

CONAN #9

script for 22 pages

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based on the work of conan creator

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lettering key:

underlined bold lettering
italic.....italic lettering
capitalized..... display lettering
(BL)oversized lettering
(sl) undersized lettering
FX..... sound effect
(th) thought balloon
(wh)..... whispered balloon
(SB) splash/burst balloon

Anything else will be specifically requested in the script itself. Thanks.

PAGE ONE - 2 PANELS

[1] BIG PANEL. IN THE HYRKANIAN STEPPES SOMEWHERE, IN A SHALLOW, ROCKY PLAIN, THE **BONE WOMAN**, GNARLED, SHORT AND SO ANCIENT IT'S NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO TELL WHAT RACE SHE IS, SITS HUNCHED BY A ROARING FIRE OF DRY WOOD. SHE WEARS A DIRTY CLOTH WRAPPED AROUND HER HIPS, AND A NECKLACE OF BONES WIDE ENOUGH TO COVER HER CHEST, HIDING HER WITHERED BREASTS. SHE HAS A FEW WISPS OF HAIR LEFT. MORE, SMALLER BONES DANGLES FROM BRACELETS AROUND HER WRISTS. BUT SHE'S NOT THE MAIN FOCAL POINT HERE, THE FIRE IS, ROARING UP IN THE DARK AND WINDY NIGHT. AND IN THE FLICKERING FLAMES OF THE FIRE, WE SEE A BIG CLOSE-UP OF **CONAN'S** FACE.

1 Caption: The woman hunched over the hissing, crackling fire like an ancient, gnarled willow blown into grotesque shape by decades of unceasing wind.

2 Caption: If she felt the bitter cold, there on the exposed Hyrkanian plain, she showed no sign of it.

3 Caption: Her withered hands cast noxious powders into the guttering flames, her lips hissed words unknown to man for a dozen lifetimes and more --

4 Caption: -- and her eyes fastened, glittering and greedy, on the images that formed in the flame before her.

5 Caption: Her name, even her race, were lost to antiquity. Those who spoke of her merely called her the Bone Woman.

6 Caption: And when they did speak of her, it was with unease and fear.

[2] CLOSE ON THE **BONE WOMAN**, HER EYES HALF-LIDDED, IN A DREAMY TRANCE. OUR FIRST GOOD LOOK AT HER -- SHE LOOKS A LOT LIKE A SOUR-TEMPERED TURTLE.

7 Bone Woman: Conan...

PAGE TWO - 5 PANELS

THE TOP THREE PANELS ARE FLAME-EDGE IMAGES, FLASHBACKS SEEN IN THE FLAMES, MAYBE SEGUEING DOWN INTO THE BONFIRE SEEN IN PANEL 4.

- [1] FLAME-IMAGE - **CONAN** WALKING IN THE BRYTHUNIAN HILLS, HEADING WEST. MUCH LIKE WHAT WE LAST SAW OF HIM IN #7.
- 1 Bone Woman: So far from your dark-hilled home, young Cimmerian, and yet still you forge onward, driven by needs you scarcely comprehend.
- 2 Bone Woman: Your eyes ever on the horizon, your spirit refusing to be confined to any borders. The world before you.
- [2] FLAME-IMAGE - LOOKING AT THE SCENE FROM ABOVE, AT **CONAN** LOOKING UP, DRAWING HIS SWORD, AS SEVERAL ARMED **BRIGANDS** DROP FROM THE TREES AROUND HIM
- 3 Bone Woman: Striving against its dangers -- to prove yourself, to make your heart quicken and your blood sing --
- 4 Bone Woman: -- and to drink deeply of the world's pleasures.
- [3] FLAME-IMAGE - IN A RURAL TAVERN SOMEWHERE, **CONAN** IS HOLDING A HAUNCH OF BEEF TO HIM, HOLDING OFF THE **INNKEEPER** AT KNIFEPOINT, CLEARLY STEALING THE FOOD. HE LOOKS FERAL AND HUNGRY.
- 5 Bone Woman: Doing whatever you must to survive --
- 6 Bone Woman: -- the fire within you unquenchable, ever reaching for more -- more --
- [4] FULL TIER, MAYBE THE BASE OF THE MONTAGE OF SCENES ABOVE. ON THE **BONE WOMAN** WATCHING THE FIRE -- THE IMAGE SHE SEES IN THIS PANEL IS OF **CONAN** SLEEPING IN THE FOREST, WRAPPED IN HIS CLOAK.
- 7 Bone Woman: You are a young man of strong destiny, Cimmerian. For good or ill, it is within you to shake the world.
- 8 Bone Woman: But others there are who also walk with heavy tread, and cast broad and lengthy shadows.
- [5] THE **BONE WOMAN** SMILES. NOT A NICE SMILE. SLY, CALCULATING, ANTICIPATORY.
- 9 Bone Woman: Your path and that of another draw close.
- 10 Bone Woman: It will prove interesting to see what comes, should those paths cross.
- 11 Bone Woman: Yes, interesting indeed...

