

(Printed with an unregistered version of Fade In)

# Barbarian

Written by

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

PRIEST: 30s-50s. Any ethnicity. Male. Poor bastard.

IDUNN: 30s. Any ethnicity. Female. Monster of nightmares.

EDMUND: 10-12. Any ethnicity. Male. Living the nightmare.

SETTING:

The churchyard of what could happen to any monastery along the British Isles.

TIME:

798 A.D.

CONTENT WARNING:

Graphic violence.

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*British Isles - 798 A.D.*

*Massive stone walls give shelter to an old churchyard, littered askew with gravestones.*

*The scene is serene, quiet, and cold. Snow falls from the open air onto the ground, covering it in a caress of frost.*

*A perhaps bloodied, sweat-drenched PRIEST frantically enters the yard through a pair of wooden double doors and attempts to barricade them behind him.*

*He quickly moves on into the yard, looking for a place to hide or something with which he might defend himself.*

*He doesn't have much luck.*

*He turns in terror as the double doors crash open once more, meeting the fearsome, chilling gaze of IDUNN, a Viking invader, bloody axe in hand.*

*She cocks her head at the PRIEST, toying with her prey.*

PRIEST

No. No!

*IDUNN slowly closes the distance between herself and the PRIEST, as he tries unsuccessfully to get away.*

*There's nowhere to go.*

PRIEST

Please. No! God be with me. Get away! Get away! Stay back!

*Panicked, out of options, the PRIEST grabs the ornate, jeweled cross pendant from*

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*around his neck and holds it out in frenzied prayer.*

PRIEST

Lord our God, protect this sinner from unholy evil!

*IDUNN stops, staring at the cross, showing unease for the first time.*

PRIEST

Yes. Yes! Stay back you spawn of hell! God is here. His Grace you shall not o'ercome!

*IDUNN hisses as the PRIEST now begins to close the distance towards her, cross held outstretched.*

*IDUNN backs away, on guard, battle-hardened, but truly disarmed and frightened by the cross.*

PRIEST

The Lord is with me! He will send you back to the depths from which you came! Away with you, demon! The Lord our God is my protection! I beseech thee, Lord, vouchsafe your wrath on this evil! Send it to damnation! Away! Away!

*Backed against a wall, IDUNN stops, dread in her eyes.*

PRIEST

Away, foul creature!

*IDUNN suddenly grabs the PRIEST'S outstretched arm, her feigned fear of the cross dropped.*

*The PRIEST is too stunned to move, and IDUNN smiles as she hacks the PRIEST'S arm clean off.*

*The PRIEST screams as blood sprays and IDUNN hisses wide, revealing a pair of sharp fangs.*

*She grabs the PRIEST and bites his neck.*

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*More blood sprays as the  
PRIEST begins to violently  
convulse.*

*IDUNN drinks deep.*

*She drains him.*

*It is not quick.*

*Upon drinking her fill, she  
lets the twitching body  
collapse on the snow and  
breathes in the bloodlust.*

*Silence.*

*Then she speaks:*

IDUNN

You may come out.

I know you are there.

...

Are you going to make me come find you?

*Beat.*

*A petrified young boy, EDMUND,  
slowly rises from behind one  
of the gravestones.*

IDUNN

Hello, there, little one.

What is the matter?

Speak with me. I will not bite.

EDMUND

You speak our tongue?

IDUNN

I speak most.

*Beat.*

EDMUND

Are you going to eat me?

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IDUNN

That depends.

(With a sudden  
movement to scare)

Do you taste good?

EDMUND

(Moving away)

No!

No, I don't.

IDUNN

(Laughing)

At ease, little one. I will not drain you. I have had my  
fill.

*IDUNN begins ransacking the  
PRIEST'S body for jewels and  
valuables.*

*EDMUND watches.*

*IDUNN watches him watch.*

IDUNN

Did you know him?

EDMUND

Yes.

IDUNN

Your father?

