

HOW THOR AND LOKI FOOLED THRYM THE GIANT

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Loki told another tale about Thor and Thrym, a stupid Giant who had a cunning streak in him. Loki and Thor had been in this Giant's house. He had made a feast for them and Thor had not been paying attention.

Then when they were far from Jötunheim Thor missed the hammer Miölnir that was the defence of Asgard and the help of the Gods. He could not remember how or where he had mislaid it. Loki thought of Thrym, that stupid Giant who had a cunning streak in him. 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 and passed Heimdall without speaking to him. He didn't dare tell anyone about Thor's loss. He spoke to no one until he came to Frigga's palace.

He said To Frigga, "You must lend me your falcon dress to fly to Thrym's home and find out if he knows where Miölnir is."

"If every feather was silver I would give it to you to go on such an errand," Frigga said.

So Loki put on the falcon dress and flew to Jötunheim and came near Thrym's home. He found the Giant on a hillside putting golden and silver collars on the necks of his

hounds. Loki in the plumage of a falcon perched on the rock above him, watching the Giant with falcon eyes.

While he was there he heard the Giant speak boastful words. "I put collars of silver and gold on you now, my hounds," he said, "but soon we Giants will have the gold of Asgard to decorate our hounds and our horses with, yes, even the necklace of Freya to put on you, the best of my hounds. For Miölnir, the defence of Asgard, is in Thrym's possession."

Then Loki spoke to him. "Yes, we know that Miölnir is in your possession, Thrym," he said, "but you should know that the eyes of the watchful Gods are on you."

"Ha, Loki, shape-changer," said Thrym, "you are there! But all your watching will not help you to find Miölnir. 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 sulkily.

"But what a compensation you would gain if you returned Thor's hammer to the inhabitants of Asgard," Loki said.

"No, cunning Loki, I will never return it, not for any compensation," said Thrym.

"Yet just think for a moment Thrym," said Loki. "Is there nothing in Asgard you would like to own? No treasure, no possession? Odin's ring or Frey's ship, Skidbladnir?"

"No, no," said Thrym. "The inhabitants of Asgard could offer me only one thing that I would take in exchange for Miölnir, Thor's hammer."

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

“She whom many Giants have tried to gain—Freya, for my wife,” said Thrym.

Loki watched Thrym for a long time with his falcon eyes. He saw that the Giant would not alter his demand. “I will tell them in Asgard of your demand,” he said at last, and he flew away.

Loki knew that those in Asgard would never let Freya be taken from them to become the wife of Thrym, the stupidest of the Giants. He flew back.

By this time everyone in Asgard had heard of the loss of Miölnir, the help of the Gods. Heimdall shouted to him as he crossed the Rainbow Bridge to ask what news he brought back. But Loki did not stop to speak to the Warden of the Bridge but went straight to the hall where the Gods sat in Council.

He told Thrym’s demand to the Æsir and the Vanir. None would agree to let the beautiful Freya go to live in Jötunheim as a wife to the stupidest of the Giants. Everyone in the Council was downcast. The Gods would never again be able to help mortal men, for now that Miölnir was in the Giants’ hands all their strength would have to be used in the defence of Asgard.

So they sat in the Council looking downcast. But cunning Loki said, “I have thought of a trick that may win back the hammer from stupid Thrym. Let us pretend to send Freya to Jötunheim as a bride for him. But let one of the Gods go in Freya’s veil and dress.”

“Which of the Gods would bring himself to do so shameful a thing?” said those in the Council.

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

“Thor, Thor! Let Thor win back the hammer from Thrym by Loki’s trick,” said the Æsir and the Vanir. They left it to Loki to arrange how Thor should go to Jötunheim 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.”

“How?” said Thor. “But no matter what it is, tell me what it is and I shall do as you say.”

“Then,” said laughing Loki, “I am to take you to Jötunheim as a bride for Thrym. You are to go in bridal dress and veil, in Freya’s veil and bridal dress.”

“What! I dress as a woman?” shouted Thor.

