

A photograph of two newborn babies sleeping peacefully in a nest made of straw and hay. They are wrapped in a light-colored, textured blanket. The background is a rustic wooden wall. In the bottom left corner, there is a black silhouette of a wolf's head and shoulders, looking towards the right.

BERSERKER
BABIES

A Berserker short story

LEE SAVINO

BERSERKER BABIES

A BERSERKER SHORT STORY

LEE SAVINO

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I set out to write a book about Berserker babies, but there's quite a bit of baby-making. This might be because I'm pregnant again, and full of hormones... anyway, you've been warned! :) - Lee

Dedicated to the members of Lee Savino's Goddess Group on Facebook.

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Author's thanks

The Complete Berserker Saga

About the Author

Also by Lee Savino

FREE BOOK



Visit www.leesavino.com and join her mailing list to receive a free Berserker book...too hot to publish on Amazon!

BERSERKER BABIES

This short story gives readers a glimpse of their favorite Berserker characters, with two sweet Berserker babies—and lots of baby-making!

Beauty, joy, and heartbreak greet the Alphas as they defend their home from the Corpse King's evil spells. The sisters Brenna, Sabine, Muriel, and Fleur fight for the minds and hearts of their mates as the Berserkers rally to face the greatest threat they've ever known.

A note from Lee: This book is a peek into the lives of reader's favorite Berserker characters, and does not stand alone. First read the Berserker Saga, and/or Rescued by the Berserker (free on all sites), plus the free novellas available for download at my website leesavino.com.

BRENNA



The silence woke me. I jerked under the pelts, caught for a moment in the void of a dream.

Where was I? Why was it so quiet?

“Good morn, love,” Daegan’s rough voice reached my ears.

Where are the boys?

“We were up with them all night.”

I know. I nursed them, I sighed. I started to rise, but Daegan let more of his weight settle atop me. I pushed at his shoulder instead.

“Where?” I croaked. My voice was rough, the words garbled, and I only use it under duress.

“I took the cradles out of the chamber. Dinnae worry, they haven’t woken yet.”

I gripped his arms, feeling off balance.

“It’s all right,” he soothed. “They’re being well looked after. They’re old enough to go for a bit without their mother.”

But—

“Hush,” Daegan said. “You needed the sleep.”

Slowly, I relaxed. He was right. And I did feel much more rested.

Thank you.

“My pleasure, love.” He rubbed his stubbled cheek on my bare shoulder.

I burrowed deeper into the pelts. The air held a chill, even though it was only late summer.

“Cold? Let me warm ye.” The pelts lifted and air gusted over my bare skin until Daegan lay atop me. His forearms held most of his weight, but his entire body, lips to toes, pressed against mine. As his body heated me, the long length of his cock grew against my leg.

When they wake, they'll be hungry. My breasts were already heavy, milk at the ready. Who is with them? Samuel? I raised my head in hope. I haven't seen my other mate for several days.

He's still atop the mountain. Still searching.

Then who's with the boys?

Sabine and her mates.

They're here? This early? I craned my head, but we were alone in the chamber, and I heard nothing. In the cave, there was no outside light to flag the day.

'Tis some time after dawn. The boys wore ye out. I thought it best to let ye sleep.

And the boys?

He shrugged. Your sister will bring them when they wake. But it may be awhile. They wore themselves out too.

I sighed and stroked Daegan's back. The muscles bunched under my touch, and his cock grew even larger. He rocked his hips against mine.

I raised a brow.

My dark-haired mate nuzzled my cheek and shoulder, dropped a kiss to my collarbone. “Ye woke in a mood. I'll make it better.”

I grabbed a handful of his hair to pull his head back. Daegan allowed this, but his eyes glittered bright with the magic that made him.

Where is Samuel? I reached with my mind, but in the past few days, the Alpha had shut himself away from our private bond. There were only shadows and smoke where he would be.

“Where he always is. Atop the mountain, trying to link with the pack.”

Are more missing?

Not more. Not less.

I blew out a worried breath. Not only for the missing warriors and the women they went to rescue, but the Alpha and my troubled mate.

Daegan’s hand moved at my breast, drawing my attention back to him. Lines of care wreathed his brow and mouth. The gold light in his eyes made the shadows below them darker.

I wrapped my arms around my dark-haired mate’s strong body, and hooked a leg over one of his powerful ones. Suddenly I didn’t want to leave this cave, the heat of my mate’s body on mine.

Daegan’s lips found my ear.

“Love me,” he whispered. His length pressed into my thigh, and I parted my legs in invitation.

When he pushed into me, I caught my breath at the sharp stretch. Our lovemaking had become this: stolen moments when our twins are asleep. Gone are the days where I spent hours on the pelt-covered dais, love-making with one or both of my mates.

Daegan paused, a worried question on his face. But my body was already ripening, responding, readying itself to greet his thick member. I tugged at him and hitched my leg higher, around his waist.

His rough hand cradled my thigh against him. With one hand planted by my head, he moved over me slowly. My eyelids fluttered as he inched inside, the petals of my sex parted slowly, split by his length. My hands roamed up and

down his back, tracing the hard muscles. Dipping his head, Daegan tugged on my lower lip with his teeth.

Together, the two of us reached for our missing mate, but there was nothing but phantom echoes where Samuel should be. So we found comfort in each other, our bodies rocked faster, my own pleasure rising as Daegan planted himself deep inside me.

He cupped a breast, playing with a nipple as he studied my face.

Quickly, I told him. Before the boys wake.

With a sigh, he fell to hands and knees and rutted hard. I hung on, enjoying the feel of him inside me. My own pleasure was a bare flame, and it would take time to stoke it into the inferno that would consume me. Besides, my mind was fractured, savoring the fierce concentration on Daegan's face, and aching as I reached for Samuel.

Daegan grunted and finished just as baby babble filled the hall outside our chambers.

Daegan. They're coming.

My black haired mate moved swiftly, grabbing a robe and helping me wrap in it. His body was bare but for a leather cloth around his hips. As we rose to greet our guests, I couldn't help admiring the flex of his great muscles, the dark hairs on his powerful chest.

Berserkers age very slowly. If the witch was right, my own life span will match my mates. But I could spend a century drinking in Daegan's masculine beauty, and he'll never fail to stir my secret lust.

Not so secret. He caught my gaze with a grin. *I'm in your mind.*

I touched his lip long enough for him to nip my finger with his teeth, and then our sons arrived.

Sabine and Maddox entered with a baby each. The twins were born in winter time, and it was now almost fall, but I still thought of them as babes.

My sister came to me straight away, holding Euan. I held out my arms for my dark-haired son, cooing to him as he turned wide, silent eyes to mine. His brother Jacob cried and thrashed in Maddox's arms, demanding milk as soon as he saw me.

"Give me this lad," Daegan took his fussing son from Maddox, and tossed the boy in the air. I turned away, carrying Euan to my nursing couch as Jacob's screams became delighted shrieks.

Sabine followed me. "They just woke. Maddox and I kept the braziers burning hot. I think the warmth helped them sleep."

I nodded to her. She had her hands on her hips, frowning at Daegan's rough treatment of his pudgy son.

"Jacob's fine." Maddox came to her side.

Sabine shrugged off his touch, sniffing. "I'm just glad you are not holding Euan. You might be tempted to start a baby tossing contest."

"I'd win, too. Euan isn't as heavy as his brother."

Sabine scowled. Maddox reached for her again. When she poked him, he grabbed and turned her, holding her back to his front. Brawny arms covered with tattoos wrapped around her slender body, keeping her captive. For all her protests, Sabine didn't struggle very hard to free herself.

I half listened to their bickering from my seat by the wall. My mates made me this private corner, well-lit and warmed by the fire. There I tucked Euan against me and opened my robe. He latched quickly, little fist pressing against my breastbone as he ate with intent. He was smaller than his brother, and less likely to cry when he was wet or hungry, so I took care to feed and check him first. Jacob was loud, but easily distracted.

