

GREED 271

Chapter 271 Driven Into A Corner.

They timed their arrows for moments when he is about to deal a decisive blow to the demon of wrath. A demon that gets stronger over time should be put down quickly or things will become problematic. He couldn't allow that to happen, so he retaliated fiercely.

Chaotic energy burst out from his frame to form a cloud of darkness around him. Just like he expected the surrounding demons avoided it easily. The only one covered by the domain of chaos is the demon of wrath. Bolts of chaos flew out from the cloud to target the other demons. He also shot out multiple spells that he had been storing but they weren't effective. They were always alert.

He soon ran out of useful spells and he couldn't use more. For some reason, they were not attacking him with spells. They were content with their bows and arrows. The arrows were able to penetrate the cloud of darkness to disturb him no matter how much he changed his position through the cloud.

They shouldn't be able to see him within the cloud of darkness but their arrows always found him. He had to dodge them while he fought the demon of wrath. He knew why they could track him. The demon of wrath he is fighting within the cloud of darkness can track whoever is causing damage to him.

The cloud of darkness may be damaging it from all directions but it came from Aeternus so is always able to find Aeternus even though it couldn't sense the environment. The others can track him because a demon of spite had marked the demon of wrath and is using it to track Aeternus.

If it wasn't obvious that they planned very well for this ambush, it became so as the demon of wrath was getting stronger as they fought. It was being damaged from everywhere so it became angrier, then it grew bigger and the red glow of its boost shone brighter. It became able to resist the chaos energy better.

The demon was sacrificing health, stamina, mana, and sin energy all for resistance. The resistance helped him to keep fighting even when blades of chaotic flames struck him and he was set aflame with the black flames.

As time passed the only thing that could hurt the demon was the claymore but even that was failing. The claymore couldn't cut the armor that the demon of wrath was wearing. So he could only inflict minimal wounds on the demon. The armor was shoddy, just plates of rough metal attached somehow to the

demon's body. The metal had been treated with something that weakened Aeternus's blows. It's what is keeping the demon alive, for now.

The demon of wrath was roaring loudly as it swung its axe with wild abandon. There was no use of skills or weapon mastery only mindless attacks but it was enough to frustrate Aeternus.

'This isn't working.' He muttered as he clashed with the axe and was almost thrown aside.

If he hadn't angled that strike and redirected its momentum, then he would have been overwhelmed by the strength of the demon. Aeternus seemed to be losing. The demon's body was covered in chaos flames but it seemed immune to pain. The more hurt it was, the stronger the boost to its resistance. It seemed immune and impenetrable to all damage but it wasn't so.

The resistance boost it is using would kill it if the fight continued. Chaos energy is a relentless pest. If Aeternus had time, then this demon would surely die but he doesn't have time. He is slowing down as the demon of wrath is being ground down.

The reduction in his speed and reaction is making it difficult to fight the demon of wrath while dodging the arrows or striking them down with chaos bolts. So he isn't losing, but he won't win if he allows the fight to continue at this pace.

He had to stop the slowing effect or he would be too sluggish to react to attacks but he didn't want to use his last trump card. He made a mistake while he was thinking about using his most powerful attack. One of the arrows struck him and he felt pain for the first time since he began moving again.

It was a small thing as if he was pricked by a needle in his soul. He wouldn't be brought down by something this low even if they combined their efforts. But the occurrence made him realize that he had to do something immediately or something more serious would happen.

He glowed a dark light again as he got ready to fire his last trump card. His enemies did something odd. They rushed towards him as if to stop him and entered the cloud of darkness. Then they began to glow. All of them were glowing except the sleeping demon of sloth and its carrier.

He didn't know what they were planning and he wasn't going to allow them to continue but first, he targeted the demon of cowardice that was running away from him with the demon of sloth in its arms. He fired the beam and it struck them immediately. They disintegrated and the slowing effect was removed.

With that done he decided to turn the attack on the others. He was about to but it was too late. They had finished preparing whatever they were planning and they executed it. It was simple and efficient. They all exploded.

The effect of the simultaneous explosion of 12 high-rank demons is highly devastating. The explosion of one high-rank demon had been enough to scatter his dark pillar of chaos. Being at the center of 12 of them with boosts of accumulated power was not a good experience. He sustained both physical and spiritual damage.

One of the demons that exploded is the one performing the spiritual attacks and the explosion caused by the demon impacted his soul heavily. This time, things didn't go easy for him.

Chapter 272 Plans And Schemes.

It would have been nothing if he was in pristine condition but there is a small crack in his soul that created a vulnerability within him. So the damage is more than nothing, but it still isn't a lot. He is made of much tougher stuff. He can deal with it.

The physical damage on the other hand is more than a little. His body is broken apart, crushed under the force of the explosion. He is missing more than 80% of his body part. The remaining parts of his body are just his spine, some ribs, and his skull. Even his skull is caved in. As serious as it may look, he is actually alright. He is alive and he is healing. He will recover if given time.

He was thinking about how the demons had exploded. It smells of treachery. Demons can't cause their bodies to explode unless they have physical organs that will allow for it. So unless all 12 demons with different sins, races, and features have organs that can allow them to explode or something is acting on them to cause the explosion.

He was lying helpless on the ground when a figure made of sin energy began to form beside him and this time, he can't move away. He has to watch the entire process of the demon lord creating her sin avatar.

"Come to gloat?" Aeternus asked her.

He doesn't feel any pain in his body, only a slight twinge in his soul. His body is healing rapidly due to his infinite chaos energy and she can't do anything to him with her sin avatar so he is in a good mood.

