

A Triple Tragedy: The Tale of the Falmilgaar Family Betrayal (Book 3/3)

Dayrl had heard of a camp setting up north near Windhelm which was recruiting for a group known as "The Companions", a Nordic group that was known for their ferocity—something he thought he would be greatly interested in. While his brother Balthorn headed west in search of rediscovering himself (whom would eventually happen upon a massacre), he would head north to Windhelm and seek out this camp. Little did he know just how right he was about his family being destined to hunt down the night dwellers, and little did he know, that he was about to embark on his own adventure...

The night was cool and a gentle mist could be seen covering the outskirts of the town. Piercing yellow eyes could be seen staring intently toward the hamlet. The beast's breath was noticeable as it exhaled. As it slowly inched forward closer to what it was so focused on, twigs from underneath its feat cracked. A young girl was playing in the late hours outside with a bunny her father had trapped for her. She was petting the furry little critter when a looming shadow swallowed her. She looked up...

A high pitched scream was heard echoing throughout the small town. Flustered townsmen rushed outside to see what the source of the terrifying sound was. A small circle of people gathered around a caged bunny that had been splattered with blood and a torn blood stained dress that belonged to the innocent young girl. From the back of the crowd, a loud yell of denial was heard and an elderly woman dropped to her knees with her hands covering her face while her husband placed his hand on her shoulder. The crowd not knowing how to comfort the woman and her husband slowly approached her and offered what little solace they were able to.

A very muscular man in his mid-twenties a few days later rode his mighty steed through the quite hamlet of Kynesgrove. Eyes stared at him taking in his paladin like steel armor which was adorned with a blue hem. The sun glistened off of it and irritated the watery eyes of the local townsfolk. He rode proud, much like a paladin would and emitted a confident aura all around. He came to a halt as his path was suddenly blocked by a rather upset looking older man. "What is it sir?" the confident Wayrl asked. "You look like a mercenary for hire or an adventurer needing something to do-either way you can handle business and I have business for you if you are interested", said the aged fellow. "What is your name and what is your business?" asked Wayrl. "My name is, Gorenth Agmund and I am looking to hire a hunter. Our town has become prey recently to a werewolf. We have suffered many losses." Wayrl responded, "I'm on my way toward Windhelm, but I'll do what I can to aid you. What can you tell me of the beast?" "He is rather large and crafty" responded Gorenth, "it seems he has only recently moved in nearby as the attacks started about three weeks ago. We were able keep him out a few times, but he is becoming more persistent. Just a few nights back he attacked Maggie, a little girl of only 7

who was out playing with her pet rabbit. No one else was out so he took her, all that remained was a terrified rabbit and a piece of her blood stained dress." Wayrl suffered a horrible flashback of his mother having her throat torn out by the same type of creature. He closed his eyes and shook his head. "What else can you tell me?" he asked. Gorenth reluctantly shrugged his shoulders, "that's about it. We are not sure where he is coming from or why he is hunting us. There is a cave to the east of here, we suspect he may be hiding there but none of us are equipped enough to handle such a threat." "Leave it to me." Wayrl responded, "I'll handle it." Gorenth looked up to him and smiled. "We'll pay you well." Wayrl didn't even give him a nod upon hearing this; he simply rode forward towards Windhelm.

 $\mathbb{T}$  the crafty hunter always felt that he had an upper advantage over his enemies. His head strong attitude never allowed him to fail. Even when faced with the most dire of circumstances, he never doubted in his own skill, and he always saw himself as being victorious (it's for those very traits that he has been able to survive in such a rugged career path: Hunter). He assumed he would meet with the Companions and enlist their aid to hunt down the werewolf—that they would help him track it and kill it. In a way, he was right. After a few days of travel he reached Windhelm and it didn't take long for him to find the temporary camp setup of the Companions. He greeted them and they him, and he asked to learn more about them. In particular, a fellow stood out that had obviously seen his fair share of battles. "My name is Farkas, brother. What is it you want to know about us?" "I have heard you guys are looking to recruit some muscle" said Wayrl. "Indeed we are" answered Farkas, "but first we gotta' see if you're as good as you think you are." The Companions explained that he would need to beat a challenger of their choosing and then they would

consider taking him on board. Wayrl was eager to show them what he was capable of doing.

