

Ulv and Björn was two young boys, young brothers they where. Ulv was the oldest of the two, one year older than his brother Björn. There mother was master of the farm and chief, there father carred for the animals. Because the tradition on the farm was that the women decided in most things except war, but war did not come as often as it used too and because of that, the boys father mostly where in stables and barnyards missing to use his steel. The boys mother run the farm and they where learned by the fireplace from a mixture of thralls, men of the hird and female relatives. Mostly it was there aunt Ásný who was a very skilled storyteller and also the fortune-teller of the farm, and no ordinary fortune-teller was she, she could so much more if she just got the magic smoke to help her see the future.

Once when Ulv was eight years old, he had followed to the market and suddenly learned that fathers had power in most other farms. That he thought about at the evening meal in front of the fire, and he could not help to ask Ásný about that. Ásný looked at her both nephews a short while before she throw something into the fire that flashed and then sat down in the way she always sat when she told tales of old times for the inhabitants of the farm.

Here now my tale of old times, times when we yet had to reach this Island. For there we begin, in the country where once we come. Where our old mother Brynása lived with her mother Gunndís that was a mighty women, but also the most mighty women most sometime leave this place for the banquette beyond. Brynása had not learned all she needed from here mother, but much she had learned. Tears could not drop when someone sees here, weakness she could not show, and weak she was not. She let also rise stone over her mother, it should be in the land we come, there it will say : "For mother Gunndís rised, she everything see and know. Gunndís the wise." That was the last that was done in the old land, because Brynása had seen that they needed to move, and so they also did. They followed the words the gods gave them, the holy smokes master. Out on the ocean they went in ship, and ship after toil arrived at the beach of this island, and here Brynása settled down. Let people start build house and soon found where village was. Yet did not the village and island now the strength of Brynása. Old man named Arnaldr lived close to forest. When newly arrived, Brynása and her sisters Geirunnr och Hrafnhilder to wash themselves at beach. Without clothes they

where when sound was heard, and glimpsed old Arnaldr that sneaked on them. Brynása was mightily angry, and with a song gnats assembled around Arnaldr and made him run from there, and all after that Arnaldr was followed by gnats. But Arnaldr told his nephew Hermundr about what happened. Hermundr assembled his brothers and his hird, and they ride towards our farm. Soon they stood outside our farm and screamed their hatred, and Brynása had to send out her own hird, to meet Hermundr where today our barley are.

Then Ásný started singing a song, and at the same time the women around them started stomp a rhythm:

[translation, with a few losses of rhymes and rhythm]

Where breads kernels should stand
hirds stood man against man
shields splashed with blood
blood on swords stood

Where drunken men have rumbled
when hird meet hird
Hermundr his faith comments
Hermundr becomes hrafn feast

Hermundr brothers cut down
Geirunnr there revenge price
Aye sorrow over beautiful maiden
that come to die

By reason nobody know
Viðir Jarl ride to barley field
Before brother swore oath of revenge
Before sister swore oath of revenge

Viðir Jarl a wise man
Made hirds leader swear oath
About future peace to come

No blood to spill in time

[original]

Där brödets frö skulle stå
hirdar stod man mot man
sköldar stänktes med blod
blod på svärden stod

Där drucken man rumlat
När hird mötte hird
Hermundr ödet sitt kommen
Hermundr blev hrafn festen

Hermundr bröder högg ner
Geirunnr sitt hämde pris
Ack sorg över vacker mö
som kom att dö

Av anledningen ingen vet
Viði Jarl red om kornets fält
innan svor broder ed om hämd
innan svor syster ed om hämd

Viði Jarl en klok man
fick hirdens ledare svära ed
om fred att komma framtid
inget blod att spilla i tid

Then stayed the rythm and Ásný begun to prepare to talk, but where interrupted when Ulv whispered to here brother Björn:

"What does hrafn means?"

