

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™



SHADOWPLAGUE







# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ SHADOWPLAGUE





# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ SHADOWPLAGUE

## Credits

Written by **John Rogers**

Art by **Andrea Di Vito**

Colors by **Aburtov and Graphikslava  
and Andrew Dalhouse**

Lettering by **Chris Mowry  
and Shawn Lee**

Edits by **Denton J. Tipton**

Consulting Editor **Andy Schmidt**

Collection Edits by **Justin Eisinger**

Collection Design by **Shawn Lee**

Collection Cover by **Wayne Reynolds**

Special thanks to Hasbro's Michael Kelly and Val Roca, and Wizards of the Coast's Bill Slavicek, Jon Schindehette, James Wyatt, and Chris Perkins, Liz Schuh, Kierin Chase, Laura Tammervik, Shelly Mazzanoble, Hilary Ross, and Chris Lindsay.

**IDW™**

Licensed By:



ISBN: 978-1-60010-922-5

14 13 12 11 1 2 3 4

[www.IDWPUBLISHING.com](http://www.IDWPUBLISHING.com)

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher  
Greg Goldstein, Chief Operating Officer  
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist  
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer/Editor-in-Chief  
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer  
Alan Payne, VP of Sales

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS VOLUME 1: SHADOWPLAGUE. JUNE 2011. FIRST PRINTING. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, WIZARDS OF THE COAST and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast LLC in the USA and other countries. Other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2011 Wizards. All associated characters and character names are property of Wizards of the Coast LLC. Used with permission. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in Korea.

IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.  
Originally published as DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Issues #0-5.





## Introduction

Any television writer worth his salt—and I assure you that John Rogers is worth sacks of the stuff—is intimately acquainted with the “writers room.” It is usually a dank conference room—ripe with the smell of take-out food, dry erase markers, and punishing deadlines—in which we who toil to entertain America generate the characters, stories, and scenes that make up the raw material for every dramatic hour that shows up on your screen week after week.

The writers room is a crucible. It is a place where you spend more time in the company of other hyper-articulate, highly intelligent, and desperate-for-attention social maladjusts than you might with your family.

The day-to-day of those lucky enough to do this job can best be described as competitive group therapy: the sharing of all of your stories, fears, and anxieties in the hope that they will be judged fit to become part of the show’s narrative. Being in the room requires patience, a love of yarn spinning, and a desire to create a shared universe: a willingness to fearlessly bring to a collective story the stuff of your own life.

That’s where *Dungeons & Dragons* comes in. For many writers in my generation (and I am a ground-level first edition player who can claim knowledge of Gygax’s primal work with the *Chainmail* RPG) and beyond, the gaming table—ripe with the smell of Red Pop, stale pizza, and impeding frost-giant-attacks—was our first exposure to the crucible of collective narrative storytelling.

Playing *Dungeons and Dragons* taught me patience with other people and their ideas. Every gaming session was an object lesson about pacing a story—knowing when to let things develop at a leisurely pace and when to stir my audience with extreme revelations and shocking destiny—and about when to insist on my way and when to let others run with the narrative ball.

Playing *D&D* also taught me how to handle the sheer mockery and ball-busting ridicule that comes with sitting in tight quarters with

a gang of hyper-articulate, highly intelligent, and desperate-for-attention social maladjusts. For example, after making the mistake of painting my first lead figure with glossy paint, I was mercilessly teased and forever saddled with the moniker “the disco cleric.” Believe me, sporting level-three leather armor around your ego when in a room full of snide contemporaries is **essential** for anyone who braves the writers room.

Every lesson I learned about surviving a room full of nerdy friends (and sometimes frenemies)—each trying to one-up the other with the best solution for a life-or-death random encounter with a beholder—has come back to help me in the writers room of every show on which I have worked. The ability to come up with a zinger like “I’d like to butter my initiative roll, but I have no modifier” doesn’t hurt either.

Let’s face it: the jocks and all their fellow barbarians may have learned to socialize in parties full of nubile cheerleaders, in vans full of pot smoke and cheap, illegally obtained beer, and in awkward, fumbling grope-out sessions in linen closets, but the geeks earned their social stripes fighting epic battles, navigating the darkness of booby-trapped caverns, interrogating the sullen denizens of the town tavern endemic to every module of *D&D*, and making life-or-death decisions in real-time while earning treasure and power beyond that of ordinary mortals...

...and guess what? The geek inherited the Earth.

I suspect that Mister Rogers and his conspirators know this all too well. It’s clear in every lovingly crafted page of the story. Where attempts at narrative epic fantasy set in the realms of *D&D* reek with faux Shakespearean language and annoying post-*Wheel of Time* huff and bluster, this book has all the elements of a great *D&D* campaign run by a bunch of geeks in the prime of their Monty Python-loving imaginations.

Rogers’ pacing is fast and frenetic. No protracted fellowship-forming, mead-drinking, Tom Bombadill

bullbada for this merry band of adventurers. This is *Dungeons & Dragons*, and that can only mean one thing: it starts in a tavern, the zombies attack in short order, and the story takes off like a magic missile.

As pencilled by the masterful Andrea Di Vito, the adventures of Adric, Khal, Varis, Tisha, and Bree feel like the expertly wrought-and-drawn distillation of the best campaign you never played. The action never stops, the stakes keep getting higher, and the characters feel like *D&D* archetypes as opposed to someone’s recycling of the dregs of a dozen of Tolkien’s less-able acolytes.

Best of all, the characters **talk** like expert players around a gaming table. The ultimate triumph in these pages is Rogers and Di Vito’s creation of a group of comrades-in-arms that at once look and sound true to their world while still coming across like the cast of an awesome present-day action film. No fusty thees-and-thous, hark-lo-and-forsooth blithering in these pages, just the expertly crafted patter of people who truly inhabit this fantastic realm: where having to get your ass handed to you by an orc to buy your friends time to find a wily shape shifter is all in a day’s work.

This book is—as one of its characters might say—“dwarven craftsmanship,” and I say that in the best possible way.

So order yourself some cardboardy pizza, bust out the Red Pop and your own personal disco cleric, and put yourself in the hands of an expert Dungeon Master... because you are about to join a level 7 party including a human fighter, halfling thief, paladin dwarf, elven scout, and a tiefling magic user...

...and you’re in the town tavern, minding your own business... but the ground begins to rumble...

...and the adventure begins...

Javier Grillo-Marxuach  
May 7, 2011





Art by Wayne Reynolds





# KRASH

THIS WAY!  
WE CAN  
CATCH THEM  
IF WE—

—OH, HERE  
THEY ARE.  
GREAT.











THIS ISN'T ALL OF THEM.

REAR GUARD. REST OF THE BANDITS ALREADY WENT BELOW.

"BELOW." WE'VE BEEN GOING DOWN FOR TWO HOURS. WHO BUILDS THESE DUNGEON MAZES, ANYWAY?



IN A WORLD WITH DRAGONS, UNDERGROUND CORRIDORS BIG ENOUGH FOR A MAN, BUT NO BIGGER...

...IT JUST BE COMMON SENSE.



BREE, STOP LOOTING THE FILTHY MURDER DOGS!

THEY GOT NOTHIN' ON 'EM, ANYWAY!



REWARD'LL MAKE UP FOR IT.

LAST CARAVAN THESE BASTARDS HIT, THEY GOT THE DUKE'S FAMILY JEWELRY. FIND THOSE, IT MEANS HOT BATHS AND COLD BEER FOR A YEAR!

TRAP, TRAP-TRAP-TRAP-

CHANK



-TRAPPITY-TRAP!

SWOOSH



SIX HUNDRED YEARS OLD, SHARP AS THE DAY SHE WAS MADE. FINE DWARVEN CRAFTSMANSHIP RIGHT THERE.

YOUR PEOPLE ARE ARTISANS OF DEATH, KHAL.

BREE, LOCKED DOOR AHEAD.

















TOO CLOSE  
FOR ARROWS,  
HU-MAN.  
NOW YOU  
DIE!



I'M NOT  
HUMAN.

AND CLOSE  
WORKS JUST  
FINE FOR  
ME.



"SNEAK  
AROUND TO  
FLANK,  
BREE."

"STAB 'EM IN  
THE BACK,  
BREE."

LIKE I DON'T  
KNOW—

—OH,  
HELLO.



HELLOOO,  
GIANT RUBY.















YOU DO NOT SMELL AFRAID.  
LET'S SEE HOW YOU TASTE.

AAAAAHHHH



RRROOR-  
KGACK...



HA! YES!  
GODS-DAMNED  
HALFLING  
LUCK.

MY...  
RUBY...



TOLD YOU  
I HAD A  
PLAN.

IS IT  
ALWAYS LIKE  
THIS?

THIS  
ACTUALLY WENT  
VERY WELL.

MY RUBY!  
WHERE IN THE  
ABYSS IS MY  
RUBY?









Art by Tyler Walpole







ON THE  
BRIGHT SIDE,  
THEY'RE ORPHAN  
ZOMBIES...

...SO  
NOBODY'S  
GONNA MISS  
'EM.

TO BE FAIR, YOU'RE  
COMING IN LATE.



THE DAY STARTED FINE ENOUGH. KHAL GOT A LETTER.

THE STAGGERED GOAT

AAAAGGGHHHH!

JUST STRIKE ME DOWN.

SHE DOES NOT LOVE ME ANYMORE.

THAT'S A HUNDRED-PAGE LETTER.

ONLY A HUNDRED PAGES!

ARE YOU NOT THE HANDSOMEST DWARF IN YOUR STEAD? ARE YOU NOT HER TRUE LOVE?

NO, I'M ASKING. I HAVE NO IDEA IF YOU'RE A HANDSOME DWARF.

YOU HAVE A POINT.

I WAS SHOWING OUR NEWEST MEMBER THE ROPES.

SIGN HERE, AND YOU'RE PART OF THE COMPANY.

RUMRUNNER'S SPLIT OF ANY TREASURE. TWO SHARES TO ME FOR CAPTAIN, ONE FOR EMERGENCIES. ANY QUESTIONS?

SURE. WHY DOES A SWORDSMAN IN FALLCREST CARRY A CAVALRY SABER AND USE PIRATE SLANG IN HIS CONTRACT?



AND SUDDENLY, IT WAS A BAD DAY.













IN THE NAME  
OF THE LORD  
WARDEN—

—HOLD!



FELL.  
FINALLY  
CAUGHT IN  
THE ACT!

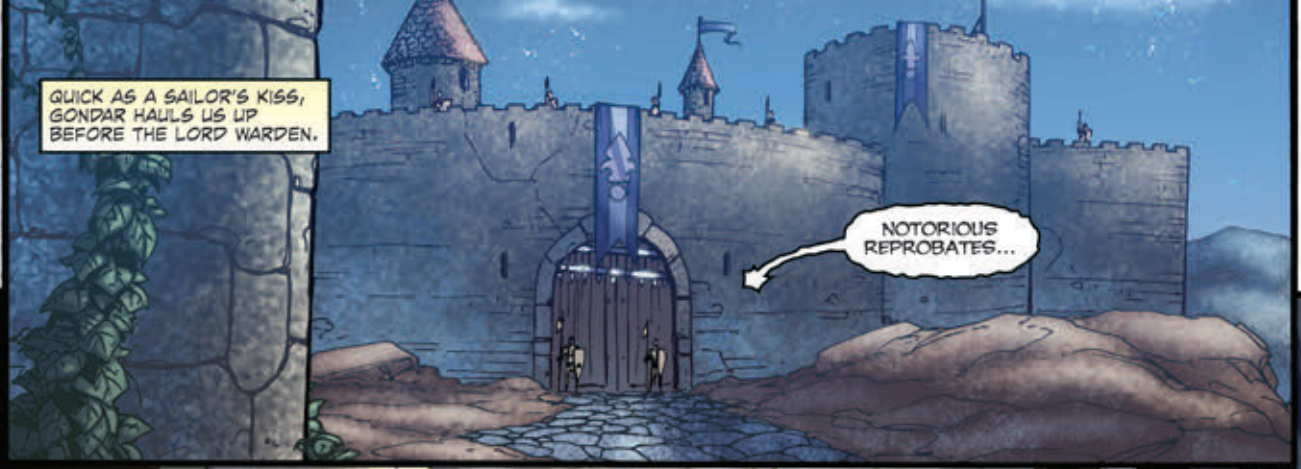
OF COURSE,  
GONDAR, I'M *ACTING*  
LIKE THERE ARE  
ZOMBIES COMING OUT  
OF THE *FLOOR*!

WHAT  
ZOMBIES?

AAAND SUDDENLY, IT  
WAS A *VERY* BAD DAY.







QUICK AS A SAILOR'S KISS,  
GONDAR HAULS US UP  
BEFORE THE LORD WARDEN.

NOTORIOUS  
REPROBATES...



...DISTURBING  
THE PEACE.

INDEED.

DESTRUCTION  
OF PROPERTY.

SCANDALOUS.

AND NOW  
FINALLY—  
MURDER.

I HAVE THE  
GIST OF IT,  
GONDAR.



BREE  
THREE-HANDS,  
SUSPECTED IN  
COUNTLESS THEFTS  
AND INJURIES.



KHAL  
KHALUNDURRIN,  
ALLEGED PALADIN  
OF THE MOST  
RIGHTEOUS  
MORADIN.

"ALLEGED"?



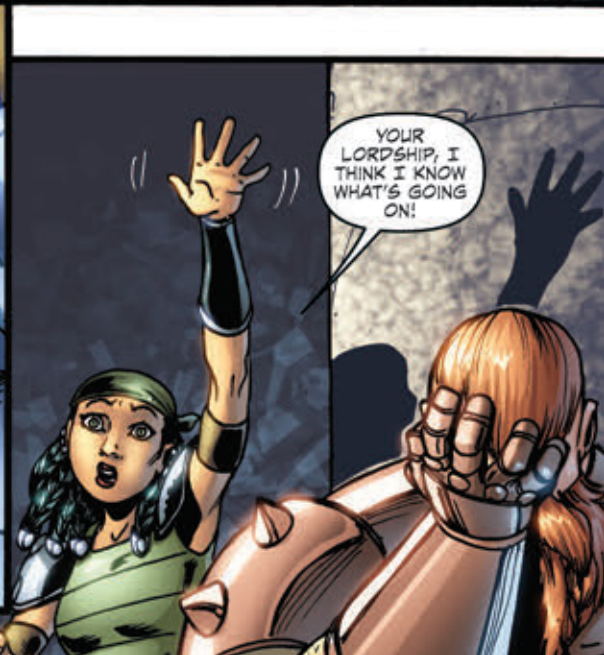
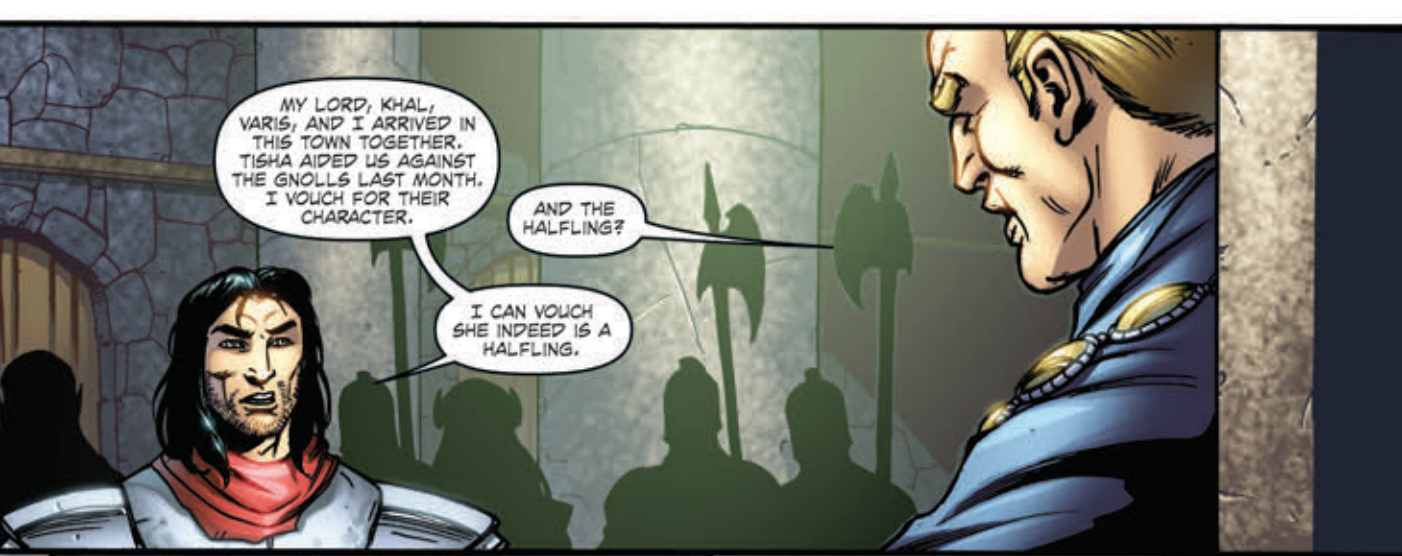
THE ELF KNOWN  
AS VARIS, AN  
EXILE FROM HIS  
OWN PEOPLE.

"EXILE" IS A BIT  
HARSH. CAN'T AN ELF  
RENT A ROOM AT AN  
INN WITHOUT AWKWARD  
QUESTIONS?



THE  
TIEFLING TISHA  
SWORNHEART,  
UNKNOWN TO  
FALLCREST  
'TIL NOW.









WHAT WAS DIFFERENT ABOUT TODAY? THAT TIEFLING JOINED OUR COMPANY!

SHE TRIED TO TAKE OVER FALLCREST WITH HER ZOMBIES AND BLAME US!



I TRANSFORMED TWO SCORE PEOPLE INTO ZOMBIES TO RUN USELESSLY THROUGH THE TOWN'S BASEMENTS.

I MADE SURE TO DO THIS JUST *SECONDS* AFTER I SIGNED THE PAPERS BONDING MYSELF TO THE PEOPLE I WOULD FRAME FOR THIS HERESY.



SHE'S PLAYING A VERY DEEP GAME, MY LORD.

GONDAR, WE STILL HANG PEOPLE, YES?



NO WORRIES, ADRIC, I'M HERE!

OH, BLOODY HELL, NO—





IT'S  
COPERNICUS  
JINX.

I'M HORRIFIED  
TO HEAR OF THIS  
UNSPEAKABLE  
TRAGEDY.

NOW LET  
ME AT THAT  
CORPSE.



DO NOT DO  
THIS ON MY  
TABLE.

SOON BEGUN,  
SOONEST  
DONE.

BREE,  
DAGGER.

THANK  
YOU.

COPERNICUS JINX, WIZARD. MY  
COMMANDING OFFICER IN THE LAST  
BORDER WAR, HE'S FOND OF ME.

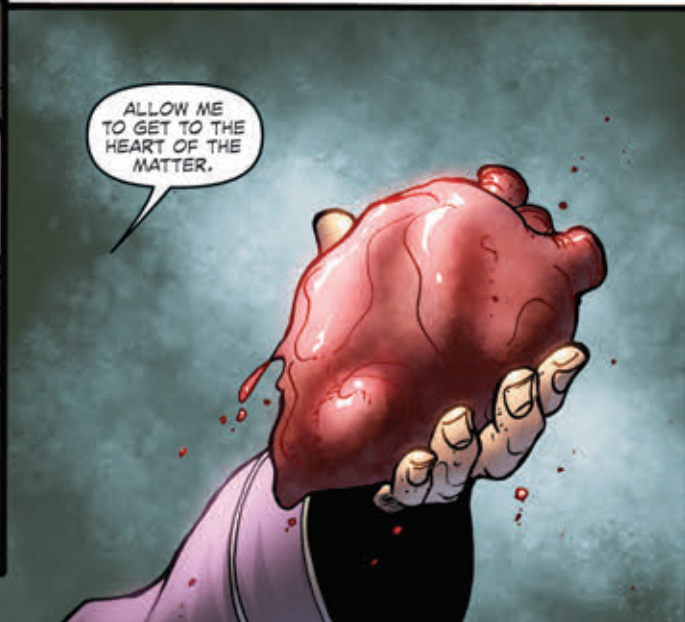
MY LORD, I  
SENSED A MAGICAL  
DISTURBANCE EARLIER IN  
THE DAY. SOMETHING  
DARK. I BELIEVE WE MAY  
BE TRYING TO SOLVE  
THE SAME MYSTERY.



WISH  
SLURP

THIS IS A  
TERRIBLE THING.

ALLOW ME  
TO GET TO THE  
HEART OF THE  
MATTER.







I'M SORRY,  
HAVE YOU NEVER  
SEEN MY ARM?

IT CAN PERFORM  
THE FINEST ALCHEMICAL  
AND ARCANIC  
EXAMINATIONS.

IT WAS A  
GIFT FROM THE  
FATHER OF MY  
FINEST STUDENT,  
JULIANA.

SUCH POWER.  
THAT'S A GENEROUS  
GIFT.

IT'S ONLY  
FAIR...

...SEEING AS  
JULIANA'S FATHER  
TORE OFF THE  
ORIGINAL.

I HAVE THE  
ANSWER. OF  
COURSE.



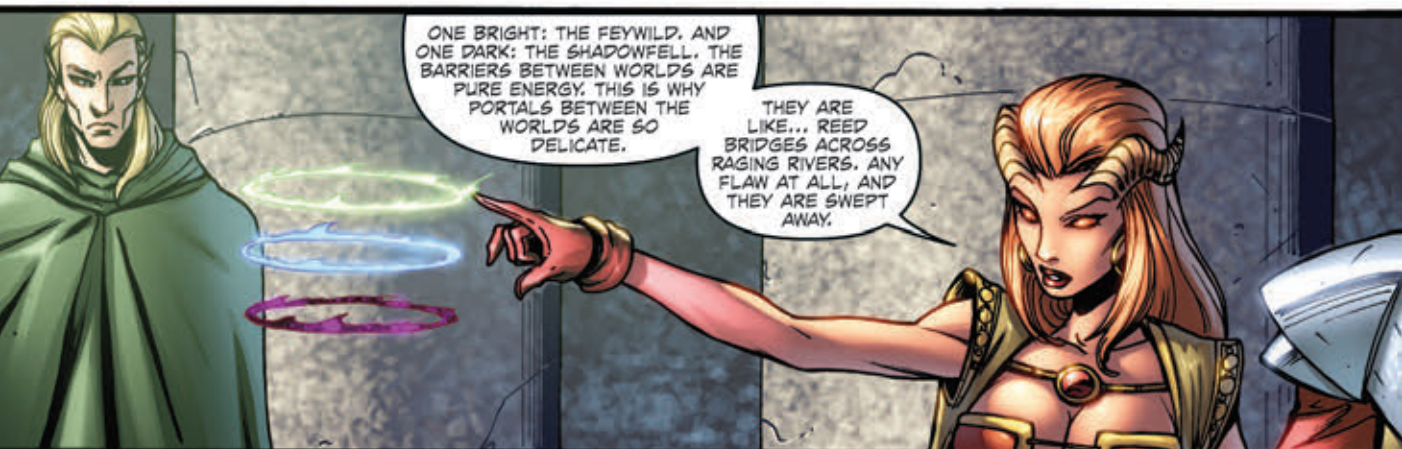


THIS MAN WAS INFECTED, SO TO SPEAK, WITH **SHADOW**.



