

Part 1 of an all-new Adventure!

ELFQUEST[®]



KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL

STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

PART
1

BROKEN WHEEL

KINGS
of the

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI









LATER...



SNARRRRL!

GRRRRRRRRRR





SAY! THAT'S YOUR BEST YET!
WHAT'S BITTEN YOU? YOU'VE
NEVER DONE TREE-SHAPING
LIKE *THIS* BEFORE!

IT'S ALL I CAN
THINK OF... KEEPING ENEMIES
OUT OF THE HOLT!

IF THESE FACES DON'T SCARE
THEM AWAY, I'LL STING THEM WITH
POISON THORNS! I-I'LL CHOKE THEM
WITH STRANGLE-WEED, CRUSH THEM
WITH FALLING BRANCHES - !



AND IF THEY
DARE BRING FIRE
HERE AGAIN..!

WOA!

LIFEMATE...REMEMBER WHO
YOU ARE. LEAVE THOUGHTS OF
COMBAT TO THOSE WHO HAVEN'T
YOUR SPECIAL GIFTS.



SOMETHING'S UP WITH
YOU TWO. COME ON - -
WHAT'S THE SECRET?

YOU ACT LIKE
YOU'VE NEVER HAD SO
MUCH TO PROTECT!



WELL, BE THAT
WAY. BUT WHEN I
GET CURIOUS, THERE'S
NO PLACE TO HIDE!

AND IT'S
A SMALL
HOLT!

"A SMALL HOLT..." TOO SMALL, INDEED, TO COMFORTABLY SUSTAIN A LARGE GATHERING OF ELVES AND TWO VIOLENTLY TERRITORIAL WOLF PACKS.

LEETAH, I --
WE HAVE MISSED
YOU SO!

COME BACK TO SORROW'S END
WITH US...IF ONLY FOR A VISIT. WITHOUT
THE GLOW OF YOUR HEALING TOUCH,
THE SUN VILLAGE DOES NOT SHINE
AS IT USED TO.

LOOK AT YOU,
ZHANTEE.

FROM OUR FARAWAY DESERT HOME
YOU'VE COME, ACROSS BURNING WASTE
AND THROUGH ECHOING GORGE TO
THIS GREEN GROWING PLACE.

YOU, WHO WORKED THE CLAY OF
SORROW'S END - AND THOUGHT
NEVER TO LEAVE IT - ARE NOW
A TRUE WOLF RIDER!

OUR FOREST
BROTHERS CHANGED
YOUR LIFE - AS THEY
CHANGED MINE.

HE CHANGED YOU.
HE CHANGED
EVERYTHING!

THE TROLLS MAKE ROUND THINGS CALLED
WHEELS. FOR STRENGTH THEY GIVE THEM
UP TO TEN SPOKES - NO MORE. THEN
THEY BEGIN ANOTHER WHEEL.

AND THIS, THE UNION
OF FOUR ELF TRIBES, IS
THE BEGINNING OF A NEW
CIRCLE. WE'VE ENTERED A
TIME WHEN NOTHING IN
THE WORLD CAN
DIVIDE US - -

NOT DISTANCE,
NOT ROCK WALLS,
NOT EVEN OLD
BELIEFS.

CUTTER
IS BLOOD OF
TEN CHIEFS.



- - NOT BY CHOICE!!
HE WAS BORN HALF WOLFIDER!
HIS WOLF BLOOD WAS STOLEN
FROM HIM IN BLUE MOUNTAIN!

WHEN THE TWINS WERE
IN MY WOMB, SCOUTER,
IT WAS EMBER WHO CALLED
THE WOLF BLOOD TO HER.
SUNTOP CALLED FOR
SOMETHING ELSE.

IF WINDKIN IS
HAPPY, AND HE
SEEMS SO, LET
HIM BE A GLIDER.
REMEMBER, WE
ARE ELVES
FIRST.

ARE THEY BOTH
WOLFIDERS?

NO...YES...!
I - I GUESS IT
DOESN'T MATTER.

YES...THE
CIRCLE IS
WHOLE.

THEN THE HEALING
CAN BEGIN. SPEAK NO
MORE WORDS. SING.
AND SEND.

WHO COMES
TO RECEIVE
THE POWER OF
THE CIRCLE?

MY FATHER,
STRONGBOW,
COMES.

WHAT IS
YOUR NEED?

I ASK RELEASE FROM
THE PAIN THAT MAKES
ME UNFIT TO HUNT
OR GUARD

I'VE KILLED AN
ELF! KUREEL'S
DEATH IS TURNING
INTO MY OWN!



WILL YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO RECEIVE WHAT WE GIVE?

I'LL TRY.

THOUGH YOU HATED KUREEL'S DEEDS, HEAD, HAND AND HEART, YOUR SOUL KNOWS YOU HAVE KILLED A BROTHER. YOU ARE BRIM FULL OF TEARS. RELEASE THEM. MOURN. WASH THE PAIN AWAY.

THE AIR SHIMMERS AND TINGLES WITH THE POWER OF PURE LOVE, CAUSING EVEN THE DOUBLE MOONS' BEAMS - CROSSED BLADES OF LIGHT SLICING THROUGH THE LEAVES - TO LOSE THEIR SHARP EDGES.

BIG-WARM BAZZ--

-- BIG NO-SEE?T BAZZ--

-- BIG CAN-FEEL?T BAZZ COVERS ALL!

HEEHEEEE! TICKLES!





ONCE THERE WAS A QUEST --



-- UNDERTAKEN PARTLY BY ACCIDENT, PARTLY BY DESIGN - WHICH LED THE WOLFRIDERS TO THE ANCIENT, ANCESTRAL DWELLING OF ALL ELVES.

THE PALACE OF THE HIGH ONES WAS FAR FROM WHAT THEY EXPECTED. WITHIN ITS TIME-WORN WALLS THE ELVES LEARNED MORE THAN THEY CARED TO - YET NOT NEARLY ENOUGH - OF THEIR RACE'S ORIGIN.



THE PALACE WAS NOT THE HOME, THE ETERNALLY SAFE HAVEN THE WOLFRIDERS HAD HOPED FOR. YET THEY TOOK FROM IT --



-- AND FROM TIMMAIN, THE LAST LIVING HIGH ONE --

-- THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY, BEING PART WOLF, BELONGED TO THE WORLD OF TWO MOONS.



UNLIKE THOSE SLAIN IMMORTALS WHOSE SPIRITS MUST FOREVER INHABIT THE PALACE --

-- THE MORTAL WOLFRIDERS WOULD FIND THEIR "SAFE PLACE" NOWHERE BUT WITHIN THEMSELVES.



SO THEY RETURNED TO THE FOREST. BUT ONE AMBITIOUS, PURE-BLOODED ELF REMAINED IN THE PALACE -- AND PROCLAIMED HIMSELF ITS MASTER.









THE PALACE LIES JUST BEYOND THE FROZEN MOUNTAINS, MY FRIENDS

NO NEED FOR YOU TO SCALE THOSE COLD, DEADLY PEAKS.

WHINE!

YAAAAH!! I DON'T LIKE THIS, BLACK-HAIR!



HA HA!!

YOU SHALL BE THE FIRST WOLFRIDERS TO SAY YOU HAVE RIDDEN YOUR MOUNTS THROUGH THE CLOUDS!



WE'RE UP HIGHER THAN THE TALLEST TREE EVER CLIMBED - - HIGHER THAN THE TOPMOST AERIE OF BLUE MOUNTAIN, BEFORE IT FELL!

NOW I KNOW WHY SKYWISE ALWAYS DREAMS OF FLYING!



ALL I KNOW IS, BEFORE THOSE GLIDER SPIRITS GOT UNDER HIS SKIN...

RAYEK COULDN'T FLOAT MUCH MORE THAN HIS OWN WEIGHT!

WHAT IF HE GETS TIRED?

I DON'T THINK HE CAN GET TIRED...NOW!



EH?! WHAT NONSENSE IS HERE?



TIMMORN'S BLOOD! IT'S SLOWING DOWN --



-- IT'S STOPPED!





RAYEK...
ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?

THREE YEARS
WITHOUT A
PEEP FROM
THE TROLLS...!

THEN, WITHIN AN
EIGHT-OF-DAYS, I
JOURNEY TO BLUE
MOUNTAIN AND
RETURN...TO THIS
GREETING!

SPURRED BY A SUDDEN FOREBODING, RAYEK STREAKS
OVER THE TROLLS' GLACIAL DOMAIN. BEHIND HIM
HIS WOLFRIDER COMPANIONS GASP, HURLING
HELPLESSLY THROUGH THE TOO-THIN AIR.



BUT EVEN IN THEIR DISCOMFORT,
CLEARBROOK AND TREESTUMP FEEL THE
PULL OF THE PALACE OF THE HIGH ONES...



CLEARBROOK...
SEE THE DOME?

I VOWED I'D
RETURN TO THE PALACE
ONE DAY - - BUT, HIGH ONES,
I MEANT ON FOOT!





KNOWING RAYEK AS SHE DOES, THE GO-BACKS' CHIEF HAS GOOD REASON TO HESITATE. BUT, HAVING MORE COURAGE THAN REASON, SHE ANSWERS READILY.

















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PART
2

KINGS of the BROKEN WATERS

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THE LODGE...!
HE CAVED IT IN!!

HIGH ONES!
WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE, RAYEK?!
KAHV! WAS IN
THERE!







OUCH!
PETALWING!
YOUR CLAWS!

HUMPH! SHARP-
DARK HIGHTHING
TOO BIG FOR
BREECHES!

THAT'S THE CLEAR
TRUTH, BUG! HIS BORROWED
POWER'S MADE HIM BIGGER --
NOT BETTER!



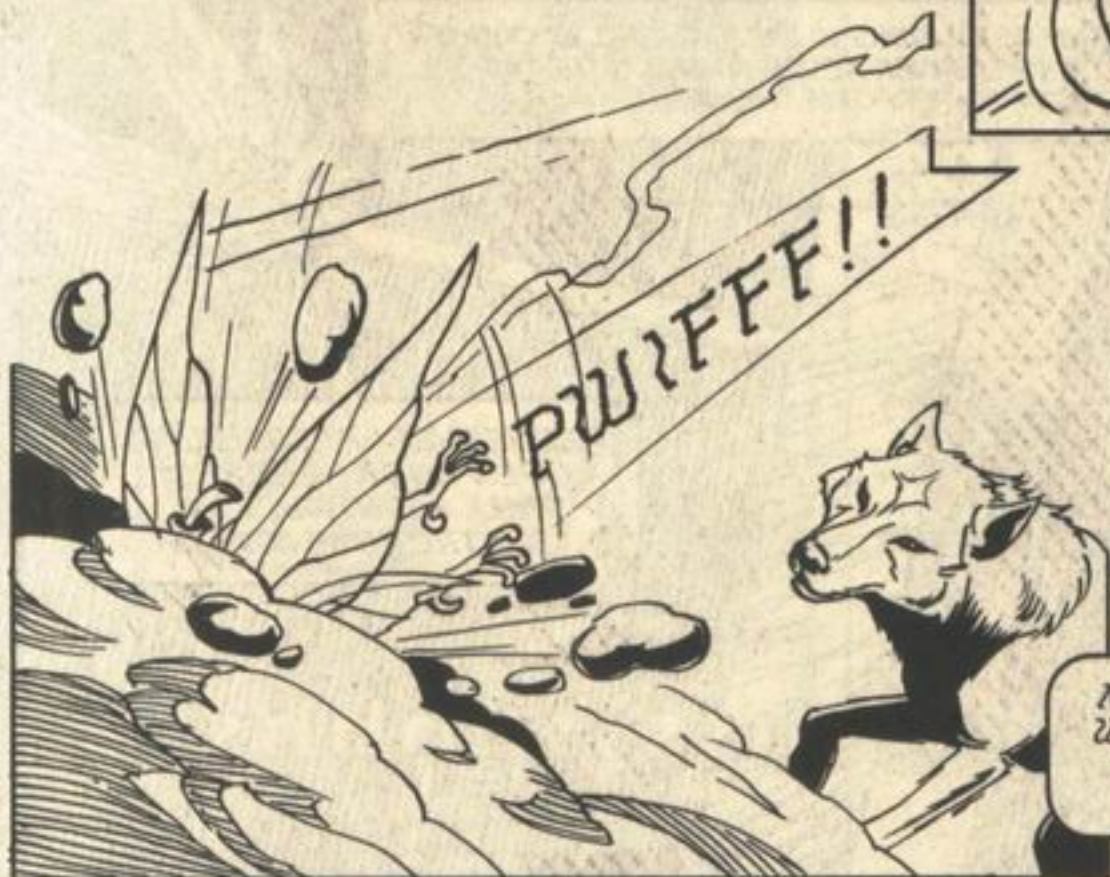
PETAZWING LIKE SHARP-
DARK HIGHTHING. BUT
NOT LIKE HURTFIRES AND
NASTYBAD BANGBANGS!



BAD HIGHTHING!
BAD! BAD! BAD!



SPOOT!

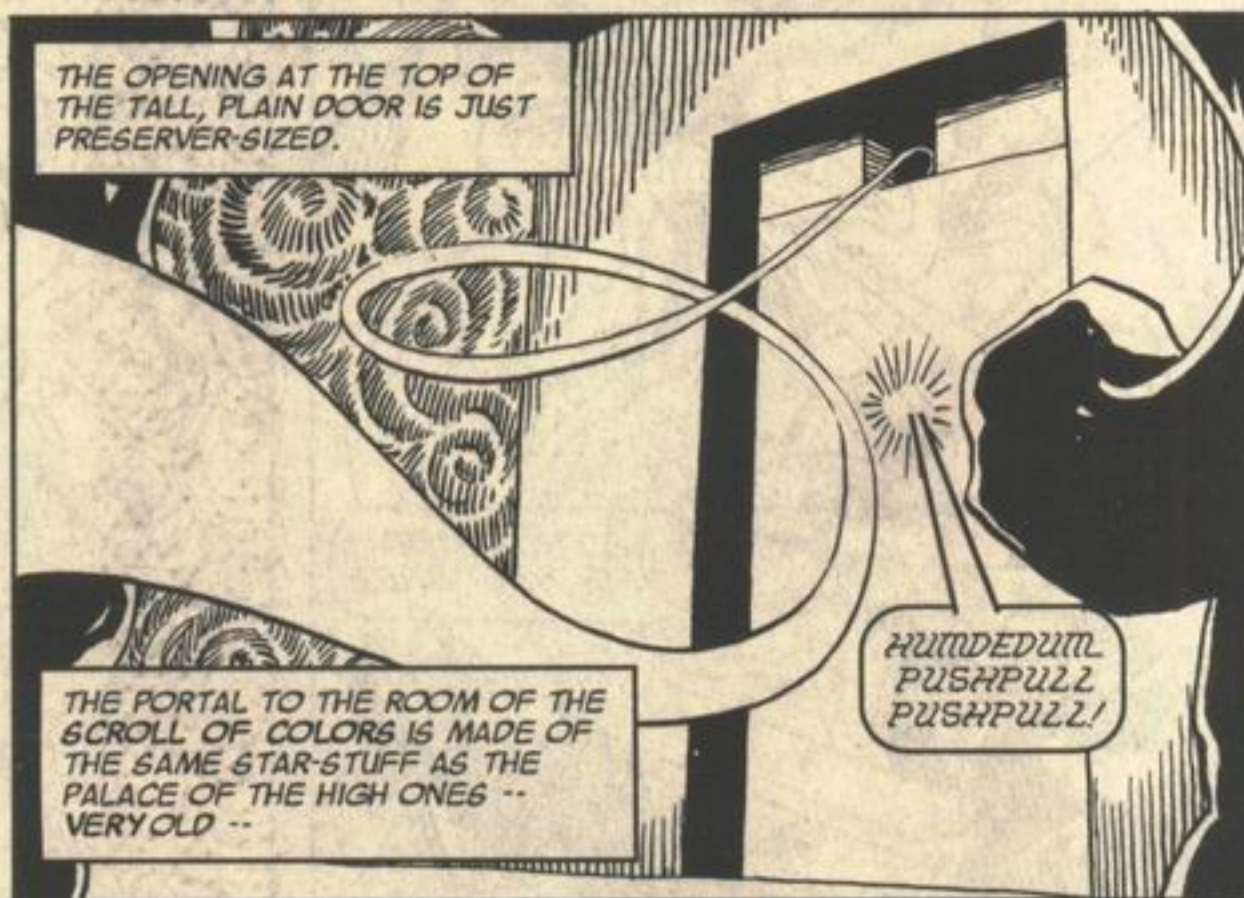


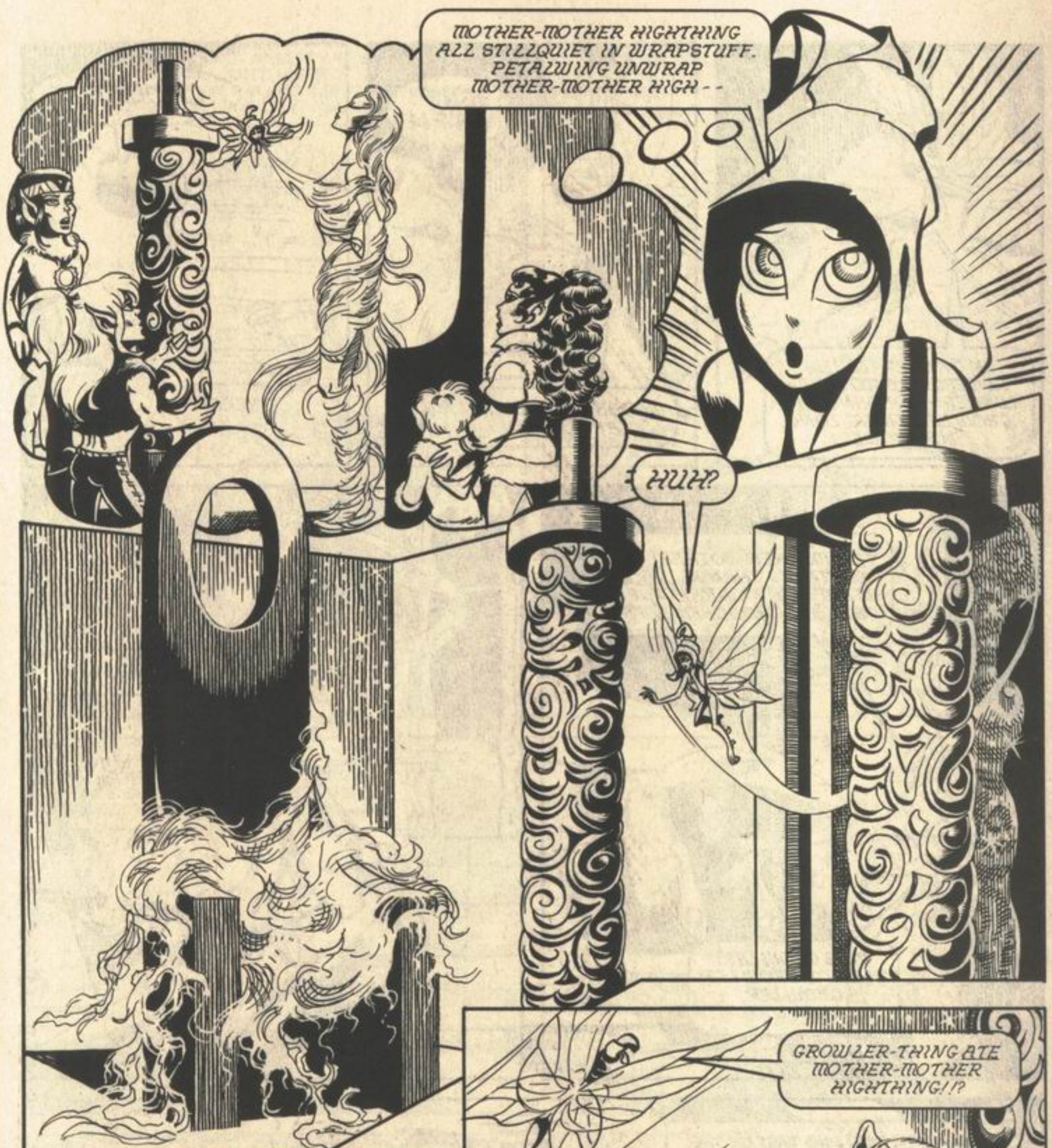
PWIFFF!!



OOOOOO!

NASTY! NASTY! PETAL-
WING KNOW SOMEBODY
TO STOP SHARPDARK
HIGHTHING!





MOTHER-MOTHER HIGHTHING
ALL STILZQUIET IN WRAPSTUFF.
PETALZING UNWRAP
MOTHER-MOTHER HIGH --

HUH?



GROWLER-THING ATE
MOTHER-MOTHER
HIGHTHING!?!?



EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!



UH OH! PETALWING
REMEMBERS. MOTHER-
MOTHER HIGHTHING WAS
GROWLER-THING LONG
LONG TIME!



SNIF!
SNIF!

MAYBE IS GROWLER-
THING AGAIN?



CHOOOF!!

YEEEP!

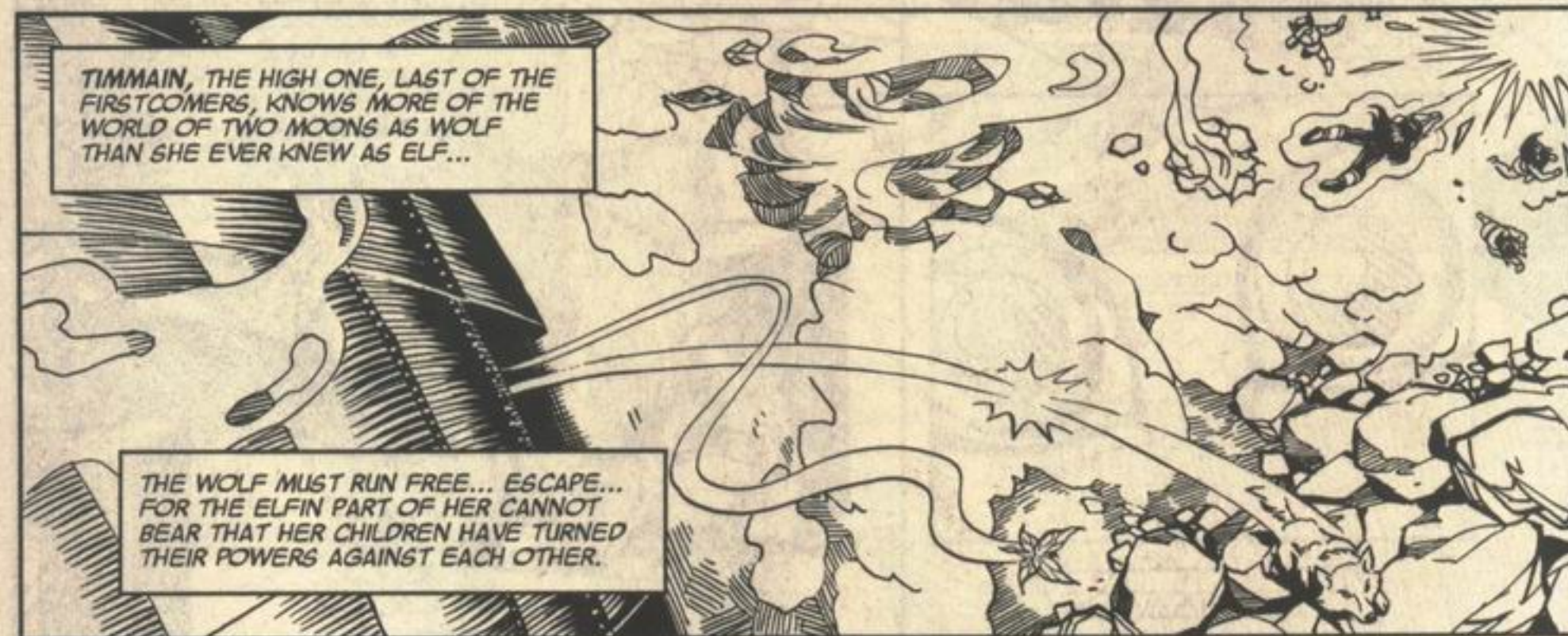


MOTHER-MOTHER
HIGHTHING CHANGE INSIDE
WRAPSTUFF? WRAPSTUFF
BREAK? CHEWCHOW OUT?

WAS GROWLER.
WASN'T GROWLER.
IS GROWLER --
WHYFOR?



WAIT!! WAIT!!



TIMMAIN, THE HIGH ONE, LAST OF THE
FIRSTCOMERS, KNOWS MORE OF THE
WORLD OF TWO MOONS AS WOLF
THAN SHE EVER KNEW AS ELF...

THE WOLF MUST RUN FREE... ESCAPE...
FOR THE ELFIN PART OF HER CANNOT
BEAR THAT HER CHILDREN HAVE TURNED
THEIR POWERS AGAINST EACH OTHER.

THE GO-BACKS CRY OUT IN RAGE AND GRIEF. THE FROZEN MOUNTAINS, BRISTLING WITH TROLLISH TRAPS, COULD NOT, IN THE END, BAR THE GO-BACKS FROM THE HIGH ONES' ANCIENT DWELLING.



BUT WHAT THE TROLLS FOUGHT TO DO FOR GENERATIONS, THE POWER OF ONE IMPLACABLE ELF WILL DO IN MOMENTS!



FOOLS! YOU KNOW THE PALACE'S TRUE NATURE NO BETTER THAN YOU KNOW YOUR OWN!

FILLED WITH THE SEEMINGLY LIMITLESS FORCE OF THE GLIDERS' SOULS, RAYEK DRIVES THE GO-BACKS ON AND ON...



YOU LOST YOUR CHANCE AT THE STARS EVEN AS YOU HELD IT IN YOUR HANDS! CHOOSE ANOTHER NAME FOR YOURSELVES...







