Jessica Smith

3 December 2015

Dr. Isaac

June 810 A.D

Dear Kellen,

Earlier today, I woke up in a cave. I looked around and understood nothing. So, I ventured outside of the cave and came upon a peculiar scene: I was surrounded by fields filled with small farmhouses. Each farmhouse was set up the same: farmable land was closest to the house and pastures were farther away. The uncultivated forests were on the edge of all the houses[[1]](#footnote-1). I started to approach one of the houses, and was surprised to see that it was made of wood[[2]](#footnote-2), which was very unlike where I was earlier today. If you don’t remember, I am an archaeologist and I was excavating an old Viking town called Mӓlar Valley when I fell into a hole. I think I hit my head pretty hard and then I woke up in the cave I was telling you about earlier. So let me continue with what happened when I approached the house and then I’ll explain why I told you about the “hole” incident. So as I approached the houses, a woman left dressed in really ragged clothing. I went up to her and asked where I was, and she responded that I was in Mӓlar Valley. “That’s impossible!,” I sputtered. I then asked what her job was here and she said she did not have a job, but was a thrall[[3]](#footnote-3). That’s when it hit me Kellen: I had traveled back to the 800s, the time of the Vikings! Something must have happened when I fell in that hole, because I jumped back so many years! The girl left me, and I didn’t even catch her name but I did realize that I was definitely not dressed right. I kept walking through the town until I happened upon someone selling cloth and then I made my own dress[[4]](#footnote-4). Seeing as it was near nightfall by the time I finished sewing (I do not remember what mom taught about sewing), I decided to go back to my cave and sleep until day time. I’ll write about my adventures again tomorrow! Love you! –Jess

Dear Kellen,

Today I woke up thinking yesterday was a dream, at least until I stepped outside. There were so many things happening! Woman and men were walking around doing chores for about an hour and then it looked like everything just stopped and people began to eat[[5]](#footnote-5). I looked around my cave and realized that some of my artifacts fell down with me, including some coins I found in my previous dig. I ran outside and with the few coins I had, I bought some land[[6]](#footnote-6) and even convinced some people to help me build my small home. I moved in and told everyone that I was, in fact a karl[[7]](#footnote-7), or a bóndis[[8]](#footnote-8) as you would know. Obviously, to own land, I would have to be a free woman but I didn’t want them confusing me with a thrall. This little town is amazing sis! Like, nothing at all like I pictured it. Everyone assumes that Vikings[[9]](#footnote-9) just led raids and were “seafaring plunderers”[[10]](#footnote-10), but actually they seem to lead pretty simple lives. That could all change though, later today I am going to explore the town more and see what else I can find! I’m sorry I have yet to figure out the date but I promise to soon! –Jess

Dear Kellen,

I found some temples earlier today. I now have realized that I am probably in the 800s somewhere, especially since this society is still very pagan[[11]](#footnote-11). Anyway, the temples I found were dedicated to Odin, Thor, Frey, Freya, and Njord[[12]](#footnote-12). I don’t have time to explain to you who all of these gods are but I will if I ever find a way back home! Right now, I wish to stay because I haven not even met the Jarl[[13]](#footnote-13) yet! I asked one of the other karls, and she said that he would be coming home soon. He apparently went to another village to look for a bride but has yet to find one. I think she hoped he would pick her, but honestly, she’s not the prettiest if you know what I mean.

1. Another look at the Vikiings [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Vikings book [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Myths and Civilizations of the Vikings book [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid., 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Vikings book, women were allowed to own property during the time of the Vikings. Even when they got married, any land they previously owned still belonged to them, not their husbands. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Myths and Civilizations [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Vikings book [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The Vikings book, The Vikings were first known as Danes, Norsemen, or Northmen. They were later called “Vikings” because of the Norse word for pirate, Vikingr. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Vikings: A New Look by Kate Gordon [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The Vikings book, By 1100 A.D., the Vikings had mostly became Christians. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid., 6. Odin was the god of poetry, battle, death, and was the most powerful, Thor was the god of thunder and sky, he supported law and justice, and he was the most popular. Frey was the god that ensured good harvest and Freya was the goddess of love. Finally, Njord was the god of wealth, fishing, and sailing. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid., 8. Jarls were the chieftains, military leaders or main priests of the town or village. They were technically the “lords.” [↑](#footnote-ref-13)