

THE THRILLING SEQUEL TO THE NUMBER ONE GLOBAL  
BESTSELLING PHENOMENON *FOURTH WING*

BURN. IT. DOWN.

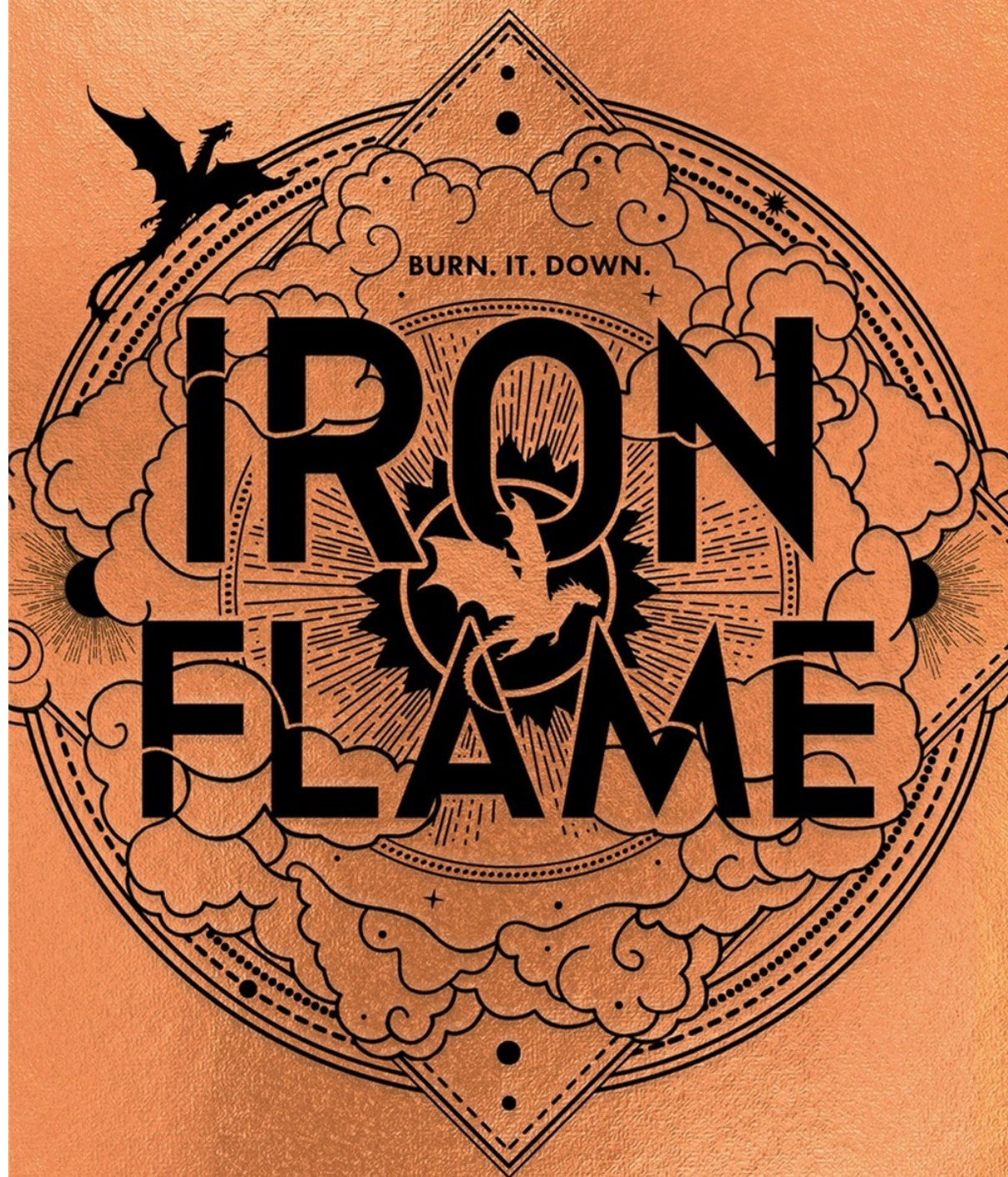


# IRON FLAME

REBECCA YARROS

THE EMPYREAN SERIES

THE THRILLING SEQUEL TO THE NUMBER ONE GLOBAL  
BESTSELLING PHENOMENON *FOURTH WING*



REBECCA YARROS

THE EMPYREAN SERIES

MORE FROM REBECCA YARROS

THE EMPYREAN SERIES

*Fourth Wing Iron Flame*

# IRON FLAME

NO.1 *SUNDAY TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR  
REBECCA YARROS



