

Thalos 236

Chapter 236: I Do Not Accept!

An awe-inspiring proclamation!

That declaration wasn't just a shock to the enemy gods—it shook Thalos's own pantheon to its core.

As someone born in the Celestial Empire, Thalos had mostly maintained a low-key and restrained demeanor. After enduring the passage of time, the Aesir gods in the broadest sense had begun to forget their God-King's glorious past.

They'd grown so accustomed to the quiet and steady power that, only now, as they looked back, did they suddenly realize—their faction had become an overwhelming giant. Their god-king, a supreme being that could only be looked up to.

It had to be said—those grand titles were more than enough to terrify an enemy.

As Thalos slammed his terrifying resume in the face of the opposing world like a wall of trophies, he was simultaneously gathering intelligence on this unknown realm.

Huh?

Something seemed... off.

This world's origin force was weaker than he had expected.

As he brazenly unleashed divine pressure to erode the enemy's world and expanded his divine perception, the strengths of the local gods began to fall into his awareness.

They were... kind of weak!

"One, two, three... five... twenty? Only twenty proper gods?" Thalos blinked in disbelief.

A relatively complete pantheon usually had no fewer than thirty gods. Natural forces alone—earth, water, fire, wind, sky—would account for around ten. Add in gods governing aspects of human life, and thirty was the bare minimum.

With only twenty gods, subtracting domains like family or fertility that had little combat value, the number of real fighters was likely a third of that—at best.

This favorable situation erased most of the worry from Thalos's mind.

He carefully scanned the divine lights within the enemy's heavens, studying their divine domains.

"Underworld god, moon goddess, god of war, battle deity, hmm? Is this a guardian of the divine realm?"

His perception, like probing tentacles or the beam of a lighthouse in the night, swept across the opposing world without restraint.

Make no mistake—this was a provocation.

But since war had already been declared, this minor act of intimidation didn't matter. In fact, it reinforced his total confidence.

Predictably, the other side was probably in chaos.

But since they hadn't attacked yet, Thalos was content to show some grace. For at least one day, he wouldn't make the first move.

Just then, Enki stepped forward. "Your Majesty."

"Speak."

"This world's essence feels somewhat... Sumerian."

"Hm?"

Ishtar and Ereshkigal also stepped out and bowed. "We agree. It's familiar."

It wasn't just a feeling.

Using Thalos's divine vision, they presented a comparison of similarities and differences between this world and the Sumerian one.

Despite minor architectural differences, the overall style was unmistakably similar.

Not identical, but clearly from the same lineage.

Thalos frowned briefly—he suddenly remembered a possibly existing pantheon.

Just like how Roman mythology inherited the essence of Greek mythology—often reusing gods with only a name change—perhaps the same applied here.

If any mythos followed Sumerian tradition, it would be the Akkadian civilization, and later the Babylonian one.

In the Akkadian pantheon, many Sumerian gods were renamed. For example, the Sumerian sun god Utu became Shamash in Akkadian myth.

This "new wrapping on the same dish" raised a deeper, more troubling thought in Thalos's mind.

In Akkadian mythology, the master of the world was still Enlil.

Which led to a thorny question: if two pantheons with a historical connection but separated by time exist in different worlds, is it possible they share the same god?

That kind of near-paradox involving space-time was seriously headache-inducing.

The idea of meeting another version of Enlil made Thalos wonder what kind of expression he should wear for such absurdity.

"Your Majesty," Enki said, "I believe this world has no god of wind."

As Enlil's older brother, Enki knew that brutal sibling very well.

If Enki said there was no wind god, there likely wasn't one.

So then... what else did this world have?

While Thalos was merely curious, the other world was in full panic.

Within the divine palace of Akkad's heavens, the sacred aura of the gods still lingered in the air.

But the vibrant, flourishing energy of days past was long gone.

The divine statues still stood on both sides of the grand hall—yet most looked like melted candles, their features warped, no longer able to cast those far-seeing gazes over worshippers and attendants.

No splendor of the temple could conceal the weakness of the Akkadian pantheon.

No luxury of attire could bring them comfort.

"Thalos Borson—what the hell is that?"

"Ninurta! It doesn't matter what he is. What matters is that his power far exceeds that of our Akkadian gods. His world is at least twice as large as our shattered realm!"

The god called Ninurta wore magnificent bronze armor, but the golden luster was marred by a fearsome wound running from his right shoulder plate down diagonally across his chest to his left side. The gap was wide enough for a grown man to punch through.

His curly golden hair hung dull and lifeless.

"Pabilsag, Ningishzida, Sudd—are you saying I should surrender?" Ninurta's eyes were bloodshot as he roared. His voice echoed through the temple, but it failed to shake the resolve of his subordinates.

The Akkadian pantheon's rule was highly fragmented.

Those named by Ninurta were all patron gods of autonomous city-states.

Sudd, who had just presented the facts, did not hesitate to confront his god-king. "Ninurta! We supported you! But look at what happened last time—thirteen gods fell, fifteen were captured, including seven goddesses! Your failure has proven your unreliability. So this time, we're done!"

Ninurta trembled all over.

Ningishzida stepped forward. "Of course, you're free to attack us—your 'city-state alliance.' I'm sure that new god-king won't miss the chance to exploit that."

Ninurta shook even more violently. "Cowards! Spineless wretches! I may fall—but I'll fall charging into battle. As for you lot, go lick the boots of that new god-king!"

Not long after, a cluster of divine lights of varying hues burst out from Akkad's heavens, racing toward the merging point between the two worlds.

At the same time, a thunderous voice reached Thalos.

[I am Sudd, patron god of the city of Shuruppak! On behalf of the 'City-State Alliance,' I hereby declare we reject the authority of the Akkadian god-king Ninurta. We will remain neutral in the coming war, and shall offer our loyalty to whichever side claims victory. We hope His Majesty Thalos Borson will accept this proposal.]

Thalos froze for a moment—then burst out laughing.

"HAHAHAHA! Hahahahahaha! Are they serious? Their god-king is already groveling, and they think their worthless little city-states are qualified to negotiate with me as equals?"

His gaze turned sharp as he replied immediately:

[Cowards who betray their master have no right to negotiate with me. This proposal... I do not accept!]