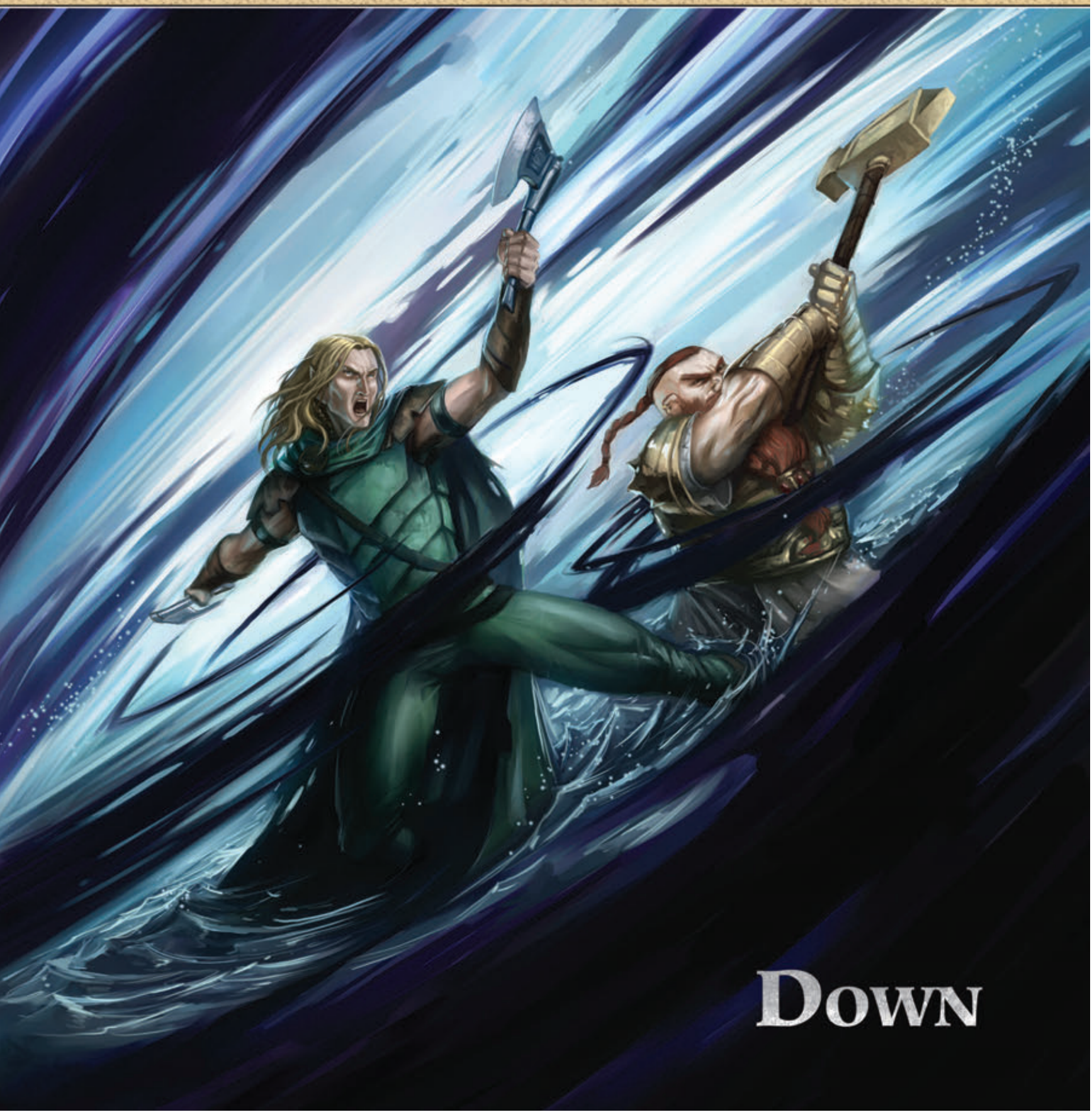


DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®]



Down

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Down

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It is a time of magic and monsters, a time when the civilized world has been reduced to a few scattered points of light glowing with stubborn determination amid a rising tide of shadows. It is a time when only the bravest dare tread the wilds of the unknown.

A small town built upon the ruins of a larger city, Fallcrest lies at the crossroads of the Nentir Vale, a great wilderness dotted with a handful of inhabited villages and towns where bandits and monsters roam freely, threatening all who venture far from settlements.

This is a place in need of a few heroes.

Fallcrest is home to many adventurers, and Adric Fell leads one such group.

Fell's Five recently escaped from the Feywild thanks to a lot of moxie and the help of a deposed eladrin lord, but made an enemy for life in the process.



Art by Tyler Walpole



PROTECT
THE CARGO!

PROTECT
THE CARGO!

THE THINGS WE
DO FOR LOVE.





SCHUNK

AIIEEEE!

THESE THINGS ARE BLOODY TOUGH—

"DUCK!" I SAID "DUCK!"



WHAT EVIL, POWER-MAD MAGE COOKED THESE UP?

SCREEEE!



~SIGH~

TIEFLINGS CREATED KRUTHIKS, DIDN'T THEY?

...YESSSS.



REALLY? I HAD NO IDEA!

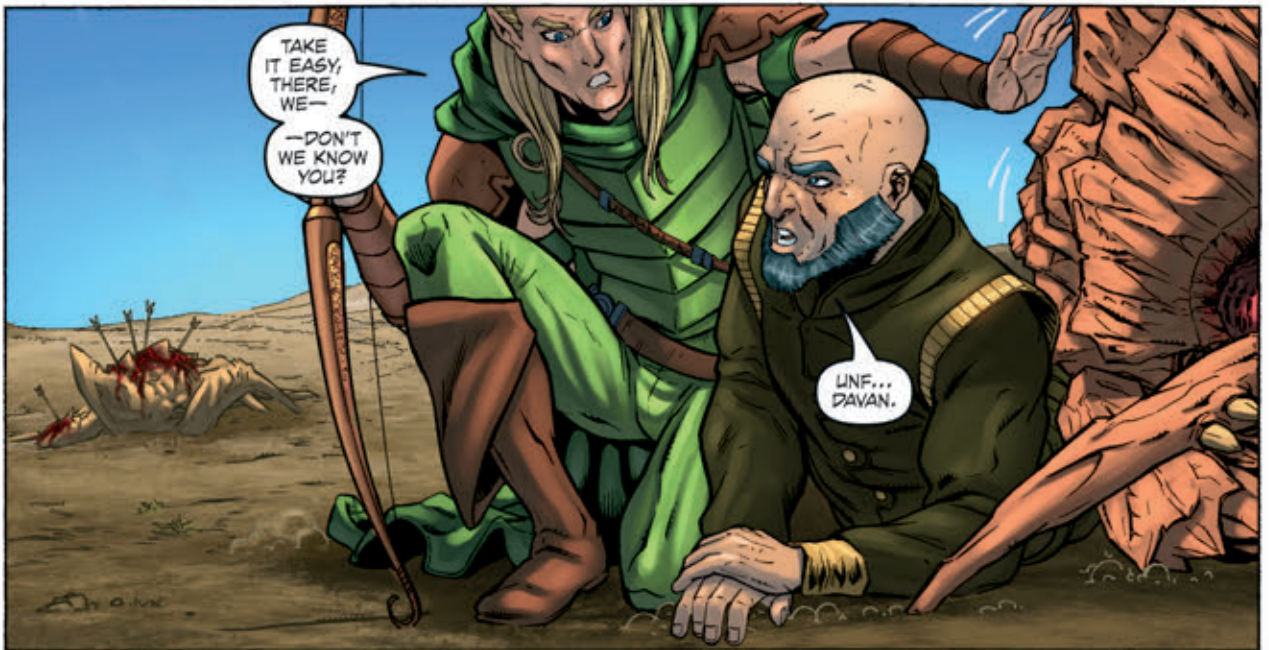
EVIL MONSTERS MADE BY TIEFLINGS, WHO KNEW?

BREE, WOULD YE STOP MUCKIN' ABOUT—



—AND GET THESE SACKS AWAY FROM THE KRUTHIKS!

WATCH IT!





KHAL
NEEDED TO
READ THE
MAIL.

RIGHT
NOW.



BUT
WE'RE DUE
IN FALLCREST
IN JUST A
WEEK.

IF WE HADN'T
COME ALONG, YOU'D
BE RED STAINS ON THE
WAGONS. SO COUNT
YOUR BLESSINGS
HE'S IMPATIENT.



THIS IS WRONG.
KRUTHIKS STALK
THE UNDERDARK.
DEEP IN THE
UNDERDARK.

SO
SOMETHING
PROVE THEM
TOPSIDE?



CAN'T YOU
COMMAND
THEM WITH
YOUR EVIL
MIND?

I HAVE HAD
JUST ABOUT
ENOUGH
OF—

AHA!



HERE IT BE. THE
NEXT LETTER FROM
MY BELOVED *DANNI*!
ADDRESSED TO ME
IN FALLCREST!







VARIS IS GENIALLY CORRUPT. TISHA HAS HER OWN AGENDA, I SUSPECT. BREE IS... BREE.

COPERNICUS JINX IS MANIPULATIVE, AND EVEN JULIANA CRAVES MAGICAL POWER.



KHAL IS THE ONLY GENUINELY GOOD FELLOW I KNOW, EXCEPT FOR, WELL...

...BUT I CAN'T STAND THE OTHER ONE. I'LL EXPLAIN LATER.



I'D HATE TO LOSE KHAL, BUT THERE'S ANOTHER REASON.

I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A DWARVEN STEAD.

