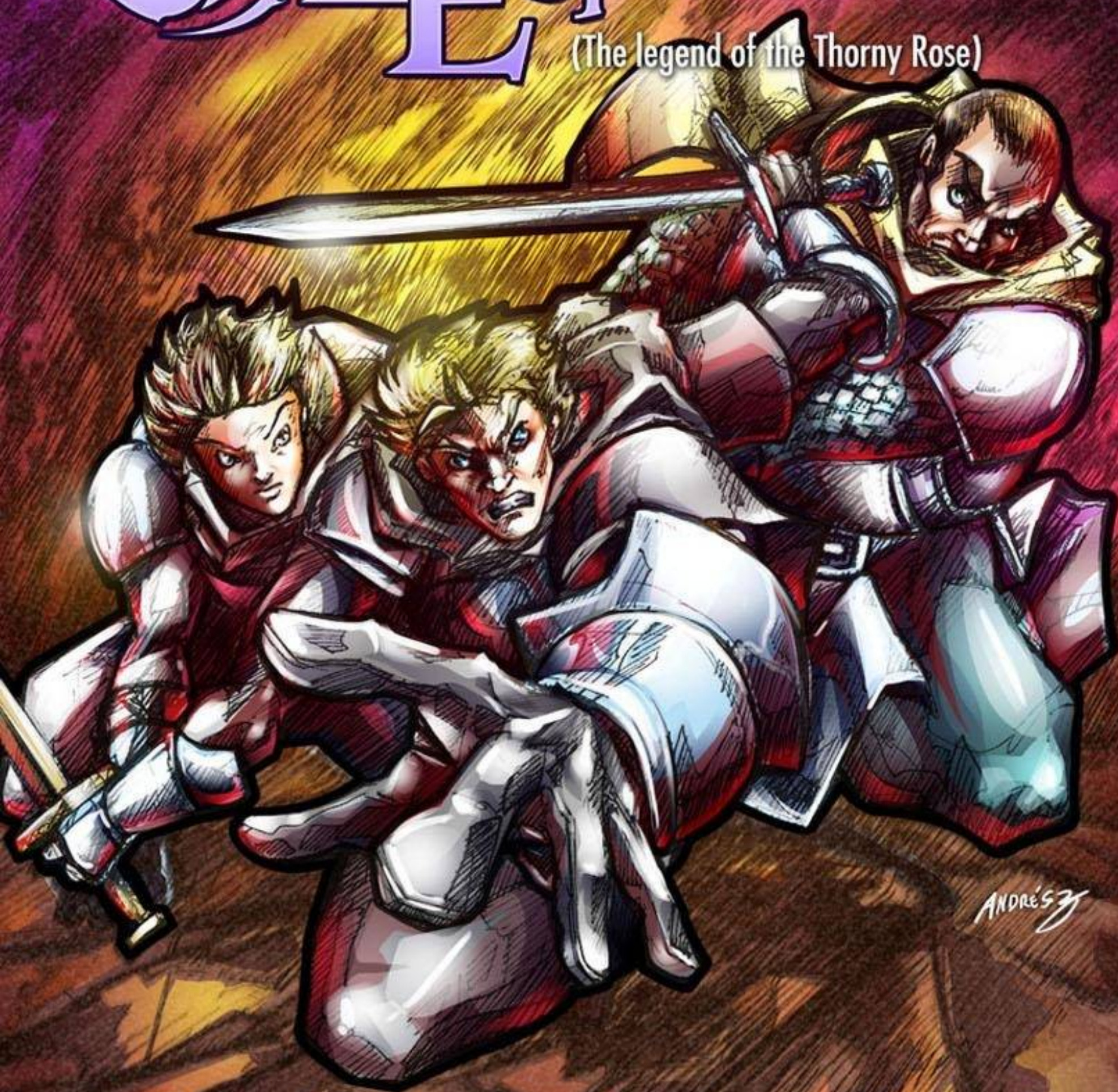


La leyenda de la Rosa Espinada

(The legend of the Thorny Rose)



ANDRÉS Z



Historia/Story:

Andrea Barra

Adaptación y Arte/Adaptation and Art:

Andrés Barra

ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A
GOLDEN KINGDOM, THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL ON EARTH, BUILT WITH
GOLDEN BRICKS AND CHARMED
FLOWER GARDENS

THAT WAS THE HOME OF THE
PEACE KNIGHTS, MEN OF HONOR
ALWAYS READY TO FIGHT FOR
GOOD

OF ALL THEIR RANKS
THERE WAS ONE SPECIAL
KNIGHT: **SIR NICOLAS**

WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, DUE TO ALL
HIS **HONOR AND BRAVERY**,
EVERYONE CONSIDERED
SIR NICOLAS TO BE THE **BEST**
PEACE KNIGHT

BUT ONE DAY FATE
TRICKED HIM...

HIS ETERNAL LOVE, THE
WOMAN OF **HIS LIFE**...

WAS KIDNAPPED
BY **RUFFIANS**

SIR NICOLAS
WENT TO HER
RESCUE

AND BRAVELY FOUGHT
THE VILLAINS WHO KEPT
HER PRISONER...

