

# 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 Þorkleason, Finnur Jónsson, and Sverrir Tómasson. Lokrur follows the tale of Þór and Útgardaloki, 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 Útgard<sup>1</sup>, wherein they travel through Jötunheim and pay a visit to a jötunn king, Útgardaloki. 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 *rímur* 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 *mansöngur*– the unknown narrator’s lyrical

1 Snorra Edda, *Codex Regius*. c.1300-1350, GKS 2367 4<sup>o</sup>, The Arnarnaganean Collection, The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies at the University of Iceland, Reykjavík, 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 *rímur* (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 *ríma*, 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<sup>[Gloss.]</sup>

- *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 Baldur's funeral pyre. A “ship of a dwarf” or any variation thereupon 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 Gallar who kill the Áss 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”<sup>2</sup>
- *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-blidr greddr ulfa* – “the battle-glad feeder of wolves”<sup>3</sup>
- *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”<sup>4</sup>. 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”

2 Harris, Richard L. (ed.) 2017, ‘*Hjálmþés saga ok Ölvis* 7 (Hjálmþér Ingason, Lausavísur 4. L. 6)’ in Margaret Clunies Ross (ed.), *Poetry in fornaldarsögur*. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 8. Brepols; Turnhout, 499

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

4 Diana Whaley (ed.) 2012, ‘Vígfuss Víga-Glúmsson, Lausavísa 1, l. 1’ in Diana Whaley (ed.) *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 1. Brepols; Turnhout, 364

- *Glowing embers of the lava-snake* [II v. 39] – A lava-snake is a dragon; this kenning refers to sparks or small flames
- *Göndli'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, *orðbog*. 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”<sup>5</sup>
- *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)

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5 Russell Poole (ed.) 2017, ‘Breta saga 35, (Gunnlaugr Leifsson, Merlínusspá 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 Hauldar<sup>6</sup> vind;  
Heyri enn mæta menja Norn<sup>7</sup>,  
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-gjörn við hreysti verk;  
alla list bar Þórr af þeim,  
Þengil hvern er sóttu heim.

1. The finest fountain of onions<sup>8</sup> has,  
ended for me grief in Hauldar's wind<sup>9</sup>;  
yet, listen, dear Norn of necklaces<sup>10</sup>,  
while I guard the old names.  
2. Odin ruled over the Æsir's fold,  
all were given the sound of Stúmi.<sup>11</sup>  
The king gave victory to thanes;  
to those who bore a spear to battle.  
3. Fjölnir's people<sup>12</sup> 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 Rímnaflakkar*. Copenhagen: S. L. Möllers, 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. (*Rímnabók*. c. 1540-1560, AM 604 G 4<sup>o</sup>, The Arnarnaganean 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 *vísa* 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 meðan 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 *vísa* 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. Allir hræddusk Yggjar nið,  
orku neytti hann jafnan við,  
þauglir<sup>13</sup> flyðu þussar land,  
þegar hann tók sér Mjöllni í hönd.  
5. Loki var nefndr Þundar þræll,  
þröttarlaus en ekki dæll;  
hvar sem Björn<sup>14</sup> til byggða fór,  
brá hann sér æ við brögðin stór.  
6. Þórr nam fréttá Nálár nið:  
≥Nú mun þurfa bragða við,  
níðskan vilda ek nafna þinn,  
næsta hitta, kompán minn!

4. All were afraid of Ygg's son<sup>15</sup>,  
strength he often employed;  
giants fled silently from the land  
once he took Mjölnir in his hand.  
5. Loki a slave of Þundur<sup>16</sup> was called,  
though not gentle, and free of strength,  
wherever Björn<sup>17</sup> to havens trekked,  
he always tried to fashion grand tricks.  
6. Thor did tell the son of Nál<sup>18</sup>,  
“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. Þundr is a *heiti* for Odin

17 Björn is a *heiti* for Thor

18 Loki, Nál is a name for Loki's mother

7. Útgörðum frá ek at auðling ræðr,  
engi vissi hans föðr né mæðr;  
Fjölnis þjón skal fara með mér,  
flesta kantu leika þér.≤  
8. Loka var ekki létt um svör:  
≥litt hentar mér þessi för.  
hefr þú frétt at hann er tröll?  
Hræðazt næri flögðin öll.≤  
9. Yggjar svaraði arfi snar,  
≥Ef þú kemr í nokkut 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,  
hamarinn tók ok hafra 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<sup>19</sup> 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<sup>20</sup> 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!

