PAGE 1: Four Panels

Panel one:

Full Width Panel: CARMEN, a 75-year-old female elf (looks about human 28) with light brown skin and wild, curly, brown hair, enters the training facility and looks around. A number of male elves use various pieces of exercise equipment and spar on mats. At the far end of the room, stands KAYLA, the only other female elf, age 73 (looks about human 26) with dark skin and straight, black hair, pointing a composite longbow with a notched arrow at an archery target about 100 meters in the distance.

Panel two:

Full Width Panel: Carmen reaches Kayla. Kayla has released the arrow and it's hit the bullseye. She looks at Carmen suspiciously.

1	SFX:	THUNK!	1
2	CARMEN:	Nice shot!	2
3	KAYLA:	Thanks.	3
4	CARMEN:	You're entering the Trials, right?	4
5	KAYLA: (SUSPICIOUS)	Yes.	5
6	CARMEN:	We should train together.	6

Panel three:

Small Panel: A poster for the Guardian Trials. The Guardian emblem is centered within a golden circle. The words "Coming in One Moon" are in script at the bottom of the poster. No dialogue.

Panel four:

Wide Panel: GALADAIN (76, looks about human 29), a muscular male elf with pale skin and long, braided, blond hair, stands behind Carmen listening to their conversation with amused disgust on his face.

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PAGE 1: Four Panels (CONT)

7	CARMEN:	7 We're the only females competing. We should help each other and let the best one win.
8	KAYLA:	8
9	GALADAIN:	9 НАНАНА!

PAGE 2: Five Panels

Panel one:

Full Width Panel: Close up on Galadain's upper body and face. Other male elves stand and sit behind him smiling and nodding their heads as he proselytizes.

1 GALADAIN:

1

A female will never be the Guardian. Don't you know your history? My line has held the title for generations and *I* intended to be the one to keep that tradition.

Besides, it's a *male* post. A female isn't fit to hold it. The two of *you* certainly aren't worthy.

What are you going to protect us from? Kittens? Butterflies? HAHA!

Just give up now and let a *REAL* Guardian show you how it's done.

Panel two:

Wide Panel: Carmen smiles widely facing Kayla. Galadain stands in between their profiles, an angry look on his face. Kayla faces Carmen, also smiling as she speaks.

2 KAYLA:

2

(to Galadain)

You scream like a youngling at the sight of a pixie. You're the reason a female is needed.

(to Carmen)

Let's do this.

Panel three:

Small Panel: Kayla bench presses a barbell with 25lb weights on each side in the training facility as Carmen spots her. Kayla's face looks strained.

3 CAPTION:

3

Guardians must be strong enough to carry their people.

4 GALADAIN: (OP)

4

Look at how she struggles! That's no Guardian!

PAGE 2: Five Panels (CONT)

Panel four:

Small Panel: Carmen takes aim at a target while Kayla puts a hand on her arm with the arrow to adjust her form. Carmen furrows her brow.

5 CAPTION: 5

The Guardian must be able to defend themself

from threats.

6 GALADAIN: (OP) 6

Watch out! Female shooting!

Panel five:

Wide Panel: Carmen and Kayla sit in a coffee house room with books open around them. Both have frustrated looks on their faces. Kayla's right hand covers her eyes as she grimaces.

7 CAPTION: 7

Guardians must know their people, their land,

and their purpose.

8 CARMEN: 8

There are so many names....

9 KAYLA:

How are we supposed to remember all of this?

Page 3: Seven Panels

Panel one:

Wide Panel: Kayla and Carmen spar in the training facility. Three male elves around them cheer. Galadain frowns in the lower right with narrow eyes. No dialogue.

Panel two:

Wide Panel: Medium close up starting at the waist of each female. Left profile of Kayla as she bench presses barbells that have 50lb weights on each side. Two smiling male elves stand back-to-back and spot the females. Carmen bench presses barbells that have 50lb weights on each side. Galadain crosses his arms the far background, frowning. No dialogue.

Panel three:

Small Panel: Galadain's head is in the lower left corner, frowning angrily. Carmen shoots at archery targets. Three have bullseyes in them. Kayla stands to her right, smiling with her fist in the air. No dialogue.

1 SFX: 1

(above each target)

THUNK! THUNK! THUNK!

