let bygones be bygones

by doubletan

Summary

Instead of killing Loki, Thanos takes him away.

The next time Thor sees him, Loki is not the same person he used to be.
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

there's a short scene of loki getting tortured at the end, nothing too gruesome but if you want to avoid it just skip to the next chapter right after thor reaches nidavellir!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Almighty Thanos, I... Loki... Prince of Asgard... Odinson... The rightful King of Jotunheim... God of Mischief... do hereby pledge to you, my undying fidelity."

Loki stabbed upwards, and Thor held his breath.

But his knife never found its way into Thanos's throat.

Blue light shrouded him from his blade down to his arm, and no matter how much force and willpower Loki put into it, his knife never found its target.

Thanos smirked. "You got gall, I'm impressed."

"Maw," he said, and strips of iron bound Loki tightly.

Forced to his knees in front of Thanos, Loki looked up spitefully at him.

Thanos stepped forward towards him. "I thought I had been mistaken in seeing potential in you when you lost to those mortals," he smirked, "but I'm never wrong am I?"

He lifted the gauntlet, and the ship erupted in purple flames.

Thanos, the Black Order and Loki disappeared in a bout of blue.

Thor blacked out as the ship exploded around him.

"Thank you for your kind hospitality," Thor lifted his bowl of soup in point, "but I have to leave immediately. If you could so kindly provide me with a pod-

"Woah woah woah, leave?" Peter said. "You literally just survived a mass murder."

Thor flinched. He does not want to think about it, of how his people had died, how Heimdall had died.

Loki is still out there somewhere, he reminded himself, and that thought alone brought along a flare of hope.

When he got Loki back things would be alright, he told himself reassuringly. And then he would reconcile with what had happened. But not now, not when Loki needed him.
Peter rocked back on his heels, realizing he has not asked the most important question. "Who did it by the way?"

"Thanos."

"Thanos?!" Peter spluttered.

"You know of him? Excellent, if you can point me in the right direction-"

"You won't stand a chance against Thanos." Gamora said calmly.

"He took my brother, I have to get him back."

"Thor, it's madness." Gamora said. "If he has any of the infinity stones on hand-"

"He already has two."

The ship went silent.

"Let me tell you about Thanos and what he plans to do with the stones before you decide to go after him." Gamora said quietly.

"....So we need to stop Thanos. Which means we have to find out where he is going next."

"Knowhere." Thor replied immediately. "Because for years, the Reality Stone has been safely stored, there with a man we call the Collector."

"If it's with the Collector, then it's not safe. Only an idiot would give that man a stone." Peter scoffed.

"Or a genius." Thor quipped back.

He stopped in his tracks. It had not been Father who had placed it there after the battle with Malekith like he thought after all.

His chest ached, Loki had been trying to stop Thanos from getting the stones for years. And what had Thor done? Nothing.

Not only that, he had called Loki the worst brother for taking the Tesseract when leaving it in the destruction of Asgard with no one to protect it would have been a guaranteed win for Thanos.

But the truth was, at that moment of time he had been more angry that Loki had not told him about it. They could have built their defenses better, be prepared for Thanos somehow, and maybe, maybe the remaining Asgardians would have survived.

The train of thought was irrational, Thor knew now, to even defend themselves against Thanos with nothing but the Grandmaster's entertainment vessel filled with refugees that had never fought once in
their entire lives. And Loki knew they would not stand a chance.

And the first thing Thor had done when he knew was to criticize him, even though Loki had changed so much for the better.

It also meant that Loki had been prepared to face Thanos alone, even though he knew how powerful he was firsthand. And he never told Thor, never asked for his help against such a formidable foe, taking the burden all for himself, was he planning to sacrifice himself, leave Thor all alone again-

Tears pricked his eyes. He prayed to the Norns that Loki is still alive, that Thor could get to him on time. And when Thor finally got him back, he would make it all up to him.

He was the only thing Thor had left after all.

"Are you alright?" Peter said. "Getting a little..." he gestured over his own face, "misty there."

Thor mustered a smile. "I'm alright. I was just thinking about Loki." He added on hastily in explanation, "my brother."

"Loki's your brother?" Gamora said in surprise.

"You know Loki?" Thor asked.

"I..." she paused, clenching her jaw. "Don't...don't attack me for what I'm going to say, alright?" She stepped back, creating distance between them as she moved towards the far end of the ship. "Do I have your word?"

