

**GRÍPISSPÁ**  
*(Gripir's Prophecy)*<sup>1</sup>

*or*

**SIGURÐARKVIÐA FÁFNISBANA I**  
*(The First Lay of Sigurd, Fáfnir's Slayer)*

**Bellows' Introduction (1936)**

The *Gripisspo* immediately follows the prose *Fra Dautha Sinfjotla* in the *Codex Regius*, and is contained in no other early manuscript. It is unquestionably one of the latest of the poems in the Eddic collection; most critics agree in calling it the latest of all, dating it not much before the year 1200. Its author (for in this instance the word may be correctly used) was not only familiar with the other poems of the Sigurth cycle, but seems to have had actual written copies of them before him; it has, indeed, been suggested, and not without plausibility, that the *Gripisspo* may have been written by the very man who compiled and annotated the collection of poems preserved in the *Codex Regius*.

In form the poem is a dialogue between the youthful Sigurth and his uncle, Gripir, but in substance it is a condensed outline of Sigurth's whole career as told piecemeal in the older poems. The writer was sufficiently skillful in the handling of verse, but he was utterly without inspiration; his characters are devoid of vitality, and their speeches are full of conventional phrases, with little force or incisiveness. At the same time, the poem is of considerable interest as giving, in brief form, a summary of the story of Sigurth as it existed in Iceland (for the *Gripisspo* is almost certainly Icelandic) in the latter half of the twelfth century.

It is not desirable here to go in detail into the immensely complex question of the origin, growth, and spread of the story of Sigurth (Siegfried). The volume of critical literature on the subject is enormous, and although some of the more patently absurd theories have been eliminated, there are still wide divergences of opinion regarding many important points. At the same time, a brief review of the chief facts is necessary in order to promote a clearer understanding of the poems which follow, and which make up more than a third of the Eddic collection.

That the story of Sigurth reached the North from Germany, having previously developed among the Franks of the Rhine country, is now universally recognized. How and when it spread from northwestern Germany into Scandinavia are less certainly known. It spread, indeed, in every direction, so that traces of it are found wherever Frankish influence was extensively felt; but it was clearly better known and more popular in Norway, and in the settlements established by Norwegians, than anywhere else. We have historical proof that there was considerable contact, commercial and otherwise, between the Franks of northwestern Germany and the Norwegians (but not the Swedes or the Danes) throughout the period from 600 to 800; coins of Charlemagne have been found in Norway, and there is other evidence showing a fairly extensive interchange of ideas as well as of goods. Presumably, then, the story of the Frankish hero found its way into Norway in the seventh century. While, at this stage of its development, it may conceivably have included a certain amount of verse, it is altogether probable that the story as it came into Norway in the seventh century was told largely in prose, and that, even after the poets had got hold of it, the legend continued to live among the people in the form of oral prose saga.

The complete lack of contemporary material makes it impossible for us to speak with certainty regarding the character and content of the Sigurth legend as it existed in the Rhine country in the seventh century. It is, however, important to remember the often overlooked fact that any popular traditional hero became a magnet for originally unrelated stories of every kind. It must also be remembered that in the early Middle Ages there existed no such distinction between fiction and history as we now make; a saga, for instance, might be anything from the most meticulously accurate history to the wildest of fairy tales, and a single saga might (and sometimes did) combine both elements. This was equally true of the Frankish traditions, and the two principles just stated account for most of the puzzling phenomena in the growth of the Sigurth story.

Of the origin of Sigurth himself we know absolutely nothing. No historical analogy can be made to fit in the slightest degree. If one believes in the possibility of resolving hero stories into nature myths, he may be explained in that fashion, but such a solution is not necessary. The fact remains that from very early days Sigurth (Sifrit) was a great traditional hero among the Franks. The tales of his strength and valor, of his winning of a great treasure, of his wooing a more or less supernatural bride, and of his death at the hands of his kinsmen, probably were early features of this legend.

The next step was the blending of this story with one which had a clear basis in history. In the year 437 the Burgundians, under their king, Gundicarius (so the Latin histories call him), were practically annihilated by the Huns. The story of this great battle soon became one of the foremost of Rhineland traditions; and though Attila was presumably not present in person, he was quite naturally introduced as the famous ruler of the invading hordes. The dramatic story of Attila's death in the year 453 was likewise added to the tradition, and during the sixth century the chain was completed by linking together the stories of Sigurth and those of the Burgundian slaughter. Gundicarius becomes the Gunther of the *Nibelungenlied* and the Gunnar of the Eddic poems; Attila becomes Etzel and Atli. A still further development came through the addition of another, and totally unrelated, set of historical traditions based on the career of Ermanarich, king of the Goths, who died about the year 376. Ermanarich figures largely in many stories unconnected with the Sigurth cycle, but, with the zeal of the medieval story-tellers for connecting their heroes, he was introduced as the husband of Sigurth's daughter, Svanhild, herself originally part of a separate narrative group, and as Jormunrek he plays a considerable part in a few of the Eddic poems.

Such, briefly, appears to have been the development of the legend before it came into Norway. Here it underwent many changes, though the clear marks of its southern origin were never obliterated. The names were given Scandinavian forms, and in some cases were completely changed (e.g., Kriemhild becomes Guthrun). New figures, mostly of secondary importance, were introduced, and a large amount of purely Northern local color was added. Above all, the earlier part of the story was linked with Northern mythology in a way which seems to have had no counterpart among the southern Germanic peoples. The Volsungs become direct descendants of Othin; the gods are closely concerned with Fafnir's treasure, and so on. Above all, the Norse story-tellers and poets changed the figure of Brynhild. In making her a Valkyrie, sleeping on the flame-girt rock, they were never completely successful, as she persisted in remaining, to a considerable extent, the entirely human daughter of Buthli whom Sigurth woos for Gunnar. This confusion, intensified by a mixing of names (cf. *Sigrdrífumol*, introductory note), and much resembling that which existed in the parallel cases of Svava and Sigrun in the Helgi tradition, created difficulties which the Norse poets and story-tellers were never able to smooth out, and which have perplexed commentators ever since.

Those who read the Sigurth poems in the *Edda*, or the story told in the *Volsungasaga*, expecting to find a critically accurate biography of the hero, will, of course, be disappointed. If, however, they will constantly keep in mind the general manner in which the legend grew, its accretions ranging all the way from the Danube to Iceland, they will find that most of the difficulties are simply the natural results of conflicting traditions. Just as the Danish Helgi had to be "reborn" twice in order to enable three different men to kill him, so the story of Sigurth, as told in the Eddic poems, involves here and there inconsistencies explicable only when the historical development of the story is taken into consideration.

