We'll see who's laughing when they have to scrape you two up off the sand.

Better turn, Crotulos, or you're going to have to patch the Condax up... again.

**BEFORE THE STORM**

GREG FRASKEY - WRITER
POP MIMAN - ARTIST
ULISES ARACOLA - COLORIST
PAT BROSSEAU - LETTERER
TOBY DUTHIEWICZ - ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER
JESSICA RUMBUMBA - ASSISTANT EDITOR

You turn-- the best way to train for the arena is to practice winning.

And you need the practice, friend!

Here-- practice recovering from this move.
IF YOU INJURED?

YEE!

WHOO!

MORE LIKELY, DEFENSE, IF THE SKULL GO AFTER OUR VILLAGES NEXT.

SO... WANT TO TRY AGAIN. ATREO MAY BE WRECKED, BUT I'M BETTING WE'RE GOING TO BE NEEDED FOR MATCHES SOON. ANYWAY.

WHAT ARE THEY WAITING FOR? THEY DESTROY ATREO, AND THEN... NOTHING.
They got Atero because it was undefended.

They don't have the guts to hit a village where there are Glatorian and Asotiri waiting.

Trust me, we've seen the last of the Skraal.
My name is Mata Nui. A few moments ago, the mask of life which contains my spirit was crushed on this strange world.

Its power created a new body for me. One I must learn to use if I am to survive here. But the first thing I encounter does not seem to be a threat...

"Well, little one. Have you come to welcome me to your world?"

"Click... click..."

I have the feeling you are trying to tell me something.

"Click... click..."

"Ah, it's the mask you're interested in, is it?"

"What...?"

"Magnificent..."

"Fzzz!"
WITH NO WEAPON, A
SHEILD MIGHT
BE JUST WHAT
I—HMHM?

HIISSSSSS
SKREEH!

(UAANAAASHH!

ALL RIGHT, I CAN LIE HERE AND
SEE JUST HOW TOUGH MY NEW
“SHEILD” IS. OR I CAN—

—MOVE!

KA-WAAAAN!

—MOVIE!
I know enough to know to back away from the slash of a stinger...

But not how to make the new body move the way I need it to.

Krunk Swap

Owed by accident—the rock took the blow meant for me, and broke the beast's stinger. It flees into the desert, howling in pain, as my shield transforms again.

Another reminder that I am a long way from home... and a long way from being what I once was.
I hear the vehicle coming before I see it. When I do,
I find a being as startled to see me as I am him.

State your business, stranger.

Just a trouble looking for the nearest city.

might as well start digging then. You're bound to find the ruins of one or another.

Huh? That's a joke, guess you're not much of a laugher, huh? Well, nearest village is vulcans. I'm headed that way myself. If you want a ride, unless you'd rather wind up running into a pack of bone-hunters and skrall.

What are bone-hunters and skrall?

no one you'd want to meet.
We arrive in the village. "Just in time," according to my driver, Metax, to see something disturbing—two warriors battling in an arena, while villagers look on cheerfully.

Metax explains that this is how disputes are settled here—between fighters called Glatorian, rather than in wars.

This system may be easier on the villagers, but it seems pretty hard on the Glatorian.

"Concede, Strakk. Yield and this goes no farther."

"All right, Ackar... you win."

"Something in the fallen one's tone does not sound right to me, and sure enough, as his opponent turns away, he reaches for his weapon..."
...AND HURLS IT. IN AN ATTACK AS DEVASTATING AS IT IS TREPACIOUS.

AAAAAHH!

THE ONE CALLED ACKAR IS DOWN. AND NOW STRASHK STANDS READY TO DELIVER A FINAL BLOW.

YOU'RE FINISHED, OLD...

BUT NOT IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT.

WHAT... UHNNNGHHHH!
This Strakk is faster than I and recovers quickly. I'll cut you down for that, outsider!

Worse. He has the power to do what he threatens.

Stay down, stranger, and I'll make it quick. If not painless.

BAWMM

Strakk, no! Your right is with me!

You're next, Ackar. But this one asked for it. And he's going to get it.
I manage to block his blow with the stinger tail, but how long can it last against cold iron?

Not long. It seems as though my power forces it toward... my mask!

Yes, my mask, indeed.

Hey!

Now, let's try this again.
CONCEDE.
FINE...
I CONCEDE!