My sons shared features and characteristics with both my mates. Euan had thick dark hair like Daegan, but was quiet and serious. Jacob was the opposite, happy and wild, and what little hair on his head was fair. Only the goddess knew their

true sire. I did not care. They have two fathers. Daegan and Samuel laid claim to them both in equal measure.

As they did me.

“Och, you’re a fast bairn.” Daegan was down on the floor with Jacob, lying on a rug to encourage the baby’s intent crawling.

“He’ll be walking sooner than you think,” Sabine said.

“He’s already trying.” Daegan’s hands hovered alongside Jacob’s body as the little one pulled himself up to his feet using a pelt hanging over the dais. Jacob took tentative steps around the dais, gripping the edge for balance. “He hates to be still.”

“I noticed,” Maddox chuckled. “He barely let me hold him.”

“Where is Ragnvald?” Daegan asked without taking his eyes from his son.

“Meeting with those who returned from the pack. Any more news from Samuel? Has he found the missing?” Maddox glanced at me hopefully, and I shook my head.

“He spends day and night atop the mountain, searching for them. The Corpse King’s magic disrupts the bonds,” Daegan said.

“Is it wise for Samuel to fight him alone?” my sister asked.

“He is not alone,” Maddox’s arms flexed around his mate. “He has us.”

Together, Daegan and I reach out with our minds, but Samuel was silent. He placed a wall between us, shunning our support.

“We need to—” Daegan began, but his son’s happy shrieking interrupted. Jacob stood clutching the pelts on the dais. His crow of triumph ended when the furs shifted under his weight. He lost his hold and landed hard on the floor.

“Och, lad, you’re all right,” Daegan propped the baby up and tugged at the cloth wrapped around Jacob’s bottom,

grimacing at the contents. “I thought I smelled something.”

“Time for us to leave,” Maddox tugged Sabine out the door as Daegan carried Jacob to the corner to change his soiled wraps.

“We’ll be back with food,” Sabine called from the hall.

Jacob screamed as his father changed him.

“Oh hush, ye wee scunner.” Daegan wrapped him back up quickly, and blew raspberries on his feet to distract him.

In my lap, Euan finished nursing and pulled himself up to survey the room. His little body relaxed when he saw his brother.

“Here he comes,” Daegan warned as Jacob sighted me and crawled towards my couch. I set Euan down, my own hands hovered as the brothers approached one another. They touched each other’s faces, as if reassuring themselves. Then Jacob howled with hunger. I scooped him up and set him at my breast, leaving Euan to crawl to his father.

“Jacob has a good battle cry,” Maddox remarked as he and Sabine entered with plates of food. My stomach growled. Sabine set the meat beside me and I nodded in thanks. My larger son will eat until my milk is gone, and scream for more.

“I have some meat broth ready.” Sabine sat next to me. “And fennel tea, for you.” She eyed Jacob as he snorted and snuffled at my breast, his hands grasped my robe as if afraid I’d pull away. “Soon he’ll be old enough to eat a little. I’ll start gathering roots. We can cook them until they soften. Carrots, potatoes, those would be best.”

“Carrots?” Daegan looked horrified. “My son needs meat.”

Maddox snorted.

“He’s a baby.” Sabine shook her head.

A cold wind gusted through the room as Ragnvald entered. The tall Berserker narrowed his eyes, adjusting to the low light of the braziers.

Maddox rose. “News?”

“Thorbjorn and Rolf have returned.”

We breathed a collective sigh.

“Do they know of the others who were lost?” Daegan asked.

“No.” Ragnvald fell into a chair. Sabine brought him a horn of mead, and he gulped before continuing. “They consulted a witch and hid from the Corpse King in another world. Their tale is a fantastic one.”

“That is strange.” Maddox’s brow wrinkled.

“There are many worlds connected by Yggdrasil,” Ragnvald said.

“This is good news. If they were delayed, but still returned. I assume they were safe and whole?” Sabine raised a brow. She is often called to provide healing to any of the pack. Broken bones, large gashes that need cleaning—anything the Berserker magic is slow to fix.

“Safe, whole, and even better.” Ragnvald allowed himself a smile. “They have a mate. She is bonded to them.”

“So soon?” Sabine asked. She didn’t protest as Ragnvald reached for her and pulled her into his lap.

“They were caught for some time in the other world. But still. These abbey women are prime and ready for mates.”

“Spaewives, all of them?” Daegan asked.

“All but a few of the holy women who guarded them,” Ragnvald nodded.

“One of the holy women is a spaewife,” Maddox corrected. “She even went into heat. She remains cloistered away, watching the youngest of the abbey women, the one’s too young to mate.”

“Juliet,” Sabine said. “Her name is Juliet. She has taken vows. She is celibate.”

“She will not remain so for long,” Ragnvald muttered. Sabine smacked him lightly with the back of hand. Ragnvald caught her wrist, his eyes flared gold at her challenge.

“You decreed that none of the women would be forced to mate,” my sister argued.

“The decree stands. But like a Berserker, a spaewife becomes a slave to her desires. The heat is strong, and few are able to withstand it.” Ragnvald smiled broader as Sabine scowled, and pressed a kiss to her palm.

So Juliet will not be forced to mate? I asked.

Daegan nodded. “The holy woman remains with the youngest of the rescued women. No Berserker will go near their lodge. Not until the young ones come into their heat.”

“Then what?” Sabine asked.

Maddox shrugged. “We will hold another round of Games. Not to award the winners, but for the spaewives to see the men compete. Perhaps they will naturally seek their mates.”

Sabine sniffed. “Or they will seek a vow of celibacy.”

“There is no fear of that.” Ragnvald’s grin had a touch of fang. “They will not be able to withstand their nature for long. The mating heat conquers us all.” His gaze swept over us. “How is Samuel?”

“We do not know,” Daegan answered. “He refuses our help. As Alpha, he believes it is his duty to shoulder the burden alone.”

Maddox shook his head. “That is not good. The Corpse King is too powerful. He has scattered some of our best warriors across the land, and still has strength to assault our safeguards.”

“He’s attacking?” Sabine raised her voice. “Here?”

“Almost constantly.” Ragnvald said. “Have you not noticed the cold winds and mist off the mountain?”

“It is almost autumn,” Sabine said uncertainly.

“The weather is too harsh for the season. And, early this morning, two hunters ventured off the mountain and were lost for several hours. They described a thick fog, smelling of poison. They survived to return, as did Rolf and Thorbjorn.”

“We cannot fight the weather,” Maddox grumbled.

“But we must fight the threat behind it. All of us, not just Samuel.” Ragnvald rubbed a hand over his face. “We need to call the witch.”

In my lap, Jacob had fallen asleep, worn from his morning adventures. I tucked him close to my warmth and bowed my head to breathe in his baby scent.

Daegan rose and joined me on the couch, Euan peaceful and quiet in his arms. I leaned over and touch my little one’s dark head, mouthing a prayer of protection.

Daegan took my hand. “We will keep you safe,” he promised me, voice thick with emotion.

My vision blurred as I nodded. I said a prayer for Samuel, battling the Corpse King from the high reaches of our mountain. He knew, as Daegan and I did, the cost of losing to the mage.

We had so much to fight for, and so much more to lose.

MURIEL



The wind tore at my gown as I braved the mountain path. The lower I descended down the mountain, the colder it grew. The sun was shining when I left the cabin I shared with my mates, but here each gust held a tinge of winter, even a few flurries of snow.

I frowned. It was not even autumn. Why was it so cold?

When I reached the foot of the mountain, a fog, thick and vile-smelling, draped over the path. Shadows grew from the mist and I shrieked, almost dropping my basket.

“Stop.” Two large warriors stepped into my path, blocking it. “What are you doing here?”

I felt their eyes on me as I answered, keeping my gaze on my feet. “I’m here for my mate.”

A long pause passed, but I didn’t raise my eyes.

“Muriel?”

I turned at Wulfgar’s deep voice. My mate hastened up the path, his great brow creased.