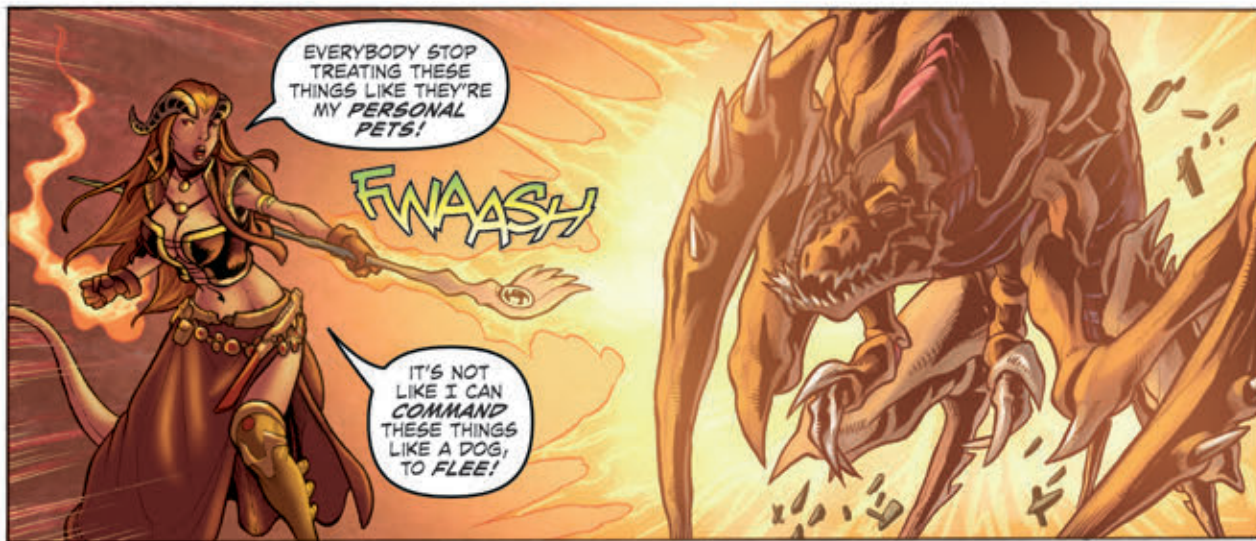


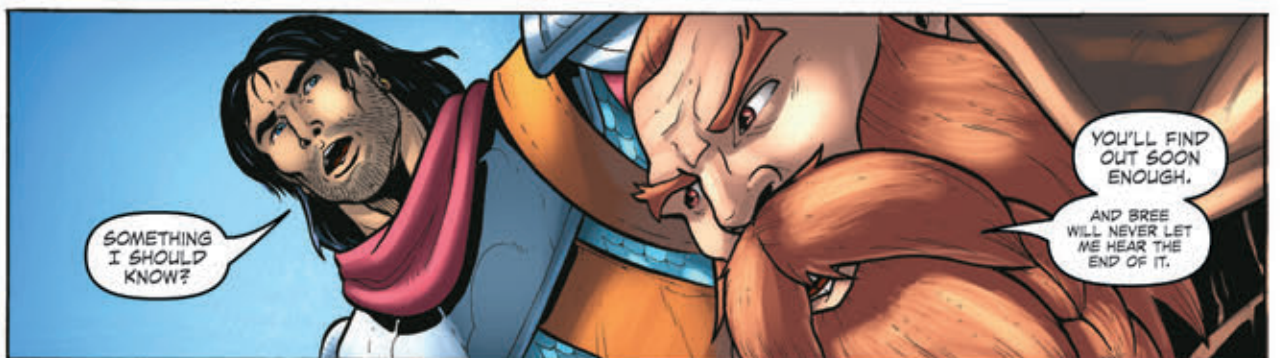
MY YOUNGER BROTHER ALWAYS WANTED TO GO. HE LOVED THE STORIES OF THE DWARVEN HEROES.

SEEING AS I'M THE LAST OF THE FAMILY, I SUPPOSE THERE'S ONE BIT OF GOOD I CAN DO IN HIS MEMORY.









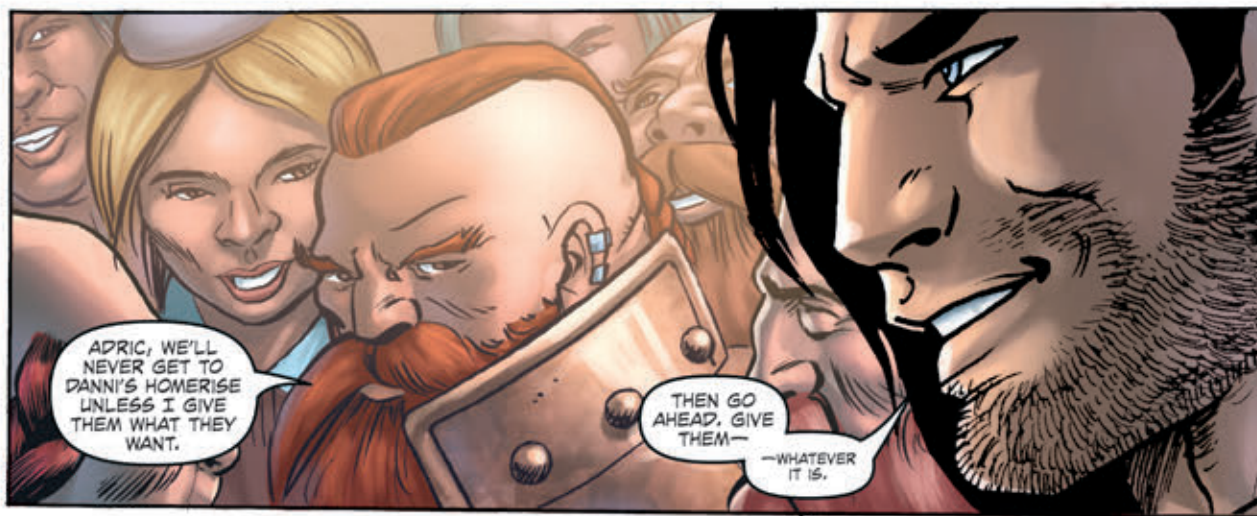
BY THE GODS.



HEY TYMON, I'M IN A
HOLD. IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

WISH YOU
WERE HERE.





ADRIC, WE'LL NEVER GET TO DANNI'S HOMERISE UNLESS I GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT.

THEN GO AHEAD. GIVE THEM—

—WHATEVER IT IS.



LOVERS AND SMITHS, LEND ME YOUR EARS!

HUZZAH!

THE SONG!

HUZZAH!

THE SONG!

SPEAK IT! SPEAK IT!



TAKA-TAKKA-TAK-TAK-TAK
TAKA-TAKKA-TAK-TAK-TAK
TAKA-TAKKA-TAK-TAK-TAK



AS SPARKS FROM THE FIRE/
AS IRON FROM THE STONE/

THE DREAM OF A DWARF'S FOR A NAME OF HIS OWN!

TAKA-TAKKA-TAK-TAK-TAK
TAKA-TAKKA-TAK-TAK-TAK



THE SONG OF THE ANVIL SINGS FOR *GREAT* AND FOR *SMALL*! THE SONG OF THE ANVIL BEATS OUT FOR US ALL!



IN THE DARK OF THE *STONE* 'NEATH THE MINE'S ANCIENT *BEAM*!

THE SONG OF THE ANVIL LEADS US ALL IN THE DREAM—!

KHAL KHALUNDURRIN!



YOU STAND ACCUSED OF UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY!

AND INDEPENDENT POETRY!

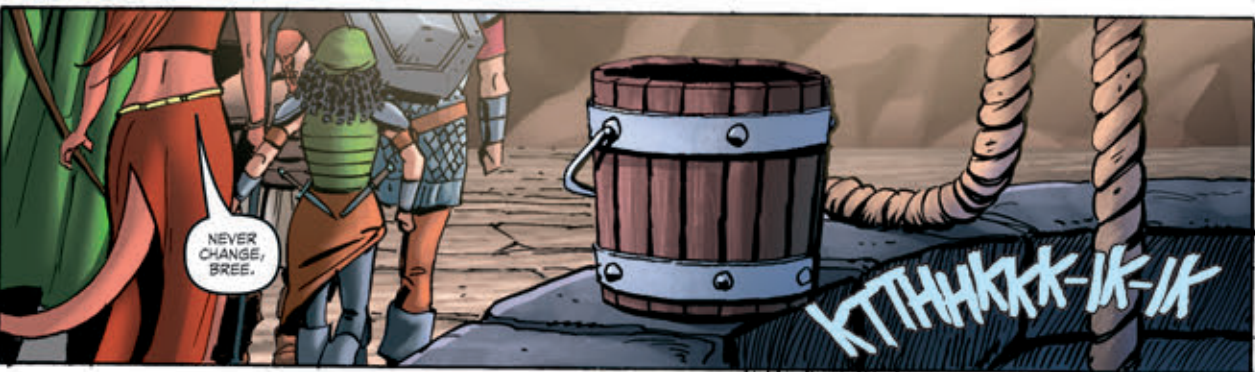


THIS CROWD WILL DISPERSE—

—AND YOU WILL COME WITH ME!