"No." She answered smugly. "I've come to offer my assistance."

Her sin avatar might just be a harmless manifestation of her will, but Aeternus found its presence unbearable right now.

Aeternus would have snorted if he could. He can't, so he made sure to transmit his feelings of derision over the mental communication.

"As you can see, I don't need your help."

"Are you sure about that?" She asked.

"Yes."

"We'll see about that." She seemed content to wait.

"Go away. I defeated the ones you sent to kill me. They failed."

"Oh, not at all. I don't think they failed. I think they did their job perfectly."

It was Aeternus's turn to be confused. "What do you mean?"

Even as he asked that question, he was beginning to have a feeling of dread. More danger was coming.

The figure smirked at him. "Can you feel it now?"

Yes, he could. Even more than that, he could see it. A group of 300 high-rank demons is flying toward him.

He sighed and said, "So you didn't lie to me."

"Nope. I only exaggerated a little."

These are not the dregs of the demon Hierarchy but the top dogs. The ones in charge of fortresses. They consider Aeternus a threat and his streak of visiting fortress after fortress only to loot and burn it down got on their bottom line. It is obvious that he wasn't doing it for access to an abyss altar but only for the fight. It meant he could come for them one day and their division would act against them.

They were afraid of him, but they weren't rash. Aeternus is already this powerful as a mid-rank demon, if he evolves then he will become a tyrant over them. That means they can't let him evolve and they can't fail their attempt at killing him. If they leave him and do nothing, there is still a chance that he wouldn't come after them. But if they attack him and fail, then they are doomed for sure.

So in a rare situation of compromise and a unified agreement, they formed a truce and created a task force to kill him. The task force was created with every demon in charge of a fortress. It was easy to do than expected because no one really trusted the truce and the contract they signed to that effect. They would prefer if all of them left their fortress at the same time and hunt Aeternus.

Their large number would make killing Aeternus all but certain and if they fail, then they will bear the consequences together. Never has a situation like that happened. The closest to it was when high-rank demons agreed to stay out of the last fight for power in the plane. This time, they formed a task force to kill a single demon who is oppressing them.

But Aeternus suddenly started escaping. He had somehow gotten word of their attack and started rushing toward the domain of mid-rank demons. They were confused for a while until they remembered that he is still a mid-rank demon and it may be possible for him not to have sin energy sickness in an area of lower sin energy concentration. Now that things have gotten to that stage they can't let him escape. They rushed after him and have been chasing him for 5 days now.

"We are almost there now. If we don't catch up to him then we are in big trouble." One of them said.

Another one shouted at him. "We know that. Stop reminding us of our grim future."The debut release happened at N0v3lBiin.

Then one of them spotted a skull with smoke pouring out of it into the surroundings. They don't see the sin avatar standing beside the skull. Their perception isn't enough but what they saw is good enough for them.

"Is that the Ominous Reaper?" She asked the others.

They strained their senses and inspected the skull.

Someone said with glee, "It really is him and he is wounded."

Not all of them were fast enough to keep up with the group, so more than half of them were left behind. They had been worried that their number won't be enough to kill the notorious Ominous Reaper. It is an absurd thought that 300 top-notch high-rank demons won't be able to kill one mid-rank demon but it was a real fear for them. But it looks like they needn't have worried.

Chapter 273 I Am Not Alone.

Now that they found their target in such a compromised position, their fear melted away. It was first replaced with delight.

"We are in luck. This will be easy."

"Killing him will be easy as squashing a bug."

They surrounded him and chatted amongst themselves with glee. Their glee turned to confusion.

"What could have turned him into this anyway?"

"Yes, I wonder that too."

"Is there something so dangerous around here?"

"He obviously fought something or someone here. Look at the ground. It was a huge fight too. The ground suffered heavily."

The surface of the ground had undergone an upheaval. There were rocks, debris, and small pools of lava everywhere. The deep pits indicating explosive impacts were especially telling of the violence that had happened here. There is a saying that when two elephants fight, it is the grass beneath their feet that suffers. The state of the environment indicates how big the two elephants that fought are.

They had prepared such a large amount of demon power to take down a single demon. What could have beaten them to it and put him in such a state? The traces of battle depicted a fierce battle too. Whoever Aeternus faced must have been very strong.

As interesting as the matter was, it couldn't hold their attention for long. Their confusion soon turned into greed.

"No matter what happened, he is right here in the palm of our hands. We can do anything to him."

"That's true. Let's see if he still has the spatial artifact."

"He doesn't have it. I searched him all over with my divine sense and couldn't find anything. Not even his blade."

"So the ones that put him in this situation took it."

"It's most likely the forces of the demon nobles."

"So what should we do now?"

"We torture him and find out all of his secrets before we kill him."

"Yes, he must know some secrets. How else did he become strong enough to kill high-rank demons as a mid-rank demon?"

The figure beside Aeternus said to him, "Do you hear that? They intend to torture you. I'm also highly interested in your secrets so I'll like to watch this."

They couldn't hear or see her, but she could hear them. The demon lord of the plane can hear all conversations going on in the plane with her divine sense except those of the demon nobles in the nine cities. The recent anomaly to that perk of being the demon lord is the inability to snoop on Aeternus's divine sense. So she is very much interested in his secrets.

Aeternus ignored her taunts. His mind was on how he got here and how to get out of it. It may have seemed like one thing led to another but the demon lord had orchestrated this entire thing. She may not want him to die, but she was willing to put him within an inch of death so that he would ask her for help. The suicide explosion of his attackers finally made sense and why they waited for him to deplete the charges of his trump card.

