A Little Bit of Lokrur: A Portion of an Old Icelandic Mythological Poem and a New English Translation

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Abstract:
The rímur known as Lokrur is preserved in a single manuscript, AM 604G 4to, and has been transcribed by such prominent scholars as Jón Þorklesson, Finnur Jónsson, and Sverrir Tómasson. Lokrur follows the tale of Þór and Útgarðaloki, as found in Snorra Edda, and weaves for us a more intricate tapestry of images, details, and events than we erstwhile get from Snorri. And while the popularity of the Eddas endures, within academia and without, variations on these popular tales remain fairly inaccessible to the general public. In this exercise I have rendered the first two sections of the poem in English, and provided analyses and references which expand upon the kennings and heiti found therein, in an effort to make Lokrur as accessible to an audience outside of academia as its eddaic counterpart. I have worked to provide a translation of scholarly quality, and a fairly normalized transcription, that can both contribute to the modern study of Icelandic poetry and invite the eye of any interested party outside of academia.

“All were afraid of Ygg’s son,
strength he often employed;
Giants fled silently from the land
Once he took Mjöllnir in his hand.”

- rímur 1, verse 7

The tradition of epic poetry in Iceland is quite a long one. The middle ages saw the rise of eddaic poetry, and its fall to the more elaborate courtly meter of the skalds. In the late confluence of these two forms the ríma was born, with the earliest known sample dating to the end of the fourteenth century (Óláfs ríma Haraldssonar). This younger style of epic poetry retained the complex kenning styles of its skaldic forebears and brought them to new, if slightly harrying, heights of use.

The poem on which I shall focus here is known as Lokrur, a rímur in four parts, preserved in a sixteenth century manuscript known by the marker AM 604G 4to. Lokrur retells the story of the Norse deities Þór and Loki on their infamous journey to Útgarð, wherein they travel through Jötunheim and pay a visit to a jötunn king, Útgarðaloki. This story is featured in prose within Snorri Sturluson’s Edda, a thirteenth century work, and is arguably one of the most widely-known myths in the Norse mythological corpus. While a comparative analysis of the prose and poetry iterations of this tale will be included in an upcoming paper of mine, this paper will focus on a translation of the first two sections of Lokrur alone.

Though there is no real call to translate this rilmur for an academic audience within the field of medieval Icelandic study, I believe the exercise can be beneficial. The Norse mythological corpus on the whole has never faded from public interest in the twenty-first century. Literature, film, art— the tales of the Eddas have touched everything, from television shows and comic books to keychains and sports teams, and modern Nordic paganism is a religion not exclusive to the Icelandic Ásatrúarfélagið (Æsir-faith fellowship). Fascination with the old gods and their stories is not a phenomenon isolated to academia, and I have rendered this translation in an effort to promote accessibility to a broader audience. This translation is there for anyone who would wish to read it.

In Lokrur, each section of poetry begins, and ends, with a mansöngr– the unknown narrator’s lyrical

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1 Snorra Edda, Codex Regius. c.1300-1350, GKS 2367 4º, The Arnamagnëan Collection, The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik, IS. 11r-14r. http://www.handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/GKS04-23687 (Hereinafter “Codex Regius”)
profession of love for an unknown woman, and proud statement of his poetic prowess— and is comprised entirely of four-line stanzas, called vísur, varying in number from twenty-one to forty-nine. As follows, each portion of rémir (poetry) will be presented in two equal columns with the original on the left and the translation on the right, and each vísa (verse) will be numbered. Footnotes have been included which elaborate upon emendations to the text and any defects within the manuscript. Each page contains up to four vísur in both languages, provided the ample number of footnotes allows the requisite space. Also, in the interest of accessibility, I have rendered the original text of the manuscript in a fairly normalized form, without the abbreviations and variations in lettering that a diplomatic transcription of 16th century Icelandic would provide. I have instead chosen to depict the text in a form closer to classical thirteenth century Icelandic in an effort to provide an easier, more regular read. While the script utilized in this section of AM 604G 4to is very clear in most instances, the orthography in use is far from the normalized orthography that would come with the 19th century. Abbreviations vary, and spelling is inconsistent. Punctuation exists only in the form of dashes and periods which indicate the separation of lines and clauses, but not their style or emotion. I have provided punctuation in my translation which may not always coincide with its Icelandic mirror, dependent upon the phrasing. All capital letters are likewise not present within the manuscript, unless they began the first word of a vísa, in which case they were broadly illuminated. I supply capitals where they would be required in modern English, including the denotation of proper names. Neither alliteration nor rhyme, key components of any réma, are preserved in the translation, in an effort to further engage readers who are not accustomed to Old Norse poetry forms.

In the interest of further clarity, each kenning present within the text will be addressed in a subsequent footnote. A kenning is a circumlocution, or combination thereof, which alludes to an object or subject that is not specifically mentioned. The interpretation of kennings in Old Icelandic poetry is dependent upon recognition of subjects and themes within the Norse mythological corpus, as well as other subjects in Icelandic lore and sagas, and later Christian themes and imagery. Kennings are a demonstration of the poet’s mastery of words and knowledge of mythological detail, and a subsequent test of the reader. The poem’s more complex kennings will be listed in a glossary below. Alternate names for characters and figures, known as heiti, will be cited in the relevant footnotes. Onwards, then, to the poetry.

### Glossary: Kennings of Note

- **Cub of the sea of Litur** [II v. 1] – a cub of the sea is a boat: any animal “of the sea” is a boat or ship. Litur is a dwarf who Thor kicked onto Baldr’s funeral pyre. A “ship of a dwarf” or any variation therupon is poetry, owing to the dwarves mentioned in the entry below, “death-liberation of dwarves,” who were set to be abandoned on a stretch of rock at sea, but “it was that mead [of poetry] which ransomed them from death on the skerry.” (Young, Edda.)