HE CLIMBED ALL OF THE TOWER'S
FLOORS THAT SEPARATED HIM FROM
HIS LOVE



BUT WHEN HE GOT THERE
HE WITNESSED *THE WORST*
TRAGEDY THAT COULD
BEFALL ONE MAN IN
THIS WORLD

HIS BELOVED DANIELA LAY
DEAD ON THE TOWER'S
LAST FLOOR

NICOLÁS WAS *CRUSHED*.
HE HAD SAVED MANY DAMSELS IN
DISTRESS, HELPED THE POOR AND
HOMELESS, FOUGHT AND WON MANY
BATTLES FOR HIS KING

BUT HE
COULDN'T SAVE
HIS BELOVED

AND THUS *DEFEATED*,
HE LEFT THE
BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN
KINGDOM



AND SO HE LIVED IN HIDING FAR WAY FROM THE KINGDOM, BELIEVING THAT HIS MISTAKE HAD CAUSED THE ENTIRE KINGDOM TO *HATE HIM*

A MESSENGER BROUGHT HIM NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM... AND AFTER HIS EXILE A NEW PEACE KNIGHT TOOK HIS PLACE, BUT EVERYTHING HAD *GONE WRONG*

THE NEW KNIGHT DIDN'T HELP THE POOR AND NEEDY, HE RAISED TAXES AND STOLE THE PRECIOUS YEARLY HARVEST THAT THE PEASANTS HAD MANAGED TO CULTIVATE

DESPITE THIS, SIR NICOLÁS STILL FELT *ASHAMED*, PESSIMIST AND HOPELESS HE SAID THAT HE COULD DO NOTHING TO SAVE THE GOLDEN KINGDOM, AND THAT HE WASN'T A PEACE KNIGHT *ANYMORE*

BUT ONE DAY, LIKE ANY OTHER, SIR NICOLÁS LOOKED UPON THE GOLDEN KINGDOM AND WITNESSES THAT IT WASN'T AS SHINY AS IT USED TO BE

THE SUN DIDN'T ILLUMINATE ITS GOLDEN WALLS, AND HE SUDDENLY REALIZED

HE COULD FEEL ALL THE *EVIL* THAT DOMINATED THE KINGDOM SINCE HIS DEPARTURE

AND AN OVERWHELMING FEELING OF *JUSTICE* INVADDED HIS SPIRIT

AND SO HE DECIDED
TO RETURN TO THE
KINGDOM



AT THE KINGDOM'S DOORS HE GAZED UPON HIS
OLD COMPANIONS AND SAW THAT THEIR EYES
WEREN'T THE SAME...



NO, THEY REFLECTED SOMETHING
DIFFERENT: DARKNESS, CRUELTY
AND EVIL

COMPANIONS I'VE RETURNED

WHO IS *THIS*?

LOOK, WE DON'T
WANT *BEGGARS* IN
THE CITY, GO BACK
FROM *WHERE YOU*
CAME

I AM NO BEGGAR;
I'M SIR NICOLÁS, PEACE
KNIGHT

YEAH RIGHT, AND I'M *THE*
KING OF THESE DOORS
GO AWAY FROM HERE


LET HIM IN. HE'S SIR
NICOLÁS, HE HAS
TRULY RETURNED



WHY HAVE YOU
RETURNED
NICOLÁS?


