



The Poetic Edda

Translated by Carolyne Larrington

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THE POETIC EDDA

THE collection of Norse–Icelandic mythological and heroic poetry known as the *Poetic Edda* contains the great narratives of the creation of the world and the coming of Ragnarok, the Doom of the Gods. The mythological poems explore the wisdom of the gods and giants and narrate the adventures of the god Thor against the hostile giants and the gods' rivalries amongst themselves. The heroic poems trace the exploits of the hero Helgi and his valkyrie bride, the tragic tale of Sigurd and Brynhild's doomed love, and the terrible drama of Gudrun, daughter of Giuki, Sigurd's widow, and her children. Most of the poems exist in a single manuscript written in Iceland around 1270, but many of them pre-date the conversion of Scandinavia to Christianity and allow us to glimpse the pagan beliefs of the North.

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SAYINGS OF THE HIGH ONE

Human social wisdom, teasing allusion to runic mysteries, spells, and charms combine in this poem to give a conspectus of different types of wisdom. Most of the poem is taken up with instruction on the subject of social behaviour, common sense and folly, moderation and friendship, composed in *ljodahattr*, the usual metre of wisdom verse. At times the poet steps forward to speak in his own voice, at times the first person merges with Odin, the god of wisdom, speaking from his own experience of questing after knowledge. The wisdom stanzas are organized by themes, connections made by juxtaposition or contrast. Towards the end of the poem Odin speaks more, of his sacrifice to learn the secrets of the runes (vv. 138–45) and of his knowledge of spells (vv. 146–64); the magical subject-matter is related in a different metre. Earlier Odin narrates two adventures with women—Billing’s girl who outwits him (vv. 96–102) and Gunnlod, whose love he exploits to win the mead of poetry (vv. 104–10). *Sayings of the High One (Havamal)* is, no doubt, a redaction of several different poems unified by the theme of wisdom and by the central figure of Odin.

- 1 All the doorways, before one enters,
should be looked around,
should be spied out;
it can't be known for certain where enemies are sitting
in the hall ahead.

- 2 'Blessed be the givers!' A guest has come in,
where is he going to sit?
He's in great haste, the one who by the log-stack
is going to try his luck.

- 3 Fire is needful for someone who's come in
and who's chilled to the knee;
food and clothing are necessary for the man
who's journeyed over the mountains.
- 4 Water is needful for someone who comes to a meal,
a towel and a warm welcome,
a friendly disposition, if he could get it,
speech and silence in return.
- 5 Wits are needful for someone who wanders widely,
anything will pass at home;
he becomes a laughing-stock, the man who knows nothing
and sits among the wise.
- 6 About his intelligence no man should be boastful,
rather cautious of mind;
when a wise and silent man comes to a homestead
blame seldom befalls the wary;
for no more dependable friend can a man ever get
than a store of common sense.
- 7 The careful guest, who comes to a meal,
keeps silent, with hearing finely attuned;
he listens with his ears, and looks about with his eyes;
so every wise man spies out what's ahead.
- 8 He's lucky, the man who can get himself
praise and good will;
very difficult it is when a man lays claim to

what's in another's breast.

- 9 He's lucky, the man who keeps in himself
praise and wit while he lives;
for bad advice men have often received
from another's breast.
- 10 No better burden a man bears on the road
than a store of common sense;
better than riches it will seem in an unfamiliar place,
such is the resort of the wretched.
- 11 No better burden a man bears on the road
than a store of common sense;
no worse journey-provision could he carry over the plain
than over-much drinking of ale.
- 12 It isn't as good as it's said to be,
ale, for the sons of men;
for the more a man drinks, the less he knows
about his own mind.
- 13 The forgetfulness-heron it's called
who hovers over ale-drinking;
he steals a man's mind;
with this bird's feathers I was fettered
in the court of Gunnlod.*
- 14 Drunk I was, I was more than drunk
at wise Fialar's;

that's the best about ale-drinking that afterwards
every man gets his mind back again.