**SHADOWFELL'S A PLACE, RIGHT? HOW DOES IT INFECT PEOPLE?**

HM. THERE EXIST TWO MIRROR IMAGES OF OUR WORLD.



ONE BRIGHT: THE FEYWILD. AND ONE DARK: THE **SHADOWFELL**. THE BARRIERS BETWEEN WORLDS ARE PURE ENERGY. THIS IS WHY PORTALS BETWEEN THE WORLDS ARE SO DELICATE.

THEY ARE LIKE... REED BRIDGES ACROSS RAGING RIVERS. ANY FLAW AT ALL, AND THEY ARE SWEEP AWAY.



I TOLD YOU LOT. GOOD TO ADD A SPELLCASTER.

YES, TOO BAD SHE GOT HER POWERS BY CHEATING.

PAH. WIZARDS.



BUT WHEN A BRIDGE FALLS, THE WATER DOESN'T RUN UP ON THE BANK AND DROWN EVERYBODY ON THE SHORE.

AYE, THIS IS MORE... WHEN A DWARVEN TUNNEL UNDER WATER COLLAPSES. SEEN IT HAPPEN.

THE TUNNEL'S NOT DESTROYED. INSTEAD, BECOMES A CONDUIT FOR THE FLOOD. UNTIL YOU SEAL THE BREACH.





SO,  
SOMEBODY  
OPENED A  
PORTAL.

A RAGGEDY,  
LEAKING PORTAL.  
DARK ENERGIES  
FLOODING THROUGH  
AND FLOODING  
OUR MINDS.

HEY,  
HERE'S GOOD  
NEWS.



AGGHHHH!

NNNGGGG-

I THINK  
OUR TRIAL'S  
OVER.

HAVE I MENTIONED HOW  
BAD A DAY IT WAS?













NOT THAT I'M  
COMPLAININ', BUT  
WHERE ARE WE  
GOING?

THE POSSESSED,  
EARLIER, THEY WERE  
RUNNING!

WERE THEY ALL  
RUNNING IN THE SAME  
DIRECTION?

WELL DONE,  
ADRIC. YES.  
FOR THE  
RIVER.



YOU FOLLOW THE  
UNDERGROUND TRAIL.  
BREE AND I WILL  
STAY TOPSIDE!



TO BE  
HONEST, THAT'S  
NOT A GREAT  
PLAN.

HEH. ADRIC'S  
PLANS ARE  
RARELY GOOD.  
BUT HE COMES UP  
WITH 'EM RIGHT  
QUICK.



IN THE ADVENTURE  
TRADE, YOU'D BE  
SURPRISED HOW MUCH  
MORE VALUABLE THAT  
TALENT IS.









THESE TUNNELS  
LOOK NATURAL,  
BUT IT BE CUNNING  
DISGUISE.

EVERY SEAM  
HAND-POLISHED  
AWAY. DWARVEN  
WORK.



AMAZING HOW  
EVERYTHING GOOD IS  
DWARVEN WORK. "THIS  
SWORD BE FLAWLESS WITH  
MAGNIFICENT DETAIL.  
DWARVEN WORK."

"THESE PASTRIES  
BE FLUFFY AND  
FILLED WITH DELICIOUS  
CUSTARD. DWARVEN  
WORK."



FIRST, YOU'D BE  
LUCKY TO TASTE A  
DWARVEN PASTRY.  
SECOND—

**CHINK-  
CHUNK  
GAHH!**

—PIT  
TRAP.



YOU KNEW  
HE'D CATCH  
HIMSELF.

EH.

I WILL  
ADMIT—NICE  
WORKMANSHIP.



THIS, ON THE  
OTHER HAND,  
BE NEW.

ANY GUESSES  
WHAT WE FIND  
ON THE OTHER  
SIDE?



WHEN IN  
DOUBT...

...USE THE  
HAMMER.





HARDTACK,  
LOTS OF MOLASSES.  
SMUGGLER'S  
CAVE.

ALXH-ARAGH  
IN'DOOOE  
TRESSURA MA  
KHUTAR—

SHHH. HEAR  
THAT?

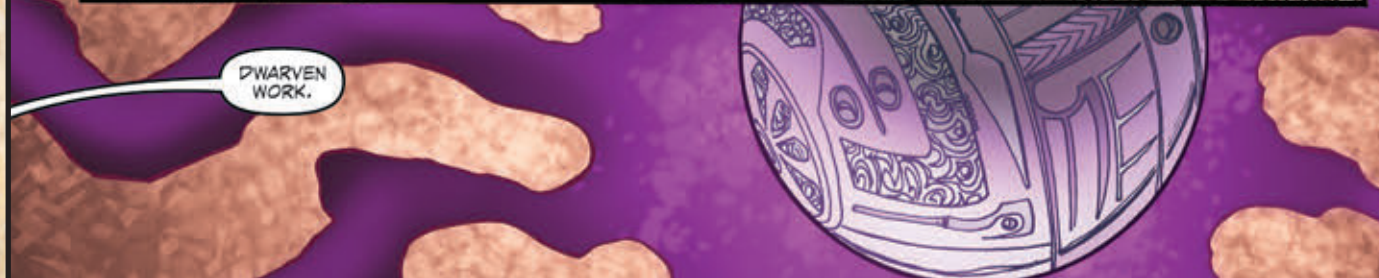


KTHALA F'TAGHN  
TRESSURA MA  
KHUTAR VENOS IN  
CORIUM!



KHAL,  
WHAT IS  
IT?

THAT SPHERE  
BE ADAMANITE AND  
DIAMOND, BONDED IN  
MAGICS FAR BEYOND  
HUMANS OR ELVES.  
FLAWLESS.  
INDESTRUCTIBLE.



DWARVEN  
WORK.





















Art by Tyler Walpole





NO, SERIOUSLY, THIS  
WAS THE LUCKY BREAK.

CHAPTER

3

KRAKA  
-THOOM











THIRTY SECONDS EARLIER.







BLOODY WIZARD!



MY EYES! VARIS! GET THE SPHERE!



TISHA!

ON IT!

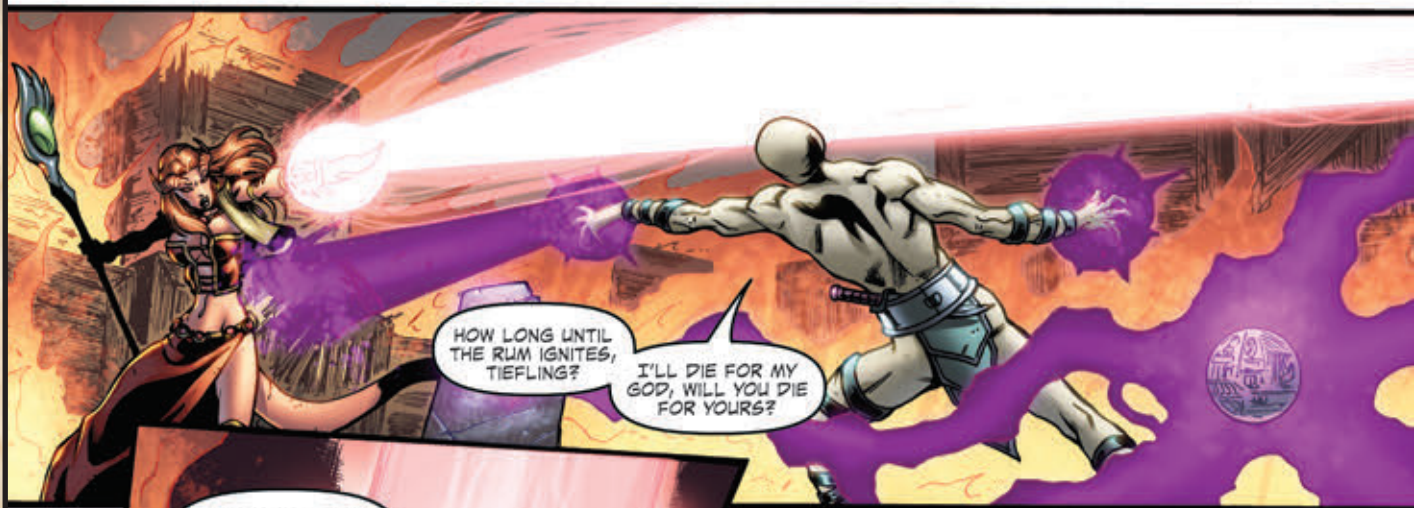
NO! DAFT FEY, GET THE SPHERE!



KHAL, THIS CHAMBER'S FULL OF MOLASSES AND RUM! AND FIRE!

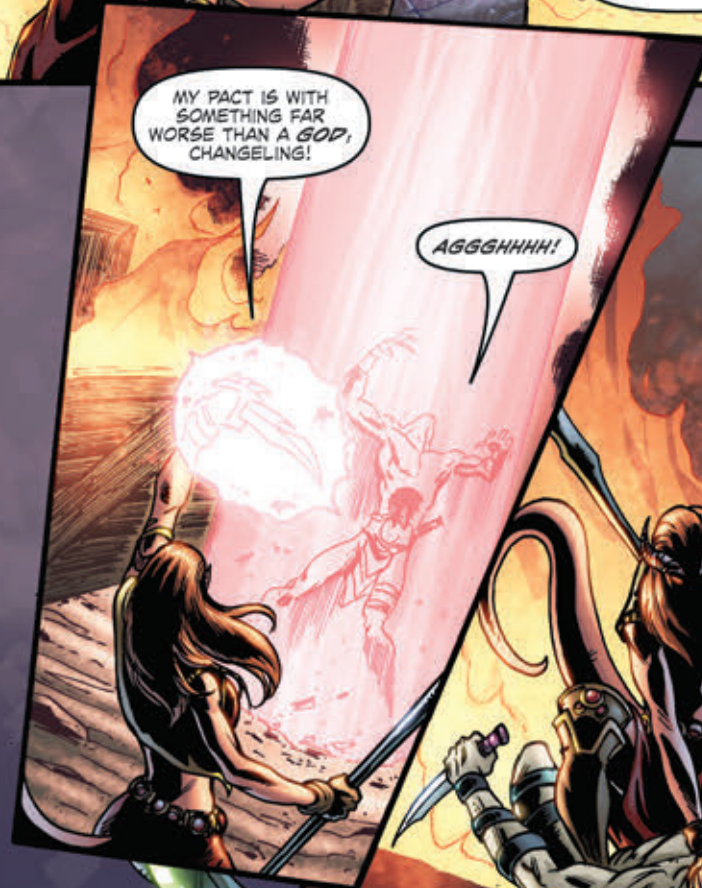
YOU WORRISOME MIDWIFE, IT'S JUST FIRE!





HOW LONG UNTIL  
THE RUM IGNITES,  
TIEFLING?

I'LL DIE FOR MY  
GOD, WILL YOU DIE  
FOR YOURS?



MY PACT IS WITH  
SOMETHING FAR  
WORSE THAN A GOD,  
CHANGELING!

AGGGHHHH!



I KNOW WHO  
YOUR PACT IS WITH,  
WARLOCK...

...AND I  
KNOW... WHY YOU  
MADE IT...



...SISTER.  
PLEASE.



TARA?! I  
DIDN'T—

...UNGH...

SHUCK





QAFF

NO!



TISHA!  
WHERE  
ARE—

RHUMPH



GOT  
YOURSELF  
STABBED.

NOT JUST A  
WIZARD. ASSASSIN  
TRAINING.



WAITED TOO  
LONG! IT'S GOING  
TO BLOW!

TELL ME  
YOU HAVE A  
PLAN!



COURSE  
I DO.

PIT  
TRAP!

KA-CHINK













AND SO WE SPENT A HALF HOUR FERRYING HYSTERICAL, WET CHILDREN TO SHORE. THEN, WHEN THE REAL WORK WAS DONE OF COURSE, WE HAD COMPANY.

YOU'RE ALIVE! HOW UNEXPECTED!

YOU ALMOST SOUND HAPPY.



THE UNEXPECTED ALWAYS MAKES ME HAPPY. WHAT DID YOU FIND?

THE DISTURBANCE WAS CENTERED UNDER THE FOUNDLING HOUSE, THERE MUST BE AN ABANDONED PORTAL IN ONE OF THE OLD SMUGGLERS CAVES.



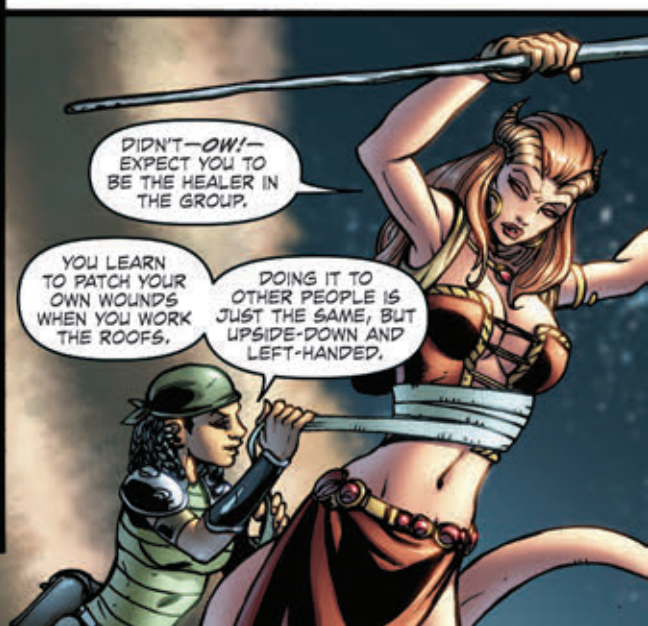
NO, JUST THE REMAINS OF ONE. THE FOCUS STONES ARE SHATTERED, BUT A CHANGELING WAS DRAWING POWER FROM THEM.



HE WAS USING SOME SORT OF ARTIFACT, A SPHERE—

NEVER SEEN THE LIKES OF IT BEFORE. STRANGE MAGICK.

YES, STRANGE AND UNKNOWN.



DIDN'T—OW!—EXPECT YOU TO BE THE HEALER IN THE GROUP.

YOU LEARN TO PATCH YOUR OWN WOUNDS WHEN YOU WORK THE ROOFS.

DOING IT TO OTHER PEOPLE IS JUST THE SAME, BUT UPSIDE-DOWN AND LEFT-HANDED.

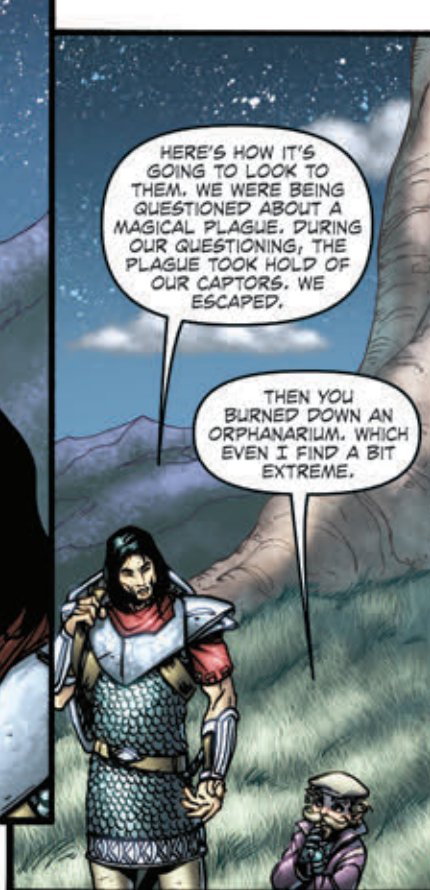




WHEN YOU GET BACK TO THE LORD MARSHALL—

WE CAN'T GO BACK TO THE LORD MARSHALL.

BUT YOU'RE CLEARED!



HERE'S HOW IT'S GOING TO LOOK TO THEM. WE WERE BEING QUESTIONED ABOUT A MAGICAL PLAGUE. DURING OUR QUESTIONING, THE PLAGUE TOOK HOLD OF OUR CAPTORS. WE ESCAPED.

THEN YOU BURNED DOWN AN ORPHANARIUM. WHICH EVEN I FIND A BIT EXTREME.



IT WAS THE DOPPLEGANGER!

WHO WE CAN'T PRODUCE.

WITH THE ARTIFACT!

THAT WE DON'T HAVE. VARIS, WHERE DO WE START?



DOWNRIVER. THE TOWN-SIDE BANK. MOST WOULD RUN FOR COVER, BUT CHANGELINGS ALWAYS HUNT FOR A NEW IDENTITY FIRST. THAT MEANS NEW CLOTHES AND WEAPONS.

GO.



I WANT TO COME WITH YOU.

I'M OLDER AND SMARTER THAN YOU.

YOU KNOW THAT'S A BAD IDEA.

BUT I'M PRETTIER.



I FOUND OUT LATER THE TOWNSPEOPLE ASSUMED JINX SAVED THE CHILDREN, AND HAD A FEAST IN HIS HONOR.

HE IS THE SECOND MOST ANNOYING CREATURE I KNOW.





GOT HIM.  
CAME ASHORE  
HERE.

ADRIC, A  
WORD.



I KNOW, THIS  
ISN'T WHAT YOU  
SIGNED UP  
FOR.

NOT THAT.  
JULIANA.



YOU OBVIOUSLY  
CARE FOR EACH  
OTHER. WHY AREN'T  
YOU WITH HER?

ACES!  
SOMEBODY ELSE  
TO BUG HIM  
ABOUT IT!



LONG STORY FOR  
ANOTHER TIME. WHAT  
I WANT TO KNOW IS  
WHY KHAL LIED ABOUT  
THE ARTIFACT.

WHAT?!  
I—AH...



...I LIE  
VERY  
POORLY.

AND YET YOU  
STILL INSIST  
ON PLAYING  
CARDS.

WHAT'S  
GOING  
ON?



IF THAT  
SPHERE BE WHAT  
I BELIEVE...

...TIS NOT A  
PROUD MOMENT IN MY  
PEOPLE'S HISTORY. I  
PROMISE TO TELL YE  
IF NEEDS BE.

GOOD  
ENOUGH.  
FOR NOW.

ADRIC!





NAKED CORPSE.  
FOOTPRINTS SHOW HE  
WAS WALKING PATROL;  
CROSSED OVER HERE—THEN  
AMBUSHED, KNIFED,  
AND DUMPED.

MUTILATED  
THE FACE. THE  
CHANGELING'S  
HAD TRAINING.



SO HE'S  
DISGUISED AS A  
TOWN GUARD.  
WONDERFUL.

DIDN'T GO  
INTO TOWN,  
THOUGH. HEADED  
OUT ON THE  
ROAD.

BREE.  
MAP.



IT'S TRADE  
SEASON. IF HE  
REACHES THE MAIN  
ROAD, HERE—

SOME  
MERCHANT'S  
GONNA WIND UP  
WITH A CUT THROAT  
AND A STOLEN  
FACE.



A HALF-HOUR  
LEAD. CAN WE  
CATCH HIM?

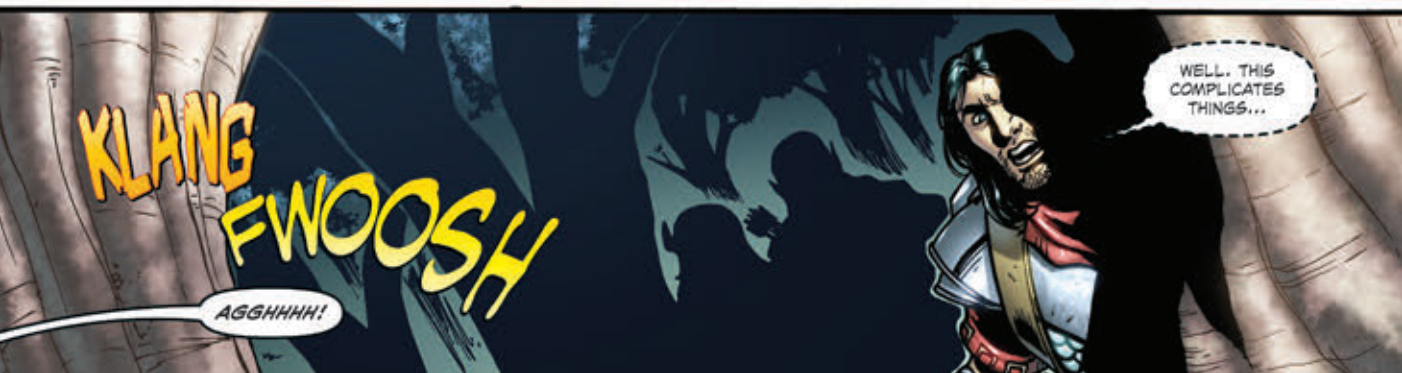
IF WE  
LOSE THE  
DWARF.

SLOW  
AND STEADY,  
FERN-LOVER.  
SLOW AND—HUHF—  
STEADY.



TRUTH TOLD, KHAL CAN RUN THE  
REST OF US INTO THE GROUND.  
DWARVEN PALADIN CANDIDATES  
RUN FOR DAYS, IN *ARMOR*.

TWO HOURS ALONG THE ROAD,  
INTO THE MOUNTAINS, SUN RISING,  
VARIS HEARD SOMETHING. TOOK US  
THROUGH THE WOODS TO FLANK.



WELL. THIS  
COMPLICATES  
THINGS...

AGGHHHH!



"...ORCS. TWO DOZEN OF 'EM.

"NOT SCAVENGERS, EITHER.  
THAT'S A CAPTAIN AND ONE OF  
THEIR WEIRD PRIESTS. LOOKS  
LIKE A UNIT FROM THE LAST WAR  
HELD TOGETHER AS MERCS."







IN THEORY,  
WE HAVE  
THOSE ORCS  
FLANKED.

