



Robert Jordan's the **WHEEL** of **TIME**



the **EYE** of the **WORLD**

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Robert Jordan's the **WHEEL** of **TIME**®

the EYE of the WORLD

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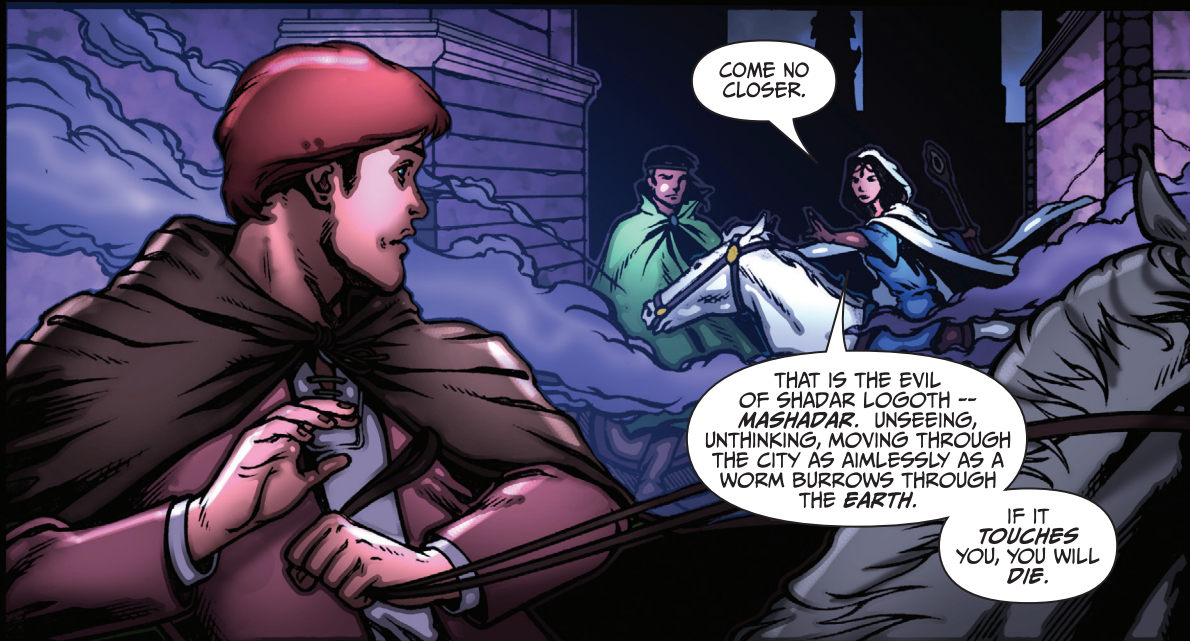
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Lan led the way down the street, and kept such a pace that it wasn't long before Rand noticed a distance had opened up, separating the Warder and the Aes Sedai from the rest of the group.





COME NO CLOSER.

THAT IS THE EVIL OF SHADAR LOGOTH -- **MASHADAR**. UNSEEING, UNTHINKING, MOVING THROUGH THE CITY AS AIMLESSLY AS A WORM BURROWS THROUGH THE EARTH.

IF IT TOUCHES YOU, YOU WILL DIE.



THEN HOW DO WE JOIN YOU? CAN YOU KILL IT? CLEAR A WAY?



MASHADAR IS VAST, GIRL. THE WHOLE OF THE **WHITE TOWER** COULD NOT KILL IT... BUT THIS THING WILL **NOT** BE ABOVE GROUND EVERYWHERE. OTHER STREETS WILL BE CLEAR.

SEE THAT STAR? KEEP ON TOWARDS THAT STAR, AND IT WILL BRING YOU TO THE RIVER.

WHATEVER HAPPENS, KEEP MOVING TO THE RIVER. GO AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN, BUT **ABOVE** ALL, MAKE NO NOISE.



THERE ARE STILL **TROLLOCS**, REMEMBER, AND FOUR **HALFMEN**.

BUT HOW WILL WE FIND YOU AGAIN?



BE ASSURED, I CAN FIND YOU.

NOW BE OFF. THIS THING IS UTTERLY **MINDLESS**, BUT IT CAN SENSE **FOOD**.



Everyone had been staring, wondering which way to go, no one wanting to make the first move.

When the tendrils of Mashadar began to drift nearer to them, Rand turned Cloud, the gray breaking into a half trot, tugging to go faster. As if moving first had made Rand the leader, everyone followed.

With Moiraine gone, there was no one to protect them should Mordeth appear. And the Trollocs. And...

Rand forced himself to stop thinking. He would follow the red star. He could hold on to that thought.



As they went, Rand caught himself gritting his teeth to stop panting -- he was telling himself to make the others at least think he wasn't afraid when a smoky tendril reached out towards them.

Wheeling, the group galloped away with no heed for the clatter of hooves they raised.



...and that clatter drew the attention of the other monsters in the city.

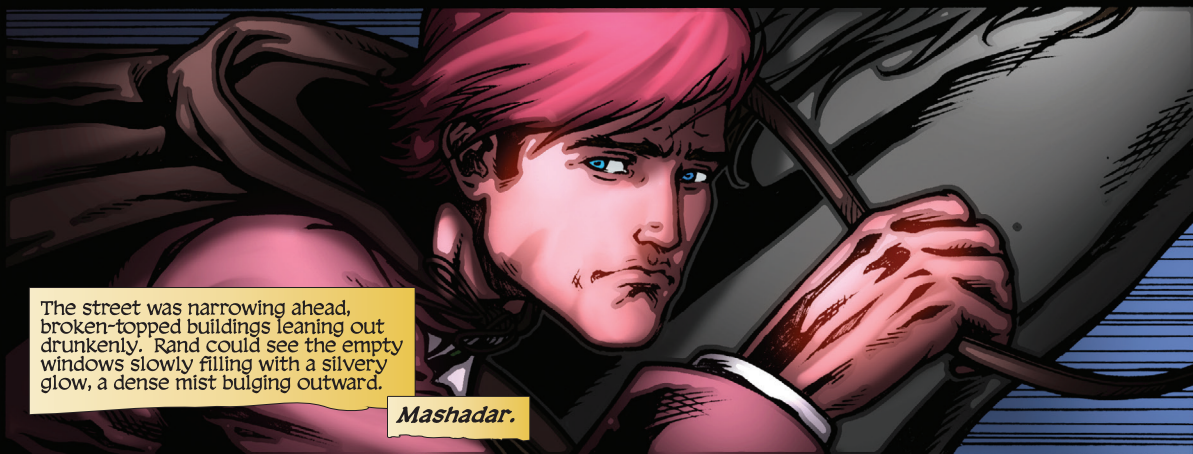
Even as Rand shouted 'this way,' he heard the same cry from five different throats, and a glance back showed his companions disappearing in as many directions, Trollocs pursuing them all.

