

**THE EDDAS:
THE KEYS TO THE
MYSTERIES OF THE NORTH**

**By
JAMES ALLEN CHISHOLM**

List of Abbreviations

Alv.	<i>Alvismal</i>
BD	<i>Baldrsdraumar</i>
FS	<i>Fjolsvithsmal</i>
GG	<i>Groagalder</i>
GM	<i>Grimnismal</i>
Har.	<i>Harbarthslíoth</i>
Hav.	<i>Havamal</i>
HM	<i>Hymiskvitha</i>
HK	<i>Hyndlulíoth</i>
LS	<i>Lokasenna</i>
RG	<i>Rígsthula</i>
SD	<i>Svipdagsmal</i>
SK	<i>Skirnismal</i>
Thry.	<i>Thrymskvitha</i>
Vaf.	<i>Vafthruthnismal</i>
SVSP	<i>Voluspa Hin Skamma</i>
VSP	<i>Voluspa</i>

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Introduction

This is a practical manual of self-transformation. It takes the form of a working edition of the mythological poems of the ancient Norse *Poetic Edda* for modern “pagans” who practice the magic and religion of the North. The poems of the *Poetic Edda* form the most complete and authentic body of surviving pre-Christian Germanic religious and magical lore. The mythological poems of the *Elder Edda* hold the keys to the understanding and practice of the pre-Christian religion of the Germanic peoples. This book enables the reader to fathom the mysteries of the Eddic poems so that the elder Troth of the Gods of Europe may again be rightly hailed in holy groves, and the hidden wisdom of the rune-masters rediscovered. This book is especially practical for those who wish follow the authentic pre-Christian religion and magic of the English and other Teutonic folk.

A new translation of the mythological poems of the Edda is the main component of this work. The religious content is revealed with accuracy and clarity. Earlier renditions have been artful paraphrases by scholars who valued the poems as literary monuments, but disregarded the religious and mythic content as the nonsensical but amusing folklore of a more primitive world. None of them ever imagined that their audiences would include practitioners of the Eddic religion. The inaccuracies of such translations have led many modern pagans astray. This is the truest translation for purposes of understanding the religious content of the *Poetic Edda*.

The original Old Norse text is included in its entirety on the facing pages of the English version so that the reader can easily compare the two. Notes to each poem, a glossary of religious terminology, in depth discussions, and illustrations are included to illuminate and help in the exploration of the deeper levels of the religious and magical content. These also to provide the keys by which this understanding may be applied in ritual blessings to the Gods and in magical workings.

The poems of the *Poetic Edda* were probably compiled by Saemundr Sigfusson in the 12th century in Iceland. None of the poems can be dated with any certainty, but it is clear that many of the heroic poems go back to the lore of the 6th and 7th centuries. It is generally believed that none of the poems were actually composed in their present form before the 9th century.

For the rune-magicians, poetry was a powerful form of magic. The Eddas hold the wisdom of the Erulian Rune-Magicians, and many of these poems may be fathomed to incredible depths and heights, by those who know how to ask. This book is about asking. These poems provide sufficient material for an accurate reconstruction and revivification of the Odian religious and magical philosophies. These poems hold spells, invocations, and lore from which rituals, sacred dramas, and initiatory rites can be reconstructed or authentically created, as well as the keys to understanding the soul and the nine worlds of Yggdrasil - the world tree of the ancient North. Many of the keys are provided also for unlocking the secrets of mysteries of the cults of Thor, Tyr and the Vanir, though much of this lore is filtered through an Odian lens.

The Eddic poems are spells, in which the mysteries of the old lore are encoded by word, rhythm, alliteration, idea, and rune. The words of a given stanza are not juxtaposed merely because the resulting rhythms and word plays are pleasing, but because of there are deep magical resonances among such words. The impact of these magical stanzas perhaps may not be registered consciously, but the magic of Eddic lines reaches far below the shallow waters of mundane conscious understanding into the depths of the collective unconscious, into the realms where our souls mingle with the realms of the Gods. The power of the Eddic verses can be used for invocations and magical operations. It is the task of the modern elders (priests) and vitkis (magicians) to gain a conscious knowledge of the meanings and powers of these combinations of word, meter and rune. The stanzas of the Eddic poems hold the secrets of our Gods. It is the task of this book to provide the modern seeker with the keys to understanding deeper levels of meaning and to encode these into modern English for fashioning invocations to the Gods and for shaping powerful poetic staves in magic.

When you are unraveling the mysteries of the Eddic poems, keep in mind that there are three basic levels of meaning associated with these myths. The first level is that of the narrative itself. From this we find out what our Gods are like and what they stand for. Fundamental truths of the northern social order are reflected in the deeds of the Gods and heroes. The myths tell of basic virtues, of right and honorable conduct, of heroism, and of criminal and dishonorable conduct.

The second level of meaning may be termed the natural. This is the level at which the myths may be connected to seasonal festivals. This is the level important to understanding the Vanic mysteries explored in chapter 3.

The third level of meaning is the initiatory. Here the myths are considered in their connection to rituals of initiation, especially magical initiation. It is at this level that you can explore the mysteries that lay behind the apparent meanings. Here you may seek the magical applications of a poem. Keys to this level of understanding are provided in chapters - and in the notes to each poem. It is the third level with which this book is most concerned, for the Eddas were composed by initiates into runic mysteries. Deeper linguistic and meta-linguistic levels of meaning may be fathomed by those who work closely with the Old Norse text.

The main component of this book is a facing page translation. The translation was rendered as clearly and as accurately as possible. For the sake of accuracy, it is sometimes necessary to use Old Norse words, or their Old English equivalents in order to translate words that convey religious ideas are no longer found in English. These words are defined in the glossary and some are discussed in detail in the notes or chapters. I trust that the lost concepts may be reintroduced into our culture with the reintroduction of these words. Notes are provided to each chapter to allow brief elaboration of important words and ideas and explanations or translations of obscure names.

The four chapters following the notes provide keys to understanding the lore and applying it in ritual and magic. Chapter 1 tells how to transliterate the rune poems into the Viking Age runes for purposes of fathoming the runic content of the poems and the meta-linguistic content of the poems. This virtually enables the reader to discover a "Teutonic Kabbalah". It tells how to create galder or magical runic songs based on Eddic stanzas, and also how create runic sigils based on these poems for gand-magic.

Chapter 2 explains the uses of holy names in invocations and magic. Specifically, it tells how to use the holy names of the magical streams of numinous power associated with the natural elements and forces of the nine worlds. In Midgard -the manifest universe- this is the stuff of which weather magic is made. It also tells how to understand these holy names as keys to the magical languages used by the wights of the nine worlds and to use this language in ritual blessings to ettins, dwarves, and elves. The chapter contains a list of other sources for lists of names and deeds, of these wights as well as the rituals for blessings and magical operations in which these wights are summoned.

Chapter 3 tells how to recognize Spring Drama motifs in Eddic myths and how to adapt these myths to Spring Dramas and festivals. Chapter 3 contains a spring drama based on the *Lay of Svipdag* that was performed at the blessing to Ostara in 1989 CE. This chapter also provides other keys to the natural interpretation of Eddic myths.

Chapter 4 discusses magical initiation in the Eddas and "faring forth" into the outer worlds for such "shamanic" operations. This chapter discusses kinds of magic that may be performed in some of the outer worlds, and geography of the outer homes.

This book provides the fundamental tools by which the seeker may get a grip on the northern lore and by which Rune-Gild siblings may decode the Eddic poems. These poems may be taken as a model of the divine order and used magically for self-transformation. By reading and internalizing these poems, the self goes from ignorance of harmony with the divine order as the forms represented in the myths are realized in one's life. Reading and contemplating these poems are magical acts in themselves.

Volume I

The Eddas

Völuspá

1.
Hljóðs bið ek allar
meiri ok minni
Viltu at ek, Valföðr,
forn spjöll fira,
helgar kindir,
mögu Heimdallar.
vel fyr telja
þau er fremst um man.
2.
Ek man jötna
þá er forðum mik
Níu man ek heima,
mjötvið mæran
ár um borna,
fædda höfðu.
níu íviðjur,
fyr mold neðan.
3.
Ár var alda,
vara sandr né sær
jörð fannsk æva
gap var ginnunga
þat er ekki var,
né svalar unnir;
né upphiminn,
en gras hvergi.
4.
Áðr Burs synir
þeir er Miðgarð
sól skein sunnan
þá var grund gróin
bjöðum um ypptu,
mæran skópu;
á salar steina,
grænum lauki.
5.
Sól varp sunnan,
hendi inni hægri
sól þat né vissi
máni þat né vissi
stjörnur þat né vissu
sinni mána,
um himinjöður;
hvar hon sali átti,
hvat hann megins átti
hvar þær staði áttu.
6.
Þá gengu regin öll
ginnheilög goð,
nótt ok niðjum
morgin hétu
undorn ok aftan,
á rökstóla,
ok um þat gættusk;
nöfn um gáfu,
ok miðjan dag,
árum at telja.
7.
Hittusk æsir
þeir er hörg ok hof
afla lögðu,
tangir skópu
á Iðavelli,
hátimbruðu;
auð smíðuðu,
ok tól gerðu.
8.
Tefldu í túni,
var þeim vettergis
uns þrjár kvámu
ámáttkar mjök
teitir váru,
vant ór gulli,
þursa meyjjar
ór Jötunheimum.

The Spae of the Volva

1.
I bid a hearing from all holy wights,
the greater and lesser of Heimdall's children.
It is your wish, Valfather, that I speak
the old spells of the world, the earliest I can recall.
2.
I recall the children of Ettins,
who, in the days of yore, brought me to life.
I recall the nine worlds, the nine steads,
of the Glorious Meting Wood, beneath the ground.
3.
It was in the earliest times that Ymir dwelled.
Neither sand nor sea, nor cold waves, nor earth
were to be found. There was neither heaven above,
nor grass anywhere, there was nothing but Ginnungagap.
4.
Soon Bur's sons heaved up the earth.
They shaped Midgard, the earth. The sun
shone from the south on the stones of the stead,
and green leeks grew from the ground.
5.
From the south the sun, companion of the moon,
threw her right hand across the edge of the world
The sun did not know what hall it had.
The stars did not know what stead they had.
The moon did not know what main it had.
6.
All the Regin went to the doom chair,
the Ginn Holy Gods mooted over this.
They gave names to night and the new moons,
they named midday, mid afternoon,
and early evening, to reckon the years.
7.
The Aesir met on Ida Vale.
High they timbered hof and harrow,
they founded forges and smithied,
they shaped tongs and wrought tools.
8.
They played tables in the garth and were blissful.
None of them lacked gold, until three maidens
came from the Thurses. Their might was awesome,
they came from Ettinhome.

9. Þá gengu regin öll ginnheilög goð, hver skyldi dverga ór Brimis blóði	á rökstóla, ok um þat gættusk, dróttir skepja ok ór Bláins leggjum.	9. Then all the Regin went to the doom chair. They held moot to say who should shape the Drighten of the dwarves from Brim's blood, from Blain's bones.
10. Þar var Móðsognir dverga allra, þeir mannlíkun dvergar í jörðu,	mæztr um orðinn en Durinn annarr; mörg um gerðu sem Durinn sagði.	10. There was Motsognir, the greatest in speech of all the dwarves. But Durinn was second. These dwarves made many man-like-bodies out of the earth as Durinn had asked.
11. Nýi, Niði, Austri, Vestri, Nár ok Náinn Bívurr, Bávurr, Ánn ok Ánarr,	Norðri, Suðri, Alþjófr, Dvalinn, Nípingr, Dáinn Bömburr, Nóri, Óinn, Mjöðvitnir.	11. Nyr and Nithi, North and South, East and West, Allthief, Entranced, Nar and Nain, Nothing, Dain Bifor, Bofor, Bombur, Nari, An, and Anarr, Oinn and Meadvolf.
12. Veggr ok Gandálfr, Þrár ok Þráinn, Nýr ok Nýráðr, Reginn ok Ráðsviðr,	Vindálfr, Þorinn, Þekkr, Littr ok Vittr, nú hefi ek dverga, rétt um talda.	12. Veig and Gand-Elf, Windelf, Thorinn, Thror and Thrainn, Thekk, Lit and Vit, Nar and Nyrath, Reginn and Rathsvith. Now are the dwarves rightly listed.
13. Fíli, Kíli, Hefti, Víli, Billigr, Brúni, Frár, Hornbori, Aurvangr, Jari,	Fundinn, Náli, Hannar, Sviurr, Bíldr ok Buri, Frægr ok Lóni, Eikinskjalði.	13. Fili, Kili, Fundinn, Nali, Hepti, Vili, Hanarr, Sviurr, Billing, Bruni, Bild and Buri Frar, Hornbori, Fraeg and Loni, Aurvang, Jari, and Oakenshield.
14. Mál er dverga ljóna kindum þeir er sóttu frá Aurvanga sjöt	í Dvalins liði til Lofars telja, salar steini til Jöruvalla.	14. I speak of the dwarves in Dvalinn's host to tell of their kind down to Lofar, of those who sought the abode of Aurvang at Jorovallar from the stone of the hall.
15. Þar var Draupnir Hár, Haugspori, Dóri, Óri Skirvir, Virfir,	ok Dolgþrasir, Hlévangr, Glói, Dúfr, Andvari Skáfiðr, Ái.	15. Draupnir was there, and also Dolgthrasir, Har, Haugsthor, Hievang, Gloi, Dori, Ori, Duf, Andvari Scirvir, Virvir, Skafith, and Ai.
16. Álfr ok Yngvi, Fjalarr ok Frosti, þat mun æ uppi langniðja tal	Eikinskjalði, Finnr ok Ginnarr; meðan öld lifir, Lofars hafat.	16. Alf and Yngvi and Eikenskjalði, Fjalarr and Frosti, Finn and Ginhar. The long line of down to Lofar will be known while men live.

17.	Unz þrír kvámu öflgir ok ástkir fundu á landi Ask ok Emblu	ór því liði æsir at húsi, lít megandi örlöglausa.	17.	From the host came three, mighty and powerful Aesir, to coast. There they found an ash and an elm of little might, and lacking orlog.
18.	Önd þau né áttu, lá né læti önd gaf Óðinn, lá gaf Lóðurr	óð þau né höfðu, né litu góða; óð gaf Hænir, ok litu góða.	18.	They had neither breath nor wit nor life hue nor manner nor good looks. Odin gave them the breath of life, Hoenir gave them wod, Lothur gave them life and good looks.
19.	Ask veit ek standa, hár batmr, ausinn þaðan koma döggrvar stendur æ yfir grænn	heitir Yggdrasil, hvíta auri; þærs í dala falla, Urðarbrunni.	19.	I know an ash that stands, called Yggdrasil, a tall tree, wet with white dews, dews dripping down into the dales. Ever green it stands over Urth's well.
20.	Þaðan koma meyjar þrjár ór þeim sæ, Urð hétu eina, - skáru á skíði,- Þær lög lögðu, alda börnum,	margs vitandi er und þolli stendr; aðra Verðandi, Skuld ina þriðju. þær líf kuru örlög seggja.	20.	From there come three maidens, deep in lore, from the water that stands under the tree. One is called Urth, the other Verthandi, the third Skuld. Scores they carved, laws they laid, lives they chose. They worked Orlog for the sons of men.
21.	Þat man hon fólkvíg er Gullveigu ok í höll Hárs þrisvar brenndu, oft, ósjaldan;	fyrst í heimi, geirum studdu hana brenndu, þrisvar borna, þó hon enn lifir.	21.	I recall the first battle in the world. There they stabbed Gullveig with spears, and burned her in Har's hall. Thrice she was burned, thrice she was born. It happened often, and yet she lives.
22.	Heiði hana hétu völu velspá, seið hon, hvars hon kunni, æ var hon angan	hvars til húsa kom, vitti hon ganda; seið hon hug leikinn, illrar brúðar.	22.	She is called Heith, who comes to houses, the far seeing spae woman. The wise volva knew gand magic, she understood seith. She played with minds by her seith. She was always dear to evil women.
23.	Þá gengu regin öll ginnheilög goð, hvárt skyldu æsir eða skyldu goðin öll	á rökstóla, ok um þat gættusk afrað gjalda gildi eiga.	23.	Then all the Regin went to the doom chair. The Ginn Holy Gods held moot as to whether the Aesir should pay tribute or whether all the gods should have a wassail.
24.	Fleygði Óðinn þat var enn fólkvíg brotinn var borðveggr knáttu vanir vígspá	ok í folk um skaut, fyrst í heimi; borgar ása, völlu sporna.	24.	Odin sped a shot into the host. That was the first battle in the world. The board wall was broken, the fortification of the Ases. The fighting Vanes trod the battlefield

25. Þá gengu regin öll ginnheilög goð, hverjir hefði loft allt eða ætt jötuns	á rökstóla, ok um þat gættusk lævi blandit Óðs mey gefna.	25. Then all the Regin went to the doom chair. The Ginn Holy Gods held moot over he who blended the sky with poison and gave Oth's woman to the tribe of Ettins.
26. Þórr einn þar vá - hann sjaldan sitr - Á gengusk eiðar, mál öll meginlig	þrunginn móði, er hann slíkt um frekn. orð ok særi, er á meðal fóru.	26. Thor was then swollen with rage against the foe. He seldom sits when he hears of such. Oaths were broken, then word and oath, powerful pacts made between them.
27. Veit hon Heimdallar und heiðvönum á sér hon ausask af veði Valföðrs .	hljóð um folgit helgum baðmi; aurgum fossi Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	27. She knows where Heimdall's hearing is hidden- under the holy sky scraping tree. Over it flow the watery falls from Valfather's pledge. Do you want to know more, or what?
28. Ein sat hon úti yggjungr ása Hvers fregnið mik? Allt veit ek, Óðinn, í inum mæra Drekkr mjöð Mímir af veði Valföðrs .	þá er inn aldni kom ok í augu leit: Hví freistið mín? hvar þú auga falt, Mímisbrunni. morgun hverjan Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	28. She sat out, all alone, there, where the old one came, the awesome Ase looked in her eye. "What do you ask of me? Why test me? I know well, Odin, where your eye is hidden— in the water of Mimir's well. Mimir drinks mead each morning from Valfather's pledge. Do you want to know more, or what?"
29. Valði henni Herföðr fekk spjöll spaklig sá hon vítt ok um vítt	hringa ok men, ok spá ganda, of veröld hverja.	29. Herrfather dealt her rings and a necklace to have her spells of spae and spae magic. She sees widely over each of the worlds.
30. Sá hon valkyrjur görvar at ríða Skuld helt skildi, Gunnr, Hildr, Göndul Nú eru talðar görvar at ríða	vítt um komnar, til Goðþjóðar; en Skögul önnur, ok Geirskögul. nönnur Herjans, grund valkyrjur.	30. She sees valkyries coming from afar, ready to ride to the Gothic host. Skuld held a shield, and Skogul another. There were also Gunnr, Hild, Gondol and Geirskogul. Now Herjan's maidens are listed, valkyries ready to ride over the earth.
31. Ek sá Baldri, Óðins barni, stóð um vaxinn mjór ok mjög fagr	blóðgum tívur, örlög fólgin; völlum hæri mistilteinn.	31. I saw Baldr, the bloodied God, son of Odin, his orlog hidden. It stood and grew, high among the trees, slender and fair, the mistletoe teinn.
32. Varð af þeim meiði, harmflaug hættlig, Baldrs bróðir var sá nam Óðins sonr	er mær sýndisk, Höðr nam skjóta. of borinn snemma, einnættir vega.	32. What seemed glorious when on the boughs turned to a deadly dart when Hoth made his cast. Baldr's brother was soon born. When only one year old, Odin's son got vengeance

33.	Þó hann æva hendr áðr á bál um bar en Frigg um grét vá Valhallar.	né höfuð kembði, Baldrs andskota; í Fensölum Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	33.	He never washed his hands nor combed his hair, until he had born Baldr's foe to the pyre. Frigg wept in Fensalir for Valhalla's woe. Would you know more, or what?
34.	Þá kná Váli heldur váru harðger	vígbönd snúa, höft ór þörmum.	34.	Then Vali wound war fetters. They were real strong bonds made of guts.
35.	Haft sá hon liggja lægjarns líki Þar sitr Sigyn ver vel glýjuð.	undir Hveralundi, Loka áþekkjan. þeygi um sínum Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	35.	She saw one lying in bonds, in the grove of kettles. It was the hated form of guileful Loki. Sigyn sits there, sad by her husband. Do you want to know more, or what?
36.	Á fellur austan söxum ok sverðum,	um eitrdala Slíðr heitir sú.	36.	A stream of saxes and swords flows from the east through Poison-Dales. It is called Slith.
37.	Stóð fyr norðan salr ór gulli en annarr stóð bjórsalr jötuns,	á Niðavöllum Sindra ættar; á Ókólni en sá Brimir heitir.	37.	A golden hall stood in the North on the vales of Nitha, it was the dwelling of the tribe of Sindra. Another stood on Okaini, it was the beer hall of the Ettin Brim.
38.	Sal sá hon standa Náströndu á, Falla eitrdropar inn sá er undinn salr	sólu fjarri norðr horfa dyrr. um ljóra, orma hryggjum.	38.	She saw a hall stand, quite far from the sun, on Nastrond. The doors face north, drops of venom fall in through the smoke hole. The hall is wound with the spines of snakes.
39.	Sá hon þar vaða menn meinsvara ok þann er annars Þar saug Niðhöggur sleit vargr vera.	þunga strauma ok morðvarga glepr eyrarúnu. nái framgengna, Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	39.	She saw there oath breakers and murderers, wading the swift stream. There were also those who deceived the female advisers of others. Nithogg sucks dead bodies there, and the warg rips men apart. Do you want to know more, or what?
40.	Austr sat in aldna ok fæddi þar Verðr af þeim öllum tungls tjúgari	í Járnvíði Fenris kindir. einna nokkurr í tröllu hami.	40.	The old one sat in the Iron-woods in the east and raised the brood of Fenrir. The worst one of them all, shall take the sun in the shape of a troll.
41.	Fyllisk fjörvi rýðr ragna sjöt Svört verða sólskin veðr öll válynd.	feigra manna, rauðum dreyra. um sumur eftir, Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	41.	He fills himself on the flesh of dead men, reddens the seat of the gods with gore. The sun turned swarthy in the following summers. The weather grew entirely shifty. Do you want to know more, or what?

42. Sat þar á haugi gýgjar hirðir, gól um honum fagrrauður hani,	ok sló hörpu glaðr Eggþér; í galgviði sá er Fjalar heitir.	42. He sat on a howe hill strumming a harp. He was the herdsman of a giantess, he was the glad Eggther. The fair red cock called Fjalar sang to him from the gallows tree.
43. Gól um ásum sá vekr hölða en annarr gelr sótrauðr hani	Gullinkambi, at Herjaföðrs; fyr jörð neðan at sölum Heljar.	43. Gullinkambi sang for the Ases. He wakes the heroes of Warfather. But another sings beneath the earth, a soot red cock in the halls of Hel.
44. Geyr nú Garmr mjök festr mun slitna Fjölð veit ek fræða, um ragna rök	fyr Gnipahelli, en freki renna. fram sé ek lengra römm sigtíva.	44. Garm bays loudly before Gnipa-Cave. The bonds are sheared and he runs hungry. I know much lore, yet see even more, of Ragnarok and the powerful victory Tivar.
45. Bræðr munu berjask munu systrungar hart er í heimi, skeggöld, skálmöld, vindöld, vargöld, mun engi matr	ok at bönum verðask, sifjum spilla; hórdómr mikill, skildir ro klofnir, áðr veröld steypisk, öðrum þyrma.	45. Brothers shall battle one another and fight to the death. Sister's sons bring ruin on their sib. There is hardness on the world and great whoredom An axe age, a sword age, shields are cloven. A wind age, a warg age, before the world falls, no man will spare the other.
46. Leika Míms synir, at inu galla Hátt blæss Heimdallr, mælir Óðinn	en mjötuðr kyndisk Gjallarhorni. horn er á lofti, við Míms höfuð.	46. Mim's sons play. The Meter will be set alight. Heimdall blows loudly on old Gjallarhorn with the horn aloft. Odin speaks with Mim's head.
47. Skelfr Yggdrasils ymr it aldna tré, Hræðask allir áðr Surtar þann	askr standandi, en jötunn losnar. á helvegum sefi of gleypir.	47. Yggdrasil, the standing ash, is shaking. The old tree howls, the Ettin is loose. All who walk the Hel-roads are terrified, right before the kin of Surt swallow it.
48. Hvat er með ásum? Gnýr allur Jötunheimr, stynja dvergar veggbergs vísir.	Hvat er með álfum? æsir ro á þingi, fyr steindurum, Vituð ér enn - eða hvat?	48. How fare the Ases, how fare the elves? All of Ettinhome is in an uproar. The Aesir met in things. The dwarves groaned before stone gates, masters of the mountain walls. So do you want to know more, or what?
49. Geyr nú Garmr mjök festr mun slitna fjölð veit ek fræða, um ragna rök	fyr Gnipahelli, en freki renna, fram sé ek lengra römm sigtíva.	49. Garm bays loudly before Gnipa-cave. The bonds are sheared and he runs hungry. She knows much lore, but I see more of Ragnarok and the powerful victory Tivar.

50. Hrymr ekr austan, snýsk Jörmungandr Ormr knýr unnir, slítr nái Niðfölr,	hefisk lind fyrir, í jötunmóði. en ari hlakkar, Naglfar losnar.	50. Hrym fares from the east, bearing a linden board. The worm Jormungand is engulfed by an ettin rage and churns the waves. The eagle screams and its pale beak is cutting corpses. Naglfar is loose.
51. Kjóll ferr austan, um lög lýðir, Fara fíflmegir þeim er bróðir	koma munu Múspells en Loki stýrir. með freka allir, Býleists í för.	51. The ship fares from the East. The folk of Muspell come over the sea, with Loki steering. Kinsmen of fools fare with Freki, Beylast's brother
52. Surtr ferr sunnan skín af sverði grjótbjörg gnata, troða halir helveg	með sviga lævi, sól valtíva, en gífr rata, en himinn klofnar.	52. Surt fares from the south with the bane of branches. The sun of the slaughter Tivar shines from his sword. Crag shake, and fiends reel. Heroes walk the Hel-road. Heaven is cloven.
53. Þá kemr Hlínar er Óðinn ferr en bani Belja þá mun Friggjar	harmr annarr fram, við úlf veka, bjatr at Surti; falla angan.	53. Another sort of grief comes to Hlin when Odin fares to fight the wolf and the illustrious Bane of Beli to battle with Surt. Frigg's lover will then fall.
54. Þá kemr inn mikli Víðarr, vega Lætr hann megi Hveðrungs hjör til hjarta,	mögr Sigföður, at valdýri. mundum standa þá er hefnt föður.	54. Then comes the mighty son of Victory-father, Vithar, to vie with the deadly beast. He struck the heart of Hvethrung's son and so his father was avenged.
55. Ginn lopt yfir gapa ýgs kjaptar mun Óðins sonr vargs at dauða	lindi jarðar, orms í hæðom; ormi mæeta, Viðard niðia.	55. The fierce jaws of the earth encircling worm gaped from the hills at the holy sky. Then Odin's son meets the worm, Vithar's kinsman slays the warg.
56. Þá kemr inn mæri gengr Óðins sonr drepr af móði munu halir allir gengr fet níu neppur frá naðri	mögr Hlóðynjar, við orm vega, Miðgarðs véurr, heimstöð ryðja; Fjörgynjar burr níðs ókvíðnum.	56. Then came the mighty son of Hloth (the earth). Odin's son strode to fight against the wolf. In rage Midgard's ward dropped him. All heroes shall leave the homestead. Fjorgyn's son strode nine steps back from the serpent, not worried about fame.
57. Sól tér sortna, hverfa af himni Geisar eimi leikr hár hiti	sígr fold í mar, heiðar stjörnur. ok aldrnara, við himin sjálfan.	57. The sun turned dark, and the land sank into the sea The bright stars fell from heaven. Steam and fire ferment. Flames leap high to heaven itself.

58. Geyr nú Garmr mjök festr mun slitna fjölð veit ek fræða um ragna rök	fyr Gnipahelli, en freki renna, fram sé ek lengra römm sigtíva	58. Garm bays loudly before Gnipa-cave. The bonds are sheared and he runs hungry. She knows much lore, but I see more about Ragnarok and the Powerful Victory Tivar.
59. Sér hon upp koma jörð ór ægi Fallá fossar, sá er á fjalli	öðru sinni iðjagræna. flýgr örn yfir, fiska veiðir.	59. She sees another rise up, earth from the ocean, all agree. Torrents flow and the eagle flies above scanning the fells and hunting fish.
60. Finnask æsir ok um moldþinur ok minnask þar ok á Fimbultýs	á Iðavelli máttkan dæma á megingdóma fornar rúnir.	60. The Aesir meet in Ida-Vale and talk of the mighty Midgard worm, recalling the mighty doom and Fimbulty's ancient runes.
61. Þar munu eftir gullnar töflur þærs í árdaga	undursamligar í grasi finnask, áttar höfðu.	61. They will again find the wondrous gold chess pieces in the grass, those they had owned in the days of yore.
62. Munu ósánir böls mun alls batna, búa þeir Höðr ok Baldr vé valtívar.	akrar vaxa, Baldr mun koma, Hrofts sigtóftir Vítuð ér enn - eða hvat?	62. The unsown acres will then grow. Evil will turn better, Baldr will return. Both Baldr and Hoth shall live in Hropt's victory hall, the work of the gods. Do you want to know more, or what?
63. Þá kná Hænir ok burir byggja vindheim víðan.	hlautvið kjósa bræðra tveggja Vítuð ér enn - eða hvat?	63. Hoenir will then handle the lot wood, his brother's two sons will live there in the wide wind home. Do you want to know more, or what?
64. Sal sér hon standa gulli þakðan Þar skulu dyggvar ok um aldrdaga	sólu fekra, á Gimléi. dróttir byggja ynðis njóta.	64. She sees a hall, standing fairer than the sun, thatched with gold in Gimle. There the worthy drightens shall dwell, forever in happiness.
65. Þá kemr inn ríki öflugr ofan,	at regindómi sá er öllu ræðr.	65. Then comes the strong one, to the doom of the gods, the awesome one from above who rules all.
66. Þar kemr inn dimmi naðr fránn, neðan berr sér í fjöðrum, Niðhöggr nái.	dreki fljúgandi, frá Niðafjöllum; - flýgur völl yfir, - Nú mun hon sökkvask.	66. The dark drake comes flying, the flashing viper from under Nitha-Fells She sees Nithogg carrying corpses in his feathers as he flies over the valley. Now she shall sink down.

The Spae of the Volva: Notes

Volvas were seeresses who travelled about the countryside performing acts of wizardry for the locals. The word *volva* means “one who carries a rod (*volr*)”. A *volr* was a cylindrical rod of about a foot and a half in length that was rounded or pointed at one end, perhaps in phallic shape. The root *vol* is found in the word *volsti* which refers to a phallic image made from the phallus of a horse.

Wise women such as the *volva* held a high and honored place in Teutonic society from the beginning of recorded Germanic history. They practiced various divinatory, healing and cursing arts known as *spae*, *seith*, *galder* and *gand*.

Spae wives would travel the country side and attend sacrificial feasts after which they would ascend wooden platforms to perform magical, especially divinatory, rites. They chanted and went into trances in which they could see more deeply into the ways of Gods and men. They answered questions about crops, the coming years, and young couples.

1. Odin (Valfather=Father of the Slain) has awakened an ancient and renowned *volva* from the dead to ply her for knowledge, just as he wakes another such woman before the gates of Hel in *The Dreams of Baldr*. So also does *Svipdag* awaken his dead mother for magical knowledge.

The spells of the *Volva* are perhaps the most powerful in the *Edda*. Like Odin, the modern seeker may fathom the mysteries of *Volva*'s words, if he knows how to ask and how to understand. The “holy kind” are the Gods and “*Heimdall*'s children” are men. Mankind was created from two trees by Odin, *Hoenir*, and *Lodur*, but the social classes were created by *Heimdall*. Between creation by Odin and the creation of social order by *Heimdall*, mankind experienced a liminal period of Chaos.

On the God *Heimdall*, see the glossary and index.

2. The “Glorious Meting Wood” is the world tree, especially as it is associated with the God *Tyr* who is the judge who metes out dooms (judgements) and measures. This is the tree as the universal column or *Irminsul*. *Meter* is here the same as the English word “mete” (measure). “Beneath the ground” refers to the world tree as a seed. The *volva* was fostered by *ettins* in ancient times.

The nine worlds are ordered about the meeting tree or world ash whose roots and branches connect the outer realms to *Midgard*, our Middle Earth, which is the center of the universe.

3. A magically charged cosmic void called “*Ginnungagap*” existed before creation. It may have been that the magical stuff of this gap was *Ginn*. The word *Ginnungagap* (The gap of *Ginnung*) is formed of the words *Ginnung* and *Gap*. *Gap* is the same as our word “Gap.” *Ginn* refers to magical forces that pervade the universe. *Ginn* is the magical stuff of which the world is wrought. *Ginn* is a prefix found joined with words that signify the names of beings and objects that are high and holy. The gods *Odin*, *Vili* and *Ve* are sometimes called the *Ginnregin*. *Ginn* is a pantheistic magical stuff that flows through the universe. It is numinous and holy. *Ginn* is the root word in our word “beginning.” The verb *Ginna* can mean to delude or to intoxicate. It is found in one of *Odin*'s names, and “*Ginn-fire*” is a name sometimes given to the smith's fire. *Ginn* is the magical stuff of the cosmic void in the beginning. A more complete description of the meeting of fire and ice in *Ginnungagap* may be found in *Gylfaginning* 6.

The noun *ginnung* can mean deceit, trickery or illusion. The verb *ginna* means to delude or to intoxicate. In Swedish, the verb *ginna* can mean both to deceive, and to perform magic. The title of the first part of the *Prose Edda* is *Gylfaginning*, which means the deluding of *Gylfi*. The *gunnungar* is the magical stuff of the world, the illusion that is the fabric of human consciousness. Human society operates by accepting shared

illusions (cultural conceptual constructs) as truths. Each society and members within a society are sometimes said to have their own way of looking at things or to see things differently. If the members of a society cannot agree to share certain basic assumptions about the world, there will be chaos which must again be fashioned in a way that seems real. Our languages are our most basic tools for articulating and ordering our assumptions into a seemingly coherent whole. Each society has its own outlook that makes sense in its own context, but may seem insane seen from the point of view of another cultural system. Much of our own elder lore is difficult to understand because we have adopted alien cultural constructs. Those who understand ginnung understand that the world is a tricky place and that things are not what they seem. It is especially the job of the Ginnregin (Odin, Vili, and Ve) to understand the world's mysteries and to see beyond the illusions and handle the magical essence of the universe.

4. The sons of Borr committed the first great cosmic sin in by killing their own ancestor Ymir to reshape the universe. The greatest deeds often require such an act.
6. The Regin are the Aesir Gods Odin, Vili and Ve in their capacity as advisors. The word *Regin* is found especially associated with the words *Ginn* and *Rok*. *Rok* means judgement and *Ragnarok* means "Judgement of the Regin."
7. When they built the first temple they were able to begin ordering their world by fashioning the tools of their conscious minds and the tools of science that are their extensions by the creative fires they stoked in their forges.

Ida Vale is the plain upon which the Gods dwelled before the raising of the walls of Asgard. Hof and harrow refer to temple and altar. See glossary. The Gods themselves established the first blessings, holy feasts, and sumbles.

8. It is sometimes thought that these maidens were Norns, but it is also possible that they were just ettins who assaulted the heavens and wreaked havoc before the Gods had built the walls of Asgard. These maidens could include Gullveig and Heith.

When the Gods had ordered their world and were enjoying the fruits of their efforts in paradise, they began to know the power of the Norns. Three maidens (possibly the Norns) arrived from Ettinhome and their days of ease were over.

The creation of the world was at the expense of the ettin race, and ever after the forces of Ettinhome were at war with the Gods and Men. Hence the need for Thor's vigilance. By shaping the world of the first primal giant, the sons of Bor brought about the pattern by which the world would function and fall again to ruin and disorder and by which it would be reshaped. By this first cosmic act, the first great layer of Orlog (sometimes mistranslated "fate") was lain. Orlog does not refer to fate or predestination, but is the idea that actions have consequences that shape possibilities and limitations for the actions that may be taken, the events that may occur, in the present. Actions taken in the present will shape the possibilities of the future and must be based on possibilities created by past actions. The circumstances into which you are born shape the kinds of lifestyles you may lead. In this way, the actions of your parents and ancestors have already determined much of your destiny. The longer you live, the more you lose some kinds of opportunities, while you make others available. All important choices involve sacrificing one set of options for another and commitment to the chosen options.

The act of creation set the processes in motion that would ultimately lead to the destruction of the world. The three maidens may well be the Norns themselves bringing the unpleasant results of the Gods' work into the world. The three maidens could as well be interpreted as the three lives of Gullveig.

9. The original dwarves were shaped by the Ases and these dwarves then created others by shaping manlike bodies from the earth.
10. Another Odinic triad, Odin, Hoenir and Lodur created mankind from two trees just as they ordered the cosmos and their own consciousness about a tree. Odin gave them the breath of life, Hoenir gave them inspired mental activity, and Lodur gave them physical characteristics. Hoenir was given as a hostage to the Vanir.

19-20. From Urth's Well the Norns come and there is soon war. The Norns are not conscious beings who plan the destinies of men and Gods by their own whim. Rather they are the forces that mechanically process the actions of the world's wights to turn the shape of the world. The three great Norns are Urth (what has been) Verthandi (what is becoming) and Skuld (what shall become). There are also many lesser Norns walking the world.

Yggdrasil means Odin's steed. He rides through the nine worlds by hanging from this steed.

21. Gullveig (the power of Gold) is the cause of war among the Gods. While the Gods were blissful on Ida Vale, they felt no lack of Gold, but Gullveig introduced lust and greed so that soon they found themselves in competition for the fires of life of which gold is a symbol.

The Aesir could not kill Gullveig with fire or iron, for she would be reborn each time she was destroyed. Lust could not be killed with material weapons. It is presumably on account of Gullveig that the Aesir found themselves in a stalemate with the Vanir.

These three stanzas may also be keys to magical initiation into women's mysteries and magical practices. After her ordeals she is reborn and emerges in stanza 22 with another name (Heith) and with the powers of spae, gandr and seiðr magic. Like a volva, she is said to visit homesteads. Her initiation by fire recalls Odin's ordeal in *The Lay of Grim*.

In the context of war between the Aesir and Vanir, Gullveig is usually thought to be Freya. Freya is the goddess who discovered the magical practices typical of the Vanir and it was she who taught these to Odin.

23. Rather than give in to the demands of the Vanir, the Aesir started the first war. Casting the first spear over or into the enemy host was a way of sacrificing the fallen to Odin.
25. The Vanes destroyed their fence, so the Aesir decided to build a fortification. They struck a deal with a master builder from Ettinhome who was to receive the sun, the moon and Freya in payment if he completed the project in one winter. Perhaps this is why the skies were mingled with venom.
26. Oaths were made to insure the safety of the ettin and that he was allowed the help of his horse. Loki cheated the ettin out of his horse just before the project was completed. Thor was called on to kill the giant when the project was completed and the Gods thereby broke another oath.
27. Heimdall sacrificed his ordinary hearing in Mim's well to gain supernatural hearing, just as Odin pledged an eye to Mim's well to gain supernatural sight. Valfather's pledge is the eye Odin left in the well in exchange for a drink of its waters or mead. Odin still sees through this eye. When he looks over the worlds from his seat in Asgard, he has a view from the top and another from below in Mim's well.
28. "Sitting Out" is the practice of meditating at a holy site, especially at a howe, in order to obtain visions or knowledge.

29. Odin takes every opportunity to master forms of magic with which he *is* unfamiliar. The spells of spae are the stanzas of the *Voluspa*, while “gand” refers to the methods by which spae is practiced.
33. When Mim’s (memory’s) sons deceive, mental activity goes awry.
35. Loki was bound in a cave in the guts of his son, though it is not known where.
36. Nitha vales=Dark Vales. Sindra is the dwarven smith who made Gullinbursti, Draupnir, and Mjolnir. This golden hall of Sindra is in Dwarfhome.
- 38-39. Nastrond=Shore of the Dead. It is located in Niflheim with Hverglmir and Nithogg. Slith, the river of knives which originates from Hverglmir, may be one of those which is here waded.

The Germanic place of torments is not permanent. Nothing is static where life is concerned, and especially not where spirit is concerned. There is no one final resting place. After death the soul may stay relatively intact and move to one of the heavenly halls for a time, or it may fall to more unpleasant places and may even be dissolved. The parts of the soul may be sundered from the individual and wend their ways back to their source of origin. The place of torments may be seen as places of shamanic type initiation as well as of death. If the soul withstands the knives of Slith and wades its waters, it may emerge strengthened. The components of a shredded soul may be dissolved, or some of them may find their way to another being.

40. Ironwood, like Mirkwood, is a great forest in Ettinhome that is full of trolls and troll-wives who ride wargs. This is one of the barriers between Midgard and the depths of Ettinhome. Skoll and Hati are the wolves who chase the sun and the moon across the heavens.

The being who takes the sun is Hati, who is here described as “having the shape of a troll.” *Hamr* is the word used for shape, and this is the word found *Hamingja*. The Old Norse phrase *Hamr Trollz* refers to faring forth in animal shape. The word *Hamr* is often found in soul travel contexts. When Loki travels to Ettinhome, he sometimes borrows the falcon or hawk shapes (*Hamr*) of Freya or Frigg. Hati may be a fetch soul of Fenrir faring forth to chase the sun while the wolf himself remains bound in Asgard. The word *troll* does not refer to the giants of later folklore, but rather to magical beings of Ettinhome. In some Scandinavian languages the word simply means magic. The word appears infrequently in the Elder Edda, but in Snorri and in HH 30 we find Troll-wives riding wargs in Ironwood. These beings are called Ironwooders. Ironwooders may be manifestations of the fetch souls of those faring forth into Ettinhome. Troll magic in the case of Hati and that of the Ironwooders is that of faring forth as wolves. Troll magic is the magic of changing into a wolf, a warrior magic par-excellence. The Ironwooders are said to ride their wargs, but the term “ride” can refer to taking possession of a wolf or its skin for the purpose of faring forth.

42. This could be the abode of a giantess such as Mengloth or Gerth, for the garths of both are warded by herdsmen on Howe-Hills. The tree upon which the cock sits is Yggdrasil. In Mengloth’s garth a cock is to be seen sitting in the branches of Yggdrasil.
43. The rooster crows at twilight, the liminal period between day and night which is neither the one nor the other. The rooster is a symbol of change and awakening.
44. Garm runs hungry with Freki. Freki is the name of one of Odin’s wolves.
45. As the forces of destruction overwhelm the world the social order crumbles into chaos and even the holiest bonds of kinship dissolve. It is an age ruled by outlaws and outdwellers.
46. The Meter is the world tree, see note 2 above. The sons of Mim play about the tree while Odin speaks with the head of their father. Mim’s head is likely the same as Mimir’s. According to Snorri’s *Yngling Saga* c. 4,

the Vanir cut off the head of Mimir and returned it to Odin after Mimir had been sent to them as a hostage. The Vanir felt cheated when they discovered that Mimir was incapable of giving advice when not in the presence of Hoenir, who was also sent as a hostage by the Aesir. Mimir means memory and Hoenir and Mimir function together like the ravens thought and memory. Neither can form good plans without working in conjunction with the other. When Odin received the head, he embalmed it and sang spells over it. This may be seen as another means of moving beyond his own personal memory to that of the collective cultural unconsciousness.

48. Stone gates are the gates between Dark-Elf home and Midgard. The gates may be any stone formation sacred to dwarves. The terms “stone door” is the dwarven equivalent of the “doors of the dead” by which ancestors may be contacted from Midgard. These stones are portals between living and dead at grave sites. Such stones may be used to cross over into Dark-Elfhome when faring forth, or as a point at which dwarves may be called forth into Midgard.

50. Jormungand, the Midgard serpent, means “great gand” or great magical staff. Its counterpart is Irminsul (great column) which forms the vertical axis of the cosmos while the serpent forms the horizontal axis.

53. According to Gylf. 36. Frey slays Beli.

54. Vithar is the son of Odin and Grith. Grith is the giantess who granted Thor iron gauntlets and a belt of might on his voyage to Geirroth’s hall.

56. Hljoth and Fjorgyn are names for Earth, the mother of Thor.

57. The heavenly and earthly bodies fall back into the chaos of stanza 5, to be formed anew. See 59.

61. As figures were part of one’s own self and psychology. As they reorder the game pieces, so they reorder the world for the next phase, and the games begin anew.

66. Nithogg and the forces of the next Ragnarok are already present in the newly created paradise. The *Voluspa* and the myth of Ragnarok can be taken as model for change and creation. A world is created, it is destroyed and it is created anew, and presumably better. The venom of Hvergelmir and its serpents is essential to the process of creation. In order to create, it is necessary to destroy. If no wood is cut, no boats are built. So it is in the process of self transformation and self development.

Think of the poems as a dream and interpret them as if they were dreams, as if the events and figures were part of one’s own self and psychology.

Hávamál

1.
Gáttir allar áðr gangi fram
um skoðask skyli,
um skygnast skyli,
því at óvíst er at vita hvar óvinir
sitja á fleti fyrir.
2.
Gefendr heilir! Gestr er inn kominn,
hvar skal sitja sjá?
Mjök er bráðr sá er á bröndum skal
síns um freista frama.
3.
Elds er þörf þeim inn er kominn
ok á kné kalinn.
Matar ok váða er manni þörf,
þeim er hefr um fjall farit.
4.
Vatns er þörf þeim er til verðar kemr,
þerru ok þjóðlaðar,
góðs um æðis ef sér geta mætti
orðs ok endrþögu.
5.
Vits er þörf þeim er víða ratar;
dælt er heima hvat;
at augabragði verðr sá er ekki kann
ok með snotrútrú sitr.
6.
At hyggjandi sinni skylit maðr hræsinn vera,
heldur gætinn at geði;
þá er horskur ok þögull kemr heimisgarða til,
sjaldan verðr víti vörum,
því at óbrigðra vin fær maðr aldregi
en mannvit mikit.
7.
Inn vari gestr er til verðar kemr
þunnu hljóði þegir,
eyrum hlýðir, en augum skoðar;
svá nýsisk fróðra hverr fyrir.

The Words of Har

1.
Watch out and check all gates before faring forth.
One should spy around,
one should pry around.
Hard to know what foe
sits before you in the next room.
2.
Hail the givers! A guest has come
where shall he sit?
Hard pressed is he,
who tests his luck by the fire.
3.
Fire is needful for those who arrive
with cold knees.
Food and clothing is needful
to men who have fared over the fells.
4.
Water is needful, for he who comes for a meal,
drying and friendly words as well,
and, if he can get them, kindness, good words,
and welcome again.
5.
Wits are needful to he who travels far.
The dull should stay home.
He will be mocked,
who cannot sit with sages.
6.
Let a man not be boastful about his wisdom,
but watchful instead. The wise and silent
are seldom harmed when wary in the hall.
A more trustworthy friend,
a man cannot have,
than understanding.
7.
The wary guest who comes to the feast
listens in silence, casts his eyes about
and pricks up his ears.
Thus the wise ward their ways.

8.
Hinn er sæll er sér um getr
lof ok líknstafi;
óðælla er við þat, er maðr eiga skal
annars brjóstum í.

9.
Sá er sæll er sjálfr um á
lof ok vit, meðan lifir;
því at ill ráð hefr maðr oft þegit
annars brjóstum ór.

10.
Byrði betri berrat maðr brautu at
en sé mannvit mikit;
auði betra þykkir þat í ókunnum stað;
slíkt er válaðs vera.

11.
Byrði betri berrat maðr brautu at
en sé mannvit mikit;
vegnest verra vegra hann velli at
en sé ofdrykkja öls.

12.
Era svá gótt sem gótt kveða
öl alda sonum,
því at færa veit er fleira drekkur
síns til geðs gumi.

13.
Óminnishegri heitir sá er yfir öldrum þrumir;
hann stelr geði guma;
þess fugls fjöðrum ek fjötraðr vark
í garði Gunnlaðar.

14.
Ölr ek varð, varð ofrölvi
at ins fróða Fjalar;
því er öldr bazt, at aftr um heimtir
hverr sitt geð gumi.

15.
Þagalt ok hugaltskyldi þjóðans barn
ok vígdjarft vera;
gláðr ok reifr skyli gumna hverr,
unz sinn bíðr bana.

8.
Happy is he who gets praise
and knows liking staves.
He has it hard, who must get these things
by the help of another.

9.
Happy is he who gets praise
and has wit throughout his life.
A man often gets evil counsel
from the heart of another.

10.
A man bears no better burden on the wilderness ways
than great wisdom.
It will prove better than wealth
in an unknown homestead.

11.
A man bears no better burden,
when on the wilderness ways
than great wisdom. One can have no worse fare,
on road or field, than too much ale.

12.
Ale is not so good as they say
for the sons of men.
A man's mind knows less,
the more he drinks.

13.
The heron is called mindlessness
who hovers over men stealing their minds
I was bound by that fowl's feathers
when I was in Gunnloth's garth.

14.
I became drunk, roaring drunk,
with wise Fjalar.
The best wassail is that
which a man leaves with his wits.

15.
Silent and attentive, and battle bold
should a chieftain's son be.
A man should be glad and happy
until defeated by death.

16.

Ósnjallr maðr hyggsk munu ey lifa,
ef hann við víg varask;
en elli gefr hánnum engi frið,
þótt hánnum gearar gefi.

17.

Kópir afglapi er til kynnis kemr,
þylsk hann um eða þrumir;
allt er senn, ef hann sylg um getr,
uppi er þá geð guma.

18.

Sá einn veit er víða ratar
ok hefr fjölð um farit,
hverju geði stýrir gumna hverr,
sá er vitandi er vits.

19.

Haldit maðr á keru, drekki þó at hófi mjöð,
mæli þarft eða þegi,
ókynnis þess vár þik engi maðr
at þú gangir snemma at sofa.

20.

Gráðugr halr, nema geðs viti,
etr sér aldrtega;
oft fær hlægis, er með horskum kemr
manni heimskum magi.

21.

Hjarðir þat vitu nær þær heim skulu
ok ganga þá af grasi;
en ósviðr maðr kann ævagi
síns um mál maga.

22.

Vesall maðr ok illa skapi
hlær at hvívetna;
hittki hann veit, er hann vita þyrfti
at hann era vamma vanr.

23.

Ósviðr maðr vakir um allar nætr
ok hyggr at hvívetna;
þá er móðr er at morgni kemr,
allt er víl sem var.

16.

The unwise man thinks he will live forever
by avoiding battle
But old age will give him no rest
though he be spared from spears.

17.

The fool gapes when among the folk.
He mutters and mopes,
and soon it is seen, when he gets drunk,
what his mind is like.

18.

He alone knows, who has wandered widely
and has fared over the fells
what mind stirs in each man
if he himself has wits.

19.

A man should not refrain from the cup
though he drink mead in the hof let him say
what is needful or be silent. No man
shall call you ignorant if you go to bed early.

20.

The greedy man, without mind's wits
eats himself in sorrow. Often he brings
ridicule on himself when he is among
wise men who mock the man's belly.

21.

The herd knows when to go home
and leave the grazing ground behind.
The unwise man never knows
how much to eat.

22.

Ill tempered the wretch,
who laughs at everyone.
He cannot recognize, as he should,
that he is not without faults.

23.

The stupid man lies awake all night
and thinks about everything
and is tired in the morning
though all is as it was.

24.
Ósnotr maðr hygg sér alla vera
viðhlæjendr vini.
Hittki hann fiðr, þótt þeir um hann fár lesi,
ef hann með snotrum sitr.

25.
Ósnotr maðr hygg sér alla vera
viðhlæjendr vini;
þá þat finnr er at þingi kemr,
at hann á formælendr fáa.

26.
Ósnotr maðr þykkisk allt vita,
ef hann á sér í vá veru;
hittki hann veit, hvat hann skal við kveða,
ef hans freista firar.

27.
Ósnotr maðr er með aldir kemr,
þat er bazt, at hann þegi;
engi þat veit, at hann ekki kann,
nema hann mæli til margt.

28.
Fróðr sá þykkisk, er fregna kann
ok segja it sama,
eyvitu leyna megu ýta synir,
því er gengr um guma.

29.
Ærna mælir, sá er æva þegir,
staðlausu stafi;
hraðmælt tunga, nema haldendur eigi,
oft sér ógótt um gelr.

30.
At augabragði skala maðr annan hafa,
þótt til kynnis komi;
margr þá fróðr þykkisk, ef hann freginn erat
ok nái hann þurrfjallr þruma.

31.
Fróðr þykkisk, sá er flótta tekr,
gestr at gest hæðinn;
veita görla sá er um verði glissir,
þótt hann með grömum glami.

24.
The stupid man thinks
that all who laugh at him are friends
He does not notice how the talk goes
when he sits with wise men.

25.
The unwise man thinks
that all who laugh at him are friends.
But when he is at the thing
he finds few spokesmen.

26.
The stupid man thinks he knows all
when he is at home.
But he does not know what to say
when men test him.

27.
When the fool fares among folk
it is best he stay quiet.
No one knows that he knows nothing
unless he talks too much.