THE CROWD OF VILLAGERS CHEERS, BUT I BARELY HEAR IT. I DID NOT COME HERE TO BE A HERO, BUT SIMPLY TO FIND THE FASTEST WAY BACK HOME.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO STRAKK NOW?

FOR ATTACKING AFTER HE HAD SURRENDERED? BANISHMENT. HE'LL BE LIVING IN THE WASTELANDS BEFORE THE WEEK IS OUT.

I'M IN YOUR DEBT, STRANGER. COME, WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOU... AND THAT TRICK WITH THE SWORD.
Akar takes me back to his shelter. He has another match in Tesara, he says, but he does not seem happy about it.

Why do you battle in the arena, if you have tired of it?

Duty, pride, but a gladiator past his prime is no good to anyone.

To be defeated without a fight would be dishonor. I don’t think you would allow that... you are a true toa.

A toa? What’s a toa?

Where I come from, it is a name given to a select few warriors, worthy of...

Mata Nui! You were brilliant! Vulcarius will pay anything you ask! And if you don’t like this village, no problem— I’ll get the others to bid on you!

That is very... kind, but the answer is no.

What are you crazy? Think what you’re giving up—the life of a prime gladiator! All right, but one day you’ll come back to me, begging for this chance.
WHAT WAS THAT AGAIN?

KIDDING! KIDDING! SOME PEOPLE HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR AT ALL...

SO WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

I START SEARCHING FOR A WAY BACK TO MY HOMELAND.

WHICH IS WHERE EXACTLY?

I KNEW IT! PROOF! PROOF OF WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING FOR YEARS!

MY HOME IS FAR FROM HERE... ON ANOTHER WORLD ENTIRELY. I WAS IT'S PROTECTOR. UNTIL I LOST EVERYTHING. NOW A DARK POWER HAS ENSLAVED MY PEOPLE. THAT IS WHY I HAVE TO GO HOME.
WHOEVER THIS PERSON IS, ACHAK SEEMS TO KNOW HELL.

KIINA: THIS ISN'T THE TIME—OR THE PLACE!

NAME'S KIINA, I'M A GLATORIAN. ONE OF THE BEST, AND YOU JUST WOZ ME A LOT OF COMPS.

IT'S OKAY, ALTHOUGH I DON'T ALWAYS AGREE WITH HER METHODS—LIKE LURKING IN SHADOWS—KIINA RANKS. I'D TRUST HER WITH MY LIFE AND HAVE MORE THAN ONCE.

SO IS WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT YOU TRUST SWORDS AND SHIELDS THAT JUST APPEAR FROM NOWHERE. THAT SORT OF THING?

SUGARING NO POINT IN LYING TO HER. I THINK THIS ONLY SEEMS TO MAKE HER MORE EXCITED!

A REAL OTHER-WORLDER. FINALLY, SOMEONE TO CONVINCE THE AGORI THERE'S A BETTER PLACE THAN THIS MISERABLE WASTELAND.
Kina says she may know of a way I can find my way home. She has found a cave near her village filled with ancient technology and strange inscriptions, and she agrees to take me there.

In return, she asks one favour—that when I leave Bara Magna, I take her with me. Seeing no other choice, I agree. The next morning, we depart from the village of Tajan.

We had been riding for some time when we reached a canyon. Acheri senhe tense as soon as we entered.

I don't like this. It's a perfect spot for an ambush.

Please, even bone hunters wouldn't be stupid enough to take on all three of us.

Oh, no? Better tell them that, then.

On DVD soon.
I look behind. We are being pursued—why and by whom, I don’t know. But I doubt they are here to invite us to dinner. Unless we are slated to be the meal.

My village—there are other Glatorians there! Hang on, we’re making a run for it.

I have yet to see Kiana fight, but I quickly learn she can drive. Little by little, we gain ground on the Bone Hunters.
Our pursuers aren't happy about it...

Keep your head down, Mata Null, or one of those Skorunax will take it off!

What do these Bone Hunters want?

"What they always want," Ackar replies. "Whatever they can get."

Do you feel that? A tremor in the ground?

Ugh... I think we may have a bigger problem than Bone Hunters...

Rumble...

...Much bigger.
SKOPIO!!

MATA NUI'S VISIT TO BARA MAGNA LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE A SHORT ONE! WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? FIND OUT IN "BIonicLES: THE LEGEND REBORN." THE NEW MOVIE AVAILABLE ON DVD THIS MONTH!