



## THE BUTCHER

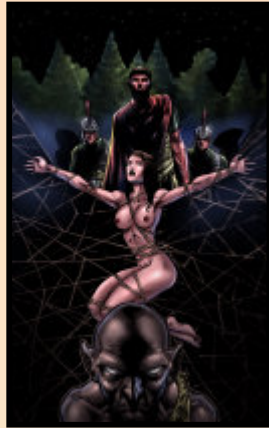
#5 - #8

ADULTS ONLY

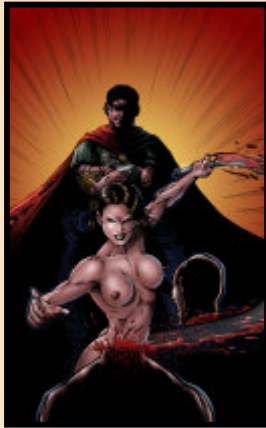
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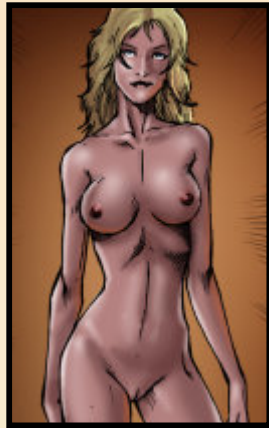
**DARKBRAIN**  
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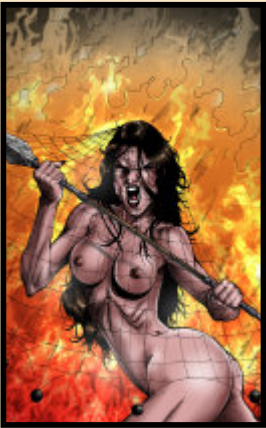
#5 THE WEBS WE WEAVE



#6 WORLDS COLLIDE



#7 CONSEQUENCE  
OF CHOICE



#8 AN UNEASY ALLIANCE





# BUCHER

## #5 "THE WEBS WE WEAVE"

LINES: EL SANTO

COLORS: CELESTIN SZABO

STORY: CRYSTAL STORM

CHARACTERS, STORY, EDITS: ANDREW ZAR

LETTERS: KEITH WOOD

FASTER MOUSE!







**THOK!**



YOU HAVE NO  
TIME TO GLOAT!  
MOVE!







YOUR STANCE IS BETTER, BUT YOUR TRACK TIME IS STILL SLOW.



THIS PACK IS HEAVY!

THIS IS HOW YOUR ENEMY TRAINS! NO EXCUSES!!









THEIR GENERAL, CAEDMON, CLAIMS HE CONTROLS THIS LAND NOW AND WE ARE NOT WELCOME, GENERAL.

WE BEAT THEIR NUMBERS THREE TIMES OVER. ARE THEY FOOLS?



DON'T SLAUGHTER THEM ALL. ONE OF THOSE DOGS KNOWS WHERE THIS BUTCHER IS HIDING.

YES GENERAL.

**RAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!**





K-THUNK!







WHERE DOES THE BUTCHER HIDE?

BY ESUS I DON'T KNOW! LET HER GO!



YOU DON'T GIVE THE ORDERS, GAUL FILTH. I DO.



**STOP!  
STOP PLEASE!  
I BEG YOU!**

**-GASP-**

**WHERE IS  
THE BUTCHER?**

**I DON'T KNOW!**

**RIIIIP!**



-GASP-  
-GASP-  
-GASP-

UFF!  
UFF!



YOUR DAUGHTER'S  
NEXT SWIN UNTIL YOU TELL ME  
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW!

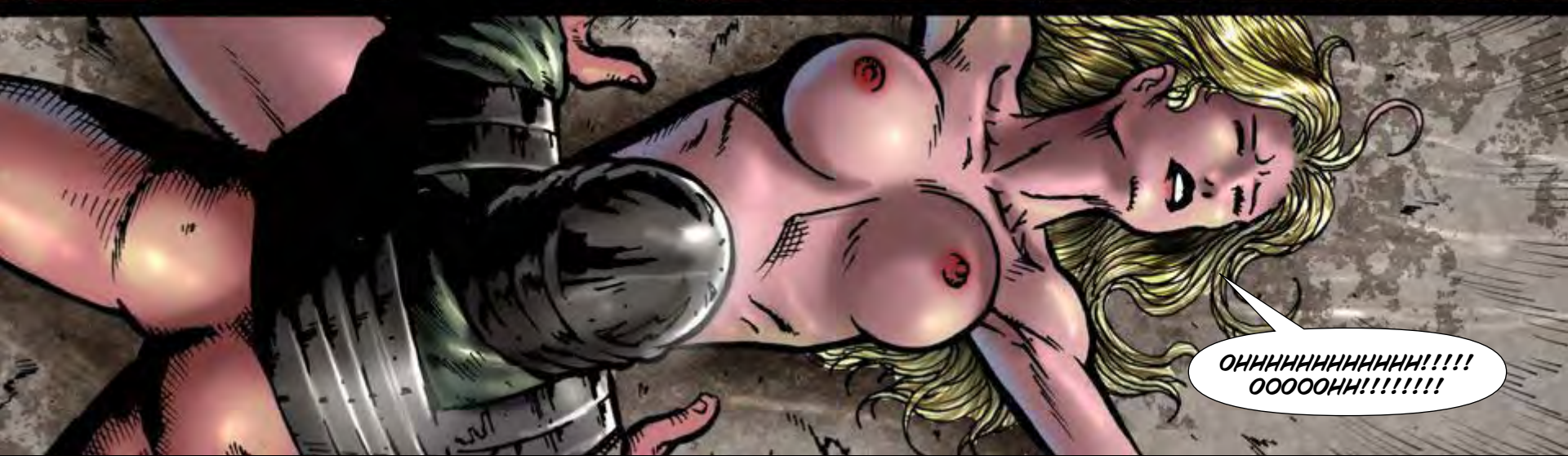


THERE ARE RUMORS  
THAT HE WAS LAST SIGHTED  
NEAR THE VILLAGE OF DURIA  
BUT THAT'S ALL I KNOW!





OH NO...  
OH NO NO... I'M... ->UFF-  
I'M SORRY CAEMON...  
->UFF-



OHNNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!  
OOOOOHH!!!!!!!



SEE! SEE WHAT  
ROME DOES FOR YOUR  
PEOPLE?

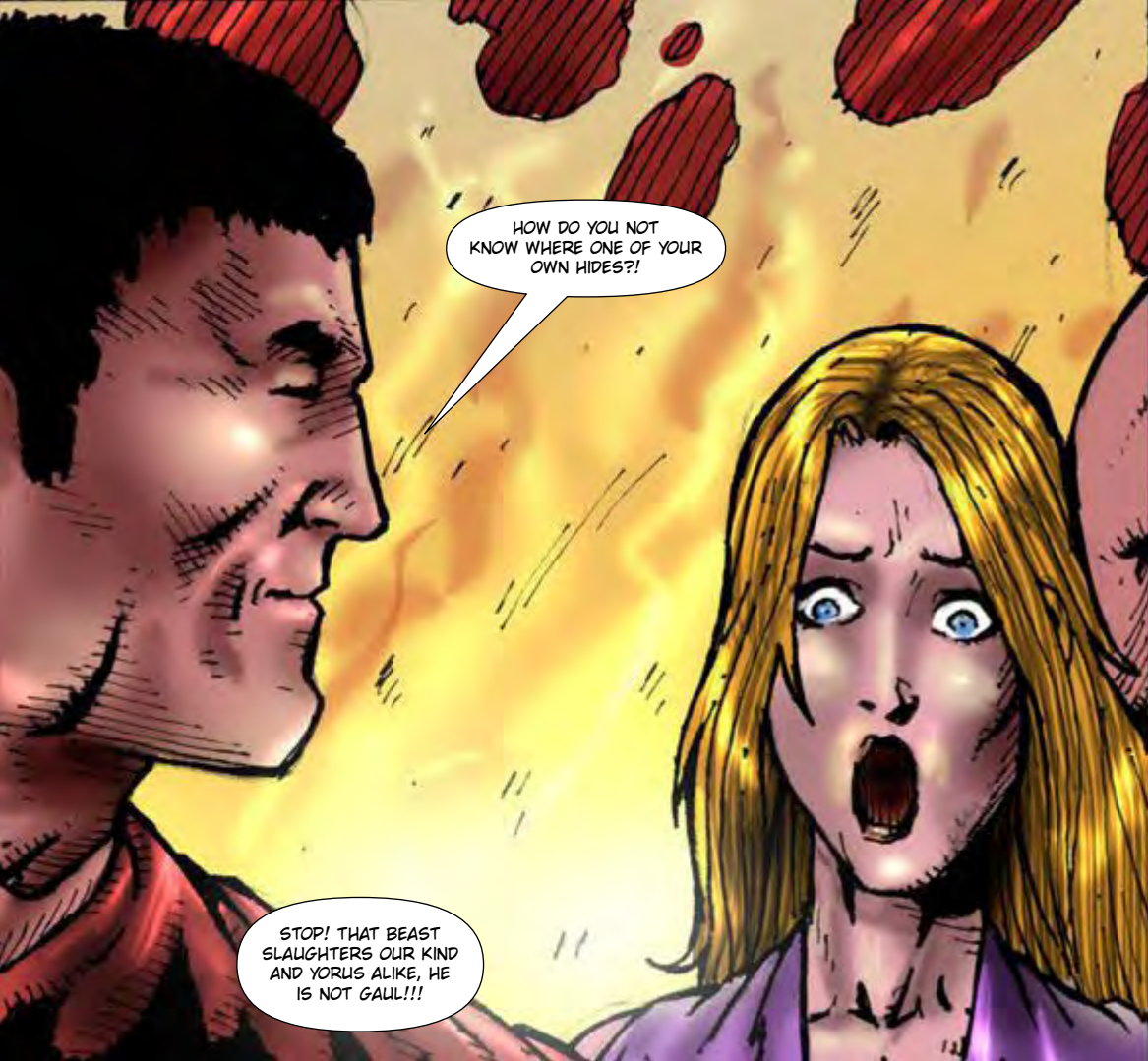
*OHHH!!!  
OHHH!!!*



SHALL WE SHARE  
THE JOYS OF ROME WITH  
YOUR DAUGHTER?

DADDY?

*NOOO! NOT  
HER TOO!*



HOW DO YOU NOT  
KNOW WHERE ONE OF YOUR  
OWN HIDES?!

STOP! THAT BEAST  
SLAUGHTERS OUR KIND  
AND YORUS ALIKE, HE  
IS NOT GAUL!!!



ARRRGHH!!

**SCHLUNK!**



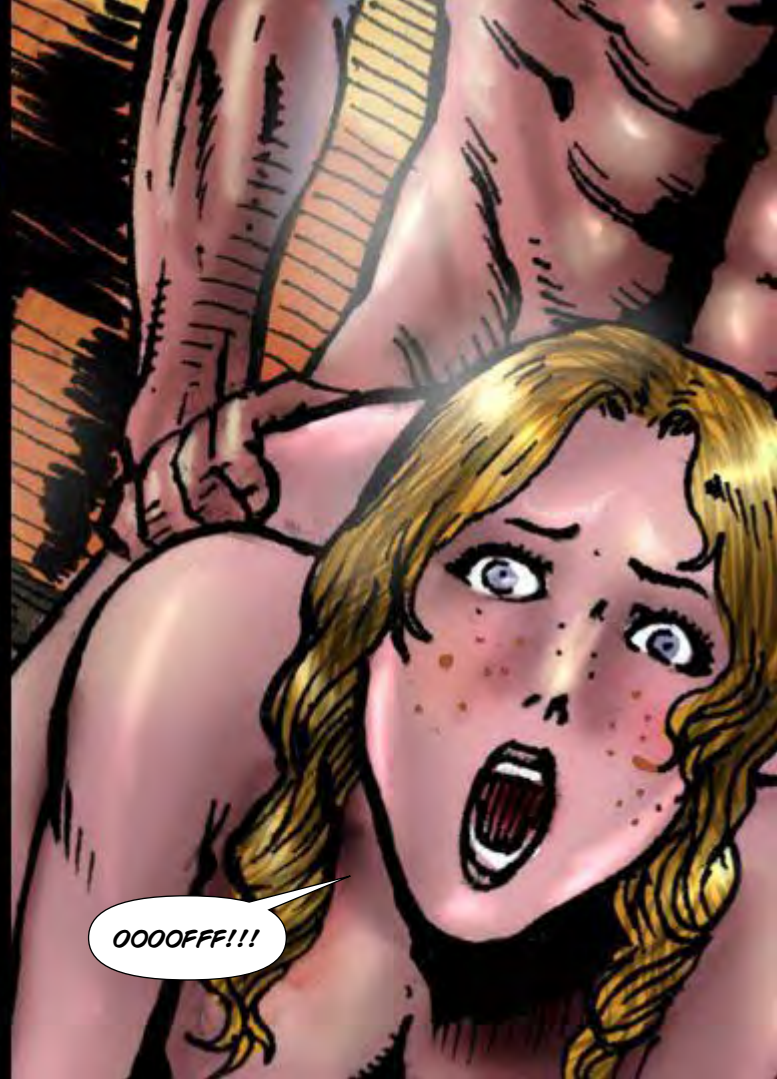
SHE HAS SPLUNK.

**THWOK!**

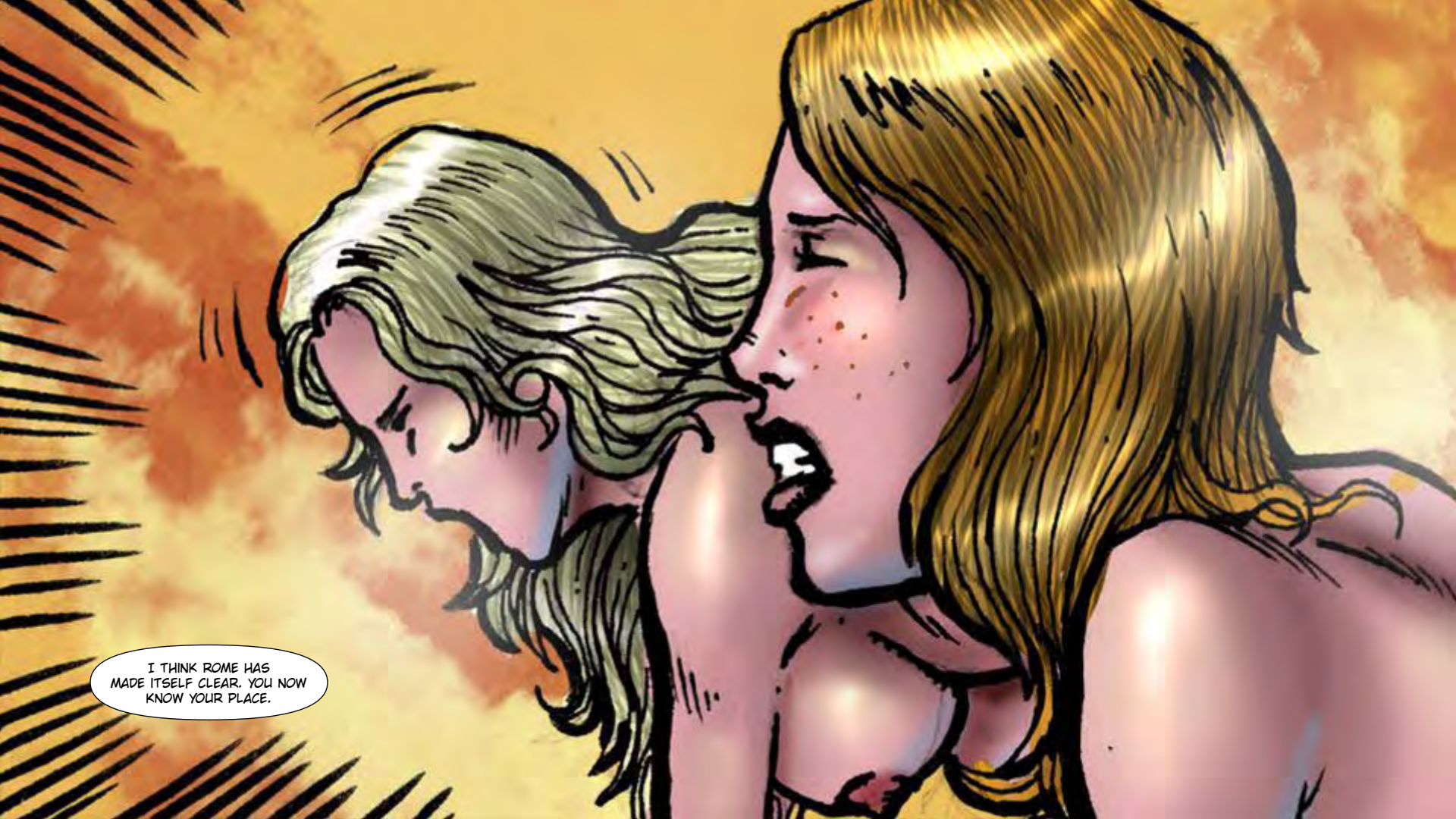


WE WILL SEE HOW LONG THAT SPUNK HOLDS OUT. GET HER READY.

NO! LEAVE HER ALONE!







I THINK ROME HAS  
MADE ITSELF CLEAR. YOU NOW  
KNOW YOUR PLACE.



EVERYONE TAKE AS MANY  
TURNS AS YOU WANT, ENJOY  
THE SPOILS OF ROME! THEY  
CERTAINLY ARE! HAHA!

**YAY!!!**



NO...  
PLEASE  
NO...



LUCILLA...  
LUCILLA...





WAKE UP.



IT'S ME!

GRAB!



THEY WERE  
YOUR FAMILY, WEREN'T  
THEY?



SLEEP. WE  
LEAVE AT THE CRACK  
OF DAWN.

Your only way through  
the afterlife is through me  
child! If you continue to slow  
your progress--



What could  
that be--







WHERE DO YOU GO PEASANT?



Oh, oh, great general, we travel to the merchant down just up ahead. They are in need of a medicine man there.



I THINK YOU'LL FIND THEY NEED MORE THAN A MEDICINE MAN IN THAT TOWN!



WHO IS YOUR SLAVE, MEDICINE MAN?

Oh? Her? Just a godless woman who owes me her life, general.



I OWE YOU NOTHING.  
YOU'VE TAKEN BACK WHATEVER  
HEALTH YOU'VE GIVEN ME.



IS THIS TRUE?  
ARE YOU A GODLESS  
WOMAN?

MY FAITH IS NOT  
YOUR CONCERN.



DO YOU KNOW THE  
QUICKEST WAY TO DURIA,  
OLD MAN?

Uh, yes, yes, but it  
is several days from here, and  
that village has been destroyed.  
Why would you go?

DO NOT QUESTION  
ME. YOU WILL SHOW  
US. NOW.

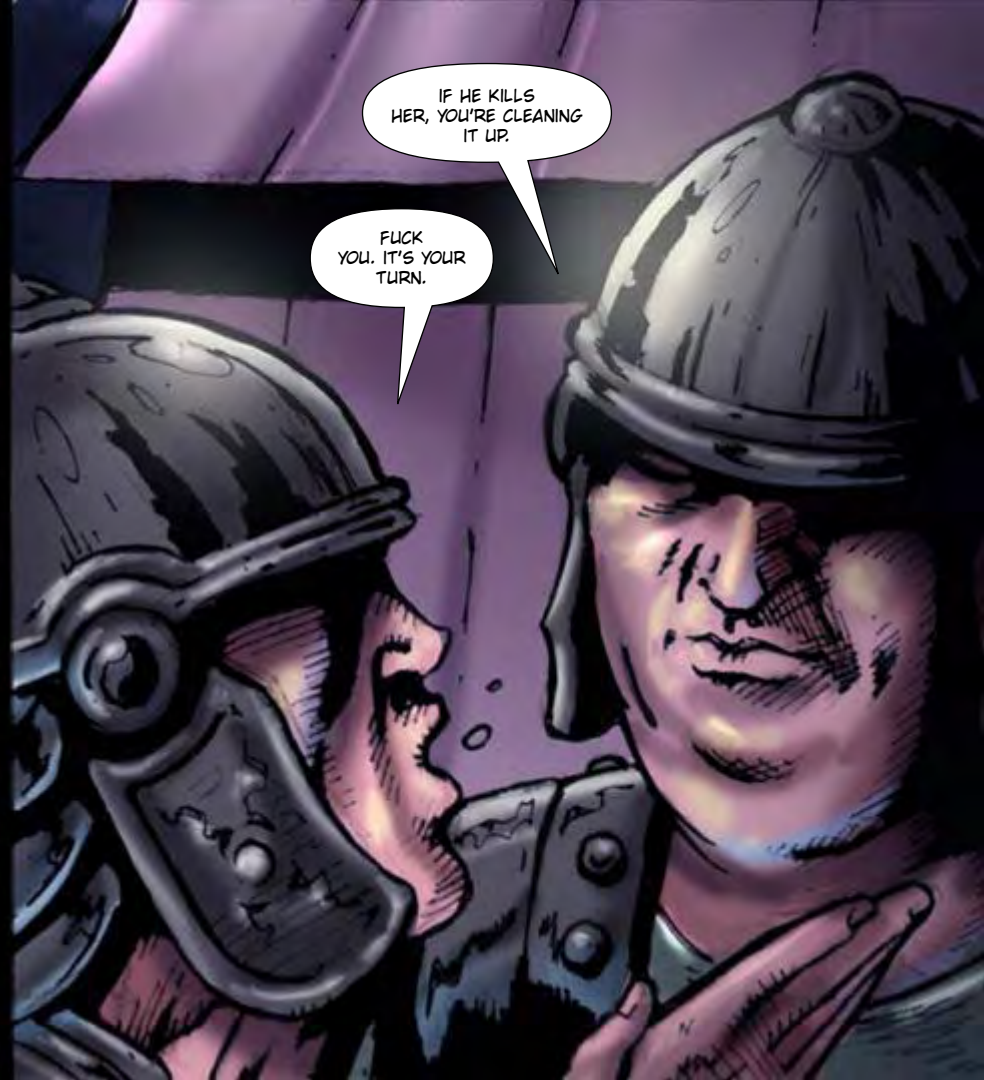






I SERVED MY GODS  
ONCE, AND THEY BROUGHT ME  
NOTHING BUT SUFFERING. YOU'LL BE  
NO DIFFERENT, SO MY SERVICE  
MATTERS LITTLE.







YOU DO NOT  
FEAR ME.

YOUR  
PEOPLE ALREADY  
KILLED ME.

I SEE. AND THE  
MEDICINE MAN GAVE  
YOU LIFE AND MADE YOU  
HIS WHORE.



JUST  
GET IT OVER  
WITH.



HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT  
THAT YOUR SERVICE, YOUR FAITH  
WAS TO THE WRONG GODS?



MMMM



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

SHHH. YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT SERVICE TO ROME.





DON'T.

YOUR GODS CANNOT  
BRING THE PLEASURE MINE  
DOES, FOR SERVICE.



MMMNNN



STOP.

YOU'RE WET,  
WHORE OF ROME. SOON,  
YOU'LL BEG.



THWUMP





OOOOOH!



WILL YOU  
SERVE ROME?

I- I- SERVE  
NOTHING!



*MMNNN*



*NGH!  
UNNH!!!*



OOOH...  
STOP... YOU CAN'T...  
WHY DO I...



OH, YOU WILL  
SERVE. YOU WILL  
SERVE ME.





BEG, WHORE OF ROME.

OOOOOOOH...

PLEASE.



BEG!

OOOH! YOU BASTARD DON'T STOP!!



->HUFF<-  
WHAT GODS WILL YOU GIVE YOUR FAITH TO NOW?

ROME! ROME!  
AAHHHH YES!!!!



THE GENERAL IS COMING TO GAUL.

I HEARD HE'S COME TO KILL THE BUTCHER.

AND CONQUER THESE LANDS IN THE MEANTIME.



**SLITCH!**

WHO GOES THERE!

AAGGHH!

IN THE TREES!



**SHLINK!**



**DIE ROMAN  
FILTH!!!!**



SHINK!





**SLISSSH**



**STHUNK!**



YOU'VE IMPROVED

I PRACTICE WHILE YOU SLEEP.



HE'S LEFT,  
BUT HE'LL BE BACK.  
WE'LL WAIT.







WHAT IN THE WORLD...



WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE?

HIDING FROM THE SCOUTING PARTY. WE GOT LOST AND AND...



YOU'VE MADE  
A MISTAKE... A GRAVE  
MISTAKE...



NO!  
STOP. THEY'RE  
CHILDREN!

THEY'VE SEEN!

THEY'RE  
CHILDREN!

THEY'VE SEEN!  
MOVE!









