

## **GREED 441**

### Chapter 441 The Trial Of The Abyss.

Imposters are killed. It is a reality that has been proven in the abyss. You will lose your life if you claim to be something and you don't have the strength to back it up. If you claim that a fortress in the abyss is yours and that you're in control of its abyss altar, your claim will be tested. It doesn't matter if you're truly in control of the abyss altar. What matters is if you can defend your claim to it. Failure to do anything in the abyss almost always leads to death.

The will of the abyss became silent with that warning. His surroundings suddenly lit up and changed. He flinched first before he figured out where he is. He has appeared beside a demon. This demon is in the domain of fledglings at the edge of the plane because the other demons around are small weak things. This demon is strange. It is bigger than fledglings, about the size of a low-rank demon and black smoke is oozing out of the demon's body. The other fledglings give it a wide berth.

'This is me.' He realized.

The will of the abyss spoke again. "A king should have fortitude."

The surroundings warped as time flowed faster. It showed Aeternus standing up after 50 years then fighting his first demon, a mid-rank demon.

'Fitalo the demon of wrath.' he muttered to himself.

He felt pain in his eyes as his former self poked Fitalo's eyes, then he felt phantom pain between his legs as his former self struck Fitalo between the legs. Fitalo swore to kill him painfully. Next came the pain that Fitalo felt as he was burned to death by Chaos flames.

"This is nothing to me." He said confidently.

He felt pain for everything he inflicted on Fitalo but the pain felt less than an itch. The pain of the eye pokes was more than the pain of the death by Chaos flames because he is more acclimated to chaos than pain. Even then, the pain is almost nothing. So he is confident that he will survive this trial if this is all that it will take to become a king.

His confidence didn't change as the record of his life as a demon played. He felt every pain he ever inflicted on others. Most of them were by chaos flames so it was a breeze. But there are certain occasions when he cut someone's head off, cut their arms, or disemboweled them. Those came back to bite him in more ways than he thought.

His mind took on the pain easily so he thought that the trial is easy, but it is not so. Because in the real world in the Zargoth plane, his body isn't having it so well. The eye sockets of his body were poked when he felt the pain of being poked in the trial world. Since he doesn't have eyes, there was no damage to his body. The same thing happened when he felt kicked between the legs. He has nothing there to be damaged so he was not damaged.

The Chaos flames did no damage to him at all either. It is the other kinds of injury that he caused to others that are damaging his body. His head and arms were cut off. His torso was mutilated and crushed. His legs were broken and his spine shattered. Every form of physical damage he caused to others began to reflect on his body.

The trial of the abyss tests the mind and the body individually. The mind and body will be tortured and since they are made differently, they react differently to the same thing. His mind can feel pain but its threshold for pain is very high. His body has been warped by Chaos energy and can't feel pain at all which is a good thing normally, but it also can't heal without Chaos energy.

In a normal situation, damage to his body will heal quickly and he can heal almost any amount of damage because of his infinite supply of energy but this is not a normal situation. His mark of sin and his soul are currently in limbo until he passes his trial of the abyss. That means his body can't get the Chaos energy it needs to heal.

His body is an anchor that tethers Aeternus to the world of the living. If his body doesn't heal, it will become damaged enough that the link between Aeternus's soul to the world is destroyed. His soul will remain stuck in limbo and will never return. He will die and be forgotten as one of the failures of the trial of the abyss.

This is the most common cause of death in other demon lords taking the trial of the abyss. Their fleshy bodies experience all the damage that they have ever inflicted. It is an unreasonable thing to ask for considering the lifestyle of demons. Except their body can heal on its own and they can use life essence to keep their body together. Aeternus's body is not natural, life essence doesn't work on it. Divine life energy might work but Legion is not willing to take the risk of allowing Chaos energy to infiltrate the mind network. So Aeternus's body is on its own.

Unlike Aeternus, other demon lords are more threatened by the pain in their souls than the damage to their bodies. Soul damage is very difficult to heal and life essence can't heal it because the soul has been pulled away from the body. But as long as they can withstand the pain in their minds, they will survive the trial of the abyss if they have life essence for their bodies.

Aeternus has always been an odd demon, an outlier. The threat of this trial is to his body, not his mind. He continued to feel carefree while his body got destroyed bit by bit. Each damage to his body reduced the connection of his soul to his body. He lost his anchor to the world bit by bit as the trial continued. He remained clueless about his precarious situation throughout the process because he can't feel pain.

Chapter 442 Choose Your Crown.

His body suffered and broke apart little by little. Then there was a time during the trial that he crushed the skull of an enemy beneath his foot. His skull shattered in the real world and the light of his soul flame within his skull went out.

The next thing that took a hit is his flames of Chaos Accumulation. The reddish flame on top of his head activated on its own burning his reservoir of Accumulation to maintain the connection to his soul and keep him alive. He will surely die when the flame goes out.

The flame began to reduce. Its rate of reduction increased rapidly. The thing about Accumulation is that it cost more to use the longer you use it. It continued to decrease rapidly despite the flow of more because of the chaos that Aeternus has caused in the Zargoth plane. It has been a long time since demons invaded the Zargoth plane and the destruction his subordinates are causing is unprecedented. His impact on an entire plane has increased his Accumulation immensely and it is still doing it but it is not enough to save him.

The rate of replenishment of the flame couldn't keep up with the ever-increasing rate of depletion. The flame of Accumulation burned until it became a tiny mote of light. Then it suddenly stopped burning. Instead of reducing rapidly due to the cost of usage, it didn't reduce at all and it didn't go out. His reservoir of Accumulation has run out but it isn't needed to sustain Aeternus's connection to the world anymore. There are 8 others that have taken on that job.

