

## Prose Edda Part 2: pp. 35- 70

XVIII. Then said Gangleri: "Whence comes the wind? It is strong, so that it stirs great seas, and it swells fire; but, strong as it is, none may see it, for it is wonderfully shapen." Then said Hárr: "That I am well able to tell thee. At the northward end of heaven sits the giant called Hræsvelgr: he has the plumes of an eagle, and when he stretches his wings for flight, then the wind rises from under his wings, as is here said:

Hræsvelgr hight he | who sits at heaven's ending,  
Giant in eagle's coat;  
From his wings, they say, | the wind cometh  
All men-folk over."

XIX. Then said Gangleri: "Why is there so much difference, that summer should be hot, but winter cold?" Hárr answered: "A wise man would not ask thus, seeing that all are able to tell this; but if thou alone art become-so slight of understanding as not to have heard it, then I will yet permit that thou shouldst rather ask foolishly once, than that thou shouldst be kept longer in ignorance of a thing which it is proper to know. He is called Svásudr[Delightful.] who is father of Summer; and he is of pleasant nature, so that from his name whatsoever is pleasant is {p. 33} But the father of Winter is variously called Vindljóni[Wind-bringer] or Vindsvalr;[ Wind-chill] he is the son of Vásadr;[3] and these were kinsmen grim and chilly-breasted, and Winter has their temper."

XX. Then said Gangleri: "Who are the Æsir, they in whom it behoves men to believe?" Hárr answered: "The divine Æsir are twelve." Then said Jafnhárr: "Not less holy are the Ásynjur, the goddesses, and they are of no less authority." Then said Thrídi: "Odin is highest and eldest of the Æsir: he rules all things, and mighty as are the other gods, they all serve him as children obey a father. Frigg is his wife, and she knows all the fates of men, though she speaks no prophecy,--as is said here, when Odin himself spake with him of the Æsir whom men call Loki:

Thou art mad now, | Loki, and reft of mind,--  
Why, Loki, leav'st thou not off?  
Frigg, methinks, | is wise in all fates,  
Though herself say them not!

Odin is called Allfather because he is father of all the gods. He is also called Father of the Slain, because all those that fall in battle are the sons of his adopt on; for them he appoints Valhall[Hall of the Slain] and Vingólf,[ Friendly Floor] and they are then called Champions. He is also called God of the Hanged, God of Gods, God of Cargoes; and he has also been named in many more ways, after he had come to King Geirrödr: {p. 34}

We were called Grímr | and Gangleri,  
Herjann, Hjálmberi;  
Thekk, Thrídi, | Thudr, Udr,  
Helblindi, Hárr.

Sadr, Svipall, | Sann-getall,  
Herteitr, Hnikarr;  
Bileygr, Báleygr, | Bölverkr, Fjölnir,  
Grímnir, Glapsvidr, Fjölsvidr.

Sídhöttr, Sidskeggr, | Sigfödr, Hnikudr,  
Alfödr, Atrídr, Farmatýr;  
Óski, Ómi, | Jafnhárr, Biflindi,  
Göndlir, Hárbardr.

Svidurr, Svidrir, | Jáldr, Kjalarr, Vidurr,  
Thrór, Yggr, Thundr;  
Vakr, Skilfingr, | Váfudr, Hroptatýr,  
Gautr, Veratýr."

Then said Gangleri: "Exceeding many names have ye given him; and, by my faith, it must indeed be a goodly wit that knows all the lore and the examples of what chances have brought about each of these names." Then Hárr made answer: "It is truly a vast sum of knowledge to gather together and set forth fittingly. But it is briefest to tell thee that most of his names have been given him by reason of this chance: there being so many branches of tongues in the world, all peoples believed that it was needful for them to turn his name into their own tongue, by which they might the better invoke him and entreat him on their own {p. 35} behalf. But some occasions for these names arose in his wanderings; and that matter is recorded in tales. Nor canst thou ever be called a wise man if thou shalt not be able to tell of those great events."

XXI. Then said Gangleri: "What are the names of the other Æsir, or what is their office, or what deeds of renown have they done?" Hárr answered: "Thor is the foremost of them, he that is called Thor of the Æsir, or Öku-Thor; he is strongest of all the gods and men. He has his realm in the place called Thrúdvangar, and his hall is called Bilskirnir; [From the flashing of light] in that hall are five hundred rooms and forty. That is the greatest house that men know of; It is thus said in Grímnismál:

Five hundred floors | and more than forty,  
So reckon I Bilskirnir with bending ways;  
Of those houses | that I know of hall-roofed,  
My son's I know the most.

Thor has two he-goats, that are called Tooth-Gnasher and Tooth-Gritter, and a chariot wherein he drives, and the he-goats draw the chariot; therefore is he called Öku-Thor. He has also three things of great price: one is the hammer Mjölnir, which the Rime-Giants and the Hill-Giants know, when it is raised on high; and that is no wonder, it has bruised many a skull among their {p. 36} girdle of might; and when he clasps it about him, then the godlike strength within him is increased by half. Yet a third thing he has, in which there is much virtue: his iron gloves; he cannot do without them when he uses his hammer-shaft. But no one is so wise that he can tell all his mighty works; yet I can tell thee so much tidings of him that the hours would be spent before all that I know were told."

XXII. Then said Gangleri: "I would ask tidings of more Æsir." Hárr replied: "The second son of Odin is Baldr, and good things are to be said of him. He is best, and all praise him; he is so fair of feature, and so bright, that light shines from him. A certain herb is so white that it is likened to Baldr's brow; of all grasses it is whitest, and by it thou mayest judge his fairness, both in hair and in body. He is the wisest of the Æsir, and the fairest-spoken and most gracious; and that quality attends him, that none may gainsay his judgments. He dwells in the place called Breidablik,[ Broad-gleaming] which is in heaven; in that place may nothing unclean be, even as is said here:

Breidablik 't is called, | where Baldr has  
A hall made for himself:  
In that land | where I know lie  
Fewest baneful runes.

XXIII. "The third among the Æsir is he that is called Njördr: he dwells in heaven, in the abode called Nóatún. He rules the course of the wind, and stills sea and fire; on him shall men call for voyages and for hunting. He is so {p. 37} prosperous and abounding in wealth, that he may give them great plenty of lands or of gear; and him shall men invoke for such things. Njördr is not of the race of the Æsir: he was reared in the land of the Vanir, but the Vanir delivered him as hostage to the gods, and took for hostage in exchange him that men call Hœnir; he became an atonement between the gods and the Vanir. Njördr has to wife the woman called Skadi, daughter of Thjazi the giant. Skadi would fain dwell in the abode which her father had had, which is on certain mountains, in the place called Thrymheimr; but Njördr would be near the sea. They made a compact on these terms: they should be nine nights in Thrymheimr, but the second nine at Nóatún. But when Njördr came down from the mountain back to Nóatún, he sang this lay:

Loath were the hills to me, | I was not long in them,  
Nights only nine;  
To me the wailing of | wolves seemed ill,  
After the song of swans.

