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RISE OF THE KINGMAKER

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PREMISE

The fate of Valthia is carved in blood.

Once the paragon of the new age, the Kingdom of the Eternal Flame teeters on the brink of oblivion. After their borders come crashing as enemy forces massacre the peerage, the race for power begins. Heirs to the throne and fraternal twins, Prince Sirix and Crown Princess Sarya are the last surviving members of the divine lineage. With the blood on his sister's hands, Sirix's days of dormancy are no more.

The Creed of the Crown has no mercy for the weak.

Only one can find the Kingmaker.

Only one will rule.



TIMELINE

“In the beginning of eternal time, the light of the stars bore a single seed from the Heavens of Odea. Over the course of several millennia, the seed grew, and its roots took the form of a sphere. The sapling was named Alar, the Elder Tree, and the Divine Ruler.

From the warmth of Odea’s light, Alar’s roots reached the edge of the darkness and beyond, and in time he cultivated his own power. Life sprung out from him, and his roots grew a new world, Nymor.

The First were born of Alar, mortals to populate Nymor with the capability of wielding magic to bend nature as they saw fit. Then, the Deities, beasts of nature to protect and teach Man as the ages progressed. Finally, a Kingmaker was created to crown rulers of Man’s nations, a child born from the spirit and chaos of nature...

Riven with greed, Man stole from one another, pillaged, and burned cities to the ground. War broke out between those who had magical power and those who did not. Deities of Nature fought against anarchy, lost through trickery and suffering, and were enslaved by Man. Through the power of the Divine Ruler, Alar, the Kingmaker pronounced a new king of Valthia, chosen to end the dark age...

At last, the gift of magic once given to Man then returned to Alar. After a thousand years of destruction and restoration, the torch of peace passed to the new generations of Valthia’s divine lineage... ”

—Excerpts from the Creed of the Crown’s Book of Life

The old ways of natural sorcery have left Nymor, the World of Man. No castles are sieged. No blades are sharpened. No blood is shed. The New Dawn brings an era of peace spanning a thousand years. All must bow to the Kingmaker, who restored the honor of Man, and the one crowned king to herald the unity of Nymor, Soron I of House Volaire. The Kingdom of the Eternal Flame blazes as the shining light of the new age, even as the sun casts a great shadow...

With bountiful harvests spanning across generations, the Valthian people swell fat and lazy, too tired to hear of the world beyond their own. Children grow to adulthood only knowing of revelry, gluttony, and an unending summer heat that dulls the mind. By the year of High Sun, their northern borders are encroached by a vassal nation turned enemy. Evessar holds Valthia at the precipice of destruction. All the while, a dark cloud looms over the Great Houses of Valthia.

The tale of the Kingmaker is not bound to Valthian ears, reaching past the farthest peaks of Nymor. As magic is all but lost, reduced to whispers in the wind, the hunt for the divine right to rule begins.



PROTAGONIST

"There is no kingdom without a Kingmaker."

Sirix Volaire, later known as the **Kingslayer**, is the eldest prince of Valthia and fraternal twin to Crown Princess Sarya. He is a young man, aged 20, with sea-green eyes and dark, middle-parted medium-length hair. Slick bangs hang above his olive, freckled cheeks. A birthmark of an 8-point star sits on his nape, eventually covered by a tattoo of the sun. Jewelry is a staple in his attire, such as gaudy rings on all fingers and an array of crowns. He wears a perpetual smirk on his face, along with dark-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

A hopeless skirt-chaser, Sirix carries the reputation of a good-for-nothing rich boy. Though he was raised to inherit the throne, his lifelong pursuit has always been his freedom, outwardly noting the similarities he shares with a caged bird. He shirks off his duties and plays around with those beneath him in social ranking, owing him the disappointment of his father and dishonor to his dead mother's legacy. With a penchant for mischief, he prides himself on his low-cost rebelling and pranks, taking in many young noble women as his accomplices. He deeply despises the responsibilities and expectations placed on him by the peerage, as they come without any respect for who he is as a person, rather only for his great lineage. However, he never publicly speaks of it.

