



Vol. 1

COLLECTED

Damsels in Distress



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Damself in Excess



Damsels In Excess

Chapter 0

GREETINGS

SO...
UH, DO I
JUST START
TALKING?

ALRIGHTY
THEN...

I AM BETHANY,
PRINCESS OF EVANFAR,
THE LARGEST AND MOST
PROMINENT KINGDOM OF
THE FIVE REALMS. AND UH...
I SUPPOSE... I AM REALLY
LOOKING FORWARD TO
SHOWING YOU WHAT MY
REIGN CONSISTS
OF...



...THE EXCITEMENT...

YOUR HIGHNESS...

...THE MONTHLY
INSURANCE TAX ON MY LAND
IS UNREASONABLE.

I MAY AS WELL HIRE
AN OFF-DUTY DRAGON TO
SCORCH THE PROPERTY AND
COLLECT THE SUM.

>YAWN<

YOU ARE
THE MINISTER OF
FINANCE, FOR LORD'S
SAKE-- THE TAX WAS
YOUR IDEA.

AND NOW
I AM SAYING IT IS
A BAD IDEA. WHY DID
YOU EVER LISTEN
TO ME?!

...THE PAGEANTRY...

I THINK...
HNNH... YOU
JUST CUT OFF
MY OXYGEN
SUPPLY.

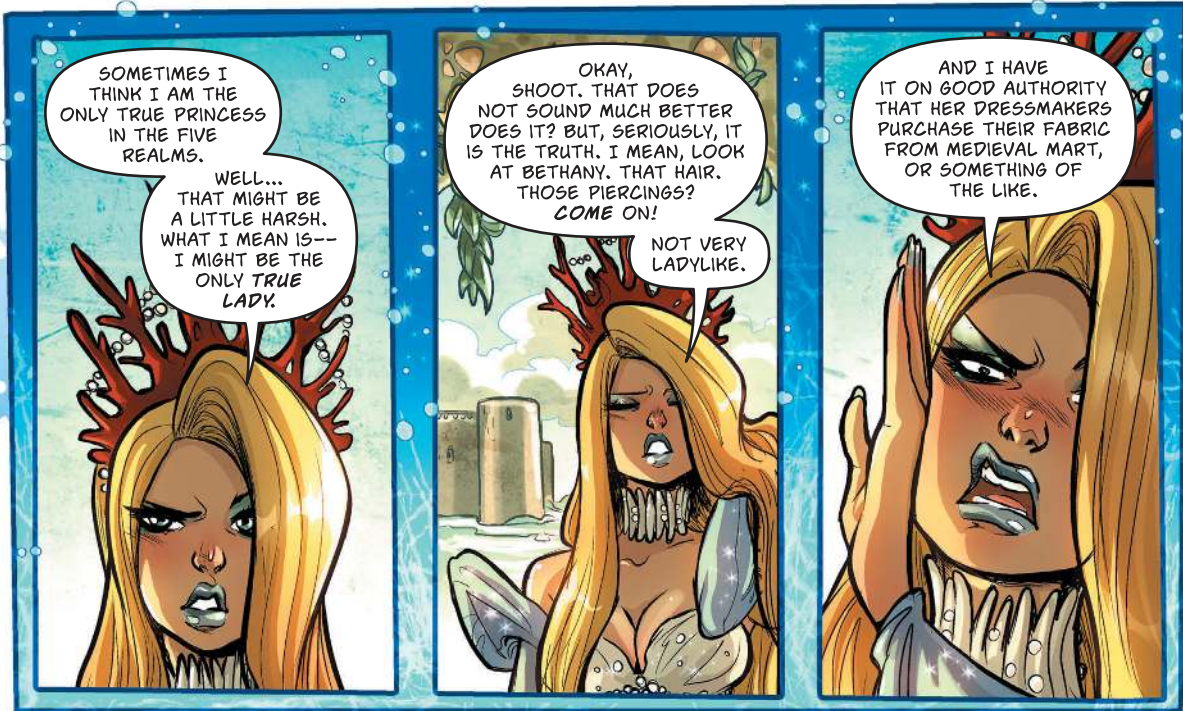
TIGHTER! THE
CITIZENS WILL
EXPECT AMPLE
CLEFTAGE!

...AND OF COURSE,
THE DRAMA...

