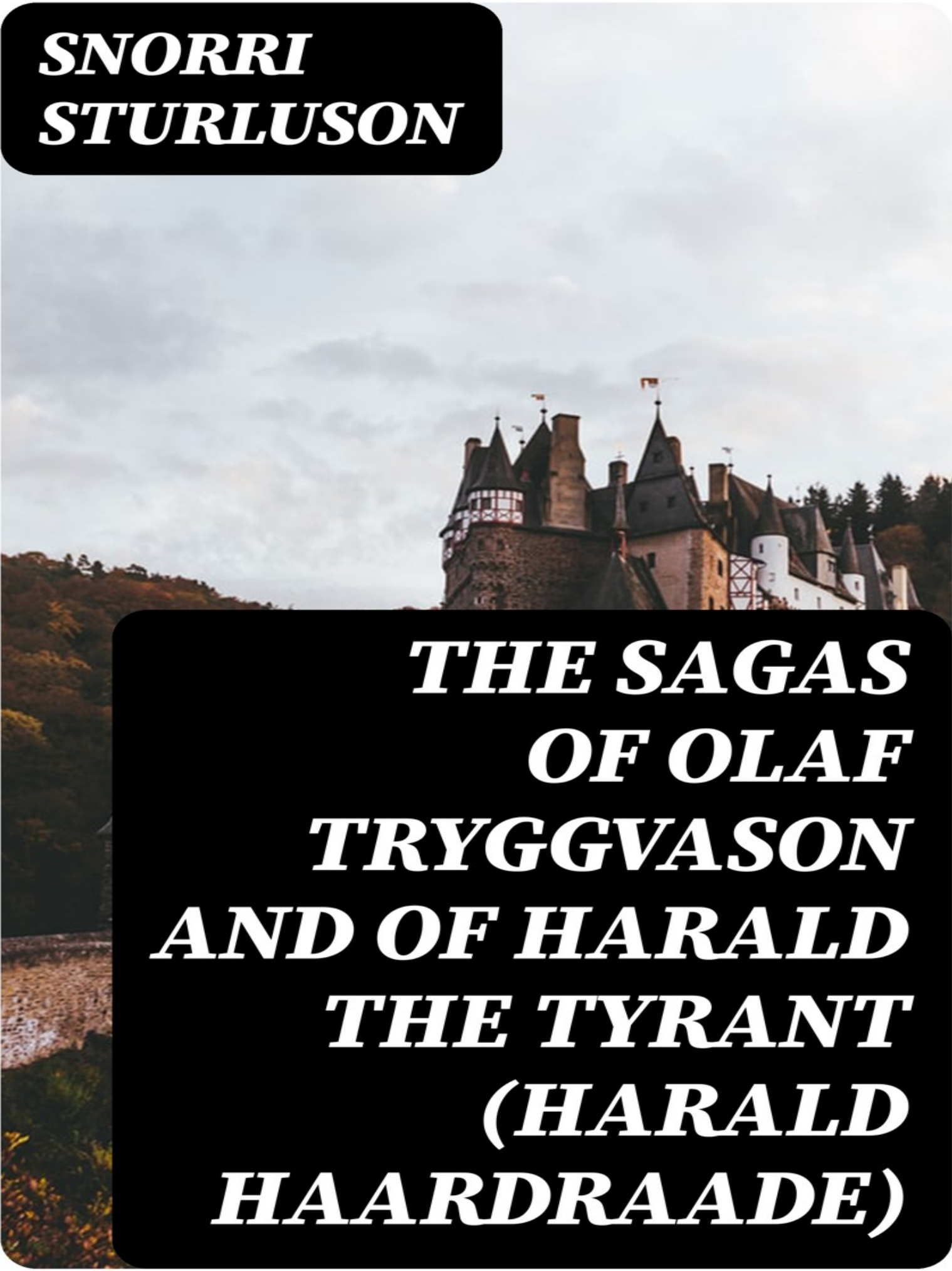



***SNORRI  
STURLUSON***



***THE SAGAS  
OF OLAF  
TRYGGVASON  
AND OF HARALD  
THE TYRANT  
(HARALD  
HAARDRAADE)***

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***THE SAGAS  
OF OLAF  
TRYGGVASON  
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THE TYRANT  
(HARALD  
HAARDRAADE)***