PIATKUS

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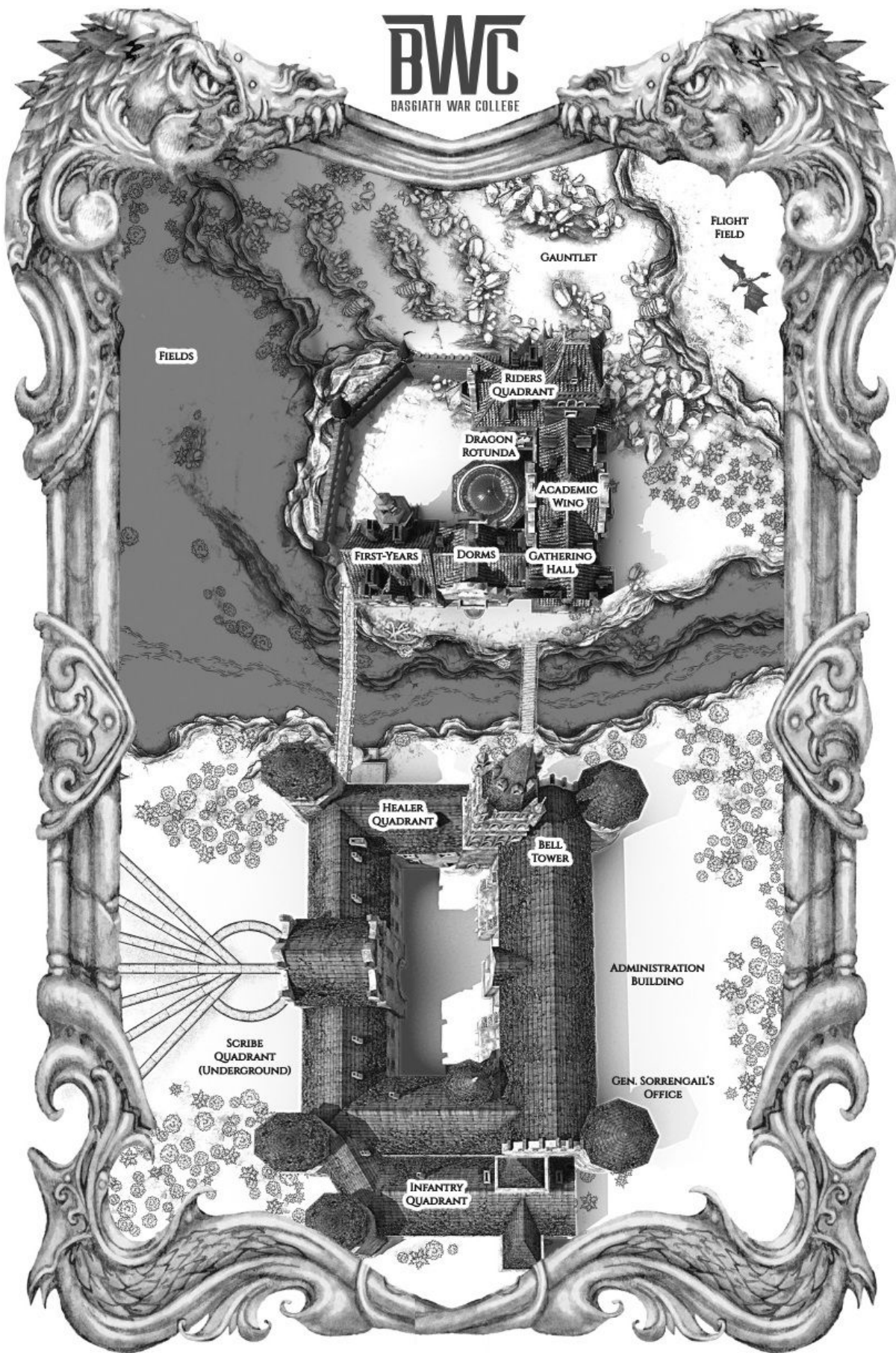
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*To my fellow zebras. Not all strength is physical.*

*Iron Flame* is a nonstop-thrilling adventure fantasy set in the brutal and competitive world of a military college for dragon riders, which includes elements regarding war, psychological and physical torture, imprisonment, intense violence, brutal injuries, perilous situations, blood, dismemberment, burning, murder, death, animal death, graphic language, loss of family, grief, and sexual activities that are shown on the page. Readers who may be sensitive to these elements, please take note, and prepare to join the revolution...