- **Death-liberation of dwarves** [I. V. 31] – Snorra Edda gives us a tale about a pair of dwarves named Fjalar and Galler who kill the Åss Kvasir and make the mead of poetry from his blood. They later kill two jötnar while still in possession of the mead of poetry. Thus, the “death-liberation of dwarves” is poetry.

- **Destroyer of the snake’s down** [II v. 25] – the “snake’s down” is gold; men of high standing “destroy” gold by breaking it into pieces which can be shared with loyal followers and friends. E.g. dýnu orms— “the eiderdown of the serpent”\(^2\)

- **Dwarf’s wheel** [II v. 30] – the sun; a golden object, and dwarves are master smiths. Four dwarves also stand at the four corners of the sky, through which the sun must pass

- **Feeder of wolves** [II v. 24] – A man who provides food for wolves by killing many in battle: a hero, warrior. E.g. ógn-blídr greddr ulfa – “the battle-glad feeder of wolves”\(^3\)

- **Fountain of onions** [I v. 1] – laukr and lind are known referents in kennings for women, e.g. feimu lauka– “of the lady of leeks.”\(^4\) Any kenning with a “tree of _” format almost always refers to a person, and the feminine substantive lind in particular is quite common in kennings for women, especially when taken as a “linden tree,” though here I have chosen to take its other meaning, “fountain,” for the strange imagery it evokes.

- **Funding’s vessel** [II v. 2] – see “cub of the sea of Litur”


\(^3\) Diana Whaley (ed.) 2012, ‘Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld Óttarsson, Ólafsdrápa 6, l. 3-4’ in Diana Whaley (ed.), Poetry from the Kings’ Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035. Skaldic Poetry of the

• **Glowing embers of the lava-snake** [II v. 39] – A lava-snake is a dragon; this kenning refers to sparks or small flames

• **Göndlir’s memory** [II v. 27] – slightly obscure, likely referring to the poem, see footnote for rímur II, verse 27

• **Payer of the arrows of a thing** [II v. 29] – “arrows of a thing” is a kenning for a scuffle, or a battle (Jónsson, ordbog. P. 419) a “payer” of battle is a warrior, here Thor.

• **Starver of Irpa’s horse** [II v. 12] – Irpa is the name of a female jötunn, and due to the famous appearance of one jötunn woman, Hyrrokin, on the back of a wolf, wolves are referred to as the steeds of troll-women. A starver of wolves is a man who does not leave enough carrion in his wake to feed the scavengers: a coward. See “feeder of wolves” above

• **The fur of the brain’s tub** [II v. 39] – bjálfi is a substantive which means “fur” or “skin”; the fur that covers the brain’s tub is the scalp, or simply skin. E.g. byggðum hjárna – “settlement of brains”5

• **Thick thumb of Hála** [II v. 23] – Hála is a troll-woman’s name, standing in for Skrímnir as a general jötunn heiti. Skrímnir’s “thick thumb” is the thumb of his glove

• **Troll-woman’s friend** [II v. 8] – Thor, though this kenning is atypical (see II v. 8 footnotes)

5  Russell Poole (ed.) 2017, ‘Breta saga 35, (Gunnlaugr Leifsson, Merlinusspá II 35, l. 8)’ in Margaret Clunies Ross (ed.), Poetry in fornal darsögur. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 8. Brepols; Turnhout, 165
LOKRUR
I and II

1. Mér hefr vænust lauka lind,
lukta sorg i Hauldar⁶ vind;
Heyri enn mæta menja Norn⁷,
á meðan ek vakta heitin forn.

2. Óðinn réð fyr Ása þjóð,
öllum veitti Stúma hljóð,
þengill gaf sá þegnum sigr,
þeim er báru at hildi vigr.

3. Fjölnis þótti ferðin sterk,
furðu-gjǫrn við hreysti verk;
alla list bar Þórr af þeim,
Þengil hvern er sóttu heim.

1. The finest fountain of onions⁸ has,
ended for me grief in Hauldar’s wind⁹;
yet, listen, dear Norn of necklaces¹⁰,
while I guard the old names.

2. Odin ruled over the Æsir’s fold,
all were given the sound of Stúmi.¹¹
The king gave victory to thanes;
to those who bore a spear to battle.

3. Fjölnir’s people¹² were thought strong,
quite eager in brave deeds;
in all skill Thor surpassed them,
whichever king is sought at home.

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6 This genitive would appear to be an altered form of the name Hulda (Jónsson, Finnur. Forníslenskir Rímnaflókar. Copenhagen: S. L. Mollers, 1896. Print. 1, v. 1. hereinafter “F. Jónsson, 1896”) but as this spelling is present in AM 604G 4to I have chosen to leave it as is. (Rímnaflók. c. 1540-1560, AM 604 G 4º, The Arnamagnean Collection, The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies at the University of Iceland, Reykjavík, IS. 16r. https://www.handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0604g [hereinafter “AM 604G 4to”])

7 Lines three and four have been swapped. When read, the visa makes far better sense, and in AM 604 G 4to two sets of thin double lines are sketched in at the beginning and end of the original third line “á medan ec uakta heiten forn” (AM 604G 4to, 15v) which Finnur Jónsson interprets as an effort on the part of the scribe to fix an error in line placement (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 290, v. 1). While I think this interpretation to be somewhat convenient, I would still argue that the visa reads far better when the lines are swapped.

8 woman; the word lind can also refer to a type of tree, often used in kennings for women

9 the mind; wind is often a kenning referent for the mind

10 woman; a Norn is a mythological female figure

11 gold; water, especially rushing water, is often associated with gold, as are jötnar (giants)

12 The Æsir: Fjölnir is an Odinic name, also a name for a descendant of Freyr
4. All were afraid of Ygg’s son, strength he often employed; giants fled silently from the land once he took Mjöllnir in his hand.

5. Loki a slave of Þundur was called, though not gentle, and free of strength, wherever Björn to havens trekked, he always tried to fashion grand tricks.

6. Thor did tell the son of Nál, “Now you shall need to come away, I want to meet your slanderous namesake next, my companion!”

