

## PAGE 1

**FULL PAGE**

THE READER SEES A STAGE AND A CROWD AS IF THEY ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CROWD (MAYBE THREE ROWS OF PEOPLE IN FRONT OF THEM) AND PERCHED ON SOMEONE'S SHOULDERS. ON THE STAGE ARE FOUR YOUNG CHILDREN: THREE GIRLS, ONE BOY. ONE OF THE GIRLS IS DRESSED IN FANCY CLOTHES LIKE SHE'S COME FROM A RICH FAMILY WHILE A BOY AND GIRL ARE DRESSED IN RAGS AND THE THIRD GIRL IS DRESSED IN DECENTLY CLEAN COMMONER CLOTHING. BEHIND THEM ON THE STAGE, OFF TO THE RIGHT, KING THEOBOLD SITS ON HIS "STAGE THRONE." THE THRONE IS FANCY BUT FOR-A-STAGE FANCY. ITS OBVIOUSLY HIS OUTSIDE THRONE. **KING THEOBOLD**, 55, AVERAGE HEIGHT AND LEAN, WEARS A SUIT OF GOLDEN ARMOR ADORNED WITH THE SYMBOL OF THE BALANCED (TBD). IN THE SHADOWS OF THE STAGE ARE FIVE OF THE KING'S NINE MAGES. THESE MAGES ARE DRAPED IN CRIMSON ROBES WITH GOLD TRIMMING. THEY WEAR BLACK, FEATURELESS MASKS THAT COVER THEIR ENTIRE HEADS LIKE DESTRO OF THE GI JOE SERIES. THE OTHER FOUR MAGES EACH STAND BEHIND ONE OF THE FOUR CHILDREN ON THE STAGE. IN ORDER, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AS THE READER SEES THEM, ARE (1) COMMON GIRL #1, (2) RAGS BOY, (3) RICH GIRL, (4) RAGS GIRL. 1, 2, & 4 ARE SOMEWHAT SURROUNDED BY TRANSLUCENT SHIELDS BUT THEY ARE IN DIFFERENT STAGES OF COMPLETELY SURROUNDING THEM. THE RICH GIRL HAS NO SHIELD AROUND HER AT ALL. THE FOUR MAGES EACH STAND BEHIND THEM WITH THEIR ARMS STRETCHING TO THE SKY AS IF TO SUMMON/CALL TO SOMETHING FROM THE SKY.

CAPTION: THE BLESSENING...

CAPTION: ...IT'S THE DAY WHERE CHILDREN AGES SIX TO TEN...

CAPTION: ...ARE TESTED FOR THE CREATORS' GIFTS...

CAPTION (POSITIONED ABOVE #1): ...IT'S A GREAT DAY FOR SOME...

CAPTION (POSITIONED ABOVE #2): ...AND FOR OTHERS?

CAPTION (POSITIONED ABOVE #3): WELL, YOU GET THE PICTURE.

CAPTION (POSITIONED ABOVE #4): BUT ONE THING IS FOR SURE...

**INSET PANEL**

THIS PANEL CAN BE PLACED ANYWHERE THAT IS CONVENIENT FOR THE ART BUT IT NEEDS TO FLOW WITH THE CAPTIONS SO THAT THE LAST CAPTION CAN BE PLACED ABOVE IT. THIS PANEL IS A CLOSE-UP SHOT OF THE RICH GIRL CRYING AND SAD BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN REVEALED THAT SHE IS UNBALANCED.

CAPTION: **NO ONE** IS EXEMPT FROM THE **REPERCUSSIONS**.

