

It had been several days since the Golgor demon general had stumbled into the war-torn reality of Muspelheim. Angels and demons took up arms against one another, fighting to the last. Yet as he had learned in his time in this reality, the rising of the sun over this world erased all harms. Death in this realm was an illusion, lasting only until the start of the next day. What the Gorgor, Furcas, had once assumed was an endless and bloody war, he began to regard as a sort of sport. No war could be won in a world without death. Everyone here was here because they liked the thrill of the fight, not the thrill of victory.

Furcas however, cared for neither. As he lugged his hopelessly obese body across the scarred landscape, he could only think about how nice it was that this place let him escape from his duties commanding armies back home. All he desired was a lazy, complacent lifestyle. One with servants who would tend to him, and keep his enormous stomach filled at all times. That was the life for him.

He squeezed through a canyon between two towering walls of rock, his tough skin shearing loose gravel from the sides of the cliffs as he forced his way through. He tumbled out the other side with a stifled belch. He appeared to be in a large basin, a crater of sorts that had been blasted into the rock. The earthy floor was mostly flat, and covered in short grass. The population was sparse for what he had seen in this realm so far. Just a couple of angels with beaked faces and bird-like legs were present, and they seemed to be tidying up the crater. They briefly looked up from their work, their singular eyes fixing on Furcas for a moment before returning to picking up stray rocks and tossing them to the sides of the crater.

Furcas shrank from their unsettling gaze, but stood his ground, ready to fight if he had to. Finding that he didn't, he settled himself into a sitting position and used the rock wall to support his back, taking the pressure of his weight off his feet. Furcas yawned and put his arms behind his head, using his fat forearms as pillows against the rock. The purple Rift Keystone bracelet he wore shone beautifully under the light that came from the unnatural blue energy that flowed across the sky at all hours of the day. He looked up at it, watching it swirl and twist like a river, partially obscuring the sun behind it and tinting the world blue.

A shrill screech like from a bird of prey shook the sky, and snapped Furcas from his drowsiness. He'd never heard a sound like that before. It came again, and a shadow crossed the sky, massive enough to cut a hole in the glowing river in the air. The screech sounded once more, and the two smaller angels in the crater looked at one another and nodded, before snapping open their wings and taking flight. Furcas sat up, eyes turned to the sky.

The shadow crossed overhead one more time before falling, diving into the crater. It crashed into the center with a force that shook the ground, making the Golgor's body wobble as well. The figure reared up, long body twisting into a coil. It looked like a cobra made of porcelain and gemstones, adorned with glowing rings of light. Three sets of arms with vicious golden claws extended from its body at regular intervals. As it wound up its body it turned its head, and its gaze caught sight of Furcas. It swung its head low, jaws ajar, giving Furcas an uncomfortably close look at the metallic razors it had for teeth. Mechanisms at its cheeks spun and whirled. The jaws were almost entirely mechanical. As it reared back, Furcas caught a glimpse of his own image, reflected in the huge mirror that made up the serpent's cobra-like hood. It spoke from those robotic jaws, its deep and booming voice reverberating in the crater basin.

"Demon of an unfamiliar realm. What brings you to my resting place?" The language it spoke was foreign. but Furcas somehow understood every word.

"Just passing through. I was planning to rest a while here, since no one seemed ta' be killin' anyone else in this little nook." He paused. "Wait, this is yer place? No wonder those two little'uns took off when you came screechin' in," Furcas mentioned.

"The Affinity? They are my servants, housekeepers if you will. I was once a First Sphere Seraphim, one of the highest in the order of Laguna. The Affinity are Third Sphere, and far below me. I have employed the two of them as my housekeepers here," the ornamented angel explained.

"Ooohh, so yer a general too, is that it? Well, I'll have yah know, where I come from, I'm high rank myself! Why, I've got a whole army back at home!" Furcas got to his feet and crossed his arms over his chest, his grin stretching with pride. The angel narrowed its gaze and twitched its claws.

"A demon army? Do you mean to bring conflict to Paradiso?" Its tone was stern and threatening, and it reared back; a snake ready to strike. Furcas backpedaled over his previous statement as he realized his mistake.

