

I DID NOT KNOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED —

— TO ENNA, REG, KEY, LADY GHARTA, THE SURVIVING FOLK OF KENEIL.

I JUST KNEW THEY'D BEEN RESCUED. AND THAT WAS ALL THAT MATTERED —

Anyone wounded or ill, bring them to the medical plaza!  
We'll bring around hot soup and watered wine in short order!

...and punitive measures against all the bison tribes will be brought up in the Great Council soon...

Why didn't you come sooner?

What, you hadn't heard? No, of course you wouldn't have...

You! HAH! You belong in jail — and I'll see you sentenced!

Sandorst is the hero here! Sandorst, Third Councillor of —

Sandorst, lack-witted, spell-mangling fool!

You dare?

Dare? I haven't even begun to —

# The Time Betwe



by ERGERET OBRIA

**P**ease reigned on the broad decks of the rescue hall Sarabarr the Merciful.

The long ordeal was over. The Great Champion and the wizards of Keneil had staved off the ravening bison hordes, holding them at bay until deliverance could arrive.

Now they could finally rest, wizards and commoners alike. Could tend their wounds and discomforts and think back on all they had lost. Friends. Family. Treasures and possessions that had taken lifetimes to amass. And for too many, all sense of safety.

A city had fallen. The smallest and most rustic of the Seventeen Cities Above the Plain, but a city nonetheless. Thousands had died, in

# en Raindrops



ILLUSTRATED BY ZESTARK KO

the crash or in the siege that followed.

They'd sought to work a miracle, these wizards, when they cast a spell so intricate, vast and all-consuming that it drained Keneil's levitation spells, sent it plummeting to Earth. They'd sought to reach through time itself, to bring back the Great Champion, with hopes of reversing the long decline of magic throughout the Autumnlands.

And they'd succeeded. They'd retrieved the Champion, though if he could restore magic, none could say.

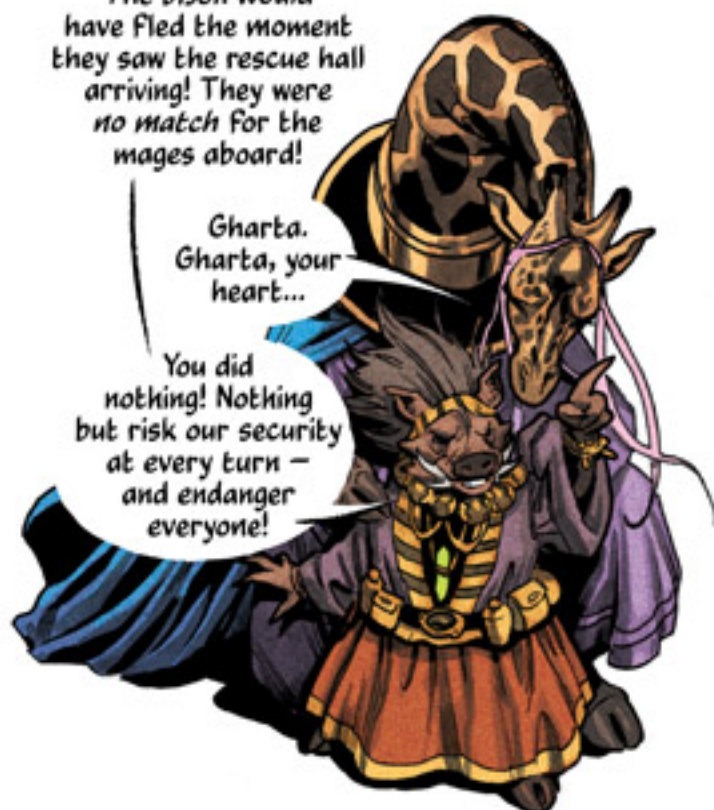
But he'd saved them, at least. And at long last, they knew, their world would be calm and uneventful once more.

Or so they believed...

...ridiculous!  
The bison would  
have fled the moment  
they saw the rescue hall  
arriving! They were  
no match for the  
mages aboard!

Gharta.  
Gharta, your  
heart...

You did  
nothing! Nothing  
but risk our security  
at every turn —  
and endanger  
everyone!



Pff. I'd always heard  
warthogs were a foolish and  
unintelligent race, but I didn't  
know it was *this* glaring.

Endanger? If not for  
my heroic actions — in the face of  
great peril and the barest trickles  
of magic, I might add —



I warn you, "barn owl,"  
there is no lack of  
magic here.

If  
you want to test  
your soft city skills  
against mine...

Guards!  
Guards!

Mad-  
creature!



Father, Lady  
Gharta! Don't —  
please don't  
fight!

Dusty's  
still down  
below! We  
have to turn  
back! There's  
still a chance  
to —



**SILENCE,**  
all of you!

...s-save...?






L-lord Tallon!


You will give me your full accounts of all that transpired on the ground — and prior to the Fall. We will discuss it —

— including the disobedience of all the involved wizards. But that will be later.




For now, we have other concerns. You will come with me, Lady Gharta. There are urgent matters before us.

Her?! B-but she — she's the ringleader! Along with the coyote! They should both be —



You may come too, Councillor Sandorst. This concerns Telm as well.


Wh-what —



I am told you may have actually conjured the Great Champion, Seeker. If so, we require his aid as well.

Where is he?

Pfah! There's no way he's the real —



The Champion is... no longer among us, Lord Tallon.

And I fear...