Powers Entwined

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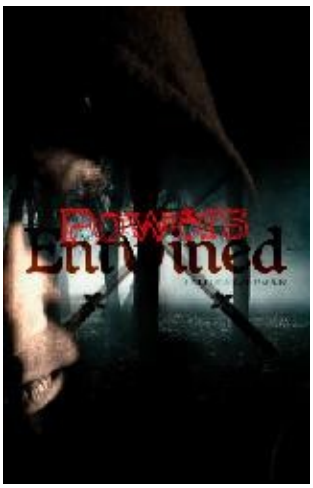
This is a story of magic and adventure. Five teenagers have to save the world, after a mysterious person sets darkness over it and they are the only ones who are not effected by it. Everyone else is in a coma-like sleep. They must learn to control their powers and save the world, as well as wake the other humans. Copyright Â© 2010 by Marcin All rights reserved. Published by Marcin Works. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher. First Edition 1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2 This book is set in 12-point Arial. Printed in Canada If any Name, Place, Event, or other part of this story resembles anything from real life it is entirely incidental unless stated in any interview, printed piece, or recorded clip.



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Chapter 1: Prologue

Prologue

His black velvet cloak trailed behind him as he swept down the long dark hallway. The hallway was made of dark stone - andesite, and was lit at long irregular intervals by torches, causing erratic shadows which brought an eerie feel to the place. The hallway stretched for a long way, with doors placed seemingly randomly along the sides.

At last the man, who was clad in leather armour, reached the end of the hallway, as well as a door. He entered through it and arrived in an almost empty room.

The walls and roof were a smooth, shiny glass-like rock - obsidian. The floor remained andesite and in the center of the room stood a pedestal. On the pedestal lay a book. It was burned in places, torn, and was overall tattered, but it was wrapped in chains and emanated power.

The man seemed to diminish in power, but he drew a deep breath and walked forward, but was flung back when he got close to it. He picked himself up and stalked out of the room, slamming the door shut behind him. He stalked quickly down the hallway to another door. He flung that one open and entered the room.

It was plain andesite with a table against the wall and a chair. In that chair sat a man who was writing feverishly. He was quite small with white hair and a small, fragile posture. His small hands flew over the parchment with a raven feather quill and deep blue ink.

Just as the leather clad man reached him, the white-haired man opened a rift in the air and threw the letter through it. The first man reached out and managed to rip a piece of the parchment off.

"-teach them any advanced ones. They must find them by themselves," he read, "otherwise they will go their own way. Stay on land. Signed Azyynell. Teach who what?" The man asked in his deep, growl-like voice.

"Runes, Verion. Runes that can counter those in your wretched book." Azyynell told him boldly.

"And how do you know these runes? And I repeat; who?" Verion asked coldly.

"Those who stand in your way. And I know these runes from my study of magic. I would think you of all people would know that." Azyynell matched the coldness Verion had given him.

"You worthless 'good' magician! I hired you to teach me how to get to the book! Not spy on me and help my enemies!" Verion said venomously.

"And I just have." Azyynell pulled out a knife, "But I wont be here to see it." and he plunged the knife into his own heart. But Verion was already gone, taking the chains off the book.

Chapter 2

Part 1: Darkness

Chapter 1

Life had been so much easier a month ago, Draketh reflected. Before the war broke out between Dirakon and Metrisen. Each country symbolised an element, and Dirakon symbolised darkness, while Metrisen symbolised metal. Then the other countries had to take sides and send in recruits. Draketh sighed. If only Dirakon had more allies then just Valantor; the country of fire and where Draketh had been recruited from, and Electon; the country of lightning. Airantelen, the country of air, had signed a treaty to send in battle machines and weapons, but not troops. So it was basically three and a half countries against four. And three countries standing by and watching. It didn't seem so bad from the numbers, but Salontex, the country of Sonics - also known as 'waves' such as brain waves and such - had greater technology, and Delentalon, the country of rock, was the most populated country. Both sided with Metrisen. The odds were in Metrisen's favour, and Metrisen was winning.