*EDMUND shakes his head no.*

*Beat.*

IDUNN

Not going to tell me who?

EDMUND

It doesn't matter now.

Why are you doing this?

IDUNN

(Removing the cross  
from the PRIEST'S  
severed arm/hand,  
dangling it)

Why do you think?

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EDMUND

You are killing us all for jewelry?

IDUNN

For the wealth they bring, little one. There are those who would pay a high price for trifles such as these.

EDMUND

If you just want money, why kill us for it?

IDUNN

(Genuinely confused)

So you cannot try to get it back. You would leave an enemy alive?

EDMUND

But we did nothing to you.

IDUNN

No. But you were in the way.

*Beat.*

EDMUND

You *are* monsters.

IDUNN

Are we? Perhaps my people are just stronger than yours.

I have a boy myself. Perhaps a few years younger than you. He has already learned to wield a sword. A shield. Can you say the same?

What is your name, boy?

EDMUND

Edmund.

IDUNN

Tell me, Edmund. You think your God will save you? If you cannot even defend yourselves from our blades?

*Beat.*

EDMUND

It is God's commandment not to kill.

IDUNN

A strange God to demand such a thing.

Does not look to me like he has ever done you any favors. So why obey him?

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EDMUND

It is a sin to harm others.

IDUNN

A what?

EDMUND

A sin.

IDUNN

And what is that?

EDMUND

(Baffled she has  
never heard the  
concept, unsure how  
to explain it)

Uh...

...

It is when you defy God's orders.

When you dishonor Him.

IDUNN

Mmm.

Were I you, I would not fear for my honor, little Edmund. I will feast with Odin in the Great Hall or with Freya in her field when the time comes. You?

I wish you fortune with your sin.

*IDUNN turns and heads towards  
the doors.*

*But a thought stops her.*

*She turns around.*

IDUNN

Do you really mean to tell me...if I was to kill you, right now? You would not try to stop me?

EDMUND

I could not.

IDUNN

We both know you could not. This man could not. But he chose to cower behind his jewelry.

(MORE)

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IDUNN (cont'd)

Would you do the same? Or would you try to stop me?

...

And you call me monster.

(Pause, grabbing hold  
of her axe, offering  
it to EDMUND)

Here.

Take it.

*EDMUND doesn't move.*

IDUNN

Take the axe, boy.

Take it, or I will drain every ounce of you.

*EDMUND, paralyzed by fear, but  
his legs somehow obeying,  
slowly crosses to IDUNN.*

*He takes the axe.*

IDUNN

Good. That was not so hard, was it?

Answer me.

EDMUND

No.

*Beat.*

*EDMUND grips the axe tight,  
even more adrenaline somehow  
pumping through him.*

IDUNN

I will tell you this.

At ease. You are safe.

I will leave you. You can tell any others who survive that I  
let you live.

But you will keep my axe, little Edmund. And you will use  
it. Train with it. Learn to wield it.

Or you will not. I do not care.

(MORE)

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IDUNN (cont'd)

But one day, I do think we should find the answer to my question.

Don't you?

I will come you to again. And we will speak again.

And on that day we will see if you hold true to your God or yourself.

How does that sound?

Do not cry, little Edmund.

I think you are lucky.

Getting the opportunity to train before combat? With my own weapon, no less?

(Stroking his hair)

Until we meet again, little one.

Dream of me, won't you?

I will of you.

*IDUNN, vastly enjoying herself, turns to leave once more.*

EDMUND

(In tears, utterly defeated)

Why are you doing this?

*IDUNN stops once more.*

*Turns back to him.*

IDUNN

Why do you think?

*IDUNN turns and exits through the double doors.*

*EDMUND succumbs to shock and falls to the ground, hyperventilating, barely holding anything together.*

*He cries.*

*The snow falls.*

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*He grips the axe tight.*

*He wails.*

*The snow falls.*

*He grips the axe tight.*

*The lights slowly fade.*

END OF PLAY.