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THE GREENLANDISH WORDS OF ATLI

1. Very many have heard, how earlier
warriors prepared speech together, which was profit to few.
Private speech made, terrible to them afterwards,
and likewise to the sons of Gjuki, who were truth-betrayed!
2. Shaping was made for Skjoldings - they were fey! -
ill Atli counseled himself - though he had understanding! -
felled great pillars, did hard ill to himself:
sent bidding swiftly that kinsmen come straight away.
3. The house-Freyja was wise, thought with human wit,
she heard the lay of words, what they spoke in secret;
then the wise one was unhappy, wished to help them,
they should sail over sea, but (she) herself came not.
4. (She) took to risting runes; Vingi confused them
- he was causing harm - before he gave them forth.
Afterwards Atli's messengers fared then
to the Lim Firth, where the keen ones dwelt.
5. There were friendly welcomes, and fires kindled
(for) those who were come there; they sensed no wiles.
took those treasures which the good one sent them,
hung on the pillars; thought not to be wary of that.
6. Kostbera came then - she was Hogni's wife,
a very fine woman - and spoke to them both.
Glaumvor, whom Gunnarr married, was also glad,
swiftly (and) seemingly fulfilled what is needed for guests.
7. They invited Hogni home, if he would rather fare then;
the deception was visible, if they had given heed!
Gunnarr swore then that if Hogni would,

Hogni did not deny what he suggested.

8. The famed women bore mead, there was much of all hospitality,
Many horns fared, until (everyone) seemed to have drunken fully;

9. the married folk went to bed as seemed wisest to them.

Kostbera was knowing, she knew (how to tell) the differences of runes,
she looked at word-staves by fire's light:

guarded was her tongue within both jaws:

they were so confused that rede was lacking.

10. They two, (she and) Hogni, fared to bed afterwards;

the folk-kind dreamed, she did not conceal this,

said to the wise helm-warder as soon as she awakened:

11. "You would (go) from home, Hogni: think on rede!

few are full-runed: fare you another time!

I understand those runes which your sister risted:

the bright one has not bidden you to this!

12. "I wonedered most about that one thing, but I could not
understand,

how it was with the wise one, that she should rist confusedly;

because it was shown, as if it were underneath,

the bane of you both, if you go swiftly,

the wife was lacking a stave, or another ruled it!"

13. "All women are ill-mindful; I do not have such a kind (of
thought).

I will not seek for these unless we must pay them.

The leader shall give us glow-red rings;

I am never afraid, although we hear of fright."

14. "It must go badly if you two think to go there!

There shall be no friendly welcome to you at this time!

Hogni, I dreamed - I do not conceal it,

you shall go against the wind, or otherwise I fear.

15. "I sensed your bedclothes burn in fire,

high flames broke against my house."

16. "Linens lie here, which you think little of:

they shall swiftly burn, there where you saw bedclothes."

17. "I sensed a bear come in here, broke up planks,

shook paws so that we became frightened,

had many of us in mouth, so that we might do nothing,

and there was trampling, not so little!"

18. "A storm shall grow there, winds become swift!
sensed a white bear? there shall be a storm from the east!"

19. "I sensed an eagle fly in here, the length of the house
- that shall deal much with us - he sprinkled us all with blood:
I sensed from his appearance, that was Atli's hamr!

20. "We shall slaughter soon: we shall then see ruddied;
often is that concerning oxen, when eagles are dreamed of!
Atli's soul is good towards us, whatever you dream."
They then let it be closed, every rede to end.

21. The well-born wakened; of the same was deemed:
Glaumvor was worried, ill came to sleep.
...with Gunnarr to get two ways.

22. "I sensed a gallows ready for you, you went to hang,
wyrms ate you, I knew you living,
the doom of gods readied itself; give rede, what that were!"

23. "I sensed a bloodied blade borne out of your sark
- ill is such sleep, to say to husband! -
I sensed a spear standing through your middle,
howling wolves at either end."

24. "Small dogs run there, they make great barking:
often the noise of dogs comes for the flight of spears."

25. "I sensed a river run in here, the length of the house,
it roared with wrath, stormed forth over benches,
broke your legs, two brothers here,
water made no sparing, that must be before something!

26. "I sensed dead women come here by night,
they were sadly clad, wished to choose you,
bade you swiftly to their benches,
I speak strengthlessly: they were your disir!"

29. "It is too late to speak as you now give rede;
I cannot flee (this) faring, for faring is expected;
much shows strongly that we must be short-lived."

30. It was dawn when they readied; the eager let themselves
all rise up; others held them back.
Five fared together, there were

half as many house-carls; that was ill-thought!

Snaevarr and Solarr, they were Hogni's sons,

He hight Orkning who yet followed them,

blithe was the shield-tree, brother of his wife.

31. The fair-dressed women fared with them, until the firth parted them,

the bright ones warned unheard, rather, they did not let it be spoken.

32. Glaumvor, who Gunnarr was married to, spoke these words,

she spoke to Vingi as it seemed worthwhile to her:

"I do not know how what will be paid for our joy;

a misdeed is guest's coming, if something should happen!"

33. Vingi answered then, little held him back:

"Etins have him, if he lies to you,

all to gallows, if he thinks other than peace!"

34. Bera spoke these words, blithe in her soul:

"Blessed sail you, and win victory,

fare, as I spoke before: let none hinder that!"

35. Hogni, well-disposed to kin, answered -

"Be brave, wise ones, however it goes!

Many speak thus, but fail it greatly,

little speaks to many as (it) was sent from home."

36. They looked backwards, before going into the sound.

then I think shaping ruled, their ways parted.

37. The powerful ones began to row, keel half-ripped,

they rowed leaning back, rather brandished wrathfully,

oar-thongs tore, tholes broke,

they did not make the ship fast before they went forth.

38. And a little later - I shall tell the end of this -

they saw a dwelling standing, which Budhli possessed,

high rang the gate when Hogni struck.

39. Vingi said these words, which better were not:

"Fare far from house! it is false to seek.

I have you swiftly burned, swiftly shall you be hewed -

fairly I bade you come, but it was false underneath -

or bide here while I hew you a gallows!"

40. Hogni spoke this word - little thought he to spare,
never fearful when testing was - :
"Think you to frighten us, you will have that seldom forth!
if you speak a word, ill shall lengthen for you!"

41. They fell upon Vingi, and slew him to Hel,
laid on with axes, while life-breath rattled.

42. Atli gathered them (his men), and fared in byrnies,
readied to go thus, that the garth was between,
all cast words wrathfully at once:
"We were fully set to deprive you of life!"

43. "That is hardly to see, if you were fully set before!
You are still unready, and we have felled one,
struck down to Hel - he was of your host!"

44. They became furious when they heard that word,
busied fingers and grasped at strings,
shot sharply, and protected themselves with shields.

45. The news of what took place outside came in;
high ones before hall; they heard a thrall tell.

46. Awful became Gudhrun then, when she heard the sadness,
laden with necklaces: she threw down all,
slung silver thus, that rings broke in parts.

47. She went out afterwards, opened the doors a little
- she was not fearful - and welcomed those come,
turned towards the Nithlungs; it was the last speaking,
such truth followed, she had to say more:

48. "I looked to help you, to keep you at home;
no man wins over shaping, and you had to come here!"
(She) Spoke from human wit, if they might settle:
they would not be reeded, all said no.

49. The blessed-born one saw how they played sorely;
thought on hardiness, and flung off cloak,
she took naked sword, and warded kinsmen's lives,
not mild was the battling where her hands laid to!

50. Gjuki's daughter let two warriors fall:
she hewed Atli's brother; he was borne away afterwards,
she shaped battle thus: cut foot from him;

THE GREENLANDISH LAY OF ATLI

1. Atli sent long ago to Gunnarr,
a cunning warrior riding, who was called Knefrodhr;
he came to Gjuki's garth and Gunnarr's hall,
to benches around the hearth and to sweet beer.

2. The lord-mighty ones drank there - but the betrayers were silent -
wine in the Welsh hall, they expected Huns' wrath;
Knefrodhr called then with cold redes,
the southern warrior, he sat on high bench.

3. "Atli sent me hence to ride on errand,
the bit-chewing steed through unknown Mirkwood,
to bid you, Gunnarr, to come to bench,

with ring-wrapped helms, to seek Atli's home!

4. "You may choose of shield there, and shafts of ash,
of gold-rimmed helms and the host of the Huns,
silver-gilt saddle-trimmings, sarks slain-red,
of arrows, of spears, of bit-chewing steeds!

5. "He shall leave you the field and give you the woods of Gnita
heath,
of roaring spears and of gilded figureheads,
great treasures and Danp's stead
and the famed wood which is called Mirkwood!"

6. Gunnarr turned his head and said to Hogni,
"What do you counsel for us, younger warrior, of all we two thus hear?
I do not know gold on Gnita Heath
that we do not have the like of!

7. "We have seven halls full of swords,
the hilts of which are of gold,
I know my steed is best, and blade keenest,
helm and shield whitest - come out of Kjar's hall,
bows bench-seemly, and byrnies of gold,
mine alone is better than that of all Huns!"

8. "What do you think the bride meant when she sent us a ring
wound with heath-dweller's wool? I think, that she bade warning!
I found heath-dweller's hair wrapped around the red ring;
our way is wolfish, to ride on (this) errand!"

9. No kinsmen whetted Gunnarr, nor another forced him,
counselors did not give ride, nor those who were powerful -
Gunnarr spoke then, as a king should,
famous, in mead-hall, from great mood:

10. "Rise you now, Fjornir! carry through the aisles
warriors' gold cups to the heroes' hands!

11. "Wolves shall rule the Niflungs' inheritance,
old, gray-coated, if Gunnarr is lost,
black-felled bears bite with fangs,
hound-hosts enjoy, if Gunnarr comes not!"

12. The land-ruler led the fearless hosts
of battle-keen men, weeping, from garth of the Huns;
then Hogni's youngest inheritance warder said:
"Fare now hale and wise, wherever your soul leads!"

13. The brave ones let the feet of bit-chewing steed travel
through the fells, unknown Mirkwood;
all Hunmark trembled, there where the hardy-mooded fared,
the whip-fearing (steeds) drove through all-green fields.

14. They saw Atli's land and deep window-sills
Bikki's warriors stood on the high burg -
the southern folk's hall was surrounded with many seats,
bound rims of white shields,
points of spears; yet Atli drank there
wine in the Welsh hall; warders sat outside,
to warn him of Gunnarr, if they saw an army coming
with roaring spears, to waken Hildir's wrath.

15. Their sister found swiftly that they came to hall,
both her brothers - she had drunk little beer.
"You are betrayed now, Gunnarr! what shall you, powerful one, win
against the Huns' harm-brandishing? Go swiftly from hall!"

16. "Brother, you would have (done) better if you fared in byrnie,
as (in) ring-wrapped helm, to see Atli's home,
you would have sat sun-bright days in saddle,
let norns weep for need-pale corpse,
Hunnish shield-maidens know your edges,
but Atli himself you would have let come into wrym-garth -

now the wyrm-garth is meant for you!"

17 "It is late now, sister, to summon the Niflungs,
a long way to look for our host,
for the fearless warriors, over Rhine's ruddy fells!"

18. They took Gunnarr there and set him in fetters,
the Burgundians' friend, and fastened his hands.

19. Hogni hewed seven with keen sword,
and flung the eighth into the hot fire.
so should the warrior be to foemen,
Hogni was (at) Gunnarr's hands.

20. The warrior asked if the Goths' folk-leader
would buy his life with gold.

21. "Hogni's heart shall lie in my hand,
bloodied, cut from the courageous rider,
from the folk-leader's son with sharp-biting sax."

22. They cut the heart from Hjalli's breast,
bloodied and laid on a board, and bore it before Gunnarr.

23. Then Gunnarr, the warriors' drighten, said this:
"Here I have the heart of Hjalli the cowardly,
unlike the heart of Hogni the brave,
that trembles greatly which lies on the board,
trembled half as much again when it lay in breast!"

24. Hogni laughed then, when they cut to heart
the living helm-hammerer - he never thought to be overawed -
they laid it bloody on board and bore it before Gunnarr.

25. Gunnarr, famed helm-Niflung, said this:
"Here I have the heart of Hogni the brave,

unlike the heart of Hjalli the cowardly,
that trembles little which lies on board,
trembled not so greatly when it lay in breast!

26. "So shall eyes be far from you, Atli,
as you shall be from the treasure!
He and I alone all concealed
the Niflungs' treasure: now Hogni lives not!

27. "I always had doubt while we two lived,
now none is mine, while I alone live!
the Rhine shall rule battle-ore's treasures,
- swift river, stemming from AEsir - the Niflungs' inheritance
glitter rings of the slain in flooding water
rather than that the gold shine on hands of the Huns' bairns!"

28. "Let wheel-wagon move forward! the captive is in bonds now."

29. Atli the mighty rode maned Glaumr,
ringed with battle-thorns of their sib.
Gudhrun of the victory-gods...
warded against tears, she who hurried into hall.

30. "So go it to you, Atli, as you did to Gunnarr,
often swearing oaths and speaking (them) early,
to Sun in the southern hall and to Sig-Tyr's mountain,
to Holkvir of his rest-bed and to Ullr's ring!"

28. And more afterwards the bit-shaker
drew treasure-warder, battle-god to his death.

31. The leader was laid living in the garth,
where a horde of heroes was creeping,
among the wyrms; but Gunnarr alone,
hate-souled, struck the harp with hands,
strings rang out; so shall a brave ring-sprinkler

hold gold against men!

32. Atli let the earth-treading horse (return) afterwards
to his lands from the murder.

A din was in the garth, greatly thronged with steeds,
there was weapons' song, they were come from the heath.

33. Gudhrun went out to Atli
with a gilded cup to give the king:
"You may,thane-ruler, in your hall,
gladly have Gudhrun's young game-meat."

34. The ale-beakers rang wine-heavy for Atli,
when the Huns gathered together in the hall,
long-bearded, the keen warriors went.

35. The bright one went forward to bear them drink,
the furious dis, to the boars,and ruled ale-food,
unwilling, pale-nosed, but spoke nith to Atli:

36. "Sword-dealer, you have chewed
the corpse-bloodied hearts of your sons with honey;
you may digest them, brave one! a meal of slain men,
to eat as ale-food, and sent to the high-seat!

