

the song of

LIONOGO

an indian ocean mythological remix



JIBA MOLEI
ANDERSON



AS LIYONGO GREW IN PERFECTION, HE BECAME A MATURE MAN,
HE WAS A TRUE MAN AND HIS BEAUTY OF APPEARANCE INCREASED...

THE SULTAN SAID TO THEM, PRAISING HIM (LIYONGO) TO THESE MEN
OF GALLA (KENYA), EVEN THOUGH A HUNDRED MEN PRESS UPON HIM,
THEY CANNOT OVERCOME HIM AND THEY FLEE AWAY

· Harries, Lyndon. "Utendi Verses: The Epic of Liyongo."
Swahili Poetry. Oxford: Clarendon, 1962. 52-53. Print.

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Smithsonian
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This graphic novel is part of
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to East Africa.*

<http://africa.si.edu/50years/oman>

CALLING ALL HEROES AND HEROINES...

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO BE A MYTHICAL SWAHILI HERO, OR HIS DAUGHTER, OR HIS ENEMIES? HOW CAN CONTEMPORARY ART CONTRIBUTE TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION? THE FOLLOWING CHARACTER STUDIES AIM TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THE TOOLS TO LAUNCH YOUR OWN IMAGINATIVE SOJOURN INTO THE MOVEMENTS OF PEOPLES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD. THE PURPOSE OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL FORMAT IS TO OFFER AN ORIGINAL MEDIUM THAT COMBINES VISUAL ART, STORYTELLING, AND HISTORICAL INSIGHTS. THE LEGEND OF LIONGO IS BASED ON A REAL PERSON WHO LIVED AROUND 1300, ALTHOUGH THE EXACT DATES ARE NOT KNOWN. FAMOUS FOR HIS BATTLE PROWESS AND MASTERY OF POETRY, HIS LEGEND HAS MOSTLY SURVIVED THROUGH ORAL TRADITION. THE HISTORICAL LIONGO WAS PROBABLY OF PERSIAN DESCENT AND THE BROTHER OF A LOCAL CHIEF. CONDEMNED TO DEATH, THE LEGEND GOES, FOR OVERREACHING HIS AUTHORITY, LIONGO COMPOSED A MESSAGE CODED IN SONGS TO HIS MOTHER, HATCHING A PLAN FOR HIS RELEASE¹. SWAHILI POETRY AND ORAL CULTURE HAVE PRESERVED LIONGO'S STORY UNTIL TODAY, INCLUDING MANY POEMS THAT ARE ATTRIBUTED TO LIONGO HIMSELF.

THE SWAHILI COAST IS AN AREA OF SOUTHEAST AFRICA THAT CONNECTS THE GREAT LAKES REGION WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION. THE FOLLOWING STORY OF LIONGO AND HIS COMPANIONS REPRESENTS THE RICH TAPESTRY OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE THAT WAS WOVEN BY THE COMMUNITIES AROUND THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A RESULT OF CENTURIES OF TRADE AND COMMUNICATION. SPECIFICALLY, THIS STORY TAKES ITS INSPIRATION FROM THE INTERCONNECTED HISTORIES OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE SWAHILI COAST. THESE TWO REGIONS ARE OVER 2,000 MILES APART, BUT OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL CENTURIES THE BOISTEROUS ANNUAL WINDS OF THE MONSOON CLIMATE COLLAPSED THIS VAST DISTANCE INTO A DIRECT HIGHWAY OF TRADE.

IN THIS GRAPHIC NOVEL, WE USE LIONGO AS A LAUNCHING POINT FROM WHICH TO CONSIDER THE INTRICACIES OF EAST AFRICAN CULTURE AND HISTORY. WE HOPE THAT THE FOLLOWING HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND GRAPHIC NARRATIVE WILL INSPIRE YOU TO CREATE YOUR OWN STORY OF A SWAHILI HERO AND HIS ADVENTURES. SUBMIT YOUR ORIGINAL STORIES TO US ON THE **SMITHSONIAN WEBSITE**, AND ADD YOUR VOICE TO THE LEGEND OF LIONGO.

WHAT IS THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD?

LIONGO AND HIS COMPANIONS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION REPRESENT A RICH COSMOPOLITAN SOCIETY THAT BOTH FLOURISHED AND STRUGGLED IN THE PRESENCE OF A CACOPHONY OF LANGUAGES, RELIGIONS, AND CULTURAL PRACTICES LONG BEFORE EUROPEANS BECAME THE DOMINANT PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. INDEED, THE PATTERNS OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND EAST AFRICA ARE ALMOST AS OLD AS HUMAN HISTORY ITSELF. AT LEAST TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO AND BEFORE THE ADVENT OF ISLAM, ARABS SAILED TO THE SWAHILI COAST IN SEARCH OF IVORY TO CARRY TO CHINA AND INDIA AND WOOD FOR THE DESERT COMMUNITIES OF ARABIA². IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES, THEY LEARNED LOCAL LANGUAGES AND DEVELOPED, IN COOPERATION WITH THEIR AFRICAN PARTNERS, ACCEPTED PRACTICES OF DECORUM AND TRADE THAT WOULD FACILITATE ONGOING CONNECTIONS. SWAHILI WORDS LIKE *USTAARABU* (CIVILIZATION), *LINGWANA* (GOOD WILL, GOOD MANNERS), AND *HESHIMA* (RESPECT) REPRESENT NOTIONS OF THE SHARED CULTURAL VALUES THAT SUPPORTED THESE RELATIONSHIPS.

PRIOR TO THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY APPEARANCE OF MODERN STEAM SHIPS, THE WIND PATTERNS OF THE ANNUAL MONSOON DICTATED THE MOVEMENTS OF SAILORS, MERCHANTS, SOLDIERS, AND MOVEMENTS OF PEOPLES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD. IN OUR STORY, LIONGO AND THE SUNBIRD TRAVEL FROM ZANZIBAR TO OMAN ON A *DHOW*, THE ICONIC SHIP OF INDIAN OCEAN TRADE. THE *DHOW* USUALLY USED A SINGLE SAIL, AND WAS CONSTRUCTED OF SOUTHWEST INDIAN TEAK HELD TOGETHER BY NATURAL FIBER STITCHING³.

1 Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, 64-65.

2 Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1875* (London: James Currey, 1987), 8.

3 Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, 64-65.

WHAT IS THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD (CONT.)?

COASTAL POPULATIONS SUFFERING FROM A SCARCITY OF NATURAL RESOURCES HAVE LONG TURNED TO THE SEA, SEEKING GREATER FORTUNES ON NEW HORIZONS. SUCH WAS THE CASE FOR VARIOUS *OMANIS*, *HADRAMIS*, *BALUCHIS*, *KASHHIS*, *GUJARATIS*, AND OTHERS OF THE COASTLINES AROUND THE INDIAN OCEAN WHEN THEY ESTABLISHED TRADING COMMUNITIES ALONG THE RICHLY ENDOWED EAST AFRICAN COAST. THE *PORTUGUESE*, *DUTCH*, *FRENCH*, AND *ENGLISH* WHO TRAVERSED THE INDIAN OCEAN CONDUCTED TRADE RELYING ON THE FORCE OF GUNS, SOLDIERS, AND ARMED FORTRESSES. THE MERCHANTS WHO WERE INDIGENOUS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION, HOWEVER, DID NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO MILITARILY DOMINATE THE REGION, AND SOUGHT TO FIT IN WITH LOCAL CULTURE, FORGE NEW RELATIONSHIPS, AND EVEN SETTLE IN A NEW CONTINENT FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS IN PURSUIT OF ADVANTAGEOUS TRADE⁴.

OMAN AND EUROPE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

THE INTEGRATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION INTO THE WORLD ECONOMY AND ITS EMERGENCE AS AN AREA OF CONTENTION IN EUROPEAN POLITICS DEVELOPED OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL CENTURIES. THE PORTUGUESE, MANY OF WHOM SETTLED FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS, BECAME PROMINENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY AND BUILT FORTRESSES IN SEVERAL PORT CITIES AROUND THE REGION, INCLUDING *MUSCAT*, *MOZAMBIQUE*, AND *MOMBASA*⁵. IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, OMANIS, IN THE MIDST OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES AT HOME, SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY OF PORTUGUESE DECLINE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR OWN PRESENCE IN EAST AFRICA. AFTER THE OMANIS HAD EXPELLED THE PORTUGUESE FROM MUSCAT IN 1650, SOME LOCAL COMMUNITIES CALLED ON THEM TO COMBAT THE PORTUGUESE IN EAST AFRICA⁶. IN EAST AFRICA ITSELF, SWAHILI MERCHANTS ALTERNATELY ALLIED WITH AND HINDERED THESE ADVANCING OMANIS, DEPENDING ON THE NUANCES OF THEIR LOCAL INTERESTS AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PORTUGUESE PRESENCE.

OMANI POWER FLOURISHED IN *EIGHTEENTH-* AND *NINETEENTH-* CENTURY EAST AFRICA FOLLOWING THEIR EXPULSION OF THE PORTUGUESE IN THE MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. DURING THIS PERIOD, MERCHANTS AND THEIR LOCAL TRADING PARTNERS PENETRATED INTO THE AFRICAN INTERIOR IN SEARCH OF THE IVORY, FOOD GRAINS, AND MANGROVE POLES THAT MAINTAINED THE VITALITY OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ECONOMY⁷. MERCHANDISE THAT DEPENDED ON *LABOR* FOR PRODUCTION, ESPECIALLY CLOVES, WERE BOOMING IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. AS A RESULT, IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURIES, ELITE OMANIS INVESTED HEAVILY IN PLANTATIONS IN ZANZIBAR. AT FIRST THIS SEEMED SO SUCCESSFUL THAT THE OMANI SULTAN *SAID BIN SULTAN* EVEN MOVED HIS CAPITAL TO ZANZIBAR IN 1840. FOLLOWING HIS DEATH IN 1856, *BRITISH AUTHORITIES* OVERSAW THE PARTITION OF ZANZIBAR FROM OMAN, OFFICIALLY SEVERING THEIR POLITICAL UNITY.

LET'S WRITE A NEW STORY...

IN THE FOLLOWING STORY OF CATASTROPHIC BETRAYAL AND EPIC COURAGE, THE SWAHILI HERO *LIONOGO* SETS OUT TO SAVE *ZANZIBAR* FROM ITS ENEMIES AND REDISCOVER HIS *OMANI* ROOTS. BUT *LIONOGO* NEEDS YOUR HELP IN COMPLETING HIS STORY. HOW MUCH POWER CAN ONE MAN OR WOMAN HAVE IN THE FACE OF ECONOMIC BOOM AND BUST AND POLITICAL INTRIGUE? HOW WOULD THE *SUNBIRD* HAVE EXPERIENCED THE LONG ABSENCE OF HER FATHER, OR ENVISIONED HER ROLE AS A BRAVE YOUNG WOMAN FROM OMAN? STUDY THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERS, AND OPEN YOUR

IMAGINATION TO THE REGION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN...

4 Engong Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Geneology and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), xxi.

5 Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 1516.

6 Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 19.

7 Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 21.

