

CHAPTER SEVEN

Remaker Awakened

Bringer burned more than ever now. At this rate, there wouldn't be a single building left intact by morning. Hugo looked around; the oak tree was the only thing not set on fire. He saw the dead bodies of his comrades as well as those of the townspeople—people he'd seen every day when he and Bryan had gone to the tree to relax. All the houses burned, and in the distance, Hugo could hear screaming. There were still townspeople he couldn't save. That made him angry. Here was Hugo, the “hero” of Bringer, and he was helpless.

Just what kind of “hero” am I? But—I can still fight. As long as I'm standing, I'll fight!

Captain Val'Aun and his soldiers approached Bryan, Jack, and Hugo who had their backs facing the blocked exit. Val'Aun smirked

and licked his lips as he stopped his horse and dismounted.

“Well, well, is it not the brave soldiers of Bringer?” he chided. “I am Val’Aun of the Techan Empire, captain under the command of General Docker Wells. I would like to congratulate you for fighting bravely this night; however, you have lost. The walls that protected your town have crumbled, and your town has turned to ashes and piles of rubble. The lifeless bodies of your comrades and those you swore to protect are painting your streets with their blood. Those who escaped just now will be killed, or captured and enslaved. You are the only ones left.” Val’Aun walked back and forth like a tiger stalking its prey.

“However,” he continued, “you have proven your value in battle, so I’ll make this one offer—swear your fidelity to me and I will spare your lives.” Val’Aun smiled coldly. His troops had Hugo’s small group surrounded.

“So, what’s it going to be?” asked Val’Aun. “Servitude? Solitude? Or perhaps—” Before he could finish, one of Hugo’s arrows shot past his face, slicing his right cheek before striking the soldier behind him. The soldier collapsed, dead. Blood started to seep from the wound on Val’Aun’s cheek. Taken aback, Val’Aun quickly recovered and started laughing.

“Still have some fight in you, boy!” He wiped the blood off with his left hand and licked it.

“Very well . . . death it shall be!” roared Val’Aun. “Kill them!”