

HERVA*,
AT THE TOMB OF
ARGANTYR.

^
RUNIC DIALOGUE.

HERVA.

ARGANTYR, wake!—to thee I call,
Hear from thy dark sepulchral hall !
'Mid the Forest's inmost gloom,
Thy Daughter, circling thrice thy tomb,

Hervor. “ Awake, Argantyr!—Hervor, the Daughter of thee and Sauferlama,
“ doth awaken thee! Give me out of the tomb the hardened sword which the
“ Dwarfs made for Sauferlama.”

* Doct^r Hicks' literal prose Translation in his *Thesaurus Septentrionalis*, of this ancient Norse Poem, is here given to gratify the reader's curiosity; also to show that it is used only as an outline, and that the following Poem is a bold Paraphrase, not a Translation. The expressions in Dr. Hicks' prose, have a vulgar familiarity, injurious to the sublimity of the original conception. A close translation, in English verse, will be found in a valuable collection of Runic Odes, by the ingenious and learned Mr. Mathias. After his example, some slight changes have been made in the names, for their better accommodation to the verse.

With mystic rites of thrilling power
 Disturbs thee at this midnight hour !
 I, thy Sauferlama's child,
 Of my filial right beguil'd,
 Now adjure thee to resign
 The CHARMED SWORD, by birth-right mine !
 When the Dwarf, on Eyvor's plain,
 Dim glided by thy marriage-train,
 In jewel'd belt of gorgeous pride,
 To thy pale and trembling Bride,
 Gave he not, in whisper deep,
 That dread companion of thy sleep ?—
 Fall'n before its edge thy foes,
 Idly does it now repose
 In the dark tomb with thee ?—awake !
 Spells thy fullen slumber break !
 Now their stern command fulfill !—
 Warrior, art thou silent still ?—
 Or are my gross senses found
 Deaf to the low sepulchral found ?—

HERVARDOR,—HIARVARDOR,—hear!
 HRANI, mid thy slumber drear!
 Spirits of a dauntless Race,
 In armor clad, your tombs I trace.
 Now, with sharp and blood-stain'd spear,
 Accent shrill, and spell severe,
 I wake you all from slumber mute,
 Beneath the dark Oak's twisted root!—
 Are Andgrym's hated Sons no more
 That sleep the SWORD, that drank their gore?—
 Living,—why, to MAGIC RHYME,
 Speaks no voice of former time,
 Low as o'er your tombs I bend
 To hear th' expected sounds ascend,
 Murmuring from your darksome hall,
 At a Virgin's solemn call?—

“ Hervardur, Hiarvardur, Hrani,—with helmet and coat of mail, and a sharp sword,
 “ with shield and accoutrements, and a bloody spear, I awaken you all under
 “ the roots of Trees.

“ Are the Sons of Andgrym, who delighted in mischief, now become dust and
 “ ashes?—Can none of Eyvor's Sons speak to me out of the habitations of
 “ the dead?”—

HERVARDOR,—HIARVARDOR,—hear !
HRANI,—mark my spell severe !
Henceforth may the semblance* cold,
That did each Warrior's spirit hold,
Parch, as Corse unblest, that lies
Withering in the sultry skies !—
Ghastly may your forms decay,
Hence the noisome reptile's prey,
If ye force not, thus adjur'd,
My Sire to yield the CHARMED SWORD !

“ Hervardur, Hiarvardur, Hrani!—so may you all be within your ribs, as a thing
“ that is hanged up to putrify among insects, unless you cause Argantyr to
“ deliver up to me the *sword* which the Dwarfs made, and the glorious belt!”

* According to the Gothic Mythology, the spirits of Heroes slept in their bodies, which did not decay. Putrefaction, therefore, was the heaviest curse that could be denounced.

“ Never shall Enquirer come
“ To break my iron-sleep again,
“ Till Lok has burst his ten-fold chain.”

GRAY'S Descent of Odin, from the
Noise Poetry.

ARGANTYR.

Arm'd amid this starless gloom,
 Thou, whose steps adventurous roam;
 Thou, that wav'ft a magic fpear
 Thrice before our mansions drear,
 Devoted Virgin,—know in time
 The mischiefs of the Runic RHYME,
 Forcing accents, mutter'd deep,
 From the cold reluctant lip!
 Me no tender Father laid
 Entomb'd beneath an hallow'd fhade;
 It was no friendly voice that gave
 The Oak, that fcreen'd a Warrior's grave,
 Gave it, in malignant tone,
 To the blasting thunderstone.—
 Timelefs now thefe bones decay,
 Pervious to the baleful ray

“ *Argantyr.* Daughter Hervor, full of fpells to raife the dead, why doft thou
 “ call fo?—wilt thou run on to thine own mischief?—Thou art mad, and out
 “ of thy fenfes, who art desperately refolved to awaken dead men!”—

“ I was not buried either by Father or other Friends—Two which lived after me,
 “ got *Turfing*, one of whom is now poffeffor thereof.”

