



**BERSERK REVENGE**  
**A Norse Saga**

# **Berserk revenge a norse saga**

by Mark Heggen Coakley

*markcoakley<AT>bell<DOT>net*

[TIP: DOWNLOAD AND PRINT FOR EASIER READING]

## 1: PARENTAGE

There was a man called Halfdan the Black, who lived and died long ago, when the folk of Norway were still ruled by many small kingdoms, and folk still followed the old customs, believing in Odin, Tor, Freya and other old gods. Halfdan grew up in the small farming-town of Os, in the kingdom of Fjordane. He was fathered by Gødrød the Toothy and mothered by an outlander woman called Aasa.

As a young man, Gødrød had killed a few other local young men, for no reason other than boredom; as punishment for these wrongs, the Fjordane Assembly had sentenced Gødrød to three years as an outlaw. Forced into exile, Gødrød rode east across the mountains. After twelve years in the east -- when nobody in Os knew if he was still alive, and few even thought about him much anymore -- Gødrød had returned home with a surprising woman.

Aasa had very dark skin. Nobody in Os could remember ever seeing a person like her before. Aasa's hair was completely black, tightly curled, and formed a soft ball around her head. She said that she was from Nubia, a place far to the south that nobody here had ever heard of. All of the gossip-loving folk in Os wanted to know their story. How had they met? Briefly, this is what happened. Aasa's first husband had travelled with Aasa from Nubia to Constantinople, where he was a diplomat to the Roman Empress. Gødrød had also lived in Constantinople then. He had learned to speak Greek and to pretend to worship Christ; these qualities, and his skill with spear and ax, had earned him a job in Constantinople as a bodyguard for the Empress Irene. Gødrød and Aasa were often at the palace at the same time. Aasa's odd-looking and darkly beautiful face -- so different from Roman women, and from the pale and pointy-nosed girls he remembered from Os -- appealed to him. He spied on her, learning that Aasa was lonely and that her husband preferred boys. When Gødrød approached her, Aasa agreed.

They kept their love secret from everybody in Constantinople.

Until, long later, she became pregnant. Gødrød and Aasa knew that it would be impossible to hide her unfaithfulness when her belly started to bulge, as Aasa's first husband had not touched her in a long time. So Gødrød and Aasa stole as many treasures from the Empress and from Aasa's first husband as they could quickly get their hands on, fleeing Constantinople on horseback by night, to the west. Gødrød had spent the early years of his exile in Russia, and was able arrange a wedding in a Russian Christian church. The fugitives continued west on horseback, her belly growing bigger and bigger. After many adventures, including losing their horses and treasure to bandits in Lithuania, Gødrød guided his huge-bellied wife over Norway's eastern mountains and into the kingdom of Fjordane and to his home-town of Os.

There was born the hero of this saga.

Aasa became very sick in the long, dark winter of Halfdan's second year. She coughed and coughed. When her coughing finally ended, she was placed in the communal grave near Os.

Gødrød, able to bear his sadness only with strong mead, drank and drank. When his drinking finally ended, he was held in chains for manslaughter, and could not remember why he had axed two of his friends to shreds during a drinking-fest in a mountainside shepherd's hut. As Gødrød was too poor to afford to pay compensation to the families of the victims, the Fjordane Assembly outlawed him again, this time for seven years.

Before his second exile, Gødrød placed his son in the foster-care of Gødrød's sister and brother-in-law.

Gødrød rode again to the east, across the mountains, never to return. He plays no more part in this saga. Nobody knows what happened to him.

## 2: HALFDAN INTRODUCED

Halfdan was a difficult child to raise. He spoke little, and his few words were usually rude. He delighted in disobeying rules and fighting.

His odd looks always attracted attention. Nobody in Fjordane had ever seen folk with Aasa's and Halfdan's curly hair and skin much darker than theirs. (In Os, visiting Swedes were rare, Danes and Finns were seen as wildly exotic, and only a few had heard of King Charlemagne.)

Often, folk would think that Halfdan had been covered with paint as a prank. More than once, when Halfdan was a young child, an adult grabbed him to rub snow or water on Halfdan's skin, trying to wipe off the brown paint.

He was soon nicknamed "Halfdan the Black," for the obvious reason, and also because the word "black" in Old Norse also meant "wicked". Folk in Os said, "He is going to grow up to be a blood-stained criminal like his father."

