

Innkeeper 871

The Innkeeper

Chapter 871: Countdown

Lex looked down at Z, and found that the scrawny 'kid' had actually grown much taller recently. It was not just his improved cultivation that affected his height, or the fact that many months had passed. The extreme stress he had been under caused his body to constantly push itself to evolve.

He was nearing six feet (1.8 meters) and his frame was filling out, although his face still retained his youthfulness. Looking at Lex, Z seemed hesitant with slumped shoulders, but within his eyes Lex could see a deep fierceness that seemed even more aggressive than Luthors.

Clearly, everyone of them had grown in their own ways during this time. What relieved Lex, however, was that the stress of war did not distort his personality. The fact that he could still behave so 'timidly' in front of Lex spoke of how he had clung to his original personality.

Yet as happy as Lex was to see his store manager once again, this was really not the time to catch up and reminisce.

"It's me, Z. Unless there's something important, we should talk at the Inn. This space will only last for a dozen seconds or so," said Lex out loud, so that even the waiting Marzu would decide on what they wanted to do.

"It is important!" Z said, regaining some of his confidence as the topic diverted towards important matters. "I didn't focus on it before, because our survival was at risk, but now there's a chance. I can feel a connection to something hidden... I can feel a call, as if something connected to me is hidden just out of view. Every time space cracks appear, or a new space tear opens, I can briefly feel that connection.

"I don't know what it is, or how it's even possible that something can be connected to me, since I've never left the Inn before, but my instincts tell me it's something very important! I can barely contain myself from responding to the call every time I feel it."

Lex, who was keeping an eye on the ever expanding divine energy, and calculating various other potential dangers, paused his thoughts as a certain gleam passed through his eyes. Z could not think of why he would be connected to something outside the Inn, but he certainly could!

All the workers at the Inn were actually clones of others. If Z felt a connection to something, then it was probably something related to the person Z was originally cloned from. Lex did not have any particular interest in the history or background of his workers original bodies, for that had no reflection on his workers whatsoever.

Although, he had to admit that each and every one of them had phenomenal potential. Whatever genepool the system was drawing from was of the highest tier. After a few mental calculations, Lex looked at Luthor.

"Change of plans. Z will come with me, you head back to the Inn. Our return might be... slightly delayed."

The moment Lex finished his sentence, Luthor grappled with overwhelming mental conflict. No matter how anyone else judged Luthor's leadership, the fact that he had not foreseen the trap coming, and over the past few days could only struggle against the odds as he waited to be rescued, left him feeling inadequate.

Luthor was supposed to be the Innkeeper's secretary and assistant, but he could not even do this much. He felt defeated. The sole consolation he had was that at least no one died under his watch.

But he did not waste time. Since he was told to go back, and he knew the urgency of the situation, he immediately took out his key.

"Oh, and one more thing," Lex said, still looking at Luthor. "The Innkeeper told me to let you know. You should start planning out a design for the prison you wanted. But... the prison should only hold souls."

Luthor's fist tightened as he heard Lex's words, and for once, Lex could not read a person's emotions. He could not tell if Luthor was frustrated or pleased, or a mix of both. Either way, Lex had no more time. Luthor departed, but the Marzu had not gone yet.

"We... we just checked using a special means. Feyore... she is already dead," one Marzu said, with a look of defeat and anger in his eyes. "We must avenge her!"

"Just leave and go report her death to your seniors. As for revenge..." Lex wanted to look up at the sky, but still hesitated. He had lost his entire skin the last time he used one of Pelvailian's bombs. He refused to believe that the second one he used was so harmless.

"Believe me, no one is getting out of here alive."

Whether the Marzu took his advice or not, Lex did not care. He put his hand on Z's shoulder and rushed away from there. He neither cared about the Void Dwellers in his path, nor the demons. Why would he, when they could naught but kneel in his presence?

"I'll do my best to help you, but you must understand that the situation is about to get very dangerous. If the situation is getting out of hand, you need to be ready to leave this opportunity behind," said Lex as his mental countdown neared zero.

'13... 12... 11...'

"Which way to your allies?" he asked.

Z pointed in a certain direction as he tried to think of a possible solution.

"How... how can you still manipulate space in this place? If I can learn to do that, then our chances of survival might increase."

Lex did not have time to explain, so he just handed Z the space affinity manual and kept running.

'6... 5... 4...'

As Lex felt the pale divine energy encompass the world, he felt that it was oddly familiar. He had flashbacks of when he used the Butter Knife at full power. Even now he did not know how he had

attacked with it - perhaps it was a power that he could only understand when he naturally reached the level that attack was on. But he sensed the divine being he had locked onto. Later, through studying various reports on the Henali portal, as well as interacting with the representatives of the Henali, Lex found out who he had really targeted. The Deity Ra!

His eyes narrowed. He did not know who the others were behind this attack on the battalion, but Ra was definitely behind the zealot!

'3... 2...'

"You feel safe attacking us outside the Inn, because you think the protection of the Inn does not extend here," Lex said aloud, knowing that his voice could clearly be heard by whoever was watching. "But did you ever stop to think that... outside the Inn, the Innkeeper won't stop us from hunting you down and getting our revenge either?"

'1... 0!'

The divine energy finally encompassed the entire planet and a profound change took place. The noble aura of a deity descended, and shocked every living being on the planet like a clap of thunder right beside one's ear.

All the demons and Void Dwellers were immediately stunned, freezing where they stood despite the compulsion of any orders they may have received. The Marzu, taking Lex's advice, left and so were saved from enduring such a corrupted 'majesty'. The few elves, minotaurs and other races that defended the fort were similarly stunned, as if they lost their very ability to think and perform actions.

Only a few devils who were spread across the planet, the zealot, as well as Lex and Z were able to endure and retain their thoughts. Among them, Z only survived due to Lex enveloping him in Domination.

This ability could not only intimidate his foes, but empower his allies as well.

Just as Lex was on the verge of cursing, realizing that it was impossible to reach the battalion's allies in time to save them, he saw a new law beginning to affect the planet. From his left eye he saw the law

descend from the sky like rain, and target every living being on the planet. Most laws for him were difficult to fully comprehend and identify, even if he could innately identify their weaknesses, but this one he was all too familiar with.

Something was teleporting all beings and bringing them somewhere. Lex immediately stopped running, and allowed himself and Z to be influenced as well.