OH, PLEASE-- YOU
KNOW YOUR KINGDOM CANNOT
POSSIBLY AFFORD THAT!

DO NOT
TELL ME WHAT I
CAN OR CANNOT
PURCHASE!

I SHOULD START BY
TELLING YOU THAT I AM
NOT THE ONLY PRINCESS
IN THE FIVE REALMS...



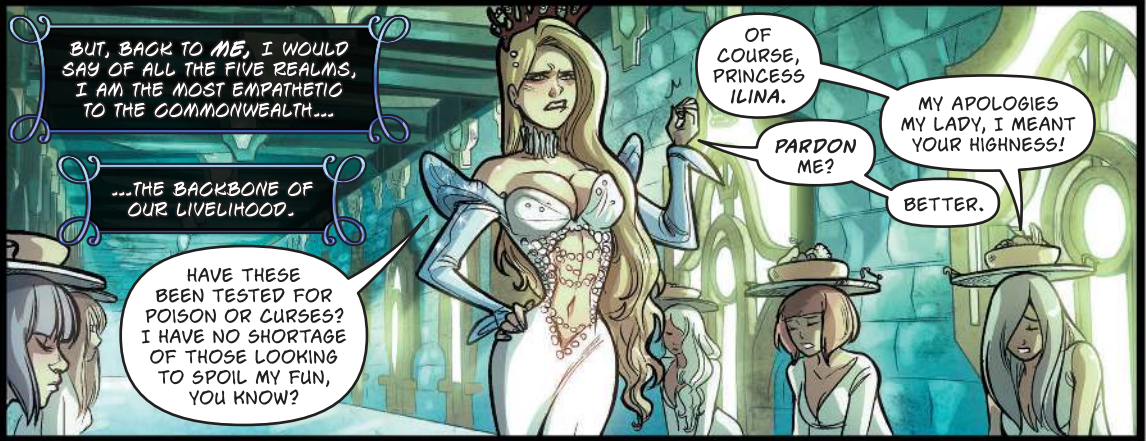
SOMETIMES I THINK I AM THE ONLY TRUE PRINCESS IN THE FIVE REALMS.

WELL... THAT MIGHT BE A LITTLE HARSH. WHAT I MEAN IS-- I MIGHT BE THE ONLY TRUE LADY.

OKAY, SHOOT. THAT DOES NOT SOUND MUCH BETTER DOES IT? BUT, SERIOUSLY, IT IS THE TRUTH. I MEAN, LOOK AT BETHANY. THAT HAIR. THOSE PIERCINGS? COME ON!

NOT VERY LADYLIKE.

AND I HAVE IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT HER DRESSMAKERS PURCHASE THEIR FABRIC FROM MEDIEVAL MART, OR SOMETHING OF THE LIKE.



BUT, BACK TO ME, I WOULD SAY OF ALL THE FIVE REALMS, I AM THE MOST EMPATHETIC TO THE COMMONWEALTH...

...THE BACKBONE OF OUR LIVELIHOOD.

