

**HYNDLULJÓÐ** (*The Lay of Hyndla*)  
*including Völuspá hin skamma.*

**Cottle's Introduction (1797)**

**ARGUMENT**

In this ode, which is sometimes called the *Voluspa brevior*, a certain woman is introduced, soliciting Freyia to settle the dispute between Ottar and Angantyr, concerning their right of inheritance, by unfolding their ancient genealogies. It happens in this ode, as it does indeed in many of the *Edda*, on account of the carelessness of transcribers, that no proper distinction of persons is preserved: therefore many parts are ambiguous, if not obscure, which belong even to the argument itself. For first it is uncertain what person this Freyia is, whether she be a Goddess or a Mortal. Trofæus was of the latter opinion; though it is most probable she was Odin's wife. Then it may be asked, who was Hyndla? She was said to dwell in a cave, and might be, perhaps, one of the Giantesses, who was gifted with the power of prophecy. This is all that can be asserted of her; for she does not appear to have been a Goddess. Ottar is the hero of the Ode, whose pedigree is so pompously related; but what person he was, and in what condition, we are not informed. It is uncertain, also, whether or not he was present at the dispute. If he was, it seems to have been merely as an hearer, under the form of a boar, lest he should be known by Hyndla, who seemed to have favored his rival Angantyr.

**Thorpe's Introduction (1866)**

Freyia rides with her favourite Ottar to Hyndla, a Vala, for the purpose of obtaining information respecting Ottar's genealogy, such information being required by him in a legal dispute with Angantyr. Having obtained this, Freyia further requests Hyndla to give Ottar a potion (*minnisol*) that will enable him to remember all that has been told him. This she refuses, but is forced to comply by Freyia having encircled her cave with flames. She gives him the potion, but accompanied by a malediction, which is by Freyia turned to a blessing.

**Bellows' Introduction (1936)**

The *Hyndluljóth* is found in neither of the great manuscripts of the *Poetic Edda*, but is included in the so-called *Flateyjarbók* (Book of the Flat Island), an enormous compilation made somewhere about 1400. The lateness of this manuscript would of itself be enough to cast a doubt upon the condition in which the poem has been preserved, and there can be no question that what we have of it is in very poor shape. It is, in fact, two separate poems, or parts of them, clumsily put together. The longer one, the *Poem of Hyndla* proper, is chiefly a collection of names, not strictly mythological but belonging to the semi-historical hero-sagas of Norse tradition. The wise-woman, Hyndla, being asked by Freyja to trace the ancestry of her favorite, Ottar, for the purpose of deciding a wager, gives a complex genealogy including many of the heroes who appear in the popular sagas handed down from days long before the Icelandic settlements. The poet was learned, but without enthusiasm; it is not likely that he composed the *Hyndluljóth* much before the twelfth century, though the material of which it is compounded must have been very much older. Although the genealogies are essentially continental, the poem seems rather like a product of the archaeological period of Iceland.

Inserted bodily in the *Hyndluljóth* proper is a fragment of fifty-one lines, taken from a poem of which, by a curious chance, we know the name. Snorri quotes one stanza of it, calling it "*the short Voluspo*." The fragment preserved gives, of course, no indication of the length of the original poem, but it shows that it was a late and very inferior imitation of the great *Voluspo*. Like the *Hyndluljóth* proper, it apparently comes from the twelfth century; but there is nothing whatever to indicate that the two poems were the work of the same man, or were ever connected in any way until some blundering copyist mixed them up. Certainly the connection did not exist in the middle of the thirteenth century, when Snorri quoted "*the short Voluspo*."

Neither poem is of any great value, either as mythology or as poetry. The author of "*the short Voluspo*" seems, indeed, to have been more or less confused as to his facts; and both poets were too late to feel anything of the enthusiasm of the earlier school. The names of Hyndla's heroes, of course, suggest an unlimited number of stories, but as most of these have no direct relation to the poems of the *Edda*, I have limited the notes to a mere record of who the persons mentioned were, and the saga-groups in which they appeared.



