



# THE POETIC EDDA

A Dual-Language Edition

EDWARD PETTIT



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Back cover image: The god Heimdallr blowing his horn, from a seventeenth-century Icelandic manuscript (AM 738 4to, fol. 35v)

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# Reginsmál

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*Reginsmál* (*Rm.*) ‘The Sayings of Reginn’ is another *prosimetrum*. Its status as a distinct work bearing this title is attributable to modern editors; in **R** (fol. 28v–30r), it bears no such heading,<sup>1</sup> although its opening word clearly marks the start of a new compositional unit, its initial letter being a rubricated (but now faded) and enlarged *S*. *Rm.* should be taken together with *Fáfnismál*, the next poem (*prosimetrum*) in **R**.

After the synopsis of *Grp.*, it is really with *Rm.* that the story of Sigurðr gets under way, if only after much colourful information about how the troublesome god Loki’s earlier killing of a dwarf led to the cursing of treasure which Sigurðr will later take from the dragon Fáfnir, brother of Reginn, Sigurðr’s foster-father. It does so with some vigour, with Sigurðr taking the god Óðinn onboard his ship, learning battle-wisdom from him, and ultimately carving a ‘blood-eagle’ into the back of his father’s killer.

The narrative advances largely in simply-worded prose summaries, but there is also much verse dialogue, more characterful than that of *Grp.* In common with other Eddic dialogues, some of this poetry has a gnomic character and is mostly in *ljóðahátttr*, although there are some stanzas of *fornyrðislag*. Also shared with some preceding dialogue poems in **R** (*Vm.*, *Grm.* and *Hrbl.*) is the prominent involvement of an incognito Óðinn.

More specific Old Norse parallels to *Rm.* exist in:

- *VS* (13–15 and 17–18), which includes variants of stt. 1, 2, 6 and 18.
- *Norna-Gests þáttr* ‘The Story of Norna-Gestr’ (4–6; *FSN* I), which includes variants of stt. 13–26. This story probably dates from the early fourteenth century.
- *SnESkald* (I, 39–40, pp. 45–47), which tells the story of the killing of Otr and its aftermath.

These three texts also contain parallels to some of *Rm.*’s prose passages.

Comparison may also be made with the Faroese ballad *Regin smiður* ‘Regin the Smith’.

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<sup>1</sup> It may originally have been headed simply *Frá Sigurði* ‘About Sigurðr’.

## Synopsis

*Prose:* Sigurðr chose himself a horse called Grani from King Hjálprekr's stud. There he met Reginn, son of Hreiðmarr, who offered to foster and instruct him. Reginn told him of how three gods, Óðinn and Hœnir and Loki, went to a waterfall, where Loki killed Reginn's brother, Otr, who was in the form of an otter. That evening, the gods showed Otr's skin to Hreiðmarr. Hreiðmarr and Reginn seized them and required them to cover the skin inside and out with gold. Loki then took the net of the sea-giantess Rán and went to the waterfall, where he caught the dwarf Andvari in the form of a pike.

*Verse:* Loki asks what sort of fish it is that fails to protect itself and demands that it find him gold (1). Andvari identifies himself and explains that he was destined to inhabit waterfalls (2). Loki asks him about the punishment meted out to those who insult each other (3), and Andvari answers (4).

*Prose:* Loki looked at the gold that Andvari owned, and even deprived him of the one ring that the dwarf had tried to withhold.

*Verse:* Andvari then declares that the gold will be the death of two brothers and a source of conflict for eight noblemen (5).

*Prose:* The gods covered the otter-skin, except for one whisker. At Hreiðmarr's insistence, Óðinn covered the whisker with the ring that Loki took from Andvari.

*Verse:* Loki declares the gold paid, but that it will be the death of both Hreiðmarr and Reginn (6). Hearing that, Hreiðmarr regrets not having killed Loki (7), who tells him that the curse will extend to those yet unborn (8). Hreiðmarr says he is not scared, and tells Loki to be off (9).

*Prose:* Hreiðmarr denied Fáfnir and Reginn compensation for Otr, their brother. Consequently, Fáfnir mortally wounded his father as he slept.

*Verse:* Hreiðmarr cries out to his daughters, Lyngheiðr and Lofnheiðr (10), but the former declares that a sister can scarcely avenge her father on her brother. Hreiðmarr urges Lyngheiðr, should she not bear a son, to have a daughter whose son might avenge him (11).