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19      Loki; another intriguing kenning which marks Loki as subservient... for “Fjölnir” see 12

20      See 15

11. Fyrðar sóttu lánga leið,  
 Loki á gøngu, en Þórir<sup>21</sup> reið.  
 Loðurr kvedst at lyktum sjá,  
 lítið hús ok garða smá.  
 12. Þórr at garði þessum snýr,  
 þar stóð úti fleina Týr.  
 Karl er blidr en kerling gløð:  
 ≥kostr er yðr at þiggja lōð.≤  
 13. Børn hefr átt sér Bóndinn tvau,  
 brigðu-væn eru systkin þau.  
 Þjálf<sup>22</sup> nefni ek þrætu<sup>23</sup> bjóð,  
 þussa kyns er Røskva fljóð.

11. The men took a long journey,  
 Loki walked, but Thorir<sup>24</sup> rode.  
 Lodurr<sup>25</sup> 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<sup>26</sup>.  
 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<sup>27</sup> Thjálf,  
 kin of giants, and the girl Røskva.

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 *Þjálf* via *Þjálf*; 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 Þórir = 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 Loðurr, 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 gekk ok Þór í sal,  
þrifligt tóku rekkar tal;  
heiðarlaus drap hǫðnu bræðr,  
Hœnis vinr<sup>28</sup>, ok kyndu glæðr.  
15. Þegar at framm bar fæðslu skauð,  
fólki Þór til veislu bauð.  
Qflgum var þá eigi leitt,  
Ullar mág at snæða feitt.  
16. Gestir átu geitar jóð,  
gleyptu bæði hold ok blóð,  
Þjálfi gjǫrði at ljósta legg,  
lysta gjǫrir til mergjar segg.

14. Thjálfi and Thor went into the hall,  
the men took to ample talk;  
honorless, Hœnir's friend<sup>29</sup> slaughtered  
the brothers of the she-kid<sup>30</sup> and fired coals.  
15. When the coward<sup>31</sup> brought the food  
forth,  
the family Thor called to a feast.  
It was not loathsome then for the stout  
stepfather of Ull<sup>32</sup> to eat fatty meat.  
16. The guests ate the babies of goats<sup>33</sup>,  
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; Ull 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. Geymir ekki Þórr um þat,  
þakti<sup>34</sup> beinl í qðrum stað,  
–Baldrs frændi breytti svá–  
breiddi siðan<sup>35</sup> stökurnar á.  
18. Þegar hið dýra Døllings<sup>36</sup> sprund,  
dróst í burt<sup>37</sup> af<sup>38</sup> stjörnu grund,  
kappar stóðu í klæði<sup>39</sup> sín,  
– komin er þessi fregn til mín.

17. Thor does not notice this,  
he covered the bones elsewhere,  
–the kinsmen of Baldr<sup>40</sup> acted thusly–  
later he spread them onto the skins.  
18. Whence that fine woman of Delling's<sup>41</sup>  
drew herself down from the ground of  
stars<sup>42</sup>,  
the heroes stood and dressed themselves,  
– this news has come down to me.

34 emended from *þagt j beine*. The use of *beini* is puzzling on its own, a singular where there should by rights be a plural, but *þagti* via *þekja* 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 *siðan* via *siðir*, 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 *siðir* from *siða*, but the 2nd person could not possibly contribute to this line in any way, and for *siðir* 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 *Døllings* via *Dogllings*. A clear reference to Dellingr, a god associated with daylight

37 *burt* via *burttu*. 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 .

39 *klæði* 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. Menju<sup>43</sup> dólgr enn mátki<sup>44</sup> þreif,  
Mjöllnir sér í oðlis kleif,  
vígir beinin barma kiðs;  
brá því harri opt til liðs.  
20. Bukkar gjörðu at bænum þeim,  
báðir lifa aptr í heim;  
illa bar sinn eþra fót,  
annar hafr við meiðsln ljót.  
21. Þór varð ei við þetta frýnn,  
þúngar lét hann síga brýnn,  
garprinn réð með gildan krapt,  
í<sup>45</sup> greipum þrífa Mjöllnirs skapt.

