



Viking Sagas

 adapted by Nigel Bryant

4. Thor and the giants - part 1

LOKI: Today I'm going to tell you about a character who makes for a great story! He's called Thor and he's the Viking god of thunder. He makes thunder with this huge hammer, I remember the first time I saw him at it:

LOKI: Thor! What've you got there?

THOR: My hammer.

LOKI: Oh yeah. Smart. Er - what exactly are you doing?

THOR: Making thunder! I'll show you!

LOKI: Yes, yes, thank you Thor - I'm well impressed.

THOR: Ha!

LOKI: Cor dear. I tell you, once he's started he goes on like that for for hours. Anyway...the story...one day Thor went to Odin, chief of all the gods, and said:



- THOR: Mighty Odin, I have never tried the strength of my hammer against our enemies the giants. I am going to their land of Jotunheim to challenge them!
- LOKI: It was just my luck that I was having a laugh with Odin at the time, 'cause then Odin said:
- ODIN: Splendid! Take Loki with you - he's excellent company. You'd like to go to the frozen land of the giants, wouldn't you, Loki?
- LOKI: Yes, lovely. There's nothing like a bit of fog and ice...
- THOR: Very well. Come, Loki!
- LOKI: And off we went in Thor's chariot. You might think that riding in a chariot would be pretty smart. Not in Thor's it wasn't. You see, horses were too ordinary for Thor. He had to be different, didn't he? What do think his chariot was pulled by? Goats! I ask you. Two shaggy goats. I have never felt so stupid in my life. Anyway, we rode from Asgard, land of us gods over the rainbow bridge to Midgard, land of you humans, and finally stopped at a run-down cottage.



- THOR: Wohhh! We shall stop at this villager's cottage for the night.
- LOKI: Great.
- THOR: Open up! Open up, I say!
- VILLAGER: Hello.
- THOR: Greetings, humble villager! Thor and Loki, gods of Asgard, are weary and hungry this starry night and beg your generous hospitality.
- VILLAGER: You what?
- LOKI: Any chance of some grub?
- VILLAGER: Oh, sure. Come in.
- LOKI: One look at the goats and the villager knew he'd got a nutter on his hands. He was very kind, and gave us what food he had. But it was just stale bread and dodgy cheese. No way was it good enough for Thor. But then Thor said:
- THOR: Ah, I have an idea!



- LOKI: You'll never guess. He picked up his hammer, raised it high over the heads of his goats... and killed them with a single blow. What a show-off! So we all sat round and had goat stew. Then half-way through the meal Thor said:
- THOR: Take care not to break any of the bones. When you've chewed them clean of meat, pile them in the corner where I've put the goat skins.
- VILLAGER: Ohh. Can't we crack open a bone or two. The marrow inside's my favourite bit.
- THOR: I absolutely forbid it!
- VILLAGER: Ohh.
- LOKI: Now, as you may remember, I like to make a little mischief when I can and this seemed like a good opportunity. So I said quietly to the villager:
- LOKI: Pssst. Don't take any notice of him. He's always making up stupid rules.



VILLAGER:

Is he?

- LOKI: Yeah. You enjoy yourself. Crack open a bone when he's not looking and suck out the marrow.
- VILLAGER: Thanks!
- LOKI: And he did, and then he threw the broken pieces in the corner with the other the bones. The next morning Thor goes up to the heap of bones and says the magic words:
- THOR: Doo-nar-kar-im-nir!
- VILLAGER: Well I'm blowed.
- LOKI: And hey presto the goats were alive again. But, of course, there was just one problem and Thor saw it at once.
- THOR: One of my goats is limping. Who disobeyed my order?
- VILLAGER: It was me! I'm sorry! Don't kill me, Lord Thor!
- LOKI: I couldn't watch. I waited for Thor to beat the poor man to jelly – but he didn't and suddenly...
- THOR: Loki.



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LOKI: ...I realised he was staring at me.

THOR: Are you going to let this man take the blame?

LOKI: Incredible. Somehow he knew it was my fault.