Thor frowned in confusion. "Yes, you have my word."

Gamora exhaled slowly. "It was a few years back. Loki seemed to have fallen out of the sky when he landed in Sanctuary, Thanos's domain. Thanos was curious, and he...he thought Loki could be useful." She closed her eyes momentarily, "and he ordered me to torture him."

Thor saw red.

He only came to himself when he realized that Peter and Drax had been trying to stop his advance, but instead were being pushed backwards towards Gamora.

Thor stopped, stumbling backwards, his fists shaking as he tried to restrain himself.

"Learn to calm down big guy! Sheesh!" The talking rabbit said.

Mantis hovered near Thor at a safe distance. "Do you need me to..."

Peter shook his head at her.

Turning back to Thor, he said sadly, "Gamora had no choice."

"It does not excuse her actions!" Thor roared.

"No it does not," Gamora agreed firmly, her body still positioned for a fight.

"What else," he gritted out. "What else was done to him?!"

Loki had only told Banner and him that Thanos had sent him to Earth, suggesting the notion that Thanos had only been an ally in Loki's invasion, not that he had been tortured into submission.
He thought back on Loki's invasion, how confused Thor had been then that Loki, who played harmless tricks in jest in his free time, would have wanted to conquer Midgard.

Father had explained Loki's drastic difference away with how the Void had changed him, that Loki was not the brother Thor knew anymore, and he had accepted it easily.

Why had Loki not said anything about it? Thor could feel his anger bubbling up again.

Loki had so many chances to do so. If he could not have done it on Midgard, he could have done so when facing Father, or even when Thor broke him out of his cell to fight Malekith. Hel, even on Sakaar.

But would Thor have believed him? When he had so easily accepted what Father said?

Would Father? Who had said Loki was no more the brother he knew?

"You should know that when we fought each other in the past, I did so with the glimmer of hope that my brother was still in there somewhere. That hope no longer exists to protect you. You betray me and I will kill you."

Thor felt like his heart was ripped open, and he deserved it. If only he had attempted to figure out why Loki had turned to evil all of a sudden, cared more, listened to him more, had more faith in him, maybe he would not have been kidnapped by Thanos now.

He thought he had changed for the better after his exile to Midgard, and maybe he did, but he certainly did not change the way he had treated his brother.

Gamora nudged Peter and Drax aside gently, and they stepped away warily, staring closely at Thor still in case he tried to attack her again.

"I know saying sorry would not make up for all the things I have done." She shook her head. "But for whatever it's worth, I am sorry Thor."

She curled her arms around herself, shame and remorse evident on her face, and that took out a little of Thor's anger.

Thor nodded stiffly, "I have given my word not to harm you, and I will not break my oath. That does not mean I forgive your actions."

Gamora nodded in understanding.

"I was not the only one," she continued. "There were many, even Thanos himself. He had scoured through Loki's mind..." Thor flinched back, "and knew that the Bifrost was broken, and that Loki knew secret pathways into Asgard from Earth."

"So he planned for Loki to conquer Earth and obtain the space stone, and use it to invade Asgard as well. It was the perfect time when Asgard was crippled without the Bifrost."

"In the case Loki thought he was going to lose, he was instructed to let Thanos's servant, the Other know, and he would enter Earth and invade Asgard first using one of the pathways and after taking over Asgard, take over Earth again from there. But thankfully none of that happened."

She looked up at Thor, "Your brother was very strong. Trust me, few could have resisted Thanos's torture for so long. He had to use the mind stone on Loki multiple times before he would even listen to him. I suspect he had broken away from the influence of the mind stone again when he was on
She shivered, "If it wasn't for Loki, Thanos would have won by now."

"But if he took Loki back, it means he has found a use for him, so you don't have to worry about Thanos killing him. But if I was you," she looked Thor in the eye, "I would have preferred if he was already dead."

"... Alright," Peter said, clapping his hands together and breaking the silence.

"Very dark and dramatic history there," he pointed between Thor and Gamora. Gamora glared at him, and he looked away quickly. "Glad it's all settled."

Drax frowned, "It is bright here."

"What are we going to do now?" Peter looked at everyone except Drax.

"You guys head to Knowhere and prevent Thanos from getting the reality stone." Thor said, moving towards their pod. "I'll go to Nidavellir to get a weapon that can kill Thanos."

