

Thalos 116

Chapter 116: Bring Me His Head

The gods of Asgard had always been a shallow bunch, judging worth by beauty.

They loathed the ugly male giants by nature.

But after hearing Mimir's proposal, Odin suddenly found the crooked eyes, lopsided mouth, and hunched back of the elderly wisdom giant... oddly pleasant to look at.

"Keep talking," Odin commanded, his voice leaving no room for argument.

Mimir braced himself, carefully choosing his words, hesitating for a long moment before continuing.

"The Aesir have no enemies left. That is... both good and bad."

"How so?"

Mimir rubbed his balding crown and sighed.

"When there's an external threat, the Aesir stand united."

But once that threat is gone, internal conflict surfaces."

"Like what?" Odin's one eye gleamed, sharp and invasive, as if it could see straight through Mimir's chest and into his soul.

A warning, loud and clear: you know what happens to Mimir when he's down to just a head.

Mimir's facial muscles twitched. He wore an expression like he had a toothache.

Still, he offered up his hard-won insight:

"His Majesty Thalos never appointed a queen. Nor did he name Balder—the purer-blooded Aesir—as his heir. Instead, he favors what the Aesir consider a mongrel... his eldest son, the thunder god Thor."

Odin scoffed.

"Those pure-blood Aesir are all old and useless. A few goddesses are alright, but the rest? Pathetic."

"They may be weak," Mimir said cautiously, "but they represent legitimacy. If they rise up, they'll drain Thalos's attention—distract him from more important matters."

"Such as?"

"Giants. More frost giants. What if, under your watch, they gathered in numbers enough to form a nation?"

Odin's mind snapped into focus.

Why had the Aesir always slaughtered giants, killing them on sight or forcing them into servitude?

And yet Thalos never did this to humans.

Because frost giants were strong enough to be a real threat.

Odin understood now.

"And?"

"Th-That's all... for now, my lord. I... I need time to think."

Mimir lowered his head, not daring to meet Odin's gaze. His nerves were fraying—he feared Odin would catch on to his stalling.

"Then go think!" Odin barked. "In three days, I want a better plan."

"Yes, my lord," Mimir muttered with a bitter nod.

As Mimir departed, Odin could hardly contain his excitement.

He trembled just thinking about the moment he would ascend the throne, basking in the worship of gods and giants alike.

The glimpse of fate he had seen was too short. He couldn't remember many details.

But that didn't matter.

He could imagine the rest.

If he were king, would Frigg become his queen? Would Freyja lie in his bed? Would Balder, beloved by all, become his heir?

The more he imagined, the more his joy turned to rage.

"So... does that mean my brother took everything from me? My throne, my consorts, my sons?"

At first, it all felt absurd.

But the longer he brooded, the more he believed.

He began to convince himself this was the "real" timeline, stolen from him.

Any lingering guilt toward Thalos... vanished.

As if it had never existed.

...

Leaving Odin's counterfeit golden palace, Mimir felt numb.

Great ancestors... why must the Aesir always bring disaster on themselves?

Was peaceful coexistence truly so hard?

No one understood Thalos's terrifying nature better than Mimir.

Others drank from the Well of Wisdom to raise their potential.

Thalos drank simply to gain more experience.

His intelligence already far surpassed his time.

As the well's original guardian, Mimir knew this deeply—and thus saw no future in Odin's schemes.

Alone and unseen, he muttered,

"Foolish Odin... and you think you can fight His Majesty with this brain?"

He failed to notice the two scarlet eyes locked on him from a pine tree overhead.

"...Hmm?"

Suddenly alert, Mimir looked up.

"I thought I felt someone watching..."

He saw nothing.

"Just my imagination, probably..."

...

Two days later.

Another group of giants emerged from the glacier.

To others, Odin's response was expected—he rode into battle on his pegasus, wielding his spear, accompanied by his only two combat-capable sons: Hodr and Vali.

But to Mimir, this was a rare opportunity.

Possibly his last.

He didn't bring any attendants. Quietly, he left Odin's castle.

If he was caught, he planned to claim he was visiting his daughter Verdandi.

His blood tie to Odin was his only shield.

Even if he was exposed, Odin wouldn't dare openly kill him.

Step by step—each five meters long—Mimir made his way toward the Bifrost.

The Rainbow Bridge wasn't near Odin's palace. That couldn't be helped.

When it was built, the bridge, Odin's castle, and the glacier formed a straight line.

Odin had meant to protect Asgard—not allow threats to march unopposed into the divine realm.

What neither Odin nor Thalos anticipated was that the glacier itself stayed in place, but the cow Auðumbla—who licked the ice to nourish life—changed where she licked.

Now the three landmarks formed an equilateral triangle.

When Mimir reached just three kilometers from the Bifröst—

A group of fully armed frost giants suddenly emerged from behind a small hill.

Mimir froze.

He forced a smile.

"Well, fancy seeing fellow kin here! I am the wisdom giant, Mimir—"

He couldn't finish the sentence.

Their bloodshot eyes and murderous expressions said it all.

"Traitor!"

"Kill the traitor!"

"AAAHHHHHH—!"

These half-naked giants, wielding crude stone axes and clubs, charged forward, howling.

To the outside world, it seemed they cursed Mimir for betraying their kind to the Aesir.

But Mimir knew the truth:

"Traitor" could mean many things.

As he watched a massive axe grow rapidly larger in his view, he smiled bitterly.

All the wisdom in the world... means nothing against a single axe.

Without protection, even the wisest sage was but a lamb to slaughter.

If they were humans, perhaps he could've fought back.

But against his own kind—dim-witted, brute-force monsters—Mimir didn't even bother resisting.

His fate had been sealed the moment he stepped out of Odin's palace.

No—

The day he reluctantly followed Odin into Jotunheim.

...

"What?! Mimir was attacked and killed?!"

Odin's reaction came in the middle of a victory celebration—he and his sons had just crushed a party of twenty giants.

He leapt to his feet, face twisted in exaggerated shock.

"He... he was my uncle!" he cried, voice full of staged grief.