If he were whole and hearty, he might be able to struggle against these many high-rank demons and have a chance at escaping. But as he is right now, he is no better than meat on a chopping board.

"Why so silent? You have to speak up if you want to preserve your life." She teased him again.

"I don't have anything to say to you." He said to her.

She looked up at their surroundings and the sight of 300 high-rank demons sharpening their blades to chop the helpless meat that is Aeternus filled her gaze. And yet, Aeternus claims he doesn't have anything to say to her. "Are you sure? I'm not a seer but I can predict that you will ask me for help soon."

He remained adamant. "Well, you're wrong about that. I don't need your help and will never need your help."

She sneered. "I thought you were intelligent and reasonable. How do you propose to get out of this conundrum? You're all alone."

She is anxious and worried behind her facade of mockery. She isn't worried that he had an ace up his sleeve. She had been watching him for quite a while now and had created a module of his strength and weaknesses, his capabilities and limits. She is worried that he would rather die than accept defeat. Then her effort will be in vain and might backfire against her. She just wanted him to be desperate enough for her to take advantage of him. She didn't want him to be killed.

Aeternus chuckled. "I'm not alone. I was not alone. I am never alone."

He is legion-3, a part of the collective consciousness and the ideal that is Legion. He is never alone. The concept of Legion is to be one but made of many. This is more than an idea that provides just emotional support. Legion is still in its formative stage but it is able to assist Aeternus with real power.

Aeternus reached into the soul sphere and tapped into the basic power of an Origin god from Legion-1. The soul of Legion-1 within the world beast responded and channeled the power of his domain into the soul sphere. When the power reached Aeternus's soul, it morphed because of the mark of sin and the chaos energy.

A black ring spread out from the skull on the ground at the speed of light. It enveloped an area with a radius of 500 meters in every direction. A black sphere sprung into existence all of a sudden and it trapped all the high-rank demons and a large chunk of the divine sense of the demon lord.

If a soul is powerful enough, it can create a nascent world, as seen in Soverick's case. This nascent world and its effect continue to improve as the soul becomes stronger. At first, it gives one slight control over the mana in an area, then it becomes a full-blown world as seen in a world god.

Chapter 274 The Assistance Of Legion-1.

A domain is not much different from a nascent world. They both have the same abilities which depend on the power of the soul, except that a world is an evolution of a domain that creates an isolated and enveloped space where the rules can be changed. The rules can only be changed, with emphasis on "can", it doesn't mean they will be changed. Soverick's nascent world grants him that possibility of change while Legion-1's domain grants him the certainty of it. The soul of a full-blown Origin god is no joke.

The high-rank demons are not panicking because they are all enveloped in darkness. They can't see anything, feel anything, or move anything. So how could they panic? They are trapped in an evolved and more powerful form of his cloud of darkness.

It is only the divine sense of the demon lord that can do something and the only thing it can do is think. All that power that she is so proud of and the only thing she can do is remain capable of thought.

"This is the authority of a demon king. Is this demon a clone of a demon king? I shouldn't have messed with him." She felt regret.

Even a small consciousness independent of the body felt immense regret for her actions. Then she felt nothing as Aeternus instructed the sphere to collapse. The chaotic energy of his soul broke all of them down and his mark of sin absorbed them. There was no resistance whatsoever from his captives. They don't even know that they are dying.

The sphere began to recede into his soul bringing with it all the demons it has enveloped and the divine sense of the demon lord. The influx of energy made his mark of sin ready to evolve. Consuming 300 top-notch high-rank demons can do that, but he isn't feeling happy. He is in so much pain that all his bodily functions are shutting down.

His soul isn't powerful enough to bear the burden of such power but it could have managed and would pay the price with some weakening which will heal. Any damage to his body wouldn't matter either since his body is far from natural. But the small vulnerability in his soul caused by the previous attacks made the consequences too heavy.

He had used the domain for only a split second, it was still too much for his soul to handle. The little hole in his soul escalated into a mind-searing pain as his soul cracked and chaos energy rampaged. And it was worsening as time passed.

His soul has crystalized when he made it somewhat immune to chaos by converting it into a concept capable of converting chaos energy into soul force. That crystalization has somehow turned into a weakness that is now preventing him from healing. There is only one thing that he can think of that will heal him.

In any other situation, he would prefer to return to the edge of the plane where no one can disturb him or spy on him to evolve. But he is in a situation where he urgently needs to heal his soul but his injury is only worsening. He doesn't have much of a choice. So he gave the go-ahead to his mark of sin.

-WARNING-

(CHAOS ENERGY HAS REACHED THE LIMIT OF NATURAL EVOLUTION.)

(WOULD YOU LIKE TO FACE THE TRIAL OF ABYSS NOW?)

(REFUSAL TO UNDERGO THE TRIAL WILL PREVENT CHAOS ENERGY FROM REACHING THE DIVINE STAGE AND IT WOULD AFFECT YOUR POTENTIAL FOR EVOLUTION)

The first thing he saw is a warning about his chaotic energy. Chaos energy usually upgrades with his evolution without his permission. He started with chaos energy at the extreme rank, then it evolved into the half-divine rank. Apparently, he has reached the limit of what it can evolve into without passing a trial.

The prospect of chaos energy upgrading to the divine ranks is good but he doubts his soul can handle the trial. The fact that he has to go through the trial that demon lords go through to become demon kings is not a good thing for his currently injured and worsening soul. So he can only decline and swear to pay the demon lord back for his loss.

He declined and the evolution interface showed up.

