

THE SHADOW PRESS

Official Newsletter for the Incipient Barony of Shadowed Stars
Constellation Region of the Middle Kingdom



Volume 1, Issue 3

Summer, 2015
Special Fiction Challenge Edition



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FROM THE HISTORIAN

A Call for Information!

Shadowed Stars History

Anyone who has any information about the Shire and its goings-on in previous years please send me the information. Events, officers, meeting places, any classes that were held, Knights, Squires, peers or demos... anything you can think of. All information will be appreciated. You may email me at historian@shadowedstars.org.

Please send any documentation you have for previous Shadowed Stars people and happenings.

Thank you for the help,
Lady Zoe Dukiana

FROM THE CHRONICLER

To the Populace of the Barony of Shadowed Stars - We Need Your Votes!

Greetings to the populace of Shadowed Stars!

This edition replaces the Summer edition of the Shadow Press and contains the entries into the Fiction Challenge contest for your review and voting

There were only two (2) entries to the contest so the voting will be held to actual Barony of Shadowed Stars members and will not be open to other areas.

Please take the time to read each story and submit your vote for the one you enjoyed the most!

Voting will be open from 9/28/2015 through 10/28/2015.

Votes can be cast two ways:

1. Via the Poll that will be posted in the Shadowed Stars Facebook group.
2. For those who would rather not use the Facebook poll to vote, a vote can also be cast by sending an email to chronicler@shadowedstars.org.

BARONIAL CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

SEPTEMBER 2015

9, 16, 23 - Archery Practice
13, 20, 27 - A&S Meeting, 2pm, IPFW Dolnick Center
13, 20, 27 - Heavy Fighter Practice, 2pm, IPFW Dolnick Center
13, 20, 27 - Fencing Practice, 2pm, IPFW Dolnick Center
15, 22, 29 - Fencing Practice, 6pm, Edge of the World Fencing Salon
20 - Equestrian Practice, 1pm

OCTOBER 2015

(to be announced - see Baronial Calendar at www.shadowedstars.org)

NOVEMBER 2015

(to be announced - see Baronial Calendar at www.shadowedstars.org)

FICTION CHALLENGE

Idea sparked by Lady Cassandra of Wyndhaven

The Shadow Press FICTION CHALLENGE

We presented a Fiction Challenge Contest to the Shadowed Stars populace!

Two entries were received!

This Shadow Press Special Edition presents the submitted stories for review and a vote to determine which story was the most enjoyed!

Voting will be open to members of the Barony of Shadowed Stars between September 28 and October 28, 2015.

The winning Fiction Challenge story will be announced and published in the Winter 2015-2016 edition of The Shadow Press which will be issued on or around January 1, 2016.

WHAT :

We issued a challenge to any and all Shadowed Stars writers of medieval-based fiction to submit a story for our first annual Fiction Challenge Contest.

STORY GUIDELINES:

Writers were asked to submit a story up to 8,000 words.

The story must have a title.

The story must be able to be read by all ages (no profanity, adult-only themes, etc.).

WHEN VOTING BEGINS:

Any member of the Barony of Shadowed Stars can submit their vote from September 28, 2015, through October 28, 2015. See Page 1 of this newsletters for ways to cast your vote!

FICTION CHALLENGE ENTRY #1:

REVENGE IS IN THE RELM OF THE GODS

854 A.D.

On a grassy outcropping overlooking the Rhine River, Siggarr Siggarrsson stood before a small alter in the ruins of a wooden temple to Woden. His long silver gray hair and drooping blond mustache wave in the wind. A troubled and slightly panicked look perfused his lined dark tanned face. He lit a fire upon the small alter. Placing a rabbit caught earlier upon the alter as an offering to the All Father, he looked up into the cloud filled sky contemplatively and remembered.

795A.D.

Word has reached the Village of Ostfold in Norway that the sea raid upon the shores of Scotland was returning, by one of the fishermen, who had seen the dragon sails in the distance.

The villagers decide to make this a holiday and all go to the beach to welcome their husbands, fathers, and sons back from their adventures, as well as seeing what riches the men have gathered in their raids.

As the sleek dragon headed warships run upon the beach one by one, the villagers wait apprehensively. The men on the ships are silent, not singing and shouting as they were want to do upon returning, indicating someone of importance had not survived the voyage.

As the men silently debark from their respective ships they form a double line behind four burly Norsemen, shouldering two stout poles. Upon the poles is a shield carrying a man, all signs indicating he is dead and not just wounded. Only one man would warrant such a show of respect from the men.

The villagers became silent and part ranks as a woman, in her early twenties, obviously in the last stages of her pregnancy, her thick blond hair tied into one long braid that falls down the middle of her back, walks slowly through the crowd, her chin up but quivering, bravely holding back her tears.

As she walked by, a couple of her women friends attempt to join her to offer their support. She keeps her gaze upon the shield carrying the man and angrily waves the women back.

She walked down to the beach alone to meet the men and her husband. As she does so one of the men in the crowd points solemnly toward the straight backed woman.

“There indeed goes a chieftain's wife!”

That night a funeral pyre had been set up at the edge of the village. Upon it lies the remains of the Norse chieftain, his hands wrapped around his sword, ready to welcome the Valkyrie, who will escort him to Valhalla and the Hall of Heroes.

The pyre is surrounded by wood soaked in oil to burn hot and brightly, to signal the passing of a great man. The village people stood in front of the pyre, silent in their respect. One of the warriors, holding a torch at the ready, waits for the one person who will light the pyre and send his chieftain upon his final voyage.

The crowd parts as a small procession solemnly walks toward the pyre. At it's head are the chieftain's wife, flanked by two of her husband's best warriors. Behind her comes a number of her ladies in waiting to support her in her time of morning. Next comes an honor guard of her husband's men, dressed in their best finery.

They all stop in front of the pyre and the warrior holding the torch hands it over to his chieftain's wife. She just stares at the torch for a moment. The warrior begins to look uncomfortable and looks at one of the men flanking the lady with a puzzled frown. The warrior to her right leans down and whispers into the lady's ear. She looks up startled and stares at the man. He whispers to her again. She shakes her head as if awakening from a dream and accepts the torch from the warrior in front of her. Now she stares at the pyre and walks quietly toward it.

She stares at the torch and looks over at her husband lying there wrapped in his burial cloth.

She thrusts the burning torch into the pile of oil soaked branches and steps back. The wood takes flame in a whoosh, encompassing the entire pyre in a matter of seconds. The chieftain's wife simply stares as her husband leaves her forever. She turns to walk back to the procession and promptly faints away.

