

The background of the entire image is a detailed illustration of Geralt of Rivia. He is positioned in the center, facing forward with a serious expression. He has his characteristic white hair tied in a ponytail and is wearing his dark, weathered witcher armor. He holds a silver sword in his right hand, which is raised slightly. The environment around him is dark and industrial, with large, metallic structures and pipes. In the foreground and background, there are bright, intense flames and sparks, suggesting a battle or a fiery destruction. The overall color palette is dominated by dark browns, greys, and bright oranges from the fire.

# THE WITCHER<sup>®</sup>

## REASONS OF STATE

**COMIC BOOK**



# THE WITCHER®

## REASONS OF STATE

BASED ON THE NOVELS BY  
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**I**t is the year 1262. After saving Ciri from the Brokilon dryads, Geralt ventures north. At the same time a war breaks out with Nilfgaard a war that would end with the battle of Sodden Hill, which would supposedly claim the life of Yennefer of Vengerberg. The realms of the extreme North remained neutral, and the land is relatively peaceful. The Principality of Malleore, where this story is set, lies on the banks of the Braa river in the foothills of the Dragon Mountains (the general location was featured in the "Limits of Possibility" short story). Presently Malleore is a part of Caingorn, the realm of King Niedamir.

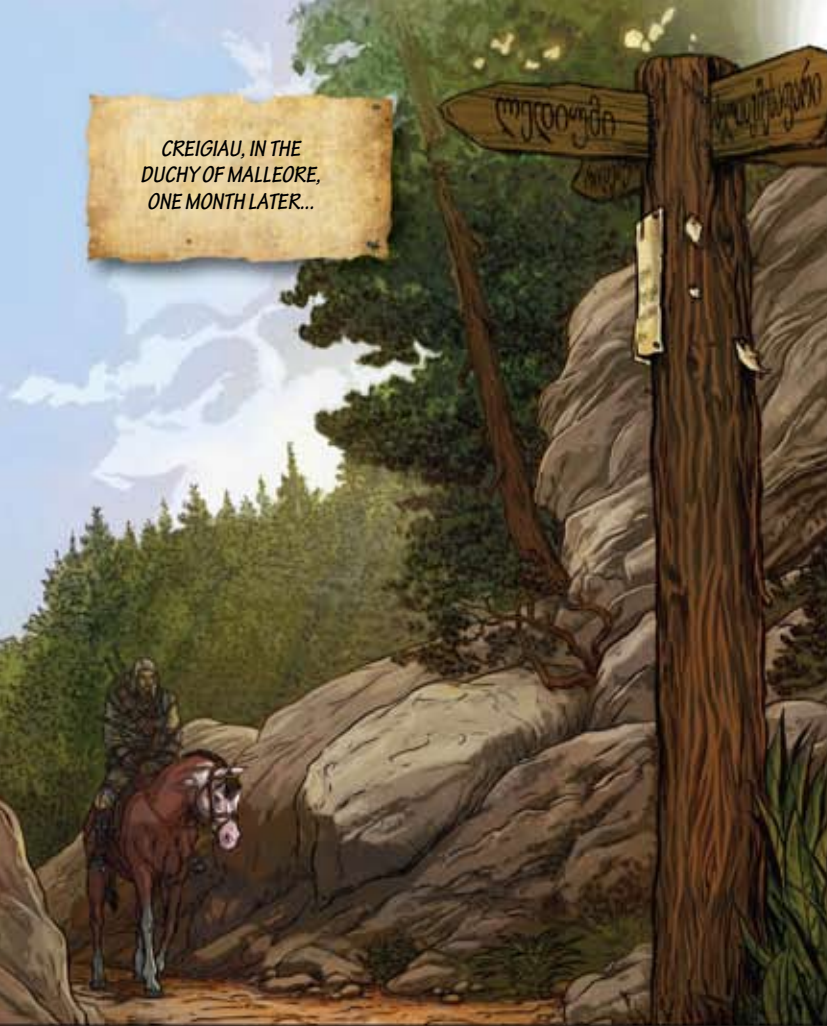
The small, heavily fortified castle of House Creigiau is located on the bank of the Crea, one of the Braa's inlets. The mountainous region was ideal for shepherding, so the Barons of Creigiau spent centuries trading in wool. However, around 1251, the castellan Lazare convinced his Baron to switch to logging instead. This industry fuels the busy shipyards of neighboring Kovir. Esterad Thyse, the king of Kovir, and his wife Zuleyka are the followers of the "Good Book" and its author, the prophet Lebioda. It is likely that trade relations with Kovir brought the cult to Creigiau. As it is often the case, the peasants did not abandon their worship of older, pagan deities, like the locally revered leshy.







CREIGIAU, IN THE  
DUCHY OF MALLEORE,  
ONE MONTH LATER...



"WITCHER  
NEEDED  
URGENTLY."

I'VE GOT  
A FEELING WE'LL GET  
SOMETHING OUT  
OF THIS TRIP TO  
THE MOUNTAINS,  
ROACH.





MOST HONORABLE  
LADIES, AND YOU,  
WORTHY LORDS, THE  
TIME HAS ARRIVED  
FOR THE FINAL OUSTS.

ETERNAL FIRE,  
PROTECT ME.



THE NOBLY BORN  
SIR OWAIN OF POVISS  
WILL NOW ENTER  
THE MELEE.



OH! HOW  
UNFORTUNATE!



ALAS... THE KNIGHT  
OF POVISS RETURNS  
TO HIS TENT,  
DEFEATED.

BUT FEAR NOT,  
SPECTATORS, BOTH  
PEOPLE OF CREIGIAU AND  
GUESTS FROM AFAR.  
THIS DOES NOT MARK  
THE TOURNAMENT'S END.



WHICH ONE'S THE CASTELLAN?

LAZARE? HE'S AT THE TABLE.



YOU'RE THE CASTELLAN? I'M HERE ABOUT THE NOTICE...

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M TAKING BETS?



NOW ENTERING THE ARENA - THE NOBLY BORN BARON BRYTON, LORD OF CREIGIAU CASTLE.

CREI-GIAUI  
CREI-GIAUI



HEROIC DEFENDER OF SODDEN HILL, DECORATED FOR VALOR MYRIAD TIMES, AND ORGANIZER OF THE TOURNAMENT IN MEMORY OF HIS FATHER, ANTON THE BEARDED.



THE GRIFFIN? ARE YOU MAD? HAVE YOU ANY NOTION HOW MUCH EFFORT WENT INTO CAPTURING THE BEAST ALIVE? AND HOW MANY MEN IT MAULED WHILE BEING BROUGHT HERE FROM THE DRAGON MOUNTAINS?

