

GREED 291

Chapter 291 Different Groups With Different Agendas.

"The show is about to start. Let's go quickly. We need to get good seats." They said to each other as they rushed towards the arena.

This group of demons is the one that came for the selection and those that came to watch the selection. The ones that came for the selection, want to join the house of Chaos and become demon nobles. They are excited about the opportunity to join a house with such potential.

While some demons are ecstatic about the chance to become demon nobles, a lot of high-rank demons only came to see the event and do not intend to participate in the selection but both types of demons are enthusiastic about the selection.

Demons like their freedom and don't like becoming another demon's Henchmen especially if they are geniuses and are capable of becoming demon nobles on their own. Some of the proud geniuses include Astaroth, Paimon, and Marbas. They only came to watch. That's why they are rushing to get good seats with those that came to participate in the selection.

Some other geniuses believe in the potential of the house of Chaos and have decided to join it even though they also have the potential to become demon nobles themselves. They aren't nameless demons either. One of them is the faceless terror, a demon of terror that is widely known among the circle of high-rank demons.

The third group of demons that came are the ones that Aeternus invited. He invited all the demons in charge of fortresses and other notable high-rank demons with strength. They might not want to be here but they have to come since he invited them.

No one wants to cross the ominous reaper since he only asked them to witness the process but that doesn't mean they have to be excited about being here. So they aren't as quick to watch the event as the first two groups.

The demons that are part of the hit squad that was supposed to attack him but survived were also invited. They are extra fearful compared to others and came to the fortress together in a group as a way to seek assurance in numbers.

These are the demons that are the opposite of excited to rush to the arena. Their steps are slow and their hearts are heavy. Their gloom didn't disappear even when they reached the arena and sat down. They kept glancing around to make sure there is no danger. Coming here is dangerous but what choice did they have?

The Ominous Reaper is already terrifying on his own, the addition of demon nobles that aren't restricted by sin concentration is like adding wings to a land dragon. Such a dragon will gain supremacy of the earth and the skies just like Aeternus will gain supremacy of everything apart from the energy well. So they came despite the fear for their lives.

The fifth groups are the spies and subordinates that the different noble demons sent to watch or sabotage the event. They include some notable geniuses like Bael from the house of the Balde of destruction, Belial from the house of the Fallen, then there is Balam, Murmur, and Asmosdius.

Salazar didn't want Bael to go since a place where there are a lot of demon nobles isn't safe but if it isn't safe enough for his strongest subordinate, who would it be safe for?

The ones that came to sabotage the selection process are also part of this group and so are the ones sent to kill Aeternus if possible. This group is the slowest to get to the arena. They spent most of their time watching and observing their surroundings.

Cain, the one sent to mess with Aeternus's soul is also among this group. Cain plans to wait for Aeternus to take on the most subordinates that he will take then he will Sacrifice himself by using his unique sin ability to create an attack that will bypass all of his target's defenses and deal true damage. He has the assurance that his sacrifice will deal a great deal of damage to Aeternus.

Aeternus was sitting in the highest seat in the arena while waiting for the demons to show up. He doesn't mind the wait. He even prefers it. The wait will give him enough time so that everything will fall into place. He continued to make more white chaos balls. This time he only had to will it for them to be created. He didn't need to forge them from scratch with his chaos spark.

He stood up to address the crowd after movement has ceased and everyone had sat down. He looked over at the thousands of high-rank demons who came here for different reasons. Some came for good reasons and others for bad ones, but he welcomes them all the same.

He started his speech. "Today is a like any other day. It is a day for excellence or mediocrity. We can either do something great today or something normal with the time we have. But one thing is certain, only the best of the best will excel. The survival of the fittest has made it so and the order of the demon society has enforced it."

Every demon listened with rapt attention.

"We have fought since the day we were born. We killed and we feasted on the spoil that is the body of our enemies. We rise from their death and become stronger, only to fight stronger opponents. It is our way of life as demons. It is the way things have worked and the way things will continue to work because it is the surest path to greatness. It is why I am at odds with the demon lord of the plane."

A lot of them were surprised while some of them were not surprised at that revelation. The surprised ones were wondering how the Ominous reaper suddenly went from terrorizing high-rank demons to being at odds with the demon lord.

Chapter 292 The Exhibition Show.

His voice rang out through the arena. "That struggle for survival pushes us to excellence. We either survive or die. It is why I am creating a noble family. You all know me as one that breaks common sense, but I assure you that you do not know the full extent of my capabilities. Many of you came here to become my subordinates while most of you came to watch what I am capable of. I will show you what Khaos Aeternus, the Lord of the house of chaos is capable of."

Now everyone is looking forward to what he has to show them. They saw mid-rank demons begin to appear within the center of the arena. Their number reached a thousand before they stopped increasing. Then the gates to the center of the arena were sealed.

"Watch and see what I am fully capable of, what I am offering you as the Lord of the house of chaos."

The 100 balls of chaos he created flew into the center of the arena and scattered into fireflies. The fireflies settled onto the mid-rank demons and got them into a frenzy.

The fireflies affected them in various amounts depending on the amount that settled on them. The ones with a lower amount of fireflies began to fight the closest demon to them while the ones with high enough fireflies began to evolve. They would lie down and be surrounded by the cocoon of evolution.

The spectating viewers were confused by the situation but they kept watching. The rabid mid-rank demons fighting each other started to reduce in numbers as they died. The ones that absorbed enough fireflies after taking the portion belonging to the killed ones also started to evolve.

The ones that have started evolving will eject the extra fireflies they have if they have too much of what is needed to start evolution. The released fireflies will then find a viable host and enter its body. Soon the arena became filled with evolving mid-rank demons but their numbers have reduced from a thousand to 100.

The evolution didn't take long and none of them died during it. They were all done in 30 minutes and what appeared in the center of the arena were 100 high-rank demons. The high-rank demons spectating were surprised and intrigued, but they were only slightly impressed.

The reason why they weren't impressed is that it is of no use to them. It is also difficult to be impressed when you have very high expectations. It might be a very useful ability for Aeternus to create high-rank demons but it isn't useful to them.

The ability to create high-rank demons from mid-rank is something that has never been heard of in the abyss. It might be a very rare ability exclusive to Aeternus but these demons expect more from the Ominous reaper. They didn't come to watch the creation of high-rank demons.

Only Aeternus himself was impressed. His former ability, the chaos spark could only work with high-rank demons. Any lower than that and the demon will surely die. Even high-rank demons have a discouraging survival rate. But that has changed. Now, even mid-rank demons have a 100% survival rate. All thanks to the fireflies.

The Chaos fireflies are actually parasites. He got the idea from the clone of Legion that helped him with the law of the soul. These parasites are soul parasites made from chaos energy and his sin ability. They will attach to the host and help the host to adapt to chaos energy which will ensure their survival during the evolution process.