AND THOSE  
ORCS HAVE OUR  
DOPPLEGANGER  
PINNED.

WE TAKE THEM  
OUT, HE FADES  
INTO THE FOREST.  
OR KILLS US AS  
WE FIGHT.



SO WHAT'S  
THE PLAN?

NOW YOU  
LIKE MY  
PLANS.

NOT  
REALLY. BUT  
I LIKE YOUR  
LUCK.



WE PUNCH  
THROUGH THE  
LINE.

**NOW!**

























SO CHANGE THE RULES.

GHARTUK  
MAG-FAR  
IMOTAK!

OR PLAY A WHOLE  
DIFFERENT GAME.



SINGLE  
COMBAT? ARE  
YOU *INSANE*?

NO, I'M  
BUYING TIME.  
BECAUSE I NEED  
YOU TO DO  
SOMETHING  
FOR ME...



WHAT ARE  
YOU UP  
TO?



SIMPLE. HE  
WINS, THE ORCS  
LEAVE.

HE LOSES, WE  
FORFEIT THE CARAVAN  
AND HALF OUR PEOPLE  
AS PRISONERS.



I'M NOT SURE  
EVERYONE WILL  
AGREE TO THAT  
BARGAIN.

SEEING AS  
WE'RE ALREADY  
FLANKED AND  
OUTNUMBERED, THE  
THIRD CHOICE IS "WE  
ALL DIE." EXPLAIN  
IT TO THEM  
THAT WAY.





HMMPH.  
GRUHN CAN  
KILL THAT  
ONE, EASY.

I SENSE  
A TRICK.

GRUHN KILL  
HIM BEFORE HE  
CAN TRICK. DEAD  
MAN CAN NOT  
TRICK.

EXCEPT FOR  
THAT TIME IN  
BLACK FOREST.  
BUT THAT ONE  
TIME ONLY.

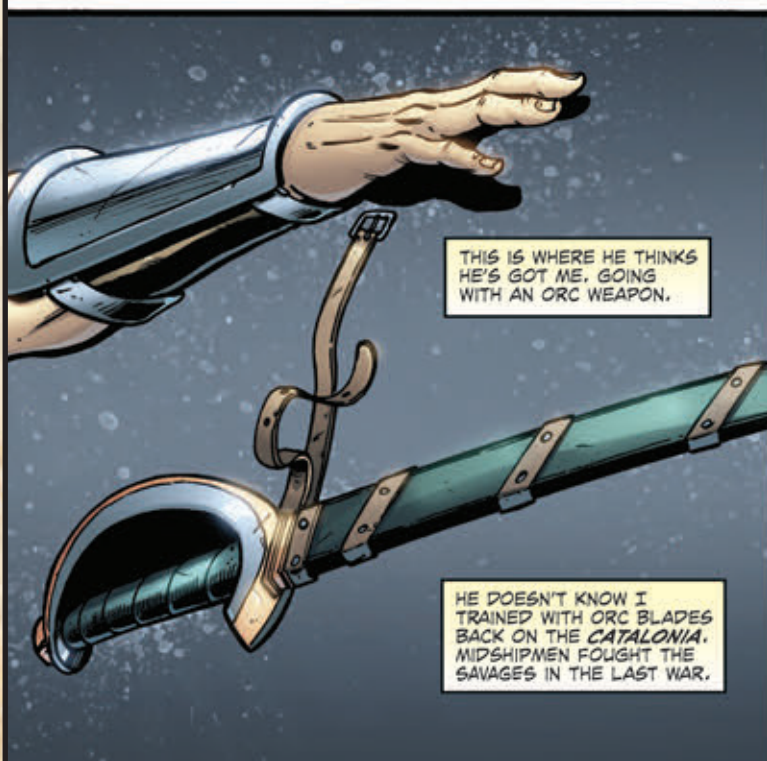


YOUR  
ORC TONGUE  
IS LIKE BABY  
WITH BROKEN  
JAW.

YOUR  
COMMON IS  
LIKE A SINGING  
GOAT.



YOU  
CHALLENGE.  
GRUHN CHOSE  
WEAPONS. NO  
SWORD.



THIS IS WHERE HE THINKS  
HE'S GOT ME. GOING  
WITH AN ORC WEAPON.

HE DOESN'T KNOW I  
TRAINED WITH ORC BLADES  
BACK ON THE *CATALONIA*.  
MIDSHIPMEN FOUGHT THE  
SAVAGES IN THE LAST WAR.



CLEAVER, MORNINGSTAR,  
MACE, SPIKED CLUB,  
POLEARM, I'M READY—

GRUHN  
CHOOSE  
ROCK.













Art by Tyler Walpole





YEAH, HE'S GOING  
TO KILL ME.

BECAUSE I HAVE  
TWO PROBLEMS.





FIRST: HE'S BIGGER AND STRONGER. THE LONGER THE FIGHT, THE BETTER HIS ODDS.

SECOND: I'M TRYING TO MAKE THE FIGHT GO LONGER. SO, YEAH.



I NEED TO BUY VARIS TIME TO GET HIS JOB DONE...



...AND I TRUST THAT ORC PRIEST ONLY SLIGHTLY LESS THAN I TRUST BREE.



GET READY. WHEN GRUHN WINS, WE STRIKE FOR VICTORY.

IF HE FALLS, WE ALSO STRIKE, FOR VENGEANCE.



IS IT ME, OR IS ADRIC HOLDING BACK?

HE'S TOYING WITH THE ORC!

HIS LIFE REALLY IS A SERIES OF VERY BAD PLANS, ISN'T IT?





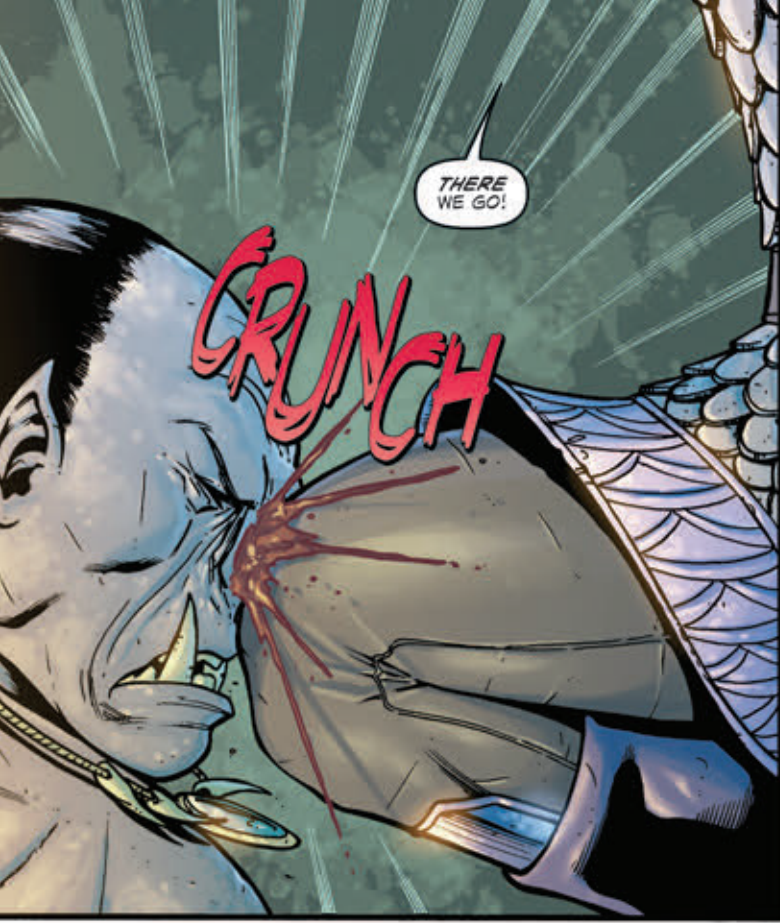




















YOUR PRIEST IS A  
DOPPELGÄNGER!



STOP  
FIGHTING!

GRUHN  
SAY STOP  
FIGHTING!



YOU HEARD  
HIM, BACK  
OFF.

YE LUCKY  
SNOTS.



YOU WERE  
STALLING UNTIL  
VARIS COULD FIGURE  
OUT WHO WAS THE  
CHANGELING?





WHAT IS THIS?

SHAPESHIFTER.  
WE WERE TRACKING HIM WHEN WE FOUND YOU ATTACKING THE CARAVAN. I FIGURED HE'D USE THE CONFUSION OF THE FIGHT TO CHANGE IDENTITIES AGAIN.



HOW YOU KNOW HE MY PRIEST?

OH, I JUST HAD MY MAN SEARCH THE BATTLEFIELD BODIES—



—LOOKING FOR THE *NAKED* ONE.



HMMPH.  
SO YOU KILL SHAPE MAN IN GRUHN'S TROOP.  
WHY WE STOP FIGHTING?



BECAUSE THERE WERE *TWO* OF THEM.





SO PROBABLY, 'CUZ YOU GUYS WERE WINNING, THE OTHER SWITCHED SIDES TO YOUR ORCS, TOO.



WE COULD STILL KILL YOU.

YOU COULD TRY, AND GET STABBED IN THE BACK WHILE YOU'RE FIGHTING ME.



HRMPH. WE GO!

FIGHT UNTIL OTHER SHAPE CHANGER IS DEAD!



WE MEET AGAIN. YOU NOT LIVE THAT TIME.

I AM SURE I WON'T.



-SIGH- GO AHEAD.

I THOUGHT YOU MADE A LOVELY COUPLE.

SOD OFF.

OOOO, YOU KISS AN ORC WITH THAT MOUTH?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU DO! AH AHA HAHAH!





MOVE AND  
MOVE FAST.  
THEY'RE NOT  
AS DUMB AS  
YE HOPE.

WON'T  
PRESS OUR  
LUCK. HELL,  
THE ODDS OF A  
RESCUE, NEVER  
MIND A RESCUE  
BY... BY...



BY WHO? OR  
WHAT, YOU  
MEAN?

NOT YOU, OF  
COURSE, DWARF  
FRIEND, BUT...  
AH...



"DWARF  
FRIEND," BAH. BET  
HIS GRANDPARENTS  
WERE STEALING MY  
PARENTS' GOATS.

KHAL,  
YOU KNOW HE  
MEANT ME. LET  
IT GO.

NO. YE  
FOUGHT FOR  
HIM. ALL VIRTUE  
BE EQUAL IN  
THE EYES OF  
MORADIN.



MY PEOPLE  
MADE THEIR BARGAIN,  
PALADIN. WE WEAR A  
DEVIL'S FACE AS  
OUR PRICE.

WAS A BAD  
BARGAIN.

MOST  
ARE.



BREE FOUND  
IT IN SECONDS,  
WHICH MEANS IT'S  
VALUABLE.

HEY!

TELL  
ME WHAT  
IT IS.





THIS BE  
A WORLD  
KEY.

AGES PAST,  
ONE OF THE DWARVEN  
KINGS GREW WARY  
OF THE ELADRIN'S POWER  
TO STEP BETWEEN THE  
FEYWILD AND THIS WORLD.  
HE DID NAE LIKE THE  
THOUGHT OF AN ENEMY  
THAT COULD APPEAR  
AND DISAPPEAR  
AT WILL.

SO HE SET HIS  
WIZARDS AND SMITHS TO  
WORK IN THE GLUTS OF  
CHAD'MARAGH, THE DARK  
MAGIC FORGE.



THEY MADE THIS.  
IT DRAWS ENERGY  
FROM ELADRIN PORTALS,  
AND LETS YE OPEN YER  
OWN DOOR TO ANOTHER  
WORLD.

YOU MADE  
IT SOUND  
MUCH WORSE  
EARLIER.



ELADRIN  
MAGIC BE IN  
THEIR BLOOD.

THERE'S A FEY  
HEART IN THE  
CENTER OF THAT  
ABOMINATION.

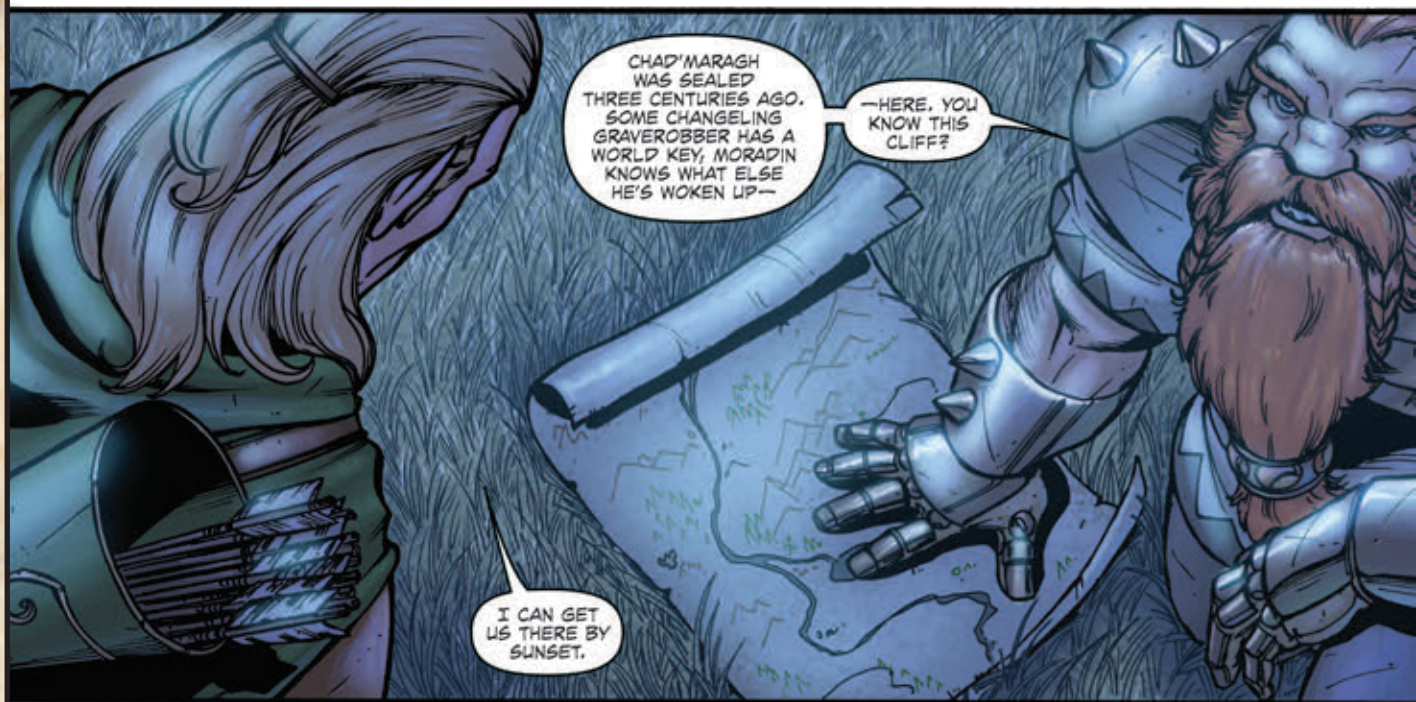
BLOODY  
HELL!



SO THE  
CHANGELING WAS...  
"CHARGING" THIS FROM  
THE ENERGIES OF THE  
OLD BROKEN PORTAL  
STONES.

BUT THAT  
ALONE COULD NOT  
CAUSE THE FLOOD  
OF SHADOW TO  
CONSUME  
FALLCREST.





CHAD'MARAGH  
WAS SEALED  
THREE CENTURIES AGO.  
SOME CHANGELING  
GRAVEROBBER HAS A  
WORLD KEY; MORADIN  
KNOWS WHAT ELSE  
HE'S WOKEN UP—

—HERE, YOU  
KNOW THIS  
CLIFF?

I CAN GET  
US THERE BY  
SUNSET.



RIGHT. NEW  
PLAN. FIND THE  
ANCIENT DWARVEN  
WEAPONS  
FORGE—

DARK, MAGICAL  
WEAPONS.

—GOT IT. BEAT  
ANY GRAVE-ROBBING  
CULTISTS ABOUT THE  
HEAD WITH A BIT OF SHARP  
STEEL, LOCK THE PLACE  
DOWN, AND RETURN TO  
FALLCREST FOR OUR  
REWARD.



OUR REWARD  
BEING "NOT  
HANGED."

WELL, YES.  
BUT MAYBE WITH  
A BONUS OF "NOT  
BANISHED!"



NICE PLAY  
WITH THE "TWO  
CHANGELINGS"  
LIE.

OLD  
HALFLING  
SAYING. "NEVER  
SETTLE WITH  
BLADES WHEN  
A LIE WILL  
DO."

AND NEVER  
SETTLE WITH A  
LIE WHEN THE  
TRUTH WILL  
DO.

...THAT  
MAKES NO  
SENSE.





I KNOW, THINKING IT WOULD BE THAT SIMPLE WAS A BIT, WELL, *SIMPLE*.



BUT THE TRUTH IS, NO PLAN SURVIVES TEN SECONDS OF CONTACT WITH AN ENEMY.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO WIND UP TOSSING YOUR PLAN ANYWAY, WHY MAKE IT COMPLICATED?



THAT'S LIKE MAKING A GOLDEN LOCKET JUST SO YOU CAN TOSS IT IN THE RIVER.

DOESN'T MAKE A LICK OF SENSE.



AS JINX USED TO SAY, A PLAN'S JUST THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE TO THE INEVITABLE ARGUMENT.

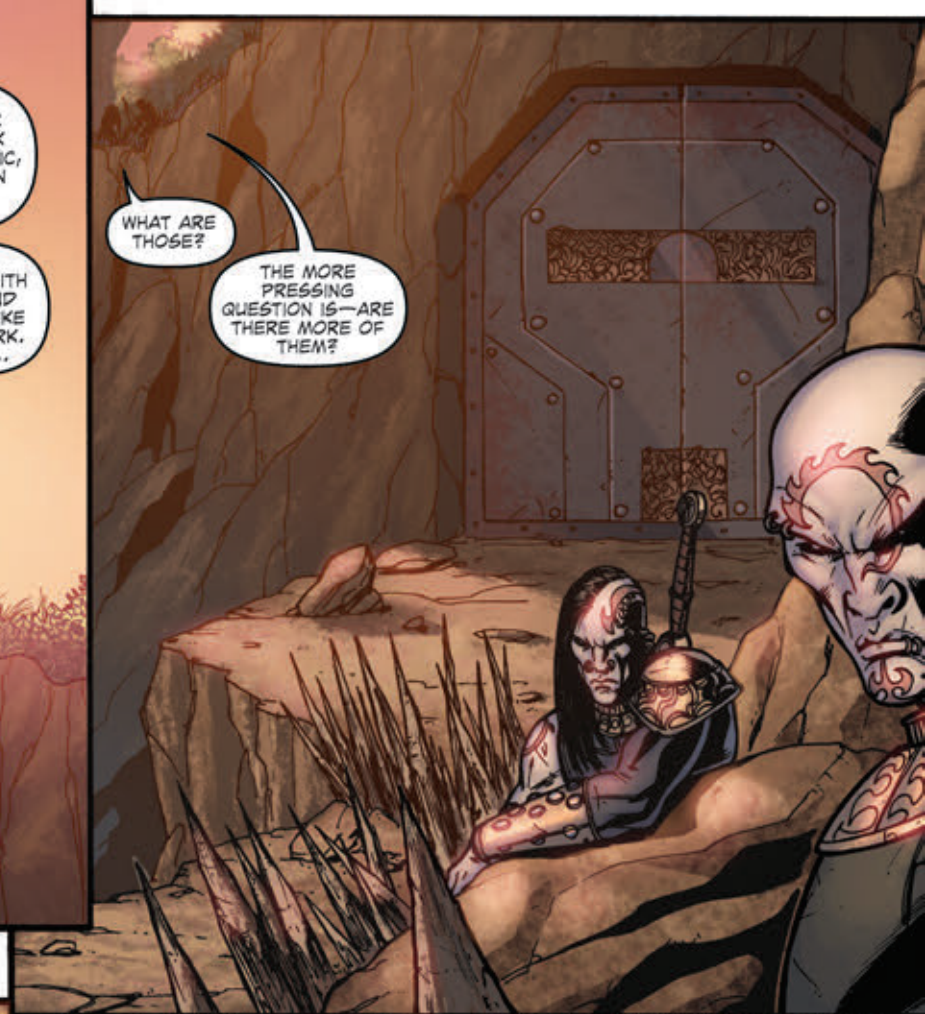




DID IT  
BOTHER YOU?  
THE ELADRIN  
HEART IN THE  
ORB?

ELADRIN  
WEAR MYSTIC  
ROBES, MUCK  
WITH HIGH MAGIC,  
AND SPEAK IN  
CRYPTIC  
HINTS.

I KILL  
THINGS WITH  
AXES AND  
SMELL LIKE  
TREE BARK.  
THERE...



WHAT ARE  
THOSE?

THE MORE  
PRESSING  
QUESTION IS—ARE  
THERE MORE OF  
THEM?



AND WE  
DISCOVER THAT  
BY—

—THIS ORC  
ARROW, I  
THINK.

DEATH  
TO THE  
OUTSIDERS!



GAAHRK!

BY THE  
RAVEN—  
ORCS!



RUNNING FOR  
THE DOOR. NOT  
SOUNDING AN  
ALARM.

MEANS NO  
REINFORCEMENTS.  
WATCH HOW HE  
OPENS IT—



"—BREE IS GOING TO WANT TO KNOW WHERE TO CHECK FOR TRAPS."

EYES SHARP. BEEN AN HOUR SINCE VARIS CHASED THE GUARD OFF, WITH NO SIGN, SO HE'S PROBABLY RIGHT ABOUT THE REINFORCEMENTS.

MAYBE.

I'M GOING TO GO WITH "PROBABLY." IT CHEERS ME UP.

ANYTHING ELSE WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS CHAD'MARAGH PLACE, KHAL?

THERE IS A RUMOR. INSTEAD OF PUTTING HIS WORST MURDERERS TO DEATH, THE KING SENT THEM HERE, TO BUILD THE TRAPS FOR THE DARK FORGE.

SO YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS MURDER FACTORY FOR MAGIC MURDER TOOLS IS FILLED WITH MURDER TRAPS MADE BY INSANE DWARVEN MURDERERS.

WELL, "INSANE"—

KILLED OTHERS FOR NO GOOD REASON.

AH, YES THEN. "INSANE."





GLURK.

SONUVA—



AYE, "NO REINFORCEMENTS"—  
—OR THEY JUST LIKE HIDING IN THE *SHADOWS* BETTER!



THEY WEREN'T *HIDING*! I WOULD'VE SEEN 'EM.