### Hollander's Introduction (1962)

"The Prophecy of Grípir" was chosen by the Collector to introduce the Sigurth poems, no doubt because it contained a sort of epitome of them all. This sufficiently evinces his lack of critical discernment, for even a slight acquaintance with the Heroic Lay teaches us that this one is of a different class: given in the form of a gnomic dialogue, it is but a sapless versified excerpt, utterly lacking originality of treatment, and full of ineptitudes and contradictions, at that! In particular, grievous confusion was wrought in the poem (and in the account of *Skáldskaparmál*, Ch.39, based on it), as well as in some modern treatments, either by the author's inability to discern that there were current two incompatible versions of Sigurth's relations with Brynhild and with Guthrún, or else by his trying to reconcile them in true medieval fashion.

I. According to *Fáfnismál*, *Sigurþarkviða hin skamma*, and *Helreið Brynhildar* (also the *Nibelungenlied*), the hero first proceeds to Gjúki's court and wins Guthrún. When there, he is prevailed upon to win Brynhild for Gunnar from her sleep, lies three nights beside her, his sword separating them, and then yields her to Gunnar.

II. In the *Volsunga saga*, the *Normagests Þáttr* (based, it seems, on poems now lost), *Sigrdrífumál*, and the *Þiðreks saga*, Sigurth first delivers and pledges himself to Brynhild. He then proceeds to Gjúki's court where a "drink of forgetfulness," given him by Grímhild, makes him oblivious of his former love and he marries Guthrún.

Curiously enough, the *Nibelungenlied* shows traces of a similar confusion (Adventure VI, VII); and the bird prophecy in *Fáfnismál* is ambiguous.

Poetically worthless, it is of interest because its author—no doubt some Icelander of the thirteenth century—still had before him the poems of "The Great Lacuna." In form, the jejune stanzas (in *fornyrðislag*) are flawless. It may be noted that the alternation between the first and the third person, as used by the speaker of himself, occurs commonly enough in Old Norse poetry, but not to the wearisome extent seen in this piece. The poem is transmitted only in *Codex Regius*.

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Thorpe (1866)	Bellows (1936)	Hollander (1962)
<p>Gripir was the name of the son of Eylimi, the brother of Hiordis. He ruled over lands, and was of all men wisest and prescient of the future. Sigurd rode alone, and came to Gripir's dwelling. Sigurd was of a distinguished figure. He found a man to address outside the hall, whose name was Geitir. Sigurd applied to him, and asked:</p> <p>1. Who here inhabits, in these towers? What nation's king do people name him?</p> <p>Geitir Gripir is named the chief of men, He who rules a firm realm and people.</p>	<p>Gripir<sup>2</sup> was the name of Eylimi's son, the brother of Hjordis;<sup>3</sup> he ruled over lands and was of all men the wisest and most forward-seeing. Sigurth once was riding alone and came to Gripir's hall. Sigurth was easy to recognize; he found out in front of the hall a man whose name was Geitir.<sup>4</sup> Then Sigurth questioned him and asked:</p> <p>1. "Who is it has   this dwelling here, Or what do men call   the people's king?"</p> <p>Geitir spake:<sup>5</sup> "Gripir the name   of the chieftain good Who holds the folk   and the firm-ruled land."</p>	<p>Grípir<sup>31</sup> was the name of Eylimi’s son, and he was the brother of Hjordís. He ruled a kingdom and was the wisest of men and had foreknowledge of the future. Sigurth rode alone and came to Grípir’s hall. Sigurth was easily known. Outside the hall he met a man whose name was Geitir.<sup>32</sup> <i>Sigurth greeted him and said:</i></p> <p>1. “This high-built castle what king houseth, Known by what name his knights among?”</p> <p>Geitir said: “The gold-ring-giver is Grípir hight O’er land and lieges who lordeth it here.”</p>

