

THE HERO

The wind gently rustled his long beard. He inhaled deeply. *Ah, I love the smell of heroism in the morning*, he thought. With one hand on his hip and the other on the hilt of his sword, armor gleaming in the morning sunlight, the hero contemplated his future quests.

“Sire! Sire!” The hero’s traveling companion stumbled up the steep hill to reach the crest upon which his friend stood, straight-backed and confident in the light.

“What is it Paibow, good friend?” the hero’s voice boomed.

“Sir Margrave, the warlocks of the North have almost completed their spell for world destruction!”

“Not to worry. I know a team of good witches to counteract them!” Margrave’s confidence was not shaken in the least.

“Yes, well, Dragon Mountain in the East has erupted. Dragons and lava have been released everywhere, laying waste to all the surrounding lands!”

“Huh. My armor, it uh, it can’t hold up against dragon fire, correct?” Margrave asked.

“That is correct, sir,” Paibow replied, wringing his hands. “And in the South, sir, the seas are rising. Storms are picking up. All the sea creatures of lore are showing themselves, and bringing down all the ships they come across!”

“Well, that isn’t great.” Margrave’s chiseled face expressed further signs of doubt.

“And the West, sir. It’s been overrun by vampires and werewolves and banshees and-”

“Yes, good Paibow, I get the idea.” There was a long silence between them. Margrave could tell Paibow was watching as he straightened up his shoulders, the other man hopeful for a plan.

“Well...,” Margrave began. “Shit,” he finished. Paibow was taken aback.

“Sir, what should we do?” Paibow asked.

“Sit with me, my dear friend.” They sat together.

“So, the plan?” Paibow pressed.

“Watch it all burn, Paibow.” He clapped his friend on the back with a big meaty hand. “Watch it all burn.”

“So, the usual then, sir?” Paibow said with a sigh. He sat down and rested his chin in his hands.

“Shut up, Paibow,” Margrave exclaimed in good humor. He pulled off his chest plate and began to polish it. Lava exploded in the distance.



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