I BELIEVED YOU
HAD *FORSAKEN* US





MY EYES WERE **BLIND**, BUT
I'VE FINALLY SEEN THE EVIL
THAT INVADES MY CITY, I WAS
BLINDED BY **MY FAILURE**

BUT NOT ANYMORE.
I **WON'T LET** THIS
EVIL TO CONTINUE
SPREADING




NICOLÁS I WARN YOU
THAT IT WON'T BE AN
EASY TASK

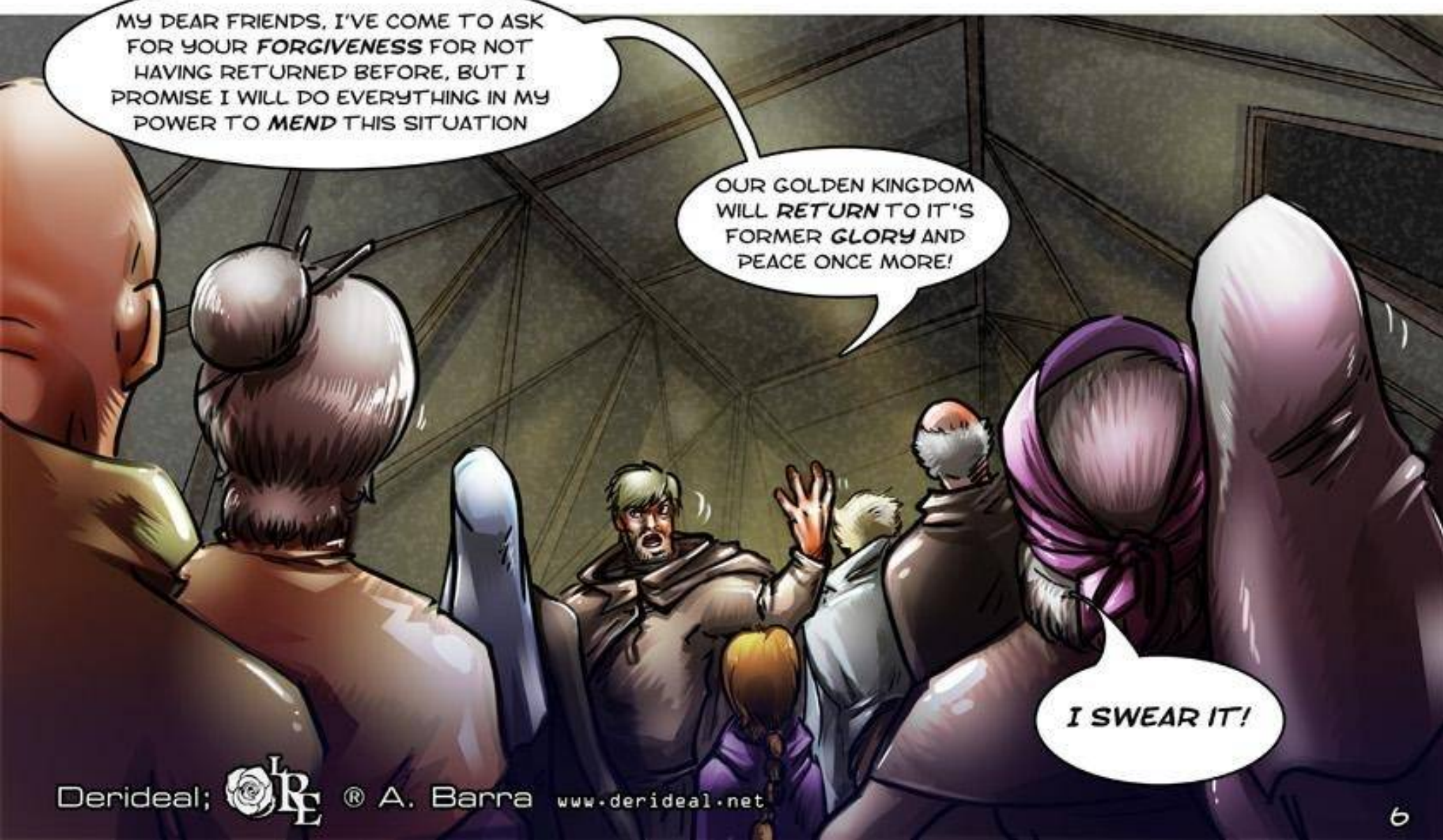
SINCE YOU LEFT MOST
OF THE PEACE KNIGHTS
WERE **CORRUPTED** BY
AMBITION AND POWER...

NOW WE ARE ALMOST
A MEMORY

MOST OF OUR
ORDER IS **DEAD**.
THERE ARE ONLY
THREE OF US LEFT



I CAN'T INFORM YOU PROPERLY HERE, YOU NEED
TO **ARM YOURSELF** AGAIN, I'LL LEAD YOU TO OUR
HIDEOUT, THERE WE'LL FIND **WYGLAF** AND HE CAN
EXPLAIN EVERYTHING





MANY YEARS AGO A DEMON TRIED TO CONQUER OUR CITY, ENVOIOUS AND JEALOUS OF ALL THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE THAT HELD OUR GOLDEN KINGDOM

AT THAT TIME THE FIRST PEACE KNIGHTS WERE ARMED



NICOLÁS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

YOU ARE HERE!

SIT DOWN!
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S HAPPENING



LEAD BY THE KING ANDRÉS IV, WHO BRAVELY FOUGHT ASIDE ALL HIS KNIGHT'S AGAINST THE EVIL, STILL MANY OF HIS MEN DIED



KING ANDRÉS FOUGHT TO THE END, AND WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED

BUT CHAINING THE DEMON IN A PERPETUAL PRISON, THE SACRIFICE OF THESE KNIGHT'S SEALED THE DEMON FOR MANY CENTURIES

BUT BY THE DESIGNS OF DESTINY, THE DEMON SEEMS TO HAVE BROKEN THE CHAINS THAT HELD IT, EMERGING FROM THE DARKNESS TO SPREAD EVIL EVERYWHERE IT GO

FULFILLING IT'S OATH OF VENGEANCE AGAINST THE KINGDOM THAT HAD DEFEATED IT AND CHAINED IT IN DARKNESS, LONG AGO

JUST A FEW DAYS AGO WE
DISCOVERED THE LOCATION OF THE
DEMON'S LAIR...

