

RE: DEITY - THE BREATH OF CREATION

3:6 Formations

Elvira flared her wings, white light spilling off of her as she lifted the whole of the Holy Mountain. Her muscles strained as she held the entire thing aloft and steady, the white energy of heaven blowing past her in roaring streams that would even strip the flesh off of some of the weaker gods. Her golden hair whipped about her head, jaw clenched as she watched her husband and a few other elemental gods rush about below, setting up a massive formation node beneath the Holy Mountain, desperately shielding themselves from the wind.

“You alright, dear?” Gilles called, readjusting a portion of the node before running another test on it. White light flashed amongst the intricate carvings and rune of the purely crystalline o-shaped node, no sparks or other signs of damage showing, and Gilles cut the power.

“Just fine. Take your time,” Elvira answered through grit teeth, a bit of hair blowing in her mouth that had her spluttering and spitting. The Holy Mountain wasn’t necessarily heavy for her anymore, but she’d been holding it up for quite a while now and it was starting to wear on her, not that she’d ever willingly show it. Most of the other nodes wouldn’t need quite as much time or effort to build, but as this was the central node for all the Heaven Realm and one of four key nodes for the formation itself, some extra care had to be put into it.

Tunnels also had to be dug so they could come back to the node and tweak it if needed, without lifting up the entire damnable mountain again. That, at least, was fairly simple, if difficult for some of the gods to come to terms with the fact that the Holy Mountain was not so easily manipulated. Like her, it was strong and stable, firm in its roots and position. The materials that comprised it and the energy that ran through it only really answered to her, and Father.

“Maybe you should start doing this as your workout,” Gilles said casually, swiping with one hand to fully activate the formation. The other elemental gods scrambled away as it lit up in a brilliant display, white and black swirling together in the circular construct, whirling to create a blurring, rapidly rotating mixture of the two colors. Other energies were naturally attracted to the two, from

the grey of the Physical Realm to the translucent of the Spiritual, combining and spinning until they were all perfectly balanced.

“Oh sure, great idea, let’s uproot the entire Holy Mountain every time I feel like bench pressing something. That’ll work out *fine*.” If she had a *century* she wouldn’t be able to list all the reasons that was a terrible idea. Even if she did need something new to help her train her physical body, that was just idiotic.

“Okay, everyone get clear! The node is running beautifully, let’s get out of the way so Elvira can put the Mountain back in place!” Gilles shouted, shooting out from beneath the Mountain in an explosion of shadow. The other gods followed as quickly as they could, though Elvira waited a few extra minutes past when the last god had gotten clear just in case. With a grunt she let herself slowly descend into the formation node, the Mountain settling back in place perfectly with her beneath it. The node’s swirling energy stabilized further the moment the Holy Mountain’s familiar weight was back in its proper place, the energy it itself created partially feeding down into the formation nexus and a little storage space below.

Already she could feel energetic crystals starting to form there, as well as in the surrounding room, which was barely two miles tall and only a few hundred miles across. That the key formation point was hardly even big enough to be considered a drop in the bucket compared to the size of the Heaven Realm itself was surprising to her – but, she couldn’t argue with its effectiveness. Elvira took a few extra moments to just observe and ensure the entire thing was functioning properly before taking the exit tunnels out from beneath the Mountain. Gilles was waiting for her when she emerged in her throne room, the tunnel entrance hidden beneath Father’s unused throne. She pushed the stone used to hide it back in place and activated the perception filters, so no one could actively search for it besides those with the key.

While not necessary to hide it, she did want to limit the amount of influence other beings could have on the node, hence the secrecy of the entrance. Lifting the entire Mountain was hard to hide, so secrecy of the project was entirely out of the question.

Besides, at this point everyone knew something was going on, even if they didn’t know what.

“It’s looking stable. We’ll have to see how it reacts when we start connecting the other nodes, but these are promising first results.” Gilles said, sliding up to stand beside her as he stared at a flat slate of pure white marble. It reacted to various energies and was attuned to the formation proper, letting him analyze certain parameters without having to actually go down to the node itself. Not everyone could have Father’s eyesight, after all, and the Holy Mountain was so dense with energy that even Gilles struggled to peer through it sometimes. She wrapped him in a one-armed hug, her wings folding around her husband as she rested her chin on his shoulder.

