

VOLUSPO (THE WISE- WOMAN'S PROPHECY)

1. Hearing I ask | from the holy races,
From Heimdall's sons, | both high and low;
Thou wilt, Valfather, | that well I relate
Old tales I remember | of men long ago.
2. I remember yet | the giants of yore,
Who gave me bread | in the days gone by;
Nine worlds I knew, | the nine in the tree
With mighty roots | beneath the mold.
3. Of old was the age | when Ymir lived;
Sea nor cool waves | nor sand there were;
Earth had not been, | nor heaven above,
But a yawning gap, | and grass nowhere.
4. Then Bur's sons lifted | the level land,
Mithgarth the mighty | there they made;
The sun from the south | warmed the stones of earth,
And green was the ground | with growing leeks.
5. The sun, the sister | of the moon, from the south
Her right hand cast | over heaven's rim;
No knowledge she had | where her home should be,
The moon knew not | what might was his,
The stars knew not | where their stations were.
6. Then sought the gods | their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, | and council held;
Names then gave they | to noon and twilight,
Morning they named, | and the waning moon,
Night and evening, | the years to number.
7. At Ithavoll met | the mighty gods,
Shrines and temples | they timbered high;
Forges they set, | and they smithied ore,
Tongs they wrought, | and tools they fashioned.

8. In their dwellings at peace | they played at tables,
Of gold no lack | did the gods then know,—
Till thither came up | giant-maids three,
Huge of might, | out of Jotunheim.

9. Then sought the gods | their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, | and council held,
To find who should raise | the race of dwarfs
Out of Brimir's blood | and the legs of Blain.

10. There was Motsognir | the mightiest made
Of all the dwarfs, | and Durin next;
Many a likeness | of men they made,
The dwarfs in the earth, | as Durin said.

11. Nyi and Nithi, | Northri and Suthri,
Austri and Vestri, | Althjof, Dvalin,
Nar and Nain, | Niping, Dain,
Bifur, Bofur, | Bombur, Nori,
An and Onar, | Ai, Mjothvitnir.

12. Vigg and Gandalf, | Vindalf, Thrain,
Thekk and Thorin, | Thrór, Vit and Lit,
Nyr and Nyrath,— | now have I told—
Regin and Rathsvith— | the list aright.

13. Fili, Kili, | Fundin, Nali,
Heptifili, | Hannar, Sviur,
Frar, Hornbori, | Fræg and Loni,
Aurvang, Jari, | Eikinskjalldi.

14. The race of the dwarfs | in Dvalin's throng
Down to Lofar | the list must I tell;
The rocks they left, | and through wet lands
They sought a home | in the fields of sand.

15. There were Draupnir | and Dolgthrásir,
Hor, Haugspori, | Hlevang, Gloin,
Dori, Ori, | Duf, Andvari,
Skirfir, Virfir, | Skafith, Ai.

16. Alf and Yngvi, | Eikinskjalldi,
Fjalar and Frosti, | Fith and Ginnar;
So for all time | shall the tale be known,
The list of all | the forbears of Lofar.

17. Then from the throng | did three come forth,
From the home of the gods, | the mighty and gracious;
Two without fate | on the land they found,
Ask and Embla, | empty of might.

18. Soul they had not, | sense they had not,
Heat nor motion, | nor goodly hue;
Soul gave Othin, | sense gave Hönir,
Heat gave Lothur | and goodly hue.

19. An ash I know, | Yggdrasil its name,
With water white | is the great tree wet;
Thence come the dews | that fall in the dales,
Green by Urth's well | does it ever grow.

20. Thence come the maidens | mighty in wisdom,
Three from the dwelling | down 'neath the tree;
Urth is one named, | Verthandi the next,—
On the wood they scored,— | and Skuld the third.
Laws they made there, | and life allotted
To the sons of men, | and set their fates.

21. The war I remember, | the first in the world,
When the gods with spears | had smitten Gollveig,
And in the hall | of Hor had burned her,—
Three times burned, | and three times born,
Oft and again, | yet ever she lives.

