“Seriously. I didn’t come here to fight you.” Kaius muttered as he snapped the third bolt between his fingers. The broken pieces clattered to the floor in time with the hand crossbow as Isran released his grip on the unloaded weapon.

“Then you came here to die.”

A veteran hunter of Vampires and the undead; Isran has slain countless members of their kind. Establishing an ancient order dedicated to ridding Skyrim of their presence was always going to attract attention. He just didn't expect to attract a vampiric sort of attention that was unlike any he had faced or dreamed of before.
presence felt throughout Skyrim, Dragons were returning and burning entire villages and the both the
Imperials and the Stormcloaks were at each other’s throats and seemingly determined to outperform
the other in number of lives lost.

And in amongst it all he was trying, almost desperately so, to re-establish an ancient order of
vampire hunters that Skyrim hadn’t seen the like of in the better part of a millennium. Even with the
increasing number of towns and villages that had suffered outright attacks by vampires and their
minions, the numbers of volunteers arriving at the fort were limited both in number and skill.

“My pa’s axe…” he thought bitterly to himself and shook his head. The couple of new arrivals that
morning had potential, but whether the vampires were going to be gracious enough to give him time
to make something of them was yet to be seen. If the emotions weren’t a foreign concept to him he
would have been deciding whether to laugh or to cry.

His frustration burned its way into his limbs and he soon began sprinting his way up their stairs,
taking three or even four at a time. It was a considerable climb up the narrow staircases to the
fortress’s upper levels but the years he had lived within the fortress ensured that when he arrived on
the sixth floor he was barely breathing heavy at all.

The fortress had been built to last, even when it was nothing more than a tiny border outpost
overlooking the southern pass between Skyrim and Morrowind. During its prime it would have been
able to hold off an Imperial Legion and comfortably house several hundred soldiers and supporting
staff. The few dozen members of the renewed Dawnguard lived within it like skulking mice, their
presence barely making an impact on the ancient structure. It did provide them with a modicum of
comfort that gave them space for anything and everything they could think of. The central hall had
been turned into an archery range, the primary mess hall had been combined into a kitchen and
dining hall and the ancient smithies were being cleared of dust ready for plating weapons with silver.
It also allowed him to have some measure of peace in the form of a private quarters where the fort
commander once resided.

Muttering to himself, he pushed his way through the door into his room but tensed within seconds as
his finely tuned instincts alerted him to the presence. There was little within the bounds of Nirm or
even Oblivion that would hope to catch him unawares, not that the person within his room had been
intent on hiding. Sitting on one of the hard wooden chairs, leaning back with his legs outstretched
and feet crossed at the ankles the armoured figure looked upwards from the book that he was reading
and gave Isran a friendly smile. “Good afternoon.”

The habitual scowl on Isran’s face deepened and his lips turned into a thin pink slit framed in his
wiry beard. “I don’t believe I was expecting a visitor.”

A snap made itself heard as the man sitting in Isran’s room closed the book he was reading and
placed it on the desk where he found it. “Sorry. Durak sent me up and said this was the best place to
find you.” With a gloved hand he gestured to the collection of books taking up space on the pair of
bookshelves set against the stone walls. “Impressive collection.”

Isran chose to ignore the statement and closed the door behind as he stepped inside. “Who are you?
What do you want?”

If the man felt aggrieved by the bluntness or the tone he didn’t show it, instead turning his full
attention to the vampire hunter standing a few metres in front of him and continuing to smile. “I’m
Kaius. I heard you were looking for vampire hunters and I thought I’d come and offer my services.”

Taking a moment and looking over Kaius, Isran grudgingly acknowledged that unlike most of the
others who had come he was experienced at least. A lot could be learned from a simple glance and
he liked what he saw. The armour he wore was extremely well made, but had signs that he didn’t just wear it for show. He carried no shield, and while he might have left it elsewhere his battered vambraces attested to a skilled swordsman who blocked with sword and forearms. The scars he wore were like badges of honour, especially the aged white line under his right eye and there was little doubt in his mind that Kaius was well used to hardship. Even the rough cut of his hair and goatee showed that he preferred the simple expedient of hacking it short with a knife; usually a clear indication of someone who lived rough or travelled frequently.