PAGE THREE - 1 PANEL

[1] SPLASH PAGE. IN A RINKY-DINK TAVERN IN A SMALL CITY OR LARGE TOWN NEAR NUMALIA, NEMEDIA, **TWO NEMEDIAN TOUGHS** ARE ROUGHING UP A **SHORT, SCRAWNY MERCHANT**. ONE HOLDS HIM UPSIDE DOWN BY ONE LEG, SHAKING HIM AS THE OTHER PICKS UP THE MERCHANT'S DRAWSTRING PURSE FROM WHERE IT FELL. OTHER **PATRONS** IN THE BAR AND THE **TAVERNER WATCH**, IMMOBILE, NOT WANTING TO GET INVOLVED. THERE ARE BOOTHS AGAINST THE WALL, SHADOWY, AND AT LEAST ONE OPEN WINDOW OUT INTO THE STREET OUTSIDE. IT'S SMOKY AND HAZY IN THE BAR, AND IT'S MIDNIGHT, OR THEREABOUTS.

NOTE: AMONG THE PATRONS OF THE BAR ARE A COUPLE OF **TROLLOPS**, **AZTRIAS PETANIUS**, THE FOPPISH, DISSOLUTE NEPHEW OF THE NUMALIAN GOVERNOR (FROM THE UPCOMING *THE GOD IN THE BOWL*), A COUPLE OF ALMOST-AS-DISSOLUTE **FRIENDS** OF HIS, **CONAN**, AND **JANISSA**. BUT WE'LL SEE THEM OVER TIME -- CONAN AND JANISSA, IN PARTICULAR, SHOULDN'T BE SEEN YET.

1 Title: **TWO NEMEDIANS WALK INTO A BAR**

2 Caption (nc): "Green to civilization, and entirely lawless by nature, Conan the Cimmerian entered the southern Hyborian lands in the reaches of Brythunia.

"Ere long, however, he found his way to the larger towns of Nemedica, where he made a rough living as a thief..."

-- The Nemedian Chronicles

3 Tough #1 (SB): HA HA HA!

4 Tough #2: Gentle now, Viartus! You wouldn't want to break the little fellow!

5 Merchant (ragged): Please -- please, no --

PAGE FOUR - 5 PANELS

- [1] FULL TIER. THE **SECOND TOUGH** WEIGHS THE PURSE, LOOKING PHONY-COMMISERATINGLY AT THE **MERCHANT**. THE **FIRST TOUGH**, MORE THUGGISH, DUMBER, SNARLS AT THE MERCHANT --
- 1 Tough #2: Your purse is light, merchant -- business not as good as you hoped, eh?
- 2 Tough #1: Still, it'll be enough for us -- and you can praise Bel and Mitra that you escaped with your life!
- [2] -- AND DROPS HIM, TAKING THE PURSE FROM THE OTHER AND HOLDING IT UP, CALLING TO THE BARTENDER.
- 3 Tough #1 (loud): Ho, taverner! Ale and wine!
- 4 Tough #1 (loud): And let travelers beware when they brave the lower quarters -- for they risk the blades of the bold thieves of Bertinus!
- [3] FROM THE SHADOWS OF ONE OF THE BOOTHS, **CONAN**, NOT SEEN CLEARLY, SNORTS DERISIVELY.
- 5 Conan: Hnh.
- 6 Caption: The voice from the shadows was rough, cold and harsh. Even in a single grunt, it held the ring of the barbaric north --
- [4] THE **THIEVES** TURN TOWARD THIS NEW ELEMENT, ANNOYED.
- 7 Caption: -- and a crude amusement at all it beheld.
- 8 Tough #2: Oh, and does one of the louse-ridden drunkards in this hole have something to say? You don't like my friend and me?
- 9 Conan: No, no --
- [5] FULL TIER. ON **CONAN**, RELAXED, JUST HAVING TAKEN A GULP FROM HIS TANKARD, LOOKING OUT FROM SHADOWED EYES, LOWERED BROWS. HE LOOKS CASUAL, RELAXED, BUT DANGEROUS. THERE'S A BURLAP SACK AT HIS FEET. THERE'S A CLOAK AROUND HIS SHOULDERS, BUT OTHER THAN THAT, HE'S IN A LOINCLOTH AND HIGH-STRAPPED SANDALS, HIS SWORD SHEATHED AT HIS BELT.
- 10 Conan: -- I always enjoy seeing a pair of pups down a chicken and declare themselves mighty forest wolves.
- 11 Conan: I know little of your ways, town-dweller, but what you just did -- Ymir, do you really think that bold?

PAGE FIVE - 5 PANELS

- [1] THE **THIEVES** ARE COCKY, SPOILING FOR A FIGHT.
1 Tough #1: Strong words from the shadows, stranger.
2 Tough #1: Dare you say it again, to our faces?
3 Conan: Dare?
- [2] **CONAN** STANDS, TOWERING OVER THEM, TAKING OFF THE CLOAK. THE **SECOND TOUGH** IS SMART ENOUGH TO BE WORRIED, BUT THE **FIRST** ISN'T.
4 Conan: Is this what you wanted, pup?
5 Tough #2: Uh...
- [3] **TOUGH #1** ATTACKS, STRIDING TOWARD **CONAN** WITH A KNIFE.
6 Tough #1: Fah. So you're a big ugly dullard who thinks he's strong, eh?
7 Tough #1: I'll break you down to size, make you wish you'd never left your miserable homeland, wherever it --
- [4] CLOSE ON THE ACTION AS **CONAN** GRABS HIM BY THROAT WITH ONE POWERFUL HAND, AND THE **TOUGH'S** EYES GO WIDE.
8 Tough #1 (SB): -- hlkk!
- [5] FULL TIER. HOLDING HIM BY NECK AND THIGH, **CONAN** HEFTS HIM OVERHEAD --
9 Conan: I am Conan, pup. A Cimmerian.
10 Conan: Remember that. For should you be unfortunate enough to meet another --

PAGE SIX - 4 PANELS

[1] FULL TIER. -- AND THROWS HIM INTO THE OTHER.