FRANKLY THAT'S A LITTLE INSULTING—

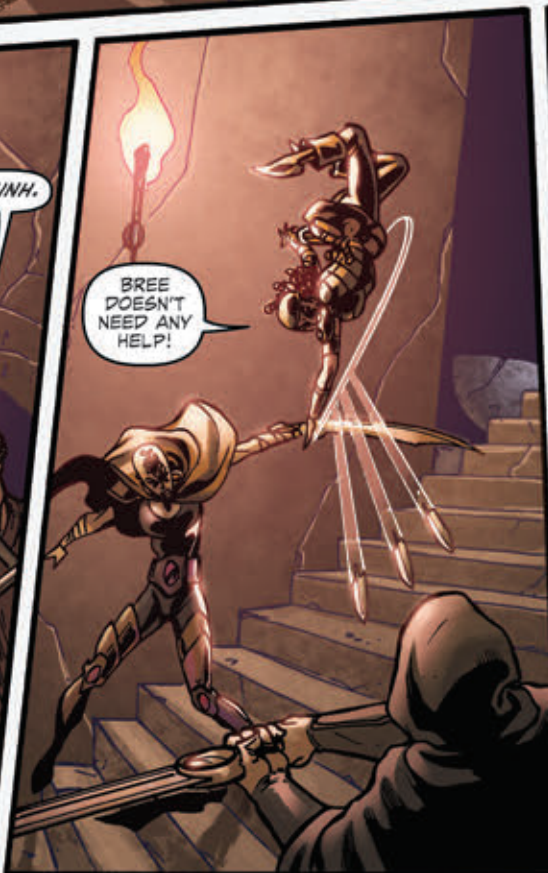
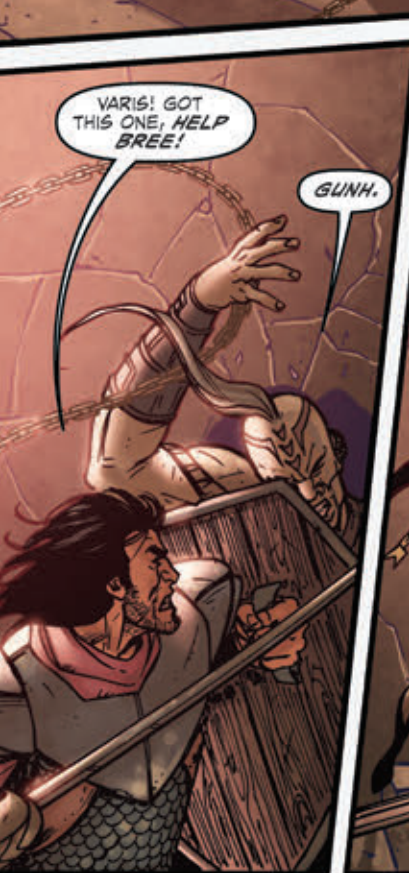
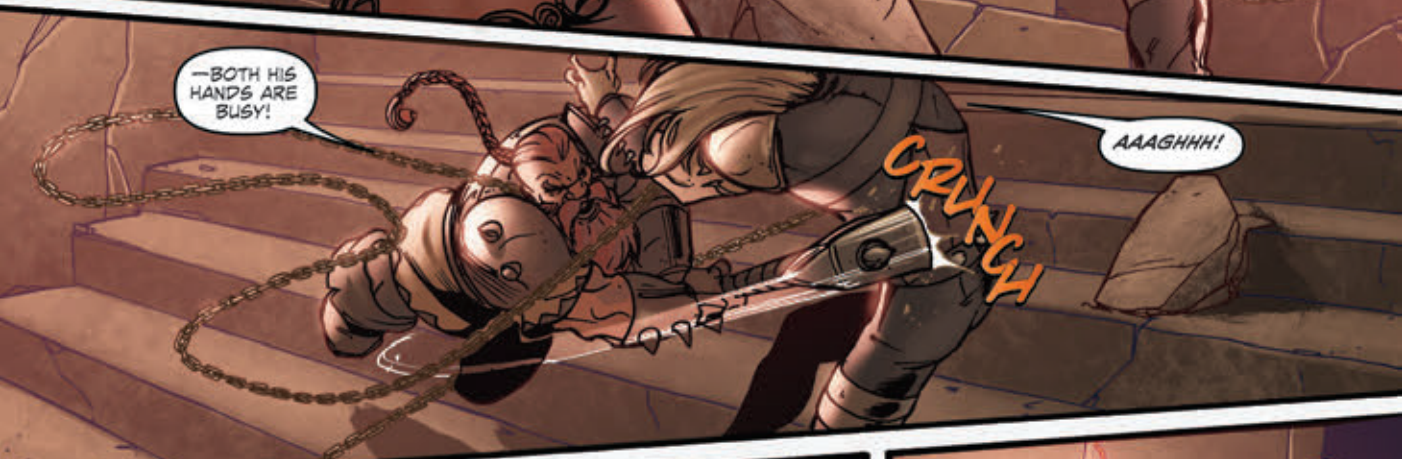
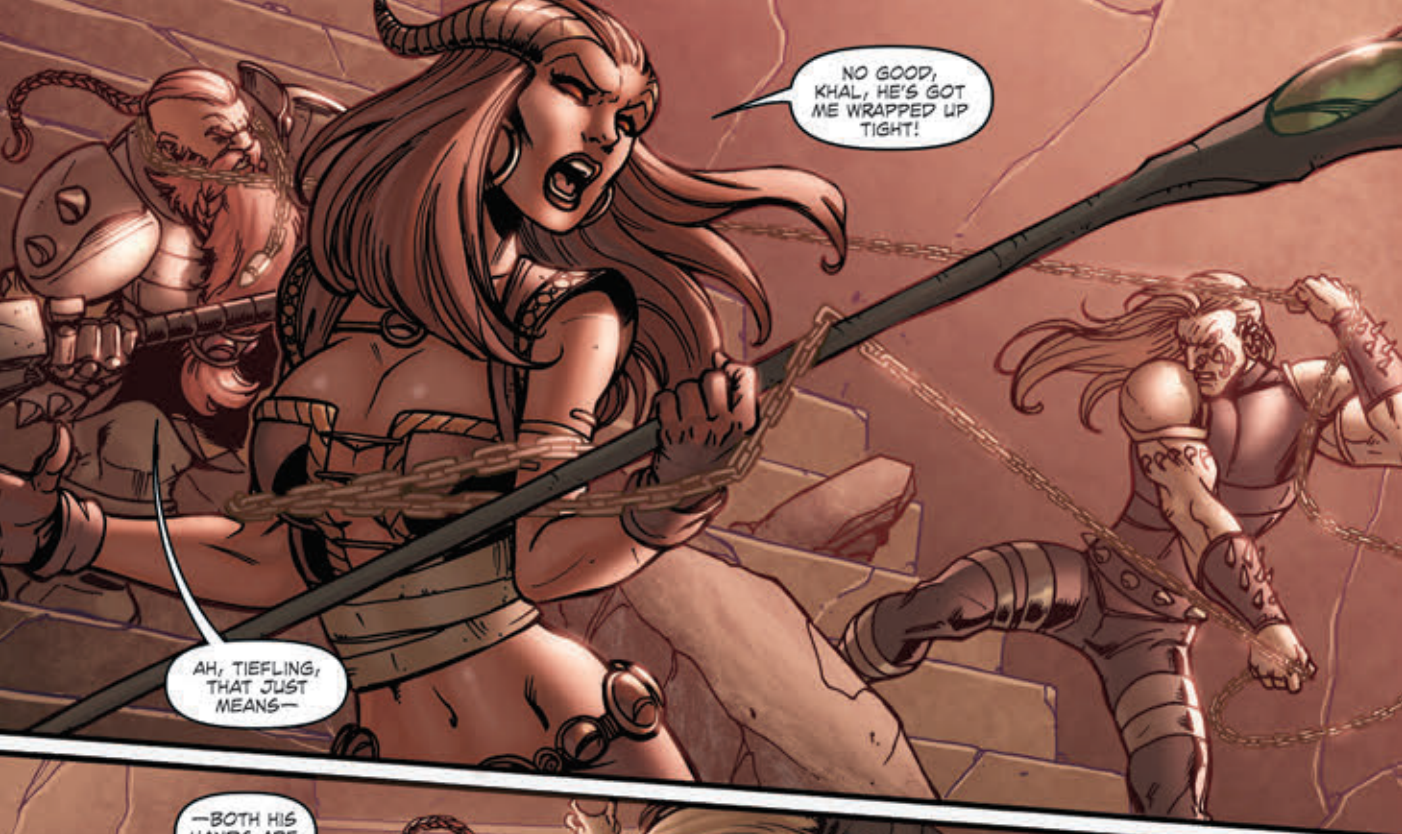


WHOA!

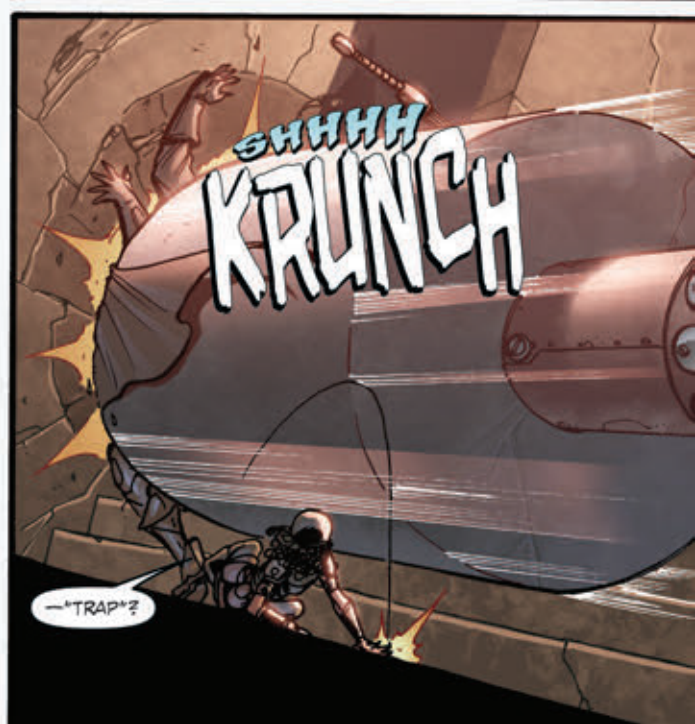
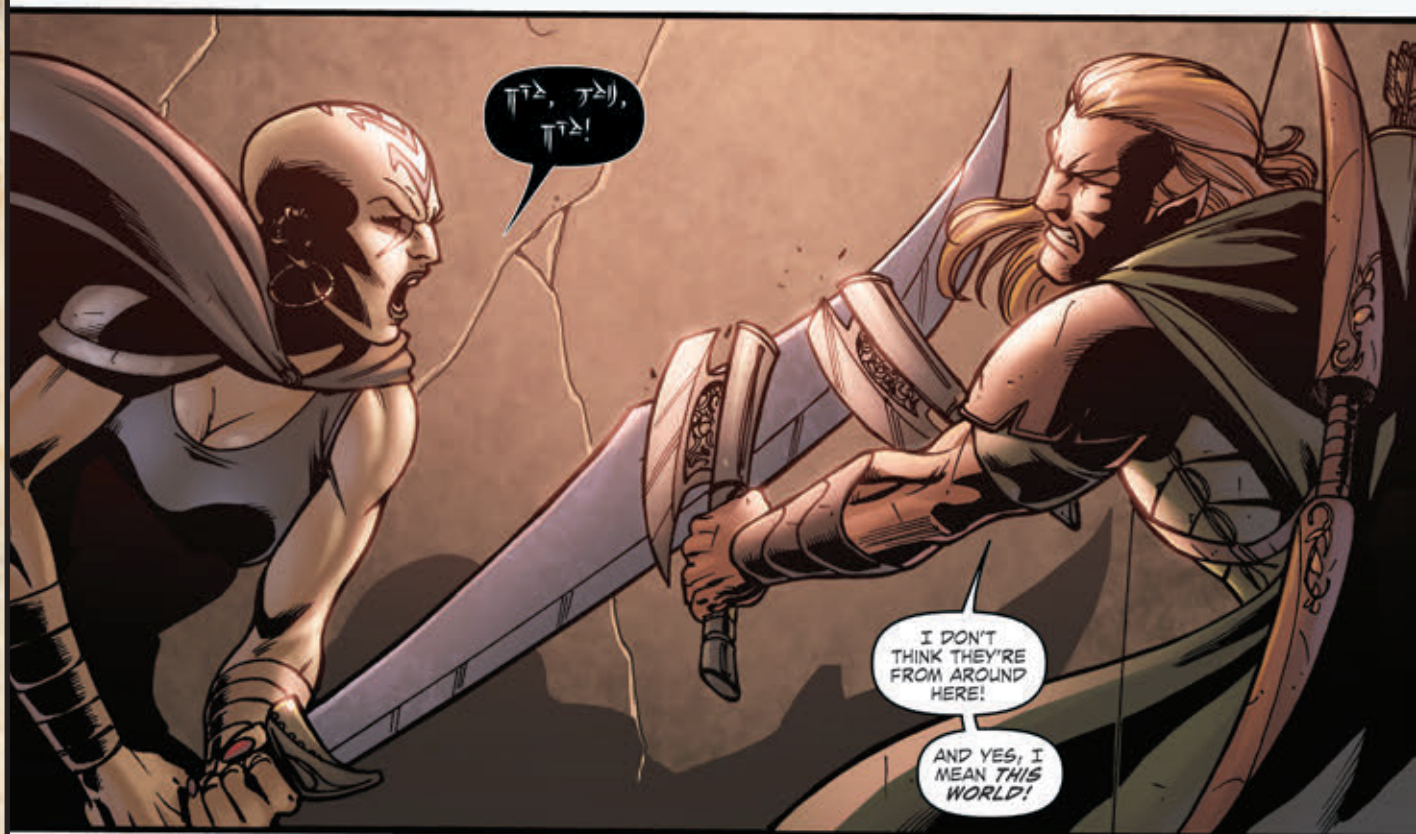
KLANG

CHUNK













THEY'RE  
'PORTERS! WE NEED  
TO GET OFF THESE  
STAIRS NOW!



RUNNING  
*DOWN* INTO THE  
SHADOWS?

WE STAND STILL,  
THEY JUST KEEP  
POPPING IN AROUND US.  
ONLY WAY TO FIGHT A  
'PORTER IS *MOVE* AND  
*KEEP MOVING*.



PERFECT! BACKS  
TO THE WALL! BREE,  
GET THAT OPPOSITE  
DOOR OPEN!



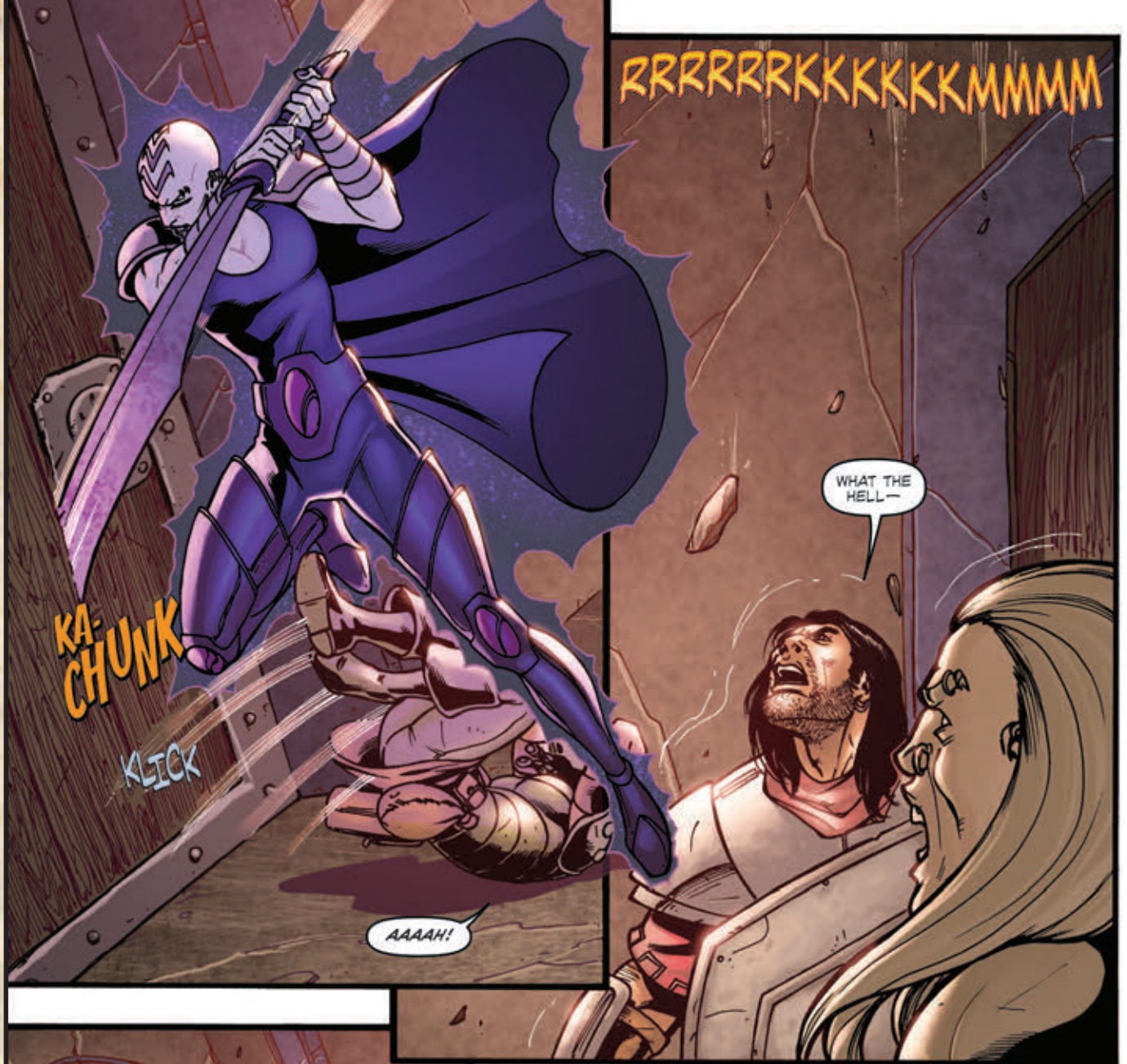
BREE, A  
LITTLE *SPEED*  
PLEASE.



YEAH, YEAH,  
YOU KEEP THE  
CHAINBOYS BUSY  
WHILE—

—WAIT, IF  
THOSE ARE THE  
CHAINBOYS...







WELL, THIS CAN'T  
GET MUCH WORSE.

CATCHY PHRASE FOR  
THE TOMBSTONE.











Art by Tyler Walpole





THERE IS *ONE* GOOD THING  
ABOUT FIGHTING IN A RAPIDLY  
FLOODING DWARVEN DEATHTRAP...

...MAYBE THE OTHER GUYS  
CAN'T SWIM? I DON'T  
KNOW, I'M REACHING HERE.



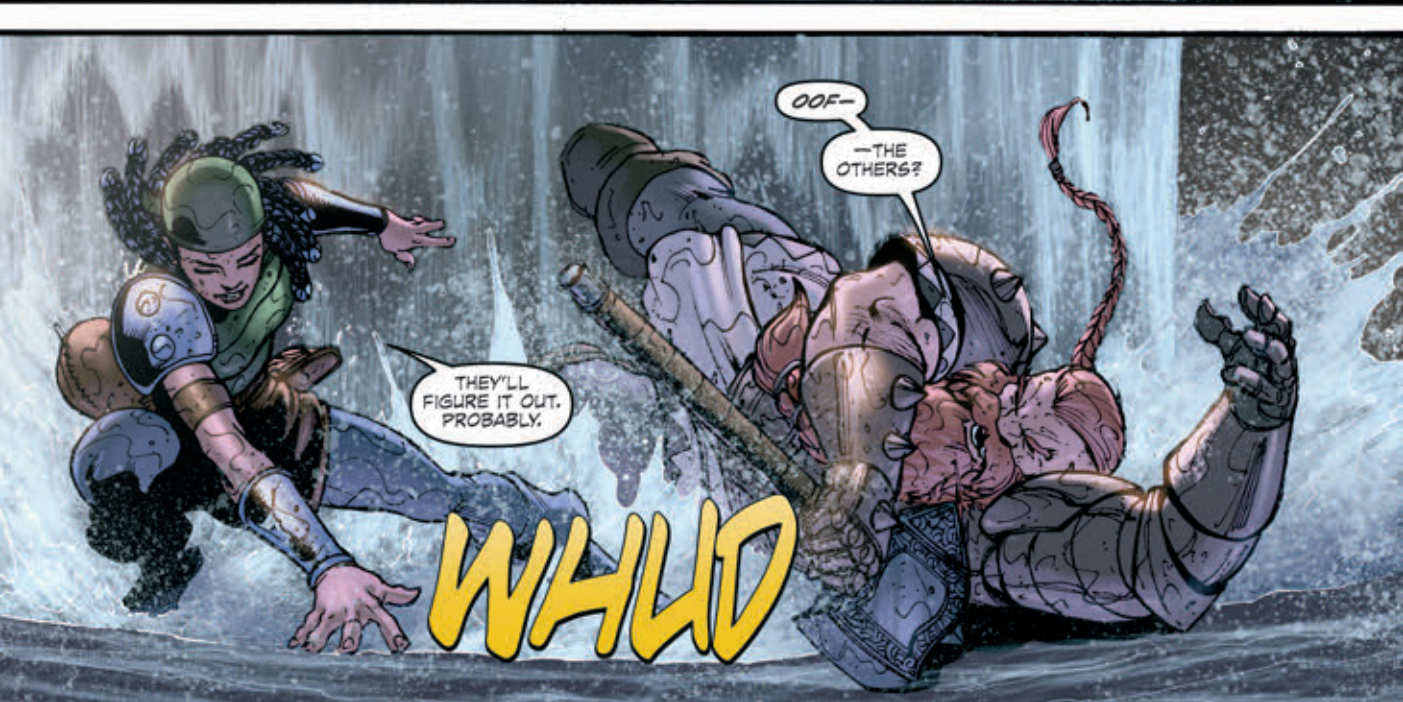
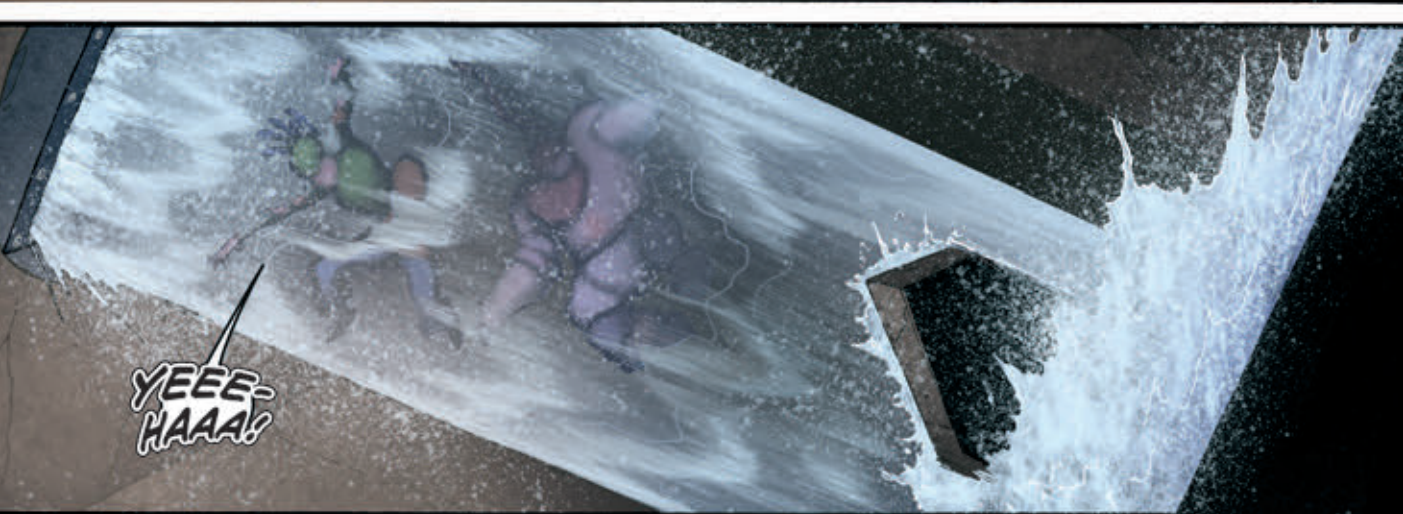




