

Thalos 169

Chapter 169

On the great eastern island, the civil war between the Fianna Knights and the royal army raged on.

At the root of this conflict was a structural absurdity: although the Fianna Knights were supposed to serve as guardians of the Irish kingdom, their oaths of allegiance were sworn not to the king but to the Fianna's commander. Thus, while they protected the king, they were not technically part of his army.

This flawed setup was the true spark behind the war.

Over time, tensions grew between the wise and illustrious King Cormac mac Airt and the Fianna's leader, Fionn. The breaking point came when Princess Gráinne's political marriage to Fionn fell through, and the Fianna's rising power caused the king to see them as a threat to the throne.

A power struggle, plain and simple.

King Cormac was a brilliant ruler. Under his reign, the kingdom had flourished, and even the Tuatha Dé Danann had once invited him to the Otherworld and gifted him many magical treasures—among them, golden apples that cured all diseases.

On the other hand, the Fianna Knights were unmatched in individual combat prowess.

To join them required passing rigorous tests, such as:

Sprinting while leaping over a rod at head height, ducking under a waist-high one, and pulling a thorn from the foot with a single finger—without slowing down.

Standing waist-deep in a hole while nine warriors threw spears at them from a distance. A single wound meant disqualification.

Running through a forest chased by warriors. Not a twig could snap underfoot, not a hair fall out of place, not a hand tremble.

Memorizing twelve volumes of poetry and composing original verse. Taking a dowry was forbidden, as was harming the weak or women.

Normally, resolving this civil war of pride and power would have been impossible. The king held royal legitimacy, the knights had their own code.

But Thalos, as an outsider, had no such qualms.

And his support would go to the Fianna.

Why? Because King Cormac's authority was intertwined with the legacy of the Tuatha Dé Danann. If Thalos truly wished to seize control over the Celtic world, he needed to erase all remnants of their influence—one way or another.

On the eastern plains of Áth, the royal army clashed in massive formations against the Fianna. The near-thousand knights formed a long line like a massive iron rake, plunging straight into the king's ranks.

Where knight met soldier, the sheer impact sent entire phalanxes flying.

The old saying that five spearmen could down a trained swordsman only applied when both sides were human.

But the Fianna weren't mere mortals anymore—they could take down giants.

In the blink of an eye, they blocked multiple spears and struck down enemy infantry with a single thrust. Some knights skewered enemies like meat on a spit, stacking several bodies onto one spear before switching to greatswords.

They broke through ranks like a plow through soil, then flanked out to the sides, re-formed into wedge formations, and pierced back in from the flanks.

The king's army did not collapse immediately, thanks to their overwhelming number of longbowmen firing deadly volleys of heavy arrows.

But it was clear—the Fianna were few. Attrition alone would allow the king's army to triumph in the end.

King Cormac thought he had it all figured out.

He had not accounted for an external intervention.

As the two sides clashed, a massive column of rainbow light pierced through the sky.

This wasn't some mage's magic circle. It was the rainbow beam of divine authorization—a sign that the Celtic World Will had granted access.

The dazzling light drew all eyes. From within, winged steeds descended, ridden by silver-armored Valkyries. Swords gleamed in hand, their booming voices echoed over the battlefield:

"We bear the will of the Celtic World—both sides are to lay down arms, make peace, and join the holy war against the Chaos Giant King Odin!"

Lay down arms?

Make peace?

Are you kidding me?

This wasn't about trust anymore. Once blood had been spilled, there was no going back.

King Cormac and Fionn could no longer trust each other. Neither wanted a subordinate—or a sovereign—who could stab them in the back.

And don't forget, it was the prince who had tried to have Fionn assassinated first.

King Cormac shouted, "Bloody hell! Who do you think you are? You dare speak for the World Will?"

Hovering overhead, the Valkyries said nothing. Following Thalos's orders, and guided by his divine awareness, they dove into a sudden attack.

It happened so fast that King Cormac and his guards were utterly unprepared.

Royal bodyguards might have shielded him on the ground—but they had no defense against an airborne assault.

Some court magicians tried to launch lightning spells at the Valkyries.

But they needn't even dodge. The divine armor around them deflected the magical attacks as if they were no more than a breeze.

Just a day ago, such a feat would've been unthinkable.

Normally, foreign divine power would be weakened—sometimes to a third of its full strength—by the local world's laws.

But now, the Valkyries moved at full power, their godly armor unbroken.

They dove in fast as lightning.

Most of the king's army hadn't even understood what was happening when, before their horrified eyes, King Cormac and his sons—including Crown Prince Caple—were all struck by the Valkyries' lances.

Their bodies didn't die instantly—they convulsed violently, writhing in agony, wailing.

The Valkyries, to ensure the royal army could clearly see what was happening, even slowed their pegasi to a hover above the battlefield.