

GREED 401

Chapter 401 Helios Is The New Target.

His Colossus soon reached the ant mound, marching forward to see to the glory of order and for the will of the Celestial Supreme to be done.

"This is it. Now I'll get to see what all this is about." He had said in anticipation.

His eyes were glued to the screen so he saw it happened. Unlike other gods he is using the barricade he set up as his influence to watch the event instead of a priest. The barricade is also very sensitive to changes so he was able to get more from it than using priests. There was a flash and the loud roar of an explosion. They seemed like one thing but the Celestial Supreme knows that they are three separate explosions happening one after the other really quickly so it looked like one prolonged explosion.

Helios expanded. His expansion heated the air and caused it to expand. That was the first explosion. It was mild but he caught it. Then Helios collapsed and discharged a plasma-like fluid into the area vacated by air and his body. The substance he ejected expanded from its fluid form into gas and ignited everything it came in contact with, including the Colossus. That was the second explosion.

The range of the second explosion was small. The substance expanded far faster than sound. It spread at the speed that heat travels. It might as well be pure heat. It formed a ball of yellowish plasma around the Colossus. There was no damage beyond the ball. But the damage the plasma produced within the ball created a reaction that led to another explosion.

This time the explosion is a mixture of plasma and air. It had a much farther range that covered the camp and the ant mound. It is what everyone saw and believed to have happened but he is more concerned about that plasma. It is much too powerful for a transcendent to wield.

That kind of thing should only be seen with Stelios and not Stelios' son that is 200 years old. That plasma-like energy would have rendered his carefulness mute. Helios would have been able to kill the two Colossi he wanted to send. He would have needed to send his best to the ant mound but he didn't expect that a simple ant mound will cause so many problems for him.

He asked himself, "Just where did he get this power?"

Something is twice as powerful if you don't know why it is powerful or its source of power. There are a lot of confusing things surrounding this situation that he can't even begin to guess. He can't guess the Stigmata or the Celestial power within it because where did Helios get that? Could it be that he is actually a Celestial but is hiding it? That will explain why he has Celestial divine energy and divine will within his Stigmata. It will also explain why he has that power. But that is not possible. Which leads him back to nothing.

He was finally able to see what the aftermath of the explosions is when the screen cleared. Helios is standing in the air above a large lake of lava. The Colossus is gone, and so is the camp of soldiers. The ant mound is also gone. None of them survived that explosion. In their place is a crater filling up with lava and a cloud of steam rising above it.

The Celestial Supreme had only one thing on his mind as he looked at Helios.

"Origin Energy." He muttered in shock.

His attention was fixed on the ant mound when he noticed someone pass his barrier. Another transcendent plant lifeform walked out of the ant mound and pass the barricade he put up.

The plant spirit waved at him through his divine vision but he wasn't concerned about that. What he was more concerned about is the green fire within the eyes of the plant. It indicated the presence of a god within that body. This means that the transcendent is also a vessel for the hidden god.

"Just how many does this god have?" He wondered.

He is wondering because that's the only thing he can do. He has already seen two transcendent vessels in this ant mound alone. For a god to have that much, he must have fervent believers who became transcentents and are willing to give up their freedom to their god. This isn't something that can happen overnight, it needs years and years of development. And yet, he has never heard of any hidden church or religion. It meant that this hidden god is hiding even more from him.

He shook his head warily. "This was a disaster. The only thing that came out of it is that the hidden god was in contact with the ant colony. That may be why Helios was released. We gave him up while they released him. They succeeded in turning him against us. All in all, it was a disaster."

He considers sending the Colossus a waste. He hasn't learned much from the death and the things that he learned are bad news. He already suspected that a plant spirit could be in touch with the ant queen since the other mama entities to become demigods have transcendent bodyguards. The Colossus just confirmed his suspicions.

The presence of the plant vessel explains how the hidden god was able to smuggle so much divinity without him noticing. The transcendent vessel absorbed the divinity and transferred it to the god. The god then transferred it to other vessels. The unraveling of that little mystery didn't make the Celestial Supreme happy. Because if it is true, then the hidden god must have a lot of vessels. Only a vessel has the necessary connection to a god to make the transfer of divinity

"Forget about that for a minute. Let me confirm what I sensed."

He decided to have a little chat with Helios and confirm if what he sensed his true. He would very much like to know where Helios got Origin energy from. He will not take no for an answer. He can't get hold of someone important working with the hidden god so Helios will have to do.

Chapter 402 Prepare Yourself.

The only way for a transcendent to be hurt enough to die is either with Origin energy or divine power. He sensed a lot of divine power earlier from Helios but it was like an inactive volcano. It was unused. It just shadowed everything and fooled the other gods. They didn't notice anything strange and thought Helios's prowess is from divine power. He wasn't fooled. He was able to sense the divine power and determine it to be Celestial power despite it being inactive.

If that explosion had contained divine power, his barricade would have been destroyed. That doesn't mean much on its own. But it means much when his barricade can sense the faint fluctuations of origin energy after the noise of divine power has died down.

Origin Energy was wielded so well that it seemed to be divine power. He wasn't fooled though. He descended to the ground immediately to confirm his suspicions. A black giant dressed in a white suit appeared where his barricade is. He sank into contemplation as he sensed the residual energy in the surrounding.

"It is Origin energy. That explosion contained Origin energy." He said with certainty.

He has confirmed the presence of Origin energy. Then he looked at Helios the source of the Origin energy and the origin of the celestial aura he was sensing earlier. Helios looked at him too and their eyes met. Then Helios turned away and ignored him. His golden figure meditated calmly in the air.

The Celestial Supreme flew up to him and asked. "What are you doing?"

"A lot of things one of which is ignoring you. I would like for you to do the same with me." Helios answered.

"I can't do that. You just killed several priests from different churches and you also killed an enforcer of my church. I cannot ignore you.

