

MAGIC SWORD

VOLUME 2

CHAPTER 3



AFTER LAYING WASTE TO THE HORDE OF
CORRUPTED KIHLEI TRIBESMAN WHO
WERE DESTROYING HER VILLAGE,
TAYIA NOW STANDS IN AWE OF A
MOUNTAINOUS CREATURE.

THE NIERHI VALLEY PEOPLE, HER
PEOPLE, WOULD NOT ENDURE THE
HEARTACHE AND LOSSES OF THIS DAY
JUST TO BE SHUFFED OUT OF
EXISTANCE BY THE
APPROACHING COLOSSUS.

AS THE GROUND QUAKES BENEATH HER
FEET, TAYIA MUST FIND THE TRUE
POWER OF THE MAGIC SWORD. FOR
THIS WELL OF POWER HAS NO BOUNDS.

IT IS INFINITE.

ENDLESS.

STORY AND ART BY
SHAY PLUMMER

THE BRIEF CALM THAT TAYIA HAD FELT AFTER SAVING HER PEOPLE HAD BEEN REPLACED BY AN ICY DREAD. THE BEAST BEFORE HER ROBBED HER OF HER CONFIDENCE, IT'S SHEER SIZE OVERTAKING THE CERTAINTY SHE HAD FELT FROM HER NEW POWER.

THEN SHE HEARD THE VOICE OF HER MOTHER ECHOING AGAIN IN HER HEAD. SCREAMING FOR HER DAUGHTER TO RUN WHILE SHE WAS RAVAGED BY THE TWISTED KHILHI TRIBESMAN ONLY HOURS AGO.

