

# Raegis and the Gluttonbrand: The Marin Games

By Prowler Purple

*Raegis Kingdom Marin Province, Age 299*

Two guards parted as the doors to the arena opened for Atten. He was nervous, but he was even more excited to meet the renowned adventurers invited to the games. He was led to a private room where the challengers were said to be having a feast. Atten slowly pushed open the door and peeked in, expecting to see fierce warriors with angry temperaments or fighters who were ready to draw their blades at even the slightest insult. Instead he saw a rowdy group of fatties gathered around Saia as she was telling a story with a drink in paw.

“And so I told those bloody nobles, you’re either six feet under or six figures in debt with you lot!” Saia and the rest of the room lit up with laughter. Any worries Atten had about this group flew out the window.

Atten walked up and patted Saia on the back. “Didn’t you already tell this story? And how come I only ever get to hear the punchline?” Atten was about to ask more, but Saia suddenly grabbed him by the collar.

“You’re going to be the punchline if you keep running your mouth! Any story is a new story if the crowd hasn’t heard it!” Saia threatened, still holding a fist a few inches from Atten’s face.

“WOOOOO! If there’s a fight going on, then the Dirk’s got to be a part of it! WOOOOO!” A huge boar suddenly came up from behind the both of them and slammed a hoof on the table. If there was ever a fur who could be described as large and in charge, it was Dirk. He was a gigantic brown furred boar with two menacing tusks. He had markings running all along his body up to his tusks, which had ceremonial carvings in them. Speaking of his body, he had an unrivaled musclegut. He wore nothing but bracers, pants, and a pelt around his waist to show off his perfectly round gut and toned abs. He was truly a warrior to be reckoned with.

“Calm down, Dirk. You must be this Atten character Saia has been telling us about. I’ve heard you’re a strong warrior. I hope she wasn’t lying. I don’t really do much talking, I just want to have an interesting fight. So don’t be boring, ok?” A morose voice said from behind Dirk. It was a zebra knight, in black armor. She was skinny, which was rare in the knights of Raegis, but she looked more fearsome than anyone else in the room because of her brooding looks. She paid zero attention to whoever she was talking to as she polished her halberd. She clearly wasn’t the type for conversation.

“Please forgive Lady Veil. Her rude manners do not match her fighting skills nor her heroic nature.” Another voice chimed in from the crowd. It was a stallion dressed in full plate armor. He carried a greatsword and wore perfectly polished armor with a knight’s tabard bearing a horse shaped crest. The tabard did have a rather large hump in it, as it couldn’t hide his rotund paunch that wobbled as he posed dramatically.

“Ah, and forgive me as well for not introducing myself. I am a champion much like you! My name is Paladin Moors. A pleasure to make your acquaintance. I hope we have an honorable duel and a bright future. Now come! Sit and eat with us! There’s plenty more to go around! For now. We shall see if Dirk leaves any for the rest of us…” Moors looked over to the boar who was already stuffing his snout in the corner.

Dirk grabbed an entire leg of some kind of roasted meat and swallowed it in one loud *\*GULP\**! He threw the bone in a pile that he already had that housed the remains of his previous feast. He had to have eaten two entire giant creatures by the looks of his pile, but he was still going. He also had enough empty mugs to fill an entire barrel, yet he still kept eating and drinking.

“What are you even eating? And how is there so much of it? Not even Atten can match your appetite!” Theo remarked with an astounded look. The creature he was eating seemed to have blue and green scales that were roasted along with the meat. It had six legs that Dirk had eaten half of.

“This, my friend, is one of the monsters that terrorized an innocent village on my last adventure! It made for quite a hunt, but more importantly, it’s making for quite the meal! I’m almost halfway full after two of them! The

quest for a full belly never ends! WOOOOO!” Dirk shouted as he snatched another leg and loudly chowed down on it. \*MONCH\* \*MONCH\* \*MONCH\* \*GLURK\*! He threw the bone in his pile and heaved his belly up with his hooves. It made a loud \*SLOSH\* as he dropped his sagging gut back into its place over his wide waistline. He was certainly having fun with his size!

The boar then looked parched, so naturally he took two tankards by the handle and chugged both frothy drinks at the same time. \*GLUG\* \*GLUG\* \*GLUG\* \*BWOOOOORRRP\*! “WOOOOO! Nothing like some good eats to really get me into the fighting spirit!” He said as he let out another loud \*BUUUUUUUURRRP\* right in Veil’s face.