The 100 high-rank demons in the center of the arena started to fight again. Once the evolution process is completed, the fireflies will become stronger and wish to recombine into the chaos spark but they aren't enough. So they will influence their host to seek out other sources of the fireflies. If those sources are other hosts, then the two hosts will try to kill the other and take their fireflies for themselves.

The current fight at the center of the arena is more appealing than the previous ones between weaker mid-rank demons. They are stronger and they have stronger sin abilities. A barrier had already surrounded the center to protect the spectators from danger so they remained entertained without worrying about their safety.

More and more of them were starting to get impressed. Aeternus had turned 1000 weak mid-rank demons into 100 formidable demons. It is a highly efficient conversion when it is known that 1 high-rank demon is stronger than 1000 mid-rank demons and the value of 1 high-rank demon to the growth of mark of sin is at least 100 killed mid-rank demons. Aeternus had made an unprecedented efficient conversation of 10 mid ranks demons into 1 high-rank demon.

The fighting demons soon started evolving. Each one of them needs 9 more portions of the fireflies which means that they have to kill 9 opponents with a single portion to evolve.

Some of them got more than they needed after killing an opponent with a lot of portions. The extra fireflies will simply leave during evolution and find a lucky host. So the demons didn't need to kill 9 opponents to get what is needed for their evolution.

Their numbers finally reduced to 10 evolving demons. This time the evolution took longer but everyone waited to see what would come of it. This is exactly what they came to see after all. So waiting 3 hours isn't too much for them.

Eventually, the evolution was done and 10 noble demons appeared. Their majesty and the suppression of the surrounding high-rank demons with their innate aura proved their authenticity. If they are fake noble demons, then they are incredibly powerful fakes or these high-rank demons won't be sensing the definite threat to their lives from the noble demons.

Now everyone is impressed. Aeternus has done it. He proved he can make demon nobles. Even more impressive is that he created them from mid-rank demons. They were all applauding him. Some were also sighing in relief because it meant they will be able to leave soon.

Chapter 293 What Next?

He stood up and raised a clawed hand to silence the arena.

"It is good that you are satisfied but the show isn't over. I promised to show you what I am fully capable of and I'm not done yet."

His words set the crowd ablaze. What could be more than that? What else does he have up his sleeve apart from demon nobles? They are sure he isn't bluffing because of the prestige he has among demons.

The various groups had varying reactions to his statement. Whatever Aeternus has planned after showing them his creation of noble demons as to be very impressive. So the excited demons that came to watch and participate became overly excited.

The same cannot be said about the paranoid ones in the crowd who had sighed in relief when they thought the show was over. They were scared before, but now they are petrified.

They had wanted to leave and go somewhere safe, but if the show isn't over they can't leave or they risk disrespecting the Ominous Reaper after their previous sin of trying and failing to kill him. They are petrified because now will be a good time for Aeternus to set his demon nobles on them to massacre them. They wouldn't be surprised if he did it, he is a demon after all.

The geniuses in the crowd are impressed but are not afraid for their lives. They are the ones with Accumulation, so the presence of demon nobles doesn't scare them. Even if they can't defeat a newly evolved demon noble, they will be able to escape.

The fact that they already have Accumulation also means that becoming demon nobles is sure for them. All they need is resources to make great selections during evolution. Their assurance of their safety is why they can sit calmly and be curious about what Aeternus has planned.

Aeternus addressed the 10 bowing demon nobles he has just created.

He said to them, "You know what to do. It is in your blood. I give you permission as the Lord of the house of Chaos to go ahead and pursue excellence."

The 10 demons pounced on one another and began fighting to the death. They are not the irrational mid-rank demons or the easily influenced high-rank demons. They are rational demon nobles. They have the strength, skills, and intelligence of demons befitting that status.

But these noble demons are not normal. They also have the knowledge of possible Strength and what they need to make that possible Strength real. All they have to do is acquire 9 more chaos sparks and they will acquire that Strength.

These 10 demons are the bloodthirsty, strongest, and luckiest of the 1000 mid-rank demons they started with. They have experienced the sweet process of evolution in two quick successions and they know a possible third. To grow stronger is a pleasant thing to any lifeform, that's why other species attempt the breakthrough to the titan of law even when the chances of death are immense.

These demons don't need to think too much. There's no uncertainty concerning their breakthrough. As long as they become the last one standing, then they will certainly evolve. Their fight was spectacular because of their struggle. It is not everyday that demon nobles are seen fighting.

Things got very heated. If not for the barrier that Xander had spent time creating, then all the spectating high-rank demons would have been in danger. It is against Aeternus's plan to put his guest in danger so soon.

The noble demons had no Accumulation because they were mid-rank demons just hours available. So they went at it with their various basic abilities and their fist. Those are the two things that are readily available and familiar with.

The arena rumbled and cracked. Chaos energy flew around everywhere. Things didn't take long to settle because of their few numbers and the use of deadly attacks. They weren't sparing so they didn't hold back at all and since only one will survive, there were no allies only temporary collaborators.

Two or more would collaborate to beat one demon. They would kill that demon and then fight each other next. The pairing was unfair and chaotic. Sometimes a collaboration will break apart because the demon that is being ganged up on retaliated and causes a serious injury to one of its oppressors. Then the previous collaborators will turn on the seriously injured partner and eliminate it first. The fight was chaotic so they didn't note the odd demon that was getting stronger the more injured he was.

Aeternus nodded appreciatively when he noticed this demon become one of the remaining three alive. This demon has the same ability as the berserker that they used to tie him down during his ambush by the demon lord. The more wounded and angry the demon got, the higher his resistance became. What's worse is that he can Accumulate power that way.

If they had taken him out earlier then he won't have reached such a level of strength. The demon is a bull coated in an aura that resembled burning flames. The flame was burning him, reducing his vitality and strength while empowering his resistance. It was too late by the time they realized his unique situation. His two opponents are both magic specialised demons. They fought against him with all their strength all to no avail. The spells they threw at him fell off of him without damaging him.

He weathered the rain of spells and captured one of them. They couldn't fly because of the barrier and their size made the fighting space very cramped. Each one of them is at least 5 meters tall with big, impressive wings.

The wings are occasionally used as weapons to fight and the captured demon was using the sharp bone spikes attached to them to try and damage his captor. The spikes worked. They penetrated the skin of the bull demon but it was too late. The bull tore his captive apart limb from limb with his bare hands before he roared and moved on to the last opponent.

Chapter 294 Encroaching Into The Domain Of The Demon Lord.

The minotaur finally defeated his opponent. He almost died in the attempt when his opponent cut off one of his hands with his wings. The minotaur enlisted the use of his teeth to crush the neck of his opponent before falling to the slumber of evolution. His mouth shouldn't have been able to do so but a brief boost of his stats with Accumulation that didn't last a second turned his jaws into jaws of death that crushed flesh and snapped bones.

Aeternus was impressed by the outcome of the fight. He knew it was unfair for some other demons. Magic-specialized demons didn't get time to adjust from not being mid-rank anymore and learn spells. The high-rank stage is when demons become familiar with spells but these didn't have the time for it.