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Three weeks later the late chieftain's wife squatted over the birthing stool, her hair lank from her exertions, her bulging belly bare and crisscrossed with veins. The room reeked of sweat and fear. She moaned with pain as another contraction rampaged through her already weakened body. Two other women in the the room looked at each other with worry. The midwife exhorts the late chieftain's wife to push harder.

"You need to push harder, my lady," she says, "The babe will come, but you must help it along, 'twill be a fine, fine son to honor his father."

The late chieftain's wife looked up at the the midwife through her sweat ridden hair.

"This babe is going to split me in two before this is done!" she screams, "I am going to die!"

The midwife looks at her charge with sympathy.

"Nay, nay my lady, 'tis normal this pain, 'tis the size of the babe." she says with a smile, "'twill be a fine strapping son, but you must push harder to bring him into the world, then you can rest."

The other woman, the late chieftain's wife's primary lady in waiting and best friend, took up some towels to wipe off the sweat from her lady's brow.

"Helga, please!" she cries, "You need to do as the midwife says."

"But it hurts so!" Helga begs, "I don't think I can do this. Please make it stop!"

The Lady in Waiting smiles at the midwife.

"One more hard push, my lady, and it will be over."

Helga furled her brow, strains and pushes hard, sweat pouring down her face. In the next moment there was a sudden spasm and the midwife catches the baby. Immediately she accepts towels from the Lady in Waiting to wrap the babe. Then she accepts a sharp knife and cuts the umbilical cord and places it into a towel with a lock from the babe to be offered to Brigid, goddess of the family.

The Lady in Waiting took hold of Helga and helps her to stand.

"Come, Helga," she says, "You can now lay down and rest."

Helping Helga to the bed in the corner of the room the Lady in Waiting helped her lay down. Pulling the covers up and tucking them under her lady's breasts, the midwife places the babe in the crook of Helga's arm so he could suckle her breast.

"How shall the babe be called?" the Lady in Waiting asks.

Helga looks down with wonder at the baby as he feeds and smiles.

"He shall be called Siggarr!" Helga announces.

The Lady in Waiting smiles back.

(Continued from page 4)

"Siggar? Yes, Siggar Siggarrsson." she exclaims, "A true son of the Norse. A true son of his father!"

805A.D.

Helga is so despondent over her late husband's loss that she only lives to care for Siggar. So when one of the new warriors courts her and then asks her to marry she agrees, not because she loves the man but because she believes her son needs a father's guidance. So when Siggar is ten years old his mother remarries. She doesn't learn until after the marriage that her new husband is a drunkard and is impotent as well. Coming home every night drunk, the man tries to take out his frustrations on young Siggar. Each night Helga intervenes and takes the beating herself to spare her son, continuing almost every night.

811A.D.

When Siggar turns sixteen, one night Helga and her husband have an intense argument. Siggar happens to be out with his friends horse riding this night. Helga's husband Nial comes stumbling home from his nightly drinking bout at the local tavern. Waiting with her husband's supper which has grown cold, Helga has been pacing back and forth with worry. Drunk and pissed that his supper is not hot and ready for him Nial starts yelling, They begin yelling at each other at the top of their lungs as they did almost every night..

"Why is my meal not ready for me, woman?" Nial shouts.

"You go out every night and get drunk with your cronies," Helga cries, "You then come back here smelling of drink and expect me to serve you hand and foot?"

"Well, I am tired of it!" she shouts back, "If you want a hot meal you cook it! Why did I ever bother marrying you? You're no father to my son. My late husband was three times the man you could ever be."

"Ohhh! Here it comes again," Nial yells, "How I can never compare to the great dead chieftain. Woman, get over it! He is dead. I am here now and I am your husband now!"

"And I expect to be treated as a husband is to be treated!" he screams!

"When you start acting like a husband and not a bully," she screams back, "then I will treat you as a husband is supposed to be treated!"

Bunching up his fist Nial raises them to strike Helga.

"Oh yes! Hit me again! That's all you can do to a woman, isn't it? You sure can't satisfy her! You can't even get it up to even try," Helga laughs, "That's why you go out every night and get drunk. That way you have an excuse not to treat me as a wife is to be treated!"

There is silence from both parties. Helga raised her hand to her mouth realizing she might have gone too far this time. Nial just stares at her. His face turns a bright red, the result of the drink and his increasing rage.

"Nial, I am..," Helga stammers.

Nial suddenly reaches out and grabs Helga by the throat with both hands and begins shaking her head back and forth.

"I'll teach you, you b***h!" Nial yells, "I'm your husband and you will treat me as such! Do you hear?"

(Continued from page 5)

Suddenly Nial hears a soft crack and Helga goes limp in his hands, her head and neck at an odd angle. He lets his wife fall to the floor. In his drunken haze it takes him a moment to realize what he has done. He stumbles out of the house and goes back to the tavern to figure out what to do.

Siggar has camped out with his friends overnight. They have been running races and practicing spear throwing for the last two days, sleeping under the stars and telling stories to scare each other. Siggar is getting his horse ready to leave.

"Are you leaving already, Siggar?" one of his friends asks.

"We don't have to be back until tomorrow." Another friend says.

"I know," Siggar says, "But I promised my mother I would chop some wood for the fireplace."

"What, are you a mother's boy?" A friend laughs.

"He probably still suckles his mother's teats." Another friend says, laughing also.

"Oh, go bugger yourselves!" Siggar shouts, laughing.

Siggar puts his left foot into the stirrup and throws his right leg up over his horse's back. Making sure he has everything, he waves to his friends and heads home. Taking his time he enjoys the fine summer day.

The next morning as Siggar rode up to his mother's house, he noticed a large crowd milling about the entrance.

Galloping up to the house, villagers jumping out of the way of the horse and its rider, Siggar leaps out of the saddle before the horse comes to a stop.

Running up to the door intent on entering, a large man steps outside blocking Siggar's way.

"Out of my way Hagar!" Siggar growls.

Hagar, the village blacksmith, looks down at the youth standing in front of him from his six foot height, with a look of sympathy.

"Now hold on boy." Haggar says, "Something nasty has happened."

"My mother?" Siggar quietly says.

"I'm sorry boy," Hagar says, "Your mother is dead, murdered it looks like."

"No!" Siggar shouts, "Let me by!"

Siggar tries to get around the two hundred pound bulk of the blacksmith, but the man fills the doorway.

"Now calm yourself boy." Hagar shouts back, "She's gone and there is nothing you or I can do about it."

Trembling Siggar stares up into the big man's face

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"Now, that's better." Hagar says with sympathy.

"What did you mean it looks like she was murdered?" Siggar asks, voice trembling.

"Just what I said, she's had her neck broken." Hagar says, with disgust, "Looks like she was shaken to death"

"Who...Nial!" Siggar growls.