As a character, Sirix is defined by the cold-blooded rivalry between him and Sarya. Although his mother loved him dearly, he was never the apple of his father's eye, and could never defeat a competition against his sister. The Creed of the Crown, the royal church of Valthia, realized this early in their childhood and aided Sarya in garnering favoritism with the peerage. Blindsided, and too young to understand the bitterness corrupting the family, Sirix was left to fend for himself against all. With every attempt to win his father's love back, he fell further away from who he was meant to be. This solidified when a deaconess of the Creed of the Crown took his innocence as a boy, signifying the cruel past he could never erase, that will never wash away from his body.



SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Sarya Volaire, age 20, is the fraternal twin of Sirix and Crown Princess of Valthia. Throughout their childhood, she made it her personal mission to torment and bully her other half, believing herself superior to him. With the praise of her father and the blood of the chosen running through her veins, Sarya is characteristically vain and serpentine. Nothing gets past her leagues of loyal minions, in part due to her allegiance with the Creed of the Crown. She has never known loss and is determined to never experience it. In the latter regard, she resembles her brother, like her appearance. Sarya has long, wavy dark hair and emerald eyes. She is quite muscular from years of swordsmanship lessons.

Keeper of secrets above all else, Sarya plays the games of the peerage with wit and skill. Upon her birth, her mother was foretold an omen of Sarya's death by the Creed of the Crown. It was said that her heart was inferior in health, caused by Sirix whilst they formed in the womb. Whether it was true mattered not, as Sarya felt her own health draining from a young age. Enraged by her physical inadequacies, she pushed her body to the limits and transformed her health for the better. Now and then, however, she is subject to tachycardia, an ailment concealed without exceptions. To know of it is to die.

Conall Evindal, age 25, is the longtime attendant of Sirix, handpicked by the king. While he has remained a faithful servant to the royal family, Conall is a stoic man, a personality to sharply contrast Sirix's impulsive demeanor. When the two are not arguing fruitlessly or spewing random insults, Conall enjoys sparring with Sirix. He values freedom above stability, a common virtue between them. He also shares the classic Valthian dark hair, though his skin is dark as night, with eyes an icy shade of blue. Scars slash across his limbs and torso from his years of competing in the Great Houses Tournament, as he is also a member of the peerage. Aware of Sarya's treatment of Sirix and her obedience to the Creed of the Crown, Conall remained with a blank poker face during his servitude.

Arine Faren, age 21, is a close friend and lover of Sirix. Throughout the meetings of the king's court, the two often met in secret rendezvous. Their escapades went far beyond the castle walls and into the secondary rings of Esilque, the capital city of Valthia, where they experienced life through different sets of shoes. Arine specializes in disguises, a hobby of her own stemming from a restrictive childhood. She has aided Sirix during his acts of rebellion by helping him to escape or playing servant to unsuspecting noblemen. Her skills are all the more useful when Sirix is framed for murder and must weave through the city without getting captured. Arine shares his views of freedom for all. She has curly brown hair and brown eyes, attributes of her heritage of the Qharenan people.