“Everything looked and felt fine while I was down there. That Father didn’t feel the need to come correct or adjust anything is a good sign as well.” She mumbled. “He’ll be by eventually I am sure, if for no other reason than to check on the crystal formations, once they’ve matured.” Gilles nodded in agreement, distracted though he was by the stone in his hand. Elvira peered at it, the flat stone slab flashing with golden numbers and symbols. She of course knew what they meant, but why use that little trinket when she could physically feel the state of the node? She was the creator and god of the entire Heaven Realm, there was no one, besides Father, who could best her when it came to knowing her own Realm.

“What is next on the docket?” Gilles asked, stowing the slab in his own shadow and wrapping one arm around her, kissing her forehead.

“Make sure everyone gets resettled on the Mountain properly, answer a few questions, things like that. We’ll start making the formation pathways soon, but for now I think it’s time for some relaxation.” She mused, tugging Gilles away from the throne room, before anyone else could come bug them. An incarnation or two of hers were already out helping the Heavenly Host keep everything organized as well as aiding the gods and fueling the mending of the Mountain back to its base.

And they’d been working hard.

It was time for some fun, and she knew exactly what she wanted to do.

Reika hummed a little tune to herself as she tended to her garden, pulling a few parasites out of the bushes and plants, introducing a few new species into the mix, trimming some of the trees and hedges...it was all very mundane stuff, but she enjoyed the process of physically tending her garden far too much to just accomplish it with her divine power. If she willed it, it would probably be easy to keep it all the exact way she wanted, without spending a lot of extra time doing this, but...there was something about getting her hands dirty, literally digging in the mud and muck, that was cathartic.

Maybe it reminded her of simpler, easier times. Back when it would be just her and Mother, tending to her Tree or playing in Her garden...

A little sigh escaped her as she finished planting a tree; a species of oak she'd created in her workshop with shining, purple leaves. The plant's leaves waved happily, the life within its trunk satisfied with the quality of the soil and water she'd provided.

"Kei, you're not going to sneak up on me like that," she said absently, patting the soil around the baby tree's trunk one last time. Her daughter appeared before her in a swirl of pink leaves, pouting and holding a bucket of ice water. Reika raised an eyebrow at her, her nine tails twitching in shame. "Not your most novel idea, is it?"

"Grandpa has me working overtime. I haven't had time to come up with anything fun to do, and now he has another job for me." she whined, dropping the bucket, laying on her back, and kicking her feet up in the air dramatically. Her black hair sprawled across the ground around her head like a pool of shiny, lustrous ink, the light of the Lunar Star reflecting off of it to create a sort of halo-like effect. That, combined with the different auras her many, many immortallities gave her, made for quite the picturesque little scene; that she was kicking her arms and legs and puffing out her cheeks as she complained only made it cuter - Reika sneakily pulled out a little memory jade, snapping a picture of the scene to be framed and hung on the wall later.

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After a short minute, though, as Reika returned to gardening and only half-listening to her daughter whine, Kei sighed and dropped the act. “Y’know, it’s not nearly as fun to do that when you all don’t giggle or laugh.” She said seriously, sitting cross legged with her chin resting on her fists, watching Reika work with half-lidded eyes.

“I’m sorry, dear, I’m a little distracted right now. Elvira just finished her formation node, and once Keilan finishes his mine will be next. Just taking some time to clear my head before I finalize preparations.” She explained, plucking a few dead-heads off of some light flowers. The petals faded into rays of golden sunlight the moment they were removed from the plant itself, shooting off into the skies and fading away. Kei huffed and puffed dramatically, flopping on her back once again to stare at the skies, and the stars that shone there. “Why don’t you tell me what’s really bugging you?”

