## I AM THALOS, ODIN'S OLDER BROTHER

Chapter	17:	The	Skull	as	the	Sky	1
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Odin's face flushed bright red. He wanted to argue—but after years of being out-reasoned and outwitted by his older brother, he knew better. Every time he spoke up, Thalos would counter with an even more profound truth, leaving him utterly humiliated.

So this time, he bit his tongue.

Argue less, and maybe he'd be scolded less.

Thalos, for his part, didn't want to keep crushing Odin in front of others either. After all, Odin was the second-born of the third generation of the Aesir. If not for Thalos, Odin would've been the unquestioned pillar of their people—a future God-King in everyone's eyes.

But a barrel filled to the brim or left empty makes no noise. It's the half-full ones that clatter most dangerously.

Odin was exactly that: dangerous because of his half-understanding. Whether or not he would one day drink from Mimir's well of wisdom, nearly every major decision Odin made in recorded myth was a catastrophic mistake—either digging his own grave or dragging the entire Aesir clan into a pit with him, usually hand-in-hand with Loki.

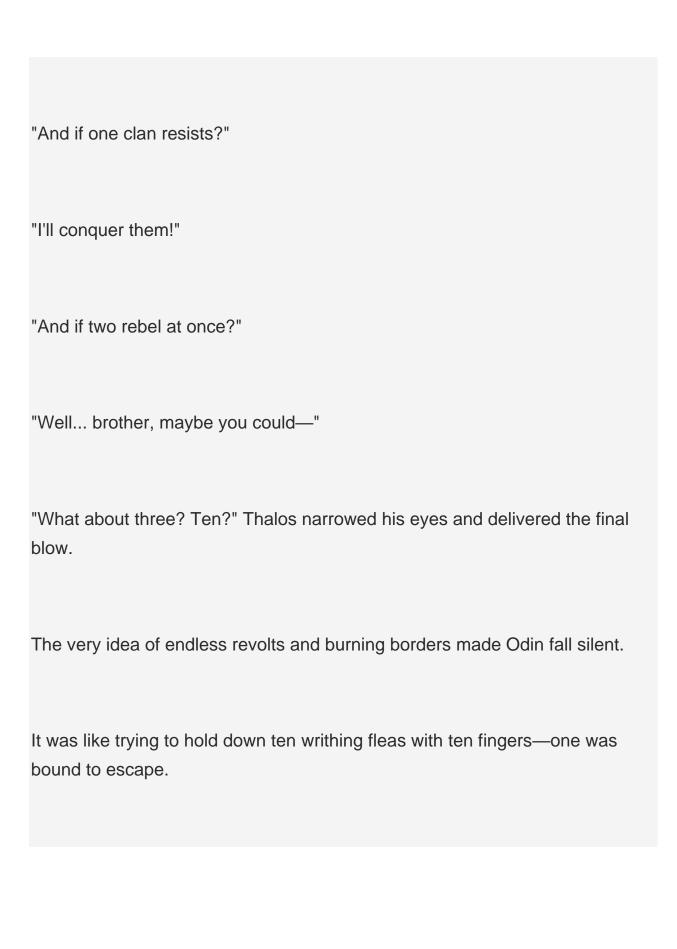
Looking at his obviously unrepentant brother pretending to yield, Thalos sighed and spoke:

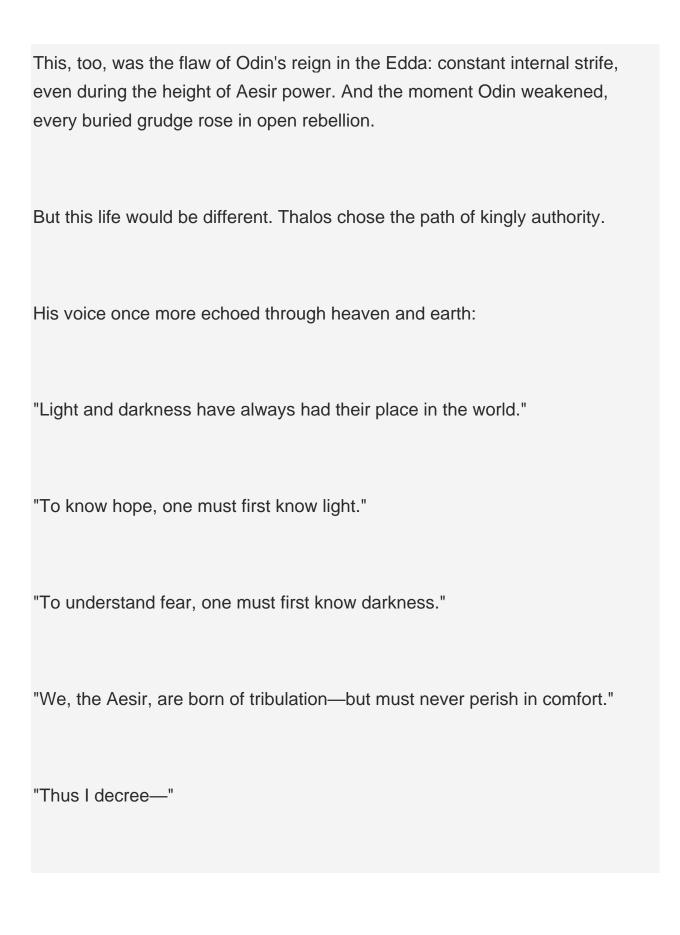
"Root out evil completely. Strike down your enemies at their source."

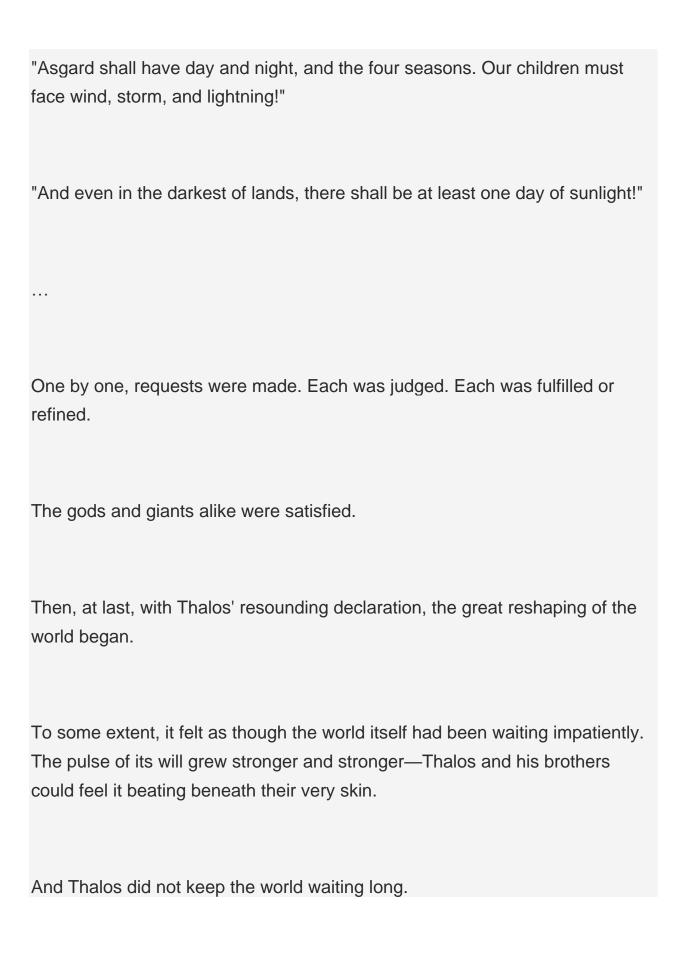
"If you cannot conquer your foes, then destroy them utterly."

