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these collections of stories the sagas and poems which are the eddas have been handed down from generation to generation going back hundreds of years many of the sagas tell the tales of mythical heroes most of whom have interactions with the divine while out on their adventures brace yourself for an epic journey into the realms of ancient legends and sagas where gods heroes and monsters collide in tales that will set your imagination ablaze saga of king olaf longfellow thor s hammer was considered so very sacred by the 62 ancient northern people that they were wont to make the sign of the hammer as the christians later taught them to make the sign of the cross to ward off all evil influences and to secure blessings norse sagas are similar to epic but usually refer to works compiled during medieval iceland saga is usually a narrative either in poems or prose dealing with historical legendary and mythical subjects written in old norse during the 13th 14th century the sagas are crucial for understanding the viking worldview they offer insights into the social structure legal systems and daily life of medieval scandinavians moreover they preserve the history and legends of the norse people serving as both historical documents and literary masterpieces of these three most concern the viking enthusiast the heroic legendary sagas fornaldarsögur the historic kings sagas konungasögur and the sagas of the icelanders or family sagas Íslendingasögur the legendary sagas are stories of gods and heroes set in the distant murky past the legendary sagas are those which take either the fictional realms of viking mythology or the distant scandinavian past as their setting they frequently feature tropes of a heroic struggle and they appear to have been heavily influenced by french romantic literature using the distinctive features of the hero as principal guideline medieval icelandic narrative fiction can be classified as 1 kings sagas 2 legendary sagas and 3 sagas of icelanders the origin and evolution of saga writing in iceland are largely matters for speculation the sagas a rich collection of traditional scandinavian stories were written down in iceland between the late 1100s and the 1300s they can be divided into several categories lives of icelandic kings and bishops family histories romances and sagas of ancient times from their roots describing the foundational myths and legends during the migration period to the later descriptions of medieval scandinavian kings and saints the sagas like the societies in which they were written evolved over time their books included the prose edda and the poetic edda which today form the basis of much of what we know about ancient norse myths and legends and numerous sagas which are supposedly based on true stories of real viking age people these are stories written in the old norse language that recount early viking voyages battles and feuds between prominent families as well as myths and legends the most famous of these legendary sagas is the saga of the völsungs brace yourself for an epic journey into the realms of ancient legends and sagas where gods heroes and monsters collide in tales that will set your imagination ablaze most of what we know about the viking age comes from these icelandic collections of poems tales sagas and stories all of this norse literature was written in the vernacular the language of iceland which was unusual for medieval times read the important myths from the mighty gods who dominated viking pagan worship like thor the giant slayer and the mysterious one eyed odin be shocked by the earth shaking treachery brace yourself for an epic journey into the realms of ancient legends and sagas where gods heroes and monsters collide in tales that will set your imagination ablaze in this volume a noted scholar of myth and folklore has assembled a rich collection of northern mythology as preserved in the eddas and sagas of iceland these are perhaps the purest versions of the original myths thanks to the island s remoteness and lack of contact with outside influences myths of the norsemen from the eddas and sagas a comprehensive overview of norse legend and mythology and a treasure trove of historical marvels tales of glory and death defeat and victory in myths and legends sages serve as guardians of special knowledge helpers or advisers to heroes and examples of wisdom virtue and goodness many mythical sages live in deep forests on mountaintops or in other places that are withdrawn from the world some are divine beings or demigods the myths and legends of the norsemen have entertained both old and young alike for hundreds of years this fascinating collection contains stories retold from the icelandic eddas the principal sources of knowledge of norse mythology and the sagas of the ancient world of the vikings

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