

Thalos 270

Chapter 270

If someone were to gaze down from the heavens, they would notice that the current shape of the Ginnungagap world was rather unusual—like a giant figure eight, or perhaps more like a string of candied hawthorns upon closer inspection.

Thalos was extremely cautious. He didn't allow Ginnungagap to devour multiple major worlds all at once. Instead, he had it absorb them one at a time.

While this method was slightly less efficient, it was far more secure.

At this point, Ginnungagap was destined to grow stronger and stronger, while the Egypt world, mired in civil war, was only growing weaker.

Since time was on Ginnungagap's side, Thalos was in no rush. At the very least, he wouldn't accelerate Egypt's internal collapse until the integration of the three Mesoamerican worlds was complete.

Gilgamesh, having received his orders, fully showcased his brilliant intellect. In Lower Egypt, within the country ruled by the bald man he had possessed, a so-called civil war erupted.

Then, Arthur—inhabiting another host body—took on the role of the rebellion's leader, "Arthus," and incited tens of thousands of slaves into open revolt against the pharaoh (portrayed by Gilgamesh).

The two sides clashed ferociously, a true battle of paper tigers. They fought viciously with poorly equipped troops, each side suffering heavy but insignificant losses. Afterward, they both declared victory and returned to their territories.

Then came the real trickery.

Arthur announced his intention to uphold justice and pledged allegiance to Horus, the rightful ruler of Egypt.

Gilgamesh (under the alias of Set) claimed he was the true heir and declared his loyalty to Set's faction.

To outsiders, these two seemed like bitter enemies, staging countless "major battles" with large armies, subpar weapons, chaotic logistics, and a high slave death toll—yet each side always claimed triumphant glory.

In the end, the two factions simply split the country down the middle.

It was written as a standoff, but in reality, the borders were guarded by a rabble of useless troops while both leaders quietly withdrew their elites to raid neighboring nations aligned with their supposed enemies.

What's that? You support Set?

No—you're not loyal enough! Imperfect loyalty is disloyalty! You're getting wrecked.

You say you support Horus?

Well, I'm the most devout of all Solar God followers—you should be listening to me!

What's that? You're neutral?

That just makes you a spy from the enemy camp!

No matter what anyone said, these two always found an excuse to attack.

At first, Horus and Set were pleased to hear that two forces in Lower Egypt claimed to support them. They sent emissaries to recruit them—only to be endlessly rebuffed with various excuses.

Eventually, both Horus and Set realized what kind of scoundrels were claiming to be their allies.

Their slogans were deafening, their answers always supportive on the surface, but beyond empty words, they offered nothing. They obeyed orders in name only.

And yet, these two factions focused their aggression almost entirely on the opposing side's peripheral states.

Both Horus and Set gnashed their teeth in frustration, arriving at the exact same conclusion about Arthur and Gilgamesh—despite targeting different people: "Ambitious schemers!"

What made things even more complicated was that the major battles between Horus and Set were being fought far away in Upper Egypt. They had no means of controlling things down in Lower Egypt.

So, the two "leaders" had no choice but to look the other way, telling themselves, "As long as they don't go too far, we'll tolerate them... for now."

Both Horus and Set thought the same thing: "Once I take down Set (or Horus), I'll come back and clean house!"

And in this strange, delicate equilibrium, Arthur and Gilgamesh continued to expand their power.

That's right.

Expand!

Thalos had indeed ordered them to stall for time and intensify the conflict between Horus and Set—but he'd also given them full autonomy to act as they saw fit.

After all, the Egyptian world remained in a separate cosmic channel. Communications were disrupted for long stretches every month. If their avatars weren't authorized to take initiative, they wouldn't be able to do anything at all.

Arthur and Gilgamesh made full use of this leeway.

The two reached a mutual understanding—while stirring chaos, they would also seize the opportunity to hunt Egyptian gods.

It didn't matter which faction the targets belonged to. Every Egyptian god that fell meant a relative increase in Ginnungagap's divine advantage.

Sure, mortals killing gods was rare. But for two genuine gods using multiple avatars, it was entirely possible to overwhelm and eliminate a few of the weaker Egyptian animal deities.

Especially because...

The Egyptian world was already cursed.

Busy with their civil war, neither Horus nor Set realized that the Mayan "Apocalypse Prophecy" had already descended upon Egypt.

In the heart of the desert lay an oasis.

Outside of the Nile Valley, every desert oasis had always been a strategically vital location.

This one was called Seshar, named after the leopard goddess Seshat.

It had once been a precious jewel in the sands—a hidden paradise. One could find desert hero trees (poplars), tamarisks forming a "green great wall," and hardy plants like welwitschia and aloe.

It wasn't exactly lush, but it added a welcome touch of green to the bleak desert.

Now, however, it was unrecognizable.

Thick, tarry brown sludge—like the corrupted blood of demons from legend—spread through the once-clear springs, choking out the last traces of life.

Only silence and death remained. The trees had withered, leaving only broken trunks. The sand was devoid of color, devoured by the black sludge, and everything appeared dull and lifeless.

The once-clear pools had dried into stagnant pits. Black stones littered the sand.

Once the watering hole for all the animals within a hundred kilometers, it was now a dead zone that no living being dared approach.

And this was no isolated case.

Over 80% of Egypt's oases had dried up.

For the animals, this was an extinction-level disaster.

Herbivores were devastated. But so too were the apex predators.

Few people understood that Egypt's animal gods drew their divine power from both their corresponding animal species and the mortal worship of those animals.

Herein lay the problem: when nearly all the leopards had died and mortals no longer had the will to pray to the leopard goddess, could she still wield divine power?

Of course not!

In recent months, natural disasters had grown rampant.

When even the Nile—the mother river of all Egyptian life—began drying up intermittently, mortals plunged into fear.

The Nile's annual floods enriched the land with silt, allowing for the cultivation of rice and other staples.

It was the single most reliable food source for humanity.

When faced with such droughts, did people still have time to worship some obscure leopard goddess?

Of course not!

Instead, a new god—Enki, god of irrigation—began quietly spreading his faith among the people of Lower Egypt.

Everyone knew this was blasphemy, a betrayal of the Egyptian pantheon.

But people had to eat!

Besides, the Nine Pillars of Egypt were already split into warring factions, tearing each other apart. Who among them cared what the mortals were doing?

In secret, countless nominal believers began switching faiths.

And it was precisely Enki's hidden divine faction that organized a covert hunt for the leopard goddess.