

Book #2

“Oh no... I completely forgot about the tournament! Why do I keep doing this every single time this comes up? I'll never be able to get out of my ranking like this. The others probably already summoned their champion months ago and are already all super strong!” a small little girl said.

The young girl rapidly drew pentagrams, stirred up potions, threw in stones, sand, iron, blood, and other materials, in a frantic, seemingly randomized manner. She clapped her hands and began an incantation. The pentagram glowed a bright blue as the items scattered across the room rumbled, inching closer together. Rocks, sand, and metal fused together into a giant boulder as blood poured over the newly merged creation.

“There we go, all set!” the little girl puffed as she wiped her sweat, “now for the final touch.”

A bubble of force surrounded the blood drenched rock and with a flick of her wrist and a tap of her staff, the sculpture exploded! The flash of light, emitted from the bubble, as the shrapnel bounced harmlessly inside the bubble. The little girl waved her hand again and the contents inside fell to the floor. The pentagram disappeared as the little girl walked toward the pile of debris.

Her palms came together with a sharp noise that echoed throughout the room. The room brightened as the curtains lifted higher. Mountains of ice and wind poked through the underlying clouds that dressed the peaks like collars on a regent's dress. The snow glowed from the reflection of the sunlight blazing millions of miles above. A poke from the edge of her staff awakened the pile of flesh born from the magical spell cast by the little girl.

“Welcome champion!” the little girl said.

“Ugh,” groaned the naked flesh on the floor.

“I am your Goddess, Levia! You are summoned to be my champion in the Tournament of Champions!”

The naked flesh rose onto its feet, still dazed from the summoning process. Its eyes adjusted to the brightness of the room, still blinded from the glare of snow and sunlight.

“Where am I?” the naked flesh asked.

“You are in the presence of your Goddess, Levia! We're high above the Morathian Mountains, which is my home!” Levia explained as she observed her champion with a heavy sigh, “This is a disaster...”

The naked flesh looked around the room, now cognizant of its surroundings. He walked toward the edge of the room, looking above the Morathian Mountain ranges. The clouds puffed as the mountain peaks cut through the moving nimbuses covering the view below. It observed as much as it could, comprehending the situation that it was in. There was nothing but the blue skyline, ice packed mountains, and white clouds, that spread across the landscape.

“Who are you again? And what am I doing here?” asked the naked flesh again.

“I told you already! I am your Goddess Levia, we're above the Morathian Mountains, and you are to participate in the Tournament of Champions!”

“What if I say “no”?” asked the naked flesh.

“Well... uhh, then, you will die a fiery death of destruction, live in eternal damnation, and regret that you will forever be nothing but a loser!”

“You have no idea what happens to me do you? More like all those things will happen to you if I say “no”,” the naked flesh showed back, “and aren't you a bit young and tiny to be a goddess?”

“What? No! If you refuse I'll just be returning to sleep here in Moria, and wait until the next tournament. I get to lie in my big comfy bed and not have a single worry in the world! Just so that you know, I am one of the Greatest Goddesses in the world! Despite my youthful good looks and young age, I am well respected and have dozens of worshippers all over the world!”

“Dozens?”

“Yes dozens!”

The naked flesh jaw dropped from the boastful nature of its summoner. It collected itself from the tiny deity wondering if it should press on.

“Anyways, I'm not interested in being your champion. Count me out.”

“Great! Can you just let me finish the ceremony? Then you can go out that door, lose, and we can both move on our merry ways!”

“What are you talking about?”

“You just said you have no interest in the tournament, you don’t want to be a champion, and you want to leave. So just let me finish the ceremony and all you need to do is just lose to the first champion you come across!”

“I’m done with this silly tournament of yours.”

“That’s fine, I want to go back to sleep anyways. Like I said earlier, I just need to finish the ceremony and send you out though. Let’s get this over with quickly, and we can both go back to sleep! So stand still!”

“So that’s your plan...,” it looked at his Goddess, “In that case, I will fight for you my Goddess. I pledge my life to your service, my Goddess. I will be your champion and win this tournament of yours!”

