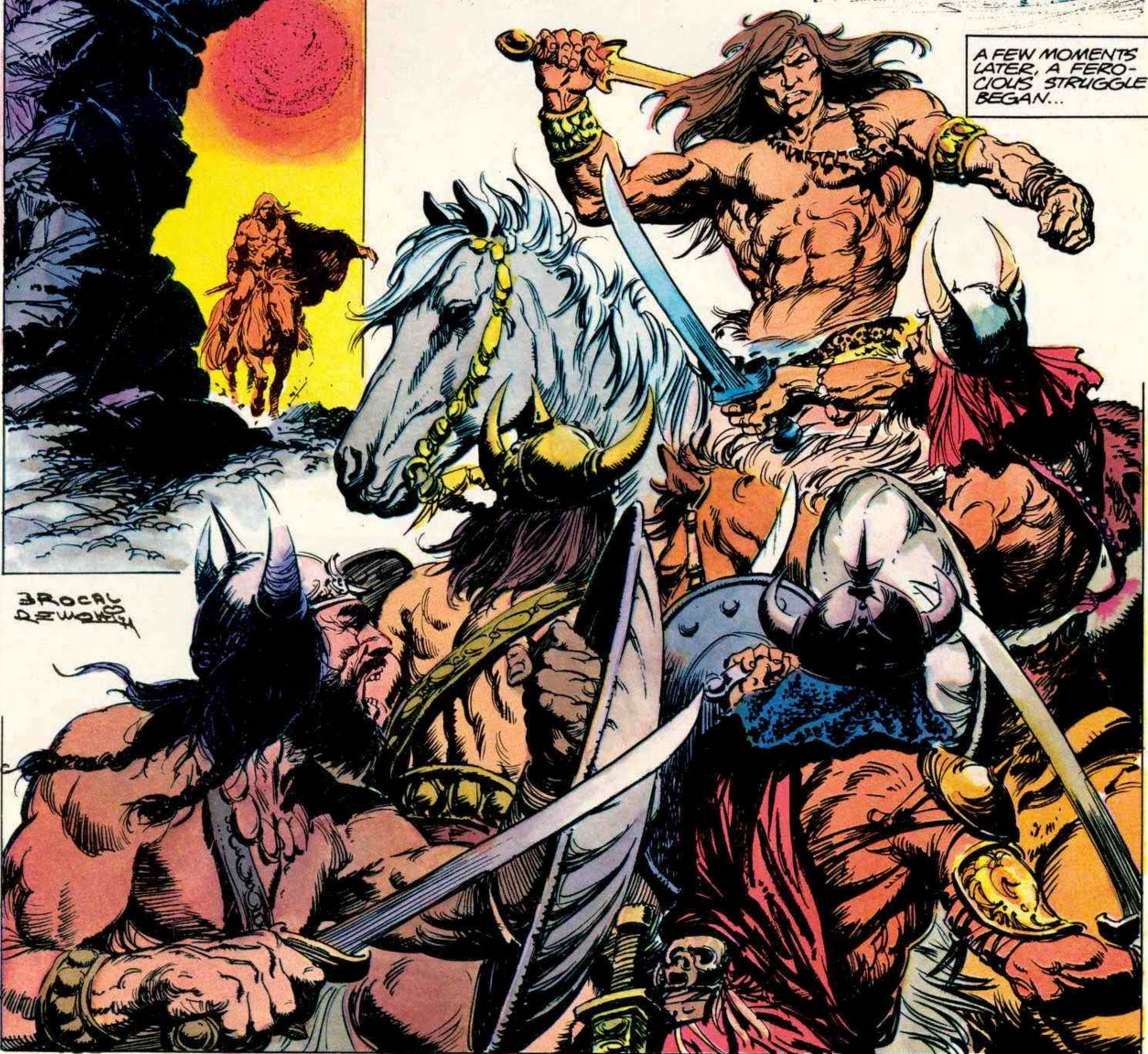
LONG, SILENT HOURS HAD PASSED WHEN SUDDENLY SAVAGE WAR CRIES RANG OUT...

