

Lord Bloodgrin: A Bloody Birth

By Sam Stepanenko

I'm a bastard, a genuine illegitimate child, born of blood and violence.

My mother was abducted when she was just 16 and spent several days being raped and violently abused before being dumped in an alley and left for dead. She should have died then but was somehow strong enough to hang on just long enough to give birth to me. Not that it would have mattered.

My Grandparents raised me, giving me everything I could ever need, including the title of Lord Bloodgrin upon their passing. Despite what should have been an idyllic upbringing I found that I had certain defects of character, particularly an obsession with blood.

As I got older I further discovered a predatory nature that was increasingly difficult to deny. A day of hunting would sate me for a time, but it was never quite enough. As I grew older I found myself prowling London, selecting and stalking people but never going so far as to indulge my desire to see their blood on my hands, to taste it, to bathe in it. I knew it was a line I couldn't cross, not yet.

Soon after my eighteenth birthday in 1888, I found out what I really am. I was alone by then, and my forays into London were becoming more frequent, almost nightly.

I usually preferred to haunt the wealthier parts of the city, but I soon found myself drawn to Whitechapel, there was someone doing terrible things there, all the things that I wanted to do but wouldn't.

He had killed at least once before I found him, but I found him. I stalked him for weeks, waiting for him to give in to his hunger again. It was the most thrilling hunt of my life.

The first time I watched him kill was the night that he took two women, and it was my fault that there were two. I was watching from the shadows as he cut his first victim's throat and he must have heard my sharp intake of breath as I finally witnessed the act I had been wanting to experience for so long. The sweet smell of fresh blood distracted and aroused me to the point that

I forgot myself and made just that small mistake. It was enough. My prey immediately stopped what he was doing and just walked away, leaving his work incomplete.

I did not follow, I wanted him to relax and drop his guard again, besides, I already knew where he was going. He was going home, and I was going to wait for him there.

It took him longer than I expected, he must have been making sure he wasn't being followed, but he finally came home. He was only there long enough to change into a fresh, unbloodied shirt before leaving to hunt again. I knew that his need hadn't been met, his mutilation of previous victims told me that he was like me, or more accurately, I was like him. I had been watching him, studying him and I already knew something that he would confirm for me soon. But not yet, tonight we both had needs to fill.

There was no time wasted selecting his new target, he was mad from the hunger that had been fully awakened by the blood and it needed to be fed. Her death was as quick as the first victim's, a simple quick cut to the throat and it was done. I admit that I took much pleasure out of watching the hunter work as he cut into her abdomen and removed her liver. The smell of her blood was exquisite, even with the slight hint of alcohol I could detect, and I wanted more, to be beside him with my hands inside her holding her kidney as he cut it free. A few brief moments later and it was done, her blood already beginning to congeal on the cobblestones as he collected his prizes and walked away into the night. Conflicted, I stood looking at what he had left of her for a few more moments questioning how this could feel so good when I knew it was wrong. I didn't take long to reconcile my feelings, I had plans to make.

I had determined his cycle and knew he would not feel the hunger again for at least 4 weeks and I planned to have my first hunt when he was hunting too. At the end of October I began my path to becoming a true predator and just 9 days later I murdered a human being.

I was waiting when he came home, high on the blood I knew he had spilled. He didn't see me in the shadows until I stepped out, and then it was too late. I struck him with the sap I had constructed, knocking him unconscious, I wanted to savor this first kill. And I had questions, many questions that I was sure he had the answers to.

When he awoke, he found himself firmly trussed and unable to move but he said nothing and made no sound, at least not until my blade whipped out and I made my first cut. Even that was only a slight hiss of pain, this man was going to be the challenge I was expecting. But all men weaken, and

he was no exception. I continued to make small cuts, saying nothing and growing more and more intoxicated by the blood in the steadily growing pool underneath him. He was the one to finally break the silence between us.

"You must be one of my by-blows, I wonder which bitch it was that refused to die."

I stopped cutting, his left ear only half attached to his head.

"She died, it just took longer than you planned."

"They all do when they give birth to one of us, they can't survive unless they are one of us."

"One of us? There's more people like us?"

"The children of Cain, the carriers of the Blood Curse, the hunters in the night, we're all of those, and we are many. But not too many, we try to kill the ones like you before you grow strong, too many hunters draw too much attention."

"Ha!! You're not afraid of attention or you wouldn't be leaving your bodies the way you have. It's what led me to you."

"We grow tired, and the only way to stop feeding the hunger is to die. I'm ready and it can only be done by another of Cain's children. I was hoping to draw someone out, but I never expected it to be my own spawn, I was sure I didn't have any living, at least not here in England."

I flicked the blade of my knife and the ear I had been working on dropped to the floor with a wet splat.

"Surprise."

The startled look on his face was almost enough to make me laugh. Instead, I drove the point of my knife into his leg so hard that I felt it dig into bone.

"Tell me more. What is the Blood Curse?"

It took a few moments before he could respond through clenched teeth.

"It's the gift we received when Cain killed his brother, we age slower than a normal human being and we get faster and stronger the older we get. The price is violence, the need to kill and spill blood. For some, like me, we need to taste it and others bathe in it, but all of us need to see it and smell it."

"How much slower, how long do we live?"

"I'm not sure anyone really knows, the oldest of us I have ever met said he was over 400 years old, but I've never heard of one of us dying of natural causes."

I chuckled, sticking him with the knife again. "Well, you're certainly not going to die of natural causes."

"Perhaps not, but my last gift to you has yet to arrive. It should be here soon, I look forward to your reaction."

I snarled and began cutting again. "I want nothing from you but your death."

His death was a messy business, hundreds of small cuts deep enough to bleed freely, but not enough to kill him...yet.

The more I worked the more euphoric I became and as my cuts began to get deeper I felt my face begin to heat and tingle.

My father started to laugh, spraying blood.

"I've never seen this one before, it's going to be very difficult for you to hide when your hunger comes upon you."

Confused, I stopped my work.

"What do you mean?"

"We all get a gift when we kill our first. A weapon. These weapons are part of us and they are the only weapons that can kill a child of Cain. Your gift is particularly unique, you may want to look into that mirror."

My face was now feeling very strange, almost like there were snakes under the skin. Unnerved, I looked towards the mirror and was dismayed by what I saw reflected back at me.

My face was gone. In its place there was nothing but a smile full of glinting silver blades. Shocked, I touched my hand to where my face should have been and could feel that something was there behind the swirling blackness. I stood and looked for a time, trying to absorb this change.

"Will it be like this all the time?"

"No, only when you need to feed the curse, or if you call it."

Still touching my new, true face I asked,

"So, I'm going to have bite people? Does that mean I'm a vampire?"

"No, you're not a vampire, as far as I know they don't exist. There are some of us that have to bite, but they are rare."

Resigned and somewhat saddened, I changed my plan for his final moments. I opened my "mouth" preparing to deliver my killing blow earlier than I had planned. I started to sink my new teeth into his neck I felt them move and shift. I pulled back and grabbed a tooth with my fingers and tried to wiggle it. To my surprise I was able to draw it out as a single long blade. I grinned, my true face now matched my name.

"Well, this changes things."

He took a very long time to die.