LISTEN HERE, MASTER... WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

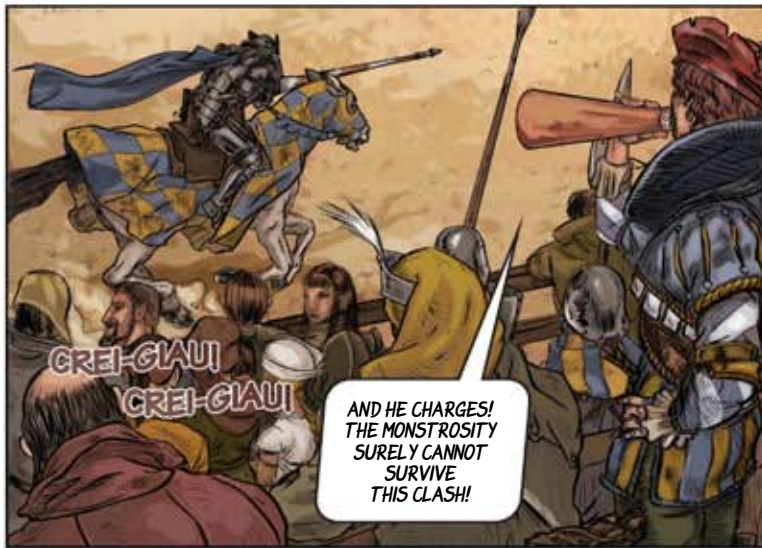
GERALT.

LISTEN HERE, MASTER GERALT. THAT GRIFFIN AWAITS THE TOURNAMENT'S WINNER THAT WOULD BE OUR GRACIOUS LORD, BARON BRYTON, IT SEEMS.



AND YOU'RE NOT WORRIED THAT YOUR LORD BARON WILL BREAK HIS NECK LIKE THE OTHER KNIGHT?

AS BETTING IS CLOSED, I CAN ONLY SAY I WOULD NOT WAGER ON THAT HAPPENING.



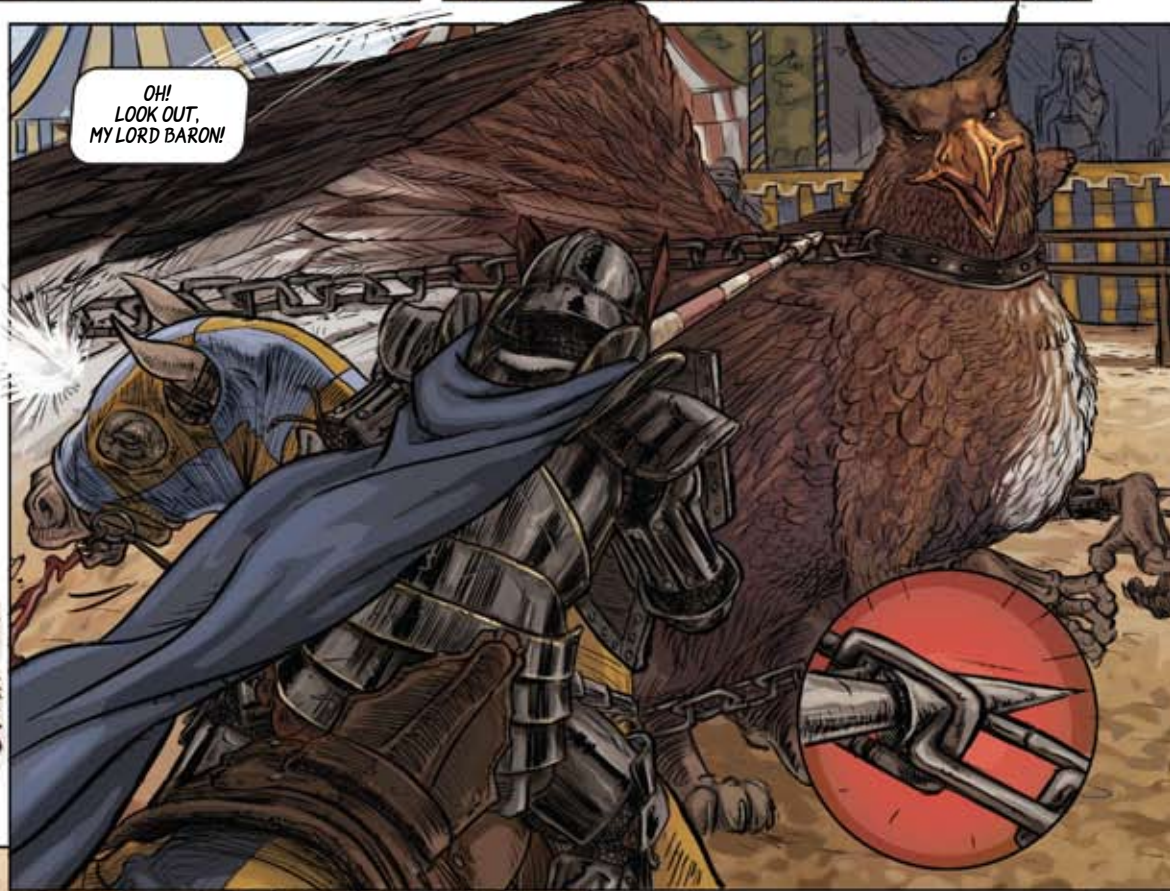
GREI-GIAUI  
GREI-GIAUI

AND HE CHARGES!  
THE MONSTROSITY  
SURELY CANNOT  
SURVIVE  
THIS CLASH!

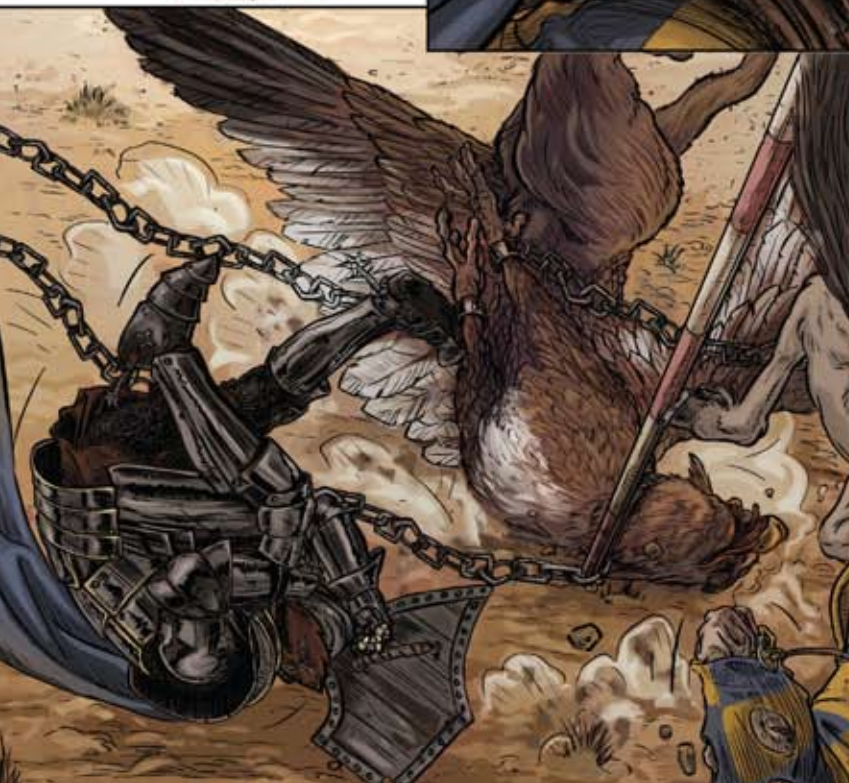


GOOD THING  
THAT HORSE  
CAN'T SEE WHERE  
IT'S GOING.

