

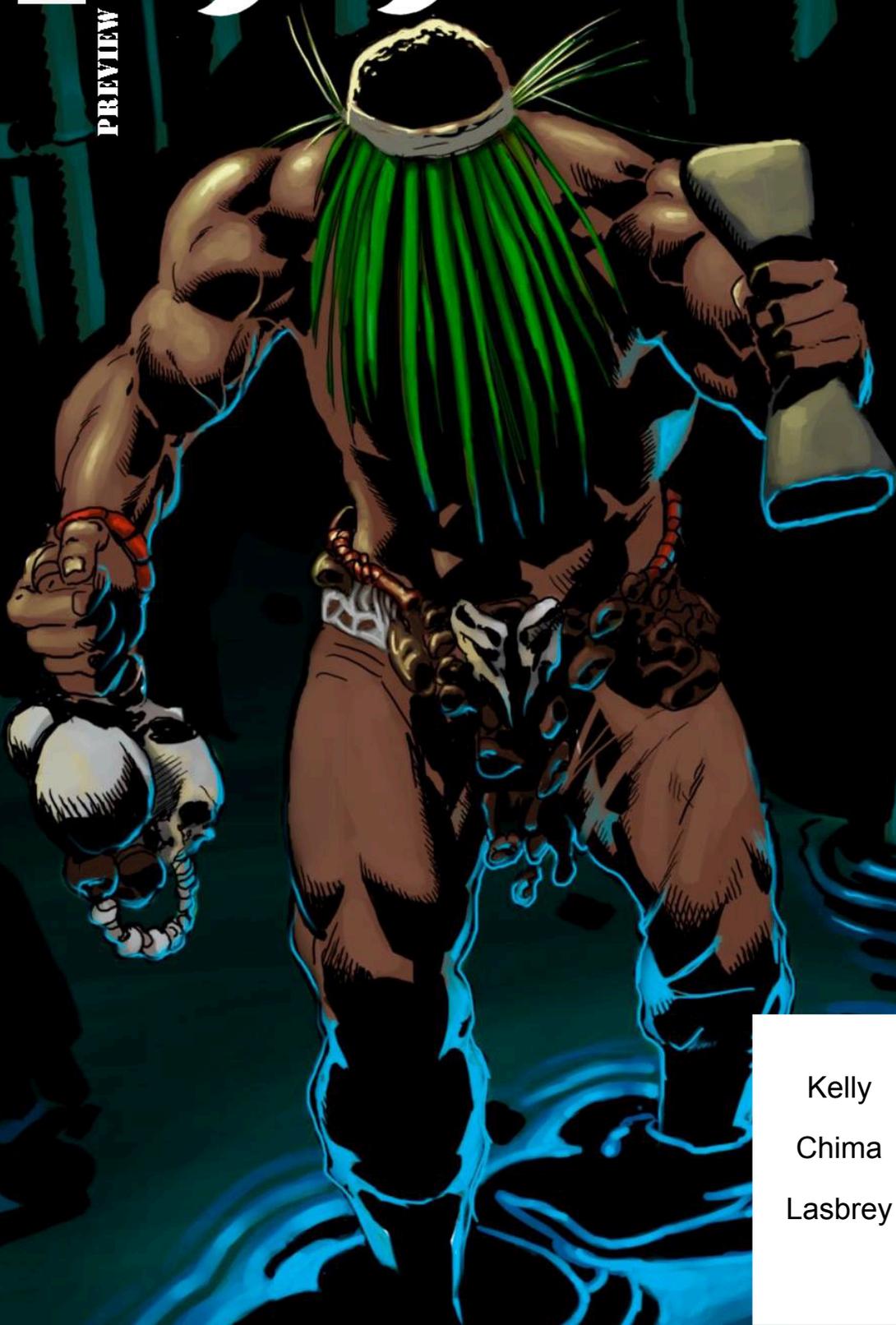


JUMAN

:THE NOIR CHRONICLES

P

PREVIEW COPY



Kelly
Chima
Lasbrey

Hide and Seek

Gather at the temple
Baron Samedi summons in
mysteria
Things will not be simple
When you are caught by
Dibia

Hear, listen closely ...
As you move to the beat
Presence of Agbara and
Alusi,
Talk to us in the temple on
the side of the street

Do you doubt the
blackness of the night?
Have you never heard
voices out of sight?