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**PANEL 1 - WIDE PANEL**

BIRD'S EYE VIEW, WIDE SHOT. THE ANGLE IS MORE OF A BIRD'S VIEW FROM A TREE AS IT LOOKS DOWN ONTO THE FOREST FLOOR. BOB AND HELEN STAND IN A FOREST CLEARING, FACING EACH OTHER, HOLDING HANDS, MOONLIGHT SHINING ON THEM. **BOB**, 25, STRONG FACIAL FEATURES BUT KIND EYES. HE'S TALL AND AVERAGE BUILD. HE HAS BROWN, CROPPED HAIR, AND A SHORT BEARD, AND HETEROCHROMIA. HIS LEFT PUPIL IS GREY AND HIS RIGHT IS HAZEL. HE WEARS A COTTON TUNIC WITH A MEDIUM V-CUT. HIS PANTS ARE DARK BROWN AND FIT SNUGLY WHILE HE WEARS CALF-LEVEL LEATHER BOOTS. **HELEN**, 24, STANDS SLIGHTLY SHORTER THAN BOB WITH THE TOP OF HER HEAD BEING LEVEL WITH HIS NOSE. HER CLOTHES ARE NOTICEABLY MORE EXPENSIVE THAN BOB'S SUGGESTING SHE IS OF HIGHER STATUS. HER DRESS IS AN EMERALD GREEN WITH WHITE COLLARING. SHE WEARS LEATHER BOOTS AS WELL BUT HERS ARE NOT AS SEASONED AS BOB'S.

CAPTION: SOME MANY YEARS AGO...

**PANEL 2**

TWO SHOT. HELEN IS ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE PANEL AND BOB IS ON THE RIGHT SIDE. HELEN LOOKS DOWN, BOB'S HAND CUPPING HER CHIN.

HELEN: THIS WILL BE OUR **LAST** TIME TOGETHER.

HELEN: THEY'RE EXILING **ANYONE** THEY FIND CONSORTING WITH UNBALANCED.

**PANEL 3**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. BOB FACES THE READER, HIS HEAD DOWN, SAD. HELEN, SLIGHTLY OUT OF FOCUS IN THE BACKGROUND, CONJURES A MAGICAL GEM IN HER HANDS, CREATING A PURPLISH GLOW/LIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.

BOB: BUT...

BOB: I LOVE YOU...

**PANEL 4**

SAME EXACT SHOT AND VIEW OF BOB, ONLY A TEAR HAS FALLEN FROM HIS EYE FOR THIS PANEL. HELEN IS IN FOCUS, NO LONGER GLOWING, PLACING A NECKLACE AROUND BOB'S NECK, HER LIPS NEAR HIS EAR.

HELEN (WHISPERING): I LOVE YOU, TOO.

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**PANEL 1 - WIDE PANEL**

BIRD'S EYE VIEW. BOB REMAINS IN THE SAME SPOT FROM PAGE 2-PANEL 1, ONLY FACING THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION THIS TIME. HELEN, FACING AWAY AS WELL, IS CONSIDERABLY FURTHER AWAY FROM BOB TO SHOW SHE IS THE ONE WALKING AWAY.

CAPTION: WHEN TWO HEARTS ARE **FORCIBLY** SEPARATED...

**PANEL 2 - WIDE PANEL**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. THE SHOT IS HIGH ENOUGH TO FULLY CAPTURE HIS LIPS AND STOPS LOW ENOUGH TO CUT THE V OF HIS SHIRT IN HALF. BOB TOUCHES THE GLOWING GEM HELEN PLACED AROUND HIS NECK. THE GEM IS VERY INTRICATE AND BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED.

CAPTION: ...THEIR LOVE SHOULD **NEVER** BE GIVEN FORM.

**PAGE 4**

**PANEL 1**

MEDIUM SHOT. FROST LEADS THE GANG THROUGH THE FOREST. ONLY BARTHOLOMEW AND CARPUS AND FLIX ARE IN THE PANEL.

CAPTION (FROST): THE BALANCED AND UNBALANCED LIVING SEPARATELY WASN'T ALWAYS A THING.

CAPTION (FROST): WE USED TO LIVE IN HARMONY.

**PANEL 2**

MEDIUM SHOT. CONTINUATION OF ART FROM PANEL 1 EXCEPT BEATRICE AND NOVA ARE IN VIEW.

CAPTION (FROST): BUT, DUE TO OVERPOPULATION, THE KING THOUGHT IT BEST TO EXILE UNBALANCED TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE BALANCED.

**PANEL 3**

MEDIUM SHOT. CONTINUATION OF ART FROM PANEL 2. FROST IS IN VIEW, LEADING THE GANG AS THEY FOLLOW BEHIND HIM IN THE TWO PREVIOUS PANELS.

CAPTION (FROST): BUT LIVING IN EXILE IS DANGEROUS.

**PANEL 4**

FULL SHOT. FROST'S BACK IS TO THE READER. THE REST OF THE GANG IS SPREAD OUT AROUND A MAKESHIFT FIGHTING RING, LISTENING TO HIM SPEAK.

