

GUÐRÚNARHVÖT

(*Guðrún's Incitement, or, Guðrún's Lament*)

Bellows' Introduction (1936)

The two concluding poems in the *Codex Regius*, the *Guthrunarhvot* (Guthrun's Inciting) and the *Hamthesmol* (The Ballad of Hamther), belong to a narrative cycle connected with those of Sigurth, the Burgundians, and Atli (cf. *Gripisspo*, introductory note) by only the slenderest of threads. Of the three early historical kings who gradually assumed a dominant place in Germanic legend, Ermanarich, king of the East Goths in the middle of the fourth century, was actually the least important, even though Jordanes, the sixth century author of *De Rebus Getecis*, compared him to Alexander the Great. Memories of his cruelty and of his tragic death, however, persisted along with the real glories of Theoderich, a century and a half later, and of the conquests of Attila, whose lifetime approximately bridged the gap between Ermanarich's death and Theoderich's birth.

Chief among the popular tales of Ermanarich's cruelty was one concerning the death of a certain Sunilda or Sanielh, whom, according to Jordanes, he caused to be torn asunder by wild horses because of her husband's treachery. Her brothers, Sarus and Ammius, seeking to avenge her, wounded but failed to kill Ermanarich. In this story is the root of the two Norse poems included in the *Codex Regius*. Sunilda easily became the wife as well as the victim of the tyrant, and, by the process of legend-blending so frequently observed, the story was connected with the more famous one of the Nibelungs by making her the daughter of Sigurth and Guthrun. To account for her brothers, a third husband had to be found for Guthrun; the Sarus and Ammius of Jordanes are obviously the Sorli and Hamther, sons of Guthrun and Jonak, of the Norse poems. The blending of the Sigurth and Ermanarich legends probably, though not certainly, took place before the story reached the North, in other words before the end of the eighth century.

Regarding the exact status of the *Guthrunarhvot* and the *Hamthesmol* there has been a great deal of discussion. That they are closely related is obvious; indeed the first parts of the two poems are nearly identical in content and occasionally so in actual diction. The annotator, in his concluding prose note, refers to the second poem as the "old" ballad of Hamther, wherefore it has been assumed by some critics that the composer of the *Guthrunarhvot* used the *Hamthesmol*, approximately as it now stands, as the source of part of his material. The extant *Hamthesmol*, however, is almost certainly a patchwork; part of it is in *fornyrthislag* (cf. Introduction), including most of the stanzas paralleled in the *Guthrunarhvot*, and likewise the stanza followed directly by the reference to the "old" ballad, while the rest is in *malahattr*. The most reasonable theory, therefore, is that there existed an old ballad of Hamther, all in *fornyrthislag*, from which the composer of the *Guthrunarhvot* borrowed a few stanzas as the introduction for his poem, and which the composer of the extant, or "new," *Hamthesmol* likewise used, though far more clumsily.

The title "*Guthrunarhvot*," which appears in the *Codex Regius*, really applies only to stanzas 1-8, all presumably borrowed from the "old" ballad of Hamther. The rest of the poem is simply another Guthrun lament, following the tradition exemplified by the first and second Guthrun lays; it is possible, indeed, that it is made up of fragments of two separate laments, one (stanzas 9-18) involving the story of Svanhild's death, and the other (stanzas 19-21) coming from an otherwise lost version of the story in which Guthrun closely follows Sigurth and Brynhild in death. In any event the present title is really a misnomer; the poet, who presumably was an eleventh century Icelander, used the episode of Guthrun's inciting her sons to vengeance for the slaying of Svanhild simply as an introduction to his main subject, the last lament of the unhappy queen.

The text of the poem in *Regius* is by no means in good shape, and editorial emendations have been many and varied, particularly in interchanging lines between the *Guthrunarhvot* and the *Hamthesmol*. The *Volsungasaga* paraphrases the poem with such fidelity as to prove that it lay before the compilers of the saga approximately in its present form.

