

Gods Daily 195

Chapter 195: Preparing to Eradicate Crimson Hills

Aurek understood perfectly what lay behind their calculations — but he did not care.

Whether the other side plotted that way was irrelevant to him. What he needed was precisely that one month.

He could use the interval to concentrate his forces and strike at Duke Furt and Crimson Hills in the western frontier.

If he succeeded in wiping out those two Half-Overlord Rank behemoths, the consequences would be enormous; the move would inevitably alarm powers in the North and Southeast and force them to react.

He worried they might seize the opportunity to unite against Eryndor City. If neighboring empires — especially the formidable Selene Empire — could occupy those forces for him, his operation would be far easier.

Taking down one or two Half-Overlord Rank powers would yield resources sufficient to elevate his Void Warlock legion to level 8.

Once that was achieved, dealing with the remaining factions would become markedly simpler. And after the month passed, the initiative over whether to ally would be entirely his.

The Brotherhood of the Old Gods was a titan he considered his to swallow — no one else would touch it.

Absorbing the Brotherhood would grant him the Emperor Points necessary to support his subsequent schemes.

All of this, ultimately, aimed at preparing to face true giants like the Selene Empire.

Whatever Empress Elizabeth schemed, Aurek did not trouble himself.

He would make certain she helped by keeping the Brotherhood and Grand Duke Walton occupied during that month.

"I will pacify the western frontier of the Empire. For the coming month, the southeastern border must be held for us," he ordered. "You must also stabilize the court so the rear remains secure."

William remained uneasy. "Your Majesty, how confident are you about subduing the vast western territories? The Half-Overlord Rank forces there — Crimson Hills, Blade City and their subordinate Ninth-Tier factions — are formidable. If we send those twenty-four thousand Peak Master Rank warriors into the campaign and suffer heavy casualties, the damage to the Empire could be fatal."

"Other rebellions will not miss their chance to strike while we are distracted.

Even if we pacify the west, the Empire will immediately face threats from the east that will consume vast portions of our available forces."

Aurek's mouth tilted into a small, unfathomable smile. "Fatal damage?"

"Go all in. Leave the rest to me."

Hearing their emperor's unshakable confidence, the ministers exchanged uneasy glances but, as always, chose to trust him without condition.

After all, back when the treasury was almost empty, they could not change Aurek's will — how could they now, when the Empire stood at its zenith?

Their only duty was to carry out his commands to the best of their ability.

After William and the others departed, the two thousand four hundred summoned units that had been sent on the sweep returned to Valoria Palace.

Aurek glanced over the results of the operation.

Emperor Points: +80,000,000.

Although many factions were destroyed, there were few Master Rank and Peak Master Rank elites among them, so the score was far lower than the great battle at Eryndor City.

Still, the various attribute legions' cleanups were ongoing and those totals continued to climb.

Aurek then spent resources to spawn four thousand new units. Whether Life Sorcerers, Mountain Shieldbearers, Elemental Assassins, Doomsday Warriors, or Void Warlocks, they were all raised to a level-7 standard.

He recalled Overthunder, Gold Amor, Violet Thunder and War Bear.

Now Overthunder had broken through to level 6, edging close to 7. Gold Amor had evolved to level 7. Violet Thunder was at level 6.

"Gold Amor," Aurek commanded, "deploy a portion of the Elemental Assassin corps to infiltrate the Southwest, the North, the Southeast, the Bimat Highlands, and the dominions of Grand Duke Walton. Assassinate provincial governors and military leaders under their sway and collect every scrap of intelligence, including border deployments."

"At the same time, send three thousand Elemental Assassins into the domains of Duke Furt and Crimson Hills. Reconnoiter their troop dispositions, numbers, locations of elites, and gather detailed intelligence on Blade City and Crimson Hills. Install spatial beacons at key rear positions to prepare for the Void Warlock legion's arrival."

Thinking of Empress Selene's designs, Aurek added, "Also infiltrate the Brotherhood of the Old Gods and uncover whatever secrets they may hide. The Elemental Assassin legions are under your full command — I want every dossier on every target prepared and laid out on the desk."

"As you command, my lord!" Gold Amor bowed devoutly, then asked, "My lord — shall the students of the Hyrule War Academy be eliminated as well?"

"Not only eliminated," Aurek replied coldly, "I will make it so they cannot live, and cannot find death. After these factions are cleaned up, it will be their turn."

His hatred for the Hyrule War Academy matched that for Crimson Hills and the other foes. The academy's students had slandered him, libeled the Empire, and desecrated the royal house with their provocations — their offenses had long since crossed every conceivable line. Killing them outright would be too easy; they deserved far worse.

Gold Amor accepted the order without hesitation.

"Violet Thunder, temporarily command the Void Warlock corps. Use Transdimensional Leap to assist the Elemental Assassin units with insertion and extraction, and deliver gathered intelligence to Valoria Palace immediately."

"Also, construct spatial nodes connecting the main provinces and coordinate closely with the Imperial Knights. Ensure we can instantly transport them into the territories of Duke Furt and Crimson Hills, and convey the various attribute legions to those battlefields."

"Overthunder, lead the Doomsday Warrior contingents to assemble at the two border zones."

"War Bear, dispatch ten thousand Mountain Shieldbearers to guard the other threatened approaches to Eryndor City — protect the capital. The Horn Dragon Fortress garrison will be handled by Rand."

To strike Crimson Hills, meticulous preparation was essential.

Aurek's current points already allowed him to ascend to Grandmaster Rank. Should he break through and condense a Divine Aspect, his magical foundation and grasp of cosmic law would undergo a qualitative transformation.

Combined with spatial and elemental duality, the Glamer Holy Sword, Divine Carapace, and that runic dagger, he would be more than able to drag that ancient from his nest and shred him to pieces.

From the intelligence, the old monster in Crimson Hills feared celestial calamity — Stellar Rank cataclysms.

As ranks advance, even the smallest step becomes an immense gulf: for Grandmaster Rank, each incremental gain can yield an additional Divine Aspect, and every extra Aspect is a huge leap in power.

Karon, bearing nine Divine Aspects, could easily contend with ten Grandmaster Rank foes and ten thousand Peak Master Rank warriors — the disparity stems from this accumulation.

Above Stellar Rank, the differences between levels expand by orders of magnitude.

It was unclear which sub-level of Stellar Rank the Crimson Hills elder occupied.

Even if he were at the pinnacle of the Stellar realm, Aurek resolved to try.

The adversary they faced was not merely the elder — it was the very celestial disaster itself that inspired fear.

If they could force that enemy from his lair, there were always more ways than obstacles.

Moreover, if Aurek advanced to Grandmaster Rank, his spatial and elemental abilities would both be strengthened, granting him methods far deadlier than before.

Spatial mastery, in particular, could give him near-absolute control over distances and portals — in some respects surpassing ordinary Stellar Rank practitioners.

Once he stepped into Grandmaster Rank, he would have the audacity to challenge any level within Stellar Rank.

Of course — imagining such things was perhaps only something he dared to conceive. But he was resolving to make those daring plans reality.