REMIXING MYTHOLOGY: THE CREATION OF A HERO

IN THE SWAHILI STORIES I READ OF *LIONGO*, HE WAS PORTRAYED AS A *SCOUNDREL*; A BULLY ARROGANT AND RUDE BLESSED WITH STRENGTH AND NEAR INVULNERABILITY, A THORN IN HIS PEOPLE'S SIDE. IN MANY WAYS, HE DESERVED TO BE DEFEATED BY THE COPPER NEEDLE. HE HAD IT COMING...

THAT WAS MY FIRST IMPRESSION WHEN I STARTED CREATING THIS PROJECT. AS I WAS READING THROUGH THE INITIAL RESEARCH SENT, THE STORY OF *LIONGO* KEPT SPEAKING TO ME. I COULDN'T AVOID IT. HE KEPT CREEPING INTO MY THOUGHTS, SINGING THE SONG HE SANG TO HIS MOTHER SO THAT HE COULD BE LIBERATED FROM CAPTIVITY. HE BEGGED... NAY... DEMANDED THAT HIS STORY BE TOLD.

WELL, I CAPITULATED AND ALLOWED HIM TO TELL ME HIS TALE... SO, HE DID. AND, WHEN HE WAS FINISHED, I COULD ONLY THINK OF ONE THING:

A CHARACTER LIKE THAT IS *NOT* A HERO. A CHARACTER LIKE THAT IS NO *ROLE MODEL* FOR CHILDREN MUCH LESS ADULTS. A CHARACTER LIKE THAT DOES NOT INSPIRE OTHERS TO BE BETTER THAN THEY ARE.

BUT, *LIONGO* WANTED TO BE A HERO. I WANTED HIM TO BE A HERO. THE WORLD *NEEDS* MORE HEROES. THIS TALE WILL PORTRAY *LIONGO* AS A HERO.

THE WORLD OF *LIONGO* IS INFLUENCED BY THE EAST AFRICAN REGION, WHICH WAS INFLUENCED BY THE CROSS POLLINATION OF CULTURES FROM ACROSS THE *INDIAN OCEAN*, ESPECIALLY THE COUNTRY OF *OMAN* AND THE ARABIC INFLUENCE ON THE EAST AFRICAN REGION. HOWEVER, THE NOTION OF A HERO, A REAL HERO, IS UNIVERSAL. AND, AS I SAID, *LIONGO* NEEDED TO BE A HERO.

SO, I TOOK A SECOND LOOK AT *LIONGO'S* TALE AND TOOK KEY ELEMENTS THAT I THOUGHT WERE CRUCIAL TO THE CHARACTER (I.E. HIS RELATIONSHIP TO *OMAN*, THE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS MOTHER). I DID NOT WANT TO RE-TELL HIS TALE, BUT RATHER CREATE A *SEQUEL* TO THE ORIGINAL STORY. I WANTED TO RE-SHAPE, *RE-MIX* THE MYTH, AND USE THAT RE-MIX TO CRAFT AN *ORIGINAL* TALE.

IN THIS TALE, THE LANDS OF *ZANZIBAR* AND *OMAN* WOULD TAKE ON A MAGICAL QUALITY IN MY TALE. BECOMING REALMS OF FANTASY AND WONDER.

I MADE *LIONGO* A LEADER OF HIS PEOPLE, HE BECAME A MAN WHO JOURNEYED FROM THE VELDTS TO UNITE AND SAVE THIS NEWLY FORMED *BANTU NATION* FROM A GREATER THREAT. HE BECAME A MAN WHO SACRIFICED WHAT WAS PRECIOUS TO HIM, HIS COMPASSION AND HIS FAMILY, TO SAVE A WORLD. THAT SORT OF SACRIFICE WOULD PAY A HEAVY TOLL. THAT SORT OF MAN WOULD BECOME COLD. IN SOME WAYS, THAT SORT OF MAN WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS CRUEL...

IN SHORT, HE WOULD BECOME THE *HARD MAN*.

REMIXING MYTHOLOGY: THE CREATION OF A HERO

BUT, THE MEASURE OF A HERO IS *OVERCOMING* THE OBSTACLES BEFORE HIM. AND, A GREAT HERO, NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL, WOULD NEED *HELP* IN CONQUERING HIS ENEMIES AND TO RECLAIM THAT WHICH HE HAD LOST...

WHO BETTER TO ASSIST SUCH A MAN THAN HIS OWN CHILD... HIS *DAUGHTER*?

AS *DON QUIXOTE* HAD *SANCHO PANZA*, AS *SHERLOCK HOLMES* HAD *DR. WATSON*, AS *BATMAN* HAD *ROBIN*, THE HARD MAN WOULD HAVE HIS *SUNBIRD*. AND THAT *SUNBIRD*, WHO WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS *REHEMA* WOULD PROVE TO BE THE LYNCHPIN THAT WAS MISSING IN MY STORY.

FINALLY, *LIONGO*'S NAME WOULD NEED AN UPGRADE AS WELL. *LIONOGO* WOULD BE THE EVOLUTION OF *LIONGO*, THE FINAL TRANSFORMATION FROM *SCOUNDREL* TO *HERO*.

SO, WAS *LIONGO* A JERK? YES. BUT, HE HAS GROWN. HE HAS MATURED. HE HAS EVOLVED. HE HAS BECOME *LIONOGO*, *THE HARD MAN*...

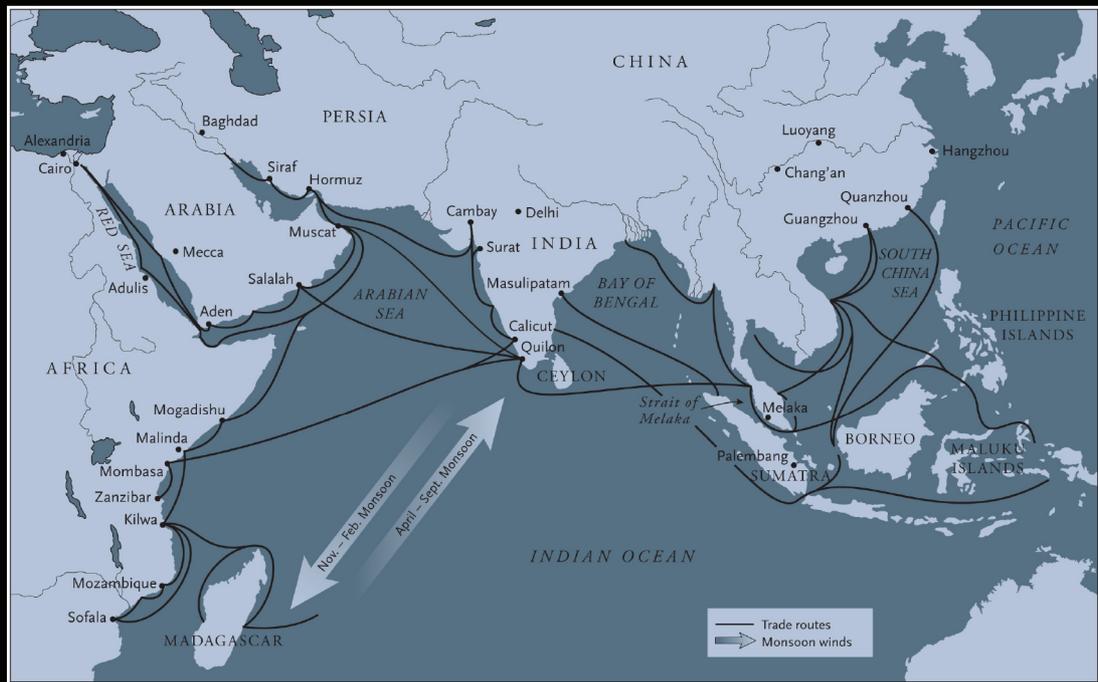
AND, THE HARD MAN IS A *HERO* THROUGH AND THROUGH.

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THE SWAHILI COAST



THE WORLD OF UONGO

East Africa has a rich history of kingdoms and trade networks that are known to historians. In fact, it is home to one of the earliest known kingdoms in the world—Nubia (also known as Karmah and Kush). Other kingdoms that developed in East Africa include Aksum (about 1st to 10th century CE), the Buganda Kingdom (14th to 20th century CE), Rwanda (15th to 19th centuries), and the Swahili coast city-states (11th to 16th century CE).

Nubia, located in the Sudanese Nile river valley, is the earliest of these kingdoms, dating back to 5,000 years ago. It was a region well-known to the Egyptians, rivaling the early Egyptian civilizations in power and wealth.

Aksum was a large empire that was located in what is today Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is remembered for its splendid gold coins, stone monuments (some surpassing those of the Egyptians' in size), and elaborate palaces. During the 4th century, King Ezana adopted Christianity as the religion of the empire. Later in the 6th century, Aksumite kings extended their empire as far as southern Arabia for a time. Aksum was an important part of extensive international trade networks.

Historians say that Arab commerce with the East African coast could go back as far as the 2nd century BCE. East African trade with India came later, around the 7th century CE. As a consequence of the international trade that developed in this region, markets became focused on urban centers along the coast with concentrations of wealth and power. Some of the most prominent market towns that developed are Mogadishu, Shanga, Kilwa, and Mombasa. The merging of African, Arab, and Indian peoples along the East African coast (from southern Somalia to northern Mozambique) produced a unique language (Kiswahili) and culture (Swahili), which still exist today. Swahili is spoken today throughout East and Central Africa, but the majority of Swahili speakers reside in Kenya and Tanzania.

DRAMATIS
PERSONAE

LIONOGO, THE HARD MAN

LIONOGO IS THE ANCIENT HERO OF SWAHILI MYTH. HIS MOTHER IS *DZVIAGURU*, THE ELDER OF THE EARTH, WHERE HE DERIVES HIS STRENGTH. HE IS A MIGHTY WARRIOR, INCREDIBLY TALL AND NEARLY INVULNERABLE.

LIONOGO SACRIFICED HIS *COMPASSION* FOR THE POWER OF THE ELDERS, THE *VOICE* AND THE *SONG*. HE WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT THE *MAJI* AND FREE THE *BANTU NATION* FROM THE GRIP OF *JOK*, THE SERPENT, AND HIS BOULTING Hordes.

THE SOGA CALL HIM *THE HARD MAN* WHOSE HEART IS STONE.

HIS ENVIOUS NEPHEW, *HEMEDI*, WOUNDED HIM WITH A *COPPER NEEDLE* DIPPED IN POISON. AS THE POISON BURNED IN LIONOGO'S VEINS, HE KNELT, *LEANING* AGAINST HIS BOW SO THAT HIS DEATH WOULD NOT BE SEEN.

HOWEVER, LIONOGO WAS NOT DEAD, MERELY *SLEEPING*. AS A SON OF THE EARTH, SO LONG AS HIS FEET TOUCHED GROUND, HE COULD NOT TRULY *PERISH*.

NOW, THE SERPENT STRIKES AGAIN, REVIVED BY *REHEMA*, THE *SUNBIRD*, LIONOGO MUST FIND HIS VOICE AND *SING* THE SONG THAT WOULD FREE *ZANZIBAR* AND THE *BANTU NATION* FROM THE SERPENT'S CLUTCHES.

