



Gudrun Episode 8

By Lucy Catherine

Directed by Jessica Dromgoole

CHARACTER	CAST	NOTES
Gudrun	Kate Philips	
Jesus	Paul Helton	
Freija	Samantha Dakin	

PLEASE BRING HARD-SOLED SHOES TO THE STUDIO
PLEASE REMEMBER TO SIGN YOUR CONTRACTS

Reh / Rec Times:

Thursday 18th April

Director:

Jessica Dromgoole

Venue:

Studio 60A
BBC Broadcasting House
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London W1A 1AA

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EPISODE EIGHT

SCENE 1:

FREIJA: *(V/O) The giant carries you through a blizzard at the top of the world. He is dressed in the pelt of a white bear and is as tall as two men. He does not look at you. You do not know where he is going. Perhaps to the next world. Perhaps you are already there.*

FX: BLIZZARD. LABOURED FOOTSTEPS THROUGH SNOW

GUDRUN: You are Jesus. You are the White Christ.

FREIJA: *(V/O) He does not speak. He focusses on the empty horizon and keeps walking.*

GUDRUN: Am I dead, Jesus? Am I forgiven?

FREIJA: *(V/O) The cold is in your bones. You feel yourself falling into a dreamless sleep.*

GUDRUN: If this is death, I am ready.

SCENE 2:

FX: INSIDE AN IGLOO. A SMALL FIRE.

FREIJA: *(V/O) But this is not death, Gudrun. You wake and find yourself wrapped in dry furs in front of a small fire. You cannot see the sky.*

GUDRUN: Where am I? Am I buried alive?

JESUS: No.

GUDRUN: There is snow above me.

JESUS: This is an ice house to protect us from the wind.

FREIJA: *(V/O) Without his white bearskin, he looks less like a giant and more like a man. A man who has lived longer than his years. His eyes are dark and kind. His black hair lies in a long plait down his back.*

JESUS: You came from the sea. I have seen your kind before, but only once.

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GUDRUN: Are you one of those who call themselves the Thule?

JESUS: I am a Tunik. This is my land. We were the first people. We were here before the Thule came.

GUDRUN: How do you speak my language?

JESUS: When I was a child, one of your kind walked out of a blizzard and we took him in. He lived in our village until he died. He taught me your language so I could speak with the men he said would come to kill us. He thought it would help.

GUDRUN: And did it?

JESUS: No. It was the Thule who came for us from the West, not your people. They chased us with their dogs and killed us with their arrows.

GUDRUN: What is your name?

JESUS: My family are almost all dead. Without family, I have no need for a name. You must drink this now.

FX: HE POURS LIQUID INTO A CUP AND PASSES IT TO HER

GUDRUN: What is it?

JESUS: Seal blood. It will give you strength.

GUDRUN: This is the blood of Christ. You are Jesus.

JESUS: Who is Jesus?

GUDRUN: The saviour.

JESUS: Then I am Jesus. Drink.

FREIJA: (V/O) The warm blood is thick and dark. You swallow and feel the life return to your numb frozen body. The days pass and you grow stronger.

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GUDRUN: I believe I can trust you.

JESUS: Knowing who to trust is not an easy thing.

GUDRUN: You have treated me well so far.

JESUS: I will always do so. I am Tunik. Our way is always to help those in need.

GUDRUN: Then I am coming with you. Where I am from the land is harsh, but not like this. At home, even in the worst depths of winter, I could survive. Here I will die without someone to guide me.

SCENE 4:

FREIJA: *(V/O) He is your guide. Where he leads, you follow. Into a world where it becomes impossible to tell the difference between the land and the sea, everything becomes one frozen mass. But he knows the places to cut through the ice and catch fish.*

FX: OUT ON THE ICE FISHING THROUGH A HOLE

GUDRUN: Look.

FX: A TUG ON THE LINE. JESUS PULLS UP THE FISH

JESUS: This one is big enough to feed us both tonight.

FX: HE PUTS THE FISH ON THE ICE AND IT FLAPS AROUND

GUDRUN: What are you doing?

JESUS: Leaving it to die.

GUDRUN: Knock it on the head. It might go back down the ice hole flapping around like that.

JESUS: When it is ready to die, it will die. It is not for me to take its life.

GUDRUN: It's just a fish.

JESUS: It has a spirit, just like you or I do.

