

Descent 1181

Chapter 1181 odd Arena

Leonel woke up and stretched.

With light steps, he hopped out of bed and began his revamped flexibility routine. This version was much less embarrassing than the former, but Leonel still preferred to do it alone.

The Luxnix were natural healers, so the techniques they had in this regard were extensive and well thought out. Compared to the techniques of Valiant Heart Mountain, they were by far and away better. They couldn't even be considered to be in the same league.

Leonel wanted to focus on not just flexibility, but power in his flexibility. The importance of that would be his ability to apply strength in positions most could not.

For example, in a deep squat where ones bottom nearly touched the ground. Most couldn't even get into such a position to begin with, at least not without their heels coming off of the ground. But, even those that could reach such a position, how much weight could they push?

Depending on the depth of a squat, the max weight that could be pushed varied along a predictable slope. What Leonel wanted to was eliminate this weakness as much as he could, and to do so with every similar type of movement as well.

To perfectly fuse flexibility and power, that was his ultimate goal and he was well on his way.

Leonel jumped to his feet and felt like a spring was coiled within his body. His joints felt good, his ligaments and tendons felt smooth, and his muscles felt explosive. Better yet, his mind was in its prime. Every breath of air felt fresh and beautiful.

'Time to go.'

Leonel slipped on a pair of sweatpants and a crisp T-shirt. He no longer bothered with shoes these days as his body was already stronger than any shoe sole to begin with. On top of that, using his own two feet not only made him more sensitive to certain changes, but Leonel also felt more flexible in his movements.

He smiled lightly to himself, running his fingers through his pale violet hair.

'Today should be fun.'

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The young geniuses of Earth, though they had mostly failed in the first day, still came out to support in full force during the second day. Not only were they here in solidarity, but they also wanted to see the true extent of prowess the geniuses of the Sector had to offer. Like this, they would know exactly how much further they had to go.

The boys seemed intent on watching Leonel from time to time, almost as if to check if he was truly okay. None of them knew what happened at the Viola estate a few days prior, but they believed that Aina had likely gotten married.

Still, Leonel continued to act the same way he always had. He laughed and joked with the others as though this matter truly had nothing to do with him. This allowed them and Leonel's grandmother to sigh a breath of relief.

There were many people who would bloviate and draw a line on their self worth. But, when push came to shove, they would still allow others to steam roll over them. At least for now, it seemed that Leonel had not regretted his decision and could still function happily.

What they didn't notice, though, was that Leonel had raised an internal eyebrow upward.

Due to his plan to deal with Aina's father, Leonel had split much of his attention to focus on the arena and its people. He not only needed to locate him, but he also needed to find the opportune moment to act.

Miel hadn't been among the Viola family members previously, so Leonel was effectively scanning the whole arena for someone who should match his description. Leonel was certain that he would have red hair and eyes. In addition, he should have an energy signature similar to that of the other Brazingers he had met.

But, what Leonel didn't expect was the oddity of the arena.

For one, there were far too many people on high alert as though they were waiting for the other foot to drop. They were either whispering amongst themselves, looking toward the entrances, or even muttering to themselves.

Secondly, the Montex family region seemed to have several individuals walking on pins and needles. Many of them had nervous or fidgeting expressions that only calmed after they reached the arena. But, even then, the elders all seemed to have heavy looks on their faces.

And lastly... the Viola family region which should have been filled to the brim was decidedly... empty?

Leonel narrowed his eyes. It couldn't have been more obvious to him that something big had happened. There was no way that the Viola would miss such an opportunity. And, considering the relaxed air and smiles around the Luxnix family, he had a guess as to what might have happened as well.

'A grand event like a wedding is indeed a good chance to catch a family of such great stature off guard. The Luxnix have been biding their time for three generations so maybe they thought this was the perfect opportunity.

'But what does this mean for Aina's father? He was their Vassal, so he probably had to fight as well. If he died, did the tablet fall into the hands of the Luxnix?'

This was possible, probable, even. If it was true, it would make things a lot more complicated. Rather than defeating one person, he would have to deal with a whole family, all while trying to outpace what growth they'd have with a tablet. That would be a tall mountain to climb.

Leonel had hardly finished this thought when his Internal Sight flickered once more. His brows couldn't help but furrow in slight confusion.

Aina, Savahn, Yuri and Miel were right there, seated together along with the commoner ranks. The only difference was that all four were wearing masks.

'Did they manage to escape? Never mind, this is a good thi—'

Leonel's pupils constricted.

Aina who had been focused on the arena, her hands gripped together, suddenly snapped her head in the direction of Earth's people. Leonel's back was facing her as he didn't need to look with his eyes to use his Internal Sight. But, that didn't stop her from doing so at all.

'She... sensed my Internal Sight?'

Leonel didn't get a chance to process this before Orinik flickered and appeared. He clearly had no intention of waiting for the Viola.

"The rules have already been explained. Day two will be a round robin style tournament. Your performance will be vetted to decide upon the third and final day. The billboard will decide your groups."

The flickering of the board began. There were only 300 individuals who made it past the first day and each round robin group would have 20 individuals. It also seemed that due to the fact these groups were smaller this time, all 15 groups would be going at the same time.

Leonel looked up to spot his number, only for his eyes to narrow even further.

Though there were no names, Leonel's memory was simply too good. Of the 300 participating, he knew the numbers of them all. Even if he didn't, he could recognize the energy signature of the Force that made up their numbers...

In his group...

1 – Leonel Morales

2 – Higli Montex

...

7 – Isac Arundo

...