NONSENSE.  
THAT HORSE,  
LIKE ITS RIDER,  
HAS WEATHERED  
MORE THAN ONE  
BATTLE.



OH!  
LOOK OUT,  
MY LORD BARON!



WELL  
AIMED.

BLOODY HELL!





WHY WOULD YOU  
WAKE ME AT THIS  
UNGODLY HOUR,  
FATHER?



I WANTED  
YOU TO MEET  
SOMEONE.  
WAIT...



AH, SEE?  
HERE HE IS.  
WITCHER.  
THIS IS MY SON -  
MARCAS,  
THE BARON'S  
SQUI...

AN HONOR.  
CAN I GO  
NOW?



EH, YOUNGSTERS  
THESE DAYS, I TRY TO TEACH  
THE KID MANNERS, ENCOURAGE  
HIM TO MEET PEOPLE, BUILD RELA-  
TIONSHIPS. BUT HE CARES  
ONLY FOR BEER  
AND WENCHES.

WHERE  
ARE YOU  
STAYING?



AT THE  
"RIPE GRAPE."

YOU WERE  
DISCREET,  
I HOPE?

INDEED.  
A LOT OF STRAN-  
GERS HERE FOR  
THE TOURNAMENT.  
NOBODY ASKED ME  
ANY QUESTIONS.



THAT'S FOR  
THE BETTER.  
COME IN, THEN.



"TO SEE IS TO  
BELIEVE," AS THE  
PROPHET SAYS.



THIS IS THE DE CREIGIAU FAMILY CRYPT. BEHOLD BARON ANTON THE ELDER, KNOWN AS THE BEARDED.

MY TRUSTED FRIEND AND FATHER TO THE CASTLE'S CURRENT LORD.



MY TRUSTED IN THANKS FOR MY FAITHFUL SERVICE, HE GAVE ME HIS COUSIN EANNA IN MARRIAGE. SHE DIED AT A LESHY'S HANDS... WOULD BE A DECADE AGO..

SURE IT WAS A LESHY? NOT A GHOUL, A WYVERN OR A DROWNER?



WHY, EVEN CHILDREN KNOW THAT THE LESHY, ALSO CALLED THE SPRIGGAN...

...PROWLS THE FOREST AS A GIANT CAT OR WOLF. I SAW THE CLAW MARKS MYSELF. THERE ARE NO SUCH ANIMALS HERE.



AND NO ONE'S TRIED TO DRIVE IT OFF FOR TEN YEARS? I CAN'T BELIEVE THE PEASANTS HAVEN'T ATTEMPTED THEIR FOLK REMEDIES.

DON'T BE FOOLED BY THIS CATHEDRAL OF LEBIODA. THE PEOPLE HERE LIGHT CANDLES TO LEBIODA AND BURN INCENSE FOR THE LESHY, FOR THE LESHY IS HOUSE CREIGIAU'S PROTECTOR. AND THE FOREST IT SEES FIT TO HAUNT IS SACRED GROUND.



BESIDES, A LESHY CAN BE DORMANT FOR YEARS. SOME NEW CORPSES APPEARED JUST AFTER BELLETEYN. INCLUDING DOIREANN - BROTHER TO THE BARON'S WIFE, LADY SEARLAI DE CREIGIAU.

NOW I UNDERSTAND THE SECRET. YOU WANT TO DISPOSE OF THIS MONSTER QUIETLY.

AYE, TRUE. REASONS OF STATE REQUIRE IT. AND WITCHERS KILL MONSTERS, RIGHT?

RIGHT.



SO, MAYBE THIS SMALL ADVANCE WILL HELP TO ALLAY ANY DOUBTS YOU HAVE?

EXCELLENT. THIS WAY, MASTER GERALT. WE'LL LEAVE BY WAY OF THE WALLS.



...THE LESHY  
DISAPPEARED AFTER  
EANNA'S DEATH, AND WE  
GOT TO WORK, TO SHAKE  
OFF THE TRAGEDY.

OUR WOOL  
HAS NEVER BEEN TOO  
PROFITABLE, BUT  
OUR TIMBER IS FIRST  
CLASS!



SO WE GAVE  
OUR SHEPHERDS  
AXES AND... BEHOLD,  
YOU WON'T FIND A MORE  
BEAUTIFUL CITY IN ALL  
OF MALLEORE.



THE SAWMILL!  
POWERED BY WATER,  
IT'S BECOME CREIGIAU'S  
CHIEF SOURCE  
OF REVENUE.

THE RIVER  
THAT FLOWS SOUTH  
FROM HERE IS THE CREA,  
ONE OF THE BRAA'S  
TRIBUTARIES. IDEAL  
FOR FLOATING  
TIMBER SWIFTLY AND  
CHEAPLY TO THE GULF  
OF PRAXEDA,  
AND FROM THERE,  
ON TO KOVIR.

THAT'S  
PROFITABLE?  
THEY DON'T HAVE  
AXES IN KOVIR?



THEY DO, BUT  
IT'S A WEALTHY  
COUNTRY. LUMBERJACKS  
THERE EARN THREE  
TIMES AS MUCH  
AS OURS DO.

SO, WHEN ALL  
IS ADDED UP, IT TURNS  
OUT THAT WE'RE  
CHEAPER. AND TO  
MERCHANTS, "CHEAPER"  
MEANS "BETTER."



I WISH MARCAS  
TOOK A GREATER  
INTEREST IN THESE THINGS.  
BUT THE RASCAL THINKS  
ONLY OF MISCHIEF.

I INDULGE HIM,  
FOR HE WAS  
SHATTERED BY HIS  
MOTHER'S DEATH,  
BUT...  
I DON'T KNOW.  
HOW IS HE SUPPOSED  
TO GOVERN THIS  
LAND ONE DAY?



...YOU MEAN  
...AS THE  
CASTELLAN?

YES, AS THE  
CASTELLAN,  
OF COURSE.



IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE BEARDED ANT ON DIED.

WHILE HIS ELDER SON, BRYTON, WAS WAGING WAR AGAINST NILFGAARD, ANTON THE YOUNGER MANAGED THE ESTATE.

CAN'T SAY HE WAS ANY GOOD AT IT. AND ADVISING HIM WAS TRUE HELL! HMPF!



SINCE BRYTON RETURNED TO THE CASTLE, HE HAS DONE ALL HE CAN TO PAY OFF CREIGIAU'S DEBTS. THE SAWMILL WAS OUR ONLY HOPE, AND NOW THIS LESHY HAS RETURNED...

TRIED MAKING OFFERINGS? MAYBE SOME RITUALS?



WE HAVE. BUT WHEN PEOPLE BEGAN DYING, THE PEASANTS DECIDED THEY WOULD WAIT OUT THE LESHY'S WRATH. WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THREE MONTHS NOW, AND NOTHING. HENCE THE NOTICE.

AND HERE HE IS! THE ELDER OF THE LUMBERJACK GUILD'S...



TAKE THIS PIGSWILL AWAY, YOU SHITEATER, BEFORE I BRUISE YOUR ARSE GOOD!

MISTER HURGAN, THIS IS THE MAN...



HERE ABOUT THE RUINS... YOU KNOW.

I'LL NOT GO ANYWHERE. THE BARON SAID TO WAIT, SO I'LL WAIT.



