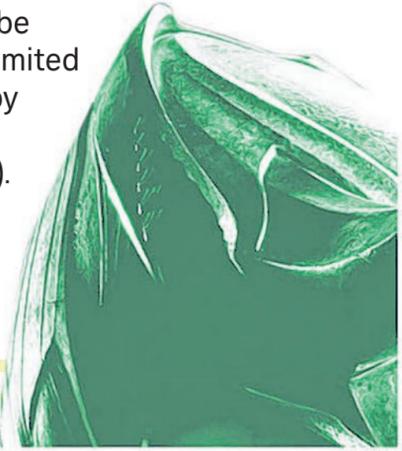


The many faces of Loki

Loki, a popular villain from the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), returns in a six-part miniseries that is named after him. Part of phase four of the MCU and now streaming on Disney+, it picks up from where the alternative Loki escapes with the Tesseract, a cube that gives its owner unlimited power, but is captured by the mysterious Time Variance Authority (TVA).



ICONIC HEADGEAR
Loki's horned helmet – which symbolises his sorcery – is one of the most iconic headgear in the MCU.

LOKI'S TIMELINE

The only MCU villain who appears from phases one to four, Loki uses lies, schemes and fake deaths to survive. Even though he meets his maker at the beginning of *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018), this trickster god manages to claw his way back to life – on the small screen.

MAIN MCU TIMELINE

Approximately 965 AD



Loki is born to Laufey, leader of the Frost Giants. Loki was abandoned and later adopted by Odin, King of Asgard. Odin raised Loki as his own, together with his other son, Thor. (*Thor*, 2011)

2011

An adult Loki joins forces with Laufey to challenge Odin, only to betray and kill his birth father to pledge his loyalty to Odin. When Odin denounces his actions, Loki chooses to fall into the abyss of space. (*Thor*, 2011)

ALTERNATE TIMELINE

2012



When the Avengers travel back in time to procure the Tesseract in the aftermath of the New York invasion, Loki escapes with the Tesseract and creates a branched timeline. (*Avengers: Endgame*, 2019)

2012



Loki survives and now works for Thanos, the Mad Titan. Loki uses the Tesseract to open a wormhole above New York City and launch a full-scale invasion. The Avengers foil his plan and capture him. Loki is later repatriated to Asgard, along with the Tesseract. (*The Avengers*, 2012)

IMMEDIATELY AFTER



Loki is captured by the TVA for breaking his timeline and creating a variant timeline. He is forced to help the TVA fix the problem in exchange for his life. (*Loki*, 2021)

2013



Dark Elves invade Asgard and kill Loki's adopted mother, Frigga. A grief-stricken Loki teams up with Thor to avenge their mother, sacrificing himself during the confrontation. Loki fakes his death and returns to Asgard to masquerade as Odin. (*Thor: The Dark World*, 2013)



TIME VARIANCE AUTHORITY

The TVA is a bureaucratic organisation that exists outside of time and space. It keeps tabs on all realities and timelines within the ever-growing Marvel Multiverse.

2017

Thor exposes Loki. The brothers reunite with Odin, now a frail old man. Upon his death, Hela, Loki and Thor's elder sister, is freed and demands their servitude. The brothers join hands to defeat Hela. Thor, Loki and the Asgardians head into space after the destruction of Asgard. (*Thor: Ragnarok*, 2017)



2018

Their ship is intercepted by Thanos. In an act of self-sacrifice, Loki attempts a futile attack on the Mad Titan. Thanos kills Loki in front of Thor. (*Avengers: Infinity War*, 2018)

FIGHTING WITH HIMSELF

The god of mischief is given two choices: either cease to exist as a disruptive "time variant" or help fix the timeline disruptions and stop a greater threat. The Sunday Times looks at the different faces of Loki in the comics who might appear in the show.



1. PRESIDENT LOKI

First appearance: Vote Loki #1 (2016)

Loki runs for the presidency of the United States and says he has the guts to lie outright to the people. His campaign tagline is "BeLiEve".



2. LADY LOKI

First appearance: Thor Vol. 3 #5 (2008)

The Ragnarok event occurs, killing all the Asgardian gods, including Loki. Instead of reincarnating as himself as he always does, Loki inhabits the body meant for fellow Asgardian Lady Sif.



3. KID LOKI

First appearance: Thor #617 (2010)

Loki "dies" at the hands of a villain called The Void. But because he had manipulated the Asgardian goddess of death's Book Of Hel, Loki's name is not found in it. Instead, he is reincarnated as a young boy with no memories of his past life.



4. IKOL

First appearance: Journey Into Mystery #622 (2011)

Kid Loki may be a clean slate, but his old self manifests as a spirit that haunts him. Kid Loki turns this spirit into a magpie called Ikol, an anagram of Loki.



5. CLASSIC LOKI

First appearance: Journey Into Mystery #85 (1962)

When Loki made his Marvel comics debut in 1962, he was an older, darker and more sinister character. A contemporary version of Loki harking back to that earlier one makes an appearance.

OTHER POP-CULTURE REFERENCES

THE MASK

The iconic green mask in the 1994 Jim Carrey film belongs to Loki, which explains why the wearer will gain notoriety and immortality.



THE SANDMAN

Loki is one of the characters in Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* comic book series (1988 to 1996). Depicted as a thin man with yellow eyes and flaming red hair, he goes by many nicknames, such as Loki Skywalker and Loki Liesmith.



MYTHICAL DETECTIVE LOKI RAGNAROK

Loki is the protagonist in the 1999 manga, *The Mythical Detective Loki Ragnarok*, where he is exiled from Asgard and becomes a paranormal detective.



NORDIC ROOTS

When Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Larry Lieber created Loki in 1962, they based a lot of his personality on Norse mythology.

NORSE MYTHOLOGY

- In mythology, Loki is a trickster god.
- Loki's main ability is shape-shifting.
- Loki is neither good nor evil. His aim is to amuse himself and create chaos.



A depiction of Loki carved on a stone, from the late Viking period, found in Denmark.

THE SYMBOL FOR LOKI

- The animal used to represent Loki is the snake, perhaps due to his cunning nature and how he can slither in and out of situations.



- Two snakes coming together to form an "S" is the symbol for Loki.
- In mythology, one of Loki's offspring is the giant sea serpent Jormungandr. It is said to be so big that it can circle Earth and bite its own tail.

Sources: MARVEL, BRITANNICA

PHOTOS: MARVEL
SUNDAY TIMES GRAPHICS: BILLY KER, BRYANDT LYN, SIMON ANG