

D. of Pride 1001

Chapter 1001- Demon Lord of Envy— [Agramon] (3)

Of course, it was all just his conjecture, he needed to know more about the history to come to any conclusion.

"I see that you are from the faction of the Demon Lord of Envy, I don't know what your position is in that army but if you ever meet someone from the Faction of Greed, you must be careful"...

"It is said that the current Demon Lord of Greed is extremely erratic and his behaviour cannot be predicted. Murdering a Seraphim and so many demi human clans in cold blood during a peace treaty, only a madman would do something like this"

Vincent cautioned, a rare sight for him to caution someone else.

"Your caution is unwarranted, I know how to take care of my life. Still, I thank you for your information" Simon nodded his head towards Vincent in appreciation before stopping in his tracks.

"We part here"...

"Uhm, we go our separate ways from here. I wish you good luck in the upcoming war, don't expect me to show mercy to your kind"...

"Likewise"...

The two grinned at each other. The former was just about to leave when he turned around and asked "Although I know I won't get an answer from you, but I will still ask away. Why did you try to save Rothgard and the others?"

The person in question also looked at the demon.

Simon deliberated before shaking his head "I can't tell you the reason"...

"I see" Vincent was about to leave—

"But I can at least tell you that it had nothing to do with the demon lord's faction or anyone. It was entirely by my own will that I chose to interfere in that battle".

What he said wasn't entirely false; after all, he was doing everything to fulfil his quests, it had nothing to do with anyone else.

Vincent did not ask anything else, seemingly content with his reply. The space around him and Rothgard twisted and in the blink of an eye, they became distant figures on the horizon.

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"I did indeed"...

"Was it your intention to let the humans win? Are you aware that the loss cost me a great deal of face?"...

"To balance things, one must lose equal amount of pawns. Though it seems my efforts were for not, the human army was decimated by one of your cohorts"...

"Hmph, don't call him my cohort. I had no hand in all of this, all of this was the doing of that Gareth. Anyways, how do you think our position stands in the eyes of the Dragon Lords? Do you think they will interfere in the upcoming battles?".

Vordanaz kept on talking; however, Simon was too distracted by the name he mentioned to hear the rest of his words.

Gareth? So it really was Gareth!! Back then, moments before that black beam of extinction struck, he saw a familiar figure appear in the sky beside Vordanaz.

To think that it really was Gareth the Demon Archduke he saw back then at the Walpurgis and Hexennacht. So he was also involved in this war.

Now that he thought about it, it did make sense. Gelgar the demon he met in the Walpurgis back then did say that Gareth was one of the famous demons who had survived since the Second Apex War.

"What do you think?"

Simon snapped from his daze and looked at the confiding Vordanaz. He had taken out enough proof to show himself as the agent of the Dragon Lords, earning some level of trust from the former.

Since he was not from any other demon's faction, it was easier for Vordanaz to speak to him. Simon saw a chance, a chance to dig deeper for information.

"Both you and me are clear where the demon noble race stands right now. It is difficult right now for us not to be seen as the perpetrator. As for whether the Dragon Lords will interfere, there is no way for me to predict the minds of those mighty beings".

Vordanaz clicked his tongue "Those are all just blatant fabrications spread by those cunning white wings to frame us I tell you. Lord Mammon didn't kill the Seraphim of Justice. Instead, it was he who got attacked first"...

"By the time Lord Mammon arrived there to sign the peace treaty, the demi humans villages were already razed down to the ground setting up the perfect pretext to frame us. If it's someone who should express their dissatisfaction, it should be us"...

"Those damn members of the Alliance, they used the opportunity when one of our Demon Lords had gone off to another continent to attack us. As if destroying ten [S] ranks dungeons was not enough, they even sacrilege the Palace of Avernus, the sign of peace between the seven primordial demon lords and kidnap the daughter of Lord Mammon"...

"Lady Valencia showed signs of being chosen by the Fragments of Greed and Lord Mammon was even preparing to relinquish his fragment to her. However, those bastards..." Vordanaz got so heated when he recollected the past that, he almost forgot where he was.

"Anyways, you can't believe anything those white wings and their cronies humans say. This war started because of the members of the Alliance, we are only attacking in retaliation. Tell this to your damn masters the Dragon Lords that they should carefully choose which side to ally with"...

"Even though three of our Primordial Demon Lords have declared themselves neutral, we still have two Demon Lords on our side, we are not afraid of them".

It seemed his previous words had struck a chord as Vordanaz frantically spilt a lot of information.

Simon listened intently, trying to deepen his understanding of the history. Just like he thought, the cause for the war that the demon side believed was totally different from the humans.

Chapter 1002- Demon Lord of Envy— [Agramon] (4)

Each side blamed the other and thought they were the ones who were wronged. The two sides opposing views and the severity of the situation only escalated the flames of war further.

It was no wonder the Dragon Lords had to step in to put an end to this war.

"Anyways, it's time for the [Assembly], you should come too" Vordanaz looked at the positions of the moons, determined the time before moving out.

Simon tagged along with Vordanaz, in any case in the Demon Lord's faction he only had connections with the latter. Tagging along with him was his only choice besides, the Demon Duke's reputation could also be beneficial for him to formulate his plans for the upcoming conflicts.

All that aside... [Assembly] huh? Simon did not have to contemplate long before he was shown what Vordanaz meant by [Assembly].

Thousands of demons, numerous high ranking beasts and kings of various races. All the major powers of the demon lord faction, the mighty presences he felt when first arriving at the Demon Lord's camp, it was the assembly of the strongest beings.

They all gathered inside an independent space filled with loess and ruins. In the middle of the realm, there was a huge stage made out of numerous protruding rocks. These rocks were like seats in an auditorium, centering a larger rock with a rock throne in the middle.

The demons and beings of the realm stood in those rocks as per their status and position in the Demon Lord's faction.

The likes of a Demon Marquess were dime a dozen here and they were all standing at the rocks further back from the stage. However, Simon simply stood at the rock where Vordanaz was, which was at the forefront of the pack.

