

# Legacy

Descent into Madness

The stench of death hung heavy in the air of the Matholus throne room. A dim light poured in through the torn curtains as the sounds of clashing swords and gun fire rang in the distance. Alone in the dying light, a prince let out a cry as he tightly held the body the fallen king. Clutching his eyes shut, he heard a mocking voice whisper in his ear.

“Well now, what do we have here?”

The prince’s eyes shot open. Drawing his sword, he quickly scanned the room. No one else was there, but still the mocking voice continued to echo in his ear.

“Denial, despair, guilt, and rage. Consumed by them, you lay there broken. How easy it would be to corrupt the heart and mind into utter madness. Yet I stay my hand for I can also sense something deeper. Dormant in the deep recesses of your soul is something ancient and powerful. Tell me child of man, what are you hiding?” Confused, the prince leapt to his feet.

“Show yourself coward! If you have come for my life, face me!” A gaudy laugh filled throughout the chamber.

“If I had come to kill you child, you would have died sobbing into that corpse there.” Out of the corner of his eye, the prince saw a shadow move. With sword in hand the prince turned to see young man shrouded in shadows. Dressed all in black, his pale skin and long white hair seem to shine in contrast. Startled the prince fell back. The young man laughed again. With what little pride he had left, the prince rose from the palace floor and walked over to the throne.

“What manor of being are you and why have you come?” he asked. A smile broke across the otherworldly man’s face. The sight of it brought chills down the prince’s spine as he sat on the throne.

“What am I? I have been called many things. The simplest answers I can give is that I am the unquenchable desires of all Humanity. The physical embodiment of the Soul. That which dwells deep within you awoke me from my slumber. In short, you could say I desire the power it holds and so I have come to make a deal of sorts.” His voice did not quite match his body. With each word uttered, a multitude of voices spoke at once. Some were that of men, others of women; however the voice that dominated over all the others was inhuman. The voice held power, authority, and wisdom.

The prince sat in silence as he examined the young man. The embodiment of the Human Soul? More like a demon feeding off this unending war. The prince didn't trust this creature for one second, however something compelled him to ask. “What kind of deal are you proposing *Demon?*”

Chuckling the young man spun around and dropped onto one knee. “Like so many before you, your kingdom has fallen and your father lies dead. Yet for a price you could have all your hearts desires.” With each word that dripped from the young man lips, the world began to fade and gave way to visions of others.

“Respect and Authority.”



“Honor and Glory.”



“Freedom and Wealth.”



“Or if you so desire it, even Revenge.”



When the images seceded, the prince struggle to catch his breath. The young man was still bowing and the sound of clashing swords and gun fire that rang in the distance returned. The

young man rose to his feet and the two's eyes met. A clash of royal amber and demonic crimson.

Once again that otherworldly smile broke across the young man's face.

“So your Highness, do we have a deal?”