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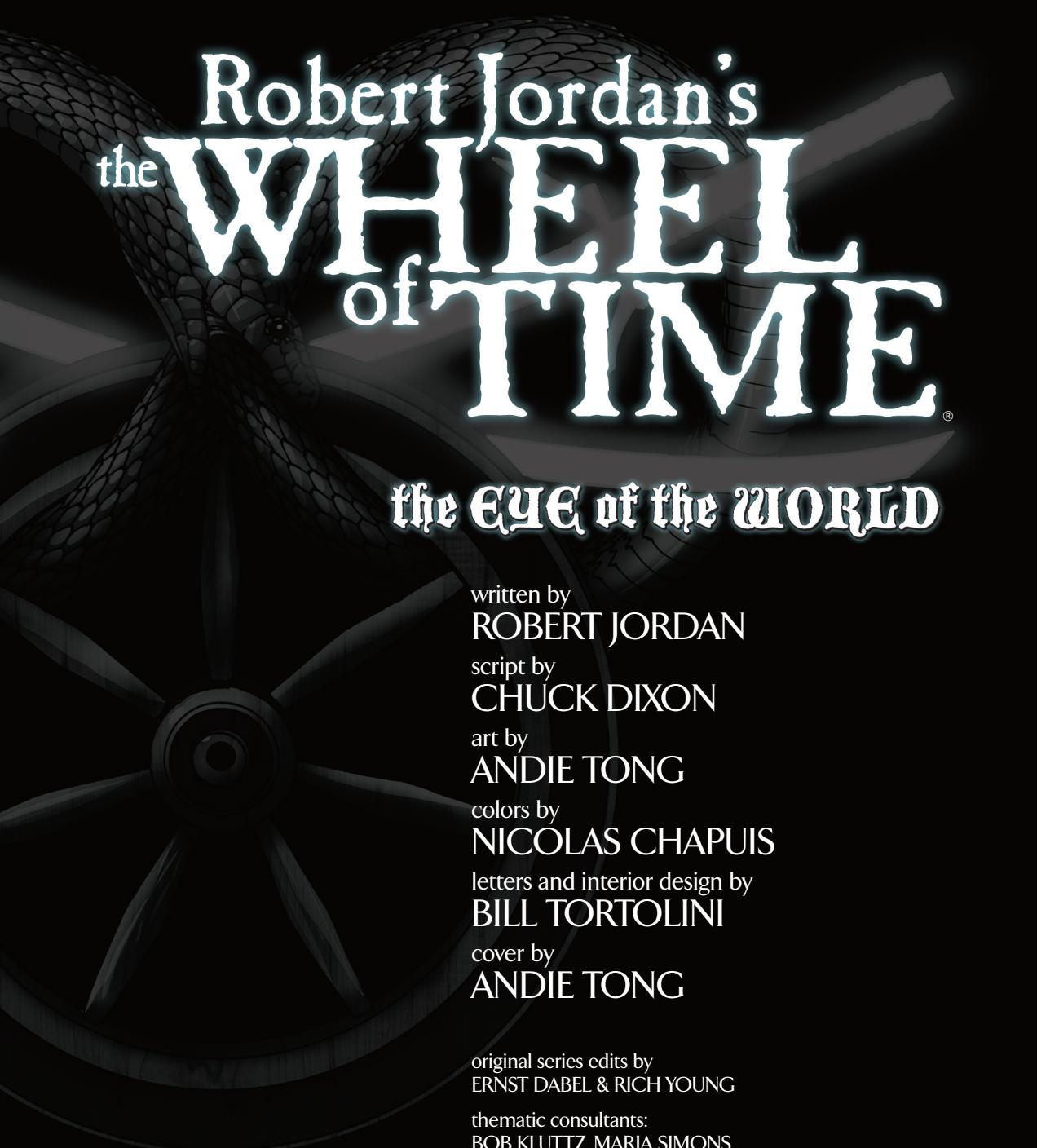
Robert Jordan's the WHEEL of TIME®



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the EYE of the WORLD

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Robert Jordan's the WHEEL of TIME®

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As Egwene sat by the fire with her tea, staring up at the fragment of the statue of Artur Hawkwing, Perrin went down to the pool to be alone.



He found himself thinking of the axe he carried -- he had been so proud of it once, back in Emond's Field... before he knew what he might be willing to do with it.



YOU
HATE HER THAT
MUCH?