He clenched his fist. "He will pay for what he has done."

Eitri tells Thor that Stormbreaker is "a king's weapon, meant to be the greatest in Asgard" and "could even summon the Bifrost", the kind of weapon that can only be afforded by the King of Asgard.

But Father had always said that Mjolnir's power had no equal, and the only other person who has acted as the Allfather was...

Thor had to excuse himself. He found a dark corner among the debris and let himself cry.

Spread eagle on a metal table, Loki's arms and legs were bound tightly by thick metal cuffs that damped his seidr. Stripped of his suit, he lay naked against the cool surface.

Loki was not new to torture, especially the Thanos kind. This was one of Thanos's tactics, to utilize humiliation to show his dominance and the lack of power his prisoner had in order to break his will.

And the torture that Thanos was about to subject him to was one that was more painful without any layer of clothing to protect him.

He clenched his jaw tight, determined not to show show any signs of defeat. Not to Thanos, never again.

Footsteps clanged heavily against the metal grail floor.

Loki did not bother to look up. "Came to do it yourself? I'm honored." he said.
"Still masking false bravado?" Thanos smirked, standing next to the table. "No matter, it will be gone in time."

"I know all your tricks now." Loki smirked back at him. "You won't win."

"This time would be different." He leaned forward to whisper into Loki's ear. "You forgot I have seen everything there is in your mind, your weaknesses, your fears..."

Loki kept his gaze steady. "You don't even have the mind stone, you can't do anything to me."

"You're strong, I admit as much." Thanos pulled back. "A fighter, like all of my children. And that's why I have not killed you yet."

Loki went cold. He barked out a strained laugh. "Don't tell me you actually mean-"

"When you landed in Sanctuary it was fate." Thanos flicked a switch on, "Destiny."

The table hummed to life and it begin to vibrate under Loki.

"You're mad," Loki hissed, "As if I will ever serve you."

The table was getting hotter, and Loki shifted uncomfortably.

"You forget you did, once. And you won't just serve me once I'm done with you. No," Thanos grabbed his chin, a grin on his face. "You would be happy to serve."

Loki spat in his face. "Never."

Thanos slammed his head back against the table, and Loki's vision went black for a moment, before the burning heat against his back brought him back to consciousness.

"I wonder." Loki lurched up violently as he tried to reduce skin contact with the scorching heat of the table.

"How long will it take." He was on fire, but he will not scream, he will not give Thanos the pleasure-

"For you to see me." He convulsed against the table. He could smell his skin burning and he imagined them burning off like flakes again.

"As your father?" He cannot think, cannot breathe, the fire, the pain. He hears himself scream.

Chapter End Notes

huge thx to all those loki theories on tumblr! yall are amazing :D
Steve gazed steadily at the surge of creatures bounding towards the barrier. And then all of them stopped simultaneously in front of it, as if waiting for something to happen.

"What the hell?" Bucky said.

A figure walked towards the barrier from the ship, seemingly walking on thin air. Steve squinted, the figure becoming clearer as it came closer towards them.

"Guys," Steve said over the comm. "That's Loki."

"Wait Loki? The guy who invaded New York?" Sam asked.

Natasha cursed. "He works for Thanos?"

"Loki was actually sent by Thanos to invade New York." Bruce said, sounding apologetic. "Sorry, I didn't mention it because I thought Thanos killed him."

"Killed? So who's side is he on now?" Steve demanded.

Loki placed both hands on the barrier, levitating above the creatures below him. And in a burst of light, the barrier disappeared.

"And there's your answer." Sam said.

Loki turned his head, and noticing Steve staring at him he smirked. What a bastard, he thought.

The creatures rushed forward with a bloodcurdling scream.

"Wakanda forever!" T'Challa roared.

Everyone charged.

Steve blocked the claws of the creature leaping up at him. Slamming it against the dirt ground, he used his shield to smash its skull in.

And just as he got back up on his feet, a wave of energy threw him back into the dirt.

Steve looked up.

Loki was levitating in the air above the battle. He gestured his arms in opposite directions, and the Wakandian soldiers below were thrown towards the edge of the battle, leaving the clearing below him empty.

Ironically, Steve thought it looked like Moses parting the Red Sea. But Loki was no prophet. Far from it.

