

FROM THE LEAD WRITER OF BIOWARE'S HIT DRAGON AGE GAMES

DRAGON AGE™



THE SILENT GROVE

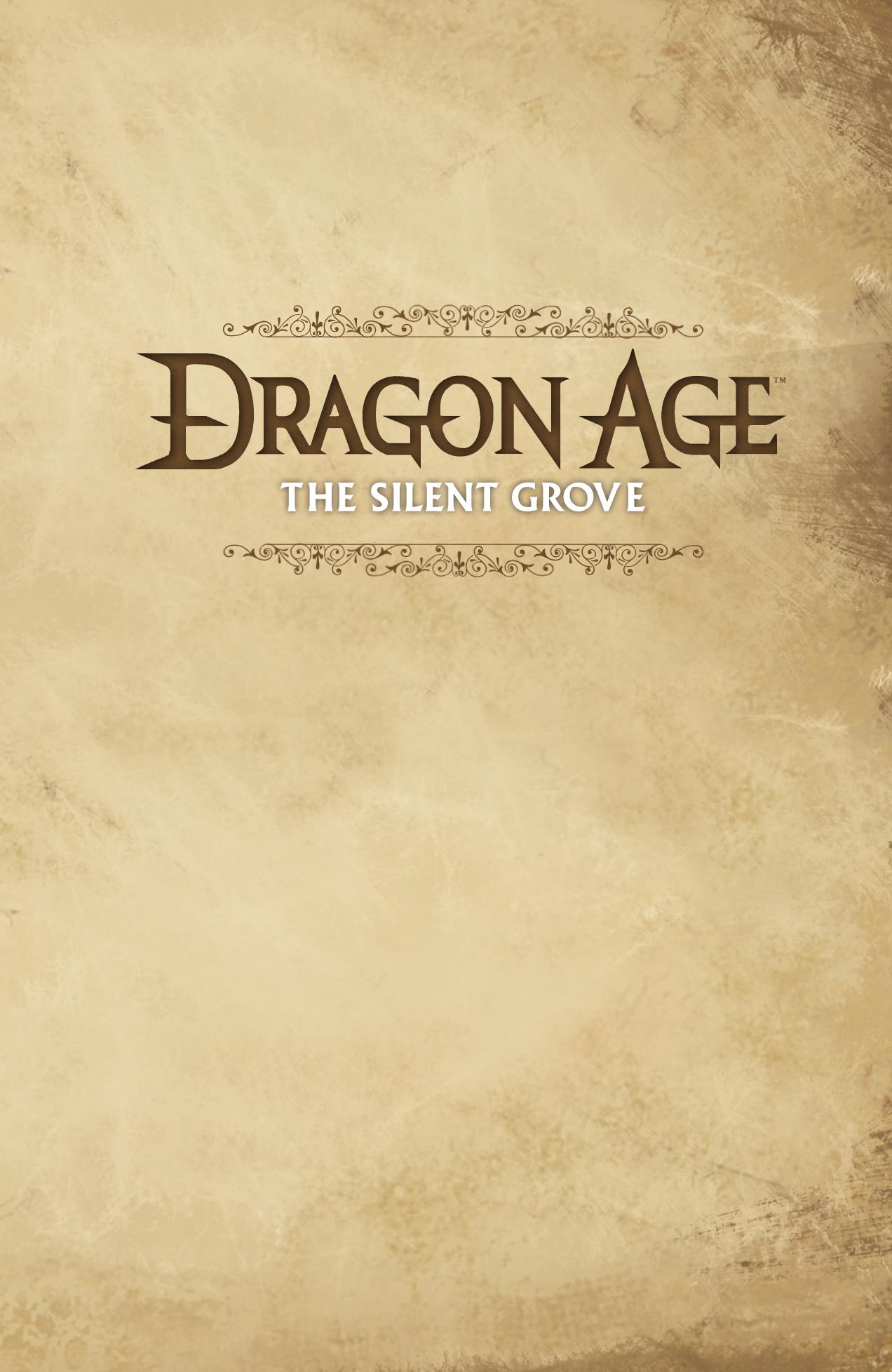
DAVID GAIDER



ALEXANDER FREED



CHAD HARDIN



A decorative horizontal scroll with floral and geometric patterns, rendered in a dark brown ink, serves as a frame for the title text. The scroll is positioned above the main title and below the subtitle.

DRAGON AGETM

THE SILENT GROVE





DRAGON AGE™

THE SILENT GROVE



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DRAGON AGE VOLUME 1: THE SILENT GROVE

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This volume collects issues one through six of the Dark Horse digital comic-book miniseries *Dragon Age: The Silent Grove*.

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Almost a decade ago, the terror of the Fifth Blight swept the nation of Ferelden. Civil war soon followed, as King Cailan died in battle against the monstrous darkspawn, and a usurper took his place.

Only the actions of a few heroes—King Cailan’s brother Alistair among them—prevented utter devastation. Since then, the new King Alistair has ruled with a steady hand and seen to his homeland’s reconstruction.

But Ferelden is not the world, and its troubles thread through distant lands. Today, a ship arrives in a northern port, and its passengers would unearth a secret that could change everything . . .



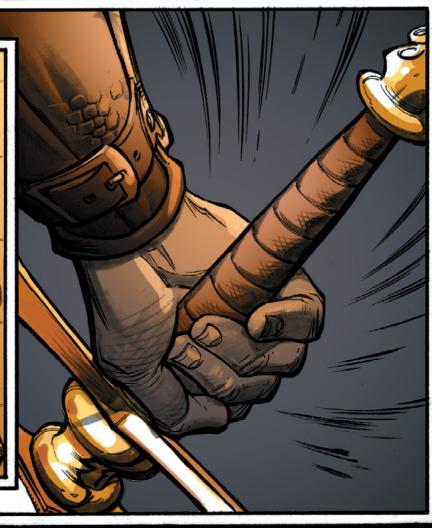




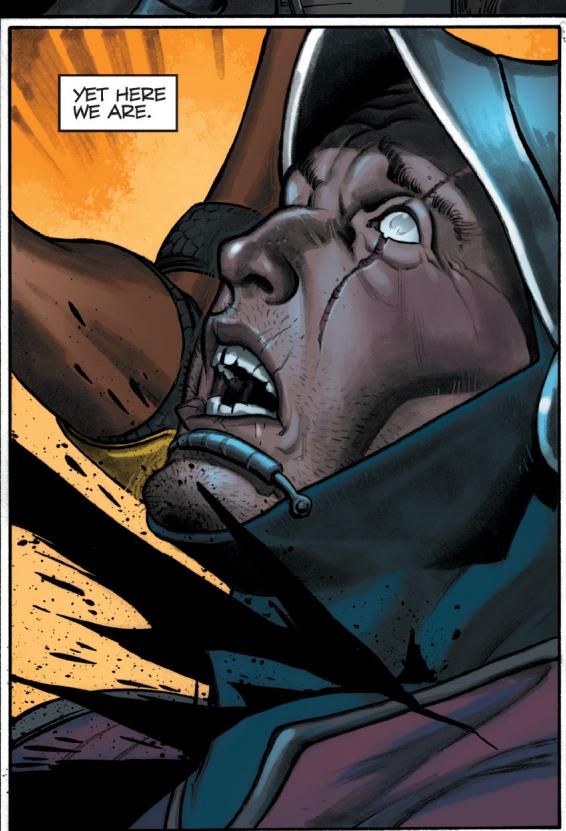
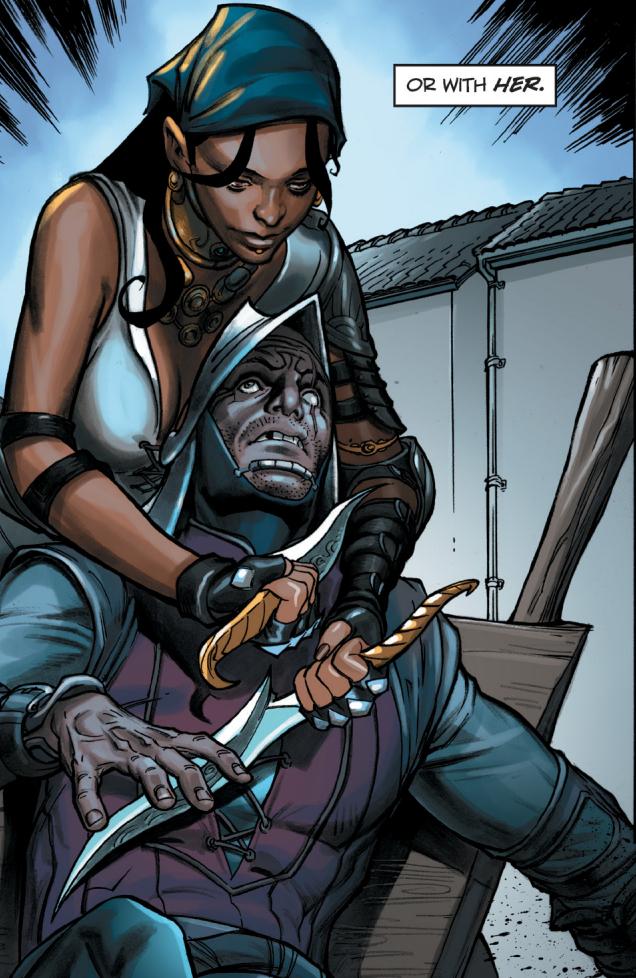
MY NAME IS
ALISTAIR THEIRIN,
AND I'M KING OF
FERELDEN.

SON
OF MARIC THE
SAVIOR?

YOU'RE...
REALLY NOT
CONVINCED,
ARE YOU?







SHE CALLS HERSELF ISABELA. PIRATE, THIEF, SHARPEST BLADE IN RIVAIN, AND AN OLD... ACQUAINTANCE, OF SORTS.

SHE KNOWS ANTIVA -- AT LEAST THE PARTS I NEED TO VISIT.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO KILL HIM.

YOU KILLED HIM -- THE MOMENT YOU GAVE HIM YOUR NAME.

WHO DOES THAT?

CUT HIM SOME SLACK, RIVAINI.

MOST KINGS CAN'T SPEAK A WORD WITHOUT A SCRIPT FROM THEIR ADVISORS.

THE DWARF IS VARRIC TETHRAS -- A MERCHANT WHO ACTS LIKE A BARKEEP OR A SPYMASTER, DEPENDING ON THE HOUR.

ISABELA'S TRAVELING COMPANION...AND NOW MINE, APPARENTLY.

FINE, FINE.

LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH --

YOU THINK THAT WAS HIS COMMANDING VOICE?

-- BEFORE THE CROWS FIND US RAIDING THEIR ARCHIVE, PLEASE?

I'M SURE IT WORKS IF YOU'RE FROM FERELDEN.

AS FOR ME? I'M A KING WHO SHOULDN'T BE.

AND I'VE MISSED WALKING INTO DEATH WITH THE WRONG PEOPLE AT MY SIDE.

HAVE YOU EVER DEALT WITH THE CROWS BEFORE, OH KING?

SORT OF.

THEN YOU UNDERSTAND THEY'RE NOT MERELY ASSASSINS --

(VERY TALENTED ASSASSINS, MIND YOU.)

-- BUT THE INSIDIOUS LITTLE VOICE IN EVERY ANTIVAN NOBLEMAN'S EAR?

THAT'S THE RUMOR.

AND WHEN YOUR SOURCE TOLD YOU THAT THEIR CONTRACTS, THEIR BLACKMAIL FILES, THEIR SECRET HISTORIES, AND THEIR RECIPES WERE ALL HERE --

-- YOUR FIRST THOUGHT WAS, "I SHOULD KICK IN THE FRONT DOOR"?



IS THAT A CRITICISM?

