

CHAPTER 2: THE GOLDEN CHILD

Kräthor's father's rule was just and fair. However, after the war his reign was tragically cut short by a sudden and unexplained illness. Some whispered poison, but no proof ever came to light. The grief in the M'cata Wene was palpable as the chief's body was laid to rest under the watchful eyes of the deities.

Kräthor's uncles, rather than following tradition, neglected their duties. Their disregard sent Kräthor and his mother into poverty. It was during these difficult times that his mother instilled in him the values that would shape his character.

His mother, left with nothing more than a small shack of weather-beaten wooden planks and a patch of infertile land, struggled to make ends meet. Their in-laws involved in shady dealings, were too immersed in their own wealth to extend a helping hand. Mother and son found solace in each other. Kräthor's grit and determination were born from these early trials.

Life became even more difficult for them after they were kicked off the plot of land by their in-laws.

One chilly and rain-soaked evening, as they sought refuge under a bridge, Kräthor's mother couldn't help but reflect on the

past. She knew they needed a miracle to escape their dire situation. The damp musty air clung to them, making their clothes feel cold and heavy. She turned to Kräthor and said, "We need something to change." In a downtrodden voice.

Kräthor nodded and replied "Mom, please don't cry. In a year, I can join the military, and we'll have a home again. I promise." Kräthor's mother wiped her tears, looks at him and says " yes I know you will my son. Its getting late, let us see if we can find some food"

she murmured, her gaze drifting to the trash bins across, that had been put out for collection.

As they approach the bins, they spotted Mr. Collins approaching them, his face etched with anger. Collins was an

imposing being, his Black diamond birthmark covered half of his face.

Fearful of what might happen next, Kräthor and his mother braced themselves for the worst.

Kräthor's father had always told him to stay away from Collins and that he was a dangerous man.

As Mr. Collins drew near he looked like a demon, but he seemed to undergo a transformation. The anger on his face gave way to a grimace of regret and sorrow. He pauses then says, "I've been looking for you two. I heard about what happened, about how you lost your home."

Kräthor and his mother exchanged puzzled glances, unsure of what to expect. Mr. Collins continued, his voice heavy with

remorse, "my condolences for what happened with your husband. We were once close friends, and I deeply regret the way things turned out. Losing him was a terrible tragedy."

As he spoke, Mr. Collins reached into his bag and pulled out photo album, worn and weathered but still holding their cherished memories. He handed it to Kräthor's mother, saying, "I found this while going through some old belongings. It's not much, but I hope it can help you reconnect with your family's past."

Tears welled up in Kräthor's mother's eyes as she clutched the album close to her heart. Mr. Collins didn't stop there; he handed them some money and offered valuable advice on how to navigate the challenges of homelessness.

Kräthor and his mother were deeply moved by this unexpected act of kindness. As they continued to huddle under the bridge, they realized that even in the darkest of times, people could find it within themselves to extend compassion and provide a lifeline to those in need.

Kräthor's mother looks at him and says " I want you to know that "no condition is permanent ,"and we are suffering today doesn't mean we would tomorrow"

Always make sure you are good to people no matter the circumstances, never pay evil with evil as no condition is permanent.

As Kräthor grew, his towering stature was matched only by his heart. His early years were filled with acts of kindness, little deeds that didn't go unnoticed by the

tribespeople.

CHAPTER 3: War on the Horizon

Upon reaching age of eligibility, Kräthor joined the military. The rigorous training and demands were challenging. However, by year 3, his perseverance paid off, and everything began to fall into place.

In the strategy chamber, Commander Lorn displayed the diverse array of weaponry available to them on the large screen. Bright nodes showcased mechanized weapons comfortably among a tapestry of traditional armaments.

Lorn addressed the room, "Behold our arsenal. A blend of ancestral craftsmanship and contemporary engineering. Resource availability has

always influenced our armory, leading us to this harmonious mix of mechanized tools and hand-crafted weapons."

He paused, drawing the attention to a topographical map that appeared on the screen. The vast stretch of the Black Mountain loomed. "Our advance faces a unique challenge. The Black Mountain's magnetism disrupts many of our mechanized weapons, rendering them ineffective the closer we approach. Flight capabilities are crippled, and communication becomes sporadic. World Below (WBL) forces have established a fortified base near its foot, shielded behind the thick forest."

The screen zoomed out, revealing the sprawling base. A network of dark trenches, bunkers, and imposing watchtowers signaled the enemy's

readiness. "Do not mistake the primitive construct of our opponents weapons as a sign of weakness. Their means of use amplifies their effectiveness".

