

BASED ON THE BESTSELLING VIDEO GAME



In *World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King*, Thassarian is a renegade death knight, one of the few of his kind to be free of the Lich King's control. Although Thassarian has turned his incredible powers against his former master, he remains feared and despised by most of his Alliance allies. Countless players have aided Thassarian in-game as he battles against the Lich King's agents in Northrend, but few fans know the details of his former life. *Death Knight* is Thassarian's story, a tale that reveals the origins, motivations, and darkest secrets of Warcraft's newest incarnation of death knights.

Written by Dan Jolley (*Warcraft: Legends*) and drawn by Rocio Zucchi, this heartrending epic will give Warcraft fans new insight into the death knights!

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DEATH KNIGHT

DAN JOLLEY • ROCIO ZUCCHI

STORY BY DAN JOLLEY

ART BY ROCIO ZUCCHI



DEATH KNIGHT





World Of Warcraft: Death Knight

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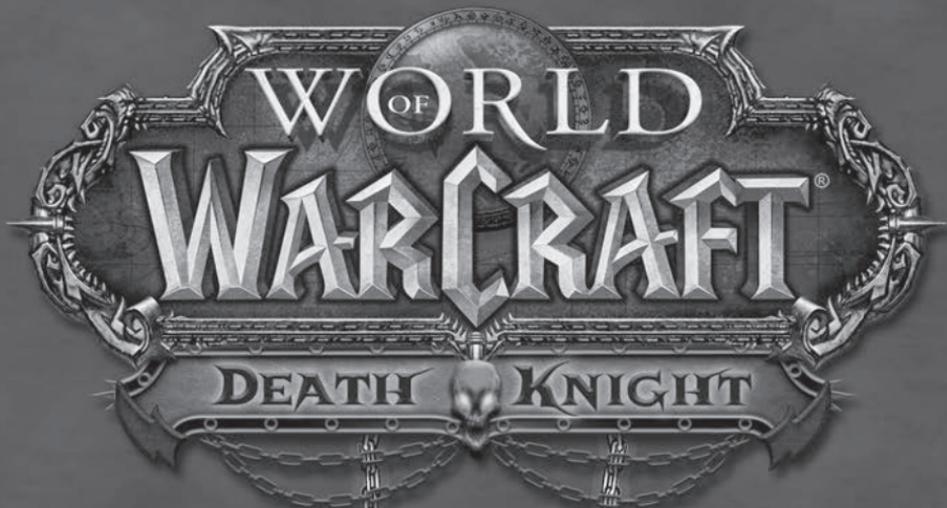
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WORLD
OF
WARCRAFT®
DEATH KNIGHT

STORY BY
DAN JOLLEY

ART BY
ROCIO ZOCCHI



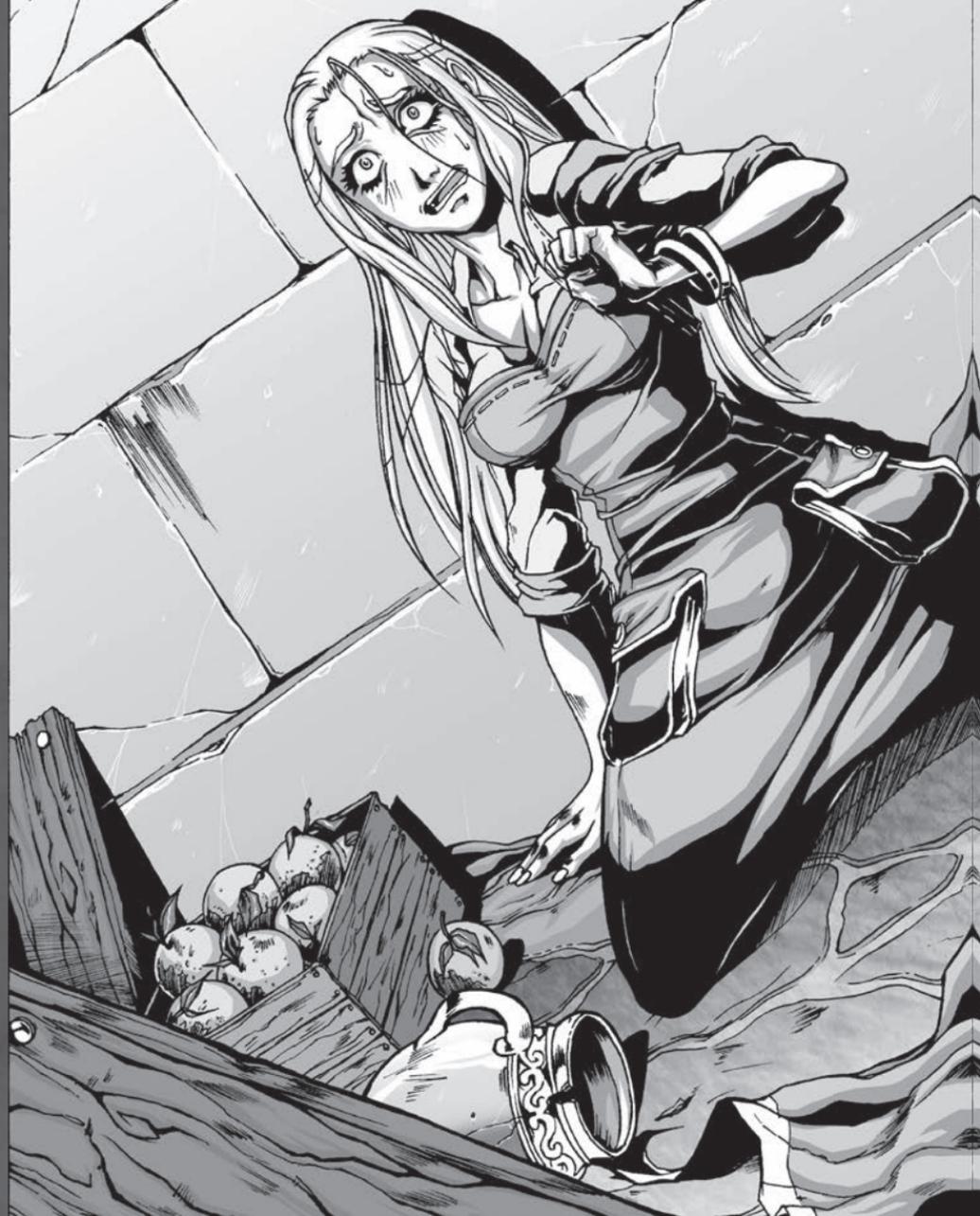
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WORLD OF WARCRAFT

DEATH KNIGHT

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CHAPTER I





The Kingdom of
LORDAERON.

MINUTES AFTER THE
SCREAMS BEGAN.

YOU TWO. THAT
WOMAN!



BRING HER TO ME!



P-P-PRINCE ARTHAS...



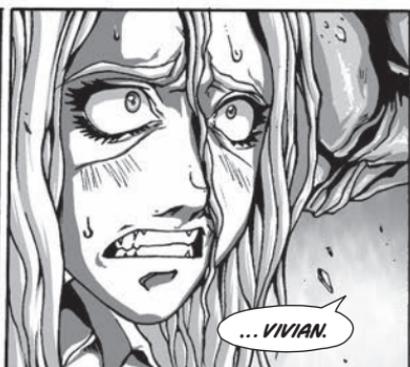
NO... NO...



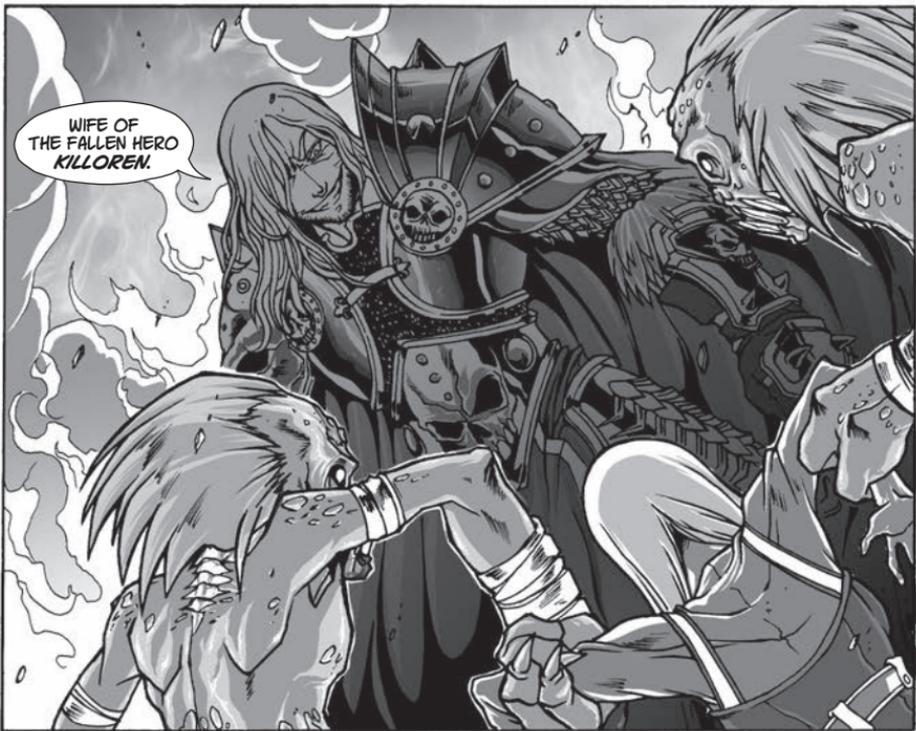
AYE, YOU HAVE NAMED ME...



... AND NOW I
NAME YOU...



... VIVIAN.

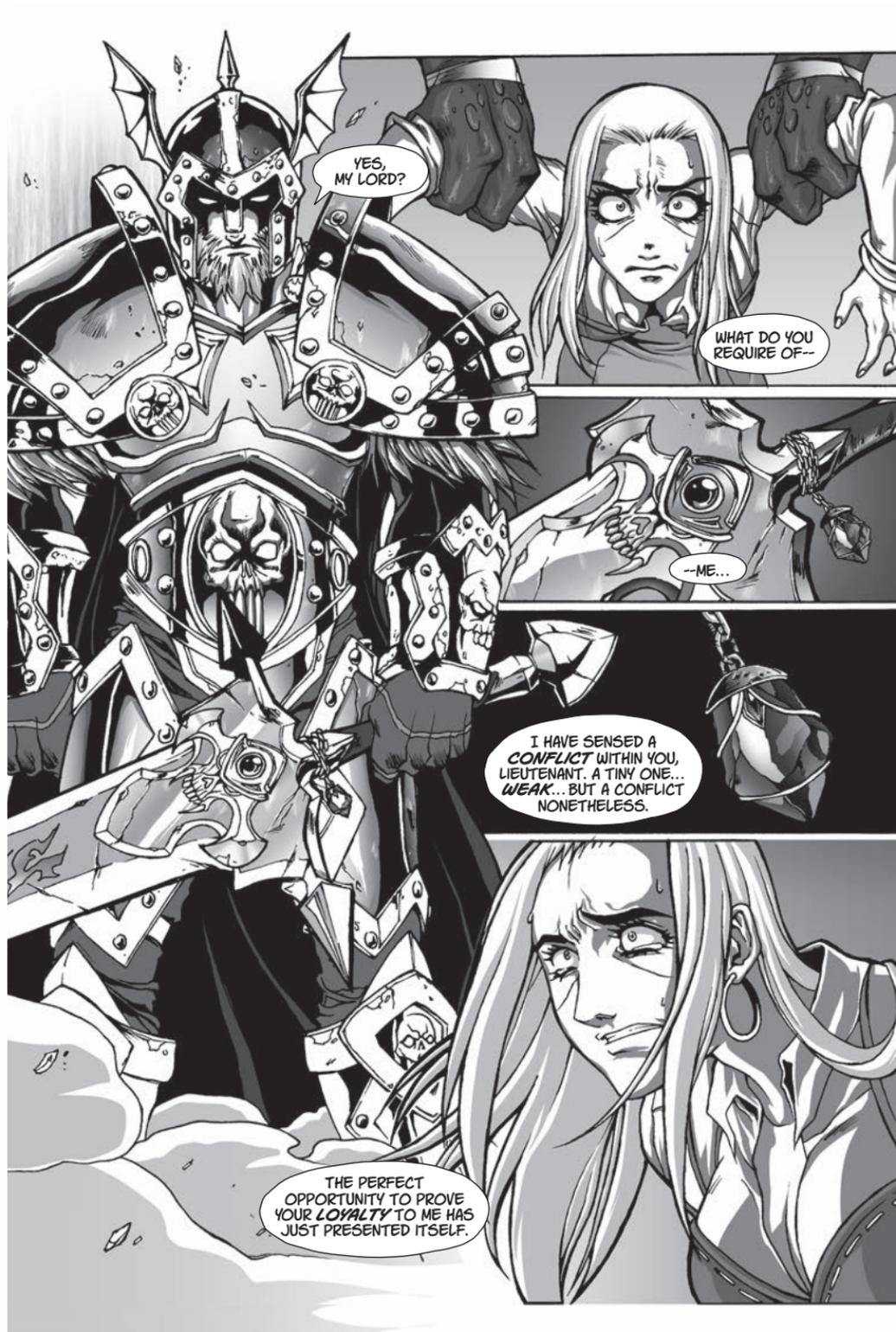


WIFE OF
THE FALLEN HERO
KILLOREN.



YOU MUST MEET MY
LIEUTENANT.

STEP FORWARD,
DEATH KNIGHT.



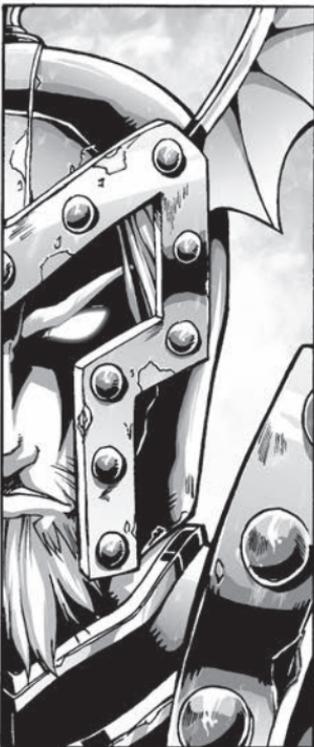
YES,
MY LORD?

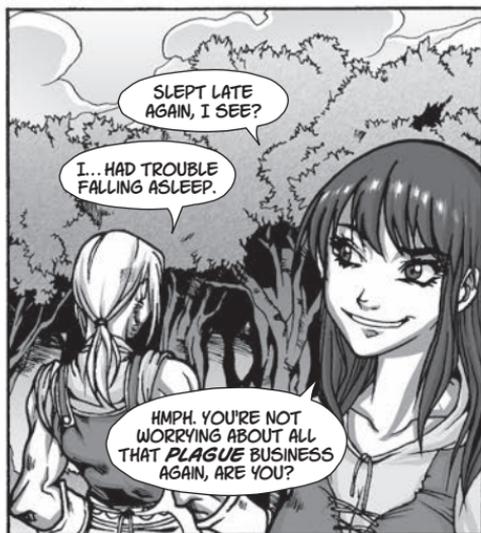
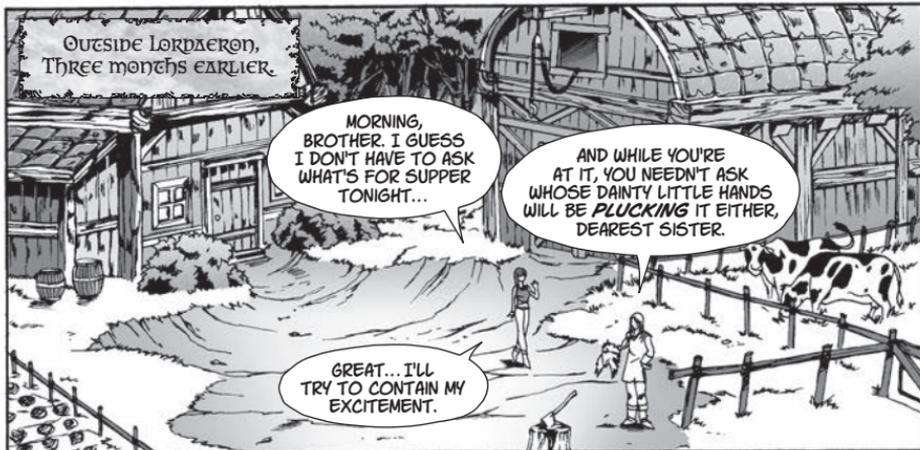
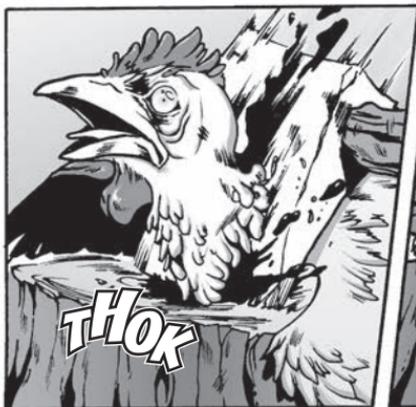
WHAT DO YOU
REQUIRE OF--

--ME...

I HAVE SENSED A
CONFLICT WITHIN YOU,
LIEUTENANT. A TINY ONE...
WEAK... BUT A CONFLICT
NONETHELESS.

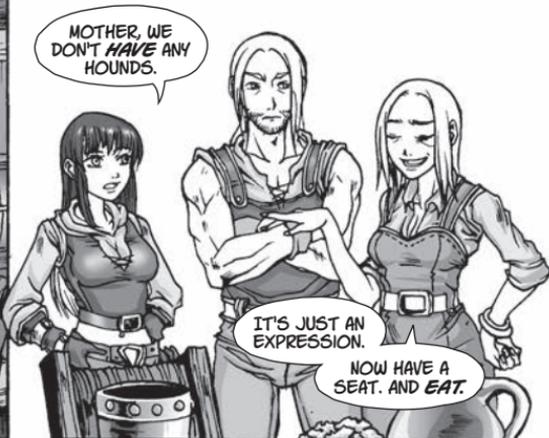
THE PERFECT
OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE
YOUR **LOYALTY** TO ME HAS
JUST PRESENTED ITSELF.







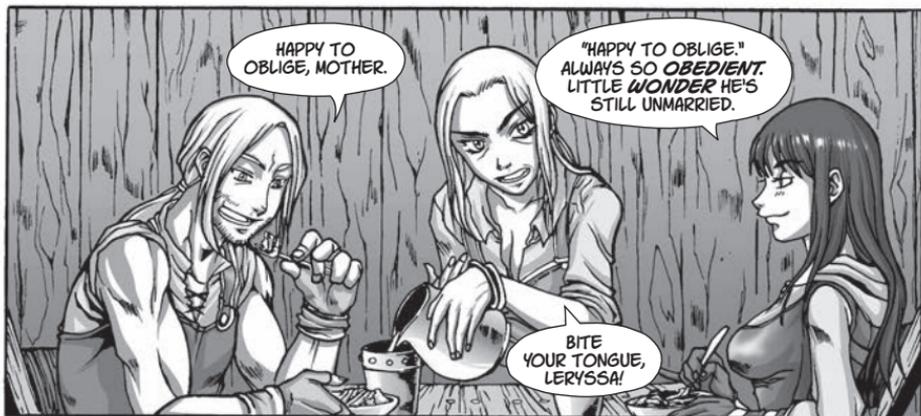
COME AND **GET** IT, YOU TWO, BEFORE I FEED IT TO THE **HOUNDS!**



MOTHER, WE DON'T **HAVE** ANY HOUNDS.

IT'S JUST AN EXPRESSION.

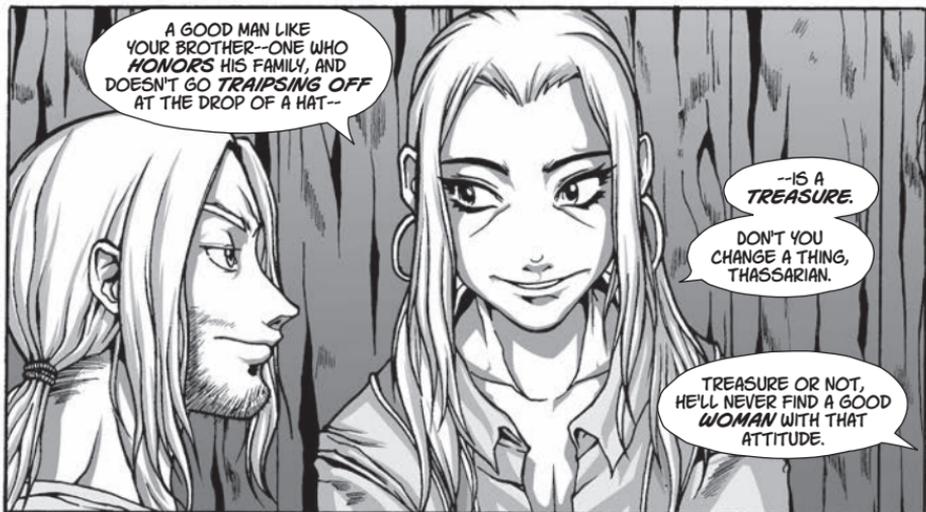
NOW HAVE A SEAT. AND EAT.



HAPPY TO OBLIGE, MOTHER.

"HAPPY TO OBLIGE." ALWAYS SO **OBLIGENT**. LITTLE **WONDER** HE'S STILL UNMARRIED.

BITE YOUR TONGUE, LERYSSA!



A GOOD MAN LIKE YOUR BROTHER--ONE WHO **HONORS** HIS FAMILY, AND DOESN'T GO **TRAIPI**NG OFF AT THE DROP OF A HAT--

--IS A **TREASURE**.

DON'T YOU CHANGE A THING, THASSARIAN.

TREASURE OR NOT, HE'LL NEVER FIND A GOOD **WOMAN** WITH THAT ATTITUDE.



THE HORDE IS ON THE MOVE, LERYSSA, WHETHER YOU ACKNOWLEDGE IT OR NOT.

IT WOULD BE **IRRESPONSIBLE** TO TAKE A WIFE NOW, WHEN I MIGHT HAVE TO **LEAVE** HER AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

I SHALL MARRY WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT. UNTIL THEN, I'LL THANK YOU TO **KEEP YOUR ADVICE TO YOURSELF.**



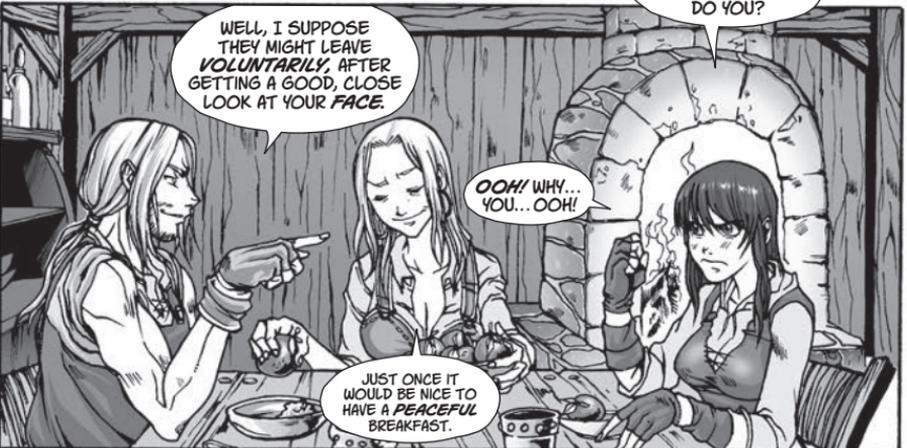
DON'T BE SILLY! THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS **TOO MUCH** ADVICE.

ESPECIALLY IN **YOUR** CASE.



OH, YES, I'LL BE SURE TO TAKE ADVICE ON **MARRIAGE** FROM THE GIRL WHO'S DRIVEN AWAY EVERY ELIGIBLE BACHELOR IN THE **KINGDOM.**

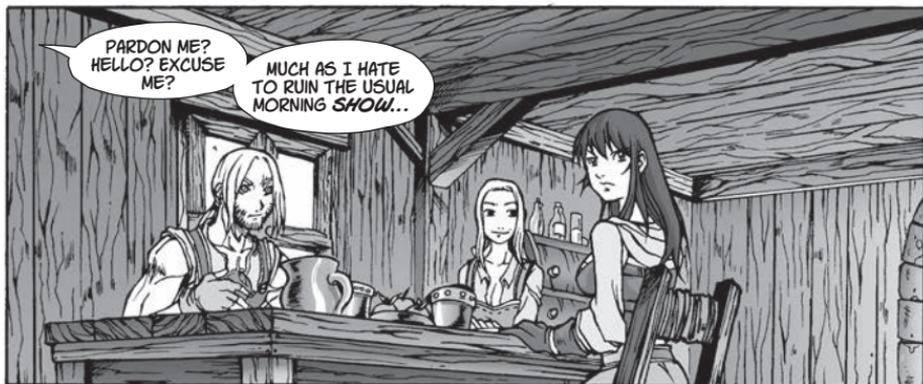
WHAT? YOU THINK I DRIVE SUITORS AWAY, DO YOU?



WELL, I SUPPOSE THEY MIGHT LEAVE **VOLUNTARILY**, AFTER GETTING A GOOD, CLOSE LOOK AT YOUR **FACE.**

OOH! WHY... YOU... OOH!

JUST ONCE IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE A **PEACEFUL** BREAKFAST.



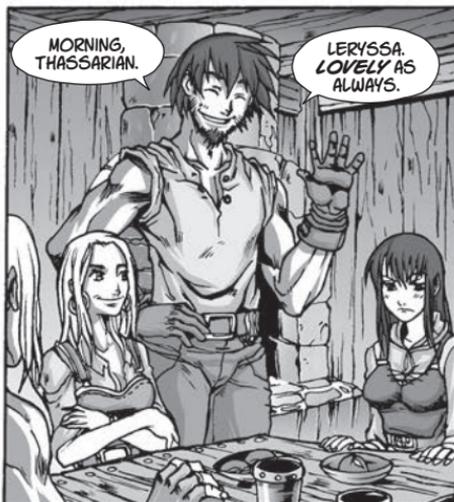
PARDON ME?
HELLO? EXCUSE
ME?

MUCH AS I HATE
TO RUIN THE USUAL
MORNING *SHOW*...



... I WONDER IF
I MIGHT TROUBLE
YOU FOR A *BISCUIT*,
MA'AM?

WHY OF
COURSE,
WILLIAM! COME
RIGHT IN.



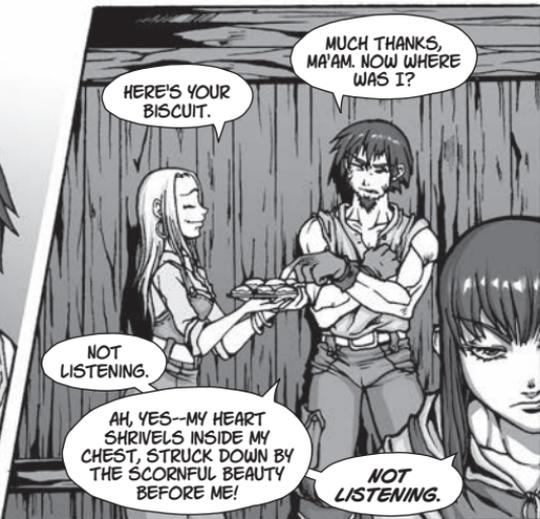
MORNING,
THASSARIAN.

LERYSSA.
LOVELY AS
ALWAYS.



THAT'S FUNNY,
IT FELT AS IF AN ODD
RUSH OF *HOT AIR*
JUST BLEW THROUGH
THE ROOM.

AGH! FAIR MAIDEN--
YOU CUT ME TO THE QUICK!
MY HEART'S BLOOD DOTH
POUR OUT AT SUCH
A WOUND!



HERE'S YOUR
BISCUIT.

MUCH THANKS,
MA'AM. NOW WHERE
WAS I?

NOT
LISTENING.

AH, YES--MY HEART
SHRIVELS INSIDE MY
CHEST, STRUCK DOWN BY
THE SCORNFUL BEAUTY
BEFORE ME!

NOT
LISTENING.

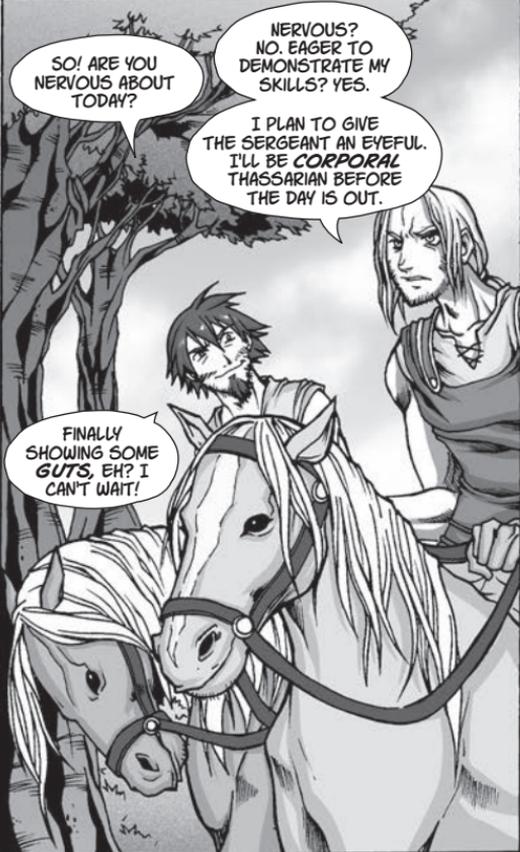


YOU'RE WASTING
YOUR TIME, I'M
AFRAID. SHE'S NOT
INTERESTED.

AND HERE I
THOUGHT SHE WAS
JUST PLAYING HARD TO
GET. WHY IS SHE NOT
INTERESTED?

HER STANDARDS
ARE RIDICULOUSLY HIGH.
PLUS SHE SAID YOUR
BREATH SMELLS LIKE
THE FLOOR OF A
GOAT PEN.

... GOAT PEN?
THAT'S A FIRST. OH
WELL, NO MATTER.

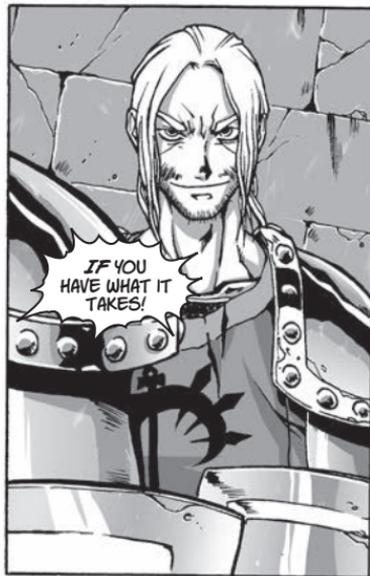
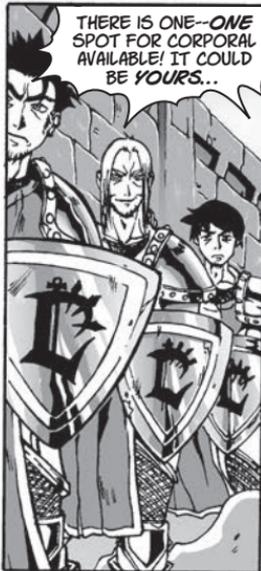


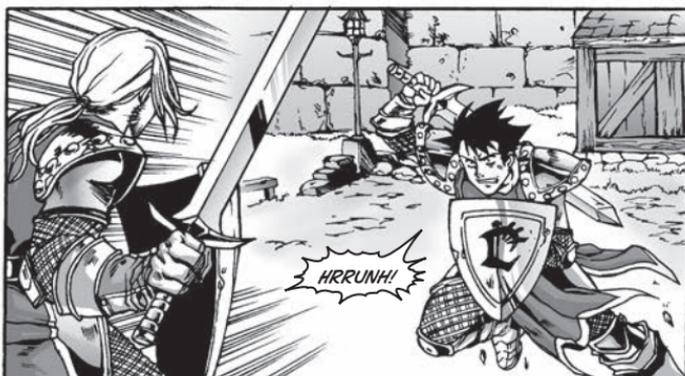
SO! ARE YOU
NERVOUS ABOUT
TODAY?

