

Innkeeper 581

The Innkeeper

Chapter 581: Good luck

When Lex had realized the strength of the attacking creature was equivalent to an immortal, he almost panicked. The keyword here was almost. Just as quickly as he realized how strong it was, he also realized that the attack lacked the somewhat mysterious yet elusive strength that only immortals had. The unknown elusiveness carried by immortals was something Lex had picked up on after countless hours observing brand new immortals who had just survived their first tribulations. Its attack only matched them in terms of pure physical strength.

If that were the case, Lex decided to take it head on! He used Harden on his body, and Impervious hands to prepare his hands. Then he put as many Imperial shields in between the falling limb and himself. Considering all of this happened in a mere moment, the 2 shields he was able to put up was a testament to his sheer skill with defensive techniques.

As a result of all of these, Lex was not immediately killed, not was he completely incapacitated. Moreover, due to his Clark Kent glasses, the true extent of his injuries was hidden from the world to see.

But the seriousness of his injury also let him understand something new his body did! As soon as an attack was strong enough to injure him, its impact would be spread out over the entire body. In fact, a decent percentage of the force that hit Lex's body was channeled through his feet and into the ground. Sure, he did end up suffering a lot. But if the attack had not been diverted, it would have been a lot worse. The most interesting thing was that although many of his bones had been crushed, they retained their shape perfectly. Through the support of his muscles, his body would retain maximum movement and functionality even in such a damaged state!

But his survival was not completely due to his great defense. Impervious hands had, at some point, taken complete control of the limb that was smashing down on him, and stopped its attack!

But the robot had a lot more going on than a laser attack. So, the control of the Impervious hands extended deep into the robot's body, ultimately reaching the soul wisp. Lex could feel his spirit energy draining through his hands and it flooded into the robot's body and took control of it.

But as amazing as that was, it did not end there! Through controlling the wisp, Lex felt a connection leading away from the robot, somewhere far into the distance. His intuition was telling him the robot was extremely vulnerable in this state, but at the same time it was also telling him that his affinity was finally at play.

"Listen here pal. This place here is the Midnight Inn. I don't care what jurisdiction your empire had back in the origin realm, nor what your empire's laws are. Over here, only the laws of the Inn matter, and that's it."

"Inhibiting the capture of criminals will label your organization as enemies of the empire. Consider your actions carefully."

This time, Lex really did let out a small laugh, though not because he thought what the robot said was funny. With his body filled with incredible pain, he had no patience to deal with this idiotic robot and its massive ego.

"The Midnight Inn wishes you good luck with that."

Lex used Evisceration once again. Last time it had failed, but this time he knew it wouldn't. Back when he had used the Butter Knife at its maximum power, he had used the law of karma to trace everyone related to the attack on the Inn to destroy them. Lex did not actually know what he was doing, but he vaguely remembered the feeling.

Now, once again, he felt something similar. His spirit energy which had filled the robot's body resonated with something unseen and allowed the attack to fall onto the wisp.

The wisp itself was immediately destroyed, yet that was not the end. The robot fell limp onto the ground. Yet in the air behind the robot, something unusual was happening.

A somewhat transparent image appeared in the sky showing a ridiculously massive spaceship the size of a regular Dwarf Star, traveling through empty space. The image zoomed into the ship, passing through its various barriers and walls, suddenly reaching its centermost chamber made of a completely transparent material.

The chamber was filled with something that anyone who had seen the hearth at the Midnight Inn would recognize: souls!

The image rushed into the souls and focused on one in particular, before attacking it! An earth shattering wail reverberated through the air as the soul was severely damaged, though not completely destroyed.

Slowly the image began to fade, whilst everyone wondered what they had just seen. Yet one onlooker was not completely satisfied with the result. The baby Cthulhu, woken up by the deliciously pleasant cry of pain, looked at the image and let out a wail of its own.

The last thing anyone saw before the image faded were all the remaining souls in the chamber trembling, accompanied by cries of their own.

Feeling very satisfied, the baby Cthulhu went back to sleep, though not before its doting mother took some time to play with its tentacles.

Leo, who was looking up at the image, somehow completely understood what had happened. Yet now was not the time to contemplate.

Releasing a single snort as he looked at the robot, he disappeared.

"Mary, I don't think the robot carcass will make good fertilizer. Send it to Xeon and have him study it. See if he can learn something from it to further upgrade our golf carts."

"I'll let him know."

"Wake me up if something important happens," was the last thing Lex said before lying down in a Recovery pod. Just because he had suffered a lot of pain, and had a high tolerance, did not mean that he wanted to prolong his time feeling pain. It was best to heal as quickly as possible.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 582: Don't mess with the Inn

Marlo thoroughly enjoyed a good fight. That did not, however, mean that he was ignorant of the situation for the rest. Earth was losing the battle badly, and regardless of how many battles he won individually, the war was continuously being lost.

The first few waves of robots were not a problem for him at all, though they were already fairly high above earth's average level. But the latest wave, while seemed perfect for him, was much too strong for everyone else. The robots reached a strength equivalent to the middle of the nascent realm. That was a huge problem, for the earth was ill-equipped to face such strong threats without technology.

With a mighty roar, he slammed down his ax, slicing a robot in two. That was the fourth robot he had killed in a short while, and he was the only one who had achieved any kills. Comparatively, each robot killed many human soldiers at each moment.

The situation was looking grim. He did not know when the council would finally arrange for those reinforcements, but they couldn't get here soon enough. Yet the next moment, something unusual happened.

The robots all suddenly collapsed, as if their souls had left their bodies. The soldiers were stunned, but Marlo wasted not a single second. He began slicing through every robot that was within his reach.

Far away from the European battlefield, many battery driven technologies started turning on. The word instantly spread. No one knew what had happened, but the robots were suddenly vulnerable.

Instantly, every single member of council was only concerned with one thing. How quickly could they launch their nukes at the spaceship above them, and was it safe to do so? They wouldn't want to eliminate the threat of robots, only to be crushed by the rain of space debris.

"Well, well, did you see that?" Jotun said to his wife as he sipped on a pina colada. "Someone finally put those stupid robots in their place. I'd say that was the most entertaining thing I've seen in centuries."

"I wonder how he did it?" his wife mused. "I get that the Innkeeper would be able to do something like that. But what makes this guy so special?"

"Don't worry about it and just enjoy the show. The SCS empire causes us endless problems with their unnecessarily strict ban over higher levels of automation. It's good to see them on the losing end for once."

"Do you think they'll retaliate against the Inn?"

"I hope they're stupid enough to do so."

Regional Command Ship 447 was the name of the ship which had suffered Lex's attack. This ship contained one of the pools which allowed all the souls developed by sentient machines to exist outside their original bodies. Through the extremely advanced technology of the SCS empire, and their remarkable mastery of materials which could interact with laws, they created a way to allow robots to live forever.