*Prose:* Fáfnir took all the gold and denied any to Reginn, who in turn asked Lyngheiðr for advice.

*Verse:* Lyngheiðr tells him to ask Fáfnir for his share in a friendly manner (12).

*Prose:* Reginn told these happenings to Sigurðr.

*Verse:* Reginn declares that Sigurðr has arrived at his home (13), and that he shall foster him, destined as Sigurðr is to become the most powerful man on earth (14).

*Prose:* Fáfnir, now in the form of a snake, lay on the treasure on Gnitaeiðr and had a helmet of terror. Reginn forged the marvellous sword Gramr for Sigurðr, and incited him to kill Fáfnir.

*Verse:* Sigurðr (probably) indicates that he wants to avenge his father first (15).

*Prose:* Hjálprekr gave Sigurðr a naval force to avenge his father. The fleet encountered a severe storm and turned toward a promontory on which a man was standing.

*Verse:* The man asks the sailors to identify themselves (16). Reginn identifies them as Sigurðr and his men (17). The man on the cliff identifies himself by various names (aliases of Óðinn), and requests passage (18).

*Prose:* They granted him that, and the storm abated.

*Verse:* Sigurðr (probably) asks the man to identify the best battle-omens for him (19), which he does (20–25).

*Prose:* Sigurðr slew Lyngvi and Hundingr's other sons in battle.

*Verse:* Reginn triumphantly records the incision of an 'eagle' on Lyngvi's back and praises Sigurðr (26).

*Prose:* Sigurðr returned to Hjálprekr's, and Reginn incited him to kill Fáfnir.

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## Reginismál

Sigurðr gekk til stóðs Hjálpreks ok kaus sér af hest einn, er Grani var kallaðr síðan. Þá var kominn Reginn til Hjálpreks, sonr Hreiðmars. Hann var hverjum manni hagari, ok dvergr of vøxt. Hann var vitr, grimmr ok fjölkunnigr.

Reginn veitti Sigurði fóstr ok kennslu ok elskaði hann mjök. Hann sagði Sigurði frá forellri sínu ok þeim atburðum at Óðinn ok Hæmir ok Loki höfðu komit til Andvarafors. Í þeim forsi var fjöldi fiska. Einn dvergr hét Andvari. Hann var lönngum í forsinum í geddu líki ok fekk sér þar matar.

‘Otr hét bróðir várr’, kvað Reginn, ‘er opt fór í forsinn í otrs líki. Hann hafði tekit einn lax ok sat á árbakkanum ok át blundandi. Loki laust hann með steini til bana. Þóttusk Æsir mjök hepnir verit hafa ok flógu belg af otrinum.

Þat sama kveld sóttu þeir gisting til Hreiðmars ok sýndu veiði sína. Þá tóku vér þá höndum ok lögðum þeim fjörlausn at fylla otrbelginn með gulli, ok hylja útan ok með rauðu gulli. Þá sendu þeir Loka at afla gullsins. Hann kom til Ránar ok fekk net hennar ok fór þá til Andvarafors ok kastaði netinu fyrir gedduna, en hon hljóp í netit.

Þá mælti Loki:

1. ‘Hvat er þat fiska, er renn flóði í?  
Kannat sér við víti varask!  
Höfuð þitt leystu Helju ór:  
finn mér lindar loga!’
2. ‘Andvari ek heiti, Óinn hét minn faðir,  
margan hefi ek fors um farit;  
aumlig Norn skóp oss í árdaga  
at ek skylda í vatni vaða.’
3. ‘Segðu þat, Andvari,’ kvað Loki, ‘ef þú eiga vill  
líf í lýða solum:  
hver gjöld fá gumna synir,  
ef þeir höggvask orðum á?’
4. ‘Ofrgjöld fá gumna synir,  
þeir er Vaðgelmi vaða;  
ósaðra orða, hverr er á annan lýgr,  
of lengi leiða limar!’

Loki sá allt gull, þat er Andvari átti. En er hann hafði fram reitt gullit, þá hafði hann eptir einn hring, ok tók Loki þann af honum. Dvergrinn gekk inn í steininn ok mælti:

5. ‘Þat skal gull, er Gustr átti,  
bræðrum tveim at bana verða,  
ok oðlingum átta at rógi —  
mun míns fjár mangi njóta!’