OUTLINE

[line numbers according to Bellows]

P1	Summary of <i>Hamðismál</i> Events
1-8	Guthrún incites her Sons to Vengeance
9-18	Guthrún Lament I: Of Svanhild's Death
19-21	Guthrún Lament II: Of Sigurd's Vow

Thorpe (1866)	Bellows (1936)	Hollander (1962)
<p>Having slain Atli, Gudrun went to the sea-shore. She went out into the sea, and would destroy herself, but could not sink. She was borne across the firth to the land of King Jonakr, who married her. Their sons were Sorli, Erp, and Hamdir. There was reared up Svanhild, the daughter of Sigurd. She was given in marriage to Jormunrek the Powerful. With him lived Bikki, who counselled Randver, the king's son, to take her. Bikki told that to the king, who caused Randver to be hanged, and Svanhild trodden under horses' feet. When Gudrun heard of this she said to her sons:—</p> <p>1. Then heard I tell of quarrels dire, Hard sayings uttered from great affliction, When her sons the fierce-hearted Gudrun, In deadly words, to slaughter instigated.</p> <p>2. "Why sit ye here? why sleep life away? Why does it pain you not joyous words to speak, Now Jormunrek your sister young in years Has with horses trodden, White and black, in the public way, With grey and way-wont Gothic steeds?</p> <p>3. Ye are not like to Gunnar and the others, Nor of soul so valiant as Hogni was. Her ye should seek to avenge, If ye had the courage of my brothers, Or the fierce spirit of the Hunnish kings."</p> <p>4. Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "Little didst thou care Hogni's deed to praise, When Sigurd he from sleep awaked. Thy blue-white bed-clothes were red With thy husband's gore, with death-blood covered.</p> <p>5. "For thy brothers thou didst o'er-hasty vengeance take, Dire and bitter, when thou thy sons didst murder. We young ones' could on Jormunrek, Acting all together, have avenged our sister.</p> <p>6. "Bring forth the arms of the Hunnish kings: Thou hast us stimulated to a sword-mote."</p> <p>7. Laughing Gudrun to the storehouse turned, The kings' crested helms from the coffer drew, Their ample corslets, and to her sons them bore. The young heroes loaded their horses' shoulders.</p>	<p>[P1]² Guthrun³ went forth to the sea after she had slain Atli. She went out into the sea and fain would drown herself, but she could not sink. The waves bore her across the fjord to the land of King Jonak; he took her as wife; their sons were Sorli and Erp and Hamther.⁵ There was brought up Svanhild,⁶ Sigurth's daughter; she was married to the mighty Jormunrek. With him was Bikki,⁷ who counselled that Randver,⁸ the king's son, should have her. This Bikki told to the king. The king had Randver hanged, and Svanhild trodden to death under horses' feet. And when Guthrun learned this, she spake with her sons.</p> <p>1. A word-strife I⁹ learned, most woeful of all, A speech from the fullness of sorrow spoken, When fierce of heart her sons to the fight Did Guthrun whet with words full grim.</p> <p>2. "Why sit ye idle,¹⁰ why sleep out your lives, Why grieve ye not in gladness to speak? Since Jormunrek your sister young Beneath the hoofs of horses hath trodden, (White and black on the battle-way, Gray, road-wonted, the steeds of the Goths.)¹¹</p> <p>3. "Not like are ye to Gunnar of yore, Nor have ye hearts such as Hogni's was; Vengeance for her ye soon would have If brave ye were as my brothers of old, Or hard your hearts as the Hunnish kings'."¹²</p> <p>4. Then Hamther¹³ spake, the high of heart: "Little the deed of Hogni didst love, When Sigurth they wakened from his sleep;¹⁴ Thy bed-covers white were red with blood Of thy husband, drenched with gore from his heart.</p> <p>5. "Bloody¹⁵ revenge didst have for thy brothers, Evil and sore, when thy sons¹⁶ didst slay; Else yet might we all on Jormunrek Together our sister's slaying avenge.</p> <p>6.¹⁷ "The gear of the Hunnish kings now give us! Thou hast whetted us so to the battle of swords."</p> <p>7. Laughing did Guthrun go to her chamber, The helms of the kings from the cupboards she took, And mail-coats broad, to her sons she bore them; ¹⁸On their horses' backs the heroes leaped.</p>	<p>When she had slain Atli, Guthrún went down to the sea to drown herself; but she could not sink. She floated across the bay to the land of King Jónakr.³⁹ He took her to wife, and their sons were Sorli, Erp,⁴⁰ and Hamthir. There was also fostered Svanhild,⁴¹ her daughter by Sigurth. Svanhild was given in marriage to King Jormunrekk⁴² the Mighty. Bikki was his councilor: it was he who led on Randvér, the king's son, to wish to wed her himself. This, Bikki told the king. He had Randvér hanged on the gallows and Svanhild killed under the hoofs of horses.⁴³ But when Guthrún heard of this she spake to her sons (as is told here).</p> <p>1. Wickedest words, most woe-bringing, Out of hate-filled heart heard I spoken When, unflinching, egged to slaughter Guthrún her sons with grim speeches.</p> <p>2. "Why sit ye still and sleep through life, Nor loathe to speak light-hearted words, When Jormunrekk your young sister, Her, Svanhild hight, had by horses trampled."⁴⁴</p> <p>3. "Ye are little like beloved Gunnar, Nor like to Hogni's stout heart is yours: Your sister's slayer would ye seek forthwith If bold ye were like my brothers twain, Or if hardy you were like the Hunnish kings."⁴⁵</p> <p>4. Said then Hamthir, the hardy-minded: "Not so highly thought'st thou of Hogni's deed When from sleep they waked Sigurth, thy spouse:⁴⁶ With blood was thy bluish-white bed linen reddened From grievous gashes, in his gore as he lay.</p> <p>5. "Bitterly didst thou thy brethren avenge, For thyself most sadly, when thy sons didst murder;⁴⁷ With the youths could we Jormunrekk kill— Our sister's slayer—of the same mind all.</p> <p>6. "The helmets⁴⁸ bring of the Hunnish kings— Hast whetted us to hateful strife."</p> <p>7. Laughing, Guthrún to the garner wended, And kingly crests she from the coffer chose, And broad byrnies brought to her sons: The hardy heroes their horses mounted.</p>