He gritted his teeth, they were going to lose at this rate.
"Somebody bring Loki down!" he shouted into his comm.

"On it!" Rhodey said, sending down a barrage of missiles.

Loki flicked a hand casually, and the missiles turned back towards him. Rhodey cursed, darting between his own missiles.

Sam swooped in after him, firing and destroying Rhodey's missiles before shooting in rapid succession at Loki.

Loki threw up a forcefield, and the bullets stopped mid-flight, falling to the ground uselessly.

Before Sam could react, Loki threw knives in between the grooves of his wings. They sputtered and he started to fall towards the ground just as Rhodey caught him in his arms.

"I'm down. My wings got busted." Sam said. "How did you guys beat him before again?"

"He wasn't this strong the last time we fought him," Natasha grunted. "Cap, what do we do?"

"We distract him as much as we can," Steve said grimly. "T'Challa, we need whatever weapons you can spare aimed at him. Rhodey you too."

He paused. "Let's hope that would be enough."

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Thor landed in the middle of the battle in Midgard. He had taken a trip to Knowhere first, and seeing the place in ruins, he left with a heavy heart, hoping that the crew that had saved him earlier had survived.

And if two of the stones were on Midgard, there was a high chance Thanos would be here as well, and in extension Loki.

"Bring me Thanos!" He roared.

He threw out Stormbreaker, killing the creatures surrounding him in one go.

A ball of green energy raced towards him, and Thor quickly dodged out of the way. It zipped past him, exploding dirt when it hit the ground.

Thor's eyes widened. He looked up.

Loki was standing above him upon the air.

"Loki!" He laughed, giddy with relief.

"You're alright." He stumbled forward towards him, all the tension from the past few days bleeding out of him. "Norns Loki, I feared Thanos had."

Loki threw another blast of seidr at him, and Thor barely parried it away with Stormbreaker.

"Loki, what are you doing?!" He scrambled up. "It's me, Thor!"

Loki hissed. "I know very well who you are."
He disappeared from sight, and Thor quickly spun around, holding out Stormbreaker just as Loki's knife clashed against it.

On a closer look at Loki, Thor could see a few bruises and slight burns on his face, all already fading from view.

He should be relieved that Thanos had not harm him gravely, yet he only felt quiet unease settle in his stomach.

"What happened to you?" he asked.

Loki drew back, grinning manically. "Why the sudden curiosity? Is the mighty Thor upset that I might be able to stand my ground against him?"

Thor flinched, recalling how Loki had called him that as well when they fought in the Observatory years ago.

"Loki, this is not you." Thor said quickly. "Thanos did something-"

Loki laughed mirthlessly, "My father only made me better."

Thor went cold.

"Thanos is not your father," he punctuated every word. "Our father was Odin Borson, of Asgard. Do you not remember?"

Loki circled around him, his eyes dark and brooding, a flashback to the Loki during his invasion of Midgard, and so entirely different from the brother that had stood by his side on the Statesman.

He felt his heart stutter. How much more must Thanos take from him?

"How could I ever forget how that old man played me like a fool?" Loki said.

"He loved you Loki!" Thor screamed. "He said it right before he-" Thor's breath hitched, "before he died, did you remember none of that?"

"One line and somehow," Loki swept out an arm, "it should make up for the past ten centuries, is that right Thor?" He sneered.

"Whatever imagined slights you think Father had done upon you, it does not give you reason to fight on Thanos's side!"

Loki roared. He sent his knives flying at Thor. Powered by his seidr, they left green trails behind them as they flew towards him with frightening speed.

Thor deflected them away rapidly with his axe.

"I will not fight you brother." Thor said in anguish. "Never again."

"I am not your brother!" Loki screamed. Numerous copies of Loki surrounded him, and they dashed towards him at the same time.

Swinging Stormbreaker, Thor lifted into the sky. Every copy of Loki vanished as they collided below him but the real Loki was nowhere in sight.

Thor frowned in confusion just as something collided at him at full force, smashing him against the
Thor groaned, pain flaring up in his back. Swiftly, he rolled away right as a blade struck the ground where he was at.

Loki snarled. Undeterred, he lunged forward to stab Thor again, and Thor rolled to a standing position.

"Brother, you have to fight it!" Thor pleaded.

