

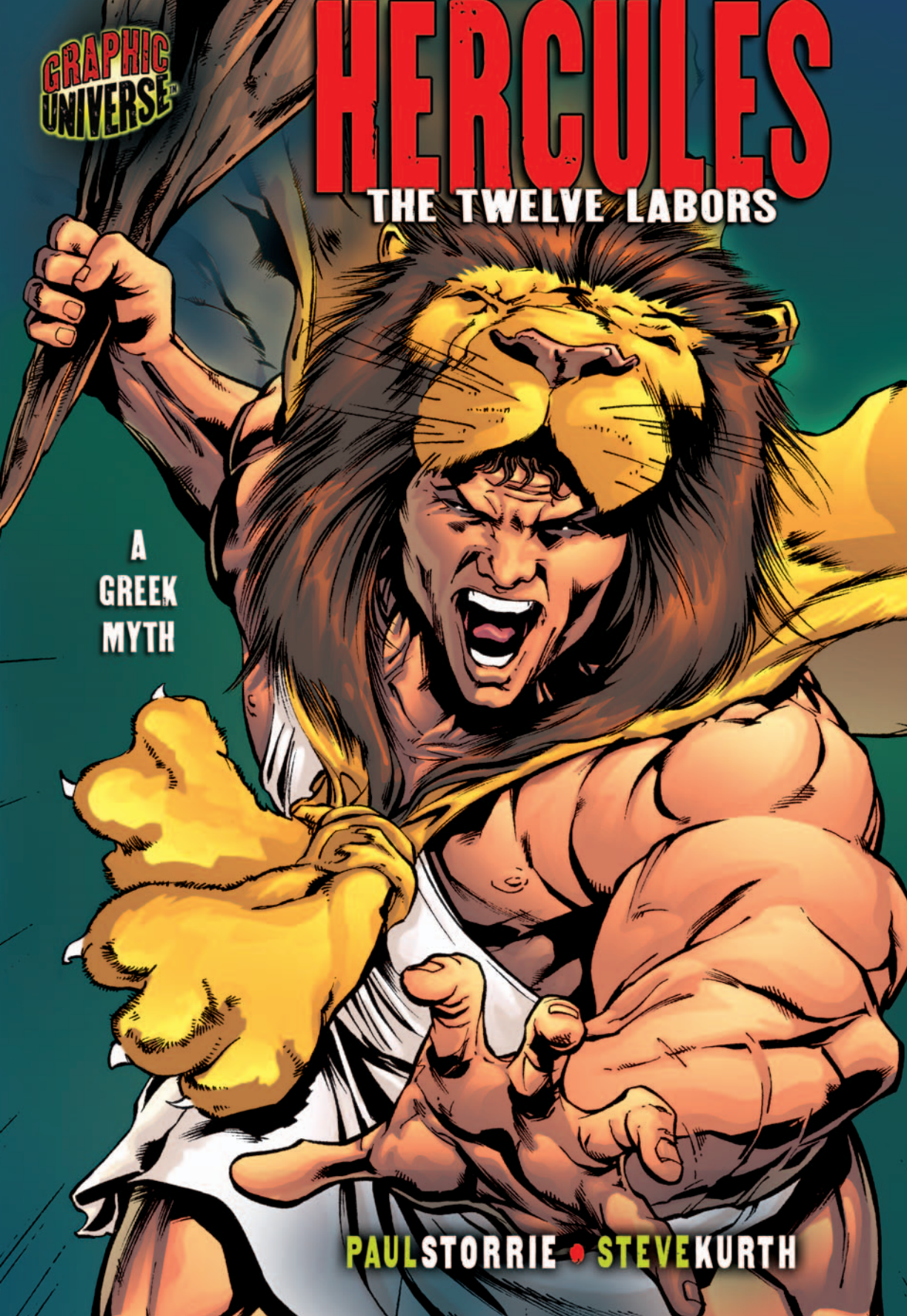
**GRAPHIC
UNIVERSE™**

HERCULES

THE TWELVE LABORS

A
GREEK
MYTH

PAUL STORRIE • STEVE KURTH



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HERCULES

THE TWELVE LABORS

A
GREEK
MYTH



STORY BY
PAUL STORRIE

PENCILS BY
STEVE KURTH

INKS BY
BARBARA SCHULZ

EUROPE

NORTH

10
THE
PILLARS
OF
HERCULES

- 1 NEMEA (LION)
- 2 LERNEA (HYDRA)
- 3 CERYNEA (HIND)
- 4 MOUNT ERYMANTHUS (BOAR)
- 5 ELIS (AUGEAN STABLES)
- 6 LAKE STYMPHALIS (BIRDS)
- 7 CRETE (CRETAN BULL)
- 8 THRACE (DIOMEDES' HORSES)
- 9 LAND OF THE AMAZONS (HIPPOLYTA'S BELT)*
- 10 ERYTHEIA (GERYON'S CATTLE)
- 11 GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES (GOLDEN APPLES)*
- 12 HADES (CERBERUS THE THREE-HEADED DOG)*

* THE LOCATIONS OF THESE LEGENDARY SITES ARE
THE BEST ESTIMATES OF HISTORIANS.

HERCULES

THE TWELVE LABORS

A
GREEK
MYTH



GRAPHIC UNIVERSE™ • MINNEAPOLIS

THE CHARACTER HERCULES MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN BASED ON AN ACTUAL PERSON. REGARDLESS, THE STORIES OF HIS GREAT FEATS OF STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND RESOURCEFULNESS ARE AMONG THE MOST FAMOUS GREEK LEGENDS. THE GREEKS CALLED THEIR GREATEST HERO HERAKLES. BUT THE ROMANS KNEW HIM AS HERCULES. THIS LATTER TITLE HAS COME DOWN THROUGH THE AGES AS THE MOST POPULAR NAME FOR THIS LARGER-THAN-LIFE FIGURE. TO CREATE THE STORY OF HERCULES' TWELVE LABORS, AUTHOR PAUL STORRIE RELIED HEAVILY ON BOTH THOMAS BULFINCH'S *THE AGE OF FABLE*, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1859, AND EDITH HAMILTON'S *MYTHOLOGY*, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1942. BOTH OF THESE DREW THEIR MATERIAL FROM THE WORK OF ANCIENT POETS SUCH AS OVID AND VIRGIL. ARTIST STEVE KURTH USED NUMEROUS HISTORICAL AND TRADITIONAL SOURCES TO GIVE THE ART AN AUTHENTIC FEEL, FROM THE CLASSICAL GREEK ARCHITECTURE TO THE CLOTHING, WEAPONS AND ARMOR WORN BY THE CHARACTERS.

STORY BY PAUL STORRIE

**PENCILS BY STEVE KURTH
INKS BY BARBARA SCHULZ**

COLORING BY HI-FI DESIGN

LETTERING BY BILL HAUSER

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THE LEGEND BEGINS

LONG AGO, IN THE FAR OFF LAND OF GREECE, THERE LIVED A HERO NAMED **HERCULES**. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MAN AS STRONG, BEFORE OR SINCE.

HIS MOTHER WAS **ALCMENA**, A MORTAL, BUT HIS FATHER WAS **ZEUS**, THE KING OF THE GODS.

THE GODDESS **HERA** WAS JEALOUS THAT **ZEUS**, HER HUSBAND, LOVED A MORTAL WOMAN. BECAUSE OF THAT, SHE HATED **HERCULES**.

HERCULES WAS RAISED IN THE CITY OF **THEBES**, ALONG WITH HIS HALF BROTHER, **IPHICLES**.

ONE NIGHT, **HERA** SENT TWO SERPENTS TO SLAY THE SLEEPING **HERCULES**, NOT CARING THAT HIS BROTHER WAS IN DANGER TOO.

EACH NIGHT, **ALCMENA** WOULD PUT HER SONS TO BED IN A GREAT **BRONZE SHIELD** THAT SERVED AS THEIR CRIB.

BUT **ZEUS** WATCHED OVER HIS SON AND SENT A **BRIGHT LIGHT** TO WAKE HIM.

EVEN AS A **CHILD**, HE WAS **STRONG** ENOUGH TO SAVE HIS BROTHER AND HIMSELF.

WHEN HE WAS A GROWN MAN, HE WENT TO THE **ORACLE AT DELPHi**, WHO GAVE MESSAGES FROM THE **GODS**, TO LEARN WHAT HE SHOULD DO WITH HIS GREAT GIFT OF **STRENGTH**.

THOUGH **HERCULES** COULD NOT SEE HER, IT WAS THE **GODDESS HERA** WHO SPOKE THROUGH THE **ORACLE** THAT DAY.

SON OF **ZEUS**, YOU MUST GO TO YOUR COUSIN, **KING EHRYSTHEUS OF MYCENAE**, AND PUT YOURSELF IN HIS SERVICE.

THIS IS THE WILL OF THE **GODS**.

FANTASTIC CREATURES

THE JOURNEY TO *MYCENAE* WAS LONG, BUT *HERCULES* LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING HIS COUSIN.

WHAT HE DID NOT KNOW WAS THAT KING *EURYSTHEUS* WAS *JEALOUS* OF HIS STRENGTH AND FAME.

SO, *HERCULES*, YOU SAY THE *GODS* SENT YOU TO SERVE ME?

WELL THEN, WE SHALL HAVE TO FIND LABORS EQUAL TO YOUR *AMAZING* STRENGTH.

THE KING DID NOT KNOW THAT THE QUIET WORDS THAT CAME TO HIM WERE WHISPERED BY *JEALOUS HERA*, HOPING TO DO *HERCULES* HARM.

YES ... YES.

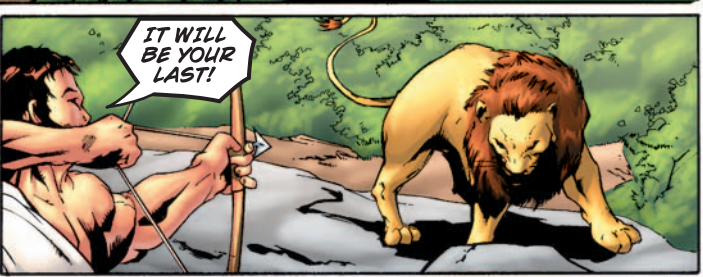
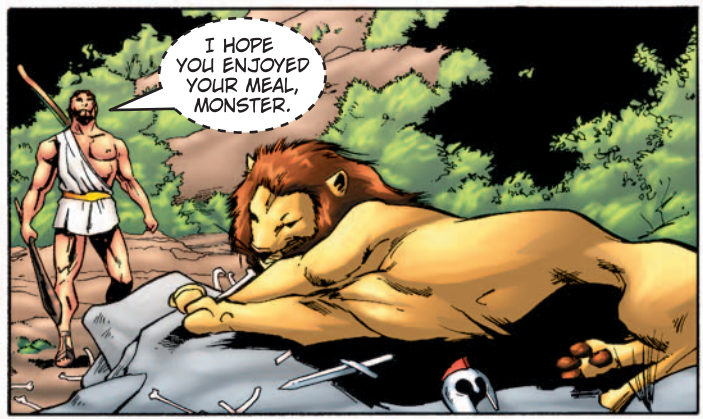
IN *NEMEA*, BY THE *SACRED GROVE* OF *ZEUS*,

A *FIERCE LION* IS MENACING THE COUNTRYSIDE.

