

Simeon the Red

Simeon's tomb is near Athten Var on [Judecca](#). Known to the Irchtani as *Unaan Kril*, the "Red Worm."

Empire of Silence

Chapter 29: Less Wings to Fly

"Have you ever heard of Simeon the Red?" She shook her head. I forced myself not to blurt a panicked "What!" at her and said instead, "He was my greatest hero. Simeon was a scholiast. No court vizier, but a ship's science officer and part of the Expeditionary Corps. This was . . . oh, thousands of years ago, back when the Empire was young. His was one of the first ships into Centaurus, surveying worlds for future colonies. Mostly they found freeholders, barbarian men who preferred the frontier to civilization, like the Normans today. These they let be or traded with or conquered in the name of the Emperor, striking ever outward into the Dark. There they found a strange new world, a freezing, craggy place ruled by giant birds and by a race of flying xenobites."

"What were they like?" Cat asked. "The xenos?"

"Like birds themselves. A little smaller than us but with great wings for arms and short beaks."

"And talons?" She leaned her weight against me.

"Oh yes," I said, gesturing. "And claws at the end of their wings that they used to wield cutlasses tall as I am!" I raised a hand to indicate how tall those weapons were. "So Tor Simeon led missions to the surface, trading with the natives. The Irchtani, they called themselves. He learned to speak with them and to understand the sign language they used, and all was well between our people and theirs."

"But they had sailed too far for the crew. The men were sick at their guns and for want of home and human women. And while Simeon was on the ground with his guard and his science team, the crew mutinied, killed Simeon's captain and the other officers, and were going to take their ship out to the freeholds and live like pirates. But they made a mistake."

"They forgot Simeon?"

"Oh no, they didn't forget him. They wanted him. Simeon could speak to the Irchtani, see? He could persuade their chieftains to sell their enemies to the mutineers as slaves. No one in the galaxy but them had seen an Irchtani before. Imagine the price one of them would fetch! For research at an athenaeum, or in Colosso, or sold to some old-blooded lord. They meant to be rich, you see, and they thought Simeon would help them. No, the mistake they made was thinking Simeon could be bought. He couldn't. Simeon was a scholiast and renounced wealth when he donned the green robes of his order. Worse, Simeon had befriended the Irchtani princes and banded with them to fight the mutineers when they came in their shuttles to find him. Simeon had never been a soldier, but he led the xenobites against the human traitors all the same and helped organize their retreat to the temple at Athten Var, the holiest of holies to the Irchtani people."

"What was it like?"

I waved a hand. "They said their gods built it all of black stone on the highest mountain on the world and that it could be defended. That was where they made their stand. Simeon and the Irchtani were victorious, the mutineers were thrown off the mountaintop, and Simeon retook his ship. And as a gift the Irchtani gave to Simeon a great cloak such as their princes wore. 'It is like your robe!' the Prince of the Birds said, but it wasn't. The Irchtani do not see color like men do, and the cloak they had made was red, not green. And thereafter Simeon was called 'The Red' for the cloak of the Irchtani, and he called the planet Judecca for the treason that was suffered there. The Empire named him captain and furnished him with a new crew, and they traveled farther into the Arm of Centaurus and brought to many other worlds the light of the Imperial Sun."

"And what happened to the xenos?" Cat asked. "When the Empire arrived? Are they gone now?"

“They’re still there,” I said. “I forget which house rules Judecca now. Calbren, maybe? Or Brannigan? There are actually Irchtani auxilia in the Imperial Legions, fighting the Cielcin. I once heard talk that the Emperor was considering citizenship for those who served the standard twenty-year period.”

“Really?”

“Really!” I said, squeezing her with one arm.

Demon in White

Chapter 10: Pinion and Claw

The Irchtani. When I was a boy on Delos, my mother would tell me stories. Stories of the Cid Arthur, of Prince Cyrus the Fool. Stories of Kharn Sagara, of Sir Antony Damrosch and Kasia Soulier. But it was the stories of Tor Simeon the Red I liked best. How after centuries of sailing his ship had discovered the planet Judecca and its native Irchtani—a species of flying xenobite nearly so intelligent as man—but the crew had revolted, killing their captain and leaving Simeon for dead. They planned to capture the Irchtani and to sell them into slavery, for such noble savages were always curiosities at the courts of a certain kind of nobleman. Thus they would end their miserable journeys rich and comfortable and might retire to the frontier. But Simeon had survived, and with the help of the Irchtani natives he defeated his former crewmates, avenged his fellow officers, and saw to it that the Irchtani were protected when Imperial settlement came at last to Judecca. He was buried in their holiest shrine, the black temple of Athten Var, a temple that was old when the Irchtani were still dumb animals. A temple that had been built—like Calagah on Emesh and the Marching Towers on Sadal Suud—by the Quiet, if built was the right word. They’d called him *Unaan Kril*, the Red Worm, for their alien eyes perceived the green of his scholiast’s vestments as red, and because we humans do not fly.

Spoilers ahead, proceed with caution

Text Occurrences:

[Empire of Silence](#)

Mentioned

Chapters 1, 2, 9, 19, 26, 28, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 41, 51, 67

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

[Howling Dark](#)

Mentioned

Chapters 26, 34, 46, 58, 63

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

[Demon in White](#)

Mentioned

Chapters 10, 14, 30, 56, 68, 76

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

[Kingdoms of Death](#)

Mentioned

N/A

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

[Ashes of Man](#)

Mentioned

N/A

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

Disquiet Gods

Mentioned

N/A

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

Shadows Upon Time

Mentioned

N/A

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

Novellas

Mentioned

The Lesser Devil - N/A

Queen Amid Ashes - N/A

The Dregs of Empire - N/A

Present

The Lesser Devil - N/A

Queen Amid Ashes - N/A

The Dregs of Empire - N/A

Spoilers

The Lesser Devil - N/A

Queen Amid Ashes - N/A

The Dregs of Empire - N/A

Tales of the Sun Eater & Other Stories

Mentioned

N/A

Present

N/A

Spoilers

N/A

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