## The Sayings of Reginn

Sigurðr went to Hjálprekr's stud and chose himself a horse, which was called Grani thereafter. Then Reginn, son of Hreiðmarr,<sup>1</sup> had come to Hjálprekr's. He was more skilful than any man, and a dwarf in stature. He was wise, grim and skilled in magic.

Reginn offered Sigurðr fosterage and instruction and loved him greatly. He told Sigurðr about his<sup>2</sup> forefathers and those events in which Óðinn and Hœnir and Loki<sup>3</sup> had come to Andvarafors.<sup>4</sup> In that waterfall was a multitude of fish. There was a dwarf called Andvari.<sup>5</sup> He was in the waterfall for a long time in the form of a pike and got himself food there.

'Our brother was called Otr,<sup>6</sup> said Reginn, 'who often went into the waterfall in the form of an otter. He had caught a salmon and was sitting on the riverbank and eating with his eyes closed. Loki stuck him to death with a stone. The Æsir<sup>7</sup> thought they had been very lucky and flayed the skin from the otter.

The same evening they sought lodging at Hreiðmarr's and showed their kill. Then we seized them and imposed on them as ransom the requirement that the otter-skin be filled with gold, and also to cover the outside with red gold. Then they sent Loki to procure the gold. He came to Rán<sup>8</sup> and got her net and went then to Andvarafors and cast the net before the pike, and it leapt into the net.

Then Loki said:

- 1.<sup>9</sup> 'What sort of fish is that, which swims in the flood?  
It doesn't know how to guard itself against misfortune!  
Free your head from Hel:<sup>10</sup>  
find me "blaze of the brook"!'<sup>11</sup>
- 2.<sup>12</sup> 'I am called Andvari, my father was called Óinn,<sup>13</sup>  
I have travelled though many a waterfall;  
in early days a wretched Norn shaped [as destiny] for us  
that I should wade in water.'
3. 'Tell [me] this, Andvari', said Loki, 'if you want to have  
life in the halls of people:  
what retribution do the sons of men receive,  
if they hack at<sup>14</sup> each other with words?'<sup>15</sup>
4. 'The sons of men receive excessive retribution,  
those who wade Vaðgelmir;<sup>16</sup>  
[for] everyone who lies about another,  
the ramifications of untrue words accompany him long [after]!'<sup>17</sup>

Loki saw all the gold, that which Andvari owned. And when he<sup>18</sup> had brought forth the gold, then he kept back one ring,<sup>19</sup> and Loki took that from him. The dwarf went into the stone<sup>20</sup> and said:

5. 'That gold, which Gustr<sup>21</sup> owned,  
shall be the death of two brothers,<sup>22</sup>  
and for eight noblemen<sup>23</sup> a source of strife —  
no one will profit from *my* possessions!'

Æsir reiddu Hreiðmari féit ok tráðu upp otrbelginn ok reistu á fœtr. Þá skyldu Æsirnir hlaða upp gullinu ok hylja. En er þat var gort, gekk Hreiðmarr fram ok sá eitt granahár, ok það hylja. Þá dró Óðinn fram hringinn Andvaranaut ok hulði hárit.

6. 'Gull er þér nú *reitt*', kvað Loki, 'en þú gjöld hefir mikil míns hofuðs;  
syni þínum verðra sæla sköpuð —  
þat verðr ykkarr beggja bani!'
- Hreiðmarr sagði:  
7. 'Gjafar þú gaft, gaftattu ástgjafar,  
gaftattu af heilum hug!  
Fjörvi yðru skylduð ér firðir vera,  
ef ek vissa þat fár fyrir!'
8. 'Enn er verra — þat vita þikkjumk —  
niðja stríð ónept;  
jöfra óborna hygg ek þá enn vera,  
er þat er til hats hugat!'
9. 'Rauðu gulli', kvað Hreiðmarr, 'hugg ek mik ráða munu,  
svá lengi sem ek lifi;  
hót þín hræðumk ekki lyf,  
ok haldið heim heðan!'