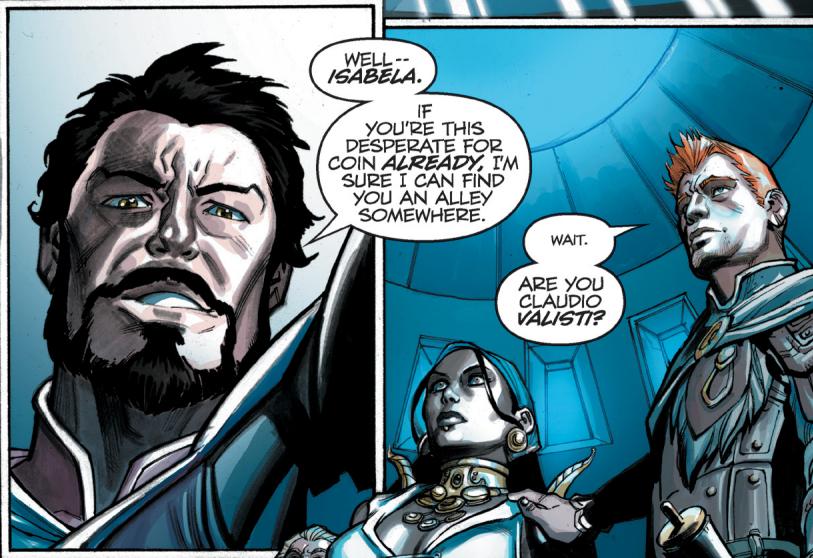
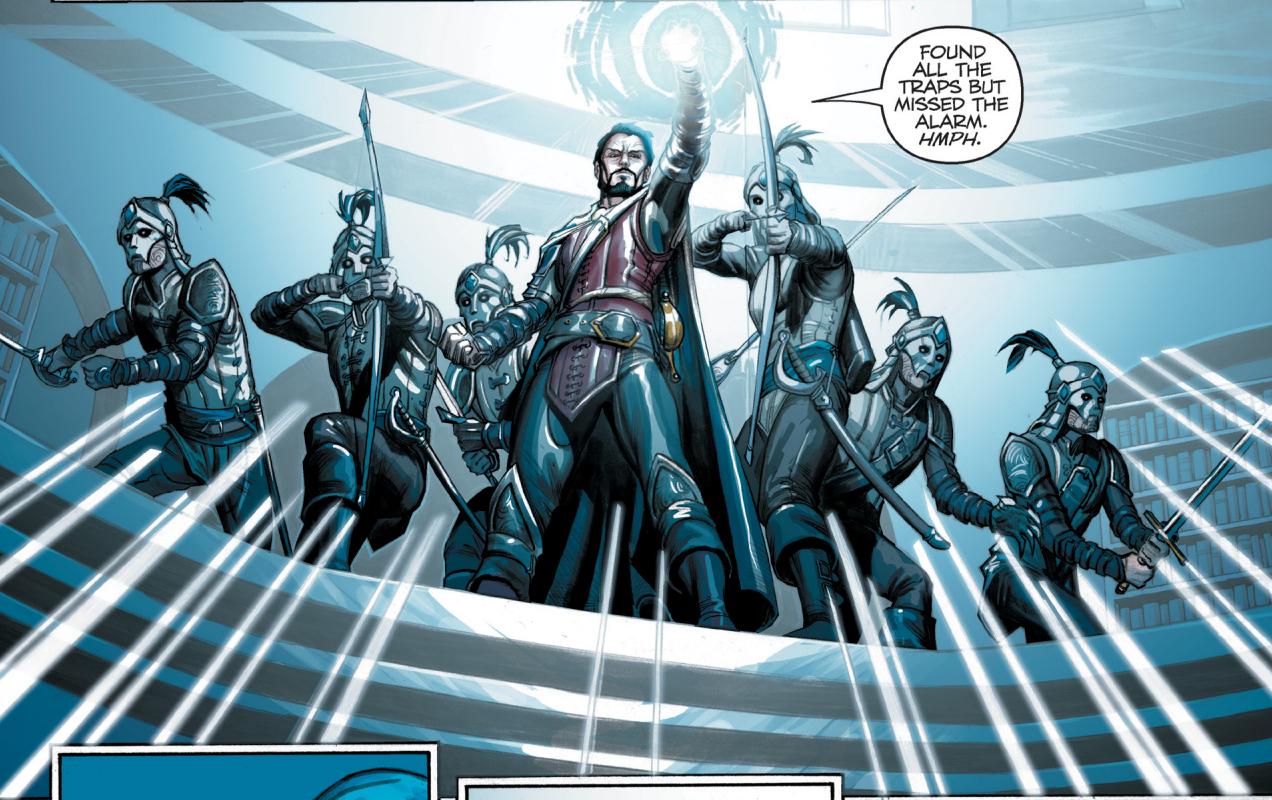
NOT AT ALL. IN FACT, I'M IMPRESSED BY --

-- STOP!

WHAT?













CHAPTER 2

I NEVER ASKED FOR AN EASY LIFE -- FRUIT EVERY MORNING, SERVANTS CLEANING MY FEET, BEDCLOTHES FREE FROM CRAWLING THINGS.

I CERTAINLY WASN'T RAISED TO EXPECT IT.

BUT THIS IS VELABANEL PRISON, THE HOUSE OF GRAVES, WHERE THE CROWS LOCK MEN AWAY FOR FUN AND TORTURE.

ONE MISTAKE, AND WE SPEND THE REST OF OUR DAYS SHACKLED AND FORGOTTEN IN CELLS BUILT BY LONG-DEAD SADISTS.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, I'M STARTING TO MISS THE ROYAL PALACE.

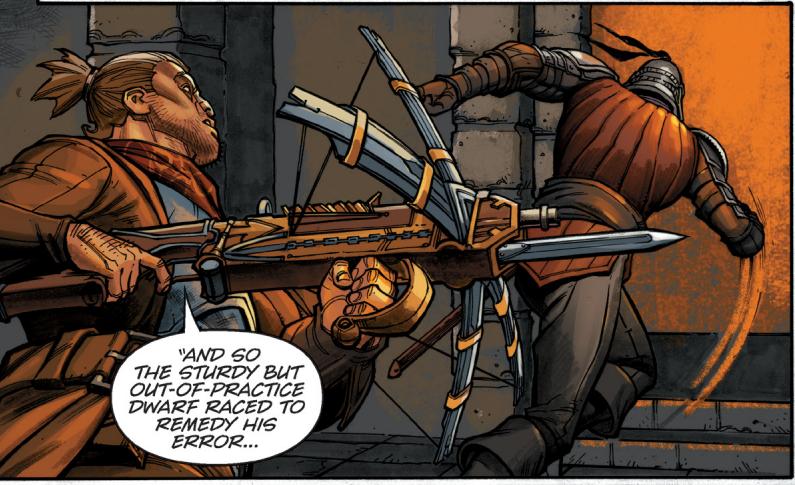
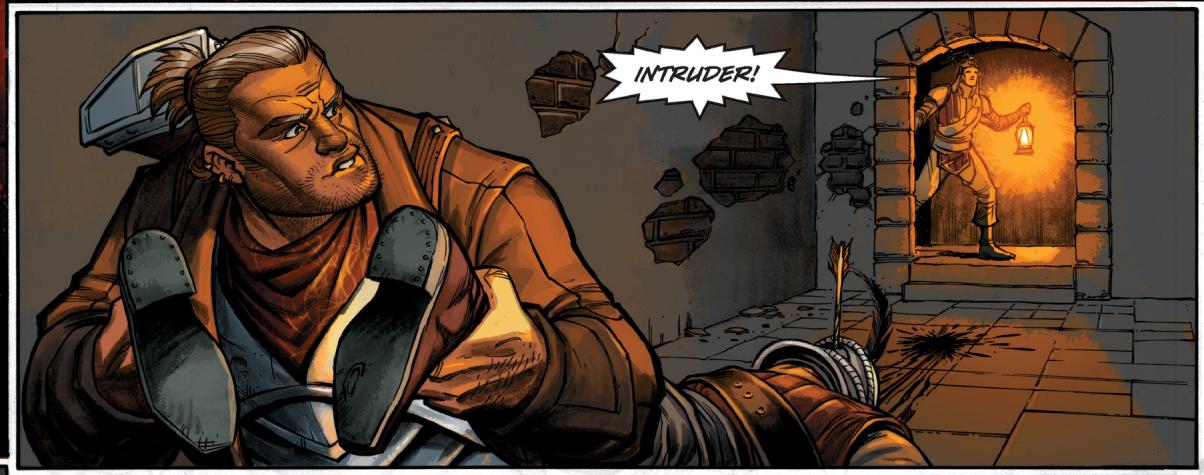
TOO DAMNED COLD.