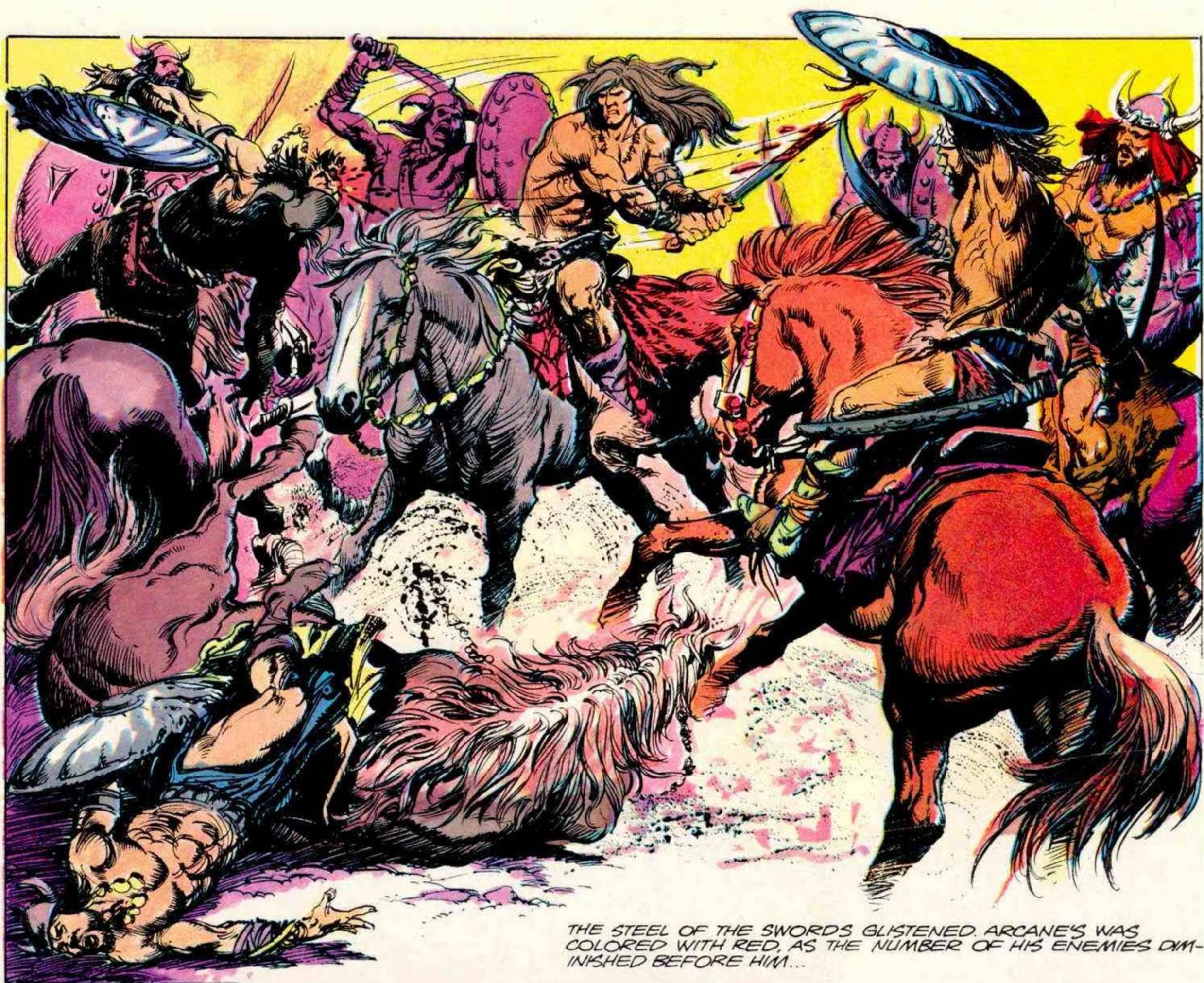


A FEW MOMENTS LATER, A FEROCIOUS STRUGGLE BEGAN...