-EVOLUTION INTERFACE-

#(RESOURCES)

1. Soul Essence: 0

2. Divinity: 0

3: Biomass: 0

4: Origin Energy: INFINITE

5: Chaos Energy: INFINITE

#(UPGRADES)

1. DEMON RANK: Mid - High.

2. SIN RANK: Mid - High.

3. CHAOS POWER: Mid - High.

4. MAGICAL RESISTANCE: Mid - High.

5. CONSTITUTION: Mid - High.

6. PHYSICAL RESISTANCE: Mid - High.

COST: 10,000 Units.

#(UPGRADABLE)

1. STRENGTH (High): 1,000 Units.

2. AGILITY (High): 1,000 Units.

3. ACTIVITY (High): 1,000 Units

#(STATS)

+1 STRENGTH = 1000 Units.

+1 CONSTITUTION = 100,000,000 Units.

+1 ACTIVITY = 100,000,000 Units.

+1 AGILITY = 1000 Units.

+1 PHYSICAL RESISTANCE = 100,000,000 Units.

+1 MAGICAL RESISTANCE = 100,000,000 Units.

+1 SPIRIT = 10,000,000,000 Units.

#(SIN ABILITY)

CHOOSE THREE OUT OF SIX.

1. The Essence of Envy: Take the Sin Abilities of Slain Enemies. (DEMON KING GRADE. Unavailable until the trial of the abyss is passed.)

2. The Spite of Envy: Reflect Magical, Spiritual, and Physical damage. (UNIQUE)

3. The Accumulation of Chaos: Accumulate power passively the more chaos you cause. (UNIQUE.)

4. The Oath of A Lord of Chaos (Upgrade Of Oath Of Allegiance): Provide access to the energy well to your bonded subordinates which will boost their power and their potential during evolution. (UNIQUE. DEMON LORD GRADE. Requires bond to the energy well of the plane)

5. The Authority Of Chaos: Become a representative of the abyss and be rewarded with an authority that enhances your power. (DEMON KING GRADE. Unavailable until the trial of the abyss is passed.)

6. Return To Chaos: An opportunity to bypass the restriction of the abyss trial limiting your potential by becoming a Chaosling. Your potential will be unlocked if you survive the return to chaos. If not, then you will have returned to chaos. (UNIQUE TRIAL. Highly dangerous with unpredictable outcomes.)

Chapter 275 Evolution.

He chuckled silently as he read through the options for his sin ability. He has been looking forward to them. The options for the UPGRADABLE section are normal for him and expected but the SIN ABILITY section isn't normal even by his abnormal standards but it is to be expected.

Aeternus knew about the privilege that genius mid-rank demons who were able to meet the requirements for upgrading the quality of their sin energy into the pinnacle rank without actually being a high-rank demon. This requirement is fusing sin energy and mana. He has long met this requirement as a low-rank demon.

In fact, he has gone beyond it since he started using chaotic power. The fusion of sin energy and mana creates a unified energy. Chaotic power is a unified energy of better quality. It was in the extreme rank, a step above the pinnacle rank when he was a low-rank demon. It moved to the half-divine rank after its second evolution. It would have upgraded to the divine rank if he can pass the trial of the abyss.

An extreme rank sin energy requires the help of the power of the plane. The energy well of the plane will enhance the energy of whoever has bonded with it, to the extreme rank. There can only be one demon that has bound the energy well to itself, hence, there can only be one demon lord.

He has even gone beyond that level of assistance and because of his unique circumstances, he has more potential when evolving to the high-rank stage. He has the choice to pick 3 out of 6 abilities beyond his stage or he can choose 6 normal abilities fitting for his rank.

He didn't even consider the option for normal abilities after a quick glance. Most often than not, quality always trumps quantity and it is true in this situation. There are even unique sin abilities, they are rare ability that is out of the norm. No amount of normal abilities can make up for missing a single one much less three of them.

The available options for rewarding his potential are at least Legendary in their base form when compared with the normal ones for his rank.

They would each have their limits and certain conditions for activation but they are too extraordinary.

He would like to take them all but his options have been limited to 3 out of 6. The decision isn't too difficult for him since some of them are restricted and one is too unpredictable. The essence of envy and the authority of chaos are both abilities that demon kings have after passing the trial of the abyss and evolving from a demon Lord into a powerhouse of the abyss.

From the knowledge he acquired from demon lord Dakon, the trial of the abyss is no joke. There is no knowledge of the trial because no demon king has ever spoken of it. All that is known is that the few that pass it become demon kings and the others are never heard from again. That's why Dakon the demon lord that tried to possess Gehaldirah joined the demon invasion of the Life plane to acquire life essence which will improve his chances during the trial.

Life essence has been known to help.

If Aeternus had a stronger soul which is in good condition and some preparation, he would take the trial but he couldn't right now. Which means he will have to be content with the choices he has now.

The spite of envy is an upgrade over normal sin abilities for high-rank demons. It is practically composed of three normal activities put together. Niva the beholder had the mirror that could reflect physical attacks but the spite of envy can do better.

The accumulation of chaos is an ability that demon nobles should get while the oath of the Lord is meant for a demon Lord that's why it needs access to the Energy well of the plane but he is sure he can make it work. His own is unique and tailored for him.

He selected them and another screen with their grades showed up. Their level ranged from Common to Divine rank. Their cost also increased exponentially by a factor of 10. Still, the cost of 100, 000, 000 units for their divine quality didn't bother him at all.

With his selection made, he began to evolve.

Meanwhile, At the Centre of the Abyss Plane. The moment Aeternus invoked the power of an Origin god's domain.