<p>8. Then said Hamdir, the great of heart: "So will no more come his mother to see, The warrior felled in the Gothic land, So that thou the funeral-beer after us all may drink, After Svanhild and thy sons."</p> <p>9. Weeping Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, Sorrowing went, to sit in the fore-court, And to recount, with tear-worn cheeks, Sad of soul, her calamities, in many ways.</p> <p>10. "Three fires I have known, three hearths I have known, Of three consorts I have been borne to the house. Sigurd alone to me was better than all, Of whom my brothers were the murderers.</p> <p>11. "Of my painful wounds I might not complain; Yet they even more seemed to afflict me, When those chieftains to Atli gave me.</p> <p>12. "My bright boys I called to speak with me; For my injuries I could not get revenge, Ere I had severed the Hniflungs' heads.</p> <p>13. "To the sea-shore I went, against the Norns I was embittered; I would cast off their persecution; Bore, and submerged me not the towering billows; Up on land I rose, because I was to live.</p> <p>14. "To the nuptial couch I went—as I thought better for me,— / For the third time, with a mighty king. I brought forth offspring, guardians of the heritage, Guardians of the heritage, Jonakr's sons.</p> <p>15. "But around Svanhild bond-maidens sat; Of all my children her I loved the best. Svanhild was, in my hall, As was the sun-beam, fair to behold.</p> <p>16. "I with gold adorned her, and with fine raiment, Before I gave her to the Gothic people. That is to me the hardest of all my woes, That Svanhild's beauteous locks should In the mire be trodden under horses' feet.</p> <p>17. "But that was yet more painful, when my Sigurd They ingloriously slew in his bed; Thought of all most cruel, when of Gunnar The glistening serpents to the vitals crawled; But the most agonizing, which to my heart flew,</p>	<p>8. Then Hamther spake, the high of heart:¹⁹ "Homeward no more his mother to see Comes the spear-god,²⁰ fallen mid Gothic folk; One death-draught thou for us all shalt drink, For Svanhild then and thy sons as well."²¹</p> <p>9. Weeping Guthrun, Gjuki's daughter, Went sadly before the gate to sit, And with tear-stained cheeks to tell the tale Of her mighty griefs, so many in kind.</p> <p>10. "Three home-fires knew I, three hearths I knew, Home was I brought by husbands three; But Sigurth only of all was dear, He whom my brothers brought to his death.</p> <p>11. "A greater sorrow I saw not nor knew,²² Yet more it seemed I must suffer yet When the princes²³ great to Atli gave me.</p> <p>12.²⁴ "The brave boys I summoned to secret speech; For my woes requital I might not win Till off the heads of the Hniflungs²⁵ I hewed.</p> <p>13. "To the sea I went, my heart full sore For the Norns,²⁶ whose wrath I would now escape; But the lofty billows bore me undrowned, Till to land I came, so I longer must live.</p> <p>14. "Then to the bed— of old was it better!— Of a king of the folk a third time I came; Boys I bore his heirs to be, ²⁷Heirs so young, the sons of Jonak.</p> <p>15. "But round Svanhild handmaidens sat, She was dearest ever of all my children; So did Svanhild seem in my hall As the ray of the sun is fair to see.</p> <p>16. "Gold I gave her and garments bright, Ere I let her go to the Gothic folk; Of my heavy woes the hardest it was When Svanhild's tresses fair were trodden In the mire by hoofs of horses wild.²⁸</p> <p>17.²⁹ "The sorest it was when Sigurth mine On his couch, of victory robbed, they killed; And grimpest of all when to Gunnar's heart There crept the bright-hued crawling snakes.³⁰</p>	<p>8. Then said Hamthir the high-minded: "So will wend hither to his mother's hall The god-of-spears,⁴⁹ in Gothland⁵⁰ slain, That for all of us thou mayst arvel drink: For Svanhild, our sister, and thy sons also."</p> <p>9. Weeping, Guthrún, Gjúki's daughter, Sate her sadly beside the hall With tear-wet cheeks, to tell her sorrow, Her weary tale, in many a way.