

The Great Herenica: Legends of Rovin

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Chapter 1

Introduction, Queen Rovin

A subtle gust of wind moved the curtains of a massive castle spire. Bright rays of sunlight went into the spire's top room. A hand moved with the wind slowly and steadily. Its skin was tan as the fall leaves; each of its fingers lined with silver rings with green, red, and blue gemstones. Its nails painted dark red, contrasting its skin color.

This was the gesture of a queen. The gesture of a queen who sat atop a silver throne and had all the

power of an empire in the palm of her fist. This queen is formally known as Calina Rovin of the Night-Fliers. She led an amassed empire that had conquered the very stars in the night sky.

Several servants had entered the queen's room. Before their eyes had even glanced at her, they were glued to the floor as they knelt.

“Speak,” the queen commanded.

“My queen, the emperor wanted us to alert you of the ambassadorial mission happening later today...”

“I am aware. Is that all?”

“My queen, the people of this world are requesting food and water after the last invasion...” a second servant explained.

The queen stood up. A white veil fell from the back of her head and revealed a golden crown with

clear blue diamonds in its center. Her red hair fell from her shoulders and extended down her back.

She turned to her servants who felt the piercing yellow eyes break into their souls even as they stared down at the floor.

“Which people is this? Are they of any sort of royalty?” Queen Rovin asked the servants.

“My queen, they are of smaller villages... those who were scorched after the emperor’s legionnaires had purged the land,” the third servant answered.

The queen raised her fist. The first two servants had shuddered once they saw the third servant raise up into the air with a blue aura around her torso.

“These villages are in no position to request from me. You will be the message,” Queen Rovin pulled her fist behind her back and sent the servant

through the open window.

The servant desperately tore off one of the window curtains before she fell off the spire and onto the gravel that made up Rovin's castle courtyard.

Queen Rovin scoffed, "You two. Tell the guards that my curtains need replacing," she paused to look at them and their shaking hands, "NOW!"

The two servants immediately stood up and left the spire room. The queen sat back in her chair and leaned against her arm, "For once...offer me some concern. This... This is just sickening..." she mumbled to herself.

Something caught the queen's attention. The sunlight that had cut into her room had abruptly faded. She looked up and saw a bright flash pierce through the sudden darkness and directly into the

queen's eyes.

Chapter 2

Act I, Ragged Roven

This is a test

Chapter 3

Act II, Pyromancy and Kings

Calina found herself in a heavy iron cage. She was within a lethargic camp set up in a wide grassy field between two mountains. The group that had raided Fort Lightveil were parading around a massive campfire, chanting away as they held tankards full of brownish liquid.

Osbold was in a separate cage. His stolen armor was torn off him and the entirety of his body was scarred and cut for the humor of the group. His arms

were strapped to the upper bars of the back of the cage.

“Osald...” Calina said quietly, “Osald, what are we going to do?”

Osald moved his head toward the sound of her voice, “There’s nothing left I can do...besides rot.”

“Come on, there has to be something...” Calina muttered.

“Okay, dying queen, let’s see you come up with a plan,” Osald’s voice became frustrated.

Calina stood up in her cage and grabbed onto the door’s bars. She stared at her dirtied fingers that were drenched in a wet, black grime. She looked closer at her palm and saw a small yellow light in between the lines of her hands.

She took a deep breath and focused. Her hands clamped together, and her fingers wrapped around the others.

“What are you doing? Praying?” Osbald smirked, “There are Demons in this world, but I’ve renounced my God.”

“Not...prayer...” Calina took in another deep breath.

She opened her hands and saw a small ball of light. At the top of it were orange flames.

“It’s my turn...” Calina held a devious smile.

The flames in her hand grew larger and larger. She opened her hand and faced the lock of her cage. The fire spewed from her palms and melted straight through the metal. The parading group people stopped and looked toward the opened cage. Calina cupped both of her hands together and spewed out even more flames from her palms. The fire spread across the field and combined with the campfire.

Calina stopped and started panting as she

dropped to one knee outside of her cage.

Osald saw all the burnt corpses of the group. Each of them was singed in one place, some of them in the motion of grabbing onto their sheathed swords and others that covered their face from the fire.

“Damn, you must really be a Demon...”