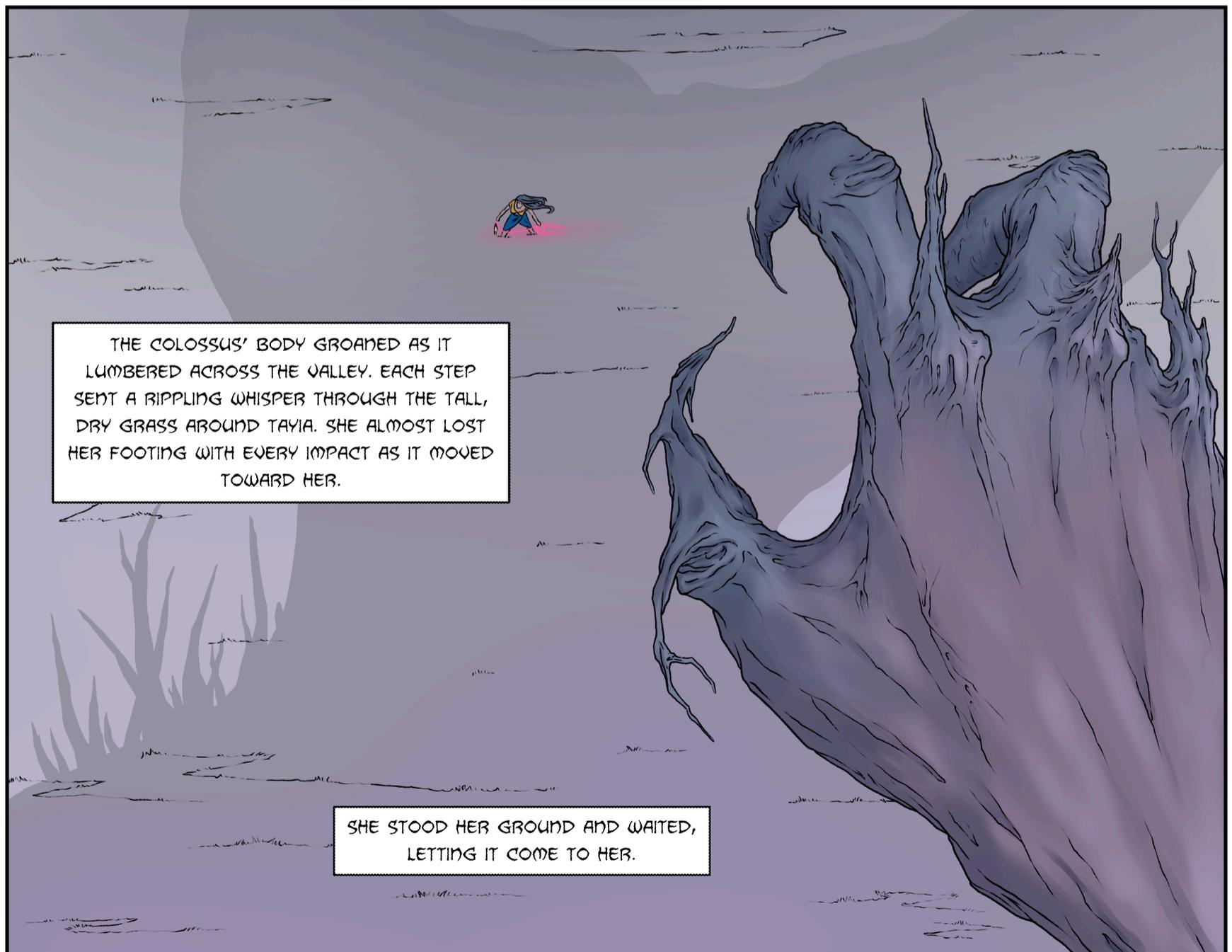


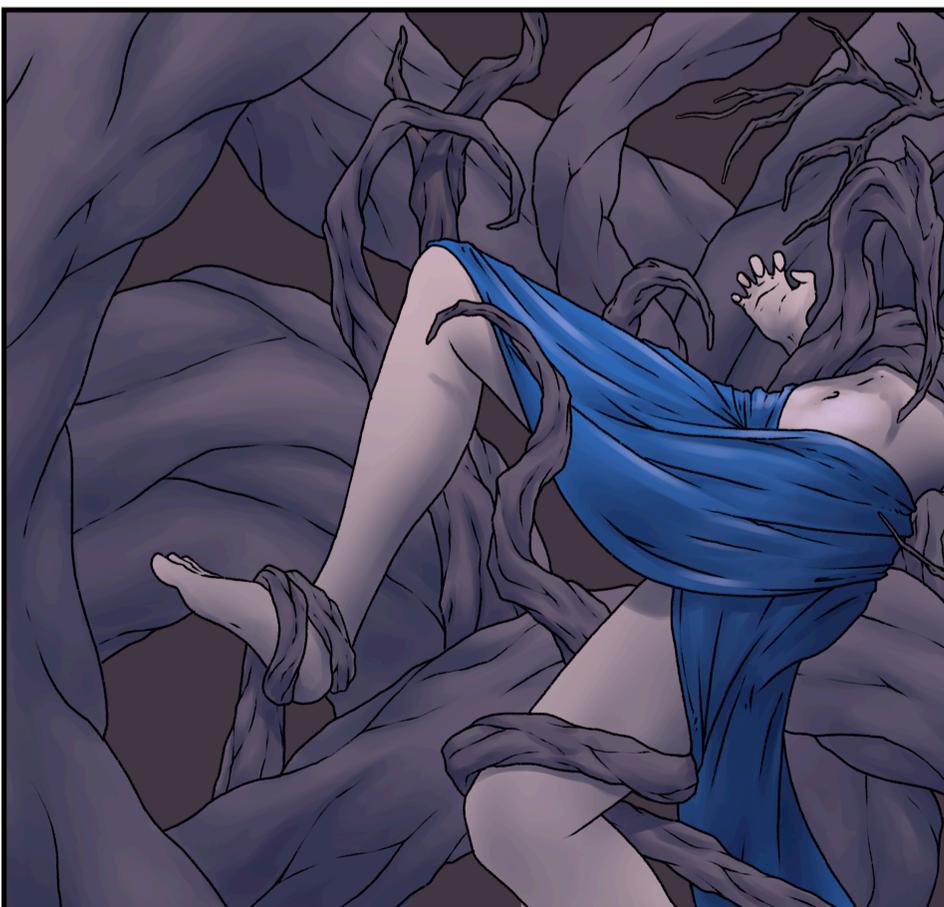
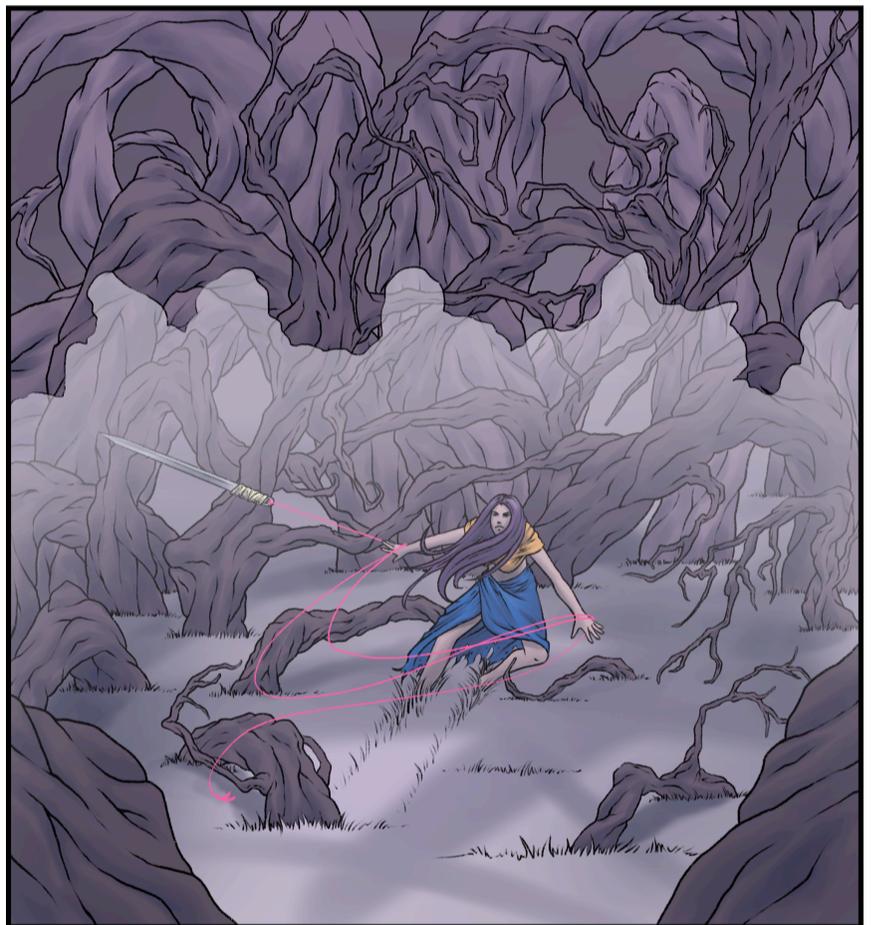
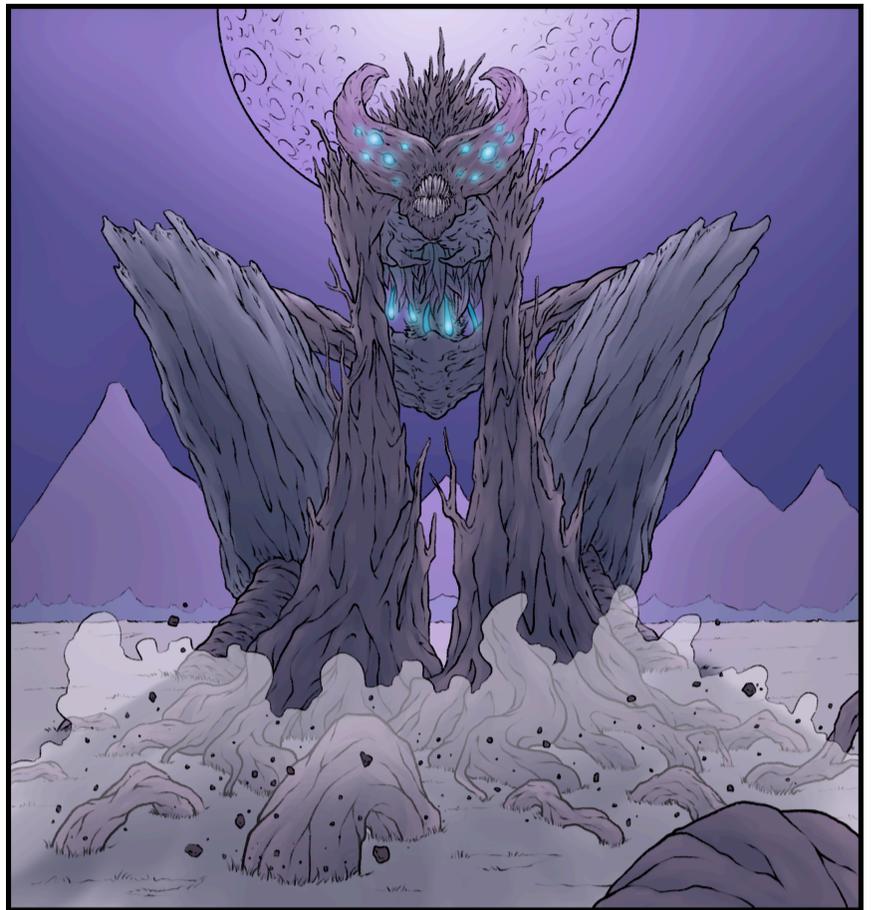
NO MORE. NO MORE PAIN FOR THE INNOCENT. NOT WHILE SHE WEILDED THIS POWER. SHE CRACKED THE END OF HER NIKTAL'S WHIP IN THE COLD NIGHT AIR WITH A FLASH AND A FLURRY AS SHE STEPPED FORWARD TO MEET THE TOWERING COLOSSUS.