</p> <p>10. "Three homes knew I, three hearth fires; Was I brought to the hall of husbands three; Matchless 'mong men was to me Sigurth— He whom murdered Hogni and Gunnar.</p> <p>11. "More woeful wife,⁵¹ ween I, never lived, (nor was ever wight in the world thus wronged);⁵² But sadder still seemed it to me When the athelings to Atli gave me.</p> <p>12. "The keen-eyed youths⁵³ I called to me: To wreak my wrath I wrought it thus: I hewed off the heads of the Hniflung heirs.</p> <p>13. "To the sea I wended, weary of life, The hateful norns I hoped to thwart.⁵⁴ Tossed me, nor drowned, the tow'ring billows, On land me lifted, to live on doomed.</p> <p>14. "The bed I mounted—had better fate hoped— Once more mated, with a mighty king.⁵⁵ I issue bore, as heirs twain sons, As heirs twain sons to the atheling.</p> <p>15. "About Svanhild seated sate her bondmaids, Whom of all my children I cherished most: Of hue whiter, my halls within, Than bright sunbeams were Svanhild's brows.</p> <p>16. "In gold I arrayed her and goodly cloths, Ere that to Gothland I gave her away.</p> <p>17. "The saddest this of my sorrows all, When horses' feet the fair hair trod On Svanhild's head, besmirched in mire.</p> <p>18. "But sorest this,⁵⁶ when my Sigurth they Did murder foully, fey, in my bed; But bitterest this, when my brother Gunnar The glittering snakes slavered over.</p>
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<p>When the brave king's heart they while quick cut out.</p> <p>18. "Many griefs I call to memory, many ills I call to memory. Guide, Sigurd! thy black steed, Thy swift courser, hither let it run. Here sits no son's wife, no daughter, Who to Gudrun precious things may give.</p> <p>19. "Remember, Sigurd! what we together said, When on our bed we both were sitting, That thou, brave one, wouldst come to me From Hel's abode, but I from the world to thee.</p> <p>20. "Raise, ye Jarls! an oaken pile; Let it under heaven the highest be. May it burn a breast full of woes! The fire round my heart its sorrows melt!"</p> <p>21. May all men's lot be bettered, All women's sorrow lessened, To whom this tale of woes shall be recounted.</p>	<p>18. "And keenest of all when they cut the heart From the living breast of the king³¹ so brave; Many woes I remember, ³²</p> <p>19.³³ "Bridle, Sigurth, thy steed³⁴ so black, Hither let run thy swift-faring horse; Here there sits not son or daughter Who yet to Guthrun gifts shall give.</p> <p>20. "Remember, Sigurth, what once we said, When together both on the bed we sat, That mightily thou to me wouldst come From hell and I from earth to thee.³⁵</p> <p>21.³⁶ "Pile ye up, jarls, the pyre of oak, Make it the highest a hero e'er had; Let the fire burn my grief-filled breast, My sore-pressed³⁷ heart, till my sorrows melt."</p> <p>22. May nobles all less sorrow know, And less the woes of women become, Since the tale of this lament is told.³⁸</p>	<p>19. "But hardest this, when to the heart Of hardy Hogni hewed the king's men. I called to mind many sorrows— (Why should I bide to bear still more?)⁵⁷</p> <p>20. "Bridle, Sigurth, the black-hued steed, Let the fleet-footed horse hitherward run: Here sitteth with me nor son's wife nor daughter To give Guthrún golden trinkets.⁵⁸</p> <p>21. "To mind call thou what to me didst say, The time we, Sigurth, sate together: That from Hel, hero, would'st hither wend, As would I to thee out of the world.</p> <p>22. "Raise up, ye earls, the oaken heap, Under heaven let it the highest be, That fire may burn the hate-filled breast's Carks and cares, and quell all sorrows.</p> <p>23. "May it lighten your lot, ye earls, And ye, noble women, your woe also, To have hearkened to the harrowing tale (of Guthrún's sorrows, Gjúki's daughter)."⁵⁹</p>
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¹ Themselves and the two sons of Atli.