“You heard right.” Isran replied, moving over towards his desk and looking over what had been moved or otherwise touched. He didn’t expect anyone to be foolish enough to steal from him, but trust was a word that Isran didn’t know how to spell, let alone one that existed in his vocabulary. “I’m glad word’s finally starting to get around. But, that means it won’t be long before the vampires start to take notice as well.”

“I’d say that they already have started taking notice.” Cracking his knuckles, Kaius rose to his feet and pushed the chair back under the small dining table in the centre of the room. “Just over a month ago my companions and I dealt with a nest of the vermin near Morthal. I’m not certain, but there were signs that they were working or otherwise allied with others of their kinds throughout Skyrim.”

As Kaius rose to his feet and moved closer to the filled bookshelves, Isran found his gaze fixated upon the taller man. At just under six foot, Isran was average in height for a Redguard but Kaius was a few inches taller. It wasn’t the height that had caught his attention, as he was far from being intimidated by something as simple as physical size. Isran knew that he was one of the most intense and intimidating individuals to walk the bounds of Skyrim, but there was definitely something off with Kaius.

“A treatise on Porphyric Hemophillia, Sanguinare Vampiris and the Undead.” Reading the title off the spine, Kaius drew the book from the shelf and briefly thumbed through the pages. “Second edition as well. Now I’m really impressed.”

He stopped in mid motion as he saw the way that Isran’s eyes narrowed as he watched his movements. His instincts were screaming at him and he now knew why. For anyone else it would have been impossible to notice, but a lifetime of experience let Isran know exactly what Kaius was. It was in the details; the way he moved, the way his feet pressed into the floor and his hands and fingers grasped at items. There was a dexterity and smoothness to his muscles that no mortal could match, and the coiling strength within him that had to be constantly held at bay lest it crush and break everything that he touched.

They shared a glance, the cold brown eyes staring into Isran’s silver-white irises as the realisation passed between them both.

“Look, I’m not here to fight.”

In a movement born from decades of practice, Isran ripped the tiny hand crossbow from its leather holster at his hip and fired a shot almost point blank into Kaius’ chest. The silver tipped bolt, dipped in an intense paralytic mixture of fungal pods from Morthal’ swamps and canis root crossed the three metre gap between them in an eye blink. It should have been impossible to dodge, impossible for it to have missed and yet any doubt that Isran may have had vanished just as quickly as Kaius twisted out of the bolt’s path.

The crossbow; a gift from Sorine Jurard years before they had gone their separate ways had been a marvel of reverse engineering. Somehow merging the designs of an Akaviri repeating crossbow from the 2nd Era into a Dwemer arbalest, Sorine had managed to create a tiny, single handed crossbow the
length of a dagger. The range was terrible, the bolts lacked the power and impact of a larger design but in close range situations such as these it was invaluable.

The first two shots missed, one shattering on the stonework of the wall behind and the second skittering off into the corner of the room with a wooden clatter. There were only three shots within the tiny crossbow’s magazine, the movement of the arms reloading it between shots but its size precluded it carrying any more bolts. Twitching his arm instinctively and following Kaius’ unnatural movements and speed as he dodged the first two bolts, Isran adjusted, aimed and squeezed the crossbows release in one simple movement.

This time the bolt was fired true, the first two proving to be distractions to force the creature to move where and how he wanted it to. Against beings that were faster, tougher and stronger than mortal men and mer, it was only through tactics, preparation and outwitting the undead monsters that they could hope to win. Isran had successfully fought and killed dozens of the bloodsuckers but had never encountered one of their kind fast enough to snatch a crossbow bolt out of the air.

“Seriously. I didn’t come here to fight you.” Kaius muttered as he snapped the third bolt between his fingers. The broken pieces clattered to the floor in time with the hand crossbow as Isran released his grip on the unloaded weapon.

“Then you came here to die.”

