

May 2011

Inge

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dieter judt

kai meyer

Inge

P a n d o r a m i c u m



laudate dominum



text: και meyer

illustrations: dieter judt

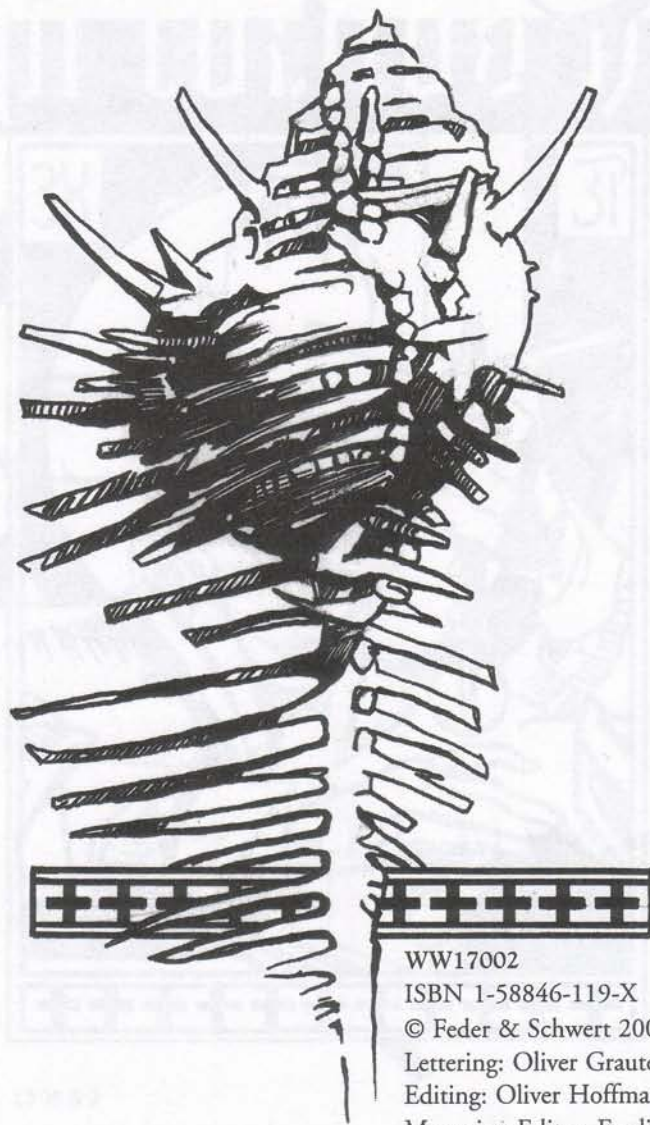
created by

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F E D E R & S C H W E R T



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THERE IS A STORY
CUMULUS TOLD ME

IT ALL BEGAN WITH THE FIRST DEITY,
THE CREATOR, WHO SAID, "I AM."

HE HAD BARELY SPOKEN THE
WORDS WHEN HE FELT FEAR.



HE THOUGHT, "WHAT AM I
AFRAID OF? I AM, AND
THIS IS ALL THERE IS."



THE REASON WAS THAT HE
WAS LONELY AND WISHED
THERE WAS ANOTHER.

THUS, THE GOD
FELT A CRAVING.



HE SWELLED AND
PARTED AND BECAME
MAN AND WOMAN.



THEY CREATED THE
WORLD FOR HIM.

THEN I ASKED CUMULUS, "WHAT
DOES THAT STORY MEAN?"



HE LOOKED AT ME FOR A LONG
TIME. "FEAR WAS THE FIRST
EXPERIENCE," HE FINALLY SAID.

"FEAR WAS THE FIRST EMOTION."

THE RAGUELITES' HIMMEL. ONE OF THE LARGE CASTLES OF THE ANGELS.



MY NAME IS LÄLE.
I AM FOURTEEN.



STILL A CHILD,
CUMULUS SAYS.



I KICKED HIS
HOLY BUTT FOR IT.



RAVEN KNOWS THAT I AM HERE. BUT HE WON'T SHOW IT. SMALL WONDER; IN THE BEGINNING, HE DIDN'T EVEN REMEMBER ME. AND HE'S IGNORED ME SINCE LAST WE TALKED... HOW MANY? FOUR YEARS AGO?

OLDER BROTHERS CAN BE DAMN MEAN. AND BITTER.

THE BOUNTY RIDERS CAME TO OUR VILLAGE FIVE YEARS AGO. THEY TOOK RAVEN AND A FEW OTHER BOYS TO THE HIMMEL. MY FATHER PUT ON HIS TALISMAN, WENT THROUGH THE DOOR AND NEVER RETURNED. MY MOTHER DIED FROM GRIEF. ONLY I REMAINED.



SO I WENT TO THE HIMMEL. THE GUARDIANS THOUGHT I WAS ONE OF THE SCULLIONS. I WENT IN AND HAVEN'T LEFT THE CASTLE SINCE. NO ONE KNOWS THAT I AM HERE. NO ONE EXCEPT FOR CUMULUS AND RAVEN.

IT IS WARM, IN SPITE OF THE WIND. IT COMES FROM THE WEST, BUT IT CANNOT CHASE THE HEAT OF THE INFERNO. THEY WILL SOON START HARVESTING THE CABBAGE IN THE CASTLE GARDENS.



MYRIEL...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

THE INFERNO WILL PASS THE HIMMEL. NO ONE WILL BE HURT.

THAT'S NOT IT. IT IS SO... BIG. BIGGER THAN EVERYTHING THAT'S OURS.



WHY IS LUCIFER'S TOOL MIGHTIER THAN THE LORD'S TOOLS?



NOT MIGHTIER. MORE CRUEL. THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE.



KADIEL FORMS AN ASSAULT DETACHMENT. HE WANTS YOU TO BE PART OF IT!

HE ASKED FOR ME?

EXPLICITLY.



CABBAGE IN AUTUMN. AND SUDDENLY, EVERYONE WANTS TO BE A HERO.

BLOCKHEADS.



AT SOME POINT, HE HAS TO TALK TO ME. HE OWES ME AS MUCH.

AT SOME POINT...

LÅLE!
WHEN YOU'RE
ANGRY, YOU ARE
HARD TO MISS.



DO YOU THINK
THE INFERNO WILL
TOUCH US?

CUMULUS IS THE RAGUELITES'
CARTOGRAPHER. HE KNOWS
MORE ABOUT THE FIRES THAN
ANYBODY ELSE.

AND ABOUT GIRLS HIDING
IN VENTILATION TUBES AND
LARDERS.



WHO
TALKS SUCH
NONSENSE?

WELL, EVERYONE!
EVERYONE IN THE
CASTLE IS
SCARED.

LOOK...
THE INFERNO WILL
PASS US BY IN A
STRAIGHT LINE. AT
LEAST 30
KILOMETERS AWAY.