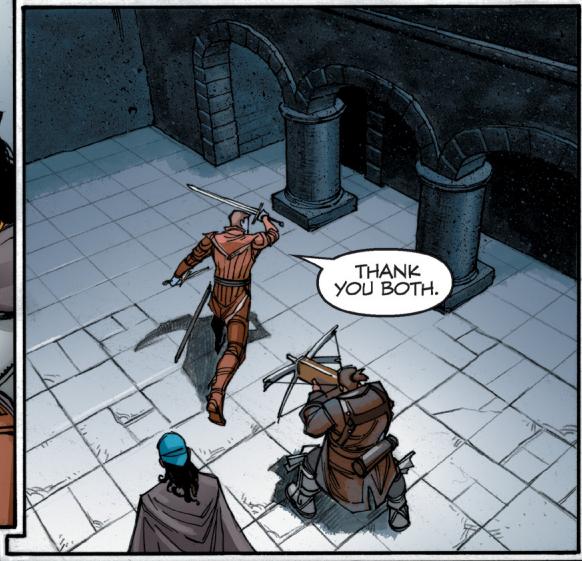
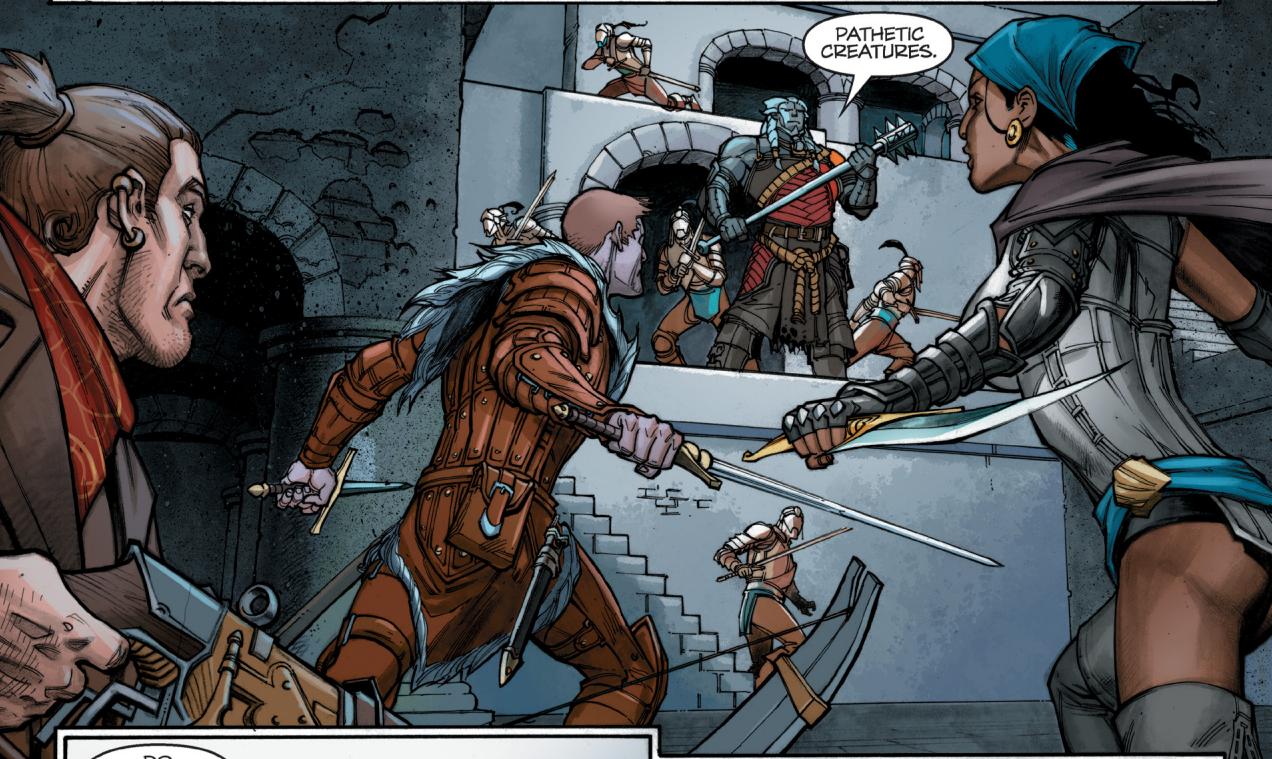
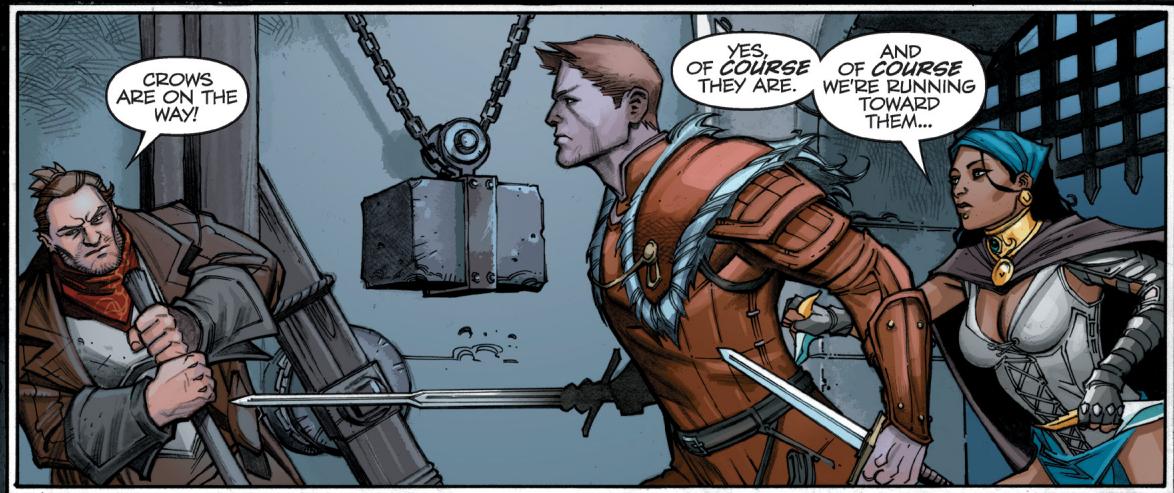


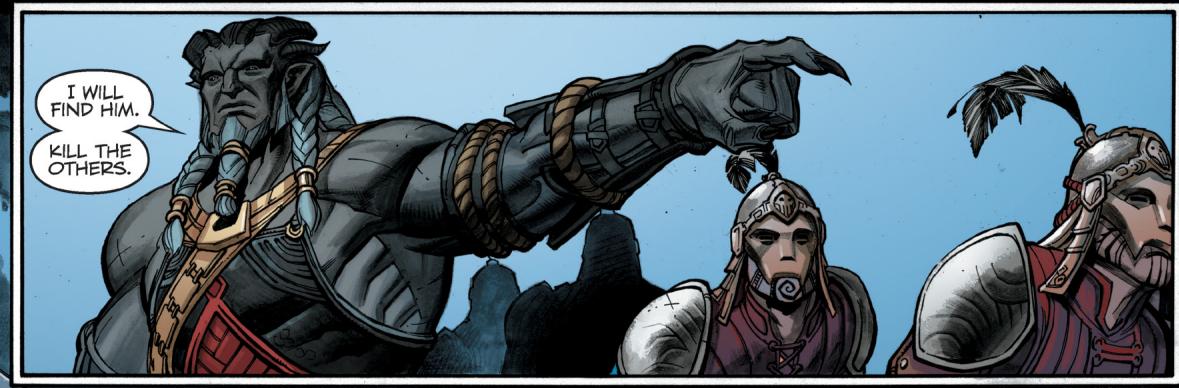












THE THIRD LEVEL. THE SEVENTY-NINTH CELL.

I'M FOLLOWING TALLY MARKS DRAWN ON THE WALLS BY ILLITERATES.

I'M NOT SURE I'M GOING THE RIGHT WAY, BUT THERE CAN'T BE A WORSE PLACE THAN HERE.

THERE ARE SCREAMS FROM THE CELLS LIKE A CHORUS. I'M STUDYING WITH THE TEMPLARS AGAIN, LISTENING TO THE HOLY CHANT, AND I JUST WANT OUT.

LIKE DOGS BEFORE A STORM.

THEY HOWL WHEN THE WINDS OF WRATH BLOW.

WHICH DOG ARE YOU HERE TO FREE?





THERE'S NO SOUND FROM INSIDE. NOTHING I CAN HEAR OVER THE SHOUTING.



AT FIRST, I DON'T EVEN SEE HIM -- I MISTAKE A HUMAN BEING FOR A LUMP OF CLOTH, RAGGED AND FILTHY IN THE CORNER.

THEN HE MOVES.

HE LOOKS AT ME WITH A FLASH OF RECOGNITION IN OLD EYES, AND I FORCE MYSELF TO SAY A NAME:



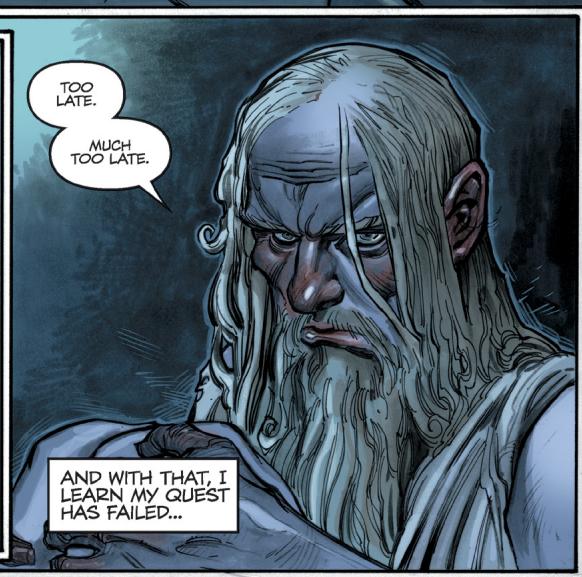
KING MARIC...?

THE NAME OF MY FATHER.

TOO LATE.

MUCH TOO LATE.

AND WITH THAT, I LEARN MY QUEST HAS FAILED...



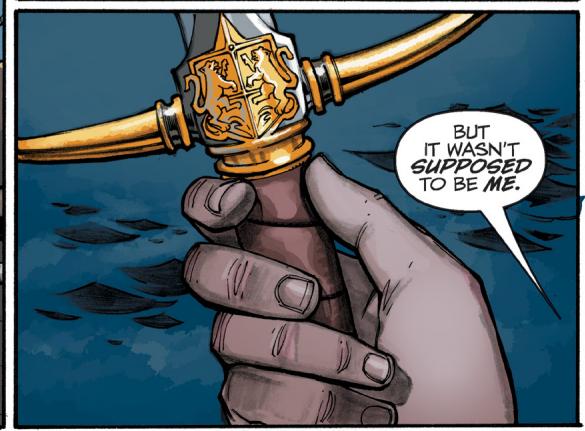
CHAPTER 3

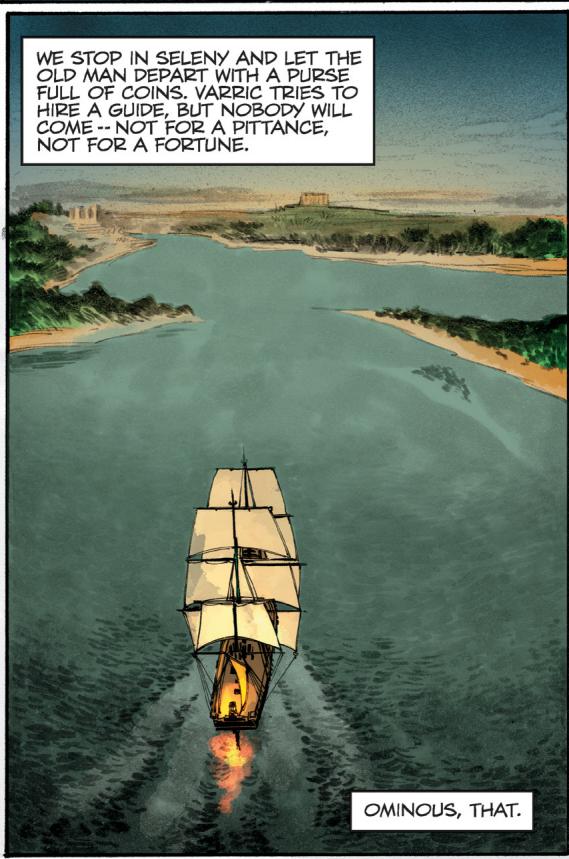
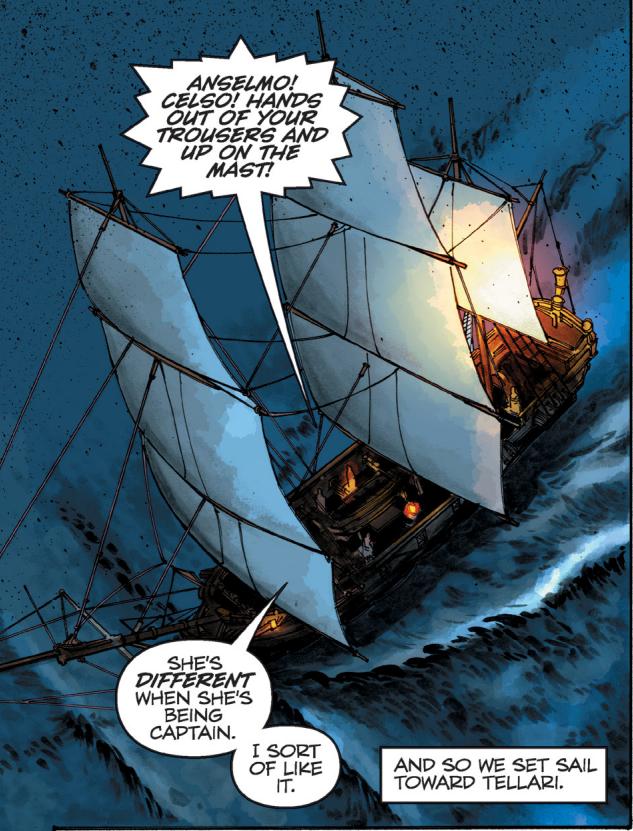












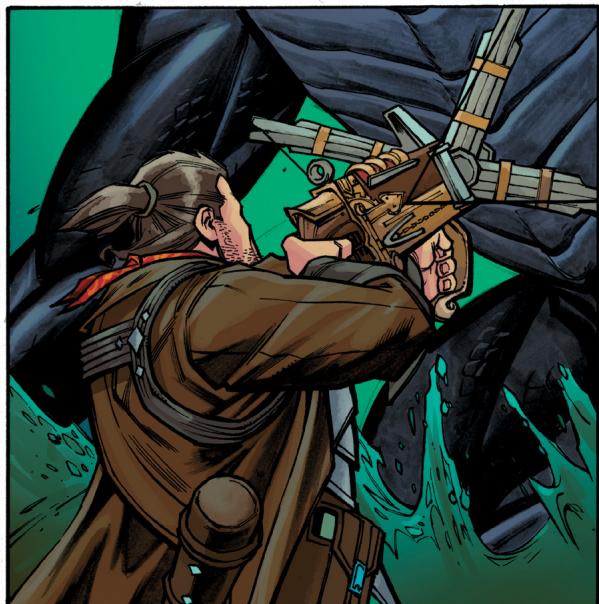






DOES
THIS COUNT AS
UNUSUAL?