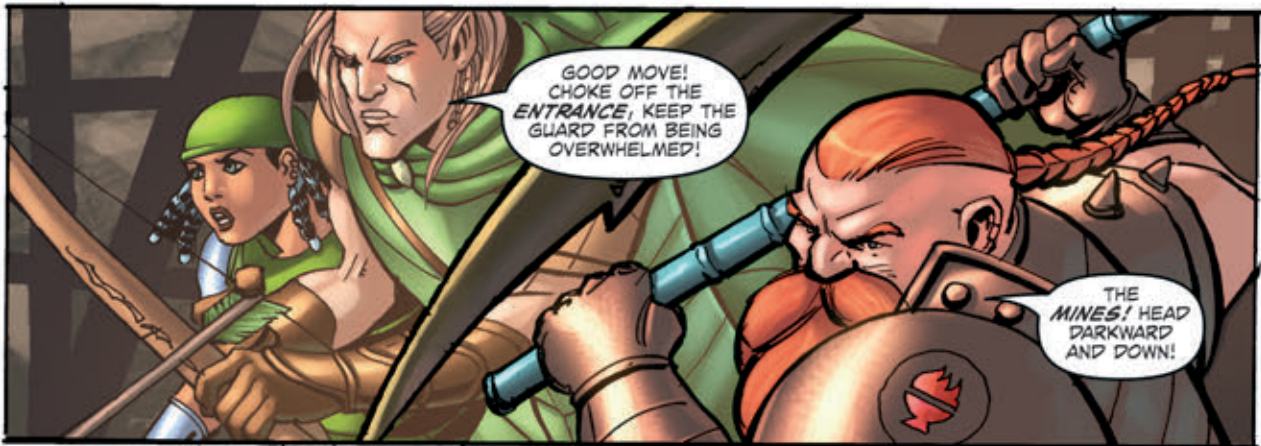


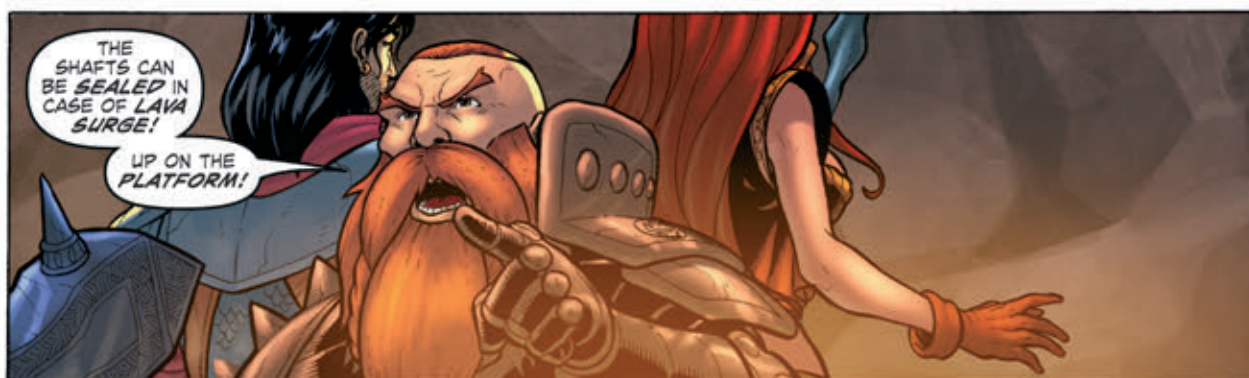
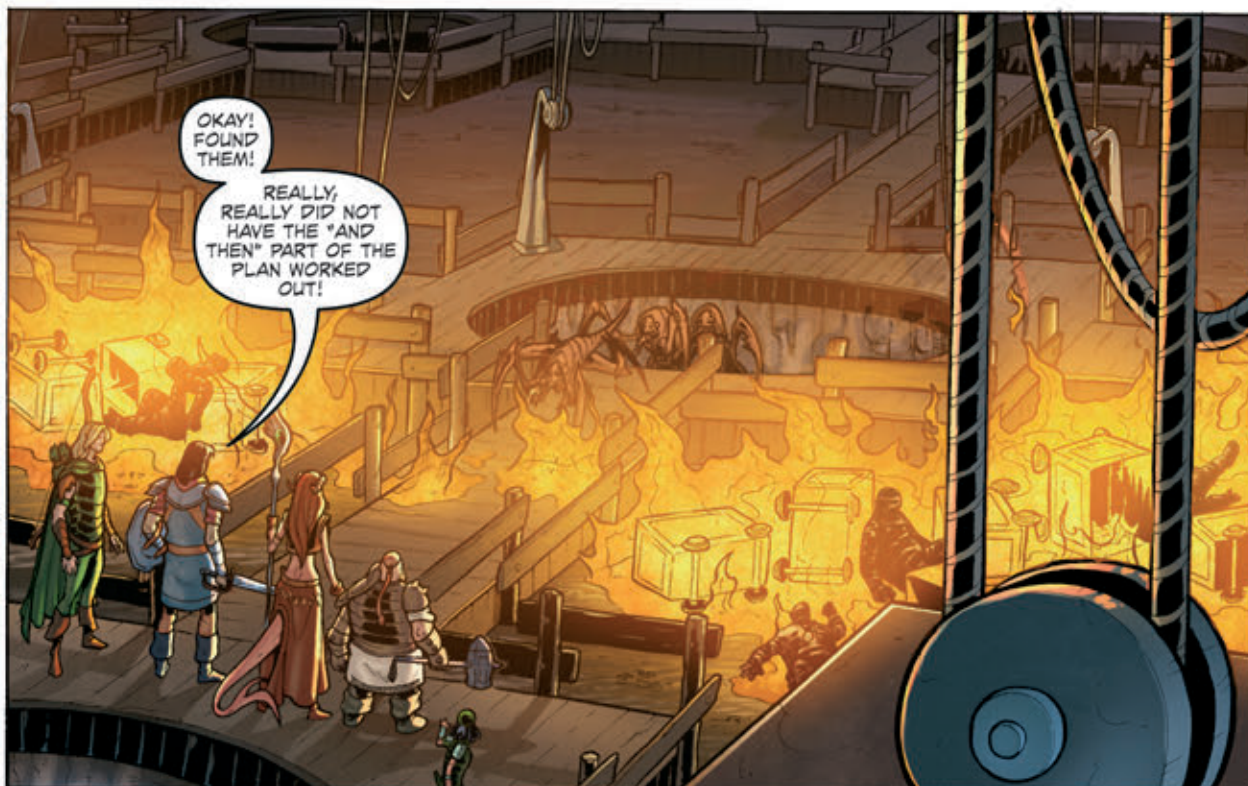
OH, AYE, I WILL! AND YOU WILL TELL ME WHICH ONE OF YOUR HARPY SISTERS ARE FORGING DANNI'S LETTERS TO ME!


















Steve Ellis



Art by Tyler Walpole





SO, KHAL SUSPECTED SOMETHING WAS AMISS WITH HIS BELOVED, AND RETURNED TO HIS STEAD.

YOU'RE LYING!

I'LL TEAR THAT LYING TONGUE OUT—

WE FOUND HIS FAIR DANNI MISSING, PRESUMED DEAD, AND POSSIBLY TO BLAME FOR THE HELLSPAWN SWARMING HIS HOMELAND.



OH, AND HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW IS TRYING TO MURDER US.

RELOAD! FIRE ON MY MARK! KILL THE POET!

SO IT'S BEEN THAT KIND OF DAY.



BACK! BACK!

YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T CONTROL 'EM.

I'LL TRY ANYTHING RIGHT NOW.

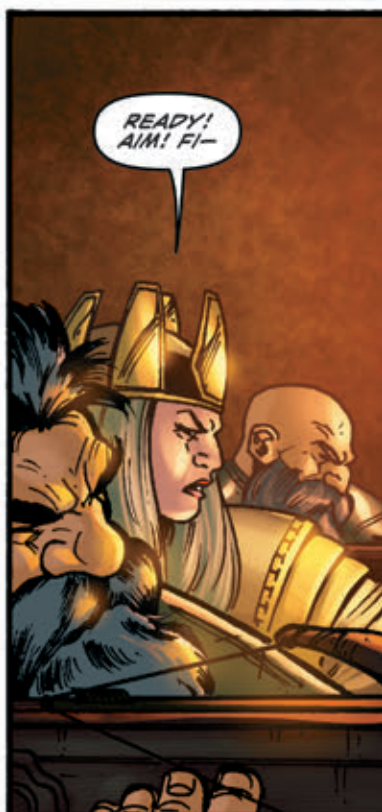


KHAL, FOCUS! WE NEED TO STOP THESE THINGS FROM SWARMING THE CITY.

THAT'S DONE! THE MINE CAP WILL SEAL—

—OH, UH-OH.

RRRRRRRRRUMBBBLE



READY! AIM! FI—



THAT'S A HUNDRED-ODD TONS OF STONE AND MAGICAL STEEL SEALING THAT MINE, TIGHT AS A MISER'S SMILE.

THOOM!

DWARVEN WORKMANSHIP, AS KHAL WOULD SAY.



AND LIKE MOST DWARVEN
WORKMANSHIP...

THIS IS A
VERY BAD
SAFETY
SYSTEM!

...BEING ON THE RECEIVING
END IS USUALLY FATAL.

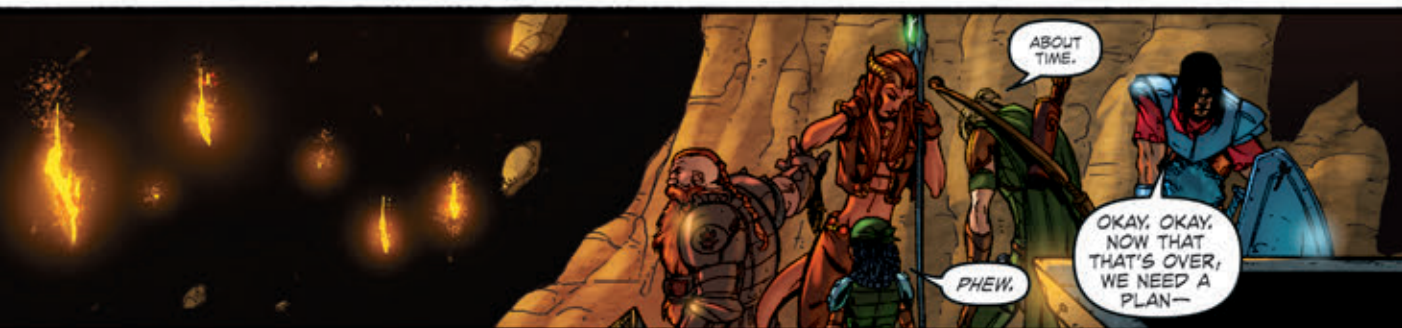
OOF!