<p>Sigurd 2. Is the wise king of the land at home? Will the chief with me come and converse? With him needs speech an unknown man: I desire speedily Gripir to see.</p> <p>Geitir 3. The glad king will of Geitir ask, Who the man is that demands speech of Gripir.</p> <p>Sigurd Sigurd I am named, born of Sigmund, And Hiordis is the chieftain's mother.</p> <p>4. Then went Geitir, Gripir to inform: "Here is a man without, a stranger, come; Of aspect he is most distinguished. He desires, king! with thee to speak."</p> <p>5. Goes from the hall the lord of men, And the stranger prince kindly greets: "Welcome, Sigurd! better had it been earlier: But do thou, Geitir! take charge of Grani."</p> <p>6. They began to talk, and much to tell, When the sagacious men together met. "Tell me, if thou knowest, my mother's brother! How will Sigurd's life fall out?"</p> <p>Gripir 7. Thou wilt foremost be of men beneath the sun, Exalted high above every king; Liberal of gold, but of flight sparing, Of aspect comely, and wise of words.</p> <p>Sigurd 8. Say thou, sage king! more than I ask, Thou wise one, to Sigurd, if thou thinkst to see it: What will first happen for my advancement, When from thy dwelling I shall have departed?</p> <p>Gripir 9. First wilt thou, prince! avenge thy father, And for the wrongs of Eylimi wilt retaliate; Thou wilt the cruel sons of Hunding boldly lay low; Thou wilt have victory.</p> <p>Sigurd 10. Say, noble king! kinsman mine! With all forethought, as we hold friendly converse:</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 2. "Is the king all-knowing   now within, Will the monarch come   with me to speak? A man unknown   his counsel needs, And Gripir fain   I soon would find."</p> <p>Geitir spake: 3. "The ruler glad   of Geitir will ask Who seeks with Gripir   speech to have."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: "Sigurth<sup>6</sup> am I,   and Sigmund's son, And Hjordis the name   of the hero's mother."</p> <p>4. Then Geitir went   and to Gripir spake: "A stranger comes   and stands without; Lofty he is   to look upon, And, prince, thyself   he fain would see."</p> <p><sup>7</sup>5. From the hall the ruler   of heroes went, And greeted well   the warrior come: "Sigurth, welcome   long since had been thine; Now, Geitir, shalt thou   Grani<sup>8</sup> take."</p> <p>6. Then of many   things they talked, When thus the men   so wise had met.</p> <p>Sigurth spake: "To me, if thou knowest,   my mother's brother, Say what life   will Sigurth's be."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 7. "Of men thou shalt be   on earth the mightiest, And higher famed   than all the heroes; Free of gold-giving,   slow to flee, Noble to see,   and sage in speech."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 8. "Monarch wise,   now more I ask; To Sigurth say,   if thou thinkst to see, What first will chance   of my fortune fair, When hence I go   from out thy home?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 9. "First shalt thou, prince,   thy father avenge,<sup>9</sup> And Eylimi,   their ills requiting; The hardy sons   of Hunding thou Soon shalt fell,   and victory find."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 10. "Noble king,   my kinsman, say Thy meaning true,   for our minds we speak:</p>	<p>Sigurth said: 2. "Is the highborn hero home in the land? Would the noble king hold converse with me? A man unknown hath need of it; Would he forthwith find the folk-warder?"</p> <p>Geitir said: "Will the gladsome king<sup>33</sup> of Geitir ask With whom he is to hold converse?"</p> <p>Sigurth said: "I am Sigurth hight, to Sigmund born, And Hjordis is the hero's mother."</p> <p>4. Then went Geitir, Grípir to tell: "An unknown man without doth stand; Of lofty mien this lord seemeth: Would he, noble king, hold converse with thee."</p> <p>5. Out of the hall hied him the housecarls' lord To greet as guest the goodly warrior: "Welcome, Sigurth—why no sooner here? Thou, Geitir, stable Grani, his steed."<sup>34</sup></p> <p>6. The thoughtful thanes of things many Gan tidings tell, trueheartedly.</p> <p>Sigurth said: "Make known to me, my mother's brother, What life will Sigurth lead hereafter?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 7. "Among the sons of men, the sun beneath, Wilt be held of heroes the highest born, Free with thy gold, to flee unready, In thy words most wise, and wondrous fair."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 8. "Still further, king—far more I ask— Say to Sigurth, if 'tis see by thee: Of my fate what first befalls me now, When from thy hall I fare on the morrow?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 9. "Wilt first, folk-warder, thy father avenge, And Eylimi eke, for evil deed: He hardy sons to Hunding born Thou wilt lay low, the lieges doughty."<sup>35</sup></p> <p>Sigurth said: 10. "Say clearly, king, to thy kinsman here, Thy sister's child, right cheerfully:</p>
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<p>Seest thou of Sigurd those bold achievements, That will highest soar under heaven's regions?"</p> <p>Gripir 11. Thou alone wilt slay that glistening serpent, Which greedy lies on Gnitahaid; Thou shalt of both the slayer be, Regin and Fafnir. Gripir tells truly.</p> <p>Sigurd 12. Riches will abound, if I so bring conflict among men, As thou for certain sayest. Apply thy mind, and at length say What will yet my life befall.</p> <p>Gripir 13. Thou wilt find Fafnir's lair, And thence wilt take splendid riches, With gold wilt load Grani's back. Thou wilt to Giuki ride, the war-famed prince.</p> <p>Sigurd 14. Yet must thou, prince! in friendly speech, Foresighted king! more relate. I shall be Giuki's guest, and I shall thence depart: What will next my life befall?</p> <p>Gripir 15. A king's daughter will on a mountain sleep, Fair, in corslet cased, after Helgi's death. Thou wilt strike with a keen sword, Wilt the corslet sever with Fafnir's bane.</p> <p>Sigurd 16. The corslet is ript open, the maid begins to speak. When awakened from her sleep, On what will she chiefly with Sigurd converse hold, Which to the prince's benefit may tend?</p> <p>Gripir 17. She to thee, powerful one! runes will teach, All those which men ought to know; And in every man's tongue to speak, And medicines for healing. May good await thee, king!</p> <p>Sigurd 18. Now that is past, the knowledge is acquired, And I am ready thence away to ride. Apply thy mind, and at length say What more will my life befall.</p> <p>Gripir</p>	<p>For Sigurth mighty   deeds dost see, The highest beneath   the heavens all?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 11. "The fiery dragon<sup>10</sup>   alone thou shalt fight That greedy lies   at Gnitaheth;<sup>11</sup> Thou shalt be of Regin   and Fafnir both The slayer; truth   doth Gripir tell thee."