IN MY LIFE SO FAR,
I'VE TAKEN SWORD
TO THREE DRAGONS.



THE BIG ONES,
I MEAN -- NOT
THE ONES THAT
LOOK LIKE SCALY,
TOOTHY DOGS AND
LOVE HORSE MEAT,
BUT THE **HIGH**
DRAGONS THAT
MAKE THE EARTH
SHAKE.



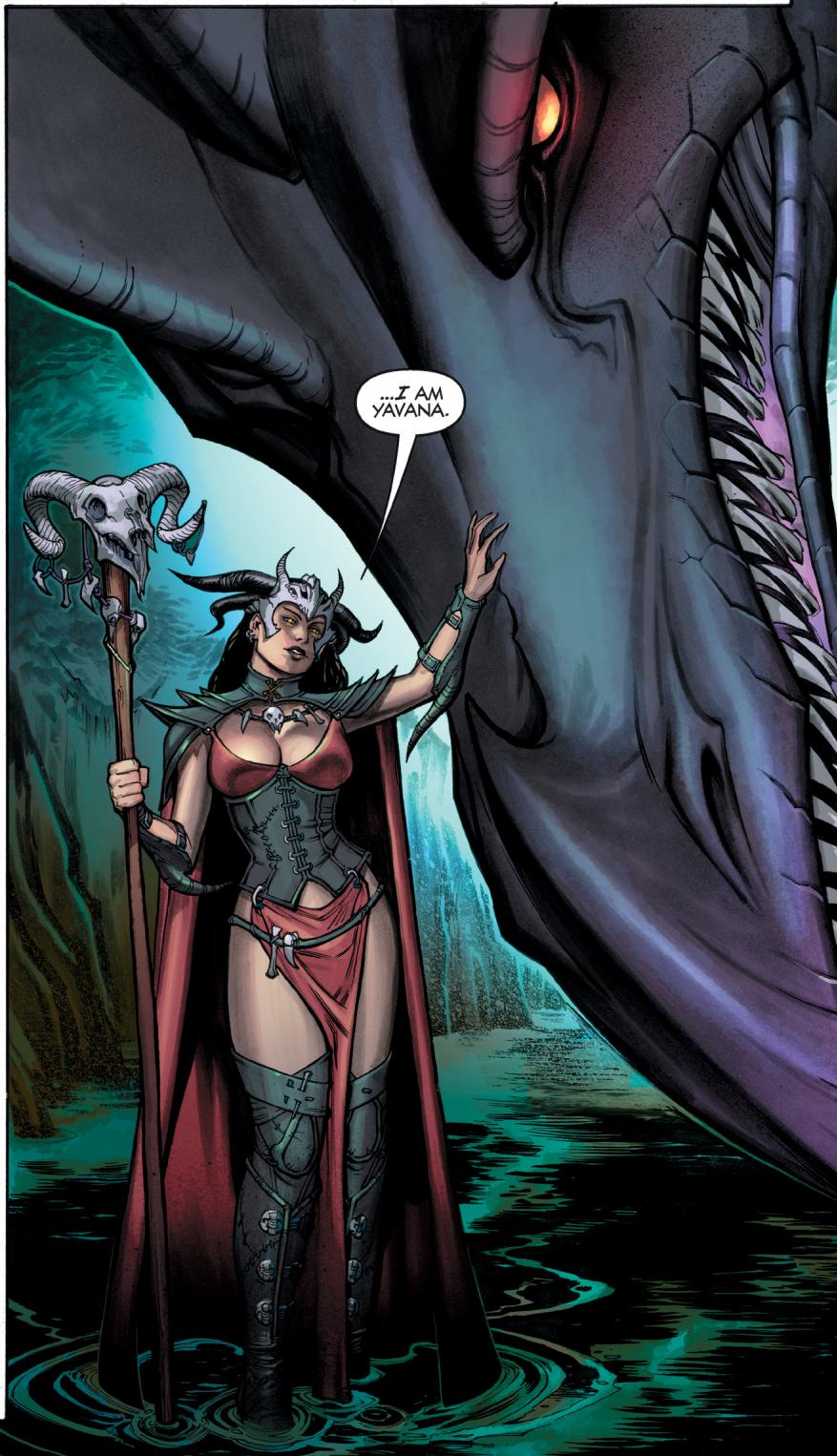
NOT EVEN
DARKSPAWN
ARE THAT
SAVAGE.



A DRAGON FEEDS
ON ANYTHING. A
DRAGON EXISTS
ONLY TO KILL.



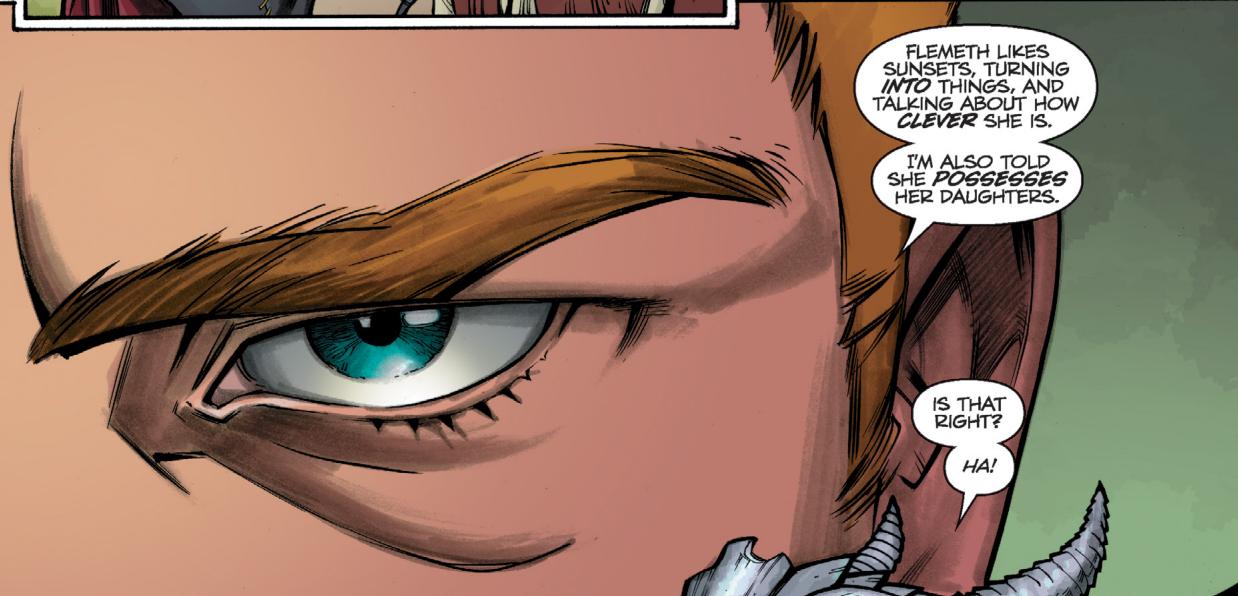
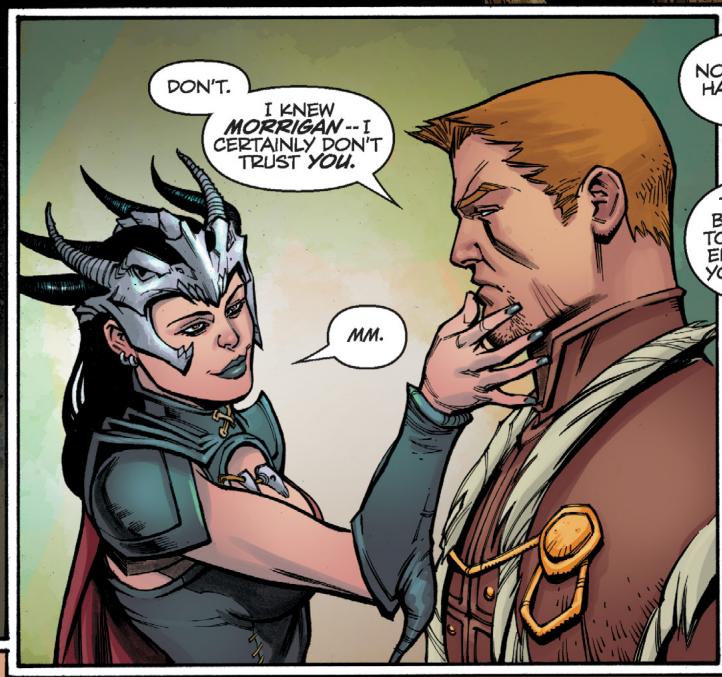
IT'S NOT
ATTACKING...?

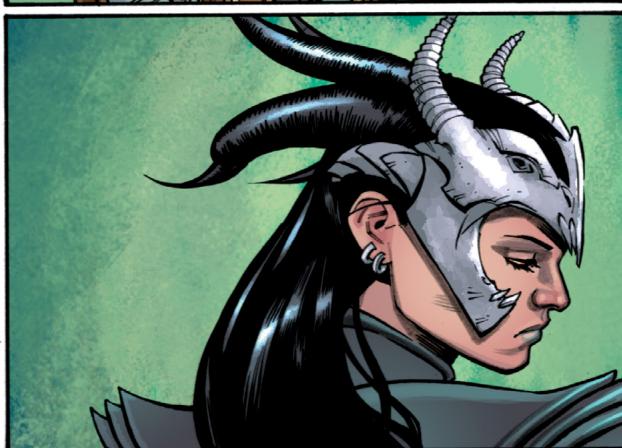




CHAPTER 4







THE
SILENT
GROVE.

BUILT AFTER
THE FALL OF THE
TEVINTER IMPERIUM,
BY THOSE WHO KNEW
THAT DRAGONS
WOULD NEED
PROTECTION.

WHAT WOULD
DRAGONS NEED
PROTECTING
FROM?

THE
IGNORANCE
OF MANKIND.

HOW MANY
"HEROES" HUNTED
DRAGONS OVER THE
CENTURIES, UNTIL
ALMOST NONE
WERE LEFT?

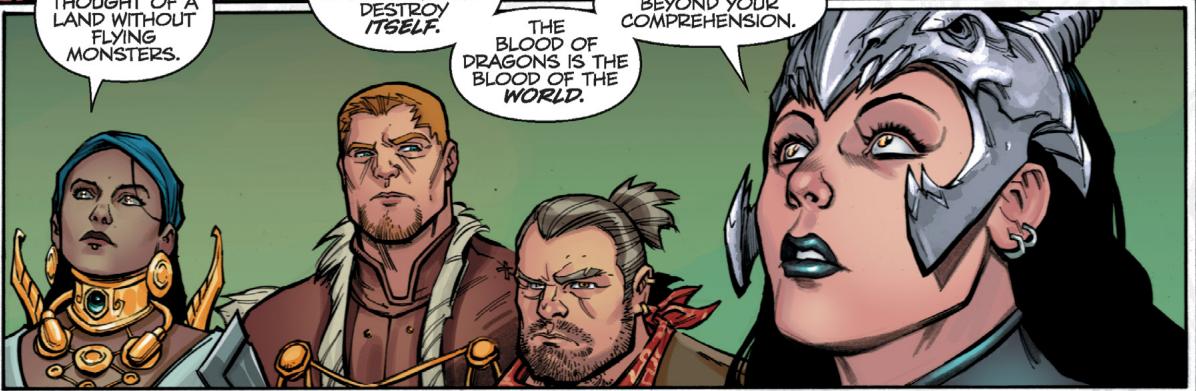
IT WAS
NEARLY A
TRAGEDY FOR
US ALL.