The bolt of pure light caught Kaius in the face and he staggered backwards, eyes running with tears and waving his hands in front of his face as Isran called upon his magical reserves. Spells that had never seen the inside of the College of Winterhold or any mages guild halls streaked through the air, competing with the pair of burning lanterns and overpowering their feeble light. Each blast of light drove Kaius back with the intensity and as Isran conjured them into existence with flicks of his wrist and his considerable willpower he was already enacting his next actions.

Engaging creatures such as vampires in open battle was one of the quickest and most painful ways to die. They had the strength of ten men, could be as fast as a bolt of lightning and were equally deadly whether they retained their humanity or had fallen to darkness. Against such creatures the only hopes for mortals when faced with one was to go on the offensive, and remain on the offensive. They had to outwit and outthink the vampire, keep two or three steps ahead and plan for every contingency because as soon as the beasts gained the slightest advantage it would be all over.

It was this forethought and planning that allowed Isran to be ready for when Kaius summoned a hazy, flickering ward between them that stopped the burning balls of light and made them burst like rotten fruits in mid-air. His control and ability with magicka was surprising to Isran, especially how the vampire was clad almost entirely in fur lined steel plate which was normally a hindrance to spellcasting. But the spawn of Molag Bal were known to be more naturally skilled with magicka so he already had a counter prepared for such a situation.

Within seconds of the ward being summoned into existence, a tiny clay pot was snatched from his belt and shattered against the ceiling between them. Isran’s only chance was to keep the initiative and despite its size the clay pot was one of the most useful pieces of equipment he owned. Small enough to fit snugly in the palm of his hand, it didn’t look like much but had been wax-stoppered and filled to bursting with finely powdered slivers of the purest silver he could acquire. Within seconds of hitting the ceiling the room was filled with dancing specks of light, most too small to be properly seen by the naked eye but enough that they soon filled the air by drifting on the faint air currents.

Kaius’ ward failed almost the instant the tiny flakes reached him and despite his best efforts the coughing fit that claimed him made it difficult to do much else. The bursts of light in his face had been enough to feel like slaps; a sure sign to Isran that he was not some freshly turned vampire but
the silver powder was a different matter. Isran had first gained the idea from reading stories of how the Legion utilised quicklime in sieges, using the whitish powders to blind and burn the defenders no matter where they tried to hide. While the powder was not entirely healthy for mortals, Isran’s eyes and throat were already beginning to become irritated; to vampires it was as though the air had turned into fire.

As it had against other vampires he had slain, Kaius flailed against the onslaught, the silver burning whatever it touched and scouring his throat and lungs and directly attacking his eyes. Against a lesser creature it would have left it whimpering and completely unable to defend itself but Kaius was stronger, far stronger than most vampires. He shrugged off the pain as though it was a foreign concept, returning Isran’s scowl with one that was less human than the one before.

“That tickles.” The growl rose from his throat and Isran somehow felt satisfaction as fangs split Kaius’ lips in an inhuman smile. He was losing control and while the more animalistic that vampires became the more dangerous they were, they were also easier to goad and trick and outmanoeuvre.

“Come on monster. Show me what you truly are.”

With a click, the leather straps holding his Warhammer to his spine fell away and the weapon fell neatly into his hands. It was ten kilograms of steel with a heavy lead core, plated in silver and covered in runes of purity and banishment. Strong enough to batter its way through orichalcum plate and pulp their wearers bones, it was also a relic of a long dead knightly order from the 3rd Era. It had slain all kinds of daedra and monsters and in Isran’s hands it had added an impressive tally of undead to its illustrious history.

Once again Kaius showed his unnatural skill and abilities, twisting and writhing away from Isran as the hammer slammed into the floor with titanic force. The silver dust was only meant to disorient and allow him to keep the initiative in the fight. It was enough to severely injure a younger bloodsucker but against an older, more powerful one like Kaius it was little more than a hindrance.

Keeping the weapon close, using the silver plated haft just as much as the enormous lead cored head he twirled and twisted it about, using its momentum and weight to keep Kaius unbalanced. The smallest amount of the silver dust was enough to slow the creature down and Isran used it to his full advantage. The hammer twisted and ripped through the air with a deep noted vrruumm sound with every movement and Isran was grunting and snarling just as much as Kaius was.

