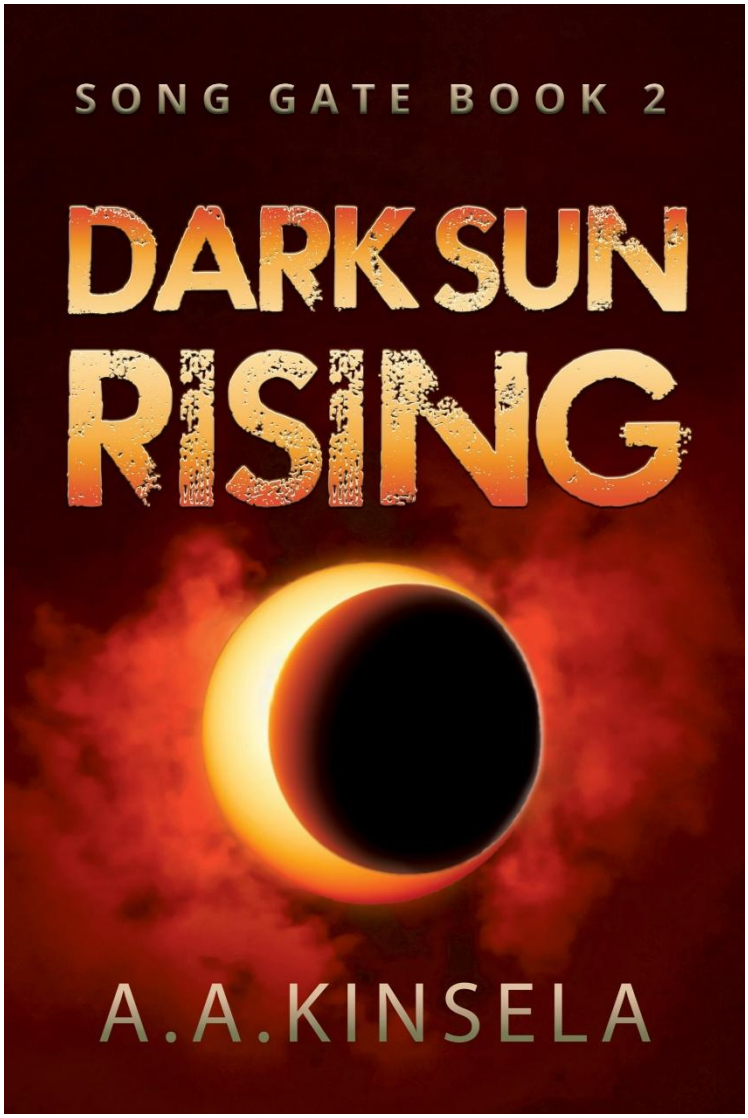
Dark Sun Rising (Song Gate, #2)

A. A. Kinsela



DARK SUN RISING by A. A. Kinsela is a print-on-demand title supplied through Amazon or IngramSpark. All wholesale orders are eligible for a 40% discount. Book stock is either printed as required from your closest Amazon or IngramSpark supplier and delivered to your address from that location or posted directly from Plainspeak Publishing (only within Australia). If your shop is within the Melbourne Metro or outer eastern regions, stock can be delivered in person. Any additional merchandise (e.g. bookmarks, bookplates, stickers, etc.) is posted separately.

DARK SUN RISING was a finalist in the 2025 Aurealis Awards – Best Young Adult Novel category.

Blurb

An ancient army resurrected.
A kingdom on the brink of collapse.
A rebellion thirteen years in the making.
...and an heir who refuses to follow the rules

All Nick wants is a normal teenage life, hidden from his war-torn homeland, Korelios. But when the rebellion he abandoned tracks him down, he is dragged back into the war he tried to forget.

The only hope for Korelios is for Nick to reclaim his throne, but to do that he must form a dangerous allegiance with the Penumbra Guard, a clandestine army led by a man his friends have sworn to kill.

As alliances blur and betrayals cut deep, Nick must confront the brutal legacy of his own bloodline and decide what he's willing to sacrifice for the crown he never wanted.

Because in this war, the price of victory may be his humanity.

Review quotes

“Kinsela has delivered something truly special with *Dark Sun Rising*; a story that doesn’t just unfold, it burns its way into you...The world feels alive with shadow, heat, and ancient power.”

“Every scene pulls you deeper into a realm where magic is dangerous, love is complicated, and survival is never guaranteed.”

“What truly sets *Dark Sun Rising* apart is its emotional depth. It’s a story about longing, identity, power, and the price of loving fiercely. The darker elements aren’t there for shock value; they’re woven into the story with intention and meaning, giving the book a rich, aching resonance that lingers long after the final page.”

“If you love fantasy with soul, romance with teeth, and stories that dare to go a little deeper into the dark then this is a must-read. This is a bold, beautiful book from an author who knows exactly how to break your heart in the best way...and then put it back together changed.”

“Kinsela's writing style is so easy to binge-read. Her characters are so relatable, human, and flawed at times, yet Kinsela also nails your typical archetypes. Nick is supremely lovable like he was in the first book, and the Aussie setting and elements were delightful and not something you typically find in fantasy.”

