

Thalos 264

Chapter 264: Die Standing—No Kneeling Allowed!

The joint strike by Enki and Arthur that killed the Rain God Chaac was merely a microcosm of the grand world war now raging.

Not far from their position—reflected in the eyes of warriors on both sides—two divine armies clashed with overwhelming force across both land and sky, locked in a final, brutal struggle.

If not for the world barrier, the deafening roar of battle would have burst beyond the boundaries of this world, echoing into the deepest reaches of the chaotic cosmos. The earth-shaking cacophony resembled a world-sized geyser, blasting through every corner of the battlefield, shaking the eardrums and souls of every being present.

Beyond the direct divine forces of the Aesir, the mortal legions of Ginnungagap surged forward like multicolored waves, pouring out from archways formed by the branches and roots of the World Tree.

Primarily composed of Midgard's core troops clad in gold or yellow armor, the Celtic units in blue and white, and the Sumerians in earth-toned hues, the Ginnungagap army was truly a spectacle.

Thanks to the flourishing state of the world and a massive increase in food production, this time they had raised a real army—no exaggeration, no padding of numbers—a full million-strong force.

A rough breakdown:

400,000 frontline soldiers

700,000 auxiliary troops

Over a million logistical personnel

At first, Thalos hadn't planned to mobilize mortals. Their combat power and efficiency were far too low.

But he changed his mind.

This wasn't just a war of gods.

This was a true world war.

To keep mortals detached from such conflicts would sever the link between the mundane and divine realms.

Besides, involving them was an opportunity—an effective filter for discovering future heroes and Einherjar.

In the past, the world's size couldn't support the birth of too many mortal legends. But now, after swallowing up multiple worlds... who knew what new gods or champions might emerge? Even Thalos found himself looking forward to the possibilities.

A million troops on the march—a staggering sight.

This was the Mythic Age. Mortal armies didn't possess modern discipline or drill. Without the means to form deep phalanxes or tight formations, they moved like waves crashing upon a shore.

Though their numbers were known, their visual impact was immeasurable. It felt like an endless swarm of marching ants, densely packed and relentless.

And this Maya world—its landscape not unlike Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula—was a broad, barren beach.

But even this vast expanse couldn't accommodate the full deployment of the Ginnungagap army.

Many nations with tens of thousands of troops were confined to battlefield strips less than five kilometers wide.

For the mortal soldiers of the Maya, Aztec, and Inca pantheons, the sight was downright terrifying.

The Ginnungagap army seemed like a boundless horde of merciless invaders—shoulder to shoulder, swarming forward, radiating cruelty and wrath, ready to devour everything in their path.

The mortals of the three Indian pantheons broke.

Under normal conditions, few units could've held their ground.

But the divine control over them was too strong. Under mind-altering divine spells, many Aztec and Inca warriors went berserk, wielding pathetic bronze weapons against Ginnungagap forces fully equipped with iron arms.

Normally, such fanatic charges would shake the morale of opposing mortals.

But not this time.

The Ginnungagap warriors were empowered by divine auras from War God Tyr and other powerful deities.

The outcome?

The inferiorly armed Inca were often instantly dismembered.

On the other hand, those who had broken free from divine influence—or whose gods had already fallen—simply dropped everything and fled into the jungle, hoping to disappear and avoid death.

The chaos was staggering.

Greater disorder erupted within the Inca and Maya divine ranks themselves.

Once Jörmungandr disrupted the formation with a violent charge, Hel's death legions—led by the hellhound Garm—thrust deep into the chaos and shattered any hope of organized resistance.

From that moment on, the divine remnants of the Inca, Maya, and Aztec pantheons could no longer mount any meaningful counterattack.

Now and then, a desperate Inca or Maya god would shout a plea for surrender—only to be met with cold, ruthless silence.

If Ginnungagap still had some powerful vassal gods secretly sheltering the enemy, perhaps the war would've ended sooner. But ever since Odin's betrayal and Vili's slumber, Thalos had never again granted dominions to others.

Every core god was either Thalos's child or a once-descended god who had proven their loyalty.

And no one dared test the God-King's wrath.

Thalos had decreed—no prisoners.

Then it would be extermination.

Every time an enemy god begged for mercy, the Aesir and their giants acted as though they'd heard nothing.

Even Ixchel, goddess of medicine and midwifery, knelt and pleaded for mercy—only to be coldly rebuked by Zislaborg, the Slavic moon goddess:

"Die standing—no kneeling allowed!"

Then she dragged the kneeling goddess upright and ran her through with a sword.

Fate is a cycle.

Back when the Maya gods allowed the Aztecs to pillage freely, prisoners were forced into mutual slaughter before having their hearts offered as sacrifices. That violence planted the seeds of their downfall.

Now that the Maya world lay in ruins, with the three great pantheons shattered—

Not even a single leaf was innocent.

This was retribution—

The cruelest, most absolute kind.

High above, Thalos sat leisurely on a platform of pure wind element, suspended in the sky. Around him, Valkyries had dismounted their flying horses and now stood respectfully at his side.

Thor, Gilgamesh, and Freyr no longer took part in the killing below.

These gods—crushed, broken, begging to surrender but forbidden from kneeling—no longer interested them.

None of the three even recognized who the enemy gods were. Thor didn't care; Gilgamesh found them beneath him; only Freyr squinted to make sense of the scattered banners fluttering in the winds.

But one sigil caught his eye—

A banner bearing the image of a Crystal Skull.

That was Skel's flag—the so-called God of Wisdom.

Freyr even summoned a Slavic divine attendant to confirm it. He learned that Skel's divine army had participated in the invasions of the Ashanti world (modern Ghana) and the Bambara world (southwestern Mali).

Those proud African pantheons had fallen beneath their blade.

Though known as a "wise god," Skel's combat prowess rivaled that of the wrathful Odin.

Unlike the brutal Aztec hosts, Skel's angelic legions were cold, efficient, and iron-willed.

But now, they were nearly wiped out.

Just a few remaining standards clung to the battlefield, surrounded on all sides by Ginnungagap's gods.

As the Slavic attendant finished his tale, the final flags vanished beneath a tide of divine might.

"It's over."

Anyone with even a shred of political or military awareness could see the truth.

The Maya, Inca, and Aztec pantheons would soon be wiped from existence in this chaotic cosmos.

Perhaps once they'd been mighty, feared, and respected.

But with their worlds fallen,

their histories shattered,

their future erased—

They would be remembered no longer.

Not even in name.