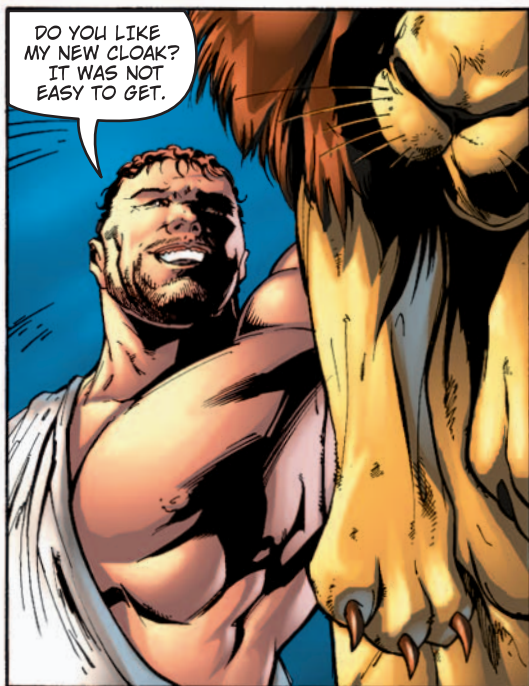
I MUST WARN YOU, NO HUNTER OR HERO HAS BEEN ABLE TO KILL IT.

THE CREATURE'S SKIN RESISTS *EVERY* WEAPON.

HERCULES SOON ARRIVED IN NEMEA TO BEGIN HIS **FIRST LABOR**. IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE HE FOUND SIGNS OF HIS PREY.







TO BEGIN HIS **SECOND LABOR** AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, HERCULES ASKED HIS NEPHEW **IOLAUS** TO TAKE HIM TO LERNEA BY CHARIOT. **IOLAUS** WAS THE SON OF **IPHICLES**, HERCULES' HALF BROTHER.

MUCH BETTER. HARD TO FIGHT WHAT YOU CAN BARELY SEE.

IS IT TRUE THAT THIS HYDRA HAS NINE HEADS, HERCULES? AND THAT ONE OF THE HEADS CANNOT BE KILLED?

SO EURYSTHEUS TELLS ME. AND THAT ITS BLOOD IS POISON.

I WONDER IF THERE WAS ANYTHING HE DECIDED NOT TO TELL?

LET'S SEE IF WE CAN ROUSE THE BEAST.







WE'LL
DONE! WE
MAY WIN OUT
AFTER ALL!



THE GRIM BATTLE CONTINUED AS
DAYLIGHT FADED. THEN, ONLY ONE
HEAD REMAINED. THE IMMORTAL ONE.



NOW,
LET IT
END!

AFTER HE STRUCK OFF THE IMMORTAL
HEAD, HERCULES BURIED IT BENEATH
A ROCK. THEN HE AND IOLAUS
PREPARED TO RETURN TO MYCENAE.



IF THIS
MONSTER'S BLOOD
IS POISON, THESE
ARROWS MAY
PROVE USEFUL IN
MY OTHER
LABORS.



WHAT WERE YOU **THINKING**, HERCULES? TO TAKE A BOY HIS AGE INTO SUCH DANGER!

BESIDES, THE GODS' WISH WAS FOR **YOU** TO SERVE ME, NOT HAVE **IOLAUS** PERFORM YOUR LABORS FOR YOU!



HE ALREADY HAS A WARRIOR'S **COURAGE**. NOW HE MUST LEARN...



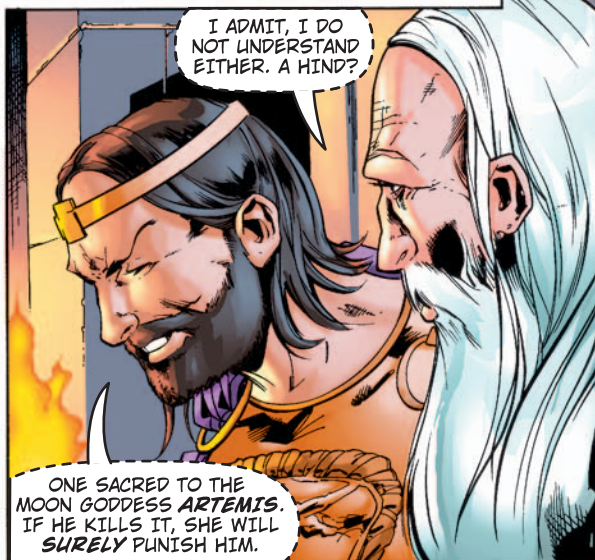
NO MATTER. YOUR **THIRD LABOR** WILL BE LESS CHALLENGING, SO YOU WILL HAVE NO NEED OF **HELP**.

I WANT YOU TO FETCH ME THE CERYNEAN HIND. AMAZING CREATURE -- IT HAS HORNS OF **GOLD**!



YOU WANT ME TO BRING YOU A DEER? HARDLY A LABOR TO MATCH MY PROWESS.

THIS SHOULD NOT TAKE LONG.



I ADMIT, I DO NOT UNDERSTAND EITHER. A HIND?

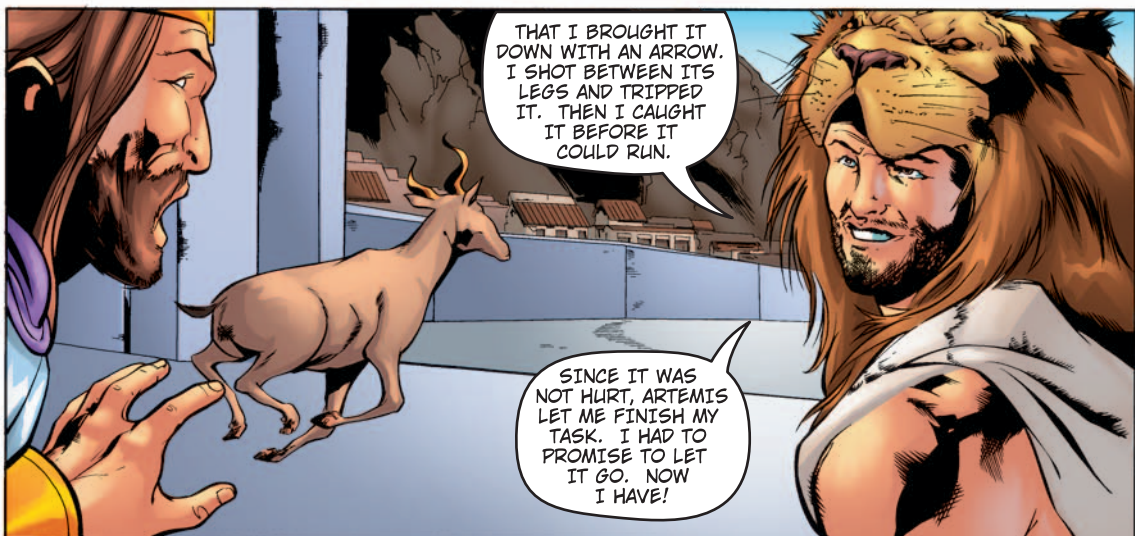
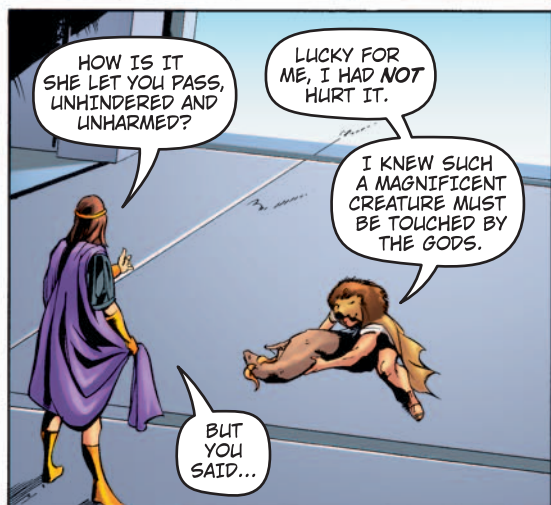
ONE SACRED TO THE MOON GODDESS **ARTEMIS**. IF HE KILLS IT, SHE WILL **SURELY** PUNISH HIM.



BUT YOU TOLD HIM...

I TOLD HIM TO **FETCH** THE ANIMAL, NOT HARM IT.

AH, YES. VERY **CLEVER** INDEED.





LATER...

WHAT TROUBLES YOU, MY KING?

Bah. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HERCULES RETURNS FROM HIS FOURTH LABOR.

SLAYING THE ERYMANTHEAN BOAR WILL BE NO CHALLENGE TO HIM.



PERHAPS NOT, MY KING.

BUT THE FEARSOME BOAR HAS BEEN TERRORIZING THOSE WHO LIVE NEAR MOUNT ERYMANTHUS.

AT LEAST IT WILL NO LONGER HURT YOUR PEOPLE.

TRUE. I JUST WISH I COULD THINK OF SOME OTHER LABOR TO...



KING EURYSTHEUS!

HERCULES IS COMING!



IT IS AMAZING, MY KING.

HE CHASED THE BEAST UP AND DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE FOR DAYS.

FINALLY, HE DROVE IT INTO A SNOWBANK NEAR THE PEAK.

THEN HE WAITED UNTIL IT WAS EXHAUSTED FROM STRUGGLING TO GET FREE!

EXHAUSTED?!? THEN IT IS STILL ALIVE?!?



Y-YES, MY KING.

AND HE IS BRINGING IT HERE?

YES, MY KING.



GO! RUN! TELL HERCULES THAT FROM NOW ON HE SHOULD SHOW THE PROOF OF HIS LABORS TO THE GUARD CAPTAIN AT THE GATE.

NOT TO ME, YOU UNDERSTAND? NOT TO ME!

GREAT CHALLENGES

KING EURYSTHEUS WAS ASHAMED AT BEING SO FRIGHTENED ABOUT THE BOAR. HE BLAMED HERCULES AND WANTED TO EMBARRASS HIS COUSIN JUST AS MUCH.

FOR THE **FIFTH LABOR**, EURYSTHEUS SENT HERCULES TO CLEAN OUT THE STABLES OF KING AUGIAS IN A SINGLE DAY, A TASK AS IMPOSSIBLE AS IT WAS DISGUSTING.

THERE THEY ARE -- THE STABLES THAT YOU AGREED TO CLEAN!

Ugh! BY THE SMELL, I CAN TELL NO ONE HAS TOUCHED THEM IN YEARS.

I WILL DO IT, BUT YOU MUST GIVE ME ONE OF EVERY TEN ANIMALS IN RETURN.

Hah! WHY NOT?

TELL ME, PHYLEUS, MY SON, DO YOU THINK HE'LL MANAGE IT?

I DON'T KNOW, FATHER.