SOMETHING... SOMETHING  
MUST MAKE YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE  
ONE THAT KILLED YOUR FAMILY.



**RAAAAGHH!!!**



*MMMM*



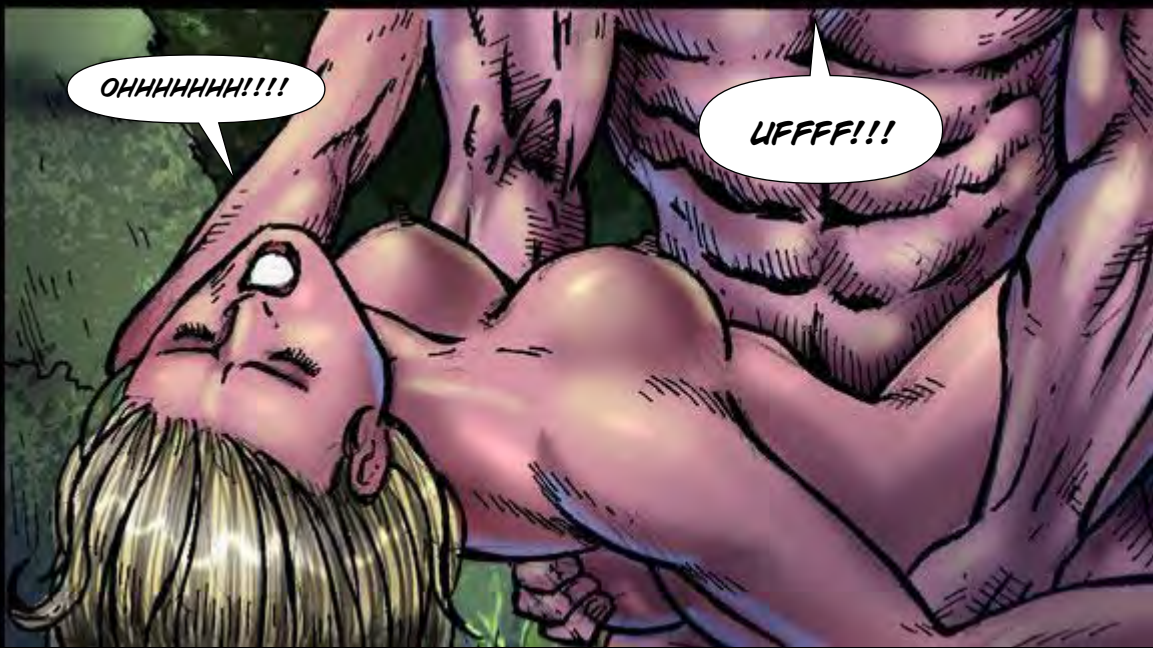


NGH!  
=>GRUNT=  
NGH!

OOOOOH...  
AAAAH!!!

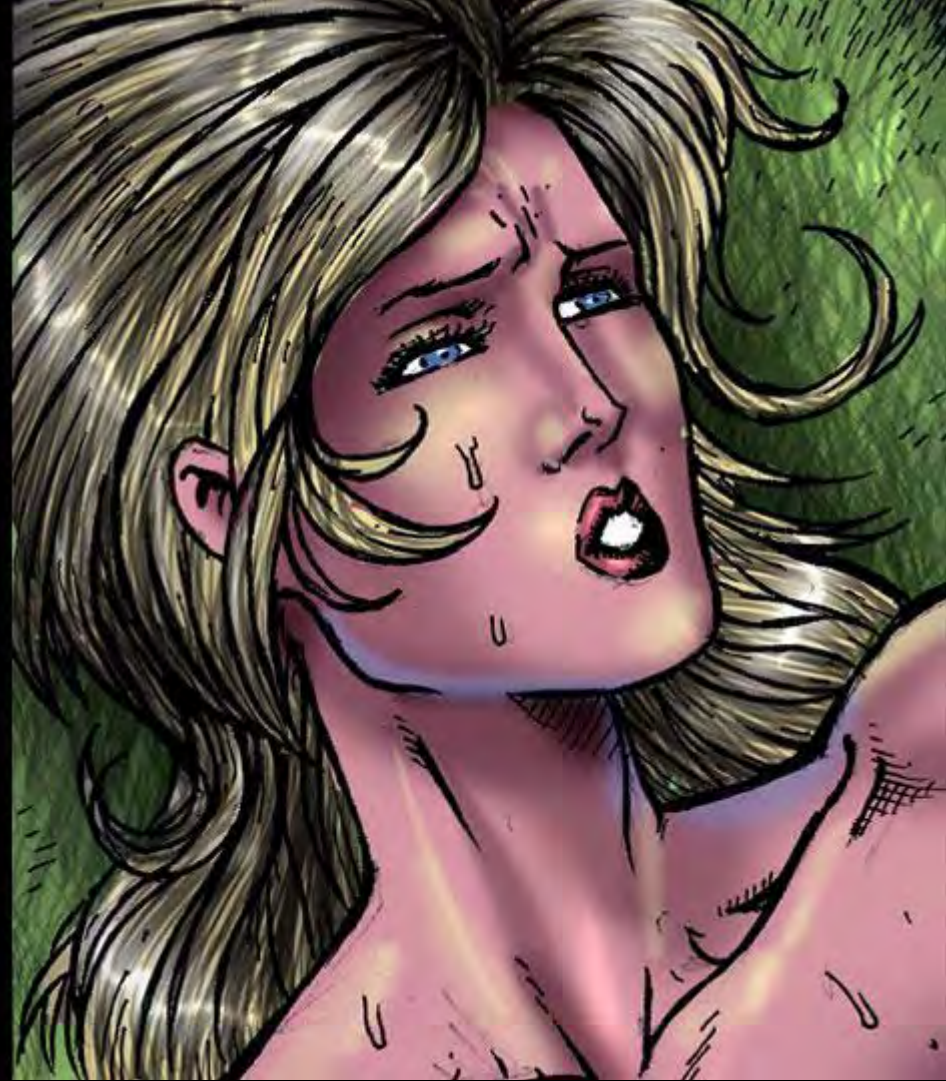


OH YES, YES!  
HARDER... HARDER  
PLEASE!



OH H H H H H H H H H H!!!!

U F F F F F!!!!







YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY  
ABOUT THE CHILDREN. NO ONE  
WILL BELIEVE THEM.



FOR ALL  
OUR SAKES, I  
HOPE SO MOUSE. I  
HOPE SO.



## #6 "WORLDS COLLIDE"

LINES: EL SANTO  
COLORS: CELESTIN SZABO  
STORY: CRYSTAL STORM  
EDITS: SUE SOARES  
CHARACTERS, STORY, EDITS: ANDREW ZAR  
LETTERS: KEITH WOOD

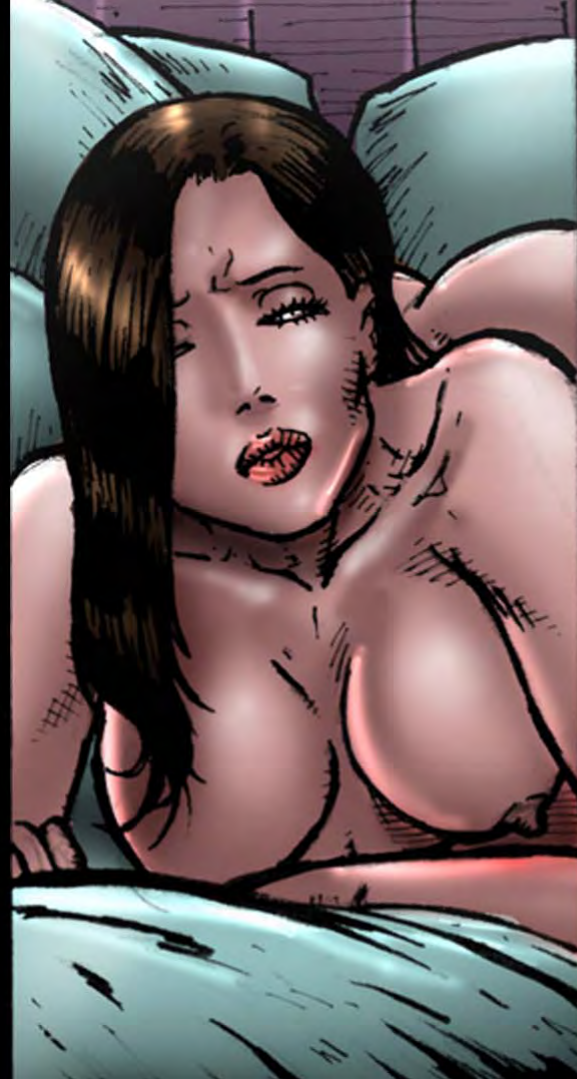




FINE. I'LL DO IT WITHOUT YOU! I'LL FIND MY SISTER AND KILL ANY ROMAN THAT GETS IN MY WAY!



SHE MADE ME WEAK. STUPID, STUPID TO LET THOSE CHILDREN SEE. I MUST HEAD BACK TO THE BORDER. ROMANS WILL BE THERE AND EVENTUALLY HE'LL HAVE TO COME. AND THIS TIME I WON'T MISS.





DOES IT ALL  
LOOK DIFFERENT  
IN THE LIGHT OF  
THE MORNING?

WHAT DO YOU  
WANT FROM ME?



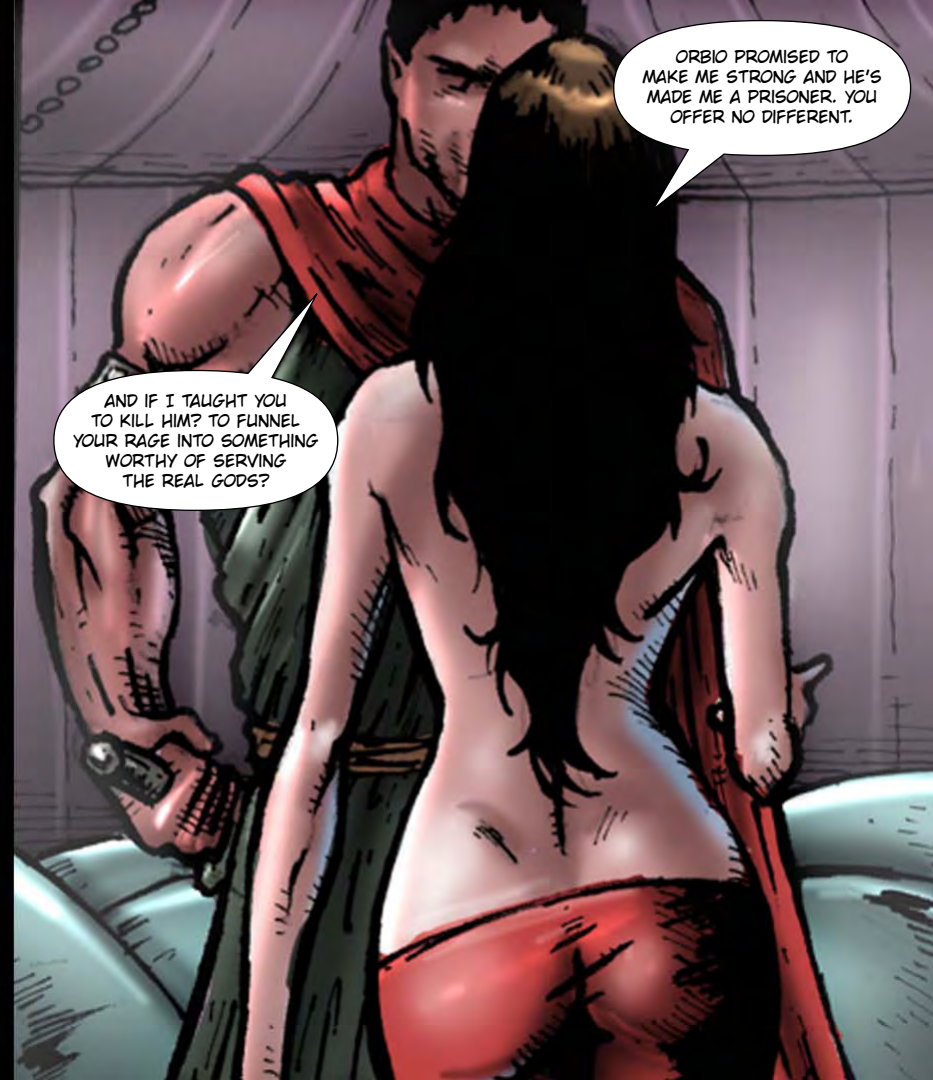
YOUR GODS MADE  
YOU WEAK. THEY LET YOU  
SUFFER BECAUSE THE GODS OF ROME  
COMMAND EVEN THEM. I CAN  
MAKE YOU STRONG.

MY BODY MAY  
HAVE BENT TO YOUR  
WILL, ROMAN, BUT I  
WILL NOT.



BE CAREFUL,  
PET. I COULD END YOU  
RIGHT NOW.

YOUR KIND  
HAS ALREADY KILLED ME  
ONCE, REMEMBER? WHAT'S  
ONE MORE?





WHY?

BECAUSE I CAN. BECAUSE ROME IS ALWAYS IN NEED OF LOYAL SERVANTS.



FOR MY PEOPLE. MY VILLAGE. THOSE THAT **ROME** MURDERED FOR THEIR OWN GREED AND --

**SMACK!**

# THWOK

IS THAT THE BEST YOU CAN DO?

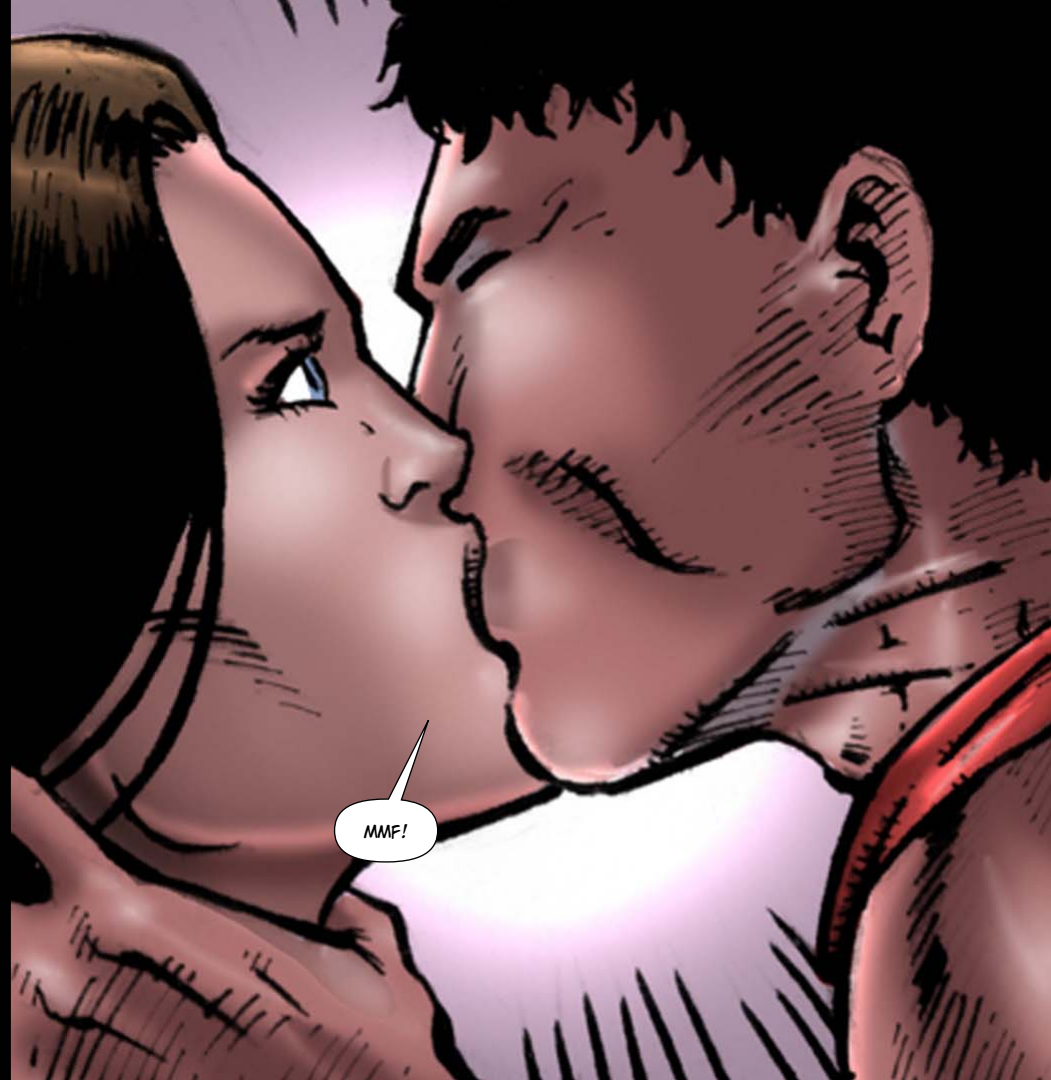


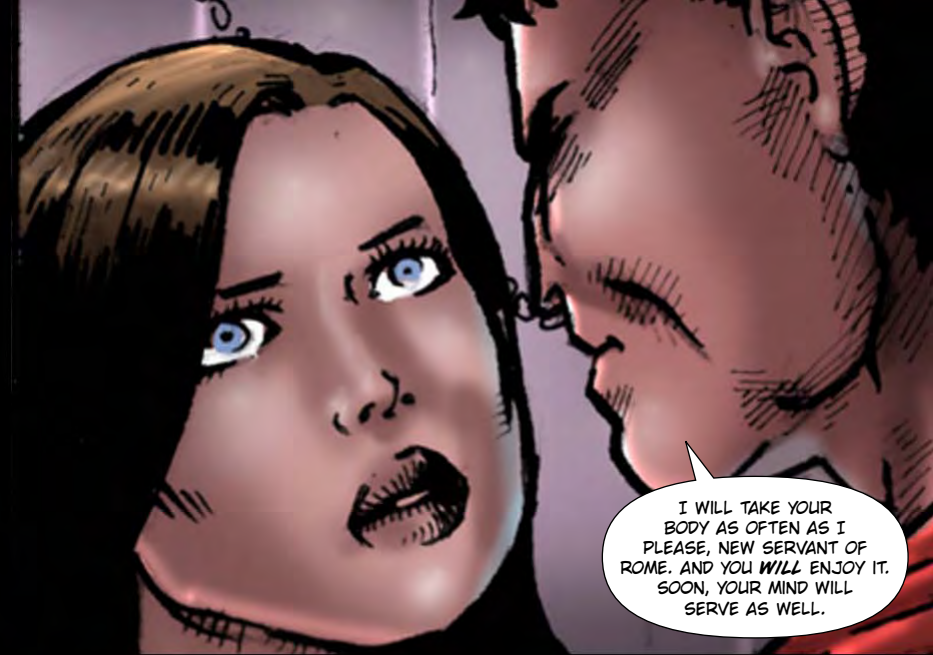
YOUR SUFFERING HAS MADE YOU STRONG. LET ME TEACH YOU HOW TO WIELD IT.

WHY SHOULD I LEARN ANYTHING FROM YOU?

ARE YOU SO LOYAL TO YOUR KIND, WHO HAS DONE NOTHING FOR YOU? LEARN YOUR HISTORY! IT WAS GAUL WHO STRUCK FIRST AGAINST ROME. YOUR PEOPLE HAVE BEEN JUST AS MUCH THE AGGRESSOR.







I WILL TAKE YOUR BODY AS OFTEN AS I PLEASE, NEW SERVANT OF ROME. AND YOU *WILL* ENJOY IT. SOON, YOUR MIND WILL SERVE AS WELL.



GENERAL, THE MEDICINE MAN HAS DISAPPEARED.



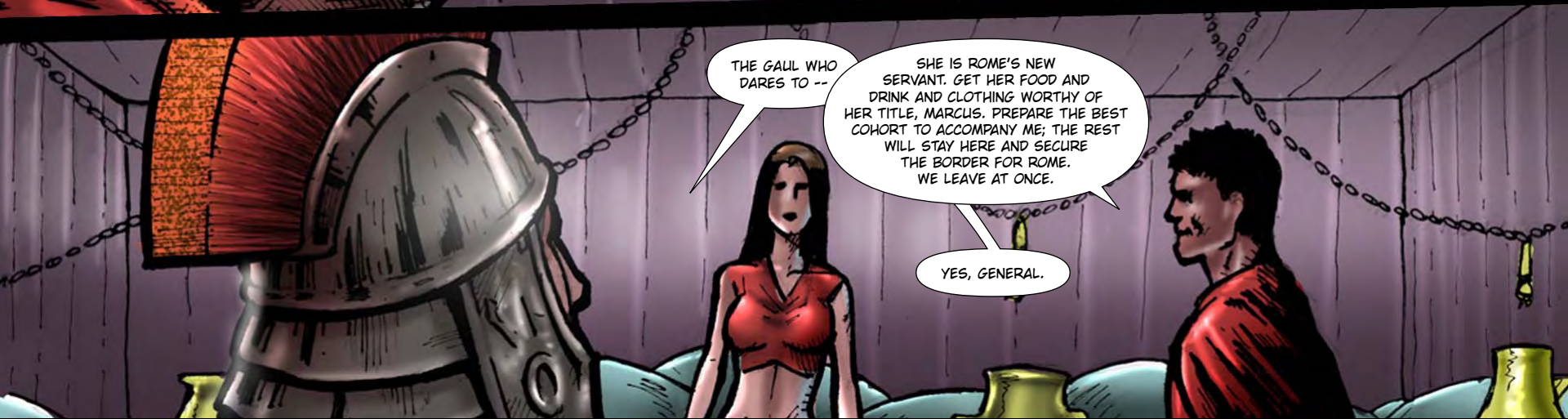
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

WE DON'T KNOW, SIRE.



DO YOU KNOW THE WAY TO DURIA?

I AM HUNGRY AND THIRSTY, AND REQUIRE BETTER CLOTHING. BUT... YES.



THE GAUL WHO DARES TO --

SHE IS ROME'S NEW SERVANT. GET HER FOOD AND DRINK AND CLOTHING WORTHY OF HER TITLE, MARCUS. PREPARE THE BEST COHORT TO ACCOMPANY ME; THE REST WILL STAY HERE AND SECURE THE BORDER FOR ROME. WE LEAVE AT ONCE.

YES, GENERAL.



Ungrateful girl. Orbio did everything for her and she betrays. Stupid, stupid, Gaul --



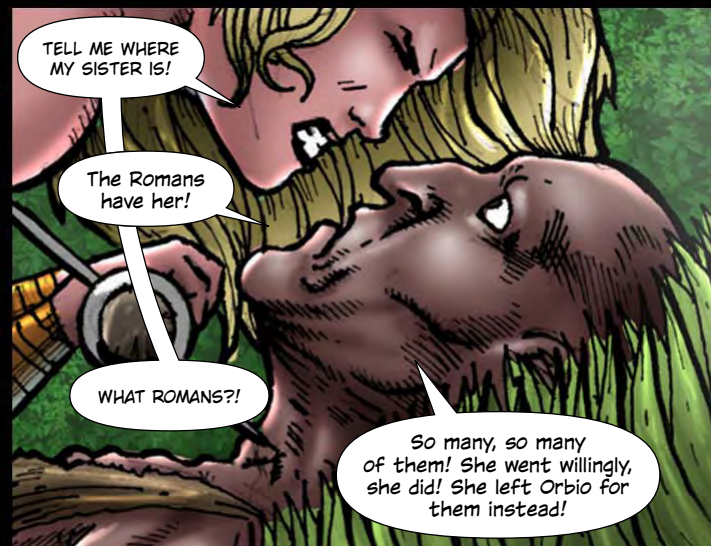
I think I've seen this before...

**TWUNK!**



I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU FOR DAYS, MEDICINE MAN. WHERE IS MY SISTER?

No, no don't hurt Orbio! I only tried to help you. both of you, yes I did!



TELL ME WHERE MY SISTER IS!

The Romans have her!

WHAT ROMANS?!

So many, so many of them! She went willingly, she did! She left Orbio for them instead!



YOU LIE!



I saw her! I saw her with the General! He fucked her like a whore and her cries were for Rome!

LIAR!