# BWC

BASGIATH WAR COLLEGE



FIELDS

FLIGHT FIELD

GAUNTLET

RIDERS QUADRANT

DRAGON ROTUNDA

ACADEMIC WING

FIRST-YEARS

DORMS

GATHERING HALL

HEALER QUADRANT

BELL TOWER

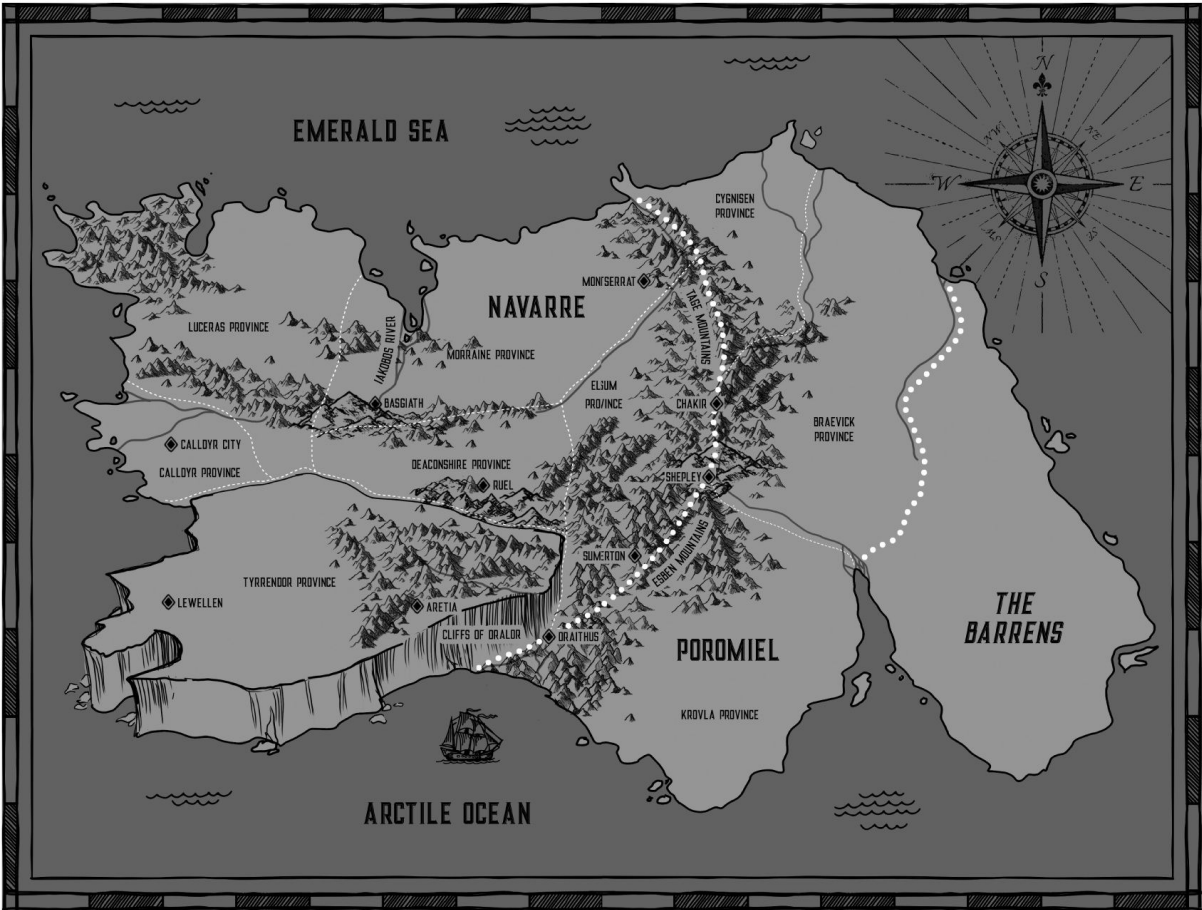
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

SCRIBE QUADRANT (UNDERGROUND)