Then Skadi sang this:

Sleep could I never | on the sea-beds,  
For the wailing of waterfowl;  
He wakens me, | who comes from the deep--  
The sea-mew every morn.

Then Skadi went up onto the mountain, and dwelt in Thrymheimr. And she goes for the more part on snowshoes and with a bow and arrow, and shoots beasts; she is called Snowshoe-Goddess or Lady of the Snowshoes. So it is said: {p. 38}

Thrymheimr 't is called, | where Thjazi dwelt,  
He the hideous giant;

But now Skadi abides, | pure bride of the gods,  
In her father's ancient freehold.

XXIV. "Njördr in Nóatún begot afterward two children: the son was called Freyr, and the daughter Freyja; they were fair of face and mighty. Freyr is the most renowned of the Æsir; he rules over the rain and the shining of the sun, and therewithal the fruit of the earth; and it is good to call on him for fruitful seasons and peace. He governs also the prosperity of men. But Freyja is the most renowned of the goddesses; she has in heaven the dwelling called Fólkvangr, [Folk-plain, Host-plain] and wheresoever she rides to the strife, she has one-half of the kill, and Odin half, as is here said:

Fólkvangr 't is called, | where Freyja rules  
Degrees of seats in the hall;  
Half the kill | she keepeth each day,  
And half Odin hath.

Her hall Sessrúmnir [Seat-roomy] is great and fair. When she goes forth, she drives her cats and sits in a chariot; she is most conformable to man's prayers, and from her name comes the name of honor, Frú, by which noblewomen are called. Songs of love are well-pleasing to her; it is good to call on her for furtherance in love."

XXV. Then said Gangleri: "Great in power do these Æsir seem to me; nor is it a marvel, that much authority attends you who are said to possess understanding of the gods, and know {p. 39} boon soever. Or are the gods yet more?" Hárr said: "Yet remains that one of the Æsir who is called Týr: he is most daring, and best in stoutness of heart, and he has much authority over victory in battle; it is good for men of valor to invoke him. It is a proverb, that he is Týr-valiant, who surpasses other men and does not waver. He is wise, so that it is also said, that he that is wisest is Týr-prudent. This is one token of his daring: when the Æsir enticed Fenris-Wolf to take upon him the fetter Gleipnir, the wolf did not believe them, that they would loose him, until they laid Týr's hand into his mouth as a pledge. But when the Æsir would not loose him, then he bit off the hand at the place now called 'the wolf's joint;' and Týr is one-handed, and is not called a reconciler of men.

XXVI. "One is called Bragi: he is renowned for wisdom, and most of all for fluency of speech and skill with words. He knows most of skaldship, and after him skaldship is called *bragr*, [poetry, foremost] and from his name that one is called *bragr*-man or -woman, who possesses eloquence surpassing others, of women or of men. His wife is Idunn: she guards in her chest of ash those apples which the gods must taste whensoever they grow old; and then they all become young, and so it shall be even unto the Weird of the Gods." Then said Gangleri: "A very great thing, methinks, the gods entrust to the watchfulness and good faith of Idunn." Then said Hárr, laughing loudly: "'T was near being desperate once; I may be able to tell thee of {p. 40} XXVII. "Heimdallr is the name of one: he is called the White God. He is great and holy; nine maids, all sisters, bore him for a son. He is also called Hallinskídi [Ram] and Gullintanni [Golden-teeth]; his teeth were of gold, and his horse is called Gold-top. He dwells in the place called Himinbjörg, [Heaven-fells] hard by Bifröst: he is the warder of the gods, and sits there by heaven's end to guard the bridge from the Hill-Giants. He needs less sleep than a bird; he sees

equally well night and day a hundred leagues from him, and hears how grass grows on the earth or wool on sheep, and everything that has a louder sound. He has that trumpet which is called Gjallar-Horn, and its blast is heard throughout all worlds. Heimdallr's sword is called Head. It is said further:

Himinbjörg 't is called, | where Heimdallr, they say,  
Aye has his housing;  
There the gods' sentinel | drinks in his snug hall  
Gladly good mead.

And furthermore, he himself says in *Heimdalar-galdr*:

I am of nine | mothers the offspring,  
Of sisters nine | am I the son.

XXVIII. "One of the Æsir is named Hödr: he is blind. He is of sufficient strength, but the gods would desire that no occasion should rise of naming this god, for the work of his hands shall long be held in memory among gods and men. {p. 41} a thick shoe. He is nearly as strong as Thor; in him the gods have great trust in all struggles.

XXX. "One is called Áli or Váli, son of Odin and Rindr: he is daring in fights, and a most fortunate marksman.

XXXI. "One is called Ullr, son of Sif, step-son of Thor; he is so excellent a bowman, and so swift on snowshoes, that none may contend with him. He is also fair of aspect and has the accomplishments of a warrior; it is well to call on him in single-combats.

XXXII. "Forseti is the name of the son of Baldr and Nanna daughter of Nep: he has that hall in heaven which is called Glitnir. All that come to him with such quarrels as arise out of law-suits, all these return thence reconciled. That is the best seat of judgment among gods and men; thus it is said here:

A hall is called Glitnir, | with gold 't is pillared,  
And with silver thatched the same;  
There Forseti bides | the full day through,  
And puts to sleep all suits.

XXXIII. "Also numbered among the Æsir is he whom some call the mischief-monger of the Æsir, and the first father of falsehoods, and blemish of all gods and men: he is named Loki or Loptr, son of Fárbauti the giant; his mother was Laufey or Nál; his brothers are Býleistr and Helblindi. Loki is beautiful and comely to look upon, evil in spirit., very fickle in habit. He surpassed other men in that wisdom which is called 'sleight,' and had artifices for {p. 42} all occasions; he would ever bring the Æsir into great hardships, and then get them out with crafty counsel. His wife was called Sigyn, their son Nari or Narfi.

XXXIV. Yet more children had Loki. Angrboda was the name of a certain giantess in Jötunheim, with whom Loki gat three children: one was Fenris-Wolf, the second Jörmungandr--that is the Midgard Serpent,--the third is Hel. But when the gods learned that this kindred was nourished in Jötunheim, and when the gods perceived by prophecy that from this kindred great misfortune should befall them; and since it seemed to all that there was great prospect of ill--(first from the mother's blood, and yet worse from the father's)--then Allfather sent gods thither to take the children and bring them to him. When they came to him, straightway he cast the serpent into the deep sea, where he lies about all the land; and this serpent grew so greatly that he lies in the midst of the ocean encompassing all the land, and bites upon his own tail. Hel he cast into Niflheim, and gave to her power over nine worlds, to apportion all abodes among those that were sent to her: that is, men dead of sickness or of old age. She has great possessions there; her walls are exceeding high and her gates great. Her hall is called Sleet-Cold; her dish, Hunger; Famine is her knife; Idler, her thrall; Sloven, her maidservant; Pit of Stumbling, her threshold, by which one enters; Disease, her bed; Gleaming Bale, her bed-hangings. She is half blue-black and half flesh-color (by which she is easily recognized), and very lowering and fierce.

