

Thalos 382

Chapter 382: Whom Shall She Betray?

Medea was indeed enduring the most terrifying shock of her life.

The person she had been.

The person she was now.

The contrast between her past, filled with the warmth of familial love, and her descent into madness after meeting Jason was painfully clear.

She had a dreadful premonition: if she hadn't been freed from the curse named "love," she couldn't even imagine what she might have done next.

She had already murdered her own younger brother for Jason's sake. And if Jason had demanded it, maybe—no, definitely—she would have broken every moral boundary known to man, becoming the terrifying witch the world would revile the most.

From the moment she left home, she had become a rootless wanderer, forever abandoned by her family.

To justify that so-called love, she would only spiral deeper into wrongs.

What Medea didn't know was that, in the original myth, after returning with Jason, she would murder his treacherous uncle who refused to give up the throne, continuing her descent as a witch. And because she loved Jason too obsessively, he would eventually grow weary of her and go off to marry a foreign princess...

She had loved.

She had lost.

She had gone mad.

Now, with the love curse removed, every muscle in Medea's face seemed to move on its own, twitching uncontrollably. Her once-beautiful face now appeared twisted and horrific, leaving Jason dumbfounded.

He stepped back.

That single instinctive step was genuine—and it pierced Medea's heart with icy despair.

"Jason... did you ever truly love me? Or were you just using my identity to steal the Golden Fleece? Was all of this just manipulation—riding on Cupid's magic to achieve your so-called heroic quest? If you love someone, you must love all of them. Did you really love all of me?"

Medea clutched at her chest, gasping as if suffering from heart failure. Her grief-stricken expression twisted with a trace of madness and venom, making her all the more intolerable in Jason's eyes.

He took two more steps back, increasing the distance between them.

Though he said nothing, his actions made his position perfectly clear.

"Ha... haha... AHAHAHAHA! Liar! Jason, you're a lying fraud! You knew this was all part of the Greek gods' scheme, yet you gladly accepted what was never yours! Your so-called wisdom and bravery are nothing but a pile of garbage!" Medea screamed hysterically.

Jason was consumed not only by fear, but by overwhelming self-doubt.

The greatest achievement of his life had been obtaining the Golden Fleece. Strip that away, and what right did he have to call himself captain of the Argo?

The thought that his heroic status might be unraveled by Medea's awakening cut into him like a blade.

Before setting out as a hero, his only credential had been studying under the centaur sage Chiron. It was only by flaunting his teacher's name that he managed to gather so many heroes. And now someone was telling him that everything he had achieved was thanks to a bewitched, insane princess? That was nothing less than a total invalidation of his entire life.

Of course he was falling apart.

How could he still find the emotional capacity to comfort a mad princess who had killed her own brother for him?

His inner chaos and cold indifference deepened Medea's despair.

"AAAAAHHHH!" She no longer cared about appearances. Medea collapsed on her knees and wept with her face buried in her hands.

The hall was filled with a chaotic atmosphere.

At that moment, Brynhildr stepped forward and approached Thalos. "My lord?"

She was asking how to deal with Medea.

Thalos had no interest in keeping a woman so emotionally unstable—a veritable "walking landmine"—around. In the myths, Medea had, after all, murdered her own children in revenge against Jason.

Even if she were a beauty capable of rivaling goddesses of love, Thalos was the God-Emperor. Was he supposed to put up with a woman so unhinged just for the sake of her looks?

Thalos spoke:

[This is a tragedy born of deliberate interference by the Greek gods! Medea, you still have a chance to turn this all around.]

"Your Majesty?" Medea looked up, disbelief in her tear-streaked, disfigured face as she gazed at the towering deity.

[Ereshkigal.]

Ereshkigal understood. From afar, she sent over a small crystal vial. "Though you killed your brother out of cursed love, it wasn't truly your fault. This is a Soul Calmer. If your brother's soul hasn't yet been taken by the Greek underworld, I can allow him to reside in the Hall of Heroes as an einherjar—or let him reincarnate in the Ginnungagap world."

Medea trembled. She knew there was no such thing as free grace from the gods.

"I... what must I do?"

Ereshkigal replied coldly, "It was the Greek gods who caused this. Naturally, you must take vengeance on them. You—no, have a dream visitation. Try to convince your father..."

Even though she didn't finish the sentence, Medea understood. Her title as the "Betrayal Witch" was likely set in stone—except now, it meant betrayal of the Greek gods, not her family.

Did she still have a choice?

No! She had no choice at all!

From the moment the *Argo* was captured, the fate of her and her family was no longer theirs to decide. She was nothing more than a pawn in the clash of two pantheons.

But she didn't mind.

You showed no mercy—I show no righteousness!

The Greek gods betrayed her and her family. Seeking revenge was only fair.

"Oh great God-Emperor, I have but one request."

[Speak.]

"If I succeed... then in the future, please grant me a love that cannot be betrayed."

Now that was interesting.

Thalos gave Merlin a playful glance—the same Merlin who had captured her. The look gave Merlin chills.

Thalos nodded.

[Very well.]

Medea was dismissed.

Naturally, it was now Jason's turn.

He opened his mouth several times, trying to beg for mercy, but the words never came out.

[Pitiful fool. You are unworthy of a throne's glory. Go be a petty chieftain of some backwater Indian province.]

"Huh?" Jason was dumbstruck.

He wanted to refuse—but couldn't find the courage.

He was no longer the proud captain of the Argonauts. He was no longer worthy. He surrendered—and Thalos wouldn't kill a surrendering mortal. So he simply shoved him off to a forgotten corner of the world.

With those two dealt with, only one captive remained—Orpheus.

He was the son of Apollo, god of light, and Calliope, one of the nine Muses. His musical talent was unrivaled—his playing could move trees, stones, and beasts. The nymph Eurydice had fallen in love with the serenity of his lyre and married the handsome youth.

During their wedding, Eurydice was bitten by a viper and died. Grief-stricken, Orpheus stormed into the underworld, using his music to move Hades and win her soul back. But the lord of the dead gave a condition: Orpheus must not look back until they had left the underworld.

When they were nearly free, Orpheus couldn't resist his love and glanced behind—causing Eurydice to fall back into the abyss forever.

Another tragic figure.

It had to be said—this guy really could play.

Thalos decided to keep him around as a living, breathing music player.