

A young man dressed in a black robe appeared in the middle of the circle. His appearance was extremely pale as if he was sick and on the verge of dying. His eyes scanned around as he looked at the magic circle on the ground with a frown.

Then, a smile appeared on his face as he looked at the group. Although he was surprised after landing his eyes on Edward, he did not show it.

“So, it is you guys who summoned me? To what I owe this pleasure?”

“Who are you?” asked Edward directly as he did not recognize this person. Most likely because he was a minor god not overtly known to the general population so not easily recognizable by certain traits.

“My name is Dolus.”

“The Greek God of Lies and Deception?” muttered Edward. “How exactly did such a weak god like you manage to survive the War? From what I know, the Greek Pantheon was forced to change its names and reinvent itself to Roman in an attempt to survive. However, I doubt a minor god like you would have such an opportunity.”

The smile on Dolus’ face remained the same, ‘This Sorcerer is not only powerful but also quite knowledgeable of the past. This may be a little tricky.’

“I have my own methods,” replied Dolus.

“Yes, as a god whose divinity revolves around trickery and cunningness, you should have your own method. Although you are no Loki, you should not be too bad.”

As soon as the word Loki was mentioned, Dolus’ smiling facade was almost broken. Obviously, that name was a sore spot for him.

And this slight change did not escape Edward's sight as he was closely observing this god in front of him. Additionally, he mentioned Loki on purpose to see his reaction.

After all, as both Gods of Trickery, as two people who share the same [Authority], Edward did not think that these two would get along since they were competitors.

Adding to that the fact that Loki is way more popular and known than Dolus, this only showed that in their confrontation, the Greek God was at a disadvantage.

"So, for what reasons have you summoned me here?" asked Dolus who forced himself to regain his calm, collected, and trusted worthy smiling face.

"No, the question is, why did you accept our summon?" said Edward, a question which made Dolus frown as he realized that the situation was different than he expected.

He thought that some mortal had come across some summoning magic and was using it recklessly. So, he believed that this was an opportunity for him to leave his hiding place and used the situation to recuperate his power.

However, after seeing Edward and how powerful of an Internal Sorcerer he was, he did not change his plan. He just thought that it would only be slightly more difficult to trick this sorcerer and his companion.

Regrettably, based on the brief conversation, he knew that his opponent might also be a master of negotiation and manipulation. Adding to their wariness and strength, a different approach was necessary.

So, Dolus removed his smiling face and became calm to the point of indifference.

"Let's not go around the bush. State your purpose directly."

“Fine,” said Edward as he waved his hand to manifest a white crystal, which then floated to Dolus inside the magic circle.

“I want to exchange knowledge from you with this.”

The greek god looked at the crystal for a few seconds before swallowing it. Then, he frowned before saying: “Crystallize Soul? However, the quality of the soul is terrible; although slightly better than animals, it’s not even on par with ordinary humans.”

Dolus was right since the crystal was made from clones.

“I can exchange with you but the souls used have to be made of ordinary people.”

“No,” replied Edward. “Only these. Plus, I can only give you 10 million, nothing more nothing less.”

Dolus frowned after hearing this. With the quality of these souls, 10 million was enough to recover a lot of his injuries but not enough to recover to his peak. Obviously, this was a calculated number.

However, after thinking about it for a while, Dolus decided to accept the deal because he knew that if he did not, some other gods will.

“Fine.”

Edward waved his hand and a magical contract flew to him. Dolus looked at it and the first thing he did was to remove all the beautiful designs on the paper that looked like nothing but decorations.

As a Trickster God, these were basic operations when tricking people into contracts. Then, he used a spell on the paper, then, the one-page contract suddenly turned into a long parchment the length of a football field.

These were all the hidden clauses of this contract that looked so simple. Then, Dolus read every single paragraph one by one while changing the clauses that he did not agree with while adding some of his.

Once he was done, he sent it back to Edward who also reviewed all the clauses. However, after the review, he only cares about two things.

The first one was the fact that Dolus refused to grant him all his knowledge for the price Edward was offering. Instead, he made a list of things he could exchange for. Edward did not hesitate to choose knowledge about the Soul, and how to cast the Divine Fire and Soul.

“Article 1567, clause c, is non-negotiable,” said Edward.

“Then, you might as well cancel the deal,” said Dolus with a sneer. “I manage to survive this war, do you think I would become enemy with Yahweh now?”

“I don’t ask you to become enemies with him. Just attack him once at the right time.”

“Same thing.”

“In that case, how about I change the clause for simple information regarding his current state. I’m sure as cautious as you are, you have gathered a great deal of information about him.”

Dolus remained quiet, seeming deep in thought.

“I’ll add another million souls. However, that’s all I can offer you.”

“Deal.”

After that, the two negotiated a few more things before they both signed the contract. Dolus was slightly surprised once everything was done. He thought that he could sacrifice a little bit of his power to break some clauses of the contract.

Unfortunately, he discovered that this contract was overseen by the Will of all the planets in the solar system. If he broke it, the backlash was enough to kill him.

So, after receiving his payment, he also gave Edward all the knowledge and information he promised. Then, he disappeared.

“I still think that we should have forcefully captured him,” said Snape. “With how weak this guy is and with the Floating City, it should be quite easy.”

“I think caution was the best approach,” retorted Lily. “This world still has too many unknown to us.”

“She’s right,” added Edward. “So far, we still do not know to what extent some of the gods have recovered. We do not even know how many of them have survived the war and how many have died.”

After that, Edward began to review the knowledge that Dolus gave him. His eyes became bright as he muttered: “I think I found a shortcut to reaching Tier 7.”

The eyes of the other became bright as they looked at him with excitement. As the most talented Arcanists in the Empire, these people knew how long it would take them to reach higher Tiers.

Hundreds of years. Even with a magical potion like the Divine Essence Potion, it would still take them dozens of years. And that’s only Tier 6 not to mention Tier 7.

However, if there was a quicker way, that would be perfect.

Edward then explained the method he just thought of.

One of the information that Dolus gave him was regarding how gods lighted up their Divine Flame and its function. The Divine Flame is an application of the soul to condense it and form a Spiritual Flame.

However, that spiritual flame is not for fighting or other things; it is used to remove the impurities in faith. It is common knowledge to all the gods that faith is poisonous.

Over absorption of it can corrupt the soul and change the personality of the gods. The solution to this problem is to remove the impurities that faith contained with the Divine Flame and make it safer to absorb—or relatively safer.

After knowing this, Edward immediately thought of using the Divine Flame to purify the mana inside Arcanists to make it reach higher purity. His theory is that since crystalized mana—which was of higher quality—was enough to allow Arcanists to reach higher Tiers, then a high purity of mana could do the same.

“Let’s go test this out right now,” said Hermione.

“Alright.”