The Wolf the Æsir brought up at home, and Týr alone dared go to him to give him meat. But when the gods saw how much he grew every day, and when all prophecies {p. 43} declared that he was fated to be their destruction, then the Æsir seized upon this way of escape: they made a very strong fetter, which they called Lædingr, and brought it before the Wolf, bidding him try his strength against the fetter. The Wolf thought that no overwhelming odds, and let them do with him as they would. The first time the Wolf lashed out against it, the fetter broke; so he was loosed out of Lædingr. After this, the Æsir made a second fetter, stronger by half, which they called Drómi, and bade the Wolf try that fetter, saying he would become very famous for strength, if such huge workmanship should not suffice to hold him. But the Wolf thought that this fetter was very strong; he considered also that strength had increased in him since the time he broke Lædingr: it came into his mind, that he must expose himself to danger, if he would become famous. So he let the fetter be laid upon him. Now when the Æsir declared themselves ready, the Wolf shook himself, dashed the fetter against the earth and struggled fiercely with it, spurned against it, and broke the fetter, so that the fragments flew far. So he dashed himself out of Drómi. Since then it passes as a proverb, 'to loose out of Lædingr,' or 'to dash out of Drómi,' when anything is exceeding hard.

"After that the Æsir feared that they should never be able to get the Wolf bound. Then Allfather sent him who is called Skírnir, Freyr's messenger, down into the region of the Black Elves, to certain dwarves, and caused to be made the fetter named Gleipnir. It was made of six things: the noise a cat makes in foot-fall, the beard of a woman, the roots of a rock, the sinews of a bear, the breath of a fish, and the spittle of a bird. And though thou understand not these matters already, yet now thou mayest speedily find {p. 44} certain proof herein, that no lie is told thee: thou must have seen that a woman has no beard, and no sound comes from the leap of a cat, and there are no roots under a rock; and by my troth, all that I have told thee is equally true, though there be some things which thou canst not put to the test."

Then said Gangleri: "This certainly I can perceive to be true: these things which thou hast taken for proof, I can see; but how was the fetter fashioned?" Hárr answered: "That I am well able to tell thee. The

fetter was soft and smooth as a silken ribbon, but as sure and strong as thou shalt now hear. Then, when the fetter was brought to the Æsir, they thanked the messenger well for his errand. Then the Æsir went out upon the lake called Ámsvartnir, to the island called Lyngvi, and summoning the Wolf with them, they showed him the silken ribbon and bade him burst it, saying that it was somewhat stouter than appeared from its thickness. And each passed it to the others, and tested it with the strength of their hands and it did not snap; yet they said the Wolf could break it. Then the Wolf answered: 'Touching this matter of the ribbon, it seems to me that I shall get no glory of it, though I snap asunder so slender a band; but if it be made with cunning and wiles, then, though it seem little, that band shall never come upon my feet.' Then the Æsir answered that he could easily snap apart a slight silken band, he who had before broken great fetters of iron,--'but if thou shalt not be able to burst this band, then thou wilt not be able to frighten the gods; and then we shall unloose thee.' The Wolf said: 'If ye bind me so that I shall not get free again, then ye will act in such a way that it will be late ere I receive help from you; I am unwilling that this band {p. 45} should be laid upon me. Yet rather than that ye should impugn my courage, let some one of you lay his hand in my mouth, for a pledge that this is done in good faith.' Each of the Æsir looked at his neighbor, and none was willing to part with his hand, until Týr stretched out his right hand and laid it in the Wolf's mouth. But when the Wolf lashed out, the fetter became hardened; and the more he struggled against it, the tighter the band was. Then all laughed except Týr: he lost his hand.

"When the Æsir saw that the Wolf was fully bound, they took the chain that was fast to the fetter, and which is called Gelgja, and passed it through a great rock--it is called Gjöll--and fixed the rock deep down into the earth. Then they took a great stone and drove it yet deeper into the earth--it was called Thviti--and used the stone for a fastening-pin. The Wolf gaped terribly, and thrashed about and strove to bite them; they thrust into his mouth a certain sword: the guards caught in his lower jaw, and the point in the upper; that is his gag. He howls hideously, and slaver runs out of his mouth: that is the river called Ván; there he lies till the Weird of the Gods." Then said Gangleri: 'Marvellous ill children did Loki beget, but all these brethren are of great might. Yet why did not the Æsir kill the Wolf, seeing they had expectation of evil from him?' Hárr answered: "So greatly did the gods esteem their holy place and sanctuary, that they would not stain it with the Wolf's blood; though (so say the prophecies) he shall be the slayer of Odin."

XXXV. Then said Gangleri: "Which are the Ásynjur? Hárr said: "Frigg is the foremost: she has that estate which is called Fensalir, and it is most glorious. The second is {p. 46} Sága: she dwells at Sökkvabekkr, and that is a great abode. The third is Fir: she is the best physician. The fourth is Gefjun: she is a virgin, and they that die maidens attend her. The fifth is Fulla: she also is a maid, and goes with loose tresses and a golden band about her head; she bears the ashen coffer of Frigg, and has charge over her footgear, and knows her secret counsel. Freyja is most gently born (together with Frigg): she is wedded to the man named Ódr. Their daughter is Hnoss: she is so fair, that those things which are fair and precious are called *hnossir*. Ódr went away on long journeys, and Freyja weeps for him, and her tears are red gold. Freyja has many names, and this is the cause thereof: that she gave herself sundry names, when she went out among unknown peoples seeking Ódr: she is called Mardöll and Hörn, Gefn, Sýr. Freyja had the necklace Brísinga-men. She is also called Lady of the Vanir. The seventh is Sjöfn: she is most diligent in turning the thoughts of men to love, both of women and of men; and from

her name love-longing is called *sjafni*. The eighth is Lofn: she is so gracious and kindly to those that call upon her, that she wins Allfather's or Frigg's permission for the coming together of mankind in marriage, of women and of men, though it were forbidden before, or seem flatly denied; from her name such permission is called 'leave,' and thus also she is much 'loved' of men. The ninth is Vár: she harkens to the oaths and compacts made between men and women; wherefore such covenants are called 'vows.' She also takes vengeance on those who perjure themselves. The tenth is Vör: she is wise and of searching spirit, so that none can conceal anything from her; it is a saying, that a woman becomes 'ware' of that of which she is informed. The eleventh is Syn: she keeps {p. 47} the door in the hall, and locks it before those who should not go in; she is also set at trials as a defence against such suits as she wishes to refute: thence is the expression, that *syn*[Denial, refutation] is set forward, when a man denies. The twelfth is Hlín: she is established as keeper over those men whom Frigg desires to preserve from any danger; thence comes the saying, that he who escapes 'leans.' Snotra is thirteenth: she is prudent and of gentle bearing; from her name a woman or a man who is moderate is called *snotr* [Wise, prudent]. The fourteenth is Gná: her Frigg sends into divers lands on her errands; she has that horse which runs over sky and sea and is called Hoof-Tosser. Once when she was riding, certain of the Vanir saw her course in the air; then one spake:

What flieth there? | What fareth there,  
Or glideth in the air?

