

his band, and charged forty of them to accompany him. Sámur, likewise, had forty men in his following, and the whole band was well fitted out, both as to weapons and horses. So they rode all along the same way until they came into Jökuldalur one night, as the fire of dawn was first lighting. They passed over the bridge on the river in the very morning when the act of distress was to be executed. Then asked Thorgeirr how they could best come there unawares; for this Sámur said he had a good advice. And out of the road he turned and up to the mountain side, and so along the neck, between Hrafnkelsdalur and Jökuldalur, until they came to the outer spur of the mountain, beneath which stood the homestead of Aðalból. There some grassy deans stretched up into the heath and a steep slope stretched down into the valley, underneath which was the farmstead. Then Sámur got off his horse and said: "Let our horses be loose and be guarded by twenty men, while we, sixty together, rush upon the stead, where, I guess, few people will be upon their feet as yet." Now they did so, and there the deans are called horse-deans unto this day. They were swiftly upon the farm. The time for rising was past, and yet the people had not got up. They broke the door open by a beam and rushed in. Hrafnkell lay in his bed, and him, together with all his housecarls, those who were able to bear weapons, they made prisoners; but women and children they drove all into one chamber. On the lawn there stood a storehouse, between which and the hall there was laid a beam for drying clothes on; unto this storehouse they brought Hrafnkell and his men. He made many offers for himself and his people; but when that was not heeded, he asked the life of his men to be spared, "for they have done nothing to offend you; but it is no shame to me to be killed; and from that I beg not to be excused; only ill-treatment I pray to be spared, for that is no honour to you." Thorkell said: "We have heard, that hitherto thou hast not let thyself be easily led by thy enemies, and it is now well that thou shouldst take a lesson for it to-day." Then they took Hrafnkell and his men, and tied their hands behind their back; whereupon they broke up the storehouse, and took down from pegs some ropes hanging therein; and next they took out their knives, making slits through their hough sinews, drawing therethrough the ropes which then they slung over the aforementioned beam, and there tied them up, eight together. Then said Thorgeirr: "Now thou hast been brought to such a plight, Hrafnkell, as thou deservest, unlikely as thou wouldst have deemed it, that thou shouldst ever have received such a shame at any man's hands as now has come to pass. Now which wilt thou do, Thorkell, sit here beside Hrafnkell and watch them, or go outside the farmstead with Sámur within the distance of an arrow shot, and there execute the act of distress on some stony knoll where there be neither field nor meadow." (This was to be done at the time when the sun was in due south.) Thorkell answered: "I will sit there beside Hrafnkell, and thus have less to do." Then Thorgeirr and Sámur executed the act of distress. Now after this they walked home and