Panel four:

Wide Panel: Carmen and Kayla sit at the coffee house with books around them, smiling as they quiz each other.

2	CARMEN:		2
---	---------	--	---

Who was the hero of Belfine?

3 KAYLA:

Jacob Branswater. When was the Treaty of

Galinfray signed?

4 CARMEN: 4

1837. What are the signs of Ralingzill?

5 KAYLA: 5

Hail from the north, fires in the south, floods in the east, and darkness in the west. Tenants of

the Guardian. Go!

Page 3: Seven Panels (CONT)

6 CARMEN AND KAYLA:

6

Strength of body and mind to face down challenges, patience to face obstacles with intellect and ingenuity, determination to stay the course, bravery to look your opponent in the eye and greet them with kindness, and integrity to inspire honesty and love in all citizens of the realm.

Panel five:

Small Panel: Outside the coffee shop. Carmen walks to the left, almost out of the frame. Kayla rounds a corner to the right to find Galadain.

Panel six:

Wide Panel: Kayla stands backed against the building, her arms crossed, a defiant look on her face as she stares at Galadain. Galadain leans over her, right hand on the building, looking down to Kayla as he speaks.

7 GALADAIN:

7

I've been watching you. You're not half bad, for a female. You'll never be Guardian, but you might just be a fitting second. Certainly better than *Carmen*. We both know she's not fit for it.

8 KAYLA:

8

Why would you...

9 GALADAIN:

9

Think about it.

Panel seven:

Small Panel: Still against the wall, Kayla looks contemplative and bites her lip, her eyes cast down. No dialogue.

Page 4: Splash Panel

Panel one:

Splash Panel: Morning at the Trials Grounds. The sky is bright overhead. Some spectators in large half-filled stands carry signs. Three young girls, CHILD 1, CHILD 2, and CHILD 3, bounce excitedly and hold signs for Carmen and Kayla in the front row.

Three female elves all about 300 years old (about 40 human years) sit nearby: CARMEN'S MOTHER with curly, brown hair and flawless light brown skin, KAYLA'S MOTHER, a female elf with perfect dark skin and straight, black hair, and GALADAIN'S MOTHER with smooth, porcelain skin and wavy, blond hair. All three smile at their children in the crowd of

An elder elf, the TRIALS MASTER, stands on a circular platform. He is about 500 elf years (looks about 50 in human years) with fair skin and long, wavy, white hair. He wears an elaborate long-sleeved ceremonial tunic belted at the waist. Behind him a banner sates "The Guardian Trials". Emblems of the 10 qualities of the Guardian, bravery, strength, ingenuity, patience, intellect, determination, integrity, kindness, endurance, and inspiration, are displayed around the area.

Carmen, Kayla, and Galadain stand among the 30 cheering competitors. All are male except for Carmen and Kayla.

1 CAPTION: 1

Day One.

2 TRIALS MASTER: 2

Over the next three days, you worthy will complete the Guardian Trials. These trials will test your...

Page 5: Five Panels

Panel one:

Wide Panel: Kayla hangs upside down on a rope pulling up a terrified Carmen as she dangles above an open-mouthed crocodile in a marsh. Galadain swings from rope to rope behind them, laughing.

1 CAPTION - TRIALS MASTER: (OP)

1

(text runs along the top of the panel)

...bravery, strength,...

Panel two:

Wide Panel: Narrow beams lay above a boiling, black pit. A pair of legs stick out of the blackness. Galadain and another male elf cross very unsteadily. Galadain looks at his feet with an angry look on his face. Carmen and Kayla stand halfway across on their beams, hands clasped, leaning back to balance each other.

2 CAPTION - TRIALS MASTER: (OP)

2

(text runs along the top of the panel)

...ingenuity, patience, intellect,...

Panel three:

Wide Panel: A long open path goes into the distance and curves to the left, out of sight. A couple trees can be seen, but they are far from each other. The sun beats down on the road and the contestants. Galadain runs ahead of Carmen, Kayla, and MALE ELF 1. All four drip with sweat.

3 CAPTION - TRIALS MASTER: (OP)

3

(text runs along the top of the panel)

...determination, endurance...

4 GALADAIN:

4

Go home, Carmen! You'll never make it.

5 MALE ELF 1:

5

This way will be shorter.