28.
Wise seems he who knows
how to ask and answer.
What goes about among men,
cannot be hidden from men.

29.
He who never shuts up
blathers powerless staves.
The speedy tongue that never stops
often brings itself harm.

30.
Do not ridicule another man,
though he is kin. He oft seems wise
who is not questioned,
and leaves dry skinned.

31.
He is wise who leaves the flyting
when guest mocks guest.
He who grins at the feast
does not know that he chatters among foes.

32.
 Gumnar margir erusk gagnhollir
 en at virði vrekask;
 aldar róg þat mun æ vera,
 órir gestr við gest.

33.
 Árliga verðar skyli maðr oft fáa,
 nema til kynnis komi.
 Sitr ok snópir, lætr sem sólginn sé
 ok kann fregna at fáu.

34.
 Afhvarf mikit er til ills vinar,
 þótt á brautu búi,
 en til góðs vinarliggja gagnvegir,
 þótt hann sé firr farinn.

35.
 Ganga skal, skala gestr vera
 ey í einum stað;
 ljúfur verðr leiðr, ef lengi sitr
 annars fletjum á.

36.
 Bú er betra, þótt lítit sé,
 halr er heima hverr;
 þótt tvær geitr eigi ok taugreftan sal,
 þat er þó betra en bæn.

37.
 Bú er betra, þótt lítit sé,
 halr er heima hverr;
 blóðugt er hjarta þeim er biðja skal
 sér í mál hvert matar.

38.
 Vápnnum sínum skala maðr velli á
 feti ganga framar,
 því at óvíst er at vita nær verðr á vegum úti
 geirs um þörf guma.

39.
 Fannka ek mildan mann eða svá matar góðan,
 at værit þiggja þegit,
 eða síns féar svági [glöggvan],
 at leið sé laun, ef þægi.

32.
 Many a man is being friendly
 when he teases at the table.
 There is always strife
 when guest clashes with guest.

33.
 A man should often get his meal early.
 When he visits friends.
 Otherwise he sits and idles,
 eats like he were starving without even asking.

34.
 It is a long way to the false friend
 though he dwell by the road.
 But a straight way lies to the good friend,
 though he lives far away.

35.
 Then the guest should go.
 He should not stay too long in one stead.
 When one stays too long in another's house,
 love turns to loathing.

36.
 One's home is better though it be small.
 To each, home is hall.
 Though he owns but two goats,
 and a thatched roof, it is better than begging.

37.
 One's own home is best, though it is small.
 To each, home is hall.
 His heart will bleed
 who has to ask for each meal's meat.

38.
 A man should not step one foot
 forth in the field without weapons.
 One cannot know, when on the road,
 when he will need his spear.

39.
 I never found a generous man
 who was so free with his food,
 that he would turn it down, or so generous
 as to loath a gift were it given.

40.
Féar síns er fengit hefr
skyliit maðr þörf þola;
oft sparir leiðum þats hefr ljúfum hugat;
margt gengr verr en varir.
40.
One should not have too much need of the goods
he has gotten. Often one squanders
on enemies what was intended for loved ones.
Many affairs go awry.
41.
Vápnnum ok váðum skulu vinir gleðjask;
þat er á sjálfum sýnst;
viðurgefendr ok endrgefendr erusk lengst vinir,
ef þat bíðr at verða vel.
41.
Friends should share joy in weapons
and clothes that are evident to one another.
Those who share gifts stay the fastest friends,
when things go well.
42.
Vin sínum skal maðr vinr vera
ok gjalda gjöf við gjöf;
hlátr við hlátri skyli hölðar taka
en lausung við lygi.
42.
A man shall ever be a friend to his friends
and give gift for gift,
laughter for laughter,
but give lies for lies.
43.
Vin sínum skal maðr vinr vera,
þeim ok þess vin;
en óvinar síns skyli engi maðr
vinar vinr vera.
43.
A man shall always be a friend
to friends and to the friend of a friend
but never a friend
to a friend's enemies.
44.
Veiztu, ef þú vin átt, þann er þú vel trúir,
ok vilt þú af hánnum gótt geta,
geði skaltu við þann blanda ok gjöfum skipta,
fara at finna oft.
44.
If you know that you have a friend and that he is true,
and that you will get good from him,
share your mind with him, exchange gifts,
and visit him often.
45.
Ef þú átt annan, þanns þú illa trúir,
vildu af hánnum þó gótt geta,
fagrt skaltu við þann mæla en flátt hyggja
ok gjalda lausung við lygi.
45.
If you know another and trust him not
and you want to get good from him
speak fair to him while thinking falsely
and give him lies for lies.
46.
Það er enn of þann er þú illa trúir
ok þér er grunr at hans geði:
hlæja skaltu við þeim ok um hug mæla;
glík skulu gjöld gjöfum.
46.
If you do not trust a man,
and he speaks his mind with you
laugh with him, but speak not your mind
and deal fitting rewards for his gifts.
47.
Ungr var ek forðum, fór ek einn saman:
þá varð ek villr vega;
auðigr þóttumk, er ek annan fann;
Maðr er manns gaman.
47.
When I was young, I once traveled alone
and lost my way.
I thought myself rich when I found another,
man rejoices in man.

48.
Mildir, fræknir menn bazt lifa,
sjaldan sýt ala;
en ósnjallr maðruggir hotvetna,
sýtir æ glöggr við gjöfum.

49.
Váðir mínar gaf ek velli at
tveim trémönnum;
rekkar þat þóttusk, er þeir rift höfðu;
neiss er nökkviðr halr.

50.
Hrörnar þöll sú er stendr þorpi á,
hlýrat henni börkr né barr;
svá er maðr, sá er manngi ann.
Hvat skal hann lengi lifa?

51.
Eldi heitari brennr með illum vinum
friðr fimm daga,
en þá slokknar er inn sétti kemr
ok versnar allr vinskapr.

52.
Mikit eitt skala manni gefa;
oft kaupir sér í litlu lof,
með halfum hleif ok með höllu keru
fékk ek mér félagu.

53.
Lítilla sanda lítilla sæva
lítill eru geð guma.
Því at allir menn urðut jafnspakir;
half er öld hvar.

54.
Meðalsnotr skyli manna hverr;
æva til snotr sé;
þeim er fyrða fegrst at lifa
er vel margt vitu.

55.
Meðalsnotr skyli manna hverr;
æva til snotr sé,
því at snotrs manns hjarta verðr sjaldan glatt,
ef sá er alsnotr, er á.

48.
He who gives gladly lives the best life,
and seldom has sorrow.
But the unwise suspect all
and always pine for gifts.

49.
I gave my clothes to two tree-men
in the field.
Men they seemed with clothes.
Shameful the naked hero.

50.
The young fir tree dies that stands
sheltered by neither bark nor needle in the field
Such is a man whom none love.
Why should such a man live longer?

51.
Hotter than fire friendship burns
for five days between false friends.
But it slackens on the sixth
and the friendship goes awry.

52.
Give not great gifts.
You can win praise with little.
Half a loaf and half a cup
won me fellowship.

53.
A small lake has a little sand.
The minds of men are small
and not all men are equally wise.
No man is whole.

54.
Middle wise should each man be
and not over wise.
The fairest life is had
by the one who knows many things well.

55.
Middle wise should each man be
and not over-wise.
A wise man's heart is seldom glad
when he has got himself great wisdom.

56.
Meðalsnotr skyli manna hverr,
æva til snotr sé;
örlög sín viti engi fyrir,
þeim er sorgalausastr sefi.
56.
Middle wise should each man be
and not over wise.
He who knows not his orlog
may sleep untroubled.
57.
Brandr af brandi brenn, unz brunninn er,
funi kveikisk af funa;
maðr af manni verðr at máli kuðr
en til dælskr af dul.
57.
Brand burns brand and is so burned.
Fire is kindled from fire.
A man is known by his talk
and the dull man is known by his nonsense,
58.
Ár skal rísa sá er annars vill
fé eða fjör hafa;
sjaldan liggjandi ulfr lær um getr
né sofandi maðr sigr.
58.
He should rise early who wants to take
the life or property of another.
Seldom does the lying wolf get the lamb
or the sleeping man victory.
59.
Ár skal rísa sá er á yrkjendr fáa
ok ganga síns verka á vit;
margt um dvelr þann er um morgun sefr,
hálfur er auðr und hvötum.
59.
He should rise early who has few workers
to see to his work himself.
He loses much who sleeps in the morning.
Half of wealth is gotten by initiative.
60.
Þurra skíða ok þakinna næfra,
þess kann maðr mjöt
ok þess viðar er vinnask megi
mál ok misseri.
60.
Dry firewood and birch bark
for roofing
a man can measure,
for wood to last in the winter time.
61.
Þveginn ok mettr ríði maðr þingi at,
þótt hann sét væddr til vel;
Skúa ok bróka skammisk engi maðr
né hests in heldr, þátt hann hafit góðan
61.
Well fed and washed fare to the thing. A man should
ride to the thing though his clothes are well worn.
A man should not be ashamed of his shoes and breeks,
or even less of his horse, though they are not the best
62.
Snapir ok gnafir, er til sævar kemr,
örn á aldinn mar:
Svá er maðr er með mörgum kemr
ok á formælendr fáa.
62.
The eagle snuffles and droops
when he fares over the waves of the sea.
So fares a man in a throng
where few will plead his case.
63.
Fregna ok segja skal fróðra hverr,
sá er vill heitinn horskr,
einn vita né annarr skal,
þjóð veit, ef þrír ro.
63.
Each shall ask and answer
who is wise and wishes to be called wise.
Let none know, not even a second.
All will know, if three know.

64.
Ríki sittskyli ráðsnotra
hverr í hófi hafa;
þá hann þat finnr, er með fræknum kemr
at engi er einna hvatastr.

65.
— — — —
orða þeira, er maðr öðrum segir
oft hann gjöld um getr.

66.
Mikilsti snemma kom ek í marga staði
en til síð í suma;
öl var drukkit, sumt var ólagat,
sjaldan hittir leiðr í líð.

67.
Hér ok hvar myndi mér heim of boðit,
ef þyrftak at málungi mat,
eða tvau lær hengi at ins tryggva vinar,
þars ek hafða eitt etit.

68.
Eldr er beztr með ýta sonum
ok sólar sýn,
heilyndi sitt, ef maðr hafa náir,
án við löst at lifa.

69.
Erat maðr alls vesall, þótt hann sé illa heill;
sumr er af sonum sæll,
sumr af frændum, sumr af fé ærnu,
sumr af verkum vel.

70.
Betra er lifðum en sé ólifðum,
ey getr kvikr kú;
eld sá ek upp brenna auðgum manni fyrir,
en úti var dauðr fyr durum.

71.
Haltr ríðr hrossi, hjörð rekr handar vanr,
daufr vegr ok dugir,
blindr er betri en brenndr séi,
nýtr manngi nás.

72.
Sonr er betri, þótt sé síð of alinn
eftir genginn guma;
sjaldan bautarsteinar standa brautu nær,
nema reisi niðr at nið.

64.
All who are wise in rede
shall not be overly forceful.
He finds, who walks among the stout,
that no one is the strongest.

65.
— — — —
Words spoken by one to another
often bring an evil reward.

66.
Far too early I arrived at many steads,
But too late at others,
The ale was already drunk or yet unbrewed.
The loathed find little among the folk.

67.
Here and there they had me in their homes,
if I was not hungry for meat
or hung two hams for the true friend
for the one I had eaten.

68.
Fire is better for the sons of men
and the sight of the sun.
Good health also, if a man can keep it
and live without shame.

69.
A man is not entirely bereft
though his health is poor.
Some are blessed with sons, some by friends,
some by wealth and others by good works.

70.
Better to be alive and happy.
The quick always get the cattle.
The fire burned for the wealthy man,
but the dead man lays outside.

71.
A halt man can ride a horse. The handless
can be herdsman. The deaf can fight bravely,
a blind man is better than a burned man,
and a dead man is of no use.

72.
Better to have a son, though born late
after the father has passed away.
Stones seldom stand by the roads
unless raised by kin for kin.

73.
Tveir ro eins herjar, tunga er höfuðs bani;
er mér í heðin hvern handar væni.

74.
Nótt verður feginn sá er nesti trúir,
skammar ro skips ráar;
hverf er haustgríma;
fjölð um viðrir á fimm dögum
en meira á mánuði.

75.
Veita hinn er vettki veit,
margr verður af aorum api;
maður er auðigr, annar óauðigr,
skylit þann vítká váar.

76.
Deyr fé, deyja frændr,
deyr sjalfr it sama,
en orðstírr deyr aldregi
hveim er sér góðan getr.

77.
Deyr fé, deyja frændr,
deyr sjalfr it sama,
ek veit einn at aldrei deyr:
dómr um dauðan hvern.

78.
Fullar grindr sá ek fyr Fitjung's sonum,
nú bera þeir vonar vól;
svá er auðr sem augabragð,
hann er valtastr vina.

79.
Ósnotr maðr, ef eignask getr
fé eða fljóðs munuð,
metnaðr hánúm þróask, en mannvit aldregi:
fram gengr hann drjúgt í dul.

80.
Þat er þá reynt, er þú að rúnum spyrr
inum reginkunnum,
þeim er gerðu ginnregin
ok fáði fimbulþulr;
þá hefir hann bazt, ef hann þegir.

81.
At kveldi skal dag leyfa, konu, er brennd er,
mæki, er reyndr er, mey, er gefin er,
ís, er yfir kemr, öl, er drukkit er.

73.
Two take on one. The tongue is the head's bane.
I expect fists under every fur coat.

74.
Night is joyful if provisions are adequate.
The cabins of ships are cramped.
Fall nights pass
and weather changes many times in five days,
even more in a month.

75.
He who knows nothing does not know
that many men become apes.
One man is rich and another poor.
There is no blame in that.

76.
Cattle die, kinsmen die,
and you yourself shall die.
But fair fame never dies
for the one who wins it.

77.
Cattle die and kinsmen die
and you yourself shall die.
But I know one that never dies
that is the doom of each one dead.

78.
The store rooms of Fitjung's sons were full.
Now they bear the beggar's staff.
Thus flies wealth in the twinkling of an eye,
the falsest of friends.

79.
The unwise man only grows arrogant
when he wins himself wealth
or a woman's love.
His wisdom never increases, only his pride.

80.
It is found when you ask the runes
which are known to the Regin
made by the Ginnregin
drawn by Fimbulþulr,
it is best to keep silent.

81.
Praise the day in the evening, a torch when it is burned,
a sword when it is tried, a maid when married,
ice when crossed, ale when drunk.

82.

Í vindi skal við höggva, veðri á sjó róa,
myrkri við man spjalla, mörg eru dags augu;
á skip skal skriðar orka, en á skjöld til hlífar,
mæki höggs, en mey til kossa.

83.

Við eld skal öl drekka, en á ísi skríða,
magran mar kaupa, en mæki saurgan,
heima hest feita, en hund á búi.

84.

Meyjar orðum skyli manngi trúa
né því, er kveðr kona,
því at á hverfanda hvéli váru þeim hjörtu sköpuð,
brigð í brjóst um lagið.

85.

Brestanda boga, brennanda loga,
gínanda ulfi, galandi kráku,
rýtanda svíni, rótlausum viði,
vaxanda vági, vellanda katli,

86.

Fljúganda fleini, fallandi báru,
ísi einnættum, ormi hringlegnum,
brúðar beðmálum eða brotnu sverði,
bjarnar leiki eða barni konungs.

87.

Sjúkum kalfi, sjalfráða þræli,
völu vilmæli, val nýfelldum.

88.

Akri ársánnum trúi engi maðr
né til snemma syni,
- veðr ræðr akri. en vit syni;
hætt er þeira hvárt.

89.

Bróðurbana sínum, þótt á brautu mæti,
húsi hálfbrunnu, hesti alskjótum,
- þá er jór ónýtr, ef einn fótr brotnar -,
verðit maðr svá trygggr at þessu trúi öllu.

90.

Svá er friðr kvenna, þeira er flátt hyggja,
sem aki jó óbryddum á ísi hálum,
teitum, tvévetrum ok sé tamr illa,
eða í byr óðum beiti stjórmlausu,
eða skyli haltr henda hrein í þáfjalli.

82.

Hew wood in the wind, row out to sea in good weather,
play with a maid in the dark, for many are the eyes of
the day. Look for speed in a ship, and for cover from a
shield. Get a sword for hewing and a maid for kissing.

83.

Drink ale by the fire, skate on the ice,
buy a lean steed, and a rusty blade,
feed your horse at home and your hound at home.

84.

Let no man trust a maiden's words,
nor the talk of a woman,
for their hearts were shaped on a spinning wheel,
and falsehood lurks in their breasts.

85.

A brittle bow, a burning fire,
a grinning wolf, a singing crow,
a grunting boar, a rootless tree,
a swelling wave, a boiling kettle,

86.

A flying arrow, a crashing wave,
night old ice, a coiled snake,
a bride's bed talk, a broken sword,
the play of bears, a king's son,

87.

A sick calf, an uppity thrall,
the pleasant talk of a volva, the fresh fallen warrior.

88.

Early sown acres should no man trust,
nor too soon a son.
Weather ruins the acres, and stupidity the son.
Each of these is a risk.

89.

Your brother's slayer, though met on the road,
a half-burned house, or too swift a horse.
A steed is worthless, if it breaks on foot.
One must not be so trusting, as to trust in these.

90.

Such is the love of a woman whose heart is false.
Like riding unshod horses over slippery ice,
or poorly trained two year olds,
or drifting rudderless on heavy seas,
or like a halt reindeer on a slippery fell.

91.
Bert ek nú mæli, því at ek bæði veit,
brigður er karla hugr konum;
þá vér fegrst mælum, er vér flást hyggjum:
þat tælir horska hugi.

92.
Fagurt skal mæla ok fé bjóða
sá er vill fljóðs ást fá,
líki leyfa ins ljósa mans:
Sá fær er fríar.

93.
Ástar firna skyli engi maðr
annan aldregi;
oft fá á horskan, er á heimskan né fá,
lostfagrir litir.

94.
Eyvitar firna er maðr annan skal,
þess er um margan gengr guma;
heimska ór horskum gerir hölða sonu
sá inn máttki munr.

95.
Hugr einn þat veit er býr hjarta nær,
einn er hann sér um sefa;
öng er sótt verri hveim snotrum manni
en sér engu að una.

96.
Þat ek þá reynda er ek í reyri sat
ok vættak míns munar;
hold ok hjarta var mér in horska mær;
þeygi ek hana at heldr hefík.

97.
Billings mey ek fann beðjum á
sólhvíta sofa;
jarls ynði þótti mér ekki vera
nema við þat lík at lifa.

98.
“Auk nær aftni skaltu, Óðinn, koma,
ef þú vilt þér mæla man;
allt eru ósköp nema einir viti
slíkan löst saman.”

91.
I say this openly, for I know both.
A man's heart is false with women.
Our hearts are most false when our words roost fair,
which deceive the hearts of the wise.

92.
He shall speak fairly and deal wealth
who will win a woman's love.
Praise the looks of the bonny lass.
Win by wooing.

93.
No man should ever ridicule
another's love.
The lure of a beautiful woman often snares
the wise while leaving the fool.

94.
A man should not heap abuse
on another for something
that happens to many men.
Powerful love makes fools of heroes and sages.

95.
Only your own mind knows what is dearest
to your heart. Each counsels himself.
There is no worse illness for a sage
than losing love for himself.

96.
I found that out, when I sat in the reeds
and waited for my heart's delight.
The heart and body of the wise maid were dear to me,
but I had not my will with her.

97.
Billing's daughter I found on her bed.
The sun-white maid slept
and a Jarldom seemed nothing to me
if I lived without her love.

98.
“Come back near evening Odin,
if you would speak with me.
It would be entirely unfitting
unless only the two of us know of this deed.”

99.

Aftr ek hvarf ok unna þóttumk
vísun vilja frá;
hitt ek hugða at ek hafa mynda
geð hennar allt ok gaman.

100.

Svá kom ek næst at in nýta var
vígdrótt öll um vakin,
með brennandum ljósum ok bornum viði,
svá var mér vílstígr of vitaðr.

101.

Auk nær morgni, er ek var enn um kominn,
þá var saldrótt sofin;
grey eitt ek þá fann innar góðu konu
bundit beðjum á.

102.

Mörg er góð mæ, ef görva kannar,
hugbrigð við hali.
Þá ek þat reynda, er it ráðspaka
teygða ek á flærðir fljóð;
háðungar hverrar leitaði mér it horska man,
ok hafða ek þess vettki vífs.

103.

Heima glaðr gumi ok við gesti reifr,
sviðr skal um sig vera,
minnigr ok máluqr, ef hann vill margfróðr vera.
Oft skal góðs geta;
fimbulfambi heitir sá er fátt kann segja,
þat er ósnots aðal.

104.

Inn aldna jötun ek sótta, nú em ek aftr um kominn:
fátt gat ek þegjandi þar;
mörgum orðum mæltu ek í minn frama
í Suttungs sölum.

105.

Gunnlöð mér um gaf gullnum stóli á
drykk ins dýra mjaðar;
ill iðgjöld lét ek hana eftir hafa
síns ins heila hugar,
síns ins svára sefa.

106.

Rata munn létumk rúms um fá
ok um grjót gnaga,
yfir ok undir stóðumk jötna vegir,
svá hætta ek höfði til.

99.

I went back thinking she loved me,
but I was misled.
I thought that I would have
great pleasure and all her heart.

100.

So I came the next night
and the warriors were all awake
bearing bright brands, their torches alight,
I worked not my will.

101.

Near morning I went in again
when the folk were asleep.
But I found a bitch bound
to the fair maid's bed.

102.

Many a good maid proves false hearted
when you get to know her. I found that out
when I lured the wise woman in lust.
The clever maiden had sport of me
with all manner of mockery,
and I had not my way with her.

103.

Glad in his household and cheerful with guests
and wise let a man be.
He should be thoughtful and eloquent
if he wants to be learned in lore and praised as such.
The man who has little to say is deemed an idiot.
That is the lot of fools.

104.

The old ettin I sought, now I am back
I would have gotten little, had I been silent.
I spoke many words to work my will
in Suttung's hall.

105.

The auger bored and made me room
gnawed through stone,
over and under were
the ettin ways.
Thus I risked my head.

106.

Gunnloth gave me, as I sat on her golden seat,
a drink of the dear won mead.
An evil reward I dealt her afterwards,
for her goodwill, and her heavy-heart.

107.
Vel keypts litar hefi ek vel notit,
fás er fróðum vant,
því at Óðrerir er nú upp kominn
á alda vés jaðar.
108.
Ifi er mér á at ek væra enn kominn
jötna görðum ór,
ef ek Gunnlaðar né nytak, innar góðu konu,
þeirar er lögðumk arm yfir.
109.
Ins hindra dags gengu hrímþursar
Háva ráðs at fregna
Háva höllu í.
At Bölverki þeir spurðu, ef hann væri með böndum kominn
eða hefði hán um Suttung of sóit.
110.
Baugeið Óðinn hygg ek, at unnið hafi;
hvat skal hans tryggðum trúa?
Suttung svikinn hann lét sumbli frá
ok grætta Gunnlöðu.
111.
Mál er at þylja þular stóli á
Urðarbrunni at,
sá ek ok þagðak, sá ek ok hugðak,
hlydda ek á manna mál;
of rúnar heyrða ek dæma, né um ráðum þögðu
Háva höllu at, Háva höllu í,
heyrða ek segja svá:
112.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð ef þú getr -:
nótt þú rísat nema á njósn séir
eða þú leitir þér innan út staðar.
113.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð ef þú getr -:
fjölknúgrí konu skalattu í faðmi sofa,
svá at hon lyki þik liðum.
107.
Dear bought, I put it to good use.
For the wise little is lacking.
Othroerir has been brought up
to the ve of the gods.
108.
I would hardly have come out alive
from the garth of the ettins,
had I not enjoyed the good woman Gunnloth
in whose arms I lay.
109.
The next day rime Thurses
strode out to ask rede
of Har in Har's Hall,
asking about Bolverk, whether he was among the Gods
or had been slain by Suttung.
110.
I know that Odin swore an oath on a ring,
How shall his troth be trusted?
He robbed Suttung and took his sumble.
To Gunnloth he brought sorrow.
111.
It is time to sing on the sage's seat
at Urth's well.
I saw and was silent, I watched and thought.
I heard the speech of men, I heard talk of runes.
They were not silent at council.
At Har's hall, in Har's hall
I heard them speak.
112.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
Do not rise at night, except to spy,
or to find the outhouse.
113.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well.
You will use it if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
Do not sleep in the arms of a woman skilled in black arts
such that she locks her limbs with yours.

114.

Hon svá gerir at þú gáir eigi
þings né þjóðans máls;
mat þú villat né mannskis gaman,
ferr þú sorgafullr að sofa.

115.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð ef þú getr -:
annars konu teygðu þér aldregi
eyrarúnu at.

116.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð ef þú getr -:
áfjalli eða firði, ef þik fara tíðir,
fásktu at virði vel.

117.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð ef þú getr -:
illan mann láttu aldregi
óhöpp at þér vita,
því at af illum manni fær þú aldregi
gjöld ins góða hugar.

118.

Ofarla bíta ek sá einum hal
orð illrar konu;
fláráð tunga varð hánun at fjörlagi
ok þeygi um sanna sök.

119.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
veistu, ef þú vin átt þann er þú vel trúir,
far þú at finna oft,
því at hrísi vex ok hávu grasi
vegr, er vætcki treðr.

120.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
góðan mann teygðu þér at gamanrúnum
ok nem líknargaldr, meðan þú lifir.

114.

She will work it that you will not want
to go to the thing or care about the talk of the folk.
You will not want food or any pleasure
and you will seek your bed in sorrow.

115.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Watch that you are not lured to bed
by another's wife.

116.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
If you fare veil
on fell or fjord, bring food.

117.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Never tell your hardships to foemen,
for you will never get a reward
for your good wishes
from evil men.

118.

I saw a man sharply bitten
by the ill words of a woman,
Her false tongue brought his death,
and her attacks were unjust.

119.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
If you have a true friend
fare to find him often.
Shrubs and grass grow
to cover the untrodden path.

120.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
Draw a good man to yourself with staves of joy,
and you will have healing songs while you live.

121.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
in þínum ver þú aldregi
fyrri at flaumslitum;
sorg etr hjarta, ef þú segja né náir
einhverjum allan hug.

122.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
orðum skipta þú skalt aldregi
við ósvinna apa,

123.
Því at af illum manni mundu aldregi
góðs laun um geta,
en góðr maðr mun þik gerva mega
líknfastan at lofi.

124.
Sifjum er þá blandat, hver er segja ræðr
einum allan hug;
allt er betra en sé brigðum at vera;
era sá vinr öðrum, er vilt eitt segir.

125.
Ráðumk, þér Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
þrimr orðum senna skalattu þér við verra mann
oft inn betri bilar,
þá er inn verri vegr.

126.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
skósmiðr þú verir né skeftismiðr,
nema þú sjálfum þér séir,
skór er skapaðr illa eða skaft sé rangt,
þá er þér böls beðit.

127.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
hvars þú böll kannt, kveð þú þér bölví at
ok gefat þínum fjándum frið.

121.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
Never be the first to forsake a friend.
Sorrow eats the heart
of he who can no longer speak
his mind to anyone.

122.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good, if you understand it.
Never bandy words
with stupid apes.

123.
You will never get any good
from an evil man.
But a good man will get you
the love and goodwill of many.

124.
When each can speak all his mind to the other,
friendship is shared.
Anything is better than fickleness.
He is no friend, whose words are always fair.

125.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will do you good if you understand it.
Bandy not three words with a lesser man.
Often the better man fails
when the worse gets hostile.

126.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well,
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Be not a maker of shoes or a shaper of shafts,
unless they are for yourself.
If the shoe is ill shaped, or the shaft is not straight,
they will wish you ill.

127.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
If you know that someone is evil, say so.
Never give friendship to your enemies.

128.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
illu feginn ver þú aldregi,
en lát þér at góðu getit.

129.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
upp líta skalattu í orrustu,
- gjalti glíkir verða gumna synir -
síðr þitt um heilli halir.

130.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
ef þú vilt þér góða konu kveðja at gamanrúnum
ok fá fögnuð af,
fögru skaltu heita ok láta fast vera;
leiðisk manngi gótt, ef getr.

131.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
varan bið ek þik vera ok eigi ofvaran;
ver þú við öl varastr
ok við annars konu ok við þat it þriðja
at þjófar né leiki.

132.

Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
at háði né hlátri hafðu aldregi
gest né ganganda.

133.

Oft vitu ógörla þeir er sitja inni fyrir
hvers þeir ro kyns, er koma;
erat maðr svá góðr at galli né fylgi,
né svá illr, at einugi dugi.

128.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
and it will get you good if you understand it,
Never rejoice in evil,
but always do good.

129.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
and it will get you good if you understand it.
Do not look up in battle.
Sons of men become like hogs,
when warriors enchant you.

130.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
and it will do you good if you understand it.
If you want a good woman, speak pleasure runes to her,
Pledge your troth and hold fast to it
if you want joy from her.
None loathes good if she gets it.

131.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
and it will do you good if you understand it.
Watch yourself, but don't be overcautious.
Be especially wary of ale
and of another man's wife.
Thirdly, see that you are not tricked by con-men.

132.

I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Never make sport
of guests and travelers.

133.

Often those who sit inside
do not know the kin of those who have arrived.
No man is so good that he has no faults,
none so evil that he is not worthy in some way.

134.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
at hárum þul hlæ þú aldregi,
oft er gótt þat er gamlir kveða;
oft ór skörpum belg skilin orð koma
þeim er hangir með háam
ok skollir með skráam
ok váfir með vílmögum.

135.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
gest þú né geyjané á grind hrekir,
get þú váluðum vel.

136.
Rammt er þat tré, er ríða skal
öllum at upploki.
Baug þú gef, eða þat biðja mun
þér læs hvers á liðu.

137.
Ráðumk þér, Loddfáfnir, en þú ráð nemir, -
njóta mundu, ef þú nemr,
þér munu góð, ef þú getr -:
hvars þú öl drekkir, kjós þér jarðar megin,
því at jörð tekr við öldri, en eldr við sóttum,
eik við abbindi, ax við fjölkynngi,
höll við hýrógi, - heiftum skal mána kveðja, -
beiti við bitsóttum, en við bölvi rúnar,
fold skal við flóði taka.

138.
Veit ek, at ek hekk vindgameiði á
nætr allar níu,
geiri undaðr ok gefinn Óðni,
sjalfur sjalfum mér,
á þeim meiði er manngi veit
hvers af rótum renn.

139.
Við hleifi mik sældu né við hornigi,
nýsta ek niðr,
nam ek upp rúnar, æpandi nam,
fell ek aftr þaðan.

134.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Never laugh at the hoary sage.
The old often speak wisely and clearly.
Wise speech oft comes from the dried skin
that hangs with the hides,
dangling with the furs
and swinging among the bushes.

135.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
Do not abuse a guest, or drive him out the door.
Instead, do well for the wretched.

136.
The beam must be sturdy, that is unbarred
for all who ride up.
Deal out rings or he
will wish you all sorts of trouble.

137.
I give you rede Loddfafnir, heed it well!
You will use it, if you learn it,
it will get you good if you understand it.
When you drink ale, call on the main of the earth,
for earth is good against ale, but fire against diseases.
Oak is good against costiveness, grain against wizardry
bearded rye against feuds. They say the moon is good
against hate. Alum use for rabies and runes against evil.
The earth draws off floods.

138.
I know that I hung, on a wind swept tree
for all of nine nights,
wounded by spear, and given to Odin,
myself to myself,
on that tree of which no man knows
from what root it rises.

139.
They dealt me no bread, nor drinking horn.
I looked down, I drew up the runes,
screaming I took them up,
and fell back from there.

140.
Fimbulljóð nú nam ek af inum frægja syni
Bölporns, Bestlu föður,
ok ek drykk of gat ins dýra mjaðar,
ausin Óðreri.

141.
Þá nam ek frævask ok fróðr vera
ok vaxa ok vel hafask,
orð mér af orði orðs leitaði,
verk mér af verki verks leitaði.

142.
Rúnar munt þú finna ok ráðna stafi,
mjök stóra stafi,
mjök stinna stafi,
er fáði fimbulþulr
ok gerðu ginnregin
ok reist Hrofrt rögna.

143.
Óðinn með ásum, en fyr alfum Dáinn,
Dvalinn ok dvergum fyrir,
Ásviðr jötnum fyrir,
ek reist sjalfr sumar.

144.
Veistu hvé rísta skal? Veistu hvé ráða skal?
Veistu hvé fáa skal? Veistu hvé freista skal?
Veistu hvé biðja skal? Veistu hvé blóta skal?
Veistu hvé senda skal? Veistu hvé sóa skal? -

145.
Betra er óbeðit en sé ofblótit,
ey sér til gildis gjöf;
betra er ósent en sé ofsóit.
Svá Þundr um reist fyr þjóða rök,
þar hann upp um reis, er hann aftr of kom.

146.
Ljóð ek þau kann er kannat þjóðans kona
ok mannskis mögr.
Hjálp heitir eitt, en þat þér hjálpa mun
við sökum ok sorgum ok sútum görvöllum.

147.
Þat kann ek annat er þurfu ýta synir,
þeir er vilja lækna lifa.

140.
Fimbul spells I got from the famous
Son of Bolthor the father of Bestla.
I had a drink of the dear mead
that was drawn from Othroerir.

141.
Then I began to grow
and waxed well in wisdom.
One word led me to another,
one work led me to another.

142.
You will find runes, meaningful staves,
very powerful staves,
very strong staves,
that Fimbul dyed,
that the Ginnregin shaped,
that the God Hropt carved.

143.
Odin among the Aesir, but Dain for the elves,
Dvalinn for the dwarves,
Asvith for the ettins.
I carved some myself.

144.
Know how to carve them, know how to read them,
know how to stain them, know how to wield them,
know how to ask them, know how to bloody them,
know how to send them, know how to sacrifice them.

145.
It is better not to ask, than to sacrifice too much.
A gift always looks for a gift.
It is better unsent, than over sacrificed.
So Thund carved before the doom of mankind.
He rose up and came back after that.

146.
I know those magical songs, not known
by the wives of kings, or any human.
One is called help and will help you
in all sickness, sorrow and affliction.

147.
I know another that is needed by the sons of men,
who want to be leeches.

148.
Það kann ek þriðja: ef mér verðr þörf mikil
hafts við mína heiftmögu,
eggjar ek deyfi minna andskota,
bítat þeim vápn né velir.

149.
Þat kann ek it fjórða: ef mér fyrðar bera
bönd að boglimum,
svá ek gel, at ek ganga má,
spretr mér af fótum fjöturr,
en af höndum haft.

150.
Þat kann ek it fimmta: ef ek sé af fári skotinn
flein í folki vaða,
fýgra hann svá stinnt at ek stöðvigak,
ef ek hann sjónum of sék.

151.
Þat kann ek it sétta: ef mik særir þegn
á vrótum hrás viðar,
ok þann hal er mik heifta kveðr,
þann eta mein heldr en mik.

152.
Þat kann ek it sjaunda: ef ek sé hávan loga
sal um sessmögum,
brennat svá breitt, at ek hánnum bjargigak;
þann kann ek galdr at gala.

153.
Þat kann ek it átta, er öllum er
ytsamligt at nema:
hvars hatr vex eð hildings sonum
at má ek bæta brátt.

154.
Þat kann ek it níunda: f mik nauðr um stendr
t bjarga fari mínu á floti,
vind ek kyrri ági á
k svæfik allan sæ.

155.
Þat kann ek it tíunda: f ek sé túnriður
eika lofti á,
ek svá vinnk t þær villar fara
inna heimhama,
inna heimhuga.

148.
I know a third for the event
that I should be in dire need of fettering a foe.
I can dull the blades of my attackers
so that they can strike by neither weapon or wile.

149.
I know a fourth,
so that if bonds bind my limbs,
I can get free.
Fetters spring from my feet,
and bonds from my hands.

150.
I know a fifth. If a foe shoots a shaft
into the host, it cannot fly
so fast that I cannot stop it,
if I catch sight of it.

151.
I know a sixth. If some thane attacks me,
with the wood of a young root,
he who says he hates me will get hurt,
but I will be unharmed.

152.
I know a seventh. If I see
a fire high on the hall
around my bench companions,
I can help them by singing the spell.

153.
I know an eighth. It is useful
for all who know it,
Whenever hatred flares up among warriors' sons,
I am able to quell it.

154.
I know a ninth. If need arises,
to save my ship on the flood,
I can still the wind, and calm the waves,
put the entire sea to sleep.

155.
I know a tenth. If I see ghost-riders
sporting in the sky, I can work it
that the wild ones fare away.
So their shapes (ham) shall fare home,
so their spirits fare home.

156.
Þat kann ek it ellifta: ef ek skal til orrustu
leiða langvini,
und randir ek gel, en þeir með ríki fara
heilir hildar til,
heilir hildi frá,
koma þeir heilir hvaðan.

157.
Þat kann ek it tolfte: ef ek sé á tré uppi
váfa virgilná,
svá ek ríst ok í rúnum fák
at sá gengr gumi
ok mælir við mik.

158.
Þat kann ek it þrettánda: ef ek skal þegn ungan
verpa vatni á,
munat hann falla, þótt hann í folk komi:
hnígra sá halr fyr hjörum.

159.
Þat kann ek it fjögurtánda: ef ek skal fyrða liði
telja tíva fyrir,
ása ok alfa ek kann allra skil;
fár kann ósnotr svá.

160.
Þat kann ek it fimmtánda er gól Þjóðrerir
dvergr fyr Dellings durum:
afl gól hann ásum, en alfum frama,
hyggju Hroftatý.

161.
Þat kann ek it sextánda: ef ek vil ins svinna mans
hafa geð allt ok gaman,
hugi ek hverfi hvítarmri konu
ok sný ek hennar öllum sefa.

162.
Þat kann ek it sjautjándá at mik mun seint firrask
it manunga man.
Ljóða þessa mun þú, Loddfáfnir,
lengi vanr vera;
þó sé þér góð, ef þú getr,
nýt ef þú nemr,
þörf ef þú þiggr.

156.
I know an eleventh: If I lead
old friends into the fray,
I sing under the shield
and they fare into battle mighty and whole,
they fare from battle whole,
they are whole, wherever they go.

157.
I know a twelfth: If I see a hanged man
swinging high in a tree,
I can carve and stain runes,
so that the man walks
and speaks with me.

158.
I know a thirteenth: If I sprinkle a young thane
with water, he will not fall,
though he goes to battle.
He will not be cut down by swords.

159.
I know a fourteenth: If I talk of the gods
before the folk, I can speak of Ases
and elves. Few of the unlearned
know these things.

160.
I know a fifteenth, which Thiodrorir the dwarf
sang before Delling's door.
He sang might to the Aesir, power to the elves,
and understanding to Odin.

161.
I know a sixteenth. If I want the heart and pleasure
of a winsome lass, I turn the mind
of the white-armed lady to me,
and wend to bed with her.

162.
I know a Seventeenth to keep her
from shirking me for any other man.
Mind this Loddfáfnir,
long will you lack it,
but it will get you good, once you learn it,
it will be useful to you when you understand it,
and needful if known.

163.

Þat kann ek it átjándá, er ek æva kennik
mey né manns konu,
- allt er betra er einn um kann;
þat fylgir ljóða lokum, -
nema þeiri einnir mik armi verr
eða mín systir sé.

164.

Nú eru Háva mál kveðin Háva höllu í,
allþörf ýta sonum,
óþörf jötna sonum.
Heill sá, er kvað, heill sá, er kann,
njóti sá, er nam,
heilir, þeirs hlýddu.

163.

I know an eighteenth that none know,
neither maid, nor man's wife.
It is always better kept secret,
except to the one
who lies in my arms,
or my sister.

164.

Now are Har's sayings said, in Har's hall
needful for the sons of men
unneeded by ettins' sons.
Hail the one who speaks them, hail the one who knows them
useful to he who gets them
hail they who heed them.

The Words of Har: Notes

The Havamal is written for the wayfarer, and those who deal with wayfarers. It is for travelers of Midgard and the outer homes. Havamal is generally interpreted as practical advice for a young man on matters of life, love and travel with a little bit of magic and religion thrown in. It is actually the initiatory sequences of the winning of the runes and the poetic mead that are at the heart of the Havamal, and all the practical advice is in some way related to initiation into the runic mysteries. Many of the stanzas giving practical advice have an esoteric level of significance. These deeper levels of lore can be unlocked by the keys given in chapter 1.

Stanzas 1-4 deal with basic physical needs and the basic elements of the world and sets forth the main theme: the crossing of unknown thresholds and faring forth into strange territory. The Viking Age vitki would have found this advise useful on ventures in Midgard as well as on farings into the outer homes. Stanza 2-4 recall some of the basic elements of creation, such as fire, ice, water, and earth, and the some basic needs for survival on the road, such as food and shelter.

5-31 deal with the importance of wits and awareness for the initiate, characteristics of the wise, and admonishments against drinking too much. The first of these stanzas, #5, warns that a fool, one who has not mastered the advice that follows, should not fare forth into the worlds but should rather stay at home.

6-7 tell us to maintain high levels of awareness. When on the road, the journeyman should waken himself to a higher state of consciousness, be watchful and attentive, and maintain this state. Ritual actions and the invocation of holy names, and a variety of meditative exercises are good for waking one's self to self-remembrance.

In such states of mind, the vitki has transcended his ordinary understanding and is able to see things from a holier point of view. In some cases, the vitki is able to transcend the mundane and to become aware of the sacred in the ordinary. This state allows one to see beyond ordinary appearances to a deeper level of reality and to see the sacred side so that one's actions take on a sacred quality. Thereby one's actions in the mundane world will become more effective and the quality of one's work will increase. In such states, magical operations and divination are effectively performed.

Stanzas 8-10 recall the need for Self-reliance. One must not depend on the wit of others but must have good counsel from the Self or the fetch soul within. 8-9 tell of the need for winning ways and the use of "liking-staves" or magic and magical understanding mentioned above that allows deeper insight into ordinary events such that allows one to gain the trust and liking of others. Many of the following verses give advise for gaining liking and may be considered "liking staves." As many strategies as one may employ, it is needful to know that fast friendship and trust are gained by demonstrating worthiness of such.

11-14 warn against ill-measured mead consumption. Mead and ale were an important part of elder Teutonic social and ritual activities. Magically, mead is a symbol of poetic inspiration or holy fury and madness. Stanzas 11-14 warn that too much ale robs men of wit and awareness. 13-14 refer directly to the episode of the rewinning of the poetic mead in stanzas 104-110 in which Odin gets back the poetic mead that was lost to ettins.

Inspiration, like alcohol itself, is not to be consumed excessively, for one's self and awareness are easily lost in the ensuing madness. To use inspiration or madness creatively in poetry, magic, art or battle, the madness must be harnessed and channeled by an alert mind and a powerful will. There are some who give themselves over to madness and let forces beyond themselves control, though this approach is usually avoided by Odians. The Odian is the master of madness, not its slave. The stronger one's will and awareness, the more madness one can handle. Odin was able to accomplish his goal after ingesting the world's stock of poetic mead, of which only a few drops, known as the poet-tasters share, are available on Midgard. For most people, excessive inspiration is no more useful than drunkenness, as pleasurable as it might be.

15. Recapitulates the need for attentive awareness and vigilance in magical endeavors.

19. Again tells us that drink (inspiration) is necessary, but to avoid losing awareness.

6, 7, and 19 tell us that silence is a needful part of attentiveness. Just as it is hard to tell what lurks in the minds of strangers when you are chattering yourself, so it is hard to maintain a high level of awareness if the mind is not quiet and focused. An unfocused mind is perpetually lost in its own dreams and chatter, unable to truly know itself or others. A vitki must master the art of clearing his mind of distracting chatter. Stanza 17 points out that the fool is constantly muttering. The same idea is conveyed in 29 but warns of the harm that results of perpetual loss of self to delusions and dreams. The attentive mind (stanza 18) can discern the nature of the minds of those around him.

16-29 contrast the wise with fools by depicting the mind of the fool as inattentive and ineffectual for its unfocused dwellings on useless matters. The fool is not conscious. He merely reacts to situations rather than assessing his situations and consciously controlling his behavior to affect the outcome. For the fool, habits such as eating and drinking are guided by neither instinct nor plan, but rather by impulse. The fool is out of touch with his instincts (stanza 21) besides lacking conscious control of his own behavior. Sages will regard such ill discipline with scorn and contempt if not amusement. The ignorant are often ignorant of their own stupidity (stanza 22). Such will often see their own failings most clearly in others and make fools of themselves criticizing others for weaknesses most obvious in themselves. Because the fool will never really understand the talk and action of folk around him (stanzas 22-26) his deeds will never match his expectations and he will always fail in time of testing. For such a man, the sleeping state is not unlike the waking state (stanza 23) and is lost in agitated dreams in both. Those capable of waking to higher states will can see how much an ordinary state of awareness resembles sleep.

30-52 are a series of “liking-staves” concerned with ways of gaining trust, praise and friendship and avoiding the opposite. These passages refer not just to etiquette in mundane situations, but are valid as well in dealing with the holy powers, whether in sacrifice or faring forth. In sacrifice the Gods are invited to fare forth into Midgard, and should be treated as guests. These stanzas follow naturally from those concerning wakefulness, since the proper frame of mind is important to conducting of sacrifices in order not to sit among the Gods as a fool. The stanzas concerning gift giving are particularly applicable to sacrificial ritual practices. Besides a knowledge of sacrificial etiquette, you need inspiration, awareness, and a quiet focused mind.

54-56 warn that it is best to be wise in the ways of Midgard before faring to the outer homes. A good grasp of consensus social and physical reality is needful before one can expect to have effective dealings with metaphysical realities.

56 says a man who knows not his orlog may sleep untroubled and would seem to be an admonishment to avoid such knowledge, and so it is, for ordinary folk, but not for the Odian vitki. The vitki is not looking for sleep anyway for “the sleeping man seldom gets victory (st 58)” and “..loses much (59).”

56-57 offer more wisdom on friendship, gift giving, and wise conduct. Passages regarding gifts and friendship may be taken as comments on sacrifice.

68-72 deal with health. Fire and the sun are used as metaphors for good health.

Note that useful esoteric knowledge may be found in the stanzas from 56 on in comparing them to previous stanzas, to the Rune poems (st 138-165), and the Gunnloth episode in stanzas 104-110. These recount Odin’s winning of inspiration and discovery of the runes and are the central episodes of the Havamal. All other stanzas in the Havamal have some bearing on these episodes. Exploration by runic transliteration is appropriate for these stanzas-see chapter 1.

The stanzas 79, 81, 82, 87, and 90-102 hold lore on initiation by relations with the opposite sex and the fetch wife—see chapter 4.

104-110 tell us how Odin won for the Gods the mead of poetry and inspiration, and how he does this by breaking his oath to Gunnloth, and the oath was not to a mere ettin. This oath was made to his own fylgja, to his higher self. Thus Odin broke his highest oath of all, that made to the most sacred part of himself.

To win the poetic mead Odin breaks an oath sworn on a ring (stanza 110) to Gunnloth, who is none other than his own fetch, or higher self, in such a way that she and her wisdom are united with his conscious self creating an entity far greater than either separately. In this exalted state, contents of the personal and collective unconscious may be brought before the light of consciousness. Such states are difficult to achieve, let alone maintain, and Gunnloth returns to Ettinhome, wiser, and the mead flows back down the ettin paths. The union must occur again and the mead must be drunk again. Odin's sexual conquests are not mere hedonism, but efforts to drastically raise his level of consciousness by welding it with supra- and sub-conscious parts of his soul. The broken oath explains Odin's name Bolverk (Evil-Doer). Odin's crime was all the more heinous that the oath was made to a high and holy part of himself.

The stanzas preceding the Gunnloth episode warn of the dangers of courting, the fickleness of lovers, and difficulties in winning them. Sometimes it is possible to experience intense interaction with the fetch wife during a romantic experience in which the fetch wife is projected, usually unconsciously, onto the lover. Emotional states alone that are generated by amorous experiences are a proven source of inspired madness.

Stanzas 138-161 are about the discovery of the runes.

Just as the mead was won at the roots in the darkest depths of Ettinhome, so were the runes won in the branches, where Odin sacrifices himself to himself by hanging. By an apparent act of self-betrayal in which one part of the self is sacrificed to another, as in his pledge of his eye to the well of Mimir. Actually, the part sacrificed is not destroyed, but exalted by being given and united to the part of the self to which it is sacrificed. When Odin gives his conscious self over to his higher self, or fetch, he is atoning for the broken oath, and immersing himself in the collective unconscious where he consciously grasps the runes.

Yggdrasil=Steed of Odin. Odin rides through the nine worlds by hanging to fathom its mysteries. In this case he sees the whole picture all at once.

143 Odin made some of his wisdom available to other, sentient wights.

146-146 The first 16 stanzas correspond to the first 16 runes of the younger row. They may also be taken as runic spells composed of several runes and turned into galder and sigils for the purposes of Workings. See chapter 1.

Vafþrúðnismál

Óðinn kvað:

1.
“Ráð þú mér nú, Frigg, alls mik fara tíðir
at vitja Vafþrúðnis;
forvitni mikla kveð ek mér á fornum stöfum
við þann inn alsvinna jötun.”

Frigg kvað:

2.
“Heima letja ek mynda Herjaföðr
í görðum goða,
þvíat engi jötun ek hugða jafnramman
sem Vafþrúðni vera.”

Óðinn kvað:

3.
“Fjölð ek fór, fjölð ek freistaða,
fjölð ek reynda regin;
hitt vil ek vita, hvé Vafþrúðnis
salakynni sé.”

Frigg kvað:

4.
“Heill þú farir, heill þú aftr komir,
heill þú á sinnum sér!
æði þér dugi, hvars þú skalt, Aldaföðr,
orðum mæla jötun.

5.

Fór þá Óðinn at freista orðspeki
þess ins alsvinna jötuns;
at höllu hann kom, ok átti Íms faðir;
inn gekk Yggr þegar.

Óðinn kvað:

6.
“Heill þú nú, Vafþrúðnir, nú em ek í höll kominn
á þik sjálfan sjá;
hitt vil ek fyrst vita, ef þú fróðr sér
eða alsviðr jötunn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

7.
“Hvat er þat manna er í mínum sal
verpumk orði á?
Út þú né komir órum höllum frá,
nema þú inn snotrari sér.”

Lay of Vafthruthnir

Odin

1.
“Give me rede now Frigg, for I long to go
to wise Vafthruthnir.
I am very eager to exchange elder stave lore
with the all-wise ettin.”

Frigg

2.
“I advise you to stay home, Warfather,
in the garth of the gods,
for I know of no ettin
as mighty as Vafthruthnir.”

Odin

3.
“I have wandered widely, dared many deeds,
oft challenged the Regin;
now I need know
how Vafthruthnir lives in his hall.”

Frigg

4.
“Then fare forth whole and return whole,
stay whole on the way.
May wod serve you, Life’s Father,
when you have words with the ettin.”

5.

“Odin fared forth to test the wisdom of the words
of the all-wise ettin.
He arrived at Im’s father’s hall,
and there Yggr strode in straightaway.”

Odin

6.
“Hail Vafthruthnir! I have come into your hall now
to see you for myself.
First of all I want to know whether you are learned,
ettin, whether you are all-wise.”

Vafthruthnir

7.
“What wight is this,
who hurls words
at me in my hall?
You will not leave unless you are wiser.”

Óðinn kvað:

8.

“Gagnráðr ek heiti; nú emk af göngu kominn
þyrstr til þinna sala,
laðar þurfi - hef ek lengi farit -
ok þinna andfanga, jötunn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

9.

“Hví þú þá, Gagnráðr, mælist af gólfi fyr?
Far þú í sess í sal!
þá skal freista, hvárr fleira viti,
gestr eða inn gamli þulr.”

Óðinn kvað:

10.

“Óauðigr maðr, er til auðigs kemr,
mæli þarft eða þegi;
ofmælgj mikil, hygg ek, at illa geti
hveim er við kaldrifjaðan kemr.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

11.

“Seg þú mér, Gagnráðr, alls þú á gólfi vill
þíns um freista frama,
hvé sá hestr heitir er hverjan dregr
dag of dróttmögu.”

Óðinn kvað:

12.

“Skínfaxi heitir, er inn skíra dregr
dag um dróttmögu;
hesta beztr þykkir hann með Hreiðgotum,
ey lýsir mön af mari.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

13.

“Seg þú þat, Gagnráðr, alls þú á gólfi vill
þíns um freista frama,
hvé sá jór heitir, er austan dregr
nótt of nýt regin.”

Óðinn kvað:

14.

“Hrímfaxi heitir, er hverja dregr
nótt of nýt regin;
méldropa fellir hann morgin hvern;
þaðan kemr döggr um dala.”

Odin

8.

“Gagnrath, I am called,
and I come thirsty from my faring
into your hall. I need a welcome, ettin,
and your reception, for I have fared far.”

Vafthruthnir

9.

