

*Ivar Bodde* (gripping HAAKON by the arm.) Pray to the Lord your God, Haakon.

*Haakon.* There is no need. I am sure of Him. (*The sound of chanting grows louder from within the church. All bare their heads; many fall on their knees and pray.*)

*Gregorius Jonsson* (to SKULE). This is a fateful hour for you and for many.

*Skule* (looking anxiously towards the church). A fateful hour for Norway.

*Paul Flida* (standing beside SKULE). Now she is holding the Iron.

*Dagfinn* (beside HAAKON). They are coming down the nave.

*Ivar Bodde.* Christ protect thy innocent hands, Inga, mother of the King!

*Haakon.* All my days I will surely repay her for this hour.

*Skule* (who has been listening anxiously, exclaims suddenly): Did she scream? Did she let the Iron drop?

*Paul Flida* (going towards the church). I do not know what it was.

*Gregorius Jonsson.* The women are weeping loudly in the porch.

(*A triumphant chant from the choir breaks in upon their voices: Gloria in excelsis Deo! The doors of the church are thrown open; INGA comes out, followed by nuns, priests and monks.*)

*Inga* (standing on the steps of the church). God has judged! Behold these hands; in them I have held the Iron!

*Voices from the Crowd.* They are as pure and white as before!

*Other Voices.* And still fairer!

*The whole Crowd.* He is indeed the son of Haakon, who was Sverre's son!

*Haakon* (embracing INGA). Thanks, thanks, most blessed among women!

*Bishop Nicholas* (as he brushes past SKULE). It was a stupid thing to insist on the Ordeal of the Iron.