Because Ásný heard this, she spoke: " Ulv my friend, hrafn is the old word for the raven that circles the light sky and the dark field where death have walked." Then she continued the tale:

Viði Jarl had terms for peace, that still stands after many year. When a firstborn children in any family becomes fifteen years shall to other family go and there live until eighteen years old become. So he could both punish and keep peace. A good and wise men he was, Viði Jarl. Because yet holds his peace, and soon will Hermundr family's leader Rambis firstborn, Rambis daughter Ljúfa with her brother Özurr, she soon will come here.

And true as was said, Ljúfa was already travelling towards Bryngardin and now with brother to escort she rode through the forest.

Her littlebrother was now big enough to himself lead parts of the hird. So fast time went past! Now here brother where already thirteen years old and ready to find marriage. If not now her father took him within when sailing to the east so he would be dead before a wife he found. She herself know that she never would a man satisfy, but nobody but she know that. That her heart did not beat for men's sake, that it was not they she desired but other maidens. But yet love had not grabbed her with its claws, but a desire for women she said from when her flow come. She was thinking to become a holy women, then nobody would her touch. But now she would spend three years with her families enemy, because of that old peace agreement. It would be the first time she was on this side the forest, it was dangerous to pass by, robbers used to wait in ambush. That was why her brother was rideing along, to protect her. She was interrupted in her thoughts, when her brother come to her and told that they would be there after the next bend. He had not been her before, so she understood that it was the knowledgeable Sóni, he that was the real leader of the hird, that had talked to Özzur. Mentally she prepared to see the farm that would be her homes in three years. But when she arrived at the farm, it was not the [nave, "långhus" in Swedish] that took her eyes mostly. Instead there was the most beautiful women she ever seen that caught her eye, a long brown hair unlike her blonde light , and the form of a goddess. She that have her wagon drawn by cats, who is not to be named. A more beautiful women she never seen. Next to her stood another women, not as beatifull, but that still reminded of the beautiful one. When they stopped outside the gate as the custom said, the two come to them. The beautiful hold the Barleywater-horn, while the other bore the port and salt. Then they come to the gate, first talked the not so beautiful:

"I am Heðinfast, the mistress of the house, take this mead and salt, as a sign that we welcome you"

As tradition told everyone took a bite of the pork, and put salt on their tongues. Now the beautiful women speak:

"I am Ásný, it is me that know the songs and the dances from the gods in this house. Here I offer you the one-eyed gods' mead"

The mead went from man to man, and last to her. She drank everything that was left, as the tradition said the highest in rank should. She was not used to drink and the strength ripped in her throat when she drank it. But she got all down without coughing and held her family's honor. Her thoughts were cloudy, but they focused on the contours under Ásný's dress and her beautiful eyes. Think if one could study seið with her, then no man to marriage could be. Her brother shook her from her thoughts when he said:

"Dear sister, we must ride back now. We see each other when Hammerfest is, Father has said I shall see you then".

With tears in her throat, Ljúfa begged him a good travel, and that they should soon see again. Then she turned around, and followed her new housewives in to the nave, passing by the swines that poked everywhere around her. She saw a compound where barley grows, and knew that what happened there, so long ago, had brought her here now. It took her a while before she dared to speak, and what she drank made her thoughts slurred, and her voice more honest.

- Venerable housewife Heðinfast, where will my place in the house be?
- We have no other guests of high rank, so you will sleep close to the fireplace for unmarried family members, together with Ásný, answered Heðinfast.
- So it is, it was long from when any unmarried woman was expected here. It should be nice that you are here, said Ásný and looked toward Ljúfa's eye.

I wonder if she notices anything, thought Ljúfa while her eyes admired Ásný. But it was only midday, and Heðinfast presented her to Ulv and Björn. Both reminded her once again of her loved brother. But she could grow to like there

company. She sat down at the big fireplace and took her deep dish and filled it with stew. She ate the stew that tasted good and drank sweetened water to it. To the evening the old songs were sung and tales told, not one was new. The only thing she could think of was to go to sleep, because then she would be alone with Ásný and could ask about her how to become a seið-woman. Sleep time was close, and her yawns made her hosts understand she needed sleep. It was Ulv that said it, so everyone heard it, and Ásný said that also she needed sleep.