Draketh still didn't understand why the war had expanded beyond the two instigating countries, but now was not the time for thought. He had to get a good night's sleep before the night morning shift relieved the night shift for battle, as Draketh was on the morning shift. The battle of Talle PassÃ© continued as Draketh slipped to sleep.

Draketh woke, expecting another day of war, but all was quiet. He left the tent, as he had slept fully dressed, and saw that the sky was dark and the two suns were faint pinpricks of light, instead of the two blazing spheres in the sky. He looked around the camp, which as filled with tents, all with the emblem of Dirakon emblazoned on them - a diving Kaitherion. A Kaitherion is a mysterious creature that appears in shadowed places. It is shaped like a lightning bolt from the side and has two wings sprouting from its back. Its eyes are dark red scalene triangles.

Normally at this time people would be returning to go to sleep as their shift ended, and others would be going out to fight, but all was still and quiet. Draketh ducked back into the tent and equipped his sword, then walked to the battle field. Everyone looked dead, but when, Draketh leaned down next to one, he could feel the heart beat, even though the man was not breathing. He checked more men and found that all were the same.

Confused, Draketh made a white flag out of some white fabric he found in the commander's tent and a stick, untied a black telan - a horse like creature with a semi-circular head from the side. Its back legs are shorter then the front ones. After calming it down from the surprise of seeing him, mounted it and rode it to the enemy camp.

There he found the same thing. *Something is happening. Something big and bad.* Draketh realized, *And I may be the only one that can stop it.*

Draketh remounted the telan, who he decided to name Adam, and rode off in the direction where he thought the nearest town was - the way the opposing force had come from.

After about half an hour later, Draketh was starting to doubt that he had gone the right way, when he saw the top of a man's head disappear behind a hill.

Draketh turned his telan in the direction the man had gone. Once over the hill, Draketh could see the town. It seemed still, like the camps, but Draketh glimpsed the man entering through the town gates, so he followed.

From what he saw, Draketh gathered that the man was wearing black armour and was tall and thin, not unlike Draketh himself. The man's face seemed to be covered by his hood.

As Draketh neared the town, Adam slowed until he stopped completely. Draketh tried to urge him forward, but it was no use. Dismounting, Draketh walked towards the town, which he read on a sign was named 'Felorn'. If he had known what was coming, Draketh would have followed Adam's lead, but as it was, he continued on alone. He continued on into the city, and following sightings of the mysterious man, he continued on until he hit a dead end.

Draketh turned around, thinking he had walked the wrong way, but there he saw the man, who seemed to float over the ground.

Draketh unsheathed his sword and asked, "Who are you? Show yourself!"

"I do not have a name, but as you wish." The man took his hood off and Draketh realised why the man was so skinny, for he was not a man. It was a skeleton, though instead of eye sockets, it had two flames, both cold white fires. "My name left along with my soul." rasped the skeleton, though the mouth did not move.

Draketh was temporarily mesmerised by the flames, but he unsheathed and lifted his sword into fighting stance. The skeleton rasped, "I do not wish to hurt you. But if you wish to fight, I will comply."

A hand burst from the ground, followed by a decomposing body, which Draketh immobilised with a few quick slashes. But more zombies came and soon enough, Draketh didn't have the strength to hack his way through as easily. He slowed as he tired and soon was being overtaken.

The skeleton issued a command and the zombies stopped. "Your warning has been given. Join him." Then the skeleton and zombies disappeared. A voice filled Draketh's mind, "You have been shown the lowest level of your fears. Being overtaken when you instigated the fight. I can do worse. Much worse." The voice left and Draketh was left with almost no strength.

He staggered down the street and saw Adam trotting towards him. The telan seemed happy, as if nothing had happened. Blackness enveloped Draketh and he passed out.

