

CORRUPTED BLOOD LORD

Chapter 2 - 1: Rebirth

At first, there was only darkness—endless and absolute. Nothingness, where only peace and emptiness existed.

Then something squeezed him — like he was being pushed out of a wet tube. He couldn't breathe. Couldn't scream.

Before all this, his last memory was fire all around. Steel crashing down on him and screaming everywhere. His friend Jonas—

And lastly pain.

But now...he felt something different than pain.

Cold air slammed into his lungs. His chest rose with a wail that wasn't his own.

Tiny limbs flailed around. His hands—were too small. His skin—was too soft. A voice — high and shrill that did not belong to him, yet came from him.

Panic drowned his thoughts.

"What the actual hell is going on!?"

No...no no no, this couldn't be right? An idea, but too absurd to be true.

His new eyes could barely see a blur of red hair. A woman's face, glowing with tears. A man leaning close behind her, jaw dark with stubble, arms thick like a bear's.

"It's a boy, my boy." The man whispered, his voice rumbling with awe. "He's strong, Saldia. Look at him haha."

The woman pressed her cheek to his, crying. "My Teclos..."

He couldn't understand anything yet but he felt sure that it was his new name.

Not David.

Not the name his mother once whispered when he came home late from school.

His limbs were weak. His voice was trapped in baby screams. His old life — parents, brother, Jonas — was gone.

"This doesn't make sense! This has to be a dream, right?" His thoughts were in disarray and panic.

But this wasn't a dream.

After accepting that he had, in fact, been reborn, he tried to adapt to the absurdity of his new reality.

The first year was rough for David, controlling his emotions as a baby was a monumental task. Hell, he couldn't even stop himself from exploding in his diaper, let alone his emotions.

Every sad thought? Tears

Every angry thought? More tears

And flexing muscles out of frustration? Well... let's just say his new parents had a lot of cleaning to do.

"Seriously, how much shit can you produce from this tiny body, Teclos?"

Still, he did manage to get a little better by the time he turned one – at least somewhat.

Somewhere after that first year, between helpless naps and drool-covered cloths, David – now Teclos – began observing his surroundings instead of constantly crying.

The world was strange...it felt wrong.

If he could describe it, the sky was clearer somehow, more vivid. Trees shimmered faintly at night, glowing with a soft blue or green hue.

Even animals looked...different. Some birds for example had four wings, mice scurried by with three pairs of eyes.

Everything was strange

And then there were people... people could control the elements with a flick of their wrists or some sort of incantation.

The first time he saw it was through a window, in his new mothers arms.

He watched his new father, Talmir, raise his hand and the wind began to move.

Causing it to spin, like a vortex.

Nothing spectacular – just a breeze to lift the dried clothing in to the basket – but enough to shatter every law of physics David had known.

He was in a world of magic.

Fantasy stories he read had lied, he realized. There were no golden screens, no stats, no godly voices giving quests.

Just full diapers, confusion and trying not to lose his sanity by learning a new language.

There was also a bit of excitement ofcourse, magic...real magic that he – most likely –could learn. Because soon after his father, he saw other people perform magic in their daily lives as well.

At most evenings though, when the stars came out, and when it got dark, he was reminded of the past – of what he had lost...family, friends, heck there's not even a TV anywhere. No technology – meaning a completley new world to adapt to.

It was still hard controling his emotions, so most of that time he still cried – silently – for his parents back on Earth. For Jonas. For Harold. For the ordinary life he'd thought was so dull.

But every time he cried, a pair of warm arms wrapped around him.

And because of that at the age of three, he opened up to "Mom" a bit more.

Her name was Saldia, and she was a warm and kind woman.

Fierce sometimes but also patient.

She taught Teclos with rough but warm hands and the occasional sharp rebuke.

Most of her lessons would be new words, house work, herbs and ointments.

"Even thorns have uses," she'd say, pressing his fingers to a wild herb's sharp leaves.

Startled he pulled his hand away, but there was no pain.