THE COLOSSUS' BODY GROANED AS IT LUMBERED ACROSS THE VALLEY. EACH STEP SENT A RIPPLING WHISPER THROUGH THE TALL, DRY GRASS AROUND TAYIA. SHE ALMOST LOST HER FOOTING WITH EVERY IMPACT AS IT MOVED TOWARD HER.

SHE STOOD HER GROUND AND WAITED, LETTING IT COME TO HER.





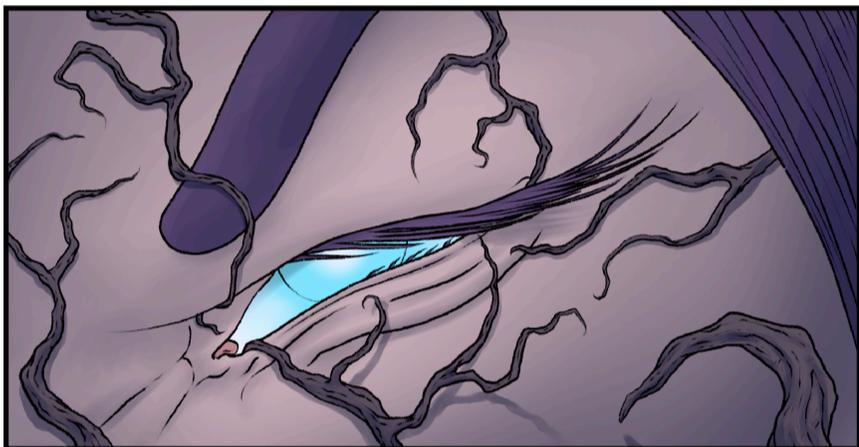
INSIDE THE THICK DUST CLOUD THAT HAD ENGLUFED HER, SHE DID NOT SEE IT'S SLITHERING TENDRILS BURROWING AROUND AND BEHIND HER UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE. THEY IMMEDIATELY PULLED AND PRIED THE MAGIC SWORD FROM HER HAND AND BEGAN TO PIN HER DOWN.



TAYIA WAS QUICKLY OVERTAKEN AND BURIED BENEATH AN EVER-CONSTRICTING MOUND OF PUTRID, SCRAPING BARK.



AS THE ROOTS WRIGGLED DEEPER INTO HER NOSE, MOUTH AND EYES, SHE FELT HER VERY LIFE FORCE UNCONTROLLABLY REACT AND SURGE FORTH IN A FURIOUS FIRE.



AS PIECES OF THE COLOSSUS RAINED DOWN, TAYIA UNDERSTOOD: SHE WAS THE MAGIC SWORD NOW. SHE WAS UNTOUCHABLE. INVINCIBLE. BOUNDLESS.

AS THE FIRE CONSUMED THE COLOSSUS, IT'S SCREAM WAS THAT OF A THOUSAND ANCIENT TREES SLOWLY BEING FELLED.



TAYIA HAD BALANCED OUT THE POWER BETWEEN THEM WITH HER INNER FIRE- BUT BALANCE WAS NO LONGER ENOUGH.