IT'S NOT ONE OF THE
BIG ONES. THIRTEEN
KILOMETERS DIAMETER
AT MOST.

THIRTEEN
KILOMETERS?
THAT'S PRETTY
BIG!



FURTHER SOUTH THEY
SUPPOSEDLY SAW ONES
THAT WERE 150
KILOMETERS WIDE.
COMPARED TO THOSE,
OURS IS JUST A JET OF
FLAME.

CUMULUS IS THE WISEST MAN I
KNOW. HE LIVES FOR HIS MAPS.
I DON'T THINK HE EVER LOVED
ANYTHING MORE THAN THEM.

NO ONE KNOWS WHEN THE FIRST INFERNO APPEARED.

CUMULUS SAYS, ONE DAY THEY BURST THROUGH THE POLAR CAPS AND MELTED THE ICE.

THEN, MANY LANDS WERE FLOODED.

SINCE THEN, THE INFERNOS HAVE CRUISED THE WORLD LIKE GIANT TWISTERS MADE OF FLAMES AND HEAT.

SOME ARE QUICK, OTHERS ARE SLOW. THERE ARE NO RULES, NO REGULATIONS. YOU CAN FEEL THE HEAT FROM AFAR, LIKE A SPRING DAWN AT FIRST. FLOWERS BLOOM - AND WITHER WITHIN DAYS. FRUIT RIPENS - AND ROTS ON THE BRANCH.

THE INFERNOS ARE THE TOOLS OF THE ADVERSARY, THE ANCIENT LORD OF THE FLIES. THEY OBEY HIM, IT IS SAID, AS HIS MOBILE HELL ON EARTH.

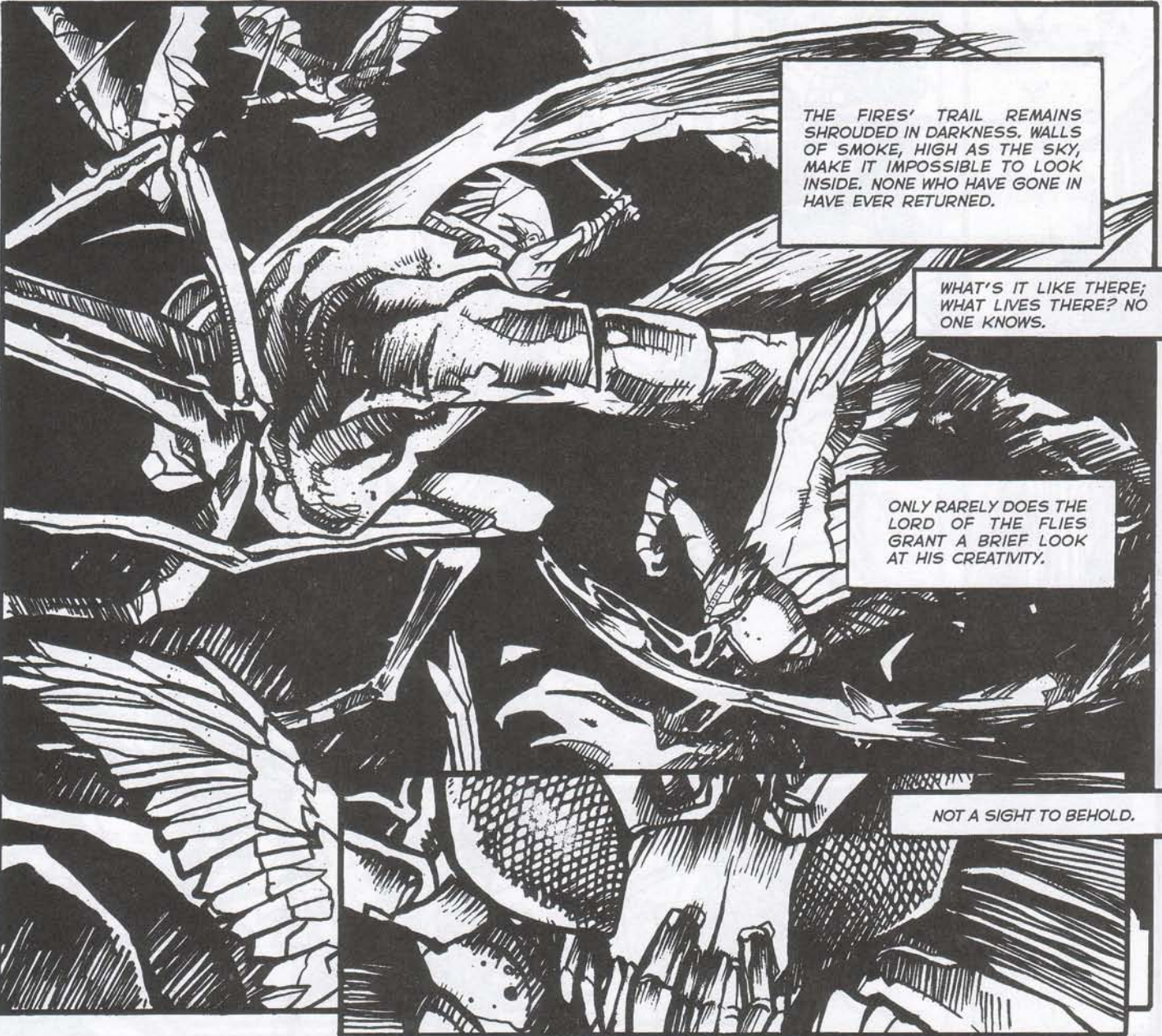
UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IS NOT ALL.



DREAMSEED!



CREATURES FROM THE BURNT LAND, THE BLACK CORRIDOR OF SMOKE AND DESTRUCTION THAT LIES IN THE INFERNOS' WAKE.



THE FIRES' TRAIL REMAINS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS. WALLS OF SMOKE, HIGH AS THE SKY, MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO LOOK INSIDE. NONE WHO HAVE GONE IN HAVE EVER RETURNED.

WHAT'S IT LIKE THERE; WHAT LIVES THERE? NO ONE KNOWS.

ONLY RARELY DOES THE LORD OF THE FLIES GRANT A BRIEF LOOK AT HIS CREATIVITY.

NOT A SIGHT TO BEHOLD.

THE DREAMSEED IS THE LORD OF THE FLIES' ARMY. THOSE WHO GAZE LONG ENOUGH INTO THE SMOKE OF THE BURNT LANDS THINK THEY CAN SEE THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF THESE CREATURES WRITHING WITHIN.

BUT MAYBE THAT'S JUST AN ILLUSION. LIKE THE FACES WE SEE IN CLOUDS.

UGLY FACES.

DEADLY FACES.





WHERE TO, STRANGER?



I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR THE RAGUELITES' AB.



GIVE IT TO US, THEN. WE WILL MAKE SURE THAT IT IS PASSED ON TO HIS EMINENCE.

I AM NO ERRAND BOY, TEMPLAR. I WILL BRING THE MESSAGE TO THE AB PERSONALLY.

