

# Prose Edda: “About the smith the son of Ívaldi and about the dwarf Sindri”

May 10, 2026 (🌞 Harpa 23) - May 16, 2026 (🌑 Harpa 29)



## Skáldskaparmál

### (Chapter 43)

Why is gold called Sif's Hair? Loki Laufeyarson, for mischief's sake, cut off all Sif's hair. But when Thor learned of this, he seized Loki, and would have broken every bone in him, had he not sworn to get the Black Elves to make Sif hair of gold, such that it would grow like other hair. After that, Loki went to those dwarves who are called Ívaldi's Sons; and they made the hair, and Skíðbládnir also, and the spear which became Odin's possession, and was called Gungnir.

Then Loki wagered his head with the dwarf called Brokkr that Brokkr's brother Sindri could not make three other precious things equal in virtue to these. Now when they came to the smithy, Sindri laid a pigskin in the hearth and bade Brokkr blow, and did not cease work until he took out of the hearth that

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which he had laid therein. But when he went out of the smithy, while the other dwarf was blowing, straightway a fly settled upon his hand and stung: yet he blew on as before, until the smith took the work out of the hearth; and it was a boar, with mane and bristles of gold.

Next, he laid gold in the hearth and bade Brokkr blow and cease not from his blast until he should return. He went out; but again the fly came and settled on Brokkr's neck, and bit now half again as hard as before; yet he blew even until the smith took from the hearth that gold ring which is called Draupnir. Then Sindri laid iron in the hearth and bade him blow, saying that it would be spoiled if the blast failed. Straightway the fly settled between Brokkr's eyes and stung his eyelid, but when the blood fell into his eyes so that he could not see, then he clutched at it with his hand as swiftly as he could,--while the bellows grew flat,--and he swept the fly from him.

Then the smith came thither and said that it had come near to spoiling all that was in the hearth. Then he took from the forge a hammer, put all the precious works into the hands of Brokkr his brother, and bade him go with them to Ásgard and claim the wager.

Now when he and Loki brought forward the precious gifts, the Æsir sat down in the seats of judgment; and that verdict was to prevail which Odin, Thor, and Freyr should render. Then Loki gave Odin the spear Gungnir, and to Thor the hair which Sif was to have, and Skíðbladnir to Freyr, and told the virtues of all these things: that the spear would never stop in its thrust; the hair would grow to the flesh as soon as it came upon Sif's head; and Skíðbladnir would have a favoring breeze as soon as the sail was raised, in whatsoever direction it might go, but could be folded together like a napkin and be kept in Freyr's pouch if he so desired.

Then Brokkr brought forward his gifts: he gave to Odin the ring, saying that eight rings of the same weight would drop from it every ninth night; to Freyr he gave the boar, saying that it could run through air and water better than any horse, and it could never become so dark with night or gloom of the Murky Regions that there should not be sufficient light where he went, such was the glow from its mane and bristles. Then he gave the hammer to Thor, and said that Thor might smite as hard as he desired, whatsoever might be before him, and the hammer would not fail; and if he threw it at anything, it would never miss, and never fly so far as not to return to his hand; and if he desired, he might keep it in his sark, it was so small; but indeed it was a flaw in the hammer that the fore-haft was somewhat short.

This was their decision: that the hammer was best of all the precious works, and in it there was the greatest defence against the Rime-Giants; and they gave sentence, that the dwarf should have his wager. Then Loki offered to redeem his head, but the dwarf said that there was no chance of this. 'Take me, then,' quoth Loki; but when Brokkr would have laid hands on him, he was a long way off. Loki had with him those shoes with which he ran through air and over water. Then the dwarf prayed Thor to catch him, and Thor did so. Then the dwarf would have hewn off his head; but Loki said that he might have the head, but not the neck. So the dwarf took a thong and a knife, and would have bored a hole in Loki's lips and stitched his mouth together, but the knife did not cut.

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Then Brokkr said that it would be better if his brother's awl were there: and even as he named it, the awl was there, and pierced the lips. He stitched the Ups together, and Loki ripped the thong out of the edges. That thong, with which Loki's mouth was sewn together, is called Vartari.

# Kennings concerning gold and Freyja

## (Chapter 44)

One may hear how gold is metaphorically called Fulla's Snood, in this verse which Eyvindr Skald-Despoiler wrought:

Fulla's shining Fillet,  
The forehead's sun at rising,  
Shone on the swelling shield-hill  
For skalds all Hakon's life-days.

Gold is called Freyja's Tears, as was said before. So sang Skúli Thorsteinsson:

Many a fearless swordsman  
Received the Tears of Freyja  
The more the morn when foemen  
We murdered; we were present.  
And as Einarr Skúlason sang:  
Where, mounted 'twixt the carvings,  
The Tear of Mardöll lieth,  
We bear the axe shield-splitting,  
Swollen with Serpent's lair-gold.

