

Abyssal 351

Chapter 351 - Defeating One After Another

Count Kenner was shocked by the appearance of the winged man. His castle had powerful scanning abilities, and yet he received no warning at all.

However, as a warrior who survived thousands of years in Baator, his battle instincts were top notch. He did not hesitate and was about to release the full power of his energy pool and his Law Avatar, even though it would mean the end for any Rank 3 life form in a radius of two thousand meters.

To the Devil Lord, all of his subordinates and family were worth nothing compared with his safety.

Unfortunately for him, before he could mobilize his Soul Origin, Zatiel's right eye shone. Instantly, an unavoidable force hit his True Soul and stunned him.

Kenner's vision went black, and he lost the ability to think for a second. When his sight returned, Zatiel grabbed the back of his head, and both of their eyes were less than five centimeters apart.

The world around the Devil Lord crumbled to dust and what appeared in front of him was a giant portal made of raging purple energy.

He felt like someone was cracking his head, and the portal was trying to swallow him.

Terror filled the heart of the Devil Lord since his instincts were telling him that once he passed through the portal, it would mean his end.

"ROAR!" Count Kenner released a roar full of rage and killing intent. He could not mobilize his Soul Origin due to the state of his True Soul, but what he could do was to detonate his energy pool.

The energy pool of a Rank 5 life form was like an ocean. The might of the explosion could level the entire fortress!.

The Neo-Demon could not care less about the devils living in this place, but that destruction would ruin his plan for this Devil Lord.

Coldness filled the eyes of the Neo-Demon, as he released his Law Avatar and then made his eight majestic wings form a cocoon with him and the Devil Lord inside.

The cocoon had just closed when Kenner energy blasted in every direction.

The entire castle began to tremble, and a storm began to form around the cocoon. You could see lightning, thunder, fire, and raging winds wrapping it.

Zatiel was inside a sphere less than five meters in diameter containing a tornado that could decimate a continent. His skin was burning, but he did not move away.

The Ice Devil burned his life force and covered the cocoon with ice to help contain his power.

The Neo-Demon's Rebirth Eye was bleeding as he used all the strength he had to push the Devil Lord's consciousness into his Rebirth Nightmare.

Every second, Kenner saw the portal getting closer and closer. He did all he could, but in the end, the portal swallowed him.

The Devil Lord found himself in a purple plane the next second without a single clue of how he arrived here. Before he could even think about leaving that place, a dark monster materialized in front of him.

Kenner was a Devil Lord, someone who enjoyed horror and slaughter, but the monster's eyes filled his heart with dread and terror.

The creature roared, showing his horrible mouth, before invading the body of the Devil Lord, by entering through his eyes, mouth, nose, and ears.

The raging energy inside the cocoon began to calm down. After a few minutes, the white wings retracted, showing the Neo-Demon and the Devil Lord.

The tornado of raging energy incinerated Zatiel's skin, and the force of the explosion broke most of his bones. Luckily his vital organs were fine, and his Rebirth Force was already healing his wounds.

Count Kenner had most of his muscles and organs torn. Releasing so much energy so fast was more than his body could handle. However, the most severe injury was in his True Soul that had fallen unconscious after Zatiel trapped his consciousness in the Rebirth Nightmare.

After having neutralized the Devil Lord, Zatiel immediately scanned his surroundings. Despite the commotion, no one came to the throne room.

The Neo-Demon knew that those Rank 4 Devils must have detected the moment Kenner detonated his energy pool but chose to ignore it.

'It makes sense they did not come. If an opponent strong enough to defy Kenner had appeared, they would only be throwing themselves to their death by interfering. There is no way a devil would be willing to sacrifice their life for their master.' Zatiel understood the devils' nature very well, and he could decipher their thoughts in a moment.

He sat on the ground and focused on healing his injuries before looking at the Ice Devil that stood immovable, waiting for his orders.

'Heart Seal is truly a fantastic skill. I can even put them in a default state and make it so that they live their lives without them knowing they are under my control, creating perfect spies.' The Neo-Demon turned to the unconscious Kenner, but he shook his head.

Trying to implant the seal in the True Soul of the Devil Lord could allow his consciousness to break free of the Rebirth Nightmare, not to mention there is a limit to how many seals he can implant.

Thanks to his current soul force and mastery of Heart Seal, he can control ten Rank 4 Devils simultaneously or a single Rank 5.

The Neo-Demon had a plan for the Devil Lord, so even if he could control him, he still would not.

'The first thing is to read his memories, learn his habits, and study his personality.' Zatiel's Mind Force invaded the Devil Lord's brain and allowed the Neo-Demon to learn everything about him, from his birth until this moment.

It took him a couple of hours, but no one in the universe knew Count Kenner better than the Neo-Demon after he finished.

Once that task was completed, Zatiel used the Law of Death to make his body intangible and vanished beneath the ground.

The Neo-Demon headed to the abode of Kenner's second in command, an old devil named Faraci.

He was a weak Rank 4 Devil, but Kenner liked his cunning mind and the fact he could never threaten him due to his potential being all used up.

Zatiel reached his dwelling in less than five minutes. The old devil was ravaging a group of slaves, and none of them resisted. It was clear their minds have been thoroughly broken.

Coldness appeared in the eyes of the Neo-Demon as he used Soul Eradicator to leave Faraci unconscious. As for the women, he killed them.

He did not have time to be caring about them, and there was no safe place to leave them in Baator, so he did the most merciful thing and ended their misery.

The Neo-Demon appeared in the room, and after using his flames to incinerate the broken bodies of the women, he began to brand the True Soul of the old devil and read his mind.

Once he finished and obtained complete control over Faraci's thoughts and actions, he grabbed him and disappeared from the abode.

The duo resurfaced at the entrance to the throne room. Zatiel closed the gate and left Faraci guarding it before vanishing beneath the ground.

Once he was alone, a vulgar and cocky expression appeared on Faraci's face as he took an orb from his spatial ring and sent a message.

"Listen up, all of you. Lord Kenner has ordered that every Rank 4 Devil, his descendants, and women immediately come to his throne. We know all of your locations and calculated the time it will take you to arrive. If any of you is late, we will brand you as a traitor, hunt you down, and torture you until your lifespan is over." After he sent the message, the old devil was left looking at the distance with empty eyes, but his nasty expression remained.

Less than five minutes after Faraci spoke to the orb, a group of ten Rank 3 lesser devils with a powerful bloodline running through their veins, and the Fiend Trent that received the Ice Devils reached the entrance to the throne.

Although the lesser devils were descendants of Kenner, their status was inferior to that of the Fiend Trent, so this last spoke first.

"Faraci, why did the Lord..." Before the Fiend Trent could finish his sentence, an invisible force knocked him and killed the lesser devils.

Zatiel's hand and head rose from the ground. He stored the Rank 4 Fiend Trent in his spatial ring and devoured the lesser devils.

Chapter 352 - New Identity

After having devoured Kenner's descendants and capturing the Rank 4 Fiend Trent, Zatiel waited until more people arrived, and the cycle continued for the next couple of months.

Every time a Rank 4 Devil arrived, Zatiel would put them into a coma and store them inside his spatial ring. As for the offspring and consorts that had yet to awake their True Soul, he devoured them all.

For the Rank 4 Neo-Demon, consuming Rank 3 life forms was not of much help. They could restore his strength and energy pool, but they proportionate almost no benefit for his body. However, Kenner's descendants had a powerful Devilish Emperor Bloodline running through their veins, and although their purity was low, consuming more than five thousand of them was nutritious.

Individuals with powerful bloodlines and of a high Rank have a more challenging time procreating, but Kenner had a harem of more than three thousand women. That, plus his libido and the fact he was almost ten thousand years old, made that number of his progeny high.

Finally, after half a year, he had captured all the Rank 4 Devils under Kenner and ended the Devil Lord's bloodline.

Zatiel went back to the throne room, where Kenner was lying unconscious. The Devil Lord's powerful physique had already healed all of his wounds on its own.

The Neo-Demon meditate for an entire week until he was in optimal conditions.

He took rune crafting tools from his spatial ring and some resources before starting to work. The Neo-Demon did not have the Enlightenment Mist to help him now, so he had to push himself to the limit to create this new Doppelganger Fiend Rune.

It took Zatiel five days until he reached the part of the Animax Soul Rune where he needed to implant the True Soul of the Devil Lord.

'This is where the challenging part comes.' Zatiel used his Mind Force to increase his speed of thought, and his eyes glowed as he examined Kenner's True Soul.