"No no! Not at all! You see, the reason I hopped realms is because I don't like that life. I mean sure, having power is nice, an' so is ordering people around. But if it was up ta' me? I'd just stay here. Right here. No death, no obligations. Only problem is there ain't much in the way of eats, and I do love to eat." He slapped his stomach for emphasis.

"Is that so?" The angel parted its metal jaws in its best approximation of a smile. "What is your name, demon?"

"Furcas. I'm a Golgor. Yours?"

"Eiros, the Glamour. I have a proposition for you, demon." Eiros relaxed his stance, loosening his coils. "If you can eat more than I, then I will believe your words are true. I will allow you to use my roost and housekeepers as you wish, whenever you come to this realm."

"Sounds good so far, except the part where you're a hundred times my size," Furcas pointed out, not amused at all.

"I assure you, I am no cheat! We shall do it according to proportion to body size," Eiros explained.

"Okay, better. What about if I lose then?"

"If you lose? Mmmhh... Then you will be obligated to stay here for a week, and keep me company. Tell me of your people and your armies and your realm."

"That all? Oh, pfftt, easy. You have yourself a deal Eiros. I suppose you've got food for us then? You better have a lot, I won't go down easy!" Furcas boasted.

"Oh, don't worry. Plenty." Eiros stretched himself to the sky, reflecting it in his dazzling mirror. His jaws opened, and that sky-splitting screech rang out, echoing far. Furcas covered his ears.

"Ouch, what was that for?" he asked as his ears rang.

"Inviting some friends for you," Eiros said, his voice calm and cool. "And some old rivals for myself."

"We're not... eating food are we?" Furcas chewed the words in his mouth, mulling over their implications as he spoke them.

“Not at all. I hope that will not be a problem,” Eiros boomed, despite his best efforts to keep his voice soft.

“Me? A problem with eating people? Not a problem at all.” Furcas grinned as angels – the ones he learned were called Affinities – began to descend from the sky and alight on the ground. Eiros slithered to the top of the cliffs that surrounded his crater roost, making room on the floor below for the congregation. The angels stood on one side, crowding around the Golgor and eyeing him suspiciously. They whispered to one another, and he caught snippets of their gossip. They didn’t think he could do it.

The ground below the cliff where Eiros perched lit up with a bloody-red seal, and large demons began to pour forth, all of them larger than the gathered angels, save for Eiros.

“Welcome friends and adversaries alike,” Eiros began. “I would like to thank you all for gathering here today. I know some of you are here for leisure.” He nodded to the angels. “Others, to escape your realm for a time.” The crowd of demons kicked up a cheer. “But, you are all here for the same purpose. A feast! Let me not misinform you. You are here to be the feast, for myself and my guest. But as per the working of the Muspelheim realm, you all shall be returned to life and body by the time the sun rises over this world. If participation does not appeal to you, I encourage you to leave now.”

The crowd shifted, but they all remained. “Excellent! In that case, let us begin. Furcas! You may have the opening meal,” Eiros said, deferring to the demon.

“With pleasure!” Furcas grabbed one of the nearby Affinity, them being conveniently human-sized and thus easy for him to swallow. It didn’t struggle. It merely chirped at him and folded its wings tight to its back. Furcas opened his jaws, his chin pressing down into rolls of neck fat as he stretched it wide and shoved that beaked face right in. It tasted of metal, but was smooth and cool against his tongue. He powered through the unpleasant taste of that metal bird face and got the angel in past its shoulders. The rest of its body was smooth as well, but tasted considerably better, like heavenly chicken. His stomach roared, spurred on by the taste, and he wrapped his massive hands around the Affinity’s small waist. He gave a shove, and a gulp, and the angel vanished without making even the slightest bulge in the Golgor’s stomach. He let out a triumphant belch. “Your turn.”

Eiros gave that open-mouth grin again and shook out its body, rattling all of its adornments as it limbered up for the task ahead. Those metal jaws opened wide, and it lunged down, scooping up a pair of large demons. It tilted its head back and swallowed, making the mirror over its throat bulge. That squirming lump sank down through its body, eventually coming to a stop just above his second pair of arms. It matched belches with Furcas and gave the demon a smug glance.

