

The Characters Torvald 'Tor' Svensen, Conrad Svensen, Victoria Connell-Svensen, Valerie Connell, Barbara Caine, Ivar Johnsen, Bob Bruj, Don Watkins, Sandra Watkins, Kellan Meig'h, Jim Federline and Steven Nanomantube are the property of Ray Stankewitz
The Character Aslaug Larsdatter "the former Shieldmaiden, now a Valkyrie" is the property of Joan Jacobsen

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'Lost'

By R C Stankewitz

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Chapter 9

"Actions Of The Gods"

Zerachiel was standing in the middle of the room where the immortal pair had been staying. The bed covers and pillows were missing from the bed and he could detect a slight aura where some entity had been standing in the room. The winged feline walked around the room, concentrating carefully to feel their life forces amongst all the others. It was obvious that whoever did this was a powerful being.

The only force he could clearly detect was the one from the entity proper. "This is not good" he said to himself as he tried to pull in the immortal couple's signatures. After a few more minutes, he was sure that he had detected something. It was another signature that was very faint but distinct. Sometimes furs were known to carry another life force signature on them after being in contact with another fur. "I will try to follow after this particular signature" he thought as he shimmered and left the room.

The Archangel reappeared in another dwelling that had a certain familiar 'feel' to it but there was no fur present. He knew this force-it felt like some fur he had been near to recently. Zerachiel walked slowly around the room, analyzing the life forces that he felt until he noticed a shrine to the Norse gods on a low table. There were only two furs that he knew of that had a shrine like that. He quickly put two and two together and hurriedly shimmered out of sight to reappear in the home of Christopher. It didn't take him long to track down the lion and give him the news.

"The Shieldmaiden has most likely been taken by the same entity or entities that took the immortal ones" the feline stated to Christopher. "I can feel the entity's after-presence in her home." The lion could see that his archangel was highly disturbed by this discovery.

"**Oh Nuts!** That's the last thing I wanted to hear! Whoever is behind this has Aslaug too!!" the lion spat out as he face-pawed himself and shook his head. The lion looked up at the angel as he asked "You are quite sure of this?"

“I am very sure” the feline angel said as he chewed on his lower lip. “I have been near her when Gabriel and Michael went to apologize to her so I am sure this is her signature.”

After the lion got his composure back, he quickly got up to leave himself. “You will go with me to see Odin” he told the angel as he prepared to shimmer out.

“Yes sir. I will go with you” the angel replied as they both shimmered out of sight.

###

Torvald and Kellan had finished their repairs to one of the air mattresses and were pumping it up with the built-in paw pump. “This will be perfect for the filly to sleep on” the huge equine stated. “It's not big enough for two so she gets the mattress by default.”

“I do not need a mattress to sleep on” the filly told them as she sat on the couch with her spear across her lap. “I will most likely stay up and keep watch for us” she added, looking to see if they understood her.

“Aslaug, we are safe for right now” the tigress said in an attempt to get the filly to settle down. “The gods will find us in due time and we'll all go home.” As the filly finally started to unwind, the tigress took her Dane axe that was sitting beside the filly and propped it up against the wall with the rest of their weapons. The tigress then reached for Aslaug's spear only to have the filly pull it away from Victoria's grasp.

“I will keep this with me, if you don't mind” she said with a concerned look on her muzzle. “It will make me feel more at ease to have it nearby” she said as she rested it across her lap again. The Shieldmaiden had told Torvald how she had come across the spear because he was aware of it's energy field. This only proved the fact that he had not told his mate her secret. The filly sat there and tried to not fall asleep but the need for rest was becoming great as her eyelids kept slamming shut on her.

“Maybe you are right about the mattress” Aslaug said as she yawned wide and stretched her arms out. “Maybe a little sleep would be good. That was a hard walk down here from the mountainside.” She then stood and did some stretching exercises to unwind some more and stretch her stiff legs a bit.

