

CHAPTER 6

THE OCTAGRAM

The moment I consumed Clayman, the red-haired demon lord Guy stood up.

“An impressive feat,” he solemnly intoned. “I hereby recognize your right, from this day forward, to call yourself a demon lord. Does anyone disagree?”

Nobody appeared to. I had passed the exam. That’s a relief, because—to be frank—goading the other demon lords into combat with me felt like suicide. I guess I never had much to worry about.

I undid the Barrier, allowing Ramiris to fly right up to my face, like she always did. “Ha-ha! I always knew you delivered the goods when the time came for it, Rimuru! In fact, I’d be happy to hire you as my apprentice!”

“Uh, I’m good, thanks. Find yourself another one.”

“Why?!” she grumped. “What’s the big deal? Why won’tcha just say yes like a good kid?”

“Hmph!” Milim proudly sniffed. “Rimuru’s my friend. I heard he doesn’t even want to get along with you!”

“What? No way! Hey! That’s a lie, right, Rimuru?”

“Wah-ha-ha-ha-ha! Sorry, Ramiris, you aren’t part of our team!”

“Whaaaat? Hyah!”

Taking the bait, Ramiris launched a flying kick at Milim’s face. She leaned to the side to dodge it and laughed even harder at her. Huh. These guys are better friends than I thought.

Meanwhile, I noticed Veldora engrossed in friendly-looking conversation with the demon lord Daggrull, bragging about how he was training to keep his aura hidden. “You see him, Daggrull?” he said, pointing at me. “That’s how you do it.”

“Indeed,” the giant replied, nodding. “It was just for a moment, but I felt an explosive amount of magicules from him. Amazing he can hide it so well.”

Veldora had apparently been providing color commentary for my battle against Clayman. I really wish he’d knock that stuff off. That was exactly why I told him to keep watch in town for me.

Deeno, meanwhile, yawned at me, his attention span already waning now that the action was over. “Well,” he moaned, “it’s fine by me.” Weirdo. And a hard one to pin, too. I’m never sure what he’s thinking about.

To Leon, however, none of this mattered. “Heh. I don’t care who becomes a demon lord. Do whatever you want.” Talk about cold.

Frey and Carillon had no objections to my new title. Which left one person.

Valentine, who had remained silent until now, lumbered up to his feet.

“Mmmm. Personally, I would never want to allow a low-born slime to ever become a demon lord, but…”

Dressed as gaudily as a mighty emperor, Valentine sneered down at me. Guess he was a no, even if I was guaranteed to win by majority vote. No worries, then, I thought as I was about to turn my attention elsewhere, when:

“Kwaaaaah-ha-ha-ha! Are you insulting my friend, you lackey?”

Veldora turned his casual attention on the maid next to Valentine.

“Come on, Milus, you really need to train your servants better. Want me to provide a little education?”

Whoa! Hey! What the hell, man?!

“What are you talking about?” Milus returned Veldora’s gaze, her voice frigid and her expression icy. “I am simply a faithful attendant of Sir Valentine’s.”

“Heyyyy, don’t do that! Valentine’s hiding the truth, Veldora. You can’t say that!”

Um, Milim? Did you just kind of blow the door open on that, or what?!

I had a suspicion something fishy was going on with him, but I suppose I was right. This fetching young maid Milus was the actual demon lord, and now she glared at Milim, attempting to stab her in the chest with her eyes.

“Ah!”

Finally realizing her error, Milim began whistling a tune to divert everyone’s attention away from her.

Maybe it would’ve worked better if she could actually whistle, but no sound was coming out, and I doubted it’d make much difference. Milus didn’t seem the type to take a joke, and these antics weren’t about to calm her down.

She looked around the chamber, thoroughly annoyed, her eyes making her look like she planned to kill us all and hide the evidence. She looked hostile and dangerous, but luckily, she decided not to take on the entire rest of the room.

“Tch. Such a bothersome, villainous dragon. How long will he insist upon meddling with me…? And you’ve forgotten my very name, no less. How can anyone have such a gift for aggravating me?”

Now the atmosphere was very different as Milus—well, the demon lord Valentine, that is—spoke. It seems that Veldora was dunderheaded enough to misremember her name entirely, which did a lot to push her buttons.

“Enough of this,” she huffed. “You may call me Valentine.” Then, with a massive outburst of magical force, her appearance transformed, her maid outfit turning into a fancy Gothic-style dress. It was Change Dress in action, a neat trick Milim was adept at as well.

