

## Dimensional Descent - Chapter 39

[Bonus chapter for 200 powerstones. Next bonus chapter at 300.]

Leonel collapsed on a bed stuffed with hay. The last month had really been far too tiring. And, to make it worse, for fear of exposing himself to Joan as a person who knew much more than he should, he hadn't practiced [Dimensional Cleanse] at all either. This was on top of the fact that he hadn't eaten his fill even once in these past few days.

That said...

[Leonel Morales]

[Strength: 0.95; Speed: 0.91 (+0.1); Agility: 0.99 (+0.1 – partially nullified); Coordination: 1.05; Stamina: 0.99-1.10 (+0.05 – nullified); Reactions: 1.05; Spirit: 0.30; Force: 0.20]

Due to the fact Leonel was running obscene distances almost everyday, the residual medicinal properties of his dad's smoothies began to eek out more and more, causing his strength, speed, agility and stamina to take leaps forward.

But, this wasn't Leonel's greatest discovery. Since running from battlefield to battlefield was so monotonous, and there wasn't exactly great entertainment when they did rest, Leonel spent much of his time calculating the perfect positions for his next eight Force Nodes.

He came to realize over time that the more he used his ability, the stronger it seemed to become. In fact, the bump in his coordination and reactions was precisely due to this indirect increase. On top of

this, due to this improvement, he found it hard to pin down his stamina with any sort of accuracy anymore, so he left it as a range. PANDA-NÓVEL.COM

Because of his calculative mind, Leonel had the ability to make the movements of his body incredibly efficient. It was for this reason his ability impacted his coordination, and likewise his reactions. However, for the same reasons, it could also improve his stamina, but it varied depending on how much of his calculative abilities he focused on making his movements waste less energy.

By now, Leonel was completely certain of the positions of his next seven Force Nodes. He was only having a bit of trouble pinpointing where the last should be.

“Are you two free?”

The sudden words from a familiar voice at the entrance of his and Aina’s tent caused Leonel to quickly sit up, sending a glance toward Aina who was lying with her back facing to him. She happened to looked toward him at the same time.

The two hadn’t exchanged many words since that day in the carriage. Leonel didn’t exactly know how to feel about that. But, what he did know was that he could trust her.

“Yes, Michael? Did the scouts find something?”

Michael lifted the curtain of their tent, poking his head in with a smile. PANDA NÓVEL

“Nothing like that. Sister just wants to see you two. I’m not sure why, so don’t bury the messenger in questions.”

“Oh!” Leonel perked up, playing the role of excited fanboy he always had. “Right away, then!”

Michael grinned. He had always liked Leonel's attitude. Much of the army found his naiveté to be refreshing. Leonel had always been quite used to being well liked through multiple social circles, so making new friends like this wasn't very difficult.

He and Aina rose from their makeshift beds, following quickly after Michael.

The army was housed in encampments on the outside of Reims, but the King who had traveled from Orleans here, and important officials were on the inside of the city. Leonel was surprised to find that Michael actually led the two of them into Reims itself.

'I guess it makes sense that she would stay inside the city. Charles couldn't allow the primary reason he regained this territory to muddle around with normal soldiers.'

Leonel didn't think much of it and was eventually brought to a mansion. The specifics about it, he was uncertain of. Was she just lounging here? Was it rewarded to her? He didn't know. He could recall the main details of the timeline, but such small matters were long since forgotten by him. p□□d□□□□□□

Michael left without a word, leaving Leonel and Aina to walk into an office area by themselves to find Joan turning around to greet them with a smile on her face.

"Leonel, Aina, it's good to have you here. Have you been treated well?"

Aina had learned to read and react to Leonel given certain clues. It was fine if she was a mute, but not understanding the language would be too suspicious. So, when Leonel nodded, her quick reaction time set in and she too nodded.

"That's good, that's good..."

Joan hesitated for a moment, causing Leonel's heartbeat to immediately slow. Well, it wasn't that his heart really did do this, but rather that he had subconsciously sharpened his reactions, causing even what was fast to be perceived far easier to him.

"I have indeed called you two here for a very important reason." She took a deep breath and sighed. "I've been lying to the two of you for a very long time, for that... I apologize. I know more about our God given abilities than I've told you.

"If you're willing to forgive me, I can take the two of you to meet the Bishop —"

"The Archbishop?" Leonel's eyes lit up like a child, as though already forgiving Joan. "We get to meet him?"

Joan was stunned for a moment before smiling sweetly. "Yes, the Archbishop."

Leonel's supposed ignorance played through well. However, his mind was spinning.

The importance of religious figures in this era couldn't be understated. The difference between a Bishop and an Archbishop was massive. Joan would never make such a mistake. That meant she meant to call out the title Bishop. But who was this Bishop that she was willing to allow Leonel to mistake for the Archbishop?

Was it a deliberate act of blasphemy? Or was she trying to spare his feelings by not calling out his ignorance?

"The Archbishop is our true Godsent messenger. He is the one who leads my path and told me of my destiny. While he is in Reims prepared to crown our liege, I can take the two of you to meet with him.

“I thought I was alone in this world until I met the two of you. If you join our cause, then the bright future we hope for will be in a hand’s grasp. Our names will resound through history.”

‘She seems sincere, she really believes that she was the only one... So the shadows really must be her ability. That makes sense, after all, they did nothing but help the entire way...’

Leonel excitedly nodded. “Of course, of course!”

“Good, then follow me. I will take you there.”

Joan smiled and turned toward a bookshelf. As though straight out of a fantasy novel, she pulled on one of the spines and caused a doorway to open.

