

Thalos 153

Chapter 153: Infernal Affairs

On the other side, Odin had no idea that his dear elder brother had used the threads of fate still lingering on him to instantly learn nearly all the secrets of the Celtic World.

Odin was still dazedly rejoicing that he had escaped death.

Little did he know: surviving great peril always invites greater doom!

Meanwhile, Austine's former boss—newly crowned God-King Bres—had summoned Lugh, the god of craftsmanship and the sun. Lugh also happened to be skilled in healing arts.

Coincidentally, this bearded sun god wasn't proficient in soul magic. The god of death in the Tuatha Dé Danann was Cernunnos.

Lugh never suspected that Austine's demigod body had been possessed by a mortal-grade soul from another world. Even when sensing how weak Odin's soul was, he simply assumed it was normal for someone on the brink of death.

So weak!

But understandable!

It was exactly the kind of damage one would expect after having their soul invaded by Chaos.

The bearded sun god performed divine arts, and the gentle glow not only helped fuse Odin's soul to Austine's body, but also expelled the final traces of Chaos from within Odin's soul.

One had to admit—it was the guidance of Fate!

"All done! Austine's out of danger now," Lugh said.

Newly appointed God-King Bres was thrilled. Having just ascended to the throne, he badly needed capable allies. Truth be told, his rise was forced—none of the Tuatha Dé Danann respected him. But with Nuada's inconveniently timed maiming and the inviolable ancestral laws, Bres had been shoved into power.

Seeing an old subordinate still alive, Bres never suspected a thing. Slapping Odin on the back, he said, "Get well soon. You're gonna help me deal with that old bastard Nuada."

Bres's arrogant words made Lugh frown. But as the god-king had just taken the throne, Lugh held his tongue. Still, the worry on his face wouldn't be going away anytime soon.

And so, Odin, while recovering and sifting through the dead man's fragmented memories, began to observe this foreign pantheon of gods.

After a day of observation, Odin's first impression was...

So weak!

No exaggeration—if Odin had even half the Aesir at his disposal, he could probably steamroll the Tuatha Dé Danann.

First of all, the Tuatha Dé Danann were short.

Odin had pondered this for a long time. Could these human-height weaklings truly be called gods?

Aesir gods were routinely two to three times the size of humans, not to mention the giants of Ginnungagap.

Odin inspected corpses on the battlefield. Those so-called deep-sea Fomorian giants barely matched the size of an average Aesir god, and more importantly, there was almost no residual elemental power detectable on their bodies.

Second, the Tuatha Dé Danann weren't completely useless—at least they were more accustomed to elemental magic.

Odin was reluctant to compare them to his old enemies from Ginnungagap.

But after surveying the field, apart from having more spellcasters, there were few who could compare to the likes of Thor or Frey—let alone his older brother Thalos, who could command earth, water, fire, and wind.

Sigh... Odin let out a deep breath.

And then there was population.

The Tuatha Dé Danann were obviously few in number.

After a full scan, he could only count about ten core deities.

Not to brag, but if Odin had been at his peak, he could probably take half of them with him even if he died in the process.

This left Odin somewhat frustrated.

Counting on these guys to help him reclaim Ginnungagap? Not happening.

Fine!

He'd lie low for a while and find a way to regain some of his divine power.

Austine had been a demigod, at least, so the foundation wasn't completely rotten. With some effort, it might just work out.

Odin had once been the God of Winter. After some probing, he discovered that this broken world lacked a God of Winter. The absence of such a divine office gave him a spark of hope.

Days passed, and Odin at least recovered physically.

This was a bodily recovery—not a restoration of his soul, and certainly not a return of his divine essence or conceptual domain.

At best, Odin was now a bottom-tier demigod in a demigod's body, possessing very little divine power.

But that didn't matter. Because he'd earned the trust of God-King Bres, who assigned him as a foreman to supervise Nuada—the former god-king—in rebuilding city walls.

Yes, you heard that right.

The former God-King, having lost an arm and thus his right to rule, had been demoted to manual labor the moment Bres took over.

"You bunch of idiots! Move faster! That wall needs to be done before the Fomorians return. Otherwise, I'll bury every last one of you in the foundation!" Bres bellowed as he lashed Nuada's broad, muscular back with a whip covered in thorny spikes.

The whip couldn't pierce Nuada's tough skin, but the insult alone hit harder than any pain.

Dozens of hateful stares were thrown at Bres, but the tyrannical new god-king remained blissfully unaware, continuing to flaunt his dominance through cruelty and fear.

He even shoved the whip into Odin's hand. "See any of 'em slacking? Whip them hard!"

"...Yes," Odin replied, speechless.

Nothing puts things in perspective like contrast. Odin still remembered how Asgard had built its walls around the realm with just one stolen divine horse.

The Tuatha Dé Danann might be several times stronger than normal humans, but only several times. Hardly impressive.

From a quick estimate, Odin could tell that this massive island-wall project wouldn't be done in less than ten years. And even if completed, walls only five men tall wouldn't stop those so-called Fomorian giants, who were two to three men high.

The key issue: the Tuatha Dé Danann didn't even have enough troops!

This God-King Bres was such a joke that even Odin couldn't be bothered to take him seriously.

Whenever Bres watched him, Odin whipped half-heartedly.

Though his divine power was gone, his martial skill remained. His whips looked fierce and precise, but just before landing, he'd pull them back—so they hit softly and did no real damage.

Nuada looked at Odin, surprised.

But Odin refused to meet his gaze.

Nuada misunderstood.

At dinner, the one-armed former god-king whispered to his two most trusted subordinates—demigod warriors Beowulf and Siegfried: "Surprising, isn't it? I thought Austine was Bres's most ruthless lackey, but he let me off. He's not so bad after all."

Beowulf and Siegfried both nodded. They exchanged glances, eyes full of unspoken thoughts.

Later, when they were away from both Nuada and Austine, in a deserted place, Beowulf said to Siegfried: "That guy... could he be Odin? I've seen him before! His presence—his demeanor—it's a perfect match."