My relief at seeing him melted before his hard frown. “You should not be here.”

I raised the basket. “I brought you some food.”

Wulfgar took my offering without looking at it. “Quickly. It’s not safe here.” With a large hand at my back, he hustled me back up the path. When I stumbled, he scooped me up in his arms. His stride barely registered a burden as he put on a

burst of Berserker speed. When we broke away from the fog, the sun shone and birds chirped as if nothing was wrong. When we reached a sunny meadow, untouched by the wind or mist, I was shivering.

“You’re cold,” Wulfgar said gruffly as he set me down, and wrapped the pelt he wore around his shoulders around me. “You should not be here. It’s not safe.”

I bowed my head at the anger in his tone. “I’m sorry. I did not know.”

“You should’ve asked before you came.”

The chiding in his tone froze me more than any weather. “I-I tried. It has been over a night and a day, I haven’t heard from you or Fergus—”

He cursed. “The Corpse King breaks the pack bonds.”

My lower lip trembled. Wulfgar cursed again and hugged me to his great body. “Come here, lass. Forgive my rough words. You startled me.”

I clung to him, savoring his hold. It had been days since I’d seen my giant mate, and months since he had held me like this.

All too soon he eased me backwards. His blunt fingers caught my chin gently. “You must stay away from the lower reaches and the boundary of the protection spell. Promise me.”

“I-I promise.”

Fergus! Wulfgar called for my second mate using our shared mind link.

Coming, the bond echoed with Fergus’ faint reply.

“You will stay with Fergus. Do not stray. You must promise me.”

I nodded against his hand, eager to please my gruff mate. His face softened a touch, and he pulled me forward, kissing my forehead just as Fergus arrived.

“Don’t let her out of your sight,” Wulfgar ordered before striding away.

“Muriel? Why are ye here? And so barely dressed? Ye must be freezing.” Fergus shrugged off the pelt over his shoulders and placed it over the one Wulfgar set on me.

“It is still summer,” I protested.

“The Corpse King has spells to control the weather. His attack on the mountain is constant.” An arm about my shoulders, Fergus led me away. “Why did ye venture so near the foot of the mountain?”

“I did not know. I have not heard from you or Wulfgar. I’m sorry.”

“Och, lass. Ye miss us. ‘Tis no crime.”

“Wulfgar was so angry,” I whispered.

“Not at ye,” Fergus said quickly. “He has been fighting these past few days without rest.”

I bit my lip. It wasn’t only the past few days. For the past few moons, my older mate had withdrawn from me. Fergus was just as loving, but it had been a long time since Wulfgar had shared my bed. Until I felt the chill of his disapproval, I didn’t realize how lonely I was without my second mate.

Fergus must’ve felt my melancholy, for he stopped to hold me close. “It will be all right, lass. The Alphas are calling the witch. We are to watch the bairns while they speak to her.”

“Things are very bad, aren’t they?”

The strain around Fergus’ mouth and his silence told me the answer.

I bit my lip, looking past him down the path. I could not see far past the poisonous fog bathing the base of the mountain, choking out the forest and foothills beyond.

BRENNA

The wind blew my hair as I climbed the mountain trail. When the summit came in view, I stopped to catch my breath. Since birthing the twins, my body had become lush and heavy, and less used to exertion. That will change when Euan and Jacob start walking.

I clutched my robe close and grit my teeth against the wind. At this height, it was louder and more terrible, filled with howls and mocking laughter. Another of the Corpse King's spells, meant to inspire despair.

I hastened my steps, reaching out with my mind for my mate, shuddering at the empty silence where Samuel should be.

The head Alpha was so strong. Too strong. His willingness to bear the burden of the whole pack was his greatest weakness. He sat on the highest pinnacle, great body still as if carved from stone, the wind tore at his blond hair.

For a moment I feared Samuel was trapped in a prison of his own mind, but he raised his head as I approached.

Brenna?

My knees almost buckled when his voice touched my mind. It had been so long. Teeth chattering against the vicious cold, I answered. *It's almost time to meet with the witch.*

With a great sigh, Samuel stretched from his pose.

Our sons?

They are well. I placed a hand on his leg. He was freezing. Muriel and Fergus are here to watch the babes. Come down the mountain. You must eat, and rest.

I must be ready to find the missing.

He's being stubborn, I linked to Daegan.

Hang on, lass. I sent help.

“Alpha,” Ragnvald’s voice rang up the path before he appeared. “I will take your place.”

Thank you, I mouthed to my sister’s mate. He inclined his regal head, and settled himself on a rock, brow furrowed in concentration.

Samuel moved slowly as an old man. I wrapped my arms around his waist, as if seeking shelter against the wind. His arm slid around my shoulders.

You should not have come.

I could not stay away. I pressed myself to his side. So joined, we walked down the path. *I missed my mate.*

It's too cold for you to be about in just a robe. You must take better care of yourself.

You can punish me later.

Silence met my words, and I felt a touch of despair.

Don't give up on him, Brenna, Daegan encouraged. *He's been too long listening to the Corpse King.*

We must remind him of what is good, I agreed. But I didn’t relax until Samuel and I entered the hallway, out of the reaches of the wind.

Here, I led him to our shared chamber. *Come and rest.*

Very well. Samuel sank into a chair slowly. *But only for a little while. There's much work to be done.*

I fetched him mead, but before I could leave to find food, Daegan entered with two plates.

“Meat,” Daegan set the plates near Samuel. “And carrots.” His nose wrinkled in disgust, he headed to where I stood

adding wood to the brazier. He caught my hands and chafed them. “Brenna, ye shouldnae leave without an extra wrap.”

I didn't know was so cold. Too cold for late summer.

Daegan sniffed. “Ye may take a chill.”

“You should not have sent her,” Samuel rasped between sips of mead.

“Ye think I can stop her?” Daegan winked at me. “She worried and fretted, not even I could comfort her. As soon as Muriel and Fergus took the boys she was off like a shot.”

“Where are my sons?”

Close, I answered, carrying the plate to him. Eat, and I will bring them to you.

Samuel took the food and grabbed my wrist. “No. Stay here. Stay warm.”

“I’ll get the boys,” Daegan said, disappearing into the hall.

I settled myself at my mate’s feet, leaning against his powerful leg. Samuel’s face looked leaner, haggard from fighting, but he was still strong in body. It was not the strength of his body that earned him a place as Alpha, but the strength of his mind. Only Daegan and I knew how fragile he was. He would bear the entire pack’s burdens until he shattered.

You take too many risks, I said.

Is it your place to question your Alpha?

I met his gaze. *Yes.*

His eyes smiled at me over the cup.

You need to share your burdens.

The Corpse King’s spells attack the mind. I leaned against Samuel as he explained slowly. *He sent me many visions. Horrible things. I did not want to carry them back here.* He gestured to the warm room, the dais piled high with pelts, my nursing couch and the two wooden cradles. Sabine and Muriel wove both my boys blankets of dyed wool, one a fair blue, the other a rich red.

But this is what reminds you of what is real, and what is worth fighting for.

Shouts and cries heralded our sons. I rose but stayed at Samuel's side. His hand caught mine and squeezed. His expression was pained, his breath came faster as images flitted over his mind. Empty cradles, a shredded red blanket. The visions of what would happen if the Corpse King were to overtake the mountain.

Quickly I seated myself beside Samuel and slung an arm around him. *Come back to us*, I begged, holding him until he blinked at me. *This is real.*

Daegan set Jacob down in the door and bounced Euan on his hip. The blond babe crawled to Samuel and I, babbling the whole way.

I lifted him with a grunt—already, he was a heavy boy—and sat him on Samuel's lap. Already the cloud in Samuel's mind was lifting.

Your son. I stepped away, blinking back tears as Samuel ran a rough hand over his Jacob's head.

Jacob kept up his monologue, meeting his father's gaze fearlessly and tugging on the pelt on Samuel's shoulders. Tension leaked out of the big Alpha's face.