YES YOU DO,
IF SHE HAD TO
CHOOSE HER WAY OF
DYING, WHICH DO YOU THINK
SHE'D PICK? ONE CLEAN
BLOW OF YOUR AXE,
OR THE WAY THE
ANIMALS WE SAW
TODAY DIED?

I KNOW
WHICH I'D
TAKE.



I DON'T
HAVE ANY RIGHT
TO CHOOSE FOR
HER, YOU WON'T TELL
HER, WILL YOU?
ABOUT...

I HATE
THIS BLOODY
THING.



I COULDN'T
HAVE DONE IT,
YOU KNOW. WHEN IT
WAS ALL PRETEND
AND MAYBE, I COULD
SWAGGER, AND
PLAY AS IF I...

IT'S
DIFFERENT
NOW. I DON'T
EVER WANT TO
USE IT AGAIN.

YOU'LL
USE IT.



BETTER
IF I NEVER
LOOK AT THIS
BLOODY THING
AGAIN--!



NO!

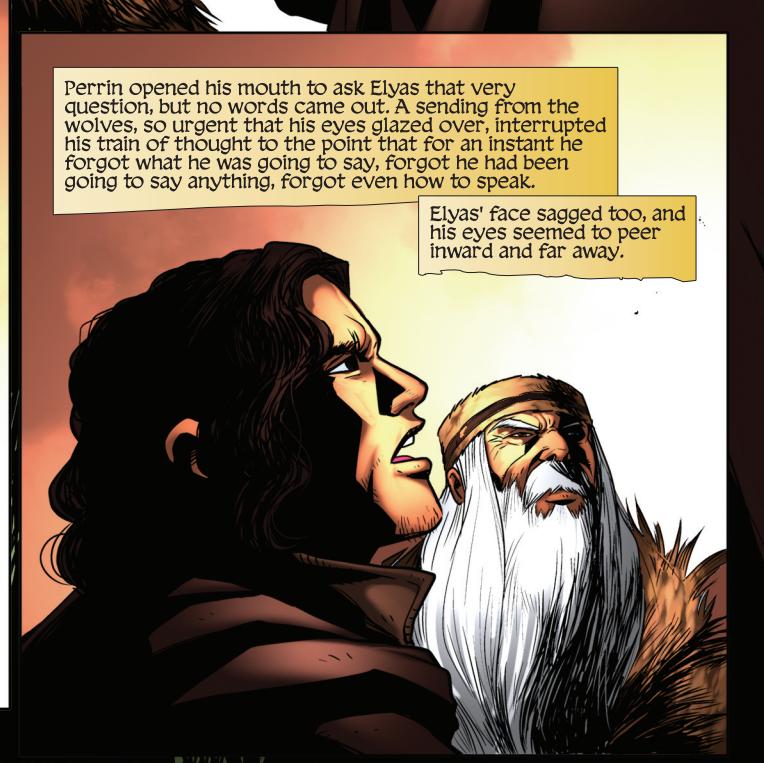


YOU WILL USE IT, BOY, AND AS LONG AS YOU HATE USING IT, YOU WILL USE IT **MORE WISELY** THAN MOST MEN WOULD. WAIT.

IF EVER YOU DON'T HATE IT ANY LONGER, THEN WILL BE THE TIME TO THROW IT AS FAR AS YOU CAN AND RUN THE OTHER WAY.



Again, Perrin stared at the axe in his hand and wondered... what if he waited, but then couldn't throw it away? What then?



