

*Voices from Haakon's bodyguard (who are pressing forward). To arms! Down with the king's enemies!*

*Skule (calling to his own men). Kill no one! Harm no one! Only keep them at a distance.*

*Haakon (restraining his men). Put up your swords, every one of you! Put up your swords, I say! (Calmly.) You make things tenfold worse for me by such behaviour.*

*Skule. It is thus that every man in the land stands, with his sword drawn against his neighbour. You see it for yourself, Haakon; and it seems to me to reveal clearly what is your duty, if your country's peace and your fellow-countrymen's lives are indeed dear to you.*

*Haakon (after a moment's thought). Yes—I see that. (He takes INGA by the hand and turns to one of the men that are standing around him.) Torkell, you were a man my father trusted to the full; take this woman, give her shelter by your hearth, and be good to her. Haakon the son of Sverre loved her dearly. God bless you, my mother!—I must away to the Council. (INGA clasps hands with him and then goes with TORKELL. HAAKON is silent for a while, then strides forward and says in clear tones:) The law shall decide, and the law alone. You Birchlegs, who were with me at the Örething and chose me for your king, now are you released from the oath you swore to me then. You, Dagfinn, are no longer my marshal; I will go attended by neither marshal nor body-guard, neither men-at-arms nor sworn henchmen. I am a poor man; my sole inheritance is a brooch and this gold armlet—a scanty store out of which to repay so many good men's services. Now, fellow-claimants for the throne, there is no difference between us! I shall have the advantage of you in nothing, except the right which I have from above—that I neither can nor will share with any man! Sound the summons for the Council, and may God and our sainted King Olaf's law decide between us!*

*(He goes out with his men to the left. The sound of horns is heard in the distance.)*

*Gregorius Jonsson (to SKULE, as crowd begins to disperse). During the Ordeal of the Iron I thought you*