"He looks so big," Samuel rasped in an unused voice.

"It's been days." Daegan murmured, playing with Euan on the floor. "They grow quickly. You cannot keep away too long."

"It is necessary."

"It is necessary for the pack to fight, Samuel. Us. Not just you."

He wants to stand, I interjected before my mates start fighting. Samuel offered his fingers for Jacob to grasp in his pudgy fists. The babe came to his feet, crowing.

He's so strong, Samuel admired.

“He is,” Daegan said, ignoring my warning look. “But he also knows there’s no shame in asking for help.”

Samuel grunted.

Maddox poked his head in. “Sabine is ready to call the witch. It’s time.”

SABINE



As the Alphas gathered on the ledge outside the mouth of the main cave, I knelt in the circle of stones to finish the summoning spell. The witch spent much of the summer teaching me, and I'd spent many hours practicing the craft. When I used flint to light the fire for the final step, the wind buffeted the tiny flame, but it did not go out. Within seconds, Yseult appeared.

“Alphas,” she nodded to the leaders.

Samuel sat on his throne, Daegan standing nearby. Brenna had her own stone seat between them. With a thick fur robe draped over her shoulders, she looked like a queen. And she was—the Berserker Queen.

My own mates were on either side of me, Ragnvald stood facing the wind, Maddox crouched close. One of Muriel's mates, Wulfgar, completed the circle.

“Well met, Ysult,” Samuel's voice fought the wind. “It is a dangerous time to travel. We are glad you have come.”

“This mountain is well protected,” Yseult's eyes were shiny black, an alien obsidian that told me she was handling heavy magic.

“The safeguards are holding, for now.” Samuel sounded so tired. My sister leaned into him, placing a hand on his leg as if seeking comfort. The head Alpha didn't move, but I sensed he drew strength from his mate's touch, rather than the other way around.

“Then I bring good news,” Yseult said. “His assault will stop with the first snows. My sisters and I have Seen it.”

“That is good news,” Daegan observed.

“He is weakened.” The wind kicked up at the witch’s words.

“This is weak?” Ragnvald raised a brow. The cold wind brought a smattering of snowflakes. A few white sprinkles dotted the ground.

“Since the raid on the abbey he has loosed all his powers to recapture the spaewives. You must hold out for a few more days.”

“Should we attack?” Maddox asked.

“Your first task is to protect the spaewives. He can use them to increase his power.”

“We have missing warriors. Several of them, along with the women they rescued. We fear his forces have captured them.”

“Then a fight is inevitable. But take care. You must keep the spaewives from the Corpse King, at all costs. They are the main source of his power.”

“Then it is decided,” Samuel said. “We will send a group of warriors to find the lost and aid them. One of us should lead.”

“I’ll do it,” Daegan and Wulfgar spoke at once.

“With respect,” Ragnvald said. “You two are the most familiar with the mountain pack. You are needed here.”

“I’ll go,” Maddox volunteered. “I can take a contingent from our pack, as well as volunteers from here.” My two mates led a separate pack. Over the past few moons both were merging slowly, but there was still rivalry among some of the warriors.

“We also should take shifts searching via the pack bonds, rotating so we are not too tired,” Ragnvald continued. “I can take a shift.”

“So can I,” Daegan nodded at the wisdom of this. “That way it will not all fall to Samuel.”

“Is there another strong warrior who can help?” Ragnvald asked. “One of the pack?”

“There is one who can easily reach the entire pack,” Wulfgar said. “An old warrior named Odin.”

“Odin?” Maddox half chuckled.

“Yes, they call him that because he has but one eye.”

“He did not go to carry off a mate?” Daegan asked.

Wulfgar shook his head.

“If his mind is strong, he can help. Send him to the summit when I am there,” Samuel said.

“Then it is decided.” Maddox struck his leg. “Samuel and Ragnvald will continue monitoring for missing Berserkers. Daegan and Odin will help and take shifts. Wulfgar will manage the pack and patrols, along with Knut and Thorbjorn. And I will lead a fresh band of warriors to retrieve the lost.”

“We are grateful for your aid, Yseult,” Samuel addressed the witch. “You and I must confer to keep this mountain safe. I know you’ve been searching for a way to stop this ancient mage. With the winter reprieve, we could be ready to fight in the spring. If you will help us.”

Yseult nodded. Over the past few minutes, her pupils had shrunk, her eyes becoming more human.

“Well?” Maddox rose and crossed his arms over his chest. “How do we defeat him?”

Yseult licked her lips. For some reason, she looked at me. I sensed a hint of sadness before she turned to Samuel.

“I will tell you.” The witch threw up her hands, casting a spell before our eyes. Figures appeared before us, light reflecting on all our faces from a shared vision. Yseult’s voice spoke over it.

A young spaewife was taken as bride to the mage who would become the Corpse King. A necromancer, he took many

wives, and committed abominations to increase his power, birthing strong children and consuming their flesh to become near immortal. When she found out his plans, she prayed to the goddess for a way to defeat him. She was given a spell, and the children born to her were more powerful than ever. Together they defeated the mage. They couldn't kill him, but they could lock him in a tomb for a thousand years.

The Corpse King's wife sacrificed her life to seal the tomb, and her sons were all slain. She was the mother of the Berserkers.

I blinked as the vision faded. Brenna looked pale, and the warrior's expressions ranged from fierce, to worried, to thoughtful.

"This one woman had a spell to contain the mage?" Samuel asked.

"My witch sisters and I are still searching for the spell."

"But if you find it," I spoke up, "it might require great cost."

Yseult pressed her lips together and nodded. "To bind the mage, one or more spawives may have to die."

MURIEL



I held little Euan in my lap and cooed to him. Beside me, a red wolf sat patiently as a baby grasped his fur with chubby fists. With a chorus of babbling, the baby pulled himself up and started to walk, holding tightly to the red pelt.

I laughed softly at Fergus' long-suffering expression. *Do you want me to distract him?*

Nay. This is how the bairn's learn. When he's older, I'll teach him to mind his uncle Fergus. The wolf stuck his wet nose on the back of the baby's knee, and Jacob lost his footing.

"Yoohoo," someone called. I tensed, peering through the bushes. We'd carried the babies through a secret hall to a hidden cave lower down the mountain. The day was fine, and though there was a chill in the summer air, the wind wasn't as bad as it was further up the mountain. We were safe. Still, we stayed in the patch of sun at the cave mouth.

"Who's there?" I asked with a glance at the wolf, who hadn't risen.

Tis your sister, Fergus told me just as Fleur poked her head around the bushes.

"Hello. I brought some honey cakes."

Fergus barked.

"Not for you. For my sister and the guards."

"Fergus is our guard," I told her.

“Not the only one.” Fleur smiled as two giant black wolves rose from the brush behind her and stalked forward. One had a white splash on his face.

Gunnr and Erik, Fergus greeted two of my sister’s mates.

“The Alphas asked us to help.” Fleur came to sit on my blanket. I scooted to make room for her, and handed her Euan in exchange for a honey cake. “They’re almost done with consulting with the witch, but we’re to watch the babes until evening.”

I linked to Fergus so he could explain.

The Alphas have decided on a course of action. But first, they wish to enjoy their mates.

What about Wulfgar? I asked, and startled when my name was called.

“Muriel.” Wulfgar stood in the shadow of the cave, beckoning to me.

Go on, lass. Fergus stayed where he was. Jacob had a handful of his fur and Gunnr’s, and was hanging on as he took toddling steps between them.

When I approached my giant husband, he drew me further back into the cave. “I must leave for patrol.”

I nodded, searching his face.

“Maddox is leading a band of warriors to search for the missing. So I will not be going far. I will return soon.”

“Be safe.”

He hesitated, as if he would say more, but then kissed my brow, as if I was a child. Not a wife. My face flushed, I could no longer hold my tongue.

“My lord,” I called before he disappeared around the bend in the hall.

He turned.