Fáfnir ok Reginn kröfðu Hreiðmar niðgjalda eptir Otr, bróður sinn. Hann kvað nei við. En Fáfnir lagði sverði Hreiðmar, föður sinn, sofanda. Hreiðmarr kallaði á dætr sínar:

10. 'Lyngheiðr ok Lofnheiðr, vitið mínu líf farit!  
Mart er þat er þörf þjár!'
- Lyngheiðr svaraði:  
'Fátt mun systir, þótt föður missi,  
hefna hlýra harms!'
11. 'Al þú þó dóttur', kvað Hreiðmarr, 'dís úlfhuguð,  
ef þú getrat son við siklingi!  
Fá þú mey mann í meginþarfar!  
Þá mun þeirar sonr þíns harms reka!'

Þá dó Hreiðmarr, en Fáfnir tók gullit alt. Þá beiddisk Reginn at hafa föðurarf sinn, en Fáfnir galt þar nei við. Þá leitaði Reginn ráða við Lyngheiði, systur sína, hvernig hann skyldi heimta föðurarf sinn. Hon kvað:

12. 'Bróður kveðja skaltu blíðliga  
arfs ok æðra hugar;  
era þat hæft at þú hjörvi skylir  
kveðja Fáfni fjár!'



The Æsir paid Hreiðmarr the treasure and filled up the otter-skin and stood it on its legs. Then the Æsir had to pile up the gold and cover it. And when that was done, Hreiðmarr went forward and saw a whisker, and he told them to cover it. Then Óðinn drew forth the ring *Andvaranautr*<sup>24</sup> and covered the hair.

6.<sup>25</sup>                    ‘The gold is now paid to you’, said Loki, ‘and you have  
   a great payment for my head;  
   for your son happiness will not be shaped<sup>26</sup> —  
   it will be the death of you both!’

Hreiðmarr said:

7.                        ‘You gave gifts, [but] you didn’t give love-gifts,  
   you didn’t give them with your whole heart!  
   You’d have been separated from your life,<sup>27</sup>  
   if I’d known of this mischief before!’

8.<sup>28</sup>                        ‘It’s even worse — I think I know this —  
   the unceasing strife<sup>29</sup> of kinsmen,<sup>30</sup>  
   I think the boars<sup>31</sup> are still unborn  
   for whom this hatred is intended!’

9.                        ‘With red gold,’ said Hreiðmarr, ‘I think I shall rule,  
   as long as I live;  
   your threat scares me not in the slightest,  
   and go home, [away] from here!’

Fáfnir and Reginn demanded kin-compensation from Hreiðmarr after Otr, their brother. He said no to that. And Fáfnir ran Hreiðmarr, his father, through with a sword, as he was sleeping. Hreiðmarr called to his daughters:

10.                        ‘Lyngheiðr and Lofnheiðr,<sup>32</sup> know that my life is destroyed!  
   It’s many a thing that need compels!’

Lyngheiðr answered:

‘Scarcely will a sister, even if she loses her father,  
   avenge that sorrow on her brother!’

11.                        ‘Yet bear a daughter,’ said Hreiðmarr, ‘wolf-hearted woman,  
   if you don’t beget a son by a prince!  
   Get for the maid a man in great need!<sup>33</sup>  
   Then their son will avenge your sorrow!’

Then Hreiðmarr died, and Fáfnir took all the gold. Then Reginn asked to have his patrimony, but Fáfnir paid with a ‘no’.<sup>34</sup> Then Reginn sought advice from Lyngheiðr, his sister, as to how he should obtain his patrimony. She said:

12.                        ‘You must ask your brother amiably  
   for your inheritance and in a better spirit;  
   it’s not fitting that you should  
   demand treasure from Fáfnir with a sword!’

Þessa hluti sagði Reginn Sigurði. Einn dag, er hann kom til húsa Regins, var honum vel fagnat. Reginn kvað:

13.                                   ‘Kominn er hingat konr Sigmundar,  
seggr inn snarráði, til sala várra;  
móð hefir meira en maðr gamall,  
ok er mér fangs vón at frekum úlfi!
14.                                   ‘Ek mun fœða fólkjarfan gram;  
nú er Yngva konr með oss kominn;  
sjá mun ræsir ríkstr und sólu —  
þrymr um ǫll lönd ǫrlögsímu!’

Sigurðr var þá jafnan með Regin, ok sagði hann Sigurði at Fáfnr lá á Gnitahiði ok var í orms líki. Hann átti ægishjál, er ǫll kvikvindi hræddusk við.