**KRACK!**

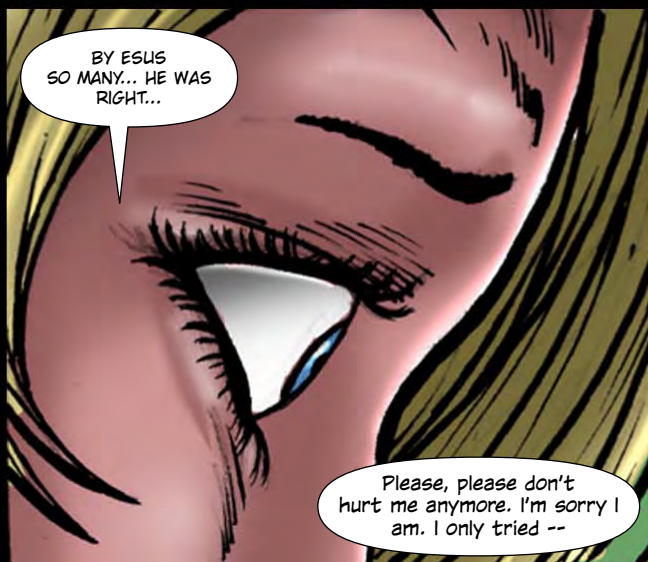
YOU WILL SHOW ME. YOU WILL TAKE ME TO THEM.

No need no need, they march this way. They come looking for your friend!



LIE TO ME AND I WILL SEVER YOUR HEAD. WHERE DO THEY MARCH AND HOW MANY?

They march for your village, Duria and they come a thousand strong!



BY ESUS SO MANY... HE WAS RIGHT...

Please, please don't hurt me anymore. I'm sorry I am. I only tried --



I WILL SPARE YOUR LIFE, ONLY SO THAT WHEN I FIND MY SISTER, WE CAN KILL YOU TOGETHER!



**THWOK!**



HE CANNOT TAKE ALL OF THEM ALONE... I MUST FIND HIM...

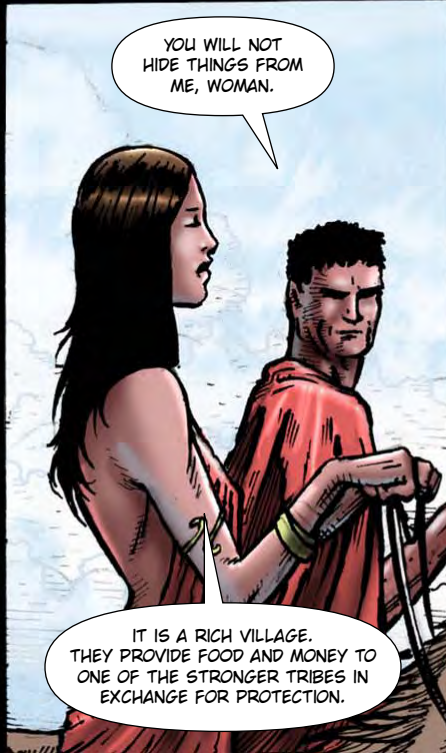


WHAT PLACE IS THIS?

STURA.

THEY HAVE AN ARMY?

NO.



YOU WILL NOT HIDE THINGS FROM ME, WOMAN.

IT IS A RICH VILLAGE. THEY PROVIDE FOOD AND MONEY TO ONE OF THE STRONGER TRIBES IN EXCHANGE FOR PROTECTION.



ONLY ROME CAN PROTECT THEM. TODAY THEY LEARN THAT LESSON.



HEAR ME! BOW DOGS,  
BOW NOW BEFORE THE MIGHT  
OF ROME! SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO  
YOUR NEW MASTER AND THIS  
VILLAGE WILL BE SPARED.



PLEASE. YOU CANNOT  
WIN A FIGHT AGAINST THEM. THERE  
IS NO OTHER CHOICE --

TRAITOR!  
GAUL TRAITOR!







**SCHLUUSHH!**









HRNGH



A ROMAN LEGION IS COMING. YOU WERE RIGHT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I FOUND ORBIO. HE'S SEEN THEM. THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU.

DID YOU FIND YOUR SISTER?



THEY ARE HEADED FOR DURIA.

THEN THAT IS WHERE THEY WILL MEET THEIR DEATH.



YOU HAVE A NATURAL TALENT WITH THAT WEAPON.

HOW CAN YOU KNOW THAT?

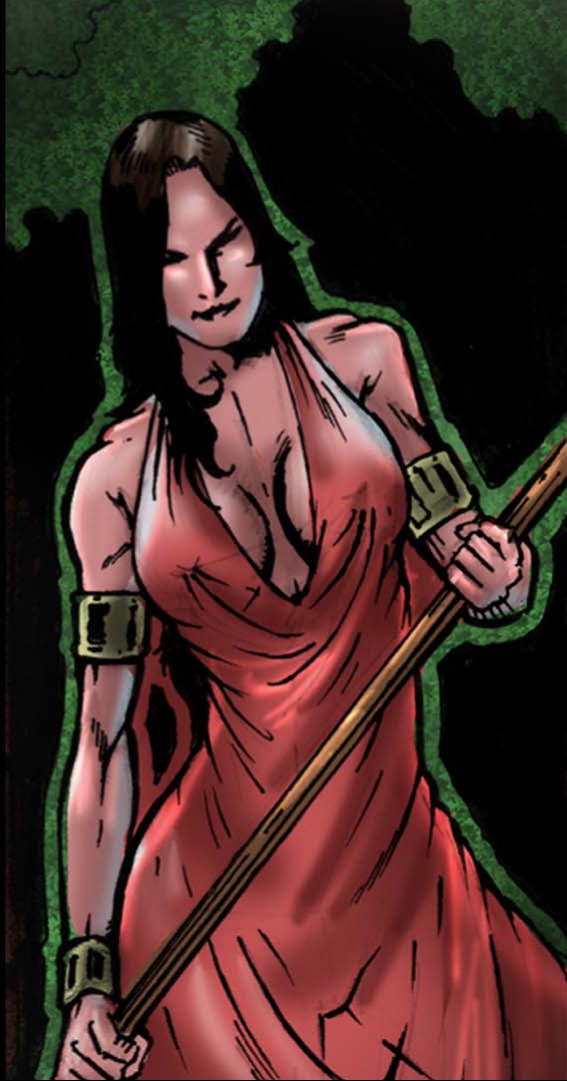
I SAW YOU KILL THAT MAN. YOU REACTED ON INSTINCT AND WITH SKILL, YET I BET YOU'VE NEVER USED SUCH A WEAPON BEFORE.

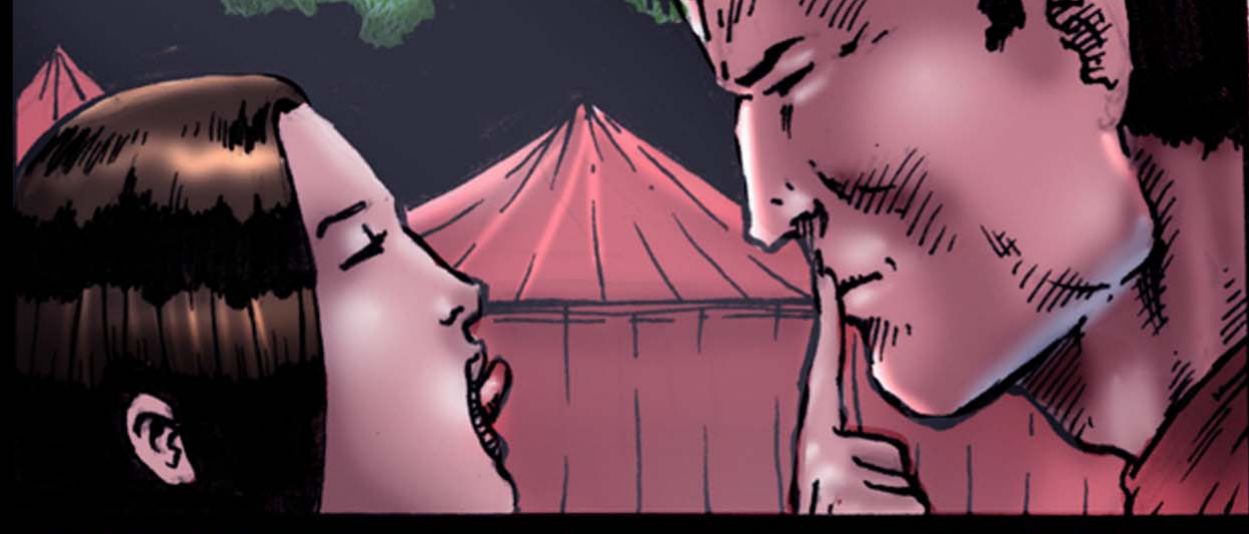
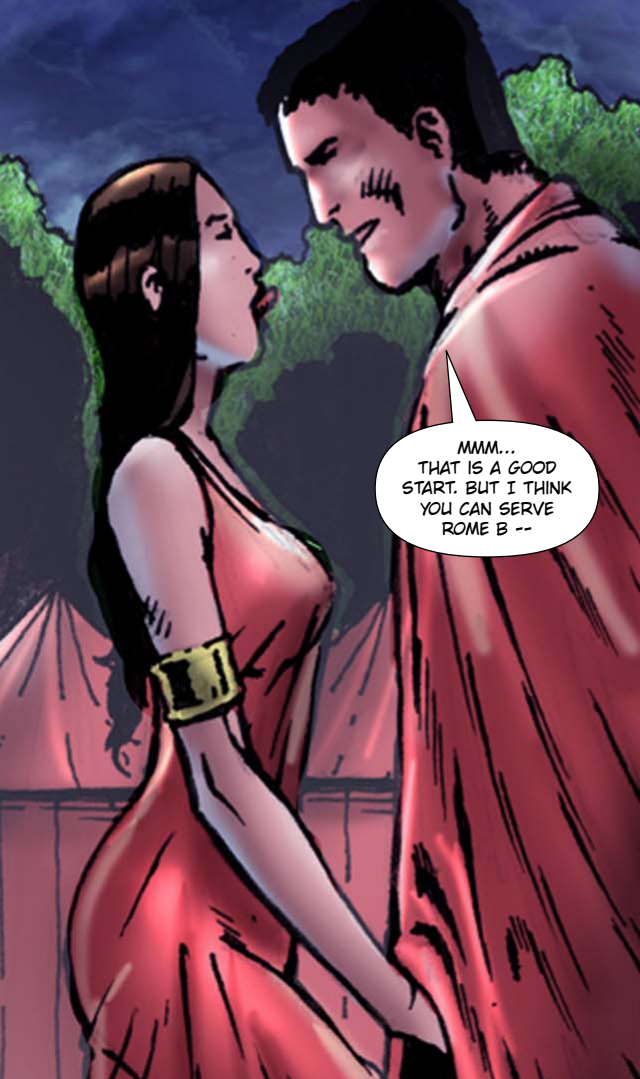
NO, I HAVEN'T.



CAN YOU TEACH ME?

PERHAPS. WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR ME, PET?







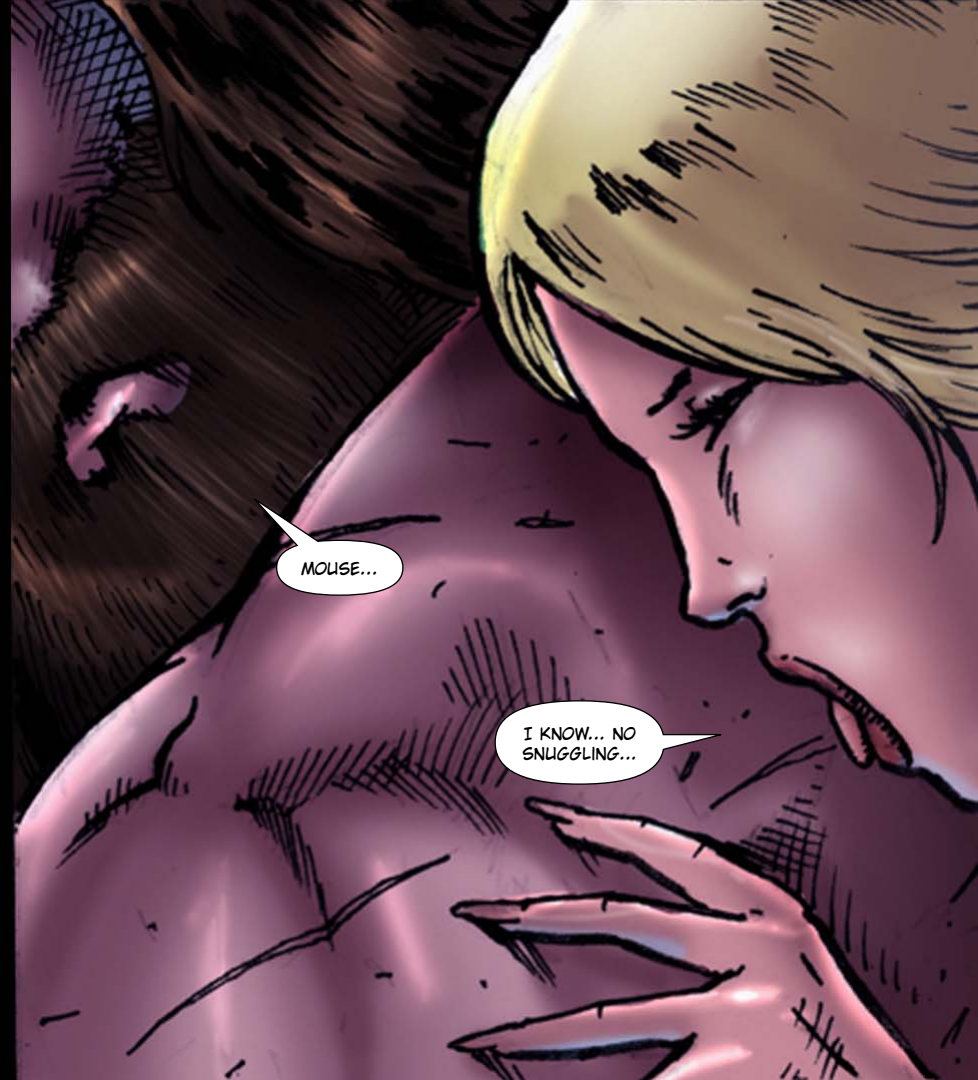
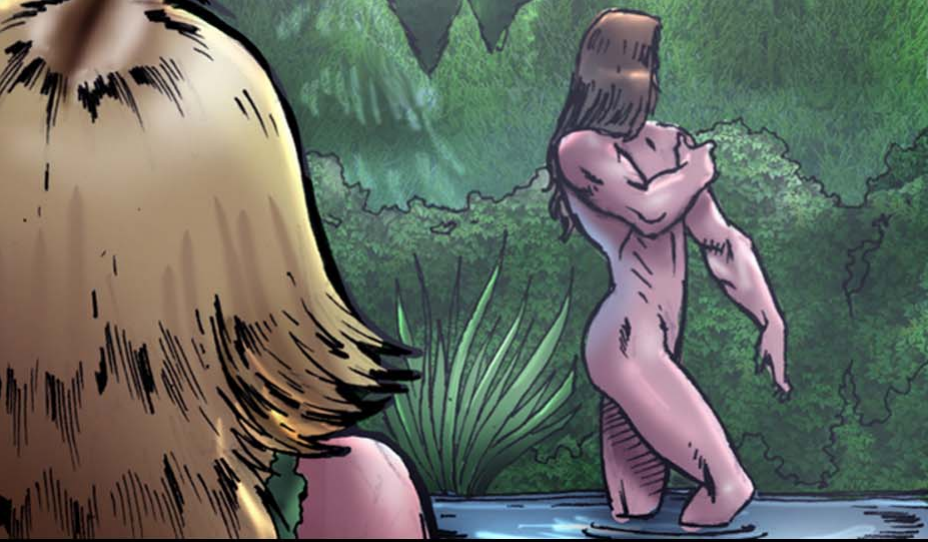
JUST MY  
BODY, ALBINUS.  
NEVER ME.

YOU WILL YIELD  
EVENTUALLY...

YOU FIRST.

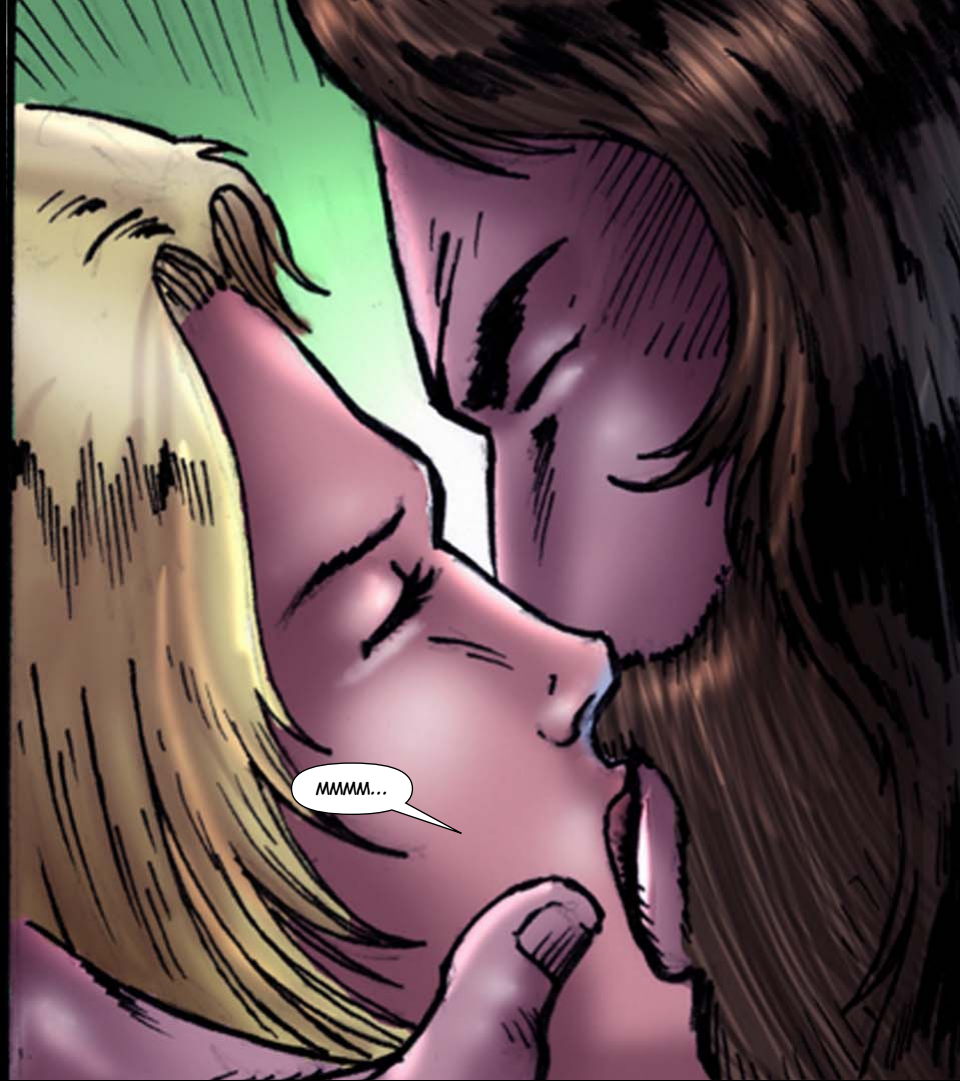


ooooo...



MOUSE...

I KNOW... NO  
SNUGGLING...



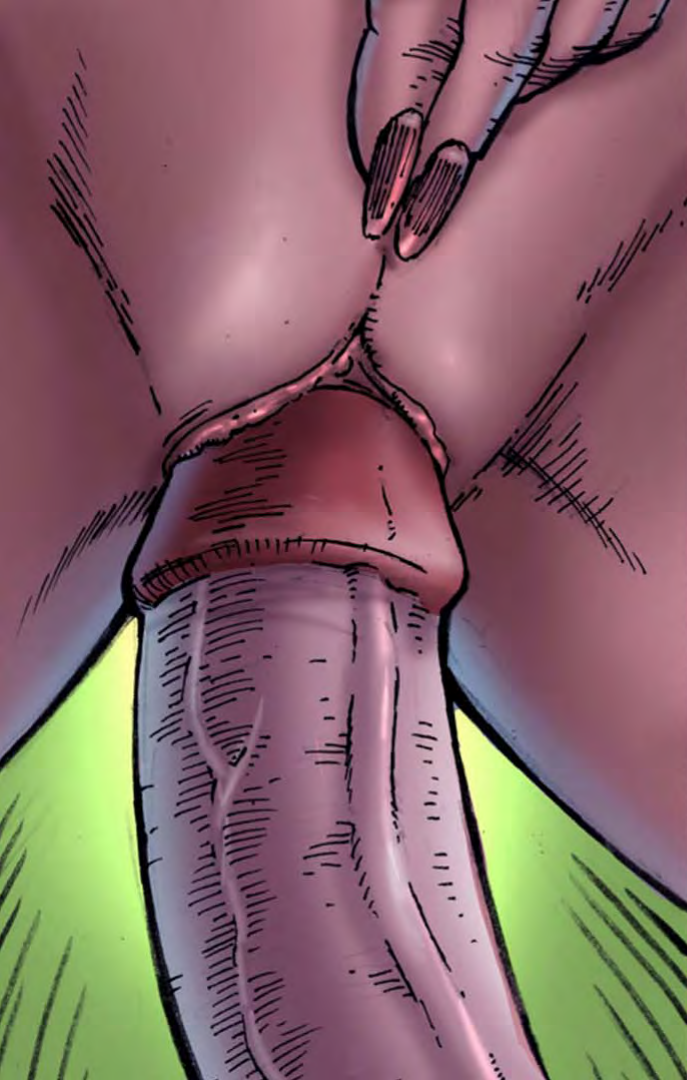


OOOOH!!!



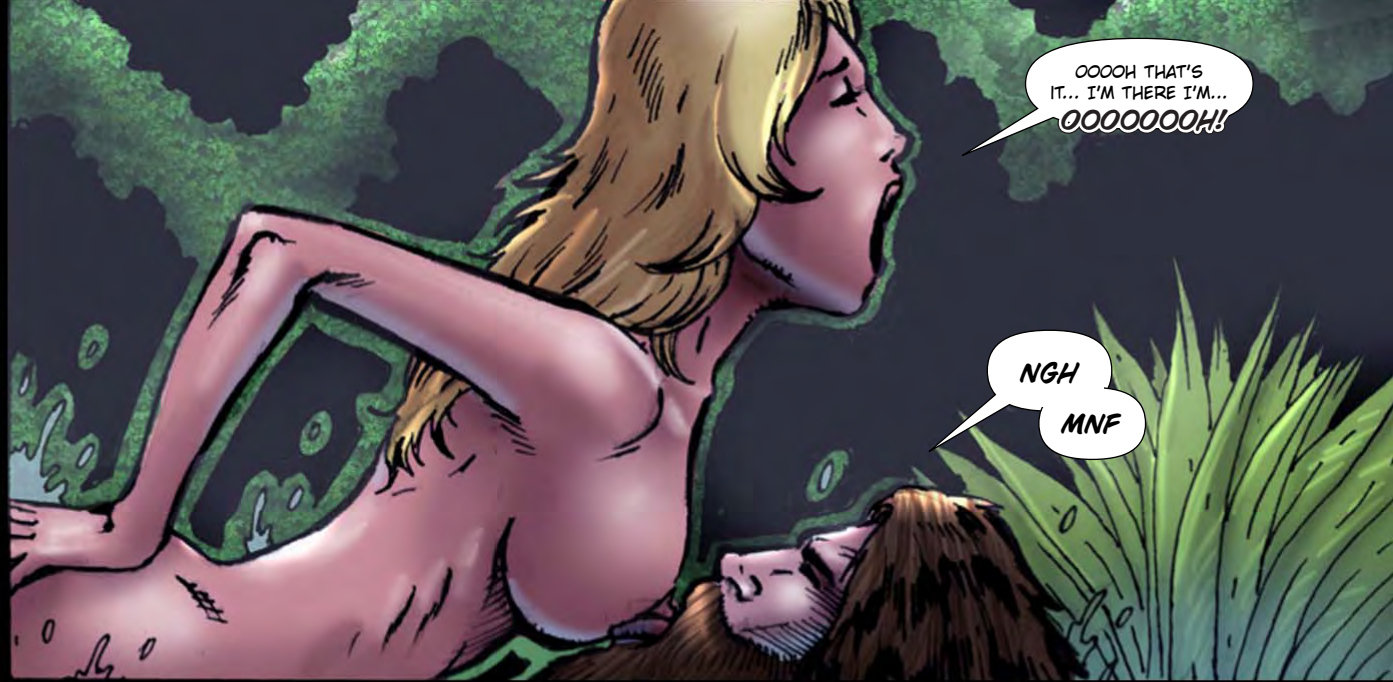
DO YOU LIKE IT THIS WAY TOO, MOUSE?

OH YES... YES PLEASE... MORE...