“I wish to ask you something.” I kept my chin up but knotted my hands in my skirts. My head tilted up as Wulfgar

came back to stand before me. He was so large, so powerful. My heart beat faster facing him, as it did from the moment we met.

“So formal, little one?” His voice held a touch of warmth. “After all these moons?”

“I-” my voice stuttered as he laid a hand on my belly, just under my breast. My blush flared again. Under my modest gown I wore three piercings, each nipple and one at my most secret place. Sometimes my mates connected each with a chain, and the merest brush of their hand leaves me wanting. My breasts and lower lips were always sensitive. Lately, too sensitive. A sennight ago Fergus removed the chain but not the piercings.

Wulfgar’s touch reminded me of all the good between us. But when I laid my hand over his, his face grew shadowed. Cold swept over me again as I felt him withdraw.

“Please,” I blurted before I lost my nerve. “You have been so distant these past few days. I have wondered...” I swallowed. “Do I no longer please you?”

His head jerked back, his eyes widening in almost alarm.

My heart sank. How did I become repulsive to him?

“I know I have been ill.” A few moons ago, I had a lingering stomach sickness. I was weak and barely able to move or eat without vomiting.

“It’s not that.”

“Then what is it? I am the same. Fergus is the same. I thought we all had grown closer, but you—”

“You are not the same,” Wulfgar said roughly.

“I have tried to be a good wife to you.”

“You are. But things will change between us.”

“Why?”

“Because you are with child.”

For a moment, I didn't think I heard him correctly. "What?"

"You did not know?"

Turning away, I put my hand to my belly. I had been sick, and when I could eat again, my appetite returned in force. I'd grown rounder, but I'd not thought it was because of a babe. "I had no reason to think..." With the pack growing larger, the attacks of the Corpse King and Brenna's boys, I'd been distracted.

"I thought you knew and weren't telling us," he muttered

"Of course I didn't know. If you'd remain in my mind you would understand that I did not realize."

"I thought perhaps your sisters would've told you."

"They are busy." Sabine studying her magic. Brenna with the twins. Fleur with her three mates.

I whirled to face him. "And what about you? You are supposed to be my mate. You have not even come to me in these past few months. Are you—" I put my hand over my mouth. Wulfgar moved, a shadow in my mind, an authoritative presence. I didn't dare accuse him of what I thought. Not out loud. *Do you not want the child?*

He caught the echo of my thought before I banished it.

Large hands, battle rough, closed on my arms. "Of course I want the babe. Of course."

"Then what is wrong?"

His hands fall away. He shook his head, and stepped back.

Wulfgar?

Be well, Muriel. Just like that, he is gone.

Babies' laughter wafted from the outside, a reminder of the sunshine and happiness only a few feet away. But I was grateful for the darkness inside the cave as I wrapped my arms around my shaking body.

Fergus caught me as I doubled over. “Easy, lass, shhh.” He pulled me into his rough embrace. His bristly beard scratched my cheek, and I realized I was crying.

“He said—”

“I heard.” Fergus cradled my head against him as I wept.

“What’s wrong? What did I do?”

“Hush, Muriel, ye did nothing wrong. It’s all right.”

“He was so sad. He didn’t want to touch me.”

“He wants ye all right. He burns for ye. It kills him to stay away.”

“It hurts me too.” I wiped my cheeks, angry with myself for crying. I should be happy. I’ve always wanted a child.

“He’s afraid.”

I stare at Fergus. Wulfgar is the most powerful warrior in the pack. He could be an Alpha. “Of me?”

“Of happiness. Since I’ve known him, he’s wanted this. A lovely wife. A family. He’s wished so long for one. And now that it’s here, he’s facing the greatest enemy he’s ever known. Wulfgar is a warrior. And one misstep, one second of faltering in this fight, and he could lose it all. Wouldn’t you be afraid, too?”

SABINE



“Come, little witch,” Maddox took my arm as I rose from finishing the summoning spell. Yseult had left, and the warriors had mostly dispersed. After Yseult had given her news on how to defeat the Corpse King, none of us felt like lingering.

“Where are we going?” I rubbed my face to rid myself of a slight headache—an effect of the concentration required to make magic.

Maddox steadied me as I followed him down the long stone hall. “I am to leave soon. But first I have something to show you.”

My head had cleared by the time we entered the sleeping chamber. Once my eyes adjusted to the dim light, I realized Ragnvald was there, waiting. My second mate was tall, one of the tallest of Berserkers. The low light shaped his regal profile

“Ragnvald?”

He turned and beckoned to me. “We do not have much time.”

I go to him slowly.

“What—?” he cut my question off with a kiss. His hands played over my body, long elegant fingers searched for something. When they found the ties of my gown and tugged, he smiled against my mouth.

I tried to catch the garment but it fell to the floor, and Ragnvald wrapped his arms around me to deter me from

grabbing it.

“Maddox—” I appealed to my other mate, but he was already naked, tattooed muscles on display as he poured oil from a jar into his hand. He let the golden liquid fall, dripping down the hard V leading to his groin. He took his long cock in hand, slickening it.

“This is what you had to show me?” I freed myself from Ragnvald long enough to cross my arms over my chest.

Maddox’s fangs glinted at me. “Help me, little witch,” he came forward. “I must be ready to fill you.”

I rolled my eyes, but my nipples were hard as I grasped him with both hands, working the oil up and down his great shaft.

Ragnvald pressed himself to my back, his long fingers dipped between my legs. “She’s ready.”

“She’s always ready for us.” Maddox held my eyes.

Ragnvald turned me and propped my leg on a stone. He and Maddox sandwiched me between them, both steadying and undoing me with clever touches.

“Wait,” I gasped as my two mates pressed kisses to my back and chest, “don’t you want to speak of what the witch told us?”

Ragnvald tugged my hair from its braid, spreading it over my shoulder. He kissed me deeper, growling a little, and I knew then this was how he dealt with the heavy news Yseult had brought.

My mates needed me.

I spread my legs a little, leaning into Ragnvald. “Claim me.”

“I will, little witch.” Ragnvald hitched me closer, set my hips against him. “We are going into battle. Maddox will lead the charge. I will attack on a different front. It is dangerous, and we do not know the risks.”

“You will win,” I whispered. “You always win.”

“Perhaps.” He grasped his own cock, rubbing it against my slick entrance. “But first we will conquer our beautiful woman.”

Maddox stood at my back, his cock slid between my legs, finding my back hole. *Ready.*

Fisting my hair, Ragnvald tugged my head to the side, “You fight us.” His lips pressed up the line of my throat. “You are so strong. But in the end you will yield.”

His hips surged forward, stroking inside me, at the same time Maddox pressed against my back hole,

I cry out, quivering between them, a fragile flame buffeted on all sides by the wind.

“Surrender,” Ragnvald ordered before his fangs pierced my skin. Pain whipped through me, pleasure on a razor’s edge.

My mates sawed in and out of me, stimulating my tender flesh until I was beyond thought, beyond longing. Hands gripped me, kneaded my flesh, lips sucking and teeth nipping as if my mates would consume me.

Surrender, they commanded again, and I cried out, thrust into ecstasy, my body no longer my own but one with theirs.

We lay on the furs afterwards, my men on either side with me tucked between them. I rolled to face Ragnvald and seed trickled from between my thighs.

I inhaled sharply.

“What’s wrong?” Maddox pressed closer me. “Sabine?”

And just like that, I was crying. I dashed at my cheeks as Ragnvald’s face blurred. His expression held pity, and he stroked my hair back with gentle hands.

“There’s something I need to tell you,” I said. “Something I should’ve told you from the start. The magic I’ve been doing, the spells Yseult has been teaching me...there is a cost.” I bit my lip, looking away to collect myself.

“There is a chance...a good chance, that the magic will change me forever.”

“What do you mean?” Maddox asked.

“I may become barren,” I whispered.

Ragnvald moved first, pulling me close.

“It’s all right,” he told me. I buried my face against his chest, needing the shelter of his arms, needing to hide. “There is always a price to magic. We knew this.”

