

Rigsthula

Original in Old Icelandic

They tell in old stories that one of the gods, whose name was Heimdall, went on his way along a certain seashore, and came to a dwelling, where he called himself Rig. According to these stories is the following poem:

1. Men say there went
Of old the god,
Mighty and strong
by ways so green
the aged and wise,
did Rig go striding.
2. Forward he went
He came to a dwelling,
In did he fare,
Two hoary ones
Ai and Edda,
on the midmost way,
a door on its posts;
on the floor was a fire,
by the hearth there sat,
in olden dress.
3. Rim knew well
Soon in the midst
And on either side
wise words to speak,
of the room he sat,
the others were.
4. A loaf of bread
Heavy and thick
Forth on the table
And broth for the meal
(Calf's flesh boiled
did Edda bring,
and swollen with husks;
she set the fare,
in a bowl there was.
was the best of the dainties.)
5. Rig knew well
Thence did he rise,
Soon in the bed
And on either side
wise words to speak,
made ready to sleep;
himself did he lay,
the others were.
6. Thus was he there
Then forward he went
And so nine months
for three nights long,
on the midmost way,
were soon passed by.
7. A son bore Edda,
With a cloth his hair
Thraell they named him,
with water they sprinkled him,
so black they covered;
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| 8. | The skin was wrinkled
Knotted his knuckles,
Thick his fingers,
Twisted his back, | and rough on his hands,
.....
and ugly his face,
and big his heels. |
| 9. | He began to grow,
Soon of his might
With bast he bound,
Home bore faggots | and to gain in strength,
good use he made;
and burden as carried,
the whole day long. |
| 10. | One came to their home,
Stained were her feet,
Flat was her nose; | crooked her legs,
and sunburned her arms,
her name was Thir. |
| 11. | Soon in the midst
By her side there sat
They whispered both,
Thraell and Thir, | of the room she sat,
the son of the house;
and the bed made ready,
till the day was through. |
| 12. | Children they had,
Fjosnir aad Klur
Hreim and Kleggi,
Drumb, Digraldi,
Lut and Hosvir;
Ground they dunged,
Goats they tended, | they lived and were happy,
they were called, methinks,
Kefsir, Fulnir,
Drott and Leggjaldi,
the house they cared for,
and swine they guarded,
and turf they dug. |
| 13. | Daughters had they,
Okkvinkalfa,
Ysja and Ambott,
Totrughypja
And thence has risen | Drumba and Kumba,
Arianef ja ,
Eikintjasaa,
and Tronubeina;
the race of thralls. |
| 14. | Forward went Rig,
To a hall he came,
In did he fare,
Afi and Amma | his road was straight,
and a door there hung;
on the floor was a fire:
owned the house. |
| 15. | There sat the twain,
The man hewed wood
His board was trimmed,
His clothes fitted close; | and worked at their tasks:
for the weaver's beam;
o'er his brow a curl,
in the corner a chest. |

16. The woman sat
At the weaving with arms
on her head was a band,
On her shoulders a kerchief
- and the distaff wielded,
outstretched she worked;
on her breast a smock;
with clasps there was.
17. Rig knew well
Soon in the midst
And on either side
- wise words to speak,
of the room he sat,
the others were.
18. Then took Amma
The vessels full
Calf's flesh boiled
-
with the fare she set,
was the best of the dainties,
19. Rig knew well
He rose from the
Soon in the bed
And on either side
- wise words to speak,
board, made ready to sleep;
himself did he lay,
the others were.
20. Thus was he there
Then forward he went
And so nine months
- for three nights long,
on the midmost way,
were soon passed by.
21. A son bore Amma,
Karl they named him;
He was ruddy of face,
- with water they sprinkled him,
in a cloth she wrapped him,
and flashing his eyes.
22. He began to grow,
Oxen he ruled,
Houses he built,
Carts he made,
- and to gain in strength,
and plows made ready,
and barns he fashioned,
and the plow he managed.
23. Home did they bring
In goatskins clad,
Snör was her name,
A home they made ready,
The bed they decked,
- the bride for Karl,
and keys she bore;
'neath the veil she sat;
and rings exchanged,
and a dwelling made.
24. Sons they had,
Hal and Dreng,
Breith and Bondi,
Bui and Boddi,
- they lived and were happy:
Holth, Thegn and Smith,
Bundinskeggi,
Brattskegg and Segg.