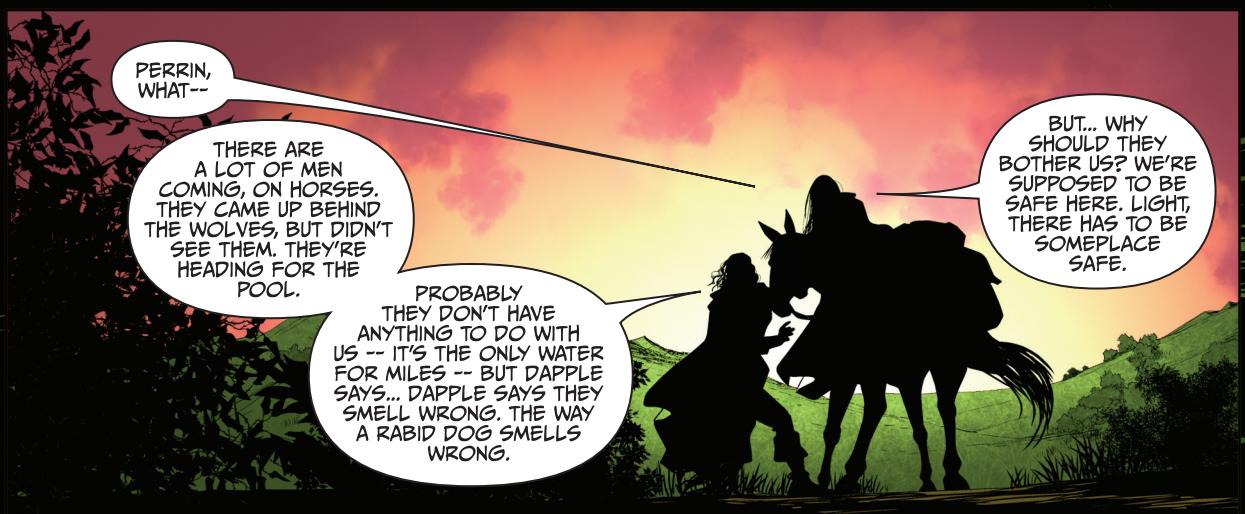
Perrin opened his mouth to ask Elyas that very question, but no words came out. A sending from the wolves, so urgent that his eyes glazed over, interrupted his train of thought to the point that for an instant he forgot what he was going to say, forgot he had been going to say anything, forgot even how to speak.

Elyas' face sagged too, and his eyes seemed to peer inward and far away.



...and then it was gone, as quickly as it had come. As soon as the veil lifted from his eyes, Elyas did not pause -- he sped toward the fire without any hesitation.

DOUSE THE FIRE!



They looked for somewhere to hide, but the twilight was thickening. Soon it would be too dark to travel, and they were far too near to the pool as it was.

There had to be somewhere to go...



Perrin trotted toward the hill, glancing over his shoulder for any sign of the men who were coming. There was nothing -- yet -- though more than once he had to stop and wait for Bela to stumble after him, picking her way carefully over the uneven ground.

The closer the mare came, the more Perrin thought that Egwene and the horse both must be more tired than he had believed.



Which meant that this had better be a good hiding place, because they were in no condition to hunt for another.



At the base of the hill Perrin studied the massive, flat rock outlined against the sky, jutting out the slope almost at the crest. There was an odd familiarity to the way the top of the huge slab seemed to form irregular steps.



Despite the weathering of the centuries, when Perrin touched the stone he could still feel four jointed columns. Fingers. These were fingers.

They would find shelter in Artur Hawkwing's hand. Maybe some of his justice would be left there...



OKAY,
FOLLOW
ME -- WE CAN'T
AFFORD
TO...

PERRIN.

COME ON,
EGWENE, WE
CAN TALK WHEN
WE GET SETTLED.
NOW FOLLOW
ME.

IT'S TOO
DARK TO SEE,
PERRIN.



HOW
CAN YOU SEE
ANYTHING?

ER, I--

I FELT
THE ROCK.
THAT'S WHAT IT
HAS TO BE. THEY
WON'T BE ABLE
TO PICK US OUT
AGAINST THE
SHADOW EVEN IF
THEY DO COME
OUT THIS
FAR.



I'LL LEAD
BELA TO
THE SPOT,
EGWENE.

It was full dark, the moon was covered by clouds, and yet Perrin could see perfectly well. He hoped Egwene would not press the issue, but all the way to the shelter he could feel her eyes on his back.



As he helped Egwene down from the saddle, the night broke out in shouts back toward the pool. The men were too far off to understand what they were shouting, but Perrin knew what was happening. The wolves knew.

THE MEN SAW WIND.

THEY'RE BREAKING UP INTO PARTIES TO SEARCH. SO MANY OF THEM, AND THE WOLVES ARE ALL HURT...

...BUT DAPPLE AND THE OTHERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP OUT OF THEIR WAY, EVEN INJURED, AND THEY DON'T EXPECT US. PEOPLE DON'T SEE WHAT THEY DON'T EXPECT. THEY'LL GIVE UP SOON ENOUGH AND MAKE CAMP.

WE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, PERRIN.

PERRIN...

I--

And then, Perrin **saw**.

Groups of torch-carrying men now rode through the hills, bunches of ten or twelve. Perrin could not tell how many there were.

They continued to shout to each other, and sometimes there were screams in the night, the screams of horses, the screams of men.

Perrin saw it all from more than one vantage, crouched on the hill with Egwene as his mind ran in the night with Dapple, and Wind, and Hopper. And Elyas was out there, too.



