

THE ALL-STAR ARENA



The mysterious potion exploded before the witch could identify it.



Its magic knocked everyone down and shattered shelves, bottles, and equipment throughout the shop.



Feeling impossible power inside her, Angora tried to restore the ruined business.



Her uncontrolled spell destroyed everything that the explosion had spared.





Clifford promised the furious keeper a share of their champion's winnings until every repair was paid.



The keeper reluctantly joined their strange company and followed them to the arena.



There they found kings, nobles, and military envoys gathered from across the world.



Their tavern fighter would face the greatest living champions in an all-star tournament.

Angora shared psychic strength, Clifford played an empowering song, and the witch cast protection over their champion.



The three spells collided and weakened him instead. His muscles failed, and the protective magic became a crushing weight.



A foreign gladiator kicked him behind the knee before the match even began.



Standing over the fallen fighter, the attacker proudly introduced himself as Rigarchu.





Clifford played his empowering tune backward, drawing away part of the harmful enchantment.



The champion remained too weak to fight, and arena officials were already calling his name.



Angora remembered a crumbling library book written in the ancient Elvish spoken by her grandfather.

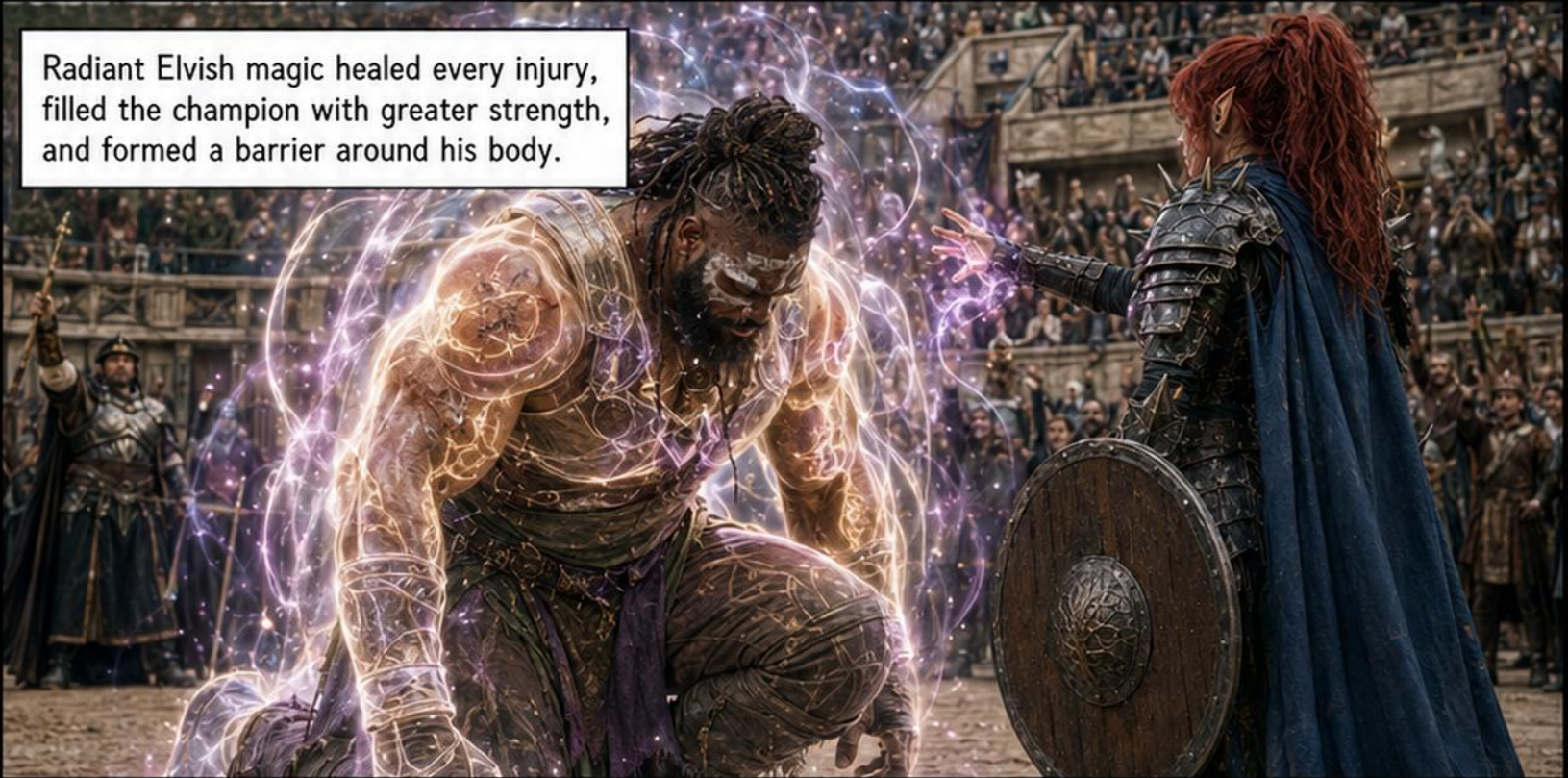


On its final page, one forgotten symbol had meant strength.

Angora raised her psychic sword and spoke the ancient words.



Radiant Elvish magic healed every injury, filled the champion with greater strength, and formed a barrier around his body.



Restored beyond his former power, their fighter entered the arena beneath the astonished gaze of the world.



Their champion overwhelmed every opponent placed before him.



The ancient barrier turned aside blades, hammers, and even Rigarchu's fastest attacks.



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Clifford and Angora had transformed a reckless wager into an international victory.





The enormous prize paid for the potion shop's complete reconstruction and still left the companions wealthy.



Only hours earlier, they had been unable to afford stew. Now they represented the world's most celebrated gladiator.



Angora proposed using their fortune to recruit and train warriors from every kingdom.



Their unlikely adventure had given birth to an academy.