22. Heith they named her | who sought their home,
The wide-seeing witch, | in magic wise;
Minds she bewitched | that were moved by her magic,
To evil women | a joy she was.

23. On the host his spear | did Othin hurl,
Then in the world | did war first come;
The wall that girdled | the gods was broken,
And the field by the warlike | Wanes was trodden.

24. Then sought the gods | their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, | and council held,
Whether the gods | should tribute give,
Or to all alike | should worship belong.

25. Then sought the gods | their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, | and council held,
To find who with venom | the air had filled,
Or had given Oth's bride | to the giants' brood.

26. In swelling rage | then rose up Thor,—
Seldom he sits | when he such things hears,—
And the oaths were broken, | the words and bonds,
The mighty pledges | between them made.
27. I know of the horn | of Heimdall, hidden
Under the high-reaching | holy tree;
On it there pours | from Valfather's pledge
A mighty stream: | would you know yet more?
28. Alone I sat | when the Old One sought me,
The terror of gods, | and gazed in mine eyes:
"What hast thou to ask? | why comest thou hither?
Othin, I know | where thine eye is hidden."
29. I know where Othin's | eye is hidden,
Deep in the wide-famed | well of Mimir;
Mead from the pledge | of Othin each morn
Does Mimir drink: | would you know yet more?
30. Necklaces had I | and rings from Heerfather,
Wise was my speech | and my magic wisdom;
· · · · ·
Widely I saw | over all the worlds.
31. On all sides saw I | Valkyries assemble,
Ready to ride | to the ranks of the gods;
Skuld bore the shield, | and Skogul rode next,
Guth, Hild, Gondul, | and Geirskogul.
Of Herjan's maidens | the list have ye heard,
Valkyries ready | to ride o'er the earth.
32. I saw for Baldr, | the bleeding god,
The son of Othin, | his destiny set:
Famous and fair | in the lofty fields,
Full grown in strength | the mistletoe stood.
33. From the branch which seemed | so slender and fair
Came a harmful shaft | that Hoth should hurl;
But the brother of Baldr | was born ere long,
And one night old | fought Othin's son.
34. His hands he washed not, | his hair he combed not,
Till he bore to the bale-blaze | Baldr's foe.
But in Fensalir | did Frigg weep sore
For Valhall's need: | would you know yet more?

35. One did I see | in the wet woods bound,
A lover of ill, | and to Loki like;
By his side does Sigyn | sit, nor is glad
To see her mate: | would you know yet more?
36. From the east there pours | through poisoned vales
With swords and daggers | the river Slith.
. |
. |
37. Northward a hall | in Nithavellir
Of gold there rose | for Sindri's race;
And in Okolnir | another stood,
Where the giant Brimir | his beer-hall had.
38. A hall I saw, | far from the sun,
On Nastrond it stands, | and the doors face north;
Venom drops | through the smoke-vent down,
For around the walls | do serpents wind.
39. I saw there wading | through rivers wild
Treacherous men | and murderers too,
And workers of ill | with the wives of men;
There Nithhogg sucked | the blood of the slain,
And the wolf tore men; | would you know yet more?
40. The giantess old | in Ironwood sat,
In the east, and bore | the brood of Fenrir;
Among these one | in monster's guise
Was soon to steal | the sun from the sky.
41. There feeds he full | on the flesh of the dead,
And the home of the gods | he reddens with gore;
Dark grows the sun, | and in summer soon
Come mighty storms: | would you know yet more?
42. On a hill there sat, | and smote on his harp,
Eggther the joyous, | the giants' warder;
Above him the cock | in the bird-wood crowed,
Fair and red | did Fjalar stand.
43. Then to the gods | crowed Gollinkambi,
He wakes the heroes | in Othin's hall;
And beneath the earth | does another crow,
The rust-red bird | at the bars of Hel.