MEANWHILE...

HIGH ONES!
THAT NOISE! DO YOU
THINK HE KILLED
THEM ALL?

WE'D HAVE
SENSED SO MANY
DEATHS, I THINK...

I HOPE...



WHAT'S HAPPENING, CLEARBROOK?
FIRST STRONGBOW SHOTS
DOWN A GLIDER... AND NOW
RAYEK'S FINISHED KAHVI!

ELVES ARE
KILLING ELVES! HOW
CAN IT BE?



AND HOW CAN
THEY ALLOW IT -- THE SPIRITS
OF ALL OUR DEAD KIN WHO
HAUNT THE PALACE?

MAYBE THEY CAN'T
SEE WHAT HAPPENS IN THE WORLD --
OR IF THEY CAN, MAYBE THEY DON'T JUDGE!

WELL,
I DO! I...



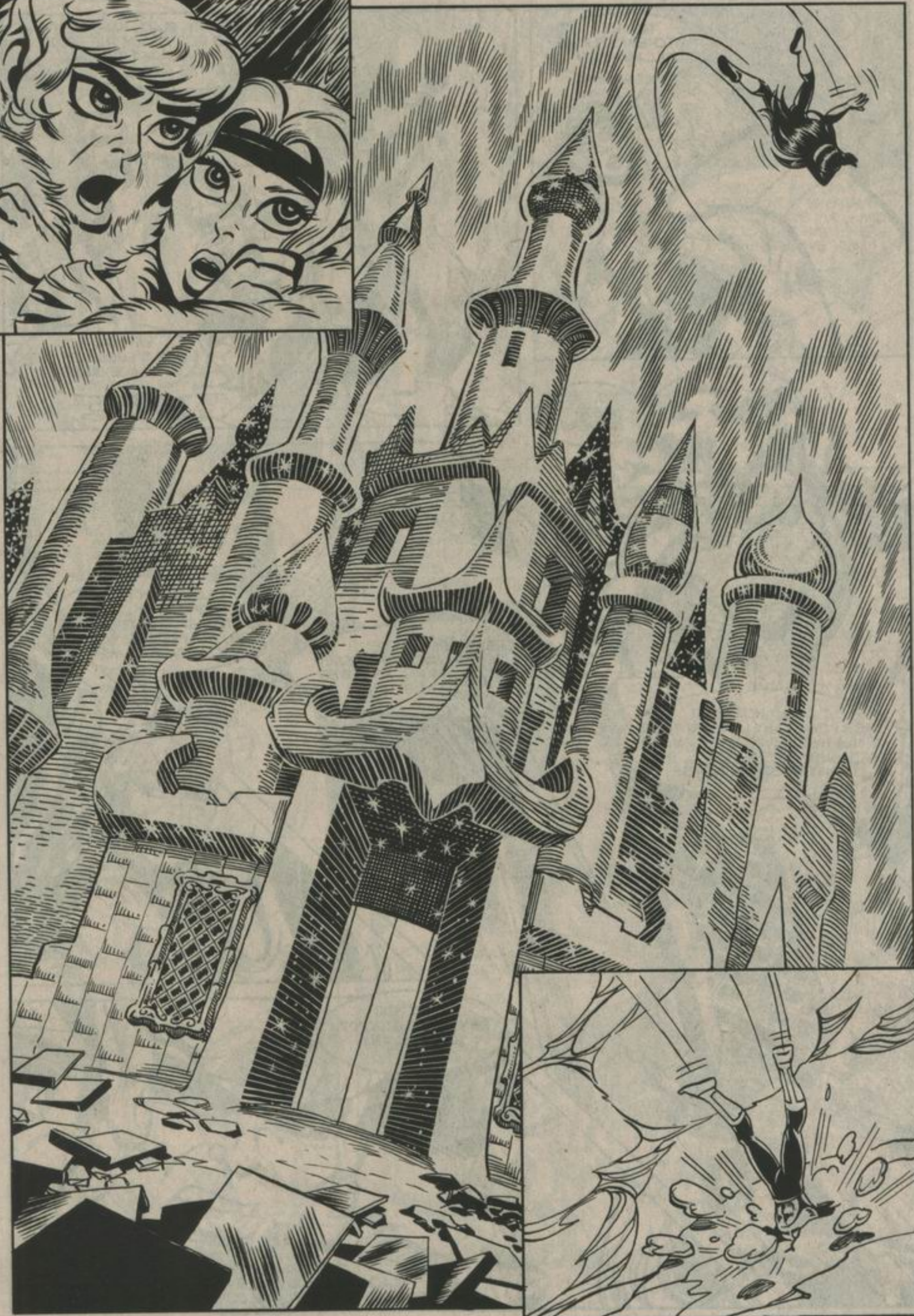
LOOK OUT!

STAY CLEAR
OF THE DOME!!
STAY CLEAR!!!



AAAAGGGHH!!







OH FINE! IS HE DEAD TOO?

NO! HE TWITCHED! HELP ME PULL HIM OUT!



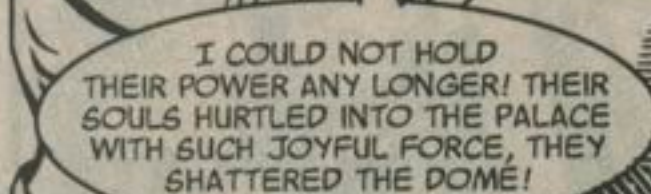
YOU'VE HAD QUITE A DAY, BLACK-HAIR. ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO DO? KNOCK THE FROZEN MOUNTAINS DOWN? BLAST THE SUN OUT OF THE SKY..?!

OOOOHHH...

WHY DID YOU TRY TO DESTROY THE PALACE, RAYEK?



NO... IT WAS THE GLIDERS!



I COULD NOT HOLD THEIR POWER ANY LONGER! THEIR SOULS HURTTLED INTO THE PALACE WITH SUCH JOYFUL FORCE, THEY SHATTERED THE DOME!



THE GREATNESS OF THE GLIDERS' MAGIC, SO LONG SUPPRESSED IN BLUE MOUNTAIN... IT HAS RENEWED THE HOME OF THE HIGH ONES!



LOOK! ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL... EH..? WITH ALL THIS SPLENDOR BEFORE YOU, WOLFRIDERS, WHY DO YOU STARE AT ME?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER..? DON'T YOU FEEL ANY SHAME?

TIMMORN'S BLOOD, BLACK-HAIR, YOU KILLED KAHVI! AND FOR ALL WE KNOW, THE GO-BACKS TOO!





HE FELL THREE TURNS OF THE SEASONS AGO...
IN THE SNOW... ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
FROZEN MOUNTAINS. BUT THE DEATHLESS LOVE
OF HER LIFEMATE ONE-EYE ENFOLDS HER,
RELEASES HER UNWEPT TEARS.

SHE WHISPERS HIS
SOUL NAME...

SUR..!


...AND HEARS HER
OWN RETURNED.

AT THE SAME TIME, RAYEK'S MENTAL CALL
GOES FAR FROM THE PALACE... DOWN... DOWN
WHERE THE TROLLS DWELL IN THEIR SOOT
SMIRCHED KINGDOM BENEATH THE MOUNTAINS.

EKUAR..?

EKUAR...
IT IS I,
RAYEK!

SEND TO ME
IF YOU CAN, MY MENTOR...
WHERE ARE YOU? HOW
DO YOU FARE..?



BROWNSKIN!
BACK FROM THE BLUE MOUNTAIN!
WELL WELL WELL! I'M FINE! EVERY-
THING IS JUST FINE!



ELSEWHERE...FAR AWAY FROM
THE FROZEN MOUNTAINS, IN
THE WIDE, LUSH VALLEY
OF ENDLESS SLEEP...

♪PANT PANT♪
THIS SONG...ALWAYS KEPT
MY FEET DANCING...WHEN
THE REST OF ME...WAS
READY TO DROP!

NO OTHER DANCER
FLASHES AND SPARKLES
AS YOU DO, HEALER. WE'VE
LONGED TO SEE YOUR SWIRLING,
MANY-COLORED VEILS AGAIN.

YOU'VE
LONGED
ESPECIALLY,
ZHANTEE!
♪HEH HEH!♪

A VEIL WOULD
CATCH AND TEAR HERE --
AND I AM TORN BY YOUR
PLEAS THAT I REVISIT
SORROW'S END.

LEETAH..!

THERE MAY BE
A REASON BEYOND MERE
REUNIONS FOR ME TO RETURN
WITH YOU NOW...

YES, THE CRY
FOR HELP THAT
SUNTOP HEARD.

SUNTOP'S
POWERS ARE
GROWING
FASTER, IT
SEEMS...

...THAN HIS
ABILITY TO
USE THEM.

HE DID SAY
THE CRY CAME
FROM FAR AWAY!
BUT WHO..?

THE CRY PERSISTS, AND ITS
SOURCE IS NOT WINNOWILL--
THAT IS ALL SUNTOP
KNOWS.

I HAVE
TRIED TO SORT
HIM OUT AS BEST
I CAN... PERHAPS
SAVAH COULD
DO MORE.


SAVAH! YES!

SHE'D KNOW
WHAT TO DO!

YES, HEALER!
COME HOME WITH
LITTLE SUNTOP!







REMEMBER THE SUN
VILLAGE, WHERE YOU WERE BORN?
HOW PEACEFUL IT WAS THERE!

"REMEMBER YOUR GRANDSIRE,
THE SUN TOUCHER?"

"AND WISE, OLD SAVAH
WHO TAUGHT YOU SO
MUCH BEFORE THE
QUEST... AND AFTER!"

"YOU'D LIKE BETTER
TO HUG HER THAN TO
TOUCH HER MIND FROM
AFAR, WOULDN'T YOU?"

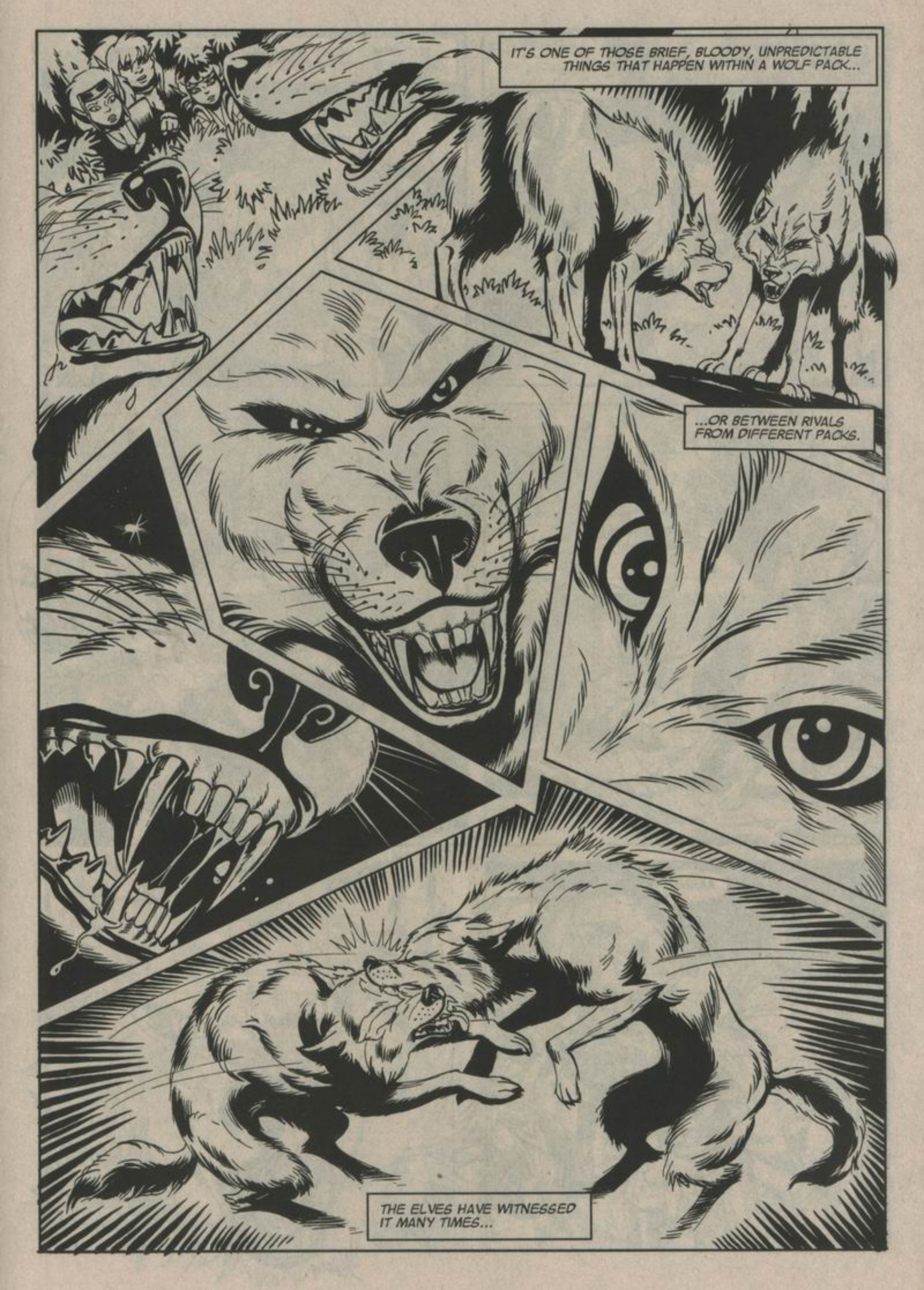
"AND REMEMBER WOOD-
LOCK AND RAINSONG?
THEIR NEW CUB MUST HAVE
A WOLF-FRIEND BY NOW!"

"DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK THERE, WHERE IT'S SAFE
AND SLOW AND STRANGE CRIES WON'T TROUBLE YOU?"









IT'S ONE OF THOSE BRIEF, BLOODY, UNPREDICTABLE
THINGS THAT HAPPEN WITHIN A WOLF PACK...

...OR BETWEEN RIVALS
FROM DIFFERENT PACKS.

THE ELVES HAVE WITNESSED
IT MANY TIMES...

LIKE EVERY WOLFRIDER,
SKYWISE FULLY KNOWS
THE RULES...

STARJUMPER'S
TOO OLD... TOO
OLD FOR THIS!

...BUT UNLIKE MOST WOLFRIDERS, HE HAS KNOWN
ONLY ONE WOLF-FRIEND SINCE BOYHOOD!

NO! DON'T
DO IT!!

GIVE UP,
STARJUMPER!
BACK OFF!

IT'S NO
USE!!

HAAH!
YAAAH! BREAK
IT UP! RUN!!

AAAH!!

GRRRR-
RRRRARR!!

SNAAA-
RRRRLL!!









TO BE
CONTINUED...

ELFQUEST[®]

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL



\$2.00

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STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

PART
3

KINGS of the BROKEN WHEEL

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
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WENDY PINI

THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO
LEAVE HIM...RIGHT UNDER THE
MOONS. MOTHER MOON IS HOLDING
CHILD MOON IN HER ARMS, SEE?

SHE'S TELLING CHILD MOON,
"DON'T BE AFRAID. A WOLF HAS
LIVED A GOOD, LONG LIFE...
AND HAS JUST LEFT IT."

YES. NOTHING TO FEAR.















TCH! SINTOP
DOESN'T "CLAIM," HE KNOWS!
I WONDER WHAT...?

PICKY, I'M SOAKED
WITH RIME! AND THE
WIND IS MUSSING
MY HAIR!

THAT'S A HERO'S
FIRST CONCERN,
ISN'T IT?

SHUT

UP...!



OOOOOOHHHH...!
MORE CHANGES! SO
LOVELY! SO WARM!
MEKDA...OSEK...!

THE ANCIENT ROCK SHAPER WEEPS QUIETLY,
REMEMBERING FRIENDS FROM A TIME NEAR
THE BEGINNING. THEY WERE ALL FIRST BORN
OF THE HIGH ONES. NOW, ONLY EKIAR IS LEFT.



BUT EVEN HE IS NOT THE OLDEST
LIVING ELF. THERE REMAINS ONE
WHO IS THE BEGINNING...

TIMMAIN!



TSX TSX TSX!
WRAPSTUFF ALL RUINED!
MOTHER-MOTHER HIGHTHING
MAKE MESSYMUCH!

SHE'S GONE!!



IS THIS YOUR DOING,
PRESERVER? WHERE
IS SHE? TELL!

EEEP!

MOTHER-MOTHER
HIGHTHING IS GROWLER
AGAIN! ZOPPITY-ZOP OFF
TO TALLROCKS WHEN YOU
MAKE NASTY HURTFIRES!!



YOU WOULD LET
THEM DRAG US HERE TO
THIS FANCIED-UP RELIC! SERVING
ELVES IS ALL YOU'RE
GOOD FOR NOW!

OOOO, MUMKINS!
LOOK! THERE'S TRINKET!
PRETTY TRINKET!



TO SHAPE-CHANGE
INSIDE A PRESERVER COCOON...
OUTSIDE OF TIME! THAT IS
MAGIC INDEED!



THE HIGH ONE...FLOWN...IN
WOLF FORM! WHY? ALL THAT I PROMISED,
I DID! THE GLIDERS' MAGIC SERVES THE
PALACE, AND HER, NOW!

WHY HAS SHE
DESERTED ME?



WHOM DO YOU
SERVE, BROWNSKIN?

ELVES, EKUAR! ALL
ELVES WHO REMEMBER
WHO THEY ARE...



»GASP!«

OH! WHAT
IS IT?!



AAGH! I HAVE IT,
CHILD! ENOUGH!!



»HEWH!« HE IS
GOOD, THAT LITTLE ONE!
VERY GOOD! AND, BUT FOR
LEETAH, HE IS ALONE AMONG
THE WOLFRIDERS.

FAILING TO GAIN
TIMMAIN'S AID, HE HAS
WISELY SOUGHT MINE.



HE HAS HEARD
SOMETHING - IN HIS MIND -- A
CRY! THE CRY OF ELVES IN A DISTANT
PLACE! THEY CALL FOR HELP!

ELVES?! YOU
MEAN...THOSE
WE HAVE YET
TO KNOW?



SO HE
SWEARS. I DO NOT
DOUBT HIM.



HE IS LOCKED
WITH THEM. ONLY HE
CAN HEAR THEM.



ONLY HE
KNOWS WHERE TO
FIND THEM!

OF COURSE THE CHILD
WOULD TURN TO ME! THOUGH I
NO LONGER CARRY THE SOULS OF THE
GLIDERS WITHIN ME -- THE SPIRITS OF
THE PALACE ARE READY TO JOIN
WITH THE WIND AGAIN!

WE WILL FLY --







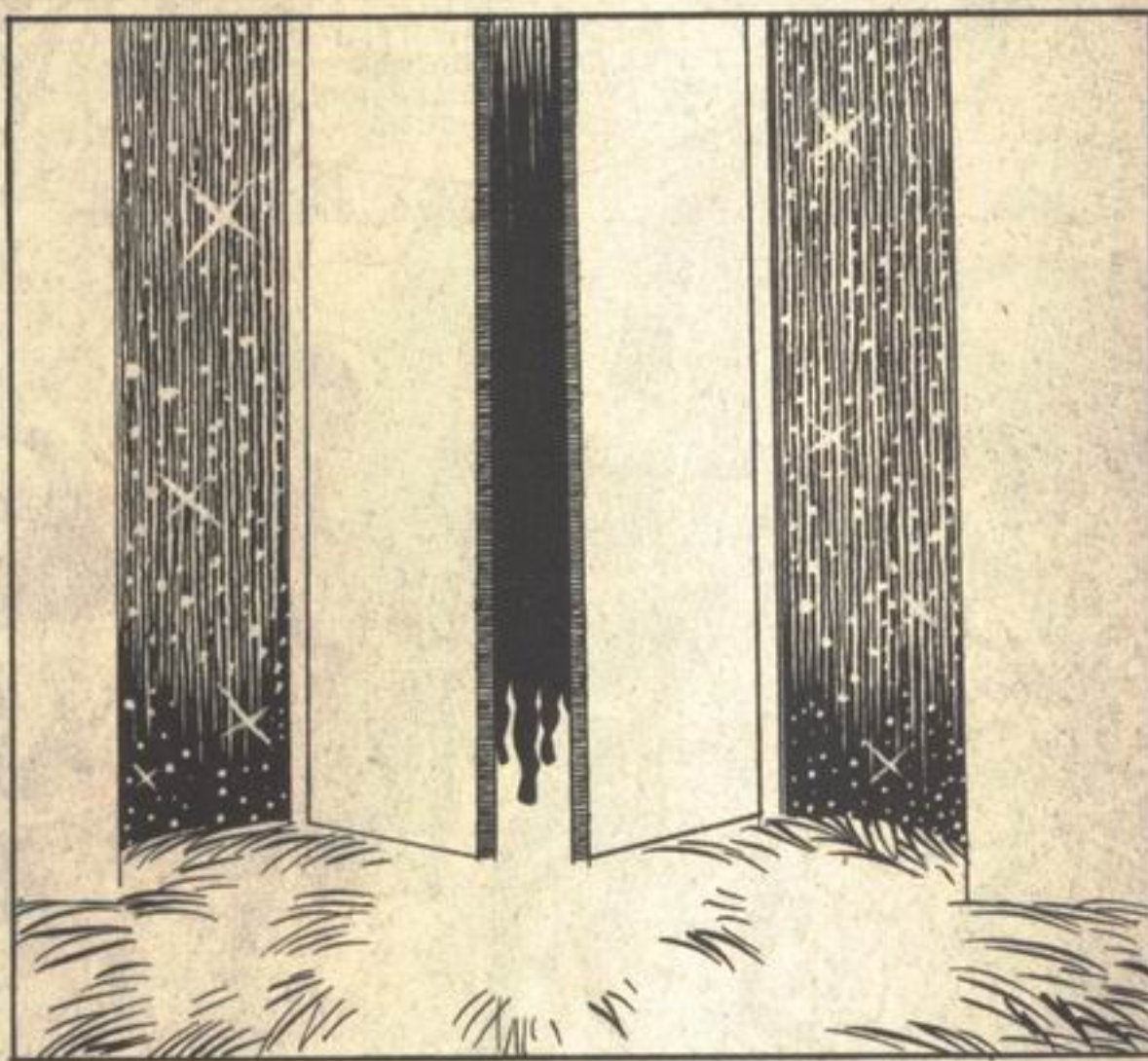














EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
HELLO! HELLO! SOFT-
PRETTY HIGHTHINGS!



AAAAAYYOOOO-
AAAAAHHHH!!!!

OOOWWWWWW-
OOOOOOOOO!!!!



THE PALACE!

AAAYYOOO-
AAAAAHHH!

TREESTUMP!
CLEARBROOK!

IT'S HERE! IT'S
REALLY HERE!



I FELT IT
BEFORE I SAW IT! BUT
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT! THE
HIGH ONES' DWELLING! HERE!
IN OUR HOLT!

YOU DID IT,
RAYEK! YOU MADE
THE PALACE FLY!















KUREEL'S SPIRIT...
WAS ASLEEP. ONE-EYE
WOKE HIM.



KUREEL...
BARELY REMEMBERED...
HOW HE DIED!



YOU'VE BOTH
FORGIVEN...



AS I FORGAVE
TWO-EDGE.



WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE?!





LATER...LONG INTO THE NIGHT...



BARBARIC!

NO...PERFECT!
WHEN YOU CAN SEE
THAT, YOU'LL TRULY
BE MASTER OF THE
PALACE.



I HAVE OFFERED
TO TAKE EVERYONE BACK
TO THE SUN VILLAGE -- TO
THAT FAMILIAR PLACE -- AS
PROOF OF THE PALACE'S
SAFETY.

WILL
CUTTER
AGREE?

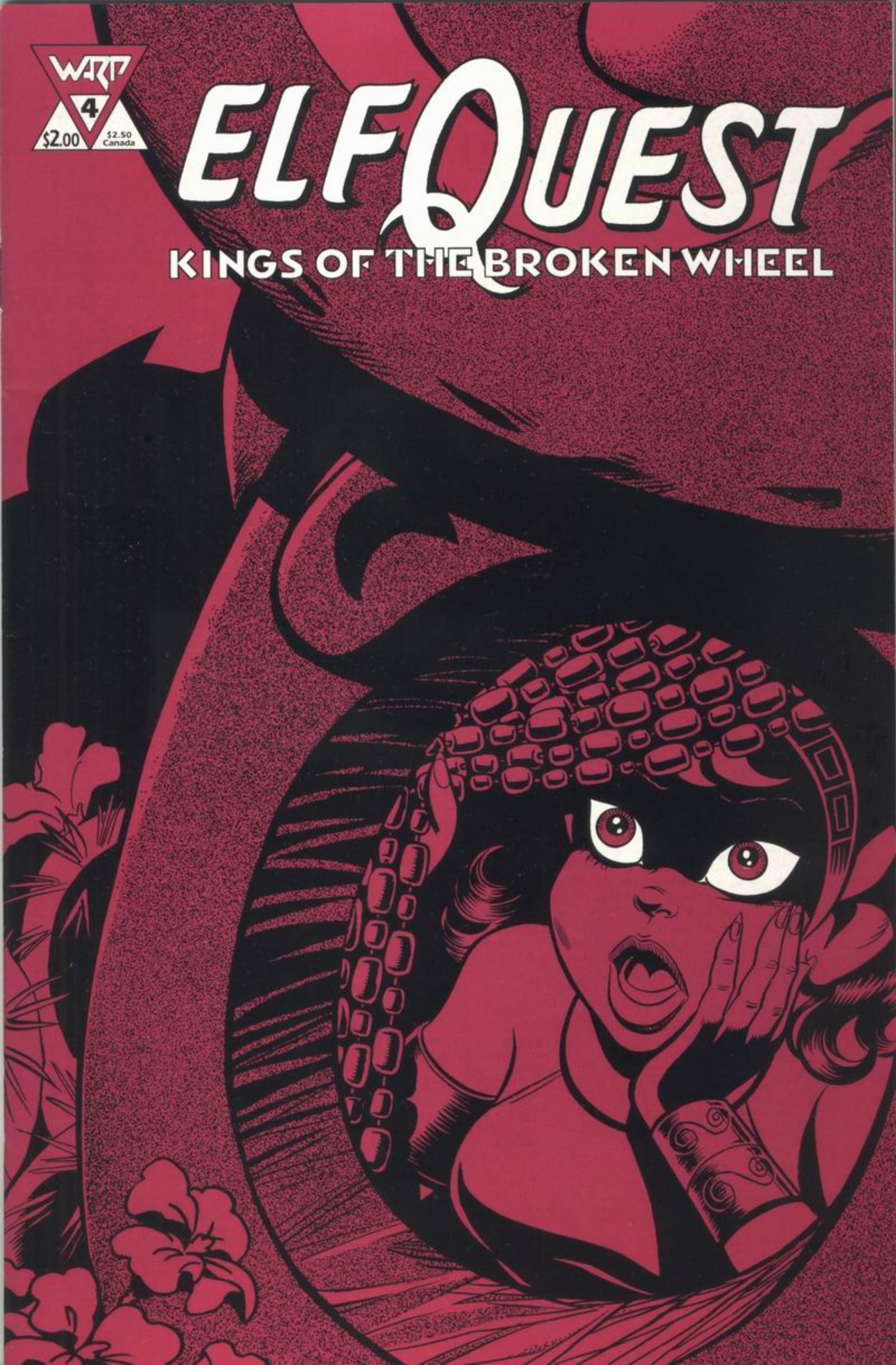


TO BE CONTINUED...



