

Thalos 281

Chapter 281: Fate Calculation

Even when it came to suicide, the Fuso people were particular. Samurai could only commit seppuku, while women were expected to drown themselves.

Hashihime, or the "Bridge Princess," represented the wrathful spirits of deeply obsessed women, making these yokai especially terrifying.

If a man crossed a bridge at night and happened to be her type, she would appear and use seductive tricks to lure him—perhaps to the edge of the bridge, where she would make him fall and drown. If she encountered a woman of a type she detested, she might try to drown her as well.

Of course, a ghost like Hashihime was nothing against someone like Scáthach—who had been a powerful gatekeeper of the Underworld long before her ascension—or even the average underworld jailer. The moment this bridge princess in a vivid red kimono emerged, she hadn't even processed what was happening before several soul chains from the Underworld wrapped around her and brought her down.

Well, as they say—if you've got the guts, ghost moms take maternity leave.

Once inside Ginnungagap's territory, all Fuso wraiths and monsters had to behave.

The gods present weren't surprised in the least. Dagda, however, was more concerned with other matters.

"Merlin, analyze the frequency of all these spatial cavities. I want to ensure that 99% of them are intercepted and redirected here. If we average more than one invasion per day across Ginnungagap's sub-worlds, I'm holding you responsible."

Never mind that rank was already a huge deal—divine beings operated on an entirely different level. Merlin, formidable though he was, was still just a subordinate under Dagda's authority.

Silently, Merlin bowed. "Yes."

Back in the Silver Palace, Thor privately asked Thalos, "Father, isn't sending people to intercept these spatial cavities a bit too passive? Isn't there a better way?"

"There are many ways to solve a problem, but they rarely appear instantly. You must learn patience. And even for gods like us, we cannot ignore the existence of karma."

"Karma?"

"Today's cause is tomorrow's effect," Thalos said, gazing off into the distance. His divine sight stretched through space, surveying the newly assembled South American continent. "The world is not made of a single element, nor is it governed by a single god. We gods are merely the world's spokespeople. Even other worlds—once they come into contact or connection with Ginnungagap in any form—a karmic thread is established."

Thor seemed to half understand, half not.

There was something else Thalos didn't say.

With his current dominion over Fate, he had acquired a special ability.

Even without previous contact, any form of engagement with another world began accumulating karmic links. Simply put, if the Fuso world kept stirring trouble—regardless of whether it was their world's will or some god's directive—once enough Fuso yokai had intruded into Ginnungagap, Thalos could bypass the chaos of the universe and determine the Fuso world's spatial coordinates and current state.

It may have seemed like Ginnungagap was being harassed into disarray, but in reality, the Fuso world was playing with fire—slowly tightening the noose around its own neck.

Thalos's gaze turned cold. "Keep at it. It's not that retribution won't come—it just hasn't arrived yet."

Once he located the Fuso world, he had no qualms about greeting it with 6000 degrees Celsius of divine fury.

At that moment, Thor suddenly asked, "Father, once we find the Fuso world, are we going to handle it the same way we did with the Mayan world?"

"The same? No. Every world is different. They require different approaches. That's what I always tell you—civil governance."

Thor scratched his head. "You always say civil governance is important. But I don't think I'll ever learn it. All I know is war. I'm afraid I'll disappoint you."

Thalos laughed quietly. "Disappoint me? Why would I be disappointed? Every person—every god—is a different being. I could never raise a son whose abilities and disposition were exactly the same as mine."

Thor gave a sheepish smile and exhaled with relief. "I'm glad, then."

Looking at his son's rugged and masculine face, Thalos smiled brightly. "Besides, I believe that in the end, war matters more than governance."

"Why do you say that?"

"Civil governance ensures the people and followers live well in the present. But its influence over future generations is limited. War, however, is different. For mortals, the larger Ginnungagap grows, the more space and resources they have. For gods, it means more divine power. So even if you don't understand governance, mastering war is no weakness. Making the world-cake bigger still wins you the loyalty of the masses. That's the foundation for generations of lasting prosperity."

Thor looked a little lost, then smiled in his usual goofy way. "Luckily, we Aesir gods live for ten thousand years. You're still young and strong, Father—there's no need for me to worry."

Thalos gave him a meaningful look. "But what if one day I run into a rival god-king just as powerful—someone I must duel in a hundred-year war?"

"Uh?"

"The chaotic universe is vast. If there exists a world large enough, it can spawn an entire powerful pantheon—and a god-king to lead them. If I'm ever occupied, it'll be up to you to support the Aesir in my place."

"You'll win though, right?" Thor's eyes held a near-fanatical trust in his father.

"I don't know. In a universe this big, it's not strange to meet an evenly matched foe." Thalos's thoughts drifted.

After all, in Greek mythology, the Titanomachy, where Zeus fought his father and the Titans for divine rule, had lasted for years.

If Thalos were tied up in such a conflict, Thor would truly have to hold the line.

Thor was stunned for a moment, then grinned. "Well, if it comes to that, we'll all fight together. Beat the guy to death."

His confidence made Thalos laugh.

Indeed.

He had crossed into this chaotic universe, built Ginnungagap from nothing, conquered one world after another, and now commanded a hundred-plus combat gods. There was no reason to believe he'd fall before the Greek pantheon.

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves. We haven't even located the Fuso world yet. Let's finish absorbing the three worlds and settle Egypt before worrying about what comes after."

"Okay."

The waiting would be long.

For the next year, Thalos put aside all other concerns and focused solely on consuming the three worlds and rebuilding the South American continent.

It took him a full year to roughly piece together over 12 million square kilometers of landmass from the soil elements of the three worlds. It was smaller than South America on Earth, but considering that Ginnungagap was shaped like an ellipsoid, there was simply no way to allocate too much area to the lower worlds. A large portion of the earth element was used to reinforce the foundation, allowing Yggdrasil's roots to anchor more firmly.

As the last trace of the Mayan world's will was devoured, Thalos let out a long breath and turned to say, "Gilgamesh, begin."