

Thalos 230

Chapter 230: The Re-skinne Army

In previous campaigns, Thalos would simply ram Ginnungagap World directly into the enemy world. Once the two came into close quarters, Ginnungagap's overwhelming might would guarantee total victory.

If this had been the Egyptian pantheon he once knew, then even their full lineup wouldn't stand a chance against the now-massively expanded Aesir pantheon.

But thanks to the peculiar spatial tunnel—a flute-shaped space corridor—it was likely that Ginnungagap couldn't make direct contact this time.

That meant they'd have to resort to a divine boarding maneuver: deploying a limited number of gods and troops to seize control of the enemy world from within.

Normally, sending too small a force would be suicide.

Worse still, that flute-shaped corridor had periodic access. Continuous deployment wasn't possible, meaning if they fought poorly, they'd just be trickling in reinforcements like pouring oil onto a fire—cannon fodder style.

But leaving such a massive Egyptian world unchecked was a dangerous gamble.

Its very presence was more proof that the so-called "Divine Pantheon Battle Royale" theory was true.

Ignore Egypt now, and they might end up joining forces with other pantheons to attack Ginnungagap later.

Or worse, another unknown pantheon might conquer Egypt like Thalos had done with Sumer, creating a new superpower that would threaten Ginnungagap.

This was a winner-takes-all battle royale—there could be no mercy.

And for the barbarian-minded Aesir gods, alliances? Pfft. What's that? Can you eat it?

Their worldview was simple: you're either one of us, or you're an enemy. No room for "neutral parties."

In their eyes, an enemy turned vassal was more trustworthy than an unreliable ally.

Thanks to Thalos' iron-handed reforms and strategic assimilation, even former enemy gods integrated into the Aesir pantheon had upward mobility and were treated fairly. So the consensus in Ginnungagap was: conquer first, talk later.

Yes, the risks were high. But the rewards? Even higher. And there was no shortage of fanatics willing to take that chance.

Think about it—even Thor had volunteered to join this divine boarding mission. What follower wouldn't follow suit?

"Me, me, me!"

"I'll go!"

"Your Majesty, let me go too!"

Except for the old-guard gods whose positions were secure, pretty much every god with any combat inclination wanted in on the boarding op.

Thalos scanned the faces beneath the throne platform, locking eyes with the burning eagerness in their gazes.

"This time, no rush. Let the Sumerian-born gods take priority!" he announced. "Because Sumer and Egypt share historical ties, their presence will be better received."

As soon as he said that, gods like Enki (God of Irrigation), Ishtar, and Ereshkigal (Elle) stepped forward without hesitation.

Having personally witnessed the might of the Aesir, these surrendered gods had long lost any thoughts of rebellion. What they wanted now was to prove themselves and escape the bottom rungs of divine hierarchy.

"All of you entering with full bodies wouldn't be ideal," Thalos added. "You may send avatars—no more than 30% of your divine soul. Demi-gods and heroic mortals may volunteer to accompany you."

A fair and rational rule.

And as always: if you don't go, someone braver will.

In addition to the former Sumerian gods, volunteers included Skadi's avatar, several of Arthur's knights, and over thirty giants led by the land's strongest—Hrungnir.

As for the field commander? As per tradition—it was Ishtar!

This time, she wasn't flying solo. Her sacred handmaidens, thoroughly trained mortal women, now possessed rudimentary interdimensional mobility. Though they still relied on Ishtar's power to traverse chaos, they functioned as living recon drones.

The group formed a tight three-dimensional wedge formation, escorting giant chunks of chaos rock toward the next "flute hole."

This time—miraculously—everything went smoothly.

Maybe it was because Gilgamesh had already "greeted" the world barrier in advance. The shield itself opened up, actively allowing the Order-aligned entities through.

For the landing forces, the trip was nerve-racking.

The giants, like Hrungnir, could feel the eerie quiet surrounding their stone landing pod. The howling winds were gone—replaced only by the faint patter of sand hitting the hull.

Normally, falling in a massive stone pod like this would mean instant death on impact.

But before it could accelerate too much, a familiar divine force caught it—Ishtar's power.

This discovery brought great comfort to the giants.

They didn't fear death in battle. Being slain by a mighty foe was an honor.

But dying from a botched landing without ever seeing the enemy? That was just humiliating.

The pod's speed slowed even more. Then came a soft jolt.

Light began to filter in as the hatch opened.

The sky was dark. The land ahead, bright.

A group of strangely dressed mortals waited near the landing site, holding torches.

Hrungnir stepped out. Before him stretched a barren desert. In the distance, flickering lights; nearby, torchlight bathed the sand in warm glow.

"What a wasteland," the strongest giant grumbled.

He spotted the operation's commander. Although the figure's appearance had changed, that golden divine radiance was unmistakable... and deeply annoying.

"You big guys—put on these masks. Otherwise, it'll be hard to blend in," came that familiar, arrogant voice.

Yep. That weirdly dressed "mortal" was obviously Gilgamesh.

"Yeah, yeah," the giants muttered. No one dared argue with the son of the God-King.

Hrungnir and the others trudged over to some wagons carrying massive bronze helmets.

Once they strapped on those elaborate brass animal helms, along with ornate armguards, legplates, and shoulder gear, they really did look like mythical divine executioners.

"Perfect! Absolutely perfect!" Gilgamesh rubbed his chin, quite pleased with his re-skinned giant army.

At that moment, a voluptuous, dark-skinned woman sauntered over, grumbling under her breath.

"Gil! Why'd you give your own mother such a terrible body to possess?" she whined. "Look at this skin—it's way too dark!"

That voice could only belong to Ishtar's avatar.

She hadn't descended in her original form, so she had to possess someone.

Gilgamesh facepalmed. "Mother, this is Egypt! Where do you expect me to find a blonde white-skinned body for you? Maybe in Upper Egypt, where they keep foreign slaves, but those bodies are too weak!"