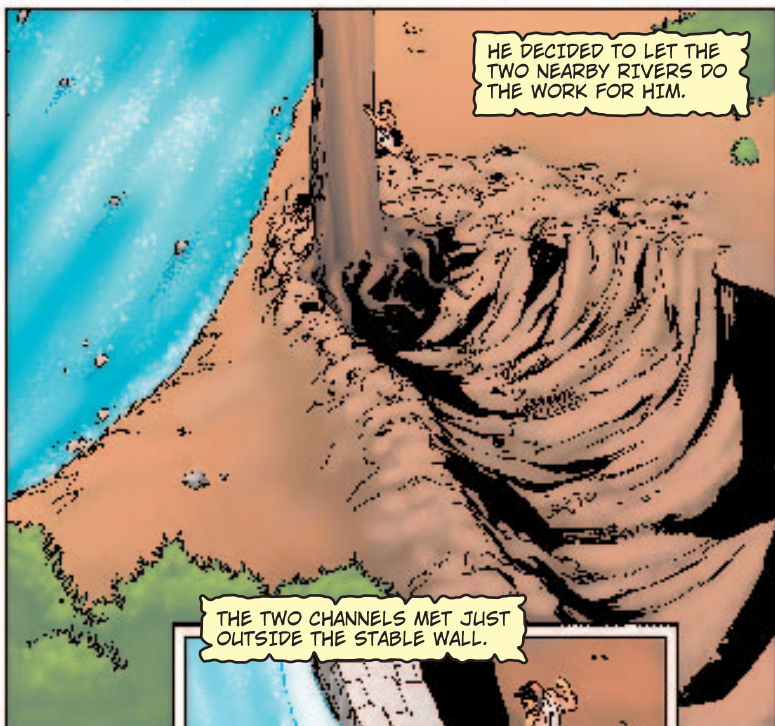


EVEN WITH THE HUNDREDS OF ANIMALS OUT GRAZING IN THE FIELDS, HERCULES REALIZED THAT HE COULD NEVER **SHOVEL** OUT THE STABLES IN ONE DAY.

THOOM!

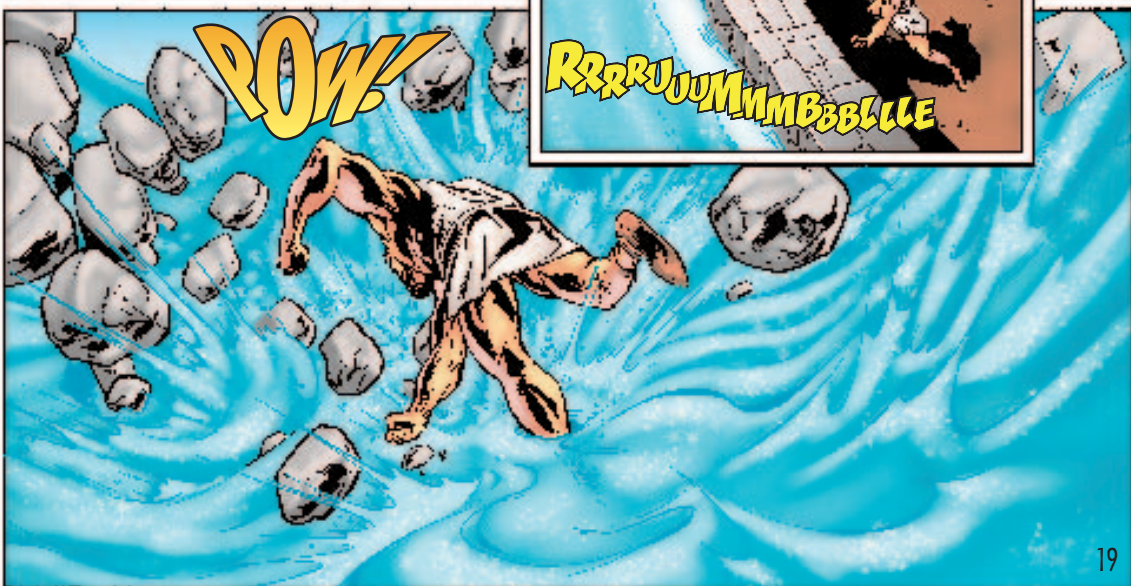


HE HAD TO FIND ANOTHER WAY.



HE DECIDED TO LET THE TWO NEARBY RIVERS DO THE WORK FOR HIM.

THE TWO CHANNELS MET JUST OUTSIDE THE STABLE WALL.



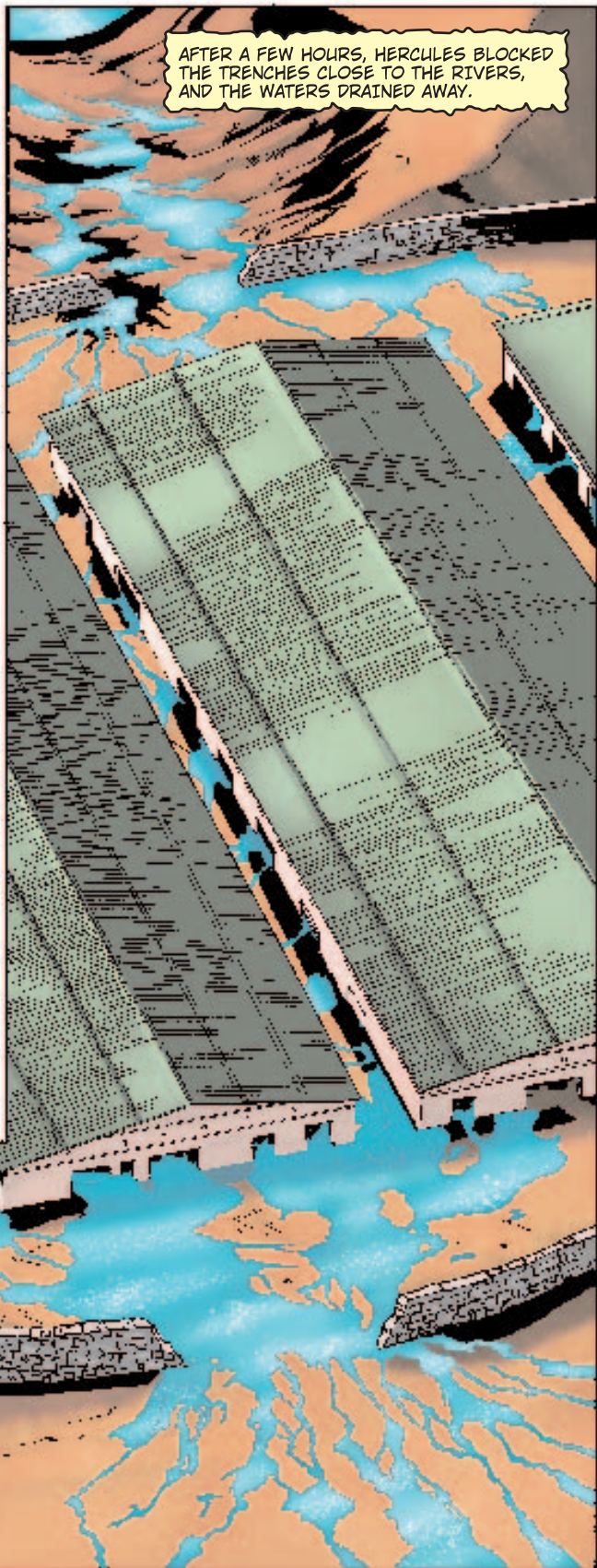
ROW!

RRRRUUMMBBLLLE

HERCULES LEAPT TO THE TOP OF THE WALL TO WATCH THE MARVELOUS SIGHT.

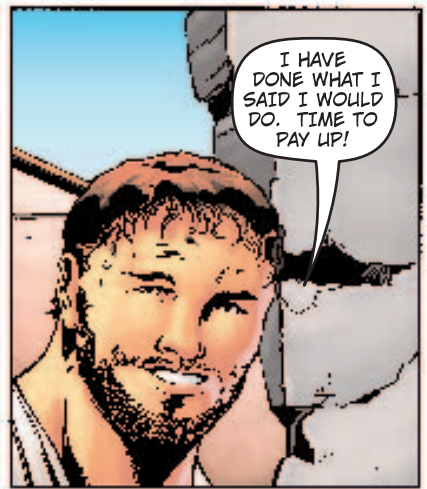


AFTER A FEW HOURS, HERCULES BLOCKED THE TRENCHES CLOSE TO THE RIVERS, AND THE WATERS DRAINED AWAY.





ARE YOU
INSANE?!



I HAVE
DONE WHAT I
SAID I WOULD
DO. TIME TO
PAY UP!



NO, IT
IS NOT!

I HAVE LEARNED THAT
YOU DID THIS AT THE
BIDDING OF KING
EURYSTHEUS AND THAT
THE GODS TOLD YOU TO
SERVE HIM. YOU HAD
NO RIGHT TO ASK
FOR PAYMENT!



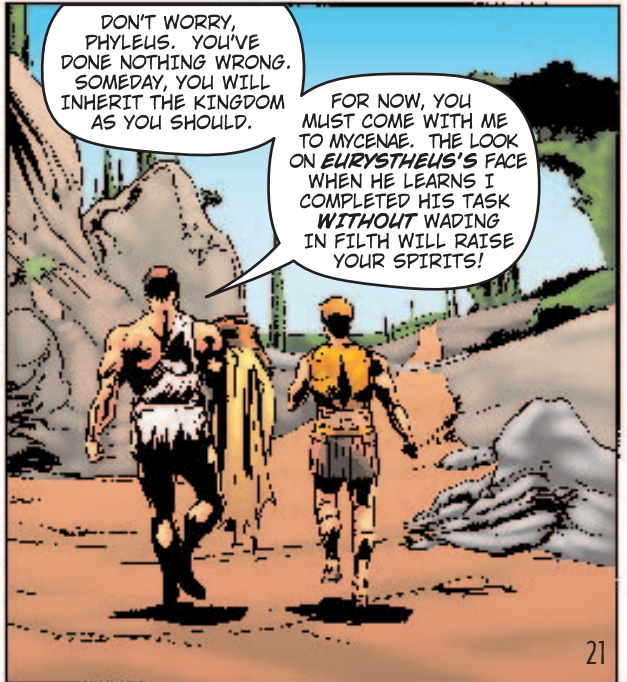
WHATEVER HIS
REASON, YOU
PROMISED HIM
THE ANIMALS,
FATHER...

WHAT?
YOU TAKE
HIS SIDE?



GET
OUT OF MY
KINGDOM,
THE PAIR
OF YOU!

COUNT
YOURSELVES
LUCKY TO LEAVE
WITH YOUR LIVES!



DON'T WORRY,
PHYLEUS. YOU'VE
DONE NOTHING WRONG.
SOMEDAY, YOU WILL
INHERIT THE KINGDOM
AS YOU SHOULD.

FOR NOW, YOU
MUST COME WITH ME
TO MYCENAE. THE LOOK
ON EURYSTHEUS'S FACE
WHEN HE LEARNS I
COMPLETED HIS TASK
WITHOUT WADING
IN FILTH WILL RAISE
YOUR SPIRITS!

HERCULES WAS RIGHT ABOUT HIS COUSIN'S DISAPPOINTMENT. HE WAS NOT SURPRISED WHEN THE KING SENT HIM TO HIS **SIXTH LABOR** RIGHT AWAY, BUT HE WAS PUZZLED BY THE TASK.

KING EURYSTHEUS SENT HIM TO THE STYMPHALIAN LAKE TO CHASE AWAY SOME **BIRDS** THAT WERE BOTHERING THE FARMERS THERE. IT SEEMED TOO EASY.

WHEN HE ARRIVED, THE LAKESHORE LOOKED PEACEFUL.

HE DECIDED TO ASK ONE OF THE FARMERS MORE ABOUT THEIR PROBLEM.

I AM **HERCULES**. KING EURYSTHEUS HAS SENT ME TO DRIVE AWAY THE **BIRDS**.

QUICKLY!
COME
INSIDE.

WHY ARE YOUR ANIMALS IN HERE, INSTEAD OF THE PEN?

NOTHING IS SAFE OUTSIDE! THE BIRDS WOULD GET THEM.

THEY ARE MONSTERS! THEIR CLAWS AND BEAKS ARE MADE OF BRASS.