Three Trollocs ran at his own heels, catchpoles waving in the air. Rand's skin crawled when he realized they were matching Cloud's stride for stride.




The street was narrowing ahead, broken-topped buildings leaning out drunkenly. Rand could see the empty windows slowly filling with a silvery glow, a dense mist bulging outward.

Mashadar.



The Trollocs still ran less than fifty paces back, close enough for Rand to see clearly. A Fade rode behind them now, and the Trollocs seemed to be fleeing the Halfman as much as to pursue Rand.

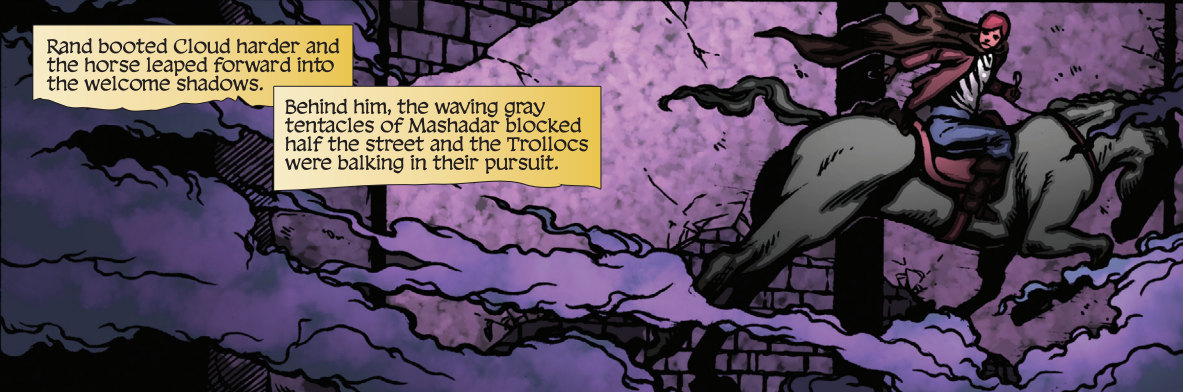




Ahead of Rand, gray tendrils
wavered from the windows,
feeling the air.

Cloud tossed his head and
screamed, but Rand dug his
heels in brutally, and the
horse lunged forward.

If one of those
tendrils touched him...



Rand booted Cloud harder and
the horse leaped forward into
the welcome shadows.

Behind him, the waving gray
tentacles of Mashadar blocked
half the street and the Trollocs
were balking in their pursuit.



The Fade snapped a whip
to spur the Trollocs on,
and instead attracted the
attention of Mashadar.

The thickening tentacles of fog struck like
vipers. Its prey tried to scream, but the fog
rolled over open mouths, and in, eating the
howls and transforming them into a piercing
whine just beyond hearing, like all the hornets
in the world digging into Rand's ears with all
the fear that could exist.

Cloud heard too, and
ran harder than ever.

After a time, Rand realized he could no longer hear the silent shriek of the Fade dying and reined Cloud to a stop.

Slumped in the saddle, he listened, but there was nothing to hear but the blood pounding in his ears.

The others. Why didn't they follow him? Were they free, or in the Trollocs' hands? If they were alive and free, they would be following the star. If not...

...The ruins were vast; he could search for days without finding anyone, if he could keep away from the *Trollocs*. And the *Fades*. And *Mordeth*. And *Mashadar*.

Reluctantly, he decided to make for the river.



Hidden in the shadows, Rand thought he heard something.

And then he thought he saw a catchpole... even as the thought flashed into Rand's head, he dug his heels into Cloud's ribs and his sword flew from the scabbard. A wordless shout accompanied his charge, and he swung the sword with all his might.



...Only a desperate effort stopped the blade short.



YAIOW!



HAVE YOU SEEN ANYBODY ELSE?

I... I... JUST TROLLOCS.



THEY *MUST* BE TRYING TO REACH THE RIVER. WE'D BETTER DO THE SAME.

Meanwhile...



Perrin sat his horse in the shadows, watching an open gateway.

He knew that Mat -- and almost everyone in Emond's Field -- considered him slow of thought, but he just preferred to think things all the way through if he could. Quick, careless thinking had gotten Mat into hot water one time after another.

To reach the gate, Perrin would have to ride nearly a hundred spans with only the night shielding him from searching eyes. That was not a pleasant thought. What did Lan say -- a hundred Trollocs and four Fades? And Moiraine said get to the river.

Careful thought had not given him much, but he had made his decision. He rode towards the gate.

As he did, another horse appeared at the far side of the square and stopped. If that dark shape was a Fade...



...RAND?



WHEW.

IT'S **PERRIN**,
EGWENE, HAVE
YOU SEEN
ANYBODY
ELSE?

NO. THEY'LL
BE ALL RIGHT,
WON'T THEY?

TA-ROOOOO



TA-ROOOOO

MOIRAIINE
SEDAL AND LAN
WILL LOOK AFTER
THEM. THEY'LL
LOOK AFTER ALL
OF US ONCE WE
GET TO THE
RIVER.

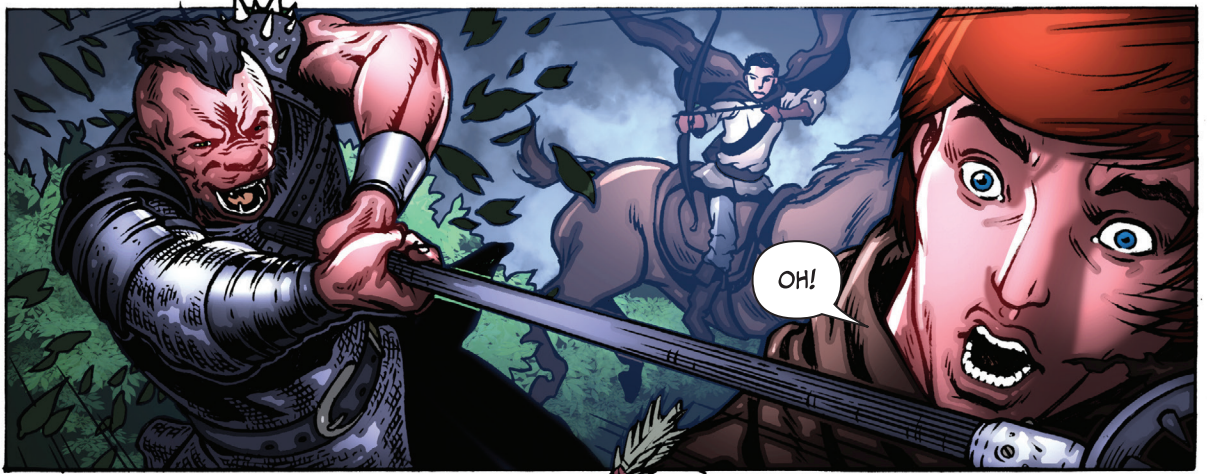
COME ON!
HURRY, EGWENE!
HURRY!



