

<https://youtu.be/03GInrZZRU4>

Saxon or Dane

- 1). Wave a decapitated head at your murderous uncle.
- 2). Leave quickly to avoid armed men.

And so another thrilling episode opens with Uhtred and Brida fleeing from Bebbenbur with the treacherous uncle and his soldiers in hot pursuit. Running straight into a massacred village where a lone survivor tells them that Danes attacked in retribution for an English uprising led by the slave Uhtred.



– Ubba (Rune Temte)

While Kjartan's men have been busy again, framing him for the murder of Earl Ragnar. Uhtred realises he has to see Ubba (*Rune Temte*) and clear his name, but Brida (*Emily Cox*) reminds him that Ubba is totally 'unpredictable' and they must take a hostage to secure their own safety. They decide to snatch Storri (*Henning Valin*), Ubba's sorcerer as Ubba is superstitious and relies on Storri's spiritual guidance as his right-hand man.

'I like this game'.



King Edmund (Jason Flemying) guesses his martyrdom is near.

After the capture of Storri, Uhtred approaches Ubba as he and Guthrum (*Thomas W. Gabrielsson*) hold Edmund, King of East Anglia prisoner. Things do not go well, with Edmund's demanding that the Danes are baptised in return for his compliance as puppet king. The Danes understand this as washing, and are confused. Uhtred explains to them that 'you sit in a barrel of water, and have more water put over you'. Not impressed Ubba shoots Edmund full of arrows to see if his Christian God will save him, and proposes the exact same treatment for Uhtred, only now waiting to see whether Odin will intervene. Prepared for this turn of events Uhtred tells Ubba he has captured Storri who will be returned *after* his safe departure. Ubba tells Uhtred he will kill him in the future as he does not believe Uhtred did not murder his adoptive family.



Brida (Emily Cox) and Uhtred (Alexander Dreymon) decide to spend some quality time together.

Meanwhile in Oxnaforda (Oxford)

Uhtred and Brida decide to take a break from the haters and hole up in Oxford to a) have a sword made, and b) pass the time by disappearing from sight while enjoying lots of sex on fur rugs. The swordsmith gives Uhtred the heads-up he is being hunted by both Saxons and Danes and as Oxford is becoming too hot to handle he and Brida decide to leave, surviving a breathtaking surprise attack filmed in a shaky hand-held camera documentary style.



Alfred (David Dowson) schemes for his religious crusades against the Danes.

The only way is Wessex

Uhtred proposes to Brida they now throw their lot in with the English and makes his way to Winchester and Father Beocca (*Ian Hart*). We now meet some new characters, the pivotal sickly steely Alfred (*David Dowson*), a master strategist, and his wife Aelswith (*Eliza Butterworth*). King Aethelred, Alfred's brother and the two Odda's : the ambitious devious younger (*Brian Vernel*), and the older (*Simon Kunz*). The feckless Aethelwold (*Harry McIntire*) plays the son of the king like an irritating university student drinking, partying and disappointing his father.



Sexy Saxon Leofric (Adrian Bower)

There is also the initial meeting with Leofric, the bodyguard to Alfred who will forge a soldier's bond with Uhtred. Leofric challenges him to fight and christens him 'Arseling'. This combat is interrupted by the appearance of Father Beocca. After this joyful reunion, Uhtred and a cagey Alfred finally meet. Alfred astounds Uhtred with his spy network and information about his and his enemies movements. Alfred outlines his vision of England and subtly describes how Uhtred's endeavours to regain the Bebbenbur lands align with his plans. The fall of East Anglia to the Danes makes Wessex the last kingdom, and the next target. Hearing news of a Danish army Uhtred decides to spy for Alfred, against Brida's advice and better judgement.

Uhtred returns with insider information concerning an imminent Viking attack. While Alfred acts upon it he also rather ungratefully detains Brida and Uhtred in tiny cages to seethe until the return of the Saxon army.

Quotes and Notes

'Heaven is Valhalla Lord, to the Christians but without the fighting, feasting and humping'
– Uhtred to Ubba

* The contrasting style of the strange 'in a relationship' Uhtred and the 'its complicated' Alfred begins.

*The music of this series is beautiful with celtic-y moments interspersed with paganish drums and chants.

*The Saxon costumes seem uber-modern with clean lines showing a subtle sophistication compared to the leather'n'furs gear of the Vikings.

*J.R.R. Tolkien the Professor of Old English would have loved the old Saxon place names morphing into their modern counterparts as we visit each location.

Original article can be seen here: -

<http://wp.me/p8uxvn-lEv>