"Now hold on boy, there's no proof he did it." Hagar says with concern in his voice, "Best leave it to the village council."

Looking askance at the blacksmith Siggar asks..

"Can I see her now?" Siggar says softly.

"I suppose." Hagar says, "You seem to have calmed down some."

Backing into the house Hagar allows Siggar to enter. Stepping inside he sees two women standing around his mother's bed. Walking up to the bed, he sees upon it laid out in her finest dress his mother, appearing to be only asleep.

As Siggar gazes upon his mother's face the blacksmith motions the two women to leave. After they have left, Hagar prepares to leave also, leaving the boy to grieve in private. As he shuts the door he pauses and gazes at the crumpled figure kneeling beside his mother's bed, shakes his head and closes the door.

Siggar looks up at the sudden silence and stares about the house through his tear filled eyes. His gaze falls upon the sword hanging upon the wall. It is his real father's blade, rescued from the burned remains in the funeral pyre by one of his father's warriors. Cleaned and a new hilt and handle attached, it was presented to Siggar upon his thirteenth birthday, the day of his becoming a man. His mother had insisted it be hung up on the wall as a symbol of his real father's greatness. Nial had wanted to have it removed but knew he would have to contend with the late chieftain's men, so it stayed upon the wall, a constant reminder to Nial of his inadequacies and failures.

As Siggar stared at the sword his eyes narrowed and a small smile appeared upon his face. He knew what he had to do.

A couple of nights later, the door to the tavern opens, allowing light and shouting voices to enter the quiet of the night. A man closes the door and darkness and quiet of the night resumes. Stumbling drunkenly down the street he heads toward his home. He pauses next to an alley entrance in confusion. A voice speaks softly from out of the alley darkness.

"Nial, why did you do it?" The voice says softly, "You didn't have to kill her."

Nial stares through his drunken haze into the dark alley.

"I don't know what you are talking about." Nial chuckles drunkenly, "Who did I kill this time?"

The voice becomes a shadow.

"I will tell you who you killed, you drunken sot!" The voice shouts.

The shadow solidifies and he is carrying a raised sword.

"You killed my mother," The voice yells, "you whore son!"

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The sword swings around its bearer's head.

"Nooo...!" Nial screams.

Slicing through Nial's neck, the sword sends the head flying into the street. Gushing blood from the severed neck spatters the sword bearer and the alley walls with Nial's blood.

Looking down at the body of his late step-father, its head staring sightless upon the star filled sky, Siggarr then looks down at his blood drenched clothes and curses. Looking about he runs back to his dead mother's house. Changing his clothes and cleaning off the blood from his body as best he can, Siggarr packs what few belongings he has and gathers the money and jewels he knew his mother had kept under one of the floorboards to hide it from Nial.

Saddling his horse and storing his belongings in the saddlebags as well as the money and jewels, Siggarr hangs his sword from the saddle horn, pulls his cloak hood up to hide his face and heads out of the village. Heading south toward Sweden he plans to join the army being raised there and make a name for himself.

Promptly declaring Siggarr Siggarrsson outlaw, the village council decrees after finding Nial's body the next day and Helga's son missing from the village.

811 A.D. - 831 A.D.

Joining a Norse mercenary band attached to the Swedish army, Siggarr, in the next twenty years fights battles in such places as Staraja Ladoga, Russia, Constantinople, Spain, Ireland, Britain, and the deserts of the Holy Land. Rising up the ranks due to his skill as a warrior and ruthlessness with captured cities, his superiors know they can count upon Siggarr to take any city they choose. When he lays siege to a fortified city his rising reputation precedes him, the city inhabitants fighting to the death rather than surrender to Siggarr the Cruel's tender mercies, which include the death of all men, the slavery of all women and children, and the complete destruction of the city, after everything of worth has been stripped from it first.

Because of his great skill in accomplishing each task given to him his superiors grant him land and a homesteading near the village of Lagda, Sweden.

Building a farm house and barns, Siggarr hires local men to run the homestead while he is gone off to war. Providing great enjoyment for him to have the homestead to return to in between battles, eventually he retires there and begins the process of finding a wife.

Hilde, the daughter of one of the Swedish chieftains whom Siggarr has fought for agrees to marry Siggarr.

A year later, Hilde gives Siggarr a son and daughter.

852 A.D.

Siggarr, now about fifty-seven, has been a decent husband, but has become jealous of another warrior's attentions to his wife. His son and daughter are both married now with their own homes and families.

This goes on for weeks until Siggarr, drunk one night and not wanting to confront the younger and stronger warrior, decides to accuse his wife of infidelity.

"Have you been unfaithful to me?" Siggarr shouts.

"No I haven't! How can you accuse me of this?" Hilde shouts back, "I have been a faithful and loving wife to you!"

"Don't lie to me you whore!" Siggarr growls, "I've seen you with Ranvig, cosying up to him! It's enough to make me sick!"

"What are you talking about?" Hilde cries incredulously, "Ranvig has helped me carry items back from the marketplace a few times."

(Continued from page 8)

“Again you lie! I suppose you two didn't meet together at the Wild Chicken tavern?” Siggarr yells, “Don't lie! You were seen seen entering together!”

“Are you now having me followed?” Hilde yells back, “Yes, we went to that tavern together. I wanted to buy him a drink to thank him for his help the last few weeks.”

“Of course, silly me,” Siggarr says softly, “You just shared a simple drink.”

Suddenly swinging his hand, he slaps her face, knocking her to the floor.

“Do you take me for a fool?” Siggarr screams, “You slept with him didn't you? Didn't you?”

Standing up, Hilde stares at her husband in disbelief, her hand rubbing her jaw.

“You're drunk.” She says coldly, “Go to bed and we'll discuss this in the morning when you are sober.”

Siggarr turns beet red in drunken anger.

“Don't patronize me, you b***h!” He shouts.

He backhands Hilde with his fist, catching her against the side of her head. Falling against a table she cracks her head open, blood gushing forth. Siggarr backs up and stares through his drunken haze.

“Hilde? Hilde?” He asks, shaking his head, “Oh gods! What have I done?”

Stumbling back out the door, Siggarr dunks his head in the water trough, the cold water sobering him up enough to think, and saddling his horse he leaves.

The next day Siggarr's daughter Freida finds her mother, and her father no where to be found.

She informs her grandfather who in his grief declares a blood debt upon his son-in-law's head.

Three months since the death of Siggarr's wife, he has been hunted like an animal by every warrior in need of the patronage and money offered by his father-in-law in lieu of the blood debt upon his person.

Tired, he needs a place to hide. Coming to his daughter's husband's farm he intends to convince his daughter to let him hide out and rest for a while.