ELFQUEST

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL

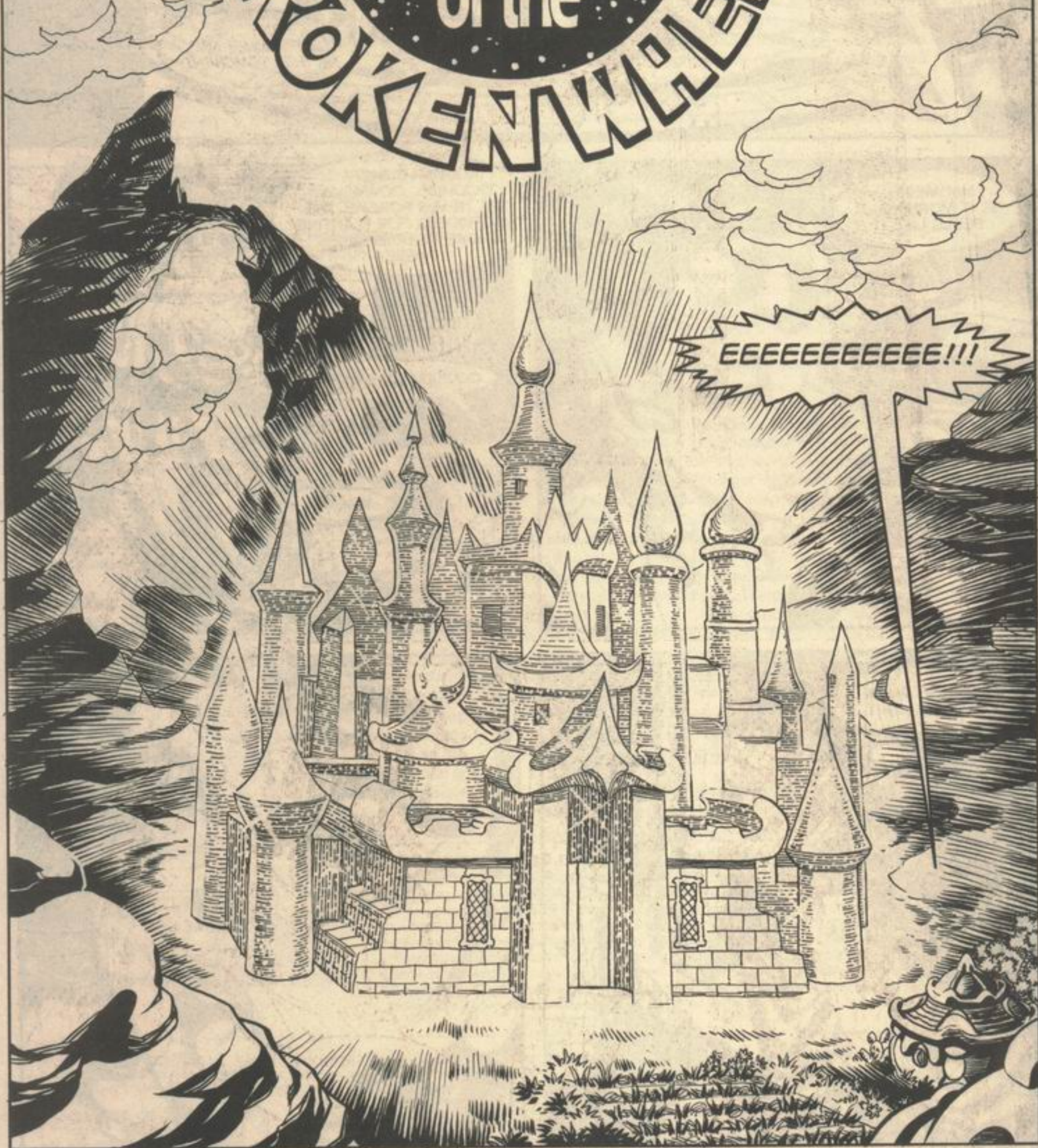




STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

KINGS of the BROKEN WHEEL

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI



MOMENTS LATER...

HURRY!

SOMEONE
GET SAVAH AND
SUN-TOUCHER!

GREAT SUN...
CAN IT BE..?!

IT IS! IT
MUST BE!

LOOK! THE
DOORS ARE
OPENING!

OH, HIGH ONES!
IT IS THE PALACE!

IT IS RAYEK!

HE'S COME BACK!

HE HAS BROUGHT
THE PALACE TO US!



LONG AGO, WHEN THEIR LINE OF CHIEFS WAS MUCH SHORTER, THE WOLFRIDERS HUNTED THE WOODLANDS...



...UNAWARE THAT ANOTHER TRIBE OF ELVES HAD SETTLED IN THE OASIS OF SORROW'S END.



THE WOLFRIDERS WOULD NEVER HAVE DISCOVERED THEIR DESERT-DWELLING KIN, NOR WOULD THEY HAVE FOUND THE PALACE OF THE HIGH ONES...



...HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR CUTTER, BLOOD OF TEN CHIEFS' REPEATED WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP THROUGH FEAR - INTO KNOWLEDGE.



THEY SHOULD NOT BE CHEERING FOR RAYEK ALONE.

LOOK AT YOUR PEOPLE'S FACES, LEETAH.



THE PALACE FEEDS THE HUNGER THAT HAS NO VOICE...IN ALL OF US!



LEETAH! LEEETAH!



SHENSHEN!
OH, MY LITTLE
SISTER...!

MOTHER...
FATHER...!



...YES...I'VE
MISSED YOU TOO!



»GASP!«
B-BUT YOU WEREN'T
TALKING JUST NOW...
WERE YOU?!

I WAS SENDING!
I-I CANNOT HELP IT.
THE PALACE...!



I DID IT!
I RECEIVED YOUR SENDING!
OH, IT IS MY FIRST TIME!

IT IS
MAGIC!!



I FEEL WARM
AND SAFE AS A CHILD
IN THE WOMB. IF ONLY
YOU COULD SEE IT,
BELOVED.

I CAN, TOORAH...
EACH TIER, EACH RECESS...
EVERY ROUNDED WALL AND
SPARKLING SPIRE...!



MY DEAR ONE,
THIS IS THE GIFT
OF GIFTS!

THIS COMPLETES US...
MAKES THE SPAN OF TIME
BETWEEN THE HIGH ONES' COMING
AND NOW SEEM BUT
AN INSTANT!

TIME MEANS
NOTHING, MOTHER OF
MEMORY. AND THE HIGH
ONES ARE NOT
ALL DEAD!



AS YOU ARE MOTHER OF THE SUN FOLK, SAVAH, SO THIS IS THE WOLFRIDERS' MOTHER.

SHE IS TIMMAIN, THE HIGH ONE...WITH US AGAIN AS IN THE YOUTH OF TIMMORN YELLOW-EYES.



I SEE... I SEE WHO SHE IS..!



FIRSTCOMER... YOU ARE MY MOTHER TOO!



ALL YOUR CHILDREN THANK YOU, WITH LOVE, FOR THEIR BEGINNINGS.



LATER...

I FEEL AN URGENCY IN YOU, MY WANDERER. YOU HAVE NOT, AFTER ALL, BROUGHT THE PALACE HERE TO STAY. HOW SOON WILL YOU LEAVE US AGAIN?

THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, IS NOT FOR ME TO SAY.



RAYEK AND I
MADE A PACT. HIS IS THE
POWER TO SUMMON THE
MAGIC OF THE PALACE --
TO MAKE IT FLY.



MINE IS
THE POWER TO
SAY WHEN.

MUST YOU FLING
A PRIVATE MATTER
TO THE CROWD?!



YOU'RE MASTER OF THE
PALACE, BLACK-HAIR, BUT CUTTER'S
MASTER OF YOU!

RAYEK HATES
SHOWING THROAT TO
CUTTER AGAIN! DON'T
RUB IT IN, KRIM!

HE DESERVES IT
FOR DRIVING THE
GO-BACKS AWAY!



THE WOLFRIDERS
WOULD TRAVEL WITH ME
ONLY IF I AGREED TO THEIR
CHIEF'S CONDITIONS.

WELL! SURELY THIS
IS NO HOMECOMING! WHAT
IS AT THE HEART OF THIS
MISSION, RAYEK?



IT'S ME,
SAVAH I STARTED
THE TROUBLE...!





THEY'RE INSIDE AND DART'S DESERT WOLVES ARE OUTSIDE SO THERE WON'T BE ANY MORE CHALLENGES.

MAKES SENSE, DON'T YOU THINK?

☆★☆☆☆!!



WE WOLFRIDERS DON'T FEAR TROLLS, DO WE, SKYWISE?

»CHUCKLE«
NOT THESE PARTICULAR ONES!



AND BESIDES... GREAT-GRANDMAMA CAN THROW ANYBODY OVER HER SHOULDER!



HEEEHEEEHEEE!



PALACE, TROLLS AND PRESERVERS...THE SUN FOLK HAVE SEEN MUCH TODAY THAT IS NEW TO THEM. I AM GLAD THEY ARE NOT FRIGHTENED.

THE WOLFRIDERS LEFT US THEIR STRENGTH, THEIR READINESS TO DEAL WITH CHANGE. WE ARE NOT SO SOFT AS YOU REMEMBER, HEALER.



BUT I THINK YOUR LITTLE SON HAS TRIED TO BE TOO STRONG, TOO LONG. HE NEEDS REST.



SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE, SAVAH...THEY KEEP SCREAMING AND SCREAMING...I HEAR THEM!

SHHHH...LATER, KITLING.



I WILL SEND YOU A SONG THAT WILL LIE LIKE A SOFT, MUFFLING BLANKET OVER THE CRY. YOU WILL SLEEP.



THANK YOU, MOTHER OF MEMORY.

»SIGHHHH...«

THEIR CONCERN FOR SUNTOP ALLAYED FOR A WHILE,
CUTTER AND LEETAH JOIN IN THE ONGOING MERRIMENT.

MORE SUBTLY COLORFUL THAN THE SUNSET,
MORE LUMINOUS THAN A MYRIAD GLOWING LANTERNS,
THE PALACE IS THE FOCAL POINT OF GREAT JOY
AND A NEW SENSE OF COMPLETENESS.



WILL YOU HAVE MORE
DREAMBERRY JUICE...?

GRUNT

MY MY! WHAT...
INTERESTING...JEWELRY!
IT'S NOT TROLL-GOLD,
IS IT?



WHY, NO! THE MOUNTAINS
HERE ARE FULL OF DIFFERENT, SHINY
METALS -- SOFT AND EASY TO WORK!
WE DO IT OURSELVES!



DO TELL...!



THINGS ARE LOOKING UP FOR US, PETS. THOUGH I LOST MY CROWN IN A GAME OF TOSS-STONE, I MAY HAVE FOUND US A NEW KINGDOM OF OUR OWN - MANY TIMES RICHER THAN ANY WE'VE KNOWN!

TRINKET LOVES PAPA!

OOOOOO, PICKY! WHEN YOU TALK LIKE THAT, I JUST MELT!



EVEN AS THE PALACE IS HONORED, SO, TOO, DOES ITS MASTER RECEIVE HIS DUE.

RAYEK, YOUR DEEP HUNGER FOR GROWTH, AND YOUR COURAGE TO PURSUE IT AS FAR AND WIDE AS YOU MUST, HAS BROUGHT US ALL TO THIS HAPPY MOMENT.

WE ARE MORE THAN WE WERE, BECAUSE OF YOU.



HUNGER FOR GROWTH - OR FOR POWER?

WHEN THE TWO GO TOGETHER YOU FEEL FULL. BUT POWER ALONE NEVER FILLS YOU UP.

IF I KNOW RAYEK, HE'S STILL HUNGRY.



WERE YOU MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD, I COULD NOT BE MORE PROUD!







WHAT? WHAT???
WHAT ARE THEY
DOING?!?

HAHAHA!
SOMETHING RAINSONG AND
I NEVER NEEDED A HEALER'S
HELP TO DO!



!!
???
!!
??
!!
???
!!!
!!!!



YOU KNEW..?

SOME. LEETAH'S
NEVER TRIED IT BEFORE.
IT'S COMPLICATED.



REDLANCE AND
NIGHTFALL AREN'T REALLY
RECOGNIZED, ARE THEY?

LIKE YOU AND
ME...YES AND NO.

SNORT!



YES FOR THE
SOUL...NO FOR
HAVING CUBS.

FOR YOU AND ME
I HOPE TO SAY SO!
»HIC« SOOO...LEETAH'S
HELPING THEM...?



THE MAIDENS HERE
LIKE TO TELL TALES. THEY SAY
LEETAH CAN...BZZZ...BZZ...

UH HUH.



DOES SHE
DO...THAT...EVERY
TIME?!!!

UH UH.



IF SHE DID, I'D BE
NUT-MASH. COULDN'T EVEN WALK,
LET ALONE BE CHIEF!

»SSIIIGHHHH...«

YIPE!!!









NEXT MORNING...



REMEMBERING..?

MMMHMM..
THE TRIAL OF HEAD,
HAND AND HEART.
YOU KNOW...



...MY FEAR
OF HEIGHTS
IS GONE.

HOW CAN I
BE AFRAID TO LOOK
UP OR DOWN OR
ANYWHERE...



...WHEN ALL THIS
IS MINE?! THE WORLD
BELONGS TO EACH
ONE OF US.

AND WITH THE
PALACE, THERE'S NO
PART OF IT WE CAN'T
EXPLORE!



BY NOW SAVAH HAS EXPLORED THE
NATURE OF SUNTOP'S AILMENT.
WE'LL SOON KNOW...

...IF KINFOLK OF
OURS ARE TRULY IN DANGER
SOMEWHERE!



AAAYOOOOAAAAHHH
YOOOAAH - YOH!


»MOAN« A WHOLE
TRIBE CALL..?! CUTTER'S
JOKING! HE MUST BE!



SOON...







EVEN AS IT AUGMENTS THE
YOUNG MYSTIC'S POWERS,
THE PALACE SHUDDERS
TO ITS FOUNDATIONS!



AND NO ONE HEARS THE CRY BUT TREMBLES WITH AWE - AND PITY!

GREAT SUN! WHAT IS IT?!

THE PALACE!
THE PALACE IS...
SCREAMING!



IS...IS THAT
WHAT SUNTOP'S
BEEN HEARING ALL
THIS WHILE?!

TIMMORN'S
BLOOD!



»PANT PANT«
THAT'S ALL...! IT GOES
ON LIKE THAT...OVER
AND OVER!

IT'S COMING FROM...
OH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO
SAY WHERE?! IT'S A STRANGE PLACE!
PLEASE! LET'S GO HELP NOW!



»WHINE
WHIIINNE
YARK!«

Y-YES, HIGH
ONE! WE ALL HEARD!
WE'RE GOING!



»GRRRRR...WOOFWOOF!«

WHAT..?!
I-I DON'T...



WHAT MORE NEED
YOU HEAR?! BUT FOR
THE FOOLISH OATH I'M
FORCED TO KEEP...

THE BOY AND
I WOULD BE GONE
THIS INSTANT!



DO YOU KNOW...
WHAT I COULD DO TO YOU...
IF I WISHED...?

YOU BLIND,
BOASTING BAT! OPEN
YOUR EYES!



ONLY YOU SEE
YOURSELF AS SEPARATE,
ABOVE THE REST.

YOU'RE NOT!
YOU'RE LONELY!



AND YOU THINK
THE WAY TO FIX IT
IS TO GET US ALL TO
MATCH YOUR PACE!

BUT EVEN TIMMAIN
WON'T RUN WITH YOU UNTIL
YOU SEE WE'RE ALL ON
THE SAME SIDE!



HIGH ONE...WE KNOW
NOTHING OF WHAT LIES AHEAD.
YOU CHOOSE WHO GOES. CHOOSE
FOR STRENGTH, FOR WISDOM, AND
FOR THE SKILLS MOST NEEDED
ON THIS QUEST.

KNOWING THAT WHICH SHE CANNOT CONVEY, THE WHITE WOLF HESITATES. THEN, SLOWLY, SHE MAKES HER FIRST CIRCLE...



...ACCEPTING THAT HER CUB'S CUBS MUST FEND FOR THEMSELVES, COME WHAT MAY.









HEEHEEE HEE

HEEE HEE HEE!

HEEE HEEHEEE HEE



PICKY! HELLLLLP!

AAAGPTH!! NOOO!!



THE LITTLE WINGED ONES ARE SO USEFUL!

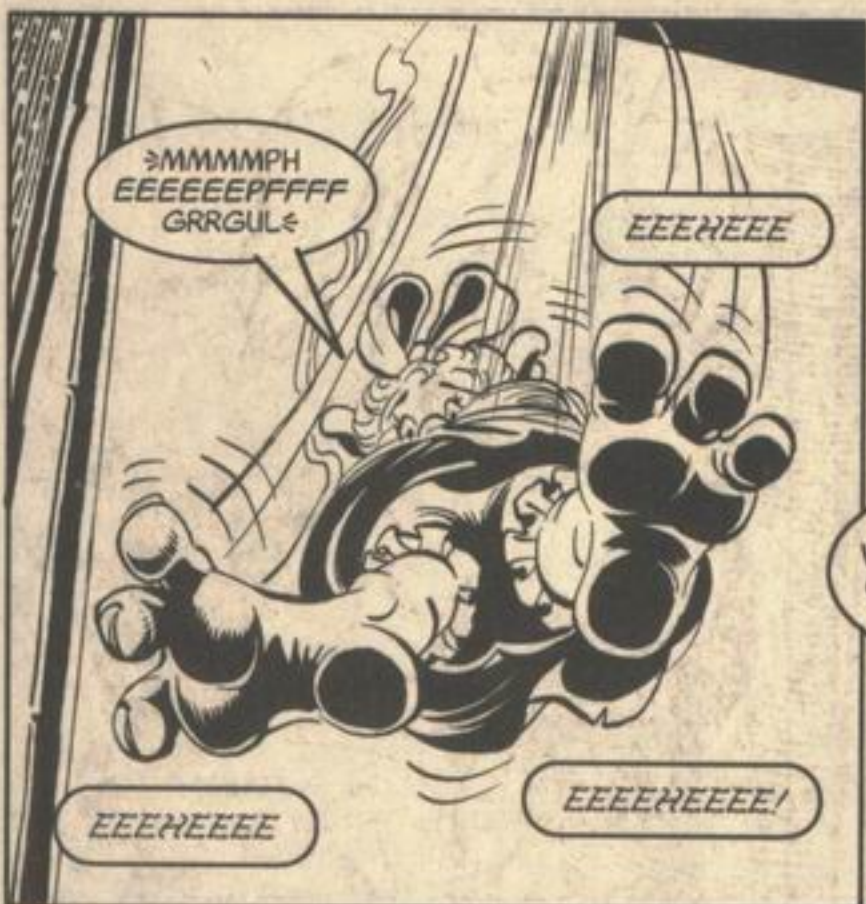
AND THINK HOW WELL THEY COULD PRESERVE FOOD FROM OUR GARDENS! NOTHING IN OUR STORE-ROOMS WOULD EVER WITHER!

»MOOOFLE« »GRRRR«



»SPUTTER« »COUGH«
WELL, WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO WITH US, ELF?

TRINKET!
WHERE'S TRINKET!?



»MMMMPH
EEEEEEPPFFFF
GRRGUL«

EEEEHEEE

EEEEHEEE

EEEEHEEE!



WE'RE STUCK WITH YOU, PICKY!
COME ON! LET'S ROLL THEM IN!

YOU'LL REGRET THIS, SON OF BEARCLAW!

WE ALREADY DO!

DESPITE THE COMMOTION IN THE ENTRANCE HALL, AN ATMOSPHERE OF QUIET REVERENCE PERVADES THE CHAMBER OF THE SCROLL OF COLORS

YOU HAVE SEEN FOR YOURSELF WHAT THE HIGH ONES WERE, AND WHY WE ARE AS WE ARE NOW, MOTHER OF MEMORY.

I SHALL BE TRUE TO MY TITLE. WHOMEVER WISHES TO SEE THE SCROLL, MAY DO SO THROUGH ME.

IT HAS BECOME PART OF ME.

NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY THE PALACE SEEMS LESS A DWELLING-PLACE THAN AN ORNAMENT FOR SHOW.

THEY WERE GUESSING, OUR DEAR FOREPARENTS, AT WHAT MIGHT BE INSIDE THE GREAT HUMAN-MADE HIVES THEY OBSERVED.

PERHAPS SOMEDAY WE DEATHLESS ONES WILL SEE THAT INSTANT IN TIME... BEFORE THE ACCIDENT...

...WHEN THE HIGH ONES FIRST APPEARED IN THE SKY. WHAT WILL HAPPEN THEN, I WONDER?

»BUFF«

AH, SAVAH! I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU!

FROM AN ANCIENT ELF TO A LOVELY, YOUNG ONE! A SMALL PIECE OF THE PALACE...

TO KEEP... SO YOU WON'T, ONE DAY, THINK IT WAS JUST A DREAM!

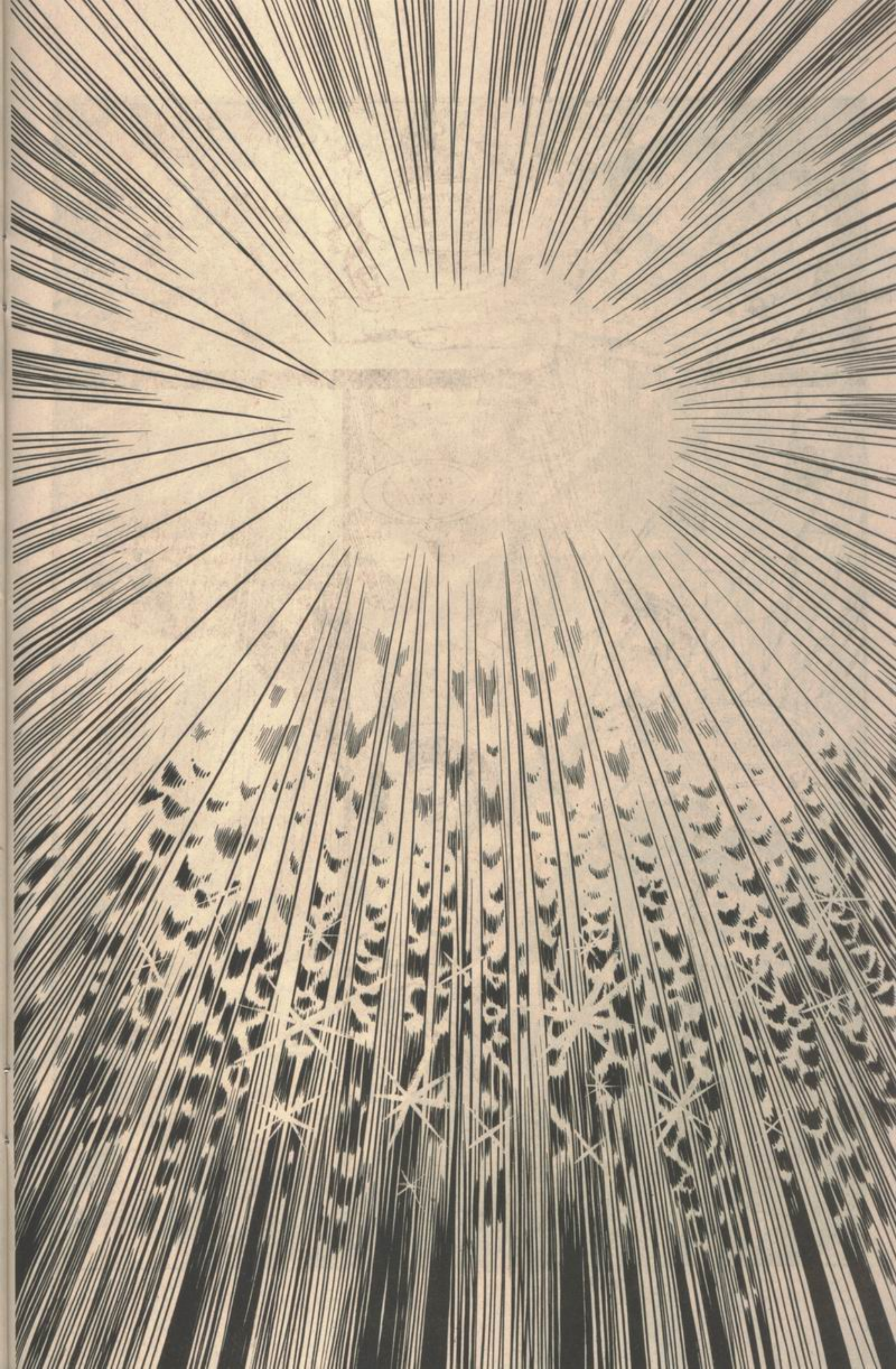
ALL FAREWELLS HAVE BEEN SAID,
ALL HOPES AND WISHES EXPRESSED...



