



TH-THIS IS NOT RIGHT. YOU SHOULDN'T BE COMING DOWN HERE WITH ME.

**E** VERLANDS KINGDOM OF ANANTIA.

THE BOOK OF AZAR IS AMONG THOSE FORBIDDEN TEXTS-- ONLY TO BE ACCESSED UNDER THE MOST DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES.

BUT THESE ARE DIRE TIMES, MY BROTHER.



MRRRPHH!



OUR PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING-- SUFFERING THIS UNBEARABLE CO-EXISTENCE WITH THE RAHTUMI.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE **SETHORII** TO RULE ONCE MORE...

...BY REMEMBERING WHERE OUR TRUE STRENGTH LIES.





LONG AGO, OUR WORLD WAS ONE OF LITTLE PEACE AS THE MAGIC SURGED THROUGH US ALL--

--INCLUDING RAHTUMI AND SETHORU ALIKE.

BUT TENSIONS MOUNTED AS THE POWER OF MAGIC BEGAN TO WANE.

EVENTUALLY, WE ALL LOST AS THE LAST REMNANTS OF MAGIC DIED AWAY-- RETURNING US TO CRAWLING AMONGST THE DIRT FROM WHICH WE CAME.

LIKE HUNGRY BEASTS BATTLING OVER A CARCASS, THE RAHTUMI AND THE SETHORU FOUGHT FOR DOMINANCE-- HOPING TO ENSURE THEIR OWN SURVIVAL.

BUT IT WAS COMING TOGETHER-- FORGING A NEW ALLIANCE-- THAT GAVE US THE HOPE TO CARRY ON. IT WAS PEACE THAT GAVE US OUR CHANCE AT A FUTURE.






AND NOW-- AFTER HIDING AWAY FOR MANY YEARS-- WE ARE ENJOYING THE NEXT GREAT AGE OF MAGIC TOGETHER.

THE SETHORU AND THE RAHTUMI-- UNITED.



WAIT... THAT CANNOT BE...



...HOW DARE SHE COME TO THIS PLACE.



ONYX!





GRACE, MUST YOU ALWAYS INTERFERE? IT WILL BE THE DEATH OF YOU— SOONER THAN YOU MIGHT EXPECT.



YOUR WORDS ARE AS USELESS AS YOUR FEEBLE POWERS.



YOU SHOULD HAVE REMAINED HIDING IN EXILE. WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.



YOU ESCAPED A COWARD LAST TIME. YOU SHALL NOT BE SO LUCKY AGAIN.





**KRASH!**



WHAT IS THIS?  
I STAND CORRECTED. THE COWARD IS NOTHING BUT A THIEF NOW.