**Snorri Sturluson**

# **The Sagas of Olaf Tryggvason and of Harald The Tyrant (Harald Haardraade)**

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The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason

The Saga of Harald the Tyrant

Notes

**The places of notes in the text are indicated thus §.  
The  
relative matter will be found at the end of  
the book in due order as to  
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**THE SAGA OF OLAF  
TRYGGVASON, CMLXVIII-M**

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NOW it befell in the days of King Tryggvi Olafson that the woman he had wedded was Astrid & she

was the daughter of Eirik Biodaskalli, a wealthy man who dwelt at Oprostad. ✕ When the downfall of Tryggvi had been accomplished, Astrid fled away bearing with her what chattels she might. And with her went her foster-father Thorolf Louse-Beard, who never left her, whereas other trusty men, loyal to her, fared hither and thither to gather tidings of her foes or to spy out where they might lurk. Now Astrid being great with child of King Tryggvi caused herself to be transported to an islet on a lake & there took shelter with but few of her company. ✕ In due time she bare a man-child, and at his baptism he was called Olaf after his father's father. All that summer did she abide there in hiding. But when the nights grew as long as they were dark and the weather waxed cold, she set forth once more and with her fared Thorolf and the others of her train. Only by night could they venture in those parts of the country that were inhabited being in fear lest they should be seen of men or meet with them. In time, at even, came they to the homestead of Eirik of Oprostad. And since they were journeying by stealth, Astrid sent a messenger to the goodman of the house, who bade them to be led to an outhouse & there had set before them the best of cheer. Thence, when Astrid had abided for a while, her followers went unto their homes, but she remained there & with her to bear her company were two women, her babe Olaf, Thorolf Louse-Beard and his son Thorgills who was six winters old. They rested in that place until the winter was done.

¶ After they had made an end to slaying Tryggvi Olafson, Harald Grey-Cloak and Gudrod his brother hied them to the

homesteads that had been his. But ere they came thither Astrid had fled & of her learned they no tidings save a rumour that she was with child of King Tryggvi. α In the autumn fared they to the north, as has been related beforetime, and when they were face to face with their mother Gunnhild, told they her all that had befallen them on their journey. Closely did she question them concerning Astrid, and they imparted to her what they had heard. But because the sons of Gunnhild were that same autumn and the next winter at strife with Earl Hakon, as hath already ere now been set forth, made they no search for Astrid and her son.

¶ When the spring was come, Gunnhild despatched spies to the Uplands, and even as far as Vik, to get news of Astrid. And when the spies returned it was with the tidings that she was with her father Eirik & there most like was she rearing the son that she had borne to King Tryggvi that was dead. Forthwith Gunnhild chose messengers and equipped them handsomely both with weapons and wearing apparel: thirty men chose she, and their leader was Hakon, a man of influence and a friend to herself. She bade them make their way to Oprostad to Eirik and from thence take the son of Tryggvi and bring him unto herself. α Thereupon the messengers set out on their way, but when they were come nigh to Oprostad learned the friends of Eirik concerning their journey and went one evening unto him with the tidings. α Straightway when night had fallen, Eirik bade Astrid make ready to leave, furnished her with sure guides, & set her eastwards with her face towards Sweden, to his friend Hakon the Old, who was a man in the exercise of potent

sway. They adventured when the night was not far spent, & next day, towards even, were they come to a country-side called Skaun, and seeing there a homestead thither went they craving lodging for the night. Of their names they made a secret & their garb was but meanly. The yeoman who abode in the place was called Biorn Venom-Sore, awealthy man was he but withal churlish, and he drave them away, & they came that same evening to another homestead which was called Vizkar. æ Thorstein was the yeoman who dwelt there & he gave them shelter and good cheer for the night, and there they slept in good beds.