"Come Z, let me show you how you should thwart your enemies plans in the future," he said before their figures disappeared.

In the dark room every single figure watching the projection felt their emotions undulating. The words of the man wearing a devil mask were clearly targeting them, and his unique choice of wearing a devil's mask when facing a conspiracy formed by a devil spoke of deep implications. Were they... in danger?

While everyone else was fearing for their lives, only Rocketfellow and the zealot were experiencing different emotions.

The zealot... was suppressing his rage and regret filled scream! Thousands of the Inn's employees had escaped! How was he to get his revenge if they all escaped? If he had not been so thoroughly suppressed earlier, he may have gone on a rampage.

As for Rocketfellow, he was simply smiling.

"Lex Williams, eh?" he murmured, looking at the mask.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 872: Too unreasonable

872 Too unreasonable

When Lex and Z reappeared, they found themselves amidst a crowd of millions of demons! They were of all shapes and sizes, large and small, and bore a faint resemblance to whatever organism they had been before the demonic conversion.

Clearly, everything that had once been alive on this planet had been turned into a demon, though he could not understand why. As confident as he was in the battalion's prowess, even they could not fight forever. With so many resources available, the mastermind only needed to use them in a slightly more effective manner to completely overwhelm the battalion, yet he had squandered them. But that no longer mattered.

"Find your allies!" Lex said to Z as he turned his attention to something else. Despite the presence of so many demons, and no doubt Void Dwellers and other beings, just out of sight, there was an odd silence in the area as every one of them was subdued by the aura of divinity!

Up ahead, in the distance, was a massive altar where a massive statue made of a deep red stone had been erected. The finer details of the statue were difficult to perceive, but the body of a man and the head of a hawk were easily identifiable.

Behind the state, a massive creature had been strung up, its feathery carcass dripping with blood that flowed out of a hole in its skull. The blood fell at the statue's feet and then seemed to be absorbed into it.

From so far away, Lex could see that a robed figure kneeled on the altar and worshiped it zealously, screaming something as he did. His voice did not carry from so far away, so Lex had no idea what he was saying, but it was enough to identify him as the enemy.

"By the way, lesson number one of thwarting enemy plans. Never let them complete their monologue. It frustrates them to no end since, generally, they crave recognition for their evil plans."

Lex locked onto the zealot and used Evisceration! Using the technique with his left eye did not add any extra effects to it, it seemed. Lex should probably look into getting new attacks.

The zealot, who was prostrating himself towards the statue of his lord, was completely unprotected when the soul attack struck him!

A sharp, inhumane wail shrieked through the air as the zealot fell forward, nearly dying from the attack! But his entire being was fueled by divinity, so his seriously wounded soul soon showed signs of automatically recovering, even if the recovered parts looked pale and decaying!

Bewildered that someone could ignore the descent of his lord's clone, and mad at being attacked, the zealot turned around quickly, only to welcome a fist in his face!

Lex did not hesitate in attacking, nor did he feel particularly courteous towards his enemy. He was somewhat curious about why the divine aura was not causing space to break, but instead of questioning it, he helped amend the situation by throwing out dozens of bombs in the air, waiting for them to drop amongst the endless demons.

As if unsure whether the explosions could truly break space, Lex held nothing back as he used his immense physical strength and dashed towards the zealot, aided by the effect of some quickly conjured arrays.

He reached just in time to deliver a devastating punch that blasted the zealot from his position and slammed him into the very statue he was worshipping. Lex paused, and shook his fist as if jerking some putrid smelling goo off his hand.

"Why is your face so squishy? I haven't even started breaking any bones?" he asked, looking back. Several explosions went off, but strangely, space did not tear as Lex expected. He narrowed his eyes, trying to figure out why. This was both a good thing and bad.

On the plus side, it would allow an easy escape to the Inn for Z if needed. On the downside, his enemies could also employ more powerful means.

Z, who was awkwardly latched onto Lex's back, took the opportunity of Lex pausing to get off.

"Lesson number 2, identify the weakness in your enemy's plan and constantly take advantage of it. There's nothing that says you have to play by their rules."

Using his left eye, Lex could tell that an enormous amount of divine energy was filling up the red statue, and that it seemed to be the focal point of whatever was happening to the planet. So, true to his words, Lex leaped forward, intending to break the statue with a punch!

"Courting death!" the zealot roared the moment he saw what Lex was doing and attacked him. The hood had fallen off his head, revealing a dried up skull with extremely prominent veins all over it.

A few of those veins had popped due to Lex's punch, leaking out the dark brown sludge it was carrying within.

The zealot had no cultivation, but the strange divinity he held within his body empowered him. He formed a scythe of pure energy and swung at Lex's neck as he channeled more of energy to try to hold Lex down with its aura as he did the others.

But with his defensive suit accompanied by his Domination, nothing could influence Lex. He completely ignored the scythe and allowed it to try to cut him, only for it to be deflected away by his collar!

His suit, despite being incredibly soft to wear, was not something to be taken lightly!

Lex's punch connected to the statue, but the divine energy contained within seemed to act on its own, to protect the statue!

"Blasphemer! Heretic! I will feed your soul to the fires of hell!" the zealot screamed as he attacked Lex again.

But Lex completely ignored him and allowed his numerous attacks to fall onto his suit. Instead, he focused completely on destroying the statue, as it was increasingly feeling more and more ominous.

In the back, Z was watching, flabbergasted. Wasn't Leo's defense just... too unreasonable?

The Innkeeper

Chapter 873: Silent Oath

873 Silent Oath

In space, the elven figure made of light was becoming smaller and smaller. Yet as its size decreased, the shape of the figure became more and more distinct. The entity that Pelvailin had believed was a broken 'law' started to regain a hint of sentience both due to its gradual recovery, as well as the fact that it sensed a threat to its existence.

Space seemed to be cracking around it as its size decreased. Clearly, its existence could not be supported in this place. Yet, conveniently, it sensed a deity's domain encompassing a planet nearby. With no real thoughts developed as of yet, the figure of light acted on instincts and moved within the domain, finally allowing the space in the vicinity to rest.

Of course, now the pressure of its existence was being borne by the deities' domain. But, as of yet, it did not have enough intelligence to worry about such things.

At the altar, the situation was becoming more and more chaotic. Just as the deformed zealot was unable to harm Lex, Lex seemed unable to harm the statue. There was a massive well of divine energy contained within which it was using to defend itself, and the divine energy kept increasing instead of decreasing as time went by!