As someone who was tagging along with an influential and powerful Demon Duke, there was no need for him to stand at the back. Although he got some strange and unfriendly gazes, they were from the ones who were hostile or rival to the demon duke.

Most did not even care about his existence. Of course, there was always an exception to the rule—like there being a certain Demon Duke who was smiling towards him.

Of course, as someone not from this timeline there shouldn't be any being in this world who can recognise him recognise him. And it was the indeed case; however, it was the opposite here.

He was the one who knew the other party. That's right, the one staring down at him from a rock not far away was none other than Gareth.

Although the latter looked much younger than his present self, there was no mistaking the dreadful aura that only a truly strong being could emit.

"Oh?" Seeing Simon stare directly at his eyes without breaking away, caught his interest. Gareth's smile widened.

Usually, demons would feel really uncomfortable when gazing at a higher ranking demon, and faint even if the gap in rank is too high. However Simon, he not only showed no signs of discomfort, he fully ignored the bloodline pressure.

"Interesting, since when did Vordanaz's faction have such an amusing demon".

Simon could see Gareth's lips moving causing him to furrow his brows.

"Don't bother with him, that guy... he is unpredictable. You better stay far away from him if you want to live a long life that is" Vordanaz cautioned.

Two Dukes locked eyes, sparks erupted and a powerful pressure descended on the place. Usually, when a Demon Duke released their aura, it would cause mayhem and evoke fear from other demons.

However, in here, a place filled with powerful beings, it was a form of entertainment.

"Oh, those two are at it again. Are they gonna fight?"...

"Go for it, the demon lord has restricted us from stepping onto the battlefield, I'm really itching to watch a fight"... the crowd cheered.

"Do you remember our score?" Gareth taunted.

"I have stopped counting after a thousand" Vordanaz replied.

"Hehe, it seems like I need to remind you once again. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem like I will get a chance today" Gareth looked at the central rock.

At this moment, the space around there distorted violently and a portal of swirling black and amethyst hues tore open. The air grew heavy, charged with an oppressive aura that weighed down even the mightiest of demons nearby.

A silence, unnatural and suffocating, fell across the land. Then through the portal stepped a single being.

His tall, imposing figure was draped in a flowing mantle of black and deep purple whose edges flickered like flames, yet no heat emanated from them— only a cold, soul piercing chill.

He was decked out in a sleek segmented full body armor with exquisite design. He had an extremely handsome face, sharp jawline, glowing amethyst eyes and rose gold that seemed to move erratically even without any wind.

Faint crackling of thunder emitted every time he took a step. The figure that stepped out was extremely eye catching no doubt; however, the most unique feature about him would be the large eye at the centre of his chest plate that seemed to blink unnaturally.

The moment he stepped forward, the atmosphere shifted dramatically, as though the world itself bent to acknowledge his presence. His sheer presence presence crushed the spirits of those in the vicinity.

Even demons of high rank felt their legs tremble involuntarily, some instinctively bowing their heads. His aura was not just power— it was a manifestation of envy itself, seeping into the hearts of all who gazed upon him, filling them with doubt, despair, and an overwhelming urge to kneel.

Who could the man who can evoke such fear from all the demons and beings of power be, other than the Demon Lord of Envy?

"We greet the mighty Demon lord— Agramon" The entire assembly greeted in unison.

"Un, so you all have gathered? Good, I have important to discuss with you and plans that need to be made from this point forth"

Agramon took his seat on the throne made for him.

The demon lord of the past finally shows his face.

Chapter 1003- Birth of a New Light

Behind Agramon, came three warriors who stepped forward from the gate at the same time. All three of them carried incredible auras far more powerful than many of the high ranking demons here and were decked out in exquisite gears.

The three were the direct subordinates of the Demon Lord of Envy and fearsome [S] rank beings.

All of them stood behind Agramon, their expression filled with superiority when subjected to countless envious gazes.

Who here didn't want to become the most trusted and direct subordinate of one of the most powerful beings in this world? An accomplishment like that would instantly bolster their position to new heights.

Regretfully, only those three beings had the right to stand next to the Demon Lord.

"Garvex" Agramon called out.

Immediately, a being with ogre like frame, with three eyes and obsidian like body stepped forward.

"He is Garvex, a Mak'thar— species who are called the master of evil eyes. He is the leader among the three subordinates of the Demon Lord and his right hand man who has been bestowed with the strongest [Edict]" Vordanaz's voice rang inside his head.

"You better not get on his bad side or else even those beings backing you cannot save you".

Simon nodded, it was good to have someone do the explaining for him.

"I Garvex first of the three, will now do the explaining. Today you all who serve lord Agramon have gathered for no other reason but to discuss the plan of conquering the central continent from this point on"...

"I know what you all have to say, we have already made the plan, what reason is there to change at this point? Your concerns are reasonable but we must change it. The reason for that is because of the news we got a couple of hours ago. The northern demon army which was being led by Lord Zantheros, Lord Khaveth and Lord Gargelios, have been... defeated"...

"!!!"...

The grand chamber descended into utter chaos as Garvex's words reverberated through the room like a thunderclap. Gasps, growls, and murmurs filled the air, accompanied by a palpable sense of disbelief and confusion.

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Even seasoned demons like Gareth and Vordanaz, who rarely displayed emotions, were visibly shaken.

Gareth's mouth opened slightly as his brows furrowed deeply, while Vordanaz leaned forward, his usually sharp eyes reflecting uncharacteristic surprise.

"This... This can't be true!" one of the high ranking demon nobles finally bellowed, his voice trembling with denial.

"Lord Zantheros, Lord Khaveth, and Lord Gargelios—all defeated? Prima Demon Archdukes? Impossible! They've survived countless battles! Their power is second only to the Demon Lords! There must be some mistake!"

Several other voices joined in, expressing similar disbelief, their tones a mix of fear and anger.

The Prima Demon Archdukes were extremely ancient beings who had not only weathered the storms of time but had also accumulated power so vast that even the strongest beings across the realms thought twice before opposing them.

Their power could be better understood by the title they carried— 'Prima' meaning the very first. The title showed the gravity of their presence.