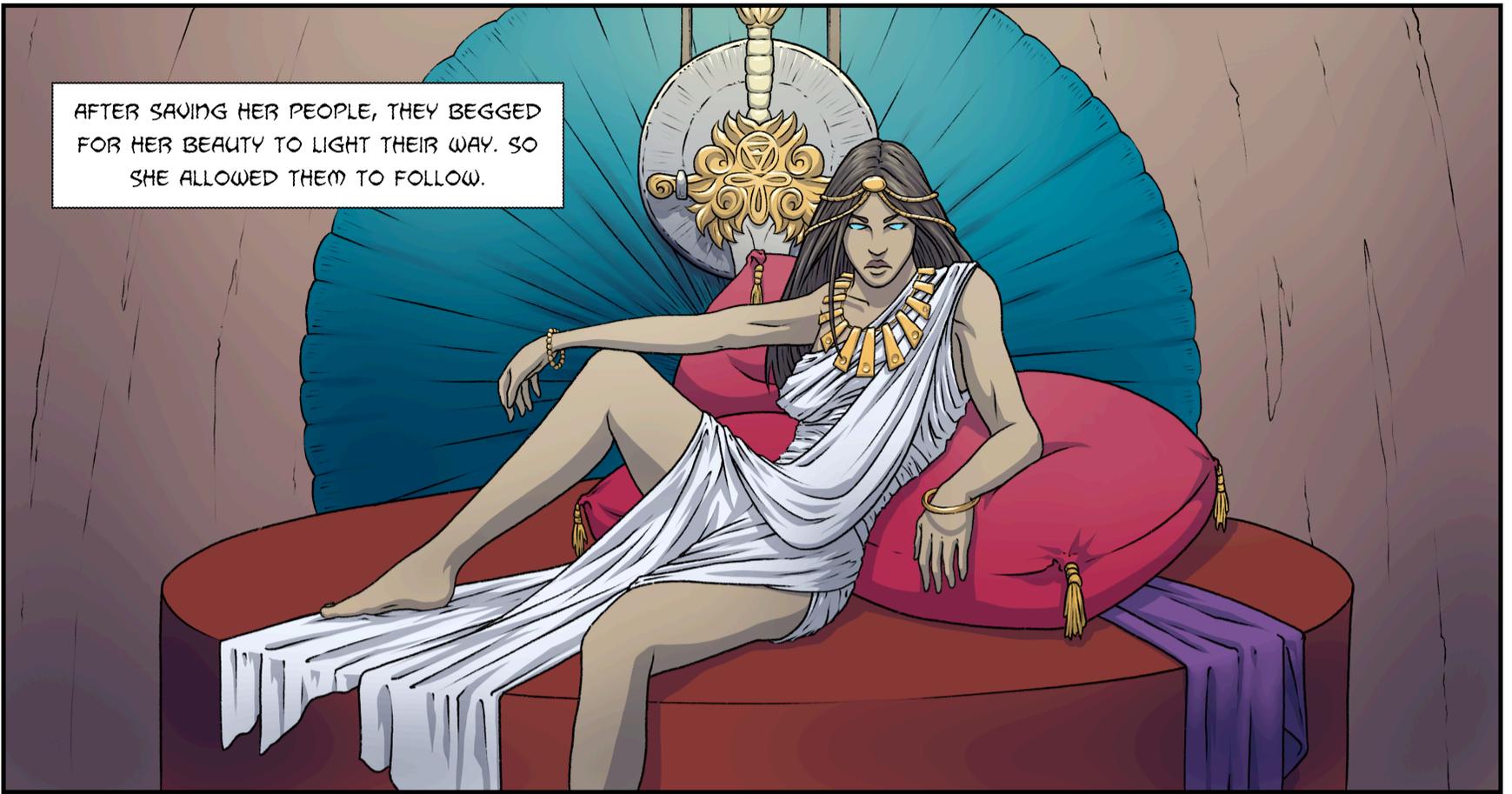


SHE DESTROYED THE COLOSSUS WITH A WHITE HOT BEAM THAT RIPPED THROUGH IT'S BODY AND PIERCED THE HEAVENS ABOVE. NIGHT BECAME DAY IN A BRILLIANT PILLAR OF LIGHT. HER LIGHT. HER BEAUTY. SHE WOULD NOW DESTROY ALL WHO STOOD BEFORE HER BEAUTIFUL LIGHT.



AND SO IT WAS.

AFTER SAVING HER PEOPLE, THEY BEGGED FOR HER BEAUTY TO LIGHT THEIR WAY. SO SHE ALLOWED THEM TO FOLLOW.



SHE ALLOWED THEM TO BRING HER GIFTS OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS WORTHY OF HER BEAUTY. IN EXCHANGE, SHE BATHED THEM IN HER POWER



SHE ALLOWED THEM TO BEHOLD THE MIRACLE OF HER BLOSSOMING RADIANCE THAT INCREASED WITH EVERY PIECE OF PRECIOUS METAL AND STONE SHE BORE FOR THEM.



