

## **New Eden 901**

### Chapter 901 Still Broken Mind

Flying back towards his home, Alex felt glad that he had put his foot in the door with the woman. Elise might be a bit of a brute, but he didn't mind.

People like her were simpler to deal with, in his opinion.

No double-dealing or scheming in the shadows.

"I just hope she doesn't take too long to make her decision. From how she talked about it, the situation is almost assuredly already past the stage where the gang kept quiet..." he mumbled, as he flew south.

Alexander quickly reached his home, flying high enough that people would think he was a bird from the ground unless they were looking out through binoculars. Once there, he landed on his balcony with finesse and elegance.

He had been practicing his landings since he had a tendency to crash and not land. Before he hurt himself, it was better to learn to land decently.

Alex instantly knew Kary was in a bad mood as he pulled the patio door open. She was sitting on the sofa, leering at the closed TV, and was in complete silence.

That was until she heard him open the damned sliding door.

"How could you leave me alone with that jerk?" she growled.

Alex sighed, knowing this was going to happen.

"I'm not a planner, Kary. You know that. I didn't want to get in your way and say stupid things. That would have only delayed the planning. Instead, I went and did a few things that needed to be done," Alex tried explaining.

"Like recruiting people for Jack?" Kary asked, glaring at him.

Alex froze. He gulped audibly, looking at her with a pale face.

"What? Why would you think I would—"

"Oh, drop the act!" she shouted, jumping up.

"After David left, I called him, wondering where you had gone, and he told me you had just brought someone in. Why did you go off to do something so stupid on your own again? Have you learned nothing?"

"What if you crossed paths with someone stronger than you? What then? You would have been half dead, and gone for another month, to god knows where, doing god knows what?!" she screamed, her eyes tearing up.

Alex had thought she was over that, but it seemed he was wrong.

"Kary... I..."

"No! I'm tired of you bolting off every time, leaving me behind. I thought we were a pair! A team! Why do you keep going out on your own?!" she shouted, walking toward him angrily.

She stopped in front of him and punched his chest repeatedly, releasing all her anger at once.

Alex didn't try stopping him, accepting the strikes like he deserved them. He waited until the hits slowed down, almost stopping to wrap his arms around her.

"I'm sorry. I swear I'm not doing this to leave you behind. I'm just worried you'll get hurt..." Alex whispered in her ear as he held her tight.

"Do you think I'm that weak? That I can't take care of myself?" she asked, sobbing.

"Far from it... You are the strongest person I know. Capable of so much. But that doesn't stop me from being scared I might lose you, Kary."

Kary punched him in the ribs.

"What about me? What about my worries? Don't you care about those? I haven't been gone for a month without news of my safety. Not even a sign to tell me you were still alive. That was you. Why don't you understand that?" she asked, pulling away from his chest.

Alex looked her in the eyes, feeling his heart pinch.

"I know... I understand how you feel. Kary, I just want you to know it won't happen again. And I only want to make sure it doesn't happen to you, either. Because I'm not strong like you," he muttered, pulling her back into his embrace.

"If you disappeared like that, I would sunder mountains and split oceans to find you. I'm not sure I would spare anyone I might think responsible for your disappearance... You are much stronger than me, mentally. I would never hold a month without breaking..."

Kary cried in his arms for a few minutes, holding him tightly.

"What makes you think I didn't break?" she eventually managed to ask.

Alex pulled her away, looking at her in the eyes again.

"Because here you are, standing in my arms. You may be crying, and you may be worried sick. But you stand strong, and you stand proud. I don't think I would if you went missing. Stand strong like this. I think the world would tremble if it happened to you..."

Kary couldn't quite understand what he meant, but she understood the feeling he was conveying.

After a while, she stopped sobbing and just stood there, holding on to him and taking in his presence.

"Can you promise me that you won't leave me behind again? I don't care if it's just to go talk to someone... Bring me along. I don't want you to disappear on me again..." she uttered, her face shoved in his chest.

Alex kissed the top of her head, soothingly sliding his hand on her back.

"Okay. I promise I won't leave you behind ever again. Everywhere I go, you go. Even if it's just to take a leak. You can hold it for me," Alex said, adding a joke to calm her.

Kary snort-laughed, punching him in the ribs, as she answered, "Dumbass."

He picked her up like a princess and headed toward the sofa. Alex had no intention of watching anything, but lying on the couch like this might help them calm down.

After petting her hair and her back for almost an hour, Kary eventually calmed down, and lay there, just breathing, her eyes closed. Alex would nearly think she was sleeping if she hadn't been scratching his chest softly with her nails.

\*Browriagruoh\*

Looking at her, Alex burst into laughter, as he understood what that noise was.

"Was that your stomach?! Ahahahaha! Did you not eat while I was gone?!" he exclaimed, as she became beet red.

"I was not hungry!" Kary defended herself, trying to break away from him to go hide.

But Alex held her tight.

"Ahahaha! Oh, that was epic! It sounded like a whale was dying in your stomach! Ahahaha!" he laughed.

She kept giving him punches, trying to break free, but he held on, laughing his ass off.

"Alright, alright!" Alex exclaimed, trying to get her to stop punching him.

"I'll make you something to eat; stop trying to beat me up, ahahaha!" he exclaimed, as he rose from the sofa, carrying her with him.

"Alright, what do we feed a starving fire slug?!" he laughed, shoving her over his shoulder.

"Hey! I'm not a slug!" she cried out, getting manhandled.

"Yes, yes! I know, you fiery sloth!" Alex mocked, slapping her ass right next to his head.

She started punching his back in indignance, but still laughed.

"What do you want? I'll make you anything I can, my sexy firebird," Alex said, dropping her ass on the counter.

Kary looked at him, biting her lip.

"If I weren't actually starving, I might eat you right up," she taunted.

"Yeah, yeah, but I meant food. What do you want to eat?" he asked mockingly.

"Hmm," Kary hummed, putting her finger to her lip, falling into thought.

He looked at her, as she pursed her lips, and looked up, trying to find what she craved for, and thought about laying her flat out right there.

But he kept his impulses in check, as feeding her should come first.

He could be a slave to his urges once she wasn't starving, he thought, grinning to himself.

"I would like some crepes, with fruit, and whipped cream, and maybe a side of potatoes?" she asked, almost in a question.

Alex made a military salute, smiling at her.

"Yes, Ma'am! I'm on it!" he clamoured, eliciting a laugh from her.

He started pulling pans, ingredients, and utensils, and quickly enough, the kitchen became a cooking war zone.

Shit flew everywhere, even hitting Kary, making her a mess for simply being too close, and Alex laughed to himself as he made a mess. It was all a show, in the hopes of getting her in a good mood again.

And it worked.

By the time he was done cooking her a hefty brunch, flour, milk, and whatnot were almost everywhere in his massive kitchen—some places he didn't even know how he got stuff on...

But Kary giggled as she dove into the food, thinking about all his antics. Her bad mood was gone, nowhere to be seen.

This put him in a good mood as well, and he finally relaxed after having a shitty morning.

From an attempted live burial to a kidnapping attempt, all the way to getting defeated in sword combat, he'd had one of those days today.

And it was only a little past noon...

'Oh well. There isn't much left to do today. I guess I'll just relax.'

Chapter 902 Brought To The Middle Of Nowhere

Of course, things were never so simple...

The minute Alex thought about his relaxing evening, his intercom rang.

Rolling his eyes up in annoyance, Alex got up to check who it was. It was the front desk.

Tapping the screen to answer, Alex put on a bright smile.

"Yes, Peter. What can I do for you?"

"Mr. Leduc. Good day to you. You have a visitor in the lobby. Says she needs to talk to you urgently."

Alex frowned. He wasn't expecting anyone to come here.

A call, sure. But not a visit.

"Did she give her name?" he asked.

"Yes. It's madam Constantine Levesque..." the man said, looking at the woman with a tinge of fear.

Alex's smile dropped, his face going placid.

"Tell her to fuck off. I don't want to see her," Alex said, before hanging up.

But as he walked back toward the sofa, his intercom rang again. Alex growled low as he glared at the damn device.

He tapped to reply and looked a lot less happy.

"Peter, I said she needs to—" he started saying before seeing the person on the intercom camera.

"I need to what, boy?! Say it to my face! You and I need to talk and you are not turning me away!" Constantine said, her face a mask of rage.

In the back, Alex could see the assistant, with her still slightly scarred face, holding Peter, with her hand around his throat with a menacing look at his neck.

"Fine. You want it to your face? Fuck off, Constantine! I don't want you near my home. Don't think I won't call in people to drag your sorry ass away," he threatened.

"Hah! As if the police would do anything to me!" she spat.

"Whoever talked about the police? The ones I'll call can deal with you. And if they aren't enough, then maybe you need a little refresher on what happened the last time you came? Or maybe ask your little bitch behind you?" Alex mocked, his face looking vicious.

Constantine gulped as the memory of her fall came back to mind.

But she didn't lay up.

"I'm serious, boy. We need to talk. Please." She asked, stepping on her pride.

Alex grit his teeth, wanting to refuse her with every fibre of his body. But she might know something they didn't...

