

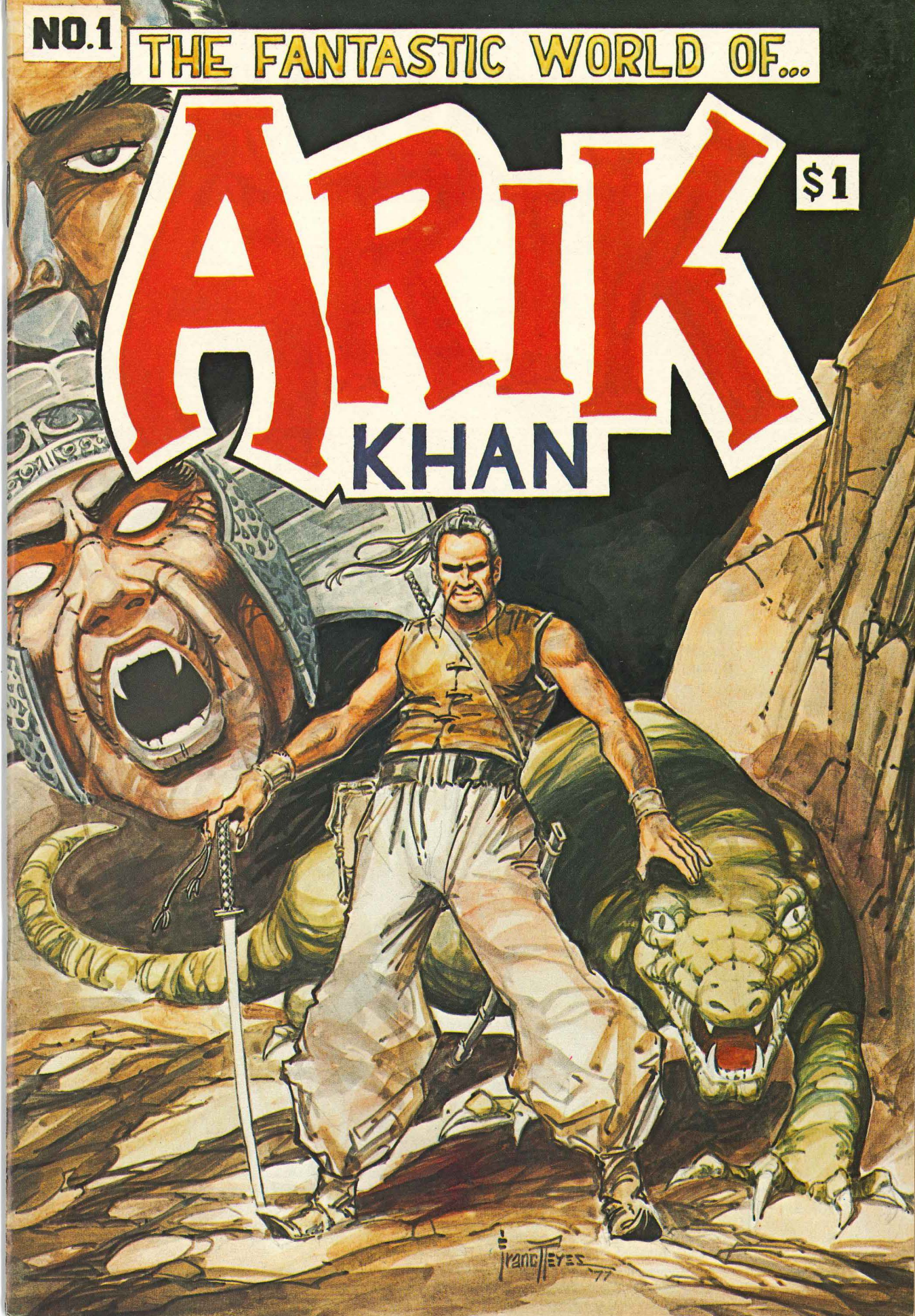
NO.1

THE FANTASTIC WORLD OF...

\$1

ARIK

KHAN



FRANCIS EYES '77

ARIK-KHAN



This is the first chapter in planned series of twenty-four, depicting the life of a very unique character: ARIK-KHAN. Adventurer, Rogue, Monster-slayer. Hero. This is a very special blend of fact and fancy. An epic we can all thrill to.

But I don't think Arik-Khan is much of a hero. Not really. Not when compared with Franc Reyes.

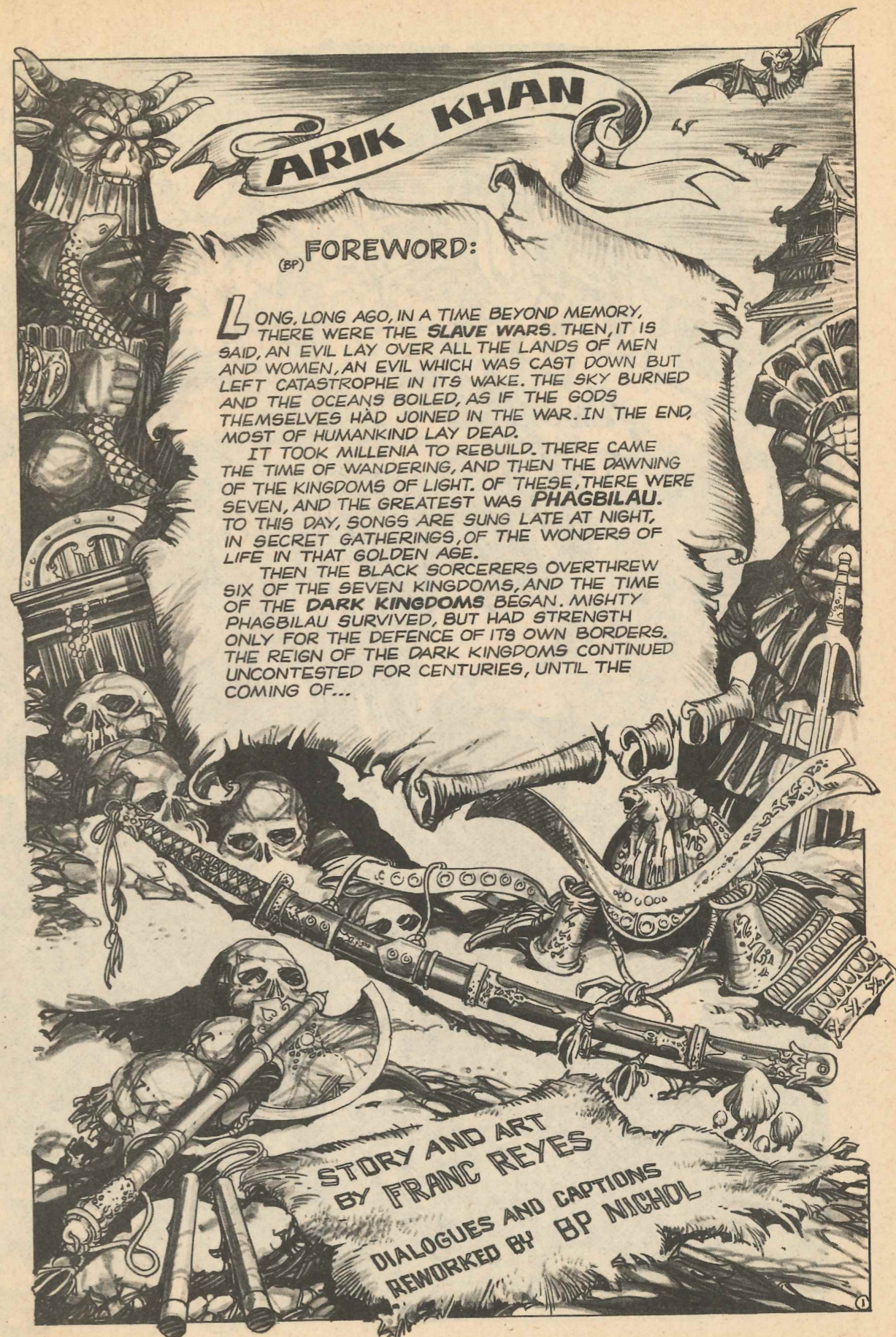
Franc is sharing a very personal vision with us. And in so doing has sacrificed quite a lot. Whatever difficulties (be they financial or artistic) have been tossed his way, his enthusiasm and freshness have prevailed.