...ALL TREASURED
MEMENTOES EXCHANGED.









I CAN SEE!
I CAN SEE THE VAST-
DEEP WATER!

I CAN SEE...

...RIGHT THROUGH
THE WALLS..!

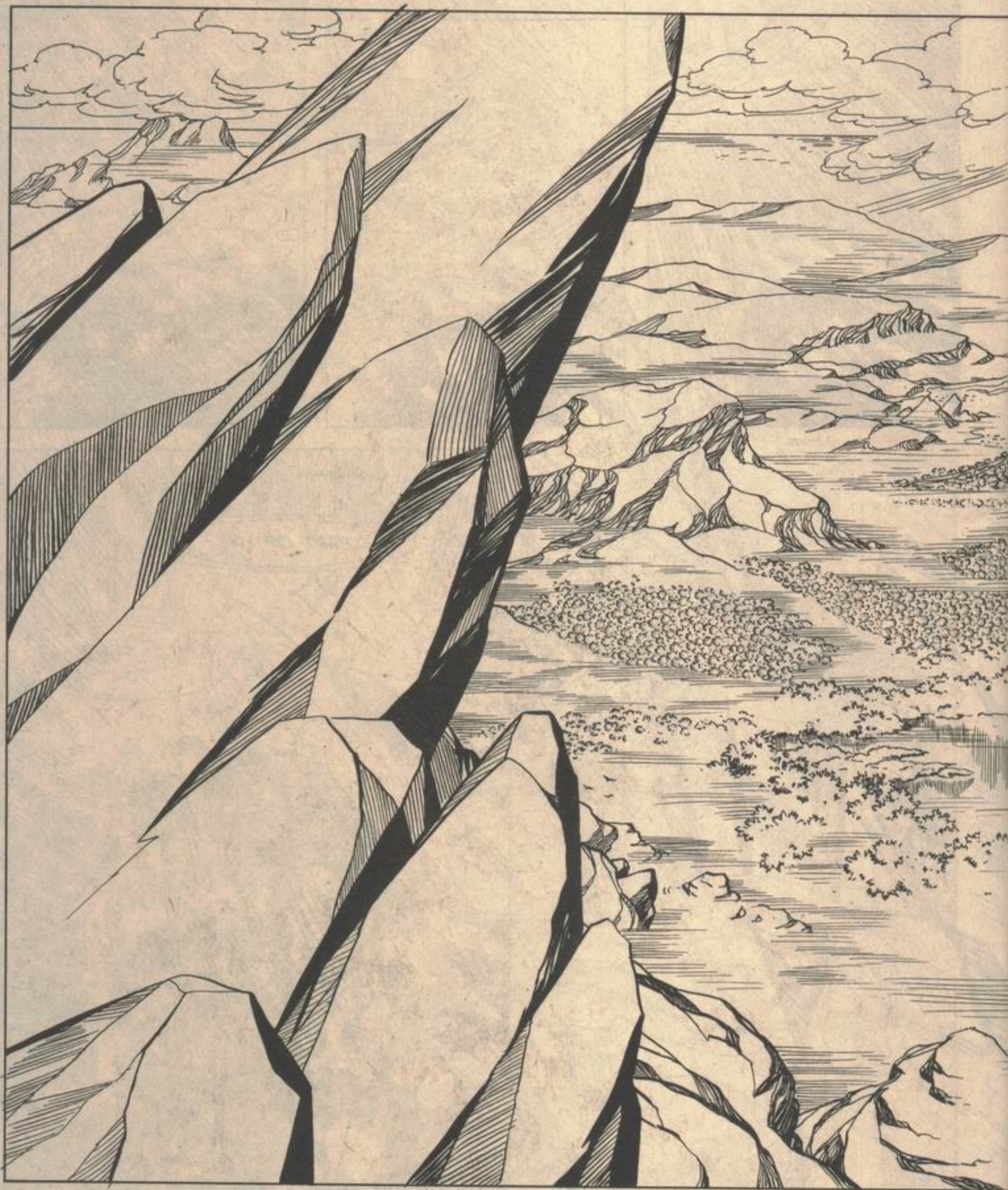
...RIGHT WHERE
WE'RE GOING!!


»ULP«

...WE'LL BE
PART OF IT...THE
NEW LAND..!

URRGHH!







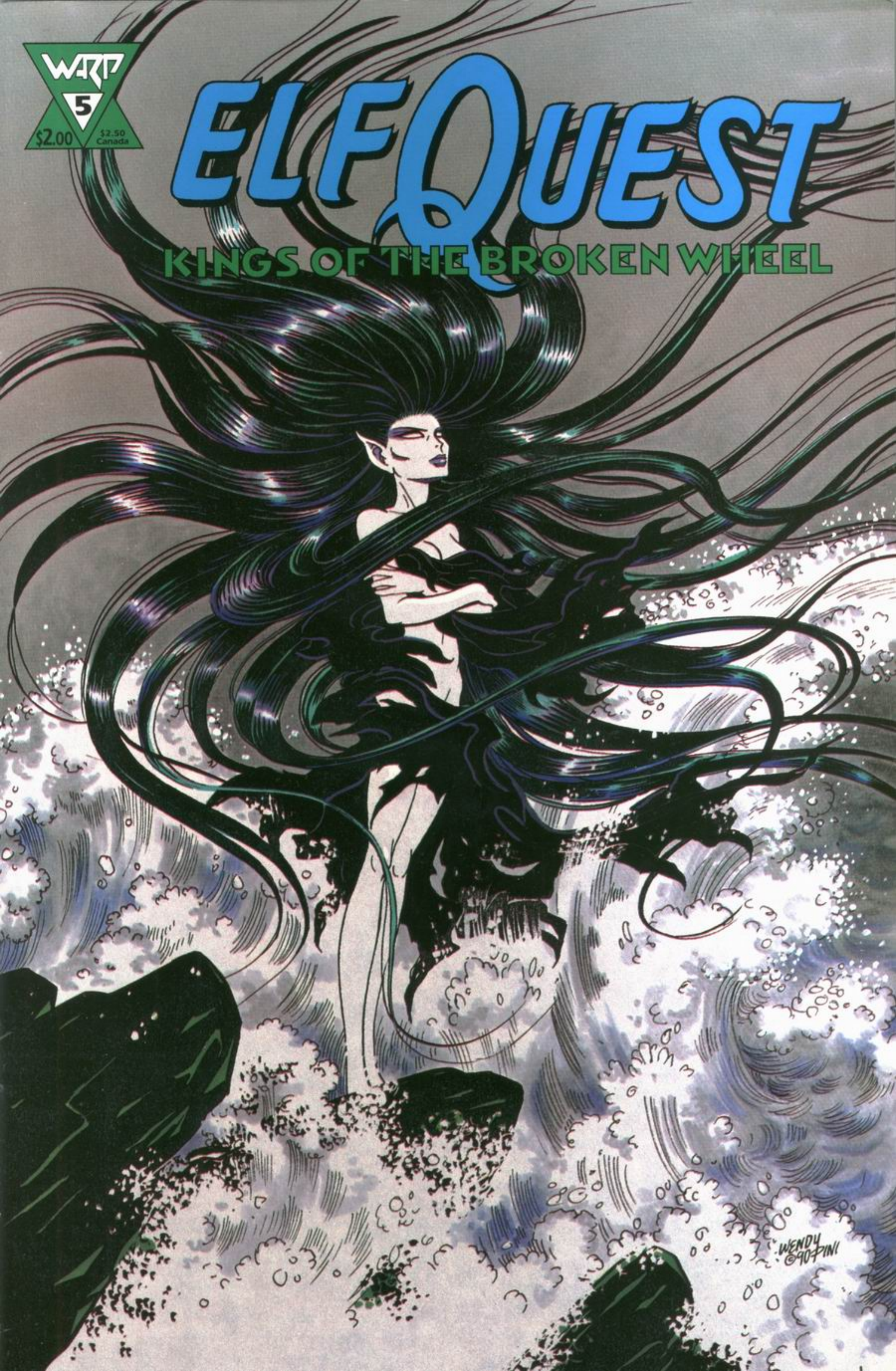
HIS SECRET SOUL NAME IS TAM. THE BLOOD OF TEN CHIEFS FLOWS IN HIS VEINS. HE WAS ONCE THE LEADER OF A SMALL ELFIN TRIBE KNOWN AS THE WOLFRIDERS. BUT NOW THEIR NUMBER HAS GROWN. THEIR WORLD HAS GROWN, TOO. AND NOTHING AWAITS THEM, CUTTER KNOWS, BUT MYSTERIES, RIDDLES, VERY FEW ANSWERS... AND THE WONDERFUL, TERRIBLE, ENDLESS GAME OF SURVIVAL.

TO BE
CONTINUED...



ELFQUEST

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL



WENDY
LOP
© 90 PINI

STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI

PART
5

KINGS of the

BROKEN WHEEL

IN A TIMELESS FLIGHT, CUTTER'S
CHOSEN BAND OF ELVES HAVE
BEEN TRANSPORTED TO A HIGH
MOUNTAIN PEAK IN AN UNKNOWN
LAND BEYOND THE VASTDEEP WATER.

YOU ARE
A SPLENDID GUIDE,
SUNTOP!

THOUGH THE PALACE
IS DISGUISED, THE ELVES WHO
HAVE CALLED US WILL SURELY
SENSE ITS PRESENCE.

WE'RE THERE?
WE'RE REALLY
THERE?









»SOB SOB«
...WHERE...ARE...YOU...!



M-MOTHER!
MY HEAD HURTS!

OH, KITLING!



»SNIFF«...DIDN'T
MEAN TO UPSET YOU!
JUST...SO TIRED!



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
I'M SICK OF SEEING
THAT CUB IN PAIN!

SOMEONE'S
PLAYED US A VERY
DIRTY TRICK!

»RRRFFFF!
WHUFF!«



TIMMAIN! WHY
WON'T THE STRANGE ELVES
ANSWER? DO YOU KNOW? IN
YOUR WOLF FORM...CAN
YOU KNOW?

»WHINE WHINE WHINE«



RAYEK...



HELP MY SON.

PLEASE.



I WILL!

THE BURDEN *SHOULD* BE MINE.



WE WILL
NEED YOUR POWER,
LEETAH.

ONLY BECAUSE YOU
ARE MUCH STRONGER THAN *SUNTOP*
WILL I ALLOW THIS.



»GASP!«

OOOOHHHHH...!



ENDLESS, YET IMMEDIATE, FILLED
WITH THE FORCE OF SUDDEN TERROR,
THE MULTI-VOICED HOWL ENTERS RAYEK'S
WAITING MIND. THOUGH LOGGED FOR DAYS
IN THE CHILD'S BRAIN, THE CRY SEEMS FRESH,
A RESPONSE TO SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED DISASTER.



THE DOOR
YOU HAVE KEPT OPEN...
SHUT IT NOW.

RAYEK SHALL
DEAL WITH THE
STRANGERS.



AAAAAHHHHH..!



BROWNSKIN..?

THIS IS THE PLACE!
THEY ARE RIGHT ON TOP OF US,
YET OUR SENDING CANNOT GET
THROUGH TO THEM!



A CRUEL RIDDLE, EKUAR!
WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE
STRANGERS IF WE FAIL
TO SOLVE IT?

WOOPS!
STEADY..!



YOUR EYES ARE BRIGHT AS FATHER'S SWORD!
I'M GLAD YOUR SILLY OLD HEAD'S
ALL YOURS AGAIN!

>GIGGLE<



NOW WHAT,
CUTTER?

NOW...WE EAT!



SHORTLY, IN A CHAMBER
WITHIN THE TRANSFORMED PALACE...

A HUNT!
GOOD!

I NEAR WENT
CRAZY SITTING AROUND
THAT SUN VILLAGE
YESTERDAY!

THESE OLD
LEATHERS ARE DARK
AND PLAIN...

...BUT 'TIL WE
KNOW OUR WAY ABOUT,
IT'S BEST WE BLEND
WITH THE NIGHT.

AND SOON...



AAAAAYYYYYYOOOOOAAAHHH!

I AM GLAD
YOU AND **CHOPCLICKER**
CHOSE TO STAY HERE
WITH ME, **EMBER**.

WELL...THEY TOLD ME
I'D BETTER CHOOSE TO!

DON'T BE SCARED,
SHENGHEN. WE **WOLFRIDERS** SAY
THE BEST WAY TO GET TO KNOW
A NEW PLACE IS TO HUNT IT!

THE DESCENT IS LENGTHY AND STEEP, BUT
BARE ROCK FINALLY GIVES WAY TO FOREST.



THE TREES ARE BREATHTAKING...
QUITE UNLIKE THEIR SMALLER,
GNARLED BRETHREN IN THE
VALLEY OF ENDLESS SLEEP.



SO MANY SOUNDS!
SO MANY SMELLS! SLIDDERBACK
IS SO EXCITED I CAN HARDLY
CONTROL HER!



»PANT PANT PANT«

»SNUFFLE« »SNUFF«

EVER MINDFUL OF THE REASON FOR THEIR ARRIVAL, THE WOLFRIDERS CONTINUE TO SEND...

...BUT THE HOPED-FOR RESPONSE STILL ELUDES THEM.



YOU KNOW... IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE THERE ARE OTHER ELVES HERE -

OR THAT THEY EVER WERE HERE!



NO MATTER! SOMEONE MADE THAT CRY. WE'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING!



FOR A WHILE LONGER THEY DO TRY. BUT, AT LAST, THEY GIVE IN TO THEIR SENSES...

...DRINKING IN THE NIGHT AIR MADE SWEET BY THE MASSIVE TREES' BREATH.



SUDDENLY...







...IMPOSSIBLE SHOT!
THICK TREES AND A HILL
BETWEEN HIM AND THE KILL!
I SEE IT...AND I STILL
CAN'T BELIEVE IT!



HUNH! BLIND
LUCK IS ALL! COULD
NEVER HAPPEN
TWICE!



OUR FIRST
TASTE OF THE
NEW LAND...!

MOMENTS LATER...



PIKE! YOU FAWN
HEART! ALWAYS THANKING
THE KILL FOR ITS MEAT!
IT CAN'T HEAR YOU.

WHO KNOWS?
IF A BEAR EATS YOU
MAYBE HE'LL THANK YOU
IN HIS OWN WAY!



OR MAYBE
HE'LL JUST
RETCH!

WHAT'S BITING YOU?
YOUR EARS ARE PRICKED
UP LIKE A SCARED
TREEWEE'S!

COME ON!
EVEN I CAN
FEEL IT..!



"...AND THE OTHERS MORE THAN
ME! EVERYTHING'S BIGGER HERE
THAN WE'RE USED TO..."



"...THE NIGHT NOISES
AND THE SCENTS..!"

"...ONLY, IT'S NOT THE
NEW LAND. IT'S US!..."



"...SOMETHING INSIDE US
IS GETTING...STRONGER!"

»GASP!«





HIGH ONES...!
THAT'S HOW
RILLFISHER...!



RAIN THE HEALER
HAD MAGIC ENOUGH TO
BREAK HER FEVER...



"...BUT NOT TO CURE THE
DEAFNESS IT CAUSED!"

"SHE SAID SHE
DIDN'T NEED EARS
TO SNATCH FISH
BARE-HANDED
FROM THE WATER!"



"BUT IF ONCE...JUST ONCE...
SHE COULD HAVE HEARD...HEARD
THAT DEAD BRANCH GIVE WAY...!"



NEXT TIME DON'T
WORRY ABOUT ME!! JUST BE
READY FOR ANYTHING!!

SO SAYS THE CHIEF
OF DREAMBERRIES!



SKOT AND KRIM...
I JUST WISHED THEM SAFE...
AND THEY WERE!

QUIETLY, THOUGHTFULLY, THE WOLFRIDERS
RETRACE THEIR PATH UP THE MOUNTAINSIDE...WITH
REDLANCE, THE BEST OF TRACKERS, IN THE LEAD.



THE TRAIL IS
SO HOT IT MIGHT AS WELL
BE MADE OF FIRE! WITHOUT
EYES, NOSE OR EARS I
COULD FOLLOW IT!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO US?



»SNIFF SNIFF«
HMMM...



WHERE ARE
YOU GOING,
CUTTER?

CAUGHT A WHIFF
OF...SOMETHING.



JUST WANT
TO MAKE
SURE...!

ROCKS AND LOW-HANGING GROWTH
MAKE RIDING DIFFICULT...THE THREE
ELVES DISMOUNT AND CREEP
CAUTIOUSLY FORWARD ON FOOT...

A CAVE!

SMELLS LIKE...
HUMANS!

I THOUGHT SO.

LOOK! ASHES!
DAYS OLD!

SO HUMANS
DWELL IN THIS NEW
LAND TOO!

HUNH! AND WON'T
THEY BE HAPPY TO SEE US!
MAYBE THEY'RE THE CAUSE
OF THE KIN-CRY THAT
BROUGHT US HERE!

I EXPECTED TO
DEAL WITH HUMANS AGAIN.
BUT WE'D BETTER SEE THEM
BEFORE WE JUDGE...

EH!?





ON MY BEST
DAY...I WAS NEVER
SO FAST!

CUTTER, YOU...!
I-I BARELY HAD TIME TO
NOCK MY ARROW!

UGH! YOU
KILLED IT, BROTHER,
YOU EAT IT!



THANKS ALL
THE SAME...!

NOT ONE OF THEM UNTOUCHED BY THE NIGHT'S WEIRD EVENTS, THE WOLFRIDERS GREET THEIR RETURNING CHIEF IN SILENCE.

WE FEED NEAR THE PALACE. AND AFTER... WE TALK! I CALL FOR A WHOLE-PACK COUNCIL.

ANTICIPATION OF THE FAMILIAR RITUAL CALMS THE SMALL HUNTERS.

AND WITHIN THE SCROLL ROOM...

MADDENING! THERE ARE MOMENTS...WHEN I THINK...I CAN ALMOST MAKE OUT WORDS!

WORDS... WITHIN THE CRY?

THOUGHTS, RATHER... FEELINGS.

SOMETHING... MORE THAN FEAR?

MUCH MORE!

THE SMOKY, CRYSTALLINE TOWERS OF THE PALACE RISE INTO VIEW, BECKONING THEM BACK TO THE ONLY HAVEN THEY NOW POSSESS.













UNOBTUSIVELY, THE HEALER OBSERVES THE WOLFRIDERS AS THEY FEAST AND NOTES NO OUTWARD SIGN OF CHANGE.

BUT LEETAH KNOWS WHAT SHE HERSELF HAS SENSED SINCE HER FIRST FLIGHT IN THE PALACE.

LATELY I HAVE FELT AN INCREASE OF POWER AND CLARITY. HAVE ANY OF YOU..?

WASHING OVER THE INCOMPLETE QUERY COMES A FLOOD OF ANSWERS.

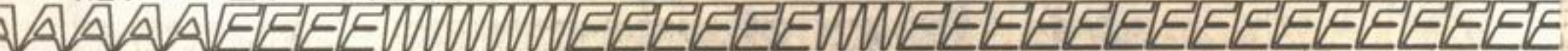


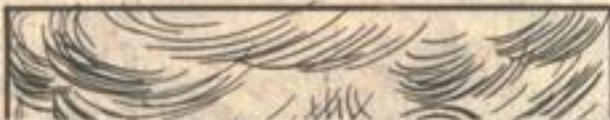
IN ONE LAST EFFORT TO OBTAIN A SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE...

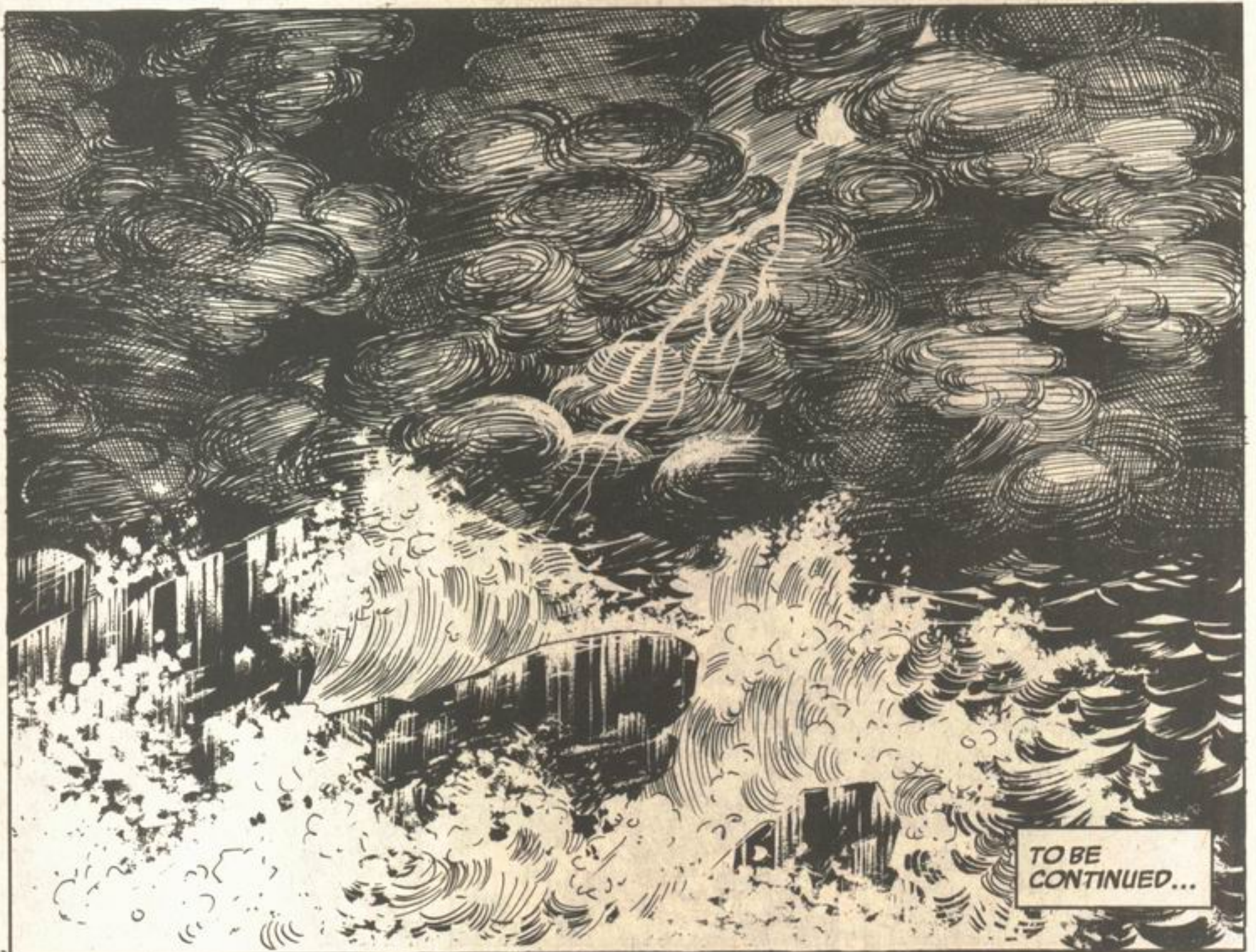
YOUR OWN VOICES...!
NOW YOU CANNOT DOUBT
WE HAVE HEARD YOU!
ANSWER!!

IN ONE LAST EFFORT TO OBTAIN A SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE...

YOUR OWN VOICES...!
NOW YOU CANNOT DOUBT
WE HAVE HEARD YOU!
ANSWER!!









ELFQUEST

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL



STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

PART
6

KINGS of the BROKEN WHEEL

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI

THE WOLVES HOWL...THE PALACE SREAMS...
VOICES, MANY VOICES...AND A RIDDLE
THAT MUST BE SOLVED NOW!

"SEEK ONE
VOICE AMONG
THE MANY!"



AFTER DAYS AND NIGHTS SPENT WITHIN THE PALACE'S POWERFUL AURA, THE WOLFRIDERS -- INCLUDING SKYWISE THE STARGAZER -- FEEL A KEEN HEIGHTENING OF THEIR SENSES.

TIMMAIN...HIGH ONE...THE ONE VOICE YOU WANT US TO FIND -- IT'S THE KEY, RIGHT? IT EXPLAINS THE CRY!

RRRUUUURRRFFF!

RRRUURRRFFF/

RAYEK!!

SANDS OF THE BOUNDLESS WASTE! WHY DO YOU INTERRUPT?!

BECAUSE YOU'LL NEVER GET A RESPONSE FROM THE STRANGER ELVES THAT WAY!

THERE'S JUST ONE VOICE YOU SHOULD BE SEARCHING FOR, JUST ONE YOU MUST HEAR! TIMMAIN SAID...

"SEEK ONE VOICE AMONG THE MANY." SHE MEANT WITHIN THE CRY, I KNOW IT!





SKYWISE...MY
ONLY FRIEND...YOU HAVE
ABANDONED ME!





RRAAAWWWK!
RRRAAAWWK!



YOU SPLATTER US
WITH ANYTHING AND I'LL
PLUG YOUR NETHER THROAT
WITH MY SPEAR!

