

GLANZ UND GRAVUR

THE POETIC EDDA

Grógaldr

The Spell of Groa

Old Norse · English – H. A. Bellows (1923)

Public-domain sources ·

GLANZ & GRAVUR
glanzundgravur.de

Svipdag wakes his dead mother Groa at her grave and asks for protective charms for a dangerous journey; she chants nine spells for him. With Fjölsvinnsmál the poem forms the so-called Svipdagsmál. It survives only in 17th-century paper manuscripts. This reading edition sets the Old Norse text and the English translation side by side, stanza by stanza; the German version is on the German edition of this page. Old Norse text after Guðni Jónsson's edition (Eddukvæði), digitised by heimskringla.no. German after Karl Simrock, Die Edda (1851; 6th ed. 1876, Wikisource). English after Henry Adams Bellows, The Poetic Edda (1923). All are in the public domain.

	Old Norse	English – H. A. Bellows (1923)
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.*"	“Wake thee, Groa! wake, mother good! At the doors of the dead I call thee; Thy son, bethink thee, thou badst to seek Thy help at the hill of death.”
2	"*Hvat er nú annt* *mínum eingasyni,* *hverju ertu nú bölvi borinn,* *er þú þá móður kallar,* *er til moldar er komin* *ok ór ljóðheimum liðin?*"	“What evil vexes mine only son, What baleful fate hast thou found, That thou callest thy mother, who lies in the mould, And the world of the living has left?”
3	"*Ljótu leikborði* *skaut fyr mik in lævísa kona,* *sú er faðmaði minn föður;* *þar bað hon mik koma,* *er kvæmtki veit,* *móti Menglöðu.*"	“The woman false whom my father embraced Has brought me a baleful game; For she bade me go forth where none may fare, And Mengloth the maid to seek.”
4	"*Löng er för,* *langir ro farvegar,* *langir ro manna munir,* *ef þat verðr,* *at þú þinn vilja bíðr,* *ok skeikar þá Skuld at sköpum.*"	“Long is the way, long must thou wander, But long is love as well; Thou mayst find, perchance, what thou fain wouldst have, If the fates their favor will give.”
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.*"	“Charms full good then chant to me, mother, And seek thy son to guard; For death do I fear on the way I shall fare, And in years am I young, methinks.”
6	"*Þann gel ek þér fyrstan,* *- þann kveða fjölnýtan,* *þann gól Rindi Rani, -* *at þú of öxl skjótir,* *því er þér atalt þykkir;* *sjalfr leið þú sjalfan þik.*	“Then first I will chant thee the charm oft-tried, That Rani taught to Rind; From the shoulder whate'er mislikes thee shake, For helper thyself shalt thou have.

7

Þann gel ek þér annan,
ef þú árna skalt
viljalauss á vegum,
Urðar lokur
haldi þér öllum megum,
er þú á sinnum sér.

Then next I will chant thee, if needs thou must travel,
And wander a purposeless way:
The bolts of Urth shall on every side
Be thy guards on the road thou goest.

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.

Then third I will chant thee, if threatening streams
The danger of death shall bring:
Yet to Hel shall turn both Horn and Ruth,
And before thee the waters shall fail.

9

Þann gel ek þér inn fjórða,
ef þik fjándr standa
görvir á galgvegi,
hugr þeim hverfi
til handa þér,
ok snúisk þeim til sátta sefi.

Then fourth I will chant thee, if come thy foes
On the gallows-way against thee:
Into thine hands shall their hearts be given,
And peace shall the warriors wish.

10

Þann gel ek þér inn fimmta,
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.

Then fifth I will chant thee, if fetters perchance
Shall bind thy bending limbs:
O'er thy thighs do I chant a loosening-charm,
And the lock is burst from the limbs,
And the fetters fall from the feet.

11

Þann gel ek þér inn sétta,
ef þú á sjó kemr
meira en menn viti,
logn ok lögr
gangi þér í lúðr saman
ok léi þér æ friðdrjúgrar farar.

Then sixth I will chant thee, if storms on the sea
Have might unknown to man:
Yet never shall wind or wave do harm,
And calm is the course of thy boat.

12

Þann gel ek þér inn sjaunda,
ef þik sækja kemr
frost á fjalli háu,
hræva kuldi
megi-t þínu holdi fara,
ok haldisk æ lík at liðum.

Then seventh I chant thee, if frost shall seek
To kill thee on lofty crags:
The fatal cold shall not grip thy flesh,
And whole thy body shall be.

13

Þann gel ek þér inn átta,
ef þik úti nemr
nótt á niflvegi,
at því firr megi
þér til meins gera
kristin dauð kona.

Then eighth will I chant thee, if ever by night
Thou shalt wander on murky ways:
Yet never the curse of a Christian woman
From the dead shall do thee harm.

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.

Then ninth will I chant thee, if needs thou must strive
With a warlike giant in words:
Thy heart good store of wit shall have,
And thy mouth of words full wise.

15

Far þú nú æva,
þar er forað þykkir,
ok standi-t þér mein fyr munum;
á jarðföstum steini
stóð ek innan dura,
meðan ek þér galdra gól.

Now fare on the way where danger waits,
Let evils not lessen thy love!
I have stood at the door of the earth-fixed stones,
The while I chanted thee charms.

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."

Bear hence, my son, what thy mother hath said,
And let it live in thy breast;
Thine ever shall be the best of fortune,
So long as my words shall last.”

Source & public domain: Old Norse text after Guðni Jónsson's edition (Eddukvæði), digitised by heimskringla.no. German after Karl Simrock, Die Edda (1851; 6th ed. 1876, Wikisource). English after Henry Adams Bellows, The Poetic Edda (1923). All are in the public domain.