Let me take you to an
empty space
Enter the mind of entity
But i must warn it is a dark
place
An intruders's black serenity

See me in the dark
Eyes with a cutting glow
Be prepared to face the
black,
And a blood that is still to
flow

Realism to a point where
it's altered
A dark change of all that is
centered

Learn to look within
The spirit is parted now
We can decide goodness
from sin,
And cure the illness
somehow

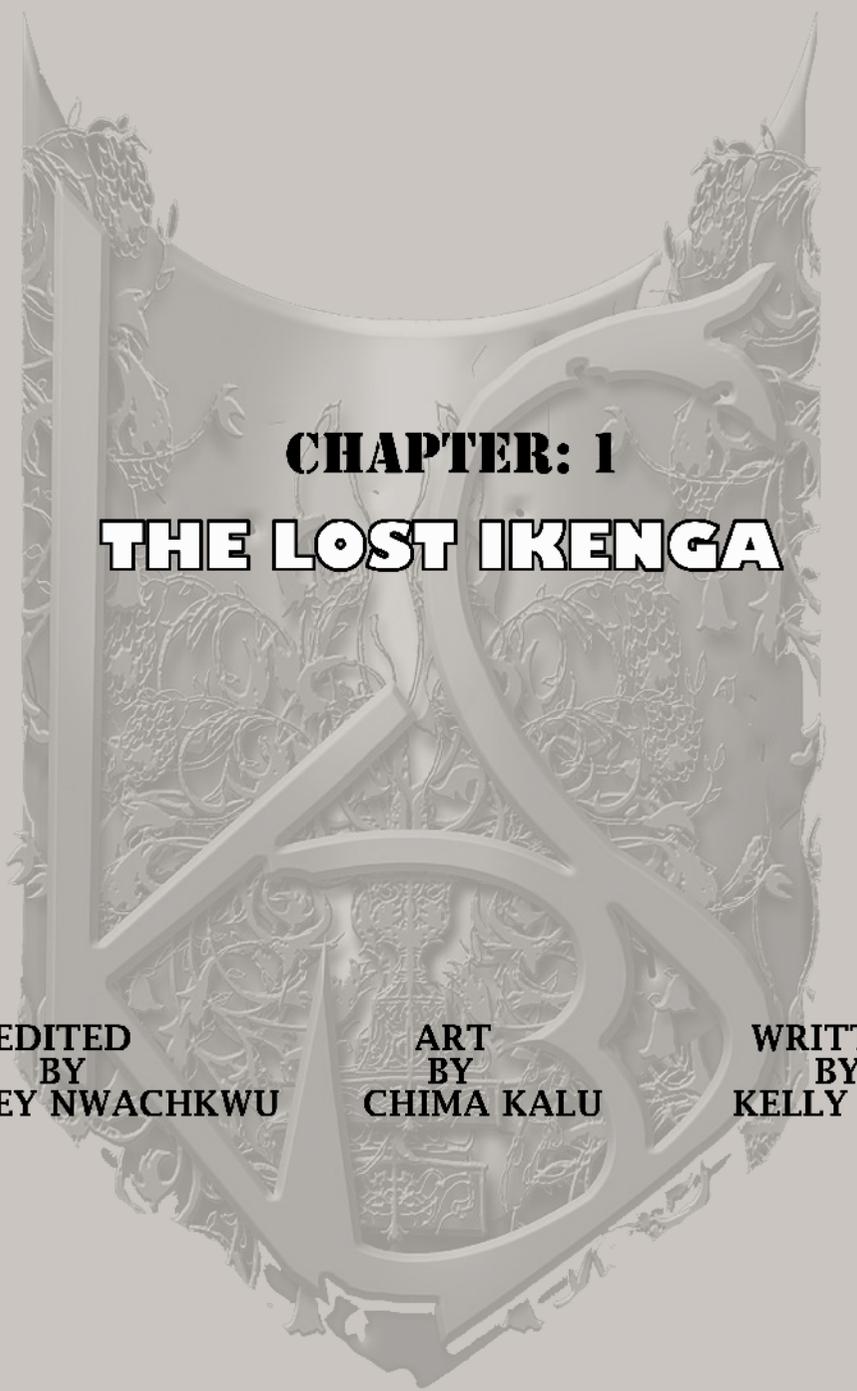
The dolls tell no lies
To believe all there is now
is civil,
Is to play Hide and Seek with
the Devil
Deny not what you see with
your eyes

Dance and hop with me
I can see what you do not
wish for me to see

My body a vessel
Wherein wisdom and
knowledge rest
Shh, let the spirits settle
To mettle of man this is
a test

Here you name your
nemesis,
Let me help...
I will work in exchange for
your innocence,
Of your soul let me help
you strip
Hear, hear voices
speak ...
Just like a black game of
Hide and Seek.