“Are you angry with me?” I asked.

“No, little *volva*.” His lips found my brow. “We knew what you were when we took you. A *volva*. A witch. Even now, your powers are growing.”

“I could’ve stopped it.” How many hours had I spent working my craft, studying with Yseult? Walking the line between *spaewife* and true magic, despite the cost of power. I’d known the truth, but hadn’t wanted to face it.

“You cannot change your destiny.”

“Even if one day the magic changes me forever? Even if I cannot bear children?”

“We do not know that for sure,” Maddox said.

“But to defeat the Corpse King...”

“We all have a part to play in this battle,” Ragnvald said, echoing Yseult’s last words to us.

“One of us might have to die,” I quavered. “One strong enough to work the spell.” *And it might be me.*

“No,” Ragnvald and Maddox said in unison. *No.*

“We will find another way,” Maddox insisted. “The witch and her sisters will do all they can to find a way to bind the Corpse King and destroy him forever.”

“We all must fight,” Ragnvald said. “All of us. We all will play our part. Oh, Sabine,” he cupped the back of my neck to draw me to him, and kissed me when my lip would quiver. “Even if the magic consumes you, even if we fall in this fight, I will not regret claiming you.”

“Never,” Maddox said.

“We were destined to possess you,” Ragnvald’s hand slid around my throat, collaring me until the tight knot around my heart melted. “There’s no escaping us. In this life, or the one beyond.”

BRENNA

The link between my mind and my mates lay quiet as we reeled from the witch's news. As soon as Yseult left, Daegan and Samuel headed to their posts—to debrief the pack and establish watch again on the heights. I retired to our chamber and waited until Muriel and Fergus brought my sons in to nurse. Euan busied himself at my breast immediately, while my sister and her red-haired mate distracted Jacob. Muriel's eyes were reddened a little, but she turned away before I could ask her if she was all right.

Truth be told, I also felt like crying. The tale Yseult told us was fantastic and tragic. She and her witch sisters still sought a final answer, a spell that could bind the mage for at least another thousand years.

We could defeat the Corpse King. But at what cost?

Euan cooed, reminding me of sweet, simple things. Good food, warm rooms, healthy children. Jacob took his brother's place, and ate ravenously, kicking his feet and squeezing my flesh until I scolded him. Muriel handed me a blanket and I wrapped him tight, and watched his little face grow lax as the warmth and full belly put him to sleep. I passed Jacob back to Fergus and took Euan again, cuddling him until his eyelids fell.

Where is Wulfgar? I signed to Muriel, but she just stared at me.

Fergus answered for her. "He's gone to patrol. He'll talk to a few of the unmated warriors, and choose a few for the

rescue.”

I nodded. Daegan entered, cheeks red from the wind. Fergus greeted him, but Muriel barely stirred.

“There are already several volunteers,” Daegan reported. “Maddox will be able to leave with a war band soon, once he and Ragnvald finish saying their goodbyes.”

Muriel glanced up at that, and she looked so sorrowful, I wanted to go to her. Fergus also had his eyes on his mate.

I was about to tell them to leave the boys with me, when Daegan lifted my son from my arms and gave him to Muriel. Bereft of my warmth, Euan jerked away with a cry.

“He’ll sleep if you walk him,” Daegan told my sister. She nodded and scuttled away. Fergus followed with Jacob, a frown on his face that mirrored mine.

Something was wrong with my sister.

Perhaps I should—

“No.” Daegan pulled me to my feet and kissed me soundly. His arms locked around my body, holding me until I melted into him. When his lips left mine, I was breathless. “We have another to care for,” he told me, drawing me to a small chamber adjoining our larger one.

Samuel sat there at a desk, studying a scroll before him. A map of the island. We entered, but he didn’t look up until Daegan lifted the scroll and set it aside.

“I need your help,” he said. “Our mate has been naughty.”

Samuel raised a brow.

Daegan tipped me forward so I leaned over Samuel. I grasped the armrests on either side to keep my balance as Daegan flipped up my skirts, baring my bottom.

“She has forgotten who she is and what she means to us. So have you. But you’ll remember, when you punish her.”

My breath quickened as Daegan loosened my gown. Samuel’s gaze skated over me. My milk-heavy breasts hang in front of his face, fruit ready for plucking.

“Keep still, Brenna,” Daegan ordered, and plunged his fingers into my sopping cunny.

I pushed forward, going onto tiptoe. Daegan rewarded my disobedience with a strong smack, then went back to fingering me. It would be rough if I were not so aroused, leaning over my handsome mate while the other played with my nethers.

Daegan’s skilled fingers knew just where to press and stroke. My eyes widened, my breath coming faster. Gold leapt into Samuel’s eyes. His smile hovered at the corner of his mouth as he freed my breasts from the clutches of my gown.

“Be still,” he reminded me, and fondled my breasts. Bent over, sandwiched between them, I was helpless. Each twitch earned me a harder smack from Daegan. My lips parted as my bottom grew hot, and Samuel’s smile grew.

As Daegan probed my cunny, Samuel leaned forward and claimed my lips. I yield to his brutal kiss, reaching for him with my mind, a tender, inviting touch. To my delight, he didn’t pull away.

Then, wetness trickled down my buttocks. Daegan’s fingers delve into the cleft, finding my tender hole and rimming it before dipping inside.

I moaned into Samuel’s mouth, coming up onto tip toe.

“It’s been too long,” Daegan’s voice was rough. “We need to claim ye properly.”

His fingers stretched me. “Part your legs. Wider.”

I rocked into position, still hovering over Samuel with my breasts swinging. Samuel kissed down my sensitive neck and took one nipple in his hot mouth. His beard scraped my sensitive skin.

Daegan’s hand smacked the underside of my bottom.

“Up,” he ordered. I arched my back, pushing my breasts into Samuel’s hungry mouth, propping up my backside for Daegan’s penetration. More oil poured onto my back, down the valley of my buttocks. Then he set the plug at my tight hole and pressed in.

“Breath, love,” he stroked my back as he seats the plug in my asshole. My chest heaved, my legs trembled, arousal slickened my cunny and slide down my legs at my discipline and invasion.

“Good lass,” Daegan crooned as Samuel freed his cock from his breeches and guided my head down. I went to my knees, mouth closing on the flared head, flicking my tongue against him in a way he liked. As he groaned and clutched the arm rests, I took him down further. When I popped up, Samuel had thrown his head back. Arms braced on his giant thighs, I pushed forward to take him down again.

“Enough.” Voice strangled, Samuel tugged my hair. Daegan helped me to my feet and guided me to straddle Samuel’s lap. I touched the great Alpha’s mind, seeking pleasure.

“Slowly,” Samuel held my hips so my cunny only enveloped the tip of his cock. I dug my fingers into his broad shoulders, fighting my instincts to sink down on his giant rod.

“So eager,” he commented.

“She misses you,” Daegan said quietly.

Bit by bit, Samuel allowed me to take him completely. The stretch felt so good, tears leaked from my eyes.

“Shhh,” he swiped them away.

I kissed him, gripping his long hair as if he would pull away from me. Frantic little noises escaped me, more animal than human but I didn’t care. Samuel hushed me and rose. With a needy cry, I wrapped my legs around his waist, my arms in a stranglehold around his neck as he carried me to the dais. When he knelt down, still inside me, I clung to him, whimpering.

“It’s alright. I’m going nowhere. I promise. We will be together.”

You left us once, Daegan pointed out.

Samuel gave his warrior brother a sharp look as he went to his side, taking me with him. Still joined, I nestled against

him, pressing my body to his. Hooking my leg over his hip, he seated himself deeper and stroked the hair from my face.

“Brenna, look at me.”

I refused, bowing my head to his chest.

He sighed, running his hands up and down my back.

Then I felt it. A nudge at the doorway of my mind. Samuel.

Brenna, let me in.

No. I clung to his body even as I denied him my mind. *You will come and take what you will, and then leave.*

“What do you want?” His breath stirred my hair. “Tell me and I will do all I can to give it to you.”

