



IRON MAIDEN

BY SANYA ANWAR

WITH KIKE J. DIAZ

HASSAN OTSMANE-ELHAOU

AND

NATE COSBY



NOON.





<WHO ARE YOU? WHERE--?>

I CAME TO PRAY TO THE MAIDEN WHEN I FOUND YOU AT HER FEET, HALF DEAD.

I'VE HEARD OF MAKING OFFERINGS OF FLOWERS AND SWEET MEATS... BUT YOUR OWN PRONE AND BLOODY BODY? BIT EXTREME, IF YOU ASK ME.

<DO YOU ALWAYS SMMPH= TALK THIS MUCH?>

I'M AFRAID I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR ROUGH, BARBARIAN TONGUE BUT--



--YOU CAN CALL ME OENILA. OENILA.



<...SONJA OF HYRKANIA.>

SONJA FROM... HYRKANIA? I THOUGHT SUCH PLACES WERE ONLY FAIRY TALES. WE DON'T GET MUCH NEWS OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE, HERE IN THE VALLEY.



<YOUR CHALKY SKIN WOULD FRY IN THE HYRKANIAN SUN.>

<BOTHER-SOME.>

EVERYTIME YOU SPEAK IT'S LIKE ROCKS GRINDING! STAY UNTIL THOSE STITCHES HEAL AND I'LL TEACH YOU A CIVILIZED LANGUAGE.



NO WOOD

IT'S FROM MY VILLAGE. THEY'VE SPOTTED THE... TRADERS. THEY COME BY FROM... TIME TO TIME.

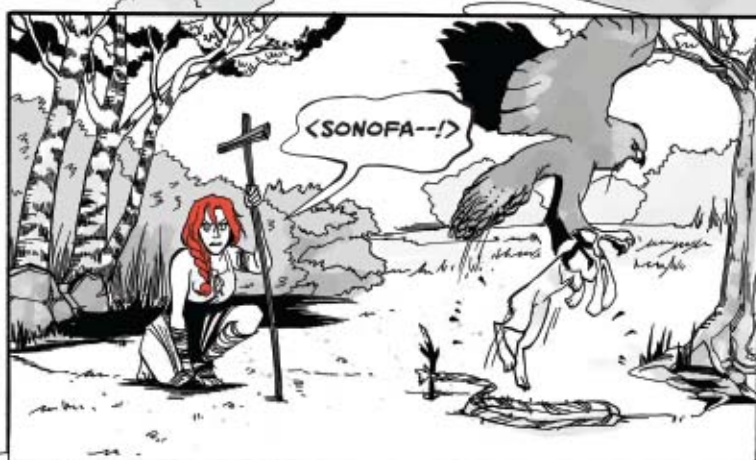


I'VE GOT TO GO. TRY NOT TO DIE, SONJA FROM HYRKANIA.



HMPH.

MIDSUMMER.





<SO IT WAS
SUPPOSED TO BE
CASH UP FRONT, EASY
JOB. PROTECTION FOR
A MERCHANT CARAVAN,
CARRYING SOME FOREIGN
FRUIT, SMITHING TOOLS--
YOUR USUAL
FARE.>

<AND NEXT
THING I KNOW,
WE'VE GOT TWO
DOZEN BANDITS,
CLOSING IN ON
EVERY SIDE-->

HMMM.

<I CAN CLEAVE A MAN
FROM BRAINS TO BALLS
LIKE THAT-->

<--BUT
WHADDA I
DO WITH THOSE DAMN
STEALTH ARCHERS? GOT
MYSELF STUCK THROUGH
THE RIBS LIKE A
SUCKLING PIG.>

I CAN HARDLY IMAGINE IT, THE
LIFE OF A *WOMAN* WARRIOR.
WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO
BE ABLE TO PROTECT MY
YOUNGER SISTERS, PROTECT
MYSELF, FROM--

<I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND WHAT
YOU'RE
SAYING-->

ANYWAY,
I CAN'T EVEN
BUTCHER A HOG
WITHOUT TURNING
SQUEAMISH.

YOU'RE NOT YET
HEALED, SONJA
OF HYRKANIA. NO
MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS, YOU
MUST STAY
HIDDEN, HERE
WITH THE
MAIDEN.

IT'S
ONLY US
WOMEN
WHO COME
TO HER ALTAR
TO PRAY FOR
LOVE, FOR
MARRIAGE...

...FOR
MERCY.