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The Building of the Wall of Asgard

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The gods built their city, Asgard, on top of a mountain. Odin, the father of the gods, thought that the city needed extra protection from the giants, so he decided to build a wall. A stranger came to the city and offered to build the wall for the gods. He promised that it would be a wall that could never be knocked down.

"How long will it take to build our wall?" Odin asked. "A year," said the stranger. The gods agreed to let the stranger build the wall because they didn't have much time to do it themselves. They thought that no payment the stranger could ask for would be too much for the construction of an indestructible wall. They would give the stranger whatever he asked for if he completed the construction of the wall within a year.

The next day, the stranger brought a gigantic horse with him. The horse alone dragged all the stones that the stranger used to build the wall. They worked day and night, and the gods watched as the wall grew higher and higher. One day, Odin asked the stranger, "Let us know how we should pay you, and we'll make sure it happens." The stranger replied, "What I ask for my work is the sun and the moon, and I will marry the love goddess Freya."

When Odin heard this, he became furious. The price the stranger asked for his work was beyond all prices. The gods would never have agreed to the construction of the wall if they had known what the stranger would ask for. The gods were in an uproar, but they let Loki speak. Loki was half god. His father was the wind giant. "Let the stranger continue building the wall. Tell him that the wall must be completed by the first day of summer. If it is not completed by that day, he will not receive the price he asks for."

The stranger turned out to be a giant and worked even faster than before. At night, when the giant slept, the horse continued to work. And the wall around Asgard grew higher and higher with each passing day.



Three days before the first day of summer, the wall was almost finished. Only a large stone had to be placed above the gate. Before the giant went to sleep, he ordered his horse to fetch the largest stone. The moon shone that night, and the horse dragged the largest stone it had ever pulled. Then it saw a beautiful mare galloping towards it. The horse introduced itself. "My name is Svadilfare. What is yours?"

The mare sniffed. "Svadilfare, aren't you just a slave?" Svadilfare put down the stone and asked in surprise, "Why a slave?" "Because you have to work day and night for your boss," said the mare. "He makes you work but never lets you enjoy yourself. You dare not leave that stone to come play with me." "Who says I can't?" said Svadilfare. And soon Svadilfare chased after the mare. Playfully, she galloped away from him. Further and further away. Svadilfare enjoyed the game and forgot about the time. The next morning, the horse was gone. Since the giant couldn't lift such a large stone himself, he went in search of the horse. However, the horse had disappeared.

The first day of summer was approaching. Hours passed. When the giant appeared before the gate in the evening, it was too late. "Your work is not finished," Odin said. "You will not receive the sun, the moon, or Freya." "It's just that I made the wall so strong," said the giant, "that I can't even break it myself." Then the giant left. It was Loki who had transformed into a mare, with the idea of making the horse go wild. The gods were relieved and happy that Asgard was now safe with this wall. But Odin felt sad and uncomfortable in his heart about the not entirely fair way in which the construction of the wall would go down in history.

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