“These paths were tunneled under the city so that important religious figures and royals can escape in case of a siege. It’ll be easier to take them than winding through the city for hours.” Joan casually explained.

“Wow! I didn’t know something like this was possible. The Archbishop really must be God’s messenger.”

Joan smiled and led the way, completely missing Leonel’s disappointed gaze as the bookshelf clicked closed behind them.

PANDA-NOVEL He had said it himself before. Sometimes over explaining revealed much more about the truth you wanted to hide. However, somewhat incredulously, he was certain that Joan meant them no harm.

If she really believed she wasn’t harming them, then who was this Bishop? Where was she leading them? And which entity could create such a large network of underground tunnels in this era?

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‘She’s gone in a circle six times already... She really takes me for a fool...’

Leonel gazed toward Joan’s slender back.

In reality, maybe it wasn’t Joan’s fault. Leonel’s calculative abilities were too sharp and he hadn’t revealed anything about his true powers just yet.

However, where she was at fault was in the fact that though Leonel portrayed himself as innocent and somewhat ignorant, he never pretended to be stupid. This Joan was looking down on him too much. Leonel was certain that he would see something wrong with her actions even without his abilities.

The tug of war in Leonel’s mind raged on. On the one hand, he truly couldn’t bring himself to see her as an enemy. But, another side of him was constantly hiding the most important aspects of himself as though instinctually.

Leonel felt that his ability was somewhat tempering his more emotional side, and he decided that he didn’t particularly dislike that fact. But, he still needed to make a decision..PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Should he continue to follow Joan? Or... Should he steel himself and kill her here?

Without Joan, completing the hidden quest would be next to impossible. The morale of the Frenchmen was almost entirely reliant on her. And Charles wasn’t eager to attack Paris to begin with.

However, a hidden quest was ultimately a hidden quest. They could leave this place without completing it. Though, Leonel wasn’t exactly sure of the ramifications for doing so.

It had to be said that though this was structured like a game, Leonel was keenly aware that it wasn't. The 'side', 'main' and 'hidden' quests all had their own purpose. Their ultimate task was to deal with the anomaly in the timeline and save the present from being eaten away by it. How important completing the hidden quest was to that end... Leonel didn't know.

He could only make decisions based on the information he had. And, according to Aina, this Sub-Dimensional Zone might very well be a Unique Zone. In such a case, with so many potential variables, the quicker they could get out... the better. PANDA NOVEL

Leonel's jaw set. This was probably the first real test his new morals faced. Was his conscience really fine with taking on this burden? Was he really okay with taking the life of a woman he had dined with? Shared life and death with? Exchanged laughs with?

'... No. I'm not okay with it...'

Leonel made a decision. The relationship he had built with her, shallow as it might be, warranted Leonel following to the end of this path. If danger lied at the end, Joan would be his enemy. It was as simple as that.

It was a naive decision, a foolish one even. The smartest thing to do was to take out the spear he had used Aina's special pockets to help hide and stab her heart through her back at this very instance.

If he did this, he and Aina's lives would be guaranteed. Whether they succeeded or failed in recapturing Paris, they would be able to leave this place. But... He didn't. p□□d□□□□□□

"We're here."

Joan stopped at a shorter than normal latched wooden door. It had almost been impossible to see in the shadows, one might easily miss it if wandering around randomly... almost like how hidden Joan's

smile was in this darkness. Leonel could only barely make out the whites of her teeth and the blues of her eyes even with his sharp senses.

“I cannot follow you in, the B — Archbishop has very strict rules. Even I am not allowed to see him freely. Take hold of this opportunity well, it could change your life.”

Joan didn't wait after unlatching the door for Leonel and Aina, bowing slightly to them almost out of an odd habit that didn't seem to fit the situation. Then, sidestepping to go around them, she aimed to leave.

“... I hope I'm wrong.”

Leonel's words were spoken in a striking English. The change was so jarring that Joan froze. She had only just brought her shoulders level with Leonel's, but she didn't dare to turn and face him despite the fact his cheek was barely a meter from her own.

That tone... It held a level of command and conviction to it that Joan couldn't overlap with the Leonel she had come to know.

In her opinion, Leonel was almost perfect in every aspect. His abilities, his loving and caring demeanor, he was even handsome. His only flaw was that he was a bit simple, to put it nicely.

To say it plainly... she liked him far more than she liked Charles.

However, the moment his words entered her ears, despite the fact she couldn't understand what they meant, she felt a sense of loss she couldn't explain. For a long while, she wasn't even certain if she had simply misheard or imagined it all. By the time the beating of her heart had stopped, the latched wooden door had opened and closed.

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Leonel and Aina appeared in what seemed like a stone-built underground sewer system. There were many semi-circular arches along the sides, branching out into several other tunnels with winding paths of their own. But, there was a distinct lack of the horrid smell or dampness one would expect.

In fact, it was oddly spotless.

If the branching archways were ignored, the corridor was at least 20 meters wide. About 200 meters ahead, there was a dead end. Its wall seemed impossibly high, the kind of structure that had no business being underground. But, there it was.

PANDA-NOVEL Still, even with this being the case, there was something else that pulled Leonel's attention away. It was a simple wooden desk. It had three draws attached to its two legs on the right side, and two bare legs on the left. It wasn't even two meters across and had nothing but a single candle lighting its entire surface.

Before this desk, a gray-haired old man wearing worn gray robes sat, his back to them, curving as though he was too worn to sit straight.

"So you've come... Tell me, I've always been curious. What is the world like a thousand years from now?"