- 1 Conan: -- he might not be so peaceable!
2 Tough #1 (SB): Huhh!
3 Tough #2 (SB): > nff! <

[2] **CONAN GRABS HIS TANKARD, AND SQUATS DOWN TO TALK TO THE TWO THIEVES, SPRAWLED IN A TANGLE. HE SEEMS LIGHT, AMIABLE.**

- 4 Conan: You see?
5 Conan: You city-dwellers are soft and weak, and don't know how to fight. The bold thieves of Bertinus?
6 Conan: You don't even know what it means to be bold.

[3] **THE THIEVES HOLD THEIR HEADS AND MOAN AS CONAN CHATS WITH THEM. THIS MIGHT BE A HIGH SHOT, LOOKING DOWN, SO WE CAN SEE THE MERCHANT, REACHING IN WITH TREMBLING HAND TO GRAB HIS PURSE FROM WHERE IT WAS DROPPED.**

- 7 Tough #2: A-and you do..?

[4] FULL TIER. **CONAN SITS BACK IN HIS BOOTH, AND GESTURES WITH HIS TANKARD AS HE STARTS TO TELL A STORY.**

- 8 Conan: I might know a little something about it.
9 Conan: Sit there and nurse your bruises while I tell you a tale --
10 Conan: -- and then judge for yourself.

PAGE SEVEN - 3 PANELS

[1] FLASHBACK BEGINS. BIG PANEL, AT LEAST HALF THE PAGE. AN ESTABLISHING SHOT OF THE SQUARE JUST INSIDE THE NORTHEAST GATE OF THE CITY WALL, WITH **PEOPLE** GOING THIS WAY AND THAT, **MERCHANTS** HAWKING WARES, AT LEAST ONE **WOMAN** POURING SLOPS OUT A SECOND STORY WINDOW INTO THE MUDDY STREET BELOW, **GUARDS** AT THE GATES, MORE. AMONG THE GROUP OF PEOPLE IS **CONAN**, JUST MOMENTS EARLIER HAVING ENTERED, LOOKING AROUND LIKE A TOURIST -- SPECIFICALLY, HE'S LOOKING UP, GRINNING BROADLY, AT A LARGE SECOND-STORY WINDOW WHERE A COUPLE OF GAUZILY-DRESSED **WHORES** ARE BECKONING HIM, TRYING TO LURE HIM INTO THE WHOREHOUSE. PAST ALL THIS, WE SEE A CHARIOT APPROACHING, COMING THROUGH THE GATES AT SOME SPEED, HOLDING A **FAT MAN**, A **CHARIOTEER** AND TWO **ARMED GUARDS**.

THE FOCUS SHOULDN'T BE ON ANY ONE PART OF THIS, BUT ON ESTABLISHING THE SCENE, THE SETTING, THE CITY -- CONAN HASN'T REALLY SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE. IT'D BE VERY NICE, THOUGH, IF THAT THIRD CAPTION COULD BE NEAR CONAN'S HEAD, TO DIRECT US TO HIM, AND IF THE CHARIOTEER'S SHOULD COULD BE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PANEL. DAYTIME.

1 Caption (cq): "I arrived in this town you're so proud of this morning, coming in through the northeast gate.

2 Caption (cq): "I may never understand why you love to wall yourself away from the world in dirty, smelly warrens, filth lying open in the streets.

3 Caption (cq): "Still, there are a few things to recommend you, and as I was admiring the sights..."

4 Charioteer (SB): Way! Make way!

Note: Conan's captions (cq) look like the overvoice we've seen from him before. Thanks.

[2] FULL TIER. ON **CONAN'S FACE**, AS HE'S SPLATTERED WITH MUD (AND SHIT AND URINE, FOR THAT MATTER, AS THE CHARIOT GOES BY.

5 Conan (SB): Huallh -- !

[3] FULL TIER. **CONAN** SHOUTS AT THE **FAT MAN** IN THE CHARIOT, STALKING TOWARD HIM. THE **FAT MAN**, A MAGISTRATE, HAS A JEWEL-TOPPED STAFF OF OFFICE, KINDA LIKE A RIDING CROP, AND A WIDE GOLD COLLAR INLAID WITH JEWELS AND WORKED RUNIC DESIGNS, LAYING ACROSS HIS BROAD CHEST; THESE ARE HIS SIGNS OF OFFICE AND AUTHORITY. HE'S AMAZED AT CONAN'S EFFRONTERY, AND IS TOUCHING THE **CHARIOTEER'S** SHOULDER TO SIGNAL HIM TO STOP, SO HE CAN DEAL WIT THIS INSANE OUTLANDER.

6 Caption (cq): "The things you do to each other -- the things you are willing to stand for --"

Conan 9/Two Nemedians/Busiek

- 7 Conan (SB): Fat fool!
8 Conan (loud): Watch where you're going in that gaudy contraption!

PAGE EIGHT - 5 PANELS

[1] FULL TIER. THE **MAGISTRATE** CRACKS **CONAN** ACROSS THE FACE WITH HIS CROP, OFFENDED AND IMPERIOUS. NOTE: THIS GUY IS NOT THE DEAD GUY FROM THE COVER TO #10, SO EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE BOTH FAT RICH GUYS THEY SHOULD LOOK DIFFERENT.