TA-ROOOOO
TA-ROOOOO

EGWENE?







Suddenly Thom galloped out of the night, hard behind the Trollocs...



...And then moonlight flashed off steel.



SKRAW!



MY SECOND-BEST KNIVES.

THAT ONE WILL BRING OTHERS. I HOPE THE RIVER ISN'T TOO FAR.

I HOPE...

Instead of saying what he hoped, Thom shook his head and took off at a quick canter, with Rand and Mat in tow.

When they reached the river, Rand could not see the far side at all. He didn't like the idea of crossing in the dark, but he liked the idea of staying on this side even less.

PICK A DIRECTION -- UPRIVER OR DOWN?

BUT THE OTHERS COULD BE ANYWHERE. ANY WAY WE CHOOSE COULD JUST TAKE US FARTHER AWAY.

SO IT COULD... SO IT COULD.

They continued on, and, for a time, nothing changed. The bank was higher in some places, lower in others, the trees grew thicker or thinned out... but the *night* and the *river* and the *wind* were all the same. *Cold* and *black*.

And then, they saw a light ahead. As they drew closer, they could see it was well above the river, as if it were in a tree.

Finally they could make out the source of the light: a lantern hoisted atop the masts of a large trader's boat.

NOW THAT IS BETTER THAN AN AES SEDAI'S RAFT, ISN'T IT?

IT DOESN'T LOOK AS IF THIS VESSEL IS MADE TO CARRY HORSES, BUT CONSIDERING THE DANGER HE'S IN, WHICH WE ARE GOING TO WARN HIM OF, THE CAPTAIN MAY BE REASONABLE.

JUST LET ME DO ALL THE TALKING. AND BRING YOUR BLANKETS AND SADDLEBAGS, JUST IN CASE.

YOU DON'T MEAN TO LEAVE WITHOUT THE OTHERS, DO YOU?

Thom had no chance to say what he meant to do, as several Trollocs burst into the clearing, with shouts in the distance indicating more were on the way.

ONTO THE
BOAT! QUICK!
LEAVE ALL THAT
AND RUN!

TA-ROOOOO



YOU ON
THE BOAT! -- WAKE
UP, YOU FOOLS!
TROLLOCS!

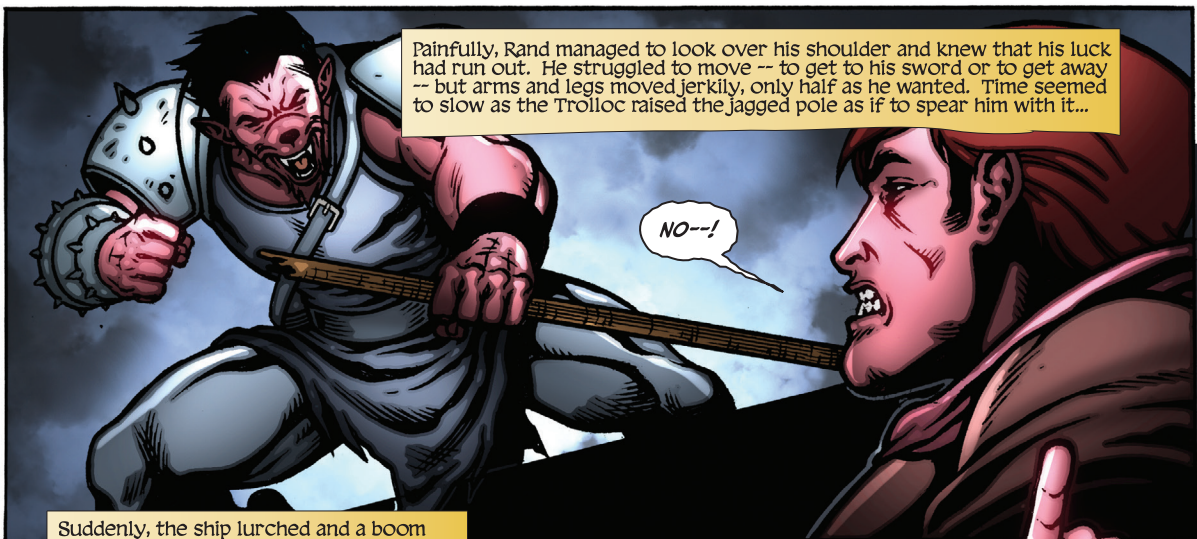


Men ran everywhere on the boat, shouting, hacking mooring lines, and struggling with Trollocs.



Suddenly, something slammed across Rand's back, smashing him to the deck. His sword fell and skittered away from his outstretched hand.



A Trollc, a large, brutish creature with a spiked mace, is attacking Rand. Rand is in a defensive posture, looking back over his shoulder with a pained expression. The background is a dark, cloudy sky.

Painfully, Rand managed to look over his shoulder and knew that his luck had run out. He struggled to move -- to get to his sword or to get away -- but arms and legs moved jerkily, only half as he wanted. Time seemed to slow as the Trollc raised the jagged pole as if to spear him with it...


NO--!

Suddenly, the ship lurched and a boom swung out of the shadows to catch the Trollc in the chest with a crunch of breaking bones, sweeping it over the side.



WELL, THAT
WILL HAVE USED
UP MY LUCK.

Shakily, Rand got to his feet and picked up his sword, for once holding it in both hands the way Lan had taught him, but there was nothing left on which to use it.

A large panel showing Rand from the waist up. He is shouting and pointing his right index finger upwards. He has a determined and angry expression. He is wearing a red cloak over a white shirt. A thick, yellow, rope-like object is wrapped around his waist.

GELB!
FORTUNE, WHERE
DO YOU **BE**, GELB?
YOU CAN NO HIDE FROM
ME ON MY OWN SHIP!
GET FLORAN GELB
OUT HERE!