The result is a true labour of love.

So don't be too quick to dismiss the monsters, wizards, and heroes as so much blood and thunder. If you look a little deeper you'll find a man who cares enough about us to share his dreams.

Dean Motter

ARIK KHAN Vol. 1, No. 1 September 1977. Published by Andromeda Publications, owned and operated by Silver Snail Comics Ltd. 321 Queen St. W. Toronto Ontario M5V 2A9. Dean Motter editor. Entire contents copyright 1977 by Franc Reyes. All Rights reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead are intended or should be inferred. Printed in Canada.



(BP) FOREWORD:

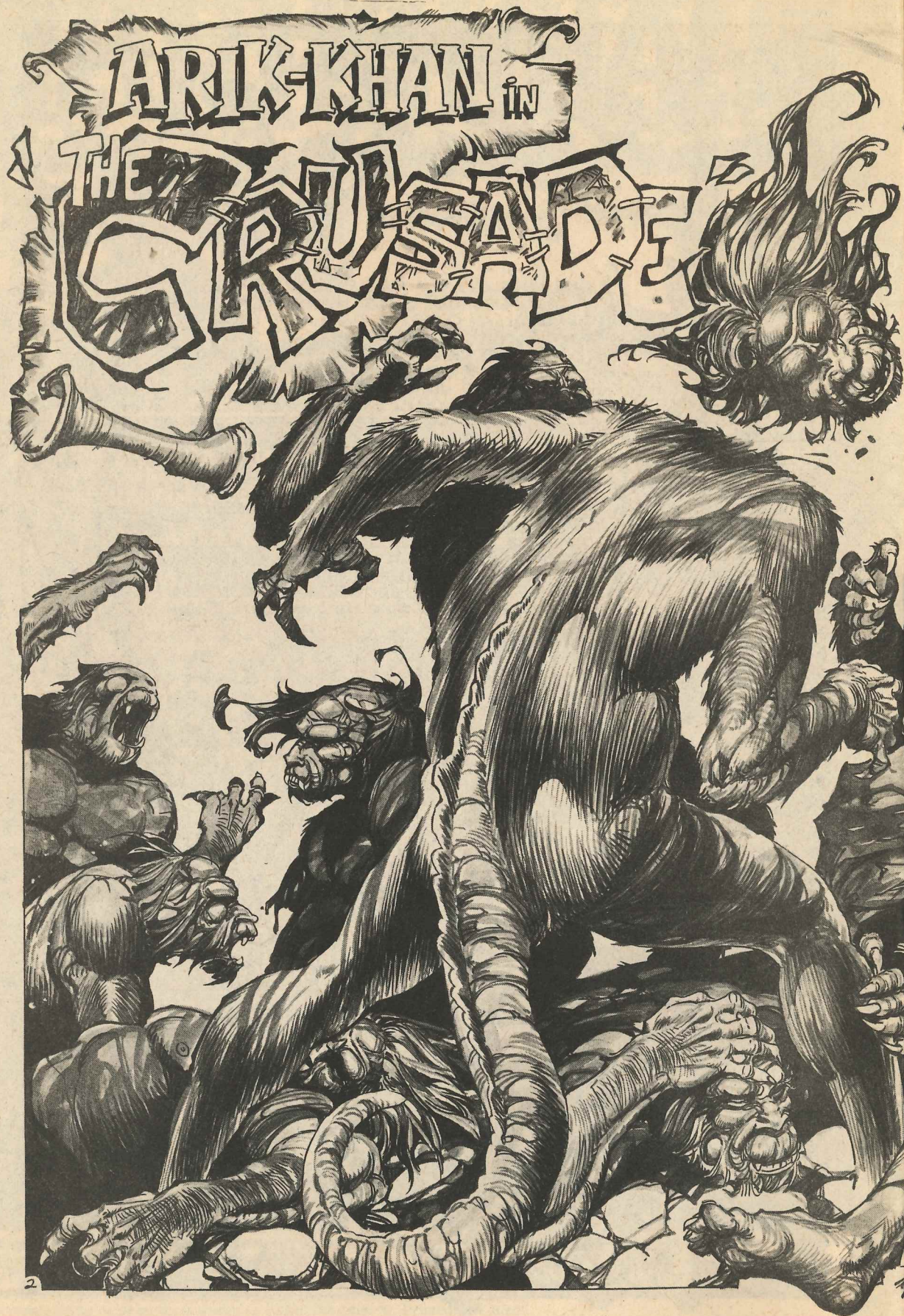
LONG, LONG AGO, IN A TIME BEYOND MEMORY, THERE WERE THE SLAVE WARS. THEN, IT IS SAID, AN EVIL LAY OVER ALL THE LANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN, AN EVIL WHICH WAS CAST DOWN BUT LEFT CATASTROPHE IN ITS WAKE. THE SKY BURNED AND THE OCEANS BOILED, AS IF THE GODS THEMSELVES HAD JOINED IN THE WAR. IN THE END, MOST OF HUMANKIND LAY DEAD.