The Devil Lord had several red runes covering his True Soul. Those were the contracts he had formed and that were still in operation.

There was only one that mattered to Zatiel, and it was the only one that had Kenner as the yielding party. It was the contract the Devil Count had signed with his superior, a Devil Duke.

Zatiel couldn't preserve all those red runes, and the moment they were broken, the other party would know that Kenner had died. That is why he captured all the Rank 4 Devils who signed a contract with the Devil Lord.

Slowly and with extreme dexterity, Zatiel advanced in the Animax Soul Rune.

It took him three days, using his Mind Force to push his body beyond its limits and the full might of his powerful eyes, but he was able to finish the Doppelganger Fiend Rune and preserve the red rune that connected Kenner to the Devil Duke.

The Neo-Demon stored the rune before closing his eyes and resting. Once he was better, and the fatigue had left his body and mind, he expelled the rune currently in his True Soul before inscribing the new one.

Zatiel's appearance did not change, but his soul force was now that of a Rank 5 life form at the Peak 2nd Engraving Stage. That was not all, since his soul aura was the same as Kenner's.

'The soul aura, memory, and personality are ready. Now it is the turn for the body.' Zatiel put his hand over Kenner's chest and began to manipulate the Law of Life.

The Neo-Demon's body began to change, and after an hour, he became a copy of the blue Devil Lord.

He did not obtain Kenner's physical might, and his physical stats remained the same. However, anyone who analyzed his body would find it identical to that of the Devil Lord.

The new "Kenner" conserved the wings and eyes of Zatiel. If he hid them, it would greatly diminish his battle power. Besides, he had a way to explain them.

Now that he no longer needed the Devil Lord, Zatiel took his space ring and opened his mouth before swallowing him. The moment the body reached his stomach, he felt a wave of energy and vitality fill his cells.

The Neo-Demon walked and sat on the throne before closing his eyes for a moment. After a minute, he opened them, and the viciousness they released was the same Kenner had when he was alive.

He killed all the offspring who could use their bloodline to find out the truth and captured the Rank 4 Devils whose contracts broke.

As for the consorts, it would be weird if the lustful Kenner all of a sudden stopped visiting his harem. So to be sure, Zatiel also killed them.

Now that his soul aura, soul force, memories, personality, and body were identical to that of the Devil Lord, Zatiel had thoroughly usurped his identity.

Instead of creating a force from zero, Zatiel took control of one that had already planted its roots in the Iron City of Dis.

While his expression made people think he was having evil thoughts, the truth was that the Neo-Demon was assessing his next movement and examining his power.

He felt how his constitution was growing stronger and how the second heaven was reaching its limit.

'All those people and Kenner's body were helpful. After I have fully digested them, I can seal a new star.' Zatiel was satisfied with his fast and yet steady and solid improvement.

He threw a few dozens of high-quality origin stones to his mouth and left his body to grow stronger on its own before beginning to handle the Rank 4 Devils.

'With six Rank 4 Devils, I can control Kenner's force and hide the fact that something happened. The rest will remain in my space ring until I can seal them in the Neo-Demon Realm. I will need them in the future, but they can never see the light of day again since they know the truth.'

Zatiel picked the four more powerful of the group and began to use Heart Seal on them. With the break needed between each seal, Zatiel was able to finish in ten days.

He took them out of the space ring and waved his hand, making them leave along with the Ice Devil and Faraci.

Once they exited the castle, light returned to their eyes, and they began to act like their true self. As for the fact that the red rune in their True Souls being gone, they could not process that information.

The Neo-Demon was deciphering his next move when a call reached him through Kenner's space ring. His eyes narrowed, and after a moment, he answered.

"Kenner, old friend, I heard rumors about something odd happening in your fortress and the fact your children vanished from the Iron City. Is there something I can do to help you?."

The voice belonged to a woman and was full of concern and worry, but Zatiel only sneered before responding.

"Kita, if that is all you have to say, then you are wasting my time!" Zatiel behavior was full of arrogance. His answer was identical to the one Kenner would have used, from his tone until the tempo and words.

The voice on the other side of the call remained silent for a moment before speaking again.

"There is no need to behave like that. I was only making sure you were okay. Anyway, the real reason I was calling is due to the Blood Fortress Incursion. It is supposed to start in a few weeks, but the rest are already traveling to the location Duke Krior gave us. They want to see if they can learn anything before entering. I wanted to know if you wanted to travel with me?" The woman's voice was truly enchanting, and it could affect weak life forms.

A thoughtful expression appeared on Zatiel's face after hearing that.

The Blood Fortress Incursion was a mission led by two opposing Devil Dukes. As its name suggested, the task was about invading the dwelling of an ancient devil named Blood Duke.

The Blood Duke was a powerful Devil Lord that failed his ascension to Archdevil. The most impressive thing about this Devil Lord was that he possessed a technique that allowed his body to reach the Void Stage.

When his advance to Rank 7 failed, and his life was nearing its end, he sealed his fortress in a unique dimension so no one could benefit from his demise.

The Devil Duke that Kenner served and another Devil Duke found the entrance to the dimension by chance as they explored some ancient ruins.

The first thing the Devil Lords did when they realized what they found was to try to kill the other and get everything for themselves, but in the end, none of them was able to succeed and decided to take a more civilized approach.

Each Devil Duke will send a force, consisting of three Devil Marquises, ten Devil Counts, and one hundred Rank 4 Devils, to explore the Blood Fortress.

Each force's goal was to obtain as many resources as they could and find the unique body refinement technique of the Blood Duke. As for how to respond to the other force, their instructions were simple: kill them all.

Coldness appeared in Zatiel eyes as he thought about the mission. He did not care about the Blood Duke's technique, but there must be some resources that will help his body in that place, not to mention two hundred Rank 4 Devils who no one would complain if they disappear.

"Ok, let's meet."

Chapter 353 - Establish A Connection

Zatiel flew at an incredible speed to the meeting point he settled with the female Devil Lord, Kita. Every time his wings moved, his momentum grew higher, and the lesser devils beneath him looked at the sky with fear.

Although both Kenner and Kita had teleportation formations capable of connecting their fortress, none of them would allow such a thing to happen.

In a battle, a Devil Lord could use that type of portal to enter the core of the other's territories, or worse, send a destructive device that could decimate everything.

Even the Magi World's organizations did not have that type of teleportation formation built between them.

As the Neo-Demon was getting closer to the female Devil Lord, he analyzed his strength.

'My current battle power is between the 2nd and 3rd Engraving Stage if I go all out. I can handle the Counts, but the Marquises have already established the elementary form of their Sacred Body of Laws. If I encounter one of them, my best chance is to attack their souls and then escape. I have two goals in this mission. One is to gather resources to train my body, and the second is to capture as many Rank 4 Devils as possible. Regarding the technique of the Blood Duke, I couldn't care less.'

No matter how great the Blood Duke's technique was, it could not compare with the ones in Zatiel's mind.

After half an hour of flying, Zatiel finally saw the female Devil Lord. Kita looked like a beautiful elf with two horns, and there was an enchanting aura surrounding her body.

The woman's eyes narrowed when she noticed the changes in the physical appearance of "Kenner". She still greeted him with a smile but raised her guard.

The female Devil Lord tried to hide her suspicions, but she could not trick Zatiel.

'Devils, paranoid garbage, always making things more difficult.' Everything else about the Neo-Demon was the same as Kenner's, but the woman still felt distrust for his wings and eyes.

"My devil bloodline grew stronger." Zatiel offered no more explanation. If he did, it would only make Kita's suspicions grow.

Bloodlines significantly impact a creature's appearance, which was even more true in fiends, so the Neo-Demon's explanation made perfect sense.

"I see. Let's go." Kita did not say anything else, and although she made it seem as if she lowered her guard, Zatiel's eyes showed him how she was mobilizing her energy in secret and was ready to strike.

Although moving through the sky was dangerous since anyone could detect them, they were powerful Rank 5 life forms. Their strength allowed them to ignore whether or not they are spotted.

The duo flew in complete silence for the first thirty minutes before Zatiel opened his mouth.

"I have a piece of information regarding the Blood Fortress that could be useful for you. It is related to an alteration made in the laws of that place."

A flash of interest immediately appeared in the eyes of the female Devil Lord, and she turned to the side, only to see Zatiel staring at her.

"What do you want in exchange?" Kita understood their relationship very well. There was no way Kenner would give her something out of the kindness of his heart.

"I heard that you have a Bone Devil Heart. I want it."

"Impossible!" The female Devil Lord showed a trace of killing intent the moment Zatiel mentioned that object.