37. "You shall not call afterwards to your knee
Erp nor Eitil, two ale-glad ones;
you shall not afterwards see (them) among the seats
giving out gold, smoothing spear-shafts,
trimming manes nor driving on horses."

38. Uproar was on the benches, there was a furious song,
howling under tapestries, the Huns' bairns wept,
except for Gudhrun, who never mourned
her bear-hearted brothers or sweet bairns,
young, unwise, whom she got with Atli.

39. The goose-bright sowed gold,
she enriched the house-carls with red rings;
she let their fate grow, but the bright gold go forth,
nor did the woman respect the gods' house.

40. Unwary Atli - he had be-drunken his thoughts,
he had no weapon, he did not beware of Gudhrun:
often that play was better, when they should lovingly
embrace before the athelings.

41. She gave the bed blood to drink with sword-point,
with Hel-greedy hands, and loosed the whelps,
the bride flung before the hall-door - and house-carls wakened -
hot brands - she made those geld for her brothers -

42. She gave all who were within to fire
and (those) who were come from Mirkheimr, from their murder of
Gunnarr;
the ancient timbers fell, the god-houses smoked,
the Budhlings' dwellings, and shield-maids burned
within, deprived of life, they sank down in hot fire.

43. Of that is fully spoken! Never thus afterwords
went a bride in byrnie to avenge brothers!
she had borne bane-words to three folk-kings
the bright one, before she died!

Yet more fully is said in "The Greenlandish Words of Atli".

FRAGMENT (OF A SIGURDHR LAY)

(Hogni said)

1. "...what has Sigurdhr done for causes,
that you will take the life from the keen one?"

(Gunnarr said)

2. "Sigurdhr has given oaths to me,
oaths given, all lied:
thus he deceived me, when he should have been
only full-trusty in all oaths."

3. "Brynhildr has caused you to do evil,
whetted you to hate, to win sorrow!
She grudges Gudhrun's good redes,
and her enjoyment to you as well."

4. Some roasted a wolf, some cut a snake,
some dealt it to Gothormr to ready (him),
before they, listing to evil, might
lay hand on the wise man.

6. Outside stood Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter,
and she spoke that word first of all:
"Where now is Sigurdhr, drighten of men,
when all my kinsmen ride before?"

7. Hogni alone gave answer:
"We hewed Sigurdhr asunder with swords,
the gray horse ever droops his head over dead leader!"

8. Then Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter, said this:
"You should well enjoy weapons and lands!
Sigurdhr should have ruled over all,
if he had held life a little longer.

9. "That would have been unseemly, that he ruled so
Gjuki's inheritance and the Goths' host,
when he had gotten five sons
for army-ruling, ready for battle!"

10. Brynhildr laughed then - all her bower resounded 0
a single time from all her soul:

"Long should you enjoy lands and thanes
you who let the keen leader fall!"

11. Then Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter said this:

"You speak many greatly blasphemous words!
(May) Unholy wights have Gunnarr, Sigurdhr's murderer!
From hate-greedy soul shall be revenge!"

5. Sigurdhr was slain south of the Rhine:

raven called on the high gallows-tree:
"Atli shall redden edges from you!
battle-destruction must come from the ruin of oaths!"

12. The evening was over - much was drunk,
then were all comfort-words told -
all slept who came into bed,
Gunnarr alone of all woke long.

13. Took to stirring feet, much took to speaking,
the army-leader began to think,
what they both had said on the tree,
raven and eagle ever, when they rode home.

14. Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter, wakened,
Skjoldings' dis, before day lightened:
"Whet me or leave me, the harm is won!
to speak sorrow or to leave it so."

15. All became silent at these words,
few knew how to understand the woman,
when she, weeping, began to speak of
what she, laughing, bade the men do.

16. "Gunnar, I sensed grimly in sleep,
cold was all in hall, I found the bed cold,
but you, leader, rode lacking in joy,

wrapped with fetters in foemen's host:
so must the strength of all you of the Niflung ftt
be gone: oaths are broken!

17. "Did you forget, Gunnar, of that doing
where you two let blood run under the track?
Now you have paid him with all ill,
when he wished to find you foremost!

18. "Then it was proved when the mood-full one had ridden
to we two, to ask for me,
how the army-leader had beforehand
held oaths to the young ruler:

19. "He let the wound-wand, wound with gold,
- the very stately king - (be) between us:
the edges were readied with fire without,
and coloured with acid-drops within..."

Of Sigurdhr's Death. Here it is spoken about the death of Sigurdhr in this lay, and here it is so told, that they slew him outside. But some say thus: that they slew him inside in his bed, sleeping. But German men say thus: that they slew him outside in the forest. And so it is said in the Old Lay of Gudhrun, that Sigurdhr and Gjuki's sons had ridden to the Thing when he was slain. But all say that together, that they betrayed his trust and attacked him (while he was) lying down and unprepared.

THE SLAYING OF THE NIFLUNGS

Gunnarr and Hogni took all the gold then, Fafnir's inheritance.

There was enmity between the Gjukings and Atli. He knew that the Gjukings had caused Brynhildr's death. That was settled, that they should give him Gudhrun in marriage, and they gave her a draught of forgetfulness, before she agreed to be married to Atli. Atli's sons were Erpr and Eitill. But Swanhild was the daughter of Sigurdhr and Gudhrun.

King Atli invited Gunnarr and Hogni home and sent Vingni or Knefroth. Gudhrun knew of despection and sent word with runes that they should not come, and as a token she sent the ring Andvaranaut to Hogni and wove a warg's hair into it. - Gunnarr had asked for Oddrun, Atli's sister, and not gotten her; then he got Glaumvor. But Hogni married Kostbera; their sons were Solarr and Snaevarr and Gjuki. - But when the Gjukings came to Atli, then Gudhrun asked her sons that they ask for the lives of the Gjukings, and they did not want to. The heart was cut from Hogni, but Gunnarr was set in a wylm-garth. He struck on a harp and put the wylms to sleep, but an adder bit into his liver.

THE WORDS OF FAFNIR

Sigurdhr fared home to Hjalprekr. Then Reginn egged Sigurdhr on to do battle with Fafnir. Sigurdhr and Reginn fared up on Gnita Heath and found there Fafnir's track, where he crept to the water. Then Sigurdhr readied a great pit in the way, and Sigurdhr went therein. But when Fafnir crept from the gold, he spat poison, and that fell from above onto Sigurdhr's head. But when Fafnir crept over the pit, then Sigurdhr laid sword into his heart. Fafnir shuddered and beat with head and tail. Sigurdhr leapt out of the pit, and they saw each other. Fafnir said:

Of the Death of Fafnir.

1. "Youth! o youth! of whom were you born, youth?
of what men's kin are you?
that you reddened the keen blade from Fafnir:
the sword stands in my heart!"

Sigurdhr concealed his name, because that was the belief in old times, that the words of a doomed man could be mighty, if he ill-wished his foe by name. He said,

2. "I am called the Stately Animal, and I have gone
a motherless kinsman;
I have no father, as the sons of men do,
I have ever gone alone."

3. "If you had no father, as the sons of men do,
do you know of what wonder you were born?"

(Volsunga saga adds, "And though you do not say your name to me on my bane-day, you know that you lie now.")

4. "I say to you that my forefatheres have never been unknown,
and the same of myself:
Sigmundr hight my father; I hight Sigurdhr,
who have battled against you with weapons!"

5. "Who whetted you, and why did you let yourself be whetted,
to fare after my life?
thou gleaming-eyed youth! you had a bold father,

what is born within shows itself soon."

6. "My soul whetted me, my hand helped me,
and my keen sword.

Few are brave who become older
if they are fearful in childhood."

7. "I know that if you had been able to grow up before your friends'
breasts,

man would see you fierce in battle;
now you are fettered, and battle-taken -
the bound ever speak tremblingly!"

8. "You brandish this at me now, Fafnir, because you see me far
from my father's kin:

I am not fettered, though I was battle-taken;
you found this at your loss of life!"

9. "You expect to hear only foelike words in all things,
but I say one thing to you truthfully:

the ringing gold, and the glow-red wealth,
those rings become your bane!"

10. "Every man wants to rule wealth

ever, until that one day,
for at some time shall every life
fare hither to Hel."

11. "The doom of the norms shall have you before the nesses
and the unwise fool;

in water you'll drown, if you row into the wind,
all is dangerous to the fey."

12. "Tell me, Fafnir, all that you wisely say,
and greatly know well:

who are those norms who are helpbringers at need

and choose (to free) a mother from sons?"

13. "I say that norns may be seen of greatly different births,
they are not of one ftt together.

Some are of the Fsir-kin, some of the alf-kin,
some are the daughters of Dvalin."

14. "Tell me, Fafnir, all that you wisely say,
and greatly know well:

how hight the holm where

Surtr and the Fsir shall blend blade-wetness together?"

15. "It hight Unshaped, but there shall all
the gods play with spears.

The Trembling Mile breaks when they fare out,
and steeds swim in the flood.

16. "I bore the Helm of Awe among the sons of ages,
while I lay among the treasures.

I thought myself alone stronger than all,
found I never so many young men."

17. "The Helm of Awe hides no one
when wrathful men shall battle;

it will be found when many come together,
that no one alone is the keenest."

18. "I sprayed out poison when I lay on the great inheritance
of my father..."

19. "Thou gleaming wurm! you made great hissing
and showed a hardy soul;

greatly grimmer become the sons of men
if they have that helm."

20. "I give you this rede, Sigurdhr - take you rede

and ride home from here!
the ringing gold and the glow-red wealth,
those rings become your bane."

21. "Your rede is spoken, yet I shall ride to the gold
where it lies in the heather.
But you, Fafnir, lie in your death-throes
there where Hel has you!"

22. "Reginn gave me rede, he shall give you rede,
he shall become the bane of us both!
I think that Fafnir must leave his life,
you became now the greater in main-strength."

Reginn had vanished away while Sigurdhr slew Fafnir, and he came then
afterwards while Sigurdhr wiped blood from the sword. Reginn said:

23. "Hail thou now, Sigurdhr! Now you have battled victoriously
and overcome Fafnir!
Of those men who have trodden the dust,
I say you are born the most fearless!"

24. "That is uncertain to know when all come together,
sons of the victory-gods,
who is born the most fearless;
many are brave who never reddened sword
in another's breast."

25. "Glad are you now, Sigurdhr, and joying in victory,
as you dry Gram on the grass.
You have slain my own brother,
though I myself ruled some of that."

26. "You gave rede that I should ride,
up the high fell to here;
the gleaming wurm would have ruled wealth and life
except that you spoke to me of a brave soul."

Then went Reginn to Fafnir and cut the heart out of him with a sword which hight Ridhill, and he drank the blood out of the wound afterward:

27. "Sit you now, Sigurdhr - for I must go to sleep -
and hold Fafnir's heart to the fire!
I wish to to eat the heart
after this drink of blood."

28. "You went far away, while I reddened
my keen sword on Fafnir;
my strength I strained against the wurm's main,
while you lay in the heather!"

29. "Long would you have let lie in the heather
the old etin,
if you had not enjoyed the sword which I myself made for you,
and your keen sword!"

30. "Soul is better than the sword's main,
where the fierce shall battle,
for I see a brave man in every battle
win victory with a dull sword."

31. "It goes better to the brave than the cowardly
in battle-play,
better to the glad than the fearful,
whatever comes to hand."

Sigurdhr took Fafnir's heart and roasted it on a twig. But when he sensed that it was fully roasted, and the blood foamed up from the heart, then he tested with his finger whether it was fully roasted. He burnt it and stuck the finger in his mouth. But when Fafnir's heartblood came on his tongue, then he understood bird-speech. He heard titmice twittering in the wood. - The titmouse said:

32. "There sits Sigurdhr, sprinkled with blood,
roasting Fafnir's heart at the fire;

wise the destroyer of rings would seem to me,
if he ate the life-muscle of the gleaming one."

33. "There lies Regin, takes counsel with himself,
wishes to betray the youth who trusts him,
bears false words together from wrath,
the evil smith wishes to avenge his brother."

34. "A head shorter, let him, the hoary thul,
fare hence to Hel!
He would be able to rule all the gold alone,
the wealth which lay under Fafnir."

35. "He would seem wise to me if he were able to have
the friendly rede of us sisters;
thought about himself and gladdened Huginn -
I expect a wolf when I see the ears."

36. "The battle-tree is not so wise,
as I had thought the army's foremost,
if he lets the brother come away,
when he has robbed the other of life-age."

37. "Greatly unwise, if he still spares
the warrior-destroying foeman,
Reginn lies there, who has betrayed him -
he is not able to see such!"

38. "A head shorter let him, the rime-cold etin, (be)
and dwell upon the rings:
then over the wealth which Fafnir ruled
you shall be sole ruler!"

39. "It was not so powerfully shaped, that Regin should
bear my bane-words,
because both brothers shall swiftly

fare hence to Hel!"

Sigurdhr hewed the head from Reginn, and then he ate Fafnir's heart and drank the blood of them both, Reginn and Fafnir. Then Sigurdhr heard what the titmice said:

40. "Gather, Sigurdhr, the red rings
- it is not kinglike to fear much! -
I know a maid, the fairest of many,
clad in gold, if you can get her.

41. "Green lie the ways to Gjuki
- forward shows the shaping for the folk's host-leader -
there a lordly king has a fair daughter,
you shall buy her with a dowry, Sigurdhr.

42. "A hall is on high Hind's Fell,
all outside it is wrapped around with fire;
wise men have built it
from the undark fire of the flood.

43. "I know of the battle-maid sleeping on the fell,
and over her plays the linden's harm;
Yggr stuck (her) with a thorn: the flax-goddess felled
another hero than he had willed.

44. "Youth, you may see the maiden under helm,
who rode Vingskornir from battle;
you may not break Sigdrifa's sleep,
descendant of Skjoldings, before the norns' shaping!"

Sigurdhr rode along Fafnir's tracks to his lair and he found it open and the doors and doorposts were of iron; of iron were all the pillars of the house, and buried in the earth. There Sigurdhr found a great deal of gold and filled two chests with it. There he took the Helm of Awe and a gold byrnie and the swort Hrotti and many precious treasures and loaded Grani with them. But the horse would not go forward, until Sigurdhr climbed onto his back. (Volsunga saga adds, "and the horse ran as if he were unloaded.")