GEN. SORRENGAIL'S OFFICE

INFANTRY QUADRANT







# FOURTH WING

All other Wings' structure is identical



WINGLEADER



EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
SECOND IN COMMAND

## CLAW SECTION

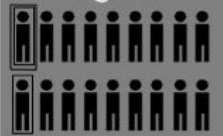


SECTION LEADER



EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
SECOND IN COMMAND

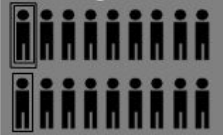
### SQUAD 1



### SQUAD 2



### SQUAD 3



## FLAME SECTION

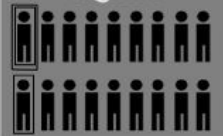


SECTION LEADER



EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
SECOND IN COMMAND

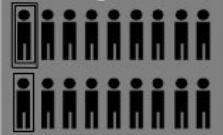
### SQUAD 1



### SQUAD 2



### SQUAD 3



## TAIL SECTION

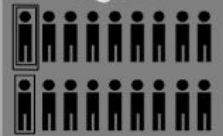


SECTION LEADER



EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
SECOND IN COMMAND

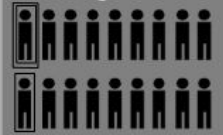
### SQUAD 1



### SQUAD 2



### SQUAD 3



SQUADS = 15 - 20 PEOPLE

DOUBLE OUTLINE = SQUAD LEADER  
SINGLE = EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SECOND IN COMMAND





The following text has been faithfully transcribed from Navarrian into the modern language by Jesinia Neilwart, Curator of the Scribe Quadrant at Basgiath War College. All events are true, and names have been preserved to honor the courage of those fallen.

May their souls be commended to Malek.

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Chapter Sixty-One

Chapter Sixty-Two

Chapter Sixty-Three

Chapter Sixty-Four

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Acknowledgments

# **PART ONE**

**In this, the 628th year of our Unification, it is hereby recorded that Aretia has been burned by dragon in accordance with the Treaty ending the separatist movement. Those who fled, survived, and those who did not remain entombed in her ruins.**

**—PUBLIC NOTICE 628.85**

**TRANSCRIBED BY CERELLA NIELWART**



# CHAPTER ONE



**R**evolution tastes oddly...sweet.

I stare at my older brother across a scarred wooden table in the enormous, busy kitchen of the fortress of Aretia and chew the honeyed biscuit he put on my plate. Damn, that's good. Really good.

Maybe it's just that I haven't eaten in three days, since a not-so-mythological being stabbed me in the side with a poisoned blade that should have killed me. It *would* have killed me if it hadn't been for Brennan, who won't stop smiling as I chew.

This might go down as the most surreal experience of my life. Brennan is alive. Venin, dark wielders I'd thought only existed in fables, are real. Brennan is alive. Aretia still stands, even though it was scorched after the Tyrrish rebellion six years ago. Brennan is *alive*. I have a new, three-inch scar on my abdomen, but I didn't die. Brennan. Is. Alive.

"The biscuits are good, right?" he asks, snagging one from the platter between us. "Kind of remind me of the ones that cook used to make when we were stationed in Calldyr, remember?"

I stare and chew.

He's just so...him. And yet he looks different from what I remember. His brownish-red curls are cropped close to his skull instead of waving over his forehead, and there's no lingering softness in the angles of his face, which now has tiny lines at the edges of his eyes. But that smile? Those eyes? It's really him.

And his one condition being me eating something before he takes me to

my dragons? It's the most Brennan move ever.

Not that Tairn ever waits for permission, which means—

*"I, too, think you need to eat something."* Tairn's low, arrogant voice fills my head.

*"Yeah, yeah,"* I reply in kind, mentally reaching out for Andarna again as one of the kitchen workers hurries by, offering a quick smile to Brennan.

There's no response from Andarna, but I can feel the shimmering bond between us, though it's no longer golden like her scales. I can't quite get a mental picture, but my brain is still a little groggy. She's sleeping again, which isn't odd after she uses up all her energy to stop time, and after what happened in Resson, she probably needs to sleep for the next week or so.

"You've barely said a word, you know." Brennan tilts his head just like he used to when he was trying to solve a problem. "It's kind of creepy."

"Watching me *eat* is creepy," I counter after I swallow, my voice still a little hoarse.

"And?" He shrugs shamelessly, a dimple flashing in his cheek when he grins. It's the only boyish thing left about him. "A few days ago, I was pretty sure I'd never get to watch you do, well, *anything* again." He takes a huge bite. Guess his appetite is still the same, which is oddly comforting. "You're welcome, by the way, for the mending. Consider it a twenty-first-birthday present."