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13 The original form here is þauglar, which appears to be a variant form of þögular. Finnur Jónsson suggests the emendation “þauglir” (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 290, v. 4) which would coincide with the necessary feminine plural so I tend to agree and will emend the form here.

14 The name in AM 604G 4to is bior. Björn is a known name for Thor and, though the previous line of the vísa clearly references Odin, it is logical that the last two lines refer instead to his son as it is Thor and Loki, not Odin and Loki, who will journey afar in this story. This emendation is suggested by Finnur Jónsson and I see no reason to contest it (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 291, v. 5).

15 Thor, Yggr is an Odinic name

16 Loki; this reference to Loki as a servant or slave to Odin is not uncommon in the rímur within this particular rímnabók, which I find of great interest, but I will address this later. Pundr is a heiti for Odin

17 Björn is a heiti for Thor

18 Loki, Nál is a name for Loki’s mother
7. Útgördum frá ek at auðlíng ræðr, engi vissi hans foðr né mæðr; Fjölnis þjón skal fara með mér, flesta kantu leika þér. 
8. Loka var ekki létt um svör: lítt hentar mér þessi fór. hefr þú frétt at hann er tróll? Hræðazt næri flögðin Ǫll. 
9. Yggjar svaraði arfi snar, Ef þú kemr í nökkut skar þá skal ek, bikkjan, bjarga þér– bú þik skjótt ok far með mér! 
10. Þórr bjó heiman þeira ferð, þurfti hvórki skjöld né sverð, hamarin tók ok hafr tvá, hvergi mátti slíkan fá!

7. I am for the king who rules out of Útgard, no one knows his father nor mothers; Fjölnir’s servant shall go with me, most tricks are well known to you.”
8. Loki was uneasy and said: “This trip is little suited to me, have you heard that he is a troll? All the giants are very afraid.”
9. The son of Ygg quickly answered: “If you come to be in some trouble, then shall I, bitch, save you– ready yourself quickly and come with me!”
10. Thor readied for their trek from home, needed neither shield nor sword; the hammer he took, and his two goats, nowhere can you find such a hammer!

19 Loki; another intriguing kenning which marks Loki as subservient… for “Fjölnir” see 12
20 See 15
11. The men took a long journey, Loki walked, but Thorir rode. Lodurrs says that at last he can see, a little house and small farmyards.

12. Thor steers them towards the gardens, there stood outside a Týr of spears. The old man is gracious and the old lady glad: “the choice to accept our reception is yours.”

13. The farmer has had two children, these are very promising siblings. I name the granter of strife Thjálfi, kin of giants, and the girl Röskva.

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21 This is a tricky little line. Finnur Jónsson prefers to emend Þórir by removing the -r, thus creating the phrase “Þor i reid” (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 291, v. 11). The line reads well, if not better, this way. However, I prefer to change as little of the original as possible, and the scribe used a clear -ir abbreviation for this suffix (AM 604G 4to, 16r), so I choose to believe that this name was not written in error. In any case, the name Þórir is a known one and is derived from the name Þór, so I am letting it stand.

22 Thjálfa via Thjálfe; two nominatives so close together would appear to indicate scribal error. It is simpler to change the ending of the name than to attempt to rearrange the line around an altered pronoun.

23 þrætu via þærtu. To note: there are several small scratch marks here, quite similar in appearance to those used on the previous page of the manuscript, which seemed to indicate a preference for the swapping of lines three and four of the first vísa. I am willing to take this set of marks as the same variety and to emend þærtu, as Finnur Jónsson long suggested (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 292, v. 13; F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 2, v. 13) þærtu is a non-entity.

24 Þorir = Thor, see 21

25 this name clearly stands in for Loki’s, which is of great interest: long has it been debated whether Loki and Lodurr, companion of Odin and Hœnir, are one in the same figure.

26 man; Týr is a prominent Norse deity, and weapons are often cited in kennings for men

27 boy, man
14. Þjálfi went into the hall, 
Þrifligt tóku rekkar tal; 
heiðarlaus drap hǫðnu bræðr, 
Hœnis vinr, ok kyndu glæðr.

15. Þegar framm bar fæðslu skauð, 
fólki þó til veislu bauð. 
Ǫflgum var þá eigi leitt, 
Ullar mág at snæða feitt.

16. Gestir átu geitar jóð, 
gleyptu bæði hold ok blóð, 
Þjálfi gjörði at ljósta legg, 
lysta gjörir til mergjar segg.

14. Thjálfi and Thor went into the hall, 
the men took to ample talk; 
honorless, Hœnir’s friend slaughtered 
the brothers of the she-kid and fired coals.

15. When the coward brought the food forth, 
the family Thor called to a feast. 
It was not loathsome then for the stout stepfather of Ull to eat fatty meat.

16. The guests ate the babies of goats, 
gulped down both flesh and blood, 
Thjálfi made to strike a leg, 
the hero did desire marrow.

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28 uin in the original
29 Thor; Hœnir is one of the Æsir
30 goats
31 Loki, most likely, though not clear
32 Thor; Úll is one of the Æsir, a son of Thor’s wife Sif
33 the babies of goats are goats. No one said old Norse poetry cannot be funny (from our late perspective)
17. Thor does not notice this, he covered the bones elsewhere, – the kinsmen of Baldr acted thusly– later he spread them onto the skins.

18. Whence that fine woman of Delling's drew herself down from the ground of stars, the heroes stood and dressed themselves, – this news has come down to me.

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34 emended from þagt j beina. The use of beini is puzzling on its own, a singular where there should by rights be a plural, but þagti via þokja very clearly makes more sense in this situation than þagt with a preposition. This is an emendation Finnur Jónsson insisted upon twice (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 292, v. 17; F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 2, v. 17) and it is clearly the most sensible option for this line.

35 sidan via sidir, another suggested emendation from Finnur Jónsson (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 292, v. 17). This decision was not an easy one to make, and it is a change that I will never quite be satisfied with. I tried to find away to take sidir from síða, but the 2nd person could not possibly contribute to this line in any way, and for sidir to play as a substantive in the plural it would require even more finagling. It seems that the cleanest option available is to support Finnur’s emendation.

