

# Views

## Chapter Two

Jakob awoke to an eerie stillness, his heart pounding in his chest. He remained motionless, feeling a tingling sensation coursing through his body, as if he had been struck by small bolts of lightning. Slowly, he opened his eyes, his mind filled with fragmented memories of doors, staircases, and fleeting glimpses of his own reflection. As he sat up, he realized his blankets were wrapped tightly around his face, his body drenched in sweat, and the fabric clinging uncomfortably to the back of his knees.

**“Ala e Ala, Awake, Awake! Arise my young prince.”** To his left, Jakob heard a women’s voice. The door to his bedroom swung open, revealing Tita Orellana, the loyal servant of House Stryder, entering with his breakfast. Tita had been an important part of the Stryder household long before Jakobs birth. Hailing from the Tokoz tribe, one of the three major tribes of the Kanui Nation, she had migrated west and found place amongst the nation as a civilian. A short yet sturdy woman, she had a crown of thick black hair and skin rich with deep brown tones. Tita had formed a deep bond with Jakobs late mother during her time serving the family.

**“Ua ala wale wau! I just woke up.”** Jakob responded with a sour tone.

**“Your native tongue is getting better. Your mother would be proud.”** Tita replied overlooking his attitude. Very few people in Hyperion still spoke the language Jakob had once enjoyed learning and conversing in. He used to find it thrilling to have a secret language, a way to communicate without others understanding. He remembered the joy of joking and laughing with his mother during their lessons together when he was very young. However, Tita's constant use of the native tongue did little to ignite his enthusiasm. He didn't even acknowledge her compliment about his skills, as his mind was still preoccupied with the voice from his dream that

eerily resembled his mother's. It had been so long since he had heard her voice. The realization that it was beginning to become difficult to remember the sound of her voice and even her face bothered him.

**“Why are you wearing that?”** Jakob asked to change the subject as he glanced at Tita who was wearing a colorful dress. He was great at changing the subject whenever he didn't feel like talking about something.

**“Oooo, do you like?”** She said as she grabbed the edges of her dress and did a quick twirl,

**“I am wearing the traditional Lava, Lava dress of the Tokoz.”** She responded. Tita wore a dress that crossed over her shoulder to the other side of her body, it was a navy-blue dress honoring her loyalty to Legon Nation but had designs of white flowers, giant sea turtles and matching triangle patterns throughout the dress to represent her birth nation. Jakob's attention wasn't fully focused on Tita's words. Instead, he found himself scanning his room, taking note of the scattered clothes and leftover food that had turned it into a chaotic mess.

**“Why didn't you clean my room?”** He interrupted her as she was going on about the history of her home nation. Tita stopped and gave him a menacing look that scared Jakob. She began to say sternly,

**“Boy if you don't...”** then suddenly she jumped screaming when she felt something brush against her leg.

**“There you are, Tiberius! I searched everywhere for you. Come here boy!”** Jakob exclaimed. Tiberius was a plump furry creature that leisurely made its way into the room.

The tiny beast, a bundle of black fur with white paws and a snowy undercoat, trotted on all fours, its pointy ears perked up in curiosity.

**“What is that?”** Tita said frightened.

**“It is a Fontania Tiger, a large maneater cat that lived near the mountains of Fontania. It was a gift from Master Hanes.”** Jakob responded.

Tita continued, **“Arnt those dangerous, you just said it was a maneater, why do you have that?”**

**“My dad said I could, and he's just a little baby right now, he doesn't even have his fangs yet. I'm going to train him.”** Jakob said with a touch of tenderness as the small creature attempted to jump onto his bed, but failed because he was too fat. Jakob gently lifted the cat onto the bed and started petting him. Suddenly, he remembered that his father was training in the morning, and he was supposed to meet him. Jakob hurriedly rummaged through his clothes to get dressed and rushed out the door.

**“Ahhh Jakob, I have breakfast for you right here. Eat before you go. That's what your mom would have wanted.”** Tita insisted. Jakob felt overwhelmed. He didn't want to disappoint his father and was trying to gather himself, but he didn't need Tita breathing down his neck.

**“You're not my mom!”** he responded angrily, continuing to throw clothes around. **“I know what to do, Tita. I'm already late, thanks to you.”**

**“Your training clothes are right here. I had them washed and prepared for you. You can't do everything on your own, young Prince. You need people.”** she politely said,

quietly walking away. Jakob paused for a moment, realizing he was in the wrong, but quickly thought to himself,

**"I don't need anyone. I got me."** He put on the clothes Tita had prepared, took a bite of his breakfast, and ran out the door to meet his father.