As he enters the steading a dog barks loudly and a figure is silhouetted in the doorway. The figure looks back inside the house and closes the door.

Siggarr rides up to the entrance and sees it is his daughter waiting with arms crossed.

“Don't bother getting off your horse.” His daughter Freida says, “You aren't welcome here!”

“Freida, please!” Siggarr begs, “I need a place to rest.”

“You expect me to give you sanctuary after what you did to mother?” Freida asks incredulously.

“It was an accident.” Siggarr says, “She tripped and fell against the table. There was nothing I could do.”

(Continued from page 9)

"Then why did you run? Don't lie to me!" His daughter yells accusingly, "Mother had a large bruise on the side of her face away from the side that struck the table. You struck her! How could you?"

"Freida," Siggarr says, hanging his head, "I am so sorry."

"It's too late for that now." Freida sighs, "I want you to leave now or I will call for my husband."

Shoulders slumping, Siggarr turns his horse to leave.

"By the way, don't try going to Thrain's farm." His daughter warns, "He has declared he will kill his father upon sight for the death of our mother."

Siggarr nods his head and heads toward the west and the Rhine river.

Wiping the tears from her eyes, his daughter waves farewell to her father, then turns around and goes back into the house and her husband, closing the door and her father behind her.

854 A.D.

Standing at the edge of a high cliff overlooking the slow moving Rhine River below, Siggarr shakes his head from his contemplations and begins to shout 'Woden', over and over again, his voice carried upward by the wind.

After about an hour, appearing against the sun high above Siggarr, a dark form slowly spirals down, unseen by Siggarr, and lands next to the alter.

Siggarr turns around upon hearing the rustling of wings and sees a man sized raven.

The raven, morphing into the body of a large man, who is covered by a dark cloak, it's hood covering the man's face. Two normal sized ravens perch upon either shoulder.

Pulling back the hood from his face, the man reveals one piercing blue eye. The other is covered with a dark leather eye patch. Thick, silver blond hair cascades down about the man's shoulders, an equally blond mustache droops from the man's upper lip.

The Norseman, seeing the two ravens, Thought and Memory, the eye patch over one eye, and the warrior stance of the man standing before the alter, shudders with awe.

"Woden, at last!" Siggarr says quietly.

Shaking his head, the Norseman draws himself up to his full height.

"Well, its about time!" Siggarr bellows, "I've been shouting myself hoarse, for the last hour, calling for you!"

Woden lifts an eyebrow and frowns.

"I am here." Woden says imperiously, "What is so important that you call upon my presence?"

The Norseman puffs out his barrel chest.

I am Siggarr Siggarrsson, chief, son of a chief, who was the son of a chief, warrior supreme, brave in battle, terror to my enemies, generous to my friends." Siggarr begins, "I have killed many men in battle and made love to many women in bed. I have..."

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Woden interrupts.

“Yes, Yes.” Woden sighs, “What is it you desire of me?”

Siggar looks slyly askance at Woden.

“I demand by my right as chief and skill as a warrior, to enter Valhalla and the Hall Of Heroes!” Siggar shouts.

Woden looks the Norseman up and down, causing Siggar to blush bright red.

“You demand?” Woden says, with booming voice, “Who are you to demand of me the right of Valhalla, given only to the warrior slain?”

Siggar stands silently with his arms crossed over his chest, glaring stubbornly back at Woden. Woden looks at Thought, who is moving restlessly upon the man's right shoulder, and shakes his large head.

He glares back at the Norseman and maliciously grins.

“I will let you enter into Valhalla upon fulfilling two conditions.” Woden says slyly.

Siggar gives Woden a suspicious look.

“What are the two conditions?” Siggar says quietly.

Woden smiles.

“First, you must fight whomever or whatever I choose.” Woden says.

Siggar puffs out his chest.

“I will fight anyone or anything to get into Valhalla!” Siggar boasts, “What is the second condition?”

“You must kill your opponent.” Woden says, grinning.

Siggar throws his hand up in dismissal.

“That will be no problem for me.” Siggar says, sneering.

Woden smiles.

“Very well then,” Woden says, with a grin, “It shall be as you say.

Raising his massive arms Woden points them at Siggar, then jerks them to the left. As he does so a doppelganger is pulled from the Norseman, causing him to fall back a step or two. The double is pulled to about fifteen meters from Siggar and staggers.

Shaking his head in disbelief, Siggar looks at Woden out of the corner of his eye, while keeping the double in front of him.

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“What is the meaning of this?” Siggarr demands.

Woden shrugs his massive shoulders and gazes at Siggarr with a look of innocence.

“What ever do you mean?” Woden asks innocently.

Siggarr gives Woden an angry glare.

“Don't play coy with me!” Siggarr growls, “I'm not in the mood!”

Woden grins broadly.

“This is your opponent.” Woden laughs.

Siggarr looks over at Woden while keeping his double in view.

“Is this some kind of joke?” Siggarr asks.

The Norseman's eyes widen in surprise, for when he spoke his double spoke the same thing, at the same time, and with the same voice!

Siggarr snarls.

“This is not funny!” Both shout.

“Stop this now!” Siggarr yells, hoping to out shout the doppelganger, “How can I fight this mockery of me?”

Woden chuckles at the confused look upon Siggarr's face. Then he bursts out in guffaws at the identical look upon the double's face

“He is not a mockery of you,” Woden chuckles, “He is you!”

“What do you mean?” Both Siggars say, glaring at each other as they speak in tandem.

“He is you in every sense of the word.” Woden says, smiling, “He looks like you, thinks like you, talks like you, moves like you, fights like you, and considering the unfortunate change in wind direction, he even smells like you! In other words, HE IS YOU!”

“How can I fight myself?” Both Siggars say, looking at Woden with anger, “We will be evenly matched! I won't be able to best him!”

“Do you wish to rescind your demand to be let in Valhalla?” Woden says, grinning.

Siggarr glares at his double. His double glares back.

“NO!” Both yell in tandem.

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Woden nods his shaggy head.

“Very well,” Woden says looking at the two, “You both know what you have to do.”

Siggarr and the doppelganger both get into a fighting stance and draw their swords. Lifting shields before them they approach each other.

Woden calmly adjusts his cloak.

“By the way.” Woden says pointedly.

Both Siggars glare at Woden.

“Remember the second condition.” Woden says, “You must kill your opponent!”

“Yes, I remember!” Siggarr and his double snarl.

Both men circle each other, searching for an opening. Clashing, shield upon shield, sword clanging against sword, they are like two male rams meeting head on at the height of the mating season!

After about four hours both Siggars are near exhaustion. They stand, shields grounded, breathing hard, sweat rolling down their faces, just glaring at each other. They both realize neither can best the other.