The demons relied on their innate sin abilities which they also just learned and are not familiar with. Physical specialized demons didn't get weapons that they need to fully bring out the strength of their body but they were still at an advantage over the ones who preferred spells. It is why a brawler won the free for all.

"That's the thing about life and competition for survival. No one remembers the losers or cares about the unfairness of the struggle after the winner is settled. Nothing can be done for the dead anymore." He said in melancholy.

The central arena had quieted down now that no one is fighting. The arena is littered with the mangled bodies of opponents that are quickly disintegrating into chaos energy to join the pulsing dark red cocoon

in the arena. The reason why they are quiet is that the cocoon though tinted with some sort of black energy looks very similar to an evolution cocoon.

An evolution cocoon is something that should only appear when a demon is evolving. While the fighting pit in the arena had quieted down and eased up, tension began to increase among the spectators.

There were silent mutters, quiet whispering, and discreet mental transmissions between the high-rank demons as they watched the change going on on the stage of the arena.

"No way, right?"

"It can't be."

"This should be impossible."

"But if anyone can do it then it's the ominous reaper."

"He did say he was at odds with the demon lord. This will explain why."

"Who wouldn't be scared of such a demon?"

They debated quietly amongst themselves. They weren't scared of Aeternus but of the evolving demon. Or could the demon be napping? Even if that is the case, no one wants to disturb the creature until they know what it will become. They were all well-behaved.

Even the geniuses didn't kick up a fuss. They have the power of Accumulation so it has helped them to touch upon the full power of the demon lord. That experience did not make them dismiss the demon lord, it instead made them aware of the disparity between them.

Ignorance is bliss but knowledge is power. The geniuses know what kind of power a being beyond the level of noble demon wields. It has not made them full of confidence if they happen to face off against

such an entity. Instead, it has informed them of their position on the food chain. They are simply genius high-rank demons. Even genius noble demons are wary of the demon lord.

They respect the demon lord more because of their genius. Their confidence has not been bolstered wrongly because they understand that there's a difference between temporary power and permanent power. That difference became especially glaring during the war 10,000 years ago when hundreds of noble demons couldn't do anything to her.

Only special demon nobles with divine rank Accumulation could hurt her but there were only 8 of them in that war. They were not enough to put the demon lord down and she has demon nobles as her subordinates. The nobles lost that war because they were outclassed in terms of quantity and quality. The demon lord was so terrifying that she outclassed them everywhere.

That's why no one wants to be on the blacklist of a new demon lord, especially if this demon lord can move around in the plane however he or she likes. There will be nowhere to hide then.

The paranoid ones remained still even though every one of the thoughts in their head and every bones in their body clamored for them to escape. They stayed still because if Aeternus can create demon lords, then it is highly likely that he has already created them. Running away won't save them now if Aeternus is out to get them. They might as well just sit here and accept their fate.

There are three major sins in the abyss. Weakness is the first sin. Failing to recognize your position on the hierarchy is the second most important sin. Trying and failing to kill someone is the third. Trying to kill isn't a sin, failing makes it a sin. Now they are going to pay for the sin of failing to kill Aeternus.

It was because of the quietness and focus of thousands of high rank that they noticed the change in the abyss. One could catch them glancing at the center of the plane. Specifically, they are looking in the direction of the energy well.

All high-rank demons can sense the energy well while only demon nobles can bond to it. So all the high-rank demons and the demon nobles can notice the charged fury that is beginning to radiate from that place. Someone had notified the demon lord of what could possibly happen here.

It is an absurd possibility that Aeternus could make a demon Lord from 1000 mid-rank demons. Aeternus himself never said anything like it. He only said he could make demon nobles then he said he

will show them his full capabilities. But common sense dictates that the rank of demon lord comes after demon nobles in the order of evolution.

So the demon lord's divine sense arrived in full fury.

"AETERNUS!!!" She screamed his name in fury to all that could hear.

Chapter 295 INFERNOX

Her mental transmission killed every mid-rank demon in the vicinity. The high-rank demons frowned while the weak ones almost blacked out.

Aeternus was unbothered by the shout.

He shouted back. "Can you keep it down? I have guests over and you're ruining the atmosphere."

"I am the demon lord," Beelta screamed as if to announce herself or assert her dominance.

"So what? Just because you're the demon lord does not mean you can do whatever you want."

"You can't take my position from me. I will forever remain the demon lord."

"Will you stop screaming? If you're so sure of yourself then there's no need to worry." He asked calmly as he started to make more giant white balls of chaos.

She wasn't willing to listen to reason. Her fury rose to the sky as she roared, "You have crossed the line. You have gone too far."

Still, Aeternus remained unconcerned. "What are you going to do about it? Certainly coming here to shout and rant won't help. This is unbecoming of someone of your stature. You're just embarrassing yourself."

She had gone mad so she didn't listen to him. She kept shouting threats at him while he continued to make snide comments.

"Beelta, this is so unlike you. I would like to listen to what's got you down but I am busy here trying to establish a coup."

He took control of the momentum of the surroundings and locked her out when she wouldn't quiet down.

The arena resumed its silence and vigil. Their eyes and attention were focused on the evolution going on within the arena. The evolution took more than 10 hours before it was completed. Then a giant flaming hand broke the cocoon. A giant flaming bull's head complete with a single giant horn came after.

A burning minotaur came out of the cocoon in its full glory. It stood up to reach 10 meters tall. There were four large wings on its back and three flaming tails. The skin and the body of the demon seemed to be made from red-hot volcanic rocks. Lava was dripping to the ground from the cracks in the skin.

There were seams in the skin from which the burning and churning inside of the demon could be seen. There is a number in his left eye that showed the number 1 in the demon tongue. It identified him as the second member of the house of Khaos. The lava inside the body of the burning demon was dripping through its skin like sweat.

The temperature of the arena spiked immediately after the demon released its aura that swept over the surroundings. There was also a spiritual influence apart from the physical discomfort of the aura. The aura was whispering ideas of anger in the minds of everyone. It was trying to make them angry and lose their composure. But how could they do that when they are practically frozen in their seats unable to move a single muscle?

The giant flaming minotaur, the embodiment of an active volcano ready to erupt knelt and bowed his head in Aeternus's direction.

"INFERNOX greets the Lord of the house of Khaos. Your every wish is my command, my lord." Its voice rumbled like thunder and this time, almost all the high-rank demons blacked out.

Even the geniuses were pushed to the very edge of consciousness. The weaker ones would have lost consciousness but the ravings of madness in their ears made it impossible to do so. So they fell into insanity instead. Their subconscious had to do something to protect their minds.

Blacking out is a defense mechanism to protect the mind, if they can't do that, then they might as well take the suggestions of anger and wrath in their heads. Still, no one did anything because they couldn't move a single muscle.

The demon lord's shout killed mid-rank demons and stressed high-rank demons but the effect is limited to that because of the distance between them. Her shout wouldn't have affected mid-rank demons if they are in their region instead of the region of high-rank demons.