While he stood there, feeling conflicted about this, he heard a conflagration behind him, and as he turned, he only saw a trail of fire leaving the balcony.

"Fuck!" Alex snapped, realizing what was about to happen.

He immediately reached into Solomon's signet, pulling out Asmodeus by force, and melding with him.

The demon was in shock and unable to stop it from happening. His mind took a back seat faster than he could ask what was happening.

Alex extended his senses toward the ground, feeling everyone in the lobby, just as Kary landed in the street below. He teleported to the door, blocking Kary's path.

"Kary, stop!" he shouted, reverting back to normal.

"Get out of my way," she growled, her body still on fire.

Around her feet, the sidewalk's concrete was melting, and the pedestrians started crying out in fear and running away.

"You can't do this, Kary. It would make you no better than her. Go back to the Penthouse and wait for me there. Please," he implored her, taking a step toward her.

Alex was feeling the heat, but he coated himself heavily in mana, to counteract it, and at least didn't burn from the proximity.

He took a tentative step toward Kary, who flinched and stepped back, not wanting to hurt him.

"Love. You're better than this. Let me deal with her. Don't sully your hands on the likes of her," he said softly.

Alex stepped forward again, reaching to grab her arm. The mana on his hand was melting away as his skin started to sizzle.

He winced in pain, and he grabbed the flaming arm, and Kary immediately extinguished the flames, fearing she might hurt him.

"Why do you even care if I burn her? No one will care. I'm pretty sure the world hates her, right now..." Kary said, her eyes sad.

"Because I don't want you to bear that weight. If someone else gets to her, then let them carry that burden. Keep your conscience clear, and your soul clean. She doesn't deserve your fury."

Kary looked at him, feeling his words were a bit hypocritical. But she wasn't going to fight him on it in the street like this.

"Fine. I'll go back up. But make this quick. I want to go back to cuddling."

Alex nodded with a smile, and Kary stepped back, reignited herself, and flew up to their home. The people in the cars on the street looked on in shock and horror.

Meanwhile, Alex turned around to enter the building. He walked straight to the counter and looked at the terrified Peter, who was being held hostage.

"I'm here. Say your piece and beat it. And leave that poor man alone," Alex said, looking at the assistant.

"Nah, I don't want to," the woman replied with a crazed look in her eyes.

Alex glared at her.

"I wasn't asking, you lesser being," Alex growled, his aura exploding out before it became razor sharp and focused on her mind.

In an instant, the weight of all his mana crashed directly into her mind, and he watched as her eyes rolled into the back of her head. She dropped to the ground, convulsing and frothing at the mouth.

Constantine had only a fraction of a second to feel the erupting power before it concentrated, and already, her fingers were trembling.

"That feeling... It was like when Gaius gets angry... No. It can't be... Gaius is a god. And he's a... a... What in the hells are you, Alexander Leduc?" she thought, her mind falling into a mess.

Alex looked back at her, as Peter ran to the back of the room, backing away from the danger. He'd heard about what Alexander was capable of doing from people who'd kept up to date on the news.

Peter was not about to try to find out...

"Spit it out, Constantine. Or I let Kary back down here, and you'll end up in an urn, if there is anything left of you," Alex threatened.

The woman's gaze snapped back into focus, and she glowered at him.

"Don't threaten me, boy. I'm still the one who holds power here. Who do you think will re-establish a connection to New Eden? You? Your pitiful friends?" she spat in disdain.

Alex huffed a laugh.

"You? Get real, woman. You came here, stepping on your pride to meet with me, because you don't know how to go back. You came here hoping I would. Am I wrong?" Alex said, as he started stepping toward her.

Given the current situation, he could easily figure out why she would come to him. If she knew how to reconnect their worlds, she would have already done so.

EG was bleeding money, and her reputation tanked faster than a snapped boat in an ocean storm.

Constantine clicked her tongue, annoyed.

"Fine, I'll talk. But not here. There are too many unwanted ears. Let's go up to your penthouse," Constantine said, walking back out from behind the reception desk.

"No."

She stopped, looking back at him.

"Excuse me?"

"I said no. We are not going up. You aren't stepping foot in my home ever again. I would rather kill you here, in front of people watching, then allow you in my home again.

"As for the woman waiting up there, she would also gladly incinerate you for what your assistant did last time. If you want to talk in private, I can arrange that. But not in my home."

The woman glared at him, her mind reeling from his audacity.

"You don't call the shots, boy!" she howled, stepping toward him, her skin suddenly glowing golden.

She had just about had it with his commanding attitude. She was the champion of Gaius, for crying out loud.

But, the next moment, her rage was sapped away and replaced by fear, as Alex appeared before her, eyes black and red, hand on her throat.

She could barely breathe, as Alex had almost completely crushed her throat already.

"You fucking annoying, obnoxious woman! I'm tired of being nice. You want to talk alone? You'll get what you want. That is, if you are able to talk while I pummel you into the ground."

The next second, Constantine felt a swirling feeling, and the scenery changed.

They were now in a cold and deserted plain, with rocks and puddles of water as their audience.

Alex had teleported them to the basin of James Bay, where he had slept that one night.

And he wasn't here to talk.

Throwing Constantine into a pillar of stone, he watched as she cannonball'd into it, slamming to a stop hard and coughing blood.

"You can huff and puff all you want here. No one will hear you. No one will see you. And above all, once I'm done with you, no one will ever find you. Let's see you talk your way out of this one."

Chapter 903 Beat Like A Cherokee Drum

Constantine extirpated herself from the half-shattered stone and looked at Alex with rage.

"You think you can get your way?! Do you think I'll die to a weak kid like you?! You little punk! I'm the champion of Gaius, the strongest god in existence! I'll crush you into the finest powder the universe has ever seen!" Constantine howled.

She shot up into the sky, her body glowing golden, as armour appeared over her branded clothes. A glowing mace also materialized in her right hand as a shield coated in gold appeared in her left hand.

Alex watched her, waiting for her little show to be over.

Constantine's eyes turned completely black, as her skin kept glowing golden, and her gaze snapped to Alex.

"You done yet?" Alex mocked.

The woman looked at him, finding his confident smile irking.

She howled in anger and dashed from the sky to the ground, her mace swinging in an arc at his head.

"Die, you arrogant prick!"

Alex didn't even bother blocking the block with his hand, as a thick layer of mana appeared between the weapon and his head. With a resounding \*Ding!\* her mace impacted the sturdy barrier and ricocheted off it like hitting a metal wall.

Constantine could already feel her hand going numb from the vibration going up her weapon's shaft, but that wasn't the worst of it.

Alex was still grinning at her.

"That's it? All that mighty speech, and you can't hit my body? Lame," he mocked before lashing out with a punch.

Constantine was quick enough to block the attack with her shield, but it felt like a semi-truck had slammed into it. She was sent skidding back for many meters before coming to a halt, her shield hand numb, and the shield dented ever so slightly.

'He dented the World Shield?!' her mind reeled.

This was a shield Gaius had made by compressing an entire planet into a single plate. Or so he had said.

And even if that was only flavour, to explain its solidity, a human still shouldn't be able to damage it.

In truth, Alex wouldn't have been able to, if he hadn't coated his hand in pure mana, at the cusp of compressing in Aether.

Even if the shield was one made by a god, and held the Mythic rank, at a bare minimum, it was heavily weakened by the lack of mana in the air. After all, everything a god created relied on mana to continue to exist.

Constantine summoning her armour in this world was bad for it, as the lack of mana damaged it, without her knowing. If she had known, she might have poured mana into it constantly to keep it from weakening.

Then, Alex wouldn't have been able to damage it, even with Aether.

Her lack of knowledge and judgment would be her downfall.



Alex didn't let her find her footing, and sprinted after her.

He knew she could match his speed, even if he used the power of his demon legs. But he could tell she lacked in raw power.

As he reached her, Alex launched into a flurry of blows, his fists tinting red as he used more of the demon's power.

Every time his fist hit the shield, or was deflected by her mace, he could feel his skin tingle.

'So divinity really hurts the demons. I wonder why if Gaius was the one who created them. Shouldn't they be immune to at least his power?' he wondered, as he kept striking like a gatling gun.

Constantine struggled to deflect and block every attack, feeling the weight behind them. She knew a direct hit to her body would be excruciatingly painful, even with the armour on.

But she miscalculated something.

A cracking sound echoed in her ear, coming from the right, and she noticed with horror that the shaft of her mace was cracking.

And she wasn't the only one to notice.

With a wicked grin, Alex spun his body, raising his leg in a roundhouse kick, and snapped it into her mace's shaft, aiming for the crack.

Even if Constantine wanted to spare her weapon, she was either blocking with it, and risking a break, or taking the blow with her body.

And she wasn't ready to risk that.

With a resounding bang, the leg smacked into the mace, which Constantine had angled slightly upward, trying to deflect the blow, and pushed into it like a wrecking ball.

There was no contest of strength to be had as Constantine's mace snapped like a twig before the leg continued its path into her shoulder, sending her barrelling away like a rag doll shot out of a cannon.

She rolled her body into a fetal position before hitting the ground, knowing full well she was going too fast to stop her motion yet.