IT'S IN THE DEPTHS OF THE
MOUNTAIN BEHIND OUR
GOLDEN KINGDOM

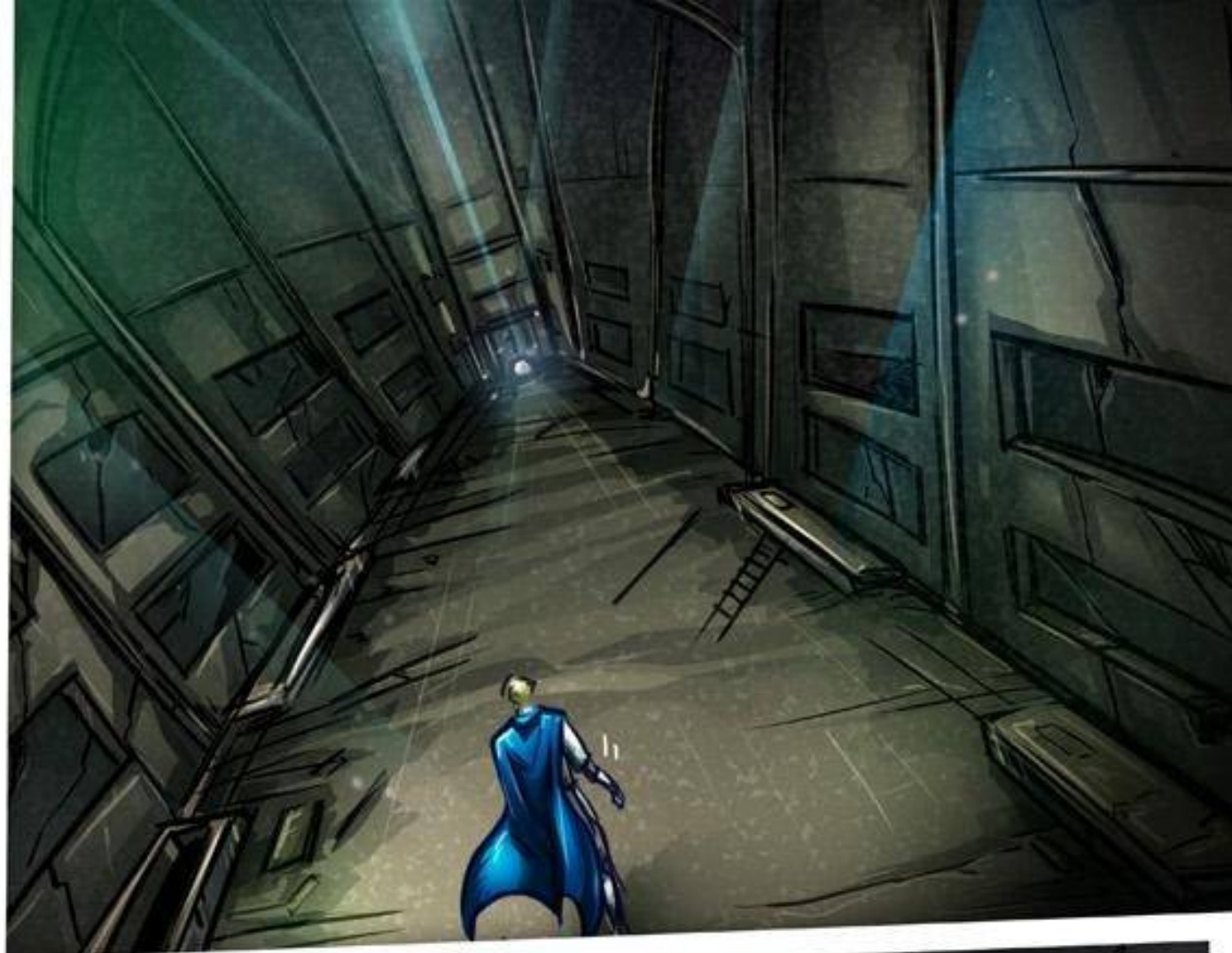
WE'RE GOING TO GO
DEFEAT THE EVIL
DEMON *THIS VERY
NIGHT*

SIR NICOLÁS KNEW THAT
THE TIME TO RETURN TO
ARMS HAD COME


HIS CHOICE DECIDED,
HE WENT AFTER HIS OLD
BATTLE SUIT

IT SEEMED TO *SHINE* EVEN
MORE THAN HE RECALLED










MY BELOVED NICOLÁS,
RESTORE THE PEACE IN
OUR KINGDOM, AS YOUR
RETURN HAS GIVEN ME
PEACE AT LAST

HERE IS YOUR SWORD,
THE ONE THAT ONCE
HELPED YOU TO FORGE
HAPPINESS IN THIS WORLD,
I HAVE GUARDED IT SINCE
YOUR DEPARTURE

WIELD IT AGAIN,
SAVE YOUR
KINGDOM



PEACE KNIGHT'S *BROTHERS*
TODAY IS THE DAY WE CHALLENGE EVIL

THE *DEMON* WHICH A THOUSAND YEARS
AGO UNLEASHED *DARKNESS* OVER OUR
KINGDOM, THE SAME THAT WAS DEFEATED
BY OUR KING ANDRÉS IV AND HIS MANY
KNIGHT'S

I KNOW WE'RE JUST A
FEW KNIGHT'S, THE ONLY
ONES THAT ARE LEFT

BUT FEAR NOT
THE *BEST KNIGHT* HAS
RETURNED TO US AND HE
WON'T HESITATE TO GIVE HIS
LIFE FOR HIS *COMPANIONS*

AS WE WON'T HESITATE
TO GIVE OUR LIVES FOR
HIM AND OUR KINGDOM

LONG LIVE THE GOLDEN
KINGDOM!

IT WAS A DESOLATED PLACE; YOU COULD BREATHE THE EVIL THAT EMANATED FROM THE GROUND, ONCE SO BEAUTIFUL AND NOW JUST POOR SOIL AND STONES

NOT EVEN SCRUBS GREW BETWEEN THE ROCKS

THE KNIGHTS GATHERED ALL THE COURAGE THEY COULD OBTAIN FROM THEIR LORD

THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND NODDED IN SILENCE

AND THUS, WITHOUT SAYING A SINGLE WORD, THEY STEPPED INTO THE DARKNESS

THE PATH **SEEMED ETERNAL**; IF IT WEREN'T FOR THEIR **SHINY ARMOR**, THE DARKNESS WOULD HAVE SHROUDED THE ROCKY PATH

BUT SUDDENLY AT DISTANCE THEY SAW **SOMETHING**

OH GOD
HAVE MERCY ON
THEIR SOULS!