“You’re so annoying. Do that again and you won’t have a snout to drink out of, you ball of lard.” Veil said as she pointed the tip of her halberd right at Dirk’s fat belly. Dirk laughed and kept on stuffing his face with all the manners of a starving peasant.

“Well this seems to be a fun bunch. I was worried that Raegis’ finest champions would be pompous and stuck up, but you all seem like real heroes! I’m glad I’ve met everyone.” Said Atten.

“Well, almost everyone. I would say the heroes of this land are not stuck up, but... the Inquisitor will be participating as well...” Moors added with a hint of contempt in his voice.

Oh! \*GULP\* that royal pain thinks she’s so much better than everyone, huh? She won’t even come eat or talk with us! \*BWOOOORP\*!” Dirk added with a full mouth as he was still eating his meal.

“Gross. I wouldn’t talk to you either, Dirk.” Veil said as she shoved the boar away from her.

“Haha! But you just did talk to me, Veil! I’ve gotcha there! Now come share a drink! Well, maybe not share, I’ll drink ‘em all up myself! WOOOOO!” Dirk convinced himself he won the argument and returned to his food.

“Besides, I don’t think anybody has talked to that guy over there.” Saia said as she pointed to a jackal sitting off in the corner. He wore baggy clothing, multiple bottles on his waist, and a turban. He had opulent gold jewelry from head to paw, and had a baggy cloth shirt and fancy vest over his round belly. He wasn’t as fat as most nobles from Raegis, but he had a sizeable enough paunch. He was reading scrolls by himself, but now everyone in the room had their eyes on him.

“Apologies, I’m new to the area and am not one for talking. Please forgive any perceived rudeness. Now if you will excuse me...” He was about to return to his scrolls when he saw Atten. Suddenly the jackal’s eyes widened. He set down his scrolls and approached him hastily. He no longer seemed to care about anyone else in the room.

“Umm, are you alright? Did I do something to offend you?” Atten asked as the jackal began staring at him in awe a foot away from him. The jackal touched one of Atten’s horns and poked his belly. Atten had no clue what was going on.

“Hey, mate. You don’t just go around touching and staring at other urs. We don’t even know your bloody name!” Saia yelled as she decided to stick up for Atten. The jackal suddenly snapped back to reality and realized that everyone was looking at him.

“I... my apologies. I just... Ahem. Allow me to introduce myself, Atten. My name is Ahmed. I wish to speak with you in private, Atten. But not now. I hope we may reunite in a safer place. I will tell you anything you wish to know that will help you on your quest.” Ahmed then grabbed his scrolls and left the room.

“Weird guy. Oh well, at least now there’s more for us to eat! WOOOOO!” Dirk said as he prepared to devour another roast.

“Attention warriors! The games will begin shortly! Lady Marin would like to speak with you, and then you shall begin your preparations.” The bird butler from before said to the group and beckoned them out the door. Everyone walked out in an orderly fashion, save a certain boar who was none too pleased that his meal was interrupted.

The games had yet to begin, yet everyone could hear a sizeable crowd from the rooms underneath the arena that they were currently in. In a roundtable room, Lady Marin sat on a gigantic chair held up by a half a dozen struggling servants.

“My dear champions! I am so excited for the games to begin! I wish to relay the rules of this event. The performers and other acts have been going on for quite some time now, but the real event will be the heroes’ cup that will end the event. It will be a heroic tournament with no limits! Be it might, cunning, or magic, do whatever it takes to claim victory! Our lovely announcer has already set up the matches, so simply take to your assigned side of the pit when you are called. I hope you all have wonderful battles!” Lady Marin declared.

“Two questions, my Lady. Will we get to see who our opponents will be? And what should we do if we get exhausted in our first fight?” Moors asked.

“Just the one I wanted to speak to, Moors. May we have a quick word after the first round? But onto your questions. We simply wish to keep your matchup a surprise! And fear not, Moors! For we have a powerful magician who will cure any weariness you have in between matches! Come on in, my daughter!” Lady Marin waved over Karin, who was sitting behind her, much to everyone’s surprise. She held a glowing staff in her talons.

“Wow, Karin! I didn’t know you used magic!” Atten added.

“I like to keep everyone on their toes. That includes you, you weirdo! Now go do something cool! I don’t want to be embarrassed for recommending you!” She said as she pushed Atten towards the door.