HE MUST RETURN TO THE LAND OF *OMAN* TO RECLAIM THE *VOICE* THAT WILL BRING *SALVATION* TO BOTH WORLDS.



REHEMA, THE SUNBIRD

SHE WAS AN ORPHAN, A BEAUTIFUL LITTLE GEM FROM THE FABLED LAND OF OMAN. NO ONE KNEW HER NAME WHEN SHE APPEARED AT THE GATES OF ZANZIBAR. SHE HAD NONE. STILL, THE ELDERS WELCOMED HER WITH OPEN ARMS AND THEY CALLED HER *BELOVED*.

SHE BECAME HANDMAIDEN TO *DZIVAGURU*, THE EARTH MOTHER WHO TREATED HER MORE LIKE A DAUGHTER THAN A SERVANT. SHE WAS READY TO LAY DOWN HER LIFE FOR HER MISTRESS WHEN THE MAJI STORMED THE GATES OF ZANZIBAR AND *JOK, THE SERPENT*, SEIZED THE BRIDGE. BUT, *DZIVAGURU* HAD A DIFFERENT *DESTINY* IN MIND FOR HER YOUNG CHARGE.

THE EARTH MOTHER GAVE THE YOUNG SUNBIRD A *VIAL*, A *BOW*, QUIVER OF *ARROWS* AND A *SCIMITAR*. ALL OF THE WEAPONS WERE ENCHANTED, ALL OF THEM BELONGING TO *LIONOGO*.

"GO TO MY SON'S RESTING PLACE," *DZIVAGURU* SAID. "POUR THE CONTENTS OF THE VIAL DOWN HIS THROAT. TELL THE HARD MAN THAT HIS MOTHER HAS NEED OF HIM.

AND SO, THE *SUNBIRD* EMBARKED ON HER MISSION, NARROWLY ESCAPING AS *BEIT AL-AJAIB*, THE HOUSE OF WONDERS, WAS BREACHED AND THE FORCES OF THE SERPENT OVERWHELMED THE ELDERS. SHE DESCENDED INTO THE *BANTU NATION*, ALREADY CHANGING FROM THE SERPENT'S *VICTORY* IN ZANZIBAR.

SHE DOES NOT KNOW THAT THIS QUEST WOULD GIVE HER A NAME, *REHEMA*, AND HER NAME WILL BE MORE THAN JUST THE LITTLE SUNBIRD'S *IDENTITY*. IT WILL BE THE WORLD'S *SALVATION*.



JOK, THE SERPENT

JOK WAS A **SORCERER** OF GREAT KNOWLEDGE AND IMMENSE POWER. HE TAMED THE WERE-BEASTS, THE **BOUTLINGIN**, AND CREATED A FEARSOME ARMY. YET, THIS WAS NOT ENOUGH. HE WANTED **MORE**.

HE DISCOVERED THE POWER OF THE **QARIN**, THE BLACKEST OF MAGICS, AND BECAME ITS MASTER. WITH THE POWER OF THESE SINISTER FORCES AT HIS FINGERTIPS, HE SET OUT TO **CONQUER** THE **BANTU NATION** AND **ZANZIBAR**, THE REALM OF WONDERS.

THE **SERPENT** AND HIS **BOUTLINGIN** **ATTACKED** THE BANTU REGION LAYING WASTE TO ALL THAT OPPOSED HIM. ONLY A **HARD MAN** WITH THE **VOICE** OF THE SWAHILI AND THE **HORN OF NGAÏ** WAS ABLE TO TURN THE TIDE BY **LIMITING** THE BANTU NATION AND ZANZIBAR. **LIONOGO** DEFEATED THE **MAJI** AND CAST THE SERPENT OUT OF ZANZIBAR AND THE BANTU NATION TO THE DARK LANDS OF **KHOISAN**, CURSED TO SLITHER THE EARTH AS A **SHADOW** FOR ETERNITY.

THOUGH NOW ONLY A **SHADOW**, THE SERPENT IS STILL VERY POWERFUL. JOK IS THE **DARK THOUGHTS** THAT REST DEEP WITHIN THE **SOUL**. HE WILL RE-ENTER ZANZIBAR AND SHAPE IT IN **HIS** IMAGE. HE ONLY NEEDS TO FIND A **MORTAL** WHOSE **HATE** MATCHES JOK'S OWN BLACK HEART TO SHAPE INTO THE **WEAPON** BY WHICH THE SERPENT WILL **CONQUER** THE BANTU NATION AND ZANZIBAR.



THE MAJI

HIS NAME WAS **HEMEDI**, THE NEPHEW OF THE GREAT **LIONOGO**, THE **HARD MAN** OF THE **SOGA** AND DEFENDER OF THE **BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS**. WHAT DID THAT MAKE HEMEDI? HE WOULD NEVER WALK THROUGH THE **GATES OF WONDER** AS A HERO OF ZANZIBAR. THIS MADE THE BOY VERY JEALOUS OF HIS UNCLE.

AND SO IT HAPPENED THAT THE **JOK**, THE **SERPENT**, APPROACHED THIS ENVIOUS YOUNG MAN IN THE **GARDEN OF DREAMS** AND MADE A PROPOSITION: DESTROY **LIONOGO**, AND HEMEDI WOULD BE HAILED A **HERO** DELIVERING THE **SOGA** FROM THE STERN HAND OF THE **HARD MAN**.

HEMEDI FASHIONED A **COPPER NEEDLE** DIPPED IN **POISON** TO SCRATCH HIS UNCLE. WITH THAT, THE YOUNG WARRIOR SOUGHT TO POISON **LIONOGO** WHILE HE SLEPT.

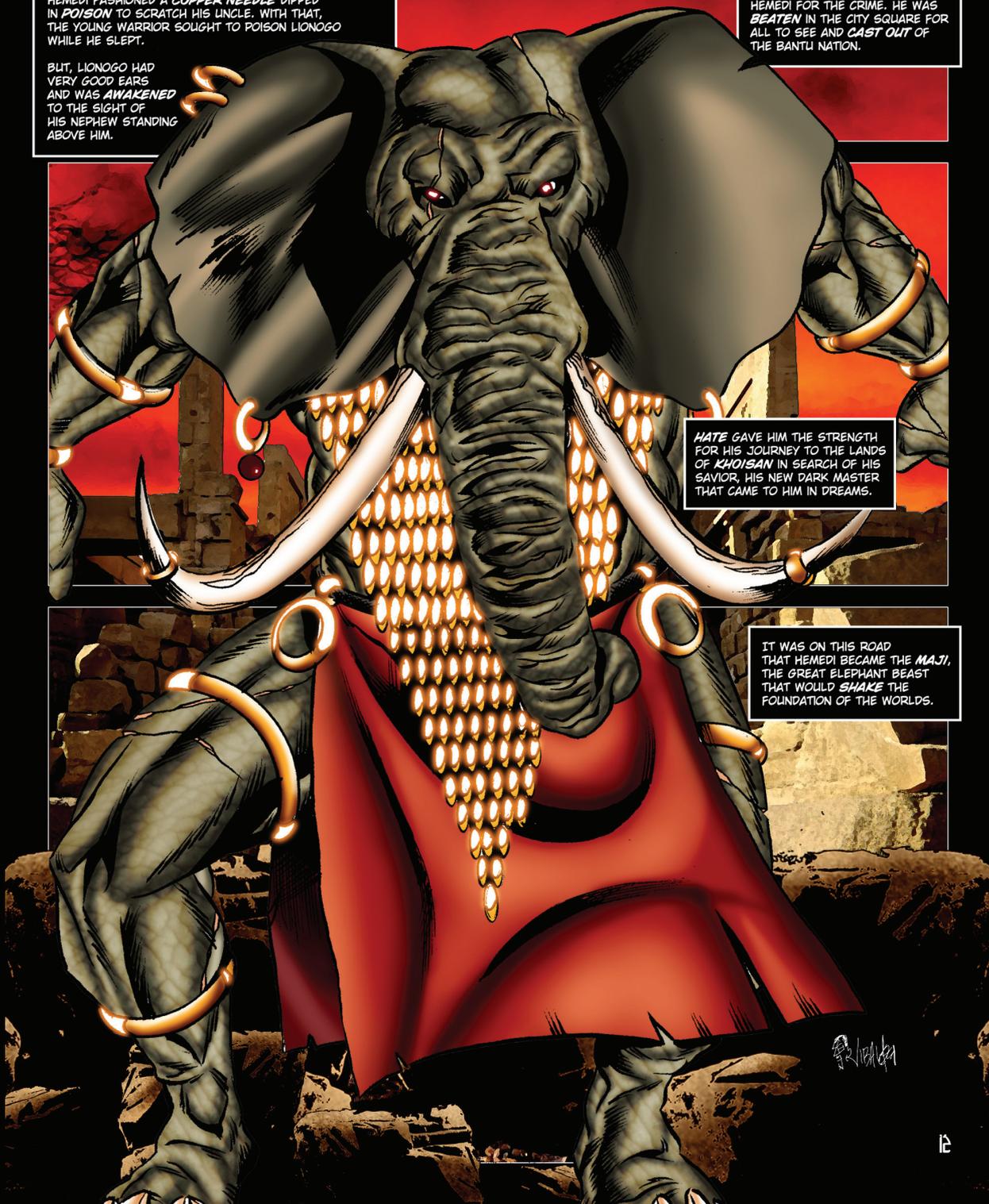
BUT, **LIONOGO** HAD VERY GOOD EARS AND WAS AWAKENED TO THE SIGHT OF HIS NEPHEW STANDING ABOVE HIM.

A **FIGHT** ENSUED, BUT HEMEDI WAS NO MATCH FOR **LIONOGO'S** STRENGTH. HOWEVER, HE MANAGED TO KEEP HIS **GRIP** ON THE **COPPER NEEDLE**. THE YOUNG WARRIOR **SCRATCHED** HIS UNCLE'S ARM WITH THE **COPPER NEEDLE** AND STAGGERED OUT OF **LIONOGO'S** BEDCHAMBER.

THE **SOGA COUNCIL** **ARRESTED** HEMEDI FOR THE CRIME. HE WAS **BEATEN** IN THE CITY SQUARE FOR ALL TO SEE AND **CAST OUT** OF THE **BANTU NATION**.

HATE GAVE HIM THE STRENGTH FOR HIS JOURNEY TO THE LANDS OF **KHOISAN** IN SEARCH OF HIS SAVIOR, HIS NEW DARK MASTER THAT CAME TO HIM IN DREAMS.

IT WAS ON THIS ROAD THAT HEMEDI BECAME THE **MAJI**, THE GREAT ELEPHANT BEAST THAT WOULD **SHAKE** THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLDS.



THE ELDERS OF ZANZIBAR

THE ELDERS OF ZANZIBAR ARE FOUR EXCEPTIONAL MORTALS THAT WATCH OVER THE BANTU NATION AND ZANZIBAR, THE REALM OF WONDER. EACH ONE A MASTER, CONTROLLING A DIFFERENT ELEMENTAL ASPECT OF CREATION. THOUGH THEIR PERSONALITIES ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR STATION, THEY ARE GENERALLY BENEVOLENT AND HELP GUIDE THE WORLDS. THEY ARE:

MUNUME: THE CLOUD MAIDEN
SHE CAN BE WARM AND SOFT LIKE A GENTLE BREEZE OR AS HARD AND FIERCE AS A HURRICANE TEARING THROUGH THE WORLDS. MUNUME CONTROLS THE WINDS THAT HELP THE DHOWS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN THAT SEPARATES THE BANTU NATION AND ZANZIBAR FROM THE FABLED LAND OF OMAN.