Osald commented.

Calina tore off the rags from her head, “I’m afraid that’s all I have left...” she continued panting.

“Check and see if you didn’t melt the one with the key!” Osald’s spirits were lifted as he stood up still tied to the cage.

Both of them heard a horse’s galloping over the crackling of the fire. Calina looked off at what remained of the field and saw a dark brown horse run through and halt right before her.

On top of the horse was a steel-plated knight

that shined blue and orange from the moonlight and fire. He stepped off his horse and approached Calina. The plating on his arms was curved almost perfectly while his chest's armor was hidden behind a cloth tunic that bore an odd symbol.

“You did this?” his deep voice asked.

Calina's yellow eyes stared at the knight's full-fledged helmet, “I was defending myself...”

“But did you do this?” the knight knelt.

“Don't answer him!” Osbald shouted, “He's an Inquisitor! He'll kill you!”

Calina struggled to create a ball of fire in her hand.

The knight's lethargic iron gauntlets wrapped around her throat.

“I wouldn't do that, pyromancer,” the knight scoffed.

“...Let go...of me...” Calina tried to speak.

“Tell me who you are and what happened here,” the knight ordered.

He let go of her and placed his gauntlets at his sides.

Calina coughed, “My name is Calina Rovin...of the Nighttt-Fliers...I am the proclaimed queen of-”

“There is only one king of this land. Moreover, you are not his wife. Your rags, I recognize them,” the knight stared at Calina’s greenish brown rags, “You were to be executed at Fort Lightveil, weren’t you?”

“It was all a mistake...” Calina told him.

“You there!” the knight approached Osbald’s cage, “You obviously know this woman, who is she and why was she going to be executed?”

“You tell me, Inquisitor...Fairbounds love their executionss...especially of the innocent,” Osbald spat at him.

“Mind your tongue!” the knight shouted.

“Make me, Inquisition dog!” Osbald yelled back.

“If you don’t tell me anything, both of you will be sent back to execution! I am offering this once and only once, repent and you shall go free,” the knight crossed his arms.

Calina stood up weakly, “Osbald...no more...”

“Don’t say anything!”

“Who are you to command me?!” Calina raised her voice in frustration, “Knight, my name is Calina Rovin of the Night-Fliers! He is Osbald of Graygon! We were going to be executed for some sort

of treason but listen to me, I have no memory of doing such a thing!” The knight glanced back and forth between Osbald and Calina, “No memory at all?”

“You won’t believe me...I am Queen Calina Rovin, I ruled over an empire with my husband. I just... I just wish to go home...” Calina said softly.

“Say I do believe you. How skilled are you in hand to hand combat?” the knight asked.

Calina’s eyes lit up, “I...I know how to use any sort of bladed weapon...great swords, single handed swords, battle axes, and war axes!”

“Show me,” the knight picked up one of the burnt corpse’s swords and tossed it to Calina.

She swiftly caught it by its handle and waved it in a circle, “How can I show you?”

“I wish to study your form, strike my gauntlets,” the knight raised his fists over his head and

chest in a defensive position.

Calina raised the sword and slashed at the knight. The blade broke into pieces as its steel melted onto the knight's gauntlets. She dropped the sword's handle and sighed.

“Strength in your forearms and shoulders. What queen would ready herself for combat?” the knight inquired. “One who must set an example,” Calina said without hesitation.

“My kingdom may have a use for you...” the knight's gauntlets pressed against the bottom of his helmet.

Calina thought for a moment, “I serve those with an imperialistic attitude. Conquer, control, and create. If your kingdom has those qualities, I will assist.”

The knight took off his helmet and revealed

a young man's face with bristled facial hair stretching around his neck and the sides of his head, "Very well," he said, "My name is Jon the Prehensile. I am an Inquisitor for the Kingdom of Fairbounds."

"I am delighted to meet you, Jon," Calina held out her hand.

"You aren't going to burn it, are you?" a smile formed across Jon's face.

"That seemed like a one-time thing..." Calina chuckled.

"I can't believe this," Osbald scoffed.

"You there!" Jon called, "You are from Graygon, meaning you were once an apprentice of a blacksmith, meaning you have the skills necessary to improve weaponry. I offer you the same as her."

