

INDIGENOUS & ANCESTRAL TRADITIONS

The Poetic Edda

A real medieval collection of Old Norse mythological and heroic poems -- the primary source for most of what is known of pre-Christian Norse religion, including Völuspá's account of creation and Ragnarok and Hávamál's proverbs of Odin. Presents 39 poems in Benjamin Thorpe's 1866 translation.

Presented by Earth's Sacred Texts — blackbetty.space

Contents

Völuspâ. The Vala's Prophecy

The Lay Of Vafthrudnir

The Lay Of Grimnir

The Lay Of Vegtam, Or Baldr's Dreams

The High One's Lay

Odin's Rune-Song

The Lay Of Hymir

The Lay Of Thrym, Or The Hammer Recovered

The Lay Of The Dwarf Alvis

The Lay Of Harbard

The Journey Or Lay Of Skirnir

The Lay Of Rig

Oegir's Computation, Or Loki's Altercation

The Lay Of Fiolsvith

The Lay Of Hyndla

The Incantation Of Groa

The Song Of The Sun

The Lay Of Volund

The Lay Of Helgi Hiorvard's Son

The First Lay Of Helgi Hundingcide

The Second Lay Of Helgi Hundingcide

Sinfiotli's End

The First Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide, Or Gripir's Prophecy

The Second Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide

The Lay Of Fafnir

The Lay Of Sigdrifa

Fragments Of The Lay Of Sigurd And Brynhild

The Third Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide

Fragments Of The Lay Of Brynhild

The First Lay Of Gudrun

Brynhild's Hel-Ride

The Slaughter Of The Niflungs

The Second Lay Of Gudrun

The Third Lay Of Gudrun

Oddrun's Lament

The Lay Of Atli

The Groenland Lay Of Atli

Gudrun's Incitement

The Lay Of Hamdir

Völuspá. The Vala's Prophecy

- ¹ For silence I pray all sacred children, great and small, sons of Heimdall, they will that I Valfather's deeds recount, men's ancient saws, those that I best remember.
- ² The Jötuns I remember early born, those who me of old have reared. I nine worlds remember, nine trees, the great central tree, beneath the earth.
- ³ There was in times of old, where Ymir dwelt, nor sand nor sea, nor gelid waves; earth existed not, nor heaven above, 'twas a chaotic chasm, and grass nowhere.
- ⁴ Before Bur's sons raised up heaven's vault, they who the noble mid-earth shaped. The sun shone from the south over the structure's rocks: then was the earth begrown with herbage green.
- ⁵ The sun from the south, the moon's companion, her right hand cast about the heavenly horses. The sun knew not where she a dwelling had, the moon knew not what power he possessed, the stars knew not where they had a station.
- ⁶ Then went the powers all to their judgment-seats, the all-holy gods, and thereon held council: to night and to the waning moon gave names; morn they named, and mid-day, afternoon and eve, whereby to reckon years.
- ⁷ The Æsir met on Ida's plain; they altar-steads and temples high constructed; their strength they proved, all things tried, furnaces established, precious things forged, formed tongs, and fabricated tools;
- ⁸ At tables played at home; joyous they were; to them was naught the want of gold, until there came Thurs-maidens three, all powerful, from Jötunheim.
- ⁹ Then went all the powers to their judgment-seats, the all-holy gods, and thereon held council, who should of the dwarfs the race create, from the sea-giant's blood and livid bones.
- ¹⁰ Then was Môtsognir created greatest of all the dwarfs, and Durin second; there in man's likeness they created many dwarfs from earth, as Durin said.
- ¹¹ Nýi and Nidi, Nordri and Sudri, Austri and Vestri, Althiôf, Dvalin Nâr and Nâin, Niping, Dain, Bivör, Bavör, Bömbur, Nori, An and Anar, Ai, Miodvitnir,
- ¹² Veig and Gandâlf, Vindâlf, Thrain, Thekk and Thorin, Thrôr, Vittr, and Littr, Nûr and Nýrâd, Regin and Râdsvid. Now of the dwarfs I have rightly told.
- ¹³ Fili, Kili, Fundin, Nali, Hepti, Vili, Hanar, Svior, Billing, Bruni, Bild, Bûri, Frâr, Hornbori, Fræg and Lôni, Aurvang, Iari, Eikinskialdi.
- ¹⁴ Time 'tis of the dwarfs in Dvalin's band, to the sons of men, to Lofar up to reckon, those who came forth from the world's rock, earth's foundation, to Iora's plains.
- ¹⁵ There were Draupnir, and Dôlgthrasir, Hâr, Haugspori, Hlævang, Glôir, Skirvir, Virvir, Skafid, Ai, Alf and Yngvi, Eikinskialdi,
- ¹⁶ Fialar and Frosti, Finn and Ginnar, Heri, Höggstari, Hliôdôlf, Moin: that above shall, while mortals live, the progeny of Lofar, accounted be.

- ¹⁷ Until there came three mighty and benevolent Æsir to the world from their assembly. They found on earth, nearly powerless, Ask and Embla, void of destiny.
- ¹⁸ Spirit they possessed not, sense they had not, blood nor motive powers, nor goodly colour. Spirit gave Odin, sense gave Hoenir, blood gave Lodur, and goodly colour.
- ¹⁹ I know an ash standing Yggdrasil hight, a lofty tree, laved with limpid water: thence come the dews into the dales that fall; ever stands it green over Urd's fountain.
- ²⁰ Thence come maidens, much knowing, three from the hall, which under that tree stands; Urd hight the one, the second Verdandi,--on a tablet they graved--Skuld the third. Laws they established, life allotted to the sons of men; destinies pronounced.
- ²¹ Alone she sat without, when came that ancient dread Æsir's prince; and in his eye she gazed.
- ²² "Of what wouldst thou ask me? Why temptest thou me? Odin! I know all, where thou thine eye didst sink in the pure well of Mim." Mim drinks mead each morn from Valfather's pledge. Understand ye yet, or what?
- ²³ The chief of hosts gave her rings and necklace, useful discourse, and a divining spirit: wide and far she saw o'er every world.
- ²⁴ She the Valkyriur saw from afar coming, ready to ride to the god's people: Skuld held a shield, Skölgul was second, then Gunn, Hild Göndul, and Geirskölgul. Now are enumerated Herian's maidens, the Valkyriur, ready over the earth to ride.
- ²⁵ She that war remembers, the first on earth, when Gullveig they with lances pierced, and in the high one's hall her burnt, thrice burnt, thrice brought her forth, oft not seldom; yet she still lives.
- ²⁶ Heidi they called her, whitherso'e'r she came, the well-foreseeing Vala: wolves she tamed, magic arts she knew, magic arts practised; ever was she the joy of evil people.
- ²⁷ Then went the powers all to their judgment-seats, the all-holy gods, and thereon held council, whether the Æsir should avenge the crime, or all the gods receive atonement.
- ²⁸ Broken was the outer wall of the Æsir's burgh. The Vanir, foreseeing conflict, tramp o'er the plains. Odin cast [his spear], and mid the people hurled it: that was the first warfare in the world.
- ²⁹ Then went the powers all to their judgment-seats, the all-holy gods, and thereon held council: who had all the air with evil mingled? or to the Jötun race Od's maid had given?
- ³⁰ There alone was Thor with anger swollen. He seldom sits, when of the like he hears. Oaths are not held sacred; nor words, nor swearing, nor binding compacts reciprocally made.
- ³¹ She knows that Heimdall's horn is hidden under the heaven-bright holy tree. A river she sees flow, with foamy fall, from Valfather's pledge. Understand ye yet, or what?
- ³² East sat the crone, in Iárnvidir, and there reared up Fenrir's progeny: of all shall be one especially the moon's devourer, in a troll's semblance.
- ³³ He is sated with the last breath of dying men; the god's seat he with red gore defiles: swart is the sunshine then for summers after; all weather turns to storm. Understand ye yet, or what?
- ³⁴ There on a height sat, striking a harp, the giantess's watch, the joyous Egdir; by him crowed, in the bird-wood, the bright red cock, which Fialar hight.

³⁵ Crowed o'er the Æsir Gullinkambi, which wakens heroes with the sire of hosts; but another crows beneath the earth, a soot-red cock, in the halls of Hel.

³⁶ I saw of Baldr, the blood-stained god, Odin's son, the hidden fate. There stood grown up, high on the plain, slender and passing fair, the mistletoe.

³⁷ From that shrub was made, as to me it seemed, a deadly, noxious dart. Hödr shot it forth; but Frigg bewailed, in Fensalir, Valhall's calamity. Understand ye yet, or what?

³⁸ Bound she saw lying, under Hveralund, a monstrous form, to Loki like. There sits Sigyn, for her consort's sake, not right glad. Understand ye yet, or what?

³⁹ Then the Vala knew the fatal bonds were twisting, most rigid, bonds from entrails made.

⁴⁰ From the east a river falls, through venom dales, with mire and clods, Slîd is its name.

⁴¹ On the north there stood, on Nida-fells, a hall of gold, for Sindri's race; and another stood in Okôlnir, the Jötuns beer-hall which Brîmir hight.

⁴² She saw a hall standing, far from the sun, in Nâströnd; its doors are northward turned, venom-drops fall in through its apertures: entwined is that hall with serpents' backs.

⁴³ She there saw wading the sluggish streams bloodthirsty men and perjurers, and him who the ear beguiles of another's wife. There Nidhögg sucks the corpses of the dead; the wolf tears men. Understand ye yet, or what?

⁴⁴ Further forward I see, much can I say of Ragnarök and the gods' conflict.

⁴⁵ Brothers shall fight, and slay each other; cousins shall kinship violate. The earth resounds, the giantesses flee; no man will another spare.

⁴⁶ Hard is it in the world, great whoredom, an axe age, a sword age, shields shall be cloven, a wind age, a wolf age, ere the world sinks.

⁴⁷ Mim's sons dance, but the central tree takes fire at the resounding Giallar-horn. Loud blows Heimdall, his horn is raised; Odin speaks with Mim's head.

⁴⁸ Trembles Yggdrasil's ash yet standing; groans that aged tree, and the jötun is loosed. Loud bays Garm before the Gnupa-cave, his bonds he rends asunder; and the wolf runs.

⁴⁹ Hrym steers from the east, the waters rise, the mundane snake is coiled in jötun-rage. The worm beats the water, and the eagle screams: the pale of beak tears carcasses; Naglfar is loosed.

⁵⁰ That ship fares from the east: come will Muspell's people o'er the sea, and Loki steers. The monster's kin goes all with the wolf; with them the brother is of Byleist on their course.

⁵¹ Surt from the south comes with flickering flame; shines from his sword the Val-gods' sun. The stony hills are dashed together, the giantesses totter; men tread the path of Hel, and heaven is cloven.

⁵² How is it with the Æsir? How with the Alfar? All Jötunheim resounds; the Æsir are in council. The dwarfs groan before their stony doors, the sages of the rocky walls. Understand ye yet, or what?

⁵³ Then arises Hlîn's second grief, when Odin goes with the wolf to fight, and the bright slayer of Beli with Surt. Then will Frigg's beloved fall.

⁵⁴ Then comes the great victor-sire's son, Vidar, to fight with the deadly beast. He with his hands will make his sword pierce to the heart of the giant's son: then avenges he his father.

- ⁵⁵ Then comes the mighty son of Hlôdyn: (Odin's son goes with the monster to fight); Midgârd's Veor in his rage will slay the worm. Nine feet will go Fiörgyn's son, bowed by the serpent, who feared no foe. All men will their homes forsake.
- ⁵⁶ The sun darkens, earth in ocean sinks, fall from heaven the bright stars, fire's breath assails the all-nourishing tree, towering fire plays against heaven itself.
- ⁵⁷ She sees arise, a second time, earth from ocean, beauteously green, waterfalls descending; the eagle flying over, which in the fell captures fish.
- ⁵⁸ The Æsir meet on Ida's plain, and of the mighty earth-encircler speak, and there to memory call their mighty deeds, and the supreme god's ancient lore.
- ⁵⁹ There shall again the wondrous golden tables in the grass be found, which in days of old had possessed the ruler of the gods, and Fiölnir's race.
- ⁶⁰ Unsown shall the fields bring forth, all evil be amended; Baldr shall come; Hödr and Baldr, the heavenly gods, Hropt's glorious dwellings shall inhabit. Understand ye yet, or what?
- ⁶¹ Then can Hoenir choose his lot, and the two brothers' sons inhabit the spacious Vindheim. Understand ye yet, or what?
- ⁶² She a hall standing than the sun brighter, with gold bedecked, in Gimill: there shall be righteous people dwell, and for evermore happiness enjoy.
- ⁶³ Then comes the mighty one to the great judgment, the powerful from above, who rules o'er all. He shall dooms pronounce, and strifes allay, holy peace establish, which shall ever be.
- ⁶⁴ There comes the dark dragon flying from beneath the glistening serpent, from Nida-fels. On his wings bears Nidhögg, flying o'er the plain, a corpse. Now she will descend.

The Lay Of Vafthrudnir

- ¹ Odin: Counsel thou me now, Frigg! as I long to go Vafthrûdnir to visit; great desire, I say, I have, in ancient lore with that all-wise Jötun to contend.
- ² Frigg: At home to bide Hærfather I would counsel, in the gods' dwellings; because no Jötun is, I believe, so mighty as is Vafthrûdnir.
- ³ Odin: Much have I journeyed, much experienced, mighty ones many proved; but this I fain would know, how in Vafthrûdnir's halls it is.
- ⁴ Frigg: In safety mayest thou go, in safety return; in safety on thy journeyings be; may thy wit avail thee, when thou, father of men! shalt hold converse with the Jötun.
- ⁵ Then went Odin the lore to prove of that all-wise Jötun. To the hall he came which Im's father owned. Ygg went forthwith in.
- ⁶ Odin: Hail to thee, Vafthrûdnir! to thy hall I am now come, thyself to see; for I fain would know, whether thou art a cunning and all-wise Jötun.
- ⁷ Vafthrûdnir: What man is this, that in my habitation by word addresses me? Out thou goest not from our halls, if thou art not the wiser.

- ⁸ Odin: Gagnrâd is my name, from my journey I am come thirsty to thy halls, needing hospitality,-- for I long have journeyed--and kind reception from thee, Jötun!
- ⁹ Vafthrûdnir: Why then, Gagnrâd! speakest thou from the floor? Take in the hall a seat; then shall be proved which knows most, the guest or the ancient talker.
- ¹⁰ Gagnrâd: A poor man should, who to a rich man comes, speak usefully or hold his tongue: over-much talk brings him, I ween, no good, who visits an austere man.
- ¹¹ Vafthrûdnir: Tell me, Gagnrâd! since on the floor thou wilt prove thy proficiency, how the horse is called that draws each day forth over human kind?
- ¹² Gagnrâd: Skinfaxi he is named, that the bright day draws forth over human kind. Of coursers he is best accounted among the Reid-goths. Ever sheds light that horse's mane.
- ¹³ Vafthrûdnir: Tell me now, Gagnrâd! since on the floor thou wilt prove thy proficiency, how that steed is called, which from the east draws night o'er the beneficent powers?
- ¹⁴ Gagnrâd: Hrimfaxi he is called, that each night draws forth over the beneficent powers. He from his bit lets fall drops every morn, whence in the dales comes dew.
- ¹⁵ Vafthrûdnir: Tell me, Gagnrâd! since on the floor thou wilt prove thy proficiency, how the stream is called, which earth divides between the Jötuns and the Gods?
- ¹⁶ Gagnrâd: Ifing the stream is called which earth divides between the Jötuns and the Gods: open shall it run throughout all time. On that stream no ice shall be.
- ¹⁷ Vafthrûdnir: Tell me, Gagnrâd! since on the floor thou wilt prove thy proficiency, how that plain is called, where in fight shall meet Surt and the gentle Gods?
- ¹⁸ Gagnrâd: Vigrid the plain is called where in fight shall meet Surt and the gentle Gods; a hundred rasts it is on every side. That plain is to them decreed.
- ¹⁹ Vafthrûdnir: Wise art thou, O guest! Approach the Jötuns bench, and sitting let us together talk; we will our heads in the hall pledge, guest! for wise utterance.
- ²⁰ Gagnrâd: Tell me first, if thy wit suffices, and thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, whence first came the earth, and the high heaven, thou, sagacious Jötun?
- ²¹ Vafthrûdnir: From Ymir's flesh the earth was formed, and from his bones the hills, the heaven from the skull of that ice-cold giant, and from his blood the sea.
- ²² Gagnrâd: Tell me secondly, if thy wit suffices, and thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, whence came the moon, which over mankind passes, and the sun likewise?
- ²³ Vafthrûdnir: Mundilfoeri hight he, who the moon's father is, and eke the sun's: round heaven journey each day they must, to count years for men.
- ²⁴ Gagnrâd: Tell me thirdly, since thou art called wise, and if thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, whence came the day, which over people passes, and night with waning moons?
- ²⁵ Vafthrûdnir: Delling hight he who the day's father is, but night was of Nörvi born; the new and waning moons the beneficent powers created, to count years for men.
- ²⁶ Gagnrâd: Tell me fourthly, since they pronounce thee sage, and if thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, whence winter came, and warm summer first among the wise gods?

- ²⁷ Vafthrûdnir: Vindsval hight he, who winter's father is, and Svâsud summer's; yearly they both shall ever journey, until the powers perish.
- ²⁸ Gagnrâd: Tell me fifthly, since they pronounce thee sage, and if thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, which of the Æsir earliest, or of Ymir's sons, in days of old existed?
- ²⁹ Vafthrûdnir: Countless winters, ere earth was formed, was Bergelmir born; Thrûdgelmir was his sire, his grandsire Aurgelmir.
- ³⁰ Gagnrâd: Tell me sixthly, since thou art called wise, and if thou, Vafthrûdnir! knowest, whence first came Aurgelmir, among the Jötun's sons, thou sagacious Jötun?
- ³¹ Vafthrûdnir: From Elivâgar sprang venom drops, which grew till they became a Jötun; but sparks flew from the south-world: to the ice the fire gave life.
- ³² Gagnrâd: Tell me seventhly, since thou art called wise, and if thou knowest, Vafthrûdnir! how he children begat, the bold Jötun, as he had no giantess's company?
- ³³ Vafthrûdnir: Under the armpit grew, 'tis said, of the Hrîmthurs, a girl and boy together; foot with foot begat, of that wise Jötun, a six-headed son.
- ³⁴ Gagnrâd: Tell me eighthly, since thou art called wise, and if thou knowest, Vafthrûdnir! what thou doest first remember, or earliest knowest? Thou art an all-wise Jötun.
- ³⁵ Vafthrûdnir: Countless winters, ere earth was formed, Bergelmir was born. That I first remember, when that wise Jötun in an ark was laid.
- ³⁶ Gagnrâd: Tell me ninthly, since thou art called wise, and if thou knowest, Vafthrûdnir! whence the wind comes, that over ocean passes, itself invisible to man?
- ³⁷ Vafthrûdnir: Hraesvelg he is called, who at the end of heaven sits, a Jötun in an eagle's plumage: from his wings comes, it is said, the wind, that over all men passes.
- ³⁸ Gagnrâd: Tell me tenthly, since thou all the origin of the gods knowest, Vafthrûdnir! whence Niörd came among the Æsir's sons? O'er fanes and offer-steads he rules by hundreds, yet was not among the Æsir born.
- ³⁹ Vafthrûdnir: In Vanaheim wise powers him created, and to the gods a hostage gave. At the world's dissolution, he will return to the wise Vanir.
- ⁴⁰ Gagnrâd: Tell me eleventhly, since all the condition of the gods thou knowest, Vafthrûdnir! what the Einheriar do in Haerfather's halls, until the powers perish?
- ⁴¹ Vafthrûdnir: All the Einheriar in Odin's halls each day together fight; the fallen they choose, and from the conflict ride; beer with the Æsir drink, of Saehrimnir eat their fill, then sit in harmony together.
- ⁴² Gagnrâd: Tell me twelfthly, as thou all the condition of the gods knowest, Vafthrûdnir! of the Jötuns' secrets, and of all the gods', say what truest is, thou all-knowing Jötun!
- ⁴³ Vafthrûdnir: Of the secrets of the Jötuns and of all the gods, I can truly tell; for I have over each world travelled; to nine worlds I came, to Niflhel beneath: here die men from Hel.
- ⁴⁴ Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, much experienced, mighty ones many proved. What mortals will live, when the great "Fimbul"-winter shall from men have passed?

- ⁴⁵ Vafthrûdnir: Lif and Lifthrasir; but they will be concealed in Hoddmimir's holt. The morning dews they will have for food. From, them shall men be born.
- ⁴⁶ Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, much experienced, mighty ones many proved. Whence will come the sun in that fair heaven, when Fenrir has this devoured?
- ⁴⁷ Vafthrûdnir: A daughter shall Alfrödull bear, ere Fenrir shall have swallowed her. The maid shall ride, when the powers die, on her mother's course.
- ⁴⁸ Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, etc. Who are the maidens that o'er the ocean travel, wise of spirit, journey?
- ⁴⁹ Vafthrûdnir: O'er people's dwellings three descend of Møgthrasir's maidens, the sole Hamingiur who are in the world, although with Jötuns nurtured.
- ⁵⁰ Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, etc. Which of the Æsir will rule o'er the gods' possession, when Surt's fire shall be quenched?
- ⁵¹ Vafthrûdnir: Vidar and Vali will the gods' holy fanes inhabit, when Surt's fire shall be quenched. Môdi and Magni will Miöllnir possess, and warfare strive to end.
- ⁵² Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, etc. What of Odin will the life's end be, when the powers perish?
- ⁵³ Vafthrûdnir: The wolf will the father of men devour; him Vidar will avenge: he his cold jaws will cleave, in conflict with the wolf.
- ⁵⁴ Gagnrâd: Much have I journeyed, etc. What said Odin in his son's ear, ere he on the pile was laid?
- ⁵⁵ Vafthrûdnir: That no one knoweth, what thou in days of old saidst in thy son's ear. With dying mouth my ancient saws I have said, and the gods' destruction. With Odin I have contended in wise utterances: of men thou ever art the wisest!

The Lay Of Grímnir

- ¹ Fire! thou art hot, and much too great; flame! let us separate. My garment is singed, although I lift it up, my cloak is scorched before it.
- ² Eight nights have I sat between fires here, and to me no one food has offered, save only Agnar, the son of Geirröd, who alone shall rule over the land of Goths.
- ³ Be thou blessed, Agnar! as blessed as the god of men bids thee to be. For one draught thou never shalt get better recompense.
- ⁴ Holy is the land, which I see lying to Æsir and Alfar near; but in Thrûdheim Thor shall dwell until the powers perish.
- ⁵ Ydalir it is called, where Ullr has himself a dwelling made. Alfheim the gods to Frey gave in days of yore for a tooth-gift.
- ⁶ The third dwelling is, where the kind powers have with silver decked the hall; Valaskiâlf 'tis called, which for himself acquired the As in days of old.
- ⁷ Sökkvabekk the fourth is named o'er which the gelid waves resound; Odin and Saga there, joyful each day, from golden beakers quaff.

- ⁸ Gladsheim the fifth is named, there the golden-bright Valhall stands spacious, there Hropt selects each day those men who die by weapons.
- ⁹ Easily to be known is, by those who to Odin come, the mansion by its aspect. Its roof with spears is laid, its hall with shields is decked, with corslets are its benches strewed.
- ¹⁰ Easily to be known is, by those who to Odin come, the mansion by its aspect. A wolf hangs before the western door, over it an eagle hovers.
- ¹¹ Thrymheim the sixth is named, where Thiassi dwelt that all-powerful Jötun; but Skadi now inhabits, the bright bride of gods, her father's ancient home.
- ¹² Breidablik is the seventh, where Baldr has built for himself a hall, in that land, in which I know exists the fewest crimes.
- ¹³ Himinbiörg is the eighth, where Heimdall, it is said, rules o'er the holy fanes: there the gods' watchman, in his tranquil home, drinks joyful the good mead.
- ¹⁴ Fôlkvang is the ninth, there Freyia directs the sittings in the hall. She half the fallen chooses each day, but Odin th' other half.
- ¹⁵ Glitnir is the tenth; it is on gold sustained, and eke with silver decked. There Forseti dwells throughout all time, and every strife allays.
- ¹⁶ Nôatûn is the eleventh, there Niörd has himself a dwelling made, prince of men; guiltless of sin, he rules o'er the high-built fane.
- ¹⁷ O'ergrown with branches and high grass is Vidar's spacious Landvîdi: There will the son descend, from the steed's back, bold to avenge his father.
- ¹⁸ Andhrimnir makes, in Eldhrimnir, Sæhrimnir to boil, of meats the best; but few know how many Einheriar it feeds.
- ¹⁹ Geri and Freki the war-wont sates, the triumphant sire of hosts; but on wine only the famed in arms, Odin, ever lives.
- ²⁰ Hugin and Munin fly each day over the spacious earth. I fear for Hugin, that he come not back, yet more anxious am I for Munin.
- ²¹ Thund roars; joyful in Thiodvitnir's water lives the fish; the rapid river seems too great for the battle-steed to ford.
- ²² Valgrind is the lattice called, in the plain that stands, holy before the holy gates: ancient is that lattice, but few only know how it is closed with lock.
- ²³ Five hundred doors, and forty eke, I think, are in Valhall. Eight hundred Einheriar will at once from each door go when they issue with the wolf to fight.
- ²⁴ Five hundred floors, and forty eke, I think, has Bilskirnir with its windings. Of all the roofed houses that I know, is my son's the greatest.
- ²⁵ Heidrûn the goat is called, that stands o'er Odin's hall, and bites from Lærâd's branches. He a bowl shall fill with the bright mead; that drink shall never fail.
- ²⁶ Eikthyrnir the hart is called, that stands o'er Odin's hall, and bites from Lærâd's branches; from his horns fall drops into Hvergelmir, whence all waters rise:--

- ²⁷ Sid and Vid, Soekin and Eikin, Svöl and Gunnthrô, Fiörm and Fimbulthul, Rin and Rennandi, Gipul and Göpul, Gömul and Geirvimul: they round the gods' dwelling wind. Thyn and Vin, Thöll and Höll, Grâd and Gunnthorin.
- ²⁸ Vina one is called, a second Vegsvin, a third Thiodnuma; Nyt and Nön and Hrön, Slid and Hrid, Sylg and Ylg, Vîd and Vân, Vönd and Strönd, Gioll and Leipt; these (two) fall near to men, but fall hence to Hel.
- ²⁹ Körmt and Ormt, and the Kerlaugs twain: these Thor must wade each day, when he to council goes at Yggdrasil's ash; for the As-bridge is all on fire, the holy waters boil.
- ³⁰ Glad and Gyllir, Gler and Skeidbrimir, Sillfrintopp and Sinir, Gisl and Falhðfnir, Gulltopp and Lettfeti; on these steeds the Æsir each day ride, when they to council go, at Yggdrasil's ash.
- ³¹ Three roots stand on three ways under Yggdrasil's ash: Hel under one abides, under the second the Hrimthursar, under the third mankind.
- ³² Ratatösk is the squirrel named, which, has to run in Yggdrasil's ash; he from above the eagle's words must carry, and beneath to Nidhögg repeat.
- ³³ Harts there are also four, which from its summits, arch-necked, gnaw. Dâin and Dvalin, Duneyr and Durathrô.
- ³⁴ More serpents lie under Yggdrasil's ash, than any one would think of witless mortals: Gôin and Môin,--they are Grafvitnir's sons--Grâbak and Grafvöllud, Ofnir and Svafnir, will, I ween, the branches of that tree ever lacerate.
- ³⁵ Yggdrasil's ash hardship suffers greater than men know of; a hart bites it above, and in its side it rots, Nidhögg beneath tears it.
- ³⁶ Hrist and Mist the horn shall bear me Skeggöld and Skögun, Hlökk and Herfjotur, Hildi and Thrûdi, Göll and Geirölul, Randgrîd and Râdgrîd, and Reginleif, these bear beer to the Einheriar.
- ³⁷ Arvakr and Alsvîd, theirs 'tis up hence fasting the sun to draw: under their shoulder the gentle powers, the Æsir, have concealed an iron-coolness.
- ³⁸ Svalin the shield is called, which stands before the sun, the refulgent deity; rocks and ocean must, I ween, be burnt, fell it from its place.
- ³⁹ Sköll the wolf is named, that the fair-faced goddess to the ocean chases; another Hati hight, he is Hrôdvitnir's son; he the bright maid of heaven shall precede.
- ⁴⁰ Of Ymir's flesh was earth created, of his blood the sea, of his bones the hills, of his hair trees and plants, of his skull the heaven;
- ⁴¹ And of his brows the gentle powers formed Midgard for the sons of men; but of his brain the heavy clouds are all created.
- ⁴² Ullr's and all the gods' favour shall have, whoever first shall look to the fire; for open will the dwelling be, to the Æsir's sons, when the kettles are lifted off.
- ⁴³ Ivaldi's sons went in days of old Skidbladnir to form, of ships the best, for the bright Frey, Niörd's benign son.
- ⁴⁴ Yggdrasil's ash is of all trees most excellent, and of all ships, Skidbladnir, of the Æsir, Odin, and of horses, Sleipnir, Bifröst of bridges, and of skallds, Bragi, Hâbrök of hawks, and of dogs, Garm, [Brimir of swords.]

⁴⁵ Now I my face have raised to the gods' triumphant sons, at that will welcome help awake; from all the Æsir, that shall penetrate, to Oegir's bench, to Oegir's computation.

⁴⁶ I am called Grim, I am called Gangleri, Herian and Híalmberi, Thekk and Thrídi, Thund and Ud, Helblindi and Har,

⁴⁷ Sad and Svipall, and Sanngétall, Herteit and Hnikar Bileyg, Bâleyg, Bölverk, Fiölnir, Grîm and Grímnir, Glapsvid and Fiölsvid,

⁴⁸ Sídhött, Sídskegg Sigföðr, Hnikud, Alfodr, Valföðr, Atrid and Farmatyr; by one name I never have been called, since among men I have gone.

⁴⁹ Grímnir I am called at Geirröd's, and at Asmund's Jâlk and Kialar, when a sledge I drew; Thrôr at the public meetings, Vidur in battles, Oski and Omi, Jafnhâr and Biflindi, Gôndlir and Harbard with the gods.

⁵⁰ Svidur and Svidrir I was at Sökkmimir's called, and beguiled that ancient Jötun, when of Midvitnir's renowned son I was the sole destroyer.

⁵¹ Drunken art thou, Geirröd, thou hast drunk too much, thou art greatly by mead beguiled. Much didst thou lose, when thou wast of my help bereft, of all the Einheriar's and Odin's favour.

⁵² Many things I told thee, but thou hast few remembered: thy friends mislead thee. My friend's sword lying I see, with blood all dripping.

⁵³ The fallen by the sword Ygg shall now have; thy life is now run out: Wroth with thee are the Dísir: Odin thou now shalt see: draw near to me if thou canst.

⁵⁴ Odin I now am named, Ygg I was called before, before that, Thund, Vâkr and Skilfing, Vâfudr and Hrôptatyr, with the gods, Gaut and Jâlk, Ofnir and Svafnir, all which I believe to be names of me alone.

⁵⁵ King Geirröd was sitting with his sword lying across his knees, half drawn from the scabbard, but on finding that it was Odin, he rose for the purpose of removing him from the fires, when the sword slipt from his hand with the hilt downwards; and the king having stumbled, the sword pierced him through and killed him. Odin then vanished, and Agnar was king for a long time after.

The Lay Of Vegtam, Or Baldr's Dreams

¹ Together were the Æsir all in council, and the Asyniur all in conference, and they consulted, the mighty gods, why Baldr had oppressive dreams.

² [To that god his slumber was most afflicting; his auspicious dreams seemed departed. They the Jötuns questioned, wise seers of the future, whether this might not forebode calamity?

³ The responses said that to death destined was Ullr's kinsman, of all the dearest: that caused grief to Frigg and Svafnir, and to the other powers--On a course they resolved:

⁴ That they would send to every being, assurance to solicit, Baldr not to harm. All species swore oaths to spare him; Frigg received all their vows and compacts.

⁵ Valfather fears something defective; he thinks the Hamingiur may have departed; the Æsir he convenes, their counsel craves: at the deliberation much is devised.]

⁶ Uprose Odin lord of men and on Sleipnir he the saddle laid; rode thence down to Niflhel. A dog he met, from Hel coming.

⁷ It was blood-stained on its breast, on its slaughter-craving throat, and nether jaw. It bayed and widely gaped at the sire of magic song:--long it howled.

⁸ Forth rode Odin--the ground rattled--till to Hel's lofty house he came. Then rode Ygg to the eastern gate, where he knew there was a Vala's grave.

⁹ To the prophetess, he began a magic song to chant, towards the north looked, potent runes applied, a spell pronounced, an answer demanded, until compelled she rose, and with deathlike voice she said:

¹⁰ Vala: "What man is this, to me unknown, who has for me increased an irksome course? I have with snow been decked, by rain beaten, and with dew moistened: long have I been dead."

¹¹ Vegtam: "Vegtam is my name, I am Valtam's son. Tell thou me of Hel: from, earth I call on thee. For whom are those benches strewed o'er with rings, those costly couches o'erlaid with gold?"

¹² Vala: "Here stands mead, for Baldr brewed, over the bright potion a shield is laid; but the Æsir race are in despair. By compulsion I have spoken. I will now be silent."

¹³ Vegtam: "Be not silent, Vala! I will question thee, until I know all. I will yet know who will Baldr's slayer be, and Odin's son of life bereave."

¹⁴ Vala: "Hödr will hither his glorious brother send, he of Baldr will the slayer be, and Odin's son of life bereave. By compulsion I have spoken; I will now be silent."

¹⁵ Vegtam: "Be not silent, Vala! I will question thee, until I know all. I will yet know who on Hödr vengeance will inflict, or Baldr's slayer raise on the pile."

¹⁶ Vala: "Rind a son shall bear, in the western halls: he shall slay Odin's son, when one night old. He a hand will not wash, nor his head comb, ere he to the pile has borne Baldr's adversary. By compulsion I have spoken; I will now be silent."

¹⁷ Vegtam: "Be not silent, Vala! I will question thee, until I know all. I will yet know who the maidens are, that weep at will, and heavenward cast their neck-veils? Tell me but that: till then thou sleepest not."

¹⁸ Vala: "Not Vegtam art thou, as I before believed; rather art thou Odin, lord of men!"

¹⁹ Odin: "Thou art no Vala, nor wise woman, rather art thou the mother of three Thursar."

²⁰ Vala: "Home ride thou, Odin! and exult. Thus shall never more man again visit me, until Loki free from his bonds escapes, and Ragnarök all-destroying comes."

The High One's Lay

¹ All door-ways, before going forward, should be looked to; for difficult it is to know where foes may sit within a dwelling.

² Givers, hail! A guest is come in: where shall he sit? In much haste is he, who on the ways has to try his luck.