THEIR FEATHERS SHINE LIKE BRONZE AND DROP FROM THE SKY LIKE ARROWS!

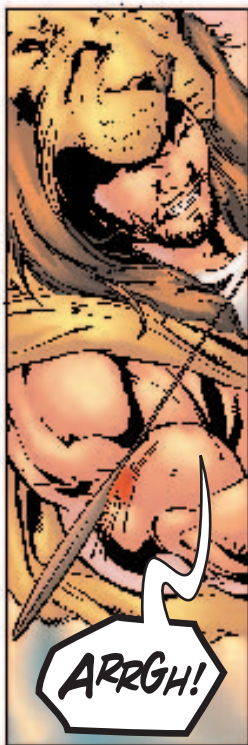
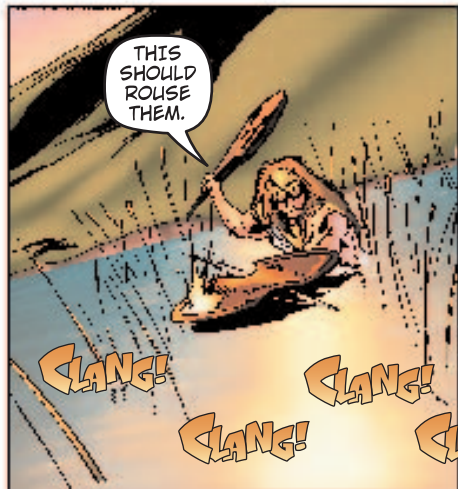
WHAT THEY KILL, THEY DRAG AWAY TO EAT.

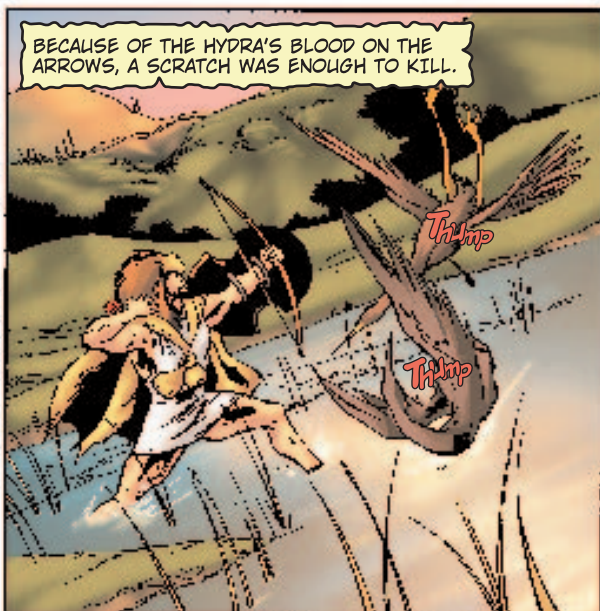
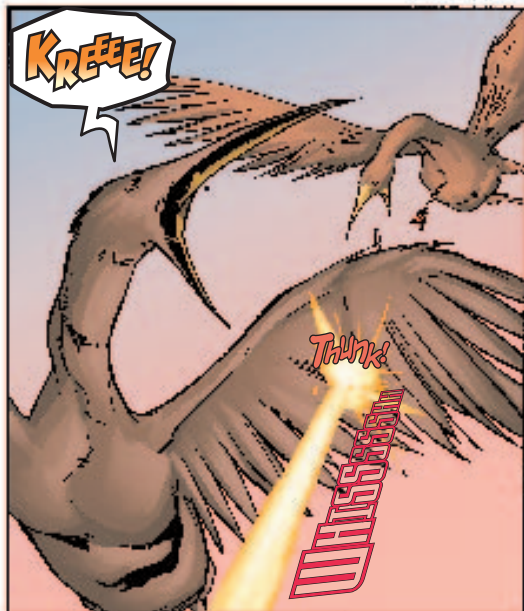
IT SEEMS EURYSTHEUS FORGOT TO TELL ME THE CREATURES WERE SO FIERCE.

NO MATTER. I WILL DRIVE THEM OFF.

NO!
STAY!

FEAR NOT! YOUR WARNINGS SHOULD KEEP ME SAFE.





EXTRAORDINARY PRIZES

FOR HIS SEVENTH LABOR, KING EURYSTHEUS SENT HERCULES TO THE ISLAND OF CRETE TO STEAL A MIRACULOUS WHITE BULL. IT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO KING MINOS, THE RULER THERE, BY THE SEA GOD POSEIDON.

MINOS WAS SUPPOSED TO SACRIFICE THE BULL, BUT IT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL THAT HE SACRIFICED ANOTHER BULL INSTEAD.

YOU LOOK UNHAPPY, HERCULES.

I DO NOT LIKE THE IDEA OF BECOMING A THIEF, CAPTAIN, BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE.

I MUST DO AS YOUR KING, EURYSTHEUS, COMMANDS.

BEFORE LONG, HERCULES FOUND SOMEONE WHO COULD HELP HIM FIND THE BULL.

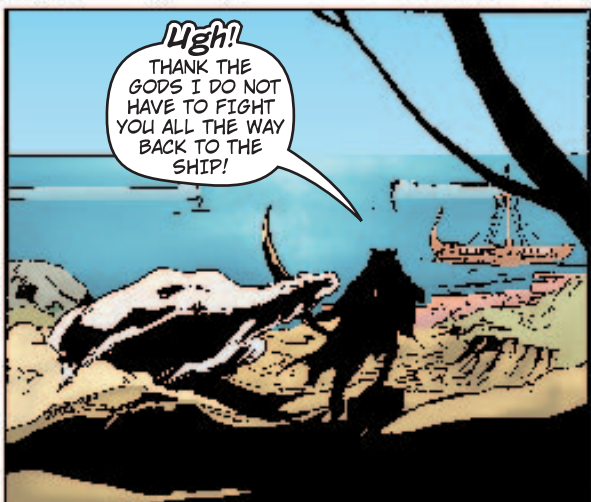
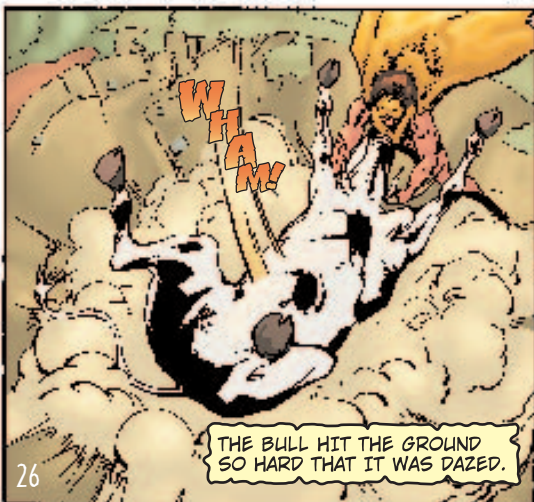
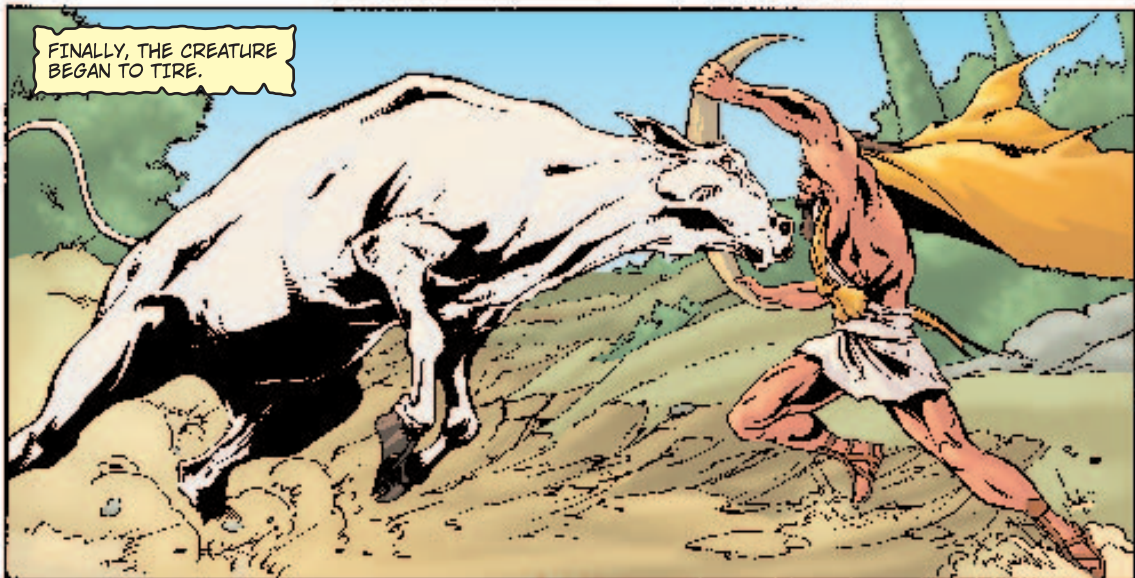
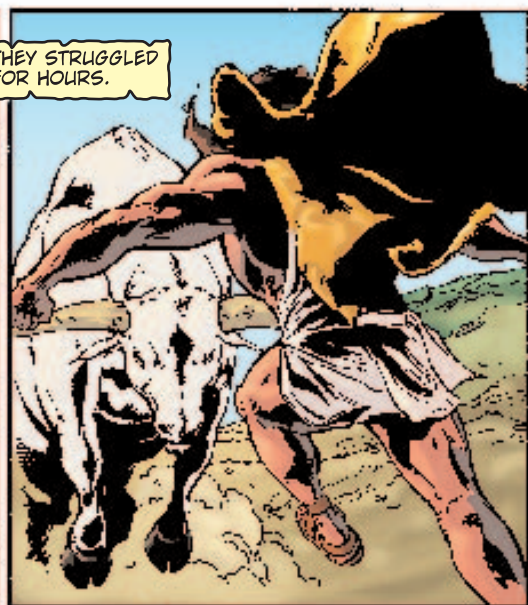
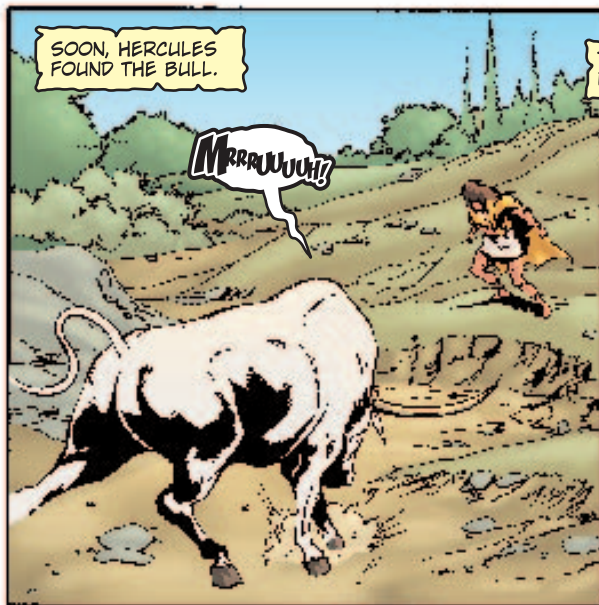
YOU MAY FIND THE BEAST IN THAT DIRECTION, BUT I WOULD NOT SEEK IT.

WHEN KING MINOS DID NOT SACRIFICE IT, THE SEA GOD PROVE IT MAD.

