

# Prehistoria Bellum

## Prologue

Albert's heart pounded as he ran across the open square, his battle rifle in his three-fingered hands and his tail swishing behind his form. He could hear the bullets zip past them as the entrenched enemy fired at him with all they had. But they only narrowly missed and the young saurian trudged on, charging the dug-in hostile troops full-on.

Finally, there was a loud crack and Albert slumped to his knees, dropping his rifle on the ground. Looking down, he could see blood trickling down his torso, emanating from a puncture on his shirt. He looked around, seeing the lifeless bodies of individuals that had lay there for days, rotting away as the flies feast on their flesh, caring less of the conflict going on around him.

Everywhere he glanced, he could see death and destruction, the ruins of what was once a prosperous city, full of hope, of dreams, of happiness. But now it was being fought over, being destroyed one block at a time as the opposing forces fought to the bitter death on streets that at one point teetered with chattering people going about their daily business. His vision was getting blurry as he fought to stay alive, long enough for his comrades to try to get him to safety where medics could look after him.

He held a hand over the wound, trying to press against it to prevent more blood from flowing out, with minimal success. As he did this, the reptilian tried getting back up onto his feet, to try to make it back to friendly lines. But he collapsed onto his back just as his comrades rushed past him, opening fire on the enemy while some of them fell as well after they too were shot. He looked for his rifle, which lay next to his feet and reached for it but was unable to. His strength was fading fast and there was little he could do about it but pray a medic would come along to help.

As he lay on the ground, he could hear the firefight, the gunfire, the explosions of grenades, the screams of the fighting, the wounded, the dying. More of his fellow soldiers rushed past him to reinforce those who had already made it to the opposing position. They began finishing the job, flushing the enemy out and forced those left standing to fall back and regroup. They had succeeded this day but Albert would not know it then, for he had passed out from the blood loss.

## Chapter 1: The Deep Breath Before The Plunge

It had begun in the spring of 1938, a war of terrible size and proportion that threatened to tear apart two giant ancient nations and destroy thousands of years of culture, advancement, and prosperity. It seemed like any other spring, the birds, pterosaurs, and wyverns were singing and squawking in the air, the weather nice, sunny, and hot, the fields green, and the forests teetering with life. Young couples relaxed under the shades of the trees, frolicked in the fields, and laughed in the interiors of cafes and restaurants. It was a peaceful life for the people of both nations and was just like any other year in the lands.

But in the political arena, things were anything but peaceful as the governments of the two nations were at odds with each other. Tensions had grown between the Federal Paleos Union and the Most Serene Kingdom of Gocha over the past few years due to territorial and political disputes which were reaching a fever point combined with an arms race that had been growing in intensity over the past two decades. The anti-monarchist Paleans viewed Gocha as a backwards state of firebreathing fools who are stuck in the 13th century while the Gochans considered the FPU to be a collection of soulless drakestepping ultraprogressives with an unhealthy obsession with war and violence. The Paleans and Gochans also had a border dispute, for a section of the land that separated the two great powers located toward the north of the great continent of Jurassia contained precious resources that would help fuel their respective economies, particularly coal, petroleum, and silver. Both claimed the area, dubbed Dracorexix, as part of their respective nations and it had at one point been part of both Gocha and the predecessor states of the Union. As such, the local culture was a bizarre mix of both nations' and Gochans and Paleans were its inhabitants, which resulted in a lot of violence between the two groups over the years.

The two nations could not be any more different, Gocha was an ancient kingdom of tall, powerfully-built dragons who valued knowledge, magic, and their old ways. An executive constitutional monarchy, its King, Eochaid III, still wielded a significant amount of power even as he was limited by the Constitution. The Prime Minister, currently Cadryn Dùghallach, was de facto head of government and was the main executive who handled domestic and foreign matters. He was in turn limited in scope of his political power by the Royal Gochan Parliament, who drafted bills for the Prime Minister and the King to either veto or ratify. The members of Parliament were elected while the Prime Minister was personally appointed by the King or Queen, usually from the political party who had the most seats in Parliament. The Federal Paleos Union, on the other hand, was a dictatorship with a military junta that had been in power for the past forty-five years running the government, its population being multispecies

and entirely composed of what the other races of the world dubbed the 'Saurians'. The Unionist government was a federated state, divided up into eighty-three counties governed by military officers who hail from his particular county which he has direct control over and they, in turn, subordinate themselves to the Council of Palean Prosperity and Cultural Supremacy, the name of the nation's junta. Its current leader, Generalissimo Richard Tudor, was an aggressive-minded, religious fervent liberal who valued the civil and economic rights of the citizenry who particularly hated dragons partially due to the suffering dragons have inflicted on the Paleans in the past and partially due to personal grievances dragons had wreaked on his family.