The soul sphere within Aeternus's soul served as the next anchor for him. It connects him to the other clones of Legion. He is not alone. He is part of a much larger entity and his connection to this entity has granted him 8 anchors so he can continue the trial even without a body. Limbo cannot have his soul.

The small mote that the flame of Accumulation has become remained in its near-death state. It didn't increase or decrease. Aeternus is not dead yet, if his soul returns and can't regrow his body, then he might die. He is just in limbo, not dead yet. He continued the trial until it came to the time when he killed the pleading demon nobles that Helios gave to him to grow his mark of sin.

"Maybe I shouldn't have killed all of them." He joked as he felt the pain of his claymore cutting into their bodies.

The surroundings darkened after he was done with them.

The will of the abyss spoke. "You have fortitude. I have seen it. You deserve the mantle of King."

"I told you so," Aeternus said smugly.

"But what kind of king do you want to be? Do you want to be the king of the abyss, the king of demons, or the king of kings? Be careful what you choose. The weight of the crown is heavy, it is heavier the more powerful it is." The voice took on an Ominous tone, "You have been warned, so choose wisely."

Three crowns appeared in front of him. They all look identical like a ring of golden metal. They are more like golden hoops than crowns. The three of them represent the three types of demon kings possible. He has proven himself to be worthy of bearing the Authority of a king so now he must choose what type of Authority he wishes and what type of king he wants to become. The information of the three appeared in his mind through his mark of sin.

The king of the abyss is a representative of the abyss. He grows stronger by furthering the agenda of the abyssal which is bringing destruction to the mortal plane. As long as a king of the abyss has an army, they can wreak destruction on a plane and wipe out the mortals. If the mortals die out so do the gods but that's not the aim of the abyss. The abyss wants the plane to be destroyed by mother high heaven.

If a plane is not promising or productive enough, for example, if it doesn't have a divine race, then mother high heaven will destroy the plane. There is a reward for the king of the abyss each time a plane is scrapped because of his or her actions. They get more Authority that way and grow stronger.

There are other advantages to becoming a king of the abyss. The representative of the abyss can never die as long as the abyss exists and as long as they are still king of the abyss. They are granted immortality and will always be resurrected by the abyss.

It is all good except the demon king of the abyss has to get access to the mortal plane if they want to attack the mortals directly. They have to get past the divine plane which is a tall order if the gods of the plane are strong. Plus, the king can only grow stronger when they cause the destruction of the plane or when they sacrifice celestial gods to the abyss. They can't become stronger in any other way.

Their immortality also comes with strings attached. Kings of the abyss can never become demon gods. They will forever remain demon kings. This option is not for him since he aims to become a world ender which is after the rank of a demon god.

The second type of king, the king of demons, is an independent demon that rules demons. This kind of king will be able to form another plane in the abyss and it will be their personal domain in the abyss like the divine kingdom of gods in the divine plane. The entire plane will be their domain where they are strongest and where their subordinates will stay. The plane will also give them a continuous supply of soldiers for their army.

Chapter 443 Heavy Is The Crown.

Kings of demons are also immortal as long as their plane still exists. A plane is not as durable as the abyss and if a demon king can create a plane, then another demon king can destroy it. That means that kings of demons will resurrect as long as they are strong enough to defend their plane. It is going to be tough because if they can't defend themselves against an assailant, odds are that they can't defend their plane from that assailant either.

The situation is not exactly hopeless. A demon king will be stronger in their plane and it requires more power to destroy the plane than to kill the king but the problem of death remains very real. The abyss is an intangible target while a plane is a tangible target that one can take their frustration out upon.

Demons are vengeful beings. There's no way a demon that kills you won't want to uproot your means of resurrection. It is the major reason why clones for resurrecting are kept hidden. But unlike clones, you can't hide an entire plane.

There isn't any other disadvantage apart from the insurance against death. A king of demons grows stronger by killing and absorbing the Godhood of Celestials. Unlike the king of the abyss who only gets a

small portion of the power from Godhood, a king of demons gets the full power. So a king of demons grows stronger faster and they won't have a limit on their growth. They can become demon gods if they meet the requirements.

The third and final option is the king of kings. This king grows stronger by absorbing celestials. They also get a plane to themselves. Unlike other kings, however, they get to have more than one crown. Having more than one crown is the major difference between a king of kings and other demon kings.

These extra crowns can come from the rare voluntary generosity of other demon kings or the more common/realistic compulsory generosity of demon kings. It is practically the same thing. Some people need to be compelled before they voluntarily give something up.

Extra crowns grant a lot of benefits some of which is an increase in the boost within the plane of the king and demon king avatars. A king of kings' domain is a death trap because of their numerous crowns. Demon kings can form avatars like the demon lord's sin avatar but their avatars have actual power up to the level of a demon lord. Only a king of kings can have an avatar with the Authority of a demon king.

It seems all nice and right but selecting this will make him a target to be killed by other demon kings once they find out what he is. Demon nobles rarely fight amongst themselves because of the prohibitive cost of Accumulation. Demon kings fight all the time but they don't try to kill each other because there is no benefit from it unless there is serious hatred.

Demon kings can't grow stronger by killing each other, plus they have means of resurrecting. So killing each other is a waste of time and resources. That is obviously not true for a king of kings. A king of the abyss that dies to a king of kings will definitely die. The immortality granted to them by the abyss itself will not be able to save them once they lose their crowns.

The condition for the immortality of kings of the abyss is that they will be resurrected as long as the abyss exists and as long as they are Kings. A demon without a crown is not a king and as such, will not be resurrected by the abyss. Kings of demons are not safe from a king of kings either.