MISTER HURGAN, GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF. I TELL YOU WE MUST...

AND I SAY I'M NOT GOING, EVEN IF I'M...

TREATED TO SOME MAHAKAMAN MEAD?

...SUPERSTITIOUS  
TWITS AND OLD  
WOMEN.

IF I SUMMONED BUT  
A FEW LADS FROM  
MAHAKAM, WE'D DEAL  
WITH THE PLOUGHING  
FRANKSTER IN NO TIME.  
BUT I STILL VALUE  
MY ARSE, BLIMEY.

ARSE?

AYE, ARSE. HERE,  
MY DEAR WITCHER, THERE  
IS BUT ONE PUNISHMENT  
FOR MOST CRIMES. A STAKE UP THE  
ARSE. YE WATCH OUT,  
GERALT. IF THE SERFS LEARN  
THAT YOU KILLED THEIR SACRED  
BEAST, THINGS MAY TURN  
NASTY. HEHEHEH!

DAMMIT. LAZARE  
WENT ON AND ON ABOUT  
THE SECRET, BUT NEGLECTED  
TO MENTION THE STAKE.  
WHY THE HELL DID I TAKE  
THAT ADVANCE...

MOST WOULD  
SPLIT NOW. YOU'RE  
CLEARLY AN HONORABLE  
MAN, THOUGH  
A WITCHER.

...

I CAN'T REALLY  
BLAME THE SERFS FOR  
WANTING NO PART IN IT. IT'S  
THE NOBLES' BUSINESS.  
AND, TRUTH BE TOLD, THE  
LESHY MAINLY KILLS  
NOBLES.

RUMOR IS  
THAT THE CONFLICT  
BETWEEN THE BROTHERS  
CAUSED THE LESHY,  
THAT SON OF A BITCH,  
TO RUN AMOK.

WHAT  
CONFLICT?

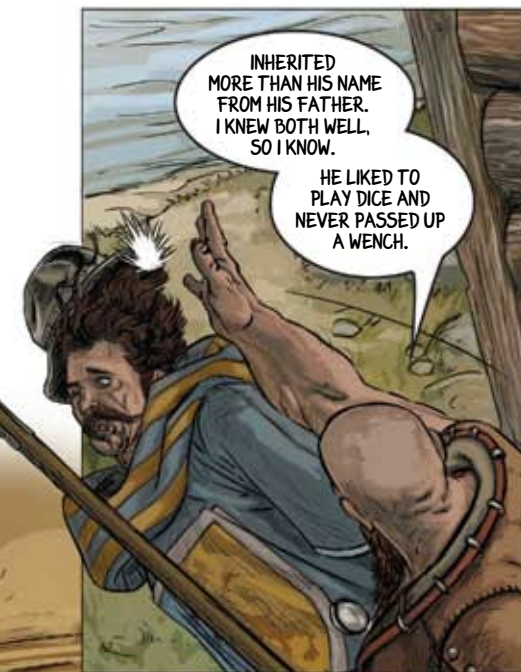
ANTON  
THE YOUNGER AND  
BRYTON ARE  
STEPBROTHERS.  
THEY ISSUED FROM  
DIFFERENT MOTHERS.  
THEY'VE BICKERED  
SINCE CHILDHOOD. WHEN  
BRYTON RETURNED  
FROM THE WAR, THERE  
WAS PEACE  
BETWEEN THEM  
FOR JUST A FEW  
MONTHS. FINALLY,  
BRYTON COULD STAND  
IT NO MORE AND DROVE  
THE ROGUE FROM HIS  
COURT.

STRAIGHT  
INTO DEATH'S  
EMBRACE, AS IT  
TURNED OUT.

ANTON  
IS DEAD? WHO  
KILLED HIM?

...DEPENDS ON  
WHO YOU ASK.  
I THINK HIS DEBT'S  
GOT HIM KILLED.

A REAL  
RAKE THAT ANTON  
WAS, OR MY NAME  
ISN'T HORGAN  
BOLT







?!



MARCAS?  
WHAT ARE YOU...  
BOTH DOING  
HERE?



WITCHER!



GET OUT  
OF HERE!



DID FATHER  
SEND YOU?  
HOW DID HE KNOW  
ABOUT THE SECRET  
PASS...?



ROARR!



THE LESHY'S  
HERE! UP A  
TREE, NOW!

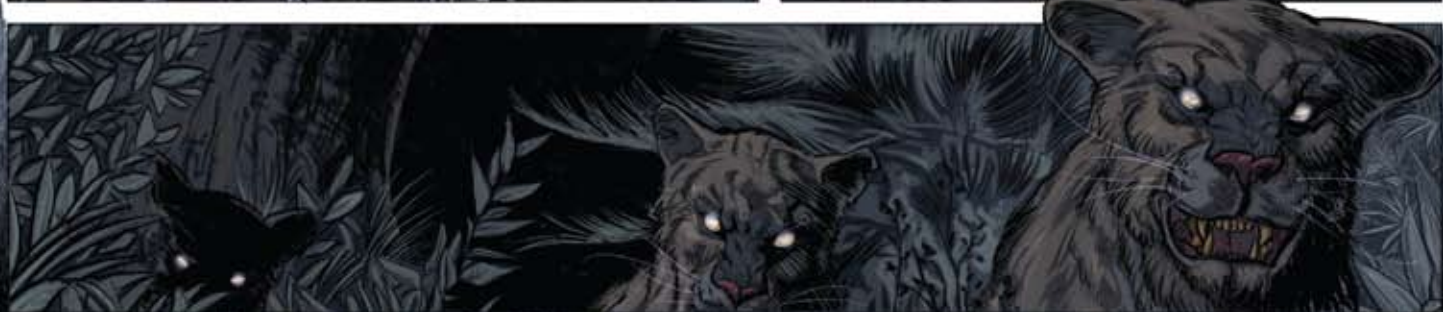
WE'LL NOT  
RUN, WITCHER.  
YOU CAN COUNT  
ON US!



I DON'T WANT  
TO COUNT ON YOU!  
DAMMIT! QUICK, GET  
OVER HERE!

















RRRR...  
WHO ARE  
YOU?

I'M...  
GERALT,  
A WITCHER.



I TOOK ON  
A CONTRACT INVOLVING  
A LESHY. BUT I GUESS  
THAT'S OUT OF DATE. ARE  
YOU BARON BRYTON'S  
BROTHER?



BRYTON  
HIRED A MURDERER?  
I MIGHT'VE  
EXPECTED THAT ...



I'M NOT SURE  
IF HE KNOWS  
YOU'RE...  
PROWLING THESE  
WOODS...

OH, HE  
KNOWS. WHO DO YOU  
THINK PLACED  
THIS CURSE  
ON ME?

...THE  
CURSE CAN BE  
LIFTED.

WHY?  
SO HE CAN FINISH ME  
OFF MORE EASILY?  
HE SHOULD FINALLY  
ACCEPT MY CHALLENGE  
AND FACE ME IN  
COMBAT.



TELL HIM  
I'M WAITING.

AND WHAT  
IF HE GIVES ME  
A WERECAT  
CONTRACT?

THEN WE'LL  
MEET AGAIN,  
WITCHER.



BUT THEN,  
YOU WON'T LEAVE  
MY FOREST  
ALIVE.



