

THE POETIC EDDA

- A Book That Inspired Tolkien -

ORIGINAL OLD NORSE TEXT WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Revised and including a glossary of terms

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Loki taunts Bragi

LOKASENNA

Ægir, er öþru nafni hét Gyimir, hann hafði búit ásum öl, þá er hann hafði fengit ketil inn mikla, sem nú er sagt. Til þeirar veizlu kom Óþinn ok Frigg kona hans. Þórr kom eigi, þuiat hann var í austrvegi. Síf var þar, kona þórs ; Bragi ok Íþunn kona hans. Týr var þar, hann var einhendr : Fenrisúlfr sleit hönd af hánnum, þá er hann var bundinn.

Þar var Njörðr ok kona hans Skapi, Freyr ok Freyja, Víþarr sonr Óþins. Loki var þar, ok þjónustumenn Freys Byggvir ok Beyla. Mart var þar ása ok álfa.



Loki Bound

LOKASENNA

AT THE BANQUET OF ÆGIR

Ægir, who is also called Gymir (the Binder), bade the gods to an ale feast after he had got possession of the great cauldron as already told. To this banquet came Odin and Frigg, his wife. Thor came not because he was journeying in the East-country, but his wife Sif was there, and Bragi, with his wife Iðunn; Tyr also, who was one-handed, because the wolf Fenrir had torn off the other hand while the gods were binding him.

There were Njörð and his wife Skaði, Frey and his servants Barley and Beyla, Freyja, Vidar, the son of Odin, with many other gods and elves; there, moreover, was Loki.

As already told: See Hymiskviða. East-country, or Jötunheim.

Ægir atti twá þjonustumenn : Fimafengr ok Eldir. Þar var lýsigull haft fyrir elds ljós ; sjálft barsk þar öl ; þar var griðstaþr mikill. Menn löfupu mjök hversu góðir þjonustumenn Ægis váru. Loki mátti eigi heyra þat, ok drap hann Fimafeng.

Þa skóku ósír skjöldu sína ok céppu at Loka ok eltu hann braut til skógar, en þeir faru at drekka. Loki hvarf aþr ok hitti úti Eldi ; Loki kvaddi hann :

Loki kvað :

1. ' Seg þat, Eldir ! svát þú einugi
feti gangir framarr :
hvat hér inni hafa at ölmálum
sigtíva synir ? '

Eldir kvað :

2. ' Of vápn sin dóma ok of vígrisni sína
sigtíva synir :
ása ok alfa es hér inni 'rú
mangi's þér í orði vinr.'

Loki kvað :

3. ' Inn skal ganga Ægis hallir í
á þat sumbl at sea ;
joll ok áfu fóerik ása sunum
ok blentk þeim meini mjöp.'

Eldir kvað :

4. ' Veiztu, ef inn gengr Ægis hallir í
á þat súmbl at sea,
hrópi ok rógi ef þú eyss á holl regin,
á þér munu perra þat.'

Ægir had two servants, Nimble-snatcher and Fire-stirrer. Shining gold was used in the hall for the light of fire, the ale bore itself, and the place was held as a holy peace-stead. Men praised Ægir's servants, and said oft how good they were; but Loki could not brook this, and he slew Nimble-snatcher.

The gods all shook their shields and cried out against Loki, and chased him away to the woods, and then betook themselves again to drink. But Loki turned back, and finding Fire-stirrer standing without, he hailed him:

Loki:

1. Tell me, Fire-stirrer but whence thou standest
 move not a single step
 what are the sons of the war-gods saying
 o'er the ale-cup here within?

Fire-stirrer:

2. Of their weapons are speaking the sons of the war-gods,
 they boast of their battle-fame;
 but 'mid gods and elves who within are gathered,
 not one is thy friend in his words.

Loki:

3. I shall now enter the halls of Ægir
 this banquet to behold:
 mockery and strife will I bring to the god's sons,
 and mingle sorrow with their mead.

Fire-stirrer:

4. Know, if thou enter the halls of Ægir
 this banquet to behold,
 if reproach and slander on the blest Powers thou pour
 they shall wipe out thy words upon thee.

Loki kvað :

5. ' Veizt þat, Eldir ! ef vit einir skulum
 sáryrþum sakask,
 auþugr verþa munk í andsvörum,
 ef þú mælir til mart.'

