

Thalos 360

Chapter 360: The Coronation of the God-Emperor (Part I)

Ten years!

For a god, it was a long and yet fleeting stretch of time.

With the six new god-kings officially enthroned, the entire Ginnungagap world entered a curious state—an intoxicating blend of anticipation and fervent restlessness.

Because up next was none other than the coronation ceremony of Thalos himself—the moment he would formally ascend as God-Emperor!

And as planned, the entire preparation process had also taken ten full years.

As the coronation day drew near, every sub-world within Ginnungagap intensified its atmosphere of celebration and ritual.

Even the most remote of villages saw visits from bards and minstrels.

Why? Because Bragi, god of poetry and son of Odin, had issued an ironclad edict to his followers: the glory of the God-Emperor Thalos must reach every single corner of the world. Every sentient being must understand His greatness.

Thus, it became commonplace to see performers wielding makeshift instruments—harps, lutes, or traditional vivors. In some cases, due to shortage of personnel, even half-trained apprentices had to step forward, shrieking their throaty verses like polar bears in heat.

For Bragi—once a disgraced son of Odin—the past twenty years marked a miraculous comeback. By composing endless verses to praise his various cousins, he had finally begun to wash away his shameful past and restore a fragment of dignity.

Well—technically, the old gods ignored him and the new gods didn't know him. Only Bragi himself lived in fear of Thalos's retribution. He'd spent decades keeping his head down, and at last found an opportunity to pick a side, and pick it hard.

"Legend says that in the beginning of Ginnungagap, the mighty First Aesir King Paul fell in love at first sight with the giantess Bestla. In a friendly cultural exchange, the two became bound in love, eventually giving birth to the great God-King Thalos Paulson..."

"Our Lord Thalos was unparalleled in valor—ripping giants apart with his bare hands at age three, and slaying Ymir, the frost giant progenitor, by five."

"Back then, Ymir towered higher than mountains and could freeze seas the size of Vanaheim with a single breath!"

"Thalos gathered divine power, condensing it into a blade of golden radiance ten thousand feet long that pierced the sky, and with one slash, beheaded Ymir..."

Ahem. These bards were clearly in tall-tale mode. The ending was accurate, but the middle? So laced with "artistic embellishment" that even Thalos blushed when he heard it.

Not that he could stop them. By the end of the story, he really did possess that level of power.

These propaganda tours by bards lasted several years.

A full year before the coronation, every city with a population over ten thousand had a World Tree sapling planted in its central plaza.

Every Sunday at sunrise, those saplings would shed sacred dew that formed a massive water screen three stories high and two carriages wide.

Within the screen, a looping audiovisual presentation chronicled the deeds of Thalos Paulson:

From the Seven-Day Creation, to the war with the Vanir, to surviving Ragnarök, and then leading divine campaigns across the Celtic, Sumerian, Egyptian, Akkadian, Mayan, Fusang, and Indian worlds—each segment rich in visuals and narration.

To ignorant mortals, these were nothing short of divine cinema.

Each full loop of the documentary took half a day.

Yet the masses watched with rapt attention, utterly mesmerized.

If it weren't for the Sunday-only rule, people probably wouldn't have done anything else—they'd just sit and watch these "divine films" all week long.

The Aesir religion, being a polytheistic system, required every temple to house a statue of Thalos in a central position. Thanks to this, his power of belief had grown to rival even the elemental dominions of Wind, Water, and Sky.

After a full decade of buildup, the long-awaited day finally arrived.

That day, all cities and towns capable of housing large gatherings received a full broadcast of the coronation via mental projection. As a special gift, a few lucky believers were chosen from each settlement to physically attend the coronation in Asgard, transported via the Rainbow Bridge.

"Long live His Majesty the God-Emperor!"

"All glory to Lord Paulson!"

"May Ginnungagap prevail for eternity!"

The central plaza of Asgard had changed dramatically over the past century. For this ceremony, the east and west sides of the square were outfitted with twenty-tiered stone viewing platforms, ensuring that every mortal guest could clearly behold the majesty of the God-Emperor.

Lining both sides of the golden road were neat ranks of Einherjar warriors, each holding gleaming silver tower shields, forming living walls that separated the path from the crowds.

From dawn until the ceremony began, flower-laden floats paraded past the viewing platforms. Each float bore dancers or actors performing traditional operas and dances from different worlds, and each represented a military triumph of the God-Emperor.

This grand prelude came to a close when Heimdall, the Guardian God, blew his mighty Gjallarhorn.

"Ooooohhh!"

"It's starting—it's starting!"

The masses erupted in deafening cheers, their voices echoing across the heavens as they chanted the holy name of Thalos.

Sky, earth, sea, and air—the four great elements themselves shivered with resonance.

"Whooooo!"

"BZZZZZZZ!"

The very world vibrated with ancient voices, echoing the thunderous joy of billions.

From the dome of Ginnungagap's sky rained down a cascade of starlight. Along the sacred road, flames atop the eternal golden braziers surged several meters into the air.

One after another, phantom images of world-class divine beasts appeared, soaring over the God-Emperor's boulevard:

The Kraken, Fenrir, the Yamata no Orochi...

When the colossal head of Jörmungandr, the World Serpent, slowly rose beside the Rainbow Bridge, the crowd reached its first climax.

That monstrous head drew screams of wonder from the mortals.

The crowd's awe made the serpent's slitted eyes squint with satisfaction.

"That's the holy beast Jörmungandr!"

That word—"holy beast"—made all the years of drudgery and loyalty feel worth it.

The appearance of the World Serpent signaled the start of the parade.

The first force to march down the golden avenue was none other than the Frost Giant Army.

Led by Loki, the giants appeared clad in golden armor and helms. The moment they stepped onto the God-Emperor's Road, it was as if all of Asgard trembled beneath their feet.

Every step of the frost giants spilled mist from their armor seams, recreating the apocalyptic feel of Fimbulwinter.

Although the earth god Geb had already used divine arts to prevent tremors from reaching the viewing platforms, the visible shockwaves of each giant's stride still left mortal spectators dumbstruck, their only reaction being to scream wildly in excitement.

The giants were the foundation of Aesir dominance. It was thanks to their aid that Ymir was slain and the Aesir founded.

Thalos had clearly chosen this most visually overwhelming division to lead the entire ceremony—a deliberate and symbolic decision.