19. The mighty enemy of Menja<sup>46</sup> gripped  
again his Mjöllnir in the hawk's cliff<sup>47</sup>;  
consecrates the bones of the brothers  
of the kid<sup>48</sup>, 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.

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43 *Menju* via *Menia*. *Menja* could not remain in the nominative alongside *dólgr*.

44 *mátki* via *makte*.

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

46 Thor; *Menja* is the name of a troll-woman, Thor is a famous killer of trolls

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

48 goats

22. Sjónir hvesti Sifjar verr,  
–svó gengr opt ef illa ferr–  
herðir<sup>49</sup> gekk úr hverjum lið,  
hvítna tóku hnúarnir<sup>50</sup> við.  
23. Klókr talaði karl við Þór,  
–kneyfiliga<sup>51</sup> með orðum fór–  
≥svó vil ek heill at ek sættir býð  
sjálfum þér fyri heimalýð.<

22. The husband of Sif<sup>52</sup> 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.”

- 
- 49 *herður* 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 hvítuðu hnúarnir”. (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 *hnúarnir* via *hnúarnar*.
- 51 *kneyfiliga* via *kneyþiliga*. 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. Sauðungs ansar sífjar-blóð,  
 síðan týndi öllum móð:  
 ≥Þjálfí vil ek at þjóni oss,  
 þrýstíligi ok seima Hnoss.≤  
 25. Karl var eigi í svörunum seinn,  
 segir at Þór skuli ráða einn,  
 rǫskr fylgdi bauga Baldr,  
 Bǫlverks syni<sup>53</sup> um allan aldr.  
 26. Eyddist þann veg ýta spjall,  
 Ása vǫrðr er sátrr karl,  
 Þjálfí bjost ok þrifligt sprund,  
 þessu næst með Yggjar kund.

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

53 *syni* via *sonr*. Because *Baldr* and *rǫskr* dominate the nominative a change was necessary. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 293, v. 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; Thjálfí. Jewelry is used in kennings to denote men and women. Baldr is a deity, son of Odin.

57 Thor. “Bǫlverkr” is a *heiti* for Odin.

58 Thor

59 Also Thor

27. Rýmr fór<sup>60</sup> með rekka sín,  
–rausa ek þann veg Yggjar vín,  
eptir lagði kjappa<sup>61</sup> kyn,  
Kjalars niðr hjá brodda hlyn.

28. Ýtar gengu alt til nætr,  
ekki fengu hǫldar sætr,  
dagrinn leið en Dǫllings<sup>62</sup> mær,  
dóttir Ónnars<sup>63</sup> myrkrið fær.

27. Rýmr<sup>64</sup> left with his men,  
–I recite in this way of the wine of Ygg<sup>65</sup>–  
Kjalar’s son<sup>66</sup> left the kin of goats<sup>67</sup> behind  
with the maple tree of spears<sup>68</sup>.

28. The men all walked until the night,  
the heroes found no place to stay.  
The day passed, and Delling’s maiden<sup>69</sup>  
made the daughter of Ónnar<sup>70</sup> murky.

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60 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.

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

62 *Dǫllings* via *dǫrllings*. The scribe seems to struggle with spelling this name in particular.

63 *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).

64 “Rýmr” is a *heiti* for Thor

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

66 “Kjalar” is a *heiti* for Odin

67 goats

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

69 Nótt once again, the night

70 Jǫrð, the earth; night darkened the earth. See <sup>63</sup>

29. Skatnar fundu í skógi sal,  
 skreyttr víða nǫðru dal,  
 hagligt list þeim hurða dýr,  
 Hlóru<sup>71</sup> fóstri í skálann snýr.  
 30. Ræfr er sterkt á ránni því,  
 rekkar gengu skálann í,  
 býsna-hár ok breiðar dyrr-  
 bragnar litu ei slíkan fyrr.  
 31. Nýtir<sup>72</sup> tóku þar náð ok svefn  
 nǫðru lands ok hrínga Gefn  
 hér skal dverga dauða-lausn  
 detta niðr ok orða þausn.

29. The men found a hall in a forest,  
 broadly adorned with the valley of the  
 snake<sup>73</sup>.  
 Timely the beast of doors<sup>74</sup> seemed to them,  
 Hlora's foster-son<sup>75</sup> 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<sup>76</sup> took there  
 quiet and rest, and the Gefion of rings<sup>77</sup>.  
 Here shall the death-liberation of dwarves<sup>78</sup>  
 and a tumult of words fall down.