YES --
TRAGIC, THE
THOUGHT OF A
LAND WITHOUT
FLYING
MONSTERS.

IN
DESTROYING
WHAT IT DOES
NOT UNDERSTAND,
MANKIND WOULD
DESTROY
ITSELF.

ANOTHER SUBJECT
BEYOND YOUR
COMPREHENSION.

THE
BLOOD OF
DRAGONS IS THE
BLOOD OF THE
WORLD.





ENOUGH!
YOU
BROUGHT US
HERE -- DON'T YOU
DARE TURN
AWAY!

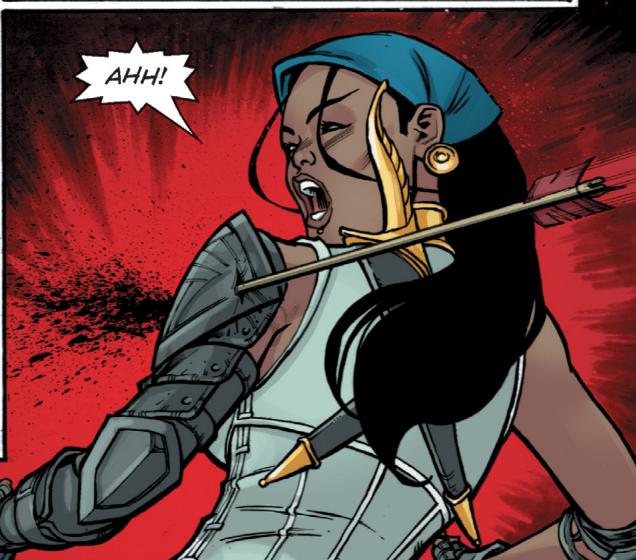


AH!

ALISTAIR!







NEXT
TIME, PIERCE
THE HEART
LIKE YOU'RE
ASKED.

CLODIO!
BASTARD.

WHAT IS
THIS?

IF YOU
WANTED US DEAD,
YOU COULD'VE SAVED
US THE TROUBLE
AND DONE IT IN
ANTIVA.

I
COULD HAVE,
YES, BUT THIS
ISN'T CROW
BUSINESS.

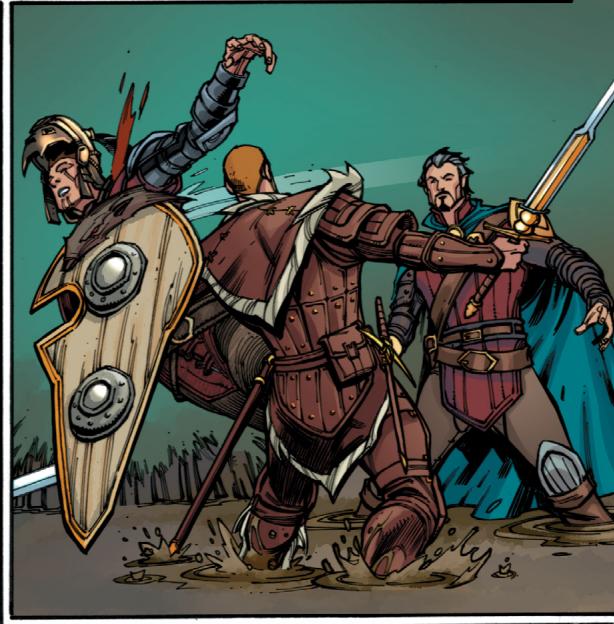
MY
MASTER HAS
BEEN LOOKING
FOR THE SILENT
GROVE FOR
YEARS.

ALAS,
THE DRAGON
DOESN'T LIKE
EXPLORERS -- WE'D
NEVER MADE IT
THROUGH THE
SWAMPS UNTIL
TODAY.

MY
SINCERE
THANKS FOR
SHOWING US
THE PATH.

WHAT
MASTER?

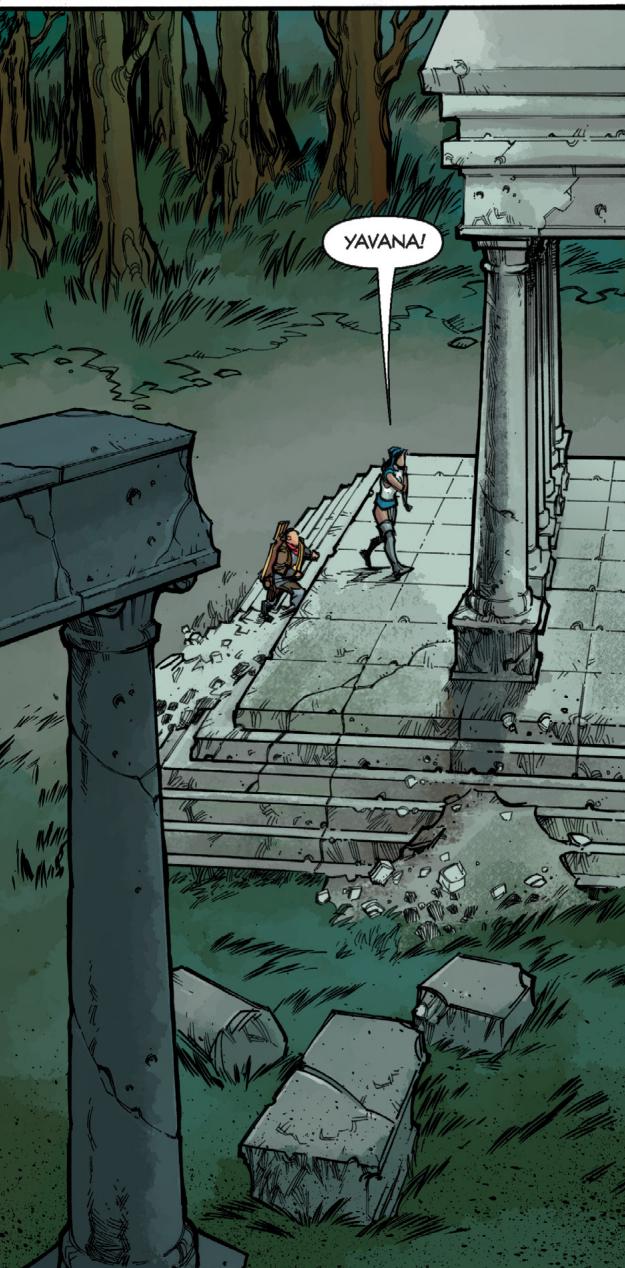
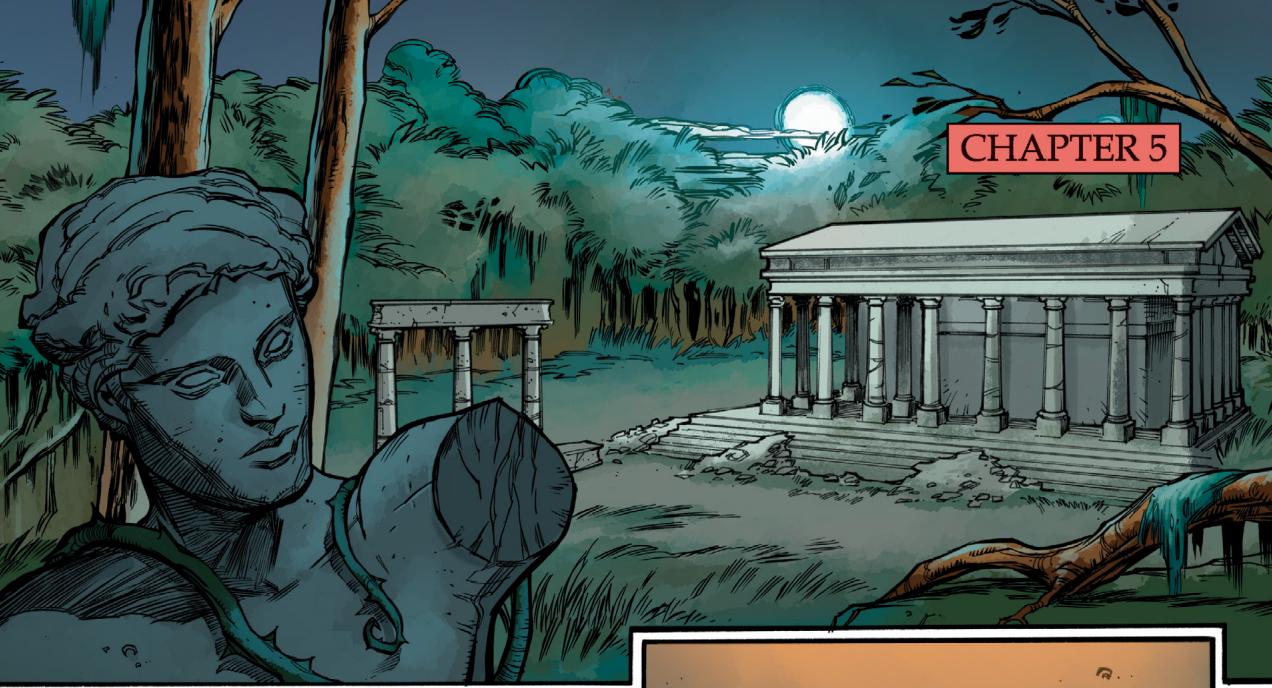
TAKE
THE KING
ALIVE.
KILL THE
OTHERS.







CHAPTER 5









...IF IT'S ANY COMFORT, I WAS IMPRESSED YOU CAME TO ANTIVA ALONE.

IT SHOWED COURAGE, IF NOT INTELLECT.

RIGHT--
BECAUSE
YOU'RE THE
CLEVER
ONE.

YOU
LURED ME ALL
THE WAY OUT
HERE TO GET
INTO THAT
GROVE?

I
DID.

PITY
YOU DIDN'T
THINK TO JUST
KILL THE
DRAGON.

WE TOYED
WITH THE
NOTION OF
TRYING --

-- BUT THAT
BEAUTY IS
WHY WE'RE
INTERESTED.

WHEN YOU
SAY "WE"...YOU'RE
NOT TALKING
ABOUT THE CROW
ASSASSINS.

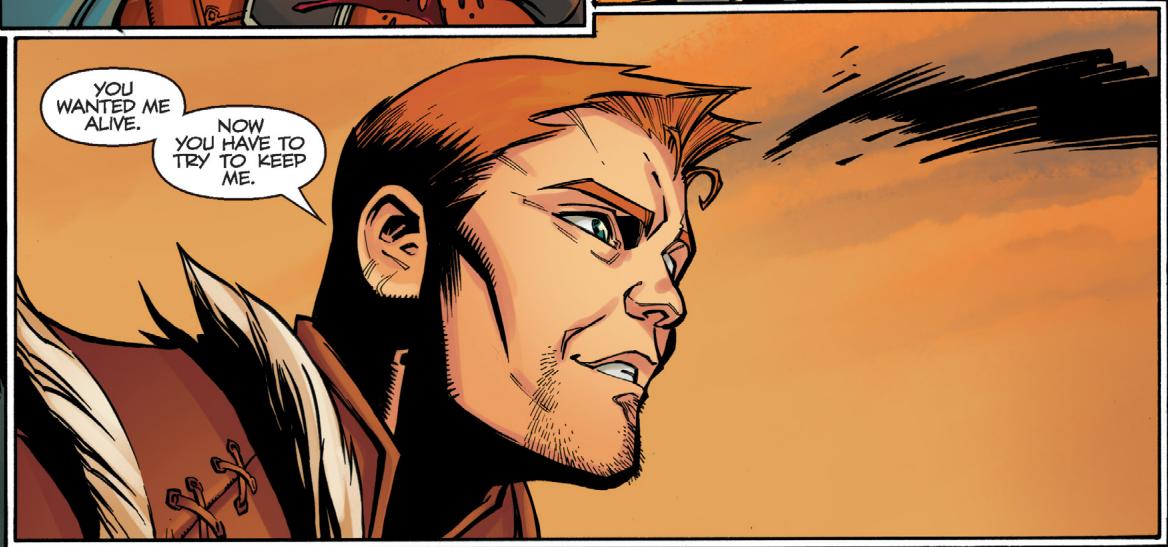
WE ALL
HAVE OUR
PATRONS.