WITHOUT HIS PERMISSION, WE CANNOT—



YOU WILL LET ME PASS.



WE WILL LET YOU PASS.

LET THE MAN PASS!



ALL THE HIMMEL KNOWS
WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

I SAW MY BROTHER
CARRY MYRIEL HOME IN
HIS ARMS. THEY LAID HIM
OUT IN ONE OF THE
CHAPELS AND DRAPED A
CLOTH OVER HIS
SHOULDERS.

ALL ARE AFRAID OF THE
FIRE. BUT UNTIL THIS
AFTERNOON, NOT MANY
WERE CONCERNED ABOUT
THE DREAMSEED.

"TOO FAR AWAY," THEY
ALWAYS SAID. BUT NOW,
GOD'S ARMY PREPARES
FOR WAR....

I HAVE TO TALK TO
RAVEN. HE NEEDS
ME NOW MORE THAN
EVER BEFORE, EVEN
IF HE DOESN'T
REALIZE IT.

AND I NEED HIM.

NO ONE DARES IMAGINE
WHAT WILL HAPPEN
WHEN THE DREAMSEED
ATTACKS THE HIMMEL.

I USED TO
THINK OLDER
BROTHERS
WERE A
NUISANCE.
TODAY I ONLY
WISH HE'D
FINALLY
ACCEPT ME.

AND IF THERE
REALLY WILL
BE A WAR
AGAINST THE
DREAMSEED,
THIS MIGHT
BE THE LAST
CHANCE FOR
HIM TO DO
SO.

THE AB'S CHAMBER. HE HAS A VISITOR.

MAYBE I CAN EAVESDROP HERE
TO FIND OUT WHAT IS TO COME.

YOUR IGNORANCE WILL
NOT BE YOUR DOWNFALL
ALONE, AB GUNDAR!

THE DREAMSEED
WOULDN'T
DARE....

THE DREAMSEED,
VENERABLE AB, IS NOT
GUIDING THE
INFERNOS. YOUR TRUE
ENEMY IS SOMEONE
ELSE.

I DON'T KNOW
WHO YOU ARE
AND WHAT YOU—

THERE IS NO TIME FOR
THIS NOW, AB. AT THIS
VERY MOMENT, THE
INFERNO CHANGES ITS
COURSE.

IT NOW HEADS
STRAIGHT FOR
YOUR CASTLE.



OUR SURVEYS SAY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

YOUR SURVEYS ARE OLDER THAN AN HOUR. NOW, THE INFERNO CHANGES ITS COURSE.

YOU MUST TRUST ME.



YOU SHOW UP HERE, DO... DO SOMETHING TO MY FLOOR AND EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE YOU IN SUCH A SITUATION? YOU MUST HAVE LOST YOUR MIND.



I KNOW YOUR SECRET, AB GUNDAR. YOUR ORDER'S SECRET.



YOU WOULD NOT DARE....

TO SAY IT? THAT IS NOT NECESSARY. I AM NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR IRE, ONLY YOUR TRUST.



THE RAGUELITES' HIMMEL WILL FALL.

BEFORE THE NEXT NIGHT.



THE INFERNO IS NOT QUICK ENOUGH.

NOT YET, BUT SOON.



BLOW THIS WHEN IT IS TIME, IT WILL STOP YOUR SECRET FROM FALLING INTO THE ENEMY'S HANDS.



THE LEGEND IS TRUE, THEN?

THE PANDORAMICUM.



YOU DARE CARRY SUCH BLASPHEMY INTO A HOUSE OF THE LORD!



THAT'S SORCERY!



YOU'RE A FOOL, AB GUNDAR.



YOU THREW AWAY FAR MORE THAN YOU WILL EVER KNOW.



I DON'T THINK ANYBODY REALLY KNOWS WHO HE IS. ONE OF THE RESTLESS WANDERERS, SOME SAY. A CHARLATAN, THE OTHERS SAY.

EVERYWHERE HE WALKS, PETRIFIED MUSSELS AND SNAIL-SHELLS AND BONES RISE FROM THE GROUND.



SOMEONE CALLED IT A STONY SPRING. THE TERM FITS QUITE WELL, SOMEHOW. THE PAST BLOOMS AS IF AFTER A LONG, LONG WINTER.

IF ANYBODY KNOWS WHAT THAT MEANS, IT IS CUMULUS! SOMETIMES I THINK HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. WELL, AT LEAST MORE THAN ALL OTHERS.



MORE THAN AB GUNDAR.



LOOKS LIKE THE AB HAS ALREADY SUMMONED HIM. SOMETIMES CUMULUS REACTS A LITTLE... UMM... FORCEFULLY TO CERTAIN NEWS.



RAVEN!

NO ONE THERE. ALL ANGELS ARE EITHER ON PATROL OR IN BRIEFINGS.

THE ANGELS' QUARTERS ARE GUARDED. IF I CAN MEET HIM ANYWHERE, IT IS HERE.

THE WANDERER WAS RIGHT. IT HAS CHANGED COURSE.

SECRETLY, WE ALL MAY HAVE FELT IT.

YOU HAVE TO TREAT DESTINY LIKE YOUR BODY, CUMULUS ONCE SAID. ENJOY IT WHILE IT'S GOOD. BE PATIENT WHILE IT'S BAD. AND ONLY APPLY CURES IN UTMOST EMERGENCIES.

BUT IF THE PANDORAMICUM IS A CURE, WHY DID THE AB THROW IT AWAY? AND WHAT SECRET DID THE WANDERER SPEAK OF?

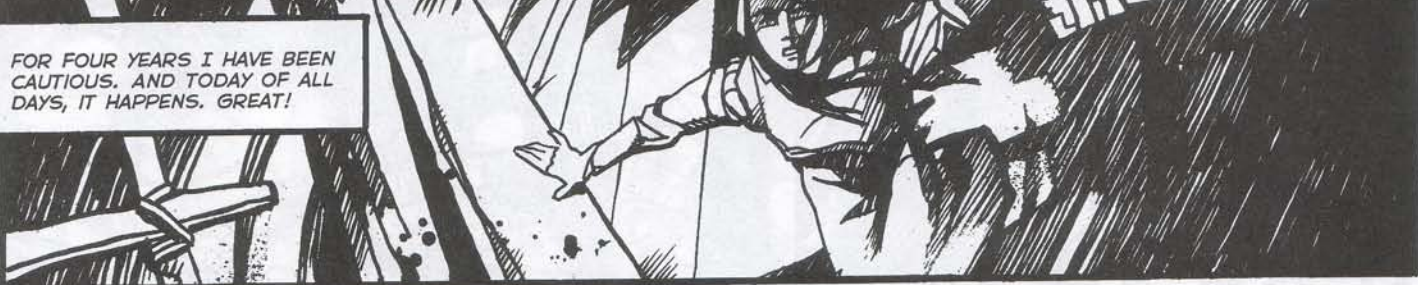
HEY, GIRL!

