

Viking Sagas

 adapted by Nigel Bryant

9. Apples of Iduna - part 3

Odin: (Flashback) Only Iduna can pick the apples. We must get her back before it's too late. What are we going to do?

Loki: It's me again. Loki. If only I hadn't helped the eagle-giant, Thiassi, to carry off Iduna with her basket of apples. Then us gods wouldn't have shrivelled up into wizened old wrecks. Of course, I didn't let on it was all my fault...and at first I thought I'd got away with it. But then a few days later, Odin came to see me...

Odin, great to see you.

Odin: I can hardly move.

Loki: Can't interest you in a game of footie then?

Odin: Oh, how can you joke at a time like this? Oh, how can Iduna be so cruel? To disappear knowing that without her apples we're to wither and die?

Loki: I know!

Odin: Unless of course she was made to go.

Loki: Made to go, who would make her go?

Odin: Who indeed? A giant bird perhaps carrying her off into the sky.

Loki: A bird, my lord?



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- Odin: Yes, Loki, a bird. I'm told you were the last to see her. Heimdall!
- Loki: Just my luck - I'd been seen with Thiassi the eagle-giant in Iduna's garden! Typical it would have to be Heimdall who saw us!
- Heimdall: Here, my lord!
- Odin: Ah, Heimdall, tell me again what you saw the day Iduna disappeared.
- Heimdall: I saw you, Loki! As the bird carried Iduna into the sky, you were laughing!
- Loki: But this is -
- Odin: What trick have you been playing Loki? What have you done? The trick's failed, Loki. You're growing old like everyone else. So tell me - what have you done?
- Loki: Oh, it's true! I did it, it's all my fault. The eagle was Thiassi in disguise.
- Odin: Thiassi! The king of the giants of Jotunheim?
- Loki: He was going to drop me from the sky. If I hadn't have helped him I would have probably died!
- Odin: And now you have helped him you're sure to die!
- Loki: Odin was right - of course he was. What a mess!
- Odin: Loki, you must get her back.
- Loki: What!



Odin: And while you're gone, Loki, I shall think of a suitable punishment for you for when you return...if you return. Now go!

Loki: It was all very well Odin saying get her back - but how exactly? Of course: shape-changing! That's my special skill. So what should I change into to get Iduna back from Jotunheim, the land of the giants? A bird! Yes! And what kind of bird? The fastest! A falcon!

So off I sped in falcon shape to Jotunheim. I'll tell you what: I knew when I got there. The air turned icy cold and down below was swirling mist...but through it jutted a mighty tower. The palace of king Thiassi. So down I swooped and landed on a window sill. You'll never believe what I heard...

Iduna: No, never! I'll never give them to you!

Loki: It was her voice! Iduna was in that very room! I settled on the window sill and listened in. She and Thiassi were having a terrible row!

Thiassi: Very well, if you won't give me the magic apples I'll take them myself. Give me the basket!

Iduna: Ow!

Thiassi: There. Now let's see. What on earth?

Loki: It was amazing: each time Thiassi took an apple it shrivelled like a dried-up pea. It was just like in her garden. Only Iduna could handle them.

Thiassi: Bah! Keep your wretched apples! Stay locked here in this room for the rest of your days!



- Loki: You know, I almost felt sorry for Little-Miss-Perfect. I hopped down into the room and turned myself back into my normal shape. For some reason Iduna didn't seem all that pleased to see me.
- Iduna: Loki, traitor! What are you doing here? Come to play some other trick on me?
- Loki: No, no, no. I'm here to rescue you.
- Iduna: Rescue me? You who betrayed me to the giants?
- Loki: Yeah, I'm sorry about that! I was having an off day. It was nothing personal.
- Iduna: Go away - I hate you! Get out of my sight!
- Loki: Eh, now steady on. I promise you it's not a trick.
- Iduna: I'll never trust you again.
- Loki: I can't say I blame you really. But listen, you've got to come back. Every god and goddess in Asgard is desperate for your apples.
- Iduna: What...you mean they're...
- Loki: Yep, dying basically. Thor can't even lift his hammer and Freya, remember lovely Freya? She looks like a rotten cabbage!
- Iduna: How terrible!
- Loki: It is rather!
- Iduna: What shall I do?
- Loki: Get your basket, hold it tight, and stand still.



- Iduna: Right, ok.
- Loki: Now I'm going to turn you into a sparrow.
- Iduna: What?
- Loki: How else to you think we'll get back to Asgard? I could turn you into a frog and we could hop?
- Iduna: No, no, a sparrow will be fine. What about the basket?
- Loki: I'll turn it into a apple pip. You'll carry it in your claws. So then - Imnircaratin!
- Got it in one! I turned Iduna into a sparrow and myself into a falcon again. But when I took off she wouldn't follow...
- Iduna: Oh, I'm not sure I can. I've never done this before!
- Loki: Oh dear, oh dear, just give it a try! You might enjoy it.
- Iduna: Oh yes, it is rather nice!
- Loki: Come on then - home to Asgard!
- Iduna: Home to Asgard!
- Loki: And off we flew.