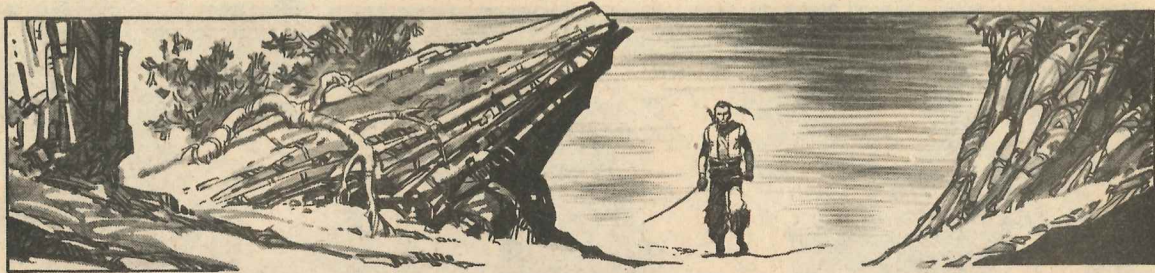
IT TOOK MILLENIA TO REBUILD. THERE CAME THE TIME OF WANDERING, AND THEN THE DAWNING OF THE KINGDOMS OF LIGHT. OF THESE, THERE WERE SEVEN, AND THE GREATEST WAS PHAGBILAU. TO THIS DAY, SONGS ARE SUNG LATE AT NIGHT, IN SECRET GATHERINGS, OF THE WONDERS OF LIFE IN THAT GOLDEN AGE.

THEN THE BLACK SORCERERS OVERTHREW SIX OF THE SEVEN KINGDOMS, AND THE TIME OF THE DARK KINGDOMS BEGAN. MIGHTY PHAGBILAU SURVIVED, BUT HAD STRENGTH ONLY FOR THE DEFENCE OF ITS OWN BORDERS. THE REIGN OF THE DARK KINGDOMS CONTINUED UNCONTESTED FOR CENTURIES, UNTIL THE COMING OF...

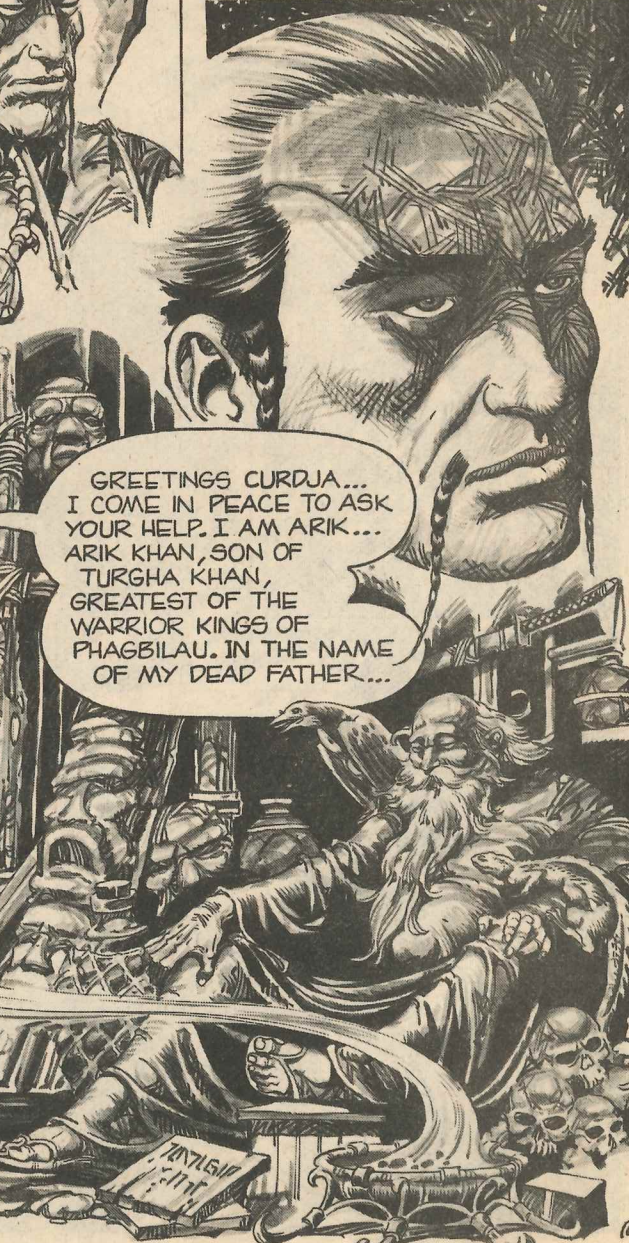
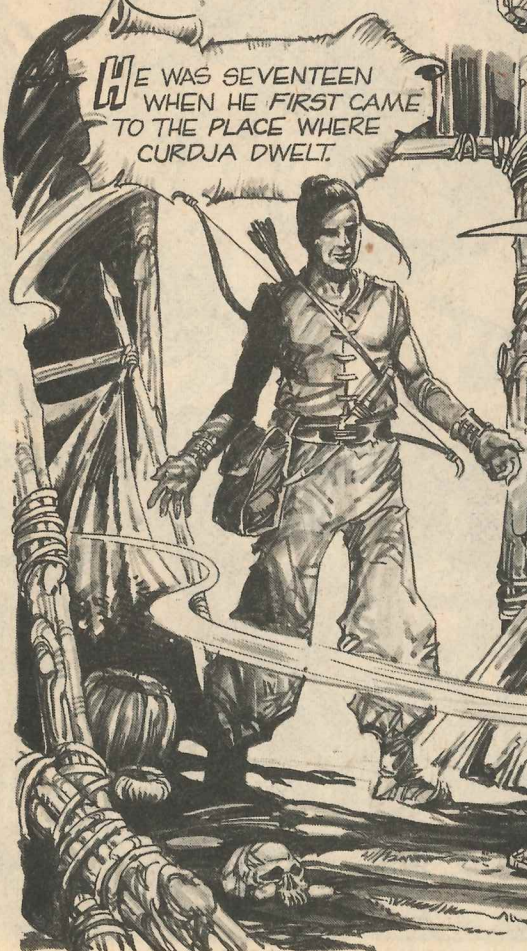
STORY AND ART
BY FRANC REYES

DIALOGUES AND CAPTIONS
REWORKED BY BP NICHOL



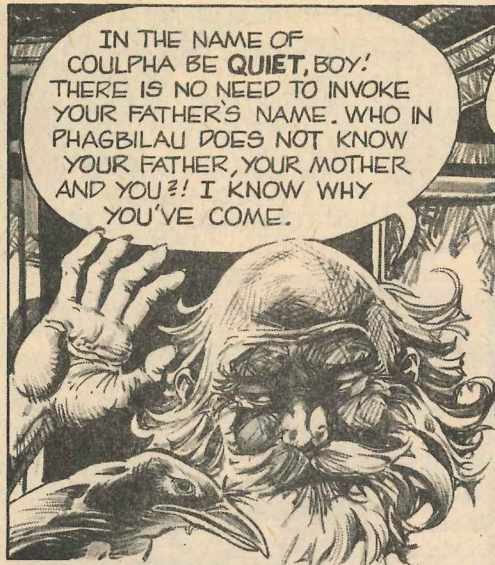


THE DEAD ARE DEAD, BUT THEY LEAVE BEHIND A BURDEN OF MEMORIES. THEIRS HAVE DIED ON THE BLOODY BATTLEFIELD, WHILE THOSE OF ARIK KHAN CHASE AFTER HIM OVER THE UPTURNED FACES OF THE CREATURES HE'S KILLED.