- ³ Fire is needful to him who is come in, and whose knees are frozen; food and raiment a man requires, wheo'er the fell has travelled.
- ⁴ Water to him is needful who for refection comes, a towel and hospitable invitation, a good reception; if he can get it, discourse and answer.
- ⁵ Wit is needful to him who travels far: at home all is easy. A laughing-stock is he who nothing knows, and with the instructed sits.
- ⁶ Of his understanding no one should be proud, but rather in conduct cautious. When the prudent and taciturn come to a dwelling, harm seldom befalls the cautious; for a firmer friend no man ever gets than great sagacity.
- ⁷ A wary guest, who to refection comes, keeps a cautious silence, with his ears listens, and with his eyes observes: so explores every prudent man.
- ⁸ He is happy, who for himself obtains fame and kind words: less sure is that which a man must have in another's breast.
- ⁹ He is happy, who in himself possesses fame and wit while living; for bad counsels have oft been received from another's breast.
- ¹⁰ A better burthen no man bears on the way than much good sense; that is thought better than riches in a strange place; such is the recourse of the indigent.
- ¹¹ A worse provision on the way he cannot carry than too much beer-bibbing; so good is not, as it is said, beer for the sons of men.
- ¹² A worse provision no man can take from table than too much beer-bibbing; for the more he drinks the less control he has of his own mind.
- ¹³ Oblivion's heron 'tis called that over potations hovers; he steals the minds of men. With this bird's pinions I was fettered in Gunnlods dwelling.
- ¹⁴ Drunk I was, I was over-drunk, at that cunning Fialar's. It's the best drunkenness, when every one after it regains his reason.
- ¹⁵ Taciturn and prudent, and in war daring, should a king's children be; joyous and liberal every one should be until his hour of death.
- ¹⁶ A cowardly man thinks he will ever live, if warfare he avoids; but old age will give him no peace, though spears may spare him.
- ¹⁷ A fool gapes when to a house he comes, to himself mutters or is silent; but all at once, if he gets drink, then is the man's mind displayed.
- ¹⁸ He alone knows who wanders wide, and has much experienced, by what disposition each man is ruled, who common sense possesses.
- ¹⁹ Let a man hold the cup, yet of the mead drink moderately, speak sensibly or be silent. As of a fault no man will admonish thee, if thou goest betimes to sleep.
- ²⁰ A greedy man, if he be not moderate, eats to his mortal sorrow. Oftentimes his belly draws laughter on a silly man, who among the prudent comes.
- ²¹ Cattle know when to go home, and then from grazing cease; but a foolish man never knows his stomach's measure.

²² A miserable man, and ill-conditioned, sneers at every thing: one thing he knows not, which he ought to know, that he is not free from faults.

²³ A foolish man is all night awake, pondering over everything; he then grows tired; and when morning comes, all is lament as before.

²⁴ A foolish man thinks all who on him smile to be his friends; he feels it not, although they speak ill of him, when he sits among the clever.

²⁵ A foolish man thinks all who speak him fair to be his friends; but he will find, if into court he comes, that he has few advocates.

²⁶ A foolish man thinks he knows everything if placed in unexpected difficulty; but he knows not what to answer, if to the test he is put.

²⁷ A foolish man, who among people comes, had best be silent; for no one knows that he knows nothing, unless he talks too much. He who previously knew nothing will still know nothing, talk he ever so much.

²⁸ He thinks himself wise, who can ask questions and converse also; conceal his ignorance no one can, because it circulates among men.

²⁹ He utters too many futile words who is never silent; a garrulous tongue, if it be not checked, sings often to its own harm.

³⁰ For a gazing-stock no man shall have another, although he come a stranger to his house. Many a one thinks himself wise, if he is not questioned, and can sit in a dry habit.

³¹ Clever thinks himself the guest who jeers a guest, if he takes to flight. Knows it not certainly he who prates at meat, whether he babbles among foes.

³² Many men are mutually well-disposed, yet at table will torment each other. That strife will ever be; guest will guest irritate.

³³ Early meals a man should often take, unless to a friend's house he goes; else he will sit and mope, will seem half-famished, and can of few things inquire.

³⁴ Long is and indirect the way to a bad friend's, though by the road he dwell; but to a good friend's the paths lie direct, though he be far away.

³⁵ A guest should depart, not always stay in one place. The welcome becomes unwelcome, if he too long continues in another's house.

³⁶ One's own house is best, small though it be; at home is every one his own master. Though he but two goats possess, and a straw-thatched cot, even that is better than begging.

³⁷ One's own house is best, small though it be, at home is every one his own master. Bleeding at heart is he, who has to ask for food at every meal-tide.

³⁸ Leaving in the field his arms, let no man go a foot's length forward; for it is hard to know when on the way a man may need his weapon.

³⁹ I have never found a man so bountiful, or so hospitable that he refused a present; or of his property so liberal that he scorned a recompense.

⁴⁰ Of the property which he has gained no man should suffer need; for the hated oft is spared what for the dear was destined. Much goes worse than is expected.

- ⁴¹ With arms and vestments friends should each other gladden, those which are in themselves most sightly. Givers and requiters are longest friends, if all [else] goes well.
- ⁴² To his friend a man should be a friend, and gifts with gifts requite. Laughter with laughter men should receive, but leasing with lying.
- ⁴³ To his friend a man should be a friend; to him and to his friend; but of his foe no man shall the friend's friend be.
- ⁴⁴ Know, if thou hast a friend whom thou fully trustest, and from whom thou wouldst good derive, thou shouldst blend thy mind with his, and gifts exchange, and often go to see him.
- ⁴⁵ If thou hast another, whom thou little trustest, yet wouldst good from him derive, thou shouldst speak him fair, but think craftily, and leasing pay with lying.
- ⁴⁶ But of him yet further, whom thou little trustest, and thou suspectest his affection; before him thou shouldst laugh, and contrary to thy thoughts speak: requital should the gift resemble.
- ⁴⁷ I was once young, I was journeying alone, and lost my way; rich I thought myself, when I met another. Man is the joy of man.
- ⁴⁸ Liberal and brave men live best, they seldom cherish sorrow; but a base-minded man dreads everything; the niggardly is uneasy even at gifts.
- ⁴⁹ My garments in a field I gave away to two wooden men: heroes they seemed to be, when they got cloaks: exposed to insult is a naked man.
- ⁵⁰ A tree withers that on a hill-top stands; protects it neither bark nor leaves: such is the man whom no one favours: why should he live long?
- ⁵¹ Hotter than fire love for five days burns between false friends; but is quenched when the sixth day comes, and-friendship is all impaired.
- ⁵² Something great is not [always] to be given, praise is often for a trifle bought. With half a loaf and a tilted vessel I got myself a comrade.
- ⁵³ Little are the sand-grains, little the wits, little the minds of [some] men; for all men are not wise alike: men are everywhere by halves.
- ⁵⁴ Moderately wise should each one be, but never over-wise: of those men the lives are fairest, who know much well.
- ⁵⁵ Moderately wise should each one be, but never over-wise; for a wise man's heart is seldom glad, if he is all-wise who owns it.
- ⁵⁶ Moderately wise should each one be, but never over-wise. His destiny let know no man beforehand; his mind will be freest from' care.
- ⁵⁷ Brand burns from brand until it is burnt out; fire is from fire quickened. Man to' man becomes known by speech, but a fool by his bashful silence.
- ⁵⁸ He should early rise, who another's property or wife desires to have. Seldom a sluggish wolf gets prey, or a sleeping man victory.
- ⁵⁹ Early should rise he who has few workers, and go his work to see to; greatly is he retarded who sleeps the morn away. Wealth half depends on energy.

⁶⁰ Of dry planks and roof-shingles a man knows the measure; of the fire-wood that may suffice, both measure and time.

⁶¹ Washed and refected let a man ride to the Thing, although his garments be not too good; of his shoes and breeches let no one be ashamed, nor of his horse, although he have not a good one.

⁶² Inquire and impart should every man of sense, who will be accounted sage. Let one only know, a second may not; if three, all the world knows.

⁶³ Gasps and gapes, when to the sea he comes, the eagle over old ocean; so is a man, who among many comes, and has few advocates.

⁶⁴ His power should every sagacious man use with discretion; for he will find, when among the bold he comes, that no one alone is doughtiest.

⁶⁵ Circumspect and reserved every man should be, and wary in trusting friends. Of the words that a man says to another he often pays the penalty.

⁶⁶ Much too early I came to many places, but too late to others: the beer was drunk, or not ready: the disliked seldom hits the moment.

⁶⁷ Here and there I should have been invited, if I a meal had needed; or two hams had hung, at that true friend's, where of one I had eaten.

⁶⁸ Fire is best among the sons of men, and the sight of the sun, if his health a man can have, with a life free from vice.

⁶⁹ No man lacks everything, although his health be bad: one in his sons is happy, one in his kin, one in abundant wealth, one in his good works.

⁷⁰ It is better to live, even to live miserably; a living man can always get a cow. I saw fire consume the rich man's property, and death stood without his door.

⁷¹ The halt can ride on horseback, the one-handed drive cattle; the deaf fight and be useful: to be blind is better than to be burnt no one gets good from a corpse.

⁷² A son is better, even if born late, after his father's departure. Gravestones seldom stand by the way-side unless raised by a kinsman to a kinsman.

⁷³ Two are adversaries: the tongue is the bane of the head: under every cloak I expect a hand. * * *

⁷⁴ At night is joyful he who is sure of travelling entertainment. [A ship's yards are short.] Variable is an autumn night. Many are the weather's changes in five days, but more in a month.

⁷⁵ He [only] knows not who knows nothing, that many a one apes another. One man is rich, another poor: let him not be thought blameworthy.

⁷⁶ Cattle die, kindred die, we ourselves also die; but the fair fame never dies of him who has earned it.

⁷⁷ Cattle die, kindred die, we ourselves also die; but I know one thing that never dies,--judgment on each one dead.

⁷⁸ Full storehouses I saw at Dives' sons': now bear they the beggar's staff. Such are riches; as is the twinkling of an eye: of friends they are most fickle.

⁷⁹ A foolish man, if he acquires wealth or woman's love, pride grows within him, but wisdom never: he goes on more and more arrogant.

⁸⁰ Then 'tis made manifest, if of runes thou questionest him, those to the high ones known, which the great powers invented, and the great talker painted, that he had best hold silence.

⁸¹ At eve the day is to be praised, a woman after she is burnt, a sword after it is proved, a maid after she is married, ice after it has passed away, beer after it is drunk.

⁸² In the wind one should hew wood, in a breeze row out to sea, in the dark talk with a lass: many are the eyes of day. In a ship voyages are to be made, but a shield is for protection, a sword for striking, but a damsel for a kiss.

⁸³ By the fire one should drink beer, on the ice slide; buy a horse that is lean, a sword that is rusty; feed a horse at home, but a dog at the farm.

⁸⁴ In a maiden's words no one should place faith, nor in what a woman says; for on a turning wheel have their hearts been formed, and guile in their breasts been laid;

⁸⁵ In a creaking bow, a burning flame, a yawning wolf, a chattering crow, a grunting swine, a rootless tree, a waxing wave, a boiling kettle,

⁸⁶ A flying dart, a falling billow, a one night's ice, a coiled serpent, a woman's bed-talk, or a broken sword, a bear's play, or a royal child,

⁸⁷ A sick calf, a self-willed thrall, a flattering prophetess, a corpse newly slain, [a serene sky, a laughing lord, a barking dog, and a harlot's grief];

⁸⁸ An early sown field let no one trust, nor prematurely in a son: weather rules the field, and wit the son, each of which is doubtful;

⁸⁹ A brother's murderer, though on the high road met, a half-burnt house, an over-swift horse, (a horse is useless, if a leg be broken), no man is so confiding as to trust any of these.

⁹⁰ Such is the love of women, who falsehood meditate, as if one drove not rough-shod, on slippery ice, a spirited two-years old and unbroken horse; or as in a raging storm a helmless ship is beaten; or as if the halt were set to catch a reindeer in the thawing fell.

⁹¹ Openly I now speak, because I both sexes know: unstable are men's minds towards women; 'tis then we speak most fair when we most falsely think: that deceives even the cautious.

⁹² Fair shall speak, and money offer, who would obtain a woman's love. Praise the form of a fair damsel; he gets who courts her.

⁹³ At love should no one ever wonder in another: a beauteous countenance oft captivates the wise, which captivates not the foolish.

⁹⁴ Let no one wonder at another's folly, it is the lot of many. All-powerful desire makes of the sons of men fools even of the wise.

⁹⁵ The mind only knows what lies near the heart, that alone is conscious of our affections. No disease is worse to a sensible man than not to be content with himself.

⁹⁶ That I experienced, when in the reeds I sat, awaiting my delight. Body and soul to me was that discreet maiden: nevertheless I possess her not.

⁹⁷ Billing's lass on her couch I found, sun-bright, sleeping. A prince's joy to me seemed naught, if not with that form to live.

⁹⁸ "Yet nearer eve must thou, Odin, come, if thou wilt talk the maiden over; all will be disastrous, unless we alone are privy to such misdeed."

⁹⁹ I returned, thinking to love, at her wise desire. I thought I should obtain her whole heart and love.

¹⁰⁰ When next I came the bold warriors were all awake, with lights burning, and bearing torches: thus was the way to pleasure closed.

¹⁰¹ But at the approach of morn, when again I came, the household all was sleeping; the good damsel's dog alone I found tied to the bed.

¹⁰² Many a fair maiden, when rightly known, towards men is fickle: that I experienced, when that discreet maiden I strove to seduce: contumely of every kind that wily girl heaped upon me; nor of that damsel gained I aught.

¹⁰³ At home let a man be cheerful, and towards a guest liberal; of wise conduct he should be, of good memory and ready speech; if much knowledge he desires, he must often talk on good.

¹⁰⁴ Fimbulfambi he is called who' little has to say: such is the nature of the simple.

¹⁰⁵ The old Jotun I sought; now I am come back: little got I there by silence; in many words I spoke to my advantage in Suttung's halls.

¹⁰⁶ Gunnlod gave me, on her golden seat, a draught of the precious mead; a bad recompense I afterwards made her, for her whole soul, her fervent love.

¹⁰⁷ Rati's mouth I caused to make a space, and to gnaw the rock; over and under me were the Jotun's ways: thus I my head did peril.

¹⁰⁸ Of a well-assumed form I made good use: few things fail the wise; for Odhrærir is now come up to men's earthly dwellings.

¹⁰⁹ 'Tis to me doubtful that I could have come from the Jotun's courts, had not Gunnlod aided me, that good damsel, over whom I laid my arm.

¹¹⁰ On the day following came the Hrimthursar, to learn something of the High One, in the High One's hall: after Bolverk they inquired, whether he with the gods were come, or Suttung had destroyed him?

¹¹¹ Odin, I believe, a ring-oath gave. Who in his faith will trust? Suttung defrauded, of his drink bereft, and Gunnlod made to weep!

¹¹² Time 'tis to discourse from the preacher's chair. By the well of Urd I silent sat, I saw and meditated, I listened to men's words.

¹¹³ Of runes I heard discourse, and of things divine, nor of graving them were they silent, nor of sage counsels, at the High One's hall. In the High One's hall. I thus heard say:

¹¹⁴ I counsel thee, Loddfafnir, to take advice: thou wilt profit if thou takest it. Rise not at night, unless to explore, or art compelled to go out.

¹¹⁵ I counsel thee, Loddfafnir, to take advice, thou wilt profit if thou takest it. In an enchantress's embrace thou mayest not sleep, so that in her arms she clasp thee.

¹¹⁶ She will be the cause that thou carest not for Thing or prince's words; food thou wilt shun and human joys; sorrowful wilt thou go to sleep.

¹¹⁷ I counsel thee, etc. Another's wife entice thou never to secret converse.

- ¹¹⁸ I counsel thee, etc. By fell or firth if thou have to travel, provide thee well with food.
- ¹¹⁹ I counsel thee, etc. A bad man let thou never know thy misfortunes; for from a bad man thou never wilt obtain a return for thy good will.
- ¹²⁰ I saw mortally wound a man a wicked woman's words; a false tongue caused his death, and most unrighteously.
- ¹²¹ I counsel thee, etc. If thou knowest thou hast a friend, whom thou well canst trust, go oft to visit him; for with brushwood over-grown, and with high grass, is the way that no one treads.
- ¹²² I counsel thee, etc. A good man attract to thee in pleasant converse; and salutary speech learn while thou livest.
- ¹²³ I counsel thee, etc. With thy friend be thou never first to quarrel. Care gnaws the heart, if thou to no one canst thy whole mind disclose.
- ¹²⁴ I counsel thee, etc. Words thou never shouldst exchange with a witless fool;
- ¹²⁵ For from an ill-conditioned man thou wilt never get a return for good; but a good man will bring thee favour by his praise.
- ¹²⁶ There is a mingling of affection, where one can tell another all his mind. Everything is better than being with the deceitful. He is not another's friend who ever says as he says.
- ¹²⁷ I counsel thee, etc. Even in three words quarrel not with a worse man: often the better yields, when the worse strikes.
- ¹²⁸ I counsel thee, etc. Be not a shoemaker, nor a shaftmaker, unless for thyself it be; for a shoe if ill made, or a shaft if crooked, will call down evil on thee.
- ¹²⁹ I counsel thee, etc. Wherever of injury thou knowest, regard that injury as thy own; and give to thy foes no peace.
- ¹³⁰ I counsel thee, etc. Rejoiced at evil be thou never; but let good give thee pleasure.
- ¹³¹ I counsel thee, etc. In a battle look not up, (like swine the sons of men then become) that men may not fascinate thee.
- ¹³² If thou wilt induce a good woman to pleasant converse, thou must promise fair, and hold to it: no one turns from good if it can be got.
- ¹³³ I enjoin thee to be wary, but not over wary; at drinking be thou most wary, and with another's wife; and thirdly, that thieves delude thee not.
- ¹³⁴ With insult or derision treat thou never a guest or wayfarer. They often little know, who sit within, of what race they are who come.
- ¹³⁵ Vices and virtues the sons of mortals bear in their breasts mingled; no one is so good that no failing attends him, nor so bad as to be good for nothing.
- ¹³⁶ At a hoary speaker laugh thou never; often is good that which the aged utter, oft from a shriveled hide discreet words issue; from those whose skin is pendent and decked with scars, and who go tottering among the vile.
- ¹³⁷ I counsel thee, etc. Rail not at a guest, nor from thy gate thrust him; treat well the indigent; they will speak well of thee.

¹³⁸ Strong is the bar that must be raised to admit all. Do thou give a penny, or they will call down on thee every ill in thy limbs.

¹³⁹ I counsel thee, etc. Wherever thou beer drinkest, invoke to thee the power of earth; for earth is good against drink, fire for distempers, the oak for constipation, a corn-ear for sorcery, a hall for domestic strife. In bitter hates invoke the moon; the biter for bite-injuries is good; but runes against calamity; fluid let earth absorb.

Odin's Rune-Song

¹ I know that I hung, on a wind-rocked tree, nine whole nights, with a spear wounded, and to Odin offered, myself to myself; on that tree, of which no one knows from what root it springs.

² Bread no one gave me, nor a horn of drink, downward I peered, to runes applied myself, wailing learnt them, then fell down thence.

³ Potent songs nine from the famed son I learned of Bolthorn, Bestla's sire, and a draught obtained of the precious mead, drawn from Odhrærir.

⁴ Then I began to bear fruit, and to know many things, to grow and well thrive: word by word I sought out words, fact by fact I sought out facts.

⁵ Runes thou wilt find, and explained characters, very large characters, very potent characters, which the great speaker depicted, and the high powers formed, and the powers' prince graved:

⁶ Odin among the Æsir, but among the Alf, Dain, and Dvalin for the dwarfs, Asvid for the Jotuns: some I myself graved.

⁷ Knowest thou how to grave them? knowest thou how to expound them? knowest thou how to depict them? knowest thou how to prove them? knowest thou how to pray? knowest thou how to offer? knowest thou how to send? knowest thou how to consume?

⁸ 'Tis better not to pray than too much offer; a gift ever looks to a return. 'Tis better not to send than too much consume. So Thund graved before the origin of men, where he ascended, to whence he afterwards came.

⁹ Those songs I know which the king's wife knows not nor son of man. Help the first is called, for that will help thee against strifes and cares.

¹⁰ For the second I know, what the sons of men require, who will as leeches live. * * * *

¹¹ For the third I know, if I have great need to restrain my foes, the weapons' edge I deaden: of my adversaries nor arms nor wiles harm aught.

¹² For the fourth I know, if men place bonds on my limbs, I so sing that I can walk; the fetter starts from my feet, and the manacle from my hands.

¹³ For the fifth I know, if I see a shot from a hostile hand, a shaft flying amid the host, so swift it cannot fly that I cannot arrest it, if only I get sight of it.

¹⁴ For the sixth I know, if one wounds me with a green tree's roots; also if a man declares hatred to me, harm shall consume them sooner than me.

- ¹⁵ For the seventh I know, if a lofty house I see blaze o'er its inmates, so furiously it shall not burn that I cannot save it. That song I can sing.
- ¹⁶ For the eighth I know, what to all is useful to learn: where hatred grows among the sons of men-- that I can quickly assuage.
- ¹⁷ For the ninth I know, if I stand in need my bark on the water to save, I can the wind on the waves allay, and the sea lull.
- ¹⁸ For the tenth I know, if I see troll-wives sporting in air, I can so operate that they will forsake their own forms, and their own minds.
- ¹⁹ For the eleventh I know, if I have to lead my ancient friends to battle, under their shields I sing, and with power they go safe to the fight, safe from the fight; safe on every side they go.
- ²⁰ For the twelfth I know, if on a tree I see a corpse swinging from a halter, I can so grave and in runes depict, that the man shall walk, and with me converse.
- ²¹ For the thirteenth I know, if on a young man I sprinkle water, he shall not fall, though he into battle come: that man shall not sink before swords.
- ²² For the fourteenth I know, if in the society of men I have to enumerate the gods, Æsir and Alfar, I know the distinctions of all. This few unskilled can do.
- ²³ For the fifteenth I know what the dwarf Thiodreyrir sang before Delling's doors. Strength he sang to the Æsir, and to the Alfar prosperity, wisdom to Hroptatyr.
- ²⁴ For the sixteenth I know, if a modest maiden's favour and affection I desire to possess, the soul I change of the white-armed damsel, and wholly turn her mind.
- ²⁵ For the seventeenth I know, that that young maiden will reluctantly avoid me. These songs, Loddafnir! thou wilt long have lacked; yet it may be good if thou understandest them, profitable if thou learnest them.
- ²⁶ For the eighteenth I know that which I never teach to maid or wife of man, (all is better what one only knows. This is the closing of the songs) save her alone who clasps me in her arms, or is my sister.
- ²⁷ Now are sung the High-one's songs, in the High-one's hall, to the sons of men all-useful, but useless to the Jotuns' sons. Hail to him who has sung them! Hail to him who knows them! May he profit who has learnt them! Hail to those who have listened to them!

The Lay Of Hymir

- ¹ Once the celestial gods had been taking fish, and were in compotation, ere they the truth discovered. Rods they shook, and blood inspected, when they found at Oegir's a lack of kettles.
- ² Sat the rock-dweller glad as a child, much like the son of Miskorblindi. In his eyes looked Ygg's son steadfastly. "Thou to the Æsir shalt oft a compotation give."
- ³ Caused trouble to the Jotun th' unwelcome-worded As: he forthwith meditated vengeance on the gods. Sif's husband he besought a kettle him to bring, "in which I beer for all of you may brew."

⁴ The illustrious gods found that impossible, nor could the exalted powers it accomplish, till from true-heartedness, Ty to Hlorridi much friendly counsel gave.

⁵ "There dwells eastward of Elivagar the all-wise Hymir, at heaven's end. My sire, fierce of mood, a kettle owns, a capacious cauldron, a rast in depth."

⁶ Thor: "Knowest thou whether we can get the liquor-boiler?"

⁷ Ty: "Yes, friend! if we stratagem' employ." Rapidly they drove forward that day from Asgard, till to the giant's home they came.

⁸ Thor stalled his goats, splendid of horn, then turned him to the hall that Hymir owned. The son his granddam found to him most loathful; heads she had nine hundred.

⁹ But another came all-golden forth, fair-browed, bearing the beer-cup to her son:

¹⁰ "Ye Jotuns' kindred! I will you both, ye daring pair, under the kettles place. My husband is oftentimes niggard towards guests, to ill-humour prone."

¹¹ But the monster, the fierce-souled Hymir, late returned home from the chase. He the hall entered, the icebergs resounded, as the churl approached; the thicket on his cheeks was frozen.

¹² "Hail to thee, Hymir! be of good cheer: now thy son is come to thy hall, whom we expected from his long journey; him accompanies our famed adversary, the friend of man, who Veor hight.

¹³ See where they sit under the hall's gable, as if to shun thee: the pillar stands before them." In shivers flew the pillar at the Jotun's glance; the beam was first broken in two.

¹⁴ Eight kettles fell, but only one of them, a hard-hammered cauldron, whole from the column. The two came forth, but the old Jotun with eyes surveyed his adversary.

¹⁵ Augured to him his mind no good, when he saw the giantess's sorrow on the floor coming. Then were three oxen taken, and the Jotun bade them forthwith be boiled.

¹⁶ Each one they made by the head shorter, and to the fire afterwards bore them. Sif's consort ate, ere to sleep he went, completely, he alone, two of Hymir's beeves.

¹⁷ Seemed to the hoary friend of Hrungrir Hlorridi's refection full well large: "We three to-morrow night shall be compelled on what we catch to live."

¹⁸ Veor said he would on the sea row, if the bold Jotun him would with baits supply: "To the herd betake thee, (if thou in thy courage trustest, crusher of the rock-dwellers!) for baits to seek.

¹⁹ I expect that thou wilt bait from an ox easily obtain." The guest in haste to the forest went, where stood an all-black ox before him.

²⁰ The Thursar's bane wrung from an ox the high fastness of his two horns. "To me thy work seems worse by far, ruler of keels! than if thou hadst sat quiet."

²¹ The lord of goats the apes' kinsman besought the horse of plank farther out to move; but the Jotun declared his slight desire farther to row.

²² The mighty Hymir drew, he alone, two whales up with his hook; but at the stern abaft Veor cunningly made him a line.

²³ Fixed on the hook the shield of men, the serpent's slayer, the ox's head. Gaped at the bait the foe of gods, the encircler beneath of every land.

²⁴ Drew up boldly the mighty Thor the worm with venom glistening, up to the side; with his hammer struck, on his foul head's summit, like a rock towering, the wolf's own brother.

²⁵ The icebergs resounded, the caverns howled, the old earth shrank together: at length the fish back into ocean sank.

²⁶ The Jotun was little glad, as they rowed back, so that the powerful Hymir nothing spake, but the oar moved in another course.

²⁷ "Wilt thou do half the work with me, either the whales home to the dwelling bear, or the boat fast bind?"

²⁸ Hlorridi went, grasped the prow, quickly, with its hold-water, lifted the water-steed, together with its oars and scoop; bore to the dwelling the Jotun's ocean-swine, the curved vessel, through the wooded hills.

²⁹ But the Jotun yet ever frowned, to strife accustomed, with Thor disputed, said that no one was strong, however vigorously he might row, unless he his cup could break.

³⁰ But Hlorridi, when to his hands it came, forthwith brake an upright stone in twain; sitting dashed the cup through the pillars: yet they brought it whole to Hymir back.

³¹ Until the beauteous woman gave important, friendly counsel, which she only knew: "Strike at the head of Hymir, the Jotun with food oppressed, that is harder than any cup."

³² Rose then on his knee the stern lord of goats, clad in all his godlike power. Unhurt remained the old man's helm-block, but the round wine-bearer was in shivers broken.

³³ "Much good, I know, has departed from me, now that my cup I see hurled from my knees." Thus the old man spake: "I can never say again, beer thou art too hot.

³⁴ "Now 'tis to be tried if ye can carry the beer-vessel out of our dwelling." Ty twice assayed to move the vessel, yet at each time stood the kettle fast.

³⁵ Then Modi's father by the brim grasped it, and trod through the dwelling's floor. Sif's consort lifted the kettle on his head, while about his heels its rings jingled.

³⁶ They had far journeyed before Odin's son cast one look backward: he from the caverns saw, with Hymir from the east, a troop of many-headed monsters coming.

³⁷ From his shoulders he lifted the kettle down; Miollnir hurled forth towards the savage crew, and slew all the mountain-giants, who with Hymir had him pursued.

³⁸ Long they had not journeyed when of Hlorridi's goats one lay down half-dead before the car. It from the pole had sprung across the trace; but the false Loki was of this the cause.

³⁹ Now ye have heard,--for what fabulist can more fully tell--what indemnity he from the giant got: he paid for it with his children both.

⁴⁰ In his strength exulting he to the gods' council came, and had the kettle, which Hymir had possessed, out of which every god shall beer with Oegir drink at every harvest-tide.

The Lay Of Thrym, Or The Hammer Recovered

¹ Wroth was Vingthor, when he awoke, and his hammer missed; his beard he shook, his forehead struck, the son of earth felt all around him;

² And first of all these words he uttered: "Hear now, Loki! what I now say, which no one knows anywhere on earth, nor in heaven above; the As's hammer is stolen!"

³ They went to the fair Freyia's dwelling, and he these words first of all said: "Wilt thou me, Freyia, thy feather-garment lend, that perchance my hammer I may find?"

⁴ Freyia: "That I would give thee, although of gold it were, and trust it to thee, though it were of silver."

⁵ Flew then Loki--the plumage rattled--until he came beyond the Æsir's dwellings, and came within the Jotun's land.

⁶ On a mound sat Thrym, the Thursar's lord, for his greyhounds plaiting gold bands and his horses' manes smoothing.

⁷ "How goes it with the Æsir? How goes it with the Alfar? Why art thou come alone to Jotunheim?"

⁸ Loki: "Ill it goes with the Æsir, Ill it goes with the Alfar. Hast thou Hlorridi's hammer hidden?"

⁹ Thrym: "I have Hlorridi's hammer hidden eight rasts beneath the earth; it shall no man get again, unless he bring me Freyia to wife."

¹⁰ Flew then Loki--the plumage rattled--until he came beyond the Jotun's dwellings, and came within the Æsir's courts; there he met Thor, in the middle court, who these words first of all uttered.

¹¹ "Hast thou had success as well as labour? Tell me from the air the long tidings. Oft of him who sits are the tales defective, and he who lies down utters falsehood."

¹² Loki: "I have had labour and success: Thrym has thy hammer, the Thursar's lord. It shall no man get again, unless he bring him Freyia to wife."

¹³ They went the fair Freyia to find; and he those words first of all said: "Bind thee, Freyia, in bridal raiment, we two must drive to Jotunheim."

¹⁴ Wroth then was Freyia, and with anger chafed, all the Æsir's hall beneath her trembled: in shivers flew the famed Brisinga necklace. "Know me to be of women lewdest, if with thee I drive to Jotunheim."

¹⁵ Straightway went the Æsir all to council, and the Asyniur all to hold converse; and deliberated the mighty gods, how they Hlorridi's hammer might get back.

¹⁶ Then said Heimdall, of Æsir brightest--he well foresaw, like other Vanir--"Let us clothe Thor with bridal raiment, let him have the famed Brisinga necklace.

¹⁷ "Let by his side keys jingle, and woman's weeds fall round his knees, but on his breast place precious stones, and a neat coif set on his head."

¹⁸ Then said Thor, the mighty As: "Me the Æsir will call womanish, if I let myself be clad in bridal raiment."

¹⁹ Then spake Loki, Laufey's son: "Do thou, Thor! refrain from suchlike words: forthwith the Jotuns will Asgard inhabit, unless thy hammer thou gettest back."

- ²⁰ Then they clad Thor in bridal raiment, and with the noble Brisinga necklace, let by his side keys jingle, and woman's weeds fall round his knees; and on his breast placed precious stones, and a neat coif set on his head.
- ²¹ Then said Loki, Laufey's son: "I will with thee as a servant go: we two will drive to Jotunheim."
- ²² Straightway were the goats homeward driven, hurried to the traces; they had fast to run. The rocks were shivered, the earth was in a blaze; Odin's son drove to Jotunheim.
- ²³ Then said Thrym, the Thursar's lord: "Rise up, Jotuns! and the benches deck, now they bring me Freyia to wife, Niord's daughter, from Noatun.
- ²⁴ "Hither to our court let bring gold-horned cows, all-black oxen, for the Jotuns' joy. Treasures I have many, necklaces many, Freyia alone seemed to me wanting."
- ²⁵ In the evening they early came, and for the Jotuns beer was brought forth. Thor alone an ox devoured, salmons eight, and all the sweetmeats women should have. Sif's consort drank three sals of mead.
- ²⁶ Then said Thrym, the Thursar's prince: "Where hast thou seen brides eat more voraciously? I never saw brides feed more amply, nor a maiden drink more mead."
- ²⁷ Sat the all-crafty serving-maid close by, who words fitting found against the Jotun's speech: "Freyia has nothing eaten for eight nights, so eager was she for Jotunheim."
- ²⁸ Under her veil he stooped desirous to salute her, but sprang back along the hall. "Why are so piercing Freyia's looks? Methinks that fire burns from her eyes."
- ²⁹ Sat the all-crafty serving-maid close by, who words fitting found against the Jotun's speech: "Freyia for eight nights has not slept, so eager was she for Jotunheim."
- ³⁰ In came the Jotun's luckless sister, for a bride-gift she dared to ask: "Give me from thy hands the ruddy rings, if thou wouldst gain my love, my love and favour all."
- ³¹ Then said Thrym, the Thursar's lord: "Bring the hammer in, the bride to consecrate; lay Miollnir on the maiden's knee; unite us each with other by the hand of Vor."
- ³² Laughed Hlorridi's soul in his breast, when the fierce-hearted his hammer recognized. He first slew Thrym, the Thursar's lord, and the Jotun's race all crushed;
- ³³ He slew the Jotun's aged sister, her who a bride-gift had demanded; she a blow got instead of skillings, a hammer's stroke for many rings. So got Odin's son his hammer back.

The Lay Of The Dwarf Alvis

- ¹ Alvis: The benches they are decking, now shall the bride with me bend her way home. That beyond my strength I have hurried will to every one appear: at home naught shall disturb my quiet.
- ² Vingthor: What man is this? Why about the nose art thou so pale? Hast thou last night with corpses lain? To me thou seemst to bear resemblance to the Thursar. Thou art not born to carry off a bride.
- ³ Alvis: Alvis I am named, beneath the earth I dwell, under the rock I own a place. The lord of chariots I am come to visit. A promise once confirmed let no one break.