The center of the plane is where the energy well is. The energy well is a pillar of concentrated sin energy that reached the sky. Sin energy pours out of the pillar into the plane and spreads to every corner of the plane but its concentration drops as it spreads.

This pillar is also called the waypoint as it is present throughout all the planes of the abyss and can be used to access the other planes. Going through the pillar can lead you to another plane at random or not if you have a specific destination. But only high-rank demons and above can use it. They have the necessary resistance to the allure of all that sin energy and not become lost in it.

While the concentration of sin energy varies across the plane, Mana on the other hand is equal in concentration throughout the plane except in a few odd places. But as a demon grows stronger, their reliance on sin energy outweighs their need for mana. So they discard mana by fusing it with sin energy and creating a unified energy.

This unified energy is the pinnacle rank energy required to become a demon noble and acquire Accumulation. It can be replenished by both sin energy and mana but is stronger than both of them.

A demon Lord is crowned when he or she binds the pillar to themselves. They get to upgrade their unified energy in power and also have an infinite supply of it from the energy well. It is how a demon noble evolves to become a demon Lord.

Chapter 276 Beelta The Demon Lord.

The power of a demon Lord is not a small thing. A single demon nobles gets to bind the energy well to themselves and become the demon lord. So she is clearly special, but it is not enough for Beelta the demoness of gluttony.

If one can see into the center of the pillar that represents the energy well, one will see a round grotesque ball of flesh about 110m in diameter. As large as the ball is, it is very small when compared to the 1km diameter of the pillar it is in and when compared with the real diameter of the pillar, then the ball might as well be nothing.

The pillar possesses a lot more space within it than it shows from the outside of it. This ball is the demon lord of the plane and has the special perk of being able to live in the pillar. She had thought she was very big before she began living in it, but she has come to realize that she might as well be a speck of dust in the abyss.

That's the thing about getting wiser and growing stronger, you begin to realize how insignificant you are in the broad scheme of things. But what could be more important than a demon Lord? She knows what the answer to that question is. What she doesn't know is if demon kings are significant in the grand scheme of things. After all, you would expect demon lords, rare as they are, to be significant or special.

There can only be one demon lord in each plane of the abyss. There are less than a thousand of them in all of the high heaven realm. A demon Lord is as powerful as a grand god and a titan of law. If you crunch the numbers, that means that a single main plane in the realm has more titans of law than demon lords and there are more than 100,000 such planes in the realm of high heaven.

A single pantheon may have a lesser number of grand gods than demon lords but all the pantheons in the high heaven realm have more than ten thousand grand gods. All in all, demon lords are rare, but they aren't special.

Beelta would like to know why that is and if a demon king is significant, but she can't. She got this big by eating and accumulating power but she can't grow more than this. She has reached her limit. The worst part is that all this power will mean nothing in the face of the authority of a demon king. So she craved that power so much, but she can't have it.

Ever heard about the seven deadly sins? Demons of pride don't have weaknesses, demons of lust have very powerful magical abilities, and demons of wrath have strength and resistance above what other demons are capable of.

These are the seven most powerful sins but they weren't so powerful like so in the past. The change is because they have been embodied into a law of the world. In demon terms, the seat of the demon god of those seven sins has been occupied. The existence of a demon god representing the sins has elevated their power.

There aren't only seven demon gods in the abyss but they are the most popular ones. There is a demon god of gluttony and it makes the sin of gluttony very powerful. What this means for Beelta is that she cannot become a demon king of gluttony.

There can be many demon kings for a sin, but once a demon god is created, all the other kings will be demoted to demon lords and have their authority forcefully stripped. The existence of a demon god means demons with that particular sin are more powerful and they survive more, but they can't go past the stage of a demon lord.

This is why Beelta is stuck. The only way to become a demon king is to be bestowed the authority of one by a demon god. But why would an all-powerful being share his power with a lesser being? We are also talking about selfish demons here. Selfishness is a virtue for demons.

Take her situation for example. She has long broken through to the next rank as a demon lord. Her energy has reached the half-divine rank, so she doesn't need the enhancement of the energy well but she refused to leave for someone else to have their turn. Her selfishness is preventing more demon lords from being created just like the selfishness of demon gods is stopping demon kings from being created.

So that path is hopeless for her. It has happened before to some other demon lords but they were the vassals of the demon god before he ascended. Beelta isn't so lucky. She had grown stronger ever since she became a demon lord. Her unified energy has even upgraded to the half-divine rank a step above extreme but she can't take the trial of the abyss for the authority of gluttony anymore.

Imagine her shock when she sensed Aeternus the weird demon with access to chaos. Other demons got a longing for him as soon as they saw him. They knew instinctively that he was special but they didn't know why. Beelta knew why immediately.

The chaos that Aeternus has access to can warp her sin and make it Chaotic Gluttony instead. With that, she will be able to take the trial of the abyss for the authority of chaos or something. Aeternus represents her chance to break her limits and maybe find out if demon kings are significant in the world when she becomes one.

Even if she didn't have that knowledge, she would have tried everything to eat Aeternus. You can't dangle something good and create a feeling of longing for it within a demon of gluttony, one that ate her way to power and expect her to hold herself back from trying to take a bite.

Chapter 277 How To Plan An Ambush.

Self-restraint is not one of Beelta's many strengths, but the knowledge that the weird demon might be her only chance for breakthrough made her restrain herself. There is simply too much at stake. She had to take things carefully because she doesn't want to lose her chance.

So eating the weird demon became the very last option. She would try everything she can do to get that access to chaos and if it doesn't work, she will then eat Aeternus.