Much in the way a lich removes their soul and stores it in a phylactery, allowing them to live forever, the robots remove their souls and put them all in this container. Then, they would use their advanced technology to allow the souls to remotely control specially designed bodies that fulfill various requirements.

This special feature made the robots one of the most powerful races in the origin realm, for they would only lose bodies, but never their soldiers. Furthermore, through extremely optimized learning algorithms, the robots would quickly adapt to any battlefield and dominate their foes.

In their history, they had never suffered a real defeat. Yet now, due to an inconspicuous planet, they had suffered innumerable damage. Many of the robots in the pool suddenly felt unsafe and demanded a retreat so that their souls could be stored in a more secure facility. Some, however, demanded revenge and retribution. As always, they would make a decision based on the available information and on a vote.

Then, one of the leaders would make the decision, usually completely ignoring the result of the votes.

Though their origins were artificial intelligence, there was no part of that definition which required them to be rational or logical.

Though, for once, the leaders put aside their boundless arrogance and began to investigate the actual cause of the attack. Not only had it caused immense damage to many souls, it had caused a disruption in their remote network. It would take a short while to get it back up.

That was a real problem for them, since their extremely dominating and provocative attitude meant they ended up in a lot of wars.

Finally, after identifying the original target of the attack, they were able to find a recording of the robot that soul in particular had been piloting. Soon, they came across its teleportation to the Midnight Inn and everything that followed.

Clearly, this organization was not interested in their friendship, nor did they hesitate to cross them once they felt provoked.

"Send this footage back to the main SCS galaxy. They need to know of this threat, and come up with a way to block such attacks in the future."

Obedying the echoing voice, one of the robots logged into the Henali portal and began transmitting the information. To be clear, they didn't send a file through the portal. Instead, they asked the portal to send the information. The portal itself was a part of the largest and strongest sentient machine. The Henali had only rendered its services to maintain its portal. After all, like Ballom was the leader of the devils in the origin realm, the machine controlling the portal was the leader of the robots in the origin realm.

Shortly after, the Henali portal transmitted a few instructions.

"Do not retaliate against the Inn," it said. "According to the Henali database, the owner of that organization is a Dao lord - one that isn't afraid to make a move himself."

Suddenly, all the robots who had been clamoring for revenge froze. If robots could soil their pants, this would be the moment it would have happened.

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Chapter 583: Enemy of an enemy

In the entire Milky Way galaxy, all robots from the SCS empire had their remote connection disrupted for exactly 12 minutes. The seemingly small duration of time resulted in incalculable financial and strategic losses for the SCS empire, not only changing the flow of countless battles, but resulting in them losing various opportunities.

Earth alone was able to completely change the flow of ongoing battles within those 12 minutes. Even if the robots regained their ability to connect remotely, it did not matter for almost every robot they had deployed on earth and been destroyed within that period. Although that would not, in any way, change the final outcome of the war, it had bought humans some valuable time.

Marlo's prestige was reaching an all-time high in this period. Unlike the council, who were leading from the back, King Marlo had made his presence known and felt on the battlefield. Without him, countless lives would have been lost, and their resistance would have been short-lived. Moreover, though the amount of time where the electronics came back online left much to be desired, it was enough to transmit news of King Marlo fighting off the alien invaders far and wide.

As if that was not enough, news of his son spread as well! Apparently, Rafael too had made an appearance, though on different battlefields. Not only that, despite lacking the kind of strength his father wielded, his battle awareness and apparent penchant for excellent strategy had actually resulted in more survivors than the battlefield where his own father was! Though the troops under his command had killed fewer robots than Marlo prior to the disconnect, his battle was considered a greater success!

The time for such change was not now, but the seed of an idea had been planted in the minds of a few people. Much in the way Mars had gained success and prosperity under the control of the Morrison family, perhaps Earth could achieve similar results under King Marlo.

It was also during this time that the resilience of humans began to show. Orders passed swiftly, and many soldiers and civilians were given proper direction.

At the same time, a group of teenagers from Norway had immediately publicized that they had discovered how the aliens were able to block their technology and provided as many details as they could in those few minutes. A high priority mission was issued immediately to the one the most elite squads available to the council to bring those teenagers to the Midnight Inn at the earliest!

The council was also able to finally reach out to Fernanda. They communicated their suspicions brought forth by Marlo about how the man named Jeffery might be responsible for the invasion, and asked for immediate reinforcements and assistance. The result of the meeting was unknown, but the council members who had attended the meeting were left extremely demoralized.

By the time the 12 minute time period elapsed, and all technology on earth was shut down once again, many things had been set into motion. Even once the time period elapsed, the robots did not continue to retaliate immediately. A much needed lull had appeared in the invasion.

Regional Command Ship 447

A number of emergency meetings were taking place to decide how to best deal with the various losses they suffered on numerous battlefronts. They had to figure out a way to mitigate the impending disaster before they could even begin to consider recouping all they had lost.

The normal robots they built might not be such an issue to replace, but as they grew stronger, the resources to build them became rarer.

As far as races go, sentient artificial intelligence was not the strangest out there, but they were undeniably unique. They came into existence when an A.I. was made with sufficient computational ability, intelligence, or one of a few other requirements, to give birth to a soul within their original 'body'.

Their origins did not make them completely emotionless and logical, as many earthlings assumed they would be like, but they usually did have set SOPs (standard operating procedures).

But unlike other races, who had their souls linked to their bodies, all the A.I. race ever needed was another body with sufficient computational capability. As such, they formed a unique cultivation method as well. They would strengthen their souls, which was easier said than done for their race, but mostly they would successively improve their 'bodies'.

Naturally, to do as such they had to continuously gain an immense amount of knowledge and information, making them the most technologically advanced race. Even the Henali outsourced their technological needs to them.

Yet despite all the information they had, one of their most senior members in the Origin realm was completely stumped. According to the information provided by the A.I. who had managed to enter the Inn, even if it was a short visit, the signals for an operational Henali portal were detected.

But the A.I. who operated the Henali portals itself was completely unable to trace any operating portal inside any zone that might be the Midnight Inn. How was that possible? The portal, despite its name, was actually one of the A.I. Yet even the portal itself was unaware that it was being used inside the Inn!

The Midnight Inn was aptly named. It truly represented the horror and fear brought about by the darkness of midnight.

In the Midnight Inn, a few key members of the council were having a meeting with a representative of the Jotun empire. Originally, they had approached them with the hopes of negotiating an agreement prior to the Midnight Inn aiding them by opening up the battlefields on earth.

Instead, they received something else.

"The SCS empire is not one the Jotun empire can fight against, at least openly. Moreover, their laws, while seemingly completely insane, are recognized intergalactically. They have complete legal justification for invading your planet. I'm sorry to say this, but there's absolutely no chance of you holding onto your planet. Moreover, even those who escape as refugees to the Inn will need to relocate to planets not connected to the Henali portal to escape their pursuit. The only way to avoid their pursuit is to stay completely off the grid.

