

A JOURNEY IN PICTURES THROUGH

GRIM GRUESOME
VIKING VILLAIN

THE CURSED SWORD

See:

- The pigsty where Bjarni works as the story opens
- The forest road where he saves Astrid from a robber
- Astrid's house - outside and inside
- The ship that Astrid hides on
- The fjord and mountain path leading to Grim Gruesome's lair

*Photographs taken at Lofotr Viking Museum, Trollfjord and other locations in the Lofoten Islands, Norway.
Sheepskins on wall-bench from Stöng Viking farmhouse reconstruction, Thjorsardalur, Iceland.*

The pigsty where Bjarni works as the story opens

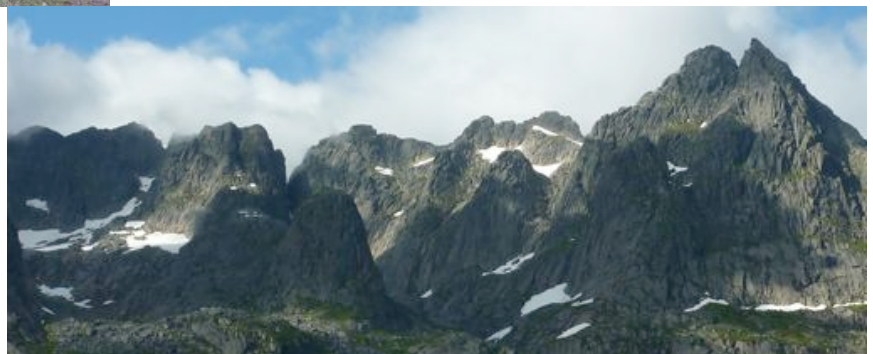
“Bjarni wasn’t much older than you, but he had to work hard all day long, every day. He was a servant on a big farm. He looked after a herd of pigs for a rich, bossy farmer called Thorgill.”



The forest road where Bjarni saves Astrid from a robber



“This road was like all roads in the kingdom: it was just a dry, beaten mud track. On one side of it there were green fields full of corn and cows. But on the other side there was thick forest. This forest stretched away to the towering peaks of distant mountains shrouded in swirling mist.’



The house where Astrid lives with her father, Thorgill

“Farmer Thorgill’s hall was very grand and luxurious.”



“The wooden walls were carved with twirling, interlaced lines and patterns.”

“The wall-benches were covered with soft sheepskins.”



“Astrid’s chest of clothes and jewellery was kept in a corner of the room, behind the door.”

The ship that Astrid hides on



“The sailors were all busy loading and unloading trading goods.

‘Where are you going?’ she called out to them.

‘We’re off to Denmark,’ one crew told her.

‘Just along the coast,’ said some others.

‘England.’

‘West-over-sea, right across to Iceland for the last trip before the winter.’

‘Out past the islands to catch whales.’

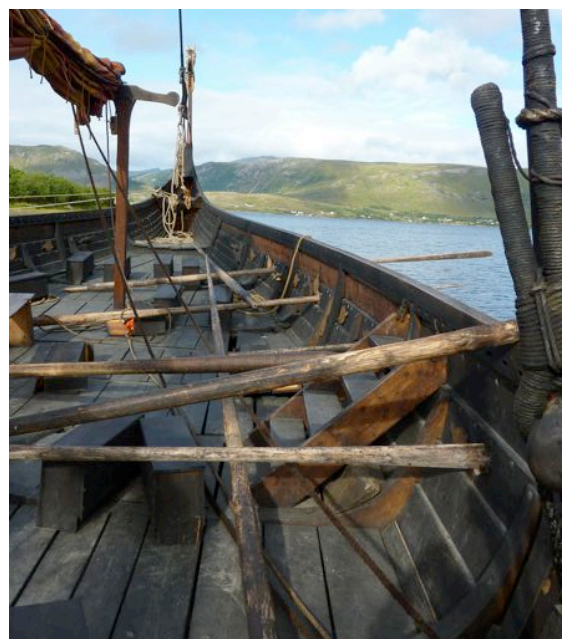
‘Orkney.’

‘Round to Sweden.’

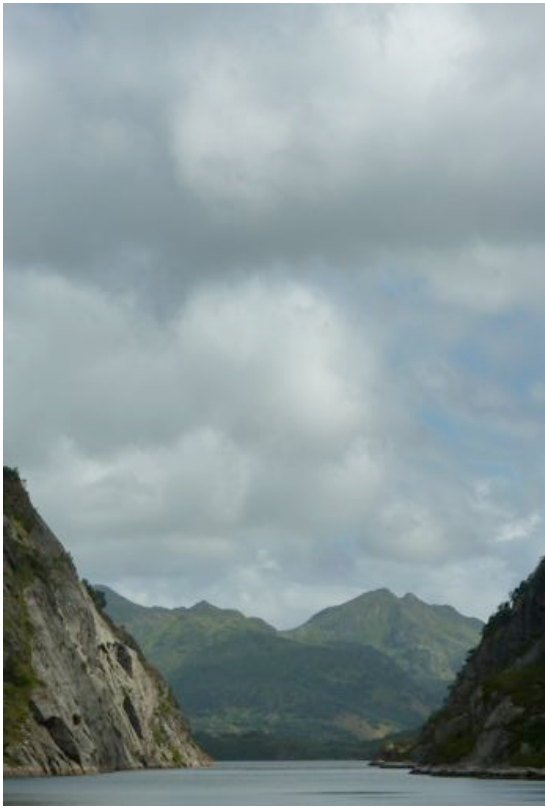
And then at last, ‘Up north to Lapland.’ ”