THE SPAE OF GRIPIR

The son of Eylimi, Hjordis' brother, hight Gripir. He ruled lands and was the wisest of all men and fore-sighted. - Sigurdhr rode alone and came to Gripir's hall. Sigurdhr was easy to recognise. He met a man at a point outside before the hall; he named himself Geitir. Then Sigurdhr spoke to him and asked,

1. "Who dwells here in this burg?

What do the thanes name the folk-king?"

"Gripir hight the warriors' steersman,
he who rules fastly lands and thanes."

2. "Is the wise king home in the land?

May the ruler come to speak with me?

An unknown man needs speech:

I wish swiftly to find Gripir!"

3. "The glad king shall ask Geitir this,
who the man be who asks Gripir for speech?"

"I hight Sigurdhr, Sigmundr's bairn,
and Hjordis is the helm-ruler's mother!"

4. Then went Geitir to say to Gripir:

"Outside here is an unknown man come;

he is noble-like to look upon;

he wishes, folk-leader, to have a meeting with you."

5. The drighten of warriors went out of the hall

and hailed welcome to the helm-ruler.

"Take you here, Sigurdhr! It would have been seemly earlier!

And you, Geitir, care for Grani yourself!"

6. They took speech and spoke much,

then when the rede-speakers, warriors, met..

"Say you to me, if you know, mother's brother:

how shall Sigurdhr shape his life?"

7. "You shall become the greatest man under the sun,

and highest born of all boars,

generous of gold, but stingy of fleeing,
noble to look on and spae-wise in words.

8. "Speak you, wise king! more fully of Sigurdhr,
Wise one, I ask yet, if you seem to see:
what shall be done first for luck,
when I go from your garth?"

9. "First, folk-leader, you shall avenge your father
and avenge all Eylimi's sorrow;
you shall fell the hard and brave sons of Hunding,
you shall have victory."

10. "Say thou, noble king, to me, your kinsman,
more clearly, what we two bravely speak of:
see you Sigurdhr's keen deeds of bravery,
which fare highest under heaven's corners?"

11. "You shall battle the gleaming wurm alone,
he who lies greedy on Gnita Heath;
you shall become the bane of both,
of Reginn and Fafnir: rightly says Gripir."

12. (My) Wealth must be rich, if I achieve it so,
battle with men, as you, wise one, say!
Sense farther and speak longer:
what shall become for my life afterwards?"

13. "You shall find Fafnir's dwelling
and take up the fair wealth,
load the gold on Grani's back;
you'll ride to Gjuki, the battle-ready ruler!"

14. "Helm-ruler, you shall say more,
wise boar, in soul-rede.
I am Gjuki's guest, and I go from there -

what must become for my life afterwards?"

15. "The folk-king's daughter sleeps on the fell,
bright, in a byrnie, after Helgi's death.;
you must hew with your keen sword,
with Fafnir's bane cut the byrnie."

16. "Broken is the byrnie, the maiden takes speech,
and the wife is wakened from sleep -
what shall the wise one choose to speak of with Sigurdhr,
so that he becomes a lucky folk-leader?"

17. "She shall teach you runes for your power,
all which men wish to know,
and to speak every tongue of men,
hale shall you live your life with leechcraft, king!"

18. "Now is that ended, taken are the wisdoms,
and I am prepared to ride from there.
Sense further and speak longer:
what more shall become for my life?"

19. "You must find the dwellings of Heimir
and be the glad guest of the folk-king.
Sigurdhr, all that I see before me has fared to end;
you must ask Gripir no further!"

20. "Now I shall get sorrow from the words that you say,
because you see farther, folk-king.
you think Sigurdhr's grief is too great,
because you, Gripir, will not speak more fully to me."

21. "The youth of your life lies most lightly before me,
little afterwards;
I, the rede-speaker, am not able to tell rightly,
nor am I more fore-wise; at end is all I know!"

22. "I know no man above the mould,
who sees more forward than you, Gripir!
you shall not hide it, although it be ugly,
or unluck be readied for my lot!"

23. "Deeds of shame are not laid for your life,
noble one! Know that, atheling!
your name will be known while the world lives,
causer-of-battles!"

24. "Worst I think it: that should part
Sigurdhr from the folk-leader when it goes so;
All lies before you - show you the way,
to me, if you will, famous mother's-brother!"

25. "Now shall all be said to Sigurdhr,
because, leader, you have forced me to this!
You shall know that I do not lie:
a certain day is deemed for your death."

26. "I wish not the wrath of the powerful folk-king,
but rather to get your good rede, Gripir!
Now will I know openly, although you do not wish to see:
what Sigurdhr sees soon at hand."

27. "A woman is with Heimir, fair to look upon
- the men name her Brynhildr -
the daughter of Budli, but the lordly king,
the hardy-souled man, Heimir, fosters her."

28. "What is it to me, though I see a maiden,
fair to look upon, fostered by Heimir?
that shall you, Gripir, prepare to say,
because you see all of xrlvg before us!"

29. "She will rob you of most pleasures,
the fair to look upon, fostered by Heimir;
you sleep no sleep, nor judge causes,
the concerns of men, unless you see the maid."

30. "What tending shall be laid to Sigurdhr?
Say you that, Gripir, if you seem to see!
Shall I buy the maid with a dowry,
the folk-leader's fair daughter?"

31. "You shall swear all oaths
full fast; but few shall you keep:
when you have been Gjuki's guest one night,
you shall not remember Hymir's wise foster-daughter."

32. "How is that so, Gripir - speak this before me! -
see you weakness in the leader's shaping?
when I shall rend the contracts with that maid,
whom I had thought to love with all my soul?"

33. "You become so, chieftain, before another's deceptions,
you shall receive redes from Grimhildr:
she shall offer you the bright-headed maid,
her daughter, and well lure the leader."

34. Shall I then form kinship with Gunnar,
and go to marry Gudhrun?
Full well-wedded then the folk-leader would be,
if sorrows over ill deeds did not plague me!"

35. "Grimhildr shall do betrayal towards thee,
she shall bid you to ask for Brynhildr
for the hands of Gunnar, the Goths' drighten,
you shall promise a swift faring to the folk-leader's mother."

36. "Ill luck is to hand, I can see that,

rede fails Sigurdhr wholly,
If I shall ask for the famous maid
for another's hand - her who I love well!"

37. "You shall all swear oaths together,
Gunnar, and Hogni, and you, leader, the third,
for you shall change appearances when you are on the way,
Gunnar and you; Gripir lies not!"

38. "How shall that go? how shall we exchange
looks and bearing when we are on the way?
another falsehood must follow that,
fatal for all: but speak you, Gripir!"

39. "You have Gunnar's looks and his bearing,
but your speech and main of soul -
you shall pledge yourself
to the brave sister of Atli; the wight sees despite that.

40. "I think that worst: Sigurdhr must be named evil
among warriors, to do so!
I would not wish to bid with wiles
a bride for the boar, who I know to be best!"

41. "Army's famous edge leader, you must while
beside the maid as if she were your mother;
for that your name shall be known while the world lives,
folk's leader!"

42. "Shall Gunnarr have the good woman,
famous among men - tell me, Gripir! -
although the thane's bride, keen of thought, had slept three nights
beside me,
such is not thought of!"

43. "Together shall both bridals be drunken,

for Sigurdhr and Gunnar in Gjuki's hall.

Then hides are changed when you come home,
though each, despite that, has his own thoughts."

44. "How, afterwards, shall the kinship among (these) men be joyous?
tell me, Gripir!
shall Gunnarr be readied for joy afterward,
or I myself?"

45. "You shall remember the oaths, but you must be silent
nevertheless,
you shall not deny Gudhrun your good redes.
but Brynhildr shall think herself a bride badly given,
the woman seeks to revenge herself for the wiles.

46. "What shall be offered to comfort the bride,
when wiles were used on the wife?
The woman had sworn oaths from me,
never fulfilled and little enjoyed!"

47. "She shall say to Gunnar
that you did not keep your oaths well,
when the noble king, Gjuki's heir,
had trusted the leader with all his soul."

48. "What is then, Gripir? tell me about this!
shall I truly be as they say?
or does the fame-blessed woman lie about me
and about herself? tell you that, Gripir!"

49. "The powerful bride shall, from wrath,
from overwhelming sorrows, not deal well with you.
You never did harm against the good one,
though you deceived the king's wife with wiles."

50. "Shall wise Gunnarr go at her whetting then,

and Guthormr and Hogni?

shall the sons of Gjuki redden their edges
against me, their sibling? yet tell thou, Gripir!"

51. "Then sorrow is at Gudhrun's heart,
when her brothers give rede towards your bane,
and nothing becomes her joy afterwards,
the wise wife; Grimhildr causes that."

52. "Then should you be comforted, army's edge-leader!
thus must luck be laid for the leader's life:
no mightier man shall come on the earth,
under the sun's seat, than thou, Sigurdhr, seem!"

53. "Part we hale! None wins over what is shaped!
Now, Gripir, you have well-done what I bade!
Ready-willing would you have spoken better
for my life, if you might have!"

FIRST LAY OF GUDHRUN

Gudhrun sat over the dead Sigurdhr. She did not weep like other women, but she was ready to burst from sorrow. Both women and men went to comfort her, but that was not easily done. - Men say that Gudhrun had eaten of Fafnir's heart and she understood the speech of birds. - This is yet said of Gudhrun:

1. It was early when Gudhrun prepared herself to die,
when she sat sorrowful over Sigurdhr;
she made no weeping, nor wrung her hands,
nor cried out like other women.

2. The all-wise earls went before,
they who (wished to) ease her heavy heart.
Gudhrun was silent, could not weep,
she was so sad as to burst.

3. The noble brides of the earls sat,
adorned with gold, before Gudhrun;

each of them told (of) a time of sorrow,
which had been bitterest to bide.

4. Then spoke Gjaflaug, Gjuki's sister:

"I know that I must be the most miserable on earth:
I have suffered the loss of five husbands,
three daughters, three sisters,
eight brothers - but I live yet!"

5. Gudhrun was silent, could not weep,
she was so sad at the youth's death
and heavy-souled over the folk-leader's corpse.

6. Then spoke thus Herborg, Hunland's queen:

"I have harder sorrows to say:
my seven sons, in southern lands,
(my) husband the eighth, fell in battle;

7. "father and mother, four brothers,
wind played over them on the sea,
waves struck against the bulwarks.

8. "I myself had to adorn, I myself had to bury,
I myself had to handle their corpses.
I suffered all that in one half-year,
so that no one tried to give me comfort.

9. "Then I was bound and battle-taken
afterwards in the same half-year;
I had to wash and bind shoes onto
the warleader's woman every morning.

10. "She set me in fear from jealousy,
and drove me with heavy blows;
I never found a better house-master,
nor any worse housewife."

11. Gudhrun was silent, could not weep,
she was so sad at the youth's death,
and heavy-souled over folk-leader's corpse.

12. Then Gullrond, Gjuki's daughter, spoke thus:
"Few of you know, foster-mothers, though you be wise,
(how) to bear comforting speech to a young wife!"
She had them uncover the folk-leader's corpse.

13. She unwrapped the blanket from Sigurdhr
and brought the cushion before the wife's knees:
"Look on the beloved, lay your mouth to his mustache,
as you embraced the hale leader!"

14. Gudhrun looked upon (him) one time:
she saw the day-bright's hair running with blood,
the gleaming eyes of folk-leader dimmed,
boar's soul-burg sheared by sword.

15. Then Gudhrun sank bent onto the cushion,
hair loosened, cheeks reddened,
and drops of rain ran down to knees.

16. Then Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter, wept,
so that tears flowed along tresses,
and the geese cried out in their dwelling,
many birds which the maiden owned.

17. Then Gullrond, Gjuki's daughter, spoke thus:
"I know that the greatest love was (given) to you
of all people above the earth!
You were never content, without or within,
my sister, except beside Sigurdhr!"

18. "So was my Sigurdhr beside Gjuki's sons,

as (if he) were the garlic growing above the grass,
or were a bright stone set in a band,
arkenstone among athelings!

19. "Among the folk-leader's men I seemed
higher than any of Herjan's disir;
now I am little as leaves are
many on laurel-tree, at the boar's death.

20. "I miss in seat and in bed
my speech-friend - the kin of Gjuki ruled it!
The kin of Gjuki ruled my evil,
and their sister's sore weeping!

21. "Be it so to your hosts, your lands emptied,
as you carried out your sworn oaths!
You shall not enjoy the gold, Gunnar,
the rings shall become your bane
since you swore oaths to Sigurdhr.

22. "There was much greater joy in the garth,
when my Sigurdhr saddled Grani,
and they fared to ask for Brynhildr,
evil wight, to ill-luck!"

23. Then Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter spoke thus:
"(May) that witch lack husband and children,
who made it possible for you, Gudhrun, to shed tears
and gave you speech-runes this morning!"

24. Then Gullrond, Gjuki's daughter spoke thus:
"Still your words, folk-loathed!
you have ever been wyrd to athelings,
and everyone recks your life-age ill-shaped,
sore sorrow to seven kings,
and greatest friend-destroyer to wives!"

25. Then Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter spoke thus:

"Atli alone ruled all this evil,
my brother, born of Budhli,

26. "when we two in the hall of the Hunnish folk
saw the wurm-bed's fire on the boar -
I have paid for that journey since,
I see that sight ever!"

27. She stood under the pillar, made fast her strength,
from the eyes of Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter,
fire burned, poison frothed out,
when she looked at the wounds on Sigurdhr.

Gudhrun went afterwards outside into the woods and wastelands and
fared to Denmark and was there with Thora, Hakon's daughter, seven
half-years.

Brynhildr did not wish to live after Sigurdhr. She let eight of her
thralls and five bondsmmaids be slain. Then she laid a sword to herself
as bane, as is said in "The Short Lay of Sigurdhr".

THE SECOND LAY OF GUDHRUN

King Theoderik was with Atli and had lost most of his men there.
Theoderik and Gudhrun told their sorrows between them. She spoke to
him and said:

1. I was a maid of maids - my mother raised me up -
bright in bower, I loved (my) brothers well -
until Gjuki dowered me with gold,
dowered with gold, gave to Sigurdhr.

2. Sigurdhr was thus above the sons of Gjuki,
as were the green leek grown above the grass,
or high-boned hart among brave beasts,
or glow-red gold on gray silver.

