

1

I cut hard with my sword!  
It was a long time ago  
that I visited Götaland  
and killed the dragon.  
I married lovely Thora,  
then the warriors called me  
Lothbrok after that fight  
when I killed the serpent.  
I stuck a bright blade  
in that long coiled worm.

2

I cut hard with my sword!  
I was young when  
I sliced meat for the hungry wolf  
and the blonde-footed eagle  
out east in Eyrasund,  
we gave them big meals  
where the hard iron sang  
on high helmets, the blood  
swelled like an ocean tide  
and the raven waded in.

3

I cut hard with my sword!  
I heaved the spears high,  
I was twenty years old  
and reddened my spear all over.  
I fought eight jarls  
east of the Dína rivermouth,  
My hospitable habits did not fail  
the wolf at that meeting.  
Blood fell in the swelling  
sea; the soldiers lost their lives.

4

I cut hard with my sword!  
Battle was in the cards  
when we sent the Helsing men  
home to Odin's halls.  
We went up the Iva river,  
our spears had a chance to bite then,  
that whole river turned red  
from hot blood spilled from wounds.  
Our swords moaned on armor,  
our spears pierced shields.

5.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I think they defied no one then  
before Herraud fell  
on his ship in battle.  
After him  
no braver chieftain  
ever split the waves  
to harbor.  
That was a king who always  
brought a stout heart to battle.

6

I cut hard with my sword!  
The army threw shields  
when a sword ran  
laps through men's breasts,  
at Skarpasker  
arrows bit hard in the havoc,  
shields turned red with blood  
before King Hrafn fell;  
hot blood was driven  
from men's scalps.

7

I cut hard with my sword!

The men shouted hard

before King Eysteinn

fell at Ullarokr.

Then we had gold taken

from their arms in battle.

Swords crept through

red shields at that meeting;

blood flowed from wounds

made deep into skulls.

8

I cut hard with my sword!

At Inndyrisey the ravens

got their fill of enough meat

to bust them open,

and we served the wolves

a table that suited their tastes.

It was difficult to see

at sunrise;

I saw bowstrings bent,

iron stung the edge of helmets.

9

I cut hard with my sword!

We held shields in blood

when we fed the ravens

by Bornholm;

shields were destroyed,

the bow loosed iron arrows.

Völnir fell in that battle,

there was no greater king.

Bodies covered the shoreline;

the wolf rejoiced in the sacrifice.

10.

I cut hard with my sword!  
The battle looked to get tougher,  
before King Frey fell  
in Flanders; during that havoc,  
a hard blue sword, blood-splattered,  
in those olden days, took a bite  
from what was inside  
a golden helmet.  
Many a lady wept at dawn,  
when the wolf took his breakfast.

11.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I think that hundreds lay dead  
on those ships  
at the place called Englanes.  
We sailed to the battle  
six days, before the army fell,  
and our spears met in assembly  
at the break of dawn;  
it was there Valthjof  
fell before our swords.

12.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Brown blood dripped from swords  
in Barða Fjord, the arrow made  
pale corpses for hawks' breakfast,  
whining over while spearpoints  
bit hard into chain-mail shirts,  
swords were proven true—or not,  
each venom-sharp blade like a snake  
sought its burrow in wounds,  
snowed-under in bloodshed.

13.

I cut hard with my sword!  
We held heavy shields high  
at the battle-game  
by Hjadning harbor,  
and then men could see  
when we split shields  
in the sword-exchange,  
with many a man's helmet halved,  
that the battle was not like sitting  
next to a pretty woman with a drink.

14.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Splits appeared fast in those shields,  
many a body fell dead to the earth  
in Northumberland;  
there was no need on that morning  
to urge the men hard to fight,  
while the sharp bright swords  
bit helmeted faces;  
this battle was nothing like  
kissing a young widow in your lap.

15.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Victory was destined  
for Herthjof in the Hebrides,  
when he fought our men.  
The first whose fall was fated  
in that rain of spears was Rognvald,  
the greatest loss to any men  
in a sword-storm.  
That young helmet-chopper  
could throw a spearhead hard.

