Welcome to Jade, Brendan. The Lich-King alerted me that you would be arriving from the realm of the undead.

He also instructed me to give you an artifact that’s crucial to your mission.

That ancient sword-hilt belonged to the only warrior we know of to visit the site of your objective, Were-Wolf.

Find the site by tracking down the warrior.

Don’t be so sure. That trail is eight thousand years old!

As I said, Knight-Spectre, it won’t be too difficult.

Remember, I am the best tracker in all of reality.

Now isn’t that too special.

Sir?

Excuse me, sir, but I sense someone gating in from the realm of the undead to this area.

The scent is very faint but readable. This won’t be too difficult...

That must be Natasha, ex-Queen of the Vampires.

Now that she’s become the Lich-King’s personal ‘slave’ he has her running all sorts of errands.

Aren’t we undead all his ‘slaves’ now, Sir?

True enough. Tell my ‘staff’ to enter. They should be in on this, too.
Soon...

Ah, greetings, Natasha. I -

- Why isn't Jade conquered yet, Rook?

The memos I've been getting lately tell me you're behind quota!

Now, now, Natasha. You know conquering an entire dimension isn't a task that can be rushed!!

I capture a city here, conquer a kingdom there. It all adds up.

Remember, being undead means we can afford to be patient.

Never the less, you should concentrate on making more progress.

Your annual performance evaluations have been slipping lately.

And you know there are a lot of office managers' back in the realm of the undead who would love to have your cushy position.

Natasha, you didn't come here just to reprimand me in front of my staff, now did you?

Doesn't the personal secretary of the Lich-King have anything better to do?

(Watch it, Rook...) I just came to check up on a few things...

The were-wolf Brendan. Did you send him on his mission?

Of course.

But why the Lich-King would want him to capture the Magic-Sapper is beyond me.

Magic-Sapper?? What's that?

A strange obelisk, imbued with awesome, but temporary power.

When it's found, it will rob every magic-user on jade of power for one day.

During that time, the were-wolf will have the abilities of the realm's most powerful magic-user.
HMM... THIS IS GETTING STRANGER BY THE MINUTE!
I WONDER WHAT THE LICH-KING IS UP TO.

WHO KNOWS? WHO CARES?
NOW, ABOUT MY OPERATION BUDGET...

...THE LICH-KING ONLY ALLOWS ME ENOUGH POWER AND TREASURE TO KEEP EIGHT PERMANENT STAFF MEMBERS, TWO OF THEM AREN'T EVEN UNDEAD!!
DO YOU KNOW HOW TOUGH IT IS TO HAVE TO RAISE THE DEAD FROM CEMETERIES EVERY TIME I NEED AN ARMY?!!

WE'LL GET TO THAT LATER, ROCK. HOW ARE THE TWO PRISONERS I SENT YOU DOING?

THE LICH-KING'S GRANDDAUGHTERS? THOSE TWO ARE SAFELY TUCKED AWAY IN THE TOWER.

OH NO! WE DROPPED RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GUARDS!! WE'RE SURROUNDED!
NOW WHO SHOULDN'T I CLEAR ELEMENT FIRST...

THWOM
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO LOCK UP 300lbs OF ANGRY WERE-CHEETAH!!
(HANG ON, GENE)

ZINKS
"SAFELY TUCKED AWAY" EH?

NOW THIS IS EMBARRASSING
GUARDS, STAY BACK! I’LL RECAPTURE THEM MYSELF!!

CHEETAH!! IT’S THE LEADER OF THE GUARDS!!

JUST STAND BACK’N’ WATCH ME GO TO TOWN ON THIS JOKER, GINA...

SHOOOO!

HUUH?

PIWWOM

HEY! WHERE’D YOU GO? I HAVEN’T PROPERLY INTRODUCED YOU TO MY KNUCKLES YET!

HA! HIDING IN THIS SMOKE, EH? WELL, THAT CHEAP LITTLE TRICK WON’T SAVE YOU!!...

SILENTLY BRITTANY LOOKS AROUND...

OWW...

ENCHANTED ARMOR?? SO THAT’S HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO KNOCK OUT CHEETAH SO EASILY!

LYCANTHROPS CAN ONLY BE HURT BY MAGIC, SILVER OR EACH OTHER.

I ADVISE YOU TO CONTROL YOUR ANGER, GINA.

I SAW WHAT YOU DID! STRIKING MY LITTLE SISTER IN THE BACK LIKE THAT!

PUT ‘EM UP, YOU COWARD!

AS THE WERE-CHEETAH DISCOVERED, MY ENCHANTED ARMOR HAS POWERS THAT CAN’T BE MATCHED.

