

## **The White Wolf of Benu**

By Talitha Gholston

When Brana's mother was pregnant she visited a seer. The seer told her that Brana would grow to be something special. Her destiny was to stand above the rest and save her people. When she was two her mother started teaching her everything she could to make her smart, kind, strong, and reliable. Her mother did a great job. As Brana was growing older she began being a little more curious about the outside world since her mother never allowed her to be like other kids.

When she turned twelve, she fought against a group of kids her age to become a warrior. The boys laughed at her and told her that she could never be as strong as them. Until she fought against them and won every fight. Benu was a small village of one hundred people, more kids than adults. Brana worked in the fields with her father and helped with the animals. The day she turned eighteen was the day her destiny started.

She was outside with her family tending to the cattle when she heard horses in the distance. She stopped what she was doing to see who was visiting since people seldom traveled through. She heard a bell in the distance signaling the people approaching her village. Being a female, she wasn't called on her to protect her village.

She grabs her spear and locks her family in their home. She doesn't just run headfirst in the fight; she slowly works her way towards the fighting. She hears women and children's screams and cries. Closer to the battle she readies herself to fight. The first two men she takes down easily. The next three she comes across she spins on her knees as she takes her spear and cuts their legs, coming up and killing them fast. By the time she makes it to the middle most of her people are dead, and some are being held by men.

Their leader tells them to burn everything. Before being seen she goes back for her family to get them to safety. She leads her family away to a neighboring village. She tells of what happened and rallies the warriors in that village. She leaves her family in the care of the leader and heads out. As they travel she becomes close to a man her age name Ragnor. As they approach the Vikings that raided her village she produced a plan. She was going to sneak in at night and free her people. She wanted them out of harm's way before she fights.

That night she sneaks in with a small group of men. They make sure no one sees her as she lets her people go. She learns that most of the young women and girls are not with them. As she is freeing the last man, one of the soldiers catches her. She tells the men with her to get them to safety. She disarms and kills the soldier but not before the rest wake up. She fights with everything that is in her and kills the soldiers holding the prisoners. She learns that the leader moved ahead with the rest of the soldiers with the kids and women.

She goes back to get companions and they are packing up to head back with the people they have. She asks who wants to go after the rest with her. Three of the young men agree to travel with her. Ragnor, Igor, and Freydis get their things. The rest of the men take the prisoners back to their village. Brana and her three companions head off to save her people. One night as her companions were sleeping, she was keeping watch when she heard music in the distance.

She follows the noise and comes to a meadow that seems like the sun is shining but it's dark where she is. She moves closer and feels the warmth as soon as she crosses the threshold. A lady appears by a lake that goes on for miles. "My child. Your journey has been long, and you are getting tired," she says when Brana gets close.

"Who are you," Brana asks.

"Brigit. You are coming to the end of this journey but there will be many more. You will save your women and children," Brigit says. "You are destined for greater things. Do you want our strength to help you defeat your enemies?"

"What do I have to do?" Brana asks. "What do I have to give in return?"

"Drink this water," Brigit says holding up a cup. "We want you to be our warrior. After you save your people you will lead our armies. When the time comes we need you, you come without question."

Brana agrees and drinks the water. She doesn't feel any different, but Brigit assures her that she is. She leaves the meadow but as she looks back it is no longer there. When she gets back time hadn't changed at all. After her companions get up she goes after her people. When she makes it to the Vikings she is more powerful than any man and she kills them all. When she gets back to her people they decide to stay in that village and start their lives there.

Ragnor takes interest in her, and he asks for her hand in marriage. She agrees and marries him. Ten years later Brigit comes calling and she sets out to battle. It takes her ten more years and fifteen battles before she returns home to live the rest of her life with her husband. The Goddess Brigit never bothered her again.