

Thalos 100

Chapter 100: The Deep Sea God [Ægir]

The cow Auðumbla in Jotunheim had always been the greatest wildcard of them all.

Sure, sometimes it would lick out an Aesir god frozen in ice—but more often than not, it brought only trouble.

Blessing or curse, it was one and the same.

Odin had long since grown tired of it.

While his elder brother enjoyed himself in the warmth of Asgard, Odin had to squat here in this frozen wasteland, keeping an eye on a giant cow in case it licked something dangerous out of the glacier—so he could immediately eliminate it.

Whatever joy he'd once felt upon becoming king of a realm had long since been ground down by the monotony of this endless duty.

He'd thought many times about killing the beast, which was as large as his own palace. Unfortunately, even with his spatial powers, he had tried again and again without being able to harm it in the slightest.

And in the past year, Odin's frustration had only deepened.

Comparison is the thief of joy.

If his younger brother Vili was a fool who happened to fall into good fortune, lounging on the beaches of Vanaheim, Odin could accept that. But seeing Freyr's treatment? That he could not abide.

Why was it that Freyr, a lowly descended god, could be granted dominion over an entire realm—sunny, radiant Alfheim no less—surrounded by beautiful, obedient light elves? Meanwhile, Odin had to freeze his ass off here, fighting giants and commanding a rowdy, disloyal bunch?

Even if reason told him that Thalos's actions were strategic—absorbing the Vanir through calculated marriage and placement—in his heart, all Odin saw was Freyr, a pretty-boy political climber, bedding Thalos's sister and riding her pillow-talk straight to a throne. That little mutt now stood above Odin himself.

Loki's growing closeness to Thalos only made this imbalance more bitter.

He felt like his corner had been stolen out from under him.

So Odin slacked.

He'd never been a particularly responsible god to begin with. In the epics, whenever the Nine Realms fell into crisis, he'd toss the job to Thor and call it done.

Thus, when one day Auðumbla licked open a vast, frozen canyon, Odin was late by half a day in responding.

"Go on, go on—maybe Asgard could use a little chaos for once."

In the past, Odin would take the brunt of such threats, only letting Asgard mop up the leftovers. But this time, his mindset had shifted. He was content to sit back, let things fall apart, and let Asgard take the hit.

Worst case, they strip me of Jotunheim's kingship. Big deal. Who the hell wants to rule this godforsaken wasteland anyway? Odin muttered bitterly.

With his sons Höðr and Váli in tow, Odin finally arrived at the scene—and was promptly stunned.

"Looks like giants... but they're not giants?"

The enormous footprints left in the snow told Odin that whatever had emerged was huge. But these newly awakened beings weren't like the crazed, vengeful frost giants of old. Instead of charging toward Asgard, they headed for the sea—then dove in.

"Father, what should we do? Should we report to Asgard?" Váli asked solemnly.

"Go ahead. If they're enemies, they'll show up at Asgard anyway. If not—then it doesn't matter." Odin spurred his four-legged pegasus and trotted right back to his palace.

By the time Thalos received word, the delay was already half a day, at best.

"Forgive me, Your Majesty—I happened to be looking elsewhere at the time," said Heimdall, kneeling at the base of the divine throne, solemnly apologizing.

"It's fine. I don't blame you. You have keen sight, yes—but you can't be everywhere at once. Rise."

"Thank you, Your Majesty."

Heimdall did indeed possess divine sight—he could see for thousands of miles—but even that had limits. He could only focus on one thing at a time. When his attention was locked onto a particular detail, broader events could escape him.

Especially considering Jotunheim was enormous—some twenty times the size of Asgard.

Unless the enemy directly jumped onto the Bifrost, Heimdall's surveillance range was rather limited.

After dismissing Heimdall, Thalos fell into thought.

Something water-related? A sea monster? Sea giants? Or something else entirely?

There were plenty of entities associated with water in Norse myth.

At the moment, even Thalos couldn't think of a specific match.

He wanted to keep watching the situation—but like Odin in the epics, he had a similar problem: he was surrounded by beings with sky-high combat ability and very low strategic insight.

These punch-first, think-never types were practically experts at making situations worse.

Thor, Freyr, Tyr, Vidar—these were the few competent ones. Sometimes, Thalos would make use of Loki. And that was it. That was the entire strategic braintrust of a god-king overseeing nine realms.

As for the rest of the gods? Thalos was satisfied enough if they could simply manage their own domains—expecting them to help with cross-realm issues was wishful thinking.

So Thalos instructed his Valkyries to keep watch and report any updates. That was all he could do for now.

And sure enough, soon afterward, changes began to stir in the middle realms.

Among the fishermen and sailors of Midgard and Vanaheim—mortals who worshipped Thalos in his aspect as god of the ocean—it was customary to pray at grand sea temples, offering devout sacrifices before setting sail.

Each mortal made a wish: safe voyages, clear skies, no storms.

Of course, oceanic storms were just natural phenomena—sunlight evaporating seawater, which then condensed into clouds until it eventually fell again.

Thalos was far too busy to micro-manage weather systems.

Luckily, mortals were blissfully ignorant. When someone drowned, their first thought was: "They must not have prayed devoutly enough to Lord Thalos Borson—he grew angry."

Those who lived? Blessed by Thalos.

Those who died? Blasphemers.

Thus, the logic loop was complete and self-reinforcing.

But lately, mortals near Midgard's surrounding seas began to speak of a new divine being—the Deep Sea God: Ægir.

Mortals chanted his name not with reverence, but with fear.

This legendary, hundred-meter-tall sea giant with four arms was said to deliberately capsize ships that ventured too close to his underwater lair. All their cargo and treasures became his.

Rumor had it his home was filled with jewels and riches, lit not by torches but by gold itself, so radiant that people began calling his treasure "Ægir's Fire."

When Brunhilde brought these rumors to Thalos's attention, he finally remembered who this fellow was.

"Ah. It's him."

Seated on the divine throne, Thalos rubbed his temples.

Being God-King was no easy job.

To rule all nine realms meant that whenever a new challenger emerged—he had to respond. Whether to crush them or recruit them was a separate matter.

But another thing stood out: Ægir's domain was water, overlapping with Thalos's current divine domain of ocean.

In theory, Ægir's jurisdiction was even broader than Thalos's.

And if that's the case...

Well, there's nothing left to say.

Beat him.