¶ Next day betimes came Hakon with the men of Gunnhild to Oprostad and asked for Astrid and her son, but Eirik said that she was not there, so Hakon and his men ransacked the homestead and bided till late even toward sundown, and gat them some tidings of Astrid's road. Then rode they forth the same day and came almost as night fell to the house of Biorn Venom-Sore in Skaun, and there took harbour. æ Then Hakon asked Biorn if he had aught to tell concerning Astrid; and he said that some wayfarers had come there during the day and had asked for a night's lodging, 'I sent them away, and it is likely they sought a refuge elsewhere in the neighbourhood.' Now a workman that had been of the household of Thorstein, being on his way to pass out from the forest, that same even happened to chance on the homestead of Biorn and learned that guests were tarrying, & further of what fashion was their errand; and all this he forthwith sped back to tell to Thorstein the yeoman. æ So while there was still a third of the night unspent, Thorstein aroused his guests and bade



them begone, urging them harshly to bestir themselves. When they had passed a little way from the house then did Thorstein open unto them that the emissaries from Gunnhild were hard by at the house of Biorn seeking for them. ⁊ They besought him for succour, and he set them on their way with a guide & some food, and their guide led them into the forest where there was a lake & an islet overgrown with reeds. They were able to wade out unto the islet & thereon hid they themselves among the reeds. ⁊ Early on the morrow Hakon rode out from the homestead of Biorn over the countryside, asking withersoever he went for Astrid. When he was come unto the house of Thorstein demanded he if they had thither been and Thorstein said that certain folk had fared thither & had gone on at daybreak eastwards through the forest. Then did Hakon bid Thorstein come with him because he was skilled in the knowledge of the tracks and hiding-places: and Thorstein set forth. But when they were come to the forest led he them away from where Astrid was. ⁊ The whole of that day did they go seeking for them, but found them not. Then they came back on their road & related unto Gunnhild what had befallen. Astrid & her followers went forth on their way till they were come unto Sweden to the home of Hakon the Old, and there Astrid and her son dwelt a long while, and it was well with them.

¶ Gunnhild, she that was mother to the King, hearing that Astrid & her son Olaf were in Sweden, once more sent forth Hakon and a brave following with him, this time eastward to Eirik King of Sweden, with goodly gifts and fair words. The messengers were made welcome and given good entertainment, and thereafter Hakon made known his

errand to the King, saying that Gunnhild had sent craving the King's help so that he might take Olaf back with him to Norway: 'Gunnhild will foster him,' quoth he. æ Then did the King give him men to go with him, and they rode to the house of Hakon the Old, and there Hakon offered with fair words to take Olaf with him. Hakon the Old returned a friendly answer and said that it must so happen that the mother of the child should decide about his going, but Astrid would in nowise suffer the boy to fare forth with them. So the messengers went their way & brought back the answer unto King Eirik and they made them ready to return home; but once more prayed they the King to grant them help to bear off the boy whether Hakon the Old were willing or not. So the King yet again gave them a company of men & the messengers returned to Hakon the Old and demanded that the boy be allowed to fare forth with them, but as Hakon was unwilling that this should be, resorted they to big words and threats of violence, and bore themselves wrathfully. Then did a thrall spring forward whose name was Bristle, and would have smitten Hakon but that he & they that were of his company withdrew hastily so that in nowise might they be beaten of the thrall: and back fared they to Norway and recounted to Gunnhild all the happenings of their journey & likewise that they had seen Olaf Tryggvason.