"Oh Thor," he shook his head with mock pity, "you never change do you? Always a sentimental fool. But," he lifted his knives up, "no more games. I will-" Loki jerked his neck to the side, his eyes widening. He vanished from view.

All of a sudden, a huge shadow loomed over Thor.

He looked up.

Loki was lifting one of the gigantic wheels that were racing along the field, its gears still clinking as it sought ground.

It stopped in the air, levitating right above Thor.

"Loki," Thor shouted above the clamor of the battle, "do not do this!"

It fell.

Thor lifted Stormbreaker, bracing his body against the onslaught. His arms shook from the exertion as Stormbreaker cut it cleanly in half.

He stumbled away, panting heavily. He looked up and around him. Loki was nowhere in sight.

Thor swore. Using Stormbreaker, he flew to the air to scan the horizon.

He spotted Thanos first, walking steadily towards Wanda and Vision across the forest ground. And Loki, by his side, sweeping everyone out of the way with his seidr.

Fury surged up in him. It was Thanos who did this, who once again forced Loki to do evil against his will, and if he killed Thanos...

He roared, swinging Stormbreaker downwards with all his force-

And it stuck itself into Thanos's throat.

"This is for Loki," Thor snarled at him.

Thanos gurgled, stumbling backwards as purple blood sprayed from the gash in his neck. With a heavy thump, he fell backwards onto the grass.

"NO!" Loki screamed, rushing forward towards Thanos.

Thanos lifted a hand shakily, and Loki grabbed onto it. "My son..." he said weakly.

"Father," Loki sobbed, his face pressed to Thanos's shoulder.

No one moved.
Thor looked around the clearing. Everyone who had fought Thanos earlier were gathering warily around them.

Catching Steve's eye, Thor shook his head slowly at him.

Steve nodded, whispering something into the machinery at his ear. He could only hope that they would trust him enough with his brother and not to attack Loki right away. It would not bid well for any of them, including Thor himself.

When Thanos finally went still, Loki had not moved from his position by his side.

He took a cautious step towards Loki, "It's alright," he said gently. "I killed him Loki. You're finally free from that monster."

Loki jerked his head up to look at Thor, his face a mixture of anger and resentment. "You did this," he snarled.

Thor took a step back. "Loki..." he said hesitantly.

A huge blast of seidr hit Thor square in the chest and he was thrown onto his back.

He groaned in pain, but before he could get up Loki landed above him.

"Must you rip away everything that is good in my life?" Loki screamed, tears streaming down his face.

"And now." He conjured a knife in his hand, "you will pay."

He brought it downwards, and Thor squeezed his eyes shut.

But the blow never came.

Loki let out a cry. Two hands were pressed tight to his temples, and Loki spasmed, falling unconscious at his feet.

Wanda stared unbelieving at Loki as if she could not quite believe what she had done.

"I just put him to sleep. I didn't kill him." She said quickly to Thor.

"I...I thank you Wanda."

Thor got up shakily.

He looked at Loki. His hair had fallen across his face, and Thor brushed them away gently, curling them behind his ear.

He looked so innocent now, bared of the pain and hatred Loki had experienced in recent years. Thor wished he could lie to himself that this was the Loki before his failed coronation, a time where everything had been alright between them, a time that seemed a lifetime ago.

A time he would never get back.

His heart ached.

The rest of the warriors had started to inch closer towards them and Thor brandished Stormbreaker quickly.
"You will not harm my brother," He warned.

Some of them looked towards Steve, while a few others looked towards a man in a black suit.

Both leaders looked at each other.

The man in the black suit nodded, and Steve sighed.

He looked at Thor wearily, "Alright. Everyone stand down."

"Give me your word Steve."

"I give you my word that none of us will hurt Loki if he doesn't attack us first. But Thor," Steve looked at him, "you have a hell lot of explaining to do."

Chapter End Notes

[link to tumblr]

yes loki has all these powers in the official mcu website, i'll never not be bitter about how none of the movies showed them. plus this time loki wants to kill thor and everyone that stands in thanos's way so he's going all out xD

these 2 chpts are really short (sorry) but i felt it was needed to separate them because they were different scenes, but no worries the last one will be p long! :D
T’Challa glanced around the meeting room. Everyone looked exhausted from the battle earlier, but thankfully they were all present and punctual, a fact he appreciated greatly. He stood up. "Let us begin."

