

Name's Xain. Just Xain.

Today, I am a Berserker whose blade belongs to the Vikings of Jomsburg. Before that, I was a mercenary – a sword to be hired by the highest bidder. A Noble Savage, if you will. I have traveled across many lands, always searching for answers to some dire questions that have plagued my existence. “What happened all those years ago?” and “How did I get here, now?” Depending on how you look at it... the two questions may be one and the same. But you're probably more interested in what I do know, instead of what I don't.

I was the only son of respectable parents. We belonged to a nomadic Scythian tribe, so we were never in one location for long. Life was hard, but rewarding. I would help Father in whatever fields that were set up during the early day. Crops were grown and distributed amongst the tribe; anything that was leftover was used for trade with other nomadic Scythian tribes. My people specifically, often inhabited an area that has now come to be called Olbia, which was in the Western-most reaches of the Scythian lands. Depending on the season, we would travel farther South-East, or, on rare occasions, North to grow Ice Melons.

Come afternoon, I would often help my Uncle as his apprentice at the mobile forge. It was here that I cultivated an affinity for metal working, and the practice of using blades. He taught me that the only good blade is one soaked in your enemy's blood.

Whenever the evenings were fair enough go out for an adventure that is precisely what my two closest friends, Aquilus and Sydian, and I found ourselves doing.

Some of the adventures had us stalking game through the woods at dusk. Other times, we found ourselves banding together to defend one another from predators for which we were the game. Most nights were uneventful, but filled with imagination.

I was always the brawn of the group. I'll take a nice set of swords, or a spear any day. I always said that the song of a metal blade as it cuts the flesh of my enemies is an intoxicating lullaby.

Aquilus was the designated marksman. His eyes could spot the tiniest movement in the dimmest of light, and his shots usually found their mark.

Sydian was not blessed with good aim, nor was he particularly muscular... He was, however, a brilliant tactician and problem solver. Whenever we found ourselves in a tight spot, which admittedly, was more often than not, he would devise amazing escape plans. Truly, had we not had each other, we wouldn't have survived some of the foolish situations we placed ourselves in.

Which brings us to the next chapter in the story of my life. Fast forward many seasons; Aquilus, Sydian and I are of age when it was expected for young men of the tribe to venture out, and see the world beyond the Scythian lands. Some men return to tribal life boasting heroic tales and trophies. Many do not. We were among those that did not return, but not by our own choice...

We three, as well as many other hands upon a cargo ship, found ourselves enveloped in a supernatural event one late afternoon at sea. To this day, I still seek knowledge of this event; the night of the Chaos Storm.

First, the sky darkened in an instant as the water beneath the boat began to shimmer and glow. It was as if the sky and the sea had switched places. I remember it vividly; the

water began to boil, and spark. Suddenly, the sounds of what, I could only assume, were boulders crashing into each other echoed from the darkened sky above. Casting my eyes upwards, I caught a glimpse of pillars and shards of rock and ice plummeting from pitch-black clouds. Then there was an intense heat. The water all around the boat erupted as geysers of flame and bolts of electricity arced into the air. It was as if all the elements were clashing simultaneously; fire, water, air, earth, electricity, light and dark all in a cataclysmic war.

Shortly after the first impact, the boat we were aboard was hurled into the sky. I lost my footing, and remember the bitter cold of my breath leaving my body as I collided with something solid.

I awoke with a painful gasp of air. Ice shards split and crashed around me, the crystalline shattering sounds reverberated through my very being. My lungs felt as if they hadn't worked in an ice age. As it turns out, that was not terribly far from the truth. Glancing quickly around me, I soon realized that I was cocooned in a giant sphere of ice; opaque as a pewter tankard, but strangely illuminated. The outer shell was intact, and I can only assume that the shattering that still echoed in my ears was from my very own frozen coffin.

The first sign that indicated a long time had passed was that my sword was rusted shut to the scabbard. Being worthless as a weapon, I had no choice but to utilize my once proud blade as a bludgeon to hammer my way out of that glacial tomb. I emerged in a world that was much different than the one I had come from.

Time is a foreign concept to me. When I was in the 'old world' time wasn't so much a measurable concept, but rather a reference to the passing of the seasons. "Time" was when the nomads would make the trek to our next-season home to plant new crops, or hunker down for the snow months. Today, it is apparently a measure of something's age, and the cycle of the four seasons makes up one year. According to scholars that I have met in my travels, the last of the Scythians were wiped out around the year 300... I knew very little of my tribe's history when I lived there. I can recall no significant events that would help me determine when I am from. The unknown history of my origin haunts me like a ghost of a life long passed. For years, I have travelled searching for fragments of information about my birthplace, my tribe, the Chaos Storm, what became of Aquilus and Sydian – anything. With frustratingly little success, I have all but given up on ever discovering the life story that I never lived.

Today, I am a Berserker of the Vikings of Jomsburg. That is my story now. I carry the present with me to replace my lost past.