Lex did not need a thorough investigation to figure out that the increasing divinity came from the blood of the Marzu hanging behind the statue.

Lex's eyes narrowed as he reconsidered his plan. Although he could see the weakness of the statue due to his ability to peer at the laws that made it up, the shield of divine energy prevented any of his attacks from reaching the statue itself.

This was also the reason he attacked the statue instead of the zealot. As much as he enjoyed frustrating him, a single hit had been enough for him to analyze the fact that the zealot was also under the protection of this unusual divine energy. Although he was not impervious to damage, he would heal almost instantly after sustaining an attack!

Whatever ritual was taking place was already underway, and he had to disrupt it somehow!

"I found them!" Z exclaimed. While Lex had been beating the statue, Z was looking for the other survivors from the fort. But even if he found them, Z could not go rescue them for it was Lex's ability that prevented him from freezing as well.

His call attracted Lex's attention, but it also attracted that of the zealot. Fueled by a blinding fury, the zealot hurled his scythe at Z, strengthened by his divine might. But if Lex were not confident in protecting him, he would never have separated!

Lex had put up invisible shields using Imperial Shield all around Z, protecting him from any attack. The scythe broke through a couple of them, but was eventually unable to reach the Innworker!

The zealot let out a savage, frustrated howl at failing once again. He wanted nothing more than to cleanse these heretics but his power was insufficient. Driven mad, the zealot decided to do something even more crazy!

His figure vanished and he appeared in the distance, above the countless demons, and began killing them in droves.

Lex approached Z and stood beside him and watched the actions of the far off zealot.

"Lesson three of thwarting your enemies' plans: you need a thorough understanding of your enemies actions, and what motivated them to begin with! That zealot is somehow generating divine energy through the death of countless beings. I believe that when the zealot arrived on this planet, he was probably very weak, without any cultivation of his own. That is also why he never acted against anyone before. He was silently using you to kill as many as possible, so that he could harvest as much energy as possible.

"Whatever ceremony he has started also requires an immense amount of divine energy, so he's killing all the demons himself. He's hoping to speed up the ceremony, and use its effects to kill us. So now, my question to you is, how do we complete our objective and simulatenously stop the enemy?"

Z did not hesitate in answering.

"Our first priority is saving our allies. We can send them to the Inn, and then find a way to disrupt the ceremony at its foundation: the statue!"

"Hmm, you're right. But you're also wrong," said Lex as he grabbed onto the youth and rushed towards their previous allies. "If you're feeling extremely gracious, one way is to send all the demons here to the Inn as well. With no beings to kill, his plan will fail on its own. But I'm not so keen on sending the very demons who were hunting you down to the Inn. Since this entire planet is full of enemies, with only a few remaining allies, there's a much simpler solution. Rescue the allies, then destroy the entire planet!"

Just as Lex finished his words, he summoned another one of Pelvailians missiles. He did not know why the previous one had not delivered its devastation yet, although he was quite sure it would eventually erupt. That did not mean, however, that he could not just use another missile! Whether it tore up space or not would not matter if he targeted the planet itself, right?

Z, who was up until now focusing on Lex's words, suddenly trembled. He made a silent oath to never miss a day of work in his life.

"Of course, you can also take advantage of a few uncertain elements as well," Lex said as he suddenly turned his head and looked to his left. In that direction, a new group had just been teleported over from somewhere on the planet, and within that group Lex sensed multiple powerful beings!

A single glance was enough to tell Lex that there were over a dozen devils amongst that group, and they all looked like they were struggling against the suppression of the deities' aura.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 874: Devils Throne

874 Devils Throne

Although Lex had spotted the devils, they had not spotted him yet. They were all struggling against the divine aura, but the moment they were teleported over, and found themselves amidst an endless sea of stunned demons, they stopped holding back whatsoever!

The devils transformed. Their aura immediately erupted as 17 devils roared out in anger! They had come to this planet to hunt, and instead were the ones being played with! But while the devils regained their

ability to move around freely, the demons around them still did not heed their commands! After all, they could not move at all!

Lex did not stop moving, but instead of going over the sea of demons, he decided to be a little more discreet and travel on the ground. He even withdrew the missile he planned on using.

If he could get the devils and the zealot to fight each other, something unexpected may happen!

He did not need to do much besides stay out of sight and not attract attention. The zealot was blaring his aura in full as he carried out a massacre, and thus easily attracted the attention of all the devils. Without hesitation, the devils spread their wings and took flight, ready for war.

A few moments later, the thunderous sounds of a massive brawl echoed across the expanse, alongside the frequent earthquakes!

"Do you think they can stop the zealot?" Z asked. He was feeling incredibly strange, which could be determined by the fact that he was casually asking questions even in such a serious moment. They were not out of danger, and if anything, were in much more danger than what the battalion was facing before.

Yet he felt none of the associated pressure, or even urgency. It was as if he was completely safe so long as he stayed beside Leo, which made no sense. After all, it could be easily seen that Leo himself could not effortlessly resolve every issue, or else he would have destroyed that statue.

He knew this. But feelings were not the most logical part of the human experience, and Z felt incredibly safe at that moment.

"No, they can't. It's not that the zealot is strong, but that he has too much divine energy. Even if I kill him in one hit, he will immediately come back to life, because it's not his soul sustaining him, but the energy itself! Unless the devils can deplete his energy or sever their connection, they can't do anything to him, either."

Z, having been extremely introverted for months, kept asking Leo random questions, sometimes related to their situation, and sometimes not. Lex, playing the role of Leo, too kept answering all questions patiently.

He did not try to point out that they were currently on a battlefield, and that this was not necessarily the best time to chat. After all, between the two of them, Z had spent more time on the battlefield, so Lex was in no position to speak.

With the symphony of a chaotic battle accompanying them, they finally reached their destination and reached those of their allies that had been left at the fort. At a glance, Z could tell that their numbers had dwindled greatly during their time apart, but there was nothing he could do about that.

Lex handed Z a bunch of keys and they began to slip the keys in the hands of the surviving soldiers, and then crushed them to send them to the Inn. With all their assailants and pursuers occupied with fighting each other, they faced no hurdles whatsoever. Z actually felt strange that no new Void Dwellers had rained down on him in so long.

