

The Shattered Voice

Prologue

He was born on a cold morning of First Seed 12th, 4th Era year 179, four years after the end of the war that devastated to the ground the third Empire. He was born on Riverwood, nestled among the dense forests and crystal-clear rivers of Whiterun Hold. The northern wind entered through the wooden walls of the humble home of his parents, Harald and Sigrid Ulfricsson, blacksmiths known for forging tools as solid and swords as sturdy as the mountains surrounding the valley. From his first cry, Bjorn seemed to carry in his blood the determination of those who shape metal under the harsh fire: a child born among embers, hammers, and anvils.

Bjorn was a very energetic child, always running around and playing with his village friends: Eirik and Lars. From an early age, he was interested in his father's blacksmithing work. The boy, always covered in soot, enjoyed the warmth of the forge while working with his father.

But the child grew up, and he became a full-fledged man, even though he was only 17 winters old. The harsh conditions of Skyrim cause people to mature more quickly. Some time after Septimus Signus wrote "Ruminations on the Elder Scrolls," Bjorn received his first delivery assignment outside Riverwood. He was sent to deliver some swords to the city of Whiterun. Bjorn arrived on time for the delivery, left the swords at the guards barracks, got paid some gold coins and went back to Riverwood.

The time passed by, the parents of Bjorn left Riverwood due to the emergence of competition that could not be beaten. A new blacksmith and his family settled in the village, and so Bjorn parents were forced to leave. They moved to the fortified Imperial town of Helgen.

Three years passed, and Bjorn was now 21 winters old. He was sent to deliver some military equipment, a civil war was raging in the province of Skyrim. A self-proclaimed liberator, called Ulfric, nicknamed Stormcloak, killed the High King of Skyrim, Torygg, and started a rebellion against the Imperial power in Skyrim. The

province was divided into two sides, Imperials and Stormcloaks. Bjorn didn't have any inclination towards any side of the war, but preferred a strong empire capable of fighting against Thalmor than a divided one. But business is business, and Bjorn was sent to deliver equipment to the Stormcloaks.

Bjorn had already been walking for a few days, he was close to Riften. But something happened the 16th of Last Seed 4th era 201, he would never forget this day. Walking along a dusty road, a group of bandits appeared from nowhere.

—This road is ours! Pay 20 Septims to our leader or face the consequences!—Screamed one of the bandits whilst shaking an iron pike.

—Why should I pay? Give me a valid reason, leeches!—Replied Bjorn.

He realized that he had said what he thought, not what he should have said. Now Bjorn had to face the consequences of his words alone.

The bandits circled Bjorn, he only carried a woodcutter's axe. Despite Bjorn's skill with the axe, the bandits were too many, and it didn't take them long to "kill" Bjorn.

Bjorn was believed dead, all his armor and weapons stolen, his pockets empty, and his spirit gone. Only one thing was missing, which, fortunately or unfortunately, had not been taken from him: his life. Bjorn woke up on the morning of the 17th, covered partially in snow. His body ached, his joints creaked. He tried to get up as best he could, but the pain was unbearable. He leaned on a nearby rock and, in the distance, he spotted some smoke. It didn't look like a fire; it looked like a camp.

Limping, he approached the camp. It was the camp mentioned in some geography books about Skyrim, the ancient giant camp known as "Steamcrag Camp." Bjorn noticed that at the side of the road there was a wrecked cart and a wounded Khajiit lying on the ground. He went over to help, more out of pity than pure kindness.