

THE POETIC EDDA

Guðrúnarkviða in þriðja

The Third Lay of Guthrun

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

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Gudrun is accused of adultery with Theodoric and clears herself by the ordeal of the boiling cauldron; her accuser Herkja scalds her hand. Preserved in the Codex Regius of the Poetic Edda (GKS 2365 4to, c. 1270). 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	*"Hvat er þér, Atli, æ, Buðla sonr? Er þér hryggt í hug? Hví hlær þú æva? Hitt mundi æðra jörlum þykkja, at við menn mæltir ok mik sæir."*	“What thy sorrow, Atli, Buthli's son? Is thy heart heavy-laden? Why laughest thou never? It would better befit the warrior far To speak with men, and me to look on.”
2	*"Tregr mik þat, Guðrún Gjúka dóttir, mér í höllu Herkja sagði, at þit Þjóðrekr und þaki svæfið ok léttliga líni verðið."*	“It troubles me, Guthrun, Gjuki's daughter, What Herkja here in the hall hath told me, That thou in the bed with Thjothrek liest, Beneath the linen in lovers' guise.”
3	*"Þér mun ek alls þess eiða vinna at inum hvíta helga steini, at ek við Þjóðrek þatki áttak, er vörðr né verr vinna knátti.*	“This shall I with oaths now swear, Swear by the sacred stone so white, That nought was there with Thjothmar's son That man or woman may not know.
4	*Nema ek halsaða herja stilli, jöfur óneisinn, einu sinni; aðrar váru okkrar spekjur, er vit hörmug tvau hnigum at rúnum.*	Nor ever once did my arms embrace The hero brave, the leader of hosts; In another manner our meeting was, When our sorrows we in secret told.
5	*Hér kom Þjóðrekr með þría tegu, lifa þeir né einir þriggja tega manna; hnöggt þú mik at bræðrum ok at brynjuðum, hnöggt þú mik at öllum höfuðniðjum.*	With thirty warriors Thjothrek came, Nor of all his men doth one remain; Thou hast murdered my brothers and mail-clad men, Thou hast murdered all the men of my race.

6

Sentu at Saxa,
Sunnmanna gram,
hann kann helga
hver vellanda."

Summon Saxi, the southrons' king,
For be the boiling kettle can hallow."

7

Sjau hundruð manna
í sal gengu,
áðr kvæn konungs
í ketil tæki.

Seven hundred there were in the hall,
Ere the queen her hand in the kettle thrust.

8

"Kemr-a nú Gunnarr,
kallig-a ek Högna,
sékk-a ek síðan
svása bræðr;
sverði mundi Högni
slíks harms reka,
nú verð ek sjalf fyrir mik
synja lýta."

Gunnar comes not, Hogni I greet not,
No longer I see my brothers loved;
My sorrow would Hogni avenge with the sword,
Now myself for my woes I shall payment win.

9

Brá hon til botns
björtum lófa
ok hon upp of tók
jarknasteina:
"Sé nú, seggir,
sykn em ek orðin
heilagliga,
hvé sá hverr velli."

To the bottom she reached with hand so bright,
And forth she brought the flashing stones:
"Behold, ye warriors, well am I cleared
Of sin by the kettle's sacred boiling."

10

Hló þá Atla
hugr í brjósti,
er hann heilar sá
hendr Guðrúnar:
"Nú skal Herkja
til hvers ganga,
sú er Guðrúnu
grandi vændi."

Then Atli's heart in happiness laughed,
When Guthrun's hand unhurt he saw;
"Now Herkja shall come the kettle to try,
She who grief for Guthrun planned."

11

Sá-at maðr armligt,
hverr er þat sá-at,
hvé þar á Herkju
hendr sviðnuðu;
leiddu þá mey
í mýri fúla.
Svá þá Guðrún
sinna harma.

Ne'er saw man sight more sad than this,
How burned were the hands of Herkja then;
In a bog so foul the maid they flung,
And so was Guthrun's grief requited.

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