



YOU DO NOT LOVE MY CARESSES, SWEET SISTER?



YOU ARE NOT SO READY WITH YOUR TEARS AS FORMERLY...

NNNH!

YOU SHALL WRING NO MORE TEARS FROM ME.

TOO OFTEN YOU HAVE REVELED IN THE SPECTACLE OF THE QUEEN OF KHAURAN SOBBING FOR MERCY ON HER KNEES.

I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE SPARED ME ONLY TO TORTURE ME; THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE LIMITED YOUR TORTURES TO SUCH TORTURES AS NEITHER SLAY NOR PERMANENTLY DISFIGURE.

BUT I FEAR YOU NO LONGER; YOU HAVE STRAINED OUT THE LAST VESTIGE OF HOPE, FRIGHT, AND SHAME FROM ME.





SLAY ME AND BE DONE WITH IT, FOR I HAVE SHED MY LAST TEAR FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT, YOU SHE-DEVIL FROM HELL!

YOU FLATTER YOURSELF, DEAR SISTER.

SO FAR IT IS ONLY YOUR HANDSOME *BODY* THAT I HAVE CAUSED TO SUFFER, ONLY YOUR PRIDE AND SELF-ESTEEM THAT I HAVE CRUSHED.



YOU FORGET THAT, UNLIKE MYSELF, YOU ARE CAPABLE OF MENTAL TORTURE.

I HAVE OBSERVED THIS WHEN I HAVE REGALED YOU WITH NARRATIVES CONCERNING THE COMEDIES I HAVE ENACTED WITH SOME OF YOUR STUPID SUBJECTS.



BUT THIS TIME I HAVE BROUGHT MORE VIVID PROOF OF THESE FARCES.

DID YOU KNOW THAT KRALLIDES, YOUR FAITHFUL COUNCILLOR, HAD COME SKULKING BACK FROM TURAN AND BEEN CAPTURED?



WHAT-- WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?





OH, ISHTAR!
KRALLIDES!



AYE! HE WAS SEEKING TO STIR UP THE PEOPLE AGAINST ME, POOR FOOL, TELLING THEM THAT CONAN SPOKE THE TRUTH WHEN HE SAID I WAS NOT TARANIS.

HOW WOULD THE PEOPLE RISE AGAINST THE FALCON'S SHEMITES? WITH STICKS AND PEBBLES?



BAH! DOGS ARE EATING HIS HEADLESS BODY IN THE MARKETPLACE, AND THIS FOUL CARRION SHALL BE CAST INTO THE SEWER TO ROT.



HOW, SISTER! HAVE YOU DISCOVERED THAT YOU STILL HAVE UNSHED TEARS?
GOOD!



I RESERVED THE MENTAL TORMENT FOR THE LAST.

HEREAFTER I SHALL SHOW YOU MANY SUCH SIGHTS AS THIS!







I *KNEW* THAT CONAN SPOKE THE TRUTH WHEN HE SAID IT WAS NOT TARAMIS!

FOR MONTHS I HAVE HAUNTED THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE PALACE, PLAYING THE PART OF A DEAF BEGGAR.



AT LAST I LEARNED WHAT I HAD BELIEVED-- THAT OUR QUEEN WAS A PRISONER IN THE DUNGEONS THAT ADJOIN THE PALACE.

THIS INVASION OF THE ZUAGIRS GIVES US THE *OPPORTUNITY* WE SOUGHT.

WHAT CONAN MEANS TO DO, I CANNOT SAY.



PERHAPS HE MERELY WISHES VENGEANCE ON CONSTANTIUS. PERHAPS HE INTENDS SACKING THE CITY AND DESTROYING IT. HE IS A *BARBARIAN* AND NO ONE CAN UNDERSTAND THEIR MINDS.

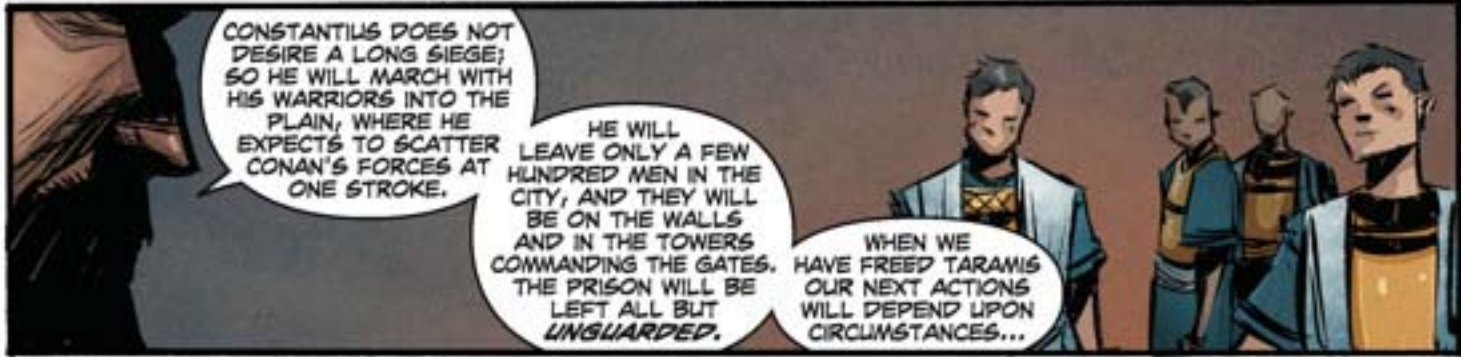
BUT THIS IS WHAT WE MUST DO: *RESCUE TARAMIS* WHILE THE BATTLE RAGES!



CONSTANTIUS WILL MARCH OUT INTO THE PLAIN TO GIVE BATTLE. EVEN NOW HIS MEN ARE MOUNTING.

HE WILL DO THIS BECAUSE THERE IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOOD IN THE CITY TO STAND A *SIEGE*. CONAN BURST OUT OF THE DESERT SO SUDDENLY THAT THERE WAS NO TIME TO BRING IN SUPPLIES.

AND SCOUTS HAVE REPORTED THAT THE ZUAGIRS HAVE *SIEGE ENGINES*, BUILT, UNDOUBTEDLY, ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS OF CONAN, WHO LEARNED ALL THE ARTS OF WAR AMONG THE WESTERN NATIONS.



CONSTANTIUS DOES NOT DESIRE A LONG *SIEGE*; SO HE WILL MARCH WITH HIS WARRIORS INTO THE PLAIN, WHERE HE EXPECTS TO SCATTER CONAN'S FORCES AT ONE STROKE.

HE WILL LEAVE ONLY A FEW HUNDRED MEN IN THE CITY, AND THEY WILL BE ON THE WALLS AND IN THE TOWERS COMMANDING THE GATES. THE PRISON WILL BE LEFT ALL BUT *LINGUARDED*.

WHEN WE HAVE FREED TARAMIS OUR NEXT ACTIONS WILL DEPEND UPON CIRCUMSTANCES...