

Thalos 60

Chapter 60: The 'Four-Legged' Divine Steed – Sleipnir

With just a harness and a set of reins, the divine horse Svaðilfari could pull a hundred-meter-high hill with ease. No wonder that so-called architect had dared to make such grand claims.

Well, now the fool had opened his greedy mouth and dared defile the three most honored Aesir deities—giving the God-King full justification to kill and confiscate his horse.

Even if this incident were spread across all Nine Realms, no one would dare claim Thalos was in the wrong.

On the contrary—it looked like he might even end up with a city wall for free!

The gods flooded Thalos with praise, proclaiming his wisdom and might.

This news quickly reached a scrappy-looking ice palace deep within Jotunheim.

There, a miserable Odin sat gnashing his teeth.

Sure, he'd been crowned king—but he'd also been banished from Asgard's eternal summer to this godsforsaken blizzard-battered wasteland.

He couldn't exactly complain about his brother. After being made king, Thalos had summoned a legion of dwarven craftsmen to build Odin a grand golden palace. But compared to Asgard, Odin felt he was the one who truly needed walls and fortresses.

It made no sense.

He had deliberately built his palace far from the glaciers. Yet every time the divine cow licked out a new frost giant from the ice, those creatures didn't march straight for the nearby Rainbow Bridge. No—they detoured across half of Jotunheim just to come bother him.

Had the gods of fate personally declared war on Odin?

Whatever the case, his palace now needed minor repairs every three days and major reconstruction every week.

"Damn divine steed Svaðilfari," Odin muttered, not-so-idly. "If only I had him to help build my city walls..."

The speaker had intent—and the listener had ambition.

Say what you will about Loki, but his loyalty to Odin was unwavering—er, scratch that. His willingness to act on impulse certainly was.

He didn't even ask Odin. He just started plotting.

"The gods of Asgard will definitely want that horse for their walls. If I ask, they'll just say no. So why not... steal it?"

Once the thought took root, Loki acted at once.

That very night, he slipped away to Asgard.

From the ramparts of his castle, Odin watched Loki's figure disappear into the snowy night. He squinted his one eye thoughtfully.

Odin had always been a man of conviction—just not too much of it.

He reasoned: worst-case scenario, they return the horse after using it. If Thalos punishes Loki, he'll find a way to make it up to him later.

All well and good.

But Odin forgot one crucial truth—when danger's real, Loki is safest; when danger isn't... Loki is the danger.

Yes.

In every sense of the word.

Unbeknownst to either of them, Thalos himself had visited the royal stables and laid down a series of Order Sigils.

The whole affair was so oddly secretive and meticulous, even the valkyries were stunned.

One by one, Thalos inscribed and buried stone tablets in the ground beneath the stable. Runes upon runes, but not for defense, not for flight.

It was... baffling.

Just a horse, right?

Then why all this trouble?

If he was worried about the horse running off, why was it still being led outside to build walls?

And those mysterious stone slabs the valkyries helped him bury—what were they for?

They'd assumed that was the end of it—until Thalos gave a chilling order to Brynhildr and her sisters:

"Should you hear strange noises from the stable at night—do not approach. Do not interfere, unless the horse is physically removed. This concerns the balance between Order and Chaos. This command is absolute. Do you understand?"

His tone was so solemn that even the usually fearless valkyries were left stunned.

Their loyalty was unwavering.

And a god-king of such divine wisdom—of course he deserved their trust. However strange the command, they obeyed without hesitation.

When they buried the stones, they did so with reverence—like wrapping a perfect porcelain artifact in the finest white silk.

They felt it should be treated with such care.

Though not mortal, the valkyries were sensitive to divine currents. As soon as the first tablet was buried, they sensed a surge of mysterious energy. The roots of Yggdrasil overhead gleamed brighter.

An invisible flame of law and order had begun burning silently across the land.

Like the river's return to the sea, even the land itself—once subtly confused—now pulsed with joy.

No one else knew what Thalos had truly buried.

The tablets were astonishingly simple. Basic definitions etched in divine runes:

"Horses should be born in stables."

"Different species must obey reproductive isolation."

"Horses are herbivores of the odd-toed ungulate genus *Equus*."

"Horses only have two sexes—male or female."

"A horse has four legs, one head, one neck, two eyes, two ears, one heart..."

And on, and on...

In total, Thalos had written thirty-six such tablets.

They seemed absurd—so elementary they bordered on insulting.

But that's the irony of the world: every absurd law usually stems from an equally absurd event.

Sure enough—on the very night those tablets were buried, the enormous stables (large enough for two teams of giants to play football) welcomed an uninvited guest.

A striking white mare had arrived.

Svaðilfari, the mighty stallion, didn't know where she came from.

But none of that mattered.

She was beautiful.

She was huge—seven meters at the shoulder.

She snorted seductively, then bolted.

And of course, he gave chase.

How could he not?

She fled, he pursued—unstoppable force meets... very poorly planned escape.

Her one fatal error was underestimating Svaðilfari's speed.

The result?

The next morning, Thalos was met with a wide-eyed, visibly shaken Brynhildr.

"Report, Your Majesty. We've... discovered a sort of foal in the stables."

Thalos went to inspect, calmly destroyed the 'corpse,' and added a new tablet: "Horses should have skin."

Day 3 brought similar issues.

He added twelve new tablets, including "Horses should only have one mouth," and "Horses' four legs should be symmetrical."

By Day 4, the count rose to eighty-eight tablets.

Finally, on Day 5, a somewhat normal-looking foal was born—standing two meters tall at the shoulder.

Thalos sighed with relief and named the steed: "Aesir Steed."

Day 6? He had to add thirty-six more tablets.

Day 7 brought more offspring: "Vanir Steed" and "Midgard Steed."

By Day 15, Thalos realized: now every god and his children had a divine steed.

He quietly removed and destroyed the first law tablet: "Horses should be born in stables."

Meanwhile, Odin noticed something off about "Loki."

"Loki... what's going on? You've been disappearing every night. Where've you been?"

"N-nothing," Loki replied, forcing a radiant smile despite his pale face. "Odin, I have... a gift for you."

He led out a breathtakingly majestic colt.

Odin immediately sensed the thick divine aura emanating from the foal.

"This... for me? Where did you get it?"

"Don't ask. Just tell me—do you want it? Or are you going to run off and ask Big Brother Thalos?"

Odin frowned. He'd already heard that for some reason, Asgard was now awash with divine colts. Even Thor had one.

That was enough to annoy him.

Laughing with pleasure, he accepted the four-legged divine steed and named it: Sleipnir.