“Now, I will make a quick speech, and introduce our fighters! Follow me, and take a bow! Let us begin!” Lady Marin pointed forward and her servants heaved the fat bird up and towards the gate to the arena. Everyone followed as the dim pit was lit up by sunlight, and the hums of the crowd were replaced with screams and cheers! The arena was the size of a fortress, yet every single seat was taken by citizens, travelers, nobles, and more. Children sat on

parent's shoulders and nobles sat on high seats with servants aplenty surrounding them. This truly was a huge event!

Atten wasn't sure what to think with all of these eyes on him, but he was snapped back to reality once Lady Marin began to speak, "Welcome, furs of Raegis! I am Lady Marin, and I am here to host this fabulous tournament and introduce these heroes in the name of the arts! This tournament was founded to remind the people of Raegis that they have nothing to fear, as our heroes will always protect our way of life. Nothing needs to change, as we have comfort in Raegis and our luxurious way of life!" Lady Marin yelled to the crowd, who cheered between each pause.

"Now, let me introduce your heroes! First up is Lady Veil! She has been an adventurer for fifteen years, and she is known all across the land for saving the life of Lord Tomas in the battle of Isra Village!" Marin pointed to Lady Veil who took a small curtsy and looked away, clearly not wanting the attention.

"Next up is Paladin Moors! A champion of the light, and the guardian of Raegis Castle town! This hero created the paladin order and has guarded the crown tirelessly! What a hero!" Moors went into an exaggerated bow, and the crowd lost their minds!

"Next up is..." Lady Marin pointed to Dirk, who took his introductions upon himself.

"WOOOOO! The Dirk is here! Who's ready to see me bust some heads! WOOOOO!" Dirk yelled and gave his belly a hard pat! The crowd went wild and let out Dirk's signature WOOOOO with him.

"Lovely. Next up is an up and comer from a small village next to the Dismar Desert! Behold the mighty Ahmed! He may be new, but count him out and you will be sorry!" Ahmed did a formal bow in response. He got a moderate cheer, but with a crowd this size, it felt like an entire village was cheering him on!

"Next up is the rough and tumble martial artist from Brensworth, Miss Saia! She is a former bartender who lets her fists do the talking for her! I

wouldn't want to be on the other side of those!" Saia must have felt at home with the crowd, as she curtsayed and then did an impressive flip into a combat stance. Despite her size, she could move! The crowd ate it up, as cheers filled the arena!

"Next up is a small hero from the Hakuna Village, Theo! He may be a fisherman, but don't doubt his tenacity!" Theo waved awkwardly. Atten couldn't believe the crowd could be this silent right after being so loud.

"Well, up next is a fire wielding swordsman who is also from Hakuna Village! Meet Atten, wielder of Gluttonbrand!" After the Lady's introduction, Atten knew it was his time to shine! He tossed his sword in the air and let it spin. It burst into flame as it spun, and fell right into Atten's paws as he imitated an action pose he read about in a scroll. The crowd went from silent, to shaking the arena in an instant. He was glad he could make an impression.

*\*THUD\* \*THUD\* \*THUD\** An icy chill ran through the arena as loud footsteps came from the arena doors. She was here. The crowd was awestruck as the Inquisitor emerged from the dark hallway, rapier in paw. She stood next to Atten and curtsayed. The crowd erupted in cheers. She needed no introduction.

"Now that introductions are out of the way, we can begin the first match! Our first two fighters will be Atten versus Ahmed! Fighters, get in position!" Atten was surprised that he was up first, but at least he wouldn't have to contend with the nerves that came with waiting. Both he and Ahmed walked to opposite sides of the ring. They drew their weapons and prepared for battle!

"Let the Marin games... BEGIN!" Lady Marin shouted as she left the arena. Atten charged Ahmed with his sword drawn, ready for him to charge as well. To his surprise, Ahmed was standing still. Atten hesitated for a moment, but continued his charge!

"Yah!" He swung his blade right across Ahmed's chest! *\*SHING\**! It cut right through him! Atten thought he might have gone too hard, but he looked up at the jackal and saw that his wound was made entirely out of sand! In fact,

his whole body turned into nothing but dust, and crumpled right in front of him!

The crowd gasped, and Atten detected something behind him! He used what little acrobatic skill he had to roll out of the way of whatever way coming for him! *\*WOOSH\**! A spear flew by Atten's face as Ahmed appeared behind him. "Show me your power, I must see if my theory about you is true." Ahmed then waved his paw and watched the sand flow from the dissolving fake Ahmed into one of his bottles. He then began swinging at him with his spear!

