

Thalos 336

Chapter 336: Competing to See Who Hits Harder

The assault from Ginnungagap proceeded in an orderly, unstoppable manner.

The Aesir gods were long accustomed to this style of warfare.

Forget about anything like fancy breakthroughs or theatrical speeches about loyalty—none of that mattered here.

This was the purest form of warfare: crushing with world-scale mass.

Thalos had anticipated this and deliberately refrained from unleashing Vidar and the World Tree at full power. After all, the Indian world wasn't small. In sheer volume, it might not compare to the combined Mayan tri-worlds, but it had its own complexities. Unlike the relatively flat South American continents, nearly half of the Indian world consisted of mountainous terrain.

Thalos wasn't sure if this Indian world also held half of the Himalayas, but his divine perception sensed its high altitude and a denser Earth-element presence. This, in a way, enhanced the world's elemental reserves. Moreover, it included half of the Indian Ocean.

And there was another complication: after engaging with the Indian world, Thalos discovered something unexpected—its connections to its vassal sub-worlds were deeper than anticipated.

"Maybe their pantheon's structured like a hierarchy, but the elements seem to flow freely between them? That bizarre?" Thalos chuckled as he read the report.

In a way, it was a form of conquest in itself.

Instead of fully assimilating conquered pantheons, India had forced its subservient deities to surrender control over parts of their worlds, essentially bleeding them dry. A divine-level resource siphon. Thalos had never seen anything quite like it.

"Well then, I guess it's worth paying those little worlds a visit." He paused, then began assigning commands. "Arthur, Horus, and Pelenn—take your squads and scout those three Indian sub-worlds. If you encounter the Trimurti, I'll send reinforcements."

"Yes, my lord!" the three divine warriors responded in unison.

This, too, was open strategy.

If the Indian gods were fully focused on defending their homeland, then Thalos would simply send elite raiders to smash their resource zones. Let's see how they react.

These three warriors—any one of them was god-king-tier in other pantheons. And now, with their current divine power levels, they even surpassed most active god-kings.

And with the World Tree's roots invading alongside them, there was no way India could copy Angra Mainyu's tactic of isolating and self-destructing their sub-worlds in chaos.

This left the Indian gods with a dilemma:

Either send elite forces to save their vassal worlds, thus thinning their primary defenses and risking a decisive Aesir breakthrough—or abandon the sub-worlds entirely and commit all forces to the frontline.

Either way, Thalos maintained the upper hand and even had enough troops left to guard against a potential Fusang backstab.

Once the orders were issued, the Aesir mobilized quickly.

Rustle, rustle, rustle—

In the eyes of their enemies, those World Tree root tendrils were absolutely demonic.

Sub-worlds with unreinforced world barriers screamed under their grip, their skies turning from ominous crimson to an eerie jade green, while the stale air was suddenly flushed with a crisp, refreshing scent.

To the mortals of the Baki world, if not for the fact that this was clearly a divine invasion, it might've seemed like a blessing.

As more tendrils pierced the heavens and emerged from the ends of the earth, both mortals and gods became part of a chaotic, jumbled "symphony."

Well—symphony in the sense of volume, not harmony.

Leading the charge, Arthur kicked through a fragment of barrier solidified by divine power, then casually sliced through the realm's core defense with Excalibur, leaving a luminous blue trail where the sword passed.

The barrier collapsed like a wave, and divine ripples surged from the horizon—enemy mobile units were arriving.

Too bad... this wasn't an even match.

The guardian deity of this small world—already weakened by higher-tier gods siphoning most of their foundational power—was no match for the Knight-God of Sixteen Realms.

Within a heartbeat, the trembling deity's low-grade artifact was sliced in half, and his divine body staggered straight into Arthur's blade.

A surge of immense divine power melted his armor, and white smoke billowed from the cleaving wound, signaling body and soul unraveling under pressure.

Another low-tier god rushed in to assist—only to be struck by Gawain, Arthur's half-god knight, whose single slash left him choking on blood, unable to do more than gurgle before being expertly carved apart.

As he fell, he still couldn't understand—how could a mere half-god wield such overwhelming power?

Simple: information asymmetry.

A major-world half-god often had mastery over some extraordinary principle and could actively draw power from their chosen domain. The only difference between a half-god and a true god was the "ignition of divine fire." A true god was officially recognized by the world's will, and that domain would offer all of its matching divine force willingly.

Half-gods pulled it manually. True gods received it on tap.

Arthur had long spent vast amounts of his own divine power raising his elite knights. His goal was to one day have them earn enough merit to ignite their own divine fires.

And the divine power he spent cultivating these half-gods? It exceeded the entire divine energy budget of this small-world's pantheon.

After gauging the opposition's strength in a single move, Arthur stopped intervening. He planted Excalibur in the ground and simply watched as his knights rampaged.

Even without his help, this battlefield had already turned into a twisted, nightmarish vortex for the defenders.

No matter how many gods or angels arrived, they were instantly shredded in this grinder of flesh and divinity.

Before long, Bedivere returned, boots sloshing through a pool of god-blood, and reported, "My lord, the enemy resistance has been crushed. Roughly three true gods escaped."

With their deities gone, the sky-high divine realm began collapsing. Objects hung weightlessly in the air, including spilled divine wine, which now formed a necklace of hovering beads midair.

Arthur passed through the collapsing realm, his divine aura evaporating the suspended droplets and filling the area with a faint alcoholic mist.

He had no intention of preserving the temple.

He gave a casual glance. "Report our victory to His Majesty. We'll fall back to the world barrier and let the World Tree continue terraforming this realm."

"Yes, my lord!"

When Thalos received the report, he almost laughed aloud.

These guys were competing to see who could destroy more. Each one was holding back just enough to let the other two try and top them—each strike more brutal than the last.

They claimed the mission was to draw out the Trimurti.

Yet each squad had basically wiped out their target.

And in one day, four of India's vassal pantheons had been obliterated... ahem, four because Odin's gang also looted one.

Thalos could already imagine the expressions on the Trimurti's faces.