Chapter 3

Chapter 2

"You are ready for your first healing rune!" Esther said when Dalia entered the healer's hut in their town of Targa. It was a small hut with 2 rooms - one for the patients, and one for operations and storage. The patient's room was the smaller, entrance room. It had chairs along the sides of the rectangular rooms and two doors; one to the other room and one to the outdoors. This is where they were now.

"Really?" Dalia asked eagerly.

"Yes. Let's go to the other room." Esther told her, and the two of them walked through one of the doors and into the storage room.

There, there were shelves upon shelves of herbs and other non-magical healing items. But one of the selves had scrolls of parchment, and Dalia knew that each one contained a healing rune.

Now, Esther took one out of its cubby and unrolled it on the operation table that occupied the middle of the room.

On the scroll, the top-left corner read 'warmth', while in the center, there was a symbol that filled the parchment:

"I thought it would say 'heal' or something like that." Dalia said, surprised.

"To use a rune for heal would probably kill me, and I've been using runes for a long time." Esther replied.

"Why?"

"Because it would heal everything, and use up a lot of energy," Esther replied, "Now, let's get to it."

Dalia looked back at the rune.

"This one can help cure colds. Focus on it. Concentrate." Esther directed Dalia, "Look deep into it and focus on warming up the table. It'll work better if you touch the table."

Dalia reached out and placed her small palms on the table. Looking at the rune and focusing all her willpower, she tried to heat up the table. For a while nothing happened, then in her mind, flames rose up, but she forced them down and concentrated on the heat the flames had given off and released it at the stone table. Suddenly, warmth hit her fingers and surprised, she jumped back, loosing concentration. After the rush of adrenaline, the sound of clapping reached her and she saw Esther clapping. Dalia felt weak, but powerful from the magic.

"I'm surprised you didn't faint!" Esther exclaimed.

Dalia gripped the now cold table to steady herself. "Really?"

"Yes, most people do. I know I did, and I heated this table a lot less. You seem to have a gift for magic."

"Wow!" Dalia decided to keep quiet about making the flames go down. Being too powerful could be dangerous, especially if it reached the wrong ears.

"I think we can try another one!" Esther told her.

"Cool!" Dalia said eagerly.

This time, Esther pulled out a different scroll, which read 'calm' and had this symbol:

"It is tougher to calm a hysterical person then a nervous person." Esther told Dalia, "And it will be a lot easier on me, because I'll only be pretending."

The rest of the day went by quickly. Dalia learned quite a few runes and had to bring them all down. Esther sent Dalia home with homework to learn a few runes.

Once Dalia got home, she found that her parents hadn't returned from work yet, so she studied a bit, then got ready for bed and fell asleep as soon as her head touched her pillow, drained from the magic.

The next day, Dalia expected it to be sunny, but once she got outside, assuming her parents had already left the house for work, she found that fog had covered the sky, almost blocking out the suns. The town felt quiet, as if it was abandoned.

She walked to the healer's hut and, unusually, met no one on the way. Esther wasn't there, which was also weird.

She waited for a while, until she decided to enter the storage room.

Walking in, she saw the scroll with the rune warmth on the table. As if it triggered something, the flames rose up in Dalia's mind and the scrolls began to burn. The hut started to burn.

She tried to remember the rune for cooling, but in the panic she had forgotten it.

Then the scroll with warmth on it rolled up and changed into a skeleton with burning eye sockets.

Dalia rushed back, but the skeleton waved it's boney hand and the scrolls reappeared and the fire stopped. It then said, "Your warning has been given. Join him."

Dalia fell unconscious.

Chapter 4

Chapter 3

Eric brought his hammer down oh the metal he was banging into a sword. In fact, it wasn't just a sword, but his latest creation - a Dalos. Dagger-Long sword.

It was a long sword with a dagger on the other end. The long sword was made of light metal - iron coated aluminum and the dagger was full iron, to help balance out the sword.