THEY WERE **CURSED MEN**, THEY GAVE THEIR SOUL TO THE EVIL **DEMON**, AND NOW THEY COULD DO LITTLE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES AGAIN

INTRUDERS!

KILL THEM!

GIVE THEIR SOULS
TO OUR MASTER!

MY LORD
GIVE ME
STRENGTH TO
FIGHT THIS
BATTLE!

WE MUST
KEEP FORWARD!



THEY PUSHED THEIR WAY THROUGH
THE TUNNELS FIGHTING MORE AND
MORE DARK WARRIORS



SUDDENLY, THEY SAW A HUGE
DOOR AT THE DISTANCE

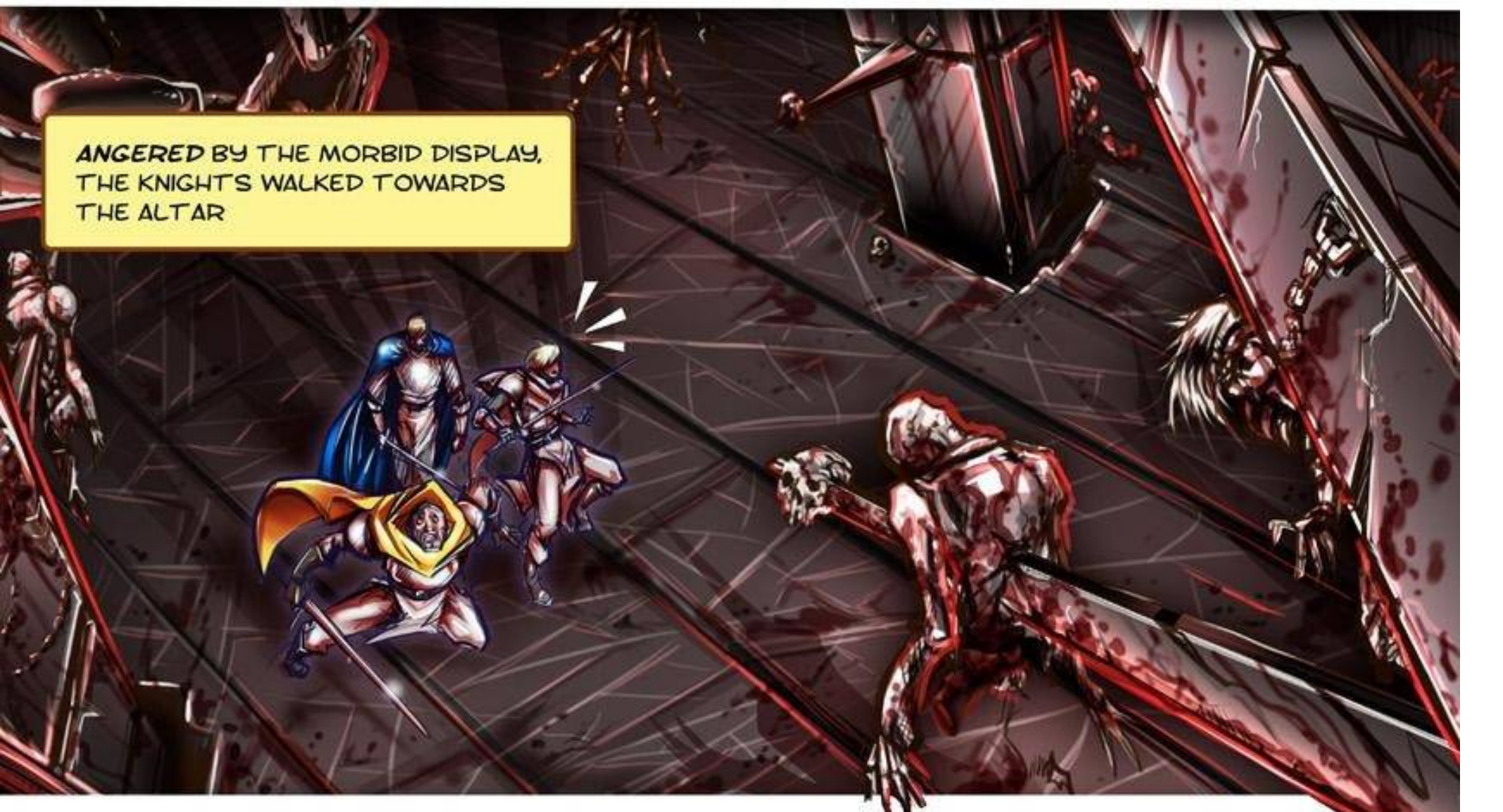
WHEN THEY CROSSED THE DOORWAY
AN EERIE SILENCE HOVERED OVER THE
PLACE






THEY FOUND THEMSELVES INSIDE A
SOLID CHAMBER

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CHAMBER THEY SAW AN **ALTAR**
OF **UNNATURAL SIZE**, IT WAS SUSPENDED ABOVE THE
SOIL WITH CHAINS TIED TO **SPIKED PILLARS** THAT
HUNG **MANY CORPSES**... MOST MUTILATED



ANGERED BY THE MORBID DISPLAY,
THE KNIGHTS WALKED TOWARDS
THE ALTAR



JUST A LONE SOUL STOOD AT
THE END OF THE CHAMBER

THEY COULD ONLY DISTINGUISH
HIS HEAD, WHICH WAS HIDDEN
UNDER A **TERRIFYING** HELMET
COMPOSED OF SEVERAL
STACKED CROWNS...