And as she struck the cold, hard ground, she bounced off like a basketball off a court, and spun upward, her stomach holding its contents for dear life, as she turned into a spinning top.

She hit the ground a second and then a third time before she had lost enough speed to try to stop herself. But it was easier said than done.

Even as she twisted her body to get her legs on the ground first, all that did was send her flying backward, and she had to roll herself back again before smashing into another stone outcropping.

The air blew out of her lungs, accompanied by blood, as her vision blurred from hitting the stone behind her.

Constantine dropped to her knees, her breath ragged, as she couldn't get her lungs to expand fully, and her vision shaky, blood trickling down her nape from the back of her head.

"He's not human. This is the devil Gaius warned me about. The one that brings an end to humanity..." she muttered, lifting her head to look at her enemy.

Alex was already near her, sauntering his way to her with a devilish grin.

"Is that what Gaius told you? That a devil would threaten our world? Well, he wasn't entirely lying. But let me ask you, Constantine," Alex said, crouching near her.

She didn't have the strength to attack him, so she just glared at him with her eyes half out of focus.

"Did Gaius tell you how it comes to pass? How the demons come into our world?"

Constantine huffed, spitting blood in his face.

"He told me what I had to know. The rest was for me to figure out," she spat.

Alex smeared the blood across from his face, grinning wider.

"So he kept you in the dark. That's because you would have never followed him if you knew. You haven't been able to reach him lately, have you? Your precious Gaius?"

Her eyes wavered as she realized he knew more than she thought.

"I'll tell you why," Alex said, grabbing the back of her head and forcing her to gaze into his eyes.

"Because your oh so precious Gaius killed another god, who was trying to help the world of New Eden, and ours by extension. Because Gaius doesn't want our world to survive. He wants it to burn. So he can bask in the flames and enjoy himself," he said, his gaze hardening.

Constantine's eyes widened.

"No. That can't be... Why would he make me his champion? Why would he ask me to struggle for humanity's sake? You are lying!"

Alex chuckled.

"You keep rambling about how you are smarter, stronger, and wiser than everyone. But, in truth, you are the dumbest, weakest, most naïve piece of human trash among us. To think some people look up to you makes me sick," he said, leering at her.

"Shut up! Shut up! You're lying! Shut up!" Constantine howled, trying to hit Alex.

Alex slammed her head into the stone behind her again, grabbing her by the face.

As he pulled his hand back, her gaze almost clouded over, and her mouth hung open a bit.

She was almost done for.

"If I'm the liar here, then why did you try pinning the servers shutting down on a hacker you knew nothing about? Haven't you already been lying to everyone by not telling them what New Eden really was? How much of a hypocrite are you?" Alex asked, seething with anger.

"I... Did... It... For... Them," she muttered, her vision slowly going dark.

'Is this how I die? Killed by the very devil who will bring doom to humanity? I'm sorry I failed you, your grace...' she thought, still not accepting Alexander's words.

Alex watched as she fainted and clicked his tongue in annoyance.

"So much bravado, and yet you fall to this much power. The Raijū would have torn you to shreds... But don't think you can get off the hook so easily. You are not dying today, you dumb bitch. You still have to atone for what you put the world through."

Alex reverted back to a human before his eyes glowed golden. He had no intention of killing her.

Alex was hoping that knocking the fear of death into her would open her eyes to who Gaius really was. But it seemed she was much more brainwashed than he had first thought.

'This'll be a long road until she understands the truth...'

#### Chapter 904 Solomon's Worry

Looking at her unconscious body, Alex sighed in annoyance.

"All that smack talk about being the one with power, being the champion of Gaius, and you still posed little of a challenge. Did you even take the time to learn how to play New Eden? Or did you rest on your laurels after he declared you the strongest?" he mumbled.

But it didn't matter.

Alex refused to stay a moment more in her presence. Looking at her irked him, and he feared what he might do if he stayed with her.

So, he dove into her pockets, pulled out her neuro-phone, and slapped it into her ear.

He pressed the button on the outside of it until it started dialling emergency services and then backed away.

"If you're lucky, someone will find you before something does. If not, well, I guess that's what fate had in store for you."

He then pulled out a piece of paper from his vest, along with a pen, and left a small note in her pocket.

"If you don't understand that message, I guess we'll meet again sooner than later..." he mumbled.

Looking at her with a sneer one last time, he melded with Asmodeus again, who was once more pulled out of the ring like it was nothing, and melded with without his consent.

'What the—Stop this!' Asmodeus growled in his mind.

But Alex couldn't care less about the demon and used his powers to teleport back to Montreal, leaving Constantine lying there, unconscious, in the middle of the plains of James Bay.

As he reappeared on his balcony, like nothing had happened, Alex was assaulted by a sense of vertigo.

"Woah..." he murmured, grabbing the balcony railing, before he could fall to his knees.

He felt incredibly weak right now, as if his mana had suddenly all drained away.

'I felt fine teleporting there earlier... Why the sudden exhaustion?' he wondered.

But in his head, all he heard was Asmodeus' suave laughter.

'Ha ha ha ha ha. What an imbecile you are. Did you think using my powers for jumps this big was free of cost? Look at you now. You can barely stand on your two feet.'

'I guess I should thank you, though. With how strong this body is, and how weak your mind is right now, I can finally get a vessel and break this stupid seal on my soul. Ahh, to feel the wind on my horns. To hear the screams of my future victims.

'To finally taste the flesh of a mortal again. How I missed those feelings. Thanks to your stupidity, I will now get to feel them again.'

Alex's heart skipped a beat. He could feel Asmodeus reach into his mind, pushing him out of his own body and into his soul space.

And with how little mana he had, he could barely put up resistance at all. In mere moments, the takeover was accomplished.

Alex landed in his soul space, still hearing Asmodeus' voice around him.

"Thank you for the vessel, you dumb mortal. I will take good care of it and bathe in blood every day to keep its skin young and healthy, I swear. Ha ha ha ha ha ha!"

Alex gulped at the thought of who was closest to him right now.

But before the body took a single step, something else surged within Alex. Something much stronger than Asmodeus.

A being that was still inside the soul space, since all this time, and had kept quiet and still.

Sangis Oxym.

"Master," Sangis called out, with his two-toned voice.

Alex turned to look at the strange being next to him.

"For a moment, I forgot you were a thing..." Alex muttered.

"Shall I kick out the intruder, master?"

Alex looked at him with a grimace, the voice grating against his eardrums.

"Can you do that?" he asked, uncertain.

Sangis nodded, like there was nothing to it.

Outside the soul space, Asmodeus had just tried moving, only to realize that the body was not reacting to his will. He had felt the surge inside him, but given the nature of the surge, he had thought it was his powers de-sealing.

But, now that he couldn't move, he was wondering what was happening.

He reached inside and quickly noticed the two mana signatures across the body, as if two beings were occupying it, and he frowned.

"What the hell? Get out of my way, you nameless demon."

But the mana didn't budge, and the body still refused to move.

Inside the soul space, Alex was looking at the Nephilim, who was just staring at him.

"And you can do it without pushing me out or forcing control?" he asked, unsure he wanted to find out what the Nephilim would do if he controlled his body.

But Sangis only nodded in response.

Alex was weirded out about the unresponsiveness of the Nephilim. It was like trying to talk to an autistic person.

There was no way to know what they were thinking, and their lack of verbal activity only made their stares more uncomfortable.

"Then do it. What are you waiting for?" Alex said, looking at him insistently.

After another silent nod, the Nephilim closed his eyes for a second, extended his arm forward, hand open, and the next moment, Asmodeus reappeared in the soul space, throat in that hand, eyes wide.

"What the?" Asmodeus barely had time to say before Sangis' hand clenched his airways closed, and the words couldn't come out anymore.

Alex could tell that Sangis had no intention of letting go, and almost enjoyed seeing him choke out the demon like this. But he needed him alive.

His powers were too valuable.

"Don't kill him. I still need his powers. Come with me," Alex said, focusing his mind on Solomon's signet, and diving into it.

As he reopened his eyes, the cloudy textured ground replaced his empty white space, and the steps up a dais led to Solomon, who was sipping tea.

But the sudden feeling that something had entered his sacred space that didn't belong there interrupted his peace.

As his head snapped toward the intruder, he saw Alexander walking toward him, with in tow, Asmodeus swinging limply from another being's hand, practically passed out.

The demons inside the ring all appeared around Solomon, and he felt in danger for the first time in a long time. His hands lit up with white power.

Alex looked around, seeing all the demons appear at the drop of a hat for Solomon, and wondered why they were still so loyal to him, even though he was technically their new master.

Solomon was but an echo, in here, and in theory, the only reason he was still here at all was because he wanted to see Alex grow. But the seventy-two demons were still intensely loyal to him.

'Well, seventy-one,' Alex thought, looking at Asmodeus.

This was surprising, given that Asmodeus always looked like the most docile of them, serving Solomon like a butler. But he had broken his seal only moments ago, and Solomon could tell.

"What in the world happened here, and what is this abomination you brought with you?" Solomon asked, his hands shining like two miniature suns.

Alex looked at Solomon with a frown.

"You know what happened. I know you can sense the seal on Asmodeus is gone. I felt it break, and I didn't make it. Why don't we sit and talk?" Alex said, walking toward him still.