- ⁴ Vingthor: I will break it; for o'er the maid I have, as father, greatest power. I was from home when the promise was given thee. Among the gods I the sole giver am.
- ⁵ Alvis: What man is this, who lays claim to power over that fair, bright maiden? For far-reaching shafts few will know thee. Who has decked thee with bracelets?
- ⁶ Vingthor: Vingthor I am named, wide I have wandered; I am Sidgrani's son: with my dissent thou shalt not that young maiden have, nor that union obtain.
- ⁷ Alvis: Thy consent I fain would have, and that union obtain. Rather would I possess than be without that snow-white maiden.
- ⁸ Vingthor: The maiden's love shall not, wise guest! be unto thee denied, if thou of every world canst tell all I desire to know.
- ⁹ Alvis: Vingthor! thou canst try, as thou art desirous the knowledge of the dwarf to prove. All the nine worlds I have travelled over, and every being known.
- ¹⁰ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis!--for all men's concerns I presume thee, dwarf, to know--how the earth is called, which lies before the sons of men, in every world.
- ¹¹ Alvis: Jord among men 'tis called, but with the Æsir fold; the Vanir call it vega, the Jotuns igroen, the Alfar groandi, the powers supreme aur.
- ¹² Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis, etc. how the heaven is called, which is perceptible in every world.
- ¹³ Alvis: Himinn 'tis called by men; but hlyrnir with the gods; vindofni the Vanir call it, uppheimr the Jotuns, the Alfar fagraræfr, the dwarfs driupansal.
- ¹⁴ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the moon is called, which men see in every world.
- ¹⁵ Alvis: Mani 'tis called by men, but mylinn with the gods, hverfanda hvel in Hel they call it, skyndi the Jotuns, but the dwarfs skin; the Alfar name it artali.
- ¹⁶ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the sun is called, which men's sons see in every world.
- ¹⁷ Alvis: Sol among men 'tis called, but with the gods sunna, the dwarfs call it Dvalinn's leika, the Jotuns eyglo, the Alfar fagrahvel, the Æsir's sons alskir.
- ¹⁸ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis, etc., how the clouds are called, which with showers are mingled in every world.
- ¹⁹ Alvis: Sky they are called by men, but skurvan by the gods; the Vanir call them vindflot, the Jotuns urvan, the Alfar vedrmegin; in Hel they are called hialm hulids.
- ²⁰ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the wind is called, which widely passes over every world.
- ²¹ Alvis: Windr 'tis called by men, but vavudr by the gods, the wide-ruling powers call it gneggiud, the Jotuns oepir, the Alfar dynfari, in Hel they call it hvidudr.
- ²² Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the calm is called, which has to rest in every world.
- ²³ Alvis: Logn 'tis called by men, but lægi by the gods, the Vanir call it vindslot, the Jotuns ofhly, the Alfar dagsevi, the Dwarfs call it dags vera.
- ²⁴ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., what the sea is called, which men row over in every world.
- ²⁵ Alvis: Sær 'tis called by men, but silægja with the gods; the vanir call it vagr, the Jotuns alheimr, the Alfar lagastafr, the Dwarfs call it diupan mar.

- ²⁶ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the fire is called, which burns before men's sons in every world.
- ²⁷ Alvis: Eldr 'tis called by men, but by the Æsir funi; the Vanir call it vagr, the Jotuns frekr, but the Dwarfs forbrennir; in Hel they call it hrodudr.
- ²⁸ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the forest is called, which grows for the sons of men in every world.
- ²⁹ Alvis: Vidr 'tis called by men, but vallarfax by the gods, Hel's inmates call it hlidthangr, the Jotuns eldi, the Alfar fagrlimi; the Vanir call it vondr.
- ³⁰ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the night is called, that Norvi's daughter hight, in every world.
- ³¹ Alvis: Nott it is called by men, but by the gods niol; the wide-ruling powers call it grima, the Jotuns olios, the Alfar svefngaman; the Dwarfs call it draumniorunn.
- ³² Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the seed is called, which the sons of men sow in every world.
- ³³ Alvis: Bygg it is called by men, but by the gods barr, the Vanir call it vaxtr, the Jotuns æti, the Alfar lagastafr; in Hel 'tis hnipinn called.
- ³⁴ Vingthor: Tell me, Alvis! etc., how the beer is called, which the sons of men drink in every world.
- ³⁵ Alvis: Ol it is called by men, but by the Æsir biorr, the Vanir call it veig, hreina logr the Jotuns, but in Hel 'tis called miodr: Suttung's sons call it sumbl.
- ³⁶ Vingthor: In one breast I have never found more ancient lore. By great wiles thou hast, I tell thee, been deluded. Thou art above ground, dwarf! at dawn; already in the hall the sun is shining!

The Lay Of Harbard

- ¹ Who is the knave of knaves, that by the sound stands yonder?
- ² Harbard: Who is the churl of churls, that cries across the water?
- ³ Thor: Ferry me across the sound, to-morrow I'll regale thee. I have a basket on my back: there is no better food: at my ease I ate, before I quitted home, herrings and oats, with which I yet feel sated.
- ⁴ Harbard: Thou art in haste to praise thy meal: thou surely hast no foreknowledge; for sad will be thy home: thy mother, I believe, is dead.
- ⁵ Thor: Thou sayest now what seems to every one most unwelcome to know--that my mother is dead.
- ⁶ Harbard: Thou dost not look like one who owns three country dwellings, bare-legged thou standest, and like a beggar clothed; thou hast not even breeches.
- ⁷ Thor: Steer hitherward thy boat; I will direct thee where to land. But who owns this skiff, which by the strand thou holdest?
- ⁸ Harbard: Hildolf fief is named who bade me hold it, a man in council wise, who dwells in Radso sound. Robbers he bade me not to ferry, or horse-stealers, but good men only, and those whom I well knew. Tell me then thy name, if thou wilt cross the sound.

⁹ Thor: I my name will tell, (although I am an outlaw) and all my kin: I am Odin's son, Meili's brother, and Magni's sire, the gods' mighty leader: With Thor thou here mayest speak. I will now ask how thou art called.

¹⁰ Harbard: I am Harbard called; seldom I my name conceal.

¹¹ Thor: Why shouldst thou thy name conceal, unless thou crime hast perpetrated?

¹² Harbard: Yet, though I may crime have perpetrated, I will nathless guard my life against such as thou art; unless I death-doomed am.

¹³ Thor: It seems to me a foul annoyance to wade across the strait to thee, and wet my garments: but I will pay thee, mannikin! for thy sharp speeches, if o'er the sound I come.

¹⁴ Harbard: Here will I stand, and here await thee. Thou wilt have found no stouter one since Hrungrnir's death.

¹⁵ Thor: Thou now remindest me how I with Hrungrnir fought, that stout-hearted Jotun, whose head was all of stone; yet I made him fall, and sink before me. What meanwhile didst thou, Harbard?

¹⁶ Harbard: I was with Fiolvari five winters through, in the isle which Algron hight. There we could fight, and slaughter make, many perils prove, indulge in love.

¹⁷ Thor: How did your women prove towards you?

¹⁸ Harbard: Sprightly women we had, had they but been meek; shrewd ones we had, had they but been kind. Of sand a rope they twisted, and from the deep valley dug the earth: to them all I alone was superior in cunning. I rested with the sisters seven, and their love and pleasures shared. What meanwhile didst thou, Thor?

¹⁹ Thor: I slew Thiassi, that stout-hearted Jotun: up I cast the eyes of Allvaldi's son into the heaven serene: they are signs the greatest of my deeds. What meanwhile didst thou, Harbard?

²⁰ Harbard: Great seductive arts I used against the riders of the night, when from their husbands I enticed them. A mighty Jotun I believed Hlebard to be: a magic wand he gave me, but from his wits I charmed him.

²¹ Thor: With evil mind then thou didst good gifts requitè _Harbard_.

²² One tree gets that which, is from another scraped: each one in such case is for self. What meanwhile didst thou, Thor?

²³ Thor: In the east I was, and slew the Jotun brides, crafty in evil, as they to the mountain went. Great would have been the Jotun race, had they all lived; and not a man left in Midgard. What meanwhile didst thou, Harbard?

²⁴ Harbard: I was in Valland, and followed warfare; princes I excited, but never reconciled. Odin has all the jarls that in conflict fall; but Thor the race of thralls.

²⁵ Thor: Unequally thou wouldst divide the folk among the Æsir, if thou but hadst the power.

²⁶ Harbard: Thor has strength over-much, but courage none; from cowardice and fear, thou wast crammed into a glove, and hardly thoughtest thou wast Thor. Thou durst not then, through thy terror, either sneeze or cough, lest Fialar it might hear.

²⁷ Thor: Harbard, thou wretch! I would strike thee dead, could I but stretch my arm across the sound.

²⁸ Harbard: Why wouldst thou stretch thy arm across the sound, when there is altogether no offence?
But what didst thou, Thor?

²⁹ Thor: In the east I was, and a river I defended, when the sons of Svarang me assailed, and with stones pelted me, though in their success they little joyed: they were the first to sue for peace. What meanwhile didst thou, Harbard?

³⁰ Harbard: I was in the east, and with a certain lass held converse; with that fair I dallied, and long meetings had. I that gold-bright one delighted; the game amused her.

³¹ Thor: Then you had kind damsels there?

³² Harbard: Of thy aid I had need, Thor! in retaining that maiden lily-fair.

³³ Thor: I would have given it thee, if I had had the opportunity.

³⁴ Harbard: I would have trusted thee, my confidence if thou hadst not betrayed it.

³⁵ Thor: I am not such a heel-chafer as an old leather shoe in spring.

³⁶ Harbard: What meanwhile didst thou, Thor?

³⁷ Thor: The Berserkers' brides I on Læssø cudgelled; they the worst had perpetrated, the whole people, had seduced.

³⁸ Harbard: Dastardly didst thou act, Thor! when thou didst cudgel women.

³⁹ Thor: She-wolves they were, and scarcely women. They crushed my ship, which with props I had secured, with iron clubs threatened me, and drove away Thialfi. What meanwhile didst thou, Harbard?

⁴⁰ Harbard: I in the army was, which was hither sent, war-banners to raise, lances to redden.

⁴¹ Thor: Of that thou now wilt speak, as thou wentest forth us hard terms to offer.

⁴² Harbard: That shall be indemnified by a hand-ring, such as arbitrators give, who wish to reconcile us.

⁴³ Thor: Where didst thou learn words than which I never heard more irritating?

⁴⁴ Harbard: From men I learned them, from ancient men, whose home is in the woods.

⁴⁵ Thor: Thou givest certainly a good name to grave-mounds, when thou callest them, homes in the woods.

⁴⁶ Harbard: So speak I of such a subject.

⁴⁷ Thor: Thy shrewd words will bring thee evil, if I resolve the sound to ford. Louder than a wolf thou wilt howl, I trow, if of my hammer thou gettest a touch.

⁴⁸ Harbard: Sif has a gallant at home; thou wilt anxious be to find him: thou shalt that arduous work perform; it will beseem thee better.

⁴⁹ Thor: Thou utterest what comes upmost, so that to me it be most annoying, thou dastardly varlet! I believe thou art lying.

⁵⁰ Harbard: I believe I am telling truth. Thou art travelling slowly; thou wouldst have long since arrived, hadst thou assumed another form.

⁵¹ Thor: Harbard! thou wretch! rather is it thou who hast detained me.

⁵² Harbard: I never thought that a ferryman could the course of Asa-Thor retard.

- ⁵³ Thor: One advice I now will give thee: row hither with thy boat; let us cease from threats; approach the sire of Magni.
- ⁵⁴ Harbard: Go farther from the sound, the passage is refused thee.
- ⁵⁵ Thor: Show me then the way, if thou wilt not ferry me across the water.
- ⁵⁶ Harbard: That's too little to refuse. 'Tis far to go; 'tis to the stock an hour, and to the stone another; then keep the left hand way, until thou reachest Verland; there will Fiorgyn find her son Thor, and point out to him his kinsmen's ways to Odin's land.
- ⁵⁷ Thor: Can I get there to-day?
- ⁵⁸ Harbard: With pain and toil thou mayest get there, while the sun is up, which, I believe, is now nigh.
- ⁵⁹ Thor: Our talk shall now be short, as thou answerest with scoffing only. For refusing to ferry me I will reward thee, if another time we meet.
- ⁶⁰ Harbard: Just go to where all the powers of evil may have thee.

The Journey Or Lay Of Skirnir

- ¹ Rise up now, Skirnir! go and request our son to speak; and inquire with whom he so sage may be offended.
- ² Skirnir: Harsh words I have from your son to fear, if I go to speak with him, and to inquire with whom he so sage may be offended.
- ³ Skirnir: Tell me now, Frey, prince of gods! for I desire to know, why alone thou sittest in the spacious hall the livelong day?
- ⁴ Frey: Why shall I tell thee, thou young man, my mind's great trouble? for the Alfs' illuminator shines every day, yet not for my pleasure.
- ⁵ Skirnir: Thy care cannot, I think, be so great, that to me thou canst not tell it; for in early days we were young together: well might we trust each other.
- ⁶ Frey: In Gymir's courts I saw walking a maid for whom I long. Her arms gave forth light wherewith shone all air and water.
- ⁷ Is more desirable to me that maid than to any youth in early days; yet will no one, Æsir or Alfar, that we together live.
- ⁸ Skirnir: Give me but thy steed, which can bear me through the dusk, flickering flame, and that sword, which brandishes itself against the Jotuns' race.
- ⁹ Frey: I will give thee my steed, which can bear thee through the dusk, flickering flame, and that sword, which will itself brandish, if he is bold who raises it.
- ¹⁰ Skirnir Speaks to the Horse: Dark it is without, 'tis time, I say, for us to go across the misty fells, over the Thursar's land: we shall both return, or the all-potent Jotun will seize us both. Skirnir rides to Jotunheim, to Gymir's mansion, where fierce dogs were chained at the gate of the enclosure that was round Gymir's hall. He rides on to where a cowherd was sitting on a mound, and says to him:

¹¹ Tell me, cowherd! as on the mound thou sittest, and watchest all the ways, how I to the speech may come, of the young maiden, for Gymir's dogs?

¹² Cowherd: Either thou art death-doomed, or thou art a departed one. Speech wilt thou ever lack with the good maid of Gymir.

¹³ Skirnir: Better choices than to whine there are for him who is prepared to die: for one day was my age decreed, and my whole life determined.

¹⁴ Gerd: What is that sound of sounds, which I now sounding hear within our dwelling? The earth is shaken, and with it all the house of Gymir trembles.

¹⁵ A serving-maid: A man is here without, dismounted from his horse's back: he lets his steed browse on the grass.

¹⁶ Gerd: Bid him enter into our hall, and drink of the bright mead; although I fear it is my brother's slayer who waits without.

¹⁷ Who is this of the Alfar's, or of the Æsir's sons, or of the wise Vanir's? Why art thou come alone, through the hostile fire, our halls to visit?

¹⁸ Skirnir: I am not of the Alfar's, nor of the Æsir's sons, nor of the wise Vanir's; yet I am come alone, through the hostile fire, your halls to visit.

¹⁹ Apples all-golden I have here eleven: these I will give thee, Gerd, thy love to gain, that thou mayest say that Frev to thee lives dearest.

²⁰ Gerd: The apples eleven I never will accept for any mortal's pleasure; nor will I and Frey, while our lives last, live both together.

²¹ Skirnir: The ring too I will give thee, which was burnt with the young son of Odin. Eight of equal weight will from it drop, every ninth night.

²² Gerd: The ring I will not accept, burnt though it may have been with the young son of Odin. I have no lack of gold in Gymir's courts; for my father's wealth I share.

²³ Skirnir: Seest thou this sword, young maiden! thin, glittering-bright, which I have here in hand? I thy head will sever from thy neck, if thou speakst not favourably to me.

²⁴ Gerd: Suffer compulsion will I never, to please any man; yet this I foresee, if thou and Gymir meet, ye will eagerly engage in fight.

²⁵ Skirnir: Seest thou this sword, young maiden! thin, glittering-bright, which I have here in hand? Beneath its edge shall the old Jotun fall: thy sire is death-doomed.

²⁶ With a taming-wand I smite thee, and I will tame thee, maiden! to my will. Thou shalt go thither, where the sons of men shall never more behold thee.

²⁷ On an eagle's mount thou shalt early sit, looking and turned towards Hel. Food shall to thee more loathsome be than is to any one the glistening serpent among men.

²⁸ As a prodigy thou shalt be, when thou goest forth; Hrimnir shall at thee gaze, all beings at thee stare; more wide-known thou shalt become than the watch among the gods, if thou from thy gratings gape.

²⁹ Solitude and disgust, bonds and impatience, shall thy tears with grief augment. Set thee down, and I will tell thee of a whelming flood of care, and a double grief.

- ³⁰ Terrors shall bow thee down the livelong day, in the Jotuns' courts. To the Hrimthursar's halls, thou shalt each day crawl exhausted, joyless crawl; wail for pastime shalt thou have, and tears and misery.
- ³¹ With a three-headed Thurs thou shalt be ever bound, or be without a mate. Thy mind shall tear thee from morn to morn: as the thistle thou shalt be which has thrust itself on the house-top.
- ³² To the wold I have been, and to the humid grove, a magic wand to get. A magic wand I got.
- ³³ Wroth with thee is Odin, wroth with thee is the Æsir's prince; Frey shall loathe thee, even ere thou, wicked maid! shalt have felt the gods' dire vengeance.
- ³⁴ Hear ye, Jotuns! hear ye, Hrimthursar! sons of Suttung! also ye, Æsir's friends! how I forbid, how I prohibit man's joy unto the damsel, man's converse to the damsel.
- ³⁵ Hrimgrimmir the Thurs is named, that shall possess thee, in the grating of the dead beneath; there shall wretched thralls, from the tree's roots, goats' water give thee. Other drink shalt thou, maiden! never get, either for thy pleasure, or for my pleasure.
- ³⁶ Thurs I cut for thee, and three letters mere: ergi, and oedi, and othola. So will I cut them out, as I have cut them, in, if there need shall be.
- ³⁷ Gerd: Hail rather to thee, youth! and accept an icy cup, filled with old mead; although I thought not that I ever should love one of Vanir race.
- ³⁸ Skirnir: All my errand will I know, ere I hence ride home. When wilt thou converse hold with the powerful son of Niord?
- ³⁹ Gerd: Barri the grove is named, which we both know, the grove of tranquil paths. Nine nights hence, there to Niord's son Gerd will grant delight.
- ⁴⁰ Skimir then rode home. Frey was standing without, and spoke to him, asking tidings:
- ⁴¹ Tell me, Skirnir! ere thou thy steed unsaddlest, and a foot hence thou goest, what thou hast accomplished in Jotunheim, for my pleasure or thine?
- ⁴² Skirnir: Barri the grove is named, which we both know, the grove of tranquil paths. Nine nights hence, there to Niord's son Gerd will grant delight.
- ⁴³ Frey: Long is one night, yet longer two will be; how shall I three endure. Often a month to me less has seemed than half a night of longing.

The Lay Of Rig

- ¹ In ancient days, they say, along the green ways went the powerful and upright sagacious As, the strong and active Rig, his onward course pursuing.
- ² Forward he went on the mid-way, and to a dwelling came. The door stood ajar, he went in, fire was on the floor. The man and wife sat there, hoary-haired, by the hearth, Ai and Edda, in old guise clad.
- ³ Rig would counsel give to them both, and himself seated in the middle seat, having on either side the domestic pair.

⁴ Then Edda from the ashes took a loaf, heavy and thick, and with bran mixed; more besides she laid on the middle of the board; there in a bowl was broth on the table set, there was a calf boiled, of cates most excellent.

⁵ Then rose he up, prepared to sleep: Rig would counsel give to them both; laid him down in the middle of the bed; the domestic pair lay one on either side.

⁶ There he continued three nights together, then departed on the mid-way. Nine months then passed way.

⁷ Edda a child brought forth: they with water sprinkled its swarthy skin, and named it Thræl.

⁸ It grew up, and well it throve; of its hands the skin was shriveled, the knuckles knotty, * * * and the fingers thick; a hideous countenance it had, a curved back, and protruding heels.

⁹ He then began his strength to prove, bast to bind, make of it loads; then faggots carried home, the livelong day.

¹⁰ Then to the dwelling came a woman walking, scarred were her foot-soles, her arms sunburnt, her nose compressed, her name was Thy.

¹¹ In the middle seat herself she placed; by her sat the house's son. They spoke and whispered, prepared a bed, Thræl and Thy, and days of care.

¹² Children they begat, and lived content: Their names, I think, were Hreimr and Fiosnir, Klur and Kleggi, Kefsir, Fulnir, Drumb, Digraldi, Drott and Hosvir, Lut and Leggialdi. Fences they erected, fields manured, tended swine, kept goats, dug turf.

¹³ The daughters were Drumba and Kumba, Okkvinkalfa, and Arinnefia, Ysia and Ambatt, Eikintiasna, Totrughypia, and Tronubeina, whence are sprung the race of thralls.

¹⁴ Rig then went on, in a direct course, and came to a house; the door stood ajar: he went in; fire was on the floor, man and wife sat there engaged at work.

¹⁵ The man was planing wood for a weaver's beam; his beard was trimmed, a lock was on his forehead, his shirt close; his chest stood on the floor.

¹⁶ His wife sat by, plied her rock, with outstretched arms, prepared for clothing. A hood was on her head, a loose sark over her breast, a kerchief round her neck, studs on her shoulders. Afi and Amma owned the house.

¹⁷ Rig would counsel give to them both; rose from the table, prepared to sleep; laid him down in the middle of the bed, the domestic pair lay one on either side.

¹⁸ There he continued three nights together. Nine months then passed away. Amma a child brought forth, they with water sprinkled it, and called it Karl. The mother in linen swathed the ruddy redhead: its eyes twinkled.

¹⁹ It grew up, and well throve; learned to tame oxen, make a plough, houses build, and barns construct, make carts, and the plough drive.

²⁰ Then they home conveyed a lass with pendent keys, and goatskin kirtle; married her to Karl. Snor was her name, under a veil she sat. The couple dwelt together, rings exchanged, spread couches, and a household formed.

²¹ Children they begat, and lived content. Hal and Dreng, these were named, Held, Thegn, Smith, Breidr-bondi, Bundinskegg, Bui and Boddi, Brattskegg and Segg.

²² But [the daughters] were thus called, by other names: Snot, Brud, Svanni, Svarri, Sprakki, Flíod, Sprund, and Vif, Feima, Ristil; whence are sprung the races of churls.

²³ Rig then went thence, in a direct course, and came to a hall: the entrance looked southward, the door was half closed, a ring was on the door-post.

²⁴ He went in; the floor was strewed, a couple sat facing each other, Fadir and Modir, with fingers playing.

²⁵ The husband sat, and twisted string, bent his bow, and arrow-shafts prepared; but the housewife looked on her arms, smoothed her veil, and her sleeves fastened;

²⁶ Her head-gear adjusted. A clasp was on her breast; ample her robe, her sark was blue; brighter was her brow, her breast fairer, her neck whiter than driven snow.

²⁷ Rig would counsel give to them both, and himself seated on the middle seat, having on either side the domestic pair.

²⁸ Then took Modir a figured cloth of white linen, and the table decked. She then took thin cakes of snow-white wheat, and on the table laid.

²⁹ She set forth salvers full, adorned with silver, on the table game and pork, and roasted birds. In a can was wine; the cups were ornamented. They drank and talked; the day was fast departing, Rig would counsel give to them both.

³⁰ Rig then rose, the bed prepared; there he then remained three nights together, then departed on the mid-way. Nine months after that passed away.

³¹ Modir then brought forth a boy: in silk they wrapped him, with water sprinkled him, and named him Jarl. Light was his hair, bright his cheeks, his eyes piercing as a young serpent's.

³² There at home Jarl grew up, learned the shield to shake, to fix the string, the bow to bend, arrows to shaft, javelins to hurl, spears to brandish, horses to ride, dogs to let slip, swords to draw, swimming to practise.

³³ Thither from the forest came Rig walking, Rig walking: runes he taught him, his own name gave him, and his own son declared him, whom he bade possess his alodial fields, his alodial fields, his ancient dwellings.

³⁴ Jarl then rode thence, through a murky way, over humid fells, till to a hall he came. His spear he brandished, his shield he shook, made his horse curvet, and his falchion drew, strife began to raise, the field to redden, carnage to make; and conquer lands.

³⁵ Then he ruled alone over eight vills, riches distributed, gave to all treasures and precious things; lank-sided horses, rings he dispersed, and collars cut in pieces.

³⁶ The nobles drove through humid ways, came to a hall, where Hersir dwelt; there they found a slender maiden, fair and elegant, Erna her name.

³⁷ They demanded her, and conveyed her home, to Jarl espoused her; she under the linen went. They together lived, and well throve, had offspring, and old age enjoyed.

³⁸ Bur was their eldest, Barn the second, Jod and Adal, Arfi, Mog, Nid and Nidjung. They learned games; Son and Svein swam and at tables played. One was named Kund, Kon was youngest.

³⁹ There grew up Jarl's progeny; horses they broke, curved shields, cut arrows, brandished spears.

- ⁴⁰ But the young Kon understood runes, æfin-runes, and aldr-runes; he moreover knew men to preserve, edges to deaden, the sea to calm.
- ⁴¹ He knew the voice of birds, how fires to mitigate, assuage and quench; sorrows to allay. He of eight men had the strength and energy.
- ⁴² He with Rig Jarl in runes contended, artifices practised, and superior proved; then acquired Rig to be called, and skilled in runes.
- ⁴³ The young Kon rode through swamps and forests, hurled forth darts, and tamed birds.
- ⁴⁴ Then sang the crow, sitting lonely on a bough! "Why wilt thou, young Kon: tame the birds? rather shouldst thou, young Kon! on horses ride * * * and armies overcome.
- ⁴⁵ Nor Dan nor Danp halls more costly had, nobler paternal seats, than ye had. They well knew how the keel to ride, the edge to prove, wounds to inflict.
- ⁴⁶ The rest is wanting.

Oegir's Compotation, Or Loki's Altercation

- ¹ Tell me, Eldir! ere thou thy foot settest one step forward, on what converse the sons of the triumphant gods at their potation?
- ² Eldir: Of their arms converse, and of their martial fame, the sons of the triumphant gods. Of the Æsir and the Alfar that are here within not one has a friendly word for thee.
- ³ Loki: I will go into Oegir's halls, to see the compotation. Strife and hate to the Æsir's sons I bear, and will mix their mead with bale.
- ⁴ Eldir: Knowest thou not that if thou goest into Oegir's halls to see the compotation, but contumely and clamour pourest forth on the kindly powers, they will wipe it all off on thee?
- ⁵ Loki: Knowest thou not, Eldir, that if we two with bitter words contend, I shall be rich in answers, if thou sayest too much?
- ⁶ Loki then went into the hall, but when those present saw who was come in, they all sat silent.
- ⁷ Loki: I Lopt am come thirsty into this hall, from a long journey, to beseech the Æsir one draught to give me of the bright mead.
- ⁸ Why gods! are ye so silent, so reserved, that ye cannot speak? A seat and place choose for me at your board, or bid me hie me hence.
- ⁹ Bragi: A seat and place will the Æsir never choose for thee at their board; for well the Æsir know for whom they ought to hold a joyous compotation.
- ¹⁰ Loki: Odin! dost thou remember when we in early days blended our blood together? When to taste beer thou didst constantly refuse, unless to both 'twas offered?
- ¹¹ Odin: Rise up, Vidar! and let the wolf's sire sit at our compotation; that Loki may not utter words of contumely in Oegir's hall.
- ¹² Vidar then rising, presented Loki with drink, who before drinking thus addressed the Æsir:
- ¹³ Hail, Æsir! Hail, Asyniur! And ye, all-holy gods! all, save that one As, who sits within there, Bragi, on yonder bench.

¹⁴ Bragi: A horse and falchion I from my stores will give thee, and also with a ring reward thee, if thou the Æsir wilt not requite with malice. Provoke not the gods against thee.

¹⁵ Loki: Of horse and rings wilt thou ever, Bragi! be in want. Of the Æsir and the Alfar, that are here present, in conflict thou art the most backward, and in the play of darts most timid.

¹⁶ Bragi: I know that were I without, as I am now within, the hall of Oegir, I thy head would bear in my hand, and so for lying punish thee.

¹⁷ Loki: Valiant on thy seat art thou, Bragi! but so thou shouldst not be, Bragi, the bench's pride! Go and fight, if thou art angry; a brave man sits not considering.

¹⁸ Idun: I pray thee, Bragi! let avail the bond of children, and of all adopted sons, and to Loki speak not in reproachful words, in Oegir's hall.

¹⁹ Loki: Be silent, Idun! of all women I declare thee most fond of men, since thou thy arms, carefully washed, didst twine round thy brother's murderer.

²⁰ Idun: Loki I address not with opprobrious words, in Oegir's hall. Bragi I soothe, by beer excited. I desire not that angry ye fight.

²¹ Gefion: Why will ye, Æsir twain, here within, strive with reproachful words? Loft perceives not that he is deluded, and is urged on by fate.

²² Loki: Be silent, Gefion! I will now just mention, how that fair youth thy mind corrupted, who thee a necklace gave, and around whom thou thy limbs didst twine?

²³ Odin: Thou art raving, Loki! and hast lost thy wits, in calling Gefion's anger on thee; for all men's destinies, I ween, she knows as thoroughly as I do.

²⁴ Loki: Be silent, Odin! Thou never couldst allot conflicts between men: oft hast thou given to those to whom thou oughtest not--victory to cowards.

²⁵ Odin: Knowest thou that I gave to those I ought not--victory to cowards? Thou wast eight winters on the earth below, a milch cow and a woman, and didst there bear children. Now that, methinks, betokens a base nature.

²⁶ Loki: But, it is said, thou wentest with tottering steps in Samsø, and knocked at houses as a Vala. In likeness of a fortune teller, thou wentest among people. Now that, methinks, betokens a base nature.

²⁷ Frigg: Your doings ye should never publish among men, what ye, Æsir twain, did in days of yore. Ever forgotten be men's former deeds!

²⁸ Loki: Be thou silent, Frigg! Thou art Fiorgyn's daughter, and ever hast been fond of men, since Ve and Vili, it is said, thou, Vidrir's wife, didst both to thy bosom take.

²⁹ Frigg: Know thou that if I had, in Oegir's halls, a son like Baldr, out thou shouldst not go from the Æsir's sons: thou should'st have been fiercely assailed.

³⁰ Loki: But wilt thou, Frigg! that of my wickedness I more recount? I am the cause that thou seest not Baldr riding to the halls.

³¹ Freyia: Mad art thou, Loki! in recounting thy foul misdeeds. Frigg, I believe, knows all that happens, although she says it not.

³² Loki: Be thou silent, Freyia! I know thee full well; thou art not free from vices: of the Æsir and the Alfar, that are herein, each has been thy paramour.

³³ Freyia: False is thy tongue. Henceforth it will, I think, prate no good to thee. Wroth with thee are the Æsir, and the Asyniur. Sad shalt thou home depart.

³⁴ Loki: Be silent, Freyia! Thou art a sorceress, and with much evil blended; since against thy brother thou the gentle powers excited. And then, Freyia! what didst thou do?

³⁵ Niord: It is no great wonder, if silk-clad dames get themselves husbands, lovers; but 'tis a wonder that a wretched As, that has borne children, should herein enter.

³⁶ Loki: Be silent, Niord! Thou wast sent eastward hence, a hostage from the gods. Hymir's daughters had thee for an utensil, and flowed into thy mouth. _Niord_.

³⁷ 'Tis to me a solace, as I a long way hence was sent, a hostage from the gods, that I had a son, whom no one hates, and accounted is a chief among the Æsir.

³⁸ Loki: Cease now, Niord! in bounds contain thyself; I will no longer keep it secret: it was with thy sister thou hadst such a son; hardly worse than thyself.

³⁹ Ty: Frey is best of all the exalted gods in the Æsir's courts: no maid he makes to weep, no wife of man, and from bonds looses all.

⁴⁰ Loki: Be silent, Ty! Thou couldst never settle a strife 'twixt two; of thy right hand also I must mention make, which Fenrir from thee tore.

⁴¹ Ty: I of a hand am wanting, but thou of honest fame; sad is the lack of either. Nor is the wolf at ease: he in bonds must bide, until the gods' destruction.

⁴² Loki: Be silent, Ty; to thy wife it happened to have a son by me. Nor rag nor penny ever hadst thou, poor wretch! for this injury.

⁴³ Frey: I the wolf see lying at the river's mouth, until the powers are swept away. So shalt thou be bound, if thou art not silent, thou framer of evil.

⁴⁴ Loki: With gold thou boughtest Gymir's daughter, and so gavest away thy sword: but when Muspell's sons through the dark forest ride, thou, unhappy, wilt not have wherewith to fight.

⁴⁵ Byggvir: Know that were I of noble race, like Ingun's Frey, and had so fair a dwelling, than marrow softer I would bray that ill-boding crow, and crush him limb by limb.

⁴⁶ Loki: What little thing is that I see wagging its tail, and snapping eagerly? At the ears of Frey thou shouldst ever be, and clatter under mills.

⁴⁷ Byggvir: Byggvir I am named, and am thought alert, by all gods and men; therefore am I joyful here, that all the sons of Hropt drink beer together.

⁴⁸ Loki: Be silent, Byggvir! Thou couldst never dole out food to men, when, lying in thy truckle bed, thou wast not to be found, while men were fighting.

⁴⁹ Heimdall: Loki, thou art drunk, and hast lost thy wits. Why dost thou not leave off, Loki? But drunkenness so rules every man, that he knows not of his garrulity.

⁵⁰ Loki: Be silent, Heimdall! For thee in early days was that hateful life decreed: with a wet back thou must ever be, and keep watch as guardian of the gods.

- ⁵¹ Skadi: Thou art merry, Loki! Not long wilt thou frisk with an unbound tail; for thee, on a rock's point, with the entrails of thy ice-cold son, the gods will bind.
- ⁵² Loki: Know, if on a rock's point, with the entrails of my ice-cold son, the gods will bind me, that first and foremost I was at the slaying, when we assailed Thiassi.
- ⁵³ Skadi: Know, if first and foremost thou wast at the slaying, when ye assailed Thiassi, that from my dwellings and fields shall to thee ever cold counsels come.
- ⁵⁴ Loki: Milder wast thou of speech to Laufey's son, when to thy bed thou didst invite me. Such matters must be mentioned, if we accurately must recount our vices.
- ⁵⁵ Then came Sif forth, and poured out mead for Loki in an icy cup, saying:
- ⁵⁶ Hail to thee, Loki! and this cool cup receive, full of old mead: at least me alone, among the blameless Æsir race, leave stainless.
- ⁵⁷ He took the horn, drank, and said:
- ⁵⁸ So alone shouldst thou be, hadst thou strict and prudent been towards thy mate; but one I know, and, I think, know him well, a favoured rival of Hlorridi, and that is the wily Loki.
- ⁵⁹ Beyla: The fells all tremble: I think Hlorridi is from home journeying. He will bid be quiet him who here insults all gods and men.
- ⁶⁰ Loki: Be silent, Beyla! Thou art Byggvir's wife, and with much evil mingled: never came a greater monster among the Æsir's sons. Thou art a dirty strumpet.
- ⁶¹ Thor then came in and said:
- ⁶² Silence, thou impure being! My mighty hammer, Miollnir, shall stop thy prating. I will thy head from thy neck strike; then will thy life be ended.
- ⁶³ Loki: Now the son of earth is hither come. Why dost thou chafe so, Thor? Thou wilt not dare do so, when with the wolf thou hast to fight, and he the all-powerful father swallows whole.
- ⁶⁴ Thor: Silence, thou impure being! My mighty hammer, Miollnir, shall stop thy prating. Up I will hurl thee to the east region, and none shall see thee after.
- ⁶⁵ Loki: Of thy eastern travels thou shouldest never to people speak, since in a glove-thumb thou, Einheri! wast doubled up, and hardly thoughtest thou wast Thor.
- ⁶⁶ Thor: Silence, thou impure being! My mighty hammer, Miollnir, shall stop thy prating: with this right hand I, Hrungrnir's bane, will smite thee, so that thy every bone be broken.
- ⁶⁷ Loki: 'Tis my intention a long life to live, though with thy hammer thou dost threaten me. Skrymir's thongs seemed to thee hard, when at the food thou couldst not get, when, in full health, of hunger dying.
- ⁶⁸ Thor: Silence, thou impure being! My mighty hammer, Miollnir, shall stop thy prating. Hrungrnir's bane shall cast thee down to Hel, beneath the gratings of the dead.
- ⁶⁹ Loki: I have said before the Æsir, I have said before the Æsir's sons, that which my mind suggested: but for thee alone will I go out; because I know that thou wilt fight.
- ⁷⁰ Oegir! thou hast brewed beer; but thou never shalt henceforth a compotation hold. All thy possessions, which are herein, flame shall play over, and on thy back shall burn thee.

