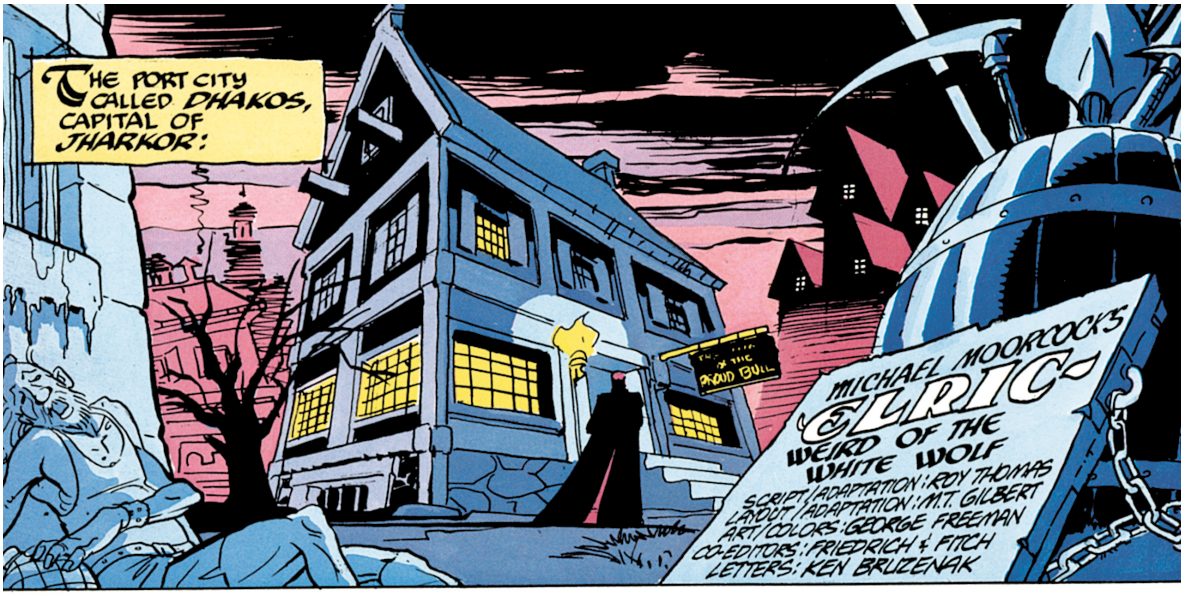
THE PORT CITY CALLED DHAKOS, CAPITAL OF JHARKOR:
MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S
ELRIC
WEIRD OF THE WHITE WOLF
SCRIPT/ADAPTATION: ROY THOMAS
LAYOUT/ADAPTATION: M.T. GILBERT
ART/COLORS: GEORGE FREEMAN
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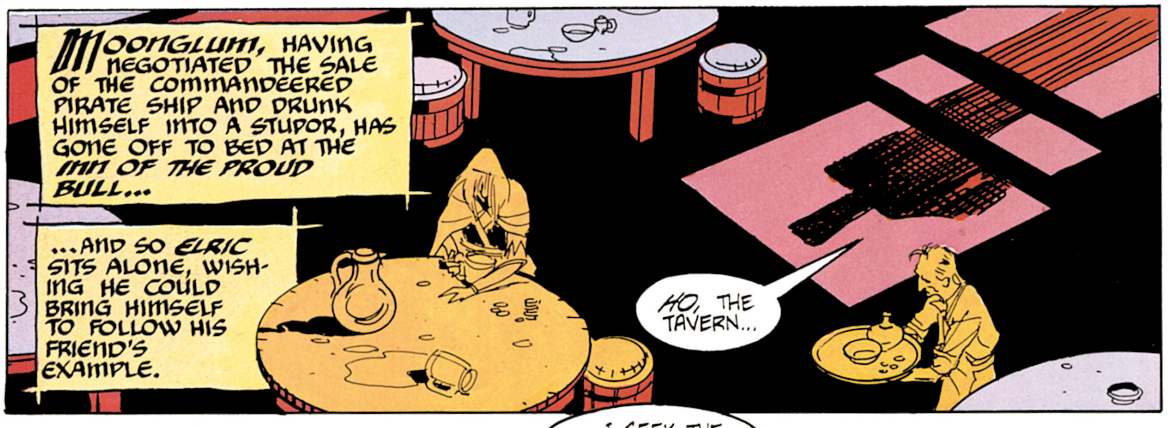
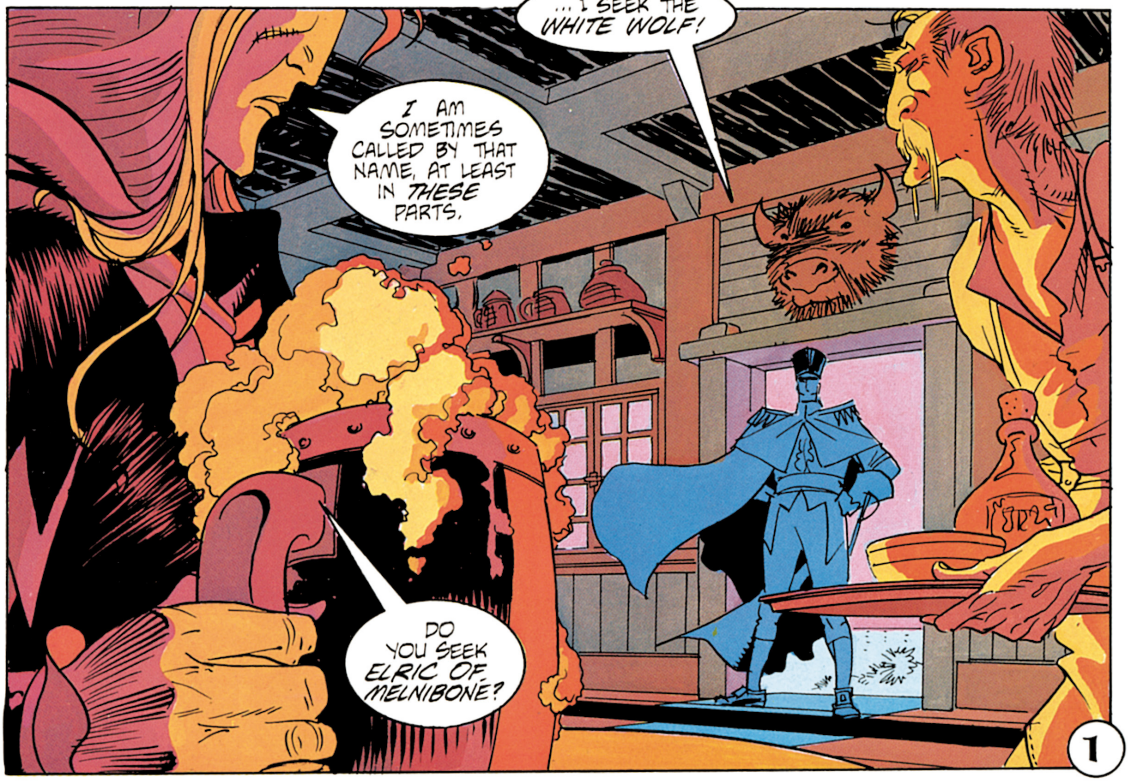
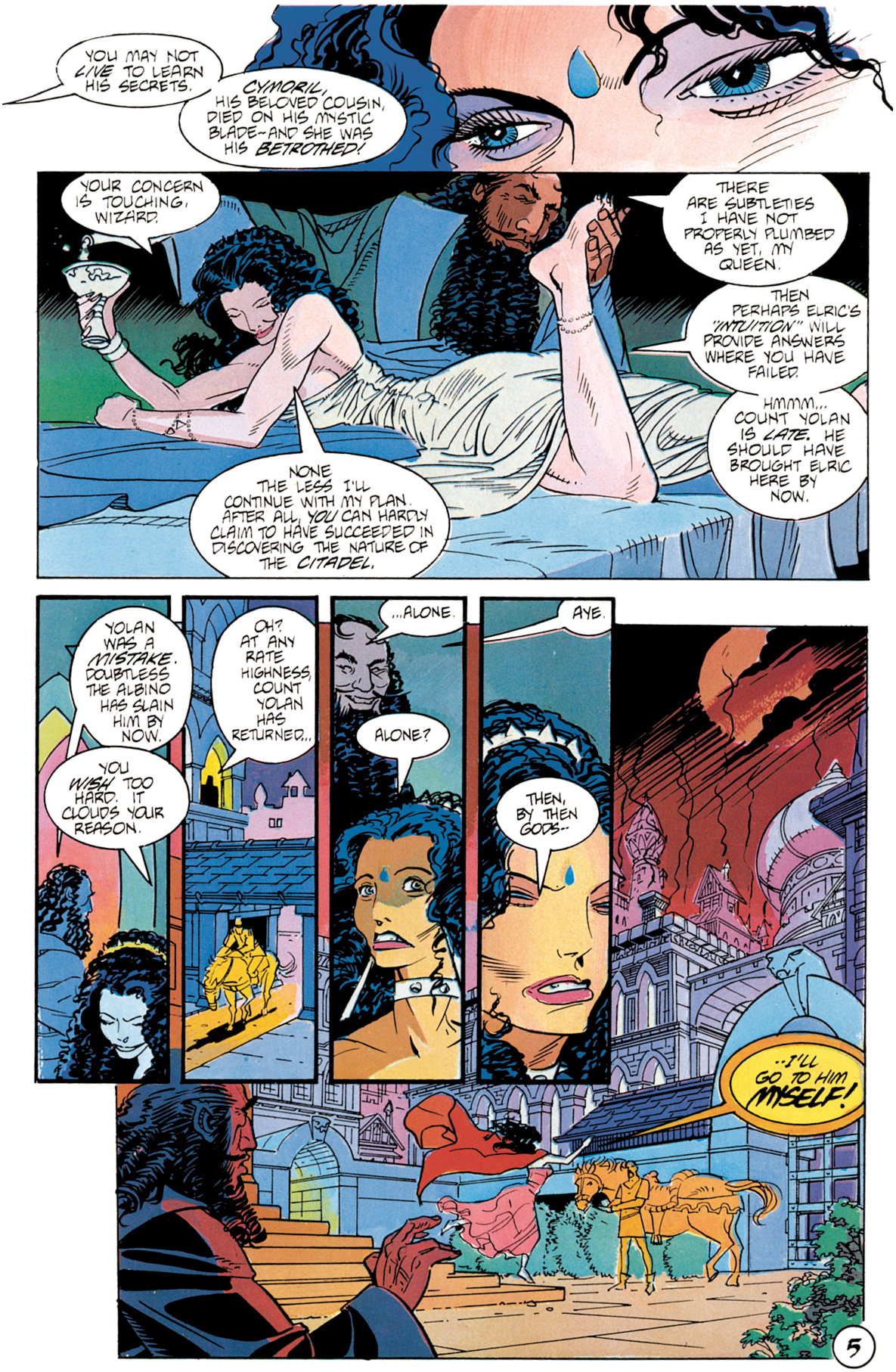

MOONGLUM, HAVING NEGOTIATED THE SALE OF THE COMMANDEERED PIRATE SHIP AND DRUNK HIMSELF INTO A STUPOR, HAS GONE OFF TO BED AT THE INN OF THE PROUD BULL...
...AND SO ELRIC SITS ALONE, WISHING HE COULD BRING HIMSELF TO FOLLOW HIS FRIEND'S EXAMPLE.
HO, THE TAVERN...

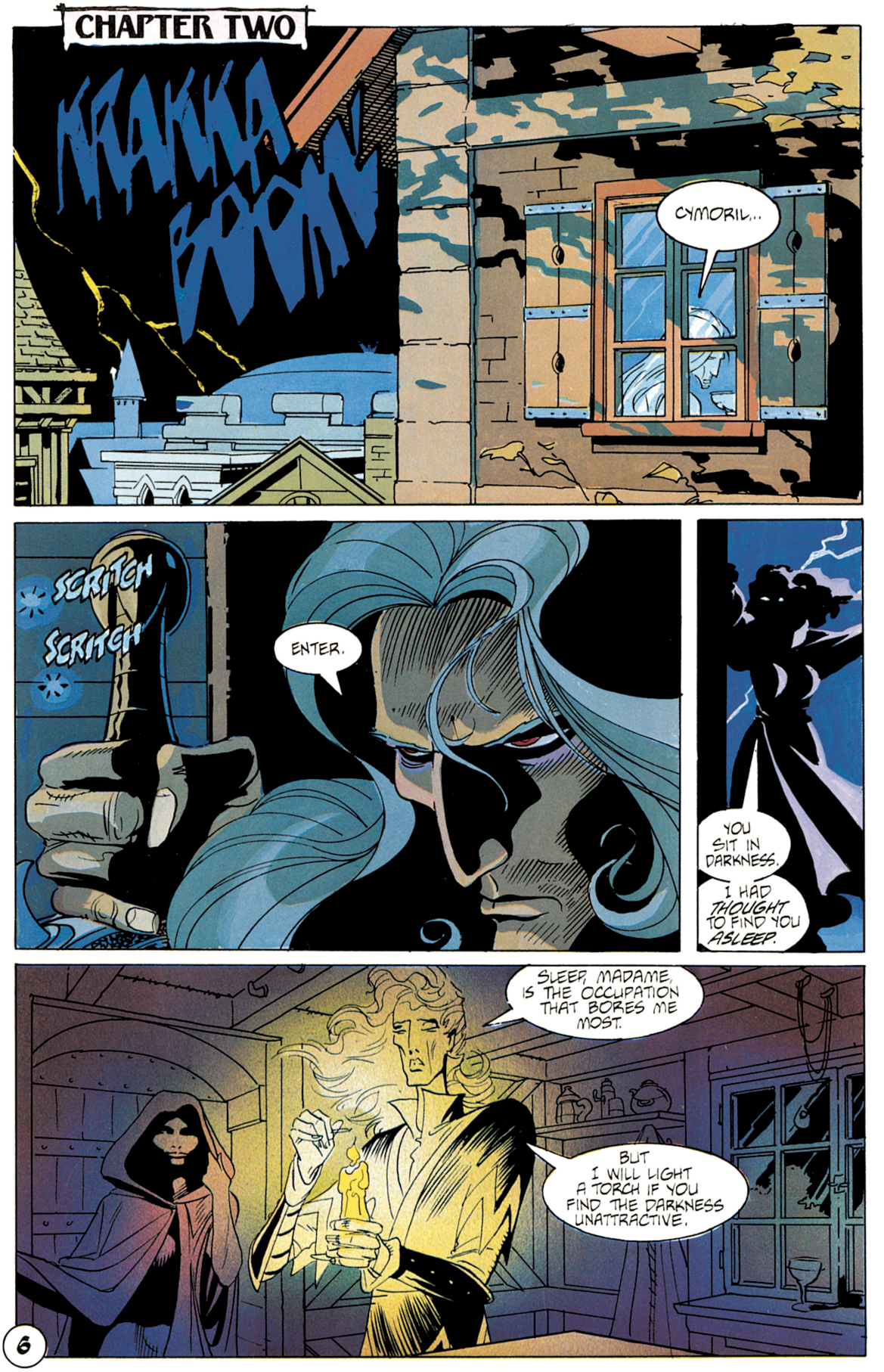

...I SEEK THE WHITE WOLF!
I AM SOMETIMES CALLED BY THAT NAME, AT LEAST IN THESE PARTS.
DO YOU SEEK ELRIC OF MELNIBONE?
1

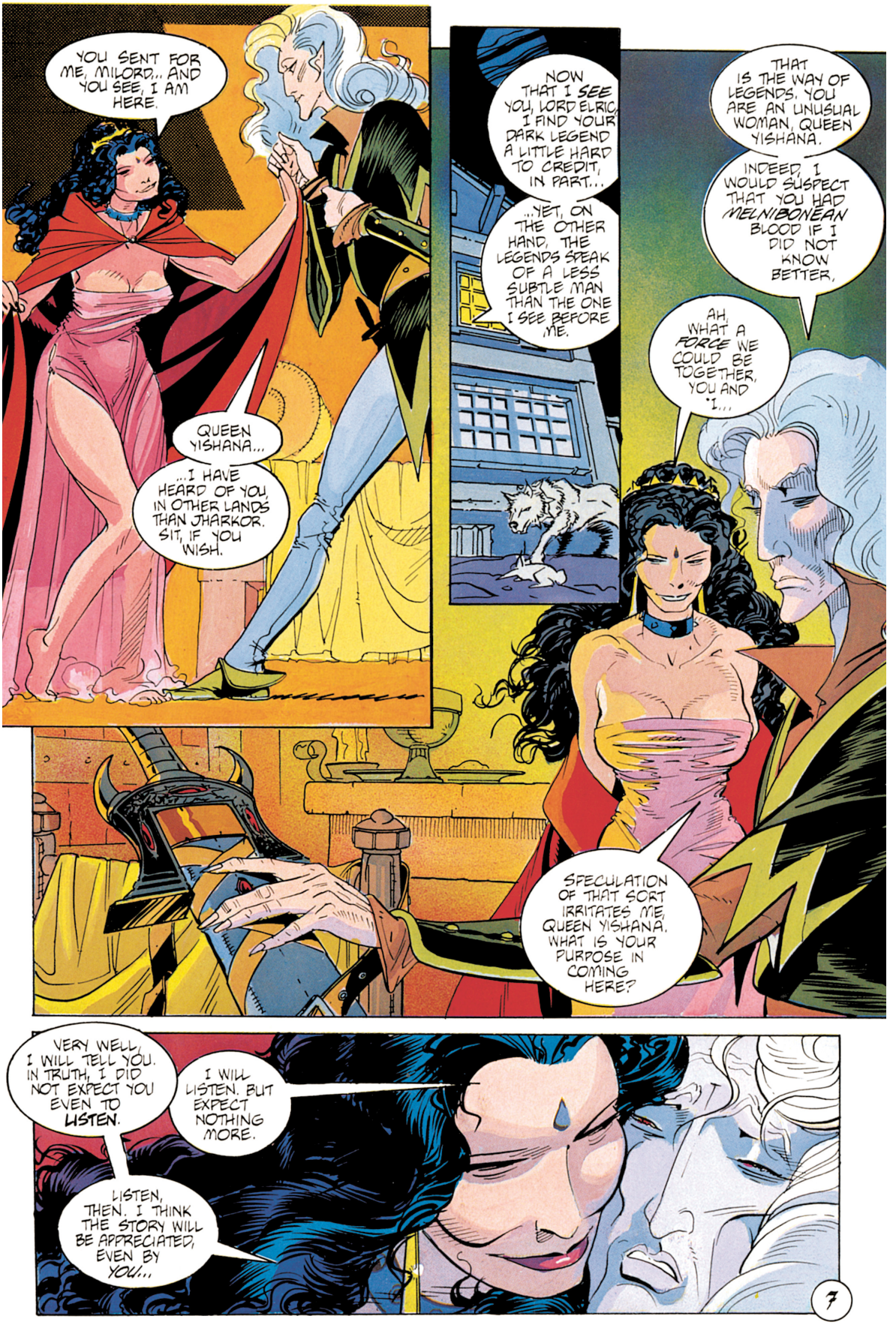

AYE, I AM COUNT YOLAN, DEPUTY-COMMANDER OF THE CITY GUARD... AND I BEAR A MESSAGE FOR YOU.
YOU KNOW, YOU ARE BRAVE TO COME HERE SO OPENLY, FELLOW...
...DO YOU THINK THE FOLK OF JHARKOR HAVE SUCH SHORT MEMORIES-
--AS TO FORGET THAT YOU LED THEIR KING INTO A TRAP, SCARCELY TWO YEARS SINCE--AT IMRRYR--
--THEN FLED BY SORCEROUS MEANS?
IF KING DARMIT DIED DURING THE ATTACK AGAINST THE DREAMING CITY, IT WAS BY NO ACTION OF MINE.
ENOUGH RHETORIC. WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?
YOU SNEER AT MY QUESTIONS, THEN PROFFER LAME LIES TO COVER YOUR OWN COWARDLY DEEDS.
IF I HAD MY WAY, YOU'D BE FED TO YOUR HELL-BLADE.
YOUR TAUNTS TIRE ME AS LIQUOR COULD NOT.
IF AND WHEN YOU FEEL READY TO DELIVER YOUR MESSAGE, GIVE IT TO THE INN-KEEPER.
HALT!
2

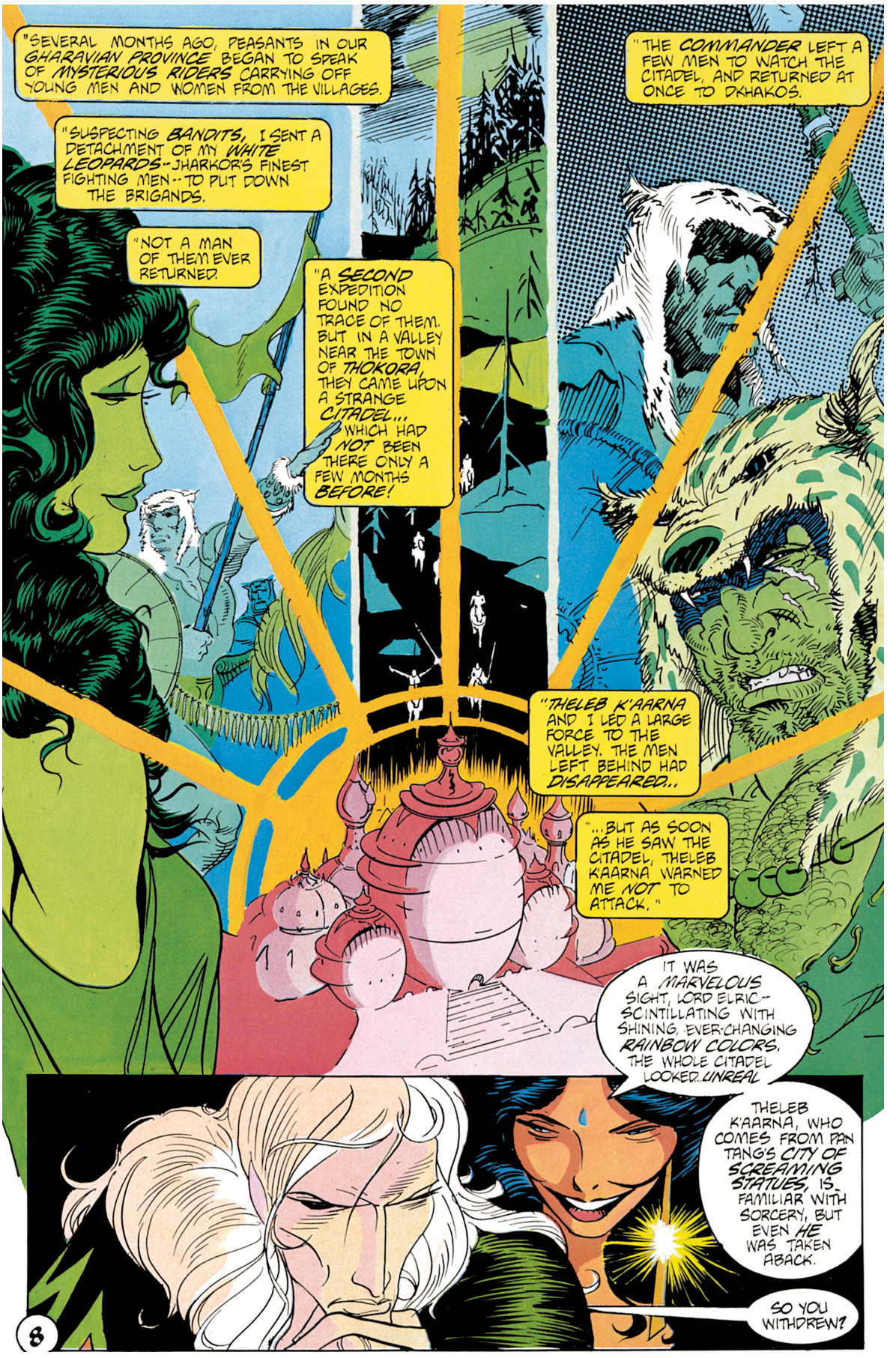

I AM NOT USED TO SUCH FAMILIARITY, YOUNG MAN.
I--
FORGIVE ME. I SHOULD NOT HAVE LET MY EMOTIONS OVER-RIDE MY MISSION.
I CAME ON A MATTER OF DISCRETION... A MESSAGE FROM QUEEN YISHINA. SHE SEEKS YOUR HELP...
I AM AS DISINCLINED TO HELP OTHERS AS TO EXPLAIN MY ACTIONS.
DARMIT, YOUR QUEEN'S LATE HALF-BROTHER, DISCOVERED AS MUCH... AS I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY WARNED HER.
MOST ASSUREDLY! FOR ALL THAT, SHE STILL DESIRES TO SEE YOU IN PRIVATE-- TONIGHT.
I WOULD POINT OUT THAT I COULD HAVE YOU ARRESTED SHOULD YOU REFUSE.
PERHAPS.
TELL YISHANA THAT I STAY THE NIGHT HERE AND MOVE ON AT DAWN.
SHE MAY VISIT ME IF HER REQUEST IS SO URGENT.
3