INFERNOX might not be as powerful as the demon lord but is very close to these high-rank demons. They are nothing but prey to him and their subconscious knows that.

"Not bad." Aeternus smiled as he examined the stats of the new addition to his house.

NAME: INFERNOX

RACE: Chaotic Entity.

BLOODLINE: Chaosling.

DEMON RANK: Demon Duke.

CHAOS RANK: Second Star.

HEALTH: 100%

STAMINA: 100%

CHAOS ENERGY: 392,671

ACCUMULATION: 7

ATTACK RATING: Physique:600. Spirit:612. MAGIC:648.

DEFENSE RATING: Physique:624. Spirit:588. MAGIC:648.

ABILITIES:

1. The Power Of Wrath(EPIC): +9 Boosts to Strength when angry by burning chaos energy.
2. The Endurance Of Wrath(DIVINE): Boosts to Physical, Spiritual, and Magical attacks the more injured you get and reach up to +21.
3. The Aura Of Wrath(UNIQUE): A passive aura that badgers those around you with a Spiritual attack. Those that are unable to overcome the attack become immobilized. Those that can overcome it but are affected by the aura will have their prowess reduced based on the level of influence. The debuff ranges between 10-50%.
4. The Strike of Vengeance(DIVINE): The Accumulation of anger and resentment for empowerment within the body. Can be used to attack or to raise the state of existence to 17.
5. Body of Calamity (UNIQUE): Calamity brews within you and you're a volcano ready to erupt. The more your Accumulation increases the more potential you possess. You gain a boost to every part of your body even when you don't use Accumulation and this boost is directly proportional to the amount of Accumulation stored.
6. Connection To The Lord(UNIQUE): You are capable of communicating with the Lord of your house through this connection and he to you through the connection. You are his eyes and hands. The Lord can see through your senses and assist you with some energy to perform the tasks he has given you.

STATUS: Reverent.

Chapter 296 Fight Or Die.

A demon Duke is not a new term in the abyss. There can only be one demon lord but there can be others who have reached that power by relying on other options apart from the energy well. The subordinates of demon kings are demon dukes. They evolve to that rank from being demon nobles.

The demon noble rank is the last rank a demon can evolve to on its own. They usually need the assistance of the energy well of an abyssal plane or the power of a demon king to reach the next level. They become demon dukes if they are assisted by a demon king instead of demon lords that use the energy well.

Aeternus can perform this assistance because he has something that demon kings should have, an infinite supply of energy at the half-divine rank. Even if he has chaos energy at the divine rank, Infernox will still be unable to evolve to the half-divine rank. Upgrading to half-divine and above requires the use of divinity. It is a must.

Infernox hasn't reached the demon lord's level but he has come very close to it. His state of existence which is at 12 is much higher than that of demon nobles at 8 and much closer to the demon lord's state of existence which is 17. Infernox might be newly evolved, yet some demon nobles can't beat him with the full power of Accumulation because their boosts only peak at the state of existence of 12.

A state of existence of 12 and stats ranging from 46-54 make Infernox' power rating between 552-648. It is a huge improvement from the 296-360 power rating of demon nobles.

Aeternus said to him, "Infernox the demon Duke, welcome to the house of chaos. You have earned your entry through blood and sweat. In my book, that is excellence."

Then he said to the frozen high-rank demons, "It is your turn to pursue excellence. Show me the greatness that is buried within you. Exert your full potential or you will die."

He spread his hands and hundreds of white chaos balls fled into the air then they dispersed into fireflies that fell all over the high-rank demons. The fireflies fell all over the fortress to touch every demon in it even the ones that didn't come to the arena and were only lurking about in the fortress. As long as they are within the 1km radius of Infernox' domain, they were touched by the fireflies.

"Release them and let us watch the show." He said to Infernox.

"Yes, my lord." He replied.

He retracted his aura. Then he flew to Aeternus. His flapping wings spread the aura of heat around him to the surroundings so he doesn't need much effort to fly. The air beneath his wings expands as it heats up. A single push creates more upthrust for him than it would for Xander.

He stretched his hands to Aeternus who leaped into his large hands. Then he flew into the air and stayed there to survey the high-rank demons. The high-rank demons watched 1000 mid-rank demons earlier as they slaughtered themselves. It is the turn of the high-rank demons to slaughter themselves.

He told Infernox. "Control the area, I don't want that nosy demon lord from interfering."

Infernox spread his mind to shield the fortress from the sight of the demon lord. He couldn't do it expertly as Aeternus does it by taking control of the momentum around but he did it. He used brute strength to make the momentum of the area resonate with him by injecting them with his aura. He couldn't control the momentum but his tampering prevents the demon lord from controlling it either. It is crude but it covers a larger area than Aeternus's control.

The demons on the ground gained the ability to move and the first thing they did was shout at him.

The ones that came for the selection were startled and didn't know what exactly they were supposed to do. They had seen the show so they knew that they ought to fight and get more fireflies but were they supposed to start a gigantic free for all rights now? This isn't the selection method they were expecting.

So they asked him, "Lord Khaos, what do we do now?"

The ones that came just to spectate shouted pleadings to him. "Please let us go, lord Khaos."

They suspect what he wants from them but it isn't what they came for. They only wanted to watch a show not star in one, especially since it is such a dangerous show with over 90% Casualty rate.

The subordinates of demon nobles and various geniuses tried another method to dissuade him.

"Lord Khao, please you can't do this. You will make the entire domain of demon nobles your enemies. Your actions will start a war. You already have made enemies of the demon lord. It isn't wise to create more enemies. Friends are a better alternative.

The ones that were paranoid that something bad would happen are the most composed. After all, they are right about being suspicious. Something bad actually happened. They are the silent group. They are shaking because of their shock but also considering how to get out of this situation. They may be shocked but they are the easiest to accept that they might die here today. After all, they have been prepared for this eventuality right from the beginning.

Aeternus considered them and listened to them. They are all feeling various emotions, some are afraid and others are furious, but they didn't dare revolt. They have experienced being frozen like sitting demonic ducks so they know that using force or acting out won't work. He didn't say anything for a while. He was waiting for something. They took his silence as him considering their pleas so it emboldened them to make their case more.

He finally spoke when he sensed the fireflies become active within them.

He said to them. "Those fireflies are molded to be parasites, not symbiotes. Their purpose is to push their host to evolution or to death if the host resists evolution. A mid-rank demon is easily infected. They can't resist the parasites so they are whipped into a frenzy to fulfill the purpose of the parasites. If for some reason, the mid-rank demons can't evolve, they will die and their bodies will be deconstructed into chaos energy."

The mid-rank demons in the fortress were all killed by the demon lord's scream earlier. They couldn't resist and didn't get the luxury of falling to insanity. Their blackout isn't the defense mechanism of a mind against something dangerous. Their minds shut down completely, that's why the frenzy of the fireflies couldn't affect them. So they died as the parasites destroyed their body or maybe they were dead already when that scream made them brain-dead.