⁷¹ After this Loki, in the likeness of a salmon, cast himself into the waterfall of Franangr, where the Æsir caught him, and bound him with the entrails of his son Nari; but his other son, Narfi, was changed into a wolf. Skadi took a venomous serpent, and fastened it up over Loki's face. The venom trickled down from it. Sigyn, Loki's wife, sat by, and held a basin under the venom; and when the basin was full, carried the venom out. Meanwhile the venom dropped on Loki, who shrank from it so violently that the whole earth trembled. This causes what are now called earthquakes.

The Lay Of Fiolsvith

¹ From the outward wall he saw one ascending to the seat of the giant race.

² Fiolsvith: Along the humid ways haste thee back hence, here, wretch! is no place for thee.

³ What monster is it before the fore-court standing, and hovering round the perilous flame? Whom dost thou seek? Of what art thou in quest? Or what, friendless being! desirest thou to know?

⁴ Wanderer: What monster is that, before the fore-court standing, who to the wayfarer offers not hospitality? Void of honest fame, prattler! hast thou lived: but hence hie thee home.

⁵ Fiolsvith: Fiolsvith is my name; wise I am of mind, though of food not prodigal. Within these courts thou shalt never come: so now, wretch! take thyself off.

⁶ Wanderer: From the eye's delight few are disposed to hurry, where there is something pleasant to be seen. These walls, methinks, shine around golden halls. Here I could live contented with my lot.

⁷ Fiolsvith: Tell me, youth; of whom thou art born, or of what race hast sprung.

⁸ Wanderer: Vindkald I am called, Varkald was my father named, his sire was Fiolkald.

⁹ Tell me, Fiolsvith! that which I will ask thee, and I desire to know: who here holds sway, and has power over these lands and costly halls?

¹⁰ Fiolsvith: Menglod is her name, her mother her begat with Svaf, Thorin's son. She here holds sway, and has power over these lands and costly halls.

¹¹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what the grate is called, than which among the gods mortals never saw a greater artifice?

¹² Fiolsvith: Thrymgioll it is called, and Solblind's three sons constructed it: a fetter fastens, every wayfarer, who lifts it from its opening.

¹³ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what that structure is called, than which among the gods mortals never saw a greater artifice?

¹⁴ Fiolsvith: Gastropnir it is called, and I constructed it of Leirbrimir's limbs. I have so supported it, that it will ever stand while the world lasts.

¹⁵ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what those dogs are called, that chase away the giantesses, and safety to the fields restore?

¹⁶ Fiolsvith: Gifr the one is called, the other Geri, if thou that wouldst know. Eleven watches they will keep, until the powers perish.

¹⁷ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether any man can enter while those fierce assailants sleep?

¹⁸ Fiolsvith: Alternate sleep was strictly to them enjoined, since to the watch they were appointed. One sleeps by night, by day the other, so that no wight can enter if he comes.

¹⁹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether there is any food that men can get, such that they can run in while they eat?

²⁰ Fiolsvith: Two repasts lie in Vidofnir's wings, if thou that wouldst know: that is alone such food as men can give them and run in while they eat.

²¹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what that tree is called that with its branches spreads itself over every land?

²² Fiolsvith: Mimameidir it is called; but few men know from what roots it springs: it by that will fall which fewest know. Nor fire nor iron will harm it.

²³ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., to what the virtue is of that famed tree applied, which nor fire nor iron will harm?

²⁴ Fiolsvith: Its fruit shall on the fire be laid, for labouring women; out then will pass what would in remain: so is it a creator of mankind.

²⁵ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what the cock is called that sits in that lofty tree, and all-glittering is with gold?

²⁶ Fiolsvith: Vidofnir he is called; in the clear air he stands, in the boughs of Mima's tree: afflictions only brings, together indissoluble, the swart bird at his lonely meal.

²⁷ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether there be any weapon, before which Vidofnir may fall to Hel's abode?

²⁸ Fiolsvith: Hævatein the twig is named, and Lopt plucked it, down by the gate of Death. In an iron chest it lies with Sinmoera, and is with nine strong locks secured.

²⁹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether he will alive return, who seeks after, and will take, that rod?

³⁰ Fiolsvith: He will return who seeks after, and will take, the rod, if he bears that which few possess to the dame of the glassy clay.

³¹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether there is any treasure, that mortals can obtain, at which the pale giantess will rejoice?

³² Fiolsvith: The bright sickle that lies in Vidofnir's wings, thou in a bag shalt bear, and to Sinmoera give, before she will think fit to lend an arm for conflict.

³³ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what this hall is called, which is girt round with a curious flickering flame?

³⁴ Fiolsvith: Hyr it is called, and it will long tremble as on a lance's point. This sumptuous house shall, for ages hence, be but from hearsay known.

³⁵ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., which of the Æsir's sons has that constructed, which within the court I saw?

³⁶ Fiolsvith: Uni and Iri, Bari and Ori, Var and Vegdrasil, Dorri and Uri, Delling and Atvard, Lidskialf, Loki.

³⁷ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., what that mount is called, on which I see a splendid maiden stand?

³⁸ Fiolsvith: Hyfiaberg 'tis called, and long has it a solace been to the bowed-down and sorrowful: each woman becomes healthy, although a year's disease she have, if she can but ascend it.

³⁹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., how those maids are called, who sit at Menglod's knees in harmony together?

⁴⁰ Fiolsvith: Hlif the first is called, the second is Hlifthursa, the third Thiodvarta, Biort and Blid, Blidr, Frid, Eir and Orboda.

⁴¹ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether they protect those who offer to them, if it should, be needful?

⁴² Fiolsvith: Every summer in which men offer to them, at the holy place, no pestilence so great shall come to the sons of men, but they will free each from peril.

⁴³ Vindkald: Tell me, Fiolsvith! etc., whether there is any man that may in Menglod's soft arms sleep?

⁴⁴ Fiolsvith: There is no man who may in Menglod's soft arms sleep, save only Svipdag; to him the sun-bright maid is for wife betrothed.

⁴⁵ Vindkald: Set the doors open! Let the gate stand wide; here thou mayest Svipdag see; but yet go learn if Menglod will accept my love.

⁴⁶ Fiolsvith: Hear, Menglod! A man is hither come: go and behold the stranger; the dogs rejoice; the house has itself opened. I think it must be Svipdag.

⁴⁷ Menglod: Fierce ravens shall, on the high gallows, tear out thy eyes, if thou art lying, that hither from afar is come the youth unto my halls.

⁴⁸ Whence art thou come? Whence hast thou journeyed? How do thy kindred call thee? Of thy race and name I must have a token, if I was betrothed to thee.

⁴⁹ Svipdag: Svipdag I am named, Solbiart was my father named; thence the winds on the cold ways drove me. Urd's decree may no one gainsay, however lightly uttered.

⁵⁰ Menglod: Welcome thou art: my will I have obtained; greeting a kiss shall follow. A sight unlooked-for gladdens most persons, when one the other loves.

⁵¹ Long have I sat on my loved hill, day and night expecting thee. Now that is come to pass which I have hoped, that thou, dear youth, again to my halls art come.

⁵² Svipdag: Longing I have undergone for thy love; and thou, for my affection. Now it is certain, that we shall pass our lives together.

The Lay Of Hyndla

¹ Freyia: Wake, maid of maids! Wake, my friend! Hyndla! Sister! who in the cavern dwellest. Now there is dark of darks; we will both to Valhall ride, and to the holy fane.

² Let us Heriafather pray into our minds to enter, he gives and grants gold to the deserving. He gave to Hermod a helm and corslet, and from him Sigmund a sword received.

- ³ Victory to his sons he gives, but to some riches; eloquence to the great, and to men, wit; fair wind he gives to traders, but poesy to skalds; valour he gives to many a warrior.
- ⁴ She to Thor will offer, she to him will pray, that to thee he may be well disposed; although he bears ill will to Jotun females.
- ⁵ Now of thy wolves take one from out the stall; let him run with runic rein. _Hyndla_.
- ⁶ Sluggish is thy hog the god's way to tread:
- ⁷ Freyia: I will my noble palfrey saddle.
- ⁸ Hyndla: False are thou, Freyia! who temptest me: by thy eyes thou showest it, so fixed upon us; while thou thy man hast on the dead-road, the young Ottar, Innstein's son.
- ⁹ Dull art thou, Hyndla! methinks thou dreamest, since thou sayest that my man is on the dead-road with me; there where my hog sparkles with its golden bristles, hight Hildisvini, which for me made the two skilful dwarfs, Dain and Nabbi. From the saddle we will talk: let us sit, and of princely families discourse, of those chieftains who from the gods descend. They have contested for the dead's gold, Ottar the young and Angantyr.
- ¹⁰ A duty 'tis to act so that the young prince his paternal heritage may have, after his kindred.
- ¹¹ An offer-stead to me he raised, with stones constructed; now is that stone as glass become. With the blood of oxen he newly sprinkled it. Ottar ever trusted in the Asyniur.
- ¹² Now let us reckon up the ancient families, and the races of exalted men. Who are the Skioldungs? Who are the Skilfings? Who the Odlings? Who the Ylfings? Who the hold-born? Who the hers-born? The choicest race of men under heaven?
- ¹³ Hyndla: Thou, Ottar! art of Innstein born, but Innstein was from Alf the Old, Alf was from Ulf, Ulf from Sæfari, but Sæfari from Svan the Red.
- ¹⁴ Thy father had a mother, for her necklaces famed, she, I think, was named Hledis the priestess; Frodi her father was, and her mother Friant: all that stock is reckoned among chieftains.
- ¹⁵ Ali was of old of men the strongest, Halfdan before him, the highest of the Skioldungs; (Famed were the wars by those chieftains led) his deeds seemed to soar to the skirts of heaven.
- ¹⁶ By Eimund aided, chief of men, he Sigtrygg slew with the cold steel. He Almveig had to wife, first of women. They begat and had eighteen sons.
- ¹⁷ From them the Skioldungs, from them the Skilfings, from them the Odlings, from them the Ynglings, from them the hold-born, from them the hers-born, the choicest race of men under heaven. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ¹⁸ Hildegun her mother was, of Svafa born and a sea-king. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski! Carest thou this to know? Wishest thou a longer narrative?
- ¹⁹ Dag wedded Thora, mother of warriors: of that race were born the noble champions, Fradmar, Gyrd, and the Frekis both, Am, Josur, Mar, Alf the Old. Carest thou this to know? Wishest thou a longer narrative?
- ²⁰ Ketil their friend was named, heir of Klyp; he was maternal grandsire of thy mother. Then was Frodi yet before Kari, but the eldest born was Alf.

- ²¹ Nanna was next, Nokkvi's daughter; her son was thy father's kinsman, ancient is that kinship. I knew both Brodd and Horfi. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²² Isolf, Asolf, Olmod's sons and Skurhild's Skekkil's daughter; thou shalt yet count chieftains many. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²³ Gunnar, Balk, Grim, Ardskafe, Jarnskiold, Thorir, Ulf, Ginandi, Bui and Brami, Barri and Reifnir, Tind and Hyrfing, the two Haddingis. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²⁴ To toil and tumult were the sons of Arngrim born, and of Eyfura: ferocious berserker, calamity of every kind, by land and sea, like fire they carried. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²⁵ I knew both Brodd and Horfi, they were in the court of Hrolf the Old; all descended from Jormunrek, son-in-law of Sigurd. (Listen to my story) the dread of nations, him who Fafnir slew.
- ²⁶ He was a king, from Volsung sprung, and Hiordis from Hrodung; but Eylimi from the Odlingis. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²⁷ Gunnar and Hogni, sons of Giuki; and Gudrun likewise, their sister. Guttorm; was not of Giuki's race, although he brother was of them both. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²⁸ Harald Hildetonn, born of Hrærekir Slongvanbaugi; he was a son of Aud, Aud the rich was Ivar's daughter; but Radbard was Randver's father. They were heroes to the gods devoted. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ²⁹ There were eleven Æsir reckoned, when Baldr on the pile was laid; him Vali showed himself worthy to avenge, his own brother: he the slayer slew. All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!
- ³⁰ Baldr's father was son of Bur: Frey to wife had Gerd, she was Gymir's daughter, from Jotuns sprung and Aurboda; Thiassi also was their relation, that haughty Jotun; Skadi was his daughter.
- ³¹ We tell thee much, and remember more: I admonish thee thus much to know. Wishest thou yet a longer narrative?
- ³² Haki was not the worst of Hvedna's sons, and Hiorvard was Hvedna's father; Heid and Hrossthiof were of Hrimnir's race.
- ³³ All the Valas are from Vidolf; all the soothsayers from Vilmeidr, all the sorcerers from Svarthofdi; all the Jotuns come from Ymir.
- ³⁴ We tell thee much, and more remember, I admonish thee thus much to know. Wishest thou yet a longer narrative?
- ³⁵ There was one born, in times of old, with wondrous might endowed, of origin divine: nine Jotun maids gave birth to the gracious god, at the world's margin.
- ³⁶ Gialp gave him birth, Greip gave him birth, Eistla gave him birth, and Angeia; Ulfrun gave him birth, and Eyrgiafa, Imd and Atla, and Jarnsaxa.
- ³⁷ The boy was nourished with the strength of earth, with the ice-cold sea, and with Son's blood. We tell thee much, and more remember. I admonish thee thus much to know. Wishest thou a yet longer narrative?
- ³⁸ Loki begat the wolf with Angrboda, but Sleipnir he begat with Svadilfari: one monster seemed of all most deadly, which from Byleist's brother sprang.

- ³⁹ Loki, scorched up in his heart's affections, had found a half-burnt woman's heart. Loki became guileful from that wicked woman; thence in the world are all giantesses come.
- ⁴⁰ Ocean towers with storms to heaven itself, flows o'er the land; the air is rent: thence come snows and rapid winds; then it is decreed that the rain should cease.
- ⁴¹ There was one born greater than all, the boy was nourished with the strength of earth; he was declared a ruler, mightiest and richest, allied by kinship to all princes.
- ⁴² Then shall another come, yet mightier, although I dare not his name declare. Few may see further forth than when Odin meets the wolf.
- ⁴³ Freyia: Bear thou the memory-cup to my guest, so that he may all the words repeat of this, discourse, on the third morn, when he and Angantyr reckon up races.
- ⁴⁴ Hyndla: Go thou quickly hence, I long to sleep; more of my wondrous power thou gettest not from me. Thou runnest, my hot friend, out at nights, as among he-goats the she-goat goes.
- ⁴⁵ Thou hast run thyself mad, ever longing; many a one has stolen under thy girdle. Thou runnest, my hot friend, out at nights, as among he-goats, the she-goat goes.
- ⁴⁶ Freyia: Fire I strike over thee, dweller of the wood! so that thou goest not ever away from hence.
- ⁴⁷ Hyndla: Fire I see burning, and the earth blazing; many will have their lives to save. Bear thou the cup to Ottar's hand, the mead with venom mingled, in an evil hour!
- ⁴⁸ Freyia: Thy malediction shall be powerless; although thou, Jotun-maid! dost evil threaten. He shall drink delicious draughts. All the gods I pray to favour Ottar.

The Incantation Of Groa

- ¹ Son: Wake up, Groa! wake up, good woman! at the gates of death I wake thee! if thou rememberest, that thou thy son badest to thy grave-mound to come.
- ² Mother: What now troubles my only son? With what affliction art thou burthened, that thou thy mother callest, who to dust is come, and from human homes departed?
- ³ Son: A hateful game thou, crafty woman, didst set before me, whom my has father in his bosom cherished, when thou badest me go no one knows whither, Menglod to meet.
- ⁴ Mother: Long is the journey, long are the ways, long are men's desires. If it so fall out, that thou thy will obtainest, the event must then be as it may.
- ⁵ Son: Sing to me songs which are good. Mother! protect thy son. Dead on my way I fear to be. I seem too young in years.
- ⁶ Mother: I will sing to thee first one that is thought most useful, which Rind sang to Ran; that from thy shoulders thou shouldst cast what to thee seems irksome: let thyself thyself direct.
- ⁷ A second I will sing to thee, as thou hast to wander joyless on thy ways. May Urd's protection hold thee on every side, where thou seest turpitude.
- ⁸ A third I will sing to thee. If the mighty rivers to thy life's peril fall, Horn and Rud, may they flow down to Hel, and for thee ever be diminished.

- ⁹ A fourth I will sing to thee. If foes assail thee ready on the dangerous road, their hearts shall fail them, and to thee be power, and their minds to peace be turned.
- ¹⁰ A fifth I will sing to thee. If bonds be cast on thy limbs, friendly spells I will let on thy joints be sung, and the lock from thy arms shall start, [and from thy feet the fetter].
- ¹¹ A sixth I will sing to thee. If on the sea thou comest, more stormy than men have known it, air and water shall in a bag attend thee, and a tranquil course afford thee.
- ¹² A seventh I will sing to thee. If on a mountain high frost should assail thee, deadly cold shall not thy carcase injure, nor draw thy body to thy limbs.
- ¹³ An eighth I will sing to thee. If night overtake thee, when out on the misty way, that the dead Christian woman no power may have to do thee harm.
- ¹⁴ A ninth I will sing to thee. If with a far-famed spear-armed Jotun thou words exchangest, of words and wit to thy mindful heart abundance shall be given.
- ¹⁵ Go now ever where calamity may be, and no harm shall obstruct thy wishes. On a stone fast in the earth I have stood within the door, while songs I sang to thee.
- ¹⁶ My son! bear hence thy mother's words, and in thy breast let them dwell; for happiness abundant shalt thou have in life, while of my words thou art mindful.

The Song Of The Sun

- ¹ Of life and property a fierce freebooter despoiled mankind; over the ways beset by him might no one living pass.
- ² Alone he ate most frequently, no one invited he to his repast; until weary, and with failing strength, a wandering guest came from the way.
- ³ In need of drink that way-worn man, and hungry feigned to be: with trembling heart he seemed to trust him who had been so evil-minded.
- ⁴ Meat and drink to the weary one he gave, all with upright heart; on God he thought, the traveller's wants supplied; for he felt he was an evil-doer.
- ⁵ Up stood the guest, he evil meditated, he had not been kindly treated; his sin within him swelled, he while sleeping murdered his wary cautious host.
- ⁶ The God of heaven he prayed for help, when being struck he woke; but he was doomed the sins of him on himself to take, whom sackless he had slain.
- ⁷ Holy angels came from heaven above, and took to them his soul: in a life of purity it shall ever live with the almighty God.
- ⁸ Riches and health no one may command, though all go smoothly with him. To many that befalls which they least expect. No one may command his tranquillity.
- ⁹ Unnar and Sævaldi never imagined that happiness would fall from them, yet naked they became, and of all bereft, and, like wolves, ran to the forest.
- ¹⁰ The force of pleasure has many a one bewailed. Cares are often caused by women; pernicious they become, although the mighty God them pure created.

- ¹¹ United were Svafud and Skarthedin, neither might without the other be, until to frenzy they were driven for a woman: she was destined for their perdition.
- ¹² On account of that fair maid, neither of them cared for games or joyous days; no other thing could they in memory bear than that bright form.
- ¹³ Sad to them were the gloomy nights, no sweet sleep might they enjoy: but from that anguish rose hate intense between the faithful friends.
- ¹⁴ Hostile deeds are in most places fiercely avenged. To the holm they went, for that fair woman, and each one found his death.
- ¹⁵ Arrogance should no one entertain: I indeed have seen that those who follow her, for the most part, turn from God.
- ¹⁶ Rich were both, Radey and Vebogi, and thought only of their well-being; now they sit and turn their sores to various hearths.
- ¹⁷ They in themselves confided, and thought themselves alone to be above all people; but their lot Almighty God was pleased otherwise to appoint.
- ¹⁸ A life of luxury they led, in many ways, and had gold for sport. Now they are requited, so that they must walk between frost and fire.
- ¹⁹ To thy enemies trust thou never, although they speak thee fair: promise them good: 'tis good to have another's injury as a warning.
- ²⁰ So it befell Sorli the upright, when he placed himself in Vigolf's power; he confidently trusted him, his brother's murderer, but he proved false.
- ²¹ Peace to them he granted, with heart sincere; they in return promised him gold, feigned themselves friends, while they together drank; but then came forth their guile.
- ²² Then afterwards, on the second day, when they in Rygiardal rode, they with swords wounded him who sackless was, and let his life go forth.
- ²³ His corpse they dragged (on a lonely way, and cut up piecemeal) into a well, and would it hide; but the holy Lord beheld from heaven.
- ²⁴ His soul summoned home the true God into his joy to come; but the evil doers will, I wean, late be from torments called.
- ²⁵ Do thou pray the Disir of the Lord's words to be kind to thee in spirit: for a week after, all shall then go happily, according to thy will.
- ²⁶ For a deed of ire that thou hast perpetrated, never atone with evil: the weeping thou shalt soothe with benefits: that is salutary to the soul.
- ²⁷ On God a man shall for good things call, on him who has mankind created. Greatly sinful is every man who late finds the Father.
- ²⁸ To be solicited, we opine, is with all earnestness for that which is lacking: of all things may be destitute he who for nothing asks: few heed the wants of the silent.
- ²⁹ Late I came, though called betimes, to the supreme Judge's door; thitherward I yearn; for it was promised me, he who craves it shall of the feast partake.

³⁰ Sins are the cause that sorrowing we depart from this world: no one stands in dread, if he does no evil: good it is to be blameless.

³¹ Like unto wolves all those seem who have a faithless mind: so he will prove who has to go through ways strewed with gleeds.

³² Friendly counsels, and wisely composed, seven I have imparted to thee: consider thou them well, and forget them never: they are all useful to learn.

³³ Of that I will speak, how happy I was in the world, and secondly, how the sons of men reluctantly become corpses.

³⁴ Pleasure and pride deceive the sons of men who after money crave; shining riches at last become a sorrow: many have riches driven to madness.

³⁵ Steeped in joys I seemed to men; for little did I see before me: our worldly sojourn has the Lord created in delights abounding.

³⁶ Bowed down I sat, long I tottered, of life was most desirous; but He prevailed who was all-powerful: onward are the ways of the doomed.

³⁷ The cords of Hel were tightly bound round my sides; I would rend them, but they were strong. 'Tis easy free to go.

³⁸ I alone knew, how on all sides my pains increased. The maids of Hel each eve with horror bade me to their home.

³⁹ The sun I saw, true star of day, sink in its roaring home; but Hel's grated doors on the other side I heard heavily creaking.

⁴⁰ The sun I saw with blood-red beams beset: (fast was I then from this world declining) mightier she appeared, in many ways, than she was before.

⁴¹ The sun I saw, and it seemed to me as if I saw a glorious god: I bowed before her, for the last time, in the world of men.

⁴² The sun I saw: she beamed forth so that I seemed nothing to know; but Gioll's streams roared from the other side mingled much with blood.

⁴³ The sun I saw, with quivering eyes, appalled and shrinking; for my heart in great measure was dissolved in languor.

⁴⁴ The sun I saw seldom sadder; I had then almost from the world declined: my tongue was as wood become, and all was cold without me.

⁴⁵ The sun I saw never after, since that gloomy day; for the mountain-waters closed over me, and I went called from torments.

⁴⁶ The star of hope, when I was born, fled from my breast away; high it flew, settled nowhere, so that it might find rest.

⁴⁷ Longer than all was that one night, when stiff on my straw I lay; then becomes manifest the divine word: "Man is the same as earth."

⁴⁸ The Creator God can it estimate and know, (He who made heaven and earth) how forsaken many go hence, although from kindred parted.

- ⁴⁹ Of his works each has the reward: happy is he who does good. Of my wealth bereft, to me was destined a bed strewed with sand.
- ⁵⁰ Bodily desires men oftentimes seduce, of them has many a one too much: water of baths was of all things to me most loathsome.
- ⁵¹ In the Norns' seat nine days I sat, thence I was mounted on a horse: there the giantess's sun shone grimly through the dripping clouds of heaven.
- ⁵² Without and within, I seemed to traverse all the seven nether worlds: up and down, I sought an easier way, where I might have the readiest paths.
- ⁵³ Of that is to be told, which I first saw, when I to the worlds of torment came:--scorched birds, which were souls, flew numerous as flies.
- ⁵⁴ From the west I saw Von's dragons fly, and Glæval's paths obscure: their wings they shook; wide around me seemed the earth and heaven to burst.
- ⁵⁵ The sun's hart I saw from the south coming, he was by two together led: his feet stood on the earth, but his horns reached up to heaven.
- ⁵⁶ From the north riding I saw the sons of Nidi, they were seven in all: from full horns, the pure mead they drank from the heaven-god's well.
- ⁵⁷ The wind was silent, the waters stopped their course; then I heard a doleful sound: for their husbands false-faced women ground earth for food.
- ⁵⁸ Gory stones those dark women turned sorrowfully; bleeding hearts hung out of their breasts, faint with much affliction.
- ⁵⁹ Many a man I saw wounded go on those gleed-strewed paths; their faces seemed to me all reddened with reeking blood.
- ⁶⁰ Many men I saw to earth gone down, who holy service might not have; heathen stars stood above their heads, painted with deadly characters.
- ⁶¹ I saw those men who much envy harbour at another's fortune; bloody runes were on their breasts graved painfully.
- ⁶² I there saw men many not joyful; they were all wandering wild: this he earns, who by this world's vices is infatuated.
- ⁶³ I saw those men who had in various ways acquired other's property: in shoals they went to Castle-covetous, and burthens bore of lead.
- ⁶⁴ I saw those men who many had of life and property bereft: through the breasts of those men passed strong venomous serpents.
- ⁶⁵ I saw those men who the holy days would not observe: their hands were on hot stones firmly nailed.
- ⁶⁶ I saw those men who from pride valued themselves too highly; their garments ludicrously were in fire enveloped.
- ⁶⁷ I saw those men who had many false words of others uttered: Hel's ravens from their heads their eyes miserably tore.

- ⁶⁸ All the horrors thou wilt not get to know which Hel's inmates suffer. Pleasant sins end in painful penalties: pains ever follow pleasure.
- ⁶⁹ I saw those men who had much given for God's laws; pure lights were above their heads brightly burning.
- ⁷⁰ I saw those men who from exalted mind helped the poor to aid: angels, read holy books above their heads.
- ⁷¹ I saw those men who with much fasting had their bodies wasted: God's angels bowed before them: that is the highest joy.
- ⁷² I saw those men who had put food into their mothers' mouth: their couches were on the rays of heaven pleasantly placed.
- ⁷³ Holy virgins had cleanly washed the souls from sin of those men, who for a long time had themselves tormented.
- ⁷⁴ Lofty cars I saw towards heaven going; they were on the way to God: men guided them who had been murdered wholly without crime.
- ⁷⁵ Almighty Father! greatest Son! holy Spirit of heaven! Thee I pray, who hast us all created; free us all from miseries.
- ⁷⁶ Biugvor and Iyistvor sit at Herdir's doors, on resounding seat; iron gore falls from their nostrils, which kindles hate among men.
- ⁷⁷ Odin's wife rows in earth's ship, eager after pleasures; her sails are reefed late, which on the ropes of desire are hung.
- ⁷⁸ Son! I thy father and Solkatla's sons have alone obtained for thee that horn of hart, which from the grave-mound bore the wise Vigdvalin.
- ⁷⁹ Here are runes which have engraven Niord's daughters nine, Radvor the eldest, and the youngest Kreppvor, and their seven sisters.
- ⁸⁰ How much violence have they perpetrated Svaf and Svaflogi! bloodshed they have excited, and wounds have sucked, after an evil custom.
- ⁸¹ This lay, which I have taught thee, thou shalt before the living sing, the Sun-Song, which will appear in many parts no fiction.
- ⁸² Here we part, but again shall meet on the day of men's rejoicing. Oh Lord! unto the dead grant peace, and to the living comfort.
- ⁸³ Wondrous lore has in dream to thee been sung, but thou hast seen the truth: no man has been so wise created that has before heard the Sun-song.

The Lay Of Volund

¹ Maids flew from the south, through the murky wood, Alvit the young, fate to fulfil. On the lake's margin they sat to repose, the southern damsels; precious flax they spun.

² One of them, of maidens fairest, to his comely breast Egil clasped. Svanhvit was the second, she a swan's plumage bore; but the third, their sister, the white neck clasped of Volund.

- ³ There they stayed seven winters through; but all the eighth were with longing seized; and in the ninth fate parted them. The maidens yearned for the murky wood, the young Alvit, fate to fulfil.
- ⁴ From the chase came the ardent hunters, Slagfid and Egil, found their house deserted, went out and in, and looked around. Egil went east after Orlun, and Slagfid west after Svanhvit;
- ⁵ But Volund alone remained in Ulfdal. He the red gold set with the hard gem, well fastened all the rings on linden bast, and so awaited his bright consort, if to him she would return.
- ⁶ It was told to Nidud, the Niarars' lord, that Volund alone remained in Ulfdal. In the night went men, in studded corslets, their shields glistened in the waning moon.
- ⁷ From their saddles they alighted at the house's gable, thence went in through the house. On the bast they saw the rings all drawn, seven hundred, which the warrior owned.
- ⁸ And they took them off, and they put them on, all save one, which they bore away. Came then from the chase the ardent hunter, Volund, gliding on the long way.
- ⁹ To the fire he went, bear's flesh to roast. Soon blazed the brushwood, and the arid fir, the wind-dried wood, before Volund.
- ¹⁰ On the bearskin sat, his rings counted, the Alfar's companion: one was missing. He thought that Hlodver's daughter had it, the young Alvit, and that she was returned.
- ¹¹ So long he sat until he slept; and he awoke of joy bereft: on his hands he felt heavy constraints, and round his feet fetters clasped.
- ¹² "Who are the men that on the rings' possessor have laid bonds? and me have bound?"
- ¹³ Then cried Nidud, the Niarars' lord: "Whence gottest thou, Volund! Alfars' chief! our gold, in Ulfdal?"
- ¹⁴ "No gold was here in Grani's path, far I thought our land from the hills of Rhine. I mind me that we more treasures possessed, when, a whole family, we were at home.
- ¹⁵ Hladgud and Hervor were of Hlodver born; known was Orlun, Kiar's daughter, she entered into the house, stood on the floor, her voice moderated: Now is he not mirthful, who from the forest comes."
- ¹⁶ King Nidud gave to his daughter Bodvild the ring which had been taken from the bast in Volund's house; but he himself bore the sword that had belonged to Volund. The queen said:
- ¹⁷ His teeth he shows, when the sword he sees, and Bodvild's ring he recognizes: threatening are his eyes as a glistening serpent's: let be severed his sinews' strength; and set him then in Sævarstad.
- ¹⁸ This was done; he was hamstrung, and then set on a certain small island near the shore, called Sævarstad. He there forged for the king all kinds of jewellery work. No one was allowed to go to him, except the king. Volund said:
- ¹⁹ "The sword shines in Nidud's belt, which I whetted as I could most skilfully, and tempered, as seemed to me most cunningly. That bright blade forever is taken from me: never shall I see it borne into Volund's smithy.
- ²⁰ Now Bodvild wears my consort's red-gold rings: for this I have no indemnity." He sat and never slept, and his hammer plied; but much more speedy vengeance devised on Nidud.

- ²¹ The two young sons of Nidud ran in at the door to look, in Sævarstad. To the chest they came, for the keys asked; manifest was their grudge, when therein they looked.
- ²² Many necklaces were there, which to those youths appeared of the red gold to be, and treasures. "Come ye two alone, to-morrow come; that gold shall be given to you.
- ²³ Tell it not to the maidens, nor to the household folk, nor to any one, that ye have been with me." Early called one the other, brother, brother: "Let us go see the rings."
- ²⁴ To the chest they came, for the keys asked; manifest was their grudge, when therein they looked. Of those children he the heads cut off, and under the prison's mixen laid their bodies.
- ²⁵ But their skulls beneath the hair he in silver set, and to Nidud gave; and of their eyes precious stones he formed, which to Nidud's wily wife he sent.
- ²⁶ But of the teeth of the two breast-ornaments he made, and to Bodvild sent. Then did Bodvild praise the ring: to Volund brought it, when she had broken it: "I dare to no tell it, save alone to thee."
- ²⁷ Volund: "I will so repair the fractured gold, that to thy father it shall fairer seem, and to thy mother much more beautiful, and to thyself, in the same degree."
- ²⁸ He then brought her beer, that he might succeed the better, as on her seat she fell asleep. "Now have I my wrongs avenged, all save one in the wood perpetrated."
- ²⁹ "I wish," said Volund, "that on my feet I were, of the use of which Nidud's men have deprived me." Laughing Volund rose in air: Bodvild weeping from the isle departed. She mourned her lover's absence, and for her father's wrath.
- ³⁰ Stood without Nidud's wily wife; then she went in through the hall; but he on the enclosure sat down to rest. "Art thou awake Niarars' lord!"
- ³¹ "Ever am I awake, joyless I lie to rest, when I call to mind my children's death: my head is chilled, cold are to me thy counsels. Now with Volund I desire to speak."
- ³² "Tell me, Volund, Alfars' chief! of my brave boys what is become?"
- ³³ "Oaths shalt thou first to me swear, by board of ship, by rim of shield, by shoulder of steed, by edge of sword, that thou wilt not slay the wife of Volund, nor of my bride cause the death; although a wife I have whom ye know, or offspring within thy court.
- ³⁴ To the smithy go, which thou hast made, there wilt thou the bellows find with blood besprinkled. The heads I severed of thy boys, and under the prison's mixen laid their bodies.
- ³⁵ But their skulls beneath the hair I in silver set, and to Nidud gave; and of their eyes precious stones I formed, which to Nidud's wily wife I sent.
- ³⁶ Of the teeth of the two, breast-ornaments I made, and to Bodvild sent. Now Bodvild goes big with child, the only daughter of you both."
- ³⁷ "Word didst thou never speak that more afflicted me, or for which I would more severely punish thee. There is no man so tall that he from thy horse can take thee, or so skilful that he can shoot thee down, thence where thou floatest up in the sky."
- ³⁸ Laughing Volund rose in air, but Nidud sad remained sitting.
- ³⁹ "Rise up Thakrad, my best of thralls! bid Bodvild, my fair-browed daughter, in bright attire come, with her sire to speak.

⁴⁰ Is it, Bodvild! true what has been told to me, that thou and Volund in the isle together sat?"

⁴¹ "True it is, Nidud! what has been told to thee, that Volund and I in the isle together sat, in an unlucky hour: would it had never been! I could not against him strive, I might not against him prevail."

The Lay Of Helgi Hiorvard's Son

¹ Hast thou seen Sigrlinn, Svafnir's daughter, of maidens fairest, in her pleasant home? though fair the wives of Hiorvard seem to men in Glasis-lund.

² Atli: With Atli, Idmund's son, sagacious bird! wilt thou further speak?