But Solomon raised a hand toward him.

"Stay right there, boy. Something is off with you, and I want to know what, before you get closer. Otherwise, I will consider you hostile."

Alex frowned at him.

When had Solomon become so aggressive?

What Alex didn't realize was that Solomon could feel the difference in Alex's soul. The path it had embarked on.

And with his aversion to gods, his reaction was only natural.

Very few people in their lifetime could reach a place where they could start ascension to godhood. Unless another god helped them.

What he feared from Alex wasn't his new nature. It was the possibility of his new backer, what his intentions were with him, and his knowledge.

Solomon wasn't only well versed in demons, after all.

"Solomon. It's just me. Alexander," Alex said, raising his hands in a show of peace.

"I know it's you. That's not what I asked. When did you start on that path, and who is backing you?" Solomon asked again, his hands now both pointed at Alex.

The Nephilim by Alex's side was starting to feel the pressure of the old man's power, and he was getting ready mentally to fight him, only waiting for his master's command.

And the demons all around them could tell, as they felt his power well up.

Even Solomon felt the building up mana and became wary of the abomination as well. If he had to fight a fledgling god and whatever that was, he wasn't sure his demons would be enough.

And what little remained of his powers here was far from enough, either.

"Come on, boy. Give me an answer I can work with," Solomon pleaded.

"I have no backer, Solomon... I don't need one."

Chapter 905 Staged Betrayal

Solomon's face contorted in confusion. There hadn't been a new god ascending on his own in... Well, in forever.

"What do you mean, you don't need one? Did you make a deal with them to leave you alone in exchange for your help later?" Solomon asked, trying to find rhyme and reason.

Alex sighed at his fumbling.

"No, Solomon. I don't need one because I've consumed part of one... I skipped steps, according to Aravelle. And if I can fill in all the other requirements for ascension, I'll ascend with no need for their help."

Solomon frowned at him.

"Boy. What you are telling me makes no sense... Consumed part of a god? How would you even do that? No god would ever willingly give up a part of their essence to a mortal, much less one so far from the realm of legends."

Alex didn't want to waste time explaining this to him, but he wasn't sure he had a choice with the demons around oozing hostility.

"Let's sit down and talk, shall we?" he asked the old man.

"Dispel that thing, and we can talk," Solomon said, pointing at Sangis.

Alex looked at Sangis before passing his gaze over the seventy-one demons surrounding him and the Nephilim.

"What about them? Are you going to dispel them?" Alex asked, his gaze hardening as it landed back on Solomon.

"I didn't summon them. They came to my aid when I was threatened," Solomon replied.

Not only was that a lie, but Alex had yet to threaten Solomon at all. Which meant he felt threatened by his presence alone.

Alex knew Solomon was powerful since he was holding seventy-two demons bound under his thumb, even after who knew how long he had been dead. But he wondered something.

"I have a question for you, Solomon."

The old man looked at him with a narrowing guess.

"Do you remember who is wearing the signet?" Alex asked, smirking at him.

With a snap of his fingers, sixty-three of the demons disappeared, all getting sucked back into the signet ring, before Alex walked to Sangis.

"Beat them into submission, but don't kill or consume any of them. They still have their uses."

Sangis grinned devilishly, before touching the ring with the tip of his finger, and disappearing into it as well.

Solomon was astounded at the ease with which Alexander had regained control of these demons. But he wondered why the boy had left out the nine kings. He knew they were the strongest.

Wouldn't it have been safer for him to lock them away as well?

"I can hear the questions knocking around in your head, Solomon. Look, I don't want to fight you. I never have, and I never will. You are one of the few people I can trust in this fucked up world.

"But if you can't trust me, the words coming out of my mouth, and the actions I take to prove I'm telling the truth, then I have no choice but to prove it to you."

Solomon looked at him with a wary gaze.

"And how, pray tell, do you intend to prove to me you aren't some god's lackey?" Solomon asked, as his stance lowered a bit.

Alex smiled at him.

"Because the other gods would have killed these nine demon kings on sight. I won't. Instead, I'll make them willingly choose to serve me and leave you alone. If you still want to fight after that, then I guess I will have no choice..."

Asmodeus, who was still on the ground next to him, catching his breath, snickered.

"And what makes you think we would willingly follow a boy who's barely out of diapers instead of Solomon?" he mocked.

Alex turned his head toward him and grinned.

"When I created Sangis, I found out something interesting that I could do. And you are left with a choice: Follow me as mine, or become one, and submit by force," Alex said, leaning to tap his head.

Asmodeus looked at the motion, and his eyes widened after the hand touched him. But before he could utter a single word, his body vanished, replaced by a single ball of black flickering flames.

Solomon recognized this, and his eyes went wide as well.

"Have you lost your mind?! Manipulating souls?! That is not something any mortal should do! It's a grave sin against nature and Psyche!" Solomon howled, his face turning to a mask of anger.

"Psyche is dead, Solomon. I felt her die when her fragment inside, which I consumed, finally lost its tether to her soul," Alex replied, his gaze going back to a severe one.

"You consumed a fragment of Psyche's soul? This makes no sense. Why would you even have that inside you still? I saw her leave your body!" Solomon rebuked.

Alex had no time to explain the entire situation to Solomon.

The demons left around him had no intention of listening, either. The first one to move toward Alex was Paimon.

But instead of attacking him, she dashed at him and embraced him in a hug, screeching in his ear.

"Eeeee! I can finally bed a god! I've been wanting to try that for so long! Yes! I'll bend to your will! Hell, I'll bend whatever way you like!" she exclaimed, trying to drop a kiss on his lips.

Alex pushed her face away, grunting in displeasure.

"Why am I not surprised you are the first one to accept..." he mumbled, holding her at arm's length as she tried grabbing his junk.

"Alright, enough, Paimon. Settle down," he ordered, as he felt the seal on her soul vanish and the former bind back to his.

With her under him, he already had one of the nine kings of hell settled. Only eight to go.

'Well, seven, if I consider that one already cannot choose for himself,' Alex thought, as he looked at the black flames flickering next to him.

The others looked at Paimon with disgust, and she simply pulled her tongue out at them.

Solomon looked at the other demon kings and swallowed nervously. He knew them very well.

He had known them for centuries. Although they were loyal to him, they always kept their demonic sides to themselves.

Which meant they were loyal to one thing, first and foremost.

Power.

And Alex was displaying power like never before.



Controlling souls directly? Turning a demon king into his soul form with a single touch?

Even he couldn't boast of being capable of such a thing. This was indeed in the domain of the goddess of souls.

He panicked as he saw a second king walk toward Alex with a slow, measured gait.

"I heard much from you from Gäap. He says you have a lot of potential as a warrior, without counting your potential as a mage. What are your intentions, human? What do you intend to do with our power and yours once you become all-powerful?" Bael asked.

Alex smiled at him.

"It's the only logical thing. If Gaius wants to mess with the lives of millions, nay, billions of people across two worlds, then there is only one thing to do. Once I can, I'm bringing the fight to him," Alex replied, his grin widening.

Solomon instantly knew he had lost a second demon king when the seal on his soul snapped. Ever since he was dead, the old man had always known that the kings only stayed with him because they wanted to.

The seals on them were much too weak after his death. They could break out whenever they wanted.

They only stayed because new kings had risen after they were taken from hell. And the thought of returning there and reestablishing their dominion sounded like a hassle.

This was especially true since there was apparently a new power, stronger than the kings, calling himself the Demon Lord, and they refused to go from under one being to under another.

At least, Solomon treated them right.

But Alex had offered Bael something he had always wanted: a chance to duke it out with the supposed strongest beings in the universe.

Gods.

Alex felt the tether forming between him and Bael, and he smiled at him.

Bael quietly walked over to his side, looking at the other kings with expectations. He hadn't fought against them in a while, and he was itching to throw down.

Another demon king walked forward, silently, walking directly next to Alex, as the tether to his soul switched from Solomon's signet to Alex's.

Solomon looked at him in disbelief.

"Belial... I would have never thought you to betray me... You were the only king to join me willingly. What changed?"

Belial looked at Solomon with a sad smile.

"Old man, the time when you were what made my immortality interesting is long past. I've seen what is to come. I knew this moment would come to pass, way before you met the boy.

"The seals didn't weaken because you died. I weakened them in preparation for this day. I have seen his future the moment I saw yours. And his is a bright one. Much more than yours ever was. No hard feelings, okay?"

Chapter 906 Kings Bending The Knee

Solomon looked at Belial in disbelief.

"I've been dead for four thousand years, Belial. And I lived a long life. How could you have seen his future when you met me? A single diverging event, and he would have never existed. How far ahead did you have to look to see him?"

Belial sighed as he shook his head disappointingly.

"We've spent nearly five millennia together, and yet, you still don't grasp the intricacies of my abilities, Solomon. They've dubbed you the great sage, Solomon the Wise, but it seems you were never the keenest intellect, were you?" Belial taunted.

"Be careful with your words, Belial. Though I may no longer hold dominion over you, I still possess the power to erase you from existence," Solomon growled, his voice dripping with menace.

"Can you?" Belial asked with a smirk.