ILAT: THE LORD OF STORMS
BLUSTERING, BOISTEROUS, LOUD, GREGARIOUS AND MERCURIAL, THESE ARE SOME OF THE WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE THE LORD OF STORMS. POWERFUL OF BUILD AND A FIERCE WARRIOR IN HIS OWN RIGHT, ILAT IS MASTER OF THE RAIN THAT NOURISHES THE BANTU NATION AND PROVIDES SAFE PASSAGE BETWEEN THE WORLDS.

WAI: THE SUN KING
INTENSE OF GAZE AND OF LITTLE HUMOR, WAI CONTROLS THE POWER OF THE SUN THAT SHINES OVER THE BANTU NATION AND ZANZIBAR. HE ENSURES THAT LIGHT REACHES THE CROPS SO THAT THEY MAY GROW AND WARMS THE BODIES OF THE WORLDS SO THAT THEY MAY ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF CREATION.

DZIVAGURU: THE EARTH MOTHER
DZIVAGURU IS THE ELDER OF THE EARTH PROVIDING NOURISHMENT TO THE WORLDS, GIVING THE TREES THAT BEAR FRUIT A PLACE TO REST AND GROW. IT IS HER DUTY TO BIRTH HEROES THAT WILL PROTECT THE WORLDS FROM THE FORCES OF DARKNESS.

THIS IS WHY SHE GAVE BIRTH TO LIONOGO...

HE IS NOT DONE WITH PROTECTING THE WORLDS.

THE SOGA & THE MALAKIA

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THERE WAS NO **BANTU NATION**. THERE WERE DIFFERENT VILLAGES EACH WITH THEIR OWN **CULTURE**, THEIR OWN WAY OF LIVING IN THE WORLDS. THE **LAND** WAS LUSH AND **GREEN**, THE **HUNTING** WAS **PLENTIFUL** AND THERE WAS NO NEED FOR WAR...

THEN, THE **BOULTINGIN** HORDES CAME LED BY **JOK**, **THE SERPENT**, RIDING **THE MAJI**, THE GREAT BEAST, AND REIGNED **TERROR** OVER THE LAND.

ALL SEEMED TO BE LOST UNTIL A MAN WITH THE **VOICE OF THE SWAHILI** AND THE **HORN OF NGAÏ** EMERGED FROM THE WILDERNESS. HE GATHERED THE STRONGEST MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE CONQUERED TRIBES, **PAINTED THEIR FACES** WITH THE MARK OF **JUSTICE** AND **TRAINED** THEM IN THE WAYS OF WAR. THESE FIERCE WARRIORS UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF **THE HARD MAN** BECAME KNOWN AS THE **SOGA**.

TOGETHER IN ARMS, THE TRIBES BECAME THE MIGHTY **BANTU NATION** AND, WITH THE HELP OF THE **HARD MAN**, KNOWN AS **LIONOGO**, DROVE THE SERPENT AND HIS MINIONS BACK TO THE DARK LANDS OF **KHOISAN**.

THE **MALAKIA**, ALSO CALLED THE **SUNBIRDS** BY THE BANTU, ARE AN ORDER OF WARRIOR **ANGELS** DEDICATED TO PROTECTING THE **BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS**, HOME OF THE **ELDERS OF ZANZIBAR**. THEY ANSWERED **LIONOGO'S** CALL AND FOUGHT WITH THE **SOGA** AGAINST THE FORCES OF THE SERPENT.

FROM THAT MOMENT ON, THE **SOGA** AND **MALAKIA** FORMED AN EVERLASTING **ALLIANCE** WITH THE **SOGA** PROTECTING **SHANGA**, THE BANTU ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS WHILE THE **MALAKIA** DEFEND **BEIT AL-AJAIB**, ZANZIBAR'S ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDGE.

THE BOLLITINGIN

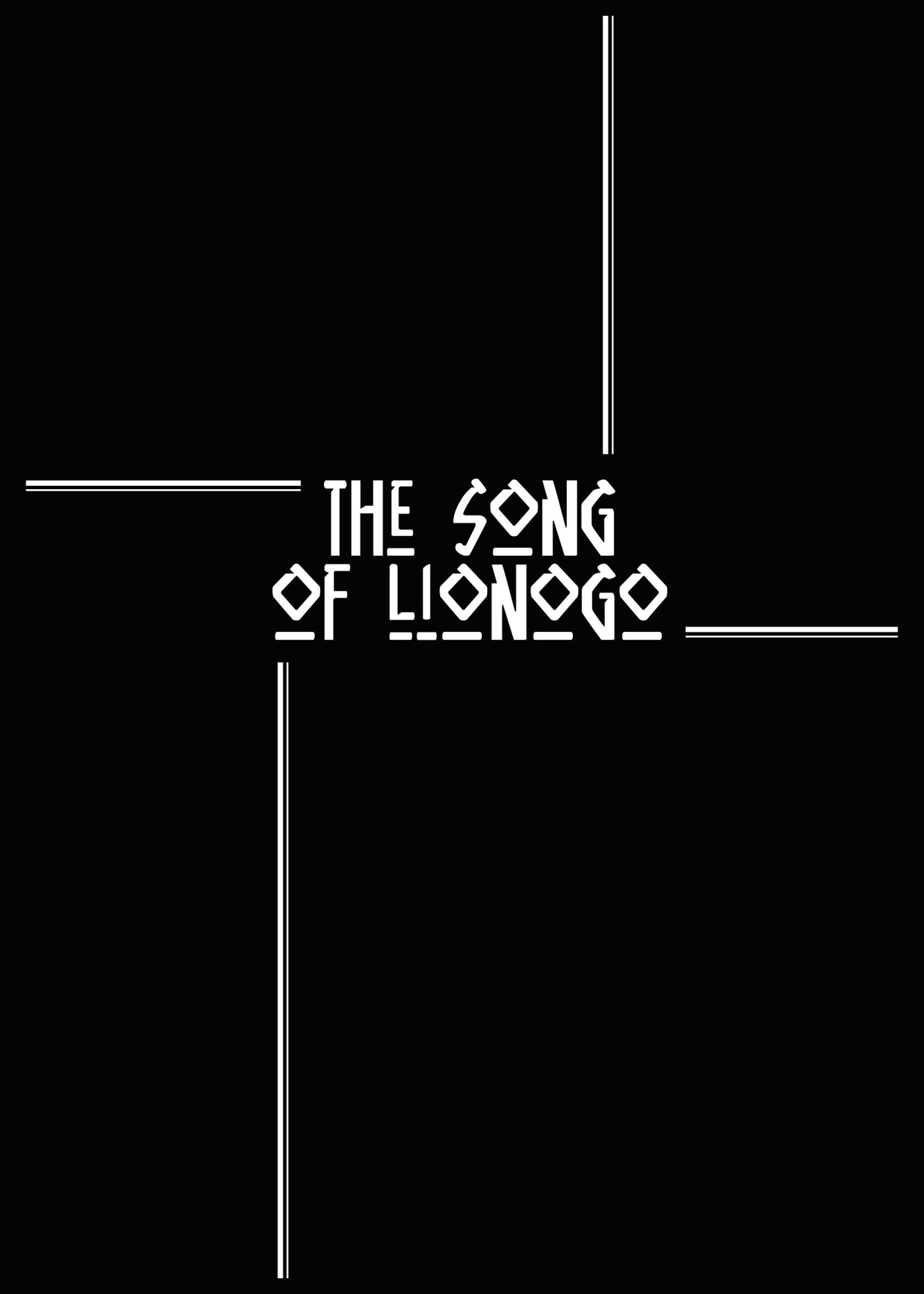
THE LANDS OF *KHOISAN* ARE HOME TO THE BOLLITINGIN, THE HALF-HYENA MONSTERS THAT ARE THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES.

THESE TREACHEROUS BEASTS ARE THE *FOOT SOLDIERS* OF *JOK, THE SERPENT*, MASTER OF THE *QARIN*.

NOW, A BOLLITINGIN IS A *SAVAGE* AND *CRAFTY* THING. THOUGH *WIRY*, IT IS VERY *FAST* AND *STRONG*.

ITS CLAWS AND FANGS ARE NATURAL TOOLS OF DESTRUCTION. PUT A WEAPON, SUCH AS A *MAMBELE* OR *RINGU* IN THEIR HANDS, THE AVERAGE MAN WOULD STAND *LITTLE* CHANCE AGAINST SUCH A CREATURE.





THE SONG
OF LIONOGO



LIONOGO, LEADER OF
THE *SOGA* AND KEEPER
OF THE *HORN OF NGAI*,
WAS GONE.

THE SCION OF *SWAHILI* THAT
SACRIFICED HIS *COMPASSION*
FOR *STRENGTH*...

THE HERO WHO RETURNED
FROM *OMAN* WITH THE KEY
TO THE WORLDS' SALVATION...

THE WARRIOR WHO *UNIFIED*
THE WORLDS AGAINST
JOK, *THE SERPENT* AND
THE *BOULTINGIN* HORDE...

THE *HARD MAN* THAT
DEFEATED THE *MAJI* AND MADE
THE *BANTU NATION* STRONG...

WAS LAID *LOW*
BY A YOUNG BOY
WITH A *POISONED*
COPPER NEEDLE.



THE SOGA CAST OUT THE CULPRIT, HEMEDI, KIN TO THE HARD MAN, CREDITED FOR LIONOGO'S DEMISE.

THEY HAD *BEATEN* HIM IN THE CITY SQUARE AND LEFT HIM LIKE SO MUCH REFUSE OUTSIDE THE GATES OF SHANGA.

I WAS CAST OUT BY THOSE WHO SHOULD BE CALLING ME A *HERO*...

I WILL BRING THE WALLS OF SHANGA DOWN AROUND MY *ENEMIES*.

I WOULD STORM THE *GATES OF ZANZIBAR* ITSELF AND DEFEAT THE *ELDERS*, FORCING THEM TO OBEY *MY WILL!*

BROKEN, WRACKED WITH PAIN, HEMEDI TRAVELED THE VELDT TO THE LANDS OF *KHOISAN*, HOME TO THE *BOULTINGIN* AND THEIR MASTER, *JOK, THE SERPENT*.

HIS *HATE*, THE FUEL THAT ALLOWED HIM TO *ENDURE*.



I WOULD GIVE MY VERY *SOUL* AND
PLEDGE UNENDING *ALLEGIANCE* TO
ONE THAT COULD GRANT SUCH A WISH.

THAT IS
THE CORRECT
ANSWER.

THE *SERPENT* RAISED HIS
LEFT HAND TO THE AIR AND
BEGAN TO SING IN A LOW
AND OMINOUS *VOICE*, CALLING
UPON HIS DARK *POWER*.