I TRUST IT IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT. YOU DRAW ME AWAY FROM MY GUESTS.



IT'S NOT A LESHY, MY LORD. IT'S A WERECAT. A MAN WHO WAS CURSED AND BECAME A LYCANTHROPE - HALF MAN, HALF CAT.

THIS IS WITCHER GERALT, BARON. I HIRED HIM TO RID US OF THE LESHY...



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? AFTER ALL, THE PROPHET LEBIODA SAID, "VERILY I SAY TO YOU: THOU SHALT BATTLE THE DEVIL AND HIS MINIONS - BEASTS OF ALL FORMS."

ANTON! HE'S ALIVE? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...

INDEED.

IT'S YOUR BROTHER, MY LORD BARON.



MY LORD BARON, HE... HE WANTS TO CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL.

ABSURD. I DON'T FIGHT MONSTERS...



UNLESS THEY'RE CHAINED...

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

MY LORD, THE CURSE CAN BE LIFTED. IT WON'T RIGHT ANY WRONGS, BUT IT WILL SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM.

WILL IT? AND WILL MY PEOPLE FORGIVE ANTON FOR ALL THE KILLINGS? AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT HIS FAULT - IT WAS THE CURSE! NO, WITCHER. FOR REASONS OF STATE - BROTHER OR NOT, THE BEAST MUST DIE.





DON'T  
BE SHY...

?!



LADY  
SEARLAI?!  
WHY ARE  
YOU...?

MASTER  
WITCHER, HEAR  
ME OUT. I'VE A VERY  
IMPORTANT  
MATTER...



NO DOUBT.  
BUT I'M NOT  
INTERESTED - IN THE  
MATTER NOR ITS  
IMPORTANCE.  
GOT DIRTY  
LAUNDRY? DO  
IT YOURSELF.

DON'T  
BE SHY.

PLEASE,  
MASTER  
WITCHER.  
I'VE NO ONE  
ELSE...



NO THANKS.  
I EXPECTED  
A LESSON BUT GOT  
THE BARON'S

CURSED BROTHER  
FIND A HIRED  
ASSASSIN.  
I DON'T MEDDLE  
IN POLITICS.

BUT...



M'LADY,  
I KNOW YOUR  
BROTHER'S  
DEAD. KILLED  
BY ANTON  
THE WERECAT I SYMPATHIZE.  
I DO. BUT WITCHERS  
ARE NOT AVENGERS.  
NO MATTER  
THE PRICE.

BUT I DON'T  
WANT ANTON'S  
DEATH!



I WANT  
YOU TO LIFT  
THE CURSE.



THOUGH NOBLE,  
MY FAMILY WAS  
POOR. MY MARRIAGE  
TO LORD CREIGIAU  
WAS OUR ONLY WAY OUT  
OF DEBT.

WE REJOICED  
WHEN I BECAME  
PREGNANT.



YET FIVE  
MONTHS ON... I MISCARRIED..  
MY FATHER REFUSED  
TO LOOK AT ME. BRYTON  
GREW DISTANT.



TEARS FILLED  
MY NIGHTS, FEARS  
TAINTED MY  
DREAMS.

DID BRYTON  
STILL LOVE ME? WHAT  
USE TO HIM WAS A BARREN  
WIFE? WHERE WOULD  
I GO IF HE CAST  
ME OUT?  
AND THEN  
ANTON  
RETURNED.

HE WON MY  
HEART  
INSTANTLY, BUT  
RESISTED..  
HE DID NOT  
WISH TO DISAPPOINT  
HIS BROTHER.  
TO NO  
AVAIL.

I SHALL  
NEVER FORGET  
THAT NIGHT.  
HE GAVE  
ME ALL  
I LACKED.



PASSION,  
CONFIDENCE,  
STRENGTH. AND  
THE CHILD I SO  
TERRIBLY  
DESIRED.

M'LADY,  
I KNOW  
THE REST  
OF THE STORY.



THE SECRET WAS  
REVEALED. BRYTON  
CURSED ANTON, BANISHED HIM.  
BUT ANTON HAS RETURNED  
AND HE'S BEGUN  
TO KILL.

AS LORD  
OF THESE LANDS,  
BRYTON HAS TO PUNISH  
ANTON - REASONS  
OF STATE. I UNDERST  
AND THAT.



BUT I CAN'T  
CONDONE IT. WHICH  
IS WHY I HAVE  
TO LEAVE. TODAY.

BUT...  
BRYTON DID  
NOT MERELY BANISH  
ANTON.. HE DEMANDED  
HIS MURDER..



BRYTON?  
WHAT WOULD  
THE PROPHET  
LEBIODA  
SAY?

DO NOT MOCK OUR  
FAITH, WITCHER. CASTELLAN  
LAZARE TOLD ME THE TRUTH.  
HE SIMPLY COULD NOT FOLLOW  
THE BARON'S ORDERS AND  
RELEASED ANTON.

THOUGH HE  
FORCED HIM TO  
PLEDGE HE WOULD  
NEVER RETURN TO  
CREIGIAU.

ALAS, ANTON  
DID NOT  
GET FAR.



BEFORE THE  
CASTELLAN COULD  
AID HIM, SOMETHING  
HAPPENED -

THE CURSE  
BRYTON HAD CAST  
IN ANGER REARED  
ITS HEAD.

BOTH WERE  
TERRIFIED. THEY  
PARTED, BELIEVING  
THE MATTER  
CLOSED.



NOT SO.

DO YOU  
STILL BELIEVE  
ANTON DESERVES  
TO DIE?



LIFT THE CURSE -  
I BEG YOU. OUR CHILD IS  
CREIGIAU'S SOLE HEIR.  
THE BROTHERS WILL  
RECONCILE.

TRULY  
BELIEVE THAT,  
MLADÝ?

...

WELL,  
ONE THING'S  
CERTAIN.



I CAN'T BELIEVE  
I MISSED IT... THERE WAS  
NEVER A LESSON,  
AND BRYTON DIDN'T CAST  
A CURSE.

WHAT...?  
BRYTON DIDN'T...?  
BUT LAZARE  
CLAIMED..

EXACTLY -  
LAZARE.





WITCHER?  
WHAT HAVE  
YOU..?



WE GOTTA  
TALK,  
LAZARE

THERE'S ONE  
THING I POSITIVELY  
DETEST. KNOW  
WHAT THAT IS?



WHEN FAT  
FRAUDS LIKE  
YOU TAKE ME  
FOR A HIRED  
THUG.



B-BUT  
I DON'T KNOW  
WHAT YOU'RE  
THE FAMILY CRYPT?  
WH-WHY ARE  
WE HERE..?



YOU ACTUALLY  
THOUGHT A WITCHER'D  
COME ALONG AND KILL THE  
BEAST, NO QUESTIONS ASKED?  
JUST ONE PROBLEM - WE  
AREN'T WILL-LESS GOLEMS.  
SOMETIMES WE  
THINK.



WH-WHAT  
ARE  
YOU..?

NO MORE  
GAMES, LAZARE. I KNOW  
IT'S A WERECAT.  
MOST LIKELY ONE OF  
BRYTON'S AND ANTON'S  
ANCESTORS...