YOU MANAGED TO
GET *THIS* FAR

BUT YOU MUST BE
REALLY *TIRED* NOW

HA HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA

DID YOU WITNESS MY
GREAT SCENE?

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT
TO FIGHT ME?



YOUR EVIL ENDS TODAY
YOU SHALL NOT HARM MORE INNOCENT
SOULS FROM OUR KINGDOM
IF IT IS NECESSARY TO KILL YOU,
WE WON'T HESITATE



I OFFER YOU A CHANCE TO
SURRENDER, OR WE WILL
FIGHT YOU WITHOUT MERCY
WITH THE STRENGTH OF OUR
FALLEN

HA HA HA HA HA



THEN LET'S DUEL MY
FRIENDS



SHRIIN



NICOLÁS WAIT!

LEAVE THIS
BATTLE TO
ME



YOU HAVE TO
CONTINUE FORWARD

I BEG OF YOU,
TRUST ME WITH
THIS BATTLE

I WILL STOP
THIS FIEND

WYGLAF-

FIGHT WITH
STRENGTH AND
HONOR

WE WILL RETURN

AS THE DOOR SHUT, THEY COULD
HEAR THE MENS' SWORDS CLASHING

CLANK!

SHIING

PLAF

SLASH!

THE BATTLE HAD BEGUN

AND WHILE HIS COMPANIONS
WALKED, THEIR THOUGHTS
AND FAITH PUT TOWARD
THEIR FRIEND

WYGLAF FIERCELY
FOUGHT HIS FOE

CLANK!


SHIING

THEY BARELY HIT EACH
OTHER, THEIR SWORDS
CLASHING...

POOSH!

THACK!

AND NEITHER SHOWED
ANY SIGN OF WEAKNESS



BUT HE MADE A
FALSE MOVE...

NNNRGH!

THUNK!

WOUNDED, HE
WASN'T ABLE TO
DEFEND HIMSELF

HE HAD DEDICATED MOST
OF HIS LIFE TO HIS WORK...

SLASH!

ARGH!

GLASH

CLANK!

LEAVING ASIDE HIS
FAMILY...

HE COULDN'T DIE...

HE COULDN'T
GIVE UP JUST
YET...

NOT WHILE HE WAS
STANDING BETWEEN
EVIL AND HIS LOVED
ONES

NICOLÁS AND HECTOR HAD TO CROUCH TO CONTINUE ADVANCING THROUGH A SMALL AND NARROW TUNNEL



SLOWLY THE TUNNEL GREW WIDER AND THEY STARTED TO HEAR SOME STRANGE NOISES, DEEP **GROWLING'S** AND HISSING



THEY FOLLOWED THE PATH AND SUDDENLY SOMETHING CAME OUT TO FACE THEM...



IT WAS A CREATURE TWICE THE SIZE OF ANY *PEACE KNIGHT*, A BIG BEAST WITH DIRTY AND MALFORMED TEETH

WITH A LOUD SHOUT IT CHARGED AGAINST THE KNIGHTS



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EARTHQUAKE!



MEANWHILE *WYGLAF* AND
THE EVIL WARRIOR WERE
EXHAUSTED FROM THEIR
LONG BATTLE

BOTH WERE BADLY
WOUNDED, THEY TOOK
BREATH ONCE AGAIN



AND CHARGED AGAINST
EACH OTHER FOR THE
LAST TIME

SLASH!

NONE OF THEM
WERE VICTORIOUS



FORGIVE ME MY LOVE...

I WON'T BE COMING
BACK TO YOU AS I
PROMISED



SOME DAY WE'LL
BE TOGETHER
AGAIN



WYGLAF'S LAST
THOUGHTS WERE
DEVOTED TO HIS
FAMILY

HECTOR AND NICOLÁS RAN
THROUGH A CRACKED TILED
FLOOR

ALL OF A SUDDEN THE GROUND SHOOK AGAIN
AND THEY BOTH ALMOST FELL TO THE GROUND

BUT THEY MANAGED
TO MAINTAIN BALANCE
AND KEPT RUNNING

HÉCTOR LOOKED BACK

AND HE SAW A WHOLE ARMY
OF OGRES, DEMONS,
GIANTS, GHOSTS
AND WHO KNOWS WHAT
OTHER KINDS OF
ABOMINATIONS!

THEY'RE TOO MANY!

THEY APPROACHED THE FINAL DOOR OF THE VAST DUNGEON; IT HAD A DARK SYMBOL OF A HOODED BEING CARVED IN IT

NICOLÁS YOU HAVE TO GO ALONE!

I'LL TRY TO BUY YOU SOME TIME!

FIGHT BRAVELY!