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?

CORRECT, AND NOW YOU MUST BOTH ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU ARE PRISONERS HERE...

AND YOU’RE HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
MEANWHILE, AT GINA AND CHEETAH’S UNDERGROUND APARTMENT AND LAB COMPLEX IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA...

HELLO? IS ANYBODY HOME?

JUST ME, MOM.

I THOUGHT YOU AND DAD WERE GOING TO BE AT THE MANSION ALL NIGHT...

YOUR MOTHER AND I HAD TO DEAL WITH AN EMERGENCY, BRIANNA.*

BY THE WAY, ARE GINA AND BRITANNY AROUND?

*N SEE LAST ISSUE – FRED...

NOPE, THEY LEFT FOR A MEETING AT THE MUSEUM TWO HOURS AGO.

THEY SHOULDN’T HAVE BEEN BACK BY NOW...

THEY DIDN’T CALL IN OR ANYTHING, DEAR?

I’M AFRAID YOUR FEELINGS WERE RIGHT ON THIS ONE, THEO.

WHILE WE WERE BUSY IN THE MIDWEST, SOMEONE SNATCHED UP MY BABIES!

I MIGHT HAVE SENSED THAT OUR DAUGHTERS WERE TAKEN FROM THIS DIMENSION AGAINST THEIR WILL SOONER, JULIA...

BUT AS YOU KNOW, ALL OF MY CONCENTRATION AND ENERGY WERE FOCUSED ON THE EMERGENCY.

I’M BEGINNING TO FEEL THAT “EMERGENCY” MAY HAVE BEEN A DIVERSION...

UHH... IS SOMETHING UP, DAD?
WE... WE THINK SOMEONE HAS KIDNAPPED GINA AND BRITTANY, BRIANNA. SOMEONE WHO COMMANDS GREAT MAGICAL POWERS.

OH NO! WHO DID IT?

I'M NOT SURE. AT FIRST I SUSPECTED MY FATHER, BUT HE WOULD HAVE TAKEN THEM TO HIS REALM, THE REALM OF THE UNDEAD...

MY MAGIC TELLS ME THEY WERE TAKEN TO JADE INSTEAD.

THEO, HOW MUCH ENERGY DO YOU HAVE LEFT? CAN YOU MAKE A DIMENSION DOOR TO JADE?

IF YOU WENT TO JADE, YOU'D BE TOO WEAK TO DO ANYTHING BUT REST.

JULIA, WHOEVER KIDNAPPED THE GIRLS IS SURE TO BE AS POWERFUL AS I AM...

YOU ACT AS IF I'M NOT! YOU KNOW, I'M JUST AS GOOD A WARRIOR AS YOU ARE A MAGIC-USER...

TRUE ENOUGH. DO YOU NEED TO PICK UP YOUR SWORD FROM THE MAISON?

NO, I'LL PICK ONE UP WHEN I GET THERE.

BE CAREFUL, JULIA.

MM....

YOU SHOULD ARRIVE IN THE VICINITY OF WHEREVER THE GIRLS ARE, JULIA...

GOOD LUCK.
**Panel 1:**

- UHHH...
- TAKE IT EASY, DAD...
- AS SOON AS GENN, MESHA OR TARK GET HERE, WE'LL GO HELP MOM!
- IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE...
- NONE OF THEM ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CREATE A DIMENSION DOOR.
- I JUST NEED TO REST FOR A FEW HOURS.
- YOUR MOTHERS ON HER OWN UNTIL THEN.

**Panel 2:**

- AT THAT MOMENT ON JADE...
- POOR THEO MUST HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED WHEN HE CREATED IT.
- I'D BETTER CHECK MY SURROUNDINGS, SEE WHERE I AM.

**Panel 3:**

- UGH...
- MADE IT?
- URRH
- THAT DIMENSION DOOR WAS VERY SLOPPY.

**Panel 4:**

- OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW!
- I MUST HAVE STRAINED A MUSCLE DURING THAT FLIP. I'M NOT AS FLEXIBLE AS I USED TO BE.

**Panel 5:**

- BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE IT EASY NOW.
HMM...

THAT'S ROOK'S CASTLE... I BET THAT'S WHERE CAINA AND BRITTANY ARE BEING HELD.

ROOK'S BEEN CAUSING TROUBLE FOR THE TEMPLARS FOR YEARS NOW...

AND IF HE GIVES THOSE PERFECTIONISTS TROUBLE, HE'S SURE TO CAUSE ME A FEW PROBLEMS...