³ Bird: I will if the prince will offer to me, and I may choose what I will from the king's court.

⁴ Atli: Choose not Hiorvard nor his sons, nor the fair daughters of that prince, nor the wives which the king has. Let us together bargain; that is the part of friends.

⁵ Bird: A fane I will chose, offer steeds many, gold-horned cows from the chief's land, if Sigrlinn sleep in his arms, and unconstrained with that prince shall live.

⁶ This took place before Atli's journey; but after his return, when the king asked his tidings, he said:

⁷ Labour we have had, but errand none performed; our horses failed us in the vast fell; we had afterwards a swampy lake to ford; then was denied us Svafnir's daughter with rings adorned, whom we would obtain.

⁸ The king commanded them to go a second time, and also went himself. But when they had ascended a fell, and saw in Svavaland the country on fire, and a great reek from the horses of cavalry, the king rode down the fell into the country, and took up his night-quarters by a river. Atli kept watch, and crossed the river, and came to a house, on which sat a great bird to guard it, but was asleep. Atli shot the bird dead with an arrow. In the house he found the king's daughter Sigrlinn, and Alof daughter of Franmar, and brought them both away with him. The jarl Franmar had taken the form of an eagle, and protected them from a hostile army by sorcery. There was a king named Hrodmar, a wooer of Sigrlinn: he had slain the king of Svavaland, and ravaged and burnt the country. Hiorvard obtained Sigrlinn, and Atli Alof. Hiorvard and Sigrlinn had a son tall and comely: he was taciturn and had no fixed name. As he was sitting on a mound he saw nine Valkyriur, one of whom was of most noble aspect. She said:

⁹ Late wilt thou, Helgi! rings possess, a potent warrior, or Rodulsvellir,--so at morn the eagle sang--if thou art ever silent; although thou, prince! a fierce mood mayest show.

¹⁰ Helgi: What wilt thou let accompany the name of Helgi, maid of aspect bright! since that thou art pleased to give me? Think well over what thou art saying. I will not accept it, unless I have thee also.

¹¹ Valkyria: Swords I know lying in Sigarsholm, fewer by four than five times ten: one of them is of all the best, of shields the bale, with gold adorned.

¹² A ring is on the hilt, courage in the midst, in the point terror for his use who owns it: along the edge a blood-stained serpent lies, and on the guard the serpent casts its tail.

¹³ There was a king named Eylimi; Svava was his daughter; she was a Valkyria and rode through air and water. It was she who gave Helgi that name, and afterwards often protected him in battle. Helgi said:

¹⁴ Hiorvard! thou art not a king of wholesome counsel, leader of people! renowned though thou mayest be. Thou hast let fire devour the homes of princes, though harm to thee they none have done.

¹⁵ But Hrodmar shall of the rings dispose, which our relations have possessed. That chief recks little of his life; he thinks only to obtain the heritage of the dead.

¹⁶ Hiorvard answers, that he will supply Helgi with an army, if he will avenge his mother's father. Helgi thereupon seeks the sword that Svava had indicated to him. Afterwards he and Atli went and slew Hrodmar, and performed many deeds of valour. He killed the Jotun Hati, as he sat on a crag. Helgi and Atli lay with their ships in Hatafiord. Atli kept watch in the first part of the night. Hrimgerd, Hati's daughter, said:

¹⁷ Who are the chieftains in Hatafiord? With shields are your ships bedecked; boldly ye bear yourselves, few things ye fear, I ween: tell me how your king is named.

¹⁸ Atli: Helgi is his name; but thou nowhere canst to the chief do harm; iron forts are around the prince's fleet; giantesses may not assail us.

¹⁹ Hrimgerd: How art thou named? most powerful champion! How do men call thee? Thy king confides in thee, since in the ship's fair prow he grants thee place.

²⁰ Atli: Atli I am named, fierce I shall prove to thee; towards giantesses I am most hostile. The humid prow I have oft occupied, and the night-riders slain.

²¹ How art thou called? corpse-greedy giantess! hag! name thy father. Nine rasts shouldst thou be underground, and a forest grow on thy breast.

²² Hrimgerd: Hrimgerd I am called, Hati was my father called, whom I knew the mightiest Jotun. He many women had from their dwellings taken, until him Helgi slew.

²³ Atli: Thou wast, hag! before the prince's ships, and layest before them in the fiord's mouth. The chieftain's warriors thou wouldst to Ran consign, had a bar not crossed thee.

²⁴ Hrimgerd: Now, Atli! thou art wrong, methinks thou art dreaming; thy brows thou lettest over thy eyelids fall. My mother lay before the prince's ships; I Hlodvard's sons drowned in the ocean.

²⁵ Thou wouldst neigh, Atli! if thou wert not a gelding. See! Hrimgerd cocks her tail. Thy heart, methinks, Atli! is in thy hinder part, although thy voice is clear.

²⁶ Atli: I think I shall the stronger prove, if thou desirest to try; and I can step from the port to land. Thou shalt be soundly cudgeled, if I heartily begin, and let thy tail fall, Hrimgerd!

²⁷ Hrimgerd: Just come on shore, Atli! if in thy strength thou trustest, and let us meet in Varinsvik. A rib-roasting thou shalt get, brave boy! if in my claws thou comest.

²⁸ Atli: I will not come before the men awake, and o'er the king hold watch. It would not surprise me, if from beneath our ship some hag arose.

²⁹ Hrimgerd: Keep watch, Atli! and to Hrimgerd pay the blood-fine for Hati's death. If one night she may sleep with the prince, she for the slain will be indemnified.

³⁰ Helgi: Lodin is named he who shall thee possess, thou to mankind art loathsome. In Tholley dwells that Thurs, that dog-wise Jotun, of all rock-dwellers the worst: he is a fitting man for thee.

³¹ Hrimgerd: Helgi would rather have her who last night guarded the port and men, the gold-bright maiden. She methought had strength, she stept from port to land, and so secured your fleet. She was alone the cause that I could not the king's men slay.

³² Helgi: Hear now, Hrimgerd! If I may indemnify thee, say fully to the king: was it one being only, that saved the prince's ships, or went many together?

³³ Hrimgerd: Three troops of maidens; though one maid foremost rode, bright, with helmed head. Their horses shook themselves, and from their manes there sprang dew into the deep dales, hail on the lofty trees, whence comes fruitfulness to man. To me all that I saw was hateful.

³⁴ Atli: Look eastward now, Hrimgerd! whether Helgi has not stricken thee with death-bearing words. By land and water the king's fleet is safe, and the chief's men also.

³⁵ It is now day, Hrimgerd! and Atli has thee detained to thy loss of life. A ludicrous haven-mark 'twill, indeed, be, where thou a stone-image standest.

³⁶ King Helgi was a renowned warrior. He came to King Eylimi and demanded his daughter Svava. Helgi and Svava were united, and loved each other ardently. Svava remained at home with her father, but Helgi was engaged in warfare. Svava was a Valkyria as before. Hedin was at home with his father, King Hiorvard in Norway. Returning home alone from the forest on a Yule-eve, Hedin met a troll-wife riding on a wolf, with serpents for reins, who offered to attend him, but he declined her offer; whereupon she said: "Thou shalt pay for this at the Bragi-cup." In the evening solemn vows were made, and the son-hog was led forth, on which the guests laid their hands, and then made solemn vows at the Bragi-cup. Hedin bound himself by a vow to possess Svava, the beloved of his brother Helgi; but repented it so bitterly that he left home and wandered through wild paths to the southern lands, and there found his brother Helgi. Helgi said:

³⁷ Welcome art thou, Hedin! What new tidings canst thou give from Norway? Why art thou, prince! from the land driven, and alone art come to find us?

³⁸ Hedin: Of a much greater crime I am guilty. I have chosen a royal daughter, thy bride, at the Bragi-cup.

³⁹ Helgi: Accuse not thyself; true will prove words at drinking uttered by us both. Me a chieftain has to the strand summoned; within three nights I must be there. 'Tis to me doubtful whether I return; then may well such befall, if it so must be.

⁴⁰ Hedin: Thou saidst, Helgi! that Hedin well deserved of thee, and great gifts: It would beseem thee better thy sword to redden, than to grant peace to thy foes.

⁴¹ Helgi so spoke, for he had a foreboding that his death was at hand, and that his fylgiur (attendant spirit) had accosted Hedin, when he saw the woman riding on a wolf. There was a king named Alf, a son of Hrodmar, who had appointed a place of combat with Helgi in Sigar's plain within three days. Then said Helgi:

⁴² On a wolf rode, at evening twilight, a woman who him offered to attend. She well knew, that the son of Sigrlinn would be slain, on Sigar's plain.

⁴³ There was a great conflict, in which Helgi got his death-wound.

⁴⁴ Helgi sent Sigar riding, after Eylimi's only daughter: he bade her quickly be in readiness, if she would find the king alive.

- ⁴⁵ Sigar: Helgi has me hither sent, with thee, Svava! thyself to speak. Thee, said the king, he fain would see, ere the noble-born breathes forth his last.
- ⁴⁶ Svava: What has befallen Helgi, Hiorvard's son? I am sorely by afflictions stricken. Has the sea him deluded, or the sword wounded? On that man I will harm inflict.
- ⁴⁷ Sigar: This morning fell, at Frekastein, the king who beneath the sun was of all the best. Alf has complete victory, though this time it should not have been!
- ⁴⁸ Helgi: Hail to thee, Svava! Thy love thou must divide: this in this world, methinks, is our last meeting. They say the chieftain's wounds are bleeding. The sword came too near my heart.
- ⁴⁹ I pray thee, Svava!--weep not, my wife!--if thou wilt my voice obey, that for Hedin thou a couch prepare, and the young prince in thy arms clasp.
- ⁵⁰ Svava: I had said, in our pleasant home, when for me Helgi rings selected, that I would not gladly, after my king's departure, an unknown prince clasp in my arms.
- ⁵¹ Hedin: Kiss me, Svava! I will not return, Rogheim to behold, nor Rodulsfioll, before I have avenged Hiorvard's son, who was of kings under the sun the best.
- ⁵² Helgi and Svava were, it is said, born again.

The First Lay Of Helgi Hundingcide

- ¹ It was in times of yore, when the eagles screamed, holy waters fell from the heavenly hills; then to Helgi, the great of soul, Borghild gave birth in Bralund.
- ² In the mansion it was night: the Norns came, who should the prince's life determine. They him decreed a prince most famed to be, and of leaders accounted best.
- ³ With all their might they span the fatal threads, when that [he] burghs should overthrow in Bralund. They stretched out the golden cord, and beneath the middle of the moon's mansion fixed it.
- ⁴ East and west they hid the ends, where the prince had lands between; towards the north Neri's sister cast a chain, which she bade last for ever.
- ⁵ One thing disquieted the Ylfing's offspring, and the woman who had the child brought forth. Sitting on a lofty tree, on prey intent, a raven to a raven said: "I know something.
- ⁶ Stands cased in mail Sigmund's son, one day old: now is our day come. His eyes are piercing as a warrior's; the wolf's friend is he: we shall rejoice!"
- ⁷ He to the folk appeared a noble chief to be; among men 'twas said that happy times were come; went the king himself from the din of war, noble garlic to bring to the young prince;
- ⁸ Gave him the name of Helgi, and Hringstadir, Solfioll, Snæfioll, and Sigarsvellir, Hringstad, Hatun, and Himinvangar, a sword ornate, to Sinfiotli's brother.
- ⁹ Then grew up, in his friends' bosom, the high-born youth, in joyous splendour. He paid and gave gold for deserts; nor spared the chief the blood-stained sword.
- ¹⁰ A short time only the leader let warfare cease. When the prince was fifteen winters old, he caused the fierce Hunding to fall, who long had ruled over lands and people.

- ¹¹ The sons of Hunding afterwards demanded from Sigmund's son treasure and rings; because they had on the prince to avenge their great loss of wealth, and their father's death.
- ¹² The prince would neither the blood-fine pay, nor for the slain indemnity would give. They might expect, he said, a terrific storm of grey arrows, and Odin's ire.
- ¹³ The warriors went to the trysting place of swords, which they had appointed at Logafioll. Broken was Frodi's peace between the foes: Vidrir's hounds went about the isle slaughter-greedy.
- ¹⁴ The leader sat under the Arastein, after he had slain Alf and Eyiolf, Hiorvard and Havard, sons of Hunding: he had destroyed all Geirmimir's race.
- ¹⁵ Then gleamed a ray from Logafioll, and from that ray lightnings issued; then appeared, in the field of air, a helmed band of Valkyriur: their corslets were with blood besprinkled, and from their spears shone beams of light.
- ¹⁶ Forthwith inquired the chieftain bold, from the wolf-congress of the southern Disir, whether they would, with the warriors, that night go home?--then was a clash of arms!
- ¹⁷ One from her horse, Hogni's daughter, stilled the crash of shields, and to the leader said: "We have, I ween, other objects than with princely warriors to drink beer.
- ¹⁸ My father has his daughter promised to the fierce son of Granmar; but I have, Helgi! declared Hodbrodd, the proud prince, like to a cat's son.
- ¹⁹ That chief will come in a few days, unless thou him call to a hostile meeting; or the maiden take from the prince."
- ²⁰ Helgi: Fear thou not Isung's slayer; there shall be first a clash of foes, unless I am dead.
- ²¹ Thence sent messengers the potent prince through air and over water, succours to demand, and abundance of ocean's gleam to men to offer, and to their sons.
- ²² "Bid them speedily to the ships to go, and those from Brandey to hold them ready." There the king abode, until thither came warriors in hundreds from Hedinsey.
- ²³ From the strands also, and from Stafnsnes, a naval force went out, with gold adorned. Helgi then of Hiorleif asked: "Hast thou mustered the valiant people?"
- ²⁴ But the young king the other answered: "Slowly" said he "are counted from Tronuey the long-beaked ships, under the seafarers, which sail without in the Oresund,--
- ²⁵ Twelve hundred faithful men; though in Hatun there is more than half of the king's host--We are to war inured."
- ²⁶ Then the steersman threw the ship's tents aside, that the princes' people might awake, and the noble chiefs the dawn might see; and the warriors hauled the sails up to the mast in Varinsfiord.
- ²⁷ There was a dash of oars, and clash of iron, shield against shield resounded: the vikings rowed; roaring went, under the chieftains the royal fleet far from the land.
- ²⁸ So might be heard, when together came the tempest's sister and the long keels, as when rock and surge on each other break.
- ²⁹ Higher still bade Helgi the deep sail be hauled. No port gave shelter to the crews; when Oegir's terrific daughter the chieftains' vessels would o'erwhelm,

³⁰ But from above Sigrun intrepid, saved them and their fleet also; from the hand of Ran powerfully was wrested the royal ship at Gnipalund.

³¹ At eve they halted in Unavagar; the splendid ships might into port have floated, but the crews, from Svarinshaug, in hostile mood, espied the host.

³² Then demanded the god-born Gudmund: "Who is the chieftain that commands the fleet, and that formidable force brings to our land?"

³³ Sinfiotli said, slinging up on the yard a red-hued shield with golden rim;--He at the strait kept watch, and able was to answer, and with nobles words exchange--

³⁴ "Tell it at eve, when you feed your pigs, and your dogs lead to their food, that the Ylfings from the east are come, ready to fight at Gnipalund.

³⁵ Hodbrodd will Helgi find in the fleet's midst, a king hard to make flee, who has oft the eagles sated, while thou wast at the mills, kissing the thrall-wenches.

³⁶ Gudmund: Little dost thou remember of ancient saws, when of the noble thou falsehoods utterest. Thou hast been eating wolves' dainties, and of thy brother wast the slayer; wounds hast thou often sucked with cold mouth; every where loathed, thou hast crawled in caverns.

³⁷ Sinfiotli: Thou wast a Valacrone in Varinsey, cunning as a fox, a spreader of lies. Thou saidst thou no man wouldst ever marry, no corsleted warrior, save Sinfiotli.

³⁸ A mischievous crone wast thou, a giantess, a Valkyria, insolent, monstrous, in Alfather's hall. All the Einheriar fought with each other, deceitful woman! for thy sake. Nine wolves we begat in Sagunes; I alone was father of them all.

³⁹ Gudmund: Father thou wast not of Fenriswolves, older than all, as far as I remember; since by Gnipalund, the Thurs-maidens thee emasculated upon Thorsnes.

⁴⁰ Thou wast Siggeir's stepson, at home under the benches layest, accustomed to the wolf's howl out in the forests: calamity of every kind came over thee, when thou didst lacerate thy brother's breast. Notorious thou mad'st thyself by thy atrocious works.

⁴¹ Sinfiotli: Thou wast Grani's bride at Bravollr, hadst a golden bit, ready for the course. Many a time have I ridden thee tired, hungry and saddled, through the fells, thou hag!

⁴² Gudmund: A graceless lad thou wast thought to be, when Gulnir's goats thou didst milk. Another time thou wast a giantess's daughter, a tattered wretch. Wilt thou a longer chat?

⁴³ Sinfiotli: I rather would at Frekastein the ravens cram with thy carcase, than thy dogs lead to their meat, or thy hogs feed. May the fiend deal with thee!

⁴⁴ Helgi: "Much more seemly, Sinfiotli! would it be for you both in battle to engage, and the eagles gladden, than with useless words to contend, however princes may foster hate.

⁴⁵ Not good to me appear Granmar's sons, yet 'tis right that princes should speak the truth: they have shown, at Moinsheimar, that they have courage to draw the sword."--

⁴⁶ Rapidly they their horses made to run, Svipud and Svegiud, to Solheimar, over dewy dales, dark mountain-sides; trembled the sea of mist, where the men went.

⁴⁷ The king they met at the burgh's gate, to the prince announced the hostile advent. Without stood Hodbrodd with helmet decked: he the speed noticed of his kinsmen. "Why have ye Hniflungs such wrathful countenances?"

⁴⁸ "Hither to the shore are come rapid keels, towering masts, and long yards, shields many, and smooth-shaven oars, a king's noble host, joyous Ylfings.

⁴⁹ Fifteen bands are come to land; but there are out at sea, before Gnipalund, seven thousand blue-black ocean-beasts with gold adorned; there is by far their greatest multitude. Now will Helgi not delay the conflict."

⁵⁰ Hodbrodd: "Let a bridled steed to the chief assembly run, but Sporvitnir to Sparinsheid; Melnir and Mylnir to Myrkvid; let no man stay behind of those who swords can brandish.

⁵¹ Summon to you Hogni, and the sons of Hring, Atli and Yngvi, Alf the old; they will gladly engage in conflict. We will let the Volsungs find resistance."

⁵² It was a whirlwind, when together came the fallow blades at Frekastein: ever was Helgi Hundingsbani foremost in the host, where men together fought: ardent for battle, disdaining flight; the chieftain had a valiant heart.

⁵³ Then came a maid from heaven, helmed, from above--the clash of arms increased--for the king's protection. Then said Sigrun--well skilled to fly to the host of heroes from Hugin's grove--

⁵⁴ "Unscathed shalt thou, prince! possess thy people, pillar of Yngvi's race! and life enjoy; thou hast laid low the slow of flight, the chief who caused the dread warrior's death. And thee, O king! well beseem both red-gold rings and a powerful maid: unscathed shalt thou, prince! both enjoy, Hogni's daughter, and Hringstadir, victory and lands: then is conflict ended."

The Second Lay Of Helgi Hundingside

¹ "Say thou to Heming, that Helgi bears in mind who the mailed warrior was, whom the men laid low, when the grey wolf ye had within, and King Hunding thought it was Hamal."

² Hamal was the son of Hagal. King Hunding sent men to Hagal in search of Helgi, and Helgi had no other way to save himself than by taking the clothes of a female slave and going to grind. They sought but did not find him. Then said Blind the Baleful:

³ Sharp are the eyes of Hagal's thrall-wench; of no churlish race is she who at the mill stands. The millstones are split, the receiver flies asunder. Now a hard fate has befallen the warrior, when a prince must barley grind: much more fitting to that hand is the falchion's hilt than a mill-handle.

⁴ Hagal answered and said:--

⁵ No wonder 'tis that the receiver rattles, when a royal damsel the handle turns. She hovered higher than the clouds, and, like the vikings, dared to fight, until Helgi made her captive. She is a sister of Sigar and Hogni; therefore has fierce eyes the Ylfing maid.

⁶ Helgi escaped and went on board a ship of war. He slew King Hunding, and was afterwards named Helgi Hundingsbani. He lay with his force in Brunavagar, and carried on "strand-hogg" and ate raw flesh. There was a king named Hogni, whose daughter was Sigrun: she was a Valkyria, and rode through the air and over the sea. She was Svava regenerated. Sigrun rode to Helgi, and said:--

⁷ What men cause a ship along the coasts to float? where do ye warriors a home possess? what await ye in Brunavagar? whither desire ye to explore a way?

⁸ Helgi: Hamal causes a ship along the coasts to float; we have home in Hlesey; a fair wind we await in Brunavagar; eastward we desire to explore a way.

⁹ Sigrun: Where, O prince! hast thou wakened war, or fed the birds of conflict's sisters? Why is thy corslet sprinkled with blood? Why beneath the helm eat ye raw flesh?

¹⁰ Helgi: It was the Ylfings' son's last achievement,--if thou desirest to know--west of the ocean, that I took bears in Bragalund, and the eagles' race with our weapons sated. Now, maiden! I have said what the reasons were, why at sea we little cooked meat ate.

¹¹ Sigrun: To a battle thou alludest. Before Helgi has King Hunding been doomed to fall. In conflict ye have engaged, when your kindred ye avenged, and stained with blood the falchion's edge.

¹² Helgi: Why dost thou suppose, sagacious maiden! that it was they, who their kin avenged? Many a warrior's bold sons there are, and hostile to our kindred.

¹³ Sigrun: I was not far, leader of people! eager, at many a chieftain's end: yet crafty I account Sigmund's son, when in val-runes the slaughter he announces.

¹⁴ A while ago I saw thee commanding the warships, when thou hadst station on the bloody prow, and the cold sea waves were playing. Now, prince! thou wilt from me conceal it, but Hogni's daughter recognizes thee.

¹⁵ Granmar was the name of a powerful prince who dwelt at Svarinshaug. He had many sons: one was called Hodbrodd, the second Gudmund, the third Starkadr. Hodbrodd was at the assembly of kings, and there betrothed himself to Sigrun, the daughter of Hogni. But when she was informed of it, she rode with the Valkyriur through the air and over the sea in quest of Helgi. Helgi was at that time at Logafioll, warring against the sons of Hunding, where he slew Alf and Eyiolf, Hiorvard and Hervard. Being over-fatigued with the conflict, he was sitting under the Arastein, where Sigrun found him, and running to him, threw her arms around his neck, and, kissing him, told him her errand so as it related in the first Volsungakvida.

¹⁶ Sigrun sought the joyous prince, Helgi's hand she forthwith grasped, kissed and addressed the helm-decked king.

¹⁷ Then was the chieftain's mind to the lady turned. She declared that she had loved, with her whole heart, Sigmund's son, before she had seen him.

¹⁸ "To Hodbrodd I was in th' assembly betrothed, but I another prince would have: yet, chieftain! I foresee my kindred's wrath: I have my father's promise broken."

¹⁹ Hogni's daughter spoke not at variance with her heart: she said that Helgi's affection she must possess.

²⁰ Helgi: Care thou not for Hogni's wrath, nor for the evil mind of thy kin. Thou shalt, young maiden! live with me: of a good race thou art, as I perceive.

²¹ Helgi then collected a large fleet and proceeded to Frekastein, and at sea experienced a perilous storm. Lightnings came over them, and the flashes entered the ships. They saw that nine Valkyriur were riding in the air, and recognized Sigrun among them. The storm then abated and they reached land in safety. The sons of Granmar were sitting on a hill as the ships were sailing towards the land. Gudmund leapt on a horse, and rode to explore on the hill by the haven. The Volsungs then lowered their sails, and Gudmund spoke as is before written in the Helgakvida:--

²² "Who is the leader that commands the fleet, and an appalling host leads to our land?"

²³ This said Gudmund, Granmar's son:

²⁴ Who is the warrior that commands the ships, and lets his golden banner wave o'er his prow? No peace seems to me in that ship's front; it casts a warlike glow around the vikings.

²⁵ Sinfiotli, Sigmund's son, answered:

²⁶ Here may Hodbrodd Helgi learn to know, the hard of flight, in the fleet's midst: he the possession holds of thy race; he the fishes' heritage has to him subjected.

²⁷ Gudmund: Therefore ought we first, at Frekastein, to settle together, and decide our quarrels! Hodbrodd! 'tis time vengeance to take, if an inferior lot we long have borne.

²⁸ Sinfiotli: Rather shalt thou, Gudmund! tend goats, and steep mountain-tops shalt climb, have in thy hand a hazel staff, that will better please thee than judgments of the sword.

²⁹ Gudmund rode home with intelligence of the hostile armament; whereupon the sons of Granmar collected a host, and many kings came thither. Among them were Hogni, the father of Sigrun, with his sons, Bragi and Dag. There was a great battle, and all the sons of Hogni, and all their chiefs were slain, except Dag, who obtained peace, and swore oaths to the Volsungs. Sigrun, going among the slain, found Hodbrodd at the point of death. She said:

³⁰ Not will Sigrun of Sefafioll, King Hodbrodd! sink in thy arms: thy life is departed. Oft the axe's blade the head approaches of Granmar's sons.

³¹ She then met Helgi, and was overjoyed. He said:

³² Not to thee, all-wise maiden! are all things granted, though, I say, in somewhat are the Norns to blame. This morn have fallen at Frekastein Bragi and Hogni: I was their slayer.

³³ But at Styrkleifar King Starkadr, and at Hlebiorg the son of Hrollaug. That prince I saw of all most fierce, whose trunk yet fought when the head was far.

³⁴ On the earth lie the greater number of thy kinsmen, to corpses turned. Thou hast not fought the battle, yet 'twas decreed, that thou, potent maiden! shouldst cause the strife.

³⁵ Sigrun then wept. Helgi said:

³⁶ Sigrun! console thyself; a Hild thou hast been to us. Kings cannot conquer fate: gladly would I have them living who are departed, if I might clasp thee to my breast.

³⁷ Helgi obtained Sigrun, and they had sons. Helgi lived not to be old. Dag, the son of Hogni, sacrificed to Odin, for vengeance for his father. Odin lent Dag his spear. Dag met with his relation Helgi in a place called Fioturlund, and pierced him through with his spear. Helgi fell there, but Dag rode to the mountains and told Sigrun what had taken place.

³⁸ Loath am I, sister! sad news to tell thee; for unwillingly I have my sister caused to weep. This morning fell, in Fioturlund, the prince who was on earth the best, and on the necks of warriors stood.

³⁹ Sigrun: Thee shall the oaths all gnaw, which to Helgi thou didst swear, at the limpid Leiptr's water, and at the cold dank wave-washed rock.

⁴⁰ May the ship not move forward, which under thee should move, although the wished-for wind behind thee blow. May the horse not run, which under thee should run, although from enemies thou hast to flee!

⁴¹ May the sword not bite which thou drawest, unless it sing round thy own head. Then would Helgi's death be on thee avenged, if a wolf thou wert, out in the woods, of all good bereft, and every joy, have no sustenance, unless on corpses thou shouldst spring.

⁴² Dag: Sister! thou ravest, and hast lost thy wits, when on thy brother thou callest down such miseries. Odin alone is cause of all the evil; for between relatives he brought the runes of strife.

⁴³ Thy brother offers thee rings of red gold, all Vandilsve and Vigdalir: have half the land, thy grief to compensate, woman ring-adorned! thou and thy sons.

⁴⁴ Sigrun: So happy I shall not sit at Sefafioll, neither at morn nor night, as to feel joy in life, if o'er the people plays not the prince's beam of light; if his war-steed runs not under the chieftain hither, to the gold bit accustomed; if in the king I cannot rejoice.

⁴⁵ So had Helgi struck with fear all his foes and their kindred, as before the wolf the goats run frantic from the fell, of terror full.

⁴⁶ So himself Helgi among warriors bore, as the towering ash is among thorns, or as the fawn, moistened with dew, that more proudly stalks than all the other beasts, and its horns glisten against the sky.

⁴⁷ A mound was raised for Helgi; but when he came to Valhall, Odin offered him the rule over all jointly with himself. Helgi said:

⁴⁸ Thou, Hunding! shalt for every man a foot-bath get, and fire kindle; shalt bind the dogs, to the horses look, to the swine give wash, ere to sleep thou goest.

⁴⁹ A female slave passing at evening by Helgi's mound, saw him riding towards it with many men:

⁵⁰ Is it a delusion which methinks I see, or the powers' dissolution, that ye, dead men, ride, and your horses with spurs urge on, or to warriors is a home journey granted?

⁵¹ Helgi: 'Tis no delusion which thou thinkst to see, nor of mankind the end, although thou seest us, although our horses we with spurs urge on, nor to warriors is a home-journey granted.

⁵² The slave went home and said to Sigrun:

⁵³ Sigrun! go forth from Sefafioll, if the people's chief thou desirest to meet. The mound is opened, Helgi is come, his wounds still bleed; the prince prayed thee that thou wouldst still the trickling blood.

⁵⁴ Sigrun entered the mound to Helgi and said:

⁵⁵ Now am I as glad, at our meeting, as the voracious hawks of Odin, when they of slaughter know; of warm prey, or, dewy-feathered, see the peep of day.

⁵⁶ I will kiss my lifeless king, ere thou thy bloody corslet layest aside. Thy hair is, Helgi! tumid with sweat of death; my prince is all bathed in slaughter-dew; cold, clammy are the hands of Hogni's son. How shall I, prince! for this make thee amends?

⁵⁷ Helgi: Thou art alone the cause, Sigrun of Sefafioll! that Helgi is with sorrow's dew suffused. Thou weapest, gold-adorned! cruel tears, sun-bright daughter of the south! ere to sleep thou goest; each one falls bloody on the prince's breast, wet, cold, and piercing, with sorrow big.

⁵⁸ We shall surely drink delicious draughts, though we have lost life and lands. No one shall a song of mourning sing, though on my breast he wounds behold. Now are women in the mound enclosed, daughters of kings, with us the dead.

⁵⁹ Sigrun prepares a bed in the mound.

⁶⁰ Here, Helgi! have I for thee a peaceful couch prepared, for the Ylfings' son. On thy breast I will, chieftain! repose, as in my hero's lifetime I was wont.

⁶¹ Helgi: Nothing I now declare unlooked for, at Sefafioll, late or early, since in a corpse's arms thou sleepest, Hogni's fair daughter! in a mound, and thou art living, daughter of kings!

⁶² Time 'tis for me to ride on the reddening ways: let the pale horse tread the aerial path. I towards the west must go over Vindhialm's bridge, ere Salgofnir awakens heroes.

⁶³ Helgi and his attendants rode their way, but Sigrun and hers proceeded to their habitation. The following evening Sigrun ordered her serving-maid to hold watch at the mound; but at nightfall, when Sigrun came thither, she said:

⁶⁴ Now would he come, if he to come intended, Sigmund's son, from Odin's halls. I think the hope lessens of the king's coming, since on the ash's boughs the eagles sit, and all the folk to the dreams' tryst are hastening.

⁶⁵ Serving-maid: Be not so rash alone to go, daughter of heroes! to the house of draugs: more powerful are, in the night-season, all dead warriors, than in the light of day.

⁶⁶ Sigrun's life was shortened by grief and mourning. It was a belief in ancient times that men were regenerated, but that is now regarded as an old crone's fancy. Helgi and Sigrun are said to have been regenerated. He was then called Helgi Haddingiaskadi, and she Kara Halfdan's daughter, as it is said in the songs of Kara; and she also was a Valkyria.

Sinfiotli's End

¹ Sigmund Volsung's son was a king in Frankland. Sinfiotli was the eldest of his sons, the second was Helgi, the third Hamund. Borghild, Sigmund's wife, had a brother named Gunnar; but Sinfiotli her stepson and Gunnar both courted one woman, on which account Sinfiotli slew Gunnar. When he came home, Borghild bade him go away, but Sigmund offered the blood-fine, which it was incumbent on her to accept. At the funeral feast Borghild presented the beer: she took a large horn full of poison, and offered it to Sinfiotli; who, when he looked into the horn, and saw that there was poison in it, said to Sigmund: "the drink ferments!" Sigmund took the horn and drank up the contents. It is said that Sigmund was so strong that no poison could hurt him, either outwardly or inwardly; but that all his sons could endure poison outwardly. Borghild bore another horn to Sinfiotli, and prayed him to drink, when all took place as before. Yet a third time she offered him the horn, using reproachful words on his refusing to drink. He said as before to Sigmund, but the latter answered: "Let it pass through thy lips, my son." Sinfiotli drank and instantly died. Sigmund bore him a long way in his arms, and came to a long and narrow firth, where there was a little vessel and one man in it. He offered Sigmund to convey him over the firth; but when Sigmund had borne the corpse into the vessel, the boat was full-laden. The man then said that Sigmund should go before through the firth. He then pushed off his boat and instantly departed.

² King Sigmund sojourned long in Denmark, in Borghild's kingdom, after having espoused her. He then went south to Frankland, to the kingdom he there possessed. There he married Hiordis, the daughter of Eylimi. Sigurd was their son. King Sigmund fell in a battle with the sons of Hunding.

Hiordis was afterwards married to Alf, son of King Hialprek, with whom Sigurd grew up in childhood. Sigmund and his sons exceeded all other men in strength, and stature, and courage, and all accomplishments, though Sigurd was foremost of all; and in old traditions he is mentioned as excelling all men, and as the most renowned of warlike kings.

The First Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide, Or Gripir's Prophecy

- ¹ Who here inhabits, in these towers? what nation's king do people name him?
- ² Geitir: Gripir is named the chief of men, he who rules a firm realm and people.
- ³ Sigurd: Is the wise king of the land at home? Will the chief with me come and converse? With him needs speech an unknown man: I desire speedily Gripir to see.
- ⁴ Geitir: The glad king will of Geitir ask, who the man is that demands speech of Gripir.
- ⁵ Sigurd: Sigurd I am named, born of Sigmund, and Hiordis is the chieftain's mother.
- ⁶ Then went Geitir, Gripir to inform: "Here is a man without, a stranger, come; of aspect he is most distinguished. He desires, king! with thee to speak."
- ⁷ Goes from the hall the lord of men, and the stranger prince kindly greets: "Welcome, Sigurd! better had it been earlier: but do thou, Geitir! take charge of Grani."
- ⁸ They began to talk, and much to tell, when the sagacious men together met. "Tell me, if thou knowest, my mother's brother! how will Sigurd's life fall out?"
- ⁹ Gripir: Thou wilt foremost be of men beneath the sun, exalted high above every king; liberal of gold, but of flight sparing, of aspect comely, and wise of words.
- ¹⁰ Sigurd: Say thou, sage king! more than I ask, thou wise one, to Sigurd, if thou thinkst to see it: what will first happen for my advancement, when from thy dwelling I shall have departed?
- ¹¹ Gripir: First wilt thou, prince! avenge thy father, and for the wrongs of Eylimi wilt retaliate; thou wilt the cruel sons of Hunding boldly lay low; thou wilt have victory.
- ¹² Sigurd: Say, noble king! kinsman mine! with all forethought, as we hold friendly converse; seest thou of Sigurd those bold achievements, that will highest soar under heaven's regions?"
- ¹³ Gripir: Thou alone wilt slay that glistening serpent, which greedy lies on Gnitahaid; thou shalt of both the slayer be, Regin and Fafnir. Gripir tells truly.
- ¹⁴ Sigurd: Riches will abound, if I so bring conflict among men, as thou for certain sayest. Apply thy mind, and at length say what will yet my life befall.
- ¹⁵ Gripir: Thou wilt find Fafnir's lair, and thence wilt take splendid riches, with gold wilt load Grani's back. Thou wilt to Giuki ride, the war-famed prince.
- ¹⁶ Sigurd: Yet must thou, prince! in friendly speech, foresighted king! more relate. I shall be Giuki's guest, and I shall thence depart: what will next my life befall?
- ¹⁷ Gripir: A king's daughter will on a mountain sleep, fair, in corslet cased, after Helgi's death. Thou wilt strike with a keen sword, wilt the corslet sever with Fafnir's bane.
- ¹⁸ Sigurd: The corslet is ript open, the maid begins to speak. When awakened from her sleep, on what will she chiefly with Sigurd converse hold, which to the prince's benefit may tend?

