

I AM THALOS, ODIN'S OLDER BROTHER

Chapter 8: The Mysterious Blood of the Giant

Everyone—whether it was the rest of the Aesir or the still-watching giants—believed the progenitor of frost giants, Ymir, was already dead.

In truth, it was an illusion.

Thalos knew his limits well.

Sure, he had broken through Ymir's thick defenses. But killed him? Not yet.

The most defining trait of the giant race was simple: they were hard to kill.

For a human, that wound would be fatal.

For Ymir? It was barely a flesh wound.

A massive length of torn intestines was already spilling from the progenitor's split-open abdomen, but even as that grotesque sight unfolded, Ymir's body was beginning to regenerate.

New tissue sprouted like wriggling roots at the edges of his wounds, struggling to pull the injury closed and restore his enormous form.

"Vili, shrink down! Get away from there now!" Thalos, having landed his strike, quickly reduced his size and retreated. Even in his haste, he didn't forget to shout at his dopey younger brother to flee.

Thankfully, Ymir's full attention was focused on his pain and Thalos's attack.

If he had turned on Vili just then, Thalos honestly wasn't sure if he'd intervene or not.

"Pest—!" Ymir roared, voice garbled by rage and agony. With one sweeping strike, he blasted away an entire hill at least the size of a basketball court.

The collision shattered the mound into thousands of tons of debris, sending a storm of boulders and earth crashing down across the plain, striking everything in range. The impact rocked the entire region, triggering a quake that shook the frozen landscape.

And then—something appeared.

Ymir, following a faint instinct, dropped into a crouch and slammed his palm onto a humanoid shape made of frost.

"RAAGH!" he recoiled with another howl of pain. As he pulled back his massive hand, he was stunned to see a huge, jagged spike of stone impaled straight through his palm.

He had never expected this—never guessed that the icy human figure, so similar in form to the one that had wounded him earlier, was hollow inside, hiding a weapon of deadly precision.

In normal times, he could crush a hundred such spikes with a flick of his fingers. But slamming down with full force had meant impaling himself—literally.

Before he could recover, a second thunderous shock erupted near his foot.

This time, it was a sharpened tree trunk wrapped in crackling lightning that speared through his left shin like a javelin of wrath.

"WHO?! Pest! COME OUT! COME OUT!!!" Ymir bellowed, flailing in blind rage.

Once again, he struck only empty air—those damned Aesir gods had vanished into the snowstorm.

Ymir's destructive might was beyond question.

But it meant nothing if he couldn't hit his targets. He was only wasting his energy—his life.

"Vili! Climb that mountain and throw a big rock at him. Then run over there!" Thalos barked again, tracking his clueless brother down in the chaos.

"What about me?" Odin popped up from behind a boulder.

"You cover Vili. Then repeat the whole thing."

"Got it!" Odin nodded, then paused. "Big Brother, what about you?"

"I'm preparing a big move. I just need you two to buy me a little time." Thalos's voice was calm but certain. "Once I'm ready, Ymir is dead. Let's go—we can wear him down."

"Understood!"

Odin still harbored ambitions of surpassing his brother, but now was no time for pride. He grabbed Vili and took off.

Two minutes later, high atop a two-hundred-meter mountain, Vili heaved a boulder the size of five men locked arm-in-arm toward the distant Ymir—over a kilometer away.

The boulder tore through the sky like a meteor, cutting through the freezing winds with terrifying force.

Naturally, Ymir noticed it.

He raised his makeshift club—a 50-meter-long pine trunk stripped of branches—and struck the boulder cleanly midair.

Sparks exploded as the granite rock shattered, flying off who knows where.

With one monstrous step measuring fifty meters, Ymir charged toward Vili.

Fortunately, Odin's surprise attack came just in time, forcing Ymir to turn again.

Once more, Odin bolted away.

To outsiders, it looked like another failed Aesir ambush.

But only Thalos knew exactly what he was doing.

He had stepped into a steaming, blood-red pit.

Ymir, despite the severity of his abdominal wound, barely noticed how much blood he had lost. That one slash from Thalos had spilled enough to fill an entire snowy crater.

On the pristine white landscape, the sight of this blood pool was surreal—like a gate to the deepest depths of a frozen hell.

Without hesitation, Thalos leapt in.

As soon as he submerged, he felt it: the blood transformed into countless crimson tendrils, piercing his divine body like lances of raw power.

His bearskin armor exploded. His coarse garments were torn to shreds.

Even his powerful ice shield shattered instantly before this ancient, savage force.

For anyone else, panic would have been inevitable.

But not Thalos.

He accepted it all.

For beings not of the frost giants, this blood was a deadly poison—even the robust Aesir couldn't resist it.

But he was the exception.

Born of Bor's divine seed and Bestla's giant blood—

Thalos was at least half frost giant!

That lineage allowed him to let Ymir's blood surge into his divine form, reshaping it from the inside out.

Bones snapped and reformed.

Organs liquefied and rebuilt.

Thalos's skin became a shredded canvas of crimson and steam.

But no matter how wild the giant's blood raged, Thalos didn't resist.

He embraced it.

He even had the clarity to sift through the invading power—absorbing the essence, discarding the waste.

Like a soul damned to eternal torment, he endured the cycle of death and rebirth over and over, letting the blood rewrite him.

The only thing he protected was his heart—shielded by his divine will—preventing his body from becoming fully frost giant.

Bones crackled like firecrackers.

Organs restructured, harder and stronger than before.

Muscles and sinew reknit themselves tighter than steel.

To Thalos, it felt like an eternity.

In truth, it lasted less than three minutes.

When he finally emerged from the pool, anyone watching would have been stunned:

The reeking blood pool had transformed into a chilling lake of clear, icy water.

Aside from a few fragments of Ymir's shredded entrails, no trace of the progenitor remained in the pond.

Thalos raised his head.

Crimson droplets—purified giant blood—dripped like melted snow from his brow, yet their essence was already absorbed. They no longer held danger.

Thalos was smiling—his white teeth gleaming with wild satisfaction.

"Not enough," he murmured, eyes glittering.

"This blood... this glorious progenitor's blood...

It's still not enough."