13 – Rychard Viola

...

17 – Syllar Luxnix

...

20 – Aina Brazinger.

Chapter 1182 Prey

Leonel didn't spend very long looking at the billboard of motes of light. As easily as he had memorized the numbers of everyone, he had also memorized his own group just as quickly. Instead, his mind was still spinning.

Before lifting her curse, Aina's mind was the weakest part of her by far. After she accidentally absorbed his blood during a particularly... rough session, they stumbled upon a cure for her curse. Back then, Aina had chosen to keep a small piece of her curse with her because it was useful for her training. But, by then, everything was already perfectly under control.

Leonel remembered that her mental coercion was so powerful back then that it not only affected him, but she found it difficult to control as well. With such powerful suggestion, even if Aina had been an ugly woman, there would have been lines of men wrapping around several planets waiting to do her bidding. When such mental coercion was fused with her top tier genetics... Well, the results spoke for themselves.

It was actually thanks to Aina that Leonel grasped how to use his King's Might so quickly. That sort of coercive ability on the world was something that he had gotten a front row seat to everyday until Aina finally learned how to control it.

But, even then, the change hadn't been to the point where Aina had overtaken Leonel in matters of the mind. After all, Leonel was at the Peak of the Fifth Dimension in these matters. In fact, he was more accurately at a Pseudo Sixth Dimensional state thanks to awakening his Wisdom Branch so early.

For Aina to be able to sense his Internal Sight so easily...

In order to remain as stealthy as possible, Leonel had chosen to strip his Internal Sight of much of its strength. The reason why he could only tell that people were whispering amongst themselves and muttering, but he couldn't hear exactly what they were saying, was because he had stripped his Internal Sight of that ability to make it less obvious. And yet, she had still sensed it.

Of course, now Aina was well into the Fifth Dimension, the gap between his mind and hers then, versus it now was much smaller. But still...

'This makes things more complicated, but it isn't impossible. She reacted, but her father didn't, that means that her mental coercion and strong mind aren't a shared strength of their Lineage Factor, so it's still possible. In that case, isn't there a perfect opportunity? I'll just wait until she's fighting a battle to make a move...'

"Aina? Is something wrong?"

Savahn's voice snapped Aina awake.

"Hm? No, it's nothing."

"I hope my group isn't too hard," Savahn laughed self-deprecatingly. "They really made it hard with these numbers, I have no way of knowing who I'm matching up against."

Aina smiled. "You're very strong. I think you'll do great."

Aina didn't need to lie, Savahn was, indeed, very powerful. Though far weaker than herself, Savahn was still a talent of Earth. After so long on a Sixth Dimensional world, the amount of potential she had unearthed was astounding.

Plus, Savahn had a great amount of battle prowess because she had already become used to surviving on her own. Aina was very confident in her friend.

...

The billboard flickered once more. This time, choosing the first set of matches. A total of 30 numbers lit up, preparing the crowd for 15 matches at once.

'Oh? Seems like it's my turn already.' Leonel thought to himself.

"I'll be back." He said with a smile.

Leonel's flickered, a small circle of dust being left where he once stood. When he appeared again, he was already on the stage.

BANG!

The stage before Leonel quaked, a heavy set young man landing before him. The stone threatened to crack and it took several moments before the stage itself ceased to move. Anyone else might have directly fallen from the impact, but Leonel's body simply swayed from side to side as though an expertly engineered creation unmoved by natural disasters.

BANG! BANG!

A twin pair of aces slammed against the ground, the low growl of the young man matching the sudden eruption of cheers.

He had entered a state of battle the moment he landed. Like many others, he saw this as an opportunity of a lifetime, one that he had no intention of squandering. He would make sure he squeezed everything he had out of his body.

He wasn't from a family like the Montex, Viola or Luxnix. He wasn't even from a family a step below them like the Sage or the Arundo. However, he had still managed to claw his way here to the second day and he would make his every breath count.

Seeing Leonel's nonchalance, he couldn't help but be disgusted, but it didn't take him off his focus in the slightest. In fact, it only made him more focused, his Force rising up like a tide, steadily flooding throughout his body and crashing against the barriers he himself put up.

He rose up his twin maces, unleashing a mighty roar into the skies before exploding forth.

BANG!

Leonel didn't seem to notice the movement of the young heavy-set man before him. Instead, his head tilted to the side slowly, feeling a strong aura to his left.

Myghell stood in abject silence, his eyes closed and his long hair fluttering in the wind. He seemed completely separate from everything around him, displaced from the world and higher than even the skies above their head.

Leonel smiled. No, it might very well be more accurate to say that he grinned.

The way his head tilted, the way his hands rested in his pockets, even down to the way the dancing wind pressed his clothing to his toned torso and how the shadows outlined his handsome features. It seemed that even with Myghell's disregard and calm, Leonel was a Demon that had found his prey.

Chapter 1183 Trash Like You

Hughoc charged forward like a raging bull. The air formed a semi spherical curtain around him, his speed and mass so disproportionate that sparks flew in the air.

To his back, his maces followed, sparking as they clashed with the wind.

In the blink of an eye, he appeared before Leonel, his shoulder swinging as though it was nothing more than a lever. The flexibility was obscene and the power behind it was even more so.

At that moment, Leonel's gaze shifted from Myghell back to Hughoc. His gaze was frighteningly cold and his body was completely unmoving. However, if one ignored the commotion around him and paid attention to the ground beneath his feet, it would be possible to see his toes hooking downward with such force that ten holes surrounded by spiderweb thin cracks had appeared.