THE PALACE ROYAL.
SURELY YOU JEST, HIGHNESS!
HOW CAN SOME DECADENT SPELL-SINGER HELP YOU, WHERE ONE AS SKILLED IN THE BLACK ARTS AS I CANNOT?
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT, THELEB K'AARNA. BUT ELRIC OF MELNIBONE IS A LEGEND--THE MOST SPOKEN-OF, LEAST-KNOWN MAN IN THE WORLD.
I WISH TO DISCOVER WHAT OTHERS HAVE ONLY SPECULATED ON--HIS TRUE CHARACTER.
IF YOU SEEK TO MAKE ME JEALOUS AGAIN, YOU ARE SUCCEEDING, OF COURSE...
...BUT I HAVE LITTLE HOPE FOR YOUR AMBITION.
OH? AND WHY NOT, PRAY TELL?
B-BECAUSE, HIGHNESS, TO US, SORCERY IS LEARNED AFTER YEARS OF STUDY AND SACRIFICE.
TO ELRIC, WHOSE ANCESTORS WERE HALF-DEMON, SORCERY IS INTUITIVE--NATURAL!
4


YOU MAY NOT LIVE TO LEARN HIS SECRETS.
CYMORIL, HIS BELOVED COUSIN, DIED ON HIS MYSTIC BLADE--AND SHE WAS HIS BETROTHED!
YOUR CONCERN IS TOUCHING, WIZARD.
THERE ARE SUBTLETIES I HAVE NOT PROPERLY PLUMBED AS YET, MY QUEEN.
THEN PERHAPS ELRIC'S "INTUITION" WILL PROVIDE ANSWERS WHERE YOU HAVE FAILED.
HMMM... COUNT YOLAN IS LATE. HE SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT ELRIC HERE BY NOW.
NONE THE LESS I'LL CONTINUE WITH MY PLAN. AFTER ALL, YOU CAN HARDLY CLAIM TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DISCOVERING THE NATURE OF THE CITADEL.
YOLAN WAS A MISTAKE. DOUBTLESS THE ALBINO HAS SLAIN HIM BY NOW.
YOU WISH TOO HARD. IT CLOUDS YOUR REASON.
OH? AT ANY RATE HIGHNESS, COUNT YOLAN HAS RETURNED...
...ALONE.
ALONE?
AYE.
THEN, BY THEN GODS--
..I'LL GO TO HIM MYSELF!
5

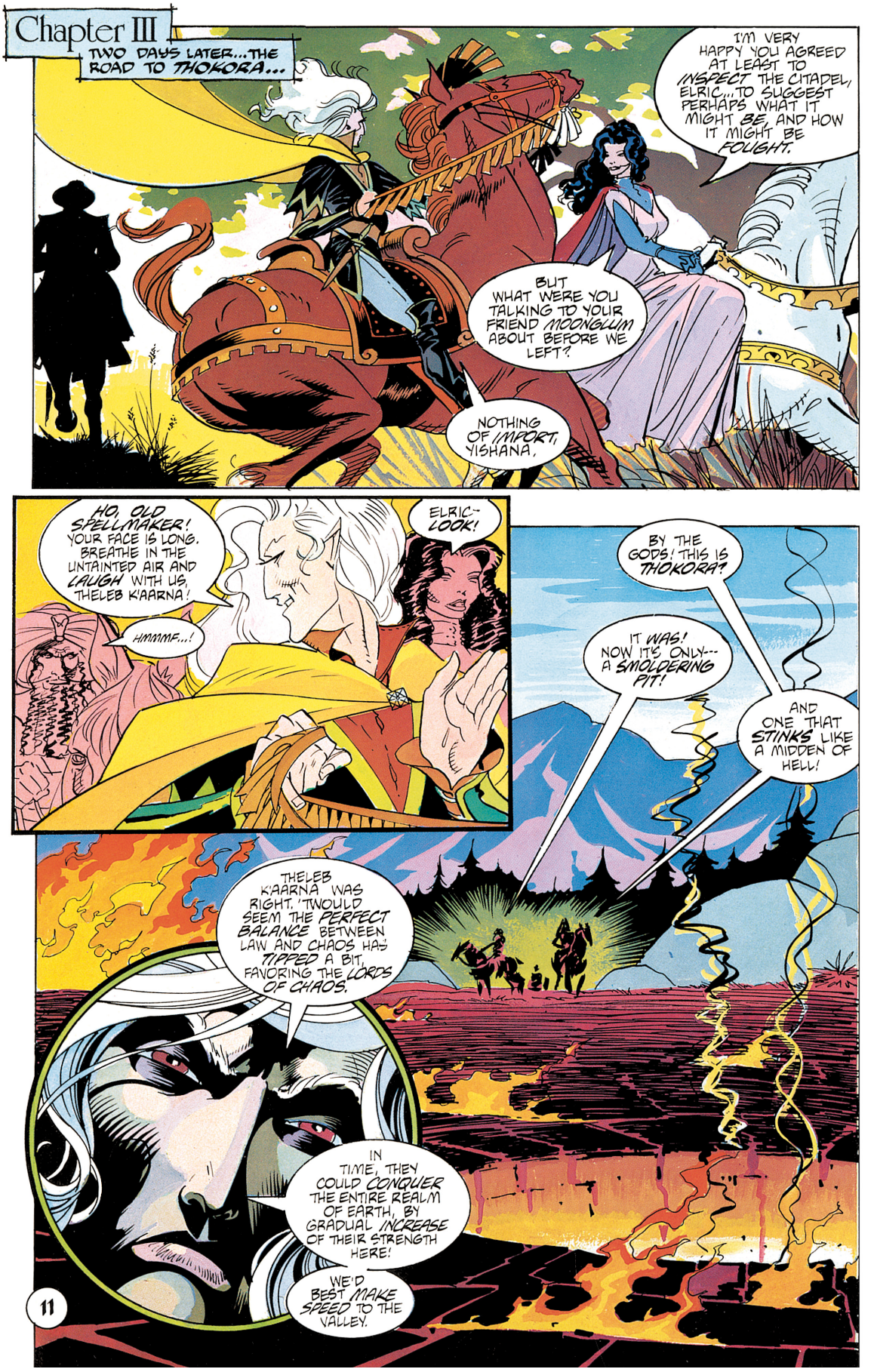

CHAPTER TWO
KRAKKA BOOM
CYMORIL...
SCRITCH
SCRITCH
ENTER.
YOU SIT IN DARKNESS.
I HAD THOUGHT TO FIND YOU ASLEEP.
SLEEP, MADAME, IS THE OCCUPATION THAT BORES ME MOST.
BUT I WILL LIGHT A TORCH IF YOU FIND THE DARKNESS UNATTRACTIVE.
6

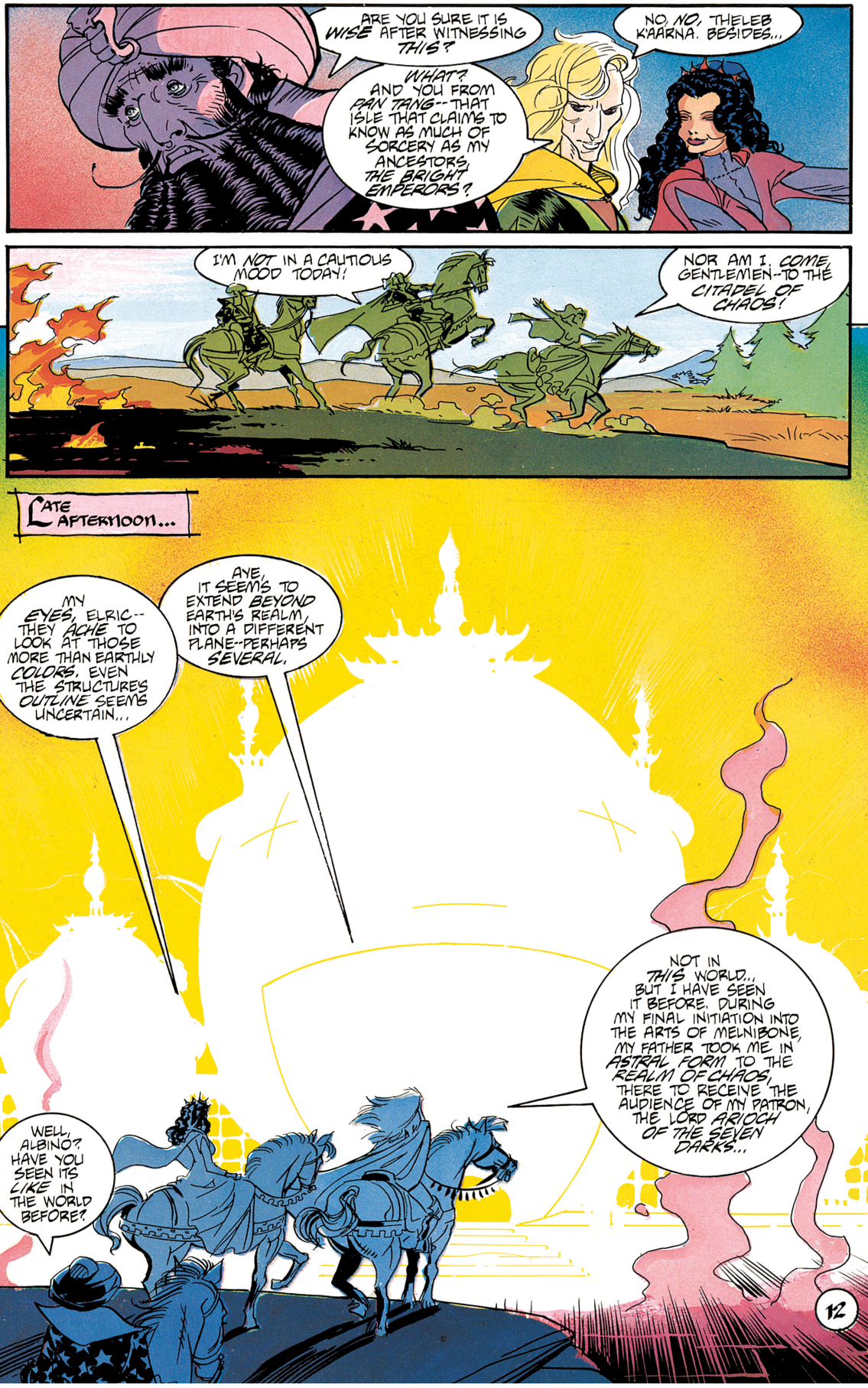

YOU SENT FOR ME, MILORD... AND YOU SEE, I AM HERE.
QUEEN YISHANA...
...I HAVE HEARD OF YOU, IN OTHER LANDS THAN JHARKOR. SIT, IF YOU WISH.
NOW THAT I SEE YOU, LORD ELRIC, I FIND YOUR DARK LEGEND A LITTLE HARD TO CREDIT, IN PART...
...YET, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE LEGENDS SPEAK OF A LESS SUBTLE MAN THAN THE ONE I SEE BEFORE ME.
THAT IS THE WAY OF LEGENDS, YOU ARE AN UNUSUAL WOMAN, QUEEN YISHANA.
INDEED, I WOULD SUSPECT THAT YOU HAD MELNIBONEAN BLOOD IF I DID NOT KNOW BETTER.
AH, WHAT A FORCE WE COULD BE TOGETHER, YOU AND I...
SPECULATION OF THAT SORT IRRITATES ME, QUEEN YISHANA. WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE IN COMING HERE?
VERY WELL, I WILL TELL YOU. IN TRUTH, I DID NOT EXPECT YOU EVEN TO LISTEN.
I WILL LISTEN. BUT EXPECT NOTHING MORE.
LISTEN, THEN. I THINK THE STORY WILL BE APPRECIATED, EVEN BY YOU...
7

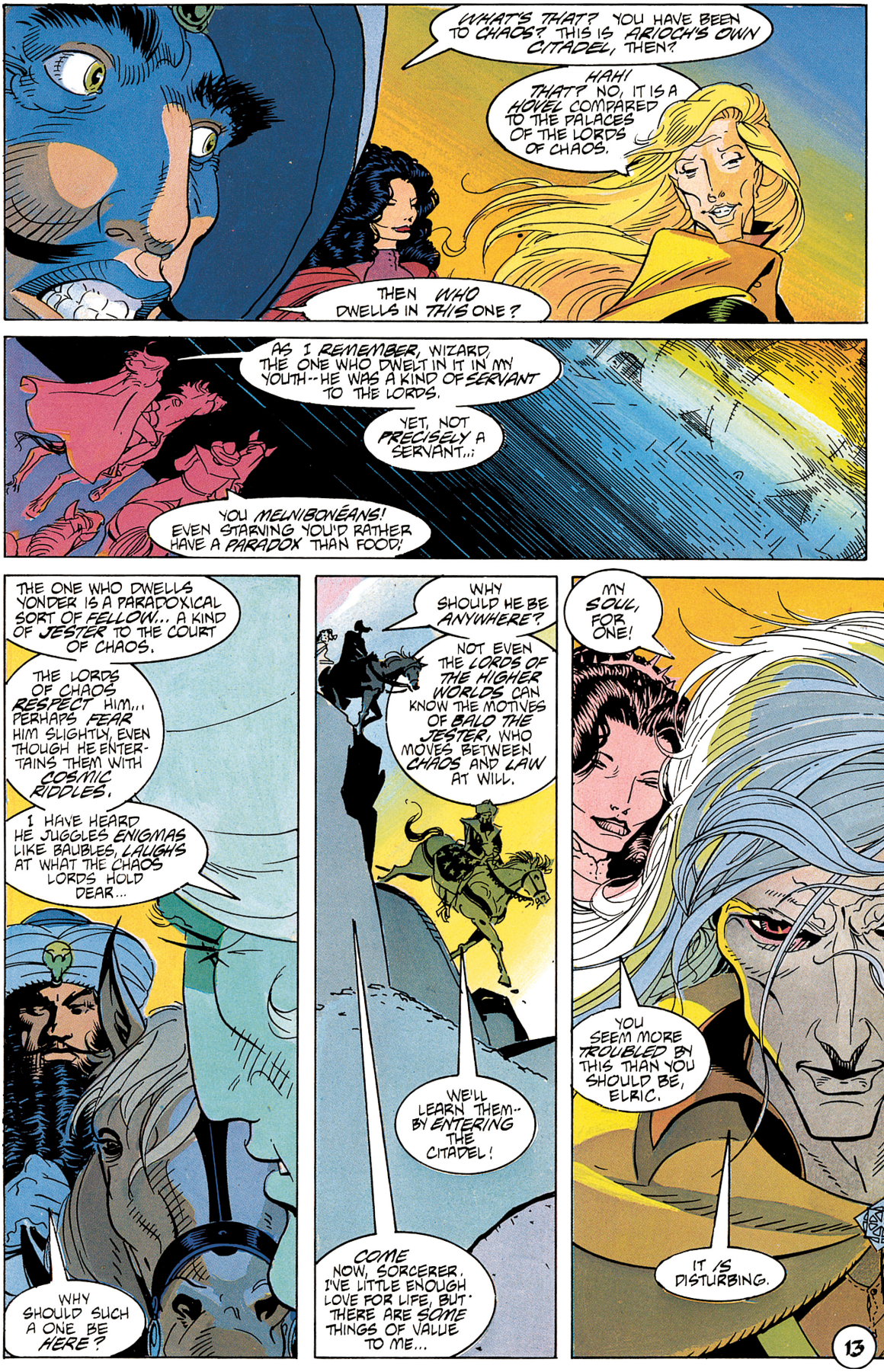

"SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, PEASANTS IN OUR GHARAVIAN PROVINCE BEGAN TO SPEAK OF MYSTERIOUS RIDERS CARRYING OFF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE VILLAGES.
"SUSPECTING BANDITS, I SENT A DETACHMENT OF MY WHITE LEOPARDS--JHARKOR'S FINEST FIGHTING MEN--TO PUT DOWN THE BRIGANDS.
"NOT A MAN OF THEM EVER RETURNED.
"A SECOND EXPEDITION FOUND NO TRACE OF THEM. BUT IN A VALLEY NEAR THE TOWN OF THOKORA, THEY CAME UPON A STRANGE CITADEL... WHICH HAD NOT BEEN THERE ONLY A FEW MONTHS BEFORE!
"THE COMMANDER LEFT A FEW MEN TO WATCH THE CITADEL, AND RETURNED AT ONCE TO DKHAKOS.
"THELEB K'AARNA AND I LED A LARGE FORCE TO THE VALLEY. THE MEN LEFT BEHIND HAD DISAPPEARED...
"...BUT AS SOON AS HE SAW THE CITADEL, THELEB K'AARNA WARNED ME NOT TO ATTACK."
IT WAS A MARVELOUS SIGHT, LORD ELRIC--SCINTILLATING WITH SHINING, EVER-CHANGING RAINBOW COLORS, THE WHOLE CITADEL LOOKED UNREAL
THELEB K'AARNA, WHO COMES FROM PAN TANG'S CITY OF SCREAMING STATUES, IS FAMILIAR WITH SORCERY, BUT EVEN HE WAS TAKEN ABACK.
SO YOU WITHDREW?
8

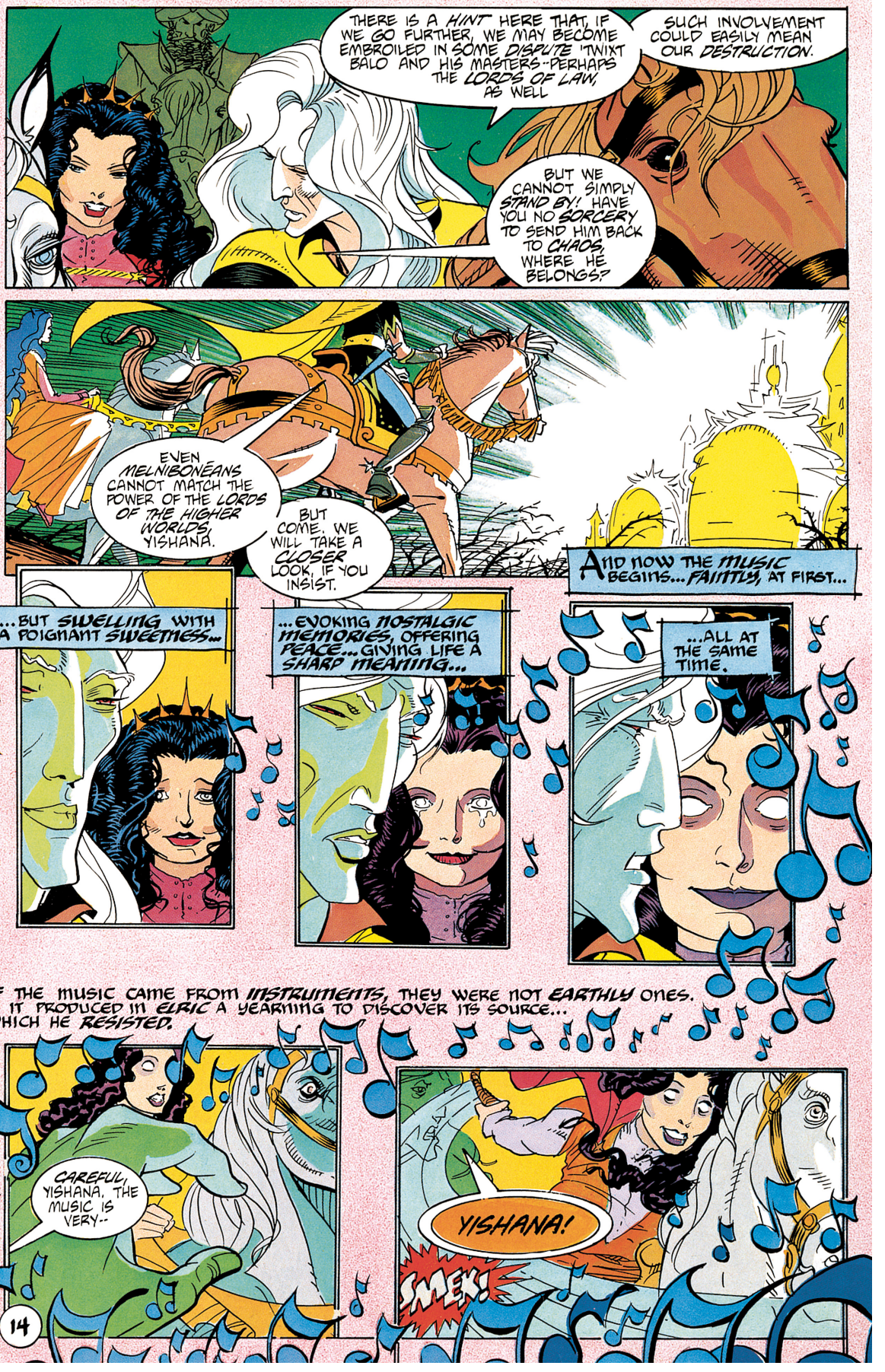

"WE WERE ABOUT TO-- WHEN THE MUSIC CAME. SWEET, BEAUTIFUL, UNEARTHLY, PAINFUL MUSIC.
"I DALLIED, DESPITE THELEB K'AARNA'S SHOUTS-- SO HE SLAPPED MY HORSE'S RUMP--
"--AND WE ESCAPED.
"BUT, LOOKING BACK, WE SAW THE REST TURN AND MOVE TOWARD THE CITADEL, DRAWN BY THE MUSIC.
"NEARLY TWO HUNDRED MEN WENT BACK--AND VANISHED!"
AND SINCE THEN?
SO FAR, THELEB K'AARNA'S MAGICAL DIVINATIONS HAVE TOLD HIM IT HAS COME TO EARTH FROM THE REALM OF CHAOS, AND IS SLOWLY EXTENDING ITS RANGE.
MORE AND MORE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE BEING ABDUCTED BY THE MINIONS OF CHAOS!
ELRIC, YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF BOTH CHAOS AND LAW. IF THELEB K'AARNA IS RIGHT.
WHY, YOUR VERY GODS ARE LORDS OF CHAOS!
THAT IS EXACTLY TRUE, YISHANA.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, IT IS NOT IN MY INTEREST TO FIGHT AGAINST ANY ONE OF THEM.
9