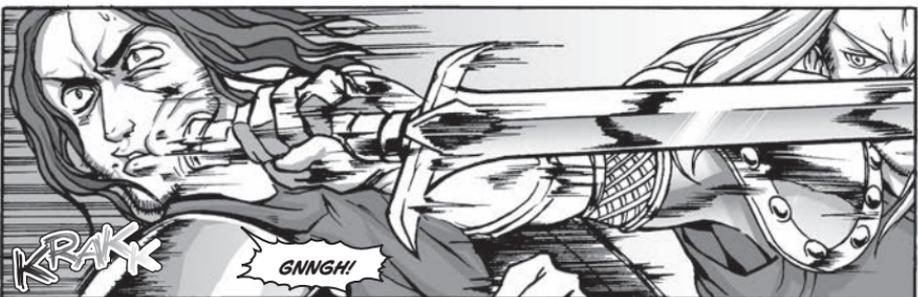
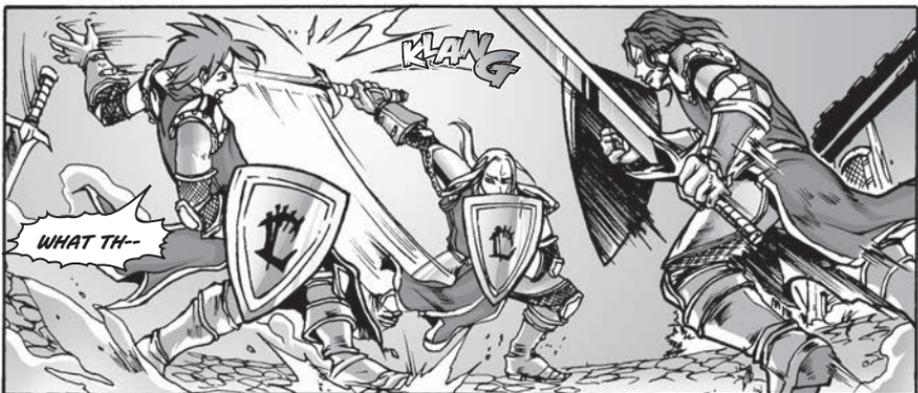
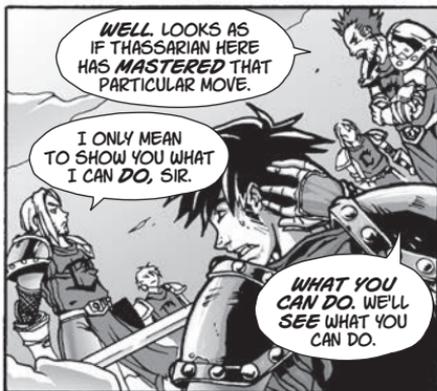
NERVOUS?
NO. EAGER TO
DEMONSTRATE MY
SKILLS? YES.

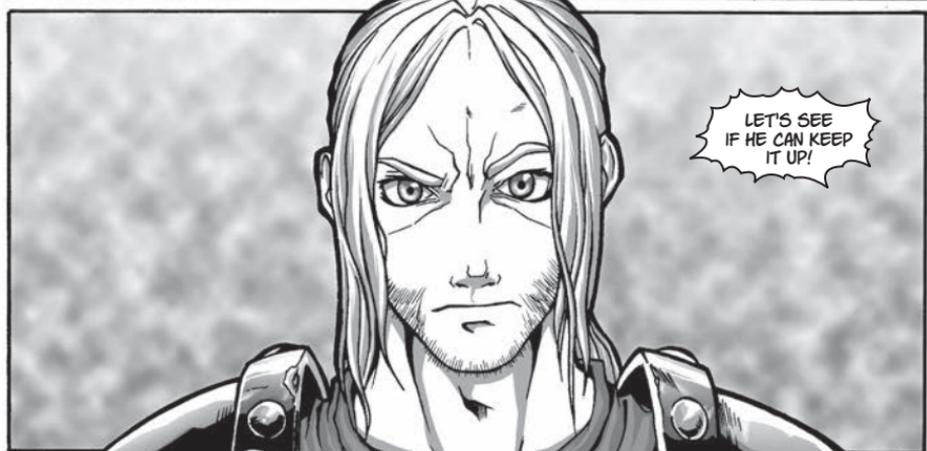
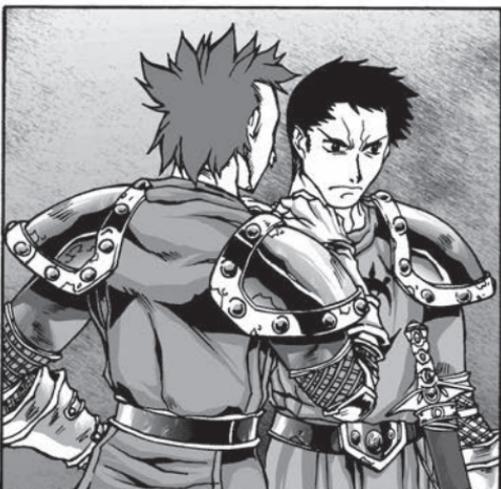
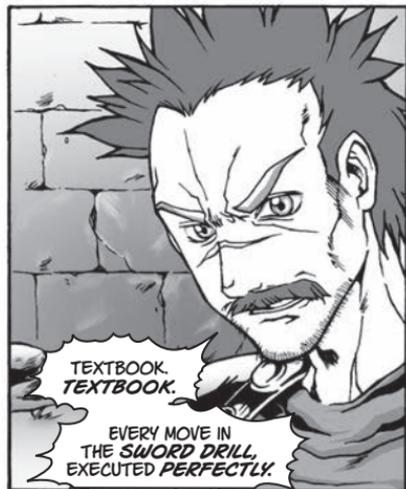
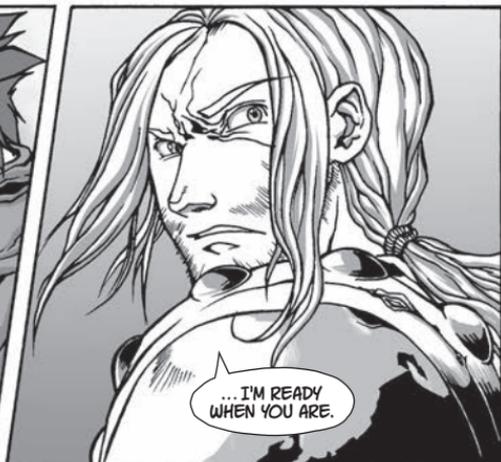
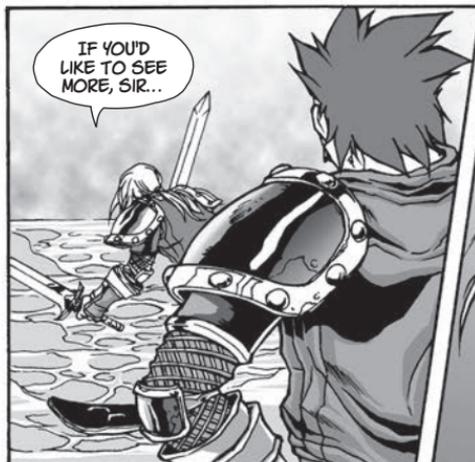
I PLAN TO GIVE
THE SERGEANT AN EYEFUL.
I'LL BE *CORPORAL*
THASSARIAN BEFORE
THE DAY IS OUT.

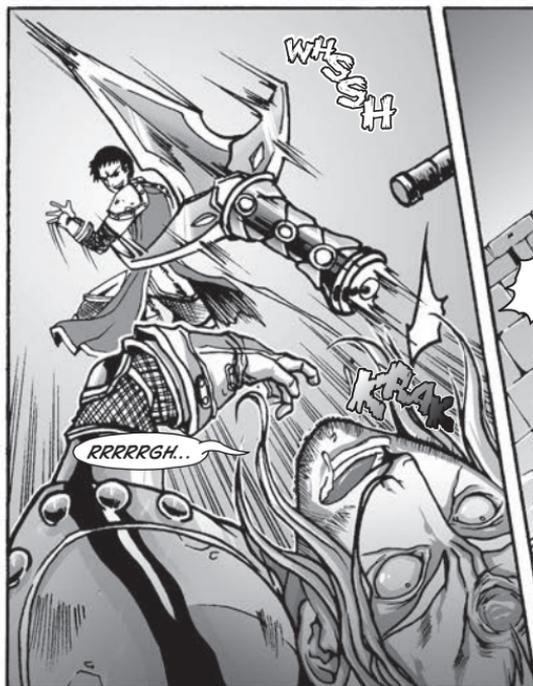
FINALLY
SHOWING SOME
GUTS, EH? I
CAN'T WAIT!











"WE'RE DONE FOR THE DAY."

I'M SORRY, SIR. I JUST--I THOUGHT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A *SWORD DRILL*.

IT *WAS*. BUT THERE ARE NO *RULES* ON THE BATTLEFIELD. LOOK, I KNOW YOU'RE BUCKING FOR A PROMOTION, AND I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS, BUT...

...IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

IT'S-- SIR, I CAN DO *BETTER*. I'LL WORK HARDER!

I BELIEVE YOU *WILL* WORK HARDER, SON, BUT THAT'S NOT IT.

LOOK, THASSARIAN, AN OFFICER'S GOT TO THINK ON HIS FEET. IMPROVISE. ADAPT. HE'S GOT TO HAVE THAT ONE PARTICULAR *SPARK*.

AND YOU DON'T HAVE IT.

YOU'RE A *FOLLOWER*, SON. YOU'RE MEANT TO *TAKE ORDERS*. NOT GIVE THEM.

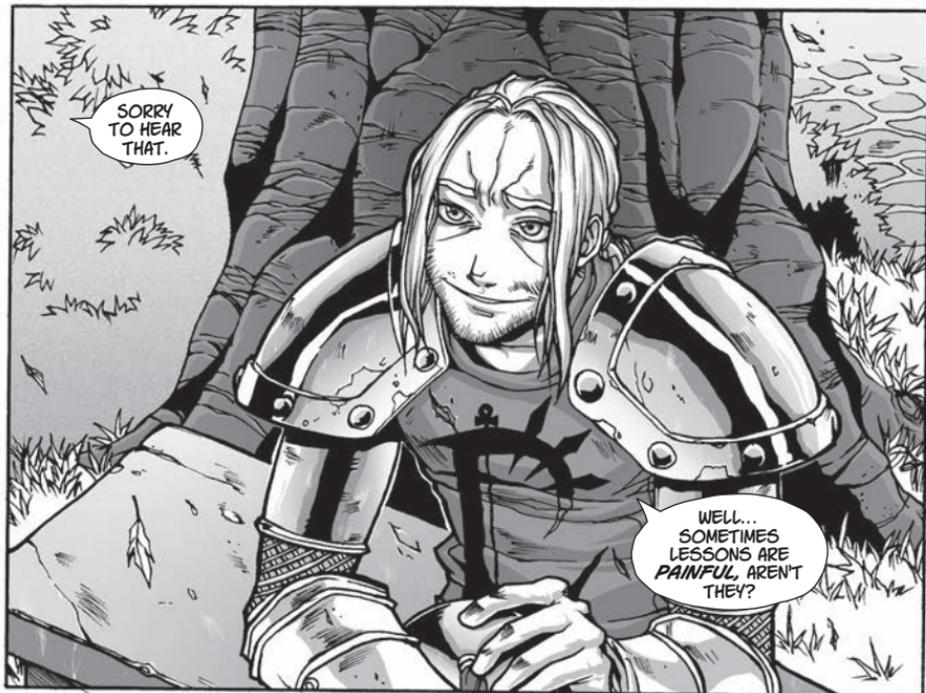
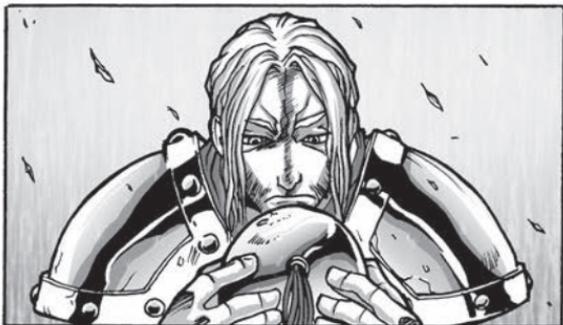
AND THERE'S NO *SHAME* IN THAT. YOUR *SWORD ARM* IS WHAT WINS BATTLES, MAKE NO MISTAKE. RIGHT ALONGSIDE THE OTHER ENLISTED MEN.

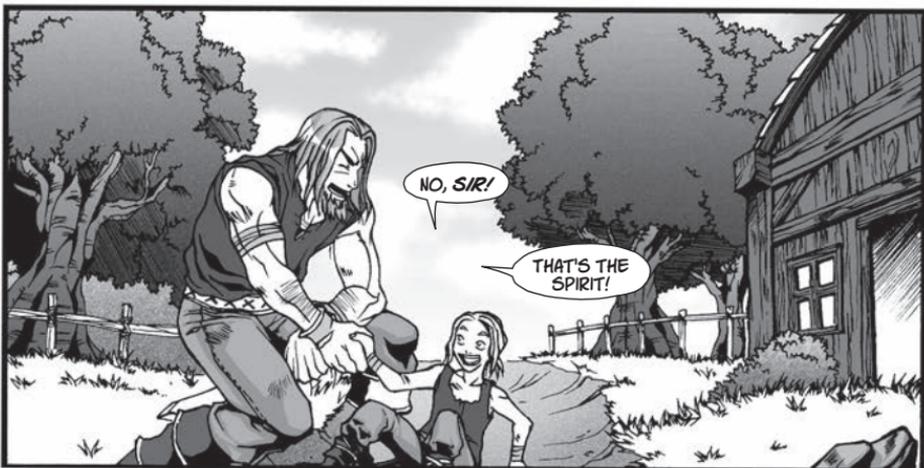
SO TAKE THAT KNOWLEDGE. *EMBRACE* IT... BUT *FORGET* ABOUT RISING THROUGH THE RANKS.

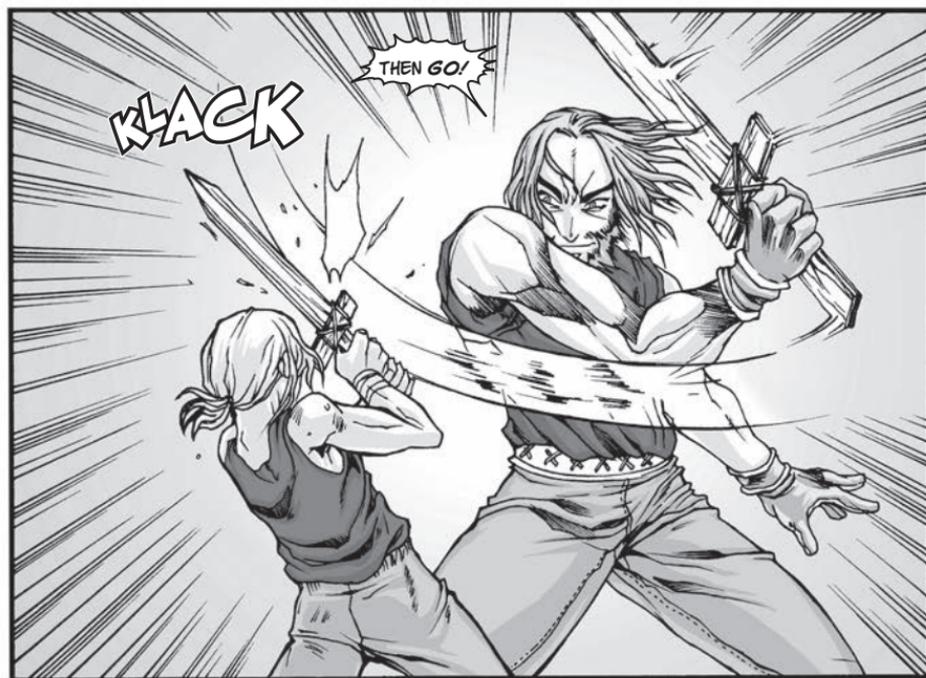
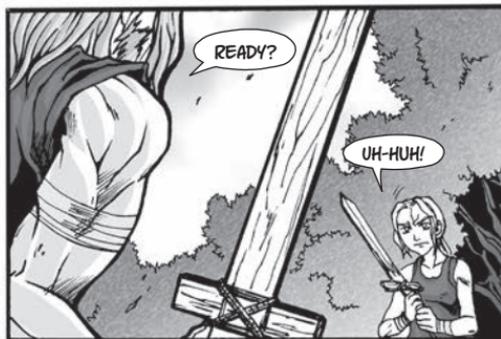
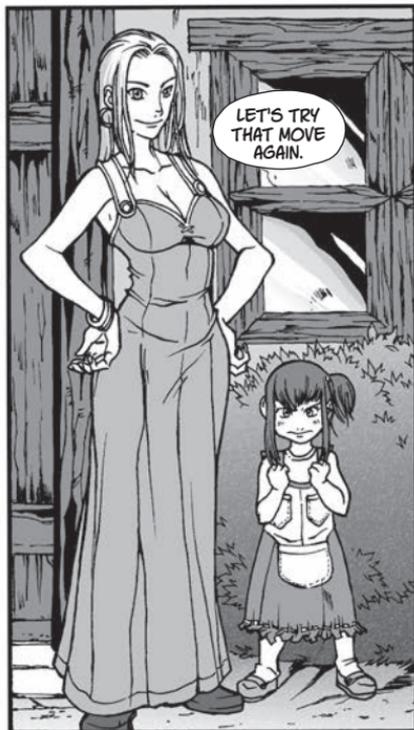
I...

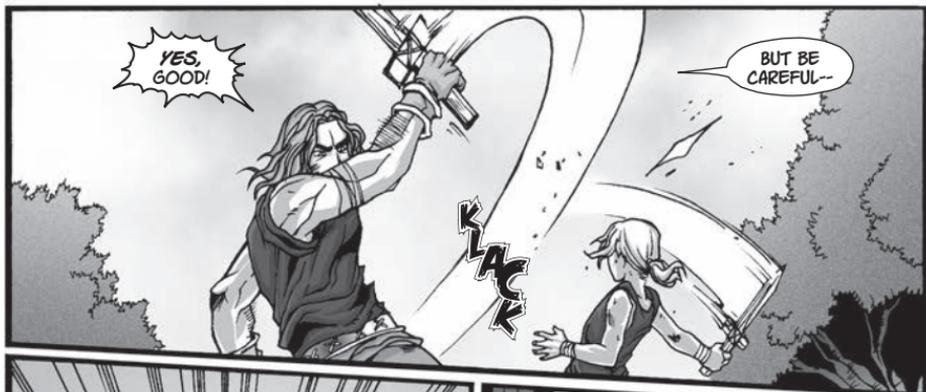
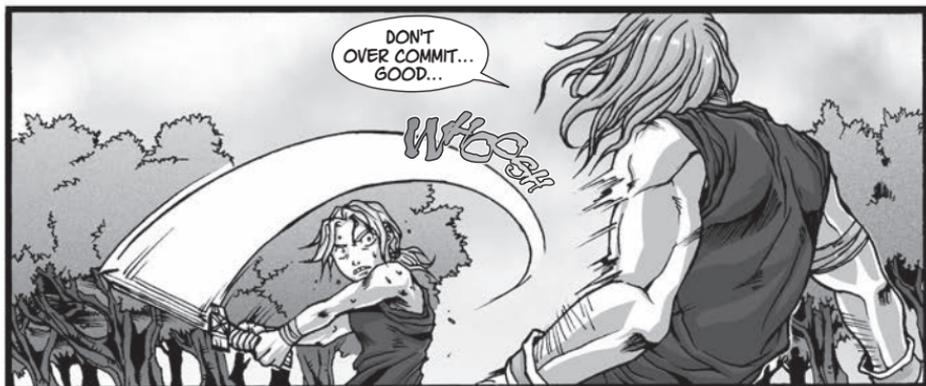
...YES, SIR.

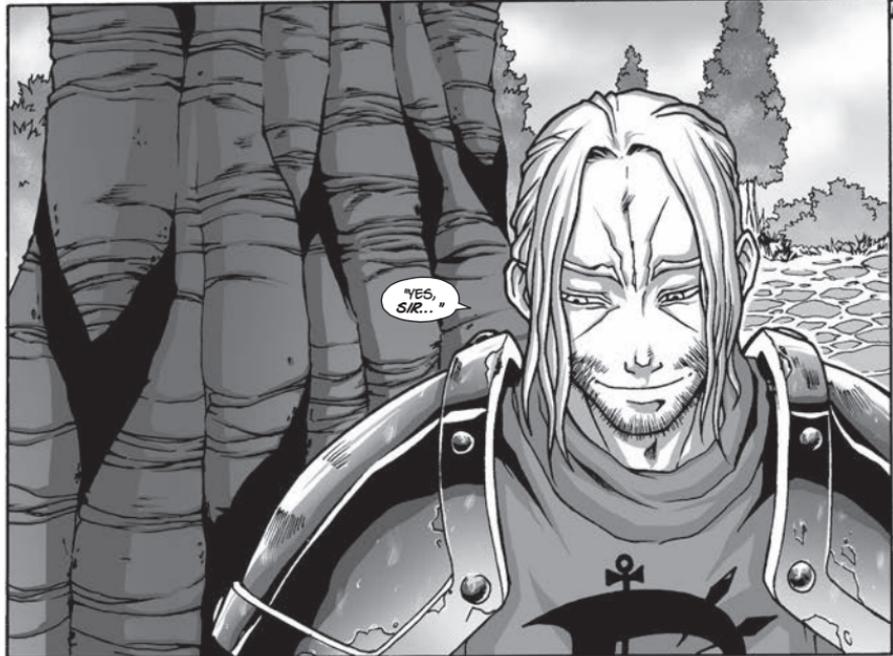
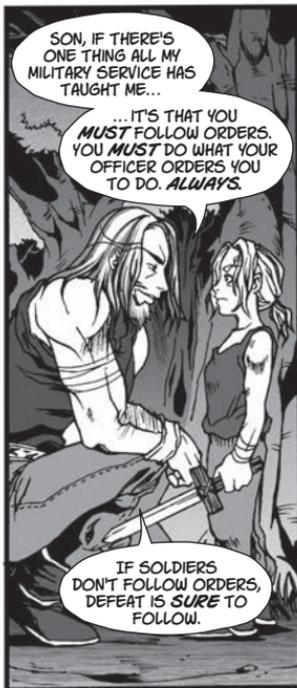
GOOD BOY.













I THOUGHT I
COULD BE A LEADER.
TAKE CHARGE. BE AN
EXAMPLE.



WE'RE GOING TO
NEED LEADERS. HAVE
YOU **HEARD** HOW MANY
VILLAGES HAVE FALLEN TO
THIS **PLAGUE**?

YEAH.



PLUS THERE'S
ALL THIS "DEATH CULT"
BUSINESS. HAVE YOU
HEARD ABOUT **THAT**?

AS MUCH
AS ANYONE HAS.
JUST **RUMORS**.

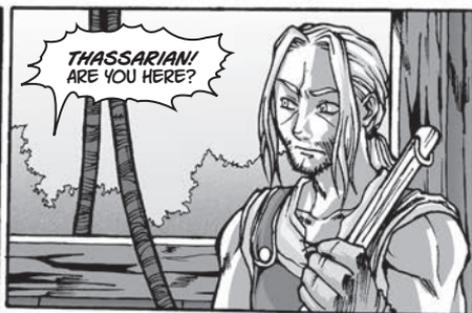
LOOK, WE'RE
DONE HERE. COME
ON, LET ME BUY
YOU A PINT.



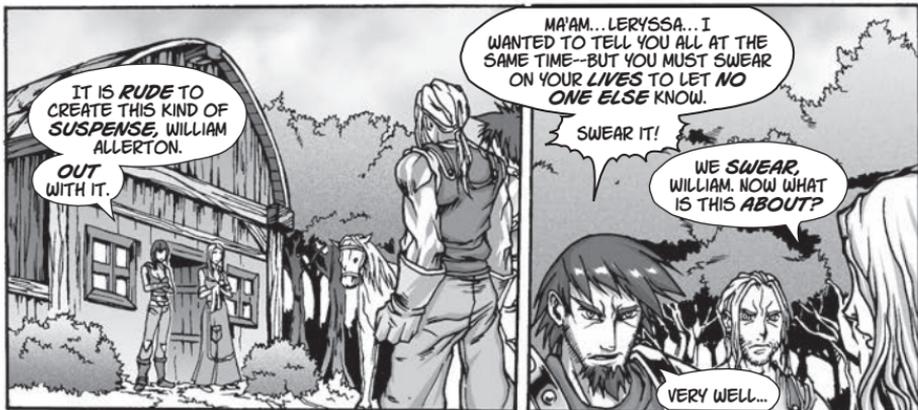
YEAH... ALL
RIGHT.

I SUPPOSE
THAT BEATS
SITTING HERE AND
WALLOWING.

THAT'S THE
SPIRIT!







IT IS RUDE TO CREATE THIS KIND OF SUSPENSE, WILLIAM ALLERTON.

OUT WITH IT.

MA'AM... LERYSSA... I WANTED TO TELL YOU ALL AT THE SAME TIME--BUT YOU MUST SWEAR ON YOUR LIVES TO LET NO ONE ELSE KNOW.

SWEAR IT!

WE SWEAR, WILLIAM. NOW WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

VERY WELL...



...PRINCE ARTHAS IS MOUNTING AN OFFENSIVE. A FULL COMPANY SETS SAIL FOR NORTHERN IMMEDIATELY.

I HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THAT COMPANY...

... AND SO HAVE YOU.

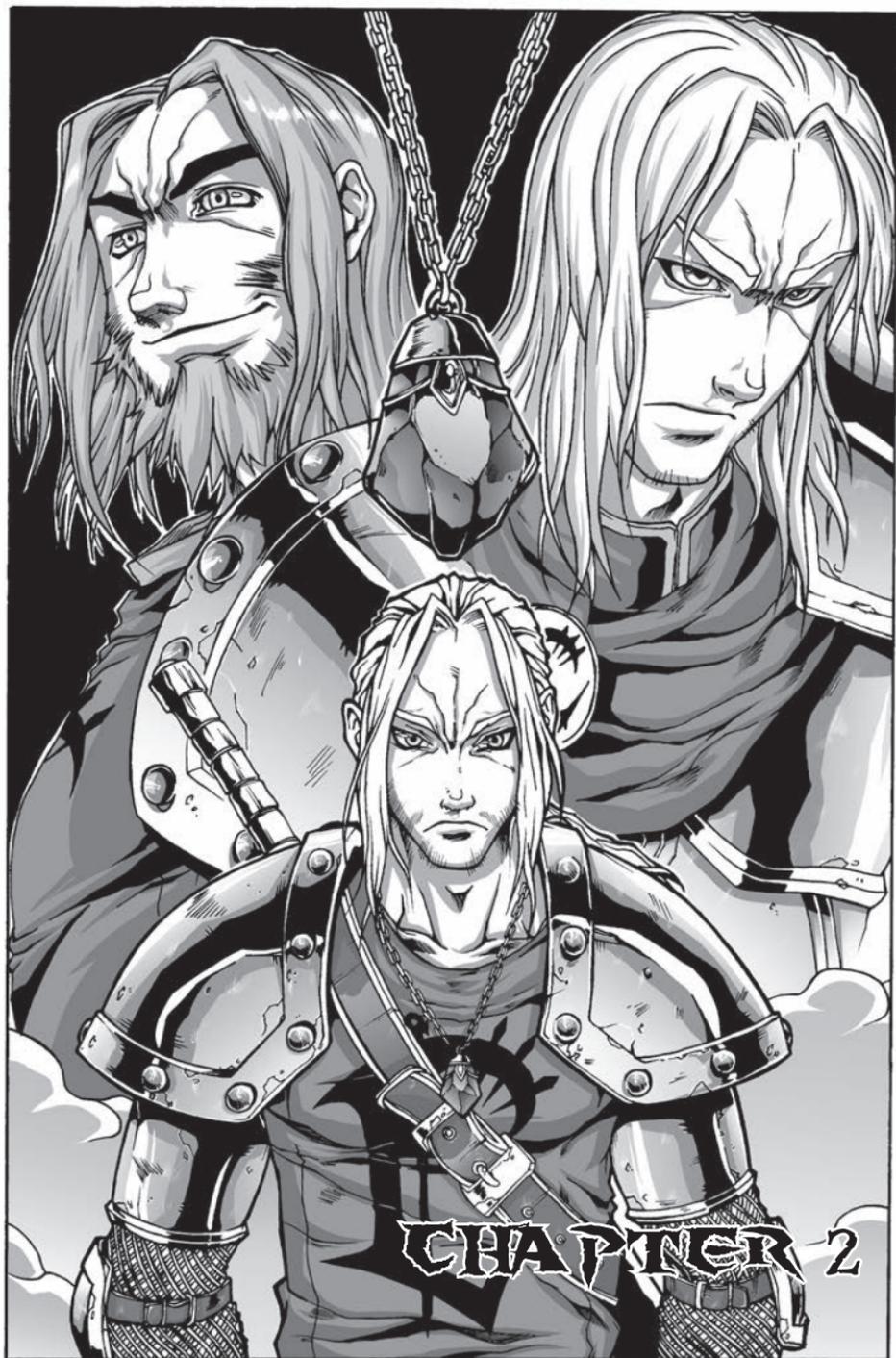


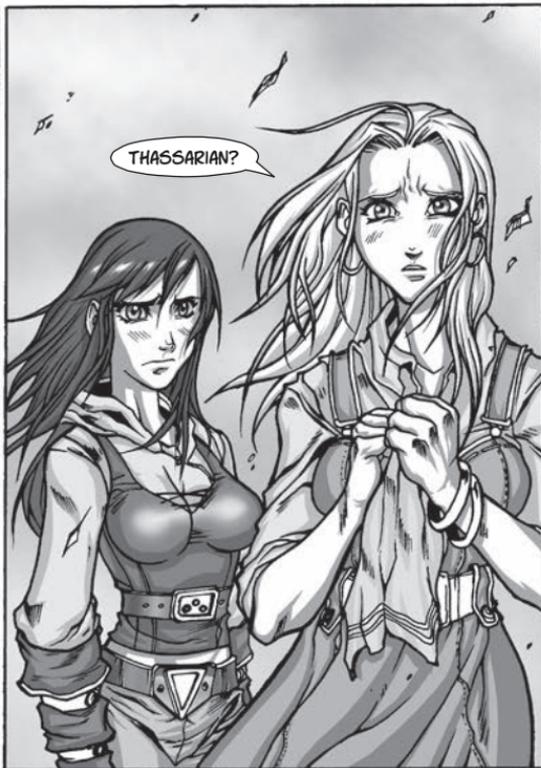
YOU HAVE A HALF-HOUR TO READY YOUR GEAR AND REPORT TO THE BARRACKS.

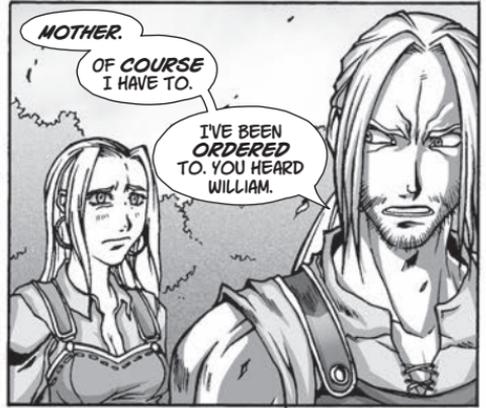
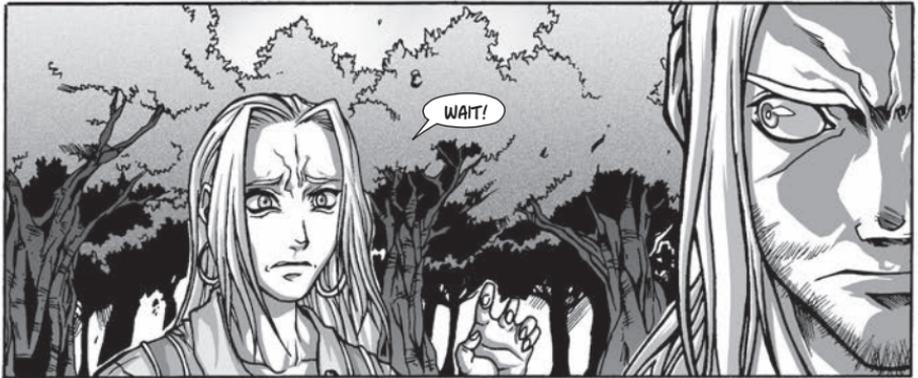
ARTHAS HAS ASKED FOR OUR HELP.

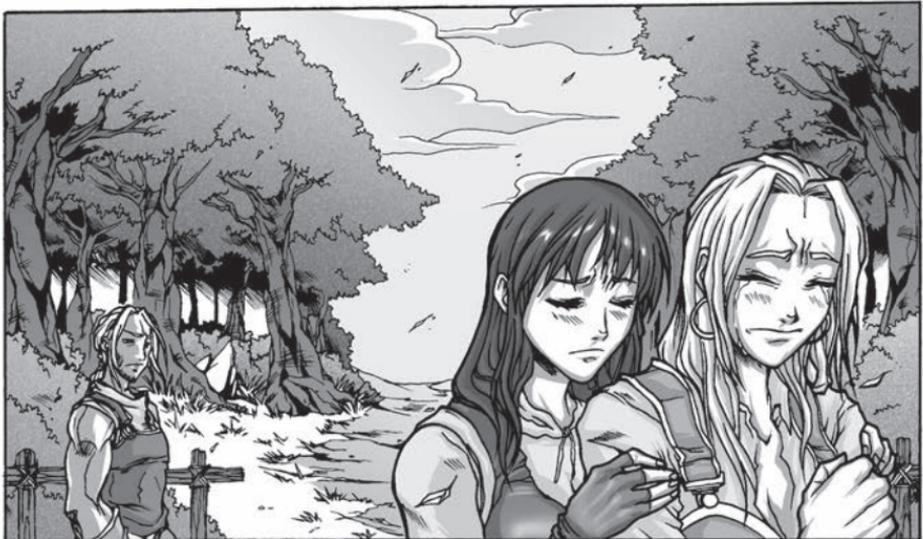
DON'T BE LATE.













I'M...
I'M SORRY
ABOUT THIS.



YOU BOTH
KNOW I HAVE NO
CHOICE.
DON'T
YOU?