Reginn gerði Sigurði sverð, er Gramr hét. Þat var svá hvast at hann brá því ofan í Rín ok lét reka ullarlagð fyrir straumi, ok tók í sundr lagðinn sem vatnit. Því sverði klauf Sigurðr í sundr steðja Regins.

Eptir þat eggjaði Reginn Sigurð at vega Fáfni. Hann sagði:

15.                                   ‘Hátt munu hlæja Hundings synir,  
þeir er Eylima aldrs synjuðu,  
ef meirr tiggja munar at sækja  
hringa rauða en hefnd fǫður!’

Hjálprekr konungr fekk Sigurði skipalið til fǫðurhefnda. Þeir fengu storm mikinn ok beittu fyrir bergsnǫs nakkvara. Maðr einn stóð á berginu ok kvað:

16.                                   ‘Hverir ríða þar Rævils hestum  
hávar unnir, haf glymjanda?  
Seglvigg eru sveita stokkin,  
munat vágmarar vind um standask!’

Reginn svaraði:

17.                                   ‘Hér eru vér Sigurðr á sætrjám,  
er oss byrr gefinn við bana sjálfan!  
Fellr brattr breki brǫndum hæri,  
hlunnvigg hrapa — hverr spyrr at því?’
18.                                   ‘Hnikar hétu mik, þá er Hugin gladdi  
Vǫlsungr ungi, ok vegit hafði;  
nú máttu kalla “karl af bergi,”  
Feng eða Fjǫlni — far vil ek þiggja!’

Þeir viku at landi, ok gekk karl á skip, ok lægði þá veðrit.

Reginn told these things to Sigurðr. One day, when he<sup>35</sup> came to Reginn's farmstead, he was greeted well. Reginn said:

13.<sup>36</sup>                    'Sigmundr's offspring has come here,  
the man of resolute counsel, to our halls;  
he has more spirit than an old man,  
and I expect a wrestle with a ravenous wolf!<sup>37</sup>

14.<sup>38</sup>                    'I shall bring up the battle-brave prince;  
now Yngvi's<sup>39</sup> offspring has come among us;  
that prince will be the most powerful under the sun —  
his fate-threads lie<sup>40</sup> across all lands!<sup>41</sup>

Sigurðr was then always with Reginn, and he told Sigurðr that Fáfnir lay on Gnitahaiðr and was in the form of a snake. He<sup>42</sup> had a helm of terror, of which all living things were afraid.

Reginn made Sigurðr a sword, which was called Gramr.<sup>43</sup> It was so sharp that he dipped it in the Rín<sup>44</sup> and let a tuft of wool drift with the current, and it took the tuft apart as [easily as it did] the water. With that sword Sigurðr clove asunder Reginn's anvil.

After that Reginn incited Sigurðr to slay Fáfnir. He<sup>45</sup> said:

15.<sup>46</sup>                    'Hundingr's sons will laugh loudly,  
they who denied Eylimi<sup>47</sup> his old age,<sup>48</sup>  
if the prince's wishes are more to seek  
red rings than revenge for his father!'

King Hjálprekr gave Sigurðr a naval force to avenge his father. They ran into a great storm and tacked for a certain rocky promontory. A man was standing on the cliff and he said:

16.<sup>49</sup>                    'Who is riding there, on Rævill's<sup>50</sup> horses,  
the high waves, the roaring sea?  
The sail-horses<sup>51</sup> are splattered with sweat,  
the wave-steeds won't withstand the wind!'

Reginn answered:

17.<sup>52</sup>                    'Here we are with Sigurðr on sea-trees,<sup>53</sup>  
since a fair wind is given to us toward death itself!  
The steep breaker falls from higher than the prow-boards,  
the roller-steeds<sup>54</sup> stumble — who asks about this?'

18.<sup>55</sup>                    'They called me Hnikarr,<sup>56</sup> when young Vǫlsungr  
gladdened Huginn,<sup>57</sup> and he had slain;  
now you can me "old man from the cliff,"  
Fengr<sup>58</sup> or Fjölni<sup>59</sup> — I want to receive passage!'

They steered to land, and the old man went on to a ship, and then the weather calmed.<sup>60</sup>

19. ‘Segðu mér þat, Hnikarr, allz þú hvártveggja veizt,  
goða heill ok guma:  
hver þózt eru, ef berjask skal,  
heill at sverða svipun?’