The deepest and most important things to Leonel were Respect and Persistence. Even if he felt his opponent was far weaker than him, he would give them their due respect. Myghell was one matter, a matter he would deal with in due time. However, Hughoc was a different matter entirely.

Leonel's entire demeanor changed in a matter of a fraction of a moment. The last three meters between himself and Hughoc happened within the blink of an eye to everyone else. But, to him, everything had slowed so considerably that he could see the fierce twinkling light in his opponent's eyes, he could see the sizzling heat of the swinging mace as it scorched through the atmosphere as though a falling meteor, and he could see the steady drum of determination that reverberated through Hughoc's heart.

The mace appeared right above Leonel's head, its leading spike barely half a foot from connecting.

It was then that Leonel moved.

His right foot swiveled backward in a quarter circle, shifting his body to the side and allowing the mace to whiz right by him.

The harsh whistling was so grating on the ears that a lesser person with a weaker body might have felt their ears burst. But, Leonel had already reacted.

His anchor foot remained down, his right foot moving again and lifting into the air, stepping down with a vicious momentum. The descent of Leonel's sole made the previous meteoric assault of Hughoc's mace seem like nothing more than child's play.

There was something about the timing of Leonel's movements that felt incomparably smooth, something about the ease and conservation of energy that seem especially beautiful. He was like a well oiled machine, using only as much as he needed and nothing more.

BANG!

The polearm of the mace met Leonel's stomp. The instance was so perfectly timed that the mace had just crashed into the stage's stone platform. The result was Leonel's strength fusing with Hughoc's own, causing the latter's expression to change.

Hughoc felt his wrist nearly break, the skin of his fingers and palm suddenly experiencing so much pressure that that they ripped free from his muscle and bone, sending a shocking pain to his brain so

severe that he froze for just a moment. The result was him missing a counter opportunity with his second mace even as he lost his grip on the first, his hand turning into a bloody mess.

BANG!

The stage imploded, a cloud of dust, rock and bits of stone rising into the air. But, that only hid the muffled bang that happened an instant afterward.

The crowd was stunned to find Hughoc's body flying out faster than it had come rampaging in. He shot out of the plume of debris so quickly that it became immediately obvious that he had lost consciousness.

The steel metal plate he wore on his chest was completely crumpled, a hole the size of a fist becoming its new centerpiece.

Hughoc crashed outside of the arena, his mouth violently erupting with a pillar of blood. There was no doubt who had won the battle. But, by this point, Myghell was already stepping off of his stage, his opponent standing frozen in place.

For a long while, the young woman didn't move, her expression staring out into blank space.

"Moxxi!"

It was unknown who had called out this name, but it became like a trigger for a chain reaction. The young woman's body crumbled piece by piece, her expression becoming one of helplessness and sadness in her final moments.

It felt as though she wanted to ask 'why did you have to kill me?'. But, whether because she didn't have the strength to do so, or realized there wasn't much of a point, she reserved the last of her strength to die with dignity.

Her face wilted and collapsed into a pile of ash, fluttering into the wind.

Leonel watched this with silence. He too could have killed his opponent easily. It was only a matter of using a little bit more force or a slight manipulation of his Force. He hadn't done so because he didn't see the point.

When he fought large groups of people, killing as a deterrent and to ensure the safety of his life was one matter. He had learned to accept that this was necessary and began to live with the result. However, in a one on one battle where there were no variables to account for outside of the man right before him, not to mention the fact they didn't have a grudge... He couldn't help but think...

Why?

Were lives really so worthless? Did they not mean anything? Even if they couldn't defeat you, couldn't they have still fought for their dreams against others? And even if they couldn't, so what? Were they worthless because they happened to be born with less talent than others? Because they happened to have weaker backers? Because luck hadn't shined down on them the same way?

Who could make such decisions? Who had the right to be the arbitrator of who lived and who died?

"Is this what you've been doing with my power?"

Leonel's voice seemed to carry a mysterious strength with it, so much so that there wasn't a single person who couldn't hear it.

"In that case I'll be sure to take it back. Trash like you is unworthy of having it."

Myghell's steps froze.

Chapter 1184 Said Nothing

Myghell's head turned, his golden gaze meeting Leonel's pale violet irises.

For a moment, the world turned still, a hollow clash reverberating before what sounded like the roar of dragons and the cry of phoenixes resonated through the air. Though, it was difficult to tell if this was truly what was happening, or if it was simply an illusion created by the thumping hearts of those spectating.

It felt as though the other still ongoing battles were meaningless, as though what remained of the Selection had suddenly become a poor attempt at extending vacant, vacuous entertainment when the true root of what they wanted to see was already right before them.

Leonel might have still stood on his stage while Myghell had already stepped down from his own. And yet, their gazes still somehow felt level.

A thick violet aura hung around Leonel, a dense golden fog hanging around Myghell.

The trembling of Planet Luxnix itself seemed to shock people awake from their stupor, their grips on the armrests of their chairs and the erratic beating of their arms suddenly jumping forward several levels in strength.

Then, it all vanished at once. The two looked away almost simultaneously, Leonel stepping down from his stage and walking toward Earth's geniuses while Myghell walked toward the Luxnix.

At their closest, their shoulders practically brushed against one another. But, by their reactions, one would have never guessed such a thing. If one had been entirely focused on their expressions, they might as well have been worlds away from one another.

The elders of the Luxnix watched on with narrowed gazes.

None of them understood the nuance of Leonel's views. Many of them believed that Leonel would have targeted Myghell one way or another. And now, they felt that their guesses had only been affirmed.

