

# *How Thor Lost His Hammer*

Foster & Cummings

Nordicscandinavian

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*Intermediate*

*7 min read*

“Come, Loki, are you ready? My goats are eager to be off!” cried Thor, as he sprang into his chariot, and away they went, thundering over the hills. All day long they journeyed, and at night they lay down to rest by the side of a brook.

When Baldur, the bright sun-god, awoke them in the morning, the first thing Thor did was to reach out for Miölnir, his magic hammer, which he had carefully laid by his side the night before.

“Why, Loki!” cried he. “Alas, my hammer is gone! Those evil frost giants must have stolen it from me while I slept. How shall we hold Asgard against them without my hammer? They will surely take our stronghold!”

“We must go quickly and find it!” replied Loki. “Let us ask Freyja to lend us her falcon garment.”

Now the goddess, Freyja, had a wonderful garment made of falcon feathers, and whoever wore it looked just like a bird. As you may suppose, this was sometimes a very useful thing. So Thor and Loki went quickly back to Asgard, and drove with all speed to Freyja’s palace, where they found her sitting among her maidens. “Asgard is in great danger!” said Thor, “and we have come to you, fair goddess, to ask if you will lend us your falcon garment, for my hammer has been carried off, and we must go in search of it.”

“Surely,” answered Freyja, “I would lend you my falcon cloak, even if it were made of gold and silver!”

Then Loki quickly dressed himself in Freyja’s garment and flew away to the land of the frost giants, where he found their king making collars of gold for his dogs, and combing his horses. As Loki came near, he looked up and said, “Ah, Loki, how fare the mighty gods in Asgard?”

“The Æsir are in great trouble,” replied Loki, “and I am sent to fetch the hammer of Thor.”

“And do you think I am going to be foolish enough to give it back to you, after I have had all the trouble of getting it into my power?” said the king. “I have buried it deep, deep, down in the earth, and there is only one way by which you can get it again. You must bring me the goddess Freyja to be my wife!”

Loki did not know what to say to this, for he felt sure that Freyja would never be willing to go away from Asgard to live among the fierce giants; but as he saw no chance of getting the hammer, he flew back to Asgard, to see what could be done.

Thor was anxiously looking out for him. “What news do you bring, Loki?” cried he. “Have you brought me my hammer again?”

“Alas, no!” said Loki. “I bring only a message from the giant king. He will not give up your hammer until you persuade Freyja to marry him!”

Then Thor and Loki went together to Freyja’s palace, and the fair goddess greeted them kindly, but when she heard their errand, and found they wished her to marry the cruel giant, she was very angry, and said to Thor, “You should not have been so careless as to lose your hammer; it is all your own fault that it is gone, and I will never marry the giant to help you get it again.”

Thor then went to tell Father Odin, who called a meeting of all the Æsir, for it was a very serious matter they were to consider. If the king of the giants only knew the power of the mighty hammer, he might storm Asgard, and carry off the fair Freyja to be his bride.

So the Æsir met together in their great judgment hall, in the palace of Gladsheim; long and anxiously they talked over their peril, trying to find some plan for saving Asgard from these enemies. At last Heimdall, the

faithful watchman of the rainbow bridge, proposed a plan.

“Let us dress Thor,” said he, “in Freyja’s robes, braid his hair, and let him wear Freyja’s wonderful necklace, and a bridal veil!”

“No, indeed!” cried Thor, angrily, “you would all laugh at me in a woman’s dress; I will do no such thing! We must find some other way.” But when no other way could be found, at last Thor was persuaded to try Heimdall’s plan, and the Æsir went to work to dress the mighty thunder-god like a bride. He was the tallest of them all, and, of course, he looked very queer to them in his woman’s clothes, but he would be small enough beside a giant. Then they dressed Loki to look like the bride’s waiting-maid, and the two set off for Utgard, the stronghold of the giants.

When the giant king saw them coming he bade his servants make ready the wedding feast, and invited all his giant subjects to come and celebrate his marriage with the lovely goddess Freyja.

So the wedding party sat down to the feast, and Thor, who was always a good eater, ate one ox and eight salmon, and drank three casks of mead. The king watched him, greatly surprised to see a woman eat so much, and said:—

“Where hast thou seen  
Such a hungry bride!”

But the watchful Loki, who stood near by, as the bride’s waiting-maid, whispered in the king’s ear, “Eight nights has Freyja fasted and would take no food, so anxious was she to be your bride!”

This pleased the giant, and he went toward Thor, saying he must kiss his fair bride. But when he lifted the bridal veil, such a gleam of light shot from Thor’s eyes that the king started back, and asked why Freyja’s eyes were so sharp.

Again Loki replied, “For eight nights the fair Freyja has not slept, so greatly did she long to reach here!” This again pleased the king, and he said, “Now let the hammer be brought and given to the bride, for the hour has come for our marriage!”

All this time Thor was so eager to get his treasure back that he could hardly keep still, and if it had not been for

what the wily Loki said, he might have been found out too soon. But at last the precious hammer was brought and handed to the bride, as was always the custom at weddings; as soon as Thor grasped it in his hand, he threw off his woman's robes and stood out before the astonished giants.

Then did the mighty Thunderer sweep down his foes, and many of the cruel frost giants were slain. Once more the sacred city of Asgard was saved from danger, for Thor was its defender, and he was careful never again to let his magic hammer be taken from him.

Besides the hammer, Thor had two other precious things, his belt of strength, which doubled his power when he tightened it, and his iron glove, which he put on when he was going to throw the hammer.

"I am the God Thor,  
I am the War God,  
I am the Thunderer!  
Here in my Northland,  
My fastness and fortress,  
Reign I forever!

"Here amid icebergs  
Rule I the nations;  
This is my hammer,  
Miölnir the mighty;  
Giants and sorcerers  
Cannot withstand it!

"These are the gauntlets  
Wherewith I wield it,  
And hurl it afar off;  
This is my girdle,  
Whenever I brace it  
Strength is redoubled!"—Longfellow

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