Inside a circle surrounded by bones, an area referred to as "the pit" that the Companions had made outside of their camp, stood Wayrl and his challenger, a barbarian of a man named Horrith. The Companions stood outside the pit of bones and citizens of Windhelm also joined the spectacle. The fight commenced. Horrith cracked his knuckles inside a tightly clenched fist to signal he was ready, while Wayrl simply bowed his head-never taking his eye off of his opponent (just like he and his brother would start every sparring session). Horrith let out a barbarian war cry and charged at Wayrl. Wayrl waited for a moment for the time to execute his first strike. When the barbarian was close enough, Wayrl crouched low and using the force of a pivot inward toward his opponent was able to successfully strike the beast of a man in the gut with a tight fist. The air in Horrith's lungs was forced out and he staggered a bit to the side trying to keep distance between himself and Wayrl. But Wayrl wouldn't have it, being a seasoned fighter, he knew never to let up. He dashed towards Horrith and kicked him in the back of the knee causing Horrith to lean back. As Horrith was trying to stand back up straight, his face was met with a downward hammer-fist that finished knocking him back on the flat of his back. All the spectators gasped in awe at how quickly and precisely the expert fighter was able to execute his technique. While Horrith was down, Wayrl straddled his right leg and picked up Horrith's right foot. He twisted his body locking Horrith's leg between his own two legs and applied pressure to the foot downward causing extreme pain for the humbled barbarian. With enough pressure he could easily snap the leg, but he didn't go that far, he just applied enough to immobilize the large man.

De looked out toward the crowd and eyed Farkas waiting for him to signal that the fight was over. Farkas was taken back a bit at how quickly the fight was over and responded as soon as his shocked expression was able to fade away from his face. "You got yourself a place here friend." After hearing this, Wayrl released the trapped leg of his opponent and all could hear a sigh of relief come from Horrith who was in no hurry to stand up. "Where did you learn to fight like that?" Farkas asked. "My brother and I created this fighting style." He responded. The Companions were very interested in taking on this young lad as their own and learning from him while offering to teach him what they could as well. However, Wayrl would not show them everything that he and his brother have developed; they told each other long ago that these secret techniques give them the advantage in any situation and to let them out of their inner circle would prove detrimental. No, he would only show them a few of the basics—which would impress them enough. "I will be happy to teach you." He said, "but you'll need to assist me with a favor as well." "What is that?" Farkas replied. "Just south of here, a town known as Kynesgrove has recently fallen victim to a werewolf. I would like to request the help of your guild to dispatch the beast for them. A few of your fighters and myself should be able to track and kill it quick enough-you can even keep the payment." Farkas, rubbed his chin in contemplation while the other Companions looked on eagerly waiting on how he would respond. Then he spoke, "Consider it done. That isn't the type of job we usually take, but money is money. Rest with us at camp tonight and tomorrow we'll venture to Kynesgrove and see what we can do." Wayrl nodded and did not notice the skeptical looks the rest of the Companions were suddenly wearing.

Bhile Wayrl rested his head in his private tent, sleeping next to his silver sword (given as a gift the same time Balthorn received his silver sword from their father's friend after the funeral), Farkas was investigating into the werewolf matter that Wavrl spoke of. Farkas had heard of recent attacks at other towns they camped near as well and he suspected the worse -a companion had begun "hunting" on his own. There is a code amongst the Companions that hunts should not harm the innocent, but rather their prey, and only their prey. Even if a traveler were to happen upon them, they should do their best to avoid the need to kill him (unless of course he were a hunter). This is why some people who have happened upon a beast of the night was able to live and tell about it-though afraid, they were never in danger. Farkas had grown suspect of a fellow brother named Bastion but wasn't positive. He had a problem however, that was as bold as a bright new moon: If it was in fact a Companion that was murdering nearby villagers, there was a huge chance that the Companion's "blessing" might be exposed—which would damage the whole guild—this could not be Allowed.