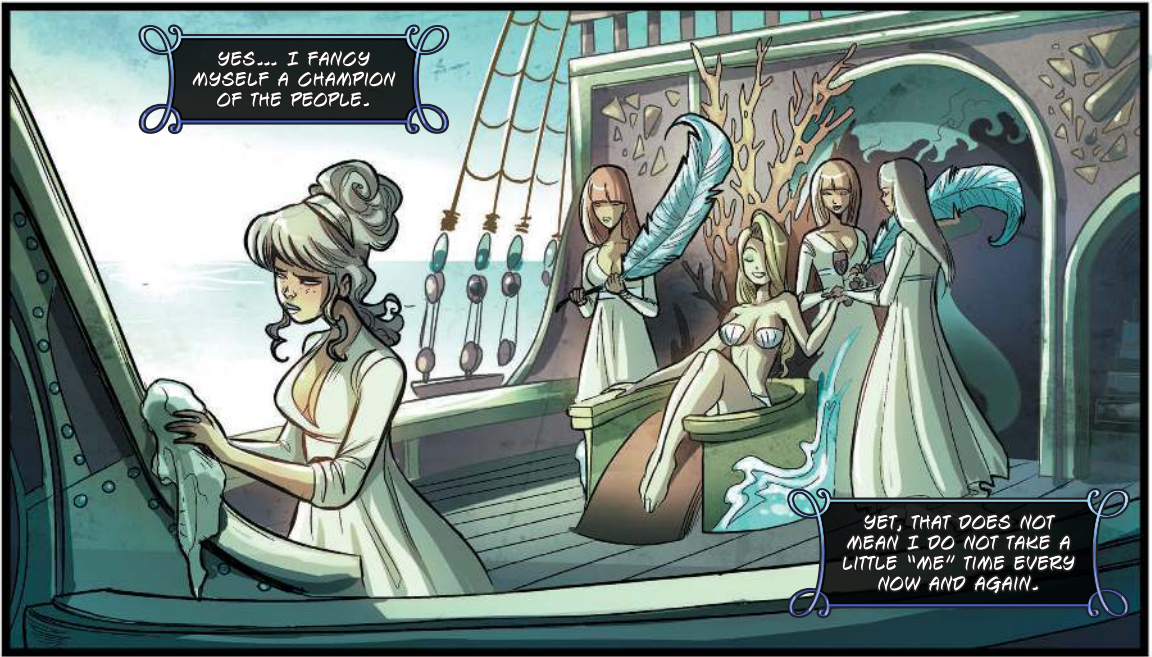
HAVE THESE BEEN TESTED FOR POISON OR CURSES? I HAVE NO SHORTAGE OF THOSE LOOKING TO SPOIL MY FUN, YOU KNOW?

OF COURSE, PRINCESS ILINA.

PARDON ME?

MY APOLOGIES MY LADY, I MEANT YOUR HIGHNESS!

BETTER.



YES... I FANCY MYSELF A CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE.

YET, THAT DOES NOT MEAN I DO NOT TAKE A LITTLE "ME" TIME EVERY NOW AND AGAIN.



SHE WOULD SAY THAT.

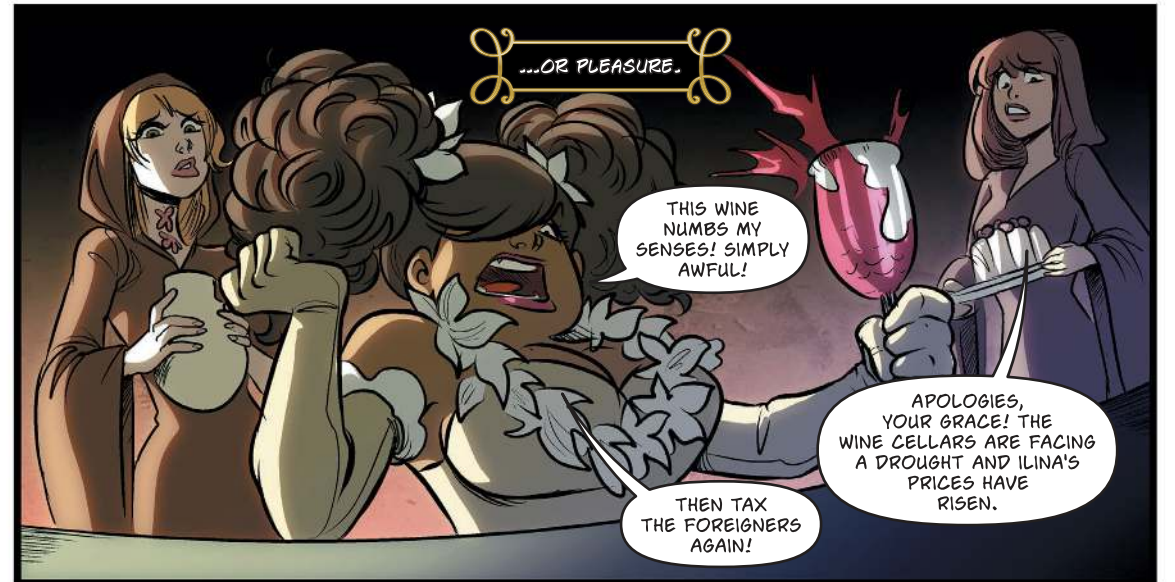
IF ILINA SPENT LESS TIME ON HERSELF, AND MORE TIME ON HER KINGDOM, SHE MIGHT HAVE MORE SUPPORTERS TO HER THRONE--LIKE BETHANY.

