

Thalos 304

Chapter 304: Unease desu

If one were to ignore the nature of the event and focus only on the appearance, this would seem like an absolutely absurd outcome.

A world that small counter-killing one ten times its size, conquering an entire pantheon in the process—who wouldn't wonder aloud, "Was Bathala an idiot?"

Such a result could only occur when someone fully armed with planes and cannons went to blast a tribe of savages.

Yet in this chaotic universe, most god-ruled worlds were still stuck in the Bronze Age, with little chance of launching such a dimensional-dominance strike.

Precisely because no one had experienced this level of overwhelming divine warfare, observers found it unbelievable.

Bathala's clan fell so quickly, they were annihilated and had their entire world dragged away by the much smaller Akkad realm—and it took a full seven days before their overlords, the Yamatai pantheon, even received the report.

That might sound ridiculous, but it was fact.

Only Thalos and his Ginnungagap empire emphasized real-time communications and full-spectrum battlefield awareness.

Yamatai, on the other hand, had been so bogged down by chaos demons that they had neither time nor reliable methods of communication. The constant interference from chaos, plus their vassal pantheons often deliberately slowing down the flow of information to maintain autonomy, made message delivery a nightmare.

By the time Yamatai learned that Bathala had personally led an expedition, their divine council was still discussing how to curb his growing ambition.

Takama-ga-hara, the Divine Realm.

This domain differed in many ways from the versions Thalos had read about in Yamatai mythology.

The supreme deity of Yamatai—the Sun Goddess Amaterasu—resided in a legendary palace said to be formed of eight million mirrored prisms, each folding different phases of sunlight into space. Whether there were truly eight million mirrors, only Amaterasu herself could say.

The palace's corridor columns were solidified solar prominences, eternally flowing with molten gold.

Suspended in the coffered ceiling were twelve miniature suns, slowly consuming one another along the zodiacal paths.

Even the central courtyard's pool was filled with mercurial solar light, its floor covered in shattered magatama beads offered by emperors through the ages.

Amaterasu's visage—noble, beautiful, and radiant—was nonetheless shadowed by worry. She waved off her divine handmaidens, then turned to face a mysterious bronze mirror imbued with immense divine power.

This was the Yata Mirror, one of Yamatai's Three Sacred Treasures, forged from heavenly ore and river stones.

Through it, Amaterasu directly viewed her brother Tsukuyomi, residing in the Land of Night.

Born from the Creator God Izanagi like herself, Tsukuyomi was one of the divine trio known as the Mikogami.

Clad in a dark robe, Tsukuyomi straightened upon seeing her, and bowed deeply. "Sister. Do you require something of me?"

Amaterasu conveyed the intelligence she had received.

Tsukuyomi thought for a moment. "If Bathala grows too powerful, Tan-gun, Sudabon, and Rama will be difficult to control."

Amaterasu frowned in displeasure. "We are not overlords—we merely band together for survival in this chaotic universe. What control do you speak of?"

"I spoke out of turn," Tsukuyomi bowed again and rose. "But sister, regardless of your intent, the other gods do not see it the same way."

"Let's not debate this now. What we need to consider is how we respond if Bathala gains power."

Tsukuyomi pondered. "Let's observe whether he pays tribute. As long as he maintains proper ritual behavior, a light reprimand should suffice."

"And if he pretends nothing happened?" Amaterasu pressed.

Tsukuyomi sighed. "Even though we are beset by greater troubles, discipline must still be enforced. As an outward-facing pantheon, we need the divine power paid by vassals."

The Yamatai pantheon had its own burdens.

Despite being known as a host of eight million gods, most were useless forest spirits or rural sprites—99% were the kind that could scare ignorant mortals but were utterly worthless in real battle.

And yet, because the total number was so vast, even if just 1% could fight, their force appeared ferocious to outsiders.

During their long drift through the chaotic universe, driven by both divine pressure and their world's will, Yamatai had gently subjugated a few small pantheons, creating a loose hierarchy of overlord and vassal pantheons.

Unfortunately, after arriving in this gigantic chaotic region, they became trapped.

A bizarre vortex of chaos ensnared both the Yamatai world cluster and the opposing mysterious world group, locking them in place, unable to drift deeper into the universe.

Under normal circumstances, two rival pantheons in such close proximity would inevitably clash.

But the constant monster tides of chaos forced both sides to focus on fending off endless demonic attacks.

As the pressure mounted, Amaterasu was forced to abandon regions heavily corrupted by chaos. Each time she cut away a small chunk of land and cast it into subspace as bait, it lured away hordes of chaos demons, reducing stress on the Yamatai world.

Under these exhausting circumstances, neither side had the strength to invade the other.

Amaterasu had not anticipated the arrival of new worlds... nor that Bathala would take the initiative to attack.

This was the dilemma:

To punish a disobedient underling, there's no better way than a good beating.

If Bathala could rebel and get away with it, other vassal pantheons might follow his lead. What then?

Ironically, just as Amaterasu began secretly summoning her subordinates to prepare for a punitive expedition, new intelligence arrived—

Bathala had fallen.

"What...? That's impossible!" Amaterasu gasped.

She had thought it was some tasteless joke.

But when the world tether abruptly shattered, she felt it—a deep, undeniable unease.

This was the collapse of world order.

This was the destruction of a divine oath.

No one could be held accountable, for the one who swore loyalty—Bathala himself—was now dead.

An entire Thousand-Island World lost—and surely some of Bathala's underlings had survived by chance.

One such lesser god now knelt on the steps of the Sunlit Hall in Takama-ga-hara, tearfully recounting the death of his god-king.

"Your Majesty Amaterasu, you must stand up for us! Those vile bastards are truly despicable! They set a wicked trap, waited for Lord Bathala's valor to shine, then ambushed him—and right before our eyes, they hammered him to death!"

The more vivid his account became, the faster a growing sense of dread spread among the gathered Yamatai gods atop Takama-ga-hara.