1 Magistrate: You dare address me in such a manner?!

2 FX: WRAK

3 Conan (SB): Uhh!

[2] **CONAN**, HUNCHED, WIPES BLOOD FROM HIS MOUTH WITH THE BACK OF HIS HAND, HIS EYES GLITTERING WITH ANGER AT THE **MAGISTRATE**. THE **MAGISTRATE** IS ORDERS HIS **GUARDS** TO BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF **CONAN**.

4 Conan: You useless tub of guts. You'll pay for that, by --

5 Magistrate: Guards, give him a lesson in manners. Beat him senseless -

-

[3] THE **GUARDS** COME FORWARD, TOWARD **CONAN**. THEY'RE NOT AS TALL AS HE IS, BUT THEY'RE BRAWNY AND TOUGH, AND MAYBE THEY HAVE TRUNCHEONS. THEY DON'T BOTHER WITH THEIR SWORDS; THEY'RE DELIVERING A BEATING, NOT A DEATH. THERE ARE OTHER **PEOPLE** AROUND, BUT THEY'RE BACKING AWAY, MAKING ROOM.

6 Magistrate: -- and leave him in the gutters he smells of so pungently.

7 Guard: Don't resist, outlander.

8 Guard: It'll only go harder for you.

[4] **CONAN** GLOWERS AT THEM, ABOUT TO CHARGE --

9 Caption (cq): "Don't resist."

10 Caption (cq): "They actually told a hillman to take a beating without fighting."

11 Conan: If your master thinks two of you are enough to deal with me, dog --

[5] -- AND WE GET A BIG FIGHT PANEL, AS **CONAN** SLUGS IT OUT WITH THESE **GUYS** LIKE A WHIRLWIND WITH FISTS. FRAZETTA-ESQUE FIGHT MOMENT.

12 Conan (SB): -- he's even more of a fool than he looks!

PAGE NINE - 5 PANELS

- [1] FULL TIER. THE LAST **GUARD** FALLS BEFORE CONAN'S FISTS.
1 Caption (cq): "I'd had armor, recently, but sold it for food, these last weeks. Not that I needed it. They weren't cowards, I'll give them that.
2 Caption (cq): "Still, it didn't take long."
- [2] **CONAN** STALKS TOWARD THE NOW-TERRIFIED **MAGISTRATE**, DRAWING SWORD.
3 Conan: And now, you quivering sack of suet --
4 Conan: -- what were you saying about teaching me a lesson?
- [3] CLOSE ON THE **MAGISTRATE**, SHOUTING IN TERROR.
5 Magistrate (SB): Watchmen!
6 Magistrate (SB): Watchmen!
- [4] THE **CITY WATCH** COMES RUNNING, PAST **BYSTANDERS**, SWORDS OUT -- NINE OR TEN ARMED SOLDIER-POLICE. THEY SHOULD HAVE AN EMBLEM SOMEWHERE ON THEIR HARNESS (THEIR ARMOR OR EQUIPMENT) WITH THE SCARLET DRAGON OF NEMEDIA ON IT. NO DESIGN FOR THIS EXISTS, SO IT COULD BE ANYTHING FROM A FULL DRAGON ON THEIR OVER-TUNICS TO A LACQUERED DRAGON-HEAD ON A CIRCULAR PLATE SOMEWHERE. **CONAN** SEES THEM COMING --
7 Caption (cq): "The scuffle with the pig's bodyguards must have alerted the city watch -- and there's a life for whipped curs and fools -
-
8 Caption (cq): "But there were more than I wanted to deal with, just then --"
9 Watchman (loud): Halt, you! Drop your blade!
- [5] FULL TIER. -- AND CHARGES THROUGH THE CENTER OF THEM, KNOCKING SEVERAL OF THEM SPRAWLING. WE SHOULD SEE THIS FROM BEHIND CONAN, AS IF WE WERE STANDING NEXT TO HIM WHEN HE CHARGED.
10 Caption (cq): "-- so I knocked a few down --"
11 Watchman (SB): H-ahh!
12 Second Watchman (SB): Nnuh!
13 Conan: I'll find you again, pig.

PAGE TEN - 5 PANELS

- [1] FULL TIER. LOOKING DOWN AN ALLEY, PAST A FEW STARTLED **PEOPLE**, AS **CONAN** VAULTS OVER A REASONABLY-HIGH WALL -- SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE MOST PEOPLE COULDN'T GET OVER IT. WE'RE LOOKING PAST TWO OF THE **CITY WATCH** AS THEY SEE HIM GO, AMAZED. FLASHBACK ENDS, MOMENTARILY.
- 1 Caption (cq): "-- and left the square to them, for the moment."
2 Watchman: He's --
3 Watchman: -- how did he climb that?
- [2] BACK IN THE BAR. THE TWO **TOUGHS** ARE DISBELIEVING.
- 4 Tough #1: What? You faced a nobleman's guards and the city watch, and are free to tell about it?
5 Tough #1: You think we'll believe that?
- [3] THE **TROLLOPS** CONFIRM THE STORY, TALKING ANIMATEDLY ABOUT HEARING THE NEWS OF THIS EARLIER. ONE OF THEM LOOKS AT **CONAN** WITH OPEN, LASCIVIOUS ADMIRATION.
- 6 Trollop #1: No, no -- it's true! They were talking of it in the marketplace!
7 Trollop #2: Outlanders, they said! But I heard there were at least five -- they humiliated Magistrate Attarus's personal guard --
8 Trollop #2: -- and escaped from an entire squad of the watch!
9 Trollop #2: Was that just you?
- [4] **CONAN** GRINS, AND GESTURES TO HIS BOOTH, INVITING THE TROLLOPS TO JOIN HIM.
- 10 Conan: Attarus, yes. That was his name.
11 Conan: Why don't you and your friend there join me?
12 Conan: More ale, innkeeper! And a flagon of wine for the ladies!
- [5] IN THE NEXT BOOTH, HER BACK TO **CONAN'S** BOOT, WE SEE **JANISSA**, CLOAKED AND HOODED, HER FACE PARTIALLY IN SHADOW. THERE'S A TANKARD IN FRONT OF HER BUT SHE'S NOT DRINKING, JUST LISTENING INTENTLY, TENSE AND WARY.
- 13 Conan (off): Now, where was I?