BY MAHMOUD MOKHTAR TARBA
LIBYA



CHAPTER: 1
THE LOST IKENGA

**EDITED
BY
LASBREY NWACHKWU**

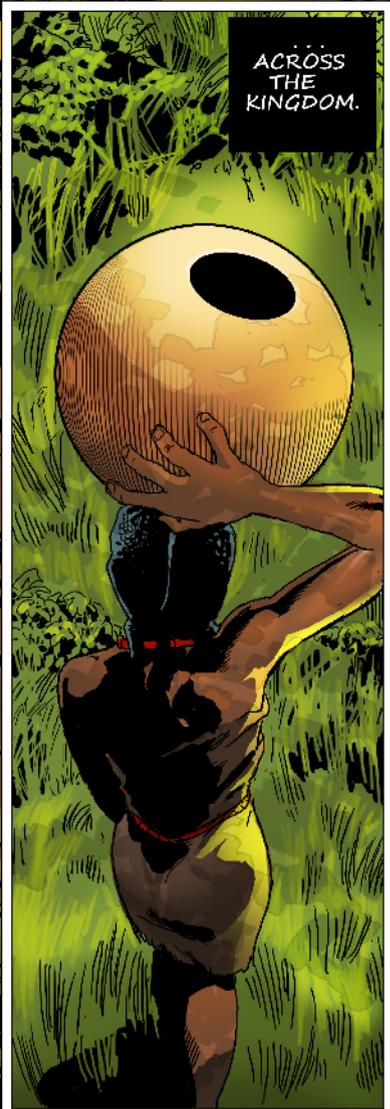
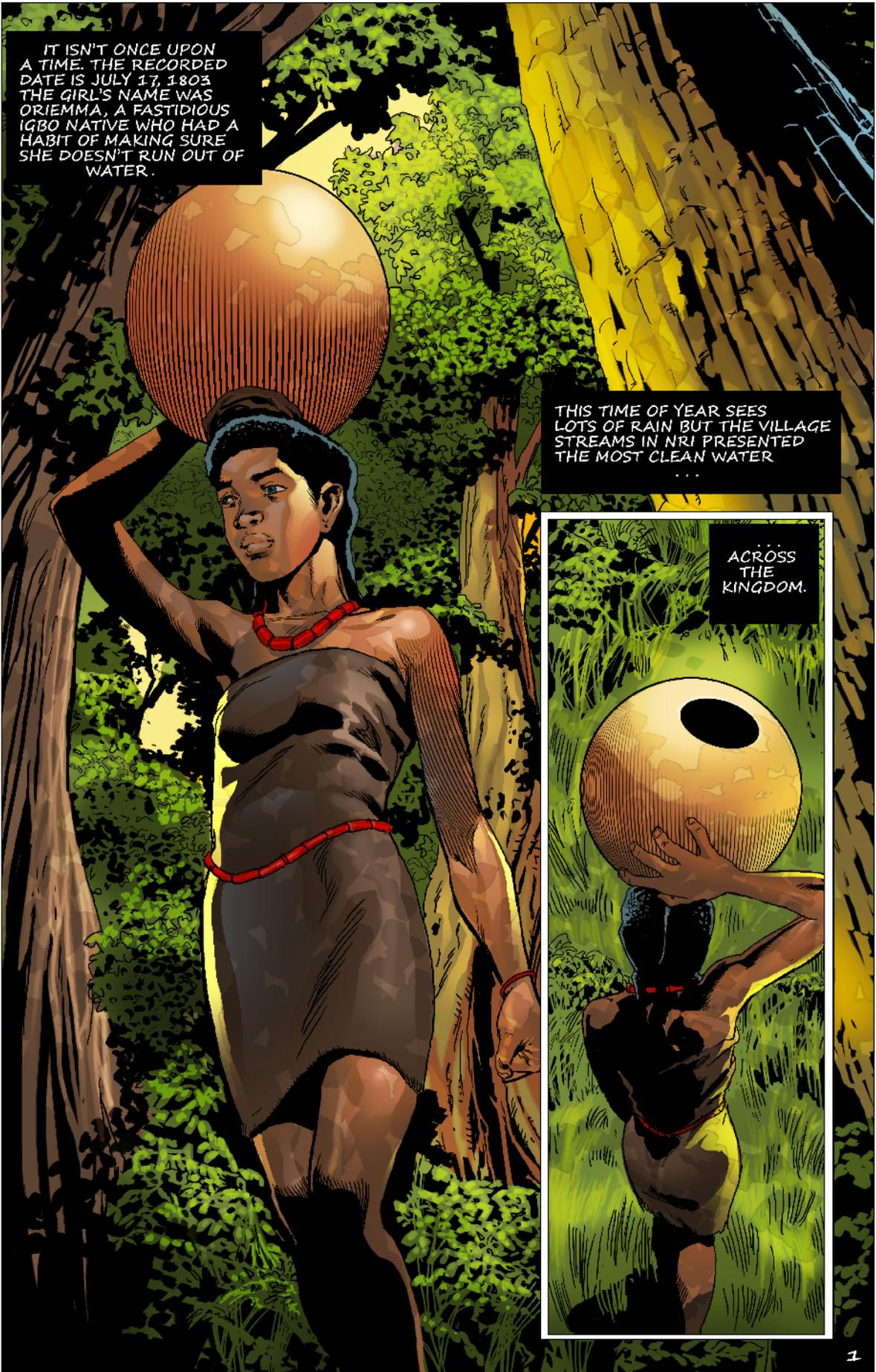
**ART
BY
CHIMA KALU**