He wasn't sure it would work, but he hoped so. Eric was sure a new style of fighting would have to be learned to fight with the Dalos, but he thought it would pay off.

He raised his hammer to strike again, when he heard a knock on the door. Leaving the Dalos-to-be piece of metal, Eric walked to the door.

After opening the door, he saw a man in a war uniform. The man was quite tall, taller than Eric. He had red hair and brown eyes, unlike Eric's brown hair and green eyes.

"I am Aigin, a captain in the Delentalon army, and I'm in search of blacksmiths who can make swords for the army. I can pay you fifty deynars per sword. I'll be back in thirty day for all the swords you have made till that time. Deal?" the man put his hand out to shake.

"Deal." Eric shock Aigin's smooth hand with his callused and rough one.

"Then I will be back in thirty days." Aigin said, then left.

Eric work the day away, and went to sleep exhausted.

When he woke up, Eric was sure it was morning, due to the fog and the quiet. But, once he looked out the window, Eric could see that the two suns were far past the horizon, yet the sky was grey.

Weird he thought. Eric got dressed, attached his sheath to his belt and chose the sharpest sword.

Walking outside, he noticed that there was no one on the streets. *That explains the quiet* Eric thought.

After looking around the town, Eric found that everyone was asleep in some weird slumber. Eric decided to search another nearby town, but before he could pack to leave, he saw movement. Eric moved to the spot, trying not to disturb the quiet.

When Eric reached the spot, he detected more movement farther up the street. Again, Eric crept down the street, still trying to keep quiet. This went on for a while, until the figure appeared down the other side of the street, from which they had come from. The human-like shape flit from shadow to shadow, only saying still for a few seconds at a time.

Exasperated, Eric called out, "Who are you?! Show yourself!"

The figure stopped moving and turned its head, as if it hadn't known Eric was there. *Then again,* Eric reflected, *maybe it hadn't known I was here.*

Then, a voice hit him from all sides, as if it was coming from inside him, yet it was forcing its way in. Eric cringed away from it and sank to his knees, pressing his hands against his ears.

"Do you really wish that?" The voice hurt his hear, penetrating his hands and attacking Eric's ears. "Do you really wish to see my true form?"

"No!" Eric cried out automatically. He stood up, shaking, and pulled out his sword, "But can you at least show some form? And why are you here? Why are all these people asleep?"

The shadow-like figure took out a hand and seemed to take off its hood, causing the darkness to flow away. Now Eric was looking at a skeleton in a cloak, with fire for eyes.

Eric's last hopes of this being a dream vanished - even his subconscious didn't have this much of an imagination. Eric stared at the hypnotizing, fiery eyes and waited for more answers, his conviction that he was going crazy growing every second.

"I am a messenger, sent to you with an anonymous message. As to why these people are asleep, I cannot tell you."

The fact that he still felt calm unnerved Eric. He felt that he should be panicking, but all he did was ask; "What is this message?"

"Ah, and here we hit a snag. To receive the message, you must be subjected to a test."

The ground under Eric's feet opened and he fell through into a room with a hallway leading out. The end of the hallway was shrouded in darkness. Above him, the ground - or roof - closed up and the only light source became the single torch on the wall, the flames flickering coldly like the skeleton's eyes.

Eric took the torch from it's holder and moved it to show more of the hallway leading away. There was nothing except dark, cold, rough stone forming the passage.

Holding his sword in his right hand, and the torch in his left, Eric walked quickly and quietly down the corridor, always checking around corners before rounding them, but Eric didn't meet anything but two forks, where he went right both times.

Eric now jogged through the maze, turning left, right, right again, his pace growing faster as he went, until he broke out into a run, panicking that he won't make it out. He turned a corner, hit a dead end, and doubled back. Again, he had to turn back, and he turned and chose a completely different path. The silence unnerved him. *I should be able to hear something other than my feet and heart,* he thought.