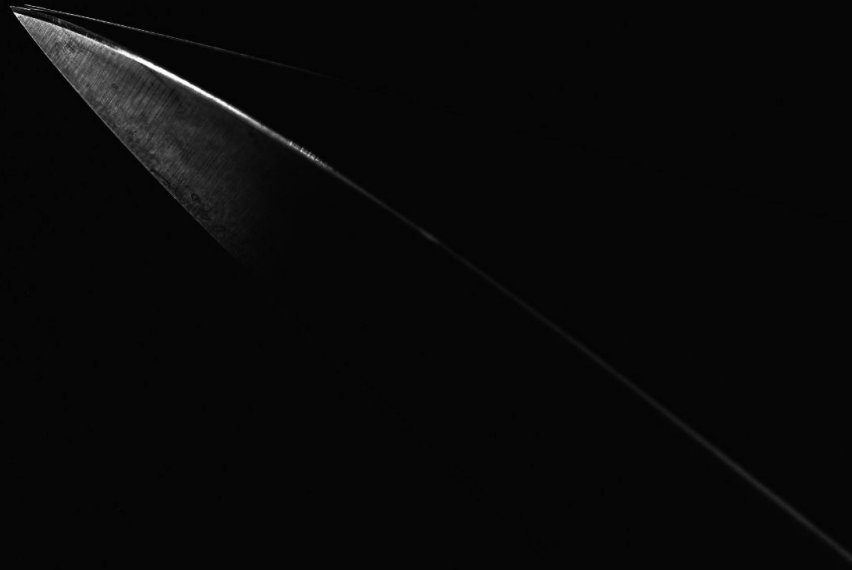


LOCATIONS

Valthia's geography is predominantly made of mountains, with the Great Expanse in the north serving as its border to the rest of the continent. The rest of the landscape is full of smaller mountains and hills, with a strip of mountains known as the Silver Sword in the center of the peninsula, home to dragons. Thus, it marks the border between the east and west city-state regions, and the southern capital, Esilque. As Valthia is situated on a jutting end of a larger continent, it is surrounded by 2 seas: the Green Sea, and the White Gulf. Further at the northern border is Evessar, once a vassal nation turned enemy. Across the Green Sea beyond is the Qharene Republic, neither enemy nor ally.

The White Castle is named based on its appearance. It is a large, pristine white, Roman-style castle with square-shaped towers, constructed by the first king of Valthia. It sits on a cliff directly next to the sea, with sharp rocks below. It has all the amenities and rooms a royal castle would have, such as a lavish garden, an elaborate ball room, gatehouses and guardrooms, and a grand chapel specifically for the Creed of the Crown (located in the heart of the castle). There is an underground escape tunnel for the royal family, which leads to a cave at the base of the cliff. In the cave are several boats and ships, useful for fleeing. The tunnel is located inside the Creed of the Crown's chapel. Most of the furniture is reminiscent of Ancient Greece and Rome, with intricate stone and wood carvings. The cloth used for furniture is often silk, dyed a multitude of colors.

Esilque is the main capital of Valthia and the largest city in the entire kingdom. It is divided into five rings, with the two inner rings making home to the upper crust of society: the peerage and rich merchants. The third ring is for the middle class, and is where most businesses thrive as the more high-traffic, metropolitan area of the capital. The fourth ring is designated for those who fall into the working class bracket, as well as slaves and criminals. The fifth and final ring is agricultural land, protecting the city. There is a minor difference between the quality of food sourced from within Esilque's agricultural lands versus on the outer regions of Valthia. Esilque has a consistent harvest whereas the rural lands are subject to natural disasters (fewer to take care of it).



THE WORLD

A great world war took place around a thousand years ago based on the purity of magic. Humans were divided on the right to use magic, where a large portion believed magical talents belong strictly to the ruling classes with the purest bloodlines, and the others thought magic was inherent and necessary to further advance creation. The Kingmaker proclaimed a new ruler of Valthia during this and commanded all the Deities of Nature to absorb any humans' magical powers. At present, magic is forbidden practice, unless one belongs to the peerage. The divine right to practicing sorcery is inherent by blood.

Records of history were destroyed following the world war, along with most of the population, and new generations repopulated the world. As the Kingmaker was last seen around a thousand years prior, Valthians believe that only his descendants have any claim to the throne, and that when Valthia expands its territories, the old ruler will be reborn into one of his descendants and subsequently rule the world through unification.

The monarch is considered an incarnation of the Divine Ruler, and on each solstice Valthians will pray to the monarch for protection, good health, success, and more. Bloodline is extremely important to the Creed of the Crown, as it was established based on the principle that the purest blood comes from a long, noble line. During baptism, blood is drawn and spread across the forehead in the shape of an 8-pointed star, the symbol for the Divine Ruler. The Creed of the Crown has several places of worship spread across Valthia, but disciples are obligated to travel to specific Holy Sites. The temples are often situated on a mountain or hill, the highest point in a specific territory.

Evessar, the enemy at Valthia's northern border, is an oligarchy, where the ruling body is made of extremely wealthy war criminals. Evessar seeks to take over Valthia, through infiltrating and corrupting their peerage. The oligarchy's goal is to convert Valthia into its naval base, where they can then attack and take over the Qharene Republic, the nation across the Green Sea. Evessar is known for its ballistae, fire projectiles, scorpions, naval vessels similar to triremes, metal spikes, etc. The practice of magic is no longer taboo in the country, as they pride themselves on resourcefulness above all.



SYNOPSIS

The Kingmaker has disappeared for a thousand years.