² In the manuscript the prose is headed "Of Guthrun," the title "*Guthrunarhvot*" preceding stanza 1. The prose introduction is used both by Snorri (*Skaldskaparmal*, chapter 42) and in the *Volsungasaga*. It would be interesting to know on what the annotator based this note, for neither Bikki nor Randver is mentioned by name in either the *Guthrunarhvot* or the *Hamthesmol*. On the prose notes in general, cf. *Reginmol*, introductory note.

³ Guthrun: on the slaying of Atli by his wife, Guthrun, Sigurth's widow, cf. *Atlamol*, 83-86 and notes.

⁴ Jonak: a Northern addition to the legend, introduced to account for Svanhild's half-brothers; the name is apparently of Slavic origin.

⁵ Sorli, Erp, and Hamther: Sorli and Hamther are the Sarus and Ammius of the Jordanes story (cf. introductory note). The *Volsungasaga* follows this note in making Erp likewise a son of Guthrun, but in the *Hamthesmol* he is a son of Jonak by another wife.

⁶ Svanhild: cf. *Sigurtharkvitha en skamma*, 54 and note. Jormunrek (Ermanarich): cf. introductory note.

⁷ Bikki: the Sifka or Sibicho of the Gothic legends of Ermanarich, whose evil counsel always brings trouble.