BROCAL
DEWORTH





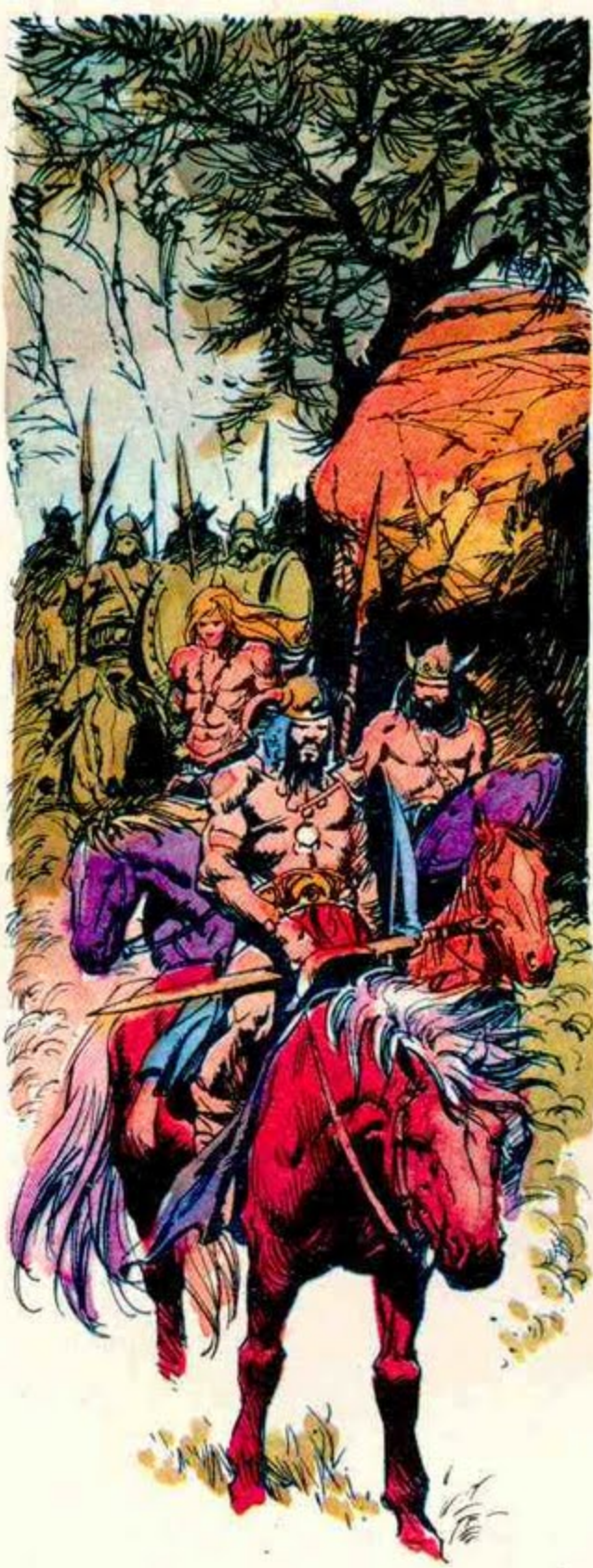
THE STEEL OF THE SWORDS GLISTENED. ARCANÉ'S WAS COLORED WITH RED, AS THE NUMBER OF HIS ENEMIES DIMINISHED BEFORE HIM...

BUT THEY WERE STILL TOO MANY FOR ONE MAN!!

WE WILL NOT KILL YOU NOW. OUR CHIEF, TOUGAR, WANTS YOU FOR HIMSELF.



ABANDONING THE DEAD BODIES ON THE FROZEN EARTH, THE MEN BEGAN TO LEAVE.



AFTER A LONG HORSE RIDE THROUGH THE DESERTED MOUNTAINS, THEY CAME UPON A PLAIN SURROUNDED BY ROCKY PEAKS. TOLGAR'S ARMY CAMP WAS AT THE CENTER.

ARLANE WAS LED TO CHIEF TOLGAR. THE CHIEF WAS TOLD OF THE COMBAT WITH THE PRISONER.

...AND HIS SWORD IS COVERED WITH THE BLOOD OF YOUR FAITHFUL WARRIORS!

YOU WILL DIE AT SUNSET BECAUSE OF THIS!



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Dynamis

BUT NOW I SHALL GRANT YOU, GREAT WARRIOR, THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING MY MEAL...



AND IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY FESTIVAL IN HONOR OF THE CONDEMNED MAN, WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF FOOD AND WINES. TOLLIGAR DRINKS INSATIABLY, AND AS THE WINE TAKES ITS TOLL, HIS TONGUE LOOSENS...



THE SECRET OF THE FEROCITY OF MY MEN? I WILL TELL YOU, SINCE YOU ARE GOING TO DIE!

I DISCOVERED THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH... THAT STONE HAS THE POWER TO INCITE HATE AND VIOLENCE IN ANYONE WHO GAZES UPON IT!