"Alright, knock it off," Alex intervened.

Belial looked at his new master and clicked his tongue.

"Any others who want to join while they can? Or do I have to smash all of you into one demon and force you into obedience?" Alex threatened.

Of the five remaining demon kings under Solomon, Purson and Beleth willingly walked over to Alexander's side, not too keen to determine if he was willing to go through with his threat.

But the last three stood next to Solomon, Viné and Balam glancing at Zagan, ruler of the ninth hell.

Zagan had always been the strongest amongst them, and the ruler of the seventh and eighth hell knew better than to go against his will. They were waiting to see what he chose to do here before following him.

Alex looked at them and immediately understood the dynamic.

"For kings of hell, I feel you two hold little pride in your own power. Looking up to Daddy Zagan for direction. Is that what the kings of hells amounted to back in your days? I get how you were so easily replaced, then," he mocked.

Zagan took a step forward, grinning menacingly.

"For an inferior being, you talk an awful lot of smack, human. Should I remind you why humans always feared demons? Or where that fear comes from?" Zagan asked, pulsing with a thick, dark Aether.

Alex was taken by surprise. He knew Zagan was the strongest of them, and his powers were troublesome to deal with.

But he had never thought Zagan had learned how to use Aether.

This Aether felt so corrupted that Alex was almost tempted to call it something else entirely.

The pulse reached Alex, and his vision instantly clouded over in black.

He looked around, hearing scratching and grinding around him.

"Do you think this still works against me, Zagan? Your domain of fear is merely an inconvenience nowadays. I've met things that scare me a lot more than you ever will," Alex mocked, as he also focused on his mana.

In moments, he converted a quarter of his remaining mana to Aether, and coated himself in a thin layer. This may not act as a sturdy barrier, but it kept the fear domain at bay.

"You think this flimsy layer of Aether can stop your fears from coming to the fore?" Zagan's voice echoed around him.

His voice then laughed creepily, sounding straight out of a horror movie.

Alex smirked.

"Maybe not forever, but I don't need forever. He should be done soon. And when he comes out, he'll deal with you just as easily as he dealt with Asmodeus and the sixty-three demons under you and your kin."

Zagan paused his laughing, his mind going to the thing the human had come with, and he hesitated for a single moment. It wasn't fear he felt, as he couldn't feel that emotion.

As a manifestation of fear, Zagan could not feel it, but what he did feel, was a great apprehension about the Nephilim.

Like it didn't belong to the realm of logic.

"Do you really think that thing can deal with all sixty-three demons you locked it with, including our Princes and Marquises? That is an awful lot of confidence you put into such a young being. Do you not fear it will lose?" Zagan taunted.

But Alex chuckled in response.

"I heard from your subordinates that you can't feel fear. I wonder if Sangis can change that for you?" he mocked.

The space around Alex trembled as Zagan began to feel anger welling inside him.

His domain of fear wasn't a skill where he could attack or hurt his enemy. It served the purpose of locking them in place until their minds broke, and then he could go to town on them with little effort.

It was why he made it to King as fast as he did when he came into existence. Once he used his fear domain, nothing could stop him from devouring his prey and growing in power.

But it wasn't working on Alexander at all. The flimsy layer of Aether the boy had coated himself with was holding the mana from the domain at bay, keeping it from corrupting his mind.

Zagan's uncertain voice echoed around Alex, who was simply waiting things out inside the domain.

"Why aren't you scared? Humans always fear something. Why aren't your fears eating you alive?" he asked, confused.

With a scoff, Alex replied, "Would you fear a battle you've already won?"

Before Zagan could ask what he meant, a violent impact on his face knocked his concentration away, and the domain was dispelled.

When his eyes came back into focus, he was on the ground, blood trickling from his mouth, and the thing was standing above him with a neutral face.

Black and purple blood covered its body as it leaned forward toward Zagan.

"Your choice, demon. Servitude or demise?" Sangis' two-tone voice asked.

Zagan looked at the Nephilim and growled at him.

He saw the two other kings of hell kneeling in front of Alex, fear evident on their faces. Whatever the Nephilim had done before attacking him, they were terrified and didn't dare look in his direction.

"Choose, now. Do not make my master wait."

Zagan turned his face toward Solomon, who looked at him grimly.

Solomon had already understood what was to happen. Even if he fought against the boy he had once thought was so weak, there would be no good outcome.

Alex could leave the ring whenever he wanted, and Solomon had no way to replenish his spent power. His lack of a vessel meant he could only use the mana he had in this fragment.

Once it was depleted, he would vanish.

And Alex seemed aware of this.

Once he felt the two tethers latch to his soul, Alex turned to the floating orb of black fire beside him.

"I'll give you one last chance, Asmodeus. Cross me again, and you'll disappear faster than you can say, 'Wait,'" Alex said, snapping his fingers again.

The orb took the shape of Asmodeus again. He was sweating profusely and looked at Alex with a look of horror on his face.

"You madman! Do you realize what you threatened to do?! It's blasphemy!" Asmodeus howled.

But Alex laughed at his comment.

"That's rich, coming from a demon. Give me your answer, or you can return to being a piece of an unfinished puzzle. What will it be?"

Asmodeus looked at the other kings, hoping one would help him, but he quickly realized they weren't even looking him in the eyes. Some even looked at him with disdain.

"What in the nine hells happened?" he mumbled.

"I don't have all day, demon," Alex barked.

"Why would I follow you? What good would it do me? What do I have to win by staying at the side of someone like you?" Asmodeus mocked.

Alexander grinned at him.

"The luxury of staying yourself," he replied.

Asmodeus shivered at the thought. He could tell by the Nephilim's traits that he was in pain every so often.

Did he want to end up like that?

"You have three seconds, you demonic ass hat. Three. Two. One—"

As Alex raised his hand to snap his fingers, Asmodeus threw himself on his knees, shouting, "Wait! Please wait! I'll swear fealty!"

Alex grinned at him.

"Smart choice. Bind yourself to me. And if I feel any funny business in the seal, I'll rescind your safety."

Asmodeus shook his head, fear the only thought on his mind.

He refused to become an abomination, a mixture of two beings. He would never let that happen.

He promptly tied his soul to Alex's, being meticulous in his sealing mark, so Alex didn't take any of the runes as a betrayal.

Solomon stood by, knowing he couldn't do anything about what was happening. For all his might in life, he was only an echo of his previous self.

Zagan watched as the last of his peers switched allegiances to this farce of a human being.

He spat at the Nephilim's feet.

"You and your master can both go fuck yourselves. I would never bind myself to a being who thinks he can take on gods and win. Solomon at least had the wit never to confront them directly."

Turning his head toward Solomon, Zagan smiled.

"You never showed fear, even in the direst of moments. I respected you, Solomon. And so, for you, I offer my life."

Chapter 907 A Spell That Shapes The Future

The following action he took baffled Solomon, and took Alexander by surprise.

Zagan stabbed his right hand into his chest, quicker than Sangis could react, and as he did, he grabbed onto his own soul and crushed it.

There was no agonizing cry, or drifting away of a life behind his eyes. His death was instantaneous.

But he died with a big grin on his lips, and his left hand in a show of bad faith toward Alexander.

Alex looked at the scene and wasn't sure whether to scoff or plainly laugh. This was extreme, even for a demon king.

Even the other kings were looking at Zagan's body, as it started burning away, with their mouths agape and their eyes wide.

Solomon extinguished the spell he'd been holding in his hands, knowing this was a useless endeavour.

"Zagan... You fool..."

But as the body burned away, a single pulse of Aether resounded in the ring's enclosed space. And Alex knew instantly why the demon had done what he did.

"Sangis! Stop the body from burning out!"

But the Nephilim reacted too late, and the last ember flickered out of existence. The next moment, the space pulsed again, this time as runes in a dark crimson suddenly lined the walls.

Although Alex couldn't read the runes or understand their meaning, he could tell this was a spell of massive proportions. But someone in here could read these runes.

Solomon looked at the runes with wide eyes. He was conflicted between horror and amazement.

Horror in what was about to happen, but amazed that Zagan had learned these runes from watching him etch them so many times before.

These were binding runes—but not just any kind.

Solomon smiled and muttered some words before Alexander, along with the eight demon kings and Sangis, were kicked out of the space.

As Alex was thrust back into his own mind space, gasping at the force of the transfer, he felt the connection between him and the Ring of Solomon shatter.

Looking down at his hand, he watched as the ring turned from its jade green to a deep red and then an obsidian black before it turned to ashes.

"What the fuck is happening?! Solomon? Solomon!" Alex shouted, trying to reach the old man.

But the connection was gone.

And with it, the sixty-three demons still within the ring...

Spinning toward Belial, Alex barked, "Did you see this happening?!"

Belial was just as shocked as Alexander, and it was visible on his face.

"I... I did not... I foresaw Solomon no longer existing after this event. But I had no idea how he would die..."

Purson stepped forward.

"I couldn't read the runes, but I recognized the essence of the spell. It's a spell I never thought Zagan could pull off..."

Alex snapped his head toward him, his eyes furious.

There was a moment of silence before Alex snapped.

"Well?! Spit it out already!"