He did a gesture with his fingers, and a screen appeared in front of him. "The barrier is fixed and up again. We have killed all of the aliens on the battlefield. All villagers have been transported to the capital and weapons are currently being set up around its perimeter in case some had escaped."

He scrolled through a projected list in front of him. "The gauntlet and the five stones are placed separately in different vaults around the palace. Selected people here have access to one of stones each." He nodded, "That will be the temporary measure until we decide what to do with it permanently."

"The UN has requested for a report on the invasion, and we need to discuss a dateline to submit our statement." He sat down. "That is all."

Steve shifted forward in his seat. "I was able to contact Tony who was with Spiderman and Doctor Strange and they are alive and well. All thanks goes to these two," he nodded at Groot and the rabbit, "since they were able to contact their crew who were together with them. They will be coming back to Earth in approximately a week's time and Barton is on his way to Wakanda as well."

He nodded at T’Challa. "We will figure out a statement to make to the UN when everyone is here."

"And finally the main issue," he looked at Thor, "Loki."

Thor’s heart pounded painfully against his chest. He only had one chance to do it right, or lose Loki forever.

Thor begun slowly, "Loki has been placed in one of the cells." His breath hitched slightly at that, how many times must Loki be locked up, again and again?

"Wanda has been kind enough to ward it, which will prevent Loki from using his seidr. He remains unconscious still."

"And to what has happened to Loki," Thor took a deep breath, sending an apologetic look at everyone. "My friends, this might take a while."

When Thor finished, the rabbit piped up almost immediately, raising a hand. "I can testify that I was there when Gamora said it. So was Groot." He looked around the table, seeing if anyone dared to contradict him.
"I am Groot." Groot said as well.

Thor mustered a small smile at them, grateful for their support.

"But Thor," Steve rubbed a hand over his beard, "even if this...Gamora said was true, how do we know he didn't join Thanos willingly this time round? I know as you said he...he had it pretty rough with Thanos last time, but everyone on the field saw him attacking us. You said he was only kidnapped for a few days in Earth's time, there was no way anyone, even Thanos could change his mind that quickly, and especially without the mind stone as well. How do you explain that?"

Wanda glanced at Thor. Thor nodded.

"I....looked through Loki's mind," she grimaced, starting to shake.

"Wanda," Vision said alarmingly, getting up to hold her, but Wanda shook her head, taking a deep breath to calm herself.

"Time works differently on Titan, Thanos's home planet. Loki was..." she closed her eyes momentarily, "was there for years."

Silence fell over the room.

"Thanos..." She took a breath in shakily, "wanted Loki to see him as his father. Even without the mind stone, Thanos tested and used the other stones on him as well, in addition to his own forms of torture. They weren't used directly on his mind, but it was enough to influence his thoughts after so long a time. And if there's no magic enchanting his mind I can't reverse what Thanos had done. "she clamped one hand to her mouth, her face pale. "Sorry, thinking about it again just.....I need a...I need a break."

She left abruptly, Vision following after her.

Thor looked at the seat she vacated. He could not bring himself to feel remorse for what he had asked Wanda to do, and it left a bitter taste in his mouth. He had to know, had to confirm his suspicions, had to prove to everyone that Loki was better than everyone thought he was incapable of. And he was willing to sacrifice everything to have Loki back.

"My friends," Thor turned back to the table, "I know Loki has done much wrong against all of you."

He shook his head, "I do not ask you to grant him amnesty, just your permission to let him stay in his cell with no harm intended against him until he gets better."

He put a hand to his chest, "I will take full responsibility if he harms anyone. But if any of you are not willing, I will not begrudge you. But know this," Thor clenched his jaw hard, "I will do whatever in my will to keep my brother safe from harm."

Bucky slammed the table hard. "Alright, I'm in."

"Bucky," Steve frowned. "You never fought this guy before, he's dangerous. You don't know what you're getting yourself."

"I be damned if I didn't help him Steve." Bucky said evenly. "I know I don't know this guy half as well as some of you here do-"

"More than half," Steve muttered, staring indignantly at Bucky even as Bucky glared at him.
"But I had you, and Sam and...the best recovery I could ever imagine." He smiled at Shuri and T'Challa.

"But Loki didn't get that, no offense Thor."

Thor shook his head, "None taken."