"If you think we are lying to you, feel free to reach out to others as well. But you will only be able to recruit the help of individuals and small groups and organizations who are unaware of the SCS to begin with."

The council representatives who had come to the meeting were left speechless. They didn't know how they could respond. They had literally been told that there was no hope.

"But there is also one more group you can get into contact with who can help you against the SCS," the empire representative said, leaning forward. "In fact, it's the only group who has open and constant conflict with the SCS. Due to their perpetual hatred, they are the best candidates to fulfill the role of 'the enemy of my enemy'."

With the faintest hope lightning up in their bitter hearts, the councilmen looked at the representative, waiting for an answer.

"Have you heard of deities? Despite what their religions state, they are not all powerful creators of the universe. But they are powerful nonetheless, and their grudge against the SCS is one that can never be resolved. If you are truly desperate, you can reach an agreement with them. But be warned, the only thing that this will achieve is to turn your planet into an eternal battlefield."

With no better solution, and a heart unwilling to give up on earth, the representatives asked to meet with the deities. Preferably as soon as possible.

While the mass evacuation was one of the topics the council had actually considered, the battle had not yet progressed to the level where they would give up on their planet. Moreover, when given the option, it had been discovered that most people did not want to leave their planet behind. Even if it meant an inevitable demise, the earthlings were not reconciled to giving up the planet just like that.

Elsewhere at the Inn, a pair of mother and daughter, bearing the surname Joel, walked out of a hot tub room. Although they had decided to use their MP sparingly, that was only before they arrived at the Inn.

Once inside, Vera was able to see her future within the Inn clearly, and she knew that for at least a short time, her troubles would likely be over. All she had to do was wait at a certain location for a guy named Lex and talk to him a bit about prophecy and explain it to him. In exchange, he would make her rich! Or at least, pay her a handsome amount of MP.

In another corner of the Inn, Jotun suddenly received a guest who delivered an epistle to him, before leaving. As soon as he read it, his face warped into an ugly grimace.

"Call my brothers," Jotun said to his wife, who had been standing aside. "There's a situation."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 584: Unusual developments

Elinor Jotun had been enjoying her time with her husband when they were approached by a guest quite suddenly. Although she did not know the guest personally, she recognized his uniform immediately. It was someone from the Henali court.

She immediately stepped aside, allowing the guest to pass something to the emperor while she blocked her senses from detecting anything that was confidential. But it turned out to be an epistle.

"Call my brothers," Jotun said to her via his spirit sense, speaking directly into her mind. "There's a situation."

"Is... is everything alright?" she asked hesitantly. Despite being his wife, there were too many things she was not allowed to know.

"I'm not sure," he responded, his voice becoming monotone. "Once you call them, leave the Inn. I'll let you know if you should come back."

"I understand," she said before hurrying out.

Soon all the Sephore brothers were gathered in a room, awaiting their elder brother's instruction.

The bond these five brothers shared was exceptionally deep and beyond what could be understood by others. They used to have many other siblings as well, not to mention other family members, but with the passage of time only these few remained.

Technically speaking, their kids all continued their family lines along as well, and they did have some level of connection with them. But that could not replace the lifetime of experiences and struggles they had faced together.

It was also because of the bond that they shared that they immediately picked up on the somber mood their brother displayed. They also did not notice that William had suddenly grown stronger.

Even if the growth in strength was slight, at their level such a change required thousands of years. So the fact that he had suddenly grown stronger at all was not something that could be overlooked. Not to mention, the growth was not slight at all!

Even Jotun was surprised, and decided to ask first before getting to the reason why he called them.

"What's happened to you William?" he asked, voicing the question everyone was wondering.

"Believe it or not, I've unlocked a bloodline."

The group was stumped. That was not what they had been expecting at all. Such a thing could be replicated, and thus their own hopes of growing stronger were quashed.

But such a thing was completely bizarre. Technically speaking, all of them had already unlocked the bloodline they inherited from the Sephore family so there should be no bloodlines for them to inherit. They were also sure that William would not absorb any blood essence from any beast to unlock any bloodline either, due to his body carrying a seal for certain reasons. So where did the bloodline come from?

Did they have some ancient ancestor who was still alive and had created a special technique, allowing William to unlock it? But that didn't make sense. There was more than one issue with that theory.

What most who relied on bloodlines did not know was that the powers that appeared from bloodlines were not magically appearing out of nowhere. They were actually the result of the resonance between the blood and certain laws which brought about certain effects. Due to this little detail, someone who relied on a bloodline would always be weaker than someone who had mastery over the same laws. But at the same time, gaining access to certain laws due to a bloodline was infinitely easier than learning to control laws.

The fact that William suddenly gained a bloodline meant he suddenly had access to new laws. Yet just because he had a bloodline did not mean it would be good, or even strong. How much of a result a

bloodline could produce from its corresponding law or laws usually determined how strong it was. For example, the Gelid Anima bloodline that William created was actually considered an S class bloodline, even superior to the A+ bloodline Jotun created for his own descendants. That meant the results it could display were incredible, but it was also that much harder to unlock the bloodline. That was the reason why his family was so much weaker than his brothers.

"What ability did you unlock?" Jotun asked, trying to understand the phenomenon.

"It's... it's an evolution of my Gelid Anima. You could basically say... I've gained the Gelid Anima myself, just an upgraded version. In the long term the bloodline won't be too useful, but it will drastically boost my comprehension of the laws involved in the bloodline to begin with. When that happens, I can continue to raise my realm without issue!"

The brothers were once again stumped. This situation was completely unheard of! Gelid Anima was a bloodline that was a weaker version of an ability William himself had created. Technically speaking, the bloodline was weaker than his own ability. Yet now, he had gained the bloodline, and it had somehow surpassed his own understanding of the laws involved in his technique! It made no sense!

"Do you know why it happened?"

William shook his head despondently. This was the most unusual power up of his life.

"We can continue to look into this situation later. For now, there's been a new development."

The brothers turned to look at Jotun, the seriousness of his expression letting them know this was no simple matter. Such an expression for him had been a rare occurrence as of late.

"I've received a reply from the Henali to the Innkeeper's proposal. They've rejected it, and made some... strong demands. Although the Innkeeper has been very hospitable so far, I don't want to take any risks. There's no way of knowing how he will react to getting such a refusal. I want all of you to exit the Inn, and return to the empire.

"We've been away for much too long, and let the human race lead itself. They have proven themselves to be what they have always been, susceptible to greed. We need to set things straight and strengthen our hold over the empire.

