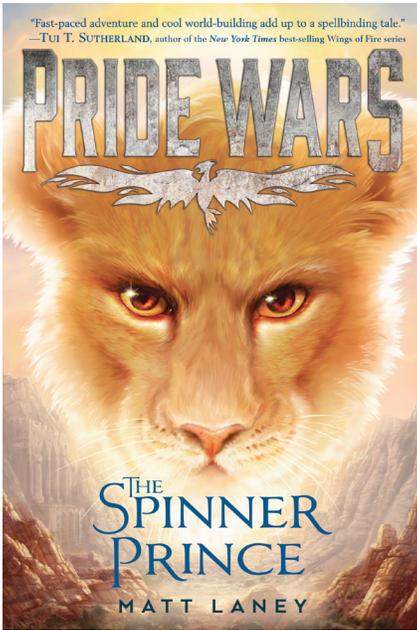


# THE SPINNER PRINCE

by Matt Laney



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## About the Book

Prince Leo is next in line for the throne of Singara, a land ruled by super evolved felines. Like every thirteen-year-old, Leo must prove his worth by hunting a deadly beast called a slaycon. But killing a slaycon is the least of Leo's problems. The enemy beyond the Great Wall is rising up. Inside the wall, Singara is being torn apart by Leo's rebellious cousin. Worst of all, Leo is a Spinner, cursed with a dangerous and forbidden power he can't control.

The future of Singara is in Leo's hands. Can he conceal his curse, claim the throne, and protect his realm? Or will he embrace his power and discover a far greater destiny . . . for himself and for his world?

*The Spinner Prince* is an action-packed adventure that will keep readers engaged to the very last page. It follows the classic hero's journey, while introducing students to folklore from a variety of cultures and inviting them to explore themes of faith, friendship, and perseverance in the face of adversity. Older readers will discover opportunities to discuss spirituality, narrative truth vs. scientific fact, racism, and xenophobia.

## About the Author

Matt Laney is an ordained minister with a lifelong interest in world religions, folklore, wisdom traditions, martial arts, and big cats. *The Spinner Prince* marks his literary debut. Matt lives in Georgia with his family.

## Plot Development Questions

These questions will help students reflect on major plot points.

### Chapter 1: Leo has his final training session with General Kaydan.

- How is Leo's world similar and different from yours?
- Why is it important for Leo to kill a slaycon?
- What do we learn about Leo in this first chapter?

### Chapter 2: Leo accidentally reveals his identity as a Spinner to Anjali.

- What is a Spinner, and what challenges does being a Spinner present to Leo?
- Why do Singas reject fiction?
- Is Anjali a friend or foe?

### Chapter 3: Leo's grandfather argues with Tamir about Leo's readiness for the hunt.

- Does Tamir truly care about Leo? How do you know?
- How would you describe Leo's relationship to his grandfather?

### Chapter 4: Leo selects his slaycon and weapons for the hunt.

- Some Singas in the crowd do not support Leo. Why is that?
- Why does Leo choose the slaycon named Storm?
- What do you think of Leo's choices for weapons? What do you think he has in mind?

### Chapter 5: Leo hunts the slaycon named Storm in Border Zone Seven.

- What is Leo's strategy in the hunt?
- What does Leo learn about Storm?
- Why doesn't Leo kill Storm when he first had the chance?

### Chapter 6: Leo meets Daviyah in the Haven and celebrates the Hunt with his grandfather.

- What happens to Leo after Storm bites him?
- Why does Leo decide not to talk about his experience in the Haven or how Storm died?
- Why does Leo's grandfather say "You will be a great Kahn" at the end of the chapter?

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## **Chapter 7: A hole is discovered in the Great Wall.**

- What did you learn about the Maguar in this chapter?
- Why does the phantom firewing bird attempt to lead Leo into enemy territory?
- Why does Leo's grandfather want to keep the hole in the Great Wall a secret?

## **Chapter 8: Leo, his grandfather, and Galil return to the city.**

- What does Leo learn about the Great War from his grandfather?
- Why is his grandfather so upset in the first part of this chapter?
- What about the shepherd sparks Leo's curiosity and frustration?
- Do you think Leo should trust Anjali? Why or why not?

## **Chapter 9: Kaydan and Anjali escort Leo back to the castle.**

- Why does Leo decide not to tell Kaydan about his slaycon hunt?
- Why does Kaydan suspect that Mandar's quadron is loyal to Tamir?
- How does Leo regain trust in Anjali?