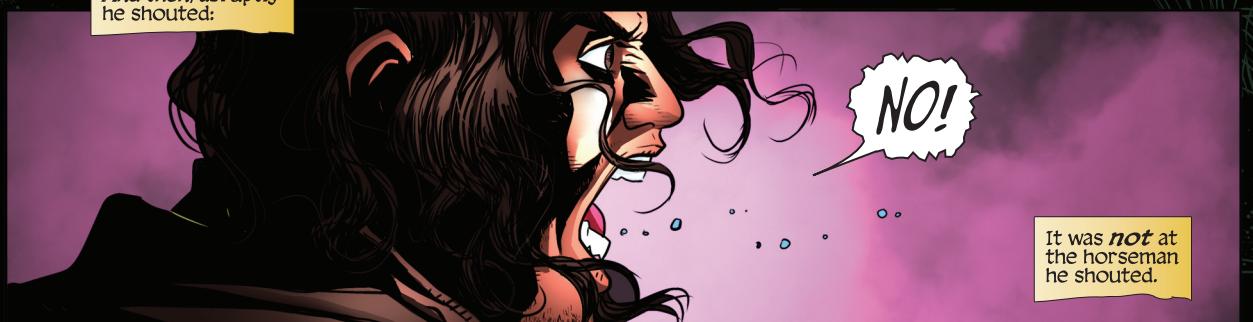


LOOK,
THERE IS
SOMETHING
UP THERE!





For a moment, Perrin stared at the lancehead, enough sharp steel to go completely through him.



It was *not* at the horseman he shouted.



Out of the night Hopper came and left the ground in a leap, soaring like the eagles. The Whitecloaks had only a moment to begin cursing before Hopper's jaws closed around the throat of the man with his lance leveled at Perrin.

The wolf's momentum carried both of them off the other side of the horse, and Perrin felt the man's throat crushing, tasted the blood.



Hopper landed lightly, already apart from the man he had killed. His good eye met Perrin's for just a second, and a thought passed from wolf to man:

Run, brother!



Without thinking, Perrin leaped forward, still screaming. All thought was gone. The horsemen had bunched too much to be able to use their lances, and the axe was a feather in his hands, one huge wolf's tooth of steel.



The Whitecloaks set upon Hopper then, pinning him to the earth with their lances. Perrin could feel the wolf's pain, it *filled* him, and he screamed.



And then something crashed into his head, and, as he fell, he did not know if it was Hopper or himself who died.



PERRIN?
OH, THANK THE
LIGHT--



--I WAS
AFRAID THEY
HAD KILLED
YOU.



As his head cleared, Perrin tried to get up from the floor. Sharp pain stabbing along his arms and legs turned the movement into a flop. For the first time he realized he was tied, hand and foot.

Egwene as well.

That they were tied was shock enough, but they wore enough ropes to hold horses. What did they think he and Egwene **were**?

MY LORD
CAPTAIN.



BE AT EASE, CHILD BYAR.

YOU HAVE TALLIED OUR COSTS FOR THIS... ENCOUNTER?



NINE MEN DEAD, MY LORD CAPTAIN, AND TWENTY-THREE INJURED, SEVEN SERIOUSLY. ALL CAN RIDE, THOUGH.



THIRTY HORSES HAD TO BE PUT DOWN. THEY WERE HAMSTRUNG!



MANY OF THE REMOUNTS ARE SCATTERED. WE MAY FIND SOME AT DAYBREAK, MY LORD CAPTAIN, BUT WITH WOLVES TO SEND THEM ON THEIR WAY, IT WILL TAKE DAYS TO GATHER THEM ALL.



WE DO NOT HAVE DAYS, CHILD BYAR. WE RIDE AT DAWN. NOTHING CAN CHANGE THAT. WE MUST BE IN CAEMLYN IN TIME, YES?



AND WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR ALL THIS, ASIDE FROM THESE TWO YOUNGLINGS?



I HAVE HAD THE WOLF THAT WAS WITH THIS LOT SKINNED, MY LORD CAPTAIN. THE HIDE SHOULD MAKE A FINE RUG FOR MY LORD CAPTAIN'S TENT.

Hopper!

GRRR...

Not even realizing what he was doing, Perrin growled and struggled against his bonds. The ropes dug into his skin, but they did not give.

His mouth curled into a tight smile at the thought of his teeth meeting in Byar's throat -- and the thought shocked him. His smile faded, and he shook himself. He was a *man*, not a *WOLF*.

