

2nd Grade --

How Thor and Loki Fooled Thrym the Giant

Once Loki and Thor ate in the home of Thrym, a cruel Giant who had cunning streaks in him. Thor had been unwatchful.

When they were far from the land of the Giants, Thor missed his hammer that was the defense of Asgard and the help of the Gods. He could not remember how or where he had mislaid it. Loki's thoughts went toward Thrym, that cruel and cunning Giant. Thor, who had lost the hammer that he had sworn never to let out of his sight, did not know what to do.

But Loki thought it would be worthwhile to see if Thrym knew anything about it. He went first to Asgard. He hurried across the Rainbow Bridge without speaking to anyone. He dared not tell the Dwellers in Asgard about Thor's loss. He spoke to none until he came to Freya's palace.

To Freya he said, "You must lend me your falcon dress until I fly to Thrym's dwelling and find out if he knows where Mjölfnir is." Mjölfnir was the name of Thor's hammer.

"If every feather was silver I would give it to you to go on such an important errand!" Freya said.

So Loki put on the falcon dress and flew to Jötunheim, the land of the giants, and came near Thrym's dwelling. He found the Giant upon a hillside putting golden and silver collars upon the necks of his hounds. Loki in the plumage (feathers) of a falcon perched on the rock above him, watching the Giant with his falcon eyes.

And while he was there he heard the Giant speak, boasting, "I put collars of silver and gold on you now, my hounds," said he, "but soon we Giants will have the gold of Asgard to deck our hounds and our horses, yes, even the necklace of Freya to put upon you, the best of my hounds. For Mjölfnir is mine."

Then Loki spoke to him from the tree. "Yes, we know that Mjölfnir is in your possession, O Thrym," said he, "but know that the eyes of the watchful Gods are upon thee."

"Ha, Loki, Shape-changer," said Thrym, "you are there! But all your watching will not help you to find Mjölfnir. I have buried Thor's hammer eight miles deep in the earth. Find it if you can. It is below the caves of the Dwarfs."

"It is useless for us to search for Thor's hammer," said Loki; "eh, Thrym?"

"It is useless for you to search for it," said the Giant.

"But I wonder what you would gain if you restored Thor's hammer back to him?" Loki said.

"No, cunning Loki, I will give it back, not for any price," said Thrym.

"Yet, think of it, Thrym," said Loki. "Is there nothing in Asgard you would like to own? No treasure? Odin's ring perhaps?"

"No, no," said Thrym. "Only one thing I would take in exchange for Thor's hammer."

"And what would that be, Thrym?" said Loki, flying toward him.

"She whom many Giants have wished for -- Freya, for my wife," said Thrym.

Loki watched Thrym for a long time with his falcon eyes. He saw that the Giant would not accept anything else. "I will give you those in Asgard of your demand," he said at last, and he flew away.

Loki knew that the people in Asgard would never let Freya be taken from them to become the wife of Thrym, the cruelest of the Giants. He flew back to share the bad news.

By this time all the Dwellers in Asgard had heard of the loss of Mjöllnir, Thor's mighty hammer. He told the people of Asgard of Thrym's demand. None would agree to let the beautiful Freya become a wife to the cruelest of the Giants. All in the Council were cast down. The Gods would never again be able to help men, for now that Mjöllnir was in the Giants' hands all their strength would have to be used to defend Asgard.

So they sat in the Council, very worried indeed. But cunning Loki said, "I have thought of a trick that may win back the hammer from cruel Thrym. Let us pretend to send Freya to the giant as a bride. But let one of the Gods go wearing Freya's veil and dress."

"Which of the Gods would bring himself to do so shameful and embarrassing a thing?" said those in the Council.

"Oh, he who lost the hammer, Thor, should be prepared to do that much to win it back," said Loki.

"Thor, Thor! Let Thor win back the hammer from Thrym by Loki's trick," said the people. They left it to Loki to arrange how Thor should go to the land of the giants as a bride for Thrym.

Loki left the Council of the Gods and came to where he had left Thor. "There is but one way to win the hammer back, Thor," he said, "and the Gods in Council have decreed that you shall take it."

"What is the way?" said Thor. "No matter what it is, tell me of it and I shall do as you say."

"Then," said laughing Loki, "I am to take you as a bride for Thrym. You are to go in bridal dress and veil, in Freya's veil and red bridal dress."

"What! I dress in woman's garb?" shouted Thor.