She made answer:

I fly not, | though I fare  
And in the air glide  
On Hoof-Tosser, | him that Hamskerpir  
Gat with Gardrofa.

From Gná's name that which soars high is said to *gnæfa* [Project, be eminent, tower]. Sól and Bil are reckoned among the Ásynjur, but their nature has been told before.

XXXVI. "There are also those others whose office it is to serve in Valhall, to bear drink and mind the table-service and ale-flagons; thus are they named in *Grímnismál*: {p. 48}

Hrist and Mist | I would have bear the horn to me,  
Skeggjöld and Skögull;  
Hildir and Thrúdr, | Hlökk and Herfjötur,  
Göll and Geirahöd,  
Randgrídr and Rádgrídr | and Reginleif  
These bear the Einherjar ale.

These are called Valkyrs: them Odin sends to every battle; they determine men's feyness and award victory. Gudr and Róta and the youngest Norn, she who is called Skuld, ride ever to take the slain and decide fights. Jörd, the mother of Thor, and Rindr, Váli's mother, are reckoned among the Ásynjur.



XXXVII. "A certain man was called Gýmir, and his wife Aurboda: she was of the stock of the Hill-Giants; their daughter was Gerdr, who was fairest of all women. It chanced one day that Freyr had gone to Hlidskjálf, and gazed over all the world; but when he looked over into the northern region, he saw on an estate a house great and fair. And toward this house went a woman; when she raised her hands and opened the door before her, brightness gleamed from her hands, both over sky and sea, and all the worlds were illumined of her. Thus his overweening pride, in having presumed to sit in that holy seat, was avenged upon him, that he went away full of sorrow. When he had come home, he spake not, he slept not, he drank not; no man dared speak to him. Then Njördr summoned to him Skírnir, Freyr's foot-page, and bade him go to Freyr and beg speech of him and ask for whose sake he was so bitter that he would not speak with men. But Skírnir said he would go, albeit unwillingly; {p. 49} and said that evil answers were to be expected of Freyr.

"But when he came to Freyr, straightway he asked why Freyr was so downcast, and spake not with men. Then Freyr answered and said that he had seen a fair woman; and for her sake he was so full of grief that he would not live long if he were not to obtain her. 'And now thou shalt go and woo her on my behalf and have her hither, whether her father will or no. I will reward thee well for it.' Then Skírnir answered thus: he would go on his errand, but Freyr should give him his own sword--which is so good that it fights of itself;--and Freyr did not refuse, but gave him the sword. Then Skírnir went forth and wooed the woman for him, and received her promise; and nine nights later she was to come to the place called Barrey, and then go to the bridal with Freyr. But when Skírnir told Freyr his answer, then he sang this lay:

Long is one night, | long is the second;  
How can I wait through three?  
Often a month | to me seemed less  
Than this one night of waiting.

This was to blame for Freyr's being so weaponless, when he fought with Beli, and slew him with the horn of a hart." Then said Gangleri: "'T is much to be wondered at, that such a great chief as Freyr is would give away his sword, not having another equally good. It was a great privation to him, when he fought with him called Beli; by my faith, he must have rued that gift." Then answered Hárr: "There was small matter in that, when he and Beli met; Freyr could have killed him with his hand. It shall come to pass {p. 50} that Freyr will think a worse thing has come upon him, when he misses his sword on that day that the Sons of Múspell go a-harrying."

XXXVIII. Then said Gangleri: "Thou sayest that all those men who have fallen in battle from the beginning of the world are now come to Odin in Valhall. What has he to give them for food? I should think that a very great host must be there." Then Hárr answered: "That which thou sayest is true: a very mighty multitude is there, but many more shall be, notwithstanding which it will seem all too small, in the time when the Wolf shall come. But never is so vast a multitude in Valhall that the flesh of that boar shall fail, which is called Sæhrímnir; he is boiled every day and is whole at evening. But this question which thou askest now: I think it likelier that few may be so wise as to be able to report truthfully concerning it. His name who roasts is Andhrímnir, and the kettle is Eldhrímnir; so it is said here:

Andhrímnir | has in Eldhrímnir  
Sæhrímnir sodden,  
Best of hams; | yet how few know  
With what food the champions are fed."

Then said Gangleri: "Has Odin the same fare as the champions?" Hárr answered: "That food which stands on his board he gives to two wolves which he has, called Geri [Ravener] and Freki [greedy] ; but no food does he need; wine is both food and drink to him; so it says here: {p. 51}

Geru and Freki | the war-mighty glutteth,  
The glorious God of Hosts;  
But on wine alone | the weapon-glorious  
Odin aye liveth.

The ravens sit on his shoulders and say into his ear all the tidings which they see or hear; they are called thus: Huginn [Thought] and Muninn [Memory]. He sends them at day-break to fly about all the world, and they come back at undern-meal; thus he is acquainted with many tidings. Therefore men call him Raven-God, as is said:

Huginn and Muninn hover each day  
The wide earth over;  
I fear for Huginn lest he fare not back,--  
Yet watch I more for Muninn."

XXXIX. Then said Gangleri: "What have the champions to drink, that may suffice them as abundantly as the food? Or is water drunk there?" Then said Hárr: "Now thou askest strangely; as if Allfather would invite to him kings or earls or other men of might and would give them water to drink! I know, by my faith! that many a man comes to Valhall who would think he had bought his drink of water dearly, if there were not better cheer to be had there, he who before had suffered wounds and burning pain unto death. I can tell thee a different tale of this. The she-goat, she who is called Heidrún, stands up in Valhall and bites the needles from the limb of that tree which is very famous, and is called Lærádr; and from her udders mead runs so copiously, that she fills a tun every day. That tun is so great {p. 52} that all the champions become quite drunk from it." Then said Gangleri: "That is a wondrous proper goat for them; it must be an exceeding good tree from which she eats." Then spake Hárr: "Even more worthy of note is the hart Eikthyrni, which stands in Valhall and bites from the limbs of the tree; and from his horns distils such abundant exudation that it comes down into Hvergelmir, and from thence fall those rivers called thus: Síð, Víð, Sökin, Eikin, Svöl, Gunnthrá, Fjörm, Fimbulthul, Gípul, Göpul, Gömul, Geirvimul. Those fall about the abodes of the Æsir; these also are recorded: Thyn, Vín, Thöll, Höll, Grád, Gunnthráin, Nyt, Nöt, Nönn, Hrönn, Vína, Vegsvinn, Thjóðnuma."