Yep. This was the real thing. The stand-in Valentine was a remarkable specimen himself, but his “maid” was on another dimension. Now we were greeted by a demon lord among demon lords, the ultimate personification of strength and beauty.

“You can leave ahead of me, Roy,” she ordered the kingly ex-Valentine.



“But Lady Valentine—”

“If I’ve been unmasked in front of this many people, there’s no point keeping up the charade.”

She glared at Veldora yet again. “It…it’s not my fault—I didn’t know,” he stammered, feeling out of sorts and trying to avoid her gaze. To Milim, meanwhile, it was already someone else’s problem. The topic was over in her mind. Selfish as always, I could see.

Perhaps understanding that more than most, Valentine seemed ready to drop the subject, as peeved as she was about all this. Shaking off her anger, she stood before Roy, now comfortably back in the servant role.

“Anyway,” she intoned, “there is something that concerns me. When Clayman looked at you, his eyes stopped for a moment, did they not? He might be involved with those cockroaches that invaded my domain earlier. I want you to return home and inform my people to step up our security.”

Guess Carillon and I weren’t the only guys Clayman picked a fight with. No wonder everybody hated him. Maybe he was just trying to discover where Valentine’s domain was—it was still a secret—but even for a data-gathering fiend like him, sometimes it was all too easy to step over the line.

“…Yes, my lady.”

Roy left the chamber alone, not questioning Valentine’s order for a moment. No, he had no business being on the throne at all. He really was just a political stand-in. It was, I suppose, a sign of Valentine’s power and influence.

Time to switch gears. I plucked the round table out from my Stomach and set it back in place. Good thing I thought about storing it before I smashed it up. If battle had broken out before the barrier was in place, I’m sure it would’ve been a mess. The thing looked far too fancy for restitution to be cheap.

All the demon lords sat back down at the table, while Guy’s two maids prepared some tea for us.

“Ah,” Leon suddenly said next to me, “I just remembered. I thought I had heard the name Kazalim somewhere before, but that’s the demon lord I killed, isn’t it?”

I thought I was gonna spit the tea out right there. How could he be so nonchalant with that?

“You know him, Leon?”

And how could Milim not know that? The other demon lords seemed similarly unfazed, many apparently clueless about the guy. Even Ramiris had completely forgotten. I thought she kept her memories whenever she was reborn? I wanted to poke fun at her about it, but that’d just be mean.

…So what’s Kazalim got to do with this?

…Understood. The word Kazalim was uttered by Clayman as he called for help.

Oh, right, right! Now I remember. He did scream something like that. I totally remember that, so hopefully nobody’s putting me on the same boat with Milim and Ramiris.

“So how is this Kazalim related to Clayman?” I asked.

“Kazalim is the Curse Lord,” Carillon explained. “You and he recommended me to this post, didn’t you, Milim?”

“Ohhhh, him! The Curse Lord, I remember. Huh. So that’s the demon lord Leon killed?”

So she knew him by his nickname? That made a little sense. But really, it’s not like Leon killed any other demon lords. If I had to guess, she probably almost forgot since it was just all too boring to her.

“Right. Kazalim was a walking dead like Clayman,” said Carillon, his voice a tad nostalgic. “A unique monster, he said, evolved by himself from an elf. I was kinda friendly with him, so that’s what he told me. The two of them must’ve been connected behind the scenes. Clayman took over Kazalim’s old seat, besides.”

Unlike Clayman, Carillon didn’t seem to have any bad blood for this guy. But hang on a minute. I almost let it pass, but if Kazalim’s a walking dead, too…

“Is Kazalim still alive? Maybe he just pretended Leon killed him, and he’s hiding out somewhere?”

“Yeah,” agreed Carillon, “that might be the case. He was a really sharp guy, you know? You had to be even more careful with him than Clayman.”

So maybe I was right.

“Well,” Leon naturally objected, “I don’t much like you phrasing it like I let him get away. He invited me to join his force, claiming he would help me become a demon lord. Turning him down would have led to assorted annoyances, so I decided to defeat him and seize his position. Whether he’s alive or dead, it doesn’t matter to me.”

Certainly, I could see it if Leon just wanted to stage a display of power without actually wanting to kill him.

“Whoa there, Leon. That’s exactly why Clayman hated you, you realize.”

“Hmph. Do you think I care?”

Yeah, to Leon, the whole subject was just an annoyance, no doubt. I didn’t realize Clayman was trying to put the screws to Leon, too, though. He was just trying to hit everyone up, wasn’t he? I was starting to wonder just how smart he really was.