“Grandpa has me helping Xing Wu guide the Dao Progenitors. Or, he wants me to.” She spoke slowly, as if taking her time to enunciate the words would help her understand their intent better. Reika withheld her giggle so Kei didn’t hear. She knew exactly what that was like – Mother was frustratingly cryptic at times.

“And you don’t know why?” she pressed, plucking another dead flowerhead. This one was a shadow lily, the petals melting into darkness the moment they were removed from the plant.

“That’s the problem; I do know why. He wants me to figure out my divine domain and my dao and all that stuff; it’s why he’s sticking me with Xing Wu again. I just – it’s not going to work that way. He can’t help me with any of that stuff, and I haven’t even made a People yet, not that I even *can* anymore.” These were legitimate complaints now, not just whining for the sake of it. Lazily she lifted one hand up to touch a strand of swirling life energy, the green substance trailing down Kei’s arm, twisting about it like a chain before flowing back into the garden proper, nurturing that which Reika grew.

“My dear, you are a brilliant child, and can see more than even I or your aunt and uncles sometimes. You, of all Mother’s children or grandchildren, are the one to inherit the most of Her sight. But sometimes I fear you cannot see the forest for the trees.” She shook her head sadly, pityingly, knowing it would antagonize her daughter. Kei lifted her head to narrow her eyes at her mother, pursing her lips and waiting patiently for an explanation. Humming a lullaby to herself Reika turned her attention back to her garden, content to allow Kei to stew on those words. Not because she believed she would understand them; she’d been intentionally cryptic. No, she just wanted to annoy her.

“You can’t just –“

“Do you know what one seed said to the other, after they were planted?” She interrupted, much to Kei’s incredulity. “How’s it growing?”

“Mom,” Kei groaned, burying her face in her hands. “That was terrible. Awful. I hated it with every fiber of my being. You were really stretching for that one.”

“I know,” Reika said with a little chuckle, standing, dusting off her hands, and walking over to her daughter to sit down beside her. Kei reached up and toyed with her hair, a yellowish color to signify the changing seasons of the Realms.

“I like what you’re doing with your hair. It looks nice.” She said after a moment.

“Thank you.” Reika chewed on her next words carefully, laying a gentle hand on her daughter’s knee. “What I am trying to get you to see, Kei, is that you need a little change of perspective. You are a free spirit, yes, but why has Mother put you on this task? Is it to point out what you are not, or what you *want* to be? We are always put in situations we do not want to be in, the point is to make the most of it while we are there, or get through it with as few scratches as possible. You

also may be reading too much into it. Mother may have put you on the task for a far simpler reason.”

“What’s that?”

“Xing Wu may now be a god, but he still represents the mortal. You, my dear, represent the divine in a way they might be able to understand. Silly. Goofy, lovable, playful you.” Reika punctuated her last word with a poke to the cheek, making Kei giggle – only to sober up immediately afterwards. Reika hid her frown, turning to face her daughter fully, giving her, her full, undivided attention.

“What –“

She was interrupted by one of her favored advisors, a holy beast that had risen the karmic chain as a squirrel, who came scampering up to her. Even without hearing him out she knew what time it was and what she needed to do – she could feel Keilan’s formation node come into full effect, her brother likely having completed it before even Elvira but, due to his meticulousness, put it off for as long as possible to ensure it was correct.

“Go on, Mom,” Kei said, leaping to a standing position and plastering a fake smile on her face. Reika saw right through it though, whispering a promise in her ear to finish their talk later as she wrapped her in a tight hug. “I’m worried about Gramps, is all.”

“Oh, don’t you worry about Her. You know how She is,” Reika said, releasing her and stepping away. Kei’s smile softened as Reika left, though the moment she turned away her smile morphed into a deep frown.

Now she knew where all that was coming from. Mother was...Mother. And she was worried about Her too. Not because of stress or anything like that, but because of Her nature. This disaster was bigger than she could imagine, and she knew Mother. She was pushing everyone hard, to grow, to change, to reach a certain tipping point that wasn’t supposed to be reached yet.