So he will be a threat to the other types of kings. It will be like the situation when high-rank demons banded together to get rid of him again. Except for this time, his assailants are not paranoid because of the possible threat that he might become to them and they will be able to resist even if he uses the domain of an Origin god.

Apart from the glaring disadvantage of being hunted down, he still has to survive donning the crown. Each crown comes with different advantages and disadvantages making them more powerful than the other. The will of the abyss already told him that the more powerful it is, the heavier it is. The will of the abyss was literal in that the crowns are heavy on the soul.

Heavy is the crown and the burden that it places on the head that bears it. His decision is the final trial. Demons are greedy but it is not a sin to be greedy. You can be greedy as long as you know your limits. Just like weakness is not a sin as long as you know your place in the hierarchy and keep to it. So he has to choose one of the crowns and hope his soul doesn't break under the pressure.

This will be a tough decision for other demons. They have just gone through a grueling ordeal in the trial. Their soul is damaged and their mind is just hanging by a thread. Carrying a load that is too much for them might be what will finally make their soul crack under pressure. In fact, there are prospective demon lords that crack under the weight of the lightest crown because it is the straw that breaks their back.

It is not that the weakened demon lords don't know their limits. It is not that none of them are aware that even the weakest crown will kill them. But they have to make a decision because the trial isn't over until they return to the world above. And the longer they hesitate, the weaker and smaller their chances get. It becomes a decision between certain death if they don't choose a crown or uncertain death if they chose a crown. Anyone will choose uncertain death and hope for the best.

Chapter 444 Evolution Confusion.

If a demon lord is lucky enough to pass the trial of the abyss then they will have to make a very important decision about their future. There are three crowns that they must select from. There is the crown of the king of the abyss, the king of demons, and finally the king of kings. Each one is heavier than the last. Their soul can shatter if the burden of the crown is too much to bear.

They may be weak and tired after being subjected to mental torture but they must pick one. The decision is really between the first two kinds of crowns. The third crown is too troublesome. The burden of the third crown will continue to increase as you add more crowns to it and you will be hunted for bearing it. It may be a crown that keeps giving but it will also continue to ask for payment from you.

Now that the three options have been narrowed to two reasonable ones, the decision of which crown to bear has been somewhat made easier. Mind you that the decision has not become easy. It has become easier, and less difficult. So it is still difficult. They can't rest and make the decision when they are not literally in limbo with one foot in life and the other in death. They must answer now. What crown will they bear?

The choice is easy and simple for Aeternus. He selected the crown of the king of kings. The other crowns disappeared as soon as he made the decision. He can't change his mind now. The crown of the king of kings flew towards him and settled on him. Then it began to sink into his soul.

The presence of a foreign and powerful object in one's soul is not a pleasant feeling. The pressure alone as your soul is forcefully expanded to accommodate the crown is enough to shatter weak souls. It felt like his mind is being forced to expand by the infusion of deadly and volatile energy. He also knows that the volatile energy will explode at the first occurrence of imbalance and turn his soul into a grenade.

The crown sank into his soul and fused with his mark of sin. It completed the fusion process since his soul didn't resist it or slack from supporting it. Then the sensation of danger he felt from the crown disappeared. It has finally become his.

The crown appeared around his soul, like a golden ring snuggling a ball within it and protecting it. Then the crown pulled on his connection to the world above in a bid to continue his transformation on his body. If he doesn't have any connection to the world above, he will remain here and die. Since he has a strong connection, his soul was pulled out of limbo to the real world.

(YOU HAVE PASSED THE TRIAL OF THE ABYSS)

(YOU HAVE GAINED THE CROWN OF THE KING OF KINGS)

(CHAOS ENERGY HAS UPGRADED TO THE DIVINE RANK)

(YOUR EVOLUTION TO DEMON NOBLE IS STARTING NOW)

(ERROR! SENSING THAT UNIFIED ENERGY IS AT EXTREME RANK)

(REQUIREMENT FOR EVOLUTION TO DEMON LORD MET)

(YOUR EVOLUTION TO DEMON LORD IS STARTING NOW)



(ERROR! SENSING THAT UNIFIED ENERGY IS BEYOND EXTREME RANK)

(REQUIREMENT FOR UNIQUE EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON MET)

(YOUR EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON IS STARTING NOW)

(ERROR! SENSING THAT THE TRIAL OF ABYSS HAS BEEN PASSED AND A CROWN HAS BEEN ACQUIRED)

(REQUIREMENT FOR UNIQUE EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON KING PARTLY MET)

(UNIQUE EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON KING ABORTED BECAUSE OF LACK OF HALF-DIVINE STATS)

(REMEDY! DIVINITY FOUND WITHIN EXISTENCE)

(DO YOU WANT TO CONSUME DIVINITY TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON KING)

A lot of notifications bombarded him as soon as he cleared the trial of the abyss. His existence is an anomaly and the system that streamlines the evolution of demons had to take its time to figure out what is going on with him. He is a high-rank demon and should evolve to become a demon noble. That's how it should be. But what is required to become a demon noble is a unified energy at the pinnacle rank. He has more than that, hence the initial confusion.

If he already has extreme rank energy, then evolving into a demon noble will get him nothing. It will be a redundant evolution, so the system tried to find the evolution that is suitable for him. It was then that the system realized that he doesn't just have energy at the extreme rank, he has more.

The demon noble rank is the last rank that a demon can reach on its own. Demon nobles need the energy pillar of an abyssal plane to acquire the next rank of energy and evolve. Killing other demon nobles won't help towards meeting the requirement for energy. Then a demon Lord needs a lot of divinity from gods to reach the half-divine rank. It is then that they take the trial of the abyss.