3. Afterwards my brothers would not grant me,
that I had a husband foremost of all;

they could not sleep nor judge causes,
before they caused Sigurdhr to die.

4. Grani ran to the Thing - whinnying could be heard -
yet Sigurdhr came not himself;
saddle-beasts were all sprinkled with sweat,
and from much toil, under the slayers.

5. I went weeping to speak with Grani,
wet-cheeked I asked the horse of his tale;
Grani bent downward then, drooped head to grass,
the horse knew that his owner did not live.

6. I delayed long, long thoughts strove together,
before I asked folk-warder about leader.

7. Gunnar dropped his head; Hogni told me
of Sigurdhr's sorrowful death:
'Gothormr's bane lies hewed on the other side of the river,
given over to wolves.

8. 'Look for Sigurdhr on the southern road!
there you shall hear the ravens calling,
eagles calling, glad of food,
wargs howl around your husband.'

9. 'Why, Hogni do you wish to say
such sorrows to me, deprived of joy?
The ravens should rend your heart
in a far-off land; you are worst of men!'

10. Hogni answered only once,
not inclined to good soul, from great grief:
'You shall have much weeping of this, Gudhrun,
when the ravens rend my heart.'

11. I turned alone from there, from talk,
to the wood, to gather the wargs' leavings:
I made no weeping, nor wrung hands,
nor complained about it, like other women,
when I sat sorrowing over Sigurdhr.

12. The night seemed deeply dark to me,
when I sat sorrowfully over Sigurdhr,
I thought the wolves to be all-better,
if they caused me to part from life
or burnt me like birch-wood!

13. I fared from the fells five days counted.
until I saw Half's high hall.

14. I sat seven half-years with Thora,
Hakon's daughter, in Denmark.
She embroidered in gold for my pleasure
Southern halls and Danish swans;
we two had that which warriors play on the picture,
and on the handwork helm-warder's thanes,
red shields, Hunnish host,
helm-warder's following, sword-clad, helm-clad;

16. Sigmundr's ships glided from land,
gilded figureheads, graven stems;
we wove onto the tapestry that when they did battle,
Sigarr and Siggeirr, south on Funen.

17. Then Grimhildr, the Gothic woman, asked
what I was thinking of...
she threw down tapestry and summoned her bairns,
single-mindedly to ask of this,
whether son would atone to sister,
or would pay for slain husband.

18. Gunnarr was ready to let gold be offered,
to atone for causes, and Hogni the same.
She asked of this: which wished to fare,
to saddle steed, to hitch wagon,
to ride horse, to fly hawk,
to shoot arrows from yew-bow.

19. Then they went in like boars,
Langobardish hosts, they had red fur-cloaks,
polished byrnies, crested helmets,
saxes girded on, they had dark-brown hair.

20. Each wanted to choose treasures for me,
choose treasures and speak bravely,
if they might be able to win my trust
from many sorrows - I did not bring myself to trust.

21. Grimhildr brought me a cup to drink,
cold and bitter, that I not mind my causes:
that was mixed with Wyrð's main,
very cold sea, and hallowed boar's blood.

22. In the horn, every sort of staves were
risted and reddened - I was not able to understand -
a long ling-fish from the Haddings' land,
an uncut ear of grain, beasts' innards.

23. Many bales were together in that beer,
all herbs of the wood and a burnt acorn,
dew of the hearth, sacrifice-entrails,
seethed swine's liver, with which she silenced (my) claims.

24. Yet I forgot all which I had gotten,
all about the boar, iron-slain in hall.
The three kings came before (my) knee,
before she herself sought to speak with me.

25. "Gudhrun, I will give you gold to receive,
much of all wealth, from your father's death,
red rings, Hlodhver's hall,
all bedclothes, for the fallen boar;

26. "Hunnish maids, they who weave with little boards
and ready fair gold, so that you receive pleasure -
you shall rule Budhli's wealth alone,
bedecked with gold, and given in marriage to Atli!"

27. "I do not wish to go with a husband,
nor have Brynhildr's brother!
It is not seemly for me to raise a clan
with Budhli's son, nor enjoy life!"

28. "Do not intend any longer that folk pay for hate,
although we have caused it before!
so shall you let it be as if they both lived,
Sigurdhr and Sigmundr, if you raise up sons!"

29. "I may not be joyful, Grimhildr,
nor offer hopes to the battle-eager one,
since the corpse-ravenous (and) Huginn greedily drank
Sigurdhr's heartblood together!"

30. "I have found him the most clan-stately
of all folk, and foremost of any;
you shall have him, until your life-age fades -
be husbandless, unless you choose him!"

31. "Bid me no longer, single-mindedly,
to those bale-full kin!
he shall grimly act towards Gunnarr
and rend the heart from Hogni.
I shall not be light over it before from the life-strong

of whetted edge-play I take life-age."

32. Weeping, Grimhildr gripped the words
which showed bale to her bairns,
and great ill to her youths:

"Yet I shall give you lands, a following,
Wine-Burg, Wal-Burg, if you will receive (them) -
have and enjoy that to age, daughter!"

34. "Then I shall choose from kings,
and indeed have that needful from kin!
This husband will never become loved by me,
nor ill to brothers be protection to bairns!"

35. That moment every dreng was seen on horse
but the Welsh women (were) lifted into wagon:
we rode cold land seven days,
yet another seven we struck waves,
yet on the third seven we strode dry land.

36. There the door-warders of the high burg
unlocked the gates before we rode into garth.

37. Atli wakened me - but I seemed to myself to be
full of ill soul at kin's death - :

38. "So norns newly wakened me,"
he wished that I give rede about spae of danger:
"I sensed that you, Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter,
laid a destruction-blended blade against me."

39. (Gudhrun) "That is before a fire, when iron is dreamed,
before conceit and wilfulness, a woman's wrath.
I shall go to burn you against bale,
tend and leech, although it be loathly to me."

40. (Atli) "I sensed saplings falling here in the dwelling,
those which I wished to let wax,
ripped up by roots, reddened in blood,
born to the bench, you bade me to eat.

41. I sensed hawks fly from my hand,
deprived of meat, to ill-luck's house;
I sensed their hearts eaten with honey,
in sorrow-mood of soul, swollen with blood.

42. I sensed whelps loosed from my hand,
both yelped, deprived of joy;
I sensed their flesh become carrion,
against my will, I had to eat the corpses."

43. (Gudhrun) "There shall warriors speak of slaughtering
and take head from the white-haired beasts.
They are fey: in a few nights
before the days grow short, the warriors shall enjoy them."

44. (Atli) "I lay afterwards - I did not want to sleep -
self-willed in sickbed - I shall remember to do..."

THIRD LAY OF GUDHRUN

Herkja hight a bondsmaid of Atli; she had been his lover. She said to Atli that she had seen Thiodhrekr and Gudhrun both together. Atli was greatly uncheerful. Then said Gudhrun:

1. "What is always with you, Atli, Budhli's son,
you are sad in soul - why do you never laugh?
The jarls would think it better
if you spoke to men and looked at me!"

2. "That saddens me, Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter,
which Herkja said to me in the hall,
that you and Thiodhrekr slept under a blanket
and were lightly (under) linen!"

3. "I shall swear all oaths to you,
at the white holy stone,
that I never did with Thiodhmar's son
what man nor maid should not do!

4. "Except that I embraced the arranger of armies,
the unshamed boar, a single time.
Our speeches were otherwise,
when we troubled two inclined to secret speech!

5. "Thiodhrekr came here with three tens -
not one of them lives - of thirty men!
you robbed me of brothers, and the byrnieid ones,
robbed me of all my nearest kin!

6. "Send you the Saxon, southern leader:
he knows how to hallow a boiling kettle!"
Seven hundred men went into the hall,
before the king's wife went to the kettle.

8. "Gunnarr comes not, I do not call Hogni,
I see not my beloved brothers afterwards -
Hogni would avenge such sorrow with sword:
now I must clear myself of sin."

9. She plunged bright hands to the bottom -
and she took up the arkenstone:
"See the warriors now: I have become cleared,
in holy fashion, as kettle boils!"

10. Atli's soul laughed in breast,
when he saw Gudhrun's hands whole:
"Now shall Herkja go to the kettle,
she who expected ill for Gudhrun!"

11. No one saw (anything) more pitiful, everyone who saw that,
how there the hands were burnt from Herkja!
Then the maid was taken to the foul bog -
this Gudhrun got for her sorrows.

BRYNHILDR'S RIDE TO HEL

After Brynhildr's death two bale-fires were made, one for Sigurdhr,
and that burned first, but Brynhildr was burned on the other, and she
was in a wagon which was adorned with gold cloth. So it is said, that
Brynhildr drove with the wagon on the Hel-road and fared to a dwelling
where a certain giantess lived. The giantess said,

1. "You shall not go on this path
My garth is supported on stone!
It were better for you to spread a tapestry to weave,
rather than to visit another's husband!

2. "Why should you visit from Welsh-land,
constant-headed one, my house?
Var of gold, you have, if you desire to know,
- mild one - nothing but men's blood on your hands!"

3. "Brandish (it) not at me, bride from the stone,
although I was at viking!
I must seem the better of us,
where men ken our clans."

4. "You were Budhli's daughter, Brynhildr,
born for the worst luck in the world:
you have destroyed Gjuki's bairns,
and broken their good dwelling."

5. "I shall say to you, wise, from the wagon,
if you desire to know, greatly witless one,
how Gjuki's heirs made me
love-robbed and oath-broken!

6. "The soul-full king took our hides,

eight sisters, born under oak;

I was twelve winters old, if you desire to know,
when I gave oaths to the young leader.

7. "All in Hlymdales called me
Hildir-under-Helm, whoever knew.

8. "Then I caused the old one of the Gothic folk,
Helm-Gunnarr, to go to Hel most swiftly;
I gave victory to Audha's young brother:
Odhinn became greatly angry with me for that.

9. "He laid me about with shields in Skatalund,
red and white, rims touching;
then he bade break my sleep
whoever in the land had never known how to fear.

10. "(He) let burn high around my hall,
southwards, the war-of-all-woods;
he bade one thane to ride over that,
he who brought me that gold which lay under Fafnir.

11. "The good gold-dealer rode Grani,
there where my foster-father steered the benches;
He alone seemed better than all there,
viking-of-Danes, in the host.

12. "We two slept, and in comfort, in one bed,
as if he were born my brother;
neither of us might lay
our hand over the other in eight nights.

13. "Yet Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter brandished at me
that I had slept in Sigurdhr's arms;
then I became wise about this, as I had not wished to,
that they had deceived me into man-taking!

14. "With pressing sorrow for a long time must all
women and men living be raised up!
We two should have spent life together,
Sigurdhr! Sink thou, giantesses' get!"

HELGAKVIDHA HUNDINGSBANA I

Here begins the tale of Helgi the Bane of Hunding and Hodhbroddr. (Lay of the Volsungs)

1. Ancient the year when eagles screamed
holy waters fell down from Heaven-Fells.
Then had Helgi the hugr-great
Borghild born in Bralundr.

2. Night was in dwelling norms came,
for the atheling being to shape.
They bade the folk-leader most famed be
and of princes the best to seem.

3. They spun from strength xrlog-threads,
for him brought forth to burgs in Bralund.
They wound about the golden threads
and under the moon's hall's middle fastened.

4. They eastwards and westwards concealed the threads,
there had the prince the land between.
Brought Neri's sister to the north-way
one fast. She bade it hold ever.

5. One thing was to harm the Ylfings' descendant
and that maid who should raise him up.
Raven spoke to raven - sat on high gallows-tree -
greedy for fodder, 'I know something!

6. 'Stands in byrnie the bairn of Sigmundr,
one day old - now is day come!

With keen eyes like a warrior!

Be he friend to wargs! we two shall be glad!'

7. To the army seemed he day-bright leader to be,
the warriors said good harvest-years should come.
Himself went the prince from battle-press,
to bring to the young one a noble leek, the prince.

8. He gave Helgi name and Hringstead,
Sun-Fell, Snow-Fell and Sigar's Field,
Hringstead, Hatun and Heaven-Meadow -
blood-dyed wurm-sword to Sinfjotli's brother.

9. Then took to waxing before friends' breasts,
the noble-born elm in gleaming joy.
He got and gave gold to his band,
the prince spared not blood-sprinkled hoard.

10. Shortly let the prince battle be bidden,
when the folk-leader was fifteen winters,
and he let the hardy Hunding be slain,
he who long ruled over lands and thanes.

11. Spoke thereafter to Sigmundr's bairn,
of wealth and rings Hunding's sons,
because they had to pay for the boar
for mickle wealth-taking and father slain.

12. The prince let not gifts be offered,
nor the descendants rather weregild get;
He said they must await mickle weather
of gray spears and Odhinn's wrath.

13. The warriors fared to blade-meeting
which they had laid at Logafells.
Slit Frodhi's frith among the foes,

fared Vidhrir's hounds wal-greedy, around island.

14. The prince sat himself when he had slain
Alfr and Eyjolfr under Eagle-Stone,
Hjorvardh and Havardhr Hunding's sons;
spilt had he all the aett of spear-Mmmir.

15. Then burst a light from Loga Fells
and from that light lightnings came:
There were under helms on Heaven-Meadows...
Their byrnies were with blood sprinkled,
and from spears sparks sprang forth.

16. Asked then early from the wolf's work
the daybright to the southern dmsir,
if they would home with the warriors
that night fare - bowstrings resounded.

17. But from horse Hogni's daughter,
stilled the shields' clash said to the prince
'I think, that we have other deeds,
than with ring-breakers beer to drink.

18. 'My father has his maid,
to the grim one promised Granmar's son;
But I have, o Helgi said Hodhbroddr to be,
a shameless king like a cat's son.

19. 'Then comes the folk-leader in few nights,
unless you show him to the wal-stead
or take the maid from the gracious prince.'

20. 'Be not in awe of Isung's bane!
First must be din of blades or else I must be dead!'

21. Sent messengers the all-ruler then,

aloft and on water to bid the warbands,
deed-rich river's gleam
to promise to heroes and their bairns.

22. 'Bid swiftly to ships to go,
and on Brand-Isle to be ready!'
After that the prince bided till to meeting came
heroes hundred-many from Hedhinn's Isle.

23. And there from the stead out of Stave-Ness
glided the warships adorned with gold -
Asked Helgi Hjorleifr of this:
'Have you counted the fearless sons?'