I DO NOT CARE ABOUT WOLF-HIDE RUGS, CHILD BYAR.

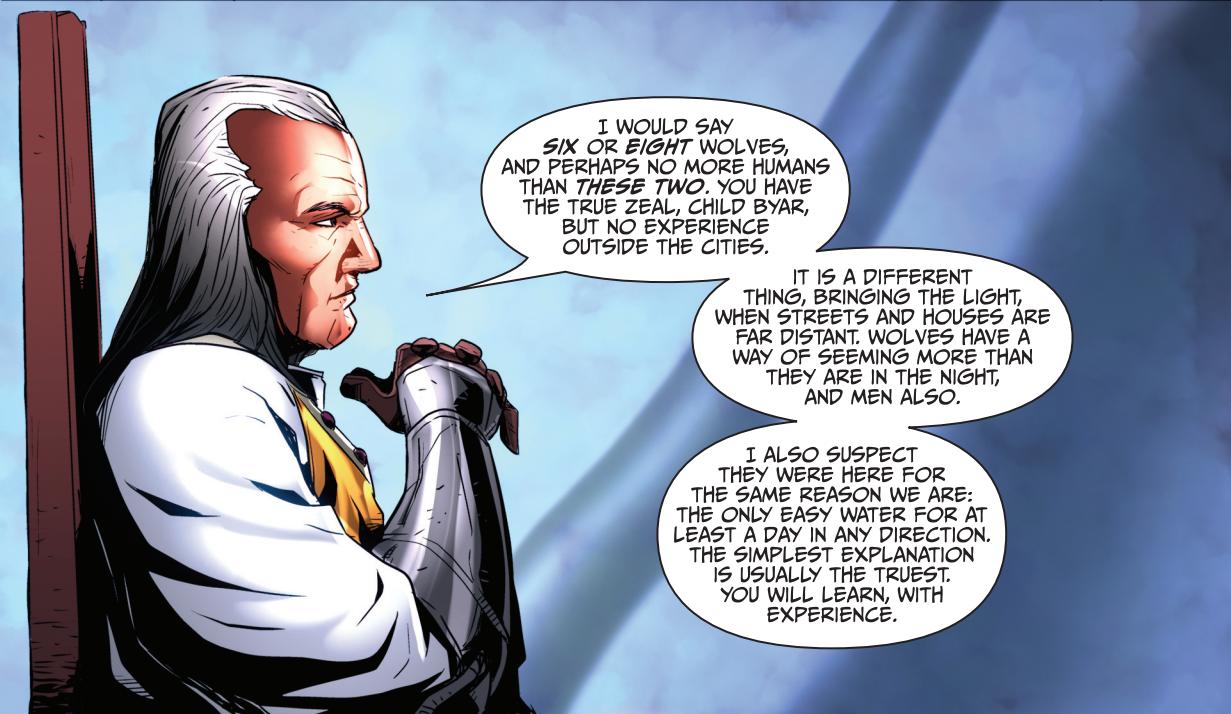
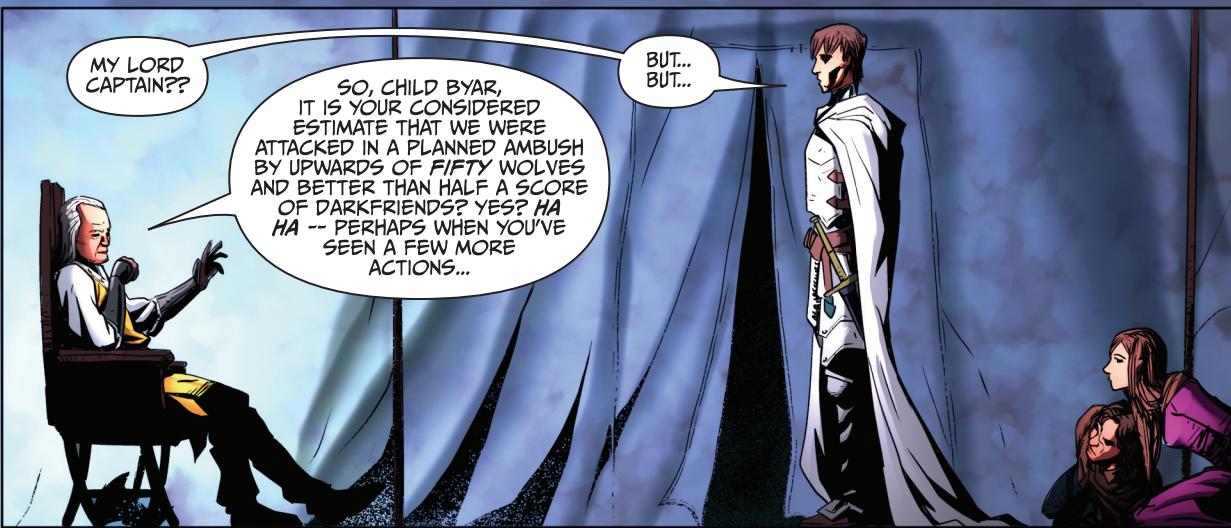
YOU WERE REPORTING ON WHAT WE ACHIEVED THIS NIGHT, NO? IF WE ACHIEVED ANYTHING.