Commander Lorn continued, "Their superior position and numbers are evident, but our edge lies in our advanced mechanical armaments, which we must utilize effectively before approaching the mountain's magnetic grasp."

Officer Kael, with his gleaming sword by his side, added, "Beyond the territorial disputes, the essence of this war is access to resources. Without them, our ability to sustain and expand, to fuel our industries and develop our cities, becomes stagnant. Victory not only offers dominance but ensures our civilization's growth and

prosperity.

Nods of agreement filled the room. Every warrior understood the profound implications of their mission and the significance of securing the resources for their people's future.

Officer Kael continued, "Our journey begins tomorrow,

It will take us 4 days to reach our destination. Communication with Headquarters will begin to fade once we approach Earth's atmosphere. Once we touch down, communication will be reestablished, but locally with the dispatch at Fort M'Saka. Get ready soldiers! War is on the horizon".

Kräthor has been sent to the battlefield

near their Fort M'Saka with an infantry unit under the leadership of Lieutenant Karth.

Karth steered his troops through the rugged landscape, dotted with boulders and trees, pausing just outside the enemy's firing reach. Enemy projectiles narrowly missed, and despite their position, Karth's unit quickly found themselves swarmed.

The sounds of war echoed across the battlefield as LIEUTENANT Karth's unit found itself pinned down, by the forces of the World Below (WBL).

"Hold the line!" LIEUTENANT Karth bellowed, his sword glowing in the faint sunlight filtering through the smoke and dust. The soldiers locked shields, planting their feet firmly amidst the rocky terrain.

The vast expanse of the battlefield was momentarily broken by the sight of the World Above's (WAB) tanks. Their translucent, pod-shaped shells, refracting the ambient light, as they moved through the mist. To the left led by Lord Varis, a specialized unit donned in heavy armor-like hazmat suits prepped their equipment. These were the gassers and chemical troops, ready to release their deadly concoctions upon the enemy.

Further back, Officer Arkus and a separate battalion of warriors stood out, even amidst the chaos. Clad in formidable armor Arkus his unit wielded specialized firearms, discharging rounds imbued with a potent acid, capable of melting through the enemy's armor upon impact. these elite fighters were the backbone of the

World Above's (WAB) defense.

On the other side, the army of the World Below (WBL) pressed forward relentlessly under the command of General Grondur, known for his brutality.

The horizon shook with the approach of Commander Valdor and his unit of Rhydocs. The Rhydoc was a formidable beast. Its massive, muscular body was encased in a leathery hide covered in armor-like scales, offering an added layer of protection. The creature's head was an amalgamation of both the rhino and the crocodile: a broad snout with two imposing horns thrusting forward, yet lined with the jagged, fearsome teeth of a crocodile. Its high-set eyes bore a predatory gleam. Four robust legs, tailored

for both might and speed, propelled it across terrains with unexpected nimbleness, while its thick tail, struck with lethal potency. Atop these dominating creatures, warriors in dark armor moved in sync with their mounts, forming an unstoppable force of nature.

Amid the thickening dust and the screams of battle, the unmistakable roar of the Rhydocs echoed across the field. These hulking beasts, known for their unmatched strength and ferocity, charged through the front lines, their thick hides deflecting arrows and spells with ease. Riding atop these formidable creatures were the WBL's elite soldiers, armed with razor-sharp spears and clad in ebony armor reflecting the cruel sun.

The Rhydocs, with their powerful legs and

spiked tails, made quick work of the World Above's (WAB) fortifications. Every trampling footstep and devastating tail swing sent soldiers flying, their armor crumpling under the immense force. Behind these beasts, the accompanying WBL troops, emboldened by their Rhydocs' rampage, followed through the gaps, their blades slick with the blood of their foes.

Officer Kael attempted to rally his troops and counter the onslaught. However, a well-aimed projectile found its mark, exploding with a magnificent plume, wounding him in and sending him crumpling to the ground. His fall further demoralized the already beleaguered (WAB) forces.

CHAPTER 4: The Battle Continues

Amid this chaos, Kräthor, ever the

tactician, quickly discerned an opportunity. While the Rhydoks and their troops were decimating the front lines, they had, in their bloodlust, overextended their position, leaving their flanks exposed.

From a nearby ridge, Colonel Hesheer observed the battle intensify, his sharp mind analyzing each maneuver. Noticing a gap opening on the left flank, he turned to Grondur.

