

Thalos 366

Chapter 366: Won't Stop Until He Hits the Wall

Fewer enemies, more friends—that's the right way to go.

Make the enemy become the enemy of the whole world—that's the most correct strategy.

Though Thalos had led the Aesir for so long and conquered so many pantheons, the truth was, he didn't always annihilate everything in his path. Take, for example, the Tuatha Dé Danann or the Horus faction within the Egyptian pantheon—his approach was always to win them over first, subdue them second.

After Thalos finished his speech, Thor "quietly" commented to his brothers Tyr and Vidar with a voice volume of 90 decibels: "Father's political wisdom—I could study for ten thousand years and still not get it."

Those two nodded solemnly.

This little moment left Thalos half-amused, half-exasperated.

Back in the main hall, truth be told, the ones who held a real grudge against Odin were primarily the old Aesir gods, at most including the original Vanir pantheon.

Since the old gods had no objection to Thalos sparing Odin, the newly assimilated gods from other pantheons had even less reason to say anything.

After all, Thalos had resolved the entire "Ragnarök" incident so elegantly that apart from a few unlucky giants, some divine attendants, and mortal casualties, not a single major god had fallen. The overall loss to the pantheon amounted to little more than flesh wounds.

If back then, one-third of pureblood Aesir gods had died, you can bet today's court would be in full revolt.

Frey merely raised a question: "Then Your Majesty, should we order the Ginnungagap World to accelerate forward?"

"Best not to," Loki said in a soft tone.

Frey didn't quite understand, but seeing the smile on Thalos' lips, he immediately realized—he just didn't understand Odin.

In theory, Frey should have hated Odin. After all, Odin was the one who killed his and Freyja's father.

But in truth, he couldn't bring himself to hate him.

From beginning to end, it had been the Vanir's arrogance that started a war with the Aesir, only to be counterattacked and defeated. It was pure cause and effect. If Njord hadn't been his father, he wouldn't even have wanted to fight that war.

Frey didn't understand Odin, nor did he care to. Since Loki, one of Odin's closest former followers, had spoken, it naturally had its reasons.

As soon as Loki spoke, Frey quietly returned to his divine seat.

Only Thalos truly understood Loki's meaning: Odin, after all, still had pride. He was playing both sides—he wouldn't pass up the chance to grow stronger, but he also didn't want to bow his head to his elder brother. If Thalos ordered Ginnungagap to accelerate, he'd be reducing the time Odin had to seize spoils. That might just reignite old grudges. So, neither rushing nor slowing down—keeping to the original pace was best for the current situation.

With the tone set, the focus turned to war preparations.

By now, with the Egyptian and Slavic pantheons rising in status, the ones eager to prove themselves were the smaller pantheons previously subordinate to the Indian and Fuso worlds.

All of them were eager, itching to rise to greatness.

Thalos was secretly amused but did nothing to stop them.

When major pantheons clashed, small pantheons had to choose sides.

That didn't mean every small pantheon had what it took to climb to the top.

Thalos had built this pyramidal advancement system from the start with some hidden traps. It's just that, by coincidence, each newly joined pantheon happened to have one or two talented figures who managed to convert potential into strength and successfully rise. This created the illusion that anyone could climb the ranks through effort.

In Thalos' eyes, someone like Baldr had already fallen out of favor in the combat department.

Yet Baldr had sparred with several war gods from these small pantheons and beat them like schoolchildren.

In the end, it all came down to environment.

Every Aesir god was a warrior forged in mountains of corpses and seas of blood—not just possessing strong divine bodies, but also first-rate combat experience. You couldn't compare them to the rookie gods from minor pantheons who had surrendered early on.

Just as Thalos was willing to take Loki's advice and let Odin have a go, he didn't mind these small fries running into a brick wall.

Among the gods of theology, everyone outwardly obeyed orders but actually just went through the motions.

Among the gods of praxis, only after being beaten like grandsons would they realize the value of backing a mighty tree for shelter.

Coincidentally, a stable pyramid structure needed a large base of mid-tier undergod laborers.

And so, the battle plan was happily finalized.

Meanwhile, Thalos and Loki were completely correct in their assessment of Odin's mindset.

Odin was exactly the type to forget grand ideals when tempted by small gains.

After passing along intel about the opposing side via a dream to Thalos, he immediately locked down his divine mind—no way he was letting his dear big brother peek into his soul.

Now that Odin had regained strength, ruled a world, and was once again a God-King, there was no way he would allow himself to be seen through like when he'd been a remnant soul sneaking into the Celtic realm.

That didn't stop him from staying several steps ahead of Thalos.

The days that followed were filled with short yet intense clashes with the Greek world cluster.

The current state of affairs resembled two palms pressed together in prayer. Worlds from different domains approached from opposite directions, entering relatively parallel ocean current trajectories. With neither side able to directly breach the other's world, both launched attacks through the gaps and holes in the mutated star zones.

This battle method resembled the earlier ones in other starfields: as long as you killed or defeated the opponent's champion, you could cleave off a large chunk of the enemy world's space—regardless of how much earth, water, fire, and wind elements it held, or how many mortal slaves it contained. It was like opening a mystery box.

Lately, Odin had been in great spirits. Two of the enemy's small worlds in a row had proved no match for Lyranca's gods.

After finishing off one minor pantheon, the next challenger emerged: a god system known as the "Hittites."

Of course, Odin reported that to Thalos as well.

Thalos chuckled.

The Hittites settled in Anatolia around 5,000 years ago—modern-day Turkey. They originated from the eastern highlands of Asia Minor, near the upper reaches of the Kızılırmak River.

Strictly speaking, the Hittite pantheon was a branch of West Asian mythology.

Because figures like Anu appeared in their stories too, their myths were part of the Mesopotamian system. Wherever the Hittites conquered, they absorbed the local deities into their pantheon.

It was unclear what era this particular Hittite pantheon that Odin faced hailed from.

The trouble was, Hittite mythology was a mess—full of fathers killing grandfathers and sons killing fathers, a warm and loving legacy of patricide.

If that wasn't chaotic enough, things got even more absurd.

For instance, in Hittite myth, Anu lost a battle and fled in panic, only to be seized by his "beloved" son Kumarbi, who proceeded to bite off and swallow a certain part of his father's body. After that, Kumarbi became pregnant and gave birth to his own son—the storm god Teshub.

Seeing something that eye-melting, Thalos actually felt his own harem antics seemed pure by comparison.

Truly, I'm just not twisted enough to fit in with you freak-show gods!