RAGE KEPT THE BOY ALIVE
AS HE FELT THE DARK POWER
SURGE THROUGH HIS BODY.

BONES *CRACKED* AND REFORMED
AS MUSCLES *SWELLED*, ALMOST
BURSTING WITH POWER.



HIS SKIN TURNED GREY, *TOUGH*
AND *HARD* ENOUGH TO FEND OFF
ARROW, SPEAR AND SWORD.

HIS *SCREAMS* BECAME
A THUNDEROUS BELLOW
AS TUSKS *BURST* THROUGH
THE SKIN, EARS *FLATTENED*
GROWING LONG AND HIS NOSE
BECAME AN IMPOSING *TRUNK*.

HEMEDI, THE BOY,
WAS NO MORE.

ONLY THE *MAJI*,
THE GREAT ELEPHANT,
REMAINED.

NOW, THE SERPENT
HAD HIS *SPEAR*...

HE POINTED HIS WEAPON
TOWARD *SHANGA*.

WITH *LIONOGO* GONE, THE *SOGA*
WERE NO MATCH FOR THE *MAJI*
AND THE *BOULTINGIN* HORDES.



THE SWARM OF TERRORS
TORE THROUGH THE *SOGA*'S
DEFENSES LIKE SO MUCH OLD
AND BRITTLE *DRUM SKIN*.

JOK HAD HIS *ARMY*, LED BY
HIS GREAT BEAST, TO STORM
THE *GATES OF ZANZIBAR*.

THE FORCES OF THE SERPENT STORMED THE BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS.

THE ELDERS OF ZANZIBAR SENT THE MALAKIA, THE ANGELIC WARRIORS ALSO KNOWN AS SUNBIRDS, TO DEFEND ZANZIBAR.

THE SUNBIRDS FOUGHT VALIANTLY, BUT IT WAS TO NO AVAIL.

THE SERPENT MEANS TO TAKE ZANZIBAR!

HE WILL SHAPE THE WORLDS IN HIS IMAGE!

HIS BEAST IS TOO POWERFUL... WE ARE LOST!

THE WORLDS STILL HAVE A CHAMPION.

DZIVAGURU, THE EARTH MOTHER CALLED FOR THE HARBINGER OF HER SON, THE HARD MAN'S RETURN.

A YOUNG SUNBIRD, DZIVAGURU'S HANDMAIDEN, ANSWERED HER SUMMONS.

GO TO MY SON'S RESTING PLACE, BELOVED.

TELL THE HARD MAN THAT HIS MOTHER HAS NEED OF HIM.

DZIVAGURU HANDED THE SUNBIRD A VIAL FILLED WITH A POTION.

SHE ALSO GAVE THE YOUNG GIRL A BOW, QUIVER OF ARROWS, A SCIMITAR AND LIONOGO'S TREASURED OMANI KHANJAR DAGGER. ALL OF THE WEAPONS WERE ENCHANTED.

I AM READY TO LAY DOWN MY LIFE FOR ZANZIBAR AND MY OMANI HERITAGE!

THE MALAKIA EMBARKED ON HER MISSION, STEALING AWAY FROM THE BATTLE, NARROWLY ESCAPING AS BEIT AL-AJAIB, THE HOUSE OF WONDERS, FELL.

SHE DESCENDED INTO THE REALM OF THE BANTU NATION, ALREADY CORRUPTED BY THE SERPENT'S VICTORY IN ZANZIBAR.

SHE HAD TO HIDE HER IDENTITY AS THIS NEW AND FRIGHTENING REALITY HELD NEITHER REFUGE NOR SOLACE FOR HER.

THE SONGBIRD TRAVELLED THE TREACHEROUS TERRAIN ARRIVING AT LIONOGO'S FINAL RESTING PLACE.

SHE CAME UPON LIONOGO'S BODY, PERFECTLY PRESERVED.

THE SONGBIRD PULLED THE VIAL FROM HER ROBES, *POURED* THE GOLDEN LIQUID DOWN THE SLEEPING WARRIOR'S THROAT AND *WAITED* FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY.

STILL NOTHING.

AS SHE TURNED TO WALK AWAY, A STRONG *HAND* GRIPPED HER ARM. THE EYES OF *LIONOGO*, STARING WITH A PIERCING GAZE, GREETED HER.

YOU HAVE BEEN *ASLEEP* FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

THE ELDERS HAVE *NEED* OF YOU.

WILL YOU *HONOR* THEIR REQUEST, OR MUST I *RETURN* WITH NEWS THAT YOU ARE STILL *THE HARD MAN* OF LEGEND WE WERE *WARNED* ABOUT?

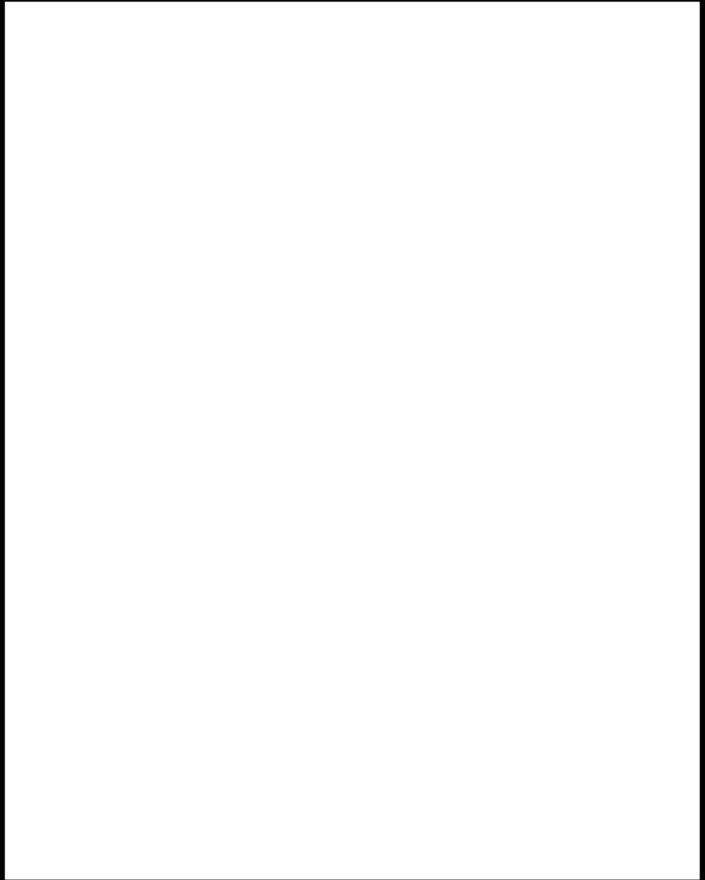
SO, ZANZIBAR HAS *FALLEN*, AND ONLY A *SONG* CAN SAVE IT... AM I RIGHT, GIRL?

WE MUST CROSS THE OCEAN TO *OMAN*. IT IS WHERE WE WILL FIND THE *VOICE* AND END THIS MADNESS.

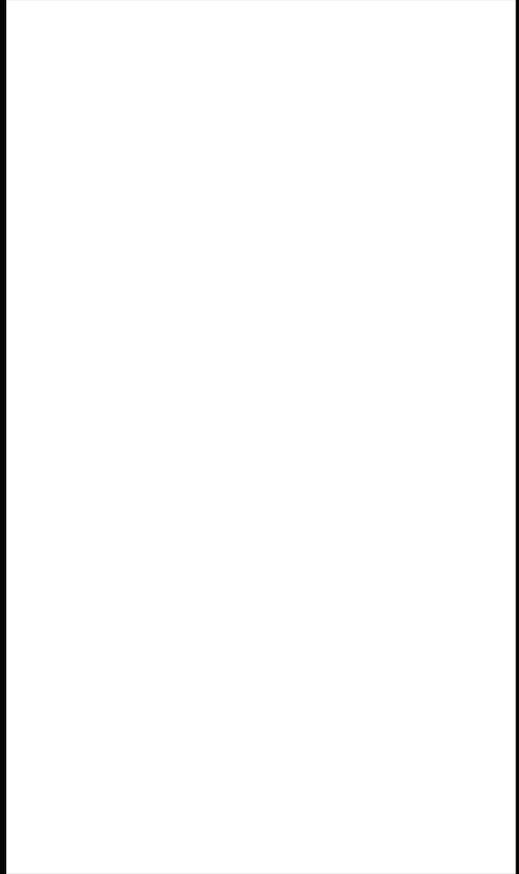
LIONOGO AND THE SONGBIRD EMERGED FROM THE TOMB TO STEP INTO A WORLD HE FOUGHT SO HARD TO *PREVENT*.

HE TASTED THE SERPENT'S *INFLUENCE* IN THE AIR. IT WAS *BITTER*. THOUGH LIONOGO *WITNESSED* THE DARK PLACE WITH EYES OF STEELED RESOLVE...

How Will The serpent try to stop our heroes?



What is the secret Lionogo is hiding from The sunbird?



THE SUNBIRD AWOKE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO A MELODY SHE HAD NOT HEARD SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD.

THE VOICE WAS RASPY AND STRUGGLED WITH A NOTE OR TWO, BUT STILL SO BEAUTIFUL, SO SAD.

WE MUST GO HOME TO OMAN...

THIS WAS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE ONCE,

THE WORLD, THE SKY, THE SEA, THE PLAINS, THE BANTU PEOPLE... IT WAS A PLACE OF WONDER AND JOY, THE GEM OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THIS WAS A WORLD THAT NEEDED TO BE PROTECTED, AND I WOULD SACRIFICE ANYTHING, EVERYTHING, TO KEEP THIS WORLD SAFE.

I HAD TO PAY A PRICE FOR STRENGTH. THAT PRICE WAS MY COMPASSION.

AT THE TIME, I THOUGHT IT A SMALL SUM TO BE A GREAT WARRIOR AND TO DEFEND MY HOME.

I BECAME HARDER, CRUELER. MY WIFE WAS CARRYING MY CHILD AND MY COLD Demeanor PUSHED HER AWAY...

MY WIFE WAS OMANI. OUR DAUGHTER, WOULD BE OF OMAN AS WELL...

I SING FOR THEM...

I SING FOR YOU... MY REHEMA.

YOU GAVE UP SO MUCH FOR THIS WORLD.





THE ROCKS *SHIMMERED*
BEFORE THE SUNBIRD'S EYES.

THE PEBBLES BEGAN TO FALL AWAY
LIKE THE *SWEAT* FROM A COOL DRINK,
GROWING IN INTENSITY AS *STONE* FLOWED
LIKE *WATER* AND DRAINED INTO THE OCEAN.

A MAJESTIC *DHOW*
SAT IN THE DOCK,
SAILS UNFURLED,
READY FOR TRAVEL.