I. AM.
SICK. OF.
FALLING!

FEEDER
TUNNEL! THIS
WAY!

SKREE!

KRUNCH!





NOT AT ALL! THIS BE VERY, VERY DANGEROUS!

WE HAVE TO GO FASTER!



DO WORDS NOT MEAN THE SAME TO HIM? IS HE INJURED IN THE HEAD?

HEY, WE TAKE ORDERS FROM HIM. WHAT DOES THAT MAKE US?



NO!

SCHAKK

KA-CHANG



THE CHAIN DOES NAE JUST *DRIVE* THE CAR!

IT ALSO BE THE *BRAKE*!

...WOULD IT HELP IF I EXPLAINED WE DON'T HAVE MINES IN THE FOREST?



UGH!

GAH!

BLEAGH!

CHAKKA-CHAKKA-CHAKKA-CHAKKA

AND THAT IS WHY I CARRY A SHIELD.

BE A BLOODY WEEK GETTIN' THIS OUT OF ME BEARD.

GOOD NEWS! WE'VE RUN OUT OF KRUTHIK!

I THINK THAT'S BECAUSE—

CHAKKA
CHAKKA
CHAKKA

CHAKKA-CHUNK

NOT AGAIN.

OH—

—YOU
HAVE GOT
TO BE—

—KIDDING
MEEE—

SPLOOSH! SPLASH! SPLASH!
SPLASH!

SPFFFT?

WOW. THAT
LADY DOES NOT
LIKE POETRY.

SHUT
YER GOB,
BREE.



JUST A FEW MINUTES WITHOUT YER PRATTLIN'. GIVE A DWARF TIME TO THINK.

KTANG-
FESSH



FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I'M SORRY.

AH, HERE WE GO.

WHAT THAT WOMAN SAID ABOUT YOUR *BELOVED*. BEING DEAD.



KATHANG

VOOOSH



VOOOSH

VOOOSH

VOOOSH



WELL, THAT'S A HELL OF A THING.

SYMPATHETIC SUNSTONES. DON'T STAY LIT FOR LONG, BUT NEVER NEED REPLACIN'.

DANNI'S WORK, THAT.



SHE BUILT 'EM AFTER I TOLD HER THE STORY OF AL'BIHEL, THOSE SUNBOMBS I SAW THERE. HELL OF AN ENGINEER, MY GIRL.

I SAID I'M SORRY—

DON'T BE. SHE'S NAE DEAD.



HOW—

IF DANNI BE DEAD, I'D KNOW IT.

WE REALLY GONNA GO DOWN INTO THE GUTS OF THE EARTH BASED ON YOUR FEELINGS?

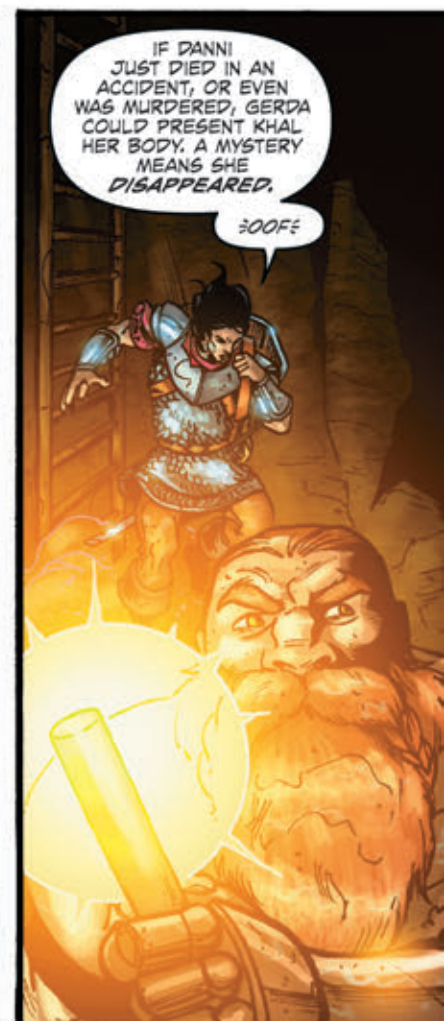


NO, WE'RE GOING BECAUSE OF WHAT GERDA DID.



GERDA FORGED THE LETTERS TO KHAL. WHY? TO KEEP HIM FROM COMING HERE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO DANNI.

BUT THAT ONLY MAKES SENSE IF WHAT HAPPENED TO DANNI WAS A MYSTERY.



IF DANNI JUST DIED IN AN ACCIDENT, OR EVEN WAS MURDERED, GERDA COULD PRESENT KHAL HER BODY. A MYSTERY MEANS SHE **DISAPPEARED**.

BOOF!



BUT EVEN THEN, WHY
BE SO AFRAID OF KHAL
POKING AROUND,
LOOKING FOR
DANNI?

SECOND
CLUE—THE
KRUTHIKS. GERDA
THINKS DANNI DID
SOMETHING TO CAUSE
THE KRUTHIKS TO
SWARM. WHY?

THIS BE
NEW.



BECAUSE DANNI
MUST'VE BEEN DOWN
HERE WHEN THE KRUTHIK
BEGAN TO ATTACK. WHICH
MEANS SHE WAS LAST
SEEN... DOWN
HERE.



...WHAT?

YOU MUST
WORK VERY, VERY
HARD TO APPEAR
SO DENSE MOST
OF THE TIME.



PRESSURE
CRACKS. ONLY
HAPPENS
WITH—



—INTERSECTING
TUNNELS.

BLOODY
HELL.







BUT IN
MUCH SMALLER
AMOUNTS.



"SOMETHING THAT COULD LIVE
IN ETERNAL DARKNESS... AND
*SLAUGHTER KRUTHIKS
BY THE HANDFUL.*"

YOU JUST
REFUSE TO SEE
THE GOOD SIDE
HERE, DON'T YOU?



COULD DANNI
AND YOUR
PEOPLE—

THIS?
NAE. SHE'S AN
ENGINEER. EVEN IF
SHE WERE DOWN
HERE WITH SOME
GUARDS, NOTHING
SHORT OF A
FULL COMPANY OF
SOLDIERS COULD
HAVE DONE
THIS.



UH, GUYS?
MAYBE THIS MEANS
THE KRUTHIK WEREN'T
INVADING THE
SURFACE.

MAYBE
THEY WERE
FLEEING.



THERE'S
SOMETHING WRONG
HERE...

I DON'T
REMEMBER YOU
WORRYING THIS
MUCH BEFORE.
SING A HAPPY ELF
SONG OR
SOMETHING.



YOU—YOU'RE TOUCHING IT.

NO, I MEAN THERE'S NOT ENOUGH *BODY PARTS* TO JUSTIFY ALL THIS... GOO. AND THERE ARE DRAG MARKS IN OLDER FLUID THAT'S DRIED.



SLURP! YES, THIS IS OLDER. SOMETHING *DRAGGED DEAD* KRUTHIK AWAY FROM HERE, JUST LEAVING THE SCRAPS.

GURGLE! GACK!



CAN YOU TRACK WHERE THE BODIES WERE TAKEN?

-HURRRRK-

EASILY ENOUGH. STRAIGHT AHEAD FOR NOW.



YOU KNOW ALL THE HAPPY ELF SONGS ARE ABOUT KILLING INVADING HUMANS, RIGHT?

KHAL, SING A HAPPY DWARF SONG—

ALSO ABOUT KILLING INVADIN' HUMANS.



ARE YOU SAD? BECAUSE YOUR MINIONS ARE DEAD?

GIVE ME STRENGTH.

I'M TALKING ABOUT THE MONSTERS, BY THE WAY.





DRAG MARKS.
SOMEBODY PULLED
THE KRUTHIK CORPSES
ALONG OVER THAT
BRIDGE.



LET'S
BE OFF,
THEN.

HOLD UP
JUST A SECOND.
THIS REQUIRES
SUBTLETY.



NOT
OUR STRONG
POINT.

HEY, WE
WERE SUBTLE
BACK IN THE
FEYWILD.

BEFORE
OR AFTER YOU
WOKE UP THE
GIANT DEATH
GOLEM?



I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING
SCREAM "I AM EVIL" THIS
LOUD SINCE THE SIEGE AT
TINDALL-REE.

SHUDDER
THE PUS
CATAPULT. THAT
MAD WIZARD BE
TOO MAD.



AND, OF
COURSE, YOU
REALIZE WE'RE
BEING
FOLLOWED.

...I DID
NOT KNOW
THAT.

I
NOTICED.

YES, WELL
THAT'S YOUR
JOB.



WHOEVER IT
IS HASN'T ATTACKED
YET, SO THEY'RE
PROBABLY MORE AFRAID
OF US THAN WE ARE
OF THEM.