At the heart of Nymor is Valthia, the Kingdom of the Eternal Flame, foretold for centuries to bring the New Dawn—an era of unending peace. However, when the country of Evessar builds strongholds along their borders, the next world war looms over the horizon.

Sirix Volaire is the capricious, playboy prince of the Kingdom of Valthia, and fraternal twin to Crown Princess Sarya. He leads a lavish, idle life, continuously shirking off his responsibilities despite the punishment waiting for him. However, when Sarya stages a coup and hunts him down, he is left scrambling to survive.

With the aid of his loyal attendant Conall, he reunites with his lover Arine and flees into the capital city, Esilque. From there, he successfully evades enemy forces of Evessar marching deeper into the city rings and assassins sent by Sarya by the cover of nightfall. As the capital is sieged and thrown into chaos, Arine is captured by Evessarian forces, and Sirix has no choice but to flee without her.

Following his escape, Sirix is determined to find the Kingmaker, who can restore the peace of Valthia, as well as his honor. He and Conall journey to the Silver Sword mountains, where they outmaneuver or face the enemies on their tail. In the caverns of the mountain, they find that the Kingmaker is not an object, but a child, born when his father, the king, was slain. They then return to the villages of Valthia, where they search for any baby with inherent power. As they do so, Sarya catches wind of their plans, and offers a deal: meet his fate and fight, or Arine will suffer a horrible death.

Sirix agrees and returns back to Esilque, but with an army at his back. During his journey across the city-states of Valthia, he gathered support for his cause: join the Valthian Rebellion to win your freedom back. As Sarya meets him on the battlefield, she reveals that Arine died the day she was captured. Without a Kingmaker, Sirix and Sarya fight. With the rebellion on its last line of defense, Conall stabs Sirix in the back. It is then that he realizes Sirix had the 8 pointed star birthmark on his nape, and as the pain travels up Sirix's spine, he reawakens as the Kingmaker. He rains down the forces of magic along his enemies, and the war is won.

After his coronation, he later finds out from hostages that the king was from Evessar, who had turned against them after falling in love with Sirix's mother. His real father had died upon Sirix's birth. A bittersweet ending, Sirix restores the peace of Valthia and Nymor, transforming Valthian society by fully abolishing the peerage.

STORY EXCERPT

Sirix stepped inside the caverns of the Silver Sword, met with a dank stench that enveloped his face. By his feet lay a few ash-covered slabs, which led into an abyssal darkness where none had returned. At Conall's apprehension, Sirix threw the pebble sitting beside their shields and down beyond the flight of stairs, bearing a quiet echo.

"No living creature walks these halls," Conall announced.

Using his torch to guide his way, Sirix descended the steps, pressing his armored feet lightly against each slab of dry stone, coated with soot and dust. Each chunk crumbled into the abyss for several beats, before reaching the bottom with a loud, hollow crash. *Bones*, Sirix thought.

"Evil spirits," he called out. "I enter without fear."

"You speak to them, and they will answer soon enough," Conall replied.

"And what might they say to their prince?"

"Perhaps nothing," Conall said with a chuckle. "But I do not wait to hear their voices. They tortured Men for eternity. Do you think they found peace in the afterlife?"

Yet, Sirix smiled as he stood on the doorstep of the black void. "I am the son of those who murdered their brethren, as my father was. Let them try to end my bloodline," He then declared, unsheathing his greatsword. "Let them try, and they shall be damned."

Upon descending the last step, Sirix placed his foot on the skeletons of Man and Dragon before him. He clenched his jaw, an icy chill running up his spine. Whilst waving the torch to navigate his way through the decaying and fleshless bodies, he froze in his tracks. At the center of a cracked archway was a message engraved into the stone, and directly above it was the makings of a great claw mark. Several holes had broken through to the other side of the wall. Sirix cocked his head, peering into the entrance.

"Don't go without me or I'll kill you myself," said Conall.

Sirix smirked. "Spooked, are we?"

A gale blew past them, billowing necrotic particles into the air. In the wind was a whisper, inaudible yet shrill, tickling Sirix's ears. Seconds later, a blood-curdling screech ripped into the air like a crack of lightning. He met Conall's eyes and readied his stance.

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