

I AM THALOS, ODIN'S OLDER BROTHER

Chapter 21: Thor the God of Thunder

Aside from the three main palaces, in order to demonstrate that they had no ambitions of seizing power, Bor and his wife, Odin, and Vili each built a copper-covered palace at the back of the Golden Palace's mountain. Though brass might still shine like gold from afar, those in the know could tell the difference.

Their spontaneous gesture spread to the mortal world through the mouths of the craftsmen.

Mortals began to identify one another's status by the clasps on their capes. If the clasp was made of ornate carved gold, it denoted nobility; if it was a plain brass clasp, it signified a commoner.

Having only palaces might have been too monotonous.

Near the palace complex were branches of the World Tree, with various creatures living around them.

For instance, the boar Saehrímnr served as a source of meat. Every day, Chef Andhrímnr would use the magical cauldron "Eldhrímnr" to cook it, and every night, Brother Boar would resurrect on the spot.

The stag Eikþyrnr and the goat Heiðrún stood on the mountain slopes beside Valhalla, eating leaves from the Tree of Læraðr. Heiðrún's milk was unmatched mead and could fill a giant-sized barrel, while Eikþyrnr's antlers would drip dew into the spring Hvergelmir.

There was also a rooster named Gullinkambi living on the roof. For now, it seemed ordinary, but according to prophecy, when it crowed, it would mark the beginning of Ragnarök.

Just as the construction of the palaces was completed, the giantess Járnsaxa suddenly went into labor.

It all happened so abruptly.

One moment, the skies over Asgard were clear and sunny, the next, they were filled with dark clouds and fierce winds.

Anyone unaware might have thought some demonic force was attacking.

Whether it was the craftsmen at work, the giants feasting, or the Aesir gods engaged in other matters, all were alarmed by this sudden change.

One after another, they rushed out of their buildings, only to witness a bizarre scene—the rest of Asgard remained calm and sunny, except above the rear hall of the Silver Hall where Járnsaxa resided. There, layer upon layer of thunderclouds had amassed.

The wind stopped moving, and every leaf on the branches of the World Tree drooped.

It was as if rain was about to fall, yet not a single drop came down.

The world fell into silence, broken only by the increasingly thunderous rumble that echoed across all of Asgard.

Thalos spread his perception and found that over the Sea of Elements, all other elemental forces had retreated.

Only the thunderous power of the wind element was exceptionally active.

The Aesir gods could clearly sense that the laws above the Silver Hall were shifting, as laws unrelated to thunder consciously gave way.

This was the will of the world making room for a new god to descend.

Soon, the overwhelming power of thunder and lightning began to dominate the sky, even attempting to encroach on domains it shouldn't have touched.

Interestingly, when some of this thunderous power brushed against Thalos's domain, it quickly withdrew and, in elemental language, expressed reverence and submission.

Thalos widened his eyes, his deep gaze transcending time and space.

In that moment, he understood—when Járnsaxa's belly began to swell, he still hadn't known what kind of child she would bear. But now it was clear he needn't have wondered. This was the world will's instinctive choice.

The world of Ginnungagap needed a God of Thunder. Whose son the God of Thunder was didn't matter to the world.

Thalos was the God-King, so he was the father.

Not long after, Bestla—playing the role of midwife—finally emerged, holding a newborn child two meters tall and weighing at least 200 pounds.

Yes, just born. Two hundred pounds. Still a child!

The sight made Thalos twitch at the corner of his eye. But considering the child's mother was a female giant over twenty meters tall—about seven stories high—it was not entirely unreasonable.

Compared to the stunned faces of Bor, Odin, and Vili, Bestla reacted quite naturally. This was the Aesir's first fourth-generation god!

Driven by instinct for survival and reproduction, the newly promoted grandmother Bestla couldn't stop smiling. She might not care whether her son was God-King, but she certainly cared whether he had offspring. A powerful divine descendant was a guarantee of the Aesir's enduring strength. It also gave all the giants and mortals who served the Aesir a lasting object of loyalty.

"Dear Thalos, have you thought of a name for the child?"

Outside the Silver Hall, thunder roared.

The air within the hall was filled with divinity familiar to the gods, so much so that it should no longer be called a temple, but rather a shrine.

Within the great hall stood the sacred statue of their ancestor Buri. His eyes, made of black onyx, seemed to gaze with profound insight at his great-grandson. The statue seemed to smile...

Listening to the thunder outside the window, Thalos smiled as well.

"Thor! Thor, the God of Thunder—"

"RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE!" A deafening boom shook the heavens as more thunderclouds gathered, unleashing a continuous barrage of thunder. The spirits of lightning seemed to declare their allegiance to the new god in this way!

Bor was overjoyed. Laughing, he took Thor from Bestla's arms. "Let Grandpa hold you."

Little did he know, whether because of his rough handling or because his five-meter-tall frame seemed 'petite' in comparison, Thor felt uncomfortable. He raised his chubby but pot-sized fist and punched Grandpa square in the left eye.

"Ah!" Bor cried out in pain. His eye visibly swelled and darkened.

Worst of all, there was nowhere he could complain.

Who told him to shove his big bearded face over like a black bear, only to get sucker-punched by his adorable grandson?

As his eye turned black, Thor the good grandson actually giggled.

"Pfft!"

"Whuuuh!"

"Hahahaha!"

All the gods burst into laughter—except for poor Grandpa Bor, whose world had just been rocked.

Thor grew quickly. As a child with three-quarters giant blood, his genes turned out surprisingly good. He didn't seem slow-witted like in the epic Edda, but rather quite clever, with a stunningly strong physique.

By the time he was two, he could lift his five-meter-tall, 800-pound grandfather Bor like a barbell...

With the birth of the two male gods, Tyr and Víðarr, the Aesir no longer faced any risk of a lineage break.

In a way, Thalos owed it all to the Aesir's almost primitive and wild customs. His parents never forced him to marry any giantess. After all, back then, Bor had simply knocked Bestla out with a club on the battlefield and dragged her home, turning raw rice into cooked rice, so to speak.

Most female giants were casual and admired strength. Bearing Thalos's child and living with Thalos were two entirely separate matters. Some stayed in Asgard, while others returned to live in Jotunheim.

In Thor's fourth year, the magical cow Auðumbra finally pulled a stunt on Thalos.