- ¹⁹ Gripir: She to thee, powerful one! runes will teach, all those which men ought to know; and in every man's tongue to speak, and medicines for healing. May good await thee, king!
- ²⁰ Sigurd: Now that is past, the knowledge is acquired, and I am ready thence away to ride. Apply thy mind, and at length say what more will my life befall.
- ²¹ Gripir: Thou wilt find Heimir's dwellings, and the glad guest wilt be of that great king. Vanished is, Sigurd! that which I foresaw; no further mayest thou Gripir question.
- ²² Sigurd: Now bring me grief the words thou speakest; for thou foreseest, king! much further; thou knowest of too great calamity to Sigurd; therefore thou, Gripir! wilt not utter it.
- ²³ Gripir: Of thy life the early portion lay before me clearest to contemplate. I am not truly accounted sage, nor of the future prescient: that which I knew is gone.
- ²⁴ Sigurd: No man I know on the earth's surface, who greater prescience has than thou, Gripir! Thou mayest not conceal it, unhappy though it be, or if ill betide my life.
- ²⁵ Gripir: Not with vices will thy life be sullied; let that, noble prince! in thy mind be borne; for while mankind exists, thy name, director of the spear-storm! will be supreme.
- ²⁶ Sigurd: The worst seems to me, that Sigurd is compelled from the king to part in such uncertainty. Show me the way--all is decreed before--great chieftain! if thou wilt, my mother's brother!
- ²⁷ Gripir: To Sigurd I will now openly tell, since the chieftain me thereto compels: thou wilt surely find that I lie not. A certain day is for thy death decreed.
- ²⁸ Sigurd: I would not importune the mighty prince, but rather Gripir's good counsel have. Now I fain would know, though grateful it may not be, what prospect Sigurd has lying before him.
- ²⁹ Gripir: There is with Heimir a maiden fair of form, she is by men Brynhild named, daughter of Budli; but the dear king Heimir nurtures the hard-souled damsel.
- ³⁰ Sigurd: What is it to me, although the maiden be of aspect fair? nurtured with Heimir? That thou, Gripir! must fully declare; for thou foreseest my whole destiny.
- ³¹ Gripir: She will thee bereave of almost every joy, the fair-faced foster-child of Heimir. Thou wilt not sleep, nor of affairs discourse, nor men regard; only this maiden thou wilt see.
- ³² Sigurd: What remedy for Sigurd will be applied; tell me that, Gripir! if it seem good to thee. Shall I obtain the damsel? with dowry purchase the lovely royal daughter?
- ³³ Gripir: Ye will each swear unnumbered oaths, solemnly binding, but few will keep. Hast thou been Giuki's guest one night, thou wilt have forgotten the fair ward of Heimir.
- ³⁴ Sigurd: How is that, Gripir! explain it to me: seest thou such fickleness in the king's mind, that with that maiden I shall my engagement break, whom with my whole heart I thought to love?
- ³⁵ Gripir: Prince! thou wilt be snared in another's wiles, thou wilt pay the penalty of Grimhild's craft; the bright-haired maiden, her daughter, she to thee will offer. This snare for the king she lays.
- ³⁶ Sigurd: Shall I then with Gunnar form relationship, and with Gudrun join in wedlock? Well wived then the king would be, if the pangs of perjury caused me no pain.
- ³⁷ Gripir: Thee will Grimhild wholly beguile; she will implore thee Brynhild to demand for the hand of Gunnar, king of Goths: the journey thou wilt forthwith promise to the king's mother.

³⁸ Sigurd: Evils are at hand, I can that perceive; Sigurd's wits will have wholly perished, if I shall demand for another's hand, a noble maiden whom I well love.

³⁹ Gripir: All of you will swear mutual oaths, Gunnar, and Hogni, and thou the third; and ye will forms exchange, when on the way ye are, Gunnar and thou: Gripir lies not.

⁴⁰ Sigurd: To what end is that? why shall we exchange forms and manners, when on the way we are? Another fraud will surely follow this, altogether horrible. But say on, Gripir!

⁴¹ Gripir: Thou wilt have Gunnar's semblance, and his manners, thy own eloquence, and great sagacity: there thou wilt betroth the high-minded ward of Heimir: no one can that prevent.

⁴² Sigurd: To me that seems worst, that among men I shall be a false traitor called, if such take place. I would not deception practise on a royal maid the most excellent I know.

⁴³ Gripir: Thou wilt repose, leader of hosts! pure with the maiden, as she thy mother were; therefore exalted, lord of men! while the world endures thy name will be.

⁴⁴ The nuptials will of both be solemnized, of Sigurd and of Gunnar, in Giuki's halls; then will ye forms exchange, when ye home return; yet to himself will have each his own senses.

⁴⁵ Sigurd: Will then Gunnar, chief among men, the noble woman wed? Tell me that, Gripir! although three nights by me the chieftain's bride glad of heart has slept? The like has no example.

⁴⁶ How for happiness shall hereafter be this affinity? Tell me that, Gripir! Will the alliance for Gunnar's solace henceforth prove, or even for mine?

⁴⁷ Gripir: Thou wilt the oaths remember, and must silence keep, and let Gudrun enjoy a happy union. Brynhild nathless will herself think an ill-married woman. She will wiles devise to avenge herself.

⁴⁸ Sigurd: What atonement will that woman take, for the frauds we shall have practised on her? From me the maiden has oaths sworn, but never kept, and but little joy.

⁴⁹ Gripir: She to Gunnar will plainly declare, that thou didst not well the oaths observe, when the noble king, Giuki's heir, with his whole soul, in thee confided.

⁵⁰ Sigurd: What will then follow? let me know that. Will that tale appear as true, or that the noble woman falsely accuses me, and herself also. Tell me that, Gripir!

⁵¹ Gripir: From spite towards thee, and from o'erwhelming grief, the powerful dame will not most wisely act. To the noble woman do thou no further harm, though thou the royal bride with guiles hast circumvented.

⁵² Sigurd: Will the prudent Gunnar, Guthorm, and Hogni, at her instigation, then proceed? Will Giuki's sons on their relative redden their swords? Tell me further, Gripir!

⁵³ Gripir: Then will Gudrun be furious at heart, when her brothers shall on thy death resolve. In nothing then will that wise woman take delight. Such is Grimhild's work.

⁵⁴ In this thou shalt find comfort, leader of hosts! This fortune is allotted to the hero's life: a more renowned man on earth shall never be, under the sun's abode, than thou wilt be accounted.

⁵⁵ Sigurd: Now part we, now farewell! Fate may not be withstood. Now hast thou, Gripir! done as I prayed thee: thou wouldst have fain a happier end foretold me of my life's days, hadst thou been able.

The Second Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide

¹ What fish is this, that in the river swims, and cannot from harm itself protect? Redeem thy life from Hel, and find me the water's flame. _The Pike_.

² Andvari I am named, Oin was my father named; many a cataract have I passed. A luckless Norn in times of old decreed, that in the water I should wade.

³ Loki: Tell me, Andvari! if thou wilt enjoy life in the halls of men, what retribution get the sons of mortals, if with foul words they assail each other.

⁴ Andvari: Cruel retribution get the sons of mortals, who in Vagelmir wade: for the false words they have against others uttered, the punishments too long endure.

⁵ Loki viewed all the gold that Andvari owned; but when he had produced the gold, he retained a single ring, which Loki also took from him. The dwarf went into his stone and said:

⁶ That gold which the dwarf possessed, shall to two brothers be cause of death, and to eight princes, of dissension. From my wealth no one shall good derive.

⁷ The Æsir produced the gold to Hreidmar, and with it crammed the otter's skin full, and set it up on the feet. They then had to heap up the gold and cover it; but when that was done, Hreidmar, stepping forward, observed a whisker, and required it to be covered; whereupon Odin drew forth the ring "Andvaranaut," and covered the hair. Loki said:

⁸ There is gold for thee, and thou hast a great redemption for my life. For thy son no blessing is decreed; of both it shall prove the bane.

⁹ Hreidmar: Gifts thou hast given, friendly gifts thou hast given not; with a kind heart thou hast not given. Of your lives ye should have been deprived, had I foreknown that peril.

¹⁰ But that is worse, what I seem to know,--a strife of kinsmen for a woman. Princes yet unborn I think them to be, for whose hate that gold is destined.

¹¹ The red gold, I trust, I shall possess while I am living: of thy threats I entertain no fear; so take yourselves hence home.

¹² Fafnir and Regin demanded of Hreidmar their share of the blood-fine for their slain brother Otr, which he refused, and Fafnir stabbed his father with a sword while sleeping. Hreidmar called out to his daughters:

¹³ Lyngheid and Lofnheid! Know my life is departing. To many things need compels. _Lyngheid_.

¹⁴ Few sisters will, although they lose a father, avenge a brother's crime.

¹⁵ Hreidmar: Then bring forth a daughter, wolf-hearted fury! If by a chief thou have not a son. Get for the maid a spouse, in thy great need; then will her son thy wrong avenge.

¹⁶ Hreidmar then died, and Fafnir took all the gold. Regin then requested to have his share of the patrimony, but met with a refusal from Fafnir. Regin thereupon sought counsel of his sister Lyngheid, how he might obtain his patrimony. She said:

¹⁷ Thou of thy brother shalt mildly demand thy patrimony and a better spirit. It is not seemly, that with the sword thou shouldst demand thy property of Fafnir.

¹⁸ The foregoing is what Regin related to Sigurd. One day, when he came to Regin's dwelling, he was kindly received, and Regin said:

¹⁹ Hither is come the son of Sigmund to our Hall, that man of energy: courage he has greater than I aged man: now of a conflict have I hope from the fierce wolf.

²⁰ I will nurture the bold-hearted prince: now Yngvi's kinsman is to us come; he will be a king under the sun most powerful; over all lands will his destinies resound.

²¹ Sigurd was thence forward constantly with Regin, who related to him how Fafnir lay on Gnitaheld in the likeness of a serpent. He had an "Ogis-helm," at which all living beings were terror-stricken. Regin forged a sword for Sigurd, that was named Gram, and was so sharp that immersing it in the Rhine, he let a piece of wool down the stream, when it clove the fleece asunder as water. With that sword Sigurd clove in two Regin's anvil. After that Regin instigated Sigurd to slay Fafnir. He said:

²² Loud will laugh Hunding's sons, they who Eylimi of life deprived, if the prince is more desirous to seek red rings, than to avenge his father.

²³ King Hialprek collected a fleet to enable Sigurd to avenge his father. They encountered a great storm, and were driven past a certain promontory. A man was standing on the cliff who said:

²⁴ Who ride yonder, on Rævils horses, the towering billows, the roaring main: the sail-steeds are with sweat bedewed, the wave-coursers will not the wind withstand.

²⁵ Regin: Here am I and Sigurd in sea-trees; a fair wind is given us for death itself: higher than our prow the steep waves dash, the rolling horses plunge. Who is it that inquires?

²⁶ Hnikar: They called me Hnikar, when I Hugin gladdened, young Volsung! and battles fought. Now they mayest call me the ancient of the rock, Feng, or Fiolnir.--I desire a passage.

²⁷ They turn to the land, the old man goes on board, and the storm abates. Sigurd said:

²⁸ Tell me, Hnikar! since thou knowest the omens both of gods and men, which omens are the best--if to fight 'tis needful--at the swing of glaves?

²⁹ Hnikar: Good omens there are many, if men but knew them, at the swing of glaves, a faithful fellowship, I think, is the dark raven's, with the sworded warrior.

³⁰ The second is, if, when thou art gone out, and about to depart, thou seest two renown-seeking men standing in the fore-court.

³¹ The third omen is, if wolves thou hearest howl under the ash-boughs, it will victory to thee announce over helmed warriors, if thou seest them go before thee.

³² No man should fight against the moon's late-shining sister. They have victory, who can see keenly at the play of swords, or to form the wedge-array.

³³ Most perilous it is, if with thy foot thou strikest, when thou to battle goest. Wily Disir stand on either side of thee, and wish to see thee wounded.

³⁴ Combed and washed let every brave man be, and at morning fed; for 'tis uncertain whither he at eve may come. 'Tis bad to succumb to fate.

³⁵ Sigurd fought a great battle with Lyngvi, Hunding's son, and his brothers, in which Lyngvi and his three brothers fell. After the battle Regin said:

³⁶ Now is the bloody eagle, with the trenchant blade, graven on the back of Sigmund's slayer. No son of king, who the earth reddens, and the raven gladdens, is more excellent.

³⁷ Sigurd returned home to Hialprek, when Regin instigated him to slay Fafnir.

The Lay Of Fafnir

¹ Young fellow! young fellow! by what fellow art thou begot? of what people are thou the son? that thou in Fafnir reddenst thy glittering falchion? Thy sword has pierced my heart.

² Sigurd concealed his name, because it was the belief in those times, that the words of dying persons were of great power, if they cursed an enemy by his name.

³ Sigurd: Gofugt-dyr I am called, but I have wandered a motherless child; nor have I a father like the sons of men: alone I wander.

⁴ Fafnir: If thou hast no father like the sons of men, by what wonder art thou begotten?

⁵ Sigurd: My race, I tell thee, is to thee unknown, and myself also. Sigmund was my father named, my name is Sigurd, who with weapon have assailed thee.

⁶ Fafnir: Who has incited thee? why hast thou suffered thyself to be incited to take my life? youth of the sparkling eyes! Thou hadst a cruel father-- * * * *

⁷ Sigurd: My heart incited me, my hands gave me aid, and my keen sword. Rarely a man is bold, when of mature age, if in childhood he was faint-hearted.

⁸ Fafnir: I know if thou hadst chanced to grow in the lap of friends, they would have seen thee fierce in fight. Now thou art a captive, taken in war, and, 'tis said, slaves ever tremble.

⁹ Sigurd: Why Fafnir! dost thou upbraid me that I am far from my paternal home? I am not a captive, although in war I was taken: thou hast found that I am free.

¹⁰ Fafnir: Thou wilt account only as angry words all I to thee shall say, but I will say the truth. The jingling gold, and the gleed-red treasure, those rings, shall be thy bane.

¹¹ Sigurd: Treasure at command every one desires, ever till that one day; for at some time each mortal shall hence to Hel depart.

¹² Fafnir: The Norns' decree thou wilt hold in contempt as from a witless wight: In water thou shalt be drowned, if in wind thou rowest. All things bring peril to the fated.

¹³ Sigurd: Tell me, Fafnir! as thou art wise declared, and many things to know: who those Norns are, who help in need, and from babes loose the mothers.

¹⁴ Fafnir: Very diversely born I take those Norns to be: they have no common race. Some are of Æsir-race, some of Alfar-race, some are Dvalin's daughters.

¹⁵ Sigurd: Tell me, Fafnir! as thou art wise declared, and many things to know, how that holm is called, where Surt and the Æsir will sword-liquor together mingle?

¹⁶ Fafnir: Oskopnir it is called; there shall the gods with lances play; Bifrost shall be broken, when they go forth, and their steeds in the river swim.

¹⁷ An Oegis-helm I bore among the sons of men, while I o'er the treasures lay; stronger than all I thought myself to be; stronger I found not many!

¹⁸ Sigurd: An Oegis-helm is no protection, where men impelled by anger fight: soon he finds, who among many comes, that no one is alone the boldest.

¹⁹ Fafnir: Venom I blew forth, when on my father's great heritage I lay.

- ²⁰ Sigurd: Thou, glistening serpent! didst a great belching make, and wast so hard of heart. Fierceness so much the greater have the sons of men, when they possess that helm.
- ²¹ Fafnir: Sigurd! I now counsel thee, do thou take my counsel; and hence ride home. The jingling gold, and the gleed-red treasure, those rings, shall be thy bane.
- ²² Sigurd: Counsel regarding thee is taken, and I to the gold will ride, on the heath that lies. But lie thou, Fafnir! in the pangs of death, until Hel have thee!
- ²³ Fafnir: Regin betrayed me, he will thee betray, he of us both will be the bane. Fafnir must, I trow, let forth his life: thine was the greater might!
- ²⁴ Regin had gone away while Sigurd slew Fafnir, but came back as Sigurd was wiping the blood from his sword. He said:
- ²⁵ Hail to thee now, Sigurd! Now hast thou victory won and Fafnir slain: of all the men who tread the earth, thou art, I say, the bravest born.
- ²⁶ Sigurd: Uncertain 'tis to know, when we all come together, sons of victorious heroes, which is the bravest born. Many a one is bold, who sword has never broken in another's breast.
- ²⁷ Regin: Glad are thou now, Sigurd! and in thy gain rejoicing, while Gram, in the grass thou driest. My brother thou to death hast wounded, yet in some degree was I the cause.
- ²⁸ Sigurd: Thou didst me counsel, that I should ride o'er high fells hither. Treasure and life had still possess'd that glistening serpent, hadst thou my anger not excited.
- ²⁹ Regin then approached Fafnir and cut out his heart with a sword named Ridill, and afterwards drank blood from his wound. He said:
- ³⁰ Sit now, Sigurd!--but I must go to sleep--and Fafnir's heart hold to the fire. Of this refection I would fain partake, after that drink of blood.
- ³¹ Sigurd: Thou wentst far off, while I in Fafnir my keen sword reddened. With my strength I strove against the serpent's might, while in the ling thou layest.
- ³² Regin: Long hadst thou allowed in the ling to lie that Jotun old, hadst thou the sword not used that I forged for thee, thy keen-edged glave.
- ³³ Sigurd: Valour is better than might of sword, when foes embittered fight; for a brave man I have ever seen gain victory with a dull sword.
- ³⁴ For the brave 'tis better than for the timid to join in the game of war; for the joyous it is better than for the sad, let come whatever may.
- ³⁵ Sigurd took Fafnir's heart and roasted it on a stick. When he thought it roasted enough, and the blood frothed from it, he touched it with his finger, to try whether it were quite done. He burnt his finger and put it in his mouth; and when Fafnir's heart's blood touched his tongue he understood the language of birds. He heard the eagles chattering among the branches. One eagle said:
- ³⁶ There sits Sigurd sprinkled with blood; Fafnir's heart at the fire he roasts. Wise methinks were the ring-dispenser, if he the glistening life-pulp ate.
- ³⁷ Second eagle: There lies Regin communing with himself; he will beguile the youth, who in him trusts: in rage he brings malicious words together, the framer of evil will avenge his brother.

- ³⁸ Third eagle: By the head shorter, let him the hoary babbler send hence to Hel; then can he all the gold possess alone, the mass that under Fafnir lay.
- ³⁹ Fourth eagle: He would, methinks, be prudent, if he could have your friendly counsel, my sisters! If he would bethink himself, and Hugin gladden. There I expect the wolf, where his ears I see.
- ⁴⁰ Fifth eagle: Not so prudent is that tree of battle, as I that martial leader had supposed, if he one brother lets depart, now he the other has of life bereft.
- ⁴¹ Sixth eagle: He is most simple, if he longer spares that people's pest. There lies Regin, who has betrayed him.--He cannot guard against it.
- ⁴² Seventh eagle: By the head shorter let him make the ice-cold Jotun, and of his rings deprive him; then of that treasure thou, which Fafnir owned, sole lord wilt be!
- ⁴³ Sigurd: Fate shall not so resistless be, that Regin shall my death-word bear; for the brothers both shall speedily go hence to Hel.
- ⁴⁴ Sigurd cut off the head of Regin, and then ate Fafnir's heart, and drank the blood of both Regin and Fafnir. He then heard the eagles saying:
- ⁴⁵ Bind thou, Sigurd! the red-gold rings. It is not kingly many things to fear. I a maid know by far the fairest, with gold adorned. Couldst thou but her obtain!
- ⁴⁶ Second eagle: To Giuki lead all-verdant ways; the fates point out to wayfarers where the good king a born daughter has; her wilt thou, Sigurd! purchase with bridal gifts.
- ⁴⁷ Third eagle: There stands a hall on the high Hindarfiall, without 'tis all with fire surrounded; sagacious men have it constructed of the resplendent radiance of the flood. _Fourth eagle_.
- ⁴⁸ On the fell I know a warrior maid to sleep, over her waves the linden's bane. Ygg whilom stuck a sleep-thorn in the robe of the maid who would heroes choose.
- ⁴⁹ Thou, youth! mayest see the helmed maiden, her whom Vingskornir from battle bore. May not Sigrdrifa's slumber break the son of warriors, against the Norns' decrees.
- ⁵⁰ Sigurd rode along Fafnir's track to his lair, which he found open. The doors and door-posts were of iron; of iron also were all the beams in the house; but the treasure was buried in the earth. Sigurd found there a great quantity of gold, and filled two chests with it. He took thence the Oegis-helm, a golden corslet, the sword named Hrotti, and many precious things, all which he laid on Grani; but the horse would not proceed until Sigurd had mounted on his back.

The Lay Of Sigrdrifa

- ¹ What has my corslet cut? why from sleep have I started? who has cast from me the fallow bands?
- ² Sigurd: Sigmund's son has just now ript the raven's perch, with Sigurd's sword.
- ³ She: Long have I slept, long been with sleep oppressed, long are mortals' sufferings! Odin is the cause that I have been unable to cast off torpor.
- ⁴ Sigurd sat down and asked her name. She then took a horn filled with mead, and gave him the _minnis-cup_.

⁵ She: Hail to Day! Hail to the sons of Day! To Night and her daughter hail! With placid eyes behold us here, and here sitting give us victory.

⁶ Hail to the Æsir! Hail to the Asyniur! Hail to the bounteous earth! Words and wisdom give to us noble twain, and healing hands while we live.

⁷ She was named Sigdrifa, and was a Valkyria. She said that two kings had made war on each other, one of whom was named Hialmgunnar; he was old and a great warrior, and Odin had promised him victory. The other was Agnar, a brother of Hoda, whom no divinity would patronize. Sigdrifa overcame Hialmgunnar in battle; in revenge for which Odin pricked her with a sleep-thorn, and declared that henceforth she should never have victory in battle, and should be given in marriage. "But I said to him, that I had bound myself by a vow not to espouse any man who could be made to fear." Sigurd answers, and implores her to teach him wisdom, as she had intelligence from all regions:

⁸ Sigdrifa: Beer I bear to thee, column of battle! with might mingled, and with bright glory: 'tis full of song, and salutary saws, of potent incantations, and joyous discourses.

⁹ Sig-runes thou must know, if victory (sigr) thou wilt have, and on thy sword's hilt grave them; some on the chapes, some on the guard, and twice name the name of Ty.

¹⁰ Ol- (beer-) runes thou must know, if thou wilt not that another's wife thy trust betray, if thou in her confide. On the horn must they be graven, and on the hand's back, and Naud on the nail be scored.

¹¹ A cup must be blessed, and against peril guarded, and garlick in the liquor cast: then I know thou wilt never have mead with treachery mingled.

¹² Biarg- (help-) runes thou must know, if thou wilt help, and loose the child from women. In the palm they must be graven, and round the joints be clasped, and the Disir prayed for aid.

¹³ Brim- (sea-) runes thou must know, if thou wilt have secure afloat thy sailing steeds. On the prow they must be graven, and on the helm-blade, and with fire to the oar applied. No surge shall be so towering, nor waves so dark, but from the ocean thou safe shalt come.

¹⁴ Lim- (branch-) runes thou must know, if thou a leech wouldst be, and wounds know how to heal. On the bark they must be graven, and on the leaves of trees, of those whose boughs bent eastward.

¹⁵ Mal- (speech-) runes thou must know, if thou wilt that no one for injury with hate requite thee. Those thou must wind, those thou must wrap round, those thou must altogether place in the assembly, where people have into full court to go.

¹⁶ Hug- (thought-) runes thou must know, if thou a wiser man wilt be than every other. Those interpreted, those graven, those devised Hropt, from the fluid, which had leaked from Heiddraupnir's head, and from Hoddropnir's horn.

¹⁷ On a rock he stood, with edged sword, a helm on his head he bore. Then spake Mim's head its first wise word, and true sayings uttered.

¹⁸ They are, it said, on the shield graven, which stands before the shining god, on Arvagr's ear, and on Alsvið's hoof, on the wheel which rolls under Rognir's car, on Sleipnir's teeth, and on the sledge's bands.

¹⁹ On the bear's paw, and on Bragi's tongue, on the wolf's claws, and the eagle's beak, on bloody wings, and on the bridge's end, on the releasing hand, and on healing's track.

- ²⁰ On glass and on gold, on amulets of men, in wine and in wort, and in the welcome seat, on Gungnir's point, and on Grani's breast, on the Norn's nail, and the owl's neb.
- ²¹ All were erased that were inscribed, and mingled with the sacred mead, and sent on distant ways: they are with the Æsir, they are with the Alfar, some with the wise Vanir, some human beings have.
- ²² Those are bok-runes, those are biarg-runes, and all ol- (beer-) runes, and precious megin- (power-) runes, for those who can, without confusion or corruption, turn them to his welfare. Use, if thou hast understood them, until the powers perish.
- ²³ Now thou shalt choose, since a choice is offered thee, keen armed warrior! my speech, or silence: think over it in thy mind. All evils have their measure.
- ²⁴ Sigurd: I will not flee, though thou shouldst know me doomed. I am not born a craven. Thy friendly counsels all I will receive, as long as life is in me.
- ²⁵ Sigrdrifa: This I thee counsel first: that towards thy kin thou bear thee blameless. Take not hasty vengeance, although they raise up strife: that, it is said, benefits the dead.
- ²⁶ This I thee counsel secondly: that no oath thou swear, if it be not true. Cruel bonds follow broken faith: accursed is the faith-breaker.
- ²⁷ This I thee counsel thirdly: that in the assembly thou contend not with a fool; for an unwise man oft utters words worse than he knows of.
- ²⁸ All is vain, if thou holdest silence; then wilt thou seem a craven born, or else truly accused. Doubtful is a servant's testimony, unless a good one thou gettest. On the next day let his life go forth, and so men's lies reward.
- ²⁹ This I counsel thee fourthly: if a wicked sorceress dwells by the way, to go on is better than there to lodge, though night may overtake thee.
- ³⁰ Of searching eyes the sons of men have need, when fiercely they have to fight: oft pernicious women by the way-side sit, who swords and valour deaden.
- ³¹ This I thee counsel fifthly: although thou see fair women on the benches sitting, let not their kindred's silver over thy sleep have power. To kiss thee entice no woman.
- ³² This I thee counsel sixthly: although among men pass offensive tipsy talk, never while drunken quarrel with men of war: wine steals the wits of many.
- ³³ Brawls and drink to many men have been a heartfelt sorrow; to some their death, to some calamity: many are the griefs of men!
- ³⁴ This I thee counsel seventhly: if thou hast disputes with a daring man, better it is for men to fight than to be burnt within their dwelling.
- ³⁵ This I thee counsel eighthly: that thou guard thee against evil, and eschew deceit. Entice no maiden, nor wife of man, nor to wantonness incite.
- ³⁶ This I thee counsel ninthly: that thou corpses bury, wherever on the earth thou findest them, whether from sickness they have died, or from the sea, or are from weapons dead.
- ³⁷ Let a mound be raised for those departed; let their hands and head be washed, combed, and wiped dry, ere in the coffin they are laid: and pray for their happy sleep.

³⁸ This I thee counsel tenthly: that thou never trust a foe's kinsman's promises, whose brother thou hast slain, or sire laid low. there is a wolf in a young son, though he with gold be gladdened.

³⁹ Strifes and fierce enmities think not to be lulled, no more than deadly injury. Wisdom and fame in arms a prince not easily acquires, who shall of men be foremost.

⁴⁰ This I counsel thee eleventhly: that thou at evil look, what course it may take. A long life, it seems to me the prince may [not] enjoy;--fierce disputes will arise.

⁴¹ Sigurd said: "A wiser mortal exists not, and I swear that I will possess thee, for thou art after my heart." She answered: "Thee I will have before all others, though I have to choose among all men." And this they confirmed with oaths to each other.

Fragments Of The Lay Of Sigurd And Brynhild

¹ The fire began to rage, and the earth to tremble, high rose the flame to heaven itself: there ventured few chiefs of people through that fire to ride, or to leap over.

² Sigurd Grani with his word urged, the fire was quenched before the prince, the flame allayed before the glory-seeker with the bright saddle that Rok had owned.

³ Brynhild was sitting in a chair as Sigurd entered. She asks who he is, and he calls himself Gunnar Giuki's son. "And thou art destined to be my wife with thy father's consent. I have ridden through the flickering flame (vaftrlogi) at thy requisition." She said: "I know not well how I shall answer this." Sigurd stood erect on the floor resting on the hilt of his sword. She rose embarrassed from her seat, like a swan on the waves, having a sword in her hand, a helmet on her head, and wearing a corslet. "Gunnar," said she, "speak not so to me, unless thou art the foremost of men; and then thou must slay him who has sought me, if thou hast so much trust in thyself." Sigurd said: "Remember now thy promise, that thou wouldst go with that man who should ride through the flickering flame." She acknowledged the truth of his words, stood up, and gave him a glad welcome. He tarried there three nights, and they prepared one bed. He took the sword Gram and laid it between them. She inquired why he did so. He said that it was enjoined him so to act towards his bride on their marriage, or he would receive his death. He then took from her the ring called Andvaranaut, and gave her another that had belonged to Fafnir. After this he rode away through the same fire to his companions, when Gunnar and he again changed forms, and they then rode home.

⁴ Brynhild related this in confidence to her foster-father Heimir, and said: "A king named Gunnar has ridden through the flickering flame, and is come to speak with me; but I told him that Sigurd alone might so do, to whom I gave my vow at Hindarfiall, and that he only was the man." Heimir said that what had happened must remain as it was. Brynhild said: "Our daughter Aslaug thou shalt rear up here with thee." Brynhild then went to her father, King Budli, and he with his daughter Brynhild went to King Giuki's palace. A great feasting was afterwards held, when Sigurd remembered all his oaths to Brynhild, and yet kept silence. Brynhild and Gunnar sat at the drinking and drank wine.

⁵ One day Brynhild and Gudrun went to the river Rhine, and Brynhild went farther out into the water. Gudrun asked why she did so? Brynhild answered: "Why shall I go on along with thee in this more than in anything else?" "I presume that my father was more potent than thine, and my husband has performed more valorous deeds, and ridden through the blazing fire. Thy husband was King

Hialprek's thrall." Gudrun answered angrily: "Thou shouldst be wiser than to venture to vilify my husband, as it is the talk of all that no one like to him in every respect has ever come into the world; nor does it become thee to vilify him, as he was thy former husband, and slew Fafnir, and rode through the fire, whom thou thoughtest was King Gunnar; and he lay with thee, and took from thee the ring Andvaranaut, and here mayest thou recognize it." Brynhild then looking at the ring, recognized it, and turned pale as though she were dead. Brynhild was very taciturn that evening, and Gudrun asked Sigurd why Brynhild was so taciturn. He dissuaded her much from making this inquiry, and said that at all events it would soon be known.

⁶ On the morrow, when sitting in their apartment, Gudrun said: "Be cheerful, Brynhild! What is it that prevents thy mirth?" Brynhild answered: "Malice drives thee to this; for thou hast a cruel heart." "Judge not so," said Gudrun. Brynhild continued: "Ask about that only which is better for thee to know; that is more befitting women of high degree. It is good, too, for thee to be content, as all goes according to thy wishes." Gudrun said: "It is premature to glory in that: this forebodes something; but what instigates thee against us?" Brynhild answered: "Thou shalt be requited for having espoused Sigurd; for I grudge thee the possession of him." Gudrun said: "We knew not of your secret." Brynhild answered: "We have had no secret, though we have sworn oaths of fidelity; and thou knowest that I have been deceived, and I will avenge it." Gudrun said: "Thou art better married than thou deservest to be, and thy violence must be cooled." "Content should I be," said Brynhild, "didst thou not possess a more renowned husband than I." Gudrun answered: "Thou hast as renowned a husband; for it is doubtful which is the greater king." Brynhild said: "Sigurd overcame Fafnir, and that is worth more than all Gunnar's kingdom, as it is said:

⁷ "Sigurd the serpent slew, and that henceforth shall be by none forgotten, while mankind lives: but thy brother neither dared through the fire to ride, nor over it to leap."

⁸ Gudrun said: "Grani would not run through the fire under King Gunnar: but he [Gunnar] dared to ride." Brynhild said: "Let us not contend: I bear no good will to Grimhild." Gudrun said: "Blame her not; for she is towards thee as to her own daughter." Brynhild said: "She is the cause of all the evil which gnaws me. She presented to Sigurd the pernicious drink, so that he no more remembered me." Gudrun said: "Many an unjust word thou utterest, and this is a great falsehood." Brynhild said: "So enjoy Sigurd as thou hast not deceived me, and may it go with thee as I imagine." Gudrun said: "Better shall I enjoy him than thou wilt wish; and no one has said he has had too much good with me at any time." Brynhild said: "Thou sayest ill and wilt repent of it. Let us cease from angry words, and not indulge in useless prattle. Long have I borne in silence the grief that dwells in my breast: I have also felt regard for thy brother. But let us talk of other things." Gudrun said: "Your imagination looks far forward."

⁹ Brynhild then lay in bed, and King Gunnar came to talk with her, and begged her to rise and give vent to her sorrow; but she would not listen to him. They then brought Sigurd to visit her and learn whether her grief might not be alleviated. They called to memory their oaths, and how they had been deceived, and at length Sigurd offered to marry her and put away Gudrun; but she would not hear of it. Sigurd left the apartment, but was so greatly affected by her sorrow that the rings of his corslet burst asunder from his sides, as is said in the Sigurdarkvida:

¹⁰ "Out went Sigurd from that interview into the hall of kings, writhing with anguish; so that began to start the ardent warrior's iron-woven sark off from his sides."

¹¹ Brynhild afterwards instigated Gunnar to murder Sigurd, saying that he had deceived them both and broken his oath. Gunnar consulted with Hogni, and revealed to him this conversation. Hogni earnestly strove to dissuade him from such a deed, on account of their oaths. Gunnar removed the difficulty, saying: "Let us instigate our brother Guthorm; he is young and of little judgment, and is, moreover, free of all oaths; and so avenge the mortal injury of his having seduced Brynhild." They then took a serpent and the flesh of a wolf, and had them cooked, and gave them to him to eat, and offered him gold and a large realm, to do the deed, as is said:

¹² "The forest-fish they roasted, and the wolf's carcase took, while some to Guthorm dealt out gold; gave him Geri's flesh with his drink, and many other things steeped therein."