PAGE ELEVEN - 5 PANELS

- [1] BACK TO FLASHBACK. FULL TIER. **CONAN**, IN AN ALLEY, LOOKS AS A MIDDLE-AGED, GRUBBY-LOOKING **PEASANT WOMAN** POINTS TO A LARGE, MULTI-STORY STONE BUILDING, A VIRTUAL FORTRESS, THE GRANDEST PLACE IN THE CITY. **GUARDS** OUTSIDE. IT'S NIGHT BY NOW.
- 1 Caption (cq): "It was not hard to find the fat fool's dwelling-place. Attarus was his name, as the wench here said --
- 2 Caption (cq): "-- and he cannot be well-loved, if the manner of those who directed me there is to be trusted.
- [2] FULL TIER. LARGISH. IN AN ALLEY ALONGSIDE ONE WALL OF THE BUILDING, **CONAN** CLIMBS THE STONE WALL, HIS FINGERS FINDING PLACES TO GRIP WHERE FEW BUT CIMMERIANS COULD. WE CAN SEE AROUND THE CORNER ENOUGH TO SEE THE GUARDS OUT FRONT, ALERT BUT UNKNOWING. FLASHBACK ENDS AGAIN.
- 3 Caption (cq): "His home was large and gaudy -- I have seen smaller armed forts in the north.
- 4 Caption (cq): "And while there were guards at the gates, there were none on the walls. Perhaps they think them unscalable --
- [3] IN THE TAVERN, AT A TABLE, **AZTRIAS** HAS BEEN LISTENING, INTERESTED, TO **CONAN'S** STORY, BUT HIS FRIENDS ARE BORED. **AZTRIAS** CAN BE SEEN ON THE COVER TO #11, PLUS IS DESCRIBED BY HOWARD AS A "SLENDER, RICHLY DRESSED FIGURE," AND AS "A FOPPISH YOUNG NOBLEMAN," WITH EMBROIDERED SLEEVES, SLENDER SHOULDERS, AND DELICATE WHITE HANDS.
- 5 Conan: -- and perhaps they are, to Nemedians.
- 6 Conan: None of you would last long, in my homeland.
- [4] ONE OF **AZTRIAS'S** **COMPANIONS** WANTS TO GO, AND STARTS TO RISE, BUT **AZTRIAS** WAVES HIM BACK INTO HIS SEAT.
- 7 Companion: Shall we go, Aztrias? That towering hulk treats this place as his own, and his atrocious accent offends my --
- 8 Aztrias: Silence, Tinna --
- [5] **AZTRIAS** LOOKS INTERESTED, AS HE LISTENS.
- 9 Aztrias: -- I wish to hear this -- !

PAGE TWELVE - 5 PANELS

- [1] FLASHBACK AGAIN. FULL TIER AGAIN. **CONAN** CLAMBERS IN AN UPPER-STORY WINDOW, PLEASED AT HOW EASY THIS IS.
- 1 Caption (cq): “The upper windows lay unbarred, their latches open to any who might try them.
- 2 Caption (cq): “And though there were guards within --“
- 3 Guard (off): Ho! Ho, you!
- [2] **THREE GUARDS** ARE IN THE CORRIDOR HE’S CLAMBERED INTO, AND HAVE THEIR SWORDS OUT, COMING TOWARD HIM, CHALLENGING.
- 4 Caption (cq): “-- they were ill-suited for their task.”
- 5 Guard: Halt where you are!
- 6 Other Guard: State your business here, and swiftly!
- [3] **CONAN** APPROACHES THEM, SMILING, HANDS RAISED, WELL AWAY FROM HIS SWORD-HILT.
- 7 Caption (cq): “I approached them, smiling to show I was no threat, my hands well away from my swordhilt.”
- 8 Conan: My apologies, good sirs. I did not mean to alarm you.
- 9 Conan: As to my business --
- 10 Caption (cq): “A strange man entering by a window at night should be set upon, not challenged.
- [4] SUDDENLY DRIVING FORWARD, HE PALMS TWO OF THE **GUARDS’** FACES, AND SLAMS THEIR HEADS INTO THE WALL, KNOCKING THEM COLD.
- 11 FX: THKNK
- [5] AS THEY SLUMP, HE WHIRLS, DECKING THE THIRD **GUARD**.
- 12 Conan: -- it is with your master.
- 13 Caption (cq): “And a Cimmerian’s true threat does not lie with his weapons.”

PAGE THIRTEEN - 5 PANELS

[1] FULL TIER. IN HIS RICHLY-APPOINTED BEDCHAMBER, THE **MAGISTRATE** SITS UP, HOLDING THE SHEETS AROUND HIM, SHOUTING PEEVISHLY. ESTABLISH THE ROOM AS WELL AS THE MOMENT.

