

Sunraven Preview

Leo Sunraven, the last of the Sunravens, struggled out of the goblin hole, his body bruised and battered, though compared to the fate of the young adventurers who he was supposed to rescue, he had come out lightly. So much death in such a small, dirty hole. Thirty dead goblins. Five dead adventurers. Five dead horses outside the goblin hole. One quiet forest for Leo to contemplate the terrible events that had happened. His blond hair now covered in mud; his blue eyes shot red from the goblin's trap dust.

Leo began to head back to town. His wounds were light enough for him to be able to walk back. He was tired, dirty, and aching in every joint. Killing goblins in a cramp hole took its toll, even if it wasn't particularly dangerous for someone with as much fighting experience as Leo Sunraven. The forest was dark, even though it was only sunset, the orange light somehow duller than usual.

"So much death" a terrible voice echoed through the forest. Creeping over like death itself, a dark shadow unnaturally rose from the forest floor, drinking the dying sun's light hungrily. Rising up the regal shadow showed the skeletal body beneath, as the most terrifying symbol of death, The Wraith God Whisper. Upon seeing the visage, Leo dropped to his knees, his eyes locked on the floor, knowing that any disrespect would mean death.

"Ah, the Sunravens, the one family that has shaken this world more than any other. Blessed with magical prowess that makes even the goddess of magic Volcania jealous, with enough wit to out manoeuvre the god of war Tactinious, with enough courage to face The Dragon God of Destruction, yet no other god claims you" Whisper said, his voice a dark whisper that echoed throughout the forest like death itself.

"My family keeps its oath" Leo said, his voice barely a whisper.

"Does it now?" Whisper said, throwing an ornate silver dagger at Leo's foot, landing impossibly close to the kneeling man's front foot.

"We have never laid our weapons, we have always fought" Leo said, his voice a little louder than he had hoped to make it.

"So how was she? A real beauty, wasn't she?" Whisper said darkly.

"Don't speak of the dead like that" Leo whispered through gritted teeth.

"Or did you enjoy the boys more? Young and strong" Whisper continued to taunt.

"They didn't deserve to be killed by goblins, let alone defiled" Leo said, his anger welling up.

"Was it good to feel the goblin blood run down your blade? Was it satisfying to hear every last goblin's death wail?" Whisper said mockingly.

"I hate it!" Leo said, raising his head in defiance.

It was too late, for the moment Leo had realised what he had done, he was staring right into Whisper's skeletal face, the black voids of Whisper's eyes mirroring his. Leo hadn't realised how close Whisper had gotten to him in the short period of time they had been talking and was now so close that they were almost touching. Leo felt as the Death God's Dagger lightly pressed itself against his neck, the cold of the steel bringing a chill to his spine.

“That’s what I like about you Sunravens. You are always so courageous, so defiant, so... ready to meet death” Whisper said, his voice darker and more resonant than before.

“I... I suppose you have a job for me” Leo said through gritted teeth, still locking eyes with the god of death and darkness.

“Oh excellent, you are willing to listen” Whisper said, releasing the blade from Leo’s neck.

“I... keep my family’s oath, we still... serve” Leo whispered, lowering his eyes once again.

“Then I will ask you to do the bidding of my darkest aspect, The Tainted Blade.” Whisper said.

Leo closed his eyes and sighed as he breathed. The Tainted Blade was the worst aspect of Whisper, the blade of assassins. Whenever Whisper asked someone to work for the Tainted Blade, death would surely follow. And all the works were evil. Not because Whisper was evil, but because the prayers of the innocents had turned from asking for salvation to the death of their captors. Only truly evil events ever caused the Tainted Blade to bare his fangs.

“More goblins?” Leo asked.

“No, goblins can’t be truly depraved enough. They merely rape and murder.” Whisper stated coldly.

“Worse than... never mind” Leo said in shock.

“Please, a little defiling is pitiful for the darkness you will see” Whisper said with a hollow laugh.

“What are you going to ask me to do?” Leo said, trembling slightly at the dark thoughts.

“You will not return to town. Walk through the forest all night and all day, come dusk tomorrow you will find the place. A place more evil than any goblin hole” Whisper said.

“What could be worse than goblins defiling young adventures?” Leo asked himself.

“A place built on the darkest of love, the love of flesh” Whisper answered darkly.

“I... I will need my equipment” Leo said, resolving himself to Whisper’s demands.

The God of Death didn’t reply, instead vanishing into the early night. Leo turned around to see a neat package of his equipment, his families warbow and greatsword displayed as per the old traditions of war. His armour neatly placed behind his weapons. And beside it a pair of rings, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a cloak, a belt, a small leather bag and an evil looking mask all neatly placed. Whatever it was Leo was about to face, it wouldn’t be in a hole, so the equipment he had left behind, his family’s magical heirlooms, were now in front of him. Knowing he wouldn’t have much time, Leo grabbed the bag and pulled out a glass vial. Leo drank the potion of fortitude in his hand, that would keep him awake for the travel and began to don the armour. There was more death to be had.