36 Dogllings via Døllings. A clear reference to Dellingr, a god associated with daylight

37 burt via burru. While Finnur Jónsson does not emend this form in his diplomatic edition (F. Jónsson, 1905) he does suggest this change in his older edition (F. Jónsson, 1896. p. 2, v. 18). As the past plural form of brjóta in the third person, brutu, cannot be suggested here, the next logical step is to consider this a form of the adverb braut/brott/burt. For simplicity I will emend the word final -u.

38 af via ã.

39 klaði via possib. karde. The original is dark and damaged, but seems to be karde. As I can do little to nothing with karde, I feel it best to accept Finnur Jónsson’s logical suggestion (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 292, v. 18), as this phrase is not only common but also present in this same instance within Snorra Edda. (Snorri, Gylfaginning. P. 58, l. 23)

40 Baldr is a son of Odin, brother to Thor.

41 Nótt, the night, wife of Dellingr

42 the sky
19. The mighty enemy of Menja\textsuperscript{46} gripped again his Mjöllnir in the hawk's cliff\textsuperscript{27}; consecrates the bones of the brothers of the kid\textsuperscript{48}, the king often did this.

20. The he-goats did as the prayers bid them, both were back to life in the world; one goat carried one back foot badly, with ugly injuries.

21. At this Thor came to an ugly frown, let his heavy brows sink down, the man did with swarthy power grasp Mjöllnir's shaft in his grip.

\textsuperscript{43} Menju\textsuperscript{via} Menia. Menja could not remain in the nominative alongside dölgr.

\textsuperscript{44} mátki\textsuperscript{via} makte.

\textsuperscript{45} The \textit{i} is supplemented. It is easier to assume that this \textit{i} was suppressed, perhaps to preserve metrical structure, than it is to drag \textit{greipum} out of the adjective \textit{greipr}, or the verb \textit{greipa}. It is of interest that Finnur Jónsson also suggests this, though he rarely offers emendations that disturb the metrics of these \textit{vísur} (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 293, v. 21).

\textsuperscript{46} Thor; Menja is the name of a troll-woman, Thor is a famous killer of trolls

\textsuperscript{47} arm, hand. Öglir can refer to a falcon as well, naturally, if that animal is more preferable to the reader.

\textsuperscript{48} goats
22. Sjónir hvesti Sifjar verr,
–svó gengr opt ef illa ferr–
herðir⁴⁹ gekk úr hverjum lið,
hvítna tóku hnuárnir⁵⁰ við. 
23. Klókr talaði karl við Þór,
–kneyfiliga⁵¹ með orðum fór–
≥svó vil ek heill at ek sættir býð 
sjálfum þér fyrí heimalýð.≤

22. The husband of Sif⁵² sharpened his gaze,
–so often this happens if it goes badly–
hardness went out over each joint, 
the knuckles took to whitening. 
23. Wisely the man spoke with Thor, 
–he went with timid words– 
“I will wish you such good fortune that I offer in 
recompense the folk of the home.”

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⁴⁹ herðir via herðir. Herðir provides an assortment of issues, the first of which being Finnur Jónsson’s lack of concern for said word, which he glosses as “fire” without any explanation (Jónsson, Finnur. Ordbog til de af Samfundet til Udgivelse af Gammel Nordisk Litteratur Udgivne Rímur Samt til de af O. Jiriczek Ud-givne Bósarímur. Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & co., 1926. [Hereinafter “F. Jónsson, ordbog”]). While the imagery such a translation would inspire is powerful, and within the realm of possibility, it strikes me as an overstep. It is far more likely, I believe, that this herðir is a scribal error, and that it should be emended to herðar and thus govern the motion of a specific body part, or that it should be emended to herður and add further description to the action. I have chosen the latter option as it is “hardness” that provides the image that is most similar to the iteration of this vísa within Snorra Edda, “Hann herti hendurnar at hamarskaftinu svo at hvítnuðu hnuáarnir”. (Snorri, Gylfaginning. P. 59, l. 1). While this is clearly the verb herða and not the substantive, and it is obviously modifying a hand and not an entire body, I believe it is more likely that this paralleling of Snorri was intended, as has so clearly been the case for the entirety of this particular vísa, as I will later iterate.

⁵⁰ hnuárnir via hnuáarnar.

⁵¹ kneyfiliga via kneyfiliga. This adverb appears nowhere else, only here in Lokrur. Finnur Jónsson says that it should be glossed as “timid”. I have not found any record of the word in any dictionary or database. As such, I must adhere to Finnur’s recommendation. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 293, v. 23)

⁵² Thor is Sif’s husband
24. The blood-relation of Saudung\(^{54}\) answers, after his fury abated: “Stout Thjálfi I want as a servant to us, and the Hnoss of honeycombs\(^{55}\).”  
25. The man was not delayed in his answer; he says that Thor alone shall have them. The vigorous Baldr of rings\(^{56}\) followed Bölverk’s son\(^{57}\) for all of time.  
26. In this way the men’s talk ended, the Æsir’s protector\(^{58}\) agreed with the man. Thjálfi readied himself, and the clever girl, after this they were with the son of Ygg\(^{59}\).

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53 syni via sonr. Because Baldr and rǫskr dominate the nominative a change was necessary. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 293, i. 25)  
54 This could clearly be taken as “Sif’s-blood of Saudung” instead, but I can find no other reference to Sif as being related to her own husband, so I have instead taken this to be a reference to Thor’s lineage alone. “Saudung” is a heiti for Odin.  
55 A woman, girl; Rǫskva. Hnoss is a daughter of Freyja, “honeycomb” here stands in for wealth, or gold  
56 a man; Thjálfi. Jewelry is used in kennings to denote men and women. Baldr is a deity, son of Odin.  
57 Thor. “Bölverkr” is a heiti for Odin.  
58 Thor  
59 Also Thor
27. Rýmr fór⁶⁰ með rekka sín,  
–rausa ek þann veg Yggjar vín,  
eptir lagði kjappa⁶¹ kyn,  
Kjalars niðr hjá brodda hlyn.  
28. Ýtar gengu alt til nætr,  
eikki fengu holdar sætr,  
dagrinn leið en Döllings⁶² mær,  
dóttir Ónnars⁶³ myrkrío fær.