Hnikarr kvað:  
20. ‘Mörg eru góð, ef gumar vissi,  
heill at sverða svipun;  
dyggja fylgju hygg ek ins dökkva vera  
at hrottameiði hrafns.

21. ‘Þat er annat, ef þú ert út um kominn  
ok ert á braut búinn:  
tvá þú lítr á tái standa  
hróðrfúsa hali.

22. ‘Þat er it þriðja, ef þú þjóta heyrir  
úlf und asklimum;  
heilla auðit verðr þér af hjálmstöfum,  
ef þú sér þá fyrri fara.

23. ‘Engr skal gumna í gøgn vega  
síð skínandi systur mána;  
þeir sigr hafa, er sjá kunnu,  
hjørleiks hvatir, eða hamalt fylkja.

24. ‘Þat er fár mikit, ef þú foeti drepr,  
þars þú at vígi veðr;  
tálar dísir standa þér á tvær hliðar  
ok vilja þik sáran sjá.

25. ‘Kemðr ok þveginn skal kœnna hverr  
ok at morni mettr,  
þvíat ósýnt er, hvar at apni kœmr;  
illt er fyr heill at hrapa.’

## Capitulum

Sigurðr átti orrostu mikla við Lyngva, Hundings son, ok bræðr hans. Þar fell Lyngvi ok þeir þrír bræðr. Eptir orrostu kvað Reginn:

26. ‘Nú er blóðugr ǫrn bitrum hjörvi  
bana Sigmundar á baki ristinn!  
Ǫngr er fremri, sá er fold ryði,  
hilmis arfi, ok Hugin gladdi!’

Heim fór Sigurðr til Hjálpreks. Þá eggjaði Reginn Sigurð til at vega Fáfni.

- 19.<sup>61</sup> 'Tell me this, Hnikarr, since you know  
the omens of both gods and humans:  
what are the best omens, if one has to do battle,  
at the swinging of swords?'<sup>62</sup>
- Hnikarr said:
- 20.<sup>63</sup> 'There are many good signs, if men [only] knew them,  
at the swinging of swords;  
I think the dark raven is a doughty escort  
for a sword-tree.'<sup>64</sup>
- 21.<sup>65</sup> 'This is the second, if you've come outside  
and are ready for the road:  
you see standing on the threshold<sup>66</sup>  
two fame-eager fellows.
- 22.<sup>67</sup> 'This is the third, if you hear  
a wolf howling beneath ash-branches,<sup>68</sup>  
good luck will granted to you from helm-staves,<sup>69</sup>  
if you see them travelling first.'<sup>70</sup>
- 23.<sup>71</sup> 'No man shall fight when facing towards  
the late-shining sister of the moon,<sup>72</sup>  
they have victory, whetters of sword-play,<sup>73</sup>  
who know how to see, or how to form a snout-like phalanx.'<sup>74</sup>
- 24.<sup>75</sup> 'It's a great hazard, if you stub your toe,<sup>76</sup>  
when you wade into battle;  
treacherous females<sup>77</sup> stand on both sides of you  
and want to see you wounded.
- 25.<sup>78</sup> 'Combed and washed shall every wise man be  
and fully fed in the morning,  
because it's uncertain where one will come to by evening;  
it's [a] bad [idea] to press ahead despite an omen.'<sup>79</sup>

### Capitulum<sup>80</sup>

Sigurðr had a great battle against Lyngvi, Hundingr's son, and his brothers. There Lyngvi fell and those three brothers. After the battle Reginn said:

26. 'Now a bloody eagle is carved with bitter sword  
on the back of the slayer of Sigmundr!<sup>81</sup>  
None is more outstanding [than] the one who might redder the earth,  
the ruler's heir,<sup>82</sup> and gladden Huginn!'

Sigurðr went back to Hjálprekr's. Then Reginn incited Sigurðr to kill Fáfñir.

## Textual Apparatus to *Reginismál*

*Reginismál*] This title, now traditional, is not in **R**; it is supplied editorially. *NK* detects a faded heading in **R**, which it suggests reads *Frá Sigurði* 'About Sigurðr'.