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| <p>HYNDLA</p> <p>8. Let us rather now discourse<br/>About fit trappings for the horse;<br/>Then soaring 'bove all lesser things,<br/>Talk of the lineage of kings:<br/>Of heroes who far back can trace<br/>Kindred with celestial race.<br/>No haughty rival shall withhold<br/>From Ottar his paternal gold.</p> <p>9. Ev'ry nerve I willing strain,<br/>That he his long lost right may gain:<br/>That right, by care parental left,<br/>Unjustly from the hero reft.<br/>He rais'd a temple to my name,<br/>And justly may my favor claim:<br/>Far off its crystal turrets shine<br/>As built by architect divine.<br/>And daily at my altars fall<br/>The lowing victims of the stall.<br/>Ottar on me relies for aid,<br/>And well his trust shall be repaid.</p> <p>[Stanzas 10-21 deleted by this compiler]</p> <p>22. As trees that feel the mountain blast,<br/>Their strength'ned roots more widely cast;<br/>So nurs'd in storms, those heroes grew,<br/>And thence unconquer'd brav'ry drew.<br/>Torrents with impetuous sway,<br/>Sweep the prostrate folds away:<br/>Autumnal flames with whirlwind force,<br/>Dispeople forests in their course:<br/>Berserki thus, thro' regions wide,<br/>Scatter'd desolation's tide.<br/>Such ancestry can Ottar boast,<br/>Till far in fabled ages lost!</p> <p>23. Other heroes now I tell ---<br/>I knew Brod and Horver well.<br/>In halls of Rhalf, with dance and song,<br/>Their youthful moments pass'd along.<br/>These, with Jormuker, kindred hold ---<br/>Son-in-law of Sigurd bold.<br/>Hear me, Hyndla! now relate,<br/>Fafner born to hapless fate.<br/>I the hero knew full well ---<br/>Beset with cruel bands he fell.</p> <p>24. He a regal office bore,<br/>From Vaulsung<sup>5</sup> sprung in days of yore.<br/>Hiördisa<sup>6</sup> I can trace<br/>From Herodunger's giant race,<br/>Elymi<sup>7</sup> on his father's side,<br/>Came from Odlingi's valiant tribe.<br/>Such ancestry can Ottar boast,<br/>Till far in fabled ages lost!</p> <p>25. Gunmarr and Hogni both may claim,<br/>From Guiker their paternal fame.<br/>Gudruna too, a father's love,<br/>Did from the hoary chieftain prove.<br/>Guttormer, from a different source,<br/>Dates his not ignoble course:<br/>His sire the same --- but to his bed,<br/>A foreign damsel he had led.<br/>Such ancestry can Ottar boast,<br/>Till far in fabled ages lost!</p> <p>26. Harald known by teeth of gold,<br/>Sprung from Hræreker of old.<br/>Hræreker was Odar's son:<br/>From Juar Oda's fame begun.<br/>To Radbard, Randver was the sire ---<br/>Youth of ev'ry maids desire.<br/>These with heroes were enroll'd,<br/>Whose deeds delighted Gods behold.</p> | <p>Frodi her father was, and her mother Friant:<br/>All that stock is reckoned among chieftains.</p> <p>15. Ali was of old of men the strongest,<br/>Halfdan before him, the highest of the Skioldungs;<br/>(Famed were the wars by those chieftains led)<br/>His deeds seemed to soar to the skirts of heaven.</p> <p>16. By Eimund aided, chief of men,<br/>He Sigtrygg slew with the cold steel.<br/>He Almveig had to wife, first of women.<br/>They begat and had eighteen sons.</p> <p>17. From them the Skioldungs,<br/>from them the Skilfings,<br/>From them the Odlings, from them the Ynglings,<br/>From them the hold-born, from them the hers-born,<br/>The choicest race of men under heaven.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>18. Hildegun her mother was,<br/>Of Svafa born and a sea-king.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski! / Carest thou<br/>this to know? Wishest thou a longer narrative?</p> <p>19. Dag wedded Thora, mother of warriors:<br/>Of that race were born the noble champions,<br/>Fradmar, Gyrd, and the Frekis both,<br/>Am, Josur, Mar, Alf the Old. / Carest thou this to<br/>know? Wishest thou a longer narrative?</p> <p>20. Ketil their friend was named, heir of Klyp;<br/>He was maternal grandsire of thy mother.<br/>Then was Frodi yet before Kari,<br/>But the eldest born was Alf.</p> <p>21. Nanna was next, Nokkvi's daughter; / Her son<br/>was thy father's kinsman, ancient is that kinship.<br/>I knew both Brodd and Horfi.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>22. Isolf, Asolf, Olmod's sons<br/>And Skurhild's Skekkil's daughter;<br/>Thou shalt yet count chieftains many.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>23. Gunnar, Balk, Grim, Ardskafl, Jarnskiold,<br/>Thorir, Ulf, Ginandi, Bui and Brami, Barri and<br/>Reifnir, Tind and Hyrfing, the two Haddings.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>24. To toil and tumult were<br/>The sons of Arngrim born, and of Eyfura:<br/>Ferocious berserker, calamity of every kind,<br/>By land and sea, like fire they carried.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>25. I knew both Brodd and Horfi, they were in the<br/>court of Hrofl the Old; / All descended from<br/>Jormunrek, son-in-law of Sigurd. (Listen to my<br/>story) the dread of nations, him who Fafnir slew.</p> <p>26. He was a king, from Volsung sprung,<br/>And Hiordis from Hrodung;<br/>But Eylim from the Odlings.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>27. Gunnar and Hogni, sons of Giuki;<br/>And Gudrun likewise, their sister.<br/>Guttorm was not of Giuki's race,<br/>Although he brother was of them both.