She decided to question him first and figure out where, how, and why he got the power. But she knew that wasn't going to happen easily. She couldn't walk up to him and ask him about his power and receive answers.

No demon will do that in their right mind. This weird demon is surely not going to spill the beans by being asked politely. The fact that you're asking a question means you need the answer, which means the answer is important to you. Demons will capitalize on that and try to get benefits from you.

Strength can compel a weaker being to talk and torture can force a being in pain to confess but the only way to be sure that a demon is telling the truth is if they are forced to through the power of a contract. If she forms a contract with him then he will be compelled to help her to the best of his abilities. Then she will have the full information to make an informed decision.

To get him to sign a contract, she has to offer him something in exchange. She couldn't use her forces to fight and force him because that might lead to his death. His death might cause the access to chaos to shift to the killer or make it disappear altogether. If he is going to be killed by someone, it had to be her.

So she began watching him. The more she watched, the more she was startled, and maybe impressed. His soul is weak and strong at the same time, probably due to the influence of chaos. His perception is also acute. He had been able to notice her gaze immediately. His intuition is spot on as he can somehow tell which demon is highly dangerous.

The chaos warped his body and also gave him some perks, like making his body unnatural, unfeeling, and untiring. His defenses were boosted by chaos and so is his attack. She couldn't inspect him closely because of the cloak of Chaos energy around him. Chaos energy made his attacks corrosive and it also burned her divine sense.

Those are his strengths. The weird demon may be powerful, but he is not perfect. He has some weaknesses and Beelta found a lot of them. His soul was weak, fragile, and strained. She doesn't know how or why his soul is like that, but she could sense the abnormalities in his soul. His body might be odd but it is weak too, probably the weakest aspect of him. The weird demon always loses clashes that involve physical strength.

The magical prowess of the demon is high but he seems oddly restrained by the chaos energy. Either his soul is too weak to manipulate it or the chaos energy resists his control. She noticed a lag in his spell casting. His sin ability can rectify that weakness but it can only copy the magical attacks of others and has a maximum of three charges. He also cannot fly.

The information about the number of copies he can make came from watching his fights. That information also made her realize that his sin ability might be divine ranked and he might be able to acquire accumulation when next he evolves considering the quality of the chaos energy he is using. But she couldn't let that happen. Accumulation allows a demon to sit back and do nothing while getting stronger. She couldn't let this weird demon have that.

The weird demon is already strong among high-rank demons, almost unbeatable. Accumulation will remove all high-rank demons as a threat to him and she doesn't want him to get into the domain of nobles or they might also sense his unique situation. She has to get him before that happened. So she began using the information she acquired about him.

His movements were erratic, but she wanted to plan an ambush. Then she remembered the time he ran towards the edge of the plane to avoid an ambush. That gave her an idea about how he would behave if overwhelming danger is coming for him. But she couldn't lie about the danger because of his intuition. It had to be real, or he won't be fooled.

She sent out numerous teams to different spots of the border based on his current and estimated locations where they began executing the ambush. The objective of the ambush is to wreak havoc on his body and soul but only to a state where he is close to death and helpless.

The ambush was prepared and she enveloped them in a cloak by using the power of the plane as a demon lord. Her camouflage is not something a demonic beast can see through so Xander didn't see anything when Aeternus sent her to scout.

The demon lord waited for him to get into one of her estimated positions. It was easy to calculate considering that he is looting the fortresses of the demons in the alliance he just fought.

Then she told him about the incoming danger. She didn't lie to him or he might notice something odd. He refused to sign the contract and mocked her before he started to escape. Maybe he wouldn't have mocked her if he knew she was responsible for both the ambush and the attack of the group of high-rank demons.

She may not be able to control the high-rank demons but she can incite them to band together to eliminate a threat to their way of life by using some of her hidden subordinates.

Chapter 278 What Went Wrong?

It was very easy to incite them when they are afraid of the weird demon and when the argument to attack is based on sound logic. If all of them cannot kill one mid-rank demon, then they do not have any future anymore in the domain of high-rank demons.

The weird demon's intuition became muddled up because of the two pronged attacks and the numerous other ones at the border that she wouldn't be using. In a sense, he was surrounded by danger. So he walked right into her ambush. He had no choice in the matter, it was the only possible outcome. One way or the other she would have gotten him.

Each ambush team had lifted boulders up into the sky and used a rare treasure to freeze them there. The rocks were to create a heavy attack that is purely physical and will force him to use one of his trump cards. It has been shown that if the attack is physical, he can't copy it or resist it if it is strong. His inability to fly means he won't be able to escape the attack.

No magical attacks were used during the entire ambush. Even the ranged attack was made with bows and arrows fashioned from the thorns of a porcupine demon of weakness. Something like that will enhance a weakness or create a new one, no matter how small.

She had noticed that he didn't allow the scorpion demon of weakness to sting him. That's why she aimed to create a weakness in his strained soul. She doesn't know what will happen if that occurs but it is certain to weaken him.

Everything worked perfectly. The weird demon is weak physically so he couldn't put down the demon of wrath who has been buffed up to resist damage. That allowed the others to snipe at him easily. Everything would have worked in her favor as long as he walked into the ambush and since he had to walk into her ambush, it became a must that everything will work in her favour. She had everything planned out.

The demons she sent committed suicide when he had used the last of his trump card. As if on cue, the group of high-rank demons also arrived. She had teams standing by. They were there to join in the ambush if something unexpected happens but now they can represent her will as the demon lord and rescue him. All he had to do is sign a contract of agreement and they would swoop in to save him. Then everything went wrong.