XL. Then said Gangleri: "These are marvellous tidings which thou now tellest. A wondrous great house Valhall must be; it must often be exceeding crowded before the doors." Then Hárr answered: "Why dost thou not ask how many doors there are in the hall, or how great? If thou hearest that told, then thou wilt say that it is strange indeed if whosoever will may not go out and in; but it may be said truly

that it is no more crowded to find place therein than to enter into it; here thou mayest read in *Grímnismál*:

Five hundred doors | and forty more  
So I deem stand in Valhall;  
Eight hundred champions | go out at each door  
When they fare to fight with the Wolf."

XLI. Then said Gangleri: "A very mighty multitude of men is in Valhall, so that, by my faith, Odin is a very great {p. 53} chieftain, since he commands so large an army. Now what is the sport of the champions, when they are not fighting?" Hárr replied: "Every day, as soon as they are clothed, they straightway put on their armor and go out into the court and fight, and fell each other. That is their sport; and when the time draws near to undern-meal, they ride home to Valhall and sit down to drink, even as is said here:

All the Einherjar | in Odin's court  
Deal out blows every day;  
The slain they choose | and ride from the strife,  
Sit later in love together.

But what thou hast said is true: Odin is of great might. Many examples are found in proof of this, as is here said in the words of the Æsir themselves:

Ash Yggdrasill's trunk | of trees is foremost,  
And Skíðbladnir of ships;  
Odin of Æsir, | of all steeds Sleipnir,  
Bifröst of bridges, | and Bragi of skalds;  
Hábrók of hawks, | and of hounds Garmr."

XLII. Then said Gangleri: "Who owns that horse Sleipnir, or what is to be said of him?" Hárr answered: "Thou hast no knowledge of Sleipnir's points, and thou knowest not the circumstances of his begetting; but it will seem to thee worth the telling. It was early in the first days of the gods' dwelling here, when the gods had established the Midgard and made Valhall; there came at that time a certain wright and offered to build them a citadel in three seasons, so good that it should be staunch and proof against the Hill-Giants and the Rime-Giants, though they should {p. 54} come in over Midgard. But he demanded as wages that he should have possession of Freyja, and would fain have had the sun and the moon. Then the Æsir held parley and took counsel together; and a bargain was made with the wright, that he should have that which he demanded, if he should succeed in completing the citadel in one winter. On the first day of summer, if any part of the citadel were left unfinished, he should lose his reward; and he was to receive help from no man in the work. When they told him these conditions, he asked that they would give him leave to have the help of his stallion, which was called Svadilfari; and Loki advised it, so that the wright's petition was granted. He set to work the first day of winter to make the citadel, and by night he hauled stones with the stallion's aid; and it seemed very marvellous to the Æsir what great rocks that horse drew, for the horse did more rough work by half than did the wright. But

there were strong witnesses to their bargain, and many oaths, since it seemed unsafe to the giant to be among the Æsir without truce, if Thor should come home. But Thor had then gone away into the eastern region to fight trolls.

"Now when the winter drew nigh unto its end, the building of the citadel was far advanced; and it was so high and strong that it could not be taken. When it lacked three days of summer, the work had almost reached the gate of the stronghold. Then the gods sat down in their judgment seats, and sought means of evasion, and asked one another who had advised giving Freyja into Jötunheim, or so destroying the air and the heaven as to take thence the sun and the moon and give them to the giants. The gods agreed that he must have counselled this who is wont to give evil advice, Loki Laufeyarson, and they declared {p. 55} him deserving of an ill death, if he could not hit upon a way of losing the wright his wages; and they threatened Loki with violence. But when he became frightened, then he swore oaths, that he would so contrive that the wright should lose his wages, cost him what it might.

"That same evening, when the wright drove out after stone with the stallion Svadilfari, a mare bounded forth from a certain wood and whinnied to him. The stallion, perceiving what manner of horse this was, straightway became frantic, and snapped the traces asunder, and leaped over to the mare, and she away to the wood, and the wright after, striving to seize the stallion. These horses ran all night, and the wright stopped there that night; and afterward, at day, the work was not done as it had been before. When the wright saw that the work could not be brought to an end, he fell into giant's fury. Now that the Æsir

saw surely that the hill-giant was come thither, they did not regard their oaths reverently, but called on Thor, who came as quickly. And straightway the hammer Mjölnir was raised aloft; he paid the wright's wage, and not with the sun and the moon. Nay, he even denied him dwelling in Jötunheim, and struck but the one first blow, so that his skull was burst into small crumbs, and sent him down bellow under Niflhel. But Loki had such dealings with Svadilfari, that somewhat later he gave birth to a foal, which was gray and had eight feet; and this horse is the best among gods and men. So is said in *Völuspá*:

Then all the Powers strode | to the seats of judgment,  
The most holy gods | council held together:  
Who had the air all | with evil envenomed,  
Or to the Ettin-race | Ódr's maid given.

{p. 56}

Broken were oaths then, | bond and swearing,  
Pledges all sacred | which passed between them;  
Thor alone smote there, | swollen with anger:  
He seldom sits still | when such he hears of."

XLIII. Then said Gangleri: "What is to be said of Skíðbladnir, that which is best of ships? Is there no ship equally great?" Hárr replied: "Skíðbladnir is best of ships and made with most skill of craftsmanship; but Naglfar is the largest ship; Múspell has it. Certain dwarves, sons of Ívaldi, made

Skíðbladnir and gave the ship to Freyr. It is so great that all the Æsir may man it, with their weapons and armaments, and it has a favoring wind as soon as the sail is hoisted, whithersoever it is bound; but when there is no occasion for going to sea in it, it is made of so many things and with so much cunning that then it may be folded together like a napkin and kept in one's pouch."

XLIV. Then spake Gangleri: "A good ship is Skíðbladnir, but very great magic must have been used upon it before it got to be so fashioned. Has Thor never experienced such a thing, that he has found in his path somewhat so mighty or so powerful that it has overmatched him through strength of magic?" Then said Hárr: "Few men, I ween, are able to tell of this; yet many a thing has seemed to him hard to overcome. Though there may have been something so powerful or strong that Thor might not have succeeded in winning the victory, yet it is not necessary to speak of it; because there are many examples to prove, and because all are bound to believe, that Thor is mightiest." Then said Gangleri: "It seems to me that I must have asked you touching this matter what no one is able {p. 57} to tell of. Then spake Jafnhárr: "We have heard say concerning some matters which seem to us incredible, but here sits one near at hand who will know how to tell true tidings of this. Therefore thou must believe that he will not lie for the first time now, who never lied before." Gangleri said: "Here will I stand and listen, if any answer is forthcoming to this word; but otherwise I pronounce you overcome, if ye cannot tell that which I ask you."