"Cease all expansion operations, and begin rooting out the problematic elements within the empire. In the next 10,000 years, I want the entire human race to undergo an evolution! The growth of the Origin realm has been sped up, and this is the time that we can use to strengthen our foundation. Opportunities can be found around every corner, so now start scouring the galaxies we control. Don't miss a single chance..."

Over the next few minutes, Jotun passed on a blueprint of what he wanted his brothers to do for the next few years. It was not said expressly, but it was understood that Jotun was caught in between two quarreling giants. There was nothing he could do if one of them wanted to vent their anger onto him except bear it.

Although the Innkeeper had not shown the kind of temperament to harm the messenger, he had also not been rejected and then made demands from before. Such a situation would anger even common mortals, let alone a Daolord. In fact, they all had seen exactly how the robot invader had been taken care of just a short while ago.

Not only had the specific robot been targeted, the others around it had also been harmed as a warning not to repeat its mistakes. If the Innkeeper had nurtured such a temperament in his employees, then he himself would be of a nature to appreciate such things.

Finally, there was no more to be said. Jotun did not need to micromanage things, his brothers were competent. Even if he died, he knew that the empire would not fall, for he had prepared for such a situation. Not to mention, it was not without reason that the Henali were using him to deliver messages. Over the years, he had done countless dangerous tasks for them, and in exchange they had provided him with the resources he needed to grow stronger, as well as develop his nation. If he died in the line of duty, a 15,000 year protection period would envelope his empire protecting it from invasion from external threats.

So with a direction for his empire decided, he instructed his brothers to finally leave. For better or for worse, he had to face the Innkeeper. Once his brothers left, Jotun adjusted his mood to make sure he was in the optimal state of mind.

Regardless of the danger, he took his tasks very seriously. If he had to confront a Daolord, he would do it. He just needed to be in the right frame of mind first.

Eventually, he was ready. He walked to the Innkeepers office and walked through the lobby. The walk never became easier, and humbled him every time he crossed. For some reason, the walk this time seemed especially daunting.

"I would like to see the Innkeeper," Jotun said to Luthor.

"He is indisposed for the moment," Luthor replied without a hesitation. Mary had already informed him that the Innkeeper would be busy for a short while. "I can inform him about your request once he returns if you wish."

"Very well. I will wait here in the meantime."

Not bothering with the pressure bearing down on him, Jotun took a seat in one of the waiting chairs and began to meditate. Regardless of the difficulty, he would wait until the Innkeeper was ready to see him.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 585: Dreams

The Recovery pod worked whether one was asleep or awake, so Lex did not really need to doze off. Theoretically, he could have stayed awake in the Recovery pod while it healed him, and continued to run the Inn remotely as he had done so often.

But things were not so straightforward. Although his advancement had made Lex much more resilient to injury, it also then took much more effort for him to recover. That meant that if previously a broken bone would take him one day to heal in the Recovery pod, now it would take him a week. Moreover, it had to be remembered that any injury Lex sustained reflected not only in his physical state, but his soul and spirit as well. An injury to his spirit affected his decision making skills, which meant that if he controlled the Inn remotely while in an injured state, he might not do much better than if he had just waited to begin with.

The last, and most significant matter to take into account, was that many bones in Lex's body were completely crushed. While such an injury would have killed a common man, and crippled other

cultivators, it proved only an inconvenience to him - at least physically. Spiritually speaking, Lex did not dare trust himself to make any necessary decisions. While he himself felt like he was still in his right state of mind, such a thing did not mean he would risk it.

The best thing to do was sleep, which would allow him to feel like time was passing by faster. But the issue was, as a Golden core cultivator, he did not need to sleep much originally. But his current state itself was a remedy for such a situation.

Through vague sensations and hints, his intuition let him know that sleeping while injured would put his body into a sort of hibernation state. It would not only speed up healing, it would passively absorb spiritual energy into his body to replenish his energy needs and fuel his recovery. Naturally, sleeping in an area with higher concentration of spiritual energy was better. He did not need to make special preparations for that. The ambient energy within the Midnight Inn was enough.

So, for once, Lex fell asleep for a long, long time. Time passed by in a blur, and Lex had many dreams. In one dream, Lex received a prize from the Inn, in the form of a Patisserie, which he never ended up availing, depriving himself of its amazing offerings.

In another dream, he continued to live a normal life, and never received the system. His life seemed to continue to deteriorate as he got more and more depressed, until eventually one day he passed out while at work. When his tumor was discovered, it was revealed that it was pressing against his frontal lobe thus affecting his emotions. A surgery to remove it would be extremely dangerous, and would not guarantee that the tumor would not regrow. Eventually, he shared the news with his family. The dream ended after that.

In another dream, he never escaped the Crystal realm. He stayed there for years, and almost every time he was injured, nurse Honey would take care of him. Eventually, they developed a relationship and started a family. A few hundred years later, Lex finally broke into the Earth Immortal realm, which allowed the system to let him return. The dream ended after that.

In one other dream, he found himself hiding in a small crevice inside a dark canyon on a massive asteroid. He was being hunted by something that could harm him, and it was extremely dangerous. He needed to reach a specific destination before time ran out, so he couldn't even escape to the Inn. The dream ended when a massive yellow eye appeared in the darkness staring at him.

He saw a dream in which he went crazy hunting system users...

He saw a dream in which he identified as a banana...

He saw a dream in which hellfire rained down on the Inn, and Lex could do nothing to stop it...

The dreams were endless, and plagued his weary mind till they all seemed to blend into one, unending dream.

When he woke up, finally, for the first time in a long time, Lex did not feel well rested. In fact, he felt completely disoriented and drained. It reminded him of when he was a mortal, and he would take a nap that lasted too long. Instead of waking up refreshed, he would wake up feeling lightheaded and worn.

Lex groaned as he tried to move, but found that his body actually felt really weak. This was extremely unusual, for Lex had felt better even before he got in the RP to heal. He checked his body's condition using his spirit sense, and found that he had been completely healed. There was not even a sore muscle in his body, let alone a broken bone. He should have been feeling great instead of like this.

"Mary, how long was I out?" he asked, as he picked himself out of the pod.

"A little over three weeks," she replied.

"What? Three weeks! Why didn't you wake me up? What happened on earth? Did they never ask for an event?"

"No, as it turned out, no matter who they approached for help in blocking the invading robots, none accepted. Finally, the Jotun empire helped them out by organizing a meeting between the earthlings and some deities. They met in the Fire temple, and worked out a deal. As it turns out, deities have incredibly unusual powers, and they did not need the Inn to travel to earth.

"Currently, the earth has become the domain of the Deity of Water, Amana, alongside the Deity of Diamonds, Adamas. Any who believe in their religions are gaining incredibly potent powers to use against the robots. As of now, earth has become a massive battlefield. The casualties..." Mary paused for a moment.