STOP!

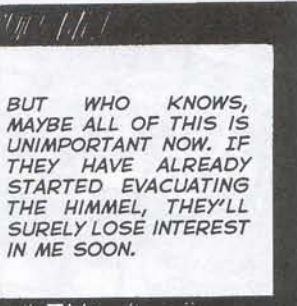
DAMAE! CALL THE GUARDS!

THAT WAS AN ORDER!

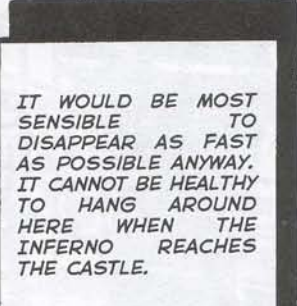
BUT SHE'S JUST A CHILD...




FOR FOUR YEARS I HAVE BEEN CAUTIOUS. AND TODAY OF ALL DAYS, IT HAPPENS. GREAT!




BUT WHO KNOWS, MAYBE ALL OF THIS IS UNIMPORTANT NOW. IF THEY HAVE ALREADY STARTED EVACUATING THE HIMMEL, THEY'LL SURELY LOSE INTEREST IN ME SOON.






IT WOULD BE MOST SENSIBLE TO DISAPPEAR AS FAST AS POSSIBLE ANYWAY. IT CANNOT BE HEALTHY TO HANG AROUND HERE WHEN THE INFERNO REACHES THE CASTLE.



NO ONE EXCEPT FOR THE ANGELS HAS EVER ENCOUNTERED THE DREAMSEED - AND LIVED TO TELL THE TALE. IF THE HIMMEL FALLS, THE SPAWN WILL SOON BE CRAWLING ALL OVER THE PLACE.



THE ONLY QUESTION IS: WHOM SHOULD I RATHER FLEE?




HI, BIG BROTHER.



HE NEVER LIKED IT WHEN I CALLED HIM THAT.


I SHOULD THROW YOU FROM THE BATTLEMENTS.






IT STARTED ALL OVER AGAIN. THE DOUBTS, THE SELF-RECRIMINATIONS, THE LONELINESS.

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO BE LONELY.




YOU STILL DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? I AM A RAGUELITE NOW, LÅLE! THIS ENCOUNTER SHOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN PLACE, NOT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

BUT I AM HERE! YOU CANNOT SIMPLY SEND ME AWAY.



I HAVE BEEN LIVING IN THIS CASTLE FOR MORE THAN FOUR YEARS. I NEVER ASKED YOU FOR ANYTHING - I ONLY WANTED TO TALK TO YOU. I HAVE LEARNED TO GET BY ON MY OWN.


WHY HAVE YOU COME? I CAN DO NOTHING FOR YOU. CANNOT TAKE CARE OF YOU.




YOU WERE JEALOUS.

JEALOUS?


BECAUSE THE BOUNTY RIDERS TOOK ME, NOT YOU.



I AM SUPPOSED TO BE JEALOUS - OF THIS? ... GOOD LORD, RAVEN.




I SAW WHAT THEY DO TO YOU. HOW DESIRABLE DO YOU THINK THIS IS FOR SOMEONE WHO HASN'T BEEN BRAINWASHED?



YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.



NO, PROBABLY NOT.



THE INFERNO APPROACHES EVER FASTER.



YOU NEED TO GET AWAY.

I WON'T GO WITHOUT YOU. YOU'RE MY BROTHER.



THE RAGUELITES WILL GO TO BATTLE.



THEN I WILL WAIT HERE FOR YOU!

NO, YOU WON'T! THE HIMMEL WILL FALL.



I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE WITHOUT YOU.



YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO GO.



WHAT?



GET HER TO THE GROUND. AND DANIEL - SEE TO IT THAT SHE JOINS THE REFUGEE TRACKS!



NO!





TAKE ME BACK IMMEDIATELY!



YOU KNOW THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE.



WHAT DO YOU CARE IF I LIVE OR DIE?

WE ARE ANGELS. WE HELP.

OH, SURE.



IN BATTLE, WE WILL SACRIFICE OUR LIVES FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

SACRIFICE? BUT -



NONE OF US EXPECTS TO COME BACK FROM THIS FIGHT.

DOES RAVEN KNOW THAT?

EVERYONE KNOWS. EVERYONE KNOWS HIS DESTINY.



BUT... YOU CANNOT SIMPLY MARCH TO CERTAIN DOOM.

WE ARE ANGELS. WE SERVE THE LORD IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY.

BUT YOUR DEATH SERVES NOBODY!



NO ONE EXPECTS YOU TO UNDERSTAND THIS.



GO WITH THE OTHERS. YOU'LL BE SAFE IN THE SOUTH.



TAKE ME BACK TO RAVEN!



WHAT'S YOUR NAME?



LÄLE.



FAREWELL, LÄLE. GOOD LUCK!



WAIT!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NOW. I MANAGED TO CREEP INTO THE HIMMEL ONCE, BUT A SECOND TIME? AND NOT ONE DAY BEFORE A WAR ERUPTS!



THERE'S NO ONE WHO WOULD HELP ME. NO ONE EXCEPT FOR CUMULUS. AND AS IT STANDS, I PROBABLY WON'T SEE HIM AGAIN.



BUT MAYBE THERE IS SOMEONE ELSE.



I CANNOT SIMPLY RUN NOW...

HE CANNOT TREAT ME WORSE THAN THE DREAMSEED WOULD. AND MAYBE HE KNOWS A FEW ANSWERS.



CUMULUS SAYS I TEND TO BE OVERCONFIDENT.

WE'LL SEE.

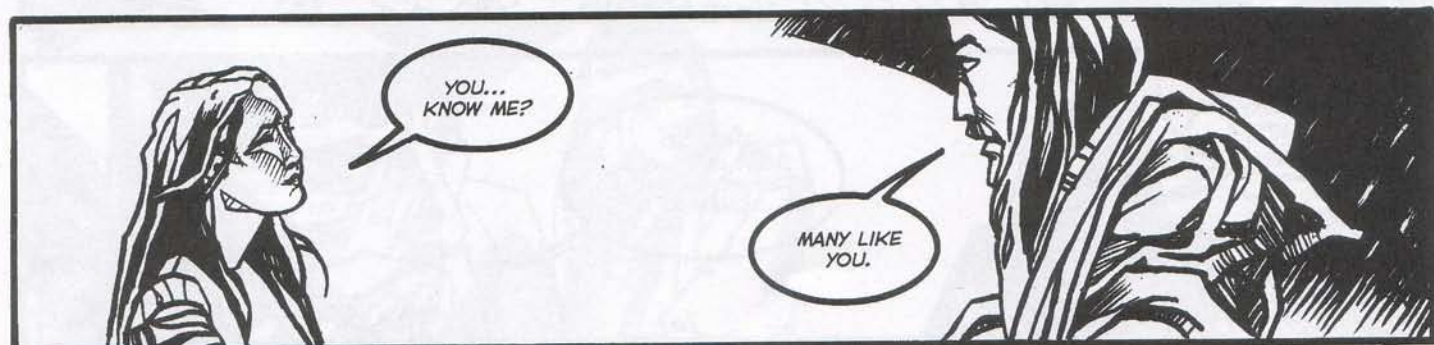


WHATEVER IT IS - IT SEEMS TO BE WAITING FOR SOMEONE.



