

NORSE MYTHS

MONSTERS
AND
VIKING
VOYAGERS



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STEPHEN DAVIES
SEARRA MILLER

COVER NOT
FINAL

MEET THE GODS

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ODIN

Odin 'Allfather' created humans and also many of the gods. The ravens on his shoulders are called Huginn (Thought) and Muninn (Memory). Arrogant and often cruel, Odin is a god to be feared above all others.



THOR

Strong, loveable and a teeny bit dim, Thor rides in a chariot pulled by two goats, Snarler and Grinder. He uses his incredible strength to protect Asgard from giants and monsters.



FRIGG

Foremost of all the goddesses, Frigg is the wife of Odin and the mother of Balder and Hod. She can see into other realms and even tell the future.



LOKI

Mischievous trickster Loki is always getting himself and others into trouble. He uses powerful shapeshifting magic to turn himself into a fly, a fish or even a giant.



SIF

Thor's wife Sif is famous for her long, silky blonde hair. Of all the gods and goddesses in Asgard, she is by far the vainest. Her son Ull is a fantastic archer and a superfast skier.



TYR

Tyr is the brave but reckless god of war. His hand was bitten off by a monstrous wolf called Fenrir.



FREYR

Freyr is the god of fertility and growth. He is the one to thank for plentiful harvests and healthy children.



FREYA

Beautiful Freya is the goddess of battle. She rides in a chariot pulled by cats and owns a falcon skin that enables her to fly.



HONIR

Honir loves accompanying Odin and Loki on their adventures. He is very indecisive, though, and he will usually answer with a vague grunt!



HEIMDALL

Heimdall, watchman of the gods, guards the Bifrost bridge day and night. His eyes and ears are so sharp, he can spot grasshoppers on the distant horizon and hear the wool growing on a sheep!



BALDER

With his handsome face, wise speech and generous character, Balder is the best of all the gods. In fact, his goodness makes him literally glow.



HOD

Balder's blind brother Hod is kind but gullible. His gullibility leads to the worst disaster imaginable.



IDUN

Idun is a cheerful, carefree goddess, whose apples contain the secret to eternal youth. Whenever a god begins to grow old, one bite will make them young again.

THOR AND THE GIANTS

One bright summer morning, Thor kept out of bed and picked up his mighty hammer. It was giant hunting season!

I love the sounds of summer. The roar of klemleses, the howl of fleeing giants...

While Thor was harnessing his battle goats Snarler and Grinder to his chariot, his brother Loki turned up, asking to join the hunt.

You'll be needing a sharp-witted travelling companion.

FINE! Come with me if you want to.

Thor and Loki held on tight as the golden chariot zoomed across the Bifrost bridge to Midgard, the world of men.

At sunset, the brothers came to a farm, where they were welcomed nervously by a farmer, his wife, their son Thialfi and their daughter Roskva. The farmer invited the gods to join them for a bowl of vegetable stew.

This stew could do with some meat...

Urr-oh.

Thor did what needed to be done, and the whole family feasted on goat meat. But Thor set one condition for the meal.

Throw the bones onto those skins. Don't break any, whatever you do!

Loki saw an opportunity to play a trick on the farmer's son, Thialfi.

The marrow inside the bones will blow your mind.

Thor! Look over there!

GLURP SLURP

I don't see anything.

The next morning, Thor went outside and raised his hammer over the goat bones. Suddenly, the bones began to resemble themselves!

My beloved Snarler's leg is broken!

Oh, so now I'm beloved?

ONE OF YOU BROKE A BONE LAST NIGHT! WHO WAS IT?

Thialfi shakily raised his hand.

YOU!

As a punishment, Thor demanded that Thialfi and Roskva accompany him at his servants.

He keeps calling me 'The Alf!'!

Who knows? The Alf! and the other one may come in useful on our quest.

At least he gives you a name!

Thor and Loki left the goats behind, bringing along Thialfi and Roskva instead, and set sail in a boat across the great ocean that separates Midgard from Usgard.

We're going this way, that way. Forwards, backwards, Over the Usgard Sea.

Upon arriving on the shore of Usgard, the travellers continued their journey on foot - up the stony beach, across a freezing plain and into a gloomy forest.

I'm so o-oh-oh even my goosekumps have goosekumps.

By nightfall they reached a clearing in the middle of the forest and looked around for somewhere to rest for the night.

Tomorrow, we hunt GIANTS!

They came across a vast cave, gazing into the enormous chamber, which led to smaller side-chambers.