"Hmm. That's a shame." Helios's eyes were still closed as he meditated.

The Celestial Supreme began to fume. "Is that all you have to say for yourself? You're a criminal that has offended the entire gods of the pantheon."

"So?"

"So? So?" The Celestial Supreme began to shake with anger. "So?"

He was speechless and furious. He should be respected and revered. Maybe he should have gotten used to things not going his way recently but this still struck what was left of his pride. He certainly didn't expect this kind of dismissal from a boy that he witnessed being born. What's worse is that this is the second time he is getting this sort of dismissal. That pompous plant dragon also disrespected him.

Helios spoke up. "It really is a shame that you won't ignore me."

"Fine. I understand why you're proud. But mark my words, you will regret this course of action."

The Celestial Supreme understood that transcendents feel confident in their power because there's almost nothing that the gods can do to them. Helios is also a young giant who has been sheltered all his

life so his pride and ignorance are understandable. The little twerp got his first taste of power and thinks himself unstoppable.

In fact, Helios should be more proud since he also has Origin energy within him and he shouldn't be surprised by the disrespect. It is like father and son. But pride doesn't mean power or security. The churches aren't reigning Supreme in the mortal realm for nothing. Ignorant or not, disrespect and blasphemy are the two monster grievous sins one can commit to a god. So he won't stomach Helios's disrespect.

If Helios is already behaving like this then how will he behave if he asks him how he got Origin energy? The Celestial power might be from Stelios but he isn't sure about it. The Celestial Supreme will rather apprehend him and then question him. Disrespect or not, all that matters is strength and he will show this young upstart the errors of his way.

He decided to give Helios one more chance. The gods are also watching after all. He wants to be fully justified for any extreme measures he employs to apprehend the boy. "I'm guessing you don't feel remorse and are not repenting for the murder of..."

"No, I'm not remorseful...." Helios interrupted him but he seemed to have something stuck in his throat. He stopped mid-speech as the power of order focused on him to prevent him from saying what he wanted to say next. He used his divine sense to communicate and he easily shrugged the power off and continued. "No, I'm not remorseful Zernon."

The Celestial Supreme's frosty face couldn't get any colder. "I see. You are on the side of the hidden god. That's how you were able to become a transcendent. Is that who is giving you your confidence? Your father is also one of them. He betrayed me. I knew he had made plans against me but I didn't think he will go this far."

Helios's words showed his allegiance. It is also a message to him to send the best that he can send. It didn't help that Helios simply smirked at him.

Zernon nodded gravely. He said, "Prepare yourself."

He returned to his divine kingdom immediately. Then he ordered the remaining 30% of his church's forces to apprehend Helios. He is bringing out the best of his forces for this expedition. He also

announced a divine council meeting. The gods had dispersed when he suddenly left their meeting and didn't return to them. Even so, the gods arrived immediately and no one mentioned his abrupt departure from the last meeting. No one wants to get on the bad side of the Celestial Supreme right now. It was then that all of them noticed something.

Back To Aeternus.

Far away in another plane of existence. The 541st plane of the abyss to be exact.

There is a fortress within the domain of high-rank demons. In that fortress is a pillar more than 1,000 meters. On this pillar is a black statue. The details on the statue are sharp and create a vivid image of a thin but muscular entity.

Chapter 403 A Duel In The House Of Chaos.

The statue seems to have been carved in the form of a demon. But the demon that it depicts is odd for a demon. The statue is short like a low-rank demon, just 1.7 meters tall, but it has horns that are mainly seen in high-rank demons.

There is also a blazing red flame burning between the horns. The flame is very life-like, moving and shifting like a real flame. Except that the flame isn't burning anything, producing heat, or has an apparent source of fuel. Yet, the flame is surely growing stronger. The use of the flame isn't obvious either since it isn't producing light to improve the visibility of the top of the pillar. So the pillar is dark. Even the statue beneath the flame is barely visible.

Suddenly the sockets in the head of the statue where its eyes should be opened. From within the sockets can be seen a white ghostly flame burning with everlasting vigor. Then black fumes began to ooze out of the body of the statue until it is obscured within a cloak of darkness. Only the white soul flames of the eyes and the red flame of Accumulation can be seen.

Aeternus awoke from his slumber. He has not moved from this spot for more than 200 years. He has been waiting for his chance and he can tell that it will come soon. It isn't time yet for the call to arms, but one of the duties of being the Lord of the house of Chaos has made him wake up.

Soon two figures appear in the air at the top of the pillar. They knelt in the air and bowed to the demon that occupies the top of the pillar. The pillar is not wide, just 20 meters in diameter. Aeternus is small compared to other demons so there is a lot of space on the pillar since he is the only one on it, but the

space is meant for only those that he has invited. These two have not been invited, so they stay in the air.

They both greeted him with due reverence and stated their request. "We seek the audience of Lord Khaos."

"Is this about your insatiable lust?" Aeternus directed his question to one of the figures.

His cold voice reached them and made them both shiver. He can't talk with his mouth so his divine sense had to connect to their minds. Brushing their minds against his is an experience that brings out their primal instincts for survival. It is their faith in him as their lord that stopped them from preparing to be attacked.

"Yes, lord Khaos," Baal answered the question.

Baal has changed from the harmless-looking high-rank demon he used to be. He is a demon duke of lust now. He has grown in size standing at 30 meters tall and can still grow larger than that. He has 3 pairs of wings, two horns, and one tail. His skin is black like the color of his eyes. His eyes are more like two bottomless holes rather than black.

Having received his answer, Aeternus spoke, "Get on with it then."

Baal then made his request, "Lord Khaos, Number 2 would like to challenge number 1."

"You have used up your quota for challenges in this century. What say you Infernox?" Aeternus asked number 1.