REGARDLESS OF THE DANGER, I'VE GOT TO GET IN THERE!!

AND I'M NOT COMING OUT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTERS!

NOTHING! THIS CELL MAY BE LARGER THAN THE ONE WE WERE IN BEFORE, BUT ITS SIX-ZILLION TIMES THICKER!

NO WEAK SPOTS ANYWHERE.

THAT KNIGHT-GHOST SAID THIS CELL WAS USED TO HOLD DRAGONS AT ONE TIME. IT EVEN HAS AN ENCHANTED DOOR TO LOCK IT.

THAT FIGURES.

BUT THERE ARE LOTS OF ORE AND METAL SCRAPS LYING AROUND.

MAYBE I CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING.
WE'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS DUNGEON, GINA.

EARLIER, WHEN WE TRIED TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT, I THOUGHT I SMELLED SOMETHING... OR RATHER, SOMEONE!

BRENDAN! THE PSYCHO-WEREWOLF THAT WIPPED OUT MY WHOLE CLAN! HE'S BEEN HERE!

OUTSIDE THE CASTLE...

EM? DAMMIT! ROCK'S GUARDS HAVE DETECTED ME ALREADY!

I WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF COMING THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR!

OH BROTHER! ANOTHER THRILL-SEEKING HUMAN ADVENTURER!
I THOUGHT WE SPARED FOR THOSE THINGS LAST WEEK!

...I'D BETTER GET ONE Heck OF A CARD NEXT MOTHER'S DAY!
Fwoosh!

HOLY--

SHOOT! JUST MISSED 'ER!

Hanging on that cliff is getting perilous...

Wwss

Ooh! Nice blade...

Hiya... Mind if I hitch a ride, pal?

What the...
All right, who's next? Who wants some?

When we send the human plummeting to her death, she won't go splat correctly unless she's really high up!

Oops! A volunteer has just spoken!

Higher! Take the flyers up higher!!

Huh? What kind of obey human are you?

One that needs to see just how sharp my new sword is!

Hahahaha! Time to meet your end!

Mash

Hmm... sharp enough!

Yank

Time to go splat!
YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE DO YOU...

SWIP

WAIT! NO!

AAAAAAA

NOOOOOO...

NOOOOO

OOF

WAK

OOG! I LUCKED OUT AND GOT TWO WITH THAT LAST ONE.

AHHHHHH!

MY CORE MUSCLE IS ACTING UP AGAIN!

CAN'T LET IT SLOW ME DOWN...

CHUD
I wouldn't have said a wibby remark but you knocked out my teeth! *

* Now get off my flier!
WHAT THE HELL?!

I'M NOT DONE WITH YOU YET, CREEP.

REST IN PEACE!

WHHEW! THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM!
NICE OF THEM TO TAKE ME TO THE TOP OF THE RIDGE, THOUGH.

I'VE HEARD OF HER. SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ONE OF THE BEST ARMSMasters ON JADE.

I CAN'T HELP YOU ON THIS ONE, ROCK. ALL OF MY ACTIVITY THIS NIGHT HAS LEFT ME A LITTLE WEAK.

I THINK WE MAY HAVE A PROBLEM, NATASHA...

HER NAME IS JULIA DIGGERS, ROCK. SHE IS VERY GOOD.

I HAVEN'T HAD A "DRINK" FOR A WHILE.

YOU COULD FEED ON ONE OF THE DIGGERS' BEATS, YOU KNOW.
THAT'S NOT AN OPTION. THE LICH KING WANTS THEM BOTH ALIVE AND HEALTHY... THEN I'LL HANDLE THIS.

GUARDS... TAKE HER

YES, SIR.

Sigh... it's an Unliving...

CAN YOUR GUARDS STOP HER, ROOK?

NO...

BUT THEY'LL SLOW HER DOWN.

SHE MAY BE HIGHLY SKILLED AND EXPERIENCED...

BUT SHE IS GETTING OLD...

AND WHEN SHE'S EXHAUSTED HERSELF DEFEATING MY MINIONS, I'LL STEP IN AND FINISH HER...

AND WHEN SHE'S EXHAUSTED HERSELF DEFEATING MY MINIONS, I'LL STEP IN AND FINISH HER...

NO SIGNS OF GUARDS, EITHER.

THAT MEANS ROOK USES OTHER MEANS TO SECURE THESE HALLS.

HMM... NO SIGN OF TROUBLE...

I'D BETTER WATCH FOR TRAPS.

OAH!

THUK!
SHACK

UGH!

GOOD THING I SAW THAT COMING...

WHOOPS!!

