The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Dante - 2006/08/22 04:31

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After nearly a month of working day and night to complete this monumental project,
I'm pleased to announce the launch of Malachai's Cohort, the first feature-length (unofficial) Dwarven Forge graphic novel online.

This action packed adventure tells the tale of a motley group of adventurers who set out to find the lost treasures of a long deceased and obscure wealthy socialite.

Malachai Underhill, professor of archaeology by day, and tomb raider extraordinaire by night, hires a hardened band of mercenaries to journey with him into the depths of a secret labyrinth filled with mysteries, terrors, and treasures beyond their imaginations.

The story consists of 254 photographs, each with a running narrative to illustrate the tale. This is the single longest running photo-illustrated graphic novel I've published to date.

I hope you enjoy it.

http://purgatorio.com/gameroom/gameroom2006/malachais_cohort

-Dante

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by War Duke - 2006/08/22 06:50

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Since you spent so much time on this thing (and it is pretty cool) I figured Id help out a bit if you don't mind. Every good graphic novel needs a cover so I thought Id spend a few minutes and butcher your opening shot. Hope you like it.
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18113/lake000.jpg
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18113/lake000.gif

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by jkratzer - 2006/08/22 10:39

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Dante -

Haven't had a chance to read it yet (price of surfing before work, AT work!), but it LOOKS GREAT!

See ya!

Jim

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...
Posted by Dante - 2006/08/22 13:09

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War Duke--that's fantastic! What a great editing job. The selection around the trees looks great. The whole thing looks great! Thanks!

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...
Posted by Dante - 2006/08/23 16:49

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Anybody out there..? Bueller? Bueller?

Not that I'm trolling for praise, but, I'm surprised at the lack of feedback on my little pet project. Just wondering if I offended folks or something unbeknownst to me... I know the story is long and all but... ;-}~

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...
Posted by Myrthe - 2006/08/23 18:22

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Dante ...

That was .... AMAZING !!!!!! Too Cool !!!

What a fun project and what a fantastic job. That's certainly something to be proud of !!! I really enjoyed that diversion, thank you !!!

I "breezed" through it the first time (as fast as one can "breeze" through 254 images with text) and I'm going to revisit it again when I'm not on a lunch break !!!

I've even pointed some of my non-Dwarven Forge / non-gamer friends (I try not to judge) to it and I'm sure they will finally "join the fold" after reading your "Graphic Novel".

Great job !!!! Thanks for the adventure !!!

- Mike

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...
Posted by weaverjk - 2006/08/24 08:22

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Lacl of feedback due to lack of time and enormity of said project. Sorry, Dante! Since you said its 250+

pics, all narated (sp), and I'm a slow reader, I thought I'd save this for when I have 1-2 hours to kill.

JKW

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by RabidFox* - 2006/08/25 05:09

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Sorry Dante, life and the world has been a crush.
I have not gotten to your presentation yet to say "Yeah!" or "You have gotta be kidding!"
I will try soon, but I cannot honestly promise a definite time; maybe, you know, if you could calm the world down a good bit, just maybe it could be actually soon.
There are just some clowns out there that think the world should be listening to them rather than the more rational folks around.
UGH!!!

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Thod - 2006/08/25 19:56

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Dante

Really great work. I love it. This really is another dimension to all what I have seen here before. I'm tempted to tell all my players to read the story first before we play next time. Still trying to trach them how to play together - in vain.

To everyone else - go - spend the time - it really is worth reading through the whole lot !! I'm thinking about going through it a second time. Oh - and I would love to write one myself.

Now a few bits for improvement. I hope you don't get this wrong Dante - the whole story is just great. But I experienced a few 'jumps' in the text where I felt something was missing. The pictures I refer to are 40, 131, 154, 165 and 208.

40 - there isn't any mentioning about the iron rings(?) before. Something like 'Look what I found' would introduce the remaining sentence.
131 - the amulet springs out of nowhere. On 130 some protection is mentioned but somehow I miss again half a sentence
154 - Malachai mentions the 'stone chewing creature' that the dwarf has mentioned before. But I can't find him mentioning anything like that or making a hint.
165 and 166 have the same text. It makes sense for 166 but it seems the text for 165 got lost
208 'The others knew what Malachit said was true ...' I can guess what he has said. But he never did so.

Now a last bit - with my screen resolution I can see the full picture as well as the text. But I need to scroll each time I want to get to the next picture button.

I feel bad to mention this - I think the story is absoluteley fantastic and a great bit of work. Just this few minor bits and it's perfect in my eyes.

So why did I take that long to get me posting here?? Well - I needed time to really pay the novel the tribute it deserves. I saw the post a few days ago - and skipped it. No time ...

I'm really glad I finally found the time.

Go ahead Dante - write a sequel. And be patient - it might take me a week or so again to read it. But I will !!

Thod

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Ghostmage - 2006/08/25 20:21

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Nicely done, Dante! I was very impressed and thoroughly enjoyed reading through this! Very good work with the lighting...and the shadows!! I really loved the shadows in many of the photos!! Over-all, it was a fantastic production.

I would not take it personally that there might appear to be a slowed response time here from many -- after all, it was a very long adventure and most are probably still waiting for a large window of time to fully enjoy it like I did.