A Bone Devil Heart was not an organ but a treasure, a type of plant born in a place where powerful life forms have died and whose vitality has changed the terrain. It purified the bones of a life form and helped the entrance to the 3rd Engraving Stage.

Zatiel did not truly need that treasure since the Law of Rebirth constantly refines his body. He just wanted to bring out a subject that would draw Kita's full attention.

The Neo-Demon did not do anything after seeing the woman's killing intent and limited himself to stare coldly at her.

Kita understood she could not defeat the Devil Lord. While both were at the 2nd Engraving Stage, the woman had entered recently while the blue devil was at the peak. Most of her rage came from the fact Kenner managed to learn a secret from her.

After seeing that she calmed down, Zatiel kept speaking with her, trying by every means to obtain the heart. He offered various treasures, promised help, and made subtle threats.

During the entire conversation, Zatiel made sure they maintained eye contact.

When the Neo-Demon saw that everything was failing and the female Devil Lord was about to end the conversation, he offered something he knew she could not pass.

"I can also give you the technique that helped me increase the power of my devil bloodline."

Kita could not hide the desire in her heart from showing in her face. The bloodline and True Name are the core of most devils' power, at least until they manage to reach Rank 7. No matter how slight, any improvement in either of them was something every fiend strived to obtain.

"I want a sample." Although the Bone Devil Heart was useful for Kita's next advance, improving her bloodline was more important.

Zatiel kept his eyes on the woman as he took a crystal from his ring and began to imprint some information in it. He stayed like that for more than five minutes, and although Kita was getting impatient, she did not look away.

The Neo-Demon had finished in the first minute. He was stalling for time until he finally felt it.

'The connection has been established!.' Zatiel was thrilled but did not show it on his face and handed the crystal to Kita.

The female Devil Lord immediately analyzed the technique, and a look of understanding appeared on her face as she stared at the Devil Lord.

The principle behind the technique Zatiel handed it over was to use your offspring in a cruel ritual, where their life force would be ignited to enhance the bloodline inside them.

They would burn to ashes until only a ball of condensed blood essence remained. After that, the Devil Lord would consume it and improve his bloodline.

Kita believed she had figured out why Kenner's descendants had disappeared all of a sudden.

The cruelty of the Devil Lord did not affect her. On the contrary, she unconsciously lowered her guard a little as she had a better picture of the strange events that happened in Kenner's fortress.

The female Devil Lord immediately agreed to the exchange after seeing the technique.

Zatiel imprinted the entire technique in a crystal and traded it for a rock, the size of a fist, that had veins and was beating.

Kita began to memorize the technique once she had it in her hands.

A cruel smile appeared on her face. If it wasn't for the fact the technique needed a lot of preparations, and she had to take part in the mission, the female Devil Lord would have returned to her fortress and devoured her children.

After she finished learning the technique, Kita stared at Zatiel. She was waiting for the other part of the deal.

The Neo-Demon no longer cared about the woman since she was no a threat after forming the connection, but it was still too early to shred all pretenses.

"The Blood Fortress was affected by the Blood Duke's laws. Our souls and energy will be weakened, so we will have to rely mostly on our bodies to fight."

Kita frowned when she heard that, and envy appeared in her eyes as she focused on Zatiel.

Her battle style focused on illusion and bewitching abilities. Although her body was still strong due to her demonic bloodline and the laws she had engraved in it, it could not compare with Kenner's.

"I guess you got lucky."

Zatiel only glanced at the woman before looking forward. He was not Kenner, and his energy pool and Law Avatar were an essential part of his battle power.

'My illusion and soul invasion spells depend on my Rebirth Eye and unique Mind Force. I hope the laws do not hinder them as well.'

The duo kept flying for another three hours before finally reaching their destination. Two groups have already formed there, and they were both showing pure killing intent.

Chapter 354 - Severian

The two groups noticed Zatiel and Kita. One team showed an even greater killing intent when the duo arrived, while the members of the other team displayed a smile.

The duo went to the team that was welcoming them. Zatiel and Kita repaid the courtesy and greeted them all, but they knew that these "comrades" were just as dangerous as their enemies.

The moment something precious appeared in the fortress, everybody would become an enemy.

With the addition of the Neo-Demon and female Devil Lord, the party that served Duke Krior had seven members, while the other only had five.

After that short reception was over, the Devil Lords focused on the space in front of them. There was nothing there other than some ruins, but you could detect invisible cracks in space connected to another dimension if you were strong enough.

The Devil Lords' powerful consciousnesses were like invisible beasts that swept everything in their path as they scanned the terrain.

Zatiel did not join them since the first thing in his mind was to assess the threats around him.

He could not use his consciousness to examine them since they would notice, and Heart Scan was not very useful in determining the target's strength, but his Rebirth Eye could show him a lot of an individual.

The Neo-Demon's right eye focused on the Devil Lord floating a couple of meters above the other Counts. She was a woman approximately two meters tall, with a snake body and two heads.

He could see a thriving life force like an ocean, an extraordinarily dense and pure soul force, and engraved laws in every cell of her body.

'A Sacred Body of Laws.'

Zatiel recognized the qualities of the woman's body that depicted her as a Devil Marquess, a Peak Rank 5 life form!.

He marked her as an extremely dangerous individual since his current strength would only let him run from her.

The Neo-Demon battle power allowed him to handle life forms at the 2nd and maybe 3rd Engraving Stage, but someone at Peak Rank 5 was five to seven times stronger.

After he finished with the strongest, his Rebirth Eye began to analyze the Devil Counts. They were a Hell Lion, a Fiend Dragonborn, a Spider-Wolf, a Storm Hawk, and a Shadow Frog.

According to Kenner's intel, the group's strongest was supposed to be the Hell Lion. His name was Sirex, and he had reached the peak of the 3rd Engraving Stage.

However, the Neo-Demon's attention was drawn to the Shadow Frog, named Severian. He was at the edge of the group and had a very timid and cowardly attitude. No one found that odd since he was supposed to be at the 1st Engraving Stage, but Zatiel's Rebirth Eye showed him a soul force more extraordinary than that of the Hell Lion.

The Devil Count appeared to have detected Zatiel's stare and glanced at him.

A strange light appeared in the Shadow Frog's eyes before giving a humble smile and looking away.

'He obtained a technique that permitted him to hide his true power. Since they do not see him as a threat, the rest unconsciously put less attention on him, giving him more freedom. He is like a wolf playing to be the sheep only to show his fangs when the time is right. Cunning and powerful, a dangerous combination.' The Neo-Demon also marked the Shadow Frog as a serious threat.

Once he ended with his team, Zatiel analyzed the other side. He did not get surprises in them, and other than the Devil Marquess, the rest were between the 1st and 3rd Engraving Stage.

After analyzing all those already here, Zatiel followed the Devil Lords and attempted to peer into the dimension where the Blood Fortress resided.

The first thing was to find one of the invisible space cracks that led to the dimension. The Devil Lords were using their consciousness to locate them. As for the Neo-Demon, he once again thanked his bloodline for giving him his right eye.

The Rebirth Eye showed Zatiel the space cracks. He picked one that no one had detected yet and sent his consciousness inside.

The moment the Neo-Demon's consciousness passed through the crack, he felt a powerful repulse force fighting against him.

He was barely able to enter ten centimeters with his consciousness before being shut out.

Zatiel frowned when that happened. He was not able to see anything on the other side.

'My consciousness is stronger than the rest due to my racial heritage and the fact Elemental Chaos tempers it. Nonetheless, its origin, my True Soul, is still at Rank 4.' The Neo-Demon began to think about how to handle that problem, and an idea came to mind.

Once again, he sent his consciousness into the space crack, but this time injected his Mind Force in it.

It was hard to control, and he felt like his consciousness was carrying a heavy boulder but was able to defeat the force on the other side of the space crack, allowing him to see the dimension.

What appeared in Zatiel's mind was an enormous fortress. The buildings in it were thousands of meters tall, and it had a diameter that could equal a small continent.

The Neo-Demon's consciousness could not cross the fortress's walls due to the repelling force being too high.

However, he could see the fortress's outer layer from the sky, and there was no sign of life in it.

Zatiel also used the energy in his consciousness to release a fireball against the walls. The Neo-Demon did not think he could harm them with such a weak spell, but he was surprised when he saw how the blast of the attack was almost null.

An extremely powerful life form with high control over the laws reinforced space in the dimension. Normally, a spell carrying the full strength of a Rank 5 life form could create destructive

shockwaves that would extend for hundreds of kilometers, but here, they would cover a few dozen meters.