¹³ With this food he became so furious, that he would instantly perpetrate the deed. On this it is related as in the Sigurdarkvida, when Gunnar and Brynhild conversed together.]

The Third Lay Of Sigurd Fafnicide

¹ It was of old that Sigurd, the young Volsung, Giuki sought, after his conflict, received the pledge of friendship from the two brothers; oaths exchanged the bold of deed.

² A maid they offered him, and treasures many, Gudrun, Giuki's youthful daughter. Drank and conversed, many days together, Sigurd the young and Giuki's sons.

³ Until they went to woo Brynhild, and with them Sigurd, the youthful Volsung, rode in company, who knew the way. He would have possessed her, if her possess he might.

⁴ Sigurd the southern laid a naked sword, a glittering falchion, between them; nor the damsel did he kiss, nor did the Hunnish king to his arm lift her. He the blooming maid to Giuki's son delivered.

⁵ She to herself of body was of no sin conscious, nor at her death-day, of any crime, that could be a stain, or thought to be: intervened therein the grisly fates.

⁶ Alone she sat without, at eve of day, began aloud with herself to speak: "Sigurd must be mine; I must die, or that blooming youth clasp in my arms."

⁷ "Of the words I have uttered I now repent; he is Gudrun's consort, and I am Gunnar's. The hateful Norns long suffering have decreed us."

⁸ Oftentimes she wandered, filled with evil thoughts, o'er ice and icebergs, every eve, when he and Gudrun had to their couch withdrawn, and Sigurd her in the coverings wrapt, the Hunnish king his wife caressed.

⁹ "Devoid I go of spouse and pleasure; I will beguile myself with vengeful thoughts."

¹⁰ By those fits of fury she was impelled to murder. "Thou, Gunnar! shalt wholly lose my land, and myself also. Never shall I be happy, king! with thee.

¹¹ I will return thither from whence I came, to my near kindred, my relations; there will I remain, and slumber life away, unless thou Sigurd cause to be slain, and a king become than the other greater.

¹² Let the son go together with the father, the young wolf may not longer be fostered. For whom will vengeance be the easier to appease, if the son lives?"

- ¹³ Wroth was Gunnar, and with grief borne down; in his mind revolved, sat the whole day; he knew not well, nor could devise, what were most desirable for him to do, or were most fitting to be done, when he should find himself of the Volsung bereft, and in Sigurd a great loss sustain.
- ¹⁴ Much he thought, and also long, that it did not often happen, that from their royal state women withdrew. Hogni he then to counsel summoned, in whom he placed the fullest trust.
- ¹⁵ "Of all to me Brynhild, Budli's daughter, is the dearest; she is the chief of women: rather will I my life lay down than that fair one's treasures lose.
- ¹⁶ "Wilt thou the prince for his wealth circumvent? good 'tis to command the ore of Rhine, and at ease over riches rule, and in tranquillity happiness enjoy."
- ¹⁷ This alone Hogni for answer gave: "It beseems us not so to do, by the sword to break sworn oaths, oaths sworn, and plighted faith.
- ¹⁸ "We know not on earth men more fortunate, while we four over the people rule, and the Hun lives, that warlike chief; nor on earth, a race more excellent, if we five sons long shall foster, and the good progeny can increase.
- ¹⁹ I know full well whence the causes spring: Brynhild's importunity is over-great.
- ²⁰ We will Guthorm, our younger brother, and not over-wise, for the deed prepare: he is free from sworn oaths, sworn oaths, and plighted faith."
- ²¹ Easy it was to instigate the ferocious spirit: in the heart of Sigurd stood his sword.
- ²² On vengeance bent, the warrior in his chamber hurled his brand after the fierce assassin; to Guthorm flew dartlike Gram's gleaming steel from the king's hand.
- ²³ Fell the murderer in two parts, arms and head flew far away, but his feet's part fell backwards on the place.
- ²⁴ Sunk in sleep was Gudrun, in her bed, void of cares, by Sigurd's side: but she awoke of joys bereft, when in the blood of Frey's friend she swam.
- ²⁵ So violently struck she her hands together, that the stout of heart rose in his bed. "Weep not, Gudrun! so cruelly, my blooming bride! thy brothers live.
- ²⁶ An heir I have, alas! too young; he cannot flee from the hostile house; among themselves they recently have dark and evil counsels devised.
- ²⁷ Never henceforth, although seven thou bear, will such a son to the trysting with them ride. Full well I know how this has befallen: Brynhild the sole cause is of all the evil.
- ²⁸ Me the maiden loved more than any man; but towards Gunnar I sinned not; affinity I held sacred, and sworn oaths; thence forward I was called his consort's friend."
- ²⁹ The woman gave forth sighs, and the king his life. So violently she struck her hands together, that the beakers on the wall responsive rang, and in the court the geese loudly screamed.
- ³⁰ Laughed then Brynhild, Budli's daughter, once only, from her whole soul, when in her bed she listened to the loud lament of Giuki's daughter.
- ³¹ Then said Gunnar, the hawk-bearing prince: "Laugh not thereat, thou barbarous woman! glad on thy couch, as if good awaited thee. Why hast thou lost that beauteous colour? authoress of crime! Methinks to death thou art doomed.

³² Well dost thou deserve, above all women, that before thy eyes, we should lay Atli low, that thou shouldst see thy brother's blood-streaming sore, his gory wounds shouldst have to bind."

³³ Then said Brynhild, Budli's daughter: "No one provokes thee, Gunnar! complete is thy work of death. Little does Atli thy hatred fear; his life will outlast thine, and his might be ever greater.

³⁴ Gunnar! will tell thee, though thou well knowest it, how early we resolved on crimes. I was o'er-young and unrestrained, with wealth endowed, in my brother's house.

³⁵ Nor did I desire to marry any man, before ye Giukungs rode to our dwelling, three on horseback, powerful kings: would that journey had never been!

³⁶ Then myself I promised to the great king, who with gold sat on Grani's back. In eyes he did not you resemble, nor was at all in aspect like: yet ye thought yourselves mighty kings.

³⁷ And to me apart Atli said, that he would not have our heritage divided, nor gold nor lands, unless I let myself be married, nor grant me any part of the acquired gold, which he to me a girl had given to possess, and to me a child in moneys counted.

³⁸ Then distracted was my mind thereon, whether I should engage in conflict, and death dispense, valiant in arms, for my brother's quarrel. That would then be world-widely known, and to many a one bring heartfelt anguish.

³⁹ Our reconciliation we let follow: to me it had been more pleasing the treasures to accept, the red-gold rings of Sigmund's son: nor did I another's gold desire; him alone I loved, none other. Menskogul had not a changing mind.

⁴⁰ All this will Atli hereafter find, when he shall hear of my funeral rites completed; for never shall the heavy-hearted woman with another's husband pass her life. Then will my wrongs be all avenged."

⁴¹ Up rose Gunnar, prince of warriors, and round his consort's neck laid his hands; all drew nigh, yet each one singly, through honest feeling, to dissuade her.

⁴² She from her neck those about her cast; she let no one stay her from her long journey.

⁴³ He then called Hogni to consultation. "I will that all our folk to the hall be summoned, thine with, mine--now 'tis most needful--to see if we can hinder my consort's fatal course, till from our speech a hindrance may come: then let us leave necessity to rule."

⁴⁴ To him Hogni answer gave: "Let no one hinder her from the long journey, whence may she never born again return. Unblest she came on her mother's lap, born in the world for ceaseless misery, for many a man's heartfelt sorrow."

⁴⁵ Downcast he from the meeting turned to where the lady treasures distributed. She was viewing all she owned: hungry female thralls and chamber-women. She put on her golden corslet--no good meditated--ere herself she pierced, with the sword's point.

⁴⁶ On the pillow she turned to the other side, and, wounded with the glave, on her last counsels thought.

⁴⁷ "Now let come those who desire gold, and aught less precious, to receive from me. To every one I give a gilded necklace, needle-work and coverlets, splendid weeds."

⁴⁸ All were silent, thought on what to do, and all together answer gave: "Too many are there dead: we will yet live, still be hungry hall-servants, to do what fitting is."

- ⁴⁹ At length after reflection, the lady linen-clad, young in years, words in answer uttered: "I desire that none, dead to entreaty, should by force, for our sake, lose their life.
- ⁵⁰ Yet o'er your bones will burn fewer ornaments, Menia's good meal, when ye go hence me to seek.
- ⁵¹ Gunnar! sit down, I will tell to thee, that of life now hopeless is thy bright consort. Thy vessel will not be always afloat, though I shall have my life resigned.
- ⁵² With Gudrun thou wilt be reconciled, sooner than thou thinkest: that wise woman has by the king sad memorials, after her consort's death.
- ⁵³ There is born a maid, which her mother rears; brighter far than the clear day, than the sun's beam, will Svanhild be.
- ⁵⁴ Gudrun thou wilt give to an illustrious one, a warrior, the bane of many men: not to her wish will she be married; Atli will come her to espouse, Budli's son, my brother.
- ⁵⁵ Much have I in memory how I was treated, when ye me so cruelly had deceived: robbed I was of happiness, while my life lasted.
- ⁵⁶ Thou wilt desire Oddrun to possess, but Atli will permit it not; in secret ye will each other meet. She will love thee, as I had done, if us a better fate had been allotted.
- ⁵⁷ Thee will Atli barbarously treat; in the narrow serpent-den wilt thou be cast.
- ⁵⁸ It will too come to pass, not long after, that Atli will his soul resign, his prosperity, and cease to live; for Gudrun in her vengeance him in his bed will slay, through bitterness of spirit, with the sword's sharp edge.
- ⁵⁹ More seemly would appear our sister Gudrun, had she in death her first consort followed, had but good counsel been to her given, or she a soul possessed resembling mine--
- ⁶⁰ Faintly I now speak--but for our sake she will not lose her life. She will be borne on towering billows to King Jonakr's paternal soil. Doubts will be in the resolves of Jonakr's sons.
- ⁶¹ She will Svanhild send from the land, her daughter, and Sigurd's. Her will destroy Bikki's counsel; for Jormunrek for evil lives. Then will have passed away all Sigurd's race, and Gudrun's tears will be the more.
- ⁶² One prayer I have to thee yet to make, in this world 'twill be my last request: Let in the plain be raised a pile so spacious, that for us all like room may be, for those who shall have died with Sigurd.
- ⁶³ Bedeck the pile about with shields and hangings, a variegated corpse-cloth, and multitude of slain. Let them burn the Hun on the one side of me;
- ⁶⁴ Let them with the Hun burn on the other side, my household slaves, with collars splendid, two at our heads, and two hawks; then will all be equally distributed.
- ⁶⁵ Let also lie between us both the sword with rings adorned, the keen-edged iron, so again be placed, as when we both one couch ascended, and were then called by the name of consorts.
- ⁶⁶ Then will not clang against his heel the hall's bright gates, with splendid ring, if my train him hence shall follow. Then will our procession appear not mean.
- ⁶⁷ For him will follow five female thralls, eight male slaves of gentle birth, fostered with me, and with my patrimony, which to his, daughter Budli gave.

⁶⁸ Much I have said, and more would say, if the sword would grant me power of speech. My voice fails, my wounds swell: truth only I have uttered; so I will cease."

Fragments Of The Lay Of Brynhild

¹ Gunnar: "Why art thou, Brynhild! Budli's daughter! absorbed in evil and murderous thoughts? What injury has Sigurd done thee, that thou the hero wilt of life bereave?"

² Brynhild: "Sigurd to me oaths has sworn, oaths sworn, all falsehoods. He at a time deceived me when he should have been of all oaths most observant."

³ Hogni: "Thee Brynhild has in anger instigated evil to perpetrate, harm to execute. She grudges Gudrun her happy marriage, and thee, possession of herself." * * *

⁴ Some a wolf roasted, some a snake cut up, some to Guthorm served the wolf, before they might, eager for crime, on the mighty man lay their hands.

⁵ Without stood Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, and these words first of all uttered: "Where is now Sigurd, lord of warriors, seeing that my kinsmen foremost ride?"

⁶ Hogni alone to her answer gave: "Asunder have we Sigurd hewed with our swords; his grey steed bends o'er the dead chief."

⁷ Then said Brynhild, Budli's daughter: "Well shall ye now enjoy arms and lands. Sigurd would alone over all have ruled, had he a little longer life retained.

⁸ Unseemly it had been that he should so have ruled over Giuki's heritage and the Goths' people, when he five sons, for the fall of hosts, eager for warfare, had begotten."

⁹ Then laughed Brynhild--the whole burgh resounded--once only from her whole heart: "Well shall ye enjoy lands and subjects, now the daring king ye have caused to fall."

¹⁰ Then said Gudrun, Giuki's daughter: "Much thou speakest, things most atrocious: may fiends have Gunnar, Sigurd's murderer! Souls malevolent vengeance awaits."

¹¹ Sigurd had fallen south of Rhine: loud from a tree a raven screamed: "With your blood will Atli his sword's edges redden; the oaths ye have sworn your slaughter shall dissolve."

¹² Evening was advanced, much was drunken, then did pleasant talk of all kinds pass: all sank in sleep, when to rest they went. Gunnar alone was wakeful longer than all:

¹³ He began his foot to move, and much with himself to speak; the warlike chief in his mind pondered, what during the conflict the raven and the eagle were ever saying, as they rode home.

¹⁴ Brynhild awoke, Budli's daughter, daughter of Skioldungs, a little ere day: "Urge me or stay me--the mischief is perpetrated--my sorrow to pour forth, or to suppress it."

¹⁵ All were silent at these words; few understood the lady's conduct, that weeping she should begin to speak of what she laughing had desired.

¹⁶ "In my dream, Gunnar! all seemed so horrid, in the chamber all was dead; my bed was cold; and thou, king! wast riding of joy bereft, with fetters loaded, to a hostile host. So will ye all, race of Niflungs! be of power deprived, perjurers as ye are!

¹⁷ Ill Gunnar! didst thou remember, when blood ye in your footsteps both let flow; now hast thou him ill for all that requited, because he would prove himself foremost.

¹⁸ Then was it proved, when the hero had ridden to see me, to woo me, how the warlike chief whilom held sacred his oath towards the youthful prince.

¹⁹ Laid his sword, with gold adorned, the illustrious king between us both: outward its edges were with fire wrought, but with venom drops tempered within."

²⁰ From this lay, in which the death of Sigurd is related, it appears that he was slain without doors, while some relate that he was slain sleeping in his bed: but the Germans say he was slain out in the forest; and it is told in the "Gudrunarkvida hin Forna," that Sigurd and the sons of Giuki had ridden to the public assembly (thing) when he was slain. But it is said by all, without exception, that they broke faith with him, and attacked him while lying down and unprepared.

The First Lay Of Gudrun

¹ Of old it was that Gudrun prepared to die, when she sorrowing over Sigurd sat. No sigh she uttered, nor with her hands beat, nor wailed, as other women.

² Jarls came forward of great sagacity, from her sad state of mind to divert her. Gudrun could not shed a tear, such was her affliction; ready she was to burst.

³ Sat there noble wives of jarls, adorned with gold, before Gudrun; each of them told her sorrows, the bitterest she had known.

⁴ Then said Giaflaug, Giuki's sister: "I know myself to be on earth most joyless: of five consorts I the loss have suffered; of two daughters, sisters three, and brothers eight; I alone live."

⁵ Gudrun could not shed a tear, such was her affliction for her dead consort, and her soul's anguish for the king's fall.

⁶ Then said Herborg, Hunaland's queen: "I a more cruel grief have to recount: my seven sons, in the south land, my spouse the eighth, in conflict fell.

⁷ My father and my mother, my brothers four, on the sea the wind deluded; the waves struck on the ship's timbers.

⁸ Their last honours 'twas mine to pay, 'twas mine to see them tombed, their funeral rites to prepare was mine. All this I underwent in one half-year, and to me no one consolation offered.

⁹ Then I became a captive, taken in war, at the close of the same half-year. Then had I to adorn, and tie the shoes, of the Hersir's wife, each morn.

¹⁰ From jealousy she threatened me, and with hard blows drove me: nowhere master found I a better, but mistress no where a worse."

¹¹ Gudrun could not shed a tear, such was her affliction for her dead consort, and her soul's anguish for the king's fall.

¹² Then said Gullrond, Giuki's daughter: "Little canst thou, my fosterer, wise as thou art, with a young wife fittingly talk." The king's body she forbade to be longer hidden.

¹³ She snatched the sheet from Sigurd's corpse, and turned his cheek towards his wife's knees: "Behold thy loved one, lay thy mouth to his lip, as if thou wouldst embrace the living prince."

¹⁴ Gudrun upon him cast one look: she saw the prince's locks dripping with blood, the chief's sparkling eyes closed in death, his kingly breast cleft by the sword.

¹⁵ Then sank down Gudrun back on her pillow, her head-gear was loosed, her cheeks grew red, and a flood of tears fell to her knees.

¹⁶ Then wept Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, so that the tears spontaneously flowed, and at the same time screamed the geese in the court, the noble birds, which the lady owned.

¹⁷ Then spake Gullrond, Giuki's daughter: "Your loves I know were the most ardent among living beings upon earth: thou hadst delight nowhere, sister mine! save with Sigurd."

¹⁸ Then said Gudrun, Giuki's daughter: "Such was my Sigurd among Giuki's sons, as is the garlick out from the grass which grows, or a bright stone on a thread drawn, a precious gem on kings.

¹⁹ I also seemed to the prince's warriors higher than any of Herian's Disir; now I am as little as the leaf oft is in the storm-winds, after the chieftain's death.

²⁰ Sitting I miss, and in my bed, my dearest friend. Giuki's sons have caused, Giuki's sons have caused my affliction, and their sister's tears of anguish.

²¹ So ye desolate the people's land, as ye have kept your sworn oaths. Gunnar! thou wilt not the gold enjoy; those rings will be thy bane, for the oaths thou to Sigurd gavest.

²² Oft in the mansion was the greater mirth, when my Sigurd Grani saddled, and Brynhild they went to woo, that which accursed, in an evil hour!"

²³ Then said Brynhild, Budli's daughter: "May the hag lack spouse and children, who thee, Gudrun! has caused to weep, and this morning given thee runes of speech!"

²⁴ Then said Gullrond, Giuki's daughter: "Cease, thou loathed of all! from those words. The evil destiny of princes thou hast ever been; thee every billow drives of an evil nature; thou sore affliction of seven kings, the greatest bane of friendship among women!"

²⁵ Then said Brynhild, Budli's daughter: "Atli my brother, Budli's offspring, is the sole cause of all the evil;

²⁶ When in the hall of the Hunnish folk, with the king we beheld the fire of the serpent's bed. Of that journey, I have paid the penalty, that sight I have ever rued."

²⁷ She by a column stood, the wood violently clasped. From the eyes of Brynhild, Budli's daughter, fire gleamed forth; venom she snorted, when she beheld the wounds of Sigurd.

²⁸ Gudrun then went away to the forest and deserts, and travelled to Denmark, where she stayed seven half-years with Thora, Hakon's daughter. Brynhild would not outlive Sigurd. She caused her eight thralls and five female slaves to be killed, and then slew herself with a sword, as it is related in the "Sigurdarkvida in Skemma" (the Short Lay of Sigurd).

Brynhild's Hel-Ride

¹ "Thou shalt not pass through my stone-supported dwelling place. Better had it beseemed thee to work broidery, than to seek after another's husband.

² Why dost thou, vagrant woman! from Valland, my dwelling visit? Thou hast, golden dame! if thou desirest to know, gentle one! from thy hands washed human blood."

³ Brynhild: "Upbraid me not, woman of the rock! although I have in warfare been. Of us, I trow, I shall the better seem, wherever men our conditions know."

⁴ Giantess: "Thou, Brynhild! Budli's daughter! wast in evil hour born in the world; thou hast been the bane of Giuki's children, and their happy house subverted."

⁵ Brynhild: "From my chariot I will truly tell thee, thou witless crone! if thou desirest to know, how Giuki's heirs made me both lovelorn and perjured.

⁶ The bold-hearted king caused the garbs of us eight sisters under an oak to be borne. Twelve years old was I, if thou desirest to know, when to the youthful king oaths I gave.

⁷ By all in Hlymdalir I was called Hild with the helm, by all who knew me.

⁸ Then caused I next, in the Gothic realm, the old Hialmgunnar to Hel to journey: I gave victory to the youthful brother of Oda, whereat Odin became hostile to me.

⁹ He with shields encompassed me, red and white, in Skatalund; their surfaces enclosed me; him he ordained my sleep to break, who in no place could be made to fear.

¹⁰ He made around my hall, towards the south, towering burn the destroyer of all wood: then bade that man only over it to ride, who me the gold should bring, that under Fafnir lay.

¹¹ On Grani rode the chief, the gold-disperser, to where my foster-father ruled o'er the dwellings. He alone seemed there to all superior, the Danish warrior, of the court.

¹² We slept and were content in the same bed, as if he had my born brother been; neither of us might on the other, for eight nights, lay a hand.

¹³ Reproached me Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, that I had slept in Sigurd's arms; then was I made aware of what I fain would not,--that they had deceived me, when a mate I took.

¹⁴ To calamities all too lasting men and women, ever will be while living born. We two shall now, Sigurd and I pass our life together. Sink thou of giant-kind!"

The Slaughter Of The Niflungs

¹ Gunnar and Hogni then took all the gold, Fafnir's heritage. Dissension prevailed afterwards between the Giukungs and Atli. He charged them with being the cause of Brynhild's death. By way of reconciliation, it was agreed that they should give him Gudrun in marriage, to whom they administered an oblivious potion, before she would consent to espouse Atli. Atli had two sons, Erp and Eitil, but Svanhild was the daughter of Sigurd and Gudrun. King Atli invited Gunnar and Hogni to his residence, and sent to them Vingi, or Knefrod. Gudrun was aware of treachery, and sent them word in runes not to come; and to Hogni, as a token, she sent the ring Andvaranaut, in which she had tied some wolf's hair. Gunnar had sought the hand of Oddrun, Atli's sister, but did not obtain it. He

then married Glaumvor, and Hogni took Kostbera to wife. Their sons were Solar, Snævar, and Giuki. When the Giukungs came to Atli, Gudrun besought his sons to intercede for their lives, but they would not. The heart of Hogni was cut out, and Gunnar was cast into a pen of serpents. He struck his harp and lulled the serpents, but an adder stung him to the liver.

The Second Lay Of Gudrun

¹ A maid above all maids I was; my mother reared me bright in her bower; my brothers I much loved, until me Giuki, with gold adorned, with gold adorned, to Sigurd gave.

² Such was Sigurd above Giuki's sons, as the green leek is, springing from the grass, or the high-limbed hart above the savage beasts, or gleed-red gold above grey silver.

³ Until my brothers the possession grudged me of a consort to all superior. They could not sleep, nor on affairs deliberate, before they Sigurd had caused to die.

⁴ Grani to the assembly ran, his tramp was to be heard; but Sigurd then himself came not. All the saddle-beasts were splashed with blood, and with sweating faint, from the murderers.

⁵ Weeping I went to talk to Grani, with humid cheeks, I prayed the steed to tell: then Grani shuddered, in the grass bowed down his head. The steed knew that his master was no more.

⁶ Long I wandered, long was my mind distracted, ere of the people's guardian I inquired for my king.

⁷ Gunnar hung his head, but Hogni told me of Sigurd's cruel death. "Beyond the river slaughtered lies Guthorm's murderer, and to the wolves given.

⁸ Yonder behold Sigurd, towards the south, there thou wilt hear the ravens croak, the eagles scream, in their feast exulting; the wolves howling round thy consort."

⁹ "Why wilt thou, Hogni! to a joyless being such miseries recount? May thy heart by ravens be torn and scattered over the wide world, rather than thou shouldst walk with men."

¹⁰ Hogni answered, for once cast down, from his cheerful mood by intense trouble: "Gudrun! thou wouldst have greater cause to weep, if the ravens should tear my heart."

¹¹ Alone I turned from that interview to the wolves' scattered leavings. No sigh I uttered, nor with my hands beat, nor wailed, as other women, when I heartbroken sat by Sigurd.

¹² Night seemed to me of blackest darkness, when I sorrowing sat by Sigurd. Better by far it seemed to me had the wolves taken my life, or I had been burnt as a birchen tree.

¹³ From the fell I journeyed five long days and nights, until the lofty hall of Half I recognized. Seven half-years I with Thora stayed, Hakon's daughter, in Denmark.

¹⁴ She for my solace wrought in gold southern halls, and Danish swans.

¹⁵ We had in pictures the game of warriors, and in handiworks a prince's nobles; red shields, Hunnish heroes, a sworded host, a helmed host, a prince's following.

¹⁶ Sigmund's ships from the land sailing, with gilded heads, and carved prows. We on our canvas wrought how Sigr and Siggeir both contended southward in Fyen.

¹⁷ When Grimhild, the Gothic woman, heard how greatly I was afflicted, she cast aside her needle-work, and her sons called oft and earnestly, that she might know, who for her son would their sister compensate, or for her consort slain the blood-fine pay?

¹⁸ Gunnar was ready gold to offer, for the injuries to atone, and Hogni also. * * * She then inquired who would go the steeds to saddle, the chariot to drive, on horseback ride, the hawk let fly, arrows shoot from the yew bow?

¹⁹ Valdar and the Danes with Jarizleif, Eymod the third with Jarizkar, then entered, to princes like. Red mantles had the Langbard's men, corslets ornamented, towering helms; girded they were with falchions, brown were their locks.

²⁰ For me each one would choose precious gifts, precious gifts, and to my heart would speak, if for my many woes they might gain my confidence, and I would in them trust.

²¹ Grimhild to me brought a potion to drink cold and bitter, that I my injuries might forget; it was mingled with Urd's power, with cold sea-water, and with Son's blood.

²² In that horn were characters of every kind graven and red-hued; nor could I comprehend them: the long lyng-fish of the Haddings' land, an uncut ear of corn: the wild-beasts' entrance.

²³ In that potion were many ills together, a herb from every wood, and the acorn, the fire-stead's dew, entrails of offerings, swine's liver seethed; for that deadens strife.

²⁴ And then I forgot, when I had taken it, all the king's words in the hall spoken. There to my feet three kings came, before she herself sought to speak with me.

²⁵ "Gudrun! I will give thee gold to possess, of all the riches much of thy dead father; rings of red gold, Hlodver's halls, all the hangings left by the fallen king.

²⁶ Hunnish maids, those who weave tapestry, and in bright gold work, so that it may delight thee. Over Budli's wealth thou alone shalt rule, adorned with gold, and given to Atli."

²⁷ "I will not have any man, nor Brynhild's brother marry: it beseems me not with Budli's son to increase a race, or life enjoy."

²⁸ "Take care not to pay the chiefs with hate; for 'tis we who have been the aggressors: so shouldst thou act as if yet lived Sigurd and Sigmund, if sons thou bearest."

²⁹ "Grimhild! I cannot in mirth indulge, nor, for my hero's sake, cherish a hope, since the bloodthirsty [wolf and] raven have together cruelly drunk my Sigurd's heart's blood."

³⁰ "Him of all I have found to be a king of noblest race, and in much most excellent: him shalt thou have until age lays thee low, or mateless be, if him thou wilt not take."

³¹ "Cease to offer that cup of ills so pertinaciously, that race to me: he will Gunnar's destruction perpetrate, and will cut out Hogni's heart. I will not cease until the exulting strife-exciter's life I shall have taken."

³² Weeping Grimhild caught the words, by which to her sons Gudrun foreboded evil, and to her kindred dire misfortunes. "Lands I will also give thee, people and followers, Vinbiorg and Valbiorg, if thou wilt accept them; for life possess them, and be happy, daughter!"

³³ "Him then I will choose among the kings, and from my relatives reluctantly receive him. Never will he be to me a welcome consort, nor my brothers' bale a protection to our sons."

- ³⁴ Forthwith on horseback was each warrior to be seen; but the Walish women were in chariots placed. For seven days o'er a cold land we rode; but the second seven, we beat the waves; and the third seven, we reached dry land.
- ³⁵ There the gate-wards of the lofty burgh the latticed entrance opened, ere the court we entered.
- ³⁶ Atli waked me, but I seemed to be full of evil thoughts, for my kinsmen's death.
- ³⁷ "So me just now have the Norns waked,--a grateful interpretation I fain would have. Methought that thou, Gudrun! Giuki's daughter! with a treacherous sword didst pierce me through."
- ³⁸ "Fire it forebodes, when one of iron dreams, arrogance and pleasure, a woman's anger. Against evil I will go burn thee, cure and medicate thee, although to me thou art hateful."
- ³⁹ "Seemed to me here in the garden that young shoots had fallen, which I wished to let grow: torn up with their roots, reddened with blood, to table they were brought, and offered me to eat.
- ⁴⁰ "Seemed to me that hawks flew from my hand, lacking their quarry, to the house of woes; seemed to me I ate their hearts with honey swollen with blood, with sorrowing mind.
- ⁴¹ "Seemed to me from my hand whelps I let slip; lacking cause of joy, both of them howled: seemed to me their bodies became dead carcasses: of the carrion I was compelled to eat."
- ⁴² "There will warriors round thy couch converse, and of the white-locked ones take off the head; death-doomed they are within a few nights, a little ere day: thy court will eat of them."
- ⁴³ "Lie down I would not, nor sleep after, obstinate in my fate--That I will execute!"

The Third Lay Of Gudrun

- ¹ What ails thee ever, Atli! Budli's son! Hast thou sorrow in thy heart? Why never laughest thou? To thy jarls it would seem more desirable, that thou with men wouldst talk, and on me wouldst look.
- ² Atli: It grieves me, Gudrun! Giuki's daughter! that in my palace here, Herkia has said, that thou and Thiodrek have under one covering slept, and wantonly been in the linen wrapt.
- ³ Gudrun: For all this charge I will give my oaths by the white sacred stone, that with me and Thiodrek nothing has passed, which to man and wife only belongs;
- ⁴ Save that I embraced the prince of armies, the honoured king, a single time. Other were our cogitations, when sorrowful we two sat to converse.
- ⁵ Hither came Thiodrek, with thirty warriors; now there lives not one of those thirty men. Surround me with thy brothers, and with mailed warriors; surround me with all thy noblest kinsmen.
- ⁶ Send to Saxi the Southmen's prince; he can hallow the boiling cauldron."
- ⁷ Seven hundred men entered the hall, ere in the cauldron the queen dipt her hand.
- ⁸ "Now Gunnar comes not, nor call I Hogni: I shall not see again my loved brothers: with his sword would Hogni such wrong avenge: now I must myself purify from crime."
- ⁹ She to the bottom, plunged her snow-white hand, and up she drew the precious stones. "See now, ye men! I am proved guiltless in holy wise, boil the vessel as it may."
- ¹⁰ Laughed then Atli's heart within his breast, when he unscathed beheld the hand of Gudrun. "Now must Herkia to the cauldron go, she who Gudrun had hoped to injure." No one has misery seen who

saw not that, how the hand there of Herkia was burnt. They then the woman led to a foul slough. So were Gudrun's wrongs avenged.

Oddrun's Lament

¹ I have heard tell, in ancient stories how a damsel came to the eastern land: no one was able, on the face of earth, help to afford to Heidrek's daughter.

² When Oddrun, Atli's sister, heard that the damsel had great pains, from the stall she led her well-bridled steed, and on the swart one the saddle laid.

³ She the horse made run on the smooth, dusty way, until she came to where a high hall stood. She the saddle snatched from the hungry steed, and in she went along the court, and these words first of all uttered:

⁴ "What is most noteworthy in this country? or what most desirable in the Hunnish land?"

⁵ Borgny: Here lies Borgny with pains overwhelmed, thy friend, Oddrun! See if thou canst help her.

⁶ Oddrun: What chieftain has on thee brought this dishonour? Why so acute are Borgny's pains?

⁷ Borgny: Vilmund is named the falcon-bearer's friend: he the damsel wrapt in a warm coverlet five whole winters, so that from her father she was hidden.

⁸ They, I ween, spoke not more than this: kindly she went to sit at the damsel's knee. Vehemently sang Oddrun, fervently sang Oddrun songs of power over Borgny.

⁹ A girl and boy might then tread the mould-way, gentle babes, born of Hogni's bane. Then began to speak the death-sick damsel, who before had no word uttered.

¹⁰ "So may thee help the benignant genii, Frigg and Freyia, and other gods besides, as thou hast from me peril removed!"

¹¹ "I was not inclined to give thee help, because thou never wast of succour worthy: I vowed, and have performed what I then said--when the princes the heritage divided, that I would ever help afford."

¹² Borgny: Mad art thou, Oddrun! and hast lost thy wits, when in hostile spirit most of thy words thou utterest; for I have been thy companion upon the earth, as if from brothers we both were born.

¹³ Oddrun: I remember yet what thou one evening saidst, when I for Gunnar, a computation made. Such a case, saidst thou, would not thenceforth happen, to any maiden, save to me alone."

¹⁴ Then sat down the sorrowing lady to tell her woes, from her great grief:

¹⁵ "I was nurtured in the kingly hall, I was the joy of many in the council of men. Life I enjoyed, and my father's wealth, five winters only, while my father lived.

¹⁶ These last words the noble-hearted king strove to utter, ere he departed hence.

¹⁷ He bade me be endowed with ruddy gold, and in the south be given to Grimhild's son. He said no maiden could more excellent in the world be born, if fate willed it not otherwise.

¹⁸ Brynhild in her bower was occupied in broidery: she had people and lands around her. Earth slumbered, and the heavens above, when Fafnir's bane her burgh first saw.

- ¹⁹ Then was conflict waged with the Walish sword, and the burgh taken which Brynhild owned. It was not long--which was not surprising--ere she discovered all those frauds.
- ²⁰ These she caused cruelly to be avenged, so that we all have great afflictions. Known it will be through every land of men, that she caused herself to die with Sigurd.
- ²¹ But I for Gunnar, rings' dispenser, love conceived, such as Brynhild should. But he Brynhild bade a helmet take, said she a Valkyria should become.
- ²² They forthwith offered ruddy rings to my brother, and indemnity not small. He besides offered for me fifteen vills, and the load of Grani's sides, if he would accept them.
- ²³ But Atli said he never would a marriage-gift receive from Giuki's son. Still we could not our loves withstand, but I my head must lay upon the ring-breaker.
- ²⁴ Many things said my relations; declared they had surprised us both together; but Atli said, that I would not crime commit, nor scandal perpetrate. But such should no one for another ever deny, when love has part.
- ²⁵ Atli sent his emissaries about the Murkwood, that he might prove me; and they came to where they ought not to have come, to where we had one couch prepared.
- ²⁶ To the men we offered red-gold rings, that they it might not to Atli tell; but they forthwith hastened home, and it quickly to Atli told.
- ²⁷ But they from Gudrun carefully concealed it, yet rather by half she should have known it.
- ²⁸ A sound was heard of gold-shod hoofs, when into the court rode Giuki's heirs. * * * Of Hogni they the heart cut out, and into a serpent-pen the other cast.
- ²⁹ I had gone yet once again to Geirmund, to prepare a banquet. * * * The brave king began the harp to sound; for the prince of noble race hoped that I to his aid might come.
- ³⁰ I it heard from Hlesey, how of trouble there the harp-strings sang.
- ³¹ I my thralls bade all be ready: I the prince's life would save. The vessel we let float past the forest, until I saw all Atli's courts.
- ³² Then came Atli's miserable mother crawling forth:--may she perish!--she Gunnar pierced to the heart; so that the hero I could not save.
- ³³ Oftentimes I wonder, woman gold-adorned! how I after can life retain; for I seemed the formidable sword-dispenser as myself to love:
- ³⁴ Thou sitst and listenest, while I recount to thee many an evil fate, my own and theirs." Each one lives as he best may. Now is ended _Oddrun's lament_.