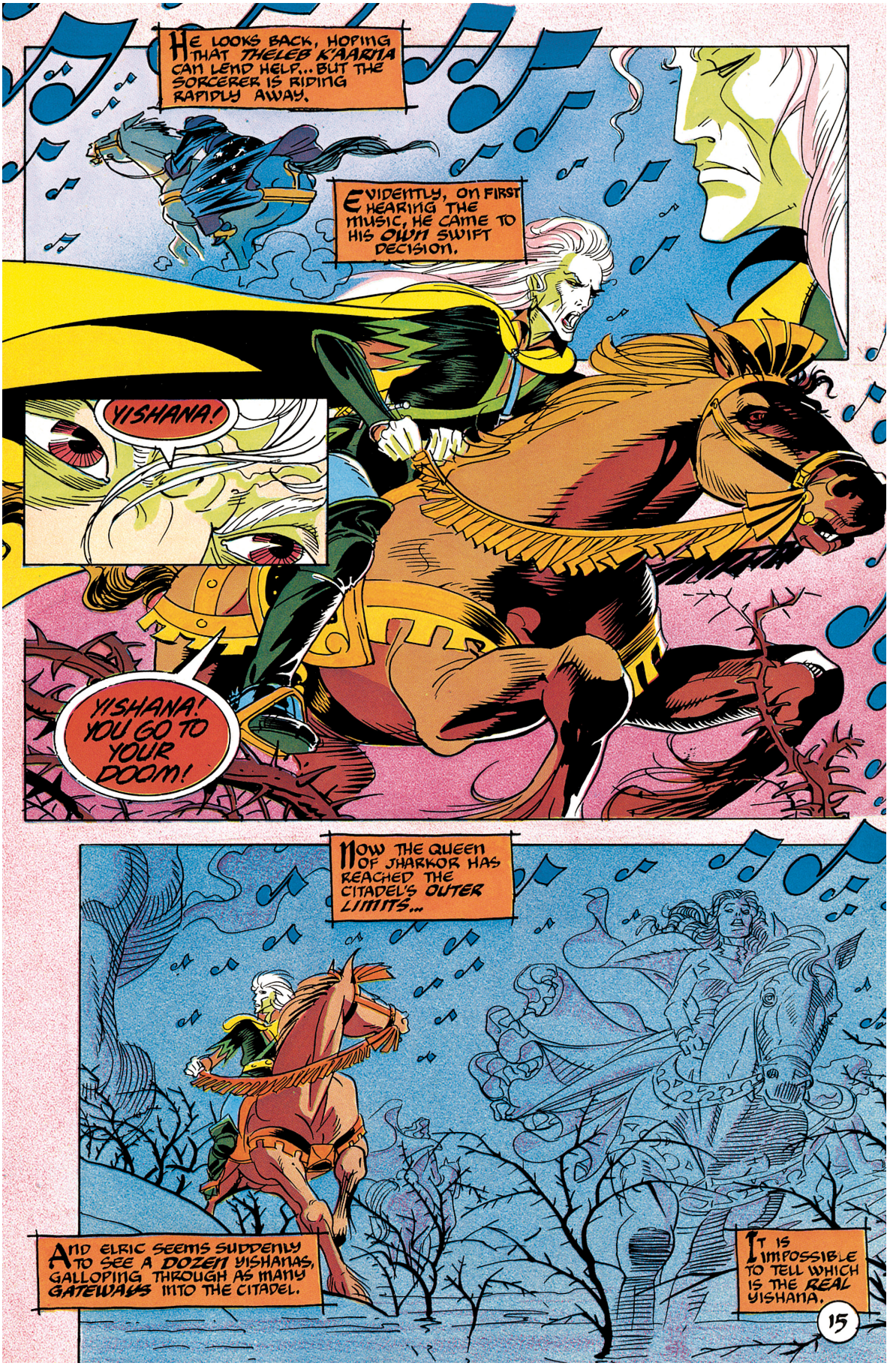

HMMM... PERHAPS YOU WILL BE STRONG ENOUGH.
AS FOR THE OTHER MATTER...
...WE CAN DISCUSS THAT...
...LATER.
10

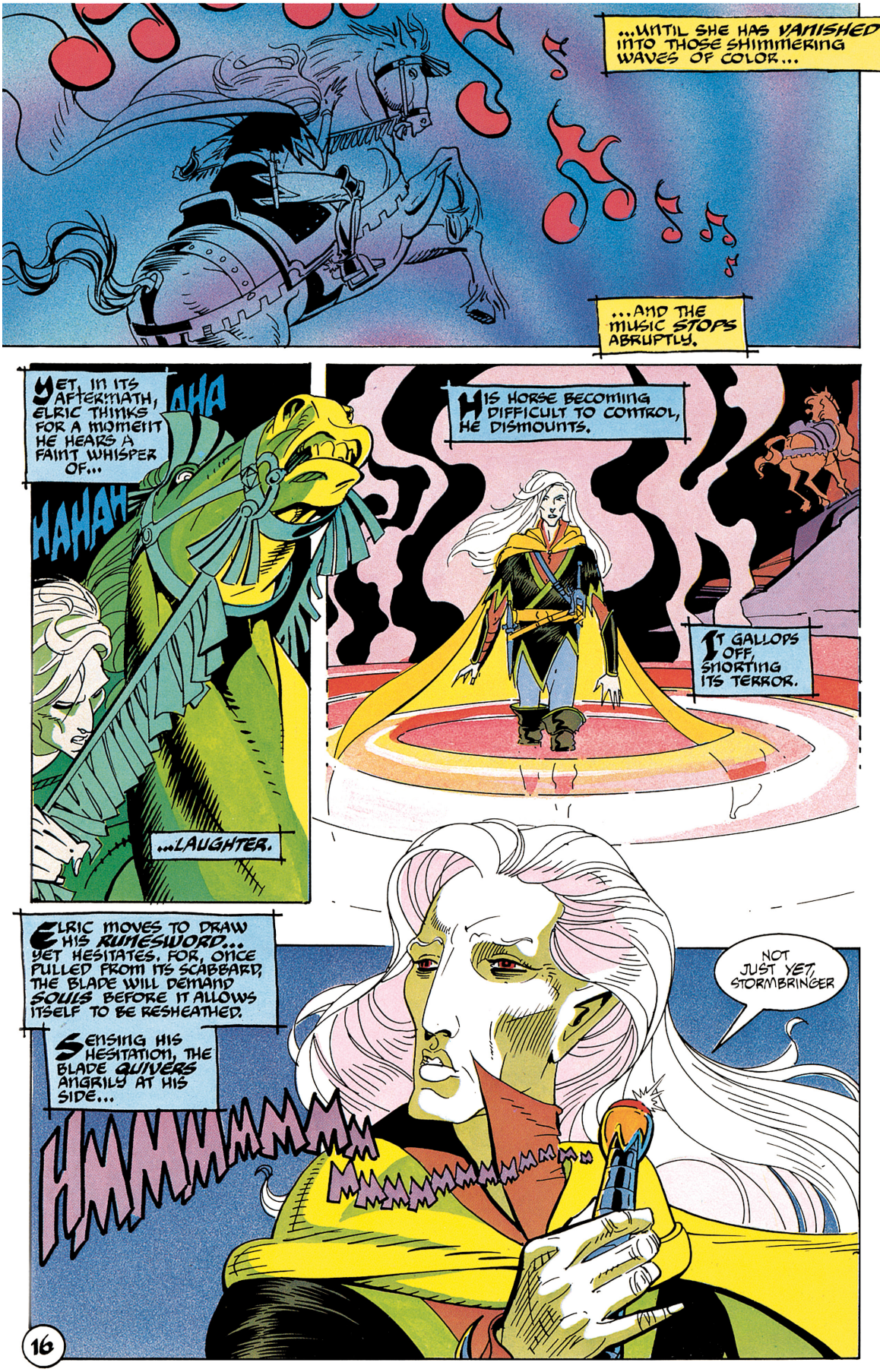

Chapter III
TWO DAYS LATER...THE ROAD TO THOKORA...
I'M VERY HAPPY YOU AGREED AT LEAST TO INSPECT THE CITADEL, ELRIC...TO SUGGEST PERHAPS WHAT IT MIGHT BE, AND HOW IT MIGHT BE FOUGHT.
BUT WHAT WERE YOU TALKING TO YOUR FRIEND MOONGLUM ABOUT BEFORE WE LEFT?
NOTHING OF IMPORT, YISHANA.
HO, OLD SPELLMAKER! YOUR FACE IS LONG. BREATHE IN THE UNTAINTED AIR AND LAUGH WITH US, THELEB K'AARNA!
HMMMF...!
ELRIC--LOOK!
BY THE GODS! THIS IS THOKORA?
IT WAS! NOW IT'S ONLY--A SMOLDERING PIT!
AND ONE THAT STINKS LIKE A MIDDEN OF HELL!
THELEB K'AARNA WAS RIGHT. 'TWOULD SEEM THE PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN LAW AND CHAOS HAS TIPPED A BIT, FAVORING THE LORDS OF CHAOS.
IN TIME, THEY COULD CONQUER THE ENTIRE REALM OF EARTH, BY GRADUAL INCREASE OF THEIR STRENGTH HERE!
WE'D BEST MAKE SPEED TO THE VALLEY.
11

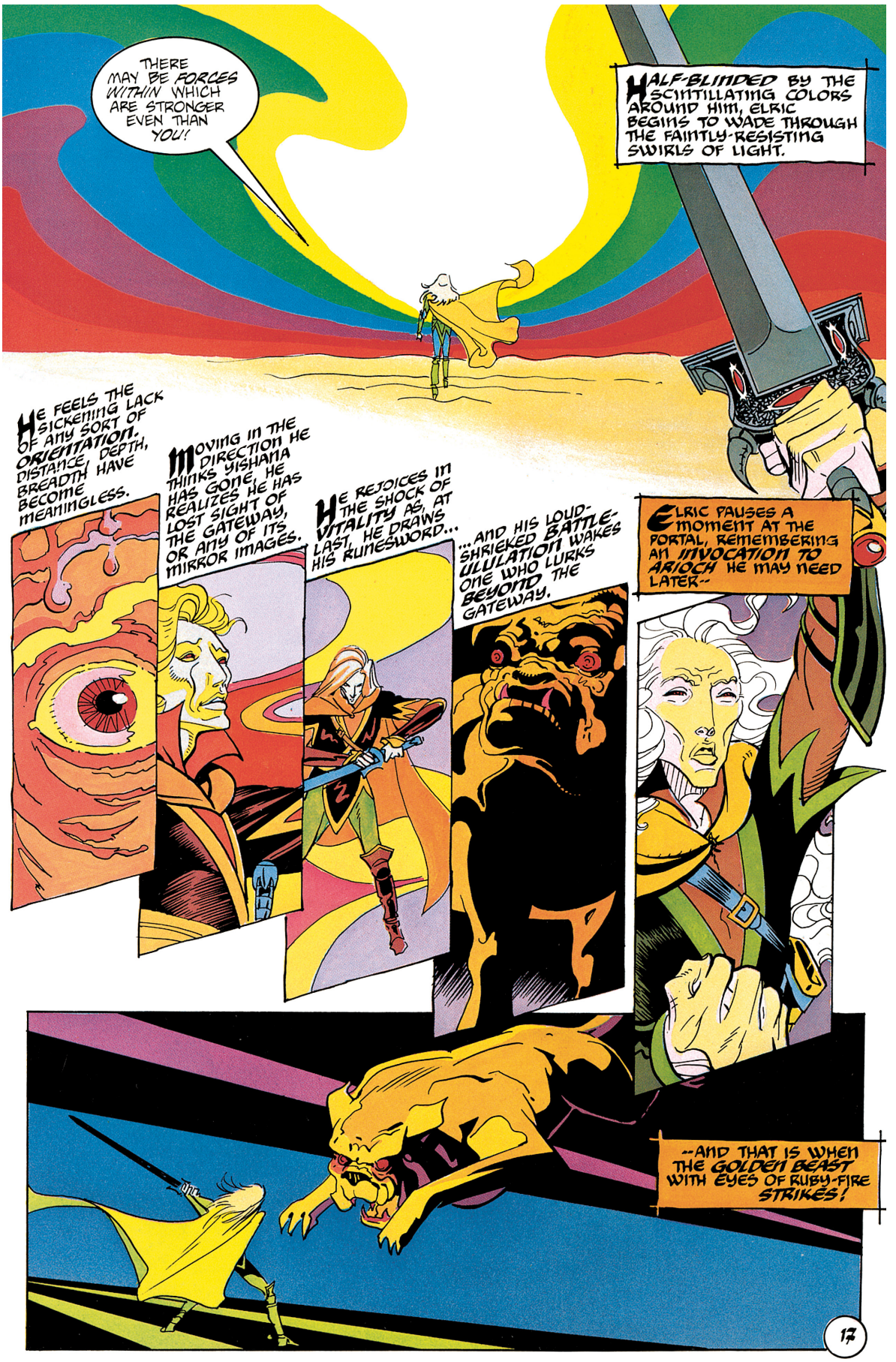

ARE YOU SURE IT IS WISE AFTER WITNESSING THIS?
NO, NO, THELEB K'AARNA. BESIDES,,,
WHAT? AND YOU FROM PAN TANG--THAT ISLE THAT CLAIMS TO KNOW AS MUCH OF SORCERY AS MY ANCESTORS, THE BRIGHT EMPERORS?
I'M NOT IN A CAUTIOUS MOOD TODAY!
NOR AM I. COME, GENTLEMEN--TO THE CITADEL OF CHAOS!
LATE AFTERNOON...
MY EYES, ELRIC--THEY ACHE TO LOOK AT THOSE MORE THAN EARTHLY COLORS. EVEN THE STRUCTURE'S OUTLINE SEEMS UNCERTAIN,,,
AYE, IT SEEMS TO EXTEND BEYOND EARTH'S REALM, INTO A DIFFERENT PLANE--PERHAPS SEVERAL.
NOT IN THIS WORLD,, BUT I HAVE SEEN IT BEFORE. DURING MY FINAL INITIATION INTO THE ARTS OF MELNIBONE, MY FATHER TOOK ME IN ASTRAL FORM TO THE REALM OF CHAOS, THERE TO RECEIVE THE AUDIENCE OF MY PATRON, THE LORD ARIOCH OF THE SEVEN DARKS...
WELL, ALBINO? HAVE YOU SEEN ITS LIKE IN THE WORLD BEFORE?
12

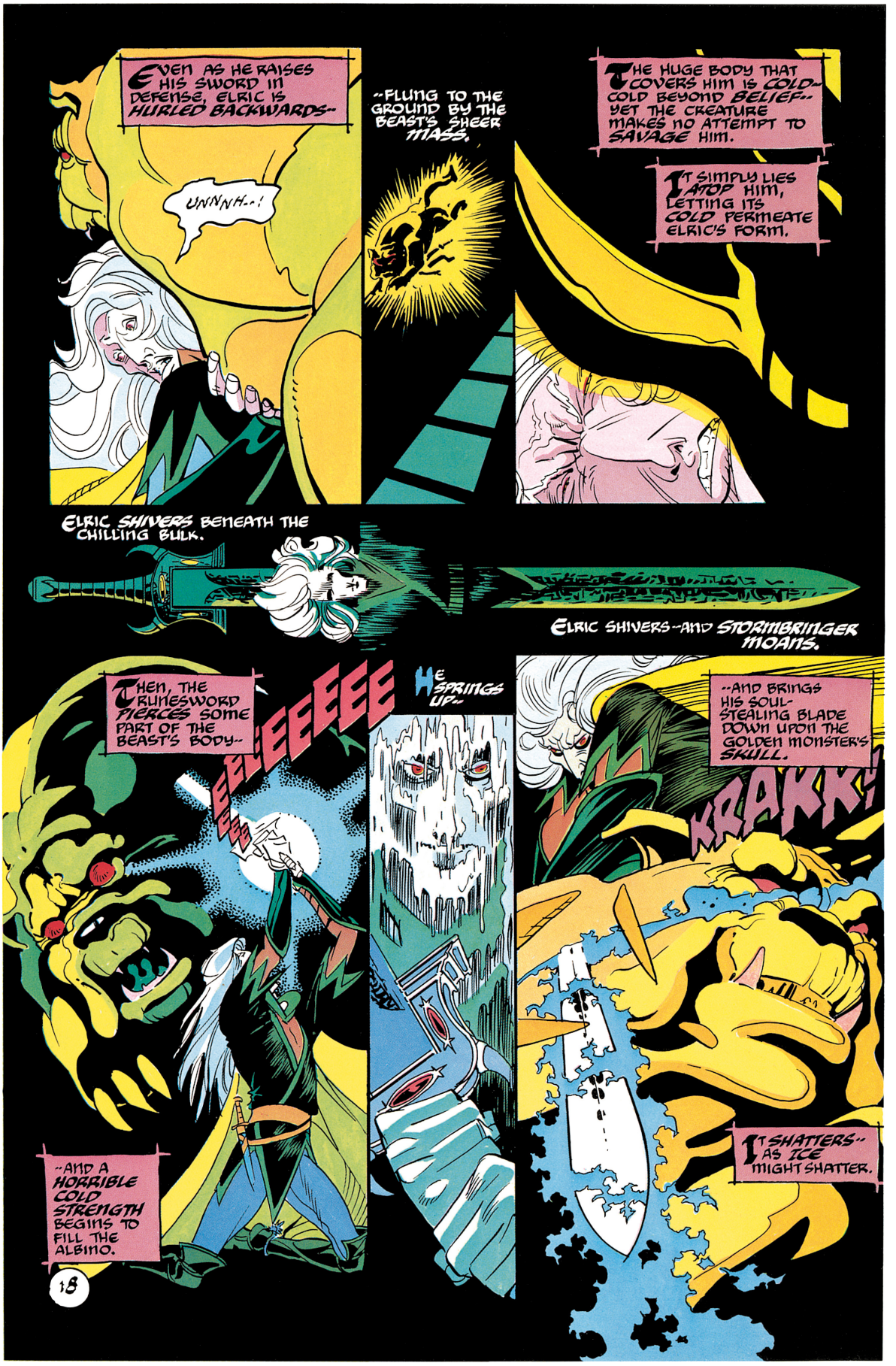

WHAT'S THAT? YOU HAVE BEEN TO CHAOS? THIS IS ARIOCH'S OWN CITADEL, THEN?
HAH! THAT? NO, IT IS A HOVEL COMPARED TO THE PALACES OF THE LORDS OF CHAOS.
THEN WHO DWELLS IN THIS ONE?
AS I REMEMBER, WIZARD, THE ONE WHO DWELT IN IT IN MY YOUTH--HE WAS A KIND OF SERVANT TO THE LORDS.
YET, NOT PRECISELY A SERVANT...
YOU MELNIBONÉANS! EVEN STARVING YOU'D RATHER HAVE A PARADOX THAN FOOD!
THE ONE WHO DWELLS YONDER IS A PARADOXICAL SORT OF FELLOW... A KIND OF JESTER TO THE COURT OF CHAOS.
THE LORDS OF CHAOS RESPECT HIM... PERHAPS FEAR HIM SLIGHTLY, EVEN THOUGH HE ENTERTAINS THEM WITH COSMIC RIDDLES.
I HAVE HEARD HE JUGGLES ENIGMAS LIKE BAUBLES, LAUGHS AT WHAT THE CHAOS LORDS HOLD DEAR...
WHY SHOULD SUCH A ONE BE HERE?
WHY SHOULD HE BE ANYWHERE?
NOT EVEN THE LORDS OF THE HIGHER WORLDS CAN KNOW THE MOTIVES OF BALO THE JESTER, WHO MOVES BETWEEN CHAOS AND LAW AT WILL.
WE'LL LEARN THEM-- BY ENTERING THE CITADEL!
COME NOW, SORCERER, I'VE LITTLE ENOUGH LOVE FOR LIFE, BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS OF VALUE TO ME...
MY SOUL, FOR ONE!
YOU SEEM MORE TROUBLED BY THIS THAN YOU SHOULD BE, ELRIC.
IT IS DISTURBING.
13


THERE IS A HINT HERE THAT, IF WE GO FURTHER, WE MAY BECOME EMBROILED IN SOME DISPUTE 'TWIXT BALO AND HIS MASTERS--PERHAPS THE LORDS OF LAW, AS WELL
SUCH INVOLVEMENT COULD EASILY MEAN OUR DESTRUCTION.
BUT WE CANNOT SIMPLY STAND BY! HAVE YOU NO SORCERY TO SEND HIM BACK TO CHAOS, WHERE HE BELONGS?
EVEN MELNIBONEANS CANNOT MATCH THE POWER OF THE LORDS OF THE HIGHER WORLDS, YISHANA.
BUT COME, WE WILL TAKE A CLOSER LOOK, IF YOU INSIST.
AND NOW THE MUSIC BEGINS... FAINTLY, AT FIRST...
...BUT SWELLING WITH A POIGNANT SWEETNESS...
...EVOKING NOSTALGIC MEMORIES, OFFERING PEACE... GIVING LIFE A SHARP MEANING...
...ALL AT THE SAME TIME.
IF THE MUSIC CAME FROM INSTRUMENTS, THEY WERE NOT EARTHLY ONES. IT PRODUCED IN ELRIC A YEARNING TO DISCOVER ITS SOURCE... WHICH HE RESISTED.
CAREFUL, YISHANA. THE MUSIC IS VERY--
YISHANA!
SMEK!
14


He looks back, hoping that Theleb K'aarta can lend help... but the sorcerer is riding rapidly away.
Evidently, on first hearing the music, he came to his own swift decision.
YISHANA!
YISHANA! YOU GO TO YOUR DOOM!
Now the Queen of Jharkor has reached the citadel's outer limits...
And Elric seems suddenly to see a dozen Yishanas, galloping through as many gateways into the citadel.
It is impossible to tell which is the real Yishana.
15


...UNTIL SHE HAS VANISHED INTO THOSE SHIMMERING WAVES OF COLOR...
...AND THE MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY.
YET, IN ITS AFTERMATH, ELRIC THINKS FOR A MOMENT HE HEARS A FAINT WHISPER OF...
AHA
HAHAH
...LAUGHTER.
HIS HORSE BECOMING DIFFICULT TO CONTROL, HE DISMOUNTS.
IT GALLOPS OFF, SNORTING ITS TERROR.
ELRIC MOVES TO DRAW HIS RUNESWORD... YET HESITATES, FOR, ONCE PULLED FROM ITS SCABBARD, THE BLADE WILL DEMAND SOULS BEFORE IT ALLOWS ITSELF TO BE RESHEATHED.
SENSING HIS HESITATION, THE BLADE QUIVERS ANGRILY AT HIS SIDE...
HMMMMMM
MMMMMMMMMM
NOT JUST YET, STORMBRINGER
16

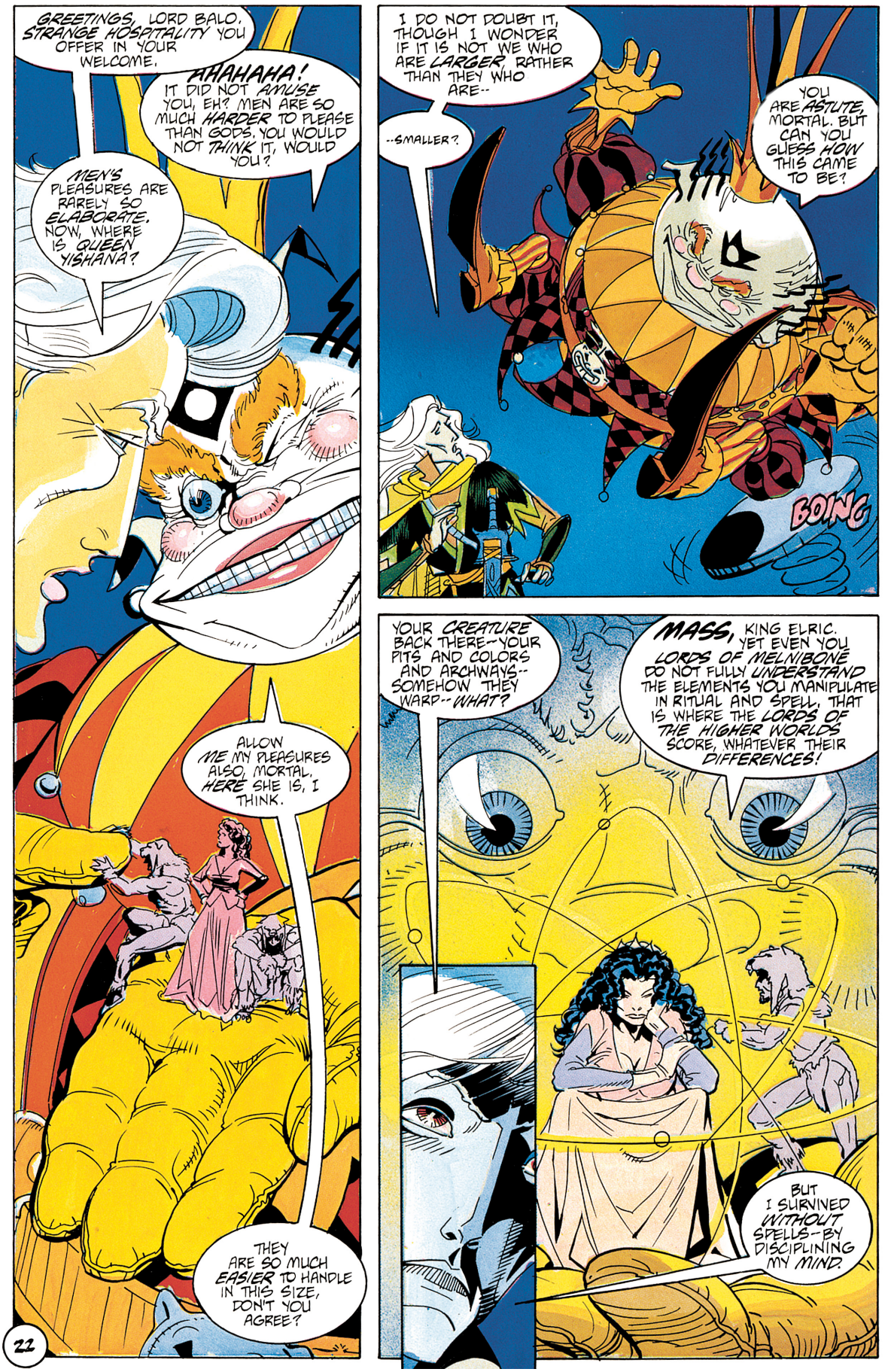

THERE MAY BE FORCES WITHIN WHICH ARE STRONGER EVEN THAN YOU!
HALF-BLINDED BY THE SCINTILLATING COLORS AROUND HIM, ELRIC BEGINS TO WADE THROUGH THE FAINTLY-RESISTING SWIRLS OF LIGHT.
HE FEELS THE SICKENING LACK OF ANY SORT OF ORIENTATION. DISTANCE, DEPTH, BREADTH HAVE BECOME MEANINGLESS.
MOVING IN THE DIRECTION HE THINKS YISHANA HAS GONE, HE REALIZES HE HAS LOST SIGHT OF THE GATEWAY, OR ANY OF ITS MIRROR IMAGES.
HE REJOICES IN THE SHOCK OF VITALITY AS, AT LAST, HE DRAWS HIS RUNESWORD...
...AND HIS LOUD-SHRIEKED BATTLE-ULULATION WAKES ONE WHO LURKS BEYOND THE GATEWAY.
ELRIC PAUSES A MOMENT AT THE PORTAL, REMEMBERING AN INVOCATION TO ARIOCH HE MAY NEED LATER--
--AND THAT IS WHEN THE GOLDEN BEAST WITH EYES OF RUBY-FIRE STRIKES!
17