OVERCONFIDENT?

PAH!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN - MANY LIKE ME?

HEROES.

I AM NO HERO.

YOU SOON WILL BE. THE CHOSEN ONES WERE ALWAYS THE LAST TO KNOW THAT THEY WERE CHOSEN.

BUT THAT IS -

LISTEN. AND THEN DECIDE.

THE WORLD WAS NOT ALWAYS AS IT IS TODAY. THERE WERE OTHER ERAS. ERAS WITHOUT THE INFERNOS AND THE TERRORS OF THE BURNT LAND.

A WORLD WITHOUT ANGELS.

BUT THERE ALWAYS WERE ANGELS.

NOT IN THE ERAS BEFORE THE GREAT SAINT VITUS' DANCE.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

BILLIONS DIED WHEN SAINT VITUS' DANCE HIT THE WORLD. IT KILLED ALL ADULTS, ALL WHO HAD CROSSED THE THRESHOLD FROM ADOLESCENCE. ONLY THE CHILDREN SURVIVED, THOSE WHO WERE EVEN YOUNGER THAN YOU. ON THEIR SHOULDERS RESTED THE BURDEN TO CREATE A NEW WORLD.

AND THIS IS WHAT THEY CAME UP WITH?

THEY DID THEIR BEST. BUT THEY NEVER HAD A CHANCE.

WHAT HAPPENED?

SAINT VITUS' DANCE DIED DOWN AS SOON AS IT HAD BEGUN. BUT SOON PEOPLE NOTICED THAT THE OCEANS ROSE AND THAT STRANGE LIGHTS ILLUMINATED THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN SKIES. THE INFERNOS ROSE FROM WITHIN THE POLES, MELTED THE GIANT ICE MASSES AND STARTED MEANDERING ACROSS THE WORLD.



THEY REALLY CAME FROM WITHIN THE EARTH?

YES, FROM WITHIN THE EARTH. AND FROM WITHIN A MAD MIND.

WITHIN A FEW DAYS, THE OCEANS FLOODED THE COASTAL AREAS. AGAIN, MILLIONS DIED.



BUT THE REST RETREATED INTO THE WORLD'S HIGHEST BUILDINGS...

... AND CREATED A CULT OF CHILDREN.

THE ANGELS' CASTLES WERE FOUNDED, AND WITH THEM THE SIX GREAT ORDERS - MICHAELITES, GABRIELITES, RAPHAELITES, URIELITES AND RAGUELITES.

EVERY ORDER HAD ITS OWN JOB, ITS OWN WEAKNESSES AND ABILITIES. THE RAGUELITES THAT YOUR BROTHER BELONGS TO BECAME THE KEEPERS OF THE PAST, HEIRS TO ALL THINGS TECHNICAL FROM THE TIME BEFORE SAINT VITUS' DANCE.



BUT EVERYONE USES TECHNICAL THINGS! WATER WHEELS AND MILLS AND... AND... MY FATHER HAD HIS OWN PLOW MADE OF STEEL THAT HE USED TO TEND HIS FIELDS!

WHAT THE RAGUELITES KEEP DEEP WITHIN THEIR CASTLES IS SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT, LÅLE. IT IS BIGGER AND MORE DANGEROUS. IT MUST NEVER FALL TO THE ENEMY'S HANDS, NO MATTER THE COST.

THIS IS WHY YOU WENT TO SEE THE AB?

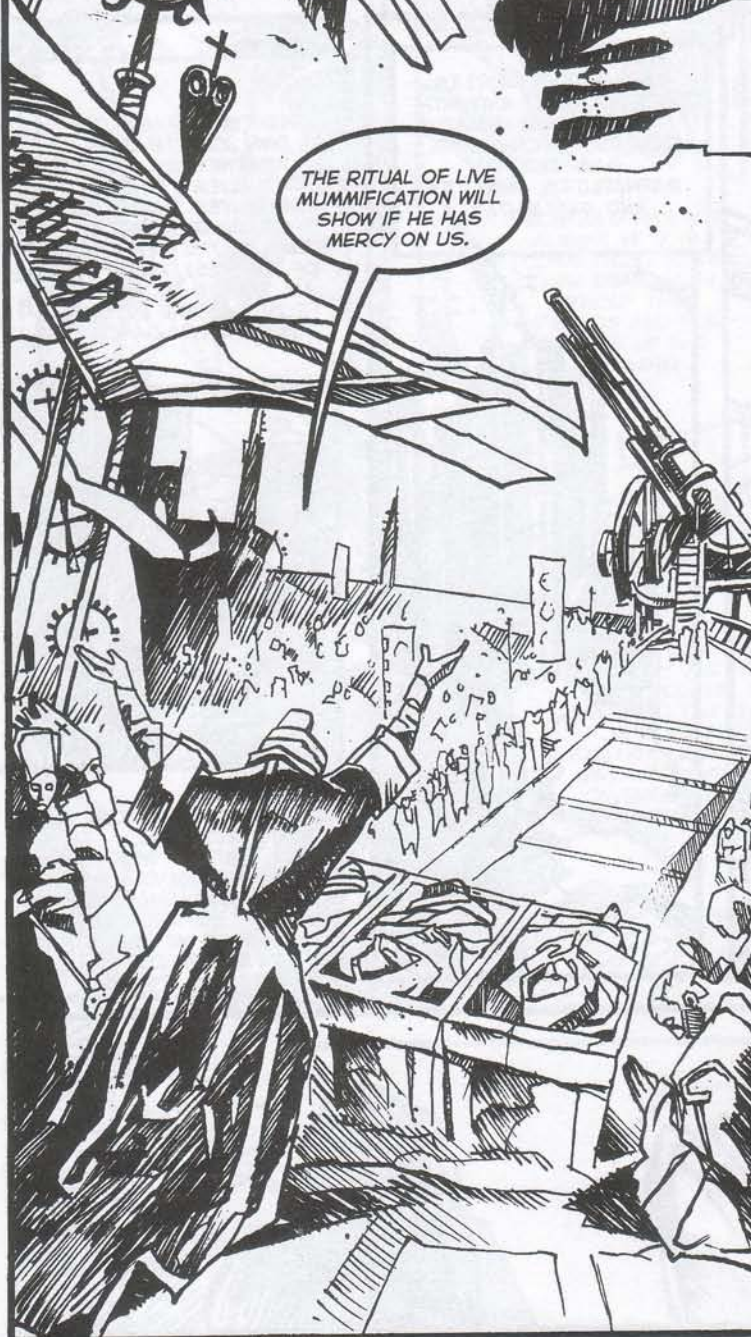




THE AB IS A FOOL. YOU'D NEVER GUESS HOW HE TRIES TO STOP THE INFERNO IN THIS VERY INSTANT.