Then spake Thrídi: "Now it is evident that he is resolved to know this matter, though it seem not to us a pleasant thing to tell. This is the beginning of this tale: Öku-Thor drove forth with his he-goats and chariot, and with him that Ás called Loki; they came at evening to a husbandman's, and there received a night's lodging. About evening, Thor took his he-goats and slaughtered them both; after that they were flayed and borne to the caldron. When the cooking was done, then Thor and his companion sat down to supper. Thor invited to meat with him the husbandman and his wife, and their children: the husbandman's son was called Thjálfí, and the daughter Röskva. Then Thor laid the goat-hides farther away from the fire, and said that the husbandman and his servants should cast the bones on the goat-hides. Thjálfí, the husbandman's son, was holding a thigh-bone of the goat, and split it with his knife and broke it for the marrow.

"Thor tarried there overnight; and in the interval before day he rose up and clothed himself, took the hammer Mjöllnir, swung it up, and hallowed the goat-hides; straightway the he-goats rose up, and then one of them was lame in a hind leg. Thor discovered this, and declared that the husbandman or his household could not have dealt wisely with the bones of the goat: he knew that the thighbone {p. 58} was broken. There is no need to make a long story of it; all may know how frightened the husbandman must have been when he saw how Thor let his brows sink down before his eyes; but when he looked at the eyes, then it seemed to him that he must fall down before their glances alone. Thor clenched his hands on the hammer-shaft so that the knuckles whitened; and the husbandman and all his household did what was to be expected: they cried out lustily, prayed for peace, offered in recompense all that they had. But when he saw their terror, then the fury departed from him, and he became appeased, and took of them in atonement their children, Thjálfí and Röskva, who then became his bond-servants; and they follow him ever since.

XLV. "Thereupon he left his goats behind, and began his journey eastward toward Jötunheim and clear to the sea; and then he went out over the sea, that deep one; but when he came to land, he went up, and Loki and Thjálfi and Röskva with him. Then, when they had walked a little while, there stood before them a great forest; they walked all that day till dark. Thjálfi was swiftest-footed of all men; he bore Thor's bag, but there was nothing good for food. As soon as it had become dark, they sought themselves shelter for the night, and found before them a certain hall, very great: there was a door in the end, of equal width with the hall, wherein they took up quarters for the night. But about midnight there came a great earthquake: the earth rocked under them exceedingly, and the house trembled. Then Thor rose up and called to his companions, and they explored farther, and found in the middle of the hall a side-chamber on the right hand, and they went in {p. 59} thither. Thor sat down in the doorway, but the others were farther in from him, and they were afraid; but Thor gripped his hammer-shaft and thought to defend himself. Then they heard a great humming sound, and a crashing.

"But when it drew near dawn, then Thor went out and saw a man lying a little way from him in the wood; and that man was not small; he slept and snored mightily. Then Thor thought he could perceive what kind of noise it was which they had heard during the night. He girded himself with his belt of strength, and his divine power waxed; and on the instant the man awoke and rose up swiftly; and then, it is said, the first time Thor's heart failed him, to strike him with the hammer. He asked him his name, and the man called himself Skrímir,--'but I have no need,' he said, 'to ask thee for thy name; I know that thou art Ása-Thor. But what? Hast thou dragged away my glove?' Then Skrímir stretched out his hand and took up the glove; and at once Thor saw that it was that which he had taken for a hall during the night; and as for the side-chamber, it was the thumb of the glove. Skrímir asked whether Thor would have his company, and Thor assented to this. Then Skrímir took and unloosened his provision wallet and made ready to eat his morning meal, and Thor and his fellows in another place. Skrímir then proposed to them to lay their supply of food together, and Thor assented. Then Skrímir bound all the food in one bag and laid it on his own back; he went before during the day, and stepped with very great strides; but late in the evening Skrímir found them night-quarters under a certain great oak. Then Skrímir said to Thor that he would lay him down to sleep,--'and do ye take the provision-bag and make ready for your supper.' {p. 60}

"Thereupon Skrímir slept and snored hard, and Thor took the provision-bag and set about to unloose it; but such things must be told as will seem incredible: he got no knot loosened and no thong-end stirred, so as to be looser than before. When he saw that this work might not avail, then he became angered, gripped the hammer Mjölnir in both hands, and strode with great strides to that place where Skrímir lay, and smote him in the head. Skrímir awoke, and asked whether a leaf had fallen upon his head; or whether they had eaten and were ready for bed? Thor replied that they were just then about to go to sleep; then they went under another oak. It must be told thee, that there was then no fearless sleeping. At midnight Thor heard how Skrímir snored and slept fast, so that it thundered in the woods; then he stood up and went to him, shook his hammer eagerly and hard, and smote down upon the middle of his crown: he saw that the face of the hammer sank deep into his head. And at that moment Skrímir awoke and said: 'What is it now? Did some acorn fall on my head? Or what is the news with thee, Thor?' But Thor went back speedily, and replied that he was then but new-wakened; said that it was then midnight, and there was yet time to sleep.

"Thor meditated that if he could get to strike him a third blow, never should the giant see himself again; he lay now and watched whether Skrímir were sleeping soundly yet. A little before day, when he perceived that Skrímir must have fallen asleep, he stood up at once and rushed over to him, brandished his hammer with all his strength, and smote upon that one of his temples which was turned up. But Skrímir sat up and stroked his cheek, and said: 'Some birds must be sitting in the tree above me; I imagined, {p. 61} when I awoke, that some dirt from the twigs fell upon my head. Art thou awake, Thor? It will be time to arise and clothe us; but now ye have no long journey forward to the castle called Útgardr. I have heard how ye have whispered among yourselves that I am no little man in stature; but ye shall see taller men, if ye come into Útgardr. Now I will give you wholesome advice: do not conduct yourselves boastfully, for the henchmen of Útgarda-Loki will not well endure big words from such swaddling-babes. But if not so, then turn back, and I think it were better for you to do that; but if ye will go forward, then turn to the east. As for me, I hold my way north to these hills, which ye may now see.' Skrímir took the provision-bag and cast it on his back, and turned from them across the forest; and it is not recorded that the Æsir bade him god-speed.