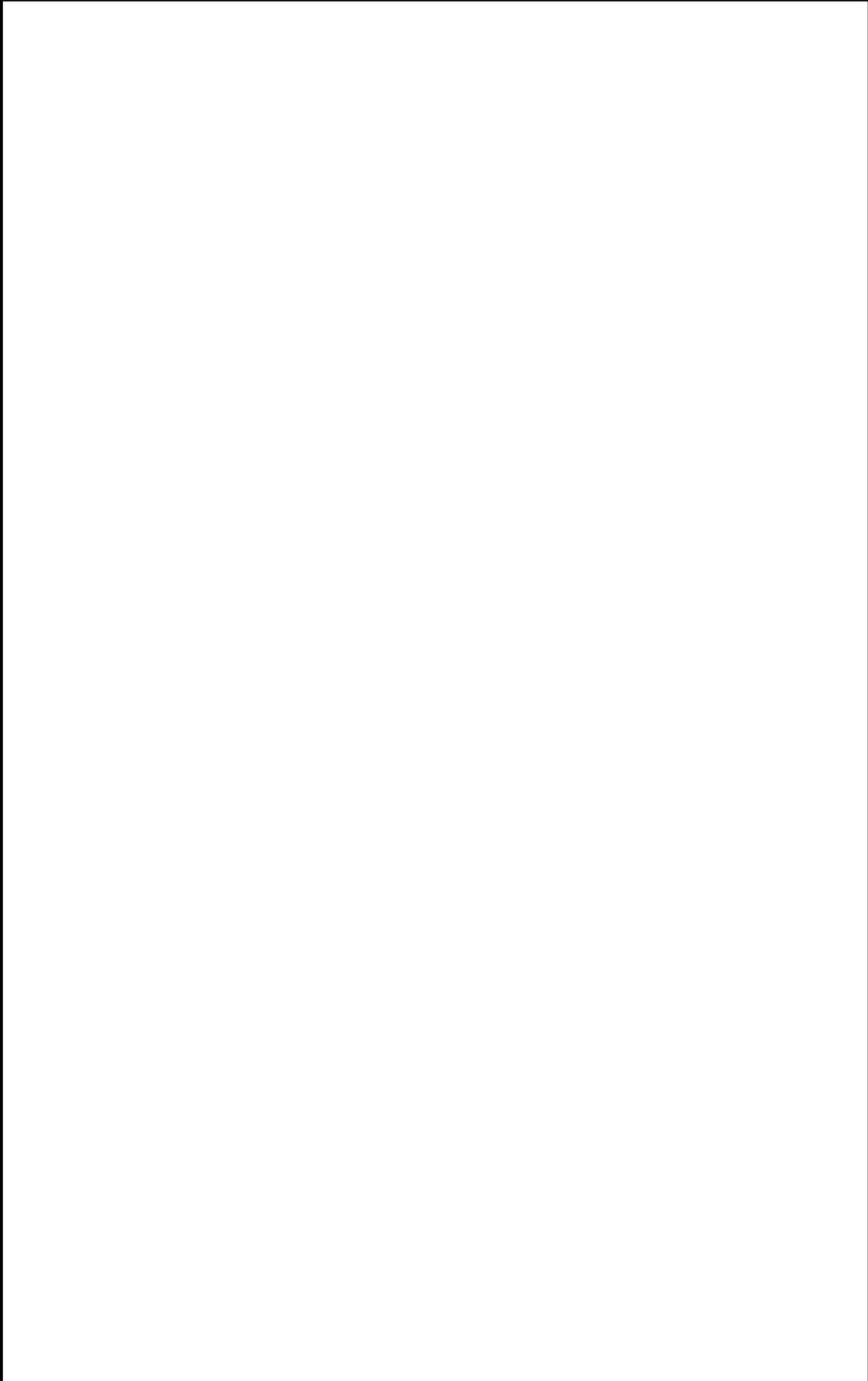
AH, MY LITTLE
SUNBIRD...

YOU SHOULD
KNOW BY NOW
THAT *ANYTHING*
IS POSSIBLE.

UNKNOWN TO THE HEROES,
JOK *DISCOVERED* THEIR MISSION...

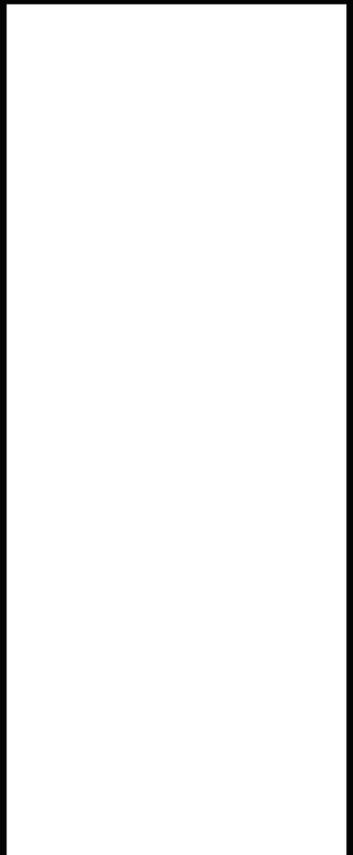
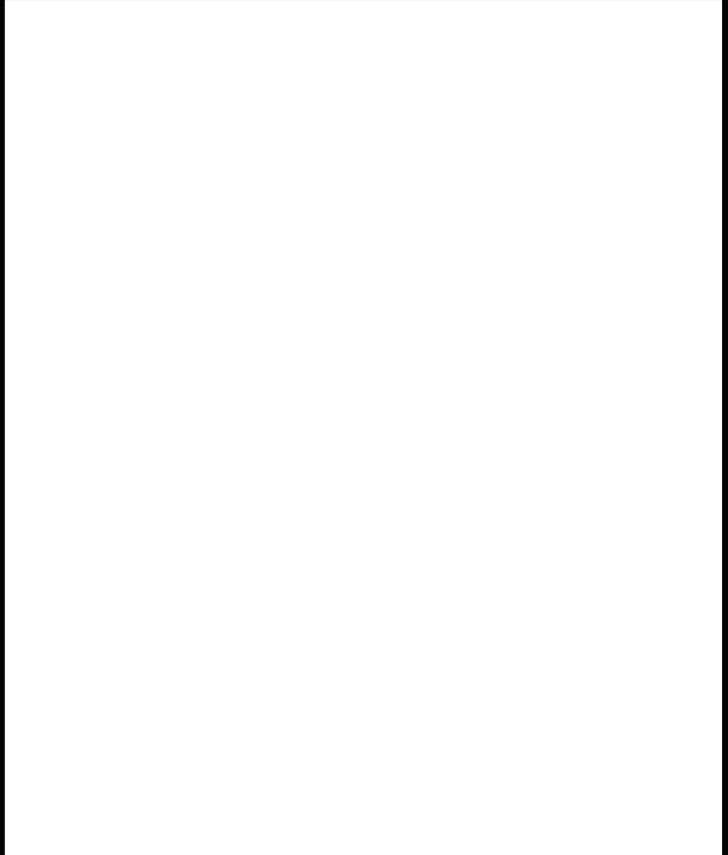
WHILE IN THE WATER, THE *DHOW*
WAS *ATTACKED* BY THE SERPENT'S
FOUL *MAGICKS*...

Liongo and The sunbird are attacked! Who, or what, attacks them?



Create a comic book page!

Liongo needs The sunbird to be free... What does he give her to escape?



REHEMA...

HE GAVE HER A NAME...
AS ANY FATHER WOULD
TO HIS CHILD.

SHE OPENED HER EYES
AS IF IT WERE THE *FIRST* TIME
THAT SHE SAW THE WORLDS.

LIONOGO WAS GONE,
LOST IN THE ATTACK.

I TURN *NOT*
MY BACK IF EVIL IS
BEFORE ME.

AND MY *HEART*
FACES IT AND *SEEKS* EVIL
WHEREVER IT IS.

I WILL STRIVE
FOR RANK, HAVING *RANK*,
STRIVING AGAINST WRONG AND
WRONG, TIL' MY *SOUL*
MEETS ITS FATE.

AND, I WILL
NOT FAIL YOU,
FATHER.

HE *ALLOWED* HIMSELF TO
BE TAKEN TO MAKE SURE
THAT REHEMA WOULD BE
SAFE. HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF
TO BRING HER HOME.

OMAN.

REHEMA KNEW WHAT
SHE HAD TO DO.

REHEMA JOURNEYED
TO *AYBUT AL ALMAL*,
THE BIRTHPLACE OF
HER ANCESTORS.

ONCE THERE, SHE REPEATED
THE *SONG OF LIONOGO*,
THE SONG SHE HEARD DURING
THEIR TRAVELS.

THE ANCESTORS HEARD
THEIR DAUGHTER'S VOICE
AND *BLESSED* HER WITH
THE POWER OF *NGAI*...

REHEMA BECAME THE *HORN*.
SHE WAS NOW THE *VOICE*
OF *COMPASSION*.

YOU ARE THE *KEY* TO
THE WORLDS' SALVATION.
YOU ARE THE *SONG* THAT
MUST BE SUNG.

LIONOBO AWOKE, PEERING THROUGH DUNGEON BARS.

THE HARD MAN WAS BROUGHT TO ZANZIBAR BY THE SERPENT'S TROOPS, LOCKED IN THE DEPTHS OF BEIT AL-AJAIS.

HIS SUNBIRD, REHEMA, WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME HE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED, BUT THIS WAS DIFFERENT.

HE WASN'T WORRIED FOR HIS OWN LIFE OR THE WORLDS' SALVATION.

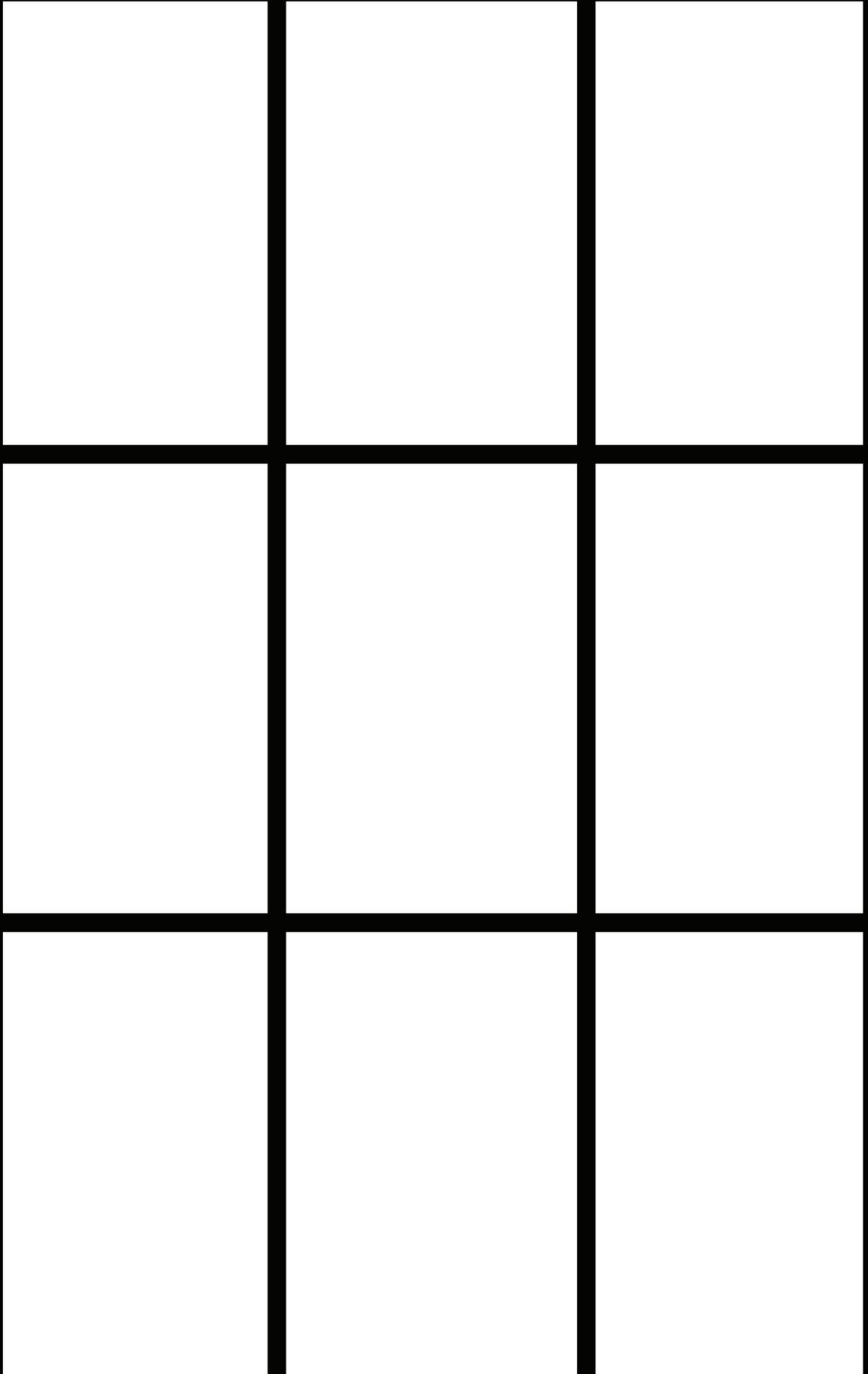
AT THE MOMENT, THE HARD MAN WAS CONCERNED WITH ONE THING...

