Chapter one.

Avarice be thy name

~There was always a feeling of death, though the reasons for why would never be clear. No....they would be, but not for a long time, not till I had grown, not till I would die, and re-awaken to whom I was now. And what was I? Demi human? God? a being that both exists here. . . on the mortal plan and yet also on the pri-morial? No I was neither. I could and would not tolerate any of those damned phrases to part from my lips.

Death was. . . too me back then, a thing of anger. . . a cruel tainted being that served only to put mortals back in there places. Oh how I loathed death, figured myself above it, and yet saw it all around, perceived it, bathed in it. My search to understand it only lead me deep into its cold embrace.

I remember dear mortal. . . but do you remember me?

Remember the war I had waged? The plague I have spread? The chaos I wrought on the heavens themselves. How many of your gods did I savagely murdered? How many of your temples did I desecrate?

The number mortal....is numerous, but the name of the one who did it, the god child who caused your anger to raise, your swords to call at arms, and your flags you would raise against me!

How many of your children, men, and women did you send at me till I disappeared? I give you my name! I give you my temple! May you remember my story, so that you! The newly strong, the newly brave might forgive each other. . . and forgive the gods.

I remember it. . .The name.

Maxwell Gryphon, Son of Abidious Grias de Gryphon~

I remember the cold wind, the snow of the eighteenth winter, resting on vacant fields. The nights darkness, casting its cold shadow over everything that dared moved over the fields. Hunters in the sea of black. Natures wolves howling in the night sky, owls hooting there echo across the edges of someone's being. . . calling a deep whisper to my mind. It glazed over me...the sounds. Pail ears honing in on their location, my mind already figuring out where the owl was. . . the closest one at least.

Breathing to me, was harsh, taking in any breath would bring sharp icy needles into me, causing me to clench my black robes tighter around my body. Did I dare start a new fire? And risk being spotted by something, other than natures hunters? No, the cold was fine enough. I would live, like most things in the world, by being still and staying put. The cold could bug me all it wanted, but I would be damned if I moved and risked detection. Fire was bad. . . movement was bad. Damn it everything was bad, but there was hope. If I could just last till morning. . . till shadows would pull high, then I could escape. Jump into the shadows and pop out some place else. Maybe somewhere warm? Like a beach? Or maybe even a dessert?

A smile crooked across my face at the thought, black eyes scanning the sky's edge as I would bundle my cloak even closer to my chest. Desserts where bad. The hunters where after all, from there. Those blasted hunters! And here I thought I could live in peace! My eyes closed slightly, sleep threatening to take my body. . . the snow was after all, comfortable. The thought would lull me. . . eyes closing slightly, ever. . . so slightly.

"you alright" A voice called back to me, eyes popping wide as I would look forward and up! Hands clenching, power rising through my veins as I lulled the dark powers within! Only to silence them. What stood in front of me was an odd figure. A Vulpis creature, a bi-pedal fox morph dressed in white leathers and a matching white cloak. The sun had risen, burning bright in the sky, and here was this fox creature, sitting down in front of me, blue eyes looking curiously into my own."You look rather pail"

I would shake my head and smile, looking to each side of me. A steady fire had been going on a nice fire set, a tent strung up nearby. How long had he been out of it? "That's my normal skin color" I would say, trying to brush the comment ahead, and still peering at the fox creature. That goofy smile. He had a boy slung around his shoulder, the string, I would realize, was that of Elsen fiber. . . rare rare material.

"you look rather....furred" The fox would simply smile and nod." Of course! What's a Vulpis without his fur! Quite a rather stupid looking thing if you ask me" Funny. . .he was already rather stupid looking, the fur certainly helped him look absolutely idiotic yet. . . there might be skill behind him." How long was I out?"

"Beats me . . . I just woke up to be honest. And there you where, leaning against that tree there"

Was this fox playing tricks on me? There was no way in Grias's hell, that I could have stumbled into this camp without. . .

"You passed my circle though. . . so no one could see you, but you didn't break my inner wards though. . .strange how you didn't. . ."

Circle? As in magic circle? Now it made sense. Inner wards. My eyes closed and I would draw upon the dark powers in my soul and body, grinning wildly as I could see the intricate net of magic and elements spun about that camp. Wards of defense, wards of concealment, wards of scent wards, wards of fire, ice, wind water. . . fire? My mind branching over to the fire ones and gasping.

The world was a scary place indeed, for me, it was trivial. Death seemed to be all about me, and yet never truly taking me. I say this now, mostly because of the pattern of the fire ward. . . the intensity and power behind it. . .and how if I moved to my right juuuuust and inch, I was sure that I would be screaming and howling like a wild animal. If would have killed me. . .even if I just touched it slightly.

"You scare me" I would say finally, eyes opening again. He looked at me, head tilted as if he had been interrupted. . . in fact. He had. I was so busy figuring out the patterns behind is warding that I had completely missed him explaining the dangers that I had barely avoided.

"Um. . .sorry? Don't mean to be rude ya know, but humans are a rare species, and you have happened to avoid all of my traps....which were designed to kill. . .well you really. Or people like me"

"People like me?"

"you know, intruders, marauders, crazy pail skinned, black haired, black robed humans like yourself" he would laugh, as if he had told a joke. . . I didn't get it

In fact I didn't get him! His whole routine! And the fact that he still kept those fucking wards up. He most have seen my face though, or maybe he had seen my eyes flash red, for he backed up and away rather easily. "fine fine, cool yourself, I'm making them non hostile to "you" " He said, standing up and stretching his back. My eyes closed again, trying to get a hold of how he activated them. . . maybe I could replicate it. Make it so that his own wards where hostile to him. He would clap his paws, and my eyes would catch it. The activation sending a signal all about, making me a friendly. . .but how? There were no words, no spells casted. . . what was the activation sequence? My mind reached out to his and immediately a pain would rise up throughout my body.

"nice try, but I like my thoughts to myself, thank you"

My hand would rise to my head, retreating from him and leaning my head back against the tree. I did glean something from him. . . or maybe it was given. Looking over the events, I could safely make out two. . .maybe three things. One he was a threat or an ally. Two, if he wanted to kill me he would and could do so in a heartbeat. . . and three, which was and is the thing from which I still pounder if he gave me that information. He was a guardian.

Stomach growling and eyes fluttering open again. I was still leaning against the tree, still with my cloak bundled about me, the night sky assaulting my vision. Each breath I would take in would cause me to shiver in pain. Had I passed out? Was I in that much in need of comfort? For someone to talk too? My hands would clench in anger and I would close my eyes, testing the world about me, peering through the clouds and the skies, before settling it back down. . . and looking at the wards.

~You can come in you know~ A voice rang in my ears, heart jumping for joy.

~though I must ask your name~

"Only few can ever know it. . . without ever giving me there's first"

~I am rex~

"then you may call me max"