FROST: SO, WE TRAIN AND LEARN TO DEFEND OURSELVES FROM ANY POTENTIAL THREATS.

**PAGE 5**

**PANEL 1**

WIDE PANEL. BIRD'S EYE VIEW. EXACT SHOT FROM BOB AND HELEN'S NIGHT IN THE OPENING. IN THIS PANEL, THE CLEARING IS MORE AGED AND HAS BEEN TURNED INTO THE TRAINING RING THAT FROST HAS LED THE GANG TO. THE RING IS SHODDY AND MADE FROM OLD LOGS AND POSTS.

CAPTION: CARPUS. BARTHOLOMEW. LET'S SEE WHAT YOU TWO HAVE LEARNED SINCE OUR LAST TRAINING SESSION.

**PANEL 2**

WIDE PANEL. EXACT ART FROM PANEL 1 EXCEPT FROST, BEATRICE, AND NOVA STAND OUTSIDE OF THE RING LOOKING IN ON CARPUS AND BARTHOLOMEW INSIDE THE RING IN BATTLE STANCES.

CAPTION (SHARED BETWEEN CARPUS AND BARTHOLOMEW): RIGHT!

**INSET PANEL 1**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. CARPUS, 17, HEAVYWEIGHT AND ROUND, 6'5", STANDS INSIDE THE RING. HE IS PROFILED AND FACING THE READER'S RIGHT AS IF TO BE LOOKING INTO THE NEXT PANEL AND DOWN AT THE PERSON IN INSET PANEL 2.

**INSET PANEL 2**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. BARTHOLOMEW, 19, ATHLETIC BUILD, 6'0, STANDS INSIDE THE RING. HE IS PROFILED AND FACING THE READER'S LEFT, LOOKING INTO INSET PANEL 1 AT CARPUS.

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**PANEL 1**

FULL SHOT. CARPUS AND BARTHOLOMEW EXIT THE RING, DUSTY, EXHAUSTED, BATTLE-WORN, BUT SMILING. BEATRICE AND NOVA WATCH FROM OUTSIDE THE RING. FROST WATCHES FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RING.

FROST: BEATRICE. NOVA. YOU'RE UP.

**PANEL 2**

FULL SHOT. BEATRICE AND NOVA HAVE A FEW BEADS OF SWEAT AND DIRT ON THEIR FACES. THEY FACE EACH OTHER IN BATTLE STANCES, FAKE WEAPONS DRAWN. NOVA HAS TWIN DAGGERS DRAWN. BEATRICE HAS A SWORD AND SHIELD DRAWN.

NOVA: YOU CAN GIVE UP ANY TIME YOU'RE READY.

BEATRICE: I BET YOU WOULD JUST **LOVE** THAT.

NOVA: YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST ME!

BEATRICE: WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

**PANEL 3**

FULL SHOT. AN UNDEAD CREATURE CRASHES THROUGH THEIR RING. NOVA AND BEATRICE DODGE AWAY FROM IT.

CREATURE (BURST BALLOON): RAAAARRRRRRRGGGGGGGG!!!!

**PANEL 4**

FULL SHOT. FROST STANDS IN FRONT OF THE CREATURE, SWORD DRAWN, STARING IT DOWN. HE USES HIS FREE HAND TO POINT IN THE DIRECTION HE WANTS THE GANG TO RUN TOWARD. THE UNDEAD CREATURE TOWERS OVER HIM.

FROST: GET BACK TO THE CAVE!

NOVA: BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?

FROST: NOW!!

**PANEL 5**

FULL SHOT. THE GANG FLEES THROUGH THE WOODS.

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**PANEL 1**

FULL SHOT. THE GANG IS OUTSIDE THE CAVE ENTRANCE. BARTHOLOMEW BENDS OVER WITH HER HANDS ON HER KNEES. NOVA FACES THE WALL NEXT TO THE CAVE ENTRANCE, RESTING ONE HAND ON IT AND THE OTHER ON HER HIP. CARPUS LIES ON HIS BACK WHILE BEATRICE SITS ON HIS BELLY, HER HEAD IN HER HANDS.

BARTHOLOMEW: WHAT THE...\*GASP\*...HECK WAS...\*GASP\*...THAT?

CARPUS: \*GASP\* IT WAS HUGE!