24. But the young king said to the other:
'Hard were it to count from Troni Strand
the long-headed ships and host-loaded,
which from Jorvasund outward fared.

25. 'Twelve hundred of trusty men,
yet are in Hatun half as many
battle-host of kings we expect strife...'

26. So ripped the steersman the awnings off
that of heroes the horde awake
(and the day-bright ones day's brow see)
and the princes pulled up on mast-tree
the woven sails in Varin's Firth.

27. Was oars' din and iron's clashing
shield struck on shield vikings rowed;
swift-forwards went among athelings
the hero's fleet far from lands.

28. (So was to hear where together came
Kolga's sister and the old keels,

as if berg and wave broke together...)

29. Helgi bade pull high the sail over,
of the waves were not the shipfolk shy -
when there frightful AEgir's daughter
over the steering-mares would climb.

30. But herself Sigrzn above them
the folk-host warded and their vessels:
she wound strongly out of Ran's hands
the king's wave-beasts at Gnipa Grove.

31. Sat there by evening in Una Bay
the fair-built ships were able to float,
but those themselves from Svarin's Howe
with bitter hugr the army recognised.

32. Asked the good-born Gudmundr of this:
'Who is the land-ruler who steers the host,
and he who furious host leads to the land?'

33. Sinfjotli said - swung up to boat's edge,
the red shield, whose rim was of gold,
there was a sound warder who knew how to answer
and with athelings words to exchange -

34. 'Say thou that in evening when to swine you give
and to your bitches you give milk-bread,
that the Ylfings are from eastward come,
greedy for battle from Gnipa Grove.

35. 'There shall Hodhbroddr Helgi find,
unflying prince in the fleet's middle,
he who has often eagles sated,
while you, by quern kissed thrall-maids!'

36. (Gudmundr)

'Little think you, folk-leader of ancient tales
when you of athelings untruths brandish!
You have eaten wolves' carrion
and to your brother the bane become,
and wounds sucked with cold mouth,
have in stone-waste all-loathed, crept.'

37. (Sinfjotli)

'You were a volva on Varin's Isle,
treachery-wise woman bore you lies together:
you claimed no man to wish to have,
warrior in byrnie except Sinfjotli!

38. 'You were a harmful witch, valkyrie,
awful, ill-mighty with All-Father.
The einherjar had to all do battle,
contrary-willed woman for thy sake!

39. 'Nine had we - on Saga Ness -
wolves begotten only I was their father!'

40. (Gudmundr)

'You were not father of Fenris-Wolves,
older than all as I remember,
since you were gelded before Gnipa Grove
by thurse maidens on Thorr's Ness.

41. 'You were Siggeirr's stepson lay under home-stead,
to wolf's songs accustomed in the wood outside;
came to you ills all to hand
when you of your brother the breast ripped;
you made yourself famed through blasphemous deeds.;

42. (Sinfjotli)

'You were Grani's bride on Bravelli,

gold-bridled, were ready for racing.

I had you, tired, many steps ridden,
slender under saddle cow, downhill!

43. A swain you seemed senseless to be,
when you Gullnir's goats milked,
yet another time as Imidhr's daughter,
a tattered troll-maid! will you speak further?'

44. (Gudmundr)

'First will I at Freki Stone
sate the ravens on your corpse,
before your bitches give your meat
or give to boars! grim wights deal with thee!'

45. (Helgi)

'It were for you two, Sinfjotli, seemlier greatly,
battle to raise and gladden eagles,
than with unneeded words to battle,
although the ring-breakers are estranged by hate.

46. 'I expect no good from Granmarr's sons,
yet fit is for princes to tell the truth.
They have shown at Moins-Home,
that they have courage blades to brandish.'

47. They, with strength, let run
Svipudhr and Sveggjud to Sun-Home,
through dewy dales and dark glens,
Trembled Mist's horse where the kinsmen fared.

48. They met the prince at the hall's gate,
they said angrily the ruler had come!
Without stood Hodhbroddr in helm bedecked
he sensed the horse-ride of his aett.
'Why is fury's colour on the Niflungs?'

49. 'Wend here to sand swift keels,
Revenge's stags and long rows,
many shields shaven oars,
Gylfi's stately host the glad Ylfings.

50. Fifteen went, folk up on land,
Though in Sogn out seven thousand.
Lie here in the gates before Gnipa Grove
brime-beasts blue-black and built with gold.
There are by far most of their horde.
Now shall Helgi hasten blade-Thing!'

51. 'May run the bridled to regin-Thing
but Sporvitnir to Sparin's heath,
Melnir and Mylnir to Mirk-Wood!
Let no man sit behind
who the wound-flame is able to brandish!

52. 'Bid thee, Hogni and Hringr's sons,
Atli and Yngvi Alfr the Old,
they who are greedy battle to raise.
let the Volsungs withstanding get!'

53. Swift alone was that when together came,
the pale edges at Freki Stone.
Ever was Helgi Hunding's-Bane,
first in the folk where men did battle...
first in the war unwilling to flee;
so had the helm-bearer a hard mood-acorn!

54. Came then from heaven helm-beings over
- waxed din of spears - they who warded the hero.
Then Sigrzn said 'Wound-beings behind
the curses of men cut Huginn's barley!

55. 'Hail thee, wise leader, ruler of men,
aett-stave of Yngvi and enjoy life,
for you have felled the flight-unwilling
boar, who ruled the awful one's death.

56. 'And for you, prince are both well seemly,
the red rings and the mighty maid,
Hale shall you, prince both enjoy,
Hogni's daughter and Hring-Stead,
Victory and lands! the strife is closed!'

Helgakvidha Hundingsbana II

Of the Volsungs.

Pr. 1. King Sigmundr Volsung's son had Borghildr from Bralund. They named their son Helgi, and after Helgi Hjorvardhsson. Helgi was fostered by Hagall.

Pr. 2. Hundigr hight a powerful king. Hundland is named after him. He was a great warleader and had many sons, who were at harrying.

Pr. 3. Unfrith and foeship were between those of king Hundigr and of king Sigmundr; each slew the kinsmen of the other.

Pr. 4. King Sigmundr and his aett hight Volsungs and Ylfings.

Pr. 5. Helgi fared to spy out the warband of king Hundigr. Haemigr, the son of king Hundigr, was home.

Pr. 6. But when Helgi went away, then met he a herder and spoke,

1. 'Say thou to Heming that Helgi remembers
who in byrnie the warriors felled.

It was the gray wolf whom you had within
although known as Hamal to king Hundigr.

Pr. 7. (Hamal hight the son of Hagall.) King Hundigr sent men to Hagall to seek Helgi. But Helgi might not escape by another way, than to take on the clothes of a bondsmaid and go to grind meal.

Pr. 8. They sought and found not Helgi.

2. Then spoke Blindr the Bale-Wise,
'Keen are the eyes of Hagall's thrall-maid,
she is not of carles' aett who at quern stands!
The stones spring apart the bin breaks before.

3. 'Now has a hard deeming the warrior received,
he who as prince shall wal-barley grind.
Rather were seemly for those hands
the sword's grip than the mill-handle.'

Hagall answered and said,

4. 'That is little strange though the mill thrums,
for a kingly maid turns the handle.
She stormed forth over the clouds
and dared to battle as vikings,
before Helgi on her fastened fetters,
she was a sister of Sigar and Hogni,
thus has awful eyes the Ylfing maid.'

Pr. 9. Helgi got away and fared on a warship. He felled king Hundingr
and was afterwards called Helgi Hunding's-Bane.

Pr. 10. He lay with his army in Bruni Bay and made there a supply raid
on land and ate there raw (meat).

Pr. 11. Hogni hight a king. His daughter was Sigrun; she was then a
valkyrie and rode air and water. She was Svava born again.

Pr. 12. Sigrun rode to Helgi's ships and spoke,

5. 'Who lets float the fleet in harbour?
Where, host-mighty have you home?
What do you bide for in Bruni Bay?
Where do you look to know your path?'

6. 'Hamall lets float the fleet in harbour,
We have our home in Hles Island!
We bide for good breeze in Bruni Bay,
we look eastward to know our path!'

7. 'Where have you, helmed one battle wakened
or fed the goslings of Gunnr's sister
why is your byrnie with blood sprinkled?
why should, under helms, you eat raw meat?'

8. 'That did most newly the Ylfings' descendant
before western flood if you look to know,
where we took bears in Bragi Grove
and the aett of eagles with edges sated.
Now is said, maid what strife-reasons readied themselves:
why we by mere's edge little-steaked (meat) eat.'

9. 'Battle brightened thou! was before Helgi
king Hundingr sunk to the field!
bore battle together who revenged kinsmen,
and blood streamed from the blade's edges.'

10. 'How do you know that you see they,
- wise understander - who revenged kinsmen?
Many are the keen ones warriors' sons,
and like to our descendants.'

11. 'I was not far from folk's edge-leader,
yesterday by morning at life's-closing of prince.
Yet name I wily Sigmundr's bairn,
he who in wal-runes of battle-play speaks.

12. 'I saw you forward in the longships,
where you dwelt by bloodied staves,
and the spray-cold waves played;

now will hide himself the daybright from me,

But Hogni's maid Helgi kens!'

Pr. 13. Granmarr hight a powerful king, who settled at Svarin's Howe.
He had many sons: Hodhbroddr, second Gudmundr, third Starkadhr.

Pr. 14. Hodhbroddr was at a meeting of kings; he betrothed himself to
Sigrun Hogni's daughter.

Pr. 15. And when she heard that, she rode with valkyries through water
and through air to seek Helgi.

Pr. 16. Helgi was then at Logi Fells and had done battle with
Hundingr's sons.

Pr. 17. There felled he Alfr and Eyjolfr, Hjorvardhr and Hervardhr,
and he was all tired with fighting, and sat under Eagle-Stone.

Pr. 18. There Sigrun met him and embraced him about the neck and
kissed him and said to him her news, as is said in the 'Old Lay of the
Volsungs'.

13. Sigrun sought the glad hero,
home to bring Helgi to seek her hand,
kissed and spoke to the king under helmet,
then turned helm-wearer hugr to the woman;
first, said she, she had loved with all hugr,
the son of Sigmundr before she had seen him.

14. 'I was to Hodhbroddr in host betrothed,
but another boar I did not wish.
Though I see before me, folk-leader kinsmen's wrath,
I have my father's desired rede broken.'

15. Hogni's maid began of hugr to speak:
she said, she must have Helgi's protection.

'Think you not of Hogni's wrath,
nor the ill hugr of your aett!
You shall, maid young with me live,

you have an aett, a good one while I may live.'

Pr. 19. Helgi gathered together a mighty ship-host and fared to Freki Stone and got in the harbour a great storm, dangerous to men.

Pr. 20. Then came lightning over and bright beams stood in the ships. They saw in the lightning, that nine valkyries rode and they kenned Sigrun.

Pr. 21. Then the storm laid and they came hale to land.

Pr. 22. Granmarr's sons sat on a certain berg, when the ships sailed to land.

Pr. 23. Gudmundr leapt on horse and rode to look from the mountain to the harbour; then the Volsungs rolled their sails down.

Pr. 24. Then spoke Gudmundr, as it is written before in the Lay of Helgi:

16. 'Who is the folk-leader who steers the ships,
and he who furious hosts leads to the land?'

(This said Gudmundr Granmarr's son:

17. Who is the Skjoldung who steers the ships,
lets battle-flags gold before the stave?
Frith seems not to me in the faring's van,
battle-red turns around the vikings.')

Pr. 25. Sinfjotli, Sigmundr's son, answered, and that is also written.

18. Sinfjotli said,
'Here may Hodhbroddr Helgi ken,
ready for battle, in the fleet's middle,
he has the homeland of your aett,
the Fjorsung's inheritance under himself thrust!'

19. 'That shall first at Freki Stone
warriors together judge of strife-sakes.

I say it is time, Hodhbroddr revenge to win,
for we the lesser part long bore.'

20. (Sinfjotli)

'First shall you, Gudhmundr to goats tend,
and in cliff-clefts climb about
have you in hand a hazel-twig,
that were blither for you than swords' deeming.'

21. (Helgi)

'It were for you, Sinfjotli seemlier greatly,
battle to raise and gladden eagles,
than with unneeded words to battle,
although the ring-breakers are estranged by hate.

22. 'I expect no good from Granmarr's sons,
yet fit is for princes to tell the truth.

They have shown at Moins-Home,
that they have courage blades to brandish,
they are warriors swift to bravery.

Pr. 26. Gudhmundr rode home with news of the host; then summoned
Granmarr's sons the army. Many kings came there.

Pr. 27. There was Hogni, Sigrun's father, and his sons Bragi and Dagr.

Pr. 28. There was a great battle, and fell all of Granmarr's sons, and
all of the chieftains, except Dagr, Hogni's son, got quarter and swore
oaths to the Volsungs.

Pr. 29. Sigrun went among the slain and found Hodhbroddr with his
death coming.

She said,

23. 'For you shall not Sigrun from Seva Fells
- king Hodhbroddr! - sink into arms!
Slain are the lives - and reach the corpses,
gray steeds of giantess - of Granmarr's sons.

Pr. 30. Then she met Helgi and became all-glad. He said,

24. 'All is not to you, all-wise, given, -
I say that certain norms ruled -
fell in the morning at Freki Stone
Bragi and Hogni I was their bane.

35. 'And at Styr Cliff Starkadhr the king,
though at Hli Mountains Hrollaugr's sons.
He saw I as warrior most grim of ghost,
his body battled though head was gone!

36. 'Lie on the earth all the many
of your kinsmen become corpses.
You might not turn aside battle that was shaped for you,
that you become strife for mighty men.'

Pr. 31. Then wept Sigrun. He said,

27. 'Have hugr, Sigrun! a Hildir you've been to us!
No Skjoldung wins against what's shaped.'
'Life would I now chose for those who are slain,
and if I could also conceal you in embrace!'

Pr. 32. Helgi got Sigrun in marriage, and they had sons. Helgi was not old.

Pr. 33. Dagr, Hogni's son, made blot to Odhinn for his father's revenge. Odhinn lent Dagr his spear.

Pr. 34. Dagr found Helgi, his kinsman, in that place called "Fetter-Grove".

Pr. 35. He laid against Helgi with the spear.

Pr. 36. There fell Helgi. But Dagr rode to the fells and spoke the news to Sigrun.