It just so happens that his Chaos energy was clamoring for an upgrade before his evolution. And he underwent the trial of the abyss so that his potential will not be limited. So now he has a unified energy that skipped the pinnacle, extreme, half-divine ranks to become the divine rank. The system determined that a high-rank demon with such powerful unified energy must have a special evolution.

It is understandable that he will skip the demon noble rank. He already has Accumulation and a noble house. It is also understandable that he will skip the demon lord rank. He already has infinite energy and the Oath of the lord. Then normal demon lords go on to have half-divine unified energy from the extreme energy.

That means he has somehow managed to upgrade his Unified energy to the half-divine rank as a high-rank demon which is against all rules. So he was granted the right to evolve as a unique type of demon called the divine demon.

Chapter 445 Divine Demon King.

He would have skipped even that to evolve to a special type of demon king if all his other stats were at the half-divine rank. But his evolution had to stop and a request was made to allow the use of divinity to make up for the lacking requirements.

Fortunately, he has a lot of divinity in his possession due to the generosity of the gods of the Zargoth plane. Each item to make a demigod contains 10 points of divinity. A transcendent needs a total of 30 Divinity to become a low god. 90 divinity for a mid god, 180 divinity for a high god, and finally 360 divinity for a grand god. Each point of divinity is very precious but the gods gave Legion 450 items containing 4500 points of divinity. Aeternus was given 2000 points so he is not lacking in divinity.

He clicked yes to allow the consumption of divinity so that he can have his upgrade.

(CONSUME 1440 UNITS OF DIVINITY TO EVOLVE?)

He chose to continue.

(YOUR EVOLUTION TO DIVINE DEMON KING IS STARTING NOW)

EVOLUTION INTERFACE-

#### #( RESOURCES )

1. Soul Essence: 0

2. Divinity: 560

3: Biomass: 0

4: Origin Energy: INFINITE

5: Chaos Energy: INFINITE

#### #( UPGRADES )

1. DEMON RANK: High - Demon King.

2. SIN RANK: High - Demon King.

3. CHAOS POWER: High - Lesser Divine.

4. MAGICAL RESISTANCE: High - Lesser Divine.

5. CONSTITUTION: High- Lesser Divine.

6. PHYSICAL RESISTANCE: High - Lesser Divine.

7. STRENGTH: High - Lesser Divine.

8. AGILITY: High - Lesser Divine.

9. ACTIVITY: High - Lesser Divine.

COST: 1440 Units of Divinity.

#( UPGRADABLE )

#( STATS )

+1 STRENGTH = 4 Units of divinity.

+1 CONSTITUTION = 4 Units of divinity..

+1 ACTIVITY = 4 Units of divinity.

+1 AGILITY = 4 Units of divinity.

+1 PHYSICAL RESISTANCE = 4 Units of divinity.

+1 MAGICAL RESISTANCE = 4 Units of divinity.

+1 SPIRIT = 12 Units of Divinity.

#( SIN ABILITY )

CHOOSE ANY.

1. The Essence of Envy: Take the Sin Abilities of Slain Enemies. (DEMON KING GRADE)

2. The Divine Hunter: As a demon created specifically for hunting gods you ignore every and all suppression you face within the divine kingdom of a god. You have also lost the weakness of demons to divine power. (DIVINE KING RANK)

3. The Divine King's Avatar: Create an avatar that can be empowered by Godhood. The power of the avatar is dependent on the power of the Godhood used. You do not need to sacrifice one of your numerous crowns to create an avatar at the level of a demon king. (DIVINE KING RANK)

4. The Divine King: You get a boost to your power the more powerful your subordinates are. (DIVINE DEMON RANK)

5. The Oath Of A Divine King(Upgrade of the Oath of the Lord):

The Divine House: You're not an ordinary lord as such your house cannot be ordinary. Your subordinates get a boost that is equal to the percentage of their cumulative power significance. (DIVINE KING RANK)

Connection Of The King: Your subordinates are your senses, hence you can share their senses. They are your hands, hence you can provide them with energy. Communication between the lord and the subordinate is possible through this connection. It is also possible to assist your subordinates with a single attack. (DEMON KING RANK)

- Herald Of The King: Select 6 subordinates to bestow the title of Herald. These subordinates will be able to use your Authority for a short period depending on long they can carry the burden of the extra power. (DEMON KING RANK)

6. The Power of Crowns: You get stronger the more crowns you have but you can stronger still. Acquire this ability to increase your mark of sin with the various crowns you get and increase your boost from the crowns. (DIVINE KING GRADE)

This Evolution is very costly. He has never paid for evolution before. This time he has to pay divinity and he has to pay more than 1000 for it for his evolution. It is costly but highly rewarding. For one, his stats have been unlocked and made to reach the lesser divine rank. It is quite a leap from the high-rank grade to the lesser divine.

The second major difference is the sin abilities that he can get. A normal Evolution should grant him a single more ability which is Accumulation, but since he has already acquired that and other abilities as a high-rank demon he gets to have Unique abilities.

The abilities don't come cheap either. Each one is something that a demon lord will have to save for thousands of years to acquire. Some demon kings can only afford one and at most two if they are filthy rich. So most kings just use their generic abilities as demon kings. The first sin ability, the ESSENCE OF ENVY is the one most kings of envy go for. It is the most essential ability of a demon king of envy.

The ESSENCE OF ENVY is the crown achievement of envy. Demons of envy go from copying abilities, to reflecting them, and to taking them permanently. As they say, if you can't beat them, join them. Demons of envy have a limited capacity for copying abilities, so reflecting abilities become handy. They don't need to copy an ability to use it when they can reflect it. If there's an ability that they can't reflect, then it is worth taking.