J arkas being unsure about the identity of the werewolf and suspecting it
to be one of his own could not risk killing the beast as Wayrl had wanted to,
however in order to appease Wayrl (an exceptional candidate) he would have
to come up with a plan. He met with the other select few Companions that
were inside "the Circle" and came up with a scheme. He would enter into
his werewolf form the next day and would send Wayrl and a couple others to
accompany him to Kynesgrove. That night, while in his beast form, he
would make an appearance and scare the hell out of the townsmen, he would
make it convenient for Bastion Arithol−his close friend and fellow
Companion in the inner circle (as well as suspected murderer) to attack him
out in the woods. He'll howl and Bastion will dip his blade in deer's blood
to complete the effect. Bastion will then emerge before Wayrl or anyone else
are able to see the beast make his way back to safety upon the hill behind the
woods. By doing this, Farkas would be able to read Bastion's reactions
(as well as see if he acted familiar with the area) and appease Wayrl and

help the villagers feel safer. A good plan it was and all agreed on it. Also, they would make some quick coin too! That is always a plus in any situation.

The next day Wayrl was eager to head out and setup near Kynesgrove. Farkas told him that he was going to stay at camp and monitor the new recruitments, but he was sending a couple of his best fighters along with Wayrl to aid in dispatching the werewolf. Farkas figured if Wayrl proved himself over time that he would slowly introduce the topic of lycanthrope and maybe, hopefully after Wayrl grew closer to the guild he would at least be a little interested in receiving the same blessing they enjoyed. Keeping a fighter as skilled as Wayrl would benefit the guild no doubt and Farkas knew it. Wayrl nodded and along with Bastion and another Companion set out toward Kynesgrove.

They quickly setup an operations camp just outside the town and waited for nightfall. Wayrl tracked down Gorenth and told him the plan. "Tonight we will rid you of your werewolf menace if we are lucky enough that he show himself." Gorenth was over joyed at the sound of that. The time came, night grew upon them and Wayrl along with the two Companions took their places. Wayrl would watch the south side of town, while Bastion would watch the east side (which faced some woods as well the mountain hills that Farkas would make his escape into. Farkas had already set the deer blood in place earlier that day.) And the 2<sup>nd</sup> Companion, Brendal (who was unaware of the inner circle) kept watch of the north and west sides. They waited for sun to finish setting and Brendal and Wayrl said silent prayers for the beast to please make an appearance. They're prayer's would be answered, but not by any deity.

As was planned Farkas (now as a werewolf) came rushing down the mountain making horrendous growling sounds. The townsmen ran inside with haste and peeked out their windows to see if the hired mercenaries would in fact be able to dispatch their local demon. Bastion caught site of the beast, "damn it! I see him, he's coming! I'm going in!" Wayrl hollered for him to stop so he could aid him, but Bastion had already taken off. Wayrl and Brendal went running after him. From within the woods, a loud howl could be heard. The sword was dipped in blood and Farkas made his way up the hill-top to safety with the furious speed of Hircine's curse. Bastion strolled out in a confident, yet exhausted manner. Wayrl and Brendal saw him and his sword, which was covered in blood. They looked at him in disbelief. Before they could say anything a local saw the three and the blood that was dripping down the silver edge of the sword. Bastion smiled at the local and raised his sword high in the air for all the locals to be witness of his great dead. The locals were thrilled and threw a feast for the three in their local inn, Braidwood Inn. The feast was great and mead was in plenty. However, during all the celebrating Wayrl had an uneasy gut feeling, everything was too simple. After the payment was dispersed and celebration came to an end, the inn keeper offered the three a place to stay for free. A soft bed was a lot better than a hay pile in a tent and all thanked him and headed toward their rooms. Later however, Wayrl did sneak out and attempt to explore the area that Batsion had come from when he declared victory. He never found a body, but there was an area covered in blood (Farkas threw the bucket of deer blood out, and splattered an area of foliage to enhance the effect.) Further, Wayrl noticed Bastion's sword was made out of silver, so if he injured the werewolf that badly, surely the animal crawled somewhere and died... surely.

If only Waryl had stayed a bit longer to observe the area, he would have seen a glorious beast—Farkas—quietly lurking, sniffing, and investigating the area himself. While in the form of the wolf his senses were so much keener than a mere man's. He was on to something. What was it? A scent—a faint scent, but still recognizable. That was a problem. He recognized it. It was of his close friend Bastion. Since the smell was faint, that proved Bastion had been in the area before and this scent was not of a man, but of a wolf—a werewolf. Farkas was truly hurt and even wanted to deny it, but the scent was there. The evidence was literally overwhelming him. He would have to remedy this situation somehow.