28. 'Reluctant am I, sister sadness to say to you,
for I have, need-pressed brought sister to weep.
Fell in morning at Fetter-Grove,
the prince, who was best in the world,
and of heroes at the throat stood.'

29. (Sigrun)

'You shall all oaths bite,
those which to Helgi you have sworn,
by the lighting Leiptr's water,
and the drizzle-cold wave-stone.'

30. 'Glide not that ship that glides under you
though wished-for breeze lie behind you.
Run not that steed who runs beneath you,
though from your foes you would save yourself!
Bite not for you that sword which you brandish,
unless to you yourself it sings around head!

31. 'Then were I revenged for Helgi's death,
if you were a warg in the woods outside,
robbed of all wealth and of all pleasure,
having no meat but what from corpses bursts!'

(Dagr said)

32. 'Mad are you, sister and without wits,
when you to your brother this bidding decree.
Odhinn alone rules all bale,
because he among siblings runes of strife-cause brought.'

33. 'Your brother offers you red rings,
all Vandil's holy places and Battle-Dales -
have you half the world for harm to pay,
bride ring-adorned and your bairns.'

34. (Sigrun)

'I shall never sit so blessed at Seva Fells,
nor early wander that I enjoy life,
unless on the host's leader the light shines,
runs under the leader the battle-steed there,
to gold bit accustomed if I could embrace the prince!

35. 'So had (Helgi) himself fearsome made
to his foes and their kinsmen
as before the wolf woad-wild run
goats from the fell full of fear.

36. 'So bore Helgi among warriors
as nobly-shaped as an ash above thorns,
or the stag-fawn sprinkled with dew,
who fares over all animals
and horns glow to heaven itself.'

Pr. 37. A howe was readied over Helgi. But when he came to Valholl,
then Odhinn offered him everything to rule with himself.

37. Helgi said:

'You shall, Hundingr for every man,
footwater ready and fire kindle
the hounds bind the horses herd,
give the swines swill before going to sleep.'

Pr. 38. Sigrun's bondsmaid went in the evening by Helgi's howe and
saw, that Helgi rode to the howe with many men. The bondsmaid said,

38. 'What sort of deception is that which I seem to see,
or else the doom of the gods? dead men ride
who their horses with points spur:
or is to the warriors a faring home given?'

39. 'That is no deception which you seem to see,
nor the rending of ages although we appear,

although we our horses with points spur
nor is to the warriors a faring-home given.'

Pr. 39. The bondsmaid went home and said to Sigrun,

40. 'Go out, Sigrun, from Seva Fells,
if you the folk-warrior list to find!
The howe is unlocked Helgi is come,
blade's tracks bleed the day-bright bade you
that you wound-drops should put to rest.'

Sigrun went into the howe to Helgi and spoke,

41. 'Now am I so joyful over our meeting,
as the meat-greedy hawks of Odhinn,
who know of slain, of warm corpses,
or dew-lighted the dawn see.

42. 'First will I kiss the king unliving,
yet thou the bloody byrnie cast off.
Thy hair is, Helgi wet with frost,
the prince is all with wal-dew soaked,
the hands spray-cold of Hogni's kinsman!
How shall I, prince bettering for this win?'

43. 'You alone rule, Sigrun from Seva Fells,
how Helgi is with sorrow-dew soaked:
you weep, gold-adorned, with grim tears,
sun-bright, southern, before going to sleep.
Each falls bloody on breast of the prince,
spray-cold, hot within pressing with sorrow.

44. 'Well shall we drink the dear draught,
although we have lost desire and lands!
shall no man a sorrow-song sing,
although in my breast the bane-wound appear,

now that the bride is shut in the howe,
the warrior's idis with us, the dead!'

Pr. 40. Sigrun readied a couch in the howe.

45. 'Here have I for you, Helgi a couch readied,
without sorrow Ylfing's descendant!
I will embrace you within folk-leader, sleep,
as I, with the prince living remember.'

46. 'Now can I nothing unawaited name,
late or early at Seva Fells,
when you in the arms of the unliving sleep,
white, in the howe, Hogni's daughter,
and you are living kingly-born!

47. Time is for me to ride the reddening ways,
the pale steed the flight-path treads;
I must westward on wind-helm's bridge,
before Salgofnir wakes the sig-folk.'

Pr. 41. Then Helgi rode with his host, but the women went home to the dwelling.

Pr. 42. The next evening Sigrun had her bondsmaid hold watch on the howe.

Pr. 43. But at the day-setting, when Sigrun came to the howe, she said,

48. 'Come were by now if he meant to come,
Sigmundr's bairn from Odhinn's hall:
I say the hope lessens that hero will come,
when on the ash-limbs the eagle sits,
and all hosts go to the dream-Things.

(the bondsmaid said:)

49. 'Be not so mad as alone to fare

- Skjoldungs' idis - to the draug-house.

Become mightier all by night,
the dead wights than by light day.'

Pr. 44. Sigrun was short-lived from pain and sorrow.

Pr. 45. That was believed in ancient times, that men were born again,
but that is now called an old wives' tale.

Pr. 46. It is said of Helgi and Sigrun that they were born again. He
hight then Helgi Haddings'-Prince, and she Kara the daughter of
Halfdan, as is spoken in "The Song of Kara", and she was a valkyrie.

THE LAY OF HELGI HJORVARDHSSON

("Helgakvidha Hjorvardhssonar")

In translating poetry, it is very seldom possible to be both accurate
in sense and in form. Since this translation is intended for spiritual
study, where it came to a conflict between literal meaning and
maintaining the alliterative poetic pattern and/or rhythm, I have
chosen to be literal at the expense of the poetry. A more beautiful,
though less accurate, translation can be found in Lee Hollander's
Poetic Edda (University of Texas Press).

Of Hjorvardhr and Sigrlinn. Hjorvardhr hight a king. He had four
wives. One hight Alfildr, their son hight Hedhinn; a second hight
Saeridhr, their son hight Humlungr; a third hight Sinriodh, their son
hight Hymlingr. King Hjorvardhr had sworn this oath: to have that
woman, whom he knew to be fairest. He heard, that King Svafnir had a
daughter who was fairest of all, who hight Sigrlinn.

Idhmundr hight his jarl. Atli was his son, who fared to ask for
Sigrlinn for the hands of the king. He dwelt winter-long with King
Svafnir.

Franmarr hight a jarl there, Sigrlinn's foster-father; his daughter
hight Alof. The jarl gave rede, that the maid be denied, and Atli
fared home.

Atli the jarl's son stood one day in a certain grove; but a bird sat
in the branches up above him and had heard, that men called the women
fairest whom Hjorvardhr the king had. The bird croaked; yet Atli heard
what he said. He spoke,

1. "Saw you Sigrlinn Svafnir's daughter,
fairest of maids in Munarheimr?
although desirable Hjorvardhr's women
seem to the warriors at Glasislundr."

2. "Shall you with Atli Idhmundr's son,
wise-souled bird more speak?"
"I shall, if the prince will make blot to me,
and choose I, what I will out of the king's garth!"

3. "Choose thou not Hjorvardhr nor his sons,
nor of the fair folk-leader's brides,
none of the brides who the prince has!
Deal we well together as friends know how to."

4. "I shall choose a hof a great harrow,
gold-horned cows from the warrior's dwelling,
if for him Sigrlinn sleep in arms,
and uncompelled follows the boar."

That was before Atli fared. Yet when he came home and the king asked him of tidings, he said:

5. "We have difficulty and no fulfillment
our horses were weary on mighty fells,
we had afterwards to wade Saemorn,
then was denied to us Svafnir's daughter,
the ring-bedecked who we wished to have."

The king bade that they should fare a second time. He fared himself. Yet when they came up on a fell and looked at Svavaland, (there saw they) land-burning and great clouds of horse-dust. The king rode from the fells into the land and took night lodgings with someone. Atli held watch and fared over the river. He found a house. A great bird sat on the house and held watch and was sleeping. Atli shot a spear to kill the bird, and in the house found he Sigrlinn, the king's daughter, and Alof, the jarl's daughter, and took them both out with him. Frammarr the jarl had changed his hide into an eagle's form and warded them from the armies with sorcery.

Hrodhmarr hight a king, a wooer of Sigrlinn. He slew the Svava-king and had plundered and burned the land.

Hjorvardhr the king got Sigrlinn, and Atli Alof.

Hjorvardhr and Sigrlinn had a mighty and fair son. He was silent; no name would fasten upon him. He sat on a howe. He saw riding nine valkyrjur, and one was stateliest. She said,

6. "Late shall you, Helgi rule over rings -
- powerful battle-apple - nor Rodhull-Vales.

Eagle screamed early if you are still silent,
though you a hard soul, warrior, show!"

7. (he said) "What let you follow the name of Helgi,
- bride bright-lightening - all you speak to offer?
Think you before all speak well!
I'll have none of it unless I have you!"

8. (she said) "I know swords lying in Sigar's Holm,
four are lacking from five tens:
one is of them better than all,
bale of spears and wrought with gold.

9. A ring is on hilt soul is in the middle,
awe is in edge for he who gets it to own;
lies on the edge a blood-dyed wurm,
and on the guard turns adder tail."

Eylimi hight a king. His daughter was Svava. She was a valkyrja and
rode air and water. She gave Helgi this name and shielded him often
afterwards in battle. Helgi spoke:

10. "Thou art not, Hjorvardhr hale-reded, king,
folk's edge-leader though you are famed;
if you let fire eat the boar's dwellings,
though he harm to you never did.

11. Yet Hrodhmarr shall rule over rings,
those which had our kinsmen!
The folk-leader looks at living hardly,
thinks he of dead men to rule the inheritance."

Hjorvardhr answered, that he would give a host to Helgi, if he wished
to avenge his mother's father. Then sought Helgi the sword which Svava
had showed him the way towards. Then fared he and Atli and felled
Hrodhmarr and won many great works of strength.

He slew Hati the etin, who sat on a certain mountain. Helgi and Atli
lay their ships in Hatafirth. Atli kept watch in the first part of the
night. Hrimgerdhr, Hati's daughter, said:

12. "Who are the heroes in Hati's firth?
Shields are adorned on the ships;
Bravely you go I think you fear little.
Make known to me the king's name!"

Atli said:

13. "Helgi he hight yet thou may never
win harm to the prince,
iron fortresses are 'round atheling's fleet,
witches cannot scathe us!"

Hrimgerdhr said:

14. "What hight thou hero ill-mighty,
what do kinsmen call thee?
The folk-leader trusts thee when he lets thee
dwell in the fair ship's stem."

15. "Atli I hight awesome shall I be to you!
greatly am I grimmet to witches.
In wet stem I have often dwelt,
and slain evening-riders.

16. "What hight thou hag corpse-greedy?
name thy father, witch!
Nine rosts should you be beneath
and trees grow from your bosom."

17. "Hrimgerdhr I hight Hati hight my father,
him know I ill-mightiest etin.
Many brides he took from dwellings,
until Helgi hewed him."

18. "Thou were the troll-woman before warrior's ship,

and laid wait in the firth.

Of the prince's heroes you wished to give Ran,
if the spear had not come in your flesh."

19. "Deceived art thou now, Atli! in dream I say you are,
you let eyebrows sink over brow.
My mother lay before the kings ship,
I drowned Hlodhvardhr's sons in harbor.

20. You would whinny, Atli were you not gelded:
Hrimgerdhr raises her tail!
In hind-parts your heart Atli, think I to be,
though you have a stallion's voice."

21. "Strong should you think me if you knew how to test,
and stepped I to land from water.
All lame would you be if my heart were in it,
and sink would your tail, Hrimgerdhr!"

22. "Atli, go onto land if you trust your might,
and we shall meet in Varin's Bay!
Rended ribs shall you, warrior, get,
if you come in my claws."

23. "I shall go before warriors wake,
and hold with leader word.
Not unexpected to me if to us came
the witch up under ship."

24. "Wake thou, Helgi and speak with Hrimgerdhr,
because you have slain Hati!
One night could she sleep by the boar,
then had she bettering for bales."

25. "Lodhinn hight, who shall have thee! loathly art thou to mankind!
so dwells the thurse in Tholl Islands,

hound-wise etin worst of wildness-dwellers,
he'll be a fitting man for you."

26. "Her would you rather, Helgi who watched over harbor,
last night with the men.
Sea-golden maid might thought I to bear;
here rose she over land and water
and made fast so your fleet.
She alone ruled there that I might not
be bane to the prince's men."

27. "Hear thou now, Hrimgerdhr, if I better thy harms,
say thou more fully to leader:
was it one wight who warded atheling's ships,
or fared there many together?"

28. "Three times nine maids! but one rode before,
a white and helmeted maid.
Their horses shook themselves from them sprang to men,
dew in deep dales,
hail in high woods,
from that comes good harvest to humans;
all that was loathly to me, when I looked."

29. "East look thou now, Hrimgerdhr, if thou hast met
Helgi with Hel-staves.
On land and on water warded is atheling's fleet,
and the leader's men the same.

30. Now it is day, Hrimgerdhr, yet you have been delayed
by Atli until all time.
As harbour-mark mockable seem you
there, where you stand in stone's likeness!"

King Helgi was an all-mighty warleader. He came to King Eylimi and asked for Svava, his daughter. They both, Helgi and Svava, swore oaths and loved each other mightily. Svava was at home with her father, and Helgi at battle. Svava was a valkyrja as before.

Hedhinn was home with his father, King Hjorvardhr, in Norway. Hedhinn fared home along through the forest on Yule evening and found a troll-woman, who rode a warg and had wyrms as reins, and offered her following to Hedhinn. "No," he said. She said, "You shall pay for this at the toasting cup!"

That evening was the swearing of oaths. The lead boar was lead forth; men laid their hands there and swore ther oaths at the toasting cup. Hedhinn swore an oath towards Svava, the daughter of Eylimi, most beloved of Helgi his brother, and he rued it so mightily that he went at once on the same ways south in the land, and found Helgi his brother.

Helgi said:

31. "Come thou well, Hedhinn! what can you say,
of new tidings out of Norway?
Why have thou, prince hurried from land
and come alone to find us?"

32. "A great wrong have I done.
I have chosen the king's child,
thy bride at bragar-cup."

33. "Sorrow thou not! soon must be real,
ale-speech, Hedhinn for us both.
A prince has me to island bidden,
in three nights I shall come there
doubt is upon me that I come back after.
Then may to the good be done such as must be."