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 12. "Rich shall I be   if battles I win With such as these,   as now thou sayest; Forward look,   and further tell: What the life   that I shall lead?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 13. "Fafnir's den   thou then shalt find, And all his treasure   fair shalt take; Gold shalt heap   on Grani's back, And, proved in fight,   to Gjuki fare."<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Sigurth spake: 14. "To the warrior now   in words so wise, Monarch noble,   more shalt tell; I am Gjuki's guest,   and thence I go: What the life   that I shall lead?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 15. "On the rocks there sleeps   the ruler's daughter,<sup>13</sup> Fair in armor,   since Helgi<sup>14</sup> fell; Thou shalt cut   with keen-edged sword, And cleave the byrnie   with Fafnir's killer."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 16. "The mail-coat is broken,   the maiden speaks, The woman who   from sleep has wakened; What says the maid   to Sigurth then That happy fate   to the hero brings?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 17. "Runes to the warrior   will she tell, All that men   may ever seek, And teach thee to speak   in all men's tongues, And life with health;   thou'rt happy, king!"</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 18. "Now is it ended,   the knowledge is won, And ready I am   forth thence to ride; Forward look   and further tell: What the life   that I shall lead?"</p> <p>Gripir spake:</p>	<p>Seest deeds of daring done by Sigurth, Which soar highest the heavens beneath?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 11. "Thyself wilt slay the serpent glitt'ring Which greedy lieth on Gnita Heath;<sup>36</sup> To both brothers wilt bring quick death, To Regin and Fáfñir: aright saith Grípir."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 12. "Great wealth will I win if I work it so, As thou sayest certain, and slay these twain. Scan yet longer the skein of fate: What will further fall to my lot?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 13. "The Fáfñir's lair wilt find anon, And have from the heath the hoarded wealth; Wilt load the gold on Grani's saddle: Then ride to Gjúki<sup>37</sup> the gladsome king."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 14. "Shalt, wise folk-warder, my weird tell further And, sage sea king, say still onward: When Gjúki's guest goes on his way, What will still further fall to his lot?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 15. "On the fell sleepeth the folk-warder's daughter<sup>38</sup> In weeds of war, sine wound-dead Helgi;<sup>39</sup> With keen edge wilt cut her byrnie, Slitting with sword which slew Fáfñir."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 16. "Her mail is slitted, the maiden speaketh, As from her sleep she sitteth up then. To thy sib Sigurth what saith the lady, Which to the leader good luck will bring?"</p> <p>Grípir said: 17. "Will she teach thee runes, doughty ruler— Which all men are eager to learn— Teach thee to talk the tongues of men, And healing leechcraft:<sup>40</sup> hail to thee king!"</p> <p>Sigurth said: 18. "Learned is the lore which lords should know; Ready am I to ride from thence. Scan yet longer the skein of fate: What will further fall to my lot?"</p> <p>Grípir said:</p>
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<p>19. Thou wilt find Heimir's dwellings, And the glad guest wilt be of that great king. Vanished is, Sigurd! that which I foresaw; No further mayest thou Gripir question.</p> <p>Sigurd 20. Now bring me grief the words thou speakest; For thou foreseest, king! much further; Thou knowest of too great calamity to Sigurd; Therefore thou, Gripir! wilt not utter it.</p> <p>Gripir 21. Of thy life the early portion Lay before me clearest to contemplate. I am not truly accounted sage, nor of the future prescient: That which I knew is gone.</p> <p>Sigurd 22. No man I know on the earth's surface, Who greater prescience has than thou, Gripir! Thou mayest not conceal it, unhappy though it be, Or if ill betide my life.</p> <p>Gripir 23. Not with vices will thy life be sullied; Let that, noble prince! in thy mind be borne; For while mankind exists, thy name, Director of the spear-storm! will be supreme.</p> <p>Sigurd 24. The worst seems to me, that Sigurd is compelled From the king to part in such uncertainty. Show me the way—all is decreed before— Great chieftain! if thou wilt, my mother's brother!</p> <p>Gripir 25. To Sigurd I will now openly tell, Since the chieftain me thereto compels: Thou wilt surely find that I lie not. A certain day is for thy death decreed.</p> <p>Sigurd 26. I would not importune the mighty prince, But rather Gripir's good counsel have. Now I fain would know, though grateful it may not be, What prospect Sigurd has lying before him.</p> <p>Gripir 27. There is with Heimir a maiden fair of form, She is by men Brynhild named, Daughter of Budli; but the dear king Heimir Nurtures the hard-souled damsel.</p>	<p>19. "Then to Heimir's<sup>15</sup>   home thou comest, And glad shalt be   the guest of the king; Ended, Sigurth,   is all I see, No further aught   of Gripir ask."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 20. "Sorrow brings me   the word thou sayest, For, monarch, forward   further thou seest; Sad the grief   for Sigurth thou knowest, Yet nought to me, Gripir,   known wilt make."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 21. "Before me lay   in clearest light All of thy youth   for mine eyes to see; Not rightly can I   wise be called, Nor forward-seeing;   my wisdom is fled."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 22. "No man, Gripir,   on earth I know Who sees the future   as far as thou; Hide thou nought,   though hard it be, And base the deeds   that I shall do."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 23. "With baseness never   thy life is burdened, Hero noble,   hold that sure; Lofty as long   as the world shall live, Battle-bringer,   thy name shall be."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 24. "Nought could seem worse,   but now must part The prince and Sigurth,   since so it is, My road I ask,—   the future lies open,— Mighty one, speak,   my mother's brother."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 25. "Now to Sigurth   all shall I say, For to this the warrior   bends my will; Thou knowest well   that I will not lie,— A day there is   when thy death is doomed."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 26. "No scorn I know   for the noble king, But counsel good   from Gripir I seek; Well will I know,   though evil awaits, What Sigurth may   before him see."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 27. "A maid in Heimir's   home there dwells, Brynhild<sup>16</sup> her name   to men is known, Daughter of Buthli,   the doughty king, And Heimir fosters   the fearless maid."