Prima Demon Archdukes were beings who had been alive since the time of the Seven Primordial Demon Lords and had seen the beginning of this world. They were a force that could alter the balance of the world itself.

So when the assembly heard that the three Prima Demon Archdukes who were leading the demon forces from the north were defeated, nobody could believe it. They all wanted Garvex to recheck his facts and take back his statement.

However, Garvex remained resolute, his expression cold and unyielding as he waited for the clamor to die down. His stance was unwavering, and his sharp eyes glanced briefly at Agramon, who had yet to speak a word.

The Demon Lord of Envy's silence loomed large over the room, his stillness far more terrifying than any outburst. It was his unspoken acknowledgement of Garvex's announcement that silenced the crowd.

If Agramon had no objections, it could only mean one thing— the report was true.

Meanwhile, Simon stood behind Vordanaz, silently observing the chaos. Unlike the others, he wasn't well-versed in the history of this world or its wars went down. He had no idea who these three Prima Demon Archdukes were, nor did he fully grasp the gravity of their defeat.

"Who are these beings?" He could only turn to Vordanaz who had a mutual beneficial relationship with him.

Vordanaz shot him a sideways glance, clearly surprised at the question, but after a brief pause, he answered.

"The Prima Demon Archdukes are extremely ancient demons. Beings born during the reign of the Seven Primordial Demon Lords, they are considered the pinnacle of power within our kind, second only to the Demon Lords"...

"Their strength is immeasurable, their influence unparalleled. The fact that three of them were defeated simultaneously... it's unthinkable. To put it simply, their fall shakes the very foundation of our forces."

Simon furrowed his brows together as he processed the explanation. The room's panicked atmosphere suddenly made much more sense.

A new threat had emerged, and it was powerful enough to bring down beings of near-absolute strength.

The tension in the room grew unbearable. Finally, a low, hissing voice broke the silence.

"But how?" It came from a beast with three heads and a fiery body "How could such beings fall so suddenly? Who possesses the strength to defeat them? Could it be the Seraphims of Origin?"

For three Prima Demon Archdukes to fall, the opponent had to possess a power similar to the Demon Lords. Beings who possessed that kind of power could be easily counted with hands.

"No," Garvex shook his head, firmly denying the possibility.

"Our scouts and seers watching over them have confirmed that the two Seraphims of Origin have not descended. They remain in their Heavenly Palaces, watching as always."

If it was not the Serpahims of Origin either, then who could it be?

Garvex sighed deeply, as if the answer he was about to give weighed heavily on him.

Chapter 1004- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel]

Garvex's sharp gaze swept over the assembly, and for the first time, his voice betrayed a hint of unease.

"We... are not entirely certain. However, our scouts and seers reported a blinding surge of divine light— an energy so pure and vast that it covered hundreds of miles. It swept through the battlefield and eradicated everything within its reach."

Garvex continued, "Our investigations point to a conclusion that may incite further unrest, but it must be said. We believe..." He hesitated for a moment, glancing once again at Agramon, who gave a subtle nod of approval.

"... we believe it was the work of a newly risen Seraphim."

The assembly fell deathly silent. It was as if all the air had been sucked out of the room. Even the most arrogant of demon nobles wore a pensive expression at the mention of a Seraphim.

"A... new Seraphim?"...

"Yes, this being, whoever they are, has ascended to a level that rivals the Prima Demon Archdukes and cannot be ignored. We don't know who they are yet but we are sure that the Alliance's power has increased even further"...

Silence fell over the assembly as all of them tried to digest the dire information they just received.

"The emergence of a new Seraphim is also the reason why we must change our plans moving this point forward"

Garvex stepped forward, his voice resolute. The emergence of new seraphim was no doubt a bad news but there was a silver lining in everything.

"Do not worry, we might have lost the prima demon archduke in this war but we also have gained something. Lord Mammon and his forces have broken through the alliance's defences on the eastern front and are marching towards the north. We will soon join forces with them and with that, our forces will become double as powerful"

Garvex's announcement caused a ripple of relief and excitement to spread through the room. The tension from the announcement of the Prima Demon Archdukes' defeat still lingered, but the hope brought by the mention of Lord Mammon's forces, brought them immense confidence.

The combined forces of two Demon Lords, especially ones as renowned as Agramon and Mammon, was no small matter. It was a strategic powerhouse, something even the entire would struggle to contend with.

The news of the two Demon Lords joining hands was monumental. But Garvex wasn't finished.

"And there's more. The Spriggan Continent which has been embroiled in a long endless clan wars, has finally seen its clear winner this time. That's right, the clan who won the war is our ally, they ousted the other clans and unified all the clans under their banner"...

"As part of the promise for the help the demon lords provided them, they will soon join us in the war against the Alliance. Their reinforcements will bolster the strength of our armies even further"

Another piece of great news, the assembly rejoiced, the despairing mood from earlier completely disappeared followed by a new ray of hope.

It was said that the Spirggan Continent was a land of fierce warriors and indomitable spirits where the battle for the survival was continuous and endless. Numerous clans rose and fell every day and it was only the victor who stood remaining at the end of the day.

Having fierce warriors from the Spriggan continent join them, they couldn't ask for more.

For a moment, the chamber resonated with the roars of approval and excitement. However, Garvex raised his hand, signalling for them to silence down.

"You all can rejoice but do not get complacent. The victory on the Spriggan Continent is significant, yes. But to bring our allies from there to this battlefield, we need something far more powerful and far reaching than a spatial gate"...

"We need to set up an intercontinental teleportation formation. A formation that can connect two continents which are divided by the vast ocean, you can imagine how tricky and difficult it is. Setting up an intercontinental teleportation formation is no simple feat"...

The crowd fell silent, the weight of his words sinking in. They were all strong beings and had various levels of accomplishment in the spatial strength. As such, they understood better than anyone how difficult it was to create a gate that could connect the lands of two continents.

That said, even though none of them could do it, it didn't mean that there was no one here who couldn't. There was one being in this place who had enough power in this world to make the impossible possible.

The epitome of strength and the object of reverence of every demon, the Demon Lord had the greatest power among all of them.

All eyes focused on Garvex.