Finnur Jónsson suggests, twice, that *burt* should be inserted here (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 293, v. 27; F. Jónsson, 1896. p. 2, v. 27). This would perfect the metric structure, but the line is fine without the addition.

kjappa via kiappta. This kenning clearly refers to Thor’s goats, the emendation is necessary. (F. Jónsson, 1905. p. 293, v. 27)

Döllings via dölllings. The scribe seems to struggle with spelling this name in particular.

Ónnars via óttars. This is an emendation which Finnur Jónsson made in his earlier edition of the poem but discarded in his later version. (Jónsson, 1896. p. 2, v. 28). Ónnar is the father of Jǫrð, the earth, and so it would follow that if anything is being darkened by the coming of night, it would be Earth. I will not take the second suggested part of this emendation, the change from dóttir to dóttur; there is a clear punctuation mark here in the manuscript which separates this portion of the line from the previous, so I will let the nominative stand (AM 604G 4to, 16r).

“Rýmr” is a *heiti* for Thor

Poetry; any beverage associated with Odin is by virtue the mead of poetry

“Kjalar” is a *heiti* for Odin

goats

a man; the farmer. A kenning which features both a weapon, or weapons, and a tree is fairly guaranteed to refer to a man.

Nótt once again, the night

Jǫrð, the earth; night darkened the earth. See ⁶⁵
29. The men found a hall in a forest, broadly adorned with the valley of the snake.
   Timely the beast of doors seemed to them, Hlora's foster-son goes into the hall.
30. The roof is strong on this house, the heroes went into the hall – wonderfully high, and the doors broad – the men had never seen the like before.
31. Users of the snake's lands took there quiet and rest, and the Gefion of rings.
   Here shall the death-liberation of dwarves and a tumult of words fall down.

End I

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71 Hlóru via hlodu. While he recommended this change in his earlier edition, Finnur Jónsson does not emend hlodu in his second edition. (F. Jónsson, 1896. p. 3, v. 29). It is conceivable that this name is not some form of scribal error and that the information necessary to lend clarity has simply been lost to us. But, as it is clarity that I am aiming for, and such clarity requires the change of only one letter, I will emend the name


73 gold; snakes and dragons often mark kennings for gold– the ground beneath a dragon is its hoarde
74 a hall; an animal associated with doors, or other objects found in or on houses, generally indicates a hall or building of some form
75 Thor
76 users of gold: men.
77 a woman, which must refer here to Róskva. Curious, as she is not mentioned during this part of the story in Snorra Edda.
78 Poetry, see gloss
1. Still shall the cub of the sea of Litur be loosed once more; for me it is not easy on faith’s fort to recount the Æsir’s drink.
2. There I will raise Funding’s vessel; The accorder of Draupnir’s sweat was in that hut of the whale with his merry men.

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79 His via hlunn. Finnur Jónsson emended hlunn twice, and while a “boat launch” is perfectly reasonable in this setting, the removal of the -l makes the kenning a bit more obvious. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v.1; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 294, l. 1). Jón Porkelsson suggests a change from enn to hver which I find unnecessary. (J. Porkelsson, 1888. P. 158, l. 1)
80 Heim via sein. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 294, v. 2; F. Jónsson, 1896. P.3, v. 2)
81 poetry, see Gloss
82 the mind
83 poetry
84 poetry, see Gloss
85 a man of noble bearing, Thor
86 “whale” is standing in for a giant here

II
3. Þegar at fyrðar festa blund,
framir í visku höllum\textsuperscript{87},
sá kom uindr á uida grund,
och\textsuperscript{88} veiði í\textsuperscript{89} ranni Óllum.
4. Meiðir\textsuperscript{90} vakna á miðri nótt\textsuperscript{91}
mens stoðu í klæði,
skalinn allr ok skógrinn þaut\textsuperscript{92},
skalf sem leiki á þraði.

3. At once the fine men fall fast asleep,
in the halls of wisdom\textsuperscript{93}.
The wind came across the wide ground,
and rattled in all the rooms.
4. Trees of necklaces\textsuperscript{94} awaken at
midnight; put on their clothes;
the hall and all the forest howled;
shook as if played on a string.

\textsuperscript{87} In his 1896 edition Finnur Jónsson emends hlöllum to höllu, necessitating a change from Óllum to Öllu in line four. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 3). I will let hlöllum stand.

\textsuperscript{88} Finnur suggests emending ok to at. I find this unnecessary. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 3).

\textsuperscript{89} There appears to be a “j” superimposed onto the stem of the -r in ranni. (AM 604 G 4to, 16v 2; F. Jónsson, 1905 P. 294, v. 3; F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 3)

\textsuperscript{90} In his earlier edition Finnur suggests meðar (Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 4). As it stands, meider is not grammatically incorrect, and so it stays.

\textsuperscript{91} Finnur Jónsson suggests nótt in 1896, I assume it was done in the interest of improving the rhyme. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 4)

\textsuperscript{92} Finnur Jónsson doubly suggests þaut be emended to þrátt. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 4. F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 4) Though þaut certainly won’t improve the rhyme in modern Icelandic, I’m keeping it.

\textsuperscript{93} the mind, the chest is also possible

\textsuperscript{94} men
5. The troop of men was hurt by mischief–
    filled with sorrowful affliction–
    here they see an ugly hovel,
    will find it in the middle of the hall.

6. Loki was not quiet out of fear;
    he leapt in there with Thjálfi.
    Eindriddi sat himself in the doorway,
    the whole group started to shake.

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95 Hér sér via hiersir. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 5) In his earlier edition, however, he changes hierser to höldar.
(F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 5) I waver on whether to choose hér sér and render hitta the infinitive, or whether to change the suffix of hierser for the nominative plural hersar. I am favorable to either option, but yield to Finnur.

