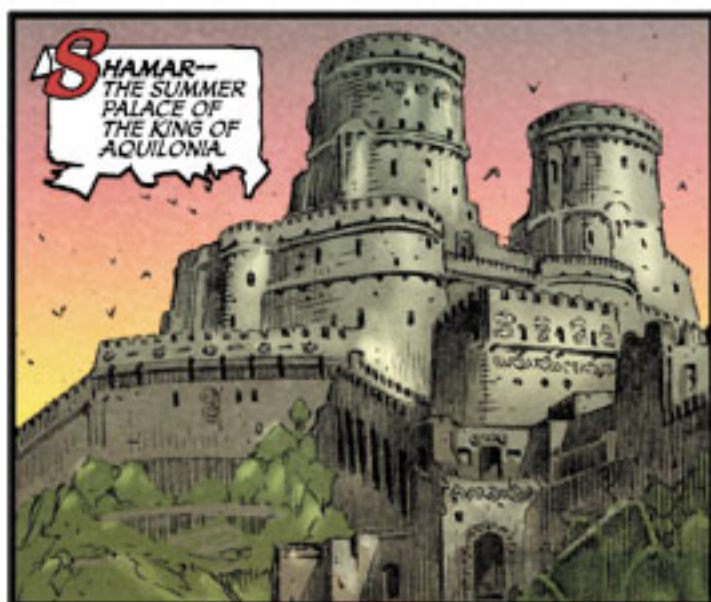




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SHAMAR--
THE SUMMER
PALACE OF
THE KING OF
AQUILONIA.



PERMISSION
TO ENTER YOUR
CHAMBERS,
MY LIEGE?



IF YOU
MUST. WHO
ARE YOU,
BOY?

I AM *PRAMIS*,
MILORD, FROM NEMEDIA--
A SCRIBE IN THE
ORDER OF CHRONICLERS.
I WAS SENT BY--



--BY
COUNCILOR
PUBLIUS. AYE,
HE WARNED
ME.

THE
SENILE OLD
CROW.

DOES HE
THINK I'VE NO
BETTER USE
FOR THE
NIGHT?



LORD PUBLIUS BELIEVES IT'S TIME TO TRANSCRIBE A *HISTORY* OF YOUR REIGN, MY KING... THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS MIGHT KNOW OF YOUR TRIUMPHS... YOUR *GLORY*...



WHY SHOULD I DWELL ON THE PAST WHEN I CAN DREAM OF THINGS I'VE *YET* TO SEE?

STILL, I'VE NEVER SHIED AWAY FROM TELLING A TALE-- ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE'S NEW WINE IN MY CUP... AND ANOTHER JUG TO FINISH OFF...



WOULD YOU BEGIN, MY LIEGE, BY SPEAKING ON THE WIZARD *TSOTHA*... THE TREACHERY OF *STRABONUS* AND *AMALRUS*... AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF *SHAMU*?



HA!

"THEY TRAPPED THE LION ON *SHAMU*'S PLAIN, AND WEIGHED HIS LIMBS IN IRON CHAIN. THEY CRIED--ALoud IN THE TRUMPET BLAST! THEY CRIED--THE LION IS CAGED AT LAST!"