Purson sighed, before opening his mouth to speak.

"It was a sealing spell, mixed in with a spell Zagan could never have used without a massive amount of power, since it's not his domain. I'm guessing that is why he used his soul as a catalyst, and the rest of the demons as fuel..."

Alex was still glaring at him, waiting for the answer.

"Zagan sealed Solomon's soul to the ring, using it as a vessel for it, and used his soul as a catalyst, and the demons as fuel, to create a new body. He offered up sixty-three of our kin, to restore Solomon to life in a demon body..."

This news hit Alex like a sledgehammer.

Not only had he lost an incredible number of demons at his disposal, but he had also lost the fount of knowledge that was Solomon. Once the demons had bent to him, he had no intention of harming Solomon.

He respected the old man. But, once again, his rash actions had cost him dearly.

Alex roared in rage, realizing the impact this would have on the timeline.

The demon Solomon would reincarnate into wouldn't be in this world, or even in New Eden. No.

It would be too powerful to be born across the veil, even as this as it was. There was only one place it could appear.

The demon plane.

And he knew for sure this demon would be born with power unmatched in that realm.

"There is another problem..." Belial said, dragging their attention to him as he squirmed uncomfortably.

"How much worse could this turn out to be?" Alex spat.

11:47

"The spell... It also contained an essence of time... I don't think the reborn Solomon will be reborn now... I think he might have been regressed through time, toward the past..."

Alex's blood drained from his face.

"How far?" Alex asked, his words quivering.

"I... have no idea..."

"How far back, Belial?!" Alex shouted, grabbing the demon by the shoulders.

"I don't know!" Belial shouted back, scared to answer.

But Sangis' two-toned voice cut in between them.

"One thousand four hundred and seventy-two years," he said, intoning the words, as if to mark the gravitas of the situation.

Alex looked at him with horror.

"Fuck... No... No no no! Fuck!"

The demons weren't sure why he was reacting like that, but Sangis knew. He shared memories with Alex, after all.

Alex dropped to his ass, realizing the gravity of the situation.

"This can't be... It can't happen..."

A voice started resounding around him, and it took a moment for him to recognize it.

"...up!..."

"Al... ke... up!"

"Kary?" Alex muttered, as he realized his body had probably been motionless all this time on the outside.

Even if time went by slower in the mind space, there had probably been a few minutes outside.

He focused on bringing his mind back outside and saw that he was sitting with his back on the railing of his balcony.

"Alex! What the hell happened?!" Kary exclaimed as she saw his eyes flutter open.

"Huh?"

"You reappeared on the balcony, and then suddenly your eyes went black, before you stopped moving and then collapsed on the ground, unresponsive. What happened?" she asked, her voice panicky.

"I went to deal with Constantine, and when I returned, Asmodeus tried taking control of my body. But it's okay; I dealt with it," Alex said, straightening himself up.

Kary looked at him in disbelief.

"What about the ring? Why did that disappear?" she asked, worried he had lost his legacy for some reason.

He slapped his hands in his face, a mix of grief and regret overcoming him, as he groaned.

"Urgh... I don't want to think about this right now..."

Kary frowned.

"Alex, what happened while you were out? The ring turned black and crumbled to ashes. Did you argue with Solomon? Did he rescind the legacy?"

Alex started lightly knocking the back of his head on the glass railing...

\*Thump\*

\*Thump\*

\*Thump\*

He remained quiet, processing his thoughts as best he could in the tumult of the events that had just transpired.

Kary knew it was better to let him deal for a few moments and refrained from pushing him, but she was impatient for answers.

Solomon's legacy was a big part of them being alive right now. At least it had saved him many a time in the past.

Both when the demon had appeared in the compound, and when he used the demon's powers against the goblins in Nebraska.



That was without counting how he had teleported in front of Violette, saving her life, almost two months back, as the Raijū had tried killing her.

Those powers, even though demonic in nature, were valuable assets.

If he had lost the legacy, that meant he had lost valuable tools. And there was no telling who would get it next, and what they would do with it.

Hearing him sigh, Kary focused on him again.

"Alex... Tell me what happened. Is the legacy gone? Did you fight with Solomon because of Asmodeus?"

Alex shook his head no.

"That's not it... It's so much worse..."

Kary was getting fidgety by the lack of answers coming from his mouth, and Alex could tell she was losing patience. But the situation, if he guessed it right, was bad enough that he wasn't sure he should tell anyone at all.

But he had promised her not even a week ago that there would be no more secrets between them. So he bit the bullet, hoping she wouldn't freak out.

"I fought with Solomon. He felt the change in my soul and became wary, but that's not the issue. When the demons all chose to stand by his side, even though I'm their master, I got pissed.

"I might have reacted out of proportion. Now, the legacy is gone, and we have an even bigger problem on our hands..."

Kary looked at him, her eyes almost boring through his skull.

"What problem?"

Alex sighed again, locking eyes with her.

"One of the demon kings did something and took away the ring. He used it, along with the demons I hadn't bound to me yet, and created a new body for Solomon..."

Kary frowned.

"Isn't that a good thing? I recall you telling me Solomon was a good person."

Sighing again, Alex rubbed his face tiredly.

"You don't understand. He didn't create a human body... He created a demonic one, with the power of sixty-three combined demons, ranging from marquis' to counts... In the demon plane... back over a thousand years in the past..."

Kary's eyes went progressively wide.

"Do you mean..."

"Yes... I mean that I think I just inadvertently created our worst enemy through my stupid actions... I think I just caused the birth of the demon lord..."

Chapter 908 Heavenly Sandwich

Kary was stupefied, for a moment, taking in his words like thunderbolts to her brain.

"Excuse me, what?"

Alex looked at her with regret-filled eyes.

"I think I caused Zagan to feel wronged enough that he decided to do an unthinkable spell and created the demon lord..."

"You're going to have to walk me through this in detail. Your words are reaching my brain, but they aren't computing..." Kary said, stunned.

So Alex did just that. He took the time to explain the situation that had happened with Constantine, first, since that was a part of the story, before he moved on to the incident with Asmodeus, that led to the one with Solomon.

He remained seated on the cold cement floor of his balcony, his back against the glass railing, for what felt like an eternity recounting the events. By the time he finished, Kary was also on the ground, her mind reeling in disbelief and shock.

Alex looked at her with saddened eyes, wondering what she would think of him.

But contrary to his thoughts, when she looked up at him, there was no blame in her eyes, no disdain or anger.

She leaned in to hug him, realizing the weight he now had to carry on his mind.

Yes, he had inadvertently caused the birth of their biggest threat. But the fault was not his alone to bear.

"It's not your fault. I think the situation escaped all of you. I don't think Solomon wanted this, either. Or Zagan. Your hand might have been forceful in your demand for loyalty, but it would have to come at some point, wouldn't it?" Kary asked, keeping him in her embrace.

Alex took a second to reply, trying to imagine what he could have done differently. But he knew he would eventually have to confront the kings for their loyalty.

Even though Asmodeus had lent him his power on multiple occasions, he always had hidden intent. He was always waiting for that moment of weakness, the one that he had jumped on today.

Given their demonic nature and cunning minds, Alex knew that this day would have had to come at some point.

Would it have turned out differently? Probably.

However, Alex knew very little about Zagan, aside from his powers. He had no insight into the demon's inner musings, or how his mind worked.

The chance of Zagan never bowing to him was ever-present. Maybe with more power, he could have stopped him from committing the irreparable.

But Zagan looked prepared when he cast his spell, as if this had been on his mind for a while.

Would he ever have let Alex stop him?

Realizing the implications of all these moving pieces alleviated Alex's guilt a little.

"Eventually, I would have had to confront them and demand their obedience, yes," Alex replied to Kary's question.

"Then I guess it was just a matter of when. Not how. If Zagan was ready to go through with this, and pulled it off without too much of a hitch, then he knew what he was doing," Kary said, trying to ease his guilt more.

She refused to blame him for something that he had no control over. A spell this intricate, she knew as a magic user, was something that required time to learn, craft, and prepare for.

This wasn't a spur-of-the-moment action. If he hadn't done it today, it would have happened in the near future.

"Let's just go inside and have a moment to rest. I think you need it," Kary said, getting back to her feet.

She helped Alex up, as he looked downtrodden, and pulled him inside by his arm.

Alex let her pull him along to the kitchen island, where she sat him down, before she started pulling out ingredients from the fridge.

"I will make you the best sandwich you ever tasted, and I hope that cheers you up. Okay?" she told him, softly.

Alex nodded his head, still lost in thought.

He wanted to stop blaming himself and believe that this was not his fault. To believe that it would have happened eventually, regardless of what he did.

But it was easier said than done, especially given how it had happened today.

He barely saw Kary zooming around the kitchen as she toasted bread, lightly seared some bologna, cut some crunchy lettuce and tomatoes, and built him a monster of a sandwich.

There were three slices of bread in there, along with what looked like an ungodly amount of meat, plenty of vegetables, some cheese slices, white, of course, and what looked like mayo.

She pushed the small plate in front of him, leaning on the island across from him, smiling brightly, as she tried to get him to perk up.

"Cmon. Eat up before the tomatoes make the rest of the sandwich soggy. It'll cheer you right up."

