

Thalos 423

Chapter 423: Anubis vs. Athena

Not just Gilgamesh—every Aesir who saw the scene through mind projection was stunned.

Huh? The dignified god of war actually ran?

What the hell was that?

Isn't the god of war supposed to be the deity with the strongest battle will in a pantheon? If the war god leads the retreat, do they have any warriors left?

Perhaps to spread the damage, or because his giant form had higher defense, Ares enlarged himself again, then turned without looking back and ran the way he came.

Ares's maneuver was so unorthodox and so clean that by the time Gilgamesh drew his treasured divine sword, Ea, Ares was already striding a hundred meters per step; he didn't quite exit the optimal kill range in a few steps, but the key was that Gilgamesh wasn't confident he could go all out and still keep the bastard's life here.

At the same level, defeating an opponent isn't hard; killing them requires another level of difficulty, and capturing them is harder still.

Mainly, the Greek war god greased his heels and bolted—so far beyond what Gilgamesh expected that he missed his chance. If not his life, taking an arm might have been possible.

And now? He stared at Ares, shot full of spears like a porcupine, and the guy still wouldn't die.

Gilgamesh was very annoyed.

Either way, the victory was beyond doubt.

He won so fast that Siegfried and Bedivere barely had room to show their stuff before the enemy's forced retreat made them abandon the fight.

There was no helping it; when the strengths are close and one side wants to withdraw, the other truly can't keep them.

Siegfried stepped up and bowed. "Congratulations, Your Majesty!"

Gilgamesh's mouth twitched, and he almost lost his composure. "What's there to congratulate?"

"No, Your Majesty. However pathetic Ares might be, he is still the war god of Olympus! Your Majesty defeating the enemy's war god will greatly boost the Aesir's morale."

Gilgamesh fell silent.

Siegfried was right.

Even if Ares really was trash, he was still a god-king—and the Greek world's god of war, the figurehead of battle! For a mere god of wealth to beat the other side's war god—how was Ares supposed to explain that?

Say he got beat black and blue by a wall of money?

So much for Greek "win-ology."

In the Silver Palace, Ishtar was already squealing, shaking her hips and breaking into a dance.

Thalos smiled and calmly ordered, "Send the mind projection of Ares's defeat to all god-kings and core deities."

Brunhilde: "Yes!"

Clearly, the Greeks had no concept of linked operations—or rather, the Olympians simply didn't think that way.

Under the laws of the starfield, in a situation with multiple fronts advancing at once, supporting another lane was unrealistic. The complex spatial environment also made direct teleportation and a straight rainbow bridge impossible.

However, projecting an innocuous mind image was no problem.

Ares had rushed in so fast that on some routes, the report of his defeat arrived before they'd even met the enemy.

Athena had just laid eyes on the jackal-headed god-king Anubis when she saw, projected in the sky behind him, the image of Ares's defeat.

With almost no hesitation, Athena concluded that Ares really had lost.

Although in this life the famous Trojan War hadn't happened, and there was no record of Athena defeating Ares, the Olympian god-kings had a rough sense of each other's relative strength.

A glance or two and she knew: that sustained, overwhelming barrage—she herself, even with the Aegis, would find it hard to withstand, let alone Ares.

Especially when the Anubis opposite her announced his title as "God-King of Justice and Judgment," Athena quickly adjusted her strategy...

Justice and judgment? In the Greek world, there was no such convenient portfolio.

Zeus led the way in wrongdoing, Poseidon followed, and whole hordes of monsters were forever "the Emperor's descendants," "sons of the god-king"—who could try them?

Sensing the staggering surge of divine power in Anubis, Athena abandoned any hope of killing him.

"Goddess-king of wisdom and war—Athena!"

Bathed in golden light, dignified and beautiful, Athena drew gasps of admiration from the gods staring at her.

"So that's Athena, one of the three great virgin goddesses?"

"As expected—we must trust His Majesty's eye!"

Anubis's sub-gods murmured in awe.

Athena keenly noticed that the killing intent aimed at her from the other side had dropped sharply.

That subtle shift secretly angered her.

Clearly, she had already been relegated to a "trophy" in their eyes.

That attitude made her much less inclined to hold back.

The colossal figure of Anubis took a step forward. He raised a divine sigil and shone it toward her, as if to get a clearer look at Athena's face. Then he confirmed it.

"Athena, you guessed right! You're the goddess our God-Emperor, Thalos Borson, has named specifically. However, it won't be me who deals with you—most likely His Majesty himself will act. So now, you may choose to fight me, or withdraw."

His measured tone left Athena conflicted.

She knew Anubis for what he was: a very rigid, taciturn sort. The biggest trait of such a figure is steadiness—no flashy stratagems, no high ceiling of cunning. A type with a very high floor and not a high ceiling.

Expecting him to win big was impossible; conversely, suffering a crushing defeat was unlikely.

Especially since Athena felt his divine power might even slightly exceed her own, she wavered.

But...

"We're here already! If I don't fight at least once, won't your side think Olympus is weak?"

"Then come!"

Athena flicked her spear, and a cluster of olive branches, several stories tall, suddenly sprang from the soil before Anubis, growing madly.

"Peace?" Anubis blinked—then, in an instant, those olive branches became a myriad phantasmal serpents, octopus-like, enveloping his divine body.

The next second, a golden scale appeared out of thin air, and the venomous snakes that had just tried to seize Anubis were instantly transported onto the pans.

"Guilty!" Anubis barked.

At the sound, Athena felt a large mass of her divine power ripped away, wrenched from her control.

So this was judgment?

Athena was truly shocked.

Could a foreign world's laws bind a Greek goddess-king?

Her first impression of this cross-world "law enforcement" was absurd.

By what right do you judge me?

Only then did Athena realize that, all around Anubis, a great many law-steel tablets had appeared without her noticing.

Seemingly unrelated objects were seizing control of the laws within this spatial corridor!