**WRITTEN
BY
KELLY KALU**

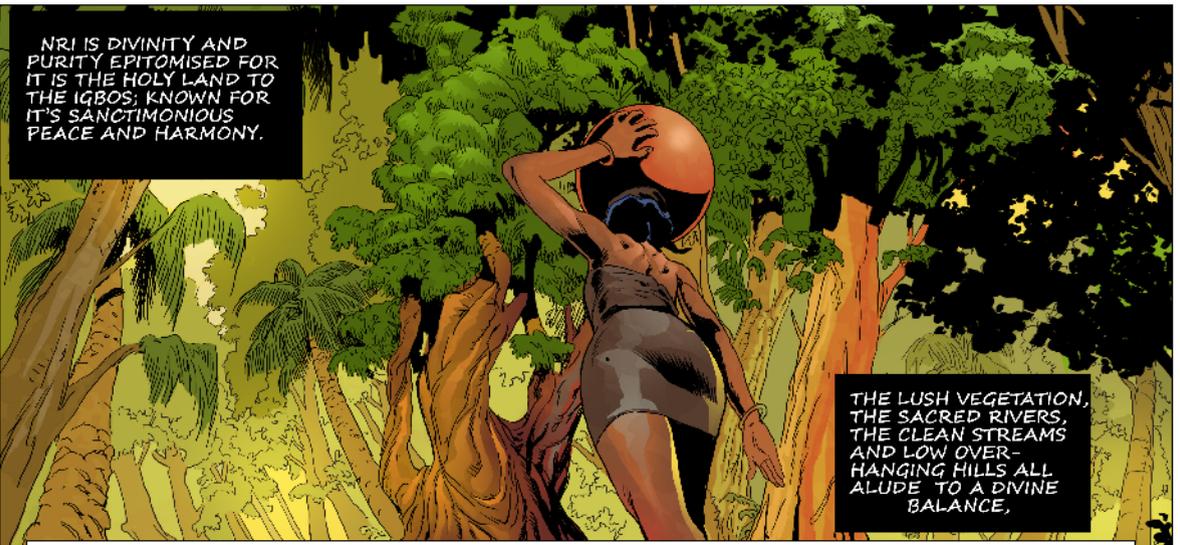
IT ISN'T ONCE UPON A TIME. THE RECORDED DATE IS JULY 17, 1803. THE GIRL'S NAME WAS ORIEMMA, A FASTIDIOUS IGBO NATIVE WHO HAD A HABIT OF MAKING SURE SHE DOESN'T RUN OUT OF WATER.

THIS TIME OF YEAR SEES LOTS OF RAIN BUT THE VILLAGE STREAMS IN NRI PRESENTED THE MOST CLEAN WATER

ACROSS THE KINGDOM.



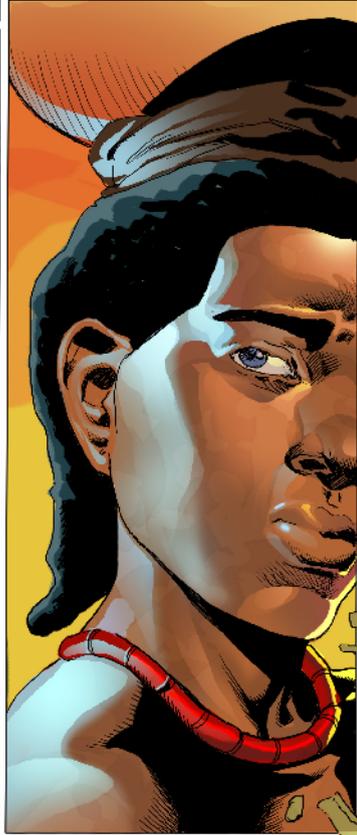
NRI IS DIVINITY AND PURITY EPITOMISED FOR IT IS THE HOLY LAND TO THE IGBOS; KNOWN FOR IT'S SANCTIMONIOUS PEACE AND HARMONY.