Infernox the demon duke of wrath remains almost the same. He has grown to become 50 meters tall and this is just his base height. He becomes taller when he is angry. He has his bull head with a single horn, 2 pairs of wings, and 3 flaming tails. His tails aren't the only thing on fire. His entire body is burning with a reddish-orange flame and lava is dripping from the cracks in his reddish volcanic rock skin.

"I accept the challenge from number 2, Lord Khaos." Infernox's voice rumbled like rocks tumbling down the side of a mountain as he spoke.

"Then I give my permission and allow this challenge."

"We thank Lord Khaos."

They offered their gratitude after he gave them permission to try and kill each other. Then they flew into the air and began to prepare. The demons on the ground noticed that a fight is about to begin so they stopped whatever they are doing to watch. But only the high-rank demons are watching. The multitude of mid-rank demons as far as the eye can see are still fighting and trying to kill each other. Mid-rank demons don't have the leisure to rest or watch a fight when everything around them is trying to kill them. A silver of rest will only come when they have vanquished enough foes for them to evolve.

Two High-rank demons who were sparing also stopped practicing to watch the fight in the sky.

"Isn't that duke Baal? I thought he has used up his challenge quota." One of them asked.

"He has. He must have agreed to it." His partner answered.

The one that asked the question scoffed and spoke. "Obviously. It's not like Baal can flaunt the rules. Every fight needs Lord Khaos's permission so they must have gotten it."

"I meant duke Infernox. I heard that duke Baal was taunting duke Infernox. If duke Infernox didn't agree to the challenge, duke Baal wouldn't have presented the challenge since he is out of challenging quota."

"How many as that made now? This should be his sixth challenge."

"No, it is his seventh."

"Yes, this will make his seventh. Duke Baal sure loves to fight."

"Yes, he does."

The two of them kept quiet as the fight finally started.

Every duke has the right to challenge another duke higher up in the chain of command once every century. Baal has had two opportunities to challenge and he has used them. He will then goad demons in the higher ranks into accepting his challenge since he can't force them to fight him. His behavior has become public knowledge.

Chapter 404 INFERNOX VS BAAL 1

It is also public knowledge that while Baal likes to half his superiors into fighting him, he doesn't accept any challenge from those beneath him. He won't fall into being goaded. He will only fight if they use their challenge quota on him. Dukes have to respect their superiors and cannot say anything overly offensive to each other even to goad them into a fight. The hierarchy of the family is strictly upheld.

Disrespect is punished by the loss of an amount of Accumulation to be determined by Lord Khaos. To lose your Accumulation is a very painful loss that demons will do anything to avoid. It is enough encouragement not to disrespect their superiors. As opposed to his current opponent, Baal has enough self-control to not be goaded into a fight by a statement like, "Are you afraid of losing to me?"

That's all it took to set Infernox on edge and to accept this challenge. A simple sentence and now they are about to fight in a duel that might lead to the death of one of them.

Baal eyed his opponent. He readied his grimoire. The giant tattered book floating beside him flew into his hands. Baal turned the pages which are made from the skin of demon nobles. He uttered a phrase that turned the pages into cards made of ice.

Now that he is ready to do battle he spoke to his opponent. "So you're not afraid of losing to me. Accepting the challenge has surely proved that."

Infernox scowled which is a terrifying look on the face of a bull. He huffed great flames through his nostrils before replying. "I'll prove more than that when I beat you up."

Baal was never moved by the taunts that others use to try and goad him into a fight because he is not afraid of losing. He just doesn't care enough to prove them wrong by wasting his time fighting them. He

believes himself to be superior and he doesn't need to win a fight to prove it. Infernox on the other hand was easily goaded for numerous reasons. The obvious reason is that he is a demon of wrath and the less obvious reason is that he is really afraid of losing to Baal.

Baal has risen through the ranks by fighting strong opponents while Infernox became number 1 because he was the second demon that was added to the house. So he isn't feeling confident in himself and doesn't think he deserves the position. He decided to fix that problem by facing his fears. Fear is not a good emotion for a demon to have. Defeating Baal and if lord Khaos allows it, killing Baal will prove to him that he deserves it.

NAME: INFERNOX

RACE: Chaotic Entity.

BLOODLINE: Chaosling.

DEMON RANK: Demon Duke.

CHAOS RANK: Second Star.

HEALTH: 100%

STAMINA: 100%

CHAOS ENERGY: 728,912

ACCUMULATION: 710,129

ATTACK RATING: Physique:648+360. Spirit:648+71. MAGIC:648+71.

DEFENSE RATING: Physique:648+323. Spirit:648+323. MAGIC:648+323.

ABILITIES:

1. The Power Of Wrath(EPIC): +9 Boosts to Strength when angry by burning chaos energy.
2. The Endurance Of Wrath(DIVINE): +21 Boosts to Physical attacking power, Physical, Spiritual, and Magical resistance the more injured you get.
3. The Aura Of Wrath(UNIQUE): A passive aura that badgers those around you with a Spiritual attack. Those that are unable to overcome the attack become immobilized. Those that can overcome it but are affected by the aura will have their prowess reduced based on the level of influence. The debuff ranges between 10-50%.
4. The Accumulation of Vengeance(DIVINE): The Accumulation of anger and resentment for empowerment within the body. Can be used to attack or to raise the state of existence to 17.
5. Body of Calamity (UNIQUE): Calamity brews within you and you're a volcano ready to erupt. The more your Accumulation increases the more potential you possess. You gain a 0.01% boost to every part of your existence even when you don't use Accumulation and this boost is directly proportional to the amount of Accumulation stored. The current boost is 71 power.
6. Connection To The Lord(UNIQUE): You are capable of communicating with the Lord of your house through this connection and he to you through the connection. You are his eyes and hands. The Lord can see through your senses and assist you with energy to perform the tasks he has given you.

STATUS: Angry.

