

Odin, then and now

Complete Synopsis

Act I

A large television screen hangs above the stage. The screen comes alive and we meet our Weather Reporter standing in front of a weather map, reporting and predicting what we are about to see/hear on the stage while also offering commentary as to how the actions of Odin and the ancients relate to history and to today's world, ie: human rights, equality, justice, greed, rising sea levels, an increase in average global temperatures, etc.

The Weather Report concludes and the television goes black.

The curtain rises. The music begins. There's fog on the ground and in the air. Dim lighting reveals Odin with a noose around his neck hanging lifelessly from the huge Tree of Life. A sword is stuck in his side. Suddenly, Odin comes to life, removes the sword, cuts the noose, and falls to the ground. The Norns rush to his side and offer comfort. Odin regains his senses and notices the Norns have been working with the Runes. Odin's curiosity leads the Norns to teach him about the Runes and how they communicate. After a while, Odin has grasped the language and decides to create poetic sentences with the Runes. He creates three different poems.

Upon creating these poems, Odin is struck with the reality of his dual nature. As the God of Knowledge, he is deeply entrenched in the creation of poetry. Yet as God of War, he is in charge of destruction. He lives a dual existence between right and wrong, war and peace, and kindness and hatred. He then performs a soliloquy that mixes his measured and deliberate "God of Knowledge" phrasing with his barbaric and impulsive "God of War" behavior.

At the end of this soliloquy, six Giants appear. They back Odin into a corner and vent their anger because Odin's army (the Beserks) murdered one of their comrades. Loko, the leader of the Giants appears and orders the Giants to hold off their anger. Loko reminds the Giants that he will personally guarantee Odin's demise and it will occur at Ragnarok (the war to end all wars). The Giants back off, Loko orders them to go home, and then orders Odin to leave - all while reminding Odin he will be punished at Ragnarok, the war to end all wars.

Once Odin is gone, Loko magically transforms into his female counterpart, Loki, who then wanders up the garden path to meet Odin. Loki is Odin's mistress. After

some tender moments together, she convinces him to give her permission to gather all the Strays (unclaimed warrior souls not intended for heaven or hell). In return, she will train these souls to fight at his side at Ragnarok.

Odin is skeptical but agrees. In truth, it's a plot in which she and her counterpart Loko will actually train the unclaimed souls to turn on Odin at Ragnarok and fight on the side of the Giants. As Odin and Loki continue their discussion, the Berserks - Odin's army - enter from the rear of the theatre in a drunken stupor, proceed through the audience and onto the stage where they pass by Odin & Loki. The Berserks are always accompanied by a Dwarf.

The scene ends with Odin & Loki exchanging declarations of love.

In the next scene, we meet Baldar, Odin's son, and Frigg, Odin's wife. The mother and son are reuniting after being apart for some time. Frigg thinks the world of Baldar and is completely obsessed with his safety, which has led her to establish pacts with all the evils, poisons and forces of death that could hurt him - with the exception of one: Mistletoe (which she strangely uses every day to adorn her hair). Baldar is a God who has been given the gift of clairvoyance, which means that means he sees that someday "the pen will be mightier than the sword". As such, Odin must realize that his identity of the God of Knowledge will reign supreme over his barbaric ways as the God of War.

Enter the Dance of the Valkyries – the nine warrior maidens who work for Odin. Each day, they comb the world looking for Strays (slain heroes from previous battles whose souls are unclaimed by heaven and hell). They take these heroes to Odin's Valhalla, where they are made immortal and protect Odin and the Gods forever. The Strays will join Odin at Ragnarok.

After the dance, we witness Loko meeting with the Giants, telling them of the sure-fire plot he and Loki have created to deceive Odin and give the Giants the victory at Ragnarok. From high atop a tree, this entire scene is witnessed by the Ravens. The Ravens are spies who travel around the world each day and report their findings to their master, Odin. They rush to report the Loko/Loki news to Odin.

Baldar is trying to convince Odin to embrace knowledge and civility when The Ravens arrive to tell of Loko/Loki's evil plan. Odin views this news as a precursor to Ragnarok and he vows to gather his forces for war. First, he calls upon the

Beserks, then the Valkyries, and, finally, the soldiers from Valhalla. The scene culminates in a powerful show of force that gives Odin a great deal of confidence.

The next scene opens with Frigg as coming upon an old woman who happens to be Loki in disguise. The two begin to talk. Frigg's fixation with the safety of Baldar leads her to reveal to the old woman that mistletoe is the only thing that can kill her and Odin's son.

Meanwhile, Odin travels to a meeting of the Gods at Asgard. The meeting is a hedonistic blend of violence, human sacrifice, and discussion about the impending doom of Ragnarok. During the chaos of the party, Loki murders Baldar with a dart made from mistletoe. The party continues with most people completely unaware that a murder has even been committed.

End of Act I

Act II

Fresh from the murder of Baldar, Loki shape-shifts back into Loko, who meets with the Giants to boast about his crime. The Ravens are horrified to hear Loko brag that he (as the sex-shifted Loki) murdered Baldar to get even with Odin for his murder of a Giant. They immediately leave to inform Odin of the terrible news.

News of the death of his son, coupled with the news that his mistress is actually Loko, sends Odin into a very dark place. He orders The Ravens to summon the Berserks and have them find Loko/Loki and kill them.

The Ravens follow orders before setting out to find Frigg to inform her of the death of her son. Odin also arrives to console her, but the pain is too great as she breaks down and collapses.

The mourners all gather for Baldar's Funeral. Presiding over the ceremony is Glythia, the female priestess carrying the hammer of holiness and protection. She performs the traditional rites and prayers over Baldar's body, and then leads to processional away to the young god's final resting place.

After the funeral, Odin is sitting beneath The Tree of Life, contemplating his dual personalities: warrior-incivility and thinker-civility. The Ghost of Baldar appears to Odin who, for the first time, listens to Baldar's message of peace and civility.

Meanwhile, upon Odin's orders, The Berserks have captured Loko/Loki with the intent to kill. However, knowledge is beginning to creep into their being. Some want to kill, yet others now understand the difference between killing for survival and killing because someone has ordered it. Eventually knowledge prevails and they release Loko/Loki unharmed. But will this newly-found knowledge weaken their effectiveness on the battlefield?

Despite the generosity of The Berserks, Loko/Loki's greed, obsession with power lead them over the edge in an aria of confusion, self-doubt, hatred, suffering, and pain.

Odin returns to the Tree of Life contemplating his curse of knowledge. In the end, his warrior side prevails and he vows to fight to the death at Ragnarok. He summons his aid, Fromin and the two review the battle plans.

The war has come: Ragnarok has arrived!

As all the main characters have had a personal epiphany and/or apocalypse before arriving at Ragnarok, the war is somewhat anti-climatic. Nevertheless, The Ravens meet their demise on the battlefield, then Odin kills Loko/Loki, Frigg loses her life as Baldar's Ghost watches from afar, and Odin is mauled to death by the wolf Fenrir. Everyone is dead. All becomes quiet.

A new day dawns. There's a young man and a woman by the Tree of Life. Slowly, they begin to dance and come closer to the audience. It's a young Odin & Loki. Will history repeat itself?

End of opera

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