

Thalos 322

Chapter 322: The Mantis Hunts the Cicada

"Hahaha! Slaughter one another! Lose yourselves in hatred! Fall into the abyss in the end—" Angra Mainyu laughed like an elegant conductor, watching this grand spectacle from a place of absolute safety.

On the surface, he was still a loyal servant of Yamatai, fighting on the frontlines.

Only he knew—that was merely one of his worthless avatars.

Other gods, when creating avatars, would inject them with vast divine power and shards of their souls.

His? They weren't even his. He simply hijacked some unfortunate soul under his control, casting an illusion over them so they wore his "skin." From the outside, it looked like he was fulfilling his pact and fighting. That's all.

"Hahaha! Foolish Indian gods, even more foolish Yamatai gods. You think you can control me? You insects who hide in your cozy, orderly worlds—you know nothing of this starfield's real laws!"

At that moment, Angra Mainyu's divine body split open with multiple wounds, his internal organs transforming into a sludgy mass of pitch-black ink, leaving behind only the frame of a divine shell.

Dark purple chaotic runes flared beneath his feet like scabs burnt through the void. His withered fingers suddenly elongated to the thickness of thighs, their tips splitting into countless branches that clawed into the ritual circle's edge. Beads of blood oozed between the joints, becoming incorporeal as they pierced through the ground, penetrating the edge of this forsaken world, and plunging into the deepest depths of the starfield.

Around the circle, countless Yamatai shrine maidens, Indian monks, and various other "sacrifices" obtained by Angra Mainyu stood with vacant eyes. Each began to slit their own throats in different manners.

But from their wounds flowed not blood—but a chaos-tinged, sulfur-reeking substance.

At the center of the ritual, Kushinadahime, bound and used as the core sacrifice, felt tears streaming from the cracked corners of her eyes. A strange prickling sensation crept up her spine. She heard the sound of her molars grinding together, and to her horror, she realized her throat had begun rapidly secreting mucus.

She couldn't breathe.

A crimson beam extended from the ritual circle and enveloped her.

Unconsciously, she began chanting in a tongue she had never learned. The syllables scorched blisters into her vocal cords. Her ceremonial robes fluttered despite no wind, revealing ankles corroded by chaos energy. The corruption spread like vines up her legs, climbing all the way to her lower abdomen.

There—where she carried Susanoo's child.

This was the evil of Angra Mainyu.

The world of Malaya, as a subordinate world of Yamatai, could only be fully controlled by the bloodline of an official Yamatai god.

That rule had been set by the Three Noble Children long ago.

Unfortunately, when Malaya's gods were defeated and retreated to Yamatai, they left the world behind, abandoning that critical rule—something the Three Noble Children failed to consider.

Under normal circumstances, Angra Mainyu's half-baked divine power couldn't activate such a high-level sacrificial ritual.

But by luring Yamatai and India into war here, the massive number of fallen souls on both sides provided the currency needed to breach spatial boundaries.

"Huff... Haha! Hahaha! You gods abandoned the chaos beasts I now call my most loyal servants—"

Deep beneath Malaya's earth came the sound of fabric tearing—subtle at first, but growing steadily louder until both sides' soldiers on the surface heard it.

A horrific, greasy ripping like tearing oil-soaked leather filled the air.

Still, few paid it mind—until it began coming not only from the ground, but also from the indistinct, chaotic sky above.

The entire space began to make a low, churning rumble—like the stomach of some massive beast as it swallowed its meal and prepared to digest.

That thick, tarry noise made even the gods' skin crawl.

"What is this?!" Susanoo cried out.

Amaterasu's pupils narrowed to pinpricks. She gave an immediate order: "Retreat!"

Retreat?

As if it were that simple.

Angra Mainyu had played the obedient servant for a long time—moving between battlefields, capturing or killing key figures, replacing them with his illusions—all for this moment.

Now, in this world, nearly all spatial abilities were heavily suppressed.

Only a handful of top-tier gods could still tear open the now-reinforced chaotic barriers and escape with a small group of close followers.

But those few small exits—how many soldiers could they possibly save?

For the millions of yokai and demons, it was a drop in the ocean. Worthless.

"Hahaha! Come forth—rise again—my army of slaves—"

At Angra Mainyu's soul-shattering summons, throughout this chaotic starfield, every being that had failed to enter the afterlife—souls rejected by Yama of Indian hell, those barred from Yomi, or locked outside the soul barriers of Ginnungagap and Helheim—all responded to his call.

The ancient, chaotic wails shook both Indian and Yamatai gods to their core.

What's happening?!

Everyone wanted to know the answer.

Only one man, seated upon the divine throne in the Silver Palace, had even an inkling:

"Huff... it's as if... a galactic prison named 'Chaos' has suddenly pardoned all its prisoners."

A terrible analogy.

A horrifying reality.

Hela, Ereshkigal, Scáthach—the death gods beside Thalos—instantly understood: their king was most likely correct.

No one knew how many of the ancient gods and fallen beings who'd entered chaos had retained their reason—or how many would emerge to continue their rampages, indiscriminate slaughter, and wickedness.

This unscreened amnesty was the ultimate blow to the worlds of order.

Almost simultaneously, in both India and Yamatai, thousands upon thousands of spatial gates burst open. Countless former chaos beasts poured into the worlds.

Even though most of them re-ordered upon entering these realities, becoming structured lifeforms, that didn't mean they were sane.

Some wielded blades and slaughtered at will.

Some pillaged, raped, and burned.

Some looked human—but were no longer people.

To the people of India and Yamatai, these bizarre freaks were indistinguishable from the man-eating rakshasas and ogres.

And then came the final horror—

No help came when they cried out.

The core gods of both worlds had been lured into the Malaya battlefield. Those left behind were second- and third-tier deities—minor officials at best.

And in the end, many slain mortals began transforming into chaos phantom forms, sinking into the earth, passing through the world's boundaries...

And falling into the deepest depths of the chaos starfield.

This was the redemption of chaos demons.

And the damnation of the living.