



THERE!
THERE IT IS!
YOU SEE IT,
GAMI?



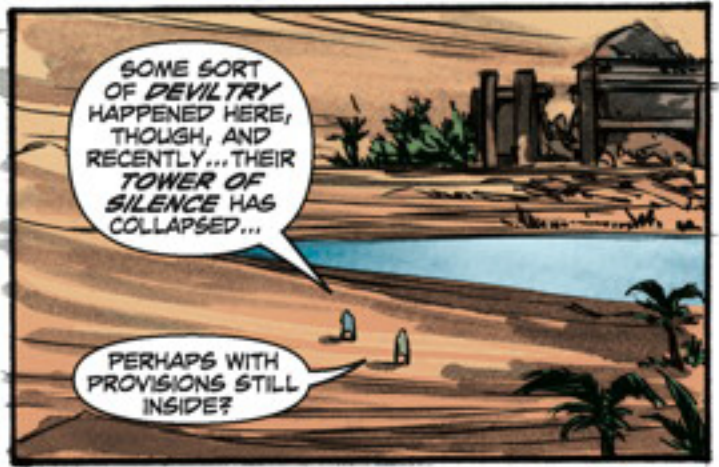
THE OASIS
OF AKREL! I
TOLD YOU! I
TOLD YOU THE
TALES WERE
REAL!

AND THERE
ARE MONKS THERE,
YOU SAY, WHO CAN
GIVE US FOOD?
SHELTER? FRESH
CLOTHING?



IT'S
WHAT THE
OLD CHARTS
SAY...

GUG GUG
GUG GUG



SOME SORT
OF DEVILRY
HAPPENED HERE,
THOUGH, AND
RECENTLY... THEIR
TOWER OF
SILENCE HAS
COLLAPSED...

PERHAPS WITH
PROVISIONS STILL
INSIDE?



HOPEFULLY
IT IS ISHTAR'S
WILL. I TELL YOU,
TAREK...

...I FOR ONE
WILL JUST BE
HAPPY TO STOP
RUNNING...



OUR
ONCE-BELOVED
QUEEN HAS TAKEN
EVERYTHING
FROM US--HER
ONCE-LOYAL
GUARDSMEN.



THOSE
SHE HAS NOT
SLAUGHTERED
SHE HAS DRIVEN
INTO THE
WASTES.



I HAVE
NOT EATEN A
PROPER MEAL IN
MONTHS. I CAN
BARELY LIFT MY
BLADE ABOVE
MY WAIST.



THERE IS
NOTHING YOU
CAN TAKE FROM
US BUT OUR
LIVES, DESERT
DOGS.

TARAMIS
GOT THE REST
BEFORE YOU.



DEAREST ALCEMIDES,
LECTOR TO THE
PERIPATOS OF NEMEDIA:

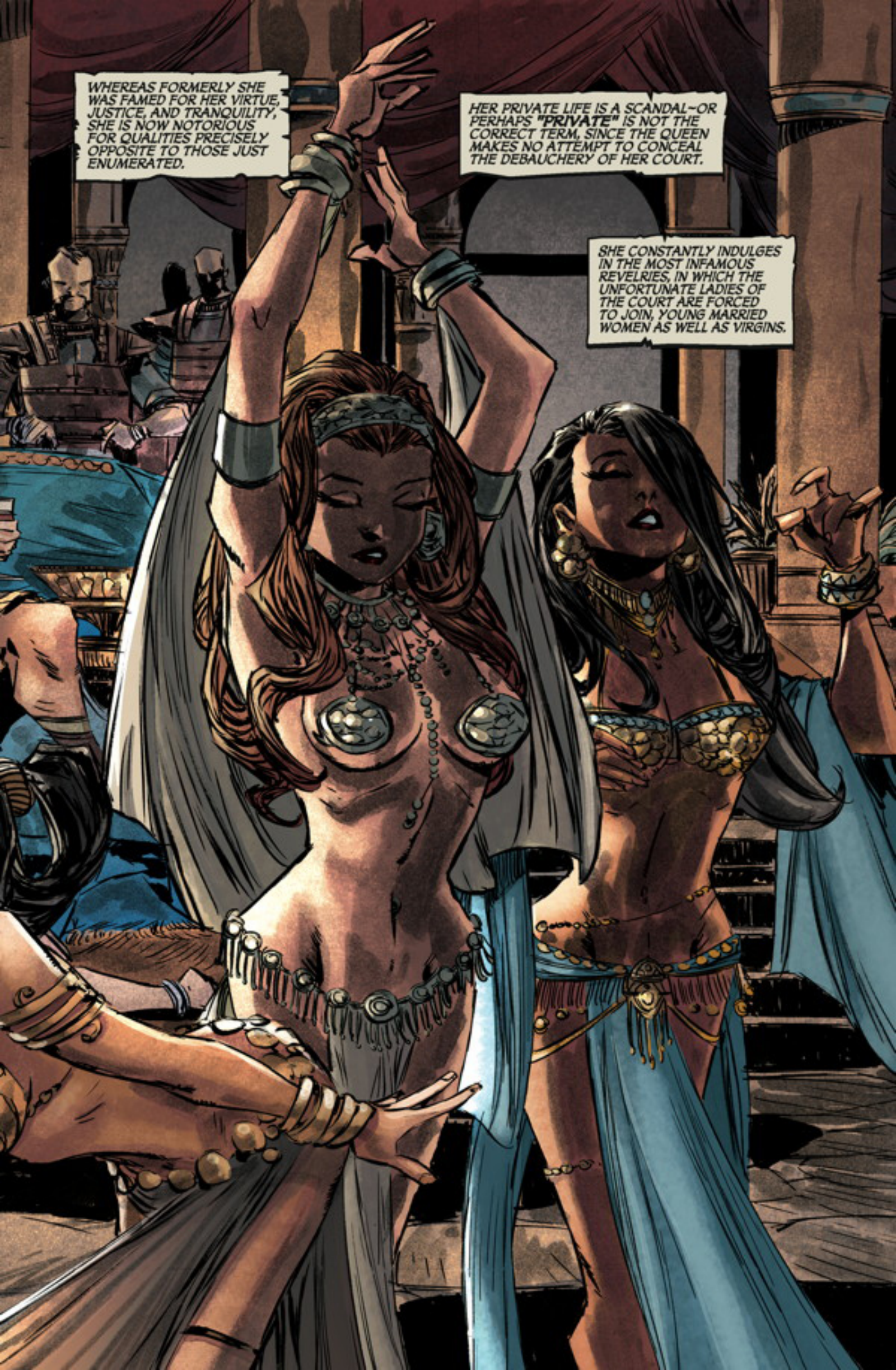
YOU CAN SCARCELY CONCEIVE, MY DEAR OLD FRIEND, OF THE CONDITIONS NOW EXISTING IN THIS TINY KINGDOM SINCE QUEEN TARAMIS ADMITTED CONSTANTIUS AND HIS MERCENARIES...

...AN EVENT WHICH I BRIEFLY DESCRIBED IN MY LAST, HURRIED LETTER.

SEVEN MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THEN, DURING WHICH TIME IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE DEVIL HIMSELF HAD BEEN LOOSED IN THIS UNFORTUNATE REALM.

TARAMIS SEEMS TO HAVE GONE QUITE MAD.





WHEREAS FORMERLY SHE WAS FAMED FOR HER VIRTUE, JUSTICE, AND TRANQUILITY, SHE IS NOW NOTORIOUS FOR QUALITIES PRECISELY OPPOSITE TO THOSE JUST ENUMERATED.

HER PRIVATE LIFE IS A SCANDAL—OR PERHAPS "PRIVATE" IS NOT THE CORRECT TERM, SINCE THE QUEEN MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL THE DEBAUCHERY OF HER COURT.

SHE CONSTANTLY INDULGES IN THE MOST INFAMOUS REVELRIES, IN WHICH THE UNFORTUNATE LADIES OF THE COURT ARE FORCED TO JOIN, YOUNG MARRIED WOMEN AS WELL AS VIRGINS.