## End I

- 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
- 72 Jón Þorkelsson emends *nytar* to *nýtir* in order to secure a subject. (Jón Þorkelsson, “Lokurur eller Loka rímur.” *Om Digtingen på Island I det 15. og 16. århundrede*. N.p.: Copenhagen: Høst & Sons Forlag, 1888. 158, v. 31. [hereinafter “J. Þorkelsson, 1888.”])
- 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 Rǫskva. Curious, as she is not mentioned during this part of the story in *Snorra Edda*.
- 78 Poetry, see<sup>Gloss</sup>

## II

1. Enn skal leysa lægis hún<sup>79</sup>,  
Litar í oðru sinni;  
mér er eigi hægt um trygðar tún,  
at telja Ása minni.  
2. Þar vil ek reisa Fundíngs far,  
fleygir Draupnis sveita  
skeljungs þeim<sup>80</sup> í skála var  
með skatna sína teita.

1. Still shall the cub of the sea  
of Litar<sup>81</sup> be loosed once more;  
for me it is not easy on faith's fort<sup>82</sup>  
to recount the Æsir's drink<sup>83</sup>.  
2. There I will raise Fundíng's vessel<sup>84</sup>;  
The accorder of Draupnir's sweat<sup>85</sup>  
was in that hut of the whale<sup>86</sup>  
with his merry men.

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79 *Hún* 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 Þorkelsson suggests a change from *enn* to *hér* which I find unnecessary. (J. Þorkelsson, 1888. P. 158, l. 1)

80 *Þeim* via *seim*. (F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 294, v. 2; F. Jónsson, 1896. P.3, v. 2)

81 poetry, see<sup>Gloss</sup>

82 the mind

83 poetry

84 poetry, see<sup>Gloss</sup>

85 a man of noble bearing, Thor

86 “whale” is standing in for a giant here

3. Þegar at fyrðar festa blund,  
framir í visku hǫllum<sup>87</sup>,  
sá kom uindr á uida grund,  
ok<sup>88</sup> veifði í<sup>89</sup> ranni ǫllum.  
4. Meiðir<sup>90</sup> vakna á miðri nótt<sup>91</sup>  
mens stoðu í klæði,  
skalinn allr ok skógrinn þaut<sup>92</sup>,  
skalf sem leiki á þræði.

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

87 In his 1896 edition Finnur Jónsson emends *hǫllum* to *höllu*, necessitating a change from *ǫllum* to *öllu* in line four. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 3). I will let *hǫllum* stand.

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

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)

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

91 Finnur Jónsson suggests *nátt* in 1896, I assume it was done in the interest of improving the rhyme. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 4)

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.

93 the mind, the chest is also possible

94 men



5. Fyrða lið var fári meitt,  
fyllt af sútar iðju,  
hér sér<sup>95</sup> borgar<sup>96</sup>-hreysi eitt,  
hitta í ranni miðju.

6. Loki var hvergi af hræðslu kyrr,  
hann hljóp þar inn með Þjálfa;  
Eindriði settist sjálfr í dyr,  
sveit tók ǫll at skjálfa.

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 Thjálfí.  
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 *hiersir* 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 *hiersir* 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. Dreingir svofu um dökkva nátt,  
 dagr tók mjög at sigra;  
 fólkit<sup>97</sup> bjóst til ferðar brátt<sup>98</sup>,  
 ok fýsir harðra vigra.  
 8. Skessu vinr<sup>99</sup> frá skála veik,  
 skamt með sína granna;  
 leit hann þá hvar at lá við eik,  
 lofðungr<sup>100</sup> hamra ranna.  
 9. Firna ljótr ok at fæstu vel,  
 er flassi<sup>101</sup> þessi skaptr,  
 býsna digr ok blár sem hel,  
 berr that einginn aptr.

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<sup>102</sup> 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<sup>103</sup>.  
 9. Shockingly ugly and the least nice  
 he is clumsy-minded,  
 wonderfully large and black as Hel;  
 no one refutes that.

97 -l inserted. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 7; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 7)

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 *uinr* 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.

100 -ð inserted. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 8; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 295, v. 8)

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:<sup>Gloss</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> bar fúlan þef,  
er fyki í<sup>105</sup> hellis skúta.

