

Thalos 244

Chapter 244: Mobilization

"Ding! Ding! Ding!"

The war bells tolled long and loud—

For the first time in a long while, all eleven sub-worlds of the Ginnungagap realm echoed with the sound of alarms.

In each sub-world, every priest received an unmistakably clear divine message.

Some were startled awake from their dreams; others fell into a trance mid-ritual and awoke moments later, each of them crying out with precise, solemn words: "By order of the Supreme God-King Thalos Borson—Ginnungagap is about to be attacked by the Aztec world. All civilians and military units are to enter Combat Readiness Level One."

Back when initial contact was made with the Egyptian world, Thalos had already issued a Level Two alert. Now it was upgraded to Level One.

From the gods and their divine attendants to the beasts under Asgardian control, down to the mortals themselves—everyone was on full alert.

Thanks to Thalos' decades-long Enlightenment Campaign across half the realm, most beings in the world were well aware of the dangers beyond. The great war with the Sumerian world nearly twenty years ago still felt like it had happened just yesterday.

Though most mortals hadn't witnessed the grandeur of that divine war with their own eyes, they could all see the massive new continent added to Ginnungagap's lower world.

And thanks to Thalos allowing partial access to the Bifrost Bridge for trade and communication between mid- and lower-level mortals, people now truly understood the brutal stakes of world-scale warfare:

Win—and you're seated at the table.

Lose—and you become the dish.

Thankfully, Thalos had enforced a strict assimilation policy on all outsiders.

Those who refused to obey were killed.

Those who submitted had to prove their loyalty over time before being granted the rights of free citizens.

Anyone who wished to rise further had to earn distinction through war against external threats.

Given all that, it was surprisingly the Sumerians who now expressed the greatest thirst for battle.

To them, Thalos wasn't an invader—he was a liberator. Their glorious God-King had freed them from the tyranny of the violent wind god Enlil.

Their passion for war now rivaled that of the Midgardians.

"For our God-King! Slaughter those Aztec bastards!"

"The freedom granted by His Majesty shall not be stolen by you trash—"

Countless Sumerian men, wielding all manner of crude weapons, surged toward local garrisons demanding to enlist in the Ginnungagap Coalition Forces.

In truth, only a handful of major Sumerian cities—such as Uruk, under the rule of wealth god Gilgamesh—openly recruited volunteers and handpicked warriors for the army. Most Sumerian cities strictly followed Asgard's directives and only sent their reservists to report for duty.

Today, the entire Ginnungagap world had long since developed a complete and sophisticated mobilization system for mortals.

In addition to a carefully selected professional military, all healthy adult men were required to undergo at least two months of military training annually during the off-season. Those with excellent performance were added to the reserve forces and received higher-tier benefits, including reduced "Divine Taxes" paid to Asgard.

This tiered design ensured both professionalism and avoided overburdening the mortal nations.

However, this policy had only been applied to the Celtic territories and other long-standing domains. The Sumerians had not yet proven their loyalty in war and thus hadn't been fully integrated into Ginnungagap's military structure.

As for the newly absorbed Akkadians—a different strategy was employed.

The moon god Nanna and other descending gods projected illusory scenes of the Aztec sacrificial rituals Loki had witnessed across the skies of major Akkadian cities.

Even those priests who had lost their patron gods ran through the streets crying out:

"Look! These are the Aztecs who once enslaved the Slavs to attack us! Such monstrous cruelty!"

"Surrendering to the Aesir still allows us to live with dignity. But if the Aztecs take us—that will be the true end!"

"We'll be degraded without limit. Treated like playthings for their amusement. The losers will be sacrificed alive in the most horrific ways!"

Initially, most Akkadians couldn't emotionally connect with scenes of blood sacrifices performed on African and Slavic people. But once Loki delivered a new set of memory fragments showing the rituals, many Akkadians suddenly recognized their own kin.

"Oh God! That's my uncle—he was captured years ago!"

More and more Akkadians realized their relatives had become slaves in the Aztec world. They wept and shouted, their fury erupting from deep within.

Indeed, anger is often humanity's most powerful and enduring emotion.

When the Aesir invaded Akkad, there had been little slaughter among the mortals. Thalos' elite shock troops had simply and efficiently crushed all high-level resistance. As such, ordinary people barely registered the divine change in leadership.

Especially after the new gods easily subdued the most devout priests, the Akkadians found they held no real grudge against the Aesir.

It was instead the Aztecs—who had once butchered and enslaved them—who quickly became the lightning rod for all their hatred.

And just like that, with the Aztecs serving as the common enemy, the Akkadian people were fully mobilized.

Seizing the moment, numerous Asgardian divine attendants arrived with troops, delivering massive quantities of finely forged weapons from Svartalfheim.

As they stood before mountains of gleaming new steel, the Valkyries proclaimed a fiery slogan:

"Take up the God-King Borson's gift—these sharp blades—and march into the Aztec world to reclaim your kin and your people—"

The fury of the masses exploded into a thunderous roar.

They raised their weapons high and shouted in unison:

"Long live Lord Borson!"

"Kill the Aztecs!"

"Avenge our kin!"

The roused fervor of the Akkadian crowds was reflected in the eyes of Heimdall, Guardian of the Realm. Through a mind-projection, the scenes were broadcast above the Silver Palace's throne hall.

Witnessing this, the gods all marveled at their God-King's astonishing skill in manipulation.

Put bluntly, the original conquest of the Akkadian world was nothing more than a naked act of aggression. No matter how creatively the victors' historians tried to whitewash it, the brutal plunder behind the war couldn't be hidden.

The knight god Arthur, with his strict moral standards, had once expressed subtle objections to that campaign. It was only after witnessing firsthand the cruelty of the Sumerian god-king Enlil that he reluctantly withheld his dissent.

But now—he realized there were worse monsters.

Enlil, who had three times brought destruction to the mortal realm, may have been cold and cruel—but the Aztec gods?

They were something else entirely.

They didn't even see humans as people. Sacrifices were entertainment. Ritual slaughter was divine expression.

They were what happened when absolute power went entirely unchecked.

Arthur suddenly found himself filled with admiration and reverence for his own God-King.

"So my Lord truly is the most humane of all the God-Kings..."

Regardless, before the clash between the two worlds had even begun, the mortal realms of Ginnungagap had already completed their full mobilization for war.