“Why then, Gagnrath, do you speak from the floor?
Have a seat in the hall,
then we shall see whether guest
or aged sage has greater wit.”

Odin

10.

“Let the poor man who visits the wealthy man
say what is needed and not.
Those who come against the cold-ribbed,
bring themselves evil by bragging, I think.”

Vafthruthnir

11.

“Tell me Gagnrath, since you want
to test your might from the floor:
what is that horse called,
who draws the day over mankind?”

Odin

12.

“Shining Mane”, he is called, who draws the day
through the sky and over mankind each day.
To the Hreithgoths he seems the finest.
That mare’s mane shines.”

Vafthruthnir

13.

“Tell me Gagnrath, since you want
to test your might from the floor:
What do they call the horse
who draws night from the east to the good Regin?”

Odin

14.

“Rime-Mane” he is called,
who so draws.
He slavers foam each morning;
thence come dewes to the dales.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

15.

Seg þú þat, Gagnráðr, alls þú á gólfi vill
þíns um freista frama,
hvé sú á heitir, er deilir með jötna sonum
grund ok með goðum.”

Óðinn kvað:

16.

“Ífingr heitir á, er deilir með jötna sonum
grund ok með goðum;
opin renna hon skal um aldrdaga;
verðrat íss á á.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

17.

Seg þú þat, Gagnráðr, alls þú á gólfi vill
þíns um freista frama,
hvé sá völlr heitir er finnask vígi at
Surtr ok in svásu goð.”

Óðinn kvað:

18.

“Vígriðr heitir völlr, er finnask vígi at
Surtr ok in svásu goð;
hundrað rasta hann er á hverjan veg,
sá er þeim völlr vitaðr.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

19.

“Fróðr ertu nú, gestr, far þú á bekk jötuns,
ok mælumk í sessi saman,
höfði veðja vit skulum höllu í,
gestr, um geðspeki.

Óðinn kvað:

20.

“Seg þú þat it eina, ef þitt æði dugir
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan jörð um kom eða upphiminn
fyrst, inn fróði jötunn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

21.

“Ór Ymis holdi var jörð um sköpuð,
en ór beinum björg,
himinn ór hausi ins hrímkalda jötuns,
en ór sveita sær.”

Vafthruthnir

15.

“Tell me Gagnrath, since you want
to test your might from the floor:
What is the river called, that divides the realms
of the Gods from that of the sons of ettins?”

Odin

16.

“Ifing, that river is called,
that divides the realm of the ettin’s sons
from that of the Gods.
Forever it will run free, never iced over.”

Vafthruthnir

17.

“Tell me Gagnrath, since you want to test
your might from the floor:
What do they call the field, where Surt
and the beloved Gods shall meet for war?”

Odin

18.

“Vigrith, they call the field,
where Surt and the beloved Gods shall meet for war.
The field allotted them is
a hundred leagues in all directions.”

Vafthruthnir

19.

“You are quite learned, my guest. Now come
to the ettin’s bench, and let us speak seated.
We two shall wager our heads in the hall,
my guest, over wisdom.”

Odin

20.

“Tell me this first, Vafthruthnir,
if inspiration serves you, and you know;
How did the earth and the heavens
first come to be, oh wise ettin?”

Vafthruthnir

21.

“Earth was shaped from Ymir’s flesh,
mountains from his legs, and heaven
from the skull of the rime-cold ettin,
and the sea from his blood.”

Óðinn kvað:

22.

“Seg þú þat annat, ef þítt æði dugir
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan máni kom, sá er ferr menn yfir,
eða sól it sama.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

23.

“Mundilfari heitir, hann er mána faðir
ok svá Sólar it sama;
himin hverfa þau skulu hverjan dag
öldum at ártali.”

Óðinn kvað:

24.

“Seg þú þat it þriðja, alls þik svinnan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan dagr um kom, sá er ferr drótt yfir,
eða nótt með niðum.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

25.

“Dellingr heitir, hann er Dags faðir,
en Nótt var Nörvi borin;
ný ok nið skópu nýt regin
öldum at ártali.”

Óðinn kvað:

26.

“Seg þú þat it fjórða, alls þik fróðan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan vetr um kom eða varmt sumar
fyrst með fróð regin.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

27.

“Vindsvalr heitir, hann er Vetrar faðir,
en Svásuðr sumars.”

Óðinn kvað:

28.

“Seg þú þat it fimmta, alls þik fróðan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hverr ása elztr eða Ymis niðja
yrði í árdaga.”

Odin

22.

“Tell me a second, if inspiration serves you,
Vafthruthnir, and you know:
how the moon faring over men,
and also how the sun, came into being?”

Vafthruthnir

23.

“The father of the moon
is named “Mundilfari.”
He is the father of the sun as well.
They turn the heavens every day and tally time.”

Odin

24.

“Tell me a third, Vafthruthnir, for they say
you are wise, and that you know:
How did day that fares over men, the night,
and the moons come into being?”

Vafthruthnir

25.

“Delling he is called who is father of day.
Night was born of Norvi. The Regin
shaped the new and waning moons
for men to tally time.”

Odin

26.

“Tell me the fourth, since they say, Vafthruthnir,
that you are wise, and that you know:
how did the winter and warm summer
first come into being among the wise Regin?”

Vafthruthnir

27.

“Vindsval he is called, who is winter’s father,
and summer’s is Svasuth.
Vindsval was born by Vasuth
whose kin are cold-ribbed.”

Odin

28

“Tell me the fifth, since you say you are wise,
Vafthruthnir, and that you know:
Who was the eldest of the ettins,
of the kin of Ymir, in the days if yore?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

29.

“Örófi vetra áðr væri jörð sköpuð,
þá var Bergelmir borinn,
Þrúðgelmir var þess faðir,
en Aurgelmir afi.”

Óðinn kvað:

30.

“Seg þú þat it séttu, alls þik svinnan kveða,
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan Aurgelmir kom með jötna sonum
fyrst, inn fróði jötunn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

31.

“Ór Élivagum stukku eitrdropar,
svá óx, unz varð ór jötunn;
þar eru órar ættir kómnar allar saman;
því er þat æ allt til atalt.”

Óðinn kvað:

32.

“Seg þú þat it sjaunda, alls þik svinnan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvé sá börn gat, inn baldni jötunn,
er hann hafðit gýgjar gaman.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

33.

“Undir hendi vaxa kváðu hrímþursi
mey ok mög saman;
fótr við föeti gat ins fróða jötuns
sexhöfðaðan son.”

Óðinn kvað:

34.

“Seg þú þat it átta, alls þik svinnan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvat þú fyrst of mant eða fremst um veitzt,
þú ert alsviðr, jötunn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

35.

Örófi vetra áðr væri jörð um sköpuð,
þá var Bergelmir borinn;
þat ek fyrst of man, er sá inn fróði jötunn
á var lúðr um lagiðr.”

Vafþrúðnir

29.

“During the countless winters,
before the earth was shaped,
Bergelmir was born, his father was Thruthgelmir,
and his father was Aurgelmir.”

Odin

30.

“Tell me the sixth, Vafþrúðnir,
since you say you are wise, and that you know:
from whence came Aurgelmir and the sons of ettins
in the beginning, oh wise ettin?”

Vafþrúðnir

31.

“Drops of venom sprang from Eliveg
and increased until an ettin arose.
Therefrom comes our entire tribe,
and our fierceness.”

Odin

32.

“Tell me a seventh, Vafþrúðnir,
since they say you are wise, and that you know:
how did the unruly ettin beget children
when he had not the pleasure of an ogress?”

Vafþrúðnir

33.

“Under the hands of the Rime-thurs
they say a daughter and son grew together.
Foot with foot, the wise ettin
begat a six-headed son.”

Odin

34.

“Tell me an eighth, Vafþrúðnir,
since they say you are wise, and that you know:
what is your first memory, your earliest knowledge,
since you are wise, ettin?”

Vafþrúðnir

35.

“In the endless winter,
before the shaping of the world,
Bergelmir was born. First thing I can recall
is the wise ettin being set in a flour-bin.”

Óðinn kvað:

36.

“Seg þú þat it níunda, alls þik svinnan kveða
ok þú, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan vindr um kemr, svá at ferr vág yfir;
æ menn han sjálfan um sjá.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

37.

“Hræsvelgr heitir, er sitr á himins enda,
jötunn í arnar ham;
af hans vængjum kvæða vind koma
alla menn yfir.”

Óðinn kvað:

38.

“Seg þú þat it tíunda, alls þú tíva rök
öll, Vafþrúðnir, vitir,
hvaðan Njörðr um kom með ása sonum
- hofum ok hörgum hann ræðr hunnmörgum -
ok varðat hann ásum alinn.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

39.

“Í Vanaheimi skópu hann vís regin
ok seldu at gíslingu goðum;
í aldar rök hann mun aftr koma
heim með vísnum vönum.”

Óðinn kvað:

40.

“Seg þú þat et ellifta hvar ýtar túnum í
höggvask hverjan dag;
val þeir kjósa ok ríða vígi frá,
sitja meirr um sáttir saman.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

41.

“Allir einherjar Óðins túnum í
höggvask hverjan dag;
val þeir kjósa ok ríða vígi frá,
sitja meirr um sáttir saman.”

Óðinn kvað:

42.

“Seg þú þat it tólfta, hví þú tíva rök
öll, Vafþrúðnir, vitir;
frá jötna rúnum ok allra goða
segir þú it sannasta,
inn alsvinni jötunn.”

Odin

36.

“Tell me a ninth Vafthruthnir, since they say
you are wise, and that you know,
where does the wind come from which wends
over waves, but is itself unseen by men?”

Vafthruthnir

37.

“He is called Hraesvelg, who sits at heaven’s end,
an ettin in eagle’s shape.
They say the wind wafts from his
wings and over mankind.”

Odin.

38.

“Tell me a tenth, Vafthruthnir,
since you know the deeds of all the gods:
how did Njorth come to be among the sons of Ases?
His hofs and harrows are innumerable,
but he was not begotten by the Ases.”

Vafthruthnir

39.

“He was shaped in Vanaheim by wise Regin
who gave him as hostage to the gods.
In the last age he will return
home to the wise Vanir.”

Odin

40.

“Tell me an eleventh:
What men fare
into the field to kill
each other each day.”

Vafthruthnir

41.

“All the einherjar slay one another
in Odin’s field each day.
They choose the slain, then ride from the fight,
and sit as friends.”

Odin

42.

“Tell me the twelfth, how you know, the deeds
of all the Gods, Vafthruthnir, since you know.
Since say you are the wisest in the runes
of the ettins and all the Gods,
oh all-wise ettin.”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

43.

“Frá jöttna rúnum ok allra goða
ek kann segja satt,
þvíat hvern hefi ek heim um komit;
nú kom ek heima fyr Níflhel neðan;
hinig deyja ór helju halir.”

Óðinn kvað:

44.

“Fjölð ek fór, fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin:
Hvat lifir manna, þá er inn mæra líðr
fimbulvetr með firum?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

45.

“Líf ok Lifþrasir, en þau leynask munu
í holti Hoddmímis;
morgindöggvar þau sér at mat hafa;
en þaðan af aldir alask.”

Óðinn kvað:

46.

“Fjölð ek fór, fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin:
Hvaðan kemr sól á inn slétta himin,
er þessa hefir Fenrir farit?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

47.

“Eina dóttur berr alfröðull,
áðr hana Fenrir fari;
sú skal ríða, þá er regin deyja,
móður brautir, mær.”

Óðinn kvað:

48.

“Fjölð ek fór, fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin:
Hverjar ro þær meyjar, er líða mar yfir,
fróðgeðjaðar fara?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

49.

“Þrjár þjóðár falla þorp yfir
meyja Møgþrasis,
hamingjur einar þeira í heimi eru
þó þær með jötnum alask.”

Vafthruthnir

43.

“From the runes of ettins and all the Gods
I can speak the truth,
for I have been about in the world.
I wandered the nine worlds, and way down in Niflhel
to where the heroes of Hel die.”

Odin

44.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared,
oft have I tested the Regin.
What man will live, when the great fimbulvetr
comes to mankind?”

Vafthruthnir

45.

“Lif and Lfthrasir, they shall hide
Hoddmimir in the woods.
They shall have the morning dews as their meat.
So shall mankind be nourished.”

Odin

46.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared,
oft have I tested the Regin.
How comes the sun to smooth heaven
once it is killed by Fenrir?”

Vafthruthnir

47.

“Alfrothul will bear one daughter
before she is killed by Fenrir.
When the Regin die, that maid will ride
the wilderness ways of her mother.”

Odin

48.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared,
oft have I tested the Regin.
Who are the wise minded maidens
who fare over the sea?”

Vafthruthnir

49.

“Three tribes of maidens descended
over Mothgras’ village.
They bring hamingja to their homes,
though they are ettin’s ilk.”

Óðinn kvað:

50.

“Fjölð ek fór fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin;
Hverir ráða æsireignum goða,
þá er sloknar Surtalogi?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

51.

“Víðarr ok Váli byggja vé goða,
þá er sloknar Surtalogi,
Móði ok Magni skulu Mjöllni hafa
Vingnis at vígþroti.”

Óðinn kvað:

52.

“Fjölð ek fór fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin;
Hvat verðr Óðni at aldragi,
þá er rjúfask regin?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

53.

“Úlfr gleypa mun Aldaföðr,
þess mun Víðarr vreaka;
kalda kjafta hann klyfja mun
vitnis vígi at.”

Óðinn kvað:

54.

“Fjölð ek fór fjölð ek freistaðak,
fjölð ek reynda regin;
Hvat mælti Óðinn, áðr á bál stigi,
síalfr í eyra syni?”

Vafþrúðnir kvað:

55.

“Ey manni þat veit, hvat þú í árdaga
sagðir í eyra syni;
feigum munnni mæltu ek mína forna stafi
ok um ragna rök;
Nú ek við Óðin deildak mína orðspeki;
þú ert æ vísastr vera.”

Odin

50.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared,
oft have I tested the Regin.
Which Ases shall rule the land
when the fire of Surt is slaked?”

Vafthruthnir

51.

“Vithar and Vali shall dwell in the ve of the Gods
when the fire of Surt is slaked.
Mothi and Magni shall have Mjolnir
to wield after the battle.”

Odin

52.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared,
oft have I tried the Regin.
Who shall bring death to Odin
when the Regin are ruined?”

Vafthruthnir

53.

“Then the wolves will gulp down Allfather,
but Vithar will venge him.
He shall cleave the cold jaws
of the wolf in combat.”

Odin

54.

“Far have I fared, much have I dared
oft have I tested the Regin.
What did Odin say to the ears of his son
before he was hoisted to the pyre?”

Vafthruthnir

55.

“No man knows that which you spoke
to your son in the days of yore.
It was with a doomed mouth
that I told old staves and spoke of Ragnarok.
Now I have exchanged my wisdom
in words with Odin. You are the wisest.”

Lay of Vafthruthnir: Notes

1. Vafthruthnir=powerful in weaving or entangling.
2. Herfather=Warfather=Odin
4. Odin is the father of madness or inspiration. The word *oth* in Odin's name or *wod* in Woden's name means madness or fury which were considered the essence of inspired mental activity.
5. Ygg is a name for Odin meaning "awesome."
11. The concept of the sun as a shining disc drawn on a cart has existed in Europe at least since the Bronze Age as evidenced by the Trundhøime Chariot which is a bronze statue of a horse drawn chariot bearing a gold covered disc.
12. It is not known who the Hreith-Goths were.
16. Because it is never iced over it is never easily crossed. This may be the same as the sound in the Harbarth's Lioth which also separates Gods and ettins.
17. Vigrith is mentioned in Gylf. 51.
18. Gylf. 11 and Skd 26 both have Mundilfari as the father of the sun and the moon.
19. On Delling see Gylf. 10 and Hav. 160.
29. Aurgelmir is Ymir.
31. Elivag=Ice-Waves is the name of the primal stream that flowed from the north and met with fire in Ginnungagap to form Ymir. In Hym. 5 Hymir is said to dwell east of Elivag. This is likely one of the rivers that separates cosmic realms and empties into one of the seas that separate the worlds. If Hymir dwells to the east of it, Elivag must flow between Ettinhome and Midgard.
35. This passage is not entirely clear and we can not be certain that it was a flour bin that Bergelmir is set in here. The flour bin may be the same as the millstone described in Gylf on which Bergelmir floated to safety when the rest of his kin was drowned in the blood of Ymir.
39. Regin must refer to an Odinic trinity here since the Ases as a whole are mentioned in the next line.

Njorth was given to the Ases as a hostage after the war between the Vanes and the Aesir. See Gylf. 23 and Yng. 4
41. Einherjar-see glossary.
42. The ettins and elves have some runic knowledge as indicated by Hav. 143.
43. Like Odin, Vafthruthnir fares forth into the nine worlds in search of wisdom.
44. Fimbulvetr=Great Winter is a severe winter that lasts three years that lasts three years and precedes Ragnarok.
45. Hoddmimir may be a name for Yggdrasil.

49. On Hamingja, see glossary. The identity of these three maidens cannot be established. They may be Norns, Dises, or beings similar to the nine maidens of Lyfjaberg.

51. On Ve, see glossary.

Grímnismál

Frá sonum Hraðungs konungs. Hraðungr konungr átti tvá sonu. Hét annarr Agnarr, en annarr Geirröðr. Agnarr var tíu vetra, en Geirröðr átta vetra. Þeir reru tveir á báti með dorgar sínar at smáfiski. Vindr rak þá í haf út. Í náttmyrkri brutu þeir við land ok gengu upp, fundu kotbónda einn. Þar váru þeir um veturinn. Kerling fósttraði Agnar, en karl fósttraði Geirröð ok kendi hánom ráð.

At vári fékk karl þeim skip. En er þau kerling leiddu þá til strandar, þá mælti karl einmæli við Geirröð. Þeir fengu byr ok kómu til stöðva föður síns. Geirröðr var fram í skipi. Hann hljóp upp á land, en hratt út skipinu ok mælti: “Farðu nú, þar er smyl hafi þik.” Skipit rak í haf út, en Geirröðr gekk upp til bæjar. Honum var vel fagnat, en þá var faðir hans andaður. Var þá Geirröðr til konungs tekinn ok varð maðr ágætr.

Óðinn ok Frigg sátu í Hliðsjálfu ok sáu um heima alla. Óðinn mælti: “Sér þú Agnar fósttra þinn, hvar hann elr börn við gýgi í hellinum, en Geirröðr fósttra minn er konungr ok sitr nú at landi?” Frigg segir: “Hann er matníðingr sá, at hann kvelr gesti sína, ef honum þykkja of margir koma.” Óðinn segir, at þat er in mesta lygi. Þau veðja um þetta mál.

Frigg sendi eskismey sína Fullu, til Gerröðar. Hon bað konung varast, at eigi fyrirgerði honum fjölkunnugr maðr, sá er þar var kominn í land, ok sagði þat mark á, at engi hundr var svá ólmr at á hann myndi hlaupa. En þat var inn mesti hégómi, at Geirröðr væri eigi matgóðr, ok þó lætr konungr hann handtaka þann mann, er eigi vildu hundar á ráða. Sá var í feldi blám ok nefndist Grímnir, og sagði ekki fleira frá sér, þótt hann væri at spurðr. Konungr lét hann þína til sagna ok setja milli elda tveggja, ok sat hann þar átta nætr.

Geirröðr konungr átti þá son tíu vetra gamlan, ok hét Agnarr eftir bróður hans. Agnarr gekk at Grímni ok gaf honum horn fullt at drekka ok sagði, at konungr gerðir illa, er hann þíndi þenna mann saklausan. Grímnir drakk af. Þá var eldrinn svá kominn, at feldrinn brann af Grímni. Hann kvað:

Lay of Grimnir

King Hrauthung had two sons, one was called Agnar and the other Geirroth. Agnar was ten years old and Geirroth eight. The two rowed out on a boat with tackle to angle for small fish. The wind blew them into the ocean. In the murk of the night they were wrecked on a shore. They walked inland, where they found a farmer and spent the winter. The woman fostered Agnar and the man raised Geirroth and gave him rede.

In the spring the man got a ship for them. When the farmers led them to the shore, the man spoke alone with Geirroth. They took a fair wind and arrived at their father's harbor. Geirroth was at the bow of the ship and leapt ashore and pushed the ship back shouting “Go now! Go out into the sea and be taken by Smyl.” The boat drifted away and Geirroth strode up to the town where he was well received, although his father had died. Geirroth became king quite famous.

Odin and Frigg sat on Hlithskjalf and looked over all the worlds. Odin spoke: “Do you see Agnar your foster son, how he begets children with a giantess in a cave, while Geirroth, my foster son, sits as king of the land.” Frigg said: “He is so stingy with food that he starves his guests if he thinks that there are too many.” Odin said that was a huge lie. They made a wager on this matter.

Frigg sent her maid servant, Fulla, to Geirroth. She bade the king watch himself lest a man cunning in sorcery bewitch him. She said he was coming to his land and would be marked out in that no hound was so savage as to attack him. It was a great falsehood that Geirroth was not generous with his food. Nevertheless, he had bound the man whom the dogs would not attack. The man wore a blue cloak and called himself Grimnir but would say no more about himself even though he was asked. He tortured him to make him talk and then set him between two fires where he stayed for eight nights.

King Geirroth had a son who was ten winters old whom he named Agnar after his brother. Agnar walked over to Grim and gave him a full horn to drink from and said that it was wrong for the king to torture him since he was innocent. Grim drank and the fire flared up and burned his cloak. He said:

1.
 Heitr ertu, hripuðr ok heldr til mikill;
 göngumk firr, funi!
 Loði sviðnar, þótt ek á loft berak,
 brennumk felldr fyr.

2.
 Átta nætr sat ek milli elda hér,
 svá at mér manngi mat né bauð,
 nema einn Agnarr, er einn skal ráða,
 Geirröðar sonr, gotna landi.

3.
 Heill skaltu, Agnarr, alls þik heilan biðr
 Veratýr vera;
 eins drykkjar þú skalt aldri
 betri gjöld geta.

4
 Land er heilagt, er ek liggja sé
 ásum ok álfum nær
 en í Þrúðheimi skal Þór vera,
 unz um rjúfask regin.

5.
 Ýdalir heita þar er Ullur hefir
 sér um görva sali
 Álfheim Frey gáfu í árdaga
 tívar at tannféi.

6.
 Bær er sá inn þriði er blíð regin
 silfri þökðu sali;
 Valaskjálf heitir, er vélti sér
 áss í árdaga.

7.
 Sökkvabekkr heitir inn fjórði, en þar svalar knegu
 unnir yfir glymjja;
 þar þau Óðinn ok Sága drekka um alla daga
 glöð ór gullnum kerum.

8.
 Glaðsheimr heitir inn fimmti, þar er in gullbjarta
 Valhöll víð of þrumir;
 en þar Hrofr kýss hverjan dag
 vápndauða vera.

1.
 “You are a hot fire, and way too big.
 I drive you far away, Fire!
 The cloak is singed. Though I cast it aloft,
 the cloak burns before me.

2.
 Eight nights I sat between the fires.
 No man dealt me food, except for Agnar alone,
 the son of Geirroth
 he alone shall rule the land of the Goths.

3.
 Hail Agnar! Veratyr
 bids you greetings.
 You will never get
 better payment for a single drink.

4.
 The land I see lying
 near the Ases and the elves is holy.
 In Thruthheim Thor shall dwell until
 the ruin of the Regin.

5.
 Yew Dales is the place where Ull
 has made himself a hall.
 The Gods gave Elfhome to Frey,
 in the days of yore, as a tooth fee.

6.
 The third hall, built by the blithe Regin,
 thatched with silver,
 is called Valaskjalf, and was founded
 by the Ases in the days of yore.

7.
 Cold waves crash around the fourth
 which is called Sökkvabekk.
 Odin and Saga drink there gladly
 all their days from golden vessels.

8.
 The fifth is called Gladhome.
 There stands Valhalla fast and wide,
 where Hropt chooses
 the weapon slain each day.

9.
Mjök er auðkennt, þeim er til Óðins koma
salkynni at séa:
sköftum er rann reft, skjöldum er salr þakiðr
brynjum um bekki strát.
10.
Mjög er auðkennt, þeir er til Óðins koma
salkynni at séa:
vargr hangir fyr vestan dyrr
ok drúpir örn yfir.
11.
Þrymheimr heitir inn sétti, er Þjazi bjó,
sá inn ámáttki jötunn;
en nú Skaði byggvir, skír brúðr goða,
fornar tóftir föður.
12.
Breiðablik eru in sjaundu, en þar Baldr hefir
sér um gerva sali,
á því landi, er ek liggja veit
fæsta feiknstafi.
13.
Himinbjörg eru in áttu, en þar Heimdall
kveða valda véum;
þar vörðr goða drekkir í væru ranni
glaðr inn góða mjöð.
14.
Fólkvangr er inn níundi, en þar Freyja ræðr
sess kostum í sal;
hálfan val hún kýss hverjan dag,
en hálfan Óðinn á.
15.
Glitnir er inn tíundi, hann er gulli studdr
ok silfri þakðr it sama;
en þar Forseti byggir flestan dag
ok svæfir allar sakir.
16.
Nóatún eru in elliftu, en þar Njörðr hefir,
sér um görva sali;
manna þengill inn meins vani
hátimbruðum hörgi ræðr.
9.
It is well known to those who come to Odin
and see his hall that it is roofed
with spear shafts and shingled with shields
and the benches are strewn with mail.
10.
It is well known to those
who come to Odin to see his hall
that a warg hangs before the west door
and an eagle hovers above.
11.
The sixth is called Thrymheim,
where the terrible ettin Thiazi dwelled.
Now Skathi, bright bride of the gods,
lives there in the former abode of her father.
12.
Breiðablik is the Seventh, and that is where
Baldr built himself a hall.
I know that the fewest
of evils abide there.
13.
Heavencrag is the eighth. They say Heimdall
wards the holy steads there.
The God's warder drinks in that tranquil hall,
glad in good mead.
14.
The ninth is Folkvang, and there
Freyja assigns seats in the hall.
She chooses half the slain each day
and Odin has half.
15.
Glitnir is the tenth. Its studs are of gold
and the roof was shingled in silver.
Forseti sits there most of the day
and puts all strife to rest.
16.
Noatun is the eleventh, and that is where
Njorth built himself a hall.
The thingruler of men presides without crime
in the high-timbered hall.

17.

Hrísi vex ok háu grasi
Víðars land Viði;
en æar mögr of læzt af mars baki
frækn at hefna föður.

18.

Andhrímnir lætr í Eldhrímn
Sæhrímn soðinn,
fleska bezt; en þat fáir vitu,
við hvat einherjar alask.

19.

Gera ok Freka seðr gunntamiðr
hróðigr Herjaföður;
en við vín eitt vopngöfugr
Óðinn æ lifir.

20.

Huginn ok Muninn fljúga hverjan dag
Jörmungrund yfir;
óumk ek um Hugin at hann aftr né komit,
þó sjámk meir um Munin.

21.

Þýtr þund, unir þjóðvitis
fiskr flóði í;
árstraumr þykkir ofmikill
valglaumni at vaða.

22.

Valgrind heitir, er stendr velli á
heilög fyr helgum dyrum;
forn er sú grind, en þat fáir vitu,
hve hon er í lás lokin.

23.

Fimm hundruð dýra ok um fjórum tögum,
svá hygg ek á Valhöllu vera;
átta hundruð einherja ganga senn ór einum durum,
þá er þeir fara við vitni at vega.

24.

Fimm hundruð gólfa ok um fjórum tögum,
svá hygg ek Bilskirni með bugum;
ranna þeira er ek reft vita,
míns veit ek mest magar.

17.

Brushwood grows, and high grass in
Vithi, Vithar's land.
There the son, the stout one,
leapt from horseback eager to venge his father.

18.

Andhrimnir boils Sæhrimnir in Eldhrimnir.
Seahrimnir is the best of meats,
though not well known,
which the einherjar eat.

19.

Wise and battle-accustomed, famous warfather
feeds that to Geri and Freki,
but Odin the weapon-father
always lives on wine alone.

20.

Huginn and Muninn
fly over the earth each day.
I dread that Huginn may not come back,
though I fear more for Muninn.

21.

Thund roars and fish live
in the flood of Thiothvitnir.
That river's current seems too strong
for the throng of the slaughtered to wade.

22.

The gate that stands in the field
near the holy doors, is called Valgrind.
That gate is old and few know
what latch locks it.

23.

I think there are five-hundred
and forty doors in Valhalla.
Eight hundred einherjar shall sally forth
from a single door when they fight the wolf.

24.

I think there are five hundred and forty rooms
with rings in Bilskirni.
Of all the halls I know, the greatest ever built
was that of my son.

25.
Heiðrún heitir geit, er stendr höllu á
ok bítr af Læraðs limum;
skapker fylla hon skal ins skíra mjaðar;
kná at sú veig vanask.

26.
Eikþyrnir heitir hjörtr, er stendr höllu á
ok bítr af Læraðs limum;
en af hans hornum drypr í Hvergelmi,
þaðan eiga vötn öll vega:

27.
Síð ok Víð, Sækin ok Eikin,
Svöl ok Gunnþró,
Fjorm ok Fimbulþul,
Rín on Rennandi,
Gipul ok Göpul,
Gömul ok Geirvimul,
þær hverfa um hodd goða,
Þyn ok Vín, Þöll ok Höll,
Gráð ok Gunnþorin.

28.
Vína heitir ein, önnur Vegsvinn,
þriðja Þjóðnuma,
Nyt ok Nöt, Nönn ok Hrönn,
Slíð ok Hríð, Sylgr ok Ylgr,
Víð ok Ván, Vönd ok Strönd,
Gjöll ok Leiftr, þær falla gumnum nær,
er falla til Heljar héðan.

29.
Körmt ok Örmt ok Kerlaugar tvær,
þær skal Þórr vaða
dag hvern, er hann dæma ferr
at aski Yggdrasils,
því at ásbrú brenn öll loga,
heilög vötn hlóa.

30.
Gláðr ok Gyllir, Glær ok Skeiðbrimir,
Silfrintoppr ok Sinir,
Gísl ok Falhófnir, Gulltoppr ok Léttfeti,
þeim ríða æsir jóm
dag hvern, er þeir dæma fara
at aski Yggdrasils.

25.
Heithrun, the goat is called, who stands
in warfather's hall and eats of Laerath's limbs.
She fills the vat full of bright mead.
That drink cannot be drained.

26.
Eikthyrnir the hart is called who stands
in warfather's hall and eats of Laerath's limbs.
Drops fall from its horns to Hverglmir.
From there all waters have their ways.

27.
Sith and Vith, Soekin and Eikinn,
Svol and Gunnthro,
Fjorm and Fimbulthul,
Rin and Rennandi,
Gipul and Gopul,
Gomul and Geirvimul,
turn about the hof of the Gods
with Thyn and Vin, Tholl and Holl,
Grath and Gunnthorinn.

28.
One is called Vina, another Vegsvinn,
a third Thiothunna.
Nyt and Not, Nonn and Hron,
Slith and Hrith, Sylg and Ylg,
Vith and Van, Vond and Strond,
and Gjoll and Leipt flow among men
and thence to Hel.

29.
Kormt and Ormt, and the two Kerlaugs,
these Thor shall wade each day
when he fares to doom at the ash Yggdrasil.
The bridge of the Gods
is all ablaze with fire
and the holy waters seethe.

30.
Glath and Gullir, Gler and Skeithbrimir,
Silvertop and Sinir, Gisl and Falhofnir,
Golltopp and Lettfeti,
these steeds the Aesir ride
when they fare to doom
each day at the ash Yggdrasil.

31.
 Þryjár rætr standa á þrjá vega
 undan aski Yggdrasils;
 Hel býr und einni, annarri hrímþursar,
 þriðju mennskir menn.

32.
 Ratatoskr heitir íkorni, er renna skal
 at aski Yggdrasils;
 arnar orð hann skal ofan bera
 ok segja Niðhöggvi niðr.

33.
 Hirtir eru ok fjórir, þeirs af hæfingar
 gaghálsir gnaga:
 Dáinn ok Dvalinn,
 Duneyrr ok Durathrór.

34.
 Ormar fleiri liggja und aski Yggdrasils,
 en þat of hyggi hverr ósviðra apa:
 Góinn ok Móinn, þeir eru Grafvitnis synir,
 Grábakr ok Grafvölluðr,
 Ófnir ok Sváfnir, hygg ek, at æ skyli
 meiðs kvistu má.

35.
 Askr Yggdrasilsdrýgir erfði
 meira en menn viti:
 hjörtr bítr ofan, en á hliðu fúnar,
 skerðir Niðhöggv neðan.

36.
 Hrist ok Mist vil ek at mér horn beri,
 Skeggjöld ok Skögul,
 Hildr ok Þrúðr, Hlökk ok Herfjötur,
 Göll ok Geirahöð,
 Randgríðr ok Ráðgríðr ok Reginleif;
 þær bera Einherjum öl.

37.
 Árvakr ok Alsviðr þeir skulu upp héðan
 svangir sól draga;
 en und þeira bógum fálu blíð regin,
 æsir, ísarnkol.

38.
 Svalinn heitir hann stendr sólu fyrir,
 skjöldr, skínanda goði;
 björg ok brim ek veit at brenna skulu,
 ef hann fellr í frá.

31.
 Three roots spread three ways
 under the ash Yggdrasil.
 Hel dwells beneath one, Rime Thurses
 beneath another, and human beings under the third.

32.
 Ratatosk the squirrel is called
 who runs on the Yggdrasil ash.
 He bares the words of the eagle above
 and tells them to Nithogg beneath.

33.
 There are four harts who gnaw
 with their necks thrown back.
 These are Dain and Dvalinn
 Duneyr and Durathror.

34.
 More worms lie under the Yggdrasil ash
 than unwise apes can imagine;
 Goinn and Moinn, the sons of Grafvitnir,
 Grabak and Grafvolluth, Ofnir and Svafnir.
 They shall always tear
 the twigs from that tree.

35.
 The distress endured by the Yggdrasil ash
 is more than men know.
 The hart bites from above, its side is rotting
 and Nithogg gnaws its roots from below.

36.
 Hrist and Mist will bare me the horn.
 Skeggjold and Skogul,
 Hild and Thruth, Hlok and Herfjotur,
 Goll and Geironul,
 Randgrith and Rathgrith, and Reginleif.
 These bear the ale to the einherjar.

37.
 Arvakr and Alsvith
 hungry shall draw up the sun.
 Under their bellies the blithe Regin,
 the Aesir, hid cold iron.

38.
 Svold he is called who stands before the sun.
 He is a shield for the shining Goddess.
 I know that mountain and Ocean would burn
 if he ever fell from there.

39.
Sköll heitir úlfr, er fylgir inu skírleita goði
til varna viðar,
en annarr Hati, hann er Hróðvitnis sonr,
sá skal fylgja heiða brúði himins.

40.
Ór Ymis holdi ver jörð um sköpuð,
en ór sveita sær,
björg ór beinum, baðmr ór hári,
en ór hausum himinn.

41.
En ór hans brám gerðu blíð regin
Míðgarð manna sonum;
en ór hans heila váru þau in harðmóðgu
ský öll um sköpuð.

42.
Ullar hylli hefr ok allra goða
hverr er tekr fyrstr á funa,
því at opnir heimar verða um ása sonum,
þá er hefja af hvera.

43.
Ívalda synir gengu í árdaga
Skíðblaðni at skapa,
skipa best, skírum Frey,
nýtum Njarðar bur.

44.
Askr Yggdrasils, hann er æðstr viðar,
en Skíðblaðnir skipa
Óðinn ása, en jóa Sleipnir,
Bilröst brúa, en Bragi skálda,
Hábrók hauka, en hunda Garmr.

45.
Svipum hef ek nú ypt fyr sigtíva sonum,
við þat skal vilbjörg vaka;
öllum ásum þat skal inn koma
Ægis bekkir á,
Ægis drekkur at.

46.
Hétumk Grímnir, hétumk Gangleri,
Herjann ok Hjalmbéri,
Þekkr ok Þriði, Þuðr ok Uðr,
Herblindi ok Hár.

39.
The wolf is called Skoll who follows the shining God
to the wood of warning.
But Hati is the other, and he is the son of Hrothvitni,
and he shall follow the bright bride of heaven.

40.
The earth was shaped from Ymir's flesh,
from his blood the sea,
hills from his bones, trees from his hair,
the sky from his skull.

41.
From his brow the blithe Regin
made Midgard for the sons of men.
From his brain they shaped
all the angry clouds.

42.
Ull and all the Gods will befriend him
who first takes it off the fire,
for the worlds are opened to the sons of Ases
when they heave off the kettle.

43.
The sons of Ivaldi went forth in the days of yore
to shape Skithblathni
the best of ships for Frey,
the noble son of Njorth.

44.
The Yggdrasil ash is the best of trees,
Skithblathnir of ships,
Odin of Ases, Sleipnir of Horses,
Bifrost of Bridges, Bragi of Skalds,
Habrok of hawks and Garm of hounds.

45.
Now I look up to the sons of the victory gods
and thereby awaken help
from all the Aesir who come
to Aegir's bench
for Aegir's drink.

46.
I am called Grim, and Gangleri,
Herjan and Hjalmbéri,
Þekkr and Þrithi, Thuth and Uth,
Helblindi and Har.

47.
Saðr ok Svipall ok Sanngetall,
Herteitr ok Hnikarr,
Bileygr, Báleygr, Bölverkr, Fjölñir,
Grímr ok Grímnir, Glapsviðr ok Fjölsviðr;

48.
Síðhötr, Síðskeggr, Sigföðr, Hnikuðr,
Alföðr, Valföðr, Atríðr ok Farmatýr.
Einu nafni hétumk aldregi,
síz ek með fólkuð fó.

49.
Grímnir mik hétu at Geirröðar,
en Jálk at Ásmundar,
en þá Kjalarr, er ek kjálka dró;
þrórr þingum at,
Viðurr at vígum,
Óski ok Ómi, Jafnharr ok Biflindi,
Göndlir ok Hárbarðr með goðum.

50.
Sviðurr ok Sviðrir er ek hét at Sökkmímis,
ok dulðak ek þann inn aldna jötun,
þá er ek Miðvitnis vark ins mæra burar
orðinn einbani.

51.
Ölr ertu, Geirröðr, hefr þú ofdrukkitt;
miklu ertu hnugginn, er þú ert mínu gengi,
öllum Einherjum ok Óðins hylli.

52.
Fjöld ek þér sagðak, en þú fátt um mant,
of þik véla vinir;
ækir liggja ek sé míns vinar
allan í dreyra drifinn.

53.
Eggmóðan val nú mun Yggr hafa,
þitt veit ek líf um liðit;
úfar ro dísir, nú knáttu Óðin sjá,
nálgastru mik ef þú megir.

54.
Óðinn ek nú heiti, Yggr ek áðan hét,
Hétumk Þundr fyrir þat,
Vakr ok Skilfingr, Vafuðr ok Hroftatýr,
Gautr ok Jálkur með goðum,
Ófnir og Sváfnir, er ek hygg at orðnir sé
allir af einum mér.

47.
Sath and Svipal and Sanngetal,
Herteit and Hnikar,
Bileyg, and Baleyg, Bolverk and Fjolnir,
Grim and Grimnar, Glapsvith and Fjolsvith,

48.
Sithott and Sithskegg, Sigfather and Hnikuth,
Allfather and Valfather, Atrith and Farmatyr.
There is one name I have never been called
since I have fared among the folk.

49.
They call me Grimni at Geirroth's
and Jalk at Asmund's.
I was called Kjalarr when I drew the sled,
and Throrr at things,
Vithuth in battles,
Oski, Omi, Jafnharr and Biflindi,
Gondler and Harbarth among Gods.

50.
Svitharr and Svithrir I was called at Sökkmimi's,
the time I hid the old ettin
and had slain
the famous son of Mithvitnir.

51.
You are drunk Geirroth. You've drunk way too much.
You are quite bereft of the blessings
of all the einherjar and the friendship of Odin.

52.
I said much and you remembered little.
Friends betray you.
I see the sword of my friend
all sprayed with gore.

53.
A sword mown man will Ygg now have.
I know your life is through.
there are many Dises. Now you will be able
to see Odin—Move against me if you dare.

54.
I am called Odin and was called Ygg before.
I was named Thund before that.
Vakr and Skilfing, Vafuth and Hroptatyr,
Gautr and Jalk I was called by Gods.
Also I was called Ofnir and Svafnir.
I think they are all one in me.

Geirröðr konungr sat ok hafði sverð um kné sér, ok brugðit til miðs. En er hann heyrði at Óðinn var þar kominn, stóð hann upp ok vildi taka Óðinn frá eldinum. Sverðit slapp ór hendi honum ok vissu hjöltin niðr. Konungr drap fæti ok steyptist á fram, en sverðit stóð í gögnum hann, ok fékk hann bana. Óðinn hvarf þá. En Agnarr var þar konungr lengi síðan.

King Geirroth sat with his sword on his knees half un-sheathed. When he heard that it was Odin who had come, he stood up to try to take Odin from the fire. The sword fell forward and stood against him and took his life. Odin disappeared, but Agnar was king in the land for a long time.

Lay of Grimmir: Notes

Prose: Hlithskjalf is the high seat in Odin's hall from which Odin looks over the nine worlds. See SK Prose Introduction and the note to the prose introduction.

1. When Grim takes the drink the fire flares up and burned his cloak when the fire met the magically charged liquid in a magically charged space. As in Ginnungagap, this reaction brings about the shaping of a new being. Grim becomes more powerful at the end of the ordeal. After consuming the drink, which may be seen as the waters of Hverglmir from which change is brought about when it meets the fires of Muspell, Grim has power over fire.
2. In the winning of the Runes (Hav. 138-139) Odin hangs for nine nights and dealt neither bread nor drinking horn. Grim's casting off of the old cloak is symbolic of his casting off of his old identity to enter into a new level of being. Agnar's role is also that of an initiate. He is cast out -to the sea, away from human company, to live in an island in Ettinhome where he lives and has sexual union with a giantess. Just as he is fostered by a woman (Frigg) on the farm in Midgard, so he is fostered by a giantess in outgard. On the initiatory significance of union with women of outgard, see chapter 4. The cave is a symbol of the womb of the mother earth, into which he descends to undergo initiatory ordeals and to be reborn from the cave after union with the fetch soul in its contrasexual form as a giantess. Agnar begets progeny by the giantess in order to be reborn in the company of his brother Geirroth for the purpose of vengeance, just as Odin bears Vali to venge Baldr and Vithar as a means of surviving Ragnarok. See Voluspa and Baldr's Dream. Geirroth has a son whom he names Agnar who rescues Grim and thereby brings about the death of his father. The second Agnar is a rebirth of the first. After undergoing the transformation and reaching an important level of maturity, the younger Agnar passes an initiatory test by helping Grim and then receives priestly and kingly lore so that he can replace Geirroth as king.
3. Veratyr is a name for Odin and means "God of Mankind."
4. Elfhome is the heavenly abode of the Light Elves that is just beneath Asgard.
8. Gladhome is where the Gods first set up their judgement seats after they ordered the world. See Gylf. 14. This is where Asgard and Valhalla were established. The Gods meet at Urth's well beneath the world tree each day to give judgement. Hropt is one of Odin's names.
10. On wargs (ON vargr) see index.
11. The story of the slaying of Skathi's father Thiazi and Skathi's marriage to Njorth is told in detail in SKP 1.
12. These Ves (holy steeds) are in Asgard.
14. Freya is more similar to Odin than are many of the Aesir. She not only takes half the slain each day, but she also seeks inspiration and wields magic. It was she who taught Odin Seith.
15. According to Gylf. 32. Forseti is the son of Baldr and Nanna. Forseti may be the same as the God Fosites, the Frisian God whose sanctuary on the island Helgoland is mentioned in the *Life of Willibrord*. This passage is translated in *Grove and Gallows* by James Chisholm.
18. Andhrimnir is the fire that boils the sacred boar meat (Saehrimnir) in the kettle Eldhrimnir. Saehrimnir is eaten by the warriors in Valhalla, and like Thor's goats, is always whole again the next day.

19. Wine, like mead, is a metaphor for inspiration. Odin needs only inspiration. The rest of the wights must sustain themselves on meat, material of the manifest universe, as well as on spirit.
20. Huginn=thought and Muninn=memory. Odin fears most for memory because thought can not work effectively without it. Thought can be improved and developed with a good foundation in memory. These may be seen as the cognitive and creative sides of the brain. One who experiences only memory without thought finds himself in states of awe and terror at the chaotic and uncontrolled contents of his imagination. One with thought only is likely to experience only the present, unable to make connections between the present and the past.
21. Those who seek Valhalla but are not strong enough of are swept away by the current of Thund. This is the flood of Thjothvitnir (ON Great Wolf) who may be Fenrir. Thund may the river in Asgard that separates the abode of Fenrir from the Gods and may be one of the difficult barriers on the way to Valhalla. By means of Thund, the weaker souls are unable to gain entry into Valhalla. Since fish is a common skaldic kenning for sword, the fish may be taken as swords swimming in the blood they are drawing from Fenrir.
- 25-26. The waters drawn up by the roots of Yggdrasil are released by the harts and the goat Heithrun whose udders release the liquids in rivers back to the seas and wells that sustain the tree. These liquids are drawn back into Asgard by the tree to the leaves where they are again consumed and processed by the harts and goat.
26. Hvergelmir (roaring kettle) is the pool in Niflheim from which the primal waters that met with fire in Ginnungagap flowed. It is the source of numerous rivers that flow throughout the multiverse. It is clear that the lore of the rivers and waters of the multiverse was once part of body of lore concerning travel through the nine worlds. The rivers served both as boundaries between the worlds and as well as means of travel between the worlds. It is impossible to reconstruct this lore purely from the-written record. Those who would know must seek in the nine-worlds.
27. Sith=slow; Vith=broad; Soken=rushing forth; Eiken=raging; Svol=cold; Gunthro=battle brave; Fjorm=hasty; Fimbulthul=greatly roaring; Rin=Rhein; Geirvimol=teeming with serpents; Groth=greedy; Tholl=swelling; Thyn=roaring; Gunnthorn=battle-lusty.
- 27-28. The rivers in 27 flow to heaven while the rivers in 28 flow through Midgard and wind their ways to Hel.
- 28 These rivers are definitely from Hverglmir. According to Gylf. 4, Svol, Gunnthra, Fjorm, Fimbulthul, Slith, Hrith, Sylg, Ylg, Vith, Leipt and Gjoll run from Hverglmir to Hel. 30. The Gods ride magical steeds capable of leaping the fierce cosmic rivers which Thor wades. The Gods established twelve seats for moot in Gladhome at Ida-Dale near Urth's well
29. The Bifrost Bridge meets Asgard at the well of Urth, from whence these rivers flow, which seem to separate Urth's Well from the rest of Asgard. These waters boil and steam at this meeting place beneath the flaming rainbow bridge. 28 Vio=Wine Stream; Thiothunna=people swallower; Nyt=milk; Not=burning; Nonn=bold; Slith=fearful; Hrith=storming; Sylg=swallower; Ylgr=wolf; Vond=difficult; Gjoll=frenzied; Leipt=lightening.
31. Each root may be thought to bind three worlds and ends at one of the three cosmic wells. Urth's well is in Asgard; Mimir's well is in Ettinhome, and Hverglmir is in Niflheim.
- The worlds bound by the three main roots include A) Asgard, Light-Elfhome, and Midgard B) Hel, Muspelheim and Niflheim C) Vanaheim, Dwarfhome and Ettinhome. The roots binding the nine worlds may be visualized as the triangles of the valknut (knot of the slain).
32. Nithogg=The One Who Strikes Down.

34. Likely the serpents of Hverglmir.
36. Mist=misty; Skeggold=battle age; Hild=battle; Thruth=The Strong; Hlok=battling; Herfjotur=warfetter; Goll=Shrieking; Geironal=spear storming; Randgrith=shield fierce; Rathgrith=planwrecker.
37. Arvakr=Early Waker; Alsvith=Very Swift
39. Skoll pursues the sun and Hati pursues the moon.
42. This stanza speaks of sacrifice. In this context Odin is a sacrifice waiting to be heaved from the flames and the wisdom of Odin is thereby opened to Agnar.
43. The sons of Ivaldi are the dwarves who made some of the God's most powerful tools and weapons, including Sif's hair, Skithblathnir, and Gungnir. See Gylf. 35.
44. Skithblathnir is a ship given to Frey by dwarves known as the sons of Ivaldi that always has a fair wind, sails over land and sea, carries all of the Gods in all of their armor, and can be folded up like a piece of cloth.
- 48-51 is a list of some of the many names of Odin. The following is a list of translations for those that are translatable. Grim=mask; Gangleri=Wayweary; Herrjan=Warrior; Hjalmbéri=Helmbearer; Thekk=Welcomed one; Thrithi=Third; Thuth=Thin; Uth=Wave; Har=One-eyed; Sath=Truthful; Svipal=Changeable; Sanngetal=Truthfinder; Herteit=Glad in Battle; Hnikar=Thruster; Bileyg=One-Eyed; Baleyg=Fiery-Eyed; Bolverk=Worker of bale; Fjólnir=One who Hides in Furs; Grim=Hood; Fjolsvith=Shape-shifter?; Sithott=Long-Hood; Sithskegg=Long-Beard; Sigfathir=Victory-Father; Hnikuth=Thruster; Atrith=One who charges by horse-back; Harbarth=Grey-Beard; Gondlir=Gand-Wielder; Svithrir=The Wise Svithat=Sage.
54. Vak=Wakeful; Ofnir=Weaver; Svafnir=One who puts to sleep.

Skírnismál

Freyr, sonr Njarðar, hafði einn dag sett í Hliðskjálf, ok sá um heima alla. Hann sá í Jötunheima, ok sá þar mey fagra, þá er hon gekk frá skála föður síns til skemmu. Þar af fekk hann hugsóttir miklar. Skírnir hét skósveinn Freys. Njörðr bað hann kveðja Frey máls.

Þá mælti Skaði:

1.
“Rístu nú, Skírnir, ok gakk skjótt at beiða
okkarn mála mög
ok þess at fregna, hveim inn fróði sé
ofreiði afi.”

Skírnir kvað:

2.
“Illra orða er mér ón at ykkrum syni,
ef ek geng at mæla við mög
ok þess at fregna, hveim inn fróði sé
ofreiði afi.”

3.
“Segðu mér þat, Freyr, fólkvaldi goða,
ok ek vilja vita:
Hví þú einn sitr endlanga sali,
minn dróttinn, um daga?”

Freyr kvað:

4.
“Hví um segjak þér, seggr inn ungi,
mikinn móðtrega?
Því at álfröðull ýsir um alla daga
ok þeygi at mínum munum.”

Skírnir kvað:

5.
“Muni þína hykka ek svá mikla vera,
at þú mér, seggr, né segir,
því at ungir saman várum í árdaga;
vel mættim tveir trúask.”

Freyr kvað:

6.
“Í Gymis görðum ek ganga sá
mér tíða mey;
armar lýstu, en af þaðan
allt loft ok lögr.”

Lay of Skirnir

Frey, the son of Njorth, had sat in Hliðskjálf, and saw over all the worlds. He looked into Ettinhome, and there he saw a beautiful maid going out of her father's hall and into her bower. From this he fell to a deep depression. Frey's servant was called Skirnir. Njorth bade him to ask Frey to speak.

Skathi said:

1.
“Rise now Skirnir and go and bid
my son to speak.
Ask the wise one
with whom he is angry.”

Skirnir said:

2.
“Evil words will I have from your son
if I go to speak with the lad
and ask the wise one
with whom he is angry.”

3.
“Tell me Frey, warleader of the gods,
what I wish to know.
Why do you sit alone, sad in the hall,
all day long my drighten.”

Frey said:

4.
“How do I tell you, oh young hero,
of my heartache?
It is because the elfbeam shines all day
and yet not on my heart.”

Skirnir said:

5.
“I do not think that your love is so very great
that you cannot tell me about it, hero,
for when we were young in days of yore
well could we trust each other.”

Frey said:

6.
“In Gymir's halls I saw
the beloved maid walk before me
and from there her arms brightened
the sky and the sea.”

7.

“Mær er mér tíðari en manna hveim
ungum í árdaga;
ása ok álfa þat vill engi maðr
at vit samt séim.”

Skírnir kvað:

8.

“Mar gefðu mér þá þann er mik um myrkvan beri
vísan vafrröga,
ok þat sverð, er sjálft vegisk
við jötna ætt.”

Freyr kvað:

9.

“Mar ek þér þann gef, er þik um myrkvan berr
vísan vafrröga,
ok þat sverð, er sjálft mun vegask
ef sá er horskr, er hefr”

Skírnir mælti við hestinn:

10.

“Myrkt er úti, mál kveð ek okkr fara
úrig fjöll yfir,
þursa þjóð yfir;
báðir við komumsk, eða okkr báða tekr
sá inn ámáttki jötunn.”

Skírnir reið í Jötunheima til Gymisgarða. Þar váru hundar ólmir, ok bundnir fyrir skíðgarðs hliði, þess er um sal Gerðar var. Hann reið at þar, er féhirðir sat á haugi, og kvaddi hann:

11.

“Segðu þat, hirðir, er þú á haugi sitr
ok varðar alla vega:
Hvé ek at andspillir komumsk ins unga mans
fyr greyjum Gymis?”

