

## Thalos 187

### Chapter 187: Arthur, the God of Knights

Arthur was no novice when it came to the divine realm.

He too yearned for the mystical, for the power of a higher order.

Though this life had no Holy Grail, as spoken of in *Le Morte d'Arthur*, that did not stop him from instinctively craving the favor of the divine.

Arthur understood well: a divine seat wasn't granted out of thin air. It required the world's acknowledgment.

As the sovereign of both worlds, the God-King Thalos had the authority to request the world itself to allocate a portion of its origin and shape it into a new godhood.

But why him—Arthur?

He could hardly believe his ears. He instinctively looked up toward the towering figure of the God-King—and received a smile and a nod in return.

Thalos spoke: "Arthur, should you wish it, from this day forth you shall be the paragon and object of reverence for every knight beneath the heavens."

Arthur's breathing grew rapid. As he glanced around, he met the blazing, joyful eyes of his most loyal knights.

Still, he clung to a final sliver of modesty. "I... I am not worthy. I am but a mere mortal king."

Thalos gave him a dignified way to accept: "You may take up the mantle once you've sired an heir and settled your affairs."

The divine king had spoken thus—refusing now would be sheer disrespect.

Arthur bowed deeply. "I thank the God-King for his grace. I, Arthur Pendragon, am willing to take up the mantle of God of Knights, to safeguard all that is good in this world!"

A roaring cheer erupted from his knights! Their ten voices filled the Golden Palace with an impassioned fervor.

All around, members of the Connacht, Ulster, and Fianna knightly orders broke into applause.

Only Commander Fionn wore a bitter expression. He knew full well that he had fallen from the God-King's favor. As the head of a knightly order, he had clashed with the faction of royal authority. Even though the God-King, for reasons unknown, allowed the Fianna order to triumph, it could not cover up the stigma of "rebellious against the crown."

Allowing King Arthur of neighboring Camelot to assume the mantle of Knight God was the most pointed rebuke to the Fianna.

Fionn didn't dare utter a word of protest. The Aesir were too powerful. The might they had shown during the battle on Emerald Isle was clearly not even their full strength.

Even though the Thor they saw on the island was already terrifying enough, meeting the true Thor at close range revealed a far more terrifying being. Not to mention, this world also had the World Serpent Jörmungandr as a guardian beast.

That enormous silhouette—just one glimpse had chilled Fionn to the bone.

Under his lead, the Fianna knights chose to accept the new order, and walked over to pledge their faith to the new God of Knights.

Then came two more promotions—unexpected yet somehow fitting.

Brynhildr next announced: "Lady Scathach! For your valiant efforts and unflinching courage in the face of evil gods, you are hereby enshrined as the Goddess of Heroic Spirits, charged with overseeing the daily training in Valhalla's Hall of Heroes and guiding the einherjar."

This time, it was Cú Chulainn's turn to be stunned. "Master, you don't have to guard the gates of the underworld anymore?"

Scathach, as Queen of the Land of Shadows, had been akin to a goddess of death. But in the Ginnungagap world, the domain of Death was already managed by Thalos and Hela. Not having to keep watch over the restless dead was, undeniably, a form of liberation.

But Scathach merely gave her foolish disciple a meaningful glance. "My foolish pupil, every gift has a price marked in the unseen. Don't worry—you won't escape your share."

"Huh?"

Cú Chulainn stared dumbly as his master, wielding Gungnir, stepped forward and took her place at the front of the Valkyrie formation—ranked even ahead of Brynhildr.

Then came Brynhildr's next declaration: "Cú Chulainn! Your valor in battle has been witnessed by all. You are hereby appointed Guardian of Light, subordinate to the God of Light, Freyr."

Freyr was frequently on campaign, and a capable subordinate god was essential.

Cú Chulainn dumbly watched as a godlike, dazzlingly handsome man—six times his size—approached while humming a cheerful tune. Then, right in front of him, Freyr casually shrank down to mortal size.

This radiant god... Cú Chulainn felt not a trace of dislike for him.

Freyr grinned like a sunny youth and extended a hand. "Yo, want to be my subordinate god? This is a real-deal divine position. Once you're the Guardian of Light, you can choose freely from the light elves of Alfheim."

As the so-called "Child of Light," Cú Chulainn knew full well he could never ascend to become a principal deity of light. Being accepted as Freyr's subordinate was already the Aesir's highest favor.

"I accept! My Lord Freyr!"

Afterward, Merlin was casually tossed to Dagda as a subordinate god. What Dagda would do with him... was a tale for another time.

One new principal deity, three new subordinate gods—the mortal factions of the Celtic world had now been given their share.

This was the benefit of expanding the divine pie.

For a moment, gods and mortals from both worlds rejoiced together.

In truth, all of this had come out of the former Danu gods' territory. But they were so pitifully weak after being wrecked by chaos that they dared not utter a single complaint. Thalos restoring their dignity was already more mercy than they deserved.

Naturally, the festivities continued—seven days of revelry in the Palace of Joy.

Finally, the newly anointed God of Knights, Arthur, mustered the courage to request an audience with Thalos.

"Your Majesty, now that I have assumed this divine mantle... what exactly must I do?"

It was a good question—one most gods wouldn't know how to answer.

If you asked any Aesir, Vanir, or Danu god how to do it, they'd just stare and say, "Isn't this as easy as breathing?"

Thalos smiled warmly. "I've already spoken to the world's will. Your divine domain has been opened. Now, close your eyes. Picture yourself standing upon a platform for mustering troops, with every knight in the world gathered before you. Begin with those you know best."

Arthur, the god, did as instructed. To his astonishment, what should have been darkness became populated with vivid silhouettes.

Though the distant crowd remained hazy—just shadows in layers—he clearly saw and heard Gawain and Gareth boasting, and Agravain scolding the mischievous Kay.

Arthur couldn't help but call out: [My knights...]

"Your Majesty?" The knights all paused. They had unmistakably heard their liege—no, their patron deity—speak directly into their ears.

[Uh, never mind. I was just consulting with His Majesty Thalos about godhood. Please carry on.]

Arthur opened his eyes, feeling vaguely embarrassed—as though he'd just intruded upon the private lives of his men.

Thalos chuckled. "You've found the key, haven't you?"

"A bit," Arthur admitted, slightly abashed.