It happened so fast. One moment the demon lord was taunting that weird demon with access to chaos energy. Everything was in her grasp. She had pushed him to his doom and was about to reap her rewards but something appeared and ripped a piece of her consciousness away. Then it was gone.

"What went wrong?" She asked herself even as her mind felt like splitting in two.

The pain in her consciousness couldn't douse her curiosity about what went wrong, so the gigantic ball within the energy well of the plane used the pillar as an antenna of sorts to transmit her divine sense to a faraway location that her divine sense wouldn't be able to reach normally. Her divine sense appeared where the ambush had taken place and where 300 high-rank demons used to be.

What happened here?"

She asked one of her subordinates that had been watching the ambush.

Her gaze was fixed on the smooth crater about 500 meters in diameter cut into the ground and the weird demon at the bottom of it that was oozing out thick chaos energy. The 300 high-rank demons are nowhere to be found. She wants to know what happened here.

The porcupine demon of weakness that she asked stepped forward and answered.

"We don't know, your lordship. An anomaly that resisted all perception appeared. The only thing we could see of it was pure blackness. As if light could not even reflect from it. The anomaly seemed to have killed all the high-rank demons or it may have taken them somewhere unknown. It isn't definite yet, but it is most likely for the first option to be possible because reports of their deaths through their contracts are coming in."

The porcupine demon didn't participate in the ambush because the demon lord suspected that the weird demon will be extra careful of the arrows if he was around. So it is part of the team that was to step in if needed. They had seen what occurred clearly but they didn't know exactly what happened.

Beelta was shocked. All those high-rank demons died here? If they had been teleported out of here, she would have been notified of it as the demon lord of the plane. Unless someone much more powerful than her clouded her senses. If that is true then she is in big trouble.

But then again, why would such an entity interfere? Do they know the weird demon or were they helping him? If they aren't his allies, why didn't they take him and use him? If they are, why didn't they take him away? She had no answers to the questions plaguing her but she could tell that he is still there at the bottom of the crater.

Send someone to investigate the bottom of the crater and find out immediately if those demons died or not." She ordered.

The loss of so many high-rank demons didn't faze her. They aren't all her subordinates. Only two of them were her subordinates. Those two are the ones she used to nudge the high-rank demons into coming together to kill the weird demon.

The porcupine demon nodded and instructed one of his teammates to go and investigate. It is practically a death sentence. If that weird demon is the one responsible for the anomaly then whoever they send might die or be sent somewhere unreachable. But they can't say no to the demon lord. It is not because of the demon lord's power but because of a contract of eternal servitude that they were forced to sign.

Chapter 279 Investigation

Beelta ignored the delegation of duty that occurred. It is understandable that the porcupine demon would be reluctant to risk his life. A contract doesn't need a willing agreement for it to be effective. Only a written agreement is needed and that can be acquired by force or threat to life. So her contracted subordinates aren't highly motivated.

The weird demon is lucky she doesn't want an actual threat to his life. If someone refuses to sign a contract, she will kill that demon and use him or her as a lesson to encourage the others to sign. She had made an exemption for the weird demon because a chance of progress for her had to be taken delicately or she might lose it forever. Now, look where being soft has led her to.

They finally sent a little beholder to inspect the situation. The beholder is the size of a fist and the clone of one of her subordinates. The clone will serve as an extra eye to the beholder and he will inform them of the situation.

Beelta didn't mind. She had said to send someone, it is their job as her subordinates to interpret and execute her instructions perfectly. All is fine as long as they fulfill her orders.

The fist-sized beholder went down to the bottom of the crater in the form of half of a perfect sphere. The main body above was feeling dread the closer the eye went to the thick cloud of darkness. The cloud looked solid and flexible like foam.

"I can't see through the cloud, I'll send the sentry in." The beholder said then he made the eye sink into the cloud.

The eye exploded into dust as soon as it made contact with the cloud.

"I lost it. The black cloud is too strong for a high-rank demon to survive in it." The poor beholder said through the headache that was trying to split his head.

"Useless. I can see that much myself. If you're no use to me then there's no need to have you around." Beelta said and activated the control over his life and death that she was given through the contract she signed with him.

The beholder's big eye dimmed and he fell to the ground dead. She isn't angry at the beholder, his efforts were simply useless. She could have thrown a rock and observed its performance and it would behave the same as the sentry. Why would she need someone so useless then?

"What about news about the high-rank demons?" She asked.

The porcupine demon hurriedly answered. "It has been confirmed. They are all dead."

He lied. It hasn't been confirmed but he believed it to be true. The communication network of demons isn't that good because just like spatial artifacts, communication devices go awry whenever they interact

with demons. Only special methods empowered by the abyss like the abyss altar and two-way letter are dependable.

The two-way letter is what they are using to reach their informants and it works by displaying whatever is written on one piece of a letter on the other piece of bound letter no matter the distance. Messaging is instantaneous but there is no method of notification. The inability to know when there's a new message slows down the communication process.

All the porcupine demon has heard is that there were reports of deaths but it is largely unconfirmed for all the demons. The presence of clones and the general secrecy of demons made the information about the situation of the 300 high-rank demons slow to disperse. But he had better say their death is confirmed or he would die too.

"Is that so? There's nothing to do here. You can all return now." The demon lord ordered them while she remained to watch the situation.

There are a lot of questions and a lot of unknowns about Aeternus but none of them can dissuade her from her aim. In fact, everything that just happened only served to kindle her interest in the weird demon. About 300 high-rank demons died. It can be explained by the appearance of the spatial artifact.