As if reading their thoughts, he nodded "Lord Agramon can indeed set up such a powerful intercontinental teleport gate. However, even with the demon lord's immense abilities, creating a gate like that won't guarantee a success"...

"To make sure that our allies reach here we need the combined might of two Demon Lords. That is why we must join forces with Lord Mammon's army. Only with his strength combined with Lord Agramon's can we establish the gate and summon our reinforcements from the Spriggan Continent".

The assembly remained silent, digesting the information. The idea of an intercontinental teleportation gate was staggering. It was not only a massive undertaking in terms of power but also a declaration of the Demon Lords' intent to conquer the central continent with overwhelming force.

"With the combined might of Lord Agramon and Lord Mammon and the reinforcements from the Spriggan Continent, even the Alliance will tremble before us!"

Suddenly emboldened by a beautiful future that Garvex showed them, one demon after another started shouting praises for the demon lord.

Simon observed the proceedings in silence. While the demons around him roared with excitement, he couldn't help but feel a chill run down his spine. The stakes were escalating far beyond what he had imagined.

The convergence of the two Demon Lords' armies and the prospect of intercontinental reinforcements meant the coming battles would be unlike anything he had ever seen before.

Chapter 1005- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (2)

The combined forces of two Demon Lords, the clans of the Spriggan Continent, and the remaining armies of the Demon faction promised a terrifyingly powerful war machine.

On the other hand, opposing them was the Alliance— a vast coalition of human kingdoms, demi-humans, angels, and countless other major and minor races. United under the crushing pressure of the demons' tyranny, they had formed a desperate confederation to resist annihilation.

For the first time, Simon could grasp the full scope of the conflict. The collision of these titanic forces was no mere war. It was the cataclysm itself. It was no wonder the dragon lord had to intervene.

A neutral race, one that existed as an apex predator among predators, breaking their impartial stance to intervene— it all made sense now. If this war were allowed to continue unchecked, it would destroy the balance of the world, perhaps even endanger the world itself.

As Simon processed these thoughts, Garvex's voice once again rang out, pulling his attention back to the present.

"All plans moving forward will hinge on the conquest of Orlandos," he declared.

Orlandos—a once-proud kingdom now reduced to a pitiful state. Garvex's lips curled into a sneer as he described the situation. "The humans have abandoned the lands surrounding Orlandos. Their

villages are empty, their fields lie fallow, and their people have either fled or gathered in the capital to mount a pathetic resistance"...

"What's more, their so-called king has already fled. A being that they regard as their lord has abandoned his own people and ran away to save their own hide. Truly a human like behaviour".

The room erupted into mocking laughter. For the demons, the pitiful state of Orlandos was nothing more than a joke and a form of entertainment.

"Lord Agramon has decreed that Orlandos will fall. No matter how inconsequential their resistance is, our forces will march on the capital with full might and raze it to the ground. The fall of the Orlandos is important for the next part of our plan".

Garvex discussed the plan with high-ranking demon nobles sometimes adding their opinions.

"Orlandos is weak, and its defences are laughable. But it's too... convenient. The humans are no fools. If they've concentrated their forces in the capital, it could mean they're planning something. Or perhaps they're stalling for time"...

"Everyone from the Angels of Principality to Dominion from the Three Star Scripture has been accounted for except for the Seraphim of Honor. He has yet to show his face or make his move"...

"It is highly likely that he will interfere in the upcoming battle for Orlandos. So before you leave, hear this: Orlandos will fall within the week. Lord Mammon's forces will rendezvous with us shortly thereafter, and the intercontinental teleportation gate will be constructed"...

"This is the beginning of the end for the Central Continent. Prepare yourselves accordingly. If it's the Seraphim we must fight, then we shall. Nobody can stand in our way! All for a better world for us!!"...

"All for a better world for us!!"

The assembly shouted in unison....

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The Capital of Orlandos, Solastre, stood silent and heavy under a blood-red dusk. The air was thick with tension, each breath feeling like a weight on the chest.

Everywhere, the flames of war cast long shadows on the walls, both literal and metaphorical. The news of the approaching demon army had reached every ear, from the lowliest foot soldier to the most seasoned commander.

Soldiers in mismatched armor moved through the city streets haphazardly, their faces pale and their hands trembling. Even as they worked to prepare defences, their movements were mechanical, as if the gravity of the situation had sapped their very will to fight.

Inside one hastily set-up barracks, groups of knights and soldiers could be seen sitting in tense silence. Some stared at their swords, others looked at the pictures of their family and loved ones, and a few clenched their fists, trying to suppress the visible tremors.

The very city was a picture of despair.

"I heard the demons burned three cities in a single night," the soldiers discussed lifelessly.

"Yeah, I heard that there are many monsters in their army that can breathe fire which can even melt steel"...

"Haha, monsters are the last of your worries. The truly terrifying ones are the Demon Nobles. You can't understand their power unless you've seen it with your own eyes. They don't fight. They annihilate."...

"Haha, honestly what am I even doing here. I should have just abandoned everything and fled with the others".

The atmosphere became eerily silent after that, the weight of the words pressing down on them like an actual physical force. It was not only this barrack, everywhere you can lay your eyes in the city, you would see demoralised and lifeless soldiers.

In the streets, a few brave souls tried to rally morale. A young knight stood on a crate, addressing a small crowd of soldiers and citizens.

"This is our home! We may be facing annihilation, but we can still overcome it! We've fortified the walls, and we have steel in our hands. As long as we stand together, we can protect our city, our families, and our lives!"

His voice was the very description of passion and vigor. But without strength all it would get you was a few half hearted cheers at best. His words felt hollow against the tidal wave of fear that gripped the hearts of the people.

Even in the capital's royal palace, the mood was no better. Once a grand hall where the king of Orlando held court, it now stood hollow and cold, devoid of its sovereign.

The throne sat empty, with a long round table at the centre of the place. Commanders, knights, and advisors gathered in the room, their faces drawn and pale. Maps, scrolls, and scattered reports covered the table, hastily marked with ink displaying how dire their situation was.

A silence hung over the room until someone finally broke it.