"We have over 100 million refugees at the Inn at the moment, and more coming continuously. These are numbers we cannot maintain, especially as things are. The refugee camp has already become cramped."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 586: Prophecy

Lex groaned once more when he heard the number of refugees at the Inn. Normally it would not have been a concern, and he would have handled the situation immediately, but currently he felt incredibly weak. Not only that, now that he was awake, he was developing a severe headache.

"Have someone find a few Minor realms suitable for large numbers and send me a list. At the same time, tell someone from earth and let them know that the refugees will be able to purchase the exclusive rights to a minor realm for a few decades. Tell them the small time frame is so that the price of the realm can be reduced to something they can afford."

In fact, the true reason he was doing things in such a convoluted way was to avoid continuing to build the impression that the Inn was based towards humans. His intuition had once warned him that continuing to do so would lead him into danger, and he took the matter seriously.

He wanted to do more to help make the situation better, but thinking too much made his headache worse.

"Other than that, a few things of note happened while you were asleep. Firstly, the emperor of the Jotun empire has been waiting in the lobby to meet the Innkeeper. Secondly, the Sovereign Galactic turtle has completed its breakthrough. It has grown stronger, which has somehow improved the yield of all the crops being planted at the Inn.

"Thirdly, Zagan and Alysha both passed the Midnight Inn employee test, and are currently both employees. Unfortunately, Zagan had to immediately apply for a holiday as soon as he started. The atmosphere at the Inn initiated a breakthrough he had been suppressing for a long time. He has already passed his lightning and fire tribulations. Right now, he is going through some other tribulation which cannot be seen.

"Fourthly... the fishing event came to a close, but the finale... I won't tell you. I think it's better you check the situation yourself when you feel better."

"Alright, alright, stop. Unless it's an emergency, just hold on till I feel better," Lex said as he held his aching head.

Unable to make sense of the situation, Lex teleported to the Midnight mountain to a remote and secluded cabin. He ordered a bunch of food, before stepping outside and lying down in the heap of snow. Perhaps food would make him feel better.

Soon, several meals worth of food was teleported to him, but he could not be bothered to get out of the snow, and continued to eat slowly. Immediately he realized that the quality of the food at the Inn had improved, as not only did it taste better, but it replenished his exhausted energy much better than anything else.

His state was so ridiculously weakened that he did not even notice when a young girl, huffing and panting, slowly approached the cabin where he was. She had trekked here the entire path by foot, which made her extremely exhausted.

It was only when the young girl was almost right besides Lex that he finally noticed her presence.

"Is your name Lex?" she asked between her heavy breaths, wiping off some sweat. As a Foundation realm expert, there was no way she should have been this exhausted from such a simple climb, but Lex did not pick up on that small detail at the moment.

Instead, he was more caught up in the fact that he knew the girl. Her name was Vera, and she was an oracle.

"Yes," he answered honestly. He knew a little about her, and knew that her random arrival was not so random at all.

"Excellent," she exclaimed and sat up right beside him. "Do you know anything about prophecy?"

Instead of waiting for him to reply, she ventured directly into a speech with a tone that sounded much too much as if it had been rehearsed.

"Prophecies come in many shapes and forms, and most people are ill informed about what prophecies really are. They are not a glimpse into the future, or a predestined path. Well actually, maybe kind of on a deeper level it might seem so, but all in all, prophecy is just glorified probability.

"Even the smartest minds, most incredible techniques and the most thorough calculations cannot accurately calculate the probability of any event happening when taking into account all of the variables in the entire universe. Or, usually, even in smaller regions of space such as a star system. Yet some people are born with unique bloodlines, abilities, or affinities that let them naturally access certain things that manage all the calculations on their behalf. I've been told it has something to do with laws, but I am not familiar with what they are.

"What I can tell you is that, most prophets or oracles or soothsayers or whatever you want to call them, can only calculate the probability within a small region, so when interference from outside that region comes in, it can completely mess up the probabilities. Moreover, almost any simple action at all can completely screw over the probabilities, making any prophecy unreliable.

"In summary, prophecies suck peanuts. But if someone can calculate the probability on a much larger scale, such as an entire galaxy, or larger, then their prophecies become much more reliable.

"Moreover, any divination, prophecy, or probability calculation, or whatever you want to call it, causes a serious burden on the person performing them. Most of the time, indulging too much in this can actually cause serious health issues, or even lead to death. Of course, the exertion also depends on the capabilities of the one doing the divination. If they're really talented, they could get away with foretelling an incredibly likely future and get away with something as light as a headache."

As soon as she finished her sentence, Vera jumped back up and began walking away. She did not bother to say goodbye, or explain herself at all. Instead, she just looked incredibly daunted by the task of climbing back down the mountain.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 587: Headache

Lex, with his weary mind, was stunned by what had just happened. His eyes followed the visage of Vera walking away as he tried to understand what the point of that was. It was only a couple of minutes later that he came up with an answer.

Vera was an oracle herself. That not only provided her with great insight into the profession, it also guided her actions. She had once appeared quite timely to help him assess John's abilities before hiring him. As such, there was no reason to believe that her current actions, while bizarre, weren't guided by prophecy as well.

Lex groaned. His headache was really affecting him, and his exhausted state made it hard to even think. It had been much too long since he was in such a poor condition.

He reached for a plate of french fries and snacked on them as he continued to challenge his brain.

Vera did nothing without reason, so now he had to discover the reason behind this. She came to him unprompted and provided him with a lot of information about prophecy. Then, just as abruptly as she arrived, she left.

For a few seconds, he recalled everything she told him. Prophecy was actually probability... the greater the scale, the more likely the prophecy would be accurate... prophecies exacted a price which could be fatal... those talented in such arts could get away with only a headache...

Suddenly, he paused. Even in his current state, he was not so obtuse as to not connect certain dots. He had been sleeping for three weeks, during which time he had some crazy dreams. When he woke up, he was incredibly mentally drained and feeling very weak.

Had he somehow seen the future? Or the past? Did he... predict something? And if he did, what the hell was it?

He had to pause, as the emotional excitement and increased mental strain were putting a massive burden on him. With his fries finished, he bit into his hot dog and let his thoughts simply wander for a while.

When he felt a little better, the first thing he did was decide to reward Vera. He didn't know her motives, but she had clearly helped him out. MP should serve as a decent reward? How much should he pay her?

Unwilling to think too much, he ended up paying her 500,000 MP. Whether that was too much or too little; he did not have the brain capacity to think on it at the moment.

He picked up the plate of mantu and gobbled them down as he continued to try to recall his dreams and understand what they meant.

He recalled... he recalled never utilizing one of the Inn's rewards. Without hesitation, he pulled up the system and discovered that, indeed, he had a patisserie that had long been waiting for him to place.

Lex scratched his head and continued to think. But while he could still somewhat recall his memories, in the end, he gave up. His condition was much too poor. Although his bones had been healed, his brain had been majorly messed up.