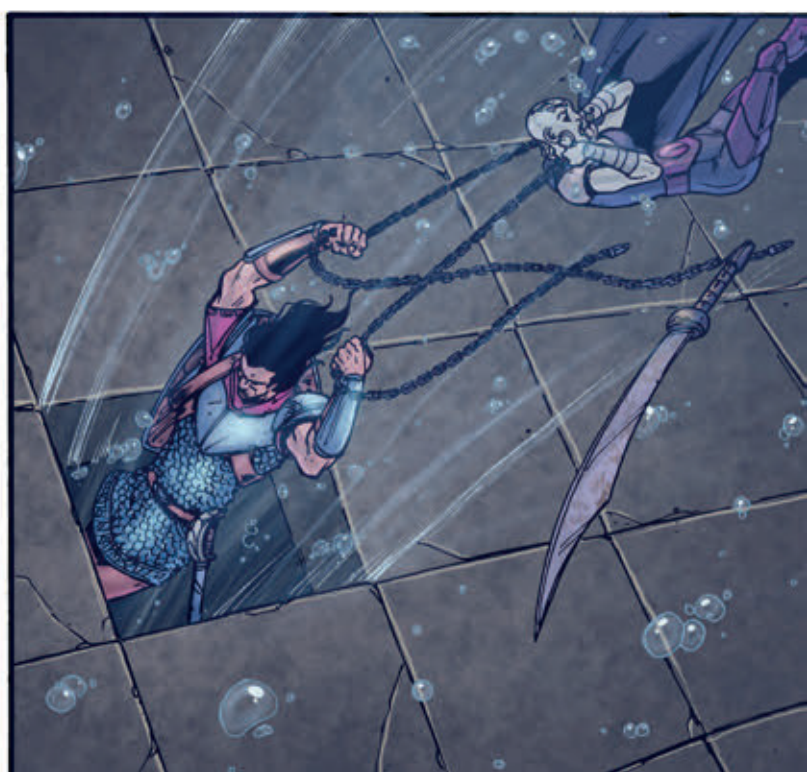




















BEHIND THE  
WALLS OF EVERY  
PROPERLY BUILT  
DUNGEON—

—IS  
THIS.



...YOU KNOW  
WHAT I'M  
THINKING?



SUICIDE.

AMBUSH.

SHORTCUT!

DEAD  
END.





PERFECT. WE BYPASS ALL THOSE NASTY DWARVEN TRAPS.

WAIT, KHAL, DID YOUR PEOPLE EVER TRAP THESE SHAFTS?



NAE. ENOUGH PEOPLE DIED WORKING IN 'EM, SEEMED LIKE THEY WERE DEADLY ENOUGH ON THEIR OWN.



OH, GOOD.

**INTERLOPERS!  
YOU ARE  
DOOMED!**



**YOU WILL  
DIE SOON! IN  
AGONY!**

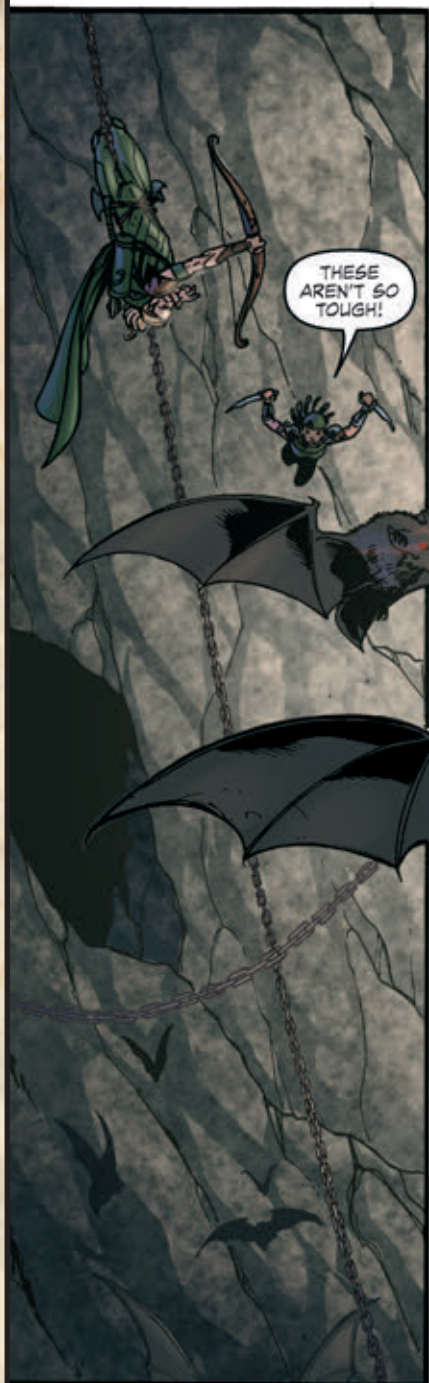
WHO IS THAT?

BIGGER PROBLEM...



...WHAT DID IT WAKE UP?





THESE  
AREN'T SO  
TOUGH!



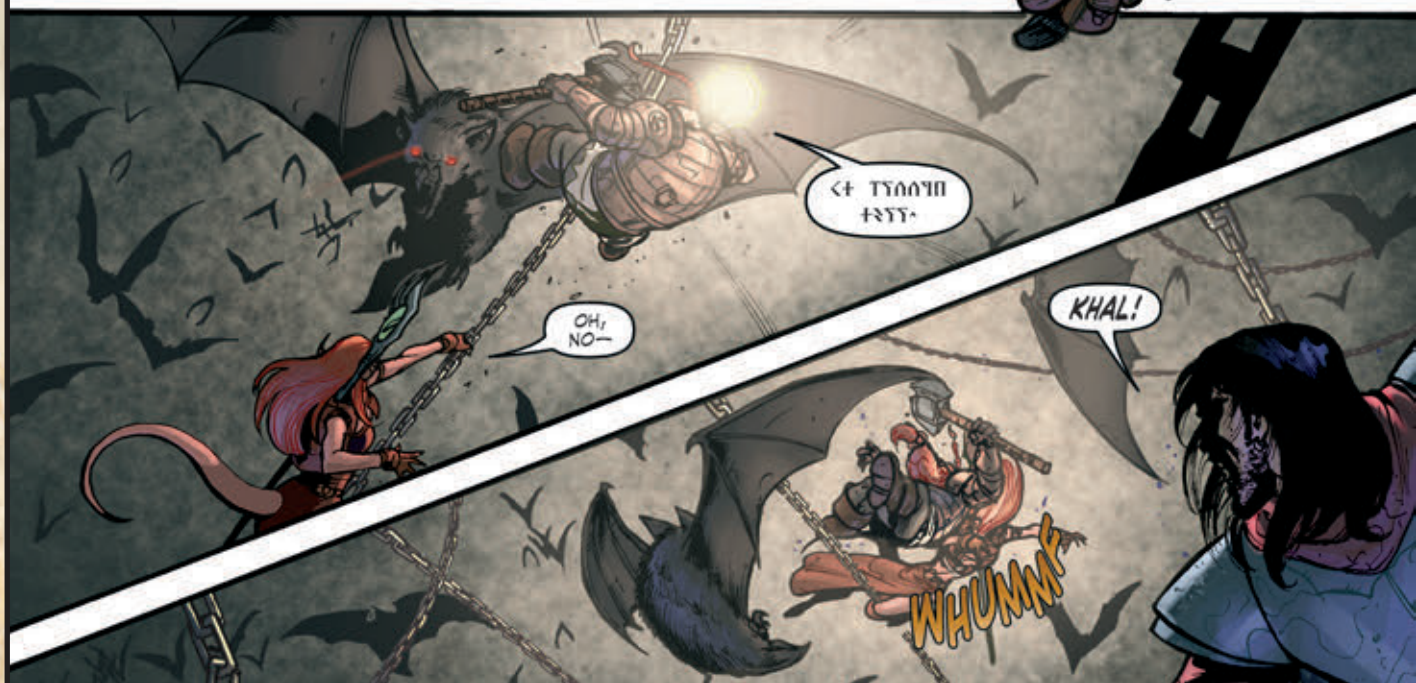
DON'T  
PROVOKE  
THEM!

GOT IT—WAIT,  
"DON'T"?



BREE, STAY  
CLEAR!

YOU  
COULDN'T  
TAG ME ON  
YOUR BEST  
DAY!



ՀԻ ԿՆԱՆՈՒ  
ԷՆՆԻ

OH,  
NO—

KHAL!

WHUNNY





THIS IS  
GOING TO  
HURT.



TWANG

SWUNG



GAHHHH!



ASH!  
YOU FITLHY  
FERN-LOVER!  
YOU'VE BEEN  
WAITING TO DO  
THAT!

NOT GOOD,  
NOT GOOD, NOT  
GOOD...



ROPE'S NOT  
GOING TO  
HOLD!

THERE!  
SWING US  
OVER!







KLING  
KLANG  
FZZZT



REMINDE ME  
AGAIN WHY WE  
DO THIS?



CALLLED BY  
MY GOD, OF  
COURSE.

OF COURSE.  
MUST BE NICE  
TO HAVE THAT  
SORT OF  
FAITH.



BAH. FAITH IS  
NEVER EASY. FAITH  
WITHOUT DOUBT IS  
MEANINGLESS.

AND DOUBT'S  
A HARD  
MASTER.



DIDN'T EVEN  
START AS A  
PALADIN. STARTED  
AS A POET.

SURE, A  
POET.

WAIT,  
WHAT?



WHAT KIND OF  
POETRY?

YOU  
WROTE LOVE  
POEMS?

~SIGH~  
LOVE.





I'M  
GONNA  
SAY IT.

DON'T.



NEVER  
SPLIT THE  
PARTY!



TECHNICALLY, IT'S  
JUST A DELAYED  
FLANK.

LISTEN, THE  
*ENTRANCE* TO THIS  
PLACE NEARLY KILLED US.  
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BET  
THE REST OF THOSE  
SCRUFFY GRAVE  
ROBBERS—



YOU MEAN  
THE ONES WHO  
NEARLY TURNED  
US INTO MEAT  
PIES?

WHEN WE  
*OUTNUMBERED*  
THEM.

—ARE HUDDLED  
IN THE FORGE,  
WAITING TO BE  
RESCUED?



YOU'RE IN  
A MOOD,  
THEN.

THEY MAKE  
WEAPONS OUT OF  
FEY GUTS. ANYONE  
ELSE HERE HAVE A  
FEY HEART IN  
THEIR CHEST?



FAIR  
ENOUGH.

INTERLOPERS?





GIVE ME ANOTHER ONE.

"IS OUR LOVE WORTH DISOBEYING OUR CLAN?"

"NO."



I DON'T GET IT.

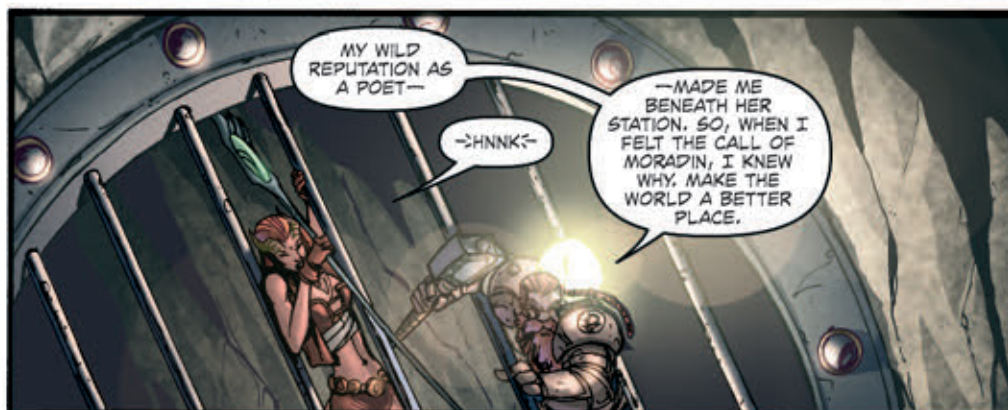
THEY DON'T DISOBEY BECAUSE THEY'RE DWARVES. BUT THEY *CONSIDER* IT. FOR LOVE.

THERE WERE RIOTS WHEN I READ THAT ONE.



MAYBE IT SOUNDS BETTER IN ITS ORIGINAL DWARVEN.

'COURSE, THAT'S PART OF MY PROBLEM. WHY MY SWEET DANNAE'S FAMILY DOES NOT APPROVE OF ME.



MY WILD REPUTATION AS A POET—

—HNNK—

—MADE ME BENEATH HER STATION. SO, WHEN I FELT THE CALL OF MORADIN, I KNEW WHY. MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.



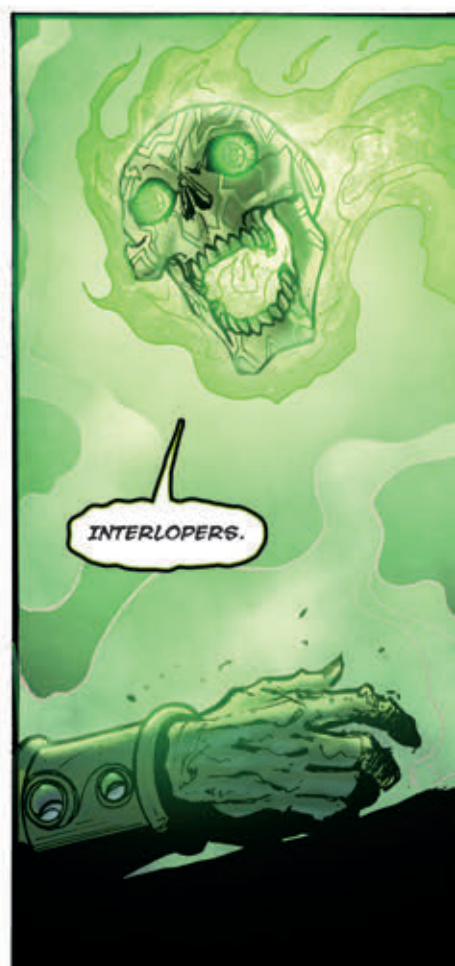
IF I RETURN WITH THE BLESSINGS OF MORADIN, WHO ARE THEY TO DOUBT ME?

NOW, WHY ARE YOU OUT IN THE WORLD?

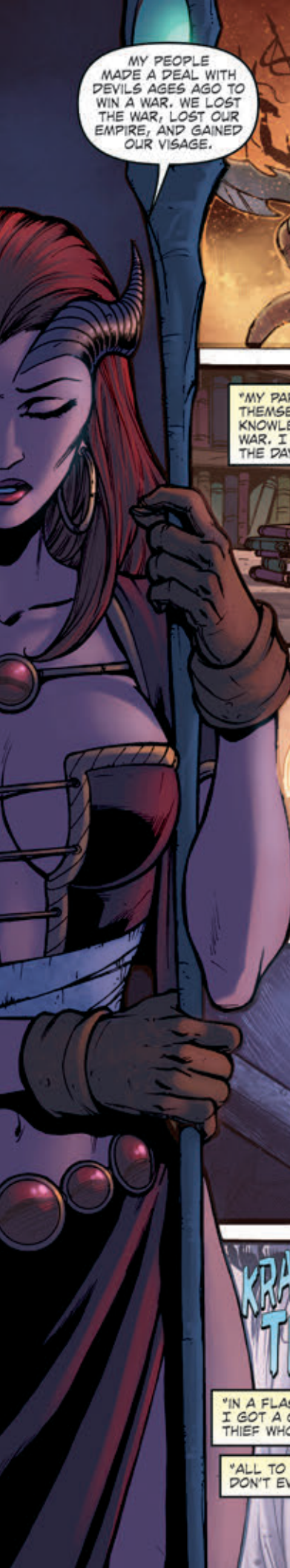


I'M TRYING TO FIND MY PARENTS' MURDERER.









MY PEOPLE  
MADE A DEAL WITH  
DEVILS AGES AGO TO  
WIN A WAR. WE LOST  
THE WAR, LOST OUR  
EMPIRE, AND GAINED  
OUR VISAGE.



"MY PARENTS DEDICATED  
THEMSELVES TO FINDING THE  
KNOWLEDGE WE LOST IN THAT  
WAR. I HELPED THEM FROM  
THE DAY I COULD WALK.



"LIFE IN THE BOOKS  
MADE THEM SO HAPPY.

"MY LITTLE SISTER, TARA, TURNED  
THOSE STUDIES INTO AN ART. SHE  
BECAME A WIZARD. I STAYED IN  
THE BOOKS WITH MY PARENTS...



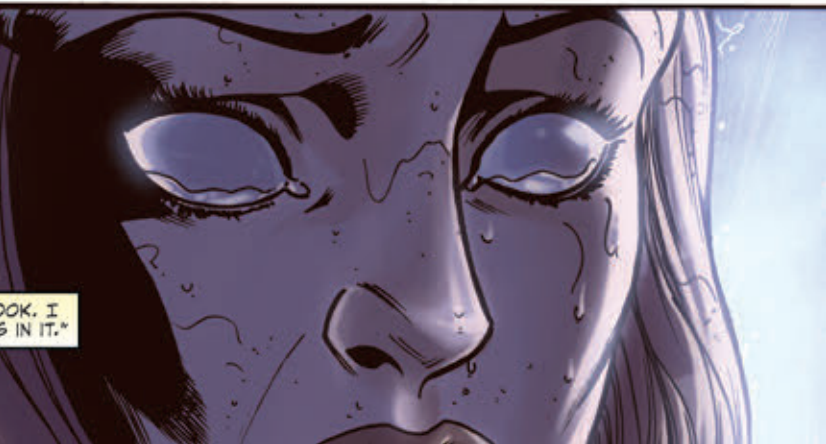
"...UNTIL THE DAY THEY DIED.



KRAKA-  
THOOM

"IN A FLASH OF LIGHTNING,  
I GOT A GLIMPSE OF THE  
THIEF WHO'D KILLED THEM.

"ALL TO STEAL A SINGLE BOOK. I  
DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT WAS IN IT."











INTERLOPERS!

READY,  
SET—



I THOUGHT YOU  
WOULD NEVER GET  
DOWN HERE!

COME  
ON!



DIDN'T YOU  
HEAR MY  
WARNINGS?

WARNINGS?

IN THE MAIN  
SHAFT!



YOU YELLED  
THAT WE  
WERE GOING  
TO DIE!

"LOOK OUT!  
THAT PLACE IS  
DANGEROUS!  
YOU'RE GOING  
TO DIE!"



BUT YOU KEPT  
CALLING US  
"INTERLOPERS."

YES! WAIT, IS  
THAT NOT RIGHT?  
I ONLY SPOKE  
DWARVEN WHEN THEY  
MADE ME INTO A  
FLAMESKULL...



"VISITOR"

THAT'S  
"VISITOR."  
INTERLOPER IS  
MORE; AH,  
"INVADER."





OH, THEN  
THESE  
PEOPLE.

THEY'RE  
INTERLOPERS!



HOW MANY  
OF THESE  
BLOODY GRAVE  
ROBBERS ARE  
THERE?!

I DON'T  
KNOW THAT  
WORD.



THESE ARE  
SHADAR-KAI,  
FROM THE REALM  
OF SHADOWFELL.  
SERVANTS OF THE  
RAVEN QUEEN  
OF DEATH.

HOW'D  
THEY FIND  
THIS PLACE?



OH, THEY  
DID NOT FIND  
CHAD' MARAGH.  
THEY WERE  
BROUGHT HERE  
TO PROTECT  
IT.



PROTECT  
IT FROM  
WHAT?!









THEY ARE  
HERE TO  
RESTORE  
IT.



"SOMETHING'S HAPPENING."

"HE IS RETURNING. THE  
ONE WHO DRIVES THEM."



"HE IS... NOT WHAT  
ONE EXPECTS."





"A CYCLOPS?"



BUT... THE  
CYCLOPS SERVE  
THE DARK KINGS  
OF THE FEYWILD.  
NOT SHADOW.

OF COURSE.  
IT IS A COMPACT.  
A TREATY. BOTH  
WORLDS ARE  
TO INVADE  
THIS ONE.

DID YOU  
NOT KNOW  
THIS?



I. HATE.  
YOU.

THWAP

OW!










