

66. "EVERYONE HERE IN GREAT Q'AF UNDERSTANDS THAT TO NAVIGATE FATE MEANS TO SEIZE ITS BARE THROAT AND SQUEEZE."

ZHAMAN OF Q'AF TELLS QUEEN ENE OF ACHAEAN SPACE WHO HAS COME HERE AGAINST HER CONTROL.

"YET THERE IS ONE THING THAT NO ONE MAY DO, ONE TRANSGRESSION AGAINST CRUEL OLYMPUS."

"PUNISHED ARE WE AT POSEIDON'S BEHEST, MY DEAR BROTHER AND I--"

"--AND, BY PROXY, ALL SOULS HERE ON Q'AF ARE TOO."

"ZEUS."
ENE THINKS.

"POSEIDON."

"TELLING THE TALE OF JUST HOW WE BECAME A WHOLE PEOPLE IMPRISONED ON PARADISE STARTS WITH THE DEATH OF OUR MOTHER--"

"--THE WOLF OF THE WOODS; THE GREAT MOTHER OF --"

"--WE WERE HEARTBROKEN AND SO WE WENT HUNTING..."

67. "FINDING AND KILLING WHAT WE THOUGHT WERE FIENDS, WE RETURNED TO OUR KIN AND OUR KITH BEARING TROPHIES BENEATH CANOPIES FALLING OF BLOSSOMS AND TO THE GRAND CHEERS OF OUR PEOPLE."

"HERE WAS THE HEAD OF HUMBABBADON AND ON A PIKE JUST HER SIZE PUT WE ALSO THE HEAD OF HIS CLUCKOLDRESS-BRIDE."



"OVER US ALL, IN OLYMPUS, POSEIDON DID RANT AND DID ROAR OUT FOR VENGEANCE."

"MONSTROUS HUMBABBADON SPRUNG FROM HER LOINS AND LIKE SO MANY OTHERS WAS EXILED TO THIS FAR EDGE OF PROXIMA KENOR."

"THIS SEA OF STARS IS POSEIDON'S OWN ORPHANAGE FILLED WITH HER UNWANTED BROOD."



68. "HERA TELLS ZEUS THAT DEAR HERAKLES, BREAKER OF CHAINS, WAS OUR SIRE AND KILLING US WOULD BE AKIN TO FOUL DECIDE."

"THIS MAD POSEIDON SEEKS CRUELER WAYS WITH WHICH TO PUNISH US..."

"...OTHER THAN DEATH."



"SO SHE SUMMONS A STORM."

"NONE MAY SPILL ZEUS-KIN BLOOD OTHER THAN ZEUS. IT WAS THUS WAY BACK THEN IT IS THUS EVEN NOW."

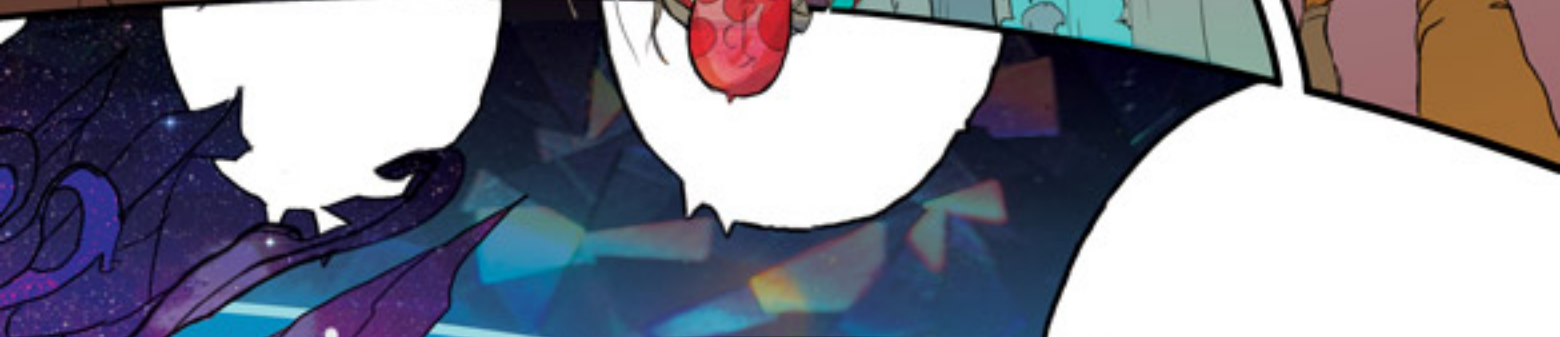
SAYS HYRAR.

"--WITHOUT END OR REPRIEVE--"



"WE THOUGHT WE'D SAVED THOSE BELOW
FROM THE MAW OF A MONSTER AND CAME
HOME TO RELAY THE GOOD NEWS.

"LITTLE DID
WE KNOW."



"OUR FAIR
MODEST SYSTEM OF
NATION-STARS --"

"--UNIFIED
Q'AF--"

"--MADE OF RAW
SPACE SET A'BOIL BY
GODLY WRATH.

"--WAS THIS
WHOLLY
CONSUMED.

69. "NO ONE CONCEIVED OF ITS PERMANENCE THEN."

HE SAYS,

"NO ONE CONCEIVED THAT THE SHELTERING SKY OVERHEAD WAS THE CEILING WITHIN A GRIM TOMB."

"AND INSIDE ITS PERIMETER..."

"...LURKED A LEVIATHAN."

"PROTEUS, SON OF POSEIDON HERSELF, TRAPPED IN HERE WITH US."

"MASSIVE, UNSTOPPABLE--"

"--PRESCIENT, TOO--"

"IT IS PROTEUS, ENDLESSLY SCANNING THE STORM FOR ESCAPE, THAT HAS RENDERED US CUT OUT OF SPACE AND FROM TIME."

"NOTHING CAN TOUCH US AS WE CAN TOUCH NOTHING OUTSIDE OF OURSELVES, IT SEEMS."

70. "ENE OF ACHAEA KNOW IF YOU LEAVE IT MEANS DEATH IN THE MAW OF THE BEAST,"

SAYS ZHAMAN.