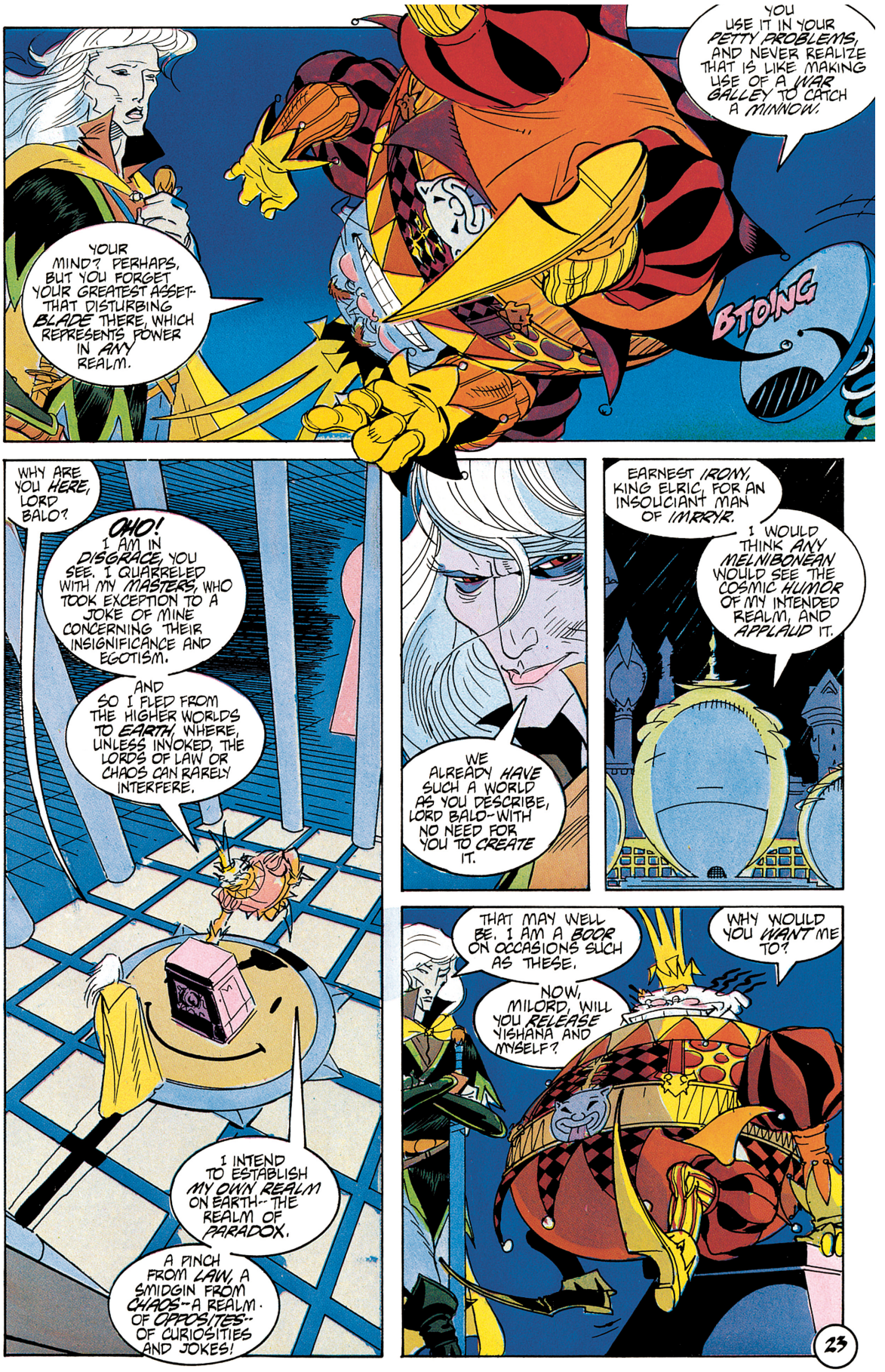

EVEN AS HE RAISES HIS SWORD IN DEFENSE, ELRIC IS HURLED BACKWARDS--
UNNNH--!
--FLUNG TO THE GROUND BY THE BEAST'S SHEER MASS.
THE HUGE BODY THAT COVERS HIM IS COLD--COLD BEYOND BELIEF--YET THE CREATURE MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO SAVAGE HIM.
IT SIMPLY LIES ATOP HIM, LETTING ITS COLD PERMEATE ELRIC'S FORM.
ELRIC SHIVERS BENEATH THE CHILLING BULK.
ELRIC SHIVERS--AND STORMBRINGER MOANS.
THEN, THE RUNESWORD FIERCES SOME PART OF THE BEAST'S BODY--
EEEEEEE
HE SPRINGS UP--
--AND BRINGS HIS SOUL-STEALING BLADE DOWN UPON THE GOLDEN MONSTER'S SKULL.
KRAKK!
--AND A HORRIBLE COLD STRENGTH BEGINS TO FILL THE ALBINO.
IT SHATTERS--AS ICE MIGHT SHATTER.
18


ONCE WITHIN THE PASSAGE, THE WHOLE CITADEL SEEMS FILLED WITH ROARS AND SHRIEKS WHICH SEEM MAGNIFIED BY THEIR VERY ECHOES --AS IF THE VOICE THE COLD-BEAST HAD LACKED OUTSIDE WAS SHOUTING ITS DEATH-AGONIES HERE.
NOW HE IS RUNNING UP A SPIRAL RAMP... FROM WHICH, LOOKING DOWN WITH A SHUDDER, HE BEHOLDS AN INFINITE PIT OF SUBTLE, DANGEROUS COLORS, WHICH SWIM MADDENINGLY, HYPNOTICALLY BENEATH HIM.
UPWARDS IS THE SAME AS DOWNWARDS. ONLY THE RAMP HAS ANY KIND OF CONSTANCY.
DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
HE EVEN FEELS AN ALL BUT UNCONTROLLABLE URGE TO LEAP INTO THE YAWNING PIT...
...BUT HE STRENGTHENS HIS GRIP ON STORMBRINGER AND DISCIPLINES HIMSELF TO CLIMB ONWARD, UPWARD.
AAAARRRRRR RRRRRRRRR
19


ELRIC KNOWS HE IS IN SOME PROVINCE OF THE HIGHER WORLDS LONG BEFORE HE COMES TO THE END OF THE RAMP AND STEPS ONTO A BRIDGE LEADING OVER THE PIT TOWARD A BLUE-GLEAMING ARCHWAY.
HE IS WITHIN THAT ARCH WHEN HIS SWORD BEGINS TO MURMER...AND, TURNING, ELRIC BEHOLDS ANOTHER ARCHWAY, THIS ONE GLOWING A DEEP RED.
WHERE THE TWO MEET IN A PURPLE OF FANTASTIC RICHNESS. THE ALBINO EXPERIENCES STILL ANOTHER POWERFUL HYPNOTIC PULL.
NO SOONER DOES ELRIC FORCE HIMSELF TO ENTER THE RED ARCH THAN TWO MORE APPEAR-- GREEN AND YELLOW--
--TILL HE SEEMS TRAPPED WITHIN A CRISSCROSS OF VIBRANT BEAMS--
--AND EVEN STORM-BRINGER'S BLACK RADIANCE CAN SLICE THEM ONLY FOR MOMENTS AT A TIME.
AS ELRIC CONTINUES FORWARD, A SHAPE LOOMS AMID THE CONFUSION OF COLOR.
IT SEEMS A MAN IN SHAPE, BUT NOT IN SIZE.
THE CREATURE IS LESS THAN HIS OWN HEIGHT, YET IT GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF VAST PROPORTIONS--AS IF IT WERE A GIANT, AND ELRIC HAS GROWN TO MATCH ITS BULK!
IT BLUNDERS TOWARD ELRIC--
20


--AND THROUGH HIM!
BTONG
YET, THE CREATURE IS OF SUCH INCREDIBLE DENSITY THAT EVEN HIS RUNE-SWORD MAKES NO IMPRESSION ON IT.
AGAIN THE THING REACHES OUT TO GRASP HIM--AND ELRIC GRINS AS IT AGAIN FAILS TO HOLD HIM.
BUT WHEN HE BEHOLDS, WITH TERROR, THE LIGHT GLEAMING THROUGH HIS OWN PALE HAND--
--HE REALIZES IT IS HE WHO IS THE GHOST!
FEARING FOR HIS VERY SANITY, ELRIC FLEES--INTO A GREAT HALL OF UNSTABLE SHIFTING COLORS--
--WHERE A SMALL FIGURE GRINS MERRILY UP AT HIM.
WELCOME, KING OF MELNIBONE! AND HOW FARES THE RULER OF MY FAVORITE EARTHLY RACE?
21

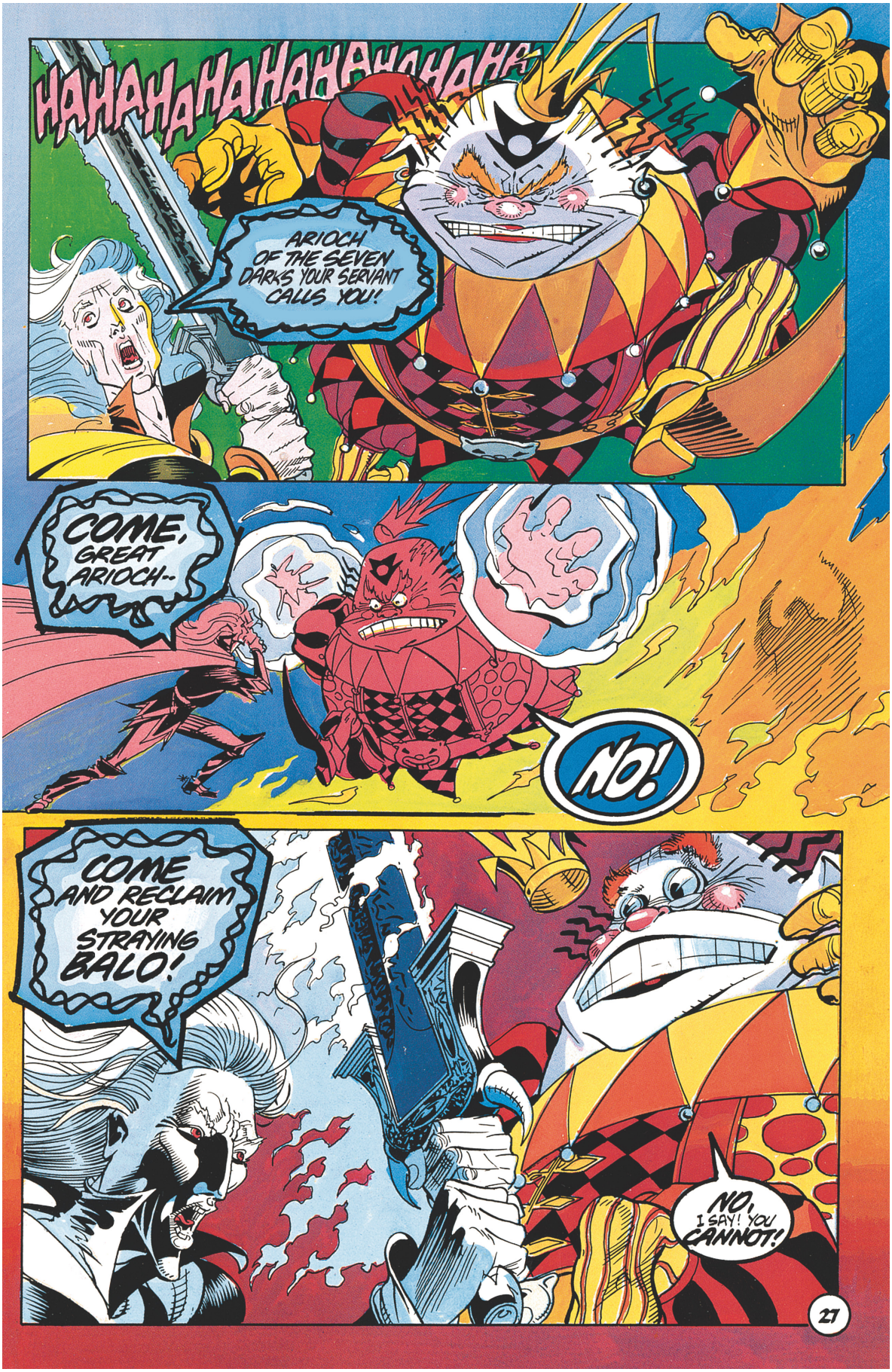

GREETINGS, LORD BALO. STRANGE HOSPITALITY YOU OFFER IN YOUR WELCOME.
AHAHAHA! IT DID NOT AMUSE YOU, EH? MEN ARE SO MUCH HARDER TO PLEASE THAN GODS. YOU WOULD NOT THINK IT, WOULD YOU?
MEN'S PLEASURES ARE RARELY SO ELABORATE. NOW, WHERE IS QUEEN YISHANA?
ALLOW ME MY PLEASURES ALSO, MORTAL. HERE SHE IS, I THINK.
THEY ARE SO MUCH EASIER TO HANDLE IN THIS SIZE, DON'T YOU AGREE?
I DO NOT DOUBT IT, THOUGH I WONDER IF IT IS NOT WE WHO ARE LARGER, RATHER THAN THEY WHO ARE--
--SMALLER?
YOU ARE ASTUTE, MORTAL. BUT CAN YOU GUESS HOW THIS CAME TO BE?
BOING
YOUR CREATURE BACK THERE--YOUR PITS AND COLORS AND ARCHWAYS--SOMEHOW THEY WARP--WHAT?
MASS, KING ELRIC. YET EVEN YOU LORDS OF MELNIBONE DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE ELEMENTS YOU MANIPULATE IN RITUAL AND SPELL, THAT IS WHERE THE LORDS OF THE HIGHER WORLDS SCORE, WHATEVER THEIR DIFFERENCES!
BUT I SURVIVED WITHOUT SPELLS--BY DISCIPLINING MY MIND.


YOUR MIND? PERHAPS, BUT YOU FORGET YOUR GREATEST ASSET-- THAT DISTURBING BLADE THERE, WHICH REPRESENTS POWER IN ANY REALM.
YOU USE IT IN YOUR PETTY PROBLEMS, AND NEVER REALIZE THAT IS LIKE MAKING USE OF A WAR GALLEY TO CATCH A MINNOW.
BTOING
WHY ARE YOU HERE, LORD BALO?
OHO! I AM IN DISGRACE, YOU SEE. I QUARRELED WITH MY MASTERS, WHO TOOK EXCEPTION TO A JOKE OF MINE CONCERNING THEIR INSIGNIFICANCE AND EGOTISM.
AND SO I FLED FROM THE HIGHER WORLDS TO EARTH, WHERE, UNLESS INVOKED, THE LORDS OF LAW OR CHAOS CAN RARELY INTERFERE.
I INTEND TO ESTABLISH MY OWN REALM ON EARTH-- THE REALM OF PARADOX.
A PINCH FROM LAW, A SMIDGIN FROM CHAOS--A REALM OF OPPOSITES-- OF CURIOSITIES AND JOKES!
WE ALREADY HAVE SUCH A WORLD AS YOU DESCRIBE, LORD BALO-WITH NO NEED FOR YOU TO CREATE IT.
EARNEST IRONY, KING ELRIC, FOR AN INSOUCIANT MAN OF IMRRYR.
I WOULD THINK ANY MELNIBONEAN WOULD SEE THE COSMIC HUMOR OF MY INTENDED REALM, AND APPLAUD IT.
THAT MAY WELL BE. I AM A BOOR ON OCCASIONS SUCH AS THESE.
NOW, MILORD, WILL YOU RELEASE YISHANA AND MYSELF?
WHY WOULD YOU WANT ME TO?
23

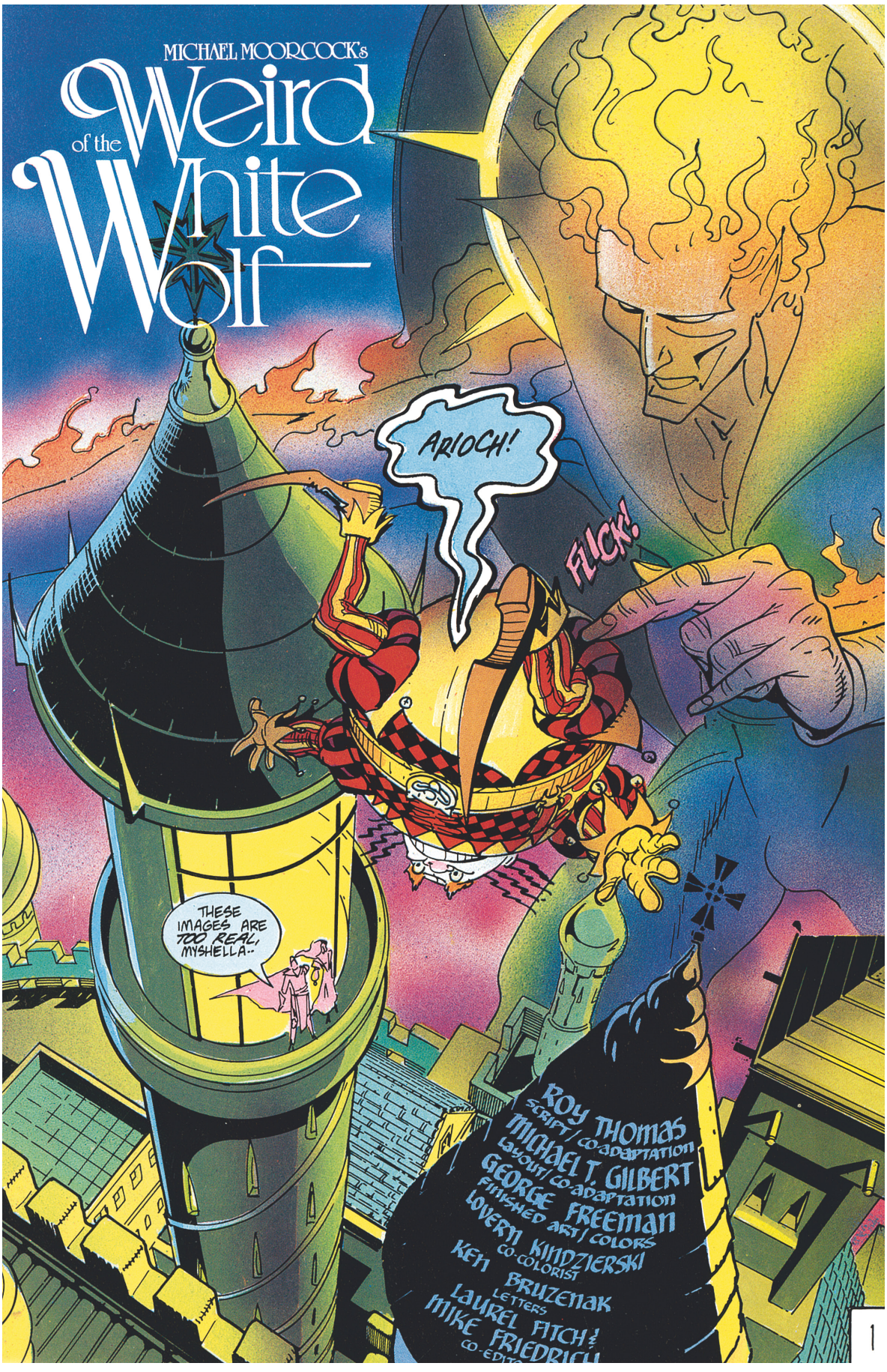

YOU AND I, KING ELRIC--WE ARE GIANTS! I HAVE GIVEN YOU THE STATUS AND APPEARANCE OF A GOD.
WHY, YOU AND I COULD BE--NAY, SHOULD BE--PARTNERS IN THIS MAGNIFICENT ENTERPRISE OF MINE!
UNFORTUNATELY, LORD BALO, I DO NOT POSSESS YOUR RANGE OF HUMOR, AND THUS AM UNFITTED FOR SUCH AN EXALTED ROLE.
BESIDES...
...IT IS IN MY MIND THAT THE LORDS OF THE HIGHER WORLDS WILL NOT EASILY LET DROP THE MATTER OF YOUR AMBITION, SINCE IT APPEARS TO CONFLICT SO STRONGLY WITH THEIR OWN.
HAH!
24