GUDRUN: You believe each fish has a spirit?

JESUS: Everything has a spirit. Every fish, every animal, every pebble on the beach. There is no difference between the flesh on my bones and a grain of sand or a flake of snow. We all come from the same place and we deserve the same reverence.

GUDRUN: Where was it that everything came from?

JESUS: Out of the ocean and that is where we will all return.

FX: THE FISH HAS STOPPED FLAPPING

JESUS: His spirit is gone.

FX: GUDRUN PICKS UP THE FISH

GUDRUN: Shall I put him in the bag now?

JESUS: First we must give thanks. Bring him here.

FX: SHE BRINGS HIM THE FISH

JESUS: I thank you for giving up your life for ours. When I die I will return you to the ocean. There. It is done.

FX: THE FISH IS PUT IN THE BAG

JESUS: Bait the line again. We will see if there is one more who wishes to give himself to us.

FX: GUDRUN BAITING THE LINE

JESUS: When I was growing up and we had the man of your kind with us, I once asked him if he was afraid to die.

GUDRUN: What did he say?

JESUS: He said he looked forward to dying in battle. He said that was an honourable death.

GUDRUN: Those who die a warrior's death are taken by Odin the All Father to Valhalla.

JESUS: What is Valhalla?

GUDRUN: It is the hall of the slain.

FREIJA: (V/O) Five hundred doors and forty are there in Valhalla. Eight hundred warriors will leave each at the same time when Ragnarok comes and they must go to war with the children of Loki.

JESUS: Your people sound like the Thule. Thirsty for blood.

GUDRUN: Shouldn't you fight to protect what is yours?

JESUS: What is yours?

GUDRUN: The land. The cattle and sheep who graze the land. The treasure buried beneath it.

FREIJA: ***(V/O) And your daughter, Sigrid, herself now far from the Sacred Land, far from her home.***

JESUS: Only one thing belongs to you and that is your spirit. The rest is borrowed. I borrow the flesh of the fish to give me the strength to keep walking, but when I die, my body will return to the water and it will feed the children of the fish I borrowed from. It is all passed between us, one to the other. There is no such thing as ownership. There is only exchange.

SCENE 5:

FREIJA: *(V/O) He has no bow. No spear. What would the Valkyries, who choose the bravest warriors to be taken from the battlefield to Valhalla, make of this man?*

FX: _____ EATING THE FISH

GUDRUN: Tastes good.

JESUS: He gave his permission to us to eat him. Flesh given freely tastes better than that taken by force.

SCENE 6:

FREIJA: *(V/O) One day, a fine day, when the sun lights up the snowfields with a dazzling brilliance, you come to the camp of his people. Just a small collection of animal skin shelters. Most of them hanging ragged in the blustery North wind.*

JESUS: There. I told you we would find the camp.

GUDRUN: Where are they?

JESUS: We will see.

GUDRUN: Why don't you call out? See if anyone can hear you?

JESUS: I don't want to disturb their spirits.

FREIJA: *(V/O) As you draw closer, you see why.*

GUDRUN: Oh no.

FREIJA: *(V/O) There are only three of them. A man, a woman and a young boy.*

JESUS: My brother and his family.

FREIJA: *(V/O) Their bodies lie neatly at the entrance to one of the tents. Each has a wound in the chest.*

JESUS: The Thule.

GUDRUN: How do you know that?

JESUS: These wounds are from arrows. They always take them out of the bodies before they leave. An arrow is a precious thing to a Thule. The more men it has killed the more valuable the arrow.

GUDRUN: But they had no weapons of their own. This wasn't a fight. It was a massacre.

JESUS: They want the land and the prey for themselves. Soon they will have it all.

GUDRUN: Why don't you fight back?

JESUS: There is nothing to fight for. This is just a wave on the ocean. It crashes on the sand and washes us away. On another day, it will be the Thule who disappear. Nothing lasts forever and fighting the waves of the ocean is futile. They cannot be stopped from breaking.

SCENE 7:

FREIJA: *(V/O) He finds a good place and cuts a hole in the ice. Whispering his incantations, he feeds the bodies into the hole, giving their flesh back to the ocean.*

FX: A BODY SLIPS UNDER THE WATER

JESUS: Good luck on your journeys. I love you.

FREIJA: *(V/O) He sheds no tears. And you resume your trek.*

FX: WALKING THROUGH SNOW

GUDRUN: Where are we going now?