They followed to the fireplace they would share, put up separators of wood around them, to have some kind of privacy in sleep. Now was the time for Ljúfa to ask if she could learn what Ásný already knew, the other she did not dare to say.

- Ásný wise, how do you become one of those who sing and cast runes?
- That my beautiful friend demands talent and apprenticeship. I now seek an apprentice, answered Ásný.
- Oh most beautiful of all women let me be your apprentice, so I can be close to you.
- If that you want, no man you can ever have, are you sure you want to refrain from that?
- I never a man wanted, women I long have longed for now. But no one more than you, you beautiful.
- So it becomes then, you can be my apprentice, but you also want to lie with me I think, and I want to lie with you, so let's share night camp.

Ljúfa got her wish, Ásný and she shared bed many nights. They slept with each other, like men sleep with women. All on the farm was peace, until the day of the Hammerfest, when Ljúfa's father Rambí, her brother Özurr and the full hird. With the full hird rode Hermunderfamily to drink Hammerfest at Bryngardinn. Then Özurr that rode in following to tell of their arrival seen in forest Ásný and Ljúfa in forest lie each other. Quickly he rode back, and his father's following rode for battle instead of feast. In betrayal should they come and not should Heðinfest be prepared. But aye, the Hammerbearer gave omen to Ásný in song.

[translation:]

My thunderfeast is near
to battle when
father to love your
ride in with army
prepare for struggle hird

[original:]

Min åskefest kommer
bli ett slag när
far till kärleken din
rider in med här
förbered för strid hirden

The first that Ásný did was tell her sister of her song from the Hammerbearer. Björn and Ulv now had to hide, and got to know where a bot to flee in would be if battle was lost. So the hird went, to outside gates and very soon rode Rambí hird to there. With word he demanded his daughter back and to talk with the witch that robbed his daughter. So ride Heðinfast, Ásný and Ljúfa out to the middle of the field as tradition demanded. There come also Rambí, Özzur and his law skilled, but Rambí broke with tradition and peace, when he with his axe cleft Brynása in half. For Heðinfast was that break with tradition so big that she spit Rambí in the face and said:

- Let the battle be here and now, you horrible. One day shall you be plagued worse than me now, whoever of us that wins this battle.

Heðinfast run to her hird in rage, but Ljúfa bend down over the dead body and cried, then she said:

- I want with her rest, she is most loved to me. Father give me that, cleft also me with your sword

Against his daughter Rambí was not man enough to wield sword, but she took her brothers sword in a quick movement and yelled:

- Defend your self, or I cleft you as you cleft her I loved.

So father had to daughter cleft, and so strong was the sadness for his actions that when the battle commenced he died, though his hird was more mighty, but he was clefted by one of Heðinfasts men. After the battle where only Özzur left on the farm of the descendants from Brynása and Hermundr, because Ulv and Björn fled as they been told when they saw how badly the battle went. Özzur ordered Bryngardin to be burned to the ground, and so did his fathers men. He also lighted the pyre where he let both his family's dead and his enemy's dead be collected by those who rides to all fields where warriors fall. Because the love between Ásný and his sister Ljúfa had mightily surprised him. When he come home he let rise a stone over his father as tradition was. But it was most for the sake of his mother, she was expecting it. Self he had doubts and therefor become known as Özzur the unsure.

Long from the farm you now could see the flames, there sat Björn and Ulv in the little boat that would take them to new lands. In there anger over all this swore Björn:

- One day I will return and revenge this injustice, then should Hermundrs farm also burn to the ground.
- Brohter mine, this you should not swear, we do not know how our life's will be, said Ulv
- I mean the words I said, gods know I will have revenge, with blood I show my earnestness.

When Björn had said those words, he opened one of his veins with a knife and blood come in sea. The two of them rowed along in life, to the mainland that there ancestors Brynása once had come. There they where returning, over the storming sea.