

## Retribution

### Chapter 1: Excerpt

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Lightning flashed dimly amid swirls of darkness to reveal a decayed land; bare soil broken only by the remnants of dead brush and trees. These crunched lightly under the feet of a young man, clutching tightly to his cloak as it rippled in the wind. Slowly he crept toward an object that stood out in sharp contrast to the surrounding wasteland. He was not sure why but he seemed drawn to it, as if it called out to him, beckoning for his approach. As he drew closer he began to relax the grip on his cloak, for the wind lessened, the lightning ceased and the clouds parted ever so slightly to cast a sudden dim ray of light onto the device which was now only a few paces away. It glittered under the rays of the sun, a metallic silver sheen, and the young man gasped when he took in its form and beauty, for he now realized that the strange item was in fact a sword, stuck into the ground at a slight angle. Marvelous he thought it to be; wonderfully crafted, though odd as well, for an unusual inscription could be seen etched into the length of the blade.

Its hilt was darkened silver, and it had the shape of two thin dragon wings spread out to grant the wielder protection from an enemy blade. The rest was like that of the upper body and head of a dragon, with the blade protruding from beneath a closed maw; two red rubies were its eyes. The creature's body twisted down and around the handle, with each coil spread apart just enough to create the perfect grip for the wielders fingers; the wicked spiked tip of a dragon's tail was the pommel. Filled with wonder and recognition, the young man reached out with fingers that stretched slowly toward the hilt before he took in a sharp breath and jerked back his hand, for blood began to pour out from the rubies like tears. They spilled down the blade and stained the earth below...