

GUINEVERE: BRIGHT SHADOW

by Sarah Provost

EXCERPT

We heard footsteps in the corridor. Thinking it was the guard come to take us for sentencing, we stood and faced the door. But it was Edalwurf who stood there.

“What are you doing here?” I asked coldly.

“I have come to save you, Madam,” the bishop replied. “By law, the punishment for a woman who commits treason is death at the stake. But you have many friends, myself included, who do not wish to see you suffer. I have come to tell you that you can be spared.” Catlin tensed, then slumped back. She knew what was coming, and so did I.

“You are to be my savior?” I asked.

“Not I, Madam, but the Savior of all. Accept His mercy, which he offers to even the most loathsome sinner. Repent, vow yourself to the Christ and you shall be saved both in heaven and here on earth.”

“So if I submit myself to your authority, I can live out my life in a convent. If I do not, I am consigned to the flames?” He nodded.

I walked to the door, pounded on it for the guard. “I’d rather burn.”

I admit I was startled by the expression that met my declaration. It was not rage or frustration or even pity, which would have been surprising enough. It was satisfaction. This man had no interest whatever in saving my soul. He would be delighted to see me burn. “As you wish, Madam,” he murmured, and went out.