AH, GELB. WERE YOU NO SUPPOSED TO SECURE THIS BOOM?

BUT I DID. TIED IT DOWN TIGHT. I ADMIT I'M A LITTLE SLOW ABOUT THINGS NOW AND THEN, CAPTAIN DOMON, BUT I GET THEM DONE.



NO SO SLOW AT SLEEPING WHEN YOU SHOULD BE STANDING WATCH. WE COULD BE MURDERED TO A MAN, FOR ALL OF YOU.



NO, CAPTAIN, NO. IT WAS HIM. I WAS ON GUARD, LIKE I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE, WHEN HE SNEAKED UP AND ATTACKED ME. I FOUGHT HIM, BUT THEN THE TROLLOCS CAME.

HE'S IN LEAGUE WITH THEM, CAPTAIN. A DARKFRIEND.

IN LEAGUE WITH MY AGED GRANDMOTHER. DID I NO WARN YOU THE LAST TIME, GELB? AT WHITEBRIDGE, OFF YOU DO GO! GET OUT OF MY SIGHT BEFORE I PUT YOU OFF NOW.



THESE TROLLOCS DO BE FOLLOWING ME. WHY WILL THEY NO LEAVE ME BE?

UHM, CAPTAIN, WE HAVE FRIENDS BACK THERE. IF YOU GO BACK AND PICK THEM UP, I'M SURE THEY'LL REWARD YOU.

YES, CAPTAIN. ALLOW ME TO--

NO. YOU THREE COME BELOW, WHERE I CAN SEE WHAT MANNER OF THING BE HAULED UP ON MY DECK.

AND FORTUNE DESERT ME, **SOMEBODY** SECURE THIS HORN-CURSED BOOM!





NOW MY NAME BE BAYLE DOMON, CAPTAIN AND OWNER OF THE SPRAY, WHICH BE THIS SHIP.

NOW WHO BE YOU, AND WHY SHOULD I NO THROW YOU OVER THE SIDE FOR THE TROUBLE YOU'VE BROUGHT ME?

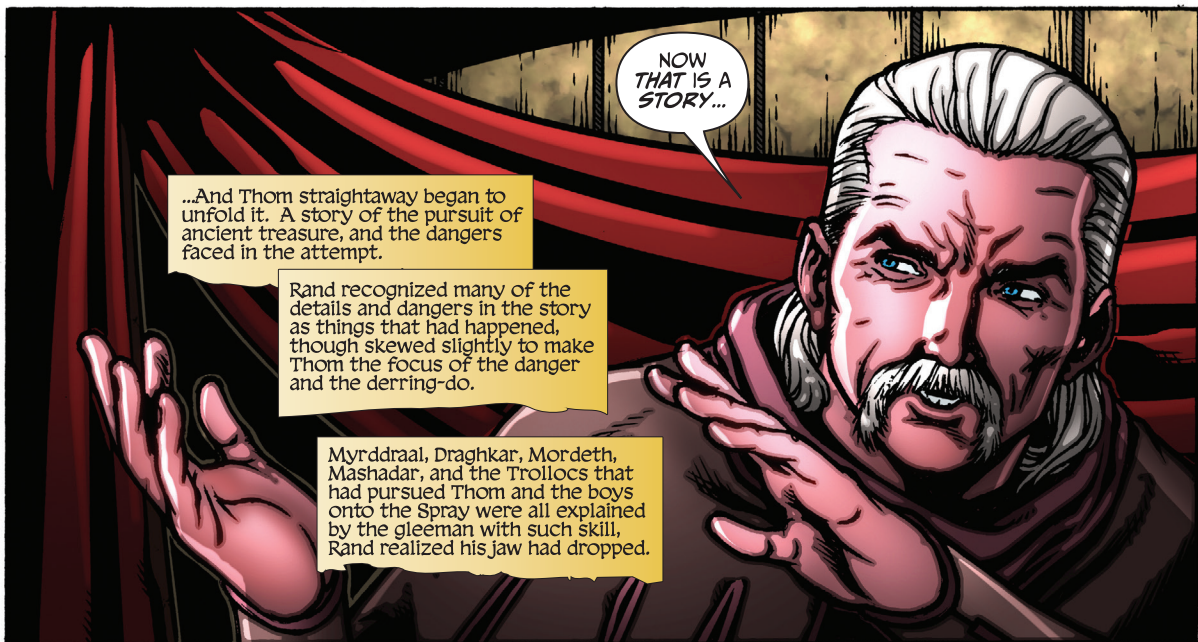
WE DIDN'T MEAN TO CAUSE YOU TROUBLE. WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO CAEMLYN, AND THEN TO--

AND THEN WHERE THE WIND TAKES US. THAT'S HOW GLEEMEN TRAVEL, LIKE DUST ON THE WIND. I AM A GLEEMAN, YOU UNDERSTAND, THOM MERRILIN BY NAME.

THESE TWO COUNTRY LOOTS WANT TO BECOME MY APPRENTICES, THOUGH I AM NOT YET SURE THAT I WANT THEM.



THAT BE ALL VERY WELL, MAN, BUT IT TELLS ME **NOTHING**. FORTUNE PRICK ME, THAT PLACE BE ON NO ROAD TO CAEMLYN FROM ANYWHERE I EVER HEARD TELL OF.



NOW **THAT** IS A STORY...

...And Thom straightaway began to unfold it. A story of the pursuit of ancient treasure, and the dangers faced in the attempt.

Rand recognized many of the details and dangers in the story as things that had happened, though skewed slightly to make Thom the focus of the danger and the derring-do.

Myrddraal, Dragkar, Mordeth, Mashadar, and the Trollocs that had pursued Thom and the boys onto the Spray were all explained by the gleeman with such skill, Rand realized his jaw had dropped.



THAT BE A TALE
MANY FOLK WOULD NO
BELIEVE. OF COURSE, I
DID SEE THE TROLLOCS,
DID I NO.

NOW,
HAPPEN YOU TO
HAVE SOME OF
THIS *TREASURE*
YOU MENTIONED
WITH YOU?



ALAS, WHAT LITTLE WE MANAGED
TO CARRY AWAY WAS LOST WITH
OUR HORSES, WHICH BOLTED
WHEN THOSE LAST TROLLOCS
APPEARED. ALL I HAVE LEFT
ARE MY FLUTE AND MY HARP,
A FEW COPPERS, AND
THE CLOTHES ON
MY BACK.

BUT BELIEVE
ME, YOU WANT NO
PART OF THAT TREASURE. IT
HAS THE TAINT OF THE DARK
ONE. BEST TO LEAVE IT
TO THE RUINS AND THE
TROLLOCS.