¶ Now Astrid had a brother, the son of Eirik Biodaskalli, whose name was Sigurd: long had he been remote from the land, sojourning in the realm of Gardar (western Russia) with King Valdamar, § by whom was he held in great honour. Now Astrid conceived the desire that she should hie unto this her brother Sigurd. Therefore Hakon the Old furnished her with

trusty followers & handsome equipment after the best manner. And she journeyed in the company of certain merchants. It was for the space of two winters she had abode with Hakon the Old, and Olaf was now three winters old. It came to pass as they were heading eastwards across the sea some vikings fell upon them, men of Eistland (Esthonia) and took possession both of folk and goods, and some of the folk they killed & some they shared among themselves as thralls. Thus was Olaf withdrawn from his mother and passed into the custody of one Klerkon, an Eistlander. Together with him were committed Thorolf and Thorgills. Klerkon deemed Thorolf too old for a thrall, and that he would be of no use, therefore slew he him, but took the boys with him and sold them to a man, hight Klerk, for a good he-goat. ⁊ A third man bought Olaf, and gave for him a good tunic or cloak. The man was named Reas, his wife Rekon, & their son Rekoni. There tarried Olaf long and it fared well with him, and always was he mightily beloved by the churl. Six winters did Olaf sojourn thus in Eistland.

¶ Sigurd Eirikson had come unto Eistland as an emissary of Valdamar King of Holmgard (Novgarod) to collect the tribute belonging to the King & he travelled as a man of wealth with many folk much beladen in his train. ⁊ Now it chanced that in the marketplace his eye lit on a certain fine boy whom he knew could not be of the country, & asking him his name gat for answer that he was called Olaf and his father Tryggvi Olafson and his mother Astrid, the daughter of Eirik Biodaskalli. Thus did Sigurd learn that Olaf was son unto his very own sister, and he asked him after what manner he had come to that place: and Olaf told him all

that had befallen him. Sigurd bade him come with him to the peasant Reas, and when they were come to the churl paid he him what price was covenanted between them for the boys and bare them with him to Holmgard. But never a word did he relate of the lineage of Olaf, yet held he him in high favour.

¶ It was that one day in the marketplace lingered Olaf Tryggvason when there was a gathering of many people. And it chanced that amongst them, spied he Klerkon who had slain his fosterfather Thorolf Louse-Beard. Now Olaf had a small axe in his hand, and he drave it into the head of Klerkon so that it went right down into his brain: forthwith ran he home to his lodging and told his kinsman Sigurd thereof. Straightway did Sigurd take Olaf to the house of the Queen, and to her made known what had befallen. Her name was Allogia, and Sigurd prayed for her grace to protect the lad. The Queen beheld the boy and said that one so young and so well favoured must not be slain, and proclaimed her readiness to summon men fully armed. Now it fell in Holmgard that so great was the respect paid unto peace that it was lawful to slay any man who himself had slain another who was uncondemned; and therefore in accordance with their law and custom the people made assemblage together to take into custody the person of the boy. ✕ Then were they told that he was in the house of the Queen in the midst of an armed band; and this was also brought to the ears of the King. ✕ He made him ready to go over to these armed men & give them his commission not to fight, and forthwith did he, the King, adjudge the geld-levy, the fine thereof being paid down by the Queen. Thereafter

did Olaf abide in the house of the Queen and waxed to find much favour in her eyes.

¶ Now it was the law in Garda that men of royal blood should not dwell there save with the consent of the King, therefore Sigurd made known unto the Queen from what stock Olaf was descended and in what manner he had come thither, saying that because of dissensions he could not prudently be in his own country, and he prayed her to speak with the King upon this matter. Then did she approach the King beseeching him that he would help this son of a king even because so hard a fate had befallen him: & the outcome of her prayers was that the King pledged her his word and taking Olaf under his protection treated him with honour, as it was seemly the son of a king should be held in honour. ✕ Olaf was nine winters old when he came to Garda, & nine more winters dwelt he with King Valdamar. Olaf was exceeding fair & tall to look upon and of mighty stature & of great strength withal. And in prowess in sports, so it is told, was he the best of all the Norsemen.

