

## Thalos 73

### Chapter 73: Loki's Closest Brother

The realm of gods is not all bloodshed and war—there's also politics and social ties.

But if you don't have the power to kill or conquer, no one's going to talk to you about kindness or relationships.

From another world, Thalos had learned this truth well:

If you want people to respect you, they must first know the consequences of not doing so.

This time, Thalos had truly done everything he could for Loki.

There was no point in imprisoning the God of Mischief.

No being in existence could truly watch over a trickster god.

Besides, even killing Fenrir didn't guarantee another world-ending beast wouldn't rise in his place.

This was simply a pretext, a legitimate reason for Thalos to take drastic action.

He soon issued a formal divine proclamation to all of Asgard through the Valkyries:

A prophecy of Ragnarök.

A cataclysm likely to destroy the world.

This is Chaos invading Order.

It is a nightmare not just for the Aesir, but for every living being across the Nine Realms.

To prepare, Thalos—by the authority of the God-King—declared the Disaster Prevention and Grain Storage Plan.

This was no empty threat—it was an official, written divine edict.

As for implementation? That was left to the Valkyries who were once princesses of mortal nations. Each returned to her homeland to deliver the command:

—Effective immediately, strict grain rationing is to be enforced in all realms.

—All brewing of alcohol and wasteful use of food is forbidden.

—All harvested wheat must be quickly ground into flour and stored in dry, protected areas.

—A minimum of one-quarter of each nation's seasonal production must be reserved in state warehouses, overseen by divine envoys from Asgard.

—Any loss or destruction of food will be punished by hanging, and the soul of the offender will be claimed by Thalos for eternal torment.

This wasn't just bark—it came with bite.

Thalos dispatched giants and dwarven craftsmen to help mortals and light elves construct water-powered mills and stone granaries.

Simultaneously, gods like Ullr, Thor, and several combat-hardened giants were sent to patrol the Iron Forest, a borderland between Midgard and Jotunheim.

They had only one order:

"Kill anything taller than a giant."

This forest, according to the epics, was where the gods had once exiled Fenrir.

It was here, in that forgotten wilderness, that the young wolf had quietly grown to sky-shattering size.

Killing Fenrir wasn't the end.

If Ragnarök had already begun, Thalos would now snuff out every last ember of Chaos.

Meanwhile, with his newly acquired Sea divinity, Thalos taught the humans of Vanaheim how to harvest salt, preserve fish, and create stockpiles of dried rations—preparation for the three years of darkness and cold that were foretold.

Those were years of mortal despair.

The oceans would freeze. Fishermen could no longer pierce the fifteen-meter-thick ice to draw even a single fish.

During this period, Thalos planned to spend more time in Vanaheim—checking in on his "foolish third brother" Vili and also boarding his magical ship to probe the ocean's depths for signs of any World Serpent.

And after all this was set in motion, he waited—for the aftermath of Loki's trial to unfold.

Loki was brilliant. Too brilliant.

He might not have realized it in the moment, but as he mulled things over, something began to feel off.

The grand tribunal in the Golden Palace—every major god and giant had been present... except Odin.

Odin, of course, had a perfect alibi. At that time, some unruly giants had just been licked out of the ice by that damned cow again, and he'd gone off to kill them.

But was it truly that urgent? So urgent that Thalos couldn't have delayed the trial?

He could've simply sent Ullr or someone else to hold the line.

Loki was officially Odin's subordinate.

And Odin... just happened to not be there?

The moment that clicked, Loki saw everything clearly—Thalos must have spoken with Odin beforehand. And gotten his approval.

"Coercion? Bribery? No... that's not Thalos' style.

He probably just laid out the facts plainly—and Odin gave in."

Odin... why?

Angrboda, the she-giant who truly loved Loki and her son, had cried herself into exhaustion and was fast asleep.

It was then that Odin arrived—carrying a massive jug of honey mead.

Loki sat wordlessly in his throne room, staring at Odin.

Odin wore an awkward smile. He said gently, "Loki... you know I can't go against my brother. He's always right. Come on. Have a drink. It won't hurt so much if we're drunk."

He raised a gem-encrusted goblet, poured the golden mead, and passed it to Loki.

Staring at Odin's face—equal parts guilty and friendly—Loki froze.

So many thoughts raced through his mind. But in the end, he took the cup.

And drank it all.

One cup... then another... then another...

Eventually, Loki grew tipsy. His tongue twisted, but his mind was unnaturally clear.

Even as Odin kept babbling on about how Thalos had gone too far, Loki could see through it.

Odin was trying to shift the blame.

If Odin had stood his ground, would Thalos really have acted this way?

Maybe.

But at the very least, Thalos wouldn't have judged Fenrir so harshly.

After all, this was the man who elevated his dimwit brother Vili to King of Vanaheim—where he now spent his days being doted on by goddesses.

Would Thalos truly not care about Odin's opinion?

No.

Odin agreed.

Deep down, Odin must have grown tired of him too.

The pain of losing his son... and the sting of betrayal by his closest brother—

These two griefs swirled together, and Loki no longer wanted to untangle them.

That night, he and Odin drank themselves unconscious.

The next morning, Odin left without a word, assigning a steward to explain he had gone to patrol the glaciers.

That was Odin's duty. No one would question it.

When Loki awoke and saw the seat Odin had occupied, for some reason... he found the lingering scent there utterly disgusting.

Just then, Angrboda burst into the hall, her face lit with joy.

"Darling! Look at this!"

In her wide arms, two furry little things wriggled.

They looked like dogs—

But Loki instantly knew: They were wolves.

His pupils shrank to pinpricks. He forgot to breathe.

"Wolves?" he asked, barely audible.

"Yes!" she beamed. "Our Fenrir was only just born and already mated with a she-wolf. I never imagined I'd be a grandmother so soon!"

Loki jolted upright. His entire body trembled uncontrollably.

His mind raced.

He quickly extended his divine perception—scanning every corner of the castle for any Valkyries or Thalos' watchers. He found nothing.

He lowered his voice to a whisper:

"Angrboda! You know that His Majesty the God-King has vowed to destroy any chaotic being.

There's a good chance Fenrir's children are also demon wolves."

Angrboda turned pale instantly. Her motherly instincts exploded in full force.

"No! I won't let them take them! He killed my child—he won't touch my grandchildren!"

The maternal rage of a she-giant was not to be trifled with. Most days, they were gentle as rain. But when protecting their young, they became fierce as any male.

Loki's head was spinning.

Especially when the woman in question was far taller and heavier than him—

He couldn't stop a raging giantess, no matter how clever he was.

Once she'd finished ranting, Loki sighed and spoke, half to soothe her, half as suggestion:

"If you won't hand them to Thalos... then give them to Odin."

"He's... my best brother."