1 Magistrate: Jimmon! Hauga!

2 Magistrate: What is Mitra's name is all the commotion?! Disturb my sleep again, and I'll see you flogged within an inch of --

[2] **CONAN** STEPS OUT OF DARKNESS, LOOKING DOWN AT HIM. HE'S ALARMED.

No Copy

[3] **CONAN** PUTS ONE FOOT UP ON EDGE OF BED, CASUAL, AND LEANS FORWARD TO TALK, ALMOST AMIABLY, TO THE **MAGISTRATE**. THE **MAGISTRATE** BEHINDS TO SHOUT FOR HIS GUARDS --

3 Conan: You are an ill-mannered lout, man of Nemedi, as well as being an ugly tub of guts.

4 Conan: I told you this afternoon I would find you again. Did you doubt me?

5 Magistrate (SB; BL): Guards! G --

[4] -- AND **CONAN** BACKHANDS HIM ACROSS THE ROOM WITH ONE POWERFUL BLOW.

6 FX: WHRAKK

[5] THE **MAGISTRATE** COWERS IN A SHADOWY CORNER, LOOKING DEFEATED AND PATHETIC.

7 Caption (cq): "A man would have fought back. But men are scarce, it seems, in the cities of the south."

8 Magistrate (shaky, sl): d-don't -- please --

9 Magistrate (shaky, sl): wh-what are you going to do to me -- ?

PAGE FOURTEEN - 6 PANELS

[1] CONAN SNORTS DERISIVELY.

1 Conan: I was going to kill you, pig, for your insult in the square today.

2 Conan: But by Crom's fell offspring, there's no satisfaction in it. The way you cower and quail, it'd be like stepping on a bug.

3 Conan: A fat, ugly bug, true, but --

[2] LOOKING AROUND, HIS EYES LIGHT ON THE GOLDEN COLLAR AND CROP, ON A STAND NEAR THE BED.

No Copy

[3] HE TAKES THEM, SMILING.

4 Conan: Ah.

5 Conan: I'll just take these. They should fetch a pretty penny, and buy me wine and ale enough to make a fine apology.

6 Conan: And perhaps you'll show more respect to strangers hereafter.

[4] THE MAGISTRATE GETS UP, PROTESTING --

7 Magistrate: You -- you can't!

8 Magistrate: Those are my symbols of office, of authority! Blessed by the priests of Mitra at the court in Belverus! You mustn't --

[5] -- AND CONAN BELTS HIM UNCONSCIOUS, BARELY THINKING ABOUT IT.

No Copy

[6] CARRYING THE COLLAR OVER ONE ARM, AND THE CROP IN THAT HAND, HE'S CLIMBING OUT THE BEDROOM WINDOW --

9 Caption (cq): "I thought about killing him after all --

10 Caption (cq): "-- but I could hear pounding footsteps approaching. One of the guards must have awakened, roused the household.

11 Caption (cq): "And I'd had enough of this place --

PAGE FIFTEEN - 5 PANELS

- [1] FULL TIER. -- AND RACES OFF OVER THE ROOFTOPS OF THE CITY. FLASHBACK ENDS, THIS TIME FOR GOOD!
1 Caption (cq): "-- so I departed in search of more convivial surroundings."
- [2] THE **TOUGHS** STILL DON'T BELIEVE IT.
2 Tough #1: Oh, better and better. Now you braved the magistrate's palace, to avenge a single blow. Walked out with his most precious possessions.
3 Tough #1: You're a liar!
- [3] **CONAN** GRINS OVER HIS TANKARD, HIS EYES SLIDING SIDEWAYS, LOOKING DOWN AT SOMETHING.
4 Conan: Am I?
- [4] WE SEE WHAT HE'S LOOKING AT. HE'S SHIFTED THE SACK ON THE FLOOR WITH HIS FOOT, SO THE COLLAR AND CROP WITHIN ARE EXPOSED, GLITTERING WARMLY IN THE DIM LIGHT.
5 Tough #2 (off, sl): bel, mitra and ishtar!
- [5] THE TWO **TOUGHS** LOOK AT EACH OTHER, ASSESSINGLY
No Copy

PAGE SIXTEEN - 5 PANELS

ALL FULL TIERS THIS PAGE.

[1] THEY DRAW THEIR SWORDS, GRINNING --

No Copy

[2] -- AND POINT THEM AT **CONAN**, THE TIPS CLOSE TO HIS JAW. HE MAKES NO REACTION, BUT WE DON'T SEE HIS HANDS UNDER THE TABLE. HE DOESN'T LOOK WORRIED.

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[3] THE **SECOND TOUGH**, STILL HOLDING HIS SWORD ON CONAN, CROUCHES AND PICKS UP THE COLLAR AND CROP, TAKING THEM OUT OF THE SACK.

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[4] THEY HOLD THEIR SWORDS AT **CONAN** STILL, AND HE'S STILL IMMOBILE, UNCONCERNED. THE **FIRST ONE** SNEERS AT CONAN, THE **SECOND** IS SIMPLY DELIGHTED WITH THEIR GOOD FORTUNE.

1 Tough #1: Not so brave after all, eh?

2 Tough #1: All that talk of pups and chickens and soft townsmen. Well, what do you think of the bold thieves of Bertinus now, eh?

3 Tough #1: What do you --

4 Caption: And if a slight smile played momentarily about Conan's mouth --

[5] THEY TURN AT A COMMOTION FROM THE DOOR.

