

# *Freyia and Swansong*

[Disclaimer: I stood on the shoulders of giants when I penned this story No, not those giants ... just a figure of speech. This little piece was originally inspired by a line from one of Maggies tales "... she (Freyia) lay with the dwarfs..." The character of Dvallon is taken from the Havalmar and the dragon lady is the intellectual property of a visual artist and writer who goes by the pen name Voenix and who created wonderful artwork and fictional stories around the Nordic pantheon. Suzanne Slade owns rune cards with his art.]



She walked down the steps that had been carved into the underground while Midgard had still been in formation. No torches illuminated the way. She walked deeper and deeper into the belly of the earth by the light of huge crystals set between veins of iron ore and charcoal.

The goddess Freyia decked out in gold and jewelry, in the armor of a Valkyrie hidden underneath the fine blue linen of a noblewoman, made her way down into the deepest levels of the dwarven stronghold.

On her shoulder she carried a wooden chest, about six feet long, made of oak wood and engraved with twenty-four runes of power as well as with the stylized images of great beasts and fabulous beings. Too big and heavy for all but the strongest mortal warriors to lift let alone carry the chest did not hamper the step of the most beautiful and magnificent goddess.

The narrow rocky stairs gradually grew broader and broader and finally opened into a huge cave also lit by crystals but not only by crystals alone. In the darkness shown a huge fire, the furnace of a dwarven smithery. Freyia knew its owner well. Dvallon was a loving husband and father and he was also a master smith without peer.

He waited for her, wearing a burned and speckled leather apron over his broad hairy chest, stoking the fire in his furnace even more, not minding the new burns on his arms that only added to the scars of his former, not minding the smoke that had always smelled sweeter than roses to him. Dvallon was eager to

repay Freyia for the bliss and happiness he had found with his family thanks to her. HE bowed respectfully as Freyia reached him and set the oaken chest down on the ground.

“Your Highness,” Dvallon said with another nod of his head. He rubbed his blackened, dirty hands together in anticipation and his eyes were focused on the gift she had brought like she had promised even more than on Freyia’s beauty. Freyia in turn was more than willing to forgive that given the importance of this meeting.

“Master Dvallon,” she replied, “see what I have brought you.”

Freyia fetched a heavy key from inside her cloak, another work of Dvallon just like the locks on the chest that she opened with the key before she threw back the heavy massive lid.

Dvallon stepped closer and gazed at the contents of the chest. It was full of rocks, ranging in size from mere pebbles to chunks the size of a human head. All shimmered and gleamed with silvery-grey colour. Dvallon dug his hands deep into them, sniffed at them and even licked on some. Finally he nodded his head vigorously, not just in approval but in unfettered awe.

“I have never touched better iron and silver in my lifetime.” he said with reverence

“So it will be good enough for the task at hand?” Freyia asked.

Dvallon picked up a big piece of iron ore and stroked it like a child.

“If I can’t work with this, nothing in the nine worlds will do and I shall no longer call myself a smith.”

“Very good Master Dvallon. Still to ensure our success I brought you two other very special ingredients.”

Again Freyia reached inside her cloak to bring forth a leather pouch dyed dark blue like midnight.

“Manni’s light,” she said to Dvallon, “beams of pure moonlight and here...”

Suddenly in the darkness before Dvallon high above his head two red jewels like carbunkel stones lit up. A long snout covered in red scales moved into the circle

of light created by Dvallin's fire and finally the horned head of a dragon loomed over the smith.

"No worries. I won't eat you until you are done."

It was a lady dragon with a melodious voice that rang with amusement over Dvallin's obvious fear. He could have sworn she smiled.

"She is an old friend of mine." Freyia calmed him, "And old teacher and I don't think she eats dwarfs. She is only here to help you fight your furnace even more than usual."

The dragoness raised a claw, very slowly and carefully as not to scare the diminutive artisan before her. She closed one of her nostrils with her paw, closed one eye to take better aim and snorted a ball of fire and sparks out of the other nostril directly into the smithy's fire. For a moment the flames rose upward with a thunder and a hiss, growing to ten times their former height and illuminating the huge vastness of the cave as well as the enormous winged body of the dragoness. When they returned to their normal size and shape Dvallin could tell that something had changed.

The crackle of the flames had changed. They spoke in strange tongues now of miracles and wonder.

The dragoness retreated into the dark again and left the cave in the same mysterious way in which she had arrived. For a moment Dvallin thought he heard her mumble about dwarfs all tasting like chicken.

Freyia gave Dvallin an encouraging smile and a nod of her head before she ascended the stone steps again to attend to the other tasks she had come for while Dvallin began his work.

Three days and three nights he labored without rest, creating his own kind of magic in the company of fire earth and liquid metal.

As the fourth days dawned above in Midgard Freyia returned to collect what she had commissioned.

Tired and covered in grime, sweat and ashes, new red burns and wounds on his darkened skin but full of pride and happiness Dvallin broke a granite mold

before her eyes. As the stone block fell apart under the blows of Dvallon's hammer piece by piece a sword came into sight.

And what a magnificent blade it was, full of magic, three feet long and slender, shining brightly with silver and blue light. There was an impossible glow and brightness about the blade. The hand guard was plated with silver and had the shape of a swan spreading its wings wide. Then handle was white elk bone wrapped with golden wire and crowned by a heavy pommel engraved with runes that glowed bright red.

Freyia picked up the sword and spun it around for several minutes in a dance of humming and whistling steel as only the Queen of the Valkyries could dance with a sword. When she finally stopped Freyia blew her breath into the blade along its full length, held it high above her head with both hands and proclaimed:

**“YOUR NAME SHALL BE SWANSONG!”**

That moment the flames in Dvallon's furnace once again rose upwards like they had done three days and nights ago and Swansong began to sing of battle and glory, of life and death, of fate and chance.

That moment when above the ground the sun rose in Midgard again, a sword was born and Freyia held a piece of destiny in her hands.

Dvallon remained in the dark after Freyia had departed and listened to the secrets that the runes on the oaken chest whispered to him. Freyia had paid him well. They would all believe that she lay with him but her gift to the master smith surpassed even the pleasure that the goddess of love could give.

This was one secret within a secret within a secret when the miracles called Brisingamen was only the most obvious miracle, hiding another one in its shadow.

It is foretold that when Ragnarok comes, Brisingamen will play its role in the fate of the gods. If that is true those involved in forging Brisingamen helped forge the fate of the worlds. That may be for better or worse but it is always better than waiting for fate to shape you.

And perhaps on that fateful day of Ragnarok Sutr the ruler of the fire giants may find the god Freyr much better armed than he expects him to be with a singing sword of silver, steel and moonlight. Or maybe this is just a fairy tale to keep up our hopes? Only the Nornir know the truth and they are not talking.

And how did Freyia get her hands on the finest metals in the nine worlds and a pouch of moonlight? I suppose this is an entirely different story...

**HAPPY YULE! SOON THE LIGHT WILL BE BACK!**