Even to this point, they didn't have a firm understanding of Leonel's strength. And, truth be told, they had no idea that Leonel had already regrown his Innate Node.

If regrowing Innate Nodes was so easy, why would stealing them be such a large deal? If the matter was so simple, those with Innate Nodes would probably be reared like farm animals, being 'harvested' every so often.

Unfortunately, Leonel's lack of understanding when it came to the Dimensional Verse was rearing its ugly head once again. If news that his father could regrow Innate Nodes came out, who knew what kind of commotion it would cause?

To the current Leonel, he assumed that it was possible, it was just that it took a lot of time. After all, it took him 20+ years of drinking that vomit smoothie to instigate the regrowth of his Innate Node. To him, it was just a tedious process...

The truth of the matter was that Leonel's father had joined the government of the Ascension Empire, entering their research branches, to personally create a method of healing his son by fusing his knowledge of the Dimensional Verse with Earth's brand of technology.

It could only be said that Leonel's father was a genius that appeared once in several hundred generations. It was unknown if even Leonel could ever reach the level his father had, this was how exaggerated this matter was.

Of course, even Velasco miscalculated sometimes. How could he think that his son would be so reckless as to try to form a Tenth Node?

According to Velasco's original intention, upon breaking into the Sixth Dimension using the God Path, Leonel's Innate Node would naturally begin to regrow itself. But, it had appeared in the Third Dimension, far too early.

This aside, the residual Scarlet Star Force that had leaked from Leonel during his breakthrough into Tier 3 was explained away by the elders with a myriad of different hypotheses. This went to show just how far the idea of regrowing an Innate Node was from their minds.

Now that they heard Leonel's words, they all believed that Leonel wanted to take his Innate Node back, something that left their brows furrowed and their gazes cold. But, when they realized that Leonel had just antagonized Myghell when the latter had cared little for him before, and how Leonel was merely at Tier 3 while Myghell could step into the Sixth Dimension whenever he wanted, they relaxed their murderous intentions.

There was no need to antagonize the Void Palace when this matter would be easily dealt with by Myghell.

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Leonel returned to sit by his grandmother's side with a smile on his face. It was as though what had happened previously hadn't occurred at all.

"Little Leo, you need to be careful. Scarlet Star Force is very dangerous. It's one of the only Forces I know that can cause damage to higher Dimensional beings even in a lower Dimensional state. And if it's at the same level... I don't know if there's a defense that can stop it if it's not constructed by a Force on the same or near the same level..."

Leonel blinked. "You don't have to worry, grandmother. I know. I actually don't feel much danger from him at all. If anything, Aina is stronger than him."

Roesia's brow furrowed. Her senses were sharper than Leonel's and her Internal Sight was far stronger. She was absolutely certain that Myghell was still stronger than Aina was. So, why would he say something so reckless? Her grandson didn't seem like the type to mindlessly boast.

She opened her mouth to say something else, but in the end she just sighed. She was still only just beginning to form her relationship with Leonel, she felt like she was walking on eggshells not because she was scared of her grandson, but because she was afraid to say something that overstepped her bounds.

She shook her head and made a decision. If Leonel was really in danger fighting Myghell, even if it meant offending the Void Palace, she would still move. She would rather lose her life than allow any harm to come to her grandson.

The battles raged on and Arnold and Milan eventually got their turns. As one might expect, they didn't perform astoundingly, but they didn't perform poorly either, each winning about 30-40% of their matchups.

Since performance was based on evaluations and not raw numbers during the second day, they might get a pass due to their low strength.

Of course, Elthor, Karolus and Noah performed even better than this.

Soon, it was Aina's turn to step onto the arena once again.

Leonel's gaze sharpened. 'Let's hope this works.'

Numerous small crystalline spiders formed on his palm.

Roesia raised an eyebrow, but said nothing in the end.

Chapter 1185 Fan Clubs

Despite wearing a mask, Aina seemed to have become the center of attention once more. Though, this time, this only seemed to be in one portion due to her beauty.

While her face might have been covered, there was simply no mistaking that enormous ax and figure that seemed to attract so many gazes like a magnet. It didn't take much time at all for Aina's own fan club to come out in full swing, their loud cheers rocking the stadium.

In truth, several such fan clubs had crept up. Even Elthor had his own. Though, maybe this wasn't so surprising since he did the devilish handsome archetype wonders. His horns only made him feel more exotic and made even more women swoon.

Among the fan clubs, though, Aina's and Myghell's could be said to be the largest. Elthor was more like a niche specific to a certain population of unabashed degenerates and furies. As for Leonel, he was probably a close second to Aina and Myghell.

Leonel never really considered it before because he had spent his whole life, practically, chasing after just a single woman, but he was quite handsome in his own right. Unfortunately, his style of dress docked him a few points, and his unknown background docked him a few more.

If Leonel dressed in expertly tailored robes like Myghell and the other geniuses did, not to mention making his Morales family origins public information, he would probably speed by the latter with ease. But, he was quite comfortable where he was at.

Unless it was a cool uniform, he wouldn't compromise his own comfort to wear it. How ridiculous.

Funny enough, Aina got the opposite reception.

Though Aina and Leonel were opposites in a lot of respects, when it came to their casual form of dress, they were in complete lockstep. Aina put functionality over everything else, and Leonel placed his comfort above everything else. Something like fashion wasn't at the forefront of either of their minds.

But, because Leonel was a man, his style was seen as lazy as opposed to Aina who just received a more exotic label that made her 'stand out' from 'other girls'.