Having the ESSENCE OF ENVY will practically shore up any weakness that a demon has. They will be able to take the sin abilities of other demons for themselves. It is an ability that beats the next most important one by a small margin. The sixth ability, the POWER OF CROWNS is the second most important ability for demon kings. It is certain that he will have more crowns and it is certain that he will have a limit to the number of crowns he can safely bear. So it is best that he maximizes the boost from each crown and get the most out of them.

His evolution needed divinity but the sin abilities can be bought with chaos energy so he acquired all the abilities. Then he went on to upgrade all the abilities to the divine grade. His evolution commenced fully when he finished his selections.

Chapter 446 Offer Of Help.

In the real world. The moment Aeternus returned from Limbo.

His shattered bones began to vibrate as soon as his soul returned to the world. They became restless black shards of bone and they remained so until a golden crown appeared around the red chaotic flames of Accumulation in the place where the broken pieces of his skull are.

The tiny flame reacted to the crown as soon as it appeared. It blossomed and expanded in size as if it were exploding. Then it shrunk down after its expansion and solidified into a red crystal flame, permanent and unchanging. The red crystal flame hung in the middle of the crown while letting out a reddish glow. The reddish glow expanded and also solidified to form a cocoon around Aeternus's broken body.

Aeternus began to evolve within the cocoon after he finished the selection of abilities. Threads of energy sprouted from the golden crown and wound around each piece of his shattered bones. Then the threads put the pieces together and wound them like threads holding pieces of fabric together. His bones became whole again albeit cracked all over. Even his two horns have been attached to his skull.

Next, the golden threads fused with the black bones and healed the bones in the process. The threads disappeared and left behind a completely healed black skeleton with golden and slightly enlarged bones. The red cocoon surrounding Aeternus began to recede after the change. It shrank and clung to the golden skeleton. It formed the muscles on the bones. A crystal-like reddish flesh covered the golden bones and it formed red tips on the golden horns protruding from his skull.

With Aeternus's divine body fully formed, his soul woke up. The golden crown on the head of the skull left the red crystal and entered the skull. The skull lit up with golden light and the sockets showed brightly with the light. Then his skull began burning black flames that sprouted from his scalp to form his hair. The same black flames sprouted from his back to form two black wings.

He sighed and said, "I have awoken."

His sigh and his voice echoed throughout the plane like a whisper. Mortals heard it and wondered if they were hearing things. It invoked thoughts of suicide within them. A voice that is making them feel like killing themselves feels more like an internal voice than an external voice. They disregarded it as they have always disregarded their suicidal thoughts. But the gods heard it and shivered. It is as if they have heard the roar of a predator. In this case, the gods are rats that just heard the meow of a cat.

The Celestial Supreme's POV

The Celestial Supreme became even more agitated. He had expected a demon king to attack the divine plane, but what happened is actually more than he expected. It is not the first time he was wrong and it probably won't be the last time.

He had been waiting cautiously and preserving his force for the attack of a demon king. But somehow that demon that pretended to be a high-rank demon is actually a demon king. He isn't even surprised anymore that they found a way to fool the detection system of the divine plane and allow a demon king to pass by undetected. They also managed to bypass the divine plane so why not fool the detection system too?

"They planned that too. It all finally makes sense." He lamented.

The development made him realize a lot of things. Their deception of the threat level of the demons will ensure that he wouldn't try absolutely everything possible regardless of the cost to stop a high-rank demon from invading the mortal realm. It also makes sense that the demon that they will allow into the mortal realm will be their heaviest hitter.

He had always wondered why a high-rank demon attacked first and bypassed the divine plane instead of the demon lord or a demon king. He also suspected that the fight between Helios and the demon lord is just a show to lull him into a false sense of safety. It turned out that he was right about that. Helios didn't kill the demon lord, he took the body and brought it to the mortal realm. Helios must just be returning a loyal servant to their master. It finally makes sense why a group of demon dukes will be following a high-rank demon.

He received a communication request as he was thinking about what to do in retaliation. It was from the god of fate. He accepted the request and they became connected. The face of the god of faith appeared in his vision. The lazy god is still relaxing on his ocean of threads.

The god of faith asked him languidly. "Hey, did I just hear a demon king?"

Zernon became irritated immediately. His irritation showed in his tone when he asked, "What's it to you?"

The god of faith began to make fun of him. "How did you fuck things up so badly? I knew you were a bonehead but to allow a demon king into the mortal realm is just dumb. Have you no common sense? I had..."

Zernon interrupted. "I am very busy right now. I don't have time for chitchat. What do you want?"



"I want to offer you my help. You are out of your depth and you could use the help of a Celestial. How about you break the non-interference contract?"

"No way. Goodbye." He replied and shut off the communication immediately.

His preferred number for something is 1 and 0. There used to be 1 Celestial, and 101 gods. Of which 0 gods are from other races. All the gods were from 1 race. But now, there are 4 Celestials and 102 gods. Of which the gods are from 2 types of races, giants, and plants. His beautiful order has been destroyed by 2 and 4. He has to live with the existence of the extra Celestials, for now, that's why he hasn't tried to eliminate them yet.

Chapter 447 Divine Lords On The Menu.

There are already too many Celestials for his liking. There's no way he will allow the god of fate to muddy the waters with Stelios already in the mix. He will keep him away from everything.

He said to himself, "But he is right. I need help.

A demon king is a threat to him and more than enough threat to be the doom of the mortal realm. He has been fighting back the enemies from all sides but he is only one Celestial. The help of another Celestial will be useful and might help to turn the situation.