Hirðir kvað:

12.

“Hvart ertu feigr, eða ertu framgenginn?
Andspillir vanr þú skalt æ vera
góðrar meyar Gymis.”

Skírnir kvað:

13.

“Kostir ro betri heldr en at klökkva sé,
hveim er fúss er fara;
einu dægri mér var aldr um skapaðr
ok allt líf um lagit.”

7.

“The maid is more beloved to me
than maid has been to any man in elder days.
Neither Ase nor elf nor any man
desires that we have this arrangement.”

Skírnir said:

8.

“Give me the steed then, that can bear me
through the darkness and the famous flickering flame
and give me the sword that swings itself
against the tribe of ettins.”

Freyr said:

9.

“I give you the horse to bear you
over the darkness and the famous flickering flame,
and the sword that swings itself
if wise the wielder.”

Skírnir spoke to his horse:

10.

“It is dark outside. Now I say, let us fare forth
over the wet fell
over the tribe of thurses.
Both of us shall arrive or the great ettin
will take the two of us.”

Skírnir rode into Ettinhome until he came to the yard of Gymir where there were savage hounds tied to the wooden posts of the gate that stood before Gerth's hall. He rode up to the shepherd sitting on the howe and spoke to him:

11.

“Tell me herdsman, you who sits on the howe hill,
who wards all the ways,
how we may come to speak with the young maid
beyond the grey hounds of Gymir.”

Hirðir said:

12.

“Are you death bound or are you dead?
You shall always lack
the company of the good maid of Gymir.”

Skírnir said:

13.

“It is better to be a hero
than to whine for he who wishes to travel.
My age was shaped to the day
and a long life was allotted me.”

Gerðr kvað:

14.
“Hvat er þat hlym hlymjá, er ek heyrir nú til
ossum rönnum í?
Jörð bifask, en allir fyrir
skjálfa garðar Gymis.”

Ambátt kvað:

15.
“Maðr er hér útistiginn af mars baki
jó lætr til jarðar taka.”

Gerðr kvað:

16.
“Inn bið þú hann ganga í okkarn sal
ok drekka inn mæra mjöð;
þó ek hitt óumk, at hér úti sé
minn bróðurbani.”

17.

“Hvat er þat álfa né ása sona
né víssa vana?
Hví þú einn um komt eikinn fúr yfir
ór salkynni at séa?”

Skírnir kvað:

18.
“Emkat ek álfa né ása sona
né víssa vana;
þó ek einn um komt eikinn fúr yfir
yður salkynni at séa.”

19.

“Epli ellifu hér hef ek algullin,
þau mun ek þér, Gerðr, gefa,
frið at kaupa, at þú þér Frey kveðir
óleiðastan lifa.”

Gerðr kvað:

20.
“Epli ellifu ek þigg aldregi
at mannskis munum,
né vit Freyr, meðan okkart fjör lifir,
byggjum bæði saman.”

Gerth said:

14.
“What is that din
I now hear in our hall?
The earth shakes and everything
before the hold of Gymir trembles.”

Ambot said:

15.
“There is a man out here who stepped off
the back of his steed. Let him bring his horse
into the garth. In need of company
the young man comes for the good maid of Gymir.”

Gerth said:

16.
“Bid him come into our hall
and drink the maid’s mead!
Though I fear that outside
waits my brother’s slayer.

17.

“Are you an elf or an Ase’s son
or a wise Van?
Why do you come alone over wild fire
to see our halls.”

Skírnir said:

18.
“I am not an elf or an Ase’s son
nor a wise Van,
though I come alone over wild fire
to see your halls.

19.

“I have here eleven apples all golden
that I will give to you, Gerth,
to strike a deal such that you say that Frey
is to you the most beloved man who lives.”

Gerth said:

20.
“I shall never accept your eleven golden apples
for the love of any man, and not with Frey.
For as long as we both shall live,
we shall not live together.”

Skírnir kvað:

21.

“Baug ek þér þá gef, þann er brenndr var
með ungum Óðins syni;
átta eru jafnhöfðir, er af drjúpa
ina níundu hverja nótt.”

Gerðr kvað:

22.

“Baug ek þikkak, þótt brenndr sé
með ungum Óðins syni;
era mér gulls vant í görðum Gymis,
at deila fé föður.”

Skírnir kvað:

23.

“Sér þú þenna mæki, mær, mjóvan, málfáan,
er ek hef í hendi hér?
Höfuð höggva ek mun þér hálsi af,
nema þú mér sætt segir.”

Gerðr kvað:

24.

“Ánauð þola ek vil aldregi
at mannskis munum;
þó ek hins get, ef it Gymir finnizk,
vígs ótrauðir, at ykkur veiga tíði.”

Skírnir kvað:

25.

“Sér þú þenna mæki, mær, mjóvan, málfáan,
er ek hef í hendi hér?
Fyr þessum eggjum hnígr sá inn aldni jötunn,
verðr þinn feigr faðir.

26.

“Tamsvendi ek þik drep, en ek þik temja mun,
mær, at mínum munum;
þar skaltu ganga, er þik gumna synir
síðan æva séi.

27.

“Ara þúfu á skaltu ár sitja,
horfa heimi ór, snugga heljar til;
matr né þér meir leiðr en manna hveim
innfráni ormr með firum.

28.

“At undrsjónum þú verðir, er þú út kemr;
á þik Hrímnir hari, á þik hotvetna stari;
víðkunnari þú verðir en vörðr með goðum,
gapi þú grindum frá.

Skírnir said:

21.

“I will give you a ring that was burned
with Odin’s young son.
Eight rings of equal weight
drop from it every ninth night.”

Gerth said:

22.

“I shant accept the ring, though it was burned
with Odin’s young son.
I do not lack gold in Gymir’s halls
where my father’s wealth I deal.”

Skírnir said:

23.

“Do you see this narrow inlaid sword
that I have here in my hand, maid?
I shall hew your head from your neck
unless you agree with me.”

Gerth said:

24.

“Threats shall never force me
to do the will of any man,
though I guess that if Gymir finds you
he will slay you in short order.”

Skírnir said:

25.

“Maiden, do you see this narrow inlaid sword
that I have in my hand?
Before these edges will the old ettin fall,
your father will be a dead man.

26.

“I smite you with a taming wand and I shall
break you, maiden, to do my will.
You shall go to where the sons of men
will never see you again.

27.

“You shall sit forever on the eagle’s mound.
You will turn away from home and towards Hel.
Man will be more loathsome to you
than the shining snake to men.

28.

“You will become a spectacle when you go out.
Hrimnir will stare at you and every wight
will stare at you. You will be well known
when the guard of the Gods gapes through the gates

29.
 “Tópi ok ópi, tjösull ok óþoli,
 vaxi þér tár með trega.
 Sez þú niðr, en ek mun segja þér
 sváran súsbreka
 ok tvennan trega;

30.
 “Tramar gneypaþik skulu gerstan dag
 jötna görðum í;
 til hrímþursa hallar þú skalt hverjan dag
 kranga kostalaus,
 kranga kostavön;
 grát at gamni skaltu í gögn hafa
 ok leiða með tárur trega.

31.
 “Með þursi þríhöfðuðum þú skalt æ nara,
 eða verlaus vera;
 þitt geð grípi,
 þik morn morni;
 ver þú sem þistill, sá er var þrunginn
 í önn ofanverða.

32.
 “Til holts ek gekk ok til hrás viðar,
 gambantein at geta,
 gambantein ek gat.

33.
 “Reiðr er þér Óðinn, reiðr er þér Ásabragr,
 þik skal Freyr fíask,
 in firinilla mæ, en þú fengit hefr
 gambanreiði goða.

34.
 “Heyri jötnar, heyri hrímþursar,
 synir Suttungs, sjálfir áslíðar,
 hvé ek fyrbýð, hvé ek fyrirbanna
 manna glaum mani,
 manna nyt mani.

35.
 “Hrímgrímnir heitir þurs, er þik hafa skal
 fyr nágrindr neðan;
 þar þér vílmegir á viðarrótum
 geitahland gefi;
 æðri drykkju fá þú aldregi,
 mæ, af þínum munum,
 mæ, at mínum munum.

29.
 “Madness and howling
 shall increase in you.
 You shall sit below and I shall dictate
 great hardship
 and twofold grief.

30.
 “Fiends shall bend you through the dismal day
 and in the garth of ettins you shall creep
 without choice
 or hope of choice,
 into the halls of rime thurses everyday.
 You shall have weeping for amusement,
 and you shall know grief and tears.

31.
 “Ever shall you dwell with three headed thurses
 or be without husband.
 Your mind will be dull
 and your grief shall waste you.
 May you be as a thistle thrust
 into the top of the harvest.

32.
 “I walked to the woods, to the sappy woods
 to get a power-teinn
 and I got a power-teinn.

33.
 “Odin is angered with you the highest God
 is angered with you. Frey shall hate you
 you criminal maiden, you have incurred
 the costly wrath of the Gods.

34.
 “Hear me now ettins! Hear me now rime thurses!
 Sons of Suttung, and the champion of the Ases himself!
 Hear how I forbid, how I forbid
 the joy of mankind to the maid
 and the company of men to the maid.

35.
 “The thurs called Hrimgrimmir shall have you
 beneath the door of the dead.
 Beneath the roots of trees
 you shall never
 take another drink.
 This by your own will, maid
 by my own will, maid.

36.

“Þurs ríst ek þérok þrjá stafi,
ergi ok æði ok óþola;
svá ek þat af ríst, sem ek þat á reist,
ef gerask þarfar þess.”

Gerðr kvað:

37.

“Heill ver þú nú heldr, sveinn, ok tak við hrímkálki,
fullum forns mjaðar;
þó hafðak ek þat ætlat, at myndak aldregi
unna vaningja vel.”

Skírnir kvað:

38.

“Örendi mín vil ek öll vita,
áðr ek ríða heim héðan,
nær þú á þingi munt inum þroska
nenna Njarðar syni.”

Gerðr kvað:

39.

“Barri heitir, er vit bæði vitum,
lundr lognfara;
en eft nætr nú þar mun Njarðar syni
Gerður unna gamans.”

Þá reið Skírnir heim. Freyr stóð úti ok kvaddi hann ok spurði tíðenda:

40.

“Segðu mér þat, Skírnir, áðr þú verpir söðli af mar
ok þú stígir feti framar:
Hvat þú árnaðir í Jötunheima
þíns eða míns munar?”

Skírnir kvað:

41.

“Barri heitir, er vit báðir vitum,
lundr lognfara;
en eft nætr nú þar mun Njarðar syni
Gerðr unna gamans.”

Freyr kvað:

42.

“Löng er nótt, langar ro tvær,
hvé um þreyjak þrjár?
Oft mér mánaðr minni þótti
en sjá hálf hýnótt.”

36.

“I carve a thurs rune for you and three staves
-ergi, madness, and impatience-
I can scratch them off just as I scratch them on
if need arises.”

Gerth said:

37.

“Welcome now heroic lad and take this rime cup
full of hoary mead,
though I never thought that I would ever
love a Van’s son.”

Skírnir said:

38.

“I want to know all my errand done
before I ride away from here.
When will you meet in tryst
the strong son of Njorth.”

Gerth said:

39.

“We both know there is a quiet grove called Barri.
After nine nights, then
will Gerth give her love
to the son of Njorth.”

Then Skírnir rode home. Frey stood outside and spoke with him asking tidings.

40.

“Tell me Skírnir, before you unsaddle the steed,
and before you take a step,
what you gained in Ettinhome
that was to either your or my liking.”

Skírnir said:

41.

“We both know a quiet grove called Barri.
After nine nights
Gerth will give her love
to the son of Njorth.”

Frey said:

42.

“A night is long. Two are longer.
How shall I endure three?
Often a month seemed less to me
than waiting half a wedding night.”

Lay of Skirnir: Notes

Prose Introduction. Hlithskjalf is Odin's seat in Valhalla. From on high Odin looks out over the nine worlds. He watches the nine worlds from the nethermost regions by means of the eye he sacrificed and left in Mimir's well as pledge in exchange for a drink from this well of mead. Frey ascended the throne and looked out over the world and saw sights he was not prepared for, including the giantess Gerth. Though this poem is the telling of a spring renewal myth, it has an initiatory meaning.

Frey is not an initiate of Odian magic and so unprepared to see so widely and deeply. As a result he became so disoriented and depressed that he was unable or unwilling to speak. We might say that he was unable to handle the powerful visions, the inspiration, and the madness that came to him on that seat, and went mad. Those who use Odinic magical techniques, including true Odians, risk going completely insane. There is a fine line between inspiration and madness. When an Odian fails to wield his inspiration or madness, it wields him, hence the warnings against too much mead (inspiration) in the *Havamal*.

The Odian should master and understand the lore of the nine-worlds, not only for his own initiation but to act as a technician of the sacred or the soul on behalf of his folk. Skirnir may be seen as a shaman who fares forth into the outer realms to help Frey recover his soul, in this case in the form of his fetch wife. Until Frey is united with his fetch soul, or his higher self, he is incapacitated. For more on the esoteric significance of union with the fetch wife, see chapter 4.

On the natural interpretation of *Skirnismal*, see chapter 3. In this context Frey's moodiness is symbolic of winter dormancy.

5-14. On flickering flame, guardian hounds, herdsmen who sit on mounds, and shaking earth, see chapters 4.

8. The sword that swings itself is a fairy-tale motif. (J. Grimm, *Myth*. II 725).

9. Frey is not a God known for faring into Ettinhome. When a journey into an outer realm is made, Frey is never involved. Frey had a steed capable of leaping the flames of Ettinhome, and a sword that excelled in ettin fights, but lacked the sort of magical skills by which Odin and Loki fare, and the ettin-like strength by which Thor gets along in the eastern realm. Frey was a powerful God of war and magic, but his activities were confined to Vanaheim, Asgard, and Midgard. His father Njorth once tried to live with Frey's mother Skathi in her father's hall in the mountains of Ettinhome, but could not tolerate the environment any more than Skathi could tolerate Njorth's abode.

The Vanic myths are bound up closely with spring and winter rites and dramas, hence the theme of periodic separation and reunion of Vanic couples. Every year the rescue of a spring queen from the underworld and her marriage to a spring God is celebrated.

32. Magic-Tefinn or "Gamban Tefinn", see Glossary.

36. Skirnir scratches cursing staves on a teinn, including the Thurs rune, which the *Old Norwegian Runic Poem* calls "the torture of women."

Hárbarðsljóð

Þórr fór ór Austrvegi ok kom at sundi einu; öðrum megin sundsins var ferjukarlinn með skipit.

Þórr kallaði:

1.
“Hverr er sá sveinn sveina, er stendr fyr sundit handan?”

Ferjukarlinn kvað:

2.
“Hverr er sá karl karla, er kallar um váginn?”

Þórr kvað:

3.
“Fer þú mik um sundit, fœði ek þik á morgum;
meis hef ek á baki, verðra matr in betri;
át ek í hvíld, áðr ek heiman fór,
síldr ok hafra, saðr em ek enn þess.”

Ferjukarlinn kvað:

4.
“Árligum verkum hrósar þú, verðinum;
veiztattu fyrir görla;
döpr eru þín heimkynni, dauð, hygg ek, at þín móðir sé.”

Þórr kvað:

5.
“Þat segir þú nú, er hverjum þykkir
mest at vita, at mín móðir dauð sé.”

Ferjukarlinn kvað:

6.
“Þeygi er sem þú þrjú bú góð eigir;
berbeinn þú stendr ok hefr brautinga gervi,
þatki, at þú hafir brækr þínar.”

Þórr kvað:

7.
“Stýrðu hingat eikjunni, ek mun þér stöðna kenna, -
eða hverr á skipit, er þú heldr við landit?”

Ferjukarlinn kvað:

8.
“Hildolfr sá heitir, er mik halda bað,
rekk inn ráðsvinni, er býr í Ráðseyjarsundi,
baðat hann hlennimenn flytja eða hrossaþjófa,
góða eina ok þá, er ek görva kunna;
segðu til nafns þíns, ef þú vill um sundit fara.”

Lay of Harbarth

Thor was travelling out along the eastern road when he came to a sound. A ferryman with a ship stood on the other side.

Thor hailed him:

1.
“Who is that lad of lads who stands across the sound?”

The Ferryman answered:

2.
“Who is that churl of churls who calls across the waves?”

Thor said:

3.
“Ferry me over the sound! I will feed you
in the morning. I have a basket on my back
with the best meal. Before heading home
I ate my fill and am sated by herring and goat.”

The Ferryman said:

4.
“You boast your meal a morning deed
but you know not all. The folks at home
are downcast. I think your mother is dead.”

Thor said:

5.
“Now you are telling me the thing that seems heaviest
that any may know when you say my mother is dead.”

The Ferryman said:

6.
“Although it is not likely that you own
even three good steeds, bare legged you stand
in beggar’s gear not even wearing your breeches.”

Thor said:

7.
“Steer that ferry boat over here and I will
show you the stead. But who owns that boat
you’ve got on the other bank?”

The Ferryman said:

8.
“Hildolf he is called who gave me custody of the craft.
A warrior wise in rede he and lives by Rathsey sound.
He bade me ferry no robbers or horse thieves
only good men and those whose deeds I know.
Tell me your name if you want to cross the sound!”

Þórr kvað:

9.

“Segja mun ek til nafns míns, þótt ek sekr séak,
ok til alls eðlis; ek em Óðins sonr
Meila bróðir, en Magna faðir,
þrúðvaldr goða, við Þór knáttu hér dæma;
hins vil ek nú spyrja, hvat heitir þú.”

Ferjukarlinn kvað:

10.

“Hárbarðr ek heiti, hylk um nafn sjaldan.”

Þórr kvað:

11.

“Hvat skaltu of nafn hylja, nema þú sakar eigir?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

12.

“En þótt ek sakar eiga, þá mun ek forða fjörvi mínu
fyr slíkum sem þú ert, nema ek feigr sé.”

Þórr kvað:

13.

“Harm ljótan mér þykkir í því
at vaða um váginn til þín ok væta ögur minn;
skylda ek launa kögursveini þínum
kanginyrði, ef ek kœmumk yfir sundit.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

14.

“Hér mun ek standa ok þín heðan bíða,
fannta þú mann in harðara at Hrungni dauðan.”

Þórr kvað:

15.

“Hins viltu nú geta, er vit Hrungnir deildum,
sá inn stórúðgi jötunn, er ór steini var höfuðit á;
þó lét ek hann falla ok fyrir hníga.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan, Hárbarðr?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

16.

“Var ek með Fjölvari fimm vetr alla
í ey þeiri, er Algren heitir;
vega vér þar knáttum ok val fella,
margs at freista, mans at kosta.”

Þórr kvað:

17.

“Hversu snúnuðu yðr konur yðrar?”

Thor said:

9.

“I would tell you my name and that of all my kin
even if I was outlawed. I am Odin’s son,
the brother of Meili, the father of Magni.
I am a powerful God! It is with Thor
you are chattering. Now I want to know your name.”

The Ferryman said:

10.

“I am called Harbarth, I hide my name seldom.”

Thor said:

11.

“Unless you have a reason,
why should you hide your name?”

Harbarth said:

12.

“Though I had a reason, I would ward my life
against the likes of you unless I were doomed.”

Thor said:

13.

“It would seem an awful shame to me
if I were to get my gear all sopping wet
wading over the river to you. You will be well rewarded
for your mockery if I wade over the sound.”

Harbarth said:

14.

“Here I stand awaiting your arrival. You will not find
a tougher man now that Hrungnir is dead.”

Thor said:

15.

“Now you recall how I fought with Hrungnir
the tall and arrogant ettin. His head was of stone,
but I felled him and he died.
What were you doing then Harbarth?”

Harbarth said:

16.

“I was with Fjolvari for five entire winters
on the island of Allgreen
where we fought and slaughtered,
dared many deeds, seduced maidens.”

Thor said:

17.

“How were the women with you?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

18.

“Sparkar áttu vér konur, ef oss at spökum yrði;
horskar áttu vér konur, ef oss hollar væri;
þær ór sandi síma undu,
ok ór dali djúpum
grund um grófu;
varð ek þeim einn öllumefri at ráðum;
hvílda ek hjá þeim systurum sjau,
ok hafða ek geð þeira alt ok gaman.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan Þórr?”

Þórr kvað:

19.

“Ek drap Þjaza, inn þrúðmóðga jötun;
upp ek varp augum Alvalda sonar
á þann inn heiða himin,
þau eru merki mest minna verka,
þau er allir menn síðan um sé.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan, Hárbarðr?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

20.

“Miklar manvélar ek hafða við myrkriður,
þá er ek vélta þær frá verum;
harðan jötun ek hugða Hlebarð vera;
gaf hann mér gambantein,
en ek vélta hann ór viti.”

Þórr kvað:

21.

“Illum huga launaðir þú þá góðar gjafar.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

22.

“Þat hafr eik, er af annarri skefr,
um sik er hverr í slíku.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan Þórr?”

Þórr kvað:

23.

“Ek var austr ok jötna barðak
brúðir bölvísar, er til bjargs gengu;
mikil myndi ætt jötna, ef allir lifði
vætr myndi manna und Miðgarði.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan, Hárbarðr?”

Harbarth said:

18.

“We had some lively ladies
if only they had been gentle,
they were wise, if only they had been loyal.
They wound rope out of sand
dug the ground out of deep dales
but I was too wise for all of them.
I slept with those seven sisters
and had my way with them all.
What were you doing then Thor?”

Thor said:

19.

“I dropped Thiazi the hardy ettin.
I cast the eyes of the sons of Alvald
up into the cloudless sky.
Those mighty marks of my work
have all men seen since.
What were you doing then Harbarth?”

Harbarth said:

20.

“I worked powerful love spells on Mirk-riders.
I turned them from their husbands.
I deemed Hlebarth one tough ettin.
He gave me a magic teinn and I drove him
out of his mind.”

Thor said:

21.

“I think you payed evil to a giver of good.”

Harbarth said:

22.

“The oak gets that which falls from another.
Each for himself in such affairs.
What were you doing then Thor?”

Thor said:

23.

“I was in the east smiting ettins,
those baleful brides who walk the crags.
The ettin tribes would be strong had they lived.
Mankind and Midgard would have been naught.
What were you doing then Harbarth?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

24.

“Var ek á Vallandi ok vígum fylgðak,
atta ek jöfrum, en aldri sættak;
Óðinn á jarla, þá er í val falla,
en Þórr á þrælakyn.”

Þórr kvað:

25.

“Ójafnt skipta er þú myndir með ásum liði,
ef þú ættir vilgi mikils vald.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

26.

“Þórr á afl ærit, en ekki hjarta;
af hræzlu ok hugbleyði þér var í hanzka troðit
ok þóttiska þú þá Þórr vera;
hvárki þú þá þorðir fyr hræzlu þinni
hnjósa né físa, svá at Fjalarr heyrði.”

Þórr kvað:

27.

“Hárbarðr inn ragi, ek mynda þik í hel drepa,
ef ek mætta seilask um sund.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

28.

“Hvat skyldir um sund seilask, er sakir ro alls engar?
Hvat vanntu þá, Þórr?”

Þórr kvað:

29.

“Ek var austr ok ána varðak,
þá er mik sóttu þeir Svárangs synir,
grjóti þeir mik börðu, gagni urðu þó lítt fegnir,
þó urðu þeir mik fyrri friðar at biðja.
Hvat vanntu þá meðan, Hárbarðr?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

30.

“Ek var austr ok við einhverja dæmðak,
lék ek við ina línhvítu ok launþing háðak;
gladdak ina gullbjörtu, gamni mæst unði.”

Þórr kvað:

31.

“Góð átt þú þér mankynni þar þá.”

Harbarth said:

24.

“I was in Valland waging wars.
I goaded wild boars and never made peace.
Odin takes the earls who fall in the slaughter
but Thor takes the kin of thralls.”

Thor said:

25.

“You unevenly divide the folk with the Ases
if you had much power.”

Harbarth said:

26.

“Thor has plenty of strength but no heart.
In fear and cowardice you stood in a glove.
Then you did not seem much like Thor!
You dared neither to sneeze nor fart
for fear that Fjalarr hear you.”

Thor said:

27.

“You coward, Harbarth! I would drop you
straight to Hel, if I could reach across the sound!”

Harbarth said:

28.

“Why should you reach over the sound when there
is no reason? What were you doing then Thor?”

Thor said:

29.

“I was in the east warding the river
where Svarung’s sons sought me.
They hurled boulders at me but it availed them not.
They came before me suing for peace.
What were you doing then Harbarth?”

Harbarth said:

30.

“I was in the east talking to a woman. With that
linen white lady I played we had a secret meeting where
I gladdened the gold bright one. That maid liked to play.”

Thor said:

31.

“Then your dealings went well, eh?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

32.

“Liðs þíns væra ek þá þurfi, Þórr,
at ek helda þeiri inni línhvítu mey.”

Harbarth said:

32.

“I was in need of your help Thor,
but I held that linen white maid fast nevertheless.”

Þórr kvað:

33.

“Ek munda þér þá þat veita, ef ek viðr of kœmumk.”

Thor said:

33.

“I would have helped you had I been there.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

34.

“Ek munda þér þá trúa, nema þú mik í tryggð véltir.”

Harbarth said:

34.

“I would have trusted you, had you not betrayed me.”

Þórr kvað:

35.

“Emkat ek sá hælbítr sem húðskór forn á vár.”

Thor said:

35.

“I am no heel-biter, like an old rawhide shoe in spring.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

36.

“Hvat vanntu þá meðan, Þórr?”

Harbarth said:

36.

“What were you doing in the meantime Thor?”

Þórr kvað:

37.

“Brúðir berserkja barðak í Hléseyju,
þær höfðu verst unnit, véltu þjóð alla.”

Thor said:

37.

“I battled with berserker brides at Hles Isles.
They worked ill and deluded the entire folk.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

38.

“Klæki vanntu þá, Þórr, er þú á konum barðir.”

Harbarth said:

38.

“You acted disgracefully then Thor, battling with women.”

Þórr kvað:

39.

“Vargynjur þat váru, en varla konur;
skelldu skip mitt, er ek skorðat hafðak,
œgðu mér járnlurki en eltu Þjalfa.
Hvat vanntu meðan, Hárbarðr?”

Thor said:

39.

“They were she-wolves, hardly women.
They shattered my ship when I put it ashore,
threatened me with iron clubs, chased away Thjalfi.
What were you doing then Harbarth?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

40.

“Ek vark í hernum, er hingat gerðisk
gnæfa gunnfana, geir at rjóða.”

Harbarth said:

40.

“I was on a raid against this very place,
raising banners, reddening spears.”

Þórr kvað:

41.

“Þess viltu nú geta, er þú fórt oss óljúfan at bjóða.”

Thor said:

41.

“Do you mean that you came against us to work evil?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

42.

“Bæta skal þér þat þá munda baugi,
sem jafnendr unnu, þeir er okkr vilja sætta.”

Harbarth said:

42.

“I shall make amends to you with an arm ring.
It will serve as referee to reconcile us.”

Þórr kvað:

43.

“Hvar namtu þessi in hnœfiligu orð,
er ek heyrða aldregi in hnœfiligri?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

44.

“Nam ek at mönnum þeim inum aldænum,
er búa í heimishauga.”

Þórr kvað:

45.

“Þó gefr þú gott nafn dysjum, er þú kallar þær
heimishauga.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

46.

“Svá dæmi ek um slíkt far.”

Þórr kvað:

47.

“Orðkringi þín mun þér illa koma,
ef ek ræð á vág at vaða,
ulfi hæra hygg ek þik æpa munu,
ef þú hlýtr af hamri högg.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

48.

“Sif á hó heima, hans muntu fund vilja,
þann muntu þrek drýgja, þat er þér skyldara.”

Þórr kvað:

49.

“Mælir þú at munns ráði, svá at mér skyldi verst þykkja,
halr inn hugblauði, hygg ek, at þú ljúgir.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

50.

“Satt hygg ek mik segja, seinn ertu at för þinni,
langt myndir þú nú kominn, Þórr, ef þú litum færir.”

Þórr kvað:

51.

“Hárbarðr inn ragi, heldr hefr þú nú mik dvalðan.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

52.

“Ásaþórs hugða ek aldregi mundu
glepja féhirði farar.”

Thor said:

43.

“Whence come your spiteful words.
Never have I heard anything more hateful.”

Harbarth said:

44.

“I took them from men, very old men,
who dwell in the wood of the home.”

Thor said:

45.

“You give a very good name to graves,
calling them wood of the home.”

Harbarth said:

46.

“So I deem such things.”

Thor said:

47.

“Your glib tongue would bring you ill
if I decided to wade the waves.
You would howl louder than a wolf
if I smote your head with my hammer.”

Harbarth said:

48.

“Sif is at home in whoredom. You should want a meeting
with him and there prove your might, for that is your duty.”

Thor said:

49.

“You tell me what seems the worst to me!
You are a craven man! I think you are a liar.”

Harbarth said:

50.

“I think that I speak the truth. You are late on your journey.
You would be far by now had you been travelling.”

Thor said:

51.

“Harbarth you coward! You have been delaying me.”

Harbarth said:

52.

“Asa-Thor! I never thought
you would let a ferryman beguile you.”

Þórr kvað:

53.

“Ráð mun ek þér nú ráða, ró þú hingat bátinum,
hættum høetingi, hittu föður Magna.”

Thor said:

53

“I will now give you some advice. Row that boat over here
and let us stop squabbling. Come here to Magni’s father!”

Hárbarðr kvað:

54.

“Farðu firr sundi, þér skal fars synja.”

Harbarth said:

54.

“Get away from this sound! I won’t let you cross!”

Þórr kvað:

55.

“Vísu þú mér nú leiðina, alls þú vill mik eigi
um váginn ferja.”

Thor said:

55.

“Then show me the way if you will not ferry me
over the waves.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

56.

Lítit er at synja, langt er at fara,
stund er til stokksins, önnur til steinsins,
haltu svá til vinstra vegsins, unz þú hittir Verland;
þar mun Fjörgyn hitta Þór son sinn,
ok mun hon kenna hánú áttunga brautir
til Óðins landa.”

Harbarth said:

56.

“It is easy to deny but far to travel.
There is an hour to the stock, another to the stone.
Hold to the road to the left until you reach Vesland.
There Fjorgyn will meet Thor, her son,
and show her kinsman the wilderness way
to Odin’s land.”

Þórr kvað:

57.

“Mun ek taka þangat í dag?”

Thor said:

57.

“Will I get there within the day?”

Hárbarðr kvað:

58.

“Taka við víl ok erfiði, at upprennandi sólu,
er ek get þána.”

Harbarth said:

58.

“I guess that you will have misery and hardship
when the sun rises.”

Þórr kvað:

59.

“Skammt mun nú mál okkat, alls þú mér skœtingu
einni svarar;
launa mun ek þér farsynjun, ef vit funnumk í
sinn annat.”

Thor said:

59.

“Shorten your talk then,
if you will answer only with insults.
I will pay you back for denying me a crossing
if we ever meet again at another time.”

Hárbarðr kvað:

60.

“Far þú nú, þars þik hafi allan gramir.”

Harbarth said:

60.

“Go away! Go to where all demons may have you.”

Lay of Harbarth: Notes

Introductory Prose: Thor is returning from an expedition to Ettinhome and has arrived at a river that separates Ettinhome from either Midgard or Asgard, warded by a seemingly unfamiliar ferryman (actually Odin) who calls himself Harbarth. The realms of Ettinhome and Helhome are realms to which the dead fare. These realms are separated from Midgard by great rivers and even oceans. The souls of the dead are admitted to and led to the appropriate realms by ferrymen and herdsmen. Herdsmen who ward specific regions of Ettinhome may be seen in SK, and SD and *Hervor's Saga*.

3. That Thor offers to feed the ferryman in the morning, and that he asks the ferryman if they will get there within the day, tells us that it is late in the afternoon and that Thor has a long day's trek behind him. Thor is wandering on foot, instead of by wane, and is therefore without his goats and must cross the sound by boat or by wading. Thor normally has little trouble wading waters that separate the worlds. As much as he clearly desires to cross the stream, Thor is unable in this instance. Because he is without his goats, it is possible that the O.N. word *hafra* refers to oats rather than to goat. The O.N. word can mean either, though it rarely means "oats" in early literature. For this reason I am inclined to think that Thor is carrying the meat of his two goats who were left behind when they were lamed in a culinary accident. It seems that his goats could be sacrificed, eaten, and the skin and bones hollowed so that the goats became whole again. According to Snorri a farmer with whom Thor shared his feast broke the bone to get marrow. The bone did not heal.

There is some inconsistency in the stories of the loss of Thor's goats. According to Snorri, Thor lost his goats on his voyage to Utgarth and later visited Hymir on foot. But according to the HM, Thor and Tyr ventured out to Hymir's hold in Thor's wane but had to return on foot because the goats were incapacitated by the deceit of Loki. That the episode appears in two different tales of Thor's eastern voyages suggests that it is independent and more important than the individual stories to which the episode was attached. This episode was perhaps incorporated into a tale for specific cultic purposes. Likely the variations occurred along regional lines. The significance of the story of the laming of the goats is yet to be fathomed and incorporated into modern Thoric cultic practices.

4. The motif of the death of Thor's mother may be the survival of a winter myth since Thor's mother was Fjorgyn or Jorth, the mother earth. Stanza 56 shows that Harbarth is lying in order to shock Thor. This may be taken as a survival of initiation lore. Thor finds himself in a strange land, as indicated by his asking of the ferryman for directions in stanza 55. At the river which separates Ettinhome from Midgard, Thor meets Harbarth who could help him, but hinders him instead. Harbarth's first words are intended to shock. This recalls the first spell that Svipdag learned from his mother which allowed him to shake form his shoulders what seemed shocking or demoralizing, see GG. 6. This spell was intended for use in an initiatory journey into Ettinhome. Note that Thor is instructed to get help from his mother, just as Svipdag obtained help from his mother on his initiatory quest. *The Lay of Harbarth* may be a myth associated with initiatory practices in which young men were left in unknown wilderness to find their ways back and tested by elders.
6. Thor is known to have one hall, Bilskirnir, though two steeds are mentioned, including Thruthheim and Thruthvanger mentioned in GM and Gylf 21.
7. Hildulf=Battle Wolf.
10. Harbarth is one of Odin's names, see GM 49. Even as Harbarth speaks he is disguising his identity. He is Thor's own father, though Thor can not recognize him.
15. On Thor's fight with Hrungrnir see Skd 17.

17. Although these ettin maids were physically and magically powerful and unwilling, Odin had his way with them.
19. On Thiazi see Gylf. 56.
20. Mirk-riders are likely the wolf or warg riding troll maidens who ride about in one of the forests of Ettinhome called Mirkwood, and perhaps also in Iron wood. See VSP note 40.
26. In Gylf. which tells of Thor's journey to Utgarth, this ettin is called Skrymer rather than Fjalar. Fjalar is a dwarf name in VSP 10 and LS 60 and 62. In Skd I and Hav 14. Fjalar is the name of one of the dwarves who killed Kvasir.
29. Svarung's sons are giants.
30. Odin is here meeting a giant maiden such as Gunnloth for purposes of the kind of magical initiation discussed in chapter 4. The adjective Gold-Bright is fitting for these beautiful ettin women whose abodes are rich and splendid.
37. On Berserkers, see glossary. Thor and Odin both recount their encounters with powerful sorceresses in Ettinhome. Consistently, Thor crushes them while Odin seduces them. Likewise, in dealings with other ettinkind, Thor smashes them with Mjølfnir asking questions later, while Odin interrogates them. Odin's seductions of giant maids are not mere hedonism, but part of his initiatory work as explained more fully in chapter 4.
39. One such she wolf was the mother of King Siggeir who fares forth into the night as a wolf to devour the nine brothers of Sigmund in the *Volsung Saga*. The baleful brides of stanza 23 may be similar beings.
56. Harbarth may be seen here as the ferryman who wards the way between the worlds, conveying souls to their appropriate place in Ettinhome or beyond. Odin appears in this capacity in the *Volsung Saga* as well.

If the river runs north and south, dividing Ettinhome in the east, and Asgard or Midgard in the west, and Harbarth is giving Thor good directions, then it is likely that Thor takes a path to the north so that when he takes a road that bares to the left he will cross the river or sound and arrive in Midgard where he meets his mother Fjorgyn who tells him how to get to Asgard. If he travelled south and turned left, he would be travelling east and wind up deep in Ettinhome.

Hymiskviða

1.
Ár val tívar
ok sumblsamir
hristu teina
fundu þeir at Ægis
veiðar námu,
áðr saðir yrði,
ok á hlaut sáu,
örkost hvera.
2.
Sat bergbúi
mjök glíkr megi
leit í augu
“Þú skalt ásum
barnteitr fyr
miskorblinda;
Yggs barn í þrá,
oft sumbl gera.”
3.
Önn fekk jötni
hugði at hefndum
bað hann Sifjar ver
“þanns ek öllum öl
orðbægin hálr,
hann næst við goð;
sér færa hver, -
yðr of heita.”
4.
Né þat máttu
ok ginnregin
unz af tryggðum
ástráð mikit
mærir tívar
of geta hvergi,
Týr Hlórriða
einum sagði:
5.
“Býr fyr austan
hundvíss Hymir
á minn faðir
rúmbrugðinn hver,
Élivága
at himins enda;
móðugr ketil,
rastar djúpan.”
- Þórr kvað:
6.
“Veiztu ef þiggjum
þann lögvelli?”
þann lögvelli?”
- Týr kvað:
“Ef, vinr, vélar
vit gervum til.”
7.
Fóru drjúgum
Ásgarði frá,
hirði hann hafra
hurfu at höllu,
dag þann fram
unz til Egils kvámu;
hornögfgasta;
er Hymir átti.
8.
Mögr fann ömmu
hafði höfða
en önnur gekk
brúnhvít bera
mjök leiða sér,
hundruð níu,
algullin fram
bjórveig syni:

Lay of Hymir

1.
Of yore the Tivar of the slain hunted game,
gathered in sumble and before they were sated
they shook teinns and looked on lots.
They found Aegir had plenty of everything.
2.
The fell-dweller sat happy as a child,
much like a kinsman of Misterblindi.
Ygg's son spitefully looked him in the eye:
“You shall often make sumble for the Ases.”
3.
The taunting hero had troublesome work for the ettin,
who thought next of venging himself on the God.
He bade Sif's man fetch a fit kettle:
“Then I shall heat up some ale for you all.”
4.
But the great Gods and the Ginnregin
were unable to get one at all,
Until Tyr spoke truly
giving Hlorritha good rede.
5.
“Wise Hymir dwells eastward of Elivagar
My fierce father has a kettle there.
That roomy vessel is a mile deep.”
- Thor said:
6.
“Do you know if we can get that boiler?”
- Tyr said:
“If, my friend, our work is wily.”
7.
They then fared forth from Asgard
for most all of the day until they came to the stead
of Egil who herded the horn-glorious goats.
Then they turned to the hall of Hymir
8.
Grandson met grandmother and they loathed
one another greatly. She had nine hundred heads.
But another came forth all in gold and white of brow.
She bore strong brew to her son.

9. “Áttniðr jötna, hugfulla tvá er minn frí glöggr við gesti,	ek viljak ykkir und hvera setja; mörgu sinni görr ills hugar.”	9. “Kin of ettins, I will put you two under the cauldron, though you are strong of spirit. My lover is quite often stingy with guests, greedy, and wicked of mind.”
10. En váskapaðr harðráðr Hymir gekk inn í sal, var karls, en kom	varð síðbúinn heim af veiðum, glumðu jöklar, kinnskógr frörinn.	10. But then the terrible one, the hard-reding Hymir, came home heavy laden from hunting. He strode into the hall with icicles a jangling, the churl returned with a frozen beard.
Frilla kvað: 11. “Ver þú heill, Hymir, nú er sonr kominn sá er vit vættum fylgir hánnum vinr verliða;	í hugum góðum, til sala þinna, af vegi löngum; hróðrs andskoti, Véurr heitir sá.	Frilla said: 11. “Hail thou Hymir, oh glad-minded one! Your son has come to your hall. He for whom we waited is back in your hall after a long trek. Hroth’s enemy follows him, a friend of men called Veorr.”
12. Sé þú, hvar sitja svá forða sér, Sundr stökk súla en aðr í tvau	und salar gafli, stendr súl fyrir.” fyr sjón jötuns, áss brotnaði.	12. “See where they sit under the gable hall. They stand before a pillar to protect themselves.” The pillar sprung asunder. The pole broke in two before the ettin’s gaze.
13. Stukku átta, hverr harðsleginn fram gengu þeir, sjónum leiddi	en einn af þeim heill af þolli; en forn jötunn sinn andskota.	13. Eight were shattered, but one cauldron, hard-hammered, stayed whole when it fell from the post. Then they stepped forward. The old ettin beheld his foes.
14. Sagðit hánnum er hann sá gýgjar groeti þar váru þjórar bað senn jötunn	hugr vel þá, á golf kominn, þrír of teknir, sjóða ganga.	14. He was uneasy when he saw the sorrow of giants walking on his floor. Soon the ettin bade three bulls be taken for boiling.
15. Hvern létu þeir ok á seyði át Sifjar verr einn með öllu	höfði skemmra síðan báru, áðr sofa gengi, öxn tvá Hymis.	15. Each was shortened by a head and they bore them to the roasting pit. But the husband of Sif had all of two oxen himself before going to sleep.
16. Þótti hárum verðr Hlórriða “Munum at aftni við veiðimat	Hrungnis spjalla vel fullmikill: öðrum verða vér þrír lifa.”	16. The meal of Hlorritha seemed very great indeed to the friend of Hrungnir. “In the evening, we three must live by another meal, but of meat from the hunt.”

17. Véurr kvaðzk vilja ef ballr jötunn	á vág róa, beitr gæfi.	17. Veorr said he wanted to row out onto the sea if the stubborn giant would give him bait.
Hymir kvað: “Hverf þú til hjarðar, brjótr berg - Dana,	ef þú hug trúir, beitur sækja.	Hymir said: “Turn to the herd if you trust your mind, and seek bait, breaker of mountain-Danes.”
18. Þess vænti ek, ögn af uxa Sveinn sýsliga þar er uxi stóð	at þér mynit auðfeng vera.” sveif til skógar, alsvartr fyrir.	18. “This is what I think - I think it would be very easy for you to get crap from my oxen.” The warrior went quickly to the wood where a black ox stood.
19. Braut af þjóri hótún ofan	þurs ráðbani horna tveggja.	19. The thurs-slayer ripped from the bull the high two horned hill.
Hymir kvað: “Verk þykkja þín kjóla valdi	verri miklu en þú kyrr sitir.”	Hymir said: “Your work seems much worse, keel-wielder, than when you were sitting.”
20. Bað hlunngota áttrunn apa en sá jötunn lítla fýsi	hafra dróttinn útar færa, sína talði at róa lengra.	20. The lord of goats bade the kinsman of apes steer the roller-horse outward, but the ettin had little desire to row out any further.
21. Dró meir Hymir einn á öngli en aftr í skut Véurr við vélar	móðugr hvali upp senn tváa, Óðni sífjaðr vað gerði sér.	21. Famous Hymir, moody, soon drew up two whales on a single hook. But in the aft of the craft, Odin’s kin, Veorr, craftily fixed his tackle.
22. Egnði á öngul, orms einbani gein við agni, umgjörð neðan	sá er öldum bergr, uxa höfði; sú er goð fía, allra landa.	22. The warden of men, bane of worms, fastened the ox-head to the hook. He who hates the god and lays below encircling all the lands of the earth gaped on the hook.
23. Dró djarfliga orm eitrfáan hamri kníði ofljótt ofan	dáðrakkr Þórr upp at borði; háfjall skarar ulfs hnitbróður.	23. Daring and bold, Thor drew the venomous worm up onto the gunwale and struck the high head-hill of the hideous brother of the wolf from above with the hammer.
24. Hraungalkn hlumðu, fór in forna sökkiðisk síðan	en hölkn þutu, fold öll saman; sá fiskr í mar.	24. Fiends of the woods shrieked the crag hills roared, all together on the ancient earth. That fish sank back into the sea.

25. Óteitr jötunn, svá at ár Hymir veifði hann ræði	er aftr reru, ekki mælti, veðrs annars til.	25. The ettin was not glad. When they rowed back, Hymir spoke not while at the oar. He turned the steering board until the wind came the other way.
Hymir kvað: 26. “Mundu um vinna at þú heim hvali eða flotbrúsa	verk halft við mik, haf til bæjar festir okkarn.”	Hymir said: 26. “Would you share half the work with me? Why don’t you haul the whales home to town, or make fast our sailing-goat.”
27. Gekk Hlórríði, vatt með austri einn með árum bar hann til bæjar ok holtriða	greip á stafni upp lögfáki, ok með austskotu brimsvín jötuns, hver í gegnum.	27. Hlorritha stepped out and grabbed the stem and hoisted the water-horse up by the bilge. Alone he hefted both boat and oars, he carried that ocean-boar over wooded ridge and hot spring to the ettin’s hall.
28. Ok enn jötunn þrágirni vanr, kvaðat mann ramman, kröfturligan,	um afrendi, við Þór sennti, þótt róa kynni, nema kálk bryti.	28. But the ettin, who was want to be obstinate bandied words with Thor about strength. He said that although a man could row, he was neither strong nor mighty unless he could break the chalice.
29. En Hlórríði, brátt lét bresta sló hann sitjandi báru þó heilan	er at höndum kom, brattstein gleri, súlur í gögnum; fyr Hymi síðan.	29. When he had it in his hand he let fly while still sitting. He shattered a stone wall and drove it through a pillar, yet they bore the chalice back to Hymir whole.
30. Unz þat in fríða ástráð mikit, “drep við haus Hymis, kostmóðs jötuns,	friðla kenndi eitt er vissi, hann er harðari, káلكi hverjum.”	30. Then the lovely lady taught him one good bit of advise that she knew. “Strike Hymir in the skull for this part of the ettin is stronger than any cup.”
31. Harðr reis á kné færðisk allra heill var karli en vínferill	hafra dróttinn, í ásmegin; hjalnstofn ofan, valr rifnaði.	31. The stern goat-lord rose on his knees and strove with all his godly might. The churl’s headpiece stayed whole, but the round wine-cup was shattered asunder.
32. “Mörg veit ek mæti er ek kálki sé — karl orð um kvað: aftr ævagi:	mér gengin frá, ór knéum hrundit;” “knákat ek segja þú ert, öldr, of heitt.	32. “A very dear thing is gone from me now that my chalice lays in ruin before me The karl said: “I can never again say: “Brew me some beer!”

33.	Þat er til kostar, út ýr óru Týr leitaði stóð at hváru	ef koma mættið ölkjól hofi.” tysvar hræra; hverr kyrr fyrir.	33.	“It will be another loss, if the ale-keel can be taken out of our hall.” Twice Tyr tried to budge the boiler but it stood fast at each try.
34.	Faðir Móða ok í gegnum sté hóf sér á höfuð upp en á hælum	fekk á þremi golf niðr í sal; hver Sifjar verr, hringar skullu.	34.	The father of Mothi seized the rim and strode across the floor down through the hall. The husband of Sif heaved the boiler up over his head and the ring handles rang on his heels.
35.	Fórut lengi, aftr Óðins sonr sá hann ór hreysum folkdrótt fara	áðr líta nam einu sinni; með Hymi austan fjölhöfðaða.	35.	They travelled far before they looked. After Odin’s son was back on the road he saw a many headed folk-host fare from the crags with Hymir.
36.	Hóf hann sér af herðum veifði hann Mjöllni ok hraunhvala	hver standanda, morðgjörnum fram, hann alla drap.	36.	Standing he heaved the cauldron off his shoulders and swung murderous Mjolnir before him and dropped the entire throng of those whales-of-the-rocks.
37.	Fórut lengi, hafr Hlórriða var skær skökuls en því inn lævísí	áðr liggja nam halfdauðr fyrir; skakkr á beini, Loki um olli.	37.	They did not travel far before they saw one of Hlorritha’s goats lying half dead, the harness-horse was lame of leg, and all because of baleful Loki.
38.	En ér heyrð hafið, goðmálugra hver af hraunbúa er hann bæði galt	hverr kann um þat görr at skilja? - hann laun um fekk, börn sín fyrir.	38.	You have heard, who know the lore of the Gods, what happened next, how the crag dweller was rewarded for that, when he payed with both his children.
39.	Þróttöflugr kom ok hafði hver, en véar hverjan ölðr at Ægis	á þing goða þanns Hymir átti; vel skulu drekka eitt hörmeitið.	39.	The mighty one came to the thing of the gods with the cauldron that Hymir once owned, and the Gods shall drink ale with Aegir.

Lay of Hymir: Notes

1. The Gods are gathered at a sacred feast and for sumble (ritual drinking) and engaged in divinatory magic using rune teinns. The runes on the lots would have been colored with blood from the animals sacrificed for the feast. The use of cauldrons is important in sacrifice; there are usually three; one to boil the meat of the sacrificial animal, one for its blood, and another for the mead or ale.

There is debate over the meaning of the phrase *orkost hvera* which is sometimes translated “a lack of kettles” and at others “an abundance of everything.” Since they were having a feast it is likely that they did have the kettles needed for boiling the meat and holding the blood, but lacked a kettle suitable for ale.

5. Eliveg is the venomous river that flowed from the well Hvergelmir into Ginnungagap where Aurgelmir, the first ettin, was created. See Gylf. 4.

Hymir is also mentioned in LS 34. In this instance, Hymir is said to be Tyr’s father, though in SK 9 it is said that he is Odin’s son. Variants on the traditions of the Gods are numerous and the stories varied according to the regions or even hearths over which they were told. Our purpose is to understand the logic of the *Elder Edda*, so we will accept the Eddic version. To reconcile the two traditions, we might say that Odin was the father of Hymir, so that Tyr was the grandson of Odin. The wagon by which Thor travels to Ettinhome when he has company on a journey is drawn by two goats. See also Gylf. 21. The word “fierce” is used to translate the word *mothugr*, the root of which is *moth*, cognate to our word mood. See FS note 21.

9. Thor and Tyr stood behind a pillar in the gable-hall on which the nine cauldrons were hung.

10. “Heavy laden” is a conjectural translation of *sithbuinn*.

- 30-31. In Germanic myth and folklore, giants are reputed to have skulls harder than stone, which is befitting of large crag-dwellers. Heroes descended from giants, such as Egil Skallagrimson, sometimes have especially hard heads.

32. The last line of this stanza is not clear.

37. The story of the laming of Thor’s goats is told in Gylf . 44.

Lokasenna

Ægir, er öðru nafni hét Gymir, hann hafði búið ásum öl, þá er hann hafði fengið ketil in mikla, sem nú er sagt. Til þeirrar veizlu kom Óðinn ok Frigg kona hans. Þórr kom eigi, því at hann var í austrvegi. Sif var þar, kona Þórs, Bragi ok Iðunn kona hans. Týr var þar, hann var einhendr, - Fenrisúlfr sleit hönd af hánnum þá er hann var bundinn. Þar var Njörðr ok kona hans Skaði, Freyr ok Freyja, Víðarr son Óðins; Loki var þar ok þjónustumenn Freys, Byggvir ok Beyla. Margt var þar ása ok álfa. Ægir átti tvá þjónustumenn, Fimafengr ok Eldir. Þar var lýsigull haft fyrir elts ljós. Sjálft barsk þar öl; þar var gríðastaðr mikill. Menn lofuðu mjök hversu góðir þjónustumenn Ægis váru. Loki mátti eigi heyra þat, ok drap hann Fimafeng. Þá skóku æsir skjöldu sína ok æpðu at Loka, ok eltu hann braut til skógar, en þeir fóru at drekka. Loki hvarf aftr ok hitti úti Eldi; Loki kvaddi hann:

1.
“Segðu þat, Eldir, svá at þú einugi
feti gangir framarr,
hvat hér inni hafa at ölmálum
sigtíva synir.”

Eldir kvað:

2.
?Of vápn sín dæma ok um vígrisni sína
sigtíva synir;
ása ok álfa er hér inni eru,
manngi er þér í orði vinr.”

Loki kvað:

3.
“Inn skal ganga Ægis hallir í,
á þat sumbl at sjá;
jöll ok áfu færi ek ása sonum,
ok blend ek þeim svá meini mjöð.”

Eldir kvað:

4.
“Veiztu, ef þú inn gengr Ægis hallir í,
á þat sumbl at sjá,
hrópi ok rógi ef þú eyss á holl regin:
á þér munu þau þerra þat.”

The Flyting of Loki

Aegir, who was also called Gymir, brewed ale for the Gods when he acquired the great kettle that was just described. Odin and his wife Frigg came to the feast. Thor did not come because he was in the east. Thor's wife Sif was there, along with Bragi and his wife, Idunna. Tyr, who was one-handed, was there. When the Fenrir wolf was bound it had bitten off Tyr's hand. Njorth and his wife Skathi were there, and also Frey and Freya, and Odin's son Vithar. Loki was there, and also Frey's attendants, Byggvir and Beyla. There were many Ases and elves. Aegir had two attendants, Fimafeng and Eldir. They had gleaming gold for firelight and the ale served itself. It was a great ve. People praised highly the good attendants of Aegir and oft said how good they were. Loki could not stand hearing all this praise, so he slew Fimafeng. The Aesir shook their shields and began shouting at him. They drove him away into the woods and went back to drinking. Loki turned back and hit upon Eldir and spoke to him:

1.
“Tell me Eldir, before you walk
a single step away,
what the gods here within
are saying over their ale.”