Thanks again for this. It was very fun and truly sparked a lot of ideas for my huge layouts!

~Cheers

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by L - 2006/08/25 21:08

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I'm with everyone else, Dante -- don't have time for anything this big at the moment! I'm taking it in stages, though, it's pretty freaking impressive!

L

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Stefan - 2006/08/26 00:24

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I agree with Thod,

Once again Bravo! Great stuff! But having to scroll to see the next image is a bit of a pain...if there was a way to just keep your pointer on one area and "click" next , it would be more steamlined and keep my attention on the story...

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Dante - 2006/08/26 00:38

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Thod, et all. Thanks for the feedback. Again, I wasn't trying to be a whiner, though some may have thought I wanted the world to stop what it was doing to validate my little story.

Very good catches on the plates you mentioned. I went back to see what was wrong and realized that there are entire paragraphs missing from the whole story. I'm really bummed now. I don't know what the deal is or why they were chopped out but a lot of the pages had some really great dialogue going on between characters. What a total pisser.

I did do some post-publish editing. I wonder if the program just choked on the volume. Well, back to the "drawing board" so to speak.

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Dante - 2006/08/26 04:21

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Thod--I think I managed to get all of the original copy back up online. I had a backup of the text file I used to copy & paste the story and dialogue into my web software from.

All of the sections you listed above plus many, many more were missing large chunks of text that are integral parts of the story. They're what tied everything else together. It's totally not the same story without them. I'm finding that this software I'm using (Web Picture Creator) has some pretty drastic limitations for what I want to do. Control over navigation is one of the big problems. This is supposed to be fixed in the upcoming version but I'm not holding my breath.

I have an idea of how I'd like to layout the pages but I'd have to do this manually in a regular web development software package. WPC is a "photo album" generator (freeware).

I'm working on breaking the story into chapters to make it easier to follow, but in the end, it will still be a click-through process. Editing for brevity will probably be high on the priority list too. I learned a lot from this experiment.

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by RabidFox* - 2006/08/26 05:45

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... . Again, I wasn't trying to be a whiner, though some may have thought I wanted the world to stop what it was doing to validate my little story.

... .
Did not mean to sound crabby, if of course you are refering here to my prior posting.

Just with all the "fun" folks out there in the world causing extra work for those of us that have to deal with them and their messes, well ... .
Any way, I am sorry Dante if you thought I was crabbing at you.
I was really complaining about how I really do not have the time to read your story right now.
All my postings here lately have been quick shots in between troubleshooting "opportunities".
I have not been able to spend any way near the time on the WEB as I have been before.
Maybe Dante, I will be able to read you story soon.

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Dante - 2006/08/26 12:17

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RF--no problem. No offense taken. Better not to have read it the first time around. I'm sure you've seen by my post above that I found a ton of problems with the copy on many of the images. Oh well, live and learn.

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Thod - 2006/08/26 20:23

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Dante

Here is some feedback you will enjoy :-) I was having your starting page on my screen and my son looking over my shoulder enquired about the pictures. As he can't read very much yet (5 years old) I spend the next hour having him in my lap and reading the (revised) story to him. We managed up to picture 113. It was rather me who wanted a break.

Instead of a story or book tonight I had promised him earlier I would read the remaining story to him. Needless to say he went to bed late - well - it's Sunday tomorrow ...

In the afternoon he did a drawing inspired by the story he had seen so far. I have posted it here. On the left we have Faron - crossbow in his hand on the steps - shooting an arrow to the demon. The demon itself is in the middle. In case you don't notice - the difference in style of the hands is the differense between hands and claws. Also notice the arrow sticking in the side. You can also see the glowing eyes as well as the spiky ears and the circle is the lava fountain.

In the left corner you see Malachai with his lantern. Below the demon is Hedeon. Notice the thicker arms and the two dimples - they are the muscles of the barbarian lord. I can't remember at the moment what the bit on the right of Hedeon is. Oops - looking at the original pictures again I nottice that Hedeon is the only one with a shield. Seems I did miss this ...

The last one is Thorgrim the dwarf. Clearly distinguisable by his 'helmet' on top of his head.

The picture was done some 2 hours after he had seen the story - completely out of memory. Yes - technically there is improvement possible - but he still has a few years to learn. And it is quite impressive to see the details he picked up noteworthy of including in his picture.

Dante - I hope you enjoy the picture.

Thod

PS: yes - the story is now a lot easier to follow. It made sense before - just because of the pictures - but it flows now a lot better and no unexpected jumps anymore.
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18286/IMG_0973_1.JPG
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18286/IMG_0974_1.JPG
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18286/IMG_0972_1.JPG
http://dwarvenforge.com/images/fbfiles/images/18286/IMG_0975_1.JPG

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The First (Unofficial) Dwarven Forge Graphic Novel Online...

Posted by Dante - 2006/08/28 01:04

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Thod, I read your post yesterday evening but only had the chance to respond today. I was very touched by your story. Send my regards to your son and tell him that I think that the drawings are wonderful. I showed them to my son (3.5 years) and my wife and they were both enchanted by them, and your story.

I'll keep you posted on the next installment. It will be shorter, I promise. ;-}~

Regards,

-Dante

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