Unease threatened to dig its claws into his mind as he fought and Isran struggled to keep it at bay. Kaius was no ordinary vampire and had the resistances and abilities that matched any of the master vampires Isran had ever fought. Even hindered by the powder he was still faster than ordinary mortals and the first blows struck nothing but air but Isran soon gained the advantage that he needed.

Hooking the bottom of the warhammer’s grip behind an armoured knee he swept one of Kaius’ legs out from under him, forcing the vampire to drop even as he used the momentum to throw a vicious left hook. The punch smashed Kaius onto his hands and knees, the silver banded knuckle guards wrapped around his fingers burning vampiric flesh with the impact. A couple of teeth and a single fang clattered across the stone floor with a mouthful of blood from the impact, briefly stunning him as Isran spun, gripped both hands on his Warhammer and swung it as though he was chopping firewood.

Isran would have sworn that he had stuck the floor again or tried to batter his way through a block of solid ebony as the impact ran up his arm. With blood staining his goatee Kaius had roared, reaching up with a single hand and caught the descending warhammer with a loud slap that ripped through the air. For the single heartbeat that his hands went numb, Kaius simply gripped the
warhammer’s head and wrenched it from his grasp, throwing it to one side where it rattled across the stones. In thirty years of hunting vampires Isran had never encountered one that had attempted such a move, let alone accomplished something as ridiculous as catching a weapon in mid strike. The surprise cost him as Kaius surged to his feet faster than he could react, talons like polished ebony erupting from the tips of his fingers and sinking to the knuckles in his armoured chest piece.

“I did not come all this way to pick a fight with you.” Monstrously inhuman, Kaius’ features writhed as the bones of his face restructured and transformed into something almost daedric in appearance. “If I wanted you and the rest of your pathetic hunters dead, then you would already be cooling and rotting on the floor...”

Isran couldn’t help but watch as the eyes completely filled with darkness, the brow, cheekbones and jaw suddenly cracking and pushing forward against the skin that kept them trapped. Disarmed and being held at arm’s length off the floor there was little else that he could do but stare at the changes that the creature holding him underwent. A sick kind of curiosity within him made him watch as Kaius grimaced, snarling to himself before using a considerable force of will to crush the monstrous part of his nature into the depths of his soul where it had been lurking. The talons remained, having punching their way through the thick brigandine steel plates covering most of Isran’s torso and shredding the chainmail and leather underneath.

A small part of Isran’s mind noted the fact that despite the shocking violence that he had exhibited, not once had Kaius attempted to harm him. The closest that the vampire had become to actually harming him was lifting him off the ground with a single hand and somehow managed not to scratch or even touch the flesh under the armour. Instead, the rest of his mind reacted with its usual determination not to lose to monsters born to darkness and he smashed a vial of holy water directly across Kaius’ face. Crystalline shards bit deep into the flesh of jaw and cheek, drawing further blood even as it mixed with the holy water that had splashed everywhere.

Kaius reacted immediately, the talons removing themselves from where they had punched through leather and metal and letting Isran drop to the floor. Expecting such a reaction, he landed with far more grace than should have been possible in fifteen kilograms of armour, stepping lightly away from Kaius who was clutching at his face with blood streaming between his fingers.

He was not reacting the way that Isran had been expecting. The tiny vials were priceless, almost irreplaceable and had taken many long months to acquire. After personally climbing to retrieve snow from High Hrothgar he had the water thrice-blessed by priests of Arkay and Stendarr and even an acolyte of Meridia. There was nothing else like them within the bounds of Tamriel. The last time he had to resort to using one it had left the vampire in question screaming in absolute agony as the flesh literally sloughed off his bones.

Kaius seemed annoyed more than anything else, and the only signs of any distress was the way that he dabbed his hand against his face, pinched a shard of glass out of his cheek and spat a mixture of blood and water onto the floor.

