



PLEASE.

PLEASE.

WE ARE BUT TRAVELERS IN NEED OF AID.

MERCY!

"MERCY," YOU ASK?

CARRYING THE BLADED PLAGUE IN YOUR ARMS?

"PLAGUE?"



SHE'S NOT ILL. SHE'S CURSED.

BY THE WICKED SORCEROR YOU BEGGED HER TO KILL!



SHE ATTACKED ONE OF YOUR MEN. I KNOW.

IT WAS THE CURSE. SHE CAN'T...SHE CAN'T FORGIVE ANYONE.

SHE NEEDS REST AND A FEVER. OR SHE'LL DIE.



AYE, AND IF SHE LIVES, MORE OF US WILL DIE.

WHAT'S TO STOP HER FROM SLITTING ALL OUR THROATS ONCE SHE'S FIT?

WHAT'S TO STOP HER? WHAT'S TO STOP HER?



LOOK AT
HER HANDS,
FARMER!

HER HANDS
ARE RUIN.

ILL OR
WELL...

"THE DEVIL WILL NEVER
WIELD A SWORD AGAIN!"

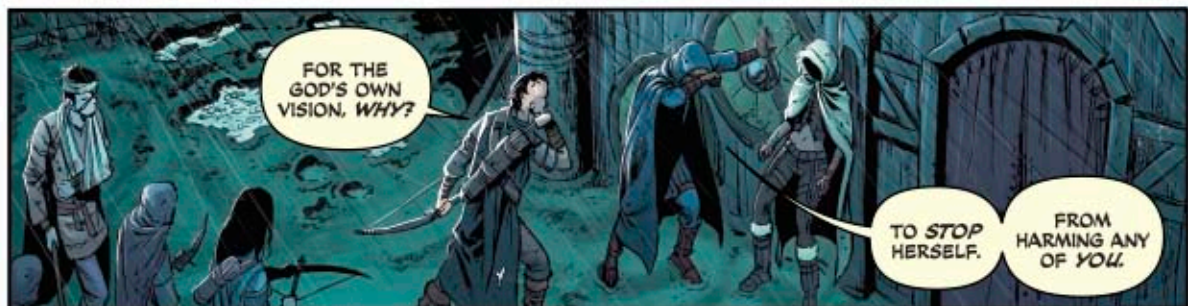


MITRA'S GRAVE.

WHO... WHO COULD DO THIS TO HER?

HERSELF.

SHE DID THIS TO HERSELF.



FOR THE GOD'S OWN VISION, WHY?

TO STOP HERSELF.

FROM HARMING ANY OF YOU.



I'M SORRY, HAVAN, IS IT? I'M SORRY, HAVAN.

BUT SHE NEARLY BEAT THE INN'S OWNER VALAR TO DEATH.

I FORGIVE.



VALAR, YOU DON'T NEED TO DO THIS.

IS IT NOT MY INN, PALLUS?

SHE KILLED THE BEAST THAT SLAYED MY FATHER AND HE DESTROYED HER FOR IT.



I FORGIVE HER.

I never really knew what a beautiful word that was.



What a CRUCIAL and POWERFUL word.



"Forgive."

ALL RIGHT. WE'LL FEED HER, AND GET HER WARM.

YOU MAY STAY WITH HER AS YOU WISH.

BUT THE DOOR WILL REMAIN LOCKED.



THAT IS FINAL.

...

AGREED.

I never thought twice about it.

To be honest, I thought forgiveness signified WEAKNESS, oftentimes.



But what other word can save a family, stay an execution, and end a war?

REST, WITCH PRINCESS.

DREAM OF...WHAT YOU LOVE, I IMAGINE.

A DOZEN LOVELY PLAYMATES AND ALL THE WINE YOU CAN DRINK.

What other word could break my HEART like this?



I must be dying.

That image isn't even remotely tempting right now.

I'LL HAVE MY DAUGHTER ENILA BRING STEW AND WINE.

FOR THE PAIN.

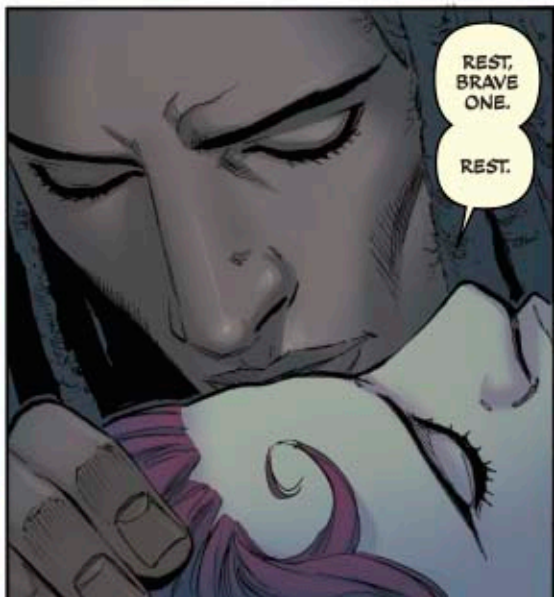


THE HEALER IS THREE HOURS RIDE EACH WAY.

IF SHE LIVES, HE'LL NEVER SAVE THOSE HANDS.

I'VE SENT THE STABLE BOY ON MY FASTEST HORSE.

IT IS ALL WE MAY DO.



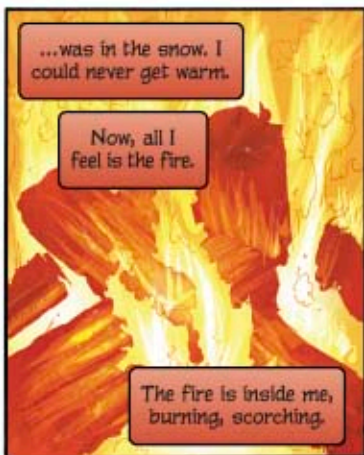
REST, BRAVE ONE.

REST.



I know it's the infection. But I feel this world falling away from me.

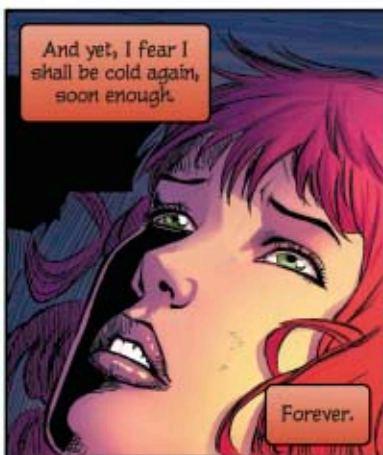
The last time I had fever dreams...



...was in the snow. I could never get warm.

Now, all I feel is the fire.

The fire is inside me, burning, scorching.



And yet, I fear I shall be cold again, soon enough.

Forever.



NOW, PLEASE TELL ME AGAIN SLOWLY, YOUNG MAN.

I AM SIMPLY A FRAIL OLD MAN AND NEED TO BE TOLD THINGS PLAINLY.

WHERE IS THE CRIMSON-TRESSED STRUMPET, MMM?



SHE...SHE KILLED ALL MY BROTHERS, SIR!

LAST I SAW, SHE WAS BAD HURT, AND HEADED BACK T'WARDS THE VILLAGE.

HOW EXTRAORDINARY. VERY WELL, MY LAD.

YOU MAY GO.

I... CAN GO?

YES.

BUT I WOULDN'T TARRY, BOY.