It cannot be denied that Infernox is very powerful. But most of the dukes were there when he became a duke. He was just a mid-rank demon among a thousand that were used to show the full capabilities of the Lord of Khaos. He transformed from an insignificant mid-rank demon in a show into a demon duke used to compel the others to fight. All he has currently is due to the Lord of Khaos and he is thankful for that opportunity.

He has been reborn by that experience but there is a mark of stain on him that cannot be removed. This mark of stain is the Epic rank ability that he acquired as a mid-rank demon. It proves that he doesn't belong amongst the genius demons with Legendary and Divine abilities. It proves that he wasn't raised or meant to be great. He was just lucky. If not for that opportunity, he wouldn't be here. So he needs to prove to himself and to others that he deserves to be here.

NAME: BAAL

RACE: Chaotic Entity.

BLOODLINE: Chaosling.

DEMON RANK: Demon Duke.

CHAOS RANK: Second Star.

HEALTH: 100%

STAMINA: 100%

CHAOS ENERGY: 2,132,379

ACCUMULATION: 1,252,718

ATTACK RATING: Physique:648. Spirit:648+168. MAGIC:648+382.

DEFENSE RATING: Physique:648. Spirit:648. MAGIC:648+324.

ABILITIES:

1. The Power of Lust(DIVINE): +30 Boost to Magical power.
2. The Hoarding of Power(DIVINE): +200% to Health, Stamina, and Mana Storage limit.
3. The Lust for Power(UNIQUE): Steal something that you want from someone by marking them with your spirit. You can steal Accumulation, Health, and Stamina. The effect of Lust for power and the rate of siphoning is dependent on the difference in the power of Spirit. Gain advantage of +14 to your Spirit for the activation of Lust for power.
4. Master of Elements(UNIQUE): You are incredibly talented when it comes to the usage of mana. You can use all basic elements of mana. Earth, fire, water, air, light, and darkness spells are possible with this ability. Gain a 50% boost to defense against spells based on the basic elements and a 20% boost to magical power.
5. The Accumulation of Lust: Accumulate power by desiring the things of others. The more malcontent you are, the more power you store away for later use. This power can be used to attack or to raise the state of existence to 17.
6. Connection To The Lord(UNIQUE): You are capable of communicating with the Lord of your house through this connection and he to you through the connection. You are his eyes and hands. The Lord can see through your senses and assist you with energy to perform the tasks he has given you.

STATUS: Excited.

Chapter 405 INFERNOX VS BAAL 2.

Baal is a prodigy who was raised to become another demon noble on par with the 8 strongest demon nobles. He was destined to be great. He has an innate talent for mana manipulation that enabled him to master the fusion of sin energy and mana when he was just a mid-rank demon. He was already a high-rank demon when Infernox was a mid-rank demon. And he wasn't some ordinary high-rank demon either.

He believes he should be superior to Infernox in the ranking since he has the advantage of age, talent, and most importantly, strength. It is nothing personal. It is simply in his nature to lust after good things regardless of whether he deserves it or not. So they will duke it out and see who gets to be the head and who gets to be the tail. Strength should be the determinant of the rank in the house instead of the time you joined the house.

Fire came out of Infernox's body like a liquid and spread over the metal axe head in his hand. The metal heated up quickly and became a crystal with the same reddish-orange color as the flame. Infernox roared and flapped his giant wings. His giant figure shot towards Baal like a burning meteor with his axe raised and primed for decapitation.

Baal responded quickly. He muttered some words and threw one of the ice cards that the pages of his grimoire had transferred into. The ice card transformed into a thick slab of ice that stood in Infernox's path. Infernox's axe fell with impunity and cut into the obstruction. The ice slab shattered but there was another one waiting for Infernox.

Infernox shattered the next one easily, and the next one, then the next one. Meanwhile, the ice slabs that he shattered reformed into their original shape. They look intact and ready to be shattered again. They would have looked completely identical to their previous state except that they are smaller. Apparently, they didn't come out unscathed from the previous shattering. But they are ready to go again for another round of smashing.

Infernox became boggled down by 10 slabs of ice that rotated the duty of being shattered. It gave Baal time to form a bigger ice construct. He muttered for 10 seconds into an ice card and infused it with a lot of energy, then he transformed it into a giant ice gate. The ice gate flew towards Infernox and entered the rotation.

Infernox struck the gate with his full power but he could only cut out chunks of the gate instead of shattering it with one blow as he did for the ice slabs. He aimed for a second blow but an ice slab tried to smash into his side. He waved one arm to shatter the distraction but it reduced the power of his strike on the gate. He tried again to bring down the ice gate but more and more distractions tried to prevent him from doing just that. Meanwhile, Baal is siphoning his stamina.

He can feel himself growing weary due to Baal's unique ability The Lust For Power. It made him frustrated and he roared. Flames poured out of his skin into his surroundings like some leaking furnace. A domain of flames appeared around him to form a sphere of fire. He became the core of a large ball of fire.

The ice slabs around him were melted easily by the flames so he could concentrate on the giant ice wall. He succeeded in shattering it and he found another giant ice wall behind it. He wasn't surprised, but he became angrier. The flames around him grew hotter the angrier he became. His emotions acted as fuel to his flames.

He set to work on the gate while Baal tried to slow him down with more ice slabs but it was all futile. The ice slabs were like lambs sent to their slaughter. They entered the domain of flames never to return again. Even the ice gate couldn't show its full strength within the flames. It is already taxing for the ice gate to survive the flames. Weathering the onslaught of Infernox's blows is a little too much for it to cope with. So Infernox was able to destroy the second ice gate in record time.

He found another gate waiting for him but he grinned this time around. He has come close to Baal. He just has to overcome this last barrier quickly enough then he will finally be able to crush Baal's weak body. Unfortunately, he couldn't be happy for long because Baal increased the distance between them. He flapped his wings and flew back while he continued to create more ice gates. He was able to create two more ice gates that entered the rotation to stall Infernox.