¶ Earl Hakon Sigurdson abode with the Danish King, Harald Gormson, during the winter after he had fled from Norway before the sons of Gunnhild. ✕ Now Hakon had so much on his mind that winter that he took to his bed, and often lay wakeful, eating & drinking only so much as would maintain the strength in his body. Then secretly sent he his men northwards to Throndhjem to his friends there, & counselled them that they should slay King Erling if it might be that they could compass that deed; adding furthermore that he himself would fare back to his realm in summer-time. That winter they that were of Throndhjem slew Erling,

as is aforewrit. ⁊ Betwixt Hakon and Gold Harald was there a friendship close as that of brothers that have been laid in the same cradle and Harald would lay bare his thoughts unto Hakon. ⁊ Harald confessed he desired to settle on the land and no more live on his ship of war, and he questioned Hakon if he thought Harald would share his kingdom with him were he to demand the half. 'Methinks,' quoth Hakon, 'that the Danish King will not refuse thee justice; but thou wilt know more concerning this matter if thou speakest thereon to the King; methinks thou wilt not get the realm save thou demandestit.' Shortly after this talk spake Gold Harald to King Harald when they were in company with many mighty men, good friends unto them both. Gold Harald then demanded that he should halve the kingdom with him, in accordance with the rights which his birth and lineage gave him there in Denmark. ⁊ At this demand waxed Harald very wroth, & sware that no man had ever besought his father, Gorm, that he should become King of half of what pertained unto Denmark, nor yet of his father Horda-Knut (Hardicanute), nor again of Sigurd Snake-i'-the-eye, nor of Ragnar Lodbrok; & so great was his fury that none dared parley with him.



¶ Thence came it that his own position was now even less than before to the liking of Gold Harald, for no kingdom had he any more than aforetime; while to this was added the wrath of the King. So went he to his friend Hakon and made wail of his plight unto him, and besought of him good counsel, if he had such to give him, as to how he might become possessed of the realm; and he said he was minded to seek his kingdom by force of arms. Then Hakon bade him not breathe word of this to anyone lest it should become known: 'It might cost thee thy life,' he said. ✕ 'Bethink thee diligently what thy strength is, for he who would risk so great a venture must be high-hearted and dauntless,

shirking neither the good nor the evil, so that to which he hath set his hand may come to pass. All unworthy is it to take up great issues and afterwards to lay them down again with dishonour.' Then did Gold Harald answer: 'To such purpose will I take up this claim, that I will not even spare these my own hands from slaying the King himself if occasion serve, should he refuse me this kingdom which is mine by right.' And therewith ended they their commune. After this came King Harald to Hakon, and they fell to talking together & the King told the Earl of Gold Harald's claim to the kingdom, and with what answer he had rebuked him, declaring that he would by no means diminish his own kingdom, 'but if Gold Harald hold fast to this his claim; then see I nothing for it save that I should put him to the death for in him have I but little faith if he will not surrender this desire.' The Earl made answer: 'Methinks Harald hath set out on this matter with such earnestness that he is not like to set it aside; and that if it should come to a rising in the land, there would be many that would flock unto his standard and the main of them because of the love they had borne to his father. It would bring thee the greatest ill-chance shouldst thou slay thy kinsman, for in such case all men would deem him blameless. Nor will I counsel thee to become a lesser king than was Gorm thy father; he also very much increased his realm, but in no wise diminished it.' Then said the King: 'What then is thy counsel, Hakon? Wouldst thou that I should divide my kingdom, and have this unrest off my mind?' 'Our meeting will be again ere many suns set,' answered Earl Hakon. x 'I will first ponder over this difficult matter, and thereafter give thee an answer.'



Then did the King depart and with him all the men that were of his company.