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Content warning:

Dark Sun Rising contains content that may not be suitable for all readers.

Although this is a work of fiction, I have drawn inspiration from ancient Mediterranean societies, many of which had views and practices we now consider outdated at best and inhumane at worst.

Within the pages of this book are depictions of PTSD, slavery, violence, torture, racism, and non-explicit consensual sex.

Please tread lightly if any of these distress you.

Sample internal pages

Dark Sun Rising

Song Gate: Book Two

A. A. Kinsela

Plainspeak Publishing

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, businesses, places, events, locales, and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

The author acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which this book was written and published, the Wurundjeri, and pays respect to their people, culture, and Elders past, present and future.

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For Elliott, the littlest,
who missed out on the last one.

A note from the author

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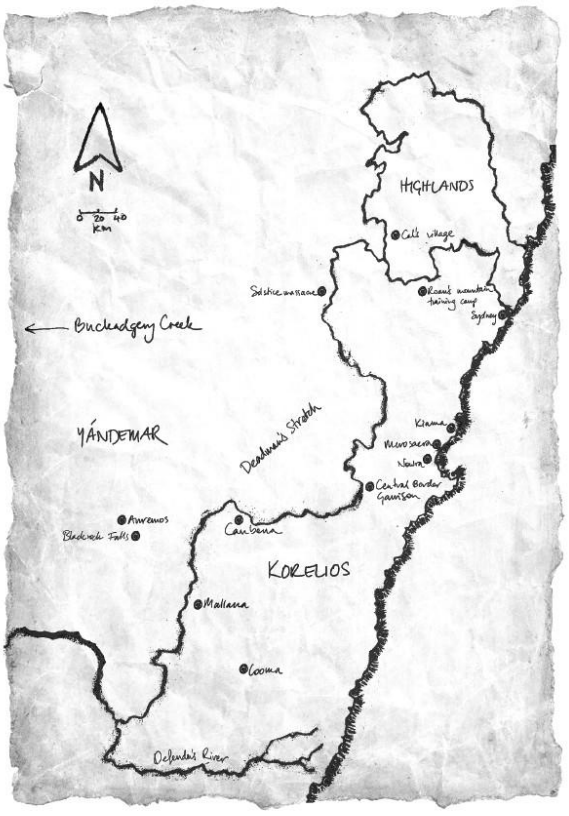
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Prologue

Extracts from *The Monarchy of Korelios*, written and compiled by Valerius, Korelian Prefect and Consul, and Head of the Auremos Council.

...Once defended by the legendary Penumbra Guard, which was disbanded following the second slave rebellion three hundred years ago, Korelian monarchs are now protected by the Penumbra Guard's more ruthless successors, the Arai...

...The introduction of the Arai Oath significantly altered the rule of law. The Oath bound the Arai to serve and protect the monarch, thus transferring absolute control of the military to the monarchy. Some rulers have attempted to restore the senate to its former state of power. The most recent example was Alastor, who was in the process of assigning an unprecedented level of legislative and judicial authority to the senate when he was assassinated. His successor, Thanos, demolished his father's advancements by dissolving the senate, thereby terminating public recourse for justice and removing oversight and accountability of the monarchy. Operating outside the law, the Arai have grown in strength and numbers. The Oath binds them to the king like never before, and he has wielded this power liberally to spread fear and enforce compliance...

...Throughout the ages, separatists have repeatedly advocated for the decentralisation of the monarchy. Under Thanos's rule, the republican movement has seen a dramatic increase in support, despite threat of execution for any mention of a republic...

CHAPTER 1

Vicious deforestation

Artemis ran hard, breath puffing white in front of her face. Her lungs ached from gulping so much freezing air. Her cheeks stung too, but the chase had heated her up, and she considered dumping her jacket. She could always come back for it later.

Icy earth crunched under her boots as she followed the dirt track towards the ridge. She vaulted a fence and dropped into a crouch behind a burned-out tree stump to wait. Towering blackbarks and silvertops grew close together on these hills. The trees and hills had different names on this side of the song gates. Everything was different here.

Further down the slope, Tilda and Maddy's large timber house rose out of the predawn fog, the light from its windows glowing through the gloom. A heap of unsplit logs tumbled across the yard. Beyond that, tucked behind a clutch of wattle trees, was the little cottage where Artemis had been living with Nick and Cal for the past six weeks – ever since Tilda and Maddy had found them on the side of the road after they'd barely escaped King Thanos and the Arai with their lives.

Someone approached. Artemis silenced her breaths, listened for the creak of the fence as it was vaulted. Then she sprang. After a few simple grappling moves, she had her weight pressing down on all the right places and a knife resting against a jaw.

Nick groaned in frustration.

'You're still too loud,' she said.

'As if! I could barely hear my own footsteps. Anyway, you said you wouldn't stop until we reached the ridge.'

'We're at the ridge.'

'No, the highest part is another—' He twisted his head around to check the distance. '—twenty metres at least.'

She shrugged. 'Close enough.'