Chapter 1006- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (3)

"No matter how many times we look at the map, it won't help" One of the commanders seated around the table strained his neck and looked at his subordinate.

"Any sign of movement from the enemy?"

"None, sir," the scout replied, but his eyes betrayed his apprehension "But they're coming. The reports... they're consistent. There are millions of them. Maybe even tens of millions. We won't..."

He stopped himself, biting his lips.

"Enough. Just keep watch."

The commander dismissed the scout before he could say anything. They all knew how hopeless the situation looked, there was no need for a mere scout to tell them that.

But despite his attempts to keep the scout's words in check, the aura of dread was impossible to shake. Everyone in the room could feel it— the inevitability of the approaching army. It was as if the air itself carried the stench of death.

"How long until reinforcements arrive?" someone asked.

"Reinforcements? " A younger officer scoffed bitterly "Reinforcements that won't arrive in time, you mean?"

His words attracted sharp glares from the others, but no one argued the point.

"Enough with all of that" the officer with the highest authority here, decided to finally open his mouth. His name was Vaylen and he was the knight commander of the kingdom of Orlandos.

That is until the king fled and most of the high ranking officers from the order packed their belongings and gave in their resignation. He on the other hand did not leave and gathered whatever little soldiers and officers he could gather to mount a final resistance.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that he was the very will of the kingdom of Orlandos' resistance.

"We should not beat ourselves down and instead look for ways that can give us hope. What happened of the Angels? The Demon Lord of Envy's army managed to invade this deep inside the Central continent. Shouldn't the Three Star Scripture start making their move by now?"

One of the subordinates responded "As per Commander Vaylen's order, I have sent multiple missives. Just this morning, I finally received a response."

His voice faltered slightly under the weight of the room's expectant gazes "The Seraphim of Honor's subordinates has assured us that they are on their way."

A ripple of murmurs spread through the chamber, but it was quickly stifled by a sharp voice.

"On their way? What in the stars does that even mean? Do they expect us to hold out against an endless demon horde while they take their time descending from their holy palaces?".

"W-Well, they can't just move and spread their force everywhere. The demon Lord of Envy isn't the only force currently attacking the continent" The subordinate tried to reply.

"Well, I'll be damned. Why the hell are they even fighting on the Eastern Region when the Three Star Scripture is supposed to protect kingdoms like us on the Western corner of the continent?"

"Isn't that why we pay those heavenly tributes to them every year? What's the point of it if they won't even protect us? Hold on? Hold on with what? These walls? These soldiers? Do you think this pitiful excuse of a force can stop the Demon Lord's army?"

Every word that the officer said was undeniable and irrefutable and what was on everyone's mind but no one wanted to say it out loud.

"Do you have any alternative?" Vaylen shot back "You want to abandon the capital? Turn tail like the king did and let the demons burn our houses and enslave our families and loved ones?"

"Is that what you are suggesting? Or do you want to lick the shoes of those demons and turn against humanity? Decide, the choice is yours. We may not have a chance, but if we don't fight, we guarantee defeat."

The maps on the table painted a grim picture: the demon army was less than a day away. With their overwhelming numbers and monstrous strength, the resistance of the kingdom of Orlandos was little more than a dam made of straws trying to hold back a tsunami.

"No one's denying the odds. But we have a duty. To the people who remain, to the soldiers who look to us for guidance. We will hold, even if we have to kill the enemies with our teeth or crawl on the ground. Let the world witness our last stand".

For better or worse, this was it.

Fortunately for them, the ray of hope that they have desperately been waiting for, arrived. Space shook as if it was water and two figures stood at the hall where no one other than them should be allowed to enter.

One of the even, the silver haired one had the audacity to sit on the King's throne.

"That was some impressive speech. Well said commander, I really like people like you who believe in the strength of the humans and resist until their very end"...

His voice woke the crowd. Alarmed, they got up from their seats and raised their weapons.

"Who are you and how did you reach this place? You dare to sit on the king's throne?"

Although the throne was just an empty decoration now that nobody cared about, it was still a symbolic sign. To see someone sit there, naturally, they were all displeased.

"Relax, I'm not the one you should point those weapons at. Aren't there other suitable targets for that?" Vincent unbothered by their reactions continued to run his mouth.

"You!!"...

"Haha, everyone please calm down, my friend here means no harm. In fact, we are on the same side" Rothgard intervened to diffuse the situation.

"Vincent you too, stop inciting them and get up from that throne".

At this friend's adamant request, Vincent got up from the throne. The people of the Orlandos were less wary of him now; however, their initial impression of him still made them unable to like him.

"So who are you guys?"

As the man with the highest authority here Vaylen questioned the intruders.

Chapter 1007- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (4)

"I am Rothgard, the commander in chief of the south wing army of the Empire of Solarion" Rothgard introduced.

"Wait Solarion!! I see... so you were part of the advanced defence army sent by the southern alliance"

As one of the nations from the southern region fiercely fighting the demons, the Empire of Solarion was quite famous. Plus there was no one here that did not know about the recent civil war that was going on in the Kingdom of Solarion which went by a different name previously.

The previous king's reign was usurped and a new family rose to the throne. Unlike the other nations from the Southern Alliance, the people of Orlandos liked Solarion very much, after all, they did not ignore the pleas of their reinforcement.

Although the Central Continent was united under the banner of Alliance, in reality, the Central Continent was so vast that there were many factions. The Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern all had their own alliances.

The kingdom of Soalrion belonged to the Southern Alliance which had repeatedly ignored the pleas for reinforcement from the northern and western alliances at the start of the war, as their own territory was far away from the demons.

It was only after the flames of war completely razed the Northern and Eastern regions did the Souther Alliance came to its senses and started pushing for a united front.

However, it was already too late, numerous nations had perished under the demon forces and needless to say, the reputation of the Southern Alliance fell rock bottom in the eyes of the other alliances.

Of course, there were exceptions like Solarion who sent most of their forces as reinforcements realising the danger the demons possessed.

"Rorthgard? Wait the south wing army you say? Reports say that the south wing army led by you has been completely annihilated on Mount Gorgor. So why are you here and how are you alive?" one of the officials posed Rothgard a question.