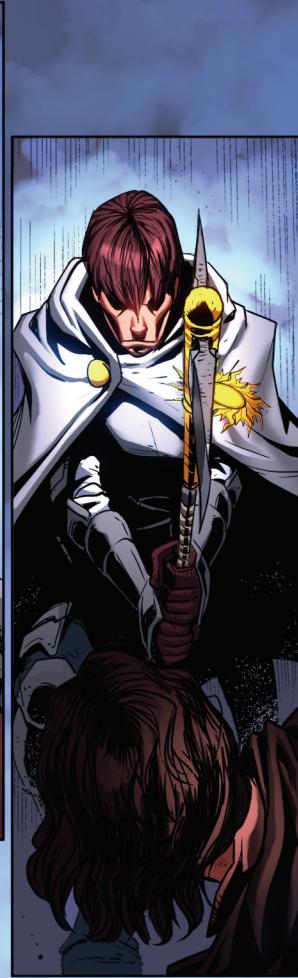
I WOULD ESTIMATE THE PACK THAT ATTACKED US AT FIFTY BEASTS OR MORE, MY LORD CAPTAIN. OF THAT, WE KILLED AT LEAST TWENTY, PERHAPS THIRTY.

BESIDES THESE TWO, THERE WERE AT LEAST A DOZEN OTHER MEN. I BELIEVE WE DISPOSED OF FOUR OR FIVE, BUT IT IS UNLIKELY WE WILL FIND ANY BODIES, GIVEN THE DARKFRIENDS' PROPENSITY FOR CARRYING AWAY THEIR DEAD.

ALL IN ALL, THIS SEEMS TO BE A COORDINATED AMBUSH, BUT THAT RAISES THE QUESTION OF--

BYAH-HAH-HAH-HA!





NOT A
VILLAGER'S
WEAPON, MY LORD
CAPTAIN. NOR A
FARMER'S.

NO...

UNH...

MY NAME
IS GEOFRAM
BORNHALD. YOU
ARE PERRIN, I UNDER-
STAND. BUT YOU, YOUNG
WOMAN, WHAT IS
YOUR NAME?

I AM
EGWENE.



JUST
PERRIN
AND JUST
EGWENE.

BUT I
SUPPOSE IF
YOU TRULY ARE
DARKFRIENDS,
YOU WISH TO HIDE
YOUR IDENTITIES
AS MUCH AS
POSSIBLE.

WE AREN'T
DARKFRIENDS--!

THWAK
YOU WILL
KEEP A CIVIL
TONGUE WHEN
SPEAKING TO AN
ANOINTED OF THE
LIGHT, OR YOU
WILL HAVE NO
TONGUE.

GO
EASY,
CHILD
BYAR.

I EXPECT
THESE TWO DO
NOT KNOW MUCH OF
THE ANOINTED, OR ABOUT
LORDS CAPTAIN OF
THE CHILDREN OF
THE LIGHT.

PLEASE, FOR
CHILD BYAR'S SAKE,
AT LEAST, TRY NOT TO
ARGUE OR SHOUT, YES? I
WANT NO MORE THAN THAT
YOU SHOULD WALK IN THE
LIGHT, AND LETTING ANGER
GET THE BETTER OF
YOU WON'T HELP
ANY OF US.

I HAVE
HEARD OF
THIS THING OF
MEN RUNNING WITH
WOLVES, THOUGH
I HAVE NOT SEEN
IT BEFORE.

MEN SUPPOSEDLY
TALKING WITH WOLVES AND
OTHER CREATURES OF THE DARK
ONE... A FILTHY BUSINESS. IT
MAKES ME FEAR THE LAST
BATTLE IS INDEED
COMING SOON.

