

THRYMSKVITHA (THE LAY OF THRYM)

1. Wild was Vingthor | when he awoke,
And when his mighty | hammer he missed;
He shook his beard, | his hair was bristling,
As the son of Jorth | about him sought.
2. Hear now the speech | that first he spake:
“Harken, Loki, | and heed my words,
Nowhere on earth | is it known to man,
Nor in heaven above: | our hammer is stolen.”
3. To the dwelling fair | of Freyja went they,
Hear now the speech | that first he spake:
“Wilt thou, Freyja, | thy feather-dress lend me,
That so my hammer | I may seek?”

Freyja spake:

4. “Thine should it be | though of silver bright,
And I would give it | though 'twere of gold.”
Then Loki flew, | and the feather-dress whirred,
Till he left behind him | the home of the gods,
And reached at last | the realm of the giants.
5. Thrym sat on a mound, | the giants’ master,
Leashes of gold | he laid for his dogs,
And stroked and smoothed | the manes of his steeds.

Thrym spake:

6. “How fare the gods, | how fare the elves?
Why comst thou alone | to the giants’ land?”

Loki spake:

“Ill fare the gods, | ill fare the elves!
Hast thou hidden | Hlorrithi’s hammer?”

Thrym spake:

7. “I have hidden | Hlorrithi’s hammer,
Eight miles down | deep in the earth;
And back again | shall no man bring it
If Freyja I win not | to be my wife.”
8. Then Loki flew, | and the feather-dress whirred,
Till he left behind him | the home of the giants,
And reached at last | the realm of the gods.
There in the courtyard | Thor he met:
Hear now the speech | that first he spake:
9. “Hast thou found tidings | as well as trouble?
Thy news in the air | shalt thou utter now;
Oft doth the sitter | his story forget,
And lies he speaks | who lays himself down.”

Loki spake:

10. “Trouble I have, | and tidings as well:
Thrym, king of the giants, | keeps thy hammer,
And back again | shall no man bring it
If Freyja he wins not | to be his wife.”
11. Freyja the fair | then went they to find;
Hear now the speech | that first he spake:
“Bind on, Freyja, | the bridal veil,
For we two must haste | to the giants’ home.”
12. Wrathful was Freyja, | and fiercely she snorted,
And the dwelling great | of the gods was shaken,
And burst was the mighty | Brisings’ necklace:
“Most lustful indeed | should I look to all
If I journeyed with thee | to the giants’ home.”

13. Then were the gods | together met,
And the goddesses came | and council held,
And the far-famed ones | a plan would find,
How they might Hlorrithi's | hammer win.
14. Then Heimdall spake, | whitest of the gods,
Like the Wanes he knew | the future well:
"Bind we on Thor | the bridal veil,
Let him bear the mighty | Brisings' necklace;
15. "Keys around him | let there rattle,
And down to his knees | hang woman's dress;
With gems full broad | upon his breast,
And a pretty cap | to crown his head."
16. Then Thor the mighty | his answer made:
"Me would the gods | unmanly call
If I let bind | the bridal veil."
17. Then Loki spake, | the son of Laufey:
"Be silent, Thor, | and speak not thus;
Else will the giants | in Asgarth dwell
If thy hammer is brought not | home to thee."
18. Then bound they on Thor | the bridal veil,
And next the mighty | Brisings' necklace.
19. Keys around him | let they rattle,
And down to his knees | hung woman's dress;
With gems full broad | upon his breast,
And a pretty cap | to crown his head.
20. Then Loki spake, | the son of Laufey:
"As thy maid-servant thither | I go with thee;
We two shall haste | to the giants' home."
21. Then home the goats | to the hall were driven,
They wrenched at the halters, | swift were they to
run;
The mountains burst, | earth burned with fire,
And Othin's son | sought Jotunheim.
22. Then loud spake Thrym, | the giants' leader:
"Bestir ye, giants, | put straw on the benches;
Now Freyja they bring | to be my bride,
The daughter of Njorth | out of Noatun.

23. "Gold-horned cattle | go to my stables,
Jet-black oxen, | the giant's joy;
Many my gems, | and many my jewels,
Freyja alone | did I lack, methinks."
24. Early it was | to evening come,
And forth was borne | the beer for the giants;
Thor alone ate an ox, | and eight salmon,
All the dainties as well | that were set for the
women;
And drank Sif's mate | three tuns of mead.
25. Then loud spake Thrym, | the giants' leader:
"Who ever saw bride | more keenly bite?
I ne'er saw bride | with a broader bite,
Nor a maiden who drank | more mead than this!"
26. Hard by there sat | the serving-maid wise,
So well she answered | the giant's words:
"From food has Freyja | eight nights fasted,
So hot was her longing | for Jotunheim."
27. Thrym looked 'neath the veil, | for he longed to kiss,
But back he leaped | the length of the hall:
"Why are so fearful | the eyes of Freyja?
Fire, methinks, | from her eyes burns forth."
28. Hard by there sat | the serving-maid wise,
So well she answered | the giant's words:
"No sleep has Freyja | for eight nights found,
So hot was her longing | for Jotunheim."
29. Soon came the giant's | luckless sister,
Who feared not to ask | the bridal fee:
"From thy hands the rings | of red gold take,
If thou wouldst win | my willing love,
(My willing love | and welcome glad.)"
30. Then loud spake Thrym, | the giants' leader:
"Bring in the hammer | to hallow the bride;
On the maiden's knees | let Mjollnir lie,
That us both the hand | of Vor may bless."
31. The heart in the breast | of Hlorrithi laughed
When the hard-souled one | his hammer beheld;
First Thrym, the king | of the giants, he killed,
Then all the folk | of the giants he felled.

32. The giant's sister | old he slew,
She who had begged | the bridal fee;
A stroke she got | in the shilling's stead.
And for many rings | the might of the hammer.

33. And so his hammer | got Othin's son.

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