"Leaving a sworn enemy trapped in darkness only gives fate a chance to harden their heart, sharpen their mind, and steel their flesh. When they rise again in strength—what will we do then?"

Still unwilling to accept the advice, young Odin blurted, "If they won't submit, we'll make them! We'll fight until they do!"







As his vision expanded beyond the land itself, he looked from far above at the vast Ginnungagap and its surrounding chaos.

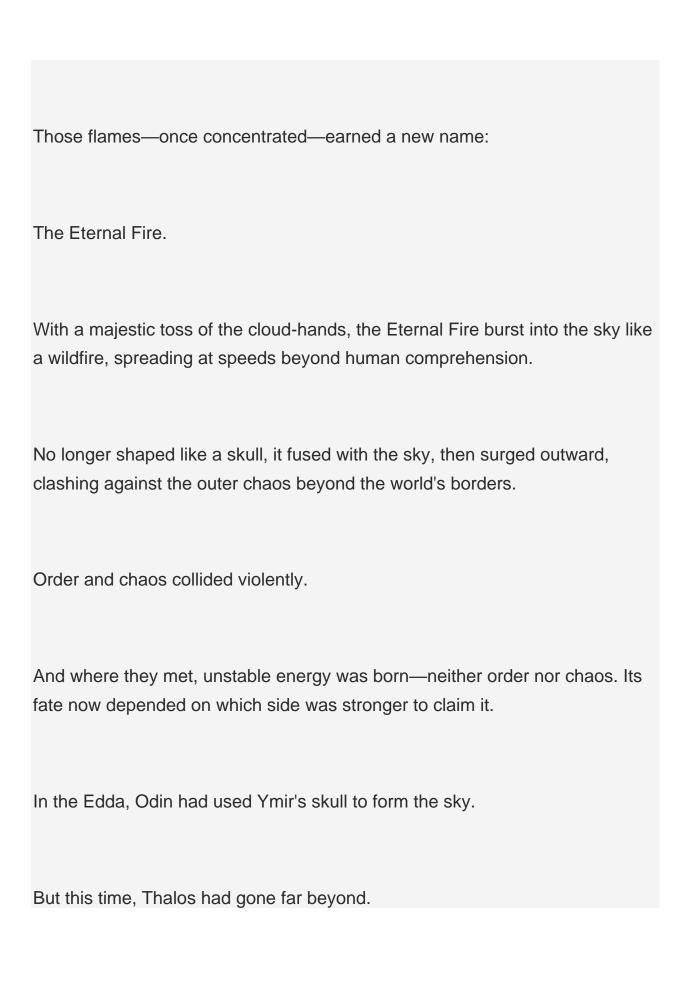
His gaze fell upon Surtur's ruined, terrible skull.

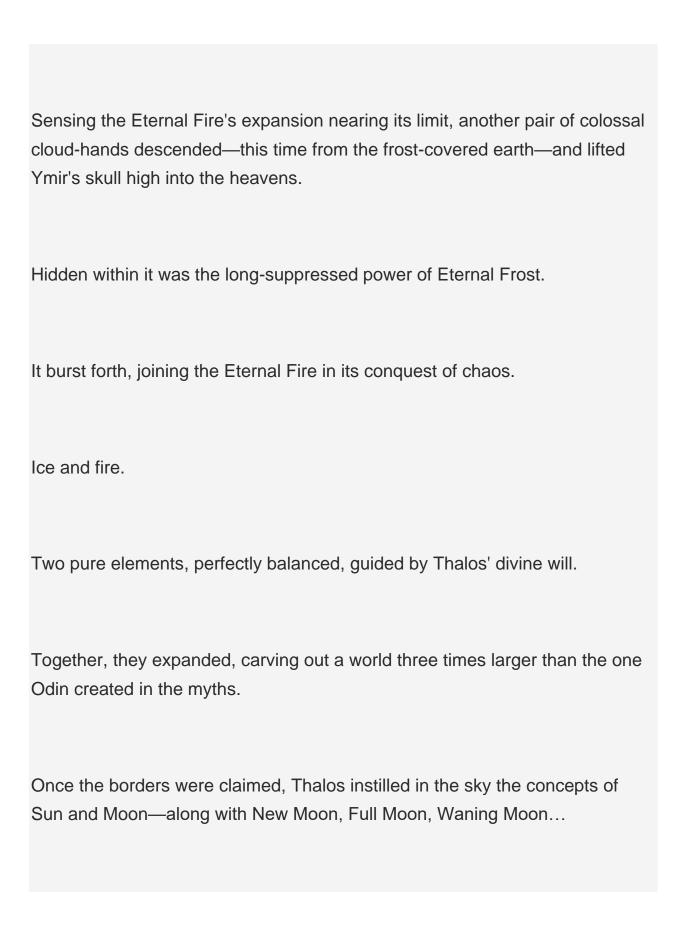
Raising both hands toward it, two gigantic hands made of cloud descended from the heavens. Over a thousand meters in length, these divine hands lifted the shattered skull of the fire giant high above the clouds.