34. "Say thou, Helgi that Hedhinn should
have good from thee and great gifts!
It were more seemly sword to reden
than frith give to your foes."

That said Helgi, for he sensed that he was fey and that his fylgja had visited Hedhinn, when he saw the woman riding on the warg.

Alfr hight the king, the son of Hrodhmarr, who had bidden Helgi to the battleplace on Sigar's Field for the third night. Thus said Helgi:

35. "Rode on a wolf when twilight was,

a woman, who him to follow offered.

She knew that slain must be
Sigrlinn's son at Sigar's Field."

Then was there a mighty battle, and Helgi got his bane-wound there.

36. Helgi sent Sigar riding
after Eylimi's only daughter.
He bid swiftly to be readied,
if she would find folk-leader living.

37. "Helgi has sent me here,
with thee, Svava yourself to speak.
Thee, says the protector he will meet,
before the noble-born from life-breath parts."

38. "What happened to Helgi Hjorvardhr's son?
to me are harsh sorrows shown!
If the sea rose around him or sword bit him,
or were it a warrior he'll win harm from me."

39. "Fell here by morning at Freki Stone
the prince, who was best under sun.
Alfr must over all victory rule,
although this happening was not needful."

40. "Hail to thee, Svava your heart you must rule
this must in this world our last meeting be.
Begin for the prince to bleed the wounds
The blade has come for me next to the heart.

41. I bid thee, Svava bride, do not weep!
if you will listen to my speech:
that you for Hedhinn ready a bed,
and the young boar in love endure."

42. "I have said that in Munarhome,
when Helgi for me ruled rings,
that not willingly should I after folk-ruler's dying,
an unknown boar in arms enfold."

43. (Hedhinn said) "Kiss me, Svava! I come not again
to visit Rogheimr nor Rodhulsfells,
before I've revenged Hjorvardhr's son,
who was of princes beneath sun the best."

Of Helgi and Svava it is said that they were born again.

THE WORDS OF REGINN

Sigurdhr went to Hjalprekr's dwelling and chose himself a horse, who was called Grani afterwards. Then Reginn, the son of Hreidhmarr, came to Hjalprekr. He was wiser than every man and a dwarf in size; he was wise, grim, and learned in magic. Reginn fostered Sigurdhr and taught him and loved him greatly.

He told Sigurdhr of his forebears and of those events, when Odhinn and Hoenir and Loki came to Andvari's Waterfall; in those falls were many fish. A certain dwarf hight Andvari, he had a dwelling in the falls in the likeness of a pike and got his food there. - "Otter hight our brother", said Reginn, "who often fared into the falls in an otter's likeness. He had taken a salmon and sat on the river's bank and ate with half-closed eyes. Loki threw a stone at him, and it was his bane. It seemed to the AEsir that they had had great luck and they flayed the pelt from the otter. That same evening they sought guesing with Hreidhmarr and showed him their booty. Then we took them into captivity and laid on them as ransom to fill the otterskin with gold and also to cover it outside with red gold. - Then they sent Loki to get the gold. He came to Ran and got her net and fared then to Andvari's Waterfall and cast the net for the pike, and he leapt into the net. Then said Loki,

1. "What is that fish who runs in the flood,
but cannot ward himself against harm?
You must buy off your head from Hel:
find me the fire of the flood!"

2. "I hight Andvari, Oinn hight my father,
I have fared in many falls.
Miserable norns shaped in ancient days for me,
that I should wade in the water."

3. "Say thou that, Andvari, (Loki said) if you would like to have

life in the halls of men:

what payment do the sons of men get,
if they hew at each other with words?"

4. "An overpayment get the sons of men,
who wade in Vadhgelmir;
whoever lies about others, of untrue words
wide hence stretch the branches."

Loki saw all the gold that Andvari owned. But when he had given up the gold, then he had afterwards one ring, and Loki took it from him. The dwarf went into the stone and said,

5. "The gold which Gustr had shall
become the bane of two brothers,
and the cause of strife for eight athelings;
my wealth shall be joy to no man."

The AEsir gave up the wealth to Hreidhmarr and stuffed the otter-skin and raised it to its feet. Then the AEsir had to pile up the gold and hide it. When that was done, Hreidhmarr went before it and saw one whisker and bade it be covered. Then Odhinn brought forth the ring Andvaranaut and covered the hair.

6. "Now the gold is given up to you, (Loki said) but you will have a great payment
for my head;
for your son will this blessing be shaped:
it will be the bane of you both!"

Hreidhmarr said,

7. "You gave gifts, but you did not give generously,
you did not give with a hale soul!
Little life should be left to you,
if I had known that foeship before!"

8. "But worse is - that I seem to myself to know! -
the kinsmen's strife with kin;
I think it will yet be unborn boars

who know this hate!"

9. "The red gold (said Hreidhmarr) I mean that I shall rule myself,
as long as I live;
I do not fear your hate in the least,
so wend your way home from here!"

Fafnir and Reginn asked Hreidhmarr for their kin-geld from Otter,
their brother. He said no to them. But Fafnir laid his sword into his
sleeping father Hreidhmarr. Hreidhmarr called to his daughters:

10. "Lynghheidhr and Lofnheidhr! Know that my life is ended!
Great is the need which presses!"
Lynghheidhr answered,
"Few sisters, though their father be lost,
would revenge sorrow on brothers!"

11. "Bear you a daughter, (Hreidhmarr said) wolf-souled dis!
if you get no son with a prince!
Get a man for the maid in great need,
then their son shall avenge your sorrow!"

Then died Hreidhmarr. But Fafnir took all the gold. Then Reginn asked
him for his father's inheritance; Fafnir told him no. Then Reginn
sought speech with Lynghheidhr, his sister, as to how he should get his
father's inheritance. She said,

12. "You should speak blithely to a brother
of inheritance, and with different thoughts.
It is not fitting, that with a sword you should
ask Fafnir for wealth."

Reginn told these things to Sigurdhr. - One day, when he came to
Reginn's house, he was well welcomed. Reginn said,

13. "Sigmundr's kinsman has come hither,
the brave-reded warrior to our hall;
he has more courage than an old man,
and I expect battle from the greedy wolf!"

14. "I shall foster the fierce folk-leader;
now Ingvi's kinsman has come among us!
so shall the prince be most powerful under the sun,
his xrlvg-thread resound over all lands!"

Sigurdhr was usually with Reginn then, and he said to Sigurdhr that Fafnir lay on Gnita Heath and was in the likeness of a worm; he had the Helm of Awe, which all living things are terrified before.

Reginn made for Sigurdhr a sword, which hight Gramr. That was so keen, that he drew it upstream in the Rhine and laid a clump of wool on the river, and the clump was taken asunder like water. With that sword Sigurdhr clove Reginn's anvil asunder.

After that Reginn egged Sigurdhr to battle against Fafnir. He (Sigurdhr) said:

15. "High would laugh the sons of Hundings,
they who ended Eylimi's life,
if the ruler longed more greatly to seek
red rings than to revenge his father!"

King Hjalprekr gave Sigurdhr a fleet for his father-revenge. They got a great storm and sailed near to a certain cliff-ness. A man stood on the cliff and said:

16. "Who rides Rfvil's horses there,
the high waves, the roaring sea?
The sail-steeds are sprinkled with sweat,
the wave-mares cannot withstand the wind!"

Reginn answered,

17. "Sigurdhr's men are on the sea-trees here,
a sail-wind is given to us to be our bane,
the high waves fall over the high prow,
the roller-horses plunge down! Who asks about it?"

18. "I was called Hnikar when Huginn was gladdened,
- young Volsung - and (many) were slain;
now you may call the Carl of the Berg
Feng or Fjolnir! I wish to get passage!"

They went towards the land, and the karl came on the ship, and the weather laid. Sigurdhr said,

19. "Tell me that, Hnikkar - of everything that you know,
good signs for gods and men:
Which holy signs are best if there is battle
for the swinging of swords?"

20. "Many, if warriors know them,
are good holy signs for the swinging of swords!
A true following for the sword-tree, I think,
is the dark one of the raven.

21. "That is a second, if you have come out
and are ready to go forth:
when you see, standing on the path,
two fame-greedy warriors.

22. "That is a third, if you hear the howling
of a wolf under ash-branches:
good will be to you when you come among helmet-staves,
if you see them faring first.

23. "Never shall warriors battle in the direction
against the moon's shining sister:
they have victory who can see,
brave in blade-play, when they draw up battle-wedges.

24. "That is a greatly ill sign if your foot stumbles
when you wend towards battle:
betraying disir stand at your two sides
and will see you wounded.

25. "Every keen man should be combed and cleaned
and eat in the morning,

for it is unknown where he will come in the evening;
it is ill to hurry past good."

Sigurdhr had a great battle with Lynvi the son of Hunding and his brothers. Then fell Lyngvi and his three brothers. - After the battle Reginn said:

26. "Now, with a bitter blade, the blood-eagle is
risted on the back of Sigmundr's bane!
Few were braver who reddened the earth,
the warrior's inheritance, and gladdened Huginn!"

THE WORDS OF SIGRDRIFA

Sigurdhr rode up on Hind's Fell and turned south towards Frankland. On the fell he saw a great light, as if fire burned and lighted up to heaven. But when he came there, there stood a shield-burg and a banner above it. Sigurdhr went into the shield-burg and saw that a person lay there and slept with all battle- weapons. He took first the helm off the head. Then he saw that it was a woman. The byrnie was fast as if it were grown into the flesh. Then he cut with Gram from the byrnie's neck opening downwards, and so out in the direction of both sleeves. Then he took the byrnie off her; yet she awakened and sat up and saw Sigurdhr and spoke:

1. "What bit byrnie? how broke I sleep?
how fell the pale fetters from me?"

He answered:

"Sigmundr's bairn! - a short time ago
raven tore corpse-flesh - Sigurdhr's blade."

2. "I slept long, I was asleep long -
long are sorrows to folk!
It was Odhinn who ruled that I might not
brandish staves of sleep."

Sigurdhr sat down and asked her name. She took a horn full of mead and gave him a memory- draught.

3. "Hail day! Hail day's sons!
hail night and daughter!
with unwrathful eyes look upon us,

and give victory to the sitting ones!

4. "Hail the AEsir! Hail the Asynjur!

hail the much-giving earth!

Words and human wit give to we two well-famed

and leeches' hands during life!"

She named herself Sigrdrifa and was a valkyrie. She said, that two kings did battle: one hight Helm- Gunnar, he was then old and the greatest army-man, and Odhinn had promised him victory, but

"the other hight Agnarr, brother of Audha

whom no wight wished to protect."

Sigrdrifa felled Helm-Gunnar in the battle. But Odhinn stuck her with a sleep-thorn to revenge this and said that she should never afterwards bring victory in battle and said that she should be given in marriage. "But I said to him, that I has sworn an oath there in answer, never to be given to a man who knew fear." He spoke and asked of her to know her wisdom, because she knew tidings from all the worlds. Sigrdrifa said:

5. "Beer I bring thee, byrnie-Thing's apple!

blended with main and main-glor;

it is full of songs and liking-staves,

good galdrs and pleasure-runes.

6. "You shall ken victory-runes if you will have victory,

and rist on the hilt of the blade,

some on the guard, some on the grip,

and name Tyr twice.

7. "You shall ken ale-runes if you wish that another's woman

not betray your trust, if you trust;

they shall be risted on horn and on hand's back

and mark Nauthiz () on your nail.

8. "You shall sign the cup, and this against fear

and cast a leek in the liquid:

then you know that never will be for you

mead blended with ill.

9. "You shall know protection-runes if you will protect
and loose children from women;
they shall be risted on palms and over the limbs' span
and bid then the disir aid.

10. "You shall make brine-runes if you will have protected
sail-mares on the sound;
on mast-stave shall be risted and on the rudder's blade
and lay fire on the oar:
then high waves fall not, nor so the blue waves,
but you come whole to the harbour.

11. "Limb-runes shall you ken, if you will be a leech,
and know how to deal with wounds;
they shall be risted on bark and on the leaf of a tree,
from which the limbs bend eastward.

12. "You shall ken speech-runes, if you will that no man
pay you back for injury with hate-deeds.
wind them around, weave them around,
set them all together
at that Thing where folk shall
fare in full judgement.

13. "Soul-runes shall you take if you wish to be
the most sharply-understanding man of all.
Hroptr fully reded them, fully risted them,
fully understood them,
from that liquid which had leaked
from the skull of Heidhdraupnir
and from the horn of Hoddrofnir.

14. "On the berg (he) stood with the edges of (the sword) Brimr,
he had helm on head;
then spoke Mimir's head

wisely the first word,
and said truthful staves.

15. "(He) said they were risted on the shield which stands before the
shining god,
on Arvakr's ear and on Alsvidr's hoof,
on the wheel which turns under Hrungr's wain,
on Sleipnir's teeth and on the sled's straps,

16. "on bear's paw and on Bragi's tongue,
on wolf's claw and on eagle's beak
on bloodied wings and on bridge's end,
on loosening palm and on healing spoor,

17. "on glass and on gold and on men's luck,
in wine and in wort and on the will's seat,
on Gungnir's point and on Grani's breast,
on norn's nail and on owl's beak:

18. "All were scraped off that were risted on,
and cast into the holy mead
and sent on wide ways;
they are with AEsir, they are with alfs,
some with wise Vanir,
some have human men;

19. "those are beech-runes, those are protection runes,
and all ale-runes,
and mighty main-runes,
who knows them unconfused and undestroyed
has them for himself as good luck,
gain, if you take them,
until the doom of the gods!"

20. "Now you shall choose, all the choice is offered to you,
keen weapons' maple!
speech and silence have you yourself in soul -

all evils are full-meted."

21. "I shall not flee, although you know me fey,
I am not born with cowardice!
I wish to have all your friendly rede
as long as I live!"

22. "That rede I to you the first, that to your kinsmen
you be without fault.
Lessen you revenge, although they give you cause,
that speak (I) to the good of deaths.

23. "That rede I to you the second, that you never swear oaths
unless they be true;
grim dooms go upon breach of trust,
miserable is the warg of oaths.

24. "That rede I to you the third, that you at the Thing
do not deal with foolish men;
for the unwise man often lets be said
truer words than he knows,

25. "All is difficult if you are silent concerning it:
then you are thought to be born with cowardice
or that truth is said -
doubtful is what is said at home,
unless it is good-gotten -
let you make away with his life-breath the next day,
and thus pay folk for lies!