Eldir said:

2.
“The sons of Victory-Tivar speak
of their weapons and their deeds in war.
From the Ases and elves within,
there are few kind words for you.”

Loki said:

3.
“I shall go in to Aegir's hall
to see that sumble. Hate and evil,
I will bring to the sons of Ases,
and blend this venom into their mead.”

Eldir said:

4.
“Bear in mind that if you go into Aegir's hall
to see the sumble, and bespatter
the Regin in the hall with reproach and abuse,
they will smear it on you.”

Loki kvað:

5.

“Veiztu þat, Eldir, ef vit einir skulum
sáryrðum sakask,
auðigr verða mun ek í andsvörum,
ef þú mælir til mart.”

Síðan gekk Loki inn í höllina. En er þeir sá, er fyrir
váru, hverr inn var kominn, þögnuðu þeir allir.

Loki kvað:

6.

“Þyrstr ek kom þessar hallar til,
Loptr, um langan veg,
ásu at biðja at mér einn gefi
mæran drykk mjaðar.”

7.

“Hví þegið ér svá, þrungin goð,
at þér mæla né meguð?
Sessa ok staði velið mér sumbli at,
eða heitið mik héðan.”

Bragi kvað:

8.

“Sessa ok staði velja þér sumbli at
æsir aldregi,
þvíat æsir vitu hveim þeir alda skulu
gambansumbl um geta.”

Loki kvað:

9.

“Mantu þat, Óðinn, er vit í árdaga
blendum blóði saman?
Ölvi bergja lézktu eigi mundu,
nema okkr væri báðum borit.”

Óðinn kvað:

10.

“Rístu þá, Viðarr, ok lát úlfs föður
sitja sumbli at,
síðr oss Loki kveði lastastöfum
Ægis höllu í.”

Þá stóð Viðarr upp ok skenkti Loka, en áðr hann drykki,
kvaddi hann ásuna:

11.

“Heilir æsir, heilar ásynjur
ok öll ginnheilög goð -
nema sá einn áss er innar sitr,
Bragi, bekkjum á.”

Loki said:

5.

“Bear in mind Eldir,
that if we should bandy words,
I will have cogent retorts
when you talk too much.”

Then Loki strode into the hall. When the Gods saw
who stood before them, they fell silent.

Loki said:

6.

“I, Loptr, come thirsty to this hall
from a long trip
and bid the Aesir grant me
one more drink of mead.”

7.

“Why be so quiet, stifled God,
that you are unable to speak?
Choose a place and seat for me
at the sumble, or ask me to leave.”

Bragi said:

8.

“The Aesir will never choose you
a place and a seat at the sumble,
for they know which wights
they ought to have at fair feasts.”

Loki said:

9.

“Remember this Odin, that we blended
our blood together in days of yore.
You said you would not taste ale,
unless it were born to both of us.”

Odin said:

10.

“Rise Vithar, and let the wolf’s father
sit at the sumble,
lest Loki speak flyting staves
to us in Aegir’s hall.”

Then Vithar stood up and filled Loki’s cup.
Before drinking Loki spoke:

11.

“Hail the Aesir! Hail the Asynjur,
and all the Ginn-Holy Gods,
except for this one Ase, Bragi,
who sits inside on this bench.”

Bragi kvað:

12.

“Mar ok mæki gef ek þér míns féar,
ok bætir þér svá baugi Bragi,
síðr þú ásum öfund um gjaldir;
grem þú eigi goð at þér!”

Loki kvað:

13.

“Jós ok armbauga mundu æ vera
beggja vanr, Bragi;
ása ok álfa, er hér inni eru,
þú ert við víg varastr
ok skjarrastr við skot.”

Bragi kvað:

14.

“Veit ek, ef fyr útan værak, svá sem fyr innan emk
Ægis höll um kominn,
höfuð þitt bæra ek í hendi mér;
lykak þér þat fyr lygi.”

Loki kvað:

15.

“Snjallr ertu í sessi, skalattu svá gera,
Bragi bekkskrautuðr!
vega þú gakk, ef þú vreiðr séir,
hyggsk vætr hvatr fyrir.”

Iðunn kvað:

16.

“Bið ek, Bragi, barna sífjar duga
ok allra óskmaga,
at þú Loka kveðira lastastöfum
Ægis höllu í.”

Loki kvað:

17.

“Þegi þú, Iðunn, þik kveð ek allra kvenna
vergjarnasta vera,
síztu arma þína lagðir ítrþvegna
um þinn bróðurbana.”

Iðunn kvað:

18.

“Loka ek kveðka lastastöfum
Ægis höllu í;
Braga ek kyrrri bjórreifan,
vilkat ek at it vreiðir vegizk.”

Bragi said:

12

“I give you my sword and my horse, my wealth,
and bid you have Bragi’s arm ring,
lest you deal bale to the Ases.
Do not anger the Gods with you!”

Loki said:

13.

“You shall always be lacking
in both horse and arm-ring, Bragi,
for of all the Ases and elves, who are
gathered herein, you are the most wary in war,
and the shyest in shooting.”

Bragi said:

14.

“I know that if I was outside,
just as I am now inside Aegir’s hall,
I would have your head in my hand.
I would spare you little for your lies.”

Loki said;

15.

“You are clever on the bench, but won’t do anything.
Bragi, you are a bench ornament.
If you are so offended, and fancy yourself so bold,
then come outside and fight!”

Idunna spoke:

16.

“I bid you think of our children, Bragi,
of all our dear sons,
and not to bandy bale staves
with Loki in Aegir’s hall.”

Loki said:

17.

“Silence Idunna! I say that of all wives,
you are the most wanton.
Clean-washed, you wrapped your arms
about your brother’s slayer.”

Idunna said:

18.

“I will not bandy bale staves with Loki
in Aegir’s hall. I calm Bragi,
who is drunk on beer, so that you two
do not do battle in rage.”

Gefjun kvað:

19.

“Hví it æsir tveir skuluð inni hér
sáryrðum sakask?
Lofski þat veit, at hann leikinn er
ok hann fjörg öll frá.”

Loki kvað:

20.

“Þegi þú, Gefjun, þess mun ek nú geta,
er þik glapði at geði:
sveinn inn hvíti, er þér sigli gaf
ok þú lagðir lær yfir.”

Óðinn kvað:

21.

“Ærr ertu, Loki, ok örviti,
er þú fær þér Gefjun at gremi,
því at aldar örlög hygg ek, at hon öll um viti
jafngörla sem ek.”

Loki kvað:

22.

“Þegi þú, Óðinn, þú kunnir aldregi
deila víg með verum;
oft þú gaft þeim er þú gefa skyldira,
inum slævurum, sigr.”

Óðinn kvað:

23.

“Veiztu, ef ek gaf þeim er ek gefa né skylda,
inum slævurom, sigr,
átta vetrvartu fyrir jörð neðan
kýr mólkandi ok kona,
ok hefr þú þar börn borit,
ok hugða ek þat args aðal.”

Loki kvað:

24.

“En þik síða kóðu Sámseyu í,
ok draptu á vétt sem vödur,
vitka líki fórtu verþjóð yfir,
ok hugða ek þat args aðal.”

Frigg kvað:

25.

“Örlögum ykkrum skylið aldregi
segja seggjum frá,
hvát it æsir tveir drýgðuð í árdaga;
firrisk æ forn rök firar.”

Gefjon said:

19.

“Why are you two Aesir attacking one another
with wounding words.
Loki knows he is a joker
and that he loathes the Gods.”

Loki said:

20.

“Silence Gefjon! Now I shall tell,
who beguiled you to merriment.
The white youth gave you a ring
and you laid your thighs over him.”

Odin said:

21.

“You are mad Loki, out of your mind,
to provoke Gefjon’s anger,
for I think she knows the orlog of all men,
just as well as I.”

Loki said:

22.

“Silence Odin! You never could
deal victory to men.
Often you did not grant victory to him
whom you should have, but to duller men.”

Odin said:

23.

“If I have given victory to those to whom
I should not have, to lesser men,
you know that for eight winters
you were under the earth giving milk as a cow
or a woman, and you bore babies.
I think that these were womanish ways.”

Loki said:

24.

“But they say you worked seith magic on Sam’s Isle,
that you plied magic like a volva,
that you fared among men in the form of a vitki.
I think that those were womanish ways.”

Frigg said:

25.

“You two should never tell tales of your orlog,
of the deeds you two Ases
did in days of yore, those deeds of old
that you keep hidden.”

Loki kvað:
26.
“Þegi þú, Frigg, þú ert fjörgyns mær
ok hefr æ vergjörn verit,
er þá Véa ok Vilja léztu þér, Viðris kvæn,
báða i baðm um tekit.”

Frigg kvað:
27.
“Veiztu, ef ek inni ættak Ægis höllum i
Baldri líkan bur,
út þú né kvæmir frá ása sonum,
ok væri þá at þér vreiðum vegit.”

Loki kvað:
28.
“Enn vill þú, Frigg, at ek fleiri telja
mína meinstafi;
ek því réð, er þú ríða sérat
síðan Baldr at sölum.”

Freyja kvað:
29.
“Ærr ertu, Loki, er þú yðra telr
ljóta leiðstafi;
örlög Frigg hygg ek at öll viti,
þótt hon sjálfgi segi.”

Loki kvað:
30.
“Þegi þú, Freyja, þik kann ek fullgörva;
era þér vamma vant;
ása ok álfa, er hér inni eru,
hverr hefir þinn hór verit.”

Freyja kvað:
31.
“Flá er þér tunga, hygg ek at þér fremr myni
ógott um gala;
reiðir ro þér æsir ok ásynjur,
hryggr muntu heim fara.”

Loki kvað:
32.
“Þegi þú, Freyja, þú ert forðæða
ok meini blandin mjök,
síz þik at bræðr þínum stóðu blíð regin,
ok myndir þú þá, Freyja, frata.”

Loki said:
26.
“Silence Frigg! You are Fjorgyn’s daughter
and have always been the most lustful; ever since
the time that you, as Vithri’s wife did not hinder
Vili and Ve, but took them both to your bosom.”

Frigg said:
27.
“You know that if I had a son like Baldr
in Aegir’s hall, you would not leave
the sons of Ases,
before he had battled you in rage.”

Loki said:
28.
“If you like, Frigg, I shall speak
more of my harm-staves.
I planned it such that you
do not ride behind Baldr to the halls.”

Freyja spoke:
29.
“You are raving Loki,
telling twisted bale staves.
I think that Frigg knows all orlog,
though she does not say so herself.”

Loki said:
30.
“Silence Freya! I know well that you
are not lacking faults.
Of the Ases and elves who sit herein,
to each you have been a whore.”

Freyja said:
31.
“Your tongue is false. I think that you
shall sing some evil to yourself.
The Aesir and the Asynjur are wroth with you.
You will fare home grieving.”

Loki said:
32.
“Shut up Freya! You are a forðætha
and have done much evil. Do you remember,
Freyja, how the blithe Regin caught you,
in bed with your brother, when you farted?”

Njörðr kvað:

33.

“Þat er válítit, þótt sér varðir
vers fái, hós eða hvárs;
hitt er undr, er áss ragr er hér inn of kominn,
ok hefir sá börn of borit.”

Loki kvað:

34.

“Þegi þú, Njörðr, þú vart austr heðan
gíls um sendr at goðum;
Hymis meyjar höfðu þik at hlandtrogi
ok þér i munn migu.”

Njörðr kvað:

35.

“Sú erumk líkn, er ek vark langt heðan
gísl um sendr at goðum,
þá ek mög gat, þann er mangi fiár,
ok þikkir sá ása jaðarr.”

Loki kvað:

36.

“Hættu nú, Njörðr, haf þú á hófi þik!
munka ek því leyna lengr:
við systur þinni gaztu slíkan mög,
ok era þó vánu verr.”

Týr kvað:

37.

“Freyr er beztr allra ballriða
ása görðum í;
mey hann né grætir né manns konu,
ok leysir ór höptum hvern.”

Loki kvað:

38.

“Þegi þú, Týr, þú kunnir aldregi
bera tilt með tveim;
handar innar hægri mun ek hinnar geta,
er þér sleit Fenrir frá.”

Týr kvað:

39.

“Handar em ek vanr, en þú hróðrsvitnis;
böl er beggja þrá;
úlfgi hefir ok vel, er í böndum skal
bíða ragnarökrs.”

Njorth said:

33.

“It is no crime that a woman have
both a husband and lover.
It is, however, a scandal that the womanish Ase
who came here has born babies.”

Loki Said:

34.

“Silence Njorth! You were sent from the east
as a hostage to the Gods.
The maids of Hymir had you for a piss-hole,
and made water in your mouth.”

Njorth said:

35.

“I had my consolation: long ago
I was sent as a hostage to the Gods,
and since have begotten a son
whom no one hates, and seems the best of Gods.”

Loki said:

36.

“Stop it Njorth! Show some moderation!
I will no longer hide
that you begot such a son with your sister.
He was worse than expected.”

Tyr spoke:

37.

“Frey is the best of all
the bold riders in Asgard.
He brings no sorrow to maids or men’s wives,
and loosens each from fetters.”

Loki said:

38.

“Silence Tyr! You never could bring
justice between two men.
I also know that Fenrir
chewed off your right hand.”

Tyr said:

39.

“I may be missing a hand,
but you lost Hrothvitnir,
who is an evil pain to us both,
that wolf who bides Ragnarok in bonds.”

Loki kvað:
40.
“Þegi þú, Týr, þat varð þinni konu,
at hon átti mög við mér;
öln né penning hafðir þú þess aldregi
vanréttis, vesall.”

Freyr kvað:
41.
“Úlfr sé ek liggja árósi fyrir,
unz rjúfask regin;
því mundu næst, nema þú nú þegir,
bundinn, bölvasmíðr!”

Loki kvað:
42.
“Gulli keypta léztu Gymis dóttur
ok seldir þitt svá sverð;
en er Muspells synir ríða Myrkvið yfir,
veizta þú þá, vesall, hvé þú vegr.”

Byggvir kvað:
43.
“Veiztu, ef ek eðli ættak sem Ingunar-Freyr,
ok svá sælligt setr,
mergi smæra mölða ek þá meinkráku
ok lemða alla í liðu.”

Loki kvað:
44.
“Hvat er þat it litla er ek þat lögggra sék,
ok snapvíst snapir?
at eyrum Freys mundu æ vera
ok und kvernum klaka.”

Byggvir kvað:
45.
“Byggvir ek heiti, en mik bráðan kveða
goð öll ok gumar;
því em ek hér hróðugr, at drekka Hrofts megir
allir öl saman.”

Loki kvað:
46.
“Þegi þú, Byggvir, þú kunnir aldregi
deila með mönnum mat;
ok þik í flets strái finna né máttu,
þá er vágu verar.”

Loki said:
40.
“Silence Tyr! It happens that your wife
bore a son by me.
You have never gotten even a penny,
you wretch, for that injury.”

Freyr said:
41.
“I see a wolf lying before the mouth of a river
until the ruin of the Regin.
Unless you shut up,
you will next be bound, you forger of bale.”

Loki said:
42.
“You bought Gymir’s daughter with gold
and so sold your sword. But when the sons
of Muspell ride through Mirkwood, wretch,
you will not know how to fight.”

Byggvir said:
43.
“If I had the lineage of Ingunar-Frey,
and such a blessed seat,
I would crush the marrow of this evil crow
and smash all his limbs.”

Loki said:
44.
“Who is this tiny thing that crouches abjectly
and snuffles like a dog?
You shall always be about Frey’s ears
and chattering at the mills.”

Byggvir spoke:
45.
“I am called Byggvir, and the Gods
and men say I am fast.
I am triumphant here, with the sons of Hropt
gathered together drinking ale.”

Loki said:
46.
“Silence Byggvir! You never could
deal meat to men. Nor could they find you
in the straw of the floor
when men waged war.”

Heimdallr kvað:

47.

“Ölr ertu, Loki, svá at þú ert örviti,
- hví né lezkaðu, Loki? -
því at ofdrykkja veldr alda hveim,
er sína mælgj né manat.”

Loki kvað:

48.

“Þegi þú, Heimdallr, þér var í árdaga
it ljóta líf um lagit:
öргу baki þú munt æ vera
ok vaka vörðr goða.”

Skaði kvað:

49.

“Létt er þér, Loki; munattu lengi svá
leika lausum hala,
því at þik á hjörvi skulu ins hrímkalda magar
görnum binda goð.”

Loki kvað:

50.

“Veiztu, ef mik á hjörvi skulu ens hrímkalda magar
görnum binda goð,
fyrstr ok efstr var ek at fjörlagi,
þars vér á Þjaza þrifum.”

Skaði kvað:

51.

“Veiztu, ef fyrstr ok efstr vartu at fjörlagi,
þá er ér á Þjaza þrifuð
frá mínum véum ok vöngum skulu
þér æ köld ráð koma.”

Loki kvað:

52.

“Léttari í málum vartu við Laufeyjar son,
þá er þú létz mér á beð þinn boðit;
getit verðr oss slíks, ef vér görva skulum
telja vömmín vár.”

Þá gekk Sif fram ok byrtaði Loka í hrímkálki mjöð ok
mælti:

53.

“Heill ver þú nú, Loki, ok tak við hrímkálki
fullum forns mjaðar,
heldr þú hana eina látir með ása sonum
vammalaus vera.”

Heimdall said:

47.

“Loki is drunk and out of his mind.
Why not leave him alone?
Too much drink will rule any man
such that he minds not his speech.”

Loki said:

48.

“Silence Heimdall! In days of yore,
a hateful life was allotted you.
With a wet back you shall ever stay awake
as the watchman of the Gods.”

Skathi said:

49.

“You are happy now Loki, but your tail
will not wag so loosely for long,
for the Gods will bind you to a sword
with the rime-cold guts of your son.”

Loki said:

50.

“Though the Gods will bind me to a sword
with the rime-cold guts of my son,
know that I was first and foremost
among the slaughter when we seized Thiazi.”

Skathi said:

51.

“Though you were first and foremost among the gods
at the slaughter when you took Thiazi,
know that you will have cold rede
from my véss and fields.”

Loki said:

52.

“You were lighter when with Laufey’s son,
when you bade me share your bed.
Such tales are told
when we reveal our blemishes.”

Then Sif walked forward and poured mead for Loki
into a rimy cup and said:

53.

“We hail you Loki!
Take this goblet full of mead,
and let myself alone among the Ases,
remain without stain.”

Hann tók við horni ok drakk af:
54.
“Ein þú værir, ef þú svá værir,
vör ok gröm at veri;
einn ek veit, svá at ek vita þikkjumk,
hór ok af Hlórriða,
ok var þat sá inn lævísi Loki.”

Beyla kvað:
55.
“Fjöll öll skjálfa; hygg ek á för vera
heiman Hlórriða;
han ræðr ró þeim er rægir hér
goð öll ok guma.”

Loki kvað:
56.
“Þegi þú, Beyla, þú ert Byggvis kvæn
ok meini blandinn mjök;
ókynjan meira koma með ása sonum;
öll ertu, deigja, dritin.”

Þá kom Þórr at ok kvað:
57.
“Þegi þú, rög vætr, þér skal minn þrúðhamarr,
Mjöllnir, mál fynema:
herða klett drep ek þér hálsi af,
ok verðr þá þínu fjörvi um farit.”

Loki kvað:
58.
“Jarðar burr er hér nú inn kominn;
hví þrasir þú svá, Þórr?
en þá þorir þú ekki er þú skalt við úlfinn vega,
ok svelgr hann allan Sigföður.”

Þórr kvað:
59.
“Þegi þú, rög vætr, þér skal minn þrúðhamarr,
Mjöllnir, mál fynema:
upp ek þér verp ok á austrvega,
síðan þík mangi sér.”

Loki kvað:
60.
“Austrförum þínum skaltu aldregi
segja seggjum frá,
síz í hanska þumlungi hnúkðir þú, einheri,
ok þóttiska þú þá Þórr vera.”

Loki took the horn and drank:
54.
“You would be the one if you were careful
and true to your husband.
But I know of one, he I know well,
who had Hlorritha’s wife for a whore,
and that was hateful Loki.”

Beyla said:
55.
“All the fells shiver.
I think Hlorritha is on the way home.
He will bring to rest
he who slanders the Gods and heroes.”

Loki said:
56.
“Silence Beyla! You are Byggvir’s woman
and stir much evil, and are one
of the more shamed to come among the Gods.
You are all damp and dirty.”

Then Thor came and said:
57.
“Shut up you wretched wight, or my mighty hammer
Mjolnir will take away your talk.
I will drop your shoulder-cliff out from under
your neck and send you to your doom.”

Loki said:
58.
“Son of Jorth, who has just now arrived!
Why are you so feisty Thor?
You won’t be so feisty when you fight the wolf, Thor,
and he swallows Victory-Father whole.”

Thor spoke:
59.
“Shut up you wretched wight! My hammer of might,
Mjolnir will take away your talk.
I will cast you into the east
where no one will ever see you again!”

Loki said:
60.
“You should never tell to warriors of your voyage
to the east. There you crouched, cowering,
in the thumb of a glove, oh champion!
You did not seem like Thor then.”

Þórr kvað:

61.

“Þegi þú, rög vættr, þér skal minn þrúðhamarr,
Mjöllnir, mál fynema:
hendi inni hægri drep ek þik Hrungrnis bana,
svá at þér brotnar beina hvat.”

Loki kvað:

62.

“Lifa ætla ek mér langan aldr,
þóttú hætir hamri mér;
skarpar álar þóttu þér Skrymis vera,
ok máttira þú þá nesti ná,
ok svaltz þú þá hungri heill.”

Þórr kvað:

63.

“Þegi þú, rög vættr, þér skal minn þrúðhamarr,
Mjöllnir, mál fynema:
Hrungrnis bani mun þér í hel koma
fyr nágrindr neðan.”

Loki kvað:

64.

“Kvað ek fyr ásum, kvað ek fyr ása sonum,
þaz mik hvatti hugr,
en fyr þér einum mun ek út ganga,
þvi at ek veit at þú vegr.”

65.

“Öl görðir þú, Ægir, en þú aldri munt
síðan sumbl um gera;
eiga þín öll, er hér inni er,
leiki yfir logi,
ok brenni þér á baki.”

En eftir þetta falst Loki í Fránangrsforsu í lax líki. Þar tóku æsir hann. Hann var bundinn með þörmum sonar síns Vála, en Narfi sonr hans varð at vargi. Skaði tók eitrom ok festi upp yfir annlit Loka; draup þar ór eitri. Sigyn kona Loka sat þar ok held munnlaug undir eitrit. En er munnlaugin var full, bar hún út eitrit; en meðan draup eitrit á Loka. Þá kippðist hann svá hart við, at þaðan af skalf jörð öll; þat eru nú kallaðir landskjálftar.

Thor said:

61.

“Silence you slanderous wight, or my hammer of might,
Mjolnir, will take away your talk.
My right hand will drop you
wielding Hrungrnir’s bane and break all your bones.”

Loki said:

62.

“I think I will live a long life,
though you threaten me with your hammer.
The straps of Skrymir were strong
and you couldn’t get your food.
Though you were whole, you went hungry.”

Thor said:

63.

“Shut up you slanderous wight! My hammer of might,
Mjolnir, will take away your talk!
By Hrungrnir’s bane you will fall to Hel
beneath the gates of the dead.”

Loki said:

64.

“I spoke before the Ases, and before
the sons of Ases, what my mind urged me tell.
But I will leave you now
for I know your weight.”

65

“You brewed ale Aegir,
but you will never hold a sumble
after this. Flame are playing
on all that you won in her
and are burning on your back.”

After that, Loki concealed himself in Frangang falls in the shape of a salmon. There the Gods took him. He was bound with the bowels of his son Narfi, but his son Vali turned into a wolf. Skathi took a viper and fastened it over Loki’s face. Venom dripped down. Sigyn, Loki’s wife, sat there and held a basin under the poison. When the basin was full, she bore the poison away, venom dropped on him and he struggled so hard that the entire earth shook. These are what men now call earthquakes.

The Flyting of Loki: Notes

1. Some have suggested that this poem is late and that the bitter exchanges between the Gods and Loki are mainly lies and the poem was a Christian effort at defamation and blasphemy. There is no real evidence to support this view, and much of the lore revealed in the flyting is corroborated by other Eddic lore. Many scholars would have us believe that much Eddic lore is actually Christian in origin based on a few shallow parallels between Christian and Eddic myth. That some mixing did occur in the late viking age is likely, and Christian interpretations can be seen in Snorri Sturluson's *Younger Edda*, but the elder poems are clearly of heathen origin. There are no lies in the *Elder Edda*, only our own inability to understand the lore. Of course there were many regional variations on the myths and their meanings, and in their contexts, these were true as well. It is our task first to understand the Eddic myths on their own terms, and then to realize the truths that are discovered in our own souls, and then to apply these truths to our daily lives.
9. The rite of blending blood is described Saxo Grammaticus' account of Hadingus in which an earthen chamber is dug and the blood of the parties is mingled on the ground. The two emerge reborn as brothers and the earthen chamber may be seen as symbolizing the womb of mother earth.
11. Lines 3 and 4 may be taken as a general invocation of the Aesir.
16. Idunna is the Goddess who holds the apples that sustain the youth and vigor of the Gods.

Bale staves are curses.
17. See chapter 3 for the mythic significance of a union between a maid and her brother's slayer in the spring drama myths.
- 20 In the *Saga of Bosi and Heraud*, Bosi gives a ring to a woman before seducing her on three different occasions.
22. Odin takes the best at the peak of their abilities for service in Valhalla. While on Midgard they are often confronted with great adversity and losses in order that they will be strengthened.
23. *Ergi* refers to shameful sexual acts, especially passive sodomy by a male.
24. Odin learned Seith from Freya. See YS.
25. Frigg here confirms the accusations of both Loki and Odin.
26. On the meaning of brothers marrying the same woman in turn, see chapter 3.
28. Loki engineered the death of Frigg and Odin's son Baldr. See BD.
32. Among the Vanir, marriage between brother and sister was permitted, though it was forbidden to all others.
48. Heimdall waits for Ragnarok in a hall before the rainbow bridge Bifrost in order to warn the Gods of the approach of the hosts of Hel and Muspell.
49. Skathi's father Thiazi was destroyed by the wiles of Loki. See SKd 1. It was Skathi who fastened the venomous snake over Loki's face when he was bound.
60. On Thor's voyage to Utgarth, see SKd 45.

Þrymskviða

1.
Reiðr var þá Vingþórr
ok síns hamars
skegg nam at hrista,
réð Jarðar burr
er hann vaknaði
um saknati,
skör nam at dýja,
um at þreifask.
2.
Ok hann þat orða
“Heyrðu nú, Loki,
er eigi veit
né upphimins:
alls fyrst um kvað:
hvat ek nú mæli
Jarðar hvergi
áss er stolinn hamri”.
3.
Gengu þeir fagra
ok hann þat orða
“Muntu mér, Freyja,
ef ek minn hamar
Freyju túna
alls fyrst um kvað:
jaðrhams léa,
mættak hitta?”.
- Freyja kvað:
4.
“Þó munda ek gefa þér
ok þó selja,
þótt ór gulli væri
at væri ór silfri.”
5.
Fló þá Loki,
unz fyr útan kom
ok fyr innan kom
- fjatrharmr dunði, -
ása garða
jötna heima.
6.
Þrymr sat á haugi,
greyjum sínum
ok mörum sínum
þursa dróttinn,
gullbönd snøri
mön jafnaði.
- Þrymr kvað:
7.
“Hvat er með ásum?
Hví ertu einn kominn
Hvat er með álfum?
í Jötunheima?”
- Loki kvað:
“Illt er með ásum,
hefr þú Hlórriða
illt er með álfum;
hamar um folginn?”
- Þrymr kvað:
8.
“Ek hefu Hlórriða.
átta röstum
hann engi maðr
nema færi mér
hamar um fólgin
fyr jörð neðan,
aftr um heimtír
Freyju at kvæn.”

Lay of Thrym

1.
Ving-Thor was wroth. On waking
his hammer was gone.
His beard shook and his hair tossed.
Jorth's son began groping about.
2.
These words he spoke first:
“Listen up Loki, to what I'm going to tell you.
No one yet knows anywhere on heaven or earth
that this Ase's hammer has been stolen.”
3.
They went to Freya's fair home:
and first spoke to her with these words:
“Would you loan me your feather skin,
Freyja, so that I might find my hammer.”
- Freyja said:
4.
“I would give it to you even if
it were made of gold or silver.”
5.
Then the feather skin whirred
and Loki flew until he got out of
Asgard and came to Ettinhome.
6.
Thrym the lord of thurses sat on a howe
twisting golden collars for his grey dogs
and evened the manes of his horses.
- Thrym said:
7.
“How fare the Aesir? How fare the elves?
Why have you come to Ettinhome?”
- Loki said:
“Ill fare the Aesir, ill fare the elves.
Have you hidden the hammer of Hlorritha?”
- Thrym said:
8.
“I have hidden Hlorritha's hammer
eight leagues beneath the earth.
No one shall get it back,
unless he brings me Freya as queen.”

9. Fló þá Loki, unz fyr útan kom ok fyr innan kom Mætti hann Þór ok þat hann orða	- fjatrharmr dundi, - jötna heima ása garða. miðra garða alls fyrst um kvað:	9. The feather skin whirred and Loki Flew until he got out of Ettinhome and into Asgard. He met Thor in Midgard who first spoke to him with these words.
10. “Hefir þú erindi Segðu á lofti oft sitjanda ok liggjandi	sem erfiði? löng tíðendi, sögur um fallask lygi um bellir.”	10. “Have you tidings as well as trouble? Tell me, while still in the air, the lengthy news. While sitting a story may fail, while lying it may become a lie.”
Loki kvað: 11. “Hef ek erfiði Þrymr hefir þinn hamar, hann engi maðr nema hánnum færi	ok erendi. þursa dróttinn, aftr um heimtir Freyju at kván.	Loki said: 11. “I have trouble and tidings. Thrym the lord of thurses has your hammer, and no one can get it back unless he brings him Freya as a bride.”
12. Ganga þeir fagra ok hann þat orða “Bittu þik, Freyja, vit skulum aka tvau	Freyju at hitta alls fyrst um kvað: brúðar líni; í Jötunheima.”	12. They went to the fair hall of Freya and Thor first spoke these words: “Freya, don bridal linen, for together we shall drive to Ettinhome.”
13. Reið varð þá Freyja allr ása salr stökk þat it mikla “Mik veiztu verða ef ek ek með þér	ok fnasaði, undir bifðisk, men Brísinga: vergjarnasta í Jötunheima.”	13. Freyja was wroth and snorted with rage. The whole hall of the Ases trembled, and the great Brising necklace was broken asunder. “I will be thought a whore if I go to Ettinhome with you.”
14. Senn váru æsir ok ásynjur ok um þat réðu hvé þeir Hlórriða	allir á þingi allar á máli ríkir tívar hamar um sætti.	14. Then all the Aesir and Asynjur fared to thing for moot. The ruling Tivar reded on how to get Hlorritha’s hammer back.
15. Þá kvað þat Heimdallr, vissi hann vel fram “Bindum vér Þór þá hafi hann it mikla	hvítastr ása, sem vanir aðrir: brúðar líni, men Brísinga.	15. Heimdall, the whitest of Ases, who, like a Vane, could see far ahead, spoke: “Let us gird Thor in bridal linen and in the great Brising necklace.”
16. Látum und honum ok kvenváiðir en á brjósti ok hagliga	hrynja lukla um kné falla breiða steina um höfuð typpum.”	16. “Let keys dangle from him and let women’s weeds fall about his knees let bridal stones bedeck his breast and his head be properly hooded.”

17.	Þá kvað þat Þór “Mik munu æsir ef ek bindask læt	þrúðugr áss: argan kalla brúðar líni.”	17.	Thor, the mighty Ase, spoke: “The Aesir will call me a queer if I allow myself to be dressed in bridal linen.”
18.	Þá kvað þat Loki “Þegi þú, Þórr, Þegar munu jötnar nema þú þinn hamar	Laufeyjar sonr: þeirra orða. Ásgarð búa þér um heimtir.”	18.	Then spoke Loki, Laufey’s son: “Silence Thor! Say no more! Unless you get your hammer back, the ettins will soon dwell in Asgard.”
19.	Bundu þeir Þór þá ok inu mikla létu und hánum ok kvenváðir en á brjósti ok hagliga	brúðar líni meni Brísinga, hrynja lukla um kné falla breiða steina um höfuð typpðu.	19.	They clothed Thor in bridal linen and the great brising necklace and let keys dangle on him. Women’s wear fell about his knees, bridal stones were on his breast, and they fit his head with a hood.
20.	Þá kvað Loki “Mun ek ok með þér vit skulum aka tvær	Laufeyjar sonr: ambótt vera, í Jötunheima.”	20.	Then spoke Loki Laufey’s son: “I will go with you and be the handmaid. The two of us shall drive to Ettinhome.”
21.	Senn váru hafrar skyndir at sköklum, Björg brotnuðu, ók Óðins sonr	heim um reknir, skyldu vel renna. brann jörð loga, í Jötunheima.	21.	Soon the goats were driven home. They hastened to the harness and ran well. The mountains broke and flames scorched the earth as Odin’s son fared into Ettinhome.
22.	Þá kvað þat Þrymr, “Standið upp, jötnar, nú færa mér Njarðar dóttur	þursa dróttinn: ok stráið bekki, Freyju at kván ór Nóatúnnum.	22.	Then spoke Thrym, lord of thurses: “Stand up you ettins, and strew the benches with straw! Now they are bringing Freya, daughter of Njorth of Noatun here to me as a bride.”
23.	Ganga hér at garði öxn alsvartir fjöld á ek meiðma, einnar mér Freyju	gullhrynðar kýr, jötni at gamni; fjölð á ek menja, ávant þykir.”	23.	“Golden horned cows and oxen all ablack graze here in the garth for the pleasure of ettins. I own many treasures and have many jewels. It seems I lack Freya alone.”
24.	Var þar at kveldi ok fyr jötna einn át oxa, krásir allar drakk Sifjar verr	um komit snemma öl fram borit; átta laxa, þær er konur skyldu, sáld þrjú mjaðar.	24.	Evening soon came and ale was born to the ettins. The husband of Sif ate one ox, eight salmon, and all the womens’ delicacies, and drank three measures of mead.

25. Þá kvat þat Þrymr, “Hvar sátu brúðir Sáka ek brúðir né inn meira mjöð	þursa dróttinn: bíta hvassara? bíta breiðara mey um drekka.”	25. Then spoke Thrym, lord of thurses: “Where have you ever seen a bride bite more sharply? I have not seen a bride bite as broadly or drink as much mead.”
26. Sat in alsnotra er orð um fann “Át vætr Freyja svá var hon óðfús	ambótt fyrir við jötuns máli: átta nóttum, í Jötunheima.”	26. The knowing handmaid sat there and found words to speak to the ettin: “Freyja fasted eight nights, so madly eager was she for Ettinhome.”
27. Laut und línu, en hann útan stökk “Hví eru öndótt Þykki mér ór augum	lysti at kyssa, endlangan sal: augu Freyju? eldr um brenna.”	27. He pulled the linen, lusting for kissing, but sprang back to the other end of the hall. “How terrible are Freyja’s eyes! Fire seems to burn in those eyes.”
28. Sat in alsnotra er orð um fann “Svaf vætr Freyja svá var hon óðfús	ambótt fyrir við jötuns máli: átta nóttum, í Jötunheima.”	28. The brides-maid sat, all-knowing, and found words to speak to the ettin: “Freyja has not slept at all in eight nights, so madly eager she was for Ettinhome.”
29. Inn kom in arma hin er brúðféar “Láttu þér af höndum ef þú öðlask vill ástir mínar,	jötna systir, biðja þorði: hringa rauða, ástir mínar, alla hylli.	29. The ettin’s baleful sister stepped in, daring to ask for bridal gifts: “Take from your hand those red rings, if you want to have my love, my love and all my friendship.”
30. Þá kvað þat Þrymr, “Berid inn hamar lekkið Mjöllni vígið okkr saman.	þursa dróttinn: brúði at vígja, í meyjar kné, Várar hendi.”	30. Then Thrym, lord of thurses spoke: “Bring the hammer to hallow the bride!” He laid Mjólnir on the bride’s knee: “Hallow the two of us together by the hand of Var!”
31. Hló Hlórriða er harðhugaðr Þrym drap hann fyrstan, ok ætt jötuns	hugr í brjósti hamar um þekki; þursa dróttin, alla lamði.	31. Hard-minded Hlorritha laughed in his breast when he saw the hammer. First he slew Thrym, lord of thurses, and then crushed the ettin’s kin.
32. Drap hann ina öldnu hin er brúðféar hon skell um hlaut en högg hamars Svá kom Óðins sonr	jötna systir, um beðið hafði, fyr skillinga, fyr hringa fjölð. endr at hamri.	32. Then he smote the old sister of the ettins, she who had demanded bridal gifts. She received a blow instead of schillings, a stroke of the hammer instead of a heap of rings. And so Odin’s son got his hammer back.

Lay of Thrym: Notes

4. Loki typically travels to Ettinhome by means of Freya's falcon shape (ON "hamr"). In the *Younger Edda* Loki uses Frigg's hawk shape to fly to Geirroth's hall and uses Freya's falcon shape to travel to Thiazi's garth. By this shape Loki fares forth into Ettinhome. Thor is not versed in this sort of magic.
13. The Brisingamen is the prized necklace of Freya that she acquired from the four dwarves who fashioned it. She paid for it by spending a night with each of them. It was later stolen by Loki and retrieved by Heimdall.
23. In the *Gautrek's Saga* it is related that the farmer Rennir had the horns of his favorite ox gilt with gold and silver.
30. The hammer was used to hallow brides in heathen marriage ceremonies. Var is one of the Asynjur. According to Snorri in *Gylf. 35.*, "The ninth is Var. She harkens to the oaths and compacts made between men and women; wherefore such covenants are called vows. She also takes vengeance on those who perjure themselves."

Alvíssmál

Alvíss kvað:

1.

“Bekki breiða, nú skal brúðr með mér
heim í sinni snúask,
hratat um mægi mun hverjum þykkja,
heima skalat hvíld nema.”

Þórr kvað:

2.

“Hvat er þat fira? Hví ertu svá fölr um nasar?
Vartu í nóttmeð ná?
Þursa líki þykki mér á þér vera,
ertattu til brúðar borinn.”

Alvíss kvað:

3.

“Alvíss ek heiti, bý ek fyr jörð neðan,
á ek und steini stað,
vagna vers ek em á vit kominn,
bregði engi föstu heiti fira.”

Þórr kvað:

4.

“Ek mun bregða, þvíat ek brúðar á
flest um ráð sem faðir,
varka ek heima, þá er þér heitit var,
at sá einn, er gjöf er, með goðum.”

Alvíss kvað:

5.

“Hvat er þat rekka, er í ráðum telsk
fljóðs ins fagrglóa,
fjarrafleina, - þik munu fáir kunna, -
hverr hefr þik baugum borit?”

Þórr kvað:

6.

“Vingþórr ek heiti, hef ek víða ratat,
sonr em ek Síðgrana;
at ósátt minni skalattu þat it unga man hafa
ok þat gjaforð geta.”

Alvíss kvað:

7.

“Sáttir þínar er ek vil snemma hafa
ok þat gjaforð geta,
eiga vilja ek, heldr en án vera,
þat it mjallhvíta man.”

Lay of Alvis

Alvis said:

1.

“Clear the benches, for now my bride
shall come home with me.
It will seem to all that I was hasty with the maid.
I won't waste time getting home.”

Thor said:

2.

“What sort of being are you,
you who are such a white-nose?
It seems to me that you ought to get a thurs's corpse.
You were not born for a bride.”

Alvis said:

3.

“I am called Alvis, I live beneath the earth.
I have a stead under the stones.
For weapon's worth I have come.
Let no man disregard fast oaths.”

Thor said:

4.

“I shall break the oath. As her father,
I have the most say. I was not home
when she was promised. It is for myself alone,
of all the Gods, to give her for marriage.”

Alvis said:

5.

“Who is this man, who says
that he is the father of the fair maid?
You wretch! Few will know you.
Who brought you the rings?”

Thor:

6.

“I am called Vingthor! I have wandered wide.
I am Sithgrani's son. You will not have
the young lass by my leave,
or have my approval of marriage.”

Alvis:

7.

“I will soon have your consent,
and get your approval.
I would rather have the snow-white lass
than to be alone.”

Þórr kvað:

8.

“Meyjar ástum muna þér verða
vísí gestr of varit,
ef þú ór heimi kannt hverjum at segja
allt þat er vilja ek vita.”

9.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sú jörð heitir, er liggr fyr alda sonum
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

10.

“Jörð heitir með mönnum, en með ásum fold,
kalla vega vanir,
ígræn jötnar, alfar gróandi,
kalla aur uppregin.”

Þórr kvað:

11.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sá himinn heitir erakendi,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

12.

“Himinn heitir með mönnum, en hlýrnir með goðum,
kalla vindófnir vanir,
uppheim jötnar, alfar fagaræfr,
dvergar drjúpansal.”

Þórr kvað:

13.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hversu máni heitir, sá er menn séa,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

14.

“Máni heitir með mönnum, en mylinn með goðum,
kalla hverfanda hvél helju í,
skyndi jötnar, en skín dvergar,
kalla alfar ártala.”

Thor said:

8.

“I will grant you the maid’s love, wise guest,
give you what you wish,
if you can tell me everything I want to know
about each of the worlds.”

9.

“Tell me this Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know, the origin of all beings:
what the earth is called, that lies beneath
the sons of men, in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

10.

“It is called “Earth” by men, “Field” by the Ases,
“Ways” by the Vanes, “Greenish” by ettins.
Elves call it “Growing”.
and the Uppregin call it “Clay.”

Thor said:

11.

“Tell me this Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin
of all things: what heaven is called
in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

12.

“Heaven” it is called among men. Gods call it “Sky”,
Vanes call it “Windweaver”,
ettins call it “Upper-World”, elves call it “Fair-Roof”,
and dwarves call it “Dripping Hall”.

Thor said:

13.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what is the moon called, which is seen
by the sons of men, in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

14.

“Men call it “Moon”, but it is called “Fiery”
among the Gods. In Hel they call it “Turning Wheel”.
Ettins call it “Speed”, dwarves call it “Shining”,
but elves call it “year reckoner”.

Þórr kvað:

15.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sú sól heitir, er séa alda synir,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

16.

“Sól heitir með mönnum, en sunna með goðum,
kalla dvergar Dvalins leika,
eygló jötnar, alfar fagrahvél,
alskír ása synir.”

Þórr kvað:

17.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé þau ský heita, er skúrum blandask,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

18.

“Ský heita með mönnum, en skúrván með goðum,
kalla vindflot vanir,
úrván jötnar, alfar veðmegin,
kalla í helju hjalm huliðs.”

Þórr kvað:

19.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sá vindr heitir, er víðast ferr,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

20.

“Vindr heitir með mönnum, en váfuðr með goðum,
kalla gneggjuð ginnregin,
œpi jötnar, alfar dynfara,
kalla í helju hviðuð.”

Þórr kvað:

21.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé þat logn heitir, er liggja skal,
heimi hverjum í?”

Thor said:

15.

“Tell me this Alvis, since I know, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what the sun is called,
that men see in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

16.

“It is called “Sol” among men, and “Sun” among Gods.
Dwarves call it “Dvalinn’s Plaything”,
ettins call it “Everglow”, elves call it “Fairwheel”,
but the sons of Ases call it “Allbright”.

Thor said:

17.

“Tell me Alvis, For I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what are the clouds called,
that bring showers, in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

18.

“Men call them “Clouds”, the Gods call them “Hope
of Showers.” They are called “Windsailors” by Vanes,
But “Rainhope” by ettins, and “Weather Might”
by elves. In Hel they call them “Hiding Helm”.

Thor said:

19.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all wights:
what the wide-faring winds are called
in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

20.

“Men call it “Wind”, Gods call it “Waverer”,
the Ginnregin call it “Whinnier”,
it is called “Roarer” by ettins “Din-Farer” by elves,
and “Stormer” in Hel.”

Thor said:

21.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what is the calm called that rests
over each of the worlds?”

Alvíss kvað:

22.

“Logn heitir með mönnum, en lægi með goðum,
kalla vindlot vanir,
ofhlý jötnar, alfar dagsefa,
kalla dvergar dagsveru.”

Þórr kvað:

23.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sá marr heitir, er menn róa,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

24.

“Sær heitir með mönnum, en sílægja með goðum,
kalla vág vanir,
álheim jötnar, alfar lagastaf,
kalla dvergar djúpan mar.”

Þórr kvað:

25.

“Segðu mér þat, Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sá eldr heitir, er brennr fyr alda sonum,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

26.

“Eldr heitir með mönnum, en með ásum funi,
kalla vág vanir,
frekan jötnar, en forbrenni dvergar,
kalla í helju hröðuð.”

Þórr kvað:

27.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé viðr heitir, er vex fyr alda sonum,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

28.

“Viðr heitir með mönnum, en vallarfax með goðum,
kalla hlíðþang halir,
eldi jötnar alfar fagrlima,
kalla vönd vanir.”

Alvis said:

22.

“It is called “Calm” by men, but “Stillness” by Gods,
“Wind-Lull” by the Vanes. It is called
“Over-Warmth” by ettins, “Day-Quiet” by elves,
and “Day-Shelter” by dwarves.”

Thor said:

23.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know, the origin of all beings:
what is the sea called, that men sail,
in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

24.

“Men call it “Sea”, Gods call it “Endless Plain”,
Vanes call it “Wave”. It is called “Eel-Home”
by ettins, “Water-Stave” by elves,
and “Deep-Sea” by dwarves.”

Thor said:

25.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what is fire that burns before the sons of life
called in all the worlds?”

Alvis said:

26.

“Men call it “Fire,” the Gods call it “Flame”.
The Vanes call it “Waver”,
the dwarves call it “All-Burner”, and ettins
call it “Greedy”, in Hel they call it “Speedy”.

Thor said:

27.

“Tell me this Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all beings:
what they call the forest that grows
before the sons of life, in each of the worlds?”

Alvis said:

28.

“Men call it “Forest”, but the Gods call it
“Mane of the Fields.” Hel folk call it
“Mountain-Seaweed”, ettins call it “Fuel”,
elves call it “Fair-Limb”, and the Vanes call it “Wand”.

Þórr kvað:

29.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé sú nótt heitir, in Nörvi kennda,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

30.

“Nótt heitir með mönnum, en njól með goðum,
kalla grímu ginnregin,
óljós jötnar, alfar svefngaman,
kalla dvergar draumnjörun.”

Þórr kvað:

31.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé þat sáð heitir, er sáa alda synir,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

32.

“Bygg heitir með mönnum, en barr með goðum,
kalla vöxt vanir,
æti jötnar, alfar lagastaf,
kalla í helju hnipin.”

Þórr kvað:

33.

“Segðu mér þat Alvíss, - öll of rök fira
vörumk, dvergr, at vitir,
hvé þat öl heitir, er drekka alda synir,
heimi hverjum í?”

Alvíss kvað:

34.

“Öl heitir með mönnum, en með ásum bjórr,
kalla veig vanir,
hreinalög jötnar, en í helju mjöð,
kalla sumbl Suttungs synir.”

Þórr kvað:

35.

“Í einu brjósti sá ek aldri
fleiri forna stafí;
miklum tálum kveð ek tælðan þik,
uppi ertu, dvergr, um dagaðr,
nú skínn sól í sali.”

Thor said:

29.

“Tell me Alvis, For I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all things:
in each of the worlds, what do they call night
who was born to Nor?”

Alvis said:

30.

“Men call it “Night”, but the Gods call it “The Dark.”
The Ginnregin call it “Hood”, ettins call “Lightless”,
elves call it “Sleep-Pleasure”
and dwarves call it “Dream-Weaver”.

Thor said:

31.

“Tell me Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all things:
what the seed is called, in all the worlds,
that the sons of life sow?”

Alvis said:

32.

“It is called “Barley” by men, and “Barr” by Gods.
The Vanes call it “Growth”,
ettins call it “Eating”, elves call it “Waterstave”
but in Hel they call it “Drooping”.

Thor said:

33.

“Tell me this Alvis, for I think, dwarf,
that you know the origin of all things:
what is the ale called, in all the worlds,
that is drunk by the sons of life?”

Alvis said:

34.

“Men call it “Ale”, Ases call it “Beer”,
Vanes call it “Stout”, ettins call it “Pure-water”,
they call it “Mead” in Hel,
and Suttung’s sons call it “Sumble”.

Thor said:

35.

“I never saw such eld staves
beneath any breast,
but I fooled you with wily words.
At daylight you are up, dwarf,
now the sun is shining in the hall.”

Lay of Alvis: Notes

2. Though it may seem odd that Thor should tell a dwarf that he has a giant's body, we may remind ourselves that there are similarities in that both are denizens of the realms beneath the earth and associated with graves and stones.
16. It can also be translated as the "plaything of Dvalinn". Thor keeps Alvis talking until daybreak, at which time, dwarves who have not returned to Dark-Elfhome from their farings in Midgard are turned to stone. The visages of dwarves, ettins, and trolls may still be seen in the rock formations that serve as gateways to their homes.
20. Vafuthr=Waverer and may well mean wanderer. This is also one of the names of Odin in GM 54.
24. Lagastaf=Waterstave. The term is used twice by the elves, here to refer to the sea and again in 32 to refer to grain.

Baldrs draumar

1.
Senn váru æsir
ok ásynjur
ok um þat réðu
hví væri Baldri
allir á þingi
alla á máli,
ríkir tívar,
ballir draumar.
2.
Upp reis Óðinn,
ok hann á Sleipni
reið hann niðr þaðan
mætti hann hvelpi,
alda gautr,
söðul um lagði;
niflheljar til;
þeim er ór helju kom.
3.
Sá var blóðugr
ok galdrs föður
fram reið Óðinn,
hann kom at hávu
um brjóst framan
gól um lengi;
foldvegr dunði;
Heljar ranni.
4.
Þá reið Óðinn
þar er hann vissi
nam hann vittugri
unz nauðig reis,
fyrir austan dyrr,
völu leiði;
valgaldr kveða,
nás orð um kvað:
5.
“Hvat er manna þat
er mér hefir aukit
Var ek snivin snævi
drifin döggu,
mér ókunnra,
erfitt sinni?
ok slegin regni
dauð var ek lengi.”
6.
“Vegtamr ek heiti,
segðu mér ór helju,
Hveim eru bekkir
flet fagrlið
sonr em ek Valtams;
ek mun ór heimi:
baugum sánir
flóuð gulli?”
7.
“Hér stendr Baldri
skírar veigar,
en ásmegir
nauðug sagðak,
of brugginn mjöðr,
liggr skjöldr yfir,
í ofvæni;
nú mun ek þegja.”
8.
“Þegjattu, völva,
unz alkunna,
Hverr mun Baldri
ok Óðins son
þik vil ek fregna,
vil ek enn vita:
at bana verða
aldri ræna?”

The Dreams of Baldr

1.
Soon all the Aesir were gathered at thing
and all the Asynjur in moot.
The powerful Tivar mooted
over why Baldr had baleful dreams.
2.
Up came Odin the old god
and laid the saddle on Sleipnir.
He rode down to Niflhel,
and met a hound from Hel.
3.
He was bloody about his breast
and he barked long at galder's father.
Odin rode on. The ground thundered,
and he came to the high hall of Hel.
4.
Then Odin rode for the eastern door
for he knew the tomb of the volva was there.
Wise in witchcraft, he began to sing valgalder
until the corpse was forced to rise and speak.
5.
“What man is this whom I do not know
who has increased my hardship by his journey?
Was I covered in snow, and beaten by rain,
and besprent by with dew? I was dead long.”
6.
“I am called Vegtam and am the son of Valtam.
Tell me about Hel. I am a man from Midgard.
For whom are the benches strewn with rings,
the chambers a flood of fair gold?”
7.
“Here stands mead brewed for Baldr.
A shield lays over the clear drinks.
The sons of Odin are in despair.
I spoke by need, but now I am silent.”
8.
“Be not silent Volva! I will question you
until I know all that I want to know.
What wight shall be Baldr's bane
and rob Odin's son of his life?”