Her armor not only covered her from head to toe, something so shocking to see on a woman that it was practically its own fallacy, but every piece of it had its own purpose. Aina's fan club couldn't help but praise her modesty and she cared more about her battle prowess than how good she looked.

Of course, there was one other reason Aina's fan club was so passionate. They had all learned that she was still single and hadn't gotten married. The women were excited for her, weaving stories about how she had been forced into her circumstances even without knowing the truth. Of course, Myghell became involved in these fanciful tales, becoming the Prince Charming that saved the Princess from her shackles like a gentlemen should.

As for the men, they felt like there was still a chance for them, furiously rebutting the lovesick tales of the women.

The ultimate result were deafening cheers, clapping hands and stomping feet that threatened to bring the whole arena down.

Leonel, though, was completely unlike everyone else. The moment Aina had moved, he had become completely focused on his task, the small little crystalline spiders on his palms springing into action.

Leonel followed them as they rushed through the arena, his mind completely focused. It would take a large expenditure to have them run so far from him, especially due to their small size. But, he had no other choice in the matter.

He couldn't afford to use any other means because it might very well alert others. If there were spatial fluctuations and it was picked up by the members of the Void Palace, they might assume the worst and think Leonel to be cheating.

Though it would be quite obvious after an investigation that he wasn't, he preferred to not have to deal with such a difficulty at all.

From start to end, Leonel didn't really think about the morality of what he was doing, mostly because he didn't believe that there was anything wrong with it. The only way one could see something wrong was if he had a relationship with Aina's father in some way, but considering that Leonel had accepted that he and Aina would never be together, he didn't see things like that at all.

As far as Leonel was concerned, Aina's father was no different from a stranger to him.

Now, an argument could be made that it was unethical to steal something from someone who hadn't done you any wrong, and that was a fair point. But, this was a hit on his own morality that Leonel was willing to take.

There were certain tough decisions that Leonel knew he would have to make if he wanted to reach his goals. When he chose to resurrect Elthor instead of his closest friend in those years, Rollan, he had already made one such sacrifice. And he knew well that there would be many others he would have to make...

The spiders scurried through the arena. Leonel knew that he was on a time crunch, Aina wasn't fighting a person she would have to try very hard against. It would likely only last a single exchange.

However, he had timed things well. He began moving the instant Aina's name blinked. With everything being within his calculations, he should make it.

The spiders cut the distance.

100 meters... 50 meters... 20 meters...

The gap closed rapidly, Leonel's expression turning a bit pale. The distance between them was at least a kilometer to begin with. But, with the size of the spiders, it felt like a hundred times that.

'We made it.'

Aina's battle was already over, another resounding victory for her. She made her way back quickly, but it was already too late.

The spiders closed down the last meter distance between them and Miel, ready to pounce onto his spatial ring and fuse with it.

However, right at that moment, something Leonel had never expected occurred.

Yuri snapped her head in the direction of the spiders, her gaze glowing with a dangerous light. Before Leonel could react, a vast pressure descended, shattering the three spiders into motes of light.

Leonel slowly opened his eyes, his expression somewhat pale and his pupils constricted.

What was that?

Chapter 1186 Line of Thought

Leonel took a deep breath, surging tides of Force coming in from all directions to replenish his stamina. Thanks to his Stars, even though Leonel couldn't make use of the golden scaled koi fish without breaking the rules, Leonel's personal ability to replenish stamina was exceptional. It would at most take him a few dozen minutes to fully recover.

Still, his mind was wondering elsewhere as the battles raged on.

He hadn't expected that after he circumvented the problem of Aina, that he would run into another stone wall.

The problem of the spiders being destroyed wasn't actually much of an issue. They were just beast constructs, their death wouldn't harm Leonel in any way. But, in that moment, Leonel's own Internal Strength had almost been harmed. Had he not been fast enough, not only would Yuri's Internal Sight have damaged his own, but she would have also been able to trace those spiders back to him.

Leonel's brow couldn't help but furrow before he leaned back and sighed.

The Dimensional Verse was much larger than he gave it credit for. Even after so many years, it was still giving him surprises. He had originally thought that no one would be able to match his Internal Sight, especially after he matched his innate talent with the manipulation techniques of the Luxnix. But now, he had been slapped in the face not just once thanks to Aina, but twice thanks to Yuri.

As time went on, the advantage that Leonel had gained from his Wisdom Branche's First Awakening would only become less and less obvious. He had originally been leaps and bounds beyond anyone else, having Fifth Dimensional boundaries in the Third Dimension. But now, everyone was in the Fifth Dimension, he couldn't expect to continue with the same advantages. Or... He would have to forge new advantages for himself.

'I need to step into the Third Awakening of the Wisdom Branch soon...' Leonel thought to himself.

This was the first time Leonel actively wanted his Luxnix Lineage Factor to progress faster. In the past, it had always come naturally. But after these events, he realized that maybe just his own talent wasn't enough anymore.

As for the matters with Yuri, after calming himself from the initial shock, Leonel wasn't too surprised.

Aina had never told him about Yuri's past, but she had told him that she wasn't human. In addition, he knew that Yuri's Telekinesis Ability, the very same ability Raylion had, wasn't actually an ability at all. Rather, it was the innate skill of her race of people.

Leonel didn't know whether Aina didn't want to tell him what race Yuri was a part of, or if she simply didn't know, but the truth didn't matter. It was likely just another example of her not trusting him while he entrusted everything to her. Regardless, he was no longer emotional about it.