Hany weeks have past now and Wayrl and Farkas were developing a nice friendship. Wayrl was enjoying the company of the Companions and completely agreed with their way of life. He enjoyed being hired as a mercenary and fighting for whatever cause—just so long as he was fighting. He traveled around with the recruitment camp and stopped near various towns and villages to bring on new blood. His was very excited that the recruitment venture was almost over and the he would be able to travel to Whiterun with the Companions and join them at their base in Jorrvaskr. The recruitment party was planning to travel south of Skyrim near Falkreath and head up toward Whiterun from there. One thing bothered our young hero however, he did hear stories from locals of whatever part he was staying at tell of unusual werewolf attacks (as did Farkas). Further, he never felt one hundred percent sure about the situation in Kynesgrove. But he set his feelings aside and continued with the Companions. The excitement of heading south was showing on Wayrl's face. He would be closer to home and he was planning on visiting his and his brother's home that they built not very far from their parents' house. He was sure his brother would be back from his trip and was eager to see him again after all this time.

But his excitement was short lived. The recruitment campaign had been a success and guite a few new young warriors had joined the Companions' guild. They were on their way to Whiterun and decided to settle down near Riverwood for a week or two. Growing weary of the same old scenery of camp tents, Wayrl took a trip up into Riverwood and saw again a somber setting. Townsmen were huddled around a little cross made of wood that had been placed near the river that flows through Riverwood. He could easily see by the attire that this was a funeral. He overheard of the loss of a man not much younger than himself who was engaged recently. His name was Arlan Egil, an elf who asked a lovely young local Imperial, Angelica Oceana to marry him. He was cleaning his clothes by the stream during night and the beast struck. Wayrl's heart sank, he's heard about too many attacks that seem to be following this camp.....He began to suspect at least one of his new found friends was holding a dark secret. A few at the funeral saw the tall and muscular young Wayrl just briefly before he left. His heart grew angry. Someone was going to pay. He began watching the members closer and would ask uncomfortable questions. He didn't care, he was a very direct individual and when something was off, he was quick to find it.

A decisive Farkas saw his greatest candidate growing suspicious and had heard the questions he was asking. Farkas knew that Wayrl was on to his once close friend Bastion. As much as it hurt him, he knew what had to be done. Bastion had strayed and gone against the oaths he swore and the honor of the Companions. He had lost the inner fight all those of the blessing struggle against and his beast side had taken completely over (a risk all the Inner Circle had to face). He had to be killed. By killing Bastion and ensuring the safety of the innocent he would be able to redeem his honor since this was his friend (he felt he should have known) and this took place on his watch. Also, by eliminating the unstable hunter, he would be able to preserve the Companion's name—no one would know or associate the Companion's with the murders that took place. De would be unable to expose Bastion out publicly as this would lead on to the Companion's deepest secret, also it was best to not be directly involved—in his position it was best to keep his hands clean. He knew the better plan instead was to somehow tip off Waryl, since he was already suspect of Bastion and one of the few recruits with the fighting skills to take on a werewolf. He simply left a note in the night in front of Wayrl's tent that read: "You are correct in your suspicions. It is Bastion, he's a servant of Hircin, a murderer, and a risk to all of us (which was true, just not as Wayrl understood it). Watch out for him." The letter was signed, "A friend."

Dayrl kept an eye on Bastion. A few days went by when he noticed Bastion leaving the camp-quite late in fact. Bastion was heading towards Embershard mine-usually a bandit hang-out. He quietly followed Bastion using the skills he had practiced with his brother during Hide and Seek. Wayrl was always just a tad bit better at it than his brother-in fact he enjoyed the stealth approach so much that he dabbled in the arcane arts of illusion focusing primarily on invisibility. He loved to quietly sneak up on his brother and scare him when they weren't playing. His brother after the initial scare would laugh about it—he enjoyed it too. Bastion started going into a rage and began ripping off his clothes. He ran into the mine and an all too familiar sound for Wayrl that he still has nightmares about was heard echoing from within the mine-a werewolf howl. Shortly after that, the raging beast burst out of the mine and ran towards Riverwood-he was hungry, and he was hunting his next victim. "Not this time." Wayrl muttered under his breath. He followed the beast-preying on the stalkerhe followed just outside of Riverwood. The beast's breath could be heard... ...an eerie heaving moments before screams of terror. Bastion had spotted a young Imperial lady laying flowers at the wooden cross-the burial site of her now deceased fiancé. She was Angelica. The beast wasted no time at all in ravaging across the distance between him and her. She was barely able to scream as he picked her up and ran off with her in the direction of the mine. Her scream was still strong enough to wake up the locals, but by