He continued his motivational speech. "If the mid-rank demon evolves, then the parasites would have fused closely into their existence. The high-rank demons they become will have no choice but to try and accomplish the next aim of the parasites which is to combine into what I call a chaos spark and then evolve. But the parasites will behave differently in natural high-rank demons."

The high-rank demons could already feel something wrong with them. They are weakening and a quick check of their stats showed an ailment in their status. It is a strange thing for demons to get sick because they don't.

But while it is strange, the source of the sickness isn't unknown since it started soon after Aeternus sprinkled them with something. They don't need to be geniuses to figure out that their sickness is related to what Aeternus sprinkled on them earlier.

He continued informing them. "A high-rank demon has a strong resistance and won't be affected by the manipulations of the parasites. They have free will and won't be whipped into a crazed frenzy for evolution. But that won't stop the parasites. They have to fulfill their purpose. Since they can't get other parasites from an external source, then they will try to multiply. It is just that their multiplication needs energy and where do you think that energy is going to come from?"

His question made them realize what is going on with their sickness. They are weakening gradually and it might lead to their deaths.

He continued talking casually as if he is talking about something trivial and not their lives.

"The energy will surely come from you but there's a priority. The parasites will first go after your Accumulation, then your sin energy, your mana, stamina, and finally your life. That's why it is affecting you differently. I have bad and good news for you. The good news is that those with Accumulation will get to live a long time until their store of empowerment is fully siphoned. The bad news is that the parasites will never have enough energy because they are sending some my way. They will continue to siphon as much as you have, until you die."

Chapter 297 Everything And Anything Possible Has To Be Done To Stop Aeternus.

Indeed, the geniuses with Accumulation could feel and see their store of Accumulation reducing from their stat screen and it is reducing at a fast rate. Some of them will run out in a week. The longest survival will last a year at most. The sight of their hard-earned Accumulation wasting away without being spent on useful things hurt them more than the threat to their lives. All that effort put into stockpiling Accumulation made waste by some parasites.

"Now, to the summary. There is a way out for you. You just need to acquire a lot of the parasites from other sources to complete yours. If you're lucky you will only need to kill one other demon to complete yours, if you're unlucky you need to kill a 100. It's because of the uneven distribution of the parasitizes.

That's the solution. Don't think about trying to get someone else to remove it for you since the only person that can do it is the demon lord and I doubt she is in a helping mood."

The demon lord is certainly in a mood but it is not a helping mood. She isn't known for giving even when she is in a good mood. To ask her to help another demon when she is in a bad mood might just lead to her eating you. That is what she is known for.

The demons listening gulped. Either they fight for their lives and probably die fighting, or they do nothing and definitely die. The choice is obvious but no one wants to be the first to make a move lest they are ganged upon.

"What are you waiting for? Go on and fight. You can even fly but no one can interfere with someone else's evolution. That will guarantee you certain death. I'll be here watching faithfully and make sure no one interferes. Show me your worth. Achieve excellence or die trying."

He can evolve mid-rank demons into demon dukes but they won't be as good as evolving high-rank demons, especially the geniuses and the controllers of fortresses, into demon nobles. Those that are strong have qualities that he wants in subordinates.

Infernox might be a demon duke, but he isn't the best he can be. He has an Epic sin ability which is one of the reasons he survived the slaughter. But Aeternus isn't content with Epic. There's still legendary above it. That's why he is forcing these high-rank demons to make a choice.

Still, no one moved. Aeternus felt a little disappointed in them.

"Give them a little push." He said to Infernox.

Infernox influenced the ones that he had made to fall into insanity when he used his aura on them. This group snapped and attacked the demons closest to them. That was the trigger that kickstarted the free for all. A bloodbath started immediately.

Aeternus smiled to himself. He had called all these demons here to force them to participate in his selection process. He felt good seeing them fighting for their lives with desperation. He was standing on Infernox huge palm while watching the show below.

He made a lot of changes to his initial Chaos spark ability. The ability of the parasites to siphon energy is a means to force resistant high-rank demons to fight. He could feel his Accumulation get stronger but the flow from the parasites is only a little. Most of the siphoned energy is wasted during transmission.

He couldn't have his way with everything. Either the chaos parasites are highly virulent or docile. If they're virulent then the efficiency of transmission will be greater than the adaptation for evolution. He made them docile so that the host will have a 100% adaptability and survival rate of evolution.

That decision made the transmission efficiency fall as low as 1%. This is already enough for him. The parasites are still guzzling the energy of others which is enough incentive for them to get rid of the parasites and the only way to do that is to allow the parasites to combine when there are enough fireflies. He will be able to form his house with the best of the best. He will focus on Accumulation siphoning some other time.

The fight going down wasn't chaotic like the previous fight. The high-rank demons aren't in a frenzy, even the insane ones are just insane enough to be the first to jump into a game that might cost them their lives. They picked their opponents and stuck to them. It is a majorly one on one fight.

Some chose their opponents carefully. For example, the geniuses with Accumulation avoided each other. The controllers of fortresses avoided each other and hunted the other weak and unpopular demons. They are being rational and are using their skills efficiently so the fight is going to take a long time.

Aeternus was carefree as he watched. He has time to spare. He has already reached this stage, he can wait a while to see the fruit of his effort.

Meanwhile, someone else is panicking.

The demon lord felt like her non-existent pants are on fire. Ordinary fire can't hurt a demon but this fire is not ordinary. Any fire related to Aeternus cannot be ordinary. She has been getting one bad news after the other all related to that weird demon.

First, it is the fact that he has Accumulation. It meant that Aeternus has joined the ranks of powerhouses in the abyssal plane. Second, is the announcement that he can create a house. It was unbelievable but

Beelta expected it. Third, is the ridiculous statement from the Lord of chaos that he can evolve high-rank demons that swear fealty to him to the rank demon noble.

Her 7 poor hearts were still struggling to accept that ridiculous statement. Now, she wishes the train of calamity had ended there because what came next is worse than ridiculous. The suspicion about Aeternus's ability to create demon lord combatants is simply insane.

It is enough information to stop her heart. The anxiety would have been the death of her but the suspicions were confirmed quickly. She didn't have to experience the agony of waiting. Instead, she exchanged it for the agony of hearing about how Aeternus is forcing all the high-rank demons in that fortress to fight.

It is a no-brainer that Aeternus has to be stopped. Everything and anything possible has to be done to stop or sabotage the process. It might be a futile endeavor but she felt that no sacrifice is too large for the possibility of preventing what she considers her doom. That's why she called for a meeting between her and the established noble families.

In fact, she intended to call for the meeting of all noble demons in the plane but she took things at a measured pace. If she can convince the 8 prime demon nobles, then convincing the others will become highly possible if not certain. These 8 ganged up on her during the war 10,000 years so they have enough enmity between them but they answered her call for a meeting.