*Sigurðr*] The first letter is large and red, but faded, in **R**

*sonr*] **R** *sonar*

1/6 *lindar*] **R** *linar*

5/3 *bræðrum tveim*] **R** *brærum tveim*

6/1 *reitt*] **R** absent, supplied from *VS* 14

8/3 *ónept*] **R** *vm nept*

10/1 *Lyngheiðr*] **R** *Lyngheiþr*

10/4 *Fátt*] **R** *Far*

12/1 *Bróður*] **R** *Brvðar*

12 pr. *hluti*] **R** *lvoti*

14 pr. *øll*] **R** *os*

14 pr. *Gramr*] **R** *gram*

15/3 *þeir*] **R** *þr*

19/2 *hvárttveggja*] **R** *hvaartveGja*

22/5 *hjálmstøfum*] **R** *hilm stofom*

*Capitulum*] Rubricated but illegible in the photograph in the facsimile volume of **R**; the reading is therefore reliant on the transcription therein

## Notes to the Translation

- 1 The meaning of his name is uncertain.
- 2 Reginn's.
- 3 Three gods.
- 4 'Andvari's Waterfall'.
- 5 ON *andvari* elsewhere means 'gurnard' (cf. the dwarf's pike-form), 'care, anxiety' and 'breeze' (cf. *Gustr* 'Gust' in *Rm.* 5).
- 6 'Otter'.
- 7 Or simply 'gods'; either way, the reference is to Óðinn, Hœnir and Loki.
- 8 'Plunder, Robbery', wife of the sea-giant Ægir.
- 9 *VS* 14 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 10 The underworld land of the dead.
- 11 A kenning for 'gold'. Emendation of *linar* (and the corresponding *lionar* of *VS*) to *lindar* 'of the brook' is not the only way to make sense of this phrase; other possible emendations, which also yield 'gold'-kennings, are *linnar loga* 'flame/blaze of the snake' and *liðar loga* 'flame/blaze of the (arm/finger-)joint'.

- 12 VS 14 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 13 ‘Timid/Fearful One’. Instead of *Óinn*, VS 14 has *Óðinn*, which, as the ‘easier’ reading, is probably a substitution.
- 14 I.e., wound.
- 15 This question appears irrelevant in the context, and some scholars therefore consider this stanza a likely interpolation. That Loki should want this question answered is, however, not out of character, given his inclination to invective (see *Ls.*).
- 16 Possibly ‘Wading-Place Yeller’, presumably a river.
- 17 The waders are probably dead; cf. *Vsp.* 38, *Grm.* 21.
- 18 Andvari.
- 19 This description and the following stanza probably contributed to J. R. R. Tolkien’s conception of the One Ring in *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 20 Dwarves live in rocks.
- 21 ‘Gust’, perhaps an alias of Andvari or the name of one of his forebears.
- 22 Presumably Reginn and Fáfnir.
- 23 If this number is meant precisely, not just to indicate ‘no small number’, the eight noblemen may be Sigurðr, Guthormr, Gunnarr, Hǫgni, Atli, Erpr, Sǫrli and Hamðir.
- 24 ‘Andvari’s Gift’, evidently the ring that Loki took from Andvari.
- 25 VS 14 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 26 I.e., ordained.
- 27 I.e., killed.
- 28 This stanza is apparently spoken by Loki.
- 29 Or ‘grief’.
- 30 This translation reflects just one of many explanations that scholars have proposed for a difficult line.
- 31 When not denoting an actual boar, *jöfurr* is, as here, a common metaphor for ‘warrior’ or ‘prince’.
- 32 Perhaps ‘Heather Heath’ and ‘Praise Heath’, but *heiðr* can mean ‘bright’ as well as ‘heath’.
- 33 Whether the ‘great need’ is the man’s or Lyngheiðr’s is unclear.
- 34 I.e., he refused.
- 35 Sigurðr.
- 36 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 5 (*FSN* I; cited by chapter) has a variant of this stanza: ‘*Kominn er hingat konr Sigmundar, / seggr inn snarráði, til sala vorra, / megn hefir mikit, en ek maðr gamall, / er mér fangs ván at frekum úlfi*’ ‘Sigmundr’s offspring has come here, the man of resolute counsel, to our halls; he has great strength, but I [am] an old man; I expect a wrestle with a ravenous wolf!’
- 37 Proverbial. The ‘wolf’ is Sigurðr, whom Reginn expects to be hard to handle.
- 38 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 5 has a variant of this stanza: ‘*Ek mun fræða fólkdjarfan gram; / nú er Yngva konr með oss kominn; / sjá mun ræsir, ríkstr und sólu, / frægr um lönd öll með lofi mínu [v.l. sínu]*’ ‘I shall instruct the battle-brave prince; now Yngvi’s offspring has come among us; that prince will be the most powerful under the sun, famous throughout all lands with my [v.l. ‘his’] praise!’