ANNND—
**DON'T
MOVE!**



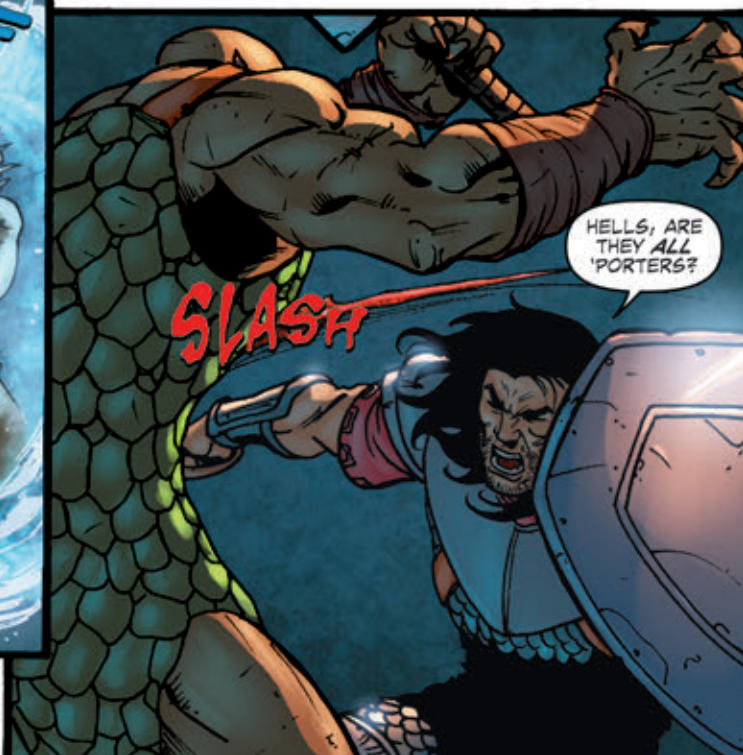
HELLO.

I WANT
TO LICK THE
INSIDE OF
YOUR RIB
CAGE.

HEE.









WELL, THERE'S ONE
MYSTERY SOLVED.

KHAL?
OH GODS, NO—
KHAL!



AIN'T SHE
A CLEVER
GIRL?



UNFORTUNATELY.



STEVE
ELLIS



Art by Tyler Walpole



THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE.

CHAPTER
3

GET HIM
TO COVER!
NOW!

GNNGGG.

KHAL JUST GOT SHOT
IN THE CHEST BY HIS
INTENDED. NOT QUITE
THE REUNION HE WAS
HOPING FOR.





LET ME
IN YOUR
MIND—

—GUURK.



THAT'S
FOR CREEPING
AROUND IN MY
SKULL.



WE WILL
PASS!
OUR MASTER
DEMANDS—

BREE!

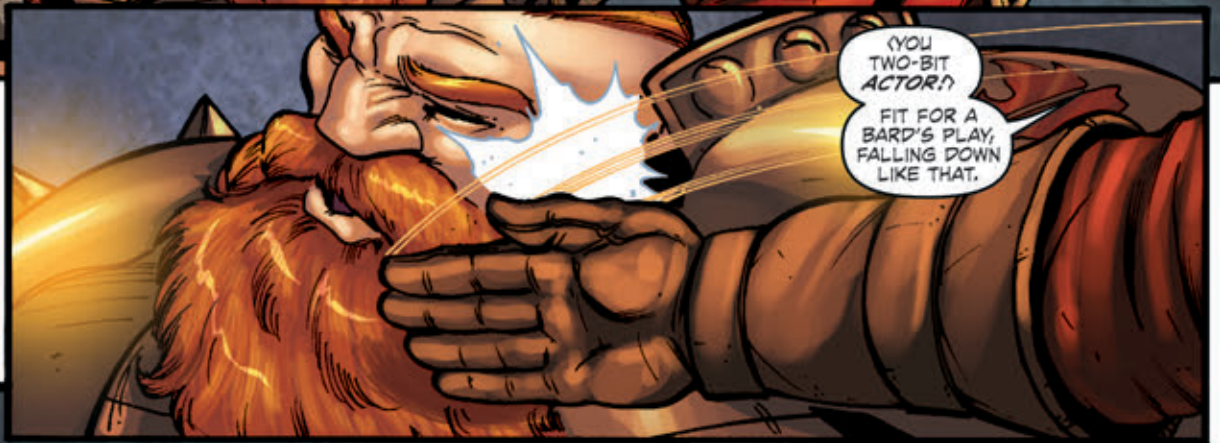


RESCUE
TIME!



AGGHHHH!

WE WILL BE
BACK! FOR
YOUR DELICIOUS
SPLEENS!







NO, **FOULSPAWN** DID THAT. WE FOUND THE SLAUGHTER-SITE AND DRAGGED THE KRUTHIK BODIES HERE. THEY SHY AWAY FROM THEIR DEAD.

COME, I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.



HMM. THOSE **FOULSPAWN** ARE, AH... FOUL, BUT THERE'S NO WAY THOSE SIX KILLED ALL THOSE KRUTHIKS.

MAYBE THIS "**MASTER**" THEY'RE SHRIEKING ABOUT ALL THE TIME. WE FOUGHT THEM OFF A FEW TIMES BEFORE WE SET UP THE BARRICADE.



THEY KEPT TRYING TO GET IN HERE?

I THINK THEIR **MASTER** WANTS SOMETHING DEEP IN THIS TEMPLE.



KRICK

I THINK
THEY'RE
LOOKING FOR
THIS.

MORADIN'S
BREATH.



IS IT
LOCKED?

YES.

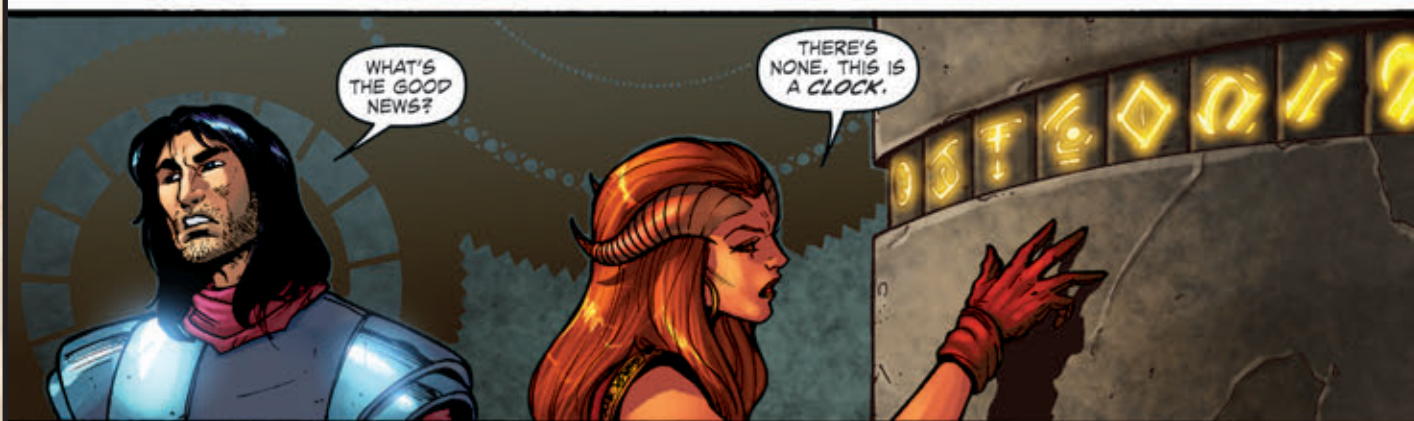
GOOD.



RIGHT, BEST TO
LEAVE SLEEPING
DEMONS LIE—

KICKKA
CHUNK
THUNK

UNLOCKED!





COUNTING
DOWN TO WHEN
THE STARS ARE
ALIGNED—

—SO
SOMETHING CAN
BE SUMMONED
HERE?



BUT IT
HAS TO BE
SUMMONED,
RIGHT?

...MAYBE. OR
IT JUST MIGHT
SHOW UP.



BETTER AND
BETTER NEWS.
IT'S ALMOST TIME.
MATTER OF
HOURS.



ANY BETS
THE FOULSPAWN'S
MASTER WANTS TO BE
HERE FOR THAT WEE
CEREMONY?

WHICH
MEANS WE
NEED TO BE
ANYWHERE
BUT.



BEST CHANCE, SOMETHING
THAT SLAUGHTERS KRUTHIKS
BY THE HUNDRED IS COMING
BACK TO CONTROL WHAT
COMES THROUGH THAT
DEMONIC GATE.

**BEST.
CHANCE.** WE
NEED TO FIND A
WAY OUT.





GOOD WORK ON
PICKING OFF THAT
MIND-KICKER.

AH, THAT. I
NEED TO KEEP
YOU ALIVE. WHO
ELSE WOULD
HIRE ME?



DID YOU SEE
MY MOTHER
WHEN—

SHE
TRIED TO
KILL ME.

SO NOTHING'S
CHANGED.



YOU'RE
VERY GOOD
WITH THAT
BOW.

OF COURSE. BUT
SOMEBODY ELSE HIRES
ME, EVENTUALLY I WIND
UP WITH OTHER ELVES.
AND SEEING AS I'M
BANISHED—



YOU
DISAPPEARED
WITH YOUR NEW
INVENTION—

"ABOMINATION."

—SAME TIME
AS THE KRUTHIKS
SWARMED. SHE
THOUGHT YOU DID IT,
WAS COVERIN' UP
YER BLAME.



I DIDN'T KNOW
ELVES "BANISHED"
OTHER ELVES.

WE'RE NOT
THAT ORGANIZED.
IT'S MORE A "GET
THEE FROM THE
FOREST, AND
NE'ER RETURN!"
THING.



AND THERE
WAS THE
POETRY.

~~25/IGHE~~ NOT
THE POETRY.
THE POEM...



WAIT, WEREN'T WE GOING DOWN?

YOU SANG "SONG OF THE ANVIL," DIDN'T YOU?



SO?

IT'S... SOMEWHAT ILLEGAL.

OOOO, PALADIN BREAKING THE LAAAAAW.