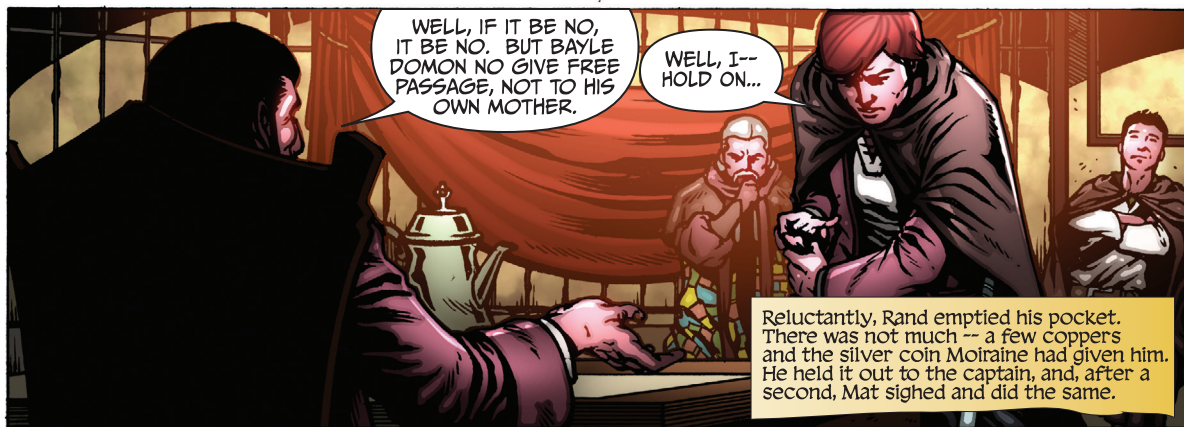


SO YOU'VE NO MONEY TO PAY
YOUR PASSAGE. I'D NO LET MY
OWN BROTHER SAIL WITH ME IF
HE COULD NO PAY HIS PASSAGE,
ESPECIALLY IF HE BROUGHT
TROLLOCS BEHIND HIM TO HACK
UP MY RAILINGS AND CUT
UP MY RIGGING.

BUT BAYLE DOMON
BE A REASONABLE MAN.
I'D NO TOSS YOU OVER THE
SIDE IF THERE BE A WAY OUT
OF IT. NOW, I SEE ONE OF YOUR
APPRENTICES HAS A SWORD. I
NEED A GOOD SWORD, AND FINE
FELLOW THAT I BE, I'LL LET YOU
HAVE PASSAGE AS FAR AS
WHITEBRIDGE FOR IT.



MY--
NO!



WELL, IF IT BE NO,
IT BE NO. BUT BAYLE
DOMON NO GIVE FREE
PASSAGE, NOT TO HIS
OWN MOTHER.

WELL, I--
HOLD ON...

Reluctantly, Rand emptied his pocket. There was not much -- a few coppers and the silver coin Moiraine had given him. He held it out to the captain, and, after a second, Mat sighed and did the same.



HMM.
YES. AS FAR AS
WHITEBRIDGE.

THAT'S A DEAR
PASSAGE JUST TO
WHITEBRIDGE.

PLUS DAMAGES
TO MY VESSEL. PLUS
A BIT FOR BRINGING
TROLLOCS DOWN ON
ME SO I MUST RUN
DOWNRIVER IN
THE NIGHT.



WHAT ABOUT
THE OTHERS? WILL
YOU TAKE THEM, TOO?
THEY SHOULD HAVE
REACHED THE RIVER BY
NOW, OR THEY SOON WILL,
AND THEY'LL SEE THAT
LANTERN ON
YOUR MAST.



HAPPEN YOU
THINK WE BE STANDING
STILL, MAN? FORTUNE
PRICK ME, WE BE THREE,
FOUR MILES DOWNRIVER
FROM WHERE YOU CAME
ABOARD. TROLLOCS MAKE
THESE FELLOWS PUT THEIR
BACKS INTO THEIR OARS,
AND THE CURRENT
HELPS, TOO.

BUT IT MAKES
NO NEVERMIND. I'D
NO PUT IN AGAIN TONIGHT
IF MY OLD GRAND-
MOTHER WAS ON THE
RIVERBANK.

I MAY NO
PUT IN AGAIN AT
ALL UNTIL I REACH
WHITEBRIDGE.



NO...

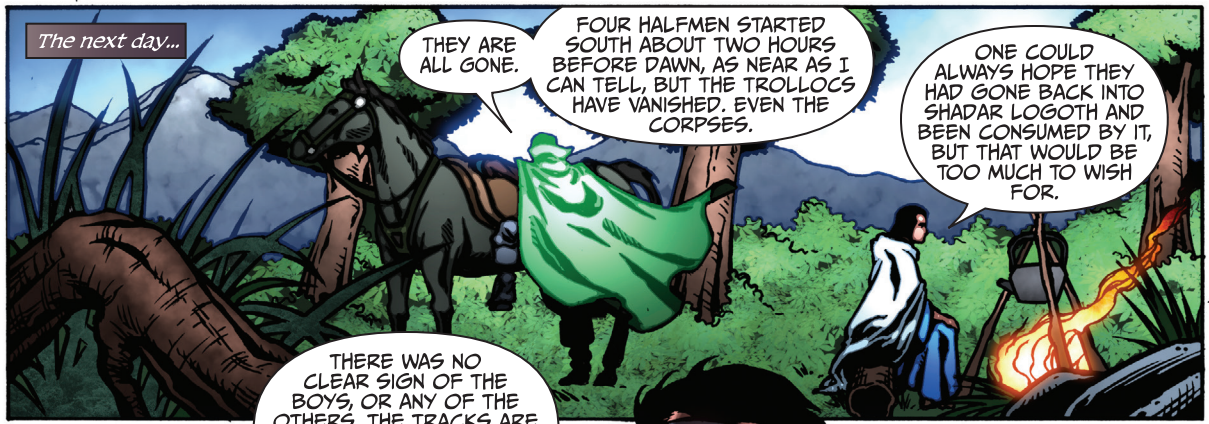


THERE ISN'T
ANYTHING YOU CAN
DO, LAD. BESIDES, THEY'RE
LIKELY SAFE WITH THE... WITH
MOIRAIN AND LAN BY THIS
TIME. CAN YOU THINK OF ANY
BETTER THAN THOSE TWO
FOR GETTING THE LOT OF
THEM IN THE CLEAR?