BUT
WOLVES
AREN'T...

ER, THAT IS,
WOLVES AREN'T
CREATURES OF THE DARK
ONE. THEY HATE THE DARK
ONE -- AT LEAST, THEY
HATE TROLLOCS
AND FADES.

AND
WHO TOLD
YOU THAT?

A WARDER,
HE SAID WOLVES
HATE TROLLOCS
AND TROLLOCS
ARE AFRAID OF
WOLVES.

A WARDER.
A CREATURE
OF TAR VALON
WITCHES.

WHAT ELSE
WOULD THAT SORT
TELL YOU, WHEN HE IS A
DARKFRIEND HIMSELF, AND
A SERVANT OF DARKFRIENDS?
DO YOU NOT KNOW TROLLOC'S
HAVE WOLVES' MUZZLES
AND TEETH, AND
WOLVES' FUR?

NOT ALL OF
THEM. SOME OF
THEM HAVE HORNS LIKE
RAMS OR GOATS, OR
HAWKS' BEAKS OR...
OR... ALL SORTS
OF THINGS.

I GIVE
YOU EVERY CHANCE,
AND YOU DIG YOUR-
SELF DEEPER WITH
EVERY WORD.

YOU RUN
WITH WOLVES,
CREATURES OF
THE DARK
ONE.

YOU ADMIT TO
BEING ACQUAINTED
WITH A WARDER,
ANOTHER CREATURE OF
THE DARK ONE. I DOUBT
HE WOULD HAVE TOLD
YOU WHAT HE DID
IN PASSING.

YOU, BOY,
CARRY A TAR VALON
MARK IN YOUR POCKET.
MOST MEN OUTSIDE TAR
VALON GET RID OF THESE AS
FAST AS THEY CAN, UNLESS
THEY SERVE THE TAR
VALON WITCHES.



YOU CARRY A FIGHTING MAN'S WEAPON WHILE YOU DRESS LIKE A FARMBOY.



YOU KNOW TROLLOCS AND A MYRDDRAAL. THIS FAR SOUTH, ONLY A FEW SCHOLARS AND THOSE WHO HAVE TRAVELED IN THE BORDERLANDS BELIEVE THEY ARE ANYTHING BUT STORIES. NOW...



WHY DO YOU NOT TELL ME THE TRUTH OF HOW YOU CAME TO BE RUNNING IN THE NIGHT WITH WOLVES?

And then, Perrin surprised Egwene with a story that would have done Thom Merrilin proud.