Alex looked at her and smiled weakly.

"Thanks," he mumbled.

But the moment he bit through the mountain of ingredients before him, his eyes widened.

He munched on the sandwich like it owed him money and looked at her with disbelief after every bite.

"What did you put in there?!" he asked, his mouth still full of half-chewed food.

"This tastes like heaven just ejaculated in my mouth!" he added.

Kary burst into laughter at his choice of words.

"Well, that is an image that will live rent-free in my mind forever, hahaha!" she exclaimed, burying her face in her elbow to laugh, face down on the counter.

Alex wasn't sure why she found it so funny, given it was the most accurate way he found to describe the taste and texture of what he had in his mouth.

The creaminess and the sweet-sour taste mixed perfectly with the meat's crunchiness and the lettuce's crispiness.

It was perfect. The perfect fucking sandwich.

"Seriously. What did you put in there? You should have this on a menu somewhere..." Alex said, stopping his scarfing, to tell her.

Kary shook her head.

"Nope. This is a secret recipe that my mom made for me when I was a kid. I'm not selling this to anyone. But I can tell you, if you promise not to tell anyone else," she said, winking at him.

Alex's eyes widened as he nodded frantically.

"My lips are sealed!" he exclaimed.

"Alright, then. The secret ingredient is in the dressing. You see, I didn't use mayonnaise, like most people would in a sandwich like this. I made my own dressing," Kary said, leaning in closer to him.

Alex hung on her every word like they were gospel, waiting for her to reveal her secret dressing.

"Instead of plain mayonnaise, I mix whipped cream cheese with a drop of lemon juice and some sweet mayonnaise, like Miracle Whip.

Alex shrugged, diving back into the sandwich. In a sense, she knew she was right about her claim on simplicity.

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"Once all mixed up together, it makes this rich, creamy, yet refreshing dressing. It goes perfectly with lettuce and tomatoes and boosts the crunchiness of the roasted bologna. But you can't tell anyone else," she revealed, winking at him.

It sounded so simple that Alex had trouble believing it was just those ingredients.

"Nothing more to it than that? Three ingredients?" he asked, baffled.

"I'll have you know that most good recipes don't require an arsenal of ingredients, love. Sometimes, simplicity is the way to go," she said, smirking at him.

Alex shrugged, diving back into the sandwich. In a sense, she knew she was right about her claim on simplicity.

He rarely ever saw his mother make complicated meals, and he never complained about taste. Her claim had to be rooted in the same logic he imagined.

He devoured the sandwich in minutes, asking for more, but Kary denied him seconds.

"One is enough. Don't overindulge, piglet," she jokingly called him.

"I want some too, you know?" she added, making a second sandwich for herself.

Alex watched her eat the sandwich with greedy eyes. Kary almost felt like she was eating something in front of a hungry dog.

It was almost cute if it wasn't that she was sure that Alex would jump on the sandwich if she left it unattended for a second.

Once that was done, she cleaned up the kitchen, putting everything away before she dragged his ass to the sofa.

"Let's just lay down and cuddle. That should help you relax a bit and forget what just happened, if only momentarily. What do you say?"

Alex wasn't sure it would help him forget, but it would ease his regret temporarily, at least. And he could use that.

They lay down on the massive sofa, Kary on the L part of it, as Alex rested his head on her lap, and she gently stroked his hair.

In minutes, Alex was already falling asleep, forgetting everything about the situation that had transpired. He fell into dreams of a peaceful life somewhere away from the city, where he and Kary enjoyed each other's company.

The dreams went from them alone, to them with kids, and them raising grandchildren, as age caught up to them.

Alex would have liked to never wake up from these dreams if he could. But fate was a cruel mistress.

#### Chapter 909 A Call Sooner Than Expected

As he was deep in the realm of dreams, a call came through on his neurophone, waking him up from his sweet reverie.

Startling awake, Kary looked at him in surprise at his sudden jumping up.

"Nightmare?" she asked him, wondering why he jumped up so suddenly.

"No, someone is calling me," Alex replied, rubbing his still-tired eyes.

He didn't recognize the number, and half wondered who it could be.

He cleared his throat so as not to sound freshly awakened and picked up the call.

"Hello."

"Alex! Alex, you have to come now! I accept your deal, but I need you here right now!"

Alex winced as the screaming entered his brain.

"Ahh, do you have to shout? What's going on, Elise?" he asked, rising to his feet.

"There is no time to explain, Alex! You need to be here now! The Los Segadores have taken people and are threatening to kill them publicly if the police try to do something about it!"

"The what now?" Alex asked, confused.

"The gang, you moron! They've taken Anthony and his father, Diego!"

Alex went from confused to serious in seconds. The mention of the gang, along with the kidnapping of two honest people trying to eke out a living, snapped his attention into focus.

"I'll be right there," he said before hanging up.

Kary looked at him with a confused gaze.

"Who is Elise? And why were you talking out loud on your neuro-phone? You know that picks up your thoughts, right?"

Alex paused, realizing she was right.

"Old habits, I guess... As for your first question, I'm trying to get Elise on our side when we leave to resolve matters worldwide. She is awakened—a powerful one, too. But I can paint you the full picture later. She needs me to take care of something, and I have to go."

Kary's frown deepened.

"I'm coming with you. You promised you wouldn't leave me behind, and you've already done it once today. I may have turned a blind eye for Constantine, but I'm not turning a blind eye now."

Alex was about to say no to her, but her words reminded him of his promise.

"Fine. But it's going to be dangerous. I don't want you dying, so be careful," he asked her, grabbing her hand.

As his skin turned black, and horns grew on his head, Alex melded with Asmodeus, expanding his senses as far as he could, and found where Elise was in a flash.

The next moment, both he and Kary were no longer in his penthouse and were standing on a busy side street, with the clamour of a crowd not too far from them.

He was behind Elise and returned to his human form before tapping her on the shoulder.

She snapped around, her fist suddenly raised in a punching motion, but stopped before hitting Alex as she recognized his face.

"Don't fucking startle me like that! I was about to punch your stupid face..."

Alex chuckled at her.

"Yeah, I saw. How bad is the situation?" he asked, wanting to get straight to business.

But Elise and Kary both cleared their throat.

"Pretty rude of you not to introduce us," Kary said admonishingly.

"Yeah, what she said," Elise added.

Alex sighed loudly, getting glares from the two of them.

"I thought you said this was urgent?" he asked.

But both of them looked at him with daggers in their eyes.

"Fine. Kary, Elise. Elise, this is Kary. There, all caught up. Now, situation, please?" Alex blurted in rapid fire.

Both women glared at him for his bluntness, but smiled at each other.

"I take it you're his girlfriend. I don't envy you. This man is a caveman," Elise said, smiling at Kary.

"Right?!" Kary exclaimed.

"It's a pleasure to meet a fellow awakened woman. We are here to help. What is going on, and what can we do?" Kary added, presenting her hand to Elise.

Elise gripped her paw and shook it with a solid grip, but Kary's strength in return impressed her.

"Like I told the dolt over the phone, the local gang kidnapped two people and is now holding them hostage in their hideout. They say they'll kill them both publicly if the police try to stick their nose in it.

"The police are cowering two streets further down, trying to get a negotiator to them to calm down the situation. But the gang has already fired warning shots at the negotiator they tried sending.

"They don't know what to do anymore, and are thinking of withdrawing."

Alex frowned at the cowardly actions of the local law enforcement. Weren't they supposed to serve and protect?

What was with the cowardly attitudes?

He was also slightly peeved that Elise was explaining the situation to Kary, but he passed over his grievances and taking action.

"Fill her up, Elise. I'll go have a chat with the police and see what all the fuss is about," Alex said, before walking toward the police barricade.

Elise nodded at him, and Kary looked at him, worried he would jump into the action without her again.

But Alex smiled at her and winked, reassuring her wordlessly that he would wait for her backup.

He quickly went through the crowd surrounding the nearby streets and reached the police barricade.

"Stop right there, sir! This is a restricted area!" an officer barked at him, his hand already on his gun.

"Get me the one in charge of this mess, officer," Alex ordered.

"Excuse me?" the officer asked, looking at him with a frown.

"You heard me. Get me the one in charge, before I go find him myself."

"Who the fuck do you think you are, sir?!" the officer asked, pumping out his chest and shoulders.

Alex looked at him in disdain, almost triggering the officer to pull out his firearm.

But a voice echoed from behind him, and de-escalated the situation.

"Stand down, Officer Parks. I know this little hoodlum, and you don't want him to start another situation. What do you want, Mr. Leduc?" the familiar man asked, as he walked over to Alex.

"Detective Trudeau! How quaint to meet you here!" Alex exclaimed, recognizing the man in uniform.

"It's Sergeant Trudeau, now, kid. You haven't answered my question. What are you doing here?"

Alex smiled wide at him.

"Would you mind if we talked somewhere more private? Your goons don't need to hear what I have to say."

The officer looked at Alex with rising anger, half-tempted to step across the police line and slap the shit out of him.

But the officer shivered at how he grinned back at him, with absolute confidence in his eyes.

'What the fuck is wrong with this dude?' he wondered.