I TRIED
TO TALK HER OUT
OF COMING.

YOU DID
WHAT YOU COULD,
LAD. NO ONE
COULD ASK
MORE.

I SHOULD
HAVE TRIED
HARDER.



The next day...

THEY ARE ALL GONE.

FOUR HALFMEN STARTED SOUTH ABOUT TWO HOURS BEFORE DAWN, AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL, BUT THE TROLLOCS HAVE VANISHED. EVEN THE CORPSES.

ONE COULD ALWAYS HOPE THEY HAD GONE BACK INTO SHADAR LOGOTH AND BEEN CONSUMED BY IT, BUT THAT WOULD BE TOO MUCH TO WISH FOR.

THERE WAS NO CLEAR SIGN OF THE BOYS, OR ANY OF THE OTHERS. THE TRACKS ARE TOO MUDDLED TO TELL ANYTHING. BUT THIS OTHER IS IMPORTANT, MOIRAINÉ.

I COULD ACCEPT TROLLOCS IN THE TWO RIVERS -- EVEN A HUNDRED TROLLOCS -- BUT *THIS*? THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A *THOUSAND* IN THE HUNT FOR US YESTERDAY!

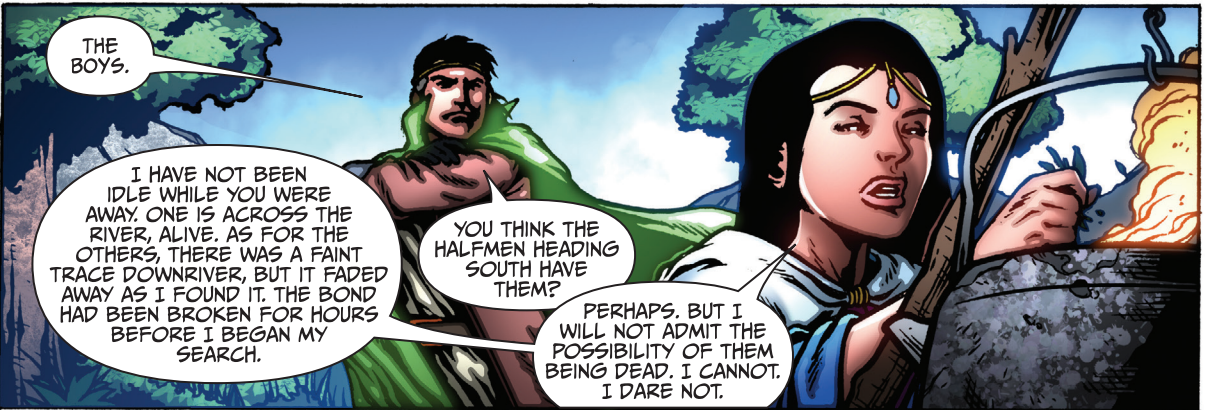
IF THOSE THOUSAND WERE HERE TO BE SENT INTO THE TWO RIVERS, WHY WERE THEY NOT? THERE IS ONLY ONE ANSWER -- THEY WERE SENT ONLY AFTER WE CROSSED THE TAREN, WHEN IT WAS KNOWN ONE MYRDDRAAL AND A HUNDRED TROLLOCS WERE NO LONGER ENOUGH.

HOW? HOW WERE THEY SENT? IF A THOUSAND TROLLOCS CAN BE BROUGHT SO FAR FROM THE BLIGHT -- SO QUICKLY, UNSEEN -- CAN TEN THOUSAND BE SENT INTO THE HEART OF SALDAEA, OR ARAFEL, OR SHIENAR? THE BORDERLANDS COULD BE OVERRUN IN A YEAR!



THE WHOLE WORLD WILL BE OVERRUN IN FIVE IF WE DO NOT FIND THOSE BOYS.

THE QUESTION WORRIES ME ALSO, BUT I HAVE NO ANSWERS. LET US DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT FACE US HERE AND NOW; EVERYTHING ELSE MUST WAIT.

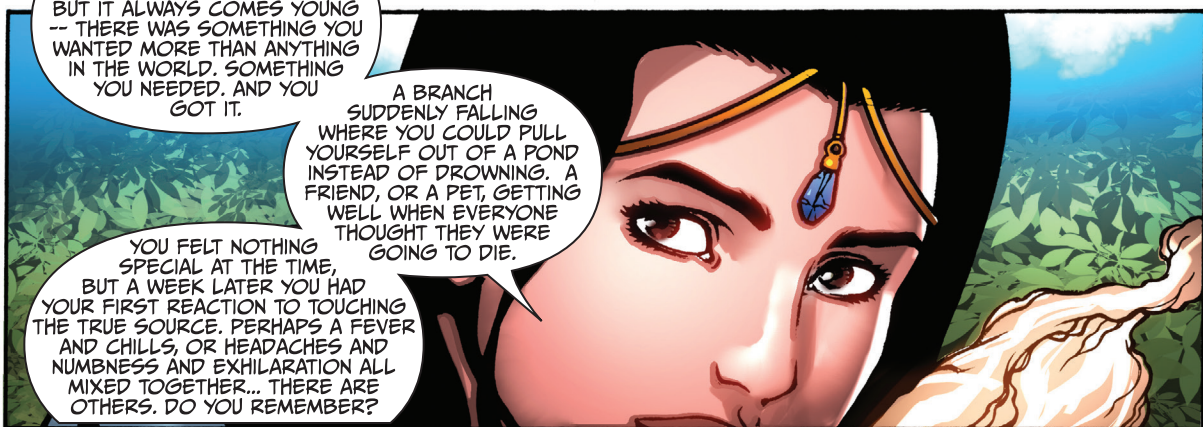
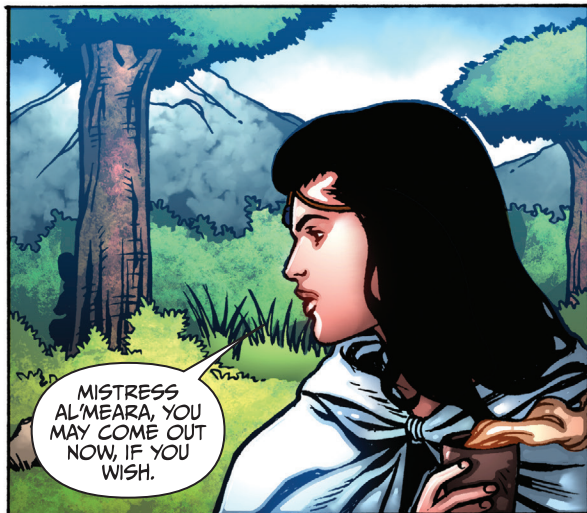
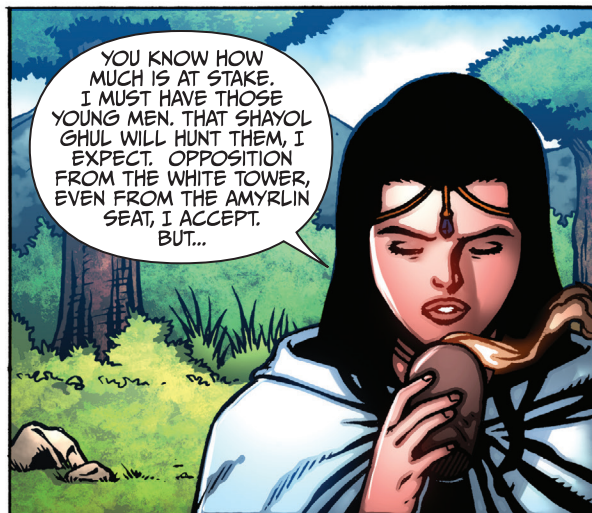