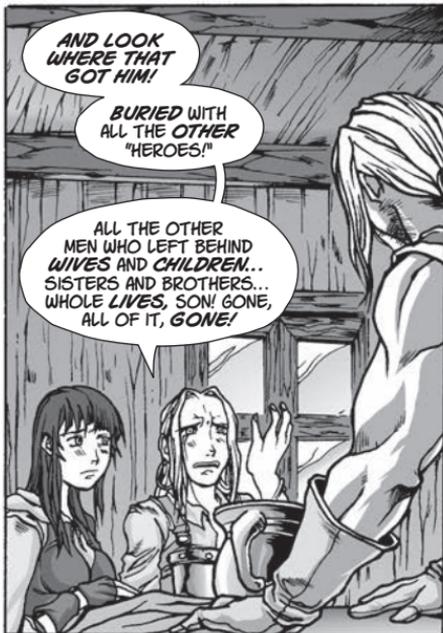
YOUR FATHER
SAID MUCH THE SAME
THING... BEFORE
HE LEFT US.

I KNOW THIS IS
WHAT HAPPENS... I KNOW
THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE,
LIVING WITH A SOLDIER.
IT'S JUST...

... I CANNOT HELP
BUT WISH THAT
YOUR FATHER COULD
HAVE BEEN JUST A
FARMER.



FATHER WAS
A HERO.



AND LOOK WHERE THAT GOT HIM!

BURIED WITH ALL THE OTHER "HEROES!"

ALL THE OTHER MEN WHO LEFT BEHIND WIVES AND CHILDREN... SISTERS AND BROTHERS... WHOLE LIVES, SON! GONE, ALL OF IT, GONE!



MOTHER... NONE OF THAT WILL MATTER IF WE LET THIS THREAT REACH US HERE. WE CANNOT SIMPLY IGNORE IT.

I HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY NOW. I'M PART OF A CHAIN. AND I WILL NOT BE THE WEAKEST LINK IN THAT CHAIN.

MOTHER, THIS IS A CHANCE TO MAKE YOU PROUD OF ME. I... HAD HOPED...

...TO HAVE YOUR BLESSING.



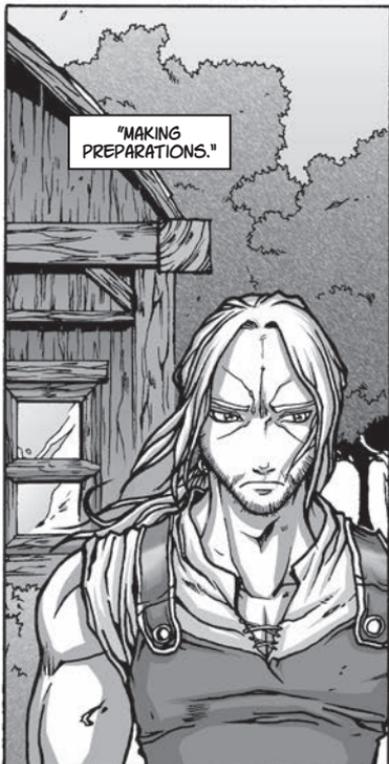
BLESSING?

AAAH HAH HAAAAH...



I'll...

I'll, uh, be in the barn.



"MAKING PREPARATIONS."



...THASS?

COME TO ADD YOUR TEARS TO MOTHER'S?



SHE'S JUST SCARED, YOU KNOW. I SHOULD THINK THAT WOULD BE OBVIOUS.

WE BOTH ARE. THASS... FOR HER SAKE, ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF THIS? I DON'T MEAN SHIRK YOUR DUTIES, BUT...

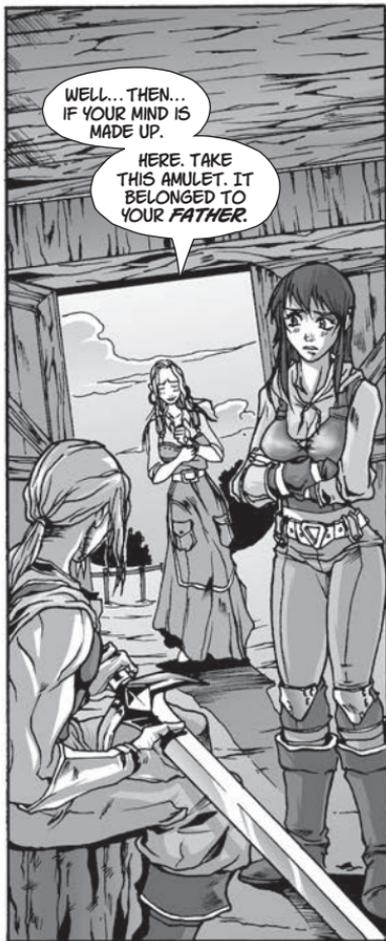


...PERHAPS TRY TO GET STATIONED HERE?

AND WHAT IF EVERYONE DID THAT? HMM? WHAT THEN?

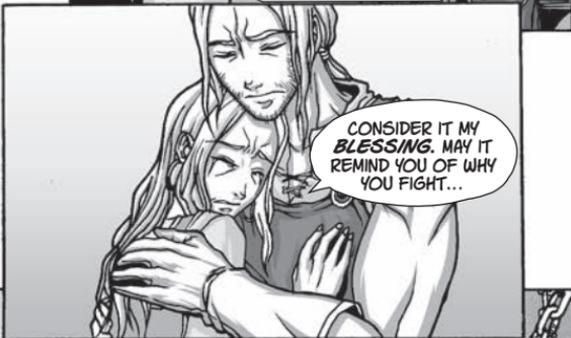
WE JUST LET OUR ENEMIES COME IN AND KILL US IN THE STREETS AND THE FIELDS?

SOMEONE HAS TO STOP THEM. THAT SOMEONE IS GOING TO BE ARTHAS. AND I'M GOING TO HELP HIM.

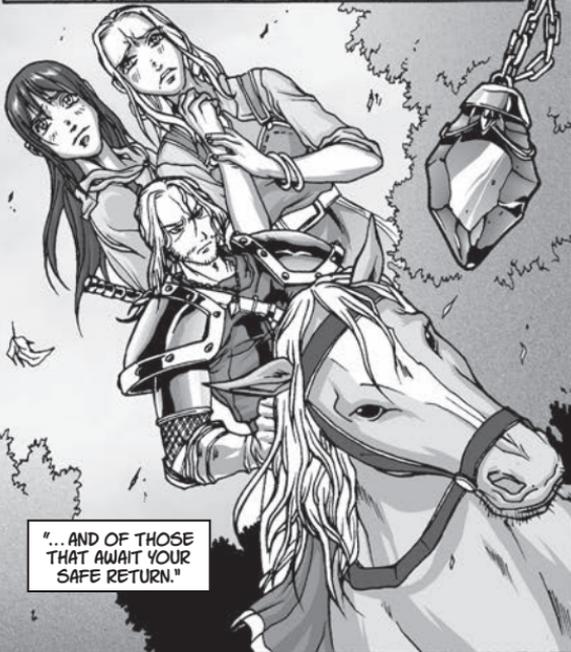


WELL... THEN... IF YOUR MIND IS MADE UP.

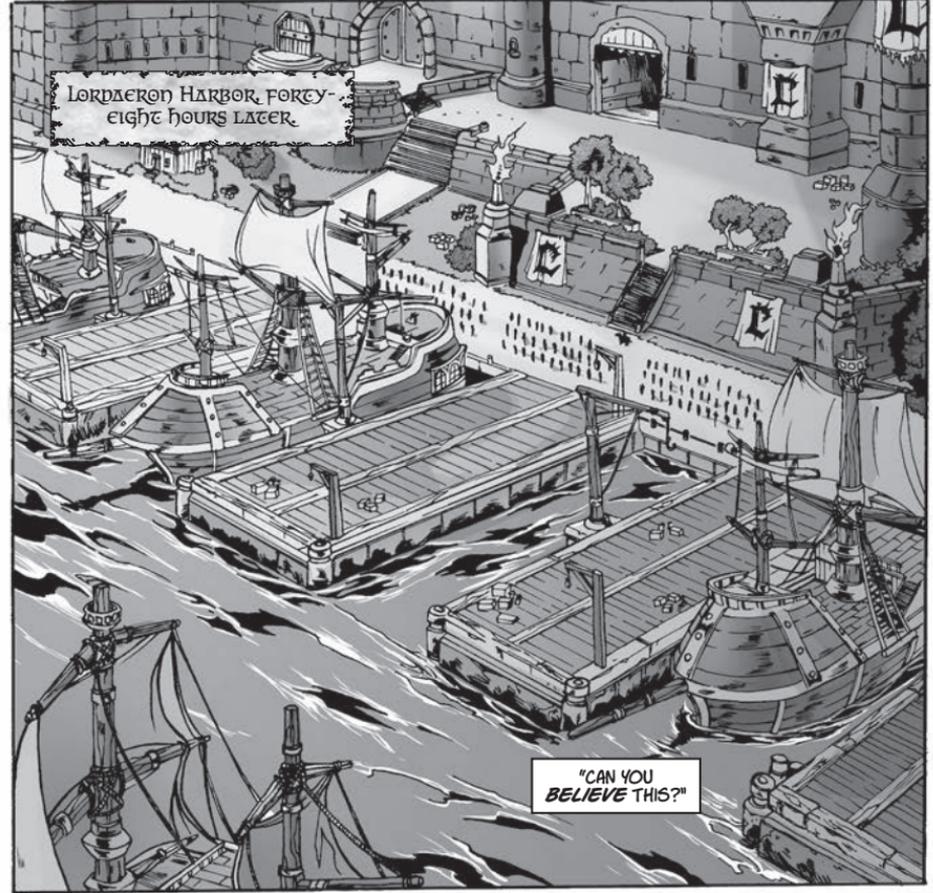
HERE. TAKE THIS AMULET. IT BELONGED TO YOUR FATHER.



CONSIDER IT MY BLESSING. MAY IT REMIND YOU OF WHY YOU FIGHT...



"... AND OF THOSE THAT AWAIT YOUR SAFE RETURN."



LORDAERON HARBOR, FORTY-
EIGHT HOURS LATER

"CAN YOU
BELIEVE THIS?"



A FORCE THIS
SIZE, ASSEMBLED SO
QUICKLY?

WORD
SPREADS FAST, I
WOULD SAY.



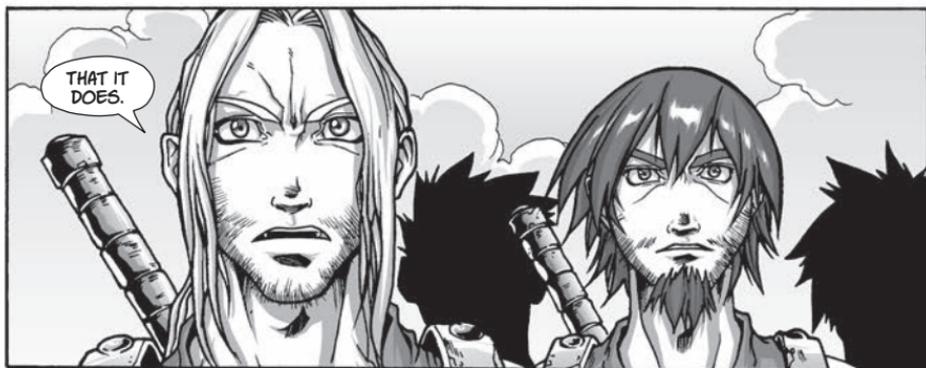
LISTEN AND LISTEN GOOD!

I HOPE YOU ENJOYED LOUNGING AROUND IN THE BARRACKS THE LAST TWO DAYS... BECAUSE NOW WE'RE DOWN TO **BUSINESS!**



YOU'RE GOING TO BOARD THIS VESSEL IN A **CALM AND ORDERLY** FASHION, ON MY COMMAND!

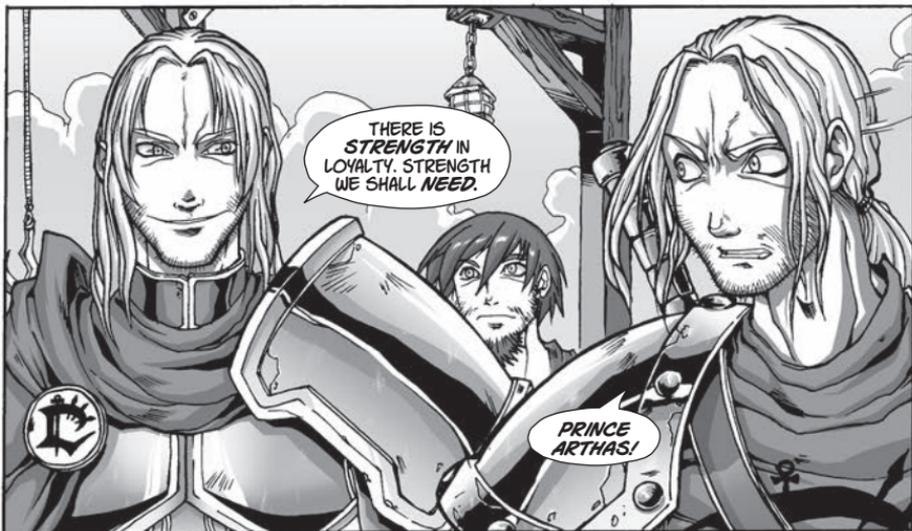
THIS MANY SWORD-ARMS SHOWING UP SO QUICKLY... REALLY REINFORCES HOW **JUST** THE CAUSE IS, DOESN'T IT?



THAT IT DOES.

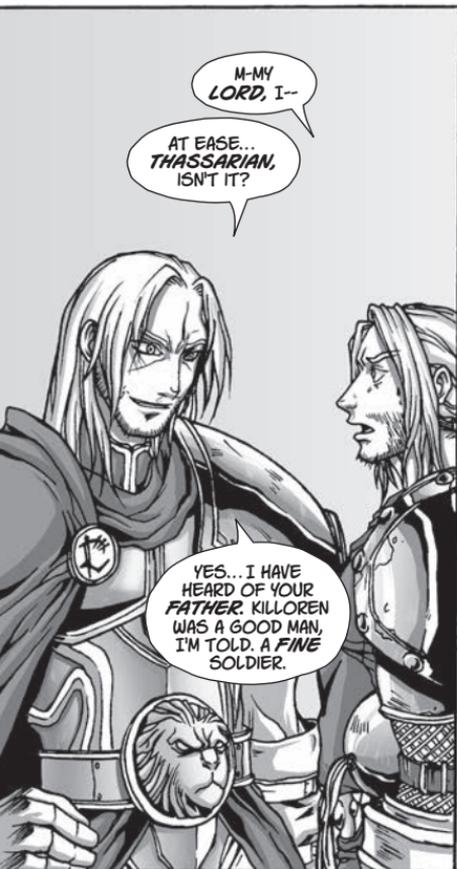


IT GLADDENS ME TO HEAR THAT SENTIMENT, SOLDIER.



THERE IS **STRENGTH** IN LOYALTY. STRENGTH WE SHALL **NEED**.

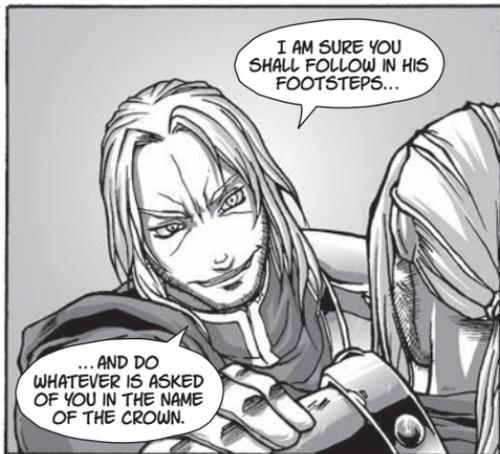
PRINCE ARTHAS!



M-MY LORD, I--

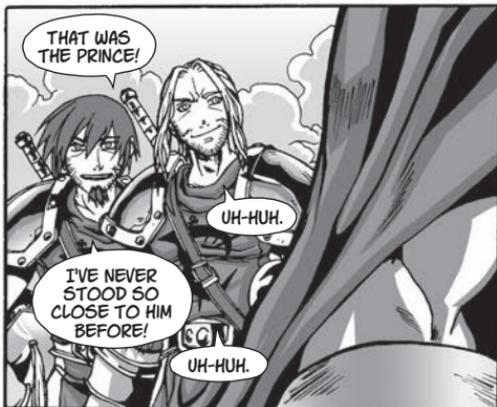
AT EASE... THASSARIAN, ISN'T IT?

YES... I HAVE HEARD OF YOUR FATHER. KILLOREN WAS A GOOD MAN, I'M TOLD. A FINE SOLDIER.



I AM SURE YOU SHALL FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS...

... AND DO WHATEVER IS ASKED OF YOU IN THE NAME OF THE CROWN.

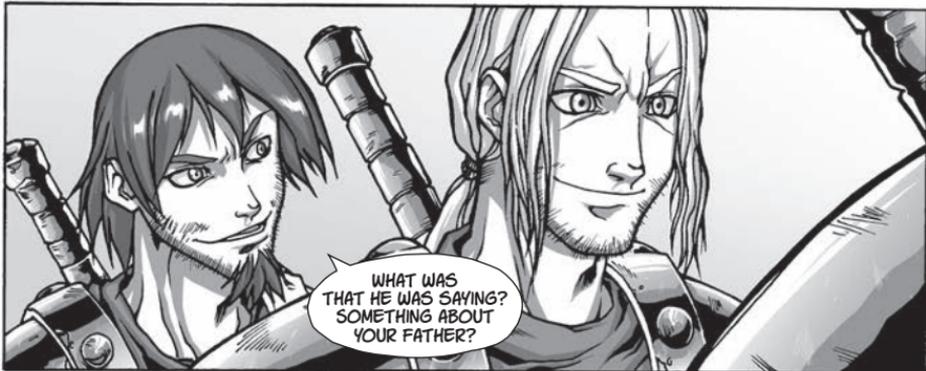


THAT WAS THE PRINCE!

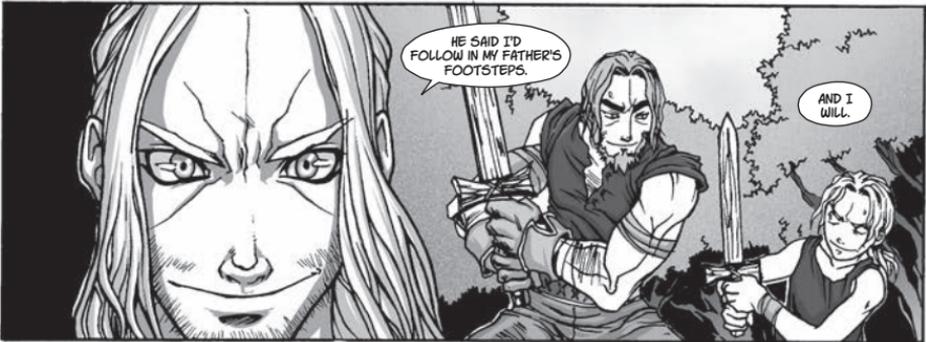
UH-HUH.

I'VE NEVER STOOD SO CLOSE TO HIM BEFORE!

UH-HUH.



WHAT WAS THAT HE WAS SAYING? SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FATHER?



HE SAID I'D FOLLOW IN MY FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.

AND I WILL.



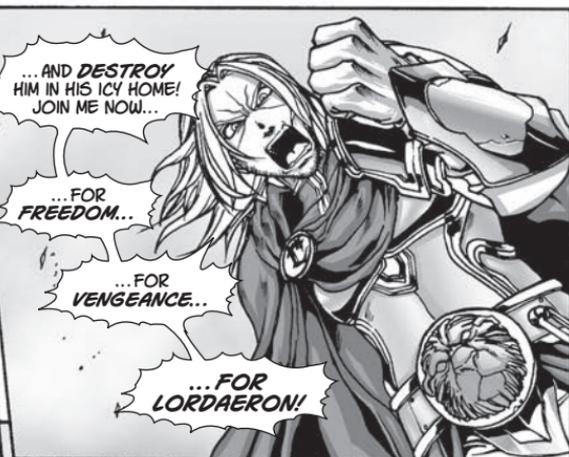
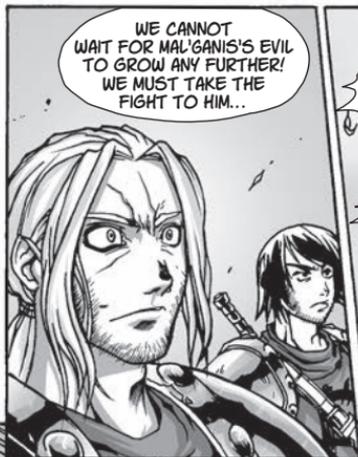
HEAR ME, SOLDIERS OF LORDAERON!

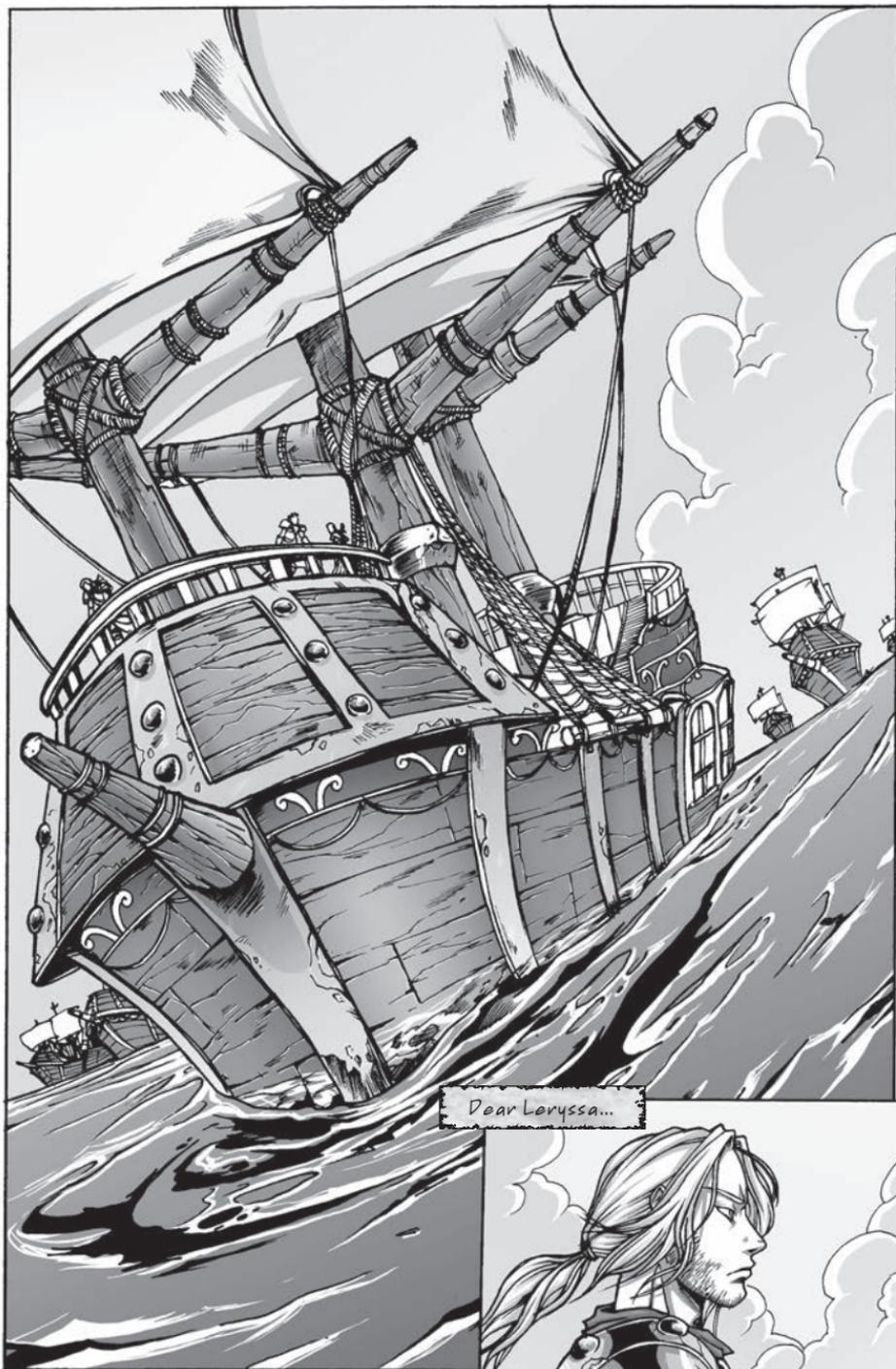
WE SAIL NORTH THIS DAY. INTO THE UNKNOWN... INTO DANGER THE LIKES OF WHICH WE HAVE NEVER FACED!



WE DO THIS BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE.

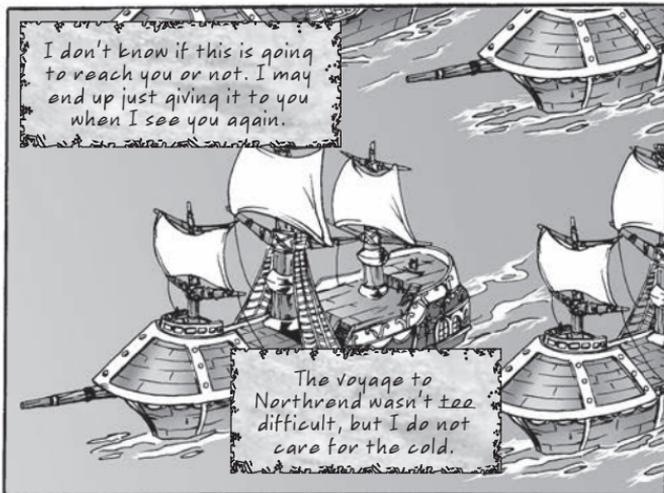
A MONSTER DWELLS IN NORTHREND-- AN ENTITY OF PURE, UNSPEAKABLE EVIL KNOWN AS MAL'GANIS.





Dear Loryssa...





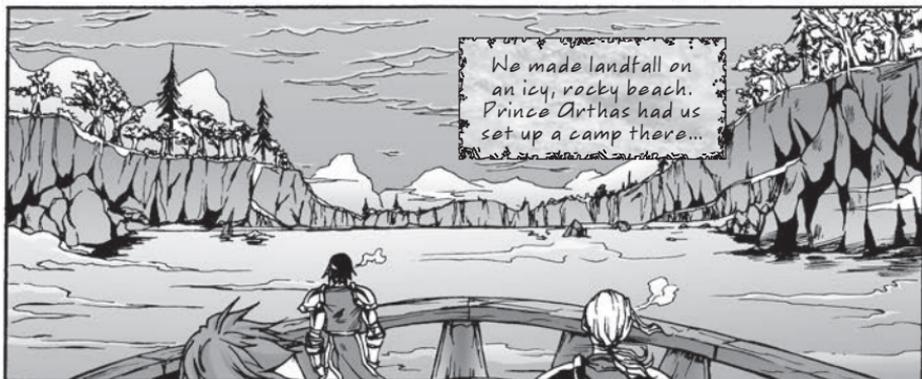
I don't know if this is going to reach you or not. I may end up just giving it to you when I see you again.

The voyage to Northrend wasn't too difficult, but I do not care for the cold.

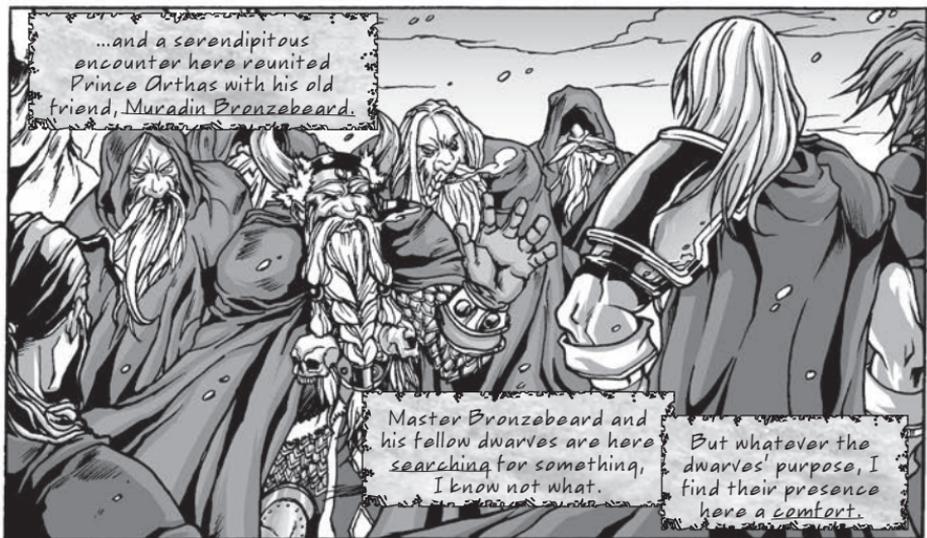


LAND HO!

LAND HOOOO!



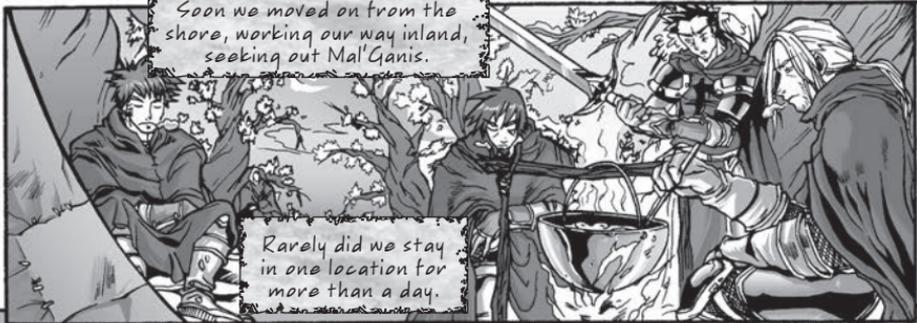
We made landfall on an icy, rocky beach. Prince Arthas had us set up a camp there...



...and a serendipitous encounter here reunited Prince Arthas with his old friend, Muradin Bronzebeard.

Master Bronzebeard and his fellow dwarves are here searching for something, I know not what.

But whatever the dwarves' purpose, I find their presence here a comfort.



Soon we moved on from the shore, working our way inland, seeking out Mal'Ganis.

Rarely did we stay in one location for more than a day.

Quickly we began finding small pockets of the undead. Enough to prove we were in the right place...

...but not enough to lead us to Mal'Ganis.



It went on like that for some time. Days at least. Weeks? I'm not sure.



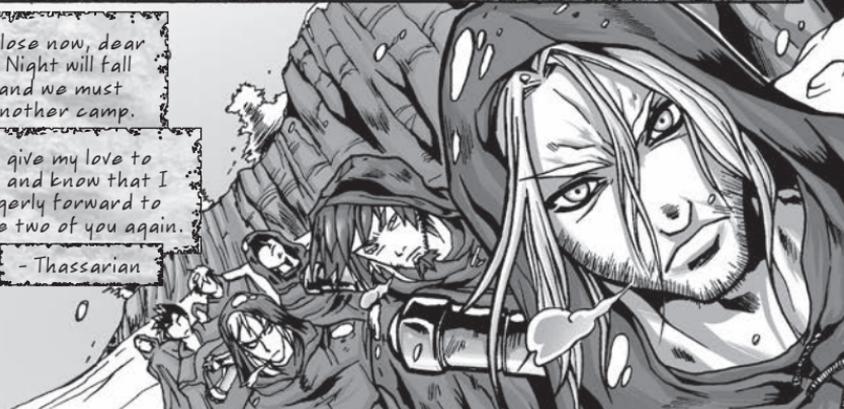
Northrend looks somewhat like places I have seen near Lordaeron...but it feels very different. Alien.

The air cuts here like a frozen blade, down to the marrow of my bones.

I must close now, dear Sister. Night will fall soon, and we must make another camp.

Please give my love to Mother, and know that I look eagerly forward to seeing the two of you again.

- Thassarian





WAIT, NOW,
TELL ME AGAIN? WE'RE
BEING CALLED BACK TO
LORDAERON WHY?



I DON'T KNOW
DETAILS. WORD JUST
CAME DOWN THAT WE WERE
TO HEAD BACK TO THE SHIPS,
AND SET SAIL FOR HOME.

NOT THAT I'M
NOT HAPPY TO BE GOING--
MY MOTHER IN PARTICULAR
WILL BE *THRILLED*.

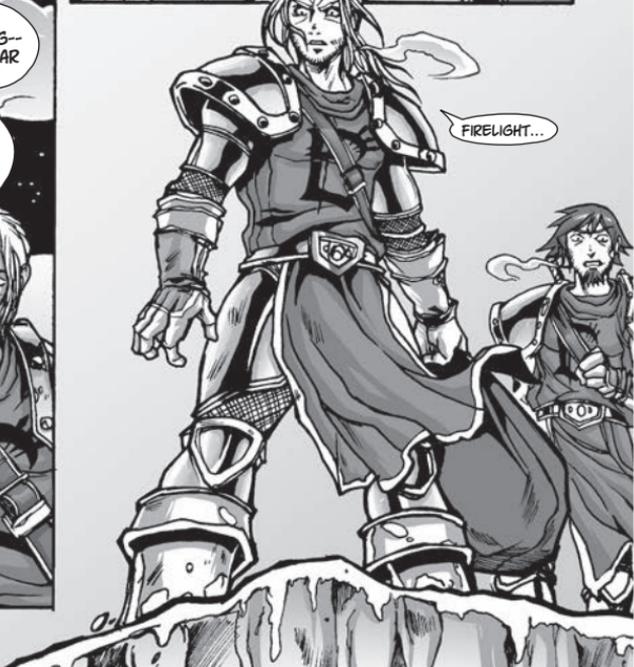
I JUST HAVE TO
WONDER *WHY*, IS ALL.
IT DOESN'T FEEL AS IF
WE'VE *ACCOMPLISHED*
ANY--



--THING...
WILLIAM?