“You can’t do that!” Levia cried, “we had a deal for you to quickly lose!”

“I do not want to live in eternal damnation, and forever regret being a loser though. As my goddess, I am positive that you must help me every single step of the way.”

“But, my bed...,” Levia sighed.

The two locked eyes in anger and frustration. Levia grit her teeth. Her champion’s insubordination was an insult she could not forgive. The naked flesh was to quickly be sent out due to her contractual duties, lose, and the world continued to spin. Yet, here the naked flesh grit back with firm conviction to force her to do the work only a deity can. Seconds passed in the staredown with neither side budging to the other. The unstoppable force has finally met the immovable object.

“Fine,” Levia said, “if you want to take the tournament seriously then I’ll tell you all about it.”

“I’m listening,” the naked flesh replied.

“Before that we need to give you a name, and some clothes,” Levia said, “then I will provide you with a gift of talent, that you will use to defeat the other Champions in the world.”

“My name? It’s...,” the naked flesh said, “It’s...”

“Well get on with it. What is your name?”

“I don’t know what my name is... I am sure I have one, but I cannot remember what it is. When you summoned me, did you see what it was?”

“Nope. My summoning spell just provides me with a champion. I have no say in the matter of who I get. I just follow the ritual, chant a few words, and here you are!”

“I can’t think of my name,” the naked flesh despaired, “how can I not know my own name? Who am I? I don’t even remember anything.”

Its hands covered his face as it sank to its knees. The more the naked flesh kept trying to recall its name, the more tormented it felt. The blank state of its mind laid bare without a single memory, name, or lead to what it was prior to being summoned. The naked flesh looked at Levia, with its eyes pleading for any answer the Goddess could provide.

“Well how about I give you one? I guess I did summon you, so it is my responsibility to provide you a name,” Levia said looking out to the mountain range, “Let’s see... since I am a goddess of water, how about Frost?”

“Frost...Frost... my name is Frost,” the naked flesh confirmed, “yes, my name is Frost.”

“Great! Now for your starting skill,” Levia said, “you do have a choice. Will you take the first skill, “Blizzard” or the second skill “Ice Cubes”? Blizzard allows you to create large blizzards anywhere, you are able to command the frozen fury of nature and rain the fury of ice against your enemies! Or would you like to make ice cubes at any time? Just saying, but, I prefer you choose “Ice Cubes” over “Blizzard”.

“Why?”

“So you can quickly lose and I can go back to sleep.”

Frost’s eyes aimed toward the ground, thinking of which choice to take.

“Before I choose, will it be possible to obtain new skills?” Frost asked.

“Sure, all you need to do is gather sparks. Sparks are found from monsters, blessed items, or extracting them from other Champions. Gathering sparks allows you to improve the skills you currently have or in the case of Champion sparks, you’re able to extract skills from defeated Champions.”

“If that is the case, I’ll take “Ice Cubes,” Frost confirmed.

“Blizzard it is! Wait... did you just say “Ice Cubes?”

“I did. I wish to have the skill “Ice Cubes”.

Instead of a light tap expected of a goddess, Levia slammed her staff to the ground as quickly as possible. A loud thud echoed in the room, as the once calm and soothing goddess smiled in glee. As the thud subsided, a glowing card, ready to bestow her Champion’s skill appeared, with the word “Ice Cube” printed directly in front. Frost reached out and touched the floating card and in an instant, the card disappeared. The palm of Frost’s hands laid flat as it’s fingers curled together. The hand opened and there sat a small ice cube, the size of a strawberry. The heat from it’s hand already began to melt as the ice formed drips of water that leaked out between the creases of it’s hand.

“No take backs or regrets Frost! You’re now bestowed with the skill “Ice Cube,” Levia said, “may this skill serve you well in the Tournament of Champions. With your commitment to serving, I Levia, Goddess of Water of Moria Valley, bestows the garments with my insignia, linking your deeds with mine. It will be my gift to you, Champion Frost.”

