

Mortal Kombat: Kitana, Slave Princess

Part I: Bargain

Kitana had sold herself to save her people. Her people, her kingdom, her realm, all of it. . . safe, forever, from the influence of Shao Kahn or any other who would try to claim it for their own.

And the price had been her. All of her. Mind, body, and soul.

To kombat Shao Kahn's latest ploy to regain his hold on Edenia, Kitana had required what the Earthrealmers called a "ringer" in a Mortal Kombat tournament, someone who could not only defeat Shao Kahn's warriors, but who could, in doing so, guarantee the safety of Edenia. Such a warrior had been impossible to find in the Realms, so Kitana had made her bargain to have a warrior imported from elsewhere.

Though there were six different realms within the universe, that universe was not the only one. There were others, parallel dimensions where things were similar yet different. The power of all the realms could allow one unlimited access to these alternate universes, where more power lay for the claiming. This was one reason Shao Kahn sought to control and merge all the realms with his own Outworld. Without this power, opening portals to these alternate universes was tricky. It had only happened once before, with the agreement of powerful beings on both sides. However, Kitana was both knowledgeable and tenacious, and had found ways to barter with stranger beings than the Elder Gods to allow her access to one such portal. Through it, she had summoned her ringer.

His soul unbound by allegiance to any Realm, Erik could win the tournament not for Edenia, and not for Outworld, but for himself, and so could become an eternal champion.

And he had. With the aid of Edenian warriors, Erik has defeated Shao Kahn's forces and won the tournament, locking the Emperor out of Edenia forever. And now, Kitana had to pay the price for her people's safety.

She sat on the Edenian throne, signing her last decrees as ruler. Once she stood up from the throne, she would no longer be Princess, no longer ruler of her realm and its people.

Her last order signed, Kitana sat in the throne for a few minutes, unwilling to rise. In all

her ten thousand years of life, she'd never had such a sense of finality. As soon as she stood up, her old life would end, forever.

"Are you alright, Highness?" one of her advisors asked.

Kitana broke out of her reverie, smiling.

"I'm fine. It's. . . it's a lot to take in."

The woman nodded. "Of course, Highness."

Kitana sighed, then put her hands firmly on the armrests of the throne, and pushed herself to her feet. Taking one last deep breath, she stepped down from the dais. Head held high, spine straight, Kitana walked out of the throne room with pride and dignity.

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