Their consciousness appeared within the meeting place. They didn't actually go there with their real bodies. To go to the demon lord with their bodies is to ask to be eaten. It is utter foolishness and these demons don't want to die of foolishness or the more likely cause of death, murder at the hands of the demon lord.

The demon lord's consciousness is also the only part of her that arrived. Moving her real body around is stressful. If there's a reason to come with her real body, then she will come with it. For example, if a demon noble is foolish enough to come with his or her body. The taste of power is great. If you can't grow stronger, then the taste of powerful beings will substitute nicely.

"Something has to be done about the Lord of Khaos. He has gone too far. He has crossed the bottom line of balance. He is practically killing more than ten thousand high-rank demons to further his agenda. That's absurd. Such a loss will make the strength of the plane impotent in our fight against the gods. It is madness and should not be allowed. We should strike him with everything we have."

She continued to rant and complain about the graveness of their situation until she was stopped by a demon noble. The demon asked a question calmly.

He is a humanoid demon taller than 6 meters and glowing in bright light. As a demon of pride, he hated being forced into such a weak position because of the existence of the demon lord. He would usually sneer and make snide comments in a meeting called by the demon lord but today he is serious. A discussion about Aeternus warrants that much from him. It is the least he can do. Anything less will be a disservice in the face of the potential ramifications of Aeternus's actions.

Chapter 298 A Tempting Offer.

The demon of pride asked the demon lord seriously, "What do you suggest we do against him? He is staying in the domain of high-rank demons. We can't exert our strength there and he is too strong. He is too strong."

The demon lord already had an answer so she answered immediately. "We should send all the high-rank demons in our houses to fight him. The ones with Accumulation can bombard him with power. As long as he dies, then his parasites will become inert."

The demon nodded seriously. "That's a good suggestion. We need time to think about it."

The figure of the demon lord in the form of the sweet innocent girl spoke hurriedly, "We don't have time. We have to hurry before it's too late."

The previous demon noble asked another question, "Too late for whom?"

"Too late for every one of us." She answered with conviction.

The demon nobles smiled at her answer. Either she is a good liar or she is naive enough to believe what she just said. Some of them couldn't hold it in anymore and began to laugh.

A noble demoness with a pleasant voice and a more than pleasant-looking voluptuous body was pointing at the demon lord while laughing. Her bountiful chest rose and fell as she laughed.

She said to the demon lord. "Look at you. Look at how low you've fallen. You can't even lie properly anymore. I wonder why."

The demon lord is a great liar but her lie isn't believable. These 8 are not buying it.

Salazar the blade of destruction spoke, "I know why. It's probably because of that upstart demon called Aeternus. I thought he was insolent and sore to the eyes but it seems I was right. The demon lord also finds him insolent and sore to the eyes. Her sore eyes are making her unable to lie properly."

The demoness nodded. "It is a shame what sore eyes can do to a demon trying to make a honest living in the abyss. A true shame."

The other demon nobles began to chuckle. Some of them joined in making fun of the demon lord too.

The demon lord spoke coldly to them. "You don't intend to root out this calamity?"

The demoness of lust answered. "No. We don't intend to help you root out your calamity."

"It is a calamity for every one of us." The demon lord shouted at them.

Another demon spoke up. This one looked like an illusion. One can see through his body but whatever they see isn't right.

This noble demon of deceit said to the demon lord. "It is certain that he is a calamity for you. It is uncertain if he is a calamity for us. He may be a calamity or a boon for us. But for you, he is surely your doom."

The demon lord didn't give up. She tried to persuade them again and again. The demon nobles listened to her with rapt attention. It doesn't cost them a thing to come and listen to her. Quite the opposite, it is an enjoyable sight to see her so frustrated. They don't intend to help her one bit but they will pressure her and try to make her attack Aeternus.

Fighting among demon nobles is tricky business. For one, it is rare for demon nobles to fight but once it happens, it quickly escalates. If one side has a power of 100 and the other side with 10 had done something bad to the side with 100. Both sides will prefer to settle the matter with other methods apart from violence.

The superior side with 100 units of power won't fight their enemies which they are more powerful than by 10 times because if they win, their power will fall to 90 units. Even if they were the ones to be provoked, an alternative to violence is usually found to put the matter to rest because more fights like that against weak foes will gradually reduce the superior side with a power unit of 100 to an inferior side of 10 units.

But if a fight is to happen, the superior side will try to rope others to their side to share the burden of the fight and its benefits. It is why the demon lord is trying to rope the demon nobles into this fight.

The demon lord is hoping to escalate the conflict and reduce her losses. This usually works if there are benefits to be had. But the demon nobles aren't taking the bait even though Aeternus has also wronged them. Their subordinates and geniuses have been forced into the situation. Even though they have already started to suffer from the crossfire between Aeternus and the demon lord, they are actually looking forward to the fight and its outcome.

The demon lord expected this. That's why she brought out a card that is sure to change their minds. She always has a plan. Even though she already planned to give up some benefits, she had to be obstinate in giving them up and she has to make her card worth the price.

"Don't you wonder where he got his abilities? How can a high-rank demon make demon nobles and demon dukes?" She asked them.

"Yes, we've wondered. So what? It doesn't change the reality of things. It is too late to stop him now." Someone answered.

Aeternus has entrenched himself within the domain of high-rank demons like a malignant tumor. Removing him is next to impossible if they can't get to him. So why bother with how he got his powers?

She said to them. "I believe that it has something to do with that spatial artifact. Something within it empowered him. He has always been too strong for his rank."

Her words got them thinking. They too have suspected as much and have come to various conclusions.

One of them voiced such a conclusion. "You mean like the Authority of a demon king?"

"Yes." She agreed.

It wasn't the truth but it was close enough to it.

"I'll ask again, so what? So what if he has the authority of the king? He is too strong now for that information to be useful."

The suspicion about Aeternus's source of power means nothing to demon nobles if they can't get it.

"I have a deal to make with you. As long as you help me apprehend Aeternus and capture him for me, I'll give up my seat as the demon lord of the 541st plane of the abyss."

Her words silenced the mocking demon nobles. They were stunned at her dedication and sacrifice. The demon nobles need benefits if they are to take the bait and her willingness to abdicate the throne of the demon lord is more than enough benefits for them. It is a tempting offer and it made them start to think deeply.

The demon lord watched their reaction. None of them is talking. If they would refuse her, they should be talking. They can either refuse or ask for more, but what she is giving is more than enough so now they are thinking about the consequences of accepting her deal.

They are already considering the difficulty of capturing Aeternus, and how to do it efficiently so that they won't take too much damage that will reduce their chances of getting her throne after she is gone. They have brought out the mental abacus and are tallying the scores, considering the possibilities, and making predictions.

One of the demon nobles with deep considerations about the situation is Salazar. The blade of destruction is deep in thought. He would like to say no and watch Aeternus clash with the demon lord.