“Really? Holy water?” Another mouthful of blood splattered over the floor and with it a chunk of loosened tooth. “What’s next? Psalms and holy artefacts?”

The same instincts that had alerted him to Kaius’ true nature were pleading with him but Isran bid them no heed. Despite the creature’s resistance to the holiest of waters he was not going to back down, especially how he still had several more tricks up his sleeve.

Proving Kaius’ prediction to be true right, an amulet of Stendarr on its leather strap was pulled out from under his armour and held out in front of him as his god’s blessings filled him with righteous might. Strength coursed its way through his veins and he knew that the power was leaving his eyes
glowing with holy power. With the purity of both purpose and soul, he could face down the very worst the darkness could offer him and throw it back into the abyss.

“I am the servant of Stendarr and messenger of his justice.” He began, intonating a battle-hymn from his days serving as a Vigilant. “I am the instrument of his divine wrath on Nirn.”

Kaius looked less than impressed even as the billowing light growing from within Isran’s soul burst free of his flesh and began radiating the room in pure light. The aura was enough to crisp the flesh of the damned and repel the mindless husks of the undead, but Kaius simply stood there and rolled his eyes.

Forcing the words from his throat, Isran took a step forward, feeling the might and power of Stendarr’s blessing upon him. “I am called upon to cleanse his kingdom…”

“Bringing ash from the flesh of thine enemies…” Kaius continued, finishing the hymn for the vampire hunter. “Are you done yet?”

The smile that creased Isran’s face was terrible to behold as the light died as Stendarr’s Aura faded away. It might not have had the effect that he wanted but it had served its purpose. “I am. But so are you.”

Hanging from the ceiling, the chain was just one of several suspended from the stones. Some were where he hung a bag filled with sand for unarmed practice, others were where he hung his lanterns. This one in particular served a specific purpose and he wrenched down hard on its length.

Locked into its place in the ceiling, the trapdoor banged open, opening a hole in the ceiling with the afternoon’s sunlight poured through. The chain rattled as it slithered and jerked, almost like it was alive as the careful series of pulleys and wheels allowed the dwemer mechanism to unlock and snap into place. Little more than a series of parabolic mirrors used by the lost civilisation to illuminate mineshafts, Isran had incorporated it with an Ayleid Varla stone that seemed to store the energies of the sun even throughout the long nights of winter. Clicking down within seconds of pulling on the chain, the suspended stone burned as the series of mirrors on the fort’s roof focussed the sun’s light onto its surface. Burning as bright and as pure as the sun, it filled the room with the soft, warm light; a light that would and had burned vampires into dust and ash in this very room.

Other than squinting at the sudden brightness Kaius seemed totally unaffected, shielding his eyes from the gem the length of his forearm suspended in the centre of the ceiling. There was a look of respect on his face, which was in stark contrast to the complete and utter shock that was on Isran’s.

Isran was rooted to the spot, mouth agape as Kaius simply crossed his arms with all the look of an irritated teacher showing displeasure to a disobedient pupil. Nothing he had ever seen or experienced in his entire life could have prepared Isran for the sight of a vampire existing in the light of the sun. In this very room and using this same mechanism he had successfully lured and slew a five hundred year of vampire master of the Garlythi bloodline. It should have been impossible, it had to be impossible, it was...

“Hah Gron Drem!”

The force of the words punched into his mind and his muscles seized for a moment before relaxing as though he was a puppet with cut strings. The amulet of Stendarr clattered to the floor a split second before he did, his armour doing little to protect him from being winded as he found himself sprawled on his back, looking up at the dangling chains and the opened trapdoor to the sky above.

He had been defeated, cast down and totally helpless by one of the very creatures he had sworn to...
destroy. In his heart he knew that it would be at the unholy claws of a vampire that would be his death but he would never have believed it would be like this.

Moving into view and blocking out the light coming from the trapdoor in the ceiling, Kaius looked down on the helpless vampire hunter and there was a sound of wood scraping across the stone floor.

“Now that I have your attention…”

Despite the paralysis, Isran found he had some control over his body and fixed Kaius with a glare.