Furcas snorted and cocked his brow. “Two for one ain’t shit when you’re big as you are!” he hollered as he jabbed a finger towards the smug angelic serpent. “Watch and learn!” The Golgor grabbed up a pair of angels, one in each oversized hand. He opened his jaws as wide as he could and stuffed them in, stretching his cheeks and jaw muscles. He gulped audibly around them, wincing as his throat was strained with the load. Two pairs of shoulders was a lot to handle. He distracted himself from the strain in his esophagus by focusing on the occasional wiggling in his stomach. The Affinity wasn’t putting up a fight by any means, but it occasionally shifted around, making his middle bounce and bulge. He lost himself to that feeling, only

snapping out as he felt a stretch in his gut and a shift in his weight to his front. He hiccuped, having gotten down his two-for-one without even noticing. He held his breath to stop his hiccups, and sneered up at an unamused Eiros.

The serpent clapped his foreclaws together with slow sarcasm. He uncoiled and slid the end of his tail through the crowd, snaring a few of the gathered demons in the loops of his tail. He hoisted them up and dangled them over his jaws, tipping his head back and opening his mouth wide. He dropped them all in at once, filling his jaws and snapping them shut with mechanical speed and precision. He swallowed, sending an obvious bulge down his throat. His hood mirror pushed out further this time, rolling over the top of that bulge of live food. It shifted back into place as that lump moved down into his slender, blue-scaled coils. He scratched at it with his huge golden claws and pressed it down, ushering it to join the smaller swell that sat near his second pair of arms. "Better?"

"Yeah, sure, a little!" Furcas replied. In truth, he was envious of the dextrous tail and spare arms that Eiros possessed. He was determined not to share this fact, and doubly determined to show up the gloating serpent. Doing away with the polite turn-taking, he lumbered into the crowd and grabbed whoever his arms could reach. He crammed angels into his mouth like they were handfuls of snack mix.

Eiros patiently waited for his turn, but soon realized that Furcas had no plans to stop this time. He growled and thrust his head down into the crowd with his mouth open wide. He scooped up as many demons as his jaws could hold as his chin skimmed the dirt floor. Swallowing this mouthful put stress on his throat, and the indulgence and gluttony that such strain represented made him feel a flicker of remorse for staying from his path as a First Sphere Seraphim. He cast the thought aside. There was no such thing as inherently good or inherently evil. He had learned that long ago. He took several swallows to get down his most recent mouthful, and as his stomach stretched further forward, his tail pulled in towards it, shortening his body as it widened.

Down in the basin, Furcas was finding movement difficult. His footsteps fell with more weight and his stomach hit the ground, dragging along it. He was thankful that his targets shuffled toward him for a change, rather than fleeing. His hands and jaws were never left wanting for something to fill them; there were willing angels aplenty. Belches erupted from his jaws between mouthfuls, and the top of his stomach rose to block his vision until he could no longer see the gloating angel that lorded over the basin.

Eiros paused in his gluttony to observe his opponent. He was feeling sluggish in his movements as his snake-like body grew more wide than long. Even though his appetite stayed strong, it was clear that Furcas was outpacing him. He took a moment for a calming breath, and then rolled his massive body down into the crater, pinning angels and demons beneath his girth. All three pairs of his arms grabbed at the available demon delights, and shoveled or tossed them into his jaws, saving him a lot of the effort of moving and slithering about. He reared up just high enough to cast his shadow over Furcas.

With Eiros now so close, Furcas could see his glimmering metallic jaws as they swallowed up demon after demon. He tried to turn in place to get a better look at his competition, but his stomach was too weighted with squirming snacks and it refused to budge.

He grunted and attempted to push his gut out of the way, but it wouldn't flatten far enough. Giving up, he resumed his feasting. The basin was running empty.

Eiros chuckled, trying to keep it soft, but his voice was too large, too booming. "Having trouble with your mobility?"