THE POWER, THE BEAUTY, AND THE RADIANCE: THEY WERE A MIRACLE-

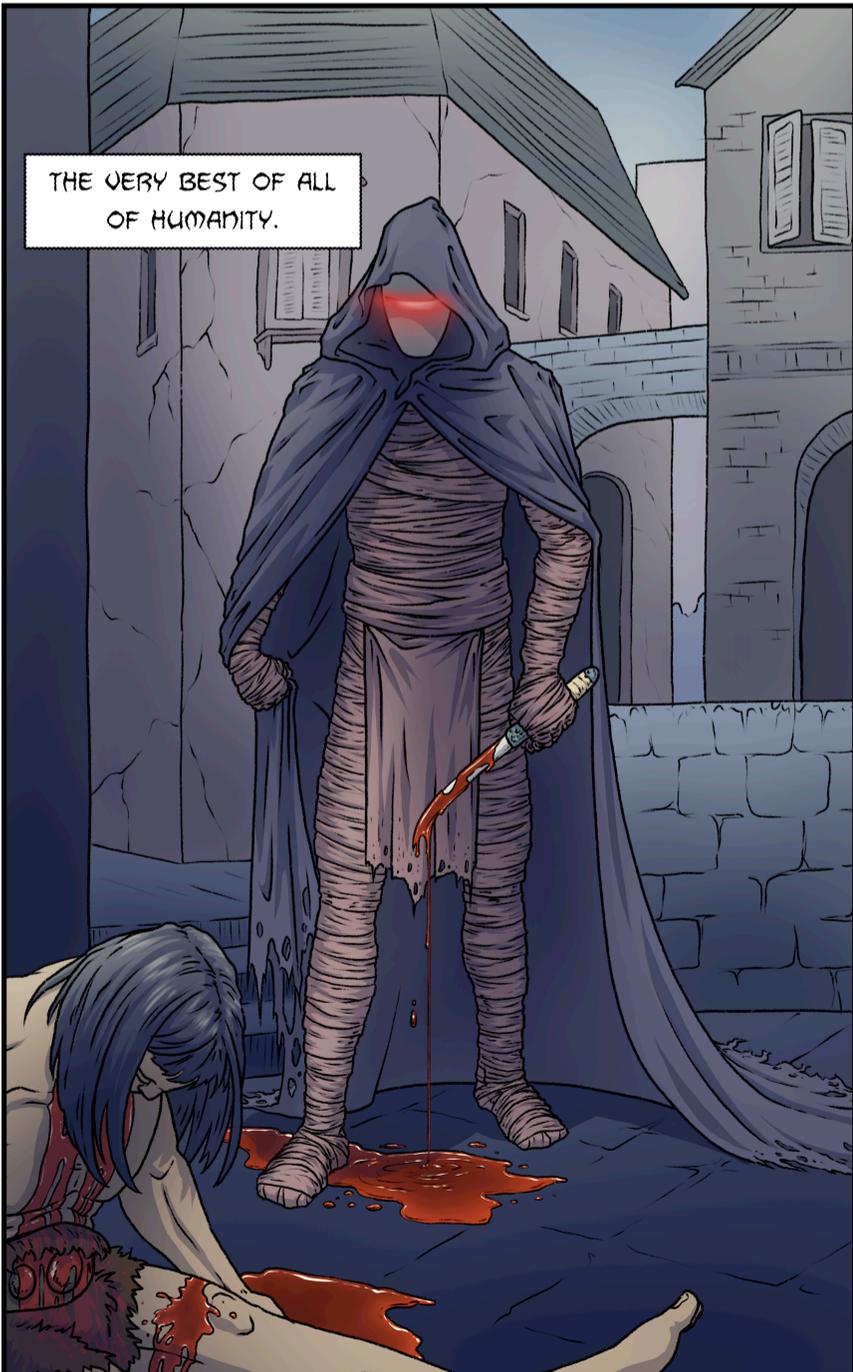
