

Thalos 142

Chapter 142: Too Late!

Thalos had a subtle feeling—despite all the drama, Chaos-corrupted Odin wasn't actually that strong.

Odin had thrown in with Chaos, yes—but judging by the clarity of his thoughts and how he wielded that power, he hadn't committed to it fully.

Maybe he still harbored delusions: that he could use Chaos to defeat Thalos, finally humiliate and get revenge on him, then conveniently purge the Chaos afterward, clean himself up, and stroll straight onto the God-King's throne.

He knew full well that succumbing to Chaos would make him grotesque. Thalos had already seen the six-headed mutant giants among the rebel army—Odin surely had, too.

This was classic Odin: "I want power, but I'm not paying the price."

The deeper Thalos analyzed this, the more convinced he became. Odin really does think that way, doesn't he?

Strutting in front of the world in false righteousness, seizing the throne without consequence, emerging from war without shedding a drop of his own blood... All these notions were clearly self-contradictory, outright delusional. And yet—they were quintessentially Odin.

Whether in the Poetic Edda or this life, Odin never got far on wisdom alone. When he needed dirty tricks to succeed, that job—and the blame—always fell on Loki.

But now, with Loki out of the picture and Thalos severing every shortcut available, Odin was left hesitating—still trying to wield Chaos without fully embracing it.

If not Odin, then who was going to lose?

Now, with five of the colossal Chaos beasts either slain or defeated—and their souls already drawn into the [Swords of the Nine Realms]—Odin began to panic.

Only one soul remained: the final one for the [Sword of Asgard].

And who better than the so-called rightful heir to the throne?

With his Chaos allegiance, he'd already been expelled from the World Will's protection. Thalos had no reason to hold back.

If he didn't fight for his life now, when would he? After becoming a sword soul?

"THAAALOS!" Odin roared with an earth-splitting scream. A terrible, rumbling explosion surged from both his body and deep underground.

All beings on the battlefield momentarily froze. Instinctively, their gazes drifted downward.

Only Thalos—who'd once harvested a branch of the World Tree alongside Odin—recognized where the quake originated:

The World Tree's core.

That's where the tree ceaselessly converts Chaos energy into Order. That energy, normally dormant and sealed by the World Tree, now boiled like a sleeping primordial beast—awakened by Odin's summoning.

And the Chaos was responding.

The very earth howled. That titanic Chaos surge, if poured into Odin, could transform him into a living apocalypse.

The sound raced upward.

Before anyone could react, Odin was airborne.

By now, his height surpassed 100 meters. He was as massive as a battleship—but thanks to the lack of material substance clinging to his Chaos-formed body, he looked... puffy. Hollow.

This world, defined by matter, couldn't offer much for Chaos to bind to. So Odin, though huge, was still strangely light.

Still, he likely weighed close to a thousand tons.

And yet—this Odin, this enormous, Chaos-swollen behemoth, was suddenly lifted into the sky by a massive golden eagle—the spirit form of the [Sword of Alfheim].

Its claws gripped his shoulder and dragged him upward.

Odin tried to resist.

The moment he raised his right arm, the phantom of the fire giant progenitor Surtr manifested beside him—and a towering, blazing [Sword of Muspelheim] pierced through his bicep and into his ribcage.

An eruption of fire followed, surging through his cracked bones and charred muscle.

"AAARRRGHH!" Odin shrieked—a cry that crushed the morale of every Chaos beast that heard it.

And it had only just begun.

As he moved his left arm, a blossom of crystalline frost exploded over it. The culprit: the ancestral ice giant Ymir, via the [Sword of Jotunheim].

Ice and fire—two polar opposites—ravaged him.

Then came the third: the [Sword of Midgard], bearing the phantom of the sea god *Ægir*, impaling his back.

The fourth, [Sword of Helheim], delivered a gut-piercing strike from Hel's wraith, Lan.

Odin couldn't even scream anymore.

It wasn't over.

The [Sword of Vanaheim], wielded by Njord's ghost, skewered his left thigh. The [Sword of Svartalfheim], via Fafnir's dragon-fanged specter, pierced through his right leg—from sole to thigh.

The eighth, [Sword of Niflheim], did not stab him.

Instead, Nidhogg's spirit summoned a dense fog that caused the very Chaos essence rising from the earth to disperse—cutting off Odin's supply of fresh energy and organic matter.

Without it, Odin's massive body began to shrink rapidly.

100 meters... 50... 30... 6...

The watching Chaos army was stunned speechless.

Gone was the towering, mighty Odin of moments before.

His connection to the Chaos wellspring severed, his reserves spent, he now looked like... just a normal Aesir god.

No.

Less than normal.

A real Aesir wouldn't look this emaciated, like a desiccated corpse.

As he shrank, the seven swords embedded in him returned to their normal sizes. They no longer radiated giant illusions—just ordinary weapons, lodged into flesh.

If not for the sheer number of them, Odin looked like a roasted chicken on a skewer.

A massive shadow loomed over his crumpled form.

Odin looked up.

Suddenly, the sky lit up. As if a new sun had risen to banish the gloom, a radiant figure—no taller than a man, yet towering in presence—stood between him and the light.

"B-brother..." Odin rasped.

"Oh? My foolish little brother—now you remember to call me brother?" Thalos sneered.

"I... I was wrong!"

Thalos couldn't tell how much pride it cost Odin to utter those words.

But he knew—it wasn't easy.

For all his flaws, Odin was a warlord. He would never let even a sliver of hope slip by.

But—

"Too late," Thalos sighed. "If betraying the world came without consequences... then what would stop anyone from doing it?"