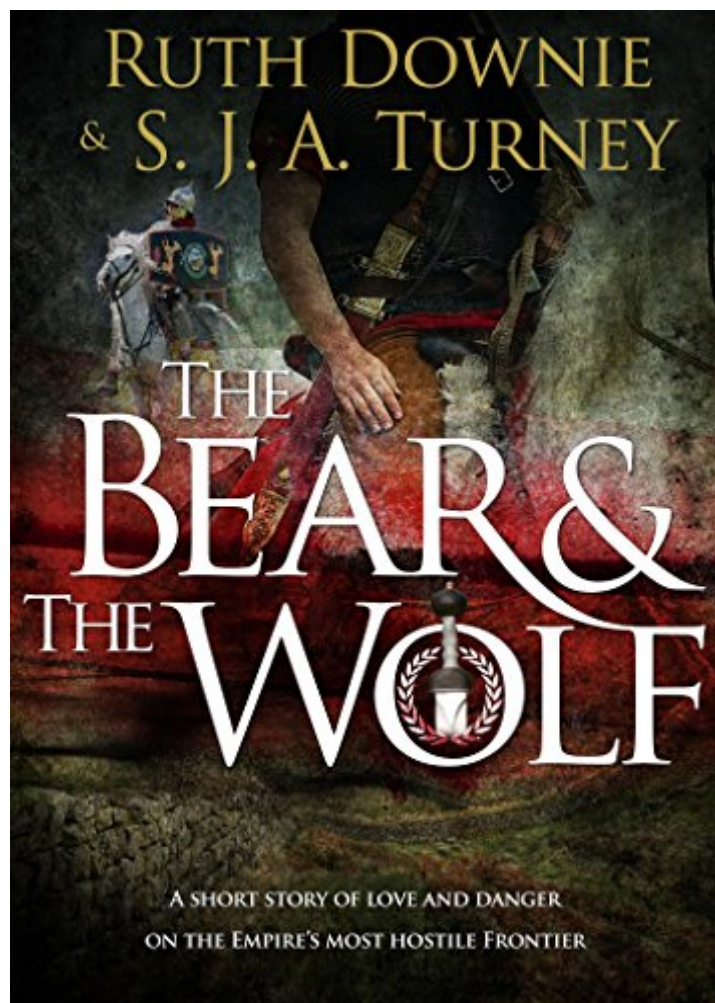


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Bear And The Wolf



Synopsis

A short story of love and danger on the empire's most hostile frontier. Senna, a native Briton married to a Roman auxiliary, accidentally uncovers a dreadful plan by the rebellious northern Maeatae tribe. Her husband Brigius, a Briton who now serves Rome, is torn when the imperial prince Caracalla arrives in northern Britannia with his unit of vicious, dangerous Numidian cavalry, causing trouble and endangering the couple's once peaceful life. Heedless of the danger to both them and their world, the pair see only one way to ensure the continuation of peace in the north, and it carries a horrifying risk. From two acclaimed authors of Historical Fiction set in the world of Rome, *The Bear and the Wolf* is a tale for all ages sure to enthrall. Originally penned for the Alderney Literary Festival, this short story is available at this time only in eBook form.

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Customer Reviews

I haven't read any books by either author, so when I saw this short story I thought it would be a good way to try them out (as it were). The synopsis gives readers the basic outline, but

can the authors follow through to give a good story when the book is only eighty-nine pages? The answer is a resounding *Yes*. The story is set in Britannia in A.D. 210, about a hundred and sixty-six years after the first Romans landed on Britannia's soil, and yet the Romans still can't afford to relax as there are pockets of unrest by the Britons, especially those who live on the other side of what is now called Hadrian's Wall. There are some wonderfully descriptive passages of the terrain that are so well done I could see them and shudder or admire accordingly. I didn't find the two main protagonists, Brigius and Senna to be completely rounded, but the broad brush strokes characteristics of the Numidian cavalry and the Second Infantry are extremely well done. Caracalla, the only historical person in the story is very well portrayed in a few sentences. I could see the ending coming and found it very nerve-racking waiting for the climax, but the Epilogue soon settled jangled nerves. I am glad I bought this book and it will be one I read again when I feel like a short story rather than a novel. It is very well-written and edited and was a pleasure to read.