BRYTON  
DIDN'T CAST ANY  
CURSE. I'M SURE OF THAT,  
'CAUSE THE MOON'S NOT  
FULL TONIGHT.



WHO  
HAUNTED THIS  
PLACE AS A WERECAT?  
THE BROTHERS'  
GRANDFATHER?

N-NO.  
THE FATHER.



CLEVER  
- THE CULT OF THE  
LESSUN AS A SMOKE  
SCREEN... HOW DID  
BEARDED ANTON BUY  
YOUR SILENCE?

W-WITH  
FREEDOM TO  
DO AS I SAW FIT.  
CREIGIAU... I-I BUILT  
THIS TOWN.

IS THAT  
ALL? WAS IT  
WORTH IT?

THE BEARD...  
PLEGDED THAT IF HIS  
SONS FAILED TO PRODUCE  
AN HEIR, RULE OF CREIGIAU  
WOULD PASS TO THEIR NEXT  
CLOSEST KIN - HIS COUSIN  
EANNA'S SON.



MARCAS.

AND YOU ALMOST  
SUCCEEDED. ANTON  
REFUSED TO MARRY, AND  
BRYTON WENT OFF TO WAR.  
BUT WHEN HE RETURNED  
WITH A FIANCÉE...

I HAD TO  
INTERVENE.  
ANTON'S A MONSTER,  
BRYTON'S A FRATRICIDE.  
THE FAMILY'S CURSED.  
THEY'VE CAUSED  
ENOUGH DEATH,  
WITCHER.

DEATH?  
VICTIMS DIDN'T START  
APPEARING UNTIL AFTER  
BELLETEYN... IT WASN'T  
THE LESSUN WHO KILLED  
YOUR WIFE. WAS IT  
THE BEARD?



IT WAS AN  
ACCIDENT... SHE  
APPEARED AS HE WAS  
TRANSFORMING.  
HE MAIMED HER TERRIBLY,  
I HAD TO... I GAVE HER  
POISON...

WE COULD NOT  
SUMMON A HEALER...  
ALL WOULD HAVE  
BEEN REVEALED...

YOU DARE MENTION  
REASONS OF STATE?  
THE BEARD PROMISE YOU  
THE CASTLE OUT OF FEAR.  
YOU USED THAT, THEN TURNED  
THE BROTHERS  
AGAINST EACH  
OTHER!

BUT YOU  
OVERLOOKED  
ONE POSSIBILITY.  
THAT YOUNG LADY SÉARLAIT  
WOULD TELL ME THE TRUTH  
TO PROTECT HER  
BELOVED.



MASTER  
GERALT, B-BUT  
YOU WOULDN'T...  
NONE WILL  
BELIEVE YOU...

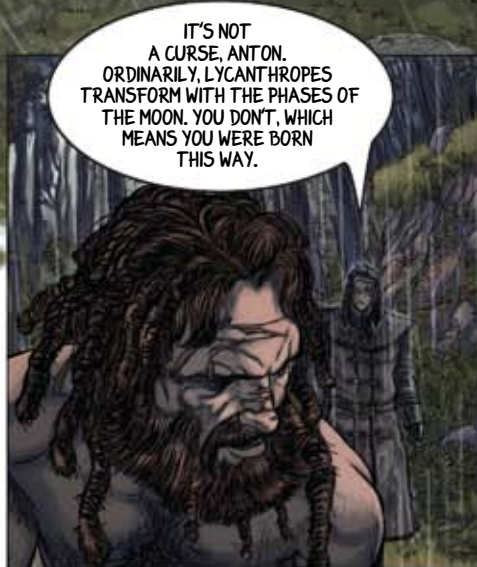
WE'LL SEE.



IT TAKES  
BALLS TO COME BACK  
NO SWORD IN HAND.  
WHAT KIND OF  
A PROFESSIONAL  
ARE YOU?

NOT MUCH OF  
ONE, APPARENTLY.  
I'M NOT HERE ON  
CONTRACT.

TRULY?  
WHAT BRINGS YOU  
HERE, THEN? REVENGE,  
CURIOSITY, OR SOME  
CONVOLUTED CODE  
OF ETHICS?



IT'S NOT  
A CURSE, ANTON.  
ORDINARILY, LYCANTHROPE  
TRANSFORM WITH THE PHASES OF  
THE MOON. YOU DON'T, WHICH  
MEANS YOU WERE BORN  
THIS WAY.



WHAT?  
NONSENSE...  
I TRANS...



THE LESSON'S  
NOT THE GUARDIAN  
OF THE DE  
CREIGIAUS

YOUR  
ANCESTORS  
WERE WERECATS.  
YOUR FATHER,  
TOO.

IMPOSSIBLE.  
I WOULD HAVE...  
WHY DO YOU  
TELL ME  
THIS...?



I WANT TO STOP  
THE BLOODSHED.  
IF YOUR LYCANTHROPY  
IS HEREDITARY,  
YOUR BROTHER IS  
INNOCENT.

INNOCENT OF  
SEEKING TO FEED  
ME TO THE GIANT  
CENTIPEDE  
AS WELL?

TRUST ME,  
WITCHER, WHEN I GET  
MY PAWS ON HIM, IT  
SHALL BE LIKE A GOOD  
BOOK - AN EYE  
FOR AN EYE.



I KNOW  
THERE'S NO LOVE  
LOST BETWEEN YOU.  
BUT CAN YOU FAULT HIM  
FOR WANTING REVENGE?  
YOU SEDUCED HIS  
WIFE.



IT WASN'T  
ME... SHE  
WAS THE  
ONE...

ANTON,  
PLEASE. SHE  
JUST HOPPED  
IN YOUR BED?

IN TRUTH,  
YES. THOUGH  
I KNOW WHO GAVE HER  
THE KEY TO MY  
CHAMBER. DOES  
THIS MEAN...?

YES.



LAZARE...  
IT'S CLEAR  
NOW.

A FAITHFUL  
FRIEND AND SERVANT.  
YET WHEN BRYTON  
RETURNED, HE BECAME  
MY FOE,

STATING PUBLICLY  
THAT CREIGIAU WAS IN DEBT,  
AND I WAS AT FAULT. HE TOOK  
OVER THE SAWMILL, THE KOVIRI  
CONTRACT. BRYTON BELIEVED HIM -  
LAZARE SWORE ON THE PROPHET  
LEBIODA...



RECONCILE  
WITH YOUR  
BROTHER. YOU NEED  
TO - FOR REASONS  
OF STATE...

EVEN MORE  
SO GIVEN THAT  
LADY SEARLAI IS  
CARRYING YOUR  
CHILD.



SEARLAI?  
THAT HELLISH WHORE  
AND NYMPHOMANIAC? MY CHILD?  
HALF THE MEN AT COURT COULD  
BE THE FATHER! NO MATTER.  
THANK YOU, WITCHER. YOU'VE OPENED  
MY EYES. IT'S NOT BRYTON  
WHO DESERVES DEATH.

WHO DOES,  
THEN? WHAT POSSESSED  
YOU TO KILL THAT  
BOY THE OTHER  
NIGHT?



REVENGE? OR  
CURIOSITY? NO, WAIT... IT  
MUST'VE BEEN SOME  
CONVOLUTED CODE  
OF ETHICS.