All that mattered was that Yuri was maybe even more troublesome than Aina in this regard thanks to her origins. And, now that he had failed once, they would all be on guard.

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"Yuri? What's wrong?" Miel frowned, wincing slightly. His injuries still hadn't fully healed, but he had insisted on being here. How could he miss such a thing? "You unleashed a lot more of your power than you normally do, I told you to be careful with that. Until you make it to the Void Palace, you can't let others know of your origins. And even then, you have to be careful with who you can trust."

Originally, Miel was going to send Yuri to the Void Palace along with Aina as a maid servant. With how many noble men and women were allowed entry, some were given exceptions to bring along one person in such a capacity.

But, now that the quotas had expanded, Yuri could enter on her own, making things a lot easier.

"I know, adoptive father. But, someone just targeted you." Yuri's frown deepened.

Her adoptive father had always made her keep a very low profile for her own safety. A large part of the reason she felt so broken up about Aina's wedding was because she felt she was being forced to choose between her own safety and her sister's happiness.

That was right... Yuri felt like she could have saved Aina that day. Whether that was because of an overinflated sense of confidence, or reality... Maybe only she and Miel knew the answer to that.

"Targeted me?"

Yuri sighed. It wasn't that Miel's mind was weaker than them, it was rather that using the Brazinger family Lineage Factor placed a lot of strain on the mind. After going all out just a day before, Miel's Soul Force was fragmented and injured. How could he sense the danger as easily?

"Yes. They were three beast constructs. I tried to track the person, but they retreated too quickly. But, from what it looks like, it's the Luxnix family technique."

Miel's brow raised before he sighed. "... Nothing in this world comes for free."

Yuri felt deflated.

The Luxnix had swooped in and saved Aina that day, but they hadn't asked for anything in return. Originally, she had held the hope that maybe this was because Aina was never the target and that the wedding was just a good chance to deal with the Viola, but this attempt seemed to spit in the face of that.

Could their goal have been more complex than the fall of the Viola?

Miel's line of thinking was the same, but he still didn't conclude that these matters were related to Aina. Would a large family war with another just for the sake of a single girl? Though his daughter was exceptionally talented, weren't all these families arrogant? Plus, they had Myghell, a child even Miel himself was greatly impressed by.

On top of this, they couldn't have known that he would be able to weaken the Viola so much before they fought.

So, Miel's thoughts were very, very different...

'Could it be that they learned of the existence of the Bronze Tablet? Could that be the true reason they attacked the Viola...?'

A hint of worry marred Miel's brow. If his greatest secret was exposed... This could be troublesome...

...

On the other side of the arena, Leonel, who had long since calmed, began to deduce several things. Among them was the exact thought process of the current Miel and Yuri.

'Yes, if they believe I'm from the Luxnix family, that would indeed be their line of thinking... Maybe I can use this to my advantage...'

Leonel looked up, feeling a familiar aura calling out to him. It seemed that it was his turn to battle once again.

Leonel Morales versus Syllar Luxnix.

Chapter 1187 Man of Energy

Syllar was like a spark of lightning. Among the Luxnix, he was probably one of the only few that cut his hair short and it made him look like a 16 or 17 year old kid, far younger than he truly was.

He appeared on the platform eager to go. But, when he saw that his opponent was actually Leonel, his brows couldn't help but shoot up.

Leonel himself landed on the platform about a minute after Syllar, not having gone all out to reach the stage like his opponent had. However, he greeted the latter with a smile that took him completely off guard.

Syllar was certain that with Leonel's hatred of the Luxnix, a smile would be the last thing he would find. In fact, he was quite certain that he would find exactly the opposite of that. But, to think that Leonel would be looking at him like this.

The truth was that Syllar along with many of the most recent generation were fairly in the dark about the truth of these matters. That said, they weren't completely clueless, mostly because of the oddity of the generations and how things lined up.

Syllar and the other two Arm Heads were technically in the generation of Leonel's mother. They had experienced dozens of years of life and were already pushing toward triple digit ages in another decade or two.

As such, when the commotion had been happening back during those days, they were more than old enough to remember. And, that also meant that of this third generation, the only ones that were of Leonel and Myghell's age who could participate at this level were just the two of them, there was no third individual.

This was to say that Syllar knew that Leonel's name had been stricken from the family records. He was also aware that there was some sort of falling out between Leonel's branch of the family and everyone else. But, he had always assumed that this was because Leonel's mother had ignored the family's wishes and married out.

As for the truth, among the youths, maybe only Myghell was aware. But, that was because the Innate Node was actually within his body.

"... I didn't expect you to be smiling in this situation." Syllar tilted his head to the side as though curiously observing Leonel. The other battles had already begun, but the two of them had yet to move a single inch.

"And what situation is that?" Leonel asked.

"Well, facing an enemy." Syllar was a bit confused by Leonel's response.

"An enemy?" Leonel thought for a moment. "I don't really see it that way."

Syllar's brow rose. "Is that because you beat Elody, so you don't really think of me like a rival? That would be a mistake. You're my junior, so I don't mind giving you a few pointers. In the Dimensional

Verse, how powerful you are is sometimes less important than how your abilities match up to someone else. And speed... Happens to match up well against a lot of things."

Syllar's irises flashed with a peculiar light, his muscles flexing and unflexing like they had minds of their own, wiggling about his body as though they were ready to explode.

"No, no." Leonel shook his head. "I don't mean it like that. I just mean that I don't see you all as an enemy. As far as I'm concerned, I'll be leading you all one day, why would I treat you like that when you haven't personally done anything to me?"