THANKFULLY, NOT ALL OF US ARE BLESSED WITH HER... FINER DETAILS. SOME OF US HAVE TO MAKE DO ON PERSONALITY ALONE. RESOURCEFULNESS IS A TRAIT OF THE GREAT KEER..

...AND I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL FIND THE KEEP TO BE THE MOST SPLENDID KINGDOM IN ALL THE REALMS...



...WE TREAT OUR GUESTS KINDLY. SPARING NO ACCOMMODATION...



...OR PLEASURE.

THIS WINE NUMBS MY SENSES! SIMPLY AWFUL!

APOLOGIES, YOUR GRACE! THE WINE CELLARS ARE FACING A DROUGHT AND ILINA'S PRICES HAVE RISEN.

THEN TAX THE FOREIGNERS AGAIN!



PEOPLE SAY ARNEN HAS A "WILD" SIDE.

ARNEN FINDS THIS ABSOLUTELY LUDICROUS. ARNEN IS TAME AS THEY COME, SERVING PRINCESS BARRA WITH HONOR. AND ARNEN IS EXTREMELY HUMBLE.

I MEAN LOOK AT ME-- ARNEN IS THE TOTAL PACKAGE!

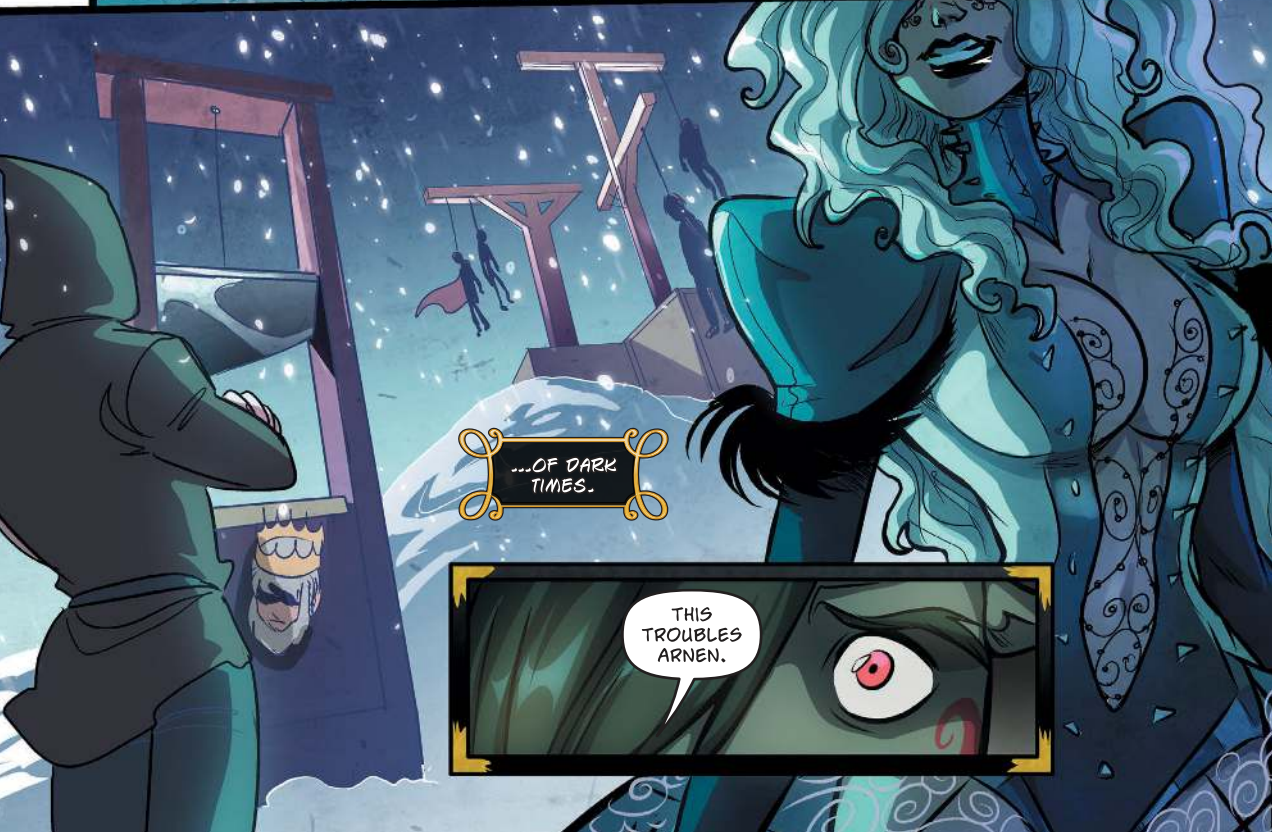
AND ARNEN IS ALSO PERCEPTIVE...