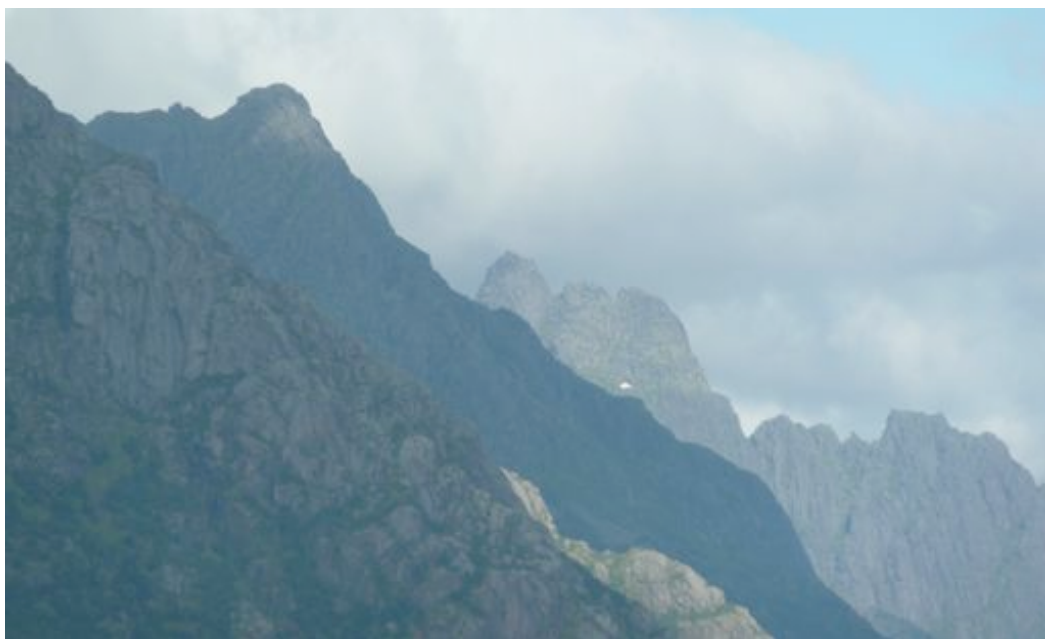
“She swung a leg over and tumbled down onto the deck. She had never been on board any kind of ship before. She was surprised at how shallow it was. Standing on the deck, the sides only came up to her waist. It would be easy to fall overboard and drown.”



The fjord leading to Grim Gruesome's lair...



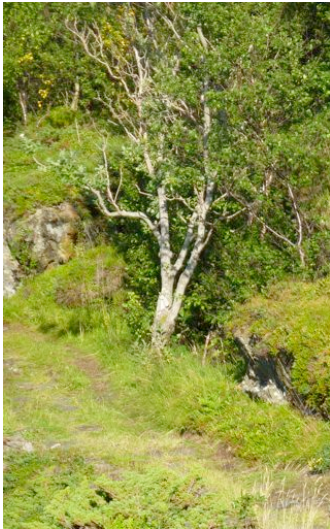
“Bjarni followed the ferryman’s directions. He turned right at the second side-fjord that he came to. Halfway along this, he turned left into Needle Fjord. At once the sun disappeared. The fjord was as narrow and sharp as its name. Sheer cliffs towered on either side. Beyond them, snow-capped mountains rose into dark, swirling storm-clouds. The cliffs were bare and crusty, dotted with heaps of loose stones and stunted, half-dead trees. The water was completely still, black and bottomless. There were no other boats here. There were no birds. The *swish-swish* of Bjarni’s oars echoed between the silent cliffs.



...And the mountain path he follows to complete his journey



“At the very top there was just enough room to row into an old landing stage by some rocks. He threw the mooring rope round a wooden post.”



“Bjarni clambered up to where the forest started. A small gap in the trees showed a winding, overgrown path. The rain had stopped as suddenly as it had begun, but the trees were dripping. Bjarni took up the sack of treasure and drew out his sword. He started up the path, using the sword to slice through stray creepers and brambles. It was so steep, he had to keep throwing the sack ahead so that he could use his hands to haul himself up. He climbed over huge boulders. He almost lost his footing on a long stretch of unmelted ice. He leaped over enormous fallen tree trunks.”