The latter's expression darkened slightly at the mention of Mount Gorgor. The memories of that battle, the brave men and comrades who gave their lives, and the aftermath of the demon attack flashed vividly in his mind.

It was like a nightmare that he wouldn't be able to forget for the rest of his life.

"You're correct," he said solemnly "The South Wing Army was obliterated at Mount Gorgor. Thousands perished in that hellish battle, and I was among the casualties—or should have been."

His tone carried both sorrow and gratitude as he continued, "If not for the intervention of unexpected allies, I would not be standing here today."

The officials exchanged confused glances.

"Yes, allies. One of them is standing right here". He pointed at Vincent now quietly standing beside him.

"There are others but unfortunately, they are not here. It was thanks to their intervention that allowed me to escape with my life and bring critical information back to the Alliance."

It was unbelievable to think that someone managed to come back alive after trying to stop the demon lord's army but the proof himself was right in front of them so they had no choice but to accept it.

"So you managed to survive so what? It does not change the situation of our Kingdom of Orlandos, we are doomed to die the moment the Demon Lord gives his command to attack. In fact, I want to ask you who managed to keep his life intact after fighting the demon lord's army. Why come here? Do you not value the life you got back through a miracle?"

The official who was bickering with Vaylen earlier now directed his despair and feeling of hopelessness at Rothgard.

Rothgard who knew exactly what the officials and commanders of Orlandos were feeling, felt a sense of camaraderie with them.

"Ever since surviving the attack of the demon army, I have been thinking constantly as to why I was the only one who survived. After agonising for a long time, I have finally come to a realisation"...

"The reason why I am alive might be because there is still something that the destiny wants me to do. As someone who has survived and felt the despair of the Demon Lord's army firsthand, I will feel like it's my duty to help others like me to overcome that fear" he began his internal monologue.

"Overcome? Overcome with what? Look around! Half of our soldiers are green recruits, and the rest are so worn down they can barely hold their swords straight. We have no reinforcements, no morale, and no leadership!" the official complained.

His repeated interruptions were so irritating that Vincent shot a true silver blade energy at the man's neck. It stopped right before their neck drawing a droplet of blood.

"If you can't fight then use your body as meat shields. In the first place aren't you a military official of Orlandos? Don't tell me you rose to this position without ever thinking that you would have to fight a battle with your life on the line one day?"

GULP... the official now humbled, gulped unable to say anything in retort. Vincent recalled his sword energy back and looked at the crowd dismissively.

"I'm not here to listen to all your nonsense. Decide right now whether you want to cower in your doubts or stand and fight with every ounce of strength you have left. Make your choice now, because when the demons arrive, hesitation will be the first thing that gets you killed."

Vincent's sharp and realistic words silenced the room in submission.

Rothgard stepped forward and using this chance when everyone was silent, he conveyed his thoughts.

"I understand your concerns after all, I have faced a similar despairing situation. However, unlike you, I had no ray of hope... but you guys do. Not only are the reinforcements from the Alliance's Three Star Scripture coming to your aid, but you also have Vincent here aiding you"...

"?"...

it took a while to register but the crowd finally realised the name that Rothgard just uttered.

Chapter 1008- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (5)

"Wait!" Vaylen almost stumbled forward "By Vincent... do you mean that legendary warrior? One of the Conquerors? That guy is?".

The crowd was in a state of shock. There was no one here in this room who hadn't heard about the legendary stories and deeds of one of mankind's strongest warriors, Vincent.

It was a name that was too famous and too big across the Central Continent. Heck, even children know about the stories of Vincent, one of the handful few to ever become a Conqueror.

To think that Vincent was standing in front of them right now, what's more, as their backup even... was unthinkable.

"I-Is he really fighting from our side?" Someone questioned.

"Of course, that's why we are here. With him on our side, its possible to buy enough time for the reinforcements to come" Rotyhgard answered.

Probably because of the way he framed it, Vincent couldn't help but voice out his discontent.

"Hey, what do you mean by buy time? Don't you believe that I can defeat the entire demon army myself?" He was only voicing out his disgrunt and wasn't expecting any reply.

"I can answer that for you. You are way over your head"...

Suddenly a voice rang out of nowhere. All the people in the room looked around in confusion as to where the voice came from. To contradict Vincent's words not to mention mock him like that, who in the world had the guts?

Vincent narrowed his eyes and stared at a space not far away from the throne.

"If you are here, then why not show yourself? Could it be that you are ashamed of your appearance?" He shot a silver energy at that exact space.

A fraction of a second later, the silver energy was caught in hand wrapped in pure white light and disintegrated. At the same moment, a figure fully covered in a flowing white light appeared in the room.

Their appearance made it impossible to know whether they were men or women; however, one distinctive feature that stood out about them was their big majestic white wings.

Those wings that were a divine marvel in itself, each feather shimmering with a radiant white glow that seemed to refract light into a spectrum of soft, heavenly hues. There was only one race in the entirety of Althaea who possessed wings like this.

The identity of the being need not be even introduced, their wings were a telltale sign of who they were.

"Hmph, how can a human be worthy of seeing the divine appearance of someone as high as I" the figure in light snorted. The five pairs of wings behind them stretched out majestically behind them.

"Oh, I am sorry, I didn't know Your Highness the mighty Gallus Gallus Domesticus was also here" Vincent gave a humble bow in derision.

His choice of words instantly infuriated the angel and they retorted back "Hmph, as expected of a race as ignorant and vulgar as the humans, even your breath stinks"...

"Hoho, then why don't you come closer and take some more whiff of my bad breath"...

"You will regret your action"...

The atmosphere in the throne room became tense causing the entire palace to tremble and cracks to run through the walls.

"Um... Sir Vincent..."

Vaylen and the other looked a little uncomfortable and lost. On one side was the human's mightiest hero, the person who had stepped into the realms of legend and on the other, one of the angles whose help they needed the most right now.

They didn't know why the two were bickering like kids the moment they met, nor did they have the guts to step in between their arguments.

"Haha, don't worry, the two know each other"

Rothgard pacified, trying to keep a straight face himself. Vincent wasn't called an anti social for no reason. With Itherion not here, it was very difficult for him to handle his friend.