25. Daughters they had,
Snot, Bruth, Svanni,
Fljoth, Sprund and Vif,
And thence has risen
- and their names are here:
Svarri, Sprakki,
Feima, Ristil:
the yeormen's race.
26. Thence went Rig,
A hall he saw,
The portal stood wide,
Then in he fared; the
- his road was straight,
the doors faced south;
on the posts was a ring,
floor was strewn.
27. Within two gazed
Fathir and Nothir,
There sat the house-lord,
Shafts he fashioned,
- in each other's eyes,
and played with their fingers;
wound strings for the bow,
and bows he shaped.
28. The lady sat,
She smoothed the cloth,
Gay was her cap,
Broad was her train,
Her brows were bright,
Whiter her neck
- at her arms she looked,
and fitted the sleeves;
on her breast were clasps,
of blue was her gown,
her breast was shining,
than new-fallen snow.
29. Rig know well
Soon In the midst
And on either side
- wise words to speak,
of the room he sat,
the others were.
30. Then Mothir brought
Of linen bright,
And then she took
And laid them, white
- a broidered cloth,
and the board she covered.;
the loaves so thin,
from the wheat, on the cloth.
31. Then forth she brought
With silver covered,
Meat all browned,
In the pitcher was wine,
So drank they and talked
- the vessels full,
and set before them,
and well-cooked birds;
of plate were the cups,
till the day was gone.
31. Rig knew well
Soon did he rise,
So in the bed
And on either side
- wise words to speak,
made ready to sleep;
himself did he Jay,
the others were.

33. Thus was he there for three nights long,
Then forward he went on the midmost way,
And so nine months were soon passed by.
34. A son had Mothir, in silk they wrapped him,
With water they sprinkled him, Jarl he was;
Blond was his hair, and bright his cheeks,
Grin as a snake's were his glowing eyes.
35. To grow in the house did Jarl begin,
Shields he brandished, and bow-strings wound,
Bows he shot, and shafts he fashioned,
Arrows he loosened, and lances wielded,
Horses he rode, and hounds unleashed,
Swords he handled, and sounds he swam.
36. Straight from the grove came striding Rig,
Rig came striding, and runes he taught him;
By his name he called him, as son he claimed him,
And bade him hold his heritage wide,
His heritage wide, the ancient homes.
37. through the fares
Forward he rod till a hall he found.
O'er the frosty crags,
38. His spear he shook, his shield he brandished,
His horse he spurred, with his sword he hewed;
Wars he raised, and reddened the field,
Warriors slew he, and land he won,
39. Eighteen halls ere long did he hold,
Wealth did he get, and gave to all,
Stones and jewels and slim-flanked steeds,
Rings he offered, and arm-rings shared.
40. His messengers went by the ways so wet,
And came to the hall where Hersir dwelt;
His daughter was fair and slender-fingered,
Erna the wise the maiden was.
41. Her hand they sought, and home they brought her,
Wedded to Jarl the veil she wore;
Together they dwelt, their joy was great,
Children they had, and happy they lived.

42. Bur was the eldest,
 Joth and Athal,
 Nith and Svein,
 Sun and Nithjung-
 Kund was one,
 and Barn the next,
 Arfi, Mpg,
 soon they began
 to play and swim;
 and the youngest Kon.
43. Scon grew up
 Beasts they tamed,
 Shafts they fashioned,
 the sons of Jarl,
 and bucklers rounded,
 and spears they shook.
44. But Kon the Young
 Runes everlasting,
 Soon could he well
 Dull the swordblade,
 learned runes to use,
 the runes of life;
 the warriors shield,
 and still the seas.
45. Bird-chatter learned he,
 Minds could quiet,

 The might and strength
 flames could he lessen,
 and sorrows calm;

 of twice four men.
46. With Rig-Jarl soon
 More crafty he was,
 The right he sought,
 Rig to be called,
 the runes he shared,
 and greater his wisdom;
 and soon he won it,
 and runes to know.
47. Young Kon rods forth
 Shafts let loose,
 There spake a crow
 "Why lurest thou, Kon,
 through forest and grove,
 and birds he lured;
 on a bough that sat:
 the birds to come?
48. "'Twere better forth

 on thy steed to fare,
 and the host to slay.
49. "The halls of Dan
 Greater their wealth
 Good are they
 Trying of weapons,
 and Danp are noble,
 than thou hast gained;
 at guiding the keel,
 and giving of wounds.