

## The Yule Lads Poem (from Iceland Monitor mbl.is)

Poet Jóhannes úr Kötlum wrote a poem about the Yule Lads in 1932, this poem is still very popular and recited in many homes and schools in December.

### Stekkjastaur - Sheep-Cote Clod

The first of them was Sheep-Cote Clod.  
He came stiff as wood,  
to prey upon the farmer's sheep  
as far as he could.  
He wished to suck the ewes,  
but it was no accident  
he couldn't; he had stiff knees  
- not to convenient.

### Giljagaur - Gully Gawk

The second was Gully Gawk,  
gray his head and mien.  
He snuck into the cow barn  
from his craggy ravine.  
Hiding in the stalls,  
he would steal the milk, while  
the milkmaid gave the cowherd  
a meaningful smile.

### Stúfur - Stubby

Stubby was the third called,  
a stunted little man,  
who watched for every chance  
to whisk off a pan.  
And scurrying away with it,  
he scraped off the bits  
that stuck to the bottom  
and brims - his favorites.

### Pvörusleikir - Spoon-Licker

The fourth was Spoon Licker;  
like spindle he was thin.  
He felt himself in clover  
when the cook wasn't in.  
Then stepping up, he grappled  
the stirring spoon with glee,

holding it with both hands  
for it was slippery.

#### Pottaskefill - Pot-Scraper

Pot Scraper, the fifth one,  
was a funny sort of chap.  
When kids were given scrapings,  
he'd come to the door and tap.  
And they would rush to see  
if there really was a guest.  
Then he hurried to the pot  
and had a scraping fest.

#### Askasleikir - Bowl-Licker

Bowl Licker, the sixth one,  
was shockingly ill bred.  
From underneath the bedsteads  
he stuck his ugly head.  
And when the bowls were left  
to be licked by dog or cat,  
he snatched them for himself  
- he was sure good at that!

#### Hurðaskellir - Door-Slammer

The seventh was Door Slammer,  
a sorry, vulgar chap:  
When people in the twilight  
would take a little nap,  
he was happy as a lark  
with the havoc he could wreak,  
slamming doors and hearing  
the hinges on them squeak.

#### Skyrgámur - Skyr-Gobbler

Skyr Gobbler, the eighth,  
was an awful stupid bloke.  
He lambasted the skyr tub  
till the lid on it broke.  
Then he stood there gobbling  
- his greed was well known -  
until, about to burst,  
he would bleat, howl and groan.

### Bjúgnakrækir - Sausage-Swiper

The ninth was Sausage Swiper,  
a shifty pilferer.  
He climbed up to the rafters  
and raided food from there.  
Sitting on a crossbeam  
in soot and in smoke,  
he fed himself on sausage  
fit for gentlefolk.

### Gluggagægir - Window-Peeper

The tenth was Window Peeper,  
a weird little twit,  
who stepped up to the window  
and stole a peek through it.  
And whatever was inside  
to which his eye was drawn,  
he most likely attempted  
to take later on.

### Gáttaþefur - Doorway Sniffer

Eleventh was Door Sniffer,  
a doltish lad and gross.  
He never got a cold, yet had  
a huge, sensitive nose.  
He caught the scent of lace bread  
while leagues away still  
and ran toward it weightless  
as wind over dale and hill.

### Ketkrókur - Meat-Hook

Meat Hook, the twelfth one,  
his talent would display  
as soon as he arrived  
on Saint Thorlak's Day.  
He snagged himself a morsel  
of meet of any sort,  
although his hook at times was  
a tiny bit short.

### Kertasníkir - Candle Beggar

The thirteenth was Candle Beggar  
- 'twas cold, I believe,  
if he was not the last  
of the lot on Christmas Eve.  
He trailed after the little ones  
who, like happy sprites,  
ran about the farm with  
their fine tallow lights.

Translation by Hallberg Hallmundsson