But as Halfdan grew into a young man, his Uncle Harald taught him to use his anger and violence for good ends. Halfdan grew a passion for listening to and composing spontaneous poetry. He would often laze away long winter nights by the fire, making up poems in his head. Even when very young, he would use that oldest of arts to express the feelings swirling inside his orphaned heart. When Halfdan chanted one of his rhyming and alliterating poems, to a family-member or one of his few friends, Halfdan's heart would sometimes empty of its fury and pain, for a while.

Uncle Harald told him to forget about becoming a farmer or shepherd or fisherman. Halfdan was told to try to become a professional fighter for the King of Fjordane, "so that instead of pointlessly killing folk around here and being exiled for it like your father, you can kill folk for the government and be a famous hero."

### 3: A FULL BLADDER

Halfdan the Black stepped out of King Lambi's hall. It was night. He had to piss. On the flat-stone path in front of him, a few guard-dogs were lying together. One dog was now sniffing at the early-fall wind. The dogs knew Halfdan's smell and ignored him. Halfdan turned and walked towards a row of out-houses on the east side of the big building. The hall was a hulking rectangle of oak boards nailed to thick oak beams holding up a high roof. The hall was the biggest building in the town of Eid, which was the biggest town in the kingdom of Fjordane. It stood aloof from Eid's other buildings. Its sloping roof was covered with tall clumps of grass and dying, droopy summer-flowers. It was surrounded by rich soil farmed by King Lambi.

Halfdan was now twenty-seven years old, and had lived in the hall as one of the King's fighters for eleven years. His face and body were covered with scars. His black hair hung in tangled curls from the top of his head; it was cut short, almost to the skin, on the back and sides of his head. In his hair and thick beard, there were a few thin strands of grey. He had one chipped front tooth. As was then customary in Norway on festive or formal occasions, for both men and women, Halfdan had smeared blue paint around both of his eyes.

A "T"-shaped Tor-idol of clay hung from a string around his muscle-thick neck. He wore a long-sleeved grey linen shirt that hung almost to his knees, tied at his waist by a belt of reindeer-leather. The belt-buckle was made of silver, twisted into the shape of a bug-eyed, cat-like beast with hands that gripped itself. A sword dangled from the belt, its oiled iron blade hiding in a sheath of cloth-wrapped oak-wood.

The well-used weapon swung forward and back beside the wool cloth of his right pant-leg as he walked.

A bit drunk, from a long night of feasting and boozing, Halfdan looked up at the brooding snow-topped mountain-range overhead, and at the clear sky filled with sharp silver stars and a honey-yellow moon. Halfdan stopped walking, staring up. He lifted a hand as if to reach up and pull down some of the glittering stars.

"Beautiful," he whispered.

Halfdan walked past a row of carved and painted masks of the gods hanging on the outside hall-wall, the grimacing faces of Odin, Tor, Freyir, Baldur, Loki and others; some of whose names are now forgotten. Halfdan went to the corner of the hall and turned left again and went fast towards a row of woven-wicker huts down-wind of the hall. To his right and across a grassy space was the high wooden wall that surrounded Eid. On the other side of the town-wall was a ragged line of shadowy trees that stretched up the dark mountain-face.

Halfdan went in an out-house. A smell of beery piss and puke rose from the hole in the ground by his cow-leather shoes. He yawned and aimed himself and soon felt better.

As he was walking back towards the hall's front door, Halfdan again noticed the guard-dogs on the path of flat stones that led towards the rest of the town.

The dogs were now eating something. Halfdan was surprised. Before his piss, the dogs had been resting on the ground and one had been sniffing the night-wind.

Where had the food come from?

Halfdan, suspicious, stopped walking.

He was staring at the dogs and about to go over to them to see what they were eating when something hit him in the lower part of his belly. It hit him hard and punched his breath out.

Halfdan gasped and looked down. A wood arrow-shaft with grey guide-feathers was now sticking straight out of his belly.

He gasped, "Tor!"

His legs went weak and he fell backwards. He landed on his back on the cold lumpy ground. Arrow-shot in the gut. He knew he was dying. A bad way to end. It would be painful and slow.

#### 4: THE HALL

As Halfdan lay stunned on the bumpy, grassy ground -- preparing himself to die for a reason he did not know, the pain of the arrow reaching deeper and deeper into his guts -- he turned his head sideways to look at the shadowy outer wall of King Lambi's hall.