Syllar, who was prepared to go, was stunned speechless.

What had he just said? Lead them? Was this guy delusional?

"Are you... Alright up here?" Syllar pointed to his head. "Do you have any idea how many of them want you dead?"

Leonel's smile became wider. But, for some reason, it felt decidedly cold. Syllar's spine tingled, the tips of his fingers and toes becoming somewhat numb.

"I don't plan on leading them. I plan on killing them."

Syllar's palms flipped over on instinct, one short sword and one dagger appearing, each to a hand. He took a step back, his body growing tight and his pupils flickering with lightning.

All their lives, the Star Order Council had advised them not to go all out. Despite having fought several exchanges with Elody and almost killing him, Leonel still didn't know what the latter's ability was. From start to finish, he had only ever used Luxnix family techniques.

However, after the destruction of the Viola family, there was no need to hide their fangs anymore.... And Syllar had never been more grateful than he was now. For this Leonel before him... He deserved for him to go all out. Because if he didn't... He would definitely suffer.

Leonel's palm flipped over soon after. With his Duality Spear gone, his favorite Quasi Silver Spear was no longer in his arsenal. But, there were still hundreds of others to choose. He was already eyeing a few Quasi Gold Spears he could see in the far off distance, but he wasn't quite strong enough to make it there. So instead, he settled for this.

The temperature began to drop, a frosted blade appearing in Leonel's hands. It looked like a construct of black ice, its blade looking like a jagged abomination from the depths of hell.

The air crackled and popped as the water vapor rapidly cooled. At the same time, a fog of cold and darkness rose from the blade into the air.

Syllar felt his joints freezing up, the fast twitching of his muscles slowing down considerably. His gaze couldn't help but narrow into slits.

"Fine."

His voice lost the childish tone it usually had, dropping by an octave.

"I'll show you my true strength then."

BANG!

An eruption of lightning violently sparked into the surroundings. Syllar's short hair, in that instant, became a river of white gold sparks. The whites of his eyes and his irises vanished, replaced by streaking arcs that split out the side of his eyes.

He became a man of energy. Then, he vanished.

Chapter 1188 Not Sure

Leonel swung his spear upward instantaneously, but it was only just barely in time to meet Syllar's blade.

He was fast. So fast that without activating his Snowy Star Owl's gaze, Leonel's eyes alone could never hope of keeping up.

As fast as Syllar's legs were, though, his blade was even quicker. He caught the side of Leonel's spear. With blade against blade, he took advantage of his own forward momentum to parry it upward, his sword skimming against the edge of Leonel's spear as the backhand of his dagger aimed directly for Leonel's throat.

In the moment, Leonel understood.

Syllar was the Arm Head of the Speed Arm of the Luxnix family. However, even then, he had only undergone his First Awakening of the Speed Branch, allowing his Light Elemental Force to fuel his speed and leaving trails of light in his wake as he moved. But, compared to Leonel who had awoken three times, what was that worth?

With things being light this, though, Syllar truly showed his colors as the fastest of the Luxnix's younger generation. Not only was his grasp of the family's techniques impeccable... But his own personal ability, the one he had been forced to hide for so much of his life, was actually so perfectly in tune with exactly the kind of fighter he wanted to be.

While it seemed like Syllar was an Elemental Speedster, this wasn't the case at all. Rather, he was a Special Type Lightning user. His Lightning wasn't the destructive type, nor was it a Speedster Type, it was an Energy Type.

His Lightning was able to fuel his body and give him strength. Whether it was improving his thinking speed, his explosive strength and his raw speed, it was able to do it all. This sort of ability was like an overall upgrade on his power, a holistic boost to how dangerous he was. And make no mistake...

He was dangerous.

Syllar's dagger appeared before Leonel's throat, flickering with arcs of lightning. It was impossible to read his gaze with just how much sheer energy was sparking out from it. The speed was so fast that everything happened far too quickly. Many weaker members in the audience didn't even realize just how much danger Leonel was in right that moment.

However, what happened next was even more shocking.

Leonel's gaze flickered. As though something had sapped Syllar of all his energy, the blade trembled and then dulled. All the strength and lightning behind it vanished in a moment.

CLANG!

Syllar's blade clashed with Leonel's neck. But as though it had rebounded against a steel wall, it was pushed and repelled backward.

Just as quickly, Syllar retreated. Like an assassin in the night, he struck just once and didn't stay in Leonel's vicinity.

Beneath Leonel's skin, a small flicker of Bronze Runes receded, hardly perceptible to the eye. However, his steps didn't pause for even a single moment as he pressed down toward Syllar.

A harsh, grating wind pulsed into the surroundings. Everywhere it passed, ice and icicles formed, turning the stage into some sort of winter wonderland.

Leonel took a step forward, his figure flashing.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Syllar's brow furrowed, his heated exchange with Leonel growing faster and faster. He felt as though Leonel was either adapting to his speed, or improving so quickly that he was being forced onto his backfoot.

Ice began to creep up Syllar's sword and dagger, his lips turning blue and his fingers trembling beneath the cold.

Leonel's short violet hair danced in the wind. The combination of violet, light blues and a dense darkness played off of each other very well. And yet, compared to the energy laden Syllar, it still felt somewhat muted and uninteresting.

The battle slowly swung in Leonel's favor, Syllar realizing that his opponent was getting faster and faster.

Leonel's spear spun in his hands. It had once been that Syllar could attack three or four times before he landed even one. But then it had shrunk to three, then two, then one... Now, Leonel seemed to attack twice as fast as Syllar did. If not for the fact that the latter wielded two weapons, he would have likely already suffered a fatal wound.