44. Now Garm howls loud | before Gnipahellir,
The fetters will burst, | and the wolf run free;
Much do I know, | and more can see
Of the fate of the gods, | the mighty in fight.
45. Brothers shall fight | and fell each other,
And sisters' sons | shall kinship stain;
Hard is it on earth, | with mighty whoredom;
Axe-time, sword-time, | shields are sundered,
Wind-time, wolf-time, | ere the world falls;
Nor ever shall men | each other spare.
46. Fast move the sons | of Mim, and fate
Is heard in the note | of the Gjallarhorn;
Loud blows Heimdall, | the horn is aloft,
In fear quake all | who on Hel-roads are.
47. Yggdrasil shakes, | and shiver on high
The ancient limbs, | and the giant is loose;
To the head of Mim | does Othin give heed,
But the kinsman of Surt | shall slay him soon.
48. How fare the gods? | how fare the elves?
All Jotunheim groans, | the gods are at council;
Loud roar the dwarfs | by the doors of stone,
The masters of the rocks: | would you know yet more?
49. Now Garm howls loud | before Gnipahellir,
The fetters will burst, | and the wolf run free;
Much do I know, | and more can see
Of the fate of the gods, | the mighty in fight.
50. From the east comes Hrym | with shield held high;
In giant-wrath | does the serpent writhe;
O'er the waves he twists, | and the tawny eagle
Gnaws corpses screaming; | Naglfar is loose.
51. O'er the sea from the north | there sails a ship
With the people of Hel, | at the helm stands Loki;
After the wolf | do wild men follow,
And with them the brother | of Byleist goes.
52. Surt fares from the south | with the scourge of branches,
The sun of the battle-gods | shone from his sword;
The crags are sundered, | the giant-women sink,
The dead throng Hel-way, | and heaven is cloven.

53. Now comes to Hlin | yet another hurt,
When Othin fares | to fight with the wolf,
And Beli's fair slayer | seeks out Surt,
For there must fall | the joy of Frigg.
54. Then comes Sigfather's | mighty son,
Vithar, to fight | with the foaming wolf;
In the giant's son | does he thrust his sword
Full to the heart: | his father is avenged.
55. Hither there comes | the son of Hlothyn,
The bright snake gapes | to heaven above;
.
Against the serpent | goes Othin's son.
56. In anger smites | the warder of earth,—
Forth from their homes | must all men flee;—
Nine paces fares | the son of Fjorgyn,
And, slain by the serpent, | fearless he sinks.
57. The sun turns black, | earth sinks in the sea,
The hot stars down | from heaven are whirled;
Fierce grows the steam | and the life-feeding flame,
Till fire leaps high | about heaven itself.
58. Now Garm howls loud | before Gnipahellir,
The fetters will burst, | and the wolf run free;
Much do I know, | and more can see
Of the fate of the gods, | the mighty in fight.
59. Now do I see | the earth anew
Rise all green | from the waves again;
The cataracts fall, | and the eagle flies,
And fish he catches | beneath the cliffs.
60. The gods in Ithavoll | meet together,
Of the terrible girdler | of earth they talk,
And the mighty past | they call to mind,
And the ancient runes | of the Ruler of Gods.
61. In wondrous beauty | once again
Shall the golden tables | stand mid the grass,
Which the gods had owned | in the days of old,
. |
62. Then fields unsowed | bear ripened fruit,
All ill grows better, | and Baldr comes back;

Baldr and Hoth dwell | in Hropt's battle-hall,
And the mighty gods: | would you know yet more?

63. Then Hönir wins | the prophetic wand,
. |
And the sons of the brothers | of Tveggi abide
In Vindheim now: | would you know yet more?

64. More fair than the sun, | a hall I see,
Roofed with gold, | on Gimle it stands;
There shall the righteous | rulers dwell,
And happiness ever | there shall they have.

65. There comes on high, | all power to hold,
A mighty lord, | all lands he rules.
. |
. |

66. From below the dragon | dark comes forth,
Nithhogg flying | from Nithafjoll;
The bodies of men | on his wings he bears,
The serpent bright: | but now must I sink.

Revision #1

Created 2025-10-17 12:03:28 UTC by Ekospirit

Updated 2025-10-17 12:03:55 UTC by Ekospirit