

GLANZ UND GRAVUR

THE POETIC EDDA

Oddrúnargrátr

Oddrun's Lament

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

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GLANZ & GRAVUR
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Oddrún, Atli's sister, helps a princess through a difficult birth and laments her ill-fated love for Gunnar and his death. 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	*Heyrða ek segja* *í sögum fornum,* *hvé mær of kom* *til Mornalands;* *engi mátti* *fyr jörð ofan* *Heiðreks dóttur* *hjalpir vinna.*	I have heard it told in olden tales How a maiden came to Morningland; No one of all on earth above To Heithrek's daughter help could give.
2	*Þat frá Oddrún* *Atla systir,* *at sú mær hafði* *miklar sóttir;* *brá hon af stalli* *stjórnbitluðum* *ok á svartan* *söðul of lagði.*	This Oddrun learned, the sister of Atli, That sore the maiden's sickness was; The bit-bearer forth from his stall she brought, And the saddle laid on the steed so black.
3	*Lét hon mar fara* *moldveg sléttan,* *unz at hári kom* *höll standandi;* *svipti hon söðli* *af svöngum jó,* *ok hon inn of gekk* *endlangan sal,* *ok hon þat orða* *alls fyrst of kvað:*	She let the horse go o'er the level ground, Till she reached the hall that loftily rose, [And in she went from the end of the hall;] From the weary steed the saddle she took; Hear now the speech that first she spake:
4	"*Hvat er frægst* *hér á foldu,* *eða hvat er hlézt* *Húnalands?*"	“What news on earth, Or what has happened in Hunland now?”
5	"*Hverr hefir vísir* *vamms of leitat?* *Hví eru Borgnýjar* *bráðar sóttir?*"	“Who worked this woe for the woman thus, Or why so sudden is Borgny sick?”

6

"Vilmundr heitir
vinr haukstalda,
hann varði mey
varmri blæju
fimm vetr alla,
svá hon sinn föður leyndi."

“Vilmund is he, the heroes' friend,
Who wrapped the woman in bedclothes warm,
[For winters five, yet her father knew not].”

7

Þær hykk mæltu
þvígit fleira,
gekk mild fyr kné
meyju at sitja;
ríkt gól Oddrún,
rammt gól Oddrún,
bitra galdra
at Borgnýju.

Then no more they spake, methinks;
She went at the knees of the woman to sit;
With magic Oddrun and mightily Oddrun
Chanted for Borgny potent charms.

8

Knátti mær ok mögr
moldveg sporna,
börn þau in blíðu
við bana Högna;
þat nam at mæla
mær fjörsjúka,
svá at hon ekki kvað
orð it fyrra:

At last were born a boy and girl,
Son and daughter of Hogni's slayer;
Then speech the woman so weak began,
Nor said she aught ere this she spake:

9

"Svá hjalpi þér
hollar véttir,
Frigg ok Freyja
ok fleiri goð,
sem þú feldir mér
fár af höndum."

“So may the holy ones thee help,
Frigg and Freyja and favoring gods,
As thou hast saved me from sorrow now.”

10

"Hnék-at ek af því
til hjalpar þér,
at þú værir þess
verð aldregi;
hét ek ok efndak,
er ek hinig mælta,
at ek hvívetna
hjalpa skyldak,
þá er öðlingar
arfi skiptu."

“I came not hither to help thee thus
Because thou ever my aid didst earn;
I fulfilled the oath that of old I swore,
That aid to all I should ever bring,
[When they shared the wealth the warriors had].”

11

Ær ertu, Oddrún,
ok örvita,
er þú mér af fári
flest orð of kvatt,
en ek fylgðak þér
á fjörgynju,
sem vit bræðrum tveim
of bornar værim."

“Wild art thou, Oddrun, and witless now,
That so in hatred to me thou speakest;
I followed thee where thou didst fare,
As we had been born of brothers twain.”

12

"Man ek, hvat þú
mæltir enn um aftan,
þá er ek Gunnari
gerðak drekku;
slíks dæmi kvað-at-tu
síðan mundu
meyja verða
nema mér einni."

“I remember the evil one eve thou spakest,
When a draught I gave to Gunnar then;
Thou didst say that never such a deed
By maid was done save by me alone.”

13

Þá nam at setjask
sorgmóð kona
at telja böl
af trega stórum:

Then the sorrowing woman sat her down
To tell the grief of her troubles great.

14

"Var ek upp alin
í jöfra sal,
- flestr fagnaði -
at fira ráði;
unða ek aldri
ok eign föður
fimm vetr eina,
svá at minn faðir lifði.

“Happy I grew in the hero's hall
As the warriors wished, and they loved me well;
Glad I was of my father's gifts,
For winters five, while my father lived.

15

Þat nam at mæla
mál ið efsta
sjá móðr konungr,
áðr hann sylti:
mik bað hann gæða
gulli rauðu
ok suðr gefa
syni Grímhildar.

These were the words the weary king,
Ere he died, spake last of all:
He bade me with red gold dowered to be,
And to Grimhild's son in the South be wedded.

16

En hann Brynhildi
bað hjalm geta,
hana kvað hann óskmey
verða skyldu;
kvað-a hann ina æðri
alna mundu
mey í heimi,
nema mjötuðr spillti.

But Brynhild the helm he bade to wear,
A wish-maid bright he said she should be;
For a nobler maid would never be born
On earth, he said, if death should spare her.