XLVI. "Thor turned forward on his way, and his fellows, and went onward till mid-day. Then they saw a castle standing in a certain plain, and set their necks down on their backs before they could see up over it. They went to the cattle; and there was a grating in front of the castle-gate, and it was closed. Thor went up to the grating, and did not succeed in opening it; but when they struggled to make their way in, they crept between the bars and came in that way. They saw a great hall and went thither; the door was open; then they went in, and saw there many men on two benches, and most of them were big enough. Thereupon they came before the king Útgarda-Loki and saluted him; but he looked at them in his own good time, and smiled scornfully over his teeth, and said: 'It is late to ask tidings of a long journey; or is it otherwise than I think: that this toddler is Öku-Thor? Yet thou mayest {p. 62} be greater than thou appearest to me. What manner of accomplishments are those, which thou and thy fellows think to be ready for? No one shall be here with us who knows not some kind of craft or cunning surpassing most men.'

"Then spoke the one who came last, 'Who was called Loki: 'I know such a trick, which I am ready to try: that there is no one within here who shall eat his food more quickly than I.' Then Útgarda-Loki answered: 'That is a feat, if thou accomplish it; and this feat shall accordingly be put to the proof.' He called to the farther end of the bench, that he who was called Logi should come forth on the floor and try his prowess against Loki. Then a trough was taken and borne in upon the hall-floor and filled with flesh; Loki sat down at the one end and Logi at the other, and each ate as fast as he could, and they met in the middle of the trough. By that time Loki had eaten all the meat from the bones, but Logi likewise had eaten all the meat, and the bones with it, and the trough too; and now it seemed to all as if Loki had lost the game.

"Then Útgarda-Loki asked what yonder young man could play at; and Thjálfí answered that he would undertake to run a race with whomsoever Útgarda-Loki would bring up. Then Útgarda-Loki said that that was a good accomplishment, and that there was great likelihood that he must be well endowed with fleetness if he were to perform that feat; yet he would speedily see to it that the matter should be tested. Then Útgarda-Loki arose and went out; and there was a good course to run on over the level

plain. Then Útgarda-Loki called to him a certain lad, who was named Hugi, and bade him run a match against Thjálfi. Then they held the first heat; and Hugi was so much {p. 63} ahead that he turned back to meet Thjálfi at the end of the course. Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'Thou wilt need to lay thyself forward more, Thjálfi, if thou art to win the game; but it is none the less true that never have any men come hither who seemed to me fleeter of foot than this.' Then they began another heat; and when Hugi had reached the course's end, and was turning back, there was still a long bolt-shot to Thjálfi. Then spake Útgarda-Loki: 'Thjálfi appears to me to run this course well, but I do not believe of him now that he will win the game. But it will be made manifest presently, when they run the third heat.' Then they began the heat; but when Hugi had come to the end of the course and turned back, Thjálfi had not yet reached mid-course. Then all said that that game had been proven.

"Next, Útgarda-Loki asked Thor what feats there were which he might desire to show before them: such great tales as men have made of his mighty works. Then Thor answered that he would most willingly undertake to contend with any in drinking. Útgarda-Loki said that might well be; he went into the hall and called his serving-boy, and bade him bring the scone-horn which the henchmen were wont to drink off. Straightway the serving-lad came forward with the horn and put it into Thor's hand. Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'It is held that this horn is well drained if it is drunk off in one drink, but some drink it off in two; but no one is so poor a man at drinking that it fails to drain off in three.' Thor looked upon the horn, and it did not seem big to him; and yet it was somewhat long. Still he was very thirsty; he took and drank, and swallowed enormously, and thought that he should not need to bend oftener to the horn. But when his breath failed, and he raised his {p. 64} head from the horn and looked to see how it had gone with the drinking, it seemed to him that there was very little space by which the drink was lower now in the horn than before. Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'It is well drunk, and not too much; I should not have believed, if it had been told me, that Ása-Thor could not drink a greater draught. But I know that thou wilt wish to drink it off in another draught.' Thor answered nothing; he set the horn to his mouth, thinking now that he should drink a greater drink, and struggled with the draught until his breath gave out; and yet he saw that the tip of the horn would not come up so much as he liked. When he took the horn from his mouth and looked into it, it seemed to him then as if it had decreased less than the former time; but now there was a clearly apparent lowering in the horn. Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'How now, Thor? Thou wilt not shrink from one more drink than may he well for thee? If thou now drink the third draught from the horn, it seems to me as if this must be esteemed the greatest; but thou canst not be called so great a man here among us as the Æsir call thee, if thou give not a better account of thyself in the other games than it seems to me may come of this.' Then Thor became angry, set the horn to his mouth, and drank with all his might, and struggled with the drink as much as he could; and when he looked into the horn, at least some space had been made. Then he gave up the horn and would drink no more.

"Then said Útgarda-Loki: Now it is evident that thy prowess is not so great as we thought it to be; but wilt thou try thy hand at more games? It may readily be seen that thou gettest no advantage hereof.' Thor answered: "will make trial of yet other games; but it would have {p. 65} seemed wonderful to me, when I was at home with the Æsir, if such drinks had been called so little. But what game will ye now offer me?' Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'Young lads here are wont to do this (which is thought of small consequence): lift my cat up from the earth; but I should not have been able to speak of such a thing to



Ása-Thor if I had not seen that thou hast far less in thee than I had thought.' Thereupon there leaped forth on the hall-floor a gray cat, and a very big one; and Thor went to it and took it with his hand down under the middle of the belly and lifted up. But the cat bent into an arch just as Thor stretched up his hands; and when Thor reached up as high as he could at the very utmost, then the cat lifted up one foot, and Thor got this game no further advanced. Then said Útgarda-Loki: 'This game went even as I had foreseen; the cat is very great, whereas Thor is low and little beside the huge men who are here with us.'

"Then said Thor: 'Little as ye call me, let any one come up now and wrestle with me; now I am angry.' Then Útgarda-Loki answered, looking about him on the benches, and spake: 'I see no such man here within, who would not hold it a disgrace to wrestle with thee;' and yet he said: 'Let us see first; let the old woman my nurse be called hither, Elli, and let Thor wrestle with her if he will. She has thrown such men as have seemed to me no less strong than Thor.' Straightway there came into the hall an old woman, stricken in years. Then Útgarda-Loki said that she should grapple with Ása-Thor. There is no need to make a long matter of it: that struggle went in such wise that the harder Thor strove in gripping, the faster she stood; then the old woman essayed a hold, and then Thor became totty on his feet, and their tuggings were {p. 66} very hard. Yet it was not long before Thor fell to his knee, on one foot. Then Útgarda-Loki went up and bade them cease the wrestling, saying that Thor should not need to challenge more men of his body-guard to wrestling. By then it had passed toward night; Útgarda-Loki showed Thor and his companions to a seat, and they tarried there the night long in good cheer.