HE WAS SEVENTEEN WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO THE PLACE WHERE CURDJA DWELT.

GREETINGS CURDJA... I COME IN PEACE TO ASK YOUR HELP. I AM ARIK... ARIK KHAN, SON OF TURGHA KHAN, GREATEST OF THE WARRIOR KINGS OF PHAGBILAU. IN THE NAME OF MY DEAD FATHER...

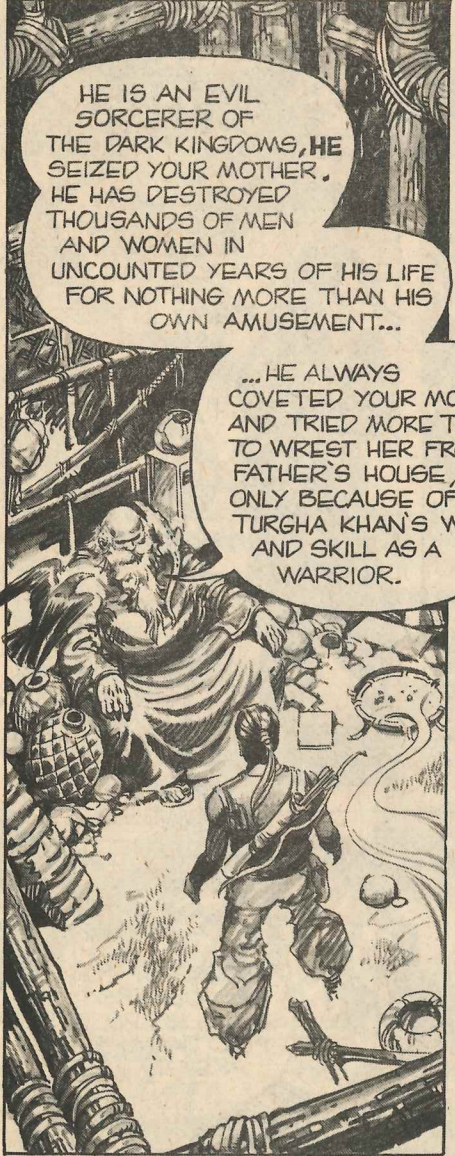


IN THE NAME OF COULPHA BE QUIET, BOY! THERE IS NO NEED TO INVOKE YOUR FATHER'S NAME. WHO IN PHAGBILAU DOES NOT KNOW YOUR FATHER, YOUR MOTHER AND YOU?! I KNOW WHY YOU'VE COME.



YOU KNOW OF MY MOTHER'S KIDNAPPING?! HOW?! WHERE IS SHE? I'LL DO ANYTHING...

BE STILL BEFORE YOU ANGER ME! YOUR FATHER IN HIS TIME DID ME MANY FAVORS. THAT ALONE RECOMMENDS YOU TO ME. BUT I HAVE MY OWN REASON FOR HELPING YOU AND IT HAS A NAME - RAKAZ!



HE IS AN EVIL SORCERER OF THE DARK KINGDOMS, HE SEIZED YOUR MOTHER. HE HAS DESTROYED THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN IN UNCOUNTED YEARS OF HIS LIFE FOR NOTHING MORE THAN HIS OWN AMUSEMENT...

... HE ALWAYS COVETED YOUR MOTHER, AND TRIED MORE THAN ONCE TO WREST HER FROM YOUR FATHER'S HOUSE, FAILING ONLY BECAUSE OF TURGHA KHAN'S WIT AND SKILL AS A WARRIOR.

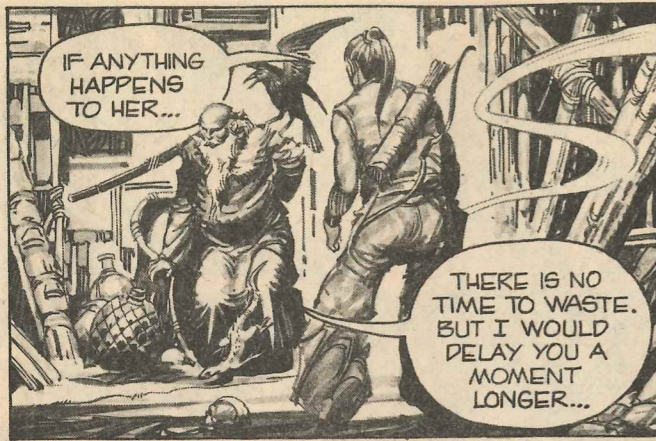


BUT HIS PATIENCE IS AS LONG AS HIS LIFE, AND AS YOUR FATHER LAY ON HIS DEATH BED, RAKAZ'S AGENTS CAME AND STOLE HER AWAY. WITH YOU ABSENT, THERE WERE NONE TO STOP HIM.



AND NOW?

I HAVE NO WAY OF PENETRATING THE BARRIERS HE HAS WOVEN ROUND HIS TEMPLE. ONLY RAKAZ KNOWS WHAT TRANSPIRES THERE.



IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HER...

THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE. BUT I WOULD DELAY YOU A MOMENT LONGER...



I WOULD DO THAT WITHOUT YOUR ASKING.



COME WITH ME THEN.



THIS IS KROG. GIVE HIM HIS HEAD AND HE WILL LEAD YOU TO RAKAZ. HE WILL FIND HIS OWN WAY BACK.



GOODBYE CURDJA! AND THANK YOU!

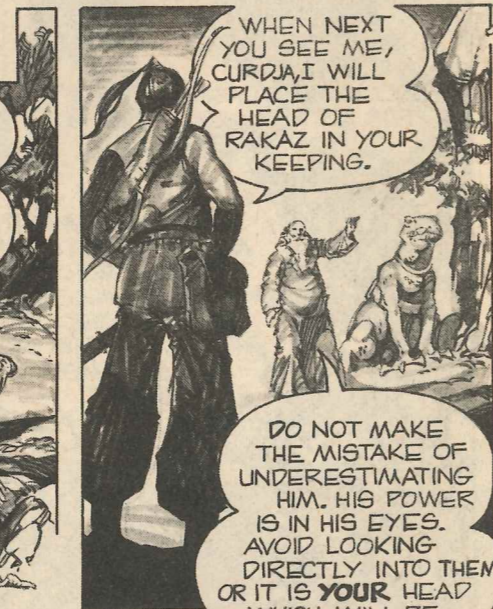
LOOK OUT FOR HIS SOLDIERS! DYING HOLDS NO FEAR FOR THEM! THEY ARE ALREADY DEAD!



I'D LIKE THIS TO BE YOURS... I HAVE NO FURTHER USE FOR IT. AGE EATS AT MY BODY. BETTER THAT YOUR HANDS WIELD IT... I PLACE ONLY ONE CONDITION ON THIS GIFT!

NAME IT!

BRING ME THE HEAD OF RAKAZ!