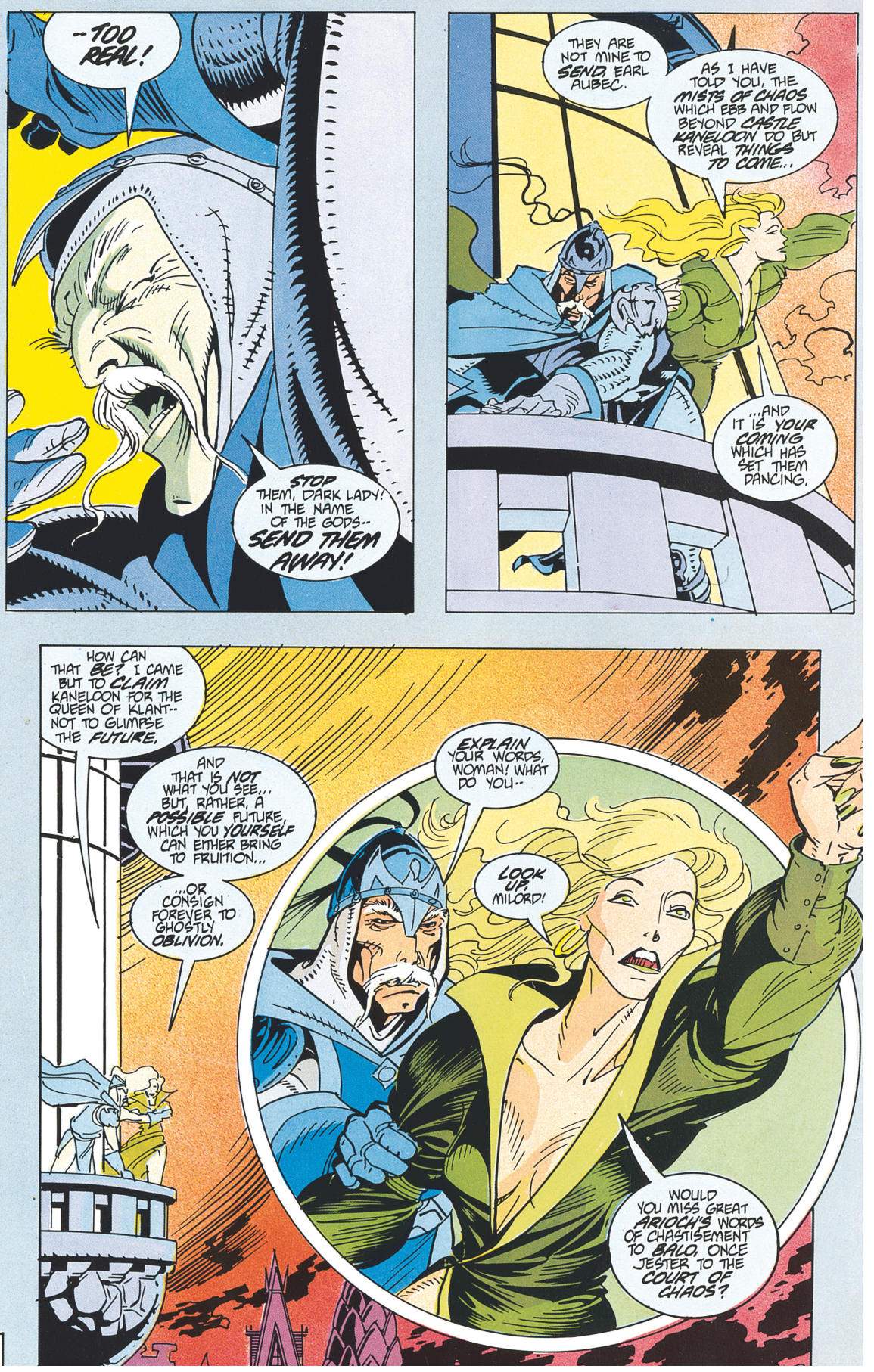

AND WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO IF I REFUSE YOUR OFFER OF ALLIANCE ?
WHY ELRIC, YOU WOULD NOT REFUSE, SURELY!
THINK OF ALL THE SUBTLE PRANKS I COULD PLAY ON YOU...
INDEED? AND MY BLACK SWORD?
ah, yes...
BALO, IN YOUR MIRTH AND OBSESSIONS, YOU HAVE NOT CONSIDERED EVERYTHING THOROUGHLY.
HMMMMM
YOU SHOULD HAVE EXERTED MORE EFFORT TO VANQUISH ME BEFORE I CAME HERE!
25

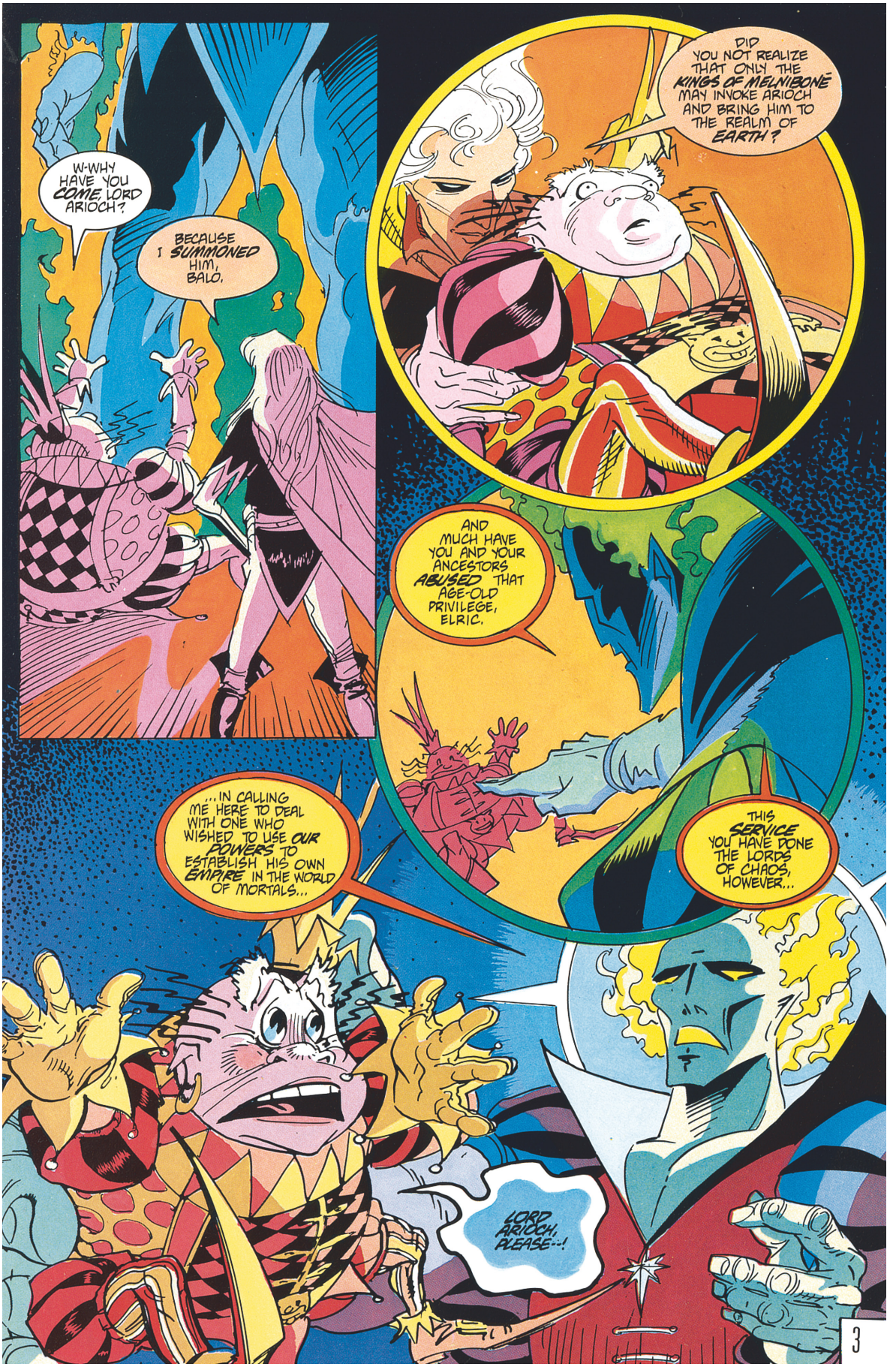

ARIOCH! MASTER! I INVOKE THEE, LORD OF CHAOS!
C-CEASE THAT, LORD ELRIC!
ARIOCH! HERE IS A SOUL FOR YOU TO CLAIM!
QUIET, I SAY!
CRACKABOOM
ARIOCH!
HEAR ME!
YOU-YOU FAILED, KING ELRIC. EXCEPT FOR A LITTLE THUNDER, YOUR INVOCATION IS UNHEEDED--
26


HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
ARIOCH OF THE SEVEN DARKS YOUR SERVANT CALLS YOU!
COME, GREAT ARIOCH--
NO!
COME AND RECLAIM YOUR STRAYING BALO!
NO, I SAY! YOU CANNOT!
27


SADLY FOR YOU, LITTLE JESTER...
...HE CAN!
28
Next: The epic conclusion
LORD OF THE LIZARDS

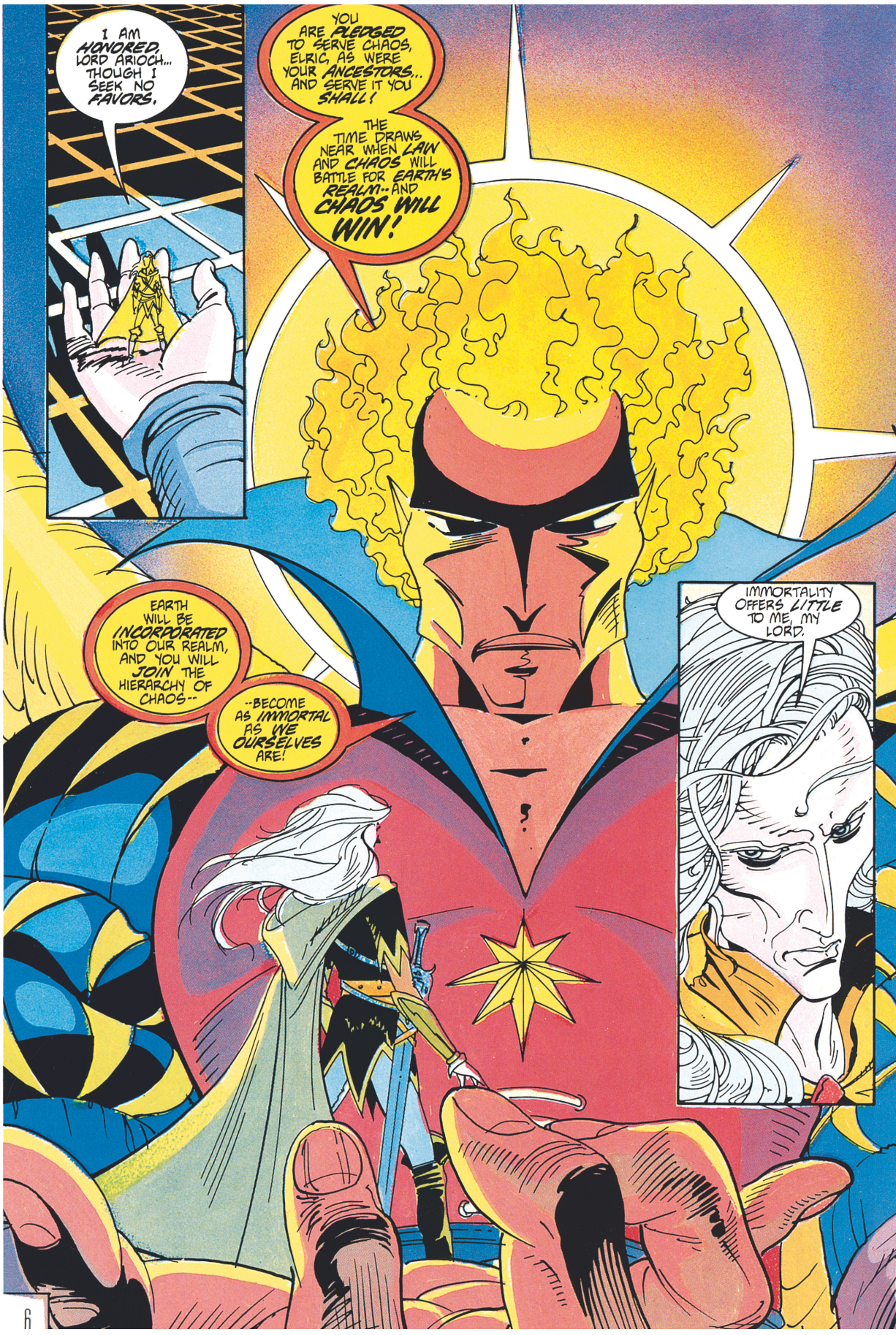

MICHAEL MOORCOCK's
Weird of the White Wolf
ARIOCH!
FLICK!
THESE IMAGES ARE TOO REAL, MYSHELLA..
ROY THOMAS
SCRIPT / CO-ADAPTATION
MICHAEL T. GILBERT
LAYOUT / CO-ADAPTATION
GEORGE FREEMAN
FINISHED ART / COLORS
LOVERN KINDZIERSKI
CO-COLORIST
KEN BRUZENAK
LETTERS
LAUREL FITCH &
MIKE FRIEDRICH
CO-EDITO
1

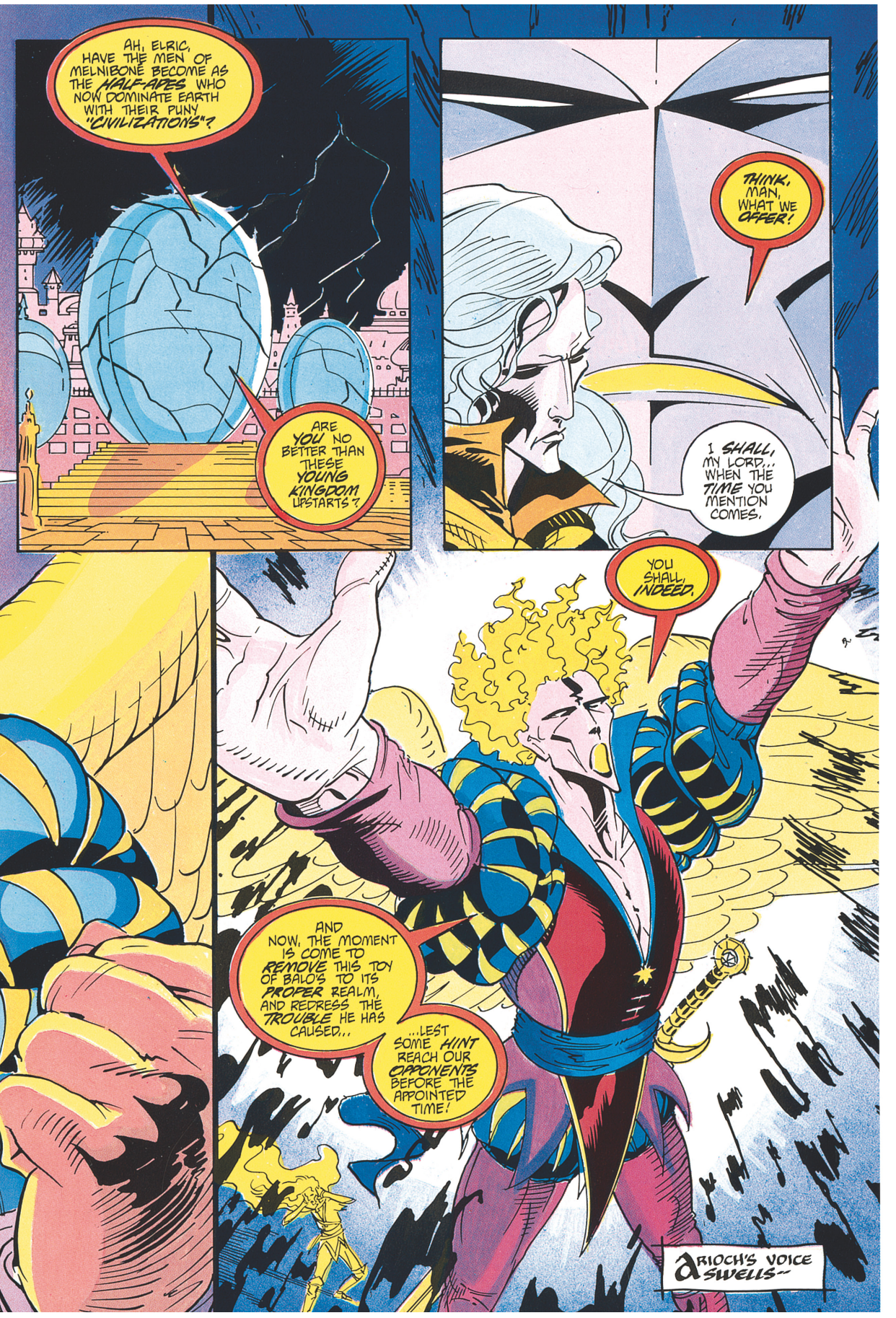

--TOO REAL!
STOP THEM, DARK LADY! IN THE NAME OF THE GODS-- SEND THEM AWAY!
THEY ARE NOT MINE TO SEND, EARL AUBEC.
AS I HAVE TOLD YOU, THE MISTS OF CHAOS WHICH EBB AND FLOW BEYOND CASTLE KANELOON DO BUT REVEAL THINGS TO COME...
...AND IT IS YOUR COMING WHICH HAS SET THEM DANCING.
HOW CAN THAT BE? I CAME BUT TO CLAIM KANELOON FOR THE QUEEN OF KLANT-- NOT TO GLIMPSE THE FUTURE.
AND THAT IS NOT WHAT YOU SEE... BUT, RATHER, A POSSIBLE FUTURE, WHICH YOU YOURSELF CAN EITHER BRING TO FRUITION...
...OR CONSIGN FOREVER TO GHOSTLY OBLIVION.
EXPLAIN YOUR WORDS, WOMAN! WHAT DO YOU--
LOOK UP, MILORD!
WOULD YOU MISS GREAT ARIOCH'S WORDS OF CHASTISEMENT TO BALO, ONCE JESTER TO THE COURT OF CHAOS?


W-WHY HAVE YOU COME, LORD ARIOCH?
BECAUSE I SUMMONED HIM, BALO.
DID YOU NOT REALIZE THAT ONLY THE KINGS OF MELNIBONÉ MAY INVOKE ARIOCH AND BRING HIM TO THE REALM OF EARTH?
AND MUCH HAVE YOU AND YOUR ANCESTORS ABUSED THAT AGE-OLD PRIVILEGE, ELRIC.
...IN CALLING ME HERE TO DEAL WITH ONE WHO WISHED TO USE OUR POWERS TO ESTABLISH HIS OWN EMPIRE IN THE WORLD OF MORTALS...
THIS SERVICE YOU HAVE DONE THE LORDS OF CHAOS, HOWEVER...
LORD ARIOCH, PLEASE--!
3


...WILL MORE THAN ATONE FOR TEN MILLENIA OF MISUSE!
SQUISH!
CRUSSH!
4

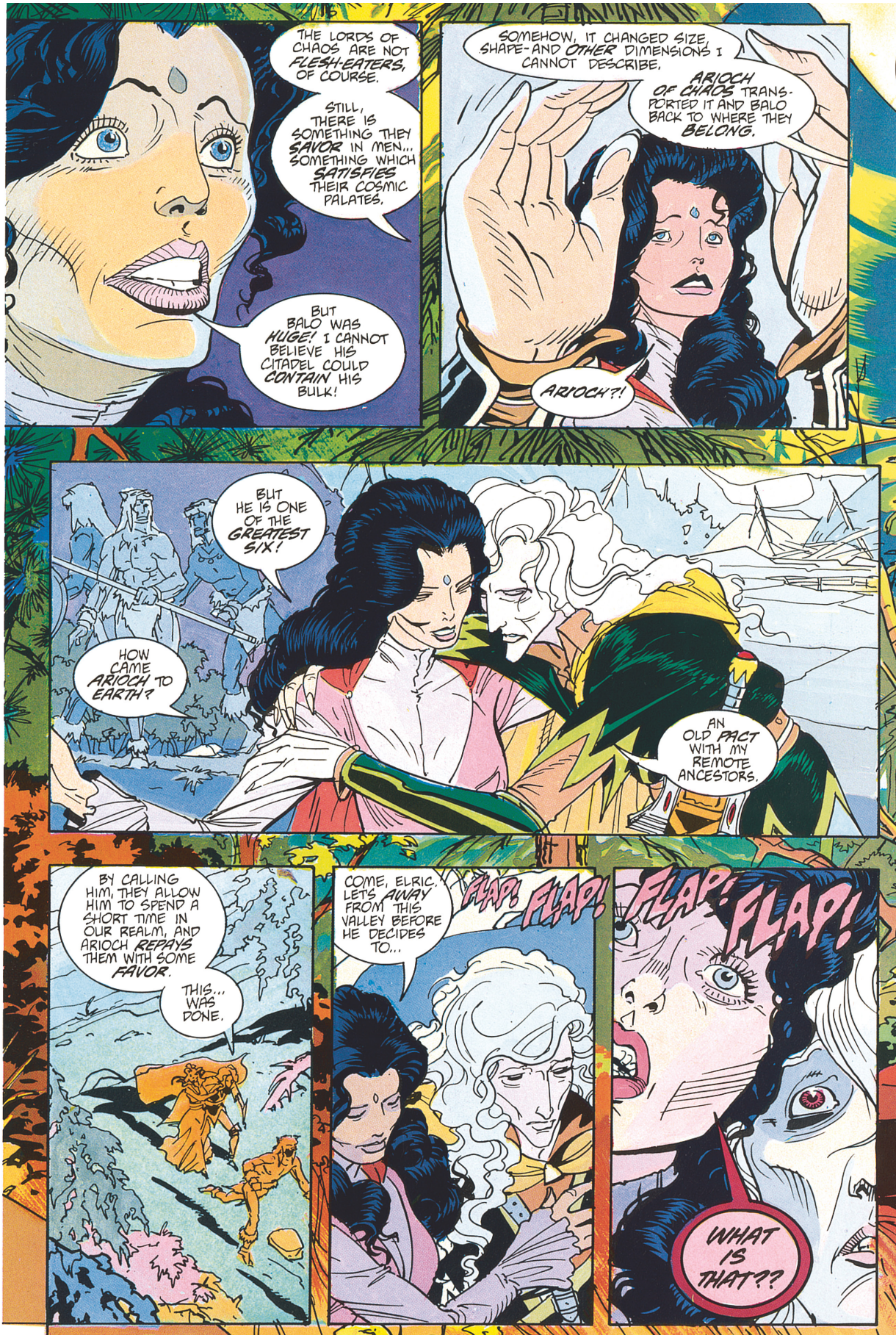

CHOMP!
ARIOCH--!
I HAVE NOT EATEN HIM, ELRIC.
IT IS MERELY THE SIMPLEST WAY OF TRANSPORTING HIM BACK TO THE REALM FROM WHICH HE CAME.
BALO HAS TRANSGRESSED, AND WILL BE PUNISHED.
AS FOR THIS CITADEL HE CREATED--IT IS UNFORTUNATE, AND CONTRADICTS THE PLANS WE CHAOS LORDS HAVE FOR EARTH--
-PLANS WHICH WILL INVOLVE YOU, OUR SERVANT--AND WHICH WILL MAKE YOU MIGHTY INDEED.
5

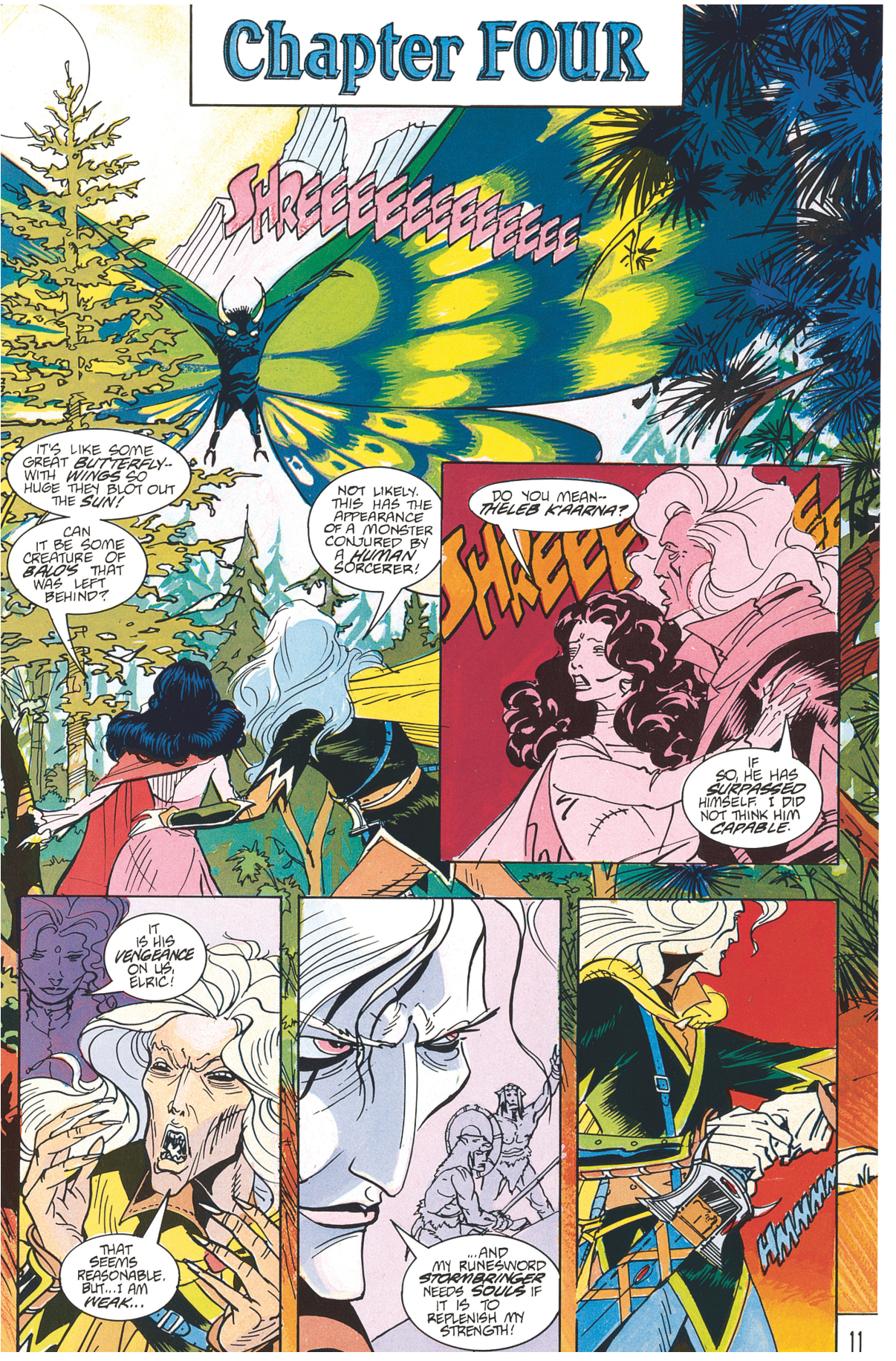

I AM HONORED, LORD ARIOCH... THOUGH I SEEK NO FAVORS.
YOU ARE PLEDGED TO SERVE CHAOS, ELRIC, AS WERE YOUR ANCESTORS... AND SERVE IT YOU SHALL!
THE TIME DRAWS NEAR WHEN LAW AND CHAOS WILL BATTLE FOR EARTH'S REALM-- AND CHAOS WILL WIN!
EARTH WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO OUR REALM, AND YOU WILL JOIN THE HIERARCHY OF CHAOS--
--BECOME AS IMMORTAL AS WE OURSELVES ARE!
IMMORTALITY OFFERS LITTLE TO ME, MY LORD.
6


AH, ELRIC, HAVE THE MEN OF MELNIBONÉ BECOME AS THE HALF-APES WHO NOW DOMINATE EARTH WITH THEIR PUNY "CIVILIZATIONS"?
ARE YOU NO BETTER THAN THESE YOUNG KINGDOM UPSTARTS?
THINK, MAN, WHAT WE OFFER!
I SHALL, MY LORD... WHEN THE TIME YOU MENTION COMES.
YOU SHALL, INDEED.
AND NOW, THE MOMENT IS COME TO REMOVE THIS TOY OF BALO'S TO ITS PROPER REALM, AND REDRESS THE TROUBLE HE HAS CAUSED...
...LEST SOME HINT REACH OUR OPPONENTS BEFORE THE APPOINTED TIME!
ARIOCH'S VOICE SWELLS--


--LIKE THE SINGING OF A MILLION BRAZEN BELLS!
ELRIC FEELS HIS OWN BODY SEEM TO SHRED APART--
--TO GROW AND STRETCH--
--UNTIL IT BECOMES LIKE SMOKE DRIFTING ON AIR--
--AND ALL AROUND HIM ARE ROLLING BANKS OF COLOR--
--FLASHES, AND IMPESCRIBABLE SOUNDS.
THEN COMES A VAST BLACKNESS, AND HE CLOSES HIS EYES.


