

THE HERO: SAVES THE DAY

“Damn it. There he is again! Hyland will not rescue my lady love this time!” Margrave watched his heroic competition from a distance.

“He shall rue the day he saves her, once more, sire,” Paibow said.

“Is his hair better than mine, Paibow?”

“Of course not, sire! Your hair is as thick as a dragon’s scale, and glitters in the sun as the sea. It most certainly is not receding like the tides,” Paibow replied, with a deep flourish of his bow.

“Thank you, dear friend.” Margrave ran his hand through his luscious locks. “We will stay one step ahead of him. Onto the castle!” Margrave struck a pose, held it for several seconds.

“Sire, which castle? There are so very many.”

“Good question, Paibow. Lady Colette gets kidnapped almost as often as the one princess, what was her name... Peach! Almost as often as Princess Peach. Anyway, Hyland said he is on his way to Darlington Keep. We leave now!” Margrave began strutting down the path, onward to the Keep.

“Uh, Sire? Darlington Keep is the opposite direction.”

“I knew that.”

The Keep loomed ahead of the pair. The doors opened easily, as if the hinges had been oiled. Margrave and Paibow shared a glance and pushed on.

They had barely started up the banner-less, stone staircase when the two were bathed in light from below. Turning, they saw backlit in the doorway two figures: Hyland and his traveling companion, Oana.

“Margrave, my friend! How did you ever get here before me?” Hyland giggled at the sheer absurdity. He took long strides to the steps and placed one foot on the first elevation.

“I have my ways, Hyland. Now, don’t come any closer. I am going to rescue the princess on this fateful day!” Hyland advanced another step, staring down Margrave. Margrave placed a hand on Paibow’s shoulder.

“It’s OK, sire. I’ll be right here with youUUUU!!!!!!” Paibow yelled as Margrave pushed him into Hyland and turned to run up the stairs. Hyland caught Paibow, gracefully spun him around, and placed him at the foot of the stairs. Paibow ended up nose-to-nose with Oana.

“Oh, hello, m’lady.” Paibow turned to stand next to her. They watched the heroes race to the top together.

After a series of pulls and trips and punches, the heroes made it to the only door at the top. At the same time, the heroes kicked the door down and attempted to enter, their shoulders wedging them into the door frame. But what they saw rendered the two speechless.

“Hello, dear heroes.” Princess Colette’s voice was music to their ears.

“What took you dimwits so long?” a strange voice asked, confident and light. It belonged to a woman, who had strapped Princess Colette into a device attached to her chest. The ladies stepped onto the window ledge.

“This is quite exciting! I’ve never been rescued by a woman before. Very empowering!” Princess Colette said.

“Who are you?” Margrave demanded.

“I’m the new hero in town. Bye, boys!” With that, the woman pulled a string and deployed a parachute that pulled them right out the window.

Margrave and Hyland pushed themselves into the room, only to get their shoulders stuck once again in the window. The heroes watched and listened to Colette laugh gleefully all the way to the ground.



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