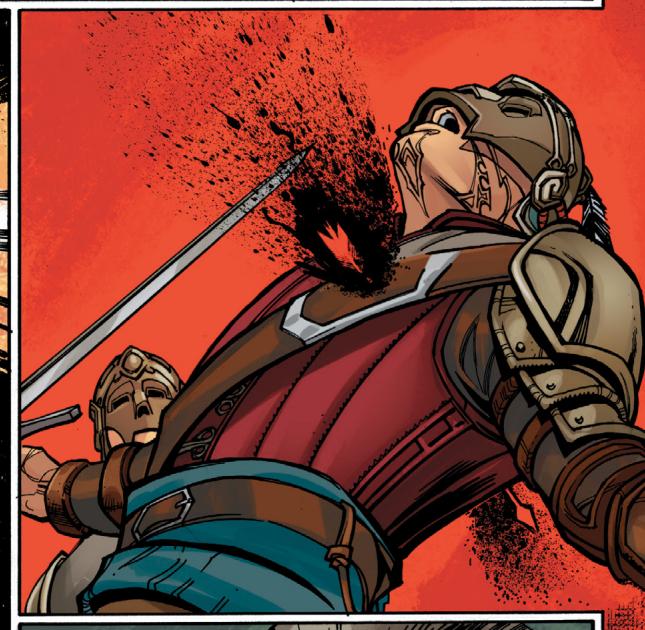
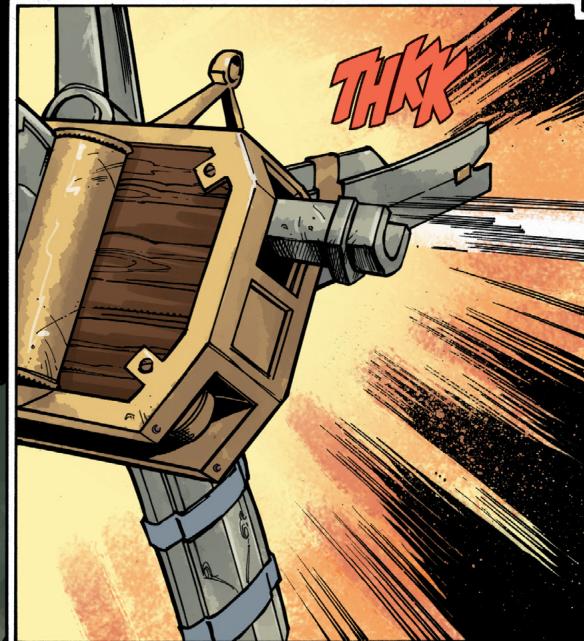
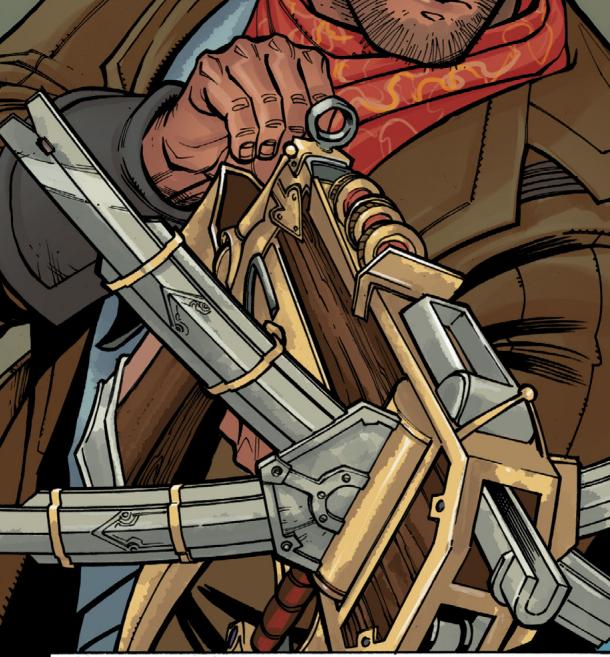
PROVE MORE
TOLERABLE THAN
YOUR FATHER,
AND I MAY EVEN
TELL YOU ABOUT
MINE.

WHAT DO
YOU KNOW
ABOUT
MARIC?

WHAT
HAPPENED
AFTER HE CAME
HERE?

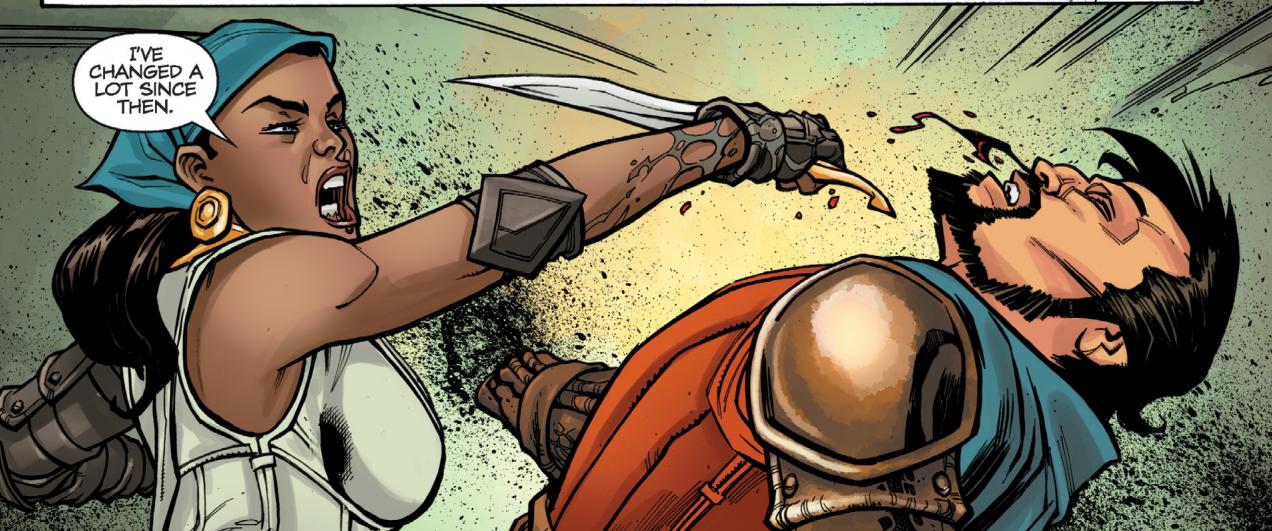


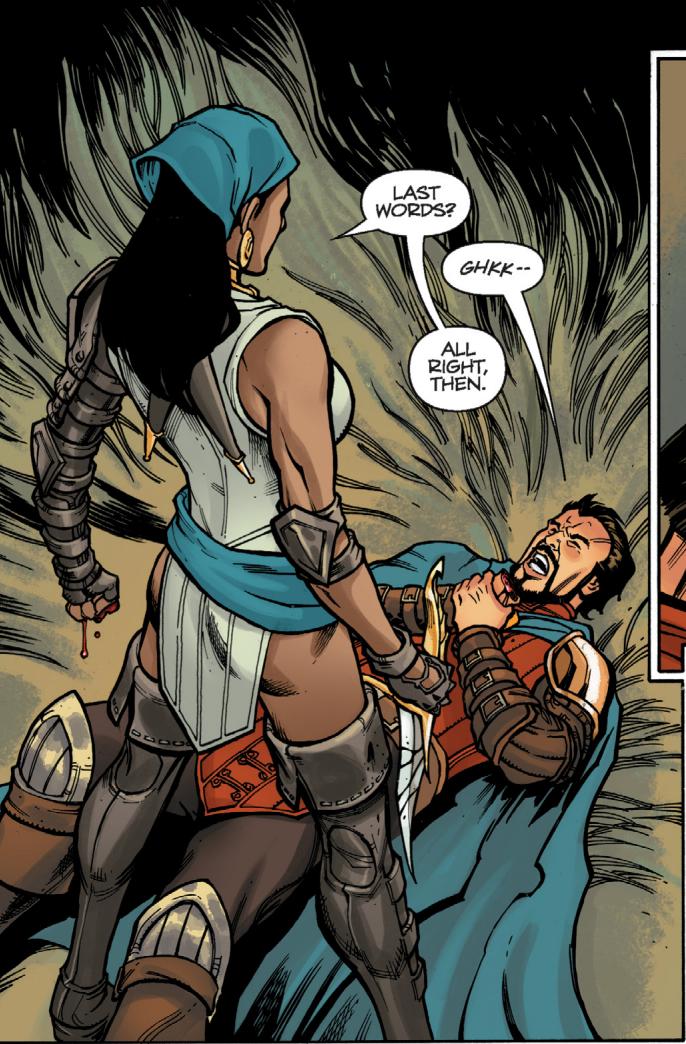


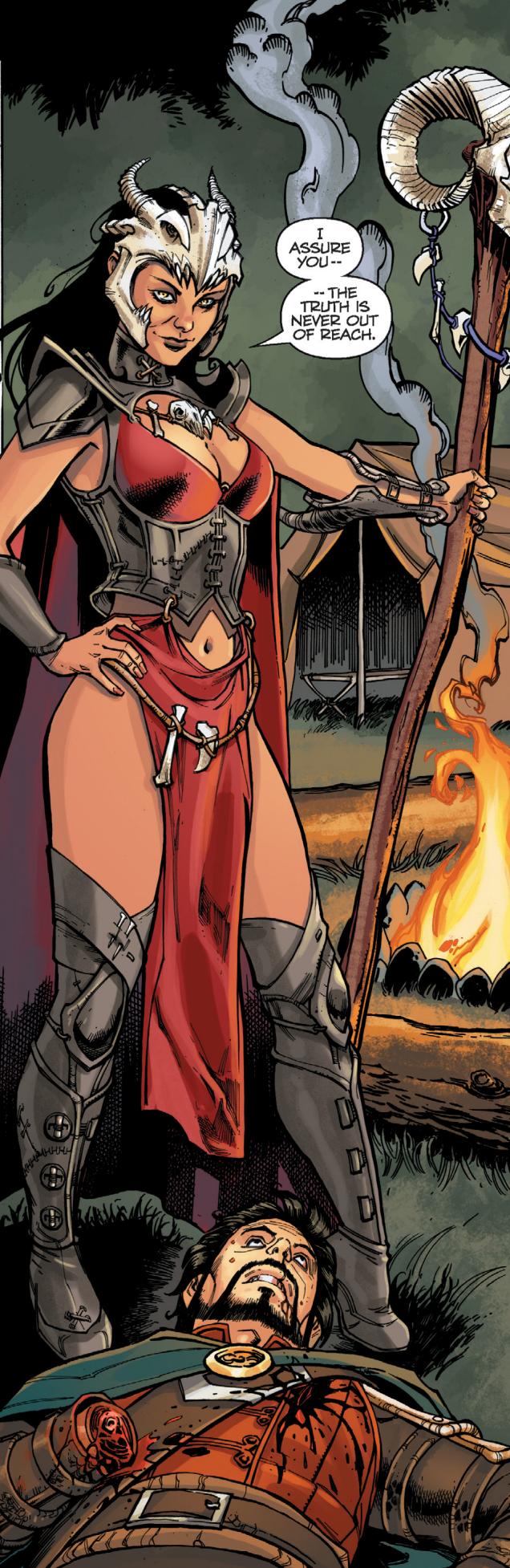
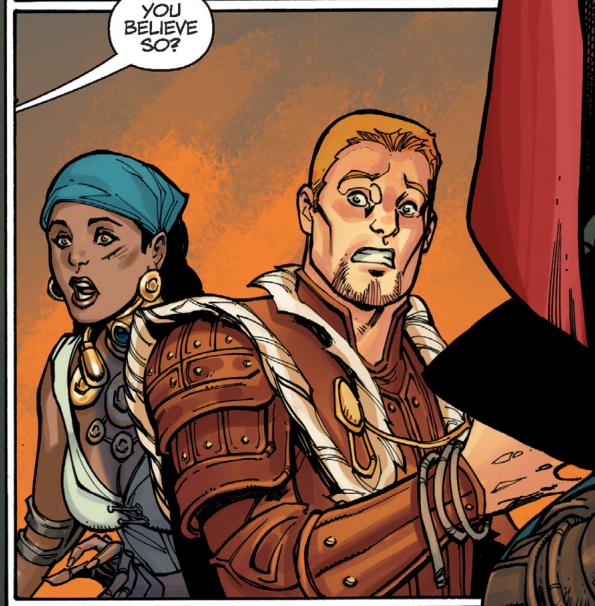












UGH.