Still, I was starting to gain a picture of what Kazalim and Clayman were up to. Leon had taken his seat here around two centuries ago, so maybe Kazalim got Carillon and Clayman into the club, then tried to earn a few more friends for himself. Clayman’s earlier scheme to turn an orc lord into a demon lord seemed like kind of a rehash of that—he wanted more people friendly to him, so he could wield more power at Walpurgis. Trying to build blocs of voters, like in an Earth government, was a surprisingly sneaky and non-demon-lord-like move, I thought. A pretty powerful one, too.

“Among Clayman’s allies were a group called the Moderate Jesters,” I said. “Those Jesters hinted that they had connections among the human world, so perhaps the resurrected Kazalim has taken human form, you know?”

According to Leon, Kazalim’s body disappeared after he was defeated. If he was alive again, it’d be in his spiritual-body form at first. It made sense that he’d then install himself into the physical body of something else. Reviving himself within the realm of a demon lord would lead to being instantly discovered, and considering nobody had found him yet, that theory could be safely discounted.

“You might be correct,” Guy unexpectedly stated. “Leon’s attacks have the power to destroy your spirit. If anything, I would mightily praise Kazalim for surviving. Plus, even for demons like ourselves, a full resurrection from our souls alone takes hundreds of years. I doubt a walking dead could ever perform it alone. Not without assistance.”

Walking dead, unlike demons, were dependent on their physical bodies. Full resurrection from the astral body took time, and if anything, Kazalim being alive would be a small miracle. So did Guy mean to imply that Kazalim had help? It all seemed connected, but for now, we had no further evidence to go on.

“Well, either way, I’ll just assume he’s alive and stay on my guard for him. If I just killed Clayman, he might be out for revenge.”

“Wah-ha-ha-ha-ha! Why worry, Rimuru? You’re a lot stronger than him now!”

“Milim,” I shouted, “that’s the exact kind of cockiness that leads to getting killed!”

Thanks to my victory today, Clayman’s forces were out of the picture. I didn’t think our foes would make any moves for a while, but we still had to keep a sharp watch out. Me alone was one thing, but I now had legions of friends to keep safe. We’d have to devote more resources to our defense and think up ways to handle the threats ahead.

After some more chatting, the Council continued. With the one who called it out of the meeting, Guy took over in his place.

“The main subject of this Council was Carillon’s betrayal and the rise of Rimuru over there, but those issues have been settled. Carillon has betrayed no one, and Rimuru has demonstrated ample power to join our ranks. Personally, I’d be happy to adjourn this session here, but an opportunity like this doesn’t come along every day. Does anyone have something they’d like to say to the other demon lords?”

“Could I, perhaps? Since we’re in the middle of this Council, I have a suggestion to give, or really, more a request,” Frey said.

“Certainly. Go ahead.”

Frey nodded at Guy. “Starting today, I’ve decided to serve Milim. As a result, I want to abdicate from my seat as a demon lord.”

Well. That was a bombshell.

“Whoa, that’s kind of sudden, isn’t it?”

“Wait, Frey! I didn’t hear anything about that!”

“No, because I didn’t say anything about it. But I’ve been thinking about it for a while, do you see?”

She squinted, as if looking at some faraway point. Then she laughed, like she was recalling something amusing.

Frey recalled a conversation she had with Milim, the one that made her decide to place her trust in the girl.

“Hey, Frey, you wanna be friends with me?”

“…Why are you asking me that?”

“Well, Rimuru and I just made friends! Friends are really great. If you ever have any trouble, you both help out each other!”

“Oh, really? Well, Milim…if you’re willing to help me out, then all right, I can be your friend.”

“Really?! Oh, I totally promise, of course!”

“You do? I’m glad to hear that. But I’m a pretty wary woman, so I’ll trust you only if you keep that promise.”

“All right! Hooray, we’re friends now!”

Frey had no trust in Clayman. That was why she believed in Milim, putting her own safety in the balance as she pretended to accept his terms.

What if Milim broke that promise? What if Milim’s mind really was under his control? The questions worried her, but Frey still placed her chips on Milim—and they paid off, big time.

That was the reason. The reason why Frey put all her trust in Milim, volunteering to become her servant. At that moment, a lofty queen who had never trusted anyone before in her life finally found it in her to believe.