"Go to Hell, Inquisitor. I'd rather rot than work with your poor excuse of a kingdom!" Osbald

shouted.

“So be it. Come, Calina, there is a looming threat that might come for us soon. We have to prepare,” Jon mounted his horse and held out his hand to Calina.

“Osald, please come with us,” Calina stared at her friend.

“I wish you the best of safety, queen. But that is all I can offer you...get...get out of my sight...” Osald choked on his words.

Calina stared at the burnt grass beneath her feet for a few seconds before she grabbed hold of Jon’s hand and got onto the back of his horse, “I...I’ll come back for you, Osald.”

“I don’t care,” Osald said solemnly.

Chapter 4

Act III, Ironclad

Jon rode out of the plains and toward a forest full of oak trees as far as the eye could see. Calina held onto his waist as the horse rushed between the trees. There were lethargic purple mountains that sprung up off in the distance with snowy tops. Calina's eyes gleamed at the sight of such greenery. The panting of the horse combined with the subtlety and atmosphere of twittering birds and the flapping of their wings. She heard the clunking of Jon's armor and looked toward

the back of his head.

To her surprise, he glanced back at her. She quickly looked away at the trees they had passed.

“If you think I would violate the immaculate sanctum of marriage, you are wrong,” Jon said over his horse’s galloping.

“What do you mean?” Calina asked.

“You mentioned you were...are married. I will respect the bond you and your husband had created,” Jon answered.

“Then what was that look?” Calina referred to his glance.

“You remind me of a family member of my own,” Jon replied, “Speaking of which, we have to make a stop. If you wish to speak to my king, I want to give the best impressions.”

“I know how to speak to fellow royalty,”

Calina exclaimed.

“I don’t doubt it,” Jon’s horse began to slow,
“But I do believe a skilled combatant should be equally
prepared when it is time to defend herself.”

Jon halted his horse in front of a small house
in the center of the forest. He dismounted and
approached the front door. His heavy iron gauntlets
knocked lightly against the bright oak wood. Calina still
sat on top of his horse and awaited.

“Gwyn! Uncle Jon is here!” Jon raised his
voice slightly.

There was a slight pause with no reply. Jon
looked back toward Calina who simply returned a
shrug.

The wooden door unlocked and was pulled
open, “Uncle Jon...?” he heard a woman’s soft voice.

“Yes, Gwyn, it’s me. Please open the door,”

Jon pressed his gauntlets together.

“I...I’m not better, uncle...they said I would be better...” Gwyn said quietly.

“Nonsense, I dispatched a healer a week ago, what progress have they made?” Jon smiled.

The door swung open and revealed a woman dressed in a light green dress with white ruffles. Her right leg was covered in a wooden splint and white gauze.

“There was no progress, uncle...I can’t fight anymore...” Gwyn whimpered.

“You won’t have to, Gwyn. You are brave, strong, and gifted. Had your mother and father been here, they would be proud to have you as their daughter,” Jon lightly placed his right gauntlet on Gwyn’s shoulder.

“Who is she?” Gwyn spotted Calina on Jon’s

horse.

“A new dame for the kingdom. Gwyn, there’s still a great service I ask of you,” Jon began.

“My armor...” Gwyn stared at the ground.

“The king and I are eternally grateful for the duty you have provided. Had we lost Fort Desik, Entrimore would’ve been next.”

“Please...” Gwyn paused, “Don’t let her die in it...it’s...it’s my tomb, not hers...”

“Thank you, Gwyn,” Jon smile grew bigger.

“Come inside, let her try it out...” Gwyn said disdainfully.

Gwyn’s house consisted of a single room with a fireplace in the center and a stairway to the far right that led to the basement. Jon and Calina looked all around. There were two swords that were mounted to a rack right above the fireplace and a small, square table

with four different chairs set in it.

“Down here...” Gwyn led them to the basement.

There were three dozen barrels stacked against the stone walls of the basement. At the very edge of the basement was a stand specified for displaying armor. Gwyn’s armor had a layer of steel that stretched over her chainmail sleeves. It had an armored skirt made with more chainmail and blue cloth while the shoulder pauldrons were a dark steel. The gloves and sleeve were lightly covered in golden highlights while the fingers and palms had a steel covering. Her abdomen was covered with a dark blue gambeson underneath a thin layer of cloth that bore the same symbol that Jon’s armor had.