At last, Eric could see light at the end of the hallway, and though his legs ached, he quickened his pace. But as he got nearer, Eric could see that the light was flickering, and was not like the light of the outdoors, which remained steady, however dim it was. Eric slowed to a cautious walk. It could be a creature of fire, he reminded himself, however much he wanted to just run to it, just to see light other than from the torch.

Eric turned the corner and found himself face to face with the skeleton. The skeleton didn't speak, but just gestured to the ladder behind it, and Eric, shaking with exhaustion, climbed it to the world outside. He crawled out, and almost fell against a tree, but steadied himself and sat down. The skeleton appeared in from of him, and the voice hit him again. "Your warning has been given. Join him." Eric slumped sideways and hit the ground, unconscious.

Chapter 5

Chapter 4

Thea looked up from the tracks. *These are fresh, I'm gaining.* Thea drew her bow and followed the tracks in the snow, keeping quiet.

The snow muffled her footsteps and after rounding a tree she spotted her prey - a racor. They were rare, and their hide was extremely prized. It was thick, rough, and very hard to penetrate, but still flexible - perfect for shields and other various pieces of armour.

Thea drew an arrow and notched it as quietly as a seasoned hunter like her could. Racors were probably among the rarest Renyskian creatures a few years ago. Now, they were for sure, ensuring that this would be a very lucky kill for her today - the fact that she had seen it in the first place was a major feat itself! But, before she could think about returning home with a racors body, she needed to get an arrow in the right place to actually kill it. One of the weakest spots on a racor was on the underside of their head, just past the chin. From there an arrow could penetrate easily through the mouth and into the brain, almost instantly killing the creature. The only problem with that plan of action was that it was almost impossible to be alive underneath a racor long enough to pull that off. Instead, Thea aimed for the elbow of the racor's spear leg. Racors are four legged creatures, but only three legs are the same. They are the back and front-left leg. These legs are almost dragon-like, and have four claws each. The front-right leg, on the other hand, is a sword-like spear from the elbow down. That leg can also excrete poison, making it the deadliest - and almost the weakest - part of the racor. If an arrow can hit the inside of the elbow, the poison would be stopped from circulating to the racors heart for heat. It would then cool down and harden, then start to burn the racor from the inside, making it an easy kill.

Thea pulled the arrow back, the string tightened and she aimed. Thea let go and the string snapped forward. The racor looked up, but it was to late. Thea pulled back another arrow and hit the racor in the eye with a swift release. The racor roared in pain and tried to charge her, but its leg was already being burned from the inside. The racor fell to the ground and glared at Thea in agony.

"Thank you Ysk for the creatures you have given us for food and all the things they give us." Thea whispered and unsheathed her dagger, ending the racors suffering with a swift stab. Thea recovered an arrow - the one in the racors elbow was melted into the arm - and picked up the racor.

The hunt went on for the rest of the day, but was unsuccessful and Thea slept underneath a tree with just the bodies of a racor, an ice puffiner - spherical creatures with little paws, feet and tails - and two poxubes - triangular, almost icy, creatures with scythe-like tails.

The next morning was dark and foggy, much like every morning in Icentor, but today Thea could feel that it was unnatural, someone had put it there. Thea picked up her hunting bag, which had all the killed creatures inside, and started to head home.

Even before she reached the usually busy city, Thea knew something was wrong. The towers were dark and quiet, the usually filled streets were empty, and the guard weren't on the walls.

She approached cautiously, but passed the walls without trouble and met no one on the cobblestone streets as Thea walked home. When she entered her home, Thea noticed a stillness as unnatural as the fog. Putting down her bag, Thea hurried upstairs and checked her parent's room. There, she saw them asleep and after a second, noticed that they were not breathing. Thea rushed forward and felt that they had heartbeats.