LOOK, IF WE CAN GET UP THERE...



I'VE MAPPED ALL THE WATERWAYS THAT CROSS OVER WITH THE MINES. WE CAN *DEFINITELY* USE IT TO GET HOME!

AHHH, THEY MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT.



UNLESS YOU WANT TO RUN OVER THEIR BACKS...



"LET'S HOPE ADRIC'S HAVING MORE LUCK."

WHAT DID YOU DO THAT WAS SO BAD—

—WAIT, WEREN'T WE GOING *UP*?

¡SIGH! I HATE EVIL TEMPLES. I REALLY, REALLY DO.



OH, GREAT. EVIL WIZARD'S DEN.

MORE "WORKSHOP." LOOK BACK HERE—



WHAT THE DEVIL?

THIS ROOM'S BEEN ENTERED RECENTLY. TRACKS IN THE DUST.



THERE'S A LOT OF SYMPATHETIC MAGIC DOWN HERE, A FAIR BIT OF ALCHEMY...

OH, HELL.



IS THAT—

WE NEED TO FIND THEM.

NOW!



GOOD NEWS!



WE FOUND AN EXIT—

—IN THE CEILING.

WE JUST NEED TO RUN A ROPE—

—OVER AN ENTIRE CAVERN OF KRUTHIKS.



NOT HELPIN'.

I COULD'VE SAID "THROUGH THE KRUTHIKS."

MY FRIENDS, THE SLOW HALFLING SPEAKS THE TRUTH.



HEY!

THE TUNNEL IS INDEED UNREACHABLE.

BUT WE ARE DWARVES!



WE HAVE BRIDGED RIVERS OF LAVA WITH IRON AND STONE!

WE HAVE CARVED STAIRS A MILE DEEP INTO THE ENDLESS DARK!



IF ANYONE CAN DO THIS—

DON'T MOVE!



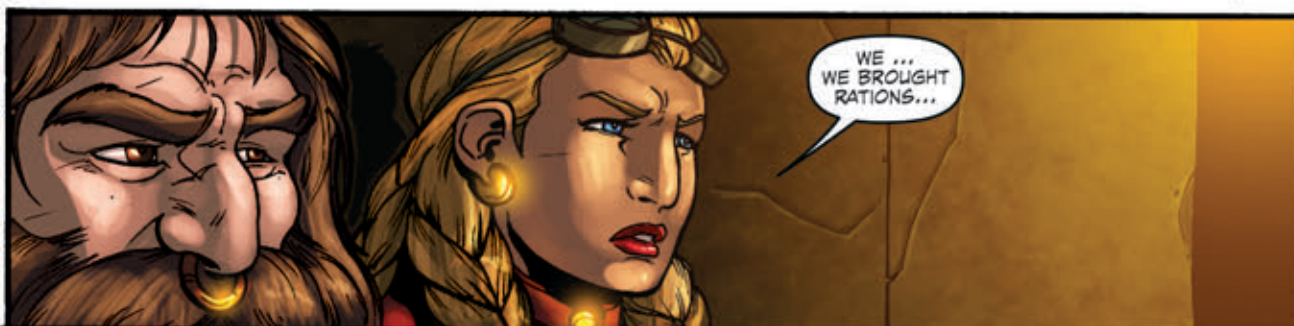
KHAL, BREE,
STEP OVER
HERE.
RIGHT
NOW.



THIS BE
MADNESS!
WE FOUND
AN *EXIT*,
WITH A BIT O'
LUCK—



DANNAE,
WHEN'S THE
LAST TIME YOU
ALL ATE?



WE ...
WE BROUGHT
RATIONS...



YOU'VE BEEN
DOWN HERE TWO
MONTHS. ALMOST TEN
PEOPLE COULDN'T
HAVE SURVIVED THAT
LONG ON PACK
RATIONS. BUT *ONE*
MIGHT.









WHAT IS THIS, A THRONE ROOM?

SHE SAID "FLEE TO THE TOMBS."



WHY DO THEY NEVER FLEE SOMEWHERE NICE?

VARIS AND KHAL, GO DOWN HERE!

"TO OUR LAIR AT THE PUB!"

BREE AND TISHA, WITH ME!



"FLEE TO THE PIE SHOP!"

I AM NOT LISTENING TO YOU.

"TO OUR WIZARD TOWER BY THE DUCK POND!"



I ASSUME THIS IS ONE OF YOUR "MORE QUICK THEN CLEVER" PLANS.

SERVANT'S ENTRANCE. EVERY PLACE LIKE THIS HAS A SERVANT'S ENTRANCE INTO THE GUTS OF THE PLACE.



IF WE CAN FIND THAT DOOR—

KRA-KDOOM

GAHH!









BUT I
HAVE AN
APPOINTMENT
TO KEEP.

SO I NEED
TO MURDER
YOU RATHER
QUICKLY.

...THIS WAS TWO OF THEM.





Art by Tyler Walpole



THEY'RE CALLED
"BEHOLDERS."
NOT SURE WHY.

AH-HA-
HAAAAA!

KZZZAP

FWOOSH

I ASSUME
"PANTS-SOILERS"
WAS ALREADY TAKEN.





...WHAZZAT*...
...SOMETHIN'
RUINED KNIFE-Y
TIME...



HEY!



WHAT
ARE--STOP
IT!
I'M NOT
A SACK OF
OATS YOU
CAN--



...



WHY ARE YOU
NOT RUNNING
FASTER?!
DO YOU
NEED ME TO
STAB YOU?!





"ANOTHER GUEST
IS COMING TO
THE PARTY!"

UNNGH

BONG BONG
BONG



...ONE
OF THESE
DAYS...

...GOING TO
LAND ON MY
HEAD.



SIGH

TELEPORT.
FLY. ALL THINGS
ON MY "MAGIC TO
LEARN" LIST.



NATURAL TUNNELS
UNDER THE TEMPLE.
MAYBE I CAN FIND MY
WAY UP THROUGH THE
FOUNDATION...



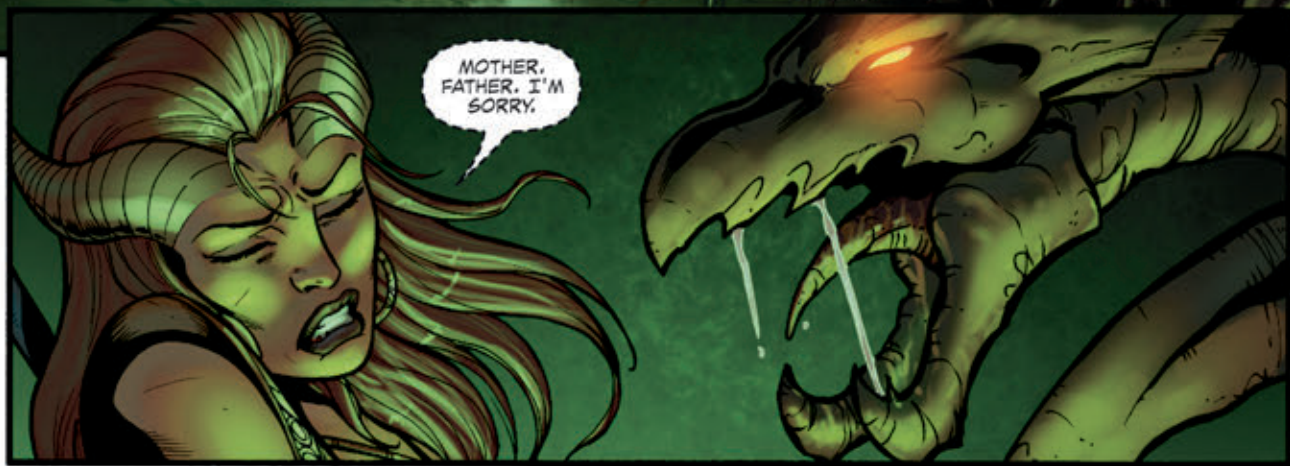
HELLO, THIS
IS PROMISING.
BIGGER ROOM.

COME ON,
BE A WINE
CELLAR...



FWASH

OH.



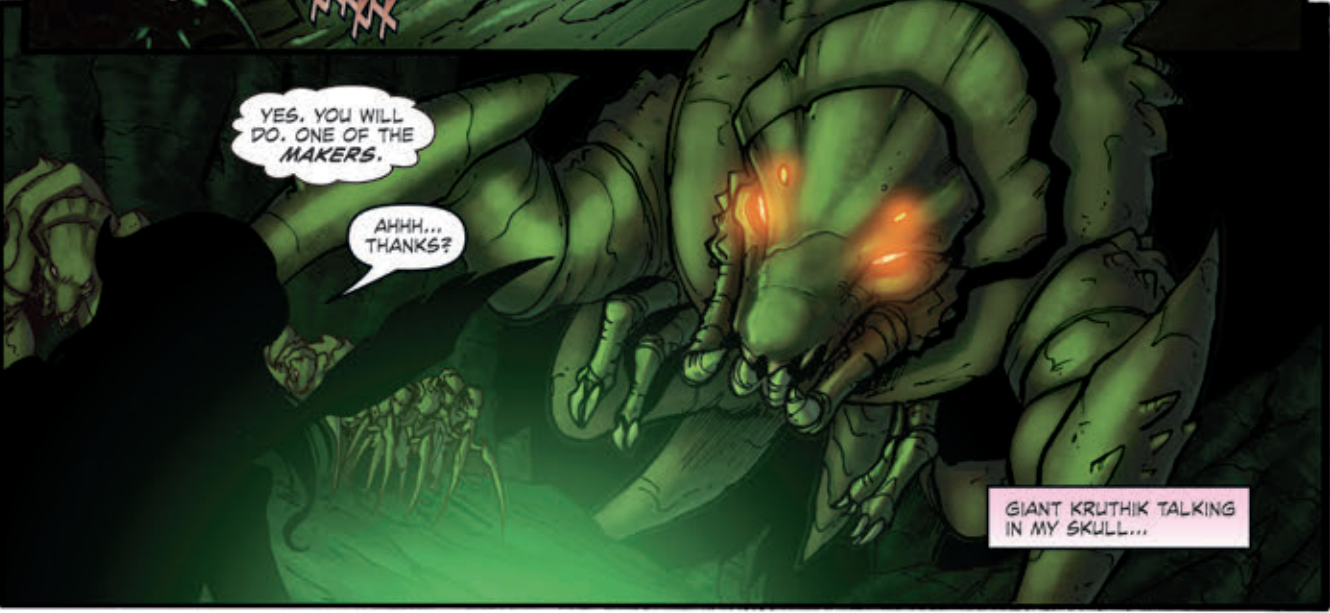
MOTHER, FATHER, I'M SORRY.



