

I AM THALOS, ODIN'S OLDER BROTHER

Chapter 16: I Shall Hear! I Shall Judge! I Shall Fulfill!

"Long live the God-King!"

Gods and giants alike raised their arms, shouting in wild, unrestrained celebration that echoed across the heavens!

What a feat!

Their God-King had vanquished two Primordial Giants—Ymir and Surtur—back-to-back. From this day forward, the Aesir's dominance over this world would be unshakable.

In their hearts surged not only fervent devotion but a mysterious resonance with the very fabric of the world.

As the cheers died down, one after another, they raised their heads and looked to the four corners of the world.

Just moments ago, this land had been consumed by the chaotic clash of ice and fire—now, it was eerily silent.

The howling winds ceased.

The boiling lava cooled.

From the heavens, a divine and unfamiliar force descended, cloaking the land in stillness.

The entire world of Ginnungagap seemed to kneel in reverence before God-King Thalos.

Thalos widened his eyes and looked around. The divine light in his pupils surpassed the boundaries of space.

Just as he began contemplating how to shape this newborn space carved from chaos, everyone—god and giant alike—sensed it:

The laws of the world were changing.

Familiar things were vanishing under the command of the world's will, while something entirely new was preparing to descend.

No one questioned it.

This was the doing of their sovereign—their almighty King Thalos, who was about to reshape the cosmos and redefine the law of all existence.

As they watched him, worship and awe etched into every expression, Thalos couldn't help but feel a quiet reflection rise in his heart.

So many crossroads. So many decisions.

Only those who choose correctly at each turning point can arrive at a moment like this.

The world's blessing was not something any ordinary being could withstand.

What he was about to do—rebuild the world—was something that not even a god a hundred or a thousand times stronger than him could do afterward. A world can only be reshaped once, during the chaotic expansion that follows its creation. Once formed and stabilized, it could never be altered again—not until the very end of its life.

For most god-kings, even this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was beyond reach.

But Thalos had it now.

And he would use it to forge a better world.

With the world's temporary blessing, his divine form grew—larger and larger—until in the blink of an eye, he was over a hundred meters tall.

Below him, gods and giants instinctively fell to their knees, bowing their proud heads.

Even the small flame-elemental creatures roaming the charred plains fled at first, but as Thalos' gaze swept over them, they too froze—prostrating before the God-King of the Aesir.

From above, a divine pressure unfamiliar to all living things descended. It was as if the entire world had transformed into a golden, towering temple a thousand meters tall.

Thalos' mighty form rose even higher, becoming the first giant of the cosmos, his gaze endless and all-seeing.

Raising both hands toward the heavens, he spoke.

His voice resonated with the world itself, reverberating across all existence with a deep, magnetic timbre:

"I have been entrusted by the World. I shall now reshape it.

Whatever desires you hold—speak them to me.

I shall hear.

I shall judge.

I shall fulfill."

The voice spread to every corner of creation.

Every strong heart beat wildly in its wake.

Even the gods found it hard to breathe, much less the giants.

No one spoke.

Not at first.

They glanced at one another, stunned into silence.

It was Bor who broke it.

The old warrior lifted his head and called out with conviction:

"Great God-King of the Aesir! The world in which we dwell is too dark—too void of life. We long for a new homeland, one bathed in light!"

It was a simple and honest request.

Since their ancestor Buri was first licked from the ice by the cow Audumbla, the Aesir had lived in cold, endless darkness. Perhaps the frost giants were accustomed to it, but the Aesir longed for sunshine. They always had.

And now, with his son the God-King wielding authority over the world's reshaping, why not speak the desire out loud?

In response, Thalos raised a single hand.

In his mind, he envisioned a divine realm of eternal spring, a garden filled with beauty and light.

The will of the world translated that vision—

And high above, a mirage shimmered into view.

A golden palace.

Flourishing courtyards.

Sunlight everywhere.

"Wooooaaahhh..."

Gasps of wonder spread through the crowd of gods. Their hearts were immediately seized by longing.

Bor's old face couldn't hide its awe.

"It's beautiful. What if we called this place... Asgard?"

Internally, Thalos groaned.

To outsiders, the name "Asgard" might sound noble, but in truth, it just meant "garden yard" in the Aesir tongue—a name as tacky and literal as calling a palace "Backyard Paradise."

Still, Thalos wouldn't argue with his father. He didn't want to disrupt fate too much and risk backlash.

He nodded with regal calm and answered with a single word:

"Granted."

With that, others stepped forward.

Next was the giantess Grid.

"My Lord, palaces may not suit our kind. May we, the giants, have a land of our own?"

Thalos, well aware that Grid might be carrying the first of the fourth-generation gods, nodded and waved once more.

Beneath Asgard, toward the east, a vast, snow-covered land appeared from the void.

It was like the pre-flood frost world all over again.

The gathered giants roared with joy.

"What if we called it... Jotunheim?"

Of course. "Jotun" meant giant. "Heim" meant home.

Another name about as creative as "Giant Town."

Still, the giants were ecstatic.

Thalos held back his eyeroll and answered again:

"Granted."

Next came his mother, Bestla.

"Could Jotunheim be made larger? Surely other frost giants survived. Not all males were our enemies."

Indeed. She was referring not only to Laufey's husband, but to other neutral giants—like her brother, who would one day be known as Mimir, the Giant of Wisdom, and even their father, Borrson, a direct descendant of Ymir.

"Granted."

With another shimmer, Jotunheim expanded even farther.

Then Odin stepped forward.

"I desire a world of shadow—one to imprison our enemies. A place where they will never see sunlight and be punished in cold and darkness forever."

He was quite proud of the idea.

He thought for sure this time his big brother wouldn't scold him.

But as always—

"My foolish little brother..."

The familiar phrase made Odin wince.

If you support me with power stones, I'll be able to release more chapters.