Confused, Thea returned downstairs, then decided to check a bit more of the city. Everyone was the same down Saityre Street, as well as Tomark Road. The city was basically deserted. Thea returned home and found some leftover salted meat and ate it, contemplating on what she should do next. Eventually, Thea made up her mind and left her home, keeping her bow at the ready. Thea ran through the streets to the city hall, and, once inside, she traversed the hallways to the armoury. She replenished her quiver with arrows, took and extra bow, and swapped her dagger for a sharper one. She slung her new second bow around her shoulder.

Thea turned and reached for the doorknob, when suddenly a dagger hit the doorknob, jamming it. Thea quickly withdrew her hand and whipped around. She saw know one, but a sword rose up and shot at her face. Thea ducked and the sword hit the door behind her and stuck, wobbling a bit.

Thea moved to the side as a knife tried to spear her head, and took a shield off of the nearby table, hiding behind it while she strapped it on. Thea moved back to the door, using the shield for protection, and tugged the dagger a few times. It didn't budge. She pulled and shook it for a while, and finally it came free - taking the doorknob with it. Thea shook the doorknob off of the dagger and tried to wedge the dagger between the wall and the door to open it, but the gap was too small. She pulled out the sword and tried to hack the door down, but she didn't have enough strength to manage that. Thea looked around and could see no other way out.

She sighed and sat down in a corner to think, as more weapons battered her arm. Thea knew she would have a bruise. There seemed to be no other way out and eventually Thea gave herself in to the battering of the flying weapons. After what felt like an eternity, the weapons stopped and Thea slowly looked out around the shield. She saw a floating gem in the middle of the room. It looked like ruby, but as she watched, blackness consumed the ruby, and it became a new stone. Thea, unfamiliar with the stone stood up and walked towards it. As she walked, a hooded figure shimmered into view, holding the stone. Thea stopped and grabbed a sword - arrows would be useless in such a small space - but as she held it, it became searing hot and Thea dropped it. It seemed she would not be using a weapon against the magician.

The stayed fairly well away and gave him her full attention, expecting a message or something. The figure took off its hood, revealing a skull, but instead of giving a message, breathed out and a strong wind tore Thea off her feet and slammed her against the wall on the other side of the room. Her head whipped into stones and Thea saw black coming in, and tried to shake it off, but it consumed her. The last things Thea heard were the words; "Your warning has been given. Join him."

Chapter 6

Chapter 5

Michael looked down at the dracor below him. It was an interesting creature - long and serpentine, with two arms. It moved quite quickly, slithering along while using its hands to propel itself faster. It was also easy to find, meaning that Michael had already found a lot of information about it.

Michael didn't really know why he liked to collect information about the creatures of Renysk, but he found it relaxing to sit in a tree and study the creatures around him in the huge Forest of Gelont. He had never gotten lost here, and knew that if he did, he could just climb one of the tall oaks to the top and look out across the forest to find his town, which had been built in a small clearing. Because of this, Michael had been deep inside the forest, and studied some of the most elusive creatures to be found there.

Through his musing, Michael lost the dracor, a relative of the racor, as his studies had shown, but noticed a different serpentine tail, then looked forward to the rest of the creature. This one had a yellow and green tail, split by a jagged, but patterned, black line down it's back. As the creature slithered, Michael caught glimpses of the bottom of the snake-like creature, where he could see the two colours fade into the other. This was one of the few creatures Michael had only seen once before. *A fiarzak*, he whispered. Quickly, Michael took out his notebook and flipped to the page with all his previous information about fiarzaks, which wasn't much, and completed the drawing. Next he started jotting down everything he noticed about it, glancing back every few seconds to study it more. Later, Michael would put all this information together into a readable order, but for now he was focused on the fiarzak.

Michael considered moving to a better position to see the fiarzak better, but decided against it for fear of disturbing the creature. A fiarzaks bite was highly venomous and could kill a grown man very painfully within an aki - Renysk's equivalent of a minute.