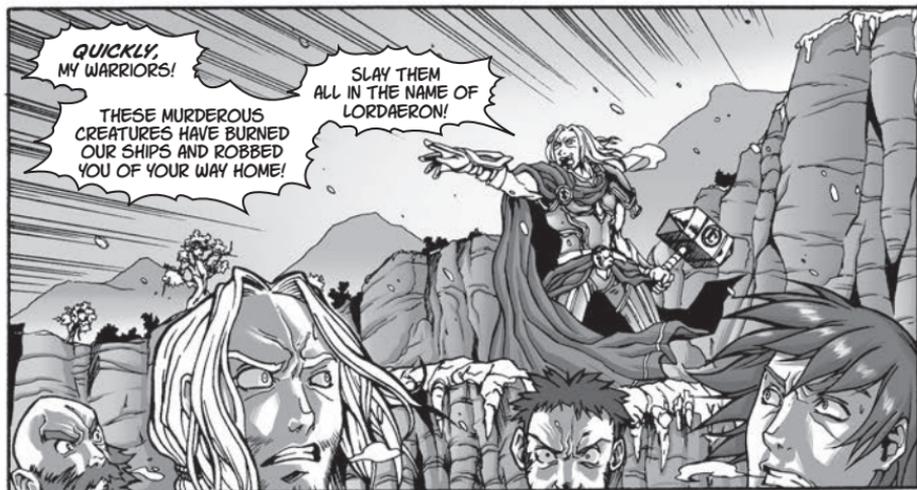
IS THAT
WHAT I THINK
IT IS?

I DON'T
KNOW-- IT
LOOKS LIKE--



FIRELIGHT...





**QUICKLY,
MY WARRIORS!**

**THESE MURDEROUS
CREATURES HAVE BURNED
OUR SHIPS AND ROBBED
YOU OF YOUR WAY HOME!**

**SLAY THEM
ALL IN THE NAME OF
LORDAERON!**



**SLAY THEM
ALL!**



GHAAHLKH!

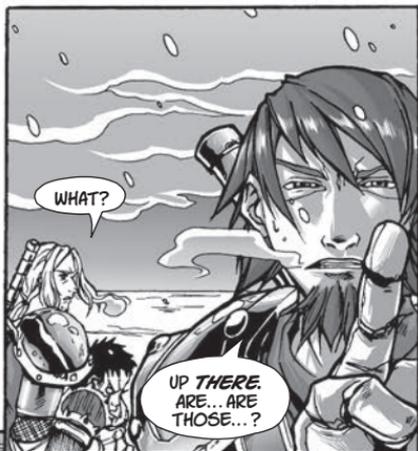


**WHAT? NO!
WAIT!**

One hour later...

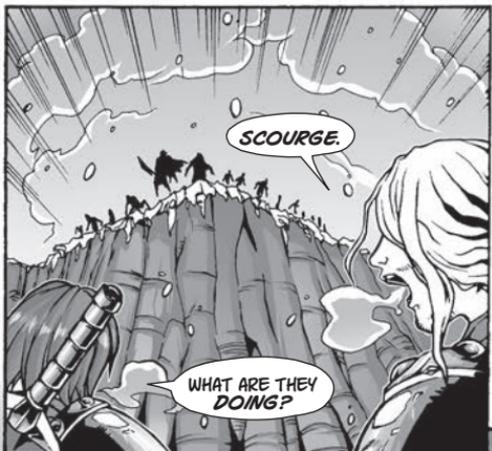


TH... THASSARIAN?



WHAT?

UP THERE.
ARE... ARE
THOSE...?



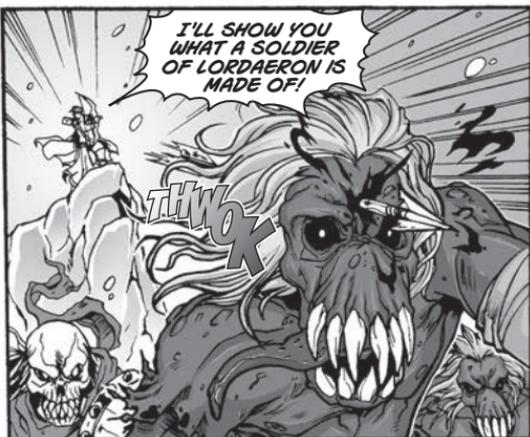
SCOURGE.

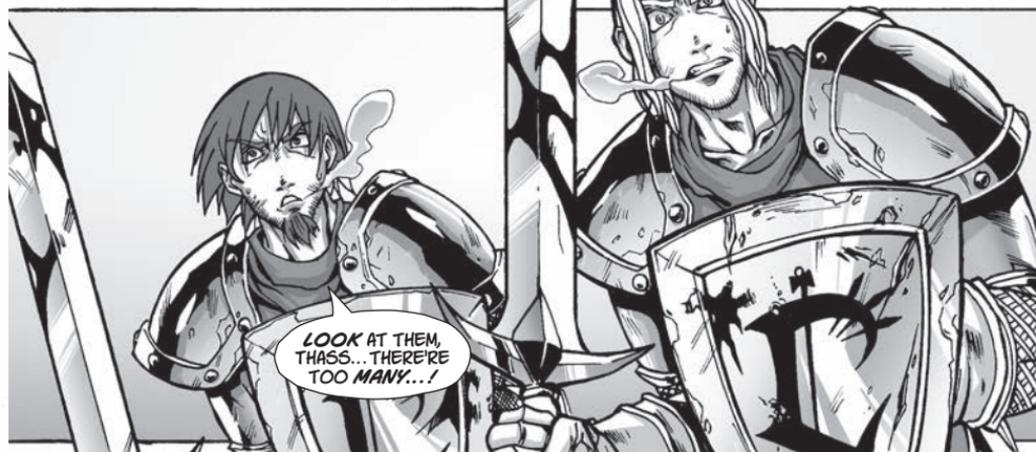
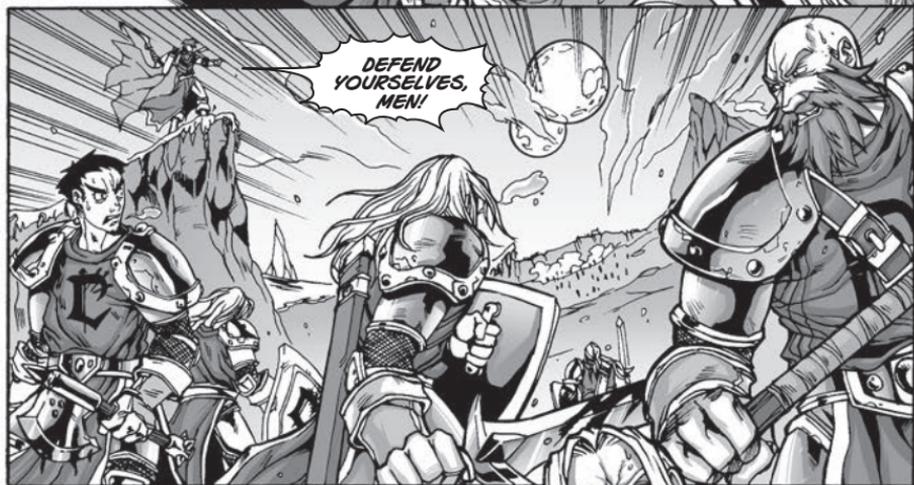
WHAT ARE THEY
DOING?



ATTACKING!

SOUND THE
ALARM!







CHAPTER 3





HMMM.



I SEE THE
HUMAN PRINCE'S
MEN...



...AND YET
NO HUMAN
PRINCE.



NO MATTER,
I SUPPOSE.



"HE'LL COME CRAWLING OUT EVENTUALLY."



THASS...
THASSARIAN...

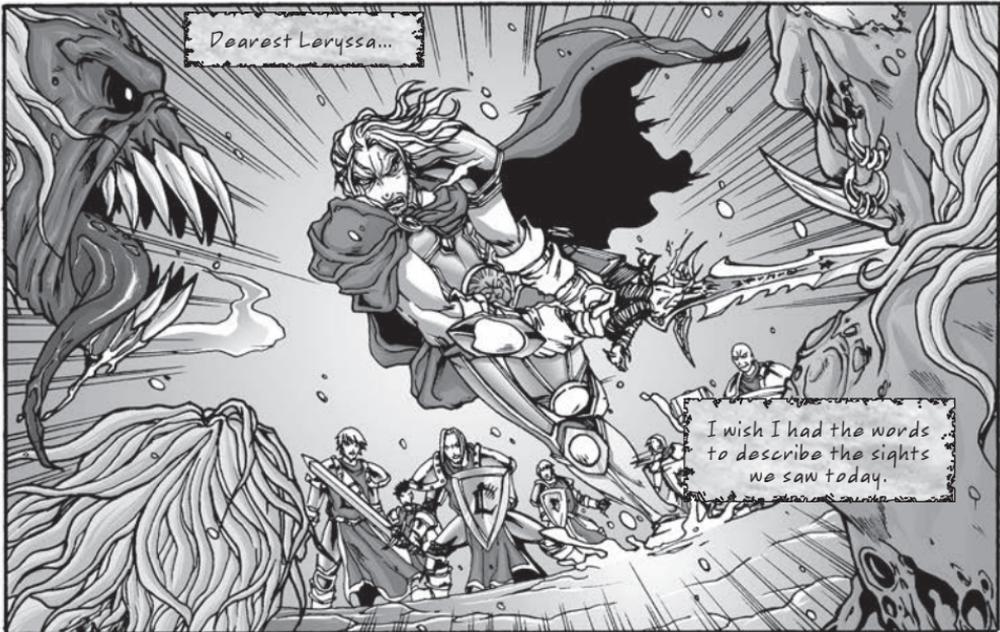


ARE YOU...
HURT?

I DO NOT
THINK SO...



... AND AT
THE MOMENT, WE
HAVE NO TIME TO
CARE!



Dearest Loryssa...

I wish I had the words to describe the sights we saw today.



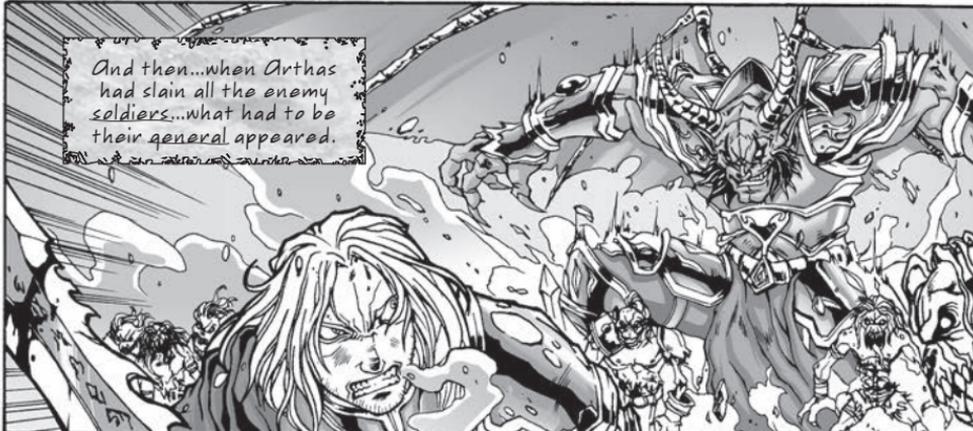
I thought us overrun... doomed, beyond doubt... but then our prince returned, and brought with him a great sword.

...my faith in Arthus was reinforced as I watched him vanquish the undead wretches.



I do not pretend to understand exactly what transpired, Sister, but...

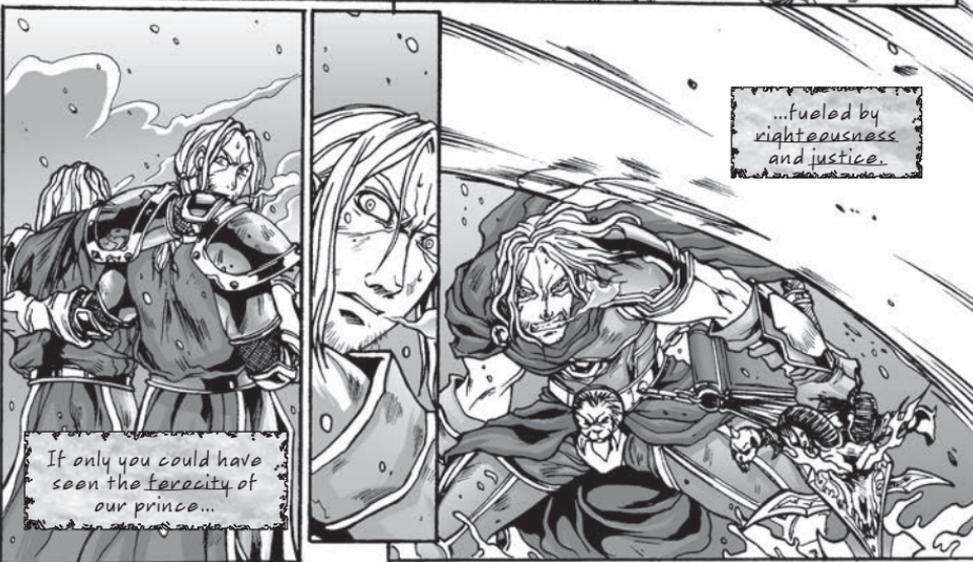


A black and white comic panel showing Arthas in the foreground with a determined, slightly grimacing expression. Behind him, a chaotic battle scene unfolds with many soldiers and a large, multi-headed demon-like creature in the background.

And then...when Arthas had slain all the enemy soldiers...what had to be their general appeared.

A black and white comic panel showing Arthas in the center, lunging forward with a sword raised high. He is attacking a knight who is falling back. The scene is filled with motion lines and a large sound effect.

If only you could have witnessed what I did, Loryssa...

A black and white comic panel showing Arthas in the foreground, looking back over his shoulder with a slight smile. Behind him, a knight is being crushed by a large, multi-headed demon. The scene is filled with motion lines and a large sound effect.

...fueled by righteousness and justice.

A black and white comic panel showing Arthas and Loryssa in the foreground. Arthas is looking back over his shoulder at Loryssa with a slight smile. They are both wearing armor.

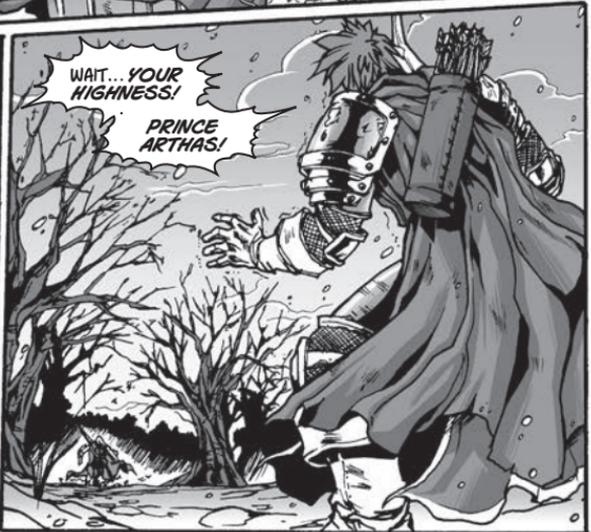
If only you could have seen the ferocity of our prince...



...that Arthas will do anything to protect it...

You would know that Lordaeron is safe...

...and that I would gladly lay down my own life to aid him in this cause.



I shall write more as I am able.

Your brother,
Thassarian

WAIT...YOUR HIGHNESS!

PRINCE ARTHAS!

TWO DAYS LATER...

FALRIC'S BEEN GONE SINCE LAST NIGHT. WHY WOULD HE RUN OFF LIKE THAT? WHY WOULD ARTHAS, AFTER SUCH A VICTORY?

AND WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO? SHIPS GONE... PROVISIONS GONE... AND NOW OUR LEADER'S GONE AS WELL.

SOMEONE HAS TO DO SOMETHING. SOMETHING. WE CAN'T JUST STAY HERE.

WE'LL DIE OF EXPOSURE, UNLESS MORE OF THOSE WALKING CORPSES FIND US.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

...HUH?

I SAID YOU'RE RIGHT. SOMEONE HAS TO DO SOMETHING.

LISTEN-- EVERYONE.

EVERYONE, MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE?

CAPTAIN FALRIC HAS FOLLOWED PRINCE ARTHAS OUT INTO THE WASTES.

CLEARLY WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT.

I INTEND TO FIND OUT.



"IT IS *CRITICAL* THAT YOU MEN STAY HERE AND KEEP THIS CAMP DEFENDED. BUT I AM GOING TO TRY TO FOLLOW FALRIC AND ARTHAS...AND BRING THEM BACK."



"I NEED TO BE ABLE TO MOVE QUICKLY, AND THE QUICKEST WILL BE ON MY OWN."

"BESIDES, YOU NEED ALL THE HANDS YOU CAN MUSTER *HERE*, TO *DEFEND* THIS PLACE IF NEED BE."



--HELLO...?







... AND LET
ME REVEAL THE
TRUTH TO YOU.

YOU WONDER WHY YOU'RE
STILL STRANDED HERE? ARTHAS
ORDERED THE BURNING OF THE SHIPS.
NOW, THE MAN YOU KNEW AS THE PRINCE
IS NO MORE. HE IS... SOMETHING
ELSE. SOMETHING GREATER.

"AND... IF I AM
LOST IN THE
WASTES..."

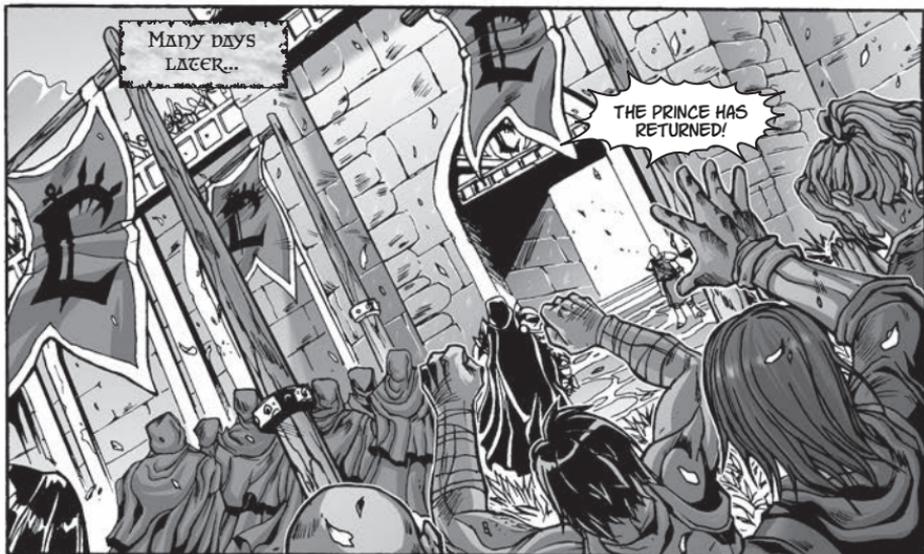


CAPTAIN...!

"... WELL, THAT WILL BE
BUT ONE SOLDIER."



"... HARDLY AN
INSURMOUNTABLE
LOSS."



MANY DAYS
LATER...

THE PRINCE HAS
RETURNED!



ALL OF
LORDAERON
REJOICE!



"PRINCE ARTHAS
HAS RETURNED
TO US!"



THE WILL
OF ARTHAS...
IS FIRST.



FOREMOST.



AND YOU SHALL
FEEL IT!



THE KING!

ARTHAS KILLED
THE KING!



YES. RUN.

RUN, FOR
ALL THE GOOD IT
WILL DO YOU.



RUN AND TRY
TO HIDE--

WHAT'S
THIS?



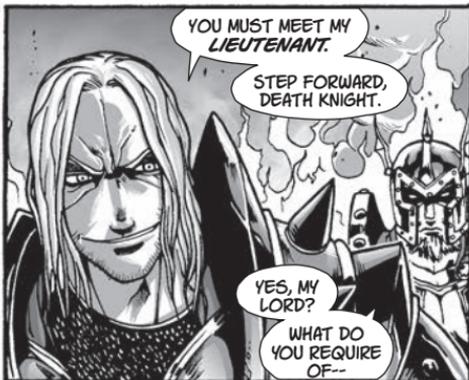
YOU TWO. THAT
WOMAN!

BRING HER
TO ME!



P-P-PRINCE
ARTHAS...

YES, YOU HAVE
NAMED ME... AND NOW I
NAME YOU... *VIVIAN*. WIFE
OF THE FALLEN HERO
KILLOREN.



YOU MUST MEET MY
LIEUTENANT.

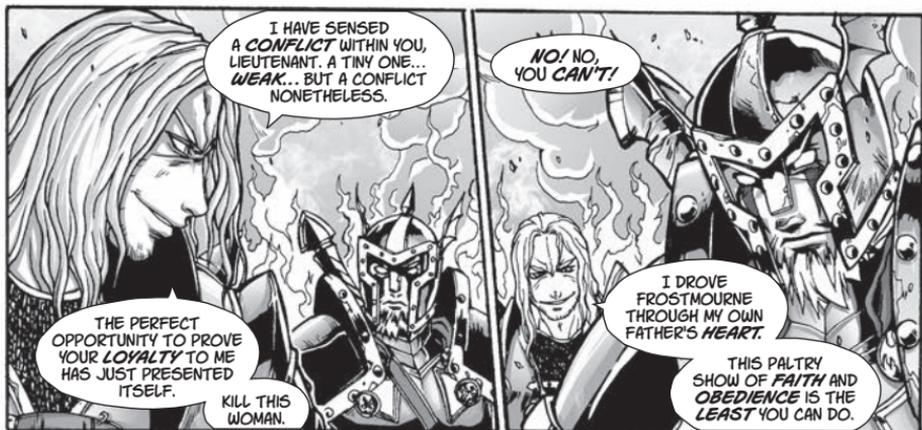
STEP FORWARD,
DEATH KNIGHT.

YES, MY
LORD?

WHAT DO
YOU REQUIRE
OF--



--ME...



I HAVE SENSED
A **CONFLICT** WITHIN YOU,
LIEUTENANT. A TINY ONE...
WEAK... BUT A **CONFLICT**
NONETHELESS.

**NO! NO,
YOU CAN'T!**

THE PERFECT
OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE
YOUR **LOYALTY** TO ME
HAS JUST PRESENTED
ITSELF.

**KILL THIS
WOMAN.**

I DROVE
FROSTMOURNE
THROUGH MY OWN
FATHER'S **HEART.**

THIS PALTRY
SHOW OF **FAITH** AND
OBEDIENCE IS THE
LEAST YOU CAN DO.



SON...
THASSARIAN... MY
BOY, MY PRECIOUS
BOY...

WHATEVER
THEY'VE **DONE**
TO YOU, YOU CAN
FIGHT IT.



YOU **HAVE**
TO **FIGHT**
IT!

DON'T
LET THEM TAKE
AWAY WHO YOU
ARE!

I... AM...

... A
SOLDIER.



THAT IS
CORRECT,
LIEUTENANT.

AND I ORDER
YOU... TO TAKE THIS
WOMAN'S HEAD.



THASSARIAN...
NO... NO, DON'T...
DON'T LET THIS
MONSTER WIN--!



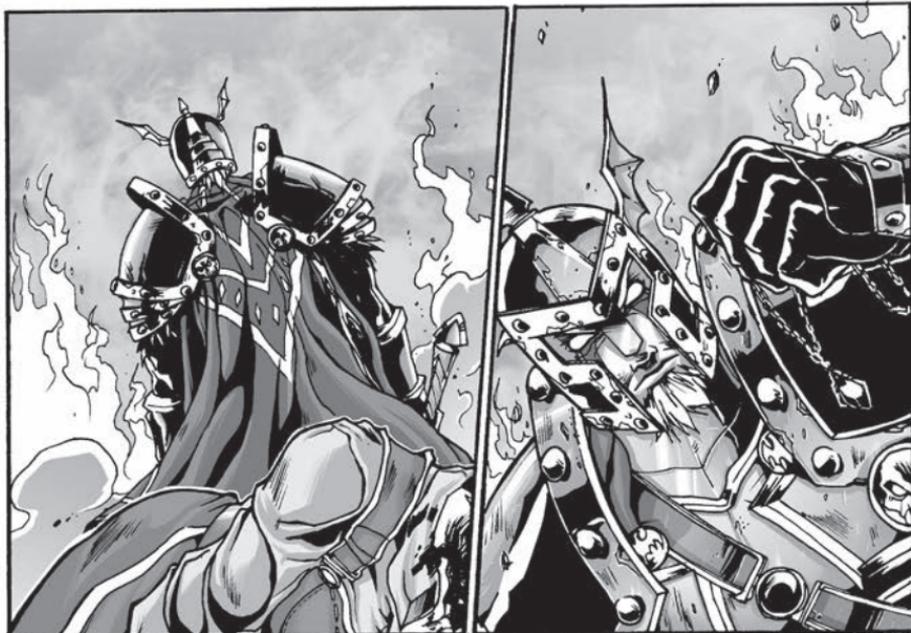
THE WILL
OF ARTHAS IS
FIRST.

HAVE
MERCY!



AND
FOREMOST.

SSCHAK



The high elf temple of An'owyn—ten days after the sacking of Capital City.

SO... WILL THE TWO OF YOU BE ATTENDING THE BANQUET TOMORROW EVENING?

WHAT BANQUET WOULD THAT BE, FALTORA?

THE ONE LADY CELLYN PLANS TO THROW. YOU KNOW HOW MUCH SHE LOVES TO SHOW OFF.

WILL, *AHEM*. WILL YOU BE GOING, MERRIEL?

WHAT MY LITTLE BROTHER *MEANS* TO ASK, MERRIEL, IS WHETHER YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE BANQUET *WITH* HIM.

KOLTIRA, I WOULD *LOVE* IT IF YOU WERE SOMEPLACE ELSE RIGHT NOW.

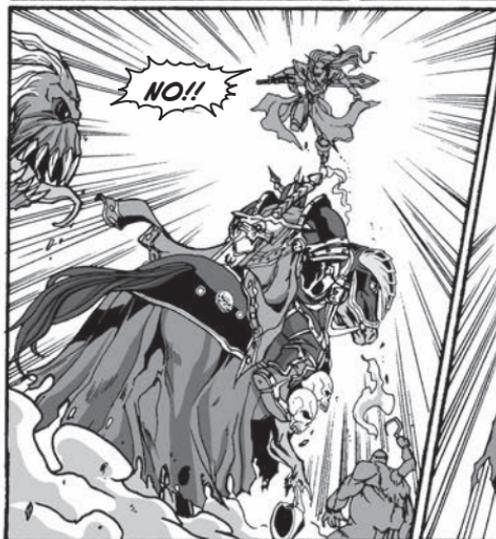
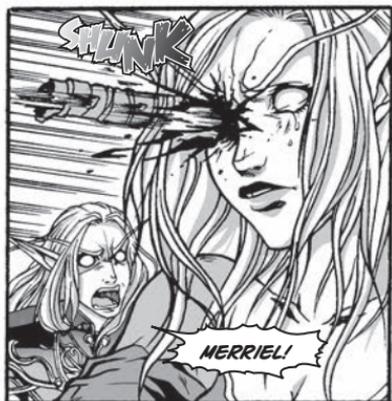
OF COURSE YOU WOULD.

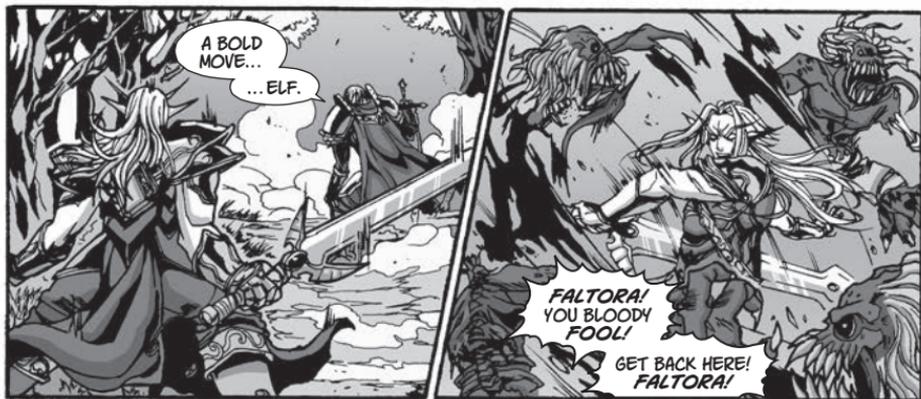
I--

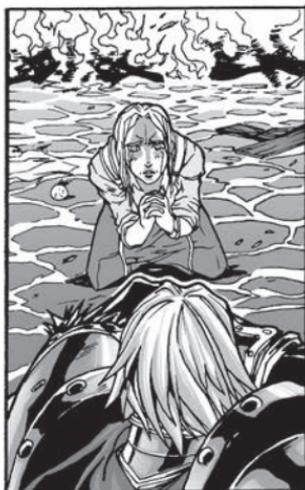
BROTHER? WHAT IS IT?

FALTORA... DID YOU CATCH THAT SCENT?







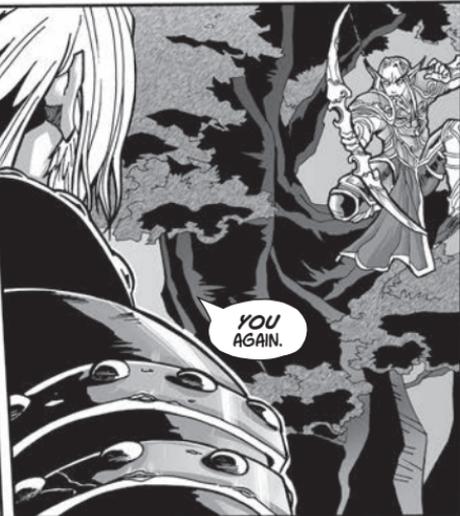




HOURS LATER...



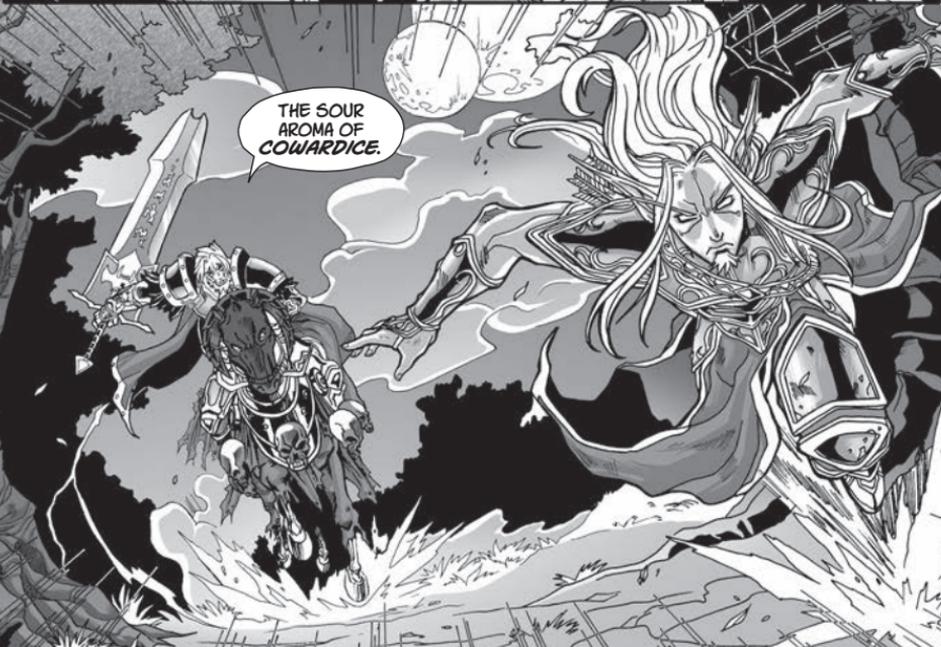




YOU AGAIN.



I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED THAT SCENT...



THE SOUR AROMA OF COWARDICE.



A **SENTIMENTAL FOOL** WHOSE EMOTIONS SEND HIM SCRAMBLING INTO THE GAPING MAW OF A LION...

... ONLY TO THEN RUN AWAY LIKE A **WHIPPED CHILD**.



NO **MATTER** THE REASON...



... HE DESERVES PUNISHMENT **FAR** WORSE THAN MERE **DEATH**.

BUT NOW I RECONSIDER. IT MAY NOT BE **COWARDICE** I SENSE...

... BUT **RECKLESSNESS** INSTEAD.



THERE IS NO COWARDICE OR RECKLESSNESS IN SIMPLY **LIVING** TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.

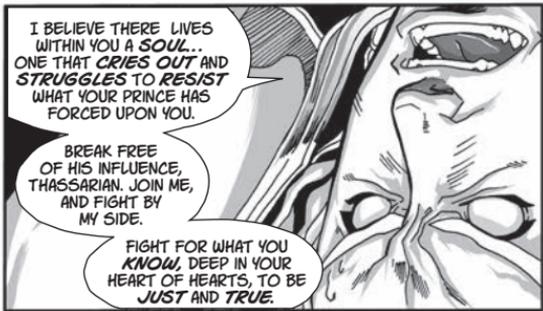
PERHAPS NOT. BUT FACING ME **SINGLEHANDEDLY** CAN **ONLY** BE CALLED **FOOLHARDY**.