*\*WOOSH\* \*WOOSH\* \*CLANG\** Ahmed had Atten on the defensive! His strikes were the fastest strikes Atten had ever seen from a spearman! He barely dodged the first two, and had to clash steel with the third strike. They were locked into a contest of strength as the two daring warriors attempted to win this clash of blades! Atten took a step forward and appeared to have the advantage, until Ahmed began putting his back behind the clash and pushed Atten towards the wall!

"Is this your limit? Was my presumption untrue? Is this so-called hero actually weak?" Ahmed taunted as he began to lower the blade towards Atten's neck.

"I don't know who you think I am, but I'll tell you one thing! I am not weak! I will save Raegis!" Atten yelled as he decided to use his head in the literal sense! *\*CLONK\** Atten headbutted the jackal in the middle of their clash, but Atten's horns gave him a distinct advantage! The jackal staggered backwards, and Atten saw his opportunity! He pointed his blade towards the jackal and called out to Vandrea in his mind.

"Hmph, you seem to hate losing as much as I do, Vandrea. Let's win this!" Atten said to the fat dragoness inside his sword.

"Please, like I would let myself or my host lose to some pathetic mortal! Show him our power!" She said as she gave Atten some of her power! *\*FWOOOOSH\**! A wave of fire shot towards the hesitating jackal! The crowd gasped once more as the flames overtook Ahmed! The wall of fire completely covered Atten's opponent!



Once the flames and smoke had cleared, only a pile of dust and rubble remained. The crowd was silent, until the mound of dust began to rise! As it rose, it became clear that it was a sphere of sand! Once it rose from the earth, the sand fell to the floor, revealing an unscathed Ahmed. He used the sand as a fireproof barrier!

Before Atten could even react Ahmed sprinted at him and slashed his spear! \*CLANG\* \*WOOOSH\*! Ahmed struck Atten's paw and sent Gluttonbrand flying! Atten was pushed to the wall by Ahmed, who held the tip of his spear to Atten's neck! Atten was defeated. He was about to put his paws in the air to declare his surrender, but all of a sudden...

"I concede." Ahmed sheathed his spear and returned the sand to his bottles. He then proceeded to walk towards the arena doors.

"You... you concede? What do you mean? You had me right there! I should be the one surrendering! Why are you doing this?" Atten asked.

"I have seen what you are capable of. You truly are who I assumed you were. As one who walks the untreaded path, it would go against all of my wishes to defeat you in battle. I concede, and I shall return home. I urge you to come see me in my home someday, Atten. In Oasis." Ahmed left the arena, leaving the crowd speechless.

The butler walked center stage and made an announcement, "The winner of the first match by forfeit is Atten. The next match will begin momentarily." The butler then escorted Atten offstage.

A few minutes later, Lady Marin returned, looking as lavish as ever. "My, what an exciting fight! An excellent victory from Atten! Who would have thought the new guy would put up that much of a fight! Well, next up to the ring is Moors versus Dir...!"

"WOOOOO!" Lady Marin barely got to finish before both the crowd and Dirk himself shouted his signature battlecry. He charged up to the side of the ring and began riling up the crowd and taunting his opponent.

“Moors! You go on about justice this and justice that! You talk about your paladin order and your great power! But do you know what that means in the face of this guy? Nothin’ at all! Because I am the great, the powerful, the mighty, the terrifying, the criminal beatin’, and food eatin’ Dirk! And you're gonna eat my dust! WOOWOO!” The crowd was absolutely ecstatic after a taunt like that! This battle was about to be legendary!

The crowd cheered! And they cheered! A minute passed and they cheered! Another passed and their cheers got quieter. Another passed and the arena was silent. “Uhh, I know I’m tough, but I didn’t think I was tough enough to scare off Moors!” Dirk said to himself.

A moment later the butler came out of the doors and said, “According to the rules of the tournament, after this wait Moors is to be declared a no-show! He will be disqualified and Dirk will be declared the winner!” The butler pointed to Dirk who bore a sad expression.

“Oh come on! I wanted an awesome battle of unmatched proportions! Now all I have is unmatched disappointment! Not very WOOWOO of you Moors!” Dirk pouted off stage.

“Next up is Theo versus Saia! Fighters, step into the ring!” The butler moved offstage as the otter and the tiger stepped up to battle.

