

Excerpt: The Viking's Yuletide Woman

Behind her, the solid door splintered, pieces flying as the blade of a sharp axe protruded through the wood. In another second, the bolt tore loose and then the hinges shattered. The heavy plank landed on the floor with a thud that resounded through Ella's body as she looked up at the Viking framed in the empty doorway.

His height and massive shoulders took up most of the space. His face was grimy and all hard angles. With the deadly axe in one hand, his wild mane of hair more bronze than blond, and eyes that glittered silver-blue, he looked every inch the fierce berserker she'd heard about.

He dropped the axe and stepped through the doorway. She inched back as he advanced, his gaze as intent as his movement. "Who...who are you? What...what do you want?" Even to her ears, the questions came out nearly as a squeak.

"My name is Bronwolf." An incongruous dimple flashed in his left cheek as he grinned, showing very white teeth. "And I want you, Princess Aethelthryth."