Open yourself to me.

He withdrew, and my nails bit into his shoulder. But then he opened himself wide and sucked me in. A flood of thoughts, and I’m drowning. Then Daegan is with me, supporting me against the rushing tide. I hold onto him but we move deeper together into the vault of Samuel’s open mind.

I saw his fear. The endless nights on the summit, battling the Corpse King. The visions of our home taken, berserkers slain, spaewives dragged away by the mage’s army. Our boys—Daegan shielded me from those visions, but not before I saw the cradle broken, the braziers overturned, the ashes scattered. The red blanket, ripped and stained darker.

Breathe, Brenna.

Air rushed into my lungs at the command. I blinked, coming back to myself. Samuel was stroking my face, still inside me.

“I am sorry,” he rumbled. “I only wanted to protect you.”

I touched his face, and it was wet.

“We can help, Alpha,” Daegan said. “We’re strong enough to bear it.”

Samuel held my eyes. “But I cannot bear to cause you pain.”

I snuggled against him, pushing my hips to take him deeper. *Keep me safe, but keep me close. I can bear anything with you.*

He tugged my head back by my hair, lips seeking my mouth. His hips rocked, stroking deep inside me as his mouth plundered mine.

Samuel. Be with me. He thrust harder, surging inside me as he growled with hunger.

At my back, Daegan removed the plug and parted my rear cheeks with his cock. A few careful thrusts, and he was inside, joining Samuel in a primal rhythm that rocked me to and fro. Their cocks rubbed every bit of my inner walls, dragging pleasure from my body.

“Whatever happens,” Daegan panted. “We will be together.” He reached across me to grip Samuel’s arm. *Together, always.*

Samuel responded by opening his mind further. A rush of desire, of longing filled the bond between us until I bowed under the onslaught. I surrendered to the storm, opening myself and becoming nothing, a hollow vessel for my mates to fill. They howled in triumph, their bodies savage and surging, ecstasy white hot and blinding. Overcome, I hovered above them, a watching spirit, consumed and born anew.

A final gasp and the men writhed on the dais. I went back into my body, heavy, sated, yet filled with lightness.

It did not matter what happened. The joy. The sorrow. We would be together.

“Until the end,” Daegan nuzzled the back of my neck.

Whenever it comes. I remained plastered against Samuel, our bodies joined intimately until he grew soft and slipped from me.

Samuel’s head drooped, the great Alpha falling into slumber as Daegan rose and cleaned me. I was content to lay

there, running my fingers over Samuel's face and chest as if he were a sleeping babe. It wasn't until Daegan brought me mead and Samuel's eyes opened at the sudden silence that I realized I was humming.

The boys will be back soon. You should spend some time with them.

"I will," he promised. "But then I must return to my post."

"Until Odin and I relieve you," Daegan reminded him, and Samuel inclined his head.

Already the lines of strain had slipped away from the blond Alpha's face. In his mind, I felt a quiet peace.

We will defeat our enemies, I told him. We will find a way.

"You heard the witch. One woman might save us," Daegan commented.

Samuel's eyes crinkled as he placed my palm against his cheek.

"One woman already has."

MURIEL

Jacob and Euan tumbled about on the blanket as I sat close, knotting my fingers in my skirts.

Since Wulfgar left I have barely spoken. I couldn't stop thinking of the fight with my mate.

How long has Wulfgar known of our child? Why isn't he happy?

If Fleur and her mates noticed my silence, they didn't comment. The twins demanded constant attention. We clean and play with them, and take them one by one to Brenna for feeding. I walk Euan up and down the cave passageways, cuddling him and letting him explore. His contented gurgles are like knives in my heart.

If all went well, soon I would hold my own child. I thought I'd be happy, but I couldn't stop thinking of Wulfgar's sad expression. Does he think I would not be a good mother? He said he does not regret the babe, but when it comes, will he welcome it?

"Come," Fergus says at sunset, and tugs me up.

"What about the boys?"

The twins are sleeping, Jacob sprawled out on the blanket, Euan napped curled up between Gunnr's paws. Fleur sat nearby, stitching with a smile on her face whenever she glanced up at her charges.

"Their parents will return soon. Fleur and her mates will watch them until then."

I trudged behind him until we reached our cabin. Once inside, Fergus pulls me to him.

“Here,” he said, turning me and stripping off my gown before I realized what was happening.

“What are you—?”

“Hush,” he smacked my bare bottom cheek, and tossed away the bundle of my clothes.

“You need this. I need this.”

I crossed my arms over my bare body. “I don’t—”

“Ye need to remember your place, lass.”

“My place?” I cried raggedly. “I have one mate who loves me, and another who cannot even stand the thought of me with child.”

“I told you, that is not your burden, it is his—”

“We are mated! His burden should be mine.”

Fergus reached for me and I scurried backwards.

“Lass, come here.”

“I thought he’d be happy. He isn’t even happy.” The pain in my gut made me bend double.

“Och lass.” Fergus folded me in his arms. The red hairs on his chest rubbed my skin as he cradled me like a child. “It is happy news. Soon Wulfgar will be able to celebrate with us. Now, now, none of that,” he chided when I let out a little sob.

He led me to a chair, and sat down before tipping me over his lap.

“W-what are you doing?” I asked.

His hands roamed over my bare bottom. “Making ye feel better.” He spanked one cheek and I jumped, though it didn’t hurt. “Will ye mind me?”

He smacked the other cheek when I didn’t answer right away.

“Yes,” I sulked. More swats, and I kicked. Fergus spanked me harder until I went limp, yielding to his will.

“Good lass.” He squeezed my warmed buttocks, pulling them apart. A pause, and warm oil drizzled between my cheeks. I made a noise deep in my throat as he fished a finger in my rear hole, and replaced it with a plug.

“Deep breath,” he ordered and pushed it inside. My feet kicked again.

“It’s too big.”

“‘Tis the same size as always. You’re just unused to it. We’ve been too long making ye feel owned.” He set me off his lap, on my knees. “Thank me for preparing ye,” he ordered.

When I was too slow to undo his breeches, he pulled me up again over one knee and rained blows on my bottom. I cried out, even as warmth stirred through me, my body readying for pleasure.

Back on my knees, I eagerly drew him out and sucked. Fergus cupped my head, murmuring encouragement as I licked him up and down. Drawing his cock up, he had me tongue his tight sac, guiding me until I relaxed into giving him pleasure. No more thought, no more sorrow, no more worry. Following Fergus’ orders, I could simply be me. By the time he drew me up, I was wet and panting with need.

Fergus turned me and pushed my front flat on the table. Hand clamped on the back of my neck, he stroked inside me, thrusting forcefully until my body rocked into the wood. My cunny quivered, tissues tightening in readiness.

He pulled out at the last minute. “No,” he smacked my ass again. “You don’t deserve to cum.”

I bit my lip against begging him. He helped me onto the table, having me lie back and he tied me down. I end up spread eagled, arms and legs bound. Fergus stood over me and finished jacking his cock, turning my head at the last second to have me swallow his seed down. A little dribbled from the side of my mouth, and he scooped it up and fed me.

“Good lass,” he crooned and I melted.

I raised my head as he got a cloth and cleaned me. “So wet,” he tsked. With a grin, he bent his red-head and lapped up my juices, licking me until I jerked in the bonds. “There. Now ye are ready.”

“For what?” I asked. He stuffed the cloth into my mouth, and bound another on my eyes.

Blindfolded, I could only wait at his mercy.

Cold metal trailing over my skin made me jerk, and his fingers pinched my nipples, toying with piercings as he attached the chain to the rings tipping my breasts. Slowly, he drew the chain down my quivering stomach and took his time attaching it to the ring between my lower lips.

“There,” he gave the chain a tug. I sucked in a breath as the sharp pain woke my arousal, my body roaring to life.

Fergus?

Silence. Whatever this was, it would be a test. My chest rose and fell under the chain, my cunny grew wetter.

