



Stag Hunt

Laura DeLuca

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In ancient Britannia, the warrior who brought down the king stag was named the defender of the land.

Eartha's brother Balen has been in love with Princess Galiene since they were children. Upon the death of the High King, the tribesmen of the realm vie for the throne, and with it, the hand of the fair princess.

Balen is desperate to win his lady, but a rival tribesman is equally determined to keep them apart.

With her brother, her dearest friend, and the country she loves all hanging in the balance, Eartha must do the unthinkable to ensure her brother's victory in the stag hunt. Sometimes true love needs a helping hand...or some blood to be spilled.

Stag Hunt Details

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Author : Laura DeLuca

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From Reader Review Stag Hunt for online ebook

Kizzie Chadwick says

Beautiful

Stunningly wrote and a true reflection of our ancestors i would fully recommend this short, beautifully written tale to anyone

Jackie says

LOVED Stag Hunt! Very well written and captivating!

Maryann says

This short story is an original take on a ancient tradition. Beautifully written, it brings to life the world of ancient britaniana. There is lots of action and tender family moments. Loved it.

Michelle Cornwell-Jordan says

Stag Hunt follows the story of Eartha, whose love for her twin brother causes her to make choices that is out of the norm for females during her time. The High King dies leaving Gailen, Eartha's best friend, but also the princess, as next in line to rule. But tradition dictates that she is to find a husband. Gailen is deeply in love with Balen, Eartha's twin brother, who Eartha is very protective towards. Gailen is distraught that another will be picked as her husband (for Balen is not considered high in status in the community), so an old ritual is announced, that whoever kills the King Stag, will be the defender of the land and also will marry Gailen.'

Much to Eartha's displeasure, Balen is entering into the hunt; Eartha is extremely concerned for her brother's safety, although Balen is an excellent fighter and such, she fears he is too distracted and will not focus, also Arn, a former childhood mate, who even as a child cheated and would stop at nothing to win; is entering and as an adult has become even more ruthless.

Soon as preparation begins, and Eartha is unable to dissuade her brother, news travels that various participants are disappearing, it seems someone is getting rid of the competition. One day, her brother is hurt in an attack, and it appears will not be able to compete in the hunt. Eartha seeing her heart- broken brother and best friend, and also not only for the love of them, but her land; she decides to enter.

She cuts her hair and dresses like her brother, and with alterations, no one is able to tell the difference, thus she sets upon a path that will change herself, as well as change the people in her land's mindsets...never to discount a woman.

First I will say, that I always look forward to Author Laura Deluca's stories, due to they cover Classic tales, Traditions in various cultures and they are told from a fresh, hip concept! I love this! As an avid history buff, and reader I find this fascinating; I myself have never come across this in Young Adult fiction in the exact way that Ms. Deluca delivers.

This is no text book rendition of facts, but she breathes life into art and history and makes it her own.

I enjoyed Stag Hunt, as with many of Ms. Deluca's stories, there is an enjoyable story telling quality; clear concise, very nice flow. There were no lagging parts that will cause the reader to lose focus. The story flowed smoothly and fast paced as the events unfolded into a grand adventure. I love also the strong female characters depicted and the strength in Eartha. She knew who she was and made no apologies for it.

Also, this story was different in that the love that was so strong, was that of a sister to brother, and that was a fresh new twist, especially in YA where the main focus of most stories is the grand passion between the two main characters.

I look forward to Ms. Deluca's stories because you truly never know what to expect.

Also my thoughts on Author Angelique Mroczka's foreword- (Flash fiction)

If I understand correctly, the forward was created separately at a different time, which is so surprising because it fits perfectly. It captures the bravery and spirited adventure that is reflected in the story. Ms. Mroczka, has a poetic and lovely way of writing and I look forward to works from this author as well.

Stag Hunt I believe will be an excellent story teens and adults, there is mild violence(as far as the hunt).

Literary Chanteuse says

Eartha, is a courageous young woman of humble origins. She is also loyal to both her loved ones and to mother earth. When The high king falls in battle, his daughter Galiene must choose a husband and the successor. Eartha knows that her brother Balen will enter the dangerous ritual of the stag hunt. Not to win the crown but the hand of his childhood love Gailene. Knowing fate will have it's way she is determined that Balen will win. Even if she must enter in his place.

Set in ancient Britannia during the Anglo-Saxon invasion, you are immediately transported and caught up in a tribal war. Eartha is a brave character who is the focus of the story and won my admiration instantly. You are taken back to her early childhood and see that her character is strong and loyal right from the beginning. A lot of action and historical rituals keep the pace interesting and exciting. A short story that I would love to see develop into a full novel.

Sheila says

Beautifully paired with a flash fiction short by Angelique Mroczka, Laura DeLuca's evocative novella, Stag Hunt, brings Britannia of the dark ages to vivid life. The king is dead and the new queen decrees her

champion will be the man who receives the gift of the stag's dying life. A god gives himself for the land. A chosen champion gives loyalty and love. And a wise young woman values the power of honest affections.

Laura DeLuca's writing is pleasingly evocative and the mythical sense of her story is beautifully consistent throughout. The female characters proffer a genuine historical strength rather than the muddied ancient-modern feel of many present-day tales of historical romance, making this a nicely convincing depiction of ancient worlds and traditions, with a genuine feel for time, people, and place.