- 15 Silent and thoughtful a prince's son should be
and bold in fighting;
cheerful and merry every man should be
until he comes to death.
- 16 The cowardly man thinks he'll live for ever,
if he keeps away from fighting;
but old age won't grant him a truce
even if spears spare him.
- 17 The fool stares when he comes on a visit,
he mutters to himself or hovers about;
but it's all up with him if he gets a swig of drink;
the man's mind is exposed.
- 18 Only that man who wanders widely
and has journeyed a great deal knows
what sort of mind each man controls;
he who's sharp in his wits.
- 19 Let no man hold onto the cup, but drink
mead in moderation,
let him say what's necessary or be silent;
no man will scold you
because you go off early to bed.
- 20 The greedy man, unless he guards against this tendency,

will eat himself into lifelong trouble;
often when he comes among the wise,
the foolish man's stomach is laughed at.

- 21 Cattle know when they ought to go home,
and then they leave the pasture;
but the foolish man never figures
the measure of his own stomach.
- 22 He's a wretched man, of evil disposition,
the one who makes fun of everything;
he doesn't know the one thing he ought to know:
that he is not devoid of faults.
- 23 The stupid man stays awake all night
and worries about everything;
he's tired out when the morning comes
and all's just as bad as it was.
- 24 The foolish man thinks that everyone
is his friend who laughs with him;
he doesn't notice though they say nasty things about him
when he sits among the wise.
- 25 The foolish man thinks that everyone
is his friend who laughs with him;
but then he finds when he comes to the Assembly*
that he has few to speak on his behalf.
- 26 The foolish man thinks he knows everything

if he cowers in a corner;
he doesn't know what he can say in return
if people ask him questions.

- 27 The foolish man in company
does best if he stays silent;
no one will know that he knows nothing,
unless he talks too much;
but the man who knows nothing does not know
even if he is talking too much.
- 28 Wise he esteems himself who knows how to question
and how to answer as well;
the sons of men cannot keep secret
what's going around about folk.
- 29 Quite enough baseless blather comes
from the man never silent;
a quick tongue, unless it's held in check,
often talks itself into trouble.
- 30 Into a laughing-stock no man should make another,
if he comes to visit the household;
many a man seems wise if he isn't asked questions
and he manages to lurk unscathed.
- 31 Wise that man seems who retreats
when one guest is insulting another;
the man who mocks at a feast doesn't know for sure
whether he shoots off his mouth amid enemies.

- 32 Many men are devoted to one another
and yet they fight at feasts;
amongst men there will always be strife,
guest squabbling with guest.
- 33 An early meal a man should usually eat,
unless he is visiting friends;
he sits and gazes round hungrily, acts as if he's starving,
and doesn't make conversation.
- 34 It's a great detour to a bad friend's house,
even though he lives on the route;
but to a good friend's house the ways lie straight,
even though he lives far off.
- 35 A man must go, he must not remain a guest
always in one place;
the loved man is loathed if he sits too long
in someone else's hall.
- 36 A farm of your own is better, even if small,
everyone's someone at home;
though he has two goats and a twig-roofed room,
that is still better than begging.
- 37 A farm of your own is better, even if small,
everyone's someone at home;
a man's heart bleeds when he has to beg
for food for himself at meal-times.

- 38 From his weapons on open land
no man should step one pace away;
for it can't be known for certain, out on the road,
when a man might have need of his spear.
- 39 I never found a generous man, nor one so unstingy with food,
that he wouldn't accept what was given;
or one so open-handed with possessions
that he disliked a gift when offered.
- 40 His piled-up property
a man shouldn't go without;
what you meant for those you love is often saved for those you
hate;
much goes worse than is expected.
- 41 With weapons and gifts friends should gladden one another,
those which can be seen on them;*
mutual givers and receivers are friends for longest,
if the friendship keeps going well.
- 42 To his friend a man should be a friend
and repay gifts with gifts;
laughter men should accept with laughter
but return deception for a lie.
- 43 To his friend a man should be a friend
and to his friend's friend too;
but no man should be a friend
to the friend of his enemy.

- 44 You know, if you've a friend whom you really trust
and from whom you want nothing but good,
you should mix your soul with his and exchange gifts,
go and see him often.
- 45 If you've another, whom you don't trust,
but from whom you want nothing but good,
speak fairly to him, but think falsely
and repay treachery with a lie.
- 46 Again, concerning the one you don't trust,
and whose mind you suspect:
you should laugh with him and disguise your thoughts:
a gift should be repaid with a like one.
- 47 I was young once, I travelled alone,
then I found myself going astray;
rich I thought myself when I met someone else,
for man is the joy of man.
- 48 Generous and brave men live the best,
seldom do they harbour sorrow;
but the cowardly man is afraid of everything,
the miser always worries when he gets gifts.
- 49 My clothes I gave out in the field
to two wooden men;*
champions they thought themselves when they had clothing,
the naked man is despised.