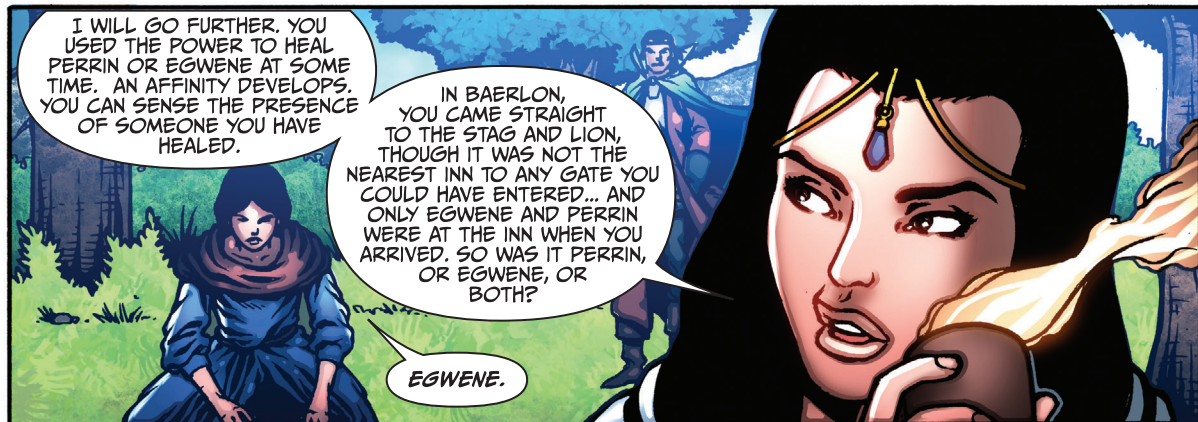
THE BOYS.

I HAVE NOT BEEN IDLE WHILE YOU WERE AWAY. ONE IS ACROSS THE RIVER, ALIVE. AS FOR THE OTHERS, THERE WAS A FAINT TRACE DOWNRIVER, BUT IT FADED AWAY AS I FOUND IT. THE BOND HAD BEEN BROKEN FOR HOURS BEFORE I BEGAN MY SEARCH.

YOU THINK THE HALFMEN HEADING SOUTH HAVE THEM?

PERHAPS. BUT I WILL NOT ADMIT THE POSSIBILITY OF THEM BEING DEAD. I CANNOT. I DARE NOT.





I WILL GO FURTHER. YOU USED THE POWER TO HEAL PERRIN OR EGWENE AT SOME TIME. AN AFFINITY DEVELOPS. YOU CAN SENSE THE PRESENCE OF SOMEONE YOU HAVE HEALED.

IN BAERLON, YOU CAME STRAIGHT TO THE STAG AND LION, THOUGH IT WAS NOT THE NEAREST INN TO ANY GATE YOU COULD HAVE ENTERED... AND ONLY EGWENE AND PERRIN WERE AT THE INN WHEN YOU ARRIVED. SO WAS IT PERRIN, OR EGWENE, OR BOTH?

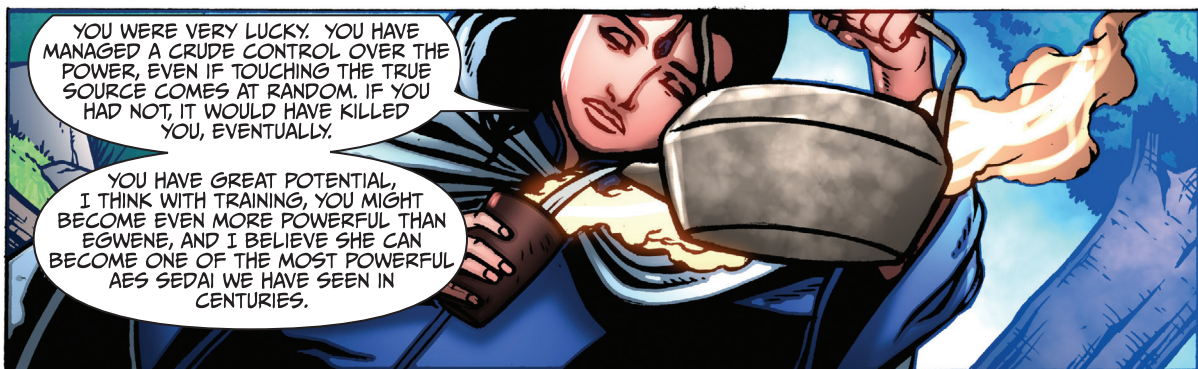
EGWENE.



SHE HAD BREAKBONE FEVER. I WAS STILL APPRENTICE TO MISTRESS BARRAN, AND SHE SET ME TO WATCH EGWENE.

I WAS YOUNG, AND I DIDN'T KNOW THE WISDOM HAD EVERYTHING WELL IN HAND. I THOUGHT EGWENE WAS DYING. I USED TO LOOK AFTER HER SOMETIMES WHEN SHE WAS A TODDLER -- WHEN HER MOTHER WAS BUSY -- AND I STARTED CRYING BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO WATCH HER DIE.

WHEN MISTRESS BARRAN CAME BACK TO CHECK ON HER AN HOUR LATER, THE FEVER HAD BROKEN. A WEEK LATER I FELL ON THE FLOOR IN THE SITTING ROOM, SHAKING AND BURNING UP BY TURNS... MISTRESS BARRAN BUNDLED ME INTO BED, BUT BY SUPPERTIME IT WAS GONE.