⁸ Randver: in the *Volsungasaga* Jormunrek sends his son Randver with Bikki to seek Svanhild's hand. On the voyage home Bikki says to Randver: "It were right for you to have so fair a wife, and not such an old man." Randver was much pleased with this advice, "and he spake to her with gladness, and she to him." Thus the story becomes near of kin to those of Tristan and Iseult and Paolo and Francesca. According to the *Volsungasaga*, Bikki told Ermanarich that a guilty love existed between his son and his young wife, and presumably the annotator here meant as much by his vague "this."

⁹ The poet's introduction of himself in this stanza is a fairly certain indication of the relative lateness of the poem.

¹⁰ Idle: a guess; a word is obviously missing in the original.

¹¹ The manuscript marks line 5 as beginning a new stanza, and lines 5-6 may well have been inserted from another part of the "old" *Hamthesmol* (cf. *Hamthesmol*, 3).

¹² Gunnar and Hogni: cf. *Drap Niflunga*. Line 5 may be interpolated. Hunnish: here used, as often, merely as a generic term for all South Germanic peoples; the reference is to the Burgundian Gunnar and Hogni.

¹³ Hamther: some editions spell the name "Hamthir."

¹⁴ Sigurth, etc.: cf. *Sigurtharkvitha en skamma*, 21-24, and *Brot*, concluding prose. This stanza has been subjected to many conjectural re-arrangements, some editors adding two or three lines from the *Hamthesmol*.

¹⁵ Bloody: a guess; a word in the original is clearly missing, and the same is true of *all* in line 3.

¹⁶ Thy sons: i.e., by killing her sons Erp and Eitil (cf. *Atlamol*, 72-74) Guthrun deprived Hamther, Sorli, and the second Erp of valuable allies in avenging Svanhild's death.

¹⁷ The manuscript indicates no gap, but most editors assume the loss of one, two or even more lines before the two here given.

¹⁸ The manuscript indicates line 4 as beginning a new stanza.

¹⁹ Line 1, identical with line 1 of stanza 4, may be interpolated here.

²⁰ Spear-god: warrior, i.e., Hamther himself.

²¹ With this stanza the introductory *hvot* ("inciting") ends, and stanza 9 introduces the lament which forms the real body of the poem.

²² Line 1 in the original is of uncertain meaning. Many editors assume the loss of a line after line 1, and some completely reconstruct line 1 on the basis of a hypothetical second line.

²³ Princes: Gunnar and Hogni.

²⁴ Some editors assume the loss of one line, or more, before line 1.

²⁵ Hniflungs: Erp and Eitil, the sons of Guthrun and Atli. On the application of the name Niflung (or, as later spelt, Hniflung) to the descendants of Gjuki, Guthrun's father, cf. *Brot*, 17, note.

²⁶ Norns: the fates; cf. *Voluspo*, 8 and note.

²⁷ The manuscript omits the first half of line 4.

²⁸ Some editors assume a gap of two lines after line 2, and make a separate stanza of lines 3-5; Gering adds a sixth line of his own coining, while Grundtvig inserts one between lines 3 and 4. The manuscript indicates line 5 as beginning a new stanza.

²⁹ The manuscript does not indicate line 1 as beginning a stanza (cf. note on stanza 16). Stanzas 17 and 18 are very likely later interpolations, although the compilers of the *Volsungasaga* knew them as they stand here. The whole passage depends on the shades of difference in the meanings of the various superlatives: *haryastr*, "hardest"; *sarastr*, "sorest"; *grimmastr*, "grimmiest," and *hvassastr*, "keenest."

³⁰ Snakes: cf. *Drap Niflunga*.

³¹ The king: Hogni; cf. *Atlakvitha*, 25.

³² The manuscript marks line 3 as beginning a new stanza. Most editors agree that there is a more or less extensive gap after stanza 19, and some of them contend that the original ending of the poem is lost, stanzas 19-21 coming from a different poem, probably a lament closely following Sigurth's death.