Disclosure: I was lucky enough to spot ebook this when it was offered free.

Tina says

I really enjoyed this book. I have always loved anything pagan rites reading and this was a really amazing read.

Heather andrews says

The book starts off in action, which I like I hate when books beat around the bush to me that's just a waste of time, it's like GET ON WITH IT ALREADY! But not this book. Typical male, Balen is he gets butterflies like us ladies do when we're crushing hard on someone, "he gawked at her, his mouth hanging open for a few minutes, before making an awkward dash to join the other youths skipping rocks from the hill." Um.. really? you didn't say anything to Galiene geesh Balen! Balen is very in love with Galiene, I mean he's so in love that he's protective, "that bastard will not...he will not have my Galiene," Balen muttered, breathless. "He will...he will not steal her throne!" Eartha is so not a lady, haha. She wants to prove herself worthy or just show the tribes that she has what it takes to do a man's work and skill as well. "A woman I may well be..." This may have been a short story but it was a good one.

Barb Henderson says

Stag hunt is a short novel that brings you back to an earlier time. The descriptions and emotions that the author produces has the reader travelling through the forest and feeling every reaction along with the heroine. Do not miss this novel

Lisa Markson says

First I have to say that I have read each and every book by this author Laura DeLuca and will continue to do so. There has never been a book that she has written that ever disappointed me. The book Stag Hunt made me think of the classic Disney story Mulan. She is very careful in drawing the reader in by giving such visual imagery of the surrounding environment. Each of her characters are given a three dimensional quality that you can't help but love and hope that love can persevere. Eartha takes her brothers place in the great stag hunt

in order to help her brother. He has fallen in love with Eartha's best friend and future queen. I love how Mrs. Deluca is able to fully tell the story without compromising anything. I highly recommend this story. And can't wait for more stories from her.

Merisha28 says

Stag Hunt by Laura DeLuca
I bought this book on amazon~~~~

This is a wonderful story with great visual scenes and characters. I've read a lot of this author's work and am enamored by the way she writes and tells the story. This short Novella has the potential to be a full novel or a series if the author chooses to do so. This story has an awesome theme that is dear to my heart- that a woman can do anything when she puts her mind to it even if it means doing what is typically a man's job. The author tells the story in a way that doesn't give away the story or the ending. I highly recommend this read. I hope that the author will continue Eartha's story and Balen's. I give this excellent written book a 5 star review!! Can't wait to read more by this author.

Gloria Defeo says

Stag Hunt is an amazing tale that offers a little bit of pagan history with a twist. Eartha and Balen are siblings who are very close, and when he's unable to compete in the Stag Hunt because of an underhanded trick, Eartha takes matters into her own hands in a way that could go horribly wrong for a variety of reasons. This 30 page short story is loaded with action from sword fights to ancient rituals. Though written in the YA genre, this is a story that people of all ages will enjoy.

Beth says

This short story centers around Celtic pagan folklore, specifically the symbolism of hunting/killing the king stag to prove you're meant to be king of the land. I'm not sure if this is an actual historic Celtic occurrence or a neo-Pagan adaptation, but there's definitely an element of magical realism at play, so I'm calling it fantasy. It's a quick read, but a nicely empowering one.

I think the biggest thing I appreciated about this story was that the two female characters are both sympathetic. Eartha is frustrated by what she sees as passivity in Galiene, but as the reader you're never led to believe Eartha is more worthy or Galiene is weak. The male characters are a little more delineated- Balen is framed as sympathetic, although we don't see enough of him to understand why he'd make a good king (only that Eartha loves him and he adores Galiene). But by contrast the primary rival for Balen is devious, a liar and cheat, prizes the kingship role over Galiene, and is otherwise clearly framed as the Bad Guy.

The plot goes as you'd expect for a YA short story- Eartha must prove herself (and thus save her brother and Galiene) through cunning, patience, and her innate understanding of the wilderness. Although no twists, the tension remains through most of the story (which is a feat, considering waiting for a stag to show up in the forest is on its surface a very boring thing). And the language throughout is evocative and descriptive, which made it a compelling read.

C.p. Bialois says

This is a quick read that really struck a chord with me. I'm a huge fan of coming of age stories where the hero is a regular type who is put, or chooses to be, in extraordinary circumstances. And this fulfilled that perfectly.

The story was fast paced and engaging to the point where I didn't have a problem envisioning the older forests of Britannia along with the people and customs. In many ways, it reminded me of some Native American legends where the braves are said to ask the animal's spirit if it would allow them to kill it to feed their family. If the answer was no, then it would run off. If the spirit said yes, it would allow the brave to kill it.

The characters were interesting, and I couldn't help but root for Eartha to win as well as for a certain bad guy to get what he deserved. I won't give away spoilers, so if you want to know more you'll have to read it yourself. :D

Like the author's other books, this quickly became one of my favorites I look forward to reading again and again.

Daniel Devereux says

I really didn't care for this. It sounds like the author had read The Mists of Avalon and used it as the basis for their work. I just couldn't get into it, at least it was free.
