

BEFORE THE INFERNO

Zuko seeks to teach Aang the secrets of firebending, but having lost his previous drive and convictions, finds that he is unable to firebend at all himself, much less teach it. In hopes of finding a firebending source other than rage, Zuko looks far back into his past, long before his banishment from the Fire Nation.

He remembers a time when his father taught him the basics of war strategy using a Chinese checkers board—while abstract in form, it taught important lessons about foresight and strategic movement. Each star represented the base of a certain region's troops, while numbers represented the number of battalions in the immediate surrounding areas. After figuring out which spaces were occupied, Zuko came to the realization: the essence of fire was...