WHEN NEXT YOU SEE ME, CURDJA, I WILL PLACE THE HEAD OF RAKAZ IN YOUR KEEPING.

DO NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF UNDERESTIMATING HIM. HIS POWER IS IN HIS EYES. AVOID LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO THEM OR IT IS YOUR HEAD WHICH WILL BE MISSING!



FOR HOURS KROG RACES ON WITHOUT SLACKENING THE PACE.

THIS THING RUNS LIKE A DEMON!



LEAP AFTER LEAP, MILE AFTER MILE...



UNTIL...

WHAT IN THE NAME OF BELZERDON IS THAT? HOLD, KROG!



BUT KROG IGNORES ARIK AND LEAPS.

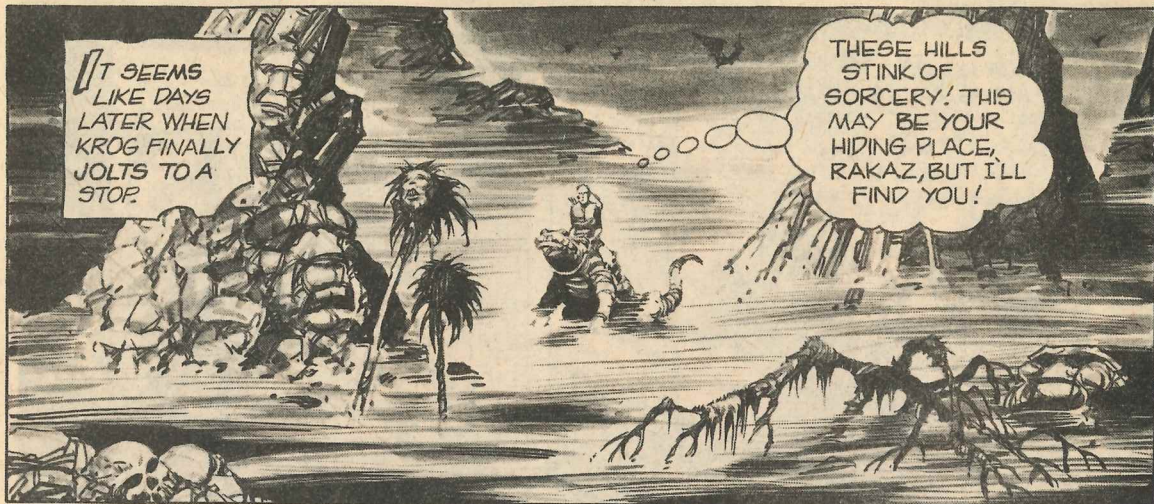
UH?!



SEIZING ON THE UNEXPECTED ADVANTAGE OF THEIR POSITION...



GOOD BOY KROG! THAT WON'T DO ANY GREAT DAMAGE, BUT IT WILL ACT AS A SMALL WARNING.



IT SEEMS LIKE DAYS LATER WHEN KROG FINALLY JOLTS TO A STOP.

THESE HILLS STINK OF SORCERY! THIS MAY BE YOUR HIDING PLACE, RAKAZ, BUT I'LL FIND YOU!



FAREWELL, TIRELESS ONE! AND LUCK BE WITH US BOTH!



IT'S SO QUIET.



THE CLIMB WAS LONG AND HAZARDOUS, AND SOON...



MY EARS PLAY TRICKS ON ME! CHANTING?!



ARIK CROPT SILENTLY FORWARD.

IN THE NAME OF COULPHA!



WHAT MANNER OF MEN ARE THESE? AND THAT WOMAN? THEIR CAPTIVE, IT SEEMS!

RAKAZ'S DEVILS, NO DOUBT!



UH?

CRICK!



WHA!



ARIK SPINS INTO HIS FIGHTING STANCE...

BELZARDON!
IT IS AS CURDJA SAID! THIS THING IS DEAD! I MUST STOP HIM BEFORE HE ALERTS THE OTHERS.

THUD!

AS THE THING LUNGES FORWARD, ARIK ATTACKS.

SWASH!

KIAIII!

SWASH!

WHUP!



COULPHA SAVE ME!
HOW DO YOU KILL THE UNDEAD?!



CHACK!

KIAI!

WOULD THAT YOUR HEAD WERE RAKAZ'S.

TSUGH!



ENOUGH OF THIS!
I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE SIGHT OF THAT PROCESSION IF I HOPE TO FIND RAKAZ.



SHORTLY...

AS THE LAST FIGURE PASSES UNDER THE ARCH...

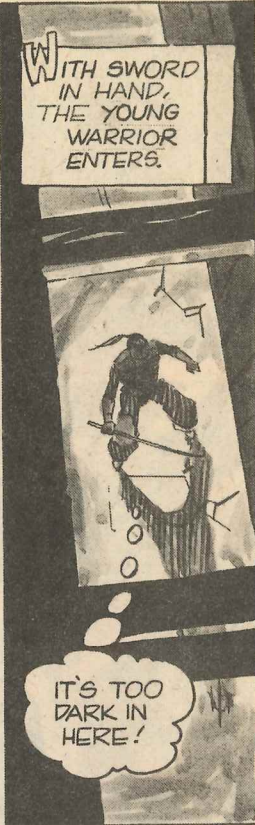




ARIK'S CURIOSITY DRIVES HIM ON.



A PASSAGEWAY!



WITH SWORD IN HAND, THE YOUNG WARRIOR ENTERS.

IT'S TOO DARK IN HERE!



TURNING THE CORNER, ARIK STOPS, STUNNED BY A SIGHT THAT WOULD HAVE DRIVEN OTHER MEN TO MADNESS.



ARIK GRIPS HIS SWORD MORE TIGHTLY AS HIS EYES SURVEY THE ROOM.

DEAR GALVAR, I PRAY MY MOTHER IS NOT HERE!



THE ANIMAL SENSE IN ARIK KHAN REACTED!



SPINNING AROUND!

YAAH!

TAG!



IT IS ONLY HIS WARRIOR TRAINING WHICH SAVES ARIK KHAN...

BRANG!

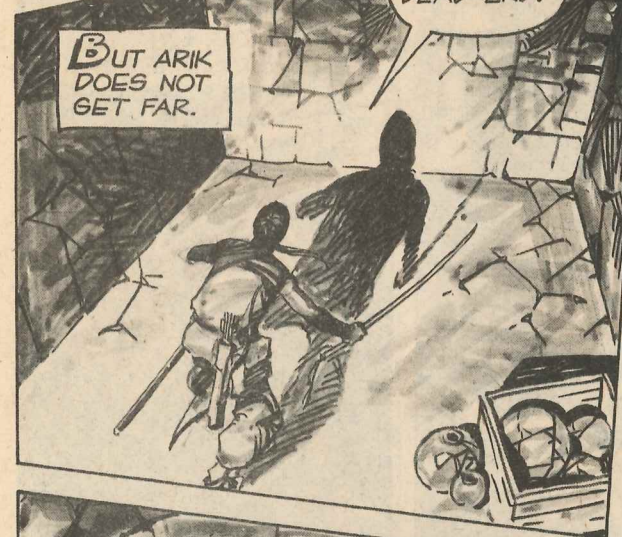


... AND GIVES HIM HIS ONE SLIGHT OPPORTUNITY.