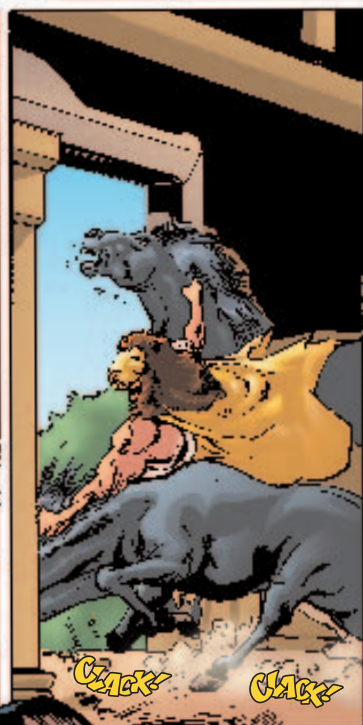
NOW IT KILLS ANYONE WHO COMES CLOSE.

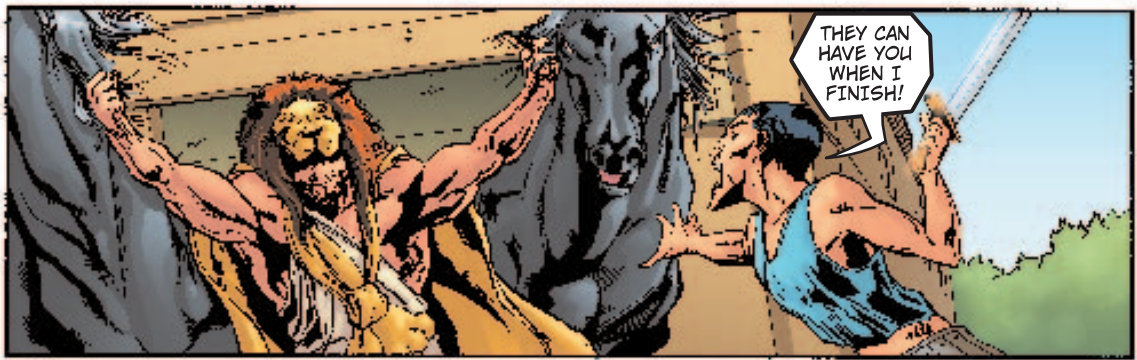
ANOTHER DANGER THAT EURYSTHEUS DID NOT WARN ME ABOUT!

I AM BEGINNING TO THINK HE MAY NOT LIKE ME.

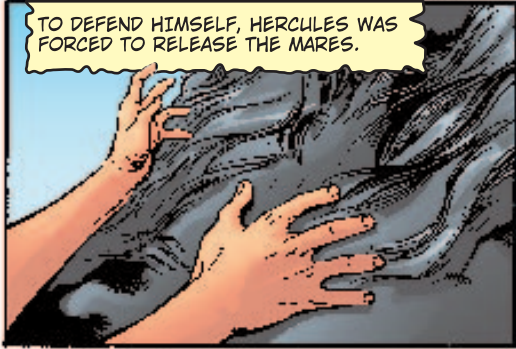








THEY CAN
HAVE YOU
WHEN I
FINISH!



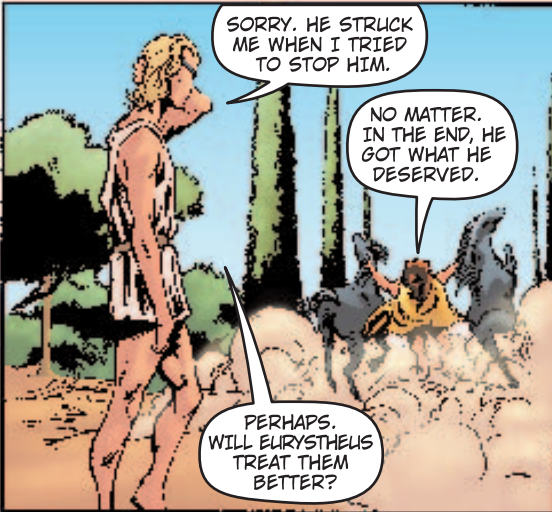
TO DEFEND HIMSELF, HERCULES WAS
FORCED TO RELEASE THE MARES.



No.



Noooooo!



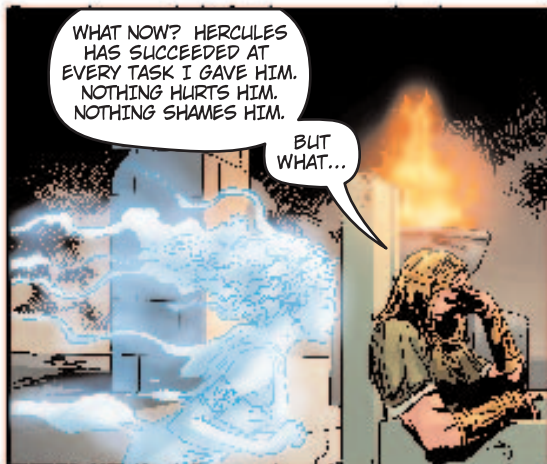
SORRY. HE STRUCK
ME WHEN I TRIED
TO STOP HIM.

NO MATTER.
IN THE END, HE
GOT WHAT HE
DESERVED.

PERHAPS.
WILL EURYSTHEUS
TREAT THEM
BETTER?



I WILL TELL HIM WHAT
HAPPENED TO DIOMEDES.
IF I KNOW EURYSTHEUS,
HE WILL BE TOO
FRIGHTENED TO BE
CRUEL TO THEM.

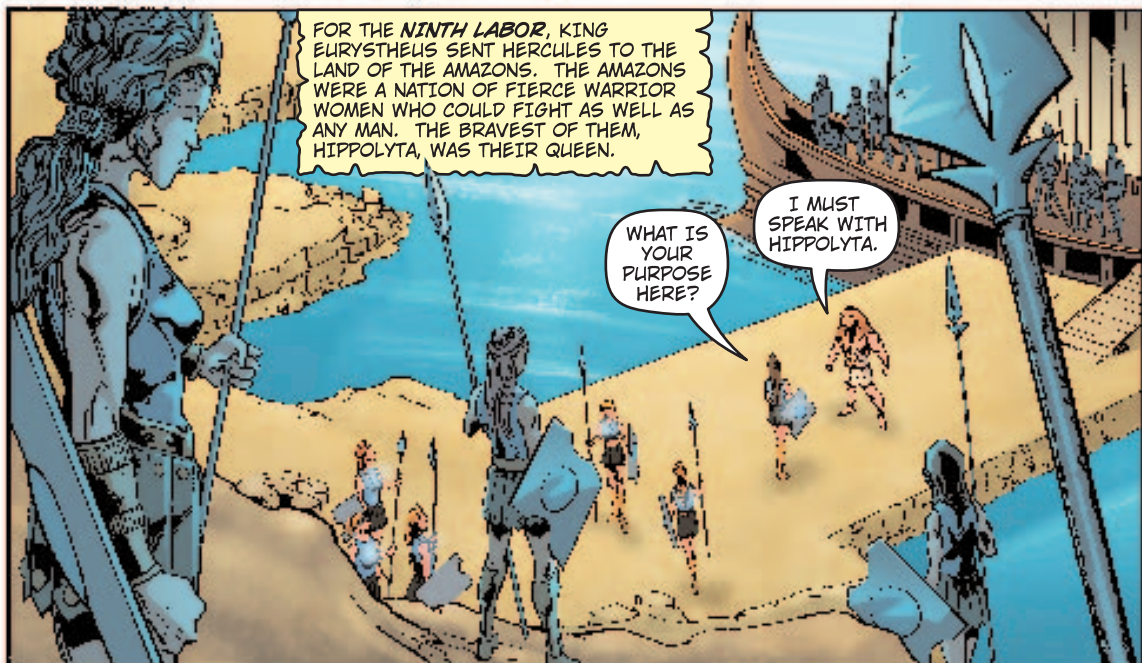


WHAT NOW? HERCULES HAS SUCCEEDED AT EVERY TASK I GAVE HIM. NOTHING HURTS HIM. NOTHING SHAMES HIM.

BUT WHAT...



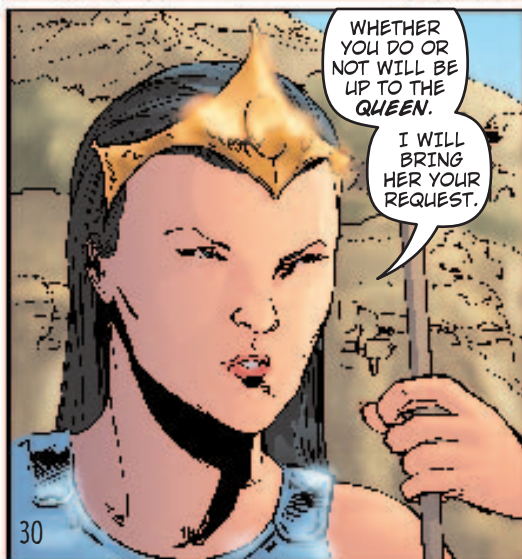
YES!
CALL FOR HERCULES!



FOR THE **NINTH LABOR**, KING EURYSTHEUS SENT HERCULES TO THE LAND OF THE AMAZONS. THE AMAZONS WERE A NATION OF FIERCE WARRIOR WOMEN WHO COULD FIGHT AS WELL AS ANY MAN. THE BRAVEST OF THEM, HIPPOLYTA, WAS THEIR QUEEN.

WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE HERE?

I MUST SPEAK WITH HIPPOLYTA.



WHETHER YOU DO OR NOT WILL BE UP TO THE **QUEEN**.

I WILL BRING HER YOUR REQUEST.



UNTIL I RETURN, STAY ON YOUR SHIP.

IF YOU TRY TO COME ON LAND, MY COMRADES WILL STOP YOU.

A SHORT TIME LATER, THE QUEEN ARRIVED.

HAIL, HIPPOLYTA, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS!

HAIL, HERCULES, HERO OF THEBES. WHY HAVE YOU MADE THE LONG JOURNEY TO MY LAND?

BY THE GODS' WILL, I SERVE MY COUSIN, KING EURYSTHEUS OF MYCENAE.

HE HAS **COMMANDED** THAT I BRING HIM THE GOLDEN BELT YOU WEAR.

YOU PLAN TO **TAKE** IT FROM ME? DO YOU THINK I WILL NOT **FIGHT** TO KEEP IT?

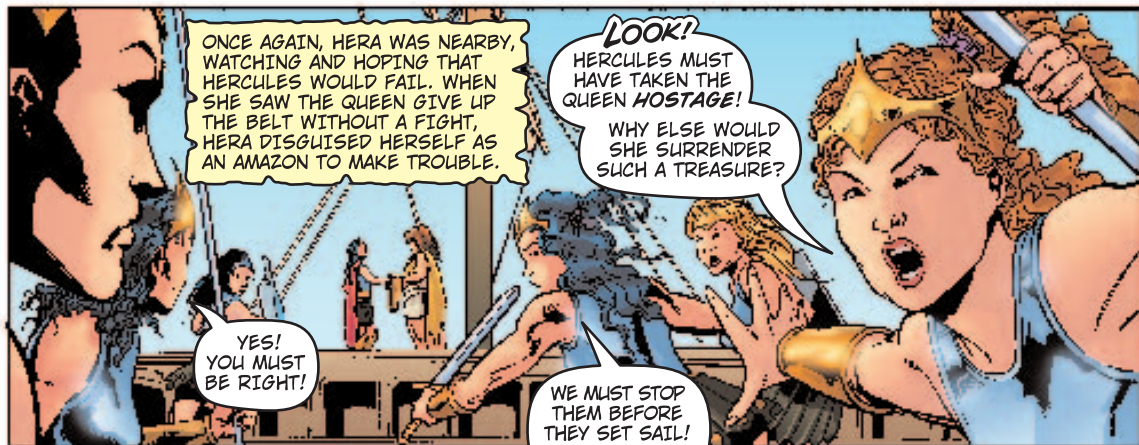
IT WAS A GIFT FROM ARES, THE GOD OF WAR.