¶ Thereafter came it to pass that Earl Hakon betook himself once more to pondering and plotting, and permitted but few of his men to be in the house with him. Some days later came Harald again to the Earl, and they communed together, and the King asked of the Earl if he had thought deeply upon that matter whereon they had discoursed when they were last face to face. 'On that matter,' quoth the Earl, 'have I lain sleepless both by night and day ever since, and I deem it the wisest counsel that thou shouldst hold and rule the kingdom that thy father had and that thou didst inherit after him, but that thou shouldst get for thy kinsman Harald another kingdom wherein he may have all honour.' 'What kingdom is that?' inquired the King, 'that I may lightly give to Harald, keeping the Danish kingdom whole the while?' The Earl made answer, 'It is Norway. The kings who rule there are hated by all the folk of their land, & every man wishes them ill, as is but meet.' Then mused the King aloud: 'Norway is a great land, and the folk are a hardy folk; it beseems me to be a land ill chosen whereon to fall with a foreign host. Thus did it happen to us when Hakon defended the land; many men were slain to us but no victory did we achieve. Moreover Harald Eirikson is my foster-son and hath sat on my knee.' Then saith the Earl: 'Long have I known that thou hast given help to the sons of Gunnhild; yet with naught but ill have they requited thee. We will take Norway more easily than by fighting for her with all the hosts of Denmark. Send thou to thy foster-son Harald, and bid him receive from thee the lands and fiefs which they had

aforetime here in Denmark. ⁊ Appoint a tryst with him; then can Gold Harald in a short while win himself a kingdom in Norway from King Harald Grey-cloak.' Then answered the King that it would be called of foul intent to betray his foster-son. 'The Danes, I trow, will account it a better deed to slay a Norwegian viking than one who is a brother's son and a Dane,' answereth the Earl; & thereafter talked they on this matter until they were in full accord.

¶ Yet again came Gold Harald to speak with Hakon, and the Earl made known to him that he had so championed his cause and to such good purpose that there was hope that a kingdom might now be making ready for him in Norway. 'Let us,' said he, 'hold fast by our compact. I shall be able to afford thee great support in Norway. Get thou first that kingdom. King Harald is now very old & hath but one son, a bastard, whom he loveth but little.' To such measure did the Earl open up the matter to Gold Harald that the younger man was in full accord with him thereon; and thereafter did they all three take lengthy counsel, to wit, the King, the Earl, and Gold Harald full oft. Then sent the Danish King his men north into Norway even to Harald Grey-cloak, and they were right well furnished for their journey, and were made welcome with much cheer and in all courtesy were received by King Harald. They related the tidings that Earl Hakon was in Denmark, and was lying sick unto death and well-nigh witless; and the further tidings that Harald the Danish King bade Harald Grey-cloak to him to take such fiefs as he and his brothers had held aforetime in Denmark, and to that purpose bade he Harald come to him in Jutland. Harald Grey-cloak laid the matter before Gunnhild and other

counsellors and their views were not all of one accord, some fearing that this journey was not without peril by reason of the men that were set over against them to be dealt with; but the greater number were desirous that he should go by reason of the great famine that was at this time in Norway whereby the kings could scarce feed their men. And it was at this season that the fjord near-by which the kings most oft abode gat its name of Harding. x In Denmark, as men had marked, the harvest had been at least of goodly measure, so that men thought to get thence what they required should King Harald have fief & dominion there. It was agreed therefore ere the emissaries departed whence they had come, that when summer was at hand Harald should hie to the Danish King, and pronounce his adhesion to the conditions King Harald proffered.

