

## Gastor's Awakening

Aarengul galloped his horse swiftly through the medieval streets of Doshan. Doshan was a thriving valley kingdom, located between two mountains, Gorin and Thralin. The kingdom was heavily guarded, and just outside the kingdom walls, there lay a tall statue of a godly giant whom the people of Doshan call, Gastor. Everyone from the peasants to the royals Doshan praised Gastor, for it was said that he once defended Doshan. Since then, the legend states that Gastor was imprisoned in Thralin Mountain, never to be seen again. Local merchants jump out of the way of the horse as it barrels down the cobblestone roads.

King Valor was sitting on his throne when Prince Aarengul burst in. "Father, I have been sent from the outpost on the Phiroid Delta to give word that the army of Tharendove is making way to Doshan to attack. It is said that they will strike at dawn," exclaimed Aarengul.

"If this is true, then you must start rounding up all the men in Doshan," ordered Valor. As the king spoke, his daughter was walking down the steps to the throne room.

"What is going on father?" she asked.

"Tharendove means to attack Doshan at dawn Talia, we must be ready," the king responded.

"But I thought the Phiroid outpost reported that they were dormant," said Talia.

"Until now apparently."

"What shall I do father?"

"You must stay safe, in your room preferably."

"But father, I can help. I am ready, I've practiced."

"You are almost ready, my daughter, but not yet."

Talia was born a supernatural ability to shoot yellow beams of power out of her hands. Ever since she was able to walk, the king has been training her to harness this power. He believes that if Talia can control her power, she can do great things for her kingdom. This ability she possesses is what the people of Doshan call Gastor's Blessing.

"Father please," Talia begged.

"Talia, you will wait in your room until the Battle for Doshan is won, or our kingdom is taken," ordered King Valor.

Talia sadly strode up the stairs and into her room. When she disappeared to the upper floor, Aarengul broke the silence, "I shall start rallying the men." "And be swift!" Valor shouted.

Dawn was nearing, and the army of Doshan were lined on the kingdom walls, while more lay behind the Gate of Doshan, ready for when Tharendove attempts to breach the gate. Talia was still resting in her room, though she wasn't planning on doing so for much longer. She lifted up the mattress in her room, and under there lay knights armor and a broadsword. Without hesitation, she changed into the outfit.

Then, she began to descend down the wall of the castle. After touching ground, Talia wasted no time jogging to the Gate of Doshan to help guard. Up on the kingdom walls, soldiers quietly prayed to Gastor that they would make it out of this battle alive. The Sun was rising, and Tharendove's army was beginning to come into view. A hush of silence fell over the valley as the army marched closer. Tharendove took their position, maneuvering their way around the statue of Gastor.

Up at the kingdom walls, Doshan raised their bows. "Raise your bows!!" shouted Aarengul, who is also the leader of the Doshan army, "Steady!" The Tharendove army had raised their shields. "Fire!" Aarengul ordered. Arrows rained down upon Tharendove. Some of the Tharendove soldiers fell, but Tharendove still fired back a barrage of arrows to Doshan. After a while, Aarengul shouted, "fire at will!" Men from both kingdoms were dying, but neither side was going to give up so easily. Suddenly, from the back of the Tharendove lines, many men holding ladders ran to the foot of the kingdom walls. They swiftly set up the ladders and began to climb up for melee battle. Soon enough, sword fighting broke out on the kingdom walls. Tharendove saw this as a chance to breach the Gate of Doshan. They took a battering ram and charged the gate. They blasted it as hard as they could, but it didn't fall. Soldiers, including Princess Talia, were guarding the gate and were blown to their knees when the ram hit. They quickly regained their strength and held position. A few more hits with the ram, and the Gate of Doshan fell. As it did, the Doshan soldiers slew the men who manned the battering ram. The men had no other choice but to charge the battlefield to guard Doshan. Talia used Gastor's Blessing to blast many soldiers at once. Tiekel, the leader of the Tharendove army, saw that she was a problem to his army and began to gallop his horse over to her position. She saw him coming and shot at his horse. His horse was stunned and flew backwards, but Tiekel jumped off as soon as it happened and landed on his feet. Wasting no time, he slashed at Talia in her left arm. It was a wound that was seeping with blood.

"A fool you are to think you could take on all of the Tharendove army and get away with it." Tiekel taunted. Talia was on the ground holding her arm in pain. Suddenly, Talia tried blasting a projectile of power at the Tharendove leader, he winced, but nothing came out of her hand. She was too injured to fight, and she needed to be trained more.

"I see your petty power has abandoned you. Serves you right for slaying dozens of my men." Tiekel growled.

Up at the kingdom walls, Aarengul had just killed a soldier he was dueling with and looked down to the battlefield. Something had abruptly caught his eye, "Talia," he said under his breath.

"Well," said Tiekel, "now it's time for you to die." He raised his sword at Talia as she tried crawling away, but as he swung down, a different sword stopped it. It was Aarengul.

Tiekel began to speak, "ah, are you the weaklings br-" He was cut off by Aarengul swinging his sword, Tiekel blocked.

"I don't have time for your monologues," said Aarengul. They swung at each other, two leaders of almost equal skill in a battle for each other's life. Talia slowly backed away in fear. T'was a momentous sword fight that didn't last much longer, for Tiekel had stabbed his sword into Aarengul's chest.

"No!" Talia screamed. She fell to her knees in horror and shock. Tiekel pulled his sword out of Aarengul. To Talia, the rest of the battle was nothing but a blip in her mind. All the killing and fighting, and Doshan had lost their leader. Talia was furious.

“May the best man prevail,” Tikel said to himself. Talia’s hands started glowing, radiating with yellow power. Her head facing down in pain. “I’m glad I got that out of the way, now I’ll know not to draw this out any longer,” Tikel said as he raised his sword.

As he did, Talia looked up at him, her eyes glowing yellow. Power dancing around her enclosed fists. As he swung his sword, power burst out of Talia as she screamed. The power flung Tikel right into the statue of Gastor. And her surge blew the rest of the soldiers, including Doshan’s, off their feet. Everyone was silent, wondering what had happened.

As soldiers began to rise to their feet, something was happening to Thralin Mountain. A crack had appeared, and it was growing bigger. Every soldier backed away. Soon enough, a huge chunk of the mountain fell off, blocking the path through the valley to Doshan. But what it revealed was what both armies were questioning, it was a giant hand. And the unusualness didn’t stop there. Soldiers gasped as the hand started moving. After a while it wiggling around. A gargantuan chunk of the mountain, three times bigger than the last burst off the mountain, falling behind the last piece. Dust surged the valley causing everyone to not see. After a few minutes, the wind had the dust cleared. When it did, people could not believe their eyes. A 60 foot tall giant stood where the piece of the mountain once was. Gastor.

“Doshan has done me well,” the giant boomed. His voice echoed throughout the valley. Suddenly, he stomped on a number of the Tharendove soldiers.

The army that attacked Doshan shouted, “retreat!” as Gastor crushed the soldiers with ease. The statue of Gastor stood tall, but not as tall as Gastor himself. He swung his hand at the statue, and it came hurtling towards the retreating members of the Tharendove army. Tikel himself was trying to escape, but was smashed under the might of Gastor. Doshan watched in awe as Tharendove was defeated.

“I thank you for setting me free, Doshan. I will continue to guard your kingdom,” Gastor said. Gastor then took a seat at the pedestal that once held the statue and slowly turned to stone.