TIK!

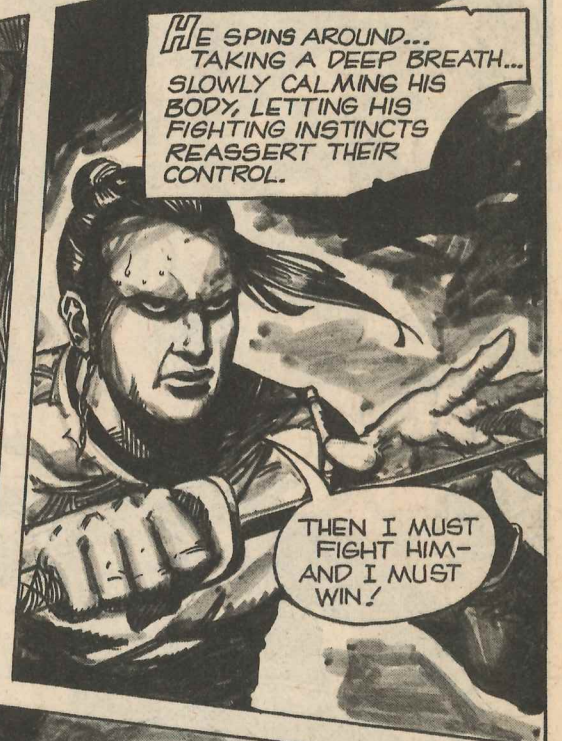


MISSED! DAMN HIM! I CAN'T GET A CLEAR STROKE AT HIS HEAD! THIS IS NO TIME FOR FOOLISH COURAGE; I'M RUNNING!



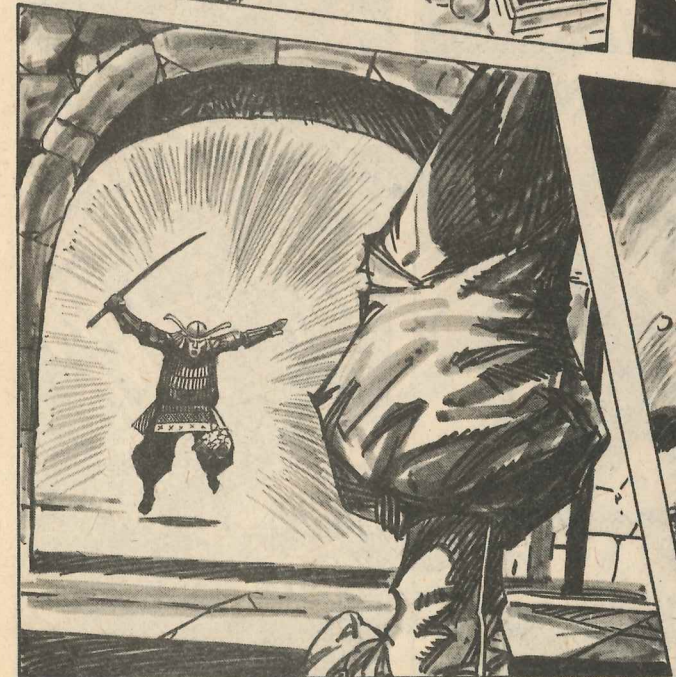
BUT ARIK DOES NOT GET FAR.

DAMN! DEAD-END!



HE SPINS AROUND... TAKING A DEEP BREATH... SLOWLY CALMING HIS BODY, LETTING HIS FIGHTING INSTINCTS REASSERT THEIR CONTROL.

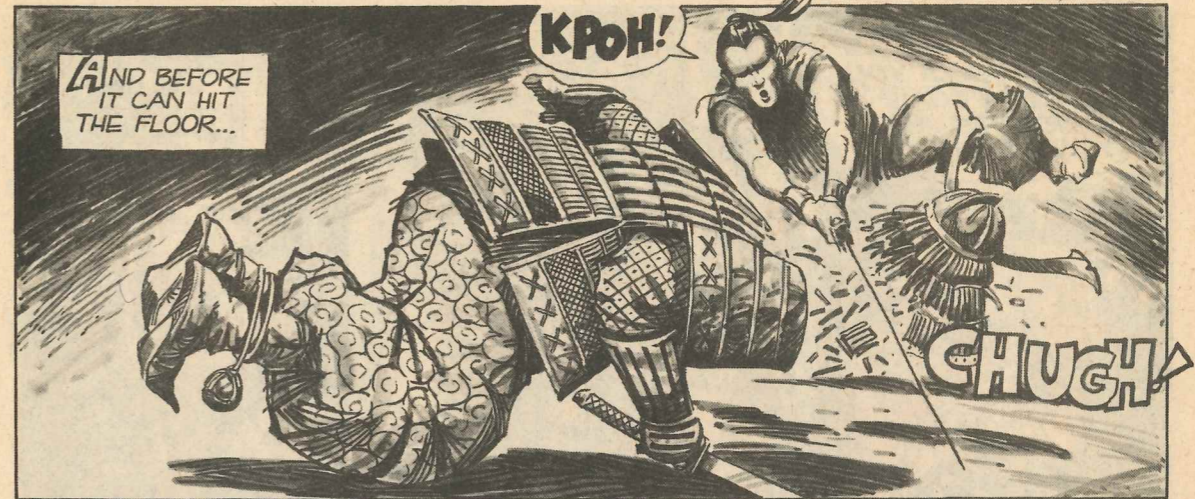
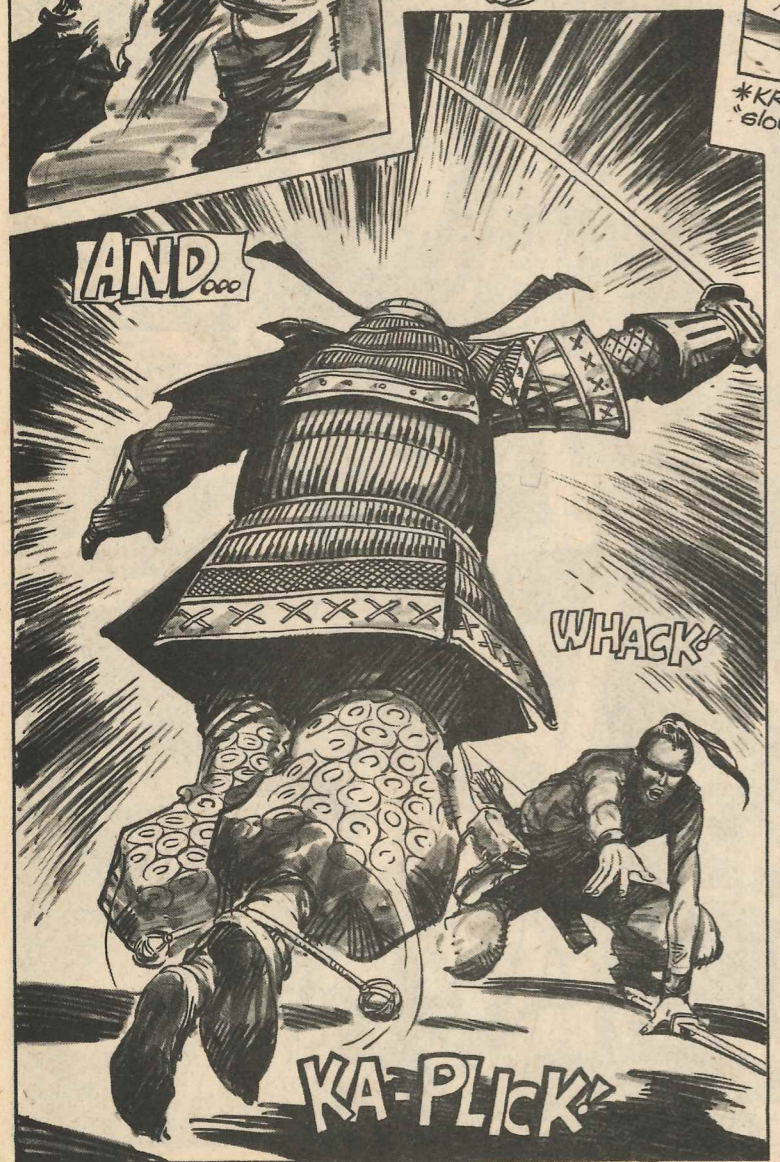
THEN I MUST FIGHT HIM- AND I MUST WIN!