..WHEN HE OPENS THEM, HE STANDS AGAIN IN THE VALLEY OF THOKORA, IN THE LAND CALLED THARKOR... WITH NO SINGING CITADEL IN SIGHT, BUT ONLY QUEEN YISHANA AND A FEW VERY STARTLED SOLDIERS.
ELRIC--!?
THEN IT WAS YOU WHO SAVED US!
I CAN CLAIM ONLY A PART OF THE CREDIT, YISHANA.
BUT--NOT ALL MY SOLDIERS ARE HERE.
WHERE ARE THE REST--AND THE VILLAGERS ABDUCTED EARLIER?
IF BALO'S TASTES ARE LIKE HIS MASTERS', I FEAR THEY NOW HAVE THE HONOR OF BEING PART OF A DEMI-GOD.
DO YOU MEAN--?

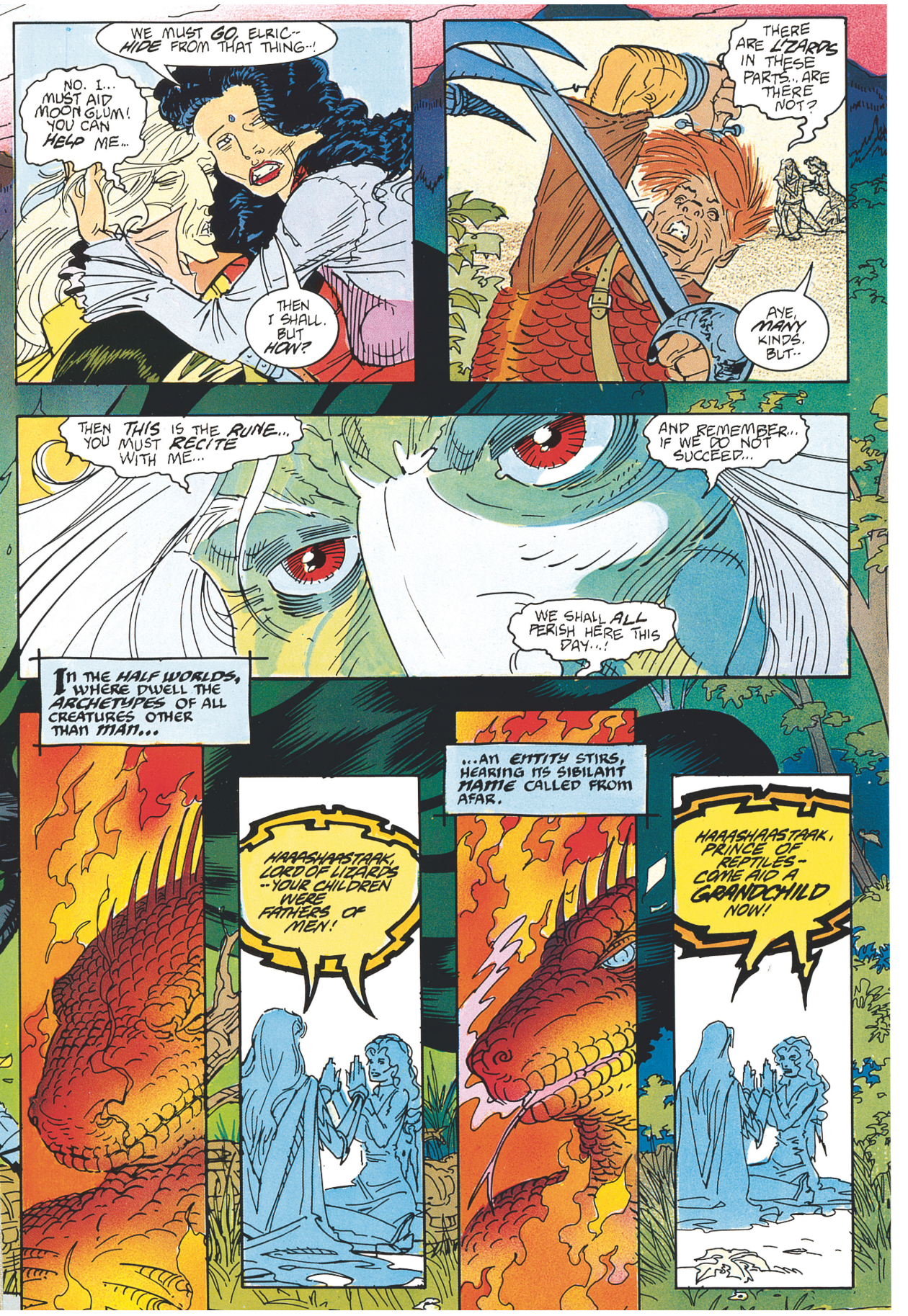

THE LORDS OF CHAOS ARE NOT FLESH-EATERS, OF COURSE.
STILL, THERE IS SOMETHING THEY SAVOR IN MEN... SOMETHING WHICH SATISFIES THEIR COSMIC PALATES.
BUT BALO WAS HUGE! I CANNOT BELIEVE HIS CITADEL COULD CONTAIN HIS BULK!
SOMEHOW, IT CHANGED SIZE, SHAPE-AND OTHER DIMENSIONS I CANNOT DESCRIBE.
ARIOCH OF CHAOS TRANSPORTED IT AND BALO BACK TO WHERE THEY BELONG.
ARIOCH?!
BUT HE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST SIX!
HOW CAME ARIOCH TO EARTH?
AN OLD PACT WITH MY REMOTE ANCESTORS.
BY CALLING HIM, THEY ALLOW HIM TO SPEND A SHORT TIME IN OUR REALM, AND ARIOCH REPAYS THEM WITH SOME FAVOR.
THIS... WAS DONE.
COME, ELRIC. LET'S AWAY FROM THIS VALLEY BEFORE HE DECIDES TO...
FLAP! FLAP!
FLAP! FLAP!
WHAT IS THAT??

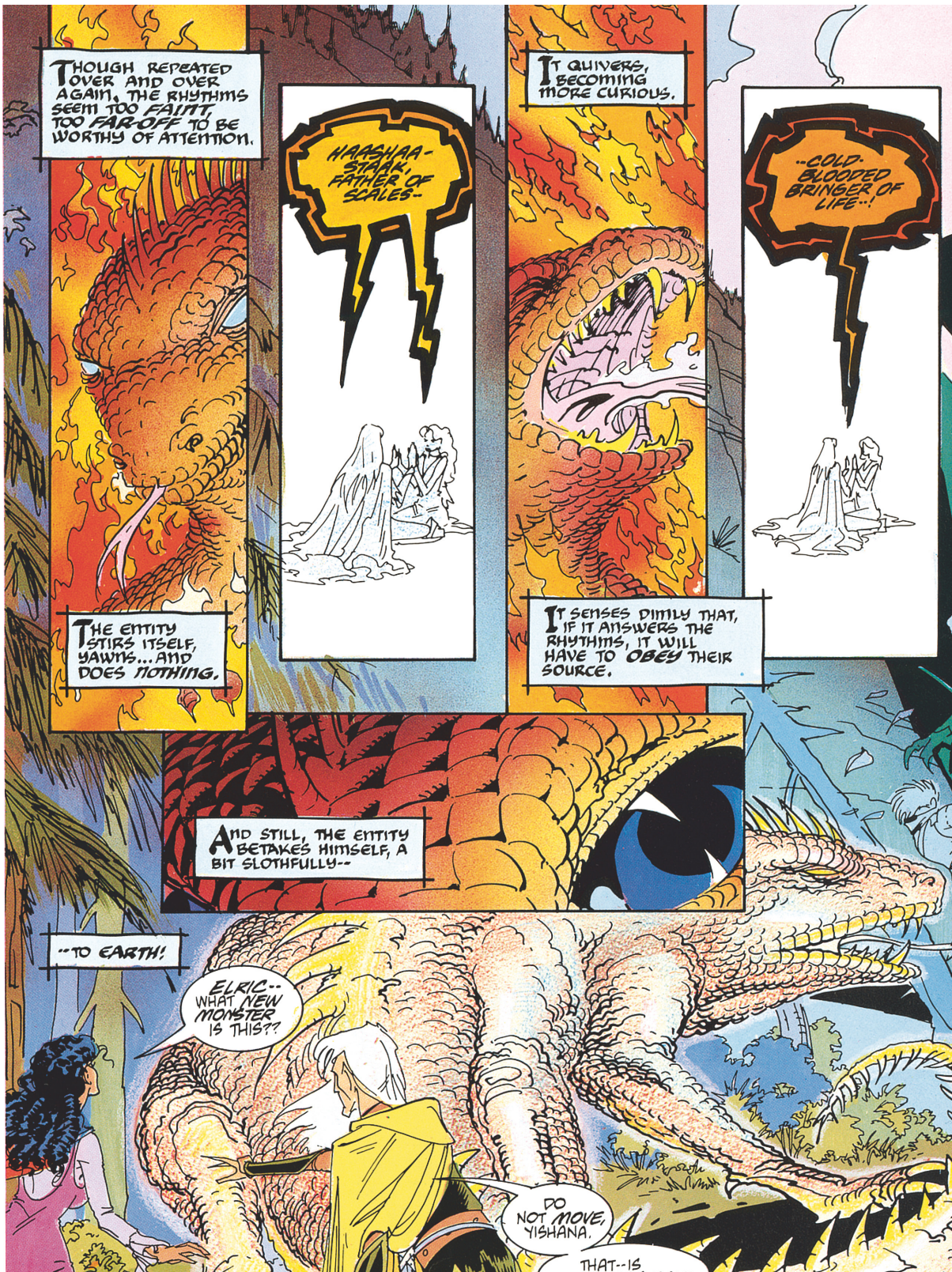

Chapter FOUR
SHREEEEEEEEEEEE
IT'S LIKE SOME GREAT BUTTERFLY-- WITH WINGS SO HUGE THEY BLOT OUT THE SUN!
CAN IT BE SOME CREATURE OF BALO'S THAT WAS LEFT BEHIND?
NOT LIKELY. THIS HAS THE APPEARANCE OF A MONSTER CONJURED BY A HUMAN SORCERER!
DO YOU MEAN-- THELEB K'AARNA?
SHREEF
IF SO, HE HAS SURPASSED HIMSELF. I DID NOT THINK HIM CAPABLE.
IT IS HIS VENGEANCE ON US, ELRIC!
THAT SEEMS REASONABLE. BUT...I AM WEAK...
...AND MY RUNESWORD STORMBRINGER NEEDS SOULS IF IT IS TO REPLENISH MY STRENGTH!
AHHHHH
11

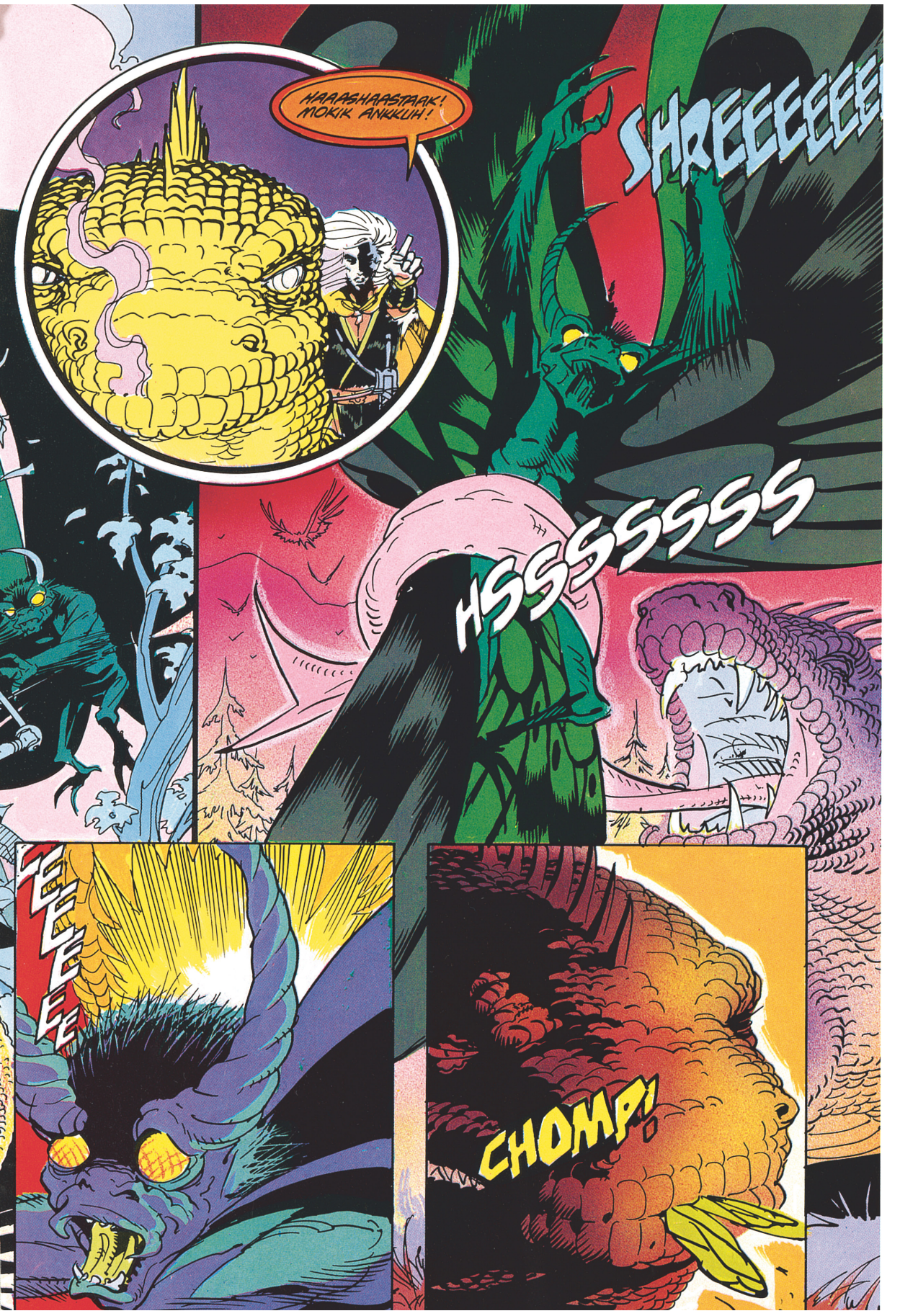

EVEN MY WARRIORS FLEE IN HORROR!
WE ARE DOOMED, ELRIC!
BEST GO WITH YOUR MEN, YISHANA.
I SUSPECT THE CREATURE WILL BE SATISFIED WITH ME ALONE.
NO! I WILL NOT DESERT YOU!
THEN DO THE THING WHICH IS NEXT BEST--
--AND GET OUT OF THE WAY!
12


SHREEEEEEEEEEE
FROM THE LOOK OF YOU, MONSTER, YOU WERE ONCE HUMAN--AND DOUBTLESS WARPED BY THELEB K'AARNA'S SORCERY.
YOU ARE MORTAL, THEN--
--AND YOU CAN DIE!
ELRIC--WATCH OUT! HE'S--
ARRRRRR
NNOOOOOOOOO


SHREEEEEEKKK
MOONGLUM...
H-HE WON'T... SURVIVE LONG... UNLESS...
YISHANA...!

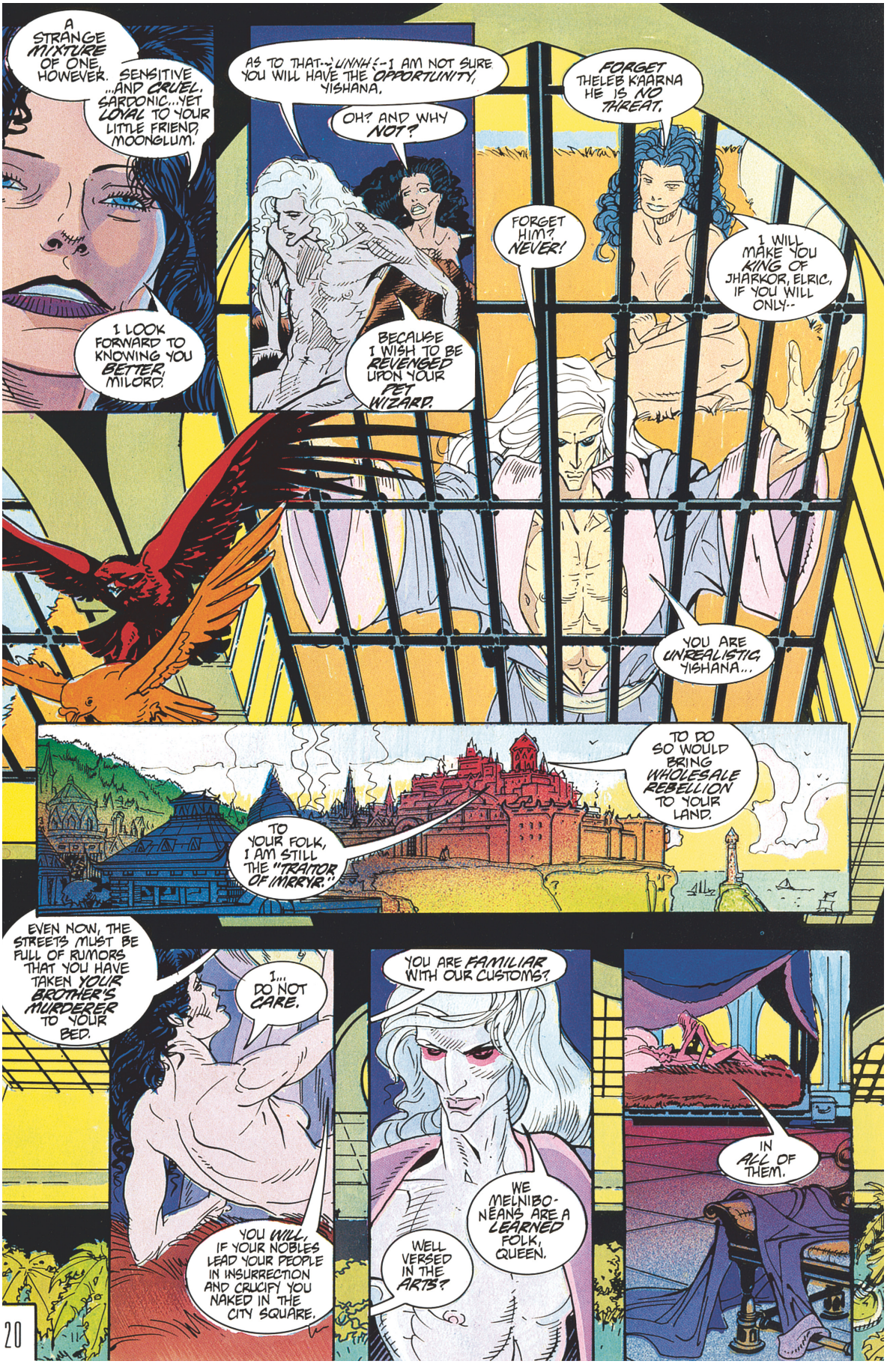

WE MUST GO, ELRIC-- HIDE FROM THAT THING--!
NO. I... MUST AID MOONGLUM! YOU CAN HELP ME...
THEN I SHALL. BUT HOW?
THERE ARE LIZARDS IN THESE PARTS.. ARE THERE NOT?
AYE, MANY KINDS. BUT..
THEN THIS IS THE RUNE... YOU MUST RECITE WITH ME...
AND REMEMBER... IF WE DO NOT SUCCEED...
WE SHALL ALL PERISH HERE THIS DAY...!
IN THE HALF WORLDS, WHERE DWELL THE ARCHETYPES OF ALL CREATURES OTHER THAN MAN...
HAAASHAASTAAK, LORD OF LIZARDS --YOUR CHILDREN WERE FATHERS OF MEN!
...AN ENTITY STIRS, HEARING ITS SIBILANT NAME CALLED FROM AFAR.
HAAASHAASTAAK, PRINCE OF REPTILES-- COME AID A GRANDCHILD NOW!