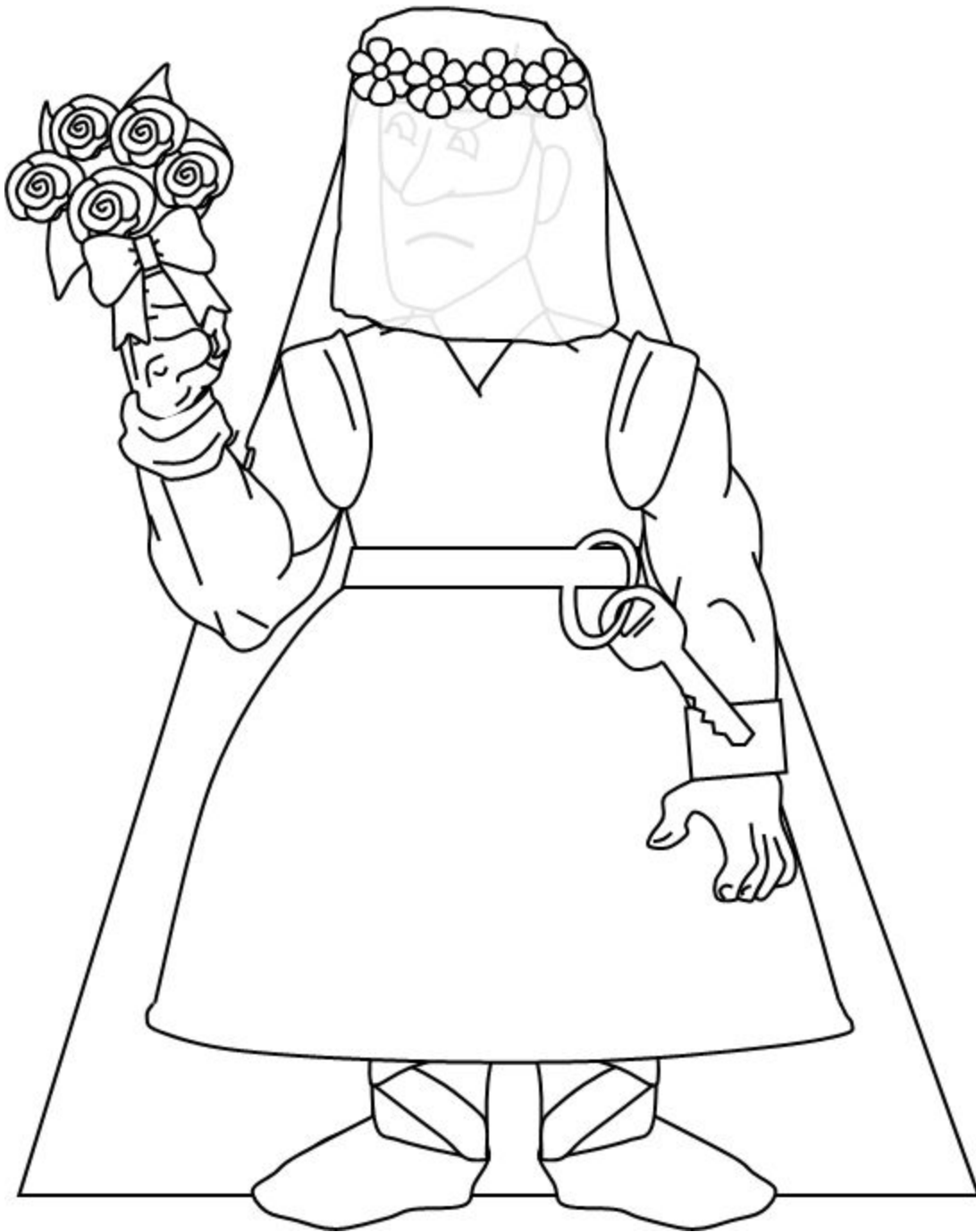
"Yes, Thor, and wear a veil over your head and a circle of flowers upon it."

"I -- I wear a circle of flowers?"

"And rings on your fingers. And a bunch of house keeper's keys around your waist."

"Stop laughing at me, Loki," said Thor roughly, "or I shall shake you."

