

**(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)**

**A/N: The battle against Darkseid continues...**

**-x-X-x-**

The Omega Force has to be the answer. That's the source of Darkseid's power after all. Usurp that, siphon the Dark Tyrant's strength, and they should be able to finish this. Especially when combined with the effect that the artificial white star of this pocket dimension was having on his and his allies biology.

If Lucien could just strip Darkseid of his connection to the Omega Force, or even just lessen it... then maybe something could be done.

The fighting continues at a truly titanic pace. If they had actually done this on Pluto, Lucien doesn't doubt that the dwarf planet would have ceased to exist by this point in time. As things stand, the pocket dimension provides all the room they need to destroy shit in the wake of their attempts at assassinating the Dark God in their midst.

As the others pull Darkseid's attention this way and that, Lucien lunges forward, delivering a haymaker to his enemy's face. At the same time though, he's focusing not on doing physical damage to Darkseid... but rather, sensing what's going on underneath the hood.

One would think, having fully unlocked the secrets of Grail's biology, that Darkseid's own genetics would fall soon after. After all, shouldn't Grail have given Lucien half the 'code' so to speak?

... But no. While they are similar, it's like comparing a child's puzzle to a world-spanning hedge maze. One of them absolutely dwarfs the other by several magnitudes and there's no prize for guessing which.

Even still, Lucien doesn't let that deter him. He keeps working on it, blow by blow, strike by strike. And with the others assisting him in the process, he has

plenty of time to maintain skin contact with the Dark God, even if it feels like the progress he's making is slow as a snail's pace.

They don't have time for him to completely figure out Darkseid's biology. Frankly, it's entirely possible it would take years... decades even to properly unlock such a thing. Obviously they barely have minutes let alone that long. So in the end, Lucien does what he can with what he has. As things grow more and more desperate, he reaches out and grabs Darkseid through a rent that has been torn in one of his armor... and rips as much of the Omega Force away from the Dark Tyrant as he possibly can.

**“GRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!!!”**

Darkseid's responding roar is more furious than ever before as he reels from the act, feeling diminished. For a moment, Lucien feels a surge of elation and excitement even as he senses the connection his and his allies share to the Omega Force growing in response to Darkseid's loss.

It's working. It's *actually working*.

... And then it's not.

**“ENOUGH!”**

Lucien's eyes widen as that sensation of Darkseid being diminished... reverses course just as quickly as it arrived. In an instant, the Dark God's control over the Omega Force is as strong as ever... no, stronger even than that. Suddenly, he feels more powerful than ever before.

That shouldn't be possible. They're splitting the Omega Force eight ways here! Lucien and his six girls on one side, Darkseid on the other. There's no world in which Darkseid should be able to grow more powerful without diminishing any of them in the process, and yet when Lucien reaches out with his senses, he feels no weakening from their end.

What is happening? What-

**“Clever little ants... yet not clever enough. You think to take my power? You think to claim it as your own? Fools, all of you. I Am Darkseid. I Am Omega.”**

Lucien’s eyes widen as Darkseid reaches out... and clenches his hand into a fist. In an instant, it’s as though every last breath of air has been driven from the pocket dimension. Except it’s more than that because really, none of them actually need to breath anymore.

And yet, the pressure that forces Lucien and his allies to his knees is immense, greater than anything he’s ever felt before. Worse still, the artificial white star lighting the pocket dimension begins to stutter... and turn as red as Darkseid’s glowing eyes.

It finally dawns on Lucien what’s happening. Darkseid said it himself. The Dark God IS Omega. And they... they’ve let that power source into themselves. All of them. All because Lucien had connected them to the Omega Force. Connected them... to Darkseid.

“You will bow and submit to Darkseid. And you will serve me as my new vanguard as I conquer not just your world, but every world in the cosmos.”

He’d effectively delivered them all to Darkseid gift-wrapped. The Omega Force was never the way to defeat the Dark Tyrant. It was only ever a trap. Kneeling in a circle around Darkseid, the six women that have come to help Lucien kill a god all have their heads bowed... in submission. The power coursing through them makes them obey.

Lucien... Lucien only has one option left at this point... to end his own life and go back and do it all again. Next time, he won’t give them any connection to the Omega Force. In fact, he’ll strip Grail of her connection so that Darkseid can’t use it to control her like he is now.

He reaches for death, reaches for the ability to end himself and revert back... only to find himself frozen. Not just physically, but in every possible way.

**“Cease.”**

The full weight of Darkseid’s gaze turns to him, those glowing red eyes narrowing in malice.

**“You think to escape into death? Nobody escapes Darkseid.”**

Lucien struggles with all his might even as his body remains absolutely still. This is no longer a contest of physical strength, but rather a fight of wills. And Darkseid’s will was far stronger. Except... Lucien was more than just his material parts. Darkseid’s control over the Omega Force might give him control over Lucien’s thoughts and actions... but it did not give him control over that part of Lucien that had courted Death. It did not give him control over Death herself.

A long time ago, Lucien had bit off more than he could chew with an entity beyond his reckoning. Trigon, Demon Lord. Death had pulled him out of the fire on that one and warned him that if Trigon had gotten his way, Lucien might not have come back.

The same was true now. If Darkseid got his way, then Lucien would not be coming back... not properly. Not if he was compelled to follow Darkseid’s will no matter where he went or what time period he landed in. Even if Darkseid wasn’t preventing him from ending himself... Lucien recognizes now that he can’t afford to anyways.

**“What are you doing? I said CEASE!”**

Under other circumstances, Lucien would have taken some amusement in Darkseid’s confused tone. There was certainly some pride to be found in making the Dark Tyrant of Apokolips sound so utterly baffled. But this was not the time or the place for such things. There was only one choice available to Lucien at this point. Only one option left to him. He starts to pull on his connection with Death. He starts to drag on it, on that strange thing that had made him whatever he was to Death. Her Champion? Her Chosen? Her Soulmate?