- 50 The fir-tree withers that stands on the farmstead,*
neither bark nor needles protect it;
so it is with the man whom no one loves,
how should he live for long?
- 51 Hotter than fire between bad friends
burns fondness for five days;
but it dies down when the sixth day comes,
and all that friendship goes to the bad.
- 52 A man need not give only a big gift,
often you buy praise with a little;
with half a loaf and a tilted cup
I've got myself a companion.
- 53 Of small sands, of small seas,
small are the minds of men;
thus all men aren't equally wise:
half wise, half not, everywhere.
- 54 Averagely wise a man ought to be,
never too wise;
for those men have the best sort of life
who know a fair amount.
- 55 Averagely wise a man ought to be,
never too wise;
for a wise man's heart is seldom cheerful,
if he who owns it's too wise.

- 56 Averagely wise a man ought to be,
never too wise;
let no one know his fate beforehand,
for he'll have the most carefree spirit.
- 57 One brand takes fire from another, until it is consumed,
a flame's kindled by flame;
one man becomes clever by talking with another,
but foolish through being reserved.
- 58 He should get up early, the man who means to take
another's life or property;
seldom does the loafing wolf snatch the ham,
nor a sleeping man victory.
- 59 He should get up early, the man who has few workers,
and set about his work with thought;
much gets held up for the man sleeping in in the morning;
wealth is half-won by activity.
- 60 Of dry wood and thatching-bark
a man can know the measure;
and of the wood which can get one through
a quarter- or a half-year.
- 61 Washed and fed, a man should ride to the Assembly,
though he may not be very well dressed;
of his shoes and breeches no man should be ashamed,
nor of his horse, though he doesn't have a good one.

- 62 He snaps and cranes his neck when he comes to the sea,
the eagle to the ancient ocean;*
so does a man who comes among the multitude
and has few people to speak for him.
- 63 Asking and answering every wise man should do,
he who wants to be reputed intelligent;
one shall know, a second shall not,
the whole world knows, if three know.
- 64 Every man wise in counsel
should use his power in moderation;
for when he mingles with the brave he finds
that no one is boldest of all.
- 65 For those words which one man says to another,
often he gets paid back.*
- 66 Much too early I've come to many places,
but sometimes too late;
the ale was all drunk, or sometimes it wasn't yet brewed,
the unpopular man seldom hits on the right moment.
- 67 Here and there I might be invited home
when I had no need of food that mealtime;
or two hams would be hanging in a trusty friend's house
when I'd already eaten one.
- 68 Fire is best for the sons of men,
and the sight of the sun

his health, if a man can manage it,
living without disgrace.

69 No man is completely wretched, even if he has bad luck;
one man is blessed with sons,
another with kinsmen, another has enough money,
another feels good from his deeds.

70 It is better to live than not to be alive,
it's the living man who gets the cow;
I saw fire blaze up for the wealthy man,
and he was dead outside the door.

71 The lame man rides a horse, the handless man drives a herd,
the deaf man fights and succeeds;
to be blind is better than to be burnt:
a corpse is of no use to anyone.

72 A son is better, even if he is born late,
when the father is dead;
seldom do memorial stones stand by the wayside,
unless one kinsman raises them for another.

73 Two are destroyers of one, the tongue is the head's slayer,
hidden under every fur coat I expect to find a hand.*

74 Night is eagerly awaited by him who can rely on his provisions;
short are a ship's yards,
changeable are autumn nights,
many kinds of weather in five days,

and more in one month.

- 75 The man who knows nothing does not know this:
that many are fooled by money;
one man is rich, another is not rich,
he should not be blamed for that.
- 76 Cattle die, kinsmen die,*
the self must also die;
but the glory of reputation never dies,
for the man who can get himself a good one.
- 77 Cattle die, kinsmen die,
the self must also die;
I know one thing which never dies:
the reputation of each dead man.
- 78 Fully stocked folds I saw for Fitiung's sons,*
now they carry a beggar's staff;
wealth is like the twinkling of an eye,
it is the most unreliable of friends.
- 79 The foolish man, if he manages to get
money or the love of a woman,
his arrogance increases, but not his common sense;
on he goes deeply sunk in delusion.
- 80 That is now proved, what you asked of the runes,
of divine origin
which the great gods made

and the mighty sage coloured;*
then it is best for him if he stays silent.