"I'm not making fun of you, Thor. You will have to do this to win Mjölfnir back for the safety of Asgard. Thrym will take nothing in exchange than Freya. When you are in his hall and he asks you to join hands with him, say you will not until he puts Mjölfnir into your hands. Then when thy mighty hammer is in your hands, you can as you wish with him and with all in his hall. I shall go with you dressed as your bridesmaid! O sweet, sweet maiden Thor!" Then Loki laughed. Thor did not laugh.



"Loki," said Thor, "you did all this to mock me. The mighty Thor in a bridal dress! With a bride's veil upon me! The Dwellers in Asgard will never stop laughing at me."

"True," said Loki, "but there will never be laughter again in Asgard unless you're able to bring back the hammer that your own **unwatchfulness** lost."

"True," said Thor unhappily, "and is this, Loki, the only way to win back Mjöl­nir from Thrym?"

"It is the only way, O Thor," said the cunning Loki.

So Thor and Loki set out for the dwelling of Thrym. A messenger had gone before them to tell Thrym that "Freya" was coming with her "bridesmaid"; that the wedding-feast was to be prepared and the guests gathered and that Mjöl­nir was to be ready to be given over to the Freya for those in Asgard. Thrym and his Giant mother hurried to have everything in readiness.

Thor and Loki came to the Giant's house in the dress of a bride and a bridesmaid. A veil was over Thor's head hiding his beard and his fierce eyes. The red wedding gown he wore and at his side hung a loop from the sash of house keeper's keys. Loki was veiled, too. The hall of Thrym's great house was swept and great tables were laid for the feast. And Thrym's mother was going from one guest to another, bragging that her son was getting one of the most beautiful women in Asgard for his bride, Freya, whom so many of the Giants had tried to win.

When Thor and Loki stepped into the room, Thrym went to welcome them. He wanted to raise the veil of his bride and give her a kiss, but Loki quickly laid his hand on the Giant's shoulder.

"Stop," he whispered. "Do not raise her veil. We in Asgard are bashful. Freya would be embarrassed to be kissed in front of everyone."

"Ah yes," said Thrym's old mother. "Do not raise thy bride's veil, son. The people in Asgard are more formal in their ways than we, the Giants." Then the old woman took Thor by the hand and led him to the table.

The size and the weight of the bride did not surprise the huge Giants. After all, they were huge and those in Asgard always looked small. They stared at Thor and Loki, but they could not see their faces and little of what was under their veils.

Thor sat at the table with Thrym on one side of him and Loki on the other. Then the feast began. Thor, not noticing that what he was not eating like a maiden, ate eight whole salmon right away. Loki nudged him and pressed his foot on Thor's, but Thor seemed not to notice. After the salmon, Thor ate a whole ox!

"These maids of Asgard," said the Giants to each other, "they may be beautiful, as Thrym's mother says, but their appetites are really something."

"No wonder she eats, poor thing," said Loki to Thrym. "It is eight days since we left Asgard. And Freya never ate anything upon the way. She was so anxious to see you, Thrym, and to come to your house."

"Poor darling, poor darling," said the Giant. "What she has eaten is little after all."

Thor nodded his head toward the beer barrel! Thrym ordered his servants to bring a large mug of beer to his bride. The servants were kept busy, bringing more and more beer to Thor. While the Giants were watching the "bride" drinking three barrels of beer, Loki kept kicking Thor under the table so he wouldn't eat like a man.

Thor reached for another hunk of meat and the veil slipped aside and Thor's eyes were seen for a moment. "Why are Freya's eyes so glaring and full of hate?" said Thrym.

"Poor thing, poor thing," said Loki, "no wonder her eyes are glaring and staring. She has not slept for eight nights. She was so anxious to come to you and to your house, Thrym, she could not sleep. But now the time has come for you to join hands with

your bride. First, put into her hands the hammer Mjöl­nir that she may receive the great price that the Giants gave for her coming."

Then Thrym, the cruelest of the Giants, rose up and brought Mjöl­nir, the defense of Asgard, the mighty hammer, into the feasting hall. Thor could hardly stop himself from springing up and seizing it from the Giant. But Loki was able to keep him still. Thrym brought over the hammer and put the handle into the hands of she, whom he thought was his bride, Freya. Thor's hands closed on his hammer. Instantly he stood up. The veil fell off him. His face and his blazing eyes were seen by all. They were full of fear! He struck one blow on the wall of the house. Down it crashed. Then Thor went striding out as the walls came in with Loki beside him, while within the Giants screamed as the roof and walls fell down on them. And so was Mjöl­nir, the defense of Asgard, which was lost and was won back.