

IN THE ROYAL PALACE OF KING XOANA OF ZINGARA.

IF YOU KEEP WATCH ANY LONGER, YOU'LL GO BLIND!

FATHER'S SCOUTS SAID SUTEKH'S ARMY HAS CROSSED THE THUNDER RIVER AND IS RAVAGING THE COUNTRYSIDE.

WE HAVE NOT HEARD SO MUCH AS A WHISPER FROM TEACHER IN OVER A MOON. I FEAR SHE HAS ALREADY FALLEN TO THE DEMON...

DON'T SPEAK SUCH FEARS OUT LOUD XOANA, LEST THE FATES MAKE THEM REAL...



I'M SURE TEACHER WILL SHOW UP WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT---

EYES OF ISHTAR!

TEACHER--! IS THAT YOU?!



TEACHER, MY HEART SOARS TO SEE YOU ALIVE!!



LYLA KNEW HER TEACHER AS WELL AS SHE KNEW THE STRING OF HER BOW. THERE WAS SOMETHING NEW IN HER TEACHER, SOMETHING DANGEROUS.

I AM YOUR TEACHER NO MORE, GIRL... I HAVE JOINED WITH THE GODDESS SCATHACH TO BECOME SOMETHING FAR MORE.



LYLA FELT THE TENSION - TWO SOULS, HER TEACHER, AND THE GODDESS SCATHACH, FIGHTING OVER THE SAME BODY.

XOANA - YOU ARE NEEDED IN WAR COUNSEL. THE FINAL BATTLE APPROACHES. NONE OF OUR EMISSARIES HAS RETURNED AND I FEAR ALL OUR ALLIES HAVE BEEN OVERTAKEN -

I - DEVIL'S BLOOD--! RED SONJA?!



I BRING ILL TIDINGS, INDEED YOUR ALLIES HAVE BEEN OVERTAKEN - THE FATE OF THIS WORLD STANDS UPON THE EDGE OF A BLADE. FORTUNATELY, I HAVE JUST COME FROM LUXOR, AND FORGED A BLADE THAT SHOULD GIVE US AN EDGE IN THIS CONFLICT.

LUXOR? HOW DID YOU GET HERE SO QUICKLY?

FATHER, TEACHER HAS JOINED WITH SCÁTHACH, HER PATRON GODDESS. WE HAVE OUR OWN DEMI-GOD NOW.

I BEG YOUR PARDON, DIVINE ONE. YOU DO MY HOUSE GREAT HONOR!

SKIP THE FORMALITIES: DOOM IS UPON US AND WE MUST MOVE SWIFTLY. I SENSE YOUR BORDERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN BREACHED.

INDEED, THEY HAVE, GODDESS. NOT ONLY HAVE SUTEKH'S FIENDS SWARMED THE ZING VALLEY TO THE EAST...

*THEY HAVE OVERRUN THE SUMMER PALACE AND KILLED MY QUEEN!


*MY SCOUTS AND SPIES TELL ME THAT SUTEKH'S ARMY IS MOVING RAPIDLY, AND WILL SOON BE WITHIN VIEW OF KORDAVA'S WALLS. WE HAVE SPENT THE LAST DAYS SETTING EVERY POSSIBLE DEFENSE, AND MAKING EVERY IMAGINABLE PROVISION.

"HERE IS WHERE WE MAKE OUR LAST STAND!"

"WE CANNOT SIMPLY WAIT HERE TO DIE. THAT IS A MISTAKE THAT HAS BEEN MADE BY FAR TOO MANY OF YOUR FELLOW RULERS. OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO DO SOMETHING SUTEKH WILL NOT EXPECT - ATTACK!"

THAT IS MADNESS! HE WILL SLAUGHTER US! WHAT CAN WE DO TO DEFEAT THIS MONSTER?

WE ALL MAY WELL PERISH IN THE COMING DAYS, KING XOAN, BUT WOULD YOU RATHER DIE HIDING BEHIND THESE WALLS, OR WITH A SWORD IN YOUR HANDS?