Zatiel frowned when he detected the uniqueness of the Blood Fortress. The price the Blood Duke had to pay to make those alterations in space and reinforce the city should have been astronomical, even for a Peak Rank 6 life form.

'According to the information, when the Blood Duke failed his ascension to Archdevil, he used his last breath to seal his fortress in a hidden dimension so no one could steal his resources, but that story had several flaws. For starters, if he wanted that no one could get their hands on his belongings, why not just destroy the fortress? Second, this place must have had millions of devils living in it. They would not have chosen to stay here after their master died, and even if they could not escape, some of them must have remained alive, and yet I can see no trace of life anywhere.' Hundreds of different scenarios appeared in Zatiel's mind that could explain what he saw, but he had too little information to pick one.

The Neo-Demon continued exploring the Blood Fortress' border, but it was a barren wasteland with nothing to offer. Eventually, he pulled his consciousness out.

Zatiel saw how the rest of the Devil Lords were still trying to enter the dimension. The Devil Marquess and Hell Lion were the only ones with a relaxed expression on their faces, telling the rest they succeeded.

The Neo-Demon focused on the Shadow Frog. Severian's annoyed expression made people think he had not succeeded, but Zatiel was sure he managed to enter the dimension.

A nasty expression appeared on Zatiel's face as he approached the Shadow Frog.

"Severian, you should give up. I could not beat the repelling force in the dimension, and your consciousness is weaker than mine. Instead of wasting time, why don't we discuss a proposition I have for you." Zatiel did not hide his voice, and the rest of the Devil Lords could hear him, but no one bothered. They did not care if the blue Count wanted to ally with the weak Shadow Frog.

Severian's eyes narrowed when he heard those words, and an annoyed expression appeared on his face, but he hid it immediately.

"Kenner, my friend, what are you thinking about?" There was a smile on Severian's face, and his attitude was docile.

Zatiel was sure the Shadow Frog felt nothing but disdain for Kenner. Unfortunately for him, since he is hiding his strength, he could not just ignore a Devil Lord that was supposed to be stronger than him.

The Neo-Demon began to talk and made sure to maintain eye contact the whole time.

Chapter 355 - The Mission Begins

Zatiel kept talking with Severian for a long time. The Neo-Demon could tell the Shadow Frog's annoyance, but he couldn't care less and took advantage of the fact he had to maintain his cover and could not dismiss him.

It was only after one hundred minutes of non-stop eye contact that Zatiel finally let the conversation finish. In the end, they made a deal and promised to do their best in case one of them needed the other's help, but they were just empty words.

'Almost double the time that I needed to establish the connection with Kita. If he had not been hiding his power, it would have been incredibly difficult to maintain eye contact for that long.' Zatiel looked at the Devil Marquess above him after handling the most significant threat between the Devil Counts.

If he could use Beyond Reality with her, then the Blood Fortress' mission would be much easier.

Unfortunately, even if Zatiel could establish a conversation with her, he would have to maintain uninterrupted eye contact for more than ten hours.

Since establishing a connection with the Devil Marquess was not feasible, he went after the other Devil Counts.

Zatiel could not just force the conversation with them as he did with the Shadow Frog, and there were many distractions. The good news is that he had a lot of time, and no one was going anywhere.

Less than a week after Zatiel and Kita reached this place, all the missing Devil Lords arrived. Both parties had ten Devil Counts and three Devil Marquises.

The new Marquises in Zatiel's team was a man that had the appearance of a giant worm with spider legs and eyes all over his body and an individual made of green fire that appeared to have no gender.

With only a few days until the Blood Fortress Incursion started, the Rank 4 Devils began to arrive. Those devils knew it would be suicide to reach this place before the Devil Lords of their team came since their enemies would have killed them if they see them alone.

After the one hundred Rank 4 Devils appeared, the Devil Lords began to split them between themselves. Every Devil Marquess chose fifteen, leaving the fifty-five remaining for the Devil Counts.

Five Devil Counts would have six Rank 4 Devils beneath them, while the rest would only get five.

The strongest Devil Counts would be the ones with an additional soldier and choose first, allowing them to pick the best Rank 4 Devils.

Zatiel chose third since "Kenner" strength was beneath the Hell Lion and Fiend Dragonborn.

The Rank 4 Devils had no vote regarding who they would be following in this mission. Although the ones picked by Zatiel did not show it, they were all cursing their luck.

Those devils had done their homework before this mission and got information about the Devil Lords they would be serving. Kenner had a massive red flag on him due to his sadistic nature and the fact he liked to see teammates kill each other.

Zatiel's Mind Force allowed him to feel those Rank 4 Devils' emotions, but that did not bother him.

'With Kenner, at least some of you would have made it alive, but with me, none will see Baator again for a long time.' The Neo-Demon picked the six devils with the most powerful soul force and no longer looked at them.

When the day of the mission finally arrived, space above both teams broke at the same time, and two individuals appeared.

They released no aura at all, and there was no fluctuation of soul force or energy in them, but the moment they showed up, everybody kneeled.

The Devil Duke, known as Krior, had a humanoid appearance. His skin was charred, and red light could be seen coming from inside his chest. He was less than a meter tall, but all the Devil Lords and Rank 4 Devils showed a terrified expression the moment he appeared.

Zatiel also showed fear in his face, but his focus was on the other team's Devil Duke.

'He is a Rank 6 Pit Fiend. If I could get a piece of his soul or some life force, then there is a chance I could evolve my sword in a Rank 6 Artifact. Unfortunately, a Devil Marquess is already more than I can handle.' Zatiel focused once again on Duke Krior, just in time to see this one releasing the full power of his consciousness.

The Pit Fiend did the same, and the power they released to the outside was so great, they generated an earthquake that could cover half a continent.

The Devil Lords felt tremendous pressure over their bodies, and the Rank 4 Devils felt nauseous due to the raging and poisonous energies that covered the sky.

Both Devil Dukes seized control over the space in front of them in a second.

The Pit Fiend created giant chains that pierced the edges of a space crack and expanded it.

Duke Krior, on the other hand, spit a ball of green fire that entered a space crack and began to form a gateway into the dimension where the fortress resided.

The portals were reinforced with the Dukes' laws, allowing easy passage to Rank 5 life forms and beneath.

"The one who brings me the Blood Duke's body refinement technique can keep the resources he obtained. The rest can only remain with five percent." Duke Krior announced that before closing his eyes.

The devils will be risking their lives, entering a Devil Duke's fortress that must be full of traps and fight against an enemy force, and yet they would obtain less than a tenth of what they manage to collect. That was bullying, and precisely the way leaders treated their subordinates in Baator.

That behavior could incite resentment in your underlings, and that was one of the many reasons devils would rather see the people beneath them die rather than see them grow stronger.

Both teams went through the portal created by their Devil Dukes and found themselves inside the dimension that contained the Blood Fortress.

They immediately felt how their energies were harder to move, and a foreign force suppressed their consciousnesses. The alterations in this place would diminish the might of their spells and make scanning harder.

Zatiel also felt those drawbacks but was happy when he noticed how his Mind Force was not affected.

Both teams looked at each other after reaching the dimension. Although killing intent overflowed their bodies, it was not the time to fight yet.

Zatiel and the devils beneath Duke Krior followed the Blood Fortress' border and took the left side, while the team under the Pit Fiend took the right side.

The Devil Lords began to split apart, and each one chose a separate entrance. The fortress was almost the size of a continent, so they all were pretty far apart.

They did this to avoid fights at the beginning of the mission. Each group would start on the fortress's outer layer and slowly make their way to the center, where the most valuable resources and information should reside.

While every group immediately entered the fortress, Zatiel's group remained at the gate.

The Neo-Demon looked at the Rank 4 Devils, and his right eye glowed as he forcefully implanted a seed of Mind Force in the head of every one of them.

The devils were too weak, and they could not fight back against the power of the Neo-Demon. They were all furious when that happened, but there was nothing they could do since even working together, the best they could achieve was to equal a weak Rank 5 life form.

"Begin to explore the outer layer. I will join you after I finish with something. The thing I implanted in your heads will allow me to see all you do." The Neo-Demon said nothing more before vanishing beneath the ground.

Zatiel's words only made the wrath in the Rank 4 Devils grow. He left them on their own, and even if they managed to find anything valuable, they were sure the Devil Lord would take it from them.

They could not ignore the order Zatiel gave them since that would mean death, so they entered the fortress.

Once he was deep underground and was sure no one was looking at him, Zatiel began preparing to seal a new star in his body.

