

The Theft of the Hammer

In the halls of the Viking gods, the mighty Thor was revered by all as the strongest. Whenever the giants attacked, Thor was the god they turned to. He loved nothing more than crushing and smashing the giants in battle. Thor's greatest weapon was his magic hammer called Mjollnir. Mjollnir gave Thor great strength and always returned to him when he called it. That was until it was stolen away and locked in a chamber of ice by one of the bravest giants of all.

Thrym was a sneaky giant. He sneaked into Thor's bedroom while the god slept and stole his hammer. When he returned to his own home, he buried it deep under a hill of ice. He knew that no matter how much Thor called for it, Mjollnir was trapped.

When Thor realised that his precious weapon had been stolen, he flew into a rage. Loki was Thor's brother and a much trickier god. He suspected that one of the giants was responsible, and he flew off to find the culprit. When he spoke to Thrym, Loki used his cunning and trickery to get the giant to confess.

"It was me who stole the hammer," the giant said. "I shall not return it until the most beautiful goddess of all agrees to marry me."

Loki knew that Freya was the most beautiful goddess, but she was also stubborn and disliked the giants as much as any of the gods. On the other hand, if the enemies of the gods found out that Mjollnir was missing, they might attack them while they were weak. Loki delivered the bad news to the gods, who argued amongst themselves. Eventually, it was agreed that Freya must marry Thrym.

Thor had another idea. On the night before the wedding, he whispered his plan to Freya, who agreed. The following morning, Thor dressed in Freya's clothes and headed out. He tried his hardest to walk the way Freya walked, to talk the way Freya talked and to trick everybody at the wedding that he was, indeed, Freya.

Before the wedding, Thrym honoured Freya with a feast. Of course, Thor ate



more than anybody there, and Thrym grew suspicious. “Do not worry,” Loki reassured him, “Freya has not eaten for a week in preparation for the wedding. She is famished.”

Thrym accepted this and asked his bride if he may look into her eyes. When he pulled back the veil, he winced at Thor’s deep red eyes. “Do not worry,” Loki said again, “she hasn’t slept in a week, either.”

Once again, Thrym accepted Loki’s lie. Desperate to be married to his new wife, Thrym fetched Mjollnir and raised it over his head to bless the marriage. As he did, Thor reached out and called his hammer to him. His wedding dress fell away and revealed his true self. The last thing Thrym saw before Thor’s mighty hammer came crashing down, was his bride-to-be laughing at his deception.



VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. If somebody is “revered”, what does it mean?
2. Which word in the text tells you that Thor’s hammer meant a lot to him?
3. Find and copy a word that tells you Thor thought that a giant might have stolen the hammer.
4. Which word in the text tells you how Thor revealed his plan to Freya?
5. What does the word “wincing” tell you about how Thrym felt when he saw Thor’s eyes?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

What was the name of Thor’s hammer?

S

How was Loki related to Thor?

S

Why did the gods worry that the hammer had been stolen?

I

What about the story tells you that Thrym was gullible?

E

How does the author use language to effectively describe Freya’s character?