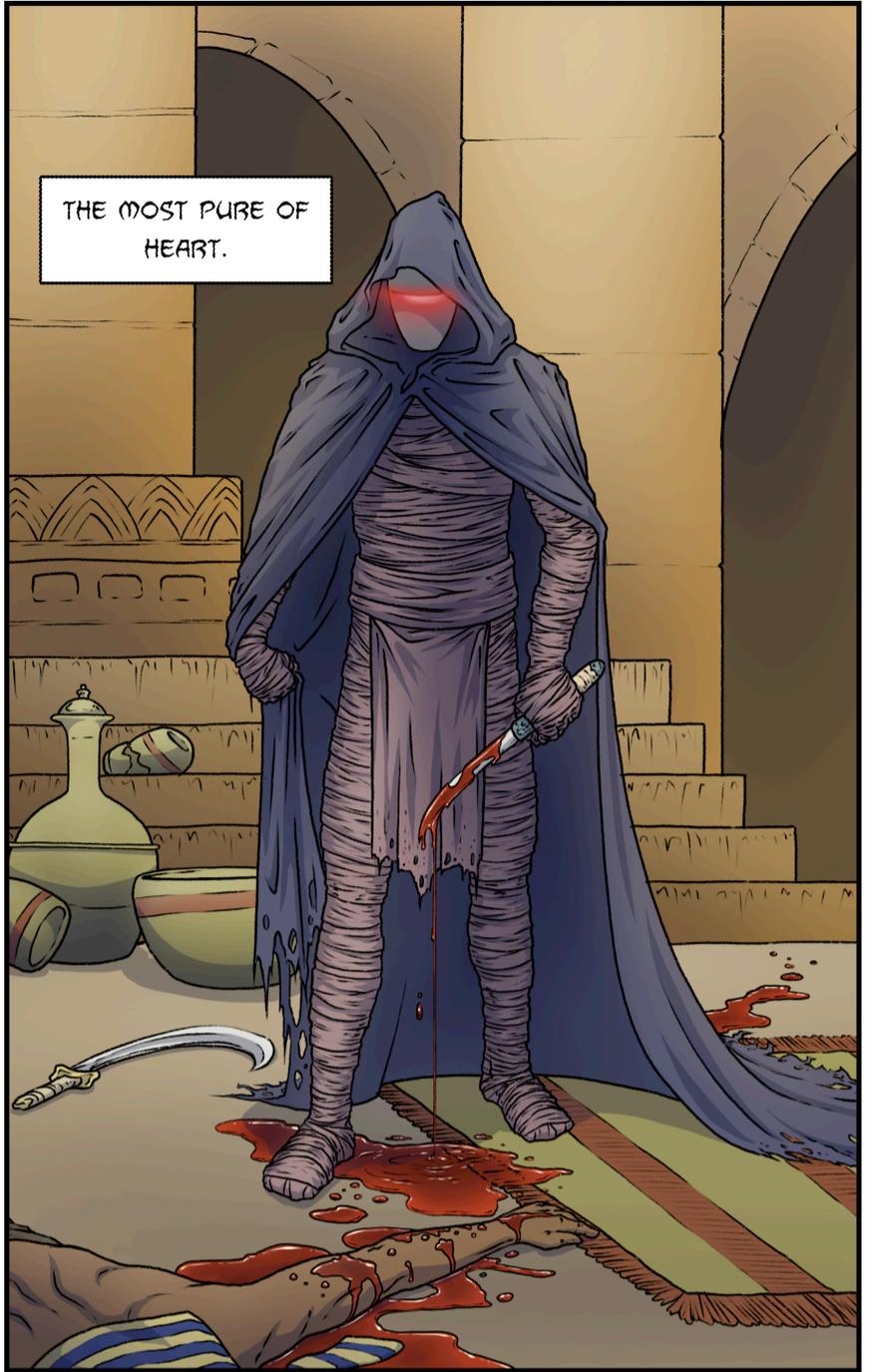
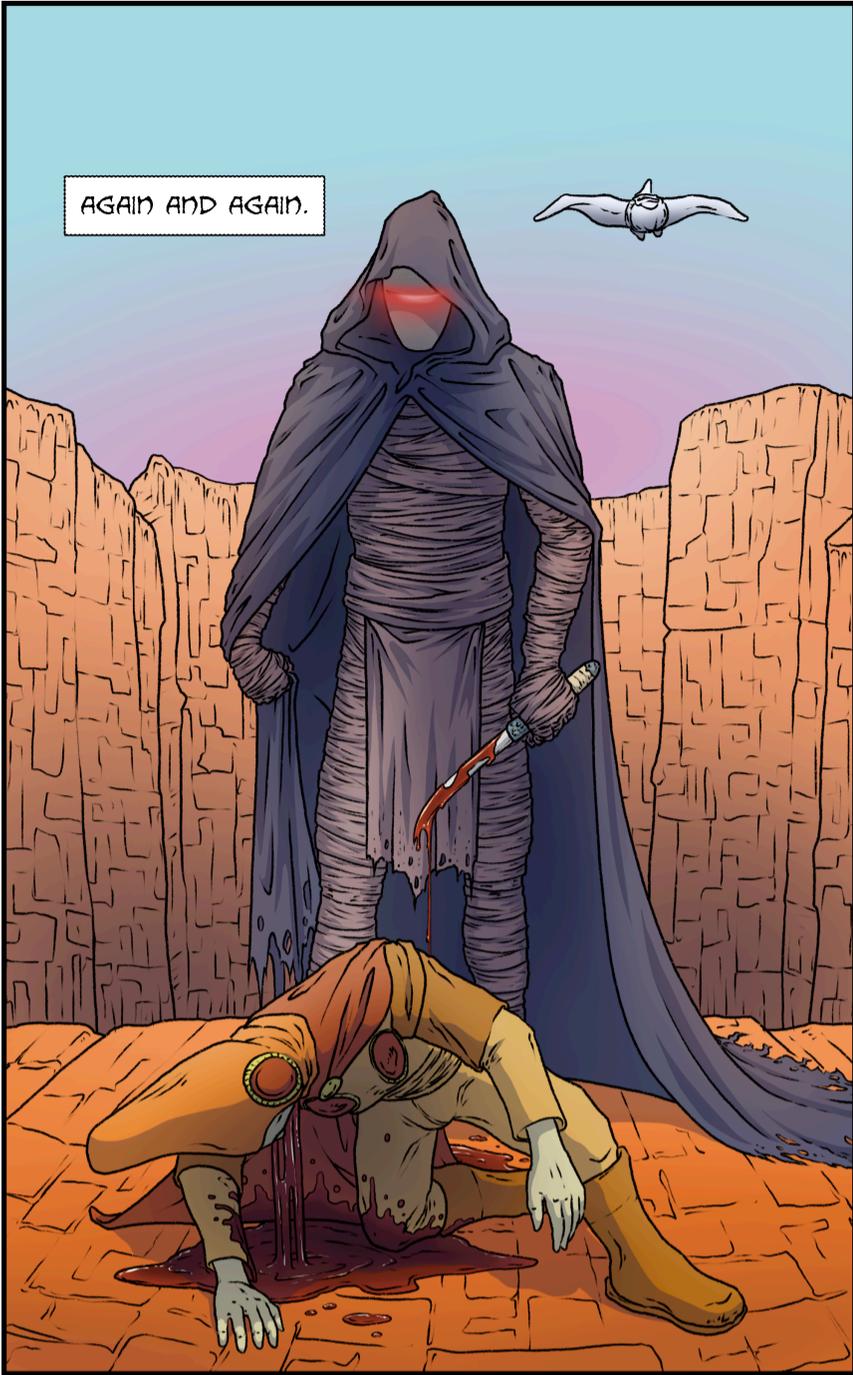
-BUT THEY WERE NOT HERS.