Chapter 356 - Second Apocalyptic Star

Zatiel's eyes were closed as he injected Elemental Chaos into the True Doomsday Body's heaven connected to the liver and relayed coordinates to his Chaotic-Core.

As the Elemental Chaos overflowed the heaven, a white whirlwind emerged inside Zatiel's liver.

In the Neo-Demon Realm's void, a white whirlwind like the one inside Zatiel appeared. Only this one was countless times larger, and it was swallowing a burning star.

The heat in the star was so high that an average Rank 4 life form would find it hard to be near it for a long time, and yet the Neo-Demon planned to seal it inside him.

The distance between Baator and the Neo-Demon Realm was incommensurable.

Thanks to the NRAI and the Incarnation of Death and Destruction's Omega Law, Zatiel teleported a star from his realm's void into his body.

A red marble appeared in the white whirlwind inside the Neo-Demon's liver, and the energy in it increased as the process of crystallization started.

When the sealing of the burning star was fifty percent done, the Star Consciousness woke up. Although it could not form coherent thoughts, it could express emotions.

The Star Consciousness reacted with rage and fear at the prospect of being incarcerated. It attempted to release a blast of fire and break his cage when a giant golden sword appeared inside the dimension containing it.

The sword created by Zatiel's True Will pierced the star with an unbelievable speed, breaking the Star Consciousness into pieces that the True Doomsday Body will soon devour.

Without the Star Consciousness resisting the process, the crystallization finished before compressing itself and finally forming a stellated dodecahedron with a red orb in the center.

A massive amount of dense and heavy energy overflowed Zatiel's body now that he formed a new Apocalyptic Star.

The increase in Astral Origin was not the only benefit the Neo-Demon obtained. The Apocalyptic Star released law's fragments that fused with the tissues around it, granting supernatural abilities to the organ.

The liver had many functions, but the most important ones were the purification of blood, the creation of nutrients for the body, and as a reservoir of glucose that is a biological energy source.

The burning star Zatiel sealed in his liver was a Peak Tier 2 Star with a developed Law of Fire that worked as its core.

Zatiel remained with his eyes closed beneath the ground as the changes on his body were happening.

The Neo-Demon felt how his liver cells were now releasing a burning heat that would incinerate any nocive substance that passed through it.

The proteins created by his liver and released into the bloodstream evolved, generating an overall improvement in his constitution. His blood was now glowing with blazing red color.

The glucose stored in the liver transformed into liquid fire. Not only was it more powerful, but it was also faster, and in a few seconds, it could fill every cell of the Neo-Demon's body with energy.

"A.I. Chip, show me my stats."

"Bip... Scanning host.

Paths of Power: Animus (Rank 4)/ True Soul (Second Origin Cycle)/ True Will (Low Star Breaker)/ True Doomsday Body (Second Heaven)

Strength: 5.7-->6.1

Physique: 7.6-->8.0

Speed: 6.2-->6.3

Astral Origin: 3.0-->3.9."

A smile appeared in Zatiel when he saw those numbers and felt the power in his body.

Every point meant an increase in fifty percent in that respective parameter. Right now, Zatiel's physique was seventeen times stronger than that of a newborn Archangel.

'My physical might can equal that of a newly advanced Rank 5 life form that focuses on body refinement. It is time I take part in this incursion.'

The Neo-Demon rose from the ground and went through the information the seeds of Mind Force inside those Rank 4 Devils gathered.

They advanced through the outer layer with ease. There were traps and defensive systems in that area, but their power was not enough to hinder Rank 4 life forms.

The devils managed to obtain some resources, but they were insignificant for the Neo-Demon. It made sense since the Blood Fortress' outer layer was where lesser devils must have lived.

After a week of traveling, the Rank 4 Devils reached a new wall. It was the dividing point between the outer layer and inner layer.

From that point on, the devils began to have problems and advanced very slowly.

A red fog covered the Blood Fortress's inner layer. It hindered the devils' consciousness even more and clouded their vision.

The inner layer traps had the power to harm Rank 4 life forms, and the devils could not get more than thirty meters away from each other since they would lose sight of their comrades.

Zatiel frowned as he went through the information. The division between the layers, traps, and even the red fog was not a surprise. What bothered him was that the Rank 4 Devils hadn't seen a trace of life in all this time. There was not even a corpse.

Without wasting more time, Zatiel passed through the gates and entered the Blood Fortress. He advanced through the ground since flying would make it easier for others to detect his position.

This place was full of Devil Counts that could threaten his life, not to mention the Devil Marquises that were much stronger than him.

Zatiel had just arrived at the wall that divided the layers when light filled his eyes.

A seed of Mind Force showed him a Rank 4 Devil being blasted out from a building he had entered less than a minute ago. Someone had punched him with so much strength that he broke all the devil's ribs.

The rest of the devils immediately gathered around the injured devil and saw a ten-meter tall faceless humanoid with red skin and raging blood energy coming out from the building.

The creature attacked without saying any word. It flashed to the group, and a sonic boom was formed behind it.

The Rank 4 Devils responded by releasing their Law Avatar. Unfortunately, the alteration in the fortress' laws diminished the help it brought to their battle power.

'I need to go there fast.' Zatiel did not care about the devils, but they were more useful for him alive, not to mention he was interested in the faceless humanoid since he was the only thing that appeared to have life in this place.

The red fog hindered the Rebirth Eye's vision, although not at the Rank 4 Devils' level. He used the seed of Mind Force in them to find out their location.

Zatiel bent his knees, and after charging his legs with all his strength, he fired his body like a cannonball.

A building appeared in the Neo-Demon's path in a second. With incredible dexterity, he adjusted his body to land with his feet in the wall.

Without losing momentum, he bent his knees again before leaping. He did that with all the buildings in his path, increasing his speed with every jump.

The faceless creature had sent a Rank 4 Devil flying away with a kick when it heard the sound of a building's wall shattering.

It had just turned around when the Neo-Demon pierced its chest with the white sword, and both crashed into the ground.

The sword pierced its heart, but the creature still was able to send a fist with immense strength to the Neo-Demon's head.

Zatiel frowned when he saw the punch coming his way. The moment the creature appeared in his sight, he used Soul Eradicator in it, but there was no effect.

A month ago, he would have been forced to dodge the fist, but this time, he had the strength to stop it with his bare hands.

The Neo-Demon felt his arm trembling but stopped an attack carrying a physical might equal to the 1st Engraving Stage without needing the help of his Law Avatar or Doomsday Incarnation.

The next second, his Eye of Death and Destruction glowed, and death force overflowed the creature's circulatory system stopping its body functions.

The Rank 4 Devils looked at Zatiel from a distance and did not dare to get close to him. The creature had almost killed them all, but the Neo-Demon defeated it in a single strike.

In another race, that display of might and the fact he saved their lives would have awoken respect and admiration, but the devils only felt fear and envy.

Zatiel did not care about their emotions and began to analyze this creature.

Chapter 357 - Statue

Zatiel used his Rebirth Eye, consciousness, and Mind Force to examine the humanoid creature and soon found out its nature and why his Soul Eradicator did not work.

'A Rank 5 Blood Zombie. It doesn't have consciousness and operates following the commands given during its creation.'

The Neo-Demon's hope of catching a living being and finding out what was happening in this place vanished. Usually, high-level puppets could store information in their minds, but time had deteriorated this one's brain.

He stored the puppet in his space ring before going through the information in the mind of the first Rank 4 Devil that the Blood Zombi attacked.

'It attacked the devil when this one put a foot in the stairs that led to the basement.' Zatiel knew that such a strong puppet must have been guarding something valuable, so he entered the building after commanding the devils to stay put.

It took a few seconds for the Neo-Demon to reach the entrance to the basement.

He did not descend right away since most places containing valuable objects or information have self-destruction devices meant to go off if the guardian fails.

Zatiel created thin threads of Mind Force that began to invade the walls. Carefully he broke the magic matrix and rune formation in his path until finally reaching a giant laboratory.

Only after making sure he deactivated every trap did the Neo-Demon enter the room.

Hundreds of different plants and all kinds of books filled the room. It was not hard to realize that this was a laboratory of a Grand Alchemist.

The Neo-Demon's Mind Force covered the entire laboratory and gave him a clear view of everything inside it.

Most of the plants had withered, but Zatiel's eyes narrowed as he noticed a fossilized root floating in a bowl with green liquid.

He got closer and began to analyze the root and the liquid with his right eye.

'The liquid had lost its unique properties, but had not dissolved after all this time, it must have been a high-level substance. If I am right, the root belonged to a Tree of Massacre. It is fossilized, and it will be hard to restore even with my knowledge, but it will be worth it.' Zatiel took a container and filled it with his blood before depositing the root inside.