LISTEN TO ME. I HAVE FOLLOWED YOU SINCE AN'OWYN FELL... *WATCHED* YOU. I KNOW YOU ARE NAMED *THASSARIAN*.

YOU COULD HAVE KILLED MY BROTHER AT THE TEMPLE. I BELIEVE YOU ALMOST *DID*.

BUT SOMETHING INSIDE YOU *HESITATED*. SOME PART OF YOU *HELD BACK*.



I BELIEVE THERE LIVES WITHIN YOU A *SOUL*... ONE THAT *CRIES OUT* AND *STRUGGLES TO RESIST* WHAT YOUR PRINCE HAS FORCED UPON YOU.

BREAK FREE OF HIS INFLUENCE, THASSARIAN. JOIN ME, AND FIGHT BY MY SIDE.

FIGHT FOR WHAT YOU *KNOW*, DEEP IN YOUR HEART OF HEARTS, TO BE *JUST* AND *TRUE*.



YOU KNOW NOT WHAT YOU ASK OF ME, ELF.

I... SHALL ALLOW YOU TO *DEPART*... RATHER THAN TAKE YOUR LIFE THIS NIGHT.

BUT BELIEVE THIS: THE NEXT TIME WE MEET, I *WILL* DRAW MY SWORD AGAINST YOU.



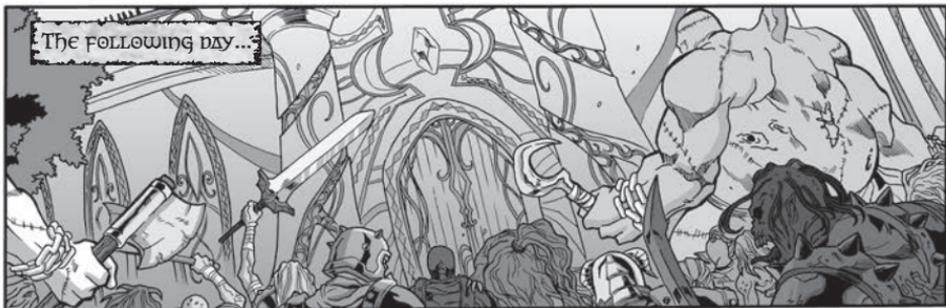
SO BE IT.

MAY THE BETTER WARRIOR PREVAIL.

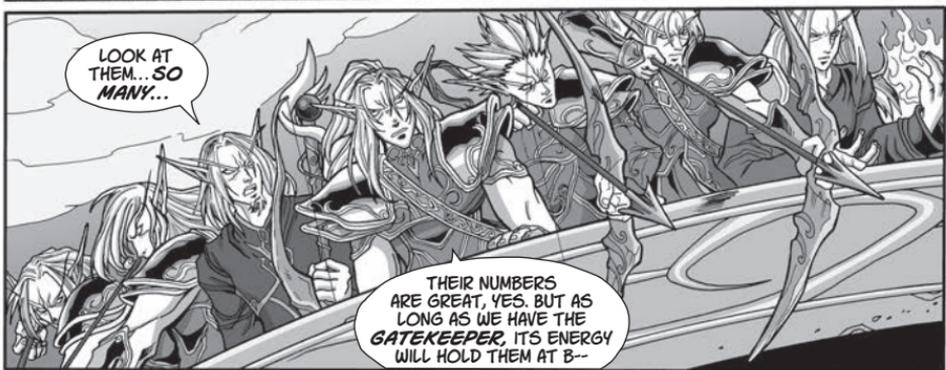


AGREED.

The following day...



LOOK AT THEM... SO MANY...

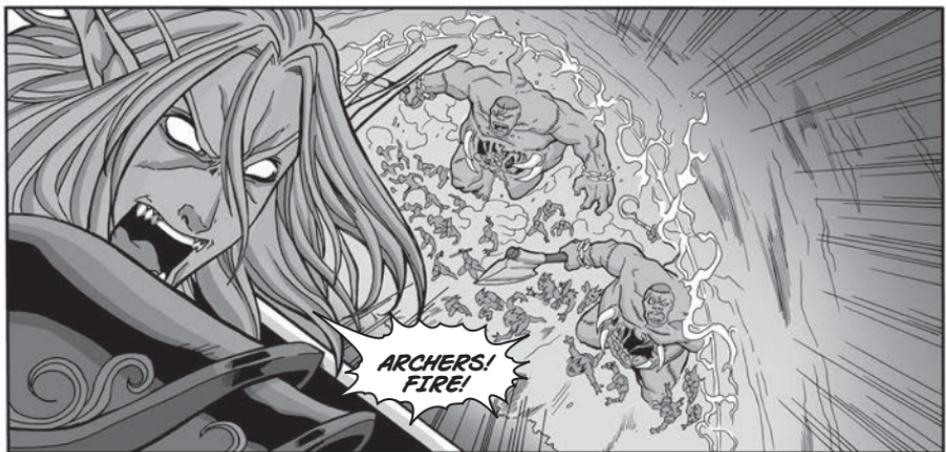


THEIR NUMBERS ARE GREAT, YES. BUT AS LONG AS WE HAVE THE GATEKEEPER, ITS ENERGY WILL HOLD THEM AT B--

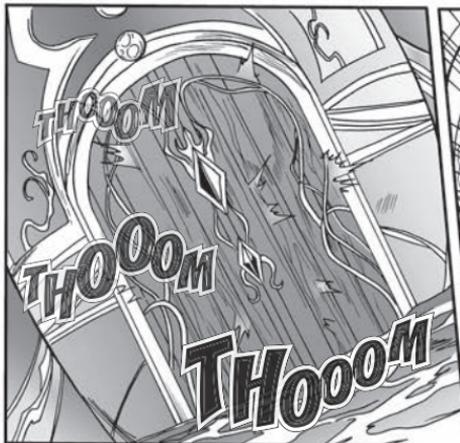
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

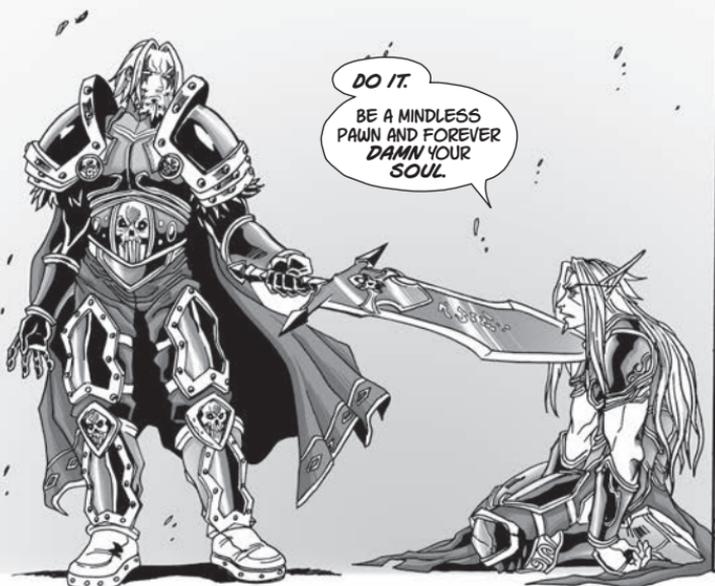
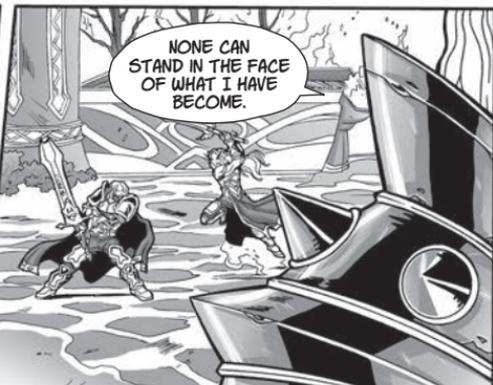
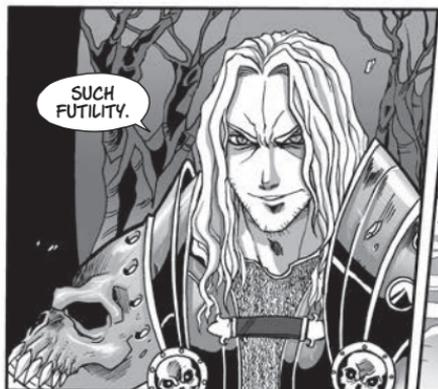


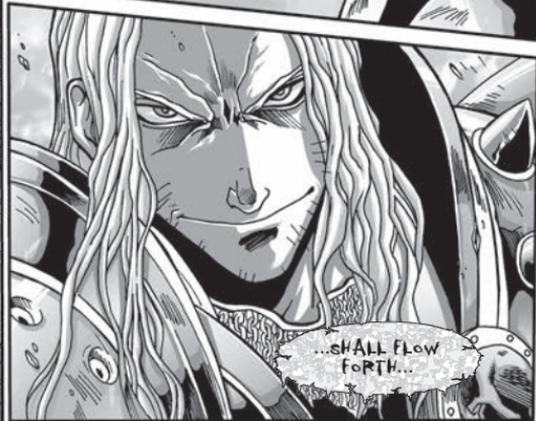
NO! NO!



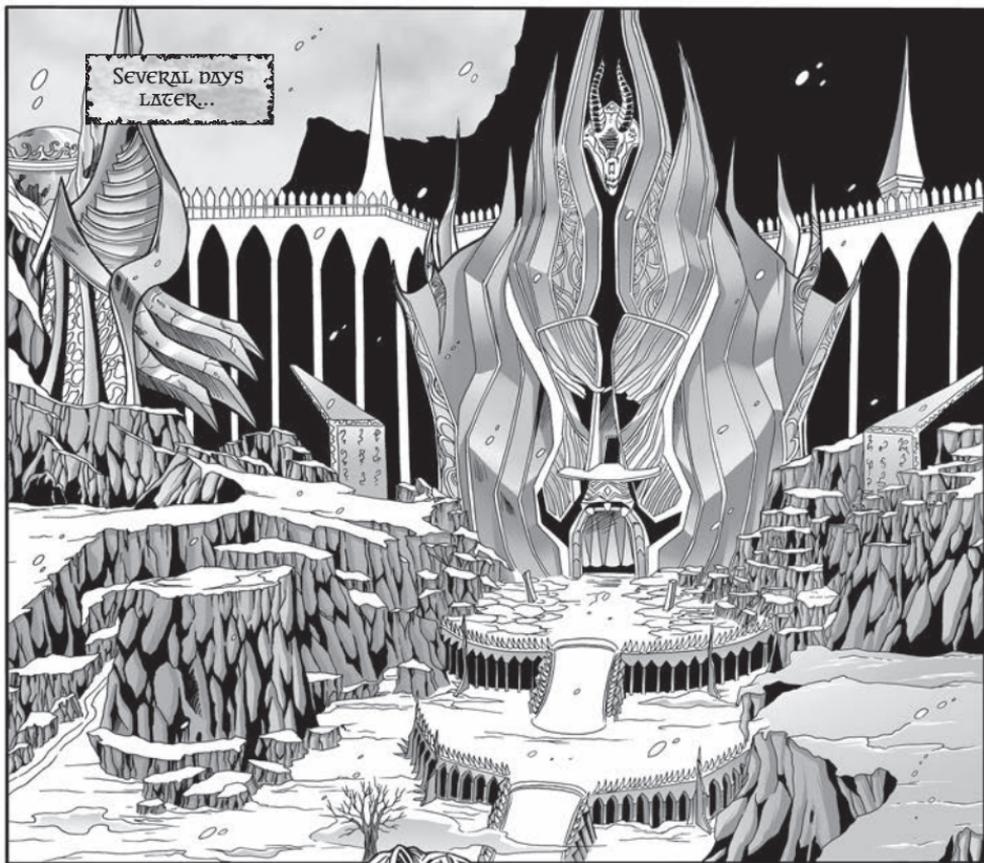
ARCHERS! FIRE!







SEVERAL DAYS
LATER...



THERE IT IS,
FELLOWS. THE PRINCE'S
STRONGHOLD... OUR
NEW HOME.

WHAT DO
YOU THINK,
KOLTIRA?

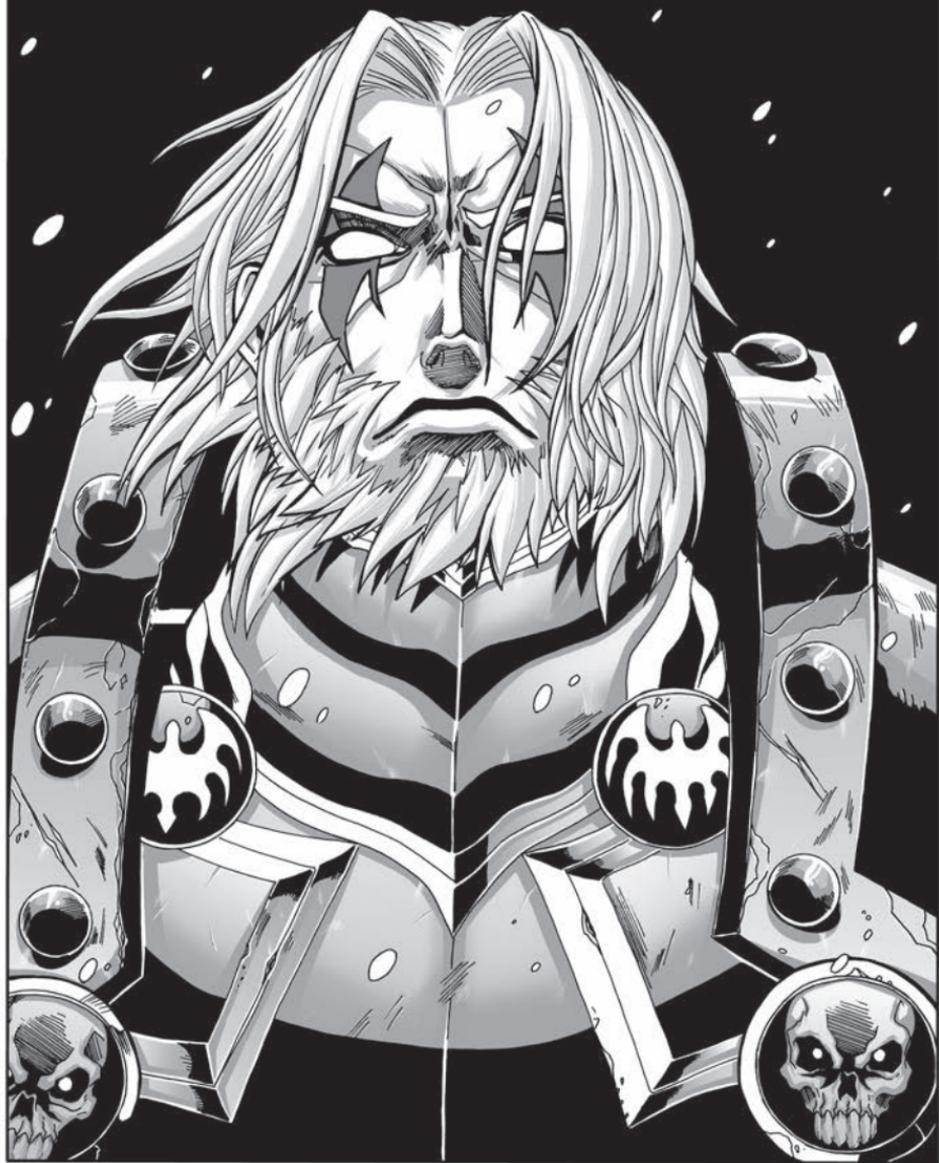




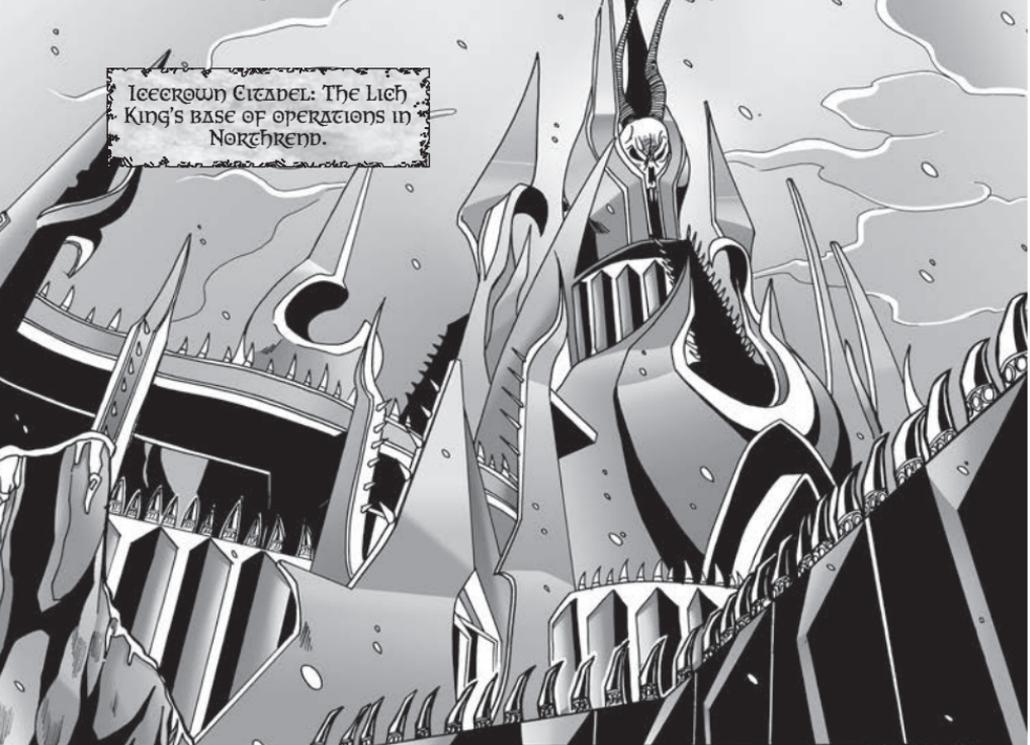
MY OPINION DOES
NOT COME INTO
PLAY, BROTHER.

YOU OF ALL
PEOPLE SHOULD
KNOW THAT.

CHAPTER 4



ICEEROWN Citadel: The Lich King's base of operations in Northrend.



GOOD, KOLTIRA.
VERY GOOD.

YOUR SKILLS
GROW EACH DAY
WE LINGER HERE.





HEAR ME, MY
SERVANTS.



THE TIME HAS
COME.

PREPARE FOR
BATTLE.

A THOUSAND
HEROES OF THE ALLIANCE LIE
BURIED BENEATH LIGHT'S
HOPE CHAPEL.

HIGHLORD MAGRAINE
SHALL LEAD YOU THERE NOW. AFTER
TAKING NEW AVALON, YOU SHALL
SCRAPE THE LAND CLEAN...



...AND CLAIM
THOSE WARRIORS...FOR THE
SCOURGE.

**DEATH TO
THE LIVING!**



MY NAME IS THASSARIAN.
ONCE I WAS HUMAN.



THAT NO LONGER
MATTERS.

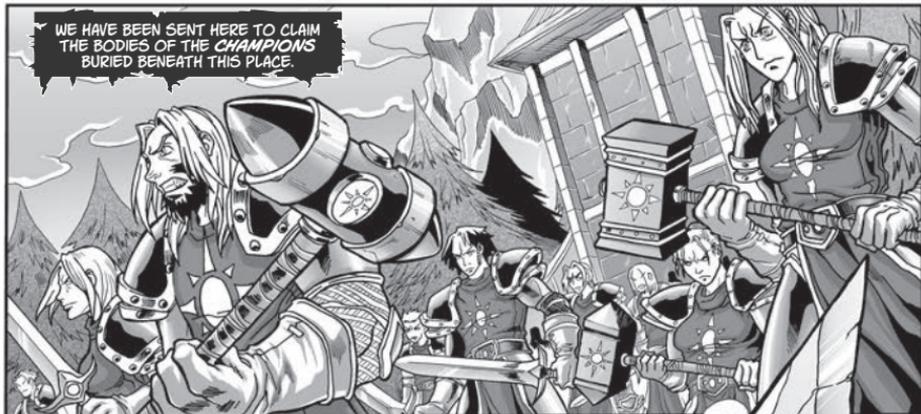


ALL THAT MATTERS
NOW IS THE WILL
OF ARTHAS...



...THE WILL OF
THE LICH KING.

WE HAVE BEEN SENT HERE TO CLAIM THE BODIES OF THE CHAMPIONS BURIED BENEATH THIS PLACE.

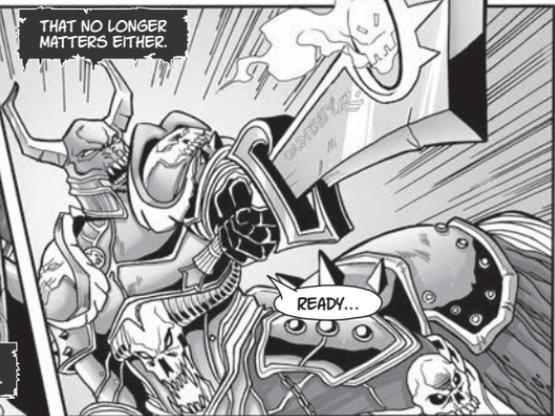


IN A DIM RECESS OF MY MIND, I KNOW THAT MY FATHER, **KILLOREN**, IS BURIED HERE...



... MOVED FROM HIS GRAVE IN LORDERON.

THAT NO LONGER MATTERS EITHER.



READY...

THE SKIES TURN RED WITH THE BLOOD OF THE FALLEN! THE LICH KING WATCHES OVER US, MINIONS!

LEAVE ONLY ASHES AND MISERY IN YOUR DESTRUCTIVE WAKE!

CHAAARGE!





NOTHING WILL TURN
US FROM THE LICH
KING'S TASK.

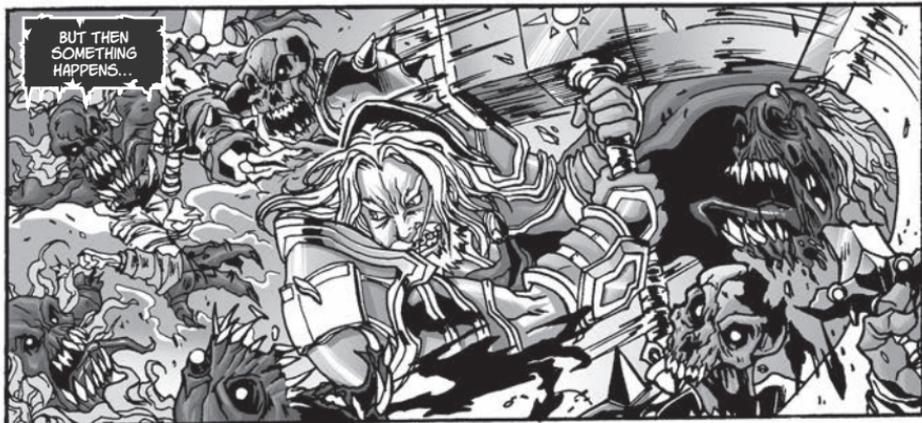


NOT THE SWORDS
AND AXES OF THE
ARGENT DAWN...



...CERTAINLY NOT
THE SOFT FLESH
BEHIND THEM.

THE SCOURGE SHALL NOT
BE DENIED. MINUTES INTO THE
BATTLE, FULLY A THIRD OF THE
DEFENDERS HAVE FALLEN.



BUT THEN
SOMETHING
HAPPENS...



... AND A BOLT OF LIGHT
BLASTS INTO MY MIND.

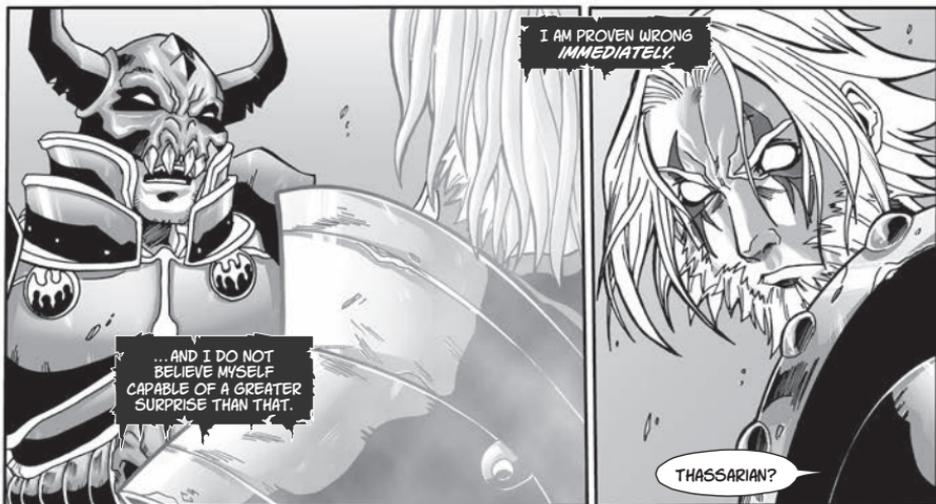


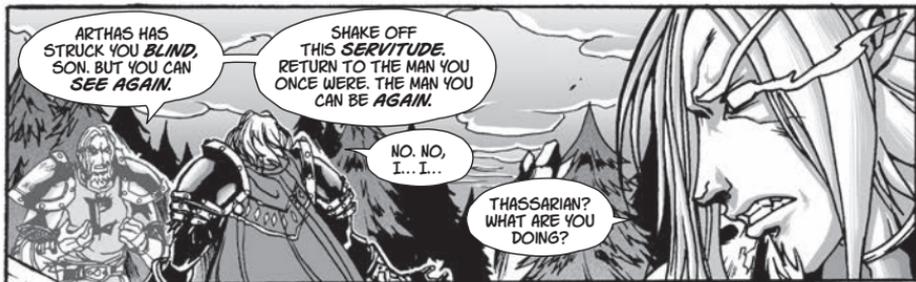
FOR A FEW SECONDS
IT IS LIKE STARING INTO
THE SUN ITSELF.



I SEE HIGHLORD
MOGRAINE GIVE THE
SIGNAL TO STAND DOWN,
AND I OBEY, OF COURSE.

BUT THEN I SEE HIM
CONVERSING... WITH A
GHOST...





ARTHAS HAS STRUCK YOU **BLIND**, SON. BUT YOU CAN **SEE AGAIN**.

SHAKE OFF THIS **SERVITUDE**. RETURN TO THE MAN YOU ONCE WERE. THE MAN YOU CAN BE **AGAIN**.

NO. NO, I... I...

THASSARIAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

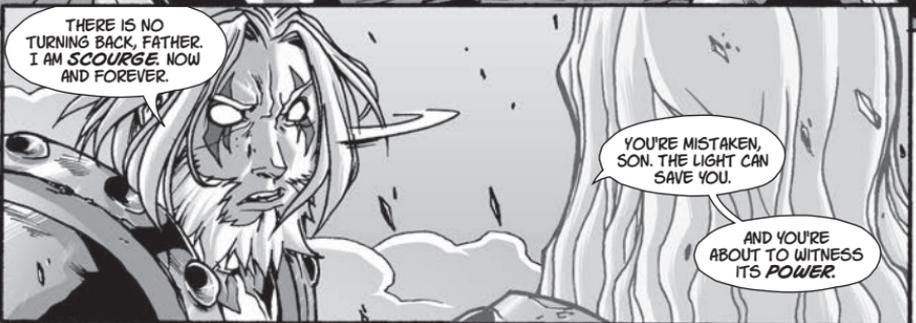


SUDDENLY MY FATHER'S VOICE CRACKS AND FADES, AS MY MASTER ARRIVES.



I CAN FEEL THE POWER OF HIS DARK, THUNDERING HEART, AS HE UNLEASHES HIS **FURY**.

I DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND DARION MOGRAINE'S **WEAKNESS**... BUT THE LICH KING IS HERE NOW.



THERE IS NO TURNING BACK, FATHER. I AM **SCOURGE**. NOW AND FOREVER.

YOU'RE MISTAKEN, SON. THE LIGHT CAN SAVE YOU.

AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO WITNESS ITS **POWER**.



THE LICH KING IS
UNSTOPPABLE. THE LICH
KING IS **ABSOLUTE**.



TIRION--

AND YET...



--HERE!

... BEFORE MY EYES...
BEFORE EVERYONE...



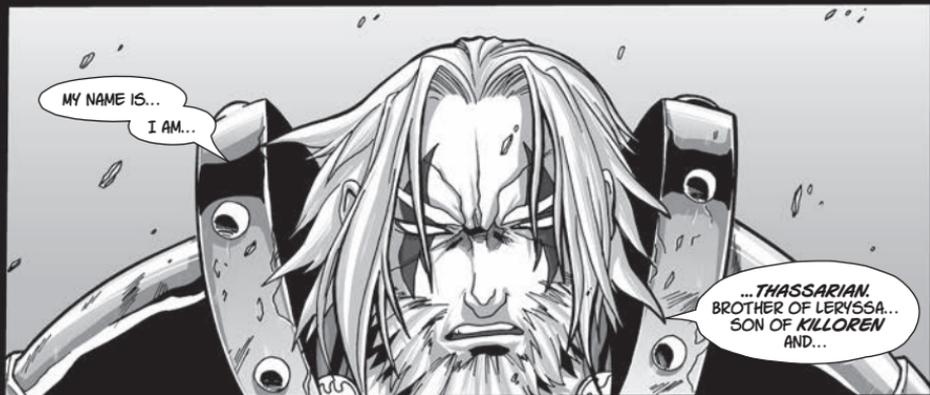
... THE LICH KING
RETREATS IN THE
FACE OF THE LIGHT!

SOMETIMES... ONCE
IN A GREAT, GREAT WHILE...
THE LIGHT GIVES US A
SECOND CHANCE.



THE CHOICE
TO BE MADE **NOW**...
THE QUESTION YOU
MUST ANSWER...

... IS **WHO**
ARE YOU?



MY NAME IS...

I AM...

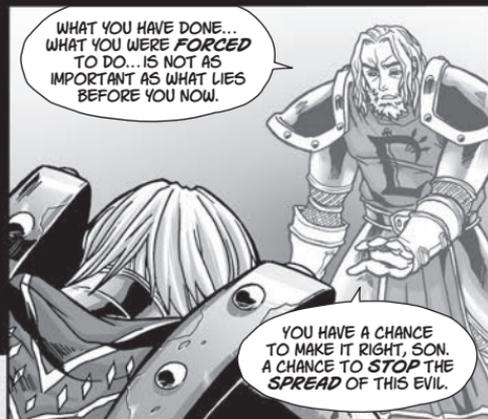
...**THASSARIAN**,
BROTHER OF LERYSSA...
SON OF **KILLOREN**
AND...



... AND...
VIVIAN...

FATHER—FATHER,
FORGIVE ME...!

WHAT HAVE
I DONE?



WHAT YOU HAVE **DONE**...
WHAT YOU WERE **FORCED**
TO DO... IS NOT AS
IMPORTANT AS WHAT LIES
BEFORE YOU NOW.

YOU HAVE A CHANCE
TO MAKE IT RIGHT, SON.
A CHANCE TO **STOP** THE
SPREAD OF THIS EVIL.



DO WHAT YOU
KNOW IS **RIGHT**,
SON.

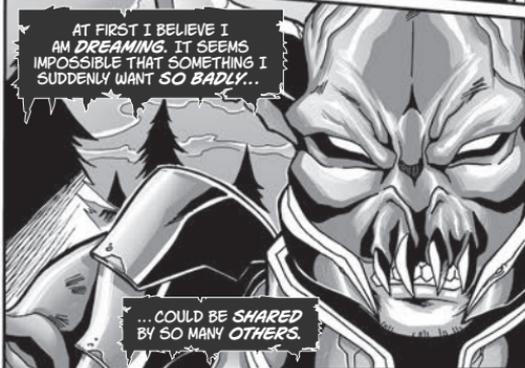
DO WHAT
YOU KNOW YOU
MUST.



MY MIND THUMBS AND BUZZES LIKE A KICKED HORNET'S NEST.



I HEAR HIGHLORD MGRAINE PLEDGING HIMSELF... PLEDGING ALL OF US... TO THE DEATH OF THE LICH KING.



AT FIRST I BELIEVE I AM DREAMING. IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE THAT SOMETHING I SUDDENLY WANT SO BADLY...

... COULD BE SHARED BY SO MANY OTHERS.



BUT FINALLY IT SINKS IN. WE ARE NOW THE KNIGHTS OF THE EBON BLADE.

AND WE SHALL SEE THE LICH KING DESTROYED.



THASSARIAN... I SEE YOU HAVE SHED THE TRAPPINGS OF YOUR PAST AS WELL...

YES... JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHER KNIGHTS NOW FREE OF THE LICH KING'S TYRANNY.

I JUST... I JUST NEEDED TO REMOVE THAT CURSED ARMOR SOAKED WITH THE BLOOD OF INNOCENTS.

INDEED... THOUGH LITTLE GOOD IT WILL DO US. A SNAKE SHED OF ITS SKIN IS STILL A SNAKE NONETHELESS.



I... DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO SAY, KOLTIRA.

YOU HAVE FOUGHT BY MY SIDE... EARNED MY RESPECT AND TRUST.