“Well who would’ve thought we would be fighting. I’ll make sure it doesn’t hurt that bad for you, cinnamon roll.” Saia said as she raised her fists.

“C... cinnamon roll?!? I’m not a cinnamon roll! At least I know how to tell a proper story! As a bartender you think you’d have more than one story, anyway. And maybe one that’s funny at least.” Theo taunted. Oh boy that was a mistake. He looked up at Saia and saw that she had fire in her eyes and her claws looked like swords.

She dashed up to the otter and stood over him, teeth bared. “WHAT DID YOU SAY ABOUT MY STORY? YOU’RE DEAD MEAT!” She put her claws around

his neck with the force of a vice grip.

“EEK! I... uh... can’t you take a joke?” He pleaded. He tried to shrug and look up with an innocent smile. He was hoping her reaction wouldn’t be too bad.

The following series of events would lead to the creation of a brand new sport in the distant future. Saia simply took the otter, curled him up by force, held him like a ball in both claws, leapt up about ten feet into the air, and slammed him into the ground so hard that the residual dust cloud blotted out the view of the arena. This would come to be known as a ‘dunk.’ The moment the otter hit the ground, the crowd let out a collective “Ooo...” Eventually the dust cleared, leaving an angry looking tiger and an otter half buried in the ground like a turnip.

Eventually the help plucked him out of the ground and carried him out to see Karin and Atten. Karin used magic to tend to his... well his everything. “Theo are you alright?” Atten asked. He could practically see the stars flying above his head.

“Atten, is that you?” Theo said as he grabbed onto Dirk’s hoof. “Your paws are so soft...” The dazed Theo tried to smooch Dirk’s hoof, which resulted in a swift flick between the eyes. \*CLONK\* “Zzz...” He was out like a light a second later.

“Yeah, I’m sure he’ll be fine.” Atten said as he turned to watch the next match.

“Next up is Veil versus the Inquisitor! This is sure to be a beautiful bout!” Lady Marin made way for the duelists. Lady Veil walked to the opposite side of the ring nonchalantly and drew her halberd. From the other side of the ring, the Inquisitor simply marched to her place and stood still. She awaited the command to begin the battle.

“Fight!” The moment the announcement was made, Veil sprung into action! She had an uncharacteristic smirk on her snout as she swung her halberd in front of her and began to charge at her unmoving foe.

“I’ll wipe the cocky attitude right off of your face, you royal pain! Eat some of this, why don’t you?” She yelled with the fury of a true warrior. This is where Veil was at home. She reared her halberd over her head and leapt into the air mere feet from the Inquisitor! She then slammed the end of the weapon down on the immobile knight with everything she had!

*\*CLANG\**! Before anyone could even see what had happened, the Inquisitor drew her blade and parried the attack perfectly! She had a firm stance unlike her opponent, and had yet to move from her spot. She took a slow step to the side, and the moment her paw hit the floor she swung her blade in a precise motion around the tip of Veil’s halberd! It seemed like for a split second she was still, and then in the next she sent Veil’s weapon flying!

*\*THUNK\**! The halberd got stuck in the ground a few feet away from both fighters. The Inquisitor held her blade to Veil’s neck, ending the battle before it had even begun. The crowd was stunned. There was barely any applause simply because most of the furs present were too shocked to cheer. “Oh whatever, she only got me with a sucker punch anyway.” Veil returned to her usual mood and pouted as she exited the ring.

“The winner is the Royal Inquisitor with an impressively decisive victory! Next up is Dirk’s first match against Atten. This will decide who will participate in the finals!” Lady Marin waved a talon as Dirk trudged his way over to the opposite side of the ring and drew a killer axe!

“You look like you’ll be fun to fight! But are you BIG enough to handle the Dirk?” Dirk yelled to Atten as he gave his belly a hearty pat! It wobbled from side to side as he swung his fur-sized axe over his shoulder. It was made of shiny steel, and looked like it would hurt. A lot.

“Heh, you know it, Dirk! I don’t plan on losing here!” Atten drew the Gluttonbrand and got into a combative stance.

“Begin!” Dirk kicked up dirt with his hooves and charged tusks first at his opponent. Atten spun his sword and did the same, horns first! The two warriors were in a dead sprint towards the center of the ring, a sprint that ended

in a loud *\*CLONK\**! Horns and tusks collided as the two warriors attempted to wrestle each other to the ground by hand before they used their weapons.