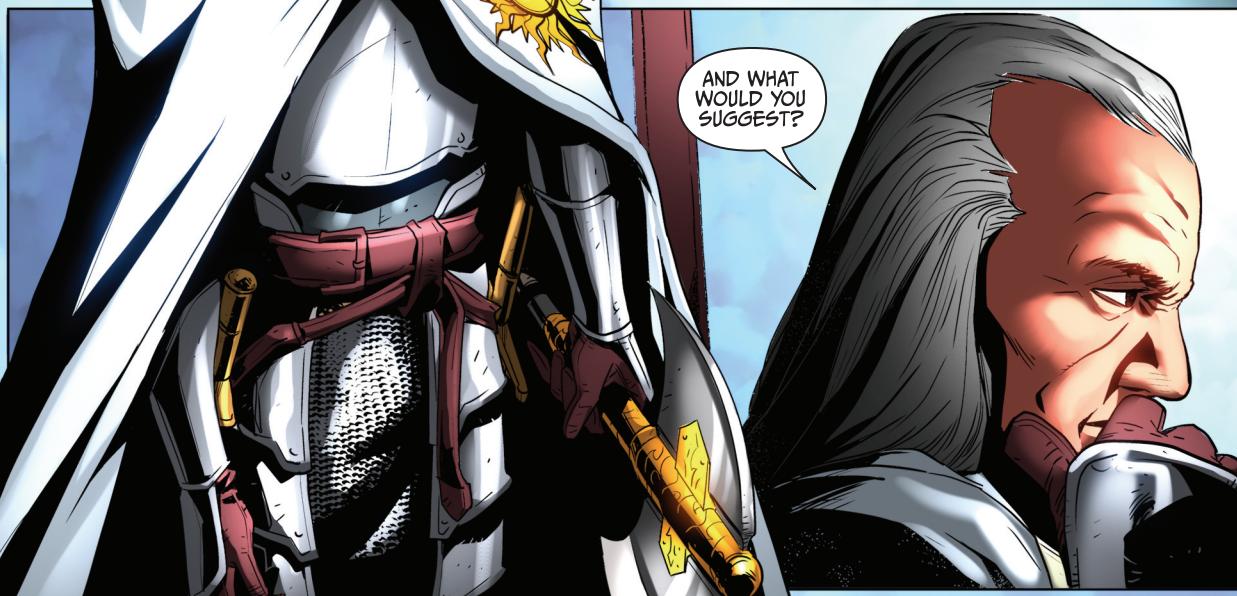
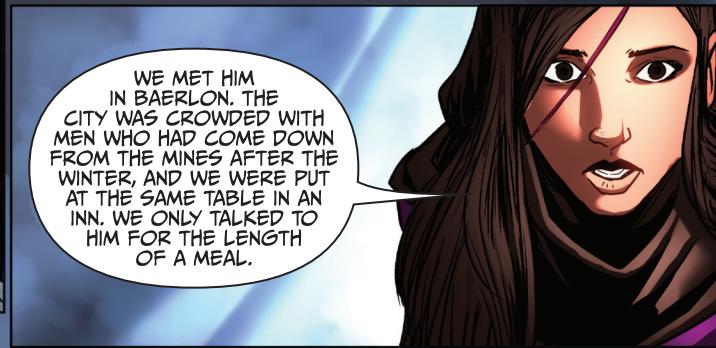
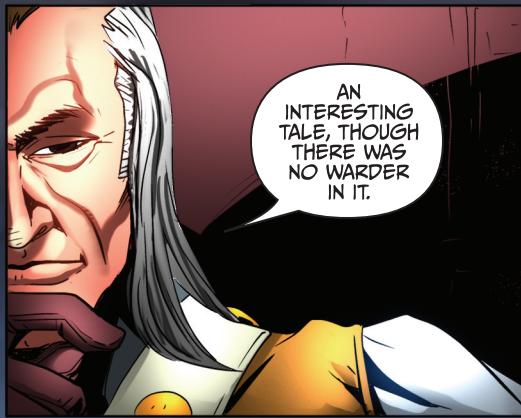


He told of a young man and woman, bored of life in the Two Rivers, who left to see Caemlyn. On the way, they had heard of the ruins of a great city, but when they found Shadar Logoth, there were Trollocs there.

They managed to escape across the River Arinelle, but they were so completely lost... eventually they fell in with a man who offered to guide them to Caemlyn, and he told them his name was none of their business.

The first they had seen of wolves was after the Children of the Light had appeared - and at that time, all they were trying to do was hide so as not to be eaten by the wolves or killed by the men on horseback. Perrin told the Lord Captain all that, humbly and in a respectful tone so as not to incite Byar, and ended his story with:

...IF WE'D KNOWN YOU WERE CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT, WE'D HAVE COME TO YOU FOR HELP.





THE PENALTY
FOR DARKFRIENDS
IS DEATH. THERE IS NO
TRUCE WITH THE SHADOW.
THERE IS NO MERCY
FOR DARKFRIENDS.



ZEAL IS TO
BE APPLAUDED,
BUT OVERZEALOUSNESS
CAN BE A GRIEVOUS
FAULT. REMEMBER THAT
THE TENETS ALSO SAY
'NO MAN IS SO LOST HE
CANNOT BE BROUGHT
TO THE LIGHT.'



THESE TWO
ARE YOUNG. THEY
CANNOT YET BE DEEP IN
THE SHADOW. THEY CAN BE
LED TO THE LIGHT. WE
MUST GIVE THEM
THAT CHANCE.



OF COURSE NOT,
CHILD. YOU MAY BE
TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT
BEING FROM THE TWO RIVERS, BUT
SHADAR LOGOTH? THAT IS A NAME
VERY FEW KNOW, AND MOST OF
THEM DARKFRIENDS. I WOULD
THINK OF A BETTER STORY
ON THE WAY TO AMADOR,
IF I WERE YOU.



REPENT AND
RENOUNCE THE DARK
ONE, COME TO THE LIGHT,
AND TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW
OF THIS VILENESS WITH
WOLVES. DO THAT, AND YOU
WILL BE SPARED A VISIT
TO THE QUESTIONERS.
YOU WILL WALK FREE,
IN THE LIGHT.



BUT YOU,
JUST PERRIN FROM
THE TWO RIVERS, YOU
KILLED TWO OF THE
CHILDREN. FOR YOU,
I FEAR, A GIBBET
WAITS IN
AMADOR.

To be continued...