YOU WERE VERY LUCKY. YOU HAVE MANAGED A CRUDE CONTROL OVER THE POWER, EVEN IF TOUCHING THE TRUE SOURCE COMES AT RANDOM. IF YOU HAD NOT, IT WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU, EVENTUALLY.

YOU HAVE GREAT POTENTIAL, I THINK WITH TRAINING, YOU MIGHT BECOME EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN EGWENE, AND I BELIEVE SHE CAN BECOME ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL AES SEDAI WE HAVE SEEN IN CENTURIES.



NO!
I'LL HAVE
NOTHING TO
DO WITH--

WITH...



...I WOULD
ASK YOU NOT
TELL ANYONE
ABOUT THIS.
PLEASE?

AND NONE
OF THIS EXPLAINS
WHAT YOU WANT
WITH RAND, MAT,
AND PERRIN.



THE DARK ONE WANTS THEM. IF THE DARK ONE WANTS A THING, I *OPPOSE* IT. CAN THERE BE A SIMPLER REASON, OR A BETTER?

LAN, WE MUST BE GOING SOUTH, I THINK. I FEAR THE WISDOM WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANYING US.

OH YES, I *WILL* BE GOING WITH YOU. YOU *CANNOT* KEEP ME FROM IT.

NO ONE WILL TRY TO KEEP YOU FROM IT. A PART OF THE PATTERN?

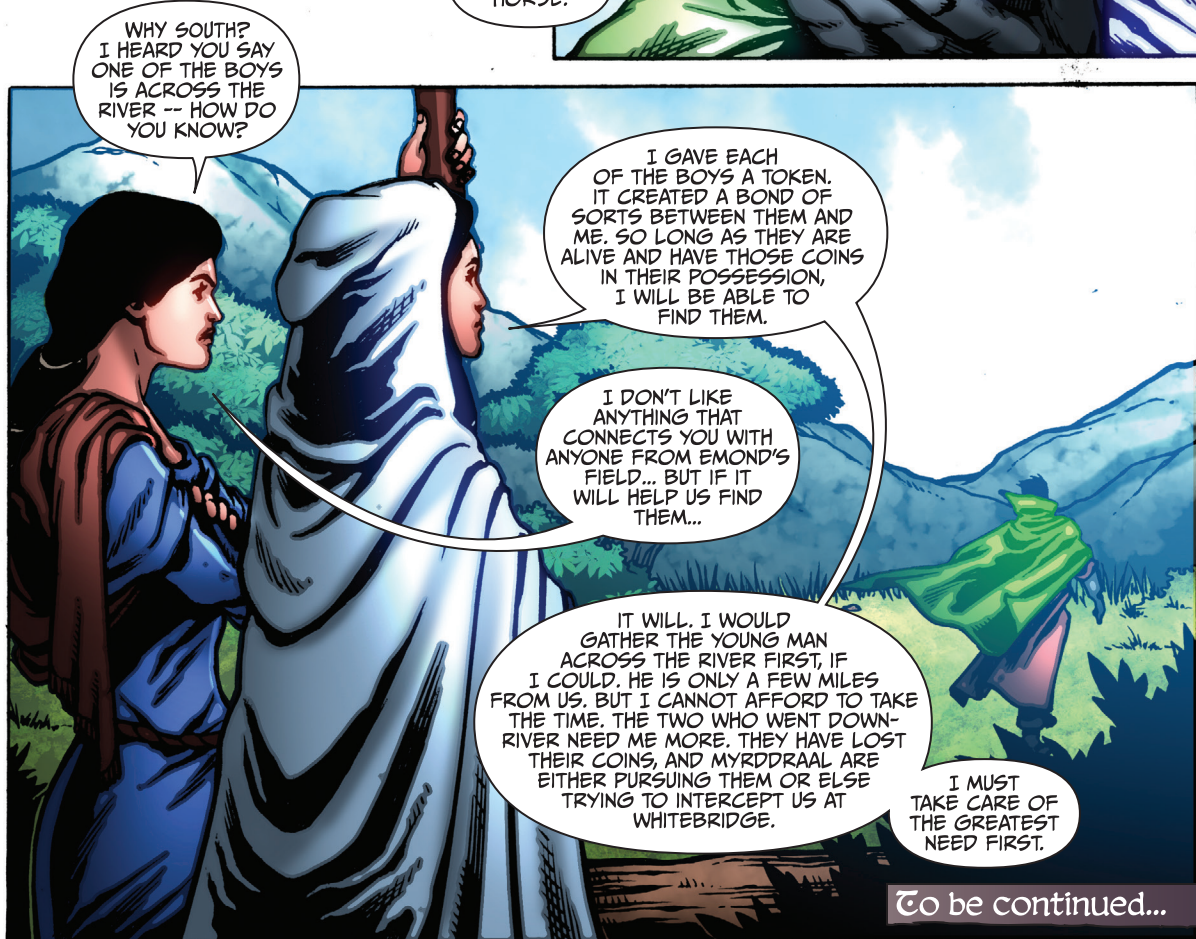


PERHAPS SO. I SHOULD HAVE SPOKEN TO MIN AGAIN.



YOU SEE, NYNAEVE, YOU ARE WELCOME TO COME.

I WILL FETCH YOUR HORSE.



WHY SOUTH? I HEARD YOU SAY ONE OF THE BOYS IS ACROSS THE RIVER -- HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I GAVE EACH OF THE BOYS A TOKEN. IT CREATED A BOND OF SORTS BETWEEN THEM AND ME. SO LONG AS THEY ARE ALIVE AND HAVE THOSE COINS IN THEIR POSSESSION, I WILL BE ABLE TO FIND THEM.

I DON'T LIKE ANYTHING THAT CONNECTS YOU WITH ANYONE FROM EMOND'S FIELD... BUT IF IT WILL HELP US FIND THEM...

IT WILL. I WOULD GATHER THE YOUNG MAN ACROSS THE RIVER FIRST, IF I COULD. HE IS ONLY A FEW MILES FROM US. BUT I CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE THE TIME. THE TWO WHO WENT DOWN-RIVER NEED ME MORE. THEY HAVE LOST THEIR COINS, AND MYRDDRAAL ARE EITHER PURSUING THEM OR ELSE TRYING TO INTERCEPT US AT WHITEBRIDGE.

I MUST TAKE CARE OF THE GREATEST NEED FIRST.

To be continued...