FROM NOW ON, NO MORE GAMES OF CHASE THE DWARF.

YOU'RE NOT JUST A DISTRACTION, VARRIC.

YOU'RE USEFUL FOR MORE THAN LURING AWAY GUARDS...

CHAPTER 6

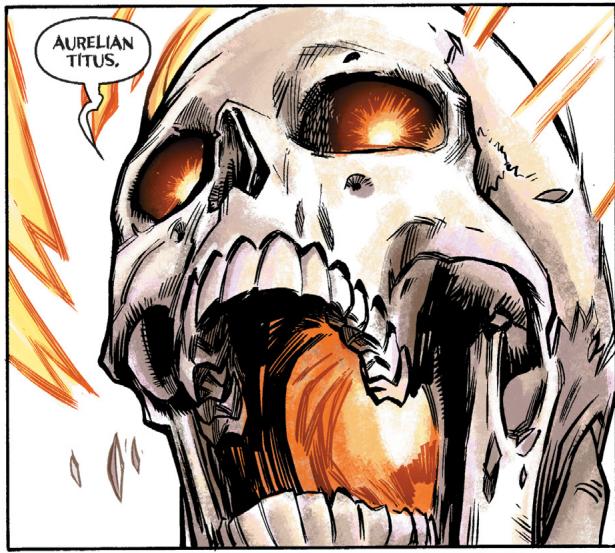
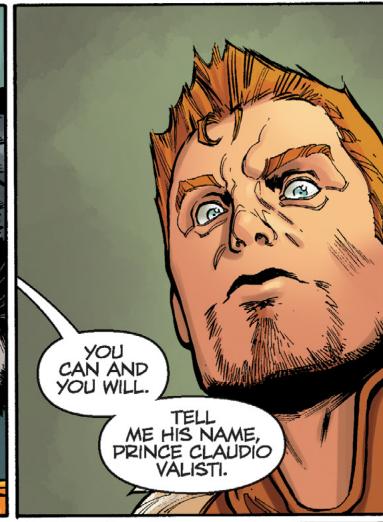
-- WHILE EVERYTHING MEMORABLE HAPPENS SOMEPLACE ELSE?

GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.

YOU ALMOST MISSED THE FUN.

EVIDENTLY, WE'RE GOING TO ASK CLAUDIO HOW IT FEELS TO BE STABBED IN THE CHEST.







IT'S ALMOST DAWN
WHEN WE RETURN
TO THE GROVE.

YOUR
FUTURE LIES
BELOW.

YOUR
FRIENDS
CANNOT FOLLOW.

ANY IDEA
WHAT'S DOWN
THERE?

BESIDES
"YOUR
FUTURE"?

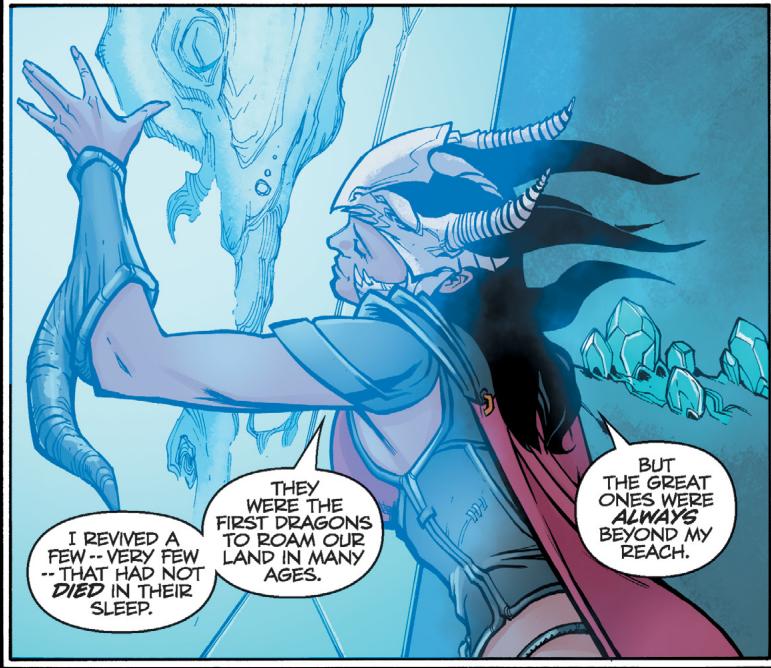
NO.

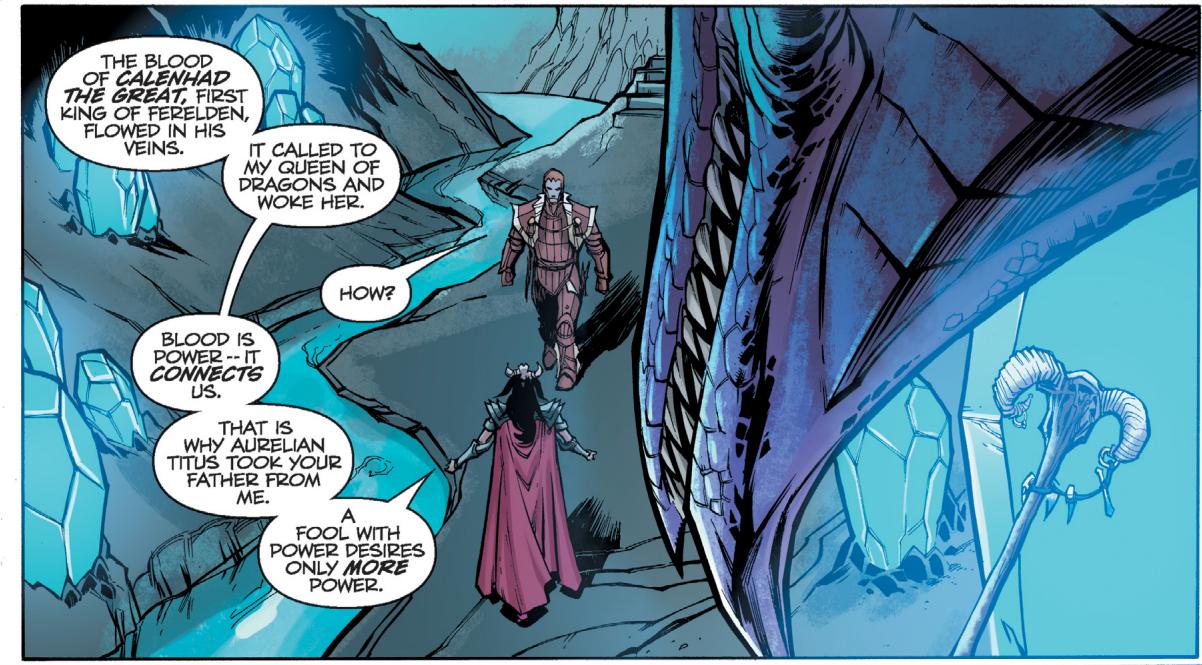
YOU'VE
COME THIS
FAR FOR
ANSWERS,
O KING.

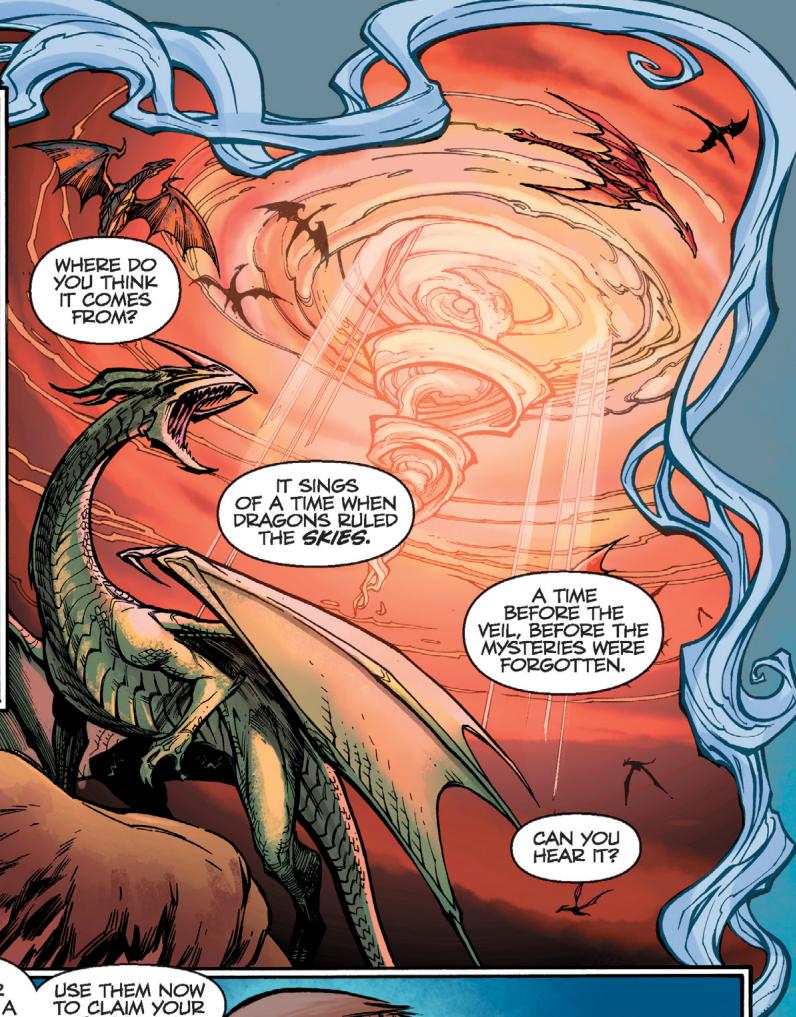
PLANNING
TO STOP
NOW?

WHAT IF
I DON'T
LIKE WHAT
I FIND?