Their progress was steady and just when it seemed that they would succeed without incident, Lex suddenly grabbed Z's hand, and prevented him from giving a key to the leader of the elves.

"What's wrong?" he asked, looking around warily.

Instead of answering, Lex grabbed the elf's neck without warning and slammed him into the ground. The slam was in no way half hearted, as the ground was torn apart as the elf's body hit it like a hammer.

Any survivors nearby were thrown away from the resulting tremor, though they still could not move on their own.

As the dust cleared, Z saw that his devil-masked boss was no longer holding an elf, but rather a grinning devil!

"How did you-" the devil began to speak, but Lex was not interested in having a conversation. The worst mistake the devil made was letting Lex grip his neck!

As someone who ran an establishment where the majority of his guests were devils, Lex had done thorough research into devils and any affiliated knowledge. Predictably, the Henali portal did not give out information such as the key weaknesses of devils. After all, it was a regulated platform. But the emporium had no such issue, and had given Lex a detailed breakdown on some of the common strengths and weaknesses of devils.

For reasons unknown, the devils had two forms: a human form and what was considered their true form. They were at their weakest in their human form, while any major damage they sustained would automatically trigger a transition, not much could be done about any damage they sustained while still weak!

Instead of slamming the devil around, as Lex often liked to do with enemies he grabbed ahold of, he picked up the devil and wrapped his free arm around its face. The devil's grin faded as he realized what was happening, but Lex moved too fast.

Leveraging his immense strength and the grip he had, Lex broke the devils neck in one swift motion, leaving its head dangling unnaturally.

"You vermin! Do you know what you've done!" the devil, still somehow alive, screamed as his body began to grow under the effects of its transformation.

"Of course I know what I've done," Lex answered as he summoned a dagger from his spatial bangle. This was one of the weapons he bought from the emporium, and it could theoretically even pierce the skin of an immortal. All Lex needed was for the immortal to hold still while he tried to stab him!

But with the devil, this was not an issue. With machine-like precision, Lex stabbed the knife directly into the devil's spine before it completed its transformation. The devil screamed again, but Lex showed no hesitation as he systematically crippled the devil. Not only did he sever many important nerves, or the devil equivalent, but more importantly, he cut all the meridians within its body.

Within a couple of minutes, the devil was completely crippled without any ability to retaliate in any way. The only thing he could still do was to use its mouth to curse and threaten Lex as it tried to comprehend the horror of what had happened to it.

"Continue to rescue the rest, there are no other devils amongst them," Lex said, not even turning to look at Z. He had not massacred nearly enough enemies to sate his boiling anger, but his cold, calculating mind kept him from acting out. He had to focus only on what was absolutely necessary.

When he finally got hold of the devil, Lex still did not vent his emotions. Contrary to what it may seem like, Lex did not torture it for his personal satisfaction. Instead, it was to leave it vulnerable as he extracted information from it.

He slammed his Domination down on the devil, finally putting an end to its endless curses, and put his fingers on the devils temple.

His fingers seemed to blur and enter the devil's mind as he used Mindmeld to transform bits of himself into thought.

This was a surprisingly useful ability, and it made interrogation much easier. But Lex had not fully mastered it, or even attained great proficiency in it yet. He had not had much opportunity to experiment with this ability, so he could only use his intuition as his guide as he sifted through the devil's memories.

He had killed the elf he had been disguised as and infiltrated the battalion stronghold. Yet oddly enough, it had never acted against them. It was as if the devil was only there to watch, or perhaps he was a part of some contingency plan.

He delved deeper to peer into his secrets, but suddenly found his memories changing. The landscape of his mind slowly began to darken, as if he was losing his thoughts or memories completely. Instead, a massive throne was forming from their fragment, positioned right in front of Lex.

A massive devil appeared on the throne, and looked down on Lex with a charming grin, as if he was genuinely happy to see him.

Once again, Lex's instincts failed to warn him of any danger, but his own common sense told him that the appearance of this devil was likely due to some protective techniques used on the captured devil's memories.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 875: Devilsbane Dagger

875 Devilsbane Dagger

Compared to the enormous throne, Lex seemed like an ant. The devil sitting in the throne seemed both grand and menacing as it looked down on Lex. The surrounding darkness wrapped itself around the devil's face, so only his eyes were visible, but the rest of his figure could easily be seen, as if it was fully illuminated.

The devil clearly seemed to enjoy the feeling of Lex looking up at it, and even leaned forward so that it could bring its face right above Lex, forcing him to arch his neck even further. But while the devil reveled in his sense of superiority, Lex was indifferent to the size difference.

Once one had stood atop a dragon, the size of things hardly seemed to matter anymore.

"You..." the devil began to say, stretching out his words as if building anticipation. "...are distracted."

Outside the mind of the devil Lex was invading, the devil had quietly and secretly healed! Although he was not back in his prime, it was enough for him to move his tail.

The tip of his was sharper than a sword, even, and stabbed Lex right in the heart... or tried to. All it managed to do was ruffle his suit a bit.

Within the mindscape, Lex continued to look at the devil indifferently. Clearly his plan did not have the effect he sought.

"Are you the one behind all of this?" Lex asked, though he had already made his own judgments.

"Why do you hope to know, dragon tamer? Do you think you can conquer me like you did the dragon? Do you think you can hide your identity behind such pathetic masks? Do you think you are more than just a pawn in a game of giants?"

The devil's voice rose into a deafening scream, shaking not just Lex's mind but the mindscape he was in as well. Outside, the devil's tail continued its feeble attempts at stabbing Lex until the once sharp tail turned dull, but it could not even tear a single stitch of Lex's suit.

"You are trying to intimidate me, to threaten me. That means you are afraid. Good. You should be afraid," said Lex, before leaving the mindscape. He was not going to learn much more than the fact that there was a group of devils intricately linked to this assault on the Midnight Inn. But who they were specifically was still a mystery.

Lex would have liked to spend more time investigating, but he did not forget that time was short.

The moment he was done trying to look into the devil's thoughts, Lex brought out the dagger he had used earlier and stabbed it through the devil's eye!

Unbelievably, even with an injury on its brain the devil was not dead yet, and continued to scream. Lex had to stab the devil numerous times before he succumbed to his wounds.