Michael spent a long time studying and writing everything he could down, until eventually, when he looked up from his notebook, the fiarzak was gone, having moved on to a more comfortable place.

The rest of the day continued as usual - studying a bit of this, a bit of that and soon the first sun was reaching the horizon - Michael's queue to start picking his way back through the dense, expansive forest that covered most of Gelont.

Michael followed his regular route home, but even as it got dark, he couldn't seem to find his way back, even after backtracking to familiar landmarks multiple times and climbing a few trees. At last, as the second sun sunk low on the horizon, colouring the sky brilliantly with streaks of red and orange, Michael climbed part-way up a tree and settled down to sleep for the night.

Michael woke to blackness, the ground trembling every so often. Michael quickly gathered this information to provide only one possible answer - at least, in his panicked state. An eggsenestorrent, one of the fiercest creatures in Renysk. It was tall, tall enough to clear the tree-line, with an ovular body and two huge wings. It also had clawed feet and, worst of all, three diamond-shaped heads.

Michael scanned the forest, but could notice nothing in any direction, though still, the ground shook. An eggsenestorrent this far into the Forest of Gelont was troubling, even if Michael couldn't see it there. Usually, eggsenestorrent kept to their caves on the outskirts of the forest and preyed on unsuspecting creatures that passed by there. If there was not enough food though, the eggsenestorrent would sometimes move further into the forest and could even stumble upon a town.

Suddenly, Michael noticed that the trembling had stopped and some unknown force soothed him back to sleep.

Michael woke with a start, exhausted as if he had had to fight to wake up. He was confused, but forced himself to look around. The suns were up, but they were dark, as if someone had dimmed them with fog, but Michael knew that he was too high up in the tree for fog to dim the light of the suns that much.

Magic was the first thing he thought of, but he pushed that aside. Every country had signed a pact to never use magic again, after what had happened last time. Michael had often wondered what the 'last time' had been, but had quickly found out that no one knew.

So Michael continued life without knowing and always pushed that concept away, but it had stayed with him and, in a way, he had never let it go. It seemed that he might need it now.

Now Michael dropped to the ground from the tree, landing on one hand, a foot and a knee. He then almost crumpled to the ground of exhaustion, though he didn't know how he could be so tired. Obviously his body was still feeling the effects of whatever dream he had dreamed up last night. Slowly, Michael stood up and started walking home, determined to get there before the second sun was over the horizon. Once Michael shook off the last of the tiredness, he swung a bit from tree to tree using vines and log branches, challenging himself to not touch the ground the rest of the way back. He enjoyed the fresh air that he got higher up in the trees, but he could detect something - some taint that made it not as fresh, not as clear as it usually was.

Again, magic sprung to Michael's mind, but this time he dwelled on it. The force that had put him to sleep last night and possibly tried to restrict him from waking up, the shrouding of the sun and now the taint in the air. To Michael, it all stank of Dark Magic.

Suddenly, Michael felt the need to race home, to check if everything was okay there. He broke into a run, dodging around trees and pushing his stamina to it's considerably high limits.

At last, he skidded to a stoop at the outskirts of the town and slowed down, calming down as well. Everything was quiet, and after checking the suns, Michael could see that there was no reason for it to be any different.

Taking a deep breath, he brushed himself off and walked toward the town square. There he saw a man in a silver hooded cloak standing in the center of the square, facing him.

Michael slowed, striding towards the man, wondering what he was there for.

"You think you have it all figured out." the man whispered, and Michael cried out, surprised, as images flashed through his mind. "You don't even know how wrong you are."

Well now I do Michael thought, when suddenly the figure's hood fell back, revealing a skeleton with eyes made of white fire, which instead of warming Michael chilled him. The skeleton swept towards him and Michael fell back, hitting his head against the stones and seeing black.

"Your warning has been given. Join him."

The combined pain from the stones and previous exhaustion overtook Michael and he succumbed to blissful blackness.

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