...THE PRIESTESSES OF THE TEMPLE OF ISLIAH USED THIS POWER, ACCORDINGLY, IN ORDER TO INSTILL A HATRED IN THEIR PEOPLE. THEY DOMINATED THEIR TERRITORIES, BUT NOW I'VE DISCOVERED THEIR SECRET. I POSSESS THE EYE OF ISLIAH! YET THEY DON'T KNOW IT!

THERE IS A PEASANT IN FARAWAY ISLIAH, A KIND OF VISIONARY, WHO WANTS TO DO AWAY WITH THE TYRANNY OF THE PRIESTESSES... AND THEY NEED THE STONE IN ORDER TO EXCITE THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE REBEL, OR THEIR REIGN WILL COME TO AN END.



...BUT THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT... AT THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT, WE SHALL OVERTHROW OUR KING. HE IS TOO PASSIVE A MAN... WHEN I HAVE THE POWER, WE WILL SPREAD OUR CONQUESTS AS WIDE AS THE LANDS OF ISLIAH... HA! HA! HA!

ARCAINE'S SKEPTICISM MADE TOUGAR FURIOUS. IN A DRUNK-EN FIT, HE ORDERED ONE OF HIS MEN TO BRING A SMALL CHEST TO HIS TENT...



YOU WILL BELIEVE ME WHEN YOU SEE...

THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH! THE PRECIOUS STONE, SET IN A CONCAVE STRUCTURE, WAS MOUNTED BETWEEN TWO CLAMPS OF GOLD. THE EVIL SHONE IN TOUGAR'S HANDS.



EXPOSED TO THIS ANGER-INDUCING OBJECT, TOUGAR BEGAN TO UTTER ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ONE OF HIS WARRIORS!

THE MAGNIFICENT STONE SENT OUT VIOLET FLASHES, WHEREUPON THE WARRIORS TURNED TOWARD THE ACCUSED MAN WITH GROWING HATRED.



THEY BECOME NO MORE THAN A BAND OF BLOOD-THIRSTY BEASTS.

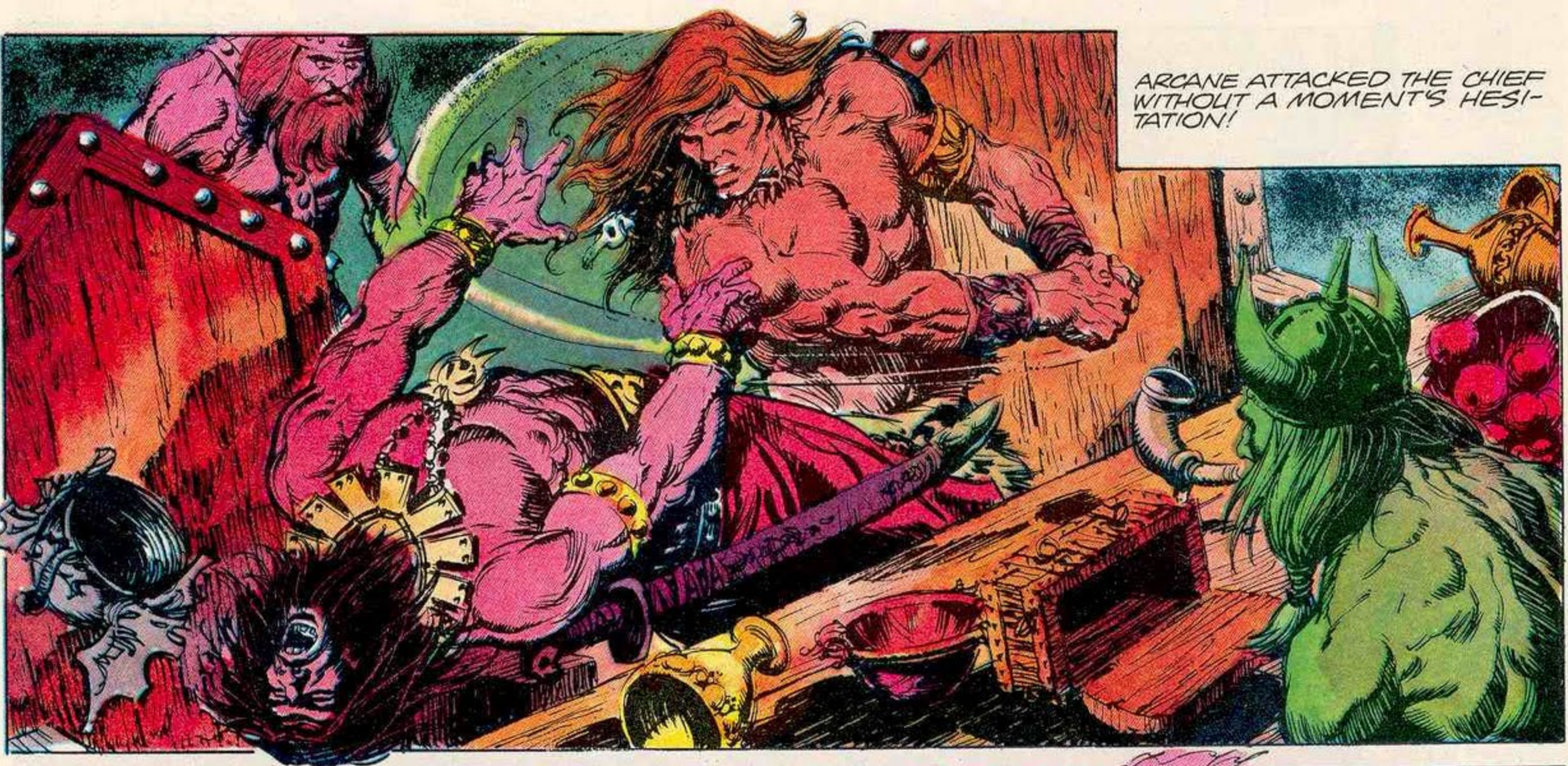
AAAAAAH!