96 borgar via burgar. Finnur Jónsson recommends the change from -u to -o in both of his editions. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 5; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 5)
7. Brave men slept through the dark night, day came to overcome much.
The folk soon readied for the trip and wished for hard spears.
8. The troll-woman’s friend moved from the hall, a short ways with his companions; he saw then where against an oak lay a king of the houses of crags.
9. Shockingly ugly and the least nice he is clumsy-minded, wonderfully large and black as Hel; no one refutes that.

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7. Dreingir svoð um dǫkkva nátt, dagr tók mjög at sigra; fólkit bjóst til ferðar brátt, ok fýsir harðra vigra.
8. Skessu vinr frá skála veik, skamt með sina granna; leið hann þá hvar at lá við eik, loðungr hamra ranna.
9. Firna ljótr ok at festu vel, er flassi essi skaptr, býsna digr ok blár sem hel, berr that einginn aprtr.

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98 brátt via hvatt. The latter is out of place here. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 7; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 7)
99 Finnur Jónsson doubly suggests uín be emended to dolgr. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 8; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 8) This is a perfectly understandable choice, a well-attested kenning. However Thor’s mother Jörð, the earth, was a jötunn, and Thor fathered a son with the jötunn Jarnsaxa. So while it is more logical to say he is an enemy of the Íviðjur— he has killed plenty of them, as Thor’s visit to Geirroðr and the boasts of Harbarðsljóð would attest— his coziness with a handful of them has prompted me to leave the line as is.
101 Flassi is a small mystery. In his ordbog Finnur Jónsson defines it as a “clumsy person” (Jónsson, ordbog. P. 96). That selfsame definition can be found in modern Icelandic dictionaries, but I can find no attestations in any other early or medieval works, nor in five different old Norse dictionaries. That Finnur defined the word himself seems likely.
102 Thor, see:
103 a jötunn (giant); rocks and rocky precipices are often used in kennings to denote giants
10. Bjarga líkt var Bauga nef,  
  bjúgt sem hornit hrúta,  
  furðuligan\textsuperscript{104} bar fúlan þef,  
  er fyki í\textsuperscript{105} hellis skúta.  
11. Auga hans eru\textsuperscript{106} sem hallar tveir,  
  hðku bar mjóva ok langa,  
  munninn sogðu mestan þeir,  
  mjog tðk ut á vanga.  
12. Allir negl sem arnar klær,  
  á Irpu fáka svelti;  
  skoðuðu ur hofði tennr tvær,  
  trölls sem í villi gelti.

\textsuperscript{104} Finnur recommends \textit{furðu-lángt} in his earlier edition, but I am far less concerned with the metrics than he is. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 10)

\textsuperscript{105} Finnur doubly recommends \textit{er fyke j} be emended to \textit{ur fylke}. While the latter option would indeed sound better, I can still work with \textit{er fyke j} as it is. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v.10; P. 295, v. 10)

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{eru} can be removed for metric improvement. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 11; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 11)

\textsuperscript{107} bad breath from a large mouth

\textsuperscript{108} a jötunn (giant)\textsuperscript{128a}
13. Allr var hann um beinin berr, ok blár sem hrauns á renni; hóldum leizt hann hraðilegr, heldr en segja nenni.
14. Digran haði Stúmi staf, stǫng fekk valla hæri; Hvedrungs arfinn hraut ok svaf, hristist þórðar næri.
15. Veðrit stóð svo eikum í áms af góma ranni, skyndjar þórri at skáli af því, skalf ok Yggjar svanni.

13. He was bare on all his bones and black as a river through a lava field. He seemed terrifying to the men—more so than I care to say.
14. Stúmi had an enormous staff—you could hardly find a bigger staff—Hvedrung’s inheritance snored and slept, the earth trembled nearby.
15. The wind stuck so in the oaks, from Ámur’s palate-house Thor feels that, because the hall shook, and also Ygg’s lady.

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109 Stúmi via stúmir. While Finnur Jónsson seems certain that Stúmir is jötunn name (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 14; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 14), and Jón Porkelson also chooses to leave it as is (J. Porkelson, 1888. P. 158, v. 14), I am not entirely convinced. I have chosen to remove the -r and advocate instead for the well-attested Stúmi (previously attested here in I v. 2).
110 Veðrit via wedr. If I were to leave the original substantive unedited, I would then need to provide an article anyway. A sound emendation. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 15; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 15)
111 a jötunn, Skrímnir. Hvedrungi is a name associated with Loki.
112 Skrímnir’s mouth. Ámr is a jötunn name, standing in for Skrímnir.
113 Þjörð, the earth, mother to Thor.
16. Thor often took glory from trolls, he took Mjölnir in hand; with savagery he held his hammer aloft--wants to deprive Glám of breath.

17. The giant was known for lies, Flekkr forfeited slumber; Vignir’s fosterling becomes afraid to battle the tree of rocks.

18. The loathsome one sat himself up, he greeted the handsome, bold man: “honor you bolstered for yourselves and the long road of the men of Ásgard.”
19. Œlundar arfe þagði123 viðr, Thor made to inquire:
Þórr nam slikt af fretta: “Tell the heroes of your name,
≥hǫldum skyr þú Hafla niðr, you son of Haflíi126, and stand!”
heitti þitt af letta!≤
20. ≥Skrímnir kalla skatnar mik, to whence in these lands do you
skildu hvat ek inni; wish to go, companion of the Æsir?”
hvert til landa lystir þik, 21. “This shall I seek, a king’s meeting–
at leita ása sinni124,≤ the one who’s wont for victory of deeds–
21. ≥Þess skal ek sækja fylkirs fund, afore Útgard with a mind of greatness
ef fyr van sigir til dauða, the king would have claim to rule.
firi Útgorðum með itra lund,
audlíng ætti125 at ráða.≤

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123 Finnur Jónsson inserts “ei” in both his editions. This does not improve the metrics or the sense of the line, I will leave it out. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4., v. 19; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 297, v. 19)
124 sinni via mine. As Ása functions solely as the genitive plural (specifically in the Æsir variation on the Áss paradigm) the line reads far better with the use of sinni. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 20; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 297, v. 20)
125 Finnur Jónsson suggests emending ætti to átti, but the subjunctive isn’t hurting anyone here, so I have left it as is. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 21; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 297, v. 21)
126 A jötunn (giant)
22. “I realize the lords lack the might to compete in sport against the king; the poles of metal went to lie down inside my glove last night.