Kellan got out one of the sleeping bags that he had saved and laid it out for Aslaug. As everyone prepared to go to sleep, the filly said a prayer to her gods that was short and to the point.

“May you find us and return us to our world as quickly as possible.”

###

After everyone had laid down to sleep, Torvald was feeling extremely restless so he went out on the porch and looked up at the stars above. "When will this end?" he thought to himself as he sat down on the end of the porch and leaned up against the cabin wall. He was thinking about nothing in particular when his other half came outside to see where her mate had gotten off to.

"Torvald, are you all right?" she asked as she sat down on the porch next to him. "Something has been bothering you ever since Aslaug arrived." She looked over to see that he was staring off into space. "There's something about that spear she carries" the tigress said in a quiet voice. "I think you know. When I touched it...I felt something, like energy from it. It made my fur stand up on end and it shocked me just a little" she related to her mate.

"You are right, there is something very special about that spear" the berserker replied to her. "Joe Latrans and I know the whole story but I am held to complete secrecy by the filly. She made me promise not to tell another living or undead soul. The rest of the squad doesn't even know the whole story. The only reason I knew something was up with that spear was the fact that I can see the energy coming from it." He swallowed hard as he got a cold shiver up his spine. "I have seen those particular kind of spears before, they're Valkyrie's spears." His mind momentarily drifted back to that day in Saxony so many years ago. A Valkyrie had argued with the white warriors that had carried his dead body off the heath. His soul had stood by and watched the argument carry on for some time until Frigg herself intervened on the warrior's behalf.

"That sounds like some real serious stuff" Victoria commented as she wrapped the quilt around herself tighter. "Maybe some day, do you think she'll tell me the story about her getting her spear?"

"Trust me" her mate retorted. "You don't want to know how she received her spear. It made my blood curdle when she told me." Just thinking about what Aslaug had said to him caused another cold shiver to go up his spine.

He sat there for a moment more before he stood up. "Let's go to bed" he said as he helped the tigress up off the porch. Before they went inside, he stopped his mate and turned her to face him. "You are to tell no fur, living, undead or otherwise, what I have just told you" he said in a serious tone of voice. The stallion had a very serious look on his muzzle as he stood there waiting for his mate's answer.

"OK, if it's that important, I promise to stay quiet" she replied to him. "You know I would never do something to hurt the filly. She's a very good friend to both of us."

The tigress looked at her husband with a very concerned look on her face. “Not to change the subject but I'm afraid that we will be here for a long time” she stated as she stood closer to her husband to stay warm. “This is not looking good so far” she added as a tear slipped down her cheek.

“We will get out of here” her husband replied to her. “It might take a few days but the gods will find us.” He then herded the tigress back off to bed again.

###

Christopher and Zerachiel materialized in Odin's realm and began to head towards his location. The one-eyed wolf was surprised to see the two of them coming towards him in a hurry with such a concerned look on their muzzles.

“What is wrong my friend?” he asked as he shook paws Norse-style with the lion. This was quite unusual for the lion to even step foot in his realm so there had to be a good reason for his appearance.

“We believe that the entity that took Torvald and Victoria has taken Aslaug as well” the lion told Odin as they sat down. The wolf could see that Christopher was worried by this new turn of events. “Zerachiel is sure of this” the lion added as he sipped some of Odin's wine that was offered to him.

“I had been dreading to hear some fur say that” the wolf stated as he leaned across the table. “I am sure now that it's the entity known as 'Violence' that has them. He wants them for his personal warriors.”

“I should have suspected as much” the lion commented. “That particular entity may be easy for us to track down.” he added. “I will recall my angels and tell them of this new development.”

“And I will recall my warriors to give them new instructions” the wolf stated as he began to plan their next moves.

“Tell Frigg that I said 'Hello', will you? I will stay in touch with you, my friend” the lion told the wolf as the two felines shimmered out of sight.