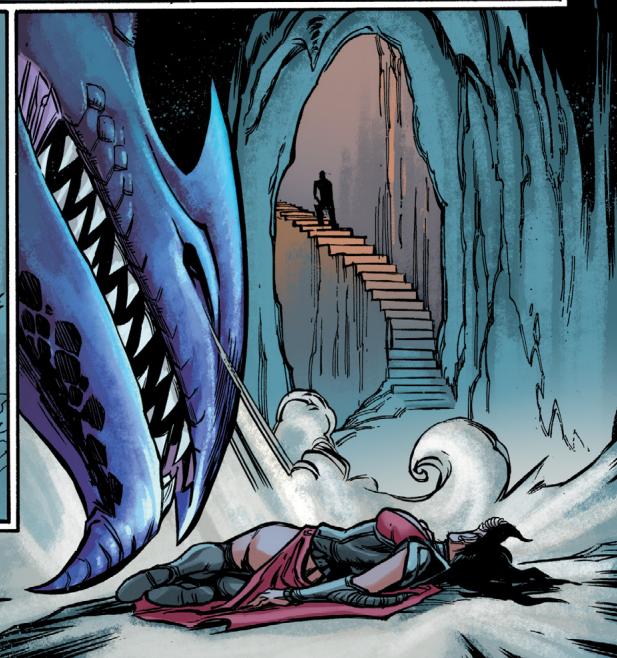
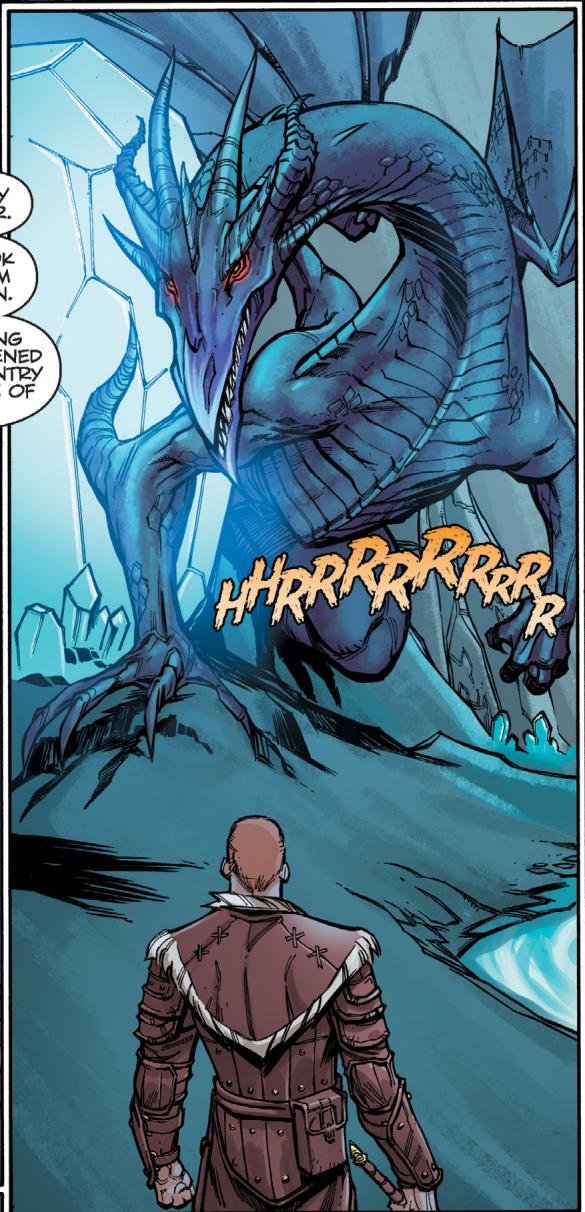


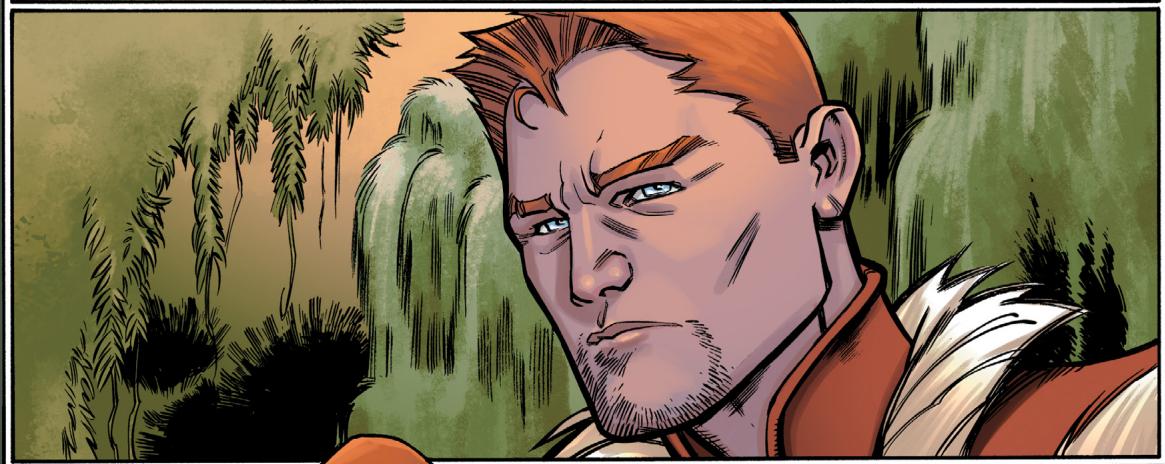


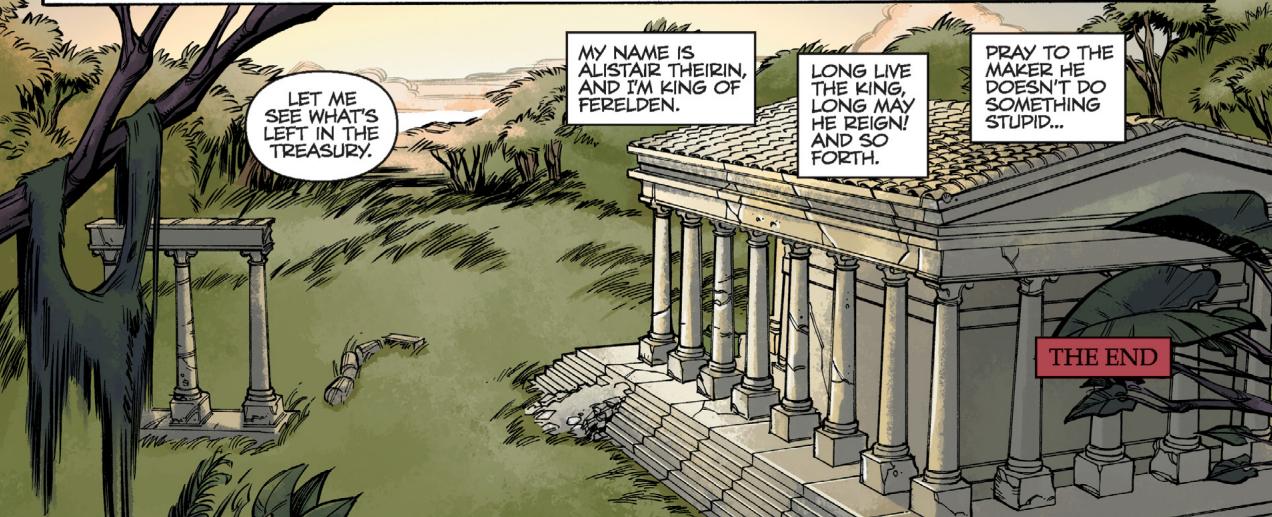


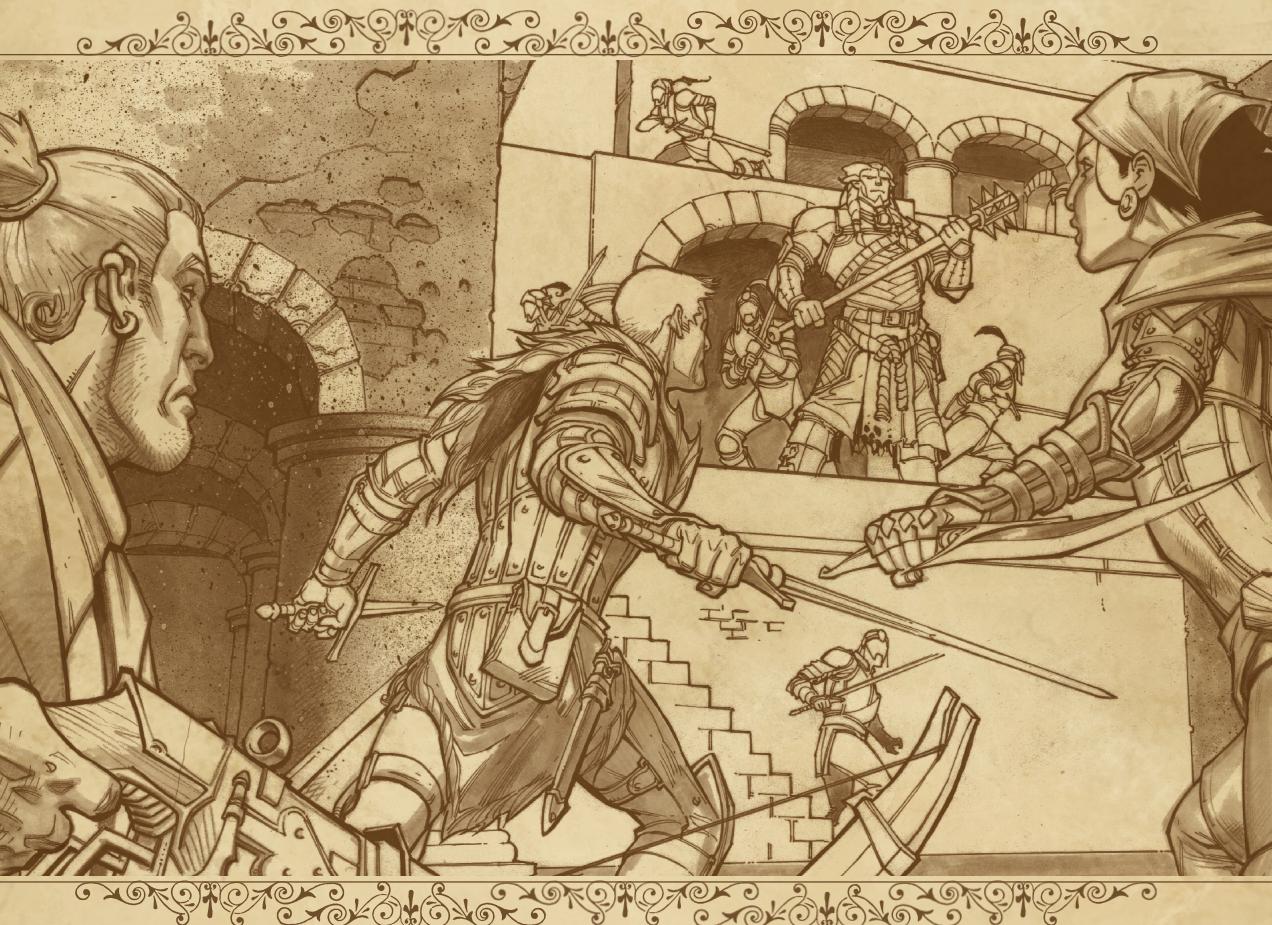














DRAGON AGETM

THE SILENT GROVE

From David Gaider, lead writer of the blockbuster Dragon Age games, Dragon Age: The Silent Grove is the perfect introduction to BioWare's world of dark fantasy!

It's unusual for a king to embark on a dangerous quest himself rather than send emissaries, but King Alistair Theirin has caught wind of a rumor big enough, and personal enough, that he is compelled to investigate. With the deadly pirate Isabela and underworld merchant Varric Tethras by his side, Alistair travels to Antiva—the nation of assassins—to learn the fate of his long-lost father, King Maric. There, they will engineer a prison break, battle an assassin prince, encounter the mysterious Witch of the Wilds, and uncover the secret history of dragons!

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