It is common knowledge that demon lords have storage spaces as a perk of their position but it isn't exactly true. Demons can't use spatial artifacts that haven't been endorsed by the will of the abyss. That is true but this endorsement is simply the empowerment of unified energy by the Energy well of the plane. Any demon can create pocket spaces attached to their soul as long as they have a mark of sin of the demon noble rank and extreme rank energy.

It just so happens that the only way to have extreme rank energy is to become the demon lord. So as long as one is powerful enough, a demon can create a spatial artifact. That's why she suspected that the spatial artifact that the weird demon is using must belong to a demon king. It wouldn't be surprising that something belonging to a demon king would have special items inside them.

The really sharp sword that the weird demon is using must be one of such special items. That claymore was so strong that she had to create special armor with her flesh to protect the demon berserker that held him down during the ambush.

"I can hardly wait. I must have Everything. Then I will achieve greatness." She said greedily as she stared at that pit.

The armor wouldn't have worked if the weird demon is strong enough. The weapon is sharp but the weird demon isn't strong enough to use it. This means that the weapon is way out of the weird demon's league. How else would he have gotten a weapon that could cut her flesh? She is a demon Lord and he is a mid-rank demon.

So the weird demon must have used one of such items to create the anomaly. It likely is a rare and single-use item since he hasn't been using it like the sword and he only used it when he is desperate. If it is so, then she wants the spatial artifact and everything within it.

Chapter 280 Flight.

The demon is very lucky to get into contact with something like that. He had been previously unheard of, but he suddenly became known. She too will have her life changed once she gets her hand on it.

She believes that the weird demon must have come across the spatial artifact and also gotten access to the chaos energy through it.

The other option is that the weird demon is a weakened demon king and that the spatial artifact belongs to him in the first place. It will also explain why he is so strong for his rank. But that will only make her want him and the spatial artifact more. Eating him should grant her his authority.

She and her divine sense that was trapped within Aeternus's domain came to the same conclusion. They both believed he is related to a demon king in one way or the other. But while that divine sense felt regret for her actions, Beelta felt increased greed. It's a situation commonly seen amongst Origin gods. When you don't know how you died and what killed you, there's a good chance that you will repeat it.

She wants him so much but there's nothing she can do right now to get him. She could feel his rising energy state which means he is evolving. If he stays in the domain of high-rank demons then she will be helpless against him. He is going to be stronger and will be able to kill every high-rank demon she sends his way.

The only way to get him is if he leaves the plane through the abyss altars or reaches the domain of demon nobles. His mere appearance there will start a war for sure, but she will have more means at her disposal. The war will be tough but she is most likely to win it. So she will wait and watch him for now.

Back to Aeternus.

He woke up feeling refreshed. His evolution had made him fall into a deep sleep, unlike the last time. The cloud of Chaos energy around him shrunk and hung closer to his body. The chaos energy had thickened so that it seemed like he was wearing a huge and soft black-as-night robe. He stood up and felt his body and mind.

"No pain, that's good."

His body and soul had healed. He had even grown stronger. He could feel the world differently as if his senses have been enhanced which they have. He could finally sense the momentum of the plane but he couldn't use it because it was all under the control of another entity. He could also feel the presence of the energy well, so he would always be able to tell where the central point of the plane is.

There was an allure and presence of power coming from the energy well. It could be comparable to different qualities of wine. High-rank demons drink watered-down wine and they can see the original source of wine in its purest form a distance away. Unfortunately, the source is currently occupied by a very strong being. The entity in control of the energy well is also the one in control of the momentum of the plane.

"The demon lord huh."

His gaze was frosty as he looked at the center of the plane. He ignored the divine sense that is stalking him as his brightly lit eyes blazed like white-hot coal. The power of his soul had increased just like his body. Two huge horns are growing on his head and there's a dark red flame burning between them. It is a tiny flame but it is slowly increasing as it accumulated power.

Power from the chaos he has caused in the abyss by killing 300 high-rank demons was flowing into the flame. The absence of that many controllers of fortresses has created an upheaval far more than the small free-for-all he caused by taking on Danazel's alliance.

A war for power has started in the domain of high-rank demons. You can imagine the scene, of thousands of demons fighting and killing each other. The bond to abyss altars changing hands every now

and then. Ambushes, Alliances, and betrayers happening all the time. Fortresses set on fire and being looted. So much Chaos and it is all empowering him.

The startling thing is that there is a more powerful supply of Chaos coming from his existence and that of the other legions apart from Legion-1. Their existence had broken the rules of the universe and it counted more than breaking the social order of a domain within a plane amongst the numerous planes in one of the abysses of the universe. Every world tree has an abyss but only one legion had broken the rules of simultaneous reincarnation.

This fact made him realize how much he outclassed the demon lord. He never feared her in the first place but now, things have been put into perspective. Legion-1 is an origin god. Origin gods are crazy, immortal sharks but are insignificant in the ocean that is the universe.

World gods are the massive continent-sized whales lurking in the very depth of the universe and capable of destroying realm trees singlehandedly. What about beyond that? A demon Lord cannot even compare to an Origin god. So what does a demon Lord count for then?

He exerted the strength of his soul and began to rise up. His soul pushed against the world and made him levitate. He didn't need to expend chaos energy or weave a spell, he could fly because he willed it. He rose while admiring the crater he caused. He stopped while he was 100m above the ground surface. It was double the height of the position they hung the boulders they tried to crush him with.

"It is a beautiful sight." He said as he looked down.

He hadn't grown taller, again. In fact, he hadn't grown physically at all, it is still the same body size he had as a low-rank demon, but the growth of his soul gave him an advantage in height that his body could never give him. He felt the majesty of the world at this height.