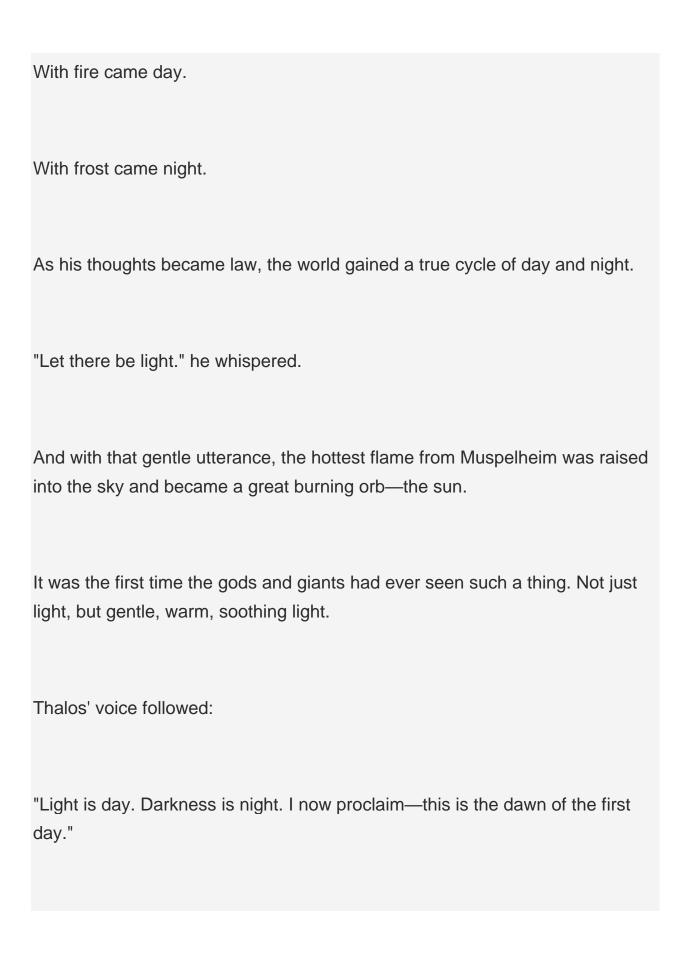
Once, the world had entrusted its foundational essence to Ymir and Surtur, hoping they would guide its order. But their ignorance stifled the world's evolution.

Now, the world reclaimed what had been given—through Thalos' will.

To the onlookers, it appeared that Thalos, with divine grace, ground Surtur's skull to ash, scattering its essence. In truth, he was extracting the flame-origin infused into Surtur by the world itself—refining it and casting it back into the world's core.







After eons in the eternal night, even the slighte	est change in law was enough to
inspire awe and trembling reverence.	
But this?	
This was world-making.	
And no matter how humbly Thalos tried to insis	
the historians of ages to come would all agree	on one term.
Creation.	