BACK TO YOUR
NEST, YOU OVERGROWN
SHAGGLE-WING!



SKYWISE!
OH, SKYW...!

NO...!
YOU ARE NOT A
WOLFRIDER! I DO
NOT KNOW YOU.

WELL! SEEMS WE
BOTH KNOW THAT YOUNG
FROST-HAIRED ONE WHO
LIKES BUNDLING UP IN
THREES, EH?.



I'M KAHVI, CHIEF OF
THE GO-BACKS. YOU'RE ONE
OF THOSE GLIDERS FROM
BLUE MOUNTAIN, YES?

I-I DO NOT
KNOW WHAT I AM...NOW.
ALL I HAVE LEFT IS
MY NAME...

...AROREE.

AH! YOU, MY
ANCIENT-EYED FAWN, ALSO
HAVE A WHOPPING BIG BIRD
THAT CAN FLY US ANYWHERE
WE NEED TO GO!



FEELING A TOUCH OF SYMPATHY
BUT FEIGNING EVEN MORE,
KAHVI HEARS AROREE OUT.

WHEN I FLED
FROM BLUE MOUNTAIN
AND MY LORD WINNOWILL'S
GEM-HARD RULE, I COULD
LOOK NOWHERE BUT TO
MY FRIEND,
SKYWISE.

"ON MY WAY TO THE FROZEN
MOUNTAINS, I WAS TURNED FROM
MY PATH BY A DARK-SKINNED ONE
NAMED RAYEK...WHO BEGGED ME
TO TAKE HIM TO WINNOWILL."

"HE...HE WAS MOST
PERSUASIVE! BUT IN THE
END, HE HAD TO BE CONTENT
WITH THE FORBIDDEN GROVE."

HE TOLD ME TO
FLY TO THE PALACE OF
THE HIGH ONES, TO VIEW
THE SCROLL OF COLORS AND...
AND TO FILL MYSELF
WITH KNOWLEDGE.

"AFTER THAT, MY MIND SEEMED
FULL OF DARK CLOUDS. I LOST
MY WAY...WANDERED. FINALLY
MY HAWK BROUGHT ME BACK
TO HIS REMEMBERED AERIE."

"AGAIN I FLEW NORTH! AGAIN
I WAS TURNED FROM MY PATH...
THIS TIME BY THE DREAD SIGHT
OF BATTLE AND BLOODSHED SO
CLOSE TO THE SACRED PALACE!"

"BUT NOTHING...NOTHING
REMAINED! SOMEHOW...
BLUE MOUNTAIN HAD FALLEN!
AND MY PEOPLE, WINNOWILL,
EVEN THE CHOSEN EIGHT
WERE GONE!"

"MY LAST HOPE OF COMFORT
LAY HERE IN THE FORBIDDEN
GROVE, BUT, AS YOU SEE, EVEN
THE WOLFRIDERS HAVE LEFT
THEIR HOLT! PERHAPS THEY
ARE ALL DEAD."

"I AM WITHOUT A LORD TO SERVE
AND WITHOUT A SAFE PLACE TO
DWELL...AMONG FRIENDS."



»SOB» SKYWISE!
SKYWISE! DO THE
TUMBLING ROCKS COVER
YOUR BONES AS WELL
AS THE GLIDERS'?!

»SOB» I FAILED TO
REACH THE PALACE!
WITHOUT YOU, MY
HEART IS BLIND!

CHEER UP, SAD-EYES!
THE PALACE IS CLOSER THAN
YOU THINK! YOUR RIDING
MATE, RAYEK, TOOK IT.

PROBABLY BROUGHT IT HERE
FIRST, TO SHOW OFF TO THE WOLFRIDERS,
THEN WHISKED THE WHOLE BOODLE OF 'EM
DOWN TO A PLACE IN THE DESERT
CALLED SORROW'S END.



OH, HE FILLED MANY A LONG
NIGHT UNDER THE FURS WITH TALES
OF HIS HOMETLAND...WHERE IT IS...
AND HOW HE'D RETURN ONE DAY
TO SHOW 'EM ALL!

YOU JUST GET US
THERE, AND YOU'LL HAVE
YOUR SKYWISE, YOUR SAFE
PLACE AND THE PALACE.ME...
I'LL GET A NEW SKIN TO
HANG IN MY LODGE...
A BROWN ONE!







NEVER BEFORE HAS THE AIR IN THE SCROLL ROOM CRACKLED WITH THE FORCE OF A GATHERING STORM!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF TIME, WOLFRIDER?

THAT IT PASSES... THAT THE SEASONS TURN...

MUCH LIKE A WHEEL...

THE STARS TOO!

GOING ROUND AND ROUND FOREVER, EH?

TIME IS LIKE THAT; AT LEAST... OUR LITTLE PART IN IT. WHEN THE HIGH ONES FIRST APPEARED, THEY WERE EXILED INTO THE "LONG AGO."

BUT WE, THEIR UNDYING CHILDREN, ARE SLOWLY CATCHING UP...

"T-TO WHAT?"

TO THAT "FAR-AHEAD" TIME... TO THE MOMENT OF THE HIGH ONES' ARRIVAL.

YOU MEAN... IT'S LIKE A CIRCLE?

A FULL CIRCLE, TO BE COMPLETED COUNTLESS YEARS FROM NOW...

...OR...

"...IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE!"

HUH?!

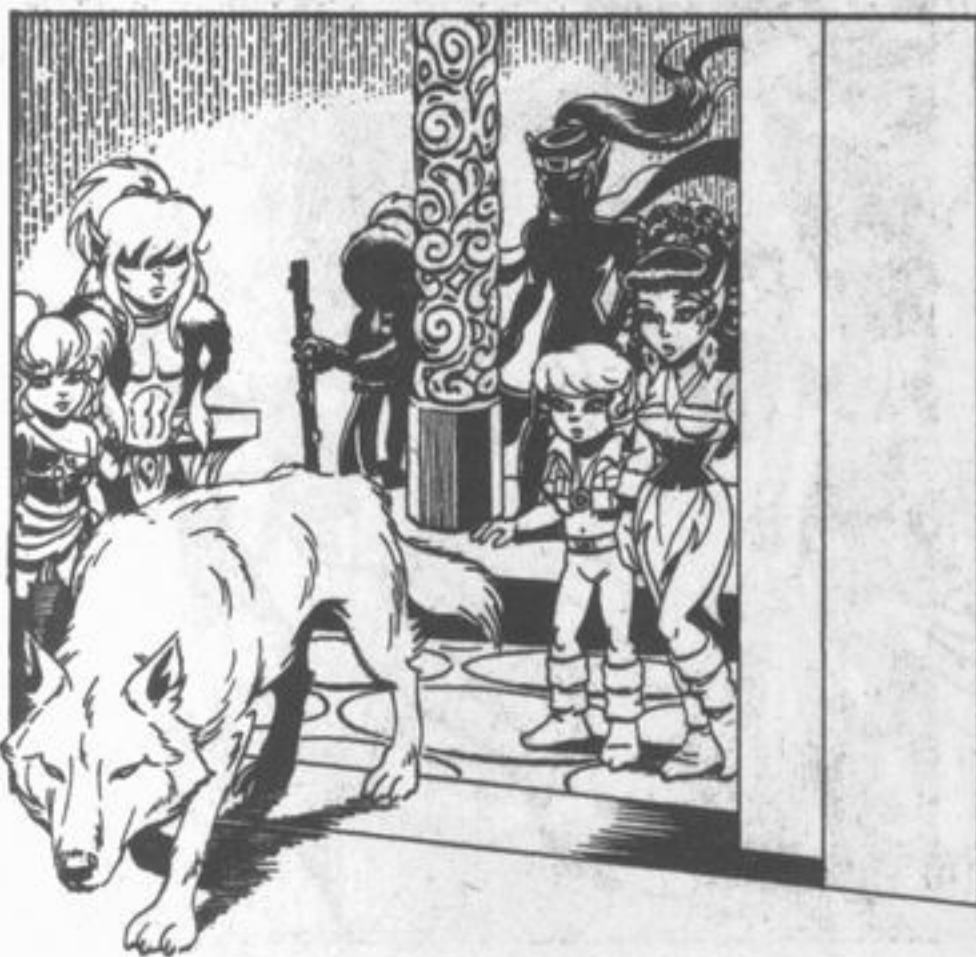
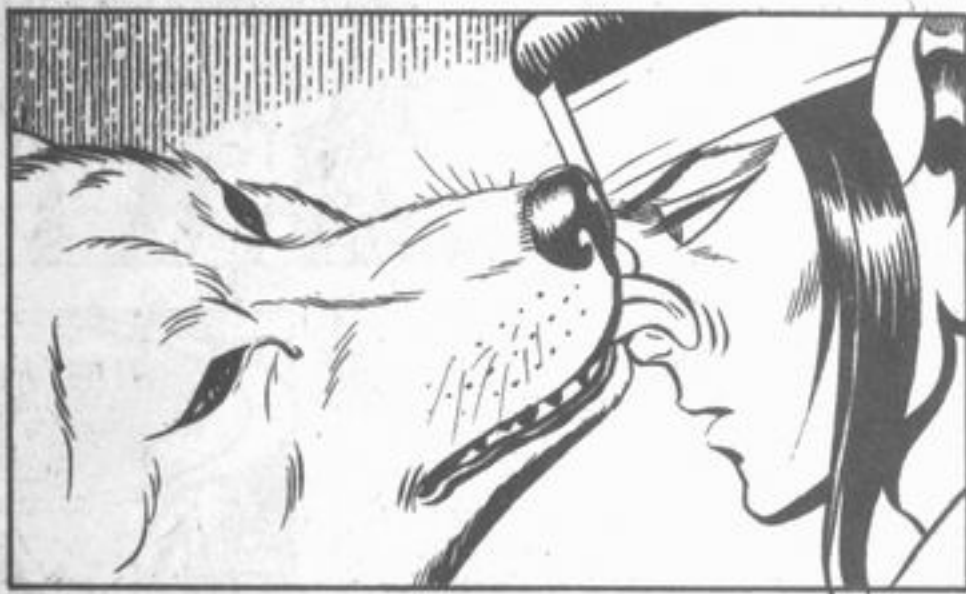














"I SAY WE DON'T TRY TO CHANGE IT."



YOU FOUR REASON WITH HIM. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONES, HERE, THAT HE RESPECTS. I NEED TO COOL OFF.



TAM...!

"NO ELF MUST DIE."



BUT RAYEK'S MEDDLING WITH ALL THAT HAS BEEN OR WILL BE! THE WAY DOESN'T TAKE THAT IN!



WE CAN'T JUST BIND HIM IN WRAPSTUFF AND DUMP HIM SOMEWHERE! WE DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF WHAT HE CAN DO. STRONGBOW SAYS DEATH CAN GENTLE AN ELF'S SPIRIT...!



BELOVED! YOU... YOU REALLY WOULD KILL RAYEK IF..?

UNLESS YOU CAN WEAN HIM AWAY FROM HIS SCHEME...



...IT MAY COME TO THAT.

ELSEWHERE...

ALMOST DAWN...! THIS
BIG DUCK IS TIRED AND HUNGRY.
HE'LL FRY IN THE HEAT OF DAY...
AND SO WILL WE!

THERE, AROREE! THAT
MUST BE THE MOUNTAIN RANGE RAYEK
CALLED WORLD'S SPINE.

YOUR LAND FREEZES,
HIS LAND BURNS. YOU ARE ICE
AND HE IS FIRE. NO WONDER
YOU HATE HIM!

WRONG, GIRL! DIFFERENCES
MAKE GOOD SPARKS! IT'S HIS HAUGHTY
AIRS I HATE. HE'S CROSSED A DEADLY
LINE AND HE'LL PAY FOR IT!

"YOU KNOW, FOR ONCE I WAS THANKFUL
FOR OLD EKUAR'S PUTTERING. THE COLD,
UNDERGROUND STORE ROOM HE SHAPED
BENEATH THE LODGE FLOOR WAS SHELTER
ENOUGH FOR URDA, THE BABE AND ME."

"AFTER RAYEK STOLE THE PALACE
AWAY, I FOUND MY TRIBE...AND
SAW HIS FURTHER INSULT TO US!"

WE'VE NEVER LIVED
WITHOUT THE STEADY TUG OF THE
PALACE NEARBY. BUT WE'RE SURVIVORS!
DIG IN YOUR CLAWS, GO BACKS! DEPEND
ON YOUR CHIEF'S VOW! I'LL GET
EVEN WITH BLACK-HAIR...

AND IF
NOT ME, MY
DAUGHTER!

SO...YOUR TASK
IS CLEAR. I SHALL
NOT INTERFERE.

MY ONLY DESIRE
IS TO FIND SKYWIGE. HE IS
MORE TO ME THAN THE PALACE
OF THE HIGH ONES!

SOON...

AAAAOOOH!

BUT SCOUTER'S CUB IS
NOT THE OBJECT OF
THE GREAT HAWK'S
HEADLONG DIVE!

HAAAAHNK!

GOOD, WINDKIN!
NOW YOU SEE THEM TOO!
DON'T WORRY! AROREE
WILL NEVER SNATCH
YOU AGAIN!

SSKRRRRREEEEE-
AAAAWWWW!!!

BLEEEAAAAAHHH!!!

CURSE IT!
THE PALACE ISN'T
HERE EITHER!

AROREE!
KAHVI! WHAT...?!



SOME DAINTY
DIGGINGS! THAT
CROWNED ONE MUST BE
RAYEK'S MUCH PRAISED
MOTHER OF MEMORY!

MORE SUDDEN VISITORS TO THE SUN VILLAGE!
AND WITH NEW FACES THIS TIME!
DEWSHINE, YOU KNOW THEM?

NOT ALTOGETHER
AS FRIENDS, SAVAH...
BUT I THINK THEY
MEAN NO HARM.



IT HAS BEEN LONG
SINCE I LOOKED ONE OF EQUAL
HEIGHT IN THE EYES.

AND SUCH HAUNTED
EYES! WHO ARE YOU,
PALE SISTER?

AH-
AH-AROREE...
ONCE OF BLUE
MOUNTAIN!



CAREFUL...!
PLAY IT GENTLY!

YOU MAY HAVE
HEARD THE WOLF-
RIDERS' TALES OF ME. I'M
KAHVI, AND I'VE COME
SEEKING MY LOVE
MATE, RAYEK...

...TO SHOW
HIM HIS FIRST
BORN!



OOOHHH...!
PRECIOUS BEYOND WORDS!
HER NAME?

VENKA!



HAD YOU COME BUT A
FEW DAYS EARLIER, YOU COULD
HAVE PLACED THE BABE IN
RAYEK'S OWN ARMS!

FOR JUST ONE NIGHT
HE BROUGHT THE PALACE OF THE
HIGH ONES TO US. THEN HE AND THE
WOLFRIDERS DEPARTED ON AN
URGENT QUEST!

SKYWISE?!
SKYWISE TOO?



YES, AS EVER, AT CUTTER'S SIDE! YOU SEE, HERE IN MY HUT, A FRAGMENT OF THE HIGH ONES' DWELLING.

SO IT IS! THE ROCK-SHAPER'S WORK, I BET!

WHERE IS THE PALACE NOW, SAVAH? WHERE HAVE SKYWISE AND THE OTHERS GONE?



IT MEANS MUCH TO US TO KNOW...

...SO WE CAN BE WITH OUR LOVEMATES AND SHARE WHATEVER TRIALS AWAIT THEM.



THE PALACE CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM ITSELF. THIS SMALL REPLICA KNOWS ALL THAT THE ORIGINAL KNOWS.

BEING NEAR IT ENHANCES MY VISIONS.

THE TRAVELERS ARE FAR AWAY IN ANOTHER LAND. THE MISTS DO NOT PART COMPLETELY.



BUT, AS IF FROM A HIGH VANTAGE, I CAN GLIMPSE GREAT EXPANSES OF GREEN AND BLUE, THE FLESH OF THAT LAND, BARELY COVERING THE MIGHTY MOUNTAINS THAT ARE ITS BONES!

TO GET THERE THE PALACE FLEW TOWARD THE SUN'S SETTING-PLACE, ACROSS A VAST BODY OF WATER. OUR DEAR ONES ARE SAFE AND WELL.



AH, THAT'S GOOD NEWS! VERY GOOD NEWS INDEED!



SOON...

QUESTIONS!
FOOD! GIFTS! UNASKED
FOR ADVICE! THE SUN FOLK
GIVE YOU EVERYTHING BUT
A MOMENT'S PEACE!

IF SKYWISE
WERE HERE, I THINK I
COULD BE HAPPY. BUT IT
HARDLY MATTERS WHERE
I DWELL NOW.



I TRULY DOUBT
THAT LITTLETRILL COULD
MAKE THE FLIGHT ACROSS
THE VASTDEEP SEA. YOU
AND THE CHILD WOULD
DROWN WITH HIM.

AND I WOULD
LAST BUT LITTLE
LONGER!



EVEN IF WE WERE TO REACH
THE NEW LAND, RAYEK IS
MASTER OF THE PALACE
AND ALL-POWERFUL!

SUCH A ONE SEES
ALL OTHERS AS MINIONS!



FROM SUCH
A ONE, BELIEVE
ME, IT IS BEST
TO FLEE!

LOOK THERE!



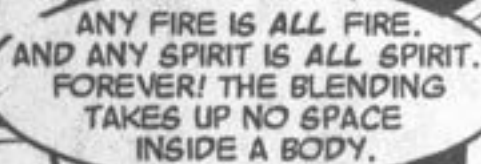
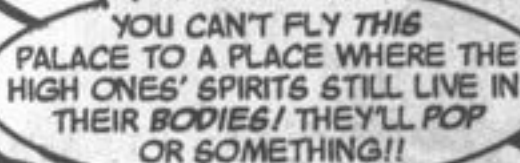
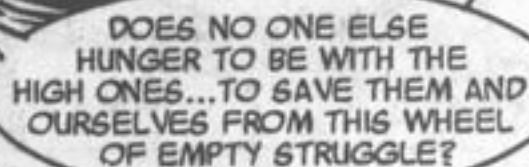
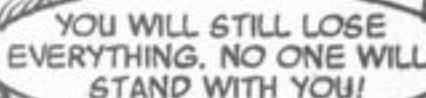
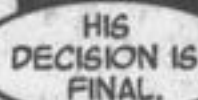
"ANTS CAN LIVE ANYWHERE!
THEY'RE TINY, BUT THEY'RE
SURVIVORS, LIKE MY TRIBE!
IF YOU STEP ON THEM..."




"THEY SWARM BACK
TO BITE YOU, THEY
AND THEIR YOUNG!"




AND SOMETIMES THE
CHILDREN HAVE SHARPER STINGS
THAN THEIR MOTHERS!






IF YOU CAN MAKE THAT CLEAR TO A CUB, THEN YOU BELONG HERE...AS A TEACHER! THE "WHEEL" IS TURNING SLOWLY, BUT IT'LL COME AROUND TO THE HIGH ONES' ARRIVAL.




AND YOU'RE IMMORTAL! WHAT'S YOUR RUSH?

I CAN THINK OF MUCH BETTER THINGS TO DO WITH THE PALACE...LIKE TRAVEL TO DIFFERENT STARS AND BACK..!


YOU STILL DO NOT SEE.



THIS WORLD HAD ITS OWN PATH. THE TROLLS' REBELLION CHANGED IT. IF A CHOSEN FEW OF US RESCUE THE HIGH ONES BY STOPPING THE TROLLS, THEN THIS WORLD WILL GO THE WAY IT WAS MEANT TO.




AND THE LITTLE BABY BROWNSKIN, WHO MAY OR MAY NOT BE...




WILL YOU WIPE OUT THE VERY CHANCE OF KNOWING HER?

THERE WILL BE NO SLAUGHTER, NO BLOODSHED. THOSE LEFT BEHIND, AND ALL GENERATIONS BACK, WILL SIMPLY VANISH WITHOUT A TRACE.




WHAT IS
THERE TO KNOW,
MY SOUL'S BROTHER?
AN ILL-CONCEIVED
CHILD IS NO JOY.




I HAVE
BEEN LISTENING.
DO NOT BE SWAYED
BY THE NARROW
MINDED ONES.




YOU HAVE
SOLVED THE RIDDLE!
I CALL YOU LORD!
THOUGH NO ONE
ELSE FOLLOWS
YOU, I SHALL!



YOUR JOURNEY WILL
SEEM TO LAST BUT AN INSTANT.
WE DEATHLESS ONES SHALL RIDE
THE SLOWLY-SPINNING WHEEL 'TIL
WE MEET YOU AGAIN...AT THE
TIME OF THE HIGH
ONES COMING!



GO NOW! AND
DESPAIR NOT! YOUR SAVAH
WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU.
TIMMAIN WILL BE WAITING
FOR YOU!



AND I...
WILL BE
WAITING..!









TO BE
CONTINUED.

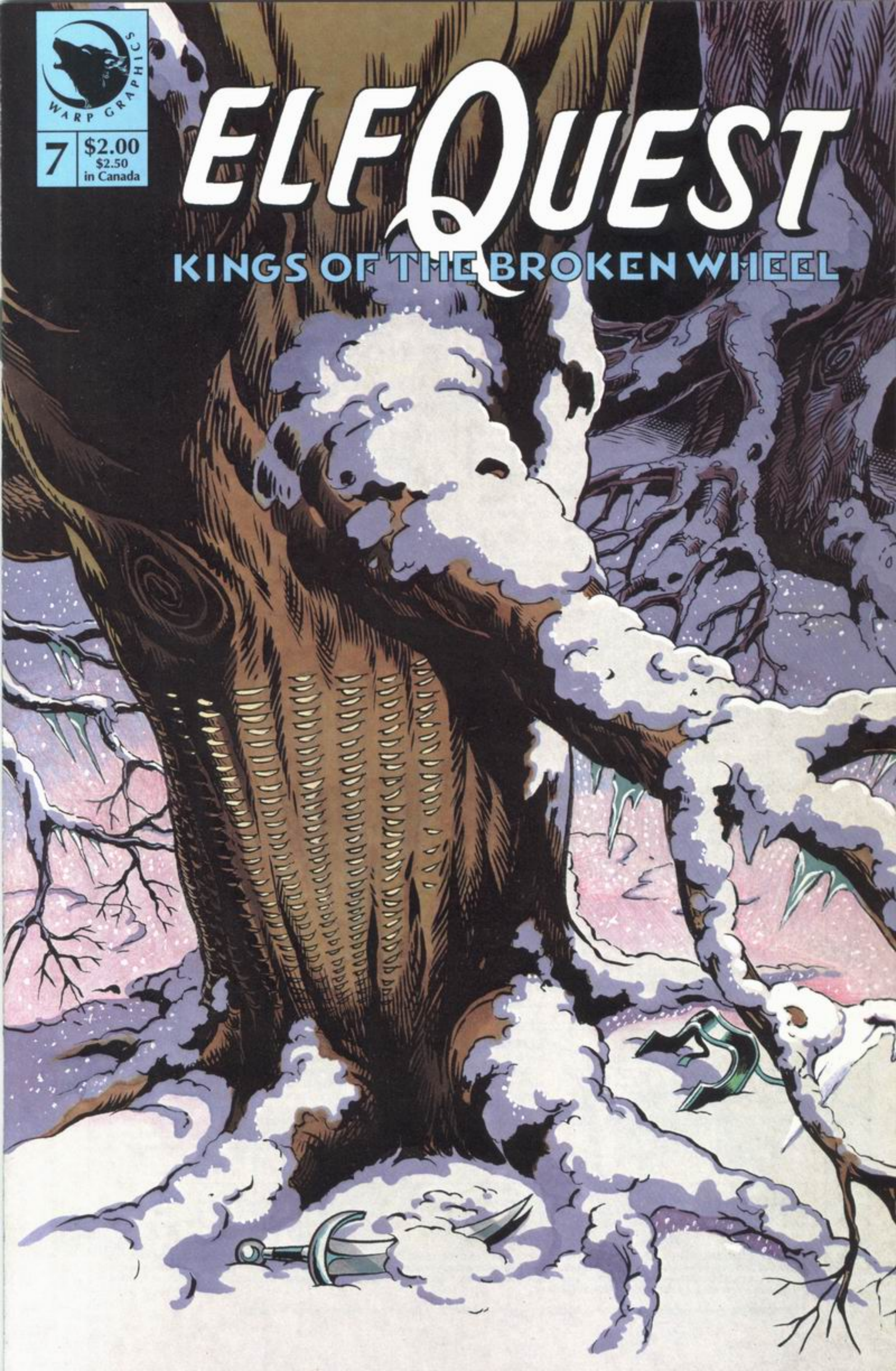


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ELFQUEST

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL



STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

PART
7

KINGS of the BROKEN WHEEL

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI

LIFEMATE FROM LIFEMATE...FRIEND
FROM FRIEND...PARENT FROM
CHILD -- SEVERED -- IN ONE
SWIFT, UNFORSEEABLE STROKE!

RAYEK HAS SWEEPED THE PALACE OF
THE HIGH ONES, AND HIS UNWILLING
COMPANIONS, INTO A FAR-AHEAD TIME --
THERE TO MERGE THE PALACE WITH ITS
FUTURE SELF AND OBLITERATE ALL
THAT HAS GONE BEFORE!

I WONDER..
WHAT IT WILL FEEL
LIKE WHEN...

DEATH IS
ANOTHER BEGINNING,
MOONSHADE.

WHAT'S COMING IS
MORE THAN DEATH! WE'LL
NEVER HAVE BEEN...AND
NEVER BE!





IT'S ALL HIS FAULT
»SNIFF«! OUR PRECIOUS TRINKET...
OUR LIVES LOST!!

HE SHOULD
HAVE KILLED THAT
EVIL RAYEK!!



SHOW SOME DIGNITY,
CHILD! THESE MAY BE OUR LAST
MOMENTS! YOU WERE TOO LAZY
TO WATCH HER, THAT'S WHY
TRINKET'S GONE!

