

CHAPTER 2 — THE CONCLAVE

Kings and Queens

The Conclave had not been summoned in an age. Not since the Founding had all the rulers of the Domains gathered under one roof. Yet now, with the world burning and the Siege devouring everything in its path, the call had gone out — and the rulers answered.

They came not out of trust. Not out of unity. But out of necessity.

The world was dying, and Prince Arick's voice had become the single thread holding hope together.

The Arrival of the Rulers

The great marble hall of the Conclave was a monument to ages long past — towering pillars carved with the sigils of the original Thirty-Three, a vaulted ceiling etched with constellations that no longer shone as brightly as they once had. Six thrones sat empty, a silent tribute to the fallen Domains.

The first to enter was **King Benymon of Dawnspear**, his indigo cloak trailing behind him like falling night. His Sentinel stood at his back, ley-steel runes glowing faintly across its armor.

Benymon paused at the empty thrones, grief flickering across his face, before taking his seat.

From Arcane Academia, the **Arch-Magister** descended on a floating disc of light, robes drifting like smoke. His crystalline Sentinel hummed with arcane resonance, scattering fractured reflections across the marble floor.

Queen Elara of the Verdant Enclave arrived next, serene as a forest dawn. Her Sentinel's armor sprouted living vines that curled and blossomed with each step.

King Roderick of the Iron Citadel entered like a storm of metal, boots striking the marble with the certainty of a man who had seen too many battles. His Sentinel — a walking fortress — took position behind him with a thundering step.

From the lower tier, the **Regent of the Shadowed Veil** emerged in muted mist, his Sentinel moving like a shadow given form.

They came in waves — frost-cloaked monarchs from the North, storm-touched rulers from the East, sun-scarred sovereigns from the South, and forest-crowned leaders from the West. Each brought their own pageantry. Each carried the weight of a dying Domain.

But even their grandeur dimmed when they passed the six empty thrones.

Some bowed their heads. Some looked away. Some stared too long.

The Warren Arrives

Then the torches dimmed.

Not from magic. From reverence.

A hush fell over the hall as **King Farab** of entered — known to all simply as **The Warren**. He did not arrive with trumpets or banners. He did not need them.

Clad in the resplendent **Pearl Elemental Armor**, its surface shimmering like moonlit water, he walked in silence. He was a king. He was a Sentinel. He was the only royal ever to ascend to true Sentinelhood.

Even the other Sentinels bowed their heads.

Farab paused at the six empty thrones. He bowed — deeply, solemnly — honoring the fallen.

Only then did he take his place among the rulers.



The Dissenter

Moments after Farab sat, **King Nbu** rose.

A venerable ruler, wise and unflinching, Nbu’s voice carried the weight of a man who had seen kingdoms rise and fall — and knew how easily they could be erased.

“Uniting,” he began, “even in these desperate times, is not impossible. But let us not pretend what this demands of us.”

He swept his gaze across the circle of rulers.

“It demands we pledge our banners. Our armies. Our sovereignty. Our bloodlines.”

A murmur rippled through the hall.

Nbu’s voice hardened.

“A Regent,” he said, “chosen by us... yet not of our blood.”

King Edrich murmured, “Would you rather we continue to feed ourselves to the slaughter?”

“NO!” Nbu roared — the sound cracking like a whip.

Silence fell.

Then, quieter — far more dangerous:

“I simply wonder... what happens when this High Order’s Regent turns his focus inward?”

He let the question hang.

“He could enslave us all.”

A chill swept the chamber.

Nbu pointed to the six empty thrones.

“Look at them. Six kingdoms erased. Six bloodlines extinguished. Six Sentinels fallen. And that was the Siege.”

He turned back to the rulers.

“Imagine what a Regent — with all our armies, all our resources, all our authority — could do if he decided *we* were the threat.”

No one breathed.

“If the Regent breaks the assurances we grant him... if he decides dissent is treason... if he believes only his rule can save the world...”

His voice dropped to a whisper that carried like thunder.

“Then he will destroy every bloodline in this room to secure his throne.”

A ripple of horror moved through the Conclave.

“What if the King Regent meant to save us becomes a greater threat than the Siege?”

The hall froze.

The Warren Responds

King Farab rose.

He did not raise his voice. He didn't need to.

“King Nbu speaks truth,” Farab said, his tone steady as stone. “Power without restraint is a danger to all realms — even in the hands of the noble.”

Every ruler listened. Every Sentinel listened.

“No king, no queen, no Sentinel — no matter how pure of heart — should stand alone in absolute authority.”

He paused.

“A council must be formed. Royals. Scholars. Clergy. Strategists. Advisors. A body that stands beside the Regent — not beneath him. A safeguard. A balance.”

Murmurs rippled through the chamber.

“And a charter must be written. Clear limits. Clear responsibilities. Transparent decisions. A voice for every Domain. A shield against tyranny — even unintentional.”

Fear gave way to possibility. Division gave way to unity. Hope flickered.

Farab's final words sealed the moment:

“I pledge myself to this council. And under my watch, the Regent will never stand alone — nor fall into darkness.”

The rulers bowed their heads.

The Warren had spoken. And the Conclave agreed.



The Choice

“Thank you, Master Sentinel,” King Edrich said. Some noticed he did not call Farab by his Dominion title — or by the name *The Warren*.

“Your name shall forever be etched in the annals of history as the sovereign who safeguarded the rights and liberties of the people.”

Then came the question that froze the room:

“Does your offer as Council mean you yourself would not bear the Regency?”

A palpable tension filled the air.

If not Farab... then who?

Whispers rose.

“Perhaps Prince Arick,” someone murmured.

“He is too young,” others grumbled.

But Arick's heroics were undeniable. His rise to the throne had not been ambition — it had been necessity. His reign, though short, had been honorable. His reputation was untarnished by old grudges.

King Farab looked into the eyes of his dear friend.

"I would follow you," he said quietly.

The room heard it.

Queen Elara stood and raised her cup. "I nominate Prince Arick, Dominion Guardian, King Regent of all Domains."

"Here, here!" King Roderick shouted, rising abruptly.

Within seconds, the entire hall stood in agreement.

Arick rose, stunned.

"I am no more than any of you," he said. "I will fight with all my heart, but I cannot lead as Regent."

"You must," Farab said.

Arick looked around the room — at his father, at Farab, at the rulers who believed in him.

He nodded, as if in agony.

The hall erupted in cheers.

And so it was decided.

Prince Arick — young, unproven, forged in battle — became **King Regent of the Domains**.

A symbol of unity. A beacon of hope. A burden he would carry alone.