###

The feline trio were sitting around, trying to settle their nerves. Barbara was making some hot chocolate with a small amount of mint in it. Conrad was sitting next to his aunt, trying to pull himself together. He had began crying when Loke and Freya had left so suddenly.

“I hope they find mom and dad soon” the young tiger commented as he wiped his eyes that were red from crying. “Why would someone do this to them?” he pondered out loud. Because he was an only child, the young tiger had a strong bond with his mother. When the stallion had begun to date his mother, Torvald always treated him as his own child. Because of that, the young tiger also had a deep attachment for his stepfather.

“They will be OK” Valerie said to her nephew. “They can defend themselves if need be” she reminded Conrad. While they sat there, Barbara brought their beverages out to them.

“You two look a mess” she commented as she sat down on the other side of Valerie. “It won't help anybody if we get all worked up about it.” While they sat there and sipped their drinks, Conrad began to think about all of the good times he had been through with his parents. He put his drink down and picked up his hammer pendant that he wore around his neck. Holding the pendant in his paws, he closed his eyes and silently prayed to the gods for help.

*“I am new to this so I am not sure if I am doing this right or not.
All I ask is for your help in returning my mother and father to this world.
We all miss them very much.”*

The two femmes eventually shuffled Conrad off to his bed again and then returned to their bed. “I know you're upset” Barbara said to the tigress. “We need to show a strong face to Conrad so he will feel more secure with what's going on.”

“You're right. I need to pull myself together” Valerie replied. “I know the gods are doing what is necessary to get them back.” The two lovers finally drifted off to sleep in one another's arms.

###

“**There are many out searching for them**” the older entity pointed out to the younger entity. “**You are flirting with disaster.**”

“I am almost done” the younger one stated in a confident tone. “I will have them before the sun warms their dwelling.”

“**Odin has sent Thor and Hel's daugr legion after you by name**” the older one said in a even tone. “**You are doomed to fail and be destroyed.**”

“What do you mean...daugr?” the younger one asked in a curious tone of voice.

"The undead" the older one replied. **"They cannot be turned as they have no soul. The danger will overwhelm and destroy you. You will not be able to stop them."**

"I...I am not afraid of soul-less warriors" the younger one said cautiously with just a hint of fear in his voice.

"You should be very afraid" the older one said coolly. **"Return them all to their realm before you are destroyed."**

As the older entity watched, the younger one returned a previously removed object back to the field. After a few moments, the younger one added more objects to another area of the field.

"This" the younger one stated, "will be my best finishing move ever."

"I will watch from over there" the older one stated, indicating a spot in space and time that was many leagues away. **"I will not get caught in the crossfire. I have to say it was nice knowing you."**

"Suit yourself" the younger one said flippantly. "I will finish my work now."

###

Gabriel and Michael had went back to the Shieldmaiden's home to try and sense where she had been taken to. They had carefully retraced her movements through the house by her lingering life force that was imprinted on objects that she had touched. Both of them kneeled in front of her shrine, feeling her life force very strong right there.

"I feel this is the strongest force in the dwelling" Michael stated as he put his hands over her shrine. "She was here only hours ago."

"I agree with you" Gabriel replied as he slowly stood and held out his hands to capture the force's direction. "I have it now. Follow me closely. I am not sure how strong the trail is" he said as the pair prepared themselves to shimmer out.

The pair shimmered out and in just a split second they were on a mountainside standing in several feet of snow. The sky was shades of blue, red and orange as the sun was beginning to peek over the the top of the mountains across the valley.

"This is not good" Gabriel said as he looked around them. There was no visual clues at all that would lead them to the filly.

“Look down there” Michael said in an excited tone. “There's smoke coming up from the valley. I'll wager they're down there.”

“Uh...we have a new problem” the smaller archangel stated. “Our tracking senses don't work here.” After a few seconds Gabriel added “We can't shimmer either.”

“Well, we better head that way until somebody comes to rescue us.” Michael said as he began to walk down the mountain.