THE LUSH VEGETATION, THE SACRED RIVERS, THE CLEAN STREAMS AND LOW OVER-HANGING HILLS ALL ALUDE TO A DIVINE BALANCE,



SO TUMULT WAS NEVER ALWAYS AN OSTENSIBLE OCCURENCE.



THEREFORE IT IS UNCANNY FOR A LIGHTNING BOLT TO CROSS A YOUNG GIRL'S PATH.



"BOLTS FROM THE BLUE" ARE INFREQUENT BUT THEY COULD STRIKE AT ANY TIME AND AT WHATEVER THEY CHOSE.



WHEN THEY DO BUILD REPEATEDLY INTO A FRENZY AT A PARTICULAR SPOT...



WITH A LITTLE GIRL CUDDLED UP IN FRIGHT.



LEGENDS HAVE IT THAT EITHER THE GODS ARE AT WAR OR HAVE CHOSEN THE ONE

WHOM SO MUCH ATTENTION IS BESTOWED UPON.



AMADIOHA, THE THUNDER
GOD REVERED ACROSS ALL
IGBOLAND BY THE
DESCENDANTS OF ERI ;
HUSBAND TO ALA, THE
EARTH GODDESS WHO
SHELTERS THE ANCESTORS
IN HER BOSSOM AND MAKES
THE LAND FERTILE; BROTHER
TO ANYANWU THE SUN GOD
WHO GIVES LIGHT TO ALL
AND TO ODIESHI, AN UNRULY
WAR GOD OF JUJU WHO MUST
SEEK AN END TO ALL MEANS.



ODIESHI,
STAND DOWN
AND DO
REVERENCE!

WHERE
THE WINE VISITS,
THERE IT SHALL
STAY.

THE DEAF NEED
NOT BE TOLD WHAT
WAR BREWS
AMONGST THESE
GODS.



THE BALANCE
ACHIEVED BY
NATURE CAN BE
UNPREPARED
FOR AN
UNPRECEDENTED
UPHEAVAL.



MORTALS
DO NOT
HAVE ALL
THE
ANSWERS.



PREPARING
COCOYAM FOR
PLANTING DOES
NOT MEAN THEY
ARE ALREADY
PLANTED.



YOU
INTERFERE
DIRECTLY
WITH THE
AFFAIRS...



... OF
MEN, THAT
CANNOT BE
ALLOWED

BECAUSE
AS SOON AS YOU
SHAKE HANDS
WITH A LEPER
HE WANT'S AN
EMBRACE!

IT IS
THE IKENGA
THAT I
WANT!



WHEN CHUKWU
CREATED ERI, HE
GAVE HIM THE
CUSTODY OF IKENGA
AND CALLED IT
THE RIGHT
HAND

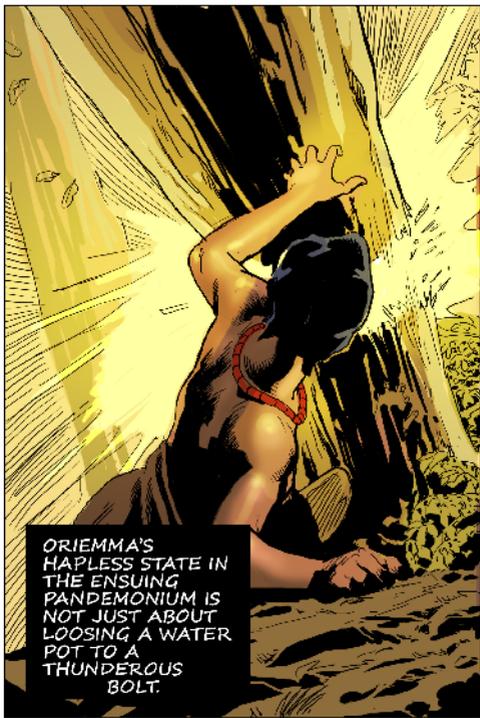
MEN ARE
UNWORTHY TO
HANDLE IT ON
THEIR OWN.

YET ANOTHER
BOLT OF FURY
DESCEND.