## **Chapter 10: Leo's grandfather hosts a feast to celebrate Leo's hunt.**

- What do you think about Leo's dream at the beginning of the chapter? Who is the lost Maguar cub?
- What does Tamir want to accomplish at the feast?
- Why does Leo stop Kaydan from killing Tamir?

## **Chapter 11: Leo travels to the Royal Academy of War Science.**

- What does Leo learn about Tamir's new weapons?
- How does Leo respond to the discovery that Kaydan is not his father?
- What does Leo learn about Tamir's daughter, Amara?

## **Chapter 12: Leo arrives at the Academy.**

- Why does Leo refuse help from the old sage (Vishna) who appears after Leo emerges from the pool?
- Why is the Academy so hard to find and so difficult to enter?

## **Chapter 13: Leo meets Alpha, the Academy's leader, and Wajid, a captive Maguar, held prisoner since the Great War twenty-five years ago.**

- How would you feel about going through the gauntlet?
- What must it be like for Alpha to have the crown prince of Singara as a cadet at the Academy?
- Why do you think Leo and Wajid are drawn to each other?

## **Chapter 14: Leo encounters Amara.**

- Why is Amara angry? What does she want most?
- What does Rukan, the giant wolf, promise to do for Leo?

## **Chapter 15: Leo attends his first gaming.**

- What does Leo learn about his quadron's combat skills?
- Why do you think Leo dares to speak Rukan's name and make him real?
- What concerns does Rukan's appearance raise for Alpha?
- Why does Leo want to go back to Wajid's cage?

## **Chapter 16: Leo, Stick, and Zoya break into Wajid's cage.**

- What does Leo learn about Stick and Zoya in this chapter?
- How and why do you think Wajid escaped?

## **Chapter 17: Leo meets his captains.**

- Why was Anjali sent to the Academy to be Leo's captain?
- Why does Leo resist and resent having Anjali at the Academy?

## **Chapter 18: Leo receives troubling news about his grandfather.**

- Why do you think General Dagan came to deliver the news about Leo's grandfather instead of General Kaydan?
- Why does Alpha recommend that Leo's quadron accompany Leo back to the castle?

## **Chapter 19: Leo and his friends travel back to the castle with General Dagan.**

- Why don't Leo and Anjali trust General Dagan, even after she protects Leo from the giant slugs in the cave?

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- Each time Leo sees the phantom firewing bird, which first appeared in chapter 2, it has grown larger and stronger. How does this compare and relate to Leo?
- What does Tamir want from Leo in exchange for seeing his grandfather's body?

## **Chapter 20: Leo and his friends slip away into Galil's secret reading room.**

- Where did all the forbidden books in Galil's secret reading room come from?
- Why didn't Galil share the note from Mira sooner?
- How does Galil define the word *faith*? Why is this a new idea for Singas?

## **Chapter 21: Leo and his friends escape from the city.**

- Do you think it was wise for Leo to summon Vishna to heal Zoya?
- Why is Anjali so angry with Stick?
- Why is Leo surprised to be hailed as the Kahn?

## **Chapter 22: Leo and his friends arrive at the Border Caves.**

- Why does Stick react so strongly when Shanti begins to tell a story?
- What secret does Shanti's story reveal?

## **Chapter 23: Leo and his friends decide to travel to the realm of the Maguar.**

- What does Leo learn about his mother?
- Who are the Ancients?
- How does the story of "The Draycon's Whisker" relate to Leo?

## **Chapter 24: Leo summons a draycon to avoid capture by Tamir's soldiers.**

- Why is Shanti so calm and confident when Tamir's soldiers arrive?
- What does Leo learn about all the creatures who appeared through fiction?
- How would you feel about leaving home and venturing into the unknown land of the enemy?

## **Post-Reading Questions**

1. Look up the "Stages of the Hero's Journey." ([yourdictionary.com/examples-of-each-stage-of-a-hero-s-journey.html](http://yourdictionary.com/examples-of-each-stage-of-a-hero-s-journey.html)) How many stages you can identify for Leo in *The Spinner Prince*? Write a few sentences about each stage you find. Be sure to give the page number where you found evidence of each stage.
2. Why are Spinners feared and hated in Leo's world? How would you feel if you were a Spinner?
3. How do each of the eight stories Leo tells relate to what's happening in his life at that moment?
4. How does Leo respond to the creatures that pop out of the stories and why? When does his response change and why? What does Leo learn about these creatures by the end of the book?
5. In a world that values truth and facts, why does Leo know so little about himself?
6. Make a list of all thing things Leo discovers about himself, and his background, by the end of the book.
7. Who is Alayah and why do the Singa reject Alayah?

Guide written by Matt Laney, author of *Pride Wars: The Spinner Prince*.