The Neo-Demon stored the container and all the books of this place into his spatial ring.

The magic knowledge was low level for him, but he could exchange it for something else with the rest of the Devil Lords. And in case a Devil Marquess asked him from where he got it, he would have an explanation.

After gathering everything valuable, Zatiel's released blue flames that destroyed anything they touched. It was best not to leave any clue of what was in here.

The Neo-Demon exited the laboratory but did not leave the building. He advanced until reaching the rooftop.

The red fog was thicker in the sky, and the Neo-Demon's vision that could see an ant more than one hundred kilometers away now saw everything blurry. Still, by pushing the Rebirth Eye to the limit and taking advantage of the height, Zatiel was able to form a clear picture of the buildings around him.

Suddenly, the Neo-Demon's eyes widened, and he focused on a structure in the distance.

It was a thousand meters tall statue of a young child with no eyes nor ears and a bloodthirsty smile on his face.

The red fog hid everything else, and the reason Zatiel could see that statue was due to his Eye of Life and Creation's unique ability to perceive hidden energy.

'It is like a heart, beating, gathering blood energy and producing life force before sending it to somewhere else.' Zatiel had already developed an idea of what the purpose of this fortress was. However, that only made more questions appear in his mind.

'I need to get inside it.' The Neo-Demon descended to the ground. After giving orders to the Rank 4 Devils of searching the buildings for anything valuable, he left.

Zatiel advanced carefully since the traps and defensive systems around him reached the level in which they could harm a Rank 5 life form.

After more than two weeks of running, he almost reached the statue when his Rebirth Eye caught a glance of someone. The fog was too dense to figure out its identity, but it was not a Devil Marques due to the soul force he felt.

That was everything he needed to know before flashing to the individual with his sword in hand and killing intent in his heart. It did not matter to the Neo-Demon whether the person was part of his team or an enemy.

After he got close enough, he was able to identify him. He was a fifteen-meter tall Helltoxin Minotaur, a Devil Count under the Rank 6 Pit Fiend.

The red fog's effect was higher in the Helltoxin Minotaur's perception than in Zatiel's, so the Devil Count was only able to react to the Neo-Demon when this one was in front of him.

The devil roared and attempted to strike the Neo-Demon with his claw full of black poison.

Unfortunately, Zatiel was too close, and the moment he raised his hand, an invisible force hit his True Soul, momentarily stunning him.

The next thing the Helltoxin Minotaur felt was a burning sword cutting his arm off.

The pain was immense, but as a Devil Lord, his battle experience was high. He immediately moved away from his enemy and fused with his Law Avatar.

Zatiel saw black tendons cover the Devil Count's body, and his Rebirth Eye showed him an invisible gas that filled the air around him.

The Neo-Demon did not give the Devil Count time to rest and flashed at him as an eclipse formed behind his back and bone spikes emerged from his knees and elbows.

A thin layer of golden plasma appeared around Zatiel, stopping the gas from infiltrating his body.

He got in front of the Devil Count and once again fired Soul Eradicator.

The Helltoxin Minotaur's spirit defenses were higher now that he had fused with his Law Avatar, but the attack still affected his concentration due to the immense pain.

Zatiel managed to block the claw with his sword before hitting the Devil Count in his chest with his knee.

The black tendons were resilient, but the bone spike was hard and burning, so it managed to pierce them, making a big hole in the Devil Count's chest before blasting him away into a building.

The two strikes broke the Devil Count's magic defenses and gave the A.I. Chip enough time to scan him. The next second, Zatiel saw all the information in his mind.

"Bip... Target scanned successfully.

Race: Devil (Rank 5, 2nd Engraving Stage)

Strength: 8.1

Physique: 6.7

Speed: 4.5

Energy Pool: 8.3

Soul Origin: 8.2"

In a different place, this fight would have been much harder for Zatiel due to the difference in energy pool and Soul Origin, not to mention that his opponent could fuse with his Law Avatar.

However, the Blood Fortress weakened Law Avatars and made the energy pool harder to use, so they depended mainly on their bodies to fight.

The Neo-Demon's strength was lower than the Helltoxin Minotaur, but his speed was almost two times greater. That difference in agility was catastrophic since Soul Eradicator affected the concentration of the Devil Lord.

Zatiel had just appeared in front of the Helltoxin Minotaur when he detected something.

His Rebirth Eye aimed at the top of the building next to him but instantly returned to the Devil Count.

The poisonous claw once again stopped his sword, but he managed to land a fist in the Devil Count's face.

His fist carried enough strength to break the Devil Count's face before being pushed away due to a kick that landed in his stomach.

The fight continued, and in less than ten minutes, the Helltoxin Minotaur's body was full of serious injuries contaminated with blue fire. The Devil Count could not keep up with Zatiel's speed.

The Devil Count was furious, but he was not a demon. Knowing that the situation was getting too dangerous, he chose to escape.

"ROAR!" The Devil Count roared as his energy exploded. From every cell of his body, a dense black gas was released.

The toxins in the black gas were powerful enough to endanger the life of a Rank 5 life form at the 3rd Engraving Stage. It drained all the energy the Helltoxin Minotaur had, but he was sure that his opponent would not dare to get close to him.

Unfortunately for the Devil Count, his calculations were wrong. He had turned around and was about to run when a sword pierced his back, severing his heart and overflowing his body with death force.

Before his True Soul could leave the soul dimension, sealing runes covered his skin.

Chapter 358 - Blood Child

There was a man on the rooftop of a building close to where the fight between Zatiel and the Helltoxin Minotaur occurred. His ten-meter tall body had draconic and fiendish traits.

The Devil Lord was a Fiend Dragonborn named Dior, a member of the same team as Zatiel. He managed to hide his presence thanks to his laws, making it challenging even for a Rank 5 life form's consciousness to detect him.

The red fog was so thick that he could not see the battle, but he had a highly developed sense of smell that worked like a form of sonar for him.

Dior followed the Helltoxin Minotaur and was about to attack him when he detected another presence and chose to hide. He was surprised by Kenner's arrival and how he handled the Helltoxin Minotaur.

The Fiend Dragonborn could also defeat the opposing team's Devil Count, but he had reached the 3rd Engraving Stage and focused on body refinement.

'There is something odd about Kenner. His strength is higher than the last time I saw him, and his Law Avatar has changed. It would have been a hard battle if I took him head-on, but the stupid dared to enter the Helltoxin Minotaur's Breath of Death. Luckily he did not kill the Devil Count, so I have the chance to devour both of them alive.' There was hunger in Dior's face as he thought of eating his comrade.

The Fiend Dragonborn's primary goal in this mission was not to harvest resources from which he would only keep a fraction or search for a technique he had no affinity for.

The moment he set foot in this dimension, he began to hunt Devil Counts to devour them and increase the power of his devil bloodline.

Dior could see in his mind how Zatiel left the black gas after storing the Helltoxin Minotaur in his space ring and how his body had a horrible stench due to the poison that invaded his cells.

'It doesn't matter. Sometimes smelly foods are the most delicious ones.' Dior smiled as he prepared to take advantage of Zatiel's weakened state when he noticed this one running to a statue close to him and then, out of nowhere, make an underground passage appear.

'What is that?' The Devil Count was surprised. His nose could give him a perfect picture of everything around him, but he had no idea how Zatiel found that tunnel.

Zatiel descended the next instant, and Dior's perception began to lose him as his scent vanished.

The Fiend Dragonborn did not chase after Zatiel immediately.

He did not believe that the Neo-Demon could have set him a trap since he should not have been able to detect his presence, but the Blood Fortress was a strange and dangerous place, so he had to be careful.

Dior got closer to the passage and once again got hold of Zatiel's scent. He sensed the Neo-Demon going down the path for a long time and how nothing got in his way.

The Devil Count waited for a few minutes, and after discerning no problem, he also began to descend.

After a few minutes of flying, the red fog disappeared, but the tunnel had so many curves that his eyes were not very useful, not to mention that the pressure on his consciousness grew even higher.

The tunnel was very long. Even with the Fiend Dragonborn speed, he had to advance for almost half an hour before seeing the exit.

Dior had just left the passage, and what he saw shocked him. He found himself in the center of a giant tower, with devils tied up to the walls.

There were thousands of devils, and while most of them were Rank 3 life forms, there were plenty of Rank 4 life forms and even Rank 5 life forms.

They had metallic ducts connected to their spines that introduced red golden energy into their bodies, and another set of tubes came out from their hearts and sent blood energy and life force down.