BOOM!

GOOD...

VERY GOOD...

FAPP

BUT I'M BETTERK
There's nothing I like better than thrashing sneaky, underhanded opponents, my friend...

Don't force me to kill you... All I want is to get my daughters and leave.

I'm afraid I can't...

Wait, how did you know I wasn't undead like the others.

Because undead either stink like a corpse or they don't stink at all... You have B.O.!!

Now let me pass!

And for Pete's sake, keep your heads at your sides!! Pmew!!

B.O.??

Why don't some of my friends tell me these things!

Get her, boys!

Congratulations, lady! You've just won a free trip to the Hurt Locker!
You underestimate us, woman...

And that will be your undoing!

Look, I'm used to wrestling dragons and trolls...

So pardon me if I appear unimpressed.

Yes, he was!

And now that his diversion is complete...

I move in for the kill.

LOOK, junior, your grip is all wrong...

Somehow, how in the-- it's all in the follow-through...

See? And a really good warrior can aim your sword at your foe and at the same time!!
ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO...
I'M GIVING YOU ONE
LAST CHANCE TO
GET OUT OF MY
WAY...

I DON'T LIKE HURTING LIVING BEINGS.

IF YOU WERE UNDEAD, YOU WOULD HAVE WOUND UP LIKE YOUR HORNY FRIEND...

WE GET THE MESSAGE, LADY...
C'MON, HANZO...

THE PAY WAS TOO LOW ON THIS JOB ANYWAY...

DAMN! I THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER LEAVE!...
MY BACK DIDN'T QUITE AGREE WITH THOSE LAST FEW FLIPS...

MY STRENGTH, SPEED AND STAMINA MAY BE AMONG THE GREATEST IN ALL OF JADE, BUT THEY ARE STILL FORTY-EIGHT YEARS OLD...

I'M REALLY GOING TO BE SORE WHEN THIS IS OVER...

NOW TO FIND THE GIRLS...

OH, OUR LITTLE INVADER HAS A LARGER WEAKNESS THAN I THOUGHT SHE HAD...
A VERY EXPLOITABLE ONE TOO...

LET'S GO WELCOME HER...
Meanwhile...

I mean, I've been standing here watching you do everything...

And I still can't believe you constructed an entire workshop out of metal ore and scrap.

I saw how to do it on a McQuever episode once.

Pass me the oscilloscope, Will-yah?

But why did you build that powered armor for me?

Usually you go for a supercar or something if you want to build a high-tech weapon...

That ghost-knight said he was able to defeat us with his magic armor...

Well, I think it would only be fair to confront him again with an armor of our own!

— Ungh —

Here, put this heavy hull-pack on the engine block for me...

Nearby...

Gina?

Britanny?

No answer.

But they must be around here someplace....
I know why you're here, Julia. Diggers. But your daughter's are my guests. Only I decide when they will be set free.

Then let's agree to disagree, Rock, and get down to business!
WIN YOU DIRTY!

WOOSH!

OOG!!!

I EXPECTED MORE FROM YOU, JULIA...

DEFEATING YOU WAS A LOT EASIER THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE!

NOW YOU SEE THAT YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR ME AND THE MAGIC OF MY ENCHANTED ARMOR!

UGH!

SNEAKY BASTARD!

JUST WAIT UNTIL ROUND TWO...

THIS FIGHT IS OVER, JULIA...

...AND SO IS YOUR LIFE...

HMM
Hmph

(Small) Kick

Vshoom

Huh??

What happened??
What did you do??

At first I thought Rook was consciously teleporting behind me before I could strike him...

But since he was considerate enough to tell me of his "enchanted armor," I realized that the enchantment was doing it for him automatically!

That's why he was able to do it so quickly! He didn't even have to think about it...

All I had to do was take a swipe at him while my back was to the wall and let his precious armor do the rest.

Now it's your turn, Vampire!

Oops! I think I hear my Boss paging me... Gotta motor! We'll do lunch!

Teleport
BOOM

WOW...you're really going to be hurtin' when your adrenaline runs out, Aisha, old girl...

I'd better find Gina and Brittany before anything else happens.

MOM??

What the heck are you doing here??

I think she's here to rescue us, Gina...

Looks like we didn't need this powered armor after all.

WHERE'S THE ZIPPER ON THIS THING?

AHA...?

That's my girls. Now let's get out of here and into a nice comfortable inn.

(= Giggle =)

I told you we were overdoing it.

At least we don't have to run around in our skivvies anymore.

Next...THE LICH-KING pt 3: CHEETAH vs. BRENDAN!