

Thalos 439

Chapter 439: The King's Army, This Way Please

In theory, the God-Emperor is omnipotent.

He resides in the divine realm, lofty and supreme, overlooking all life, observing everything, able to unleash divine thunder at will to punish any who disobey.

In reality, ever since the era of ordinary deities, Thalos had known that gods had many limitations.

The prayers of believers were too numerous and noisy, to the point that not even a "read without reply" was possible—most voices were simply "deleted with one click." Only the fervent believers whose mental strength far surpassed that of mortals might have their spiritual voices reach... the god-servants, assistants to the gods.

Unless a god had memorized the soul resonance of a voice—such as a chosen one they favored—only then could the prayer possibly be heard directly.

In the opposing Greek world, the gods led by Zeus had the ability but no interest in managing such affairs.

With the exception of a few deities like Athena, most of the Olympians had no interest in the life or death of mortals.

After all, the Titans and humans were not even the same species. Just as humans wouldn't care about the life or death of ants.

For the Olympian gods, unless there was a mass death of humans that significantly affected their acquisition of divine power, they wouldn't even notice, let alone intervene.

So don't even talk about full-map awareness—they couldn't even be bothered to cast divine sight or perception into the mortal realm.

This gave the mortal armies under the Æsir gods an opportunity.

"This is a holy war declared in the name of the God-Emperor Thalos Borson—punish those who worship false gods! Kill all who resist! Enslave the rest!" One after another, kings, generals, and even privateer leaders from various regions issued similar calls to their followers.

"Oooh oooh oooh—!" Tens of thousands of men eager to ascend the social ladder raised their weapons high and roared in response.

And the Æsir gods they worshipped responded immediately upon receiving offerings.

Multicolored divine lights descended from the heavens, granting them various enhancements.

Blessings such as Courage, Elements, the Sharpness of the Spear, Stone Skin—any divine spell that did not conflict—were bestowed, and even if divine power was scarce, it was enough to grant every warrior going into battle a long-lasting blessing.

This was the benefit of a unified interest within a polytheistic faith.

Even though the gods clearly knew that the million-strong army dispatched by His Majesty the God-Emperor this time was mostly composed of shallow believers with weak faith, they still spared no divine power in bestowing blessings. That was the confidence of a vast dominion and great resources—this world was large enough that the divine power accumulated through their divine domains could sustain a long and grueling holy war.

As for whether these shallow believers would survive to return—that didn't matter. What mattered was that they could cause trouble for the Olympian gods.

Even if these people who barely believed in the Æsir gods were to surrender to the other side, it wouldn't matter. To Zeus, they were still uncontrollable foreigners. If they dared to defect, they'd likely die even more miserably.

The only deity on the opposing side who might actually benefit would perhaps be Hades, the god of the underworld.

At the same time, in the main hall of the Silver Palace, Thalos and a group of core deities were watching the mental projections arriving from all regions.

"Oh?" Several God-Kings, including Gilgamesh, sharply noticed that many mortal archers among the invaders bore Artemis's blessing of the hunt.

"Heh." Yekaterina let out a soft chuckle.

The reactions of these sons and daughters of Thalos stirred Artemis, causing her to bow her head in shame, not daring to look at the gathered core gods.

The invasion had begun!

From Athens to Sparta, from Syracuse to Corinth, from Thebes to Megara—almost every major Greek city-state and its outskirts were plunged into panic as ruthless Æsir-aligned mortal warriors poured out from slender spatial tunnels.

To the surprise of these new Ginnungagap warriors, the resistance on the other side seemed extraordinarily weak-willed.

Greek slaves were another matter altogether. When they saw that the Ginnungagap forces didn't massacre indiscriminately and even had people shouting in Greek, "Slaves who join the Ginnungagap world will become free citizens," they immediately began chirping and pointing the way in various languages incomprehensible to the Ginnungagap troops.

When the Ginnungagap warriors approached the city gates, there were even collective slave uprisings. They attacked the gate guards, causing many garrison attempts to close the gates to utterly fail.

It was practically the Greek version of "The King's Army, this way please."

These warriors dubbed the new Ginnungagap people were thus able to charge into these cities—whose walls weren't all that tall—accelerating the collapse of the Greek rulers.

"Aaaah—!"

Burning olive branches cast twisted shadows against stone walls, thick smoke carrying the charred scent of laurel leaves spiraled into the sky.

A burly Ginnungagap warrior clad in full iron armor kicked open the door of a Greek slave master, the firelight of the burning city reflected in his leopard-headed, ring-eyed helm.

Seeing the shrine in the central hall dedicated to Apollo, he nonchalantly smashed a ceremonial pottery vessel with his axe, scattering shards and dried figs across the floor.

A Greek man who hadn't yet donned his full armor charged forward, shouting with a bronze sword raised, only to be shot dead mid-rush by the short bow of another Ginnungagap warrior behind the leader.

The leading warrior laughed heartily as he chopped off the still-twitching Greek man's head, and the Greek slave who had been cowering on the floor immediately sprang up, helping to drag out a young boy hiding behind the shrine.

Off to the side, a barefoot Greek woman fleeing in panic was swept off her feet by a Ginnungagap warrior's spear shaft, quickly tied up with rope.

Scenes like this were unfolding all across Greece.

Among the Olympian gods, only Athena dispatched some "Saints" to the mortal realm to assist in defending against the invasion.

But the enemy was simply too numerous.

In the temple atop Mount Olympus, Athena spat angrily, "Damn it! Why are there so many soldiers on their side?!"

The disadvantage of the Greek world's low population was now exposed under the glaring light of day.

Every prosperous Greek city-state had at least five slaves supporting one Greek citizen.

When those slaves joined the foreign invaders in rebellion, the Greeks didn't just fail to repel the Ginnungagap forces—they couldn't even suppress the uprisings.

What chilled Athena the most was that among the Olympians, only she, Hestia, and a few others had intervened, using divine power and god-servants to protect their believers.

Greek city-states that had already been ravaged once before—like Mycenae and Sparta—were completely abandoned by their patron god Ares, who didn't care about their fate at all.

Athena was in utter despair!

She projected her divine form above Athens, intimidating the enemy and casting divine punishments, indeed slaying thousands of Ginnungagap soldiers and scaring off remnants of the raiders who weren't true fanatics.

But so what?

She could save Athens, but not the other Greek city-states.

Those were the territories of other god-kings. She could not cross those boundaries.

All she could do was watch as the entire Greek world descended into flames.

Meanwhile, in the Temple of Light, Apollo sat slumped on his divine throne, silent for a long time. He had seen the hunting blessings upon those Ginnungagap warriors and, through prophecy, had "seen" a vision of his sister Artemis snuggling happily beside a radiant and towering figure.

"Sister, did you really betray us?"