11. Auga hans eru<sup>106</sup> sem hallar tveir,  
höku bar mjóva ok langa,  
munninn sǫgðu mestan þeir,  
mjög tók ut á vanga.

12. Allir negl sem arnar klær,  
á Irpu fáka sveltí;  
skǫguðu ur höfði tennr tvær,  
trǫlls sem í villi gelti.

10. Baugi's nose was like a stone,  
bent like the horn of a ram,  
a remarkably foul stench carried, which  
would waft from a cave of jutting rocks<sup>107</sup>.

11. His eyes are like two boulders,  
he bore a long and narrow chin;  
they said that most of the mouth  
took up much of the side of the head.

12. All the nails are like eagle's claws  
on the starver of Irpa's horse;<sup>108</sup>  
two teeth protruded from the head  
of the troll, as is horribly wrong.

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104 Finnur recommends *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)

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

106 *eru* can be removed for metric improvement. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 3, v. 11; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 11)

107 bad breath from a large mouth

108 a jötunn (giant)<sup>Gloss.</sup>

13. Allr var hann um beinin berr,  
ok blár sem hrauns á renni;  
høldum leizt hann hræðilegr,  
heldr en segja nenni.  
14. Digran hafði Stúmi<sup>109</sup> staf,  
støng fekk valla hæri;  
Hveðrungs arfinn hraut ok svaf,  
hristist jørðin næri.  
15. Veðrit<sup>110</sup> stóð svo eikum í  
áms af góma ranni,  
skynjar Þórr 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<sup>111</sup> snored and slept,  
the earth trembled nearby.  
15. The wind stuck so in the oaks,  
from Ámur's palate-house<sup>112</sup>,  
Thor feels that, because the hall shook,  
and also Ygg's lady<sup>113</sup>.

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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 Þorkelsson also chooses to leave it as is (J. Þorkelsson, 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*. *Hveðrungr* is a name associated with Loki.

112 *Skrímnir*'s mouth. *Ámr* is a jötunn name, standing in for *Skrímnir*.

113 *Jørð*, the earth, mother to Thor.

16. Tír bar Þórr af trøllum opt,  
 tók hann Mjöllnir høndum<sup>114</sup>,  
 hann greip sinn hamar með grimd á lopt,  
 Glám<sup>115</sup> vill svipta øndum<sup>116</sup>.  
 17. Flagðit á við flærðir skilt,  
 Flekkur tapaði blundi;  
 Vígnis fóstura<sup>117</sup> verðr bilt,  
 at vega at bjarga lundi.  
 18. Upp réð setjast leiðilegr,  
 lagliga kvaddi hann dreingi:  
 ≥eflist heiðr ok yðar vegr<sup>118</sup>,  
 Ásgarðs manna leingi.≤

16. Thor often took glory from trolls,  
 he took Mjöllnir in hand;  
 with savagery he held his hammer aloft–  
 wants to deprive Glám<sup>119</sup> of breath.  
 17. The giant was known for lies,  
 Flekkur<sup>120</sup> forfeited slumber;  
 Vignir's fosterling<sup>121</sup> becomes afraid  
 to battle the tree of rocks<sup>122</sup>.  
 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.”

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- 114 Finnur Jónsson emends *høndum* to *höndu*, which better matches *øndu*. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 16; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 16) I would prefer instead to leave *høndum* as is and supply an *-m* for *øndu*, rendering it part of the *andi* paradigm instead of the *ønd* paradigm, though both changes would have the same effect. Of interest: Jón Þorkleason leaves the line as it is. (J. Þorkleason, 1888. P. 158, v. 16)
- 115 *Glám* via *Glom*: vowel change for spelling normalization (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 16; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 16)
- 116 *øndum* via *øndu*. See<sup>114</sup>
- 117 *fóstura* via *fósturi*. Either the nominative *lundi* in the following clause must change case, or *fósturi* must. *Lundi* has the benefit of rhyme. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4. V. 17; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 296, v. 17)
- 118 *vegr ok yðar heiðr*. The scribe appears to have accidentally skipped these last two lines in the original– they are written in the bottom margin of 16v with a flourish. This original word order leaves much to be desired and Finnur Jónsson twice suggests that *heiðr* and *vegr* be swapped. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 18; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 297, v. 18) As the line is not in its proper place, the possibility that this original order was not intended is likely, I feel.
- 119 A very famous *draugr*; *Skrímnir* here
- 120 a variation of the jötunn name “Fleggr” (F. Jónsson, ordbog. P. 98) in place of *Skrímnir*
- 121 “Vignir” is a *heiti* for Thor
- 122 a jötunn (giant) male

