

GLANZ UND GRAVUR

THE POETIC EDDA

Helreið Brynhildar

Brynhild's Hell-Ride

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

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GLANZ & GRAVUR
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After her death Brynhild drives in a wagon on the road to Hel. A giantess bars her way, and Brynhild tells the story of her life and justifies herself. 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	*"Skaltu í gögnum* *ganga eigi* *grjóti studda* *garða mína,* *betr semði þér* *borða at rekja* *heldr en vitja* *vers annarrar.*	“Thou shalt not further forward fare, My dwelling ribbed with rocks across; More seemly it were at thy weaving to stay, Than another's husband here to follow.
2	*Hvat skaltu vitja* *af Vallandi,* *hvarfúst höfuð,* *húsa minna?* *Þú hefir, Vár gulls,* *ef þik vita lystir,* *mild af höndum* *manns blóð þvegit."*	What wouldst thou have from Valland here, Fickle of heart, in this my house? Gold-goddess, now, if thou wouldst know, Heroes' blood from thy hands hast washed.”
3	*"Bregðu eigi mér,* *brúðr ór steini,* *þótt ek værak* *í víkingu;* *ek mun okkur* *æðri þykkja,* *hvars menn eðli* *okkart kunna."*	“Chide me not, woman from rocky walls, Though to battle once I was wont to go; Better than thou I shall seem to be, When men us two shall truly know.”
4	*"Þú vart, Brynhildr* *Buðla dóttir,* *heilli verstu* *í heim borin;* *þú hefir Gjúka* *of glatat börnum* *ok búi þeira* *brugðit góðu."*	“Thou wast, Brynhild, Buthli's daughter, For the worst of evils born in the world; To death thou hast given Gjuki's children, And laid their lofty house full low.”
5	*"Ek mun segja þér* *svinn ór reiðu* *vitlaussi mjök,* *ef þik vita lystir,* *hvé gerðu mik* *Gjúka arfar* *ástalausa* *ok eiðrofa.*	“Truth from the wagon here I tell thee, Witless one, if know thou wilt How the heirs of Gjuki gave me to be joyless ever, a breaker of oaths.

6

Hétu mik allir
í Hlymdölum
Hildi undir hjalmi
hverr er kunni.

Hild the helmed in Hlymdalir
They named me of old, all they who knew me.

7

Annar hét Agnarr,
Auðu bróðir,
er véttr engi
vildi týja.

—

8

Lét hami vára
hugfullr konungr
átta systra
undir eik borit;
var ek vetra tolf,
ef þik vita lystir,
er ek ungum gram
eiða seldak.

The monarch bold the swan-robes bore
Of the sisters eight beneath an oak;
Twelve winters I was, if know thou wilt,
When oaths I yielded the king so young.

9

Þá lét ek gamlan
á Goðþjóðu
Hjalmgunnar næst
heljar ganga;
gaf ek ungum sigr
Auðu bróður;
þar varð mér Óðinn
ofreiðr of þat.

Next I let the leader of Goths,
Hjalmgunnar the old, go down to hell,
And victory brought to Autha's brother;
For this was Othin's anger mighty.

10

Lauk hann mik skjöldum
í Skatalundi
rauðum ok hvítum,
randir snurtu;
þann bað hann slíta
svefni mínum,
er hvergi lands
hræðask kynni.

He beset me with shields in Skatalund,
Red and white, their rims o'erlapped;
He bade that my sleep should broken be
By him who fear had nowhere found.

11

Lét hann um sal minn
sunnanverðan
hávan brenna
her alls viðar;
þar bað hann einn þegn
yfir at ríða,
þanns mér færði gull,
þats und Fáfni lá.

He let round my hall, that southward looked,
The branches' foe high-leaping burn;
Across it he bade the hero come
Who brought me the gold that Fafnir guarded.

12

Reið góðr Grana
gullmiðlandi,
þars fóstri minn
fletjum stýrði;
einn þótti hann þar
öllum betri
víkingr Dana
í verðungu.

On Grani rode the giver of gold,
Where my foster-father ruled his folk;
Best of all he seemed to be,
The prince of the Danes, when the people met.

13

Sváfu við ok unðum
í sæing einni,
sem hann minn bróðir
of borinn væri;
hvárki knátti
hönd yfir annat
átta nóttum
okkart leggja.

Happy we slept, one bed we had,
As he my brother born had been;
Eight were the nights when neither there
Loving hand on the other laid.

14

Því brá mér Guðrún
Gjúka dóttir,
at ek Sigurði
svæfak á armi,
þar varð ek þess vís,
er ek vildig-a-k,
at þau véltu mik
í verfangi.

Yet Guthrun reproached me, Gjuki's daughter,
That I in Sigurth's arms had slept;
Then did I hear what I would were hid,
That they had betrayed me in taking a mate.

15

Munu við ofstríð
alls til lengi
konur ok karlar
kvikvir fæðask;
við skulum okkrum
aldri slíta
Sigurðr saman.
Sökkstu, gýgjar kyn."

Ever with grief and all too long
Are men and women born in the world;
But yet we shall live our lives together,
Sigurth and I. Sink down, Giantess!”

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