“Well,” she resolutely stated, “I have my reasons. But the most important one is that I think I’m too weak to be a demon lord. I realized that for sure watching that battle just now; if I fought against Clayman, I’d be lucky to even match him. As for an awakened Clayman, I don’t see how I could win…”

“But, Frey,” Daggrull interrupted, “you specialize in high-speed aerial combat, do you not? I see no reason to depreciate yourself like this.”

“You’re right. If it was in the air, I would have the advantage. But demon lords don’t have the right to make excuses. Besides, I know quite well how having an advantage doesn’t mean anything, at times.”

She paused to give me a look, her voice resolute.

“So I’ve decided to become one of Milim’s followers instead. Plus, Milim can’t afford to be as selfish as she is forever, can she? She needs to think about managing her domain, sooner or later.”

In other words, Frey wasn’t just thinking for herself. Milim was a wild child, and you couldn’t just let her off the leash. Someone to both support and keep an eye on her was definitely needed.

Despite Frey’s own admission, I really couldn’t see her as being that weak. If anything, she was a strategist in a different way from Clayman, a strange, eerie leader who never let you see what she thought about you. The type that reminded you just how formidable her sex could be.

What would happen, though, if this actually happened? Thinking of Frey in terms of a servant, not as a demon lord, she definitely had enough power to be an aid to Milim. She didn’t really have a nation of her own, but if Frey joined her, they’d no doubt have a formal territory in place before long. We’d have to think about building political relations soon after, and with Frey handling them, I bet the negotiations would get pretty thorny. Thorny, but still fun.

Frey turned toward Milim. “What do you think? Will you accept my suggestion?”

“Ooh, I don’t really like to keep a citizenry to rule over—”

“Wait a second,” Carillon said. “I got something to say about that, too. Y’know, I’ve already lost to Milim in a one-on-one match. I’m honestly startin’ to think now’s a pretty good time to hang up my cap as a military leader. On paper, all us demon lords are equal. If we’re all facin’ a Hero, that’s one thing, but if I lost to another demon lord, I really oughtta do away with the title, y’know? So, I dunno, it just felt absurd for me to keep calling myself a demon lord. So I think I’ll join Milim’s faction starting today. Great to be on the team, boss!”

He wasn’t asking for feedback.

I could understand the logic. With these guys, might always makes right. Still, though… I mean, Milim didn’t have anyone under her, no advisers or officers to go out against this, but was it really okay for two demon lords to step down and join her side?

“Wait a minute, Carillon! That one-on-one was all Clayman’s fault! I was under mind control. I don’t know anything about it!”

Eesh. I really don’t think that excuse is gonna work, Milim. I could see the other demon lords rolling their eyes at her.

“Don’t play dumb with me, you. You just declared a minute ago that ‘Oooh, nobody can take over my mind, no!’”

It was a remarkably good impression on Carillon’s part. He had quite a talent for acting.

“Mgh?! I, um, that…”

“Well, that muscle-bound idiot can wait. What about me, Milim?”

“You—you aren’t all saying this to trick me, are you? If you start ‘serving’ me, that means we can’t talk all casually any longer, yeah? You won’t play with me, and we won’t come up with any more fun schemes, yeah?!”

Frey shook her head. “No. I’ll get to be together with you all the time. We’ll get to have more fun than ever.”

I could see the brainwashing— Er, the temptation take hold. See? This is why you gotta watch out for her.

Carillon, meanwhile, was taking the fastball-down-the-middle approach. “Besides,” he complained, “you’re the one who blew my entire damn country away! Rimuru said he’ll help me out with that, but you’ve got a duty to support us, too!”

I didn’t think she did, really, but Milim was always weak with complicated concepts like this. Man, he was smarter than I thought. Milim’s eyes were bouncing to and fro; he almost had her—and then, growing weary of thinking at all, she exploded.

“Daaahhhh! All right! Just do whatever you guys feel like!”

Smoke flew from her head like an erupting volcano as she abandoned all sentient thought. That’s Milim for you. She acted all smart, but she really sucked at critical thinking.

“Are you really sure about this, Carillon?” Guy asked.

“I am. I’ve been thinking, too. Not about abdicating the throne of the Beast Kingdom, but about maybe building some kind of new structure with Milim at the top of it.”

Guy scoffed at this, looking disappointed. “I liked you, though. In another hundred years, I was expecting you to awaken, too.” Then he grinned at him. “But very well! From this moment, Frey and Carillon are no longer demon lords. You are free to serve Milim in any manner you please.”

Now the abdication was official, and nobody voiced any further complaint. Myself included, of course.