81 At evening should the day be praised, the woman when she is
cremated,
the blade when it is tested, the girl when she is married,
the ice when it is crossed, the ale when it is drunk.

82 In a wind one should cut wood, in fine weather row on the sea,
in darkness chat with a girl: many are day's eyes;
use a ship to glide along, a shield for defence,
a sword for blows, and a girl for kisses.

83 By the fire one should drink ale, one should slide over the ice,
buy a lean horse and a rusty blade,
fatten the horse at home and the dog at someone else's.

84 The words of a girl no one should trust,
nor what a woman says;
for on a whirling wheel their hearts were made,*
deceit lodged in their breasts.

85 A breaking bow, a burning flame,
a gaping wolf, a cawing crow,
a grunting pig, a rootless tree,
a rising wave, a boiling kettle,

86 a flying dart, a falling wave,
ice of one night, a coiled serpent,
the bed-talk of a woman, or a broken sword,

the playing of a bear, or a king's child,

- 87 a sick calf, an independent-minded slave,
a seer who prophesies good, a newly killed dead man
- 88 an early-sown field let no man trust,
nor too soon in a son;
the weather rules the field and brains the son,
both of them are risky.
- 89 A brother's killer, if met on the road,
a house half-burned, a too swift horse—
the mount is useless if a leg breaks—
let no man be so trusting as to trust all these.
- 90 Such is the love of women, of those with false minds;
it's like driving a horse without spiked shoes over slippery ice,
a frisky two-year-old, badly broken in,
or like steering, in a stiff wind, a rudderless boat
or trying to catch when you're lame a reindeer on a thawing
hillside.
- 91 I can speak frankly since I have known both:
men's hearts are fickle towards women;
when we speak most fairly, then we think most falsely,
that entraps the wise mind.
- 92 He has to speak fairly and offer precious things,
the man who wants a lady's love;
praise the body of the radiant woman:

he who flatters, gets.

- 93 No man should ever reproach
another for being in love;
often the wise man is seized, when the foolish man is not,
by a desire-arousing appearance.
- 94 Not at all should one man reproach another
for what is common among men;
among men's sons the wise are made into fools
by that mighty force: desire.
- 95 The mind alone knows what lies near the heart,
he is alone with his spirit;
no sickness is worse for the sensible man
than to find no contentment in anything.
- 96 That I found when I sat among the reeds
and waited for my beloved;
body and soul the shrewd girl was to me,
nonetheless I didn't win her.
- 97 Billing's girl I found on the bed,*
sleeping, sun-radiant;
no nobleman's pleasure could I imagine
except to live beside that body.
- 98 'Towards evening, Odin, you should come again,
if you want to talk a girl round;
all will be lost unless only we know

of such shamelessness together.’

- 99 Back I turned, and thought that I loved,
turned back from my certain pleasure;
this I thought: that I would have
all her heart and her love-play.
- 100 When next I came, all the keen
warrior-band were awake,
with burning torches and barricading wood:
such a wretched path was determined for me.
- 101 And near morning, when I came again,
then the hall-company were asleep;
a bitch I found then tied on the bed
of that good woman.
- 102 Many a good girl when you know her well
is fickle of heart towards men;
I found that out, when I tried to seduce
that sagacious woman into shame;
every degradation the clever woman devised for me,
and I got nothing from the girl at all.
- 103 At home a man should be cheerful and merry with his guest,
he should be shrewd about himself,
with a good memory and eloquent, if he wants to be very wise,
often should he speak of good things;
a nincompoop that man is called, who can't say much for
himself,

that is the hallmark of a moron.

