



OURS WAS AN
EXISTENCE OF
SLAVERY.

TOILING AWAY UNDER
THE WATCHFUL EYE OF
THE GOD-LIKE ENTITY
KNOWN AS *KHAAZ*.

WITH HIS UNMATCHED
POWER, HE RULED
THROUGH *TERROR*
AND *DEATH*.



UNTIL ONE DAY, WE ROSE
UP AGAINST HIM, FOUGHT
FOR OUR *FREEDOM*, AND
DESTROYED OUR EVIL
MASTER.

SINCE IT WAS
MY HAND THAT
DELIVERED THE
FATAL BLOW...



...MY PEOPLE
LOOKED TO ME
FOR *GUIDANCE*.

I BECAME THEIR *LEADER*--
THEIR *PROTECTOR*. IT WAS
NOT A POWER I SOUGHT,
BUT RATHER A *DUTY* THAT
I ACCEPTED.



WE FOUND A NEW *HOME*-- A
SECRET *OASIS* AS THE REST
OF THE WORLD STRUGGLED
AND CHANGED. THROUGH IT
ALL, WE REMAINED INTACT.



FOR *THOUSANDS* OF YEARS,
WE WERE CONTENT TO LIVE IN
OUR SECLUSION, FREE FROM
THE VIOLENCE OF MAN.

BUT NO
MORE.



FOR THE DARKNESS
HAS RETURNED, IT
ROAMS WILD ONCE
AGAIN-- READY TO
DEVOUR ALL LIGHT.

IT MUST BE
STOPPED.



AND I MUST
STOP IT.



HEY, PAULA.
MORNING.

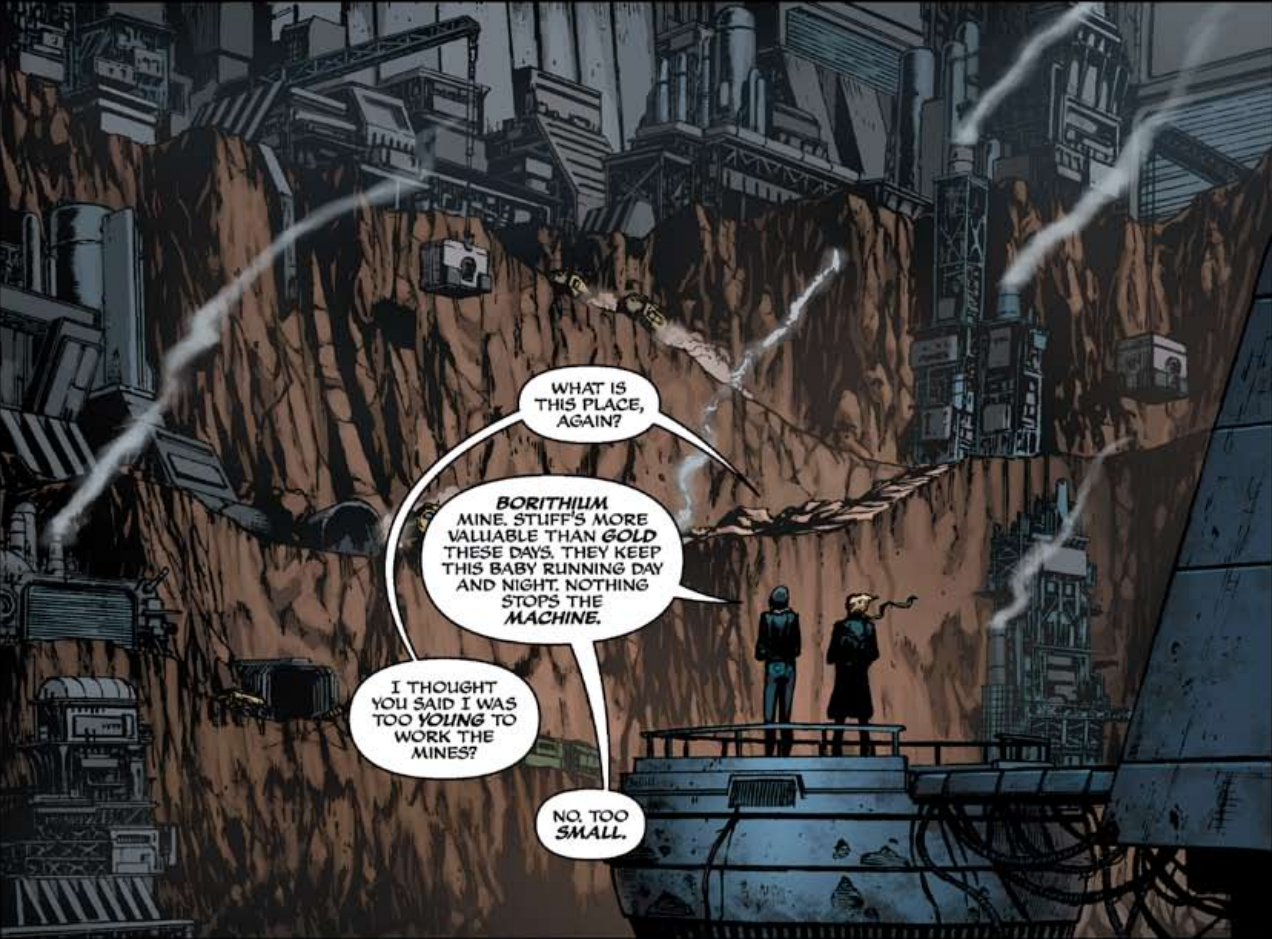
AFTERNOON,
ACTUALLY.