"Thank you." That's right. I slept right through my birthday. And I'm sure my lying in bed on the brink of death was more than enough drama for everyone in this castle, house, whatever it's called.

Xaden's cousin, Bodhi, strides into the kitchen, dressed in uniform, his arm in a sling and his cloud of black curls freshly trimmed.

"Lieutenant Colonel Aisereigh," Bodhi says, handing a folded missive to Brennan. "This just came in from Basgiath. The rider will be here until tonight if you want to reply." He offers me a smile, and I'm struck again at how closely he resembles a softer version of Xaden. With a nod to my brother, he turns and leaves.

Basgiath? Another rider here? How many are there? Exactly how big is this revolution?

Questions fire off in my head faster than I can find my tongue. "Wait.

You're a lieutenant colonel? And who is Aisereigh?" I ask. Yeah, because *that* is the most important inquiry to make.

"I had to change my last name for obvious reasons." He glances at me and unfolds the missive, breaking a blue wax seal. "And you'd be amazed at how fast you get promoted when everyone above you continues to die," he says, then reads the letter and curses, shoving it into his pocket. "I have to go meet with the Assembly now, but finish your biscuits and I'll meet you in the hall in half an hour and take you to your dragons." All traces of the dimple, of the laughing older brother are gone, and in their place is a man I barely recognize, an officer I don't know. Brennan may as well be a stranger.

Without waiting for me to respond, he scrapes his chair back and strides out of the kitchen.

Sipping my milk, I stare at the empty space my brother left across from me, chair still pulled out from the table as though he might return at any moment. I swallow the remaining biscuit stuck in the back of my throat and lift my chin, determined not to ever sit and wait on my brother to return again.

I push up from the table and head after him, out of the kitchen and down the long hall. He must have been in a hurry, because I can't see him anywhere.

The intricate carpet muffles my footsteps along the wide, high-arched hallway as I come to— *Whoa*. The sweeping, polished double staircases with their detailed banisters rise three—no, four—more floors above me.

I'd been too focused on my brother to pay attention earlier, but now I blatantly gawk at the architecture of the enormous space. Each landing is slightly offset from the one below, as though the staircase climbs toward the very mountain this fortress is carved into. The morning light streams in from dozens of small windows that provide the only decoration on the five-story wall above the massive double doors of the fortress's entrance. They seem to form a pattern, but I'm too close to see the whole of it.

There's no perspective, which pretty much feels like a metaphor for my entire life right now.

Two guards watch every step I take but make no move to stop me when I pass by. At least that means I'm not a prisoner.

I continue to stride through the main hall of the house, eventually picking up the sound of voices from a room across the way, where one of two large, ornate doors is pitched open. As I approach, I immediately recognize Brennan's voice, and my chest tightens at the familiar timbre.

"That's not going to work." Brennan's deep voice echoes. "Next suggestion."

I make it through the massive foyer, ignoring what look to be two other wings off to the left and right. This place is astounding. Half palace, half home, but entirely a fortress. The thick stone walls are what saved it from its supposed demise six years ago. From what I've read, Riorson House has never been breached by any army, even during the three sieges that I know of.

*Stone doesn't burn.* That's what Xaden told me. The city—now reduced to a town—has been silently, covertly rebuilding for years right under General Melgren's nose. The relics, magical marks the children of the executed rebellion officers carry, somehow mask them from Melgren's signet when they're in groups of three or more. He can't see the outcome of any battle they're present for, so he's never been able to "see" them organizing to fight here.

There are certain aspects of Riorson House, from its defensible position carved into the mountainside to its cobblestone floors and steel-enforced double doors in the entryway, that remind me of Basgiath, the war college I've called home since my mother was stationed there as its commanding general. But that's where the similarities end. There's actual art on the walls here, not just busts of war heroes displayed on stands, and I'm pretty sure that's an authentic Poromish tapestry hanging across the hall from where Bodhi and Imogen stand in the open doorway.

Imogen puts her finger to her lips, then motions at me to join in the empty place between her and Bodhi. I take it, noticing Imogen's half-shaved hair has been recently dyed a brighter pink while I've been resting. Clearly she's comfortable here. Bodhi, too. The only signs that either has been in a battle are the sling cradling Bodhi's fractured arm and a split in Imogen's lip.

"Someone has to state the obvious," an older man with an eyepatch and a hawkish nose says from the far end of a table that consumes the length of