Of the fwart star.—'Mid Battle's yell
 The charm'd, the fatal Weapon fell
 From my unwary grasp.—A Knight
 Seiz'd the SWORD of magic might.
 Virgin, of thy spells demand
 His name,—and from his victor hand,
 Try if thy intrepid zeal
 May win the all-subduing Steel.

HERVA.

Warrior,—thus, with falsehood wild,
 Seek'ft thou to deceive thy child?—
 Sure as Odin doom'd thy fall,
 And hides thee in this filent hall,
 Here sleeps the SWORD.—Pale Chief, resign
 That, which is by birthright mine!
 Fear'ft thou, Spirit of my Sire,
 At thy only Child's desire,
 Glorious heritage to yield,
 Conquest in the deathful field?

“ *Hervor*. Thou dost not tell the truth—so let Odin hide thee in the tomb, as
 “ thou hast got *Turfing* by thee. Art thou unwilling, *Argantyr*, to give an
 “ inheritance to thy only child?”—

ARGANTYR.

Daring HERVA, listen yet,
 Spare thy heart its long regret!
 Why trembling shrank thy Mother's frame
 When the FATAL PRESENT came?
 Virgin, mark the boding word,
 Sullen whisper'd o'er the SWORD!
 It prophecied Argantyr's Foes
 Shou'd rue its prowess;—yet that woes
 Greater far his RACE shou'd feel,
 Victims of the CRUEL STEEL,
 When, in blood of millions dyed,
 It arms an ireful Fratricide.
 MAID, no erring accents warn;—
 Of Sons to thee, hereafter born,
 One thy Chiefs shall HYDRECK name,
 Dark spirited!—but dear to fame
 Shall blooming HIARALMO live.—
 Maid, his doom thy mandates give!

“ *Argantyr.* I will tell thee, Hervor, what is to come to pass.—This *Turfing*
 “ will, if thou dost believe me, destroy almost all thy offspring.—Thou shalt
 “ have a Son, and many think that he will be called *Hydrec* by the People.”

Renounce, renounce the dire demand,
Or to thy Sons, in HYDRECK'S hand,
Fatal proves, some future day,
The CHARMED SWORD.—Disturb it not!—away!

HERVA.

ARGANTYR,—hear thy Daughter's voice,
Spells decree an only choice!
Or, in perturbed tomb unblest,
The silence of sepulchral rest
Shall no more thy sunk eye steep,
Close no more thy pallid lip,
Or, ere this night's shadows melt,
Mine the SWORD, and gorgeous belt.

ARGANTYR.

Young Maid,—who as of warrior might,
Roamest thus to tombs by night,
In coat of mail, with voice austere,
Waving the Corse-awakening SPEAR
O'er thy dead Ancestors;—offence,
And danger threaten!—hie thee hence!

“ *Hervor*. I do, by Enchantments, make that the Dead shall never know peace, or
“ rest, unless thou deliver up to me *Turfing*.”

“ *Argantyr*. Young Maid, I say thou art of manlike courage, who dost roam
“ about by night to tombs, with spear engraven by magical spells, with hel-
“ met and coat of mail, before the door of our Hall.”

HERVA.

Obey, obey, or sleep no more !
 Now my sacred right restore !
 The SWORD, that joys when Foes assail,
 Sword, that scorns the ribbed mail,
 Scorns the car, in swift career,
 Scorns the helmet, scorns the spear ;
 Scorns the nerv'd experienc'd arm ;
 ARGANTYR, yield it to my charm !
 'Tis not well the Victor's pride,
 With thee in silent tombs to hide ;
 Thy Child, thy only Child, demands,—
 Reach it with thy wither'd hands !

ARGANTYR.

The death of HIALALMO lies
 Beneath this mouldering arm!—and rise
 Round its edge, the lurid fires,
 Hostile to unaw'd desires.
 Hie thee hence, nor madly dare
 The death-denouncing grasp;—beware !

“ *Herva.* I took thee for a brave man before I found out your halls. Give me
 “ out of the tomb the workmanship of the *Dwarfs*, which hates all coats of
 “ mail.—It is not good for thee to hide it.”

“ *Argantyr.* The death of *Hialmor* lies beneath my shoulders.—It is all wrapt
 “ up in fire. I know no Maid of any Country that dares take this *Sword* in
 “ hand.”

HERVA.

Not if thousand fires invade
Streaming from its angry blade.
Innoxious are the fires that play
Round the Corse, with meteor ray,
And in these waste hours of night
Silent death-halls dimly light ;
Yet, gliding with consuming force,
Undaunted wou'd I meet their course.

ARGANTYR.

Thou, whose awless voice proclaims
Scorn of the sepulchral flames,
Left their force around thee swell,
Punishing thy daring spell,
And thy mortal form consume,
HERVA, see!—thy Father's tomb

“ *Hervor*. I shall take and keep it in my hand, if I may obtain it.—I do not
“ think the fires will burn that play about the sight of deceased men.”

