

Thalos 242

Chapter 242

This time, it was the goddess Siva who was surprised: "You're actually a True God?"

"To be precise, I'm an avatar of a True God. I don't retain memories of my origin world—my true self didn't grant me any. He only gave me the skills necessary to operate. Well... looking at it now, maybe the skills weren't quite enough."

A flicker of joy crossed Siva's face: "Is your world powerful?"

"Very powerful."

"Good. Then I'll tell you everything I know."

Loki's expression grew subtle.

As the god of trickery and mischief, he had no equal in the Aesir pantheon when it came to reading people.

When a complete stranger suddenly starts spilling their heart out to you—and not in the literal, organ-removing way—it was always suspect.

Gods could and did change over the eons, often becoming more withdrawn and somber with time. A goddess like Idunn, still bright-eyed and full of naive trust, was the true anomaly.

But this was enemy territory.

A goddess—ostensibly part of the opposing faction—ranting to a total stranger who was clearly a spy? That was ludicrous.

And yet... when Loki recalled how the Aztec gods treated their conquered deities—trampling their dignity, slaughtering their subordinates—suddenly, it all made perfect sense.

"Kiro! Those Aztec gods and their priests are absolute maniacs!"

"Suka!"

"They cut open one of my most devoted followers! She was pregnant!"

"Just to celebrate the completion of a pyramid, they blood-sacrificed forty thousand people! Thirty thousand were Slavic citizens—and ten thousand were their own! Can you imagine that?! Those lunatics offered up their own family members in some crazed frenzy!"

"Three whole days—the river ran red. The stench stuck with me for a month."

"Then came the plague. They sacrificed another hundred thousand to 'appease' the gods!"

"They didn't even give us conquered gods a corner of the heavens. We were shoved in here, among mortals, like livestock. On every festival, they'd draw lots from among us. The unlucky ones were dragged out and butchered."

"Lately they've gone even further—they're forcing us Slavs to send our demigods or subordinate gods to compete against the Yoruba pantheon. The losers get blood-sacrificed."

Clearly, Siva had been driven to the edge of sanity. She waved her arms, ranting for a full fifteen minutes without pause—venting years of humiliation and rage.

When she finally ran out of steam, Loki's avatar smiled serenely: "Honorable goddess Siva, aren't you afraid I'm actually an Aztec spy, here to report everything back to their king?"

Siva leaned back, face blank, as divine tears silently slid down her cheeks.

"I don't believe you are. You don't have that Aztec madness in you. But even if you are—I accept it. Let them kill me. At least I'll be spared from this living hell. You know, I used to be the goddess of love and fertility. But now, there's no 'love' left in me. The only reason I'm still here is because I help breed more slaves—for them to sacrifice."

"What a wretched world."

"Isn't it?" Siva's beautiful face twisted with bitterness. "Can you tell me something about your world?"

"I'm sorry—I truly don't remember. All I know is that my world is strong. I've always believed that, deep in my soul."

"Whatever. I'm tired." Siva sighed, waving a hand. "If you have more questions, ask my divine handmaid, Natasha."

She pointed toward a demigod attendant standing quietly by the door.

Loki turned to see a mix of hope and hesitation flicker in the maid's eyes. But since it was a command from her goddess, she nodded and quietly gave him a passphrase.

"You can come to me anytime. Just say: 'Mother is the greatest.'"

Loki nodded. A moment later, his body dissolved into a streak of light, vanishing from sight.

Siva's face lit up with delight. "That was just an avatar? Incredible! Even I couldn't tell."

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One day later, Thalos received word that Loki had requested an audience.

He summoned the trickster god and listened to the full report.

"Spectacular infiltration," Thalos applauded, genuinely impressed.

"To serve Your Majesty is the greatest honor of my life," Loki replied with a graceful bow.

When it came to flattery, Loki was on a whole different level—his words were so sweet, even Thalos nearly felt his teeth ache.

More importantly, the intelligence Loki brought back was critical.

If the Slavic gods were already considered obscure, the Yoruba pantheon was downright forgotten. Based on Loki's descriptions, it appeared to be an African god system—virtually unknown to the wider divine community.

Not only were their myths poorly documented, but the stories themselves were fragmentary and often contradictory.

Thalos massaged his temples. He had no interest in untangling that mess.

All he needed to know was this:

The Aztecs had gone too far.

The surviving Slavic and Yoruba gods were both desperate to rebel.

Disunity among the enemy was always a good sign.

Soon, Thalos gathered his core pantheon and shared the latest findings.

The gods exchanged smiles and knowing looks.

Frey stepped forward: "The enemy's disunity works in our favor."

Thor shrugged: "A boring opponent. But I'll take what I can get."

Enki, however, raised a concern: "If such a brutal pantheon can still rampage across the cosmos... doesn't that prove the Aztec gods are truly powerful?"

Thor's eyes lit up: "Good point!"

Loki added: "We must be cautious of their cursecraft—and the way they can use blood sacrifice to suddenly boost their strength."

Each god contributed their insights, plugging gaps in knowledge and preparing for various contingencies.

Thalos absorbed the key points and implemented some. He also ordered that the memory fragments retrieved by Loki's avatar be shown to the Akkadian gods.

Though there were only ten of these surrendered deities, Thalos knew:

Even a thousand-mile levee can collapse from a single ant hole.

He wasn't expecting these gods to fight bravely in the coming war.

All he asked was that they not drag his forces down.

Then, Thalos gave Loki new orders:

"Maintain contact with the Slavic gods. If possible, turn a few of their combat-capable gods to our side."

"How should they coordinate?"

Thalos thought for a moment: "Have them rise up when we've already broken into Aztec territory."

"That late?"

"Of course. If they move too early, they'll suffer heavy losses."

"Understood."

Not long after, Loki reconnected with his avatar and went to see Siva again.

The goddess beamed with joy upon hearing the plan—then frowned. "Why not start the rebellion as soon as the war begins? We only need a signal."

Loki shook his head. "Because my lord... is merciful."