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> | <p>Frothi her father,   and Friaut her mother;--<br/>Her race of the mightiest   men must seem.</p> <p>14.<sup>32</sup> "Of old the noblest   of all was Ali,<br/>Before him Halfdan,<sup>33</sup>   foremost of Skjoldungs;<br/>Famed were the battles   the hero fought,<br/>To the corners of heaven   his deeds were carried.</p> <p>15. "Strengthened by Eymund,   the strongest of<br/>men, / Sigtrygg he slew   with the ice-cold sword;<br/>His bride was Almveig,   the best of women,<br/>And eighteen boys   did Almveig bear him.</p> <p>16.<sup>34</sup> "Hence come the Skjoldungs,  <br/>hence the Skilfings,<br/>Hence the Othlings,   hence the Ynglings,<br/>Hence come the free-born,   hence the high-born,<br/>The noblest of men   that in Mithgarth dwell:<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!</p> <p>17. "Hildigun<sup>35</sup> then   her mother hight,<br/>The daughter of Svava   and Saekonung;<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!<br/>It is much to know,--   wilt thou hear yet more?<sup>36</sup></p> <p>18.<sup>37</sup> "The mate of Dag   was a mother of heroes,<br/>Thora, who bore him   the bravest of fighters,<br/>Fradmar and Gyrd   and the Frekis twain,<br/>Am and Jofurmar,   Alf the Old;<br/>It is much to know,--   wilt thou hear yet more?</p> <p>19. "Her husband was Ketil,<sup>38</sup>   the heir of Klypp,<br/>He was of thy mother   the mother's-father;<br/>Before the days   of Kari was Frothi,<br/>And horn of Hild   was Hoalf<sup>39</sup> then.</p> <p>20. "Next was Nanna,<sup>40</sup>   daughter of Nokkvi,<br/>Thy father's kinsman   her son became;<br/>Old is the line,   and longer still,<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!</p> <p>21. "Isolf and Osofl,   the sons of Olmoth,<sup>41</sup><br/>Whose wife was Skurhild,   the daughter of Skekkil,<br/>Count them among   the heroes mighty,<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!<sup>42</sup></p> <p>22.<sup>43</sup> "Gunnar the Bulwark,   Grim the Hardy,<br/>Thorir the Iron-shield,   Ulf the Gaper,<br/>Brodd and Horvir   both did I know;<br/>In the household they were   of Hrofl the Old.<sup>44</sup></p> <p>23.<sup>45</sup> ["Hervarth, Hjorvarth,   Hrani, Angantyr,]<br/>Bui and Brami,   Barri and Reifnir,<br/>Tind and Tyrping,   the Haddings twain,--<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!</p> <p>24.<sup>46</sup> ["Eastward in Bolm]   were born of old<br/>The sons of Arngrim   and Eyfura;<br/>With berserk-tumult   and baleful deed<sup>47</sup><br/>Like fire o'er land   and sea they fared,<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!<sup>48</sup></p> <p>25.<sup>49</sup> "The sons of Jormunrek<sup>50</sup>   all of yore<br/>To the gods in death   were as offerings given;<br/>He was kinsman of Sigurth,--   hear well what I<br/>say,-- / The foe of hosts,   and Fafnir's slayer.</p> <p>26., "From Volsung's<sup>51</sup> seed   was the hero sprung,<br/>And Hjordis<sup>52</sup> was born   of Hrauthung's race,<br/>And Eylim   from the Othlings came,--<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!</p> <p>27. "Gunnar and Hogni,   the heirs of Gjuki,<br/>And Guthrun as well,   who their sister was,<sup>53</sup><br/>But Gotthorm was not   of Gjuki's race,<br/>Although the brother   of both he was:<br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!</p> |
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| <p>Such ancestry can Ottar boast,<br/>Till far in fabled ages lost!</p> <p>[Here begins the <i>Voluspá brevíor</i>]</p> <p>27. Eleven Asi heroes rose,<br/>Ere Balder's spirit found repose.<br/>Witness of his daring wrong,<br/>With indignation Vali strong,<br/>Swift his sword vindictive drew,<br/>And brother for lost brother slew.<br/>Such ancestry can Ottar boast,<br/>Till far in fabled ages lost!</p> <p>28. From Bur, the sire of Balder came,<br/>A chieftain of no trivial fame.<br/>Freyr's bed did Gerda grace,<br/>From Gimer sprung, of giant race:<br/>Her mother, Orbod, mortals call,<br/>Fam'd for her hospitable hall.<br/>Thiaz, magnificent and good,<br/>Derives from her his kindred blood.<br/>From him a lovely virgin came ---<br/>Skada, among the Gods her name.</p> <p>29. Deeds immortal I unfold!<br/>Mighty deeds remain untold!<br/>To earth my strains do not belong: ---<br/>Other heroes claim my song.</p> <p>30. Haki, grac'd for virtues mild;<br/>Huda, boasted for her child;<br/>Huda, for female virtue fam'd,<br/>Hiorvard for her sire claim'd;<br/>Hrosstiover, and Heider too,<br/>Life and fame from Hrimner drew.</p> <p>31. What females from Vidolva sprung<br/>Magic incantations sung:<br/>Deeply vers'd in mystic spell,<br/>The future, Vilmeid's sons could tell:<br/>The wisest of the human race,<br/>The lineage of Suarhof grace:<br/>And last the giant sons of earth,<br/>From Ymer celebrate their birth.</p> <p>32. Deeds immortal I unfold!<br/>Mighty deeds remain untold!<br/>To earth my strains do not belong: ---<br/>Other heroes claim my song.</p> <p>33. Of elder time a hero came<sup>8</sup><br/>Recorded in the rolls of fame.<br/>The Gods to him reveal'd their lore,<br/>And wisdom open'd every store.<br/>On a green smooth-shaven bank,<br/>Where suns the dews of morning drank,<br/>Nine virgins knew prolific joy,<br/>And bore conjoint the wond'rous boy:<br/>With garlands wreath'd his infant head,<br/>And mildest virtues round him shed.