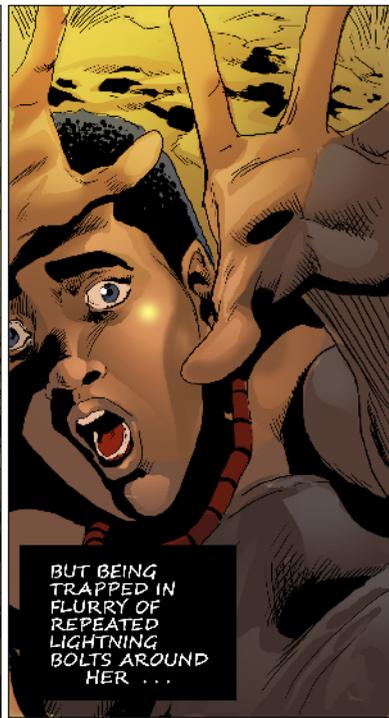


NNA OCHIE
!!

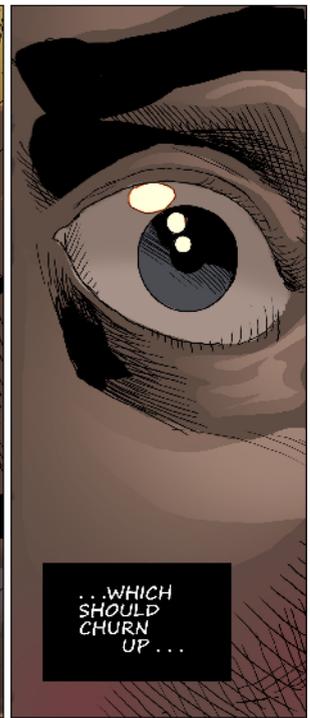
NNA OCHIE, THE
HIGH FATHER
IS AN EMISSARY
OF CHUKWU OKIKE,
THE ALMIGHTY
CREATOR.



ORIEEMMA'S HAPLESS STATE IN THE ENSUING PANDEMONIUM IS NOT JUST ABOUT LOOSING A WATER POT TO A THUNDEROUS BOLT.



BUT BEING TRAPPED IN FLURRY OF REPEATED LIGHTNING BOLTS AROUND HER ...



... WHICH SHOULD CHURN UP ...



AN APPRECIABLE HEAT ENOUGH TO CHAR HER ULI* OILED SKIN.

BUT THEY DO NOT.

*ULI IS A KIND OF LOTION OILMENT.



HEAR ME, YE GODS! RANCOR DO NOT BEGET A HAPPY ENDING.

ENVY IS DEVASTATING.

JUMAN





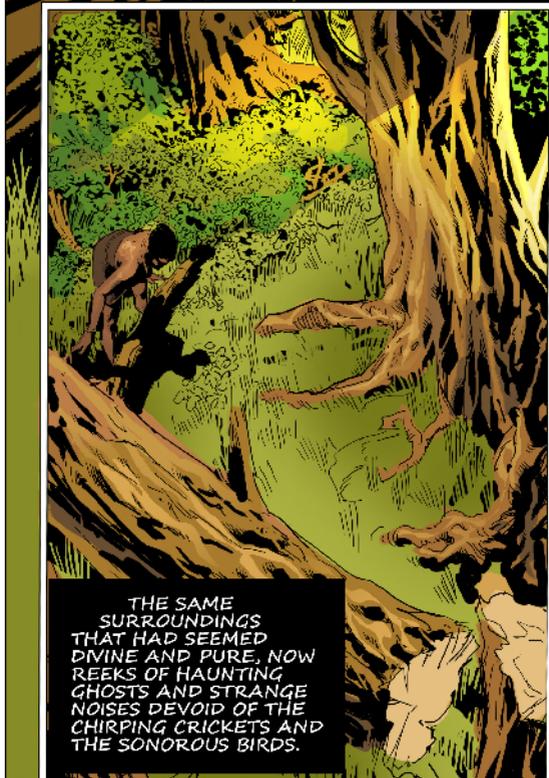
THE IKENGA OF ERI WILL CEASE TO BE IN NRI. WITH SPACE AND TIME IT GOES IS NOW THE DESTINY OF HIS CHILDREN!



CALM.



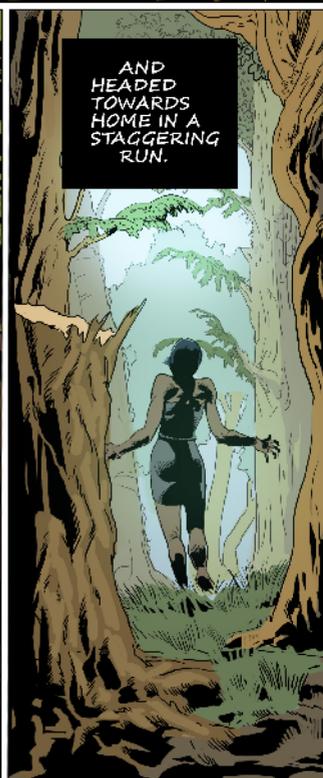
AS SUDDEN AS THE EERIE PHENOMENON CEASED DID ORIEMMA REMEMBERED SHE WAS IN A BUSH PATH ALL ALONE.



