

Thalos 282

Chapter 282: Gilgamesh's "Ascension"

"Finally, word has come. I was getting impatient." Gilgamesh's avatar revealed a faint smile as he received the message.

This divine avatar squad found itself in an awkward position—unable to break free from the will of their main bodies, granted very little autonomy, and with their power levels strictly capped.

Politically, they couldn't take bold action or interfere too deeply in the war between Horus and Set, nor could they simply slack off and wait for an opportunity. They were stuck in a limbo-like state of neither here nor there.

Normally, in this kind of situation, it should've been Ishtar—his mother—who kept Gilgamesh calm. Yet in the Egyptian world, the roles had reversed.

Every day, it was Ishtar who was impatient and restless, while Gilgamesh, her son, had become the stabilizing presence.

Oh, and Ereshkigal helped with restraining that impulsive idiot goddess too.

Still, no matter how low-key they tried to be, their strength continued to grow.

Sometimes, it's not about whether you want to stay low-key—your very existence makes it impossible.

Even if they weren't particularly strong, just the fact that their territory enjoyed calm weather and stable grain output was enough to make all the mortal nations of Lower Egypt envious.

This was a world cursed with destruction by Mayan prophecy.

But even if the Mayan god-king Komu had pronounced doom by "prophecy," that didn't mean the Egyptian world had to suffer it.

First, there was the issue of scale. Two worlds of similar size can't just easily destroy each other through a single act of trickery or misdirection.

Second, there were mitigation strategies. To be honest, during the unfolding of the Mayan prophecy, the Egyptian gods had many chances to delay or even prevent the coming apocalypse. Unfortunately, every one of those chances had been squandered by the Egyptian pantheon.

Among the Ennead, Osiris—the god responsible for agriculture—had indeed fallen.

But the other eight gods were still around!

In Thalos's view, the Mayan prophecy was more like a disruptive guide, nudging the Egyptian world into a death spiral.

Looking at gods directly connected to the prophecy's core: Ra the Sun God, Shu the Air and Wind God, Tefnut the Goddess of Rain, Geb the Earth God, Nut the Sky Goddess, Isis the Goddess of Life, Magic, Marriage, and Childbirth—these gods wielded great power. If they had coordinated properly with the Egyptian world's will and summoned the full elemental force of the world, they could've completely negated the prophecy.

Tragically, due to civil war within the pantheon, whether it was the Ennead or the numerous lesser gods beneath them, they were all forced to pick sides.

This internal strife triggered a chain of disasters.

There were indeed gods who detected the world's instability and reported it to the Ennead.

It's like finishing an aircraft carrier that's 80% complete—you need thousands of enterprises and the unified cooperation of a powerful nation with a million workers. Breaking a doomsday prophecy required the same kind of massive collaboration among the Nine Gods and their divine subordinates. But with the Ennead already divided into two camps, that was simply impossible.

In this context, no single Ennead god had enough divine power to singlehandedly deflect the prophecy's influence. Worse yet, if they used too much divine power, they risked being exposed, spied upon, or even ambushed by the opposing camp, potentially leading to their downfall.

To act would benefit the world, but hurt their camp and themselves.

To do nothing would doom the world, but benefit their own interests.

How do you think they chose?

And so, the Egyptian world, foot on the gas, rocketed down the highway to hell.

While Ginnungagap was busy absorbing the Mayan, Aztec, and Inca worlds, Egypt's signs of destruction became increasingly apparent. The world now faced a crisis similar to the Fimbulwinter in Ginnungagap's past—except here, it was the opposite.

Heat. Extreme heat. Drought. This infernal weather had lasted over two years. As a result, the Nile—the river of life in Egypt—saw its flow reduced by two-thirds.

The direct consequence: consecutive crop failures and the drying up of 75% of the desert's oases.

The first to suffer were the animal gods.

Humans could dig wells and find ways to get water—animals could not.

Often, the loss of one oasis meant the death of tens of thousands of animals.

It wasn't as simple as just going to the next oasis. In the desert, oases were not evenly distributed, and the distance between them could be enormous. If two oases were more than fifty kilometers apart, it was an insurmountable death sentence for most animals.

Less water meant more strain on both livestock and farmland. Humans were forced to closely guard the banks of the Nile, erecting fences, setting up perimeters, and laying countless deer traps to keep wild animals away.

Mass animal death led to the weakening of animal gods and the associated divine domains.

Over this recent period, even though Gilgamesh and his crew kept a low profile, nearly ten gods had either fallen in battle or surrendered to him and Arthur—including the snake goddess, Wadjyt the guardian deity of Lower Egypt, Khnum the ram god, Heqet the frog goddess, Khepri the scarab and morning sun god, and a few lesser deities.

Khepri, for example, was one of Ra's subordinates (or possibly a split form of Ra himself), yet even he was killed by Gilgamesh on a dusty day so filled with sand that the sun couldn't be seen.

This Asgard infiltration team didn't care about good vs. evil. Gilgamesh killed righteous gods, Arthur took out the wicked ones.

As for those who surrendered, in addition to Seshat the leopard goddess who had defected earlier, there were now four: Imhotep, the god of medicine and guardian of towers; Bastet, the cat goddess; and Nefertem, the god of plants. Two were assigned to each of Gilgamesh and Arthur's respective factions—perfect for keeping up appearances.

And then it happened.

At the moment Gilgamesh received his orders, a burst of divine light shattered the void and poured over him.

Though he was inside a temple, an entirely different firmament projected above his head. Countless runic prayer verses radiated immense divine energy, firing into his body like bullets.

This young god, clad in a noble white linen robe—Loin * Kurosu—suddenly found a seven-tiered lapis lazuli staircase forming beneath his feet.

The next second, a spectral projection of the Tigris River appeared, with phantom trading vessels sailing its waters, and countless golden coins chiming in mid-air, dancing around him.

His wine-red eyes began shedding their old hue, as though molten golden foil had been poured into his sockets. Between his brows shimmered the royal crest of the Asgardian gods.

No pain. As he tilted his head back and accepted this transformation, it felt as natural as eating or drinking.

Right before the stunned eyes of Seshat and Bastet—two surrendered goddesses—Gilgamesh was effortlessly, casually... ascended.