



The Killing of Worlds: Book Two of Succession

Scott Westerfeld

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Scott Westerfeld, the acclaimed author of *Fine Prey*, *Polymorph*, and *Evolution's Darling*, reached new heights of excitement in last spring's *The Risen Empire*, and left readers begging for more. Now he comes through with the dazzling payoff in book two of *Succession*, *The Killing of Worlds*.

Captain Laurent Zai of the Imperial frigate *Lynx* is a walking dead man. Unjustly held responsible for the death of the Child Empress, sister of the immortal Emperor, Zai has been sent to fight an unwinnable battle. The *Lynx* must stop a vastly superior Rix ship from reaching the planet Legis, a suicide mission that will almost certainly end in oblivion for Captain Zai and his crew.

On the planet Legis below, a Rix compound mind--a massive emergent AI formed from every computer on the planet--as been isolated by their Imperial blockade. But the mind has guided a lone Rix commando, Herd, to the planet's frozen north, and will soon order a desperate attempt to seize a polar communications array and break the blockade. Herd is a single warrior against an Imperial army, but moving silently behind her is the intelligence of an entire planet.

Ten light-years away, Captain Zai's true love, the psychic (some say mad) Senator Nara Oxham is engaged in a deadly game of political intrigue. From her position on the Emperor's War Council, Senator Oxham must find a way to forestall the Emperor's final solution if the blockade is broken: a nuclear strike to destroy the compound mind, which will also kill millions of Imperial citizens. She suspects that the Emperor has a hidden weakness discovered, by the mind, a secret so dangerous to his immortal dynasty that to prevent its discovery the Emperor is willing to countenance the ultimate crime. . . .

The killing of worlds.

With this powerful conclusion to the first story arc of *Succession*, Scott Westerfeld confirms his stature as one of the leading writers of high space opera.

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