“Hrrrng!” Both fighters grunted loudly as their eyes locked and bellies touched in the middle of their clash. Atten’s paw gripped Dirk’s hooves as they were locked in a competition of pure brute strength. It seemed to be an even match, as both of them teetered back and forth, almost losing balance.

Suddenly, Atten heard a strange noise come from Dirk’s midsection. *\*GUUUUUUURRRGLE\** A rumble travelled up from his dome of a gut up to his snout. He saw the boar’s cheeks puff up and knew what was coming next. *\*BWOOOOOORRRP\**! Dirk unleashed a mighty belch in the middle of their fight right into Atten’s face! Before Atten could react, he locked his tusks onto Atten’s horns and heaved him up into the air!

“WOOOOO!” Dirk shouted his signature shout and slammed Atten right into the dirt! *\*THUD\** A giant dust cloud formed in the arena right on Atten’s crater. Dirk raised his axe over the crater and dropped it right on top of Atten, ready to end the battle! *\*CLANG\**! The dust cleared, revealing a kneeling Atten who just blocked the giant axe swing!

“It’s gonna take more than a belch to take me out, Dirk!” Atten pushed the axe off of him and created some space. Both fighters drew their weapons, and shook the dust off of themselves. It was time for the real battle to begin! Atten ran at Dirk and went for a slice across the chest, but the fat boar hopped out of the way and raised his axe. After the backstep, he slammed his axe to the ground. A shockwave went through the arena, but Atten fearlessly dodged to the side of the wall of steel! It appeared that both warriors were fat, strong, and fast!

Dirk lifted his axe from the dirt and swung it in a circle around him as a last ditch effort! The whirling steel would have spelled the end for Atten if not for his quick wits and quicker reflexes! The wolf saw the axe coming at him and slid to the ground! As he slid, the axe flew right over his snout. The boar looked down and his eyes widened. He was wide open!

“Blaze!” Atten leapt up from the ground sword first and slashed Dirk with a fiery uppercut! He rose like a dolphin leaping on the surface of the waves, and cut straight up Dirk’s belly! After the slash came a plume of flames that sent the boar flying! \*THUD\*! Dirt and rubble flew as Dirk made a crater of his own. Atten hobbled over to seize his victory, but saw the shadow of a fat boar rising up! The boar reached out towards him, about to attack when... \*THUD\*! He fell once again to the floor, this time he was out cold!

“The winner is Atten! Congratulations!” The audience cheered for the new blood from a fishing village, for Atten! This victory felt amazing, but Atten only had one thing on his mind, the Inquisitor. He hobbled out of the arena but tripped on his own paws halfway there! He was still a bit dazed from being slammed into the ground. Eventually Atten felt some help lift him up and take him into a private room, where he eventually drifted off to sleep.

When Atten woke up, he felt like a new wolf! He stretched his paws and looked around him. He was in a bed next to a sleeping Dirk and Theo. “What? How long did I sleep? Oh no, have I missed the match?!?” Atten panicked. He was about to run out of the door when Karin walked in.

“Woah, woah! Calm down, weirdo! Are you alright?” She asked.

“I’ve been sleeping when I have a fight to get to! I might have missed it! I felt like I slept for hours!” Atten yelled.

“Teehee! That’s my magic for you! You’ve been asleep for about ten minutes. Your body is fully restored, too!” Karin said with a giggle.

“Oh, well that’s a relief. So how did Saia do in her match?” Atten asked the bird.

She winced and looked down. “It didn’t go so well for her. She put up a good fight, but... oh don’t worry about all of that stuff! I just came to tell you that your next match is about to start. So shoo! I have fighters to heal!” Karin patted Atten on the back with a talon and shoved him out of the room.

Atten sighed and headed towards the arena, but he was trapped in his own head. “Can I really face someone this strong? And more importantly what if her true identity is...”

“If it truly is her, then you’re going to fight for her, right Atten? That’s the kind of fur I assumed you were.” Vandrea spawned on his head and looked him in the eyes.

“You’re right. Let’s do this! I’m going to beat the Inquisitor!” Atten said as he got ready to rumble!

The arena was more excited than ever for the final round. The audience couldn’t contain their cheers when Lady Marin was lifted into the arena. “Good people of this province! I am excited to announce that the final battle of the games will now commence! On the north side of the arena, behold your fiery combatant, Atten!” Atten emerged from the doorway, but had no flashy tricks for the audience this time. He had only his opponent in mind.