Panel four:

Small Panel: Carmen and Kayla pass the shortcut and continue down the longer path. The back of the other elf can be seen going down the shorter route.

13

Page 5: Five Panels (CONT)

6 CAPTION - TRIALS MASTER: (OP) 6
(text runs along the top of the panel)
integrity,

Panel five:

13

CARMEN:

Full Width Panel: Nightfall. Carmen and Kayla reach the finish line, holding each other up. Most of the spectators have left. The three mothers remain, as do the children with signs for them. The children jump excitedly as Carmen and Kayla cross the finish line far behind the other contestants. Kayla looks defeated and Carmen has a slight smile on her exhausted face.

	carrier riae a eng.			
7	CAPTION - TRIAL		ng the top of the	7
			kindness, and inspiration.	
8	KAYLA:	(to Carmen)		8
		(to Garmen)	Maybe we shouldn't be here. We're last. Relast.	∍ally
9	CARMEN:		Maybe	9
10	CHILD 1: (excit	(ovoitodly)		10
		(excitedly)	I told you they'd make it!	
11	CHILD 2:	(excitedly)		11
			They did it!	
12	CHILD 3:	(shouting)		12
		(Silouting)	Carmen! Kayla! We love you!	

(to Kayla) ...maybe not.

Page 6: Six Panels

Panel one:

Wide Panel: Morning on day two of the Trials. The stands have more spectators than yesterday. The three mothers sit in the front row, as do the children. Many more female elves fill the stands and more signs for Carmen and Kayla are held by female and male spectators. A few larger built elves hold signs for Galadain. The Trials Master stands on the platform addressing the remaining 15 contestants, including Kayla, Carmen, and Galadain. Large piles of a pale purple stone are stacked behind the platform.

1 CAPTION: 1

Day Two

2 TRIALS MASTER: 2

The second day of Guardian trials shall begin! You are to move as much of the salajulin stone

to your area as you can by afternoon.

Panel two:

Tall Panel: Galadain standing with clenched fists and leaning toward Carmen. Carmen looking up at him smiling almost taunting him, with her fists clenched at her sides. Kayla has her hands on Carmen's shoulders trying to pull her away and glares at Galadain.

3 GALADAIN: 3

(to Carmen and Kayla)

You girls may as well give up now.

4 CARMEN: 4

Buzz off you overgrown swamp-rat! We have every right to be here! You know Grandpa got

the council to agree it was outdated.

5 GALADAIN: 5

A female will NEVER be Guardian. YOU will

never be Guardian. It's MY birthright.

6 CARMEN: 6

It's as much MINE as it is yours! We're from

the same line, cousin!

7 GALADAIN: 7

You can't win. Face it, Carmen, you're inferior.

Page 6: Six Panels (CONT)

8 CARMEN: I'll beat you here just like I've done everywhere else! Panel three: Wide Panel: MALE ELF 2 looks surprised and is holding a purple puff of air after running about three steps from his pile. Galadain smiles and throws stones to his collection area. Where the stones should be landing are just puffs of purple smoke. SFX: 9 9 POOF! 10 MALE ELF 2: 10 What? 11 SFX: 11 POOF! Panel four: Small Panel: Carmen walks with her first stone in her hands but it vanishes into purple smoke. 12 **CARMEN: (THOUGHT)** 12 Steady...steady.... SFX: 13 13 POOF! 14 CARMEN: (THOUGHT) 14 Damn! Too fast! Panel five: Wide Panel: Late afternoon. Contestants stand in front of piles of stone. Carmen and Kayla have the largest piles of stone and the smallest originating piles.

Wide Panel: Late afternoon. Contestants stand in front of piles of stone. Carmen and Kayla have the largest piles of stone and the smallest originating piles. Galadain and four others have respectable piles with medium-sized originating piles. The others are very small in both areas. The Trials Master stands on the platform speaking to the contenders and the crowd.

15 TRIALS MASTER: 15

The Council has convened and chosen our final three contenders. Step forth...

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12.

Page 6: Six Panels (CONT)

Panel six:

Small Panel: Galadain's eyes are wide and his jaw dropped. Carmen and Kayla smile widely.

16 TRIALS MASTER:

16

...Galadain, Kayla, and Carmen!

Page 7: Six Panels

Panel one:

Wide Panel: Early evening at the Trials Grounds. Kayla leans against a fence with Galadain leans over her.