This preference of his is because he is honestly afraid of Aeternus. He has clashed with Aeternus twice already and he lost on both occasions. His 11th commander, Alkazhi died to Aeternus.

Even though he planned his revenge for when Aeternus comes to the domain of demon nobles, he has given up on it because of recent developments. Aeternus is not the ignorant demon he thought he was. There have been numerous cases of demons underestimating Aeternus only to regret it and pay for their mistake with their lives.

The fact that the strongest demon nobles and the demon lord are meeting to scheme against him is more than enough proof that messing with Aeternus will lead to far larger repercussions. Aeternus is not a demon anyone can handle and hope to get out of the conflict without paying a large price. There is even a large possibility of not coming out of the conflict at all.

But Salazar also wants to be the demon lord. He didn't bear kids and made them fight and eat each other for the fun of it. He isn't that bored. Salazar is an ambitious and genius demon. The fact that he has a DIVINE rank Accumulation is proof that he got Accumulation as a high-rank demon before he evolved into a demon noble.

Chapter 299 Who Is The Fool?

Salazar is a prime demon, one of the only 8 in the entire plane. It is proof of his talent. With that talent comes ambition and thirst for power.

He was grooming Bael into another prime demon noble like him so that the two of them will have a better chance of making Salazar the demon lord. But now that Bael will probably die, he has to look for another window of opportunity. What window of opportunity can be greater than the demon lord abdicating?

"Are you still going to join hands with us?" He asked the demon lord.

The demon lord answered. "Yes."

He thought about why he didn't want to attack Aeternus when Alkazhi just died. He felt it was like gambling. If you start and you lose some of your resources, a desire compels you to gamble more and recoup your losses. You might get back your resources or you might lose everything. He wasn't willing to gamble more resources just to kill Aeternus. It wasn't worth it.

But that has changed. If there's something that he can lose everything over, then it will be for the rare chance of becoming the demon lord. It is worth it and he has a higher chance of success if the demon lord joins the gamble on his side.

He said to everyone. "I agree that we need to put Aeternus in his place."

No one disagreed with him. Of course, they agreed but capturing Aeternus is a tall order. How were they going to get it done? That's what they're agonizing over.

"If we do what you say and send high-rank demons to fight him then what will stop Aeternus from infecting them with his ability?" Someone asked the demon lord.

Another one agreed. "That's true. We might as well be sending him more participants for his selection."

The demon answered, this time she wasn't so assured of herself. "I heard that the high-rank demons couldn't move at all during the process of being infected. I believe that if they can resist then they can prevent themselves from being infected."

"And how do we make them resist the pressure of a demon duke?"

This time the demon lord didn't have an answer.

Salazar sighed and spoke. "Even if we can make them resist, there's no guarantee that it will work. This has to be done right. We can't just send more high-rank demons to him to do with them as he wishes. Even demon nobles with Accumulation aren't safe from him much less high-rank demons. I propose that we wait for him to get to the domain of demon nobles. Then we can use the full power of our house and ourselves to capture him."

It was what he proposed to do in the face place against Aeternus back when Alkazhi died.

The demon nobles agreed. "That's a good idea."

"Yes, let's do that."

There was no disagreement over his plan. The only one that hasn't agreed is the demon lord.

Salazar asked her. "What do you think demon lord? Your plan is hasty and full of holes. You just have to be patient and you will get him."

She sighed and agreed. "Fine."

The demoness of lust spoke, "Why don't we sign the contract now? We wouldn't want you to change your mind in the future."

The demon lord conjured a contract reluctantly. She promised to abdicate the throne as long as they bring Aeternus to her alive and mostly well. There will be a truce between all of them and the demon lord during this period which will last until the demon lord abdicates or for 1000 years. If Aeternus hasn't been captured in 1000 years, the contract will be void and open for renewal.

If Aeternus is captured, he must not be tampered with, interrogated, or asked questions about his source of strength. All of the possessions found on Aeternus has to be handed over to the demon lord. He must be brought to the demon lord immediately after he is captured. It is not a must to put everything on the line to capture him, but they mustn't help Aeternus in any way or hinder the demon lord and her forces from getting him in any form.

The demon nobles scrutinized the contract and made some changes. They made it so that the demon lord will have to abdicate even if she manages to get Aeternus in another way or on her own. She also must not interfere with the selection process after she abdicates and must leave the plane immediately.

The demon lord was unhappy throughout the process of drafting the contract and signing it. She asked them numerous times if there was really nothing they can do against Aeternus immediately instead of waiting. The 8 demon nobles placated and coerced her into seeing the necessity of the contract and signing it. All 8 demon nobles and the single demon lord signed the contract.

After they were done with the signing, they debated about more things such as if they should inform the other demon nobles or not. They finally agreed to inform them and add them to the effort to capture Aeternus.

They don't want to let the other demon nobles know that the seat of the demon lord will become available soon so they won't start planning but these 8 also want to minimize their loss and prevent the others from siding with Aeternus knowingly or unknowingly. They might cower if Aeternus asks them to help him if they don't know that the established noble families and the demon lord are against Aeternus.

The meeting dispersed on a happy note. The 8 prime demon nobles felt happy about how the meeting ended. They will be surprised to know that the happiest demon turned out to be the demon lord.

She was smiling to herself as she thought about how the meeting went.

If she had offered to abdicate without a concrete reason then they will suspect her motives. Why would the demon lord give up her throne just so that an upstart demon won't get her throne? It won't make sense. But she made them "come up" with a good reason for her. Aeternus has something linked to a demon king and it is enough to tempt her to give up her throne.

It sounds like a reasonable motive. It is also a motive that is beyond them. If they can't become the demon lord then there's no reason to compete with the demon lord over an opportunity that might make her a demon king. If they didn't have this mental assumption, then they might think they have a shot at whatever Aeternus has. The truth is that they do have a shot at it, but there's no need for them to know that.

Then they also "came up" with a better plan to get Aeternus for her since her plan was "hasty and full of holes." Is her plan hasty and full of holes? Yes. What if her plan is to make the demon nobles join her in the war against Aeternus once he reaches the domain of demon nobles? Her plan will be hasty but certainly not full of holes.

Her plan will be hasty because she just thought of it. Her initial plan was to wage war on the demon nobles while she tries to nab Aeternus as soon as he reaches the domain of demon nobles. That plan is because the demon nobles will realize the unique characteristics of Aeternus and the full extent of the opportunity that he represents when he enters their domain.

None of them have met Aeternus because they can't leave their domain and so have not experienced the longing of their mark of sin for him. That will change once Aeternus ventures into their domain. They will be able to make full contact with him, inspect him and realize the situation. Then they will fight her for him, hence the war.

But now, they will fight him for her and all she has to give up is something she wouldn't need if she gets her way. She already doesn't need the energy well anymore after upgrading her state of existence to half-divine rank using divinity. She has just been selfish and unwilling to give up power.

Her consciousness faded after saying one last thing. "The smarter they think they are, the easier it is to fool."