Suddenly, with one last burst of energy, they rush each other. As they do Woden raises one hand and the doppelganger stumbles on a stone torn up during the fighting. As he trips he falls forward toward Siggarr and impales himself upon the Norseman's sword.

Siggarr backs away pulling his sword out of his double, causing the double to fold up and fall to the ground.

Raising his arms, Woden causes an opening in the heavy cloud cover that has accumulated during the battle.

A shaft of light illuminates the dead doppelganger. A Valkyrie on a winged snow white horse rides the beam of light down to the dead double.

Landing next to the doppelganger, the Valkyrie lifts one arm and the double's body rises up off the ground in a ball of pulsating light. Placing him across her lap he has her protection until they reach the Hall Of Heroes and Valhalla.

Galloping toward the edge of the cliff, while flapping it's great wings, the winged horse approached the edge and leaped off, dropping out of sight. A moment later the horse and it's cargo appear and fly into the beam of light. Following it up until they pass through the heavy cloud cover, they disappear.

Both Siggarr and Woden have followed the flight of the winged horse until it is swallowed by the clouds, at which point the shaft of light fades to nothing.

Woden glances over at Siggarr with a self-satisfied look upon his face. Siggarr looks expectantly back.

Woden walks over to the small alter and looks over his shoulder at Siggarr.

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“Well, if there is nothing else,” Woden says dismissively, “I must return to Asgard.”

“What about me?” Siggarr asks, looking stunned.

“What about you?” Woden asks, looking back at Siggarr questioningly.

“When do I get to go to Valhalla?” Siggarr cries out.

“You did.” Woden says smiling.

Looking at Woden with suspicion.

“What do you mean 'I did'?” Siggarr asks quietly.

Woden gives Siggarr a cold look.

“Just what I said.” Woden says, a chill in his voice, “Siggarr Siggarrsson was killed in battle and was delivered up to Valhalla and the Hall Of Heroes on this day!”

“But I am still here!” Siggarr cries.

Cocking his head to one side Woden stares at the Norseman.

“Do you agree that your doppelganger was you in every sense of the word?” Woden asks imperiously, “That he was pulled from your very essence?”

“Yesssss...But...” Siggarr sputters.

“No buts about it, He was you.” Woden says laughing, “He is you. Siggarr Siggarrsson did go to Valhalla and the Hall Of Heroes as we agreed.”

As soon as Woden says that, in a puff of smoke he changes into Loki, god of Deceit.

“No! No! No!” Siggarr cries out in anguish.

“Yes! Yes! Yes!” Loki cries, mocking him.

With that Loki vanishes in a ball of flame.

Siggarr falls to his knees and pounds the ground with his fists until they are bloody.

“No! No! No!” Siggarr screams.

Loki's continuous laughter echos throughout the mountain scape.

THE END

FICTION CHALLENGE ENTRY #2: THE LIFE OF KAL

"Are we almost there Da?" Kal asked his father.

It had been a long trek along the perilous north road in the middle of summer as they journeyed on to the Duchy of Duke Charliss. Toly smiled tolerantly at his thirteen year old son who proudly carried his longbow and two dozen arrows slung over his back in his leather quiver.

"Ya son, we're nearly there. About a furlong left." He looked at the descending sun being pushed away by the encroaching night as he heaved the little pushcart with all their belongings up the hill. "We have about a candlemark left 'till night fall, and we have to get to camp, set up the tents, and cook."

"Ya, but where is 'camp'? I'm tired, and my feet hurt. And I'm tired of always moving, never staying in one place. I can't make any friends" he complained.

"Me too kiddo, but not much longer 'till we reach the outskirts of the village surrounding the castle."

"Castle! I'll get to see a real castle. Will it have a moat with alligators and a drawbridge, and a huge gate and soldiers and see the Duke too? I've never seen nobility before," he asked in a rush.

"Yes, yes, probably not, possibly, yes, and probably." Then he clarified, "Yes you'll see a castle and it will have a moat with a drawbridge, but it probably won't have any alligators. It'll have a gate but it might not be as 'enormous' as you think. There will definitely be soldiers and you might, if you're lucky, get to see the Duke"

Kal visibly drooped when he wouldn't see any alligators, but brightened when he thought of being in the presence of royalty.

"Why only if were lucky? Won't he like your stories?" he questioned.

Toly was an amateur storyteller and a spinner of real and fanciful tales.

"Yes son, but the Duke has to notice me first. I can't just announce myself. Protocol won't allow it. It's just not fitting, us being poor travelers. We can't just approach nobility like that."

Kal squinted into the distance, trying to peer over the long untended grass and shrubbery. "Is that smoke?" he wondered aloud, "We're almost there!"

His excitement was catching and Toly's heart start to beat faster and he felt and insuppressible urge to hide from the intimidating guards who patrolled the outer wood palisade on the hill, blocking the horizon.

The wall was much more impressive up close as they approached the cruel looking gate and the watchful guards.

"State your name and business for coming to the Duchy of Duke Charliss" the one on the left ordered.

"I am a simple traveler trying to make my way and protect my son in the beautiful country of your lord" he replied kindly, trying to appease him.

"Those your only weapons?" he asked gruffly, indicating Kal's bow and arrows and Toly's longsword.

"And our daggers" he added, brushing aside the fold of his tunic to display it and motioning for his son to do the same.

"Fine. The rules here are simple, don't cause trouble and none will come to you. Oh and one more thing you should know," he added. "This last fortnight, an attempt was made on the Duke's life, so don't be too surprised if people are more than a little suspicious." With that he went over to the wall and pounded three times, then two. The **gate slowly swung** inwards, revealing a sprawling array of houses and merchant stalls nestled in the hills between the castle and the protecting wall behind them.

"Move along and get outta my sight" he growled as he ushered them through an closed the menacing gates behind them.

"Would you look at that Da. A real castle" Kal said, motioning in the direction of the huge structure in the distance.

"Ya, son, it is." his father replied, "A little bit longer and we can pitch camp and get some food in us".

"Ya!" Kal agreed.

As the pair approached the nearest house they were intercepted by a welcoming committee. '*The group would be a dispatch of the guard*' Toly thought.

"Anything to declare. Any foreign goods, questions to ask, or rules and punishments to be set straight?" the lead one inquired, much nicer than those on the outer wall.

"Where are we allowed to set up our tent?" Toly asked, "And what are the local laws on game?"

"No big game, those are the Duke's property. Your can take small game like rabbit or squirrel, but not more than your share. If you're wanting something else besides, you can sell some at the market and buy greens or you can trade directly. The market opens at eight and closes at five" he said.

"And for camping?" Toly asked.