</p>	<p>19. "To Heimir's<sup>41</sup> halls wilt, hero come, And gladly dwell as guest with the king: At an end is now all my knowledge— Ask no more of thy mother's brother."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 20. "Sorrow see I in what thou sayest Since, folk-warder, farther dost see: Too great the grief Grípir weeneth, Hence more wilt not to me now say."</p> <p>Grípir said: 21. "In light most lieth thy life before me Which in youth thou, nor beyond wilt lead; Nor in truth can I foretell thy fate: At an end is now all my knowledge."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 22. "No man is known beneath heaven Who forward sees farther than thou: Hide not from me, unhappy though be My life and lot, and luckless my end."</p> <p>Grípir said: 23. "Learn and listen, lordly hero: No fault nor flaw thy fate doth blot: Know that most noble thy name will be The while, warrior, the world lasteth."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 24. "Little I like it; now leave taketh From thee Sigurth, though thus it be; The way now show—his weird none fleeth— My mother's brother, to me if thou wilt."</p> <p>Grípir said: 25. "To Sigurth shall I now say fully Since, war-worker, thou wilt it thou— Thou know'st full well that naught I lie— I see the day thy death will bring."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 26. "The wise folk-warder's wrath I wish not, But the good rede of Grípir, rather: To wit I wish, though welcome nowise, What fate lieth before Sigurth."</p> <p>Grípir said: 27. "Fosters Heimir a fair maiden Who is Brynhild<sup>42</sup> hight, his hall within— Buthli's daughter, the brave folk-king's— Of hardy mind is the maiden fair."</p>
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<p>Sigurd 28. What is it to me, although the maiden be Of aspect fair? Nurtured with Heimir? That thou, Gripir! must fully declare; For thou foreseest my whole destiny.</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 28. "What is it to me,   though the maiden be So fair, and of Heimir   the fosterling is? Gripir, truth   to me shalt tell, For all of fate   before me thou seest."</p>	<p>Sigurth said: 28. "To me what is't, a maid though be Fostered at Heimir's, fair to behold? Thou shalt, Grípir, tell altogether: Before thee lieth my fate clearly."</p>
<p>Gripir 29. She will thee bereave of almost every joy, The fair-faced foster-child of Heimir. Thou wilt not sleep, nor of affairs discourse, Nor men regard; only this maiden thou wilt see.</p>	<p>Gripir spake: 29. "Of many a joy   the maiden robs thee, Fair to see,   whom Heimir fosters; Sleep thou shalt find not,   feuds thou shalt end not, Nor seek out men,   if the maid thou seest not."</p>	<p>Grípir said: 29. "Of flee and gladness will the girl rob thee Who is Brynhild hight, Buthli's daughter: No sleep thou sleepest nor sleekest Thing<sup>43</sup> Nor men's meetings, but the maid thou seest."</p>
<p>Sigurd 30. What remedy for Sigurd will be applied; Tell me that, Gripir! If it seem good to thee. Shall I obtain the damsel? with dowry purchase The lovely royal daughter?</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 30. "What may be had   for Sigurth's healing? Say now, Gripir,   if see thou canst; May I buy the maid   with the marriage-price, The daughter fair   of the chieftain famed?"</p>	<p>Sigurth said: 30. "Is aught for easement to the atheling given? Say thou, Grípir, if 'tis seen by thee: Will I the dear one by dowry win, The folk-warder's daughter, so fair to see?"</p>
<p>Gripir 31. Ye will each swear unnumbered oaths, Solemnly binding, but few will keep. Hast thou been Giuki's guest one night, Thou wilt have forgotten the fair ward of Heimir.</p>	<p>Gripir spake: 31. "Ye twain shall all   the oaths then swear That bind full fast;   few shall ye keep; One night when Gjuki's   guest thou hast been, Will Heimir's fosterling   fade from thy mind."</p>	<p>Grípir said: 31. "Oaths ye will pledge altogether, Will pledge fully, but few ye will keep: Art with Gjúki a guest one night, From thy mind then falls Heimir's foster child."</p>
<p>Sigurd 32. How is that, Gripir! explain it to me: Seest thou such fickleness in the king's mind, That with that maiden I shall my engagement break, Whom with my whole heart I thought to love?</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 32. "What sayst thou, Gripir?   give me the truth, Does fickleness hide   in the hero's heart? Can it be that troth   I break with the maid, With her I believed   I loved so dear?"</p>	<p>Sigurth said: 32. How so, Grípir? Nor hide from me: Is fickle found the folk-warder's mind? Will I faithlessly fail the maiden To whom my whole heart I had given?"</p>
<p>Gripir 33. Prince! thou wilt be snared in another's wiles, Thou wilt pay the penalty of Grimhild's craft; The bright-haired maiden, her daughter, She to thee will offer. This snare for the king she lays.</p>	<p>Gripir spake: 33. "Tricked by another,   prince, thou art, And the price of Grimhild's<sup>17</sup>   wiles thou must pay; Fain of thee   for the fair-haired maid,<sup>18</sup> Her daughter, she is,   and she drags thee down."<sup>19</sup></p>	<p>Grípir said: 33. "A wicked woman's wiles will snare thee: Will Queen Grímhild<sup>44</sup> beguile thy mind And offer to thee her own daughter, The lovely maiden, and lure thee on."</p>
<p>Sigurd 34. Shall I then with Gunnar form relationship, And with Gudrun join in wedlock? Well wived then the king would be, If the pangs of perjury caused me no pain.</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 34. "Might I with Gunnar   kinship make, And Guthrun win   to be my wife, Well the hero   wedded would be, If my treacherous deed   would trouble me not."</p>	<p>Sigurd said: 34. "Then Gunnar's<sup>45</sup> kinsman the king<sup>46</sup> will be, When that as wife he weds Guthrún. Full well wedded then would I be, If the ruler rued not the wrong that's done."</p>
<p>Gripir 35. Thee will Grimhild wholly beguile; She will implore thee Brynhild to demand For the hand of Gunnar, king of Goths: / The journey thou wilt forthwith promise to the king's mother.</p>	<p>Gripir spake: 35. "Wholly Grimhild   thy heart deceives, She will bid thee go   and Brynhild woo<sup>20</sup> For Gunnar's wife,   the lord of the Goths;<sup>21</sup> And the prince's mother   thy promise shall win."</p>	<p>Grípir said: 35. "Will Grímhild beguile thee altogether, And egg thee on to ask Brynhild For Gunnar's wife, the Gothic<sup>47</sup> king's: Thy faith wilt thou forthwith plight him."</p>
<p>Sigurd 36. Evils are at hand, I can that perceive; Sigurd's wits will have wholly perished,</p>	<p>Sigurth spake: 36. "Evil waits me,   well I see it, And gone is Sigurth's   wisdom good,</p>	<p>Sigurth said: 36. "Ill hap draws night—I behold it well; Foresight Sigurth, I fear me, leack</p>