Baal had to stay close to Infernox or the Ice gates will be useless. If he is too far away from Infernox, infernox can just avoid the giant ice gates to reach him. But by being close to the fiery minotaur, infernox has to pass through the ice gates to reach him. Baal continued to use the tactic to stall his opponent.

Infernox roared again and pursued but he couldn't reach his target without going through the ice gates. Still, he was getting stronger and stronger. So he was destroying them faster and faster. Baal was still sending the ineffective ice slabs to their deaths. It became a race of cat vs mouse until Infernox became strong enough to destroy the ice gate with a single strike. It happened just in time too because Baal's ability to siphon his stamina is about to tire him out. The fight had taken a long time but he doesn't have anything to show for it. That will change now with his newfound strength.

He positioned himself and raised his axe for a strike to the ice gate. Then the gate suddenly exploded. It exploded without being hit. It sent out ice flakes that doused Infernox's flame domain. The two other gates exploded too after the first explosion. The full power of their explosion struck Infernox without his flame domain to protect him.

Chapter 406 VICTORY

The two other ice gates around him exploded into a grand shower of hail and ice stones. They struck his body with considerable force that crushed them into flakes. The power of the explosions and their abrupt occurrence would have killed a weaker being but Infernox is no weakling. He survived the three explosions.

"I see that you are out of tricks." He said to Baal.

He has lost his flame domain but the flame protected him from the bulk of the explosions. Meanwhile, Baal has lost all the ice constructs that he can use to delay him. The only thing still around is the pillars of the three previous ice gates. So by his standards, he is out on top.

In fact, he is stronger even. The explosion managed to harm him causing his strength and defense to increase a little. The tides of the battle have turned in his favor. Or so he thought. Baal snapped his fingers in answer. Suddenly Infernox froze over. Ice appeared all over his body. It covered every inch of his volcanic skin and froze him. The ice continued to grow until Infernox became trapped in one giant slab of ice.

The ice slabs have always been trying to recover their structure but his flame domain prevented that. Now that his flames have been put out by the explosion of three ice gates, it allowed Baal to conjure them again. Baal activated all of them at the same time in one large grand conjuration.

But that wouldn't hold Infernox for long. It's like trying to freeze a volcano. It is all but a futile attempt if you don't have enough power. Infernox was about to explode and he is still going to explode. Even now, the process has started. He lit up within the ice slab and began to melt it from within.

Baal didn't wait for him to finish his escape. He muttered some words quickly and chains formed from the pillars of the ice gates that exploded and Infernox's trapped form.

The gates exploded earlier leaving behind their pillars. There are 6 pillars for the 3 gates. Long and thick ice chains formed from the pillars and entered the ice before reaching Infernox's body. The thick ice chains used the flakes of ice that doused Infernox flames to attach to his body and bound him. Infernox couldn't resist because he was trapped within the ice. He was thoroughly bound by the time his flames shattered the giant ice slabs.

His cage of ice exploded into flakes but the flames recombined into ice labs moments after. The ice slabs formed around Infernox in large amounts except they are smaller in size. The problem with them is that each one also has a chain attached to him. They had left some flakes on him when he shattered them easily. The reason why they were smaller in size is that they dumped part of themselves on him to slow him down and form their own chains.

"Give up," Baal said to his captive.

Infernox considered using Accumulation but decided against it. The Lord of Chaos has banned the use of Accumulation for challenges. Accumulation can make a fool look powerful, but it doesn't mean they are

really powerful. Only pure skill matters and there's no skill that could let him escape from this entanglement of ice. He knows he will continue to get slower as ice holds him back while Baal flees and siphons his stamina.

It pained Infernox but he said it. "I admit defeat."

Baal nodded and recalled his summons. The ice slabs, chains, and pillars broke apart into flakes. They then formed ice cards that flew into his grimoire. Baal closed the grimoire when all the ice cards had returned. The ice cards turned into their natural state after that. They became sheets made out of the skins of demon nobles.

The sheets are a creation of Baal. He started making them when he was a high-rank demon. Back then, it was a dream item for him. But it has become easier to acquire the materials needed to make the pages now that he is a demon duke.

The sheets are capable of transforming into whatever Baal needs. He changes their form through the inscriptions he made on them. So their form is limited to spell structures. They can transform into any of his spells based on any of the 6 elements but he can only use one element at a time.

Aeternus had been watching their fight closely. He proclaimed after they are done. "From henceforth, Baal, the duke of lust, of the house of chaos shall become Number 1."

The number 2 in Baal's left eye changed into 1 immediately while the opposite happened to Infernox. The ranking represents more than superiority. It also represents resource distribution and the allocation of soldiers. It is very important in the house of Chaos.

They both bowed and offered their gratitude to their lord. "We thank the Lord of Chaos."

He said to them. "You may leave."

Infernox sighed in relief and left. He is grateful that the Lord of Khaos did not allow him to be killed for his defeat. Meanwhile, Baal hesitated to leave. He has something he wants to ask Aeternus but doesn't know how to go about it.

Aeternus noticed his hesitation, so he asked. "What is it?"

"I would like to get to know Number 0 better. But I hardly see her around." Baal answered with as much confidence that he can muster.

Aeternus chuckled. "You want to talk her into accepting your challenge right?"

Baal denied it. "No, my lord. I feel it is good to become familiar with..."

Aeternus interrupted him. "Forget it. You can't beat her. If you can't find her then you can't beat her. So find her first before concerning yourself with when you will fight her."

Baal had more questions but he kept them to himself. The Lord of Khaos has already indulged him in his lust for power. He turned around to leave when he came face to face with a giant black serpent with its mouth spread wide open and multiple fangs like long sharpened blades.

Chapter 407 The More The Merrier.

She had either been here without him noticing or she crept up to him without him noticing. Either way, she was too close to him, and even worse, he didn't notice how she became this close to him. The Lord of Khaos' words rang in his mind. If he can't find her, then he can't defeat her. He should worry about finding her first before thinking of fighting her. An enemy that can get this close to you without you noticing is a very dangerous enemy.