<br/>He was fed by ocean's wave;<br/>Earth to him her tribute gave;<br/>For him rich censers smok'd around,<br/>And blood sacrific dy'd the ground.</p> <p>34. Deeds immortal I unfold!<br/>Mighty deeds remain untold!<br/>To earth my strains do not belong: ---<br/>Other heroes claim my song.</p> <p>35. Father'd by Lok --- the graceless God,<br/>The wolf arose from Angurbod.<br/>That still the sun should yield its light,<br/>And moon irradiate the night,<br/>Lok, compell'd by coward fear,<br/>Led the mare of Sleipner near,<br/>Where journey'd sober on his course</p> | <p>28. Harald Hildetonn, born of Hrærekir<br/>Slongvanbaugi; / He was a son of Aud, Aud the rich<br/>was Ivar's daughter; / But Radbard was Randver's<br/>father. / They were heroes to the gods devoted.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>29. There were eleven Æsir reckoned,<br/>When Baldr on the pile was laid;<br/>Him Vali showed himself worthy to avenge,<br/>His own brother: he the slayer slew.<br/>All that race is thine, Ottar Heimski!</p> <p>30. Baldr's father was son of Bur:<br/>Frey to wife had Gerd, she was Gymir's daughter,<br/>From Jotuns sprung and Aurboda;<br/>Thiassi also was their relation,<br/>That haughty Jotun; Skadi was his daughter.</p> <p>31. We tell thee much, and remember more:<br/>I admonish thee thus much to know.<br/>Wishest thou yet a longer narrative?</p> <p>32. Haki was not the worst of Hvedna's sons,<br/>And Hiorvard was Hvedna's father;<br/>Heid and Hrosstiof were of Hrimnir's race.</p> <p>33. All the Valas are from Vidolf;<br/>All the soothsayers from Vilmeidr,<br/>All the sorcerers from Svarthofdi;<br/>All the Jotuns come from Ymir.</p> <p>34. We tell thee much, and more remember,<br/>I admonish thee thus much to know.<br/>Wishest thou yet a longer narrative?</p> <p>35. There was one born, in times of old,<br/>With wondrous might endowed, of origin divine:<br/>Nine Jotun maids gave birth to the gracious god,<br/>At the world's margin.</p> <p>36. Gjalp gave him birth, Greip gave him birth,<br/>Eistla gave him birth, and Angeia;<br/>Ulfrun gave him birth, and Eyrgjafa,<br/>Imd and Atla, and Jarnsaxa.</p> <p>37. The boy was nourished with the strength of<br/>earth, / With the ice-cold sea, and with Son's blood.<br/>We tell thee much, and more remember.<br/>I admonish thee thus much to know.<br/>Wishest thou a yet longer narrative?</p> <p>38. Loki begat the wolf with Angrboda,<br/>But Sleipnir he begat with Svadilfari:<br/>One monster seemed of all most deadly,<br/>Which from Byleist's brother sprang.</p> <p>39. Loki, scorched up in his heart's affections,<br/>Had found a half-burnt woman's heart.<br/>Loki became guileful from that wicked woman;<br/>Thence in the world are all giantesses come.</p> <p>40. Ocean towers with storms to heaven itself,</p> | <p>28. "Of Hvethna's sons   was Haki the best,<br/>And Hjorvarth the father   of Hvethna<sup>54</sup> was;<br/>. . . . .<sup>55</sup></p> <p>29. "Harald Battle-tooth   of Auth was born,<br/>Hrorek the Ring-giver   her husband was;<br/>Auth the Deep-minded   was Ivar's daughter,<br/>But Rathbarth the father   of Randver was:<sup>56</sup><br/>And all are thy kinsmen,   Ottar, thou fool!"</p> <p>* * *</p> <p>[Fragment of "The Short Voluspá"]<sup>57</sup></p> <p>30. Eleven<sup>58</sup> in number   the gods were known,<br/>When Baldr o'er the hill   of death was bowed;<br/>And this to avenge   was Vali swift,<sup>59</sup><br/>When his brother's slayer   soon he slew.</p> <p>31. The father of Baldr   was the heir of Bur,<sup>60</sup><br/>. . . . .<sup>61</sup></p> <p>32. Freyr's wife was Gerth,   the daughter of Gymir,<br/>Of the giants' brood,   and Aurbodha bore her;<br/>To these as well   was Thjazi kin,<br/>The dark-loving giant;   his daughter was Skathi.<sup>62</sup></p> <p>33. Much have I told thee,   and further will tell;<br/>There is much that I know:--  <br/>Wilt thou hear yet more?</p> <p>34. Heith and Hrosstiof,   the children of Hrimnir.<sup>63</sup><br/>. . . . .</p> <p>35. The sybls arose   from Vitolf's race,<br/>From Vilmeith all   the seers are,<br/>And the workers of charms   are Svarthofthi's<sup>64</sup><br/>children, / And from Ymir sprang   the giants all.<sup>65</sup></p> <p>36. Much have I told thee,   and further will tell;<br/>There is much that I know:--  <br/>wilt thou hear yet more?</p> <p>37. One there was born   in the bygone days,<br/>Of the race of the gods,   and great was his might;<br/>Nine giant women,   at the world's edge,<br/>Once bore the man   so mighty in arms.<sup>66</sup></p> <p>38. Gjolf there bore him,   Greip there bore him,<br/>Eistla bore him,   and Eyrgjafa,<br/>Ulfrun bore him,   and Angeyja,<br/>Imth and Atla,   and Jarnsaxa.<sup>67</sup></p> <p>39. Strong was he made   with the strength of earth,<br/>With the ice-cold sea,   and the blood of swine.<sup>68</sup></p> <p>40. One there was born,   the best of all,<br/>And strong was he made   with the strength of earth;<br/>The proudest is called   the kinsman of men<br/>Of the rulers all   throughout the world.<sup>69</sup></p> <p>41. Much have I told thee,   and further will tell;<br/>There is much that I know:--  <br/>wilt thou hear yet more?</p> <p>42. The wolf did Loki   with Angrbotha win,<sup>70</sup><br/>And Sleipnir bore he   to Svathilfari;<sup>71</sup><br/>The worst of marvels   seemed the one<br/>That sprang from the brother   of Byleist then.<sup>72</sup></p> <p>43. A heart ate Loki,--   in the embers it lay,<br/>And half-cooked found he   the woman's heart;--<br/>With child from the woman   Lopt soon was,<br/>And thence among men   came the monsters all.<sup>73</sup></p> <p>44. The sea, storm-driven,   seeks heaven itself,</p> |
