

DANCE OF RUNES

1

ASGARD

Shrouded in mist, Asgard, the seat of the gods, lies in the world tree Yggdrasil high above Midgard, under the protection of the world powers.

2

LOKE

Wothan, plagued by boredom and heavy with sweet mead, encountered Loke, who sensed an opportunity to set a trap for the Allfather.

Loke explained that Wothan had been cheated out of his ability to see into the future by the world powers. The secret of where the tools for seeing into the future were hidden was entrusted by the world powers only to the lindworms in Midgard.

3

DESCENT TO MIDGARD

Wothan—enraged, but also grateful for a task—set out for Midgard to find the lindworms, ready to face any danger with Gungner.

4

MIDGARD FOREST

The tree spirits in the Midgard Forest owed Loke a debt and followed his wish to stop the Allfather.

As Wothan crossed the forest, their branches whipped at him.

Subjected to fierce attacks, he began to run, wildly swinging his sword, his feet carrying him faster and faster.

5

DRAGONHOARD

Then a clearing opened before Wothan. As he entered it, three lindworms appeared in the Grail of Trees.

The lindworms, devoted to Wothan, promised to show him the sign given to them by the world powers, and so they placed their paws together.

The three merged into one.

Wothan understood and went to the Plain of the Three Springs.

6

THREEFOUNTAIN PLAIN

The roots of Yggdrasil were nourished by the three springs of the plain, which united within it to form the primordial river.

7

GIANT AT-ATTACK

Now Loke was filled with fear. If Wothan could soon turn his gaze to the future, his tricks would never succeed again. So he told the giants that the Allfather was on his way to Utgard, and they attacked Wothan.

A fierce battle ensued, but Wothan triumphed with Gunner and his sharp sword.

8

UTGARD RISING

Wothan, battered by the battle, collapsed and only regained his strength when the flaming red of dawn greeted the new day over Utgard.

9

WORLDASH YGGDRASIL

Yggdrasil, too, glowed in the red of the world powers; the ash tree

seemed to stretch ever higher,
and the Allfather felt the ancient power of the tree ever more.

10

FLOAT TO YGGDRASIL

Radiant as an almandine, Yggdrasil received Wothan into its light and gave birth to him again in its crown.

11

TWO REQUESTS

Wothan, rarely so close to the world powers, asked for the instrument of prophecy.

Twice he cried out into the ether, but his cries went unheard.

12

PIERCED BY GUNGNER

The Allfather realized that the world powers demanded a sacrifice before they would reveal the secret of prophecy.

... Then Wothan took Gungner, his spear that never misses its mark, and pierced his body,

to nail himself to Yggdrasil, consecrated to the world powers and to death.

13 - 14 - 15

NINE DAYS

For nine days and nine nights Wothan hung on Yggdrasil before the world powers heard him and

sent him back to the foot of the ash tree.

16

TWENTY-FOUR RUNES

Now branches of the world ash tree fell before Wothan, in which symbols were carved. When the

Father of the Gods saw them, he recognized the names of the runes.

The runes are what tell the god the future, and out of gratitude, the god gave them to humankind, but never to Loke.

END