23. Where you in the night had found the heart of the hall’s rafters, there you had gotten shelter in the grips of the thick thumb of Hála.

24. The king lacks not for honored care— to the clever feeder of wolves bed of wyrm and ice of hand, and many huge men belong.
25. You'll bear no might against them, destroyer of the snake's down;\(^{137}\) better it is for you to head home, rather than a king to find.

26. The shaker of bows would quickly come to face mens' trickery upon him. Still, we should both go together to seek the king at home.”

27. This Thor now agreed to artfully – that is in Göndlir's memory\(^ {138} \) – Aurnir\(^ {139} \) binds all the men's food nicely for the time being.

\(^{135}\) Fj emends *iätte to jätta* twice. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 27; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 298, v. 27) I find this unnecessary as *jätta* is the third singular past indicative and can thus function fine here, though admittedly I would prefer to change *nú* to *með.*

\(^{136}\) In his normalized version Finnur inserts a -d to give us *Göndlar,* the genitive of *Göndul,* the name of a valkyrie. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 27) This is the least invasive option, though the kenning would remain obscure. I have opted instead to take this as an erroneous genitive of the Odinic name *Göndlir,* which Finnur mentions in his dictionary but ultimately rejects as an emendation. I feel that this name is the only option which can *almost* clarify the meaning of the kenning. (F. Jónsson, *ordbog.* P. 153)

\(^{137}\) gold, see \(^{138}\)

\(^{138}\) obscure; referring to the poem itself? “Göndlir” is a heiti for Odin

\(^{139}\) *jötunn* name
28. Skrímnir spoke of a way towards kings, there was the tallest wood to cross; the givers of the land of a snake became most afraid of the cliff’s pole.

29. Ídi never walked too slow before the payer of the arrows of a thing; Aurnir did not veer straight, he bore up from behind them in one step.

30. Thence the dwarf’s wheel, heaven’s red ember, turned away from the fells. Then the lord of the houses of rocks sat – All bed down for a night’s stay.

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140 Finnur Jónsson emends heitande to hreytendur. To my knowledge, the only instance where this noun is used previously is a verse in Einarr Gílsson’s Selkollavísur: “aðr hreytendir hétu”. (Guðmundur saga Biskups. C. 1350-1400, AM 396 4to, The Arnamagnæan Collection, Reykjavík, IS. 20r 2 - 20r 5. https://handrit.is/is/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0396) Finnur Jónsson knew this work: he once said Einarr Gílsson’s poetry was all “dry narratives, and lacking in poetic flight.” (F. Jónsson. Den oldnorske og islandske litteraturs historie. Anden udgave. København: Gads Förlag, 1924, 13)


142 Jón Porkelson emends hýrnnis to hlyrnnis (J. Porkelson, 1888. P. 159, v. 30) which Finnur Jónsson adopts

143 men

144 Skrímnir

145 a jötunn name, here referring to Skrímnir

146 Thor, see gloss

147 both kennings refer to the sun; “the dwarf’s wheel” – dwarves are famous craftsmen of riches, golden objects, and the sun is golden. gloss

148 Skrímnir
31. Skrímnir tekr149 svo skjótt til orðs,  
–skauð vill náðir þiggja–  
≥ nú mega gumnar gá til150 borðs,  
geing ek meðan at liggja.≤
32. Þeira vist nam þrífa geyst,  
Þundar arfí enn sterki,  
ǫngvan hnút gat Atli leyst,  
Áss var linr í verki.
33. Ekki fekk um aptan mál,  
Ása vǫrðr at snæða,  
Skrímnis bønd eru skørp sem stál,  
skaust honum af því fæða.

31. Skrímnir starts to speak  
–the wretch wants to take a rest–  
“now the men may have a meal,  
in the meantime I’ll go lie down.”  
32. They took the provisions,  
Þundur’s strong son ardently pulled,  
yet Atli151 did not get the knot untied,  
the Ás152 was weak in this work.  
33. The protector of the Æsir got  
no food during the evening;  
Skrímnir’s straps are sharp as steel,  
because of this food eluded him.

149   tekr via talar. As this phrase is so prevalent within the old Icelandic corpus, I will employ this emendation of Finnur’s. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 31; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 298, v. 31)
150   not present in the original, supplied to aid phrasing and metrics. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 31; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 298, v. 31)
151   Atli, or Attila, stands in for Thor here  
152   a god, Thor
34. Þá var Eindríði ógnarstyggr, ðóldin misti kæti, 
gessinn hraut svo gljúfra Yggr, 
at gall í hverju stræti. 
35. Mjöllnir setti þórr í því þungan ljótum Bauga; 
Höggit kom þat hausinn í, 
amarinn sökk at auga. 
36. Vaknar Þrymr við þenna leik, 
Þjóðar spurði hann stefni: 
≥hvórt mun brum eða barið af eik, 
bregða vorum svefni?

34. Then Eindriddi\textsuperscript{153} became furious, the group abandoned joy; 
the Ygg of chasms\textsuperscript{154} snored so noisily 
that it resounded in every street. 
35. At once Thor drove Mjöllnir heavily into foul Baugi; 
the blow struck into the skull, 
the hammer sunk down to an eye. 
36. Thrym\textsuperscript{155} awakens because of this, 
he asked the leader of nations:\textsuperscript{156} 
“did a bud, or the leaf from an oak 
interrupt our sleep?