Baal remained Stoic despite the fact that he can see his reflection in her silvery fangs. He didn't sense her get so close to him but he schooled his emotions and wasn't flustered. It helped that he didn't sense any ill intent or danger from the snake. They are part of the same house so betrayal cannot occur. Murder can occur by the will of the lord of a house but certainly not betrayal. That fact strengthened his resolve not to cower or look weak.

He said calmly. "I see you're around, Number 0. We should spar sometimes."

Xander closed her mouth and turned her two left eyes so that they can focus on him.

She stared at him in silence for a while before she hissed at him. "We'll see."

Then Baal bid farewell and left. Xander retracted her head and placed it before Aeternus. Others may not see her, but the top of the pillar is occupied by Xander. She has coiled her entire body around Aeternus.

"What do you think about the fight?" Aeternus asked Xander.

"Baal is very talented but Infernox is stronger. Infernox is at a disadvantage because wisdom always trumps brawn."

Aeternus agrees with her. Baal's ability to use all elements when combined with his spell artifact makes him very versatile. He can improvise and adapt to any situation so he doesn't have any weaknesses. Infernox is stronger but has many weaknesses. He needs to get angry and he also needs to get hurt to get his maximum boosts. Baal on the other hand is boosted at any time.

Baal took advantage of his opponent's weakness to win that fight. He used ice to weaken Infernox and slow him down. He also didn't aim to hurt Infernox at all during the fight. The boost that Infernox gets from being hurt is more powerful than the boost from his anger. The more hurt Infernox gets, the higher his power and resistance to damage becomes.

That's why Baal only siphoned Stamina to tire Infernox out and used ice to tie him down. He didn't touch Accumulation because Aeternus forbade it and he didn't touch his health which will hurt Infernox. Baal clearly did his research. Baal becomes unstoppable when he combines information with his versatility.

"I still believe in Infernox though. In time, he will be too strong to be contained by anything." Aeternus said to Xander.

Xander spoke. "I think so too. Infernox wasn't this big when he became a duke and he certainly wasn't this big a hundred years ago. He is growing stronger somehow."

Aeternus nodded. All his subordinates are talented in one way or the other. Xander may not specialize in raw power but she is the best when it comes to information gathering and stealth operations. Her ability

allows her to observe others without being observed. Her keen eye noticed that Infernox is growing stronger but she doesn't know why.

A demon duke can change their shape so it is easy to overlook Infernox's increase in size but Xander caught it probably because she feels threatened by him and has been watching him closely. She is right in that Infernox is growing stronger. His unique ability, the body of calamity gives him a 0.001% boost based on his Accumulation. It is why he is getting stronger the more he Accumulates.

For now, the boost is 71, it can become 1,000 in the future when Infernox's stockpile of Accumulation increases. At that time, he won't need Accumulation to fight the demon lord. The passive boost from that ability will be more than enough for him. The demon lord has a power rating of 1071. A generous boost of 500 from her sin abilities will still make her come up short in a fight with Infernox.

'I am looking forward to his growth. I want to see what Baal will be able to do then.' he thought to himself.

In the early days of the challenges. A defeat means death. Sometimes a victory or a draw might also lead to death if Aeternus isn't satisfied with the display. But things have changed now that he has weeded out the weak and useless. Infernox will not be killed for his defeat because he has potential and because Baal can't kill him. Baal can only restrain him. It is not a good enough reason to get rid of Infernox. That's why he let Infernox live.

Then he asked Xander. "Is everything set?"

"Yes, my lord. I have spread the news that you are about to attack a plane. The demon lord and her forces have all prepared for the attack. It seems all the demon nobles are working with her." Xander replied.

Aeternus became happy. "Even better. The more the merrier. A party needs a lot of guests."

Xander has been scouting the domain of demon nobles for him. This time, he sent her to spread the rumor that he is about to leave the plane. It is a rumor and as such is unreliable but the demon lord chose to believe it. The Lord of Khaos has ensconced himself in the domain of high-rank demons for over 200 years, but there's only so much he can take. It is in a demon's nature to pillage and rob, so they believe it is high time for him to do just that.

He spends most of his days plotting and preparing for the call to action. His house has expanded over the years with a large army of demons. He is more than prepared for what is to come. He waited eagerly and was full of excitement when he received the go-ahead from Legion soon after. He grinned but his stiff face didn't show it.

"It's time to get this party started." He said to Xander.

Chapter 408 We Go To War.

He spoke through his channel of connection to all of his subordinates. "It's time to go to war."

Soon the sound of a war horn was heard throughout the fortress. Other war horns picked up the call and were blown too. The sound of war became the only thing that could be heard for a long while. The sound put the house into overdrive. Everyone started to prepare for the upcoming battle to a background of war drums and horns.

For the first time since their creation, the house of chaos is going to attack a plane. The commanders of the house got to work immediately. Rarely seen demon dukes barked orders to their legion commanders who then barked out orders to their vice commanders who in turn shouted at the mid-rank demons and their captains. Like a rolling stone, orders were sent down the hierarchy and the army was mobilized.

The hierarchy of the house of chaos has Lord Khaos and his dukes at the top while mid-rank demons are the foundation of its army. There are a total of 4950 legions of the house of Chaos. Each Legion is made up of 100,000 mid-rank demons making for a total of 495 million. Mid-rank demons make up more than 99% of the house.

There were more mid-rank demons than that at the beginning of troops accumulation but their numbers have been whittled down by forcing them to fight and kill each other to evolve. Their numbers can easily be replenished by abducting more mid-rank demons from their domain all over the plane. The mid-rank demons in the army might not have participated in a major war but they see death on daily basis.