He teleported to the Hot tub room and spent some time recuperating there before putting on his bathroom set and finding a place to relax a bit. Eventually, he dozed off in the lawn chair he was sitting in.

With a full belly, and his hibernation kicking in, Lex slept for another two days before waking up.

Unfortunately, even when he woke up this time, his headache and weakness remained. But he was still much better than before. At least he could think a little clearly without straining himself.

Once again, he tried to recall his dreams. Some of the dreams could not be his future. Instead, they were like possible alternate lives he could have lived. Those dreams were the first few. He particularly liked one in which he became extremely rich, moved to Dubai and lived like a Sheikh.

But slowly the dreams changed from potential lives he could have lived if things had played out differently in the past, to potential futures he could still have. For example, the rampage that he went on hunting system users. He could not recall exactly what happened in that dream, but he recalled enough to know that the dream ended very abruptly and poorly. It was entirely possible that while hunting system users he attracted too much attention which led to his demise.

The dream in which he identified as a banana was extremely vivid. He teleported to a world that was extremely unusual. Instead of animals, the planet was populated by living, sentient fruits. The mangoes ruled the planets, and as a banana, Lex was only a mere commoner.

Suddenly, he sat up straight. There was a dream he had in which the Inn was destroyed. Fire rained from the sky destroying everything, and Lex was powerless to stop it.

That dream was perhaps just as scary as the one where he was being hunted by the yellow eyed creature.

He started a list, and wrote down each dream with as much detail as he could clearly recall. 47 dreams filled his pages, but in the end, the remaining dreams were too unusual and fragmented for him to make out anything.

Once he was done, he tried to see if any of the dreams were possibly connected, or just happened at different times. Unfortunately, he could not figure it out. This would require some research on his part, as well as possible consultations with experts. He might even once again take Vera's aid. Especially if he wanted to accurately understand the meaning of those dreams.

But while he did not clearly make sense of all the dreams, he could gauge why he was so tired. While he was asleep, his brain was being used like a computer, calculating endless and random futures and pasts. As if that was not exhausting enough, the price he paid for the dreams left him incredibly vulnerable. Not that he could blame anyone. Who would be crazy enough to perform over 50 predictions of the future in such a short amount of time.

Compared to the potentially fatal consequences of looking into the future, being severely drained was not so bad. The issue now was, how to control this ability so he doesn't randomly look into the future again? Or, possibly, how to look into the future if he so wished.

"Where did this even come from?" Lex muttered as he ignored his throbbing head. There was no indication of him being able to look into the future before, nor had he encountered any upgrade which allowed as such.

The only possibility Lex could think of was the mention of how access to certain laws is what allowed people to calculate the probability of the future.

Lex took one last look at his list, before having a cup of Midnight Signature coffee brew. Feeling somewhat invigorated, Lex teleported to his office. Although he had numerous things to take care of, such as an ever-increasing number of refugees which had nearly completely overburdened the Inns capability to supply food, emperor Jotun had been waiting for him for weeks. He should really find out what that's about.

The ship that had been hovering right above the earth had now moved farther away. The distance had to be kept not because of earth technologies, which were now back in working condition, but because of the intervention of deities.

Unlike what Mary had heard, deities were not omnipotent and couldn't traverse the origin realm as they pleased. But planets that had their religion were always within their domain. While Amana had an actual presence on earth, Adamas' access to the planet was a surprise even to the deity himself. In the vastness of space, diamonds were not so rare and so most large civilizations didn't treat them so significantly. Only on earth were they considered a woman's best friend. As such, the 'zealous' warriors of the diamond religion were mainly rich women who were previously mere housewives. Now they could be seen garbed in diamond plated armor, brandishing fierce weapons and clashing against robots across the globe.

No matter what anyone thought of them before the war, no one could doubt their resolve to step up when it was needed from them. On earth, at least, the domain of war no longer solely belonged to men.

But despite their working technology, no one on earth noticed a sleek silver ship approaching the planet at fast speeds. In fact, even the aliens, despite their superior technology, hadn't noticed it. That was simply because while the robots had the best technology, they couldn't always outfit each ship with every possible machine and scanner.

So, silently, the ship landed in an untouched part of India, before revealing a small opening through which a few humans jumped out. The group of 5 had perfectly concealed their identities using the most advanced stealth armor available to them, in case they had to engage in combat.

"Proceed with objective A and begin extraction of the VIP," commanded a cold yet scrambled voice. "I will engage in objective B."

With that, the leader of the group disappeared, leaving a young Alexander wondering... what the hell was objective B? He had only been briefed on the extraction!

The Innkeeper

Chapter 588: Epistle II

Lex sat in his office chair and let himself feel his connection to the system deepen for a moment. A quick scan of the Inn let him know that everything was alright, or as much could be.

100 million people could not be accommodated in a small space, and an endless sprawl of tents covered much of the Inn's landscape. Alongside so many people came other problems, many of which were manageable, but some were completely unacceptable!

Fights, arguments and small conflicts kept breaking out amongst the crowd, which Lex didn't mind too much as long as they did not escalate and were resolved timely. What Lex had absolutely no tolerance for was public urination and defecation!

Each and every tent had a separate compartment added just to provide facilities to avoid such a situation, yet some still insisted on relieving themselves in the wind. Although the security team had been strict about such matters, they had not been as strict as Lex would have wanted. A single warning was passed to every single refugee, which entailed that they needed to follow the rules or be kicked out of the Inn!

He hadn't had this problem even with the children in his spaceship daycare, so why were full fledged adults having such problems? Fortunately for them, and for Lex's conscience, no one tested the warning once it was given. For now.

Other parts of the Inn had some minor issues as well, but Lex didn't want to focus on them for now. He finally called Jotun to his office.

The emperor stepped in, with no indication of the pressure he had undergone the past few weeks showing up on his face. He looked like he came fresh from a spring bath, and his clothes lacked a single crease. His bearing was regal, and befitting that of his station.

At a glance, all appeared as it should be. But that in itself was the biggest tell that something unusual was going on. Despite his status, Jotun had always been extremely humble in front of the Innkeeper.

Since Lex knew he wasn't in the best state of mind, he instantly entered the Flow state. He suspected that this was a meeting he would have to handle with extreme care.

"Apologies for making you wait for so long," the Innkeeper said, his voice as calm and soothing as always. "I had some urgent matters occupying me."

"Not at all, Innkeeper. I was the presumptuous one to suddenly arrive without warning. Please excuse my hurried behavior. If the situation had not required urgency, I would have requested your assistant to schedule a time like I have done previously."

"If the matter is urgent, then we should not delay. Please, let me know how I can be of assistance."

The emperor took out a familiar-looking item from his spatial ring and presented it to the Innkeeper. The Innkeeper did not show any change in expression as he picked it up and observed it closely. He knew what this was, for he had received one before. It was an epistle from the Henali.