<p>If I shall demand for another's hand, A noble maiden whom I well love.</p> <p>Gripir 37. All of you will swear mutual oaths, Gunnar, and Hogni, and thou the third; And ye will forms exchange, when on the way ye are, Gunnar and thou: Gripir lies not.</p> <p>Sigurd 38. To what end is that? Why shall we exchange Forms and manners, when on the way we are? Another fraud will surely follow this, Altogether horrible. But say on, Gripir!</p> <p>Gripir 39. Thou wilt have Gunnar's semblance, and his manners, Thy own eloquence, and great sagacity: There thou wilt betroth the high-minded Ward of Heimir: no one can that prevent.</p> <p>Sigurd 40. To me that seems worst, that among men I shall be a false traitor called, if such take place. I would not deception practise On a royal maid the most excellent I know.</p> <p>Gripir 41. Thou wilt repose, leader of hosts! Pure with the maiden, as she thy mother were; Therefore exalted, lord of men! While the world endures thy name will be.</p> <p>42. The nuptials will of both be solemnized, Of Sigurd and of Gunnar, in Giuki's halls; Then will ye forms exchange, when ye home return; Yet to himself will have each his own senses.</p> <p>Sigurd 43. Will then Gunnar, chief among men, The noble woman wed? Tell me that, Gripir! Although three nights by me the chieftain's bride Glad of heart has slept? The like has no example.</p> <p>44. How for happiness shall hereafter Be this affinity? Tell me that, Gripir! Will the alliance for Gunnar's solace Henceforth prove, or even for mine?</p>	<p>If I shall woo   for another to win The maiden fair   that so fondly I loved."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 37. "Ye three shall   all the oaths<sup>22</sup> then take, Gunnar and Hogni,   and, hero, thou; Your forms ye shall change,<sup>23</sup>   as forth ye tare, Gunnar and thou;   for Gripir lies not."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 38. "How meanest thou?   Why make we the change Of shape and form   as forth we fare? There must follow   another falsehood Grim in all ways;   speak on, Gripir!"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 39. "The form of Gunnar   and shape thou gettest, But mind and voice   thine own remain; The hand of the fosterling   noble of Heimir Now dost thou win,   and none can prevent."<sup>24</sup></p> <p>Sigurth spake: 40. "Most evil it seems,   and men will say Base is Sigurth   that so he did; Not of my will shall   I cheat with wiles The heroes' maiden   whom noblest I hold."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 41. "Thou dwellest, leader   lofty of men, With the maid as if   thy mother she were; [With thy sword between,   three nights thou sleepest With her thou winnest   for Gunnar's wife]<sup>25</sup> Lofty as long   as the world shall live, Ruler of men,   thy name shall remain."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 42. "Shall Gunnar have   a goodly wife, Famed among men,—   speak forth now, Gripir! Although at my side   three nights she slept, The warrior's bride?   Such ne'er has been."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 43. "The marriage draught   will be drunk for both,<sup>26</sup> For Sigurth and Gunnar,   in Gjuki's hall; Your forms ye change,   when home ye fare, But the mind of each   to himself remains."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 44. "Shall the kinship new   thereafter come To good among us?   Tell me, Gripir! To Gunnar joy   shall it later give, Or happiness send   for me myself?"</p>	<p>If I shall ask for another man Her whom my whole heart I had given."</p> <p>Grípir said: 37. "Oaths will pledge ye altogether, Gunnar and Hogni<sup>48</sup>—thou, hero, too; Each other's form, when faring to her, Takest thou and Gunnar:<sup>49</sup> Gripir lies not."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 38. "How may this happen that he and I Shift face and form when faring to her? Still other falsehoods will follow after, All fraught with sorrow; but say on, Grípir!"</p> <p>Grípir said: 39. "Wilt borrow Gunnar's bearing and form, But keep thy speech and spirit eke; Wilt pledge the troth of the proudhearted Winsome woman: fate wills it so."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 40. "Little I like it; a loathly deed All thanes will think it, if thus I do. With wiles I would not woo for Gunnar As bridge Brynhild, best of maidens."</p> <p>Grípir said: 41. "Wilt, Sigurth, sleep at the side three nights Of the maiden, as though they mother she were;<sup>50</sup> Will hence be known thy name, great king, The while, warrior, the world lasteth."</p> <p>Sigurth said:<sup>51</sup> 42. "Will the war-worker<sup>52</sup> win thereafter The good woman—this, Grípir, tell me!— Three nights although the thane's fair bride With me did sleep? A marvel were it."</p> <p>Grípir said: 43. "Together will both bridals be drunk,<sup>53</sup> Sigurth's and Gunnar's, in Gjúki's hall. The sham shapes then will yet shift at home, Though each within him his own thoughts kept."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 44. "What hap thereafter will have we twain,<sup>54</sup> When wedded thus? I wish to know. Will Gunnar's lot be good, thereafter, And eke my own? I ask thee, Grípir."</p>
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<p>Gripir 45. Thou wilt the oaths remember, and must silence keep, And let Gudrun enjoy a happy union. Brynhild nathless will herself think an ill-married woman. She will wiles devise to avenge herself.</p> <p>Sigurd 46. What atonement will that woman take, For the frauds we shall have practised on her? From me the maiden has oaths sworn, But never kept, and but little joy.</p> <p>Gripir 47. She to Gunnar will plainly declare, That thou didst not well the oaths observe, When the noble king, Giuki's heir, With his whole soul, in thee confided.</p> <p>Sigurd 48. What will then follow? Let me know that. Will that tale appear as true, or that the noble woman Falsely accuses me, and herself also. Tell me that, Gripir!</p> <p>Gripir 49. From spite towards thee, and from o'erwhelmmg grief, The powerful dame will not most wisely act. To the noble woman do thou no further harm, Though thou the royal bride with guiles hast circumvented.</p> <p>Sigurd 50. Will the prudent Gunnar, Guthorm, and Hogni, At her instigation, then proceed? Will Giuki's sons on their relative redden their swords? Tell me further, Gripir!</p> <p>Gripir 51. Then will Gudrun be furious at heart, When her brothers shall on thy death resolve. In nothing then will that wise woman take delight. Such is Grimhild's work.</p> <p>52. In this thou shalt find comfort, leader of hosts! This fortune is allotted to the hero's life: A more renowned man on earth shall never be, Under the sun's abode, than thou wilt be accounted.</p> <p>Sigurd 53. Now part we, now farewell! Fate may not be withstood. Now hast thou, Gripir! done as I prayed thee:</p>	<p>Gripir spake: 45. "Thine oaths remembering,<sup>27</sup>   silent thou art, And dwellest with Guthrun   in wedlock good; But Brynhild shall deem   she is badly mated, And wiles she seeks,   herself to avenge."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 46. "What may for the bride   requital be, The wife we won   with subtle wiles? From me she has   the oaths I made, And kept not long;   they gladdened her little."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 47. "To Gunnar soon   his bride will say That ill didst thou   thine oath fulfill, When the goodly king,   the son of Gjuki, With all his heart   the hero trusted."<sup>28</sup></p> <p>Sigurth spake: 48. "What sayst thou, Gripir?   give me the truth! Am I guilty so   as now is said, Or lies does the far-famed   queen put forth Of me and herself?   Yet further speak."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 49. "In wrath and grief   full little good The noble bride   shall work thee now; No shame thou gavest   the goodly one, Though the monarch's wife   with wiles didst cheat."</p> <p>Sigurth spake: 50. "Shall Gunnar the wise   to the woman's words, And Gotthorm<sup>29</sup> and Hogni,   then give heed? Shall Gjuki's sons,   now tell me, Gripir, Redden their blades   with their kinsman's blood?"</p> <p>Gripir spake: 51. "Heavy it lies   on Guthrun's heart, When her brothers all   shall bring thee death; Never again   shall she happiness know, The woman so fair;   'tis Grimhild's work."</p> <p>Sigurth spake:<sup>30</sup> 52. "Now fare thee well!   our fates we shun not; And well has Gripir   answered my wish; More of joy   to me wouldst tell Of my life to come   if so thou couldst."</p> <p>Gripir spake: 53 "Ever remember, ruler of men, That fortune lies in the hero's life;</p>	<p>Grípir said: 45. "The oaths thou'lt remember, yet utter them not, Wilt grudge not Guthrún thy goodly body; But Brynhild will ween her a bride mismated: The woman will of the wiles avenge her."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 46. "What will I give, the grief to allay Of the woman, since we with wiles tricked her? Hath the fair one from me false oaths many, Lying pledges, but little joy."</p> <p>Grípir said: 47. "To Gunnar goes she, will grimly tell How that thy oaths most ill didst keep, When altogether Gjúki's son had, The liege's lord, believed in thee."<sup>55</sup></p> <p>Sigurth said: 48. "How now, Grípir, give me answer: Did in truth I betray the king? Or will lie on me the highborn lady—<sup>56</sup> On me and herself? Say now, Grípir!"</p> <p>Grípir said: 49. "In anger will deal ill with thee, In moody mourning, the mighty queen: No whit hast thou harmed the lady, Though the king's wife ye with wiles did trick."</p> <p>Sigurth said: 50. "Will Gunnar and Hogni, and Guthorm<sup>57</sup> eke, Be egged thereafter against their oaths? Will Gjúki's sons their swords redden In Sigurth's blood? Say on, Grípir!"</p> <p>Grípir said: 51. "With grim grief will be Guthrún's heart filled, The time her brothers betray her foully; Nor love ever the lady hath, Nor gladness, thereafter:<sup>58</sup> 'tis Grímhild's fault."</p> <p>Sigurth said:<sup>59</sup> 52. "Fare thee well, then: over fate wins no one. Thou'st done my bidding as best thou could'st; A fairer fate thou fain had'st told me, Grípir, ungrudging, if granted it were."</p> <p>Grípir said: 53. "May ay this ease the atherling's heart: Is this lot, leader, to thy life given:</p>
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Thou wouldst have fain a happier end foretold me Of my life's days, hadst thou been able.	A nobler man shall never live Beneath the sun than Sigurth shall seem."	Will no better hero be born in the world 'Neath sun in heaven than, Sigurth, thou!"
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<sup>1</sup> The manuscript gives the poem no title.

