

## Thalos 117

Chapter 117: Shoot the Arrow First, Paint the Target Later

Grief for his kin seemed to overwhelm Odin—or so it appeared.

Half a day later, Odin personally visited the site where Mimir had been killed.

If he had truly investigated the matter, many more questions would have surfaced.

For example—why had Mimir, who rarely ever left the castle, suddenly been out alone?

Why did he just so happen to run into a few savage giants who had "revived" from the glacier?

But Odin didn't investigate.

He simply declared:

"Mimir's soul has not yet dispersed. It doesn't belong to the underworld—not yet.

To continue receiving his wise counsel, I've decided... to resurrect his head."

"Resurrect?" Bragi frowned.

"Yes! I've recently mastered some magic. Let me try."

And so, as Odin muttered a series of obscure runes no one else could understand, the severed head of Mimir—taken from the body hacked apart by other giants—was "resurrected."

Mimir's eyelids twitched unnaturally.

His cloudy eyes rolled wildly in his sockets, a deeply unsettling sight.

But among gods and giants, no one flinched.

If it got out of hand—well, they could always lop it off again.

Mimir's facial muscles spasmed violently, each one seemingly with its own will.

Within mere seconds, his expression cycled through joy, anger, sorrow, and despair—ending with a long, hopeless sigh.

"Sigh... Odin..."

"My dear uncle, my old friend!" Odin declared righteously, while speaking the most despicable words.

"Forgive me—I had no other choice but to preserve your soul this way. Surely, you wouldn't want your spirit dragged to Helheim, tortured by chaos, suffering endless pain, never to be redeemed?"

To anyone else, it sounded like noble grief.

But Mimir knew exactly what it meant:

Odin was threatening him.

The first half was nonsense. The second half made it clear:

If Mimir didn't behave, Odin would see to it that his soul endured eternal torment.

There were no random, rampaging giants.

Odin had raised these "bandits" himself. He had made a deal with them.

He had arranged everything.

This wasn't a case of Odin acting on Mimir's suggestion—

It was Odin acting first, then forcing Mimir to retroactively justify it.

Shoot the arrow, then draw the target.

Wherever the arrow lands, just draw a bullseye around it—it's always a perfect shot.

Odin had lured Mimir into trying to flee to Asgard, then "accidentally" leaked his location to some chaos-wracked giants who hated Aesir collaborators.

A classic move—killing with a borrowed knife.

One moment of disobedience, and Mimir was reduced to this:

No longer man, no longer giant, just a talking head.

Only those who'd suffered it firsthand could understand the depth of that cruelty.

Mimir... surrendered.

He forced a bitter smile.

"My lord... it is an honor to continue serving you."

That's more like it.

Odin burst into cheerful laughter, proudly cradling the living, breathing head of Mimir.

Dead uncle? What dead uncle?

He's clearly still "alive"!

Mimir's bizarre resurrection—and the fact that he continued to speak—spread through Asgard like wildfire.

Some curious onlookers even visited Odin's palace just to witness the spectacle.

And to everyone's shock, Mimir's head still answered questions with insight and precision, just as he had before.

Gods and giants alike gossiped across palaces and streets alike.

Only Hela sensed something deeper.

She personally requested an audience with Thalos.

"Your Majesty... Mimir's death wasn't natural."

"Oh?" Thalos replied, face unreadable. "Explain."

"Every soul, upon death, is drawn—across space—to Helheim.

So why is Mimir's soul still in his body, long after death?"

"Maybe wisdom giants are just... special?" Thalos offered dryly.

"No," Hela said, resolute.

"Someone used a powerful death-attribute incantation to bind Mimir's soul—before he died.

Just like how Lan once intercepted mortal souls in the deep sea.

"There aren't many deities with powerful death affinity."

She stared directly into Thalos's eyes.

"Who do you suspect, Hela?" Thalos asked calmly.

Hela lowered her gaze.

"If Your Majesty already knows... I dare not presume further."

Thalos blinked in surprise.

She's sharp. Really sharp.

Maybe it was her years of rejection and isolation—being half-dead, half-divine—that honed her sensitivity.

She could distinguish genuine kindness from polite fear with chilling accuracy.

And her intuition wasn't just better than her peers'—

It was top-tier.

Thalos sighed.

"Don't overthink it. Mimir is uncle to both me and Odin.

No matter what, Odin would never harm him."

Hela blinked. She thought on that line for a moment—

"Odin wouldn't... but maybe he'd let someone else do it?"

She understood.

Odin wasn't insane, was he?

Did he forget Mimir's daughter was one of the Goddesses of Fate?

And he still dared to do this?

No matter how you tried to hide it, you couldn't fool Fate.

Even if Verdandi and Urd swallowed this silently—what about next time?

Verdandi governed the present.

If she decided to curse someone, she didn't need evidence—just intent.

So much of this... was terrifying to consider.

Hela quickly shifted the topic.

"Your Majesty... I've recently started dreaming."

Wait, you too?

That caught Thalos off guard.

Gods don't dream—unless the dream is deeply, intimately connected to them.

This was no small matter.

Thalos leaned forward slightly, instinctively leaving the back of his throne.

"Can you tell me?"

"If it were anyone else, no. But for you—yes. You hold the death domain too."

Thalos's eyes narrowed.

In this world, he'd preserved Valhalla, but rarely touched mortal souls.

He maintained a strict selection policy, limiting his Einherjar to 1,024 warriors at most.

Death-wise, the power balance was roughly 1:9—he held one part, Hela nine.

In the Edda, Odin had death authority too, but rarely entered Helheim, let alone Hela's palace.

Hela said softly, "I dreamed... that half of a noble god's body had fallen into Helheim."

"Half?"

"...Yes. Only the lower half. I couldn't tell who it was."

Thalos: "..."

Hela was still a soft-spoken, elegant teenage girl—he couldn't exactly ask her to identify gods by their groin.

That would be absurd.

After a long pause, Thalos muttered,

"Did the legs... have any distinguishing features?"

"No. They'd been chewed to bits."

"...."

Hela's words left Thalos completely speechless.