

late hast thou let me know of this, as now all places and situations, the best of them at least, are already arranged for, and I deem it an undesirable thing to have to accept only the worst." Now Einarr took his horse and rode to Aðalból, where Hrafnkell sat in his chamber, and received him well and joyfully. Einarr applied for a situation with Hrafnkell, and he answered: "Why askest so late for this? otherwise I should have taken thee the first of all men. Now I have secured all my servants, except for that one business which, I fear, thou art not minded to undertake." Einarr asked what it was. Hrafnkell answered, he had got no one to take charge of his sheep, but said he was in great need of one. Einarr said he did not mind what work he did, whether this or any other; but said he would like to settle with him for cloth and board wages. "I'll make a short bargain with thee," said Hrafnkell. "Thy business shall be to watch fifteen ewes at the mountain dairy, and gather and carry home faggots for summer fuel. On these terms thou shalt take service with me for two 'half-years.' But a one thing I must give thee, as all my shepherds, to understand: 'Freymane' goes grazing in the valley with his band of mares; thou shalt take care of him winter and summer; but I warn thee of one thing, namely, that thou never be on his back on any condition whatever, for I am bound by a mighty vow to slay the man that ever should have a ride on him. There are twelve mares with him; whichever one of these thou mayest want, night or day, is at your service. Do now as I tell thee, and mind the old saw: 'No blame is borne by those who warn.' Now thou knowest what I have said." Einarr said he trusted he was under no such luckless spell as to ride on a horse which was forbidden, least of all when there were other horses at his disposal.

Now Einarr goes home for his clothes, and betakes himself to Aðalból. Thereupon they brought the milking-stock to the mountain-dairy up in Hrafnkelsdalr, which was set up at a place called Grjótteigssel. During the summer all went in a fair way with Einarr, so that never a ewe was missing up to mid-summer; but then, one night, it came to pass that nearly thirty of them had strayed away. Einarr went all over the sheep-walks, searching without finding any, and for nearly a week the sheep were missing. One morning Einarr rose early, and, coming out, found that all the fog from the south and the drizzle had lifted. And so he takes into his hand a staff and a bridle, and a riding-rug. Then he went on, passing Grjótteigsá, which ran above the dairy. On the shingly flats by the river were lying about all the sheep that had been home in the evening before. These he drove home towards the dairy, and then went in search of those that were wanting. He now saw the stud-horses further afield on the flats, and was minded to secure one of them to ride on, knowing that he would cover ground more quickly by riding than by walking: and when he came to the horses, he had to run about after them, they being now shy, though never before they used to run away from any one—except "Freymane" alone. He was as quiet as if stuck buried in the ground. Einarr,