Art by Tyler Walpole



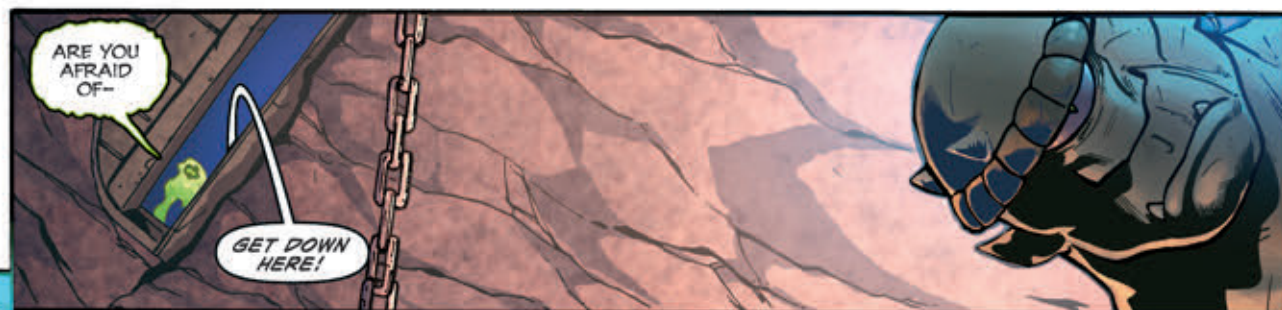
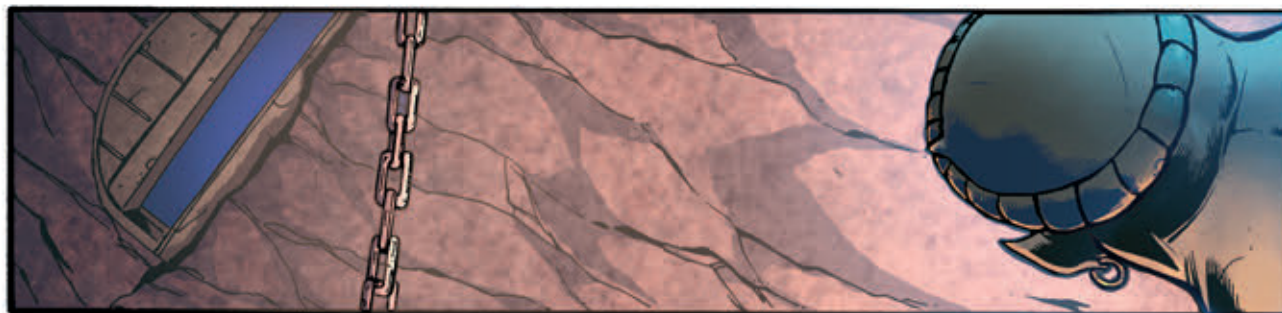




YOU KNOW, WHEN FACING AN  
INVASION FROM NOT ONE BUT TWO  
MYSTICAL PARALLEL DIMENSIONS...

...MY ABILITY TO  
*OCCASIONALLY* KILL  
OTHER PEOPLE WITH A  
BIT OF SHARP STEEL IS  
PROBABLY NOT ENOUGH  
TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.









WHY CAN MY  
ARMY NOT COME  
THROUGH YET,  
ELADRIN?

YOU ASK THE  
IMPOSSIBLE.



I'M WORKING WITH  
CORRUPT DWARVEN  
STEEL WRAPPED AROUND  
ELADRIN MAGIC BOUND IN A  
WAY IT WAS NEVER MEANT  
TO BE BOUND.

YOU GIVE ME  
EXCUSES!



I GIVE YOU  
*FACTS*. A FEW  
DOZEN UNARMORED  
TRAVELLERS MAY  
PASS THROUGH AT  
WILL. THAT IN ITSELF  
IS A MIRACLE.

AN ARMY—IT  
WILL COLLAPSE  
AND CAST YOU  
TO THE VOID.



MAYBE YOU  
TELL THE TRUTH,  
WIZARD.

OR MAYBE  
YOU ARE BUYING  
TIME... FOR A  
RESCUE.

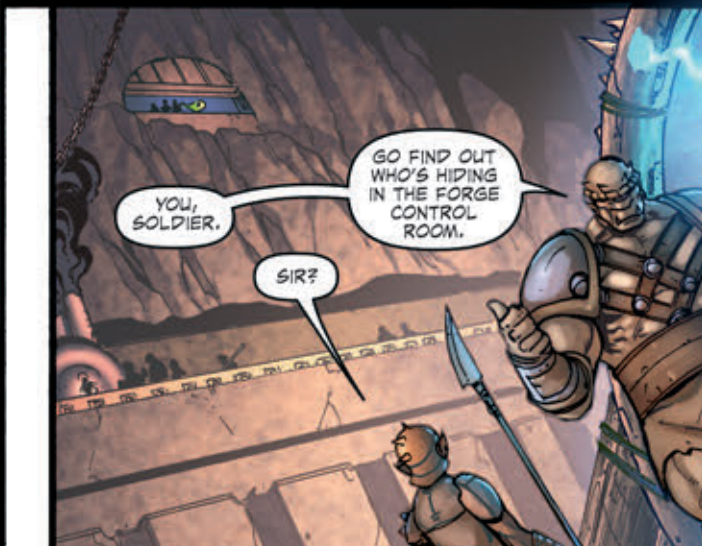


OR MAYBE  
YOU JUST  
NEED MORE  
POWER.

ELADRIN  
*BLOOD*  
POWERS THESE  
KEYS, NO?

GRRRK!













"OH, I WANNA FIND  
KHAL AND TISHA NOW!"

"SO THEY CAN TALK SOME  
SENSE INTO YOU!"



UGH. THE  
STENCH OF THESE  
SLAVES. I HATE  
GUARD DUTY.

IT'S  
NOT THE  
SLAVES.



THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
WRONG WITH THE  
OFFAL PIT.

-KAFF-  
WHY IS IT SO  
FULL?



WE'VE GOT  
CRAWLERS  
FOR FEEDING,  
BUT I HAVEN'T  
SEEN—



CHOKE ON  
IT, YE FOUL  
BEAST!

ARROOOOOOOO!

BOOOOSH











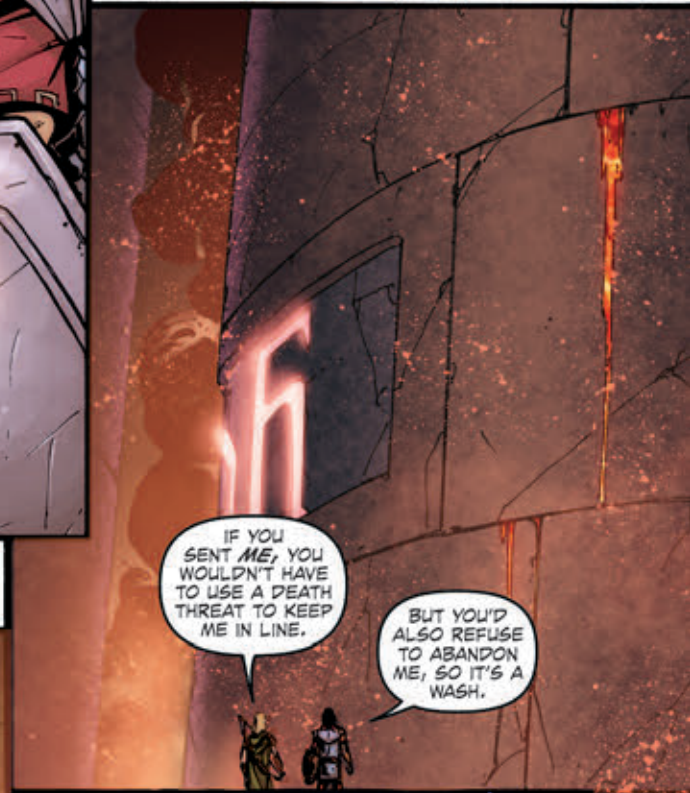
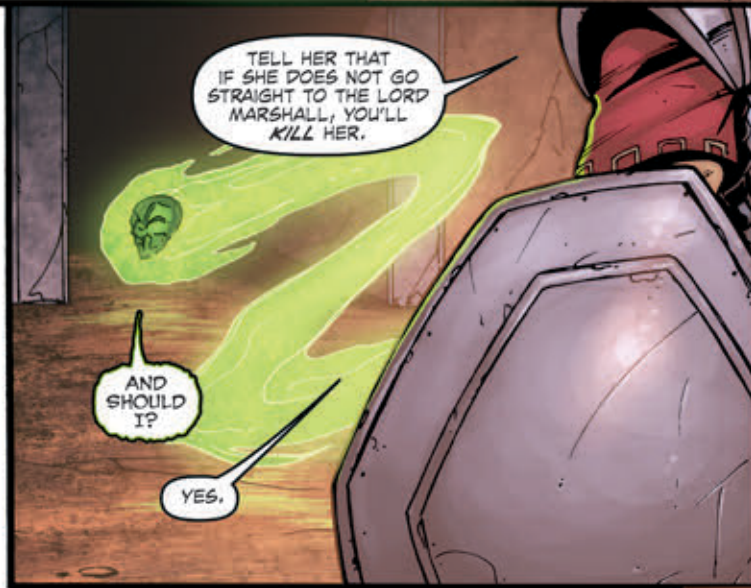


THE BURNING  
HEART OF  
**CHAD'MARAGH**.  
MOLTEN ROCK FROM  
THE WORLD'S  
CENTER IS ITS  
BLOOD.

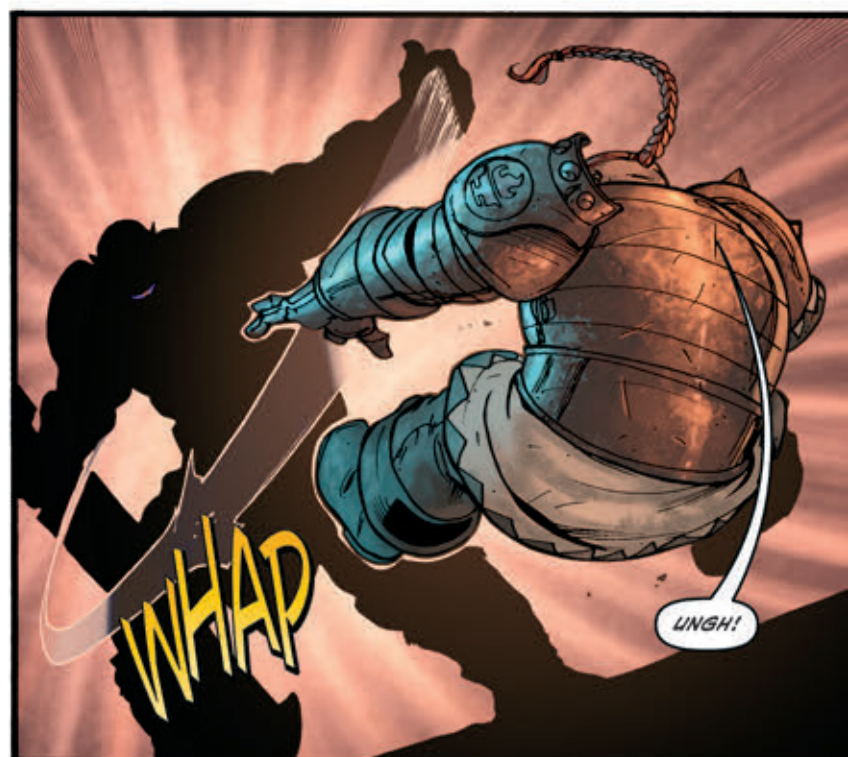
BOUND FIRE  
ELEMENTALS ARE  
ITS BREATH.



















HE SAID  
TO KILL  
ME?

YES.

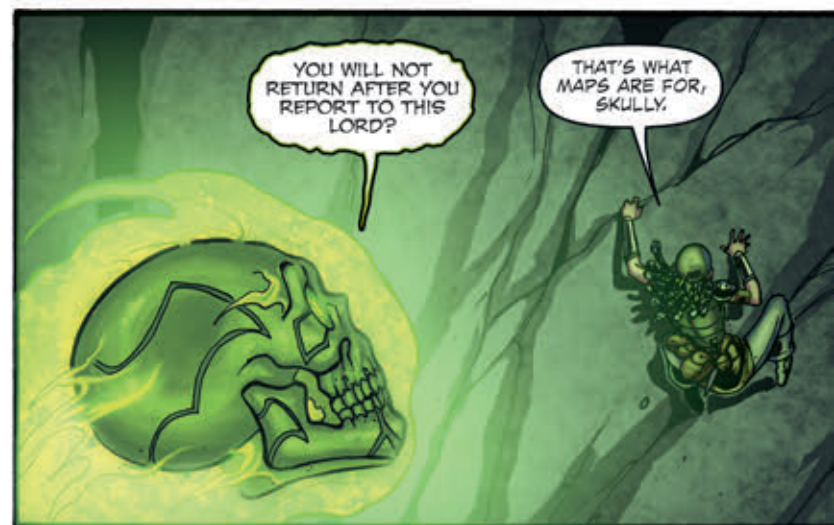
SMART  
PLAY.



YOU DO NOT  
REGRET LEAVING  
YOUR COMPANIONS  
IN DANGER?

YOU KNOW  
WHAT I WOULD  
REALLY REGRET?  
DYING FOR  
SOMEBODY  
ELSE.

SCRATCH  
THAT. DYING  
IN GENERAL.  
AIN'T GONNA  
DO IT.



YOU WILL NOT  
RETURN AFTER YOU  
REPORT TO THIS  
LORD?

THAT'S WHAT  
MAPS ARE FOR,  
SKULLY.



WITH ANY LUCK,  
THE BOSS WILL  
WRECK THIS PLACE.  
IT'LL BE A SMOKING  
CRATER BEFORE  
I'M HALFWAY  
HOME.

SO  
THE LORD  
WARDEN WILL  
FIND NOTHING  
IF HE COMES  
HERE.



SURE, AND  
HE'LL THINK  
I'M LYING,  
AND—

—OH  
POOP.





YEAH, I CAN READ  
A BIT OF MAGIC.

LEARNED BEFORE I LOST  
MY FAMILY. COPERNICUS JINX  
FOUND OUT DURING THE  
WAR, TRAINED ME IN MORE.



KSSH-AFF

I KNOW JUST ENOUGH  
TO BLOW THINGS UP.

HE WAS GOING TO SEND  
ME ON A SUICIDE MISSION.



WHICH IS WHY HE TRAINED ME.



SOUNDS COLD,  
BUT TO BE FAIR...

KRACK



SYTHSYH-  
TYSP

...I'M AN ADVENTURER.

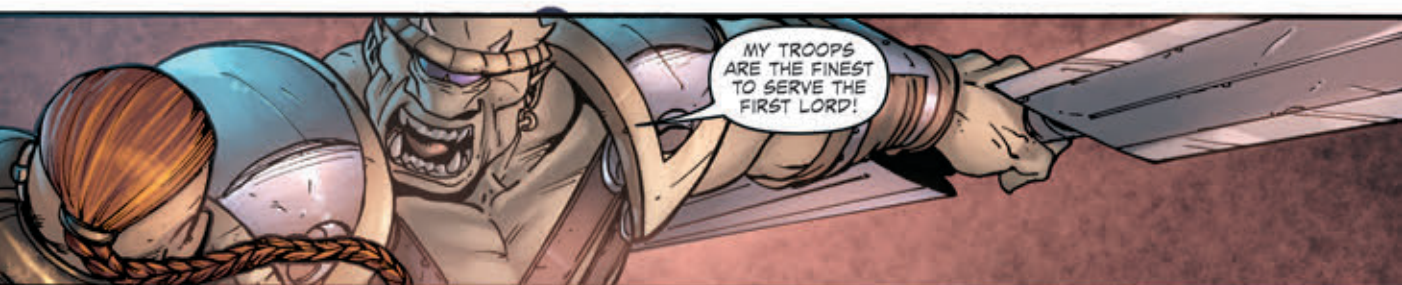


MY WHOLE LIFE'S A  
SUICIDE MISSION.













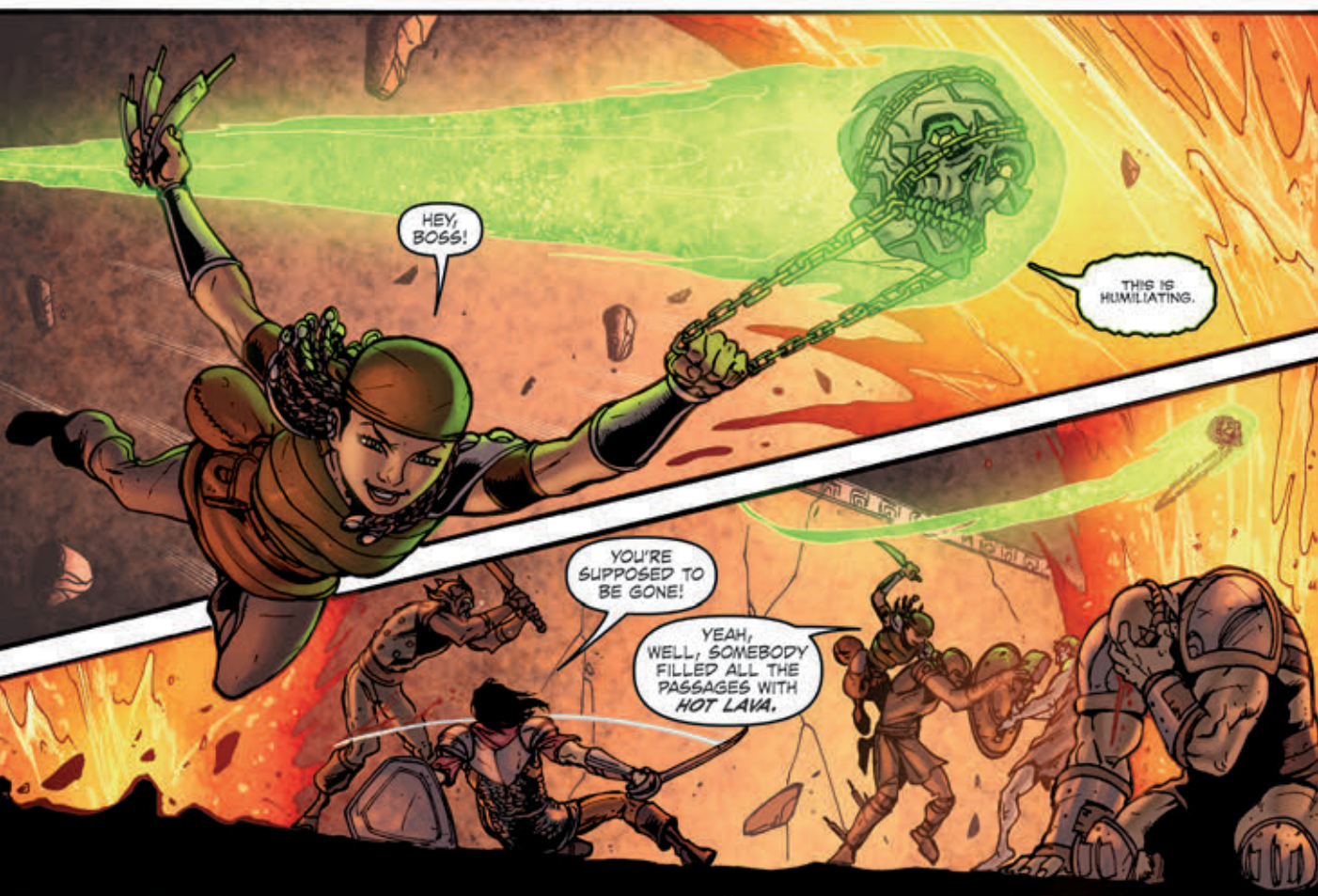
















WHERE DOES  
THIS PORTAL  
GO?

NOT  
HERE!  
WHICH WILL  
DO FOR  
NOW!



GOOD  
WORK, HUMAN!  
THE LAVA WILL  
DESTROY THIS  
PORTAL AND THE  
WORLD KEYS!



WELL,  
LET'S MAKE  
SURE WE GET THE  
JOB DONE, AND  
TOSS THIS ONE  
INTO THE—



KRKA-THOOM



NO!  
THIS PORTAL IS  
TUNED FOR THE  
WORLD KEYS IN  
THE CIRCLE.

ADDING  
JUST ONE  
MORE CHANGES  
EVERY EQUATION,  
EVERY SPELL  
BALANCE—





LIKE I SAID, MY TALENT  
WITH A SWORD WAS NOT  
ENOUGH TO SOLVE THE  
PROBLEM.

—WE WILL  
BE CAST  
INTO THE  
VOID!

BUT MY TALENT  
AT APOCALYPTIC  
SCREW-UPS  
TURNED OUT TO BE  
JUST THE THING.

TIME BENDS UPON ITSELF!  
FLASHBACKS! ANCIENT CITIES!  
WET DWARVES! EXPEND A  
DAILY POWER TO SEE IT ALL  
IN THE NEXT VOLUME!







# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™

Comic & Game Adventure

## Bad Day

by John Rogers, Andrea Di Vito, and Bill Slavicsek



The tavern is alive with drinks shared and talk of adventure. A strange noise emanates from under the floorboards, like giant scurrying rats. Suddenly, zombie-like creatures burst through the floor, sending patrons in all directions. But will you stand and fight?

Licensed By:

IDW







Comic and Game Adventure

## Bad Day

by Bill Slavicsek

Cartography by Jonathan Roberts----

### Introduction

The new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS comic follows the adventures of Adric and his companions from the town of Fallcrest and into the surrounding countryside of the Nentir Vale and beyond. In Issue #0, they followed gnolls into the Underdark and had to confront a black dragon. And that was just the beginning for the group!

In Issue #1, Adric and his band are having a really Bad Day. It's not just run-of-the-mill bad. It's Epic Bad. We've replicated three of the pivotal scenes in the story in the following three DUNGEONS & DRAGONS roleplaying game encounters. You can use these as the foundation of a longer adventure of your own creation, or you can simply play the three encounters as a short delve that can be used to start off a really bad day for your own band of adventurers.

While Adric and his companions weigh in at the mid-to-high portion of the heroic tier of play, we've decided to set these encounters at the lower end of the scale, making them perfect for 1st- or 2nd-level adventurers. You can always scale up the encounters if you want to use them to challenge higher-level characters. The *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the *Dungeon Master's Kit* provide guidelines for adjusting the level of encounters.

### Adventure Background

These encounters take place in the town of Fallcrest, in the Nentir Vale, as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the *Dungeon Master's Kit*. You can set it in any town or city in your campaign.

As the adventurers relax between quests at their favorite tavern (in this case, the Staggered Goat), they suddenly get drawn into the middle of strange occurrences that build and build until they're having a really bad day.