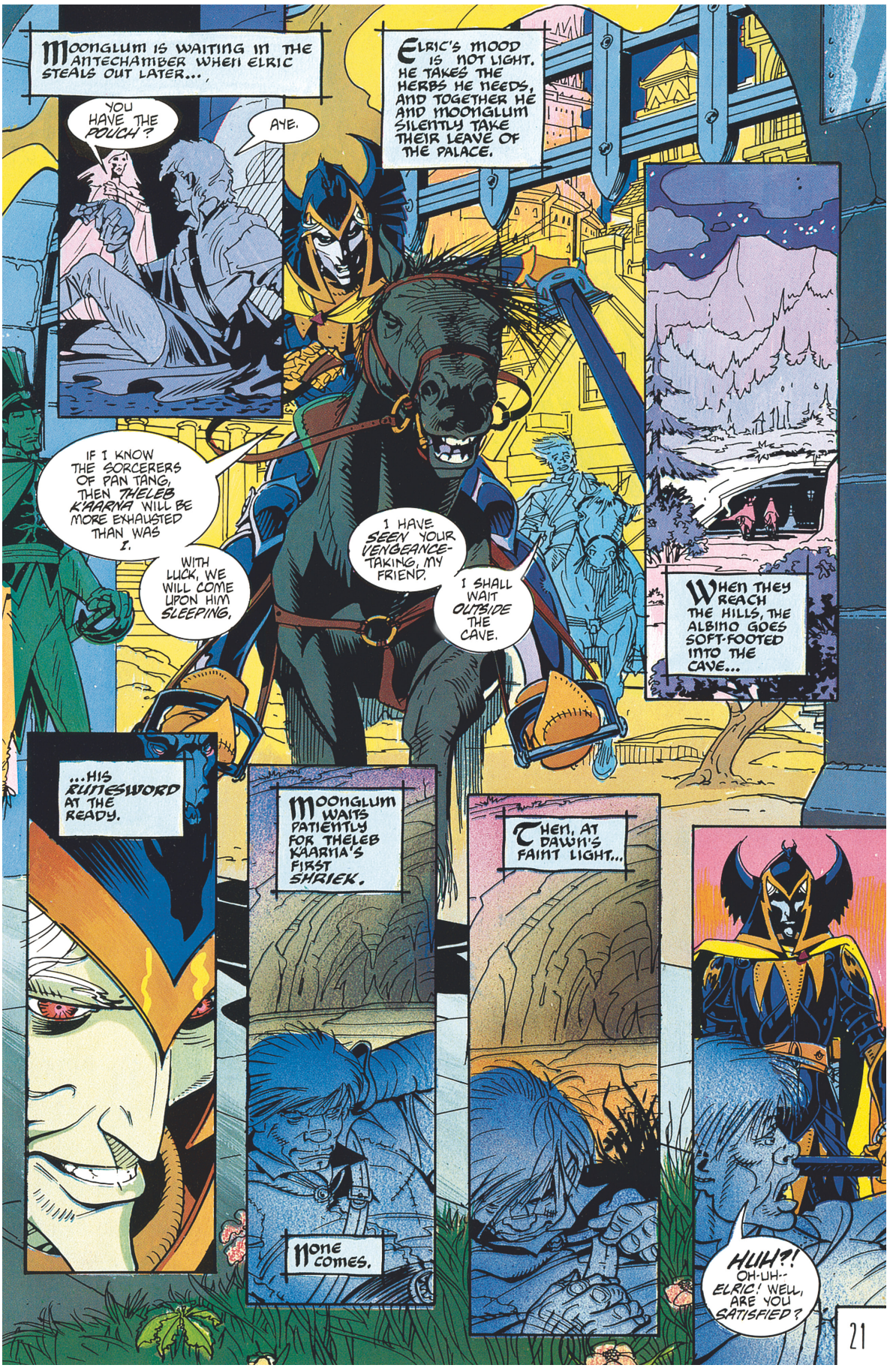

THOUGH REPEATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN, THE RHYTHMS SEEM TOO FAINT, TOO FAR-OFF TO BE WORTHY OF ATTENTION.
HAASHAA-STAAK, FATHER OF SCALES--
IT QUIVERS, BECOMING MORE CURIOUS.
--COLD-BLOODED BRINGER OF LIFE--!
THE ENTITY STIRS ITSELF, YAWNS... AND DOES NOTHING.
IT SENSES DIMLY THAT, IF IT ANSWERS THE RHYTHMS, IT WILL HAVE TO OBEY THEIR SOURCE.
AND STILL, THE ENTITY BETAKES HIMSELF, A BIT SLOTHFULLY--
--TO EARTH!
ELRIC-- WHAT NEW MONSTER IS THIS??
DO NOT MOVE, YISHANA.
THAT--IS HAASHAASTAAK!

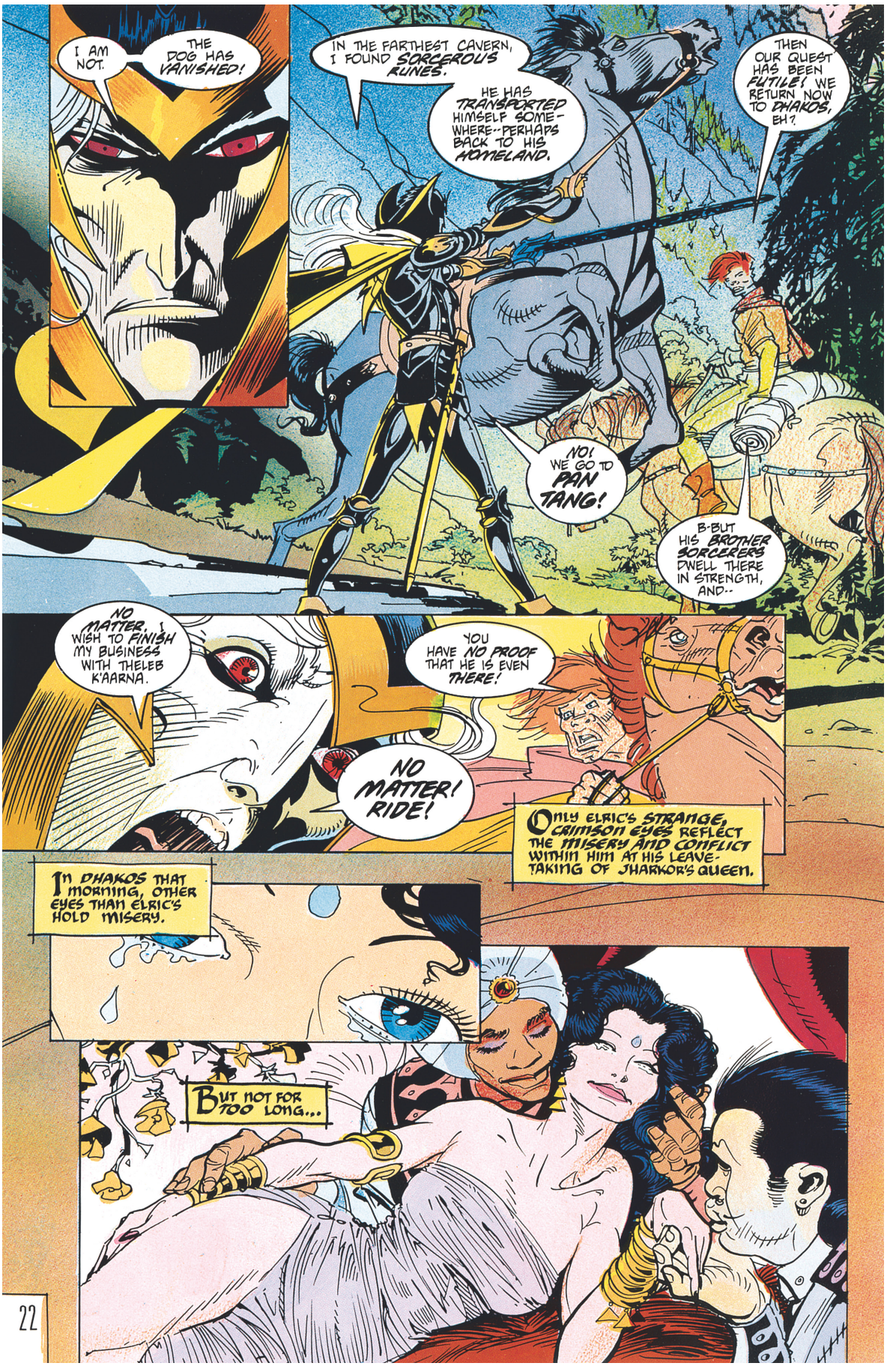

HAAASHAASTAAK! MOKIK ANKKUH!
SHREEEEE
HSSSSSSS
EEEEE
CHOMP!


BURP!
:PUU!:
ELRIC-- WHERE IS THAT THING VANISHING TO?
HOME, MOONGLUM. ITS WORK IS DONE.
OUR THANKS FOR YOUR TIMELY ATTACK, OLD FRIEND.
I FOLLOWED AT A DISTANCE, AS YOU REQUESTED, SINCE YOU SUSPECTED TREACHERY FROM THELEB K'AARNA...
"...AND WHEN I SPIED THE SORCERER COMING THIS WAY, I FOLLOWED HIM TO A CAVE IN YONDER HILLS"
LATER...
WHAT? A BED? MOONGLUM? YISHANA?
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN HERE?
MORE THAN TWO DAYS. YOU ARE IN MY PALACE.
NOW, LIE STILL. YOUR ARM...
A POUCH OF HERBS FROM MY BELONGINGS AT THE INN WILL HEAL IT QUICKLY...
...AND ALSO GIVE ME A BIT OF STRENGTH...

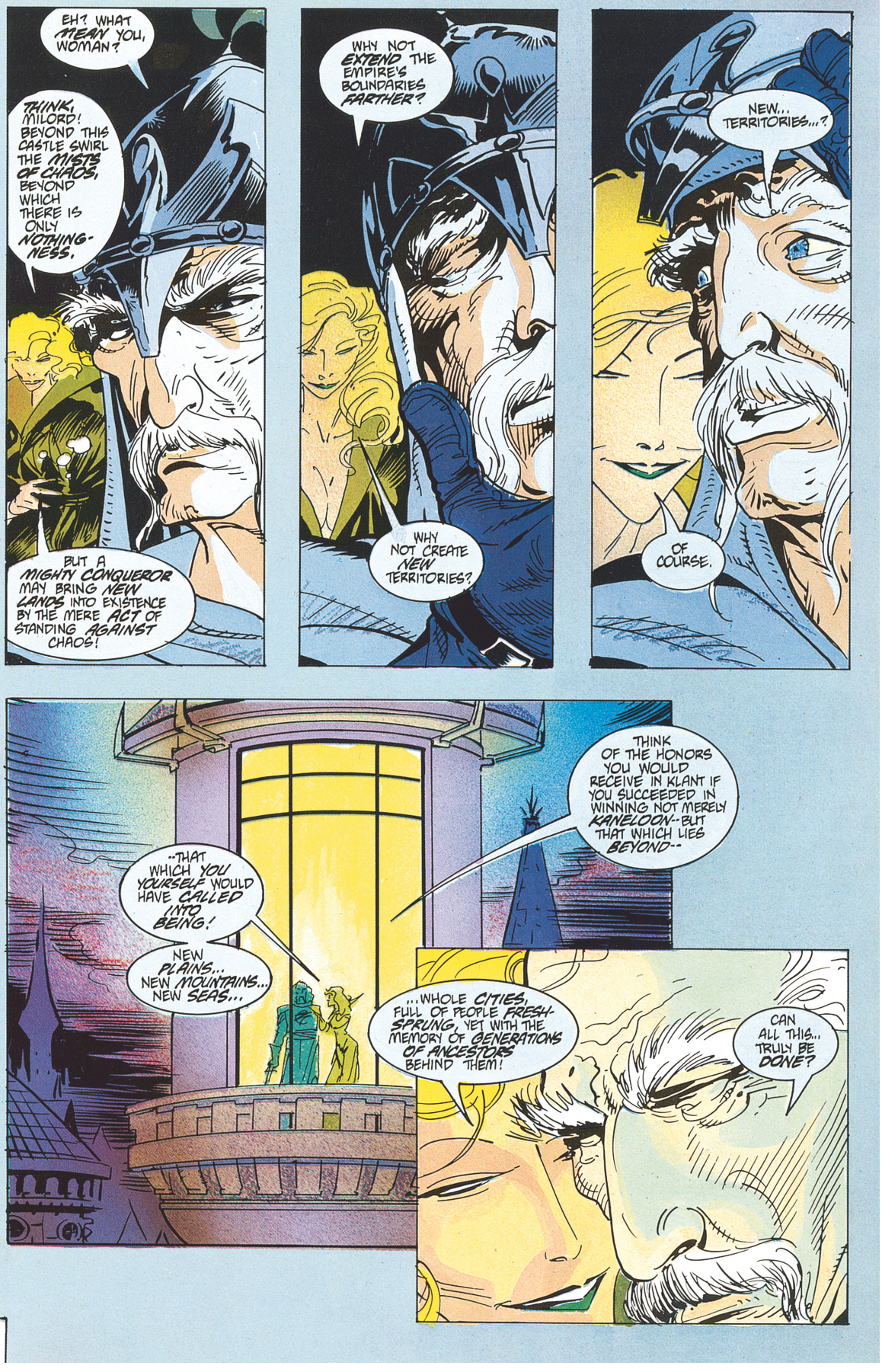

WHEN THE BUTTERFLY CREATURE EMERGED FROM THE CAVE... I DECIDED... IT WAS WISEST ...TO CHASE...
=...YAWWWNN=
WHAT IS WRONG WITH HIM, ELRIC ?
MERELY HIS FATIGUE OVERTAKING HIM.
AND, SINCE I DOUBT WE NEED FEAR ANYTHING MORE FROM YOUR SORCERER JUST YET...
...I SUGGEST... WE JOIN HIM...
I WILL GO SEE IF THEY ARE STILL THERE.
AND I... HAVE MUCH TO THANK YOU FOR, "WHITE WOLF."
OH, I THANK YOU, MADAME... MOST HUMBLY.
YOU SAVED MY KINGDOM... PERHAPS ALL THE YOUNG KINGDOMS.
IN MY EYES YOU ARE REDEEMED FOR MY BROTHER'S DEATH.
HAHAHAHA YOU ARE STILL A MELNIBONEAN, I SEE.

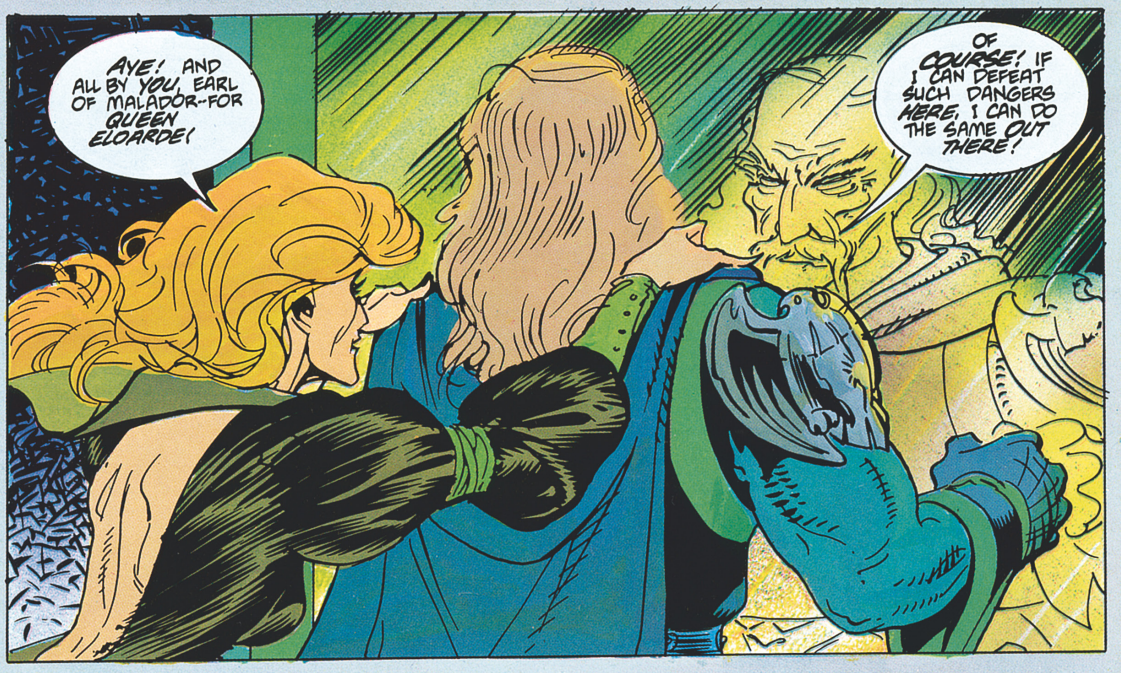

A STRANGE MIXTURE OF ONE, HOWEVER. SENSITIVE ...AND CRUEL, SARDONIC...YET LOYAL TO YOUR LITTLE FRIEND, MOONGLUM.
I LOOK FORWARD TO KNOWING YOU BETTER, MILORD.
AS TO THAT--UNNH!--I AM NOT SURE YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY, YISHANA.
OH? AND WHY NOT?
BECAUSE I WISH TO BE REVENGED UPON YOUR PET WIZARD.
FORGET THELEB KAARNA HE IS NO THREAT.
FORGET HIM? NEVER!
I WILL MAKE YOU KING OF JHARKOR, ELRIC, IF YOU WILL ONLY--
YOU ARE UNREALISTIC, YISHANA...
TO DO SO WOULD BRING WHOLESALE REBELLION TO YOUR LAND.
TO YOUR FOLK, I AM STILL THE "TRAITOR OF IMRRYR."
EVEN NOW, THE STREETS MUST BE FULL OF RUMORS THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN YOUR BROTHER'S MURDERER TO YOUR BED.
I... DO NOT CARE.
YOU WILL, IF YOUR NOBLES LEAD YOUR PEOPLE IN INSURRECTION AND CRUCIFY YOU NAKED IN THE CITY SQUARE.
YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH OUR CUSTOMS?
WELL VERSED IN THE ARTS?
WE MELNIBONEANS ARE A LEARNED FOLK, QUEEN.
IN ALL OF THEM.
20

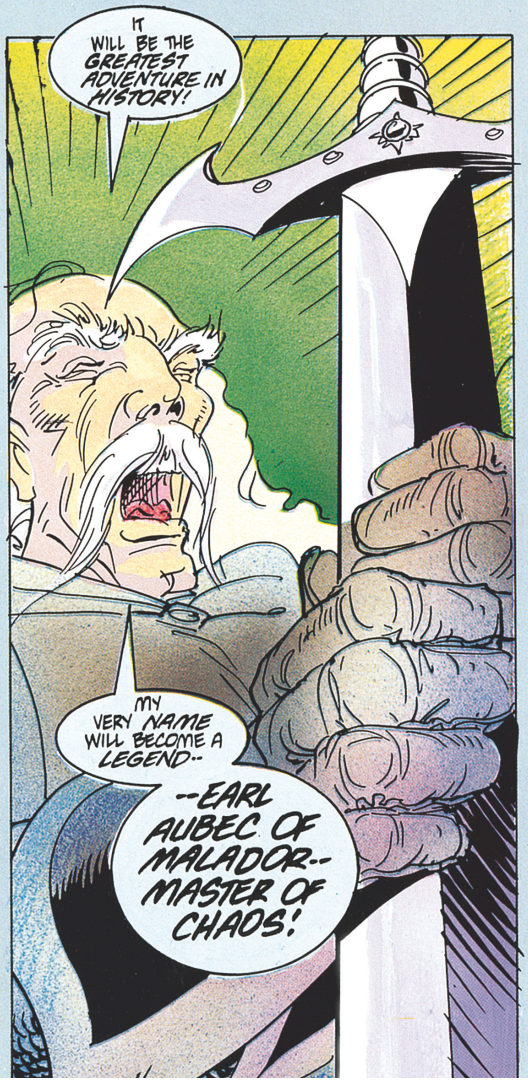

Moonglum is waiting in the antechamber when Elric steals out later...
You have the pouch?
Aye.
Elric's mood is not light. He takes the herbs he needs, and together he and Moonglum silently take their leave of the palace.
If I know the sorcerers of Pan Tang, then Theleb K'aarna will be more exhausted than was I.
With luck, we will come upon him sleeping.
I have seen your vengeance-taking, my friend.
I shall wait outside the cave.
When they reach the hills, the albino goes soft-footed into the cave...
...his runesword at the ready.
Moonglum waits patiently for Theleb K'aarna's first shriek.
None comes.
Then, at dawn's faint light...
Huh?! Oh-uh-- Elric! Well, are you satisfied?
21

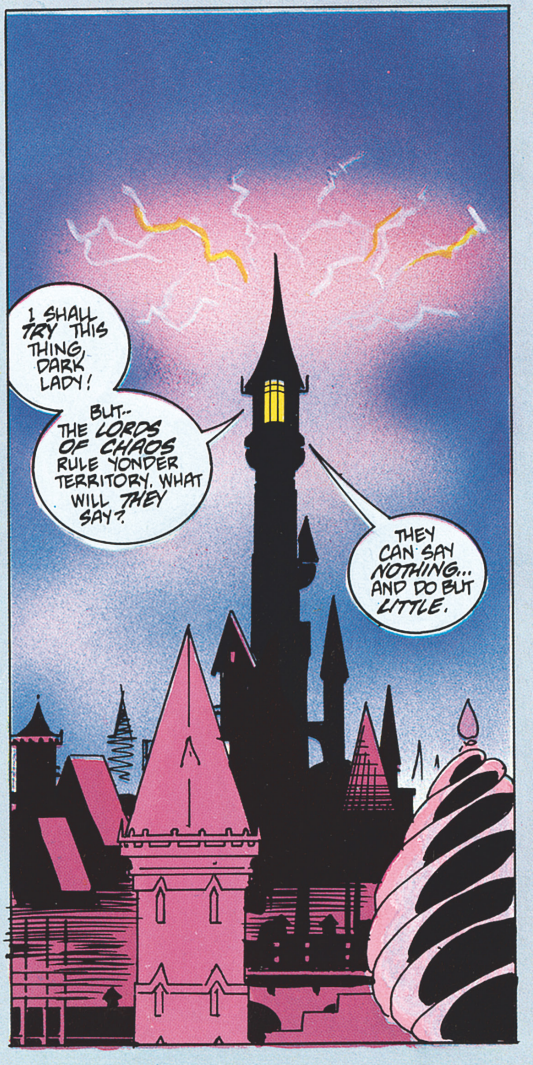

I AM NOT.
THE DOG HAS VANISHED!
IN THE FARTHEST CAVERN, I FOUND SORCEROUS RUNES.
HE HAS TRANSPORTED HIMSELF SOMEWHERE--PERHAPS BACK TO HIS HOMELAND.
THEN OUR QUEST HAS BEEN FUTILE! WE RETURN NOW TO DHAKOS, EH?
NO! WE GO TO PAN TANG!
B-BUT HIS BROTHER SORCERERS DWELL THERE IN STRENGTH, AND--
NO MATTER. I WISH TO FINISH MY BUSINESS WITH THELEB K'AARNA.
YOU HAVE NO PROOF THAT HE IS EVEN THERE!
NO MATTER! RIDE!
ONLY ELRIC'S STRANGE, CRIMSON EYES REFLECT THE MISERY AND CONFLICT WITHIN HIM AT HIS LEAVE-TAKING OF JHARKOR'S QUEEN.
IN DHAKOS THAT MORNING, OTHER EYES THAN ELRIC'S HOLD MISERY.
BUT NOT FOR TOO LONG...
22

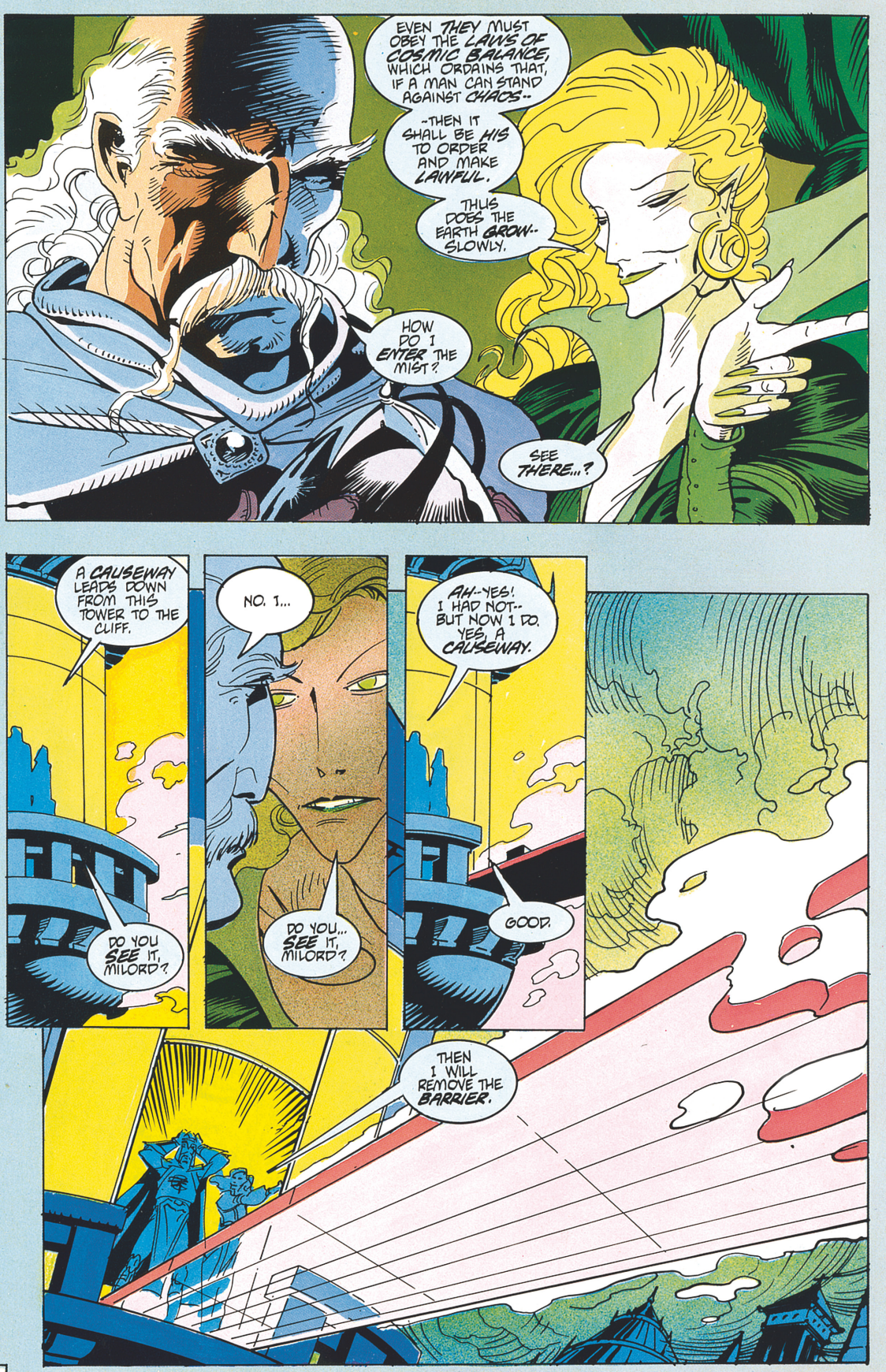

...FOR YASHINA IS A MOST PRAGMATIC QUEEN.
A WONDROUS TALE, DARK LADY, SPUN BY CLOUDS AND HONEYED WORDS.
'TIS A FUTURE I WOULD NOT ENVY! YET, I HAVE TARRIED HERE LONG ENOUGH, AND HAVE NO MORE TIME TO WASTE!
I HAVE CONQUERED CASTLE KANELOON FOR QUEEN ELOARDE OF KLANT. SHE NOW RULES ALL THE WORLD...
...AND I WILL RETURN AND LIVE IN PEACE WITH HER, AS HER FAITHFUL CONSORT!
YOU HAVE INDEED SERVED HER WELL.
YOUR QUEEN DOES INDEED RULE MANY A FINE KINGDOM AND FAIR,...
BUT - "ALL THE WORLD"? FAR FROM IT, EARL AUBEC!