AT LEAST
SHE'S ALIVE IN
THE PALACE...



"...THOUGH WE'RE TO BE
WIPED OUT FOR GOOD!"

FORGIVE ME.
I GAVE RAYEK ONE
CHANCE TOO MANY.



NOW IT'S
TOO LATE.



NO! RAYEK
WOULDN'T! »SOB« HE
COULDN'T! HE...

ZHANTEE,
TELL THEM...!



DESTROYING US
ALL... WILL GAIN HIM ONLY
LEETAH'S HATRED.

I-I THINK
RAYEK WOULD NOT
RISK THAT... FOR
ANYTHING! WHO
WOULD?!



LISTEN! WE'RE STILL
HERE! WHATEVER RAYEK'S UP TO,
HE CAN'T HAVE DONE IT YET! I
WON'T LIVE IN FEAR!



NIGHTFALL'S RIGHT. WE'RE ALIVE...AND TIMMAIN IS WITH US. WE'LL DO WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS DONE...



...HUNT, HOWL AND SURVIVE!



YOU CAN START ON THE NEW HOLT RIGHT NOW, REDLANCE.

MY CHIEF... COUNT ON ME!

COUNT ON US ALL!



SOON...

IT HAS TO BE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER HOLTS. WE'LL LIVE HIGH UP, LIKE BIRDS IN THEIR NESTS...



"...HIGH UP, WHERE NO ONE CAN SEE US FROM BELOW."



"...AND WE'LL HAVE A NEW RULE: TO THE HUMANS IN THIS STRANGE LAND, WE'LL BE NEITHER FRIENDS NOR FOES."


"TO THEM WE WON'T EXIST."



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...

YOU HAVEN'T CHOSEN A DEN FOR YOURSELF YET, CUTTER.

NO HURRY. BY AND BY.



REDLANCE'S TREE-SHAPING EXCEEDS HIS TRIBE'S WILDEST FANCIES. WHETHER SOMETHING OF THE VANISHED PALACE'S INFLUENCE REMAINS WITH HIM, OR WHETHER HE HAS SIMPLY RISEN TO MEET A GREAT CHALLENGE, EVEN HE CANNOT SAY.

AH, TREESTUMP! THERE'S ROOM ENOUGH FOR YOUR BIG FEET ...AND FOR MY HAIR TO GROW AS LONG AS IT WILL!

ZHANTEE, IT IS SO CLEVER! SO MUCH LIKE THE HUTS IN THE SUN VILLAGE!

NOT WHEN YOU LOOK DOWN!!

IT'S TIME CUTTER CHOSE. WHERE IS HE, TREESTUMP?

UP THERE. DOESN'T SEEM TO CARE WHERE HE LIVES...OR IF. CURSE IT...

"...IT'S BEARCLAW ALL OVER AGAIN!"



"...NO MATTER HOW LONG
IT TAKES, I'LL WAIT...UNTIL I
SEE MY FAMILY AGAIN!"



HANGING WITH ME 'TIL
VENKA GOT MORE TRAVEL
STRENGTH GAVE YOU GUTS,
GIRL, BUT NO BRAINS!

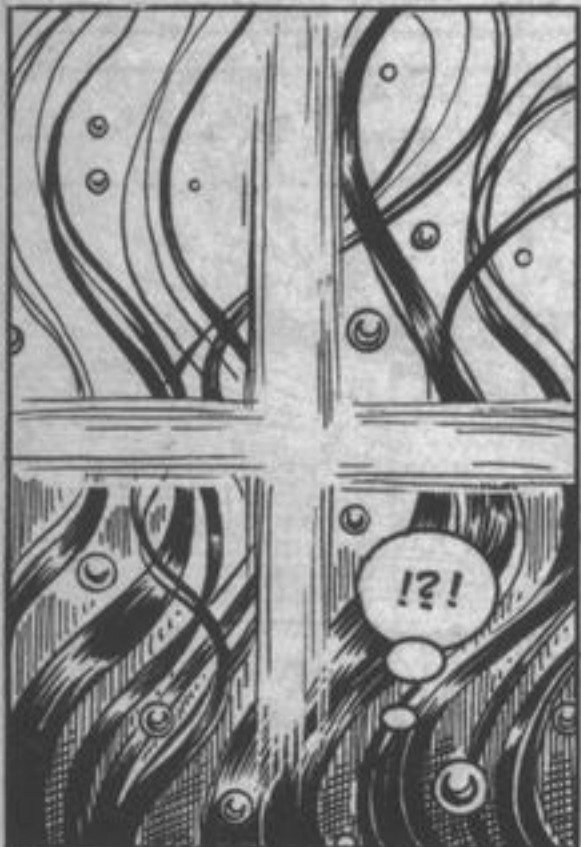
THE BIRD'S DONE
FOR! LEAVE OFF YOUR
FOOLISH SENDING...



"...TAKE VENKA
AND TRY FOR
LAND! NOW!"

NO! LOOK!
I AM ANSWERED!!
PRAISE VOLL!





EVER WARY, THE WOLFRIDERS GATHER TO AWAIT THE MOTLEY GROUP'S ARRIVAL. FINALLY...

SO...KAHVI'S CUB DID MAKE IT! AND RAYEK'S THE SIRE, OR I'M A ZWOOT!

LEARNING THAT RAYEK HAS ONCE MORE SLIPPED THROUGH HER FINGERS, KAHVI CAN BARELY CONTAIN HER RAGE. BUT AS CUTTER'S TALE OF LOSS QUIETLY UNFOLDS...

I'M SORRY FOR YOU, WOLF-CHIEF...TRULY. YOUR KIN-CLOSENESS...

...I'VE NEVER SEEN THE LIKE..!

SHHH!

HUMANS! BELOW IN THE MIST! THEY SELDOM COME THIS FAR UP THE MOUNTAIN!

IF YOU KEEP TO OUR RULES, YOU FOUR ARE WELCOME TO STAY.

WHAT CHOICE HAVE WE? BUT RAISING VENKA IN A TREE...THAT'S OUT!



MOTHER, FATHER AND
CHILD...LOCKED IN SENDING.
THREE SHARE THE WORK
AS ONE!



UHM! PERFECTLY DONE!
YOU'VE GIVEN ME FAR TOO
LITTLE TO DO TODAY!



AHH...!

GASP!

HERS IS A WOLFRIDER'S
SOUL NAME. BUT THE TRIBE
CAN CALL HER TYLEET.



"HEALER'S GIFT..!"
SHE'S AS WELCOME AS WATER
IN THE DESERT!

A SHAPE-CHANGED
HIGH ONE..!



NO BETTER
NURSE FOR OUR
TWO PRIZE
FAWNS!



STRANDS OF
WHITE BLENDING WITH
THE RED-GOLD...

...MEANS AN
EARLY WHITE-COLD! OUR
CUB'S CHANGING PELT
NEVER LIES!



I SAW YOU AND
STRONGBOW DOWN BY THE
WATERFALL LAST NIGHT.



NEXT HOWL
I'M GOING TO
SING A SONG
ABOUT IT!



WILL I GET FACE
FUR WHEN I'M OLD AS
YOU, TREESTUMP?

YOU'LL BE AS BEAUTIFUL,
AS WISE...AND MAYBE EVEN AS
QUIET AS CLEARBROOK!



HEE HEE HEE!
ALL RIGHT ALL RIGHT,
BUNDLES! YOU'RE MY WOLF
FRIEND FOREVER!



...SO WE WON THE
PALACE IN A BLOODY WAR,
BUT LOST IT AGAIN WHEN
RAYEK STOLE IT AWAY.

MAYBE...
HE DIDN'T
MEAN TO.



SO THAT'S WHY
VENKA'S BROWN LIKE
YOU! ARE YOU TWO
LOVEMATES?

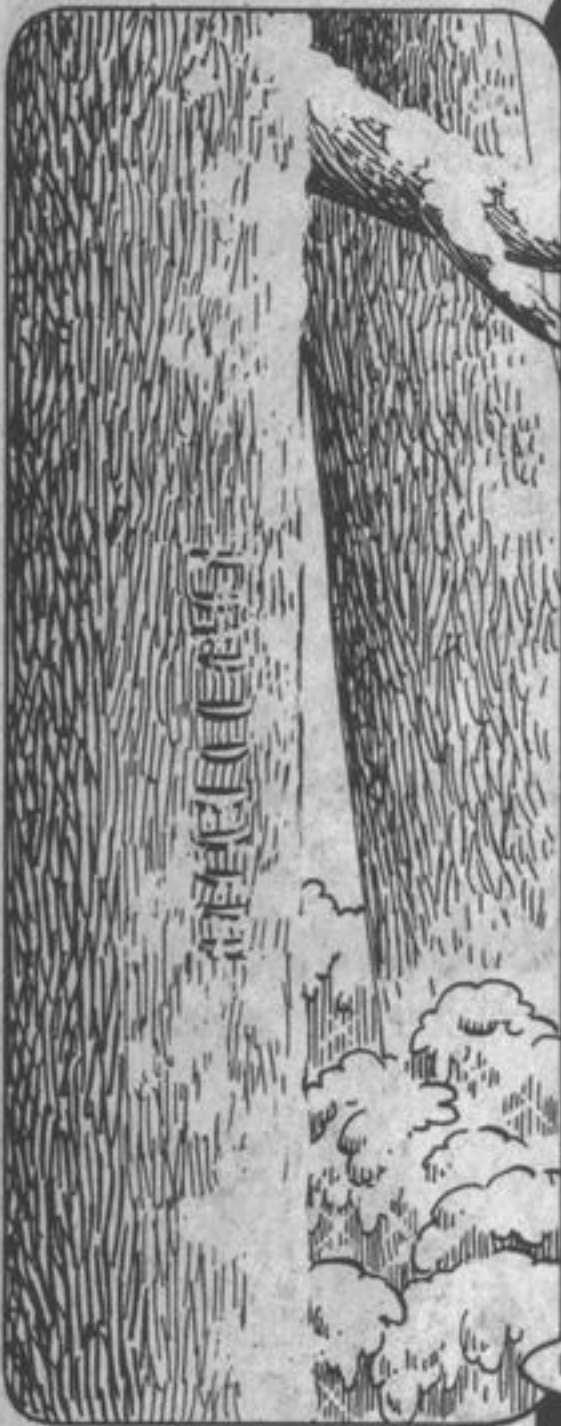
WELL...
SHENSHEN AND
I ARE VERY OLD
FRIENDS!



WAS EMBER
LIKE ME?

SOME.
TOUGHER,
MAYBE.

MOTHER AND
FATHER SAY, BECAUSE OF
ME, THEY KNOW JUST HOW
YOU FEEL.



YOU
CAN'T CHOOSE
RECOGNITION!

CAN TOO!
MOTHER AND
FATHER DID!



HUH? WHAT'S UP?



NOTHING. JUST
THE BLACK SNAKE NOSING
AROUND AGAIN.

I SHOODED
HER AWAY.

HAH! VENKA BRUSHES
WINNOWILL'S SENDINGS OFF LIKE DUST!
THINK HOW SHE'LL HUMBLE RAYEK IF SHE
GETS THE CHANCE!



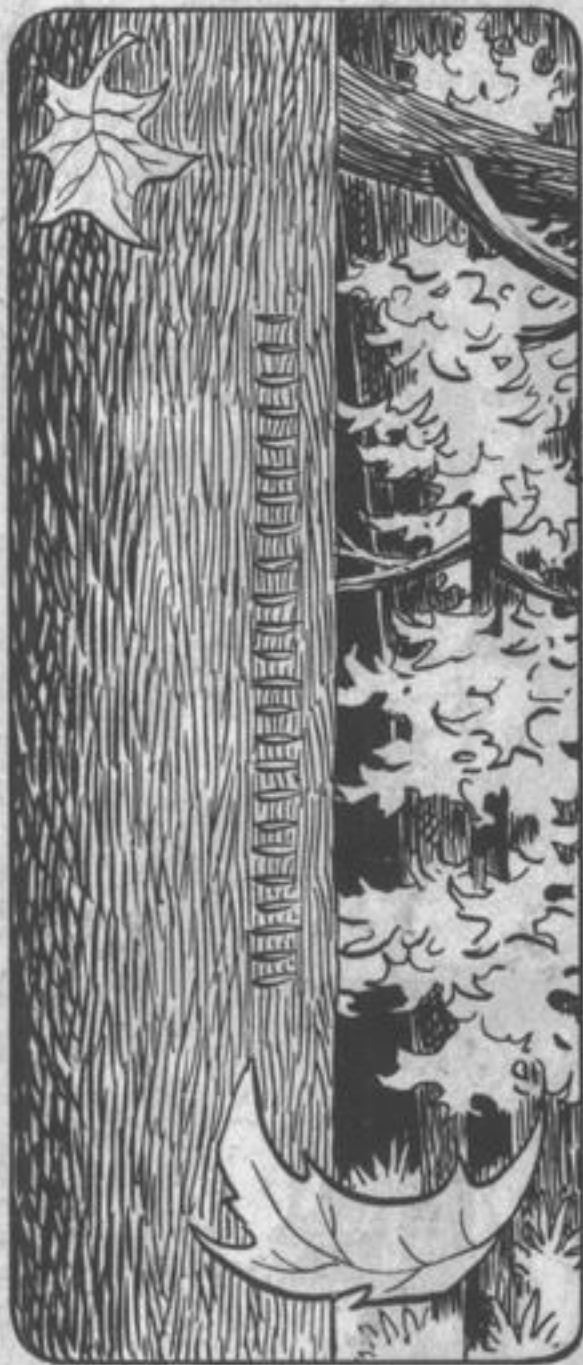
I'M GLAD SHE'S
HERE, AND THE TWO GLIDERS.
ALL OUR MAGIC-USERS DO
THEIR SHARE.



SEE? HE DID KEEP
THE SCAR I GAVE HIM. HE'S
MOURNED LONG ENOUGH. TIME
FOR HIM TO KNOW JUST HOW
GLAD HE IS I'M HERE.









SO MUCH FOR MY REVENGE! RAYEK'S FAR BEYOND SPEAR-POINT'S REACH. AND WHAT'S A SPEAR TO HIM ANYWAY?

IT'S TOO LONG A WAIT TO FIND OUT, EVEN FOR ME. WE EACH DO WHAT WE'RE SUITED FOR, EH?



AND WHAT SHOULD I DO, MOTHER, THAT WOULD PLEASE YOU MOST?



ALL THAT WAS BEST IN RAYEK, AND NONE OF THE WORST, I SEE IN YOU.



TEACH HIM A LESSON, THAT'S ALL I ASK.

TEACH HIM SO HE LEARNS!



WHAT DO YOU SEE?

A KINDRED SPIRIT...



...ONE WHO NEED NEITHER EXPLAIN NOR ASK LEAVE. ONE WHO IS NOT AFRAID TO FLY!



SHE'S FLOWN OFF...
WITH TYLDAK. THEY HOPE TO FIND
A WAY BACK TO THE FROZEN
MOUNTAINS OVER LAND!



"DIFFERENCES
MAKE GOOD SPARKS,"
SHE SAID.



MANY TWILIGHTS AND MANY HUNTS FOLLOW. AND SOMETIMES MEMORY SEEMS
STRONG ENOUGH TO BRING A MUCH-MISSED BROTHER, IN SPIRIT, TO THE CHASE.







STARVED...! FROZEN!
AT LEAST SHE'S NOT
ONE OF OURS.

DEATH'S IN THE
AIR, CLEARBROOK. THIS
IS THE CRUELEST WHITE
COLD EVER!



KRIM...
YOUR LITTLE
CHEIPAR IS...

IT WAS THE
WRONG TIME TO BREED. MAYBE
THERE IS SOMETHING TO THIS
RECOGNITION BUSINESS.

HE WAS
FRAIL FROM
THE START.


WE'LL TRY
AGAIN...THE FOUR
OF US.



HIGH THINGS GO IN
WRAPSTUFF NOW?

"A LIVING DEATH,"
LEETAH CALLED IT,
"MONSTROUS!"

TO SLEEP THROUGH
THE WHITE-COLD LIKE MUD
RATS...NO! IT'S NOT
THE WAY!

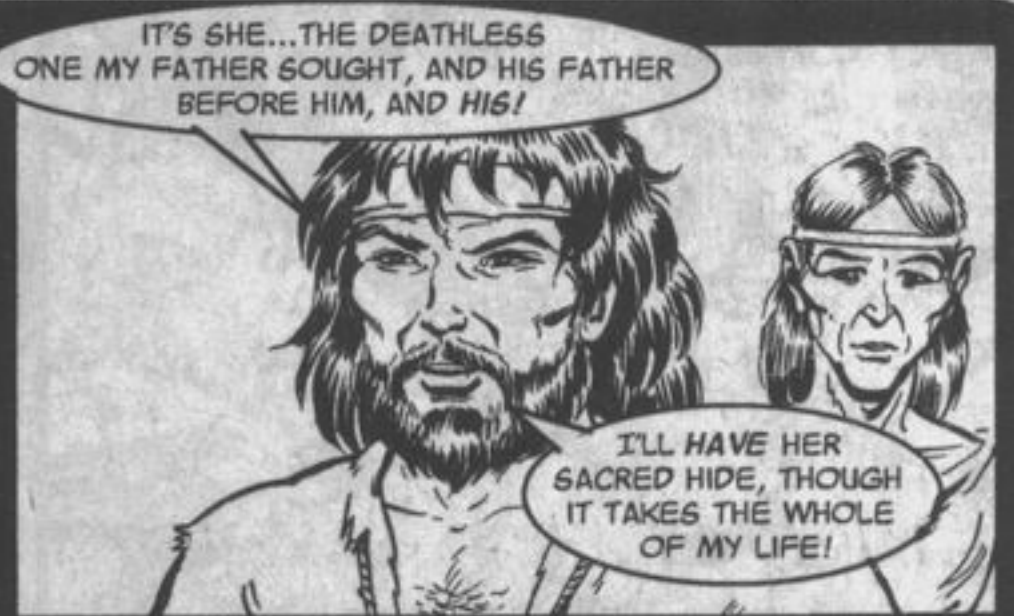


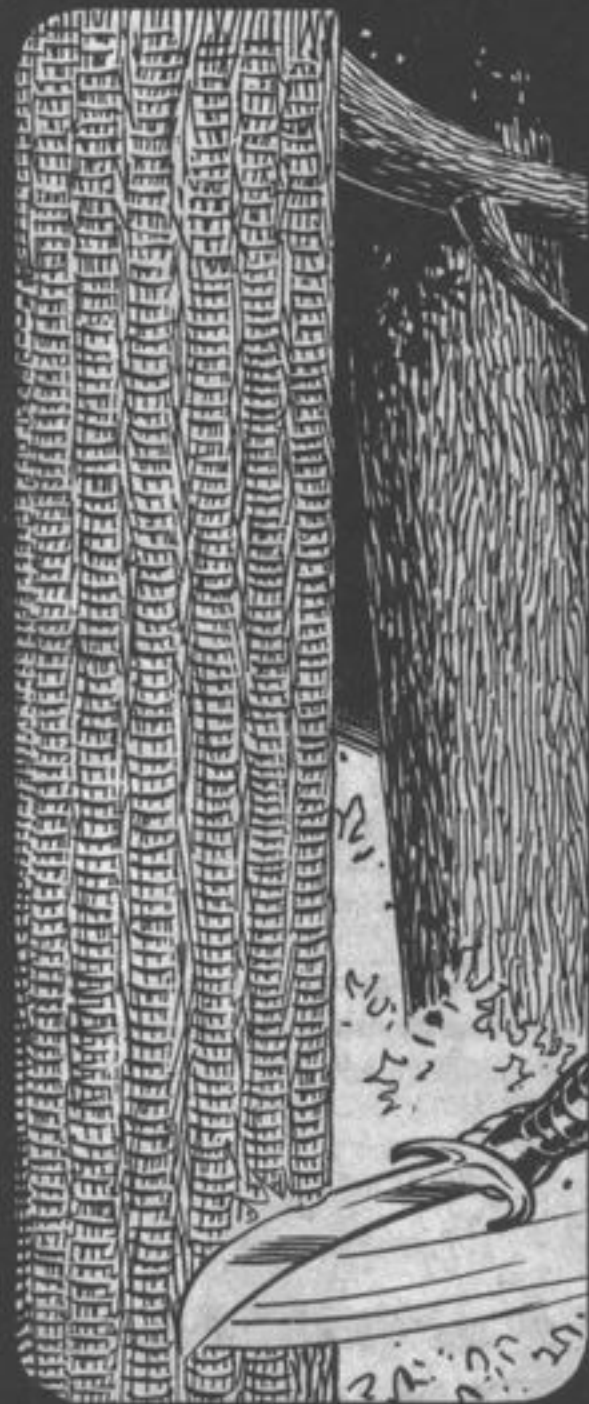
THE WAY, AN UNSPOKEN LAW BORN OF BLOOD
BLENDING BETWEEN WOLF AND ELF IN THE TIME
OF THE FIRSTCOMERS. TO FOLLOW IT IS TO BE
AWARE OF NOTHING...READY FOR NOTHING...
BUT WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MOMENT. IT IS
THE COMFORT OF FORGETFULNESS, THE
WISDOM OF BEING FULLY AWAKE. IT
IS THE NOW OF WOLF-THOUGHT.

TO CHOOSE ANY OTHER
PATH IS TO BE OTHER
THAN A WOLFRIDER.

TO BE CHIEF, KEEPER
OF THE WAY, AND YET
UNABLE TO FORGET...

...IS TO BE...
ALMOST...OTHER
THAN AN ELF.





SOON
CUTTER MUST BEGIN
ON ANOTHER TREE!

TENDER AS HE IS
IN JOININGS, NO ONE CAN TRULY
BE CLOSE TO HIM. WHY, AFTER SO
LONG, DOES HE NOT TAKE
A MATE, ZHANTEE?



HE WAITS FOR LEETAH.
I CAN ONLY SHARE WITH YOU...
WHAT I KEEP IN MY HEART.
PERHAPS IT IS ENOUGH.

TO FEEL HER TOUCH...
WAS TO LAUGH AND WEEP AT ONCE.
I WOULD USE ANY EXCUSE TO HAVE
HER GENTLE HANDS UPON ME!



MANY OF US IN THE
SUN VILLAGE, ESPECIALLY
RAYEK, DREAMED OF
RECOGNIZING HER.

BUT THAT MATCHLESS
HONOR WAS CUTTER'S!



AND NOW,
YOU ALSO
WAIT...

...WITH A LOVE THAT
SEEKS ONLY TO CELEBRATE
THEIR REUNION!



UNLIKE MY FATHER...
WHO PARTED THEM
WITHOUT MERCY!

I SHALL
REMEMBER, ZHANTEE! I,
TOO, CAN WAIT!





PETALWING STREAKS TO THE NEAREST HELP!

MOTHER-MOTHER
HIGHTHING ALL STICKY-
STUCK! COME QUICK!!



CUTTER!
YOU'RE TOO FAST
FOR ME! WAIT!

HE HAS WAITED, STRIVING TO BE
TRUE TO THE WAY, FINDING ANY
REASON TO KEEP ON UNTIL THOSE
HE LOVES MOST CAN BE WITH HIM.



...TO PROTECT THE SOURCE,
THE VERY SOUL OF HIS TRIBE!

AT LAST!

NOW HE MUST
PUT ASIDE THAT
FRAGILE HOPE...



WHINE WHINE



MAKE THE KILL
QUICK AND CLEAN. SHE
MUST NOT SUFFER!



WHITE GODDESS
WOLF! SO BEAUTIFUL!
...MINE!

??!