"General! We must reinforce the left, or they will surround us," he warned. But Grondur, drunk on bloodlust, backhanded him.

"Do not tell me how to lead my soldiers, whelp!" he snarled. "We will crush them through force alone!"

Heshire bit back a venomous reply. Determined, he grabbed his weapon and rallied a group of infantry. "With me, to the left flank!" he commanded. As they charged, Heshire's blade danced with lethal precision, cutting down numerous World Above soldiers in his path. However, despite his valiant effort, the sheer momentum of the enemy was too much.

Just as Heshire's group seemed poised to stabilize the line, Kräthor and his troops appeared, exploiting the weakness Grondur had ignored. The two forces collided, and the tide of the battle once again shifted.

Kräthor signaled his lieutenants. Soon, World Above horn-blowers sounded a particular note, a pre-agreed signal.

Almost immediately, units of Gassers and Chemical Troopers, masked and equipped, surged forward from the reserves. The Gassers released their silver-mist concoctions, tailored specifically to combat the Rhydocs. Thick plumes of the silver gas blanketed the area, causing the mighty Rhydocs to stagger and cough, their usual resilience hampered. Following closely behind, the Chemical Troopers unleashed a volley of corrosive grenades, specifically designed to break through the armor and equipment of the WBL troops, causing pandemonium in their ranks.

Caught off guard and now surrounded, the once-dominant WBL Rhydocs and their accompanying troops found themselves in a perilous situation. The tides of battle were once again shifting.

As the battle turned, Heshier recognized the precariousness of their position. The forces of the World Above pressed on with renewed vigor, pushing the WBL troops back step by step. He glanced at Chief Technical Officer Vargon, whose face mirrored his own determination.

Vargon, ever quick on his feet, unleashed his eagle-shaped drone, which took flight, slicing through World Above soldiers before returning to him like a deadly boomerang. A fiery trail followed every shot from his rifle, its explosive rounds igniting clusters of troops and sending them into chaos.

Heshier, on the other hand, gripped the handle of his mallet and in an instant, it assembled itself into a mammoth weapon. With a mighty swing, he crushed an

advancing squad, the impact sending a few airborne. When a group tried to flank him, he stomped the ground with his bionic boot, sending out a shock wave that scattered them. As some got closer, he took aim with his rifle, and the EMP rounds sent several soldiers collapsing, their armor and electronics fizzling out. Still, for every soldier they downed, two more took their place.

The duo began to slowly retreat, covering each other's back. Heshire would occasionally slam his mallet, causing mini-quakes that disrupted the advancing forces, while Vargon kept launching his drone and firing explosive rounds.

“We need to fall back and regroup!” Heshier yelled over the din of the battle, as they looked for a way to regroup with

their forces and plan their next move.

Kräthor spotted Eldan, a seasoned warrior of the WAB, leading a group from the distance, ready to aid in the fight. In the chaos, Kraythor broke from formation. His axe swung down, it met resistance, cutting down two enemy soldiers before they could react, a spurt of dark blood sprayed across the ground. Roaring WAB Tank Pods, armored behemoths on caterpillar tracks, rumbled onto the scene. Their powerful cannons blasted rounds, aimed at the Rhydocs, causing tremendous damage.

Chapter 5: Victory or Death

As the conflict intensified, Commander Lorn and Officer Eldan emerged from the

dust, leading a fresh battalion to provide much-needed reinforcements. Among them, advanced units equipped with new technology took their place on the battlefield. These were the Pulse Bearers - soldiers wielding devices that emitted concussive waves, designed to disrupt Rhydoc charges and knock enemy foot soldiers off their feet.

"Press forward!" LIEUTENANT Karth yelled, invigorating his comrades. The soldiers rallied, pushing back against Grondur's forces, which recoiled at the ferocity of the sudden counterattack.

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The world Below's army momentarily fell into disarray from the sudden assault.

In the heart of the battlefield, obscured by

the choking dust and thickening smoke, Commander Voldrek, of the Below, set his sights on General Karth, eager to turn the tide by taking down the leader of the battle's momentum. Pushing past WAB soldiers, he moved relentlessly towards his target."

From a distance, the battlefield was a blur of movement, but Voldrek stood out. WAB soldiers who dared challenge him were dispatched with brutal force . He deftly sidestepped an incoming projectile, catching a soldier by the neck snapping it and hurling him into his comrades with such force it sent them tumbling like dominos.

