

Thalos 292

Chapter 292: Ten Years

Before long, Anubis discovered that his father had all sorts of strange quirks.

For instance, during trials, Thalos required that his divine attendants hold up massive placards bearing runic inscriptions of "Silence," "Stand Back," and the like.

And then there was the mandatory opening line to his judgments: "Dog-Headed Guillotine — it executes emperors above and commoners below. By day it judges mortals; by night it tries demons!"

The ever-serious Anubis realized with speechless exasperation that his father truly had an odd, over-the-top sense of humor and was fully enjoying himself.

Still, amidst that absurdity, his new divine domain had arrived.

Judgment!

A divine role strictly limited to mortals and demons — yet indisputably a highly significant one.

Mortals were a massive category, encompassing even the human priests serving every deity across all pantheons.

Historically, gods were notorious for shielding their own. Even if a priest committed grievous crimes or invited disaster, the divine punishment was usually no more than a slap on the wrist.

Such indulgence created mounting injustice and discontent in the mortal realm.

Though the Aesir gods wielded unmatched might and didn't fear mortal rebellion, unchecked corruption would, over time, erode faith and weaken the flow of divine power — an unacceptable outcome.

Thus, Anubis became Thalos' executioner, the divine blade that struck down all who fostered injustice in the world.

With firm integrity and impartiality, Anubis began his journey as the Judge of the World.

He didn't care whose follower someone was. Under divine law, all were equal — any who sinned would face judgment.

Every grievance found a response.

If the caseload was too great, he dispatched avatars to handle the overflow.

In a short time, the mortal world saw a dramatic shift toward righteousness and order.

Of course, complaints among the gods were inevitable. But Anubis was a true-born son of the God-King!

Most of the Aesir's strongest gods were elemental deities — often Thalos' own children — and mortal faith was optional to them. They applauded Anubis' work. Thor, for instance, offered hearty approval.

The only ones truly inconvenienced were the lower- and mid-tier gods' mortal priests.

Even among the major gods, some like Hela openly voiced their support.

Hela was genuinely moved.

As the goddess of Death, her domain was among the most coveted and powerful. Countless deities eyed her position.

She could feel Anubis' innate affinity for death — and had mentally prepared to surrender part of her authority again. After all, Ereshkigal and Scáthach had both used their romantic ties to Thalos to claim pieces of the underworld's jurisdiction.

Yet Thalos had not granted Anubis a death-related domain, instead giving him one that made enemies across the pantheon. That, in Hela's eyes, was the ultimate sign of respect.

Moreover, Anubis helped streamline her duties — slaying demons and executing tyrants, then sending their souls directly to her. No need for her to offend anyone or split her authority — a perfect arrangement.

She was delighted.

After all, Egypt had more than a few death gods, each trying to carve out space in the death domain.

Now, even the God-King's own "watchdog" son hadn't been given a death role — how could any lesser Egyptian god dream of it? Let them go cool off.

Meanwhile, slightly older than Anubis, the Goddess of Dominion, Yekaterina, began to reveal her ruthless divine power.

Slaves had no rights.

In the push to fully subjugate the three Maya worlds and the newly added Set faction's mortals, the Slavic-born goddess played a pivotal role.

Every overseer who worshipped her received a surge of divine power that terrified would-be rebels.

Her Eye of Dominion allowed her priests to single out troublemakers from a crowd and eliminate them on the spot.

Conquest and subjugation — two sanitized words that in practice were brutally straightforward.

Humans, by nature, resisted control.

So, notions like "granting Aztecs self-rule" were laughable.

For any who dared step out of line, there was no choice given.

"If your master has already bent the knee, what makes you think you can stir up trouble?"

Perhaps Thalos' benevolent rule had lulled some Aztec slaves into thinking he was easy to exploit.

Such behavior made Yekaterina laugh in fury.

"Did you really think killing the Aztec trinity was just for show?!"

At her command, rivers of blood flowed.

Her young age and savage decisiveness drew the wary respect of even rival gods.

In chaotic times, harsh laws were the only option.

Some deities might think the Aesir were already invincible — that future god wars would be mere formality.

Thalos didn't agree.

Even Thor couldn't slack off without consequence — let alone lesser gods.

He owed this mindset in part to the constant monster incursions from the Fusang world.

They provided a healthy tension — a reason to stay alert.

Without such threats, the gods would grow lazy.

For instance, before the conflict with the Maya triad, there had been a long peaceful stretch. Thor had literally eaten and drunk himself into a bloated belly.

Now, as Thalos continued refining Ginnungagap's unified structure and reshaping the cosmos, he was also forging a new Egyptian Sword, into which he embedded Set's divine soul — a powerful artifact in the making.

Yet he did not allow Ginnungagap to fully absorb the Egyptian world. Instead, he left behind a crumbling, miniature world, roughly 10,000 square kilometers in area, with only minimal sky, water, and fire elements.

He named this ruin Pathfinder — a vanguard world.

It would serve as a forward base, staffed with divine avatars from Horus, Gilgamesh, and Arthur's followers, as well as a relay station for divine communications.

Beyond it, as always, he dispatched Kraken's soul to scout.

Elsewhere, he deployed various soul constructs — including Quetzalcoatl's — as perimeter patrols.

And so, ten years passed.

On this day, Brynhildr entered to report to Thalos: "Your Majesty, the number of spatial cavities has increased drastically. Anubis' trial records are rising as well."

"Oh?" Thalos looked up.

Over the years, Ginnungagap had continued advancing along the cosmic currents of the chaotic void.

He wasn't sure if their expansion had simply been too fast — leaving no time for other pantheons to rise — or if something else was at play.

For in this seemingly boundless chaotic cosmos, they had yet to encounter another pantheon, or even the ruins of a collapsed world. Only emptiness — a deceptive calm, reminiscent of the era when theirs was the only world in the universe.

But of course, it was just an illusion.

The endless stream of Fusang monsters crossing through spatial cavities kept the gods on edge.

Now, with those cavities increasing rapidly, it could only mean one thing:

A new war of gods was on the horizon.