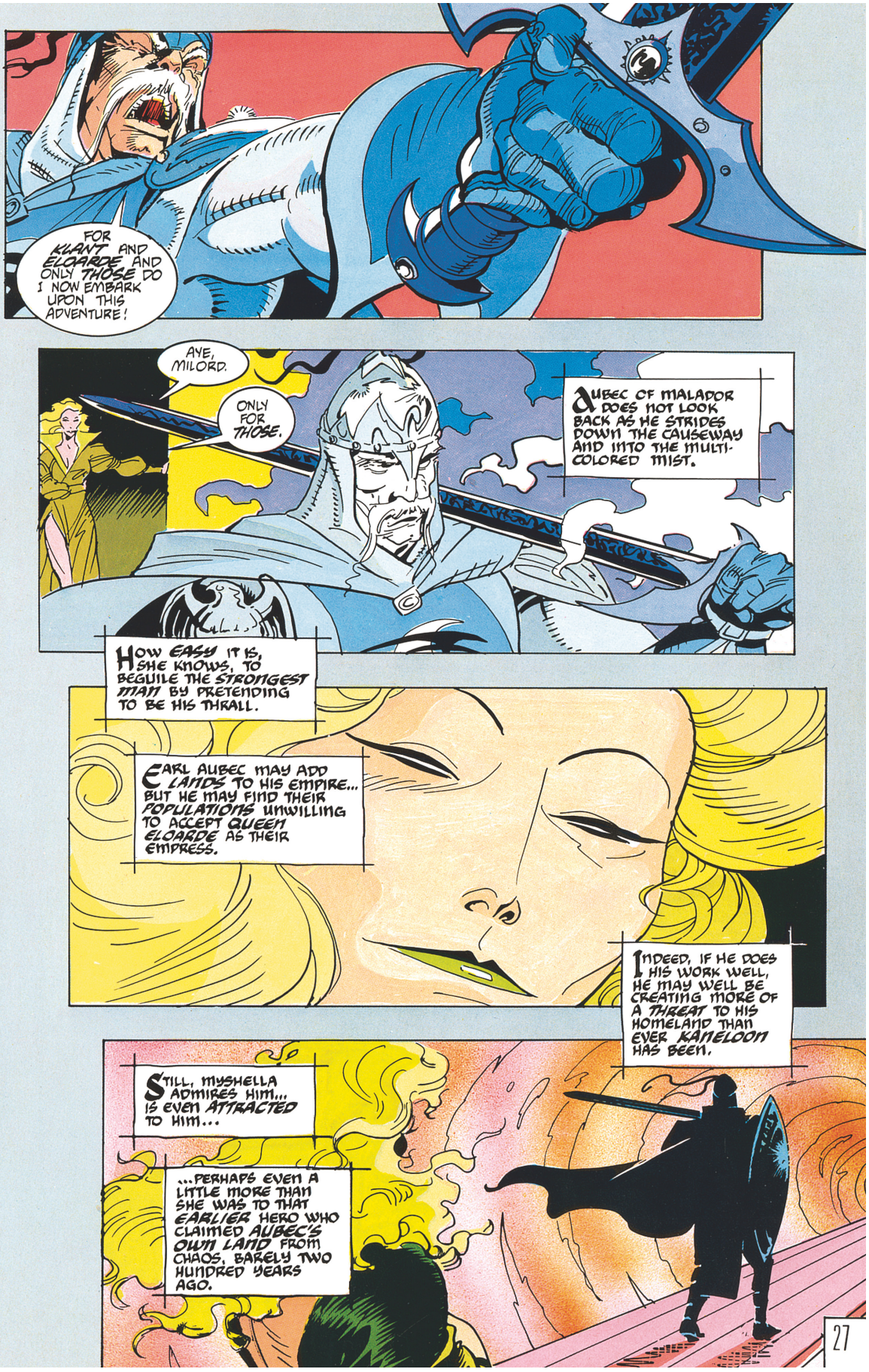

EH? WHAT MEAN YOU, WOMAN?
THINK, MILORD! BEYOND THIS CASTLE SWIRL THE MISTS OF CHAOS, BEYOND WHICH THERE IS ONLY NOTHING-NESS.
BUT A MIGHTY CONQUEROR MAY BRING NEW LANDS INTO EXISTENCE BY THE MERE ACT OF STANDING AGAINST CHAOS!
WHY NOT EXTEND THE EMPIRE'S BOUNDARIES FARTHER?
WHY NOT CREATE NEW TERRITORIES?
NEW... TERRITORIES...?
OF COURSE.
THINK OF THE HONORS YOU WOULD RECEIVE IN KLANT IF YOU SUCCEEDED IN WINNING NOT MERELY KANELOON--BUT THAT WHICH LIES BEYOND--
--THAT WHICH YOU YOURSELF WOULD HAVE CALLED INTO BEING!
NEW PLAINS... NEW MOUNTAINS... NEW SEAS...
...WHOLE CITIES, FULL OF PEOPLE FRESH-SPRUNG, YET WITH THE MEMORY OF GENERATIONS OF ANCESTORS BEHIND THEM!
CAN ALL THIS... TRULY BE DONE?

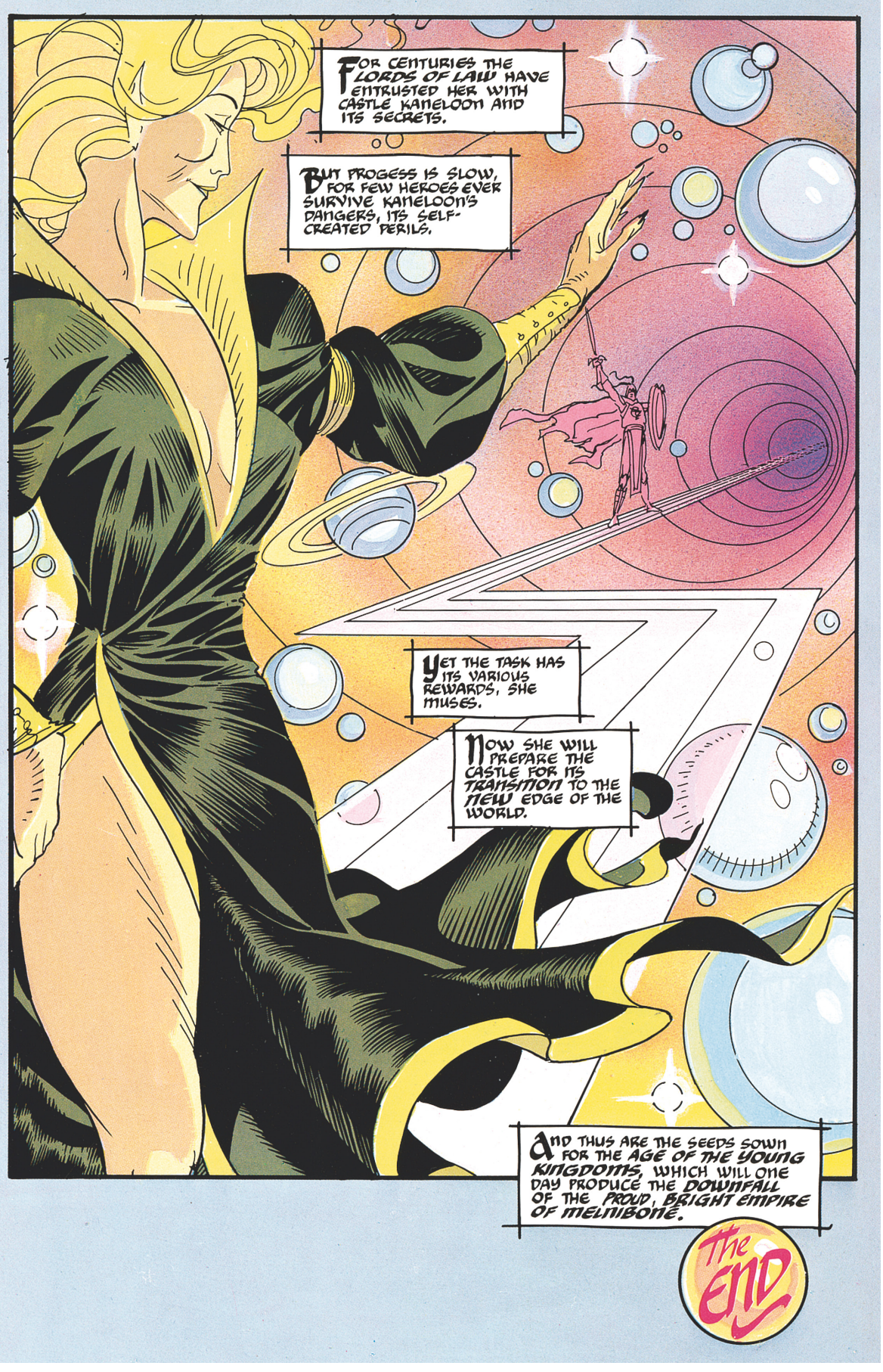

AYE! AND ALL BY YOU, EARL OF MALADOR--FOR QUEEN ELOARDE!
OF COURSE! IF I CAN DEFEAT SUCH DANGERS HERE, I CAN DO THE SAME OUT THERE!


IT WILL BE THE GREATEST ADVENTURE IN HISTORY!
MY VERY NAME WILL BECOME A LEGEND--
--EARL AUBEC OF MALADOR--MASTER OF CHAOS!


I SHALL TRY THIS THING, DARK LADY!
BUT-- THE LORDS OF CHAOS RULE YONDER TERRITORY. WHAT WILL THEY SAY?
THEY CAN SAY NOTHING... AND DO BUT LITTLE.


EVEN THEY MUST OBEY THE LAWS OF COSMIC BALANCE, WHICH ORDAINS THAT, IF A MAN CAN STAND AGAINST CHAOS--
--THEN IT SHALL BE HIS TO ORDER AND MAKE LAWFUL.
THUS DOES THE EARTH GROW-- SLOWLY.
HOW DO I ENTER THE MIST?
SEE THERE...?
A CAUSEWAY LEADS DOWN FROM THIS TOWER TO THE CLIFF.
DO YOU SEE IT, MILORD?
NO. I...
DO YOU... SEE IT, MILORD?
AH--YES! I HAD NOT-- BUT NOW I DO. YES, A CAUSEWAY.
GOOD.
THEN I WILL REMOVE THE BARRIER.


FOR KLANT AND ELOARDE AND ONLY THOSE DO I NOW EMBARK UPON THIS ADVENTURE!
AYE, MILORD.
ONLY FOR THOSE.
AUBEC OF MALADOR DOES NOT LOOK BACK AS HE STRIDES DOWN THE CAUSEWAY AND INTO THE MULTI-COLORED MIST.
HOW EASY IT IS, SHE KNOWS, TO BEGUILE THE STRONGEST MAN BY PRETENDING TO BE HIS THRALL.
EARL AUBEC MAY ADD LANDS TO HIS EMPIRE... BUT HE MAY FIND THEIR POPULATIONS UNWILLING TO ACCEPT QUEEN ELOARDE AS THEIR EMPRESS.
INDEED, IF HE DOES HIS WORK WELL, HE MAY WELL BE CREATING MORE OF A THREAT TO HIS HOMELAND THAN EVER KANELOOM HAS BEEN.
STILL, MYSHELLA ADMIRES HIM... IS EVEN ATTRACTED TO HIM...
...PERHAPS EVEN A LITTLE MORE THAN SHE WAS TO THAT EARLIER HERO WHO CLAIMED AUBEC'S OWN LAND FROM CHAOS, BARELY TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
27


For centuries the Lords of Law have entrusted her with Castle Kaneloon and its secrets.
But progess is slow, for few heroes ever survive Kaneloon's dangers, its self-created perils.
Yet the task has its various rewards, she muses.
Now she will prepare the castle for its transition to the new edge of the world.
And thus are the seeds sown for the Age of the Young Kingdoms, which will one day produce the downfall of the proud, bright empire of Melniboné.
The End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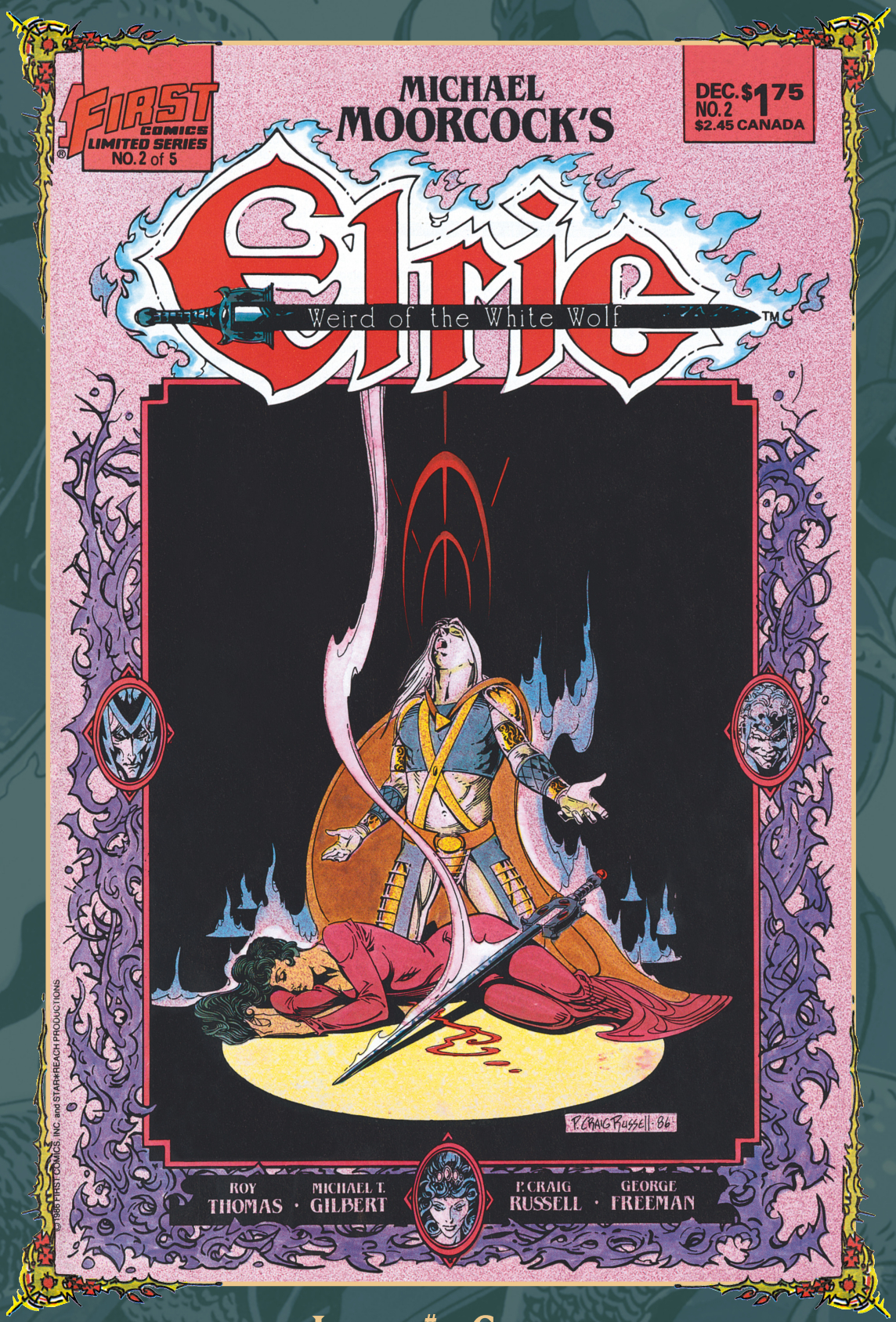

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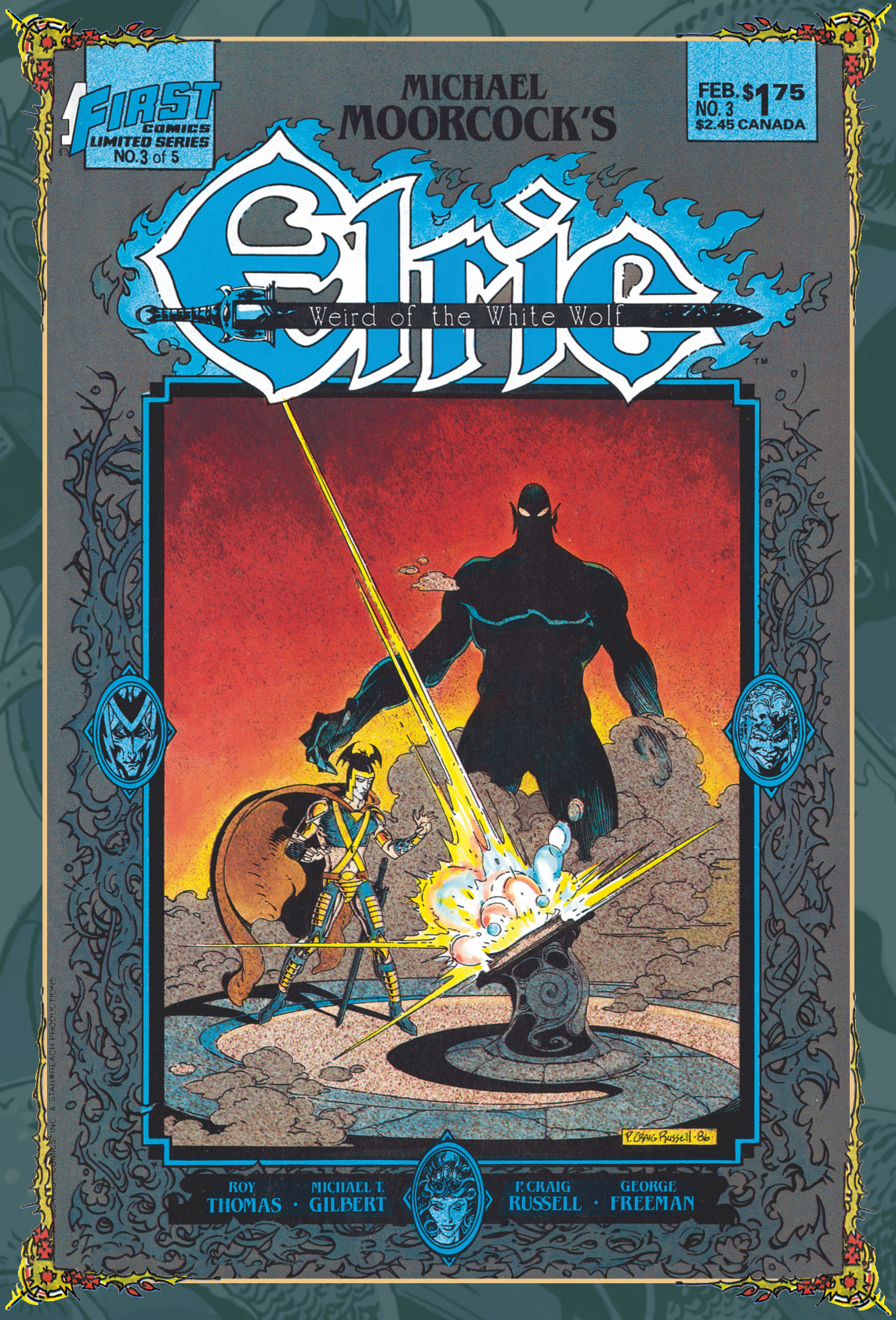

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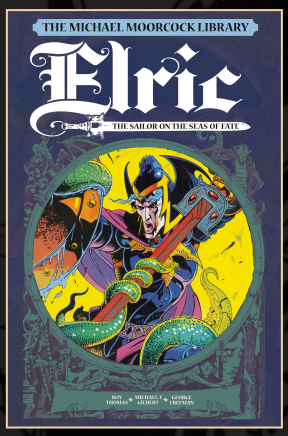

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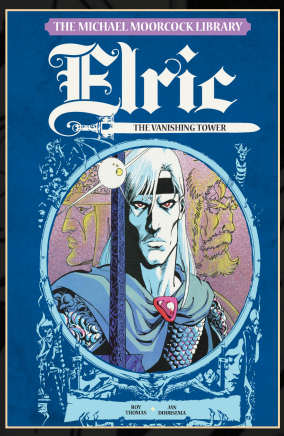

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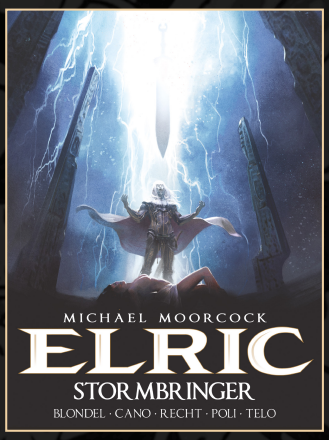

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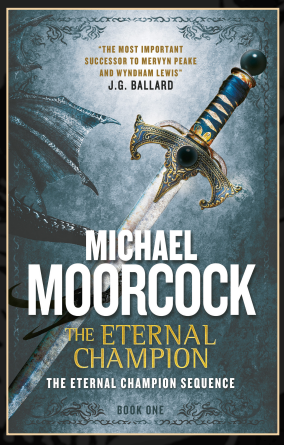

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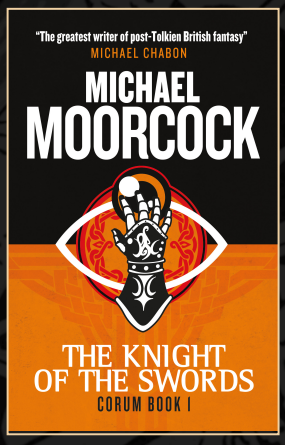

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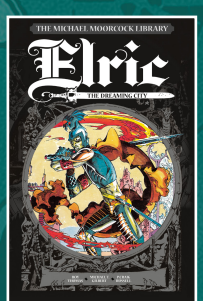

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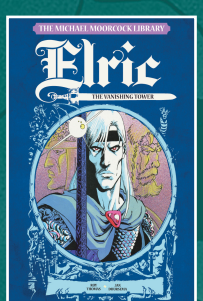

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