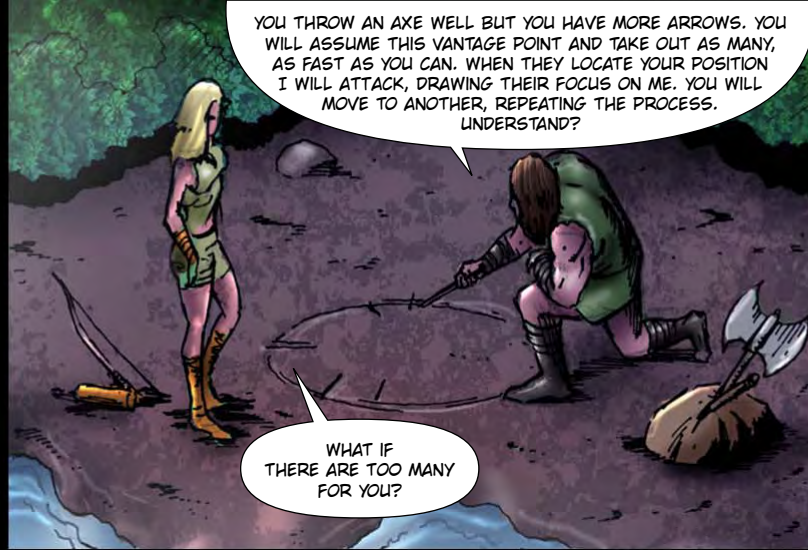




OH HH YESSSSS...







WHAT IF THERE ARE TOO MANY FOR YOU?

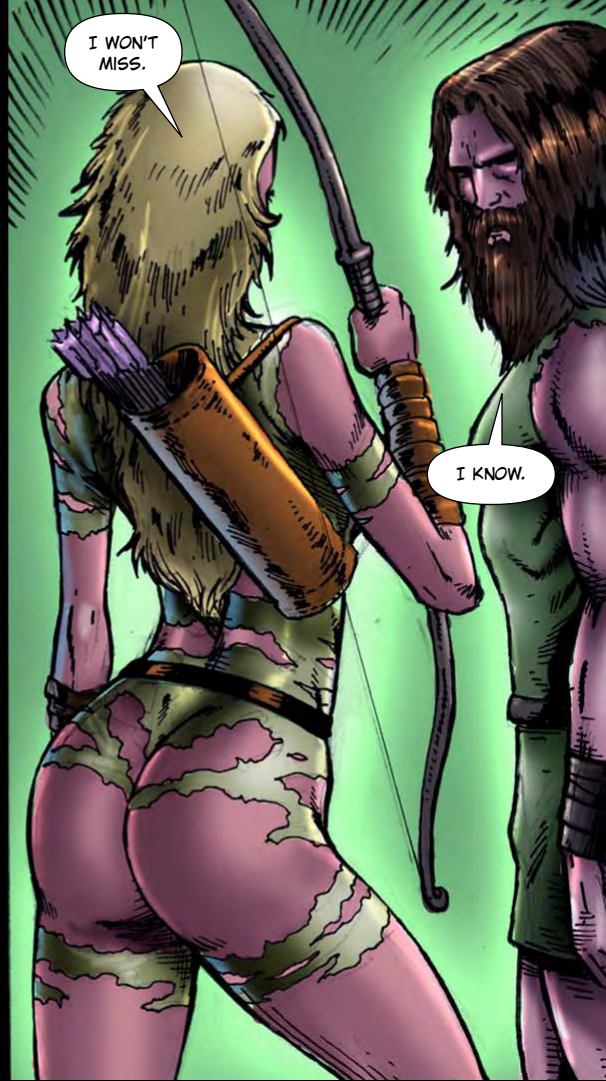
YOU THROW AN AXE WELL BUT YOU HAVE MORE ARROWS. YOU WILL ASSUME THIS VANTAGE POINT AND TAKE OUT AS MANY, AS FAST AS YOU CAN. WHEN THEY LOCATE YOUR POSITION I WILL ATTACK, DRAWING THEIR FOCUS ON ME. YOU WILL MOVE TO ANOTHER, REPEATING THE PROCESS. UNDERSTAND?



BUT YOU SAID A LEGION WOULD COME --

AND THEY WILL. EVENTUALLY. IT IS INEVITABLE. ROME MUST CONQUER THAT IN HER WAY.

I THINK YOUR MEDICINE MAN LIES. IT IS TOO MANY TOO SOON TO MARCH INTO GAUL.



I WON'T MISS.

I KNOW.




BREAK OFF,  
SEARCH THE AREA. I  
WANT THIS BUTCHER  
FOUND.



DIS PATER  
PROTECT US.





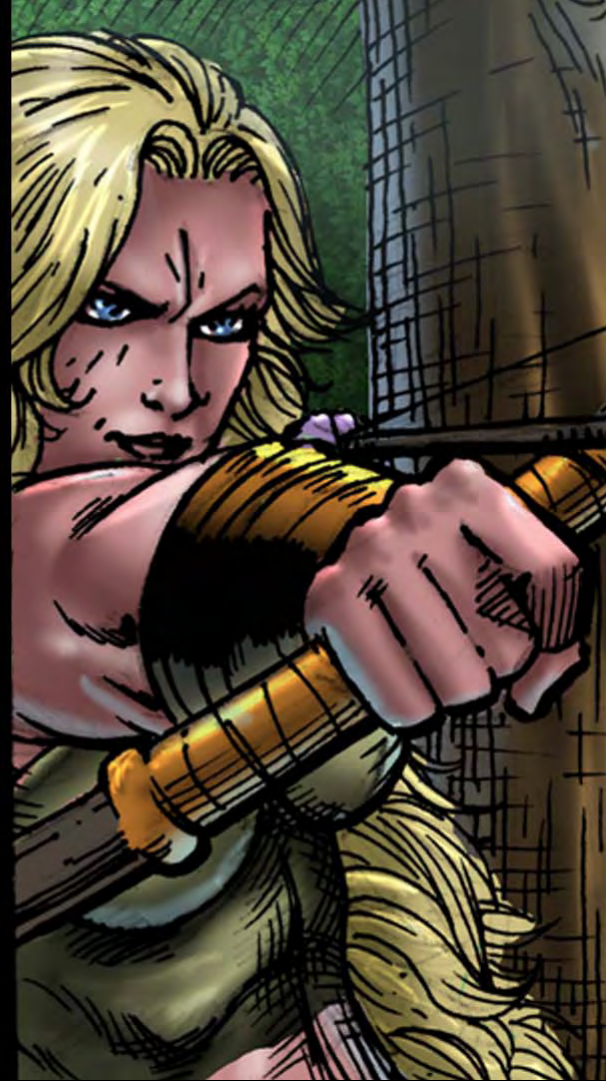
**AMBUSH!  
PROTECT THE  
GENERAL! FIND  
THEM!**

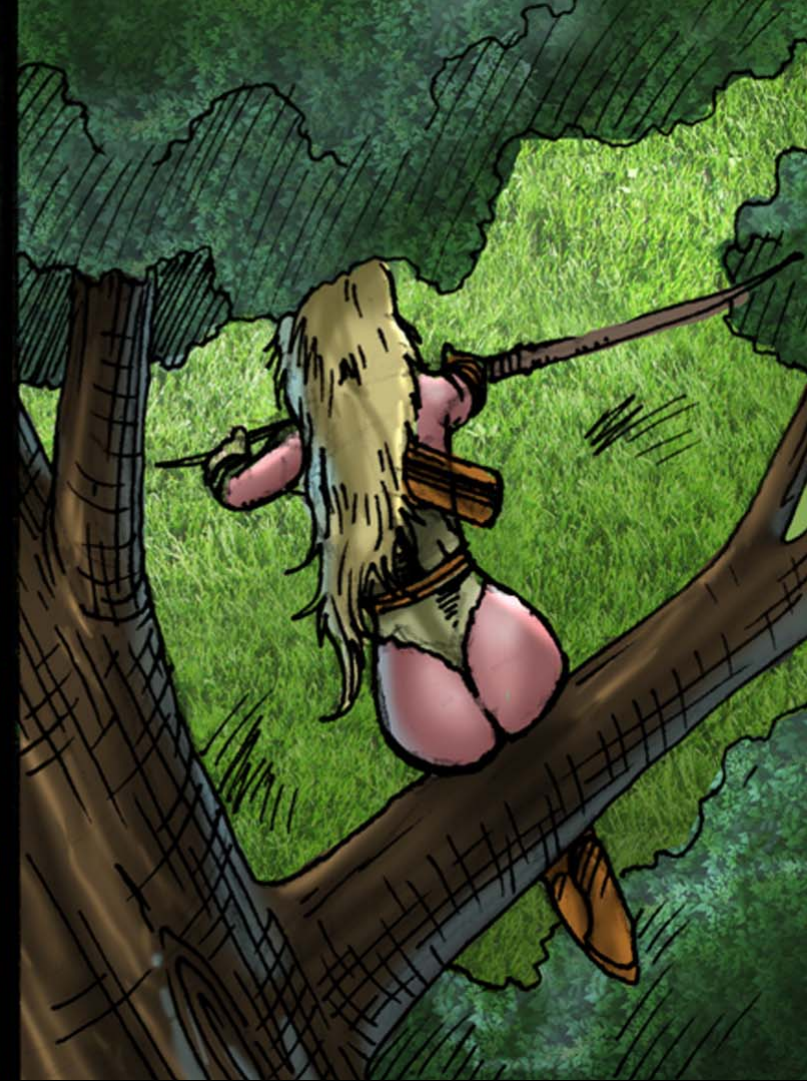








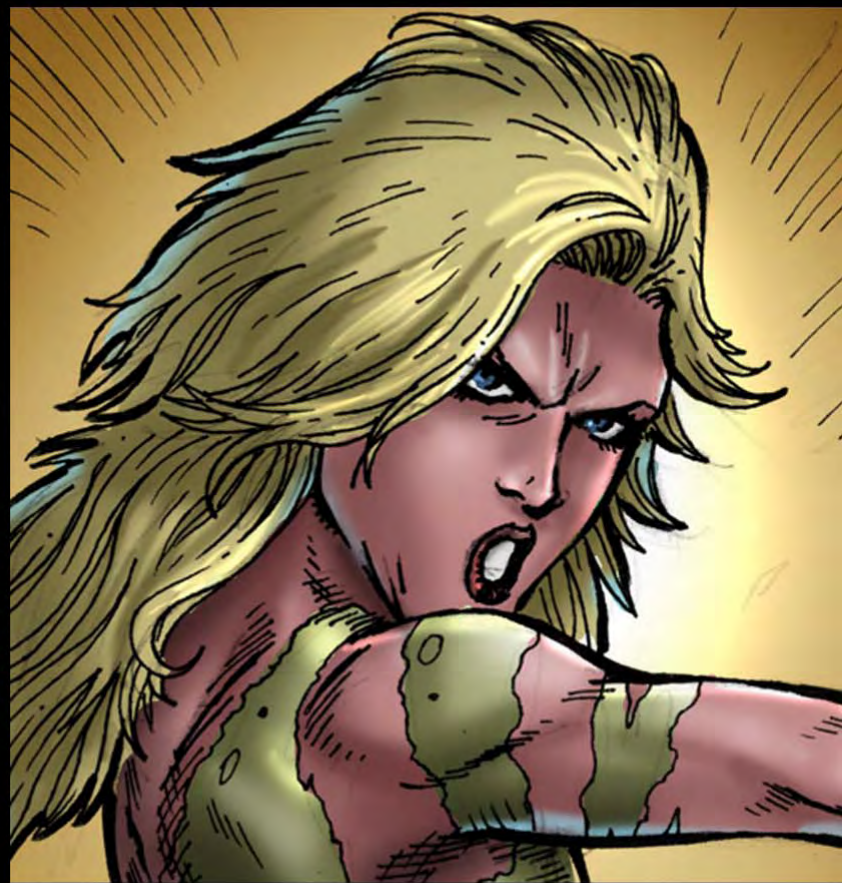


















#7 "CONSEQUENCE OF CHOICE"

LINES: EL SANTO  
COLORS: CELESTIN SZABO  
STORY: CRYSTAL STORM  
EDITS: SUE SOARES  
CHARACTERS, STORY, EDITS: ANDREW ZAR  
LETTERS: KEITH WOOD



GET UP! MOVE! NOW!

THWUNK



CAILIN!



TWANG









I KNOW THAT VOICE...

CAILIN? CAILIN?



GENERAL, THERE ARE TOO MANY! WE MUST RETREAT!



FALL BACK!  
WE WILL KILL THESE  
GALL FILTH ANOTHER  
DAY!









WE LOST HIM IN THE WOODS, SIRE. SHOULD WE SEARCH?

NO. LET THEM BE. AND PRAY IT'S NOT THE LAST WE'VE SEEN OF HIM.



AAAHHHH!!



I'M SORRY  
THEY SAW YOUR  
ARMOR.



REST.







THE NEXT TIME  
WE MEET ALBINUS, I  
PROMISE, WE DIE.

EVERY RIVALRY  
HAS A BEGINNING...

HE IS THEIR GOD,  
ALBINUS. SO LONG AS  
VERGILIUS CONTINUES TO  
CONQUER WITH SUCH SKILL,  
THEIR LOVE FOR HIM  
WILL ONLY GROW.






ROME HAS ROOM FOR ONLY ONE GREAT GENERAL. ME. MAKE NO MISTAKE, I WILL MAKE HIM THEIR ENEMY.




WHY HAVE YOU CALLED US HERE, ALBINUS?

TO WARN YOU OF AN ENEMY, VERGIILIUS.

EXPLAIN.




HE'S A THREAT TO THE POWER OF THE SENATE. WHEN HE RETURNS FROM HIS CURRENT CONQUEST, HE'LL SEEK TO BECOME EMPEROR. AND YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP HIM, NOT WITH THE WAY HIS ARMY WORSHIPS HIM.




HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS?

BECAUSE HE THINKS ME A FRIEND. YOU'VE SEEN US TOGETHER. AND I WAS, UNTIL HE MADE HIS VILE INTENTIONS KNOWN TO ME.




I TOLD YOU! I WARNED ALL OF THIS FROM DAY ONE. VERGILIUS THE CONQUEROR WON'T STOP ON THE BATTLEFIELD. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.



WE'LL NEED PROOF  
TO CONVINCE THE REST  
OF THE SENATORS OF  
THIS TREACHERY.

SAVE YOUR BREATH.  
WE ALL KNOW THE REST  
OF THEM DON'T HAVE YOUR  
GIFTS OF FORESIGHT.



AGREED. IT MAY  
TAKE US TOO MANY SESSIONS  
TO MAKE THEM REALIZE AND  
BY THEN, IT COULD BE TOO  
LATE. THE CONFLICT'S CLOSE  
TO ENDING.

AND WHEN HE  
RETURNS VICTOR, THEY'LL  
LOVE HIM EVEN MORE.

THEN HOW DO WE  
EXPOSE THE HERO FOR  
WHO HE REALLY IS?



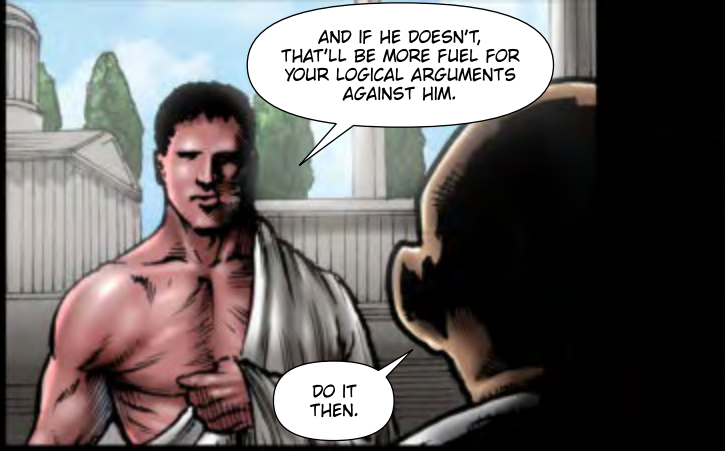
LET US CALL HIM OUT AND SEE WHAT HE'LL DO.

HOW SO?



SEND A SPOKESMAN FOR THE SENATE OUT TO HIM. TELL HIM THAT HE HAS BEEN CALLED BACK TO ROME TO GIVE A REPORT. HE CAN FACE HIS QUESTIONING THEN. I ASSURE YOU HIS TRUE NATURE WILL REVEAL HIMSELF.

IF HE ANSWERS THE SUMMONS AT ALL.





WILL THAT BE ENOUGH?  
VERGILIUS IS QUITE THE ORATOR,  
IF HE MAKES HIS CASE.

BY THE TIME I'M  
DONE WITH VERGILIUS,  
HE'LL BE DESTROYED, INSIDE  
OUT. KILL HIM, AND BRING ME  
BACK SUITABLE EVIDENCE  
OF HIS DEMISE.

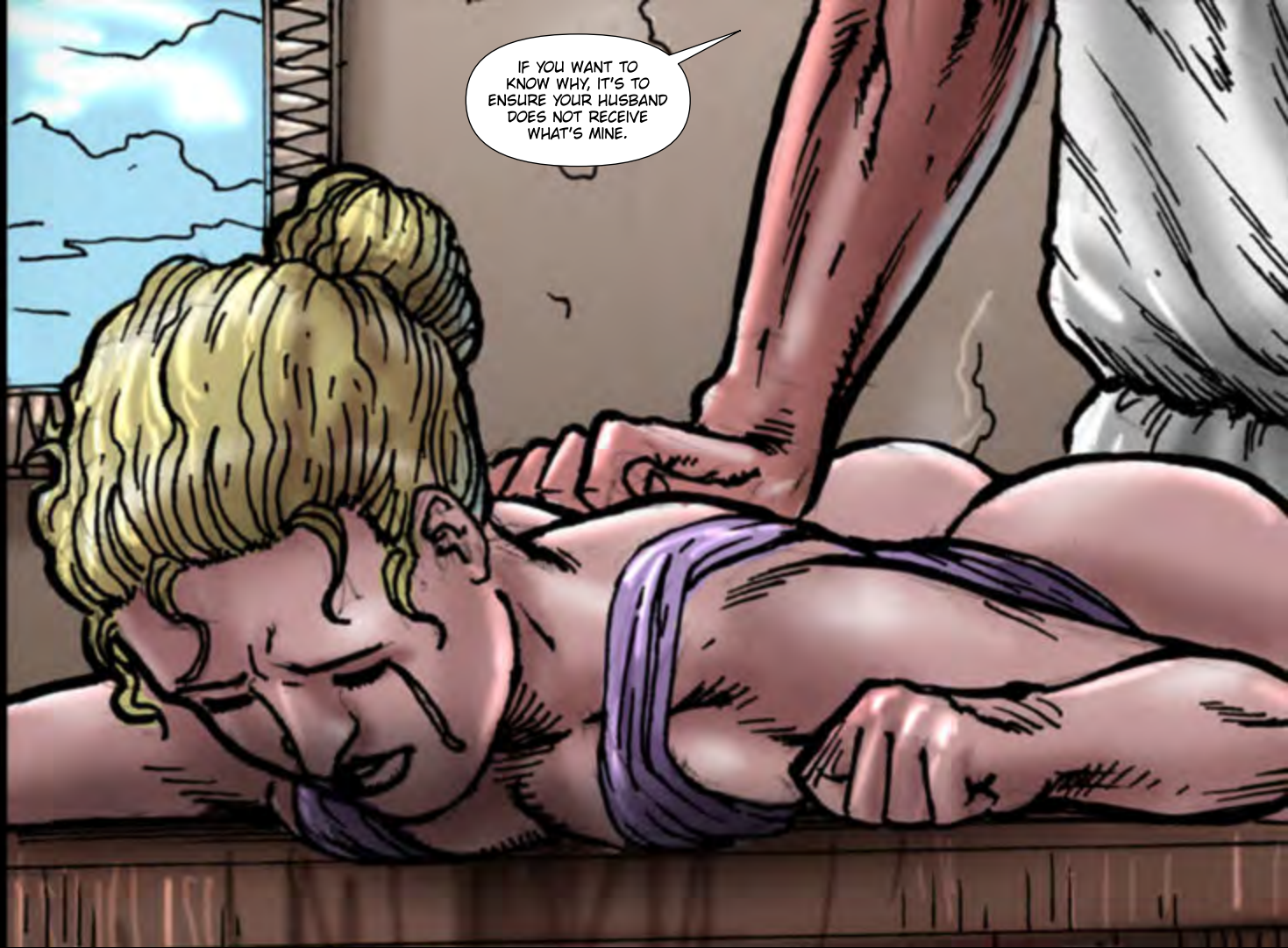
YES SIRE.