JESUS: Onwards.

GUDRUN: Are there more of your people to find?

JESUS: If there are, then I do not know them. I think no one is left.

GUDRUN: Why are we still walking then?

JESUS: There is a place we keep our memories. I must leave something of my brother and his family there.

SCENE 8:

FREIJA: *(V/O) Time makes no sense here. It is of no consequence. There is only movement, slow and painful, across an endless field of ice. You come to a place in the lee of a mountain, where the snow has not covered the rock. This place stands out, a small island of black stone in a vast white ocean.*

GUDRUN: What is this place?

JESUS: This is where we leave the memories.

FREIJA: *(V/O) Thousands of stones are stacked in rows, carefully arranged, not scattered freely as you would expect in the wilderness. There is order here. Every one of the stones is marked with mysterious lines carved into the surface, like some newly imagined version of the runes.*

JESUS: I have to find the right stones. One each for my brother, his wife and their son.

GUDRUN: How will you know which is the right stone?

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JESUS: By listening to its spirit.

FREIJA: *(V/O) He begins picking his way through the stones that have not been carved and set before, the ones that lie at the foot of a small cliff, recently fallen.*

FX: **JESUS CHIPPING AWAY AT THE STONE**

GUDRUN: I found these.

JESUS: What are they?

GUDRUN: Two stones. One for me and one for you. I tried to listen to the spirit. I don't think I heard anything, but still, I somehow felt that these were the right stones for us.

JESUS: What do you want me to do with them?

GUDRUN: Mark them like you are the ones for your family. Leave a memory of us here too.

FREIJA: ***(V/O) You chose a destiny in which your name will live on Gudrun. Perhaps here, amongst these silent stone memorials, it will do so.***

JESUS: I doubt I will ever return here. It is right that I leave the mark of myself, before I go.

GUDRUN: And what about me.

JESUS: I will leave you here too. We will lie next to each other until we are buried together beneath the ice.

SCENE 9:

FREIJA: *(V/O) When night falls you crawl under the skins. You have clung to each other for warmth since the first night he found you. But something has changed.*

FX: UNDERNEATH THE FURS

GUDRUN: Are you alright?

JESUS: I am listening to see if I can hear the spirits talking.

GUDRUN: Are they?

JESUS: No. They are silent and content. My brother is satisfied and he has returned to the ocean.

GUDRUN: Are you afraid to die?

JESUS: No. We are dying always. We come from the ocean of the dead. The land where we are now, our lives at this moment, are only borrowings from the water. Every day I think about my death, how it will be, how it should be. There is nothing to fear.

GUDRUN: They say the White Christ knew the hour of his death and was not afraid. I think perhaps you really are Jesus.

JESUS: Your saviour. We said it.

GUDRUN: I have learnt so much from you.

JESUS: It has been good to have you with me.

GUDRUN: Come here.

FX: THEY KISS

GUDRUN: Flesh freely given is the best. Didn't you say that?

JESUS: I did.

FX: PASSIONATE KISSING

SCENE 10:

FREIJA: *(V/O) You lie with this man, the giant, the ice Jesus, in a frozen and barren land. He is gentle and true, his voice never rises with anger and his touch never fails to guide you with compassion. You are open to him and give yourself freely, more freely than ever before, apart from with Kjartan, the first times, when he came home to the Sacred Land. Your heart burst with youthful love for him. You could think of nothing else but his touch, the brush of his lips on yours, the smell of his hair.*

JESUS: We should go.

FREIJA: *(V/O) It is different with Jesus. The feeling is deep and true, but it does not make you leap, or twist your insides into knots. It is solid, elemental. Like the carved rocks you leave behind you.*

FX: TRUDGING THROUGH THE SNOW

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GUDRUN: Where are we going?

JESUS: North.

GUDRUN: What will we find?

JESUS: I don't know. The spirit of the ice is telling me to go that way.

GUDRUN: If you say that is the way, then I will follow.

JESUS: That is the way.

GUDRUN: I will be at your side. Lead on, Jesus.

FREIJA: *(V/O) The sun rises but is soon covered by storm clouds and the world fades to a dull grey. The wind grows stronger and it will snow. The ice spirits are calling you Gudrun, but they are calling you into the heart of a terrible storm.*

End of Episode