Very happily I stumbled upon this short novel by favorite author Ruth Downie and SJA (Simon) Turney while looking for some Anglo Saxon books. I did not realize there was such a book, but was very glad that she and Simon Turney had another collaboration. (see " The Year of Ravens") Here it is: "A short story of love and danger on the empire's most hostile frontier..from two acclaimed authors of Historical Fiction "It read like a full length novel with depth of character and plot as well as very accurate historical detail. A quite marvelous authors' note tells of "Prince" Caracalla son of the Emperor Severus who was violent and without scruples. The setting is Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall, where Senna the main female character's tribe lived within a long day's walk. As a reader who has an anthropology degree and love this era, the landscape was meticulously described. "The Maeatae live next to the cross-wall ,which cuts the island in half", was how it has been explained, which suggests it is not the Antonine Wall .Brigius, the main male character is Senna's man, of the Votadini tribe and a soldier in the Second Nerviorum stationed at Vindolanda. There is a very intricate plot and a complex battle scene which I must reread now to get straight. (I read too fast) I must also try to figure out which of Senna's family survive this event by rereading the battle.

I was not familiar with the author Ruth Downie, but I am a big fan of Mr. Turney, so I purchased this book. The first few pages did not really pull me in, but I continued reading and began to get a good feel for this book. I liked it a lot. You very quickly get to know each character as the author presents

them to you. The story was very compelling and my one complaint of the entire book is that it is really short. I read the entire thing in maybe two hours; I wanted more. Downie writes the first part and Turney writes the second part. I found the transition between authors to be seamless and not at all awkward. I would look forward to something similar from these authors in the future.

What a GREAT fast snack of a read. Multilayered like and Oatmeal raisin chocolate chip cookie with cinnamon and cayenne for heat! The Oatmeal is the tribes of Britain, and the bitter chocolate are the arrogant and brutal North African cavalry reigning terror for fun. The heat and spice are Senna and Brigius and their plan to sacrifice some to get rid of the threat to all AND the arrogant and brutal North African cavalry! Well written, you are a fly on the wall of the tent, shed, backside of a horse throughout the book you FEEL like you are there observing. I can only HOPE, plead that these authors collaborate on a series expanding Senna and Brigius' adventure along with the Britons to everyone becoming just citizens- HINT, hint (scream stomp my feet and have a hissy fit because like Oliver in that play + I want more please.).

Life north of Hadrian's Wall was tough enough for the tribes who lived there without having to deal with the cruelties of the Emperor's son and his equally cruel Numidian cavalry. In this short, what if tale, a Roman auxiliary, from a tribe that is loyal to Rome and his wife, whose tribe is on the brink of rebellion come face to face with Caracalla and his prized cavalry unit. It is an exciting story of divided loyalties stretched to their limits in the pursuit of peace with Rome. The duo of Downie and Turney combine their talents and their expertise in things Briton and Roman and give us a glimpse of life on that tumultuous frontier and though the story is fictional, it is one that is totally believable, and that is testament to the authors' creative abilities. 4.2 stars

Downie never fails, and in this case credit goes to her collaborator Turney. It's a story of an incident--which may be true--in Rome's efforts to conquer and pacify Britain and how the pressures, both personal and social, threaten to cause a massive war with bloodshed beyond anything seen since the original conquest. We have egotistical Roman commanders, vicious and perhaps overrated Numidian cavalry, hotheads of the British tribes, a British man who's sworn to Rome in one of her legions, and his extraordinarily competent wife. I can't give away the ending except to say, would that more such arrangements could be made. Beautifully drawn background and characters.

I very good read, for anyone who loves Roman historical fiction. My only complaint is the story is just too short, by the time the author develops the plot it is finished. Takes about two hours to read and I thought where is the rest of it. But it was real entertaining.

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