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| <p>The horse endu'd with magic force.</p> <p>36. Of ev'ry steed, thro' hill or dale<br/>That snuff'd the fragrance of the gale,<br/>Suadilfar highest bore her head,<br/>And fleetest thro' the pastures fled.<br/>A wondrous courser was her sire ---<br/>Byleist with nostrils breathing fire.</p> <p>37. Not Gods above, or man can praise,<br/>Lok, the Imp of evil ways.<br/>Smoking on the cindery ground,<br/>An half-burnt sorceress heart he found.<br/>He by female arts was won,<br/>And all his high-born hopes undone.<br/>Ever from that luckless time<br/>Deep he plung'd in ev'ry crime.</p> <p>38. Billowed ocean roars aloud,<br/>And lambent sweeps the impending cloud:<br/>Its exhalations round the world<br/>Are by the tempest's fury hurl'd:<br/>From thence the fleecy snows arise,<br/>And angry whirlwinds shake the skies:<br/>Thence round ev'ry mountain's head<br/>Storms dark low'ring first were bred.</p> <p>39. Exalted in celestial state,<br/>One there is supremely great.<sup>9</sup><br/>To him the Lord of mortal things,<br/>Earth her various tribute brings:<br/>The sons of ages him applaud,<br/>As greatest, wisest, strongest God.<br/>He guides at will the wand'ring spheres,<br/>His voice obedient nature hears.</p> <p>XL.</p> <p>In after times, of greater fame,<sup>10</sup><br/>One shall come I dare not name.<br/>Few there are pretend to see<br/>Farther into destiny,<br/>Than when with inauspicious rage,<br/>Odin shall the wolf engage.</p> <p>[end of <i>Voluspa breviar</i>]<br/>[remainder deleted by this compiler]</p> | <p>Flows o'er the land; the air is rent:<br/>Thence come snows and rapid winds;<br/>Then it is decreed that the rain should cease.</p> <p>41. There was one born greater than all,<br/>The boy was nourished with the strength of earth;<br/>He was declared a ruler, mightiest and richest,<br/>Allied by kinship to all princes.</p> <p>42. Then shall another come, yet mightier,<br/>Although I dare not his name declare.<br/>Few may see further forth<br/>Than when Odin meets the wolf.</p> <p>Freyia</p> <p>43. Bear thou the memory-cup to my guest,<br/>So that he may all the words repeat<br/>Of this discourse, on the third morn,<br/>When he and Angantyr reckon up races.</p> <p>Hyndla</p> <p>44. Go thou quickly hence, I long to sleep;<br/>More of my wondrous power thou gettest not from<br/>me. / Thou runnest, my hot friend, out at nights,<br/>As among he-goats the she-goat goes.</p> <p>45. Thou hast run thyself mad, ever longing;<br/>Many a one has stolen under thy girdle.<br/>Thou runnest, my hot friend, out at nights,<br/>As among he-goats, the she-goat goes.</p> <p>Freyia</p> <p>46. Fire I strike over thee, dweller of the wood!<br/>So that thou goest not ever away from hence.</p> <p>Hyndla</p> <p>47. Fire I see burning, and the earth blazing;<br/>Many will have their lives to save.<br/>Bear thou the cup to Ottar's hand,<br/>The mead with venom mingled, in an evil hour!</p> <p>Freyia</p> <p>48. Thy malediction shall be powerless;<br/>Although thou, Jotun-maid! dost evil threaten.<br/>He shall drink delicious draughts.<br/>All the gods I pray to favour Ottar.</p> | <p>O'er the earth it flows,   the air grows sterile;<br/>Then follow the snows   and the furious winds,<br/>For the gods are doomed,   and the end is death.<sup>74</sup></p> <p>45. Then comes another,   a greater than all,<sup>75</sup><br/>Though never I dare   his name to speak;<br/>Few are they now   that farther can see<br/>Than the moment when Othin   shall meet the<br/>wolf.<sup>76</sup></p> <p>* * *</p> <p>Freyja spake:</p> <p>46. "To my boar now bring   the memory-beer,<br/>So that all thy words,   that well thou hast spoken,<br/>The third morn hence   he may hold in mind,<br/>When their races Ottar   and Angantyr tell."<sup>77</sup></p> <p>Hyndla spake:</p> <p>47. "Hence shalt thou fare,   for fain would I sleep,<br/>From me thou gettest   few favors good;<br/>My noble one, out   in the night thou leapest<br/>As Heithrun goes   the goats among."<sup>78</sup></p> <p>48. "To Oth<sup>79</sup> didst thou run,   who loved thee ever,<br/>And many under   thy apron have crawled;<br/>My noble one, out   in the night thou leapest,<br/>As Heithrun goes   the goats among."<sup>80</sup></p> <p>Freyja spake:</p> <p>49. "Around the giantess   flames shall I raise,<br/>So that forth unburned   thou mayst not fare."<sup>81</sup></p> <p>Hyndla spake:</p> <p>50. "Flames I see burning,   the earth is on fire,<br/>And each for his life   the price must lose;<br/>Bring then to Ottar   the draught of beer,<br/>Of venom full   for an evil fate."</p> <p>Freyja spake:</p> <p>51. "Thine evil words   shall work no ill,<br/>Though, giantess, bitter   thy baleful threats;<br/>A drink full fair   shall Ottar find,<br/>If of all the gods   the favor I get."</p> |
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<sup>1</sup> Sister. --- Hyndla was not the Sister of Freyia who speaks, but this was said to flatter her.