But tonight, we sleep.



At midnight, Thor and Loki were woken by a deafening rumble.



Thor went outside and saw a colossal giant lying in the clearing, fast asleep. What they had felt and heard was not an earthquake; it was the giant's mighty snore!



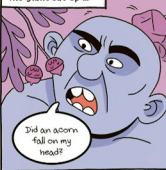
The giant stirred ...



... then rolled over and went back to sleep.



The giant got up ...



... and promptly fell back asleep again.



Thor could not understand it. Mjolnir had never failed him before. He summoned all of his energy and rage for one last strike.



As the sun rose, the giant noticed Thor for the first time.



Thor's giant-slaying had got off to a bad start, but it could only get better. He asked Skrymir where the other giants lived, and Skrymir agreed to show him.



Thor took a long run-up. He raised mighty Mjolnir high in the air...



The snoring resumed. Thor was FURIOUS!



They walked all day, and at last they arrived at a magnificent fortress.



The Great Hall inside the castle was an impressive sight. That night, the giants had an event planned...



The travellers gaped at each other realising that they were each going to have to choose a talent. Cunning Loki eyed the giant's dining table, which groaned under the weight of chopped meat.



Loki started at one end of the table and Logi started at the other. They chomped and chewed and munched and crunched, devouring the feast before them.



Loki had eaten all of the meat on his half of the table and had left the bones. But Logi the giant had eaten all the bones as well.



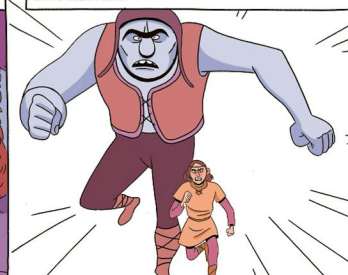
Next it was Thiaff's turn to share his talent. Knees trembling, he stood before the giants.



The whole assembly went outside and the Giant king marked out a race course. The runners knelt next to each other on the frosty grass, staring ahead at the finish line...



The runners flew along the course like greased lightning. Hugi was hot on Thiaff's heels.



The giant lengthened his stride and overtook the struggling teenager. Hugi won the race with time enough to turn and welcome Thiafi at the finish line.



You took your time!

The Giant King turned to Thor.



Your turn, Tishin. Let me guess... throwing the hammer?

I have a better idea.

Back inside the castle, the king's cup-bearer brought Thor an enormous horn.



Grunts.

We giants can empty the whole horn in one gulp.



GULP

Thor drank, but each gulp seemed to him like a vast tide of liquid. He quickly ran out of breath and had to give up.



The level has hardly gone down at all!

The Giant king laughed and suggested that Thor try something else. He pointed to a cat which the younger giants lifted to test their strength.



If you can lift Mr Pusskins, we'll be impressed.



Bohahaha! You only managed to lift one paw!

Thor was incensed.



Right, that's if I wrestle one of you lot.

The King called forth his nanny, Auntie Elli. Thor couldn't believe his eyes when he saw an old woman hobble towards him.



Hello, deary.

Auntie Elli floored Thor with her wrestling moves.



Take that!

And this!

And that!

Talent night was over. Everyone feasted and fell asleep. In the morning, Thor was still miserable from last night's humiliation.



Let's get out of here.

The travellers left the castle and headed for Midgard. As they made their escape, the Giant King caught up with them.



Don't be too downhearted about Talent Night, Thor. I used a teeny bit of magic.

What do you mean?



The Giant King explained that not everything had been as it seemed. The talent night had been an elaborate trick to teach Thor and his friends a lesson...

Thiafi was fast, but Hugi was thought itself disguised as a giant. Nothing is faster than the speed of thought.

Loki was a fast eater, but my cook Logi was Wölfre in disguise. Wölfre burns up everything in its path.

Mr Pusskins was actually Jormungar, the magical serpent. I'm impressed that you managed to lift even one paw.

Each time you hit me with your hammer in the forest, I cushioned the blow with an entire mountain to protect myself. Just look what you did to them!

The end of the drinking horn was in the sea. When you get back to the beach, you'll see how far the tide has gone out after your almighty gulps.

Auntie Elli is Old Age. No one can defeat the passing of time, Thor, not even you!



Wait... you're Strymer?

Since that day, Thor and Loki have been very careful to stay the right side of the Utgard Sea.



Peace at last...

Surprise! Now, off to Asgard with you, and no more talk of 'giant busting'!