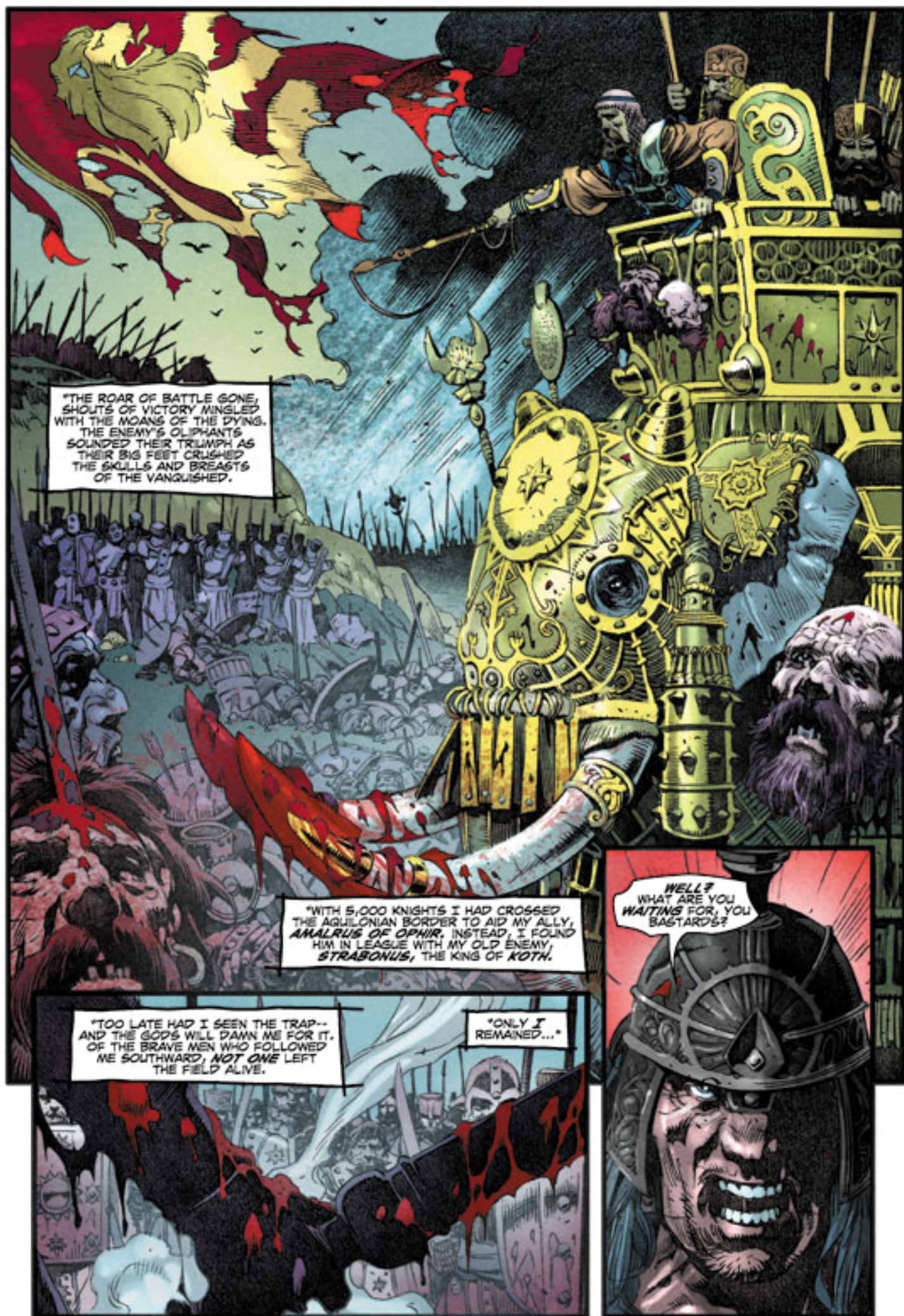
EVEN YOU MUST HAVE HEARD THE SONG, EH? THESE AGUILONIANS HAVE WRITTEN SO MANY ABOUT ME. AT LEAST THAT ONE HAS A SPRIGHTLY TUNE, BECAUSE IT'S A SONG WITH BITTER VERSES. AYE... BITTER INDEED.

THAT DAY ON THE PLAIN, I SAW MY KNIGHTS CUT TO PIECES... SMASHED AND HAMMERED TO BITS, THEN SWEEPED INTO ETERNITY...



GRAB A CUP, BOY.

IF IT'S A TALE YOU WANT, THEN, BY *CROM*, A TALE I'LL GIVE YOU.



"THE ROAR OF BATTLE GONE,
SHOUTS OF VICTORY MINGLED
WITH THE MOANS OF THE DYING.
THE ENEMY'S OLIPHANTS
SOUNDED THEIR TRIUMPH AS
THEIR BIG FEET CRUSHED
THE SKULLS AND BREASTS
OF THE VANQUISHED."

"WITH 5,000 KNIGHTS I HAD CROSSED
THE AGULONIAN BORDER TO AID MY ALLY,
AMALRUS OF OPHIR. INSTEAD, I FOUND
HIM IN LEAGUE WITH MY OLD ENEMY,
STRABONUS, THE KING OF *KOTH*."

"TOO LATE HAD I SEEN THE TRAP--
AND THE GODS WILL DAWN ME FOR IT.
OF THE BRAVE MEN WHO FOLLOWED
ME SOUTHWARD, *NOT ONE* LEFT
THE FIELD ALIVE."

"ONLY *I*
REMAINED..."

WELL?
WHAT ARE YOU
WAITING FOR, YOU
BASTARDS?



WHO DIES NEXT?

"I--CONAN, KING OF AQUILONIA, LORD OF TAMAR--ALONE!"

BAH!
WHY RISK TAKING
A TIGER ALIVE,
WHEN HE'S ALREADY
TURNED SO MANY
OF MY KNIGHTS TO
KITE'S MEAT?

ARCHERS,
STAND READY!
FIRE ON MY
COMMAND!

"IT WAS THEN THAT
THE *STYGIAN* APPEARED."

NO!
TAKE THE
USURPER
ALIVE!





"TSOTHA-LANTI
HE WAS CALLED--
A DEVOTEE OF THE
FOUL GOD SET.

"MEN SAID THAT HE TRADED SLAVES FOR BOOKS OF
SPELLS BOUND IN HUMAN FLESH! WILLFUL CHILDREN
AND REBELLIOUS SERVANTS WERE BROUGHT TO BAY
WITH THE MERE THREAT OF BEING **SOLD** TO HIM!"

I OFFER
YOU LIFE,
CONAN!



AND I
OFFER YOU
DEATH,
WIZARD!