This place had been the center of his life, ever since leaving the small, dull town of Os at sixteen. The first time Halfdan had seen the building from the outside, its size and solid construction had greatly impressed him. And the first day he had seen it from the inside, escorted there (when it was empty) by his nervous-looking Uncle Harald, Halfdan's mouth had dropped open in amazement. "Tor!" Halfdan had never seen a place like it before.

It had seemed to be a single large room (though he learned later that the King and Queen had a separate sleeping-room at the back). The room was so big! Halfdan had known entire families in Os who had fed themselves on farmland smaller than this! Some parts of the wood walls were undecorated, with bronze shield-hooks. Elsewhere, brightly-coloured wool tapestries hung on the walls, showing vivid scenes of men and gods feasting and in battle. Furs hung on the walls too: the grey skins of wolves, the larger brown skins of reindeer and moose and boar-pig, and the huge yellow-white pelts of the legendary northern bear. The bestial faces of these hunting-trophies snarled at the high ceiling.

Halfdan saw other faces too: there were small shelves on the thick oak beams holding up the roof, and on each shelf was resting the dried head of a man. Some looked like they had sat there for a long time. Messy, brittle-looking hair and beards dangled from the wrinkled, shrivelled grey skin of the lifeless and grimacing heads. Swollen blackish eyes bulged out of some heads; the eye-lids of others squinted or were completely shut. The top of each head was gone, and Halfdan could see the unlit tips of candles sticking up from the inside of each skull.

A single long fireplace stretched from one end of the hall to the other. Two rows of long tables went along both sides of the fireplace; dozens of chairs were stacked by the long inner walls. At the far end of the room was a raised platform, which held up a table running perpendicular to the rest, with tall, fancily-painted chairs behind it. In front of this king-table stood a bronze idol of a boar-pig, the size of a real boar-pig, that glittered faintly in the sunlight beaming in through small, high windows.

Straw and wildflowers were strewn across the dirt floor, giving off a nice, fresh smell.

Uncle Harald said, "When Lambi is in town, there are lots of folk hanging around in the evening here. The King and his fighters, the Queens and their serving-girls, local nobles, clerks, poets and too many slaves to count."



Harald had known this because, long before this time, he had once enjoyed a victory-feast here, as a reward from the previous king for brave military service in the Third Great Swedish War.

"When will King Lambi come back to Eid?" Halfdan asked.

Harald said, "Whenever he finishes visiting his other properties around the kingdom. He owns more farms than anybody else, all along the fjord, and he likes to check each of them regularly, to get some dirt on his hands and keep his local managers honest. And the business of ruling also pulls him all over the kingdom: taking gifts of silver from some nobles to keep them from getting too rich, giving silver to other nobles to keep them from getting too ambitious, and hearing reports from his spies. When he is done all that, he will be back."

"And then he will accept me as one of his fighters?"

Harald said, "He should. It has been arranged. My bag of silver-bits will get you in. But as I told you, getting accepted is not the hard part. After I pay your way in, you have to prove yourself on your own, or you'll be sent away."

"I will. No matter what."

"I know," Harald said. "You're good with a weapon and even better with a poem, and that's what Lambi looks for in a man." Harald placed a hand on his adopted son's shoulder. "You were born with strong luck. We are proud of the man you have become. Fate has something special planned for you."

A few days later, the king-ship had returned to the Eid docks, and things had gone as Harald had predicted. A clerk had taken the bag of silver, in front of witnesses. Harald and Halfdan had been told to report to the hall that night.

When darkness finally came, and Halfdan (wearing new clothes, and with fresh blue paint smeared around his eyes) went inside the hall for the second time, it was full of many different kinds of folk, as his uncle had described. Dozens of shields hung from the walls behind the tables. The candles sticking out of the man-heads on the shelves were burning and they, along with the cooking-fire in the middle of the room, filled the room with warm orange light. Many shaven-headed slaves were cleaning up after dinner or carrying beer buckets from table to table. The air smelled of male bodies and roasted meat. Men sat at tables in front of clay plates covered with bones and other dinner-waste. These men held silver-decorated drinking-horns and were talking and laughing until the two visitors from Os walked in. Then, all went quiet. Everybody stared at Halfdan. Usually he did not mind being stared at; he was used to it; most folk in Os had always viewed him as a freak. But now the staring eyes of this crowd of big-town folk made him more nervous.