“And from the south, behold the Royal Inquisitor herself!” The armored warrior stepped into the arena with her rapier in paw. No words were spoken between the two. No taunts. Nothing. They simply locked eyes and prepared for battle.

“Let the final battle begin!” Lady Marin was escorted out as the two fighters simply stood still. Neither were ready to make a bold move. Instead of a glorious charge, Atten simply walked towards his foe, sword in hand.

“Who... are you? Are you who I think you are? Please answer me!” Atten asked with a soft expression on his face. The Inquisitor simply looked on, completely still and completely silent.

Atten gripped his sword even harder and his face went from soft to angry. “Fine then! If you won’t move... then I’ll just make you move! Vandrea! Give me everything!” Atten let out a battle cry as he threw his sword into the ground a foot in front of the Inquisitor. That seemed to get her attention, as she put her paw on her blade.

“Too late! BLAZE!” Atten raised his paws to the sky, and the sword began to glow! The Inquisitor’s eyes widened as she realized what was about to happen. All she could do was take a single step back before...

*\*FWOOOOOOOSH\*!*

The whole arena had to shield their eyes from the massive explosion! The ball of fire was the size of half the arena, and shook the whole building! The force of the blast sent dust and debris flying. When the dust began to settle, Atten waded through rubble and debris to pull his sword from the earth. “How’d you like that?” He said as he dusted off the blade and Vandrea.

*\*RUMBLE\** The debris began to shift as the Inquisitor rose from the crater of the explosion. Her armor was dented from the impact and her tabard was on fire. With the snap of her paws a chill flowed through the air and the flames were extinguished. “If you wish to use these powers that do not belong to you, then so be it. I will educate you, through and through!” The Inquisitor spoke her first words in an authoritative feminine voice. Her voice echoed through her helmet, but even Atten could not be mistaken anymore.

“You really are... but how? Why? And when...” Atten had a million questions on his mind but could not get a single one out before the Inquisitor rushed him. She dashed towards him, blade in paw. She held her rapier out straight and went for a stab in his large midsection, which Atten barely parried.

The battle shifted to a close range sword fight, as both combatants began to clash steel with steel! Atten went for a slice that the Inquisitor caught with the tip of her rapier. She spun her weapon around, sending the Gluttonbrand upwards. Atten was exposed, but not defeated as he leapt backwards just out of range of the Inquisitor’s wide arcing slash.

*\*CLANG\** Both sword fighters met in the center of the ring with a mighty swing that sent sparks flying as the blades collided! The two fighters seemed quite evenly matched, right up until the Inquisitor slid right out of their collision of swords and went for a sweeping attack right on Atten’s legs! His weight was his downfall, as he was sent headfirst into the ground by the swipe.



“I have years of combat experience over you. Surrender.” She said with a calm voice as she was about to hold her rapier over Atten’s neck, but the wolf had a trick up his sleeve! He quickly drew the Gluttonbrand from under him and swept her legs as well! *\*THUD\**! The Inquisitor hit the ground as well, and looked Atten in the face.

Both fighters hopped backwards and rose from the floor. They dusted themselves off and drew their weapons. The Inquisitor snapped once again, and Atten felt a cold feeling hit his paws. He looked down and saw that the floor below him was freezing! An icy terrain replaced the dirt, and the Inquisitor began to run at Atten. “This is the power of the royal family!” She then began to slide on the ice instead of running, and she was heading straight towards Atten!

Atten tried to move, but felt himself slipping. If he tried to reposition, he would slip. He looked up to see the large warrior sliding at him, blade first! *\*CLANG\**! Atten blocked the blow, but his unsure footing sent him flying! *\*THUD\** *\*CRACK\**! Atten hit the floor and cracked the ice below him. He saw the Inquisitor make a wide turn and begin to slide towards him for the finishing blow!

The Inquisitor was confident that this attack would decide the battle, but saw the wolf had a smirk on his face. He then revealed that he was holding something in his paws. It was red, scaly, and fat. She didn’t even have time to figure out what it was before Atten over handed the object at her and shouted, “Fastball Special!”

He flung the object right at her! She was about to dodge it, but it began to glow. It was then set ablaze by magic and began flying towards her! She tried to slide around it, but the object grew wings and a tiny fist and began flying towards her! That was no object! It was some sort of creature!