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{153} a heiti for Thor 
\textsuperscript{154} Skrímnir 
\textsuperscript{155} A famous jötunn; Skrímnir here 
\textsuperscript{156} Thor
\end{flushright}
37. Lauf þat gjǫrði lítinn dett lézt\textsuperscript{157} á heila þýfi. Hvört er Fjǫlnis fólkit mett?\textsuperscript{≤}
Flagða spurði hann skýfi.
38. Sauðungs arfinn sannar þat, ≥Sveit hefr snætt með prýði, Aurnir, sofðu í annan stað en ek með mína lýði.≤
39. Fljótt rann svefn á Syrpu verr, sveit tók ǫll að skjálfa, hamri laust á heila ker, hrunþveings\textsuperscript{158} eisu bjálfa\textsuperscript{159}. 37. The feeling that leaf made–it let itself fall on the brain’s hillock\textsuperscript{160}.
Are the folk of Fjölnir full?" He asked the destroyer of troll-women\textsuperscript{161}.
38. The heir of Saudung affirms this: “the group has eaten well–Aurnir, you go sleep in another place than I with my people.”
39. Soon sleep overcame Syrpa’s husband\textsuperscript{162}, the whole group started to shake; the hammer struck the fur of the brain’s tub\textsuperscript{163}, glowing embers of the lava-snake\textsuperscript{164} fly

\textsuperscript{157} In his normalized edition Finnur Jónsson emends liezt to létt. I have left the verb as is. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 37)
\textsuperscript{159} Finnur takes bjálfa as the genitive singular of bjálf in his normalized edition, but leaves it alone in his diplomatic version. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 39; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 299, v. 39) Either interpretation is fair, but I prefer the imagery of the latter option.
\textsuperscript{160} The head
\textsuperscript{161} Thor, a famous slayer of trolls
\textsuperscript{162} Skrímnir; Syrpa is the name of a female jötunn (giantess)
\textsuperscript{163} the skin, or the scalp; see gloss
\textsuperscript{164} sparks, see gloss
40. Herða nam þá hóggit sitt, Herjans burr við vánga; hamarinn sökki á hlýrit mitt, haus varð sundr at ganga.

41. Vaknar Ámr í annat sinn, yglrdr ok strauk um skalla, /moment af eikum mér á kinn, mylsnan nokkur falla.

42. þá var komit at dúrum dag, dökk hvarf nótt af fjöllum, þjassa gefr hann þriðja slag, þat var mest af þillum.

40. Herjan’s son\textsuperscript{165} hardened his blow then, against the side of the face; the hammer sunk into the middle of the cheek, the head was meant to come asunder.

41. Ámur wakes one more time, frowns and strokes his bald head; “Did some dust fall off the oak and onto my cheek?”

42. Then the beloved day was come, dark night vanished from the fells. He gives Þjazi\textsuperscript{166} a third blow–that was the greatest of all.

\textsuperscript{165} Thor, “Herjan” is a heið for Odin.

\textsuperscript{166} Þjazi is a famous jötunn, his name stands in for Skrímnir’s here
43. Hlorríði spared no effort in trying to wound Idi badly; the hammer and hand sunk down deep, and the rigid shaft was buried.  
44. Hraunír stirred and asked: “What was in play then? Did birds cause the leaf to fall on me from off the fair oak?”  
45. He says “the bright fire of skies has quickly come to shine. You will pass the night with the king; time for us to set off on our trek.”

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167 skýran via skýrum. Finnur Jónsson makes this emendation in both of his editions; it is preferable that this adjective agree with eld. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 45; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 300, v. 45)  
168 Finnur Jónsson emends segir to sér twice, I find the change unnecessary. Perhaps “he sees the bright fire... has” is more evocative than “he says the bright fire... has”, but I will nonetheless leave segir in place. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5. V. 45; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 300, v. 45)  
169 a heiti for Thor  
170 a jötunn name (Jónsson, ordbog. P. 182)
46. You should lie low, for your sake,
in Loki’s pretty hall, also—
else you will get shame and disgrace,
gentlemen, with everything.
47. Now must I vanish on my way North,
enough grief is borne against you:
here I shall break from the pole of shields,
close is it now to the stronghold.”
48. Skrímnir vanished, away into the woods,
this happened suddenly:
they saw nearest the forest edge
a stronghold fair and vast.
49. Told it was, for the Hlín of spears,
that third toast of Gaut,
here will fall the wine of Fjölnir,
it can no longer be received now.

171 Finnur Jónsson removes ok. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 46; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 300, v. 46) Jón Borkelsson also makes this emendation, and moves í to the front of the line. (J. Borkelsson, 188. P. 159, v. 46) It would be preferable if ok could be placed in the first line of the vísa, but this is too trivial an issue to merit the marring of the otherwise sound metrics. I will instead take ok for “also” and leave it where it stands.

172 In his earlier work Finnur Jónsson cites this abbreviation in the manuscript as unclear or erroneous. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 6, v. 47) Paleography is by no means my expertise, nor are the intricacies of late medieval Icelandic orthographies. However, the word in question, ínar, appears to be the result of a simple scribal error. Preceding this item is íc, which the scribe indicates is placed incorrectly, and draws a mark between ín and huerfa to indicate the proper location (nu mun ec hurfa via nu mun huerfa ec). (AM 604 G 4to, 17r 31) It is all too possible that the scribe merely forgot the intended -ð while distracted by the task of repositioning íc.

173 Finnur Jónsson emends þar næst to mætir in both of his editions. While this is sensible, I don’t see the need to remove næst when we could just change þar to þeir if we want to get a subject into the line. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 6, v. 48; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 300, v. 48)

174 In his older edition Finnur Jónsson emends geir to gullaðs, providing a more typical kenning option. But a “Hlín of spears” is by no means a defective kenning, and as this is a mythological poem I will let its meaning stand. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 6, v. 49)

175 scribal error: this is the second rímur, not the third
176 a valkyrie, a woman
177 poetry
178 also poetry
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* It should be noted that Icelandic names are not sorted by patronymic here, but rather by first name, as is customary


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