And then—a slight sound outside. A boot on the outside stoop.

I gurgled in my gag and yanked the bindings. Anyone could walk in and see me—

Shhh, Muriel. Trust me.

Fergus’s voice calmed me somewhat.

The door swung open. Chilly air gusted across my bare body. I shivered slightly, my body coming even more alive, nipples hardening to points.

The door shut as the stranger came inside. The air grew warm again. Whoever it was drew near, stopping at the foot of the table. I could only imagine what they saw—a naked woman, bound, gagged, and spread, legs open and cunny on display. Gold glinting drawing attention to soft flesh trembling underneath.

The stranger came to stand beside me. A fresh scent washed over me, and, even though he didn’t speak, I knew

who it was.

“What is this?” Wulfgar rasped. A part of me tensed as another part of me relaxed. My great mate didn’t sound angry, but didn’t sound happy.

“This is your wife,” Fergus said from his corner. I imagined him sitting near the fire, boot propped on a stack of ready kindling, drinking mead and enjoying the firelight flickering over my skin. He sounded casual, almost bored. “You’re late.”

A hand skated over my chest, hovering but not touching. I sensed it, and my breath came faster.

“Why have you done this?”

“Ye need to remember your duty.”

“I know my duty.”

A scrape of a chair, and Fergus said with more force, “Ye know the one you owe to the pack. You’ve forgotten what you owe your mate.”

Wulfgar sighed.

“She cried today. She thinks you don’t want—”

“I know. I know. Muriel, I’m sorry.” He laid his hand at my collarbone. I whimpered a little, but the sound was muffled by the gag.

“Don’t tell her,” Fergus said. “Show her.”

For a moment there was silence, but for Wulfgar’s ragged breathing. Then a click of a weapon, and the fall of fabric. My mate stripping to come to me.

“Build up the fire,” Wulfgar ordered. “I don’t want her cold.”

“Ye can warm her,”

“First things first,” Wulfgar murmured, and eased the gag out of my mouth. A little water dribbled into my mouth.

“All right, sweetheart?”

I nod, still unsure. I'm bound and sightless, helpless before the most powerful man I know. A warrior with the strength to break me, in more ways than one.

But I would never hurt you, he spoke into my mind. *You have nothing to fear.*

I bit my lip. He already hurt me.

He sighed. "I'm sorry, Muriel." His hand came to my knee. "I will atone."

Giant hands brushed my hair back, stroked down my needy flesh. My hips rose to greet his touch and he clucked, avoiding the area of my throbbing pussy. I whimpered again, but didn't speak. Fergus was right. The time for words had past.

"Untie her," Wulfgar ordered.

"You sure? It can be great fun to tease her with them." Another scrape of the chair as Fergus came to do his warrior brother's bidding.

"No. I don't want the ropes. I don't need them."

My arm relaxed as the bonds fell away.

Heat hit my body as Wulfgar leaned over me. "You'll be good for me, won't you, Muriel?"

Tears pricked my eyes as I nodded.

"Oh Muriel." Rough hands massaged my limbs, arranging me carefully. "Let me atone. Let me show you how much you mean to me."

My lips parted as Wulfgar put his mouth on me. Two hands, two lips, one hot tongue, and I gasped and twitched.

"Be good," he reminded me, with a snap of the chain. He spread my legs and I kept them where he desired. Two large hands palmed my buttocks, pulling me to the table's edge. Then his mouth covered my most sensitive place.

He licked, he sucked, he probed me with his great tongue. I jerked and shook, a leaf on a branch, but didn't move from where he placed me.

Good lass, Fergus encouraged.

I opened myself to him and Wulfgar, both body and mind.

“Muriel. Dear one,” Wulfgar murmured, his stubbled cheek scratching the inside of my thigh. I jumped at the rough treatment, and he soothed me with a kiss to the thin skin.

Take your pleasure, he ordered, and ate me with such fervor I fisted my hands to keep them where they were.

When my orgasm rolled over me, he tugged the chain, a flash of pain to make the pleasure sharper. He propped my legs up against him, ankles barely resting on his shoulders, his own hands steadyed my hips and pulled me onto his cock with one great thrust. My climax ended and another one began as Wulfgar grunted, thrusting deeper and deeper inside of me.

Give it to me, Muriel, he commanded, hovering in my mind, feeling my pleasure as if it were his own.

I can't—

You must. With a growl, he gathered me up into his arms. I was weightless for a moment before he laid me on the bed. The bed he hadn't shared with me for so long.

Pain bubbled in my chest, choking me.

“Give it to me, Muriel.”

I shook my head, tears streamed out from under the blindfold.

“Yes.” He cradled my chin gently. The briefest touch, just enough to leave me sobbing. The stone around my heart cracked, broke.

Give me your pain. Let me soothe the hurt away.

Finally, I nodded. My arms and legs wrapped around his large body as he hovered over me.

His breath caressed my face.

Then he slammed his body into me. My climax exploded as he rubbed the right parts inside me. I rocked back with each savage thrust.

“Wulfgar,” I call out his name, consumed.

He let out another growl. No more man, only beast, the predator unleashed, feasting on my satisfied cries.

I bowed—but didn’t break. He had nothing to fear. I am the vessel of his child, but I am strong. And he realized it as he sated himself in my body. I hang on, shuddering with pleasure, loving the drag of his thick cock over the plug. He pulled it out, and I climaxed again, limbs shaking as I peak.

Still, Wulfgar pounded into me, holding me tight in his massive arms. I’d have marks on my flesh when he was done.

He pulled off the blindfold, I drank him in, pulling him into my body, my mind, my heart.

“Muriel,” he whispered over and over as he lost control and spilled inside me. “Muriel.”

I rubbed my face over his face and chest, savoring the strength of his arms, the bite of his stubble.

Fergus stood next to the bed, stroking my leg as Wulfgar licked at my breasts to clean me. Smiling, he handed Wulfgar a cloth to finish the job.

I stopped my giant mate when he would wipe his seed away. “Leave it. I already carry our child, but I want the reminder.”

Wulfgar bowed his head. “You humble me.”

Fergus laid a hand on his arm. “You think you do not deserve this.” My red haired mate nodded to my naked self, spread before them, glistening with sweat and our combined juices.

“But you above all have earned it.”

Come, I invited Wulfgar. Sleep beside me.

Fergus fetched us some mead, and we both drink, but then Wulfgar laid down, with me on my side before him, his large palm cradling my belly.

Comfortable? He asked me, as gentle now as he was brutal.

In answer, I wriggle back against his massive bulk, and fall asleep in the shelter of his arms, my belly protected by my mate's great hands. Hands that will one day hold his baby daughter.

The End.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Thanks for reading Berserker Babies! I almost called this Berserker Babies 1 because I'm sure I'll want to write more.

I know I dropped a bombshell with hints of the great fight coming with the Corpse King. It will span several books.

If you need to catch up, read the Berserker Saga with the four sisters. In the next few months, I'm writing Juliet's story and three more books that describe the events of the rescue and fight with the Corpse King. Plus, a fun short story involving all the Berserker Brides getting into mischief (with even more baby cameos)!

AUTHOR'S THANKS

Soooo many people to thank. I've been remiss in publicly thanking people, so here's the list:

To Golden Angel, Livia Grant, and all the writers on Lit I used to read while working my finance job. You inspired me to write again.

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To my new daughter, who at 21 weeks gestation is already so sweet and fun, and doesn't kick me awake too much at night.

To all the Berserker fans. I love this world and I'm so glad to share it with you.

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Captured by the Berserkers

Kidnapped by the Berserkers

Bonded to the Berserkers

Tamed by the Berserkers (*coming soon!*)

Owned by the Berserkers (*coming soon!*)

...and more!!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lee Savino is a USA today bestselling author. She's also a mom and a choco-holic. She's written a bunch of books—all of them are “smexy” romance. Smexy, as in “smart and sexy.”

She hopes you liked this book.

Find her at:

www.leesavino.com



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