<sup>2</sup> "Mansions of the slain." --- Valhalla.

<sup>3</sup> "At shrines." --- The prevalence of sacrifices among the heathen, is very remarkable.

<sup>4</sup> "Tho' virgins." --- There was perpetual enmity between Thor and the race of Giants.

<sup>5</sup> Vaulsung. --- Was the paternal grandfather of Sigurd.

<sup>6</sup> Hiördisa. --- Was the mother of Sigurd, descended from Halfdan.

<sup>7</sup> Elymi. --- Was the father of Hiördisa, descended from the family of the Lofdungi.

<sup>8</sup> "A hero came" --- Heimdaller.

<sup>9</sup> "One there is." --- Supposed to be meant Thor.

<sup>10</sup> "In after times." --- This is spoken concerning Surtur.

<sup>11</sup> That is, with a rein inscribed with runes.

<sup>12</sup> The road to Valhall.

<sup>13</sup> Freyja: The names of the speakers do not appear in the manuscripts. On Freyja cf. *Voluspo*, 21 and note; *Skirnismol*, introductory prose and note; *Lokasenna*, introductory prose and note. As stanzas 9-10 show, Ottar has made a wager of his entire inheritance with Angantyr regarding the relative loftiness of their ancestry, and by rich offerings (Hyndla hints at less commendable methods) has induced Freyja to assist him in establishing his genealogy. Freyja, having turned Ottar for purposes of disguise into a boar, calls on the giantess Hyndla ("She-Dog") to aid her. Hyndla does not appear elsewhere in the poems.

<sup>14</sup> Heerfather: Othin; cf. *Voluspo*, 30.

<sup>15</sup> Hermoth: mentioned in the *Prose Edda* as a son of Othin who is sent to Hel to ask for the return of the slain Baldr.

<sup>16</sup> Sigmund: according to the *Volsungasaga* Sigmund was the son of Volsung, and hence Othin's great-great-grandson (note that Wagner eliminates all the intervening generations by the simple expedient of using Volsung's name as one of Othin's many appellations). Sigmund alone was able to draw from the tree the sword which a mysterious stranger (Othin, of course) had thrust into it (compare the first act of Wagner's *Die Walkure*).

<sup>17</sup> Sijmons suggests that this stanza may be an interpolation.

<sup>18</sup> No lacuna after line 2 is indicated in the manuscript. Editors have attempted various experiments in rearranging this and the following stanza.

<sup>19</sup> Some editors, following Simrock, assign this whole stanza to Hyndla; others assign to her lines 3-4. Giving the entire stanza to Freyja makes better sense than any other arrangement, but is dependent on changing the manuscript's "thy" in line 3 to "my", as suggested by Bugge. The boar on which Freyja rides ("my worthy steed") is, of course, Ottar.

<sup>20</sup> The way of the slain: the road to Valhall.