“Well. You’ve won. Finish it…”

“By the Nine you are stubborn.” Sighing loudly, he dropped down onto the chair, straddling it and leaning on the backrest with both arms. “I think I have proven that if I wanted to kill you all that there wouldn’t be much you could do about it.”

“Then why did you come here?”

“Because despite what you think, I have no love of vampires and I guarantee you that I have killed far more than what you and your little band have.” He sniffed for a moment, wiping the droplets of blood from his nose and the dribbles of pink froth from his lips on the back of his hand. “Although I also came here to retrieve something of mine.”

Isran couldn’t help but laugh, the chuckle deep and foreboding despite his predicament. “I doubt that there could be anything here that could interest a suckhead.”

“You’d be surprised. Now your little show just before proved to me that you know more than what most people do about combating vampires. Makes me wonder how much of the true history of this place you know.”

“Fort Dawnguard?” The paralysis was still encompassing his body, but the tiniest hints of feeling were coming back into his fingertips. Not that it would be of any use; the creature sitting over him was immune to everything he had at his disposal. “Originally owned by the Jarl of Riften back in the Second Era, it was a bit of a black mark on the Hold’s history. I’m merely trying to put it to good use.”

“You can keep talking if you want.” Kaius continued. “If you’re trying to buy yourself time for either someone to come looking for you or for the Thu’um to wear off then feel free.”

Confusion was warring against his burning hatred for the smug-looking being sitting innocently on the chair. They both knew that there was little point in fighting but he wasn’t going to simply give in to the creature.

“Well, how about I simply cut to the chase.” Kaius continued. “Fort Dawnguard was created back in the Second Era when the Son of the Jarl was infected by Vampirism. The Jarl fortified this place, turned it into a prison and his personal guards into the wardens. His daughter; choosing to seek out a cure instead returned with a small army of seasoned vampire hunters and a very specific set of swords.”

Isran remained silent, clenching his jaw and staring at the way Kaius idly dug a finger into a gap where his right incisor had been. “What if I said I could get you the Light of Dawn?”

Surprise and shock burst through his stoic demeanour and despite his predicament Isran couldn’t help but laugh. “The Light of Dawn… It’s a legend – nothing more than a fairy tale. It doesn’t exist.”

“Neither does a vampire than can walk in sunlight.” There was no mistaking the predatory gleam in
Kaius’ eye even despite his missing teeth. “If I retrieve the sword of Maegalla, will you at least let me help out?”

“You can help by cutting your own throat.”

The sigh this time was deeper and showing more of Kaius’ annoyance. “Just because you couldn’t kill me doesn’t mean that I’m going to finish the job for you. Although, I have to admit that this was the closest run fight I have had in over thirty years.”

Unable to do anything else but watch and listen and wait for the paralysis to wear off, Isran was keenly attentive. “What do you get out of this? What purpose could you possibly have with allying yourself with the very group that will kill you?”

“Maybe you will kill me, maybe you won’t. Many others have tried and nearly all have failed. What do I get other than the opportunity for a rematch?” He made the act of thinking long and hard. “As capable as I am, there’s only one of me and untold dozens, if not hundreds of them. Something is going on in Skyrim to stir all the bloodsuckers into these attacks and I will need help to find them, let alone kill them.”

Tapping Isran on his armoured shoulder with a finger; a normal, human finger rather than six centimetre black talons, he leaned over until all Isran could see was the goateed face. “I’ll tell you what. You let me hang around, and not only will I give you Maegalla’s sword but I will also act as your personal attack-dog. If you find a nest that is too numerous, a vampire too ancient, or simply have a job you can’t be bothered doing yourselves, you point me at it. In return you can be my eyes and ears and maybe together we can track these bastards down and stop them from doing to others what they have done to me and my family.”

The chill emanating from the depths of Kaius’ brown eyes was enough to freeze a lake as he watched Isran’s expression. “So, what’s your decision?”