5 Caption: -- it was not there long enough for any to notice.

6 From Off (SB): Stand where you are!

7 From Off (SB): Nobody moves --

PAGE SEVENTEEN - 4 PANELS

[1] FULL TIER. IN COME THE **CITY WATCH**, SIX OR SEVEN STRONG. THE LEADER'S GIVING ORDERS, THE SECOND POINTING CASUALLY, GRINNING -- THEY'VE FOUND THE THIEVES!

1 Leader (SB): -- at the order of the city watch!

2 Watchman: Ah, and look at that, lantus. The magistrate's treasures.

3 Watchman: Caught red-handed, or I'm a Brythunian farmer's daughter.

[2] ON THE **TWO TOUGHS**, STARTLED, REALIZING THEY'RE SCREWED. THE **SECOND** IS HOLDING THE COLLAR AND CROP STILL, LOOKING AGHAST.

4 Tough #1: What?

5 Tough #1: No, it --

6 Tough #2: It wasn't us! Mitra above, it wasn't us!

7 Tough #2: It was --

[3] THEY POINT TO CONAN'S BOOTH, BUT CONAN'S GONE, THAT BENCH EMPTY. THE TWO **TROLLOPS** ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BOOTH LOOK BLANK.

8 Tough #2 (sl): -- he's gone?

[4] FULL TIER. THE **WATCH** BIND THE **TOUGHS'** ARMS BEHIND THEM. WIDE SHOT ON THE SCENE, SOME ATMOSPHERE AND BACKGROUND.

9 Watchman: Of course, of course. It was someone else -- it always is, isn't it?

10 Watchman: You've been stupid, lads. You tried to sell your swag in a half-dozen places in this quarter -- and didn't think we'd find you?

11 Watchman: Well, you've had your fun. Now you'll swing at the end of a rope for it.

12 Tough #1: But --

13 Tough #1: But --

PAGE EIGHTEEN - 6 PANELS

[1] FULL TIER. THE **TWO TOUGHS**, ARMS TIED, TWIST AROUND, LOOKING FOR SOMEONE, ANYONE, WHO'LL SAVE THEM. THE **GUARD** SEEM AMUSED.

1 Tough #1: I swear -- it wasn't us! It was that barbarian! A Cimmerian, he said he was!

2 Tough #2: We were -- he was bragging about it, but -- we recovered it! Recovered it for the magistrate!

3 Tough #1: Tell them!

4 Tough #1: Tell them he was here!

[2] VERTICAL. THE **MERCHANT** SAYS THEY'RE LYING.

5 Merchant: There's been no barbarian here these last four hours.

6 Merchant: I'd have seen him for sure.

[3] VERTICAL. THE **TROLLOPS** GRIN AND LEER.

7 Trollop #1: Cimmerians -- they're dark, aren't they? Tall and dark-eyed, like Zamorians?

8 Trollop #2: I wish there'd been one. A rich one...

[4] VERTICAL. **AZTRIAS**, LOOKING BORED, GESTURES DISMISSIVELY.

9 Aztrias: They're simply lying, watchman. I cannot speak for what they may or may not have done before entering this tavern --

10 Aztrias: -- but they have been bragging of their daring thievery ever since.

[5] FULL TIER. THE **WATCHMEN** PROD THE **TOUGHS**, CHIVVYING THEM TOWARD THE DOOR.

11 Watchman: Get along, you!

12 Watchman: We'll deliver you to the magistrate personally, in the morning -- he'll be glad to see you again, no doubt!

13 Watchman: Probably give us commendations!

[6] CLOSE ON THAT **FIRST TOUGH** AS HE VANISHES OUT THE DOOR, BAFFLED, DOOMED. WE'LL NEVER SEE HIM ALIVE AGAIN...

14 Tough #1: But --

15 Tough #1: But --

PAGE NINETEEN - 5 PANELS

- [1] FULL TIER. WIDE SHOT OF THE TAVERN INTERIOR, AS PEOPLE LOOK AROUND, TAKE A BREATH, NOT SURE WHAT TO DO NEXT.
- 1 Caption: For a moment, all was silent in the small and run-down tavern. Patrons caught their breath, looked about curiously --
- 2 Caption: And then --
- [2] A BRAUNY HAND BRUSHES BACK THE CURTAIN TO THE KITCHEN KITCHEN ALCOVE --
- 3 Conan (off): So --
- [3] -- AND CONAN STEPS BACK INTO THE MAIN AREA, GRINNING, CONFIDENT.
- 4 Conan: -- anyone think the magistrate'll be glad to see those two?
- [4] THE INNKEEPER IS AMAZED -- HE DIDN'T EVEN SEE CONAN MOVE. THE TROLLOPS RUSH TO HIM, IMPRESSED.
- 5 Innkeeper: You -- planned all that?
- 6 Trollop: I've never seen anything so clever! It was like a game! You led them right into the jaws, and --
- [5] FULL TIER. CONAN LAUGHS, A HEARTY, SELF-MOCKING LAUGH.
- 7 Conan: Hah! No, no -- if I'd truly been thinking tonight, I'd have done far better! Stolen that fat pig's money, at the very least --
- 8 Conan: -- instead of gold and jewels so recognizable I could sell them nowhere, with no access to a smithy to melt them down!