DO NOT TAKE MY QUESTION AS AN INSULT, SONJA... OR SCATHACH... OR WHOEVER YOU ARE —BUT OF ALL THE GODS, WHY IS IT THAT YOU ARE THE ONE TO HELP US? WHY NOT MITRA? AFTER ALL, HE IS THE ONE WHO LAST BANISHED SET FROM OUR WORLD...


THE GODS DRAW THEIR POWER FROM THE WORSHIP OF MORTALS, AND THE BLOOD THEY SPILL UPON THEIR ALTARS.




THERE IS TRUTH IN YOUR WORDS, LADY SCATHACH. BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN I RELISH HAVING MY CROWN CITY TURNED INTO A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.



"SUTEKH HAS DEFILED THE TEMPLES OF NEARLY EVERY GOD THIS SIDE OF THE VILAYET SEA, PUTTING THEIR PRIESTS TO THE SWORD AND FORBIDDING THEIR WORSHIP. SCATHACH MAY HAVE FEW FOLLOWERS, COMPARED TO MITRA OR ISHTAR, BUT HER TEMPLES IN HYRKANIA HAVE YET TO BE TOUCHED.



"SUTEKH WOULD STARVE ALL THE GODS IN THE NAME OF HIS FATHER. THEY ARE ALREADY SERIOUSLY WEAKENED. WHAT ENERGY COULD BE SPARED HAS BEEN USED TO EMPOWER A SWORD CONSECRATED BY THE FLAMES FROM THE FUNERAL PYRE OF THE DEMI-GOD'S MORTAL MOTHER.



"BUT IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN MERE DIVINE INTERVENTION TO UNMAKE A BEING SUCH AS THE SON OF SET. IT WILL TAKE ALL OF US, MORTAL AND IMMORTAL ALIKE."

A DAY'S RIDE, AS THE VULTURE FLIES, FROM THE WALLS OF KORDAVA.

A NEWLY MINTED GOD STANDS BEFORE HIS FOLLOWERS AND COMMANDS THEIR WORSHIP..

WHO CAN SAVE US FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE, BUT YOU SUTEKH? PRAISED BE THY NAME! AT YOUR APPROACH, THE OLD GODS TREMBLE! SANCTIFY US, SPARE US, WE BEG OF THEE!

AH! GENERAL CAIUS! OR, IS IT SIMPLY 'CAIUS' NOW? WHY DO YOU AND YOUR MEN REFUSE TO WORSHIP ME?

WE MAY RECOGNIZE YOU AS OUR CONQUEROR, SUTEKH-BUT YOU ARE NOT OUR GOD!

INDEED? TELL ME "GENERAL", HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE KESHAN VIPER?

ITS BITE CAUSES PARALYSIS.

THEY SWALLOW MEN WHOLE.

GK - GUK - ERRGH -

AQUILONIANS - COME! PROCLAIM MY DIVINITY AND BE SPARED! OR THOSE WHO PREFER COURAGE, MAY BRAVELY FACE MY PETS!

NO? NEVER HEARD OF IT? WHAT ABOUT THE PICTISH PYTHON? I IMAGINE YOU HAVE HEARD OF THOSE.





GOOD.
IF I CANNOT HAVE
YOUR PRAYERS, I WILL
TAKE YOUR FEAR. IT IS
NOWHERE AS FILLING
AS WORSHIP, BUT
FAR EASIER TO
INVOKE!

SUTEKH--
PRAISED BE
THY NAME-- WE
CAPTURED THIS
SPY TRYING TO
INFILTRATE THE
CAMP!

AHH, YOU'RE
THE APOSTATE,
SEFKH-- THE ONE
WHO FLED THE
GREAT TEMPLE
ON THE NIGHT I
WAS BORN!

FORGIVE
ME, HOLY ONE! I
WAS A FOOL! PLEASE
LET ME SERVE YOU! I
WILL DO ANYTHING YOU
ASK, IF ONLY I CAN
BASK IN THE LIGHT OF
YOUR GLORY UNTIL
THE END OF ALL
THINGS!

ARISE,
SEFKH, AND
ATTEND ME! YOUR
RETURN IS INDEED
FORTUITOUS....
AS MY LAST HIGH
PRIEST PROVED
UNWILLING TO CAST
ASIDE HIS OLD GOD
IN FAVOR OF THE
NEW!