'They are cattle!. Whoever built this and captured all these devils is a mighty entity. Those lesser devils should have died of old age a long time ago, but whatever those pipes pumped into them keeps them alive and allows blood energy and life force extraction.'

Fear was beginning to appear in the Fiend Dragonborn's eyes as he inspected the place. He followed the tubes from the devils' hearts and saw them gathering in a formation on the tower's floor.

Another thing that disturbed Dior was the fact he had lost trace of Zatiel. He had followed his scent all the way here, but now he could not find him.

Even though this place could be a treasure trove, the danger was too much for the Fiend Dragonborn.

The Devil Count had just turned around, ready to escape this place at full speed. However, his entire body froze due to a child appearing right in front of him.

"Where do you think you are going? It has been a very long time since I had someone with whom to speak. Besides, Blood Father would be very angry if I disobey his instructions."

The child's appearance was the same as the statue above this tower. He had no eyes nor ears, and there was a bloodthirsty smile on his face.

The Fiend Dragonborn was almost ten times taller than the child and an evil monster that had provoked countless atrocities, but right now, his instincts were screaming with utter horror.

Cold sweat appeared in his body, but as a cunning devil who survived thousands of years in hell, his mind was fast.

"Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Dior, a Devil Count and faithful servant of Duke Krior. I came to the Blood Fortress following my Duke's commands to search for the Blood Duke and offer my assistance. How can I address your Highness." Dior kneeled in the air and adopted a submissive stance.

All he had said were pure lies, but from the child's words, he deduced a connection with the Blood Duke, and from there, he went with his gut.

The child touched his chin as he appeared to be thinking. Dior's words seem to have affected him, and his stance relaxed, but the bloodthirsty smile remained.

"How weird. Father told me none of you knew your true purpose for coming here. How did you find out?"

Dior's eyes narrowed when he heard that, and all kinds of thoughts crossed his mind. However, he could not make the child wait.

"I am Duke Krior's trusted lieutenant and an essential part of his organization. That is why I know things others may not."

"Why would Duke Krior send you here if you are an important part of his organization?" The child frowned as he spoke those words, but he talked to himself and did not hope for Dior to answer.

The child remained thinking for a few seconds, which felt like an eternity for the Fiend Dragonborn. In the end, he shrugged his shoulder and shook his head.

"It is not my place to question a Devil Duke. If he wanted to send a trusted lieutenant to assist Father, then I can only thank him. By the way, my name is Blood Child, son of the Blood Duke."

The tension diminished after Blood Child spoke those words, and the Fiend Dragonborn took the opportunity to ask a question that had been bothering him.

"Yor Highness, Blood Child, you say I am the first visitor you had in a long time, but I saw a person coming to this place a few minutes before me."

Blood Child immediately shook his head when he heard Dior's words.

"I am confident that you were the first one to come to this place. None of the sacrifices should have the strength or special abilities capable of hiding from me. The Dukes made sure of that when they picked you."

A flash of realization appeared in the Fiend Dragonborn's eyes when he heard how Blood Child referred to the devils that took part in this mission.

"I would like to speak a little more with you, but Blood Father would be very angry if I delay things too much. Now show me your back so I can begin with my work and you can fulfill the mission Duke Krior trusted you." Blood Child rose his palm, and pipes, like those piercing the devils' spine in the walls, emerged from it.

Chapter 359 - Law Of Destruction's Minor Completion Level

Dior felt absolute terror invade his heart the moment he saw those pipes coming out from Blood Child's right palm. He imagined suffering the same fate as the devils trapped in the wall and being kept alive like blood bags.

He moved away from the child and immediately made his energy explode and mobilized his Soul Origin.

When Blood Child saw the Devil Count's behavior, an incredibly evil, cruel, and chaotic aura was released from his body and covered the entire tower.

"You dare to defy Blood Father's orders!" Blood Child flashed to the Devil Count's chest and slapped him with his left palm.

The Fiend Dragon's body could compare with that of a Rank 5 life form at the 4th Engraving Stage, but that palm strike was not only fast and powerful but also had the great might of the laws fused in it.

Dior's body crashed against the wall. An immense amount of blood energy, along with Law of Blood's runes, invaded his body, numbing his soul and energy.

Blood Child appeared in front of the Devil Count the next instant and sent pipes into his body.

The Devil Count's destiny was gloomy, and there was nothing he could do to free himself from Blood Child's power.

Suddenly, two dark figures entered the tower and flashed to the rune formation on the floor.

Their speed was incredible, even for Rank 5 standards. Dior only saw a black blur, but Blood Child was able to discern their appearances.

They were two crows with six red eyes in their faces, two in their wings, and black obsidian feathers.

Mounted in the back of these creatures were two blue devils with eight wings connected to an eclipse, bones spikes in their elbows and knees, and three eyes.

"DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH IT." Blood Child went ballistic the moment he saw the crows and devils approaching the runic formation.

He immediately forgot about the Devil Count and forcefully shut off the connection with him to chase after the blue devils.

In that exact moment, when his spirit defenses were the weakest, an invisible force struck his soul, and his sight went dark for an instant.

Along with that attack, another crow emerged from the tunnel. This one was even faster than the other two, and the devil riding his back carried a white sword covered with blue and purple fire.

When they were less than two meters away, Zatiel jumped out of the Nether Crow's head, increasing his momentum as he aimed his sword forward.

Blood Child had just regained his vision when the sword collided with his chest, right above the zone where his heart resided.

That attack, carrying such an immense speed and the full power of the Neo-Demon, could have easily pierced the body of a Devil Count at the 3rd Engraving Stage. However, it was only able to penetrate four centimeters into Blood Child's chest.

The wound was still deep since Blood Child's body was small, but there was no pain or sign of damage in him, only wild rage.

Blood Child clenched his fist and threw a punch that could split a meteorite in half.

Right before that tiny fist could land in Zatiel's body and make it explode, in front of him, the Undying Leviathan's armored head materialized.

The fist immediately destroyed the incarnation and even harmed the Void Creature's soul connected to it.

The attack continued until reaching Zatiel's chest. That tiny fist destroyed all of his ribs, smashed his lungs, and injured his hearts.

The Neo-Demon crashed on the other side of the tower, coughing mouthfuls of blood with pieces of his organs in it.

While the clash between Zatiel and Blood Child happened, Dior had managed to free himself. The first thought in his mind was to escape, but he heard a voice in his mind.

'You better stay and fight as if this is the last battle of your life!. If you even think of running away, I will use my ability to hide from Blood Child as I did before and let you here to die alone. We need to distract him until my clones finish altering the runic formation.'

The Fiend Dragonborn was shocked when he heard that. He felt no gratitude to Zatiel for saving his life, and his mind focused on choosing the path with the highest chance of survival.

Dior noticed how the tunnel to the surface had vanished and heard crystal cracking when Zatiel's Rebirth Incarnations broke the invisible force field around the runic formation. Those two factors made his decision clear.

"ROAR!" The Fiend Dragonborn roared as he fused with his Law Avatar, making him grow until he reached forty-five meters tall and silver metallic scales covered his entire body.

The Devil Count's power up did not end there since he also burned his life force and activated a medallion that made a silver aura cover his body.

Dior's battle power now could be compared with someone at Pseudo 5th Engraving Stage. He gathered every ounce of strength he had in his fist as he launched it to the monster in front of him.

Blood Child was about to chase after the Rebirth Incarnations that were at this moment infusing new runes in the formation when he saw the giant draconic fist coming his way.

The only emotion one could detect from Blood Child was fury. His tiny fist clashed with Dior's, creating a shock wave that made the entire tower tremble.

The Fiend Dragonborn felt all the bones in his hand shattering, the muscles on his arm tearing apart, and his blood burning, but he resisted the pain and attacked with his other arm.

"Fucking garbage, stop bothering me!" Blood Child's tiny body appeared to contain an ocean of blood energy, and he made it erupt.

Blood Child responded to the Fiend Dragonborn's fist with his own, but this time, Dior's entire arm exploded after the clash.

He did not end there since he flashed to Dior's chest and attacked with both his arms simultaneously.

The Devil Count felt the threat of death more clear in this instant than ever before in his entire life. He exploded his energy, broke his medallion to generate more silver aura, and gathered everything in his chest.

Blood Child's strike shattered Dior's defenses, made the Devil Count's chest explode, and buried him hundreds of meters into the wall.

The Devil Count's entire body would have burst like a balloon full of blood if it weren't for his final defenses.