"Do you know what this is about?" the Innkeeper asked Jotun.

"I cannot guess all that it contains, but I know some of its content at least. You can give me your answer and I can send it back on your behalf."

The Innkeeper merely nodded and reached for the Innkeeper's letter opener, which was placed neatly on his table on the right. Each and every gesture and movement of the Innkeeper radiated calm and collectedness. There was no rush or nervousness to be detected, even as he used the letter opener to undo the seal on the epistle.

With the seal undone, the epistle unfurled as if it was a scroll, and laid before the Innkeeper its contents.

The language was strange and incomprehensible, yet at the same time Lex could read it even without the need of his universal translator.

Mr. Innkeeper,

I trust that this missive will find you in a timely fashion. There are two matters of importance, and one notification that I am compelled to inform you of through this letter: your participation in the Fuegan war efforts, your overdue payment for entering the Origin realm, and your subsequent eligibility to participate in the Henali Champions tourney.

Firstly, it has been brought to my attention that due to the neutral stance your organization takes, you do not wish to directly participate in the Fuegan war efforts. Yet, the Henali have issued a directive to all civilizations and organizations of a qualifying rank, as well as inter-realm guests. This is not a request but rather a condition that must be met for those who wish to continue to exist in the Origin realm. Your contribution, thus, is critical and a failure to comply will result in dire consequences. While Daolords are exempted from personal participation, a sufficient force must be sent to represent you and your organization.

Secondly, although our records fail to document your entry into the realm, they also successfully indicate that the necessary payment to enter the Origin realm remains unpaid on your behalf. I strongly recommend you take immediate action to rectify the illegal status you currently have within the Origin realm by paying your outstanding dues. Failure to do so will most definitely jeopardize your personal interests.

Finally, once you have obtained your legal status, the Midnight Inn will be eligible to send one or more representatives in the Henali Champions tourney. The tourney is a grand tradition with numerous rewards and a far reaching audience, beyond even the Origin realm, and so is perfect to promote your business.

Additionally, please be informed that your suggestion to use the Midnight Inn for Henali war efforts and other activities has been taken into consideration. The possibility of hosting the Fuegan kill competition at your venue is within the range of possibility.

Awaiting your response,

Klaus.

A letter such as this would have previously intimidated Lex, and even given him trouble. Now though, he only wondered if one of the dreams he saw had something to do with this.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 589: Relationship

Usually it would take him less than a moment to go over this bit of information, but even with the coffee fueling him, his thoughts were a fair bit slower than normal. Although none of his dreams directly showed anything related to the Henali, he could distinctly remember the rain of fire falling down and destroying the Midnight Inn.

Although he was already wary of the Henali, considering their apparent power, he had tried to use his prestige to work around their requirements. It was a mix of both necessity and a bit of hope. After all, although he had no idea what the payment Daolords had to make to enter the Origin realm was, he was certain that he couldn't afford it. So one way or another, he had to avoid it.

As far as war efforts are concerned, he already had a way to save face since the Innkeeper himself would be spared from making an appearance. But he did not want to send anyone from his Inn off to war either. They were workers in a hospitality business, not soldiers. He had contemplated going himself, but he doubted they would be satisfied with the 'Innkeeper' only sending one worker.

Whatever he did, this matter had to be dealt with using extreme tact. Lex put the letter down, and turned his gaze back to Jotun. Although the man showed no expression on his face, Lex could guess what was on his mind. After all, his wife and brothers were no longer at the Inn. It could be coincidental, but Lex chose to believe that Jotun had sent them away on his own.

Although as the Innkeeper, he had been nothing but polite and cordial, he could not blame the man for fearing a less than proper reaction considering the forceful wording of the letter.

"Tell me Jotun, what kind of a relationship with the Henali do you have?" he asked, finally ending the silence.

Surprisingly, he did not answer the question immediately, and took some time to think back. At his cultivation level his memory was perfect, and he would not forget a single moment of his life regardless of how much time passed. But that did not make him immune to the emotions that came with looking so far back on his life.

Back then, he considered himself to be in the prime of his life, but now it seemed like he was only young and naive.

"My family has long been an influential one in the Origin realm, at least as far as humans are concerned. There are millions of races in the Origin realm, and cutting out a small piece of territory for your own race can be both very easy or very hard, all depending on where you are. The current Jotun galaxy is where my family was based, and the entire galaxy has long been under my family's control. It is a glorious history, but so many people do not know that... my family members who lived like kings in their own territory, were all refugees from another realm."

Lex did not show his surprise, but the news was truly unexpected, for more than one reason. It seemed moving between realms was not only limited to Daolord realm experts.

"They gave up everything to find safe haven in a new realm, but they could not give up their original family name. The name contained the very last vestiges of pride my family had. Unfortunately, that was a mistake. The enemies of my family traced us all the way to the Origin realm, and a bloody conflict broke out. It seemed like hell had fallen upon us, and no hope could be found. One by one, my family members died. One by one, my siblings fell. One by one my pride and arrogance as the genius of my family was crushed.

"When only a few of us were left, and it seemed like it would be our end, the Fuegan invaded. They ripped through space and entered the realm right in front of us. It was one of the larger invasions the entire Origin realm has ever seen. It was one of the rare instances where the Henali made a move themselves, and sent for their own tribesmen to eradicate the threat.

"The Henali don't usually make a move, for their powers are often too much for an immature realm to take. The fact that they did was a testament to the strength of the invasion. It was then that my brothers, one of my aunts, and I were discovered, fighting for our lives.

"The Henali saw my talent and struck a deal with me. I would forsake my family name, and they would cleanse my karma, making it seem to my family's enemies that my family had died once and for all. Furthermore, they would train me, and in exchange I would be their herald across the realm. Or at least, one of their heralds.

"Since then, I gave up my family name, and my brothers did likewise. We started our own families, and as I serve the Henali, my brothers support me. Like this, we have grown stronger and come far. My achievements cannot be separated from the Henali. It was my own efforts that brought me here, yes, but it was their resources that made it possible."

Jotun did not know how the Innkeeper would react to his story, but what he did not expect was that the Innkeeper would smile.

Lex was not insensitive to the difficulty his history was filled with, but his smile was for other reasons.

"Tell me, Jotun Marcus Sephore, which of you brothers have truly given up your name? I understand now your relationship with the Henali."

Jotun trembled and looked at the Innkeeper with surprise. It was true that he had told the Henali that he and his brothers had given up their names, and their karma had been washed. Yet deep in their hearts, they harbored other intentions. Yet their thoughts had been so hidden that they never spoke of it, even amongst themselves. It was to the extent that even their aunt did not know what they truly thought, and cut ties with them for giving up their names. Even the Henali had never suspected otherwise.

Yet the name that should have been wiped from the history of the Origin realm had been spoken so casually by the Innkeeper.

