

Thalos 319

Chapter 319: Taking the Fall? No—It's an Open Conspiracy!

At the same time, in the Indian world—

Shiva had just returned to his divine temple when a transmission came from another member of the Trimurti, Vishnu.

Raising his left hand, Shiva saw Vishnu's projection flickering in the flames.

"How's the Yamatai world?"

"Small," Shiva replied tersely.

"As expected... that world's oceanic nature restrains you, doesn't it?"

"Not really," Shiva responded coldly.

As an all-purpose top-tier deity, Shiva also had a water avatar. While it did pose some disadvantage, it was far from fatal—as long as he didn't recklessly plunge into Yamatai's domain. Without overextending, the threat was negligible.

The two Trimurti gods discussed the war for a while and agreed on a slow, grinding pace.

That was the tempo of divine warfare—cut off the enemy's wings, weaken their regenerative ability, bleed them out gradually, and drag them to death.

In that regard, the Indian pantheon was experienced.

This was how the Trimurti expanded their world—through invasion and absorption, gradually swallowing neighboring minor worlds and converting them into vassals.

That said, the Indian gods' methods weren't particularly ruthless—partly because they officially had thirteen recognized languages.

This approach softened resistance in the short term, but planted seeds of trouble for the future.

By contrast, Thalos was far more decisive.

The Celtic world didn't even have a writing system to begin with, and those like Scáthach already used runes—easy enough to integrate. But his real ruthlessness showed with the Sumerian pantheon: after conquering them, Thalos abolished cuneiform script entirely. Even old Sumerian gods were stripped of divinity if caught using it. Sumerian descendants? Anyone using the script—death on the spot.

This top-down reform was only possible because of his brutal execution of former god-king Enlil.

Sure, this stirred some secret resentment in the beginning—but Thalos strengthened the informant system. Anyone who could prove their superior still used the old script would see that superior demoted and themselves richly rewarded.

This aggressive divide-and-conquer tactic allowed the Aesir gods to absorb and integrate other pantheons with stunning efficiency.

By contrast, the Indian pantheon's half-measures and patchwork reforms had left dangerous loose ends...

While Shiva and Vishnu were still discussing the campaign, a divine attendant entered.

"My lord, Susanoo from Yamatai has issued a challenge to duel."

"Duel?" Shiva blinked.

They'd been troubled by the fact that Susanoo had withdrawn into his world. Like a turtle pulling into its shell, he was hard to hurt. And now he stepped out on his own?

When the sealed letter was opened, a surge of water-elemental force burst out like a sea tornado. For a mortal or demigod, this kind of elemental assault would be fatal. Against a Trimurti god, it was little more than spitting across the void.

Shiva didn't care.

In a swirl of water illusions, Susanoo's face appeared—eyes blood-red, expression crazed.

"Shiva—you dare—how dare you kidnap my beloved Kushinada-hime?! Bastard! Give her back! You want a duel? Fine! Name the time and place..." The rest was a near-incoherent tirade of rage.

This "duel letter" left both Shiva and Vishnu dumbfounded.

They had no idea that Susanoo once fought Yamata-no-Orochi just to save Kushinada-hime's family. They didn't understand what that mortal lover meant to him.

They had only one question: when did Shiva steal someone's wife?

Forget Shiva—even Vishnu chuckled.

India was indeed a bizarre place. Even a female lizard might wear a chastity belt just to cross a bustling bazaar—but even then...

Shiva? Stealing someone's wife?

Highly unlikely.

Shiva was the god of asceticism, living in harsh austerity atop Mount Kailash, meditating endlessly to attain ultimate knowledge and power through the strictest self-discipline.

If he were some pervert or scoundrel, he'd never have earned his divine renown.

This situation was so ridiculous that it even drew out Brahma.

Truth be told, Brahma, though part of the Trimurti, rarely involved himself in affairs. Unless someone needed a scapegoat, he barely participated in internal or external wars.

That this matter could drag him out of seclusion was... rare.

Vishnu sighed. "There's clearly a scheme at work. Still, this benefits us."

Or rather—this was no scheme.

This was an open conspiracy.

Shiva was furious about being framed.

The Trimurti had no idea who'd provoked Susanoo to such fury—enough that he wanted to challenge Shiva to a duel. But here was the key: once he left his watery home field, how strong could he possibly be?

Shiva was confident: "So long as it's a neutral zone, one-on-one, I'll lose to no god."

Now that's more like it.

Perhaps the emerald sea god Susanoo would suffer greatly—but in this chaotic cosmos, there was no such thing as true fairness.

Without Susanoo's protection, the Yamatai world was just a cornered girl in a dark alley.

After some discussion, it was decided that Vishnu, imitating Shiva's tone, would respond to the challenge.

"Regarding the baseless accusation that Shiva has stolen your wife, we cannot agree. However, Shiva is willing to meet Susanoo in the Malaya World."

Vishnu didn't dare let Shiva pen the reply himself—the ascetic's reputation was sacred.

Shiva could destroy, he could kill, but he could not be accused of stealing another god's wife.

In truth, even having Vishnu ghostwrite the letter was something Shiva resisted. Only after Vishnu laid out the strategic value of the move, and roped in Brahma to pressure him, did Shiva grudgingly allow it—though he still insisted on reviewing it before sending.

Predictably, the reply sent Susanoo into a complete rage.

"SHIVA! I'LL KILL YOU!" He charged out without hesitation.

Some gods, despite their lofty image, lacked self-awareness and didn't know their own weight.

He actually... actually led his own divine followers and a host of sea monsters, riding waves out of Izumo, heading straight for the Malaya World, a former Yamatai vassal realm.

Everything happened so quickly that Amaterasu received the news after Thalos did.

Thalos, via his heroic spirit spies, was just as stunned.

Unlike Amaterasu or Tsukuyomi, Susanoo's marriage to a mortal woman meant his earthly kingdom in Izumo housed many mortals as well—making spy infiltration relatively easy.

When the message reached the Palace of Silver, for some reason, Thalos felt an almost surreal sense of watching an NTR film from a certain island nation.

At first, the report that Susanoo's wife had possibly been abducted didn't mean much to him.

But when the name Angra Mainyu was casually mentioned in the intelligence...

Thalos' heart suddenly skipped a beat.