I... I CAN...  
IMPOSE MY WILL,  
COMMAND THEM...  
YET SOMETIMES THEIR  
BLOODLUST... IT WORKS  
BOTH WAYS...

AND IT'LL ONLY GET  
WORSE. IS THAT WHAT YOU  
WANT? EVENTUALLY, TOWNS-  
FOLK WILL COME TO KILL  
THE BEAST THAT'S TAKING  
BREAD FROM THEIR  
MOUTHS.



I KNOW... BUT...  
I NEEDN'T EXPLAIN  
MYSELF TO YOU.



LEAVE,  
WITCHER.  
FORGET THIS  
PLACE.







A CONSPIRACY!  
IS THAT SO,  
WITCHER?

YES,  
A CONSPIRACY.  
NOT SURPRISED,  
M'LORD?

NOT ESPECIALLY.  
ONLY NOW DO I SEE  
THINGS CLEARLY.

LITTLE WONDER  
THAT MY WIFE DETESTS  
ME. AS LAZARE WOULD  
HAVE IT, IT WAS I WHO  
WANTED ANTON'S  
DEATH.

DIDN'T  
YOU?



I ISSUED  
NO SUCH ORDER.  
BLOOD RUNS THICK, WITCHER.  
"VERILY, I SAY TO THEE THAT  
THOU SHALT LOVE  
THY FAMILY."

NO MATTER  
WHAT?

I SEE, SO  
YOU KNOW ABOUT  
MY FATHER...

WOULD YOU  
BELIEVE HE REVEALED  
THE TRUTH TO ME ONLY  
JUST BEFORE I WENT  
OFF TO WAR?



LAZARE  
LIVED WITH  
THE SECRET FOR  
A DECADE. LOYALTY,  
I UNDERSTAND,  
BUT TO THE POINT  
OF POISONING ONE'S  
WIFE?



YOU MUST  
KNOW... CREIGIAU  
MEN HAVE ALWAYS HAD  
TROUBLE... THE NUMBER  
OF NASTY CONCOCTIONS  
I HAD TO TRY BEFORE  
I FINALLY...

TO NO AVAIL.  
KNOW WHAT A MAN FEELS  
WHEN HE REALIZES HE WILL  
SIRE NO CHILDREN  
AND HAS LOST ALL HOPE  
AT RETAINING HIS  
ESTATE?

I THOUGHT  
MY FATHER'S LONGTIME  
FRIEND A RIGHTEOUS MAN,  
ONE WHO WOULD ACCEPT  
THE WILL OF THE HEAVENS  
WERE I TO HAVE AN HEIR.  
I NEVER THOUGHT

HE COULD BE  
SO AMBITIOUS.

YET HE  
SCHEMED  
FEROCIOUSLY,  
AND THE RESULTS  
ARE UNEXPECTED.





UNDERSTAND -  
EVERYONE KNOWS  
WHO... OR WHAT  
ANTON HAS  
BECOME... THEY  
KNOW THAT  
HE KILLED... THOSE  
PEOPLE. HAVE  
I ANY CHOICE?



THE PROPHET  
LEBIODA COMMANDS US  
TO PROTECT OUR FAMILY  
AND ITS GOOD NAME.

I AM A CREIGIAU.  
I HAVE SUBJECTS,  
I HAVE LANDS... MY FAMILY  
DOES NOT END WITH MY  
BROTHER.



WHAT'S  
STOPPING YOU FROM  
SENDING HEAVILY  
ARMED MEN INTO  
THE FOREST? WHAT KNOT  
WAS I TO SEVER  
WITH MY SWORD?

ENOUGH,  
WITCHER. THANK  
YOU FOR THE LESSON.  
AND FOR THE  
CONVERSATION.

LADY  
SEARLAI.



YES, MY  
LITTLE  
SEARLAI...

SHE... HAS  
ERRED. SHE  
BELIEVES  
I...

SHE  
DETESTS  
YOU...

...LOVE HER NOT.  
THAT OURS IS A MAR-  
RIAGE OF CONVENIENCE.  
THAT IS UNTRUE.



WHEN SHE MISCARRIED,  
I FELT SHAME. I KNEW I WAS AT  
FAULT. NOW I FEAR THAT WERE  
ANTON TO RETURN,  
SHE WOULD...

...CHOOSE  
HIM...



I BELIEVE THIS  
CAN BE RESOLVED.  
WITH YOUR CONSENT,  
M'LORD, I WOULD GLADLY  
MEDIATE.

IT'S UNTRUE WHAT  
THEY SAY OF WITCHERS. MAY  
THE PROPHET LEBIODA REWARD  
YOU UPON YOUR  
DEATH...

I'D RATHER THAT  
HAPPENED A BIT  
EARL...



DAM!  
DAM!  
DAM!  
DAM!

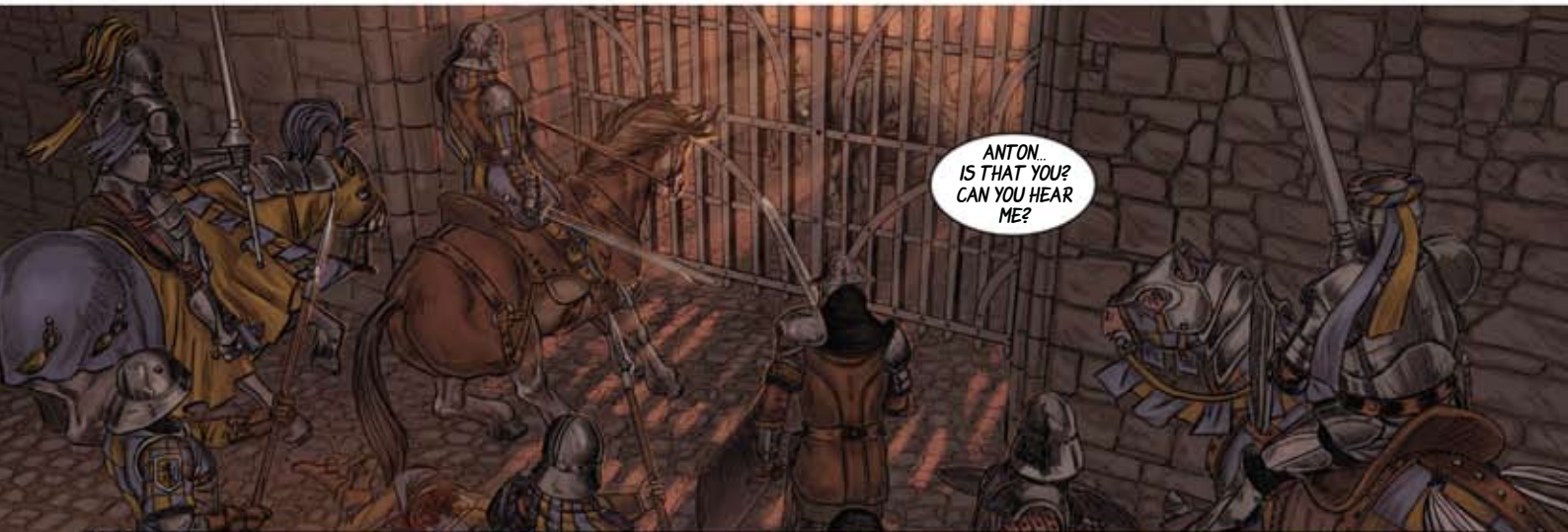


LET THE NOBLES  
SLAY EACH OTHER.  
IT'S NOT OUR  
CONCERN!