He pulled out the dagger one last time and wiped the blood off from the devil's clothes before taking a good look at it. The silver blade was straight, serrated and eight inches (20 cm) long, making it look fairly ordinary. It was instead the handle, made of an unusual black material that perfectly adapted itself to the shape of Lex's hand. The top and bottom edges of the handle had some sharp spikes pointing outwards that actually looked more dangerous than the blade.

But looks were deceiving. The blade was made from a rare metal that had the durability and sharpness to cut through the skin of an ordinary immortal. Of course, to actually perform the task one would need a lot more than just a sharp blade.

Besides that, the blade was also enchanted, so that it would suck out the vitality of anyone who touched it. The handle was made of a special material that protected the user from the blade's enchantment.

This ludicrously sharp and deadly knife had a very contrastingly simple name of Dagger, but considering his first kill with it, Lex decided to rename it Devilsbane Dagger.

Devilsbane Dagger would not have worked on the zealot or the statue which was why Lex had not used it earlier, but the devils who had incredibly resilient bodies were prime targets for it.

He turned back to Z, who was still sending away his remaining allies.

"We have sent away anyone we could, and we can thwart the enemies by sending a powerful rocket their way. Now the only thing left is to figure out how we are going to access the place that you felt a connection from. Any ideas?"

"I can feel it. The place is nearby, but it's hidden or... or just out of reach. Every time space tears I can feel its entrance, but the space tears always open up to the Void. The opening is somewhere in the cracks, where space is splintered, but not quite all the way to the Void."

Z's explanation reminded him of the sensation he had earlier, where he felt that the space here was stretched over something, as if to hide it.

"Although I understand what you are saying, I have no way of reaching the place. Read the manual I gave you and see if you can figure something out. Since you're the only one who can feel the connection, you are the only one who can open up a door to that place. I'll protect you as long as I can, but I don't know how long that'll actually be."

In the distance, he could see that more and more divine energy was accumulating in one point: the statue. The devil besieging the zealot had not slowed the accumulation of divine energy in any way. Instead, it had sped up the process, no doubt due to the collateral damage from their fight.

As if sensing that the situation was about to get much worse, Lex took off his blazer and dropped it on Z's shoulders.

"Here, put this on."

The young man was quite strong, but was not strong enough to casually tolerate the defensive blazer that had been designed from Lex. His knees buckled and he fell to the ground, but fortunately, he had caught himself before he face planted.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 876: The sudden change

876 The sudden change

An unusual situation came about as Z sat cross legged on the ground, wearing a blazer that practically caused him to bend until his face was almost touching the book he was reading. Around them stood the formidable demon army that had been created specifically to hunt them down, yet they did nothing except stand still.

Lex stood beside him cross armed, waiting for something to happen. Realistically, it was impossible for Z to master space well enough in a short enough time that he would be able to open a door to the place he felt a connection.

What Lex was hoping for, instead, was that he would be able to resonate with that place, somehow triggering a door or invitation of some kind. Of course, it would not do to tell his own employee that he had no faith in him, so instead he waited in silence.

The seconds ticked by, each seeming to extend forever before giving way to the next. Slowly, those seconds turned to minutes. Z was focusing his utmost and reading as quickly as possible, in a rush. He had no idea when death and destruction would rain down on them, so it would be best if could leave before then.

For a short while, nothing happened. Their presence remained undetected to the devils fighting far off and so there was no one to bother them. But, ultimately, a change did come, and it came abruptly and on a massive scale.

Without forewarning, the red statue erupted in a cataclysmic explosion of light that blinded all, and it was followed by an unearthly wail filled with both anger and anguish!

"I CAN SMELL THAT PLACE ON YOU!" a voice roared filled with a lust for vengeance.

The previous blinding light was so strong even Lex was forced to close his eyes, but pure instinct guided him to use Impervious Hands and bring his right hand in front of his face. His timing was perfect as a fist seemingly made of light landing right in his hand, packed with all the strength it could muster.

The force of the impact caused a minor shockwave to blow heavy gusts of wind around Lex, and pushed away many of the nearby demons. But, for all its bluster, could not move Lex, or even his hand, by a single inch.

Lex opened his eyes to see a being made of pure light, identical in shape to that of the red statue. Even so, with its body made of light and the face of a hawk, Lex could clearly tell that its expression was contorted into one of absolute, uncontrollable rage.

"Why are you so weak?" Lex could not help but ask. He had not even moved from his spot. If the entire purpose of the ritual was to summon this being of light, shouldn't it be strong?

It had thought it impossible, but Lex's question enraged the being of light even more! It tried to pull back its hand to launch another attack, but as if to emphasize what Lex had said, was unable to free itself from Lex's grasp!

Lex, unwilling to let the mystery continue, used his left eye to peer into the being's body, and discovered the issue.

All the divine energy that had been gathered so far was used up entirely to make the body of light, sustaining the being's existence. The same amount of energy wielded by the zealot afforded him many abilities, but for this being, it was only enough to sustain itself.

But that fact on its own was a testament to how powerful this being was. It was just that... before it could gather more strength it had attacked Lex, giving him an irreplaceable opportunity!

He could clearly see, even now, more and more divine energy was filling its body, thereby increasing its strength. His mind clicked, and Lex understood that if he allowed this being to gather enough divine energy, it really would become a powerful foe!

"Let me guess... Do you by any chance go by the name Ra?"

Although Lex had merely said the name, he felt a sense of rejection from the entire world! Every speck of space that had been encompassed by the divine energy seemed to gain a semblance of intelligence,

and was using it to reject Lex's presence! It was trying to kick him out. Fortunately, the sensation lasted just the very duration he said the deity's name, and not longer, or he may really have encountered a problem.

"MY NAME IS NOT FOR YOU TO UTTER, VERMIN! I WILL ANNIHILATE!"

Before Ra could continue screaming, Lex used his left hand, still empowered by Impervious Hands, and grabbed his beak, shutting it.

"What was lesson number 1, Z?" Lex asked without looking back.

"Never let the enemy complete their monologue!" Z responded promptly, as if he was ready for a quiz.

For the first time in days, Lex smiled.

"Good."

Lex freed his right hand and stepped forward to deliver a punch right in the deity's stomach causing it to lurch backwards. But with his grip on Ra's beak, it could neither grunt, nor escape from him.

"You should have learned the first time, Ra," Lex whispered in his ear, more than happy to tolerate the momentary rejection from the world. "Don't mess with the Midnight Inn!"