On the raised platform at the far end of the hall, a man was sitting on the highest chair in the middle of the table. Unlike at the other tables, a few finely-dressed women were sitting up here. When the man in the middle of this table stood, Halfdan knew that this had to be King Lambi. The man was tall and thick-shouldered and fifty-seven years old.

Halfdan stopped and stared.

"Come," Harald said. "This is not a time to be timid."

As he walked with his uncle deeper into the hall, between the long tables towards the far end, Halfdan saw more of the man who many poets called the strongest and the wisest of all Norse kings.

Purple paint circled each of King Lambi's eyes. His beard and hair were thick and yellow, with some grey twisting through his long, braided beard. The king wore a full-length gown of shiny red silk -- a magic kind of imported cloth that only a king or the richest of nobles could afford. King Lambi's belt, glittering with bits of honey-yellow amber, held a sword that was almost as long as his leg. The sword-handle was of plain, well-used leather; it had obviously been chosen less for display than for use.

King Lambi then spoke, in a booming deep voice, saying, "Is this the boy who wants to fight for me?"

Harald said, "Yes, my lord. This is my nephew, Halfdan son of Gødrød, and he is the best young fighter in the town of Os. He will serve you well."

King Lambi said, "Why is your nephew's face so black?"

Harald said, "His mother was an outlander, and passed on her looks to him."

"Can it even speak Norse?"

"He can, my lord. Perfectly. In fact, he is an excellent poet."

King Lambi leaned forward and placed both of his fists on the table-top and said to Halfdan, "Then tell me a poem, troll-faced boy. Make one up about why I should hire you."

Harald glanced at Halfdan, taking a step backwards.

After a long pause, Halfdan said:

My lord is famous for

Feeding crows with unlucky foes

Blood-steaming battlefields

Gave birth to your worthy rule

All have heard of your riches

How you spread it around

Your fighters wear fancy clothes

With such fine treats to eat

Halfdan gestured with one hand towards the feasting-tables surrounding him, and there was some laughter from the men sitting in the chairs.

More confident, Halfdan glared at King Lambi and shouted:

Since youth I yearned to serve

You, and join your war-ship's crew!

I knew that I needed

To serve you, or serve nothing!

After a pause, Halfdan said lamely, "The end."

There was some clapping, and a few hoots. The men at the tables had all heard better poems, but also many much worse. Most were impressed to hear it from someone so young and so odd-looking.

King Lambi was still standing behind his table on the platform. He seemed to be nodding slightly in approval. Finally he said, "If you can fight as well as you rhyme and alliterate, you may be worthy. Come back tomorrow at noon, alone."

Halfdan walked out of the hall with a big grin across his face.

The next day, again wearing newly-bought clothes and fresh blue paint smeared around his eyes, Halfdan showed up at the hall for the hall-joining ritual. The king and some others waited for him outside the hall, standing in a group on a field. They all wore fancy clothes and face-paint too. King Lambi was wearing a long white linen gown.

A grey stallion was tied to a stake in the ground.

King Lambi said, "Halfdan son of Gødrød. Kneel in front of the horse."

When Halfdan had done so, King Lambi said, "Do you choose to join my bodyguard, knowing that you can never leave my service, except by your death or by my command?"

"I do," Halfdan said.

He was distracted for moment by the buzzing sound of a hornet flying past his head, then he forced himself to concentrate on what the king was saying.

"Do you vow to protect me from all foes, both inside and outside Fjordane?"

"Yes."

"If I am struck down, do you vow to take revenge on my killer, even if he is of your family?"

"Yes."

"And will you accept the greatest suffering and the greatest shame known to man or gods, if you should ever break your vows made here today?"

"I do."

King Lambi said, "Then let us see if the gods approve." A man in priests' clothing gave King Lambi a wide, bronze-bladed knife. King Lambi held the horse's head with one hand and, with the other, cut its throat.

As Halfdan knelt in front of the startled beast, the cut sprayed and drenched him in hot, sticky blood. It went onto his eyes and blinded him. He had to hold his breath to keep the reeking gore out of his nose.

A low, bubbling groan from the dying horse. It reared up to its back legs. It raised its big front hooves and started kicking wildly over the blood-soaked head of the unmoving young man kneeling on red-drenched grass.

Halfdan did not flinch. His knew that his good luck would not let him be struck by any of the random hoof-swipes, and he was right.