Síþan gekk Loki inn í höllina, en er þeir sá, er fyrir váru, hverr inn var kominn, þögnuðu þeir allir.

Loki kvað :

6. ' Þyrstr ek köm þessar hallar til,
 Loptr, of langan veg,
 ásu at biþja, at mér einn gefi
 mæran drykk mjaþar.
7. (6) Hví þegiþ ér svá, þrungin goþ !
 at ér mála né meguþ ?
 sessa ok staþi veliþ mér sumbli at,
 eþa heitiþ mik heþan.'

Bragi kvað :

8. (7) ' Sessa ok staþi velja þér sumbli at
 ásir aldrigi ;
 þvít ásir vitu, hveim þeir alda skulu
 gambansumbl of geta.'

Loki kvað :

9. (8) ' Mant þat, Óþinn ! es vit í árdaga
 blendum blóþi saman ?
 ölvi bergja lézt eigi mundu,
 nema okkr væri báþum borit.'

Loki:

5. Know thou, Fire-stirrer, if we twain must fight
together with wounding words,
if thou talk too freely thou soon shalt find me
in answering ready and rich.

Then Loki entered the hall, and when those assembled saw who
was come in they all became silent.

Loki:

6. Thirsty come I, the Rover of Air,
to this feasting hall from afar;
I would ask the gods to give me but one
sweet draught of the mead to drink.

7. Why all silent ye sullen gods?
Can ye speak no single word?
Make me room on the bench, give me place at the banquet,
or bid me hie homeward hence.

Bragi:

8. Nor place at the banquet nor room on the bench
the gods shall give to thee;
well they know for what manner of wight
they should spread so fair a feast.

Loki:

9. Mindest thou, Odin, how we twain of old
like brothers mingled our blood?
Then saidst thou that never was ale-cup sweet
unless 'twere borne to us both.

8. *Bragi, the god of poetry.*

9. *The mingling of blood sealed a brotherhood in arms: Loki, Odin, and Hcenir were companions in many strange adventures.*

Óþinn kvað :

10. (9) ' Rís þá, Víþarr ! ok lát ulfs föður
sitja sumbli at,
síþr oss Loki kveþi lastastöfum
Ægis höllu í. '

Þá stóþ Víþarr upp ok skenkþi Loka ; en áþr hann drykki, kvaddi hann ásunu :

11. (10) ' Heilir ásir, heilar ásynjur
ok öll ginnheilug goþ !
nema einn áss es innar sitr,
Bragi, bekkjum á. '

Bragi kvað :

12. (11) ' Mar ok máeki gefk þer míns fear
ok bóetir svá baugi Bragi,
síþr þú ásum öfund of gjaldir ;
gremjat goþ at þér ! '

Loki kvað :

13. (12) ' Jós ok armbauga mundu á vesa
beggja vanr, Bragi !
ása ok alfa es hér inni 'rú
þú'st við víg varastr
ok skjarrastr við skot. '

Bragi kvað :

14. (13) ' Veitk, ef fyr útan váarak, sem fyr innan emk
Ægis höll of kominn,
haufuþ þitt báarak í hendi mér :
létak þér þat fyr lygi. '

Odin:

10. Rise up, Vidar, and give the Wolf's father
 bench-room at the banquet,
 lest Loki shame us with scornful speeches
 here in Ægir's halls.

Then Vidar arose and poured out ale for Loki, who thus greeted
 the gods before he drank:

11. Hail, ye gods, and goddesses, hail!
 hail all ye holy Powers!
 save only one who sits within,
 thou, Bragi, upon the bench !

Bragi:

12. Steed and sword from my store will I give thee
 and reward thee well with rings
 lest thou pour thy hate on the gracious Powers.
 Rouse not their wrath against thee!

Loki:

13. Nor steeds nor rings wilt thou ever own
 as long as thou livest, Bragi:
 thou art wariest in war, and shyest at shot
 of all gods and elves herein.

Bragi:

14. Were I without now even in such mood
 as within the halls of Ægir,
 that head of thine would I hold in my hand:
 'twere little reward for thy lie !

10. Loki was the father of the wolf Fenrir.