NOW THAT WE ARE FREE... I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THAT RESPECT AND TRUST MEANS. IS IT FOREVER TAINTED?

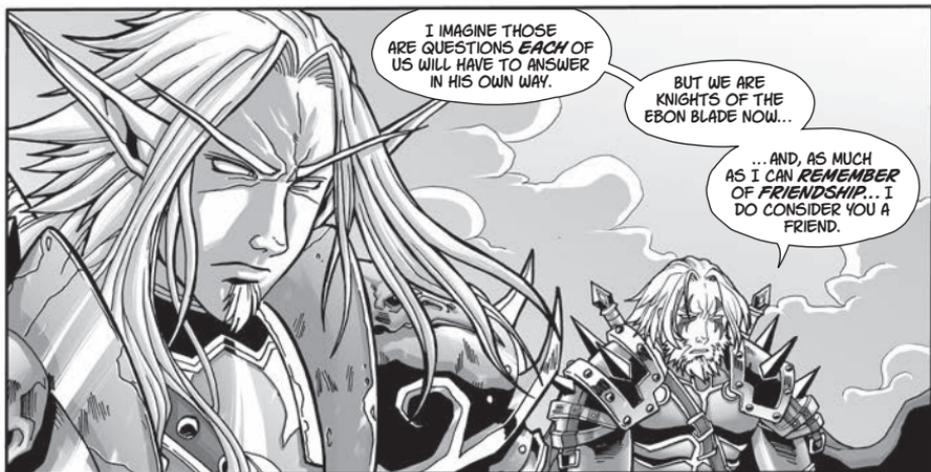
BECAUSE OF HOW WE CAME TO BE THIS WAY?



I HAVE NO ANSWERS FOR YOU, MY FRIEND. I HAVE NO ANSWERS FOR MYSELF.

WHERE DO I GO NOW? DO I RETURN TO MY PEOPLE, AND FIGHT FOR THE HORDE? ... DO I FOLLOW YOU, AND JOIN THE ALLIANCE?

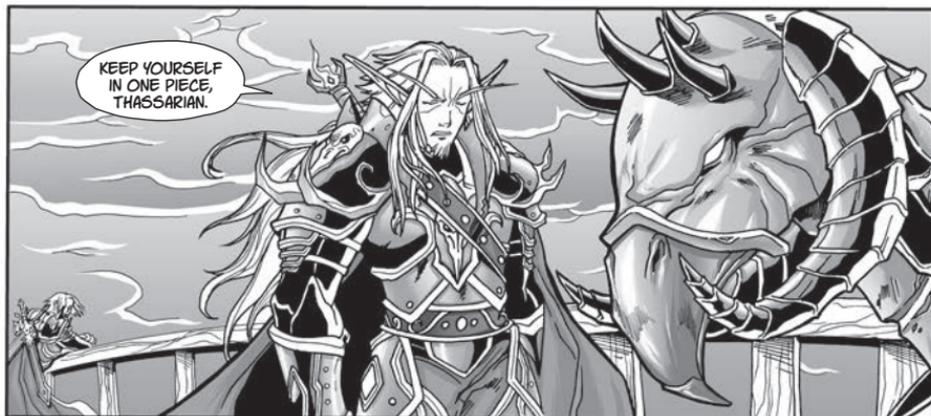
WHAT LIFE DO I HAVE LEFT TO LEAD?



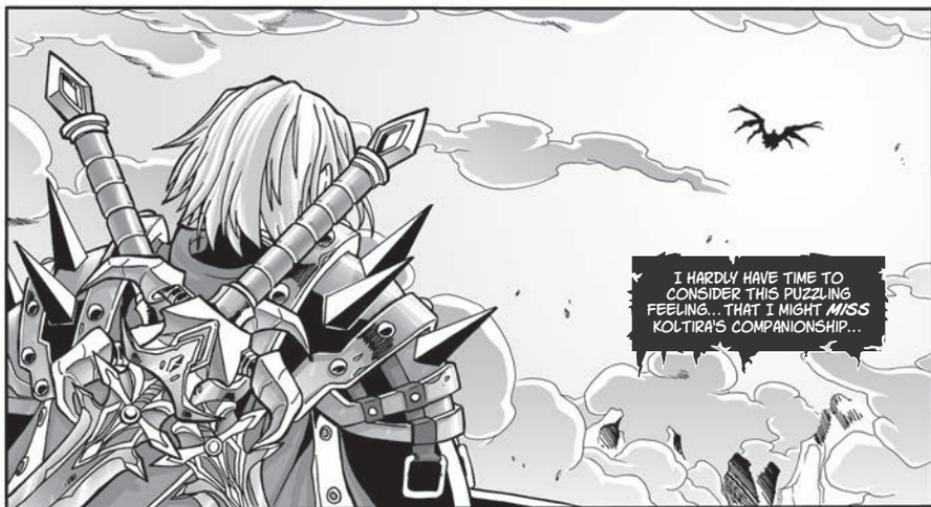
I IMAGINE THOSE
ARE QUESTIONS *EACH* OF
US WILL HAVE TO ANSWER
IN HIS OWN WAY.

BUT WE ARE
KNIGHTS OF THE
EBON BLADE NOW...

... AND, AS MUCH
AS I CAN *REMEMBER*
OF *FRIENDSHIP*... I
DO CONSIDER YOU A
FRIEND.



KEEP YOURSELF
IN ONE PIECE,
THASSARIAN.



I HARDLY HAVE TIME TO
CONSIDER THIS PUZZLING
FEELING... THAT I MIGHT *MISS*
KOLTRIA'S COMPANIONSHIP...



... BEFORE I AM CHARGED WITH DELIVERING A MESSAGE TO THE KING OF STORMWIND.



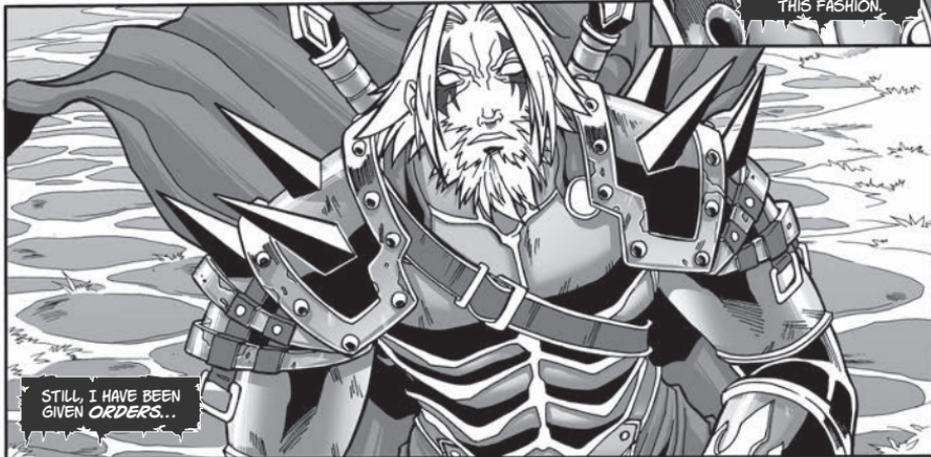
THE KING HAS BEEN ALERTED, AND KNOWS I AM ON MY WAY. IT MAKES THIS TASK NO LESS UNPLEASANT.



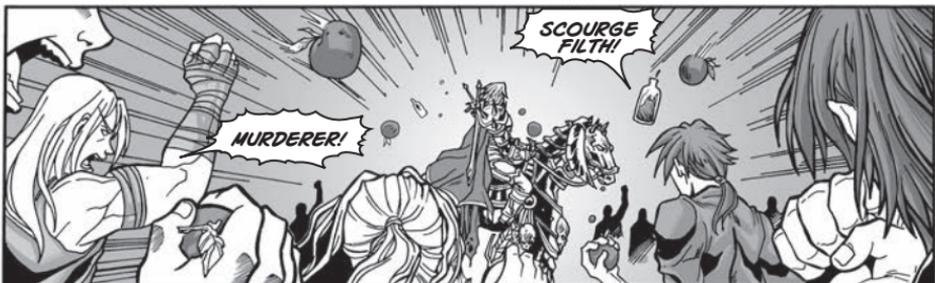
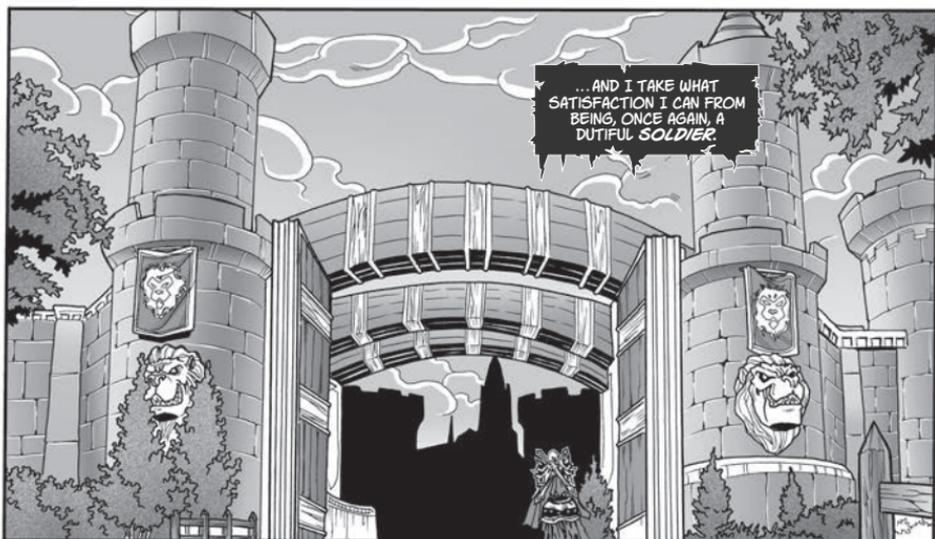
I HAVE ONLY BEEN TO THIS CITY A HANDFUL OF TIMES IN MY LIFE.

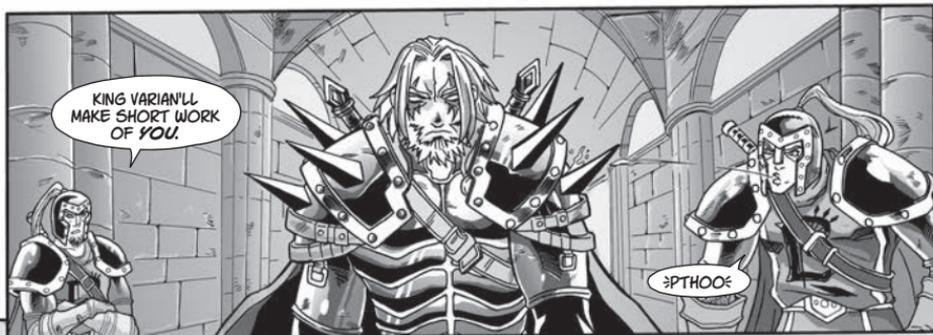


I HAD NOT IMAGINED MY RETURN IN QUITE THIS FASHION.



STILL, I HAVE BEEN GIVEN ORDERS...





KING VARIAN'LL
MAKE SHORT WORK
OF YOU.

PTHOO



ON OFFICIAL
BUSINESS OR NOT,
DEATH KNIGHT...

YOU HAVE
MERE MOMENTS LEFT
TO EXIST.



I BEAR A
MISSIVE FROM
TIRION FORDRING,
YOUR HIGHNESS.

WHAT?

GIVE ME
THAT.

I SHOULD KILL
YOU FOR SPEAKING
HIS NAME.



I... CAN SCARCELY
BELIEVE IT.

INDEED, OLD
FRIEND... BLOOD
AND HONOR.

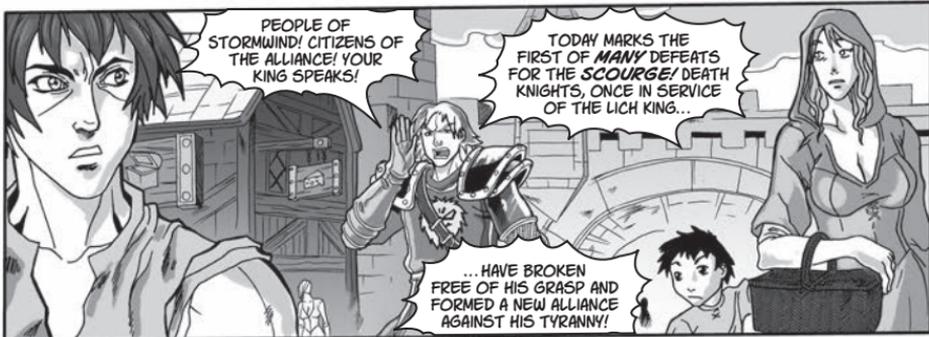


WERE IT NOT FOR THIS LETTER FROM TIRION, YOU WOULD BE A STAIN UPON MY FLOOR.

BUT IF ANYONE UNDERSTANDS REDEMPTION... IT IS TIRION. I SUPPOSE, PERHAPS, A *SECOND CHANCE* IS IN ORDER HERE.



ASSUMING YOU AND YOUR KIND *PROVE YOURSELVES*, THAT IS.



PEOPLE OF STORMWIND! CITIZENS OF THE ALLIANCE! YOUR KING SPEAKS!

TODAY MARKS THE FIRST OF *MANY* DEFEATS FOR THE *SCOURGE!* DEATH KNIGHTS, ONCE IN SERVICE OF THE LICH KING...

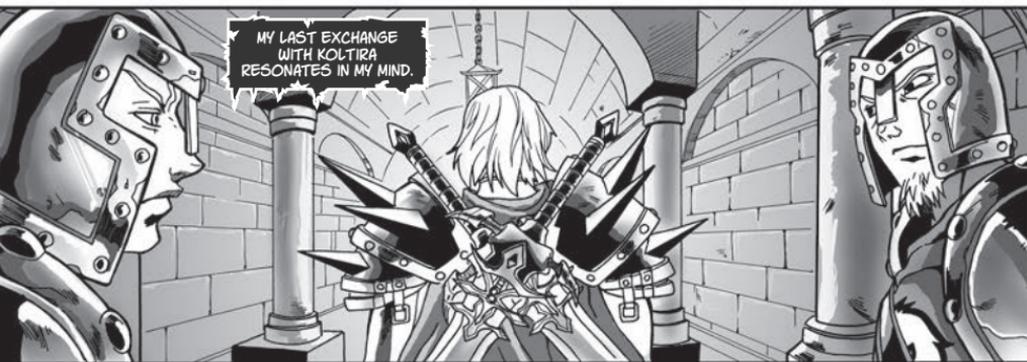
... HAVE BROKEN FREE OF HIS GRASP AND FORMED A NEW ALLIANCE AGAINST HIS TYRANNY!



YOU WILL WELCOME THESE FORMER HEROES OF THE ALLIANCE...

... AND TREAT THEM WITH THE RESPECT THAT YOU WOULD GIVE ANY ALLY OF STORMWIND!

GLORY TO THE ALLIANCE!



MY LAST EXCHANGE
WITH KOLTIRA
RESONATES IN MY MIND.



I KNOW MY PURPOSE NOW.
THE REST OF THE KNIGHTS
AND I *WILL* CRUSH ARTHAS.
EVENTUALLY.



BUT UNTIL WE
FIGURE OUT HOW
TO DO THAT...

...WHAT AM I
SUPPOSED
TO DO?



I HAVE NO LIFE
LEFT TO LIVE.

CAN I EVEN
CONSIDER MYSELF...
HUMAN?



I REMEMBER ENJOYING THIS PLACE
ONCE. THE FOOD, THE DRINK, THE
CONVERSATION...ALL OF THAT EXISTS AS
PALE SHADOWS IN MY MEMORY.



A-A-AFTERNOON, STRANGER. WHUH, UM--WHAT CAN I GET YOU?

I ONCE ENJOYED THE TASTE OF ALE, PERHAPS I STILL DO.

WUH-WUH-ONE MUG OF ALE, RIGHT AWAY.

I HEARD THE KING'S ANNOUNCEMENT. 'LONG WITH EVERYBODY ELSE, I EXPECT. SO YOU WANT TO *HELP* US NOW.



I AM FREE OF THE LICH KING'S HOLD. AND I WANT HIM DEAD.

WELL... THEN... ONCE HE'S DEAD... WHAT HAPPENS THEN? FOR YOU, I MEAN?

IF YOU CONSIDER SHARING A COMMON GOAL *HELPING* YOU... THEN YES.



WILL YOU TRY TO GO BACK TO YOUR OLD LIFE? RETURN TO YOUR FAMILY?



NO. I HAVE NO FAMILY.





I AM MANY THINGS, DEATH KNIGHT, BUT TWO THINGS I AM **NOT** ARE **STUPID** AND **ILL-INFORMED**.

WORD HAS REACHED ME OF THE EBON BLADE. BUT WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO SETTLE HERE? WHAT AGENDA ARE YOU PURSUING?



I HAVE NOWHERE TO GO, OVERLORD. I BELONG **NOWHERE**.

AGMAR'S HAMMER SEEMS TO CARE LITTLE FOR **HORDE** OR **ALLIANCE**. I SEE BOTH SIDES AT PEACE HERE.

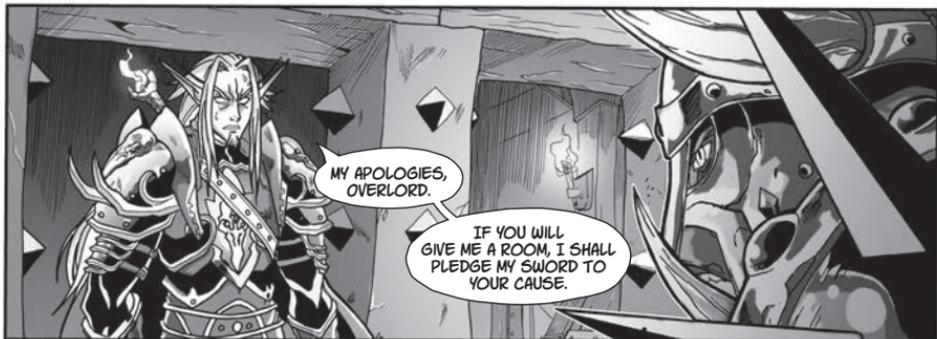
IF YOU CAN MAKE USE OF MY--



YES? FINISH YOUR SENTENCE! MY PATIENCE IS LIMITED!



--TALENTS... ON THE BATTLEFIELD...



MY APOLOGIES, OVERLORD.

IF YOU WILL GIVE ME A ROOM, I SHALL PLEDGE MY SWORD TO YOUR CAUSE.



ONLY MUCH LATER
DID I LEARN OF
KOLTIRA'S FLIGHT.



I KNOW NOT THE CAUSE
OF THE *SHADOWS*
THAT PLAGUED HIM.



PERHAPS IT HAD SOMETHING
TO DO WITH HIS HERITAGE AS
AN *ELF*, AND THEIR AFFINITY
FOR *ARCANE MAGIC*.

WHATEVER THE REASON,
KOLTIRA'S STAY IN AGMAR'S
HAMMER WAS NOT TO BE A
PEACEFUL ONE.

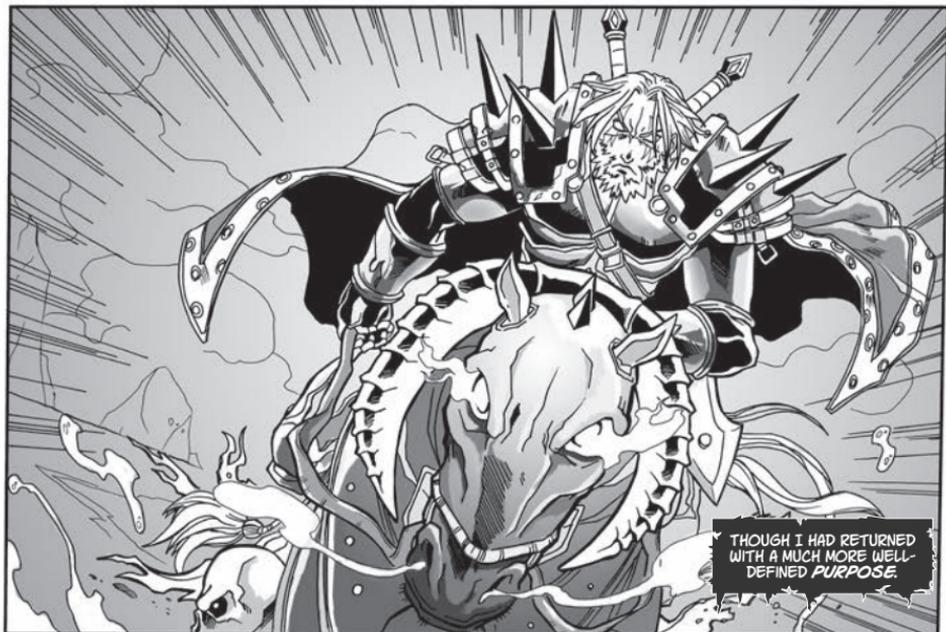


I WISH HE HAD
CALLED ON ME
FOR *HELP*.

I WOULD
HAVE COME.

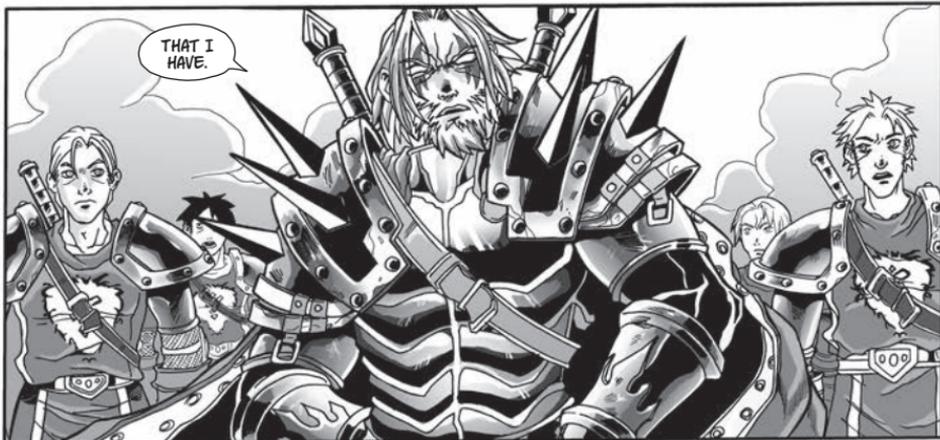
VALIANCE KEEP, ON THE
BOREAN TUNDRA.

BUT HE DID *NOT* REACH
OUT TO ME, AND MY OWN
WANDERINGS LED ME BACK
TO NORTHREND AS WELL.



THOUGH I HAD RETURNED
WITH A MUCH MORE WELL-
DEFINED PURPOSE.





THAT I HAVE.



PLUH... >AHEM<

PLEASE EXCUSE ME. DO YOU, AH, DO YOU HAVE A PROFESSION?



IN ANOTHER LIFE I WAS A FARMER.

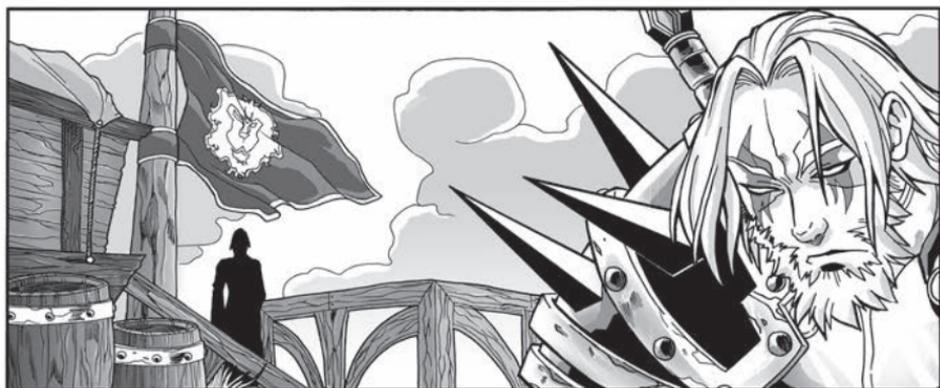
THOUGH I BELIEVE IT IS MY SKILL WITH A *SWORD* THAT WILL MOST BENEFIT YOUR ARMY NOW.



ABSOLUTELY! ABSOLUTELY.

JUST, AH, JUST SIGM. RIGHT THERE. YES.

AND WE'LL MAKE IT ALL NICE AND OFFICIAL.





"I THINK YOU'LL FIND THIS CUT SUITS YOU VERY WELL."



IT'S DURABLE, AND THE SHELL BREATHES QUITE NICELY...



... PLUS IT HAS A FLEECE LINER THAT BUTTONS IN FOR COLDER WEATHER.

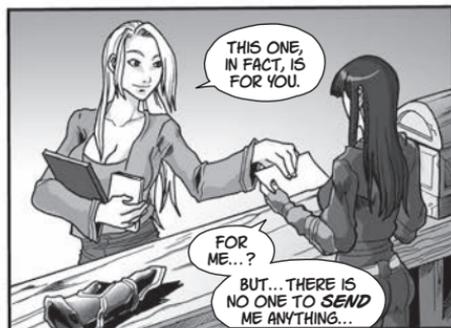


AFTERNOON, LERYSSA. HOW HAS BUSINESS BEEN?

STEADY.

YOU LOOK LOADED FOR BEAR.

OH, NOT ALL OF THESE ARE FOR ME.



THIS ONE, IN FACT, IS FOR YOU.

FOR ME...?

BUT... THERE IS NO ONE TO SEND ME ANYTHING...



I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT EXPANDING OUR HEADGEAR INVENTORY.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? MAYBE SOMETHING FURLINED?

... LERYSSA?



STARS IN THE HEAVENS...

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST!

YOU... YOU REMEMBER MY BROTHER... THASSARIAN.

YES, OF COURSE. HE DIED AT THE HANDS OF ONE OF THOSE DEATH KNIGHT CREATURES.



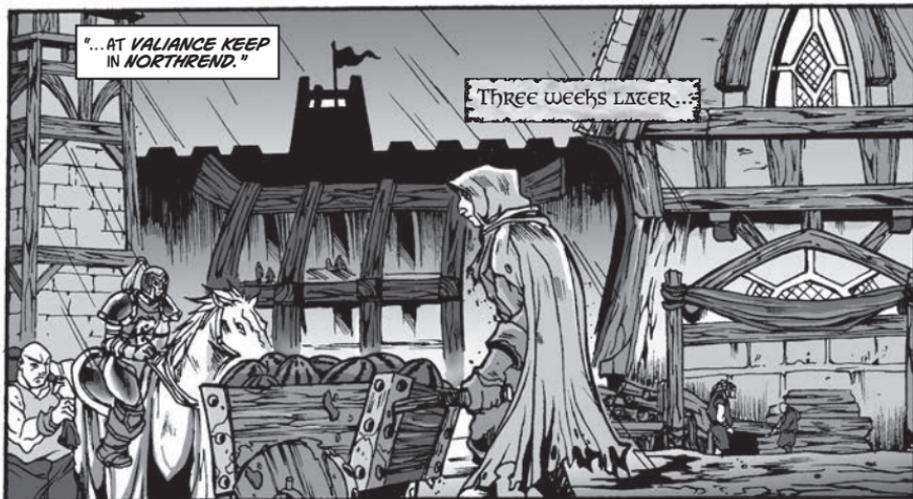
YES... YES, A SOLDIER CAME AND TOLD ME, A MAN WHO KNEW MY FAMILY. HE SAW A DEATH KNIGHT KILL MY MOTHER...

... AND THE SAME KNIGHT HAD MY MOTHER'S PENDANT, WHICH HE HAD TO HAVE TAKEN AS A TROPHY FROM THASSARIAN'S BODY.

AND YET... ACCORDING TO THIS... THASSARIAN RECENTLY ENLISTED IN THE ALLIANCE ARMY...

CHAPTER 5







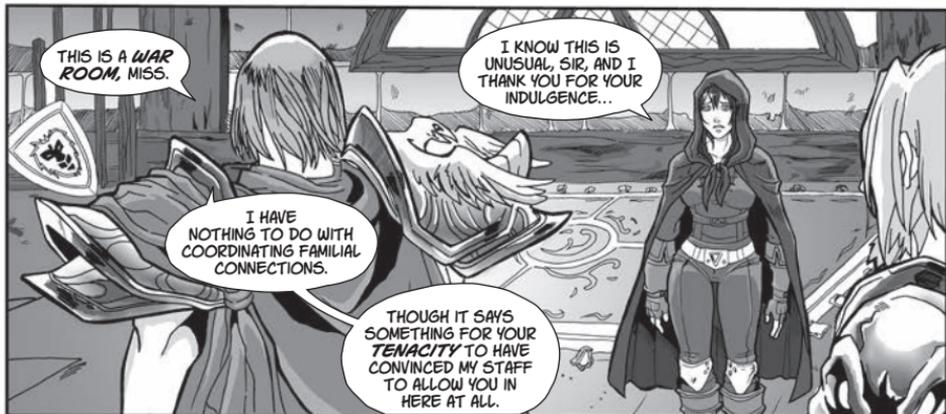
GENERAL ARLOS. SIR.

YES?
WHAT IS IT?

A YOUNG WOMAN
DEMANDS TO SPEAK
WITH YOU.



SHE CLAIMS TO BE
RELATED TO ONE OF
THE ENLISTED MEN.



THIS IS A WAR
ROOM, MISS.

I KNOW THIS IS
UNUSUAL, SIR, AND I
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
INDULGENCE...

I HAVE
NOTHING TO DO WITH
COORDINATING FAMILIAL
CONNECTIONS.

THOUGH IT SAYS
SOMETHING FOR YOUR
TENACITY TO HAVE
CONVINCED MY STAFF
TO ALLOW YOU IN
HERE AT ALL.



... BUT I *MUST*
LOCATE MY BROTHER,
THASSARIAN. HE'S...
HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE
DEAD, SIR...

... BUT A FRIEND *WROTE*
TO ME. *WILLIAM ALLERTON*.
PERHAPS YOU KNOW HIM? I,
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND
HIM, EITHER, BUT--

I'M SORRY,
YOUNG LADY. I KNOW
NOTHING OF YOUR BROTHER
OR THIS *ALLERTON* CHAP,
AND HONESTLY, I DON'T
MUCH CARE.

WE HAVE A
WAR TO WIN.
GOOD DAY.



BUT...

AHEM... PERHAPS
I MAY BE OF SOME
ASSISTANCE?



I'M SORRY,
I DON'T...

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE
MYSELF. I AM **COUNSELOR
TALBOT**. I HAVE **EXHAUSTIVE**
KNOWLEDGE OF OUR
ENLISTMENT RECORDS...

... AND I CAN TELL
YOU WITH **CERTAINTY**
THAT THERE IS **NO ONE**
AMONG OUR RANKS CALLED
THASSARIAN.

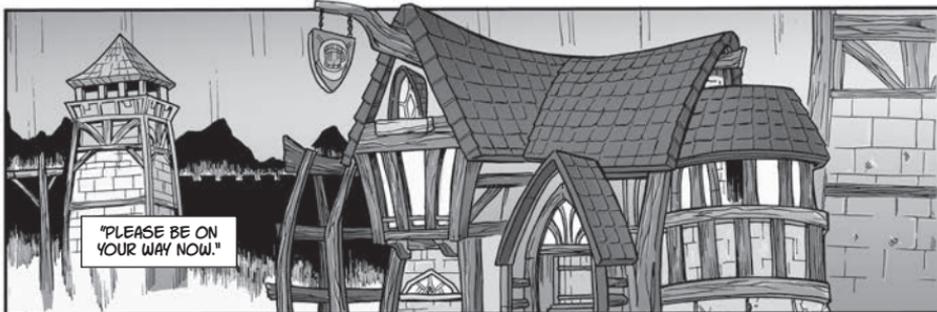


BUT, SIR,
THERE MUST BE
SOME KIND OF
ERROR.

PLEASE... I'VE
TRAVELED ALL THE WAY
FROM STORMWIND, SURELY
SOMEONE HERE CAN
HELP ME...



I'M AFRAID
NOT, MY DEAR.

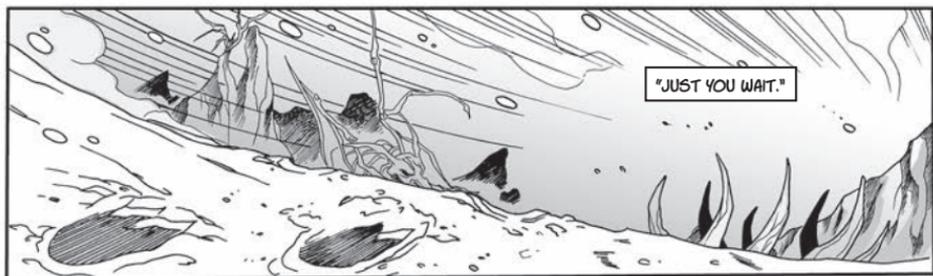


"PLEASE BE ON
YOUR WAY NOW."



ALL THIS WAY...
ALL THIS TIME...

JUST YOU WAIT,
TALBOT. I'LL SHOW
YOU AND ARLOS A
THING OR TWO.



"JUST YOU WAIT."