“ *Argantyr*. O, conceited *Hervor*, thou art mad! Rather than thou shouldst
“ in an instant fall into the fire, I will give thee the *Sword*, O, young Maid,
“ and not hide it from thee.”

Opens!—mark, to thee restor'd,
 Rising slow, the baneful SWORD!—
 See, it meets thy rash desire
 *Bickering with funereal fire!

HERVA.

Warrior, now dost thou reclaim
 The lustre of thy former fame;
 Lo, the SWORD, a seeming brand,
 Blazes in thy Daughter's hand!
 Nor perishes that hand beneath
 Vaporous flames, that round it wreath,
 Gleam along the midnight air,
 Illume the forest wide,—and glare
 On the scath'd Oak!—Sepulchral wood,
 Thee I quit for fields of blood!
 Nor would I, on its fateful range,
 This SWORD, with all its meteors, change
 For the Norweyan sceptre.—Lo,
 Death, and conquest, wait me now!—

“ *Herva.* Thou dost well, Offspring of Heroes, that thou dost give me the
 “ *Sword* out of the Tomb.—I am now better pleased, O Prince, to have it,
 “ than if I had got all Norway.”

* “ And from about him fierce effusion roll'd
 “ Of smoke, and *bickering flame*, and sparkles dire.”

MILTON'S Par. Lost. B. vi. line 765.

ARGANTYR.

HIARALMO's future bane,
Grasp'd with exultation vain,
Fatal, fatal shall be found
To thee, and thine, in cureless wound !
By that wound 'tis now decreed
HYDREK's self at length shall bleed !
Herva, less thy long regret
Had thy Chiefs in combat met
Andgrym's sons, with warlike zeal,
Met them in *uncharmed* steel.

HERVA.

Sleep, Argantyr,—Chief of might,
Thro' the long, the dreary night ;
Nor let strife, and bitter scorn,
'Mid Herva's offspring, yet unborn,

“ *Argantyr.* False Woman!—thou dost not understand that thou speakest
“ foolishly of that in which thou dost rejoice.—*Turfing* shall, if thou wilt be-
“ lieve me, destroy all thy offspring.”

“ *Hervor.* I must go to my Seamen,—here I have no mind to stay any longer.—
“ Little do I care, O royal Friend, what my Sons hereafter quarrel about.”

Disturb thee in the tomb!—and mark,
 The **SPEAR**, that broke thy slumber dark,
 Round the blasted Oak I wave,
 That ill protects a Warrior's grave!
 Soon shall its scath'd trunk be seen
 Cloth'd in shielding bark, and green
 As before the vengeful time,
 When, by force of baleful **RHYME**,
 It thrunk amid the forest's groan,
 Smote by the red thunderstone.
 Thro' the renovated boughs,
 Guardians of thy deep repose,
 Shall the hail no longer pour,
 The livid Dog-star look no more!
 Spirits of the elder Dead,
 Spell-awak'd from slumber dread,
 Not to your spears, in martial pride,
 Resting by each Hero's side,
 Not to your gore-spotted mail,
 Steely shroud of Warrior pale,
 Shall, thro' thousand Winters, drain
 Driving snow, or drenching rain;
 Nor, while countless Summers beam
 On arid plain, or shrinking stream,

Thro' the widening chink be known
Reptile vile of fultry Noon,
To wind the flimy track abhorr'd!—
Fate is mine, since mine the SWORD!

ARGANTYR.

Herva, thine the source of woes,
Direful long to all thy foes,
Ere against thy peace it turn,
And thou thy bleeding Race shalt mourn.
When extinct the tomb's blue fires,
Whose light now gleams, and now retires,
Quivering o'er its edge, forbear
To touch the VENOM'D BLADE ;—beware !
Venom, for the blood prepar'd
Of twelve brave Chiefs, their dread reward.

“ *Argantyr.* Take and keep Hialmor's bane, which thou shalt long have and
“ enjoy.—Touch not the edges, there is poison on both of them!—It is a
“ most cruel Devourer of Men!”

“ Farewell Daughter.—I do quickly give thee the twelve men's deaths, if thou
“ canst believe with might and courage,—and all the goods that Andgrym's
“ Sons have left behind them.”

Herva, now thy Father's tomb
Slowly closes!—Ne'er presume
Again to breathe, in Odin's hall,
Shrill, the Corse-disturbing call!

HERVA.

I go,—for these blue fires infest
The troubled tomb's presumptuous Guest;
As of step profane aware,
Round me, more and more, they glare.—
Hervardor, Hiarvardor,—keep
Lasting slumber!—Hrani sleep!
And sleep ARGANTYR!—Chiefs of might,
Quiet be your mornless night!

“ *Hervor.* Dwell, all of you safe in the Tombs! I must be gone and hasten
hence, for I seem to be in a place where fire burns about me.”