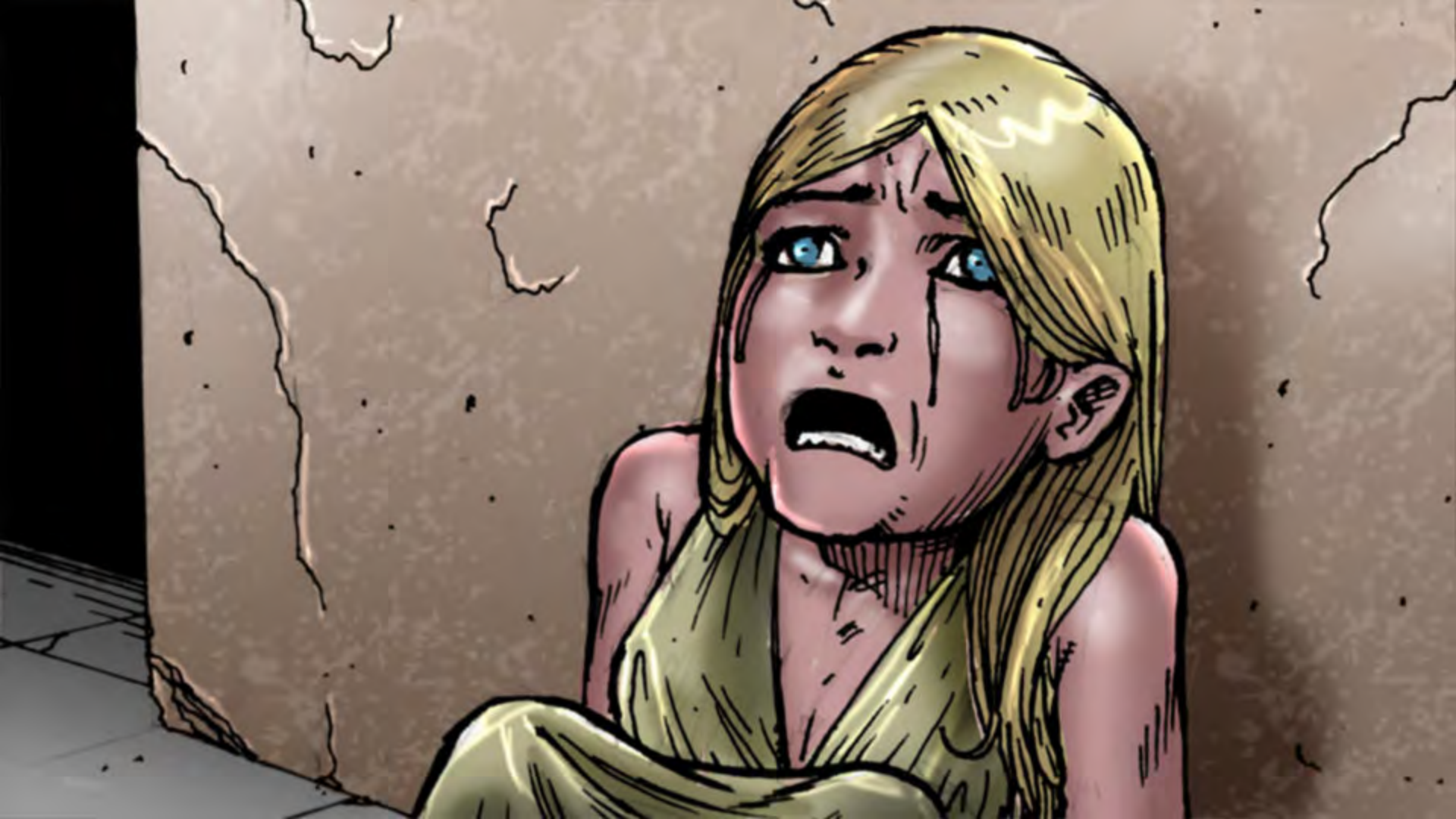


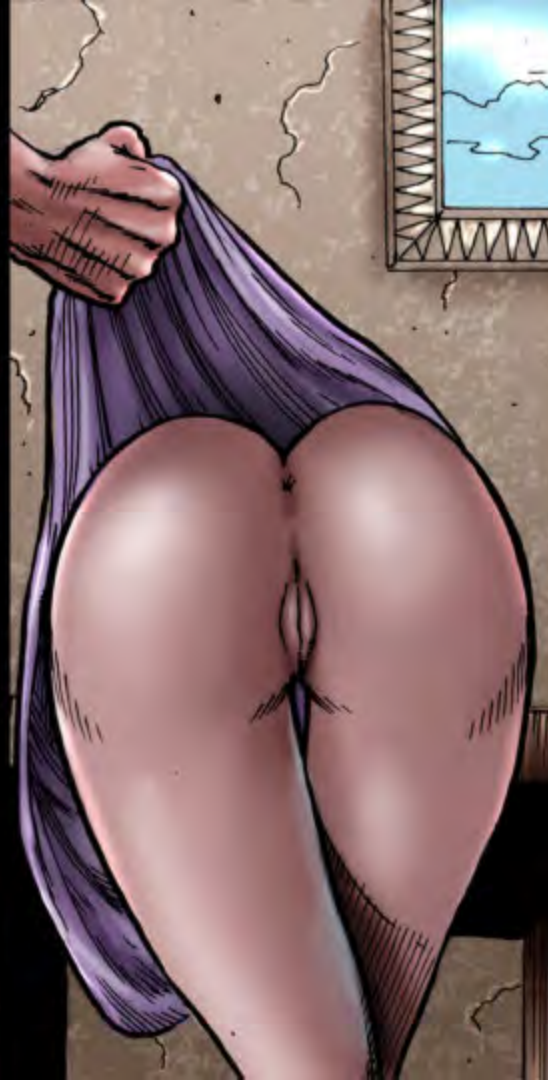


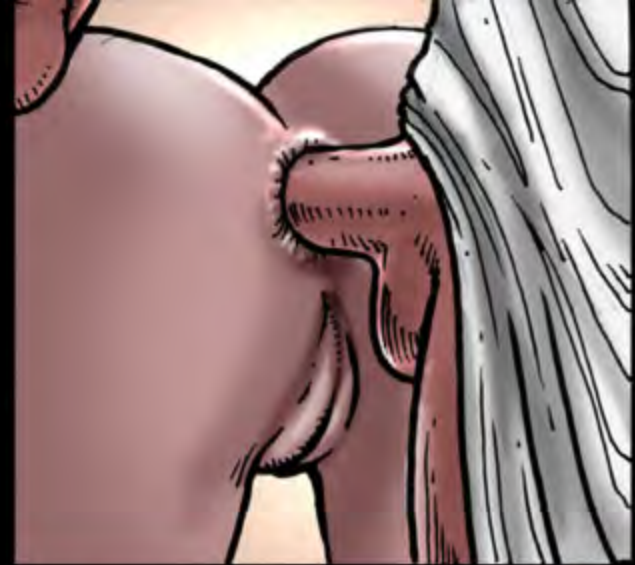


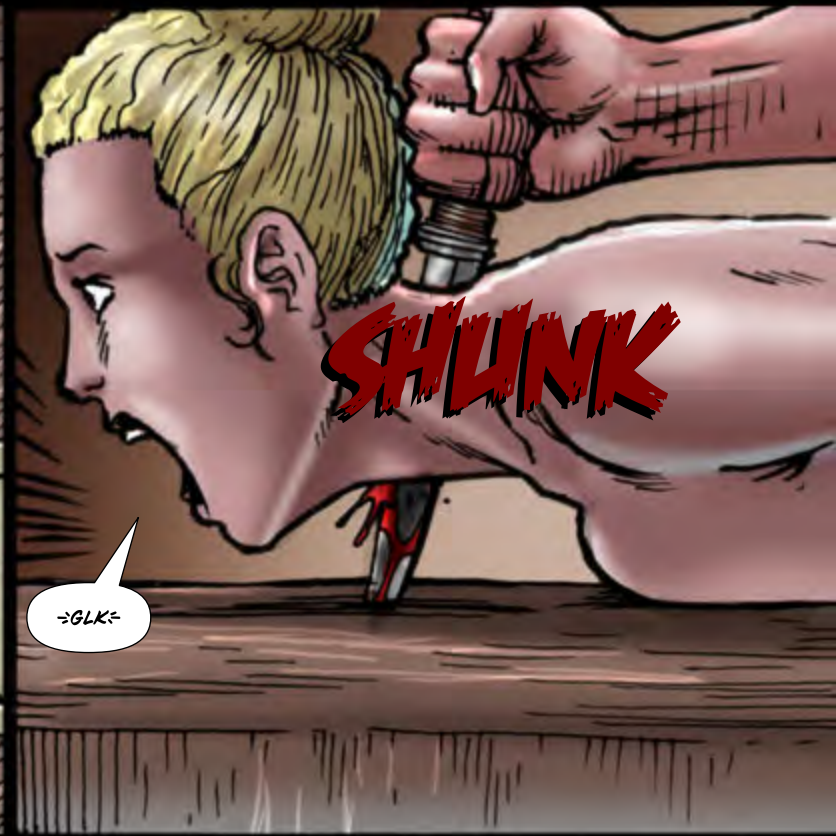


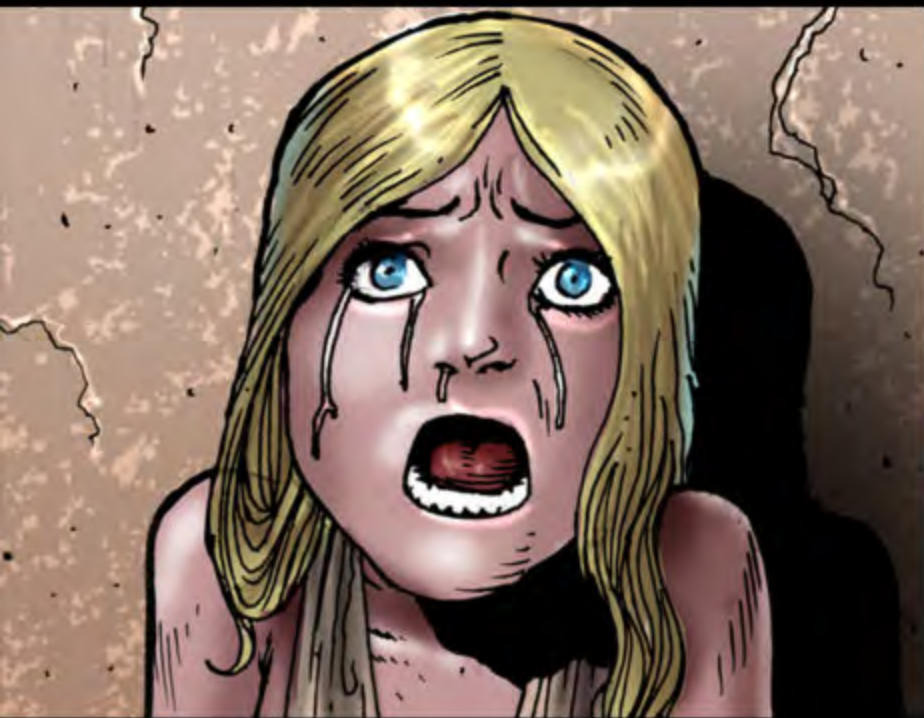
IF YOU WANT TO  
KNOW WHY, IT'S TO  
ENSURE YOUR HUSBAND  
DOES NOT RECEIVE  
WHAT'S MINE.















HE'S MURDERED  
YOUR MESSENGER.

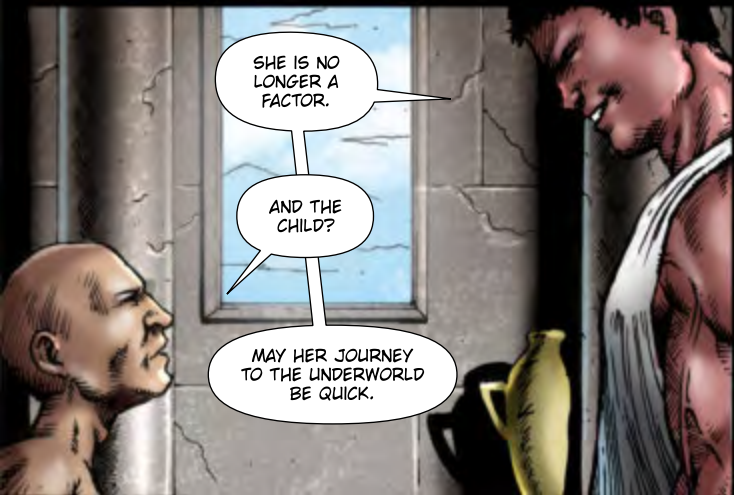


YOU DON'T HAVE TO  
CONVINCE ME OF YOUR LIES,  
ALBINUS. BUT I DO WNDER  
WHAT YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM  
RUINING VERGILIUS? WILL WE  
HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOU  
QUESTING FOR THE TITLE  
OF EMPEROR NEXT?



MY AMBITIONS  
DON'T RUN THAT HIGH.  
AND ONCE VERGILIUS IS OUT  
OF MY WAY, I'LL HAVE ALL  
THE REWARDS I NEED.


HIS WIFE, THOUGH  
A WOMAN, HAS MANY  
FRIENDS IN THE SENATE.  
SHE COULD BE A POWERFUL  
SPOKESMAN FOR HIS  
INNOCENCE.



SHE IS NO  
LONGER A  
FACTOR.

AND THE  
CHILD?

MAY HER JOURNEY  
TO THE UNDERWORLD  
BE QUICK.



VERY WELL. I WILL  
ADDRESS THE SENATE IN  
THE MORNING. WITH SENATOR  
DOMITILUS AND AMEILIUS' SUPPORT,  
YOU'LL HAVE APPROVAL TO  
GO AND ARREST HIM.

GOOD.



GENERAL, ALBINUS IS HERE TO SEE YOU. HE'S BROUGHT A SMALL GUARD OF SOLDIERS WITH HIM.



THANK YOU, LIVIUS.



WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, FRIEND?

YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE DONE THIS, VERGILIUS. I WARNED YOU.


A man with a beard and a man in profile. The man with the beard is on the left, looking towards the man on the right. The man on the right is holding a scroll.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ALBINUS?

GENERAL VERGILIUS, YOU ARE HEREBY CHARGED WITH THE MURDER OF GAIUS OCTAVIUS, LOYAL SERVANT TO THE SENATE. YOU ARE ALSO CHARGED WITH TREASON AGAINST THE SENATE. I HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO BRING YOU BACK TO ROME IMMEDIATELY SO THAT YOU MAY STAND TRIAL.

A man with a beard and a man in profile. The man with the beard is on the left, looking towards the man on the right. The man on the right is looking back at him.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT GAME YOU'RE PLAYING, BUT IT WON'T WORK. YOU'VE MADE A GRAVE MISTAKE TO CROSS ME.

A close-up of a man's face, showing his ear, nose, and mouth. He has a serious expression.

YOUR WIFE SCREAMED LIKE A SHORE WHEN I FUCKED HER. AND WHEN I WAS DONE, I SLIT HER THROAT WHILE YOUR DAUGHTER WATCHED.

**MURDERER!!**



**RAAAAA!!**







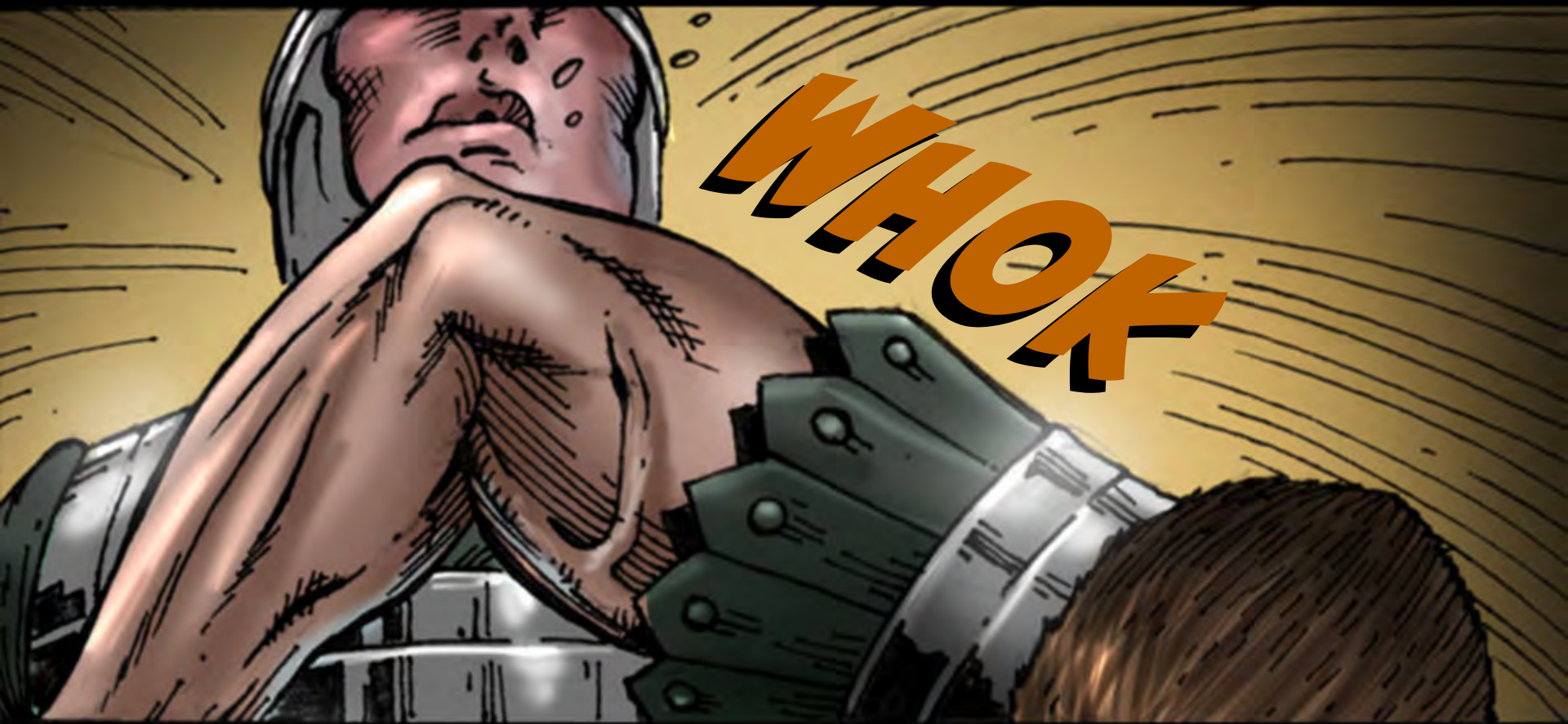
YOUR GENERAL HAS BETRAYED YOU AND ROME WITH HIS TREACHERY! I AM NOW YOUR GENERAL. AND YOU WILL SERVE ME WITH THE SAME HONOR.



TAKE HIM BACK TO ROME.

I WILL LIVE ONLY TO SEE YOU DIE FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.





**WHOK**



=GRKI=



ARREST HIM!  
IT'S YOUR DUTY  
TO OBEY!



FIND  
HIM!



THEY WERE UNABLE TO FIND HIM.



HE CAN'T HIDE FOREVER. AND HE WON'T. HE'LL MAKE HIMSELF SEEN. AND THE NEXT TIME I'LL KILL HIM.



WHAT NOW?

PATIENCE. HE'LL RETURN.

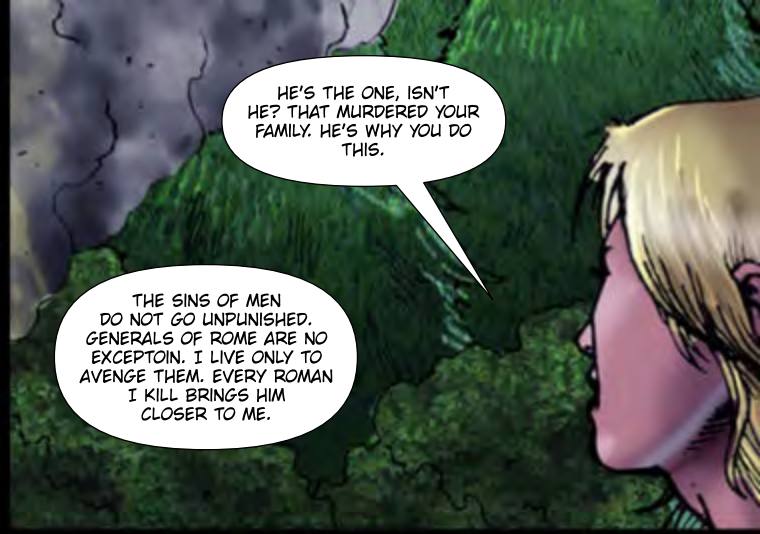
WHO WILL?

ALBINUS.



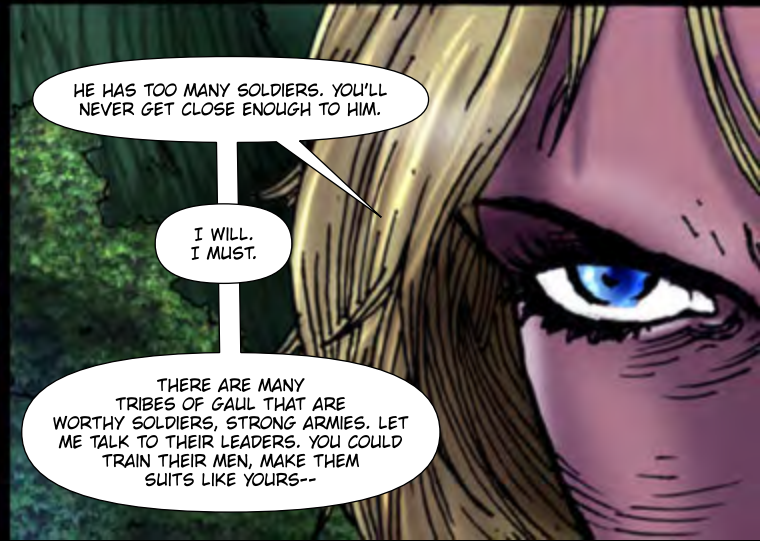
AND WHEN YOU KILL HIM?

THEN THE NEXT BATTLE I FIGHT IS IN HADES.



HE'S THE ONE, ISN'T HE? THAT MURDERED YOUR FAMILY. HE'S WHY YOU DO THIS.

THE SINS OF MEN DO NOT GO UNPUNISHED. GENERALS OF ROME ARE NO EXCEPTION. I LIVE ONLY TO AVENGE THEM. EVERY ROMAN I KILL BRINGS HIM CLOSER TO ME.



HE HAS TOO MANY SOLDIERS. YOU'LL NEVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HIM.

I WILL. I MUST.

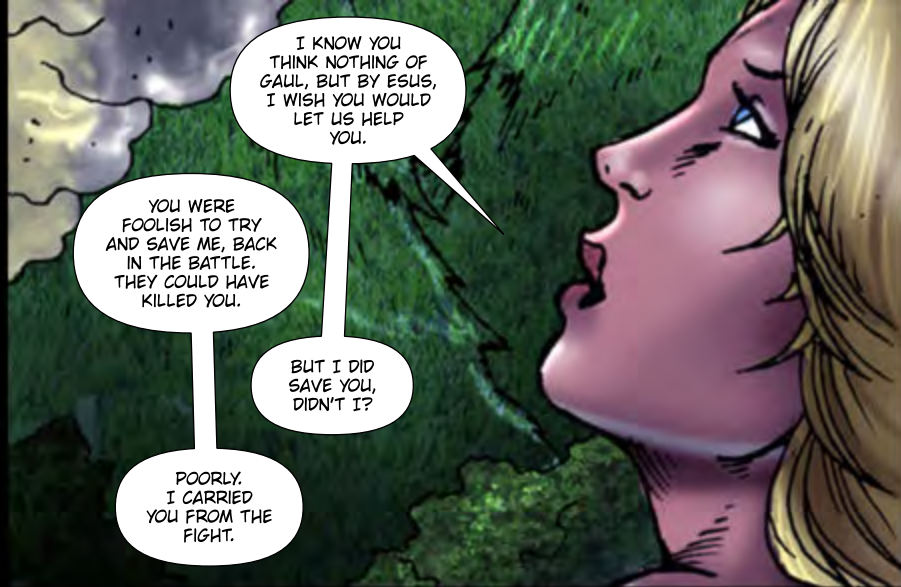
THERE ARE MANY TRIBES OF GAUL THAT ARE WORTHY SOLDIERS, STRONG ARMIES. LET ME TALK TO THEIR LEADERS. YOU COULD TRAIN THEIR MEN, MAKE THEM SUITS LIKE YOURS--



NEVER.

BUT IF YOU  
DON'T--

I WILL NOT  
GIVE MY ARMOR  
TO GAUL SO THAT IT  
MAY FALL INTO THE  
HANDS OF ROME!  
**NEVER!**



I KNOW YOU  
THINK NOTHING OF  
GAUL, BUT BY ESUS,  
I WISH YOU WOULD  
LET US HELP  
YOU.

YOU WERE  
FOOLISH TO TRY  
AND SAVE ME, BACK  
IN THE BATTLE.  
THEY COULD HAVE  
KILLED YOU.

BUT I DID  
SAVE YOU,  
DIDN'T I?

POORLY.  
I CARRIED  
YOU FROM THE  
FIGHT.



I KNOW YOU  
DON'T CARE, BUT  
THANK YOU.





OOOOOH.



WHAT ARE YOU D--

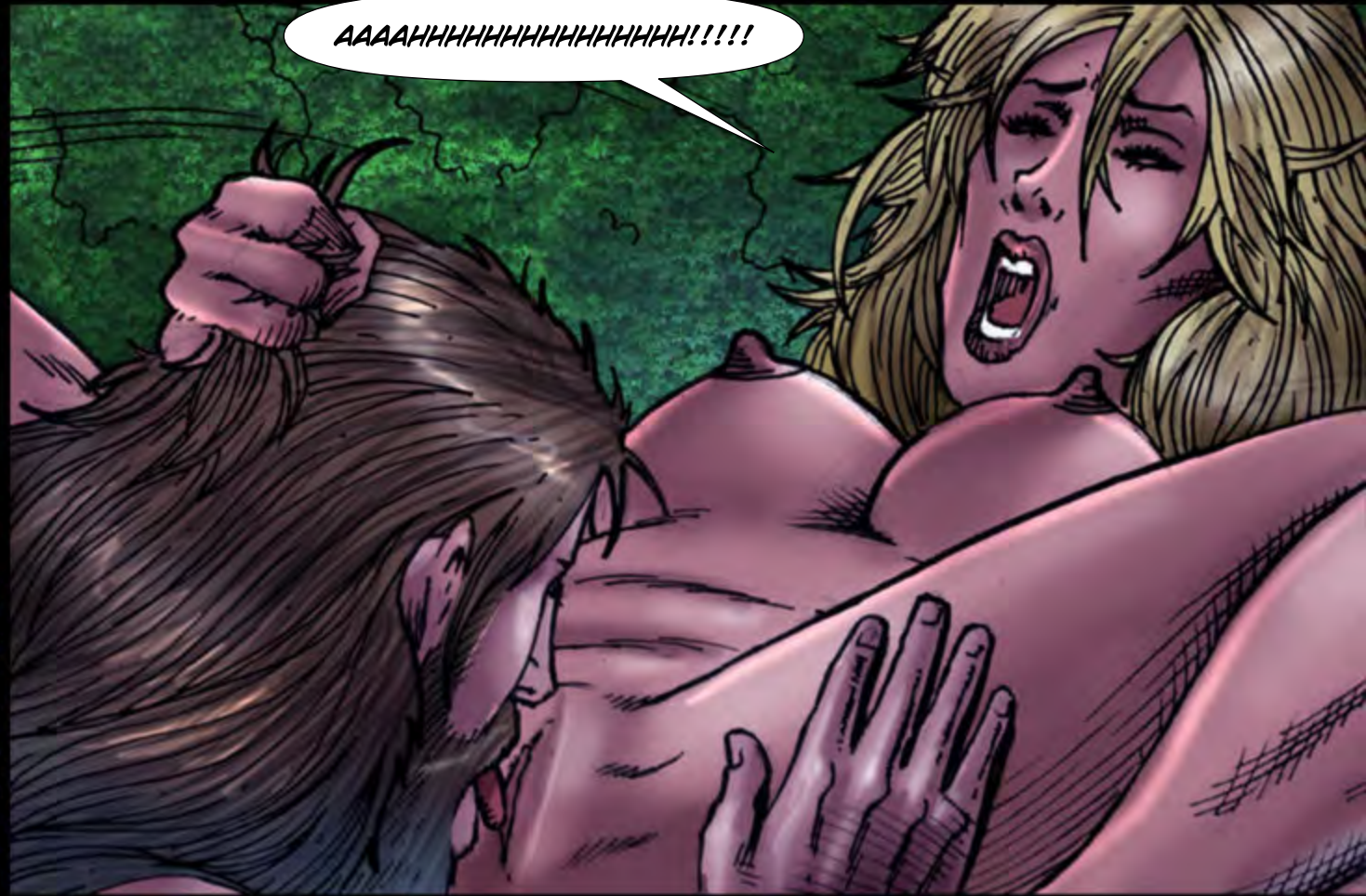
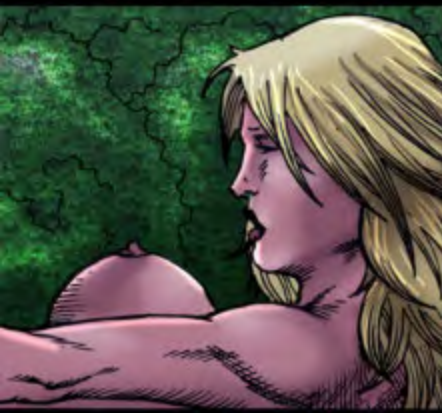
SHHHH!