9.	“Höðr berr hávan hann mun Baldri ok Óðins son nauðug sagðak,	hróðrbaðm þinig, at bana verða aldri ræna; nú mun ek þegja.”	9.	“Hoth will bear the high and notorious spray. This wight will be the bane of Baldr and rob Odin’s son of his life. I spoke under need. Now I shall be silent.”
10.	“Þegjattu, völva, unz alkunna, Hverr mun heift Heði eða Baldrs bana	þik vil ek fregna, vil ek enn vita: heft of vinna á bál vega?”	10.	“Be not silent volva! I will question you until I know all that I want to know. What wight will bring vengeance against Hoth and send Baldr’s bane to the pyre?”
11.	Rindr berr Vála sá mun Óðins sonr hönd um þvær áðr á bál um berr nauðug sagðak,	í veströllum, einnætr vega: né höfuð kembir, Baldrs andskota; nú mun ek þegja.”	11.	“Rind bears Vali in the western halls. This one, while one winter old, Odin’s son, shall slay him. He washes not his hands, nor combs his hair, before he bears Baldr’s slayer to the pyre. I spoke by need, now I shall be silent.”
12.	“Þegjattu, völva, unz alkunna, Hverjar ro þær meyjjar, ok á himin verpa	þik vil ek fregna, vil ek enn vita: er at muni gráta halsa skautum?”	12.	“Do not be silent volva! I will question you until I know all that I want to know. Who are the maidens who shall weep and cast their neck veils towards the heavens?”
13.	“Ertattu Vegtamr, heldr ertu Óðinn, “Ertattu völva heldr ertu þriggja	sem ek hugða, aldinn gautr.” né vís kona, þursa móðir.”	13.	“As I thought, you are not Vegtam. Rather you are Odin, the old god.” “You are no volva, nor wise woman but rather the mother of three thurses.”
14.	“Heim ríð þú, Óðinn, svá komir manna er lauss Loki ok ragna rök	ok ver hróðigr, meir aftr á vit, líðr ór böndum rjúfendr koma.”	14.	“Ride home Odin, and be triumphant. No men shall thus come to call me again, before Loki is free, his limbs loosed from the bonds, and destroying Ragnarok comes.

Baldr's Dream: Notes

1. According to Snorri, the Aesir meet at Urth's well below Bifrost bridge each day. A "thing" is an old Teutonic law assembly.
2. Niflhel is the same as Hel. Guard dogs and quaking earth are common features of journeys to the halls of wise women in Ettinhome and Hel. See also FS, SGD, and chapter 4. It is possible that the hound in this case is Garm who is mentioned in VSP 43. Sleipnir is the eight legged steed on which Odin fares out over the nine worlds. The lich or corpse-galder (O.N. *Valgaldra*) are a necromantic form of Galder used to waken the dead to elicit wisdom from them. Instance of this sort of magic are to be found elsewhere in Eddic and saga lore. See Hav. 157, GG, and Harbarth's Lay 44-45 in *Elder Edda*. Also see the Hervor episode in *Heidrek's Saga*. In Saxo's story of Hadingus an engraved teinn is placed under the tongue of a corpse.
4. Vegtam = Road-Ready, Valtam = Battle-Ready.
6. The halls of Hel, like those of Gerth and Mengloth, are loaded with wealth.

Rígsþula

Svá segja menn í fornum sögum, at einhverf af ásum, sá er Heimdallr hét, fór ferðar sinnar ok fram með sjóvarströndu nökkurri, kom at einum húsabæ ok nefndiz Rígr; eftir þeiri sögu er kvæði þetta:

1.
Ár kváðu ganga grænar brautir
öflgan ok aldinn ás kunnigan,
ramman ok röskvan Rígr stíganda;
gekk hann meir at þat miðrar brautar.
2.
Kom hann at húsi, hurð var á gætti,
inn nam at ganga eldr var á golfi;
hjón sátu þar hár at árne,
Ái ok Edda, aldinfalda.
3.
Rígr kunni þeim ráð at segja;
meir settisk hann miðra fletja,
en á hlið hvára hjón salkynna.
4.
Þá tók Edda ökkvinn hleif,
þungan ok þykkvan, þrunginn sáðum,
bar hon meir at þat miðra skutla,
soð var í bolla, setti á bjóð;
var kálfr soðinn krása beztr.
5.
Rígr kunni þeim ráð at segja,
reis hann upp þaðan, réðsk at sofna;
meir lagðisk hann miðrar rekkju,
en á hlið hvára hjón salkynna.
6.
Þar var hann at þat þrjár nætr saman,
gekk hann meir at þat miðrar brautar,
liðu meir at þat mánuðr níu.
7.
Jóð ól Edda jósu vatni,
hörvi svartan, hétu Þræl.

Lay of Rig

Men tell in old tales that one of the Ases was called Heimdall and that in the days of yore he made a journey along a certain seashore until he came to a farm. This is the story.

1.
They say that in the days of yore
an Ase walked wise and holy,
powerful on the green wilderness ways.
Mighty and mainful strode Rig.
2.
He strode further down the middle wilderness way
until he came to a house. The door was closed
and he strode in. There was a fire on the floor.
Hoary sat man and wife there at the hearth,
Ai and Edda wearing old hoods.
3.
Rig knew how to rede them well.
He sat on the middle seat.
Sat between the two in the hall.
4.
Edda picked up a lumpy loaf thick and heavy
with bran. Then she brought forth a bowl.
She set it in the middle of the table,
the bowl full of broth and boiled calf, best of fare.
He rose up from there, ready for bed
5.
Rig knew how to rede them well.
He lay in the middle
of the bed between the two,
there in the hall.
6.
He stayed there three nights altogether,
then walked further the middle ways.
Nine months passed.
7.
Joth and Edda sprinkled water
on a dark linen clad boy named Thrall.

8. Hann nam at vaxa var þar á höndum krofnir knúar fingr digrir, lútr hryggr,	ok vel dafna; hrokkit skinn, — — — — fúlligt andlit, langir hælur.	8. He began to grow and thrive well. Rough the skin of his hands, gnarled the knuckle, fingers were thick, his back was bent His heels were long.
9. Nam han meir at þat bast at binda, bar hann heim at þat	megins um kosta, byrðar gerva, hrís gerstan dag.	9. Then he began to test his might, ropes of bast he bound, bore burdens, bore home brushwood all day.
10. Þar kom at garði aurr var á iljum, niðrbjúgt var nef,	gengilbeina armr sólbrunninn, nefndisk Þír.	10. A bent legged woman approached his yard with dirty soles, and sunburnt arms, and her nose bent down. She was named Thir.
11. Míðra fletja sat hjá henni ræddu ok rýndu, Þræll ok Þír	meir settisk hón, sonr húss, rekkju gerðu þrungin dægr.	11. She sat down in the middle seat with the son of the house next to her. They talked and gossiped, they lay together, Thrall and Thir all day.
12. Börn ólu þau, hygg ek at héti Klúrr ok Kleggi, Drumbr, Digraldi, Lútr ok Leggjaldi, akra töddu, geita gættu,	- bjuggu ok unðu, - Hreimr ok Fjósnil, Kefsir, Fúlnil, Dröttr ok Hösnil. lögðu garða, unnu at svínum, grófu torf.	12. They bore children, were happy in their home. I think the children were called Hreim and Fjosnil, Klur, Kleggi, Kefsir, Fulnil, Drumb, Digraldi, Drott, and Hosnil. Lut and Leggjaldi. They laid fences, they dinged the acres, fed the swine, herded goats, turned the turf.
13. Dætr váru þær Ökkvinkalfa Ysja ok Ambátt, Tötrughypja þaðan eru komnar	Drumba ok Kumba, ok Arinnefja, Eikintjasna, ok Trönubeina. þræla ættir.	13. Their daughters were Drumba, Kumbla, Okvinkalfa, Arinnefia, Ysia, Ambat, Eikintiasna, Totrughyphia and Tronobeina. Thence comes the tribe of thralls.
14. Gekk Rígr at þat kom hann at höllu, inn nam at ganga, hjón sátu þar,	réttar brautir, hurð var á skíði, eldr var á golfi, heldu á sýslu.	14. At that, strode Rig straight on the wilderness ways. He came to a hall and the door was closed. He started into the hall, found a fire on the floor, man and wife had that house.
15. Maðr tegldi þar var skegg skapat, skyrtu þröngva,	meið til rifjar, skör var fyr enni, skokkr var á golfi.	15. The man fashioned a loom pole from wood. His beard was shaped, his hair hung over his forehead, his tunic close fitting, there was a chest on the floor.

16. Sat þar kona, breiddi faðm, sveigr var á höfði, dúkr var á halsi, Afi ok Amma	sveigði rokk, bjó til váðar; smokkr var á bringu, dvergar á öxlum. áttu hús;	16. Twirling her distaff the woman sat. She braided thread and made cloth. She had a hood on her head and a smock over her breast. She wore a muffler on her neck, and broaches on her shoulders. Affi and Amma owned that house.
17. Rígr kunni þeim	ráð at segja,	17. Rig knew how to rede them well.
18. reis frá borði, meir lagðisk hann en á hlið hvára	réð at sofna, miðrar rekkju, hjón salkynna.	18. He rose from the bench, ready to sleep he lay down, between the two, betwixt the man and the woman, in the middle of the bed in the hall.
19. Þar var hann at þat gekk hann meirr at þat líðu meir at þat	þrjár nætr saman; miðrar brautar; mánuðr níu;	19. He stayed there three nights all told (He walked the middle ways.) Nine moons passed in the meantime.
20. Jóð ól Amma, kölluðu Karl, rauðan ok rjóðan,	jósu vatni, kona sveip ripti. riðuðu augu.	20. Amma bore a boy. She sprinkled him with water. She named him Karl and clothed him in linen. Wild eyed, red and ruddy he was.
21. Hann nam at vaxa öxn nam at temja, hús at timbra karta at gerva	ok vel dafna, arðr at gerva, ok hlöður smíða, ok keyra plóg.	21. He began to grow, he waxed well, he tamed oxen and made plowshares, timbered houses and built sheds, fashioned carts and drove ploughs.
22. Heim óku þá geitakyrtlu, Snör heitir sú, bjuggu hjón, breiddu blæjur	hanginluklu, giptu Karli; settisk und rifti, bauga deildu, ok bú gerðu.	22. They brought home a bride, keys a dangling, in a goat-skin skirt, and gave her to Karl. She was called Snor and sat veiled. The man and dwelled and dealt rings, spread sheets and established a household.
23. Börn ólu þau, hét Halr ok Drengr, Breiðr, Bóndi, Búi ok Boddi,	- bjuggu ok unðu, - Höldr, Þegn ok Smiðr, Bundinskeggi, Brattskeggr ok Seggr.	23. They lived happily and bore sons called Hal, Dreng, Hold, Thegn, Smith, Breith, Bond, Bundinnskegg, Bui, Boddi, Brattskeg and Segg.
24. Enn hétu svá Snót, Brúðr, Svanni, Fljóð, Sprund ok Víf, þaðan eru komnar	öðrum nöfnum, Svarri, Sprakki, Feima, Ristill; karla ættir.	24. But the daughters were called by other names. Wise, Bruth, Svanni, Svarri Sprakki, Fljoth, Sprund, and Vif, Feima, and Ristil. Thence comes the tribe of Karls.

25. Gekk Rígr þaðan kom hann at sal, var hurð hnigin,	réttar brautir, suðr horfðu dyrr, hringr var í gætti.	25. Then strode Rig over the wilderness ways. He came to a hall whose door faced south. The door was leaning open and there was a ring on its post.
26. Gekk hann inn at þat, Sátu hjón, Faðir ok Móðir	golf var stráat. sáusk í augu, fingrum at leika;	26. He walked in and the floor was strewn with straw. Man and wife sat there, gazing at one another's eyes. Father and Mother were playing with their fingers.
27. Sat hús-gumi alm of bendi, En húskona strauk of ripti,	ok sneri streng, örvar skepti. hugði at örmum, sterti ermar.	27. The house-master twisted bow string and bent elm. The lady of the house looked to her arms, she smoothed the skirt and pleated her sleeves.
28. Keisti fald, síðar slæður, brún bjartari, háls hvítari	kinga var á bringu, serk bláfáan; brjóst ljósara, hreinni mjöllu.	28. She had a hood on her head and a brooch on her breast. The garment trailed behind her, the sark was blue. Her brow was brighter, her breast lighter, and her neck whiter, than fresh snow.
29. Rígr kunnir þeim meir settisk hann en á hlið hvára	ráð at segja; miðra fletja, hjón salkynna.	29. Rig knew how to rede them well. He sat down between the two, the man and the woman in the hall.
30. Þá tók Móðir hvítan af hörvi, hón tók at þat hvíta af hveiti,	merkðan dúk, hulði bjóð, hleifa þunna, ok hulði dúk.	30. The mother brought forth a white flaxen embroidered cloth and covered the table. She got a thin loaf of white wheat and set it on the table.
31. Framm setti hón silfri varða, fáin ok fleski vín var í könnu, drukku ok dæmðu,	skutla fulla, setti á bjóð ok fugla steikða, varðir kálkar, dagr var á sinnum.	31. A silver platter she set at the table full of steaked fowl. She set wine in a plated vessel. They drank and talked to the end of the day.
32. Þar vas hann at þat gekk hann meir at þat líðu meir at þat	þrjár nætr saman miðrar brautar mánuðr níu.	32. Rig rose from there, ready for sleep. He stayed there three nights all told. Then fared out over the middle wilderness ways. Nine moons passed in the meantime.
33. Svein ól Móðir, jósu vatni, Bleikt var hár, ötul váru augu	silki vafði, Jarl létu heita; bjartir vangar, sem yrmlingi.	33. Mother bore a son and clothed him in silk. She sprinkled him with water and called him Earl. He was fair of hair, bright of cheeks, and his eyes pierced like an adder's.

34.	Upp óx þar lind nam at skelfa, alm at beygja, fleini at fleygja, hestum ríða, sverðum bregða,	Jarl á fletjum, leggja strengi, örvar skefta, frökkur dýja, hundum verpa, sund at fremja.	34.	Earl grew up there at the hall. He began to shake the linden shields He fixed bow strings, bent elm, shafted arrows flung spears, sped lances, rode horses, hunted with hounds, swung swords and swam the sound.
35.	Kom þar ór runni Rígr gangandi, sitt gaf heiti, þann bað hann eignask óðavöllu,	Rígr gangandi, rúnar kendi, son kvesk eiga; óðalvöllu, aldnar byggðir.	35.	Then Rig came walking from the grove. Walking Rig came, taught him the runes and granted his own name, saying it belonged to his son. Rig bade him take possession of odal vales and old halls.
36.	Reið hann meir þaðan hélug fjöll, skapt nam at dýja, hesti hleypði víg nam at vekja, val nam at fella,	myrkvan við, unz at höllu kom, skelfði lind, ok hjörvi brá, völl nam at rjóða, vá til landa.	36.	He rode further thence through Mirkwood, over frosty fell, until he came to a hall. He began to shake spears, to shatter linden shields. He rode forth on his horse, swung his sword, wakened war, bloodied the earth dropped corpses, fought for land.
37.	Réð hann einn at þat auð nam skipta, meiðmar ok mösma, hringum hreytti,	átján búum, öllum veita mara svangrifja; hjó sundr baug.	37.	He ruled eighteen halls, he dealt wealth, and granted it to all. He showered rings, gifts and jewels, and slender horses. He hewed asunder arm rings.
38.	Óku ærir kómu at höllu, mey átti hann hvíta ok horska,	úrgar brautir, þar er Hersir bjó, mjófingraða, hétu Erna.	38.	His heralds drove over the wet wilderness ways and came to the hall where Hersir dwelled. A daughter he had, small fingered, and fair and wise, named Erna.
39.	Báðu hennar giftu Jarli, saman bjuggu þau ættir jóku	ok heim óku, gekk hon und líni, ok sér unðu, ok aldrs nutu.	39.	They asked for her and drove her home. They gave her to Earl and she walked in linen. They dwelled together and were happy. They had children and lived cheerfully.
40.	Burr var hinn ellsti, Jóð ok Aðal, Niðr ok Niðjungr, Sonr ok Sveinn, Kundr hét enn,	en Barn annat, Arfi, Mögr, - námu leika, - - sund ok tafl, - Konr var inn yngsti	40.	Burr was the oldest and Barr was the second. Then came Joth, Athal, Arfi, Mog, Nith, and Nithjung. They began to play at swimming and tables. Son and Svein came. Kund was another and Kon was the youngest.
41.	Upp óxu þar hesta tómðu, skeyti skófu,	Jarli bornir, hlífar bendu, skelfðu aska.	41.	The sons of the Earl grew up. They tamed horses, wielded shields, shaped shafts, shook the ash-wood (spear).

42. En Konr ungr ævinrúnar meir kunni hann eggjar deyfa,	kunni rúnar, ok aldrúnar, mönnum bjarga, ægi lægja.	42. But young Kon knew the runes - age runes and life runes, and more to help pregnant women, some to blunt edges and some to calm the sea.
43. Klök nam fugla, sefa of svefja, afl ok eljun	kyrra elda, sorgir lægja átta manna.	43. He understood the chirping of birds, he quenched fires, calmed the seas, and soothed sorrows. He had the strength and endurance of eight men.
44. Hann við Ríg jarl brögðum beitti þá öðlaðisk Rígr at heita,	rúnar deilði, ok betr kunni, ok eiga gat rúnar kunna.	44. He contended in runes with Earl Rig. He battled him in wits, and knew the runes better. So he came to have for himself the name Rig and runelore.
45. Reið Konr ungr kolfi fleygði,	kjörr ok skóga, kyrrði fugla.	45. The young Kon rode through forest and copse. He loosed missiles and tamed birds.
46. Þá kvað þat kráka, “Hvat skaltu, Konr ungr kyrra fugla? Heldr mætti þér [hjörvi bregða]	sat kvisti ein: hestum ríða, ok her fella.	46. A crow spoke, sitting on a branch. “Why do you tame birds young Kon? Instead you might ride horses and fell heroes.
47. Á Danr ok Danpr æðra óðal þeir kunnu vel egg at kenna,	dýrar hallir, en ér hafið; kjóli at ríða, undir rjúfa.”	47. “Dan and Damp have a hall more dear, and estates larger than yours. They know how to steer a ship and they know the edge of the sword and they bring ruin.”

Lay of Rig: Notes

1. On wilderness ways, might, and main, see glossary.
2. “Middle way” refers to a road through Midgard, while a “wilderness way” is a road through an outer home, especially Ettinhome.
7. Baptism was part of the pre-Christian rite of naming a child. An infant was not accepted as a human being until after he was named which endowed the child with a soul. Naming is a person’s first initiatory rite. As with all initiatory rites, there is a period in which the individual is in an ambiguous liminal state beyond the pale of society.
10. Thir=Drudge
23. Keys dangling from a belt were typical bridal gear. See *Lay of Thrym*.
24. Runes and the cult of Odin were the province of the aristocracy.
43. Runic spells of these sorts are found in *Havamal*, and *Svipdagsmal*.
44. Sigurth Volsung understood the language of birds when he tasted the blood of the dragon’s heart.

Völuspá hin skamma

1.
Váru ellifu
Baldr er hné,
þess lézk Váli
síns bróður
æsir talðir,
við banapúfu;
verðr at hefna,
sló hann handbana.
2.
Var Baldrs faðir
Freyr átti Gerði,
jötna ættar,
þó var Þjazi,
skrautgjarn jötunn,
Burs arfþegi,
hon var Gymis dóttir,
ok Aurboðu;
þeira frændi,
hans var Skaði dóttir.
3.
Margt segjum þér
vörumk, at viti svá.
ok munum fleira;
Viltu enn lengra?
4.
Haki var Hveðnu
en Hveðnu var
Heiðr ok Hrossþjófr
hóti beztr sona,
Hjörvarðr faðir;
Hrímnis kindar.
5.
Eru vödur allar
vitkar allir
seiðberendr
jötvar allir
frá Viðolfi,
frá Vilmeiði,
frá Svarthöfða,
frá Ymi komnir.
6.
Margt segjum þér
vörumk, at viti svá.
ok munum fleira;
Viltu enn lengra?
7.
Varð einn borin
rammaukinn mjök
nínu báru þann
jötva meyjar
í árdaga
rögna kindar;
naddgöfgan mann
við jarðar þröm.
8.
Margt segjum þér
vörumk, at viti svá.
ok munum fleira;
Viltu enn lengra?
9.
Hann Gjalp um bar,
bar hann Eistla
hann bar Ulfrún
Imðr ok Atla
hann Greip um bar,
ok Eyrgjafa,
ok Angeyja,
ok Járnsaxa.

The Shorter Spae of the Volva

1.
Eleven were the Aesir all told.
Baldr fell to the grave hill,
Vali sought to venge him,
slew his brother's slayer.
2.
Baldr's father was Burr's eldest son.
Frey married Gerth who was Gymir's daughter,
of the tribe of ettins and Aurbotha.
Thiazi was their kin.
Skathi was that ettin's daughter.
3.
I have told you much, but will say more of what
you need to know. Do you want to know more?
4.
Haki was the best of Hvaethno's sons,
but Hjorvarth was the father of Hvaethno.
Heith and Hrossthiof were the kin of Hrimnir.
5.
The volvas are all from Vitholf.
Vitki's all from Vilmeith,
but users of seith from Svarthofthi,
and all the ettin's from Ymir.
6.
Much I have told you, but I will say more of what
you need to know. Do you want to hear more?
7.
In the days of yore, one was born
kinsman of the Gods, powerful in magic.
Nine ettin maids begot the nailglorious one
on the edge of the earth.
8.
I have told you much, but I will say more of what
you need to know. Do you want to hear more?
9.
Gjalp and Greip,
Eistla and Eyrgjafa,
Ulfrun and Angeyja,
Imthir and Atla, and Jarnsaxa all bore him.

10. Sá var aukinn svalköldum sæ	jarðar megni, ok sónardreyra.	10. He waxed by the main of the ground and by the cold sea and by the blood of the sacrificial boar.
11. Margt segjum þér vörumk, at viti svá.	ok munum fleira; Viltu enn lengra?	11. I have told you much and will tell you more of what you need to know. Do you want to know more?
12. Ól ulf Loki en Sleipni gat eitt þótti skass þat var bróður frá	við Angrboðu, við Svaðilfara; allra feiknast, Býleists komit.	12. Loki begat children by Angrbotha and begat Sleipnir by Svathilfari. The most awful of all monstrosities was that born by the brother of Byleist.
13. Loki át hjarta fann hann halfsviðinn varð Loftr kviðugr þaðan er á foldu	lindi brenndu, hugstein konu; af konu illri; flagð hvert komit.	13. Loki ate the heart, the stone of a woman half roasted in the linden fire. Thereby was Loki quickenened with child by the evil woman. Thence came flagthis onto the world.
14. Haf gengr hríðum líðr lönd yfir, þaðan koma snjóvar þá er í ráði,	við himin sjalfan, en loft bilar; ok snarir vindar; at rögn um þrjóti.	14. The sea stormed to heaven itself flooded over the land. The sky gave way. Thence come the snows and fierce winds at the ruin of the Regin.
15. Varð einn borinn sá var aukinn þann kveða stilli sif sifjaðan	öllum meiri, jarðar megni; stórúðgastan sjötum görvöllum.	15. One was born, greater than all he was raised on the main of the earth. They say he is the most strong spirited, a sib of the entire folk.
16. Þá kemr annarr þó þori ek eigi fáir séa nú en Óðinn mun	enn máttkari, þann at nefna; fram um lengra ulfi mæta.	16. Another will then come, but mightier though I dare not name him. Few can see beyond the time when Odin meets the wolf.

The Shorter Spae of the Volva: Notes

2. Burr is the same as the giant Borr mentioned in Gylf. and *Voluspa* - who married Bestla to bear Odin, Vili, and Ve. Aurbotha is the same as the giant Ymir.
4. Heith is the name of Gullveig in VSP 22. This is almost certain because stanza 5 is about volvas and users of Seith, and Gullveig is both.
5. Vitholf=Wood-Wolf
7. According to Gylf. 26 Heimdall was born to nine sisters at the edge of the world. It is commonly thought that they are waves, but could as well be ettin maids such as those who dwell with Mengloth in Ettinhome which is on the edge of the world. The meaning of “nailglorious” is not clear. The term “nailglorious ettin” occurs in GG 14 and may refer to Fjolsvith. The term may refer to horns or tusks. In the case of Heimdall these studs or nails may be the tusks of the boar. Stanza 10 tells us that he was nourished by the blood of a sacrificial boar. In Gylf. 27 Heimdall is called “golden tooth” and it is said that his teeth were of gold and his sword was called Head. That his sword is called “head” suggests that he fights with his head, in which case, his tusks are his weapons. The term stud can be used to refer to horn, for ram’s horns may be called studs.
9. Gjalp=noisy; Greip=Grip; Eistla=Stormy; Angeya=Oppressor; Imthir=Frenzied; Atla=ruinous; Jarnsaxa=Ironsword.
10. He grew powerful by the godly powers of the sea, the earth, and the sacrificial boar.
12. Gylf. 34 tells us that Angrbotha was a giantess in Ettinhome by whom Loki begat Fenris Wolf, Jormungand, and Hel. Svathilfar is the stallion of the master builder in Gylf. 42. Loki seduced Svathilfari by taking the shape of a mare.
13. On the term *flagtha*, see the glossary and FS 2-3.

Hyndluljóð

Freyja kvað:

1.
“Vaki mæð meýja,
Hyndla systir,
nú er rökkur rökkra,
til Valhallar

vaki mín vina,
er í helli býr;
ríða vit skulum
ok til véð heilags.

2.
Biðjum Herjaföðr
hann geldr ok gefr
gaf hann Hermóði
en Sigmundi

í hugum sitja,
gull verðungu,
hjalm ok brynju,
sverð at þiggja.

3.
Gefr hann sigr sumum,
mælsku mörgum
byri gefr hann brögnum,
gefr hann mannsemi

en sumum aura,
ok mannvit firum,
en brag skáldum,
mörgum rekki.

4.
Þórr mun ek blóta,
at hann æ við þik
þó er hánur ótútt

þess mun ek biðja,
einart láti;
við jötuns brúðir.

5.
Nú taktu ulf þinn
lát hann renna

einn af stalli,
með runa mínum.”

Hyndla kvað:
“Seinn er gölþr þinn
vilkat ek mar minn

goðveg troða,
mætan hlæða.

6.
Flá ertu, Freyja,
vísar þú augum
er þú hefir ver þinn
Óttar unga

er þú freistar mín,
á oss þannig,
í valsinni
Innsteins burr.”

Freyja kvað:

7.
“Dulin ertu, Hyndla,
er þú kveðr ver minn
þar er gölþr glóar
Hildisvíni,
dvergar tveir

draums ætlak þér,
í valsinni,
Gullinbursti,
er mér hagir gerðu,
Dáinn ok Nabbi.

Lay of Hyndla

Freyja said:

1.
“Wake up maid of maids! Awaken my friend,
Sister Hyndla who sleeps in the cave!
Now is the twilight of twilights
and we shall ride to Valhalla, to that hallowed ve.

2.
“Let us bid Battle-father
He grants and gives gold to the worthy.
He gave to Hermod a helm and byrnie,
and Sigmund got a sword.

3.
“He gives victory to some, and money to others,
many get the gift of speech,
to others he gives wisdom, fair winds to sailors,
poetry to skalds, and valor to men.

4.
“I shall sacrifice to Thor, and ask him
that he always show you favor,
though he has no love for the brides of ettins.

5.
“Now take one of your wolves from its stall
and let him run alongside my boar.”

Hyndla said:
“Your boar is slow to tread the Gods’ road.
Nor will I burden my worthy steed.

6.
“You are false Freya, in seeking me.
Your eyes show us that you lead your lover,
the young Ottar, son of Innstein,
on a death journey.”

Freyja said:

7.
“You are dull Hyndla. I think that it is
a dream of yours, that I lead my lover
on the death road. There is a golden boar,
with golden bristles, Hildisvin, whom the two
dwarves, Dainn and Nabbi fashioned for me.

8. Senn vit ór söðlum ok um jöfra gumna þeira,	sitja vit skulum ættir dœma, er frá goðum kvámu.	8. “We two shall contend from our saddles! Let us sit and speak of the families of boars and of their kin, who are descended from Gods.
9. Þeir hafa veðjat Óttarr ungi skylt er at veita, föðurleifð hafi	Vala málm ok Angantýr; svá at skati inn ungi eftir frændr sína.	9. “They bet welsh metal, young Ottar and Angantyr. It is fitting to grant that the young warrior has his father’s share after his kinsman’s death.
10. Hörg hann mér gerði nú er grjót þat rauð hann í nýju æ trúði Óttarr	hlaðinn steinum; at gleri orðit; - nauta blóði; á ásynjur.	10. “He made me a high stone harrow. Now the rough stones are glassed. He reddened them anew, in the blood of the ox, for Ottar is ever true to the Asynjur.
11. Nú láttu forna ok upp bornar hvat ek Skjöldunga, hvat er Öðlinga, hvat er höldborit, mest manna val	niðja talða ættir manna; hvat ek Skilfinga, hvat er Ylfinga, hvat er hersborit und Miðgarði?”	11. “Now you shall tally up from the oldest kinsmen the tribes of men. Say who was a Scylding and who a Scilfing, say who an Othling, and who a Wolfing, who born of a noble, who born of a chief, choose the greatest of men in Midgard.”
Hyndla kvað: 12. “Þú ert, Óttarr, en Innsteinn var Alfr var Ulfi, en Sæfari	borinn Innsteini, Alfi inum gamla, Ulfr Sæfara, Svan inum rauða.	Hyndla said: 12. “You, Ottar, were sprung from Innstein, but Innstein was born of Alf the old, and Alf to Ulf, and Ulf to Seafara, and Seafara to Svan the Red.
13. Móður átti faðir þinn hygg ek at hon hét Fróði var faðir þeirar, öll þótti ætt sú	menjum göfga, Hléðís gyðja, en Fríund móðir; með yfirmönnum.	13. “Your father’s mother, necklace bedecked, was called a priestess of Hledis I think. Her father was Frothi, and Friund their mother. Their whole family is superior among men.
14. Auði var áðr Halfdan fyrri fræg váru folkvíg, hvarfla þóttu hans verk	öflgastr manna, hæstr Skjöldunga; þau er framir gerðu, með himins skautum.	14. “Auði was the most powerful of men before that, and Halfdan, the highest of Scyldings, before that. That foremost man conducted many battles, his works seemed to tower to the corners of heaven.
15. Eflðisk hann við Eymund en hann vá Sigtrygg eiga gekk Almveig, ólu þau ok áttu	æðztan manna, með svölum eggjum, æðzta kvinna, átján sonu.	15. “He befriended Eymund the best of men, and slew Sygtrygg by the icy sword’s edge. He led home Almveig, the best of women and they had eighteen sons.

16. Þaðan eru Skjöldungar, þaðan eru Skilfingar,
þaðan eru Öðlingar, þaðan eru Ynglingar,
þaðan eru höldbörir, þaðan eru hersborir,
mest manna val und Miðgarði;
alt er þat ætt þín, Óttarr heimski.
16. “From there the Scyldings and the Scilfings,
from there the Othlings and the Ynglings,
from there the noble born and the princely born,
the most worthy men of Midgard,
these are your kinsmen foolish Ottar.
17. Var Hildigunnr hennar móðir,
Sváfu barn ok sækonungs;
alt er þat ætt þín, Óttarr heimski.
Varðar, at viti svá, viltu enn lengra?
17. “Hildigunn was her mother,
she was the child of Svava and Saekonung.
Your family is old, foolish Ottar. It is important
to know this, do you want to know more?
18. Dagr átti Þóru drengja móður,
ólusk í ætt þar æðztir kappar,
Fraðmarr ok Gyrðr ok Frekar báðir,
Ámr ok Jösurmarr, Alfr inn gamli.
Varðar, at viti svá, viltu enn lengra?
18. “Dag married Thora the mother of Dreng.
In that family the best of champions were born.
Frathmar and Gyrth and the Freki brothers,
Amr and Josurmur, and Alf the Old. It is needful
to know this, do you want to know more?
19. Ketill hét vinr þeira, Klypps arfþegi,
var hann móðurfaðir, móður þinnar;
þar var Fróði fyrir en Kári,
en eldri var Alfr um getinn.
19. “Ketil was their kinsman, Klypp’s eldest son,
he was the mother’s father of your mother.
Frothi lived before Kari,
and Alf the Old was begotten by Hild.
20. Nanna var næst þar Nökkva dóttir,
var mögr hennar mágr þíns föður;
fyrnð er sú mægð, fram tel ek lengra;
kunna ek báða Brodd ok Hørvi
allt er þat ætt þín, Óttarr heimski.
20. “Nanna, Nokkvi’s daughter was born next.
Her son was your father’s brother.
Of the antiquity of this family I shall tell more.
I know both Brodd and Horvi.
They are all your kinsmen, foolish Ottar.
21. Ísolfr ok Ásolfr Ölmóðs synir
ok Skúrhildar Skekkils dóttur;
skaltu til telja skatna margra;
allt er þat ætt þín, Óttarr heimski.
21. “Isolf and Asolf, the sons of Olmoth,
and Skurhilda who was Skekkil’s daughter.
You shall tally many heroes.
These are all your kinsmen foolish Ottar.
22. Gunnarr balkr, Grímr arðskafi,
járnskjöldr Þórir, Ulfr grínandi.
22. “Gunnar Balk, Grim Arthskafi,
and Thori Ironshield and Wolf the Gaping.
23. [Hervarðr, Hjørvarðr, Hrani, Angantýr],
Búi ok Brámi, Barri ok Reifnir,
Tindr ok Tyrfingr, ok tveir Haddingjar;
allt er þat ætt þín, Óttarr heimski.
23. “Hervarth, Hjorvarth, Hrani, Angantyr
Bui and Brami, Barri and Reifner,
Tind and Tyrfing, and the two Haddings.
Your family is old, foolish Ottar.

<p>24. Austr í Bolm Arngríms synir brökun var berserkja, um lönd ok um lög allt er þat ætt þín,</p>	<p>váru bornir ok Eyfuru, böl margs konar, sem logi færi, Óttarr heimski.</p>	<p>24. “Aust and Bolm were the sons of Arngrim and Eyfura. The din of the berserks and many evil deeds rushed over land and sea like wild fire. These are all your kinsmen, foolish Ottar.</p>
<p>25. Kunnak báða váru þeir í hirð Allir bornir Sigurðar mági, folkum grimms,</p>	<p>Brodd ok Hörvi; Hrólfis ins gamla. frá Jörmunreki, hlýð þú sögu minni, - þess er Fáfni vá.</p>	<p>25. “I knew Brodd and Horvi, they were in the retinue of Hrolf the elder, all born by Jormunrek, brother of Sigurth the folk-ruler who slew Fafnir - hear my words.</p>
<p>26. Sá var vísir ok Hjördís en Eylimi allt er þat ætt þín,</p>	<p>frá Völsungi, frá Hraudungi, frá Öðlingum; Óttarr heimski.</p>	<p>26. “This leader was of the Volsungs, and Hjordis from the Hrauthungs, but Eylimi from the Othlings. These are all your kinsmen, foolish Ottar.</p>
<p>27. Gunnarr ok Högni, ok it sama Guðrún, eigi var Gutpormr þó var hann bróðir allt er þat ætt þín,</p>	<p>Gjúka arfar, systir þeira; Gjúka ættar, beggja þeira, Óttarr heimski.</p>	<p>27. “Gunnar and Hogni were the sons of Gjuki. By the same their sister Guthrun, but Guthorm was not of the Gjuki’s family, though he was the brother of both sons. These are all your kinsmen foolish Ottar.</p>
<p>28. Haraldr hilditönn slöngvanbauga, Auðr djúpúðga en Ráðbarðr var þeir váru gumnar allt er þat ætt þín,</p>	<p>borinn Hróreki sonr var hann Auðar, Ívars dóttir, Randvers faðir; goðum signaðir; Óttarr heimski.”</p>	<p>28. “Harold Wartooth was born to Hroreck Ringslinger, who was the son of Auth, Auth the deep-minded was the daughter of Ivar, but Radbarth, was the father of Randver. These men were given to the Gods. These are all your kinsmen, foolish Ottar.”</p>
<p>Freyja kvað: 29. “Bar þú minnisöl svá hann öll muni þessar ræðu þá er þeir Angantýr</p>	<p>mínum gesti, orð at tína á þriðja morgni, ættir rekja.”</p>	<p>Freyja said: 29. “Bring the ale of memory to my boar so that he remembers and recalls all my words and speak of these things on the third morning when those with Angantyr well of their families.”</p>
<p>Hyndla kvað: 30. “Snúðu braut heðan, fær þú fátt af mér hleypr þú, Óðs vina sem með höfrum</p>	<p>sofa lystir mik, fríðra kosta; úti á náttum, Heiðrún fari.</p>	<p>Hyndla said: 30. “Get out of here! I am going to sleep. You shall not have many opportunities for rest away from me. You rush out at night, noble friend, like Heithrun among the billy-goats.</p>

31.
Rannt at Óði
skutusk þér fleiri
hleypr þú, Óðs vina
sem með höfrum
ey þreyjandi,
und fyrirskyrta;
úti á náttum,
Heiðrún fari.”

Freyja kvað:
32.
“Ek slæ eldi
svá at þú eigi kemsk

of íviðju,
á braut heðan.”

Hyndla kvað:
33.
Hyr sé ek brenna,
verða flestir
ber þú Óttari
eitri blandinn mjök,

en hauðr loga,
fjörlausn þola;
bjór at hendi,
illu heilli.”

Freyja kvað:
34.
“Orðheill þín
þóttú, brúðr jötuns
hann skal drekka
bið ek Óttari

skal engu ráða,
bölvi heitir;
dýrar veigar;
öll goð duga.”

31.
“You always ran with lust to Oth,
but more run from under your skirt.
You rush around at night
like Heithrun among the billy-goats.”

Freyja said:
32.
“I set fire around you, you evil ogress.
You won’t leave this place.”

Hyndla said:
33.
“I see the embers burn, a fire on the earth .
He will eagerly be freed.
Bring mead to Ottar’s hand,
well blended with venom. Ill health to you!”

Freyja said:
34.
“You’ll not speak your magical words!
Though you are a ettin’s bride, you call down evil.
He shall drink the good drink.
I bid all the gods help Ottar.”

Lay of Hyndla: Notes

1. Hyndla means “little dog.”

Twilight is a time of transformation, the state between two phases that is neither one nor the other; a liminal period. Twilight is a good time to begin trance journeys and to perform other transformative magic. Freya and Hyndla are intending to go to Valhalla from Ettinhome.

2. Hermod rode to Hel to try to persuade Hel to release him to the world of the living. Sigmund was given the sword Gram in the *Saga of the Volsungs*.
5. See VSP note 40 on troll women riding wolves.
6. Like Odin, Freya takes fallen warriors to live in her hall Folkvang.
7. The boar is sometimes used as a kenning for kings or warriors. The boar is especially strongly associated with Frey and Freya and may especially apply to Vanic warriors. The boar is possibly the form taken by the warrior's fetch soul. Ottar has a great deal of Vanic ancestry for his ancestors include Scyldings, Ynglings, and Frothi and Halfdan. In Hav 129, Loddafafnir is warned not to look up in battle because some warriors will seem like wild boars when they enchant. It may be that some Vanic warriors were capable of letting their fetch souls manifest in combat such that they raged with the power and fury of their fetch animal much like the Odian berserkers who wore bear or wolf skins and went into a berserker rage in which they fought like beasts and felt no pain. Vanic warriors are known for wearing boar crested helmets such as those mentioned in Beowulf and those recovered by archaeologists.
10. The alter was glassed from sacrificial flames.
28. Harold Wartooth had tusks.
32. Hyndla wishes to return to sleep, and Freya sets flames around her. Like Brynhild in *Saga of the Volsungs*, she will now sleep surrounded by flames.

Grógaldr

1.
“Vaki þú, Gróa, vaki þú, góð kona,
vek ek þik dauðra dura;
ef þú þat mant, at þú þinn mög bæðir
til kumbldysjar koma.”
2.
“Hvat er nú annt mínum eingasyni,
hverju ertu nú bölví borinn,
er þú þá móður kallar, er til moldar er komin
ok ór ljóðheimum liðin?”
3.
“Ljótu leikborði skaut fyr mik in lævísa kona,
sú er faðmaði minn föður:
þar bað hon mik koma, er kvæmtki veit,
móti Menglóðu.”
4.
“Löng er för, langir ro farvegjar,
langir ro manna munir;
ef þat verðr, at þú þinn vilja bíðr,
ok skeikar þá Skuld at sköpum.”
5.
“Galdra þú mér gal, þá er góðir eru,
bjarg þú, móðir, megi;
á vegum allr hygg ek at ek verða muna,
þykkjumk ek til ungr afi.”
6.
“Þann gel ek þér fyrstan, - þann kveða fjölnýtan, -
þann gól Rindi Rani,
at þú af öxl skjótir því er þér atalt þykkir;
sjalfr leið þú sjalfan þik.
7.
Þann gel ek þér annan, ef þú árna skalt
viljalauss á vegum:
Urðar lokur haldi þér öllum megum,
er þú á sinnum sér.
8.
Þann gel ek þér inn þriðja, ef þér þjóðáar
falla at fjörlotum:
Horn ok Ruðr snúisk til heljar meðan,
en þverri æ fyr þér.

The Galder of Groa

1.
“Wake up Groa! Awaken good woman!
I awaken you at the door of the dead.
Do you remember how you bade your son
come to your howe hill?”
2.
“What worries you now, my only son?
By what curse are you burdened
that you call she who is buried in the earth
and has passed away from the world of men?”
3.
“The artful woman who embraced my father
shot me a hideous gaming board.
She bade me go there to she who grants no approach,
to a meeting with Mengloth.”
4.
“The journey is long, the roads are long,
and the loves of men are long,
if it is worthy that you work your will,
and Skuld turns the doom.”
5.
“Sing to me the magical spells that are good!
Help me oh mother! Avail!
It seems that I am too young
and that I could die.”
6.
“I sing to you the first, and tell you the most useful
that Rind sang to Rand. So that you may shoot
from your shoulders what seems shocking to you.
Let your self guide you.”
7.
“I sing you the second so that if you wander
without will on the road,
Urth’s ward songs may hold you with all main
when you are on the way.”
8.
“I sing you the third so that if rivers rise
to take your life Horn and Ruth
will turn themselves hence to Hel
and always ebb before you.”

9.
Þann gel ek þér inn fjórða, ef þik fjáendr standa
görvir á galgvegi,
hugr þeim hverfi til handa þér,
ok snúisk þeim til sátta sefi.

10.
Þann gel ek þér inn fimta, ef þér fjöturr verðr
borinn at boglimum:
leysigaldr læt ek þér fyr legg of kveðinn,
ok stökkr þá láss af limum,
en af fótum fjöturr.

11.
Þann gel ek þér inn sétta, ef þú á sjó kemr
meira enn menn viti:
logn ok lögr gangi þér í lúðr saman
ok ljái þér æ friðrjúgrar farar.

12.
Þann gel ek þér inn sjaunda, ef þik sækja kemr
frost á fjalli háu:
hræva kulði megit þínu holdi fara,
ok haldisk æ lík at liðum.

13.
Þann gel ek þér inn átta, ef þik úti nemr
nótt á niðlvegi:
at því firr megi þér til meins gera
kristin dauð kona.

14.
Þann gel ek þér inn níunda, ef þú við inn naddgöfga
orðum skiptir jötun:
máls ok mannvits sé þér á minni ok hjarta
gnóga of gefit.

15.
Far þú nú æva, þars forað þykkir,
ok standit þér mein fyr munum;
á jarðföstum steini stóð ek innan dura,
meðan ek þér galdra gól.

16.
Móður orð ber þú, mögr, heðan
ok lát þér í brjósti búa;
iðgnóga heill skaltu of aldr hafa,
meðan þú mín orð of mant.”

9.
“I sing you the fourth so that if fiends press you,
ready on the gallows road,
their minds shall turn their hands from you.
Let them become friendly.”

10.
“I sing you the fifth, so that if you get fettered
and your limbs are bound,
I will call loosening spells over your legs
the locks shall spring from your limbs
and the fetters from your feet.”

11.
“I sing you the sixth, so that when you are on a sea
that is greater than men know,
the sea and the sky shall join together to help you
and always grant you peaceful travels.”

12.
“I sing you the seventh, so that when frost comes
to vex you in the high hills
deadly cold shall not take your flesh
and your body will always ward its limbs.”

13.
“I sing you the eighth, so that if night
falls while you are out
on a foggy road,
a dead Christian woman will not harm you.”

14.
“I sing you the ninth, so that when you argue
with a nailglorious ettin,
goodly speech and understanding
shall not leave you in mouth and heart.”

15.
“Never go where it seems dangerous,
and let nothing harmful trouble your mind.
On earth-fast crags I stood in the door
while I sang spells to you.”

16.
“Bear from here the words of your mother
and let them dwell in your breast.
You shall have an abundance of luck in your life
as long as you mind my words.”

Fjölsvinnsmál

1.
Útan garða hann sá upp um koma
þursa þjóðar sjöt:
“Hvat er þat flagða, er stendr fyr forgörðum
ok hvarflar um hættan loga?”
2.
Hvers þú leitar, eða hvers þú á leitum ert,
eða hvat viltu, vinlaus, vita?
Úrgar brautir árnaðu aftr héðan,
áttattu hér, vernðarvanr, veru.”
3.
“Hvat er þat flagða, er stendr fyr forgarði
ok býðrat líðöndum löð?
Sæmðarorða lauss hefir þú, seggr of lifat,
ok haltu heim héðan.”
4.
“Fjölsviðr ek heiti, en ek á fróðan sefa,
þeygi em ek míns mildr matar;
innan garða þú kemr hér aldregi,
ok dríf þú nú vargr at vegi.”
5.
“Augna gamans fýsir aftr at fá,
hvars hann getr svást at sjá;
garðar glóa mér þykkja of gullna sali,
hér munda ek eðli una.”
6.
“Segðu mér hverjum ertu, sveinn, of borinn
eða hverra ertu manna mögr?”
“Vindkaldr ek heiti, Várkaldr hét minn faðir,
þess var Fjörkaldr faðir.
7.
Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hverr hér ræðr ok ríki hefir
eign ok auðsölum?”
8.
“Menglöð of heitir, en hana móðir of gat
við Svafrrþorins syni;
hon hér ræðr ok ríki hefir
eign ok auðsölum”

Lay of Fjolsvith

1.
Beyond the yard he saw rising up,
the dwelling of the tribe of thurses.
“Fare hence from here, through the wet
wilderness ways! There is no shelter for you here!”
2.
“Who is that fiend who stands before the forecourt
and wanders about the flickering flame?”
Who do you seek or for what is your search
or what is it that you want to know, oh friendless one?”
3.
“Who is that fiend, who stands in the forecourt
and offers no hospitality to the wanderer?”
“You are without words of praise, Stranger
so get out and go home!”
4.
“I am called Fjolsvith and I am deep in lore
but I am not free with my food.
Never come here, to this hold.
Go away quickly now, you wolf, down the road.”
5.
“He desires to find the delight of his eyes
who sees his most beloved. It seems to me
that the wall around the golden hall glows.
I want this place, my allodial estate.”
6.
“Tell me boy! By whom were you born
whose son are you?”
“I am Vindkald, and my father is Varkald
and his father was Fjolkaldr.”
7.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
and what I wish to know.
Who holds power and rules this place
and this land and wealth?”
8.
“She is called Mengloth, and her mother begat her
with Svafrrthorin’s son.
She is the one holding power and she rules
this land and wealth.”

9.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 Hvat sú grind heitir, er með goðum sáat
 menn it meira forað?”
9.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
 and what I want to know.
 What is that gate called, that men do not see
 among Gods to be more dangerous?”
10.
 “Þrymgjöll hon heitir, en hana þrír gerðu
 Sólblinda synir;
 fjöturr fastr verðr við faranda hvern,
 er hana hefr frá hliði.
10.
 “It is called Thrymgjoll, and was built
 by the three sons of Sunblind.
 Fast fetters await the wanderer
 who hefts it from its portal.”
11.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 Hvat sá garðr heitir, er með goðum sáat
 menn it meira forað?”
11.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
 and what I want to know.
 What is that wall called that men do not see
 among Gods to be more dangerous?”
12.
 “Gastrópnir heitir, en ek hann görfan hefki
 ór Leirbrimis limum;
 svá hefki studdan, at hann standa mun
 æ meðan öld lifir.”
12.
 “It is called Gastropnir, and I built it
 out of the limbs of Leirbrimi
 and have fastened it so well that it will
 always stand as long as mankind shall live.”
13.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 Hvat þeir garmar heita, er gífrari hefki
 önga fyrir í löndum lítit?”
13.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask you
 and what I want to know.
 What are the dogs called
 who stalk before the hall?”
14.
 “Gífr heitir annarr, en Geri annarr,
 ef þú vilt þat vita;
 varðir ellifu er þeir varða,
 unz rjúfask regin.”
14.
 “One is called Gif, and the other Geri
 and if you want to know,
 eleven wardens guard there
 until the destruction of the world.”
15.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 hvárt sé manna nökkut, þat er megi inn koma,
 meðan sókndjarfir sofa?”
15.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask
 and what I want to know.
 Are there any men, who can enter
 while the audacious ones sleep?”
16.
 “Missvefni mikit var þeim mjök of lagit,
 síðan þeim var varzla vituð;
 annarr of nætr sefr, en annarr of daga,
 ok kemsk þá vætr, ef þá kom.
16.
 “A great alternation of sleeping was imposed on them
 when the watch was established for them.
 One sleeps at night, the other at day
 so that no one who goes there gets through.”

17.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvárt sé matar nökkut, þat er menn hafi,
ok hlaupi inn, meðan þeir eta?”

18.
“Vegnbráðir tvær liggja í Viðópnis liðum,
ef þú vilt þat vita:
þat eitt er svá matar, at þeim menn of gefi,
ok hlaupi inn, meðan þeir eta.”

19.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvat þat barr heitir, er breiðask um
lönd öll limar?”

20.
“Mímameiðr hann heitir, en þat manngi veit,
af hverjum rótum renn;
við þat hann fellr, er fæstan varir;
flærat hann eldr né járn.”

21.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvat af móði verðr þess ins mæra viðar,
er hann flærrat eldr né járn?”

22.
“Út af hans aldni skal á eld bera
fyr kelisjúkar konur;
útar hverfa þats þær innar skyli,
sá er hann með mönnum mjötuðr.”

23.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvat sá hani heitir, er sitr í inum háva viði,
allr hann við gull glóir?”

24.
“Viðópnir hann heitir, en hann stendr veðrglasi
á meiðs kvistum Míma;
einum ekka þryngr hann örófsaman
Surtr Sinmöru.”

17.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
and what I want to know.
Is there any meat that one may give them
in order to rush in while they eat?”

18.
“There are two chunks of wingflesh
on Vithofni’s limbs, and if you want to know
that is the only meat one may give them
to rush in while they eat.”

19.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask
and what I want to know.
What is the yew (barr) called
whose limbs spread over all the land?”

20.
“It is called Mimameith and no one knows
from what roots it rises.
Very few know by what it falls.
Neither fire nor iron can destroy it.”

21.
“Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask
and what I want to know.
What becomes of the mod of that great tree
which neither fire nor iron fell?”

22.
“Out of its (the tree’s) berries it (the mod)
shall bring a fire for hysterical women.
They (the women) shall turn outside from within.
Such is the power of the meter among men.”

23.
“Tell me Fjolsvith what I ask of you
and what I want to know.
What is the cock up in the high tree called
who is all aglow with gold?”

24.
“He is called Vithofni, he stands weatherglassy
on the branches of Mimameith
and imposes an immense grief
on Surt and Sinmora.”

25.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvárt sé vápna nökkut, þat er knegi Viðópnir fyr
hníga á Heljar sjöt?”

26.
“Lævateinn hann heitir, en hann gerði Loftr rúninn
fyr nágrindr neðan;
í seigjárnskerri liggr hann hjá Sinmöru,
ok halda njarðlásar níu.”

27.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvárt aftr kemr, sá er eftir ferr
ok vill þann tein taka?”

28.
“Aftr mun koma, sá er eftir ferr
ok vill þann tein taka,
ef þat færir, er fáir eigu,
Eiri örglasis.”

29.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvárt sé mæta nökkut, þat er menn hafi,
ok verðr því in fölva gýgr fegin?”

30.
Ljósan léa skaltu í lúðr bera,
þann er í Viðópnis völlum,
Sinmöru at selja, áðr hon söm telisk
vápn til vígs at ljá.”

31.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvat sá salr heitir, er slunginn er
vísuðum vaftrloga?”

32.
“Hyrr hann heitir, en hann lengi mun
á brodds oddi bifask;
auðranns þess munu um aldr hafa
frétt eina fírar.”

25.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
and what I want to know.
Is there some weapon that can drive
Vithofni away to Helheim?”

26.
“It is called Laevatein (poison teinn) and Lopt made
it with runes. Beneath the gates of the dead.
It lays in a stout iron chest by Sinmora
and nine charmed locks hold it.”

27.
“Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask you
and what I want to know.
Will he return who fares after
and wants to take that tine?”

28.
“He shall return, who fares thence
wishing to take that tine
if he brings that which few own
and renders it to Aurglass (Sinmora).”

29.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask of you
what I want to know.
Is there anything precious that men have
that can make the pale witch glad?”

30.
“You must bring the shining object
that lays in Vithofni’s stead, his tailfeather,
and give it Sinmora before she will tell you
that she will loan you that weapon for victory.”

31.
“Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask,
what I want to know.
What is the hall called, that is surrounded
by the sight of flickering flame?”

32.
“It is called Lyr, and long will it
hover on a spear point.
Of its wealth, men shall ever have
only report.”

