

# [PDF] Emperor Of Nihon-Ja (Ranger's Apprentice)

John Flanagan - pdf download free book

---



**Books Details:**

Title: Emperor of Nihon-Ja (Ranger's

Author: John Flanagan

Released: 2011-09-01

Language:

Pages: 512

ISBN: 0440869846

ISBN13: 978-0440869849

ASIN: 0440869846

[CLICK HERE FOR DOWNLOAD](#)

---

pdf, mobi, epub, azw, kindle

## Description:

**About the Author** John Flanagan began his working life in advertising before moving to freelance writing and script editing. He has written TV jingles and comedy-drama for television, and is one of Australia's more prolific TV writers. John wrote the first book in The Ranger's Apprentice series to encourage his twelve-year-old son to enjoy reading. Michael was a small boy, and all his friends were bigger and stronger than he was. John wanted to show him that reading was fun, and heroes weren't necessarily big and muscular. Now in his mid-twenties, Michael is six feet tall, broad-shouldered and

powerful - but he still loves The Ranger's Apprentice. John lives in the beachside Sydney suburb of Manly.

**Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.**

1

## ***Toscana***

"Avanti!"

The command rang out over the sun-baked earth of the parade ground and the triple files of men stepped out together. At each stride, their iron-nailed sandals hit the ground in perfect unison, setting up a rhythmic thudding that was counterpointed by the irregular jingle of weapons and equipment as they occasionally rubbed or clattered together. Already, their marching feet were raising a faint cloud of dust in their wake.

"You'd certainly see them coming from quite a distance," Halt murmured.

Will looked sidelong at him and grinned. "Maybe that's the idea."

General Sapristi, who had organized this demonstration of Toscan military techniques for them, nodded approvingly.

"The young gentleman is correct," he said. Halt raised an eyebrow.

"He may be correct, and he is undoubtedly young. But he's no gentleman."

Sapristi hesitated. Even after ten days in their company, he was still not completely accustomed to the constant stream of cheerful insults that flowed between these two strange Araluens. It was difficult to know when they were serious and when they were speaking in fun. Some of the things they said to each other would be cause for mayhem and bloodshed between Toscans, whose pride was notoriously stronger than their sense of humor. He looked at the younger Ranger and noticed that he seemed to have taken no offense.

"Ah, Signor Halt," he said uncertainly, "you are making a joke, yes?"

"He is making a joke, no," Will said. "But he likes to think he is making a joke, yes."

Sapristi decided it might be less confusing to get back to the point that the two Rangers had already raised.

"In any event," he said, "we find that the dust raised by our soldiers can often cause enemies to disperse. Very few are willing to face our legions in open battle."

"They certainly can march nicely," Halt said mildly.

Sapristi glanced at him, sensing that the demonstration so far had done little to impress the gray-bearded Araluen. He smiled inwardly. That would change in a few minutes, he thought.

"Here's Selethen," Will said, and as the other two looked down, they could see the distinctively tall form of the Arridi leader climbing the steps of the reviewing platform to join them.

Selethen, representing the Arridi Emrikir, was in Toscana to negotiate a trade and military pact with the Toscan Senate. Over the years, the Toscans and Arridi had clashed intermittently, their countries separated only by the relatively narrow waters of the Constant Sea. Yet each country had items that the other needed. The Arridi had reserves of red gold and iron in their deserts that the Toscans required to finance and equip their large armies. Even more important, Toscans had become inordinately fond of *kafay*, the rich coffee grown by the Arridi.

The desert dwellers, for their part, looked to Toscana for woven cloth—the fine linen and cotton so necessary in the fierce desert heat—and for the excellent grade of olive oil the Toscans produced, which was far superior to their locally grown product. Plus there was a constant need to replenish and bring new breeding stock to their herds of sheep and goats. Animal mortality in the desert was high.

In the past, the two nations had fought over such items. But now, wiser heads prevailed, and they had decided that an alliance might be mutually beneficial for trade and for security. The waters of the Constant Sea were infested by corsairs in swift, small galleys. They swooped on merchant ships traveling between the two countries, robbing and sinking them.

Some in the region even looked back regretfully to the time when Skandian wolfships used to visit these waters. The Skandians had raided as well, but never in the numbers that were seen these days. And the presence of the Skandian ships had kept the number of local pirates down.

Nowadays, the Skandians were more law abiding. Their Oberjarl, Erak, had discovered that it was far more profitable to hire his ships out to other countries that needed to secure their national waters. As a result, the Skandians had become the de facto naval police in many

parts of the world. The Toscans and Arridi, with no significant naval forces of their own, had decided, as part of their agreement, to lease a squadron of wolfships to patrol the waters between their two coastlines.

All of which were the reasons why Halt and Will had spent the past ten days in Toscana. The longstanding enmity between the two countries, accompanied by the inevitable suspicion of the other's intentions, had led both sides to agree to ask a third-party nation to act as arbitrator in the treaty that was being put in place. Araluen was a country trusted by both Arrida and Toscana. In addition, the Araluens had close ties with the Skandian Oberjarl, and it was felt that their intervention would be helpful in forming a relationship with the wild northern seamen.

It was logical for Selethen to suggest the inclusion of Halt and Will in the Araluen delegation. He had included Horace in the request as well, but duty had taken Horace elsewhere.

The actual wording and conditions of the treaty were not the concern of the two Rangers. They were simply here to escort the chief Araluen negotiator—Alyss Mainwaring, Will's childhood sweetheart and one of the brighter new members of the Araluen Diplomatic Service.

She was presently locked away with the Arridi and Toscan lawyers, thrashing out the fine

details of the agreement.

Selethen dropped gratefully into a seat beside Will. The three companies of Toscan legionnaires—thirty-three to a company, with an overall commander making up the traditional Toscan century of one hundred men—pivoted through a smart right turn below them, changing from a three-abreast formation to an extended eleven- abreast. In spite of the wider formation their lines were still geometrically perfect— straight as a sword blade, Will thought. He was about to voice the thought, and then he smiled. The simile wouldn't be accurate so far as Selethen's curved saber was concerned.

"How are the negotiations progressing?" Halt asked.

Selethen pursed his lips. "As all such things progress. My chamberlain is asking for a reduction of three-quarters of a percent on the duty to be charged for kafay. Your advocates," he said, including Sapristiin the conversation, "are holding out for no more than five eighths of a percent. I had to have a break from it all. Sometimes I think they do this because they simply like to argue."

Sapristi nodded. "It's always the way. We soldiers risk our lives fighting while the lawyers quibble over fractions of a percentage point. And yet they look upon us as lesser beings."

"How's Alyss managing?" Will asked.

- 
- Title: Emperor of Nihon-Ja (Ranger's Apprentice)
  - Author: John Flanagan
  - Released: 2011-09-01
  - Language:
  - Pages: 512
  - ISBN: 0440869846
  - ISBN13: 978-0440869849
  - ASIN: 0440869846
-