When a mid-rank demon evolves from all the fighting, it has three choices. Become a captain of 1,000, a vice commander of 10,000, or become the legion commander of 100,000 soldiers. There's the option of death which happens quite a lot because those three positions are already filled with other high-rank demons who are not going to give up their position without a fight to the death.

The number of the legions is kept constant since there are only 99 demon dukes. Each demon duke gets an increasing amount of legions depending on their rank. Rank 99 gets 1 legion of demons and rank 1 gets 99 legions of demons. No one except the lord knows if rank 0 has any legions or soldiers since she is so secretive. Almost nothing is known about rank 0. Hsid

Since the number of legions is set, that means the available position is finite. So newly evolved high-rank demons have to fight and kill another demon in any one of the leadership positions. If they are lucky for a position to open up among the demon dukes, then they fight each other for it. Aeternus creates a vacancy at the top of the hierarchy by encouraging conflicts among dukes. Their conflict then creates an opportunity for demon nobles who then fight to fill the vacancy. This creates space in the mid-level and low-level hierarchy for newly evolved high-rank demons to fill. It is a rather streamlined process that has ensured that only the best and brightest occupy positions in the family.

That's the system of hierarchy used in the House of Chaos. So when word came from up high, it trickled down efficiently. The army roused itself like an awoken beast. 4,950 legions each with 100,000 mid-rank demons and their 111 leaders marshaled under the banners of their various demon dukes. They stood in order awaiting the command of the lord of Khaos while the drums of war are beaten and the horns of war are blown.

Aeternus flew down from his pillar overseeing his army and approached the abyss altar. He placed his hand on the near-indestructible circular black stone and funneled Chaos energy into it. A black swirling portal more than 100 meters in diameter opened up in the fabric of space. It is essentially a rift that connects the 541st plane of the abyss to a distant plane. The size of the portal is dependent on the power of the person that opened it so 100 meters is the limit of what Aeternus can achieve.

The portal became clear after chaos energy completed the connection. A view appeared showing the destination. It is a large plain with black sand. There is nothing else on the plain. It is just black sand as far as the eye can see. Suddenly the view changed to reveal something else. Then the size of the portal increased to a diameter of 500 meters.

Aeternus said calmly, unperturbed by the unusual behavior of the portal, "We March."

The horns were blown again as the army flocked into the portal. The portal wasn't supposed to behave like it did but no one questioned Aeternus about it. If Aeternus is okay with it then they must also be okay with it even if it might cost them their life.

At the center of the abyssal plane.

The demon lord had been monitoring the usage of abyss altars. It's the only way she can keep tabs on Aeternus. He has managed to envelop his fortress and keep her from looking at them with her divine sense. All her spies disappear whenever they come around Aeternus's fortress. Something ambushed them and killed them. So she waited for an abyss altar to open a connection to a plane.

She would know if it is Aeternus based on the size of the army, the strength of the demons that pass through, and the strength of the connection itself. His energy that can create demon dukes is sure to create a very powerful rift. Normal high-rank demons can't create rifts larger than 20 meters across. A portal greater than that in size and also opened in the domain of high-rank demons is a clear indication that he opened it. It will mean her prey is finally on the move.

Chapter 409 Invocation Of The Law Matrix.

The demon lord's dedication to snooping on portal creation helped her to spot Aeternus opening a portal. She picked up quickly on a strangely powerful abyss altar open a portal in the domain of high-rank demons. Such a portal should not be seen among high-rank demons. She collected more data and determined it to be Aeternus but she didn't make any rash moves yet.

She is familiar with his energy signature so she can say for certain that he opened the portal but she waited to confirm that he actually passed through the portal. It is important that he went through that portal instead of trying to fool her into thinking he went through the portal.

He could have opened multiple portals to fool her so she decided to use the strangeness of his aura based on his weird energy to confirm his passage out of the abyss. It was only when she was certain that he crossed the portal that she informed her subordinates to prepare for war.

"I've got him now. No one can deceive me." She roared with glee.

She is the Lord of the plane so she has certain privileges which she used to the fullest to determine his destination. Now she knows that he has left the plane and she also knows where he went through the connection the portal created as it opened.

She muttered after realizing which plane they would be attacking. "Why would he choose this plane? This plane has not been attacked for a while now. It's too difficult. It doesn't matter anyway. I will corner him and get what I deserve from him."

She doesn't understand why Aeternus will choose to attack this plane but it doesn't matter since she has confirmed that it is the plane he will be going to. She got the portal coordinates as soon as the portal opened. She is that efficient. Nothing will stop her from getting her hands on him.

So another set of war horns sounded out and another set of soldiers was mobilized. This time the army is much larger than that of Aeternus. Her house is much older than Aeternus's. She has more troops and they are more powerful than his too. She may not have demon dukes but she has many demon nobles who can use accumulation.

She shared the coordinates of Aeternus's destination plane with her allies too. Different war horns in various parts of the domain of noble demons were blown too. They have signed a contract with her to help her apprehend Aeternus. The bulk of the forces of the 541st plane is moving out together to fight a single demon. It is the hunt for Aeternus by high-rank demons again except it is on a larger scale. There's no way they can fail as the high-rank demons did. If Aeternus can handle them, then he wouldn't have hidden in the domain of high-rank demons all along.

The demon lord was boiling with excitement.

"I can't wait to get him." She said as she used the energy well to open a portal.

A giant portal more than a kilometer in diameter opened. Her portal was created with the full assistance of the plane so it is the biggest portal in the plane. It showed the destination after clearing up. The portal connected to the same destination that Aeternus's portal connected to. So the demon lord's portal showed a large plain of black sand.

"It's the Armageddon of the plane. I'll get you this time around." She said to herself then she ordered her army to move.

The portals of the demon nobles also showed the Armageddon of the plane they are attacking. It's the place where demons are transported to if they are attacking a plane with a divine plane. It is only if a plane doesn't have a divine plane that demons can tunnel freely into the main plane.

Back to Zargoth Plane.