*\*BOOM\**! Vandrea’s fiery punch sent the armored foe flying back onto her own ice. *\*SPLASH\**! The ice melted as she hit the floor, creating a puddle of water below both fighters. They stood up, but the Inquisitor clearly was not happy. She shook the water off of her and held her rapier tight.

“I am the Royal Inquisitor! I am a Raegis! I will not suffer such an inglorious defeat by the likes of you, a fishing boy, Atten!” The Inquisitor lost her cool as she yelled from the other side of the arena. The pitter patter of steps in the water as she ran at him. Atten furrowed his brow and charged as well! Both of them met in the middle of the puddle and slashed with all of their might!

“I know it’s you, but know this... I haven’t forgotten you, and I won’t forget! I won’t lose here, Civia!” Both fighters struck true with their swords. Atten had a large cut across his belly, but he held his wound and looked up. He hit her right where he had planned. *\*SPLASH\**! Her sliced helmet landed in the puddle below. A long braid on hair fell from the back of her head as her face was exposed to the world.

She was a beautiful lioness with a long braid of golden hair that went down her entire back. Her sky blue eyes looked down into her reflection in the water. It was rippling, yet clear. The young lioness who found Atten as a cub looked back at her. The same fur who loved to play hide and seek, listen to stories, and pull pranks on the village grown-ups stood before Atten, only now she was the Royal Inquisitor.

“Civia... what happened? What happened to the happy go lucky Civia that listened to Berwin’s stories? Why did you leave us? Leave me?” Atten dropped his weapon as his rage seemed to leave him. He only felt the hole in his heart grow larger.

“The... the battlefield is no place for words...” She said calmly as she regained her composure.

“Shut up! What happened to the promise we made! We said we would never forget! But you just left one day without a word! Some days I thought we might never meet again! But you were fine! You could have come back! You could have stopped by or even wrote! But no! What ever happened to duty to your friends?!?” Atten has tears welling in his eyes as he poured his heart out to Civia.

She quivered as she stared at her reflection. She then turned around and yelled, “My duty... is to the Kingdom of Raegis! To the Alexandrian Empire! To the crown and all her people! Not to you! My name... is Regina Von Raegis! And I will show you exactly what that means!”

Civia held her diamond encrusted rapier skyward, and snowflakes began to flutter around her. The air seemed to stand still as her blade began to glow a radiant light blue. A pillar of glowing blue ice shot up from the top of her rapier and whirred with chilling energy. It was the size of three of her, and she planned to slam it down right on top of Atten.

Atten looked up at the incoming blow with a straight face. He closed his eyes and let the world around him fade away. His mind wandered back in time, back when both he and Civia were cubs.

He remembered waking up, all alone in the salty ocean waters. A child with no home, no family, and no memories. He remembered being found by the lone girl playing on the beach. He remembered being introduced to the villagers and to Berwin. He remembered being scared and wanting to leave. But most of all he remembered what Civia told him before he tried to sneak out of town, “Berwin, the villagers, and everyone loved you. That’s why we want you to stay with us! You mean so much to Hakuna Village... and to me.”

He reopened his eyes and saw the glowing blue ice sword falling over him. He raised Gluttonbrand skyward, and let the fire rise up from inside him. His blade burst into flame, and a long broadsword of fire rose from it. He swung it forward, and the blade of flame fell towards Civia’s blade of ice. *\*BOOOOOOM\**! The impact of the two magical blades sent sparks and steam flying in all directions!

As energy collided and magic flew, the entire arena was shaking with the fury of the magical attack. The crowd had to look away from the bright collision as steam and energy went in all different directions. The fiery orange blade and glowing blue ice blade met in a burst of magic that was rocking the very earth itself! Both fighters struggled to keep their footing as they pushed harder against their opponent. The blades teetered in both directions, almost falling

upon one of the fighters. Both planted their paws, grunted, and pushed towards their foe with all of their might!

The last thing the crowd heard was both of them let out a mighty battlecry of, "YAAAAAHHH!" A bright light overtook the stadium, and then came the deafening *\*BOOOOOOOOOOM\**! A massive explosion shook the arena. Once the light faded and the dust settled, the crowd saw one thing that left everyone speechless. A shadow still stood, while another did not. The standing shadow held their rapier to the other one's neck and claimed their victory. Atten woke up moments later to see Civia standing over him. He had lost. Their fight was over. Upon this realization, he lowered his head and fell back asleep.