<sup>2</sup> Gripir: this uncle of Sigurth's was probably a pure invention of the poet's. The *Volsungasaga* mentions him, but presumably only because of his appearance here.

<sup>3</sup> On Eylimi and Hjordis see *Fra Dautha Sinfjotla* and note.

<sup>4</sup> Geitir, the serving-man, is likewise apparently an invention of the poet's.

<sup>5</sup> The manuscript does not indicate the speakers anywhere in the poem. Some editors have made separate stanzas out of the two-line speeches in stanzas 1, 3 and 6.

<sup>6</sup> Sigurth: a few editions use in the verse the older form of this name, "Sigvorth," though the manuscript here keeps to the form used in this translation. The Old High German "Sigifrid" ("Peace-Bringer through Victory") became the Norse "Sigvorth" ("Victory-Guarder"), this, in turn, becoming "Sigurth."

<sup>7</sup> Bugge thinks a stanza has been lost after stanza 4, in which Geitir tells Gripir who Sigurth is.

<sup>8</sup> Grani. Sigurth's horse. According to the *Volsungasaga* his father was Sleipnir, Othin's eight-legged horse, and Othin himself gave him to Sigurth. The introductory note to the *Reginismol* tells a different story.

<sup>9</sup> Thy father: on the death of Sigmund and Eylimi at the hands of Hunding's sons see *Fra Dautha Sinfjotla* and note.

<sup>10</sup> The dragon: Fafnir, brother of the dwarf Regin, who turns himself into a dragon to guard Andvari's hoard; cf. *Reginismol* and *Fafnismol*.

<sup>11</sup> Gnitaeith: a relic of the German tradition; it has been identified as lying south of Paderborn.

<sup>12</sup> Gjuki: the Norse form of the name Gibeche ("The Giver"). Gjuki is the father of Gunnar, Hogni, and Guthrun, the family which reflects most directly the Burgundian part of the tradition (cf. Introductory Note). The statement that Sigurth is to go direct from the slaying of Fafnir to Gjuki's hall involves one of the confusions resulting from the dual personality of Brynhild. In the older (and the original South Germanic) story, Sigurth becomes a guest of the Gjukungs before he has ever heard of Brynhild, and first sees her when, having changed forms with Gunnar, he goes to woo her for the latter. In another version he finds Brynhild before he visits the Gjukungs, only to forget her as the result of the magic-draught administered by Guthrun's mother. Both these versions are represented in the poems of which the author of the *Gripisspo* made use, and he tried, rather clumsily, to combine them, by having Sigurth go to Gjuki's house, then find the unnamed Valkyrie, and then return to Gjuki, the false wooing following this second visit.

<sup>13</sup> Basing his story on the *Sigrdrifumol*, the poet here tells of Sigurth's finding of the Valkyrie, whom he does not identify with Brynhild, daughter of Buthli (stanza 27), at all. His error in this respect is not surprising, in view of Brynhild's dual identity (cf. Introductory Note, and *Fafnismol*, 44 and note).

<sup>14</sup> Helgi: according to *Helreith Brynhildar* (stanza 8), with which the author of the *Gripisspo* was almost certainly familiar, the hero for whose death Brynhild was punished was named *Hjalmgunnar*. Is Helgi here identical with Hjalmgunnar, or did the author make a mistake? Finnur Jonsson thinks the author regarded Sigurth's Valkyrie as a fourth incarnation of Svava-Sigrun-Kara, and wrote Helgi's name in deliberately. Many editors, following Bugge, have tried to reconstruct line 2 so as to get rid of Helgi's name.

<sup>15</sup> Heimir: the *Volsungasaga* says that Heimir was the husband of Brynhild's sister, Bekkhild. Brynhild's family connections involve a queer mixture of northern and southern legend. Heimir and Bekkhild are purely of northern invention; neither of them is mentioned in any of the earlier poems, though Brynhild speaks of her "foster-father" in *Helreith Brynhildar*. In the older Norse poems Brynhild is a sister of Atli (Attila), a relationship wholly foreign to the southern stories, and the father of this strangely assorted pair is Buthli, who in the *Nibelungenlied* is apparently Etzel's grandfather. Add to this her role of Valkyrie, and it is small wonder that the annotator himself was puzzled.

<sup>16</sup> Brynhild ("Armed Warrior"): on her and her family see introductory Note and note to stanza 19.

<sup>17</sup> Grimhild: in the northern form of the story Kriemhild, Gunther's sister and Siegfried's wife, becomes Grimhild, mother of Gunnar and Guthrun, the latter taking Kriemhild's place. The *Volsungasaga* tells how Grimhild gave Sigurth a magic draught which made him utterly forget Brynhild.

<sup>18</sup> Most editions have no comma after line 3, and change the meaning to "Fain of thee | the fair-haired one / For her daughter is."

<sup>19</sup> Edzardi thinks two stanzas have been lost after stanza 33, their remains appearing in stanza 37.

<sup>20</sup> In the *Volsungasaga* Grimhild merely advises Gunnar to seek Brynhild for his wife, and to have Sigurth ride with him.