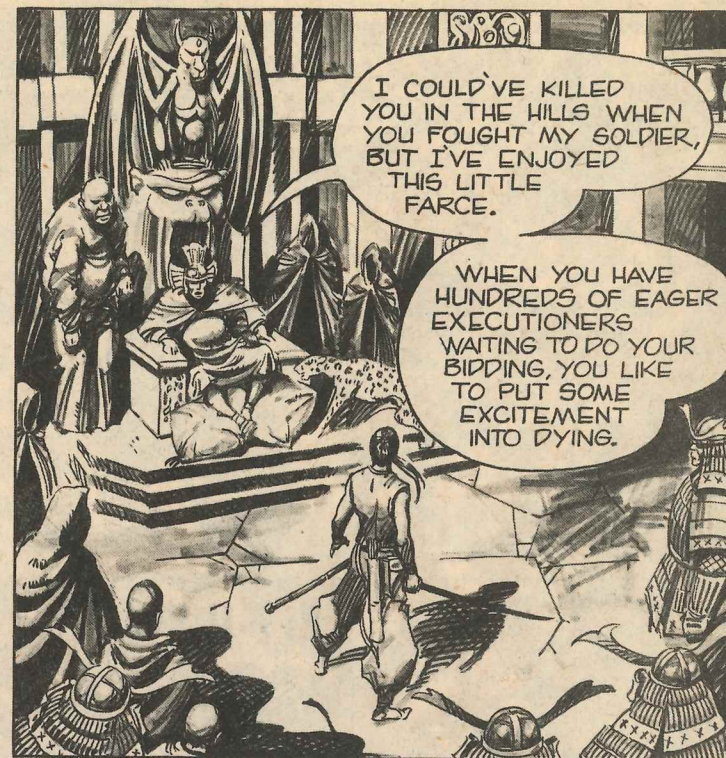
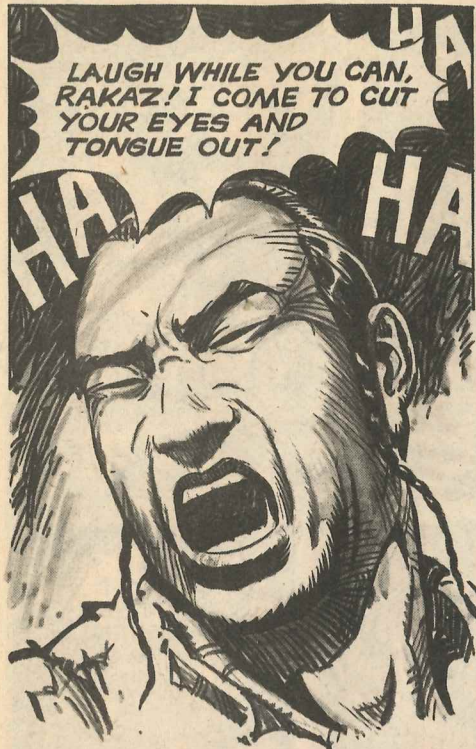


TIK!



*KREBIK-a snail, synonymous with "slow-witted" or "stupid."







IT WOULD MEAN CERTAIN DEATH FOR ME TO FACE THEM, SO...



...I MUST ACT FAST!



ALI-HUPS!
THAG!



MADE IT!



YOU'RE A CLEVER AND RESOURCEFUL MAN, ARIK KHAN, BUT YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE ME!

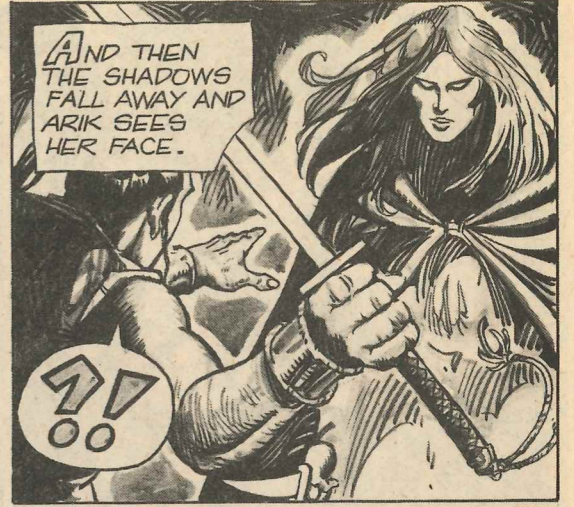


ARIK RUNS FOR HIS LIFE.



BUT AS HE TURNS A CORNER...

A SLAVE WOMAN! I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SLAY HER.



AND THEN THE SHADOWS FALL AWAY AND ARIK SEES HER FACE.

?!
OO



MOTHER!



YES! YOUR MOTHER! AND SHE IS MINE NOW...

FOREVER!



THE SIGHT OF HIS MOTHER IN A ZOMBIE STATE DRIVES ALL REASON FROM ARIK'S MIND.

I'LL KILL YOU!



BUT

ARIK IS HALTED...



HIS EYES!
I MUST NOT
LOOK AT HIS
EYES!

**STV GN!
MRV MTS!**



AS ARIK'S ARMS COVER
HIS FACE, RAKAZ REACHES
FOR HIS NECK.