GHHRRRRHH



HHRRRRRRHH



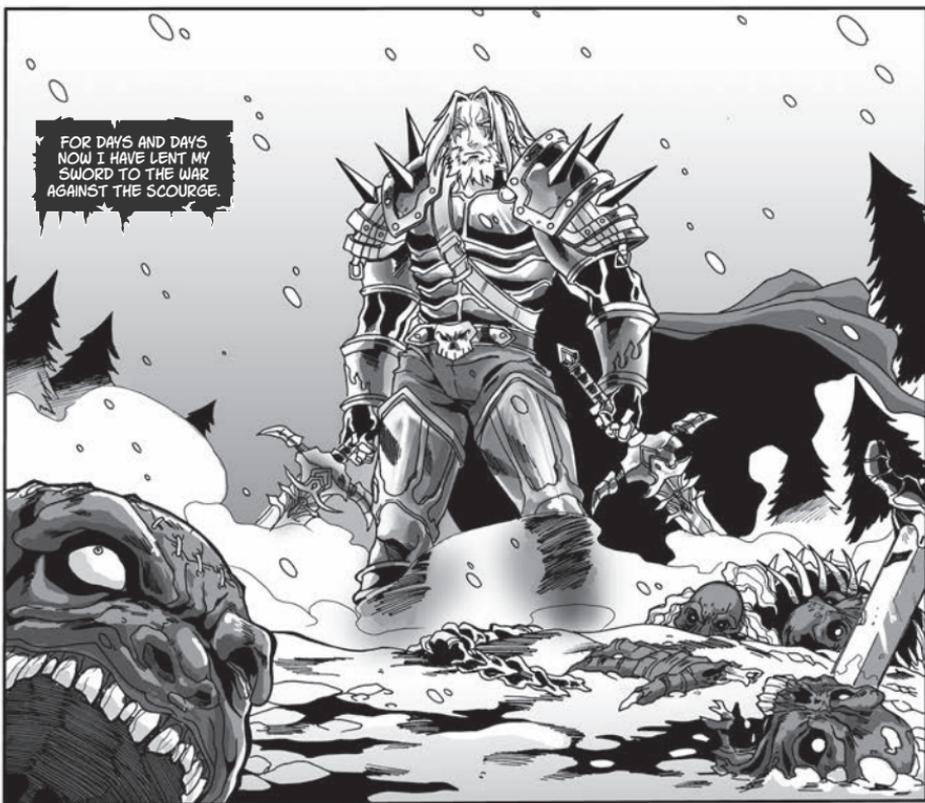
HHRAAAAHH!



KCHUKK

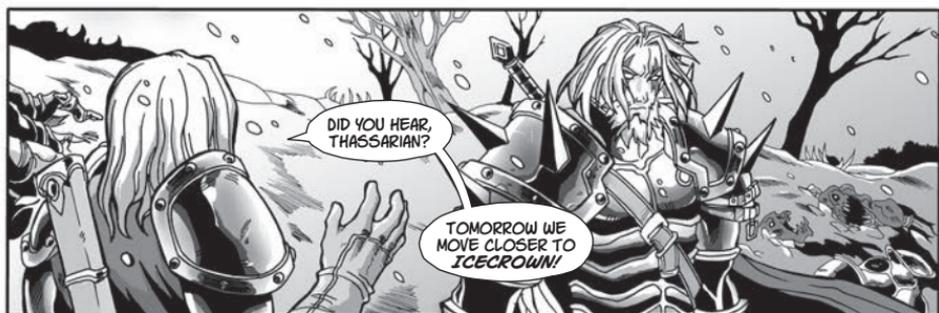


FOR DAYS AND DAYS
NOW I HAVE LENT MY
SWORD TO THE WAR
AGAINST THE SCOURGE.





THE MONSTERS
DIE... BUT THIS
IS NOT WHY I
ENLISTED.



DID YOU HEAR,
THASSARIAN?

TOMORROW WE
MOVE CLOSER TO
ICECROWN!



THAT, MAXWELL,
I SHALL BELIEVE WHEN
I SEE WITH MY OWN
EYES.

OH, COME NOW...
I KNOW WE HAVEN'T FACED
THE LICH KING YET, BUT
ONE MUST *WALK* BEFORE
ONE *RUNS*, YES?



I'VE BEEN *RUNNING*
SINCE I PICKED UP THIS
SWORD.

I'M SIMPLY NOT
ALLOWED TO RUN IN THE
PROPER *DIRECTION*.



THE CAMPFIRES THAT WARM MY FELLOW SOLDIERS BARELY REGISTER ON MY SKIN AT ALL.

I JOINED THIS ARMY TO STRIKE AT **ARTHAS**. NOT TO WANDER THE COUNTRYSIDE, WIPING OUT ISOLATED POCKETS OF SCOURGE.



I BEGIN TO WONDER IF I SHALL **EVER** HAVE THE VENGEANCE I SO DESPERATELY **SEEK**.



ARE YOU...
ARE... YOU...

... **THASSARIAN**?

I AM.

WHY DO YOU ASK THIS QUESTION, AND WHO SENT YOU?



COUNSELOR...
TALBOT...

... HAS
RECALLED
YOU.

YOU ARE
TO RETURN TO
VALIANCE KEEP.
IMMEDIATELY.

AND **ALONE**.





TELL ME, THASSARIAN,
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT MOST
OUT OF YOUR SERVICE WITH
THE MILITARY?

WHAT ONE THING
DOES YOUR HEART
DESIRE?

I... WANT
REVENGE... AGAINST
THE LICH KING.



FOR WHAT HE'S
DONE TO MY FAMILY.
FOR WHAT HE DID
TO ME.

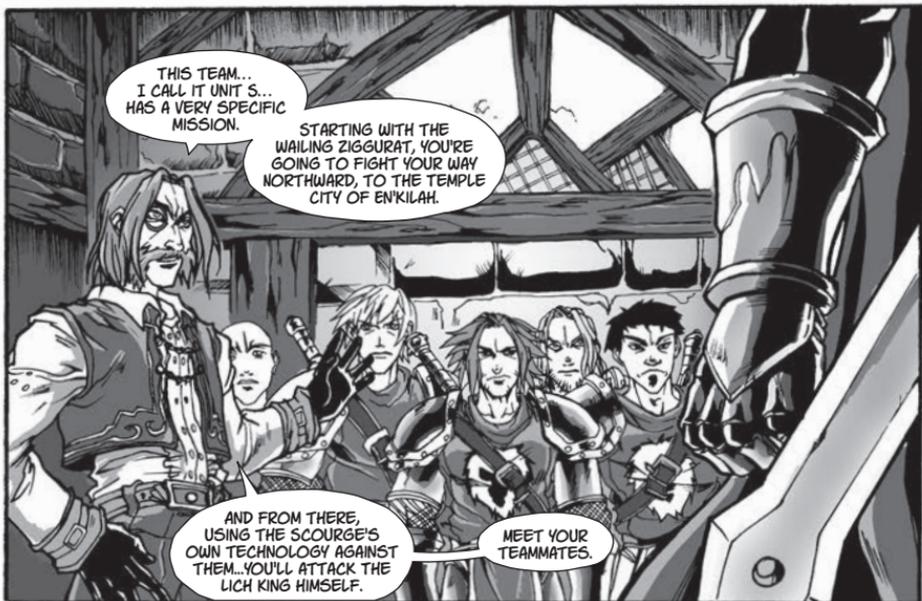
AND WHAT WOULD
YOU SAY... IF I TOLD
YOU I COULD GIVE YOU
THAT **CHANCE**?



I WOULD
LISTEN **VERY**
CLOSELY.
SIR.

WELL THEN,
START LISTENING,
SON.

I'M ASSEMBLING
AN ELITE TEAM. A
STRIKE FORCE,
IF YOU WILL.



THIS TEAM...
I CALL IT UNIT S...
HAS A VERY SPECIFIC
MISSION.

STARTING WITH THE
WAILING ZIGGURAT, YOU'RE
GOING TO FIGHT YOUR WAY
NORTHWARD, TO THE TEMPLE
CITY OF EN'KILAH.

AND FROM THERE,
USING THE SCOURGE'S
OWN TECHNOLOGY AGAINST
THEM... YOU'LL ATTACK THE
LICH KING HIMSELF.

MEET YOUR
TEAMMATES.





"THAT YOU ARE, SON. WE BELIEVE YOU'VE EARNED IT."

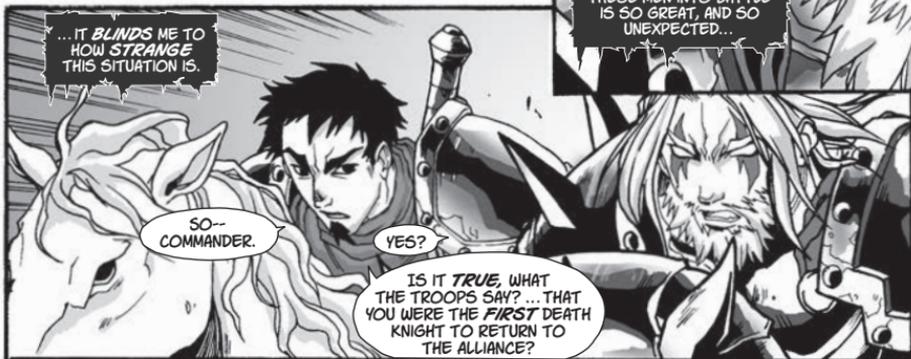
EARNED IT? HAVE I? HAVE I DONE MORE THAN ANY OF MY BROTHERS-IN-ARMS? I DO NOT KNOW.



MY FIRST COMMAND... MY FIRST REAL COMMAND, OUTSIDE THE LICH KING'S SERVITUDE.

I CAN SCARCELY BELIEVE IT.

THE HONOR OF LEADING THESE MEN INTO BATTLE IS SO GREAT, AND SO UNEXPECTED...



...IT BLINDS ME TO HOW STRANGE THIS SITUATION IS.

SO--
COMMANDER.

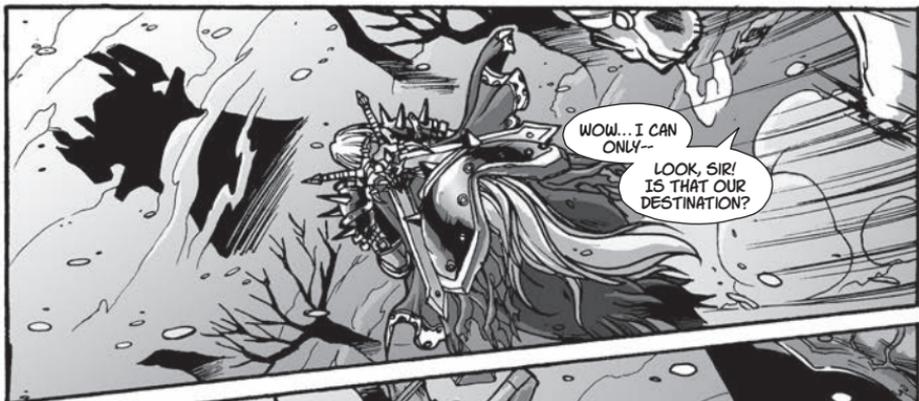
YES?

IS IT TRUE, WHAT THE TROOPS SAY? ... THAT YOU WERE THE FIRST DEATH KNIGHT TO RETURN TO THE ALLIANCE?



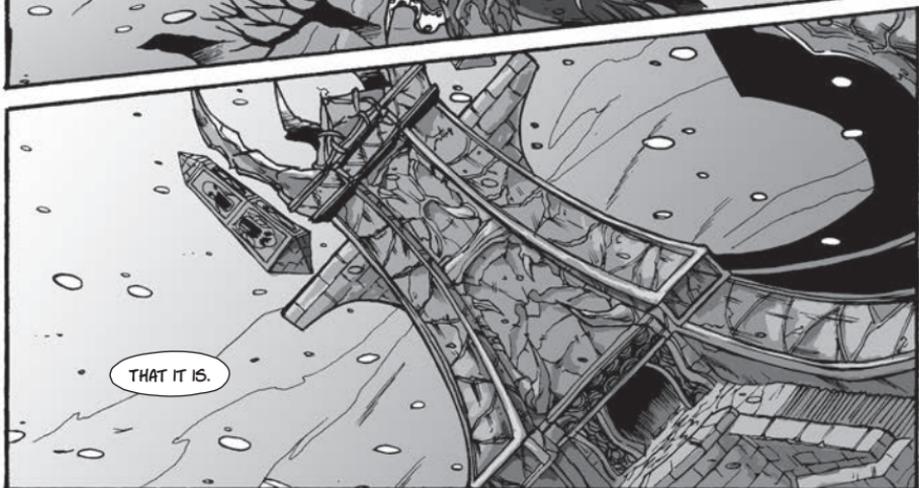
THE FIRST ONE TO MY KNOWLEDGE, YES. BUT IT HOLDS NO SPECIAL DISTINCTION.

I HAVE HARDLY BEEN ACCEPTED AS AN ALLIANCE SOLDIER. THE DISTANCE THE LIVING KEEP FROM ME IS EVIDENCE OF THAT.



WOW... I CAN ONLY--

LOOK, SIR!
IS THAT OUR DESTINATION?



THAT IT IS.



ALL RIGHT, MEN.
OUR ORDERS ARE CLEAR.

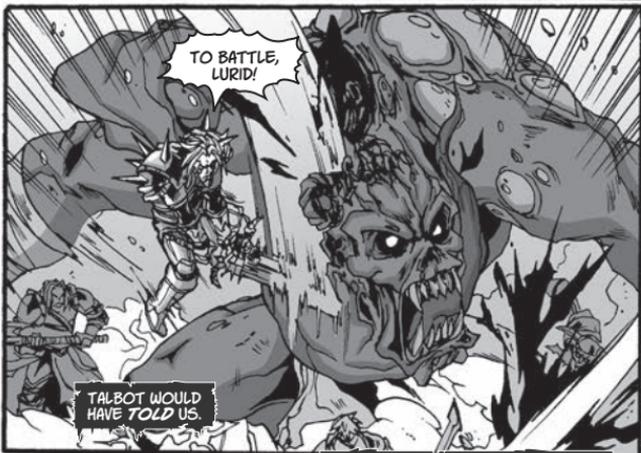
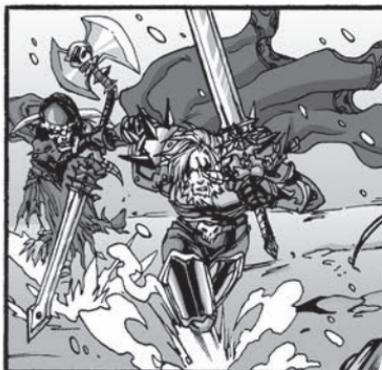
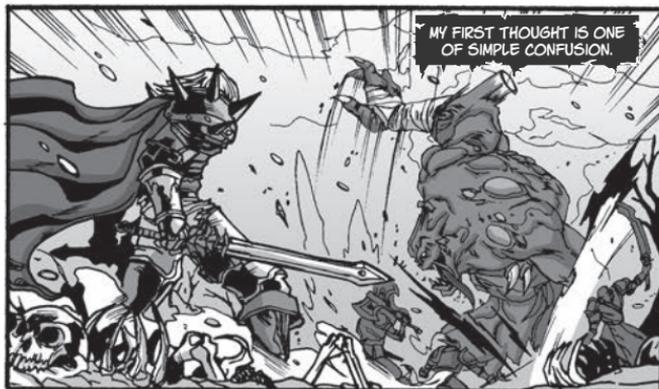
WE ARE TO
RID THIS PLACE OF
WHATEVER SOLDIERS
SURROUND IT, AND--

UH... BEGGING
YOUR PARDON,
COMMANDER, BUT...



... THAT DOESN'T
LOOK MUCH LIKE A
SOLDIER TO ME!







HE WOULDN'T HAVE SENT US OUT HERE...

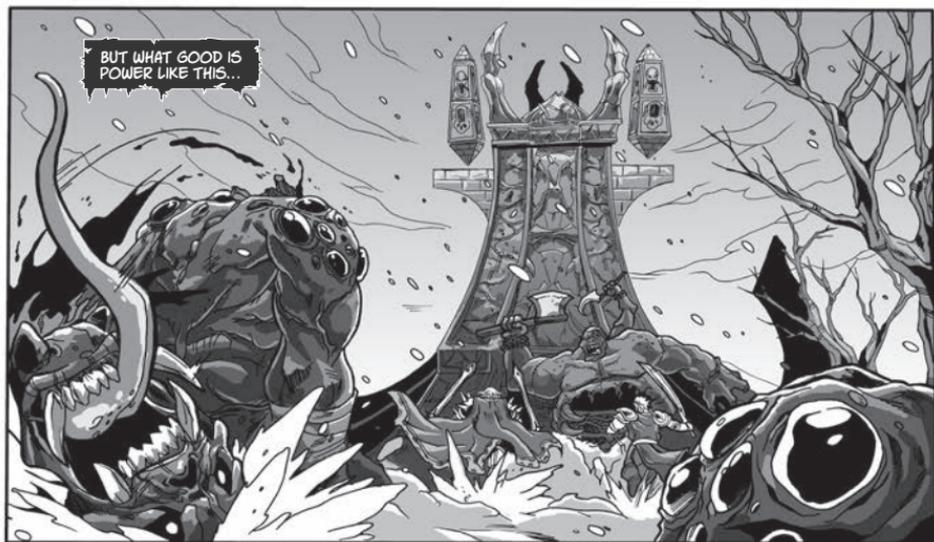




... TO OUR
DEATHS.







BUT WHAT GOOD IS
POWER LIKE THIS...



WHEN IT CAN'T KEEP
MY TROOPS ALIVE?



DAMN YOU...!



DAMN
YOU ALL!



ONLY TWO OF MY MEN SURVIVE. **TWO**. THIS MISSION... AND I... ARE **DISGRACED**.

THE MEN ARE TIRED AND BEATEN.



I THINK THE CART HAS JUST RUN OFF THE TRACKS, LURID.

...EH?



WE WERE SET UP.

THIS MISSION WAS **MEANT** TO FAIL.

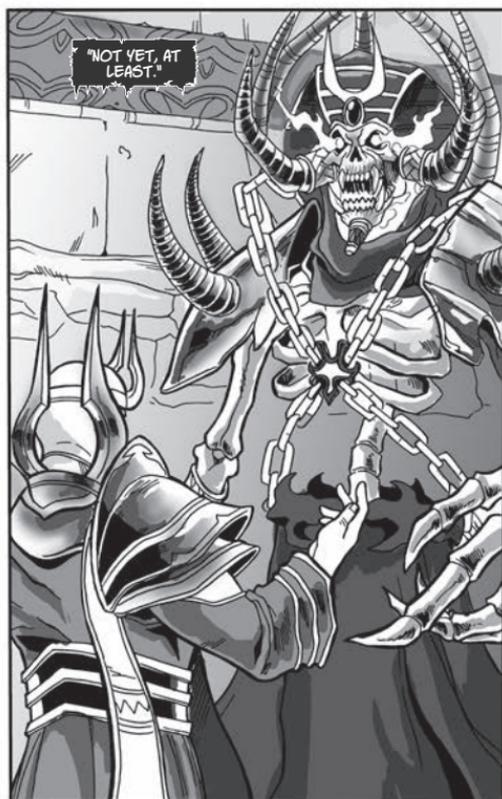


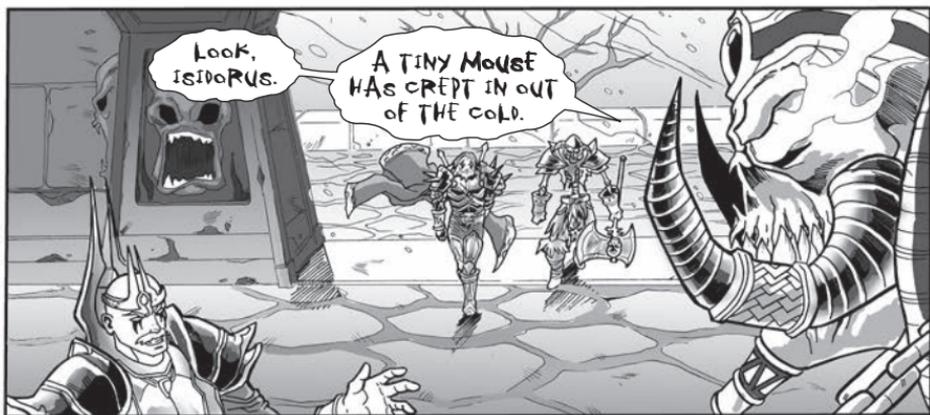
BUT **WHY?** WHY WOULD TALBOT DO THIS?

COMPREHENDING TWISTS AND TURNS LIKE THIS WAS **NEVER** SOMETHING I COULD DO.



I SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN GIVEN THIS COMMAND. I NEVER **DESERVED** IT.





Look, Isidorus.

A TINY MOUSE HAS CREEPT IN OUT OF THE COLD.



ooh. AND A MOUSE WHO BETRAYED ITS MASTER, AT THAT.

ONE TOO STUPID TO RECOGNIZE THE GLORY OF THE LICH KING.



WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH THE MOUSE?

I SAY WE FLAY IT, AND BIND BOOKS WITH ITS SKIN.



MY POWER HAS BEEN GROWING... AND INSIDE ME IT SUDDENLY CRYSTALLIZES.

THE LIES... THE BETRAYAL... THE GUILT OF LOSING THE SOLDIERS I WAS SUPPOSED TO LEAD...



... ALL OF IT COALESCEES INTO AN ICE-COLD, DIAMOND-SHARP BLADE IN WHAT IS LEFT OF MY SOUL.



BE SILENT.

THE LICH MAY BE INVULNERABLE SO LONG AS HIS PHYLACTERY REMAINS UNDISCOVERED...

ZZRRRAKK



... BUT IN MY EXPERIENCE, THEY NEVER HIDE IT VERY FAR AWAY. THIS ONE WAS EASILY FOUND.

WHAT?!
No! No!

YOU SHALL NOT DEFEAT ME!



I AM A LICH OF THE SCOURGE!

NEVER WILL I BOW TO ONE SUCH AS YOU!



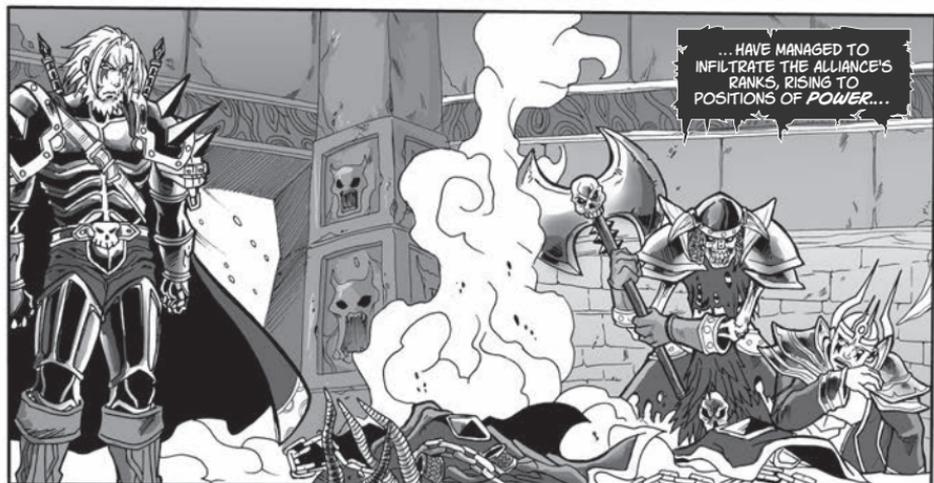
NEVER...N- NEVER WILL I...

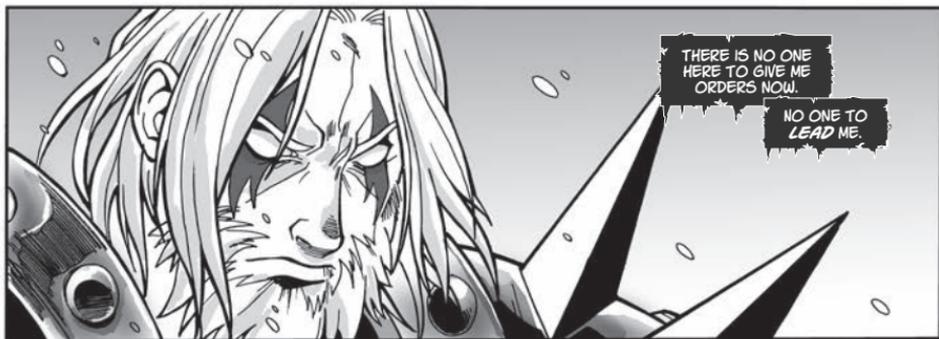
N-NNNo--



CHAPTER 6

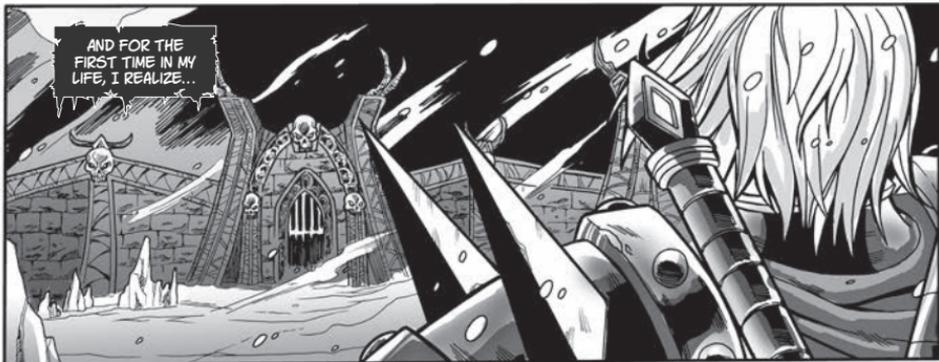




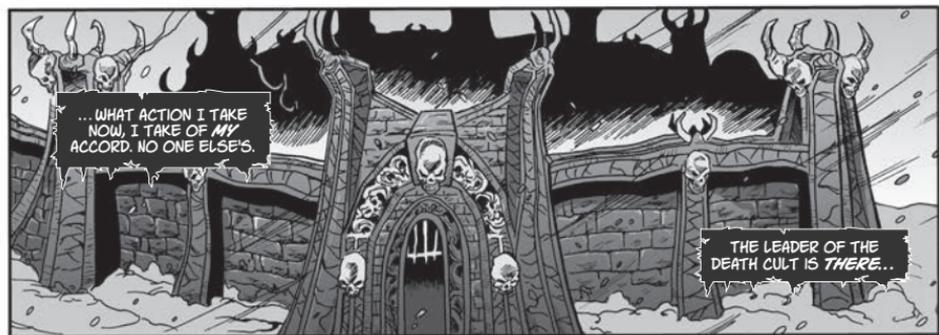


THERE IS NO ONE
HERE TO GIVE ME
ORDERS NOW.

NO ONE TO
LEAD ME.

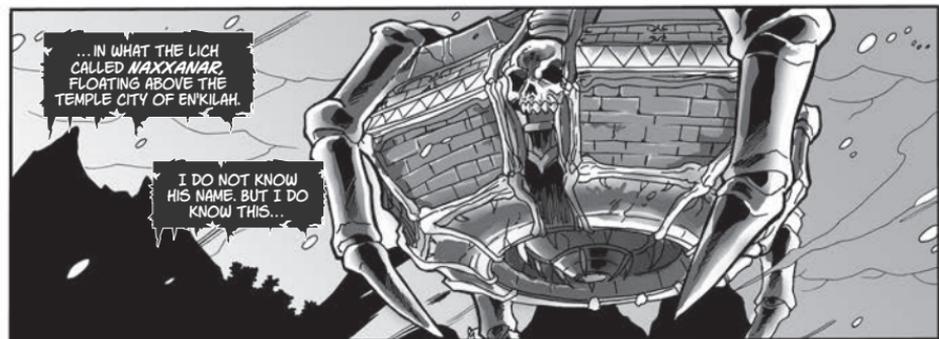


AND FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN MY
LIFE, I REALIZE...



...WHAT ACTION I TAKE
NOW, I TAKE OF *MY*
ACCORD. NO ONE ELSE'S.

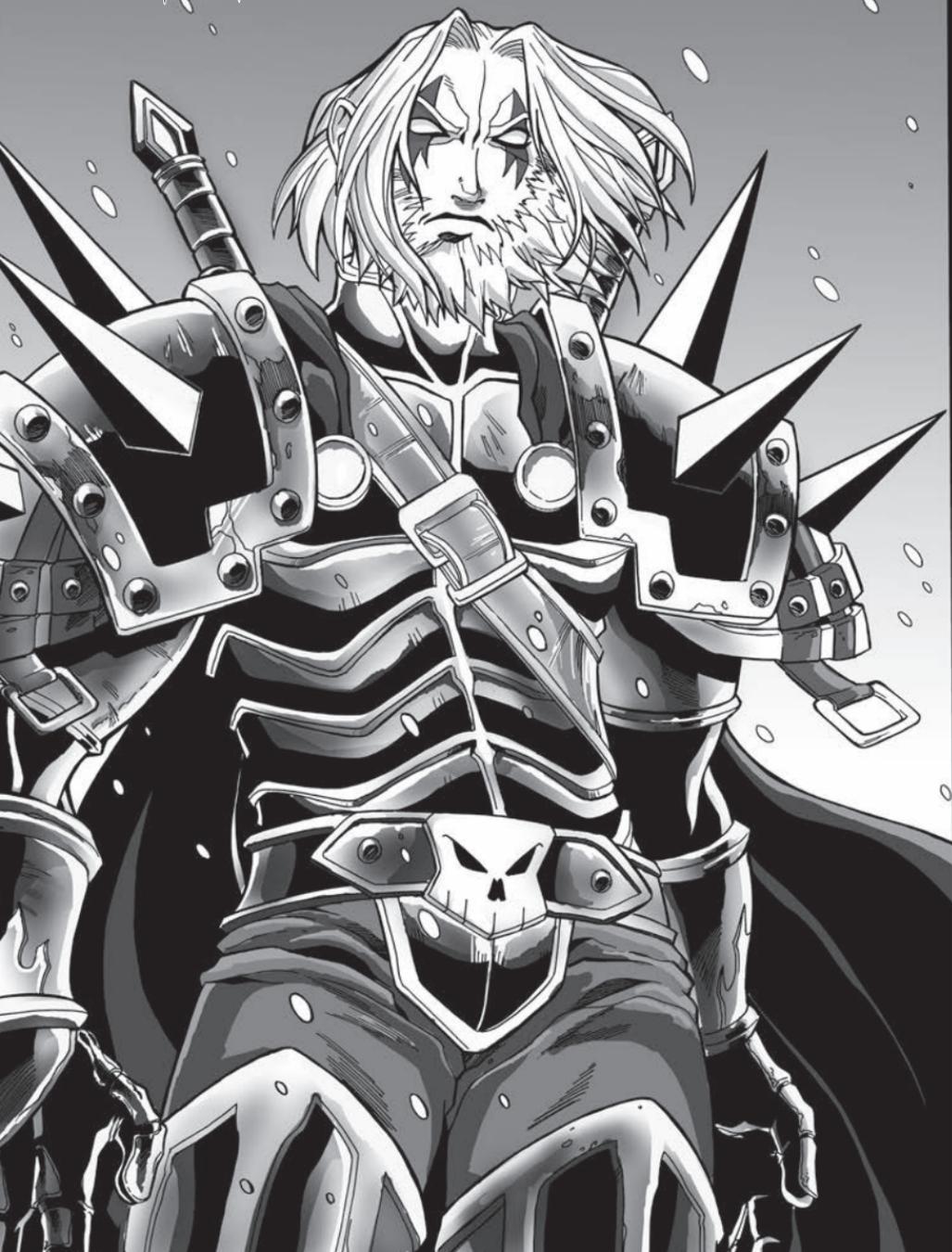
THE LEADER OF THE
DEATH CULT IS *THERE*...



...IN WHAT THE LICH
CALLED *NAXXANAR*,
FLOATING ABOVE THE
TEMPLE CITY OF ENKILAH.

I DO NOT KNOW
HIS NAME. BUT I DO
KNOW THIS...

... THASSARIAN OF
LORDAERON IS
COMING FOR HIM.



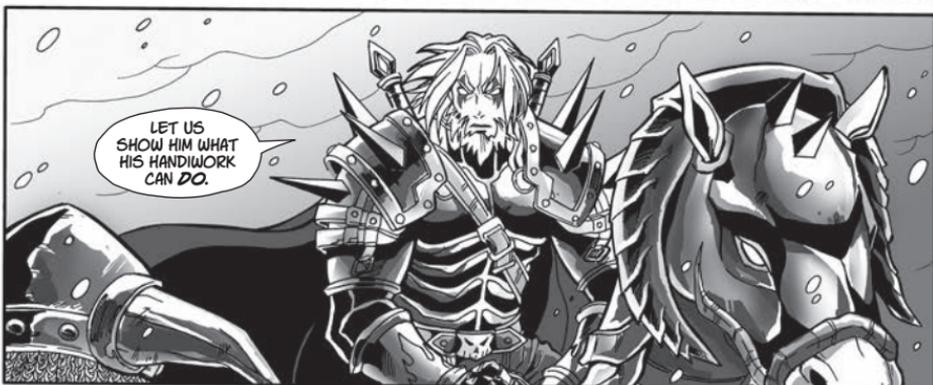


WHAT IS
YOUR WILL,
MASTER?



SIMPLY FOLLOW
ME, LURID.

THE LICH
KING HAS MADE US
WHAT WE ARE.



LET US
SHOW HIM WHAT
HIS HANDIWORK
CAN DO.