As much as he loathes this current state of things, he has to admit that the situation is dire. It is a situation in which 1 Celestial will not be enough. Especially with Helios still around to contend with.

"Let's hope it is not too late." He said as he sent a request for communication to Stelios.

There's nothing safe and easy that he can do against a demon king rampaging in the mortal realm. He might have had a chance before his son was butchered for a ritual, but now, he is helpless. There's something that he has been hesitating on which he could have used earlier if he knew about the full threat of the demons. Now he doesn't have a choice. He has to do it and he needs Stelios' help to make it work for sure.

So he decided to have a sincere talk with the true Celestial god of the sun. It is obvious now that Stelios is not with Helios. Even if they were acting together in the past, there's no way a Celestial will be okay with the complete elimination of their livelihood in the mortal realm. He should be able to take

advantage of the rift between Stelios and Helios to his benefit. Maybe he might learn some secrets about their plans.

He chatted up Stelios immediately. Stelios accepted his request for communication. A connection formed between them but Stelios only allowed it to be an audio communication and he refused to talk. He simply listened to the Celestial Supreme talk. The Celestial Supreme promised a ceasefire between them with a contract that will see to its effect if Stelios will help him. He is willing to make an oath not to try and kill Stelios anymore unless he has a reason outside of his need to eliminate other Celestials.

He truly is desperate because he didn't insist on non-interference from Stelios as a Celestial. It is that same non-interference that is preventing the Celestial god of fate from joining in this war. He needs Stelios to get involved in the war plus the Sun god is not a threat to him unlike the god of fate that is untouchable.

The two of them formed a verbal oath enforced by their domain and authority.

He asked the sun god after they had formed their oath. "When can you get ready to assist me?"

The sun god replied with an obviously weak voice, "Fine, I'll help. But you must bring all my divine lords to my divine kingdom. I prefer if you do it against their will. Bind them up and deliver them to me. I'll be waiting."

Then he cut off the communication line.

The Celestial Supreme was perplexed about why Stelios is so weak. He could sense the weakness from the divine fluctuations of the other end of the communication line. He isn't perplexed about the request though. If Stelios is weak and in dire need of help, it is normal for him to want to consume his divine lords. He has a lot of them because of his long history as a god so they should heal him to a significant extent.

It also means that Stelios is nearly helpless that he can't defeat his divine lords on his own. It is a good opportunity to try and take him out but the Celestial Supreme chose not to take advantage of him in these trying times. He can't even if he wants to, he already signed a contract not to try and kill Stelios or the sun god wouldn't have been vulnerable to him.

They agreed to help each other in eliminating the demon king. Stelios will help him to the best of his abilities while he will get Stelios his divine lords. He can't attack his ally and it is also a good thing that his ally is weak.

"Stelios won't be a threat to me for a long time to come. Maybe I should keep him around after this is over." He said to himself after sending his angels to kidnap the divine lord and bring them to his ailing partner.

Stelios is the perfect ally. His condition makes him useful and also too weak to be a threat. It made him begin to consider his ban on Celestials. Maybe he will keep the weak ones alive and kill the troublesome ones that can threaten his power. He can also use the Celestials to kill the god of fate. The fact that he couldn't do anything to the god of fate doesn't mean that others will be helpless.

#### STELIOS POV

Stelios received his divine lords and consumed them for their Godhood. Their Godhood came from him and is the most compatible nourishment for his injuries. Divine lords aren't gods. They are children of gods who were granted a Godhood that has been refined by their divine parent. The godhood they receive elevates their existence but they don't become gods because there's a god in that domain already.

The presence of Stelios in the domain of the sun is stopping the god fire of his divine lords from lighting up. They will get their god fire and become gods when the domain becomes free of a god. Of course, they have to kill their other competitors until the last man stands. So it is normal for the divine lords of a god to be hostile towards each other but it is not so for those of the sun god.

The divine lords of the sun god have nothing to fight for so they are amicable with each other. They also never thought that their father could be a threat to them. It turned out that they were wrong.

#### Chapter 448 Stelios Is Back.

The divine lords of the sun god live in harmony with one another because of a lack of competition. They also care about their father to a certain extent. It is why they were concerned about their father's absence in recent times despite the unfortunate things happening.

Their father became a Celestial which sealed their fate to be divine lords forever. They were scared for him and worried because of the Celestial Supreme. It is known that he doesn't respond well to

ascensions. Then Helios became a traitor to the plane of Zargoth for bringing demons into the plane and helping the hidden god. Helios' betrayal is a very serious matter to them but it is not as serious as when he broke apart the church of Life.

The church of Life is their birthright as children of the sun god. It could have been theirs and it can still be theirs if Stelios is killed. Helios is the last born and he is not even a divine lord yet but he took over their birthright without decorum or caring about them.

Worst of all, their father didn't do anything at all. They know that he can't be active because he is hiding but he could at least answer prayers and show visions to his believers. Stelios did not oppose the change in any way so it made it very easy for Helios to tear their birthright apart.

The divine lords wanted answers and they tried to contact their father but he blocked all communications. They never thought they had anything to fear from Stelios so they would have come running if Stelios had spoken to them and asked them to come to his divine kingdom for a meeting.

Unfortunately for them, things change for the worst when times are hard. Times have never been harder for Stelios than right now. Stelios didn't even bother with a ruse to bring them to his divine kingdom because it would have been a hassle. He couldn't risk trying to subjugate them himself. He had them brought to him bound and easily killable.

To say he is near death will be an understatement. Stelios wishes he died instead of what happened to him. He wouldn't have to suffer if he were dead. Helios and the tree father practically ripped out a huge chunk of him. It was not a neat tear either. He was given a rough, jagged, and massive wound from his encounter with them. That injury also didn't heal. So he has a huge wound that has been bleeding since that incident. He is in so much pain that he wishes Helios had killed him.