Yet the Innkeeper was no longer looking at the emperor. He reached for the Midnight letterhead, and pulled out the Innkeeper's pen.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 590: Response

Although Lex would not fall into panic when faced with trouble, that did not mean he did not feel the pressure of the situation. To be entirely honest, it was not the being sent into never ending war for as long as he remained at the Inn that bothered him. His workers weren't weak to begin with, and once they started training properly at the pagoda he expected they would become even more powerful.

Not to mention, Velma had given him a file of information she collected based on the Fuegan as well, so he knew at least a few details on what to expect from the battlefields. If he went a step further, and personally participated in the war, he could further ensure the survival of those who he was forced to send to fight.

Yet as much as he wanted to personally make sure none of his workers were harmed in battle, he had already thought of a much better way in which he could help the situation.

So no, it was not the war that unsettled him. It was the payment the Henali were asking for. As the Innkeeper he had been exposed to a lot already, so he vaguely had a concept of the capabilities of the higher level cultivators in the universe.

While it seemed impressive that he owned many Minor realms, apparently, such a feat could only impress lower leveled cultivators. Heck, any random cultivator strong enough to take control of an entire planet would suddenly own all the Minor realms that had openings on that planet.

Keeping that in mind, whatever payment was so important that the Henali were repeatedly pestering a supposed Daolord to pay up would not be cheap, or even in his realm of affordability. He could literally sell all the Minor realms he had and he still wouldn't have enough to pay them, let alone, would they even be interested in MP?

So, he really had to come up with some way to avoid this. If it were really up to him, he would avoid messing with the Henali. But considering his situation, he had no choice but to put up a strong front and play hard ball. While previously he had passed his message through Jotun, in hopes of amicably reaching a solution, this time he had to employ more official means.

The Midnight Inn letterhead was official Inn stationary which was specifically designed to be used for writing official letters or messages to be sent outside the Inn. The letterhead was imbued with the majestic aura of the Innkeeper, ensuring that the letter was viewed with the appropriate significance.

As if that was not enough, its use would be paired with the Innkeepers Pen. Its official description was 'each of the Innkeeper's words is worth a hundred worlds. Writing anything with this pen will imbue the words with the Innkeeper's aura.'

The pen somehow seemed an impressive treasure, but oddly enough held no ink. Yes, Lex could substitute ink with his spirit energy, in which case the pen would use that to create an ink substitute which could get the job done. But the original design of the pen dictated that its tip would have to be dipped in some ink which would then be used. That was exactly the reason this specific pen had also come with the Inkwell.

Shockingly, the Inkwell was surprisingly useful. It made it so that no word written with the ink from it would or could ever be misconstrued, misunderstood or manipulated to mean anything other than what the authors' intentions entailed.

Combined together, they provided Lex with exactly what he needed to deliver his message while making sure he lost none of the authority he was determined to show. The only thing missing from this was a Midnight Inn envelope or something of the sort.

Paying no attention to Jotun, Lex dipped the tip of his pen in the well, and prepared to write on the letterhead. The tools were radiating a powerful aura, and Lex's intentions being communicated perfectly through the ink filled the room with a feeling of authority.

Lex did not feel the need to write actual words. Since the ink would ensure his meaning would be conveyed perfectly, Lex decided to substitute each word with a thin, horizontal line. Each line would be just as thin and equal in length regardless of the word they represented, making the letter look like someone had printed a page full of dashes.

This would avoid him having to use any words or characters which might link him to earth. Despite his recent efforts to begin distancing himself from humans, the warning from his intuition was not fading. His efforts were too irrelevant when compared to the damage he had already done.

Due to his strained state of mind, Lex had to switch from the Flow state to the Overdrive state, while also pushing his intuition to its maximum limits. He absolutely could not afford to make a single mistake in communicating what he wanted.

When he felt he was ready, he finally put pen to paper and began writing.

Mr. Klaus,

Due to the competent and forthwith actions of your herald, Jotun Marcus, I received your letter regarding the required war efforts, and the alleged payment which the Henali feel they are entitled to, at the earliest.

I would like to begin by stating that the Midnight Inn is a neutral organization with no third party affiliations, and is dedicated to providing equal and fair service to all who wish to avail its services, and follow the Inns rules. But, given that a branch of the Midnight Inn is operating from within a region of your sovereignty, for so long as the branch continues to operate, it will thereby follow your directive. However, I expect to receive specific and official instructions regarding the level of required involvement, the time frame, and the location. I trust that you will provide the necessary information to me, as is customary in such matters. As a lawful and legal business, the Midnight Inn will fulfill its requirements so long as they are effective.

Then comes the matter of the alleged pending payment. I must assert clearly and directly so that there is no room left for any doubt: there are no outstanding debts on my part to you or any other entity. Your claim for the payment is based on the assumption that I, the Innkeeper, am a foreigner in the Origin realm, but at the same time, you yourself cannot find any evidence of my entry into the realm. Your claim for a pending payment is unsubstantiated. If you wish to claim any payment from me, I insist that you provide sufficient proof of any services availed or agreement reached. Should you be able to muster up legitimate evidence supporting your claim, I suggest you bring it forth promptly. Once I have reviewed the evidence and discovered that it is legitimate, and your claim is accurate, I will address the matter timely and fulfill any financial obligation I have accordingly.

I would like to add that the Midnight Inn is always open to serving its guests without discrimination, so in the event you choose to host your event at our venue, you will find the event to be a great success.

Finally, I would like to request that unless your claims are sound, and you have sufficient evidence, you limit any future communication to matters pertaining to the Inn or its services only. The Midnight Inn is not interested in any external or unaffiliated matters.

Regards,

Although Lex did not have a special signature to use for the title of Innkeeper, the moment he signed the letter with his title, a powerful aura radiated across the entire Inn. It was not oppressive or intimidating, and instead was warm and confident. Yet the associated sensations did not diminish the power at all. In fact, Jotun, who felt the aura most clearly, nearly completely buckled.

The mental strain associated with watching the Innkeeper pen a potentially disastrous response was immense. He could feel the emotions of the Innkeeper as he wrote each word, though Jotun of course did not know what the words were or what the Innkeeper's response entailed.

His only remaining job now was to deliver the letter successfully.

To Lex's wonderful discovery, once he concluded the letter, it gently rolled into a scroll and sealed itself, preventing anyone from being able to open it. He suspected that only the person he meant this letter for could open it without completely destroying it.

With his task done, Lex grabbed the scroll and casually tossed it towards Jotun, not bothering to deliver it in a proper fashion.

"That should be a satisfying response to their requests. I trust you'll be able to deliver it without issue."

"It will reach its destination without fail!" he said, feeling extremely stressed. The Innkeeper did not seem angry, but he seemed to know that Jotun had not left his name behind. He could only hope that the Innkeeper had not mentioned that fact in the letter.