Blood Child wanted to kill the Devil Count, but he felt how the duo was already affecting the runic formation's core, and he could not allow that to happen under any circumstance.

He had just started his path down when he noticed the Neo-Demon coming to him, once again mounted in the Nether Crow.

Blood Child saw how Zatiel propelled himself at him with the white sword pointing to his heart.

"Trash, I will end you as well!" He was much faster than the Neo-Demon and was about to blast his head off before this one could land his attack when his entire body froze.

Blood Child knew the reason for his condition immediately. It was the duo's fault, who had managed to affect the core of the runic formation.

'It is just a second. I can resist!'

A second was a lot of time for Rank 5 life forms, but Blood Child's body was incredibly hard.

Zatiel's white sword was just about to enter right where the first attack landed.

That instant, the Neo-Demon burned his life force and made his Elemental Chaos, Soul Origin, Astral Origin, and Rebirth Force explode.

Draining all that power, Zatiel was able to activate the second release of his white sword.

Blood Child was shocked when he felt the sword bury into his body, pierce his heart and then release a torrent of blue fire that contained Baator's Law of Destruction at the Minor Completion level.

A smile appeared on the Neo-Demon's face as he saw blue fire coming out from Blood Child's eyes, mouth, ears, and nose.

However, his happiness ended the next second, when a kick had landed in his waist, shattering it and sending him flying away.

Blood Child's had his heart destroyed, and blue fire filled every corner of his body, but he was still alive and strong enough to blast Zatiel away with a single kick.

Chapter 360 - The Price Of Choosing The Wrong Target

There was a hole the size of a fist where Blood Child's heart should be, and flames capable of challenging the heat of a High World's sun had invaded his body.

Nonetheless, Blood Child was still able to perform a kick powerful enough to send the Neo-Demon flying away.

Of course, Blood Child's condition was not good. The damage was enough to reduce his power a level, or else that kick would have cut Zatiel's body in two instead of just destroying his pelvis, liver, kidney, and most of his stomach.

Blood Child did not chase after the Neo-Demon or descended to kill the Rebirth Incarnations. He needed to expel the blue fire that was destroying his brain and the rest of his organs.

The white sword produced the blue fire filled with Baator's Law of Destruction after draining Zatiel's many energy sources and even a part of his life force. The power in it could incinerate an individual at the 4th Engraving Stage in a second.

It took Blood Child almost five minutes until he managed to purge the blue fire. Initially, he did not have eyes nor ears, but the fire had carved burning holes where these organs should have been.

The first thing Blood Child did after regaining control over his body was flashing to the runic formation in the ground.

He exuded an immense killing intent, and if it weren't because it may harm the formation, he would have sent a spell to annihilate the incarnations.

Both Rebirth Incarnations were moving their hands at an incredible speed as they modified the runic formation. Seeing Blood Child approach them, one of them flew to intercept him.

Blood Child showed nothing but disdain for the Rebirth Incarnation's actions. He was going to destroy him with a single punch and continue his path without losing momentum.

Unfortunately for Blood Child, when they were right next to each other, the Rebirth Incarnation self-destructed.

The explosion could not truly harm Blood Child but was able to push him back a few meters.

The incarnation that was still alive made his wings cover the runic formation as he continued to modify it.

Blood Child's face began to show anxiety when he felt the changes in the runic formation, and he continued pushing forward.

The Rebirth Incarnation raised one of his hands and fired a chaotic energy beam so powerful that the recoil made his arm explode and almost emptied his energy pool.

At the beginning of the battle, Blood Child could have pierced the attack. However, now he was forced to respond to it, which delayed him even more.

Blood Child nullified the beam with a simple palm strike and flashed forward once again, but he was too late.

The Rebirth Incarnation added the last rune and changed the core of the runic formation beneath him. The moment that happened, Blood Child lost consciousness, and his aura disappeared.

Even though he could not perform an attack, Blood Child's body was harder than a star and was descending very fast.

The Rebirth Incarnation jumped and collided with Blood Child's body.

The incarnation exploded but managed to change Blood Child's path and stopped him from crashing in the runic formation.

Finally, after putting two Rank 5 life forms at death's door with nothing but a few punches and a kick and forcing two Rebirth Incarnation to destroy themselves, Blood Child was defeated.

Silence reigned in the tower for the next few minutes until finally movements were heard from the hole that Dior had made after Blood Child's attack.

Dior slowly approached the exit. His Law Avatar was deactivated since he needed to channel his energy into stabilizing his condition. Blood Child's double punch pulverized his lungs, shattered his heart, and burned most of his blood.

He detected Blood Child's defeat and the destruction of the incarnations thanks to his nose.

After a moment, he focused on Zatiel, who was lying unconscious buried in a wall, and hunger appeared in his eyes.

'If I devour him and the other Devil Count in his ring, I may be able to heal my injuries before it is too late.' Now that the greatest threat was gone, the Devil Count immediately thought of devouring Zatiel to heal himself.

That was the nature of devils. They may experience life and death battles with someone, but at the end of the day, they would still kill him without a second thought if it benefits them.

The Devil Count knew it was a matter of time before Zatiel woke up, so he channeled what little energy he had left and rushed to him.

He grabbed the Neo-Demon's unconscious body and put the upper side of this one in his mouth. The next moment, he began to chew.

An ecstatic smile appeared on Dior's face as he felt flesh and blood running down his throat. However, it lasted little since three seconds later, his entire body froze.

A blue fire had invaded Dior's soul dimension, and due to the weakened state of his True Soul and consciousness, he was not able to resist its power.

As he faded into the darkness, Dior saw the world around him change. The broken body in his hand vanished, as did the blood and flesh in his mouth.

What he saw next was a white sword piercing his eye and burying itself in his head.

Zatiel was grabbing the weapon, and his eyes were empty as he saw the Devil Lord dying.

Dior had been under the influence of Beyond Reality from the moment Zatiel detected him spying his battle against the Helltoxin Minotaur.

The Neo-Demon tricked the Devil Lord's sense of smell to make him think he went down the tunnel first when he had remained behind.

Zatiel remained at a safe distance and used his Mind Force to explore the underground.

He was surprised by the appearance of Blood Child and was only after many calculations and developing a plan with a high chance of success that he entered the tower.

The Neo-Demon made the tunnel to the outside world disappear from Dior's sight to make him think the only chance he had to survive was fighting, and a few moments ago, he tricked the Devil Lord again and killed him.

Although capturing him alive would have been the best scenario, Zatiel's condition was truly horrible. Other than his brain, Blood Child's attack had severely damaged all of his vital organs and harmed his consciousness.

The Neo-Demon could not even maintain his body in the air and began to fall along with Dior.

The duo crashed into the ground the next moment. Zatiel did not let go of his sword buried in Dior's head and began to use the weapon's ability to absorb blood and vitality.

As he drained what little life remained in the Fiend Dragonborn's body, Zatiel used his Mind Force to activate the runic formation close to him, blocking the entrance to the tower.

Only after making sure this place was relatively safe did Zatiel analyze his condition.

'I cannot move and am having a hard time keeping myself awake. If it weren't for the vitality and blood of this Devil Lord, I would suffocate since my lungs are not functioning, and I don't have enough energy to replace the oxygen that my body needs. My liver and stomach will heal faster since they have an Apocalyptic Star helping them, and the damage in my hearts is not overwhelming. Blood Child's physical attacks carried the Law of Blood and Law of Metal and affected my consciousness. Even with my bloodline, it will take me several months to fully heal. It has been a very long time since I came so close to dying.'

Zatiel had the World Mirage Rune in him that could teleport him away, but he did not know how the alterations in this dimension would affect it.

One of the reasons he chose to face Blood Child despite the immense difference in power between the two was the words he told Dior.

The Neo-Demon understood that all the people that entered this place were sacrifices meant to help Blood Duke's resurrection, and both his Duke and the Pit Fiend were working with him.

That meant that even if Zatiel managed to survive this place, he would have to handle the Rank 6 Devil Lords on the outside.

The easiest path to survival was to find a way out of this dimension, and then before the Devil Dukes could get hold of him, escape Baator. That would mean he would have to forgo Kenner's identity and lost almost a year of work.

However, Zatiel being Zatiel, he had already begun to formulate another plan that would not only grant him significant gains but also show a painful lesson to those Devil Dukes that dared to think of him as a pawn.

'This plan could result in the continent outside of this dimension destroyed and most of the millions of devils living in it dying.' As he thought of the consequences, a smile appeared on Zatiel's face.

'Fuck them.' If it weren't for how severe his condition was, the Neo-Demon would have started to laugh.