16.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Each corpse lay on another;  
the battle-following raven  
was cheerful after that fight.  
King Marstan, the man  
who ruled in Ireland,  
did not let eagle nor she-wolf  
go to bed on an empty tummy;  
no, he invited them to Waterford;  
and the raven sat down to a good dinner.

17.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I saw hundreds fall  
in the morning before the blades,  
hundreds to the spear-testing.  
My own son was struck early  
with a sword to his heart;  
Egil stole the uncowardly  
Agnar's dear life;  
the spear fluttered by  
the bright armor, shining like flags.

18.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I saw the loyal warriors butchering  
no small order of meat  
for the wolves, with sharp swords;  
in the battle at Vinaskeið, we did not think  
it was like a girl bringing you wine;  
not a few corpses filled  
the river while the spears flew overhead.  
Many a chain-mail coat was ripped  
in the foul noise of that battle.

19.

I cut hard with my sword!  
At Lindsey, in the morning,  
we used our swords in an exchange  
with the three princes there.  
Plenty of Irish blood fell in the sea  
in that encounter of swords;  
and few had the relief  
of leaving that place unscathed,  
except the wolf, who took some home  
in his jaws, and the hawk who split it with him.

20.

I cut hard with my sword!  
A handsome-haired young fighter,  
a great friend of women,  
fell in the morning, I saw.  
In that battle at Alasund,  
it was not like when a lady  
makes you a warm bath.  
Before King Orn fell,  
I saw shields break,  
I saw men lose lives.

21.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Long swords bit shields,  
when the gold-adorned  
shaft of the spear flew over the fray;  
I saw many lives of men ended  
in that fight at Anglesey;  
I saw princes go into the battle;  
rivers were swollen red  
from the spear-wounds.

22.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Why does a man fear  
that he might face his fate  
and fall in battle?  
Men who never feed the eagle  
often hate their lives;  
they say it's useless  
to encourage a coward.  
A timid man's own heart  
is never his own friend.

23.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I consider it fair  
that one man fights one  
in swordplay,  
let no man shrink back in fear!  
This is the nature of a *drengr*.  
Let that lady-pleaser  
stand firm when swords cross!

24,

I cut hard with my sword!  
It seems to me simple reality  
that we follow our fates,  
that none escapes the *Norns'* decree.  
I didn't think Ella  
would be my death,  
after I sailed my ship over waves  
and spread a bloody table  
for the wolves from all over  
to dine in Scotland's fjords.

25.

It's often cheered me to think  
that Óðin, father of Baldr,  
has a seat ready for me at the feast;  
I'll be drinking beer soon  
from a deep horn;  
this *drengr* won't worry  
over death at Óðin's house.  
I don't come with fear on my lips  
to Óðin's table at Valhalla!

26.

I cut hard with my sword!  
Now all my sons  
with Áslaug would come  
with bitter swords to make war  
if they knew how bad  
my situation was,  
how unfew the snakes are  
with all their venom biting me.  
I gave my sons a mother  
who gave them strong hearts.



27.

I cut hard with my sword!  
It's dangerously close to my end,  
there's a grim snakebite in me,  
the serpent coils up in my heart.  
I expect that my sons  
will put swords in Ella;  
anger will swell in them,  
thinking of their father,  
those bold boys  
won't sit this one out.

28.

I cut hard with my sword!  
I have stood in the front lines  
of my troops fifty-one times,  
when spears were on offer.  
The last thing I ever wanted  
was for another king  
to be named as greater than I;  
I began reddening spears young.  
The *Æsir* will welcome me home.  
It is not a weeping death.

29.

I'm eager for the next risk,  
the *Disir* invite me home,  
sent from Valhalla by Óðin  
to guide me there.  
I'll be drinking beer gladly  
with the *Æsir* in a high seat,  
the hours of my life are over,  
I will die laughing.