<sup>21</sup> Goths: the historical Gunnar (Gundicarius, cf. Introductory Note) was not a Goth, but a Burgundian, but the word "Goth" was applied in the North without much discrimination to the southern Germanic peoples.

<sup>22</sup> Oaths: the blood-brotherhood sworn by Sigurth, Gunnar, and Hogni makes it impossible for the brothers to kill him themselves, but they finally get around the difficulty by inducing their half-brother, Gotthorm (cf. *Hyndluljoth*, 27 and note) to do it.

<sup>23</sup> In the *Nibelungenlied* Siegfried merely makes himself invisible in order to lend Gunther his strength for the feats which must be performed in order to win the redoubtable bride. In the northern version Sigurth and Gunnar change forms, "as Grimhild had taught them how to do." The *Volsungasaga* tells how Sigurth and Gunnar came to Heimir, who told them that to win Brynhild one must ride through the ring of fire which surrounded her hall (cf. the hall of Mengloth in *Svipdagsmol*). Gunnar tries it, but his horse balks; then he mounts Grani, but Grani will not stir for him. So they change forms, and Sigurth rides Grani through the flames.

<sup>24</sup> The last half of line 4 is obscure, and the reading is conjectural.

<sup>25</sup> Something is clearly wrong with stanzas 41-43. In the manuscript the order is 41, 43, 42, which brings two of Gripir's answers together, followed by two of Sigurth's questions. Some editors have arranged the stanzas as in this translation, while others have interchanged 41 and 43. In any case, Sigurth in stanza 42 asks about the "three nights" which Gripir has never mentioned. I suspect that lines 3-4 of stanza 41, which are practically identical with lines 3-4 of stanza 23, got in here by mistake, replacing two lines which may have run as given in brackets. The subsequent poems tell how Sigurth laid his sword Gram between himself and Brynhild.

<sup>26</sup> The simultaneous weddings of Sigurth and Gunnar form a memorable feature of the German tradition as it appears in the *Nibelungenlied*, but in the *Volsungasaga* Sigurth marries Guthrun before he sets off with Gunnar to win Brynhild.

<sup>27</sup> According to the *Volsungasaga*, Sigurth remembers his oaths to Brynhild almost immediately after his return to Gunnar's house. Brynhild, on the other hand, knows nothing until the famous quarrel between herself and Guthrun at the bath (another reminiscence of the German story), when she taunts Guthrun with Sigurth's inferiority to Gunnar, and Guthrun retorts with the statement that it was Sigurth, and not Gunnar, who rode through the flames.

<sup>28</sup> Brynhild tells Gunnar that Sigurth really possessed her during the three nights when he slept by her in Gunnar's form, thus violating his oath. Here again there is a confusion of two traditions. If Sigurth did not meet Brynhild until after his oath to Gunnar (cf. note on stanza 13), Brynhild's charge is entirely false, as she herself admits in *Helreith Brynhildar*. On the other hand, according to the version in which Sigurth finds Brynhild before he meets Gjuki's sons, their union was not only completed, but she had by him a daughter, Aslaug, whom she leaves in Heimir's charge before going to become Gunnar's wife. This is the *Volsungasaga* version, and thus the statement Brynhild makes to Gunnar, as a result of which Sigurth is slain, is quite true.

<sup>29</sup> Gotthorm: Gunnar's half-brother, and slayer of Sigurth.

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<sup>30</sup> The manuscript has stanzas 52 and 53 in inverse order.

<sup>31</sup> Both person and name are probably the invention of the poet.

<sup>32</sup> “Goat-herd.” Compare with the situation in *Skírnismál* and *Fjólsvinnsmál*.

<sup>33</sup> A standard epithet. See *Fáfnismál*, St.29.

<sup>34</sup> See the Prose at the end of *Fáfnismál*.

<sup>35</sup> See *Reginismál*, Sts.15-26.

<sup>36</sup> Supposed to be in Germany, by the Rhine. See *Völundarkviða*, St.14.

<sup>37</sup> The Burgundian king, Grimhild’s husband, and father of Gunnar, Hogni, and Guthrún. His name corresponds to MHG. *Gibeche*, “The Generous.”

<sup>38</sup> Brynhild.

<sup>39</sup> It has been suggested that this Helgi is identical with the Hjálmgunnar who is mentioned in the Prose following St.4 of *Sigrdrífumál* and in *Helreið Brynhildar*, St.8.

<sup>40</sup> These Runic instructions form the main contents of *Sigrdrífumál*.

<sup>41</sup> Brynhild’s foster father. Her father, in Norse tradition, is Buthli; her brother Atli. See St.27 below.

<sup>42</sup> “Maiden in Byrnie.”

<sup>43</sup> The popular assembly. See *Hávamál*, St.114.

<sup>44</sup> “Maiden in Helmet (Vizor).” She corresponds to the Uote of the *Nibelungenlied*. Her daughter is Guthrún [MGH. *Kâdrân*], “Knowing Battle Runes,” whose role is that of Kriemhild in the *Nibelungenlied*. Much of what follows is taken from the poems of “The Great Lacuna.”

<sup>45</sup> “Leader in Battle.” Both name and person correspond to the Gunther of the *Nibelungenlied*.

<sup>46</sup> Sigurth.

<sup>47</sup> Here, as often, used as an honorific epithet.

<sup>48</sup> The Hagene of the *Nibelungenlied*.

<sup>49</sup> As is told in *Brot af Sigurþarkviðu*.

<sup>50</sup> He laid his sword between himself and Brynhild. *Brot af Sigurþarkviðu*, St.20, and *Sigurþarkviða hin skamma*, Sts.4 and 67.

<sup>51</sup> Bugge’s ordering of stanzas 42-44 is followed.

<sup>52</sup> Gunnar.

<sup>53</sup> Such is the case in the *Nibelungenlied*.

<sup>54</sup> Gunnar and Sigurth.

<sup>55</sup> For this and the following events see *Brot af Sigurþarkviðu*, *Sigurþarkviða hin skamma*, and *Guðrúnarkviða II*.

<sup>56</sup> Brynhild.

<sup>57</sup> Gunnar’s stepbrother, who had not sworn Sigurth oaths. See *Brot af Sigurþarkviðu*, St.4, and *Guðrúnarkviða II*, St.7.

<sup>58</sup> The contents of the Guthrún Lays.

<sup>59</sup> The ordering of Sts. 52 and 53 following Grundtvig.