The Most Serene Kingdom dated back thousands of years, with the details of its original founding shrouded in myth and legend and had seen its fair share of civil strife with the various noble houses fighting for control of the Royal throne which resulted in over a dozen different royal dynasties ruling over Gocha. Things have largely calmed, especially since the Constitutional Reformation of 1562, though that resulted in a brief civil war between the reformists and the aristocrats who didn't want their power to be stripped away. The Federal Paleos Union was a more recent creation as it was founded in 1893 after a bloody military coup overthrew the corrupt Federal Republic of Paleos which had been in power since the Revolution of 1821, where Republican revolutionaries overthrew the decadent King Charles IV and ended the thousand-year monarchy. The already uneasy relations between the two countries became more heated since the rise of the military junta due to the Union's fervent anti-monarchism and the Kingdom's disapproval of the junta and its rampant militarism. This resulted in the arms race ensuing between the two nations which grew in size and scope as time went on until, by the late 1930s, the Gochan and Palean militaries were the most powerful on the planet and the disputed region became a powder keg with even a single spark having the potential to ignite it.

## **Chapter 2: Taking the Plunge**

That spark occurred on the evening of April 20, in the village of Sudbrook, located twenty miles south of the Gochan border. The sleepy farming town of 320 inhabitants was getting ready for bed after a long day's work of tending the fields, taking care of the draft and meat animals, when an explosion suddenly rocked the ground. A large truck that had been sitting idle in the town square since the sun started to set suddenly exploded, destroying the relatively large stone temple that towered over the village and killing fifteen people with thirty more being injured. The explosion sent pandemonium amidst the village as folks came out of their houses to investigate the site of the detonation which was marked by the charred skeleton of the truck in front of the rubble that was once the temple with a few adjacent houses either damaged or

completely destroyed. As the villagers observed the site of the explosion, gunfire started ringing out as a group of Saurian-like figures started appearing out of the shadows, dressed in long coats with cloth and linen wrappings around their snouts, firing their weapons at the crowd of civilians. Many were cut down as they tried to run from the gunsaur who rampaged through the village, attacking the local constable station and the town hall before they escaped the village and fled into the farmlands.

It didn't take long for news of the attack to escape Sudbrook and, by the time most folks throughout the Kingdom were getting up for breakfast the next morning, the incident had become national news. Outrage quickly spread throughout the Kingdom as Gochans protested in the streets and town squares of the cities and villages of the nation as they originally believed the perpetrators were agents of the Palean government. In truth, the perpetrators was an underground Dracorexian terrorist group who wished to form their own nation, funded in part by the Palean government in order to sow disorder in Gocha. Instead, the attack united the country as Gochan citizens sent letters and gifts of condolences to the families of those who were killed in the Sudbrook incident and gathered in front of local government structures, demanding the King, Prime Minister, and Parliament take action in retaliating against the Paleos Union for their alleged role in the attack.

Indeed, the government was in the midst of a mass debate on what should they do in response; a session in Parliament was held in the late morning on the day after the attack to discuss what course of action the Royal Gochan government should take. For weeks, the Parliament held daily debates, only taking breaks on Saturdays to rest; on one side, extremists on both sides of the political aisle (nationalists on the right, hardline socialists on the left) were demanding that the Kingdom attack the Paleos Union whereas the dominant parties, the Whig and the Liberal Parties, were more reluctant as they feared mass destruction and loss of life in a war against the Paleans. The monarch and the elected leader were similarly divided: King Eochaid, over two hundred years of age, was a cautious, thinking drake who feared the possibility of war with the Paleans. Prime Minister Dùghallach, on the other hand, was a firebrand hailing from a radical wing of the Liberal Party who wished that someday Gocha would come to liberate the Palean people from the oppressive Unionist junta. The King advocated caution and to secretly contact the FPU and ask them to help Gocha hunt down and eradicate the terrorists responsible for the Dudbrook attack which was contrast to the attitude of the Prime Minister, who advocated Gocha confronting the Palean government for their supposed involvement in Sudbrook and, should they refuse to apologize for supporting the Dracorexian terrorists, the Gochan Army shall invade Paleos (with the approval of the Royal Cabinet and Parliament first).

Behind the King's back (and without even the consent of either Parliament or the Cabinet), the Prime Minister sent a number of telegrams to Generalissimo Tudor over the course of four days from May 15-19, condemning the junta for its alleged involvement in the attack on Sudbrook

and mentioned evidence of Palean involvement that had been found among the items confiscated from terrorists captured by Gochan constables in the weeks following Sudbrook. Dùghallach demanded that the Palean government apologize and pay reparations for damages done to the town of Sudbrook and send aid money to those who lost family members in the attack; naturally, the Generalissimo refused, for he was horrified by the notion that the Federal Paleos Union would have funded those who wantonly slaughtered innocent people who offered absolutely no resistance. Convinced that Tudor was hiding secrets regarding the junta's international activities, the Prime Minister authorized an infiltration of the Generalissimo's office in order to find out what he truly knew. Unfortunately, the spy involved was quickly founded and taken prisoner by the Household Guard (the Generalissimos' personal bodyguard unit) and the drake was interrogated for several days with methods of torture being used as the spy refused to reveal what he knew. He died managing to withhold incriminating evidence though it didn't take a genius amidst the Guard to figure out that he was a spy for the Gochan government. Tudor sent a number of telegrams to the Prime Minister in turn on the 22nd, angry that the Gochans were trying to spy on him for his alleged involvement in the Dracorexians' activities and another heated exchange between the two leaders took place over the next two days.