When the horse stopped kicking, and fell down dead, the group of men cheered.

"The gods approve!" shouted the priest who had brought the knife.

"Stand up, Halfdan the Black," King Lambi said. "Get yourself cleaned up. Your new life starts now."

Halfdan finally allowed himself to move; he stood. A slave handed him a bucket of water, then put a big wood box at his feet. Halfdan took off all his bloody clothes and washed his body clean with a cloth dipped in the bucket. When the last of the horse-blood was off him, Halfdan opened the lid of the box. He saw with joy that it was full of fancy-looking new clothes. Fine wool pants and thick wool socks and a puffy-sleeved white shirt made of the same linen as the gown King Lambi now wore. In the box there was also a pair of shiny cow-leather shoes and a pig-leather belt. On one end of the belt was a silver belt-buckle shaped, as described earlier, like an unnatural-looking beast with gripping hands.

"My first gift to you," King Lambi had said.

That night in the hall, Halfdan drank horn after horn of mead and beer, feasted on horse-steak and listened awe-struck to King Lambi singing sad old songs and playing a silver harp.

## 5: RUNNING AWAY

Eleven years later -- lying on his back on the cold ground in the shadow of King Lambi's hall, not far from where he had undergone the joining-ritual -- Halfdan realized that he was not dying from the arrow after all. He was getting his breath back, and the pain in his gut was getting less strong. Arrow-shots to the belly were known to be extremely painful, not like this. Such hurts were usually accompanied by the smell of shit leaking from a torn-open large intestine. There was no shit-smell now.

Then what had happened?

Halfdan moved a hand to the arrow-shaft and touched it. No jolt of pain. He touched the thin piece of ash-wood with his hand and tried to move it. It was stuck solidly into something, but not him.

He raised his head to look. The belt-buckle. The arrow had stuck into the soft silver of his belt-buckle -- the long-ago gift from King Lambi. It had saved his life. The barbed iron tip of the arrow had stuck into one of the paws of the decorative beast-shape.

So lucky!

He yanked the arrow-tip out of the belt buckle and glanced at it. Just a normal-looking arrow, the sort that could be used for either hunting or war. He tossed it aside.

His skin under the belt-buckle felt sore but unbroken.

Halfdan rolled over and onto his hands and knees, still breathing heavily. He looked around the darkness. Who had shot him? He could not see anybody. The dogs were still eating whatever they had found.

What was going on?

He had to go inside to warn King Lambi.

He pushed himself to his feet and, unsteady from both the arrow-impact and the horns of booze drunk earlier, drew out his sword. His heart was pounding with near-panic. Looking all around for the unfriendly archer, he staggered quickly to the front of the hall. He had to warn them.

With his free hand, he yanked at the handle of the heavy oak door. It should have easily swung open on its greased iron hinges. It had always done so before. But now the door would not open. It was somehow jammed shut. He heaved back with all his strength, tugging at the handle. No use.

The wall-masks of the gods glared blankly past him.

Halfdan was very confused.

Had someone inside barred the door shut?

Why?

Halfdan raised his sword and banged its handle hard onto the thick oak-wood door-planks. He yelled, "Open! Open the door! Someone out here just tried to kill me! Open! Help!"

He stopped banging and yelling for a moment to listen through the door. Had he woken up anybody? Was that a scraping sound coming through the wood, or just his imagination?

Halfdan raised his sword-handle again and was about to bang on the door again when he heard a sound of a bow-string behind him. Halfdan flinched, just as an arrow stabbed into the door, a finger's-length away from his head.

He turned around. A crowd of armed men wearing war-helmets, fifty or sixty at least, were running towards him in a battle-line. Some were being dragged forward by chains attached to big, excited-looking war-dogs. These arriving dogs started barking, which made the hall guard-dogs start barking back. The night filled with barking and growling as the two groups of dogs ran madly at each other.

"Tor's balls!" Halfdan shouted.

Most of the men running towards Halfdan were carrying shields in one hand and a spear or an ax or a sword in the other hand; a few of them were archers.

A bow-string twanged from their direction, and another grey-feathered arrow bit into the door between his legs, a small distance under Halfdan's crotch.

Helpless fear pounded in his chest and neck. Hard to breathe. He had been in many battles, but this was different. He was alone, without a leader giving commands, his thinking slowed by all the beer he had guzzled inside the hall -- Halfdan was not at all ready for this!