Make sure that these encounters take place in a location that the adventurers are familiar with and where they are well known. It doesn't quite work the same if they are anonymous mercenaries just passing through when things start to go bad.

### Getting Started

Dungeon Masters need a copy of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game rules, which you can find in either the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Fantasy Roleplaying Game Starter Set* or the *Dungeon Master's Kit*. Players need a copy of *Heroes of the Fallen Lands* and a character sheet to make characters to use in the adventure.

Once you're ready to begin, check out "Encounter

1: They Came From Beneath the Goat" to get started. And wish your adventurers luck. They're going to need it!

## Encounter 1: They Came From Beneath the Goat

### Encounter Level 1 (525 XP)

3 zombified townsfolk

9 zombified townsfolk minions

#### To start the encounter, read:

*It's a typical afternoon at the Staggered Goat. The tavern's common room is crowded and noisy, full of leather-clad men and woman of various races, drinking, eating, telling tales, and exchanging secrets in the recessed shadows at far from the Goat's main doors. A barmaid—a lovely half-elf that has served you before—dances toward you with a grin and asks, "What can I get my favorite adventurers this fine afternoon?"*

The adventurers are enjoying a much-needed break in the Staggered Goat, a rough-and-tumble tavern in Fallcrest's Lower Quay district. Let the adventurers spend a few moments reminiscing about past exploits, planning upcoming adventures, talking to locals, or even discussing employment opportunities with the other customers before you dive into the heart of the encounter. Here are a couple of roleplaying opportunities you can use while the adventurers are relaxing in the Goat.

#### Kira the Barmaid

Let the adventurers roleplay chatting with Kira, the half-elf barmaid as she takes their orders. The Goat offers typical tavern fare, including dwarven ale, halfling mead, elven wine, and Nerathi spirits, as well as roasted skewers of meat, chunks of cheese, and loafs of bread.

Kira is friendly and a bit of a flirt, quick with compliments and smiles and lingering touches as she talks, but that only helps make the tips she receives that much more impressive. Hey, even a half-elf barmaid needs to eat and pay the rent!

#### Cobblegrim

Cobblegrim the dwarf regularly occupies a shadowy booth at the back of the Goat. He's a great source of rumors and he makes a point of knowing who's coming and going in the Lower Quay. For the price of a mug of strong dwarven ale from Hammerfast and a gold piece or two, he's happy to share some of what he knows with anyone who treats him with the deference and respect he feels he deserves.

Cobblegrim has also been known to serve as a broker for local adventurers, hooking up the right team with a wealthy patron whenever the opportunity presents itself. He's a great person to use to send



your adventurers off on their next quest for treasure and monster hunting.

## Shara Redhair

The tall, striking woman warrior known as Shara leads a group of rival adventurers that includes such notable heroes as Uldane Forden the halfling thief and Albanon the eladrin wizard. She sometimes wanders into the Goat just to see what's going on and to check on the seediest part of the seedier part of town. She can outdrink and outfight any man or woman in the place, and she often spends an evening or two when she's in town doing just that.

## The Bad Day Begins

After you lull the adventurers into a false sense of security with the mundane hustle and bustle of the Staggered Goat, you can then hit them with the juicy part of this encounter—zombies! Or, more specifically, zombified townsfolk! See “Developments,” below, for more information about zombified townsfolk.

### When the floor beneath the adventurers breaks open, read:

*The floorboards beneath your feet suddenly split apart as something pushes its way up from under the Staggered Goat. Lots of something. Specifically, lots of hands. And arms. And then whole bodies emerge from the newly opened hole. Zombie bodies! The horde of zombies moans as they reach out to grab you.*

## Tactics

The zombified townsfolk emerge from the hole in the floor to attack the adventurers and anyone else in the tavern. At the beginning of each round, one zombified townsfolk and three minions crawl out of the hole and join the battle. They fight to the death or until the dark energies that have created them run their course.

## Development

The townsfolk suffer from a transformation inflicted upon them by energy from the Shadowfell. This energy changes their appearance and befuddles their minds, making them susceptible to the suggestions of the villain behind this foul scheme—the wizard Kurche.

Near the end of the battle, dark energy flows out of the zombified townsfolk and they revert to their natural forms. That's when the dragonborn Captain Gondar and the Fallcrest Guard show up to find that the adventurers have slaughtered innocent citizens.

“In the name of the Lord Warden,” Gondar shouts, “hold! You have been caught in the act, and this time you will pay for your crimes!”

The Guard surround the adventurers and take them into custody. It's time to go see the Lord Warden and try to resolve this situation.

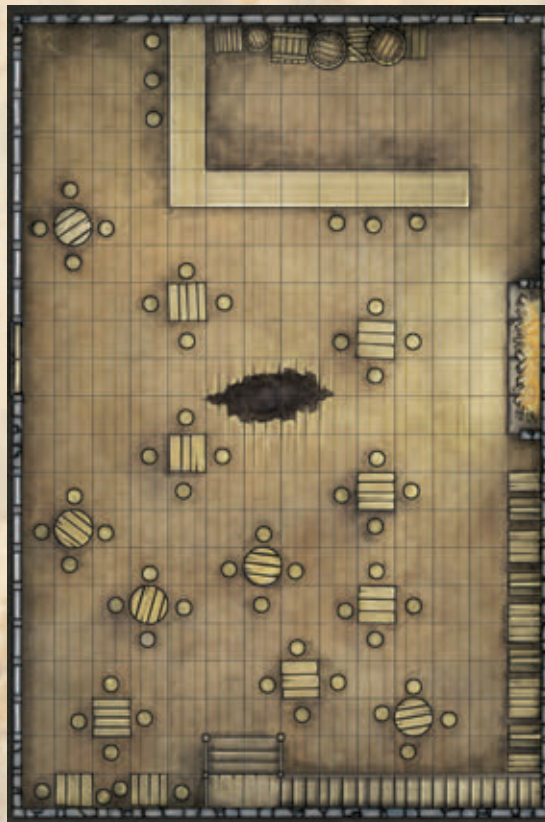
## Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Dim light in the tavern.

**Crates and Barrels:** These are filled with beverages, foodstuffs, and other mundane items. Squares containing crates or barrels are difficult terrain.

**Fireplace:** A fire burns in the large fireplace. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the fireplace takes 5 fire damage.

**Stairs:** The stairs lead to the upper level of the tavern, where a number of small rooms are available for the use of the patrons.



3 Zombified Townsfolk      Level 1 Brute  
Medium natural humanoid      XP 100 each  
**HP 33; Bloodied 16 Initiative -1**  
**AC 13, Fortitude 14, Reflex 11, Will 11 Perception -1**  
**Speed 4**

### Traits

#### Zombie Illusion

The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.

#### Standard Actions

↓ Slam ♦ At-Will

---Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d12 + 3 damage, or 1d12 + 8 against a grabbed target.

↓ **Zombie Grasp** ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: The zombie grabs the target (escape DC 12) if it does not have a creature grabbed.

**Str 16 (+3) Dex 8 (-1) Wis 8 (-1)**  
**Con 13 (+1) Int 1 (-5) Cha 3 (-4)**



**Alignment** unaligned      **Languages** —  
 9 Zombified Townsfolk Minion      Level 5 Minion  
 Medium natural humanoid      XP 25 each  
**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.  
 Initiative +1  
**AC** 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11 **Perception** +1  
**Speed** 4  
**Traits**  
**Zombie Illusion**  
 The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.  
**Standard Actions**  
 † **Slam** ♦ **At-Will**  
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC  
*Hit:* 4 damage.  
**Str** 15 (+2) **Dex** 8 (-1) **Wis** 8 (-1)  
**Con** 12 (+1) **Int** 1 (-5) **Cha** 3 (-4)  
**Alignment** unaligned      **Languages** —

## Encounter 2: Escape from the Lord Warden's Keep

**Encounter Level 4 (875 XP)**

Captain Gondar (G)  
 Lord Warden (W)  
 6 Fallcrest Guard Pikemen (P)

Assuming the adventurers peacefully accompany Captain Gondar and the Fallcrest Guard from the Staggering Goat, they are brought before the Lord Warden of Fallcrest. The Lord Warden governs the town from Moonstone Keep, an old castle set atop a steep-sided hill.

If the adventurers decide to resist arrest, then Gondar calls the full weight of the town guard down upon them. Up to 60 Fallcrest guards can be roused relatively quickly, and a militia of 350 can be assembled if necessary. Make it clear that this is a battle that the adventurers can't win if they attempt to struggle.

**When the adventurers arrive in the Lord Warden's hall, read:**

*You are escorted into a large hall within the keep and brought before the throne of the Lord Warden. He's a balding, middle-aged man with a keen mind and a dry wit. Captain Gondar and six Fallcrest Guard surround you as the dragonborn relates the charges to the Lord Warden.*

*"Disturbing the peace," Gondar says, "destruction of property, murder." He points toward the body on the nearby table, one of the zombies that attacked you at the Goat. The body appears to be that of a normal human. Dead, but normal nonetheless.*

### Roleplaying the Encounter

This encounter starts out as a roleplaying encounter, wherein Gondar presents the charges against the adventurers, the Lord Warden asks some questions,

and the adventurers attempt to explain themselves.

"Let's be frank," the Lord Warden says, "the town welcomes adventurers and I expect a certain amount of murder. I encourage it, in fact, as long as it is properly directed. Outward. At brigands and monsters. Not at the citizenry."

The Lord Warden acts reasonably. Gondar does his best to expose the adventurers for the murderers he believes them to be. And the Fallcrest Guard look on with impassive expressions and deadly looking polearms.

After everyone has had their say, the door to the hall swings open and the gnome known as Copernicus Jinx enters the chamber. "I'm horrified to hear of this unspeakable tragedy, and I have sensed a magical disturbance this day. Something dark. Allow me to get to the heart of the matter."

Jinx examines the corpse and explains that the man was infected with shadow. More specifically, he was infused with the energy of the Shadowfell. Someone has opened a portal, and dark energies are flooding through.

### Dark Energies

As Jinx finishes his explanation of what he believes has befallen Fallcrest, Gondar, the Lord Warden, and the guards are suddenly gripped by terrible convulsions. Read:

*Dark energies begin to leak from the eyes of the Lord Warden and the guards, and even the mighty Gondar seems to be caught in the grip of the shadow magic. As the convulsions end, the group begins to moan and turn toward you. That's when Gondar unleashes his fiery breath weapon at you ...*

### Tactics

As soon as the Lord Warden and his guards change into zombies, they attack the adventurers. Even though the Fallcrest defenders have been zombified, their training remains as a reflex, and they continue to employ the weapons and tactics that they are used to.

### Development

After a round of battle, Jinx shouts out, "The portal's open and more shadow is flooding through. I warned you against it, and you're welcome, by the way. Don't kill the guards. They're just possessed. Now get out of here and find that portal!"

If the adventurers can move through the doors or windows, they escape from the keep.

### Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Bright light from the braziers.

**Gates:** The metal gates are down, blocking the path out of the hall. A DC 19 Strength check is required to lift a gate.

**Braziers:** Fire burns in these large metal bowls. A brazier can be tipped (DC 12 Strength check) to cause a close burst 1. Any creature in the burst takes



5 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

**Doors:** The doors lead to lower and higher levels of the keep.

**Windows:** The windows look out upon the keep's courtyard, 20 feet below.

Captain Gondar (G) Level 3 Soldier  
Medium natural humanoid, dragonborn XP 150

**HP** 47; **Bloodied** 23 **Initiative** +4

**AC** 19, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14 **Perception** +2

**Speed** 5

Standard Actions

† **Longsword** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC, or +10 vs. AC while the dragonborn is bloodied.

**Hit:** 1d8 + 7 damage.

Minor Actions

☼ **Dragon Breath** (fire) ♦ **Encounter**

**Attack:** Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +7 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d6 + 2 fire damage.

**Str** 16 (+4) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+2)

**Con** 15 (+3) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 9 (+0)

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Equipment** scale armor, light shield, longsword

Zombified Lord Warden (W) Level 2 Controller

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 125

**HP** 37; **Bloodied** 18 **Initiative** +2

**AC** 16, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 14 **Perception** +1

**Speed** 4

Traits

☼ **Shroud of Shadow** ♦ **Aura** 3

Within the aura, bright light is dim light, and dim light is darkness. Any enemy that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 cold damage.

**Zombie Illusion**

The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Slam** ♦ **At-Will**

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d8 + 5 damage and the target is slowed (save ends).

**Str** 12 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

**Con** 13 (+2) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** —

6 Zombified Pikemen (P) Level 1 Soldier

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 100 each

**HP** 31; **Bloodied** 15 **Initiative** +4

**AC** 17, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11 **Perception** +2

**Speed** 4

**Zombie Illusion**

The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Halberd** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

**Attack:** Melee 2 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d10 + 2 damage, and the pikeman marks the target until the end of the pikeman's next turn.

† **Powerful Strike** (weapon) ♦ **Recharge** 5 6

**Attack:** Melee 2 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

**Hit:** 2d10 + 2 damage, and the target falls prone.

Triggered Actions

† **Interceding Strike** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

**Trigger:** An enemy marked by the pikeman makes an attack that doesn't include it as a target.

**Attack (Immediate Interrupt):** Melee 2 (triggering enemy); +6 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d10 + 2 damage.

**Str** 16 (+3) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Wis** 11 (+0)

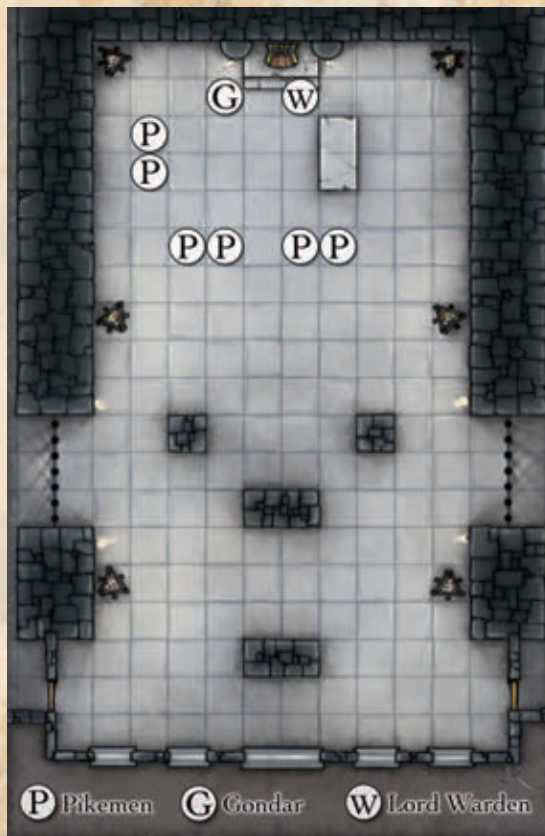
**Con** 15 (+2) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+1)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** —

**Equipment** chainmail, halberd

## Encounter 3: Burning Down



## the Orphanarium

Encounter Level 3 (754 XP)

3 zombified bashers

8 zombified gnashers

Throughout Fallcrest, the dark energies of the Shadowfell have transformed the townsfolk into zombies—or at least zombie-like creatures! The adventurers must navigate through the town, evading or fighting off zombified townsfolk, as they search for the mysterious portal that Jinx has pointed them toward. Along the way, they begin to notice that the possessed people are all heading toward the river, and that provides a direction for the adventurers to follow.

In addition, a character can make a DC 19 Arcana check to sense that the dark energy-spewing portal to the Shadowfell is somewhere inside one of the ware-



houses along the coast of the river.

Feel free to run as many scenes between Moonstone Keep and the docks of the Lower Quay as you want, but eventually the adventurers reach a burning warehouse that rises over the river. Read:

*In your search for the portal, you notice that all of the possessed townsfolk are running in the same direction—toward the Nentir River. One of the buildings on the riverside is on fire. That's probably not a coincidence. Moreover, the building houses the Orphanarium, where the orphaned children of Fallcrest are cared for. You sense that the portal is within the burning building, where a warehouse full of possessed children are about to be roasted alive.*

Time to head into the Orphanarium and save the possessed children!

## Inside the Burning Building

When the adventurers enter the Orphanarium, they are greeted by fire and smoke. Don't place any of the zombified townsfolk on the map yet. They appear in their assigned squares after the adventurers get a sense of the situation. Read:

*Double doors open into a large open space that reminds you of the lobby of a fine inn—except for the smoke and flames of the fire. To the left, a long desk is unattended, and beyond it a wide staircase climbs to the second floor. Low benches are set against the far walls, and to your right several crates and barrels have been piled neatly so that they reach almost to the ceiling. You can hear cries and moans drifting down from the upper levels of the burning building.*

Once the adventurers enter the burning building and begin looking around, the adult zombified bashers (possessed Orphanarium workers) emerge from their hiding places behind the front desk and the piled crates.

After a round of dealing with the fire and the bashers, the zombified gnashers (possessed orphans) leap down from above into the marked squares.

## The Fire

The fire has not yet engulfed the building, but it is well on its way. Any creature that enters a burning square or starts its turn there takes 5 fire damage.

A character can attempt to douse a square of fire with a DC 19 Athletics check or a DC 12 Dungeoneering or Nature check. This requires a minor action and the character must be adjacent to the burning square. A character can attempt this up to three times in a round.

## Tactics

The zombified bashers emerge from hiding to pound on the intruding adventurers. If possible, a basher attempts to push an adventurer into a burning square every time it hits.

The zombified gnashers leap down from above and try to swarm an adventurer. A gnasher uses its gnashing bite as soon as possible to attempt to clamp its teeth into a target. Note that multiple gnashers will attempt to clamp onto the same target, thus increasing the ongoing damage that target takes each round. One save stops all ongoing damage.

## Development

When only a few of the zombified townsfolk remain, the adventurers hear and feel a great rumble emerging from beneath the Orphanarium. This can happen whenever you want, but a good time for it is when only one basher or two gnashers remain active. Read:

*Suddenly the entire building begins to shake as a great noise rumbles up from beneath your feet. The flash of a huge fireball and the sound of a terrible ka-boom follow the terrible rumble, and everything around you begins to collapse and fall!*

## Next?

If that isn't the start of a really bad day, we don't know what is! Find out what happens next by checking out issue #2 of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS comic. In the meantime, use this set of encounters as the beginning of your own adventure about shadow portals and possessed townsfolk. The adventure is in your hands ...

## Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Bright light from the fire.

**Front Desk:** The long desk is 4 feet tall.

**Fire:** Any creature that enters a burning square or starts its turn there takes 5 fire damage.

**Stairs:** The wide stairs lead up to the Orphanarium's second level.

**Crates and Barrels:** These are stacked 10 feet high and filled with foodstuffs, clothing, blankets, and other mundane items donated to the Orphanarium. Squares containing crates or barrels are blocking terrain.

3 Zombified Bashers (Z)      Level 3 Brutes  
Medium natural humanoid      XP 150 each

**HP** 54; **Bloodied** 27 **Initiative** +0

**AC** 15, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13 **Perception** +0  
**Speed** 4

**Traits**

**Zombie Illusion**

The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.

**Standard Actions**

⚔ **Bash** ♦ **At-Will**

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d12 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

**Str** 18 (+5) **Dex** 8 (+0) **Wis** 8 (+0)

**Con** 14 (+3) **Int** 1 (–4) **Cha** 3 (–3)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** —

8 Zombified Gnashers      Level 3 Minions



Medium natural humanoid XP 100 each  
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

**Initiative** -1

**AC** 13, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 11, **Will** 11 **Perception** +3

**Speed** 4

**Traits**

**Zombie Illusion**

The townsfolk has been infused with dark energy from the Shadowfell that makes him or her appear to be a zombie. If an adventurer examines a zombified townsfolk closely and makes a DC 12 Perception check, he or she notices that the zombie isn't rotting or falling apart.

**Standard Actions**

⬇ **Bite** ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

*Hit:* 6 damage, and the gnasher shifts 1 square.

⬇ **Gnashing Bite** ♦ **Encounter**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude

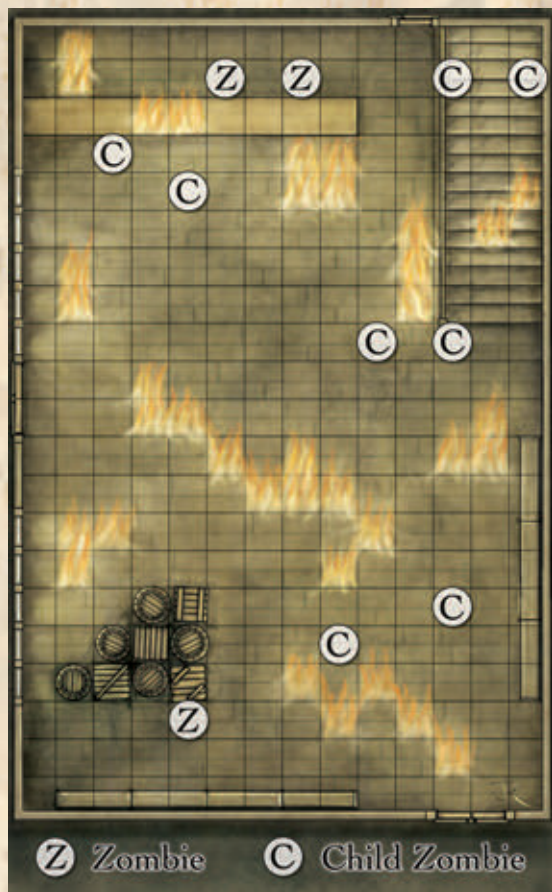
*Hit:* 6 damage, and ongoing 3 damage (save ends) as the gnasher locks onto the target with its jaws and holds on tight. Increase this ongoing damage by 1 for each gnasher that locks onto the same target.

**Str** 15 (+3) **Dex** 8 (+1) **Wis** 8 (+1)

**Con** 12 (+2) **Int** 1 (-4) **Cha** 3 (-3)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** —





# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™

Comic & Game Adventure

## Hide in Plain Sight

by John Rogers, Andrea Di Vito, and Christopher Perkins



The orphanarium is engulfed in flames and sinking into the depths of the river. Meanwhile, a dark ritual is being performed in caves beneath the building, possessing the orphans within. Can you save the children and stop the malevolent ceremony?

Licensed By:

IDW™





# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

## Comic and Game Adventure

### Hide in Plain Sight

by Christopher Perkins  
Cartography by Jonathan Roberts

### Introduction

The new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS comic follows the adventures of Adric and his companions. In Issue #1, they defended the town of Fallcrest against a horde of zombies, only to discover (to their horror) that the zombies were actually townsfolk transformed by the dark energies of a Shadowfell portal hidden beneath a burning riverside warehouse.