then it was too late. By the time the locals stepped outside of their humble homes, her screaming was off in the distance growing fainter. They weren't even sure where it was coming from. Wayrl did however, he knew exactly where from.

 $\mathfrak{W}$  ith haste equal to that of the beast he was hunting, he followed it back to the mine. The werewolf had plans to enjoy his midnight snack in this place, but Wayrl had different plans for the cursed creature. Visions of his mother played over and over again in his mind. "No, no more." he said. Inside the mine, the creature tossed the lovely and terrified young lady up against the wall, his mouth opened wide letting out a roar as saliva slowly dripped down his jaw. His arms were spread and his claws were stretched out-he was ready for the kill, but then again, so was Wayrl. Wayrl jumped toward the large beast and drove his silver sword straight through the back of the monster. As soon as the shock was over, Bastion turned and back fisted Wayrl. Still, the sword was sticking out of his belly. The beast and Wayrl were squared off against one another. It was an ultimate deadly encounter. The monster lunged at Wayrl with a snarl and Waryl rolled out of the way. He found a pick axe lying nearby and swung it heavily into the chest of the werewolf. Not being silver, it hurt but didn't do severe damage to the monster. Angelica took no time at all to find an escape and dashed for the exit of the mine.

After jamming the pickaxe into the chest of Bastion, Wayrl lunged shoulder first in to the werewolf. As soon as his shoulder hit the werewolf's shoulder he spun behind him keeping close proximity. Once he was completely behind him, he withdrew his sword. The beast howled from pain and jumped away. It extended its claws again and quickly dashed to the right of Wayrl, our hero took a swing, but was unable to deliver as the creature jumped off his landing point and lunged again. The monster was able to knock the blade from Wayrl's hand. The beast rammed into Wayrl as he tried to recover his sword, knocking him back against a table. Wayrl, quickly drew his little silver dagger (the same dagger he used to attack the werewolf that murdered his mother). Bastion again lunged toward what he thought was a helpless Wayrl. As Bastion landed near the table he used all his might to tear in to and crush...nothing? Bastion in a panick looked around. From out of a corner a dagger came flying at him and jammed itself in his throat (Wayrl had cloaked himself in shadows!) An almost demonic growl was heard. As the beast took a step back Wayrl tried to kick the dagger deeper in, but Bastion was able to knock it out first. Still, that is two silver attacks on the werewolf and he was beginning to feel weak. Wayrl took notice of this and leapt at the opportunity he saw. He barrel rolled past the side of the monster and jumped on his back. He squeezed the monster's waste with his legs as tight as he could. He reached in front of the monster and found the hole that the dagger had made while lodged in his throat. He grabbed onto opposite sides of the wound and began pulling it to opposite directions with every ounce of strength he had.

The beast tried to slam him against the wall. He would jump backwards toward the wall crushing Wayrl who was riding his back. Wayrl, though in pain remained unfazed. He continued tearing the wound wider, and wider. As he began to hear the skin rip, the beast let out an enormous growl which was choked off by grunts of pain. Wayrl leaned in close to his ear and said "I will be the bane of your kinds' existence. This I promise you!" With that Waryl let out his own monstrous growl which rivaled that of the beast he was riding. With his last burst of energy he was able to rip open the throat of the beast. He felt the muscles of Bastion go limp and shortly after that, the monster fell to the ground. Wayrl was heaving in and out heavily. He picked up his sword and sat down while leaning back on a wall—he was exhausted. He closed his eyes and slowly drifted off. He had dreams of his mother.