OH!



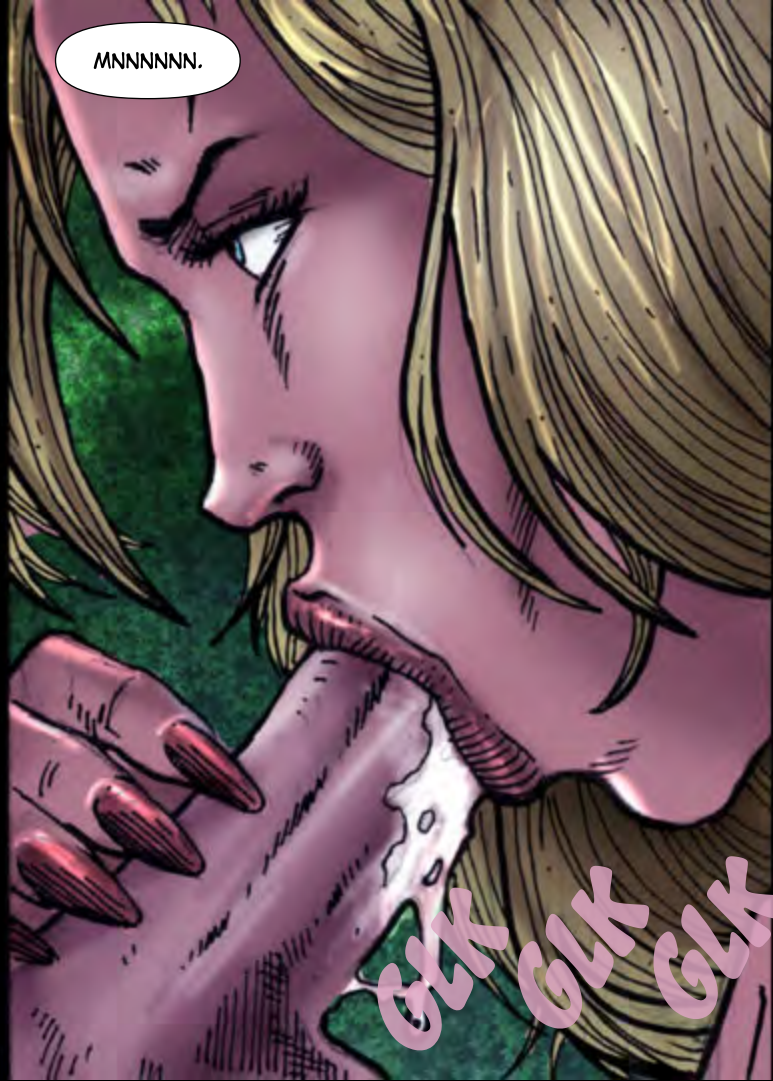
BY ESUS,  
IT FEELS GOOD!  
YES...YES MORE!  
MORE PLEASE!



AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!



MY TURN.

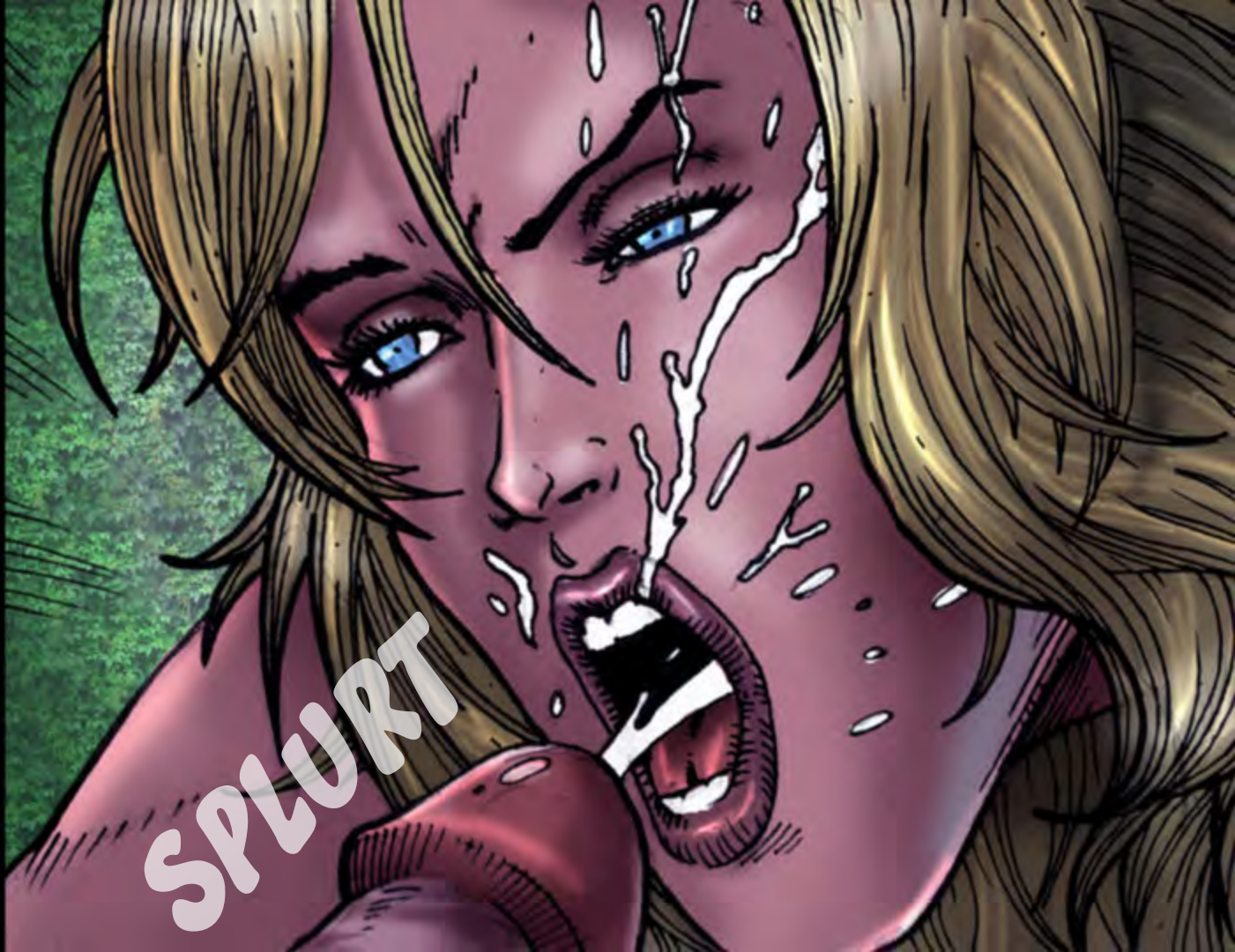
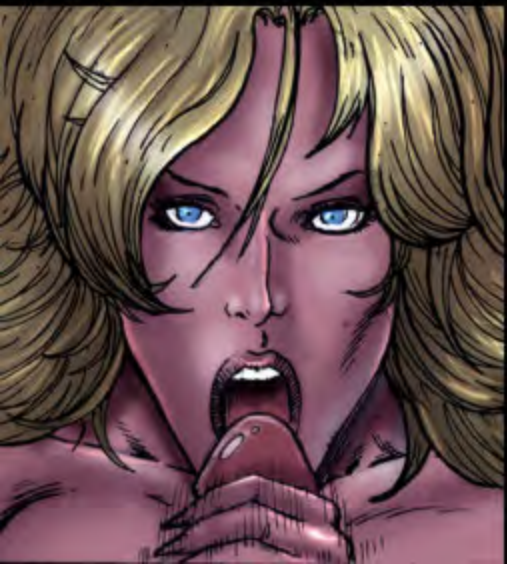


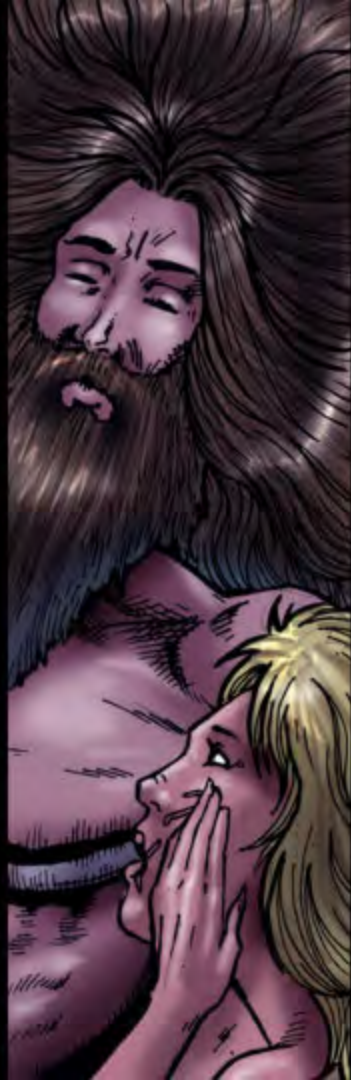
MNNNNNN.

Glt Glt Glt



->NGLK<-









PREPARE MY  
GUARD TO RETURN  
WITH ME TO ROME. WE  
LEAVE AT ONCE.

WHAT  
ARE YOUR ORDERS  
GENERAL?

YES, SIRE.



WHO WAS  
THE MAN IN  
METAL?

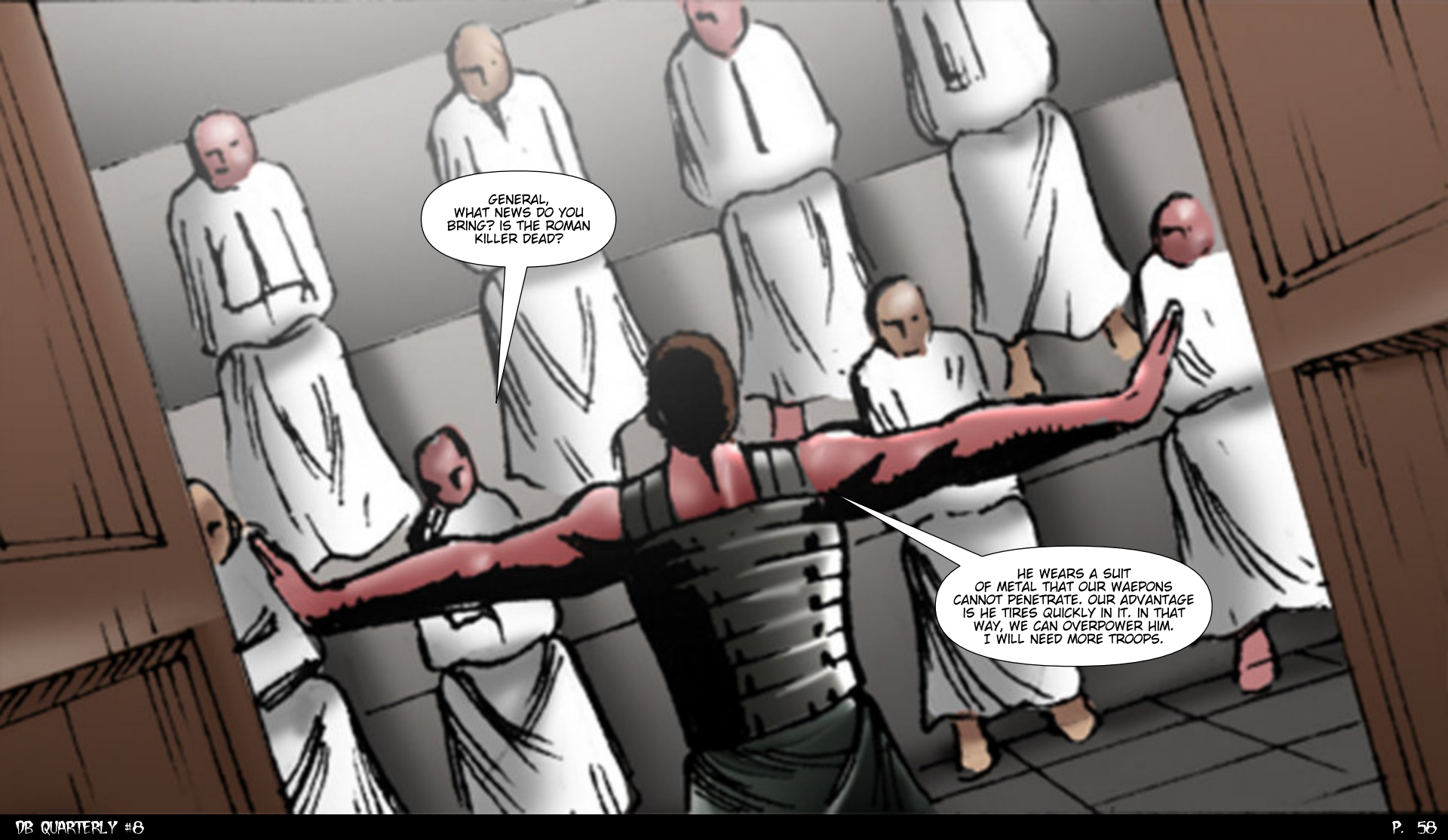
AN ENEMY.



# BU THE CHER

# 8 "AN UNEASY ALLIANCE"

LINES: EL SANTO  
COLORS: CELESTIN SZABO  
STORY: CRYSTAL STORM  
EDITS: SUE SOARES  
CHARACTERS, STORY, EDITS: ANDREW ZAR  
LETTERS: KEITH WOOD



GENERAL,  
WHAT NEWS DO YOU  
BRING? IS THE ROMAN  
KILLER DEAD?

HE WEARS A SUIT  
OF METAL THAT OUR WAEPONS  
CANNOT PENETRATE. OUR ADVANTAGE  
IS HE TIRES QUICKLY IN IT. IN THAT  
WAY, WE CAN OVERPOWER HIM.  
I WILL NEED MORE TROOPS.



MORE?  
WHY?

BECAUSE GAIL MUST  
NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE  
A CONTINUED THREAT TO  
ROME. OUR TRADE ROUTES  
WOULD PROSPER ONCE  
I TAKE THAT COUNTRY  
FOR OUR OWN.



WE WILL DISCUSS. RETURN IN THE MORNING.

WHAT IS THERE TO DISCUSS? HAVE I NOT--

DO NOT FORGET YOUR PLACE, GENERA! WE WILL DISCUSS THE MATTER IN PRIVATE. YOU ARE DISMISSED.



I TOOK THE GAUL WHORE WHERE YOU INSTRUCTED.

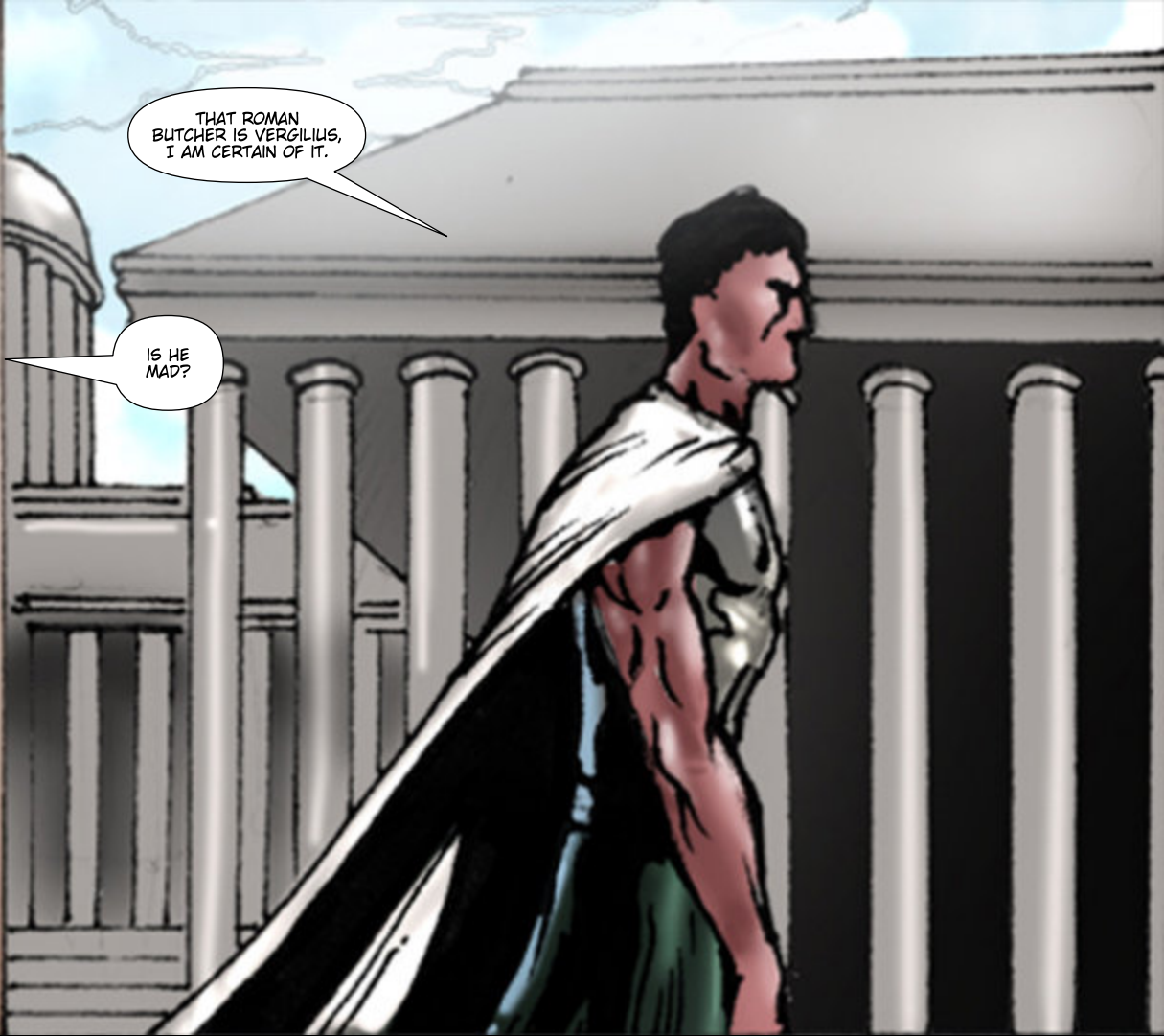


HER NAME...  
IS SORCHA.



THAT ROMAN BUTCHER IS VERGIILIUS, I AM CERTAIN OF IT.

IS HE MAD?



OBVIOUSLY, BUT  
IT DOESN'T MATTER. THE  
NEXT TIME I SEE HIM, METAL  
ARMOR OR NOT, I WILL SLIT  
HIS THROAT THE SAME  
WAY I DID HIS WIFE.






WHY DO YOU COME HERE, WOMAN?

TO LEARN HOW TO FIGHT.

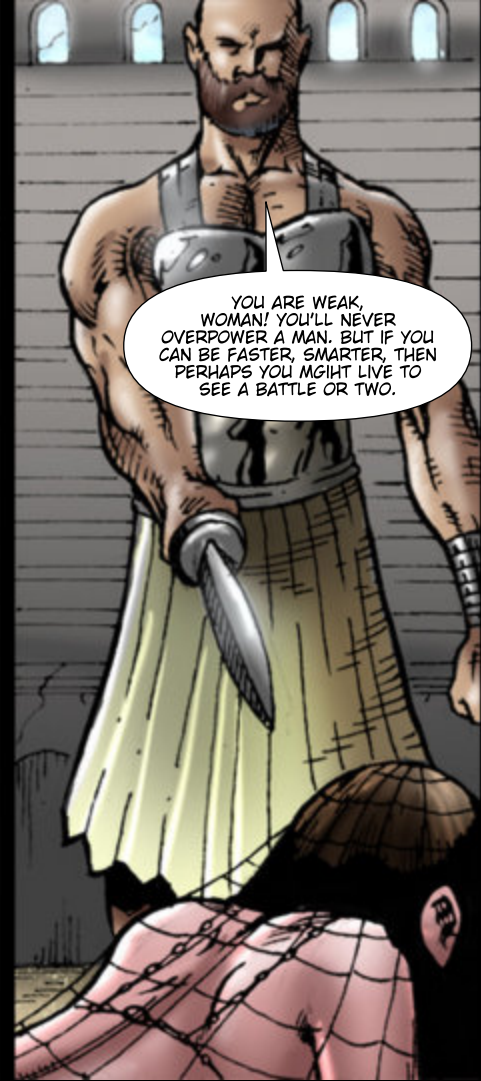


HAH! YOU ARE WEAK!

PERHAPS MY BODY IS, BUT I AM NOT.



I WILL TAKE NO MERCY ON YOU, WOMAN. I WILL TREAT YOU AS I TREAT EVERY OTHER MAN WHO WISHES TO TRAIN TO BE A GLADIATOR.



YOU ARE WEAK, WOMAN! YOU'LL NEVER OVERPOWER A MAN. BUT IF YOU CAN BE FASTER, SMARTER, THEN PERHAPS YOU MIGHT LIVE TO SEE A BATTLE OR TWO.

THEN I SUGGEST YOU MOCK ME LESS AND WE BEGIN.



WHOOOSH



YOU MOVE LIKE AN OLD MAN. FASTER, LIKE THIS!

WHUMP

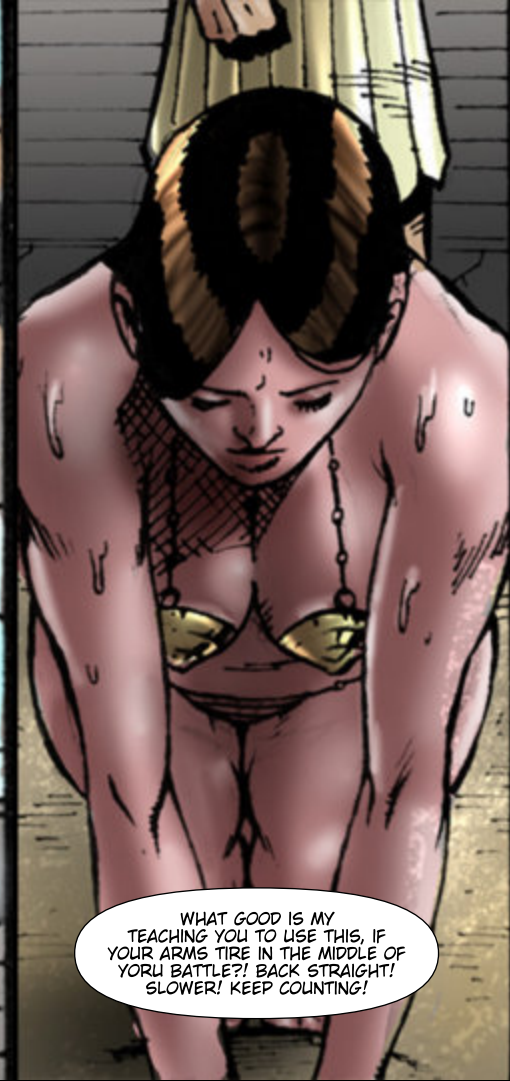
**WHISH**



**WHOOSH**



GET UP. WE GO AGAIN.