"It looks like your shepherd is not here which is causing you to run your mouth so freely, Vincent" the angel quipped.

"Huh, I am the one who should ask you that. Where is your farmer? Is he too busy to show up for the destruction of the mankind?" Vincent retorted back.

"That's Lord Barachiel for you and he will naturally show up when the time is necessary. That's why he sent me.. hmph"...

"I hope he makes it before the end. No, guess what it's better he doesn't show up. That way I'll defeat the demon lord myself. You can also take it as me doing a favour for you lot"...

"You!!" The angel huffed and puffed, enraged. Though in the end, he did not comment any further refusing to stoop to the level of the humans.

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"Um... how should we address this lord..?" After the mood settled down somewhat, Vaylen and the other officials approached the angel.

Still levitating a few meters above the ground, the angel answered "You may call me Cherubim Jumeirah, the first of the three to drink lord Barachiel's blood and the first commander of the Three Star Scripture".

He looked at the humans, his superiority undisguised "I know what you want to say. I have indeed received all of your reports and have come here as your reinforcements. The rest of the heavens army should arrive here before dawn".

Although dawn was still a couple of hours away and the Demon lord's army could arrive here at any moment, all Vaylen and the others could do was nod their heads and accept his reply.

Still, the situation looked far better than before when everything was covered in a mist of darkness. Now with Vincent and Jumeirah here, they at least had a fighting chance, there was a ray of hope.

Hours passed by in tense anticipation, Vaylen and the capital of Orlandos did everything they could to resist the enemy. And finally, the moment that every soldier in Orlandos feared came.

The already dark night, seemed to darken even further, growing oppressive by the second. The moons hid behind an ominous blanket of clouds, denying the world of its light.

Chapter 1009- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (6)

It started with a faint shiver at first but turned into a fortress shaking earthquake in a few seconds, sending a chill down everyone's spine.

Then came the cries from the scouts, trembling voices that barely held back their terror.

"They're here! The Demon Lord's forces have arrived!"...

DING... DING... DING...

Alarm bells rang all across the city and all eyes turned to the distant horizon— and there it was. A sight so horrifying it felt like the world itself had stopped.

The horizon, once a flat line of barren plains, now surged with an unnatural, inky blackness. Like a wave of living shadow, it swallowed the land whole, stretching endlessly in all directions, blotting out the ground and sky alike.

A sea of demons, beasts, and monstrosities marched forward, their sheer numbers so overwhelming that one could actually feel their skin crawling.

From the towering silhouettes of Earth Giants with glowing crimson eyes, to the sickly green mist exhaled by countless Titan Boas that clung to the air like poison, the army exuded an aura of death so thick it was suffocating.

Here and there, grotesque figures with massive wings hovered above the horde like vultures, their claws gleaming even in the faint light.

Piercing screeches, guttural growls, howls, and roars formed a cacophony of music so nerve wracking that it drowned out the alarms of the fortress.

Sky earth and even underground, everywhere they laid their eyes, was crawling with the approaching image of doom.

The soldiers and knights at the fortress walls felt their hearts sink into their stomachs, some gripping their weapons so tightly their knuckles turned white, others frozen in abject terror.

The black tide advanced steadily as if it were the embodiment of inevitability itself, and the aura of despair it carried threatened to choke all hope from the air.

The Demon Lord's army had arrived.

"W-W-What should we do? There's no way we can win against that! Run!"

Panic began to ripple through the ranks like wildfire. The soldiers trembled in their boots and prepared to run away from this nightmare they found themselves in, when suddenly a single arrow was fired.

CLANG!

The sharp sound of steel on stone snapped the soldiers out of their terror. There, standing tall atop the fortress walls, was Vaylen. His sword was unsheathed and the mantle of Orldanos was waving behind his back.

"Do you hear them? The cries of our loved ones, the hopes of those who could not flee, rest on us! If we run, we doom not only ourselves but everything we've ever held dear! But if we stand, if we FIGHT, our courage will echo across the ages!"

The soldiers who were about to flee, found themselves standing rooted to their place, their hearts steeling after that rallying cry.

Despite the immense pressure weighing down on everyone else, his eyes held nothing but determination.

"Cowards die a thousand deaths, but we, the brave warriors of Orlandos, shall face this death but once!" Vaylen's voice boomed over the city.

"Do you hear them? The cries of our loved ones, the hopes of those who could not flee, rest on us! If we run, we doom not only ourselves but everything we've ever held dear! But if we stand, if we FIGHT, our courage will echo across the ages!"

The soldiers who were about to flee, found themselves standing rooted to their place, their hearts steeling after that rallying cry.

"Stand your ground! Ready your blades! Ready your bows! This is our home! THIS IS OUR FIGHT! SOUND THE HORNS OF WAR!!"

HONK! HONK! HONK!

At the same time, thunderous horn sounded from the demon horde. The black tide surged forward as though a dam had broken, charging with terrifying speed.

Infernal Hounds (Level 400), Hellmaw Ravagers (Level 450), Earth Giants (Level 500), Earth Eaters (Level 500)... The city walls shook with the thunder of the demon army's charge.

The moment of fearlessness the soldiers felt was shortlived and fear gripped their hearts once again. Just as the aura of dread threatened to paralyze them completely, a brilliant radiance pierced the veil of darkness.

SHIIIIING!

A brilliant white harp appeared in the sky and with that, rays of light like shooting stars, shot down from it cutting through the dark veil that had blanketed the battlefield.

As the light touched the walls and the trembling soldiers, the dread and despair suffocating them lifted entirely. That was not all, from the harp a Celestial melody began to play, its music resonating across the entire battlefield each note carrying an invigorating warmth.

The music, negated the oppressive aura of the demon army, dispelling fear, poison, curses and fueling the soldiers with newfound powers.

"We're not alone!" Vaylen roared "Look, the angel is with us".

The spirits of the soldiers rose and they started fighting the never ending horde with a newfound fervour.

The battle to raze the kingdom of Orlandos officially started.