I'M HEADING
OUT. MY SHIFT
IS STARTING
IN A BIT.

IF YOU WANT
TO COME WITH ME,
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO
SCROLLING UP SOME
WORK FOR YOU-- PUT
A LITTLE MONEY IN
YOUR POCKET.



WHAT
DO YOU SAY?
READY TO GET
YOUR HANDS
DIRTY?



WHAT IS THIS PLACE, AGAIN?

BORITHIUM MINE. STUFF'S MORE VALUABLE THAN **GOLD** THESE DAYS. THEY KEEP THIS BABY RUNNING DAY AND NIGHT. NOTHING STOPS THE **MACHINE**.

I THOUGHT YOU SAID I WAS TOO **YOUNG** TO WORK THE MINES?

NO. TOO **SMALL**.



RIGHT. I GUESS TOO **YOUNG** WAS MY **LESS DEMEANING** ALTERNATIVE.

TRUST ME, YOU DON'T WANT TO WORK DOWN THERE.



THESE **MINERS** ARE CHIPPING AWAY AT **THEMSELVES** DOWN THERE.

I SEE IT IN THEIR EYES EVERY NIGHT WHEN THEY COME BACK TO THE **BAR**.



YOU CAN'T SPEND ALL YOUR DAYS SURROUNDED BY **DARKNESS** AND NOT BE AFFECTED. BUT IT'S WHAT KEEPS THIS PLACE **ALIVE**.



IT'S OUR **BLESSING** AND OUR **CURSE**.



E VERLANDS, KINGDOM OF ANANTIA.

THANK YOU, **GRACE**. IT SEEMS YOU HAVE DONE ALL THAT CAN BE ASKED.

WE'VE SEARCHED THE ENTIRE REGION TO THE EAST AND THE SOUTH. THERE IS NO SIGN OF **ONYX**.



I'M NOT GIVING UP **FAYE**. WE WILL RESUME OUR SEARCH IN THE MORNING-- COVER THE ENTIRE REGION AGAIN. AS LONG AS **ONYX** IS OUT THERE, SHE IS A **DANGER**.

I MUST ADMIT...



...THAT I AM SURPRISED TO HEAR SUCH **FEAR** IN YOUR VOICE, **GRACE**.

ONYX IS A **LOWLY** ASSASSIN. YOU'VE BESTED HER TIME AND AGAIN.



IT IS NOT **ONYX** THAT I **FEAR**-- IT IS THE **KNOWLEDGE** THAT SHE HAS **STOLEN**. THE SCHOLARS HAVE UNCOVERED EXACTLY WHAT SHE HAS TAKEN.

THE BOOK OF **AZAR**. SECRETS IN THE ART OF THE **SETHORU** **SHADOW** **MAGIC**.



AZAR? HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE OF THE GREATEST ATTACKS UPON THE **RAHTUMI** IN OUR HISTORY.

THERE IS A REASON HIS WORKS WERE **FORBIDDEN**. THEY POISONED THE MIND OF ANY WHO STUDIED THEM.

HIS **SHADOW** **MAGIC** WAS A **PLAGUE** TO ALL LIFE-- **SETHORU** AND **RAHTUMI** ALIKE.



ALL THE MORE REASON WHY I **MUST** FIND HER.

BEFORE IT IS
TOO LATE.





NO, GET AWAY--!

VALDAR!



AHHHHH!



FEAR NOT, BROTHER. THIS IS NOT YOUR END.



I AM HERE FOR YOUR SALVATION.