33.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 hverr þat görði, er ek fyr garð sák
 innan, ásmaga?”
34.
 “Uni ok Íri, Óri ok Bári,
 Varr ok Vegdrasill;
 Dóri ok Úri, Dellingr, Atvarðr,
 Líðskjálfr, Loki.”
35.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 hvat þat bjarg heitir, er ek sé brúði á
 þjóðmæra þruma?”
36.
 “Lyfjaberg þat heitir, en þat hefir lengi verit
 sjúkum ok sárum gaman;
 heil verðr hver, þótt hafi árs sótt,
 ef þat klífr, kona.”
37.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 Hvat þær meyjar heita, er fyr Menglaðar knjám
 sitja sáttar saman?”
38.
 “Hlíf heitir, önnur Hlífþrasa,
 þriðja Þjóðvarta,
 Björt ok Blíek, Blíðr, Fríð,
 Eir ok Aurboða.”
39.
 “Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
 ok ek vilja vita:
 hvárt þær bjarga þeim er blóta þær,
 ef görask þarfar þess?”
40.
 “Bjarga svinnar, hvar er menn blóta þær
 á stallhelgum stað;
 eigi svá hátt forað kemr at hölða sonum,
 hvern þær ór nauðum nema.”
33.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith, what I ask you what I want to know.
 Which of the kinsmen of the Gods
 built that which is inside that hold
 that I have not yet seen?”
34.
 “Uni and Iri, Ori and Bari,
 Varr and Vegdrassill,
 Dori and Uri, Delling, Atvarth
 Lithskjalf, Loki.”
35.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith, what I shall ask
 what I want to know.
 What is that mountain called
 where I may see the bride standing gloriously?”
36.
 “It is called Lyfjaberg and it has long been
 a pleasure for the sick and wounded.
 She who climbs it will become healthy
 even though mortally ill.
37.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask,
 what I want to know.
 What are the maids called, who sing
 peacefully together before the knees of Mengloth?”
38.
 “One is Hlif, another Hlifthrasa,
 the third Thjothvarta.
 Then there are Bjort and Bleik, Blith and Frith
 Eir and Aurbotha.”
39.
 “Tell me Fjolsvith what I shall ask
 what I want to know.
 Do they help those who sacrifice to them
 when they are in need?”
40.
 “There are some who are wise
 and help the men who sacrifice to them.
 Anytime great danger comes to the sons of men
 they take them from need.”

41.
“Segðu mér þat, Fjölsviðr! er ek þik fregna mun
ok ek vilja vita:
hvárt sé manna nökkut, þat er knegi á Menglaðar
svásuð armi sofa?”

42.
“Vætr er þat manna, er knegi á Menglaðar
svásuð armi sofa:
nema Svipdagr einn, hánuð var sú in sólbjarta
brúðr at kván of kveðin.”

43.
“Hrittu á hurðir, láttu hlið rúð,
hér máttu Svipdag sjá;
en þó vita far, ef vilja myni
Menglöð mitt gaman.”

44.
“Heyr þú, Menglöð! hér er maðr kominn,
gakk þú á gest sjá;
hundar fagna, hús hefir upp lokizk,
hygg ek, at Svipdagr sé.”

45.
“Horskir hrafnar skulu þér á háð gálga
slíta sjónir ór,
ef þú þat lýgr, at hér sé langt kominn
mögr til minna sala.”

46.
Hvaðan þú fórt, hvaðan þú för görðir,
hvé þik héttu hjú?
At ætt ok nafni skal ek jarregn vita,
ef ek var þér kván of kveðin.”

47.
“Svipdagr ek heiti, Sólbjart hét minn faðir,
þaðan ráumk vindar kalda vegu;
Urðar orði kveðr engi maðr,
þótt þat sé við löst lagit.”

48.
“Vel þú nú kominn, hefik minn vilja beðit,
fylgja skal kveðju koss;
forkunnar sýn mun flestan glaða,
hvars hefir við annan ást.”

41.
“Tell me Fjölsvith what I shall ask you
what I want to know.
Is there any man who is able
to sleep in Mengloth’s loving arms?”

42.
“There is no man who is able to sleep
in the loving arms of Mengloth
except for Svipdag. To him only
was the sunbright maid given as betrothed bride.”

43.
“Fling open the gates! Open the gate wide!
Here you may see Svipdag!
Now go and see if Mengloth my delight
desires my love.”

44.
“Listen Mengloth! Here comes a man.
Go to the guest and see. The hounds welcome him
and the house heaves up its locks.
I think that you are Svipdag.”

45.
“Wise Ravens shall tear out your eyes,
high on a gallows
if you lie, saying that the hero
has come to my hall from afar.”

46.
“From whence do you fare? From whence do you travel?
How did your parents call you?
I shall know your father’s name, and the token,
that I was betrothed as bride to you.”

47.
“I am called Svipdag. My father was called
Sunbright. I wandered the wind cold ways.
No man strives against the word of Urth
even if it is among the worst.”

48.
“Welcome! I have won my wish.
My kiss shall follow the welcome.
The sight of the beloved
who has love for the other is very pleasing.”

49.

Lengi ek sat ljúfu bergi á,
beið ek þín dægr ok daga;
nú þat varð, er ek vætt hefi,
at þú ert kominn, mögr, til minna sala.

50.

Þrár hafðar er ek hefi til þíns gamans,
en þú til míns munar;
nú er þat satt, er vit slíta skulum
ævi ok aldr saman.”

49.

“Long I sat on Lyfjaberg
waiting for you day after day.
Now what I wished for has happened
now that you have come, my man, to my hall.”

50.

“I had patience for your love
and you for mine.
Now it is certain that we two shall live
our lives and times together.”

Lay of Fjolsvith: Notes

1. *Utan Gartha* may mean “outside the wall” or that they are located in Utgarth, the region beyond the wall of Midgard in the east.

Though the text refers to the dwelling of the tribe of thurses, Mengloth, and Fjolsvith are of the tribe of ettins. Thurses dwell in the same region.

“Wet wilderness ways” is a translation of the words *urgar braut*. *Braut* refers especially to a road cut through rock or wilderness terrain. *Urgar* means “wet” and is related to the word *Ur* which refers to drizzling rain and is found in the name of rune *Uruz*.

2. The dangerous flame about which Svipdag wanders is no doubt the same as the flickering flame that surrounds Sigdrifa in the *Lay of Sigdrifa* st. 31-32.
4. Fjolsvith calls Svipdag a *vargr* which literally means wolf and figuratively means outlaw.
12. “The Limbs of Leirbrime” are often thought to be the arms and legs of a clay giant since the name seems to mean “sea of clay.” This is the material from which the wall Gasterpnr was built, and according to the text, it will “always stand as long as mankind shall live.” It seems likely that the wall is made from the limbs or branches of Mimameith, the world tree which will also endure and can be felled by neither fire nor iron.
21. The word “fruit” is expressed in the Icelandic by the word *moth* which is indistinguishable in its dative form from the word *mothr* which means wrath or moodiness and is cognate with our word “mood.” This ambiguity is probably intended to indicate that an aspect of the spirit of the tree is contained in its berries.

In stanza 22 this “mood” is referred to as a fire that the tree brings forth from its berries for use by woman who are in a state of madness or possibly pregnant. This passage is very vague and it is difficult to discern the precise effect or function of the berries. The passage seems to say that the women, as a result of the fire from the berries, will turn outside from within. This has led some to believe that it is a means of procuring an easy childbirth, though it is as likely to refer ecstatic states brought on by the berries. Please note that yew berries are highly toxic. One of the Rune-Gild drightens once tried burning yew berries and breathing the smoke. He is lucky to be alive.

The passage concludes with the phrase, “such is the power of the meter (divine measurer, especially Tyr) among men. Meter or *mjotuthr* is probably another term for the divine spark contained in the fruit of the tree and may be the same as the *mothr* (mood) referred to earlier. It may also refer to the world tree itself. The word *mjotuthr* used here to describe the tree means meter or measurer and is cognate with the Anglo-Saxon word “Metod” which generally refers to God. In Icelandic contexts it is also used often to refer to a divine dispenser of Wyrð. In stanza 47 of *Voluspa* the word *mjotuthr* is used and it is said to be kindled or lighted, recalling the yew berries bringing forth fire in FS 22. In stanza 2 we find the word associated with nine giantesses, recalling the nine maids who dwell with Mengloth, and is said to be located beneath the earth and is called the “worthy measurer beneath the earth.”

Volume II

Keys to Practical Application

Chapter 1

Runic Keys to Eddic Myth

Runic Transliteration

The Eddic poems were composed by rune masters and are much concerned with the mysteries of the nine-worlds. These poems were composed in such a way that each stanza may have several related levels of meaning. Some of the mysteries of the world encoded may be explored by studying the content, the resonances of the words themselves, the meter and the grammar, but others may be revealed by runic thinking. Runic transliteration is one method of fathoming the deeper esoteric meanings encoded into the Eddic stanzas. Runic transliteration is a means of finding the runic expressions for the ideas and magic contained in the stanzas. Many Eddic stanzas are spells and may be expressed by runes in galder and gand magic. Runic transliterations may be used both to deepen your understanding of the Gods and your own soul, and employed magically to effect changes in the subjective and objective realms.

There are three main runic alphabets or “Futharks.” The twenty four character Elder Futhark is generally used by siblings of the rune-gild and other modern runesters. The poems of the Edda were composed during the Viking Age when the 16 character Younger Futhark was in use. The Eddic runesters were using this system when they were encoding the runes into their poetry. The main difference between the Futharks is their number of runic characters. There are 24 runes in the elder row and only 16 in the younger row. As time passed, the mysteries of the elder row were compressed and expanded in the younger row and fewer symbols were used to convey more complex ideas. For this reason, the younger row is sometimes more difficult to work with at first, but easier to use when you reach advanced stage of rune-work.

The runic alphabet was not primarily a system of writing. It was maintained not as for purposes of recording literature or other mundane records, but as system of magic. The elements of the runic system include order, name, number, aett, shape, sound and meaning.

Each rune has a definite place in the rune row. The order in which the runes appear should be studied carefully in order to understand how the runes are related to each other and how the runes of the row form a whole. Each rune has a number corresponding to its place in the row. The third rune, *Thurs*, can be expressed by the number 3. Each rune has a name that has bearing on its esoteric significance. Each rune has a place on an aett. The runic alphabet is divided into three rows called “aetts.” The runes F-U-Th-A-R-K form the first aett of six on the younger row. The next ten runes appear on two aetts of five runes. Runes can also be expressed numerically by the aett and the position on the aett in which they appear. The T rune (↑) could be expressed as 3-1 meaning that it appears on the third row in the first place.

The shapes of the runes should also be considered though you should bear in mind that there were many variations on the shapes used for the runes. Finally, there are two rune poems for the younger row. A stanza of each poem is devoted to each stave. These poems provide keys to unlocking the mysteries of the runic staves (characters). Each rune is also associated with a particular sound, usually the first sound of their names. The charts below show the order, number, aett, name, sound, shape and meaning of the runes of the Younger Futhark.

Number	Shape	Gørliev	Major Variants	Phonetic Value
1	ƒ	ƒ	ƒ	f
2	ŋ	ŋ		u/o/ō/y
3	þ	þ	ð	th/ah
4	ƒ	ƒ	ƒ †	ʒ
5	R	R	R R	r
6	γ	γ	γ ∴ ↓	k/g/ng
7	*	*	† †	h
8	†	†	†	n
9	l	l		i/e
10	l †	†	† *	a
11	h †	h †	h †	s
12	†	†	†	v/d/nd
13	β	β	† β	b/p/mb
14	ψ	φ	ψ φ † †	m
15	l	l		l
16	ʌ	ʌ	l	-R

- | No. | Esoteric Interpretation of Name |
|-----|---|
| 1 | dynamic power |
| 2 | fertilizing essence |
| 3 | breaker of resistance |
| 4 | power of the word, sovereign force |
| 5 | spiritual path or journey |
| 6 | internal, magical fire or projection |
| 7 | ice seed form |
| 8 | need-fire, slavery/freedom |
| 9 | contraction prima materia |
| 10 | blooming forth into manifestation |
| 11 | sun-wheel/crystallized light |
| 12 | sovereign heavenly order |
| 13 | gestation/birth, instrument of the birch numen |
| 14 | human order of divine ancestry. power to connect realms |
| 15 | life energy and organic growth |
| 16 | telluric power |

<u>No.</u>	<u>Old Norse Name</u>	<u>Translation of Name</u>
1	<i>fé</i>	cattle, money, gold
2	<i>úr (r)</i>	drizzling rain/slag/aurochs
3	<i>thurs</i>	thurs (“giant”)
4	<i>áss</i>	(the) god (= Ódhinn)
5	<i>reidh</i>	a ride, riding/vehicle/thunderclap
6	<i>kaun</i>	a sore
7	<i>hagall</i>	hail (a special rune name)
8	<i>naudh (r)</i>	need, bondage, fetters
9	<i>íss</i>	ice
10	<i>ár</i>	(good) year, harvest
11	<i>sól</i>	sun
12	<i>Týr</i>	the god Tyr
13	<i>bjarkan</i>	birch (-goddess) (a special rune name)
14	<i>madhr</i>	man, human
15	<i>lögr</i>	sea, waterfall (liquid)
16	<i>ýr</i>	yew, bow of yew wood

Transliterating the Runes

The following table shows how to transliterate Old Norse words phonetically. Note that nasals (m/n) before denatals (d/t) are generally not written. Thus *brandr* = ƀᚱᚱᚱ. Runes are never doubled. Odinn is therefore 𐌺𐌺ᚦ. All such rules may be violated for magical purposes.

<u>Vowels</u>		<u>Consonants</u>	
a/á	ᚠ	b/p	ƀ
ö	ᚦ 𐌺 𐌽	k/g/c/q	ᚷ
ø	𐌺 ᚦ 𐌽	l	ᚠ
jö	l 𐌺 ᚦ 𐌽	m	ᚹ
ei/ey	ᚦ	n	ᚢ
æ/œ	ᚠ l	r-	ᚱ
æn/œn	ᚦ	-R	ᚱ
o/ó	𐌺	s/z	ᚱ
u/ú	𐌺	t/d	ᚦ
e/é	l	v	𐌺
y/ý	𐌺	j	l
i/í	l	h	*
		th	ᚠ

Rune Poems

The Norwegian and the Old Icelandic rune poems are included here in their entirety in both the original languages and in modern translation. These poems are keys to the esoteric meaning of the runes of the Viking Age Futhark.

The Norwegian Runic Poem

This poem was penned around the twelfth or thirteenth century. Though the word *krist* appears in stanza 7, it is clear from the meter that Hropt was the God who originally appeared in this place. *Hr* sounded like “kr” in Old Norse. The first word that appears in each stanza is the name of the rune itself.

1.
Fé vældr frænda róge;
fðesk ulfr í skóge.

1.
[Money] causes strife among kinsmen;
the wolf is raised in the woods.

2.
Úr er af illu jarne;
opt lypr ræinn á hjarne.

2.
[Slag] is from bad iron;
oft leaps the reindeer over frozen snow.

3.
Þurs vældr kvinna kvillu;
kátr værðr fár af illu.

3.
[Thurs] causes the sickness of women;
bad-luck pleases few.

4.
Óss er flæstra færða
för; en skalpr er sværða.

4.
[River Mouth] is the way of most journeys;
but a sheath is for a sword.

5.
Ræið kveða rossom væsta;
Reginn sló sværðet bæzta.

5.
[Riding] they say, is the worst for horses;
Regin forged the best sword.

6.
Kaun er barna bölvan;
böl görver nán fölván.

6.
[Sore] is the curse of children;
bale makes a man pale.

7.
Hagall er kaldastr korna;
Kristr skóp hæimenn forna.

7.
[Hail] is the coldest corn;
Krist shaped the world in days of yore.

8.
Nauðr gerer næppa koste;
nöktan kælr í froste.

8.
[Need] makes for a hard condition;
the naked freeze in the frost.

9.
Ís köllum brú bræiða;
blindan þarf at læiða.

9.
[Ice] they call the broad bridge;
the blind need to be lead.

10.
Ár er gumna góðe;
get ek at örr var Fróðe.

10.
[Harvest] is good for men;
I say Frothi was openhanded.

11.
Sól er landa ljóme;
lúti ek helgum dóme.

11.
[Sun] is the light of the land;
I bow to the holy judgement.

12.
Týr er æinendr ása;
opt værðr smiðr blása.
13.
Bjarkan er laufgroenstr líma;
Loki bar flærða tíma.
14.
Maðr er moldar auki;
mikil er græip á hauki.
15.
Lögr er, fællr ór fjalle
foss; en gull ero nosser.
16.
Ýr er vetrgroenstr viðá;
vænt er, er brennr, at sviða.

12.
[Tyr] is the one-handed God;
oft strikes the smith.
13.
[Birch] is the leafy green limb;
Loki brought the luck of falsehood.
14.
[Man] is a growth of the earth;
great is the grip of the hawk.
15.
[Water] is a river that falls from the fell;
but gold is dear.
16.
[Yew] is the wintergreen wood;
it is wont to singe when it burns.

The Old Icelandic Runic Poem

This poem was composed in the fifteenth century. Each stanza is followed by two words; the first a Latin translation of the rune name, the second an Old Icelandic word for “leader”. These additional words are further keys to the esoteric word for the runes.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.
Fé er frænda róg
ok flæðar viti
ok grafseiðs gata
aurum fylkir. | 1.
[Money] is strife among kinsmen;
the fire of the sea;
and the path of the serpent.
Gold Leader of the Retinue |
| 2.
Úr er skýja grátr
ok skára þverrir
ok hirðis hatr.
umbre vísi | 2.
[Shower] is the crying of the clouds;
and the ruin of the harvest;
and hated by herdsman.
Shadow Leader |
| 3.
Þurs er kvenna kvöl
ok kletta búi
ok varðrúnar verr.
Saturnus þengill. | 3.
[Thurs] is the torment of women;
and the crag-dweller;
and the husband of Varthruna.
Saturn Thing Ruler |
| 4.
Óss er algingautr
ok ásgarðs jöfurr,
ok valhallar vísi.
Jupiter oddviti. | 4.
[Ase=Odin] is the old God;
Asgard's wild boar;
Valhalla's leader.
Jupiter Point-Leader |
| 5.
Reið er sitjandi sæla
ok snúðig ferð
ok jórs erfiði.
iter ræsir. | 5.
[Riding] is a blissful sitting;
and a swift journey;
and the work of the steed.
Journey Worthy Man |
| 6.
Kaun er barna böl
ok bardaga [för]
ok holdfúa hús.
flagella konungr. | 6.
[Sore] is the bale of children.:
a painful spot;
the house of rotten flesh.
Whip King |
| 7.
Hagall er kaldakorn
ok krapadrífa
ok snáka sótt.
grando hildingr. | 7.
[Hail] is a cold corn;
a shower of sleet;
and a sickness of snakes.
Hail Battle Leader |

8. Nauð er Þýjar þrá ok þungr kostur ok vássamlig verk. opera niflungur.	8. [Need] is the hardship of the bondmaid; a heavy cost (or choice); and hard work. Work Descendent of the Dead
9. Íss er árbörkr ok unnar þak ok feigra manna fár. glaciers jöfurr.	9. [Ice] is the bark of rivers; the roof of the waves; danger of the doomed. Ice Wild Boar
10. Ár er gumna góði ok gott sumar algróinn akr. annus allvaldr.	10. [Harvest] is good for men; and a good summer; and the green acre. Year All-Wielder
11. Sól er skýja skjöldur ok skínandi röðull ok ísa aldrtreigi. rota siklingur.	11. [Sun] is the shield of the clouds; and a shining halo; the deadly sorrow of ice. Wheel Descendent of the Victorious One
12. Týr er einhendur áss ok ulfs leifar ok hofa hilmir. Mars tiggur.	12. [Tyr] is the one-handed God and the leavings of the wolf; and the hof-ruler. Mars Director
13. Bjarkan er laufgat lim ok lítit tré ok ungsamligr viðr. abies buðlungur.	13. [Birch] is the leafy limb; and the little tree; and the young wood. Silver Fir Protector
14. Maðr er manns gaman ok moldar auki ok skipa skreytir. homo mildingur.	14. [Man] is the joy of man; the increase of dust and the adorer of ships. Human Generous One
15. Lögr er vellanda vatn ok viðr ketill ok glömmungur grund. lacus lofðungur.	15. [Wetness] is the eddying water; and the wide kettle; and the land of fish. Lake Worthy of Praise

16.

Ýr er bendr bogi

ok brotgjarnt járn

ok fífu fárbaugi.

arcus ynglingr.

16.

[Yew] is the bent bow;

and the brittle iron;

and the giant of the arrow.

Bow, Rainbow Descendent of Yngvi

Asking the Eddas

The Eddas are dense with meaning. For those who go the way of Odin, they are an unending source of wisdom. As the quest of the Odian is never ending, so even the high God himself continues to wander the wilderness ways in search of knowledge. Though he sees farther than all others, he sees not all. The Eddas offer us the accumulated knowledge of generations of rune magicians. Runic thinking is a way to “ask” the Eddas to yield their encoded spells and hidden lore.

The following steps should be taken in “asking” the Eddas.

1. Choose passages that intrigue you the most, passages that promise to yield insights that will be of the most immediate value
2. Contemplate the meaning of the passage in English and consider its connections to other passages in the same poem and in other Eddic poems.
3. Find the key words in the stanza and ponder their meanings. Look especially for names of holy beings and words for major holy words such as “might”, “main”, “galder”, “gand”, “Regin”, etc. To find out how these terms are used in other Eddic contexts, consult the index - there is no better way to come to an understanding of a word than to study all the ways it is used in the Edda.
4. Assign runes to the key words.
5. Transliterate the key words into runes.
6. Ponder the meanings of the runes in the key words. Especially consider how the combination of runes in the word is significant. Consider the number and the order of the runes.
7. Think deeply on these runes. Chant the names or the sound (the first letter of the rune name is usually the vowel or consonant associated with the runes - see the table of Pronunciation of the Runes) of the one or all of the runes in the word while visualizing one or all of these runes.
8. Distill the content you deem important into a bind-rune and or into a galdric chant or song for use in magical workings and to allow you to recall profound insights and states of consciousness you experienced during meditation. The stanzas of the *Elder Edda* are often spells in their own right. By knowing how to ask you may discover their hidden magic.

Suppose you are seeking lore on the soul because you wish to strengthen your presence of mind or your will, and after perusing the Eddic poems. You find the spells of *The Galder of Groa* draw you, especially Stanza 6 which is for staying strong and unshaken in trying circumstances.

“I sing to you the first and recall
the most useful which Rind sang to Rand,
so that you may shoot from your shoulders
what seems shocking.
Allow your Self to lead you.”

This is one of nine spells given a young man about to make an initiatory journey to Ettinhome. This is the first which Rind gave to her son by Odin named Vali or Rand who was born for the purpose of venging the death of Baldr, and most notably, to survive Ragnarok. Rand was born as a vehicle for the survival of part of Odin’s soul after his own death. Svipdag (the young initiate in *The Galder of Groa*) must also be prepared for death and

rebirth. The voyage to Eitinnhome, a realm of the dead, may be seen as death and his emergence as rebirth. This spell was given to Odin's son to ward his wits in from the terrors of the initiatory process.

If you can turn this stanza into a spell of your own, you will be able to maintain your composure in trying times. A spell for keeping your spirits high under duress may form the basis for a spell to shake off "warfettlers" and other spells by which warriors are paralyzed in battle. You need not go to war, or to Eitinnhome to test these spells - the trials of daily life may be used to test and develop your powers. In fact, it is best to develop your skills in less stressful environments before you need them for a real catastrophe.

Fierceness may be countered by fierceness. What is shocking, or fierce, may be itself attacked or shot. When something shakes your soul, you need to be able to deal with the source of the terror in the world and with the terror itself in your own soul. It is your own soul which must be mastered first; if you are out of your wits, you cannot handle a crisis effectively. You must first then be fierce with yourself. It is not the foemen in the outer world who are the real source of your terror, but rather your own perceptions of them and their actions and the way that these perceptions are processed by your unconscious mind and by your nervous system. You will learn to interfere with the unconscious patterns to bring about a resourceful state of mind rather than paralysis or hysteria.

The spell should initially be developed in your own magical working environment. Here you may recall a time of crisis in which you fell into a debilitating state of mind in which your subsequent actions only made things worse. Recall other stimuli that have shaken your confidence and moral and contain them in your hand with a symbol of your choice, say a shark tooth or a bind-rune. Associate this symbol with as much of the feelings associated with states of fear or shock as you are able, until recalling the symbol is sufficient to recall the states. Now that you have anchored the feelings to a symbol, you have some basis for control over them

The next step is to anchor your most exalted and resourceful states of mind to a runic spell. In some cases you may wish to include a state of anger, if it is appropriate to the type of situation you envision. Anger is also easily summoned to replace fear. These feelings may be anchored to a bind rune and a galdric rune song derived from stanza 6. Once this has been accomplished, you will carve the runes onto an object, say a hammer, while singing the runes of your galder. As you do this you should recall the exalted states you wish to associate with these symbols and concentrate them in the object in which you are carving the runes. In a ritual setting, recall the negative feelings associated with the foemen and concentrate them in an object on which the symbol or bind rune you have associated with them has been carved - something made out of wood is ideal. Then bring out your hammer and recall the high states of mind. Visualize your sigil and sing your galder. Then smash the shocking object with the hammer, and imagine the negative states being totally overwhelmed by the positive. After this, test your sigil in trying circumstances in your daily life until threatening situations stimulate you to states in which you have control of yourself. Ideally, you will be able to become angry if that is needed, but it will be a controlled anger from which the controlling part of yourself is removed and from which you may be withdrawn. The final clause of the stanza states "Allow your Self to lead yourself." This is a spell in which the self acts on itself to effect change in itself. This recalls how Odin sacrificed himself to himself on the world tree to bring his conscious self to his supra-conscious Self for a profound flash of insight. In your higher state you will ideally have access to rede from your higher unconscious Self, or fetch, besides having conscious control of your body and nervous system. The ability to gain greater awareness of and interaction with the higher self may be gained by a meditative program such as *The Nine Doors of Midgard* by Edred Thorsson which provides the basic magical exercises for the Rune-Gild.

Finding Key Words

Alliteration

After you have studied the meanings of the passage on their various levels as they relate to your purpose, begin looking for the words that are most powerful and most useful to your aim. Look especially for words that alliterate in the Old Norse text. Alliterating words often resonate powerfully. Alliterating words begin with the same sounds. Half-lines, those lines with a large space in the middle in the Old Norse text, are bound by alliterating words. The first line of stanza 6 is composed of two half lines.

“Thann gelk ther fyrstan, thann kvetha fjolnytan”

The first word in the first half-line alliterates with the first word in the second, *thann* alliterates with *thann*. The second word of the first half-line alliterates with the second word in the second half-line; *gelk* with *kvetha*. *Fyrstan* and *fjolnytan* also alliterate. Normally there are two sets of alliterating words binding two half-lines and these words were the accented words (those words stressed in the metrical scheme). All vowels alliterate with each other. *J*, which is pronounced *y* (see table of Old Norse pronunciation) alliterates with all vowels. *Sk*, *sp*, and *st* usually alliterate with *sk*, *sp*, and *st* respectively, and rarely with *s*+ other consonants. The rules of meter may also be used to understand which words resonate with which others; see E.V. Gordon's *An Introduction to Old Norse* for the rules of meter in Old Norse poetry.

Key words may also be selected for the bearing they have on your aims, for the bearing the runes they contain have on your aims. The names of holy beings should be considered as well as words conveying especially powerful holy concepts such as might and main. In stanza 6, words such Rind, and Rand, would be selected because they are names of holy beings. “Shoulder” and “shocking” might be selected because they alliterate. The word *sjalfr* might be selected because of its bearing on the aim of the spell, and because the Self is such an important concept in Oodian magic. The word shoot (ON SKjotir) since shooting is the action by which the fears that bring loss of self control are driven away. Those who wish to consider the double and triple meanings of some of the words in a given passage, or who want to understand the shades of meaning of a word, may consult an Old Norse dictionary. Once you have a list of words, transliterate them into runes and contemplate the significance of the runes, especially as they bare on your aims. “Shoot” and “Self” are two likely choices, which may be transliterated ᚱᚱᚲᚱ and ᚱᚲᚱᚱ respectively.

Before meditating on the links between the runes in the word(s), meditate on the individual runes themselves. From these words, you may select one or all of the runes and work them into a bind rune or sigil. There are a number of methods for encoding runes into sigils.

The first rune in both “self” (*sjalfr*) and “shoot” (*skjotir*) is the *S* rune. In consulting the tables of runic correspondences, you will find that the name of the Sol meaning sun, it is associated with the sun wheel, and therefore also with the hammer of Thor, (like the hammer, it kills giants), and it is number eleven and appears on the second aett, the aett of Hagal. More important, it sounds like our word soul, and may be taken as the guiding light of consciousness in the soul which should also be the center from which the rest of the soul is organized and its activities orchestrated, particularly in combination with the Tyr rune, the last and fifth rune in the word “shoot” (*skjot*) which serves as an axis about which the sun wheel rotates. The K rune ᚱ is the controlled heat of consciousness used to loosen the ice of the Iss rune which holds the rest of the being together. Ice holds the soul together, but heat is needed to bring the dissolution that allows change. The fires of the soul must be kept in control, or the effects of the terror will be augmented by dissolution. On the other hand, heat is needed to prevent the soul from freezing into the state of shock and suffering a paralysis. Fire and ice must be held in balance by the guiding force of consciousness ᚱ in conjunction with the ordering principal of the Tyr rune. If fire is overwhelmed by ice, the soul will freeze and be fettered, and if ice is overwhelmed by fire and turned water or steam, there will be weakness and madness. In the wrong measure you will have the drizzle of the *U* rune, rather than the power of the aurochs, circulating through your being.

Between the Sol and Tyr runes, stand Kaun (fire), Iss (Ice) and the Ur (drizzle, rain, slag, aurochs) rune. Ur is easily shaped by either fire or ice. Ice can make it strong as iron or hard as snow, or it may be heated to molten liquid or drizzle. The U ᚱ rune is also the principal by which the resulting energies are channeled through your being. These dynamic forces of fire, ice, and iron or earth are balanced and regulated by the first and the last runes of the root of our word shoot, the Sol and the Tyr rune. Sol is the guide of consciousness and Tyr ↑ is the strength of will and the principal of right order about which the elements of the soul are marshalled and arrayed. Tyr, like Sol, is a guiding principal, it is the pole star of the night sky, by which the soul is guided in the absence of Sol. It is the cosmic axis of the world column (tree) Irminsul about which the wheel of Sol rotates. For the purpose of this magical working, we may also think of the Tyr rune as an arrow by which the will is projected (sent) and effected.

Once you have pondered the meanings of the words in the stanza and their relevance to your aims, abstract them into a runic sigil and galder. In this case we have selected the words “shoot” and “self.” The act by which the self is protected is that of shooting, therefore shoot is perhaps the single most useful word. The idea of Self may be anchored by the S rune, since both words begin with this letter, and for reasons discussed above. The Tyr rune might be included for its ordering power and as the instrument of the destruction of the state of shock. The sigil may look like this:



Emblazon the sigil on your memory while in the state of mind you would have when under a state of duress. To summon such states while in meditation, recall instances in which you have been this state, as many as you can, and associate them with the image of the sigil and the sound of the galder, which may be the intonation of one or more of the runes in the word “shoot.” The state may be further anchored to a hand gesture that imitates the sigil or one or more of the runes that comprise the sigil.

Seeking Rede From Within the self

Number was a means by which meaning was encoded into the Eddic stanzas. Numerology has been part of many systems of philosophy in the past, many of which are well known in occult circles today. A typical approach is to take a familiar system of numerology, such as that of the Kabbala, and incorporate it into rune-work. This may work as a magical system for an individual magician, but it will not be authentic. For authenticity, look for numerological thought in the Eddas themselves. Try to understand the Eddas on their own terms by looking at the contexts in which a given number occurs in the Eddas. Look at the kinds of things and events that happen in twos, threes, fours, etc. Look at the events that occur in cycles, the number of phases to the cycle, and numbers of events that occur within a phase. After considering the Eddas, then go to other Germanic sources, such as saga and folklore. Scholars have done a good deal of work investigating the meaning of mythic symbols, but have barely scratched the fertile field of northern tally lore. Runologists have been aware that number is an important part of magical runic inscriptions, but little has been done to get at meaning of the numerological content.

Number, like myth, is a system of abstraction and communication. Just as myths may have several levels of meaning and may sometimes convey complex ideas in abstract form, so complex abstract ideas are encoded into number lore. To extract this lore you need to study the Germanic lore on numbers.

Edred Thorsson and Robert Zoller have made good progress in this direction but much remains to be done. Here I will summarize some of their observations and opinions to help you along in your own work. For more infor-

mation you may consult *Runelore* by Edred Thorsson, or *Skaldic Number-Lore* by Robert Zoller available through the Rune-Gild.

Three and its multiples, especially three, nine, and twelve were among the holiest of numbers for the Germans. The old Germanic number system used to be quasi-twelve based. Hence our unusual system of measures in which we have twelve inches to a foot. In old Germanic tongues, the word “hundred” meant 120. Also note that we have the words eleven and twelve instead of something like one-teen and two-teen. Twelve and its multiples were also especially holy. The Elder Futhark had twenty-four runes. Four is another key number. The holy number twelve may be looked upon as three fours or four threes.

The following are some keys to use in thinking about the first nine digits.

1. Ginnungagap. Unity. Beginning and first cause.
2. Think in terms of polar opposites such as fire and ice, the two sexes and other extremes. Also consider holy teams such as the ravens Huginn and Muninn, or the wolves Geri and Freki.
3. The number of holy beings and things that come in threes is overwhelming. Note especially Odin-Vili-Ve. Three seems to be a number of dynamism.
4. The dwarves at the four quarters, Northi, Austri, Suthri and Vestri may be thought of as wardens of the four quarters who keep order and four as a number of stability.
5. Rarely occurs in Eddic lore. Old Teutonic week consisted of five days. There are five runes in the names Odin and Woden.
6. Rare in Eddic sources. Best you draw your own conclusions.
7. There were traditionally seven days between a death and a funeral. There is little mythic lore on the number seven.
8. Holy things are sometimes listed in eights. There were eight runes in each aett of the elder Futhark. In Havamal 137 there eight cures for eight woes, and in stanza 144 there are eight steps to runic work. In *The Lay of Grim* there is a list of the eight finest things.
9. Nine is the HOLY NUMBER. There are nine-worlds connected by the world ash upon which Odin hangs for nine nights.

Each rune has numeric value. This may be expressed in its position in the row, or by its place on a given aett. The Thurs rune is the third rune on the row and may be expressed by the number 3. It may also be expressed by the numbers 3 and 1 since it is the third rune on the first aett. The Sol rune may be expressed by the number 11 since it is the eleventh rune in the row. It may also be expressed by the numbers 2 and 5 since it is the fifth rune on the second aett. Look at the rune poems when searching for the meaning of numbers by looking at the runes they go with. You may also explore the number of runes in a given rune name. Sol has three runes in it and therefore associated with the word three by its ‘rune count.’ You may also tally up the numeric values of the runes contained in the rune name. Sol contained the Sol rune (11), the Ur rune (2) and the Logr rune (15) for a total of 28. Or it may expressed as 2:5, 1:2, 3:4.

Once you have a feeling for some of the numerals, especially the holy ones, then you may apply numerical analysis to Eddic stanzas, lines, half-lines, or words to elicit deeper meaning and find ways to express a passage numerically. One way is to find the rune count of a line or half line.

There are many ways to “ask” the Eddic stanzas. As you begin exploration by one means, you will find others, and the truths of the world will unfold before you forever.

Chapter 2

Working With Holy Wights, Natural Forces and Their Holy Names

Working With Holy Names

Though the *Lay of Alvis* is frequently disregarded as a useless collection of synonyms, it is in fact an important source for the holy ritual and magical names used by the denizens of the nine worlds to invoke fundamental natural forces of Midgard. The stanzas of this lay reveal holy language of wights beyond Midgard that may be used in invoking them and the natural forces of Midgard. This language reveals relationships between Midgard and the outer worlds. Finally, these stanzas are the keys to creating galdr-magical songs or chants - to work with the natural forces of Midgard and the wights of other worlds.

The holy words of the *Lay of Alvis* function much like kennings. A kenning is a poetic circumlocution for an ordinary event: the sea may be called a “whale road”, for example. In modern literary circles, the kenning is admired as a clever and amusing poetic device, though they originally functioned as holy words by which divine powers and wights could be called in ritual and magic.

Holy-words distill sacrality from ordinary events and allow the speaker to transcend profane consciousness to a higher state of awareness of the profound beauty and normally unseen numinous power of the world. In such a state a vitki may experience a deep state of awe and awareness of some part of the world and its wights.

In the *Lay of Alvis*, Thor interrogates the dwarf Alvis (Allwise) for the words by which the wights of the nine worlds to call thirteen of the natural phenomena of Midgard including;

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 1. Earth | 8. Sea |
| 2. Heaven | 9. Fire |
| 3. The Moon | 10. Forest |
| 4. The Sun | 11. Night |
| 5. Clouds | 12. Seed |
| 6. Winds | 13. Ale |
| 7. Calm | |

Each of these elements is in some way related to the others by its function or holy name. The elements that are most closely related are listed next to one another and form pairs.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Earth and Heaven | 4. Calm and Sea |
| 2. Moon and Sun | 5. Fire and Forest |
| 3. Clouds and Wind | 6. Night and Seed |

Ale is the leftover as the odd element which can be used to begin another series of pairs. This may at first seem an unlikely combination compared to earth and heaven, but *The Words of Har* 137 shows a connection “when you drink ale, call upon the main of the earth, for “earth is good against ale.” The same stanza also sheds light on the magical uses of grain, the moon, fire, and trees, as well as recalling earth’s use for drawing off floods. The other pairs include;

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Earth and Ale | 5. Sea and Fire |
| 2. Heaven and Moon | 6. Forest and Night |
| 3. Sun and Clouds | 7. Seed and Ale |
| 4. Wind and Calm | |

For each element, six holy names are given that are used by six categories of beings from the nine worlds. Denizens of seven of the nine-worlds are represented in the poem. Only beings from six of the nine worlds are included in any one stanza.

Those represented include the Ases of Asgard, the elves of Light-Elfhome, the Vanes of Vanaheim, the dwarves of Dark-Elfhome, Hel-folk from Helhome, ettins from Ettinhome and men from Midgard. There is no consciousness associated with Muspelheim or Niflhome as these are regions of the primal fire and ice that came together in Ginnungagap to create the world. There are three categories of beings that are hard to classify. Some are names for different Asic and Odian forces in Asgard. Ginnregin (holy advising powers, specifically the powers of consciousness of the Aesir) appears twice in the *Lay of Alvis* and appears elsewhere in the Eddas. In *The Words of Har* 80 they are associated with the creation of the runes. The other beings are “uppregin” (high advising powers), “sons of Ases,” and “Suttung’s sons.” Suttung’s sons are the ettins who dwelled with Suttung who once held the mead of poetry.

Three categories of beings appear in every stanza: Men are listed first, then the Ases, and ettins are listed fourth. The other beings will change place with one another. Vanes usually appear in the third place but are listed in the sixth in stanza 10. On two occasions third place is filled by the Ginnregin and on other occasions by Hel-folk. Hel-folk are usually listed sixth. The fifth place is always occupied by elves or dwarves.

Some of the meanings that bind some of the more unlikely pairs may be discovered by looking at the holy names. In the first series, forest and fire do not seem as appropriate as a pairing of fire and sea. The stanza on forest names shows that ettins consider it fuel or firewood. *Lay of Fjolsvith* 22 shows that the mood (spirit) of Yggdrasil brings forth a fire for hysterical women which makes it clear that there is a magical fire in wood.

Deeper levels of understanding of the meanings and uses of these stanzas may be acquired by fathoming the holy names and the wights who use them. All the words used by a single type of being may be compared to gain insight into its holy language. The words for the elements that appear in pairs may be compared to understand their relationships with one another, with Midgard and the other worlds. Runic transliteration and deep meditation are useful tools. Also check other Eddic lore concerning these elements.

The thirteen elements are phenomena experienced by the wights of the other worlds when they fare forth to Midgard, and which are reflected in some way in their own gards, since these elements are expressions of fundamental numinous powers that flow through the universe - they are the stuff of which the nine worlds are made. It is the function of priests and magicians to know the divine forces that are essences behind the natural phenomena we experience in Midgard. These numinous powers are the divine reality behind nature. Natural phenomena are expressions of these pantheistic magical forces. These powers are the stuff with which the magician works.

In order to work magically with these divine forces, the vitki must gain both an intellectual grasp of the qualities of these forces through scrutiny of the Eddic and folklore sources and practical experience by summoning them in religious and magical workings by their holy names. Those working with the runes may find that they are already familiar with these forces from workings with the runes that govern them.

So also must our elders and gothis come to know the beings of the nine-worlds by summoning them and performing blessings in their honor. At first it is very difficult to become aware of these wights and elements, but by invoking the elements with their holy names and meditating on them in the presence of the natural phenomena which are their expressions one comes to know the numinous forces associated with the sky, begin by quietly gazing into the heavens and admiring their beauty. As your sense of the sky’s beauty deepens, become aware of its might and the sense of beauty turns to awe. In a state of ecstatic awe you may experience the elemental forces of the sky. By singing or chanting the holy names of the elements during part of this experience, you internalize the associations between names and the feelings you had and the knowledge you gained during the meditative sittings. Later it will become possible to invoke the holy powers of the sky in ritual settings in which the sky is not in view and with little or no meditative preparation.

To summon one of the wights of the outer gards, find an environment for which these wights have an affinity. The Ases and Vanes are best summoned at harrows and hofs raised for the purpose. Ettins and dwarves are best

summoned in the presence of stone, crag and cliff at night. Elves are best summoned in the presence of lush vegetation and an open sky during the day. As one works with the world's wights and elements, one will become able to detect their presence while in mundane states of mind and be able to cross easily from a mundane state to a holy state by means of holy names. The essences of the phenomena of Midgard are to be found in the other eight worlds. Rain and clouds have corresponding counterparts in Ettinhome and Dwarfhome. A rock holy to the dwarves in Midgard has its counterpart in Dwarfhome. When we enter a holy space, we are close to the spirits of the other worlds. Here it is easiest to enter a holy frame of mind. Just as we are used to meeting the gods in ritual spaces in which a gate has been created between Midgard and Asgard so may we summon dwarves, elves, ettins, and land-wights into specially prepared ritual spaces in the rocks and the winds when we know how to call them in their holy languages. And so we may also commune with them.

Just as there are howes, harrows, crags, springs and groves in Midgard that are gates to the homes of ettins, Vanes, dwarves, and elves, so are there rocks, harrows and groves in these outer homes which serve as gates to Midgard. The natural phenomena of Midgard have counterparts in the outer homes as well.

Each stanza provides several holy names which provide keys to several aspects of a given element. These keys unlock the cluster of powers and attributes of the natural forces much as the rune poems provide clues to the qualities of individual runes. The rune poems and the stanzas of the *Lay of Alvis* can be used together to fathom runic connections with the elemental powers. Those working with streams of runic power from the earth, sky etc. in the Rune-Gild are especially well prepared to begin working with the natural forces of the *Lay of Alvis*.

In comparing the *Lay of Alvis* to the rune-poems it might be noted that some of the elements and wights of the *Lay of Alvis* appear in rune-names and rune-poems. The three wights who always appear in the stanzas of *Lay of Alvis*, Men, Ases, and ettins are found in the As rune, Mathr rune and Thurs rune. Fire is associated with several runes, including Fe, Kaun, and Nauth in the younger row. The sun is found in the Sol rune, the sea in the Logr rune, trees in the Bjarkan and Yr runes, and the sky and clouds may be associated with the Ur and Hail runes. The esoteric uses of the elements listed in the *Lay of Alvis* may be further fathomed by transliterating their names into runes. The powers of the elements may then be tapped by arranging the runes that invoke the qualities of the element you want to work with into a sigil or bind rune, and carving it while chanting these runes and the names of the elements.

Working With the Wights and Forces of *The Lay of Alvis*

Working With the Wights

The blessing and the working are the two main types of ritual interface with the wights of the nine worlds. The blessing is the worshipful way of rightly honoring these wights to reaffirm our kinship with them, to acknowledge their place in the order of things, to thank them for the good we have gotten from them. Thereby right order is kept and goodly wights are called to the hospitality of our homes and hearths.

The working is a magical act in which friendly wights are called to aid the vitki in some magical operation. Once you have become familiar with the beings of one of the outer gards (Dwarfhome, Elfhome, Vanaheim etc.) through meditative sittings, trance journeys (faring forth), or partaking of blessings you may gain a "feeling" for working with certain types of beings. At this point you may try inviting these wights to work with you in your magical workings.

Blessings

The ritual blessing is a nine part operation which includes:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Hallowing | 6. Drinking |
| 2. Reading | 7. Blessing |
| 3. Rede | 8. Giving |
| 4. Call | 9. Leaving |
| 5. Loading | |

These parts serve the following functions:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. Hallowing | sets ritual time and space apart from routine |
| 2. Reading | puts rite into mythic context |
| 3. Rede | links myth to purpose of rite |
| 4. Call | summons gods or wights to ritual space/time |
| 5. Loading | charges drink with holy might |
| 6. Drinking | circulates holy might within |
| 7. Blessing | circulates holy might without |
| 8. Giving | restores rightful part of might to deities. |
| 9. Leaving | declares work rightly done/return to routine |

The blessings of the Troth may be celebrated alone or in groups. It is common for the ritual operations to be divided up among two or three celebrants in group workings. Roles may be divided as the kindred leader sees fit, though the following three roles are most traditional: Theal, Shope and Goodman. The Theal performs speaking parts in which holy powers are invoked and their blessings given. The Shope speaks those parts involving the setting of mythic and social context. The Goodman performs nonspeaking ritual actions involving the distribution of the holy liquid.

At the beginning of most rites the speaker strikes the holy stance of the rune Y. This is done by standing straight with the arms straight out and up at about a 45 degree angle. This is an old and holy stance taken by Germanic peoples when they commune with holy beings. This pose was known even to the Romans.

The ninefold blessing parts are elaborated below.

1. Hallowing: A hammer working or some other method of setting a space apart for holy working is performed. In the hammer working the hammer sign is traced in the air in air to the North, East, South, West and above and below the celebrants with the words "Hammer! Hallow and hold this stead."
2. Reading: A passage from the Eddas or sagas is read or recited. The passage should be about the wights that are being called on and the great deeds and attributes of these wights.
3. Rede: The content and significance of the reading may be further elaborated or it may add details from other myths. It may also state the purpose of the blessing in general terms.
4. Call: Here the wights are invoked by their names when known. The positive attributes and deeds of these beings are again glorified, and as poetically as possible.
5. Loading: Ale is poured into a drinking horn, and the horn is raised aloft. The speaker may then verbally offer the might of the gathered folk housed in the ale to the wights. This might is blended with the might of the holy wights summoned in the call.

6. Drinking: The speaker makes the sign of the hammer in the air over the rim of the horn and drinks from it. The horn is passed around to each sworn member of the kindred.
7. Blessing: Ale is poured into the blessing bowl on the harrow. A fresh cut evergreen sprig is dipped in the blessing bowl and the ale sprinkled on the harrow and sworn members with the words: “The blessings of (name of wights called) be upon you!”
8. Giving: Ale is poured onto the ground and the verbally dedicated to the wights who were summoned and to mother earth.
9. Leaving: The blessing is called to an end with the words “So shall it be!” added to any other closing remarks.

Blessing to the Dwarves

1. Hallowing: Speaker raises a hammer (not a Thor hammer) and hallows the quarters saying “By the hammer of Dvalinn, I hallow this harrow!”
2. Reading: Recite the story of the making of Thor’s hammer by Brokk and Sindri and the making of the other great godly tools told in *Poesy of the Skalds (Skaldskaparmal)* chapter 35 in the *Younger Edda* of Snorri Sturluson. The story of the brewing of the poetic mead by Gjalar and Fjalar in *Poesy of the Skalds* chapter I might be recited instead.
3. Rede: “Let us think now, on the uses to which the kin of Dvalinn and Durinn put the mead they made from the blood of Kvasir, that wisest of wights in whom the combined knowledge of the Aesir and Vanir had been housed. Let us ponder the wondrous works wrought by the sons of Ivaldi, by Brokk and Sindri. Let us strive for the craft, precision and excellence exemplified by the dwarves in our own daily deeds. Let us wisely wield their gifts.”
4. Call: “Hail Dvalinn and Durinn, mighty masters of craft and creativity, forgers of the blade Tyrting. Hail Dvalinn, highest of dwarves, entranced in artistic inspiration and madness! Hail the sons of Ivaldi, shapers of Skithblathnir and Gungnir, who worked gold hair for Sif. Hail Brokk and Sindri, makers of the hard hammer Mjolnir, who fashioned Frey’s golden boar and the ring Draupnir. Hail Gjalar and Fjalar, brewers of Suttung’s poetic mead, killers of Kvasir! Hail the makers of mainful Brisingamen, the glowing glory of Freya, the lady of the Vanir! Hail Weyland and his wondrous works. Worthy wights of who dwell behind the gates of stone, throw open the gates this night and share with us the cup of craft and let us share blessings.”
5. Loading: Mead is poured into the horn and the horn raised aloft with the words: “We give you welcome and the gifts of our works, bring you gifts of honey and mead in thanks for the good you have granted us. In this cup let us mingle our main.”
6. Drinking: Speaker drinks and then pours mead into the horns of the other celebrants. The remainder is poured into the blessing bowl.
7. Blessing: The harrow and gathered folk are sprinkled with the mead in the blessing bowl with the words: “The blessings of the dwarven smiths and artists, the dwellers in the darkness, be upon us.”
8. Giving: The contents of the blessing bowl are poured onto the ground to the east of the harrow with the words: “To Dvalinn and Durinn, to the sons of Ivaldi, to Brokk and Sindri, to Gjalar and Fjalar, to Weyland, to the dwarves of the earth, to the dwarves of the stone, to Meadwolf and to Oakenshield, and to all their kin gathered here.”

9. Leaving: “So our work is wrought and it again renews our hearts to do worthy deeds and to strive towards our goals with mighty moods, wise words, and trust in our own powers - ever holding our oaths to ourselves and our folk.”

Magical Workings

In planning workings for elves, dwarves, and ettins, keep in mind the type of atmosphere that would be most suited for such wights, and in what sorts of endeavors they are best suited to help you. Before engaging in a working of this nature, it is wise to familiarize yourself with the lore available on the beings you choose to work with. First check the *Elder Edda* and the *Younger Edda*. If you wish to pursue the matter further, check saga and folklore material. References to these sources can sometimes be found in the notes of the better books on Norse mythology.

Ettins are best called on for workings involving the acquisition of wisdom through meetings with the fetch-wife or an ettin-wife, love, initiation, destruction, the acquisition of mead or poetry, access to dead ancestors, lore concerning the creation and beginnings of the world, fertility and prosperity, troll-magic (the art of shape changing and faring forth), and some of the darker and deadlier arcane arts that you will find referred to in the Eddas. The mysteries of the ettins and Ettinhome are deep and complex. Let those who would test their wit against Vafthruthnir be very wise indeed.

Elves are best called for work involving weather magic, fertility, prosperity, etc. No doubt there are is a lot more to the elves than indicated here, but I have not deeply fathomed their mysteries and am more familiar with the ways of dwarves, ettins, and trolls.

Dwarves are best called for workings involving the acquisition of creative powers, the brewing of magical meads, and the magical creation of holy objects, especially ritual objects such as rune knives, rings, spears, and gands. The ritual creation of magical tools of artistry would also be fall into the ken of the dwarves.

Dwarven Workings

Before doing a magical ritual, you may want to familiarize yourself with the beings you are working with in the context of a sitting. “Sitting Out” is a traditional practice in which you enter an altered state of consciousness and commune with holy beings. This is best done at a site known to be holy to these wights already, or at a site they would find pleasing. Crag, hills and grave hills and especially consecrated stone alters are pleasing to ettins and dwarves. In Europe, there are still sites known to be associated with these wights, but in America we must discover suitable sites and discover the dwarves and ettins who are already there, or invite them in. Stones may be specially consecrated as “dwarf stones.” These serve as the gates between Midgard and Dwarfhome. By these gates you may summon dwarves for communion, blessings or work, or you may “fare forth” into the home of the dwarves. Be careful in such endeavors - it is possible to lose your mind or your soul. In *Saga of the Ynglings*, King Sveighthir followed a dwarf into a crag, never to return. In such farings, it is possible to obtain a gift from the dwarves, such as a ring, a sword, or a necklace. The gift will be special to you and may be integrated into your magical work for the purpose of obtaining higher states of consciousness or states of consciousness that are good for specific types of work. Say you were given a ring, you might find you are able to get in touch with your creative faculties by recalling it to your memory. I have found that dwarves and ettins are all too eager to be of help in magical work.

The following working is for the express purpose of endowing physical objects with numinous properties for specific purposes. Simply by handling the object, you be able to bring on higher states of mind, or artistic states

of mind that were generated in the ritual setting in which they are created. If you are an artist, you might wish to charge a pen or a brush with the power to put you in touch with creative energies. To go a step further, you might hallow the tool for the express purpose of performing magical acts, such as carving, painting, or drawing runes or magical sigils or creating magical art objects.