Magic swirled around Frost, as it’s naked flesh began to disappear just as clothes bearing the symbol of Levia appeared. The divine cloth wrapped around Frost, fitting it’s body as if a tailor measured and designed the articles of clothing specifically for Frost. No longer the naked flesh, Frost admired the clothes given to him by Levia. The blue scales shimmered, flexed, and hardened as the garments cloaked the body. Brown leather boots and gloves materialized on the legs and arms of Frost, tightening a fit to allow for comfort and protection.

“We’re almost done,” Levia said, “all that’s left is to explain what the Tournament of Champions is.”

“I’m all ears.”

“The Tournament of Champions is a battle tournament featuring Gods and Goddesses to determine which deity can move in rankings. At the very top, we have the Universal Deities. The Universals are the strongest of all Gods and Goddesses. They reign and preside as judges to the Tournament. As champions battle each other, the Universals determine if a Champion and their corresponding Goddess and move up ranks. So for example, Frost, you are my Champion, and the more Champions you defeat, I gain more prestige and value as a Goddess, and move up higher in ranking. Below the Universals are the Celestials. These Gods have power over entire spaces and galaxies. These Gods and Goddesses are incredibly powerful and all of them have Champions that can rival the powers of our next tier in the system, the Planetarians. Are you picking up all of this so far?”

“I think so, but the tournament sounds like we’re just toys to you Gods and Goddesses, like pitting us against each other in deathmatches just for entertainment.”

“If you put it that way, we indeed are. I personally don’t care about these tournaments, and just want to go back to sleep. I just participate because I have to.”

“You can’t just refuse?”

“Nope, not only does the Tournament help determine ranking for deities, it also maintains the peace between Gods. Instead of having constant divine wars between Gods and Goddesses attempting to kill each other, the Universals created the tournament to help settle disputes between deities. Anyways, the Planetarians, as their name suggests, oversee planets, and are below the Celestials. The Planetarians are in control over the Naturals, which are the Gods and Goddess that control all things naturally found on the planet. Below them are the Regionalists. They oversee large areas on the planet, to maintain the peace between the many different races below. Finally there are the Elementalists. Yours truly is an Elementalist. The Elementalist of water to be more specific. I oversee the water and flow in the Moria region!”

“In other words, you’re a weak, pathetic, useless, and lazy Goddess,” Frost commented.

“That’s only because I do not want to ascend the ranks. If my Champion defeats Champions of the other Gods, my Deity Rank will rise higher. If I put my entire effort into it, I would easily become a Universal overnight! You can bet I will! Luckily, I won’t ever need to worry about that. My Champions have never won a single battle! Don’t worry Frost! When you lose, you can just go back to sleep until you get summoned again!”

The Champion turned away from it’s Goddess, ignoring the comments made. It pinched parts of its arm. There was pain. The hands and body that encompassed and made the Champion were real. It was not made from magic. Flesh can be torn and blood can leak from the body. The burden of becoming a Champion certainly loomed over Frost, but the feelings and responsibilities were overshadowed by another feeling that could not be quenched.

“I don’t think I want to go to sleep. I want to see the world below and find answers.”

“What answers do you possibly need to know about?”

“I need to find out who I am. Why did I get chosen to be a Champion? Where did I come from? What is my real name?”

“Just make them up until it becomes real. Many souls have lied frequently; it eventually becomes the truth. What difference does it make?”

“It matters to me, and you’re going to help me.”

“Like you said to me earlier, “No”.”

“You can say “No” as many times as you like, but as your Champion, you’re forced to help me.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Easy, you mentioned the Tournament is to solve conflict between Gods. If a God does not have any conflicts it would mean they would not need to have this Tournament to settle any problems. Deities that have conflicts need these problems resolved. In other words, you Goddess Levia, have some lingering conflicts that need to be resolved!”

“What? No! I don’t have any conflicts because I sleep all day!”

“That’s the problem, you have not resolved any problems because you never bothered trying to. The minute something happens, you brush it to the side and sleep! That’s it, isn’t it? The lazy good for nothing Goddess has mountains of problems that she ignored for years, and was forced into this Tournament because the other Gods are here to collect!”

Frost’s deduction was spot on as it watched Levia shrink back speechlessly.