Death... answers. Not as herself. Not as the singularly impressive woman that Lucien loved with all his heart. And yet, still she answers. She answers as her most basic components. As the primordial force she is. As the Piece of Infinity she will always be.

Darkseid, Dark God that he is, only wishes he could be akin to Death of the Endless in power. The Omega Force, even as destructive as it was, even as the very essence of entropy... was nevertheless still subordinate to the End Of All Things.

The first thing Lucien does as the sense of Death wraps around him protectively... is rip away his own connection to the Omega Force. Instantly, even with the pocket dimension's artificial star turned red, he's able to rise to his feet, standing tall before Darkseid.

**“You...”**

The Dark God's eyes narrow in thoughtful disbelief, as if Lucien has just become something interesting. Perhaps if he'd had more experience with Death, he would have known to be wary and afraid instead. But an entity like Darkseid did not feel fear... nor even wariness.

And so he does not act in time to stop Lucien from reaching out around them and severing the others' connection to the Omega Force as well. It's simple enough to do with Death at his beck and call. He simply Ends their ability to call upon the Omega Force as a source of power... and in doing so, he Ends Darkseid's ability to reach out and take control of them.

Blackfire, Claire, Tea, Kara, Hippolyta, and Grail all stagger to their feet, shaking their heads and coming out of their momentary stupor. Darkseid stares at them all in wordless silence for a moment before sneering.

**“If you will not serve Darkseid then you will fall before Darkseid.”**

Its not an empty threat either, at least as far as both Darkseid and Lucien's allies are concerned. While Lucien removed the weakness to a red sun that natural

Kryptonians had from his and his allies' biology, the absence of the White Star means they aren't nearly as strong as they were before. And the seven of them were only managing to match Darkseid blow for blow back then.

Now... well, it certainly does seem a little hopeless doesn't it? Except Lucien knows better. He can feel it... how wrong Darkseid is. Because right now, there's only one entity due to fall here. And it's not him or any of his allies.

"No."

Stepping forward, he stands right in front of Darkseid, prompting the Dark God to look at him with nothing but contempt.

**"Your defiance is pitiful. Your end is preordained."**

That brings a smile to Lucien's face.

"Funny you should say that... because from where I'm standing, you just took the words right out of my mouth. Everything ends, Darkseid. Everyone dies. Even you."

Lucien moves in and Darkseid swings, clearly intending to sweep him away with an almost casual backhand. But Lucien... Lucien catches the Dark God's arm. For the first time, true disbelief appears in those glowing red eyes. Darkseid stares at where his arm is held in shock.

After all, at this point even with all his modifications, Lucien should not have the strength to stop the tyrant in his tracks like this. Not with one hand. Not while making it look so contemptuously easy.

He doesn't bother with some final quip or anything like that. Nor does he stop to give Darkseid any more time to consider this impossibility. Instead, Lucien lashes out at Darkseid's wide open chest, slamming his palm into the Dark God... and delivering his End to him in that moment.

Death sings through Lucien's veins and he feels something akin to phantom fingers caress his cheek as Darkseid... falls. There's a brief pause after the strike, but there is no defense, no block, no second chances. Darkseid drops to his knees... and then as Lucien steps to the side, the Dark God falls forward, collapsing to the destroyed ground of the pocket dimension, dead once and for all.

Its over. Lucien stares down at Darkseid's corpse in a bit of a state of disbelief. Sure, they'd come here today to make this happen. Sure, they'd prepared for months right under the noses of the Justice League and everyone else. And sure, this was always the stated goal... but it had always felt a little impossible.

And yet here they are. Darkseid is dead. One of the greatest forces of evil in the entire universe is just... gone.

"We did it... we killed him."

Lucien doesn't even realize those words are his own until one of the others answers him. Stepping forward, Blackfire grins wickedly.

"You killed him, Lucien. The rest of us just wound up standing there and watching."

Blinking, Lucien looks around at them all... before shaking his head, his gaze lingering on Hippolyta for just a second.

"No. You all... without your help, I never could have done this. I never would have succeeded. This was a team effort. We all played a part in this."

He gives Hippolyta a sharp nod of his head, wordlessly telling her that as far as he's concerned, her life debt to him is settled. When Hippolyta nods back in silent agreement, Lucien feels a sense of relief.

Unfortunately... while that takes care of her and most of the others are all too happy... one of them can't help but speak up.

“What did you do there, at the end?”

Grail steps forward, her own red eyes no longer glowing even slightly as she narrows them at Lucien.

“You... you stripped us of the Omega Force. I’ve lived my whole life with it. I can’t feel it now. How did you do that? It shouldn’t be possible. How do you destroy the very essence of destruction itself?”

That... well, Lucien can’t deny that’s a very good question. And looking around the pocket dimension, he sees the others are all curious... even if he doubts any of them would actually help Grail press him on this if he said to just leave it.

Then again... if he can’t trust this lot with his deepest secret, who can he trust? They just fought and killed Darkseid together, after all. Perhaps... perhaps its time that others new about him and his connection to Death.

**-x-X-x-**

**A/N: I know most voted for Lucien to utilize his own connection with Death INSTEAD of trying to use the Omega Force, but in the end I thought going through the Omega Force gambit first and showing how it fails was the best way to get to that Death part. I hope people enjoy this!**

**This is also marking the climax of this story. We are officially in the ‘wind down’ phase for this fic, so consider this your opportunity to let me know what you think should happen in the chapters remaining before the story comes to a complete close!**

**Remember to Vote, leave a Like, and let me know what you think!**