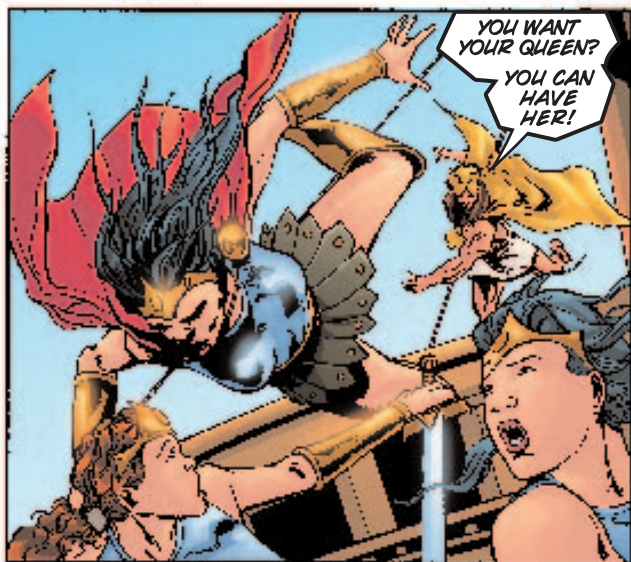
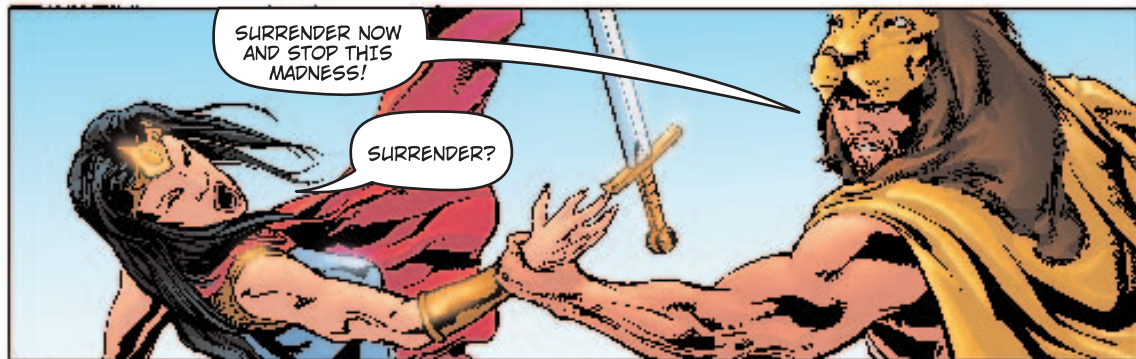
I HOPE TO **PERSUADE** YOU TO PART WITH IT. I RESPECT YOU AND YOUR WARRIORS.

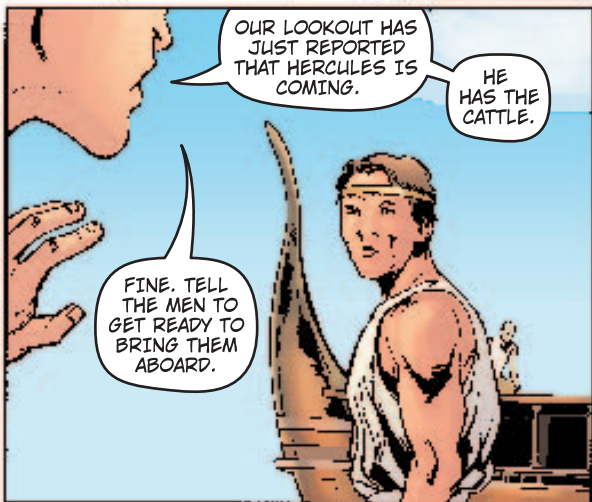
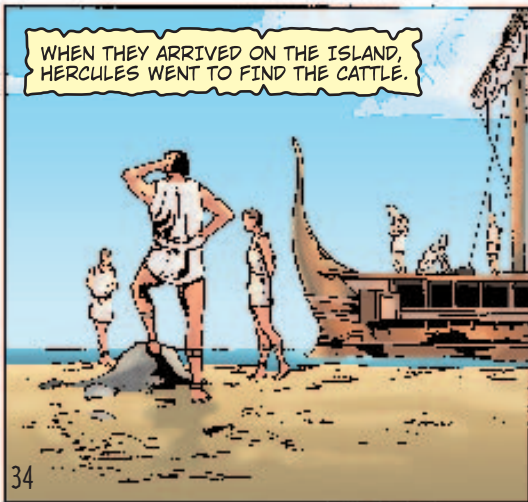
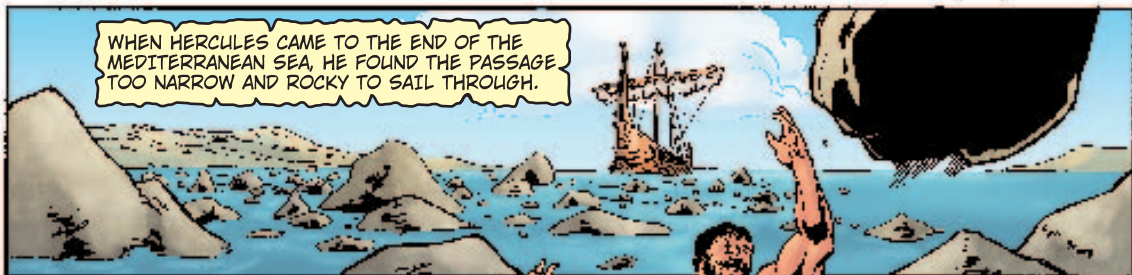
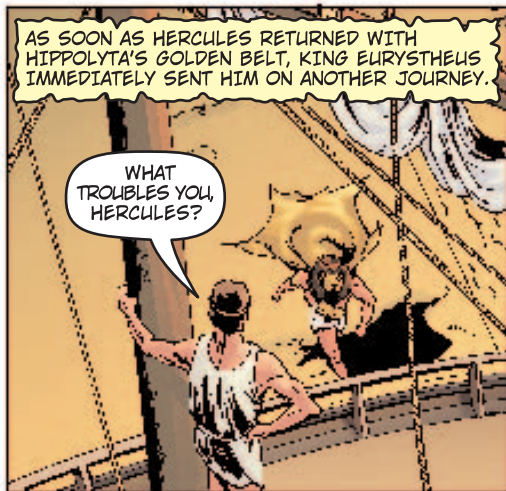
I DO NOT WISH TO BE YOUR ENEMY.

HAD YOU TRIED TO **TAKE** IT, I WOULD NEVER HAVE GIVEN IT UP.

BECAUSE YOU **ASKED** AND BECAUSE OF THE RESPECT I HAVE FOR YOU AND YOUR ADVENTURES, I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU AS A TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP.







WHEN HERCULES RETURNED, HE LOADED ALL THE CATTLE ONTO THE SHIP BY HIMSELF.

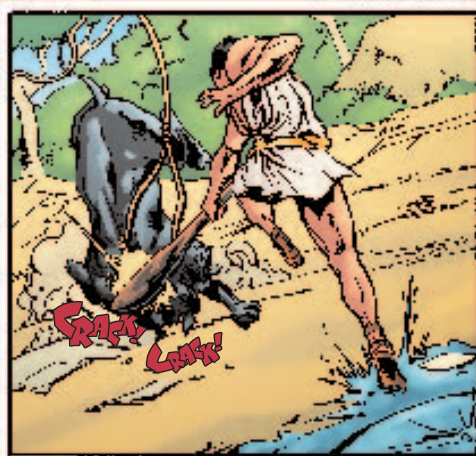
I DID NOT SEE HIM, BUT THE LOCALS TELL ME THIS GERON IS SOME KIND OF MONSTER.

IT MAKES ME FEEL A LITTLE BETTER ABOUT TAKING HIS CATTLE FOR EURYSTHEUS.



YOU'VE TAKEN MY CATTLE!

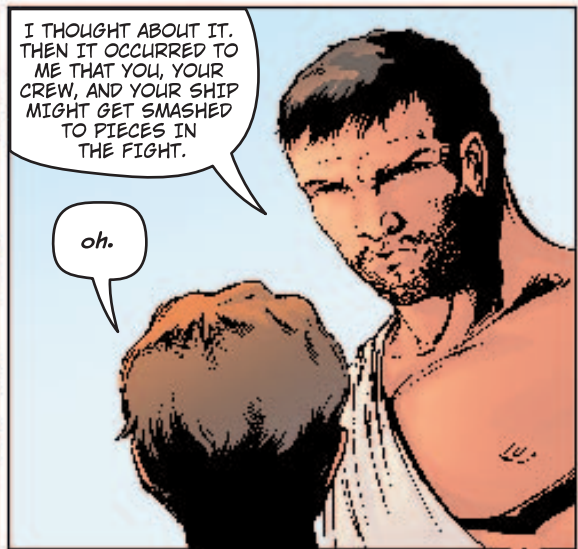
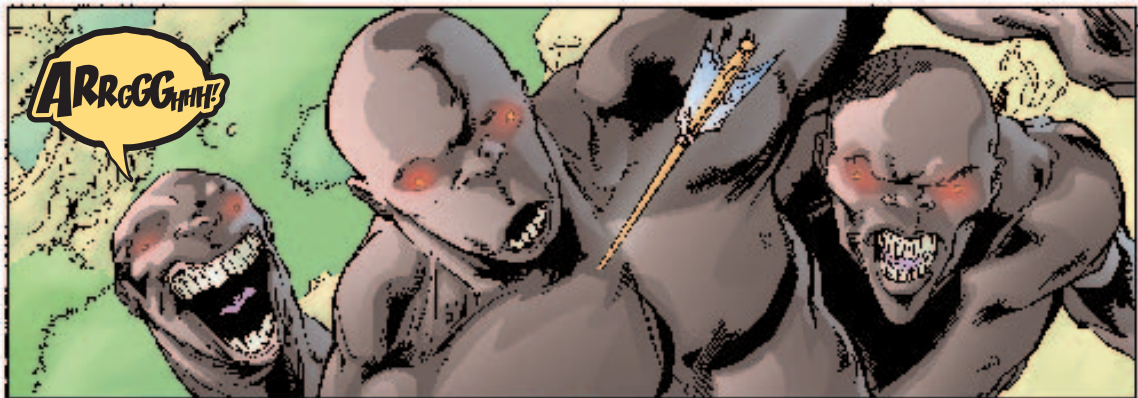
I'LL KILL YOU ALL!!



CRASH! CRASH!



GET MY BOW! NOW!



ABOVE AND BELOW

FOR THE ELEVENTH LABOR, KING EURYSTHEUS SENT HERCULES TO BRING HIM THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE HESPERIDES, WHICH BELONGED TO HERA. THE GODDESS WHISPERED THE SUGGESTION TO THE KING BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT THE CHALLENGE WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.

FIRST, EVERYONE KNEW THAT THE HESPERIDES, THE FOUR NYMPHS WHO CARED FOR THE TREE OF GOLDEN APPLES AND THE GARDEN WHERE IT GREW, GUARDED IT CAREFULLY. SECOND, NO ONE KNEW EXACTLY WHERE THE GARDEN WAS.