"I had it pretty rough, but Loki? Hell, it's his second time now. By Thanos of all people. Man," Bucky looked across the table, "I'm the one who knows the closest to how he feels." He paused, "Surprisingly."

"If all of you could let me sit here even when I had tried to kill some of you at one point," Sam coughed pointedly, "I think you should give Loki the same chance."

Steve sighed. "Damn you Buck. I'm going to sound like a total asshole if I said no won't I?" He smiled wryly.

Bucky smiled innocently. "Why Steve, don't mind me. You can do whatever you want."

Thor's heart ached at the banter between the both of them that was distinctly similar to the way Loki and him had in the past.

Steve rolled his eyes fondly, turning back to the table. "Alright, both of us are in. Who's with us?"

After a long discussion, everyone agreed, with the condition that Loki was to stay in his cell at all times under heavy supervision.

And Thor could not be more relieved that it had ended well.

Thor made his way down to Loki's cell, breathing shakily in fear of what was to come.

Wanda's magic have worn off by now, and this would be the first time Thor would be speaking to Loki after the battle.

No doubt would Loki try to rile him up, to jostle him towards anger, but Thor was determined not to rise up to his barbs. Especially with how upset Loki had been when Thor had killed Thanos, Thor had to prepared for Loki to spew more vitriol than usual.

Thor clenched his fists resolutely, he would prove to everyone that he was not clinging to false hope. And if he was patient, he would get his brother back eventually.

He nodded at the four guards stationed outside the metal doors that led to another room with Loki's cell in it. "I would like to see him please."

One of them punched in a code, another had to provide a retina scan, and the third guard had to give his fingerprint before the doors could slide open.

The room was cold and unbearably quiet, his footsteps echoing loudly against the metal floor. There was a chair that he had placed there earlier on, and he dragged it to the front of the transparent barrier separating the room from the cell.
Almost indiscernible to the eye, but Thor could see occasional sparks of magic around the cell. The other three walls were made of sturdy metal. *Vibranium*, T'Challa had explained, *nearly indestructible.*

Loki was lying on the cot, his breathing even, seemingly still asleep. He was wearing a cotton tunic that Thor had changed him into earlier.

"Loki. I know you're awake." Thor said.

A tiny smirk graced his face, and Thor inhaled sharply. It reminded him of Loki when he was a child, the same expression he would have whenever his pranks on Thor or any unsuspecting victim had been successful.

A desperate hope emerged, maybe Loki had broken through the conditioning Thanos inflicted upon him already, maybe-

But that hope vanished just as quickly as it came as Loki shifted gracefully into a seating position, his body tense and his eyes dark with animosity directed towards him.

He smiled, the edges sharp and brittle. "To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?"

Thor stared at him carefully, Loki seemed to be less distraught than he expected over Thanos's death as compared to his crazed actions during the battle, and Thor took that as a good sign.

Sitting up straighter, Thor felt as if he was preparing for battle, a thought which was not entirely wrong. An unseenable battle only fought through words, the kind that Thor had always lost at to Loki, but also one he could not bear to lose this time, no matter the odds.

Thor tried to speak, but it came out hoarse, and he cleared his throat and started again. "I just wanted to let you know that the Avengers have agreed to let you stay here until you...until you get better." He said eventually, looking around Loki's empty cell. "Are you in need of anything?"

Loki leaned forward on his knees, his lips quirked up in a sardonic smile. "I'm certainly curious why I'm not for the axe."

Thor frowned, "You were a victim in Thanos's ploy, not his ally, and you will not be punished as such."

Loki stood up violently. "I was saved!"

He snarled, "You speak callously of him, clearly you assume I have forgiven you for the act of killing my father!" The endearment and pain in his voice placed upon the last two words evident, and it sickened Thor.

Thor stood up as well, towering above Loki. He shouted, "That monster is not your father!"

"Monster?" Loki chuckled mirthlessly, "Father was right, Asgard rejected anything that did not align with their ideals. He was an outcast, betrayed by his people," he clenched his fists tight, "just like I was."

"You were planning to kill an entire race, Loki!" Thor said.