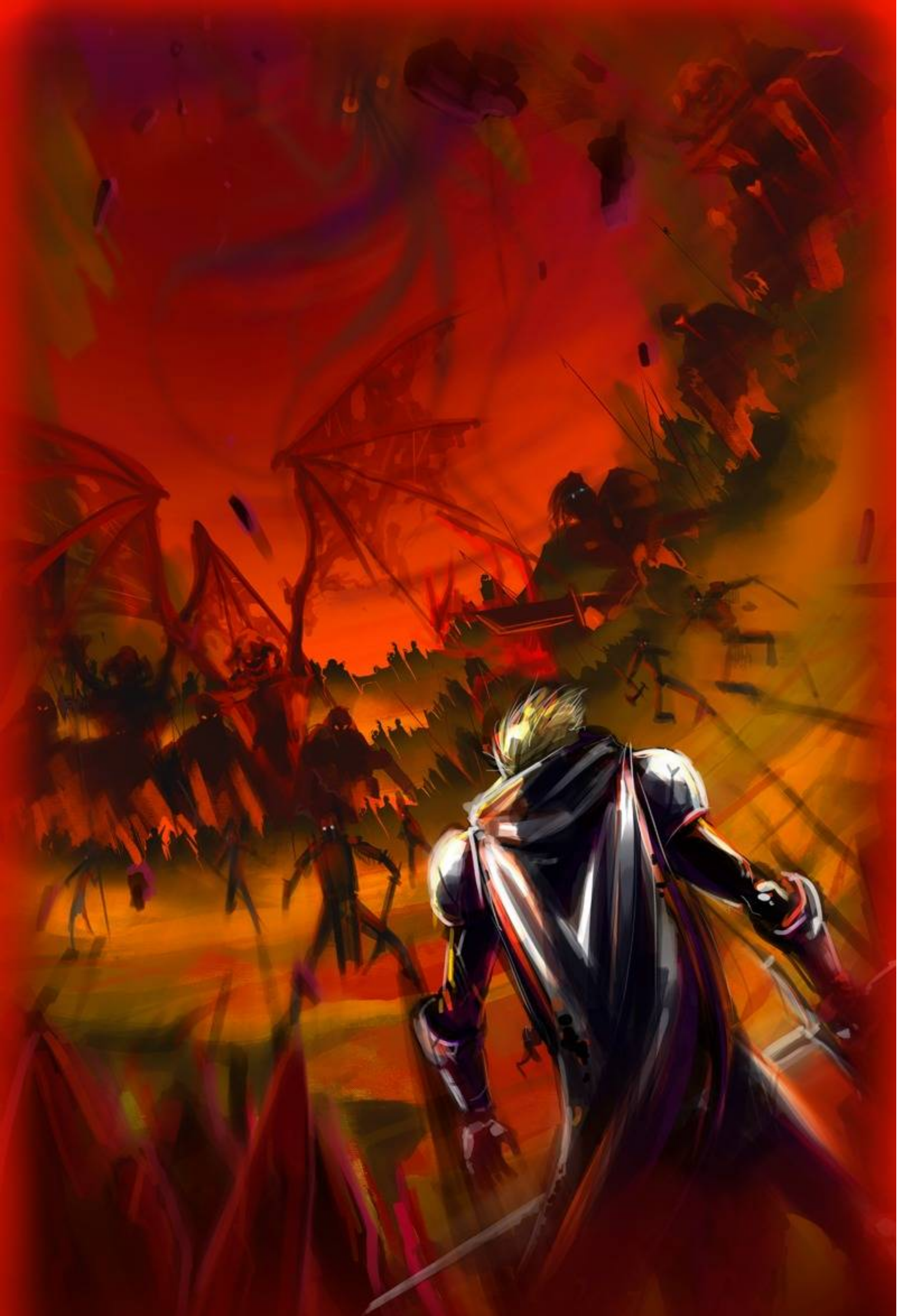
FIGHT FOR OUR KINGDOM!

RELEASE IT FROM THIS EVIL!

HÉCTOR!!

BLAM

WYGLAF...



THE ROOM WASN'T VERY BIG AND ITS WALLS WERE COATED WITH DECAYED GOLD PLATES. TORCHES AT EVERY WALL ILLUMINATED THE ROOM



A CRYSTAL BOX RESTED OVER A PEDESTAL AT THE CENTER...



NICOLÁS GLANCED AROUND




THE BOX WAS THE ONLY THING INSIDE THE ROOM


NICOLÁS TOOK A RISK, AND REACHED TO EXAMINE IT




THE BOX SUDDENLY
OPENED



AND WITHIN A SECOND A
STRONG WIND EMERGED
FROM INSIDE AND A DARK
MIST INVADED THE ENTIRE
ROOM



WHEN NICOLÁS OPENED
HIS EYES HE FOUND
HIMSELF UNDER AN
AUSTERE SKY



THE BLACK NEBULA TOOK
AN ETHEREAL AND HOODED
FORM

YOU DARE TO FACE
ME ALONE PITIFUL
KNIGHT?

YOUR IDEALS AND ORDER LIE DEAD, THEY
WERE NO MORE THAN FRAGILE DELUSIONS
THAT FELL DOWN EASILY BEFORE ME

Whiff!

AND WHEN I'M
DONE WITH YOU-

THEY WILL
CEASE TO EXIST
FOREVER!

NICOLÁS COULD
BARELY RESIST THE
FIRST ASSAULT

CLANK!

UNGH!

THRAACK!

TWANG!

NOT EVEN THE CENTURIES
SPENT CAGED COULD DIMINISH
THE DEMON'S STRENGTH

NNNRGH!