WE ALL THANK THE LORD FOR THESE THREE VOLUNTEERS.



THE RITUAL OF LIVE MUMMIFICATION WILL SHOW IF HE HAS MERCY ON US.



LORD, OUR FATHER, SHOW YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANTS MERCY. THESE CHOSEN THREE WILL HEAD TO THEE, HALF IN THIS LIFE, HALF IN THE NEXT, TO BRING YOU OUR PLEA FOR LENIENCY.



START THE RITUAL.



ADMINISTER THE CEDAR OIL TO THEM. IT WILL DECOMPOSE THEIR ORGANS AND SLOW DOWN THE PASSAGE FROM THIS WORLD INTO THE NEXT ONE.



SEDATE THEM WITH SODIUM CHLORIDE. IT WILL DRY THEIR SKIN AND PREPARE THEM FOR THE AFTERLIFE.



DRENCH THEM IN RESIN. IT WILL KEEP THEIR BODY IN THIS WORLD WHILE THEIR SPIRIT FLEES INTO THE ARMS OF THE LORD.



AND? HAS THE LORD ACCEPTED OUR SACRIFICE?



THE INFERNO STILL APPROACHES.



ARE YOU SURE? IS THE MEASURING CORRECT?



THE MEASURING IS CORRECT. THERE IS NO DOUBT.



THE LORD HAS NOT GIVEN US A FAVORABLE HEARING.



THEN, THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY.



THERE WILL BE A BATTLE, WON'T THERE?



WAR IS INEVITABLE. AB GUNDAR IS TOO PROUD TO ORDER HIS ANGELS TO FLEE.



BUT THAT IS MURDER! HE KNOWS THEY'LL DIE.

EVERYONE KNOWS.

ANYWAY, NO ONE CAN STOP DESTINY, LÅLE. NOT EVEN YOU.



YOU TOLD ME I WAS CHOSEN.

YOUR DESTINY IS THE PANDORAMICUM.

BUT THE AB HAS THROWN IT INTO THE WELL!



YOU WILL RECOVER IT. YOU WILL FULFILL THE LEGEND OF THE PANDORAMICUM WHEN THE FIRE APPROACHES THE CASTLE. THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THE RAGUELITES' HERITANCE FROM FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF THE DREAMSEED.

BUT THEY COULDN'T USE IT ANYWAY. THEY'RE ONLY ANIMALS!

NO, THEY AREN'T! AND THEIR MASTERS ARE CLEVER STRATEGISTS. WITH THE OLD TECHNICAL SCIENCE THE DREAMSEED COULD CREATE ITS OWN ANGELS. DARK, DESTRUCTIVE ANGELS!



WHAT WILL THE PANDORAMICUM DO?



IN ALL THE MILLENNIUMS IT WAS ONLY USED A FEW TIMES - IN THE OLD DAYS, IN THE OLD WORLD. ONCE IT TOPPLED THE WALLS OF A CITY CALLED JERICHO. AND IT IS SAID THAT THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL BLEW IT WHEN SODOM AND GOMORRAH FELL.

AND NOW GO!



BUT... I DON'T KNOW HOW I -



GO!



I SHOULD GET AWAY FROM HERE,
AWAY FROM THE SEA, AWAY FROM
THE CASTLE, AWAY FROM ALL THIS
GODDAMN MADNESS.

BUT THAT'S THE WAY WE
HEROES ARE. BRAVE.
CLEVER. STUPID.

AND CYNICAL. ESPECIALLY CYNICAL.
THEY SAY THAT HELPS.

AND HOW
IT HELPS.

HEROES!

CHOSEN ONES!

SURE!







RAVEN!
COME BACK!

PLEASE!

I DON'T WANT
TO LOSE YOU A
SECOND TIME.



DAMAE!
L!



DON'T MOURN
YOUR BROTHER,
L!

IT IS ALL SO...
HOPELESS.

YES,
MAYBE IT IS.



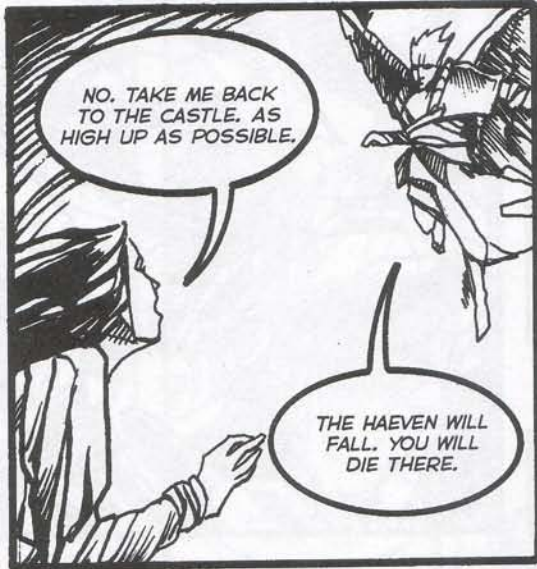
WHY DO
YOU NOT FLY IN
THE FORMATION?

I WAS CHARGED
WITH GUARDING
THE FLANKS.

NOW, CAN
YOU DO ME A
FAVOR?



I WILL NOT TAKE
YOU TO YOUR
BROTHER, L!



NO. TAKE ME BACK
TO THE CASTLE, AS
HIGH UP AS POSSIBLE.

THE HAEVEN WILL
FALL. YOU WILL
DIE THERE.



PLEASE!





MAYBE WE CAN CONQUER THE DREAMSEED AND STOP THE DOWNFALL.

YES, MAYBE...



FAREWELL, LALE, SISTER OF ANGELS.



CUMULUS!



YOU MUST HELP ME.

I AM... TIRED.



POISON!



NOT YOU AS WELL, CUMULUS!

OH PLEASE, NOT YOU AS WELL!



I DIE WITH MY MAPS, LALE. THAT'S ALL I EVER WANTED.

YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE...

DANGEROUS...



THE AB... HE... HE'S CRAZY...

ALL... DYING.

YOU COULD HAVE LIVED! DAMN, CUMULUS...



NO LIFE... WITHOUT MY MAPS...



YOU MUST GO, GO AWAY FROM HERE.