When the sun rose over Dayspring canyon as it had over the centuries past, it slowly illuminated the enormous stone edifice carved into the bones of the mountains themselves. Proud, yet weather beaten and worn from age, the fortress was an impressive sight. For the dozen or so people moving about the base of the towering walls, the huge structure blocked the light for the short hours after dawn but they went about their business of training, fortifying and otherwise preparing for the day ahead.

Isran had suffered through a sleepless night, even for one accustomed to existing with an hour or less each day. Using a combination of restoration magicka, meditation and sheer willpower he had almost cured himself of the need for sleep, but while a vampire lurked in the fortress he would know no true rest.

Kaius for his part had been good to his word, leading the way through the dark passages wormed their way through the rock like veins in flesh. He had patiently waited for Isran’s answer and once the paralysis had worn off he had simply motioned for the hunter to follow and made his way unerringly into the fortress depths. Over the years Isran had explored what he thought had been every nook and cranny that Fort Dawnguard had to offer, mostly to ensure that there was no back entrance or method of entry available to potential enemies. Rock falls of considerable size had
collapsed tunnels in the lower levels, and one of eastern bastions was a tumbled pile of stone and masonry that had ensured that the secondary gate was permanently inaccessible.

At one of the many piles of broken stone Kaius had simply stopped in place and as Isran watched he went about the business of moving the pile until a new passage had been revealed. The underground cavern beyond was partially flooded, the path consisting of raised spires of rock and wooden and metal bridges long since lost to time. For Kaius it wasn’t even a hindrance, merely telling the bemused and wary vampire hunter to wait where he was before flitting off into the darkness with all the agility of his accursed kind.

Isran was half expecting him not to return at all, but as the minutes dragged on the creature had returned from the far end of the cavern and this time carrying a single object wrapped in cloth. Don’t lose it. Kaius had said simply, handing it over to him after clearly hesitating to part with what was obviously a long, curved, double handed sword. And be careful not to cut yourself. The edge is sharper than anything you could have imagined…

The weapon itself was exquisite and it was impossible to keep the surprise and awe hidden. Emerald green flowed and joined with the perfectly polished ebony of the scabbard like ink swirling into water and it was immaculate despite the years it had lain unclaimed in the fort. The edge especially was impressive; a silver-yet-black edge marked with a wavy watermark similar to an Akaviri katana where lights danced and played on the very edges of his vision. It was sharp in the way that only enchantments and anciently powerful magicka could be, and from the merest act of dropping it lightly on a plank of wood had left it sliced in two with perfectly smooth edges from the blade’s passage.

Now Isran stood on top of the western watchtower with Celann by his side, watching as the trio far below them made their way out of the canyon. The length of the Light of Dawn was strapped to his spine where it would remain every waking moment alongside his weighty silver plated Warhammer. There was something comforting about the weapon and while he doubted it was the weapon of legend, it was an exceptional, possibly unique blade.

“It’s a pity they couldn’t have stayed for longer Isran.” Celann said wistfully as he stared at the figures. “They were brightening up the place.”

“That’s because you were thinking with your cock than with your brain.” The growl ripped from Isran’s throat but unlike his old comrade he was feeling a bit more relieved with every step that Kaius took away from the fort with his two companions. While Celann was correct and the two women that had followed Kaius to Fort Dawnguard were attractive; a thrall was a thrall. Every moment they and their master remained with the Dawnguard the greater the threat became.

He hadn’t told any other members of the Dawnguard about Kaius’ true nature, and none of them had been able to discern it for themselves. The blind, idiotic fools… A small part of him understood the reason why Kaius had been so effective at hiding what he truly was; no vampire was ever truly a day walker. Up until he had seen it with his own eyes he had never believed such a thing existed. There were others that could resist the sun’s rays for a short period; The Cyrodiilic Vampyrum Order for one, but they could only do so while freshly fed, for short periods of time and were severely weakened when they did so.

It was a mystery that he was determined to solve, one that he would bend every asset and every fibre of his being into accomplishing. A reckoning was in their mutual futures and he would be even more prepared than he had ever been.

If Kaius returned from Dimhollow in any case…
End Notes

Hah Gron Drem! - Mind Bind Peace

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