"Just past that big fir tree grove yonder, you'll see some smoke," he paused and said, "See it?"

Toly nodded assent upon seeing the indicated smoke curling lazily up towards the heavens.

"Well just over there you'll find another group that arrived yesterday. There's plenty of space and they're nice enough folk. They'll make room right enough."

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"Thank you kindly sir. We'll just be on our way now" Toly replied.

"Oh and one last thing. The Duke is holding court on the morrow for grievances large and small. Have a happy stay."

As the pair walked on towards the indicated area they heard sounds of laughter, as if someone finished telling a joke.

"Sounds like they might be lovers of a good tale, eh my boy" Toly said to his son with a smile.

As they entered the space enclosed by greenery, Kal gave a gasp of delight.

'Understandably so' Toly thought since there was another youngster about the same age if looks were anything to go by. The whole enclosure was beautiful, from the lush green grass under foot to the sparkling little waterfall, trickling down the cliff face on the far side. They saw the resident family of three talking around a campfire go silent as they realized they were not alone anymore.

"Hello. Is there a place we can set up our tent without bothering you?" Toly asked politely. For indeed, it was a fairly small space to begin with and they had three.

"It doesn't matter. We enjoy a little company" the mother said.

So Toly and his son strung up a line between two trees and draped a large square of canvas over it and staked the corners down to create an 'A' shape.

"That's pretty nifty. Ours is the same thing except it uses upright poles instead of a rope" the father commented.

"Ya, we've tried that as well but have found that this version works better for us," Toly replied. As they stored their gear the father noticed the bow that Kal carried.

"Can you use that son?" he asked, pointing at the tool.

"Sure can. I have three squirrels and a rabbit in the cart" Kal exclaimed with pride.

"We'd be willing to trade meat for greens today since the market is closed" Toly said, noticing the look of longing when his son mentioned the squirrels.

"Absolutely. My name is Gerald by the way. This is my wife Emily and our son Tony. I see the you and your son but where's your lady?"

"I'm Toly and this is my son Kal. His mother died in childbirth, though. We wander from place to place. I earn coin from telling stories and Kal manages to keep us in food."

"I'm so sorry." Emily said, "What kind of stories do you tell?"

"All kinds. Would you like a demo?"

"Ya. That would be nice" exclaimed Tony.

"How does that sound to you Kal?" Toly asked his son.

"Sure Da. I can always listen to one of your stories."

Kal brought over one of the squirrels and the rabbit and skinned them. He found a green stick, doused it in water, and spitted them each. Gerald, seeing what he was doing, found four more green sticks and lashed them together in the form of an 'X' to hold the spit. Emily presented some precious cooking oil and salt for Toly to apply. Finally, Tony brought out apples, peas, and wild tubers.

"That was good!" Tony said after he polished off his helping of rabbit.

"We haven't had meat in some time." Emily explained, "Since my husband is a woodworker and I am a weaver, we don't really have the means nor enough money to acquire it".

"Ahh, I understand completely. Are we ready for that story I promised?" Toly inquired. And so he began, to nods and exclamations.

Kal felt himself being lulled to sleep by the effects of a full belly, the radiating warmth from the camp fire, and the gentle tones of his father as he entranced his audience, weaving a tale of magic and heroes. The kind where the good throws down the evil in a duel to the death in a great mystical battle.

That night he dreamt that he was the Duke's special guest. While he was with him, though, someone tried to stab the Duke in the back with a knife. He shot over his shoulder so close to his head, that it cut a few of the sunset colored hairs that bedecked the handsome face.

AAAAAWwwwwoooooo!

Kal woke with a start as a wolf shattered the night's tranquility with its territorial howl. He peered at the luminous moon, barely visible through the crown of the trees. Sitting up he noticed that the fire waned to merely a few ruddy coals interspersed amongst the ash.

'CRACK', Kal whorled around looking for the disturbance when he found himself looking upon and mystical sight. He was face to face with a pure white wolf, so close that he could breathe in the wolf's hot steaming breath. He fell back in surprise coming perilously close to the hot coals. Suddenly, the wolf jumped past him to land on the other side of the clearing. The wolf tossed its head as if beckoning him to follow. Kal scrambled to his feet, and cautiously hurried after the retreating form of the snowy spirit. As he left the clearing Kal heard a voice whine, "But we'll be caught".

Kal started but moved closer to the source of the words. He came upon a clearing almost 20 feet across, surrounded by firs, the ground covered with layers upon layers of low lying ferns that reached nearly to his knees. The most striking thing was,

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however, the two people in the far side of the clearing, both tall and wearing flowing black robes. They were saying something to each other but Kal couldn't make out the exact words. Silently, as his father had taught him, Kal made his way closer, until the words being spoken were clear enough to understand snippets of the conversation.

"...I know Alfie, but court will be the only chance to..."

"..the ball might do I suppose..."

"...try both you know... twice as much chance for it to work..."

"...Leyo was killed the last attempt..."

"...do it in his memory...this time will be different..."

"...I suppose so John..."

"...and 'His Grace, Duke Charliss' will finally meet his end."

The sound of moving preceded the sight of a boot tip. Kal frantically stumbled back, trying to avoid detection, falling in his haste. Kal clawed his way back upright, and prayed that they didn't hear him. He ran back to the clearing, the meaning of his dream earlier in the night clear now.

"Da! Da! Wake up." Kal exclaimed as he poked and prodded his father trying to rouse him.

"Whaaa? What happened, son?"

"I overheard a plot to kill the Duke Da. It's going to happen today at the court session. Get up! We have to do something!"

"What's going on Toly?" Gerald asked, peeking out of his tent.

"You tell me everything" Toly ordered his son.

So when everyone was together, including Tony and Emily, Kal related all from the journey, from the white wolf to the assassination plan.

"We've got to warn the Duke. No questions about it" Emily decided.

"Ya, now" Kal insisted.

"All right. Everybody dressed and bring any weapons you have. Things might get ugly pretty soon" Toly said. Everyone hurried around with a new sense of purpose as they prepared to journey the two kilometers to the castle bearing news of utmost importance. Once they all had gathered up their belongings, they set out towards the rambling village and the Duke's home after it.

"Well. I think We'll take a right" Emily said as they came up to a pole mounted sign that read:

Guard Office→

They followed the meandering cobblestone road until they came upon a massive wood construction with a sign above the door that said:

Guard Office.

"Here we are" Tony said.

As they all filed in they observed a counter on the far wall and a man in a navy blue uniform sitting on a stool behind it.

Toly, their spokesman, approached the counter and asked the guard, "Where might I deliver news of an assassination plot?"