- <sup>21</sup> Hyndla detects Ottar, and accuses Freyja of having her lover with her. Unless Ottar is identical with Oth (cf. *Voluspo*, 25 and note), which seems most unlikely, there is no other reference to this love affair.
- <sup>22</sup> Various experiments have been made in condensing the stanza into four lines, or in combining it with stanza 8.
- <sup>23</sup> Hildisvini ("Battle-Swine"): perhaps Freyja refers to the boar with golden bristles given, according to Snorri, to her brother Freyr by the dwarfs.
- <sup>24</sup> Dain: a dwarf; cf. *Voluspo*, 11. Nabbi: a dwarf nowhere else mentioned.
- <sup>25</sup> The first line is obviously corrupt in the manuscript, and has been variously emended. The general assumption is that in the interval between stanzas 7 and 8 Freyja and Hyndla have arrived at Valhall. No lacuna is indicated in the manuscript.
- <sup>26</sup> Foreign metal: gold. The word *valr*, meaning "foreign," and akin to "Welsh," is interesting in this connection, and some editors interpret it frankly as "Celtic," i.e., Irish.
- <sup>27</sup> To glass: i.e., the constant fires on the altar have fused the stone into glass. Glass beads, etc., were of very early use, though the use of glass for windows probably did not begin in Iceland much before 1200.
- <sup>28</sup> Possibly two stanzas, or perhaps one with interpolations. The manuscript omits the first half of line 4, here filled out from stanza 16, line 2.
- <sup>29</sup> Skjoldung: the descendants of Skjold, a mythical king who was Othin's son and the ancestor of the Danish kings; cf. Snorri's *Edda*, *Skaldskaparmal*, 43. Skilfings: mentioned by Snorri as descendants of King Skelfir, a mythical ruler in "the East." In *Grimnismol*, 54, the name Skilfing appears as one of Othin's many appellations.
- <sup>30</sup> Othlings: Snorri derives this race from Authi, the son of Halfdan the Old (cf. stanza 14). Ylfings: some editors have changed this to "Ynglings," as in stanza 16, referring to the descendants of Yng or Yngvi, another son of Halfdan, but the reference may be to the same mythical family to which Helgi Hundingsbane belonged (cf. *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*, 5).
- <sup>31</sup> Instein: mentioned in the *Halfssaga* as one of the warriors of King Half of Horthaland (the so-called Halfsrekkr). The others mentioned in this stanza appear in one of the later mythical accounts of the settlement of Norway.
- <sup>32</sup> Stanzas 14-16 are clearly interpolated, as Friaut (stanza 13, line 3) is the daughter of Hildigun (stanza 17, line 1).
- <sup>33</sup> Halfdan the Old, a mythical king of Denmark, called by Snorri "the most famous of all kings," of whom it was foretold that "for three hundred years there should be no woman and no man in his line who was not of great repute." After the slaying of Sigtrygg he married Almveig (or Alvig), daughter of King Eymund of Holmgarth (i.e., Russia), who bore him eighteen sons, nine at one birth. These nine were all slain, but the other nine were traditionally the ancestors of the most famous families in Northern hero lore.
- <sup>34</sup> Compare stanza 11. All or part of this stanza may be interpolated.
- <sup>35</sup> Hildigun (or Hildiguth): with this the poem returns to Ottar's direct ancestry, Hildigun being Friaut's mother.
- <sup>36</sup> Line 4: cf. the refrain-line in the *Voluspo* (stanzas 27, 29, etc.).
- <sup>37</sup> Another interpolation, as Ketil (stanza 19, line 1) is the husband of Hildigun (stanza 17). Dag: one of Halfdan's sons, and ancestor of the Doglings. Line 5 may be a late addition.
- <sup>38</sup> Ketil: the semi-mythical Ketil Hortha-Kari, from whom various Icelandic families traced their descent.
- <sup>39</sup> Hoalf: probably King Half of Horthaland, hero of the *Halfssaga*, and son of Hjorleif and Hild (cf. stanza 12, note).
- <sup>40</sup> Nanna: the manuscript has "Manna." Of Nanna and her father, Nokkvi, we know nothing, but apparently Nanna's son married a sister of Instein, Ottar's father.
- <sup>41</sup> Olmoth: one of the sons of Ketil Hortha-Kari.
- <sup>42</sup> Line 4: here, and generally hereafter when it appears in the poem, this refrain-line is abbreviated in the manuscript to the word "all."
- <sup>43</sup> An isolated stanza, which some editors place after stanza 24, others combining lines 1-2 with the fragmentary stanza 23. In the manuscript lines 3-4 stand after stanza 24, where they fail to connect clearly with anything.
- <sup>44</sup> Hrolf the Old: probably King Hrolf Gautreksson of Gautland, in the saga relating to whom (*Fornaldar sogur III*, 57 ff.) appear the names of Thorir the iron-shield and Grim Thorkelsson.
- <sup>45</sup> Stanzas 23 and 24 name the twelve Berserkers, the sons of Arngrim and Eyfura, the story of whom is told in the *Hervararsaga* and the *Orvar-Oddssaga*. Saxo Grammaticus tells of the battle between them and Hjalmar and Orvar-Odd. Line 1 does not appear in the manuscript, but is added from the list of names given in the sagas.
- <sup>46</sup> The manuscript omits the first half of line 1, here supplied from the *Orvar-Oddssaga*. Bolm: probably the island of Bolmsö, in the Swedish province of Smaland.
- <sup>47</sup> The Berserkers were wild warriors, distinguished above all by the fits of frenzy to which they were subject in battle; during these fits they howled like wild beasts, foamed at the mouth, and gnawed the iron rims of their shields. At such times they were proof against steel or fire, but when the fever abated they were weak. The etymology of the word berserk is disputed; probably, however, it means "bear-shirt."
- <sup>48</sup> In the manuscript and in most editions stanza 24 is followed by lines 3-4 of stanza 22. Some editors reject line 5 as spurious.
- <sup>49</sup> In the manuscript line 1 stands after line 4 of stanza 29. Probably a stanza enumerating Jormunrek's sons has been lost. Many editors combine lines 3-4 of stanza 22 and lines 2-4 of stanza 25 into one stanza.
- <sup>50</sup> Jormunrek: the historical Ermanarich, king of the Goths, who died about 376. According to Norse tradition, in which Jormunrek played a large part, he slew his own sons (cf. *Guthrunarhvot* and *Hamthessmol*). In the saga Jormunrek married Sigurth's daughter, Svanhild. Stanzas 25-27 connect Ottar's descent with the whole Volsung-Sigurth-Jormunrek-Gjuki genealogy. The story of Sigurth is the basis for most of the heroic poems of the *Edda*, of the famous *Volsungasaga*, and, in Germany, of the *Nibelungenlied*. On his battle with the dragon Fafnir cf. *Fafnismol*.
- <sup>51</sup> Volsung: Sigurth's grandfather and Othin's great-grand son.
- <sup>52</sup> Hjordis: daughter of King Eylimi, wife of Sigmund and mother of Sigurth.
- <sup>53</sup> Gunnar, Hogni, and Guthrun: the three children of the Burgundian king Gjuki and his wife Grimhild (Kriemhild); Guthrun was Sigurth's wife. Gotthorm, the third brother, who killed Sigurth at Brynhild's behest, was Grimhild's son, and thus a step-son of Gjuki. These four play an important part in the heroic cycle of Eddic poems. Cf. *Gripisspo*, introductory note.
- <sup>54</sup> Hvethna: wife of King Halfdan of Denmark.
- <sup>55</sup> In the manuscript and in many editions these two lines stand between stanzas 33 and 34. The change here made follows Bugge. The manuscript indicates no gap between stanzas 27 and 29.
- <sup>56</sup> The manuscript and many editions include line 1 of stanza 25 after line 4 of stanza 29. The story of Harald Battle-tooth is told in detail by Saxo Grammaticus. Harald's father was Hrorek, king of Denmark; his mother was Auth, daughter of Ivar, king of Sweden. After Ivar had treacherously destroyed Hrorek, Auth fled with Harald to Russia, where she married King Rathbarth. Harald's warlike career in Norway, and his death on the Bravalla-field at the hands of his nephew, Sigurth Ring, son of Randver and grandson of Rathbarth and Auth, were favorite saga themes.
- <sup>57</sup> At this point begins the fragmentary and interpolated "short *Voluspo*" identified by Snorri. The manuscript gives no indication of the break in the poem's continuity.
- <sup>58</sup> Eleven: there are various references to the "twelve" gods (including Baldr) Snorri (*Gylfaginning*, 20-33) lists the following twelve in addition to Othin: Thor, Baldr, Njorth, Freyr, Tyr, Bragi, Heimdall, Hoth, Vithar, Vali, Ull and Forseti; he adds Loki as of doubtful divinity.
- <sup>59</sup> Baldr and Vali: cf. *Voluspo*, 32-33.
- <sup>60</sup> Bur's heir: Othin; cf. *Voluspo*, 4.
- <sup>61</sup> The fragmentary stanzas 31-34 have been regrouped in various ways, and with many conjectures as to omissions, none of which are indicated in the manuscript. The order here is as in the manuscript, except that lines 1-2 of stanza 28 have been transposed from after line 2 of stanza 33.
- <sup>62</sup> Freyr, Gerth, Gymir: cf. *Skirnismol*. Aurbotha: a giantess, mother of Gerth. Thjazi and Skathi: cf. *Lokasenna*, 49, and *Harbarthsljoth*, 19. 33. Cf. *Voluspo*, 44 and 27.
- <sup>63</sup> Heith ("Witch") and Hrossthjof ("Horse-thief"): the only other reference to the giant Hrimnir (*Skirnismol*, 28) makes no mention of his children.
- <sup>64</sup> Of Vitholf ("Forest Wolf"), Vilmeith ("Wish-Tree") and Svarthofthi ("Black Head") nothing further is known. Ymir: cf. *Voluspo*, 3.
- <sup>65</sup> This stanza is quoted by Snorri (*Gylfaginning*, 5):  
 "All the witches | spring from Witolf, /