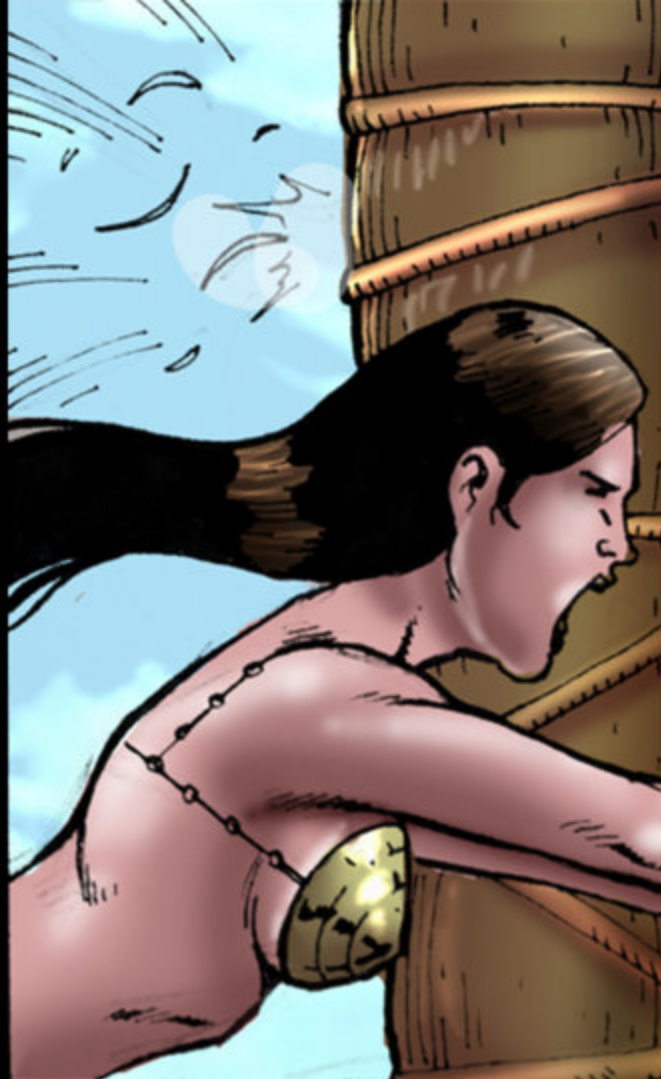
WHAT GOOD IS MY TEACHING YOU TO USE THIS, IF YOUR ARMS TIRE IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR BATTLE?! BACK STRAIGHT! SLOWER! KEEP COUNTING!





YOU'RE WASTING  
MY TIME, WOMAN. GET OUT  
OF MY RING.

NO.

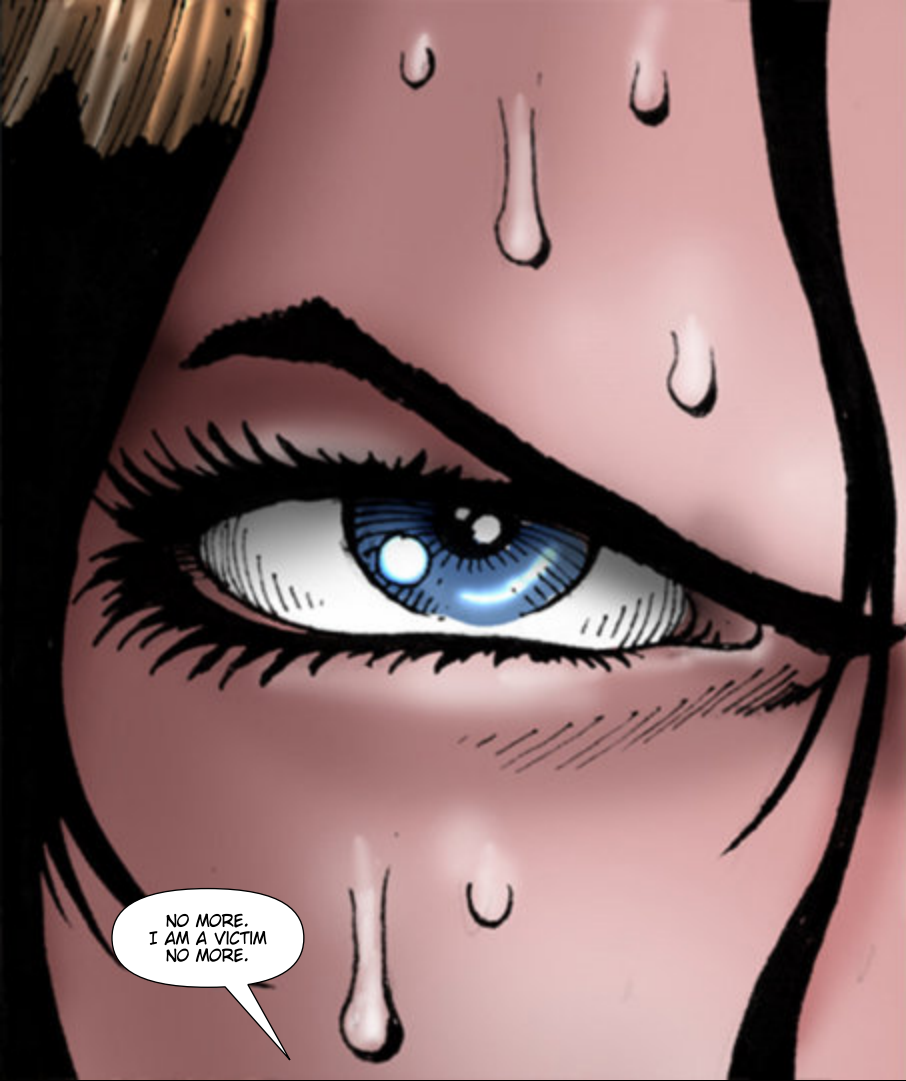


LUCKY. DO IT AGAIN.  
AND AGAIN, UNTIL THE  
SUN SETS. THEN YOU'LL  
DO IT AGAIN.



HOW LONG WILL YOU  
REMAIN A VICTIM TO THE  
WHIMS OF THOSE STRONGER  
THAN YOU? HMM?





NO MORE.  
I AM A VICTIM  
NO MORE.



PROVE IT.

**SWISH**










I WILL SNEAK INTO HIS TENT, IT WON'T TAKE ME LONG--




IF IT IS GENERAL ALBINUS YOU SEEK, HE IS NOT HERE.



YOU WISH  
TO DIE TONIGHT,  
OLD MAN.

DEATH IS  
INEVITABLE. MY  
WISH IS TO SEE MY  
COUNTRY FREE OF  
ROMANS.

YOU  
WISH A FOOL'S  
DREAM.



AS DO YOU,  
THINKING YOU  
CAN ATTACK A ROMAN  
GENERAL IN THE MIDDLE OF  
HIS CAMP. ALBINUS IS  
BLOOD-THIRSTY BUT  
HE IS NO FOOL.

WHAT  
WOULD YOU KNOW  
OF IT!?



WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?

MY PEOPLE TELL ME OF YOU. THERE ARE RUMORS THAT YOU SHOW NO MERCY, YET I WATCHED YOU SAVE HER.

DO NOT THINK YOU UNDERSTAND ME, OLD MAN.



MY SPIES HAVE REPORTED THAT ALBINUS RETURNED TO ROME TO SEEK MORE TROOPS. IF THEY ARE GRANTED YOU WILL NEVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HAVE WHATEVER VENGEANCE YOU SEEK. NOT WITHOUT OUR HELP. AND WE CANNOT DEFEAT ROME WITHOUT YOURS.



NEVER! I WILL SHARE NOTHING WITH GAUL!

ONLY A FOOL SEEKS VENGEANCE HE CANNOT CLAIM. I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU ARE A FOOL.



SHOULD HE  
CHANGE HIS MIND, OR SHOULD  
YOU FALL OUT OF HIS FAVOR AND  
NEED ANOTHER PLACE TO WIELD YOUR  
BOW, MY HOME IS YOURS.







HE'S RIGHT.



THWUNK

HE IS DEAD--  
HE HAS SEEN THE  
ARMOR, YOU KNOW  
WHAT THAT MEANS.



LET ME HELP YOU,  
LET **THEM** HELP YOU--  
IF ONLY TO PROVIDE YOU  
THE ACCESS TO YOUR  
REVENGE. DOES NOTHING  
BEYOND THAT REALLY  
MATTER TO YOU?

NO, NOTHING.

JUST MEET WITH  
THEM, PLEASE. IF YOU  
BELIEVE THEY ARE NOT WORTHY  
FOR WHATEVER REASONS, THEN  
BY ESUS I ALONE WILL  
FIGHT WITH YOU.

WHY, MOUSE?



ALBINUS HAS MY SISTER. I MUST FREE HER.



I'LL MEET WITH THEM.







TAKE A SEAT.  
FOOD? DRINK?

WHAT DO  
YOU WANT?

IF ROME COMES  
WITH THE FULL MIGHT  
OF THEIR ARMY, THERE'LL  
BE NO STOPPING THEM.

NOT MY  
PROBLEM.




ALBINUS IS YOUR  
PROBLEM. WE'VE ESTABLISHED  
THAT. WHAT YOU DO FOR US PUTS  
YOU CLOSER TO HIM. THE QUESTION  
BECOMES HOW BADLY DO YOU WISH  
TO KILL YOUR ENEMY?

MY INFORMANTS TELL ME THE SENATE IS CURRENTLY IN DEBATE ON WHETHER OR NOT THEY WILL GIVE ALBINUS ADDITIONAL LEGIONS.

THEY WILL. WE KNOW THEY WILL.


I WARNED OUR SKIRMISHES WITH THEM WERE NOT WISE.

THEY WERE IN OUR LAND! IT COULDN'T BE AVOIDED.

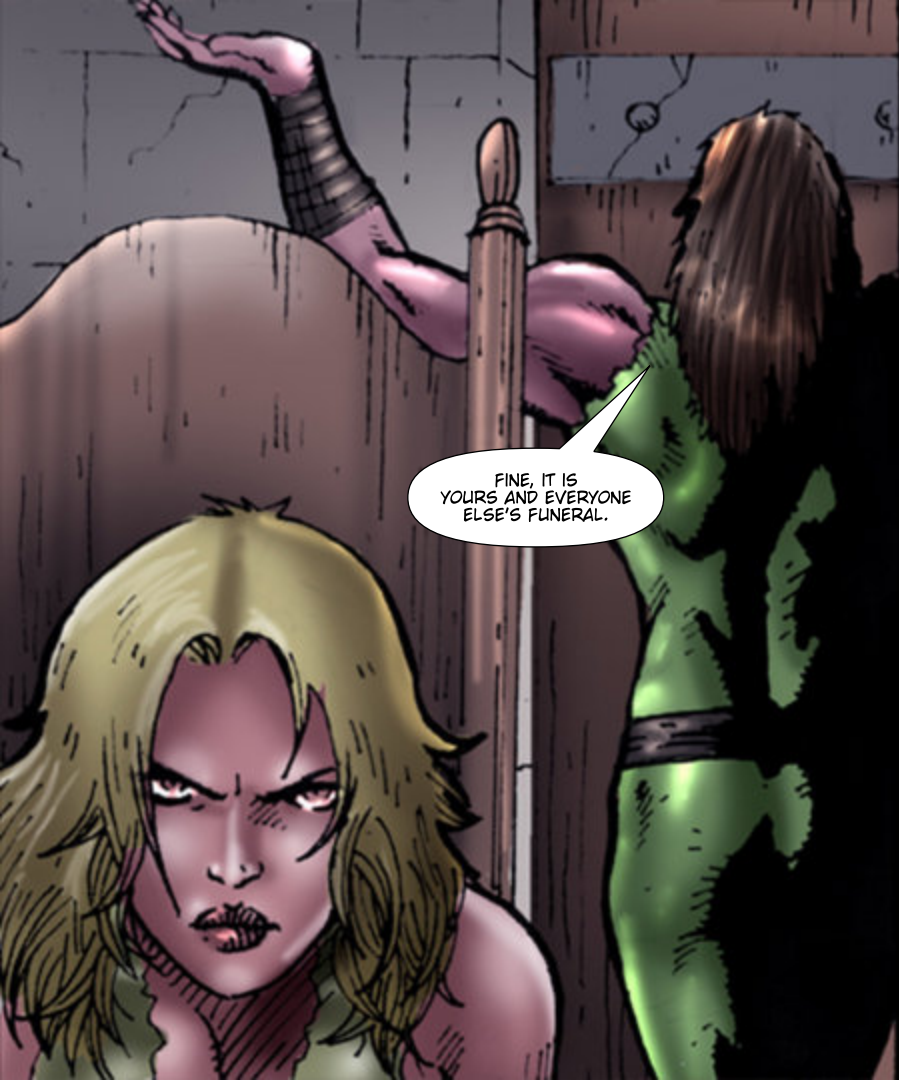


I WILL FORGE  
ARMOR FOR A SMALL  
DIVISION OF YOUR MEN.  
I WILL TRAIN THEM HOW TO  
USE IT. I WILL TEACH  
NO OTHER.

YOU WILL SEND ME  
YOUR STRONGEST, OBEDIENT,  
WORTHY FIGHTERS, AND YOU WILL  
LISTEN TO MY INSTRUCTIONS FOR  
THE BATTLE-- TO THE LETTER.



YOU ASK  
TOO MUCH. I WILL  
CONFER WITH YOU, BUT MY ARMY  
WOULD NOT OBEY YOUR  
DIRECT ORDERS.



FINE, IT IS  
YOURS AND EVERYONE  
ELSE'S FUNERAL.





DEVIN, YOU  
NEED HIM.



WAIT.

I WILL COMMAND  
MY MEN, AND YOU WILL  
GIVE YOUR ORDERS TO ME. ON  
MY HONOR I WILL FOLLOW  
YOUR INSTRUCTION.



DEVIN, YOU CANNOT TRUST THIS MAN!

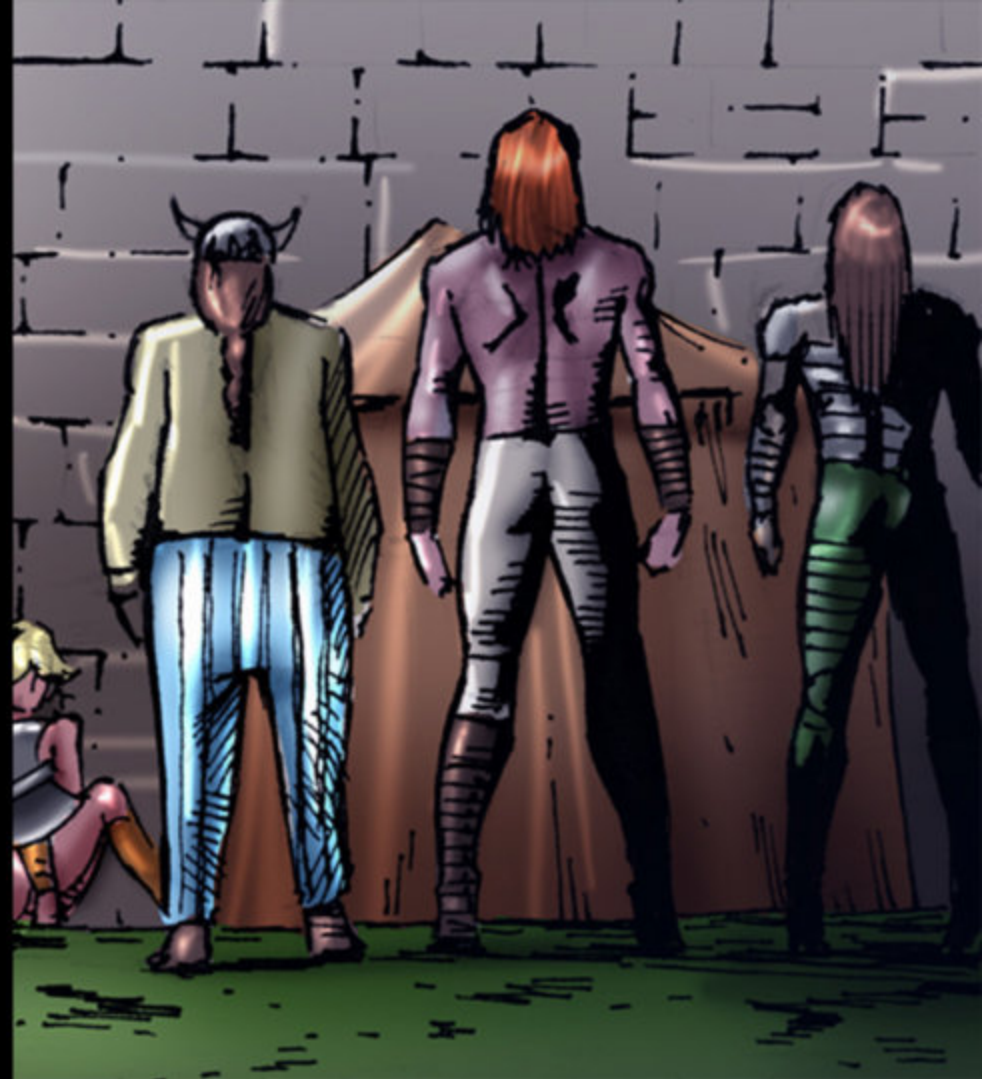
WE MAY BE RELUCTANT PARTNERS, BUT WE ARE PARTNERS, SAYER. APART WE WILL SURELY DIE.



SEND YOUR BEST MEN TO ME. WEAK MEN I WILL LET DIE IN TRAINING AND ANY DEFECTORS WILL MEET MY AXE. THIS IS A ONE-WAY TRIP TO HADES.

AND I NEED RAW MATERIALS, MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE, AND IMMEDIATELY.

DONE.





THIS IS BRICE,  
CYRIC AND ANWELL.  
THREE OF MY  
BEST.

AND THE  
REST?

ON THEIR WAY, ALONG  
WITH YOUR REQUESTED ITEMS.  
THEY WILL BE HERE IN SEVERAL  
DAYS' TIME.

THEN WE TRAIN.



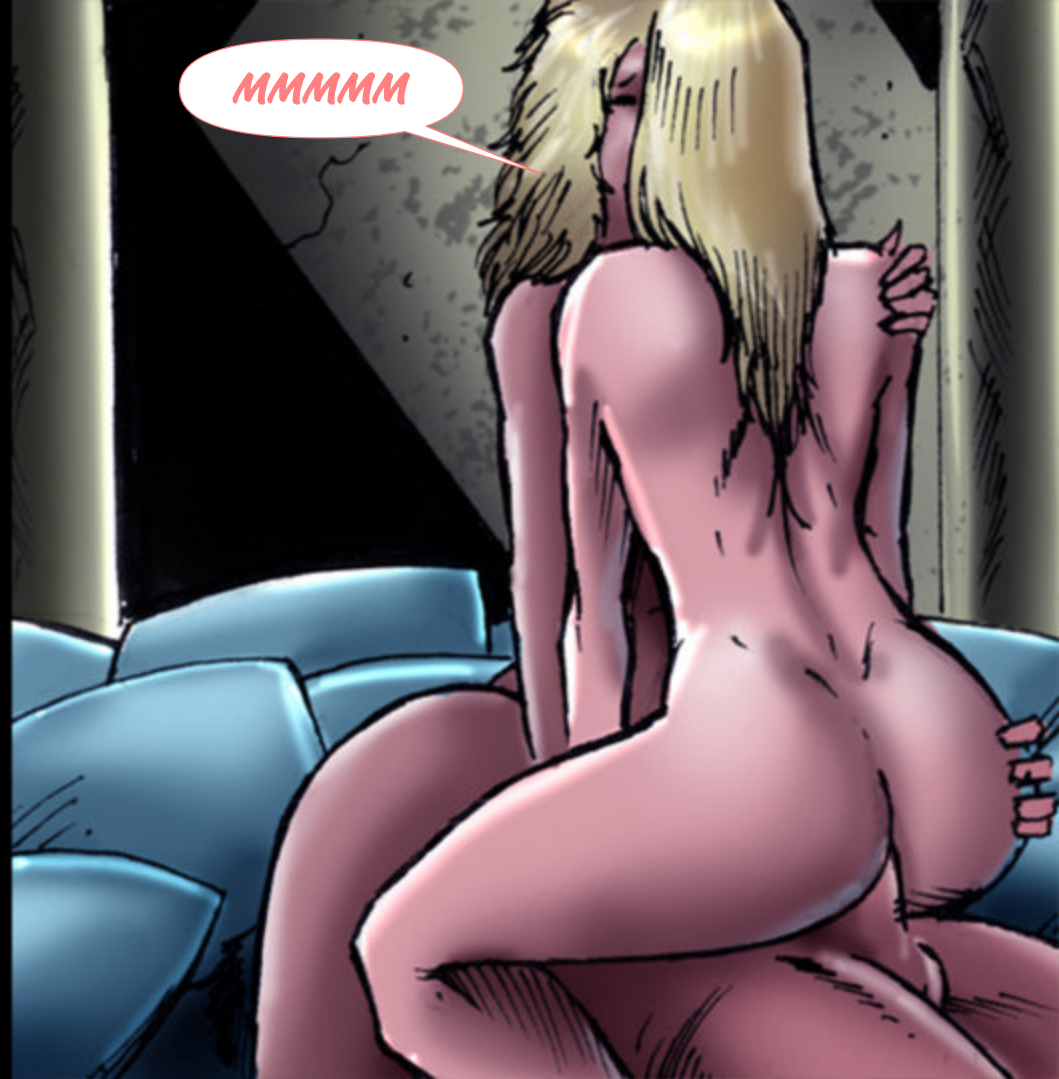
HE JESTS, DEVIN?  
WHAT NEED DO WE  
HAVE TO TRAIN?



I SAID,  
**WE TRAIN.**  
NOW!



OOOOHHH!!



MMMMMM





WHAT THE  
FUCK ARE YOU  
DOING?

I WANTED TO  
SEE IF I WAS AS  
QUIET AS I THOUGHT  
I WAS.




I WASN'T FINISHED. HAVE YOU ANY IDEA THE STRESS I'VE BEEN UNDER WHILE WAITING FOR THE IDIOT SENATE TO--

I AM.



I'LL RELIEVE YOUR STRESS, AND SOME OF MY OWN.



YES YOU WILL.



MMMMMM





WHAT...  
TOOK...SO  
LONG...



SHHH...HARDER...  
YES...YES...REMINDE ME  
WHY I SERVE ROME...  
OOOOOH!!!!



⇒HUFF⇒  
THIS WEIGHT IS  
RIDICULOUS.

AYE.  
WHAT NEED  
DO WE HAVE TO  
TRAIN LIKE  
THIS?

BECAUSE  
THIS IS HOW YOUR  
ENEMY TRAINS. MOVE  
FASTER!



⇒SNICKER⇒



JUST A MOMENT,  
I'LL BE RIGH--

**KRUNK**







**WHUMP**



GET UP! DO IT AGAIN!



YOU'RE BETTER THAN THIS, AND FOR WHAT HE MAKES FOR YOU YOU HAVE TO BE.

BLOODY HELL, HE HITS LIKE AN OX.

AYE HE DOES.

HOW DO YOU KNOW SUCH A MAN, LASS?



HE SAVED MY LIFE. NOW C'MON, LET'S GO!



FIGHT. UNTIL YOUR ARMS ACHE. THEN FIGHT MORE.

BLOODY HELL, WHAT SWORD WEIGHS AS MUCH AS THIS?

DIS PATER, DO YOU HAVE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT EVERYTHING?!

**HAAAAHA.**  
TRAIN. OR DIE IN BATTLE. I CARE NOT.







YOUR TALK  
IS USELESS!  
FIGHT!

⇒SNICKER←

BETTER DO  
AS HE SAYS.

AYE. I'M  
NOT GETTING  
HIT AGAIN.

OH, YOU ARE.  
BY ME.

**WHOMP**

# RAAAAAGGH!





YOU ARE FINISHED WITH YOUR TRAINING THEN?

PANKRATIOS WAS A GOOD TEACHER. MY DETERMINATION AND A NATURAL SKILL WITH POLE ARMS HELPED.

AS I PREDICTED.



DON'T LOOK SO CROSS, ALBINUS, POLITICS TAKES TIME.

I CARE LITTLE FOR YOUR POLITICS. AM I TO BE GIVEN THE TROOPS NEEDED OR NOT?

THE SENATE HAS AGREED THAT GAUL MUST BE DEALT WITH. YOU WILL TAKE ANOTHER LEGION AND MEET WITH GENERAL GAIUS ATILIUS REGULUS. A MESSENGER HAS BEEN DISPATCHED THAT HE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR YOUR ARRIVAL.