"What! Wait right there" the guard left suddenly, leaving them gaping after him. He returned a moment later, but with him was another man with a dark blue uniform. This one had gold stripes on the ends of his sleeves. "This is the captain of the guard. Tell him what you have told me" he said nervously.

"Well, my son overheard two men discussing their plans to kill Duke Charliss last night" Toly explained, motioning towards his son.

"Young sir, would you step with me over here" the captain asked, indicating a separate room with a hinged door.

"Sure" Kal said easily.

After an intense candlemark later, Kal and the captain emerged from the room.

"If you would accompany me to the castle, I am going to report to the Duke and would like you to corroborate your story. You can leave your gear here and someone will collect it for you later. Time is of the essence now".

The group followed the man out a side entrance and on to an empty alleyway curving **to the left until they reached** a black door. The captain went through the door and beckoned for them to do the same. "This way. Quickly now" the captain urged. The door opened up onto the main cobble stone street, flanked by shops and houses on either side of the road. The buildings fell away to both sides and they looked onto a central plaza, whose cobblestones had been replaced by white stone. In the center of which was the castle. It was magnificent, it was beautiful, it was terrifying. As they walked closer, they could see the great moat and the massive drawbridge spanning the watery chasm.

"Are there alligators in the moat?" Kal asked the guard.

"No sonny. They're too expensive to maintain" the captain answered.

"Oh" Kal said, slightly disappointed.

Past the drawbridge the castle opened up into a central courtyard of more white stone and branched off into three arches on the opposite side and the guard took the middle entryway which lead to a grand staircase of again: white stone. They followed the captain up to the third floor where they got off the landing and went toward the keep doors. There they took the spiral stair-

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case up to the top until they reached a door.

"Wait here" the captain told them as he opened the door and slipped inside. A moment later the door opened and the guard admitted them in. The captain showed the group to the Duke's council chamber where the Duke, two members of the guard with silver stripes on their sleeves signifying them as the Duke's personal guards. The Duke himself was of medium height, but emitted an aura of importance that commanded respect. Wavy golden red hair falling to his shoulders and a swordsman's build, Duke Charliss cut an impressive image. The newcomers went to a knee immediately.

"Up. Up. No need for that formality" the Duke said in deep tones, "So who is plotting my demise?"

"I do not know the circumstances behind the last attempt on your life, Your Grace. I do know that the name of the one that died though was Leyo and the names of the ones now are Alfie and John. They plan to kill you during your open court today and the ball if that doesn't work. Whenever that is." Kal then related the tale of how he came to know this information.

"Very well. Captain Karl?" Duke Charliss asked after Kal was done.

"Yes Your Grace?" the guard that led us here stood at attention.

"Cancel the open court today, we don't have enough time to prepare for it. The ball, in answer to your question young Kal, is tonight at the seventh hour lasting until the third hour but youths must retire at midnight. Karl, I wish Kal and his father to attend this ball. Please send a dispatch to escort them to their rooms and to bring them to the ball at the appointed hour. Also find them something suitable to wear"

"Yes Your Grace"

"I also, wish to attend the ball."

"But Sir..."

The Duke forestalled him with a raised hand, "Karl, if I don't do this then they will find another time to kill me and I won't be forewarned. I am setting myself up as bait in the hopes that you will get the assassin before he gets me. Then this whole escapade will be over"

Karl, seeing the logic of the statement, nodded ascent, "I still don't like it Your Grace.."

"I'm not asking for you to like it Karl, I'm ordering you to do whatever it takes to keep me safe".

"Yes Your Grace. If you will follow me" Karl motioned the group to leave.

On the way to the rooms Gerald, Emily, and their son Tony were escorted away by another guard. Karl learned that Kal had not been to a ball and that Toly was a storyteller, and that the both of them could fight.

"Really? Good" Karl said to the last, "Since you are the Duke's personal guests, you might be exposed to fighting."

"Am I allowed to carry my sword?" Toly asked.

"Yes, but only your sword. Sorry, but your son's bow won't do" he replied.

As they entered the room, Kal saw their pushcart piled high with all their things.

"A team of seamstresses and tailors will be in shortly to get measurements to create your outfit for tonight. You have almost nine candlemarks until the ball. I would get something to eat and possibly a nap."

Just as he promised, a team of four came in to get their size. Shortly thereafter a servant came with a simple luncheon and cool water. Kal ate his fill and decided to take Karl's advice. After last night's excursion, he was overcome by a sudden lethargy and felt the need to lie down for a short while. He went to the side room and found his bed. All too soon he felt himself drooping. When Kal woke, it was to his father's prodding.

"Ouch. Da, stop it"

"Come on. Get up Kal. You need to get dressed. The ball is in half a candlemark" Toly left him then. When Kal opened his eyes he found himself surrounded by clothing and a note saying: Your ball clothes. He looked around him, parti colored hosen done in maroon and black. A black doublet with matching maroon fleur de liss woven into the cloth to go over a white shirt. Slightly scuffed but otherwise new looking brown leather shoes had been placed next to the rest with a note that said: hope these fit. Lastly, a flat but poofy wine red hat with a blueish black feather tucked in on one side had been laid on top the doublet. When he tried the outfit on, Kal discovered that the hosen, shirt, and doublet fit like a charm. The boots were a tad tight and the hat was a smidgen big but it would do. He opened the door and walked into the main room. His father was checking himself over in... Was that a 'mirror'!!! Those were really expensive.

Noticing him in the mirror his father asked, "Well, how do I look?" He was wearing almost the same outfits except his was done in forest green where Kal's was red and brown where Kal's was black.

"Fine. Do I look alright?"

"Son I'm sure half the ladies from court will kill for a dance with you" he replied, and it was true, Kal was quite dashing in his new outfit, "If you don't make a fool of yourself that is" Toly joked.

A knock on their door interrupted the playful banter. "If you are ready?" The page at the door inquired, "I am to take you to His Grace's Midsummer's Ball".

"Certainly" Toly responded with excitement as the servant led them through the winding passageways and twisting corridors until they came to the grand stairway again. This time, however, they went down. All the way down to the central courtyard but went down the left hand arch. Almost immediately, the corridor started to look crowded with people in all manners of elaborate

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getups. Toly inclined his head courteously to the renowned Lord Cortan of the Belan region with his Lady Sandra. They acknowledged his presence before turning back to talk to the other man on his left. Then they came upon the Duke, who was dressed in fancy poofy clothes in gaudy blue and orange, about to turn the corner leading to the ball room.

"Ah. You made it I see" he stated, "Kal, since you were the one who actually overheard the plot you and your father may accompany me and the others of your party, well, make yourself comfortable and watch out for trouble". As the trio left, Duke Charliss turned aside and whispered something to Toly.