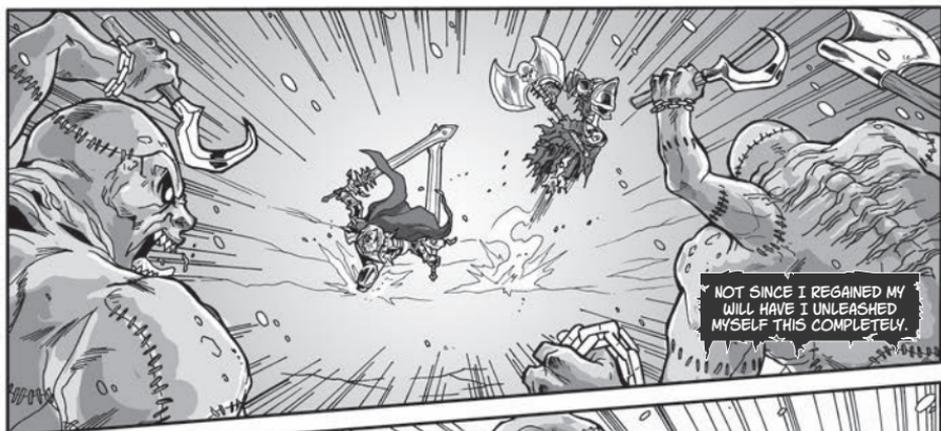


HRGH?



ON THE LEFT.

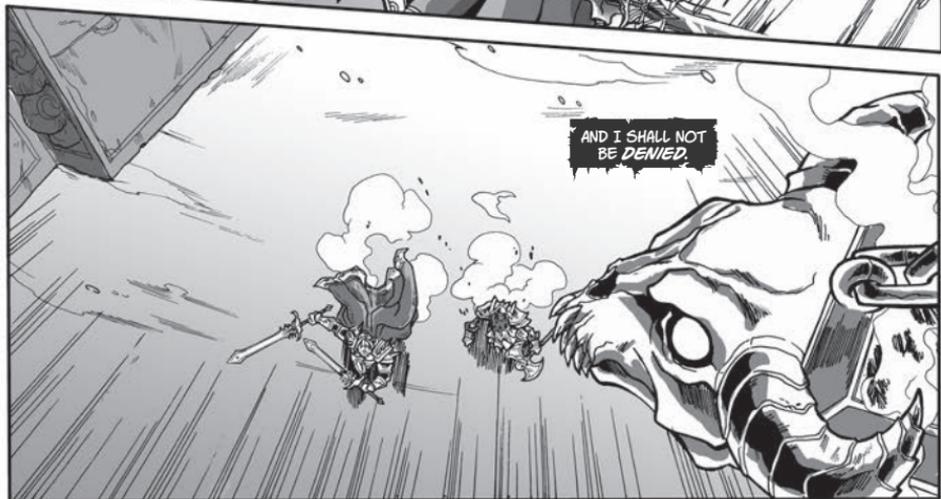
YES, MASTER.



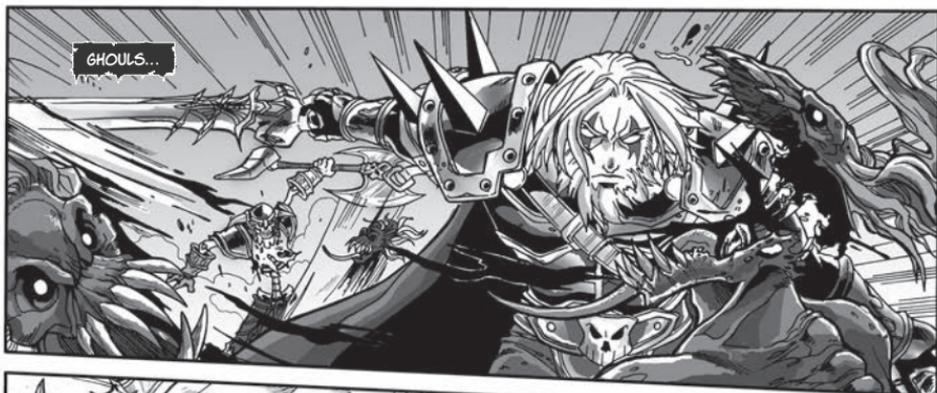
NOT SINCE I REGAINED MY WILL HAVE I UNLEASHED MYSELF THIS COMPLETELY.



I AM A KNIGHT OF DEATH... A TOWER OF DESTRUCTION, WRAPPED IN RUNES AND BLACK STEEL.



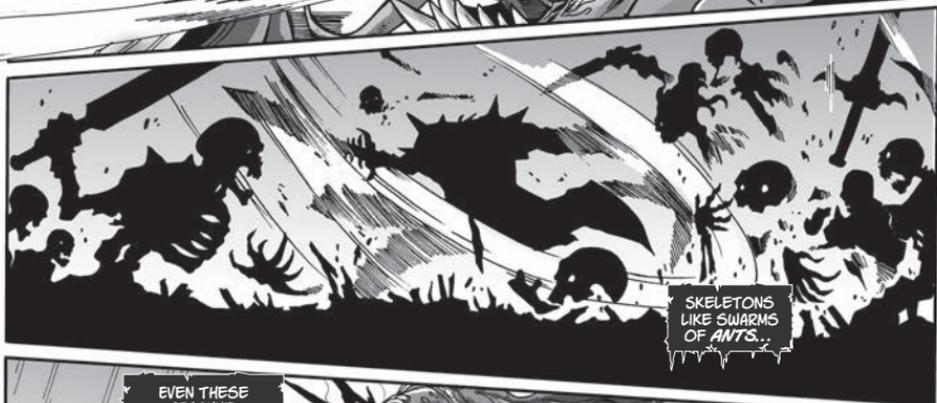
AND I SHALL NOT BE DENIED.



GHOULS...



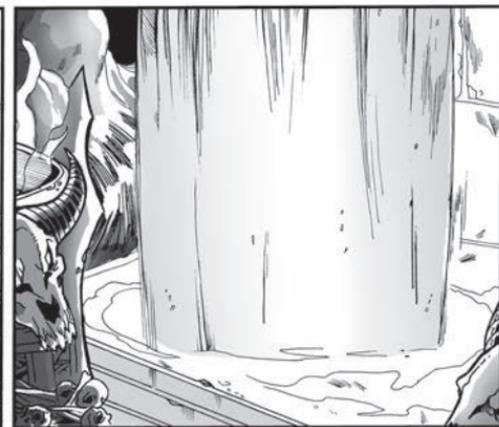
GARGOYLES...

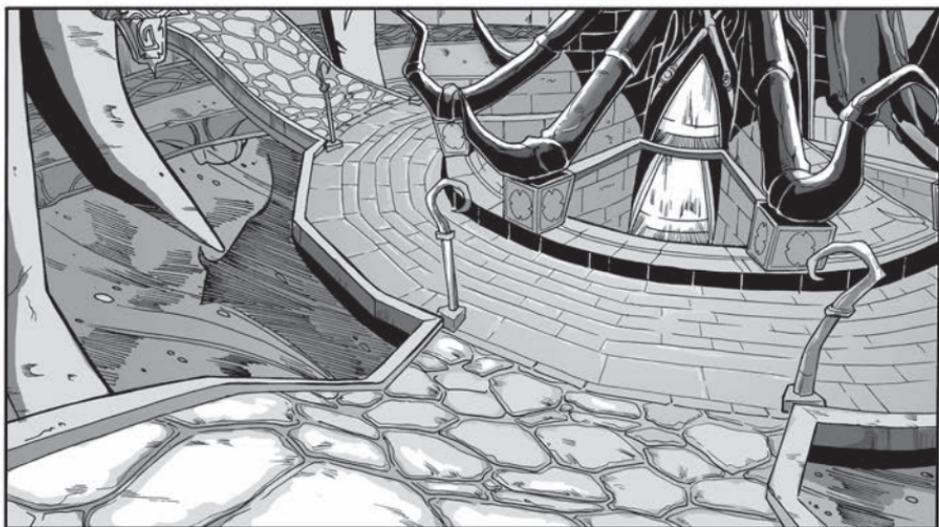


SKELETONS
LIKE SWARMS
OF ANTS...

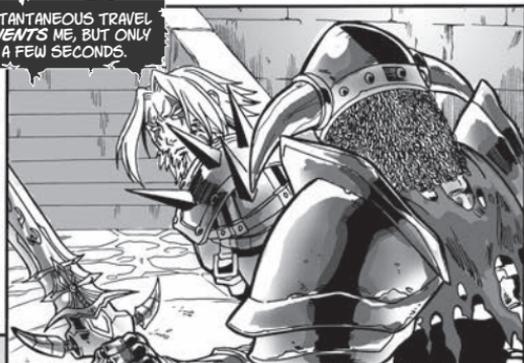
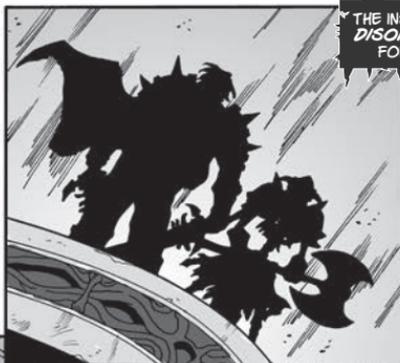


EVEN THESE
ARACHNID
MONSTROSITIES.





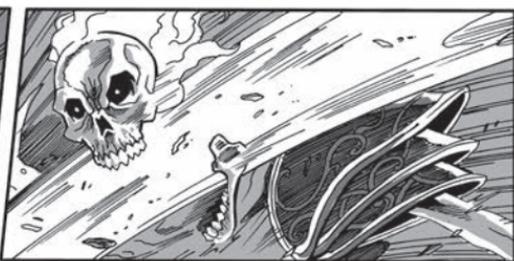
THE INSTANTANEOUS TRAVEL
DISORIENTS ME, BUT ONLY
FOR A FEW SECONDS.

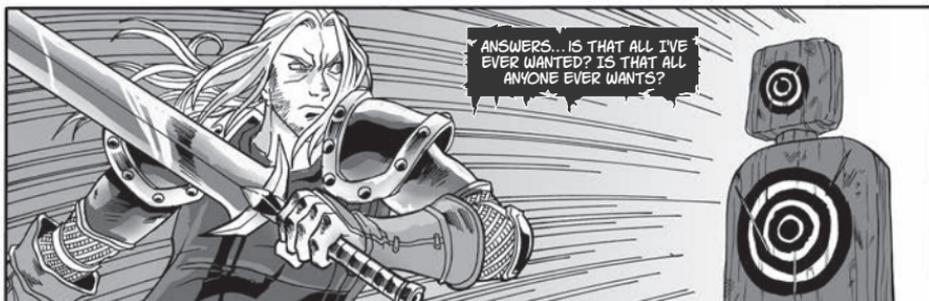
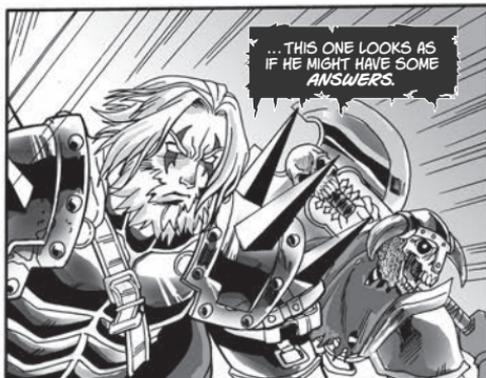


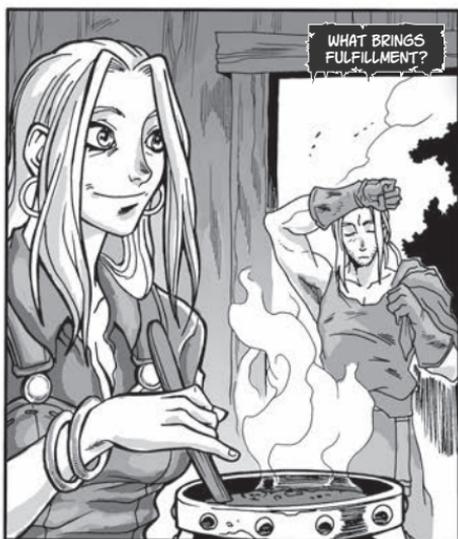
SOMEONE IN THIS PLACE
KNOWS WHERE TO LOOK
FOR THE ONE I SEEK.



I DO NOT THINK IT WILL BE
EITHER OF THESE TWO.







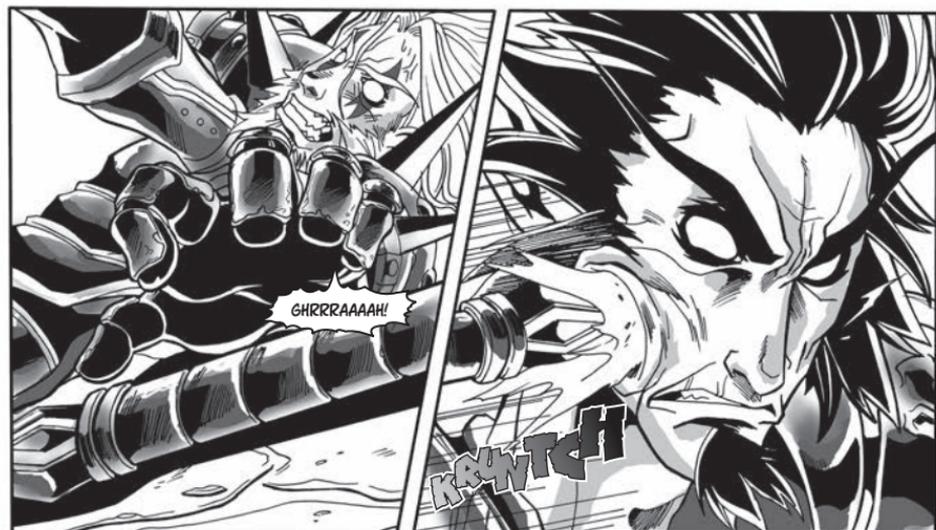
WHAT BRINGS FULFILLMENT?



WHAT MAKES A PERSON *WHOLE*?



...HOW MUCH TRAUMA CAN ANY ONE SOUL WITHSTAND?



GHRRAAAAH!

KRANTCH!



THERE--THAT INVOLUNTARY LITTLE TWITCH. THAT IS ALL I NEED TO KNOW WHERE TO LOOK...



... AND IT IS ALL HE NEEDS, TO KNOW HE'S GIVEN HIMSELF AWAY.



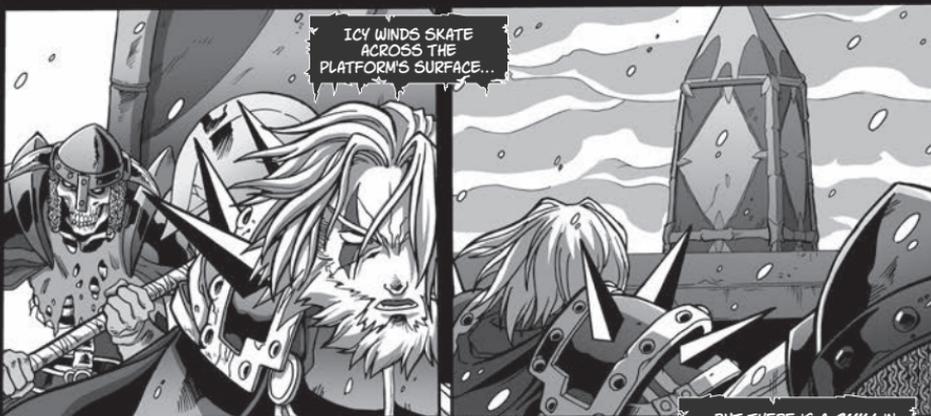
COME, LURID.

I BELIEVE WE ARE GOING UP.

YES, MASTER.



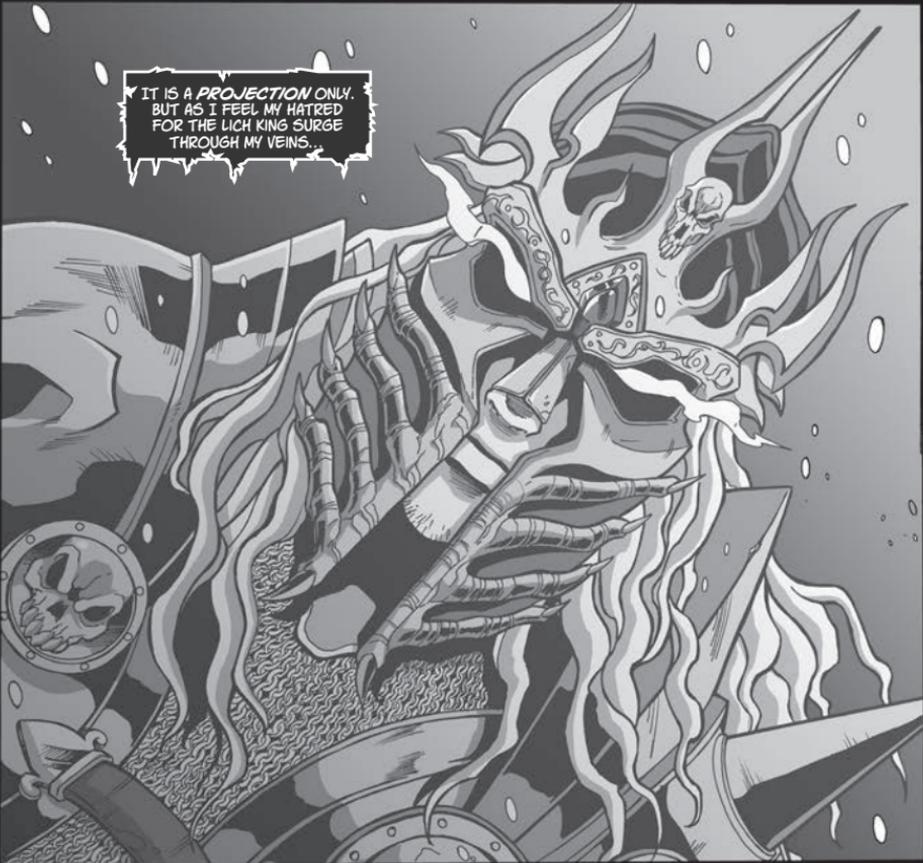
I KNEW WE WOULD BE MOVING VERTICALLY, BUT I DID NOT EXPECT TO MATERIALIZE ON THE CITADEL'S ROOF.



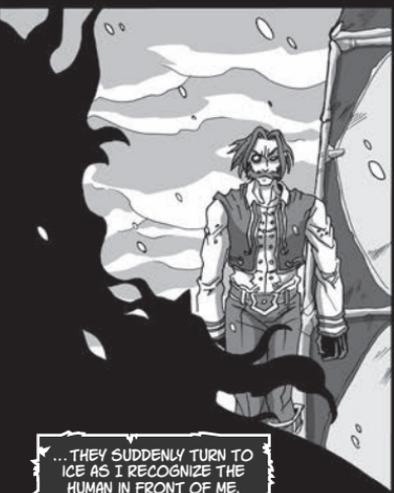
ICY WINDS SKATE ACROSS THE PLATFORM'S SURFACE...

... BUT THERE IS A CHILL IN THE AIR THAT GOES BEYOND MERE TEMPERATURE.





IT IS A *PROJECTION* ONLY.
BUT AS I FEEL MY HATRED
FOR THE LICH KING SURGE
THROUGH MY VEINS...



COUNSELOR
TALBOT.

...THEY SUDDENLY TURN TO
ICE AS I RECOGNIZE THE
HUMAN IN FRONT OF ME.





MY LORD.



THE DEATH CULT'S INFLUENCE IS FAR MORE PROFOUND THAN I HAD REALIZED. THIS IS NO CORRUPT *HUMAN*.



THIS IS A CREATURE OF THE SCOURGE... BENDING THE EARS OF ALLIANCE GENERALS!



YOUR PROGRESS IN THIS REGION HAS BEEN IMPRESSIVE. VALANAR, I AM PLEASED...

THE POWER YOU'VE BESTOWED UPON ME HAS ALLOWED ME GREAT MENTAL INFLUENCE OVER HUMAN MINDS.



I BEAR THESE OFFERINGS AS PROOF OF MY PROGRESS.

AND THEN...



... ANY COMPOSURE OR SUBTLETY I MIGHT HAVE HAD BLOWS AWAY WITH THE CHILL WIND.

LERYSSA!



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY SISTER, ELF? I SHALL RIP YOUR BEATING HEART FROM YOUR CHEST!

Now THIS IS A SURPRISE, THASSARIAN.



I HAVE NOT HEARD FROM MAGRAINE OR THE OTHER DEATH KNIGHTS FOR MONTHS.

YOU HAVE COME TO REJOIN THE SCOURGE, I TAKE IT?

I WOULD SOONER SLIT MY OWN THROAT. YOU HAVE BECOME A MONSTER, ARTHAS.

YOU WILL PAY FOR WHAT YOU DID TO YOUR OWN MEN...FOR WHAT YOU DID TO ME! I SWEAR IT.



ALLOW ME TO TAKE CARE OF THE INTRUDERS, LORD. I WILL FEED THEIR ENTRAILS TO THE MAGGOTS.

DO NOT FAIL ME, SANLAYN. RETURN TO ICECROWN WITH THIS FOOL'S HEAD OR DO NOT BOTHER TO RETURN.

YES, MY LORD!



SO, I FACE A DEATH KNIGHT.

WHETHER YOUR SOUL BELONGS TO ARTHAS OR NOT...



...IT SHALL TASTE JUST AS SWEET.



COMBAT IS NO PLACE FOR PRETTY SPEECHES.



NO? ALL
RIGHT THEN.
YOU MAY DIE
QUIETLY.



HRRHAAHHR



GET OFF ME,
YOU PATHETIC
BONE-SACK!



GET
OFF!



ALL YOUR
PROWESS...ALL
YOUR TRAINING...



...USELESS IF YOU CANNOT HIT YOUR TARGET, YES?



VERY WELL. IF YOU WISH TO STRIKE ME...



... THEN STRIKE ME.



YAAAAH!

CRACK



GAARRRHH...!

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT ENCHANTMENT THIS CREATURE HAS WROUGHT UPON HIMSELF...



... BUT I DO KNOW THAT EVERY BIT OF GOUGING, RIPPING **AGONY** THAT **HE** SHOULD BE FEELING... I FEEL NOW INSTEAD.

THE AGONY IS ENOUGH TO **KILL** ALMOST ANYONE.



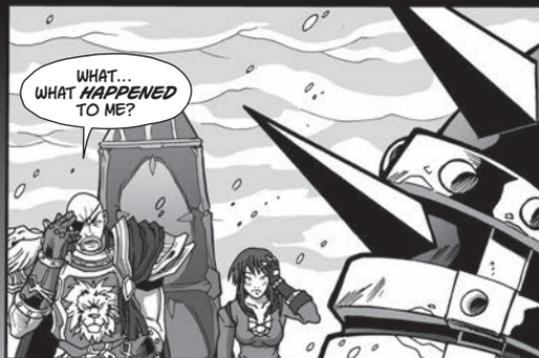
BUT SOMEHOW... IN SOME WAY, I **KNOW**...

... THAT IF I CAN HOLD ON... JUST FOR AN EXTRA **SECOND**...



... I CAN **OUTLAST** HIM.

GULP





YOU ARE...UNHURT?

WHAT? AM I--
YES, YES, I'M FINE,
BUT THASS, LOOK
AT YOU!

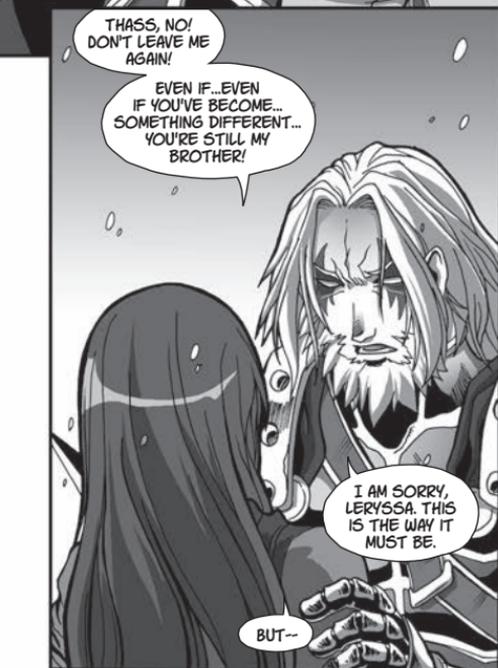


I THOUGHT... I THOUGHT
YOU WERE... *DEAD*. WHAT HAS
HAPPENED TO YOUR SKIN--
YOUR EYES --?

THASSARIAN...OH
NO...OH NO...

I...CANNOT
RETURN HOME WITH
YOU, LERYSSA.
NOT YET.

I ESCAPED THE
SCOURGE'S GRASP ON MY
MIND...BUT MY BUSINESS WITH
THEM IS FAR FROM OVER.

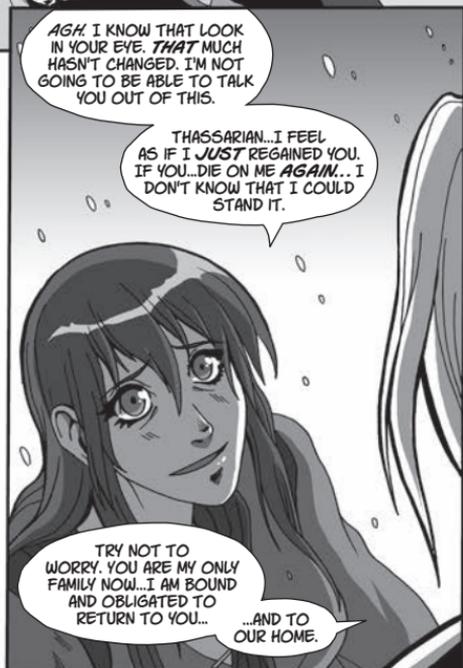


THASS, NO!
DON'T LEAVE ME
AGAIN!

EVEN IF...EVEN
IF YOU'VE BECOME...
SOMETHING DIFFERENT...
YOU'RE STILL MY
BROTHER!

I AM SORRY,
LERYSSA. THIS
IS THE WAY IT
MUST BE.

BUT--

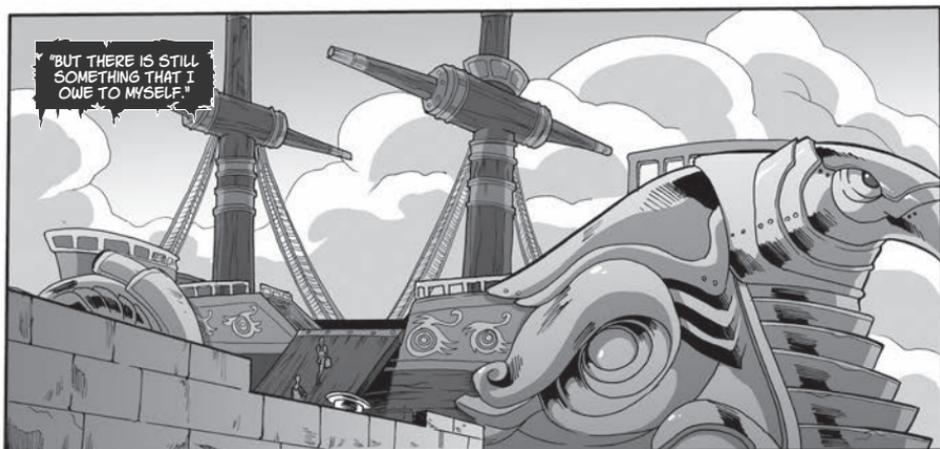


AGH. I KNOW THAT LOOK
IN YOUR EYE. *THAT* MUCH
HASN'T CHANGED. I'M NOT
GOING TO BE ABLE TO TALK
YOU OUT OF THIS.

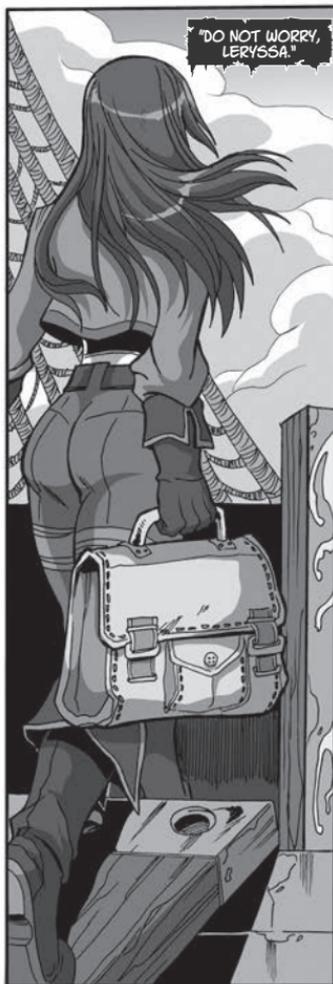
THASSARIAN...I FEEL
AS IF I *JUST* REGAINED YOU.
IF YOU...DIE ON ME *AGAIN*... I
DON'T KNOW THAT I COULD
STAND IT.

TRY NOT TO
WORRY. YOU ARE MY ONLY
FAMILY NOW...I AM BOUND
AND OBLIGATED TO
RETURN TO YOU...

...AND TO
OUR HOME.



"BUT THERE IS STILL SOMETHING THAT I OWE TO MYSELF."



"DO NOT WORRY, LERYSSA."



"I WILL COME BACK TO YOU WHEN I'M DONE."



"I SAID THOSE WORDS TO MY SISTER...AND I WANT TO MEAN THEM. BUT CAN I?"

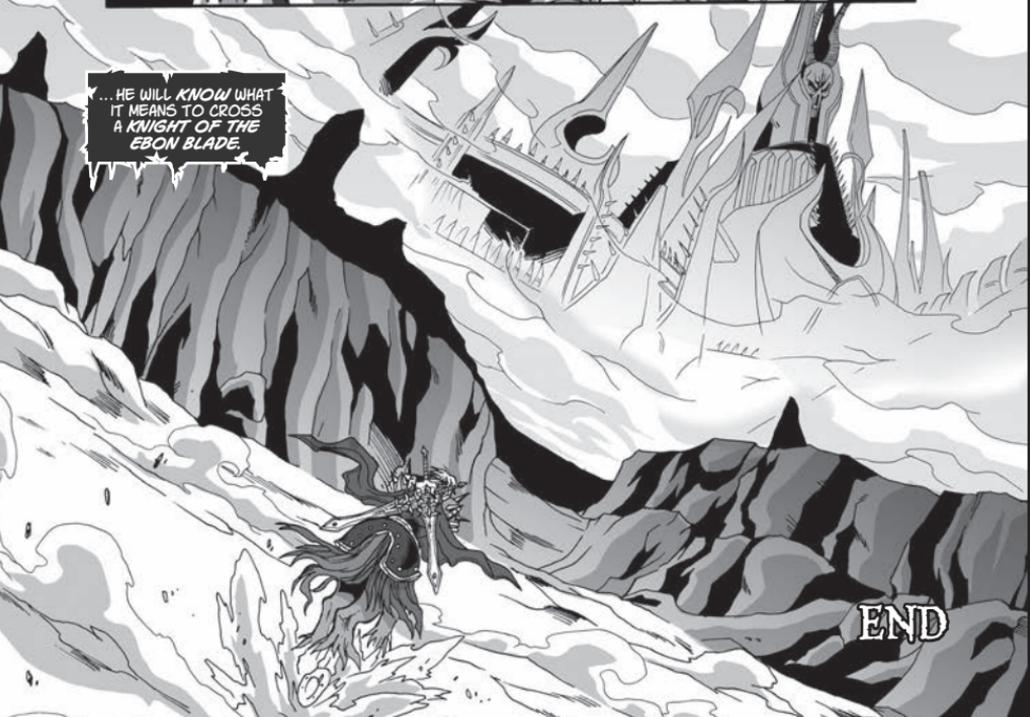
"CAN THERE BE ANY PLACE AMONG THE LIVING FOR ONE SUCH AS MYSELF? I DO NOT KNOW. BUT I PROMISE MYSELF THIS."



EVEN IF I MUST RIDE TO
ICECROWN ITSELF...



... AND FACE DOWN
ARTHAS IN HIS
VIPER DEN...



... HE WILL KNOW WHAT
IT MEANS TO CROSS
A KNIGHT OF THE
EBON BLADE.

END



CREATOR BIO'S

DAN JOLLEY



Dan Jolley has been writing professionally since age 19, and has written novels, video games, and lots and lots of comic books. Dan authored "How to Win Friends," "Miles to Go" and "Crusader's Blood," short stories for *Warcraft: Legends* Volumes 1-3.

ROCIO ZUCCHI

Rocio Zucchi was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, daughter of an Italian mother and an Argentinian father. She began to draw at a very young age. When she was thirteen, she met Fernando Heinz Furukawa (her fiancé) who helped her develop her artistic abilities. Rocio began her career as a collaborator for local books and magazines (such as *Time:5*, written by Mauro Mantella, featuring art by Fernando H.F.).

Rocio contributed art for the *Street Fighter Tribute* and *Darkstalkers Tribute* books from Udon Studios. She also works as a colorist. In addition, she worked on a webcomic series called *Heist* (created by Brendan McGinley with art by Andres Ponce).

Rocio is no stranger to *Warcraft*. She inked the story "Crusaders Blood" from *Warcraft: Legends* vol. 3, and contributed to *Tantric Stripfighter Trina*.