Saldia chuckled and said. "This one numbs pain. Remember that."

She spoke to him every day about different things, which was quite helpful for Teclos learning the language.

Saldia was also very beautiful, so thinking of his future he finally might have a shot at being called handsome and not just average.

When he turned three, she started teaching him a bit more — not just words.

For instance, she had him help grind powders for ointments or brew simple herbal teas.

He was clumsy at first, knocking over jars or dropping spoons onto the ground, the typical small baby hands and poor coordination trouble.

"Dammit! These stupid hands!", he'd curse under his breath, frustrated by his own tiny fingers.

Later, his homework doubled — shelving ointments, Bottling powders or herbs, reciting the names of different roots out loud with proper pronunciation, She also began teaching him how to read and write from an old and tattered herbalist book that smelled of lavender and ash.

More than anything, she taught him how to adapt to this world and how to cherish these small moments.

One day, while chopping a wild root in their small kitchen, she said, "You always look so sad when the sun sets."

He froze and stoped reading.

She didn't press. Didn't ask why, most likely thinking it was something trivial.

She handed him a clove, and said.

"You will always be my baby, Talmir and i will always care for you. So when you get sad, you can lean on us."

He didn't respond.

But in that moment, something inside him opened — completely.

At the age of four he got to know Talmir a bit more — his new father.

Talmir was harder to read. Stoic. Quiet. Strong.

You could tell he was a former militia man.

He looked effortlessly cool in his hunting gear — like a seasoned monster slayer straight out of a fantasy tale.

Mom told Teclos that he was respected in Kolma as one of the best hunters.

He moved with the ease of someone used to killing, but never brought that weight into their home.

He didn't say much.

But he showed alot.

He fixed their roof after a storm, muttering curses at the wind which didn't want to listen.

He crafted bows and knives quietly on the porch, letting Teclos sit nearby to watch — even handing him scraps to carve on his own.

Showed how to clean his gear, how to sharpen a sword.

They'd walk into the woods together. But they would never see animals, strangely enough, though Teclos suspected that Talmir only took him along the safe paths.

Talmir mostly spoke during the outings.

He pointed out tracks, showed him how to walk silently, how to lower his presence.

One evening in the woods Talmir suddenly asked. "Do you want to learn something new boy?"

Teclos was confused by the sudden question but was eager for a new lesson so he nodded, Talmir then sat cross-legged in the grass, closed his eyes, and placed a hand on his chest.

"What i'm about to teach you are the basics of mana and mana manipulation so listen well."

Seeing Teclos nod again he started to explain.

"Before anything else, it begins with your breathing. Feel the mana around you, then the mana within your body—and finally, draw the surrounding mana inward."

Teclos tried...and failed.

Noticing his struggle, he explained further.

"Each of us is attuned to only one type of mana, so focus on the one that feels most familiar—the one that listens to you."

Teclos tried again and failed again.

But eventually, through Talmir's calm encouragement and guidance, something stirred.

It wasn't wind or light—but something else.

Something deeper. Colder and murkier.

Like ink spreading through water, it seeped into him.

He shivered but since nothing much happened he got confused.

Talmir looked happy for once with a smile on his face, "Well done boy, what you just felt was a bit of mana gathering in your body." He said patting him on the head

"Now remember these three locations in your body where mana gathers: the abdomen, the heart, and the head. For now, guide it only toward your abdomen until it is full. Then I will teach you further."

Excited Teclos immersed himself in to training and after two months of constant mana gathering.

Saldia noticed the way the shadows around Teclos stretched too long when he passed through doorways.

That light seemed to dim in the corners when he was upset.

After noticing that she spoke with Talmir and they exchanged a look.

That night, they brought him to Father Pella, the village's old priest of the Dawn Church.

Pella was a kind-eyed, frail-looking old man with long, white, disheveled hair and a full beard. He was dressed in white robes that smelled of lavender and leather.

They explained the situation about Teclos and requested for an aptitude test, so Pella had him sit quietly while he drew a sign on a parchment and then lit a thin candle.

