



DEAD MEN HAVE NO FEAR OF BLADES.



W-WHAT--
WHAT MANNER OF HELLSPAWN ARE YOU?



THE KIND WHO IS WILLING TO TREAT WITH A LOWLY WORM SUCH AS YOURSELF.

IF MY FORM GIVES YOU PAUSE, THEN TAKE HEART.

SHOULD WE MEET AGAIN AFTER THIS NIGHT, I WILL TAKE YET ANOTHER UNANTICIPATED SHAPE.

THIS IS THE WAY OF MY KIND...

...TO REMIND MORTALS THAT THEY SHOULD NEVER BE TOO COMFORTABLE AND CONTENT WHEN CALLING FOR OUR AID AND COUNSEL.



I CAN ONLY WONDER... IS YOUR HESITATION GENUINE? OR IS IT FOR SHOW?

DO YOU PLAY UP YOUR OWN DOUBTS FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR OWN PEACEFUL MIND?

YEARS FROM NOW, WILL YOU TELL YOURSELF THAT YOU AT LEAST PONDERED WHETHER OR NOT YOU SHOULD STRIKE THIS PACT?



MAKE YOUR DECISION, MORTAL, AND DO SO WITH HASTE.

IF YOU CANNOT TRADE WITH ONE OF MY KIND TO GET THAT WHICH YOU DESIRE, THEN RUN SCREAMING BACK INTO THE DARK.

BUT IF YOU WISH TO BARTER--



--THEN SIT.
TELL ME OF YOUR WOES.
REGALE ME WITH TALES OF YOUR PETTY EARTHLY TROUBLES.



A STRANGER...

...A CIMMERIAN...

...HAS TAKEN UP WITH MY PEOPLE.



HE WANDERED INTO OUR CAMP, HALF-DEAD AND CARRYING A STOLEN SWORD...

...HUNTED BY THE TURANIANS...

...AND YET MY FATHER HAS EMBRACED HIM AS IF HE WERE A KOZAK BORN!



MY BROTHER, TOO, LOOKS TO THIS BARBARIAN WITH ADMIRATION.

CAN THEY NOT SEE HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO HARBOR THIS MAN?

WE COULD BE FORGING ALLIANCES WITH THE TURANIANS. JEHLINSIR AGHA HIMSELF IS OPEN TO A TRUCE BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE.

BUT IF WE GIVE SUCCOR TO THEIR ENEMIES--

SPEAK TRUTHFULLY NOW.
IS IT THE CIMMERIAN THAT DISPLEASES YOU SO?

TELL ME WHAT IT IS YOU REALLY WANT AND YOU SHALL HAVE IT.



SAY IT.



MY FATHER'S LOYALTY TO THIS BARBARIAN OVER HIS OWN PEOPLE HAS MADE IT CLEAR. HE IS *UNFIT* TO LEAD. AND MY BROTHER MAY BE NEXT IN LINE, BUT HE IS *WEAK*.



AND SO THIS IS WHAT YOU DESIRE. I WILL OFFER YOU A BONE. WHAT I LEAVE BEHIND WILL HELP YOU DEAL WITH ONE OF YOUR PROBLEMS.



BUT ONLY ONE.



YOUR OTHER TROUBLES WILL BE YOUR OWN TO MANAGE...
...IF YOU HAVE THE WILL...
...AND THE STOMACH FOR IT.



I'VE ALREADY MADE ARRANGEMENTS. OURS IS NOT THE *ONLY* BARGAIN I'VE STRUCK OF LATE.





--HE IS LOYAL TO HIS FAMILY.



THERE ARE NO TRACKS HERE.

THEY DIDN'T COME THIS WAY.

WE SHOULD HEAD BACK THE WAY WE--

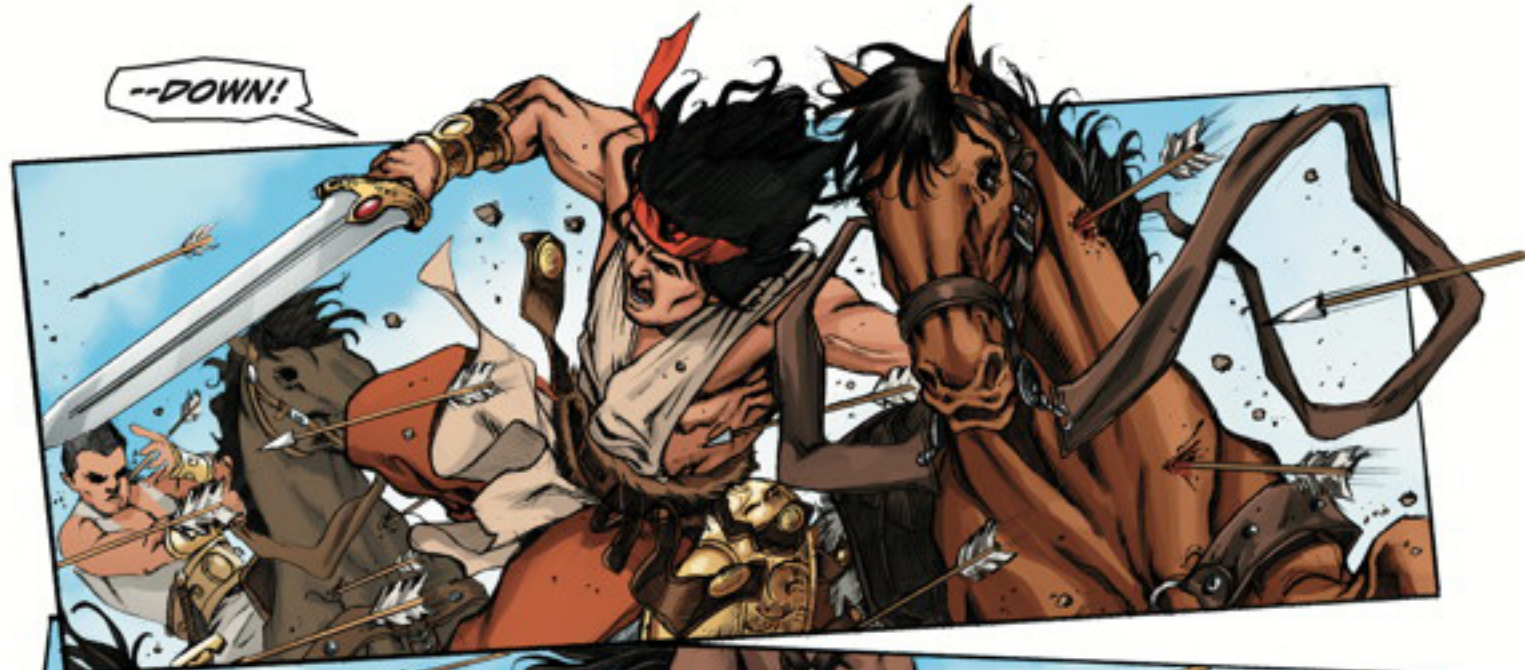


WAIT.



GET--

--DOWN!



AN
AMBUSH!



ANNGH!



CROM,
BUT WE WERE
FOOLS!
WE SHOULD
HAVE SEEN THIS
COMING!