³³ The manuscript does not indicate line 1 as beginning a stanza, and it immediately follows the fragmentary line 3 of stanza 18. The resemblance between stanzas 19-21 and stanzas 64-69 of *Sigurtharkvitha en skamma* suggests that, in some otherwise lost version of the story, Guthrun, like Brynhild, sought to die soon after Sigurth's death.

³⁴ Thy steed: Guthrun's appeal to the dead Sigurth to ride back to earth to meet her is reminiscent of the episode related in *Helgakvitha Hundingsbana II*, 39-48.

³⁵ The promise mentioned in stanza 20 is spoken of elsewhere only in the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase of this passage.

³⁶ Perhaps something has been lost between stanzas 20 and 21, or possibly stanza 21, while belonging originally to the same poem as stanzas 19 and 20, did not directly follow them.

³⁷ Sore-pressed: a guess; a word seems to have been omitted in the original.

³⁸ Words of the poet's, like stanza 1, and perhaps constituting a later addition. Many editors assume the loss of a line after line 3. The meaning, of course, is that the poet hopes the story of Guthrun's woes will make all other troubles seem light by comparison.

³⁹ His name is either Slavic, and his lands hence across the Baltic, or else a corruption of Odoacher, the Germanic ruler of Italy during the fifth century.

⁴⁰ According to *Hamðismál*, St.14, and the indirect evidence of the lay itself, which has the dual form in Guthrún's address to her sons, Erp was Jónakr's son by another woman. His name signifies "the Brownish One." The names of his half brothers are of doubtful meaning.

⁴¹ "(She Who Fights) in Swan Garment."

⁴² Historically, Ermanarich, King of the Ostrogoths in the fourth century.

⁴³ According to the more detailed account of the *Volsunga saga*, Ch.40, and similarly in *Skáldskaparmál*, Ch.39, Randvér and Bikki had been sent to Jónakr to sue for Svanhild's hand. On their return journey the king's son follows Bikki's false counsel and makes love to her. It is returned. They are subsequently betrayed by Bikki. Before mounting the gallows, Randvér plucks a hawk of all his feathers and sends him to his father. The King understands from this token that by the deed he will be shorn of honor as the bird is of feathers and orders his son taken off the gallows; but too late. Whereupon, again instigated by Bikki, the king's wrath turns on Svanhild as the origin of his dishonor. "Then she was bound in the castle gate and horses driven over her. But when she opened her eyes the horses dared not tread on her. When Bikki saw this he said that a sack should be drawn over her head, and so was done, and then she lost her life."

⁴⁴ The Translator has omitted two lines here which are identical with *Hamðismál*, St.3, lines 3-4.

⁴⁵ That is, the race of Sigurth.

⁴⁶ See *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu*, Concluding Prose, and *Sigurþarkviða hin skamma*, Sts.22ff.

⁴⁷ Her sons by Atli, Erp and Eitil, slain by her to avenge the death of the Niflungs. See Sts.11-12 below, *Atlakviða*, Sts.37ff, and *Atlamál*, Sts.74ff.

⁴⁸ In the original, "precious things" ("heirlooms"?)

⁴⁹ Kenning for "warrior": he himself. He foresees his own death.

⁵⁰ Here, for Jormunrekk's dominions.

⁵¹ Conjectural.

⁵² Supplied after Bugge's suggestion.

⁵³ Erp and Eitil. See *Atlakviða*, Sts.39ff, and *Atlamál*, Sts.71ff.

⁵⁴ By cutting short the life allotted to her by them (conjectural).

⁵⁵ Jónakr.

⁵⁶ A crescendo of comparison is scarcely intended in Stanzas 17-19.

⁵⁷ Supplied after Bugge's suggestion.

⁵⁸ She is utterly alone now, foreseeing the death of her last begotten sons, with neither kinsman nor kinswoman to comfort her. See *Hamðismál*, Sts.24ff.

⁵⁹ Supplied after Grundtvig's suggestion.