STRANGELY DIZZY,
ARIK REACTS REFLEXIVELY.

MPH!

AGH!

AND

CRASH!



COME
MOTHER,
GIVE ME
YOUR HAND!

KILL HIM!
I COMMAND YOU!
KILL HIM!

UGH!

RRIP

MY OWN
MOTHER
TRYING TO
KILL ME!
OH GODS!



I WILL TAKE
GREAT PLEASURE
IN YOUR DEATH,
ARIK KHAN!

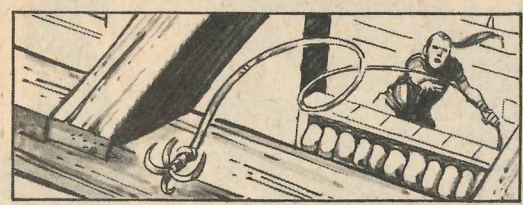
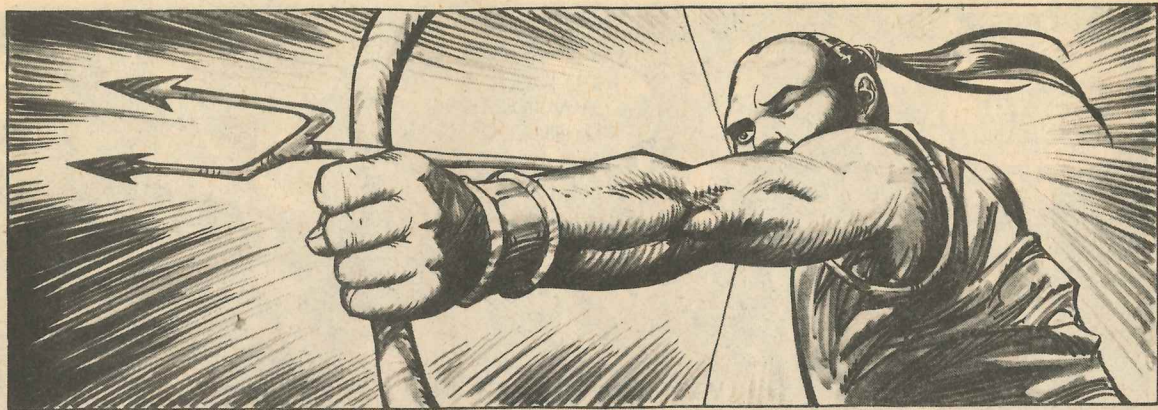


ENRAGED,
RAKAZ RUSHES
AFTER ARIK!



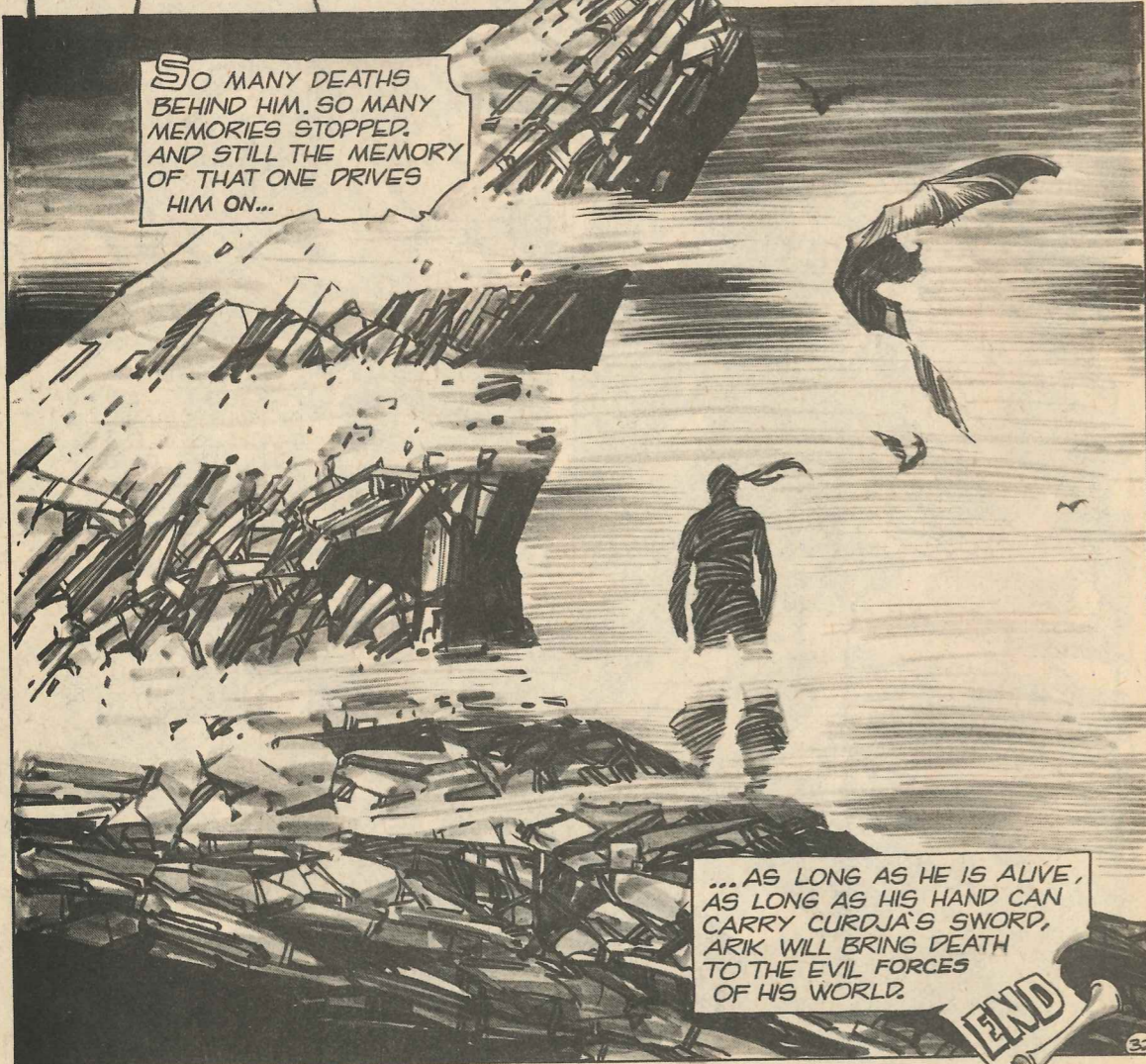
BUT

HA!?





SO MANY DEATHS
BEHIND HIM. SO MANY
MEMORIES STOPPED.
AND STILL THE MEMORY
OF THAT ONE DRIVES
HIM ON...



... AS LONG AS HE IS ALIVE,
AS LONG AS HIS HAND CAN
CARRY CURDJA'S SWORD,
ARIK WILL BRING DEATH
TO THE EVIL FORCES
OF HIS WORLD.

END



ARIK KHAN

NO.1

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ARIK

KHAN