I SING FOR YOUR SAFETY AND YOUR SUCCESS, MY CHILD,

NEVER GIVE UP WHEN YOU ARE NEARING THE END.

THE SAFETY OF HIS NEWFOUND DAUGHTER.

How does Rehema, the sunbird, free Lionogo, her father?



Create a comic book page!

SUCH DEFIANCE!
SUCH SPIRIT! SUCH
BRAVERY IN THE FACE
OF UTTER FUTILITY!

THERE IS NO THING,
NO ONE, WHO DOES NOT
KNEEL IN SUPPLICATION!
WHAT DARES TO DEFY
ME, A LITTLE GIRL?

CREATION IS
MINE TO SHAPE!
THE WORLDS BOW
AT MY FEET!

REHEMA ENTERED THE HALLS
OF BEIT AL-AJAIB, READY TO
DO BATTLE WITH THE SERPENT.

JOK WAS SHOCKED, ENRAGED
THAT HIS PLANS COULD BE
THWARTED BY ONE SO YOUNG.

A PERSON
WHO RELIES ON HIS
RELATIVE'S PROPERTY
DIES POOR...

TASTE MY VENOM,
SERPENT!

AND WITH THAT, REHEMA, SUNBIRD
TO ZANZIBAR, THE COMPASSION
OF OMAN, BEGAN TO SING.

LIONOGO FACED THE **MONSTER**
THAT ONCE WAS THE **BOY** WHO
LAID HIM LOW.

IT DID NOT MATTER HOW
LARGE OR POWERFUL
THE **BEAST** WAS THAT
STOOD BEFORE HIM ...

OH, **HEMEDI**...
YOU FOOLISH
LITTLE **BOY**...

HE WHO LISTENS
NOT OF HIS ELDERS,
HIS LEG **BREAKS!**

THE **HARD** MAN WOULD
HAVE **SATISFACTION**.

How does the story end? only you can complete the saga!



GLOSSARY

Muscat:

CURRENT CAPITAL OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN AND THE HISTORIC SEAT OF THE SULTAN IN THE SOUTHERN ARABIAN PENINSULA, ITS NATURAL BAY IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST IN THE WORLD.

Shanga:

HISTORIC SWAHILI PORT CITY OFF THE KENYAN COAST IN EAST AFRICA, PART OF THE LAMU ARCHIPELAGO. IN THE SONG OF LIONOGO GRAPHIC NOVEL, THIS IS THE CITY OF THE BRIDGE AND OF LIONOGO HIMSELF.

Zanzibar:

INDEPENDENT CITY-STATE OF THE TANZANIAN COAST IN EASTERN AFRICA. THE CITY WAS FOR DECADES AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OMANI SULTANATE IN EAST AFRICA AND FOR MANY YEARS SEAT OF THE SULTAN'S GOVERNMENT. IN THE SONG OF LIONOGO GRAPHIC NOVEL IT IS THE CITY OF THE ELDERS.

Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb:

STRAIT BETWEEN DJIBOUTI AND YEMEN THAT SEPARATES AFRICA FROM THE ARABIAN PENINSULA (ASIA) AND GRANTS ENTRY INTO THE RED SEA.

Indian Ocean:

THIRD LARGEST OCEAN IN THE WORLD, CONNECTING THE ASIAN AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENTS.

Bantu:

MAJOR CULTURE AND LANGUAGE OF INLAND EASTERN AFRICA. BANTU PEOPLES IS USED AS A GENERAL LABEL FOR THE 300 - 600 ETHNIC GROUPS IN AFRICA WHO SPEAK BANTU LANGUAGES. THEY INHABIT A GEOGRAPHICAL AREA STRETCHING EAST AND SOUTHWARD FROM CENTRAL AFRICA ACROSS THE AFRICAN GREAT LAKES REGION DOWN TO SOUTHERN AFRICA. BANTU IS A MAJOR BRANCH OF THE NIGER-CONGO LANGUAGE FAMILY SPOKEN BY MOST POPULATIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA. THERE ARE ABOUT 650 BANTU LANGUAGES BY THE CRITERION OF MUTUAL INTELLIGIBILITY.

Swahili:

MAJOR CULTURE AND LANGUAGE OF EASTERN AFRICA. ALSO CALLED KISWAHILI, IT IS A WIDELY USED LINGUA FRANCA THROUGHOUT EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA. IT IS A MEMBER OF THE BANTU GROUP OF THE NIGER-CONGO FAMILY, ORIGINALLY SPOKEN IN ZANZIBAR, AND HAS A LARGE NUMBER OF LOAN WORDS TAKEN FROM ARABIC AND OTHER LANGUAGES. THE SWAHILI LITTORAL AREA ENCOMPASSES TANZANIA, KENYA, UGANDA AND MOZAMBIQUE, AS WELL AS THE ADJACENT ISLANDS OF ZANZIBAR AND COMOROS AND SOME PARTS OF THE DRC AND MALAWI. THEY SPEAK SWAHILI AS THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE.

SWAHILI CULTURE IS THE PRODUCT OF THE HISTORY OF THE COASTAL PART OF THE AFRICAN GREAT LAKES REGION, AN AREA THAT HAS BEEN INFLUENCED BY MIDDLE EASTERN, INDIAN, PERSIAN AND PORTUGUESE CULTURES. AS WITH THE SWAHILI LANGUAGE, SWAHILI CULTURE HAS A BANTU CORE THAT HAS BEEN MODIFIED BY THOSE FOREIGN INFLUENCES.

Arabic:

SEMITIC LANGUAGE THAT DEVELOPED FROM OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE ARABIANS DURING THE TIME OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD, NOW SPOKEN IN COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, INCLUDING OMAN.

GLOSSARY

Siwa:

THE SIWA BLOW HORN IS A TRADITIONAL SIGN OF POWER, AUTHORITY AND STRENGTH IN EAST AFRICA. NEVERTHELESS, THE ORIGIN OF THE SIWA HORN CAN BE TRACED BACK TO THE ASSYRIAN PEOPLES OF MESOPOTAMIA IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

Dhow:

THE DHOW SHIPS HAVE SAILED THE INDIAN OCEAN FOR OVER 2,000 YEARS. THE ORIGIN OF THIS SHIP IS DISPUTED BETWEEN THE OMANI ARABS, THE SWAHILI AND THE INDIAN SAILORS. DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF SWAHILI COMMERCE, THE DHOW WOULD SAIL AS FAR AS INDONESIA AND CHINA TO TRADE PRECIOUS AFRICAN GOODS SUCH AS CLOVES AND IVORY FOR ASIAN MADE PORCELAIN. DHOWS TRADITIONALLY HAVE ONE TRIANGULAR SAIL AND IN MANY CASES ARE FABRICATED WITHOUT THE USE OF A SINGLE NAIL, BUT RATHER THE WOODEN PIECES ARE SOWN TOGETHER WITH ROPES.

Mission:

IMPORTANT GOAL OR PURPOSE THAT IS ACCOMPANIED BY STRONG CONVICTION.

Compassion:

FEELING OF DEEP SYMPATHY AND SORROW FOR ANOTHER WHO IS STRICKEN BY MISFORTUNE.

Graphic novel:

FICTION BOOK MADE UP OF COMICS CONTENT, THIS ORIGINAL MEDIUM COMBINES VISUAL ART, STORYTELLING, AND HISTORICAL INSIGHTS.

Hero:

PERSON OF DISTINGUISHED COURAGE OR ABILITY, ADMIRER FOR BRAVE DEEDS AND NOBLE QUALITIES.

Elder:

AN AGED AND INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY, A CHIEF.

Hyena:

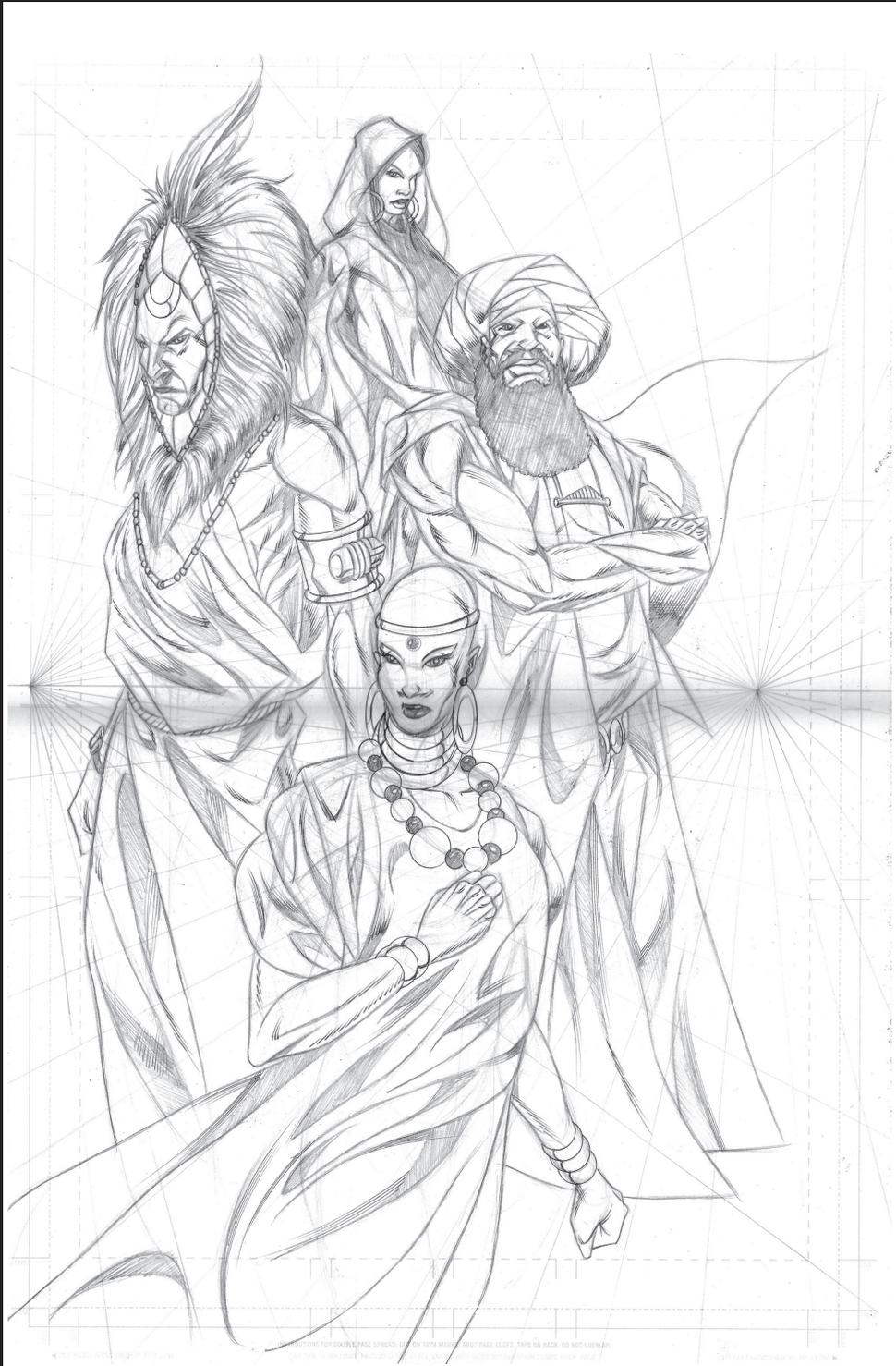
DOG-LIKE CARNIVORE FOUND IN AFRICA AND ASIA THAT HAS LARGE TEETH, FEEDS ON CARRION AND TRAVELS IN PACKS.

Ngai:

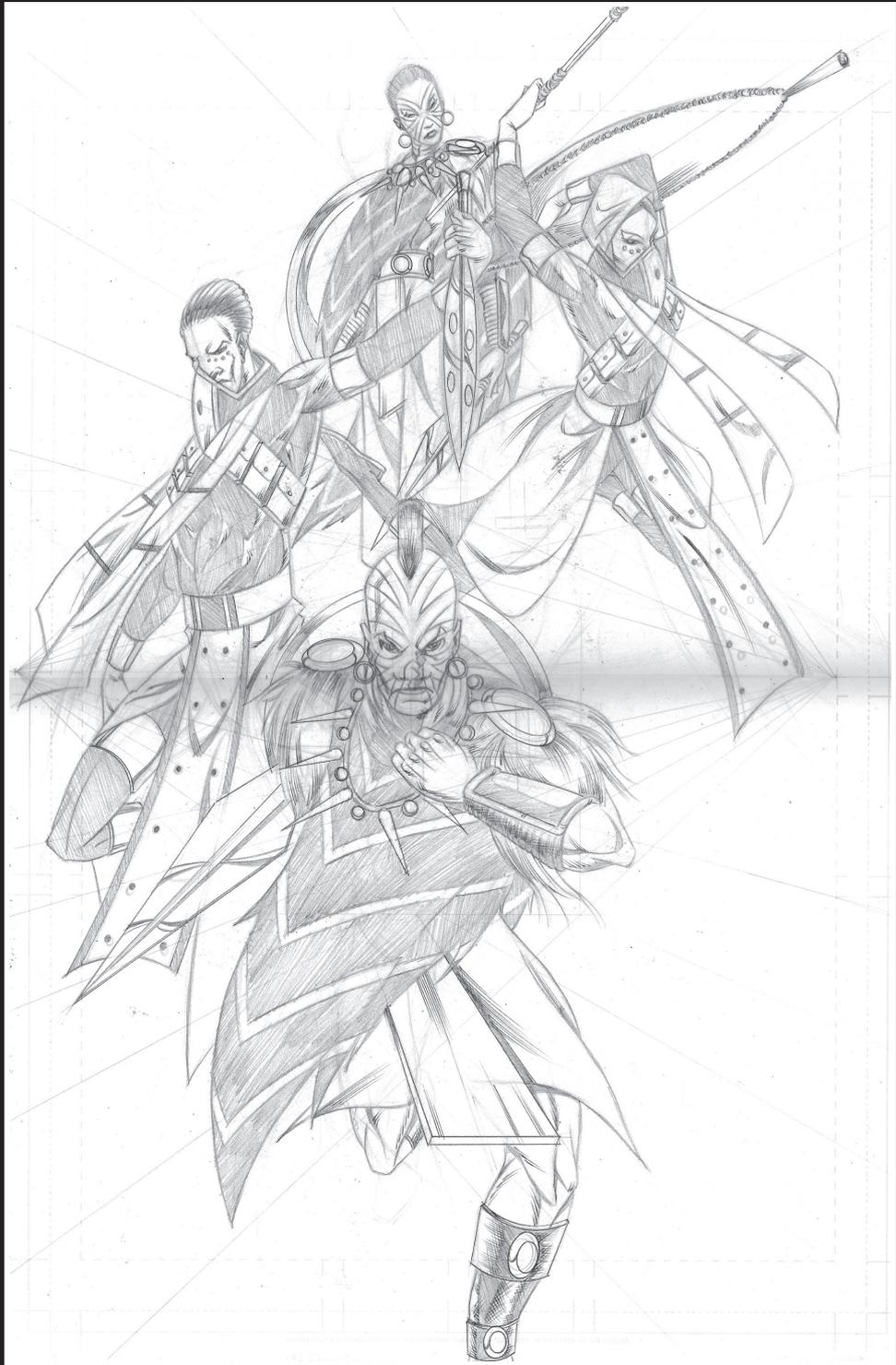
A SPIRIT IN THE STORIES OF THE KAMBA AND KIKUYU OF KENYA WHO LIVES ON THE MOUNTAIN KIRINYAGA. ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THE ORIGIN OF HUMANITY WAS FASHIONED BY NGAÏ FROM A SINGLE TREE WHICH SPLIT INTO THREE PIECES.

Magick:

AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLOIT SUPERNATURAL FORCES, USING RITUALS, SYMBOLS, ACTIONS, GESTURES AND LANGUAGE. THE RESULT OF A UNIVERSAL SYMPATHY WHERE SOME ACT CAN PRODUCE A RESULT SOMEWHERE ELSE, OR AS A COLLABORATION WITH SPIRITS WHO CAUSE THE EFFECT. THE BELIEF IN AND THE PRACTICE OF MAGIC HAS BEEN PRESENT SINCE THE EARLIEST HUMAN CULTURES AND CONTINUES TO HAVE AN IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL, RELIGIOUS AND MEDICINAL ROLE IN MANY CULTURES TODAY.

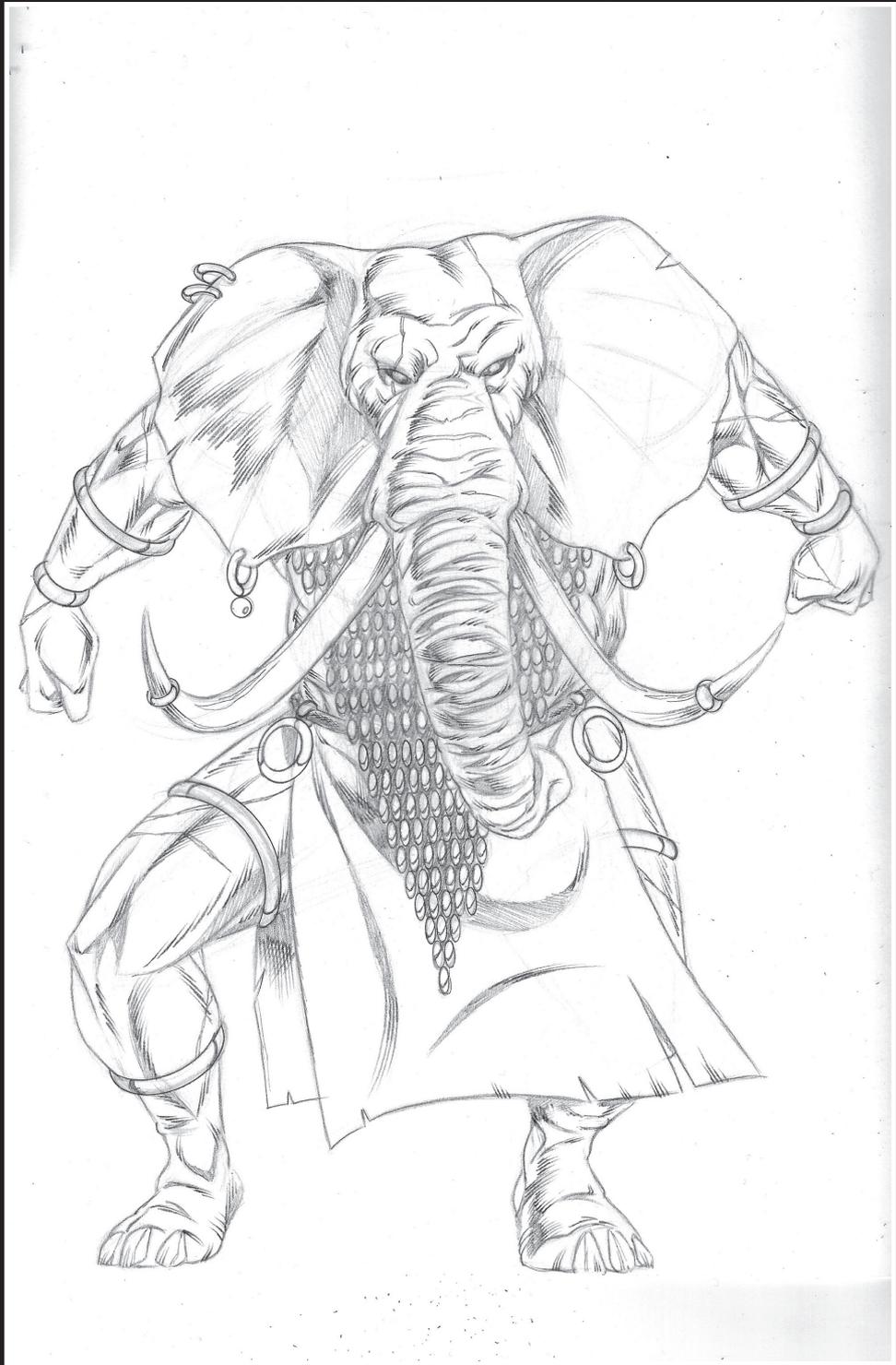


PENCILS



The Elders of Zanzibar

PENCILS



The Maji

THUMBNAILS



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