"Now, now, young man. You don't need to go around taunting my men. Come into the barricade. I'll bring you to a van, and we can talk in peace," the Sergeant said, lifting the police tape up.

Alex nodded, bending under the tape, and following the ex-detective to a van parked on the side a few feet from them.

He opened the back and climbed in, inviting Alexander inside as well. And before closing the doors, he looked at Officer Parks and said, "Let no one in here, or I'll have you on traffic duty for the rest of your career. Understood?"

The man paled at the words and nodded frantically, guarding the van as if his life depended on it—which it kind of did, considering traffic duty was a career killer.

Once they were both comfortably seated inside, the Sergeant looked at Alex with tired eyes.

"Seriously, kid. What are you doing here? This situation is already tense. If it escalates any further, I'll have to order my men into a shootout with an armed gang. There are fifty of them in that shithole they call a hideout. I only have thirty officers.

"Please tell me you aren't here to stir shit up..."

Alex looked at him with a face that screamed, 'Sorry, man.'

"I'm afraid I'm not the bearer of good news, Sergeant Trudeau. You see, the people they are holding hostage? Well, I know them. And someone else, to whom I owe a favour, also knows them and likes them."

The Sergeant sighed loudly.

"Then why did you come here instead of starting directly when you arrived? We both know you are fully capable of finishing this in minutes. I've seen what you did in the Bianchi Compound..."

Alex's eyebrow raised.

"The what of who, now?" he asked, faking ignorance.

"Oh, don't you bullshit me, son. I'm not born of the last rain. I saw the state of the compound. Even if your cleaners removed the bodies, it was easy to reconstruct from the damage to the place. And I knew of only one person capable of doing that kind of damage."

Alex chuckled.

"You haven't seen the start of what I can do, Trudeau. But that's not why I came here."

"Then, spit it out, already."



Alex grinned at him before becoming serious.

"I came here to ask you and your men to vacate the area and evacuate all civilians. When I go in there, I don't there to be stray bullets that hit bystanders. Clean the area up for me, and I'll get rid of the problem."

Chapter 910 Thirty Seconds

Sergeant Trudeau stared at Alex with uncertainty.

"I can't do that, kid. I know what you intend to do. There is no way I'll let the possible deaths go up from two to fifty. These people need to be brought to justice, not sent to hell. This isn't how society should work. We aren't in the dark ages anymore."

Alex smirked at him.

"How long will this pretense of society hold up once people start dying, Trudeau? Do you think the family and friends of these two hostages will stay on the side and do nothing after Anthony and Diego die?"

The Sergeant looked at him with a frown.

"How do you know the hostages' names?"

A chuckle escapes Alex's lips.

"Did you think I just passed nearby and jumped at the action? I was called here. I may not know the entire situation yet, but that shouldn't take too long. Once I hear the breadth of it, I will choose whether to go soft-handed or hard-handed.

"The questions are the following: Will your men still be there to interfere with the results? Will civilians get caught in the crossfire? Or will you do the right thing, and protect those that deserve to be protected?"

The Sergeant was left in a difficult position.

Either he stopped Alexander from acting, or rather, tried stopping him, and this devolved into a three-way standoff. Or he let him take action and evacuated the up-right people of the neighbourhood to ensure they stayed out of harm's way.

He was stuck between deciding the fate of honest people over the lives of a bunch of thugs. In any other circumstance, this choice would have been easy.

But he knew what awaited these thugs. It was nothing pretty.

Alex let him stew for a few seconds, as he knew the weight of the decision he was asking him to take. But as he was about to tell him to hurry up and choose, the radio on his shoulder screeched alive.

"Sir! The Los Segadores are bringing out someone in their front yard! I think it's one of the hostages!"

Alex's face grew stiff instantly.

'Fuck! Are they losing patience with the cops hanging around? If they kill either one of the hostages, Elise will chew my head off, and she'll never join us.'

The Sergeant grabbed his radio.

"Do you see weapons?!"

"Yes, sir! They looked armed, all of them!"

He clicked his tongue in anger.

"Did any of you morons try to be a hero and go against my orders to stand down? Why are they suddenly reacting like this?"

"It wasn't us, sir! A civilian walked up and yelled something at them! And now they are all getting riled up! There are more and more of them walking out and taking position in the windows!"

Alex heard this and frowned.

'Who the fuck is stupid enough to walk up on a gang and rile them up?' he thought.

But a person's face crossed his mind, and his face dropped.

'Don't tell me...'

His neuro-phone rang in his ear, and his blood froze. It was Kary calling him.

He quickly answered, trying hard not to speak his words out loud.

"What is it? I'm trying to get the police to back down. What is happening over there?" he asked, not even saying 'hello,' first.

"You'll never guess who showed up here, telling me to call you and stay out of this..."

Alex's mind jerked to a stop.

"Please tell me you told him to fuck off..."

"Trust me, nothing pleased me more than doing it. But he doesn't care. He told us he was going to solve our problem, as he always intended to do. I don't think this will end well for these guys. But I'm afraid he'll get Anthony and Diego killed..."

While the Sergeant shouted at his men to get the situation under control, and get the civilians away before this turned into a shootout, Alex kicked the van doors open.

"Where the fuck are you going?! Is this your doing?!" Sergeant Trudeau barked at Alex.

"If it were, I wouldn't have to jump in! I don't have time to entertain you anymore! This guy is going to kill everyone, and he isn't going to be careful about it! If I don't get those hostages out, they'll die, too!" Alex shouted back, as he jumped into the sky, wings appearing on his back.

He flew as quickly as he physically could, crossing the few streets' distance in seconds, before borrowing Asmodeus' powers again, and reaching into the building, where three thugs were guarding another person.

He pulled on his essence, teleporting him away from them and into his arms as he landed in the front yard, pushing away the thugs encircling Diego, who was on his knees, and wrapping his wings around the three of them, forming a dome.

Bullets immediately started tearing the air, as the thugs reacted to the sudden appearance of another person on their turf. Alex held his wings in place, until the dinging of metal on metal stopped, and the gunshots died down.

Pulling them back, a dust cloud surrounded him and the two people before him as the bullets ricocheted off his wings and into the dry ground around him. And there were not just a few holes around him.

The ground at his feet looked like a strainer, and the holes were still smoking.

He heard a familiar voice from outside the dust cloud and growled.

"Stand back, hero. I got this," David said, arrogance heavy in his tone.

"Boss! Who the fuck is that guy?! We just emptied forty clips on him, and he's still standing!" a thug sitting on a windowsill in the house's second floor asked.

Alex teleported out, taking Diego and Anthony with him, but not before whispering just loud enough for David and, unfortunately, Anthony, who was in his arms, to hear.

"Try not to kill bystanders, you fucking moron."

David burst out into laughter as the dust settled, the yard now empty of Alex and the two hostages.

"Hahahaha! You asked me if I was the hero, when I got here, didn't you, tough guy?" he asked the boss, who was standing behind a row of armed men, who were done reloading their guns.

"What kind of fucking loony are you?! You just saw us blaze this dude up, and you stood there, with not a shit to give!" the gangster shouted back.

David laughed again.

"If bullets were enough to take care of that guy, he would have been dead a long time ago. You don't have what it takes to leave a scratch on him. That one, he was the hero. He swooped in to save the hostages you were holding.

"Me? I couldn't care less if they died or not. Taking out fifty scumbags in exchange for two lives? That's a bargain in my book. I told you earlier I wasn't the hero. Let me tell you what I really am!" David shouted, raising his hands in the sky.

His shadow started shaking under his feet, but the thug didn't care to wait and see what was about to happen.

"Light him up! Make him regret he was ever born, as he meets with god!" the thug boss ordered.

Guns blazed again, this time aimed at the street.

There was no metallic echo this time, and the thug laughed as he imagined this douche getting riddled with holes for fucking with him.

Once the clips were emptied again, the man on the window sill couldn't believe his eyes.

As David had been standing in the street, there was no dust to kick up, and he remained clear as day.

Standing before him, a figure towering by a head's height looked at the thugs as his leather armour smoked from the bullets that had hit him so many times.

And behind him, David started laughing like a madman.

"Ahahahaha! You thought bullets would deal with me? Ahahahaha! I may not be the hero of this story. But let me tell you what I am, gentlemen. I am not here to save people. I am here to take what is due. I AM DEATH, AND YOUR LIVES ARE MINE!" David roared, as his shadow suddenly covered the entire front yard.

Not even a second later, hands started popping out of it, as an army of skeletons, zombies, ghouls, ghosts, and revenants popped out of the ground, dozens at a time, surrounding the men by sheer force of numbers.

The yard was so full of undead that you couldn't throw a rock without hitting an undead of some sort. And they looked ravenous as their eyes gleamed red.

"Feast, my friends! Feast on the flesh of the sinful! Send them to our father, Hades!" David shouted, as the undead jumped into action, the Death Knight standing at his side, grinning at the massacre that took place.

The undead outnumbered the living by five to one, and it was all over in thirty seconds. But those thirty seconds would forever be engraved in the onlookers' minds, whether they were present or watching through the live feed from the overhead drones.

And they would remember the screams and blood until the day they died, whether that be sooner or later.