He did not know how to kill a deity, or more likely a projection or perhaps clone of a deity, but with his left eye he could see the weakness of this body of light it was inhabiting, so he did not hesitate.

He pressed his fingers against Ra's chest, and slowly yet forcefully, pushed his hand inside the deity's body.

"UNHAND MY LORD!" came a yell from a distance as the zealot flew towards Lex at its fastest speed, 17 devils on its trail, but Lex did not break eye contact with Ra for even a moment.

He finally felt like he was punishing those, or at least some of those, who had targeted the Inn. The anger he had been nestling for so long did not allow him to look away.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 877: Torn shirt

877 Torn shirt

"Huddle yourself within the blazer," Lex said to Z through his spirit sense, though his gaze was still locked onto the deity he had captured. Without his blazer, the defense of the remainder of his suit was compromised, but that hardly mattered. After all, the suit still did not reach the level his own body was at.

A second later, the zealot finally caught up to him and delivered a devastating blow to Lex, careful not to harm Ra. Unlike the punch he had blocked, this blow was more than enough to launch the 700+ lbs (317 kgs) Lex off the ground and into the demons around them.

But with his unrelenting grip, Lex brought Ra with him even as he was hurled across the field. In fact, Lex's smile widened just a bit as this happened. It was not because he was hurt, but because...

"NOOOO! MY LORD! UNHAND HIM YOU FIEND!" the zealot wailed, his voice filled with anguish at realizing he had contributed to the harm of his lord!

But Lex did no such thing. He did not even respond. His focus was solely on digging his hand deeper into Ra's body, as he knew this state of weakness he was in was ephemeral. Even as he reached for the core hidden deep within the deities' body, Lex could feel it growing stronger. The divine energy constantly being fed to it was slowly making the body stronger. As soon as the deity had just enough spare energy, it could retaliate with something more than its feeble brute force. Lex was actually a little lucky that Ra had chosen to attack him directly in its anger, instead of biding his time till it gained some strength.

It was a race against the clock, for Lex could see the weakness of the deity was the core within its chest. If his hand could reach it, his victory was secure!

Since his demands were being ignored, the zealot went mad and began launching nonstop attacks on Lex! Divine energy fell onto his body in the form of weapons, energy beams, curses and more, yet they

could do nothing to him. The curses could not even cross the region where his Domination was in effect, let alone harm him. The rest felt like the soft touch of a very young child trying to massage the shoulders of a grown man - barely noticeable.

The devils caught up and were about to resume pummeling the zealot when they noticed the unusual situation. From Ra, they could feel immense pressure. The truth was, weak as he may be, it was nigh impossible for someone ordinary to lay hands upon even the weakest Deity.

But Lex, who was forcefully climbing the Cosmic Ascendance Spectrum using his cultivation technique, and literally absorbing Dragons Might of a Heavenly immortal dragon to bolster his own Domination, was one of the few who could. The rejection and repulsion, alongside the aura of superiority that a Deity was supposed to exude, could cow enemies even stronger than the Deity itself. But against Lex, who had tempered his body, mind and soul against a foe many cultivation levels higher, it was futile.

The zealot immediately noticed the devils and his frenzied, desperate mind came up with an idea!

"He- he is from the Midnight Inn! Help me kill him and I'll send you all out of this world! If not, he will kill us all!"

The devils hesitated, as they tried to judge the situation themselves. This was far beyond the scope of the mission they had been given, though it was true that their initial target was the Midnight Inn.

Perhaps if the situation had been different, they may not have listened to the zealot, but at the moment Lex just seemed too intimidating. In his hands he forcefully held down a Deity! If, by some miracle, he dealt with the deity, they would be next. The thought of facing such a truly devilish foe... made them give up their initial reluctance.

The seventeen devils surrounded Lex and sent out a few probing attacks while the zealot hurled attacks from atop.

The landscape changed. The ground quaked. Space itself once again began to moan. But Lex remained undeterred.

Seeing how their attacks had no effect, and how Lex was not retaliating, the devils became a little more bold with their attacks. The prior issue of the enfeebled space which prevented them from using their full force was gone, for now, so they did not hold back. Soon, they were throwing their strongest attacks at him, some of the more confident devils even coming close to attack him physically. Yet nothing worked.

The more Lex remained undeterred, the more the devils felt afraid. They began coordinating their attacks, unleashing power that was impossible to do on their own.

Like salvation coming just as they teetered on the edge of oblivion, there was finally a change. Lex's shirt began to tear!

"It's working! His defensive equipment is giving way! Keep at it."

Noticing the situation, even the infuriated Ra saw some hope, and looked at Lex with eyes filled with nefarious anticipation. The moment it was free, it would teach this feeble rat what it meant to cross a Deity! It would imprison his soul and torture him for all eternity!

Ignoring the gloating eyes of Ra, Lex continued to dig his hand into his chest. It was a touch process because each second, Ra's body was becoming stronger and more challenging to pierce through. But he was almost there.

Far off, Z continued to read the manual hurriedly, ignored by everyone. Huddled as he was in the blazer, no one had noticed him at all. With Lex's body being thrown away by the first attack, the battle had actually moved far away from him. But on a battlefield of this scale, the only contribution he could make was to quickly figure out a way to reach the space where he felt the connection.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 878: I'm an atheist

878 I'm an atheist

A volcanic rage filled the zealots' eyes as he guzzled up divine energy to fuel the endless barrage of attacks raining down on Lex. All his abilities, which used to severely diminish his foes' fighting force if not completely cripple it, seemed completely ineffective against Lex.

The aura could not restrain him, the attacks could not hurt him, the curses could not reach him and his threats did not phase him. He seemed uniquely equipped to combat divine energy, something that was almost impossible to accomplish ordinarily. But even then, he was bound to fail.

The zealot revealed an ugly, distorted smile as he saw how the devils attacks were slowly tearing his shirt apart. At first it was just his collar, but now his cuffs and even the back seemed to be suffering under their combined effort. If Lex still had his blazer, it would not have been so easy to achieve, but since he took it off himself, he had to live with the consequences.

Truthfully, his suit had not been too useful up until now. Most of the time, he faced foes much stronger than him, to whom his suit was little more than paper to be torn through, or his enemies were far too weak and were disabled from his aura alone.

This was the first time he was up against enemies near his own cultivation level, mostly because of how the space in this region could not have supported stronger beings.