THE EYE ACTS AS A BELL. IT REFLECTS, AMPLIFIES, AND INCITES HATRED. THEY DON'T HEAR MY WORDS, THEY FEEL THEM, AS IF THIS ANGER HAD BEEN BORN IN THEM. HA! HA! HA!

OOO GODS!



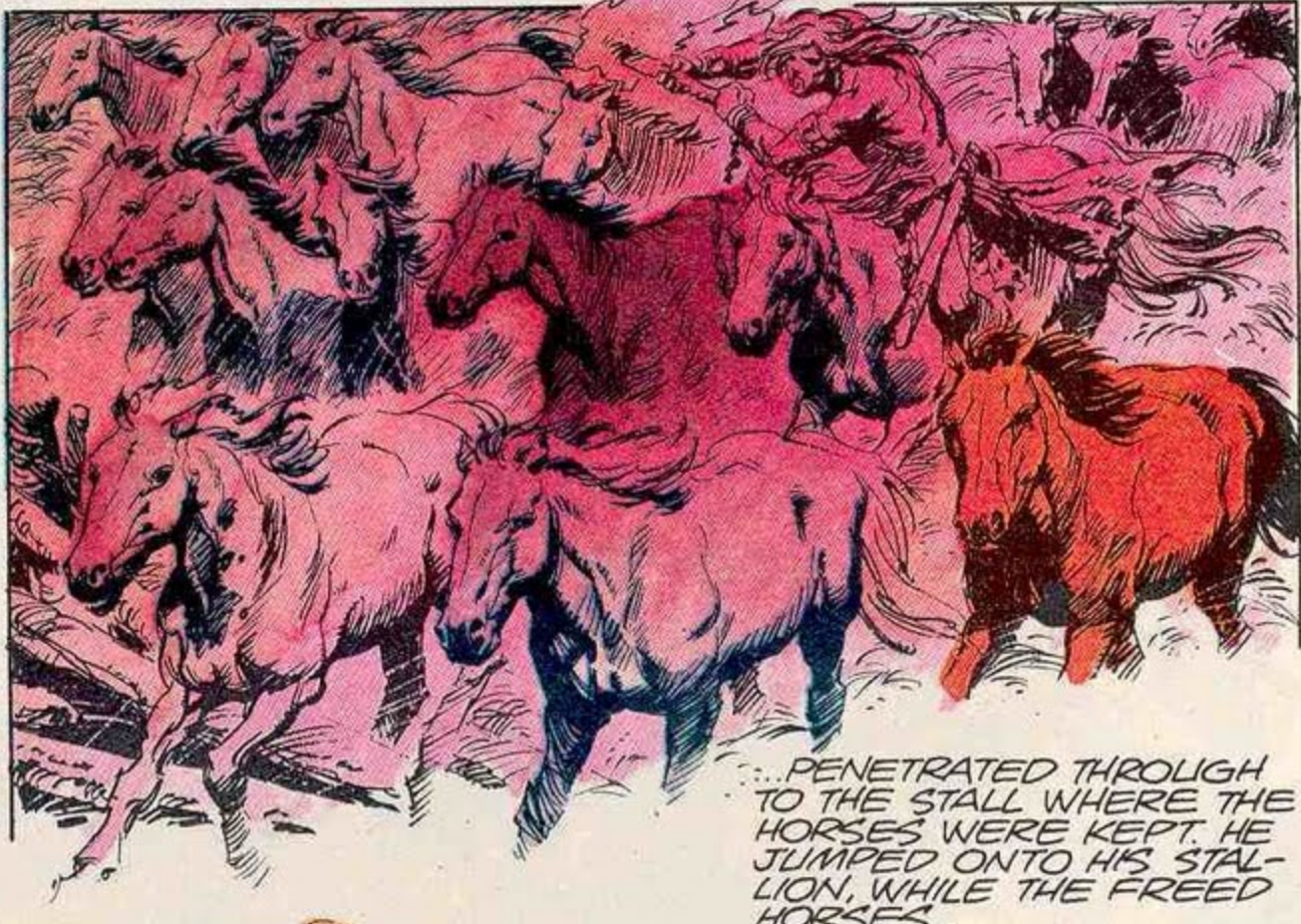
BLOOD RETURNED



ARCANE ATTACKED THE CHIEF WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION!



TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION, HE SEIZED A PIECE OF BURNING WOOD AND...



...PENETRATED THROUGH TO THE STALL WHERE THE HORSES WERE KEPT. HE JUMPED ONTO HIS STALLION, WHILE THE FREED HORSES...



...CHARGED FORTH IN A MAD CAVALCADE. THE WARRIOR ESCAPED AT A FULL GALLOP INTO THE TWILIGHT.

ARCANE WAS ALREADY WAY AHEAD OF THE BANDITS BY THE TIME THEY HAD GATHERED THEIR HORSES.

ARCANE WAS ALMOST OUT OF REACH, THANKS TO THE SWIFTNESS OF HIS OWN STEED.

FLY, MY HORSE! FLY!

BY THE TIME NIGHT FELL, ARCANE HAD SUCCEEDED IN SHAKING OFF HIS FOLLOWERS.

LATER THAT EVENING, A HORSE'S FOOTSTEPS SOUNDED ON THE STONE PATH...

MY SWORD! I MUST HAVE LEFT IT IN TOUGAR'S HANDS!

