Loki and Sigyn

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Abstract
Loki and Sigyn discusses love, pain, and dependency in the Norse myth of Loki's Binding.

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**Loki and Sigyn**

“He was bound with the bowels of his son Vali, but his son Narfi was changed to a wolf. Skathi took a poison-snake and fastened it up over Loki’s face, and the poison dropped thereon. Sigyn, Loki’s wife, sat there and held a shell under the poison, but when the shell was full she bore away the poison, and meanwhile the poison dropped on Loki. Then he struggled so hard that the whole earth shook therewith; and now that is called an earthquake.” – *Poetic Edda*

Sigyn, will you sit here awhile with me, while I
Lay, bound to a boulder by frigid black fetters,
Wounded beneath the world? This dark cavern, crawling
Under the earth like a serpent, envelops us
In its dark womb. Worry not, Sigyn, though the snake
Drips poison, powerful venom to wrack me; wroth
Were the gods who gave this sentence to me, Sigyn.

You did not ask for this; the burden mine to bear,
This anguish like an ague that saw me splintering,
Quivering and quaking against the bonds, buried
By sorrow. Sigyn, you descended with me, down
To this abyss, laid by me, stroked my hair, whispered
To me in the dark: “Dear are you to me, my heart;
Even in the black vault beneath the world I will
Stay, standing beside you.” With your bowl, you bought me Relief from the rain of gall; the gods could not know
You would shield me: sugar to the bitter bile I swallow. I sweat beneath the serpent’s dribbling fang.

Do not leave me, my love. I am hoarse with howling,
Each moment torment when you empty your bowl, full
Of venom meant for me. I chafe against the chains,
Writhing, wracked and weeping, my own mind against me
Like a black serpent, coiled and dripping corrosion;
Sigyn, the seconds you turn aside and toss your
Cup of toxins, trembling to hear my teeth clenching,
Are interminable. Beneath the world, we are
Both burdened: me by bile, my Sigyn, then, by me.