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 Historical Fiction Piece  
 **The Cries of the Eagles**

The eagle was struggling to free itself from the thorns of the matagouri bush**.** Producing sorrowful yawls, it was losing its power and potency. I felt a sudden instinctive urge to become its rescuer, so my body intuitively approached the matagouri, with no fear or apprehension. I gently reached out in an attempt to set the bird free, my fingers nervously fidgeting around each spike. As I touched the edge of the eagle’s almost fleshless wing, it shivered, then bounced up, bent its neck and bit me. Scarlet drops started tumbling upon the dry, fissured soil, making my thumb resemble a bloody waterfall. A sense of betrayal got stuck with me.   
 …  
 Being a Visigoth was a hard task, for you had to be a faithful and devoted member of the society. It was the night of December 19th, 375. The wind was so frosty it felt as if my skin was on fire. My *kuni* had gathered together near the crackling fire. Freshly baked bread was distributed, and its cottony core melted like spring snow in my mouth. Abruptly, a vociferous tumult filled the air.  
 “Huns! The Huns are coming, Botheric! May we be blessed, may we be saved!” our observer’s sudden disclosure hit the whole *kuni* like thunder. Especially our *kindin* and unfortunately my father, Botheric. But not me. I had spent my 17-year-long life aching to be a Hun instead of a Visigoth. I admired them secretly for their solid sense of freedom and their resistant, bold nature. I was one of them every time I shut my eyes, escaping my reality.  
 …   
 “Unwén, we are supposed to run now, neither one of us is considered a soldier yet. You surely are aware your father would never put your life at risk. Neither would mine. The horses are ready, brother,” my closest friend Roderic, loyal as always, urged me to leave, his voice revealing a palpable concern and his words piercing my mellow heart like needles.  
 Soon the two of us had tacked up our horses and left under the resonant clatter of horseshoes.   
 …   
   
 I looked up. The grayish clouds were of such a faded color that they blended with the sky itself. I didn’t want to be a cloud. I craved everything but the life I had. My daydream was interrupted by a fierce bawl. As I turned around, I recognized the almond-shaped eyes filled with temper and perseverance.   
 “Stop, you feeble creatures of misery, get off your forlorn horses!” the Hun’s voice was so forceful it echoed in the empty void of the field.   
 “Unwén, stay right behind me, brother, I got your back!” Roderic was oblivious of the fact that I didn’t want to be defended. In just a few second the Hun had already grabbed him and his trivial courage in his burly arms, disabling him from breathing.   
 “Unwén, t-h-he s-s-word, t-h-h-ere,” Roderic’s slick sword laid flawless on the arid soil, as if never touched.   
 “Boy, there is an evident potential in you, don’t make that mistake. Give me the sword and I’ll make you the ideal soldier. I need you now,” those three words were all I longed to hear. The sword landed in the Hun’s palm with a splendid parabola. I didn’t want to be a cloud.   
 …  
   
 Sun rays dazzled me as my eyelids gradually heaved open like a thick drapery. My body was swinging in an unstable state.The least I felt like was an ideal soldier.  
 “What will they do to him after we bring him to the Lord?” a man asked with a voice low enough to not wake me up if I was asleep.  
 “I suppose he will be enslaved just like his compatriots. Poor man. I heard Aetius rumoring how the Lords tricked their tribe to provide us protection, but receive nothing in return,” the other responded. My eyebrows instinctively collided in a furrow.   
 “Do not sympathize. Let the Lord have his word.”  
 As I started distinguishing more than just two voices, I purposely fluttered, then opened my eyes to find out I was being stared at. Foreign and familiar eyes were gazing at me from beneath their lustrous helmets. I recognized them. Eyes of Visigoths and Roman eyes.  
 “So you’re saying he’s a barbarian? Is that so?” a Roman questioned a Visigoth I had spoken to once.  
 “From top to bottom,” The Visigoth answered. The irises of my eyes left their orbits in consternation.   
 “I am most certainly not,” I protested sounding more like a corpse than a human.  
 “Stay quiet, boy,” I obeyed. Quietness had always been my middle name.  
 …  
 I found myself in something like a cave. Alone.The gloomy corners of the tiny jail made me feel doomed. I could hear my own breathing and some peculiar cries. Eagles.