

NIGHTS DOMINION™

ISSUE 4

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Emerane's sole purpose for joining the others on their fool's quest was to get enough money to buy her brother, Claude, out of debtor's prison. Claude's been there since he was nine years old, because every year the price to buy him out doubles. Though the heist turned out to be a bust, Emerane temporarily joined forces with The Furie and was rewarded handsomely for her efforts—handsomely enough to finally buy her brother back. But Claude is no longer at the debtor's prison, and those who run it can't tell her where he went or why he left.

Meanwhile, Umber's parliament has come under attack from none other than the cult of Uhlume itself!

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THE WINTER STRUCK THEM LIKE A PIST AHEAD OF AUTUMN'S HARVEST...

LIKE IRON WAS THE FROZEN GROUND, BENEATH THE HOWLING DARKNESS.



ALONE INTO THE MIGHTY GALE, ACROSS THE ICEBOUND FIELD...

HE PLUNGED HIS PISTS INTO THE EARTH TO FETCH THE SUMMER'S YIELD.



WELCOME, BROTHER. ARE YOU HUNGRY? THERE'S PLENTY.



NO CROWN WORE HE UPON HIS HEAD, NOR RULE HIS FELLOW MEN.

INTO DARKNESS DID HE FADE, AND WE'LL NEER KNOW HIS LIKE AGAIN.



WHAT BECAME OF THEM, DO YOU SUPPOSE?

THE HEROES OF OLD?



EVEN GODS DON'T LIVE FOREVER. ONLY SO LONG AS THE SONGS REMEMBER EM.

BUT I RECKON SOME HEROES ARE MERELY ASLEEP...



...WAITING TILL THE WORLD NEEDS EM AGAIN.

WHEN WILL THAT BE, I WONDER...



WHEN THE FIRE IS AT THE DOORSTEP, OF COURSE.

I THOUGHT SO ONCE, LONG AGO.



I GREW WEARY OF FIGHTING. I LAID DOWN MY ARMS, TOOK A WIFE, RAISED A FAMILY.



ONE DAY, AS I WAS OUT HARVESTING, DEATH'S DISCIPLES CAME THROUGH OUR VILLAGE.

I'D HEARD RUMOR OF THEM, BUT I LEFT THEM FOR OTHERS TO DEAL WITH.



I'D FOUGHT MY BATTLES.



I RETURNED HOME TO FIND OUR STORES PLUNDERED, MY CHILDREN KIDNAPPED, MY VILLAGE REDUCED TO SCORCHED EARTH.

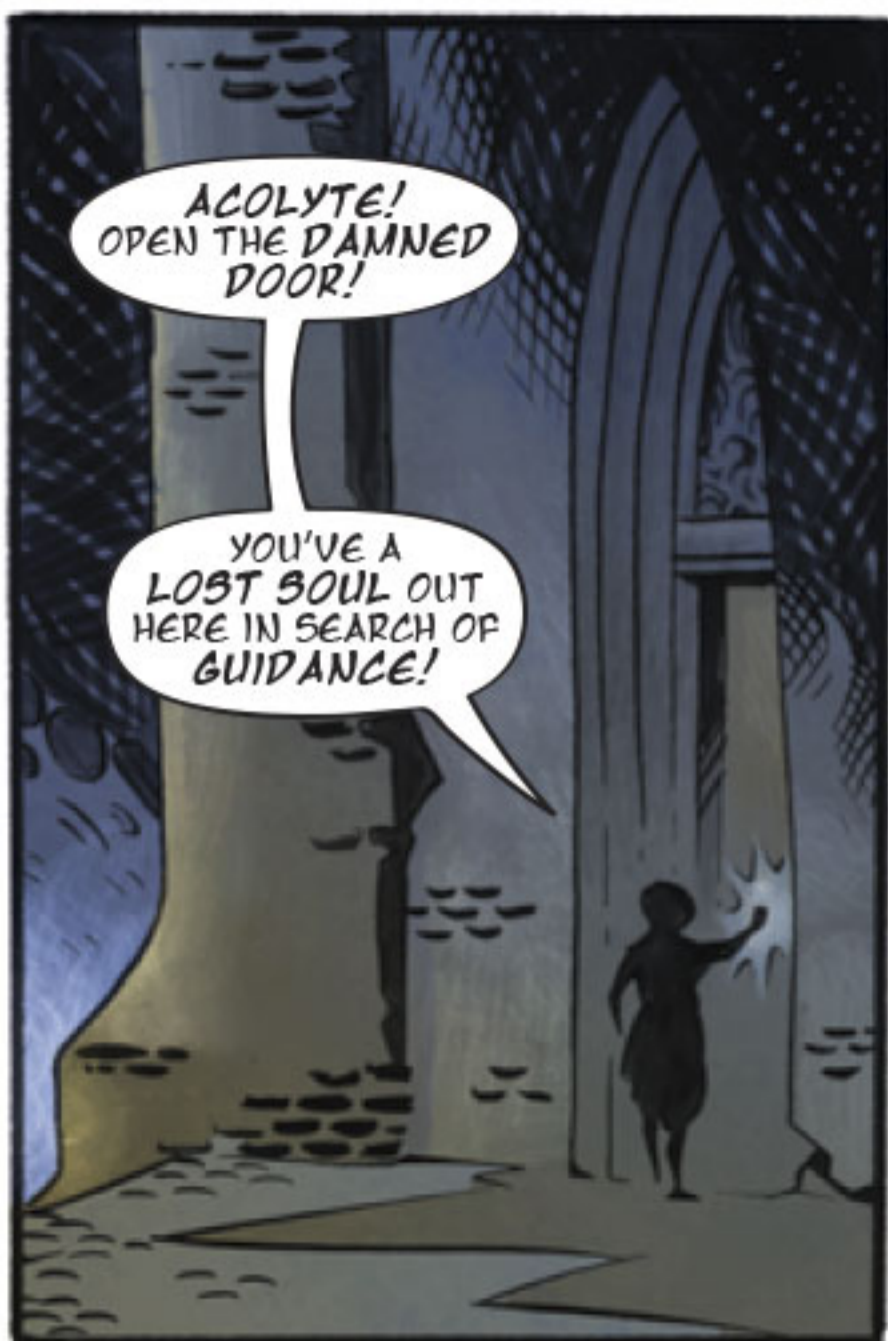


WHEN THE FIRE REACHES YOUR DOORSTEP, IT'S TOO LATE.