So now I was officially deemed a demon lord, one had dropped out due to brutal death, and two had stepped down to become vassals answering directly to Milim. The Ten Great Demon Lords were now eight.

I thought this would mark the end of the Council, but there was one problem left.

“Huh, so we aren’t the Ten Great Demon Lords any longer?”

It was just a sidelong observation on my part, but it generated a much greater reaction than expected.

“That is a concern,” Daggrull rumbled. “In terms of our dignity, we will need to consider a new name.”

Huh? It’s really that important?

“Fortunately, Walpurgis is still under way. We have all our demon lords here. Now would be a wonderful time to brainstorm.”

Even Valentine, the demon lord who definitely couldn’t take a joke, was unironically up for it. Does this really matter, guys? I think the humans are gonna come up with one for us either way, right?

“Oooh yes, it was a real mess the last go-round. Our numbers kept going up and down, and we had to hold so many darn Councils to settle on a new name each time!”

Wha?! They trigger Walpurgises on something that unimportant?! Ramiris described them as this grand, stately event, a special meeting of the minds… Oh, but didn’t she call it a “chat over tea” at first? I was really starting not to care.

“You’re right,” said Daggrull. “The Ten Great Demon Lords thing stuck after the humans came up with that, didn’t it? After we wasted all that time thinking something up. Well, I’m through with it. I don’t have the wherewithal to think about it.”

You just wanted to stop using your brain for a while, didn’t you? Don’t act like you were such a helpful participant up to now.

“Silence, you! All you did was complain. I don’t remember a single constructive suggestion from your end!” Valentine knew exactly what I was thinking.

“What’re you talking about, Valentine? You left that whole process to Roy, did you not?!” Deeno shot her down.

Unlike Milim and Ramiris, their erudition was mainly utilized to avoid work as much as possible. Why were they spending all this time thinking up names anyway? Like, they appeared dead serious about this. Did all demon lords have this much free time to work with?

Upon further query, I learned that the name Ten Great Demon Lords from the human realms stuck because they had spent years trying to devise something themselves. That was due to fluctuations in the number of demon lords—just when they thought they had something nailed down, they’d go up or down a head. So they wound up just going with the Ten Great Demon Lords, even though some were less than happy with it. It was all some of the most useless trivia I ever heard.

“All right. People. Calm down. We need to show some cooperation for a change. We can overcome this!” Guy had just admitted that his fellow demon lords were usually pretty damn uncooperative.

“Um, but… Should we, um…? The Eight Great—”

Ramiris’s suggestion was met with such deafening silence that she couldn’t even get it fully out.

“R-right,” she stammered, trying to deflect it. “Guy’s got a good point! Let’s work on this together!”

Enthusiasm for the Eight Great Demon Lords was at an all-time low. Everyone was in agreement on that, but it didn’t mean we were being any more cooperative with one another.

“Wah-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! I’ll let you guys take care of that stuff!”

“I’m tired. I’m gonna go to sleep.”

It took less than a minute for us all to fall apart. I expected it from these guys, and I sure got it. I wasn’t expecting one big happy family, but it was exactly as I predicted.

But one among us was able to cut through the awkward atmosphere—someone behind me who wasn’t picking up on our impasse at all.

“Oh? If that’s the problem, then my Rimuru’s a real professional!”

It was Veldora, no doubt growing bored and pining to go home already. Ugh. Now all their eyes were on me. I really wish he had some manga to read instead. Wait. Did he already finish reading the last volume?

And now I could see Milim’s eyes fixated upon him—or actually, that manga volume in his hand, like a hawk sizing up its prey. I had a bad feeling about that, but there were more pressing issues at hand.

“You know,” Ramiris said with a nod, “when he named Beretta, he came up with that name in no time flat, too!”

Great. They were delegating everything to me. That bum… She’s treating me with less and less respect over time, I swear. I could tell she was gradually going to push more and more on my plate. Looking around, I could see expectant expressions all around the table. Crap. They’ve already fully surrounded me?!

The demon lords looked at one another, then Guy stood up. “Rimuru, today you stand as a new demon lord. I wish to grant you a wonderful new privilege—”

“Oh, um, I don’t need it, thanks.”

I tried cutting him off before he could finish. He wasn’t gonna let it happen. With a heavy wham, the shiny, obsidian-like, horribly valuable table was chopped right in half.

“Yes,” he said as he gracefully walked right up to me, running a hand past my cheek, “I will grant you the right to provide us with a new name. A very honorable position, I should say. You will accept it, yes?”