"A race Asgard called monsters, a race you dreamed of slaying." He smiled, cocking his head to the side. "Dear Thor," he drawled, "wherever did I go wrong then?"
Thor grimaced, the weight of his past mistakes was heavy on him still. "I was wrong about the Frost Giants. After my exile, I realized-

"So now I'm the one wrong about my own species." Loki put a hand to his chest in mock shock, "Of course, Odin and Thor, how could they ever be possibly wrong-

Realizing that Loki was intentionally bringing their father into their argument in an attempt to anger him, Thor refused to rise to the bait. "Loki, enough of this." He shook his head, "I did not come here to talk about past grievances."

"Funny you should say that Thor, aren't you here in a futile attempt to regain the Loki of the past?" He raised his gaze upwards towards the ceiling before staring smugly back at Thor. "I am truly sorry to disappoint."

Thor felt his chest squeeze painfully. This was not the direction he expected the conversation to go. He could not recognize the brother standing before him, not dissimilar to how he felt when he saw Loki invading Midgard under Thanos's coercion.

And as if the first time was not enough, Thor had been helpless to stop Thanos from torturing Loki for the second time. Had twisted his brother into something else entirely, turned him against Thor, but the surge of triumph at killing Thanos had been quickly overshadowed by the pain of seeing Loki as he was now, with Thanos's cruelty written all over it.

Thor sat back down in his chair with a heavy thump, unable to shake off the feeling of defeat. He twisted his hands in front of him. "I should be the one to apologize. For what I have said on the Statesman, know it was purely spoken out of anger. And if only I had listened to your counsel more often, seek to understand you better, been a better brother..." Thor looked up at Loki, his face pained, "I am truly sorry brother. I swear I will do better by you from now onward."

A beat of silence, and then Loki grinned wildly. "Oh Thor, such sentiment!"

He stepped forward towards Thor, like a predator advancing towards his prey. "And a tad too late. The Loki of the past would have gobbled that up right away," his face contorted in disgust. "He was starved for your approval after all," he spat out bitterly.

"But," Loki stopped in front of the glass, "my father had taught me better."

"How does it feel Thor?" Loki lifted his arms, giddy with emotion. "To see that I'm no longer beneath you-

"-You were never beneath me Loki!" Thor said, aghast.

"And it was Thanos who helped me realize my potential, the only person who saw it in me when no one else did."

"Loki he tortured you!" He stood up to face Loki once again, unable to believe the ridiculous claims Loki was saying.

"Only because I was too obstinate, too willful." Loki jerked his head to the side in disgust, "Not realizing that his words held truth in them!" His eyes gazed distantly, "And that was the only way I could understand."

"Do you even hear yourself Loki?" Thor said, frustrated. "Thanos has warped your mind. He wanted to wipe out half the universe! How could you be grateful to such a mad man!"
"To save the universe sacrifices must be made!" Loki spat back at him, spittle flying onto the clear glass between them. "And none of you saw his vision like his children did."

He gestured to himself, "I attempted to do the same to a certain race after all." His lips curled up sardonically, "For Asgard."

They were close enough that they could see the flecks of color in each other eyes. Both of them breathed heavily, mist forming on the glass barrier between them, the only thing preventing bloodshed from breaking out between them.

Loki continued evenly, his eyes intense on Thor the entire time. "Father's ideals made sense. It was noble, righteous."

He raised a hand, "And what of Odin? The great Allfather who was nothing less than a tyrant who conquered realms for his own pride and glory! Hiding his children away when they shamed him! That was the father you glorified!"

"Father treated me like I was worth something," Loki said, "never did I had to scramble in the shadows of the golden son desperate for scraps of attention." He sneered.

Thor drew back, "Thanos created this hatred in you. Can't you see that?"

"No Thor, he made me realize that instead of attempting to bury grievances unsuccessfully for eons, one should eliminate the cause." He narrowed his eyes at Thor.

"Loki, please." Thor pleaded, thinking what he would give the Norns to get through to him. "This is not you."

Loki banged his fist upon the glass, and Thor flinched back, the harsh sound of it echoing throughout the hollow chamber. "Mark my words Thor, I will carry on my father's legacy and finish what he started. And when I make it out of here, you will be the first one I send to Hel." He snarled, and Thor could see it in his eyes that he meant every word.

Thor stumbled back into his seat, heartbroken. He asked softly, "What can I do to have you back Loki?"

Loki's body shook with laughter. "Oh Thor," he shook his head mockingly, "there are just some things you can never get back."

Chapter End Notes

hey,,, i mean,,, nobody died amirite :D

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