THIS MUST BE ONE OF THE BANDITS... I'LL TAKE HIS WEAPONS AWAY FROM HIM!

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HUH?



GODS!
A
WOMAN!

LET ME
GO, YOU
VILLAIN!



I AM NOT
A VILLAIN... I
THOUGHT YOU
WERE A HENCH-
MAN OF TOUGAR'S.
WHO ARE YOU?

I AM SIRCIA,
A PRIESTESS
FROM THE TEMPLE
OF THE GODDESS
ISLIAH...

DID YOU
COME FROM
FAR AWAY?

BYRON
REYNOLDS



MY MISSION IS
TO FIND THE EYE
OF THE GODDESS,
WHICH WAS STOLEN FROM
US. IN ORDER TO PRE-
SERVE PEACE, MY
PEOPLE NEED THIS
MAGIC EYE, WHICH
HAS THE POWER TO...

DON'T LIE! I KNOW
OF ITS TERRIBLE POWER!
THE POLITICS OF YOUR
COUNTRY AND ITS USE OF THE
MAGIC EYE ARE OF LITTLE IM-
PORTANCE TO ME... BUT I WANT TO
AVENGE MYSELF ON TOUGAR, AND
HE HAS IT IN HIS POSSESSION! IF
YOU HELP ME, I'LL TAKE THE
STONE AND GIVE IT
TO YOU...

GOOD, WARRIOR!
I SEE THAT WE WILL
GET ALONG... LET'S
GET ON OUR WAY.
PLEASE EXPLAIN
YOUR PLAN IN DE-
TAIL TO ME!

THE HOURS
FLEW BY AND
THE NIGHT
GREW VERY
BLACK...



THE CAMP SEEMS
CALM... LET'S LEAVE
THE HORSES... YOU
KNOW THE PLAN,
SIRCIA...