“This is messed up” Gabriel muttered as he followed behind his partner. “I am with Michael again and I am in trouble once more...”

###

The Siberian husky was slowly realizing that he was propped up against a fallen log and it was light out, possibly early morning. His head hurt and his body seemed unusually stiff to him. “Darned arthritis acting up” he muttered as he opened his eyes to see a solid white equine mare cooking something over an open fire.

As he tried to stand the equine came over to him and kneeled down beside him. “Jim, are you all right?” she asked as she helped him to sit up better. The husky could see that she was wearing an elaborately decorated white tunic and furred leather leggings of a style he had never seen before.

“Yeah, I think I'm OK but I had this bad dream that I was killed by a wild kali's poison bite” he told the mare as he rubbed his muzzle. He then noticed that he was wearing a tunic and leggings too. “Am...am I d...dead?” he asked hesitantly. The mare was white like an angel so maybe he was dead after all.

“You are no longer dead” the equine replied. “You are now quite alive, no thanks to the entity that is playing games on this planet.” She went to the fire and poured a cup of steaming liquid from a pot for the husky and brought it to him. “It is coffee but I am not sure I made it right” she confessed. “I scanned your mind to see what was a good elixir to help wake you up.”

Jim smelled it and then sipped it cautiously to see that it was as strong as any that he had experienced in the military. “This is good coffee” he commented as he sipped it some more. He could see that the equine was smiling at him. “So, who are you anyway? Are you an angel?” he asked out of curiosity.

“I am the entity called Compassion” she told him as she smiled warmly at him. “I have taken on this form so that I may interact with you” she added. “You are not far from your friend Kellan. He has a cabin over there” she said as she pointed in the proper direction. “I will accompany you to his domicile so that you will arrive safely.”

The white filly helped the husky to his feet and they took off in the direction of Kellan's cabin. While they were walking towards their destination, she stopped for a moment. "We will no doubt need these" she said as she caused two compound bows to appear out of thin air. "These weapons you should be familiar with."

"Wow" was all that Jim could say. When he took one of the bows from the mare to examine it, she caused two quivers full of arrows to appear.

"We are ready now" she stated as they continued to head towards the cabin.

###

"I must stop for a moment" the smaller archangel said as he sat down on a fallen log on the mountainside. "I have another thorn in my foot." He was trying his best to pick it out of one of his pads on his left foot. "I feel strange, like I am no longer immortal" he stated as he tried to get the foreign object out of his foot. "There are scrapes on my arms that are still bleeding" he pointed out to Michael as he sat there. "Will you try to get this thorn out? I can't see it."

"OK, let me see" Michael asked as he knelt down to see better. "Yeah, this one's in there deep. Give me a minute and I'll have it out." Michael used one of his claws to dig into the pad, eventually dislodging the thorn. "I think you are right" he mused as he looked at the scrapes on his own arms. "We are not immortal on this planet."

"I hope it's not much further" Gabriel thought out loud. He could see the valley floor below. He then ripped a strip from the bottom of his tunic and wrapped his foot to protect it. "I will need a long rest after all of this excitement."

"You and me both" Michael chimed in as they continued on down the mountainside.

###

"Ah, angels that are mortal now" the younger entity exclaimed as he rubbed his 'paws' together. "Those would make excellent soldiers"

"You are completely out of your mind if you think you can do that!" the older entity shouted out from his vantage point that was out of the crossfire. **"You should just as well hang yourself right now. That would be suicide! The gods will destroy you for that!"**

"I have this under complete control" the younger entity said as he made more plans.

“Yeah, right...” the older entity said as he shook his head. **“You are playing a deadly game now.”**

###

While all of this was going on, another entity looked on at the game unfolding below. This game was not an entertaining game to that entity; the entity was hoping that it would change soon. Some of the players seemed very strong and one particular fur carried an instrument that had great power. It was hoped that this game would end soon, before the gods became involved. It didn't look that way anymore. The entity that was as old as time itself began to pay close attention.