The Lay Of Atli

- ¹ Atli sent riding a messenger to Gunnar, a crafty man, Knefrud was his name. To Giuki's courts he came, and to Gunnar's hall, to the seats of state, and the glad potation:
- ² There drank the courtiers wine in their Valhall--but the guileful ones silence kept--the Huns' wrath they feared. Then said Knefrud, with chilling voice:--the southern warrior on a high bench sat--

- ³ "Atli has sent me hither on his errand riding on a bit-gripping steed, through the unknown Murkwood, to pray you, Gunnar! that to his bench ye come, with helms of state, Atli's home to visit.
- ⁴ "Shields ye there can choose, and smooth-shaven spears, gold-red helms, and of Huns a multitude, silver-gilt saddle-cloths, sarks gory-red, the dart's obstruction, and bit-gripping steeds.
- ⁵ "The plain he will also give you, the broad Gnitahaid, whistling javelins, and gilded prows, vast treasures, and Danp's towns, with that famed forest, which men the Murkwood call."
- ⁶ Gunnar his head then turned, and to Hogni said: "What counselest thou, bold warrior? now suchlike we hear? Of no gold I knew on Gnita's heath, to which we possess not other equal.
- ⁷ "Seven halls have we filled with swords, of each of which the hilt is gold. My horse I know the best, and my sword the keenest; my bow adorns my seat, my corslets are of gold, my helm and shield the brightest, brought from the hall of Kiar: mine alone are better than all the Hunnish ones.
- ⁸ "What thinkest thou the woman means, by sending us a ring in a wolf's clothing wrapt? I think that she caution enjoins. Wolf's hair I found twined in the red-gold ring: wolfish is the way we on our errand ride."
- ⁹ No sons persuaded Gunnar, nor other kinsman, interpreters nor counsellors, nor those who potent were. Then spake Gunnar, as beseemed a king, great in his mead-hall, from his large soul:
- ¹⁰ "Rise now up, Fiornir! let along the benches pass the golden cups of heroes, from the attendants' hands.
- ¹¹ "The wolf shall rule the Niflungs' heritage, O bearded sages! if Gunnar perish; black-coated bears earth's fruit tear with their teeth, to the dogs' delight, if Gunnar come not back."
- ¹² Honoured men, weeping led the land's ruler from the Huns' court. Then said Hogni's youthful heir: "Go now, prudent and prosperous, whither your wishes lead."
- ¹³ The warriors made their bit-gripping steeds over the mountains fly, through the unknown Murkwood. The whole Hunnish forest trembled where'er the warriors rode; over the shrubless, all-green plains they sped.
- ¹⁴ Atli's land they saw, and the high watch-towers; Bikki's people stood on that lofty fortress; the south people's hall was round with benches set, with well-bound bucklers, and white shields, the javelin's obstruction. There Atli drank wine in his Valhall: his guards sat without, Gunnar and his men to watch, lest they there should come with yelling dart, to excite their prince to conflict.
- ¹⁵ Their sister forthwith saw, when the hall they had entered, her brothers both--beer had she little drunken--"Betrayed art thou now, Gunnar! though strong, how wilt thou contend with the Huns' deadly wiles? Go quickly from this hall!
- ¹⁶ "Better hadst thou, Gunnar! in corslet come, than with helm of state, to see the home of Atli; thou in the saddle wouldst have sat whole sun-bright days, and o'er the pallid dead let the Norns weep, the Hunnish shield-maids misery suffer; but Atli himself thou shouldst into the serpent-pen have cast; but now the serpent-pen is for you two reserved."
- ¹⁷ "Sister! 'tis now too late the Niflungs to assemble, long 'tis to seek the aid of men, of valiant heroes, over the rugged fells of Rhine."
- ¹⁸ Then the Burgundians' friends Gunnar seized, in fetters laid, and him fast bound.

¹⁹ Hogni hewed down seven, with the keen sword, but the eighth he thrust into the raging fire. So should a valiant man defend himself from foes.

²⁰ Hogni had Gunnar's hands protected. The bold chief they asked, if the Goths' lord would with gold his life redeem?

²¹ "Hogni's heart in my hand shall lie, cut bloody from the breast of the valiant chief, the king's son, with a dull-edged knife." * * * They the heart cut out from Hialli's breast; on a dish bleeding laid it, and it to Gunnar bare.

²² Then said Gunnar, lord of men: "Here have I the heart of the timid Hialli, unlike the heart of the bold Hogni; for much it trembles as in the dish it lies: it trembled more by half, while in his breast it lay."

²³ Hogni laughed, when to his heart they cut the living crest-crasher; no lament uttered he. All bleeding on a dish they laid it, and it to Gunnar bare.

²⁴ Calmly said Gunnar, the warrior Niflung: "Here have I the heart of the bold Hogni, unlike the heart of the timid Hialli; for it little trembles, as in the dish it lies: it trembled less, while in his breast it lay.

²⁵ "So far shalt thou, Atli! be from the eyes of men as thou wilt from the treasures be. In my power alone is all the hidden Niflungs' gold, now that Hogni lives not.

²⁶ "Ever was I wavering, while we both lived; now am I so no longer, as I alone survive. Rhine shall possess men's baleful metal, the mighty stream, the As-known Niflungs' heritage. In the rolling water the choice rings shall glitter, rather than on the hands of the Huns' children shine.

²⁷ "Drive your wheel-chariots, the captive is now in bonds."

²⁸ Atli the mighty, their sister's husband, rode with resounding steeds, with strife-thorns surrounded. Gudrun perceived the heroes' peril, she from tears refrained, on entering the hall of tumult.

²⁹ "So be it with thee, Atli! as towards Gunnar thou hast held the oft-sworn oaths, formerly taken--by the southward verging sun, and by Sigty's hill, the secluded bed of rest, and by Ullr's ring." Yet thence the more did the bit-shaker the treasure's guardian, the warrior chief, drag to death.

³⁰ The living prince then did a host of men into a pen cast down, which was within with serpents over-crawled. But Gunnar there alone a harp in wrathful mood with his hand struck: the strings resounded. So should a daring chief, a ring-dispenser, gold from men withhold.

³¹ Atli turned his brass-shod steed, his home to revisit, back from the murder. Din was in the court with horses thronged, men's weapon-song, from the heath they were come.

³² Out then went Gudrun, Atli to meet, with a golden cup to do her duty to the king. "Thou canst, O King! joyful in thy hall receive from Gudrun the arms of the departed."

³³ The drinking-cups of Atli groaned with wine heavy, when in the hall together the Huns were counted. Long-bearded, bold, the warriors entered.

³⁴ Hastened the bright-faced dame to bear their potions to them, the wondrous lady to the chiefs; and reluctantly to the pallid Atli the festal dainties offered, and uttered words of hate.

³⁵ "Thou, swords' dispenser! hast thy two sons' hearts, slaughter-gory, with honey eaten. I resolved that thou, bold chief! shouldst of a human dish eat at thy feasting, and to the place of honour send it. Henceforth thou wilt not to thy knees call Erp and Eitil, joyous with beer the two: thou wilt not

henceforth, see them from thy middle seat, gold-dispersing, javelins shafting, manes clipping, or horses urging."

³⁶ Uproar was on the benches, portentous the cry of men, noise beneath the costly hangings. The children of the Huns wept, all wept save Gudrun, who never wept, or for her bear-fierce brothers, or her dear sons, young, simple, whom she had borne to Atli.

³⁷ Gold scattered the swan-fair dame; with ruddy rings the household gifted. Fate she let ripen, but the bright gold flow. The woman spared not the treasure-houses.

³⁸ Atli incautious had himself drunk weary; weapon he had none, nor was 'gainst Gudrun guarded. Oft had their sport been better, when they lovingly embraced each other before the nobles.

³⁹ With the sword's point she gave the bed of blood to drink with death-bent hand, and the dogs loosed, out at the hall-door drove them, and the lady wakened the household with burning brand. That vengeance she for her brothers took.

⁴⁰ To fire she then gave all that were therein, and from her brothers' murder were from the dark den returned. The old structures fell, the treasure-houses smoked, the Budlungs' dwelling. Burnt too were the shield-maids within, their lives cut short; in the raging fire they sank.

⁴¹ Of this enough is said. No such woman will henceforth arms again bear, to avenge her brothers. That bright woman had to three kings of men the death-doom borne, before she died.

⁴² Yet more clearly is this told in "Atlmalum inum Groenlenzkum" (the Groenland lay of Atli).

The Groenland Lay Of Atli

¹ Of those misdeeds men have heard tell, when warriors of old a compact made, which by pledges they confirmed, a secret consultation held: terrible it was to them after, and to Giuki's sons likewise, who were betrayed.

² The warriors' fate ripened, they were death-doomed: ill advised was Atli, though he possessed sagacity: he felled a mighty column, strove hardly against himself; with speed he messengers despatched, that his wife's brothers should come quickly.

³ Wise was the house-dame, prudently she thought; the words in order she had heard, that in secret they had said: the sage lady was at a loss: fain would she help them; they o'er the sea must sail, but she herself could not go.

⁴ Runes she graved, Vingi them falsified, before he gave them from him; of ill he was the bearer. Then departed Atli's messengers, through the branched firth, for where the bold warriors dwelt.

⁵ They with beer were cheered, and fires they kindled, naught thought they of guile, when they were come; they the gifts accepted, which the prince sent them, on a column hung them, and of no evil thought.

⁶ Then came Kostbera, she was Hogni's wife, a woman greatly cautious, and them both greeted. Glad was also Glaumvor, Gunnar's consort, the prudent dame her duty forgot not, she to the guests' need attended.

⁷ Hogni they home invited, if he would be pleased to go. Treachery was manifest, had they but reflected! Gunnar then promised, if only Hogni would, but Hogni refused what the other proposed.

⁸ The noble dames bore mead, of many things there was abundance, many horns passed round, until it seemed they had full drunken.

⁹ The household prepared their couches, as to them seemed best. Cunning was Kostbera, she could runes interpret; she the letters read by the bright fire;--her tongue she had to guard between both her gums--so perverted were they, it was difficult to understand them.

¹⁰ To their bed they went, she and Hogni. The gentle lady dreamed, and concealed it not, to the prince wisely said it as soon as she awoke.

¹¹ "From home thou art going, Hogni! give ear to counsel; few are fully prudent: go another time.

¹² I have the runes interpreted, which thy sister graved: that fair dame has not this time invited thee. At one thing I wonder most, I cannot even conceive, why so wise a woman so confusedly should grave; for it is so set down as if it intimated death to you both, if you should straightway come. Either she has left out a letter, or others are the cause."

¹³ "They are," said Hogni, "all suspicious; I have no knowledge of them, nor will I into it inquire, unless we have to make requital. The king will gift us with gleed-red gold. I never fear, though we may hear of terror."

¹⁴ "Tottering ye will go, if thitherward ye tend. No kind entertainment there will ye at this time find. Hogni! I have dreamed, I will not conceal it: in an evil hour ye will go, or so at least I fear.

¹⁵ "Methought thy coverlet was with fire consumed; that the towering flame rushed through my dwelling."

¹⁶ Hogni: "Here lie linen cloths, which thou hadst little noticed: these will quickly burn where thou the coverlet sawest."

¹⁷ Kostbera: "Methought a bear came in, and broke down the columns; and so his talons shook, that we were terror-stricken; by his mouth held many of us, so that we were helpless: there, too, was a din far from little."

¹⁸ Hogni: "A tempest there will be furious and sudden: the white bear thou sawest will be a storm from the east."

¹⁹ Kostbera: "Methought an eagle flew herein, all through the house: that will largely concern us. He sprinkled all with blood: from his threats I thought it to be the 'ham' of Atli."

²⁰ Hogni: "We often slaughter largely, and then red we see: often are oxen meant, when we of eagles dream. Sound is the heart of Atli, dream thou as thou mayest." With this they ended: all speeches have an end.

²¹ The high-born awoke, there the like befell: Glaumvor had perceived that her dreams were ill-boding, adverse to Gunnar's going to and fro.

²² "Methought a gallows was for thee erected, thou wentest to be hanged, that serpents ate thee, that I inter'd thee living, that the Powers' dissolution came--Divine thou what that portends.

²³ "Methought a bloody glove from thy sark was drawn--ill 'tis such a dream to a consort to recount--methought a lance was thrust through thy middle: wolves howled on every side."

²⁴ Gunnar: "Where dogs run they are wont to bark: oft bodes the bay of dogs the flight of javelins."

²⁵ Glaumvor: "Methought a river ran herein, through the whole house, that it roared violently, rushed o'er the benches, brake the feet of you brothers twain; nothing the water spared: something will that portend!

²⁶ "Methought dead women in the night came hither; not ill-clad were they: they would choose thee, forthwith invited thee to their seats. I ween thy Disir have forsaken thee."

²⁷ Gunnar: "Too late it is to speak, it is now so resolved; from the journey we shall not shrink, as it is decreed to go: very probable it seems that our lives will be short."

²⁸ When colours were discernible, those on journey bent all rose up: the others fain would stay them. The five journeyed together, of "hus-carls" there were present twice that number--it was ill devised--Snævar and Solar, they were Hogni's sons; Orkning he was named, who them accompanied, a gentle shield-bearer was he, the brother of Hogni's wife.

²⁹ They went fair-appointed, until the firth them parted: ever would their wives have stayed them, they would not be stayed.

³⁰ Glaumvor then spake, Gunnar's consort, Vingi she addressed, as to her seemed fitting: "I know not whether ye will requite us as we would: with treachery came the guest, if aught of ill betide."

³¹ Then Vingi swore, little spared he himself: "May him the Jotuns have, if towards you he lies! the gallows hold him, if aught against peace he meditates!"

³² Bera took up the word, she of gentle soul: "Sail ye prosperous, and may success attend you: may it be as I pray, and if nothing hinder!"

³³ Hogni answered--he to his kin meant well--"Be of good cheer, ye prudent! whatever may befall. Many say the same, though with great difference; for many little care how they depart from home."

³⁴ On each other then they looked before they parted: then, I ween, their fates were severed, and their ways divided.

³⁵ Vigorously they rowed, their bark was well nigh riven; backward bending the waves they beat, ardently plied: their oar-bands were broken, the rowlocks shattered. They made not the vessel fast before they quitted it.

³⁶ A little after--I will the end relate--they saw the mansion stand that Budli had possessed. Loud creaked the latticed gates, when Hogni knocked.

³⁷ Then said Vingi, what he had better not, "Go far from the house, 'tis perilous to enter; I quickly enticed you to perdition; ye shall forthwith be slain. With fair words I prayed your coming, though guile was under them. But just bide here, while a gallows I prepare."

³⁸ Hogni answered--little thought he of yielding, or of aught fearful that was to be proved:--"Think not to frighten us: try that seldom. If one word thou addest, thou wilt thy harm prolong."

³⁹ They rushed on Vingi, and struck him dead, laid on their axes, while life within him throbbed.

⁴⁰ Atli his men assembled, in their byrnies they issued forth, went prepared so that a fence was between them. Words they bandied, all with rage boiling: "Already had we resolved to take your lives away."

⁴¹ Hogni: "It looks but ill, if ye before have counselled: e'en now ye are unprepared, and we one have felled, smitten to death: one of your host was he."

⁴² Furious they became, when those words they heard; their fingers they stretched forth, and their bowstrings seized; sharply shot, and with shields themselves protected.

⁴³ In then came the tale of what without was passing; loud before the hall they a thrall heard speak.

⁴⁴ Then incensed was Gudrun, when the sad news she heard: adorned with necklaces, she tore them all asunder; so hurled the silver, that the rings in shivers flew.

⁴⁵ Then she went out, not gently moved the doors; went forth, void of fear, and the comers hailed, turned to the Niflungs: that was her last greeting, truth attended it; more words she said:

⁴⁶ "I sought by symbols to prevent your leaving home,--fate may no one resist--and yet must you come hither." Wisely she asked: might they not be appeased? No one consented, all answered no.

⁴⁷ Saw then the high-born lady that a hard game they played; a deadly deed she meditated, and her robe dashed aside, a naked falchion seized, and her kinsmen's lives defended: skilful she was in warfare, where her hand she applied.

⁴⁸ Giuki's daughter caused two warriors to fall; Atli's brother she struck down,--he must henceforth be borne--so she the conflict managed, that she his foot struck off. Another too she smote, so that he never rose, to Hel she sent him: her hand trembled not.

⁴⁹ A conflict then ensued, which was widely famed, but that excelled all else which Giuki's sons performed. So 'tis said the Niflungs, while yet they lived, with swords maintained the fight, corslets rent, helmets hewed, as their hearts prompted.

⁵⁰ At morning most they fought, until mid-day had passed; all early morn, and the forenoon, ere the fight was ended, the field flowed with blood, until eighteen had fallen: Bera's two sons, and her brother, had them overcome.

⁵¹ Then the fierce Atli spoke, wroth though he was: "'Tis ill to look around; this is long of you. We were thirty warlike thanes, eleven survive: the chasm is too great. We were five brothers, when Budli died; now has Hel the half, two lie slain.

⁵² "A great affinity I obtained, that I cannot deny, pernicious woman! of which I have no benefit: peace we have seldom had, since thou among us camest. Of kinsmen ye have bereft me, of riches often wronged. To Hel my sister ye have sent; that is to me most bitter."

⁵³ Gudrun: "This thou callest to mind, Atli! but thou so first didst act: my mother thou didst take, and for her treasures murder; my gifted niece with hunger thou didst cause to perish. Laughable to me it seems, when thou sorrows dost recount. The gods are to be thanked, that it goes ill with thee."

⁵⁴ Atli: Jarls! I exhort you the sorrow to augment of that presumptuous woman: I would fain see it. Strive so to do, that Gudrun may lament. Might I but see that in her lot she joys not!

⁵⁵ Take ye Hogni, and with a knife hack him: cut out his heart: this ye shall do. Gunnar the fierce of soul to a gallows fasten; do the work thoroughly, lure up the serpents.

⁵⁶ Hogni: Do as thou listest, glad I will await it; stout I shall prove myself: I have ere now things much harder proved. Ye had a hindrance while unscathed we were: now are we so wounded that our fate thou mayest command.

⁵⁷ Beiti spake,--he was Atli's steward--Take we Hialli, but Hogni let us save. Let us do half the work; he is death-worthy. As long as he lives a slug he will ever be.

⁵⁸ Terrified was the kettle-watcher, the place no longer held him: he could be a whiner, he clomb into every nook: their conflict was his bane, as he the penalty must pay; and the day sad, when he must from the swine die, from all good things, which he had enjoyed.

⁵⁹ Budli's cook they took, and the knife brought towards him. Howled the wretched thrall, ere the point he felt; declared that he had time the gardens to manure, the vilest offices to do, if from death he might escape. Joyful indeed was Hialli, could he but save his life.

⁶⁰ Hogni all this observed--few so act, as for a slave to intercede, that he may escape!--"Less 'tis, I say, for me to play this game myself. Why shall we here desire to listen to that screaming?"

⁶¹ Hands on the good prince they laid. Then was no option for the bold warriors, the sentence longer to delay. Then laughed Hogni; heard the sons of day how he could hold out: torment he well endured!

⁶² A harp Gunnar took, with his foot-branches touched it. He could so strike it, that women wept, and the men sobbed, who best could hear it. He the noble queen counselled: the rafters burst asunder.

⁶³ There died the noble, as the dawn of day; at the last they caused their deeds to live.

⁶⁴ Atli thought himself great: over them both he strode, to the sagacious woman told the evil, and bitterly reproached her. "It is now morning, Gudrun! thy loved ones thou hast lost; partly thou art the cause that it has so befallen."

⁶⁵ Gudrun: Joyful art thou, Atli! slaughter to announce: repentance shall await thee, when thou hast all proved. That heritage shall be left thee--that I can tell thee--that ill shall never from thee go, unless I also die.

⁶⁶ Atli: That I can prevent; another course I see, easier by half: the good we oft reject. With slaves I will console thee, with things most precious, with snow-white silver, as thou thyself mayest desire.

⁶⁷ Gudrun: Of that there is _no_ hope; I will all reject; atonement I have spurned for smaller injuries. Hard I was ever thought, now will that be aggravated. I every grudge concealed, while Hogni lived.

⁶⁸ We were both nurtured in one house; many a play we played, and in the wood grew up; Grimhild us adorned with gold and necklaces; for my brothers' death never wilt thou indemnify me, nor ever do what shall to me seem good.

⁶⁹ Men's too great power women's lot oppresses; on the knee the hand sinks, if the arms wither; the tree inclines, if its root-fibres are severed. Now, Atli! thou mayest alone over all here command.

⁷⁰ Most unwise it was, when to this the prince gave credit: the guile was manifest, had he been on his guard. Dissembling then was Gudrun, against her heart she could speak, made herself gay appear, with two shields she played.

⁷¹ A banquet she would prepare, her brothers' funeral feast; the same would Atli also for his own do.

⁷² With this they ended; the banquet was prepared; the feasting was too luxurious. The woman great of heart was stern, she warred on Budli's race; on her spouse she would cruel vengeance wreak.

⁷³ The young ones she enticed, and on a block laid them, the fierce babes were terrified, and wept not, to their mother's bosom crept, asked what she was going to do.

⁷⁴ "Ask no questions, both I intend to kill; long have I desired to cut short your days."

⁷⁵ "Slay as thou wilt thy children, no one hinders it; thy rage will have short peace, if thou destroyest us in our blooming years, thou desperate woman!" It fell out accordingly: she cut the throats of both.

⁷⁶ Atli oft inquired whither his boys were gone to play, as he nowhere saw them?

⁷⁷ Gudrun: Over I am resolved to go, and to Atli tell it. Grimhild's daughter will not conceal it from thee. Little glad, Atli! wilt thou be, when all thou learnest; great woe didst thou raise up, when thou my brother slewest.

⁷⁸ Very seldom have I slept since they fell. Bitterly I threatened thee: now I have reminded thee. "It is now morning," saidst thou: I yet it well remember; and it now is eve, when thou the like shalt learn.

⁷⁹ Thou thy sons hast lost, as thou least shouldst; know that their skulls thou hast had for beer-cups; thy drink I prepared, I their red blood have shed.

⁸⁰ I their hearts took, and on a spit staked them, then to thee gave them. I said they were of calves,--it was long of thee alone--thou didst leave none, voraciously didst devour, well didst ply thy teeth.

⁸¹ Thy children's fate thou knowest, few a worse awaits. I have my part performed, though in it glory not.

⁸² Atli: Cruel wast thou, Gudrun! who couldst so act, with thy children's blood my drink to mingle. Thou hast destroyed thy offspring, as thou least shouldst; and to myself thou leavest a short interval from ill.

⁸³ Gudrun: I could still desire thyself to slay; rarely too ill it fares with such a prince. Thou hast already perpetrated crimes unexampled among men of frantic cruelty, in this world: now thou hast added what we have just witnessed. A great misdeed hast thou committed, thy death-feast thou hast prepared.

⁸⁴ Atli: On the pile thou shalt be burnt, but first be stoned; then wilt thou have earned what thou hast ever sought.

⁸⁵ Gudrun: Tell to thyself such griefs early to-morrow: by a fairer death I will pass to another light.

⁸⁶ In the same hall they sat, exchanged hostile thoughts, bandied words of hate: each was ill at ease.

⁸⁷ Hate waxed in a Hniflung, a great deed he meditated; to Gudrun he declared that he was Atli's deadly foe.

⁸⁸ Into her mind came Hogni's treatment; happy she him accounted, if he vengeance wreaked. Then was Atli slain, within a little space; Hogni's son him slew, and Gudrun herself.

⁸⁹ The bold king spake, roused up from sleep; quickly he felt the wounds, said he no binding needed. "Tell me most truly who has slain Budli's son. I am hardly treated: of life I have no hope."

⁹⁰ Gudrun: I, Grimhild's daughter, will not from thee hide, that I am the cause that thy life passes away; but partly Hogni's son, that thy wounds make thee faint.

⁹¹ Atli: To the slaughter thou hast rushed, although it ill beseemed thee; 'tis bad to circumvent a friend, who well confided in thee. Besought I went from home, to woo thee, Gudrun!

⁹² A widow thou was left, fierce thou wast accounted, which was no falsehood, as we have proved. Hither home thou earnest, us a host of men attended; all was splendid on our journey.

⁹³ Pomp of all kinds was there, of illustrious men, beeves in abundance: largely we enjoyed them. Of all things there was plenty partaken of by many.

⁹⁴ A marriage gift to my bride I gave, treasures for her acceptance, thralls thrice ten, seven fair female slaves: in such things was honour; silver there was yet more.

⁹⁵ All seemed to thee as it were naught, while the lands untouched lay, which Budli had left me. So didst thou undermine, dost allow me nothing to receive. Thou didst my mother let often sit weeping: with heart content I found not one of my household after.

⁹⁶ Gudrun: Now, Atli! thou liest, though of that I little reck. Gentle I seldom was, yet didst thou greatly aggravate it. Young brothers ye fought together, among yourselves contended; to Hel went the half from thy house: all went to ruin that should be for benefit.

⁹⁷ Brothers and sisters we were three, we thought ourselves invincible: from the land we departed, we followed Sigurd. We roved about, each steered a ship; seeking luck we went, till to the east we came.

⁹⁸ The chief king we slew, there a land obtained, the "hersar" yielded to us; that manifested fear. We from the forest freed him whom we wished harmless, raised him to prosperity who nothing had possessed.

⁹⁹ The Hun king died, then suddenly my fortune changed: great was the young wife's grief, the widow's lot was hers. A torment to me it seemed to come living to the house of Atli. A hero had possessed me: sad was that loss!

¹⁰⁰ Thou didst never from a contest come, as we had heard, where thou didst gain thy cause, or others overcome; ever wouldst thou give way, and never stand, lettest all pass off quietly, as ill beseemed a king.

¹⁰¹ Atli: Gudrun! now thou liest. Little will be bettered the lot of either: we have all suffered. Now act thou, Gudrun! of thy goodness, and for our honour, when I forth am borne.

¹⁰² Gudrun: I a ship will buy, and a painted cist; will the winding-sheet well wax, to enwrap thy corpse; will think of every requisite, as if we had each other loved.

¹⁰³ Atli was now a corpse, lament from his kin arose: the illustrious woman did all she had promised. The wise woman would go to destroy herself; her days were lengthened: she died another time.

¹⁰⁴ Happy is every one hereafter who shall give birth to such a daughter famed for deeds, as Giuki begat: ever will live, in every land, their oft-told tale, wherever people shall give ear.

Gudrun's Incitement

¹ Then heard I tell of quarrels dire, hard sayings uttered from great affliction, when her sons the fierce-hearted Gudrun, in deadly words, to slaughter instigated.

² "Why sit ye here? why sleep life away? why does it pain you not joyous words to speak, now Jormunrek your sister young in years has with horses trodden, white and black, in the public way, with grey and way-wont Gothic steeds?"

³ Ye are not like to Gunnar and the others, nor of soul so valiant as Hogni was. Her ye should seek to avenge, if ye had the courage of my brothers, or the fierce spirit of the Hunnish kings."

⁴ Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "Little didst thou care Hogni's deed to praise, when Sigurd he from sleep awaked. Thy blue-white bed-clothes were red with thy husband's gore, with death-blood covered.

⁵ "For thy brothers thou didst o'er-hasty vengeance take, dire and bitter, when thou thy sons didst murder. We young ones could on Jormunrek, acting all together, have avenged our sister.

⁶ "Bring forth the arms of the Hunnish kings: thou hast us stimulated to a sword-mote."

⁷ Laughing Gudrun to the storehouse turned, the kings' crested helms from the coffers drew, their ample corslets, and to her sons them bore. The young heroes loaded their horses' shoulders.

⁸ Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "So will no more come his mother to see, the warrior felled in the Gothic land, so that thou the funeral-beer after us all may drink, after Svanhild and thy sons."

⁹ Weeping Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, sorrowing went, to sit in the fore-court, and to recount, with tear-worn cheeks, sad of soul, her calamities, in many ways.

¹⁰ "Three fires I have known, three hearths I have known, of three consorts I have been borne to the house. Sigurd alone to me was better than all, of whom my brothers were the murderers.

¹¹ "Of my painful wounds I might not complain; yet they even more seemed to afflict me, when those chieftains to Atli gave me.

¹² "My bright boys I called to speak with me; for my injuries I could not get revenge, ere I had severed the Hniflungs' heads.

¹³ "To the sea-shore I went, against the Norns I was embittered; I would cast off their persecution; bore, and submerged me not the towering billows; up on land I rose, because I was to live.

¹⁴ "To the nuptial couch I went--as I thought better for me,--for the third time, with a mighty king. I brought forth offspring, guardians of the heritage, guardians of the heritage, Jonakr's sons.

¹⁵ "But around Svanhild bond-maidens sat; of all my children her I loved the best. Svanhild was, in my hall, as was the sun-beam, fair to behold.

¹⁶ "I with gold adorned her, and with fine raiment, before I gave her to the Gothic people. That is to me the hardest of all my woes, that Svanhild's beauteous locks should in the mire be trodden under horses' feet.

¹⁷ "But that was yet more painful, when my Sigurd they ingloriously slew in his bed; though of all most cruel, when of Gunnar the glistening serpents to the vitals crawled; but the most agonizing, which to my heart flew, when the brave king's heart they while quick cut out.

¹⁸ "Many griefs I call to memory, many ills I call to memory. Guide, Sigurd! thy black steed, thy swift courser, hither let it run. Here sits no son's wife, no daughter, who to Gudrun precious things may give.

¹⁹ "Remember, Sigurd! what we together said, when on our bed we both were sitting, that thou, brave one, wouldst come to me from Hel's abode, but I from the world to thee.

²⁰ "Raise, ye Jarls! an oaken pile; let it under heaven the highest be. May it burn a breast full of woes! the fire round my heart its sorrows melt!"

²¹ May all men's lot be bettered, all women's sorrow lessened, to whom this tale of woes shall be recounted.

The Lay Of Hamdir

¹ In that court arose woeful deeds, at the Alfar's doleful lament; at early morn, men's afflictions, troubles of various kinds; sorrows were quickened.

² It was not now, nor yesterday, a long time since has passed away,--few things are more ancient, it was by much earlier--when Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, her young sons instigated Svanhild to avenge.

³ "She was your sister, her name Svanhild, she whom Jormunrek with horses trod to death, white and black, on the public way, with grey and way-wont Gothic steeds.

⁴ "Thenceforth all is sad to you, kings of people! Ye alone survive,

⁵ "Branches of my race. Lonely I am become, as the asp-tree in the forest, of kindred bereft, as the fir of branches; of joy deprived, as is the tree of foliage, when the branch-spoiler comes in the warm day."

⁶ Then spake Hamdir, the great of soul, "Little, Gudrun! didst thou care Hogni's deed to praise, when Sigurd they from sleep awaked on the bed thou satst, and the murderers laughed.

⁷ "Thy bed-clothes, blue and white, woven by cunning hands, swam in thy husband's gore. When Sigurd perished, o'er the dead thou satst, caredst not for mirth--so Gunnar willed it.

⁸ "Atli thou wouldst afflict by Erp's murder, and by Eitil's life's destruction: that proved for thyself the worse: therefore should every one so against others use, for life's destruction, a sharp-biting sword, that he harm not himself."

⁹ Then said Sorli--he had a prudent mind--"I with my mother will not speeches exchange: though words to each of you to me seem wanting. What, Gudrun! dost thou desire, which for tears thou canst not utter?

¹⁰ "For thy brothers weep, and thy dear sons, thy nearest kin, drawn to the strife: for us both shalt thou, Gudrun! also have to weep, who here sit fated on our steeds, far away to die."

¹¹ From the court they went, for conflict ready. The young men journeyed over humid fells, on Hunnish steeds, murder to avenge.

¹² Then said Erp, all at once--the noble youth was joking on his horse's back--"Ill 'tis to a timid man to point out the ways." They said the bastard was over bold.

¹³ On their way they had found the wily jester. "How will the swarthy dwarf afford us aid?"

¹⁴ He of another mother answered: so he said aid he would to his kin afford, as one foot to the other [or, grown to the body, one hand the other].

¹⁵ "What can a foot to a foot give; or, grown to the body, one hand the other?"

¹⁶ From the sheath they drew the iron blade, the falchion's edges, for Hel's delight. They their strength diminished by a third part, they their young kinsman caused to earth to sink.

¹⁷ Their mantles then they shook, their weapons grasped; the high-born were clad in sumptuous raiment.

¹⁸ Forward lay the ways, a woeful path they found, and their sister's son wounded on a gibbet, wind-cold outlaw-trees, on the town's west. Ever vibrated the ravens' whet: there to tarry was not good.

¹⁹ Uproar was in the hall, men were with drink excited, so that the horses' tramp no one heard, until a mindful man winded his horn.

²⁰ To announce they went to Jormunrek that were seen helm-decked warriors. "Take ye counsel, potent ones are come; before mighty men ye have on a damsel trampled."

²¹ Then laughed Jormunrek, with his hand stroked his beard, asked not for his corslet; with wine he struggled, shook his dark locks, on his white shield looked, and in his hand swung the golden cup.

²² "Happy should I seem, if I could see Hamdir and Sorli within my hall. I would them then with bowstrings bind, the good sons of Giuki on the gallows hang."

²³ Then said Hrodrglod, on the high steps standing; "Prince" said she to her son--for that was threatened which ought not to happen--"shall two men alone bind or slay ten hundred Goths in this lofty burgh?"

²⁴ Tumult was in the mansion, the beer-cups flew in shivers, men lay in blood from the Goths' breasts flowing.

²⁵ Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "Jormunrek! thou didst desire our coming, brothers of one mother, into thy burgh: now seest thou thy feet, seest thy hands Jormunrek! cast into the glowing fire."

²⁶ Then roared forth a godlike mail-clad warrior, as a bear roars: "On the men hurl stones, since spears bite not, nor edge of sword, nor point, the sons of Jonakr."

²⁷ Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "Harm didst thou, brother! when thou that mouth didst ope. Oft from that mouth bad counsel comes."

²⁸ "Courage hast thou, Hamdir! if only thou hadst sense: that man lacks much who wisdom lacks.

²⁹ "Off would the head now be, had but Erp lived, our brother bold in fight, whom on the way we slew, that warrior brave--me the Disir instigated--that man sacred to us, whom we resolved to slay.

³⁰ "I ween not that ours should be the wolves' example, that with ourselves we should contend, like the Norns' dogs, that voracious are in the desert nurtured."

³¹ "Well have we fought, on slaughtered Goths we stand, on those fallen by the sword, like eagles on a branch. Great glory we have gained, though now or to-morrow we shall die. No one lives till eve against the Norns' decree."

³² There fell Sorli, at the mansion's front; but Hamdir sank at the house's back.

³³ This is called the Old Lay of Hamdir.