THEY WERE OF THE MAGIC SWORD. AND JUST AS THE KEEPER HAD TOLD HER IN HER TIME OF NEED: IF SHE WAS NOT THE CHOSEN ONE, HER LIFE WOULD BE FORFEIT.

THE POWER OF THE MAGIC SWORD IS TOO GREAT FOR EVEN THOSE WITH THE PUREST OF HEARTS. ONLY THE CHOSEN ONE CAN WIELD IT AS THE KEY THAT IT TRULY IS. ALL OTHERS FALL TO LUSTFUL TEMPTATION IN THE FACE OF SUCH POWER. THEY NEVER ARE ABLE TO LET IT GO ONCE THEY HAVE IT. IT CONSUMES THEM.



SO IN A RELENTLESS CYCLE THAT HAD SPANNED EONS, THE KEEPER MUST ONCE AGAIN TAKE IT BACK.





AND SO IT WAS, IT SHALL ALWAYS BE: WHENEVER
THE NEED IS GREAT, THE PURE OF HEART MAY
CALL UPON THE POWER OF THE MAGIC SWORD
AND IT WILL REVEAL ITSELF.

FOR TIME AND AGAIN, THE KEEPER
WILL COME. HE WILL GIVE. HE WILL PRAY.

THEN HE WILL ONCE AGAIN KEEP UNTIL THE DARKNESS
IS FINALLY SEALED AWAY. HE WILL KEEP THE MAGIC SWORD.
HE WILL KEEP SEARCHING. HE WILL KEEP OUR HOPE.
EVER, HE WILL KEEP US ALL. ENDLESS.

ENDLESS