The pit that Lex was standing in had now become a black crater, its surface charred under the relentless onslaught against a single man. It almost seemed like the world itself would collapse before he would. Almost.

Mad laughter echoed through the air as the red-eyed zealot rejoiced, his dried and shriveled face revealing an ugly sight, even in the face of joy. After a particularly powerful attack used jointly by 10 of the 17 devils, his shift finally tore off!

What was revealed beneath was a perfectly sculpted body, without a single blemish or bruise to mar the sublime sight. His rippling muscles looked more divine than the divine being he had gripped in his hand, and for some reason, the effect of his Domination increased noticeably!

Of course, he was wearing a white vest underneath, but at least a single layer of defense had been removed.

Although many of their attacks fell upon Lex's skin as well, he remained completely unharmed, and the group assumed it to be the effect of his defensive garb. Destroying the slim, partially see-through vest

was much easier compared to the shirt, and in only a couple of minutes Lex was left bare chested amongst the group.

As if completely unable to restrain himself, the zealot finally closed the distance between himself and Lex, unleashed the one attack he had been nurturing for a while. How could the zealot forget the punch to the face it had received the moment Lex arrived? Finally, it was time for vengeance!

His bony fist, empowered by tremendous amounts of divine energy, connected with Lex's face. The blast from the connecting attack blew a cloud of black dust, which was quickly blown away by the heavy gusts of wind that followed. The snapping and cracking sounds of bones breaking were quite audible even over the noise of the attack, especially since there was a cry of pain and surprise that followed!

The zealot looked in horror at his fist which had been squished to jelly under the force of his own attack, while Lex remained completely undisturbed.

The devils were also startled, but then their fear and disbelief motivated them to unleash their own special hell on him. But all their efforts were to no avail. At least his shirt had been wrinkled and showed some signs of wear after a few of their attacks. Lex, on the other hand, stood pristine!

The look of anticipation in Ra's eyes changed to horror and disbelief. He could sense that the man holding him was only in the Golden core realm, so then why was he so indestructible?

While their onslaught continued, and became even more potent under the effects of their desperation, the zealot was driven to the absolute brink. With no solution seeming to work, he made a desperate play to empower Ra!

He placed his hand at the Deity's feet and transferred all the divine energy within his own body to Ra. The already feeble zealot withered as the energy left him, and soon his body crumbled and fell to the ground, as if a clay doll had broken. But while the seemingly impervious zealot died just like that, Ra immediately gained a boost in strength.

Just as a flicker of his confidence returned, Lex chuckled.

The tip of his middle finger finally touched the core within Ra's chest.

"You know, on Earth, I actually saw your statues in person once when I visited Egypt," said Lex softly. "I was not too impressed back then. I'm not so impressed now, either."

With his finger firmly pressed against the core, Lex finally took action. Using his eye, he could see that the weakness for this projection of Ra was the core in his chest. As long as he destroyed it, the clone would also cease to exist.

The only caveat with that was that the core was not so easy to destroy. Fortunately, due to Lex's abundant experience, he came up with a better solution. Instead of destroying the core, he would absorb the energy inside of it to improve himself.

If he could do that with a living dragon, Lex saw no reason why he couldn't do the same with a living deity. Once, long ago, he had improved his body using the essence of a deceased Deity. Now, he wanted to see how the energy of a living deity would improve him.

He began channeling his cultivation technique, and the extremely powerful and potent divine energy that enabled the deity to exist was forcefully absorbed into his body through his finger.

In disbelief, Ra roared, "DO YOU KNOW YOUR BLASPHEMY!?! SUCH SACRILEGE WILL NOT BE FORGIVEN BY ANY DEITY!"

"That's okay," Lex replied casually. "I'm an atheist, anyway. I never cared much about what the Deities thought."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 879: A nightmare come to life!

879 A nightmare come to life!

Lex tuned out the ranting voice of the deranged deity as he felt his cultivation technique absorb the strangely warm, slightly scalding energy. For reasons beyond his understanding, Lex found himself reminiscing at this moment.

He could not help but think back to his life just a couple of years back. His daily routine was filled to the brim with dissatisfaction from start to finish. He would wake to the annoying, piercing ringing of his alarm, just short of getting enough sleep.

He would spend a decent amount of time getting ready for the day, often having leftovers or some barebones breakfast. Something was better than nothing because if he skipped a meal, he would become extremely tired around midday. He would shower, and though most of the time there was hot water, there had been more than one occasion where he had to use cold water due to maintenance or the apartment building's water heater breaking down.

His commute was annoying. His job was somewhat stimulating, but mostly tedious work. Some of his coworkers were nice, which was the highlight of his day. He used to come back home in the evening and some a bit outside his building because he just couldn't build up the strength to go inside and face his life. What remained of the day was spent watching television or playing games.

Of course, that was what life felt like when he had the tumor. Prior to that, he was a lot more enthusiastic about life, and looked forward to facing new challenges which he could overcome. But even so, his life seemed extraordinarily mundane.

Now, his life was nothing except simply extraordinary, and no comparison was needed. After all, Lex was standing on a planet an unknown number of galaxies away from the one he came from, in the middle of a battlefield consisting of numerous races, holding down a deity whose influence spanned across time and space, surrounded by devils, and cultivating a unique power to grow stronger.

Special attention must be given to the fact that he was actually cultivating right in the middle of the battlefield while suffering countless attacks from the devils! The extent of the danger he was in could not be understated!

Cultivation was an extremely delicate process, and the slightest disturbance could bring endless ruin. The consequence could range from anything, such as a minor body ache, to complete crippling or even death!

After all, Lex was using a unique and potent energy to fundamentally alter the makeup of his body and soul. If even a fraction of the energy required at each step deviated in the slightest, it could result in failure.

But Lex was still confident in himself, because there was no one around him even qualified to disturb his cultivation. He did not forget that the missile he shot out in space had not had any massive reaction yet, but maybe he was expecting too much...

"Master, I can feel divine energy entering your body. I don't know what you are doing, but you should be careful," Pel's voice entered Lex's mind, waking him from his thoughts. "There are different kinds of energies all around us. Cultivation usually absorbs all of them, and then converts them into the one that suits us, or simply filters out the ones we don't need. In the Golden core realm, you absorb them and convert them into your own unique energy, carrying your signature and your respective affinities and traits. But some energies carry specific affinities or traits inherently.