A ray of sun broke through the smoky haze, glinting off Voldrek's armored form, painting him as an almost mythical figure

of destruction. As he closed the distance, it became clear: Voldrek was a force unto himself, and he had set his sights on Karth.

Spotting Voldrek cutting a swath through WAB troops, Kräthor realized his intent to strike at Karth's flank. He quickly shouted to Arkus, "Hold the line!" Gathering a few steadfast soldiers around him, Kräthor moved swiftly to intercept Voldrek's path, positioning himself as the frontline defense. With his treasured axe at the ready. The white diamond embedded at it's apex glowed intensely, reacting to the surrounding chaos and amplifying its dormant power. Voldrek made his charge.

Their initial clash was fierce, echoing throughout the battlefield. Voldrek's strikes, although strong and precise, met

their match in Kräthor's defensive maneuvers. Seeing a brief opening, Kräthor slammed the tip of his axe into the ground, unleashing thunderous force.

The earth rumbled as, from beneath, multiple diamond-shaped projectiles burst forth, soaring directly at Voldrek. Caught off guard, Voldrek tried to deflect them but the sheer number and intensity of the diamonds overwhelmed him. Each diamond carried with it a piece of the profound energy, and as they struck, they not only caused physical damage but seared Voldrek's dark essence.

Grievously wounded and staggered, Voldrek could only watch as Kräthor approached, his axe now glowing even brighter. Voldrek's vision blurred, but he could still discern Kräthor's eyes. With a

merciless strike, Kräthor sealed Voldrek's fate. An abyssal energy consumed Voldrek, his skin charring and splitting. From those fissures, inky shadows bled out, and he fragmented, disintegrating into a cascade of obsidian ash that the cold wind carried into the void.

Witnessing the fearsome power of Kräthor and his legendary weapon, the morale of the Below's forces plummeted, and they began to scatter.

LIEUTENANT Karth, seizing the moment of triumph, rallied his men. "For the world Above!" With renewed determination, they pushed forward, ensuring the retreat of the enemy into the dark corners from where they emerged.", General Grondur tried to rally his troops. Leading from the front, he

found himself further away from his command post and closer to the WAB's line, making him vulnerable. In the midst of the melee, Grondur and Karth crossed paths. Karth's blade found its mark, felling Grondur splattering blood across his armor, Grondur crumpled under Karth's blade, slick with a sheen of crimson.

After striking down a foe, Heshire's gaze sharp and unyielding, surveyed the frenzied battle. Witnessing Grondur meet his death, Heshire realized immediate action was paramount.

Drawing on every ounce of strategic acumen he possessed, Heshire realized they needed to regroup and salvage the situation. With a powerful shout, he summoned Valdor and his remaining Rhydocs, commanding them to rally and

form a protective barrier. Vargon, supporting his strategy, unleashed EMP rounds to disable and disorient the incoming WAB forces.

But Commander Lorn, sensing victory, grew overzealous. Eyes fixed on Heshire, he saw an opportunity to end the WBL leadership's threat once and for all.

Charging forward, his armor shining, the ground shaking with every step, he bore down on Heshire. The battlefield went silent for a heartbeat as the two powerhouses met. With a quick maneuver, Heshire swung his gigantic mallet. The force of its impact was so great that Lorn's body was obliterated upon contact, turning to a mist of red, shocking every WAB soldier watching.

The death of their revered commander

struck horror into the hearts of the WAB forces. Their charge wavered and then halted. What had seemed like an imminent victory was now a battlefield of devastation and loss on both sides.

Seeing the opportunity, Heshire gave the order, his voice echoing above the carnage, "Retreat to the Black Mountain!" Horns sounded off. The WBL forces, significantly reduced in number, began their organized withdrawal. Simultaneously, the disheartened World Above forces regrouped and made their way to Fort M'Saka, carrying with them the weight of the day's events.

As dusk fell, the once-vibrant battlefield was now quiet, littered with the aftermath of the day's fierce combat. The second war had drawn to a catastrophic close.

Word of Kräthor's heroism spread quickly. He had survived the 2nd war. It was his unit that struck the decisive blow, killing the enemies 3rd in command causing them to retreat and eventually conceded certain mineral deposits and lands around the Black Mountain. Victory etched a new line onto his face, each defeat deepened his resolve. Upon returning, he was promoted, rising rapidly in the ranks for his conduct on the battlefield. But Heshire would never forget the sting of defeat, nor Kräthor's hand in securing it. His humiliation planted a seed of vengeance that would one day bring the realms to the brink of ruin.