XLVII. "But at morning, as soon as it dawned, Thor and his companions arose, clothed themselves, and were ready to go away. Then came there Útgarda-Loki and caused a table to be set for them; there was no lack of good cheer, meat and drink. So soon as they had eaten, he went out from the castle with them; and at parting Útgarda-Loki spoke to Thor and asked how he thought his journey had ended, or whether he had met any man mightier than himself. Thor answered that he could not say that he had not got much shame in their dealings together. 'But yet I know that ye will call me a man of little might, and I am ill-content with that.' Then said Útgardi-Loki: 'Now I will tell thee the truth, now that thou art come out of the castle; and if I live and am able to prevail, then thou shalt never again come into it. And this I know, by my troth! that thou shouldst never have come into it, If I had known before that thou haddest so much strength in thee, and that thou shouldst so nearly have had us in great peril. But I made ready against thee eye-illusions; and I came upon you the first time in the wood, and when thou wouldst have unloosed the provision-bag, I had bound it with iron, and thou didst not find where to undo it. But next thou didst smite me three blows with the hammer; and the first was least, and was yet so great that it would have sufficed {p. 67} to slay me, if it had come upon me. Where thou sawest near my hall a saddle-backed mountain, cut at the top into threesquare dales, and one the deepest, those were the marks of thy hammer. I brought the saddle-back before the blow, but thou didst not see that. So it was also with the games, in which ye did contend against my henchmen: that was the first, which Loki did; he was very hungry and ate zealously, but he who was called Logi was "wild-fire," and he burned the trough no less swiftly than the meat. But when Thjálfi ran the race with him called Hugi, that was my "thought," and it was not to be expected of Thjálfi that he should match swiftness with it.

"Moreover, when thou didst drink from the horn, and it seemed to thee to go slowly, then, by my faith, that was a wonder which I should not have believed possible: the other end of the horn was out in the sea, but thou didst not perceive it. But now, when thou comest to the sea, thou shalt be able to mark what a diminishing thou hast drunk in the sea: this is henceforth called "ebb-tides."

"And again he said: 'It seemed to me not less noteworthy when thou didst lift up the cat; and to tell thee truly, then all were afraid who saw how thou didst lift one foot clear of the earth. That cat was not as it appeared to thee: it was the Midgard Serpent, which lies about all the land, and scarcely does its length suffice to encompass the earth with head and tail. So high didst thou stretch up thine arms that it was then but a little way more to heaven. It was also a great marvel concerning the wrestling-match, when thou didst withstand so long, and didst not fall more than on one knee, wrestling with Elli; since none such has ever been and none shall be, if he become so old as to abide "Old Age," that she shall not cause him to fall. And now {p. 68} it is truth to tell that we must part; and it will be better on both sides that ye never come again to seek me. Another time I will defend my castle with similar wiles or with others, so that ye shall get no power over me.'

"When Thor had heard these sayings, he clutched his hammer and brandished it aloft; but when he was about to launch it forward, then he saw Útgarda-Loki nowhere. Then he turned back to the castle, purposing to crush it to pieces; and he saw there a wide and fair plain, but no castle. So he turned back and went his way, till he was come back again to Thrúðvangar. But it is a true tale that then he resolved to seek if he might bring about a meeting between himself and the Midgard Serpent, which after ward came to pass. Now I think no one knows how to tell thee more truly concerning this journey of Thor's."

XLVIII. Then said Gangleri: "Very mighty is Útgarda-Loki, and he deals much in wiles and in magic; and his might may be seen in that he had such henchmen as have great prowess. Now did Thor ever take vengeance for this?" Hárr answered: "It is not unknown, though one be not a scholar, that Thor took redress for this journey of which the tale has but now been told; and he did not tarry at home long before he made ready for his journey so hastily that he had with him no chariot and no he-goats and no retinue. He went out over Midgard in the guise of a young lad, and came one evening at twilight to a certain giant's, who was called Hymir. Thor abode as guest there overnight; but at dawn Hymir arose and clothed himself and made ready to row to sea a-fishing. Then Thor sprang up and was speedily ready, and asked Hymir to let him row to sea with him. But Hymir said that Thor would {p. 69} be of little help to him, being so small and a youth, 'And thou wilt freeze, if I stay so long and so far out as I am wont.' But Thor said that he would be able to row far out from land, for the reason that it was not certain whether he would be the first to ask to row back. Thor became so enraged at the giant that he was forthwith ready to let his hammer crash against him; but he forced himself to forbear, since he purposed to try his strength in another quarter. He asked Hymir what they should have for bait, but Hymir bade him get bait for himself. Then Thor turned away thither where he, saw a certain herd of oxen, which Hymir owned; he took the largest ox, called Himinbrjotr [ Heaven-bellowing], and cut off its head and went therewith to the sea. By that time Hymir had shoved out the boat.

"Thor went aboard the skiff and sat down in the stern-seat, took two oars and rowed; and it seemed to Hymir that swift progress came of his rowing. Hymir rowed forward in the bow, and the rowing

proceeded rapidly; then Hymir said that they had arrived at those fishing-banks where he was wont to anchor and angle for flat-fish. But Thor said that he desired to row much further, and they took a sharp pull; then Hymir said that they had come so far that it was perilous to abide out farther because of the Midgard Serpent. Thor replied that they would row a while yet, and so he did; but Hymir was then sore afraid. Now as soon as Thor had laid by the oars, he made ready a very strong fishing-line, and the hook was no less large and strong. Then Thor put the ox-head on the hook and cast it overboard, and the hook went to the bottom; and it is telling thee the truth to say that then Thor beguiled the Midgard Serpent no less than Útgarda-Loki had mocked {p. 70} Thor, at the time when he lifted up the Serpent in his hand.

"The Midgard Serpent snapped at the ox-head, and the hook caught in its jaw; but when the Serpent was aware of this, it dashed away so fiercely that both Thor's fists crashed against the gunwale. Then Thor was angered, and took upon him his divine strength, braced his feet so strongly that he plunged through the ship with both feet, and dashed his feet against the bottom; then he drew the Serpent up to the gunwale. And it may be said that no one has seen very fearful sights who might not see that: bow Thor flashed fiery glances at the Serpent, and the Serpent in turn stared up toward him from below and blew venom. Then, it is said, the giant Hymir grew pale, became yellow, and was sore afraid, when he saw the Serpent, and how the sea rushed out and in through the boat. In the very moment when Thor clutched his hammer and raised it on high, then the giant fumbled for his fish-knife and hacked off Thor's line at the gunwale, and the Serpent sank down into the sea. Thor hurled his hammer after it; and men say that he struck off its head against the bottom; but I think it were true to tell thee that the Midgard Serpent yet lives and lies in the encompassing sea. But 'Thor swung his fist and brought it against Hymir's ear, so that he plunged overboard, and Thor saw the soles of his feet. And Thor waded to land."