**"Come on, Tiberius! Follow me!"** He called out to his cat as he dashed out of his room. Jakob's room was conveniently close to his father's private council chambers, which were on the second lowest level of the Palace. One level down and he would be in the dungeons, a place Jakob sometimes ventured into with his friends, though it always gave him the creeps. Jakob had requested to have his room moved closer to his father's chambers so that he could overhear any meetings. Racing down the hall, decorated with tapestries depicting the creation of Hyperion and the history of the nations, Jakob usually loved to stop and admire them, but today he didn't have time. At the end of the hall, he turned right and continued running until he reached the Grand Hall. The Grand Hall had massive stone pillars that surrounded the throne of the King of Legion. The room started off narrow and then opened to a larger space capable of accommodating several thousand people. The hall served many purposes, including hosting the feast planned for later in the afternoon.

As Jakob entered the Grand Hall, he encountered numerous people engaged in preparations. He knew all of them, and they were accustomed to him running around the Palace. They simply smiled and waved as he sprinted past. Jakob knew he had a long way to go to reach his father in time, but he knew a shortcut that would lead him to the training pits quickly. He knew the Palace better than anyone. Jakob darted through a side door in the Grand Hall, skillfully navigating through the crowd as he entered the Palace kitchen. The air was filled with the aroma of freshly prepared meat. He glanced around several times as he ran through the

kitchen, almost colliding with the busy staff who scolded him. The sounds of knives slicing through vegetables and the clattering of pans filled the air. He even overheard a man yelling at another cook,

**“Where is the lobster? This is raw you Donkey!”** or whatever that meant. At the far end of the kitchen, he passed through another door that led to a roundabout staircase, taking him to an external walkway on the second level that encircled the front of the palace. Climbing the staircase to the second floor, he spotted an old cargo container used for transporting food to the highest watchtower of the Palace. Jakob reached the cargo container quickly, and looked around to find Tiberius, who surprisingly managed to keep up with him.

**"You're not that slow for a fat cat,"** Jakob laughed, looking down at Tiberius. He squeezed himself and Tiberius into the cargo container and pulled the lever. When it came to a stop, he swung the door open and walked slowly to the edge of the tower. He looked up to the sky and couldn't help but feel a sting of sadness as he looked up to the large Moon of Luehtaz that lingered in the morning sky, his mother's presence always felt stronger when he saw it despite the fading memories.

**“I miss you mom.”** he whispered softly, a shiver running down his back.

Tita, on the other hand, recounted his mother with ease and reminisced about how wonderful his mother was and how deeply she loved him. While these memories brought comfort, they also stirred up moments of pain and longing.

**"Come on, Tato, you got this. You can't be weak. You can't let her down."** Jakob encouraged himself. Tato was the nickname his mom had given him at birth, and it had stuck

with him ever since. She said he looked like small and cute potato, so she called him her little Potato. Jakob eventually shortened it to Tato.

Losing his mother broke his perception of the world, exposing its harsh realities. Life was once a dream, he was safe, cherished and loved. His father was his hero, while his mother nourished his very being. Jakob's eyes were opened, allowing him to see the good and the bad. While his father, struggled to navigate the complexities of parenting while grieving the loss of his wife. Jakob was too young to fully comprehend the events surrounding his mother's passing, sometimes he was angry and didn't know why. He never understood why his mother was taken from him.

Like most people he had his ups and downs but as he grew older, he developed a tendency to put pressure on himself to be perfect. He wanted to prove his metal against the world and make his name meaningful. However, the constant control over his life and protection from those around him restrained his desire for independence. Jakob held deep love for his nation, but he longed to break free from the expectations and to carve out his own destiny, to find his place in the world on his own terms. But deep down, he was afraid of failing and disappointing his parents as the future king.

On any given day, Jakob would make his way to Avery's Lagoon with his father or personal guard, to see the bustling southern port of the nation, to witness the ebb and flow of ships in the bay. Usually when he saw the ships, he couldn't help but let his imagination run wild, envisioning himself embarking on daring pirate adventures alongside the legendary Brethren of the South. Jakob took a moment to absorb the breathtaking view of the Capital. As Jakob leaned over the balcony of the Palace, his eyes were captivated by the cityscape of his Nation. Jakob's eyes were immediately drawn to the heart of the Legion Nation, the Courtyard of Kings. The

bustling square, usually teeming with life, appeared unusually quiet. As he turned his attention towards the southern part of the city, a cluster of impressive structures soared towards the sky. Sturdy pillars, crafted from polished granite, stood tall and proud, reflecting the sunlight with a glow. Elaborate carvings decorated the fronts of buildings, depicting scenes of heroic battles and mythical beasts, each detail meticulously etched into the stone. As Jakob's eye swept across the city below, cobblestone pathways wound their way through the city, leading to hidden courtyards and squares that served as gathering places. Yet, Jakob's fascination didn't end there. His eyes shifted to the east, where the city landscape effortlessly merged with the lush forest. Towering trees stood tall and proud, their branches swaying gently in the breeze. The greenery formed a natural backdrop of the cityscape. Jakob found relief in the beauty that surrounded him.