"Yeah, I am!" Furcas shouted. "And you can still move, so that means I'm winning!"

Eiros was taken aback.

"Nonsense! That's hardly a measure of one's standing in this contest!" His voice filled the crater until it felt crowded.

"Ha! Then what is eh?" Furcas challenged between mouthfuls.

"There is a mathematical formula that can be used to-!"

"Blah blah! You just don't want to admit defeat!" A raucous laugh from Furcas filled Eiros's ears. The angel snarled.

"Defeat? You think this is all I can manage?" His voice shook the air. "This is naught but a drop in the vast ocean of my power!" The wind kicked up, swirling towards the center of the crater. "I will show you what Glamour can do!" The whirlwind grew and swelled. Smaller angels and demons were lifted from their feet. Eiros's voice was thunder on the wind. There was a sudden roar and the twisting wind grew to a full blown tornado.

Furcas dug in his feet and shielded his face with his hands as rocky debris and living creatures soared through the air. Even with his now tremendous weight, he could feel the winds trying to lift him away. His gaze followed the funnel of the twister from the ground to the sky. The top of it opened right into Eiros's mouth, pouring everything it swept up into those ravenous, glittering jaws.

Eiros chomped up everything and everyone that came close to his mouth. His stomach bloated with some of the air that was forced down between bites, but most of his increasing mass was attributable to the buffet of his fellows and foes that he was literally sucking into his stomach. Furcas wouldn't admit that he was impressed, but he was impressed. He'd never seen anything like this before. The power, the gluttony, it was unreal. Unrivaled. He grinned, enjoying the show.

Eiros widened, his body shortening further as it stretched outward, those blue scales pulling tight. His stomach swelled upwards as it spread outwards, until the crest of the spherical bulge pushed against his mirrored cobra hood. The mirror tilted upwards, reflecting more light into his golden mandible, casting a golden glow over the tumultuous crater. Furcas shielded his eyes from the heavenly light, losing track of Eiros's growth as he squinted against the radiance.

Eiros felt resplendent. His powers had been unleashed, he reveled in gluttony unrestrained, and blinding light shone from his body, illuminating his bulbous stomach and making the blue scales glimmer like so many sapphires. His meals began to pile up behind the mirror on his hood, tipping it up more and more and pushing it higher, until it clinked against his lower jaw, the sound of metal tapping glass. His eyes snapped open as his chest hit his chin, and the tornado unraveled, flinging what little remained in the vortex over the top of the basin. All that remained in it was the engorged Furcas, and the bloated Eiros. The angel thundered a belch that nearly cracked the cliffs.

"I ain't never seen anythin' like that before," Furcas began. "That was damn impressive."

Eiros lifted his chin, half in pride, and half because it was poking his now-bloated chest. "Thank you, demon. I admit, I actually am impressed with how much you managed."

"Coulda' managed more, but you ate everything!" Furcas said, his voice a mixture of impressed and insulted.

"Next time I shall plan ahead. Admittedly, I'm not quite at my limit either," Eiros chuckled.

"Next time?" The angel has Furcas's attention.

"Why yes. I will call this one a draw, as neither of us are full yet... But I am very interested in seeing who would have won. Naturally, we will have to have a rematch." Eiros's tone was almost dismissive, but Furcas could tell he was serious.

"Heh! You got yerself a deal," the demon agreed.

"Good. Now despite our previous agreement, I will allow you to stay here a while. I imagine you couldn't leave if you wanted to."

"I can totally, ah... Nah. I can't move an inch," the Golgor admitted.

"As I said. You may rest here. Enjoy your vacation from the warring of your world, Golgor." Eiros did his best to coil up, a difficult feat now that most of his length had been converted to stomach width.

"Thanks Eiros. I'll take you up on that." Furcas watched the bloated snake try to curl itself up before it fell into a deep slumber, a food coma of all things. Furcas decided to follow suit. He leaned into his still squirming stomach and gave it a slap, stilling the movement inside. His hide was tough, but comfortable enough. After all, he lived in it. The demon soon fell asleep to the sounds of the lumbering angel's snores, his mind drifting and dreaming of their future rematch.