Despite claiming to want to suppress the Four Realms, the way Mother was acting was like She was trying to force the Four Realms to reach a point of growth where certain things were no longer needed. And Reika feared she knew exactly what She felt might go missing in this collision.

She'd have to approach her siblings after this, hear their thoughts, especially if even Kei was picking up on this. But first, it was time to set the node.

I felt like I was hopped up on caffeine and adrenaline and had ADHD and yet was so focused I could complete every task I set out for myself at the same time without losing any efficiency. It was a dangerous high the Mad Scientist had put me on, and I refocused my energy to moving the Realm Sun and Lunar Star to better positions. Their rotation would help spread the growth of the Primordial Chaos more.

Me above, the Mad Scientist's energy had really put a boost on the Realms. Had she done this earlier it would have accelerated the growth of the Realms too much, and this entire debacle would be that much more difficult to handle. Now? It made preparations and construction smoother. The nodes were being planted a full ten thousand years before I originally intended, and the formation pathways were going to be similarly quick. I really needed to do something nice for her as a thank you; now, it felt like the Sun and Moon would hatch even before the collision of the Realms with the One World.

Construction wasn't the only thing the energy was affecting, either. The new regions, too, were benefiting greatly. The pseudo-sacrificial regions were growing nicely.

"Ma'am," Randus said, appearing beside me. "The regional features' dreams are reaching a peak far earlier than I imagined. I believe it is almost time for them to awaken."

“Good.” I said, slowing the Star’s internal rotation so it wasn’t spinning quite so fast. Celene waved at me from within, clearly feeling good if she was active at the moment. “Send Xing Wu and the Dao Progenitors to the other Trees now. If the guardians are waking up, it’s time for a few of them to start to take command. And kill a few of the regional barriers, as well. Let the Immortals explore a little – that should keep them satisfied for the moment.”

It was a stopgap measure to keep the mortals happy-ish, but a stopgap was better than nothing. The Mad Scientist had warned me about the Original Sin, but, especially now that I’d had some time to really digest it, I was growing less worried about it. This was not something I personally needed to fear and handle, even if it was an event that would likely color the relationship mortals had with the divine in years to come. No, the way I had set everything up, it felt more like a trial for my children.

Mr. Boxes *had* said I’d be feeling the aftershocks of the Shadow for eternity, and this felt like one of those. It was a good thing Morgan’s fate had been divvied up between my children, else this may have been a far more dire situation all things considered.

...I took a moment to look out at everyone, doing their duties and building the nodes. They had come a long way. A long, long way. Gone were the days where I needed to hold their hands through every little speed bump. Long gone. I almost missed it.

“And what about...”

“Don’t worry about Morgan. I have them on standby for something and someone in particular. In addition to still rebuilding the Hidden Realm, I mean.” I assured him, my mind already moving on to other things. There was going to be a meeting between myself and Yueya soon, Mr. Boxes had told me in the next few millennia so we could provide each other with some updates, and I felt things were moving on at a decent pace.

“That is not what I was about to say.” Randus said softly. “You need to take a break.”

“Hardly.” I scoffed, patting my butler-dressed son on the shoulder. “This is nothing compared to some of the other works I’ve done. Do you know how little I rested while prepping the Realms for life? I am sure you do, you’ve read my memories. Now go, do as I said and keep an eye out for the dreams of those features. There’s a lot to look forward to!” I said cheerily, gently pushing Randus away from the surface of the Lunar Star. The Deity of Dreams reluctantly followed my direction and vanished in a swirl of darkness. Only once he was gone did I sigh and shake my head, looking back at the fiery blue surface of the Lunar Star.

“Don’t give me that look. You of all people should understand what I’m doing.” I chided her. There was no reaction from within the Star, though I did feel an undercurrent of concern. With a roll of my eyes I turned away, gently guiding a few more streams of energy into better positions, so the flow was clearer and more efficient.

It felt like there was a lot happening in the Realms, but there was really only one concern that was worthy of my attention. The collision. Yet another sigh escaped me as I looked toward the Void, peering beyond the Primordial Chaos.

Ah, well, there was still a bit of time to go, yet.