

Thalos 287

Chapter 287: Cowardice and Backbone

With Thalos's overwhelmingly domineering declaration, Gilgamesh stepped forth with the other infiltrators in full splendor.

Despite appearing like an Egyptian pharaoh in his mortal form, any god could clearly see the staggering strength of his divine soul—his presence was a blatant proclamation that Thalos had long since interfered in this land.

Set and Horus didn't even know whether this counted as a backstab.

You could argue it wasn't—after all, they hadn't directly intervened in the divine war.

Then again, they'd infiltrated your home and stirred things up for ages. So maybe it was.

The sensation of a knife forever poised at their backs was maddening, especially now as the once-loyal Egyptian gods like Bastet huddled behind Gilgamesh.

Then Gilgamesh crossed one arm over his chest and swept a scornful gaze across the two would-be god-kings, proclaiming loudly:

"Horus! Set! I am of the Aesir Pantheon! My father—the Supreme God-King Thalos Paulson—is the ruler and conqueror of eight great worlds: Ginnungagap, Celtic, Sumerian, Akkadian, Slavic, Mayan, Incan, and

Aztec! You two have no more chances. I offer you one final option—submit to my father, or perish along with this doomed world!"

Was that supposed to be a surrender offer?

No—it was an ultimatum, plain and brutal.

There wasn't a shred of respect in those words—just contempt, rubbing their faces into the dirt of Egypt's crumbling sands.

Even the harmless desert wind that danced against their divine shields sounded like barbed lashes smacking their pride.

Anger?

They should be angry.

But the issue lay in Thalos's absurdly long list of titles—eight worlds! Eight entire worlds!

Divine titles and domains aren't things you can fake.

Unless a god wielded domains like Deceit or Illusion, a god's authority and scope were plain as day to other deities.

And to be called Ruler or Conqueror of a world meant just that: the world had accepted and submitted to you. That kind of divine brilliance—they had only ever seen it before in the late Osiris, who had only one such title from Egypt.

Thalos?

He had eight.

Not to mention the World Swords floating around him—each glowing with the essence of slain god-kings.

To kill a god-king and devour their world?

That was a kind of universe-defying power neither of them—neither god-king pretender—could hope to resist.

Horus's will wavered hard. He looked around and saw the trembling faith of his own supporters.

No Egyptian god dared to claim they would fight Thalos to the bitter end for Horus's sake. Every gaze around him was tinged with fear and hesitation.

It was as if they were silently saying:

"Horus, just surrender already. There's no shame in submitting to Lord Paulson. But if you keep courting death, don't count on us."

Horus was still too young.

He didn't realize that seeking the opinions of his followers at a moment like this was a display of extreme insecurity.

A true king might consult his people—but when it came to matters of existential importance, he already had a clear, personal answer. The consultation was mere ceremony—he was declaring: "I've decided. All of you, follow me."

The weakness of the gods only made him more uncertain.

He gritted his teeth. His previously desperate gaze hardened into something fierce. He pointed a finger at Set and declared:

"Supreme God-King Thalos Paulson! I am willing to lead my subordinate gods in surrendering to Your Majesty. But I must avenge my father's death! Please, grant me justice—destroy Set!"

He yielded!

Horus really surrendered!

Because power outweighs all else.

Egypt was doomed, and Thalos had made it obvious that he intended to scoop up the remains. Even if he did nothing, he could sit back and watch Horus and Set drag each other to ruin.

Thalos, of course, was no innocent bystander.

He had diverted the Prophecy of Destruction to Egypt, leading to the deaths of Ra, Shu, and Nut the moment his avatar arrived. Even if he wasn't the original mastermind, he was certainly an accomplice.

Power grants speech.

Thalos had a place at the table—at the head, no less.

And those who sit at the table don't converse with the ones served on the table.

Horus wasn't even a god-king. He didn't have the qualifications to speak with Thalos as an equal. Asking Thalos to kill Set for him was his only chance to retain a shred of dignity.

Refuse to yield?

Fine.

Then you can be the next dish on the table.

Thalos would have no problem making the feast even grander.

With Horus now surrendered, Set was in deep trouble.

His long, beast-like nose stiffened in sheer rage.

Horus could yield—he was the god of pharaohs, of royal authority, and of revenge. His surrender matched his divine roles.

Set could not yield.

He, too, had seen the light of Divine Kingship radiating from Thalos.

And that meant one thing: Thalos would never allow a power-hungry usurper like Set to live.

Holding the domain of Kingship meant you upheld the legitimacy of power. To allow Set—who murdered his own brother to seize power—to exist would invalidate Thalos's claim to that divine domain.

All god-kings claim they are the rightful, supreme sovereigns of divinity.

Set and Thalos were fundamentally opposed—irreconcilably so.

As Thalos turned his gaze toward him, Set could no longer restrain himself. He shouted in fury and struck first:

"You false god! I will never acknowledge your rule!"

He raised both hands and conjured a devastating sandstorm—a monstrous desert tornado roared to life as his final stand.

By now, Set wasn't aiming to survive.

He merely wanted to display the dignity of a defeated king.

Even if he fell here, he wanted to outshine Horus one last time.

Thalos chuckled.

"Oh? At least you have courage."

Set's apocalyptic sandstorm surged toward the heavens—but Thalos wasn't going to personally lower himself to act.

His status, his authority, was far too elevated.

He didn't even need to speak—Gilgamesh had already risen into the sky in a streak of gold. His form expanded rapidly until he reached the original height of the clouds, and then he raised his hand—

And grasped the projection of a World Sword hovering in the void.

The Sword of Muspelheim, blazing with endless fire elements, landed in Gilgamesh's grip—and without hesitation, he swung it down.

A colossal fire sword, like the finger of a titanic world-sized god, came crashing down toward this soon-to-be-ruined land.