As a prince, Jakob understood the importance of studying and familiarizing himself with his Nation's history. Since a young age, Jakob has displayed exceptional abilities. His impressive capacity to retain information left a lasting impression on his teachers. Additionally, his skills in physical combat and mastery of the sword never failed to amaze the older men. Nevertheless, the weight of public perception always lingered in his mind. He couldn't escape the nagging thought that people might withhold their true opinions due to his royal lineage. This uncertainty, coupled with his rebellious nature as a prince, often led him to defy the rules and find himself in trouble with his father. At times, he even faced disciplinary actions that required him to spend hours running laps in the grand throne room as a consequence.

Jakob brought his mind back to the moment, looking out over the city, caught sight of the old wire delivery systems that once transported goods across the capital and even to neighboring city states of the nation. Now, they were just part of his entertainment. The cargo basket atop the



Palace would take him to the Forest of Legion, a shortcut he had used since he was a child. But with Tiberius also in the basket, it was a risk. Jakob glanced at his cat and reassured him,

**"What? Don't look at me like that. It's going to work."** He grabbed Tiberius and squeezed himself into another basket. Jakob pulled the lever, and the basket took off, flying over the treetops before descending among the lush greenery.

**"Woooohoooo!"** Jakob's voice echoed through the air, a burst of excitement escaping his lips. It had been far too long since he last experienced this excitement. The cart soared above the treetops, a rush of adrenaline coursing through his veins, before gradually descending amongst the leaves. The scent of fresh dew blown into his nostrils. With wide eyes, he took in the awe of the forest. Even though he had witnessed its beauty countless times before, it never failed to captivate him. The changing of the season was evident. Leaves gracefully fallen from the branches, carpeting the forest floor. The remaining leaves displayed an array of blueish green colors. As he neared his destination, Jakob realized the brake system was damaged. The end of the line was approaching, but he remained calm. He positioned himself at the edge of the basket, holding Tiberius tightly. With a well-timed jump, he gracefully landed on the transition platform as the basket crashed behind him. Two Legionnaire guards stood in surprise, witnessing his daring maneuver.

**"Sorry, guys!"** Jakob shouted as he sprinted towards a rope at the edge of the platform. Sliding down, he continued running until he reached the training pits. Breathing heavily, Jakob let Tiberius down and encouraged him to enjoy himself. As his cat scurried off, Jakob laughed to himself, finding joy in Tiberius's clumsy movement.

He observed the training pits, where Legionnaires were honing their skills. The training pits held a special place in Jakob's heart. Unlike most boys of the Legion nation, who resided in the military district until they were of age, Jakob lived within the Palace walls. This afforded him the opportunity for personal training as well as occasional sessions with the fellow boys.

The pits themselves were a sight to behold. Three expansive sandpits stretched along the foot of the majestic Auroras Range Mountains, which encircled the capital. Jakob's eyes scanned each pit, taking in the intense training sessions of the Legionnaires. In the first pit, men and women were engaged in demanding tasks such as cutting logs and carrying them overhead while scaling trails carved into the mountainside. The second pit housed Legionnaires practicing various forms of combat, both unarmed and armed. As for the last pit, it was reserved for his father and his personal guard. In their typical training gear, the Legionaries displayed a range of attire, from full armor to lightweight training tunics or even no shirts at all. Some bore visible wounds, a testament to their dedication and Jakob couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement at the sight.

**"I hope my dad lets me train today,"** Jakob muttered to himself, his eyes fixed on his father in the distance, already immersed in his training, weapons in hand. Eager to join in, Jakob dashed out of the tree line but was suddenly stopped by a Legionnaire.

**"Whoa there, young prince, let me talk to you for a second,"** the Legionnaire said, blocking his path.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

Copyright © 2024 by Matthew Joseph Reign

Registration # -TXu 2-433-354

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any manner without written permission of the copyright owner except for the use of quotations in a book review. For more information, address: [theartofreign@gmail.com](mailto:theartofreign@gmail.com)

*Cover Design By – Castillo Collective Inc.*

*Published by – The Art of Reign Productions Inc.*

[www.theartofreign.com](http://www.theartofreign.com)