



Sleipnir's Winter Adventure

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The new fallen snow twinkles in the frosty winter light.

While Óðinn shovels the driveway, Sleipnir curls up in his reading nook. He is lost in a story. Suddenly, Óðinn bursts into the room.

“Everyone’s gone ice skating!” he says.

“You’re such a lively guy, Sleipnir, ‘ol buddy. Do you want to fly down to the skating pond with me?”



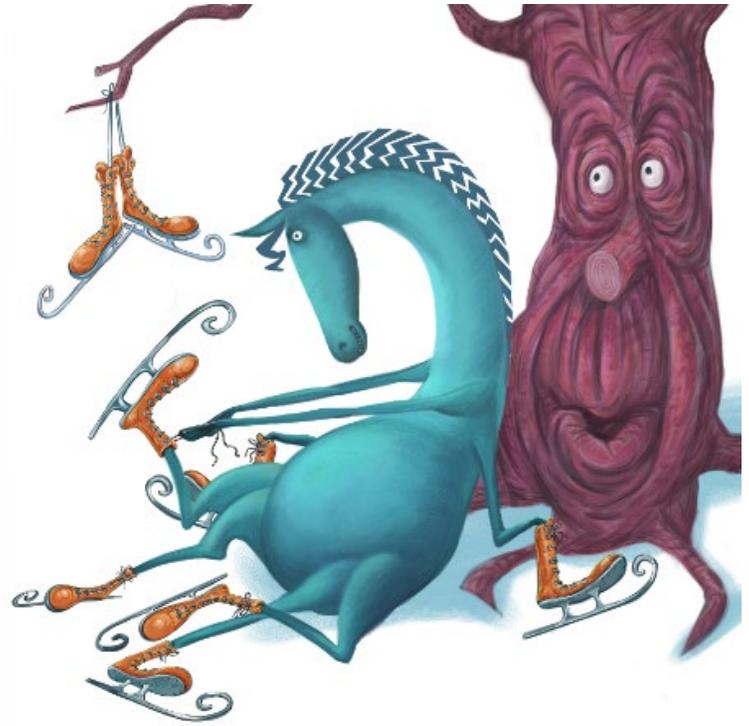
Sleipnir doesn't need to be asked twice: he puts down his book and races out.

It's great to have eight legs and be able to fly across the heavens. From high above the clouds, their house looks tiny and the pond like it's dotted with ants. Everyone and their dog is out on the ice.



Sleipnir has never dared to go ice skating. He's sure that he's going to fall and hurt himself.

His friend Yggdrasill isn't much for sports, either. "I would rather make sure no one gets hurt," he says. "Be careful, Óðinn! There's a big hole in the ice out there."

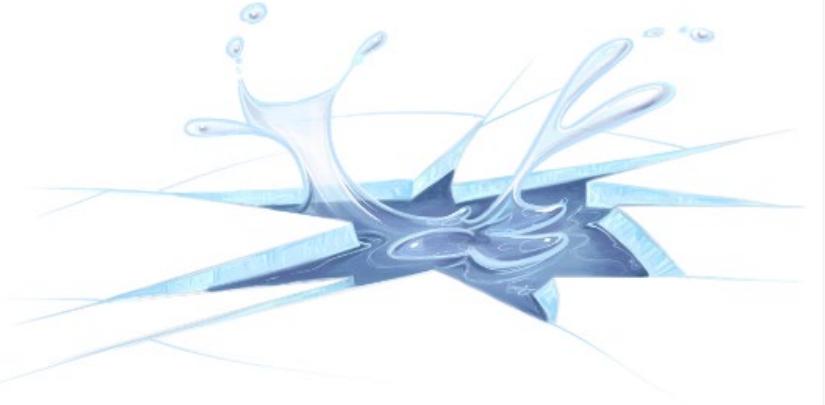


Óðinn dances around the pond. He skates in one circle after another, like a kitten chasing its tail
“Don’t you want to skate, too, Sleipnir? It’s a piece of cake!” he shouts.

“Why yes, maybe I will!” thinks Sleipnir. “I should try, since it seems so easy!”
Sleipnir borrows some skates—four pair for his eight feet.



Although no horse can rival Sleipnir on land or in the air, he's all left feet out on the pond. Crestfallen, he trundles back to the bank and lets his mane flop over his eyes so that no one will see how ashamed he is of his clumsiness.



“Look, Sleipnir! This is how it’s done!”

Óðinn speeds across the ice and doesn’t notice the huge hole gaping ominously in front of him!



Sleipnir's heart thrashes like a puppy in a sack as he watches Óðinn struggling in the ice-cold water. He whinnies frantically, and the sound echoes all over the world. If only someone would come to Óðinn's rescue! But instead, everyone rushes back to the bank posthaste. No one ventures over to the hole for fear they will end up in it themselves. There's only one thing to be done.



Sleipnir takes flight and glides over the ice to Óðinn.

“Help me, Sleipnir,” he cries in a quavering voice.

His strength has started to wane. It’s now or never. Sleipnir gently lands right next to his friend on the ice and tries to pretend that he doesn’t hear the ice crackling under his hooves.



Sleipnir gingerly stretches one of his back feet towards Óðinn, who grabs his hoof at once. But now what? Sleipnir doesn't dare move and there are more cracks in the ice every minute. He tries to take off, but he can't kick off the slippery surface of the pond. Then Yggdrasill extends one of his branches over to Sleipnir, who clenches his teeth around it. Finally, Yggdrasill pulls his friends onto dry land.



“Now that was some adventure we got ourselves into,” says Óðinn later that day as he and Sleipnir sit together under warm blankets in the reading nook. Sleipnir looks up from his book and nods. He’d already gotten lost in his imagination and was completely oblivious to everything around him. He prefers his adventures in books. Óðinn understands what he’s thinking and smiles broadly.

“Let’s keep reading,” he says. “You can’t catch cold in your imagination.” Then he lets out a mighty sneeze.

Sleipnir originates in Norse mythology. He is the eight-legged, winged steed of Óðinn, the most supreme Norse god of them all. Able to travel anywhere in the world and between worlds, Sleipnir is a particularly good symbol for everything that fiction has to offer us. Sleipnir invites you to let your imagination take flight in the world of books, adventures and stories.

This book was published by the Reykjavík UNESCO City of Literature under the banner of “Sleipnir – Your Reading Buddy.”

Sharing the joy of reading is Sleipnir’s first priority—his motto “Let your imagination take flight” encourages us to keep reading. You can read more on Sleipnir at our website bokmenntaborgin.is

By reading, we expand our world, we go on flights of imagination, and get to know different cultures, times, feelings, and stories while also gaining the knowledge and information that we need to live and be active participants in our society.

Possible topics for discussion after reading the story:

- Friendship
- Cooperation
- Anxiety/Fear
- Helping one another
 - Winter
- Sleipnir’s Origin Story
- Norse Mythology