

Thalos 83

Chapter 83 - 83 Big Brother, Save Me

"My foolish brother—"

For some reason, these days Odin kept hearing this sentence in his mind, and it tormented him endlessly.

What did I do wrong?

Why must that damned big brother keep mocking me like this?

Why is it that, even though we all drank from the Well of Wisdom, I always feel that my brother's wisdom is far beyond mine?

...

The mounting frustration filled Odin with resentment.

"If only Big Brother didn't exist! Whatever he can do, I can do too. Maybe even Thor could've been my son. Frigg and Freyja would be mine. All the goddesses would be my lovers..."

Recently, Odin hadn't grown stronger at all; the only thing that had grown was his ambition.

Sometimes even gods were not immune to such follies. Ever since Loki had grown colder toward him and stopped offering advice, the fantasies inside Odin's head had become more and more absurd.

After mentally crafting a whole saga where he claimed everything his brother possessed, Odin grew bitter at Loki's estrangement.

"Damn it! It's Big Brother's fault I had to hand over one of the wolves! Why blame me, Loki? Didn't I at least leave you one of your little wolf grandsons?"

Frustrated, Odin rode his "four-legged pegasus" Sleipnir out to clear his mind. He was tired of killing giants daily in this frozen, godforsaken Jotunheim.

While flying over the Iron Forest west of Jotunheim, he was drawn by a loud roar.

A huge black beast rose upright from within the woods.

It had nothing to do with wolves; it was a giant steel-clawed bear, over ten stories tall. Its body was like a moving mountain, and its fur resembled sharp steel spikes, far tougher than any human-made spear. Its curved claws were even stronger than iron.

Not only was it monstrously strong, its vitality was extraordinary.

Even Odin had to think twice about facing such a beast, but on the other side stood a mysterious giant who let out a mighty war cry at the start of the fight.

The giant, a frost giant, was actually taller than the upright steel-clawed bear. His entire body had a strange metallic luster, indicating terrifying durability.

The sight reminded Odin of that foul-mouthed idiot, Tiaz.

Odin often thought: if that fool had pledged loyalty to him, he wouldn't constantly be worried about lacking a strong frontline warrior.

Not that Vali and Hodr were weak—they were just passive and gloomy by nature. Odin yearned for a reckless vanguard like Thor.

Someone who could fight, withstand hits, and share the enemy's focus.

Thinking of this, Odin grew even more jealous and bitter toward his brother.

While Odin was lost in thought, the mysterious giant launched a sudden attack. Using the cover of the Iron Forest's giant trees, he closed the distance with impossible speed, grabbed the steel-clawed bear around its waist—

"Hiss!"

Odin gasped involuntarily.

No one knew better than him how sharp and deadly those bear hairs were. Even Odin himself would be pierced with countless bloody holes by such an embrace.

Yet, when the giant grabbed the bear, only the sound of twisting, grinding metal could be heard.

In the next instant, the giant effortlessly hoisted the multi-thousand-ton bear over his head and slammed it into the ground with a brutal wrestling suplex.

"ROAR—"

The earth-shaking impact flattened hundreds of towering trees nearby, some even uprooted completely.

The steel-clawed bear, its neck broken and senses spinning, was quickly strangled to death by the giant's rock-like arms.

The victorious giant rose from the ground and glared at Odin, who was circling above on his pegasus, and shouted roughly: "Since you're here, come down! Why sneak around?"

Odin, unfazed, rode down to meet him. "I am Odin! Of the Aesir!"

"Hrungnir!" the giant barked back, at least courteous enough to introduce himself. He glanced at Odin's steed and added, "Nice horse, but not as good as my Gullfaxi."

At his whistle, a gigantic golden-maned horse—shoulder height greater than five stories—emerged from the forest.

Looking at the majestic horse, Odin felt sour, knowing he had been outclassed.

At this moment, Odin still didn't realize that Hrungnir was actually the top fighter of the frost giants in the epics.

"Big doesn't mean better. How about a race to see whose horse is stronger?"

"Bring it on!"

And so, they raced toward the replica Golden Palace in Jotunheim.

If Odin were riding the eight-legged Sleipnir from the epics, he might have won. Unfortunately, without much chaotic power, Sleipnir was no match for Gullfaxi. After a wild hundred-kilometer chase, they ended in a draw.

Odin, desperately lacking strong warriors, thought Hrungnir could perfectly fill the vanguard role he longed for. So he proposed a drink together.

At first, Odin thought it would be a lovely bonding moment between lord and vassal—until Hrungnir rudely grabbed Odin's lover, the giantess Gríðr, and demanded that Odin's wife, Njord's daughter Fjölnir, pour him wine.

Mind you, these two women had borne Odin's few precious sons—Hodr, the dark god, and Bragi, the god of poetry.

Odin couldn't stand it. His face darkened. "Brother, you're going too far! That's my wife and my lover."

"So what?" Hrungnir lifted his brows provocatively.

Vali and Hodr instantly stood up, hands on their weapons.

Odin also rose, planting Gungnir firmly to the ground. "Let them go. We can still be friends."

The giant sneered, "The weak don't deserve to be my friends!"

He even pinched Odin's wife like she was a doll.

That was the final straw for Odin.

"Fine!"

Odin, famous for his unscrupulousness, struck first.

He hurled Gungnir.

The eternal spear, famed for its infallible aim, turned into a brilliant streak of cold light, pierced the short distance between them, and struck Hrungnir's chest.

"Chi!"

"Crack!"

The sound was eerie and strange.

Odin had expected strong defenses but not to this insane degree.

The spear tip embedded into the giant's metallic chest but went no further. The spear's soul even transmitted back the shocking news—the giant's heart was triangular and harder than any known metal, utterly impenetrable.

It was a clean hit—but no kill.

Before Odin could react, he saw Vali, who had lunged forward, get brutally smashed away.

Following the arc of Hrungnir's massive flintstone club, Vali's left arm twisted unnaturally, his body spinning as he crashed into the ornate replica palace wall, smashing through it and flying out the other side.

The scene made Odin's scalp go numb.

He looked up and shouted desperately: "Big Brother, save me—no, requesting reinforcements!"