In this issue, Adric and company rescue several orphans trapped in the burning building and come face-to-face with the villain responsible for opening the Shadowfell portal: a doppelganger wizard named Kurche. Kurche flees and infiltrates a merchant caravan, and that's when things go from bad to worse.

We've replicated three of the pivotal scenes in the story in the following three encounters. You can use these encounters as the continuation of the previous adventure, the foundation of a longer adventure of your own creation, or a short stand-alone adventure.

While Adric and his companions weigh in at the mid-to-high portion of the heroic tier of play, we've decided to set these encounters at the lower end of the scale, making them perfect for 1st- or 2nd-level adventurers. You can always scale up the encounters if you want to challenge higher-level characters. *The Dungeon Master's Guide*® and the *Dungeon Master's Kit*™ provide guidelines for adjusting the level of encounters.

### Adventure Background

This adventure picks up where the Issue #1 adventure left off.

The following encounters take place outside the town of Fallcrest, in the Nentir Vale, as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the *Dungeon Master's Kit*. The setting is generic so that you can place the adventure near any town or city in your campaign.

The first encounter ("Trouble Below") opens with the heroes discovering a hidden cave beneath the burning warehouse. Realizing that his work in Fallcrest is done, Kurche the doppelganger makes a hasty retreat and leaves the heroes to clean up the mess. The second encounter ("Doppelganger Season") is a skill challenge in which the heroes follow Kurche's trail, leading them to a merchant caravan under attack by a ruthless band of orcs ("Gruhn's Gang"). How they fare in the skill challenge determines the difficulty of the third and final encounter.

### Getting Started

Dungeon Masters need a copy of the *Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game* rules, which you can find in either the *Dungeons & Dragons Fantasy Roleplaying Game Starter Set* or the *Dungeon Master's Kit* boxed set. Players need a copy of *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*™ and a character sheet to make characters to use in the adventure.

Once you're ready to begin, jump right into the action with "Encounter 1: Trouble Below."

### Encounter 1: Trouble Below

#### Encounter Level 1 (725 XP)

**Kurche, doppelganger wizard (K)**

**1 explosion** (see "Features of the Area")

**1 pit trap** (see "Features of the Area")

This encounter begins when the adventurers descend through a hole in the floor of the burning warehouse. The hole opens into an old smugglers' cave hidden underneath the warehouse.

Please read this encounter carefully, as there are a number of features that come into play during the encounter.

You need to keep track of the number of rounds that pass. At the beginning of the second round, burning timbers fall through the hole in the ceiling, dealing damage to anyone underneath and blocking that means of escape. An explosion occurs at the beginning of the fifth round, and the building overhead collapses at the start of the tenth round (see "Features of the Area" for details).

The pit trap remains hidden until triggered or otherwise discovered.

#### To start the encounter, read:

*An evil power has turned many of Fallcrest's citizens into zombie-like horrors, and all signs point to a riverside warehouse south of town. The warehouse, now an orphanage, has caught on fire, and as you evacuate the last of the children from the doomed building, falling timbers punch a hole through the ground floor, revealing a secret cave underneath! From somewhere deep below, you hear maniacal laughter.*

There's nothing more that can be seen or heard in the burning warehouse. Due to smoke and other debris, the adventurers must lower themselves down into the hole to investigate further.

It's a 10-foot drop from the warehouse to the floor of the cave below. Characters take 1d10 damage from the fall unless they use a move action to carefully lower themselves or make a trained Acrobatics check to negate the damage.



**When the adventurers descend into the cave through the hole in the ceiling, read:**

*You discover an old smugglers' cave filled with crates and barrels. A circle of stones dominates the middle of the cave, and a pulsating sphere of dark energy hovers in the middle of the circle. A wizard cackles nearby, clearly enamored with the terror he has wrought.*

The adventurers begin the encounter in the corner of the cave below the hole in the ceiling.

## Tactics

The doppelganger uses *fireball* and follows up with *color spray*. Once per round, it uses *shiv* against an enemy that makes a melee attack against it. It uses its action points to aid its escape.

The doppelganger flees when first bloodied and covers its escape with *fireball*, if necessary. A *fireball* detonated inside the tunnel connecting the smugglers' cave to the river has the side effect of weakening the section of tunnel caught in the burst, creating a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 2 damage from collapsing detritus.

## Development

The heroes receive full XP whether they kill the doppelganger or drive it off. Subsequent encounters hinge on the doppelganger escaping with its life. If the adventurers prevent the doppelganger from escaping and it's captured or killed, you can skip the next encounter and save the final encounter for a future occasion. (You never know when you might need an orc ambush!)

## Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Torches provide bright light.

**Boat:** A small boat with a pole is tethered to the end of the dock that runs alongside the warehouse. The boat can seat up to four Medium creatures and has a speed of 4.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 10 feet high in the cave and 6 feet high in the tunnel.

At the beginning of the second round of combat, burning timbers fall through the hole in the cave ceiling, attacking anyone in the 4 squares directly underneath. The building overhead is collapsing, and the ceiling hole becomes plugged by flaming debris that cannot be cleared.

### Free Action

#### Falling Timbers (fire) ♦ Encounter

**Attack:** 2-square-by-2-square section under the hole in the ceiling (creatures in the area) +4 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d6 + 6 damage, and the target is restrained and takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends both).

**Miss:** The target is restrained and takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends both).

**Crates and Barrels:** The barrels are filled with molasses and oil, while the crates contain foodstuffs



and other mundane items. Hidden among the crates and barrels is a random level 1 treasure (see “Treasure” in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* or the *Dungeon Master's Kit*). Squares containing crates or barrels are difficult terrain.

**Doors:** A set of locked wooden doors lead from the cave to a staircase that used to lead up to the warehouse. A fire in the warehouse has filled the staircase with flaming debris that requires 20 standard actions to clear. The doors can be unlocked with the proper key (see “Secret Room” below) or a DC 20 Thievery check. The doors can also be forced open with a DC 18 Strength check.

**Explosion:** At the beginning of the fifth round of combat, a large explosion rocks the building above. The double doors are blown open by a sudden wave of flames, heat, and debris. Any creature occupying the 2-square-by-3-square area on either side of the doors is attacked. Characters in the pit (see below) have partial cover against the attack.

### Free Action

#### Explosion (fire) ♦ Encounter

**Attack:** Blast 3 originating from the double doors (creatures in the blast) +4 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d8 + 11 fire damage, and the target falls prone.

**Miss:** Half damage, and the target does not fall prone.

**Pit Trap:** This pit trap is disguised to look like a normal section of floor. Creatures adjacent to the pit can detect it with a successful DC 18 Perception check. (Use passive Perception scores unless the creatures are actively searching for traps.) The pit stays open once activated and is 20 feet deep.



### Free Action

#### Pit Trap ♦ Encounter

*Trigger:* A creature enters the pit's space.

*Attack (Free Action):* Melee 0 (the triggering creature) +4 vs. Reflex.

*Hit:* 2d10 damage, and the target falls prone at the bottom of the pit.

*Miss:* The target returns to the last square it occupied.

*Effect:* The pit is no longer hidden.

**Secret Room:** Near the pit trap is a small secret room. Characters can detect the secret door with a DC 18 Perception check. (Use passive Perception scores unless a character is actively searching for secret doors.) The room is empty except for a wooden lever set into the far wall. The lever can be used to reset the pit trap or lock the pit's trap doors, thereby allowing creatures to enter the pit's space without triggering the trap.

Hanging on the lever is an iron key on a loop of frayed rope. This key unlocks the doors that lead up to the warehouse (see "Doors" above).

**Summoning Stones:** In the middle of the cave is a circle of jagged stones. A successful DC 16 Arcana check confirms that the area within the circle is suffused with dark energy seeping in from the Shadowfell. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the circle takes 5 necrotic damage and is weakened until the end of its current turn. Once the doppelganger flees or is slain, the circle of stones loses its magical traits and is safe to enter.

**Tunnel:** This partly flooded tunnel connects the old smugglers' cave to the river. The water hinders movement through the tunnel, which is difficult terrain. The mouth of the tunnel is obscured by reeds and requires a DC 14 Perception check to spot from outside.

**Wooden Pilings:** Six wooden beams support a burning warehouse that partly overhangs the river. The building collapses into the river at the start of the tenth round. Until it collapses, any creature underneath the burning building takes 5 damage at the start of its turn from falling debris. The area between the pilings is treated as difficult terrain because of the wreckage.

Doppelganger Wizard (K)    Level 2  
Solo Skirmisher  
Medium natural humanoid    XP 625  
**HP** 148; **Bloodied** 74    **Initiative** +5  
**AC** 16, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14 **Perception** +7  
**Speed** 6  
**Saving Throws** +5; **Action Points** 2  
**Traits**

#### Focused Mind

Any dazed or stunned effects on the doppelganger end at the start of its turn.

#### Shadow Stride

If the doppelganger moves at least 3 squares from its starting position on its turn, it gains concealment until the start of its next turn.

#### Standard Actions

##### ④ **Sly Dagger** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex

*Hit:* 1d4 + 8 damage.

*Effect:* The doppelganger can shift 1 square after the attack.

##### ⊗ **Color Spray** (radiant) ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Close blast 5 (creatures in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex

*Hit:* 1d8 + 6 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the doppelganger's next turn.

##### ⊗ **Fireball** (fire) ♦ **Recharge** when first bloodied

*Attack:* Area burst 2 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +5 vs. Reflex

*Hit:* 2d6 + 8 fire damage.

#### Minor Actions

##### **Change Shape** (polymorph) ♦ **At-Will**

*Effect:* The doppelganger alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until it uses change shape again or until it drops to 0 hit points (whereupon it assumes its true form).

To assume a specific individual's form, the doppelganger must have seen the individual. Other creatures can make a DC 30

Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

#### Triggered Actions

##### **Shiv** ♦ **At-Will**

*Trigger:* An enemy makes a melee attack against the doppelganger.

*Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* The doppelganger uses sly dagger against the triggering enemy.

**Skills** Arcana +9, Bluff +8, Insight +7, Thievery +8

**Str** 11 (+1) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+2)

**Con** 13 (+2) **Int** 16 (+4) **Cha** 15 (+3)

**Alignment** Evil    **Languages** Common

**Equipment** Dagger

## Encounter 2: Doppelganger Season

### Encounter Level 1 (100 XP)

This skill challenge takes place after the adventurers chase off the doppelganger and escape from the smugglers' cave under the burning riverside warehouse.

**When the adventurers arrive in the Lord Warden's hall, read:**

*You escape the smugglers' cave just in time to see the burning warehouse collapse and slide into the river. Rescued orphans begin running back to town, leaving you to track down the villain responsible for this mess.*

### Skill Challenge: Tracking Kurche

After escaping from the cave, the doppelganger headed back toward Fallcrest. Along the way, it stumbled upon a town guard, murdered him, and usurped his identity. Upon seeing a merchant caravan heading out of town, the doppelganger decided to join it, offering its services as a sellsword. These are the facts, but the adventurers must discover what happened if they're to catch the villain.

This skill challenge determines how well the adventurers follow Kurche's trail. There's no question that they'll catch their quarry, but it could take longer than expected, and any delay could have unforeseen consequences!

This skill challenge is unusual in that there are only three checks, and they're made in a specific order. All of the skill checks are made as group checks (see the *Rules Compendium*™ for group check rules). In some cases, the heroes have multiple skills to choose from when making the check, but each



party member still makes only one check as part of any group check. If at least half of the adventurers succeed on the check, the whole group succeeds. Otherwise, the group gains 1 failure. At the end of the encounter, add up the number of failures to determine what happens.

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Diplomacy, Endurance, Insight, Nature, Perception, Streetwise.

*Finding the Corpse (DC 12 Perception):* If the heroes succeed at the group check, they find the mutilated and stripped corpse of a town guard murdered by the doppelganger.

*Fleeing Town (DC 12 Diplomacy, Insight, or Streetwise):* If the heroes succeed at the group check, they conclude (based on their own instincts and quick conversations with the local militia) that the doppelganger avoided Fallcrest and hooked up with a merchant caravan that left town recently.

*Catching the Caravan (DC 12 Athletics, Endurance, or Nature):* If the heroes succeed at the group check, they make good time catching up to the caravan.

**0 Failures:** If the adventurers succeed at every group check, they earn 100 XP for the skill challenge, and “Encounter 3: Gruhn’s Gang” happens as written.

**1–3 Failures:** Regardless of the number of failures, the adventurers still earn full XP for this skill challenge. For each failure, reduce by 2 the number of caravan defenders in “Encounter 3: Gruhn’s Gang.”

## Encounter 3: Gruhn’s Gang

**Encounter Level 3 (840 XP)**

**Gruhn, orc terror (G)**

**Sheshak, orc slaughter-priest (S)**

**24 orc maggots (O)**

**Kurche, doppelganger wizard (K)**

**Davan, human merchant (D)**

**12 caravan defenders (C;** see also “Skill Challenge Failure” below)

The adventurers track the doppelganger to an old trading post, where a merchant caravan is busy defending itself against a gang of orcs.

The adventurers begin along the bottom edge of the map, so that Gruhn is between them and the trading post.

Kurche the doppelganger is lurking among the caravan defenders in disguise. The doppelganger joined the caravan shortly before it arrived at the trading post. See “Encounter 1: Trouble Below” for the doppelganger’s statistics (should they become necessary), and see “Tactics” below for more information about Kurche’s role in this encounter.

The XP award for this encounter assumes that some number of orcs either escape or are killed by nonplayer characters.

## Skill Challenge Failure

If the adventurers failed one or more of the group checks in “Encounter 2: Doppelganger Season,” they arrive late. Reduce the number of caravan defenders by 2 for each failure they gained.

**When the adventurers arrive on the scene, read:**

*Through the trees, you see a roadside clearing in which six horse-drawn wagons encircle a ruined stone building. A small group of merchants and guards duck behind the wagons and crumbled walls, barely holding their own against nearly two dozen orcs. A particularly large and terrifying orc joins the fray. With greatsword in hand, he yells, “That’s right, maggots! Paint the ground with their blood!” Standing next to him is a scrawny but crafty-looking orc dressed like a wizard or priest.*

In any given round, half of the orc maggots focus their attacks on the caravan defenders instead of the adventurers. If all the caravan defenders including Davan are dead, the orcs attack the heroes *en masse*.

Rather than resolve attacks between orcs and caravan defenders, roll a d6 for each side at the end of every round. Whichever side rolls lower loses one random minion. If the roll is a tie, both sides lose a minion.

## Tactics

Gruhn tries to remain adjacent to Sheshak and uses *brunt of the attack* to absorb one attack per round directed at the slaughter-priest. Gruhn isn’t a coward, but if half of his orc maggots are slain, he breaks off the attack and orders his force to withdraw.

If Gruhn drops to 0 hit points, Sheshak becomes incensed and fights to the death. Any remaining orc maggots fight until Sheshak drops, at which point they scatter and flee. In battle, Sheshak keeps his distance while using *blood theft* to heal wounded allies.

Roughly one-third of the orc maggots engage in melee combat; the rest take cover and shoot arrows.

The doppelganger tries to blend in with the other caravan defenders. Although it protects itself and other nearby caravan defenders, the doppelganger doesn’t go out of its way to draw attention to itself, nor does it take any unnecessary risks (such as attacking a nearby character).

Davan and the caravan defenders take cover and attack orcs that get too close to them or the horses.

## Development

Finding the doppelganger in the chaos of battle is difficult, to say the least. A character can, as a standard action, choose to watch one caravan defender and make a DC 30 Insight check. If the check succeeds and the defender being watched is Kurche in disguise, the character successfully identifies the doppelganger.



If the heroes defeat the orcs, Davan expresses his gratitude and awards them a random level 2 treasure (see “Treasure” in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* or the *Dungeon Master's Kit*). Davan and his fellow merchants are horrified to learn that their caravan has been infiltrated by a doppelganger.

Orcs that are captured and interrogated only seem interested in the goods the merchants are transporting. They have no other motivation for attacking the caravan.

## What's Next?

Once Gruhn and his orcs are defeated or driven away, the heroes must return to the task at hand: confronting the doppelganger that has infiltrated the merchants' caravan. This confrontation with the elusive shapeshifter kicks off the adventure appearing in Issue #3 of this comic series!

## Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Bright light.

**Boulders and Deadfalls:** Squares occupied by boulders and fallen trees are difficult terrain. These low obstacles also provide partial cover to creatures hidden behind them.

**Standing Trees:** Creatures cannot enter squares occupied by tree trunks. However, a creature adjacent to a tree trunk square can climb the tree with a DC 10 Athletics check. Creatures up in trees gain partial concealment.

**Stone Hut:** The walls of this former trading post are shattered and range from 3 to 5 feet high. The crumbling walls provide partial cover to creatures hidden behind them. Climbing a wall costs an extra square of movement.

**Wagons and Horses:** There are three covered wagons and three open wagons encircling the stone hut. Two horses pull each covered wagon, while each open wagon has a single horse tethered to it. The horses are trained to remain calm in battle, but if a horse takes damage, it bolts (taking its wagon and possibly another horse with it). See the *Monster Manual*® or the *Monster Vault*™ for horse statistics.

All of the wagons are loaded with crates and barrels. A creature can enter a wagon's space either by climbing onto it or crawling underneath it. Wagon squares count as difficult terrain. The wagons also provide partial cover to creatures hidden behind or underneath them.

Orc Terror (G)      Level 2 Elite Brute (Leader)  
Medium natural humanoid      XP 250  
**HP** 92; **Bloodied** 46 **Initiative** +3  
**AC** 14, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 14 **Perception** +7  
**Speed** 6

**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

### Standard Actions

① **Greatsword** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

*Hit:* 1d10 + 7 damage.



† **Double Attack** ♦ **At-Will**

*Effect:* The terror makes two melee basic attacks.

### Minor Actions

**Skin of Terror** ♦ **At-Will**

*Effect:* The terror chooses an enemy in its line of sight. The terror gains resist 5 to attacks made by that enemy until the start of the terror's next turn.

### Triggered Actions

**Brunt of the Attack** ♦ **At-Will**

*Trigger:* An adjacent ally is hit by an attack.

*Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* The terror becomes the target of the triggering attack instead.

**Skills** Athletics +10, Endurance +9, Intimidate +9, Stealth +8

**Str** 19 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+2)

**Con** 16 (+4) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 16 (+4)

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Equipment** Greatsword

Orc Slaughter-Priest (S)      Level 2 Artillery (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid      XP 125

**HP** 38; **Bloodied** 19 **Initiative** +2

**AC** 16, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 14 **Perception** +6

**Speed** 6

### Standard Actions

① **Morningstar** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

*Hit:* 1d10 + 5 damage.

② **Blood Theft** ♦ **At-Will**

*Attack:* Ranged 20 (one creature); +5 vs. Fortitude

*Hit:* 2d6 damage, and one ally within 5 squares of the slaughter-priest gains 3 temporary hit points.

✱ **Wrath of Gruumsh** ♦ **At-Will Recharge** 4 5 6

*Attack:* Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +5 vs. Fortitude

*Hit:* The target gains vulnerable 5 to all damage until the end of the slaughter-priest's next turn.

**Skills** Athletics +9, Endurance +8, Religion +6, Stealth +7

**Str** 12 (+2) **Dex** 12 (+2) **Wis** 11 (+1)

**Con** 14 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 14 (+3)

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil

**Languages** Common, Giant





#### Equipment Morningstar

Orc Maggots (O) Level 2 Minion Soldier  
Medium natural humanoid XP 31 each  
**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion **Initiative** +4  
**AC** 18, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13 **Perception** +6  
**Speed** 6

#### Standard Actions

##### Ⓛ Battleaxe (weapon) ♦ At-Will

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

*Hit:* 5 damage.

*Effect:* The target is marked until the end of the maggot's next turn.

##### Ⓢ Longbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will

*Attack:* Ranged 20 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

*Hit:* 5 damage.

*Effect:* The target is marked until the end of the maggot's next turn.

**Skills** Athletics +9, Endurance +8, Stealth +7

**Str** 16 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+1)

**Con** 15 (+3) **Int** 8 (+0) **Cha** 9 (+0)

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Equipment** Battleaxe, longbow with 12 arrows

Human Merchant (D) Level 1 Skirmisher  
Medium natural humanoid XP –

**HP** 27; **Bloodied** 13 **Initiative** +4

**AC** 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13 **Perception** +0  
**Speed** 6

**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

#### Standard Actions

##### Ⓛ Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

*Effect:* The merchant can shift 1 square before or after attacking.

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

*Hit:* 1d8 + 5 damage.

**Skills** Diplomacy +6, Streetwise +6

**Str** 12 (+1) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Wis** 11 (+0)

**Con** 11 (+0) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+1)

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Equipment** Longsword

12 Caravan Defenders (C) Level 1

Minion Soldier

Medium natural humanoid XP –

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +4

**AC** 17, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 12 **Perception** +6  
**Speed** 6

**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

#### Standard Actions

##### Ⓛ Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

*Hit:* 4 damage.

*Effect:* The target is marked until the end of the caravan defender's next turn.

**Str** 15 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+2) **Wis** 9 (+1)

**Con** 11 (+3) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 10 (+0)

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** Common

**Equipment** Longsword, Chainmail





Art by Randy Green









# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ SHADOWPLAGUE





# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™

## SHADOWPLAGUE

Beginning a new era in *Dungeons & Dragons* history! The genre-defining roleplaying game gets its first ongoing series in years! Join writer **John Rogers** (*Blue Beetle*) and artist **Andrea Di Vito** (*Annihilation*) as they bring us a tale of high adventure and deep secrets. Adric Fell leads a band of heroes in a world where civilization has been reduced to a few scattered points of light amid a rising tide of shadows.

"This isn't just a good *Dungeons & Dragons* comic, or even just a good comic: It's one of the best comics on the stands today."

— Comics Alliance

"It's well-considered, inclusive and faithful to where it comes from without being slavishly controlled by its past, and best of all, it's so fun and fast-paced that none of that seems evident until you've finished the issue and want to read the next one already. More comics should be this good."

— Robot 6

"Andrea Di Vito brings the entire world to life with his art."

— Major Spoilers

"Rogers and Di Vito are using the basic ideas of the world setting, but branching out on their own from there for an original, entertaining story."

— Comic Book Resources

[www.idwpublishing.com](http://www.idwpublishing.com)

ISBN-13: 978-1600109225

52499



9 781600 109225

**IDW™**