1 GALADAIN: 1

Just throw the final challenge. Don't get a big

head because you moved a few rocks.

2 KAYLA: 2

More than you.

GALADAIN: 3 3

> You know you and Carmen aren't fit to handle the pressure. You barely made it vesterday. You both should have been eliminated.

4 KAYLA: 4

But we did make it.

GALADAIN: 5 5

> Are you willing to risk thousands of lives like that? How can you be so selfish? The two of

you can't beat me. Just do it.

KAYLA: 6 6

What about Carmen?

7 **GALADAIN:**

I'm sure you'll think of something. Do we have

a deal?

Panel two:

Small Panel: Carmen leans against the fence, her eyes closed, her fists

clenched.

KAYLA: (OP) 8 8

...yes.

Panel three:

Small Panel: Day at the Trial Grounds. Kayla smiles to Carmen. Carmen gives

her a stony look.

Page 7: Six Panels (CONT)

9	KAYLA:	I can't believe we made it to the last day!	9
10	CARMEN:	I can't believe you'd throw it all away.	10
11	KAYLA:	What do you mean?	11
12	CARMEN:	I heard you and my cousin last night.	12
	Panel four: Small Panel: Kayla and Carmen	stare at each other with hard eyes.	
13	KAYLA:	He's right, you know. You're not fit to lead.	13
14	CARMEN:	I've worked just as hard as he has to get he Harder because I'm a female!	14 ere!
15	KAYLA:	You've been leaning on me! You can't hand being Guardian. The pressure will kill you. A us. It should be Galadain.	
16	TRIALS MASTER: (OP)	Contenders! Come forth!	16
	Panel five: Small Panel: The Trials Master is behind him.	on the platform, Galadain, Kayla, and Carm	en
17	TRIALS MASTER:	For the final challenge, you will each enter a room. You must decode the clues to escape You will have 60 minutes. Begin!	

Page 7: Six Panels (CONT)

Panel six:

Full Width Panel: Diagonal splits into thirds. Galadain stands in a room picking up objects with a confused look on his face. Kayla stands in an identical room, squinting at a picture on the wall. Carmen stands in an identical room, smiling as she writes on a pad of paper. No dialogue.

Page 8: Seven Panels

Panel one:

Small Panel: Carmen emerges from the room, smiling.

1 CARMEN: 1

I'm out!

2 TRIALS MASTER: (OP) 2

20 minutes!

Panel two:

Small Panel: Kayla emerges from the room with a smile. Carmen stands within her line of sight, smiling.

3 KAYLA:

Finished!

4 TRIALS MASTER: (OP) 4

27 minutes!

Panel three:

Small Panel: Galadain emerges from the room, frowning at Kayla and Carmen.

5 GALADAIN: 5

I'm out.

6 TRIALS MASTER: (OP) 6

58 minutes!

Panel four:

Wide Panel: The stands are packed. Many signs bear drawings of Carmen and Kayla. Galadain stands on the platform. Kayla and Carmen bend over children that came to them. The Trials Master and the COUNCIL OF SEVEN convene in front of the platform in a tight circle.

7 CROWD MEMBER 1: 7

We love you, Carmen!

8 CHILD 1: 8

Ms. Carmen, will you sign my poster?

9 CHILD 2:

Ms. Kayla! Sign mine! Please!

Page 8: Seven Panels (CONT)

Panel five:

Small Panel: Carmen smiles, elated. Kayla hugs her from the right. Galadain stands behind them, mouth agape, eyes wide in disbelief.

10 TRIALS MASTER: (OP)

10

The Council has decided! Our new Guardian

is...CARMEN!

Panel six:

Wide Panel: Galadain storms off. The three mothers come to the platform and gather around Carmen and Kayla, hugging them. Carmen faces Kayla, holding her hands in her own.

11 GALADAIN:

11

You'll regret this decision! That post should be

mine!

12 CARMEN:

12

We did it! Kayla, would you be my second?

13 KAYLA:

13

After everything?

14 CARMEN:

14

I couldn't have done this without you.

15 KAYLA:

15

Yes! Of course!

Panel seven:

Small Panel: Carmen and Kayla stand together front and center. Carmen wears the ornate purple and silver tunic and simple steel headband of the Guardian and Kayla wears a less elaborate version as her Second.