26. "That rede I to you the fourth: if a woman of ill-deeds dwells,
full of faults, on the way,
to go is better than to guest,
although night overtakes you.

27. "Fore-seeing eyes need the sons of men,

where they shall battle the fierce:
often bale-wise women sit near the way,
they who blunt swords and senses.

28. "That rede I to you the fifth: although you see fair
brides on the benches,
do not let the fair kinswomen rule your sleep,
do not lure women to kisses!

29. "That rede I to you the sixth: although among men
ale-talk fares to unfriendliness,
you shall, drunken, not deal with warriors;
wine steals the wits of many.

30. "Quarrels and ale have been
sorrows to many men,
bane to some, bale-staves to some;
many are (the things) that men suffer.

31. "That rede I to you the seventh, if you deal with causes
against soul-full men,
to battle is better than to be burned
within wealth-staves.

32. "That rede I to you the eighth, that you shall look for ill,
and keep far from falsehood-staves;
do not lure you a maid nor a man's wife
nor egg on forbidden pleasures!

33. "That rede I to you the ninth, that you hide corpses
where you find them on earth,
whether they are sick-dead, or are sea-dead,
or became weapon-dead.

34. "Shall ready water for him who is dead,
for hands and head,

and comb him before (he) goes in coffin,
and bid blessedly sleep.

35. "That rede I to you the tenth, that you never trust
oaths of a warg's-get,
whether you are brother's bane,
or you have felled father:
a wolf is in a young son,
though he be glad of gold.

36. "I think causes and hates are never sleeping,
nor yet sorrows.
The boar needs to get wits and weapons,
he who shall be foremost among men.

37. "That rede I to you the eleventh, that you keep yourself from ill
to friends in every way.
It seems not to me that I know long life for the leader:
Strongly are evils risen."

THE SHORT LAY OF SIGURDHR

1. It was early when Sigurdhr sought Gjuki
the young Volsung, who had done battle:
took in the troth of two brothers,
the deed-bold gave each other oaths.

2. They gave him the maiden and many treasures,
young Gudhrun, Gjuki's daughter;
drank and deemed many days together,
young Sigurdhr and Gjuki's sons.

3. At last they fared to ask for Brynhildr,
so that Sigurdhr rode with them,
the young Volsungr, who knew how to do battle,
he would have had her for himself if he had been allowed to have her!

4. The southern warrior laid naked sword,
inlaid blade, between them,
he did not kiss the woman,
nor did the Hunnish king have her in arm:
he gave the freshly-young maid over to Gjuki's kinsman.

5. She never knew suffering in her life,
and no harm laid in her life-age,
ill which might be or were thought
- grim wyrds came between them!

6. She sat out alone in the day's evening,
she took to speaking out so clearly:
"I shall hold Sigurdhr, the freshly-young warrior,
in my arm, or else die!

7. "I spoke a word - I shale rue it after this:
his wife is Gudhrun, and I Gunnar's -
ugly norms shaped defiant longing for us!"

8. She often went in, filled with ill,
with ice and glacial ice, every evening,
when Gudhrun went to bed,
and Sigurdhr embraced her in the bedcover,
the Hunnish king loved his wife.

9. "Expectation of both happiness and husband went from me,
I must make my joy from a grim soul!"

10. From that hate she took to whetting herself for battle:
"You shall, Gunnarr, leave
my lands and myself -
I shall not love any among athelings!

11. "Then I shall fare there where I was before,
with the near descendants of my kin:

there shall I sit and sleep through life,
unless you let Sigurdhr die,
and the boar becomes better than others!

12. "We shall let the son fare with his father!
the young wolf shall not be fostered long!
to whom among men becomes revenge lighter
at settlements afterwards when the son lives?"

13. Gunnar became sad and hung his head,
drew soul around him, sat the whole day;
he altogether did not know
what were most seemly for him to win,
or were best for him to win,
to be deprived altogether of the Volsung,
and having sworn greatly to Sigurdhr.

14. He considered various things ever so long a time,
it had never happened before,
that a woman went from a king's power.
He called Hogni to speak of secrets
- there he had all his full trust -

15. "Brynhildr alone is better to me than all,
Budhli's bairn, she is the best of women;
first I should leave my life,
(rather) than part from that maid's treasures!

16. "Do you wish that we should betray the folk-leader for wealth?
Good is it to rule the Rhine's gold
and enjoying, possess the wealth
and sitting, delight in the blessing."

17. Hogni made one answer to that:
"It is not seemly for us to win thus,
to break sworn oaths with sword,

sworn oaths, trusts won!

18. "We two do not know more blessed men on earth,
while we four rule the folk,
and the Hunnish army-Baldr lives,
nor a mightier kinsmin on the earth,
if we long foster five sons,
our good kin might grow no greater!

19. "I know fully from where these paths come:
they are Brynhildr's over-mighty desire!"

20. "We two shall ready Guthormr for battle,
young, unwise brother!
he was outside of the sworn oaths,
sworn oaths, trusts won!"

21. Easy was it to egg on the one uninclined to delay:
a blade stood in Sigurdhr's heart.

22. The battle-eager rose to revenge in the hall
and cast after the one uninclined to delay:
Gramr flew strongly towards Guthormr
wonderfully bright iron, from the king's hand.

23. The foe fell down in two parts:
hands and head fell in one direction,
but the foot-part fell back in the stead.

24. Gudhrun was sleeping in bed,
sorrowless, beside Sigurdhr,
but she wakened deprived of joy
when she bathed in the blood of Freyr's friend.

25. She wrung her hands so hard,
that the mighty-souled rose up by the bed.

"Weep not so grimly, Gudhrun,
freshly-young bride - your brothers live!

26. "I have a young heir,
he cannot get far out of the foes' garth;
they who have (done) fatefully and unhappily
yet swiftly and recently took rede;

27. never, though you nourish seven, will ride
such sister's sons with them to the Thing.
I know wholly who came against me now:
Brynhildr alone ruled all bale!

28. "The maid loved me before any man -
but I never did ill to Gunnarr;
I kept sworn oaths to siblings,
otherwise I would have been called his woman's friend."

29. Life-breath flew from the woman, but life from the king:
she wrung her hands so hard,
that the cups spoke from it in the cupboard,
and the geese cried out at it in the dwelling.

30. Brynhildr, Budhli's daughter, laughed then,
a single time from all her soul,
when she, on (her) bed, was able to hear
the resounding weeping of Gjuki's daughter.

31. This spoke then Gunnarr, the young king:
"Hate-eager woman, at this you do not laugh
as gladly in your chamber as if you knew something good!
Why have you such a white appearance,
foster-mother of destruction? I think that you are fey!

32. "You would be most worthy of this, woman:

that Atli were hewed down before your eyes,
you saw your brother with bloody wounds,
bloody wounds, which you would have to bind over!"

33. "No man can call you coward, you have fully battled!
Atli looks little at your hate.
He shall ever bear
life after you and more strength.

34. "I shall say to you, Gunnarr - you know it fully yourself -
how you shortly became guilty of causes!
I was never overcome in youth,
fully supplied with wealth in my brother's house.

35. "I never willed that I should be wedded,
before the Gjukings rode to the garth,
three folk-kings on horses -
but that faring should not have been!

39. "I promised to him....
who sat on Grani's back with gold;
he was not like to you in eyes,
nor to look on in any part -
although you seemed to yourselves to be folk-kings!

36. "And Atli said that to me alone,
that in no way would he share his possessions,
gold nor lands, unless I let myself be given -
and no part of wealth's riches
which were given to me to have in early youth,
and wealth which was counted to me in early youth.

37. "Then my soul was in doubt over that,
whether I should do battle and fell the slain,
brave in a byrnie, for my brother's fault -
that would have been known among folks then,

and an affliction of courage to many men.

38. "We let our likenesses come together:
to receive treasures played more in my mind,
red rings of Sigmundr's bairn -
I did not want another man's wealth;

40. loved him alone, nor any others:
a turning soul did not dwell in the necklace-Skogul!
Atli shall find all this afterwords,
when he hears how my murder-faring was done.

41. never should a frivolous woman
ever accompany another's husband.
This shall be revenge for my sorrows!"

42. Gunnarr, the hosts' leader, rose up,
and laid his arm around the woman's neck;
all the various (men) went,
from hale soul, to hinder her,

43. She thrust everyone there from her neck,
to keep anyone from hindering her long journey.

44. He took Hogni to speak of secrets:
"I wish to say that all go into the hall,
yours with mine - now is great need! -
to know if the woman's murder-faring (can) be hindered,
until that time when hindering comes:
then let us decide what is needed!"

45. Hogni made one answer to that:
"Let no man hinder her in the long journey,
from which may she never be born again!
She crept ill-shaped from mother's knee,
she was ever born for joylessness,

sorrow to many men!"

46. The unhappy one turned from speech,
from where the earth-of-necklaces dealt out treasures.

47. She looked on all her possessions,
slain bondsmmaids and hall-women;
put on a gold byrnie - was grim in soul -
before she laid sword's edges against herself.

48. She sank to the pillows a second time,
and, blade-wounded, considered rede-giving:

49. "Now those who wish gold shall go
and receive of mine from me:
I give adorned jewelery to everyone,
tapestries and bed-clothing, bright weeds!"

50. All were silent, thought on these redes,
and all together made answer:
"No more shall die! We shall yet live!
Hall-women shall not do honour-deeds."

51. Then the linen-clad woman, from this thinking,
young in life-age, spoke words to that:
"I wish not that anyone unwilling or compelled
part for life-age for our sake!

52. "Although on your bones shall burn
fewer treasurses when forth you come,
nor Menja's good, when you visit me.

53. "Sit you down, Gunnarr! I shall say to you
your bright bride weens not to live.
your ship shall be all at sea,
although I have given up life-breath!

54. "Whatever you think, Gudhrun shall soon be satisfied;
(though) the well-known woman, with the king, have
sorrowful memories of a husband dead.

55 "There is a maid born - raised by mother -
she shall be whiter than a bright day,
- Svanhildr - than a ray of the sun.

56. "You shall give Gudhrun for a certain good,
scathe to the hero, to many warriors;
she will not be given at wish to a blessed husband:
Atli must come to have her,
my brother, born of Budhli.

57. "I remember greatly how you treated me,
then when you had painfully betrayed me,
robbed of will was I while I lived!

58. "You shall have pleasure from Oddrun,
though Atli shall hinder you;
you shall lie together under linen,
She will love you as I should have,
if good had been made for us in (our) shaping!

59. "Atli shall do ill to you,
shall lay you in narrow wurm-garth.

60. "That shall be, and not long after becomes it
that Atli must part from life-breath,
his blessing and sons' lives,
because Gudhrun shall besmirch him in bed,
with sharp edges, from wounded soul.

61. "It would be seemly for our sister Gudhrun
to follow her first husband to death

if good rede were given to her,
or else she had a soul like mine!

62. "I speak slowly now - but she shall not
part from life-age for our sake:
high waves shall lift her up
to Jonakr's udal land.

63. ".....
.....sons of Jonakr;
she shall send Svanhildr from the land,
her maiden, and Sigurdhr's.

64. "Bikki's redes shall bite her,
because Jormundrkkkr lives to harm -
then are all Sigurdhr's aett fared,
and many weepings to Gudhrun.

65. "I shall bid one boon of thee
- it must be the last boon in the world! -:
Let thus be made a high-towering, broad heap of logs on the meadow,
that it be wide enough under us all,
who have died with Sigurdhr.

66. "Adorn the heap with tapestries and shields,
well-dyed Welsh cloths and many Welsh thralls;
burn the Hunnish one on my other side.

67. "Burn on the other side of the Hunnish one
my thralls, adorned with necklaces:
two at his head, and two hawks;
then all is divided fittingly.

68. "But between us lie the ring-decked metal,
edge-keen iron, as it lay before,
then when we both got into one bed

and were called then with the name of wedded.

69. "(It) shall yet not fall ringing on his heel,
the gleaming hall's ring-handled gate,
if my troop follows him hence
- our faring shall yet not be miserable!"

70. "For five bondsmajds follow him,
eight thralls of good kin,
my slave-companion and the dowry
which Budhli gave to his bairn.

71. "I have said much, I might say many things,
if the measurer gave me more room for speech!
Voice fades, wounds swell up -
I have said only truth! - so must I let be."

OF THE DEATH OF SINFJOTLI

Sigmundr, son of Volsung, was king in Frankland. Sinfjotli was eldest of his sons, the second Helgi, the third Hamundr. Borghildr, Sigmundr's woman, had a brother, who hight ---- (a space was left for his name in the manuscript and not filled in). Both asked for one woman, and for that cause Sinfjotli slew him.

And when he came home, then Borghildr bade him fare away, but Sigmundr offered her payment, and she became (willing) to receive it.

And Borghildr bore ale at the arvel. She took poison, a great horn full, and bore it to Sinfjotli. But when he looked in the horn, he noticed that poison was therein, and spoke to Sigmundr: "Muddied is the drink, papa!" Sigmundr took the horn and drank it off. - So it is said that Sigmundr was hard-made, that poison might neither harm him without nor within; but all his sons could bear poison on their skins without. - Borghildr bore a second horn to Sinfjotli and bade him drink, and all went as before. And yet a third time she bore him the horn, and words of shame with it, if he did not drink it off. He spoke as before to Sigmundr. He said: "Let you filter it through (your) mustache, son!" Sinfjotli drank and was dead from it.

Sigmundr bore him a long way in his embrace and came to a narrow and long firth, and there was a little ship there and a man owned it. He offered Sigmundr faring over the firth. But when Sigmundr bore the lich out to the ship, then the boat was fully loaded. The carl said, that Sigmundr should fare. The carl rowed the boat out and vanished then.

Sigmundr dwelt a long time in Denmark in the realm of Borghildr, after he married her. Then Sigmundr fared south to Frankland, to that realm which he had there. Then he married Hjordis, daughter of king Eylimi. Their son was Sigurdhr. King Sigmundr fell in battle before Hunding's sons. But Hjordis was married to Alfr, the son of king Hjalprekr. Sigurdhr grew up there in his childhood. - Sigmundr and all his sons were far superior to all other men in strength and size and soul and all accomplishments. Sigurdhr was the foremost of all, and all men in

old sagas call him the foremost of all men and the most stately army-king.

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