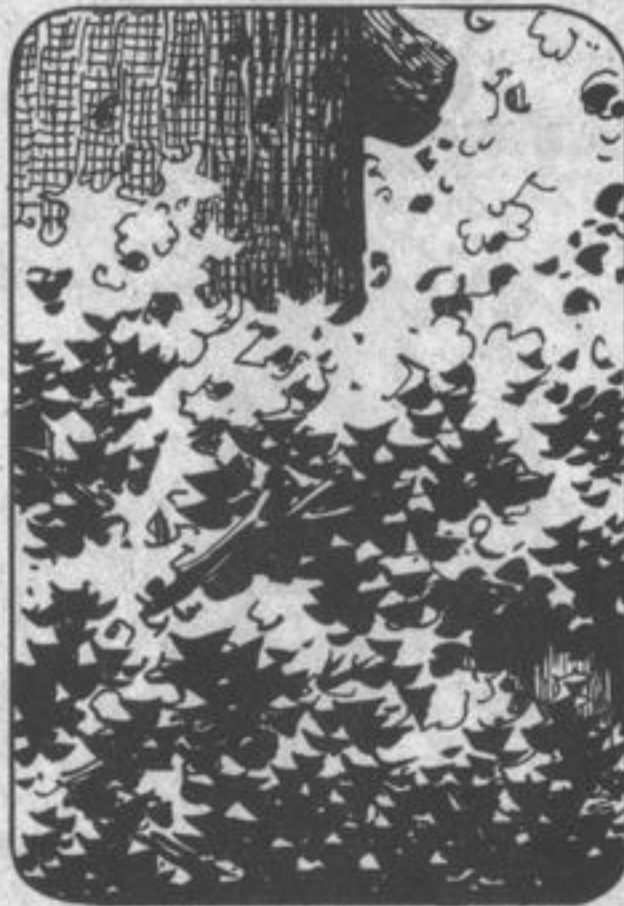












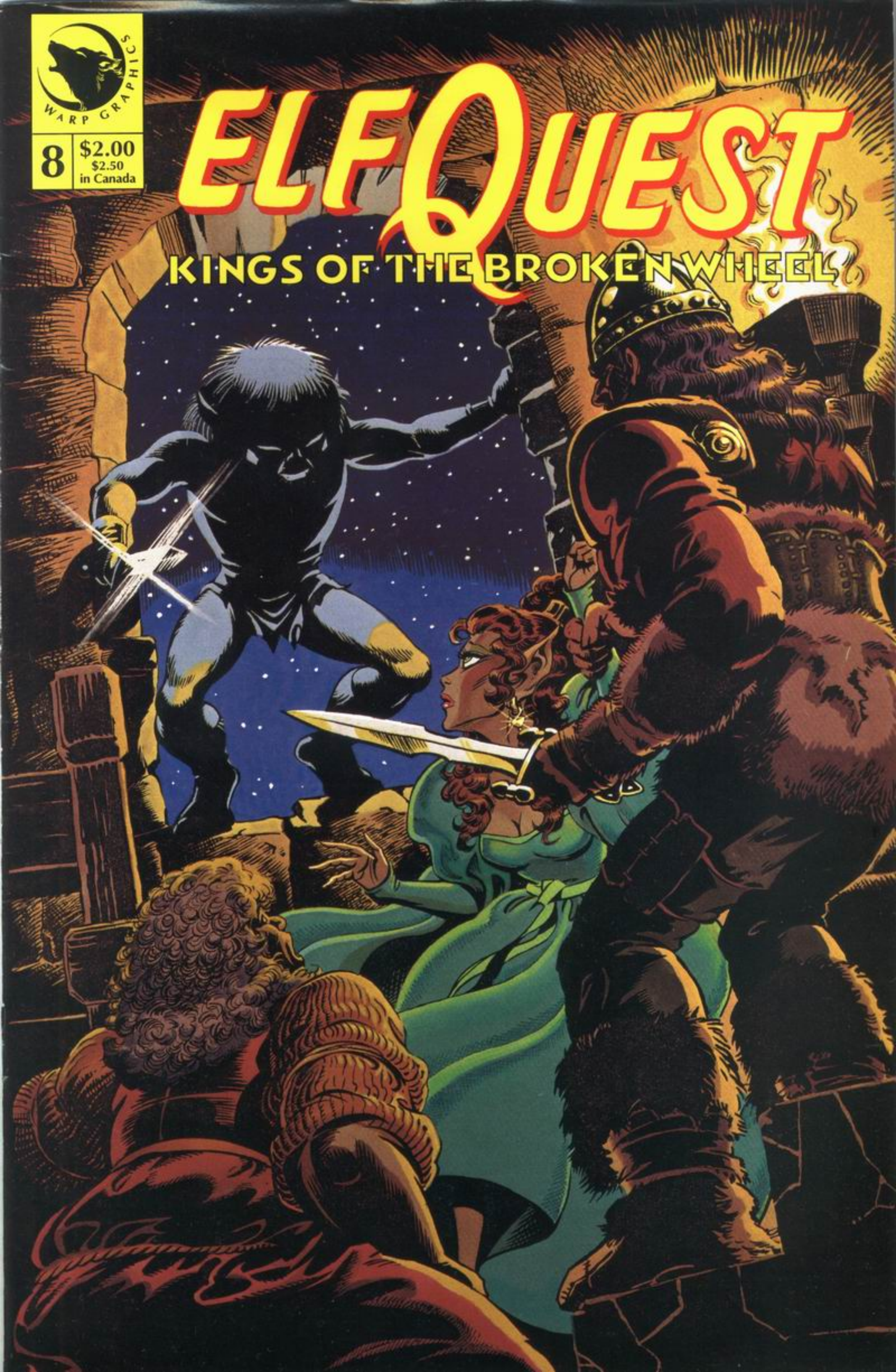
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KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL

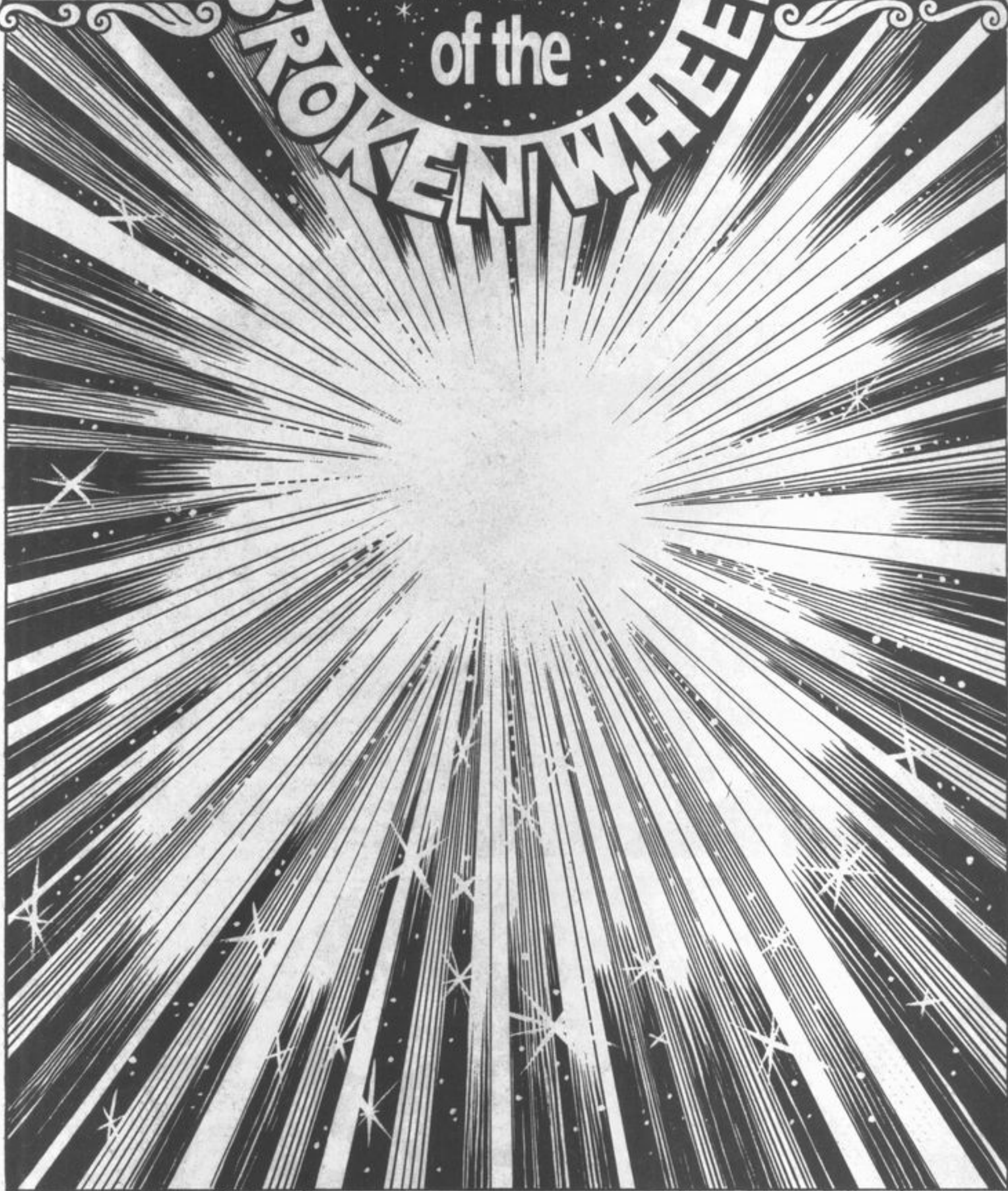


STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

PART
8

KINGS of the BROKEN WHEEL

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI









WE ARE ON THE SAME MOUNTAIN PEAK... BUT...THOSE LIGHTS! THOSE STRANGE HUTS! HOW DID THEY..?

EKUAR, J-JUST HOW...MUCH...TIME HAS PASSED SINCE RAYEK SNATCHED US? CAN YOU TELL?



TREMBLING, THE ANCIENT ROCK SHAPER KNEELS ...



...AND BECOMES ONE WITH THE WEATHERED STONE.

»GASP!«



MERCIFUL MOONS ABOVE...!



MY POOR HEAD THINKS CUTTER LEFT THE SCROLL ROOM JUST A WHILE AGO, BUT...

...FROM MY DAYS AS A FIRSTCOMER TOT...TO THE DAY BROWNSKIN FREED ME FROM THE TROLLS' PRISON HOLE...THAT IS HOW MUCH THIS MOUNTAIN HAS AGED!



NOOOOOOOOOOO!!!

LEETAH!!





HUNH!

"BACK..?!"
THEN THE THING
IS DONE?!



YOU SEE?!
NO IDLE BOASTS,
MINE!

I WAS RIGHT!
I AM RIGHT!!

BROWNSKIN,
PLEASE! WHERE
DO YOU GO?!

HER CALL IS ONLY
FOR THE MASTER OF
THE PALACE. A MANY
THOUSAND YEAR OLD
RENDEZVOUS HAS BEEN
FAITHFULLY KEPT.

ENTICED BY HIS RECENT
MEMORIES OF SENSUAL
BLISS, YET WARY THAT
THE BLACK SNAKE'S
TEMPER HAS HAD MYRIAD
TIDES IN WHICH TO SOUR...

...RAYEK HASTENS
TO MOVE HIS MOST
VALUABLE GAME PIECE...

...SO THAT WINNER
MUST TAKE ALL!

LEAVE ME WITH
MY CHILDREN! DO
THAT AT LEAST!

MOOOOTHERRR!!

HUSH! ALL WILL
BE WELL, LEETAH...BETTER
THAN WELL!









AND SO, IMMERSSED IN THE DEEPEST OF HEALING TRANCES, SHE MISSES AN ANXIOUS FRIEND'S REPEATED SENDINGS.



...NOT IN RANGE YET?
NO! FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP,
I SAW HER FALL AMONG
THESE WEIRD HUTS!



SHE'S ALIVE!
SHE MUST BE! I'LL FIND
HER, TAM! WE'LL COME BACK
TO YOU, I SWEAR IT!!



WATCH IT!
HUMANS KEEP NEAR-WOLVES
TO GUARD THEM IN THIS
TIME TOO!



»PANT PANT PANT«













FLEEING THE SNARLS OF WAKENED HOUNDS AND AN OUTWITTED MERCENARY'S OATHS, THE TWO ELVES VANISH AMID PATCHES OF MOON SHADOW.

THE MINGLED SCENTS OF GROWTH AND DECAY ARE SOOTHING. TIME'S LENGTHY PASSAGE, UNNOTICED BY THE ELVES DURING THE PALACE'S FLIGHT, HAS NOT ALTERED THE NATURAL RHYTHMS OF THE FOREST.

DID RAYEK RETURN? ARE SUNTOP AND EMBER..?

EKUAR'S WATCHING THEM. EVEN TRINKET BEHAVES AROUND HIM! AS FOR RAYEK, LET HIM...JUST LET HIM SHOW UP!

TIRED? WE CAN AFFORD A REST.


SHORTLY...

PRETTY SOON IT'LL BE MORNING. IF THEY SPOT THE PALACE, THE HUMANS ARE BOUND TO COME SNOOPING UP THE MOUNTAIN.

»CHOKE« I-I STARTED TO SEND FOR TAM AND THE OTHERS... CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE...

ONLY RAYEK IS ABLE TO MAKE IT FLY. UNTIL HE RETURNS, WE MUST DEFEND IT AS BEST WE CAN.





I, TOO, HAVE
SENT IN HOPE, BUT...
SILENCE...ONLY
SILENCE!

PERHAPS THEY CONTINUED
WANDERING TO OTHER LANDS. PERHAPS
SOMEWHERE, FAR OUT OF SENDING
RANGE, THEIR CUBS' CUBS
DWELL IN PEACE.

"WHEN HE LEARNED OF HIS
TRIBE'S MORTALITY, I HOPED
HE WOULD CHOOSE, BY MY
AID, TO DEFY FATE."

BUT THE WOLFRIDERS
WE KNEW...DIED OUT...
LONG AGO! »SIGH«
TAM... BELOVED...!

CAN YOU FORGIVE
ME...MY LIFE MATE?

"INSTEAD, HE
EMBRACED IT!"

FOR WHAT?

I KNOW WHY YOU
HID THE TRUTH.
I UNDERSTAND.

WE'LL KEEP IT
OUR SECRET
--FOR NOW.

AND SO DID ALL
OF YOU! TO THE END,
YOU CHOSE TO BE
LIKE WOLVES!

NOT ALL OF US...
NOT NOW! MY SOUL BROTHER,
MY FRIENDS, MY TIME...THEY'VE
BEEN STOLEN FROM ME!!

YOU HAVE ENDLESS TURNS
OF THE SEASONS AHEAD OF YOU,
LEETAH! I DON'T! BUT YOU CAN
GIVE THEM TO ME!





OOOHHHH...
FINALLY...THE ACHE
CEASES!

NO INJURY, BUT...
GREAT SUN! WHAT
DID SHE DO?!



SHE-SHE HURT ME!
LEETAH ATTACKED ME! DID HER
STAY WITH THE WOLFRIDERS CHANGE
THE GENTLE ONE SO MUCH?

ONCE SHE WAS DRIVEN
TO KILL...BUT ONLY TO SAVE
HER CHILD. WHAT CAN HAVE
PROVOKED HER, NOW, TO...?

»GASP« CAN SHE POSSIBLY
HAVE WANTED CUTTER MORE...
MORE THAN DWELLING FOREVER
WITH THE HIGH ONES...?



STRIVE NOT TO
UNRAVEL THE TWISTED
INTENT OF ONE WHO WILLINGLY
EMBRACES LIMITATION.



WINNOWILL!
YOU SPY ON MY
THOUGHTS!

RISE AND SEE, RAYEK!
LAUGH AT HOW LITTLE THE WORLD
HAS CHANGED! YOU LEAVE NOTHING BEHIND
BUT A TIRED SONG, REPETITIOUS OF
THEME, ENDLESS OF VERSE.



THE HIGH ONES APPEAR
AT DAWN! I WILL HAVE BUT AN INSTANT
TO UNITE MY PALACE WITH ITS ORIGINAL SELF.
SAVAH...THE SUN FOLK...TIMMAIN...
DID THEY SURVIVE?

YOU KNEW THEY
WOULD, ELSE YOU'D NOT
SO READILY HAVE COME
FORWARD IN TIME.



DO YOU FEEL IT?
EVEN NOW THE FIRST TROLLS
PLOT REBELLION...AS THEIR GUARDIANS
PART THE STARDUST FOR A HAZY
GLIMPSE OF THIS WORLD.

GO, CHANGER OF WHAT
WAS! GATHER THE SUN FOLK
AS A GIFT TO CELEBRATE THE
HIGH ONES' SALVATION.

AND MAKE OF
TIMMAIN AN OFFERING
TO HER SELF!



THAT I WILL DO! BUT FIRST
I WISH TO SEE YOU. HOW HAVE
YOU SURVIVED YOUR EXILE
BENEATH THE WAVES...?



AND WHY DO YOU SEEM
AT EASE, WHERE I ENVISIONED YOU
WRITHING FOR LACK OF ELFIN HEARTS
AND MINDS TO RULE?!



RAGE CANNOT STAY
ABOIL FOREVER IN THE VAST-DEEP'S
CALM! I HAVE **CHANGED!** AND I
HAVE BEEN ENTERTAINED
THIS LONG WHILE!

THE DEAR, FOOLISH HUMANS...
THEIR DREAMS HAVE FED ME! I HAVE
EVEN SENT THEM...PLAYTHINGS...TO
KEEP THEIR FEARFUL FANCIES
RICH AND AMUSING.

BY MY OWN KIND I
WAS SPURNED...SHUT OUT!
I HAVE FORGOTTEN THEM
ALL! ALL SAVE YOU,
MY LORD!



YOU WAITED
FOR ME. I AM
HONORED.

THE GLIDERS PERISHED
THAT YOU MIGHT RESTORE THE
PALACE. YOU SHALL RESTORE ME TOO.
AMONG THE HIGH ONES I SHALL BE
REBORN, CLEANSSED IN EVERY
WAY OF THIS WORLD!



HOW I
WANT YOU, LOVELY
SNAKE!

BUT YOU ARE
BY NO MEANS HEALED OF
YOUR OVERPOWERING
WAYS!



"AND UNTIL YOU ARE, PART OF
ME MUST REMAIN CLOSED TO
YOU...THE PART THAT NEEDS,
AND WILL HAVE, LEETAH'S AID!"



LOVEMATE, OUR
ANCIENT JOINING BENEATH
THE GREAT EGG IS FRESH
IN YOUR MIND.



THE FLAME OF YOUR
DESIRE REKINDLES MY OWN!
NO ENDLESS SKY-SLEEP FOR US!
NO PRESERVER COCOONS! MY LAST
VISION IN BLUE MOUNTAIN WAS
PUNY...A HALF-MEASURE!

IT WAS
ALL I COULD CREATE
...ALONE.

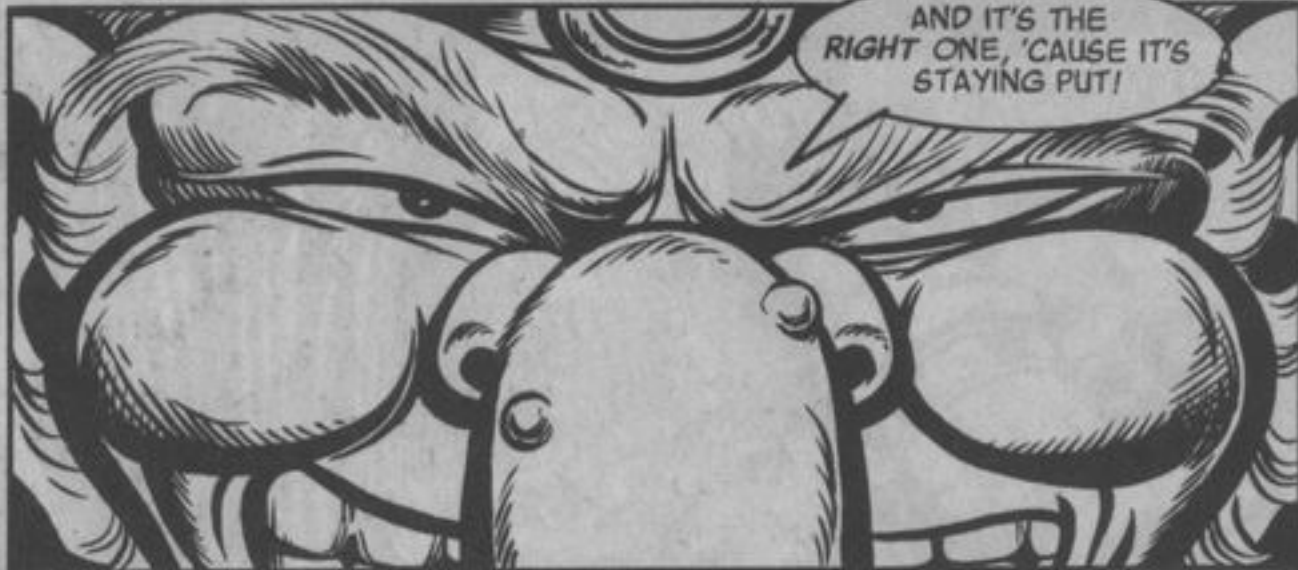
BUT TOGETHER...
TOGETHER WE SHALL
RAVISH OUR SENSES AS WE
TRAVEL BEYOND THE MANY SUNS!
WEIGHTLESS, OUR BODIES WILL
KNOW ONLY THE BLAZE OF
PURE FEELING...!

YOU SEE, I HAVE
LEARNED WHAT IT IS TO
FLOAT...TO FLY THROUGH MY
WATERY DOMAIN! I HAVE
NO MORE NEED
OF STAIRS!











DRUB! WILE-EYE!
FLAM! ALL OF YOU!
HAMMERS DOWN!!

IT'S TIME!





DO IT MOST GENTLY.
THERE HAVE BEEN SO
MANY CHANGES.

OF COURSE,
MOTHER OF
MEMORY.



CHANGES...YES...
SINCE YOU CAME INTO YOUR
ROCK-SHAPING GIFT, AHDRI.

NECESSARY
CHANGES, SUN-
TOUCHER.

"IF THIS IS NOT THE *END*
OF ALL, THEN IT IS THE BEGINNING...
OF A STRUGGLE *WITHOUT END*."



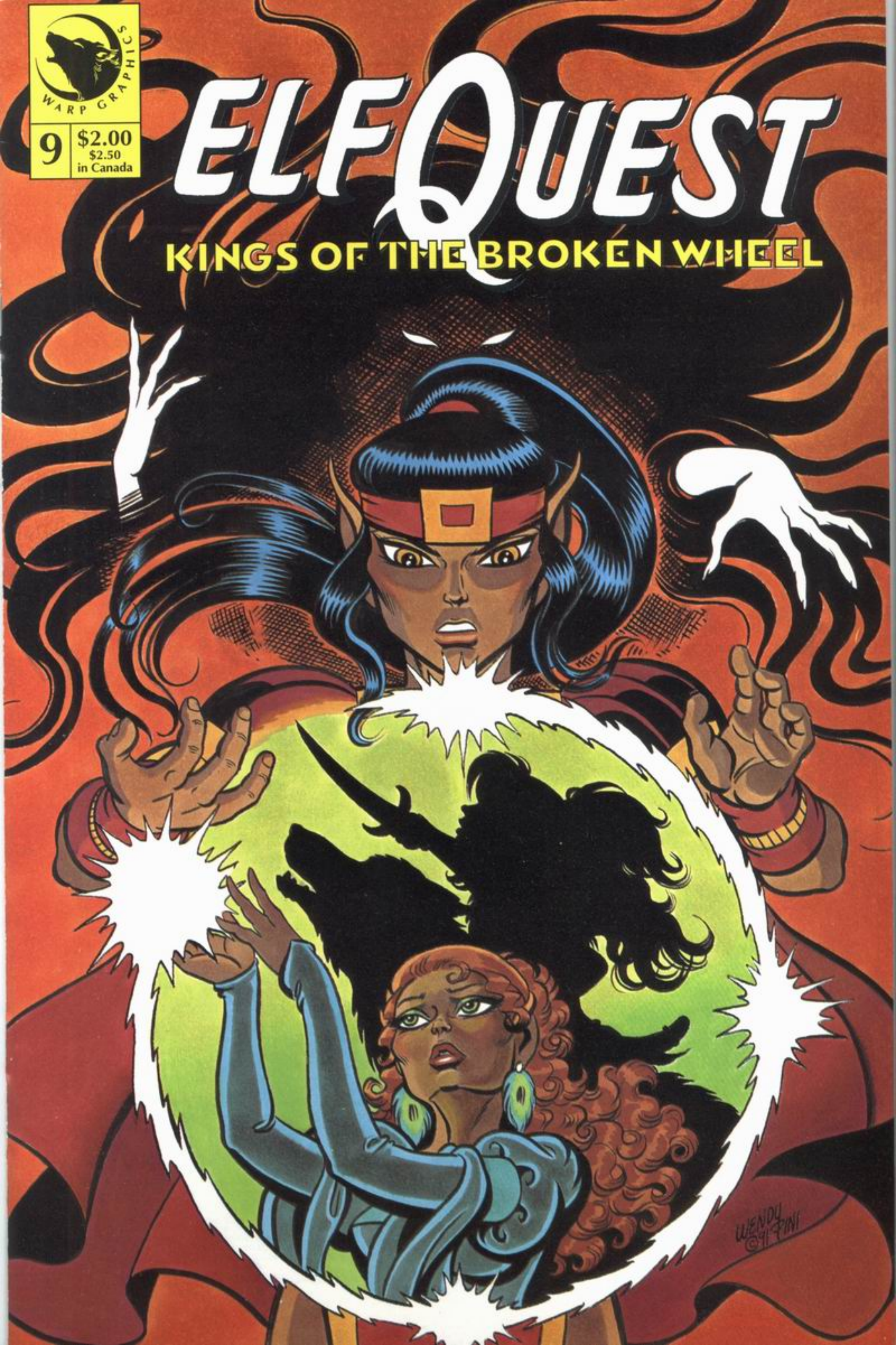
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ELFQUEST

KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL



STORY & EDITING
BY
RICHARD PINI

STORY, SCRIPT & ART
BY
WENDY PINI

PART
9

KINGS of the

TOKEN WHEEL

HE DREAMED OF VISITING THE STARS.
HE DREAMED OF EVERLASTING LIFE.
THE WORLD SAID, "MY BOUNTY IS
YOURS, BUT THE PRICE IS DEATH."

SKYWISE, KEEPER OF THE
LODESTONE, HAS CHOSEN
A DIFFERENT PATH!