Droves and droves of monsters led by legions of low ranking demon nobles attacked the city, spilling rivers of blood and raising mountains of corpses. Casualties increased on both sides; however, it was the humans who were at a severe disadvantage.

Although thanks to the buff from the angel, their powers increased. But to down each monster, demon nobles and other races allied with the demon horde they had to sacrifice ten times the soldiers.

The loss the kingdom of Orldanods faced right after the start of the war was already staggering.

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"Hmph, keep sending droves after droves of monsters at them. I can sense the presence of two powerful beings on their side. Until unless they come out, don't slow down the pace"

Standing on a high tower made with magic, Garvex commented. Beside him, there were the two other direct subordinates of the Demon Lord of Envy and numerous high ranking demons.

Simon was also among them. He used Vordanaz's coattails to ride the storm. Of the two individuals Garvex mentioned, Simon believed one was Vincent. However, he had no idea about the other.

From his vantage point atop the magically constructed high tower, Simon watched as chaos unfolded beneath him.

The demon horde surged forward like a living wave of darkness. Fighting them, the humans fought valiantly; however, the imbalance in power was far too great.

The cost the humans paid for every kill on the demon's side was far too astronomical. It was not a war, but an execution.

Chapter 1010- Seraphim of Honor— [Barachiel] (7)

From a distance, the battlefield looked like a churning maelstrom of life and death. Blood slicked the ground, and mangled bodies piled everywhere. Soldiers screamed, monsters roared, and spells clashed with dark magic in explosions of light and shadow.

This was history repeating itself, Simon thought. Even the angel's intervention could not change the grim reality. The demons were simply stronger, more numerous, and relentless.

The Kingdom of Orlandos was a dam holding back a flood, and it was cracking with each impact of the wave. How long could they hold on before their spirit breaks entirely?

Still, even against the inevitable, the humans showed resilience. Each blow they delivered drained their strength, and the weight of their comrades' deaths hung heavy on their shoulders.

Yet they fought, they held their sword and died in battle.

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RUMBLE... finally with a rumble, the last bastion of their defence, the city wall also came down and the monsters and demons surged into the city. It was the beginning of the end.

'If Vincent and the other person didn't intervene now, it was all over for Orlandos' Simon thought to himself.

Just then, as if answering the prayers of all the humans in the city, a giant pillar of light shot from the centre of the city. It soared into the sky, splitting at its zenith and spreading wide like an umbrella of protection.

The divine light cascaded down, forming a shimmering dome over the city, pushing back the encroaching darkness.

The onrushing army of darkness was stalled unable to enter the barrier while the ones inside screamed in pain as the light fell on them.

"[Sanctum of protection] huh" Garvex recognised the spell and narrowed his eyes "Are they planning to turtle inside? Hmph, very well then, I will make you step out".

Saying that, he gave the order that might as well have spelt the doom for the kingdom of Orlandos... that is if there wasn't that man there.

The surging army of darkness stopped their charge in front of the unbreakable barrier and retreated.

The demon lord's army was retreating, it was supposed to be a good sign. However, no human felt that way as all their eyes were strained towards the sky.

A suffocating pressure engulfed the plains and from the moonless night, they appeared. Numerous Demon Dukes stepped onto the sky, each radiating a nerve wrecking aura that sent waves of despair rolling across the city below.

It was not only them, even Simon who on the demon's side, widened his eyes in utter shock. A cursory glance told him that there were more than thirty Demon Dukes lining up in the sky.

A lineup like that, even at the Walpurgis and Hexennacht he had never witnessed such a congregation of raw, unrestrained power. Among them, there were also Vordanaz and Gareth.

The dukes floated in the sky, standing as if the air itself bent to their will, gazing down upon the protective barrier with scorn. The [Sanctum of Protection] might have been legendary for its

defensive capabilities, but against the might of thirty super powerful Demon Dukes, it might just as well be glass.

The humans wanted to delay the battle or buy time with that barrier of protection. But that hopeful wish was rendered moot now that the high ranking demon nobles from the demon lord's army stepped forward.

This land was doomed if something extraordinary didn't intervene.

From the history, Simon knew that the clash between the Demon Lord of Envy, Agramon, and the Seraphim of Honor was inevitable. It was written into the fabric of this timeline, a battle that would shape the course of this war.

The question was when would it happen? Would it happen here and now? Or the final battlefield was somewhere else?

There was no way to know other than witnessing the fate changing battle itself.

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In the sky, one by one, the Demon Dukes extended their hands towards the barrier. As their palms faced the radiant dome, the air around them grew heavy, like a tar of dark energy. Their voices began to hum with a discordant symphony.

"?"

Observing their every action carefully, Simon was taken aback. What was that? What was this hum, this language that he was unfamiliar with yet felt so close to?

Their chant was like nothing Simon had ever heard before. It wasn't just a language, it was something primal. A tone so ancient and cryptic that it bypassed his mind and struck directly at the soul.

The very sound seemed to make his soul and body euphoric as if it was some kind of extremely soothing melody. Of course, this feeling was not reciprocated by the humans.

For them, it was more of a hum that spelt their doom. In front of that tune, the barrier wrapped, distorting violently with every syllable. Finally, with the last syllable, whatever the Demon Dukes were doing, was completed.

"[Abyss Magic— Níðhögg]!" More than thirty beams of annihilation that stained even the night dark, was fired.

From the start of the chant to the firing of the magic, only a couple of seconds must have passed. Yet within the time frame that one took to blink, the black rays of light were already crashing against the barrier.

Abyss Magic... Simon silently repeated in his head. The moment he saw that magic, he felt as if something within him stirred. A hidden energy or perhaps a sleeping power that had been lying dormant within was suddenly stirred awake.

Abyss magic, this was the intermediate tier of Dark magic, the true essence and power of the demons. An attribute far more powerful and rare than any.

There were only a few things in this entire world that could contend against the might of the abyss magic. It was power exclusive to the demon nobles and what made them so powerful.

[Níðhögg] he silently repeated in his head, this was the magic that almost made him fail the trial and what injured him to that extend on Mount Gorgor. However, personal feelings aside, it was truly hard for him to hate the magic.