The wound can't kill him because he is a Celestial despite the fact that he is missing more than 60% of his body. He could have given up and found a way to die but he has always been tenacious. It is not his way to give up. He took the risk of death just to escape when he was about to be imprisoned forever and turned into fuel for a Stigmata. He can't give up now that he has escaped so he bore with the literal existential pain.

His situation was made worse by the active interest of the Celestial Supreme in trying to kill him. It meant he had to hide away and suffer without being able to find a way to fix himself. Things were so bad that he would have accepted any deal and made any oath for him to get out of his situation. The Celestial Supreme didn't know how bad his situation was so he didn't make any serious demands of him.

He accepted the Celestial Supreme's offer for help and uses it to get his hands on his divine lords. He healed after consuming all 917 of them and all the divinity in his stash. He was finally able to heal his injury but he hasn't recovered his strength. A Celestial power and mind are part of their body. He can't regenerate what was stolen from him because it still exists out there. What Helios took is gone forever unless he gets it back from Helios or he makes a new one.

Getting his power back from Helios is a dream for him. It is not possible for him now or in the nearest future. Even now, he can feel the tether between them as his spilt Celestial power is seeking to make itself whole again. There is a force of attraction between them that will only end when he is whole again. It is like the connection between a Celestial and their half-celestial child except this one is very strong.

The two of them can use the force of attraction to find each other. He can resist the need to be whole for now but it could get worse if Helios comes to the divine plane when he is in a terribly weakened state. That will change if Helios becomes determined to come and get what remains. Helios is very strong so if anything, Stelios runs the risk of losing what he has instead of gaining what he lost.

So he moved to realistic solutions. Recovery might be a tough order but making more Celestial power is possible. For that, he will need faith from his believers which he isn't getting right now since his believers are gradually changing their faith in him to the god of the Church of Life.

He can't begrudge his believers for their choice. It is a smart decision for them. The God of life answers prayers while he hasn't been answering any prayers. He wasn't answering a lot of prayers back when he was hale and hearty but he answered prayers from important Clergymen like Cardinals and his pope. His injury made it impossible for him to answer any prayers or talk to anyone.

It is very difficult to listen to the ramblings of mortals complain about mundane things when your mind feels fractured and clouded in utter pain. He didn't complain to them about his own fractured mind. What could be more important than that? But they will complain to him about every little thing that happens to them.

Chapter 449 Regrets And Lamentations.

Their prayers and supplications would have killed him or made him mad if he let them. He had to cut his believers off or risk loss of mental integrity.

"Mortals can be very stupid sometimes." Stelios shook his head and thought to himself.

That is his first pain-free thought and it is about his remaining believers. The mortals that left him made the best decision to leave. It was either they stick with an unresponsive god and face Helios' anger or switch to another religion that can actually help them. The smart decision is obvious. He would have made the same decision if he were a mortal too. So the ones that decided to be faithful to him are stupid.

On one side is life and salvation, on the other side is neglect and death. They chose death and neglect. Helios killed most of them for their stupid choice. The ones that survived were lucky to survive. He appreciates what they did for him just like a farmer will appreciate pigs that didn't escape through the breach in their exposure. But that doesn't mean that he won't slaughter those faithful pigs. They are pigs raised for their meat. The only thing that has changed is the revelation that they are very stupid.

"Where will I be without stupid mortals?" He said as he flexed his body.

His body looks similar to Helios' Celestial form except for the white runes and the six arms. He only has 1 pair of arms because he was a Colossus as a transcendent before he became a god. The Celestial Supreme was a Behemoth so he has 4 arms. He moved his body about to see how well he is physically.

He said to himself. "All in all, things are not so great. At least I'm not in pain anymore. I can finally reactivate my divine kingdom and answer prayers. I also have a Celestial Authority now."

He didn't choose to shut down his divine kingdom solely because of safety. He just didn't have the power, resources, and wellness of mind to listen to prayers and maintain the activities of the divine kingdom. Deactivating the divine kingdom is a risky move. It is something that you only do when you don't have a choice. It is a desperate move but it isn't really helpful. You either survive whatever made you deactivate your divine kingdom or you die.

You don't magically become better after deactivating your divine kingdom. It removes some features that expend your divine power in hopes that the reduction in the strain on your Godhood will allow it to recover. All hope is lost if you don't manage to recover after deactivating your divine kingdom. He didn't have much of a choice because if his injury didn't kill him then the Celestial Supreme will finish what Helios started. That's how far he was pushed.

But that has ended for him now. He chose to look on the bright side now that things have changed for the better. Dwelling on the fact that the boy he took for a fool swindled him and ripped a part of him is

not good for his mental and physical health. It brings a whole new meaning to being ripped off. It is better to think about good things like the lack of chronic pain and the fact that he has a Celestial Authority now. He is sharing that Authority with someone else against his will but it is still good.

He muttered to himself, "I need to recover my church. A Celestial without a church is not in a good state. A crippled Celestial like me without a church is in a very dangerous state. My situation won't change until the demons are gone."

He has become a Celestial now and as such doesn't have any future aside from it. Being able to answer prayers will definitely come in handy in doing a good job as a Celestial. Answering prayers won't do much for him unless he actually performs a miracle. The miracle his believers need right now is the elimination of the demons. He will be able to build up a church and recover his believers as soon as the demons have been eliminated.

The thought of the demon invasion brought Helios back into his thoughts. It was Helios that opened the channel for the demons and it was Helios that caused his current predicament.

He muttered angrily as he activated his divine kingdom, "I should have just let that stupid boy die in his mother's womb. That day that I saved him is the most unfortunate day of my life."