Finally came the straw that broke the camel's back for, about a week later, an incident occurred that would finally push the two warring nations over the edge. On the night of the 29th of May, a Gochan company of 150 drakes was sent on a patrol in a Dracorexian forest that was part of the border between Gocha and Paleos, ostensibly to hunt down the remnants of the terrorist group responsible for the Subbrook incident. In reality, however, the path they were meant to take would have them cross the border, which at that time was unmarked and largely unguarded, into Palean territory. At 11:37 PM, forward elements of the company came across the outer edge of a Palean village that sat right near the very edge of the dense forest. Convinced that it was a Dracorexian village they were somehow unfamiliar with, they pressed on into the village, unaware that some of the locals spotted them and alerted the nearest military base, Fort Talstor, five miles away. An entire company of Palean troops was awoken and mobilized before they boarded trucks that would carry them to the village; the Gohans, unaware of the incoming threat, decided to head back into the forest for they had found nothing of note that would help them locate the terrorists. About ten minutes after heading into the undergrowth, they heard voices calling out to them in what sounded like Palean; assuming that it was Dracorexians (as Dracorexians, mostly being descended from Palean settlers, predominantly spoke their ancestral language), replied back in their best attempts at the language in order to tell the sources of the voices to return to their homes. The Palean troops, the true source of the voices, were confused and angry with what the Gochans said back to them in their broken Palean so they, in turn, replied in their best Gochan (itself rudimentary) for the Gochans to return to their borders at once or else they will be forced to do

so at the point of a bayonet. Mistaking this as a clear threat that the unseen group will attack, the Gochans took up positions and waited for the inevitable assault which, at first, did not occur. However, one or two jumpy soldiers on one side or the other accidentally opened fire with their rifle, mistaking the snapping of a twig by a passing Dromeolizard for a hostile and, within seconds, the whole forest floor was erupt with light and the thunderous cracks of gunfire rang out across the forest, amidst the houses of the village, and in the surrounding countryside. Soon more Gochans arrived to fire at their mysterious attackers though it was quickly realized that they were still outgunned for the enemy was firing at a faster rate per minute than most of their rifledrakes could managed with their antiquated rifles. Within twenty minutes, the Gochan company was forced to retreat back to where they assumed they had come from with fourteen dead and twenty-five wounded; the Paleans, on the other hand, had thirteen dead and eleven wounded. The victorious Palean troops quickly took loaded their wounded and dead, the enemy wounded, and those able-bodied Gochans who were left behind in the rush of the battle onto trucks while the Gochan dead were hastily buried at the forest edge.

Just as before, the news quickly broke out and radios all over the country were broadcasting reports in the news of the attack on the village and it the Paleans' turn to be shocked and appalled by a terrible incident that had occurred over the night. Just as the Gochans had previously, Palean citizens all over the country were up in arms over the Gochans' intrusions and violations of their territory and demanded the junta take action. The Palean government, to its credit, was more hesitant in responding too hastily to the incident and, indeed, Generalissimo Tudor feared what may happen if violence broke out between the two powers. Tudor released a public statement over the radio on 31st where he condemned the foolishness of the Gochan Army Command in letting one of their own units wander onto foreign territory and not recall it before it was too late. Dùghallach, hoping to bait the fiery Palean dictator, released his own public statement where he condemned the aggressiveness and hypocrisy of the Paleans who were fine with aiding terrorists who killed scores of Gochan males, females, and hatchlings but lost their minds the instant a few Gochan soldiers accidentally crossed the border into their land. This had the intended result for, provoked by the statements made by the Prime Minister and various members of Parliament, the Palean junta at last declared war on June the 2nd. The armies of both countries quickly mobilized; the Gochan Army swelled from 600,000 drakes strong at the beginning of the year to more than a million strong within days while the Palean Army swelled from 800,000 strong to 1,500,000 strong in that same amount of time. The Gochan Prime Minister met with his Generals to discuss their war plans while King Eochaid was more solemn for, after taking a three-hour stroll through the Royal Gardens, said to his wife, Queen Ailidh, "I am afraid we have just let slip the Draak of war, only time will tell when they will be harnessed again."

### Chapter 3: The Opening Blows

despite that the average Gochan and Palean rifleman (or rifledrake and riflesaur, respectively) was largely equal in terms of equipment, the standard-issue Palean rifle (the Hounslow Mk. 14 Self-Loading Rifle chambered for the 8x58mm Aoexe round) was a semi-automatic rifle with a maximum capacity for ten rounds (or two stripper clips worth, which are inserted into the rifle whilst reloading) and could thus, fire at a faster rate than the