BEATRICE: IT LOOKED DEAD!

NOVA: \*...\*

**PANEL 2**

CRYSTAL-BALL VIEW OF THE PREVIOUS PANEL.

CAPTION (BOB): THE NECRONOMICON WORKED!

**PANEL 3**

MEDIUM SHOT. AN OLDER VERSION OF BOB LOOKS THROUGH THE CRYSTAL BALL, A SINISTER SMILE ON HIS FACE AND HIS HANDS CLASPED TOGETHER. THE GEM GIVEN TO HIM BY HELEN GLOWS AROUND HIS NECK.

**PAGES 8-9**

TWO PAGE SPREAD OF ART. CASTLE HALLWAY. LONG, DARK-RED CARPET RESTS IN THE CENTER OF THE HALLWAY. LARGE TORCHES LIGHT THE HALLWAY. LARGE, BEAUTIFUL PORTRAITS, REST ON THE WALLS BETWEEN EACH SET OF TORCHES (FOUR TORCHES, THREE PORTRAITS; TORCHES BEGIN AND END SEQUENCE ON THE WALL). THREE PANELS PER PAGE, EQUAL IN SIZE, SPANNING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT TO SHOW CHARACTERS WALKING DOWN HALLWAY. THE BACKGROUND ART IN EACH PANEL SHOULD BE A ZOOMED OF WHERE THE PAIR ARE CURRENTLY LOCATED IN THEIR WALK DOWN THE HALLWAY. AT THE END OF THE HALLWAY IS A GOLDISH DOUBLE DOOR. THEIR SHOES ARE CLICK/CLACKING AS THEY WALK.

**INSET PANEL 1**

TWO-SHOT. KING THEOBOLD AND OLEANDER ENTER THE HALLWAY. KING THEOBOLD WEARS A FLOWING CLOAK THAT SHOWS ONLY HIS FEET AS HE WALKS. IT KIND OF LOOKS LIKE HOW BATMAN IS DEPICTED WHEN HE'S STANDING STILL WITH HIS CAPE CLOSED AROUND HIM. OLEANDER WEARS A HOODED, DARK RED CLOAK BUT THE HOOD IS DOWN. HE HAS LONG, SILVER HAIR THAT STOPS JUST PAST HIS SHOULDERS IN THE BACK. HIS HAIR IS PARTED DOWN THE MIDDLE SO THAT IT COVERS HIS EARS AND DRAPES OVER HIS SHOULDERS IN THE FRONT AS WELL. HE WEARS A GREEN GEM AROUND HIS NECK THAT IS SUSPENDED FROM SHORT NECKLACE. HE'S REALLY LEAN AND TALL AND WEARS A FORM FITTING SHIRT THAT STOPS AROUND HIS BELLYBUTTON.

OLEANDER: SIRE...

SFX: >CLICK<

**INSET PANEL 2**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. OLEANDER SPEAKS AGAIN.

OLEANDER: I HAVE PERFECTED A NEW **WARDING** SPELL FOR YOU. IT WILL HELP MAINTAIN YOUR ILLUSION OF BEING **BALANCED** IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE.

SFX: >CLACK<

**INSET PANEL 3**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. THE BACKGROUND FOR KING THEOBOLD'S PANELS ARE THE PILLARS OF THE HALLWAY, THE NIGHT SKY, AND THE MOON. IN THIS PANEL, THE MOON IS A LITTLE CENTERED ON KING THEOBOLD. KING THEOBOLD LOOKS WORRIED.

**INSET PANEL 4**



CLOSE-UP SHOT. OLEANDER FACES FORWARD (PROFILED), CONFIDENCE ON HIS FACE.

OLEANDER: EVERYTHING **WILL** GO ACCORDING TO PLAN, YOUR GRACE.

SFX: >CLICK<

**INSET PANEL 5**

CLOSE-UP SHOT. KING THEOBOLD SPEAKS. IN THIS PANEL, THE MOON HAS VISIBLY SHIFTED TO BEHIND KING THEOBOLD'S MOVEMENT TO SHOW HE HAS MOVED DOWN THE HALLWAY.

KING THEOBOLD: IT BETTER. YOU SINGED MY BEARD WITH YOUR LAST SCREW-UP.

SFX: >CLACK<

**INSET PANEL 6**

TWO-SHOT. KING THEOBOLD ENTERS THE OPENED DOUBLE DOORS AS OLEANDER MOTIONS FOR HIM TO DO SO.