19. Þundar arfe þagði<sup>123</sup> viðr,  
 Þórr nam slikt af fretta:  
 ≥höldum skyr þú Hafla niðr,  
 heitti þitt af letta!≤  
 20. ≥Skrímnir kalla skatnar mik,  
 skildu hvat ek inni;  
 hvert til landa lystir þik,  
 at leita ása sinni<sup>124</sup>.≤  
 21. ≥Þess skal ek sækja fylkirs fund,  
 ef fyr van sigr til dauða,  
 firi Útgorðum með itra lund,  
 audlíng ætti<sup>125</sup> at ráða.≤

19. The heir of Þundar was thereby quiet,  
 Thor made to inquire:  
 “Tell the heroes of your name,  
 you son of Hafli<sup>126</sup>, and stand!”  
 20. “Skrímnir my masters call me,  
 understand what I say;  
 to whence in these lands do you  
 wish to go, companion of the Æsir?”  
 21. “This shall I seek, a king’s meeting–  
 the one who’s wont for victory of deeds–  
 afore Útgard with a mind of greatness  
 the king would have claim to rule.

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. ≥Hǫlda get ek at hindri þrótt,  
 at heyja leik við tiggja,  
 meiðar gjörðu málm<sup>127</sup> í nótt,  
 í mínum hanska at liggja.  
 23. Þar sem fyrðar fundu í njól,  
 fleyðrar hjört af skála,  
 þar hefr gjört með greipar skól,  
 gildan þumlung Hála.  
 24. Skortir eigi at skjöldung prís,  
 skýra<sup>128</sup> fæði varga,  
 grettis ból ok greipar ís,  
 gumna stóra ok marga.

22. “I realize the lords lack the might  
 to compete in sport against the king;  
 the poles of metal<sup>129</sup> went to lie down  
 inside my glove last night.  
 23. Where you in the night had found  
 the heart of the hall’s rafters<sup>130</sup>,  
 there you had gotten shelter in  
 the grips of the thick thumb of Hála<sup>131</sup>.  
 24. The king lacks not for honored care-  
 to the clever feeder of wolves<sup>132</sup>  
 bed of wurm<sup>133</sup> and ice of hand,<sup>134</sup>  
 and many huge men belong.

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127 Finnur Jónsson provides a stem final *-m* to *mals*, giving us *málms*, a known substantive in kennings for men, see <sup>Gloss.1</sup> (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 22; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 297, v. 22)  
 128 In his earlier edition Finnur Jónsson emends *skýra* to *skýrum*. This is unnecessary as the weak inflection of this adjective gives such a multitude of options for *skýra* (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 22)  
 129 men; just as trees often stand in for men, so do poles and wooden beams  
 130 a house, in this case the off-shoot in which they slept  
 131 the thumb, or area between thumb and forefinger, in Skrímnir’s glove, which they mistook for a hall. See <sup>Gloss.</sup>  
 132 a warrior, Skrímnir. See <sup>Gloss.</sup>  
 133 gold  
 134 silver

25. Ekki berr þú afl við þeim,  
eyðir dýnu linna,  
betra er þér er halda heim  
heldr en kóng at finna.

26. Boga mun verða skelfi skamt,  
skotnum þeim til klækja.

þó skulum beigla báðir samt  
buðlung heim at sækja.≤

27. Þessu játti<sup>135</sup> Þorr nu list,  
þat er in Gøndlis<sup>136</sup> minni,  
alla bindr yta vist,  
Aurnir slett at sinni.

25. You'll bear no might against them,  
destroyer of the snake's down;<sup>137</sup>  
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 Gøndlir's memory<sup>138</sup> –  
Aurnir<sup>139</sup> binds all the men's food  
nicely for the time being.

