

Leto Atreides II

Duncan Idaho: "Your strange words . . ."

Leto II: "Are but words. I spoke them. They are gone. No one heard them, therefore they no longer exist. If they no longer exist, perhaps they can be made to exist again and then perhaps someone will hear them."

Duncan Idaho: "Why do you poke fun at me, m'Lord?"

Leto II: "I poke nothing at you except words. I do it without fear of offending because I have learned that you have no ears."

Duncan Idaho: "I don't understand you, m'Lord."

Leto II: "That is the beginning of knowledge—the discovery of something we do not understand."

— The God Emperor and Duncan[src]

Leto Atreides II was the third and last ruler of the Atreides Empire as Emperor and the first and only God-Emperor from 10219 AG until his assassination in 13728 AG, when his intergalactic empire began to break up into a loose federation ruled by various powerful groups.

Leto was born on Arrakis to then-Padishah Emperor Paul Atreides and his Fremen concubine Chani Kynes, the daughter of the great Liet Kynes, just after his twin sister Ghanima Atreides. He and his sister were preborn due to Chani's consumption of the spice melange in large amounts before her death. He was named after the Duke Leto Atreides I, his paternal grandfather, and Leto Atreides II the Elder, his older brother, who was murdered in infancy.

Seeing that their aunt, the Regent of the Atreides Empire, had been possessed by the ego-memory of her grandfather Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, Leto II and Ghanima planned to prevent her from destroying the Atreides and preventing the Golden Path, the salvation of humanity which Leto worked to bring about for most of his life. This period also saw them evade an assassination attempt by House Corrino which resulted in the banishment of Wensicia Corrino by her son Farad'n, who became Ghanima's lover. Following Alia's suicide as well as the murder of his father Paul, Leto took the title of God-Emperor and ruled over humanity with an iron fist for 3,500 years, guiding it away from extinction.