¶ So in due course when the summer sun shone in the long hours of night fared forth Harald Grey-cloak towards Denmark in three longships, & one of these was steered by Arinbiorn, the 'hersir'§ of the Fjords.§ King Harald sailed from Vik over to Limfjord and took port at Hals, where it was told him that the Danish King was expected in a brief space. Now when King Harald heard of this, hastened he to make sail thither with nine ships, the which had been whiles mustered and set in readiness to take the sea. Earl Hakon had likewise armed his men & he also was about to set forth after the manner of a viking; at his word twelve ships, and they large ones, set their sails. When Gold Harald had fared forth, Earl Hakon spake to the King, saying, 'Methinks we are like to row to war and yet pay the war-fine[§] to boot. Gold Harald will now slay Harald Grey-cloak and thereafter

take himself a kingdom in Norway. æ Thinkest thou that he will be loyal to thee when thou givest him so much power? Thus said he in my presence last winter that he would slay thee could he but find occasion to do so. Now will I bring Norway under thy sway and slay Gold Harald, if thou wilt promise easy absolution at thy hands for the deed. æ Then will I be thine earl, and bind myself by oath that with thy might to be my aid I will bring Norway under subjection under thee, and thereafter hold lands under thy dominion & pay thee tribute. Then wilt thou be a greater king than thy father was, inasmuch as thou shalt hold sway over two great peoples.’ æ Thus was this covenanted betwixt the King and the Earl; and Hakon set out with his men to seek Gold Harald.

¶ Gold Harald came to Hals in Limfjord, and forthwith offered battle to Harald Grey-cloak; and Harald, albeit to him were fewer men, went ashore, made him ready for battle & set his host in array. But or ever the onset took place Harald Grey-cloak spoke cheering words to his men, bade them draw their swords, and rushing first into the fray smote on either side. Thus saith Glum Geirason in Grey-cloak’s lay:

‘Brave words spake the swordsman,  
He that dared to dye the grass sward of battle  
With the blood of the foe;  
And when Harald bade his men ply the swords in the  
strife,  
His manly words did them mightily encourage.’

¶ There fell Harald Grey-cloak. Thus saith Glum Geirason:

‘The bearer of the shield,  
He that clave longest to the ship,  
In death lay stretched  
On the broad marge of Limfjord;  
On the sands at Hals  
Fell the bounteous chieftain;  
It was his glib-tongued kinsman  
That wrought the deed.’

¶ There fell with King Harald the greater number of his men; there, likewise, fell Arinbiorn the ‘hersir.’ Fifteen winters had passed since the fall of Hakon, he that was foster-son to Adalstein, and thirteen since the fall of Sigurd the Earl of Ladir. The priest Ari Thorgilson saith that Earl Hakon was for thirteen winters ruler of his heritage in Thronthjem before the death of Harald Grey-cloak; & that during the last six winters of Harald Grey-cloak’s life, saith Ari, the sons of Gunnhild and Hakon fought against one another, & in turn fled the country.

¶ Earl Hakon and Gold Harald met not long after the fall of Harald Grey-cloak, & straightway Earl Hakon joined battle with Gold Harald. Therein Hakon gained the victory; moreover Harald was taken prisoner, and Hakon had him hanged upon the gallows. Thereafter fared Hakon to the Danish King, and easily made his peace with him for the slaying of his kinsman Gold Harald. King Harald then called out a host from the whole of his kingdom and sailed with six hundred ships, and there went with him Earl Hakon and Harald the Grenlander, who was a son of King Gudrod, and many other great men who had fled from their free lands in Norway before the sons of Gunnhild. ✕ The Danish King set

his fleet in sail up from the south to Vik, and when he was come to Tunsberg great numbers flocked to him. ⁊ And King Harald gave the whole of the host which had come to him in Norway into the hands of Earl Hakon, making him ruler over Rogoland and Hordaland, Sogn, the Fjords, South More, Raumsdal, and North More. These seven counties gave he to Earl Hakon to rule over, with the same rights as Harald Fair-hair had given to his sons; only with this difference, that not only was Hakon there as well as in Throndhjem to have all the King's manors and land-dues, but he was moreover to use the King's money and estates according to his needs should there be war in the land. To Harald the Grenlander gave King Harald Vingulmark, Vestfold, and Agdir as far as Lidandisness (the Naze) with the title of King, and gave him dominion thereof with all such rights as his kin had had aforetime, & as Harald Fair-hair had given to his sons. Harald the Grenlander was in these days eighteen winters old, & became thereafter a famous man. Then did Harald the Danish King hie him home with all the might of his Danish host.