KRRRXX

TKCATIKITA

TICKETY



YES, YOU WILL DO. ONE OF THE MAKERS.

AHHH... THANKS?

GIANT KRUTHIK TALKING IN MY SKULL...



...I DID NOT THINK IT COULD GET STRANGER THAN THE HOMUNCULUS DWARVES.

DANNI! DANNI! LISTEN TO ME!

I DID NOT THINK IT COULD STRANGER THAN THE HOMUNCULUS DWARVES...



YOUR MIND BE FOGGED BY YOUR TIME DOWN HERE.

BY THE DEATHS OF YOUR GOOD FRIENDS!



THE DEATHS THAT YOU CAUSED! YOU AND YOUR KRUTHIK MONSTERS!



TO BE FAIR, I THINK THE KRUTHIKS ARE WORKING ON THEIR OWN.

VERY HELPFUL, PINE-SUCKER. GOT ANY IDEAS?



A VERY BAD ONE.





NOT THE GOLD! THAT
MUCK THE FALSE DWARVES
BE MADE OF!



THE MAGIC HERE
SENSED YER NEED!
IT *BENT* TO YOUR
WILL!
BUT IT
BENT YOU IN
RETURN!



I JUST... JUST
WANTED TO *SAVE*
THEM... TO BRING
THEM *BACK*.



THE CLOSER
YOU GET HER TO
REALITY—

*STOP
HURTING
HER!*

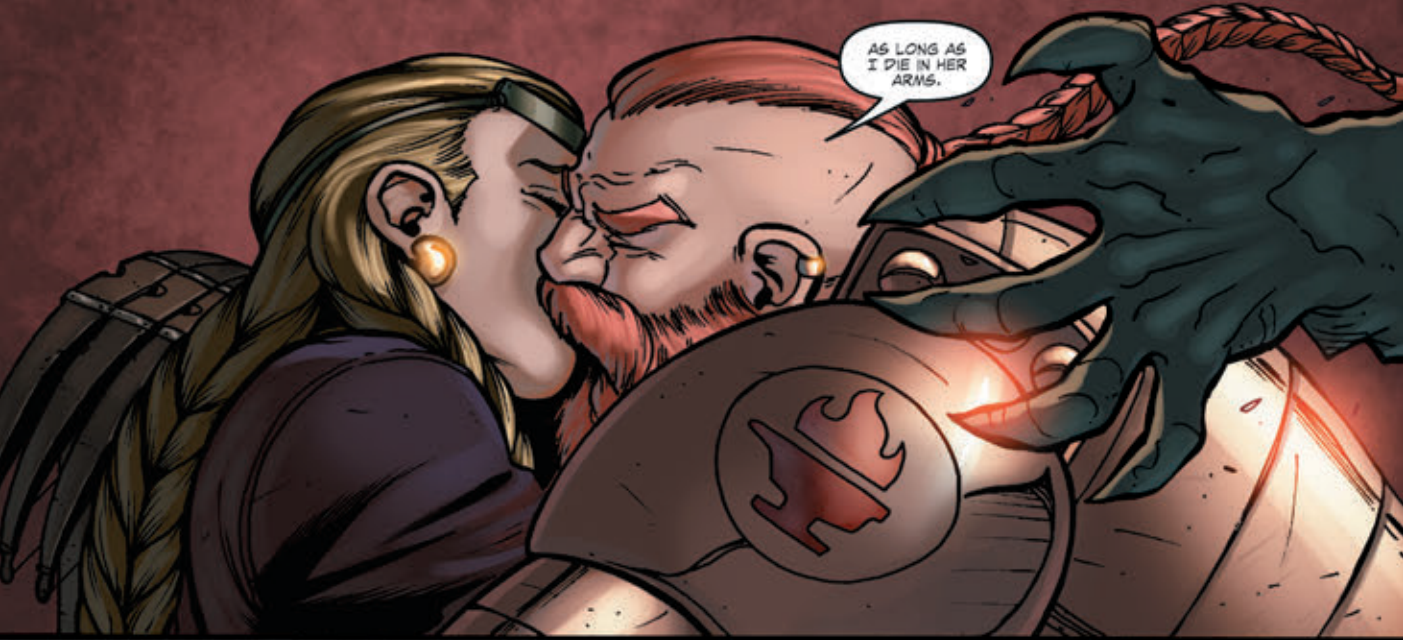
—THEY'LL
KILL US BEFORE
SHE'S ALL THE
WAY BACK!

*STOP
HURTING
HER!
STOP
HURTING
HER!*



THEN I'LL *DIE*!
BUT SHE'LL KNOW
I'M *REAL*!!

THAT MY
LOVE FOR HER
IS *REAL*!

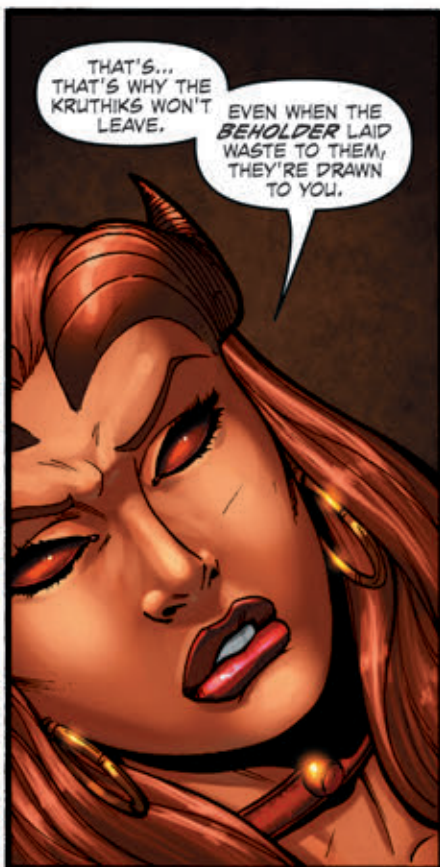






THE TIME IS
UPON ME,
MAKER.

I MUST PASS ON
MY MEMORIES AND
ESSENCE TO MY
DAUGHTER.



THAT'S...
THAT'S WHY THE
KRUTHIKS WON'T
LEAVE.

EVEN WHEN THE
BEHOLDER LAID
WASTE TO THEM,
THEY'RE DRAWN
TO YOU.



ALL THAT
I AM, A *MOTHER*
OF MY PEOPLE.

ALL THAT
I WILL BE, A
MOTHER OF MY
PEOPLE.



AH, THIS
IS... AH.

I'M
HONORED.
I THINK.



DID YOU NOT
KNOW, MAKER, THIS
IS HOW YOUR PEOPLE
FORGED ME.

EACH
MOTHER, IMMORTAL,
REGENERATING.



IT'S BEEN CENTURIES. WE DID THIS...
...OF COURSE, TO KEEP THEM FROM OVERRUNNING IF WE LOST CONTROL. LIMITED NUMBER OF QUEENS.



KKKTHISKKA-KTT HKKKK

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?



I AM DYING. THE BEHOLDERS WOUNDED ME GREATLY.



YOU ARE THE FIRST MAKER IN CENTURIES TO HOLD ONE OF THE QUEENS. MY BROOD WILL DO **ANYTHING** TO PROTECT IT.

WILL YOU TAKE IT TO SAFETY?

...
I'M SORRY, DID YOU SAY "**ANYTHING**"?





FIND THEM!
THE TIME OF
ARRIVAL IS
ALMOST—



I AM
THE WALKER
BEYOND THE
STARS!

I AM THE
DARKNESS IN
THE LONG
NIGHT!

WHO HAS
SUMMONED
ME?!



MY
RESEARCH IS
CORRECT.

I SHALL BECOME A
GOD WITH THIS SPIRIT'S
KNOWLEDGE.



GIVE TO ME THE
SECRET OF *ULTIMATE*
SORCERY! AND THEN
I WILL *RELEASE*
YOU!

I DID NOT
SUMMON YOU,
SPIRIT!

BUT YOU ARE
BOUND HERE,
UNTIL RELEASED,
AND I DEMAND
A BOON!



YOU
DEMAND A
BOON!

AYE!

AS I
AM BOUND
BY THIS
CIRCLE!