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135 Fj emends *iatte* to *játa* twice. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 4, v. 27; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 298, v. 27) I find this unnecessary as *játti* 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 *Gøndlar*, the genitive of *Gøndul*, 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 *Gøndlir*, 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, *orðbog*. P. 153)

137 gold, see <sup>Gloss.</sup>

138 obscure; referring to the poem itself? “Gøndlir” is a heiti for Odin

139 jötunn name



28. Skrímnir sagði skotnum leið,  
 skóg var mest at ganga;  
 flestir hræddust hamra meið,  
 hreytendur<sup>140</sup> oðglings landa.  
 29. Iði ek svo aldri seint,  
 orva þings fyrri reiði,  
 eigi hōrfði Aurnir beintt,  
 undan bar hann á skeidi.  
 30. Þegar at hvarf af hjólinu<sup>141</sup> dvergs,  
 hlýrnis<sup>142</sup> gløð af fjöllum,  
 þá tók ræsir ranna bergs,  
 rekkum nattstað ollum.

28. Skrímnir spoke of a way towards kings,  
 there was the tallest wood to cross;  
 the givers of the land of a snake<sup>143</sup>  
 became most afraid of the cliff's pole<sup>144</sup>.  
 29. Idi<sup>145</sup> never walked too slow  
 before the payer of the arrows of a thing<sup>146</sup>;  
 Aurnir did not veer straight,  
 he bore up from behind them in one step.  
 30. Thence the dwarf's wheel,<sup>147</sup> heaven's  
 red ember,<sup>137</sup> turned away from the fells.  
 Then the lord of the houses of rocks<sup>148</sup> sat –  
 All bed down for a night's stay.

140 Finnur Jónsson emends *heitande* to *hreytendur*. To my knowledge, the only instance where this noun is used previously is a verse in Einar Gilsson's *Selkolluvisur*: "aðr hreytendur hétu". (*Guðmundur saga Biskups*. C. 1350-1400, AM 396 4to, The Arnarnaganean Collection, Reykjavík, IS. 20r 2 - 20r 5. <https://handrit.is/is/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0396>) Finnur Jónsson knew this work: he once said Einar Gilsson'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)

141 *hjólinu* via *hielen*. Finnur Jónsson emends *hielen* to *hjálmi*. (F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 30; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 298, v. 30) Jón Þorkelsson's suggestion of a -u suffix is preferable. (J. Þorkelsson, 1888. P. 159, v. 30)

142 Jón Þorkelsson emends *hyrnnis* to *hlyrnnis* (J. Þorkelsson, 1888. P. 159, v. 30) which Finnur Jónsson adopts

143 men

144 Skrímnir

145 a jötunn name, here referring to Skrímnir

146 Thor, see <sup>Gloss.</sup>

147 both kennings refer to the sun; "the dwarf's wheel" –dwarves are famous craftsmen of riches, golden objects, and the sun is golden. <sup>Gloss.</sup>

148 Skrímnir

31. Skrímnir tekr<sup>149</sup> svo skjótt til orðs,  
–skauð vill náðir þiggja–  
≥ nú mega gumnar gá til<sup>150</sup> borðs,  
geing ek meðan at liggja.≤  
32. Þeira vist nam þrífa geyst,  
Þundar arfi enn sterki,  
ǫngvan hnút gat Atli leyst,  
Áss var linr í verki.  
33. Ekki fekk um aptan mál,  
Ása vǫrðr at snæða,  
Skrímnis þond eru skǫrp 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 Atli<sup>151</sup> did not get the knot untied,  
the Ás<sup>152</sup> 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 Eindriði ógnarstyggr,  
öldin misti kæti,  
gessinn hraut svo gljúfra Yggr,  
at gall í hverju stræti.  
35. Mjöllnir setti Þór í því  
þungan ljótum Bauga;  
Höggit kom þat hausinn í,  
hamarinn sakk at auga.  
36. Vaknar Þrymr við þenna leik,  
Þjóðar spurði hann stefni:  
≥hvórt mun brum eða barið af eik,  
bregða vorum svefni?

34. Then Eindridi<sup>153</sup> became furious,  
the group abandoned joy;  
the Ygg of chasms<sup>154</sup> 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<sup>155</sup> awakens because of this,  
he asked the leader of nations:<sup>156</sup>  
“did a bud, or the leaf from an oak  
interrupt our sleep?”

