

Thalos 119

Chapter 119: Interrupted Casting

Jötunheimr, within the replica of the Golden Palace.

Odin was currently deep in a private conversation with Mimir's severed head inside the main hall.

"Mimir, I've always longed to speak with you without reservation."

"My lord, I too have yearned for such a chance."

Mimir knew Odin didn't believe him, but he had no choice. Odin had already made him "bring his head to meet" him—who knew what worse things the utterly unscrupulous Odin might do next?

At this moment, Mimir's counsel was truly sincere.

Ten ideas, ten truths, not a drop of manipulation.

"Last time you said, 'Only when the world falls into chaos do I stand a chance.' Have you thought of something new?"

"I have an immature suggestion," Mimir offered cautiously.

"Speak."

"Incite the Dark Elves."

"Oh? What use are those black stick-men?"

"As everyone knows, the Aesir gods love the Light Elves and despise the ugly Dark Elves. The Dark Elves don't even have their own realm. They live scattered in Svartalfheim, sharing space with Dwarves, or in parts of Niflheim."

"My big brother selects divine servants and Einherjar from them every year."

"Not enough. Have them petition—say they demand a kingdom of their own."

Odin paused to ponder.

It was a solid suggestion. Even as mere mortals, the way his brother handled things, he'd likely take notice of this.

"What else?"

"Well... that depends. Do you dare?"

"What wouldn't I dare?"

"My lord, have you heard of the Eight Great Beasts?"

"Eight? I'm not exactly sure."

"That list comes from those with too much free time," Mimir said, before naming them one by one:

Níðhöggr, the black dragon gnawing at Yggdrasil's roots.

Veðrfölnir, the great eagle dwelling atop Yggdrasil's crown—its flight over a city brings hurricanes that level mortal realms.

Jörmungandr, the World Serpent—Loki's child, but now subdued and branded with Order runes by King Thalos, rendering it far weaker.

Fáfnir, a former dwarf turned dragon who destroyed a Dwarven kingdom, dragged it into chaos space, and now guards its treasure.

Kraken, the sea monster of the northern oceans.

Sköll, the sun-chasing wolf.

Garmr, the hound of Hel.

A rumored Behemoth, said to live in Niflheim. No one has seen its form—only pond-sized footprints.

After hearing the list, Odin's brow furrowed deeply.

Mimir continued: "If Fenrir and Hati hadn't been slain, they'd likely be among them too. Sadly, they were never given the chance to prove themselves."

"Kraken's already dead," Odin added.

"Well, it was a great beast."

But what troubled Odin was that half of these listed beasts were either Loki's children or controlled by them.

Loki... was the key to victory?

Odin began to regret again.

"If I reconciled with Loki..."

"No good, my lord. Jörmungandr and Garmr are already within the High King's circle. And he trusts Hela deeply. At best, you might get them to stay neutral in a crisis. That would already be a victory."

Odin felt suffocated.

On the surface, his brother Thalos seemed like a responsible king managing the Nine Realms with diligence.

But in truth, he'd been pruning every threat, every sprouting danger.

Odin had nothing to exploit.

If Jörmungandr, Garmr, and Sköll were all loyal to Thalos, even uniting the remaining five beasts wouldn't guarantee a power advantage.

Sigh! The High King's righteous name was too perfect, and his actions too thorough—he left no flaws to exploit.

Just as Odin and Mimir were plotting their rebellion, an unexpected message arrived.

Knock knock—a knock on the grand hall doors.

The voice of Bára the Tidal Wave came from outside.

"My lord, Thor has arrived from Asgard with a troop of Valkyries."

Odin's heart skipped a beat.

No way. This fast?!

Had his brother already caught wind of something?

Though convinced he hadn't exposed himself yet, Odin swiftly composed himself. He straightened his armor, grasped Gungnir, and gave Mimir's head a fierce warning glare.

"Don't say anything out of line."

"Of course not, my lord. After all... most of these schemes were mine," Mimir said, utterly submissive.

Odin took his place on the throne, cleared his throat, and called out:

"Invite my dear nephew in."

Soon, the main hall doors opened.

Thor stormed in with the Three Warriors of Asgard and several Valkyries, and bowed respectfully.

"Thor greets the King of Jötunheimr."

"Rise, my good nephew! What wind brings you here?" Odin faked warmth, stepping down and clapping Thor on the shoulder—even though Thor was taller.

Thor cast a sideways glance at Mimir's head hanging from a pillar.

"Oh, it's not complicated. When we heard what happened to my poor grand-uncle, Grandmother Bestla almost fainted—ah, never mind. Actually, what she said was:

'That damned Mimir probably said something he shouldn't again and got what was coming.'"

Mimir rolled his eyes.

She wasn't wrong. His little sister might be less wise than him, but this time she nailed it.

"All things come from cause and consequence. My sister wasn't wrong," Mimir sighed.

Thor shrugged and threw an arm over his clearly uncomfortable uncle's shoulder.

"Father says Jötunheimr's too chaotic right now. I'm here to help you deal with rebel giants—to prevent another tragedy like Mimir's."

Odin's face was a masterpiece of conflicted expression.

I just started secretly raising my own giants, and Thalos already sent a team to "cleanse" the place?

Odin tried his best to manage his expression, but the rage boiled beneath the surface.

He finally gave up pretending and let his fury show.

"It was my own negligence... that led to Mimir's tragedy."

Thor, honest and straightforward, pounded his chest.

"No worries, Uncle! With me here, not a single rebel giant will see the next dawn!"

Oh, thank you so very much, Odin thought, his lips twitching.

Indeed, sincerity is the deadliest weapon.

Thor's utterly genuine goodwill hit Odin like a truckload of shame.

He wasn't even the one attacking, but Thor's words hit like a death sentence.

And Odin knew—behind this cheerful hammer-wielder was his terrifyingly shrewd elder brother.

And the worst part?

Thalos was doing it all with perfectly legitimate reasons.

Now, Odin could only hope Thor wouldn't stumble upon the secret hideout where he'd stashed his pet giants...