ARCANE
LEFT SIR-
CIA AND
WENT OFF
TO PROWL
AROUND
THE EN-
CAMPMENT.



HA!
DO YOU
SEE WHAT
I SEE?

WHERE
DID SHE
COME FROM
?



THAT'S NOT
IMPORTANT...
SHE'S A GIFT
FROM THE
GODS!



SUDDENLY...

WHA...
WHAT
IS IT?



SHE...
SHE IS
AFLAME!

ALL AT ONCE,
THE CAMP
WAS PANICKED!



AAAAAAH!

NO.. GREAT
GODS! IT'S
NOT POS-
SIBLE!

ARCANE PROFITED FROM TOLGAR'S EXIT...



...TO GRAB HIS SWORD AND THE CHEST.

WHEN HE LEFT THE TENT, SIRCIA HAD BECOME A LIVING TORCH, AND THE WARRIORS RAN FROM HER...



OKAY!
NOW!

ARCANE TOOK THE MAGIC EYE IN HIS HANDS AND MURMURED...

YOUR HATE FOR EACH OTHER CAN ONLY BE APPEASED...

...BY THE SPILLING OF BLOOD AND TOTAL EXTERMINATION!



WHILE THE MAGIC EYE EMITTED ITS VIOLET RAYS WAVES OF BLOOD, DRENCHED WITH HATRED, WENT THROUGH THE BRAINS OF TOLGAR AND HIS WARRIORS.

THE REACTION WAS OVERWHELMING! THEY THREW THEMSELVES ON EACH OTHER WITH UNABATED VIOLENCE!

QUICKLY, SIRCIA!
TO THE HORSES!



WHILE SIRCIA AND ARCAINE ESCAPED, THE MASSACRE CONTINUED IN THE DETERIORATING CAMP.

ALREADY FAR FROM THE CAMP, THEY RESTED UNDER THE SOFT LIGHT OF THE MOON...

YOU'VE FOUND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR, SIRCIA...

YOU ARE A STRONG AND COURAGEOUS WARRIOR... IF YOU CAME WITH ME TO IS-LIAH, WE WOULD HAVE A WHOLE KINGDOM FOR OURSELVES.

IT IS MY HYPNOTIC POWER THAT MADE THEM BELIEVE I WAS A FLAMING TORCH.

THE EYES OF ARCAINE STARED INTO THE EYES OF SIRCIA...

CLING

...WHO SANK INTO A DEEP SLEEP.. ARCAINE STRETCHED HER BODY OUT ONTO THE GRASS. HE THEN TOOK THE MAGIC EYE AND WITH HIS SWORD...

...CUT OFF THE GOLDEN CLAMPS. THE STONE WAS FREE... WITH A SHARP BLOW OF HIS SWORD, HE BROKE THE STONE IN TWO. PUTTING THE TWO PIECES TOGETHER AGAIN, HE REPLACED THE CLAMPS. THE BREAK COULD HARDLY BE DETECTED...

ARCAVE
LOOKED
AT THE
AWAKEN-
ING
WOMAN...

YOU
FELL
ASLEEP...

HUMMM...
I FEEL
STRANGE...
BUT...

THE DAY
DAWNS... I
MUST RETURN
TO ISLIAH AND
TAKE THEM
THE STONE...

ARE YOU
COMING WITH
ME,
WARRIOR?

NOT NOW,
BEAUTIFUL SIRCIA.
I HAVE A LONG TRIP
AHEAD OF ME. BUT
ONE DAY SOON,
I'LL GO TO ISLIAH...

ARCAVE
GAVE THE
STONE BACK
TO SIRCIA.
THE PRIEST-
ESS GOT
ON HER
HORSE AND
RODE AWAY...

THE EYE OF
ISLIAH ACTS AS A BELL,
ENDLESSLY AMPLIFYING THE
HATE THAT HAS BEEN POURED
INTO IT. YOUR MAGIC EYE WILL
NEVER BRING HATE AGAIN...
AND THE REBELLIOUS
PEASANT WILL BE ABLE TO
COUNT ON THE AID OF
HIS PEOPLE...

YES, I
WILL GO TO
YOUR COUNTRY,
SIRCIA. AND
THEN...

...I HOPE
THAT EVERY-
THING WILL HAVE
CHANGED... AND I
HOPE NEVER TO
SEE YOU AGAIN!

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REVENUE