And here Einarr has further paraphrased Freyja so as to call her Mother of Hnoss, or Wife of Ódr, as standeth below:

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The shield, tempest's strong roof-ice,  
With tear-gold is unminished,  
Eye-rain of Ódr's Bed-Mate:  
His age the King so useth.

**And again thus:**

Hörn's Child, the glorious adornment,  
I own, gold-wound--a jewel  
Most fair--to the shield's rim  
Fast is the golden Sea-Flame:  
On the gem, Freyr's Niece, the tear-drift  
Of the fore-head of her Mother  
She bears; the Raven-Feeder

Gave me Fródi's seed-gold's fostering. It is also recorded here that one may periphrase Freyja by calling her Sister of Freyr.

**And thus also:**

A defence of songs full goodly  
He freely gave me, neighbor  
Of sea-scales: I praise gladly  
Njördr's Daughter's golden gem-child.  
Here she is called Daughter of Njördr.

**And again thus:**

The awesome Stately Urger  
Of Odin, he who raises  
The struggle stern, gave to me

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The courage-stalwart daughter  
Of the Vana-Bride, my fair axe;  
The valorous sword-mote's Ruler  
Led Gefn's girl to the Skald's bed,  
Set with the sea-flame's gold-work.

Here she is called Gefn and Bride of the Vanir.--It is proper to join 'tears' with all the names of Freyja, and to call gold by such terms; and in divers ways these periphrases have been varied, so that gold is called Hail, or Rain, or Snow-Storm, or Drops, or Showers, or Water falls, of Freyja's Eyes, or Cheeks, or Brows, or Eyelids.

# Gold called the speech of giants

## (Chapter 45)

In this place one may hear that gold is called Word, or Voice, of Giants, as we have said before; thus sang Bragi the Skald:

Then had I the third friend  
Fairly praised: the poorest  
In the Voice of the Botched-Knob's Áli,  
But best of all to me.

He called a rock Botched Knob, and a giant Áli of Rock, and gold Voice of the Giant.

## Poetic Edda Reading: “The Tragic Capture and Escape of Völund the Smith.

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# Völundarkviða

## Verses 31 - 43

31. Laughing Völund | rose aloft, Weeping Bothvild | went from the isle, For her lover's flight | and her father's wrath.

32. Without stood the wife | of Nithuth wise, And in she came | from the end of the hall; But he by the wall | in weariness sat: "Wakest thou, Nithuth, | lord of the Njars?"

### **Nithuth spake:**

33. "Always I wake, | and ever joyless, Little I sleep | since my sons were slain; Cold is my head, | cold was thy counsel, One thing, with Völund | to speak, I wish.

34. "Answer me, Völund, | greatest of elves, What happened with my boys | that hale once were?"

### **Völund spake:**

35. "First shalt thou all | the oaths now swear, By the rail of ship, | and the rim of shield, By the shoulder of steed, | and the edge of sword, That to Völund's wife | thou wilt work no ill, Nor yet my bride | to her death wilt bring, Though a wife I should have | that well thou knowest, And a child I should have | within thy hall.

36. "Seek the smithy | that thou didst set, Thou shalt find the bellows | sprinkled with blood; I smote off the heads | of both thy sons, And their feet 'neath the sooty | straps I hid.

37. "Their skulls, once hid | by their hair, I took, Set them in silver | and sent them to Nithuth; Gems full fair | from their eyes I fashioned, To Nithuth's wife | so wise I gave them.

38. "And from the teeth | of the twain I wrought A brooch for the breast, | to Bothvild I gave it; Now big with child | does Bothvild go, The only daughter | ye two had ever."

### **Nithuth spake:**

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39. "Never spakest thou word | that worse could hurt me, Nor that made me, Völund, | more bitter for vengeance; There is no man so high | from thy horse to take thee, Or so doughty an archer | as down to shoot thee, While high in the clouds | thy course thou takest."

40. Laughing Völund | rose aloft, But left in sadness | Nithuth sat.

41. Then spake Nithuth, | lord of the Njars: "Rise up, Thakkrath, | best of my thralls, Bid Bothvild come, | the bright-browed maid, Bedecked so fair, | with her father to speak."

42. "Is it true, Bothvild, | that which was told me; Once in the isle | with Völund wert thou?"

**Bothvild spake:**

43. "True is it, Nithuth, | that which was told thee, Once in the isle | with Völund was I, An hour of lust, | alas it should be! Nought was my might | with such a man, Nor from his strength | could I save myself."