BUT HERCULES KNEW THAT ATLAS, THE TITAN WHO HELD UP THE SKY, WAS RELATED TO THE NYMPHS. IF ANYONE WOULD KNOW HOW TO FIND THEM, IT WOULD BE ATLAS. SO HERCULES MADE THE LONG, DANGEROUS CLIMB TO ASK HIM.

HA! I CANNOT REMEMBER THE LAST TIME SOMEONE CAME TO VISIT ME HERE.

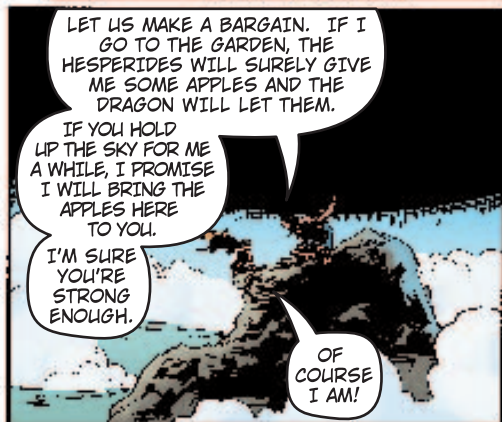
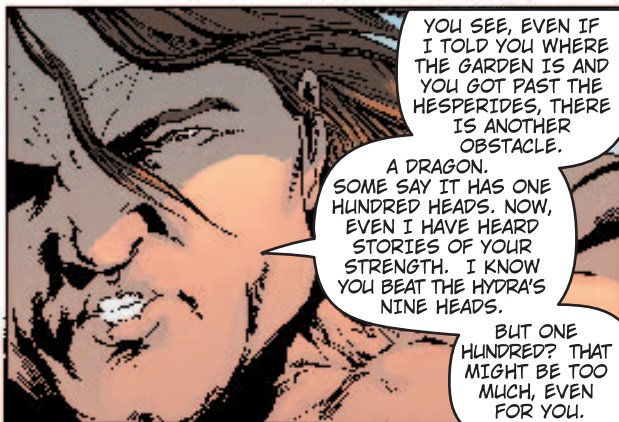
OF COURSE, MY HOME IS NOT TOO INVITING.

WHO ARE YOU? WHY HAVE YOU COME?

I AM HERCULES. I HAVE COME FOR YOUR HELP.

I WAS TOLD TO GET SOME OF THE GOLDEN APPLES THAT THE HESPERIDES WATCH OVER.

TELL ME WHERE TO FIND THEM.



EVERY HOUR THAT HE STRAINED TO HOLD THE SKY FELT LIKE A YEAR TO HERCULES. HE WAS GLAD TO SEE THE TITAN RETURN.

HERE THEY ARE! VERY PRETTY. EURYSTHEUS WILL LIKE THEM.

YES, I THINK SO TOO. NOW, TAKE BACK THE SKY.

NO. NO, I THINK NOT. I HAVE HELD THE SKY FOR LONG ENOUGH. YOU CAN HOLD IT FROM NOW ON.

REMEMBER, I PROMISED TO BRING THE APPLES HERE. I NEVER SAID I WOULD TAKE BACK THE SKY.

WHAT?!

DO NOT WORRY. I WILL TAKE THE APPLES TO EURYSTHEUS FOR YOU.

THANK YOU FOR THAT.

YOU HAVE BEEN HOLDING THE SKY MANY YEARS. I SUPPOSE IT IS ONLY FAIR THAT SOMEONE ELSE DO IT FOR A WHILE.

I WONDER IF YOU CAN DO ME A FAVOR, THOUGH?

CAN YOU TAKE BACK THE SKY FOR A TIME?

IF I FOLD MY CLOAK INTO A PAD FOR MY SHOULDERS I WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLE.

HMMM. I SUPPOSE.

A PAD WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE ALL THOSE YEARS I WAS HOLDING THE SKY.



BE QUICK.
THERE ARE MANY
THINGS I WANT
TO DO.



NO. NO, I THINK
NOT. I ASKED YOU
TO TAKE BACK THE SKY
FOR A TIME. I NEVER
SAID HOW LONG.



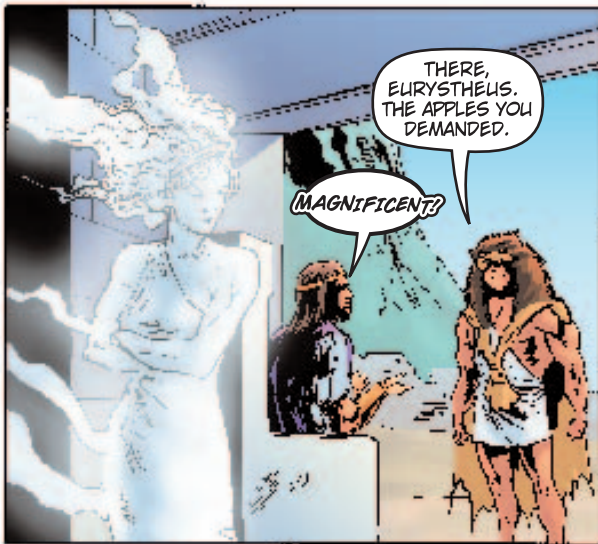
NOOOOOOO!!!
THIS IS
NOT FAIR!
COME BACK!



HA! JUST
AS FAIR AS YOU
LEAVING ME TO
DO YOUR
WORK.



Nooooooooooooooooooooo



THERE, EURYSTHEUS. THE APPLES YOU DEMANDED.

MAGNIFICENT?

HERA WAS UPSET THAT ANYONE COULD GET THE APPLES THAT BELONGED TO HER. THAT HERCULES MANAGED IT, WHEN SHE HATED HIM SO MUCH, MADE HER FURIOUS.



SHE WAS DETERMINED TO FIND A TASK THAT HERCULES COULD NOT *HOPE* TO COMPLETE.

AH! I HAVE THE PERFECT TWELFTH LABOR FOR YOU, HERCULES.

YOU MUST GO INTO THE *UNDERWORLD*, THE LAND OF THE DEAD, AND BRING ME BACK THE *THREE-HEADED* GUARD DOG, *CERBERUS*!



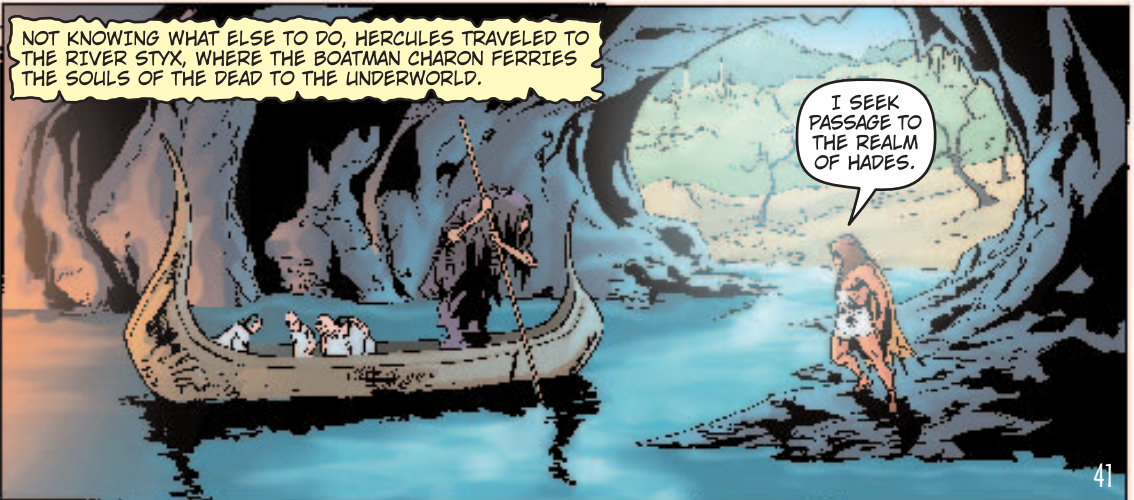
I DOUBT HADES, THE GOD OF THE UNDERWORLD, WILL BE HAPPY WITH *THAT*.



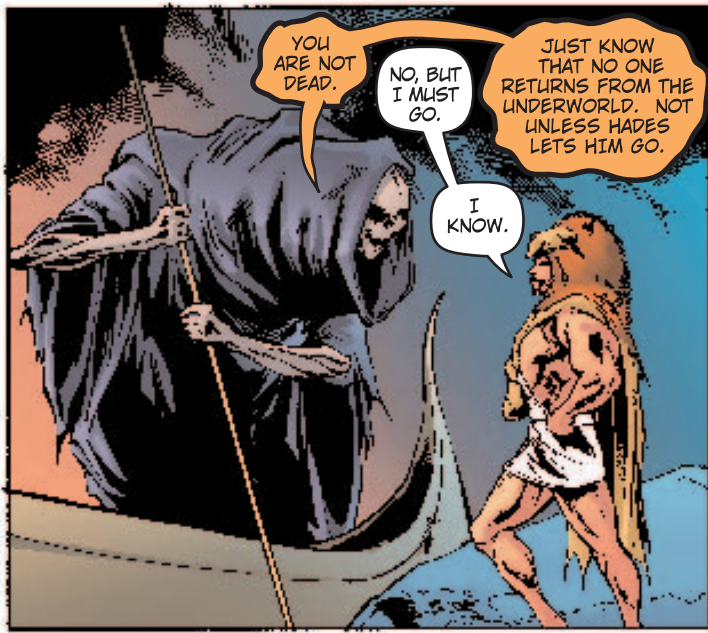
THE ORACLE SENT YOU BY THE WILL OF THE GODS.

SURELY HADES WILL RESPECT THAT. NOW, GO!

NOT KNOWING WHAT ELSE TO DO, HERCULES TRAVELED TO THE RIVER STYX, WHERE THE BOATMAN CHARON FERRIES THE SOULS OF THE DEAD TO THE UNDERWORLD.



I SEEK PASSAGE TO THE REALM OF HADES.



YOU ARE NOT DEAD.

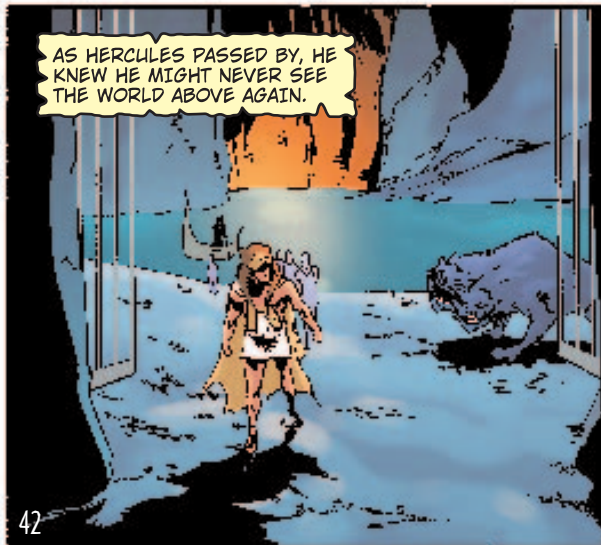
NO, BUT I MUST GO.

JUST KNOW THAT NO ONE RETURNS FROM THE UNDERWORLD. NOT UNLESS HADES LETS HIM GO.