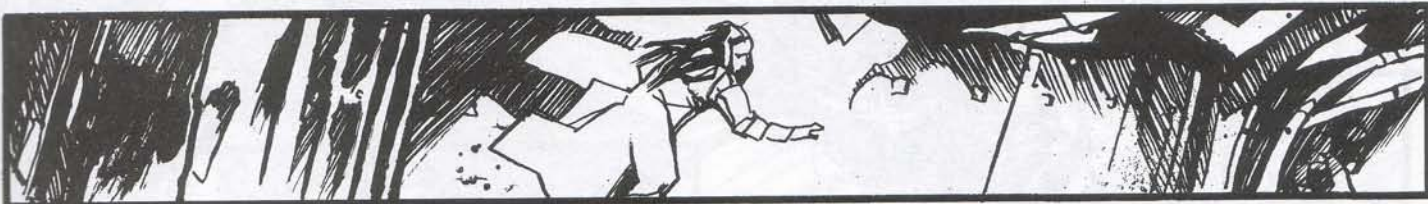


FAREWELL, CUMULUS.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY HE DID THAT. WHAT ARE MAPS TO HIM ANYWAY?

MAYBE ALL THE WORLD. ALL HE KNOWS. HIS MIND ON PAPER.

IS THAT ANSWER ENOUGH?



HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE HIM TO NOTICE ME?



I KNOW WHAT THAT IS. I HAVE SEEN AB GUNDAR USE ONE OF THEM. THAT WAS MORE THAN THREE YEARS AGO.



I DON'T THINK HE HAS EVER TRIED SINCE.

REMEMBER, LALE, YOU ARE NOW A HERO.

VERY REASSURING.



WHAT...



WHO ARE YOU?



OF COURSE, THE WANDERER SENT YOU.



DAMN FLIES.



IT MAKES NO SENSE. FOUR YEARS OF SECRETLY WATCHING THE ANGELS TRAIN WAS NOT HELPFUL AS FAR AS DIPLOMACY GOES.



ANGELS LEARN OTHER THINGS.



NO! I AM NOT ONE OF THEM.



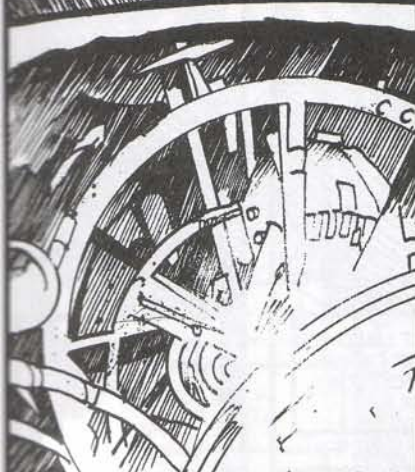
THE RAGUELITES' SECRET.
WHATEVER IT IS, IT IS
IMPRESSIVE.

AND DAMN BIG.



THERE IT IS.

COMPARED TO THE PANDORAMICUM,
ALL THE REST IS MODERN JUNK. NO
MATTER HOW MANY CENTURIES ALL
THIS HAS SEEN - THE PANDORAMICUM
IS OLDER. INCONCEIVABLY OLDER.



WHAT... ?





THAT HURT.



"LITTLE GIRLS?" I AM COQUETTING. JUST AT THE RIGHT TIME.

THE THING SWALLOWED ME. LET'S HOPE LITTLE GIRLS DO NOT AGREE WITH HIM AS WELL AS STEEL DOES.



MY GUARDIAN ANGEL - HE'S GONE.



I WONDER IF THE INFERNO IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO BURN ALL THIS DOWN HERE, TOO.



WHAT DID THE WANDERER SAY? THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL BLEW IT WHEN... WHAT? NO MATTER.



YOU GET USED TO A LOT OF THINGS. NOT TO THIS, THOUGH.



IT BURNS AND ITCHES. AND IT CAUSES STITCHES IN THE SIDE, HEAVEN KNOWS WHY.

SO THAT IS WHAT MUSTN'T FALL INTO THE DREAMSEED'S HANDS. NOTHING BUT A HEAP OF STEEL JUNK.



DARK ANGELS, THE WANDERER SAID. DREAMSEED ANGELS. AS IF THE WHOLE ANGEL CULT WASN'T ALREADY INHUMAN ENOUGH IN ITSELF.



IT IS AS IF THE AB CALLED ME.

"COME, LALE. USE THE PANDORAMICUM, AND SOON WE WILL MEET AGAIN."



THANKS FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT.



FIRELIGHT

NOT MUCH TIME LEFT.



OFF WITH IT!



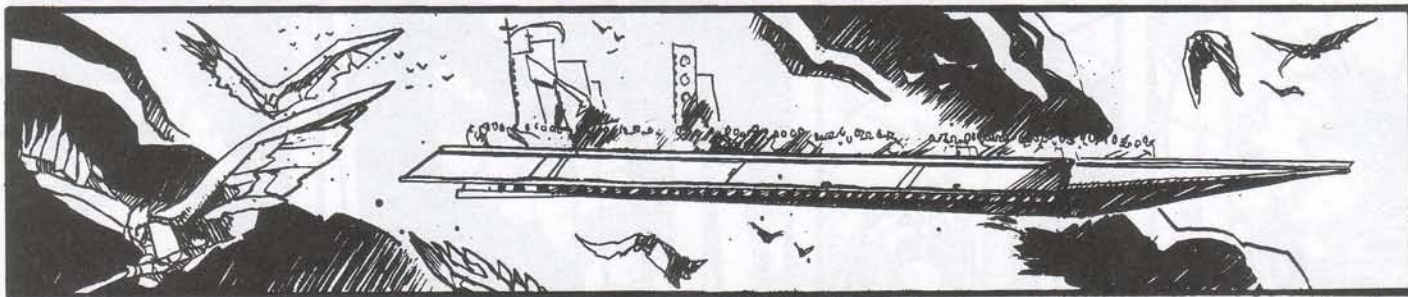
OH NO!



IT HAS BEGUN.



medita bor in mandatis tu is que dilexi





valde et levabo manus meas . . . ad mandata





tu a que di





SOON THE FIRE WILL REACH THE CASTLE.



IT HAS BECOME HOT.

WHO RULED THAT HEROES HAVE TO DIE FOR THEIR GOAL?



IT WOULD BE SO MUCH SIMPLER TO LET GO. WHO WANTS TO MAKE SUCH CHOICES?



IT IS TEMPTING.

SO EASY...



LÂLE!



IT IS TIME.
THEY'LL BE
HERE SOON.



IF THE
PANDORAMICUM
REALLY BELONGS TO
ONE OF THE
ARCHANGELS, IT IS
BLASPHEMY JUST TO
LOOK AT IT.

BUT WHO CARES?
YOU DON'T
DESTROY ONE OF
THE ANGELS'
CASTLES EVERY
DAY.



IN HELL, THEY'LL
DANCE FOR JOY WHEN I
KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

IT ALL STARTED WHEN THE
RAGUELITES' BOUNTY RIDERS
SHOWED UP IN OUR VILLAGE.
THAT WAS FOUR YEARS AGO. IF
THEY HADN'T TAKEN RAVEN AND
THE OTHERS, I WOULDN'T BE
HERE NOW.