...IN MY SCOUTING FOR PRINCESS BARRA, ARNEN HAS SEEN THINGS.

THINGS THAT FRIGHTEN ARNEN-- SPARKING MEMORIES.

MEMORIES OF HORRIBLE DEEDS...



...OF DARK TIMES.

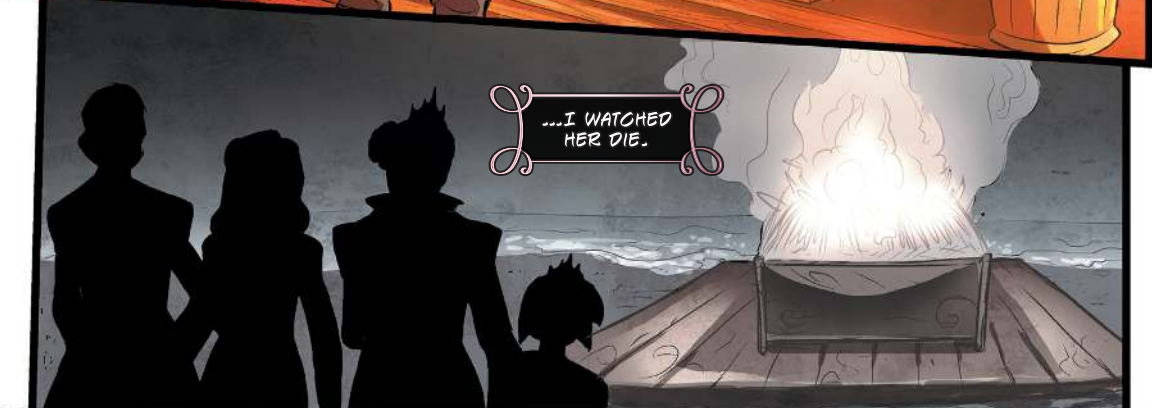


THIS TROUBLES ARNEN.



MY SPIES
TELL ME TROUBLE
IS STIRRING.

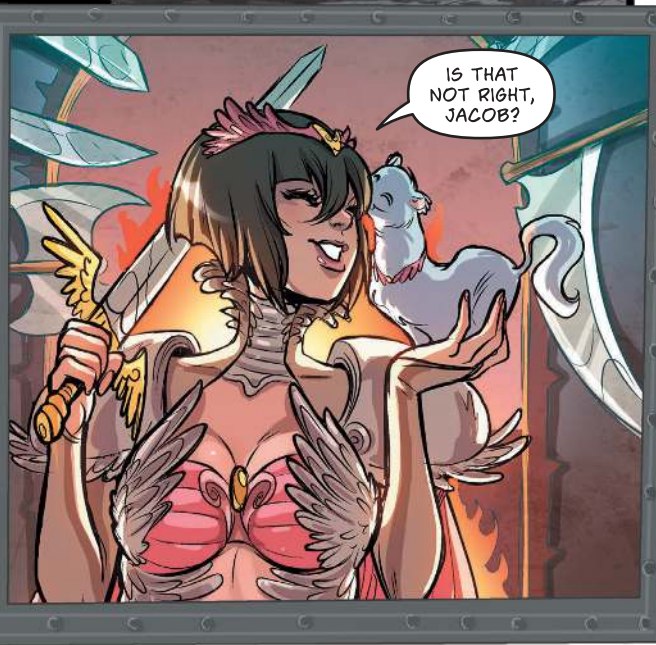
JACOB WARNS OF HER
RETURN, AND HE IS SELDOM
MISTAKEN. BUT, I REFUSE
TO BELIEVE IT...



...I WATCHED
HER DIE.



I WILL TELL YOU ONE
THING-- IF THE... DEAD QUEEN
STIRS, HEAVEN'S FORGE WILL BE
READY. WE PROTECT OURSELVES
FIERCE, IF NOTHING ELSE.



IS THAT
NOT RIGHT,
JACOB?