It is understandable that he abhors feelings of resentment and regret towards his kind act of saving Helios in the womb. Now Helios took his power, his sharing his Authority, split his church, and besmirched his good name.

"And to believe that this all happened under my nose. What is he anyway?" He asked in confusion as the rings in his divine kingdom began to light up.

Helios had grown under his careful supervision. The boy was never allowed to leave the sun city. He had the boy monitored day as night, and yet all of this happened without him being aware of it. He wasn't even suspicious of it until it happened. Helios was the sweet boy that he raised from the day he was born. What Helios has done has been totally unexpected and unthinkable.

Stelios lamented. "Everything went to shit because of that heroic quest that the hidden god started. If only I fought harder and rescued Helios when he was given to the ants in exchange for the other demigods. The hidden god must have talked him into doing what he did.

There's no use crying over spilled milk but Stelios is feeling immense regret because this entire situation is more than split milk and it could have been avoided if he didn't allow Helios to become an item in the negotiation. He doesn't think Helios was in on the demon invasion from the start. The hidden god must have convinced him after he became disillusioned when the gods deserted him and his father didn't rescue him.

#### Chapter 450 Anticipation For A Public Execution.

Stelios believes that Helios is young, naive, and easily impressionable. His worldview must have turned upside down because of the betrayal and that made him do what he did. He doesn't have any other reasonable explanation for why Helios betrayed the plane. The possibility that Helios is a clone or might be related to the hidden god and the demon didn't cross his mind at all.

Helios can't possibly be someone else's clone because he was there the day Helios was delivered as a baby and he has watched that baby grow up every day of its life. Clones are not born like babies, they are made and they resemble their creator in every way. Helios never came into contact with knowledge about demon summoning nor did he come in contact with shady characters.

Stelios monitored every book that Helios read and controlled the people that Helios came in contact with. Helios doesn't even have friends apart from Cardinal Hak so how did he come in contact with the hidden god or demons? It all comes back to that Heroic quest that Helios took part in. Helios came within the sight of the hidden god because of his wonderful performance. Then he was brainwashed into being the tool of the hidden god.

"I should have noticed that they had their eye on Helios when the ants asked for him to be their negotiator. Why else would they have demanded for him as an item? I shouldn't have allowed the Celestial Supreme to make me release Helios so that he can attend the heroic quest. It is too late now.

There are a lot of things he regrets doing and even more that he wishes he had done that could have prevented his calamities. The hidden god might have lied to Helios that the sun god is not his father to sway the poor impressionable boy, but it was him that allowed that suspicion to fester and grow when he didn't save Helios the way the Sky god saved Tanya.

He failed to live up to the image that the sky god had created of how divine parents should behave when their children are in trouble. It was Harkam's behavior that must have allowed the suspicion to fester within Helios, Then Stelios went on to confirm the suspicion when he tried to take over the boy's soul. There's no path of reconciliation between him and Helios anymore now with everything that has



happened. The best he can hope for is that Helios won't try to kill him on sight. Or even worse, Helios could try to capture him and imprison him within the jail on his back.

Stelios sighed. He shook his head to dispel thoughts of Helios and his regrets. Then he left his divine kingdom to attend the meeting that the Celestial Supreme called for. They have been having a lot of it recently. That is one thing that has changed yet.

'I doubt the Celestial Supreme will ever allow that to change. He will probably still do it until the moment he dies.' Stelios wondered to himself before he took a seat that has been prepared for him beside the Celestial Supreme.

The gods were surprised by his presence. He isn't supposed to be here. In fact, he isn't supposed to be outside his divine kingdom at all. They began whispering to themselves about why he could be out. They were further surprised when they saw where he sat. They all turned their attention to the Celestial Supreme to see how he will react.

Some of the gods were looking on with dread and anxiety slowly building up within them while some like Harkam were looking with anticipation. Harkam is very much hoping that this meeting will become a public execution. His eyes are lit up and he has a grin on his face. He would enjoy a public execution very much especially if Stelios is the victim.

Stelios isn't sitting among the rest of the gods anymore. He is facing them like the Celestial Supreme used to face all of them. He made sure to keep his face stern and calm when Harkam began to frown because the Celestial Supreme didn't react the way he wanted. The Celestial Supreme called everyone's attention to Stelios after he sat down.

"Everyone, I would like us to welcome Stelios the Celestial god of the sun to our midst."

Everyone stood up and clapped. Their clapping wasn't boisterous because of their confusion. They are genuinely surprised to see him out in the open and no explanation has been given for why he is out of his self-imposed exile. They all thought he would stay in hiding forever. Even that wouldn't save him for long if they are in a peaceful time. The Celestial Supreme has been known to be vehement and thorough in his hunt for Celestials. But it seems war has brought Stelios the opportunity to be alive and well.

The Celestial Supreme continued when they were done. "I know you all have a lot of questions. I would like to say that the Celestial god of the sun and I have come to an amicable arrangement. I won't try to kill him for being a Celestial anymore."

The god of knowledge asked. "Does that mean it is okay for grand gods to become Celestials?"

"No." His answer brooked no contest. "Now let's get to business."

The Celestial Supreme shot down that threat of trouble before it can grow. He was thinking about accepting more Celestials but he doesn't want to be pressed into making that decision. He will decide after he sees how well Stelios performs. Then he changed the subject of the conversation to the agenda of the meeting immediately. He was about to continue talking when the muscle head of the gods noticed something out of place like he usually does.

"Where is this god of fate? He must have some really great balls not to attend a divine council meeting even now. Even a Celestial has arrived but he is still refusing to show his face." Harkam said.