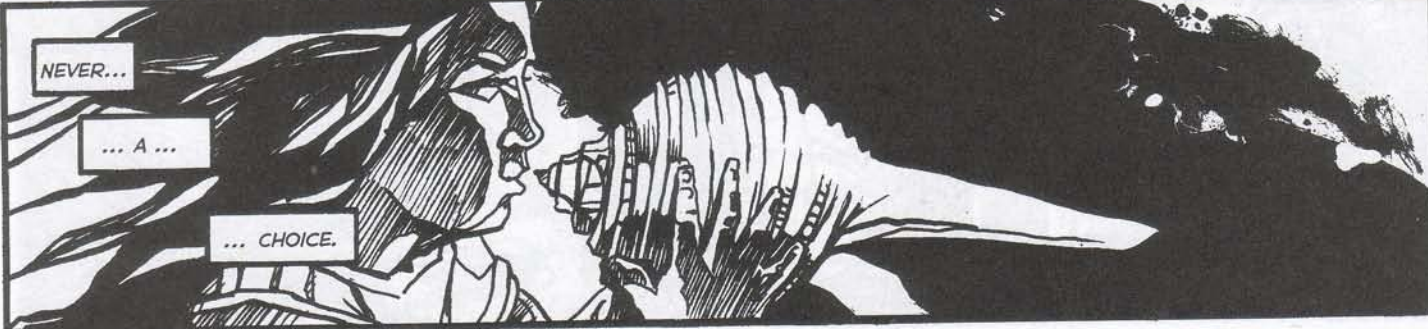
I WOULDN'T HAVE TO
MAKE SUCH DECISIONS.



THESE BASTARDS!



THEY NEVER
GAVE ME A
CHOICE.



NEVER...

... A ...

... CHOICE.



RAVEN!

RAVEN,
WATCH
OUT!

NO!





WHAT...
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

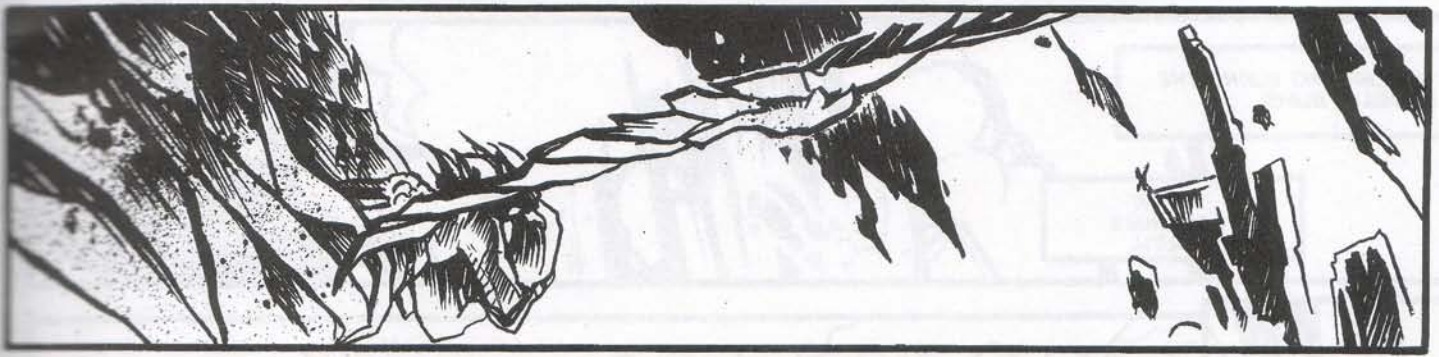




COME, LITTLE SISTER.

THE HIMMEL BURNS AROUND US.


RAVEN CALLED ME SISTER.





THE INFERNO BURNS THE HIMMEL'S RUINS.

THEN IT CONTINUES SOUTH.



THERE'S A RITUAL FOR AN ANGEL'S FUNERAL.

A CERTAIN WAY OF SPREADING THE WINGS.

IT'S IMPORTANT, SO THAT THEIR SOULS CAN SOAR ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

RAVEN LOOKS DOWN UPON ME FROM UP THERE NOW.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT.

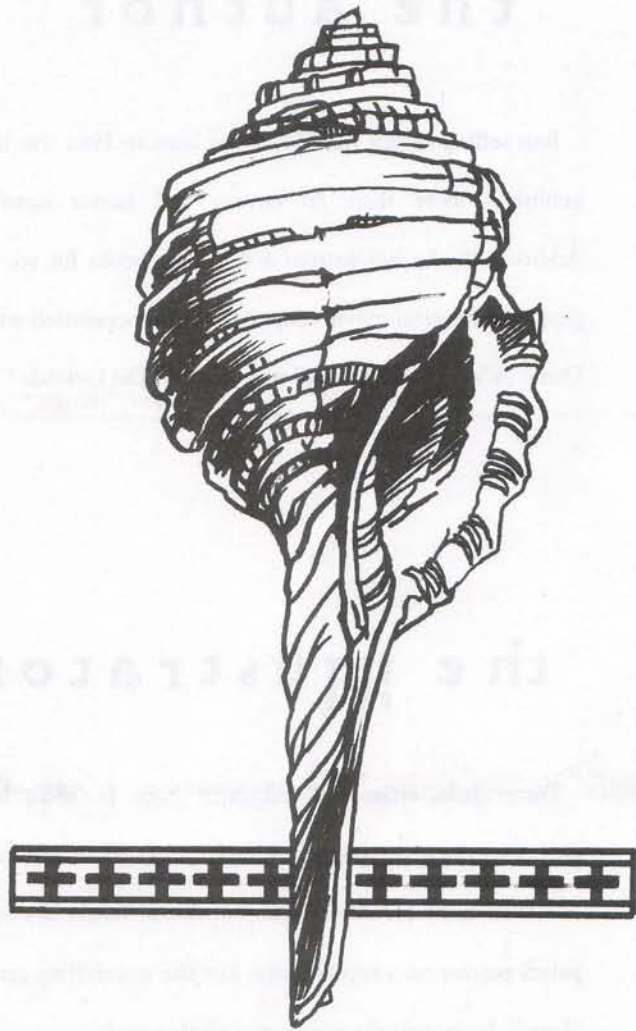


THE SKELETON MUST BE ANCIENT. THE WANDERER'S TRACKS HAVE WASHED IT FROM THE STONE.

IT MUST HAVE RESTED DOWN THERE SINCE THE WORLD WAS VERY YOUNG.

WHEN REAL ANGELS DOMINATED THE SKIES.





the author

Best selling author Kai Meyer was born in 1969. He has published more than 30 fantasy and horror novels. Additionally, he has written a series of books for young people and several movie scripts. His first cooperation with Dieter Judd was an illustrated novel called "Das Gelubde."

the illustrator

Dieter Judd, artist and illustrator, born in 1963, has published three graphic novels before this. He works as a freelance artist for several publishers and magazines and paints posters on a regular basis. For the storytelling game "Engel", he created the visuals of a whole world.

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deus ibi est



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