A good way to fool people is to withhold information from them, let them make assumptions based on incomplete information, then propose an absurd plan. They will correct you based on their incorrect assumption while thinking they are right and that you're a hasty fool.

She did it to Aeternus too. She gave him incomplete information. He assumed she didn't want him to die in someone else's hands and that she would like to eat him herself so she wouldn't aim for his life or endanger him. He expected her to pressure him at most and not ambush him. He was wrong.

Chapter 300 Leave Or Evolve.

He also assumed that since a threat was coming to him, she wanted to achieve two things at the same time by preserving him and getting him to owe her but she had made a hasty plan full of holes to achieve it.

He was right about almost all of the assumptions except the one where she made a hasty plan full of holes about it. He didn't have enough information, so he made incorrect assumptions and fell into her ambush. She told him about the attack before it happened so that he would fall into her ambush and be pincered.

It worked on Aeternus the second time. She did something and he assumed that she killed all her subordinates to stop him from getting to them. It was a faulty assumption because she didn't kill all her subordinates and she did it to stop him from getting to one of her subordinates.

That's how to trick intelligent people who have confidence in their intelligence. Withhold information, make yourself look like a fool and they will walk into a trap with their heads held high. The demon

nobles didn't have enough information but they acted high and mighty just like Aeternus when he disregarded her. Just like Aeternus, they will get the full information once they meet him.

But it will be too late by then. They will be forced by their contracts to capture him for her or just watch and do nothing while she captures him. Aeternus has grown much too strong to face him and the other demon nobles together.

This way, she has eliminated all distractions and will be able to focus on Aeternus. The demon nobles wanted Aeternus and her to fight, but they don't know what they will be missing out on by not joining the fight.

"Now I've have him for sure. I just need to wait." She said to herself.

Her gigantic body inside the energy well regained its appetite because of her good mood. She was so happy that she decided to play games with the demons she will eat.

When she's in a bad mood, she will torture and eat prisoners. But she is in a good mood, she will play games with them before eating them. The eating is constant because she is a demon of gluttony. The other thing is just her being an evil entity, a demon.

Back To Aeternus.

The demon lord isn't the only one currently happy. Something unexpected had happened. The fighting has become chaotic because of the onset of desperation. It is a good thing because the fighting will end quicker that way. High-rank demons with Accumulation can last between a week to a few months depending on their stock of empowerment. The others without Accumulation on the other hand won't last a day. It is causing desperation.

"Excellence is mostly exhibited when there's a definite threat to life." He said in wonder, "But this one is beyond me."

The ones without Accumulation could feel themselves weakening. They weren't regenerating health and stamina as fast as they could. Their sin energy and mana aren't being siphoned yet, but their maximum storage of it is reducing because of what is happening to them.

They are being at a disadvantage the more time elapses because of their lack of Accumulation. Something has to be done or they will die soon. You would expect this group to be the most desperate ones in the fight but they are not.

The most desperate group are the geniuses with Accumulation. Their health and stamina are regenerating nicely. The sin energy and mana in their body are working the way they should. They are practically fine if not for the dwindling Accumulation.

It is this slight anomaly that is pushing them to desperation. These geniuses know that if you run out of Accumulation you become nothing. Someone with 100 units of Accumulation will hesitate to attack someone with just 1 unit. But someone with zero Accumulation is not a threat to anyone.

In order not to fall to become zero threat, something has to be done to save their Accumulation.

They made some quick calculations and decided that it was more efficient to use their stockpile to kill opponents and resolve their parasites rather than to try and save it. It will deplete anyway regardless of what they do. The only difference is by how much.

The fight became boisterous because of their desperation. The geniuses with Accumulation will empower themselves for a brief period with boosted state of existence, then they will create attacks within that window of empowerment. The attacks can be physical, magical, or spiritual but they have become far deadlier to a high-rank demon because of the increase in their power rating. Their fervor is making Aeternus happy.

Some were lucky to only need to kill a few while some needed to kill a lot. Either way, many geniuses had killed enough for their parasites to be resolved in less than 10 minutes of Fighting. The parasites in their body combined with the external ones like Aeternus said they would. Their combination resulted in the formation of a Chaos spark which floated out of their bodies.

They brought the Chaos spark to Aeternus. They were about 17 of them. They flew into the sky as a group and stood a short distance away from Infernox who had Aeternus in his palm.

He clapped and said. "Well done. You have showcased your excellence."

Then he pointed to the chaos spark. "That is the fruit of your labor. It is an opportunity to achieve greatness and to go beyond your state of existence. The choice is yours. You can choose to evolve and continue the trials until you achieve the strength of a demon duke or you can leave. I promise to let you leave unharmed."

High-rank demons are resistant to the parasites and since the parasites haven't fused with their existence, they can't be forced to evolve. If they want to evolve, then they have to swear fealty to him. His ability will break any other oath of allegiance that they have because his is more powerful than other oaths.

Swearing fealty isn't something that high-rank demons like to do. The best high-rank demons in charge of fortresses don't want to do it and the geniuses with Accumulation certainly won't do it for a chance to become a demon noble. But everything changes when it is a chance to become a demon duke. That is a unique chance of a lifetime.

If he had said he could create demon dukes, no one would believe him because the demon lord herself can't. It is best to show them what he is capable of. That's why he staged the show for them.

They had watched the first show and saw how 1000 mid-rank demons became one demon duke. Aeternus had told them what to do to resolve their infection. They can see and tell that their Accumulation has stopped dwindling once the Chaos spark formed. They have every reason to believe him. The alternative is that he is lying and he won't allow them to leave.

He might also be lying about the infection being resolved. It might just be dormant and will become active soon or on command from Aeternus. Would they like to find out? All they have to do is give up the opportunity to become a demon duke, an opportunity that they fought for. And even if they are allowed to leave, what comes next?

'Will I return to my father and become his lackey again?' Bael asked himself.

His father is a genius and he sought to create another one like him. There were more than 8 demon nobles with divine rank Accumulation in the past, but the rest died during the last war ten thousand years ago. The competition between these 8 is high and there is a lack of cooperation since they are each other's direct competition. That's why Salazar tried to create a reliable ally.

Salazar succeeded in creating a helper but the help isn't being offered voluntarily. Salazar was never a good father, so why will bael offer to help him? Salazar offered him a choice just like this one on the day he acquired Accumulation. Either he serve or he dies.

Bael took the oath of allegiance to Salazar and he also signed a contract to do everything within his power to help Salazar become a demon lord. Salazar hadn't even tried to feign having trust in his son. He chose to acquire insurance in the best way possible, through a contract enforced by the will of the abyss.

'The deal is to not betray him and to do everything within my power to help him become a demon lord. If I am to help him, I need power.' Baal thought to himself.

'I can also make him come and swear allegiance to Aeternus. I can use force too since it is according to the contract.'

Then he said to Aeternus, "I accept."

Aeternus nodded to him. "Good. Now return to the ground and evolve. No one will disturb you."