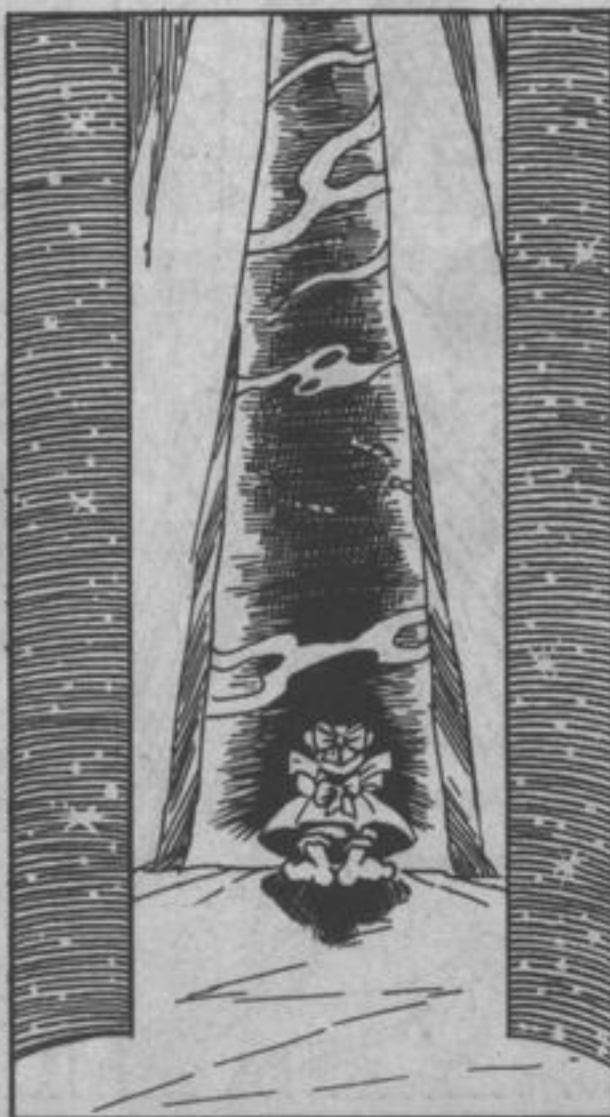
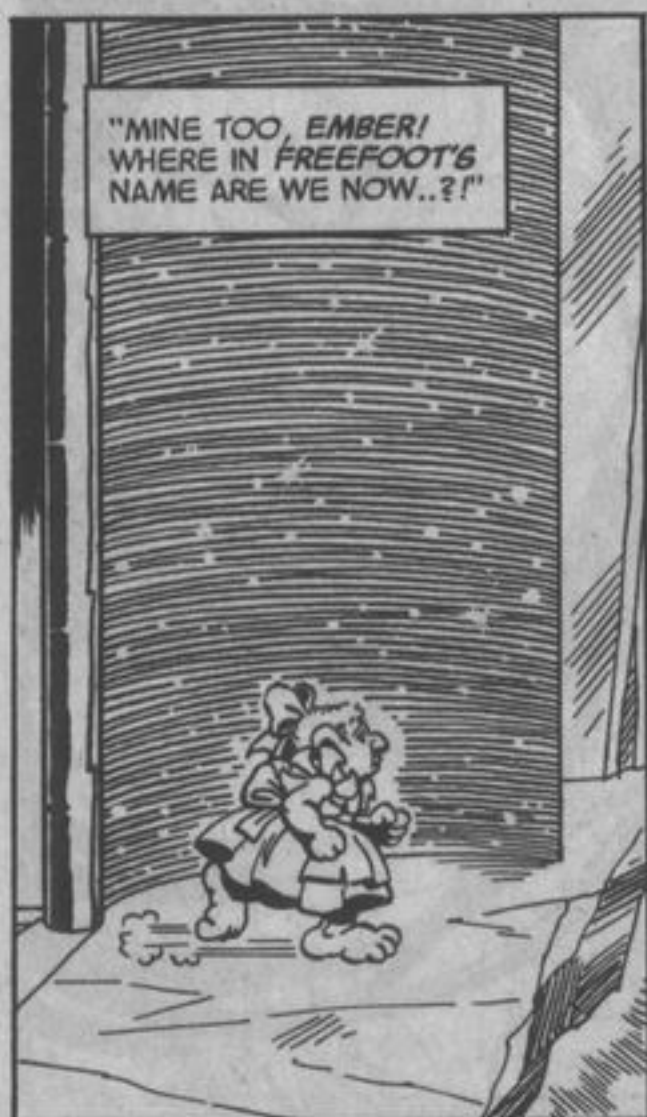
HMM...DON'T FEEL
MUCH CHANGED...EXCEPT...
SCENTS DON'T SEEM AS SHARP
AS THEY USED TO.

THAT MAY BE
ALL THE CHANGE YOU
NOTICE...AT FIRST.

I'M JUST LIKE
WINDKIN NOW.

WINDKIN...! WOLF-BLOODED
OR NOT, HE IS OUR OWN TIME'S
LAST SURVIVING WOLFRIDER...
IF HE STILL LIVES!









SEEING YOU...
FILLED WITH A CHILD'S
WONDER...IS A JOY
GREATER STILL!

I LOVE YOU...AS
I LOVE NO OTHER!



ONLY IN WINNOWILL'S
INFINITELY YOUNGER DAYS
DID VOLL, FIRST LORD OF
THE GLIDERS, GLIMPSE HER
THUS -- OPEN, ALIVE AND UNWARY.

THE AURA WHICH KEEPS
YOU DRY AND BREATHING
SURROUNDS THE PALACE TOO. IF I
AM TO ENTER, I MUST RESHAPE
MYSELF FOR AIR-LIVING.



A PITY! NOT ONE
OF OUR KIND IS UNPLEASANT TO
LOOK ON. BUT YOU! THE HIGH ONES
MUST SEE, MUST KNOW THEIR
MOST GLORIOUS CHILD!

HA HA! NONE BUT
YOU ARE SO OUTRAGEOUS
IN YOUR USE OF THE
OLD POWERS!

MY LORD...!



WHEN THE TWO
PALACES BECOME ONE...SO
SHALL YOU AND I!



!.....*



THAT IS...ONCE
LEETAH HAS SWEEP
OUT THE LAST OF YOUR
DARK CORNERS!



TIME GROWS SHORT.
MUST COLLECT SAVAH AND
THE SUN FOLK. AND WHERE
IS TIMMAIN?

HOPE LEETAH CAN
WORK THE HEALING
QUICKLY!

TRINKET WANTS
TO GO HOME NOW...*SNIFF*
PLEEEEEZE?!



...ONLY...ONLY SO
MUCH OF THE PALACE'S POWER
I CAN CONTAIN AT ONE TIME!
CAREFUL! MUST BE FIT...
FOR THE MERGING!



RAYEK...
TAKE US BACK
TO CUTTER.

NOW!!



NOT EVEN IF I
COULD AND STILL KEEP TO MY
PLAN!

ACCEPT IT! YOU ARE ONE
OF THE FEW CHOSEN TO HELP
SAVE THE HIGH ONES!

WHAT MAKES YOU
THINK THAT WILL MATTER TO
THEM?! YOU DO NOT KNOW
WHAT MATTERS AT ALL!

WINNOWILL'S
CURE MATTERS!



IF ONLY I COULD
CURE YOU! BUT YOU ARE
NOT MAD, YOU ARE JUST
WRONG...AS WRONG AS ANY-
ONE HAS EVER BEEN!

ENOUGH! SHE WILL
SHAKE OFF MY SPELL AT ANY
MOMENT! COME!



HOW DARE
YOU GIVE
ORDERS?!!

YOU'RE NO CHIEF!
I CHALLENGE YOU FOR
THE PALACE!




BETTER FOR YOU,
HAD YOU BEEN LEFT BEHIND
WITH YOUR MORTAL TRIBE,
WOLFRIDER!

OOOWWWW!!







A HEALER IS PREPARED
TO CAUSE ANGUISH, AT FIRST, KNOWING
IT WILL SOON PASS! BUT SHE WITHDREW...
JUST AS MY SHAME, ONCE SAFELY BURIED,
ERUPTED LIKE A RED SORE!

I WAS MADE TO
REMEMBER...AND REMEMBER...AND
REMEMBER! HARD WON, THE GROUND
I HAVE GAINED SINCE...HARDER WON
THAN YOU DARE DREAM!

YOU SEE?
I CANNOT FORCE
HER! ONLY SHE CAN
FINISH IT!

NEED HER?!
BY VOLL'S BLOOD, SHE
SHALL NOT TOUCH
ME AGAIN!!

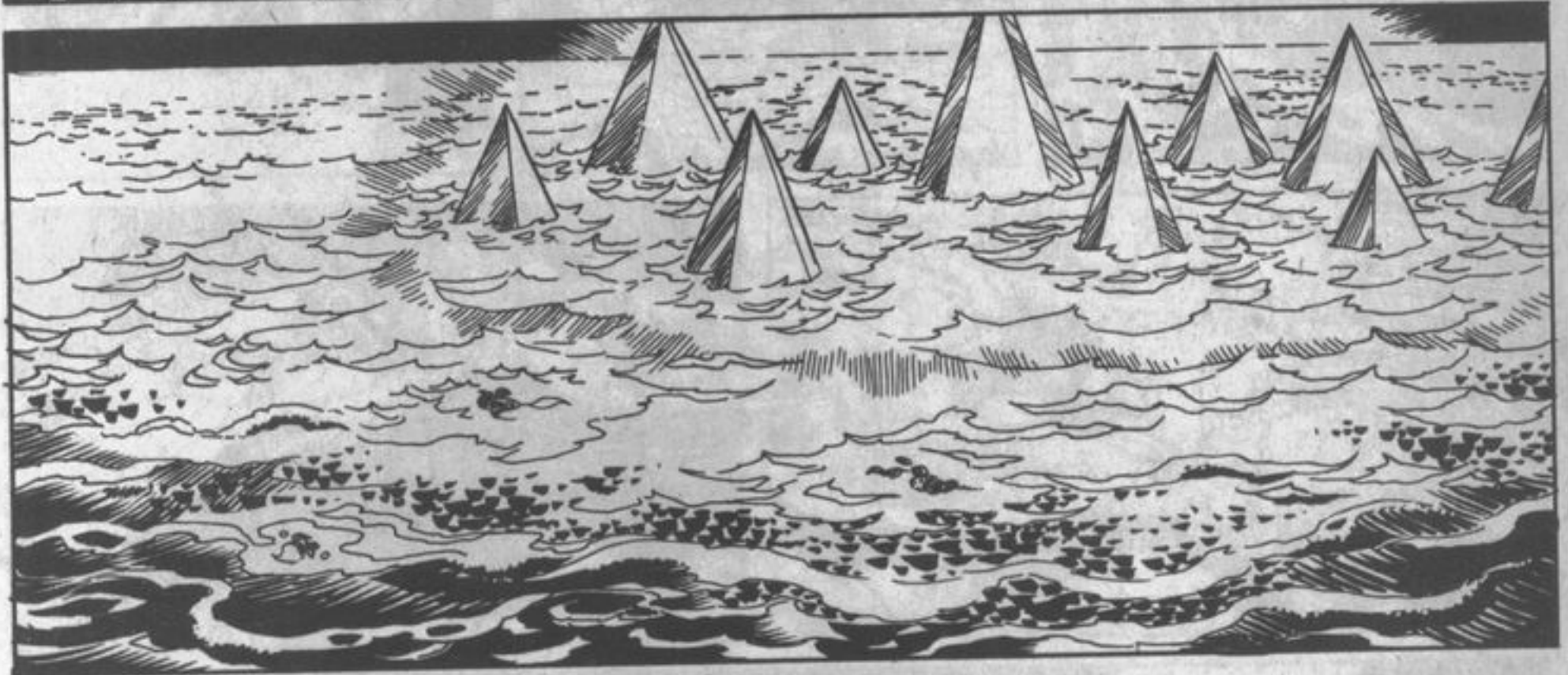
BUT...SHE
NEEDS YOU!



NEARBY, ABOVE THE
JAGGED SHORELINE...



»PANT PANT PANT«



»COUGH COUGH«

»GASP!«



LEETAH!! SHE'S
DROWNING!!





MEANWHILE...

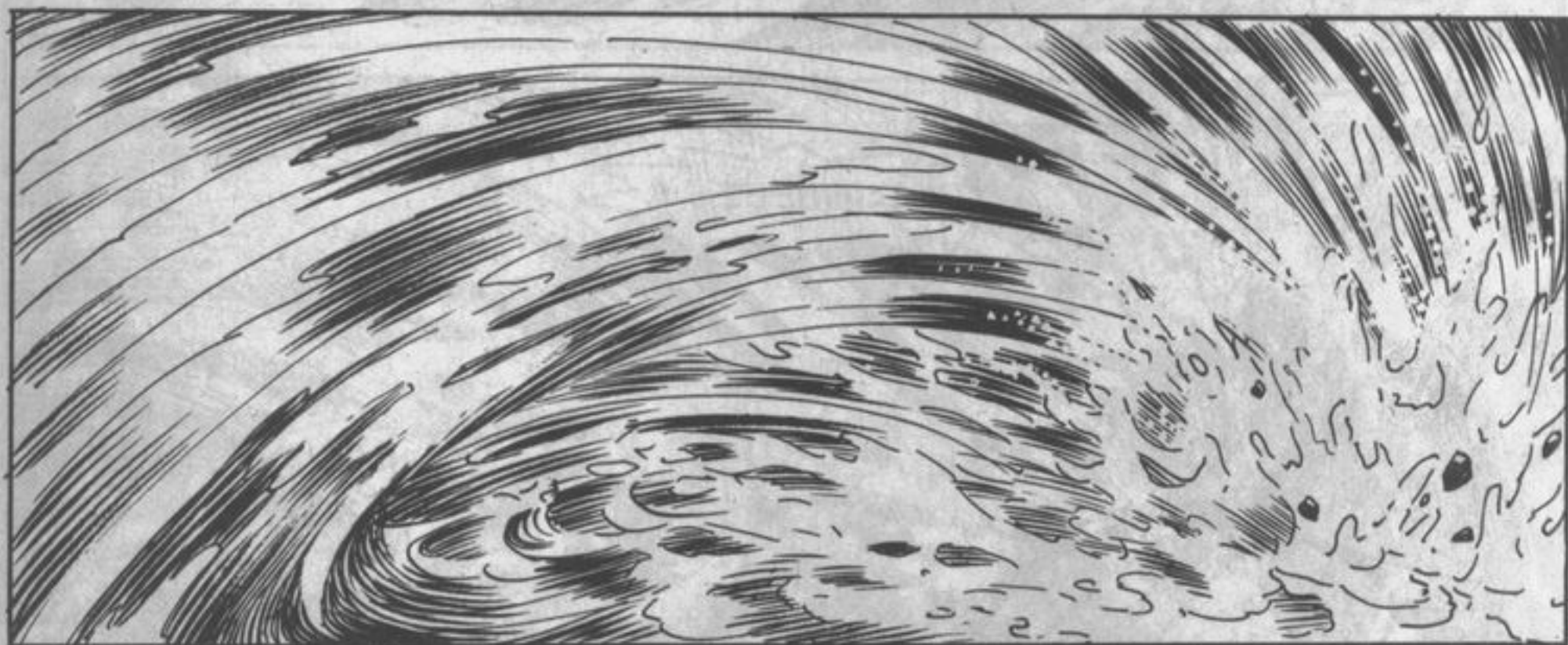
SOMEONE SEEKS
TO SAVE YOU, DARK SISTER?
I THINK NOT!

THERE IS NO
PLACE FOR YOU AND ME
TOGETHER...HERE, IN THE
PALACE OR ANYWHERE
BEYOND!

WH-WHAT'S
HAPPENING?!

HIGH ONES
HELP US..!

AAAAIIIEEEE...*





THE DEADLY WAVES, THRASHED TO
MAGICAL HEIGHTS, QUICKLY SETTLE...



HACK
COUGH COUGH



!?!



YOU...YOU'RE...

TAKE ME TO THE
BLACK SNAKE!




A WATER-RAM, SUCH
AS I HAVE USED ON HUMAN
VESSELS...A POWERFUL CURRENT
TO PIERCE THE AURA...

SOOOO...EVEN
THE SACRED DWELLING
OF THE HIGH ONES
CAN BE INFESTED
WITH FLEAS!

...AND FLOOD EVERY
CHAMBER, WILL RID
ME OF THEM!



WINNOWILL!



I KNOW THAT
SENDING! THE
BARRIERS...

THAT IS HOW I
SERVE MY TRIBE, AND OTHERS,
WHEN I CAN.

YOU PLACED THEM
IN MY PATH LONG AGO!
YOU SHUT ME OUT!!

BUT...YOUR POWERS
SUDDENLY DIMMED! YOU HAVE
NOT INTERFERED WITH ME FOR
COUNTLESS TIDES!

WHY? WHY NOW?!

NOOO! MY
FREEDOM! SHE CAN TAKE
IT FROM ME!

STOP HER,
RAYEK, I BEG
YOU!

NEVER SO SWIFTLY...
AND GENTLY...SUBDUED,
WINNOWILL DRIFTS TO
THE OCEAN FLOOR.

STUBBORN FOOL!
HELPLESS! UNABLE EVEN TO
SHAPE HERSELF FOR AIR-BREATHING!
SHE WOULD DIE IN THE
PALACE NOW!

CURSE IT! MUST
LEAVE HER! TIME IS
RUNNING OUT!

STOP HER...?
I SHALL HELP HER!



"...AND FORGET ALL ELSE!"



LEETAH?

»GASP« UUUUUNNNNNHHH...!

I'M HERE!

DON'T GIVE UP!
NOT NOW! PLEASE...
PLEASE DON'T...

...GIVE UP,
CUTTER! PLEASE
DON'T!

I'M NOT.
IT'S JUST...I'M
NO USE TO YOU
THIS WAY!

THIS FLINT
CHIP EATS AT ME,
LIKE THE PAIN IN
MY HEART. I'M
TIRED.

WHEN I FIND MY
FAMILY, I HOPE YOU'LL
ALL BE THERE! BUT FOR
NOW...HOWL FOR ME.
AND FORGET!

FORGET?
NO! YOU SHAN'T
SLEEP ALONE.

I MUST
HONOR A PROMISE...
TO MY MOTHER.

HRUMPH! WELL,
STRONGBOW, IT'LL BE
QUITE A SNOOZE! WAKING
UP IN ANOTHER TIME GOES
AGAINST THE WAY...

NOT AS
MUCH AS DOING
WITHOUT THE
ONLY CHIEF...

...WHO CAN KEEP
THE WHOLE, BARKING,
FOUR-TRIBE MESS OF US
PULLED TOGETHER!









I TOLD YOU
MY POWER WAS
IN MY FAMILY.



NOTHING
YOU CAN DO WILL
PART US!

THEN...THEN
COME WITH ME!
ALL OF YOU!

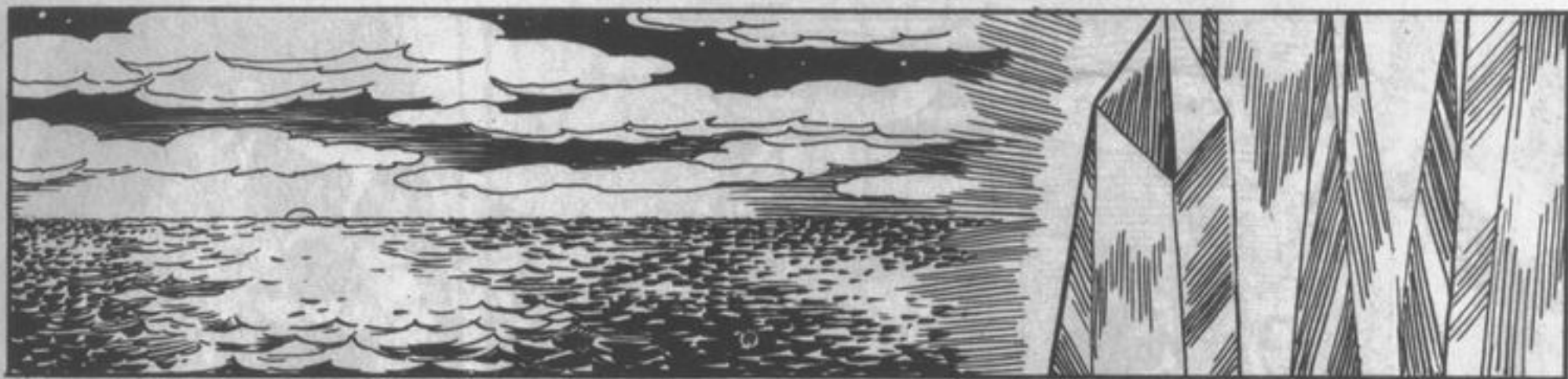


HURRY! ANYONE WHO
IS IN THE PALACE WILL SURVIVE
THE MERGING...

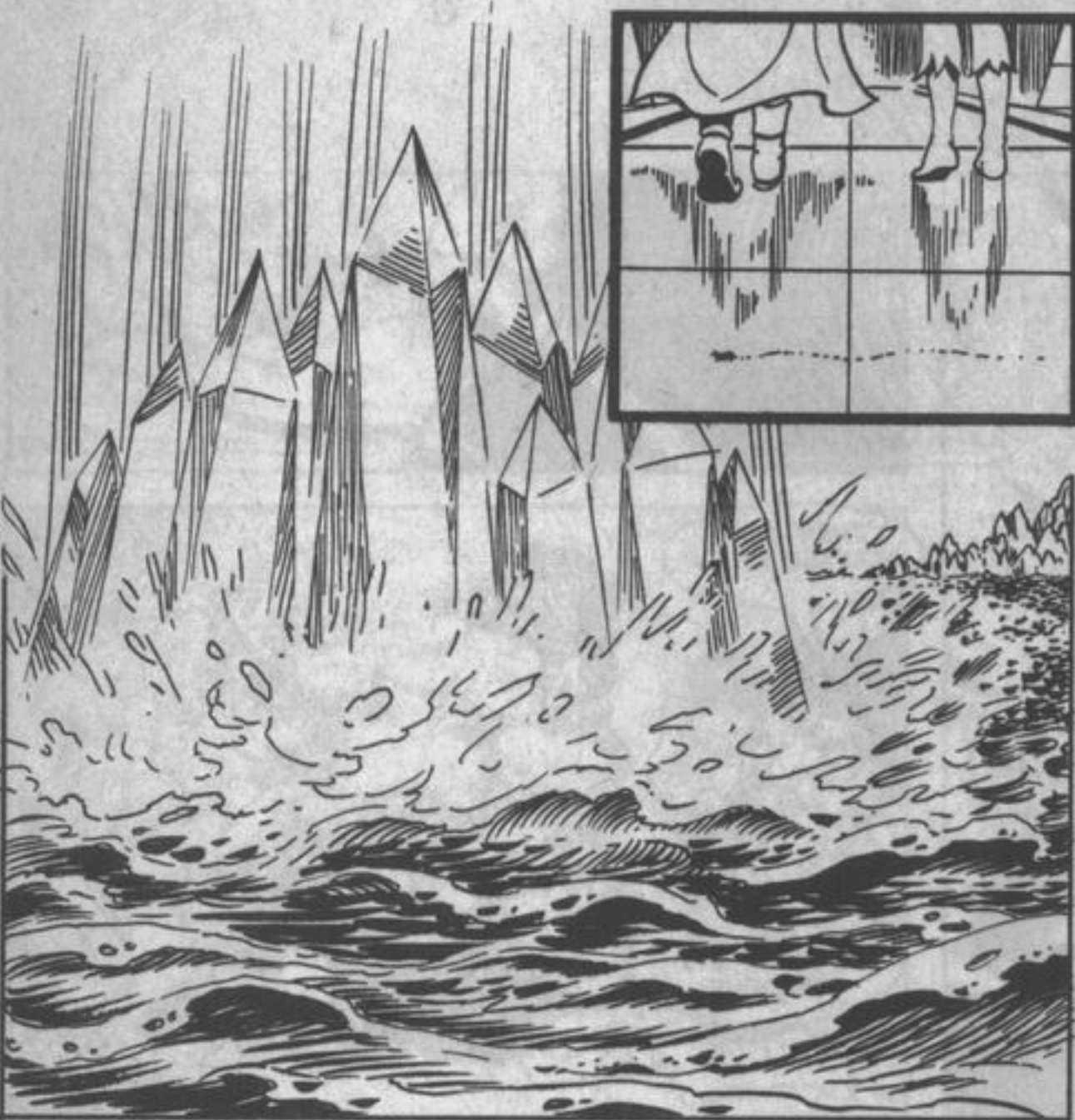


SURVIVE?! KNOWING
THOSE WE LEAVE BEHIND ARE
WORSE THAN DEAD?! NO!!
WE COULDN'T!











SOON, IN PICKNOSE'S CAVERNOUS STRONGHOLD...

YOU SHELTERED OUR COCOONS WELL, KING TROLL.

YOU SENT?! GUESS THAT WRAPSTUFF WAS TOO MUCH FOR US!

HUNH! WAY DOWN HERE, WE WERE OUT OF RANGE ANYWAY!

OOO MUMKINS! SO WRINKLY!

BAH! IT WAS WORTH THE BOTHER! AND DID YOU GET YOURS, WOLF CHIEF?

I DID. I SAW RAYEK'S EYES.

HOW... SWEET!

TIMMAIN GUARDED US AND HUNTED MEAT FOR THE TROLLS ALL ALONG! SHE'S MORE WOLF THAN EVER!

AND NOW I GET TO DO WHAT I COULDN'T BEFORE... SPOIL THIS LITTLE DREAMBERRY ROTTEN!! GITCHY GITCHY GITCH!



HOO HOO HOO
HEE HEEEE!



SAVAH...SAVAH...I'M SUNTOP. REMEMBER ME? FOR YOU IT'S BEEN MANY, MANY NIGHTS... FOR ME, JUST ONE.

THE CRY SCARED ME, BUT NOW I KNOW WE CAN NEVER LOSE EACH OTHER.

I'M COMING BACK TO SORROW'S END JUST AS SOON AS I CAN. I WANT YOU FOR MY TEACHER, SAVAH... MORE THAN EVER!



I HATE THIS!

I LIKE THIS! YOU ARE NO LONGER MY CHILD-MATE. WE ARE OF AN AGE!

LEETAH...



WHAT YOU DID FOR SKYWISE...GO ON! DO IT FOR ME!

OH, BELOVED! I HAVE WAITED SO LONG TO HEAR YOU..!



GREAT SUN! I KNOW NOTHING AT ALL OF WAITING!

"WHEN *SKYWISE* ASKED FOR TIME, IT WAS FROM HIS HEART. ONLY THE TRIAL YOU'VE ENDURED MAKES YOU SPEAK NOW. WHEN YOUR HEART IS CLEAR, ASK ME AGAIN."

<STICKY NIGHT... MIGHT AS WELL LET THE FIRE DIE, BOLLI! HALF A MOMENT AND I'LL BE IN!>