Zargoth had called for a divine council after his meeting with Helios so the gods were in their meeting talking about what to do about Helios when a power greater than the power of the divine plane and even greater than the power of the will of the realm of high heaven descended abruptly into their plane. This power behaved like a tyrant in its quest. It came for a reason and it won't leave without fulfilling that reason. Even mother high heaven cannot interfere with the actions of this power.

The law matrix, the fabric that is the foundation of the visible and invisible universe, activated for the first time in a long time within the Zargoth plane. The law matrix present within the plane thrummed with power. As greater as the power is, its actions aren't something that can be sensed in other times but it became especially glaring in a plane without Origin energy.

Something like this won't have drawn any attention in the Virut plane since it happens every time. But it more than drew attention now. All the gods knew what it was and who it is happening to immediately. Even the mortals could see the effect of the invocation of the law matrix.

Transcendents in the plane noticed, and so did the mana entities. It was like the announcement of a new god. It became a public event. The Colossus, behemoths, and Demigods in the mortal realm all turned in the same direction with various expressions on their faces. There was mostly shock and some longing on their faces. All the gods had their eyes glued to the pillar of fire descending from the sky in that location. They all had a look of shock on their face.

The pillar of fire made of cosmic energy fell onto a golden giant meditating in the air. That golden giant is becoming a king of law and is being crowned for his effort in comprehending the complete law of fire by the void universe itself. This giant has fully comprehended the law of fire and thus invoked the law matrix for acknowledgment. Then the pillar disappeared after finishing its duty.

Chapter 410 What To Do About The Future Of Giants?

The invocation of the law matrix used to happen back in the day when the giants were chased back to their plane from the ancient battlefield. Those from other races that chased after the giants of Order used to break through once in a while. Then they all left because of the uncondusive condition of the plane and because the giants of Order were killing every foreigner. Since then, no one has invoked the law matrix. Not until today.

Without Origin energy, transcendents, lords, and kings lost their advantage. Titans could still use the power of the world but the drought of origin energy escalated the process by which their essence leaked out of them thereby reducing their lifespan. So the majority of them left and those that didn't leave died

until the plane was empty of foreigners from the ancient battlefield that came to the Zargoth plane to hunt giants.

That was thousands of origin cycles ago. This type of thing hasn't happened for thousands of origin cycles. But it is happening again, but this time, to a giant of order.

Someone asked, "What is going on?"

It is an understandable question since some haven't ever witnessed such an event. It was ages ago before most of them were born that this last occurred. Only the oldest of them have ever heard of something like this. So many of the gods don't know what they are looking at but it certainly looks awesome to witness.

"Isn't that Stelios's son?"

This is the prevalent question in the minds of those that know about what's going on. Even the ignorant ask this question after being informed of the significance of this event. The oddity of the event aside, the person it is happening to should not be a giant of order. So they had to ask to make sure that the person they are looking at is indeed Helios whom some of them witnessed his birth.

The crowd of gods was thrown into chaos. There are so many reasons why it shouldn't be happening. First, there is no Origin energy, so transcents should be able to sense the law matrix. Next, he is a giant of order. So even if there is Origin energy, he shouldn't be able to sense the law matrix. Last but not the least, and probably the greatest reason why this shouldn't be happening is that Helios just became a transcendent a few minutes ago.

There are a lot of steps to becoming a king of law. First, you have to open your Origin core and build Origin channels to it. Then you have to accumulate Origin energy within your Origin core and comprehend laws. When the laws are comprehended the universe rewards you by converting the energy you have accumulated into first the Authority of a Lord of law after a 50% comprehension of a law followed by its upgrade into the Authority of a king of law after the full comprehension of a law.

In other words, there are levels to breakthroughs. People just don't jump from one level to another only a few moments after becoming transcendent or in this case, skip an entire level moments after becoming a transcendent. They just don't become kings of laws and omit the lord of law stage.

Even if all of that were possible, giants of Order can't become lords, and becoming kings of law is a thing of a dream since they can't sense other laws. And yet, Helios apparently succeeded. It implies that he can sense laws, comprehend them and even finish comprehending them without facing the obstruction of the law fragments of Order that have bonded with his body and soul.

The god of knowledge's voice rose above the crowd as he shouted. "This is unprecedented, we must study him and figure out how he did it. His breakthrough represents the path forward for our race."

The possibility of growth for their race is too appealing to the god of knowledge. He doesn't care about their race, just the new field of knowledge that Helios represents.

Another god supported him. "That's true. Our race has a lot of potential. Imagine what we can do if we can become lords of law. We'll develop and have access to the ancient battlefield."

Some Actually care about the welfare of their race. They have been stuck in this dying plane for generations. Their rate of childbirth has fallen precariously. The lack of mana will soon be the death of them and Helios's breakthrough represents salvation from that unpleasant end.

Without mana, they will stop growing stronger and giving birth eventually or their race might devolve. But if they can comprehend laws, then they will be able to risk opening the plane again and returning to the ancient battlefield. If Helios can become a king of law and in a few minutes no less, then maybe other giants of order can too.

But another god shouted, "We have to get rid of him. The legacy of the gods will end with the rise of the path of perfection. We can't let transcendents grow stronger or they will start trying to get origin energy within the plane. It will lead to a war that might end the gods."

This god got a lot of support from the pantheon. Mortals are selfish, gods are more so. They have a good thing going here. They are gods and are worshipped and adored. A change in the status quo might disrupt that. The path of perfection is usually the enemy of those on the path of divinity. Is it a good idea to foster future enemies?

The gods already have a hard time controlling transcendents. If transcendents get an alternative then serving the gods will become a poor choice for them. They will go to the ancient battlefield where they will grow stronger than the gods and then return to terrorize them.

Most of the gods aren't willing to risk their power and status for the good of the race. Even if the race does die or devolve, the gods will continue to remain on top until the very end and that is good enough for them.