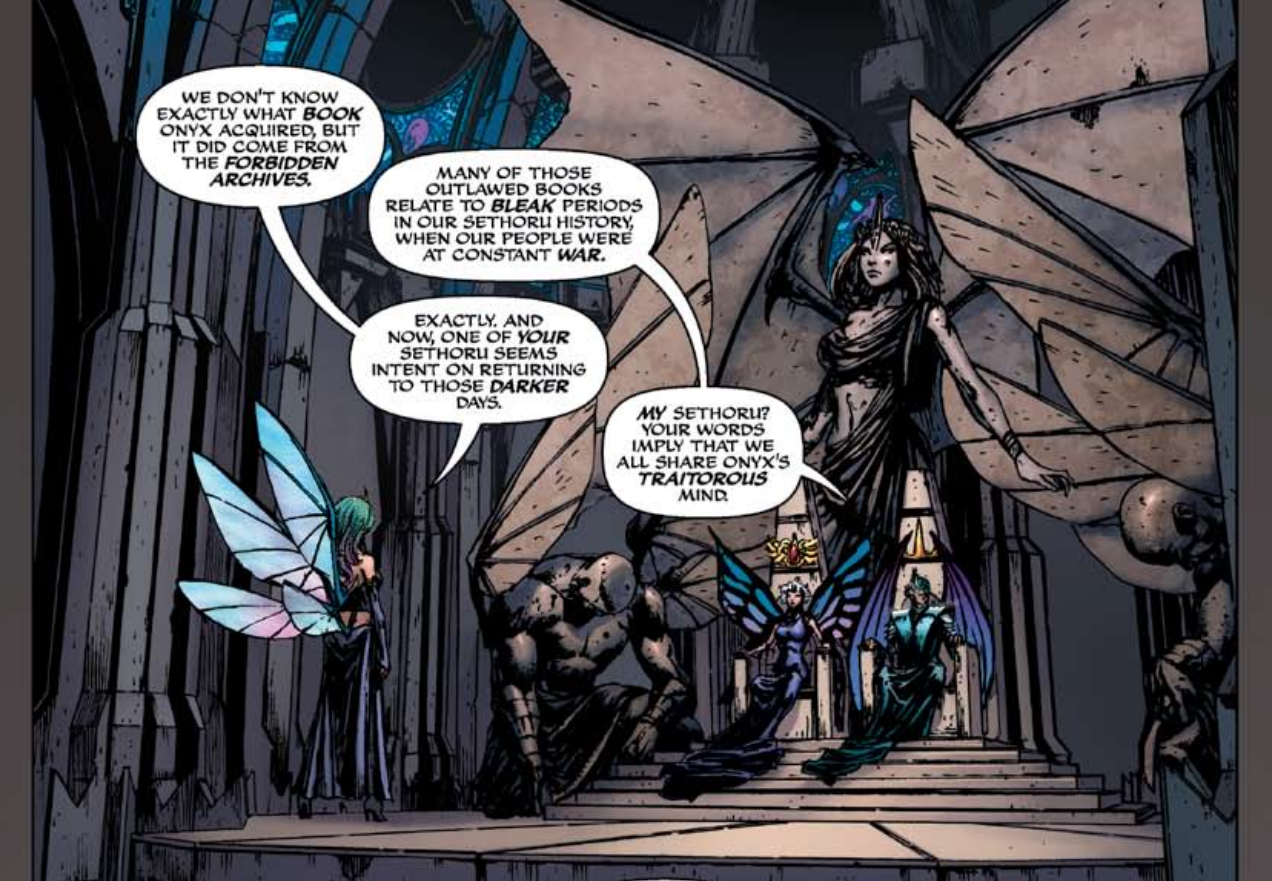


**BITE YOUR TONGUE, RAHTUM...**










WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT *BOOK* ONYX ACQUIRED, BUT IT DID COME FROM THE *FORBIDDEN ARCHIVES*.


MANY OF THOSE OUTLAWED BOOKS RELATE TO *BLEAK* PERIODS IN OUR SETHORU HISTORY, WHEN OUR PEOPLE WERE AT CONSTANT WAR.

EXACTLY. AND NOW, ONE OF *YOUR* SETHORU SEEMS INTENT ON RETURNING TO THOSE *DARKER* DAYS.

MY SETHORU? YOUR WORDS IMPLY THAT WE ALL SHARE ONYX'S *TRAITOROUS* MIND.




I AM SURE GRACE MEANT NO OFFENSE, *ARLIN*. IF OUR LONG-STANDING PEACE HAS TAUGHT US ANYTHING, IT IS THAT BAD SEEDS CAN BE FOUND IN BOTH RACES.



NEITHER THE SETHORU NOR THE RAHTUMI CAN LAY CLAIM TO *NOBILITY* AS A VIRTUE— NOR *WICKEDNESS* AS A VICE.

REGARDLESS OF HER *MOTIVE*, ONYX MUST BE FOUND, *FAYE*.



OF COURSE, GRACE, BUT DO NOT LET THIS SMALL EVENT *DAMPEN* YOUR SPIRITS.

WE ARE STILL ENJOYING THE EARLY THRALLS OF MAGIC'S RETURN. CERTAINLY, THIS IS A TIME FOR ALL TO *REJOICE*.



YES, THESE ARE *BRIGHTER* DAYS. THANKS TO MALIKAI.

BUT WHAT WAS HIS *PRICE*?