17

Brynhildr í búri
borða rakði,
hafði hon lýði
ok lönd um sik;
jörð dúsaði
ok upphiminn,
þá er bani Fáfnis
borg of þátti.

At her weaving Brynhild sat in her bower,
Lands and folk alike she had;
The earth and heaven high resounded
When Fafnir's slayer the city saw.

18

Þá var víg vegit
völsku sverði
ok borg brotin,
sú er Brynhildr átti;
var-a langt af því
heldr válítit,
unz þær vélar
vissi allar.

Then battle was fought with the foreign swords,
And the city was broken that Brynhild had;
Not long thereafter, but all too soon,
Their evil wiles full well she knew.

19

Þess lét hon harðar
hefndir verða,
svá at vér öll höfum
ærnar raunir;
þat mun á hölða
hvert land fara,
er hon lét sveltask
at Sigurði.

Woeful for this her vengeance was,
As so we learned to our sorrow all;
In every land shall all men hear
How herself at Sigurth's side she slew.

20

En ek Gunnari
gatk at unna,
bauga deili,
sem Brynhildr skyldi.

Love to Gunnar then I gave,
To the breaker of rings, as Brynhild might;

21

Buðu þeir árla
bauga rauða
ok bræðrum mínum
bætr ósmáar;
bað hann enn við mér
bú fimmtían,
hliðfarm Grana,
ef hann hafa vildi.

To Atli rings so red they offered,
And mighty gifts to my brother would give.
Fifteen dwellings fain would he give
For me, and the burden that Grani bore;

22

En Atli kvaðsk
eigi vilja
mund aldrigi
at megi Gjúka;
þeygi vit máttum
við munum vinna,
nema ek helt höfði
við hringbrota.

But Atli said he would never receive
Marriage gold from Gjuki's son.
Yet could we not our love o'ercome,
And my head I laid on the hero's shoulder;

23

Mæltu margir
mínir niðjar,
kváðusk okkr hafa
orðit bæði;
en mik Atli kvað
eigi mundu
lýti ráða
né löst gera.

Many there were of kinsmen mine
Who said that together us they had seen.
Atli said that never I
Would evil plan, or ill deed do;

24

En slíks skyli
synja aldri
maðr fyr annan,
þar er munúð deilir.

But none may this of another think,
Or surely speak, when love is shared.

25

Sendi Atli
áru sína
um myrkvan við
mín at freista;
ok þeir kómu þar,
er þeir koma né skyldu-t,
þá er breiddum vit
blæju eina.

Soon his men did Atli send,
In the murky wood on me to spy;
Thither they came where they should not come,
Where beneath one cover close we lay.

26

Buðum vit þegnum
bauga rauða,
at þeir eigi
til Atla segði,
en þeir hvatliga
heim skunduðu
ok óliga
Atla sögðu.

To the warriors ruddy rings we offered,
That nought to Atli e'er they should say;
But swiftly home they hastened thence,
And eager all to Atli told.

27

En þeir Guðrúnu
görla leyndu því,
at hon heldr vita
halfu skyldi.

But close from Guthrun kept they hid
What first of all she ought to have known.

28

Hlymr var at heyra
hófgullinna,
þá er í garð riðu
Gjúka arfar;
þeir ór Högna
hjarta skáru,
en i ormgarð
annan lögðu.

Great was the clatter of gilded hoofs
When Gjuki's sons through the gateway rode;
The heart they hewed from Hogni then,
And the other they cast in the serpents' cave.

29

Var ek enn farin
einu sinni
til Geirmundar
gerva drykkju;
nam horskr konungr
hörpu sveigja,
því at hann hugði mik
til hjalpar sér
kynríkr konungr,
of koma mundu.

Alone was I gone to Geirmund then,
The draught to mix and ready to make;
The hero wise on his harp then smote,
For help from me in his heart yet hoped
The high-born king, might come to him.

30

Nam ek at heyra
ór Hléseyju,
hvé þar af stríðum
strengir gullu;
bað ek ambáttir
búnar verða,
vilda ek fylkis
fjörvi bjarga.

Sudden I heard from Hlesey clear
How in sorrow the strings of the harp resounded.
I bade the serving-maids ready to be,
For I longed the hero's life to save;

31

Létum fljóta
far sund yfir,
unz ek alla sák
Atla garða.

Across the sound the boats we sailed,
Till we saw the whole of Atli's home.

32

Þá kom in arma
út skævandi
móðir Atla,
- hon skyli morna -,
ok Gunnari
gróf til hjarta,
svá at ek máttig-a-k
mærum bjarga.

Then crawling the evil woman came,
Atli's mother— may she ever rot!
And hard she bit to Gunnar's heart,
So I could not help the hero brave.

33

Oft undrumk þat,
hví ek eftir mák,
linnvengis Bil,
lífi halda;
er ek ógnhvötum
unna þóttumk
sverða deili,
sem sjalfri mér.

Oft have I wondered how after this,
Serpents'-bed goddess! I still might live,
For well I loved the warrior brave,
The giver of swords, as my very self.

34

Sattu ok hlýddir,
meðan ek sagðak þér
mörg ill of sköp
mín ok þeira;
maðr hverr lifir
at munum sínum;
nú er of genginn
grátr Oddrúnar."

Thou didst see and listen, the while I said
The mighty grief that was mine and theirs;
Each man lives as his longing wills,—
Oddrun's lament is ended now."

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