AND HE MANAGED TO
STAB THE DEMON
DEEPLY WITH HIS
SWORD



**NOT ONLY I SHALL
DESTROY YOUR
IDEALS, BUT YOUR
SOUL AS WELL!**

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NOT EVEN YOUR KING WAS ABLE TO
DEFEAT ME COMPLETELY



I SPENT CENTURIES HEALING
MY WOUNDS AND GROWING
STRONGER



FEEDING FROM ALL THE HATRED
AND CRUELTY YOUR PEOPLE
DEVELOPED UNDER MY SILENT
INFLUENCE

YOU FAILED THEM...



...LONG BEFORE THIS
BATTLE EVEN STARTED







"A KNIGHT IS SWORN TO
VALOR"

"HIS HEART KNOWS
ONLY VIRTUE"

NNNRGH

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

"HIS BLADE DEFENDS
THE HELPLESS"





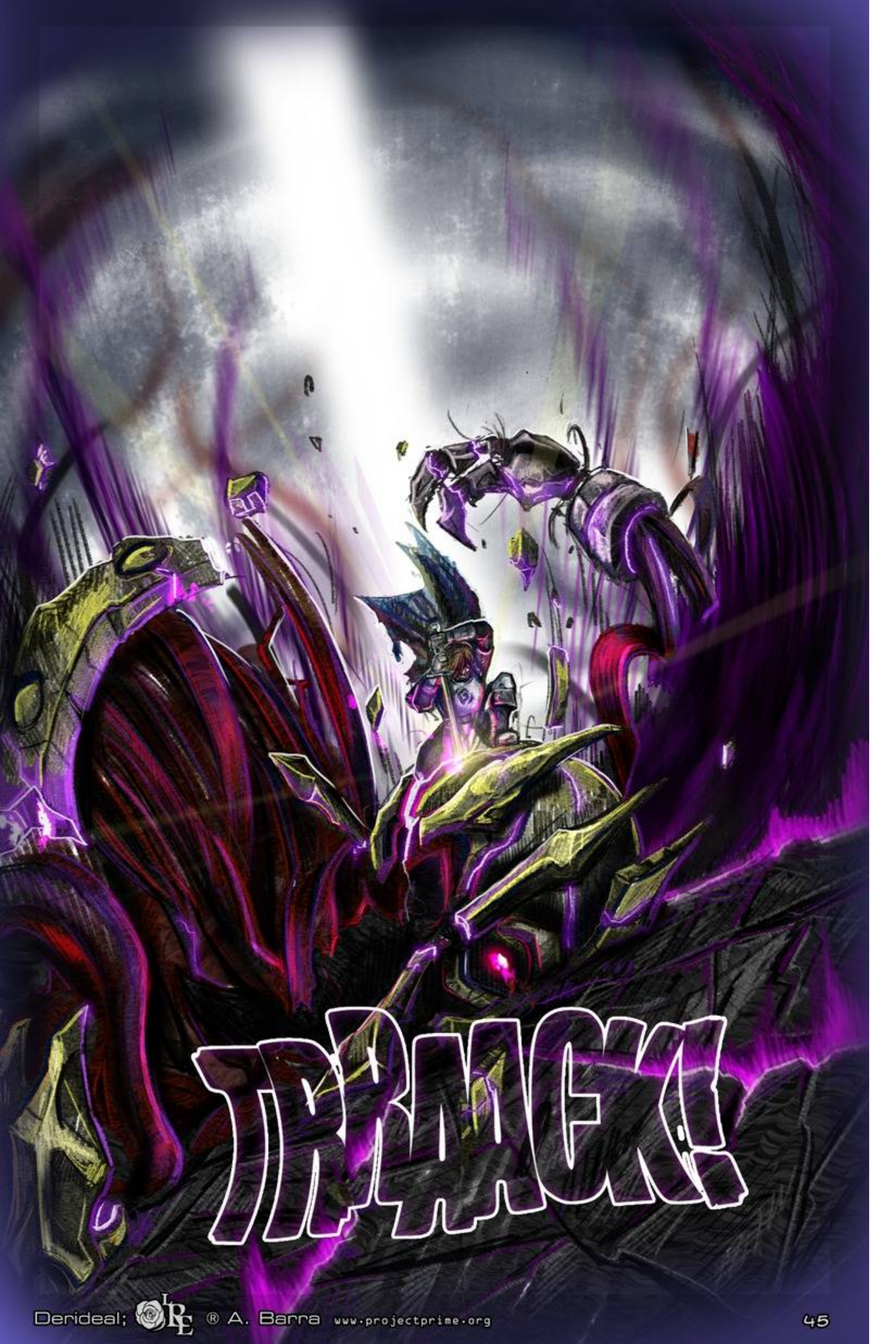
SLASH

HIS WRATH!!...

AAAAARGHH!!

UNDOES!!...

...THE WICKED!!



TRUCK



THE GOLDEN KINGDOM
SURROUNDINGS RESOUNDED....



AND THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN COLLAPSED...

*A NEW ROSE SPROUTED IN
DANIELA'S GRAVE*

*SIR NICOLÁS WAS AT LAST REUNITED
WITH HIS BELOVED MAIDEN, FINALLY AT
PEACE, KNOWING THAT EVIL WOULD NEVER
AGAIN CORRUPT THE GOLDEN KINGDOM*

FIN