“Yes Thor, and wear a veil over your head and a garland of flowers on it.”

“I—I wear a garland of flowers?”

“And rings on your fingers. And a bunch of housekeeper’s keys in your belt.”

“Stop your mockery, Loki,” said Thor roughly, “or I shall beat you.”

“It is no mockery. You will have to do this to win Miölnir back for the defence of Asgard. Thrym will take no other recompense than Freya. I would mock him by bringing you to him in Freya’s veil and dress. When you are in his hall and he asks you to join hands with him, say you will not until he puts Miölnir into your hands. Then when your mighty hammer is in your hands you can deal with him and with

everyone in his hall. I shall be with you as thy bridesmaid! Oh sweet, sweet maiden Thor!”

“Loki,” said Thor, “You planned all this to mock me. I in a bridal dress! I with a bride’s veil on me! Everyone in Asgard will never stop laughing at me.”

“Yes,” said Loki, “but there will never be laughter again in Asgard unless you are able to bring back the hammer that your carelessness lost.”

“True,” said Thor unhappily, “and is this, do you think, Loki, the only way to win back Miölnir from Thrym?”

“It is the only way, Thor,” said the cunning Loki.

So Thor and Loki set out for Jötunheim and the home of Thrym. A messenger had gone before them to tell Thrym that Freya was coming with her bridesmaid and that the wedding feast was to be prepared and the guests gathered and that Miölnir was to be at hand so that it might be given over to the inhabitants of Asgard. Thrym and his Giant mother hurried to have everything ready.

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. He wore a red embroidered robe and at his side hung a belt of housekeeper’s keys. Loki was veiled, too. The hall of Thrym’s great house was swept and decorated and great tables were laid for the feast. Thrym’s mother was going from one guest to another, boasting that her son was getting one of the most beautiful maidens in Asgard for his bride, Freya, whom so many of the Giants had tried to win.

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

"Stop," he whispered. "Do not raise her veil. We in Asgard are reserved and bashful. Freya would be much offended to be kissed in front of so many others."

"Yes, yes," said Thrym's old mother. "Do not raise your bride's veil, son. Those from Asgard are more refined in their ways than we, the Giants." Then the old woman took Thor by the hand and led him to the table.

The size of the bride did not surprise the huge Giants who were in the wedding company. They stared at Thor and Loki, but they could see nothing of their faces and little of their forms because of 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 did was unbecoming to a refined maiden, ate eight salmon right away. Loki nudged him and pressed his foot, but he did not pay attention to Loki. After the salmon he ate a whole ox.

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

"No wonder she eats, poor thing," said Loki to Thrym. "It is eight days since we left Asgard. Freya never ate on the way, because she was so anxious to see Thrym and to come to his house."

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

Thor nodded his head toward the mead vat. Thrym ordered his servants to bring some to his bride. The servants kept coming with mead for Thor. While the Giants watched, and while Loki nudged and nodded, he drank three barrels of mead.

“Oh,” said the Giants to Thrym’s mother, “we are not so sorry that we failed to win a bride from Asgard.”

Then a piece of the veil slipped aside and Thor’s eyes were seen for an instant. “Oh, how come Freya has such glaring eyes?” said Thrym.

“Poor thing, poor thing,” said Loki, “no wonder her eyes are glaring and staring. She has not slept for eight nights, because she was so anxious to come to you and to your house, Thrym. But now the time has come for you to join hands with your bride. First, put into her hands the hammer Miölnir so that she may know the great recompense that the Giants have given for her coming.”

Then Thrym, the stupidest of the Giants, rose up and brought Miölnir, the defence of Asgard, into the feasting hall. Thor could hardly restrain 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 her whom he thought was his bride. Thor’s hands closed on his hammer. Instantly he stood up. The veil fell off him. His furious face and his blazing eyes were seen by everyone. He struck one blow on the wall of the house. Down it crashed. Then Thor went striding out of the ruin with Loki beside him, while within the Giants bellowed as the roof and walls fell down on them. So Miölnir, the defence of Asgard, was lost and won back.