The flame flickered.

Then dimmed.

And then lastly, it blackened. The flame was still there—only now it was pitch black.

The priest didn't panic. But his eyes widened.

He leaned forward and gently took Teclos's hand. "Darkness," he said softly. "He's aligned with the darkness."

Saldia's fingers gripped Talmir's hand tightly. Talmir remained still, but his jaw opened and with a heavy voice he asked "how can that be?"

Pella smiled gently. "It's rare," he said. "Don't worry...although it's unusual to find darkness in the living. It's not cursed to have such mana and it's not evil. But it is... misunderstood and can be discriminated against."

They thanked Pella and excused themselves. They were silent on the walk back home.

That night, Teclos watched the moonlight spill across his floor.

For the first time, he wasn't thrilled about being the "main character." Judging by the look Talmir and Saldia had once they knew.

Offcourse he knew that they were just worried about his health and well being but...

His affinity wasn't fire, or wind, or lightning.

It was darkness.

Although father Pella reassured them nothing was wrong and it was just a magic affinity, Teclos knew how discriminating humans can be towards the unknown. Especially an organization like a church.

At the age of five, Talmir began training Teclos in earnest.

Each day soon settled into a steady rhythm. Mornings were devoted to meditation – breathing exercises and the slow, patient gathering of mana. By midday, Teclos would accompany Saldia into the fields and forest edges, learning the names of herbs, their scents, and the subtle symptoms of poisoning. He ground powders, bottled tinctures, and spent long hours reading candle-lit books under her watchful eye.

The afternoons belonged to Talmir. They went on long walks or endured drills together – running until his legs trembled, practicing posture and stances with a wooden sword or bow until every movement became deliberate.

Evenings were quieter. Dinner, small talk, the comfort of routine. And once each week, they visited Father Pella for blessings, guidance, and spiritual and health checkups.

After countless repetitions, the mana in his core was almost filled to the brim – and Talmir decided it was time for another lesson.

"Guide the mana into your core, in the abdomen like always." Talmir said. "Once that is done, we will start making a circle out of all that mana."

"A circle?" Teclos asked.

"Yes," Talmir replied. "It's the foundation for releasing and manipulating mana. First, you must spin the gathered energy in a controlled way – fast, steady. At a certain point, the mana will merge with you, forming a circle that marks the birth of a one-circle mage."

The word "mage" made Teclos's eyes sparkle.

"To come this far at the age of five," Talmir said, smiling faintly, "you've made me very proud, son. Though forming a circle is harder than gathering mana, once it's complete... you'll feel like a new person."

From that day on, Teclos practiced relentlessly – spinning his mana every day until, at the age of six, he finally succeeded. His first circle was complete.

And with it came his first memorable encounter from the village.

It was during an early spring gathering, a village-wide feast after a successful winter hunt.

Children darted between tables, mouths full, hands sticky with berry sauce and roast drippings. Teclos stood off to the side, watching them with a distant frown.

Mostly every one knew he had the darkness attribute, so he kept his distance from others.

But then he suddenly felt a quick tap to his shoulder.

"Why're you overe here, brooding like an old man?"

He turned.

A boy about his age. Taller by a hair, serious brown eyes, smudge of charcoal on his cheek. A half-smirk that said he meant no harm but definitely wanted to challenge someone.

His name was Gillard.

Teclos was stunned and before he could reply, another kid stumbled over carrying too many rolls of bread. "Oi, Gillard i brought you food, oh and im just wondering...can you eat like three pigs or what?"

The kid with the rolls had wide blue eyes, messy hair, and the kind of lopsided grin only a genuine clown could wear.

The village trouble maker Ralph.

"Here," Ralph said, tossing him a roll too.

He caught it on instinct. Looked down.

Still warm, soft and fresh.

He took a bite and smiled.

"Thanks."

They had a small chat – besides introductions, they shared their dreams, like wanting to be Hunters.

He didn't know it yet, but that moment – awkward and offhand – would be carved into his bones forever.