

**Serpent Tongue**

written by

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based on

"The Saga of Gunnlaug Serpent-tongue"

EXT. LUNDUNBURGH INN - DAY

Inside a boady inn, Gunnlaug grins smugly as Thorkel shouts at him in rage.

THORKEL  
(furious)  
**Defeating a borough full of  
Jomsvikings** -- and returning back  
to Iceland before the Summer?!

GUNNLAUG  
Why not? It would make for a great  
poem, don't you think?

Thorkel gawks at Gunnlaug, dumbstruck.

THORKEL  
Are you out of your mind boy?

Gunnlaug snickers.

GUNNLAUG  
What's the matter old man? Have you  
lost your appetite for bloodshed?  
(pause)  
Pah, don't worry, we'll be  
**accompanied by a host of Norseman.**

Thorkel shuts his eyes in utter disappointment.

THORKEL  
Just, -- What about your promise to  
Helga? You swore we would go home  
now boy.

Gunnlaug fists grips around his axe handle, veins pulse.

GUNNLAUG  
What else would you have me do  
Thorkel?! Stay here and wait? Or  
even worse, just leave Æthelred and  
**betray my honour?**

NEXT PAGE.

EXT. LUNDUNBURGH INN - CONTINUOUS

Gunnlaug gripping his axes starts pounds his chest.

GUNNLAUG  
Tell me **Housecarl**, when my father  
summons his bravest at wartime, do  
you answer the call?

Thorkel looks up in defiant pride! Dreams of ravens, banners, spears and silhouette of chanting vikings rise up at his back!

THORKEL

**Aye!** I would fight alongside him to the death.

Gunnlaug looks fiercely towards to viewer.

Thorkel looks sternly back.

Gunnlaug and Thorkel solemnly stare at each other in an inn. Saxons are drinking quietly in the background.

THORKEL (CONT'D)

Just this one thing then?

GUNNLAUG

Just this one...

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EXT. JOMSVIKING BOROUGH - NIGHT

A motte and bailey castle town, rises up in before of the pale, full moon. Dark clouds rise on the horizon.

NARRATOR

"None would ever speak of that event."

On the outer drawbridge of the town, two JOMSVIKING GUARDS argue with a PEASANT. His loaded cart has a broken wheel and is stranded on top of the drawbridge.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"And the only Skald who knew it ever happend, made it his best kept secret."

Amidst the dark trees beyond, stand the silhouettes and ominously glowing eyes of Gunnlaug, Thorkel and a dozen VIKING WARRIORS.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"All those who witnessed it were shaken to their very souls."

SPLAT. SPLAT. Weapons drawn, they run off towards to the gate in the distance. Rain starts pouring heavily.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"As the heavens fell down upon their heads that night."!cal

CRACK. Lighting flashes, the two Jomsviking Guards look up in sudden surprise.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"A hunt had begun."

RED. A sword slashes. Blood spatters across the panel.

A scared **DANE WARRIOR** turns around and shouts in alarm!

NEXT PAGE.

EXT. JOMSVIKING BOROUGH - CONTINUOUS

Walking out of the keep, **HEMMING**, a fierce looking animal of a Jomsviking captain looks up, snarling like a mad beast, surrounded by evil shadows.

Gunnlaug roars! Behind him, Thorkel and the dozen men, battle their Jomsviking and Danish foes.

Hemming raises his axe.

LARGE PANEL

CRACK! Lightning strikes again. Gunnlaug and Hemming clash their weapons.

NARRATOR

"Thunder struck, like hammer-blows upon the mountains."

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Heming swings his large Danish axe, Gunnlaug dodges it.

RED. The silhouette of Gunnlaug snarls, swinging his axe into Hemming's neck.

NARRATOR

"The wind howled through the treetops" --  
(break)

A **DANISH WARRIOR** drop his cross in fright, while others run for their lives.

DANISH WARRIOR

Freya save us!

NARRATOR

-- "Like the wild hunt, shrieking  
its driving songs."

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EXT. JOMSVIKING BOROUGH - CONTINUOUS

FULL PAGE

Gunnlaug stands steaming upon a heap of slaughtered corpses, Hemming's lifeless body lies before his feet. Flocks of crows fly up behind him.

NARRATOR

"And after the storm, followed the  
crows."

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EXT. JOMSVIKING BOROUGH - CONTINUOUS

A PEASANT MAN peeks through the door of his hovel, his entire family cowering behind him.

NARRATOR

"Thus, the mortals carefully  
scurried out from their hovels."

Thorkel walks up to Gunnlaug, placing a hand on his shoulder. The surviving Norseman warriors gather around them.

Thunder rumbles in the background.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"Yet Thor's anger echoed in the  
distance. Reminded all to hear, of  
their place in Midgard."

The dark clouds disperse as the Sun rises over the silhouette of the town, the church-tower juts out in the middle. Ringing its bells: BOING, BOING

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"Church-bells, signalling every day  
life could go on. As a reminder to  
the people that they had abandoned  
their old gods for a new one."

Gunnlaug picks up the silver cross left by the warrior.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"Yet, deep inside, they all felt  
the same, cold reality **shivering  
down their spines...**"

Masses of peasants look frightened off to the reader as a  
PRIEST rises up from behind them, shouting to the heavens: --

PRIEST  
God be praised. **We are freed from  
the Heathens!**

NEXT PAGE.

EXT. JOMSVIKING BOROUGH - CONTINUOUS

FULL PAGE

The silhouettes of a dozen Danish ships, retreat off to the  
blood-shot horizon. As Gunnlaug, Thorkel and about eight to  
nine Viking warriors, stand atop a hilltop among a crowd of  
Saxon peasants.

NARRATOR  
"No matter how hard you pray.  
**Ragnarok is inevitable.**"

THORKEL  
They took our boat.

END OF SAMPLE