IS THIS A  
NONHUMAN  
MASSACRE?  
I, SIR, REFUSE  
TO HIDE WHATEVER  
THE CASE.





ANTON.  
IS THAT YOU?  
CAN YOU HEAR  
ME?



I KNOW IT WAS  
LAZARE'S DOING.  
HE WILL BE PUNISHED.  
I WOULD NEVER...

WHAT?  
I...



I KNOW.  
I KNOW  
EVERYTHING.



ANTON, IT  
WASNT BRYTON...  
DONT FORCE  
ME TO...



YOU DONT  
UNDERSTAND.  
OUT OF MY WAY,  
I WANT ONLY  
ONE DEATH.



?!



HERS!



ARE YOU  
MAD? HOW HAS  
SHE OFFENDED  
YOU?

CURSED BLOOD  
COURSES THROUGH  
OUR VEINS,  
BROTHER. SHE CARRIES  
YET ONE MORE  
CREIGIAU, ONE  
MORE BEAST.

THE LYCANTHROPY  
GENE COULD BE  
RECESSIVE. YOU  
CAN'T KNOW...

WITCHER,  
STAY OUT  
OF THIS.



SÉARLAIT!  
RUN! HIDE!

ANTON!  
THE CHILD  
IS YOURS!



BLIMEY,  
PURE  
MELODRAMA...

STAY ALERT,  
HURGAN. IT'S  
ABOUT  
TO START...



M'LORDS,  
LET US SPEAK.  
WE'RE SURE TO FIND  
A COMPRO...

OUT OF MY WAY,  
SERPENT. I SHALL SPARE  
YOU, BUT MY CATS AREN'T  
ALWAYS OBEDIENT.



NO!  
YOU SWORE!



GRRR!



MARCAS?  
SON, WHY ARE  
YOU HERE?

I LET HIM IN!  
THROUGH THE  
TUNNEL IN THE  
RUINS.

I HEARD YOU  
CONFESS TO THE  
WITCHER.

BROTHER,  
YOU KNEW OF OUR  
FATHER AND DID NA-  
UGHT? WHAT WERE YOU  
PROTECTING?  
HIS MEMORY?

SO MANY LIVES.  
YOU WHORESONS  
DESERVE EACH  
OTHER.

SON, ALL I DID...  
I DID FOR YOU...



WHY?! I DON'T  
WANT THIS CASTLE!  
I WANT NOTHING  
FROM YOU!  
I HATE YOU!



YOU SWORE  
TO GIVE ME HIS  
HEAD, UNCLE.



WITCHER...  
PROTECT  
SEARLAI.  
YOU'LL BE SAFE  
ON THE WALLS...

IT IS  
YOURS!



ARE YOU SURE,  
MLORD? THERE'S  
NO WAY YOU'LL...

BUT I  
MUST TRY,  
MUSTN'T I?



HURGAN!





MARCAS,  
MY SON...

YOUR MOTHER,  
I WAS DEEPLY...  
UGH!



UNDERSTAND,  
REASONS OF  
STATE...



I PISS ON ANY  
REASONS  
THAT ABSOLVE  
A MURDERER.



UP THE  
STAIRS,  
QUICK!

BUT  
HE WILL...  
ANTON...



I'LL NOT  
LET YOU...  
I LOVE...

I KNOW.



!!!





THERE'S MUCH I COULD FORGIVE, BUT I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU FOR POISONING MOTHER!



WERECAT!







SATISFIED?  
HAS JUSTICE  
BEEN SERVED?



REASONS  
OF STATE... RARELY  
HAVE MUCH TO DO  
WITH JUSTICE.



DAMNED REASONS  
OF STATE. 'SAFEGUARD  
THY FAMILY AND ITS  
GOOD NAME'?



I... ALWAYS DID  
HIS WILL, OBEYED HIS  
COMMANDS. BUT WHEN  
MOTHER PASSED AWAY  
AND HE FOUND THAT  
HALF-ELF...

HE LOVED  
HER AND ANTON  
MORE THAN LIFE  
ITSELF... AND I  
BECAME...  
I MERELY WANTED...  
TO MAKE HIM PROUD.  
AND TO LOVE,  
AS FIERCELY  
AS HE LOVED ANTON'S  
MOTHER.



I BELIEVED  
SEARLAIT  
WOULD  
RECIPROCATÉ?  
WAS I ASKING  
TOO MUCH?





YOU'LL NEVER  
BE CERTAIN.

THE LYCANTHROPY  
GENE MIGHT REVEAL  
ITSELF, BUT IT COULD  
ALSO REMAIN  
LATENT.

SO PERHAPS  
I SHOULD...  
ABORT? AFTER ALL,  
IT COULD BE...?

WHAT  
DO YOU ADVISE,  
WITCHER?

IT COULD, BUT  
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO.  
A LOT DEPENDS ON  
THE PARENTS.

BUT I'M  
NO ADVISOR.  
I'M A WITCHER.





# THE WITCHER<sup>®</sup>

## REASONS OF STATE

BASED ON THE NOVELS BY  
ANDRZEJ SAPKOWSKI



Writer: Michał GAŁEK

Drawing teacher, manager and talent hunter, comic book scriptwriter. For many years he was the graphic editor of the "KKK" comic book magazine. Editor and scriptwriter of the "Visions from hell" comic book anthology (2003) based on Graham Masterton's short stories. Co-creator of the "Alma" (2007) and "Destructor" (2007) comic book series. Scriptwriter and production coordinator for the "Episodes from Auschwitz" (2009) series. Author of the "Introduction to architectonic drawing" (2008) handbook for prospective architecture students. Founder and coordinator of the pART Studio group, which focuses on advertisement graphics, utility graphics and comic books. His comic books were featured in anthologies such as "September – the War in drawing" (2003) and "Human in a test-tube" (2004).



Artist: Arkadiusz KLIMEK

Comic book drawer and graphic artist involved with the pART Studio group. Creator of hundreds of storyboards and advertising comic books (ex. the "Basia & Romek" series for Unimil) and press illustrations (ex. for "The New Fantastic Tales", "AutoWorld", "Newsweek" and "Playboy"). Primarily recognized because of his series of historical comic books, such as "Guardians of the Eagle Feather" (2006), "Famous Polish Olympians" (2008) and "Episodes from Auschwitz" (Episode 2: "Witold's Report", 2009). His comic books were featured in anthologies such as "Liquidator-Alternative" (2005), "Copyright" (2007) and "11/11 = Independence" (2007).



Colorist: Łukasz POLLER

Comic book drawer and graphic artist involved with the pART Studio group. Creator of hundreds of advertising storyboards and press illustrations (ex. for "The New Fantastic Tales", "Time of Fantastic Tales", "Donald Duck" "Biocosmosis: Emonks Anthology" #2). Permanently collaborates with Arkadiusz Klimek as his colorist. Together they created, among others, four episodes of "Famous Polish Olympians" (2008). Author of both drawings and colors for the "Episodes from Auschwitz 3: The Sacrifice" (2010).



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