THEN YOU AND I MUST RETURN TO THE CITY, BROTHER.

FOR THE FIRE SPREADS.





IT HAS EVER BEEN SO.

THE SORRIEST THING IS YOU'RE THE ONLY FRIEND I'VE GOT.



AND I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME.

CORENTINE.



I'M WIKAN. THANK YOU, CORENTINE. REALLY.

I MUST GET PERMISSION FROM MY PREFECT, BUT TRUTH TO TELL, WE HAVE PLENTY OF ROOM. IF YOU DON'T MIND MICE.



WE USED TO CUT OFF FINGERS, BUT YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MANY RECKON THEY CAN LIVE WITHOUT A FINGER OR TWO.



BUT EVERY TIME YOUR LAD LOOKS AT YOUR NOSELESS FACE, HE'LL REMEMBER THE COST OF FAILING MY FAMILY.

STOP!







BRAVE LITTLE MAN.
YOU THINK YOUR GODS
WILL AID YOU?

THEY CAN'T
EVEN PUT A
ROOF OVER
YOUR HEAD.

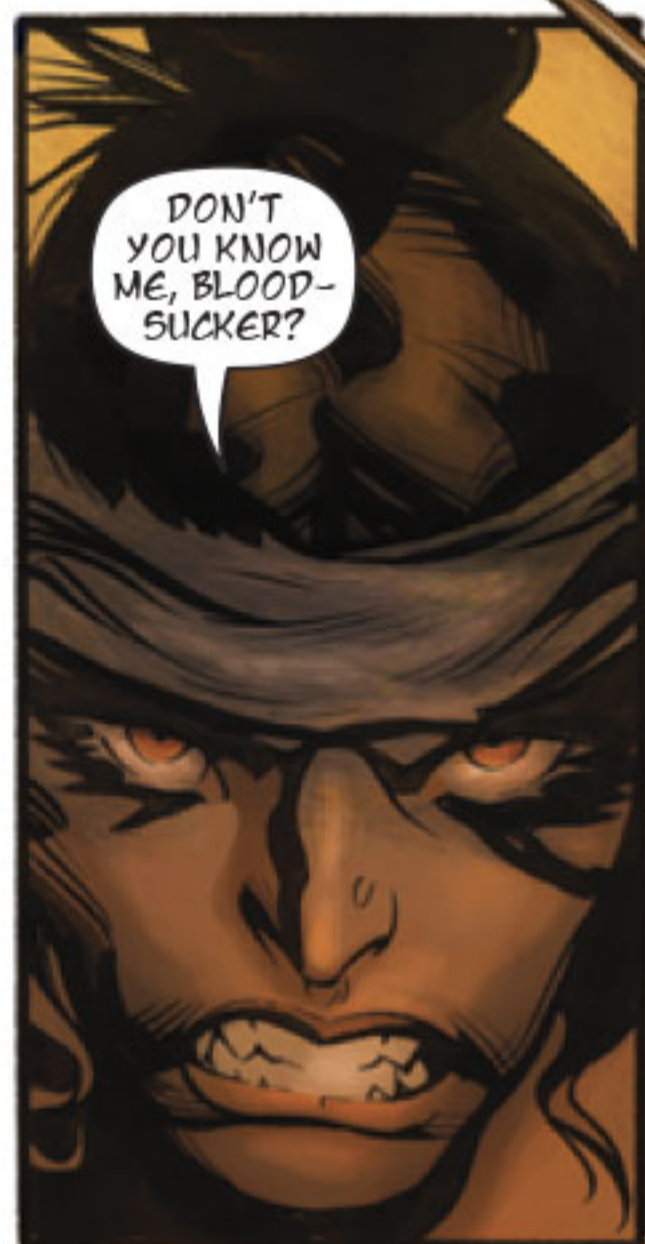


IT'LL
TAKE MORE
THAN PRAYERS
TO DEFEAT TWO
BLACKSHEARE
MEN.



I COUNT
ONE!

WHO IN
SEVEN HELLS
ARE YOU?



DON'T
YOU KNOW
ME, BLOOD-
SUCKER?



I'M THE
TEMPEST OF
PAIN!



THE BLACK-SHEARES--

EMERANE KILLED THEM! SHE...SHE SAVED US BOTH.

NO...JUST YOU. MAKE YOURSELF... USEFUL...

...FOR ONCE.



PLEASE, OYA! DON'T DESERT US.

PUT YOUR TOY GODS AWAY... AND FETCH ME... WATER.



THERE'S NO ONE LISTENING, IS THERE? NOT REALLY.



I THOUGHT IF I JUST BELIEVED HARD ENOUGH, BUT...

≡COUGH≡
≡GULP≡



...IF WE'RE TRULY ALONE, WHAT DOES OUR SUFFERING MATTER? WHO WEEPS FOR US?