OLEANDER: I ASSURE YOU, YOUR GRACE...

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**PANEL 1**

WIDE-SHOT. KING THEOBOLD AND OLEANDER STAND AT THE TOP OF A SET OF STAIRS, OVERLOOKING A GROUP OF NINE WHITE MAGES SURROUNDING A GLOWING ALTAR. KING THEOBOLD RESTS BOTH HIS HANDS ON THE RAILING IN FRONT OF HIM. OLEANDER STANDS BEHIND HIM. THE POV IS FROM THE FLOOR WHERE THE MAGES ARE AND LOOKING UP TO WHERE THE KING AND OLEANDER STAND.

OLEANDER: ...I HAVE BEEN **DILIGENT** IN MY DUTIES TO PROCURE YOUR SAFETY.

**PANEL 2**

MEDIUM SHOT. OLEANDER STANDS NEXT TO THE ALTAR, MOTIONING TO KING THEOBOLD TO LIE ON IT. TWO OF THE WHITE MAGES ARE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND.

OLEANDER: LIE DOWN ON THE ALTAR AND RELAX. **WE'LL** TAKE CARE OF THE REST.

**PANEL 3**

FULL SHOT. KING THEOBOLD'S BODY FLOATS ABOVE THE ALTAR, ENCASED IN A TRANSLUSCENT SHIELD. THE WHITE MAGES CHANT WITH THEIR ARMS RAISED.

WHITE MAGES: OMM, SHALLAH, TEKUTU, BENAR!

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**PANEL 1**

WESTERN SHOT. KING THEOBOLD STANDS NEXT TO THE ALTAR, CHECKING OVER HIMSELF. OLEANDER STANDS IN THE BACKGROUND.

KING THEOBOLD: I DON'T...**FEEL**...ANY DIFFERENT.

**PANEL 2**

WESTERN SHOT. SAME ARTWORK. ONLY DIFFERENCES ARE KING THEOBOLD NEEDS TO LOOK AS THOUGH HE'S OBVIOUSLY CHECKING A DIFFERENT PART OF HIMSELF THAN HE WAS IN THE FIRST PANEL, OLEANDER'S ARM POINTS TOWARD THE KING, A FIREBALL RESTS BETWEEN OLEANDER AND THE KING, TRAVELING TOWARD THE KING.

SFX (FIREBALL, DOUBLE OUTLINE BURST BALLOON): WHOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHH

**PANEL 3**

WESTERN SHOT. CAMERA HAS SHIFTED TO THE RIGHT. A TRANSLUSCENT SHIELD APPEARS AROUND THE KING AND THE FIREBALL IS DEFLECTED AWAY FROM THE SHIELD.

KING THEOBOLD: WHAT THE—

SFX (SHIELD): SHIIINK!

**PANEL 4**

TWO SHOT. KING THEOBOLD IS NO LONGER ENCASED IN THE SHIELD. OLEANDER IS BY HIS SIDE. A FIRE BURNS IN THE BACKGROUND. TWO-THREE OF THE WHITE MAGES TEND TO THE FIRE.

KING THEOBOLD: YOU HAVE DONE GREAT WORK, OLDEANDER. I AM PROUD OF YOU.

OLEANDER: THANK YOU, SIRE.

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**PANEL 1**

WIDE SHOT. DAY TIME. SEVERAL LOCALS HEAD TOWARD THE CASTLE COURTYARD.

**PANEL 2**

MEDIUM SHOT. ONE LOCAL SPEAKS TO ANOTHER AS THEY LOOK AT THE FOUR CHILDREN FROM PAGE 1 ON STAGE SET IN THE CENTER OF THE COURTYARD.

LOCAL #1: IT'S ALWAYS GREAT WATCHING THE "BLESSENING" KNOWING IT'S NOT ME UP THERE.

LOCAL #2: HAVE SOME DECENCY, MAN!

**PANELS 3-7**

CLOSE UP OF ALL THE CHILDREN FROM PAGE 1. THEIR FACES ARE SMILING IN EXCITEMENT AND ANTICIPATION OF GOING THROUGH THE BLESSENING.

CAPTION (LOCAL #2): THESE KIDS MIGHT BE GETTING EXILED TODAY.