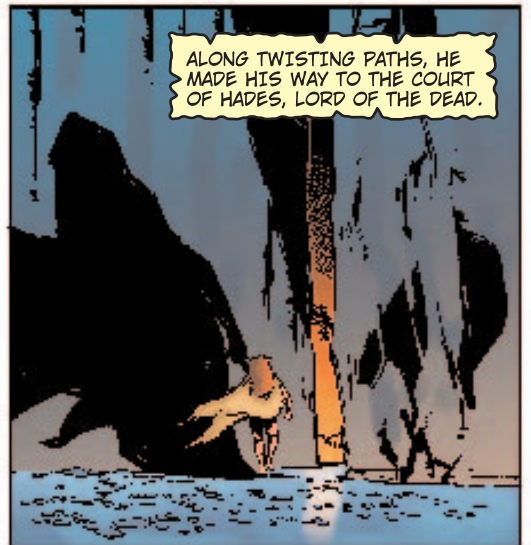
I KNOW.



THE MONSTROUS CERBERUS, GUARDIAN OF THE GATES OF THE UNDERWORLD, MADE SURE THAT NO ONE ESCAPED BACK INTO THE LAND OF THE LIVING.



AS HERCULES PASSED BY, HE KNEW HE MIGHT NEVER SEE THE WORLD ABOVE AGAIN.



ALONG TWISTING PATHS, HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE COURT OF HADES, LORD OF THE DEAD.

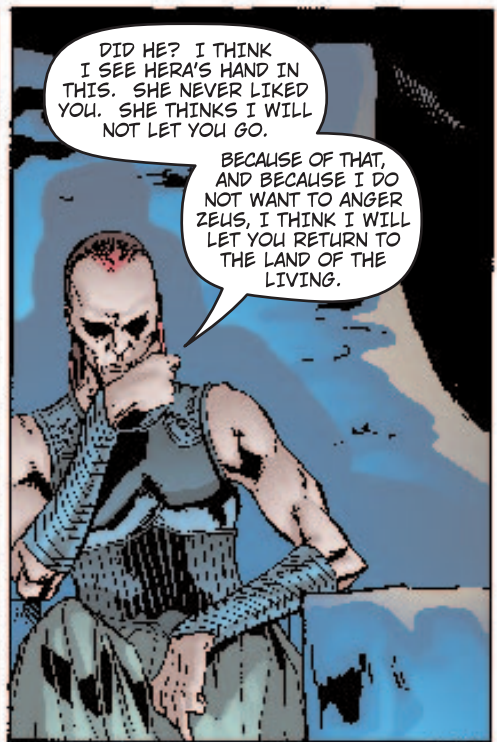


AH. I KNEW THAT A LIVING MAN HAD ENTERED MY REALM, BUT I DID NOT REALIZE THAT IT WAS YOU.

WELCOME, SON OF MY BROTHER ZEUS. WHY ARE YOU HERE?

I COME BECAUSE THE ORACLE AT DELPHI PUT ME IN THE SERVICE OF EURYSTHEUS.

HE COMMANDED ME TO BRING HIM CERBERUS.



DID HE? I THINK I SEE HERA'S HAND IN THIS. SHE NEVER LIKED YOU. SHE THINKS I WILL NOT LET YOU GO.

BECAUSE OF THAT, AND BECAUSE I DO NOT WANT TO ANGER ZEUS, I THINK I WILL LET YOU RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING.



THANK YOU, GREAT HADES.

WILL YOU LET ME COMPLETE MY TASK? CAN I TAKE CERBERUS WITH ME?



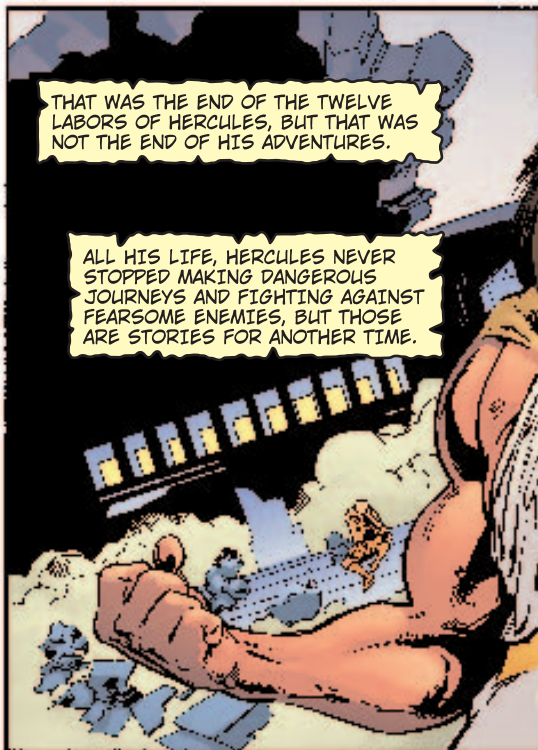
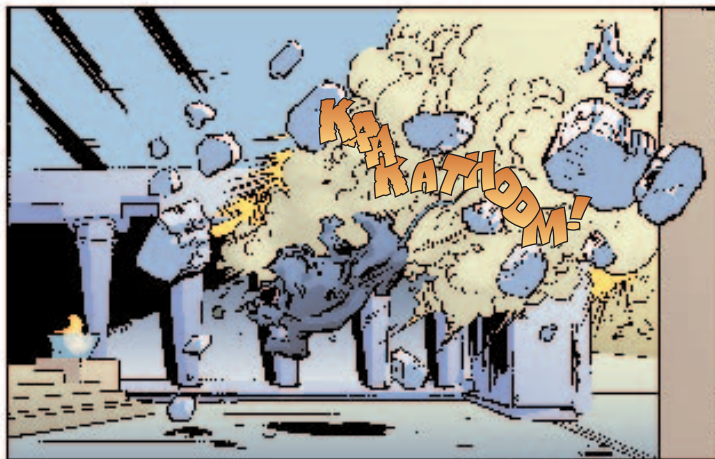
SINCE YOU ARE OBEYING THE ORACLE, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO TAKE CERBERUS...



BUT ONLY IF YOU CAN TAME HIM WITH YOUR BARE HANDS.

OH, AND TELL EURYSTHEUS THAT YOUR SERVICE IS AT AN END. TELL HIM I SAID SO.





GLOSSARY

AMAZONS: a race of female warriors of Greek legend. Hippolyta, daughter of the god of war—Ares—is the queen of the Amazons.

ARTEMIS: the Greek goddess of the moon and of the hunt

BOAR: a male pig

HADES: the underground dwelling place of the dead in Greek mythology

HERA: the immortal wife of Zeus

HIDE: the skin of an animal

HIND: a female deer

IMMORTAL: a being that never dies

MARE: a female horse

MORTAL: a being that dies

NYMPH: in Greek mythology, goddesses of nature who are often represented as beautiful women living in the mountains, forests, trees, and waters

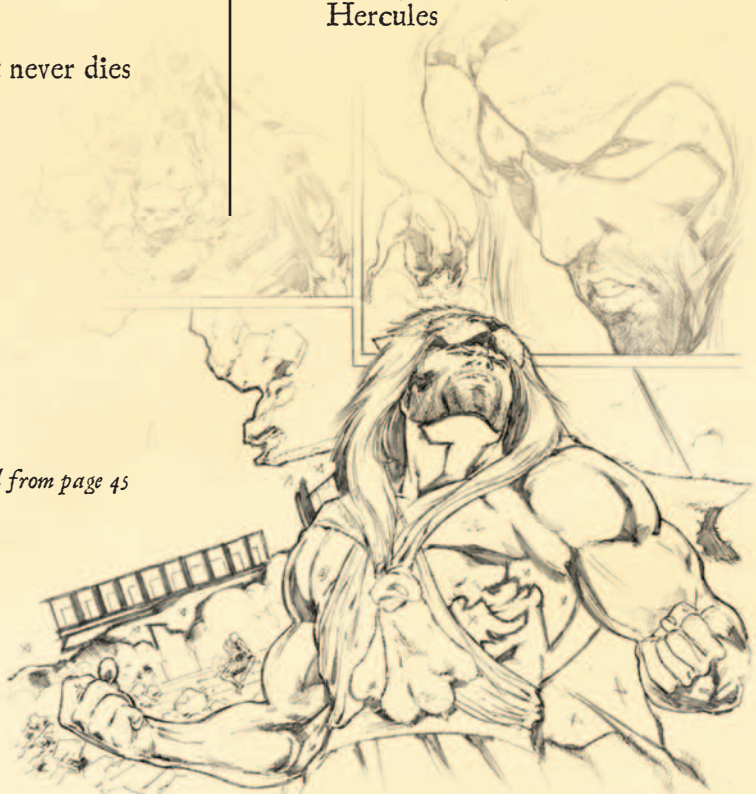
ORACLE: a priestess of ancient Greece through whom a god or gods were believed to speak

POSEIDON: the Greek god of the sea

TITAN: according to Greek mythology, a race of giants that ruled the earth before their overthrow by the Greek gods

ZEUS: king of the gods, father of Hercules

pencil from page 45



FURTHER READING AND WEBSITES

Greek Mythology: The Labors of Hercules

<http://www.mythweb.com/hercules/index.html>

With engaging cartoons and easy-to-read text, this kid-friendly site explores the labors of Hercules and also tells the stories of several other Greek heroes.

Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology*. New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1999.

First published in 1942, this classic work is a collection of lively retellings of Greek, Roman, and Norse tales.

Perseus Project: Hercules: Greece's Greatest Hero

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Herakles/index.html>

This website from Tufts University in Massachusetts features a wealth of information about the legend of Hercules, including his twelve labors and other stories.

Philip, Neil. *Mythology*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1999.

This volume in the Eyewitness Books series uses dozens of colorful photos and illustrations to explore myths from around the world.

Roberts, Morgan J. *Classical Deities and Heroes*. New York: Metro Books, 1995.

Filled with colorful illustrations and photos of ancient artifacts, this book recounts many of the most popular Greek and Roman myths, including the twelve labors of Hercules.

Thomas Bulfinch: Bulfinch's Mythology

<http://www.classicreader.com/booktoc.php/sid.2/bookid.2823/>

This website features one of the most popular English-language compilations of ancient myths. This classic work, which includes many Greek myths, was compiled by American Thomas Bulfinch in the 1800s.

CREATING HERCULES: THE TWELVE LABORS

To create the story of Hercules' Twelve Labors, author Paul Storrie relied heavily on both Thomas Bulfinch's *The Age of Fable*, first published in 1859, and Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*, first published in 1942. Both of these drew their material from the work of ancient poets such as Ovid and Virgil. Artist Steve Kurth used numerous historical and traditional sources to give the art an authentic feel, from the classical Greek architecture to the clothing, weapons and armor worn by the characters. Together, the art and narrative text bring to life the mightiest hero of Greek myth, whose battles against gods and monsters earned him a place on Mt. Olympus, the home of the Greek gods.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE ARTIST

PAUL D. STORRIE was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan and has returned to live there again and again after living in other cities and states. He began writing professionally in 1987 and has written comics for Caliber Comics, Moonstone Books, Marvel Comics and DC Comics. Some of the titles he's worked on include *Robyn of Sherwood*, featuring stories about Robin Hood's daughter, *Batman Beyond*, *Gotham Girls*, *Captain America: Red, White and Blue* and *Mutant X*.

STEVE KURTH was born and raised in west central Wisconsin. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in fine arts in illustration from the University Wisconsin at Eau Claire. Steve's art has appeared in numerous comic books, including *G.I. Joe*, *Micronauts*, *Ghostbusters*, *Dragonlance*, and *Cracked* magazine.