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153 a *heiti* for Thor

154 Skrímnir

155 A famous jötunn; Skrímnir here

156 Thor

37. Lauf þat gjörði lítinn dett  
lézt<sup>157</sup> á heila þýfi.  
Hvórt er Fjöltnis fólkitt mett?≤  
Flagða spurði hann skýfi.  
38. Sauðungs arfinn sannar þat,  
≥Sveit hefr snætt með þryði,  
Aurnir, sofðu í annan stað  
en ek með mína lýði.≤  
39. Fljótt rann svefn á Syrpu verr,  
sveit tók qll að skjálfa,  
hamri laust á heila ker,  
hrunþveings<sup>158</sup> eisú bjálfa<sup>159</sup>.

37. The feeling that leaf made–  
it let itself fall on the brain’s hillock<sup>160</sup>.  
Are the folk of Fjöltnir full?”  
He asked the destroyer of troll-women<sup>161</sup>.  
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<sup>162</sup>,  
the whole group started to shake;  
the hammer struck the fur of the brain’s  
tub<sup>163</sup>,  
glowing embers of the lava-snake<sup>164</sup> fly

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)  
158 *hrun-* via *hrvm-*. Scribal error? (F. Jónsson, *orðbog*. P. 188; F. Jónsson, 1896. P. 5, v. 39; F. Jónsson, 1905. P. 299, v. 39)  
159 Finnur takes *bjálfa* as the genitive singular of *bjálfi* 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.  
160 The head  
161 Thor, a famous slayer of trolls  
162 Skrímnir; Syrpa is the name of a female jötunn (giantess)  
163 the skin, or the scalp; see <sup>Gloss.</sup>  
164 sparks, see <sup>Gloss.</sup>

40. Herða nam þá hoggit sitt,  
Herjans burr við vánga;  
hamarinn sakk á hlýrit mitt,  
haus varð sundr at ganga.

41. Vaknar Ámr í annat sinn,  
yglldr ok strauk um skalla,  
≥mundi af eikum mér á kinn,  
mylsnan nokkur falla.≤

42. Þá var komit at dýrum dag,  
dökk hvarf nótt af fjöllum,  
Þjassa gefr hann þriðja slag,  
þat var mest af öllum.

40. Herjan's son<sup>165</sup> 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<sup>166</sup> a third blow—  
that was the greatest of all.

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165 Thor, “Herjan” is a *heiti* for Odin.

166 Þjazi is a famous jötunn, his name stands in for Skrímnir's here

43. Hlorríði sparði ekki af,  
Iðja geigr at vinna,  
hamarinn sǫkk ok hendr á,  
ok huldi skaptit stinna.  
44. Hraudnir spurði ok hreyfði sik,  
≥hvat þá væri í leikum,  
hvort munu fuglar fella á mik,  
fagra laufit af eikum?≤  
45. Skýran<sup>167</sup> segir<sup>168</sup> hann skýja eld,  
skína fljótt á gerðar,  
≥þér munud gista at grams í kveld,  
gørizt oss mál til ferðar.

43. Hlorríði<sup>169</sup> spared no effort  
in trying to wound Idi badly;  
the hammer and hand sunk down deep,  
and the rigid shaft was buried.  
44. Hraudnir<sup>170</sup> 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, *orðbog*. P. 182)

46. Þér skulut láta lagt um yðr,  
ok<sup>171</sup> Loka í vænni hǫllu,  
ella fá þér sneypu ok snyðr,  
snyrtimenn, með ǫllu.

47. Nú mun ek hverfa norðr<sup>172</sup> á leið,  
nók berr yðr til sorgar,  
skilst ek hér við skjalda meið,  
skamt er nú til borgar.

48. Skrímnir hvarf á skóg í braut,  
skamt var þess at bíða,  
Þeir næst<sup>173</sup> sáu er mörkina þraut,  
mikla borg ok fríða.

49. Glósat var firi geira<sup>174</sup> Hlín,  
Gauts hit þriðja<sup>175</sup> minni,  
Hér mun falla Fjölnis vín,  
þat fæst eigi leingr at sinni.

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<sup>176</sup>,  
that third toast of Gaut<sup>177</sup>,  
here will fall the wine of Fjölnir<sup>178</sup>,  
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 Þorkelsson also makes this emendation, and moves *í* to the front of the line. (J. Þorkelsson, 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, *nur*, appears to be the result of a simple scribal error. Preceding this item is *ec*, which the scribe indicates is placed incorrectly, and draws a mark between *mun* 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 *ec*.

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 *geirs* 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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