Working for Forging a Magical Tool

A. The Harrow

The harrow should be set up to resemble the basic components of a blacksmith shop. Those who are themselves jewelers or metalsmiths of some sort may take the idea behind this working and set it to the metaphors of their own trade and may even use their own work space as the ritual chamber. Besides the tools used in a blessing, include a small brazier, to be set on the south side of the harrow to symbolize the fires of the forge and the energies of Muspell. A bowl or cauldron of water or some other liquid that seems appropriate should be set on the side of the alter to act as the liquid in which the tool is tempered and to symbolize the waters of Hverglmir. In the west set a bellows or small fan to represent the winds of the home of the heavens or of Vanaheim. A hammer may be set in the east to symbolize the iron and wood of Etinhome in the east. An anvil (any hard flat surface will do) may be set in the middle of the harrow surface to symbolize Midgard, the realm in which the elements and energies of the nine worlds meet are synthesized and transformed. The elements of the four quarters are hereby brought together for the shaping of a magical tool. It is also possible to set the fire, water, etc. slightly away from the harrow rather than on it. It is also possible that you will want to include other elements from the nine worlds for the charging of the tool you are working on. Feel free to innovate.

Place the mead on the east side of the alter and sprig on the west. Other tools, including the gandr and rune carving and coloring instruments may be placed in the center near the anvil.

B. The Working

1. The working may ideally be placed in the context of a dwarf blessing with minor changes, up to the point of the blessing phase, at which time the actual working takes place. The call should be modified to include the following invocation to Northi, Austri, Vestri and Suthri the dwarven wardens of the four quarters.
 - a. Face the east in the Y stance and call or sing the name Austri three times and say “Austri, warden of the eastern gates, let might and main of the ettin homes flow forth to dwell in the iron on this harrow.”
 - b. Face south and call or sing the name Suthri three times and say “Suthri, warden of the southern wickets. Fling open the gates and let the all-burning fires of Muspell flow forth to dwell in the fires of the hearth at this harrow.”
 - c. Face west and call or sing the name Vestri and say “Vestri, warden of the western wicket, fling wide the gates to Vanaheim. Let the wafting winds of Hraesvelgr rush forth to this harrow to fan the flames of Muspell.”
 - d. Face north and call or sing the name Northi three times and say “Northi, warden of the northern wickets, fling wide the gates of Niflhel. Let the waters of Hverglmir flow forth to fill the waters on this harrow with their might and main.”

After the mead has been drunk and the harrow has been sprinkled with mead, but before the remaining mead is poured on the ground, perform the following actions.

- a. Light the fires of the forge.

- b. Fan the flames with the bellows.
- c. Circle the object to shaped over the flames nine times.
- d. Set the tool on the anvil.
- e. Carve runes into object, if you intended to do so.
- f. Bring out the hammer: Think on the purpose to which the tool is to be set. Remind yourself of the state of mind you wish to attain when you are using the tool you are about to hallow. Hold the hammer in both hands, raise it aloft and focus the visions and feelings of this state of mind on the hammer and feel them in the hammer. Channel these energies through your arms and into the hammer. Then bring the hammer down over the tool and transfer the numinous power from the hammer into the tool.
- g. Dip the tool in the water in the north to solidify shaped energies in the tool.
- h. Pour the remaining mead on the ground and close with the words “So it is done!”

Weather Workings

The elements in the *Lay of Alvis* may be summoned for work with the weather. I personally like a good rain storm, but will not attest that any of the thunder storms with which I have been blessed were the result of magic. Nevertheless, I have known some who are confident in their abilities to change the weather, and this sort of magic is very traditional and well attested in the old lore. Therefore I include suggestions for working weather magic based on the holy-language of the *Lay of Alvis*. I would recommend two steps: a.) Sitting Out (meditation) and b.) summoning. In meditation you should contemplate the names of the elements you are summoning and think deeply on their significance in the presence of the element if possible. Transliterate the Old Norse names into runes as described in Chapter 1. These transliterations may be turned into runic chants for the purpose of calling the elements with galder or gand magic. The more you get a feeling for working with an element in the presence of that element, and by exploring the Eddic lore on it, the more effective you be in summoning that element in ritual contexts.

To get a feeling for working with the clouds, go out on a cloudy day and chant a mantra consisting of the holy names ascribed to clouds. You may concentrate on one holy name until you understand how the atmospheres generated by this name differ from those of others. Once you feel that you are in tune with the qualities of a given name, summon them by chanting or singing a mantra, runic or otherwise, that you have created for this name. Imagine streams of this power flowing from the clouds into a sphere around your body and then inhale some of it with each breath and imagine it coursing through your body.

To call rain you will want to deal with three elements including clouds, wind and heaven and the names associated with them that are most pertinent to bringing rain.

Catalogue of Dwarf Names

This is a brief list of Eddic dwarf names and their translations.

Dvalinn=entranced; Note that Dvalinn is the dwarf who fashioned the sword Tyrting in *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise*, that he is the dwarf who brought runic wisdom to the other dwarves. Dvalinn is also the name of one of the Harts in GM who eats leaves from the limbs of Yggdrasil. Another one of these harts is named Dain which is also a dwarf's name. The connection between dwarves, Dvalinn in particular, and harts occurs again in the story of King Heidrek. King Svafrlami chased a stag into the woods, but lost it at dusk and found instead two dwarves by a stone. He prevented the dwarves from entering the stone with a graven sword. He knew they were the most skilled of all dwarves and forced them to forge a sword. The sword was Tyrting, the dwarves were Durinn and Dvalinn. Perhaps the hart is a wer-shape taken by dwarves in their daylight farings, and perhaps it is dwarves in the shape of harts who eat the leaves of Yggdrasil on the roof of Valhalla.

Nyi=new moon; Nithi=waning moon; Motsognir=mead drinker; Allthiof=Allthief; Austri=east; Vestri=west; Sudri=south; Nordri=north; Nar=corpse; Nainn=corpse; Nipingr=darkening?; Dainn=dead; Bifurr=shield ornament?; Bombur=large?; Nari=puny; Bafurr=bean; Ai=father of the tribe; Mjothvitner=meadwolf; Vigg=horse?; Gandalf=wizard elf; Vindelf=wind elf; Thrainn=threatening; Thekkkr=welcomed (also a name of Odin); Thorin=strong; Thror=thriving (also a name of Odin, an elf, a sword, and a boar); Vitri=wise; Lit=beauty; Nyr=new; Regin=mighty; Ratsvid=wise-counsel; Fili=file; Kili=wedge smith; Fundinn=found; Nali=dead; Heptifili=file haft; Hannar=skilled; Frar=quick; Hornbori=hornblower; Fraegr=famous; Loni=The Shining; Jari=conflict; Eikenskjoldi=oakenshield; Iaruvalla=sandy realms; Draupnir=Dropper? (The name of one of Odin's rings); Dolgthrasir=troll storming; Har=high; Haugspori=howeraven; Gloinn=glowing?; Dori=iron peg?; Andvari=vigilant; Virfir=rod; Alf=elf; Fjallar=?; Frosti=frost.

The *Lay of Alvis* is a gold mine for those who wish to invite dwarves, elves or ettins to their blessings, and for those who are working with the magical streams of the elements.

Chapter 3

Spring Drama and Eddic Myth

Spring Drama and Eddic Myth

Myths are a means by which a society speaks about itself. Myths are about the order the world and define the sacred in its order. Sacred stories map the order of the cosmos, the social order, the natural order, the nature of the individual, and the structure of the soul. All of these orders are built in accordance with the same structure. The microcosm of the mind is mirrored in the macrocosm of the heavens. The society of the Gods is a mirror of that of their folk. The structure of the myths is the structure of reality. Myth and ritual define, preserve and celebrate the order and the holy.

Germanic myth is cyclic, like the year. Our holiest festivals are the seasonal holidays such as Yule and Easter. These festivals celebrate certain points in the seasonal cycle such as the regeneration of the year in the dead of winter and the full manifestation and return of the powers of nature in spring. The mysteries of the natural order and the seasonal cycle contain the mysteries of the other cycles and realms of existence.

The structure of the spring drama has been reconstructed by comparative study of myth, saga, folklore, folk custom, archaeology, place-names, and art. Of special worth are accounts of spring celebrations that survived throughout Europe into the early modern period. It is our task take the myths whose structure and motifs echo the archetypal spring drama, as reconstructed by scholars, and adapt them to this model as a basis for the production of authentic spring festivals in the modern world.

The Eddic poems in which spring drama motifs stand out most clearly are the lays of Skirnir, Svipdag, and Sigdrifa; though spring drama motifs are present, they have been obscured for having been preserved in writing at a time when people were more interested in the myths as entertaining stories of heroism and adventure, and as a result of having come down to us through the channels of Odinic cults in which these myths were interpreted in terms of initiation into the mysteries of magic and the runes. Therefore, the Eddic texts need to be understood in terms of the overall structure when you adapt them to a spring drama. You will find it best to reinterpret some of the text and to alter it slightly in some cases.

The themes of the spring drama reverberate powerfully throughout much Teutonic myth and literature. There are two main phases to the spring drama: 1.) The freeing of a divine or semi divine maiden in the underworld by a God or hero of the upper world. 2.) The marriage of the hero (May Lord) and the woman (May Queen).

Outline of Spring Drama

1. The May Lord is set on his quest for the May Queen in the underworld by the machinations of the May Queen. He may have indirect contact with the May Queen through a vision as in the *Lay of Skirnir*, or by contact with one of her minions.
2. The May Lord travels in disguise, especially an animal guise, to the underworld hold of the May Queen.
3. The May Lord meets the Winter Lord who sits on a howe hill warding the way to the May Queen, who is held in thrall to the Winter Lord as a spouse, daughter, or sibling.
4. The Winter Lord is a brother, father, husband, or some other close relative of the May Queen, and often a brother or father of the May Lord as well or instead. Such themes are preserved in much of the heroic literature.
5. Flyting and or battle between the May and Winter Lords in which the May Lord is victorious and the Winter Lord slain or driven out of town.

6. May Queen brings chalice to May King and they drink, thereby hollowing their union and celebrating her return to Midgard.
7. Procession around fields and into town accompanied by revelry and merriment, followed by feasts, dances, and games etc.

Now let us consider this outline in light especially of the *Lay of Svipdag*, but also of the *Lay of Skirnir*, and the *Lay of Sigdrifa*, which provide much in the way of dialogue that can be used in spring dramas, some of which may actually be authentic survivals from the original spring drama from which the myth was taken.

1. Sending the hero on a quest by the May Queen or one of her representatives is not included in detail in the Eddic myths. The *Lay of Skirnir* opens with Frey having just glimpsed Gerth from the high seat and in the *Lay of Fjolsvith* Svipdag is compelled, in a magical battle with a woman who was either his stepmother or one of his father's lovers, to visit Mengloth. In the archetypal version of the spring drama, the hero slays his own brother or father in order to take his bride and his kingdom. This may be the source of the motif of the dual kingship and harken back to rites in which kings were sacrificed.
2. The May Lord, compelled to seek a bride in the underworld, travels in disguise, often in a beast shape. In the *Lay of Svipdag*, Svipdag assumes the name of Vindkald (means windcold) in his encounter with the herdsman. The animal form he may have used in the original may have been a wolf, for Fjolsvith called him a "vargr" which has the meaning of both "wolf" and "outlaw".

In the *Lay of Skirnir*, Skirnir travels on a horse, perhaps as one originally, and does not reveal his name to the herdsman or to Gerth, but does not give a false name either.

3. The third phase is a contest between the May Lord and the Winter Lord. The Winter King is married to the May Queen and holds her in thrall, keeping the world captive winter. The Spring Lord battles with the Winter King to the death. In some instances, the Spring King is slain and resurrected before he triumphs over winter. Such combats were a central part of the spring dramas and were well preserved in the spring festivals that survived in Europe into the early modern period. In the mythic poems of the Edda, the battles appear as mere flytings. In the *Lay of Svipdag* there is a flyting between the hero in quest of the maiden and the herdsman on the mound before her yard. This recalls other Eddic flytings with underworld wights such as the *Lay of Vafthruthnir*, the *Lay of Alvis*, and the *Lay of Grimnir*, in which giants or dwarves are defeated in a contest of wits and lore. Svipdag triumphs when he reveals his true name. If such a flyting existed in the original spring drama from which the myth ultimately is ultimately derived, then we might guess that Fjolsvith was destroyed by the sun-like brilliance of Svipdag's true identity when he casts off his disguise to reveal it. The *dag* in Svipdag means day. The meaning of the word *svip* is uncertain. So Thor slew Alvis by delaying him in conversation until the sun rose.

In the *Lay of Skirnir*, there is no flyting between the hero and the herdsman, and it is possible that herdsman was not the Winter Lord in the original. Skirnir used the sword given him by Frey to defeat a giant before he reached the herdsman. Gerth feared that Skirnir had slain her brother prior to meeting with the herdsman. It could be that this myth was derived from a spring tradition in which the Winter Lord was the brother of the May Queen. It is also possible that the Winter Lord was Gerth's father since Skirnir threatens to kill him. Perhaps there were two Winter Lord figures in the original spring drama.

The theme of the twin kings or Gods, one of whom slays the other to marry his bride, is common in the epic literature of the heathen north. It seems that two brothers would alternately replace one another on a yearly basis in spring drama rituals. In other versions, it seems that there is a long lineage of kings in which sons constantly replaced fathers.

4. After the Spring Lord defeats the Winter Lord, he is welcomed by the bride with a beaker of drink. Drinking from a beaker was common in elder Scandinavian marriage ceremonies and is known sometimes to have been accompanied by a prayer for prosperity. In both *Lay of Skirnir* and *Lay of Sigdrifa* the hero is offered a vessel of mead by the bride. In this phase it is safe to assume that a ritual marriage was celebrated.
5. The procession had the purpose of leading the May Queen and King into town and making the fields fruitful.

The *Lay of Fjolsvith*, *Lay of Sigdrifa*, and *Lay of Skirnir* are clearly derived from spring drama myths. Because they are preserved in the form of dialogues they are good material from which to flesh out a spring ritual.

There are a couple of ways to present the spring ritual. One is by the use of effigies to represent the Gods, and the other is by use of human actors to represent the May Queen and Kings. The use of effigies to represent a Goddess or God is well documented, back even to the 2nd century. Generally it seems that there is one effigy and a priest who ceremonially marries the effigy, or that two effigies are married with a priest acting as mediator hollowing the marriage, much as Skirnir arranges the marriage between Frey and Gerth. Priests or priestesses who acted ritually as the consorts of a deity would either be of the opposite sex, and may have, in rare instances, dressed in the garb of the opposite sex as the priests of the twin Gods known as the Alcis were reported by Tacitus to have done.

When using effigies, it is customary to draw them about on a wagon. This again, is documented back to the 2nd century.

Spring Drama Based on the Lay of Fjolsvith

Cast:

Fjolsvith, Svipdag, and Mengloth. Extras might include the nine singing maidens who dwell in Lyr, and the hounds Gifr and Geri.

Props and sets.

1.) Alter with usual tools, plus any that are appropriate for a ritual marriage. 2.) Animal skins and mask of boar or other Vanic animal. 3.) Fire before alter. 4.) Perhaps a gate or door way before the alter with the fire in front of it. 5.) A mound or elevated area to symbolize a mound where Fjolsvith sits.

Act I:

Vindkald arrives before the herdsman Fjolsvith.

Fjolsvith:

Who is that fiend who stands before the fore-court and wanders before the flickering flame?

Svipdag:

What manner of fiend are you who stands in the fore-court and offers not hospitality to the wanderer?

Fjolsvith:

Have you no good words stranger? Fare hence homeward from here, through the wet wilderness ways! There is no shelter for you here!

The two pause and glare at each other until Fjolsvith interrupts the silence.

Fjolsvith:

Do you know who I am? Wolf! I am called Fjolsvith, and I am not free with my food. Never come again to this

hold. Run now! Run along boy! Run, Wolf, run outlaw, down the wet wilderness ways.”

Vindkald, shaken slightly, regains his composure.

Svipdag:

The first spell my mother recited to me, that I may shake from my shoulders what seems shocking.

Vindkald traces a sigil in the air and recites an incantation in Old Norse or Old English.

Svipdag:

An eighth my mother recited, that I not be vexed, by ettins.

Vindkald traces another sigil and chants another spell. He then stands undaunted by the ettin’s threats.

Fjolsvith:

Who do you seek or rather what is the nature of your quest? What is it that you want to know, friendless one?

Svipdag:

He desires to find the delight of his eyes who sees his most beloved. It seems that the wall around the golden hall is aglow. I come to claim this place as my allodial estate!

Fjolsvith:

Ha! Tell me lad, who are you, by whom were you born?

Svipdag:

I am Vindkald and my father was Varkald and his father was Fjokold.

Svipdag performs another incantation

Svipdag:

Listen ettin, now you tell me everything that I ask you.

Svipdag traces a sigil in the air whenever he repeats this refrain.

Stanzas 6-41 are then quoted verbatim using the refrain above for Svipdag’s parts.

Fjolsvith:

The loving maid sleeps only in my loving arms and this shall never be your patrimony, outlaw, unless your name be Svipdag. Now be on your way! The trolls take you.

Svipdag

Wise ravens take your eyes foul fiend! I am Svipdag.

Svipdag engages in combat with the giant, either using a weapon or slaying the giant with his tusks or antlers or horns. Svipdag then casts off his skins and leaps over the flame. Mengloth carries a large horn of mead and greets him before the alter.

Mengloth:

From whence do you fare? What did your parents call you, oak of the mail thing? I shall know your father’s name and the token that I am betrothed to you.

Svipdag:

I am called Svipdag, my father Solbjarti. I have wandered the windcold ways.

Mengloth:

Long I sat on Lyfjaberg waiting for you day after day. Now the thing I wished for has happened, now that you are finally here, my man.

Mengloth signs the horn.

Mengloth:

Hail Day! Hail days sons!

Hail the night! Hail the daughters of night.

Look upon us with friendly eyes and grant victory to us!

Hail the Aesir! Hail the Asynjur!

Hail him on the beneficent earth!

Goodly speech and human wit may you grant us
and healing hands while we live!

They drink and any other marriage rites are performed. Svipdag dawns foliage and he and Mengloth lead a procession and dancing around the alter and fire. Those up to it may jump over the fire in celebration of the triumph of spring.

Chapter 4

Magical Initiation and Faring Forth into Ettinhome

Magical Initiation and Faring Forth into Ettinhome

The *Lay of Fjolsvith* and *Lay of Sigdrifa* are examples of spring drama stories that were understood in terms of initiation into higher mysteries of the soul and the nine-worlds by means of a union with the fetch wife.

Like the spring drama myths, the central event is intimate contact between a hero from Midgard and a divine or semi-divine woman in Ettinhome, but the imagery of the fertility rites is interpreted in terms of initiation. In modern psychological terms the fetch may be equated with the higher self. The fetch is a numinous tutelary spirit that belongs to each person and is that person's means of access to higher unconscious wisdom and to divine knowledge. Fetch souls may also take the form of an animal. This is known as a person's fetch animal while the contrasexual manifestation is known as the fetch-wife.

Initiation ceremonies are prominent in traditional societies and serve to transfer an individual from one status to another. Rites involve a symbolic death and rebirth. A young man is recognized as an adult after he has symbolically died and been reborn as an adult. Graduation and wedding ceremonies are the vestiges of initiation rites that remain in contemporary western culture.

Central to the initiatory experience is the "liminal" period. The liminal period is a time of symbolic death. It is the time in which the initiate stands between two states of being but in neither one nor the other. It is a time in which the initiate is an outsider with no status in society. Old patterns are dissolved so that new ones can be formed. In ceremonies of manhood boys are taken to the wilderness to undergo tests. Those who pass are taught new knowledge by tribal elders. When they return from the liminal state of dissolution they are reconstituted as new beings. Odian magic is largely about self-initiation. Initiations into manhood involve the reprogramming of the initiate by initiators. Self-initiation is a process whereby the individual explores his own soul and his environment and consciously brings about changes in himself to raise himself to more powerful states of being.

Ettinhome is the main liminal environment to which Odian magicians fare for self initiation. It is an underworld land of the dead, a land of awesome and terrible magical beings. It lays beyond the pale of our Middle Earth, a land of wards.

In the *Lay of Fjolsvith*, Svipdag is called a "warg" by the ettin herdsman who wards the hall of Mengloth. Warg can mean both outlaw and wolf. Indeed, Svipdag, as an initiate in the liminal state, is beyond the laws of society, hence an outlaw, until he returns.

Ettinhome is where Odin undergoes some of his most powerful initiatory experiences. It is at the hall of the ettin Suttung that Odin wins mead of poetry for Gods and men. It is at Mim's well that Odin sacrifices an eye for second sight. It is in Ettinhome that Odin has numerous magical liaisons with ettin-wives.

By union with the fetch-wife the vitki gains access to divine wisdom from the higher unconscious self. The vitki not only weds his conscious self with his personal unconscious, but also with the collective unconscious, the world of the archetypes, the gods, the runes, great wisdom, and truth in a pure and undefiled form. At the time of the union the vitki may experience profound flashes of insight. Afterwards, he will have a stronger link with the fetch and have easier access to its guidance. It is at the time of this union that self-transformation occurs. This is the point in the liminal experience where the vitki remanifests and emerges from the liminal state a greater being.

At the time of union the fetch-wife offers a vessel of mead or ale to the vitki. When Sigdrifa gives drink to Sigurth, she gives him magical power and spells. Odin obtains a draught of mead from Gunnloth immediately after union. In the *Lay of Fjolsvith*, Mengloth gives Svipdag drink when they meet. By drinking the vitki brings the wisdom of the collective unconscious into himself and integrates it into his being. Faring forth is the act of immersing yourself in the unconscious, drinking is the act of internalizing it and integrating it with conscious experience.

Before faring forth, study the geography of the journey carefully. Know what obstacles you will likely face and devise spells to counter them. Look especially carefully at the *Lay of Svipdag*, the *Lay of Sigdrifa*, and the *Lay of Skirnir*. Also look at the descriptions of Ettinhome found in the *Younger Edda*. There is also useful information in some of the sagas.

The roads through Hel and Ettinhome are very similar and there seems to be a very close affinity between the two. Both are regions to which departed spirits fare. Ettins and the souls of ancestors are known to dwell together in hills and howe hills. The road to and through Hel and Ettinhome are typified by: 1.) the crossing of great bodies of water, especially rivers, which separate one cosmic region from another; 2.) traversing dark troll filled forests such as Mirkwood and Ironwood, which lie before the waters; 3.) roads that quake loudly beneath the tread of mortals and Gods. The greater the being, the more loudly the road trembles. 4.) Gates to the hold of the fetch wife guarded by hounds, a herdsman and flames. 5.) great wealth lays inside the holds of ettin-wives. These features are common to most accounts, though every account has its omissions, additions and variations.

Faring Forth into Ettinhome

Ritual work is done in a holy frame of mind. Faring forth requires the ability to get into deep states. As you gain experience you will become familiar with a variety of holy states of consciousness and the inner workings of your own soul. Faring forth is concerned not only with the exploration and work within the realms of the Gods, but also within one's own soul. In routine consciousness, you will never reach Ettinhome or Helheim no matter how far you may journey. The crossing from routine to mythic reality requires an act of magic. This can be accomplished with a variety of ritual and meditative techniques and facilitated by the use of holy sites where the boundaries between the worlds are thinner. In some cases, stepping into the holy stead will suffice to bring on a mythic state of consciousness. This will be more apparent when permanent holy sites are available. The more experience you have with meditation, magic, pathworking and other mind and soul work, the more likely you are to succeed in faring forth. The Rune-Gild's *Nine Doors of Midgard* is the best place to start acquiring the skills needed for faring forth. It is good to visualize the journey in a light meditative state a few times before actually faring forth.

There are a number of ways to initiate and control trance states. I have found runes to be an effective tool for understanding and controlling my states of mind when faring forth.

There are a variety of techniques available for inducing trance and hypnotic states. Whether runes are used or not, a program of regular meditative and magical exercises is important to develop the skills needed for faring forth. Drums and drugs are commonly employed in traditional societies as vehicles for trans-mundane journeys. Drugs allow easy access to trans-mundane realms but it is difficult to control the experience. Generally speaking, the use of drugs for such work is ill advised. Though many traditional societies use hallucinogens on a regular basis as a shamanic vehicle, they have acquired the knowledge of the use of the drug over centuries and perhaps millennia. We have no significant surviving lore concerning the use of hallucinogens for such purposes among the Germanic folk. There is no evidence that I have yet come across for the use of *Amanita muscaria* by berserkers in the heathen age. This seems to be a fable that started in the 18th century. The sagas and Eddas contain not a peep on the use of any hallucinogenic plants.

Drumming is used by many traditional societies as a means of controlling trance states, but there is no evidence for the use of drums among the Germanic folk either. Our folk seemed to have relied heavily on poetry, singing, and chanting. Galder magic seems to have been the main vehicle of magical and mystical experience in the North.

Starting the Journey

Traditionally, such journeys were begun by sitting out at an ancestral grave site. If it is not possible to actually be at such a site, and more than likely it will not, then visualize an ancestral howe as the starting point for the journey. Begin the journey to the underworld at the doors of the dead.

Faring forth is the art of sending your conscious self forth into the world and the throughout the nine-worlds by transferring it to a suitable vehicle. Troll magic is the art of gaining mastery of the hamr by means of the will and shaping it to the form of an animal, transferring the conscious self into it, and detaching it from the body to walk the worlds. When Loki travels to Ettnhome he uses the falcon or hawk shaped hamrs of Freya or Frigg. The world *hamr* is often translated as cloak or skin in these contexts. Such translations conceal more than they reveal. Another way to fare forth is by transferring your conscious self into one of your fetch shapes. The fetch-wife may ride the *hamr* shape, or the conscious mind may take the form of its natural body and ride a fetch animal.

The Journey

The *Lay of Svipdag* shows us a glimpse of the geography of underworld from the doors of the dead, into and through Ettnhome to the hold of Mengloth. The spells of the *Galder of Groa* reveal sites likely to be seen on the way to Mengloth's garth. These songs are spells to allow the wayfarer to handle the obstacles to be encountered on the way.

The first spell Groa teaches Svipdag allows him to shake from his shoulders what seems shocking, which is to say that it allows him to avoid panic as a result of disorientation and loss of control during the journey. The vitki who would make such a journey is well advised to ponder the first spell of Groa in a meditative state to discover a rune or bind rune that serves this purpose. See chapter 1.

The second spell enables the vitki to recover his spirit after demoralization so that he does not lose sight of his goal and wander aimlessly without will.

Maintenance of one's spirits under adverse circumstances is crucial to success in long and difficult undertakings.

The third spell, in stanza 8, allows passage through cosmic rivers that separate Middle Earth from Ettnhome. These rivers are almost always included in stories of journeys to the under world and are only crossed by magical means, except by Thor, who is able to wade most such rivers and oceans. They are sometimes crossed by magical steeds or by taking bird shape.

From stanza 9 we learn that there is a "gallows road" across the river at which point the vitki is liable to meet "fiends." Note that the approach taken with these fiends is not to attack them, but rather to mollify their hostility.

The tenth stanza is a spell for loosing fetters. This is the sort of spell one may have to use when fiends do not become amiable under a galdric spell derived from stanza 9. It may also be used against the fetters of Mengloth's gate Gastropnir.

Beyond the gallows road lies a sea which is liable to be heavy. This sea is to be controlled by the will of the magician through the use of a runic song. For this spell, the vitki can look for inspiration to the *Lay of Sigdrifa* stanza 10 as well as from stanza 11 of the *Galder of Groa*.

From the sea the vitki fares through high hills in which the frost threatens to doom him and his mission to immobility and stasis.

From the hills, the vitki approaches Mengloth's garth. In this misty region the vitki may meet on the road the wraiths of dead folk who are not given entry by the ettin herdsman. These spirits wander beyond the gates and flames in isolation and alienation. These are the souls of outlaws. In the times in which the *Lay of Fjolsvith* was put into its present form, these included the lost souls of those who abandoned the troth of their folk for alienation. In the late heathen period they had only to deal with a few Christian spirits, now we may have to contend with a whole multitude.

The ninth and final spell allows the vitki to work his will in a battle of wits with the herdsman who wards the gates. It is here that the vitki tries to elicit the secrets of the hold of Mengloth from Fjolsvith before entry. Before faring forth, you may try "sitting out" to seek rede from an ancestral volva, such as Groa. Find a relevant passage from the *Elder Edda* and form a galdric chant or song by transliterating some of the words from the passage into runes. From the *Galder of Groa* you might transliterate the phrase "Awaken Groa!" When you feel the presence of the volva, listen.

Appendix A

Thinking About the Hail Rune

The runes represent the archetypal patterns by which the nine worlds are structured, and the Hail rune, the mother of the runes, is the template for the entire cosmos. From its snowflake form in the younger row we may derive all the other rune shapes, or make an abstract map of the cosmos or world tree. The Hail rune is the seed that contains in latency the first principals by which the world tree Yggdrasil is manifested, grows, dies, and is reborn. The pattern in the seed existed before Odin, as the *Voluspa* says: "I remember nine-worlds, the nine homes of the great meting wood, beneath the earth." This refers to Yggdrasil as a seed in the cosmic stuff of Ginnungagap waiting to begin ordering the undifferentiated Ginn (primal stuff) into the nine worlds.

The hail rune is that seed. According to the *Norwegian Runic Poem*, "Hagal is the coldest grain, Hropt (Odin) shaped the world in days of yore."

Odin had to discover the first principles himself in order to reshape the cosmos. The runes are a systematic expression of the totality of the worlds' mysteries as Odin perceived them when he hung on the tree. In the Hail rune we may find the most fundamental, the simplest, most condensed, and densest crystallization of these structures. The Hail rune may be said to hold all the building blocks while the other runes express phenomena associated with particular combinations of these blocks. It is the work of the runester to discover these patterns himself in order to reshape self and society.

Odin shaped the world by slaying his kinsman the primal ettin, Ymir, and making the new order from the ettin's body parts. Odin may be said to have seen the component parts of the world and the principals by which they cohered such that he was able to dismantle the old edifice and to recombine its elements to shape the new order. This was the second sacrifice. The first sacrifice was Odin's giving of himself to himself in which he dissolved himself in order to perceive the structural principals of the world and then reorder himself in accordance with the new knowledge. Then he repeated this process and worked his will on the cosmos.

In Hagal we have the mysteries of sacrifice; the patterns by which the world may be broken down into component parts and by which these parts may be rearranged. If we will look at how Hropt shaped the world in days of yore, we must look *Grimnismal* 41-42. "Of Ymir's flesh the earth was shaped. Of his blood the briny sea. Of his hair the trees, of his bones the hills, of his skull the sky. But of his brow the loving Gods made Midgard for the sons of men. From his brain they made the moody clouds hovering in the heavens."

This cosmic sacrificial structure can be found throughout the Indo-European world. The following table shows how the structure of the human being is applied to the cosmos in general in both the *Grimnismal* and in a typical Indo-European pattern as reconstructed from a comparison of numerous Indo-European cosmological myths. From this table we notice that certain elements were left out of the account in the *Grimnismal*, including wind-breath, sun-eye, and moon-mind. In the *Skaldskaparmal* Snorri gives us eye and shield as metaphors for the sun and moon.

	<u>Earth</u>	<u>Stone</u>	<u>Plants</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Sun</u>	<u>Moon</u>	<u>Cloud</u>	<u>Heaven</u>	<u>Wind</u>
IE gen. pattern	Flesh	Bone	Hair	Blood/ Sweat	Eye	Mind Eye	Brain/ Thought	Head	Breath
Grim.	Flesh	Bone	Hair	Blood	-	-	Brain	Skull	-

A complete catalogue of these nine cosmic elements, plus some, including grain, is to be found in the 13 spells of the *Alvismal* in which 6 names used in 6 of the nine-worlds are given for each of the 13 elements. We already know the homology for nine of the 13 elements including earth, trees, sea, sun, moon, sky, clouds, and wind. The other 4 elements in the *Alvismal* are not found in the *Grimnismal*'s cosmogony include fire, night, calm, ale, and seed. Seed is of course the "coldest grain" Hagalaz, in which prototypes for all of these archetypes are contained.

The *Anglo-Saxon Runic Poem* describes the transformation of the “whitest grain” into water after a buffeting in the heavens by the wind. “Hail is the whitest grain. It is whirled from the air of heaven and buffeted by gusts of wind and then it is turned to water.” This may be taken as a formula for a sacrificial dissolution. It includes the elements of the sky, wind and water which in amount in human terms to skull, breath and blood. The prominence of breath, the gusting wind, in this transformation recalls the Odin’s hanging on a windswept tree and might be included in a working for a similar self-sacrifice.

Knowing this correlation between the cosmic and the human is a great tool for work with the other rune-poems as well as for the unraveling of other mythic lore. The seed structures of the cosmos are to be found in man and vice-versa. By considering this seed pattern carefully, the mysteries by which Hropt shaped the world, you may extrapolate the pattern to the level of the human soul and its component parts, or to society and its parts. This work requires a careful study of these elements as they appear in kennings (check the *Skaldskaparmal*) and other mythic material concerning the soul and society.

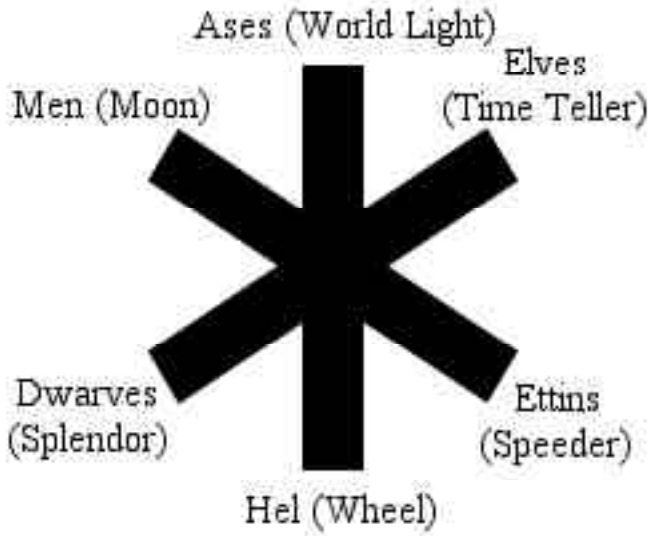
The Hail rune may be ideographically represented by either the H shape of the elder row or by the * snowflake shape of the younger row. The younger row is the best to work with when you are fathoming the runic content of the Eddas. Hail is the seventh and the * shape has seven points. This pattern may be used successfully as a mapping device for the first principals associated with the Hail rune. Pairs of opposites may also be juxtaposed on the bars of the H shape rune of the elder row or opposite one another on the snowflake pattern as shown below:



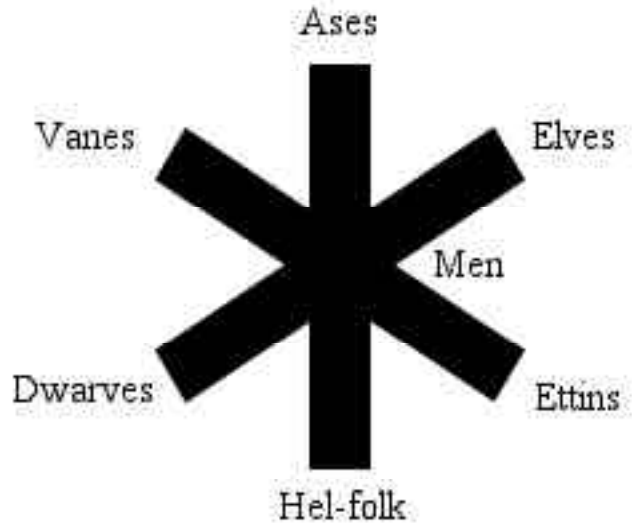
Pairs of Elements in *Grimnismal*



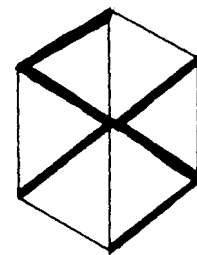
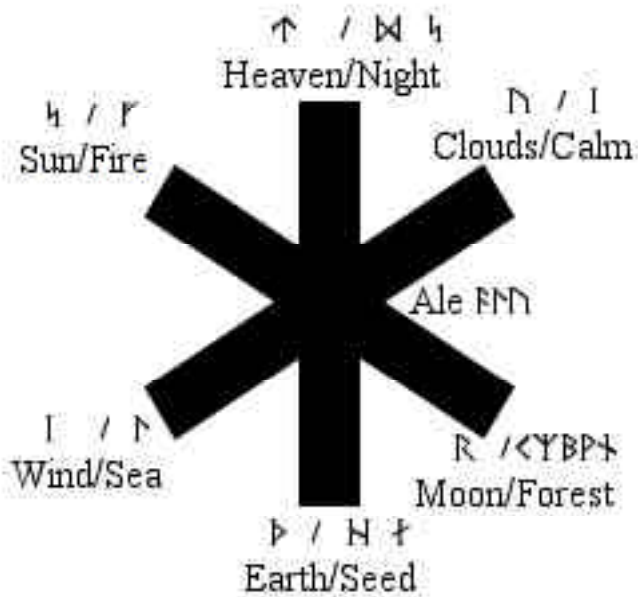
Elements from *Alvismal*



Six names for the Moon from *Alvismal*



Wights of the *Alvismal*



Rune Mother Sol
Mother of the Runes

Elements of the *Alvismal* arranged on the Hail map with runic correspondences. The arrangement of the elements and runes may be varied as it suits one for meditative and working purposes. These values may be assigned to aspects of your own world.

Mapping is an approach that may be used successfully with other runes as well, but is only one of many approaches to understanding the runes. Likewise, the seemingly crude cosmological and homological level of interpreting the mysteries of Hagalaz is only one of many, but a very good starting point. From the lore of the shaping of the world it is easy to move into the mysteries of the nature of sacrifice and its role in transformation, of self and world.



Appendix B

Pronunciation of Old Norse

Pronunciation of Old Norse

The phonetic values provided below are those of reconstructed Old Norse (as it would have been spoken in the Viking Age).

The consonants b, d, f, l, m, t, and v are just as in modern English.

a	as in “artistic”
á	as in “father”
e	as in “men”
é	as in ay in “bay”
i	as in it”
í	as ee in “feet”
o	as in “omit”
ó	as in “ore”
ö	as in “not”
ø	pronounced same as ö
u	as in “put”
ú	as in “rule”
æ	as ai in “hair”
œ	as u in “slur”
y	as u in German Hütte (i with rounded lips)
ý	as u in German Tür (ee with rounded lips)
au	as ou in “house”
ei	as ay in “May,” or as i in “mine”
ey	pronounced same as ei
g	always hard as in “go”
ng	as in “long”
h	same as English, except before consonants, then as wh in “where”
j	always as y in “year”
p	as in English, except before t, then this pt cluster is pronounced ft
r	trilled r
s	always voiceless as in “sing”
th	voiceless th as in “thin”
dh	voiced th as in “the”
rl	pronounced dl
rn	pronounced dn
nn	pronounced dn after long vowels and diphthongs

Glossary

Aesir: Race of gods corresponding to the functions of magic, law, and war.

Aett: Family or genus, used both as a name for the threefold divisions of the Futhark and eight divisions of the heavens. Also means a group or division of eight.

Athling: A noble person motivated by noble goals and tasks.

Erulian: Member of the ancient guild of runemasters who formed an intertribal network of initiates in the Germanic mysteries.

Ettin: ON. Jotun and OE. Eoten. A race of giants dwelling to the east of Midgard in Ettinhome.

Ettin-wife: A female ettin taken in magical marriage.

Fetch: A numinous being attached to every individual, which is the repository of all past action and which accordingly affects the person's life: the personal divinity. Visualized as a contrasexual entity, an animal, or an abstract shape.

Fetch-wife: The fetch in female form.

Galder: ON. Originally "incantation." The verb *gala* also means to crow. Later meant magic in general, but especially verbal magic. Here it is used to refer to verbal magic.

Hamingja: ON. Mobile magic force rather like mana of other traditions. Often defined as "luck," "shapeshifting force," and "guardian spirit."

Hamr: The plastic image forming stuff that surrounds each person. It may be collected and reformed by magical power (*hamingja*) according to the will (*hugr*).

Multiverse: The many states of being (worlds) that make up the universe. Used when focusing on the multiplicity of being.

Norn: ON. One of the three female wights who embody the processes of cause and effect and evolutionary force.

Numen: A living holy power. A numinous experience is one in which contact is made with this power. It is nonphysical and magical energy.

Orlog: ON. Primal layers or laws of past action that shape present and future conditions.

Seith: A Vanic form of magic taught to Odin by Freya. It involves getting into ecstatic states to gain visions and fare forth in animal shape. Typically performed by volvas. Such women would roam the countryside and attend feasts where they would sit on a wooden platform, go into a trance with the aid of magical songs, and obtain visions of the future. In this state they would answer questions of the villagers.

Stave: A spell or a rune.

Teinn: A talisman.

Thurs: A strong and stupid kind of giant.

Valkyrie: ON. “Chooser of the slain.” Protective numinous qualities that become attached to those who attract them. A linking force between men and gods (Odin in particular).

Vanir: ON. The race of gods corresponding to the fertility, eroticism and prosperity functions.

Vǫlé: A holy stead such as a temple or a grove. A setting for religious and magical workings.

World: One of the nine worlds or planes of being ordered about the world tree.

Vitki: A wielder of the runes. An Odian magician.

Volva: A female magician who specializes in seith magic.

Yggdrasil: The world tree about which the nine-worlds are ordered.

World Tree: The ash Yggdrasil about which the multiverse is ordered.

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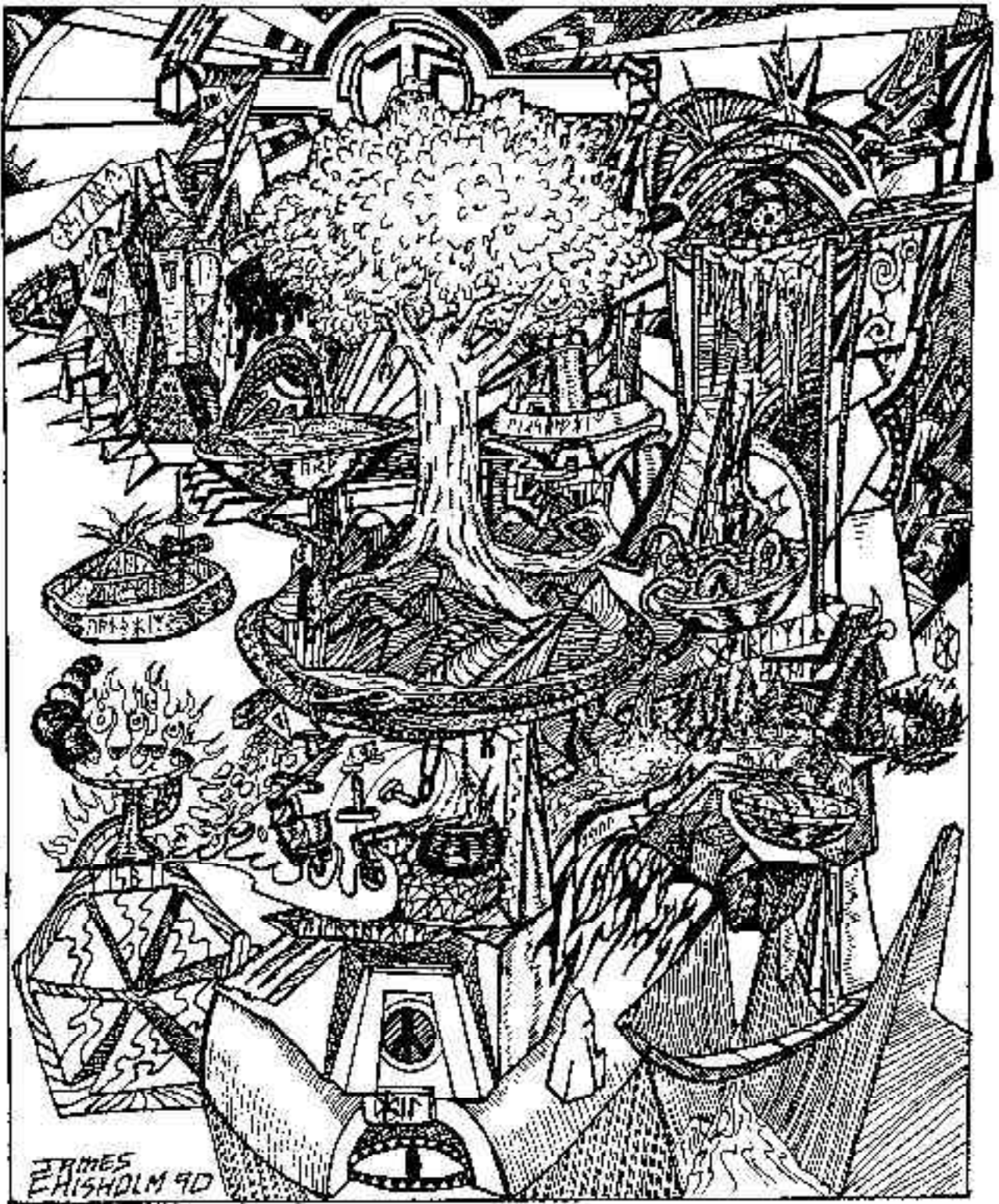
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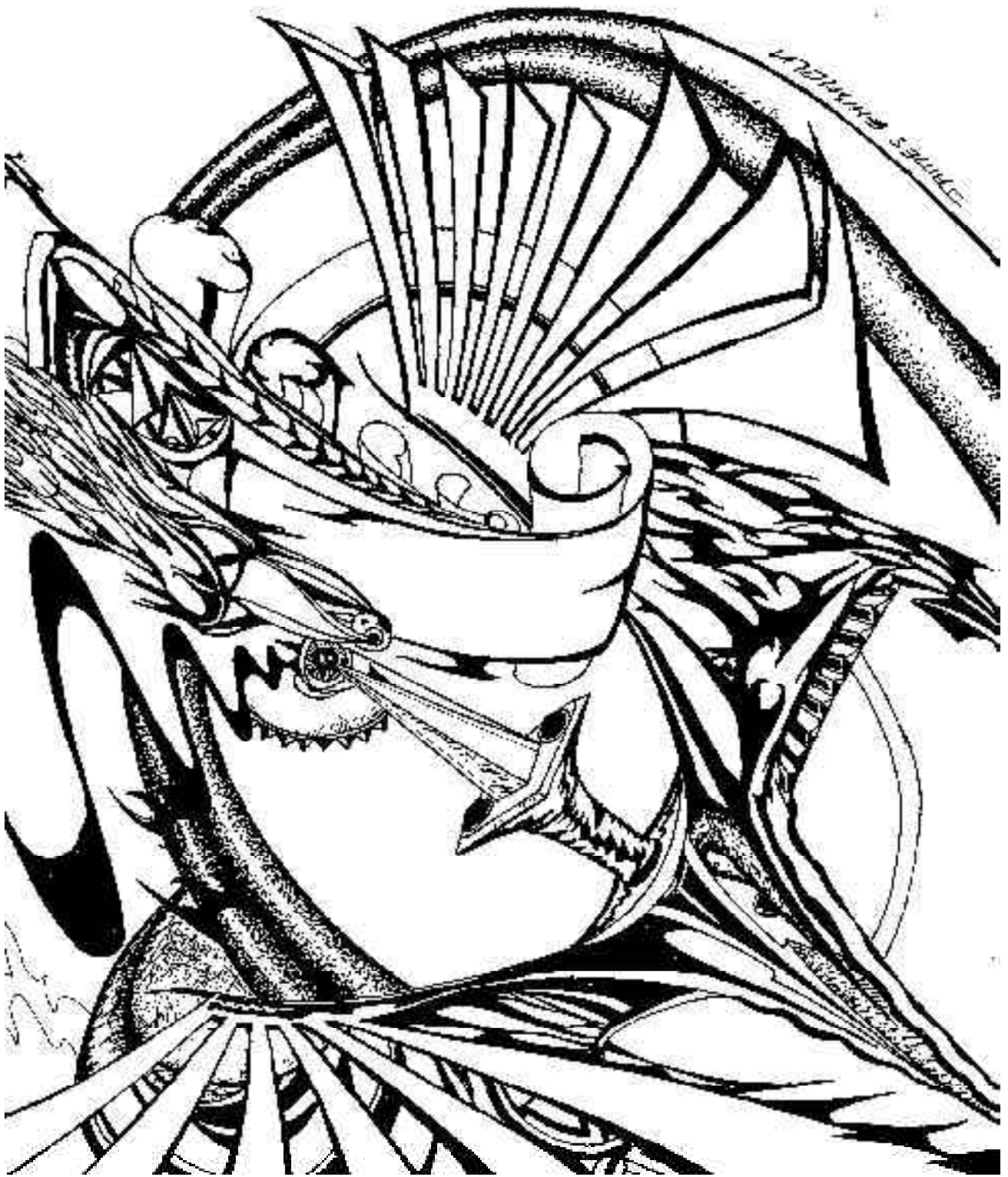
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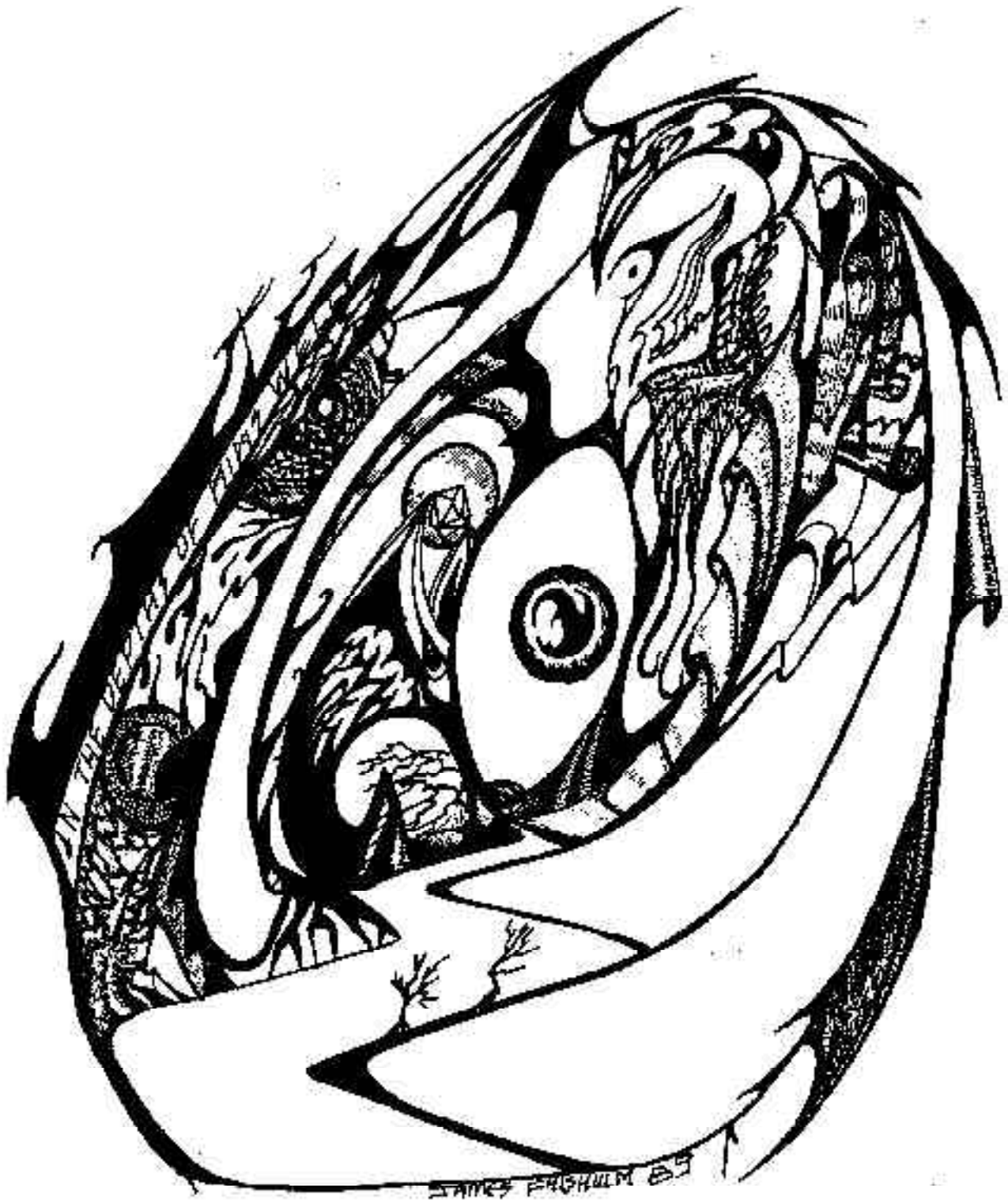
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The Nine Homes







In the Depths of Mim's Well



Mardol finds Od at Saga's Shore

Drawing by James Chisholm

Mardol walked the earth weeping tears of gold in search of her husband Od, as the story goes. Od is thought to be Odin. What Mardol sought was inspired furor, which is what the od in Odin means.