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All the warlocks | are of Willharm, /  
And the spell-singers | spring from Swarthead; /  
All the ogres | of Ymir come."

Of Vitholf ("Forest Wolf"), Vilmeith ("Wish-Tree") and Svathofthi ("Black Head") nothing further is known. Ymir: cf. *Voluspo*, 3.

<sup>66</sup> According to Snorri (*Gylfaginning*, 27) Heimdall was the son of Othin and of nine sisters. As Heimdall was the watchman of the gods, this has given rise to much "solar myth" discussion. The names of his nine giantess mothers are frequently said to denote attributes of the sea.

<sup>67</sup> The names of Heimdall's mothers may be rendered "Yelper," "Griper," "Foamer," "Sand-Strewer," "She-Wolf," "Sorrow-Whelmer," "Dusk," "Fury," and "Iron-Sword."

<sup>68</sup> It has been suggested that these lines were interpolated from *Guthrunarkvitha* II, 22. Some editors add the refrain of stanza 36. Swine's blood: to Heimdall's strength drawn from earth and sea was added that derived from sacrifice.

<sup>69</sup> In the manuscript this stanza stands after stanza 44. Regarding Heimdall's kinship to the three great classes of men, cf. *Rigsthula*, introductory note, wherein the apparent confusion of his attributes with those of Othin is discussed.

<sup>70</sup> Probably a lacuna before this stanza. Regarding the wolf Fenrir, born of Loki and the giantess Angrbotha, cf. *Voluspo*, 39 and note.

<sup>71</sup> Sleipnir: Othin's eight-legged horse, born of the stallion Svathilfari and of Loki in the guise of a mare (cf. *Grimnismol*, 44).

<sup>72</sup> The worst: doubtless referring to Mithgarthsorm, another child of Loki. The brother of Byleist: Loki; cf. *Voluspo*, 51.

<sup>73</sup> Nothing further is known of the myth here referred to, wherein Loki (Lopt) eats the cooked heart of a woman and thus himself gives birth to a monster. The reference is not likely to be to the serpent, as, according to Snorri (*Gylfaginning*, 34), the wolf, the serpent, and Hel were all the children of Loki and Angrbotha.

<sup>74</sup> Probably an omission, perhaps of considerable length, before this stanza. For the description of the destruction of the world, cf. *Voluspo*, 57.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *Voluspo*, 65, where the possible reference to Christianity is noted.

<sup>76</sup> With this stanza the fragmentary "short *Voluspo*" ends, and the dialogue between Freyja and Hyndla continues.

<sup>77</sup> Freyja now admits the identity of her boar as Ottar, who with the help of the "memory-beer" is to recall the entire genealogy he has just heard, and thus win his wager with Angantyr.

<sup>78</sup> Heithrun: the she-goat that stands by Valhall (cf. *Grimnismol*, 25), the name being here used simply of she-goats in general, in caustic comment on Freyja's morals. Of these Loki entertained a similar view; cf. *Lokasenna*, 30.

<sup>79</sup> Oth: cf. stanza 6 and note, and *Voluspo*, 25 and note.

<sup>80</sup> Lines 3-4, abbreviated in the manuscript, are very likely repeated here by mistake.

<sup>81</sup> The manuscript repeats once again lines 3-4 of stanza 47 as the last two lines of this stanza. It seems probable that two lines have been lost, to the effect that Freyja will burn the giantess alive "If swiftly now | thou dost not seek, / And hither bring | the memory-beer."