¶ Earl Hakon fared with his men northward along the coast, and when Gunnhild and her sons heard these tidings gathered they together an host, but found obstacles to enrolling men at arms. So they took the same resolution as before, to wit to sail westward across the main with such men as would go with them, and thus fared they to the Orkneys and tarried there a while. Thorfinn Skull-cleaver's sons were now earls there—Hlodvir, Arnvid, Liot, and Skuli. Forthwith did Earl Hakon subdue all the land and that winter

abode he in Thronthjem. Of this speaketh Einar Jingle-scale  
in the Vellekla:

'The Earl that on his noble brow  
A silken fillet binds  
Counties seven hath he enthralled  
With their chattels, lands, and hinds.'

Now when Earl Hakon in the summer-time fared  
northward along the coast, & the people there made their  
submission to him, issued he proclamation that all temples  
and blood-offerings should be maintained throughout his  
dominions; and it was done accordingly. Thus it is said in the  
Vellekla:

'Seeing that he was wise  
The folk-leader commanded that be sacred kept  
The temple-lands of Thor and other Gods.  
Home to glory across the billows  
Did the shield-bearer steer the ship,  
It was the Gods that led him.  
'And the men-loving Æsirs gloat on the offerings  
Whereby the shield-bearer is made of more account.  
Bountifully doth the earth give forth her sustenance  
When its lord builds temples for the Gods.'

All that is northward to Vik lies under the heel of the Earl;  
Wide is the sway that he holds, mightily waxed by  
victories.'



¶ That self-same first winter wherein King Hakon ruled over Norway came the herring up along the coast, and before that in the autumn had the corn grown wheresoever it had been sown; in the spring men gat themselves seed-corn and the greater number of the peasants sowed their fields, and soon there was promise of a good harvest.

¶ King Ragnfrod, son unto Gunnhild, and Gudrod, he that was another son to her, these two were now the only sons of Eirik and Gunnhild who were still alive. æ Thus saith Glum Geirason in Grey-cloak's lay:

'Half is my hope of wealth downfallen since the strife,  
The strife in which the life of the chief was lost,  
The death of Harald weigheth me down,



Albeit his brethren twain have good things promised me,  
And to them all men look for their welfare.'

¶ Now when Ragnfrod had abode one winter in the Orkneys made he him ready in the spring and thence shaped a course eastward to Norway, & with him were a chosen company in large ships. ⁊ And when he was come to Norway learned he tidings how Earl Hakon was in Thronthjem, forthwith did he steer northward round Stad & laid waste South More; and some folks submitted to him as oft befalleth when warrior bands go through a country—those that they meet with seek help, each one wheresoever it seemeth likeliest to be gotten. When it was told to Earl Hakon that there was war in the south within More, caused he war-arrows to be sharpened and he equipped himself in haste & set sail down the fjord. Moreover an easy matter was it for him to bring folk around his standard. Earl Hakon and Ragnfrod sighted one another off the northernmost part of South More, & straightway Hakon gave battle, he that had most men but withal smaller ships. Hard was the struggle & therein waxed Hakon luckless; men fought from the prows and sterns, as the custom was in those times. Now there was a current in the sound, and all the ships were driven into shore, so the Earl bade his folk rest on their oars, and drift to land at such place where he should deem it best to land; and when the ships grounded, the Earl and all his host sallied forth and haled them up on the beach, so that their foemen might not drag them forth again. Then did the Earl array his men on the banks, and shouted defiance to Ragnfrod to land, but they that were with Ragnfrod lay-to farther out, and though for a while they shot at one another,