- 104 I visited the old giant, now I've come back,*
I didn't get much there from being silent;
with many words I spoke to my advantage
in Suttung's halls.
- 105 Gunnlod gave me on her golden throne
a drink of the precious mead;
a poor reward I let her have in return,
for her open-heartedness,
for her sorrowful spirit.
- 106 With Rati the auger's mouth I made space for myself*
and made it gnaw through the rock;
over me and under me went the giants' paths,
thus I risked my head.
- 107 That bargain-bought beauty I made good use of,
the wise lack for little;
for Odrerir has now come up*
to the rim of men's sanctuaries.
- 108 I am in doubt as to whether I would have come
back from the giants' courts,
if I had not used Gunnlod, that good woman,
and put my arms about her.
- 109 The next day the frost-giants went
to ask for the High One's advice, in the High One's hall;

they asked about Bolverk: whether he was amongst the gods,*
or whether Suttung had slaughtered him.

110 I think Odin will have sworn a sacred ring-oath,*
how can his pledge be trusted?
He left Suttung defrauded of the drink
and made Gunnlod weep.

111 It is time to declaim from the sage's high-seat,
at Urd's spring;
I saw and was silent, I saw and I considered,
I heard the speech of men;
I heard talk of runes nor were they silent about interpretation,
at the High One's hall, in the High One's hall;
thus I heard them speak:

112 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,*
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
don't get up at night, except if you're on watch
or if you need to visit somewhere outside.*

113 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
in a witch's arms you should never sleep,
so she encloses you with her limbs;

114 she'll bring it about that you won't care
about the Assembly or the king's business;

you won't want food nor the society of people,
sorrowful you'll go to sleep.

115 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
never entice another's wife to you
as a close confidante.

116 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
on mountain or fjord should you feel like travelling,
make sure you've enough food along.

117 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
never let a wicked man know
of any misfortune you suffer;
for from a wicked man you will never get
a good thought in return.

118 I saw a man terribly wounded
by a wicked woman's words;
a malicious tongue brought about his death,
and by no means through proven guilt.

119 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,

do you good, if you have it:
you know, if you've a friend, one whom you trust well,
go to see him often;
for brushwood grows, and tall grass,
on the road which no man treads.

120 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
draw to you a good man in friendly intimacy
and learn helpful charms all your life.

121 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
with your friend never be
the first to tear fine friendship asunder;
sorrow eats the heart if you don't have someone
to whom to tell all your thoughts.

122 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
you should never bandy words
with a stupid fool;

123 for from a wicked man you will never get
a good return;
but a good man will make you

assured of favour through his praise.

- 124 That is the true mingling of kinship when a man can tell
someone all his thoughts;
anything is better than to be fickle;
he is no true friend who only says pleasant things.
- 125 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
not three quarrelsome words should you bandy with an inferior;
often the better retreats
when the worse man fights.
- 126 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
be neither a shoemaker nor a shaftmaker
for anyone but yourself;
if the shoe is badly fitting or if the shaft be crooked,
then curses are called down on you.
- 127 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
where you recognize evil, call it evil,
and give no truce to your enemies.
- 128 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,

do you good, if you have it:
never be made glad by wickedness
but please yourself with good things.

129 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
you should never look upwards in battle: *
—men's sons become madmen—
and people may try to bewitch you.

130 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
if you want to talk a good woman into secret love with you,
and to get pleasure from her,
make fair promises and keep them well:
no man tires of good, if he can get it.

131 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
I tell you to be cautious but not over-cautious;
be most wary of ale, and of another's wife,
and, thirdly, lest thieves beguile you.

132 I advise you, Loddafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:

never hold up to scorn or mockery
a guest or a wanderer.

133 Often they don't know for certain, they who sit inside,
whose kin those newcomers are;
no man is so good that he has no blemish,
nor so bad that he is good for nothing.

134 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
at a grey-haired sage you should never laugh!
Often what the old say is good;
often from a wrinkled bag come judicious words,
from the one who hangs around with the hides
and skulks among the skins
and lurks about the low-born.

135 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,
it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
don't bark at your guests or drive them from your gate,
treat the indigent well!

136 Mighty is that door-bar which has to move aside
to open up for everyone;
give a ring, or there'll be called down on you
a curse in every limb.

137 I advise you, Loddafafnir, to take this advice,

it will be useful if you learn it,
do you good, if you have it:
where you drink ale, choose yourself earth's power! *
For earth soaks up drunkenness, and fire works against
sickness,
oak against constipation, an ear of corn against witchcraft,
the hall against household strife, for hatred the moon should be
invoked—
earthworms for inflamed parts, and runes against evil;
land must take up the flood.