"Typically, you would get more in contact with the various energies when you reach the immortal realm, but since you're actively absorbing divine energy, I have to give you the proper warnings!

"Divine energy, when manifested, usually appears as different shades of white light, and so is perceived as an inherently good or pure energy. That is actually far from the truth! Divine energy, while exceptionally powerful, easily influences the spirit, and can cause the user to become conceited and self-absorbed! Over time, if not checked, it can cause the user's personality to become completely distorted!

"The two beings most who most commonly use divine energy, angels and deities, both often experience a process called falling, which is when they succumb to the corrupting influence of divine energy and completely lose themselves. It is not without reason that fallen angels and deities are much stronger than their former selves. It is because only in that state can they show the true power of divine energy!

"You, as a member of a race that does not have inherent resistance to the corruption of divine energy, are much more susceptible to its influence! If you wish to continue absorbing it, you must actively resist its sway!"

Lex was jolted awake, as if cold water had been splashed over him, when he heard Pelvailin's words! Even without realizing it, his thoughts had already fallen under the influence of divine energy. He could feel it acting on his confidence and ego, inflating it into arrogance and cocksure!

He immediately steadied his mind and paid careful attention to himself and his surroundings as his body absorbed divine energy like a sponge!

He could feel his cultivation rising bit by bit, and even his Domination evolving further. Once again, he was exposed to energy that was far beyond his level, and his cultivation technique was using it to elevate his level on the Cosmic Ascendance Spectrum.

Any shortcomings that were left in his being after being upgraded using a dragon as a base template were being filled with that of a living deity.

Unfortunately, both of these beings were known for their excessive arrogance, and Lex had to be very careful not to develop such a trait himself.

As Lex was planning out his cultivation path, one of the devils that was previously attacking him was having a panic attack. What the hell was this guy? Why was he more devilish than a devil, and more divine than a deity? He was like a nightmare, come to life!

The Innkeeper

Chapter 880: How could they know?

880 How could they know?

One of the devils roared in agony and pain as he held his injured hand. He had tried to gouge out Lex's eyes, but his eyelashes were sharper than the most well forged swords, and directly cut off his fingertip. It would have at least been worth it if Lex was somewhat injured in the process, but he remained completely unharmed.

"This... this is not working. We should just retreat instead. The zealot is dead, and the deity is captured. If we're still around when he gets free, we'll be next," said another devil, who had fallen to his knees.

The devils were a powerful race, superior to countless others. In more than one realm, they reigned supreme, and even had control over one of the Primordial realms, Garvitz! They conducted deals with the most powerful races in existence and dared to laugh in the face of dragons, even. There was no one who could deny their excellence.

So the fact that they were so utterly helpless before this masked man, who could not even bother to defend himself, left them more broken than any actual beating could render them.

"It's no use. This planet is surrounded by a divine domain. We cannot exit so easily."

"I don't care. I'm going as far away as possible from this freak! The moment he kills the deity, and the divine domain evaporates, we can escape! I'll get on the nearest ship available."

Without waiting for a response, the devil who was speaking spread his wings and flew away. After a few moments of consideration, several more devils followed. Yet some still remained. One of the devils who was having a panic attack was left behind, and a few others who had exhausted themselves completely were left kneeling in the dirt.

Without lifting a single hand against them, Lex had defeated them. Besides some damage to his shirt, he suffered no loss of his own. There was not even a speck of dirt on his body, nor a single drop of sweat! Between the smells of ash and burnt rubble, Lex still exuded a faint, refreshing smell as if he had just stepped out of the shower.

Lex, meanwhile, was totally focused on his own cultivation, and especially Ra! The core in his body was shrinking, so Lex had to continuously dig his hand deeper lest it lose contact with the core.

As he felt his own strength grow, and his body change subtly, he recalled that soldier he had seen back on Polebitvy. She too controlled divine energy, and had wings growing out of her back like an angel. Maybe he could try doing something like that as well once he was done.

Time slowly passed, and minutes turned into hours. Most of the devils around him had left, but the one who was previously having a panic attack now looked at Lex with eyes full of worship. He was kneeling like a pious believer in a temple of their revered deity.

Ra had become extremely weak by now, and no longer screamed or yelled at Lex. He only watched him in silence, as if thoroughly memorising his appearance. This was but a single incarnation of his. Even weak and wounded as he was, he would not die with the death of a single incarnation. Though it could not be denied that this would hurt him severely. So, he observed Lex, and seared his image into his brain. He would have his revenge!

Z, who had been studying this entire time, finally came to Lex, making sure to have the blazer covered his entire body.

"I think I've figured it out. The next time space cracks or tears in front of me, I might be able to open a small channel to the place calling out to me," he said, warily looking at the devil worshiping Lex.

"We'll try soon," said Lex, diverting just enough attention to respond. No matter how secure the situation felt, he would not let divine energy cause him to underestimate Ra. As a deity, he could still have a few tricks up his sleeve.

But the waning deity pulled no trick, and another hour went by just like that. His body, made of light, dulled till it was nearly extinguished. The divine domain that was encompassing the world finally failed, since there was not enough energy to replenish it.

Space in that region once again became fragile. Then, it broke completely and utterly. It was as if someone tried to catch a falling anvil with a single sheet of one-ply toilet paper. Lex, Ra, the devil and Z were all caught unprepared as they fell into the void.

Then again, how could they be prepared? None of them knew that within Ra's divine domain, the living embodiment of a law, was hiding. The strength of that being far surpassed a Heavenly Immortal, although it was not quite at the realm of a Celestial just yet. Its mere existence was too much for the fragile space to bear, and so it was destroyed, quite thoroughly and permanently!

Midnight Inn

The doors finally opened, and the convention for oracles, prophets and diviners ended. As the crowds emerged, they all wore solemn appearances, as if they had witnessed something extremely formidable.

In fact, a majority of them directly went towards the Chamber of Secrets to wipe all memory of the event from their minds. Only in such a way could they be safe from the truth. Of course, they would leave hints for themselves to guide their future actions.

But not all of them left. Vera Joel, who had organized this event, sat cross-legged on the stage where she had concluded the event, her thoughts unknown.

A small fairy, barely the size of a child's finger, flew up to her and sat on her shoulder.

"Why are you doing this, lovely?" she asked, her voice as sweet as candy.

"It's because I want a future that my prophecies cannot predict," she said, her words carrying a weight of many things unsaid.