THE SAME SURROUNDINGS THAT HAD SEEMED DIVINE AND PURE, NOW REEKS OF HAUNTING GHOSTS AND STRANGE NOISES DEVOID OF THE CHIRPING CRICKETS AND THE SONOROUS BIRDS.



A FRIGHTENED GIRL WHO IS YET TO COMPREHEND FULLY THE ENIGMATIC HAPPENING, HURRIEDLY SCURRIED TO HER FEET.



AND HEADED TOWARDS HOME IN A STAGGERING RUN.



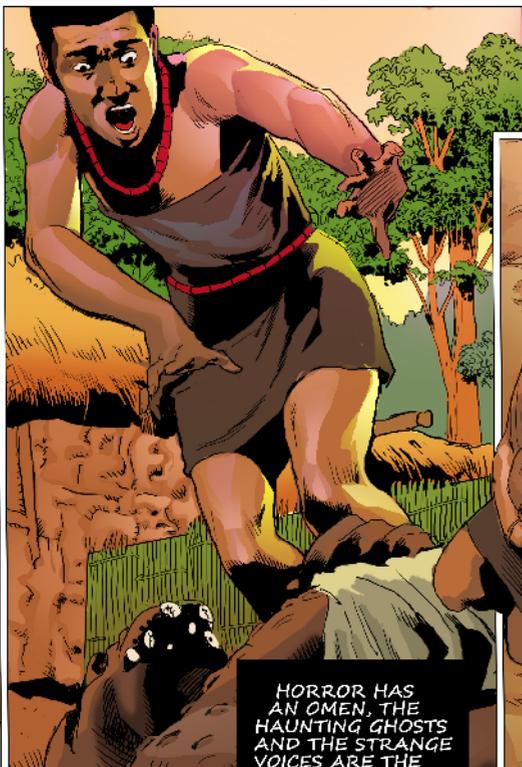
NNA ANYI!*
ARE YOU THERE,
FATHER?



NO
RESPONSE.
HE MUST BE IN
HIS OBI*.



NNA ANYI!
IS THAT YOU
ON THE
GROUND?



HORROR HAS
AN OMEN, THE
HAUNTING GHOSTS
AND THE STRANGE
VOICES ARE THE
OMEN.



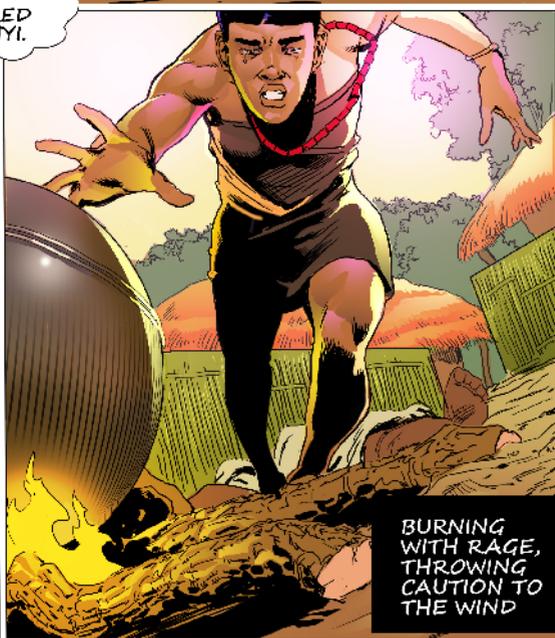
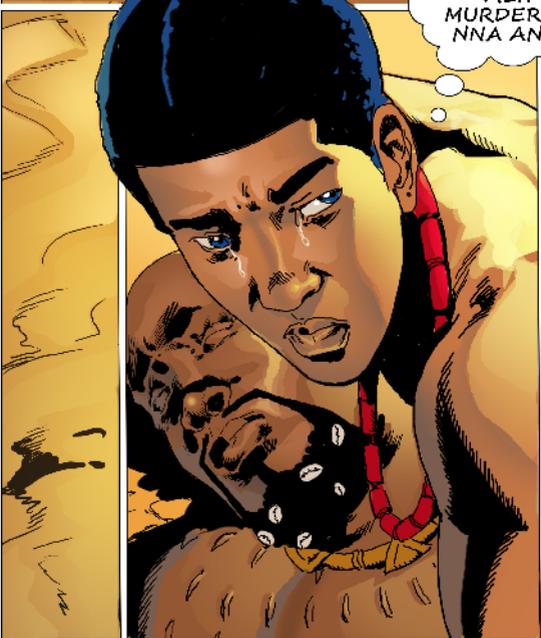
DEATH
HAS NO
RESPONSE
TO THE
LIVING.