138 I know that I hung on a windswept tree*
nine long nights,
wounded with a spear, dedicated to Odin,
myself to myself,
on that tree of which no man knows
from where its roots run.

139 With no bread did they refresh me nor a drink from a horn,
downwards I peered;
I took up the runes, screaming I took them,
then I fell back from there.

140 Nine mighty spells I learnt from the famous son
of Bolthor, Bestla's father,*
and I got a drink of the precious mead,
I, soaked from Odrerir.

141 Then I began to quicken and be wise,
and to grow and to prosper;

one word from another word found a word for me,
one deed from another deed found a deed for me.

- 142 The runes you must find and meaningful letters,
very great letters,
very stiff letters,
which the mighty sage coloured
and the huge Powers made
and the runemaster of the gods carved out.
- 143 Odin among the Æsir, and Dain among the elves,
Dvalin among the dwarfs,
Asvid among the giants,
I myself carved some.
- 144 Do you know how to carve, do you know how to interpret,
do you know how to colour, do you know how to question,
do you know how to ask, do you know how to sacrifice,
do you know how to dispatch, do you know how to slaughter?
- 145 Better not to pray than to sacrifice too much:
one gift always calls for another;
better not dispatched than too many slaughtered.
So Thund carved before the close of nations' history,*
where he rose up, when he came back.
- 146 I know those spells which a ruler's wife doesn't know,*
nor any man's son;
'help' one is called,
and that will help you against

law-suits and sorrows
and every sort of anxiety.

147 I know a second one which the sons of men need,
those who want to live as physicians.

148 I know a third one if there's great need for me
that my furious enemies are fettered;
the edges of my foes I can blunt,
neither weapons nor cudgels will bite for them.

149 I know a fourth one if men put
bonds upon my limbs;
I can chant so that I can walk away,
fettters spring from my feet,
and chains from my hands.

150 I know a fifth if I see, shot in malice,
an arrow fly amid the army:
it cannot fly so hard that I cannot hinder it
if I see it with my eyes.

151 I know a sixth one if a man wounds me
using roots of the sap-filled wood:
and that man who conjured to harm me,
the evil consumes him, not me.

152 I know a seventh one if I see towering flames
in the hall about my companions:
it can't burn so widely that I can't counteract it;

I know the spells to chant.

- 153 I know an eighth one, which is most useful
for everyone to acquire;
where hatred flares up between the sons of warriors,
then I can quickly bring settlement.
- 154 I know a ninth one if I am in need,
if I must save my ship when afloat;
the wind I can quieten upon the wave
and lull all the sea to sleep.
- 155 I know a tenth one if I see witches
playing up in the air;
I can bring it about that they wander astray
from their shapes left at home,
from their minds left at home.
- 156 I know an eleventh if I have to lead
long-loyal friends into battle;
under the shields I chant, and they journey confidently,
safely to the battle,
safely from the battle,
safely they come back from everywhere.
- 157 I know a twelfth one if I see, up in a tree,
a dangling corpse in a noose:
I can so carve and colour the runes
that the man walks
and talks with me.

- 158 I know a thirteenth if I must pour water
over a young warrior:
he will not fall though he goes into battle,
before swords that man will not sink.
- 159 I know a fourteenth if I have to reckon up
the gods before a group of men:
of Æsir and elves, I know every detail,
few who are not wise know that.
- 160 I know a fifteenth, which the dwarf Thiodrerir
chanted before Delling's doors:
power he sang for the Æsir and advancement for the elves,
thoughtfulness to Hroptatyr.
- 161 I know a sixteenth if I want to have all
a clever woman's heart and love-play:
I can turn the thought of the white-armed woman
and change her mind entirely.
- 162 I know a seventeenth, so that any young woman
will scarcely want to shun me.
Of these spells, Loddafnir,
you will long be in want;
though they'd be good for you, if you get them,
useful if you learn them,
handy, if you have them.
- 163 I know an eighteenth, which I shall never teach
to any girl or any man's wife—

it's always better when just one person knows,
that follows at the end of the spells—
except that one woman who embraces me in her arms,
or who may be my sister.

164 Now the High One's song is recited, in the High One's hall
very useful to the sons of men,
quite useless to the sons of men,*
luck to him who recited, luck to him who knows!
May he benefit, he who learnt it,
luck to those who listened!