Toly then nudged Kal with his elbow and said pointedly, "Get a look at that roast boar Kal"

Kal looked over just in time to see a guard slip his bow and quiver full of arrows under the table cloth. The man looked up to catch him staring and gave him a conspiratorial wink.

"Shall we?" the Duke inquired. He stepped forward, his ceremonial sword swinging behind him. His long strides put him just ahead of Toly and Kal, and as he turned the corner to enter the hallway leading to the ballroom, Toly heard a shout of surprise. "Assassin!", the Duke yelled above the screams of the guests. Toly swept out his long sword as Kal sprinted back towards the food table, sagging under the weight of the massive boar, and scooped up his bow and arrows. He swung the quiver over his back, drawing an arrow as he did. He ran back to the ballroom, arrow knocked to the string, looking for the assassin. There he was, laying prone on the floor, facedown. An ominous dark red stain was pooled around his midsection. Duke Charliss was picking himself up off the ground and Toly was wiping off his sword on the fallen man's sleeve. Those around him were shocked, babbling a series of "Are you all right?" to "That man... he just... Oh, good gods".

"Are you alright, Your Grace. He didn't graze you?" Toly asked worriedly.

"Yes yes, I am fine thanks to you".

Something caught Kal's eye. A disturbance in the crowd. A slight swoosh of fabric. Suddenly a face appeared just behind Duke Charliss! A long dagger in his hand, sweeping forward to deliver the killing blow. The man swung his dagger down at the Duke's exposed back, only to stumble, and come crashing down face first, the arrow shaft in his eye breaking off. The Duke jumped slightly and twisted to face the source of the sound, reaching his hand to his shoulder to brush off a few of the newly severed red-gold hairs. Breathtaking silence followed this, broken only by the assassin's dagger, rocking to and fro, on the white stone floor. Kal slowly lowered his bow as the Duke, his father, and the rest of the crowd redirected their gaze from the dead man at the Duke's feet, to him.

"Do you recognize these men Kal?" Toly asked his son.

"Yes father. This one is Alfie and the one I shot is John."

Kal whitened, as nausea overcame him at his realization that he had just killed a man.

"So there are no more assassins then?" the Duke interrupted.

"Not that I know of Your Grace, no" Kal responded, having no idea where this was going.

"So the ball will continue" he announced, to the dismay of his guards and Kal, who wanted nothing better than to be left alone at the moment.

"But-" Karl got no further than that as the Duke held up his hand for silence.

"I am not hurt Karl. I wish the ball to continue, though not for as long. I feel that after this excitement I won't be able to carry on past midnight. Karl, send a group to remove the bodies and clean the blood."

"Yes Your Grace" Karl said, though at loath to do so.

"Let's try this again shall we?" the Duke said as he swept ahead of them once again. This time, however, he stayed within sight of Kal and Toly.

Kal hurried to keep up, handing his bow off to a nearby guard who whispered, "Nice shot".

As they entered the ballroom Kal was stunned by the arching ceiling, much higher than he had ever seen, even at King Philip's palace, though not as wide. He even forgot about his internal sickness at the death of John. Kal was broken out of this trance from the Duke announcing ball officially begun. The musicians began tuning their instruments and Kal hurried over to join his father sitting next to the Duke. Kal noticed that Tony was sitting next to an open space obviously meant for himself. He sat down just as the musicians were tentatively strumming the first notes.

Toly nudged him with an elbow and whispered, "A bit grand isn't it?"

"Ya, but I suppose he is the Duke" Kal whispered back.

Toly pointed out a pair of well dressed men deep in conversation. "You see them?" he asked Kal, "That's my father talking with the Master craftsman. He's interested in hiring my father to apply the detail work to tables and chairs and such."

"Really. That's great" Kal responded, glad for his new friend.

"Ya. With dad finally getting steady work, we might be able to settle down and stay in one place for a while."

"So you guys have been in the same boat as us then," Kal said, motioning to him and his father.

"We'll be staying also son," Toly interrupted. "While you took a snooze earlier this afternoon, the Duke requested to see me. He wanted to see if I was really as good as Gerald and Emily said I was."

"What do you mean" Kal asked, quite confused now.

"I wanted to see if your father was a good story man." the Duke put in, "My bard died during the last assassination attempt

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with several other people. I've decided to offer your father his place".

"So you see son, we won't have to keep wandering anymore. We have a home." Toly said.

'*And I have a new best friend*', Kal thought, '*Maybe things won't be so bad after all*'. That outlook on life made all the difference for the rest of Kal's life.

THE END

BARONIAL OFFICERS

Seneschal

Lady Solveig Sigulfsdottir

Chatelaine

Lady Gwendolyn

Minister of A&S

Lady Gwerith verch

Albrecht

Herald

Lord Ruzhko Chobotar

Exchequer

Lady Caterina de

Radeclive

Knights' Marshal

Lord Fergus MacPherson

Rapier Marshal

*Warder Philipp Reimer
von Wolfenbüttel*

Archery Marshal

Lord Alfairin Fani

Equestrian Marshal

*Lady Gwendolyn of
Shadowed Stars*

Webminister

*Warder Philipp Reimer
von Wolfenbüttel*

Chronicler

*Lady Broinninn ingen
Magnusa*

Dance Coordinator

*Lady Gwerith verch
Albrecht*

Historian

Lady Zoe Dukiana

Chief Armorer

Lord Giovanni Di Fauro

List Mistress

Lady Zoe Dukiana

FROM THE CHRONICLER

THE BARONY WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- ◆ We need everyone to submit content for our newsletter! We can use: Editorials, pictures, Event Reports, Persona Bios, Artwork, and short stories up to 3,000 words for the quarterly newsletter!



- ◆ If you would like to create a regular or semi-regular column or have ideas of things we can include in future issues, please contact us at chronicler@shadowedstars.org!

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:

- ◆ Submit by December, 2015, for inclusion in Winter edition (January 1 publication).

RULES FOR SUBMISSIONS:

- ◆ Release Form types:
 - * Creative - For all articles, poems, original artwork that is not a photograph, and the like // We bring this to you and we keep on file.
 - * Photographer - Photographs // We bring this to you and we keep on file.
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- ◇ **Photographers - If you are unable to print a needed Model Release form, let me know and I will make sure you have a supply of printed ones to keep with you!**
- ◆ Pictures:
 - ◇ Submit as many photos as you can of our Barony activities as well as events and happenings of the groups around us! (You must have taken the photo yourself.)
 - ◇ Needed with Submission: Name of Event, date, location, SCA titles and names of those in the photo
- ◆ Images from the internet:
 - ◇ If you include an image from the internet with your submission, please make sure to include the active URL link to it

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