Still they hid, dead into the eyes of the beast they had been hunting for days. A Grand Beetle-Boar, its monstrous size and rock solid exo-skin stood bold; ready to stick its razor sharp tusks into anything trying to hurt its children.

“Just go for it.” The young boy whispered, “It’s only one of them to the 3 of us.”

“Yeah but that ONE is more than enough to take the three of us.” A tall female was knelt behind the two. She seemed young but wise in her experience in the hunt. “Look, she has newborns. We take a step closer and she’ll be racing towards us.”

The group continued to stare directly back at the beetle-boar. Her breathing hastened, it was obviously that she was ready to make the first move.

“Well Juni, what then?” the boy became anxious.

“We wait for her mark Raus, the second she is close us we scatter and catch her on the flank.” Juni continued to stare directly into the eyes of the beetle-boar. She knew how these creatures thought, her father was the previous huntsman and through his teachings she grew to be just as good as he was.

The third one, a boy slightly older than the other, kept silent. He was new to the caravan; joined only days ago after being found in an abandoned apartment. His eyes were not on the animal but on what was a further behind it. In the sunset tint of the rusted steelworks they had found the beetle-boar, he smelled a mixture of sulfur, rose petals, and the blood of an old Gigapillar. Hanging only a few meters behind the beetle-boar was a canister of mana-infused blood. He wanted it. The blade holstered to his left hip was powered by the stuff; with enough mana he could make quick work of the beetle-boar.

The beast snarled at the pack, pulling back for the initial charge. Juni’s heart began to race, she knew it was time.

“On my mark boys.” She uttered.

The beast began its unstoppable rush towards them.

“Wait for it.”

It went from being nearly a half a block away to being near meters in front of them.

“SCATTER!” She yelled. The boys went opposite ways as Juni continued to keep its attention on her. She ran towards a broken-down conveyor belt to try and get some elevation.

Raus kept his eye on where his sister was at all times. He wanted to make sure this plan went without a hitch.

“Alright sis!” he yelled as he saw keep the attention of the beetle-boar. He began looking for the other boy, he seem to be nowhere close to where they were.

The boy sprinted towards his true goal. He quickly saw that the steel bar was higher than he anticipated. He climbed up some rusty beams to get above it. His build was slender but athletic making traversing obstacles like this almost trivial from years of surviving on his own. He got to the steel bar; the canister was easily 4 meters out. He began his crawl across when he a sharp crack in the air. He turned behind him to see that the bar was finally on its last legs. This hastened the boy’s movements. Inching closer and closer, with every moment being more uncertain then the last, he was able to reach the cylinder of his dreams. He carefully pulled it from around the bar and onto his shoulders. He slowly turned around before hearing a set of snaps that all but spelled the end of the steel bar. The boy quickly rolled off the side landing hard on his ribs. The pain pierced through his body but he didn’t cry. Although he did hear the whaling of something else.

Juni continued to taunt the beast until she hears a loud crash of something in the distance. Immediately the beast turned around to see debris in the air near her nest and bolt back at it.

“Shit.” Juni had an idea of who caused that destruction and began running towards it herself.

The boy slow got up shaken a bit but with a smile on his face. The held the canister in his, and opened it. The shallow glow of crimson captured his eyes every time. There was definitely mana in the blood. Since the glow wasn’t strong he could that some had naturally leaked out over the years but it would be more than enough to power his blade. As he put the lid back on, he started to hear the trampling hooves of the beetle-boar. For most, the sight of a beetle-boar coming right at you would instill fear so strong that they’d feel like they were frozen in place. But not him, this is exactly where he wanted to be.

The boy unsheathed his blade. At the hilt there was a giant pipe-like opening. The boy quickly took the lid off of the canister and began pour the contents into the hilt. With every passing moment the beast grew closer and the boy was as quick to fill the hilt to the brim. He closed it, looks at his hunt and smirked.

“Blood of the Beast. Blood of the Body.” The boy began reciting an incantation. “I am the weapon of the Beast who holds my Body.”

The Beetle was meters within skewering the boy clean.

“Awaken, Bluthause!” The boy yelled the final words as his blade’s steel went from cold black to burning red and as the words escaped ignited his sword he swung down at the creature. Its speed let it blow right past him. As he watched the crimson splatter across his face, the beetle-boar was split in two. A cut so clean that one would assume it had done by a laser.

His blade went back to its normal state. All of the mana infused blood was evaporated. Juni and Raus finally caught up to him.

“Hooolly shit kid. That was impressive.” Juni said as she caught her breath.

“Yeah, I’ve never seen someone take down a Beetle-boar so easily.” Raus added. “That sword of yours is something else.”

The boy just smiled as he wiped the blood off his face and sheathed the sword. His blade was already clean, as if it never made contact with the monster.

“Well now that the deed is done let’s get our rewards.” Juni said as she walked towards a piece of the beast. “You can have whatever part you want…er… what’s your name again kid?”

“Sen.” The boy said breaking the short-term vow of silence, “And I don’t want any part. My prizes are over here.”

Juni looked at where the boy was standing, “You want those babies? What good are those?”

“They’re no use to me now, but once they older you’ll completely understand.”

“Whatever you say, I’m not stopping you.” Juni looked puzzled but had an idea of what Sen could have in mind. She never seen anyone do it before so she believed that she would have to wait and see.

The troop gathered their spoiled and headed back the caravan.

“You know Sen, I hope the commander lets you keep them.” Raus said.

“Doesn’t matter what she thinks. I was hunting this beast long before I joined your group. If she has a problem with it she’ll have to kill me first.”

“I wouldn’t put it past her.” Raus joked.

“And she should think I’ll follow her every order. As soon as these pups are grown, she ‘ll be thanking me.” Sen held the beetle-boars in his arms, covered by a blanket he had with him.

As caravan goes, so does its people. This is just one tale of hundreds: Warriors, hunters, cooks, and healers. They all have a story. Will you listen?