An army was running at him from the front; the door to the hall behind him would not open.

There was nothing he could do for those inside.

He would die if he stayed here.

He heard the sound of an archer shooting at him again and ducked. Again the arrow missed. Without a thought, forgetting to check the back door to the hall, Halfdan turned and ran. Back towards the out-houses.

Iron-tipped arrows spat hissing over his shoulders.

He raced past a row of smelly wicker huts and across King Lambi's farm-field, which was covered with barley-stubble from the recent harvest, and towards the town wall. It was made of sharpened pine-logs, held upright and together by iron nails and thick pine-wood cross-beams. He tossed his sword over it and leaped high to grab the top of the fence and threw a foot on a cross-beam and hurled himself over.

He landed on his feet on the ground on the other side, rolling his body onto the ground at the moment of impact, then bouncing quickly up. From the direction of the hall, he heard, mixed with the noises of dogs fighting dogs, the indistinct yelling of men. He could not make out any of their words, but they did not sound friendly.

Who were they?

He was standing near an oak-tree with thick, low branches. He grabbed a branch and pulled himself high enough up to see over the top of the town wall.

King Lambi's hall was surrounded by dozens of helmet-wearing strangers and their snarling war-dogs. And a group of five or six dogs was running towards the part of the fence Halfdan had climbed over, followed by a larger number of the mysterious fighters. One of them pointed at where Halfdan hung from the tree branch. Halfdan's head and the top of his body could be seen from inside the fence. Halfdan heard the man shout, "Look! He's hiding up that tree! Lift the dogs over the fence and they'll trap him up there!"

Halfdan dropped back to the ground, now completely panic-filled, and ran away from the fence, towards the line of trees at the base of the mountain-range in front of him. Despite the light of stars and moon, it was too dark to see the ground well, and he often stumbled. He ran towards some raspberry bushes, tried to jump over them, but one of his feet tripped into a thick branch-loop and he flung forwards and down into the mass of spiky berry-branches. His falling face slid along a thorn-covered branch, ripping skin from his beard-covered cheek and one of his ears. He dropped his sword and peeled the gripping thorns off his face. Blood and raspberry-juice dripped onto his white linen shirt. One of his shoes had fallen off.

Behind him, he heard the deep baying of dogs. They sounded like they were on this side of the wall. He had to get away from their fast, heavy bodies and terrible teeth. He stumbled away in the light of moon and stars. He ran past some big chunks of granite-stone that had, ages ago, rolled down from the mountain. He ran around the boulders and scattered bushes and trees and came to a mud-banked stream. As he jumped over the thin flow of water and used both hands to scramble up the chilly, slippery mud of the other side, Halfdan realized something.



He had forgotten his sword and one shoe in the raspberry bushes.

Halfdan hissed, "Fool!" and slapped his forehead.

How could he fight off dogs or armed fighters with empty hands?

He couldn't.

If they caught him, they would easily kill him.

"Fool!" he said again.

The dogs were still barking somewhere in the darkness behind him, and seemed to be getting louder.

He ran.

The ground was now sloping upwards. This was the lowest part of the mountain that brooded over Eid. The birch and pine and occasional oak trees grew closer together here, and the chunks of rock strewn between the tree-trunks were covered with green moss.

Inside the forest, he stopped to listen behind him. Heard the barking dogs -- getting closer?

He looked at his feet. His right one was covered by an untied cow-leather shoe. His left foot was bare. He bent to tie the strings on his right shoe with trembling fingers. Each clumsy knot he tried to make fell apart.

"Tor's balls! Forget it!"

He kicked off the single shoe and ran barefoot into the forest. He followed a rock-strewn trail that twisted up-mountain through the rocks and trees and clumps of low bushes. The dark around him and the confusion inside made it hard to move fast up the mountain-base. His bare feet slipped in the cold gravelly mud of the trail and scraped on small rocks.

He felt an old, familiar pain in one knee (years ago, he had twisted it while jumping off a war-ship to raid a town with King Lambi); it throbbed more and more as he ran.

Breathing hard, he passed under the thick moss-covered branches of a fallen tree and tripped over some tangled roots twisting out of the ground. He ran through piles of rocks from long-ago avalanches. Sometimes he saw patches of clear starry sky overhead through the dim branches overhead.

His face still stung and bled from the thorns of that raspberry bush.

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