He was totally wheedling me. The gesture might have made it look like kindness at first, but his voice made it clear that no insubordination would be allowed. I looked at him, neither nodding nor shaking my head, attempting to plead the fifth.

“And you know,” he whispered, half biting at my ears. His fingernails were practically screeching as they dug into my cheek. “This all happened because you culled our numbers, did it not? You’ll be kind enough to take responsibility and come up with a name, yes?”

An impartial observer might wonder if we were lovers sharing a special moment. We weren’t. He was threatening me—but if things had gone this far, I had nothing to refute him with. It’s really that much of a pain…?

Well, whatever.

“All right! Sheesh. You don’t have to whine so much just because you don’t like it.”

Resigning myself to my fate, I grudgingly took up the post. The looks of relief on my colleagues’ faces spoke volumes. Some were even kicking back and accepting refills on their tea, like this was already over. Well, screw them.

Really, I didn’t mind the Eight Great Demon Lords much…but yeah, maybe it’s a little too obvious. I figured that was what Ramiris was about to suggest, so let’s just trash that right off. The pressure to drop the idea immediately was palpable in the air. No way I wanted to have those frowning faces upon me.

Which left… Hmm. Come to think of it, it’s a new moon tonight, isn’t it? A night sky, full of beautiful twinkling stars…

“Hey, how about the Octagram? You know, like an eight-pointed star?”

It was greeted by silence, the demon lords closing their eyes and scrutinizing the word. Then they all reopened them in unison.

“Settled, then. Quite lovely.”

“See? I toldja! I just knew Rimuru would pull it off for us!”

“Impressive. I can see Veldora’s recommendation was an apt one.”

“Hmph. Well, so be it. Perhaps you are slightly talented.”

“Dang! Just like that! Wow. Like, what was with all the trouble we had last time anyway?”

“…Mm.”

No negative feedback. Well, great. If anyone did voice a complaint, I was thinking I’d throw the job over to them instead. I don’t know why Milim’s acting like she engineered all this, though—and that’s the question I’d want to ask you, Deeno. What were you talking about all those times before?

I had a lot of questions, but as a mature adult, I had the composure to just pretend my problems didn’t exist. From this point forward, we would be feared and revered under a new name.

We were called the Octagram:

“Lord of Darkness” Guy Crimson (demon)

“Destroyer” Milim Nava (dragonoid)

“Labyrinth Master” Ramiris (pixie)

“Earthquake” Daggrull (giant)

“Queen of Nightmares” Valentine (vampire)

“Sleeping Ruler” Deeno (Fallen)

“Platinum Saber” Leon Cromwell (demonoid)

…and me:

“Newbie” Rimuru Tempest (slime)

We numbered eight in all, and with those eight, we had just opened the curtain on a new era of demon lords.

The first order of business was how we distributed our domains.

I was granted the entirety of the Great Forest of Jura, which was a hell of a bargain, but Milim got an even better deal—the unified domains of Frey, Carillon, and Clayman under her rule. “Rule,” of course, in name only. Carillon and Frey would be handling the day-to-day management, alongside the Dragon Faithful directly serving Milim.

Clayman’s old domain was also something of a buffer zone bordering the Eastern Empire. We’d have to investigate how he administrated it and build defense lines as needed. Kind of a pain in the ass; someone would need to devote a lot of detail-oriented work to it. But that was something for Milim and her new government to think about. I had my own priorities to manage.

The rest of the demon lords saw no change in territorial land. Some simply wandered around with no home to call their own; some kept their exact location hidden; some set up fortresses on far-flung continents. It was rare for any of them to have precisely defined borders, so even if there was any change, it’d be hard to decipher.

These demon lords tended not to sweat the details, no, but they did have ways of keeping in touch. That was the function of the ring granted to each one, as a symbol of their post. Not only did they identify the wearer; they also provided for interdimensional calls between demon lords, either secret ones between two people or party lines with multiple participants.

A pretty useful bit of magic jewelry, this so-called Demon’s Ring. With it, I could get into contact with them even if I was stuck inside an Unlimited Imprisonment. I’d have to consider running Analyze and Assess on it for mass-manufacturing purposes, not that I was about tell these guys about that.

Clayman’s schemes, and the chaos he spread around the forest, were a thing of the past. I had been accepted as a new demon lord. Kazalim, Clayman’s apparent master, was a worry to me, but the demon lord drama I dealt with was now all taken care of.

Now, I was a full-fledged vertex on the Octagram.

