The Saga of the Great Sword of Cawood

Journeying across the wind whipped waves of the cold, grey sea, Hardrada the Fierce brought his dragon ships of warriors to Angleland.

Ravens croaked warnings of their arrival in the mists of dawn, silently rowing up river to Riccall.

As the Three Fates spun and wove their threads of life, the mortal men squelching through the mud and marshland along the Ouse touched their charms woven in beards and hair to keep them safe.

Odin’s omens of fiery comets in the sky reminded them of Eric Bloodaxe, already awaiting their arrival in Valhalla, the Hall of the Slain, whose roof is thatched in spears. . . . when the Fates have cut their threads. . . .

The Battle of Fulford raged fierce, bloody and cruel. Harald Godwinson, Saxon pretender king, raged at the victory of the Norsemen, and knew only their defeat would he take as a sign he would also triumph over the Norman usurper, William.

The Norsemen took York and those that could, marched on to Stamford Bridge.

Blood-filled runes carved into the sword called “Widow Maker”, dulled it as its noble lord staggered and fell on the muddy banks near the settlement known as Caw Wood. Mortally wounded, he was retreating to the safety of his dragon prowed ship moored downstream, silently expecting its master’s return.

With leather bound shield in hand, he dropped gore drenched “Widow Maker” in the oozing stagnating mud and knew. He knew only the slain who die with sword in hand could enter Valhalla to join Bloodaxe and Odin.

He heard the “Caw, Caw” cawing of the Saxon Caw Wood crows seeming to mock him. With the sound of clashing metal still ringing in his ears from the raging battle, the Viking Chieftain’s eyes clouded and dulled. A man dies only once, he is ready, “I am coming.”

The Valkyries rise up on the cold wind to Valahalla, as he begins his ride along the blood red road and asks the pale horse to tread the lonely path to the crimson sky of the setting sun.