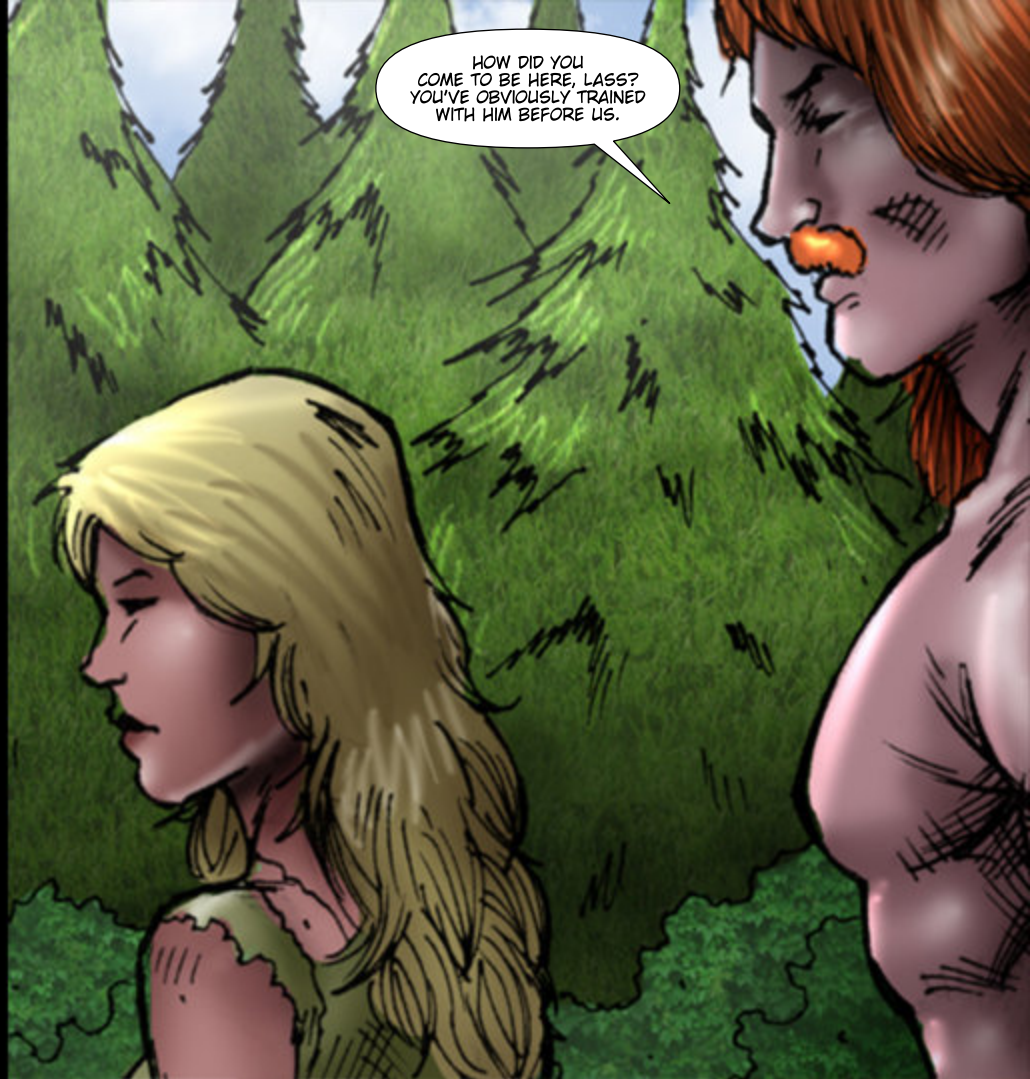






THEY STILL MOVE TOO SLOW.

THINK SO? GIVE US ANOTHER DAY OR TWO AT IT THEN. IF WE HAVE TO BE FASTER FOR WHATEVER THIS NEW ADVANTAGE IS, THEN WE WILL BE.





I LIVED  
IN DURIA.



I HEARD OF IT.  
I AM SORRY. DID YOU  
LOSE EVERYONE?

MY SISTER HAS  
BEEN CAPTURED.



BASTARD ROMANS.  
IF I HAD MY WAY, I'D SEE THE  
WORLD FREE OF THEM.

HAVE YOU  
FOUGHT THEM  
BEFORE?

NOT ME. MY  
BROTHERS DID MANY  
YEARS AGO. THEY DIED  
IN THE LAST BATTLE.

I'M SORRY.



YOU'LL ONLY  
BE GETTING THE DROP  
ON ME ONCE.

CLANG

WE'LL SEE  
ABOUT THAT!



HE FAVORS YOU.



WHO DOES?

YOUR PROTECTOR.

HIM? NO.  
NO, I THINK HE  
KILLED THAT PART  
OF HIMSELF.



I DON'T KNOW  
ABOUT THAT. JUST YOU  
BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T HAVE  
TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A  
DEVIL AND YOUR KIN.



RAAARRHHHH!!!

KA-CHUNK





BY ESUS  
YOU'RE QUICK,  
LASS!

OR YOU'RE JUST  
GENERALLY SLOW.

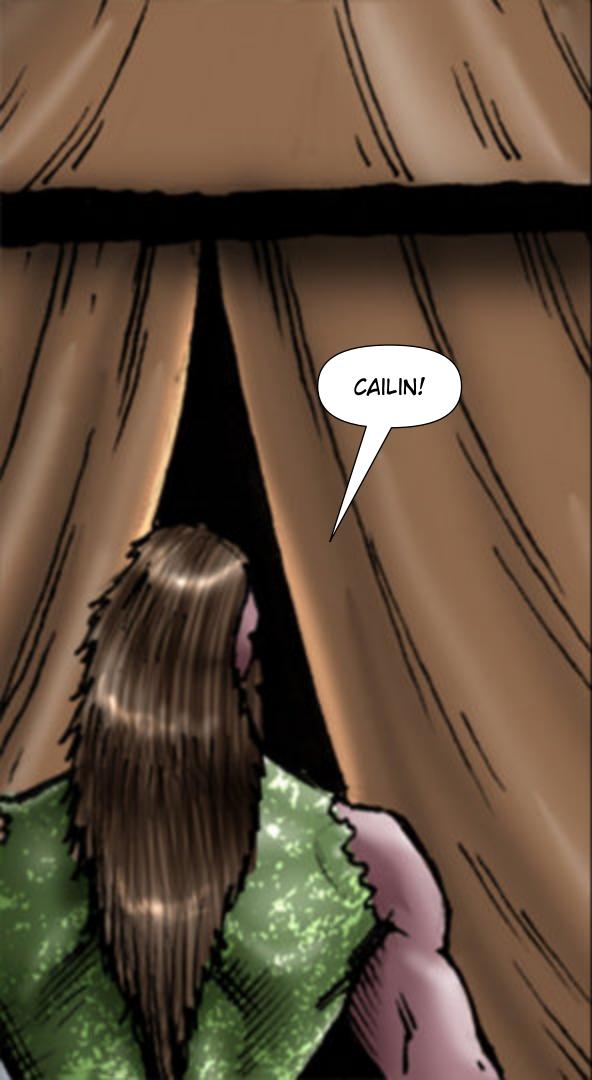
SAYS THE WIMP  
AT THE VERY END  
OF THE LINE.



FIVE MILES,  
IN FOUR AND A HALF  
HOURS. SUITABLE,  
GENERAL?

HMPH.





CAILIN!



LIH OH. HOPE YOU'RE NOT IN TROUBLE WITH THE GENERAL, LASS.







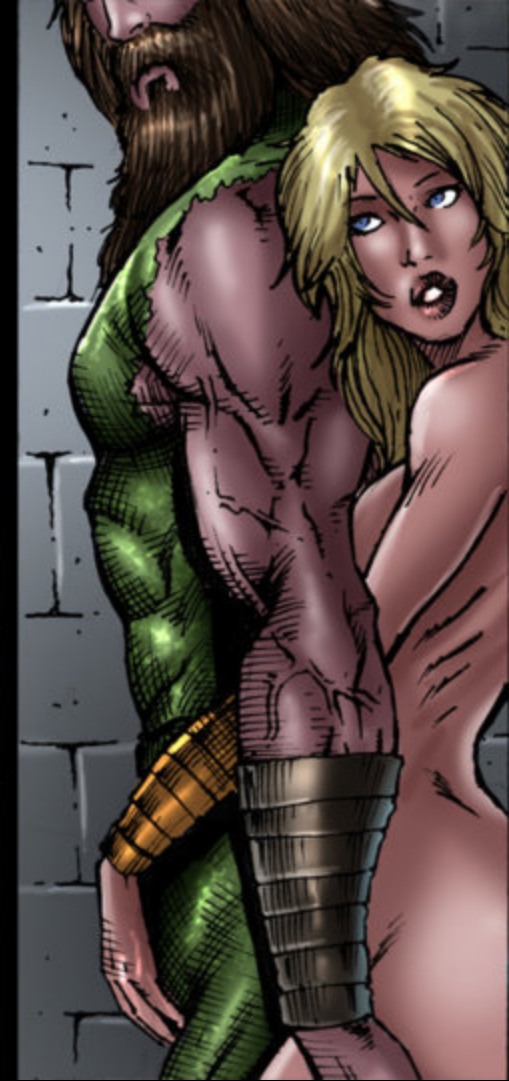
THE MEN ARE GETTING BETTER. THEY'LL BE ABLE TO HELP YOU TRAIN THE REST WHEN THEY ARRIVE.

YOU LIKE THEM. IT CLOUDS YOUR JUDGMENT.

I DON'T LIKE THEM THAT MUCH.



I LIKE YOU BETTER.

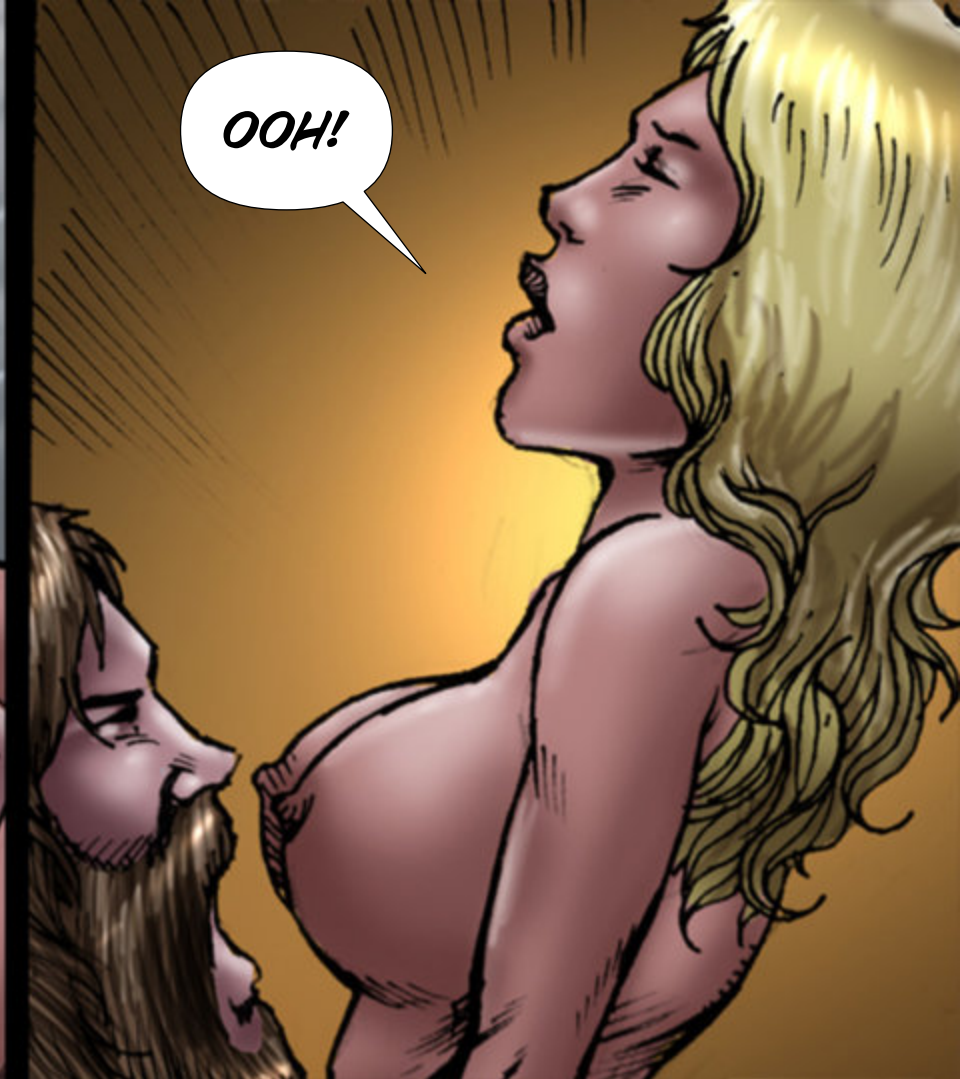




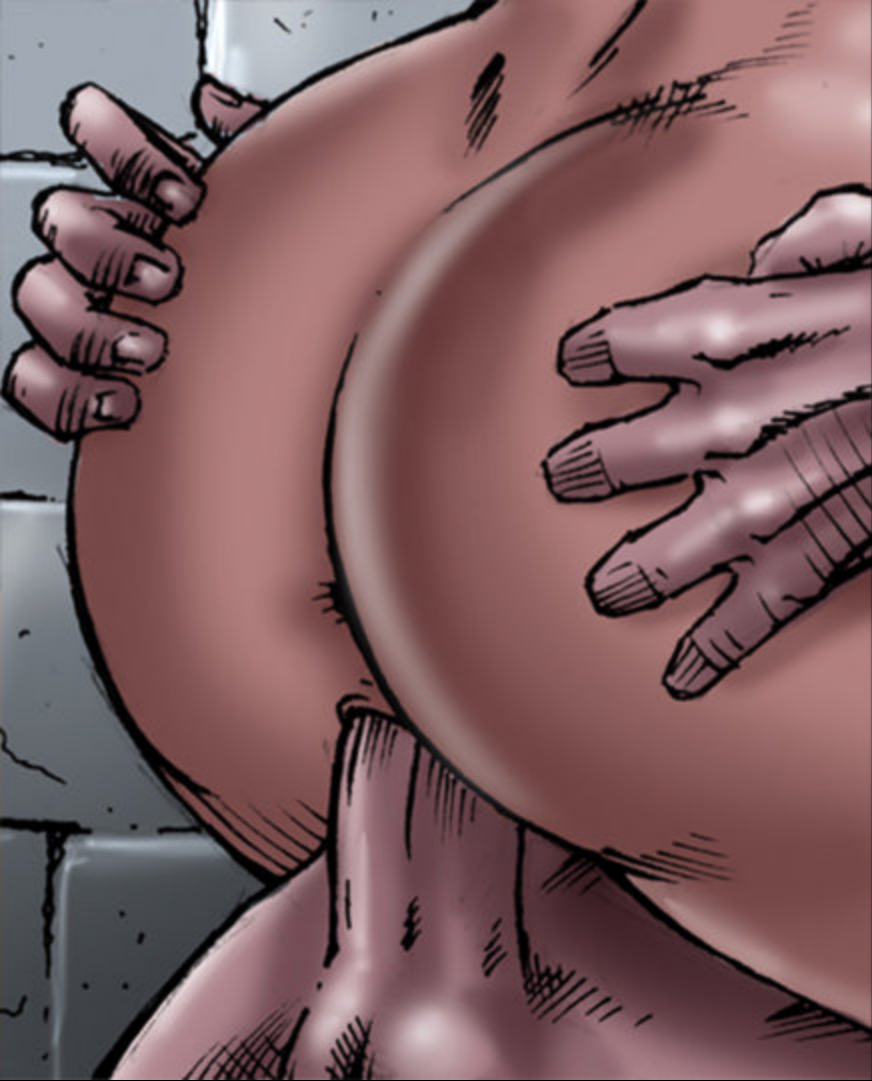
OOOOOH...  
ESUS...YES...  
YES...



NOT...  
SO...LIVID...  
MOUSE...



OOH!



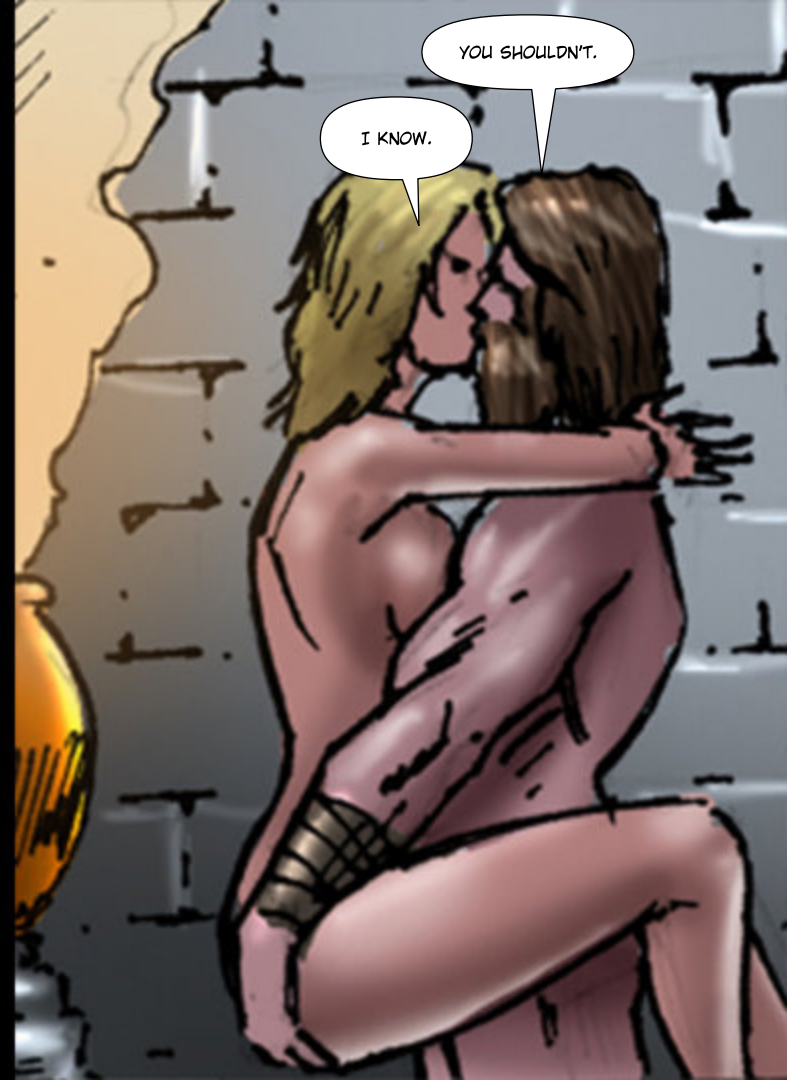
AAAAHHHH!



OOOOOOH!



WOW!





GO. TRAIN.  
I MUST CONTINUE  
TO PREPARE.



YES, GENERAL.





WHERE DO YOU WANT THE MATERIALS, SIRE?

OUTSIDE THE TENT. DO NOT UNCOVER IT.



I WORK AT NIGHT. NO ONE COMES INTO THE COURTYARD WHILE I WORK.



YOU HEARD HIM MEN, AYE? BY PENALTY OF DEATH, UNDERSTOOD?





**SCREEEEEE**  
**SCRAPPE**



HAHAHAHA!

DON'T  
LAUGH! I'M  
GOING TO  
HELP!

YOU SHOULD  
SLEEP, MOUSE. YOU WILL  
HAVE TO TRAIN THE MEN IN  
THE MORNING.



I'LL SLEEP  
LATER.



SUIT YOURSELF.



**THWAP**

ALL RIGHT, CHILDREN.  
THE DOGS OF ROME  
THINK THEY CAN MARCH ON  
GAUL AND IT'LL BE UP TO  
US TO SEE OT IT THAT  
THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN!

THEY'LL BE  
MORE OF US,  
RIGHT SIR?

AYE MORON.  
BUT WE'RE THE  
ELITE UNIT.




WE'LL BE GETTING SOMETHING THAT'LL GIVE US AN ADVANTAGE.

WHAT SIR?

DUNNO.



THE WHAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT YOU'LL BE TRAINING UNTIL WE THINK YER GOOD ENOUGH TO FIGHT WITH US, UNDERSTOOD?



GET UP,  
YAH CRY BABY!  
ON WITH YAH!

THESE PACKS ARE  
HEAVY, SIR! WHY DO  
WE NEED TO--

BECAUSE THIS  
IS HOW YOUR ENEMY  
TRAINS! DON'T QUESTION  
ME! **MOVE!**



I'M SENSING  
FEELINGS OF PAYBACK  
IN ANWELL.

A BIG BULLY,  
THAT ONE.



IT'S BEEN A WEEK. THEY'RE NOT GETTING ANY BETTER.

BABY STEPS, LASS. THEY'LL GET THERE.



I'M NOT CONVINCED, BRICE. MAKE THEM BETTER OR SEND THEM HOME.



HERE'S TO HOPIN' I NEVER GET ON HER BAD SIDE.







HA! THAT IS STILL TOO HEAVY. I MUST FIND A WAY TO MAKE IT LIGHTER.






WHERE DO THEY GO?

HOME. THEY WEREN'T GOOD ENOUGH.

GOOD LORDS, LASS. THEY WERE SOME OF MY VERY--

THEY WEREN'T GOOD ENOUGH.



I KNOW YOU DON'T TRUST HIM, BUT HE'S GOING TO LIVE UP TO HIS END OF THIS. WE BETTER MAKE SURE TO LIVE UP TO OURS.

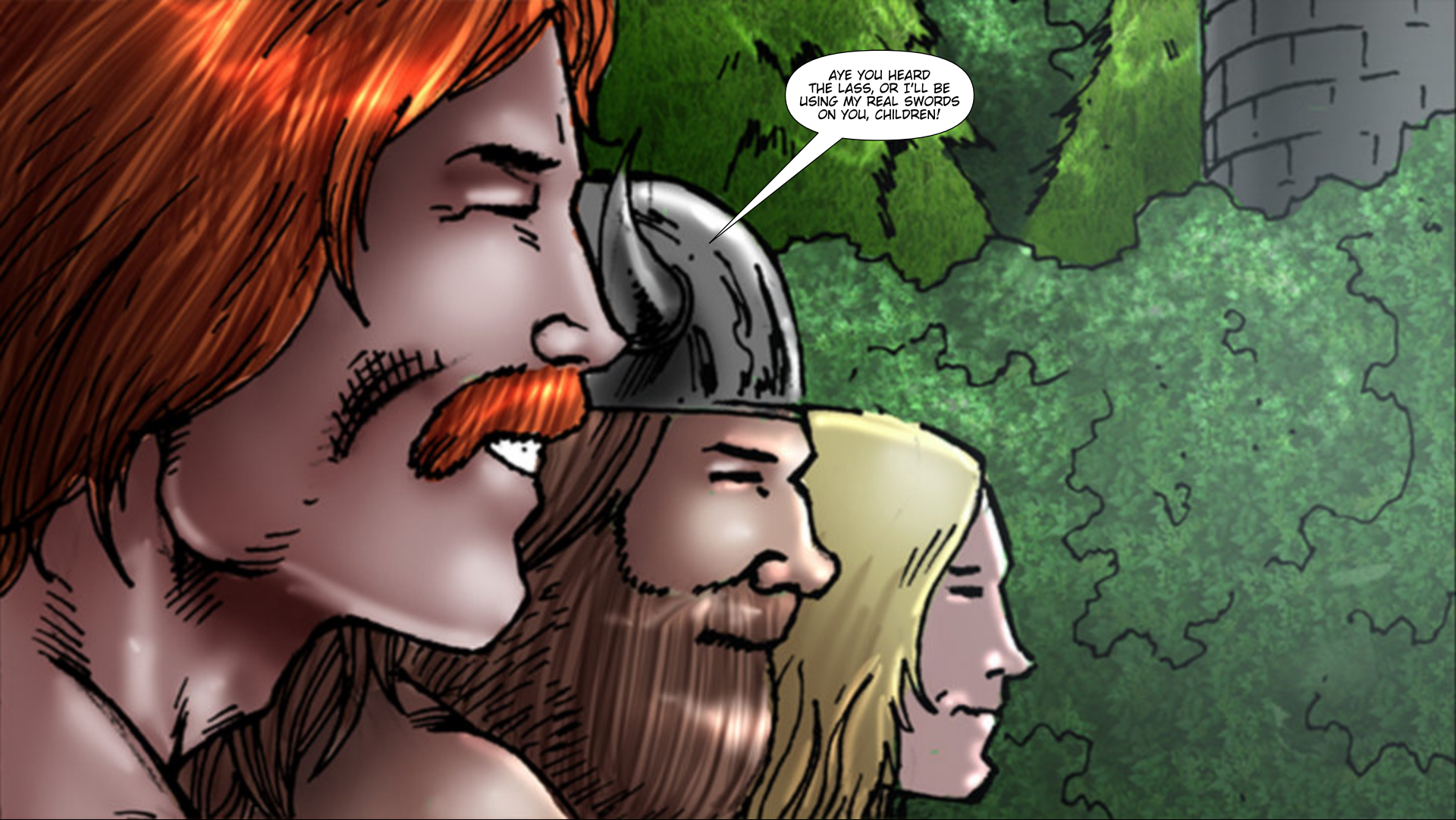


SEND FOR MORE. REAL MEN THIS TIME, DEVIN.





NOT GOOD  
ENOUGH! BY ESUS ARE YOU  
WARRIORS OF GALLI OR NOT?!  
*AGAIN!*



AYE YOU HEARD THE LASS, OR I'LL BE USING MY REAL SWORDS ON YOU, CHILDREN!

