

REGINSMOL

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THE BALLAD OF REGIN

Sigurth went to Hjalprek's stud and chose for himself a horse, who thereafter was called Grani. At that time Regin, the son of Hreithmar, was come to Hjalprek's home; he was more ingenious than all other men, and a dwarf in stature; he was wise, fierce and skilled in magic. Regin undertook Sigurth's bringing up and teaching, and loved him much. He told Sigurth of his forefathers, and also of this: that once Othin and Hönir and Loki had come to Andvari's waterfall, and in the fall were many fish. Andvari was a dwarf, who had dwelt long in the waterfall in the shape of a pike, and there he got his food. "Otr was the name of a brother of ours," said Regin, "who often went into the fall in the shape of an otter; he had caught a salmon, and sat on the high bank eating it with his eyes shut. Loki threw a stone at him and killed him; the gods thought they had had great good luck, and stripped the skin off the otter. That same evening they sought a night's lodging at Hreithmar's house, and showed their booty. Then we seized them, and told them, as ransom for their lives, to fill the otter skin with gold, and completely cover it outside as well with red gold. Then they sent Loki to get the gold; he went to Ron and got her net, and went then to Andvari's fall and cast the net in front of the pike, and the pike leaped into the net." Then Loki said:

1. "What is the fish | that runs in the flood, And itself from ill cannot save? If thy head thou wouldst | from hell redeem, Find me the water's flame."

Andvari spake:

2. "Andvari am I, | and Oin my father, In many a fall have I fared; An evil Norn | in olden days Doomed me in waters to dwell."

Loki spake:

3. "Andvari, say, | if thou seekest still To live in the land of men, What payment is set | for the sons of men Who war with lying words?"

Andvari spake:

4. "A mighty payment | the men must make Who in Vathgelmir's waters wade; On a long road lead | the lying words That one to another utters."

Loki saw all the gold that Andvari had. But when he had brought forth all the gold, he held back one ring, and Loki took this from him. The dwarf went into his rocky hole and said:

5. "Now shall the gold | that Gust once had Bring their death | to brothers twain, And evil be | for heroes eight; Joy of my wealth | shall no man win."

The gods gave Hreithmar the gold, and filled up the otter-skin, and stood it on its feet. Then the gods had to heap up gold and hide it. And when that was done, Hreithmar came forward and saw a single whisker, and bade them cover it. Then Othin brought out the ring Andvaranaut and covered the hair. Then Loki said:

6. "The gold is given, | and great the price Thou hast my head to save; But fortune thy sons | shall find not there, The bane of ye both it is."

Hreithmar spake:

7. "Gifts ye gave, | but ye gave not kindly, Gave not with hearts that were whole; Your lives ere this | should ye all have lost, If sooner this fate I had seen."

Loki spake:

8. "Worse is this | that methinks I see, For a maid shall kinsmen clash; Heroes unborn | thereby shall be, I deem, to hatred doomed."

Hreithmar spake:

9. "The gold so red | shall I rule, methinks, So long as I shall live; Nought of fear | for thy threats I feel, So get ye hence to your homes."

Fafnir and Regin asked Hreithmar for a share of the wealth that was paid for the slaying of their brother, Otr. This he refused, and Fafnir thrust his sword through the body of his father, Hreithmar, while he was sleeping. Hreithmar called to his daughters:

10. "Lyingheith and Lofnheith, | fled is my life, And mighty now is my need!"

Lyingheith spake:

"Though a sister loses | her father, seldom
Revenge on her brother she brings."

Hreithmar spake:

11. "A daughter, woman | with wolf's heart, bear, If thou hast no son | with the hero brave; If one weds the maid, | for the need is mighty, Their son for thy hurt | may vengeance seek."

Then Hreithmar died, and Fafnir took all the gold. Thereupon Regin asked to have his inheritance from his father, but Fafnir refused this. Then Regin asked counsel of Lyingheith, his sister, how he should win his inheritance. She said:

12. "In friendly wise | the wealth shalt thou ask Of thy brother, and better will; Not seemly is it
| to seek with the sword Fafnir's treasure to take."

All these happenings did Regin tell to Sigurth.

One day, when he came to Regin's house, he was gladly welcomed. Regin said:

13. "Hither the son | of Sigmund is come, The hero eager, | here to our hall; His courage is
more | than an ancient man's, And battle I hope | from the hardy wolf.
14. "Here shall I foster | the fearless prince, Now Yngvi's heir | to us is come; The noblest hero
| beneath the sun, The threads of his fate | all lands enfold."

Sigurth was there continually with Regin, who said to Sigurth that Fafnir lay at Gnitahelth, and was in the shape of a dragon. He had a fear-helm, of which all living creatures were terrified. Regin made Sigurth the sword which was called Gram; it was so sharp that when he thrust it down into the Rhine, and let a strand of wool drift against it with the stream, it cleft the strand asunder as if it were water. With this sword Sigurth cleft asunder Regin's anvil. After that Regin egged Sigurth on to slay Fafnir, but he said:

15. "Loud will the sons | of Hunding laugh, Who low did Eylimi | lay in death, If the hero sooner
| seeks the red Rings to find | than his father's vengeance."

King Hjalprek gave Sigurth a fleet for the avenging of his father. They ran into a great storm, and were off a certain headland. A man stood on the mountain, and said:

16. "Who yonder rides | on Rævil's steeds, O'er towering waves | and waters wild? The sail-
horses all | with sweat are dripping, Nor can the sea-steeds | the gale withstand."

Regin answered:

17. "On the sea-trees here | are Sigurth and I, The storm wind drives us | on to our death; The
waves crash down | on the forward deck, And the roller-steeds sink; | who seeks our
names?"

The Man spake:

18. "Hnikar I was | when Volsung once Gladdened the ravens | and battle gave; Call me the
Man | from the Mountain now, Feng or Fjolnir; | with you will I fare."

They sailed to the land, and the man went on board the ship, and the storm subsided. Sigurth spake:

19. "Hnikar, say, | for thou seest the fate That to gods and men is given; What sign is fairest |
for him who fights, And best for the swinging of swords?"

Hnikar spake:

20. "Many the signs, | if men but knew, That are good for the swinging of swords; It is well, methinks, | if the warrior meets A raven black on his road.
21. "Another it is | if out thou art come, And art ready forth to fare, To behold on the path | before thy house Two fighters greedy of fame.
22. "Third it is well | if a howling wolf Thou hearest under the ash; And fortune comes | if thy foe thou seest Ere thee the hero beholds.
23. "A man shall fight not | when he must face The moon's bright sister | setting late; Win he shall | who well can see, And wedge-like forms | his men for the fray.
24. "Foul is the sign | if thy foot shall stumble As thou goest forth to fight; Goddesses baneful | at both thy sides Will that wounds thou shalt get.
25. "Combed and washed | shall the wise man go, And a meal at morn shall take; For unknown it is | where at eve he may be; It is ill thy luck to lose."

Sigurth had a great battle with Lyngvi, the son of Hunding, and his brothers; there Lyngvi fell, and his two brothers with him. After the battle Regin said:

26. "Now the bloody eagle | with biting sword Is carved on the back | of Sigmund's killer; Few were more fierce | in fight than his son, Who reddened the earth | and gladdened the ravens."

Sigurth went home to Hjalprek's house; thereupon Regin egged him on to fight with Fafnir.

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