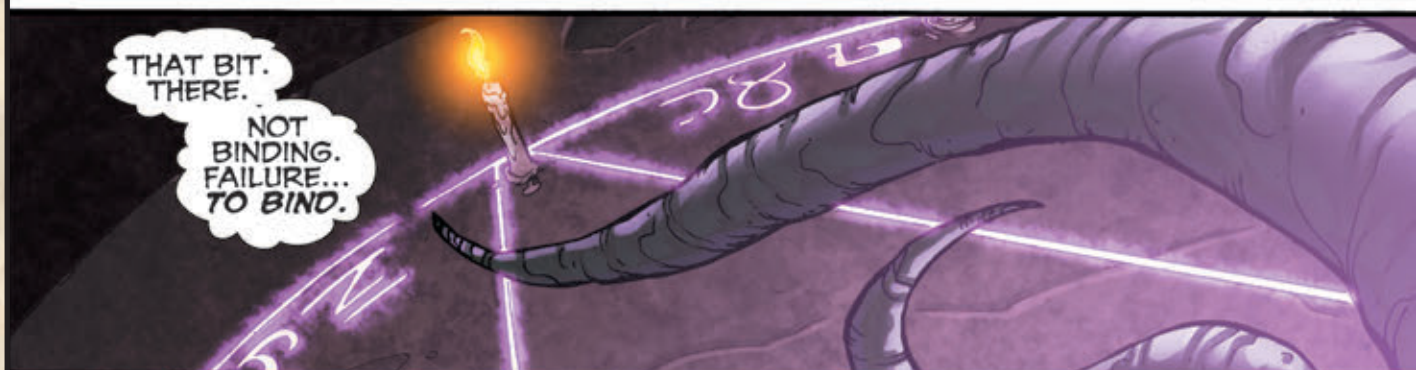
AYE!



EVEN THOUGH
THIS CIRCLE IS
INCOMPLETE?!



UMMM...
PARDON?



THAT BIT.
THERE.

NOT
BINDING.
FAILURE...
TO BIND.

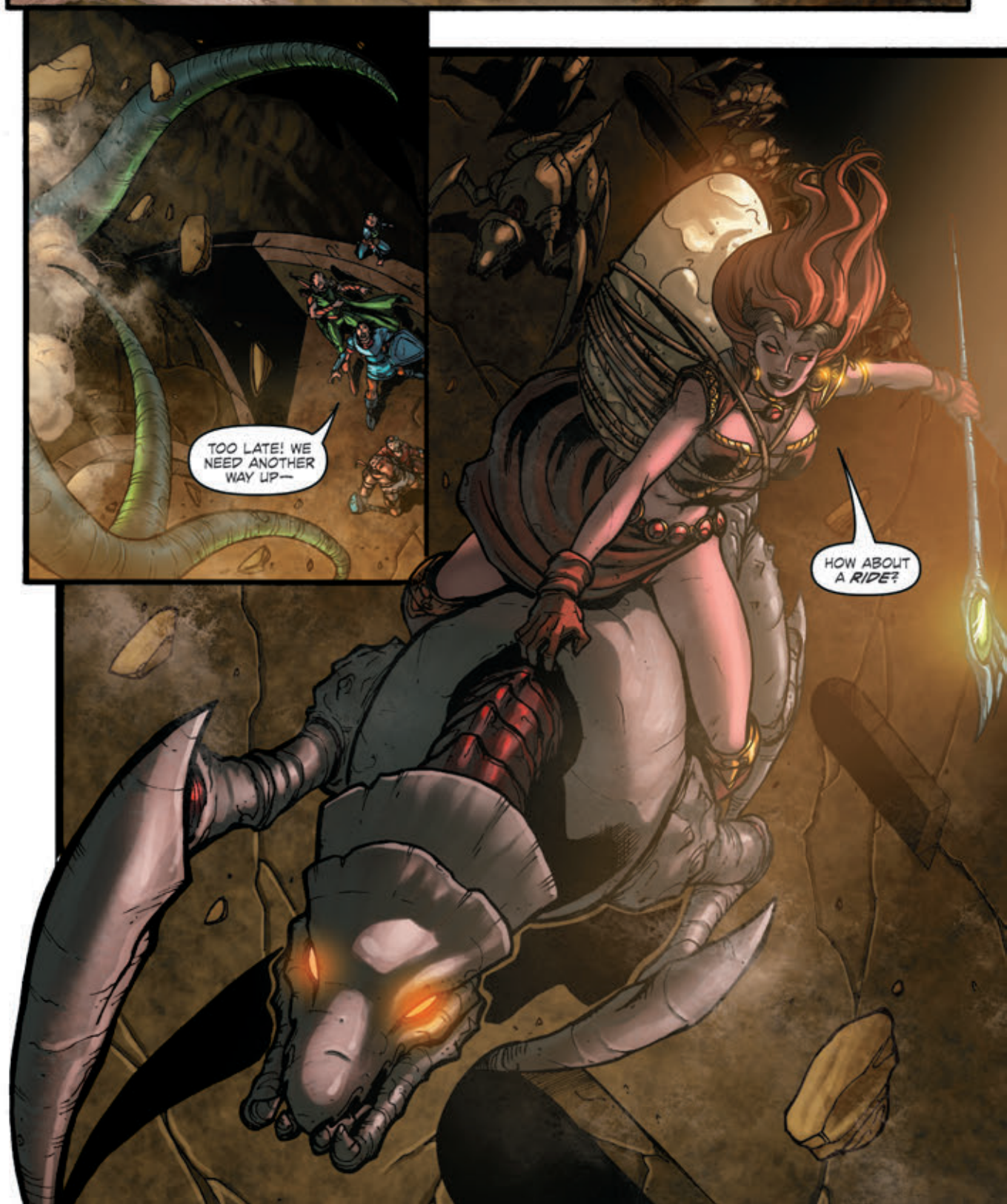


SKLOP

CHURK

OH BUGGER.







AHH. YES.
THOSE WERE
TRYING TO
KILL US.

VERY
RECENTLY.



I WILL NEVER
COMPLAIN ABOUT
YOU BEING EVIL
AGAIN!

AS LONG AS
YOU USE YOUR
EVIL POWERS
TO SAVE MY
LIFE!



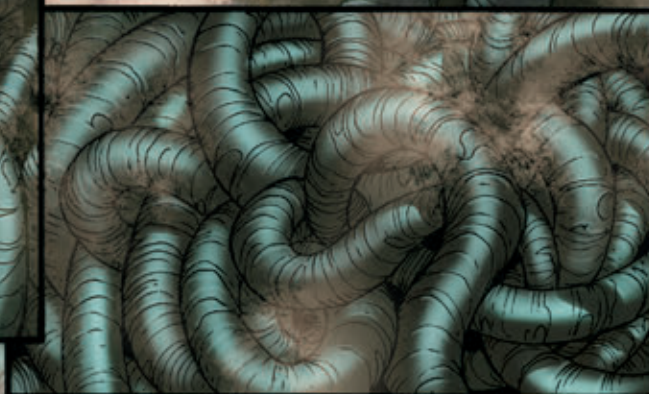
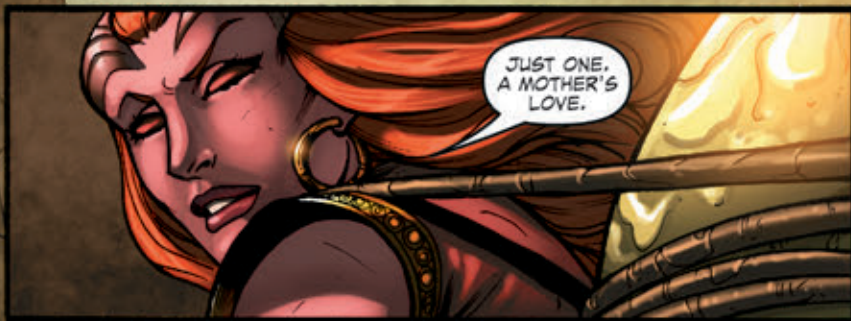
I'M GOING
TO ASSUME THESE
THINGS WILL OBEY
ME AS LONG AS I
HAVE THE EGG. AND
I JUST HAVE TO
THINK—



AAAAHH!

—OKAY! NEED
TO BE MORE
EXPLICIT!







I WILL NOT ASK
HOW YOU CAN CONTROL
THESE THINGS. I WILL
JUST ASK IF WE CAN
WALK THE REST OF
THE WAY.

BECAUSE
THESE THINGS
ARE CREEPING ME
THE HELL OUT.



I'LL SEND THEM
ON TO SCOUT AHEAD.
I'LL LOSE CONTROL
OVER THEM NOW THAT
THE MOTHER'S DEAD,
I THINK.



ANYONE ELSE
BOTHERED BY THE
PORTAL TO ELEMENTAL
EVIL WE OPENED
BACK THERE?

IT'LL
CLOSE ON
ITS OWN.

ARE YOU
SURE—

NO.



HEY KHAL, WHY WAS
DANNAE'S MOTHER ALL
TICKED OFF ABOUT THAT
POEM, ANYWAY?



BECAUSE IT'S A
POEM ABOUT CHOICE.
ABOUT A DWARF'S DREAM
TO RISE ABOVE HIS STATION.
BY THE STRENGTH OF
HIS HARD WORK.

NOT BOUND BY
FAMILY, OR CASTE,
OR CLASS.

THE CHANCE TO
LIVE AS I LIVE WITH
YOU IDIOTS, TRUTH
BE TOLD.

AH, YOU LOVE
IT, YOU BEARDED
GIT. DON'T PLAY
TOUGH.

WHAT'S A WEEK
WITHOUT ODDS OF
TREASURE AND TWICE
THE ODDS FOR
DYING?

...THE THINGS WE DO
FOR LOVE, INDEED.





Steve Ellis 29



Art by Andrea Di Vito









DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Down

Fell's Five have returned to Fallcrest, only to find shattering news for Khal. He's heading home, and nothing will stand in his way as he must lead Fell's Five against a sinister new threat in the Underdark. But this "threat" is someone near and dear to another of the group! **John Rogers** and **Andrea Di Vito** bring the latest chapter in their thrilling adventure of swords and sorcery!



IDW