*OBI IS THE CUSTOMARY SOLITARY HUT DEDICATED TO ONLY THE PATRIARCH OF THE HOUSEHOLD IN THE COMPOUND CONSISTING OF OTHER LITTLE HUTS FOR THE FAMILY MEMBERS.
*NNA ANYI IS OUR FATHER.

RACING HEART BEAT, A CONFUSION OF GRIEF AND HORROR, THESE ARE THE DREADED SLAVE HUNTERS FROM ACROSS THE SEA. . .



THESE MEN MURDERED NNA ANYI.



BURNING WITH RAGE, THROWING CAUTION TO THE WIND



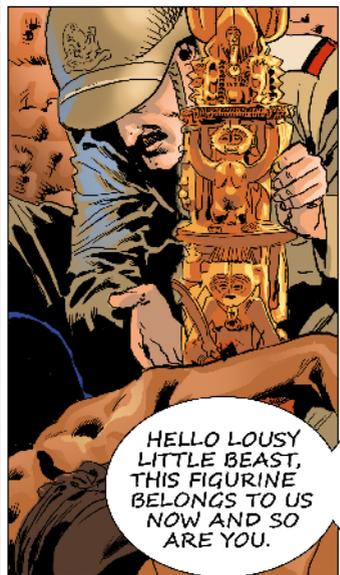
ORIEMMA SPRANG FORWARD, PROPELLED BY A VENGEANCE CLINCHED IN A TENSED NERVOUS GRIP.





THEY WERE WORSE
THAN SHE THOUGHT.
THESE WERE RELICS
AND TREASURE
HUNTERS TOO.

HER FATHER'S DEATH
BECAME CLEARER. HE
WAS NOT GOING TO
ALLOW THEM CART
AWAY THE IKENGA
WHICH HAD BEEN IN
THE CUSTODY OF HIS
FOREBEARS.



HELLO LOUSY
LITTLE BEAST,
THIS FIGURINE
BELONGS TO US
NOW AND SO
ARE YOU.



COUNT YOUR
LUCK WE'RE NOT
GONNA KILL YOU
LIKE WE DID YOUR
OLD MAN...

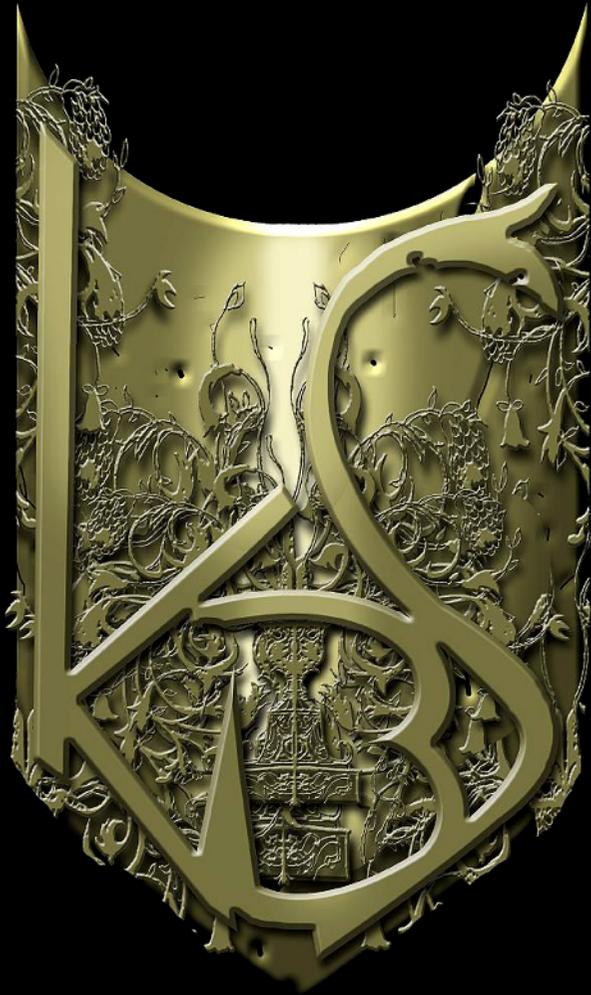


... WE
HAVE
ANOTHER
USE FOR
YOU.



HE WHO EATS PALM
KERNEL IN THE
MORNING UNDERSTANDS
THE LANGUAGE OF THE
FEMINE. THE IKENGA OF
ERI WILL CHOOSE IT'S
OWN PATH.





KAS
COMICS