PAGE TWENTY - 5 PANELS

- [1] PULL BACK ON THE SCENE. **CONAN**, STILL SMILING BUT A BIT WARY, EYES THE BARTENDER.
- 1 Conan: As it is, I haven't so much as a copper coin to show for my labor, and can't even pay for my drinks!
- 2 Conan: And if that'll be a problem between us, taverner --
- [2] **THE MERCHANT** PIPES UP, HAPPY TO RETURN A FAVOR.
- 3 Merchant: It'll be no problem, my friend. You saved my purse -- I'll gladly buy your drinks. And a full meal, as well!
- 4 Conan: Aye?
- [3] **CONAN** SMILES AT THE LITTLE GUY, AND GESTURES TO THE **TROLLOPS**. **THE MERCHANT'S** NOT QUITE SO HAPPY NOW, BUT WHAT THE HELL, HE'LL GO ALONG.
- 5 Conan: I may have to reconsider my opinion of townsmen, friend! And how about these fine ladies, as well?
- 6 Merchant: I, ah ... certainly. Food and wine for them as well.
- [4] FULL TIER, LARGISH PANEL. **CONAN**, FULL OF HIS FABLED GIGANTIC MIRTH, BEAMS, CLAPPING **THE MERCHANT** ON THE BACK WITH ONE MEATY HAND (**THE MERCHANT** STAGGERS) AND PULLING ONE OF THE **TROLLOPS** TO HIM WITH THE OTHER. LIFE IS GOOD!
- 7 Conan: Then all is good, and who's to say I didn't gain out of this night after all?
- 8 Conan (loud) : Meat and cheese, taverner -- and ale, more ale! I find that telling stories is thirsty work!
- [5] ON **AZTRIAS** AND HIS **FRIENDS**. **AZTRIAS** IS GETTING UP, WHILE ONE OF HIS FRIENDS CAUTIONS HIM NOT TO.
- 9 Friend (wh): Aztrias, I wouldn't --
- 10 Aztrias (wh): Don't be absurd. He's perfect, perfect!
- 11 Aztrias (wh): I'll pay my debts in one throw -- and we'll have a laugh, as well!

PAGE TWENTY-ONE - 5 PANELS

[1] **AZTRIAS COMES UP BEHIND CONAN.**

1 Aztrias: A moment of your time, Cimmerian?

[2] **THEY TALK. AZTRIAS GESTURING FOPPISHLY, CONAN TOWERING OVER HIM, A BIT DRUNK. AZTRIAS SPEAKS QUIETLY, SO AS NOT TO BE OVERHEARD, SO CONAN LEANS IN A BIT TO HEAR HIM.**

2 Aztrias: I am Aztrias Petanius. It strikes me that you're in need of money, and to get out of this city, hmm?

3 Aztrias: I have a job for you -- one that fits your skills well. Steal something for me, in Numalia --

4 Aztrias: -- and you'll be well paid indeed.

[3] **CONAN SMILES CRAFTILY.**

5 Conan: I'll say this. If your gold's good, little lordling, then you've got a bargain.

6 Conan: But I'll warn you -- you may want to seek elsewhere in the future.

[4] **FULL TIER. EXTERIOR SHOT OF THE TAVERN.**

7 Conan: For of all the bold thieves of Bertinus, if the best cannot even keep what he stole --

8 Conan (SB): -- what hope is there for the rest of them?!

9 Caption: The small tavern rocked with laughter and merriment. The ale flowed freely, as did lies and bawdy jests --

10 Caption: -- and the dark of night was held at bay by warmth and cheer.

[5] **A SHADOW STEALS AWAY FROM THE TAVERN INTO THE NIGHT STREETS. IT'S JANISSA, CLOAKED.**

11 Caption: For most, at least. Most...

PAGE TWENTY-TWO - 5 PANELS

[1] CLOSE ON JANISSA, AS SHE HOLDS THE JEWEL HILT OF A KNIFE TO HER FOREHEAD.

1 Caption: ...but not all.

2 Janissa: I am here, mistress.

3 Janissa: I have seen him.

[2] WE SEE A LIGHT GLITTER AND SHINE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE JEWEL.

4 Bone Woman (bw): Speak.

[3] JANISSA, CROUCHED, REPORTS. SHE COULD BE IN AN ALLEY, CROUCHED ON A BARREL, UP ON A ROOF -- WHEREVER YOU LIKE, SO LONG AS SHE LOOKS COOL.

5 Janissa: He is like a wild bull, unleashed in a potter's stall. He knows little of civilization, and would surely bring about his own doom.

6 Janissa: But he is cunning. And skilled -- he heard the watch coming almost as soon as I did.

[4] CLOSE ON THE JEWEL, THE **BONE WOMAN'S** MALEVOLENT FACE FLICKERING WITHIN IT, DISTORTED BUT CRAFTY.

7 Bone Woman (bw): Yes, Janissa, he is raw and untutored.

8 Bone Woman (bw): But he has a headlong strength that makes him someone to watch.

9 Bone Woman (bw): To Numalia, then, my keenest blade --

[5] FULL TIER. ANOTHER EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE BAR, MOSTLY -- BUT FOR PART OF IT WE CAN SEE THROUGH THE WINDOW. **CONAN** IS WAVING HIS TANKARD AROUND, HUGGING A **TROLLOP**, LAUGHING AND CAROUSING. OTHERS SEEN ARE IN A SIMILAR MOOD, IT'S A VISUALLY HAPPY MOMENT, AT LEAST. THIS MAY BE IN SILHOUETTE, IF IT WORKS WELL THAT WAY.

PULL BACK, SEE CONAN THROUGH WINDOW. SILHOUETTE? CAROUSING.

10 Bone Woman (bw): --for great forces tilt and sway precariously. The balance point is there, or will be soon --

11 Bone Woman (bw): -- and our young and spirited bull is charging straight for it -- !

12 Blurb: [end of story slug]