The chest-plate was sturdy iron that had several layers protect its breasts with dark blue cloth

between it. There was a chain-link that held both shoulder pauldrons together.

Her helmet was fully faced with a carved sun right above the eyes that shined silver. Its mouth was mottled with holes to allow its wearer to breathe clearly. Calina noticed the right shin guard had a gaping hole with what looked like were bite marks and scratches over it.

“How were you injured?” Calina asked Gwyn.

“I was part of the makeshift group of knights that were sent to defend Fort Desik from the Demon invaders...” Gwyn answered.

“The armor was passed down between dozens of daves before Gwyn. We don’t quite know what its point of origin was,” Jon explained.

“May I?” Calina gestured toward the armor

and looked toward Gwyn.

“By all means,” Gwyn limped toward it,

“Find out if it fits...” * * *

Calina stared at her gloved hands. She looked over her arms and saw how well the armor had fit. Her back felt a slight draft of wind that slipped through the openings between the layers of steel and her shoulders clunked with metal with every step she took around Gwyn’s basement.

She looked down to the boots and saw the opened hole in the shin guard.

“It was a Gargoyle who tore off that part there. If you see any...kill a few for me,” Gwyn let out a slight smile.

“What are Gargoyles?” Calina asked.

“Uncle Jon...?” Gwyn sighed.

“Gargoyles are a lesser breed of Demons.

Alone they're quite harmless, but in heavy numbers they can prove to be a threat. Have you not encountered any Demons yet?" Jon inquired.

"I've been on this world for less than a day, Jon."

"What is she saying, Uncle Jon?" Gwyn asked.

"Well, Gwyn. She isn't exactly from around here. The Demons are still a looming threat and we need whatever we can to stop them," Jon explained..

"And you wanted to use my armor..."

Jon choked on his words, "I'll make sure it returns to you." "That's all I ask..." a frown took over Gwyn's face.

Calina and Jon stepped outside of Gwyn's house. The Inquisitor stepped toward his horse and turned to look back at Calina. She carried the armor's

helmet in her arms.

“First thing’s first, we have to repair the armor at Castle Entrimore. There’s a blacksmith there we can work with,” Jon explained.

Calina stared at her bare shin and saw the sunlight reflect off her tanned leg, “Right...”

They heard the door to Gwyn’s house open again, “I never got to learn your name,” Gwyn called to Calina.

“My name is Calina Rovin of the Night-Fliers. And you must be...”

“Gwyn, Gwyn the Devout.”

They both stared at one another’s eyes. Smiles formed across both of their faces as Calina bowed forward.

“I will return the armor to you once I find a way home,” Calina said to Gwyn.

“Thank you, Calina,” Gwyn placed one hand over her own chest and lowered her head. Just then, the three of them heard the loud flapping of wings. A white bird dropped down from the canopy of the forest and landed on Jon’s shoulder. The Inquisitor noticed a note attached to the bird’s leg. He gently tore off the paper and read it.

“Calina, we must make haste,” Jon said worriedly.

“Uncle, what’s wrong?” Gwyn asked.

“Word has spread that there is someone or something that has been organizing the Demon threat. There have been dozens of attacks in quick succession to most of our forts,” Jon stated as he jumped up onto his horse.

“I can go with you to Entrimore and help defend it!” Gwyn exclaimed.

“No!” Jon yelled, “No...just stay here and stay safe. I’ll send two knights to protect you and your home, just... stay safe...”

Calina climbed onto the back of the horse with Jon, “We should let her come. She might not be safe here.”

“The knights will bring back a carriage for her to ride in. We can’t bring her on mine. You still must talk with my king. He can decide where to send you,” Jon explained.

“I’ll see you at Entrimore, right?” Gwyn called.

“Of course, Gwyn. Stay in your home and wait for the knights to arrive,” Jon smiled before he put on his helmet and took off on his horse.

Calina donned Gwyn’s helmet and stared through the visor’s eyes. She noticed dried blood near

the holes of the mouthpiece.

“Remind me to clean this helmet once we get there...” Calina commented.

Jon snickered a bit.