As daylight began showing itself through the windows of the doors to the mine, Wayrl stood. The mining doors opened and a few of the townsmen had made their way to the mine, but didn't enter for fear of the werewolf. Out came a tired, but proud Wayrl. He stood tall with his sword at his side and a fairly large bag draped over his shoulder. They asked him if he was alright, but he didn't even acknowledge they were there. He walked into Riverwood carrying the bag and a small gathering began to follow him. He stepped into the Sleeping Giant Inn. As he stepped in, he was met with solemn eyes. A few patrons stood up as if to greet him, but he ignored them. He walked over to the large table in the center of the Inn which was covered with mead and slammed the bag on the table. Without a word he opened the bag and out rolled a severed werewolf head. Nothing but gasps could be heard. Everyone looked to him. He spoke, "this is the end of your werewolf menace." The inn keeper spoke up and offered him a reward for killing the monster. First, she asked him his name. He stood there for a moment staring at the head on the table. He had memories of his mother, of his father and his sister. He felt a burning hatred for his newly found friends-who obviously covered up the events at Kynesgrove and lied to him. He felt hurt. It was clear to him what he was becoming. He was no longer the child that lost his mother, he was no longer the teen that trained with his brother. He was no longer a man that hunted beast. He was a beast. He was a beast full of rage that would haunt him for the rest of his life-a rage he was more than willing to welcome. He recalled the promise he made to the monster before tearing out its throat. He looked up toward the inn keeper, "I am Bane". The inn keeper poured what money she had into a coin pouch and offered it to him. He looked around and saw all the faces in awe of him. He then narrowed his view back on the inn keeper. He touched her on the shoulder in a friendly manner and said, "keep your money. The pleasure I get in killing these things is more than reward enough". With that he took his leave. Once he left, the inn was filled with silence. Standing in the back there were two hunters adorned with elaborate armor and silver swords. Their armor had very distinguished claw marks and their belts and arm wrappings boasted of werewolf teeth-Silver Hands. They simply looked at

each other, smiled and nodded.

J arkas got word of this. He was relieved that the pressure he was faced with was finally gone—the deed had been done, the burden had been removed. However, he was grieved by the loss of his friend, and in regards to Wayrl, he felt a strong feeling of uneasiness. He knew Wayrl would be on to the fact that a trick had been played on him and the villagers of Kynesgrove. That would hurt. That would lead to feelings of Betrayal, and those feelings could be the seeds that would give birth to a deep hatred—something not to be taken lightly. Farkas sat alone as he pondered about what type of holy savage he possibly had a hand in making.

As he was looking forward to earlier, Wayrl headed east-toward home. It didn't take long for him to reach his destination. He was happy to rest his weary head on his pillow finally. For the first time in a couple months he slept well. Within a few days his brother Balthorn appeared off in the distance. He was dressed in his black armor and sporting a new ebony blade strapped to his back. The sword had runic text inscribed on it that glowed in the early hours of the morning. Wayrl looked toward the sky and witnessed a lovely sunrise. He loved the daytime. He was thankful that he was a creature of light that could live amongst the living without dark secrets. He burned with a hatred of the Companions, he burned with a hatred for the hairy beast that prey on humans. He smiled at his brother, as he approached closer. He was willing to accept his change—a fact that he ust realized. He finally understood. He and his brother weren't really human after all. But from their life, early on they slowly changed. They were in a way, monsters themselves-monsters that would instill a new kind of terror across Skyrim; terror that the horrors of the night would feel at last. This is the story of a burning hate, this is the story of a betrayal that gave birth to a new breed of hunter, this is the story... of Bane.

## $\mathfrak{A}$ note from the author:

This completes the trilogy. Many stories can be found throughout Skyrim in many a tavern of these three. I have taken it upon myself in my free time to separate the fact from the fiction and find the truths of the Falmilgaar family and the tragedies that they have endured. After many interviews and much research, I believe I have now an accurate record of the events that took place. I wish to remain unknown as I am of no significant importance. But I will say this: during these dark times in Skyrim when travelers need beware the many horrible random encounters that can occur,

I am fortunate enough to have lived in the time of these special three people—the protectors that have gone through so much, give so much, and ask for nothing in return. Eventually the sands of time will run its course and their story will have faded away. This is why I have written their story here. I hope that somehow, they will find it, and they will find solace in that their story has been told. They deserve at least that.

## The End