- 39 A name of the god Freyr.
- 40 Or 'spread out, extend'.
- 41 Cf. *HH. I* 3–4.
- 42 Fáfnir.
- 43 'Angry', 'Hostile'.
- 44 The Rhine.
- 45 Probably Sigurðr.
- 46 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 5 has a variant of this stanza, spoken by Sigurðr: 'Hátt munu hlægja Hundings synir, / þeir er Eylima aldrs vörnuðu, / ef mik tregar meirr, at sækja / hringa rauða enn hefna föður' 'Hundingr's sons will laugh loudly, they who denied Eylimi his old age, if I desire more to seek red rings than to avenge my father!'
- 47 Sigurðr's maternal grandfather.
- 48 I.e., who killed Eylimi.
- 49 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 50 Or 'Ræfill's'. A sea-king; the meaning of his name is uncertain.
- 51 Ships.
- 52 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 53 Ships. *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 instead has *á sjó komnir* '(we have) come on the sea'.
- 54 Ships, which were launched using rollers.
- 55 *VS* 17 has a close variant of this stanza. *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has another, with *víða* 'widely' instead of *ungi* 'young', and *karl á bjargi* 'old man on the cliff' instead of *karl af bergi* 'old man from the cliff'.
- 56 An alias of Óðinn.
- 57 One of Óðinn's ravens, who is gladdened by carrion. Whether the 'young *Völsungr*' who gladdened him was *Völsungr* himself or Sigurðr is uncertain.
- 58 'Gripper', 'Seizer', another alias of Óðinn.
- 59 'Very Wise One' or 'Hidden One/Concealer', another alias of Óðinn.
- 60 The calming is not, of course, coincidental; nor was the storm's onset.
- 61 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza; it identifies the speaker as Sigurðr.
- 62 I.e., in combat.
- 63 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 64 Warrior.
- 65 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a variant of this stanza, with *til burtferðar* '(ready) for departure' in place of *ert á braut* 'you are (ready) for the road/the off', and *hróðrfulla* 'full of praise' instead of *hróðrfúsa* 'praise-eager'.
- 66 Or the path at the entrance to, and along the front of, the building from which you are setting out. The idea is doubtless that they will be keen to accompany you.
- 67 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 68 Possibly the branches of the world-ash *Yggdrasill*.
- 69 Apparently warriors, likened to staffs wearing helmets.



- 70 Or 'travelling' in front. The sense is perhaps that you are in luck if you see your enemies before they see you, or if you see them in front of you. This stanza appears to record two omens, not one.
- 71 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza.
- 72 The sun. The moon is perhaps personified as Máni here.
- 73 Warriors.
- 74 Specifically, a formation that resembles a boar's snout.
- 75 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a close variant of this stanza; instead of *at vígi veðr* '(when you) wade into battle', it has *at vígi vegr* '(when you) fight in battle'.
- 76 Literally 'if you strike with (your) foot'.
- 77 Supernatural women; cf. *Grm.* 53, *HH. I* 16, *Sd.* 27, *Hm.* 15, 28.
- 78 *Norna-Gests þáttr* 6 has a variant of this stanza: '*Kembdr ok þveginn skal kennast hverr, / ok at morgni mettr, / þvíat óvíst er, hvar at aptni kemr, / illt er fyrri heill at hrapa*' 'Combed and washed shall each man know himself (to be), and full of food in the morning, because it's uncertain where he will come to in the evening; it's a bad idea to press ahead despite an omen.'
- 79 I.e., an omen to the contrary.
- 80 Latin for 'little head', used to mark the start of a new section.
- 81 A reference to the supposed (and supposedly Óðinnic) practice of, according to the most extreme of various, increasingly lurid accounts, cutting open the ribcage of a fallen enemy from behind and then drawing out the lungs, so that they lay like a pair of eagle's wings spread across his back. Cf. *Sd.* 16.
- 82 Sigurðr.