Leonel caught the side of Syllar's blade in one of the jagged grooves of his blade. With a strong flick upward, Syllar felt his wrist nearly snap, forcing him to get rid of his sword entirely.

He moved to retreat once more, but his expression changed when he found that his foot hit air.

His eyes widened as he fell on his bottom outside of the stage. He looked on wide eyed at seemingly empty space, still not quite understanding what happened. It was only after the frost slowly began to recede and he could feel his body again that he finally understood.

His mind had actually slowed by that much.

"... That spear..." Syllar finally looked up, looking at the Black Ice Spear, his expression still somewhat lost.

Leonel smiled. "You said it best yourself. How powerful you are is sometimes less important than how your abilities match up to someone else. In this case, you met maybe the worst possible match for you."

"... I see..."

Syllar still couldn't quite understand, but he had a faint inkling. He didn't really care that Leonel had relied on a treasure. It was clear that it was a Quasi Silver Spear, and that wasn't much different from his own weapon. And, something made him think that Leonel had purposely chosen to fight in this way just so he could say those words to him.

It was quite pathetic. He finally got the chance to go all out for once, and yet he had lost like this. He could almost feel the disappointed glances that were landing on his back.

Leonel bent down and helped Syllar to stand before walking away. The latter didn't even register that Leonel had helped him until several moments later, but that only left him in another daze.

He wasn't quite sure how he was supposed to feel.

Chapter 1189 Good Chance

The Black Ice Spear wasn't the true name of the spear, it was just what Leonel had chosen to call it. But, the reality was that this spear had little to nothing to do with ice and frost. In fact, its true name was the Kinetic Blade and its domain was the Kinetic Domain.

Leonel had made Water type and Ice type spears to choose from in the Quasi Silver ranks, but the truth was that this spear wasn't one of them. In fact, this blade worked so well with Leonel because it relied on his Fire and Light Elemental affinity. In this regard, it was even better than the Duality Spear which played on none of Leonel's best affinities.

The reason for the darkness and frost the spear exuded was because it was sapping its Domain of Light and Heat. Leonel hadn't used the darkness ability of the spear at all and simply relied on its ability to absorb Kinetic Energy.

Against an opponent like Syllar who relied so heavily on the energy he could output, this spear was, indeed, the perfect counter.

Of course, the best part was not only in that Leonel could sap a region of its energy, but he could also use it to fuel the attacks of the spear itself. Leonel hadn't needed to use it against Syllar, but it could be very useful in the future.

With Leonel's level of Fire Elemental affinity, he could absorb so much heat that he could bring a Fifth Dimensional region to near Absolute Zero. That kind of power was absolutely lethal. It could only be said that everyone was quite lucky that this was a Sixth Dimensional world, or else this Selection would basically be over.

...

"Did you see it?" Orinik asked with narrowed eyes.

"I'm not sure. It happened too quickly." Ganor said slowly.

Orinik had been too infuriated before to think. But, when he thought back to the previous events, Leonel had used his bare fingers to deflect three Fifth Dimensional arrows. Then, he used a bare fist to leave a dent in Fifth Dimensional armor. And, just now, he blocked a Fifth Dimensional blade with nothing but the skin of his neck.

In his life, Orinik had never heard of defensive abilities on this level, at least not with just one's unaltered skin. It was to the point of being absolutely obscene. Unless...

It was from that family.

The trouble was, he didn't really have any proof. And, even when it comes to that family, their defense only touches upon these levels when they activate their Bronze Runes, so why was it that he hadn't seen Leonel's Runes?

Was it another ability? A technique he had never heard before? Or could it be a mutation of that Lineage Factor?

The last was a strong possibility. After all, with how many members of that family that there were, how could they not have bastard children spotted all over the Human Domain? Just the recognized children of the Nova Generation alone numbered over a billion, let alone the unrecognized ones.

"Why does it matter, anyway?" Ganor said. "Even if he's from that family, if he's here, he clearly doesn't have high standing amongst them. Why would he be participating in a Selection if he could practically get guaranteed entry so long as the right person spoke up?"

"You're always thinking short term." Orinik shook his head. "Think about what event is coming soon and what it means."

"You mean the Heir War?"

"Yes."

"And what about it? At our level we'd just be canon fodder and barely any of the spoils would be ours for the taking. You can't want me to risk my life just to get a handshake and a pat on the head right? I'll pass."

Orinik ran his fingers and thumb through his brows. He felt like he was talking to a wall. How did such an idiot manage to get into Void Palace?

Orinik didn't stay on this line of thought for long, though. When he thought about that massive thing Ganor was always carrying on his back, he couldn't bring himself to belittle the man anymore. That scrawny, half-dead looking body had far too much strength in it.

"First of all, canon fodder is an exaggeration. We'd at least be in the middle levels, enough to get something in return. And—"

"I'm adjusting for my own laziness." Ganor yawned while resting his cheek on a single palm.

Orinik couldn't refrain from rolling his eyes this time.

"—As I was saying, the existence of a member of that family with a good bit of talent like this is pretty valuable. Just think about the possibilities.

"The first potential reality is that his Lineage Factor mutated. You know how valuable such a thing is. Any mutation, even a regressive one, will want to be studied by even a weak family, let alone one on the level of them.

"If we sold this information to one of the potential Heirs, it would be a great spike in their merits so close to the event and we would definitely get a nice thank you in return without even having to lift a finger."

Ganor's eyes brightened when he heard this. This idea indeed wasn't bad. The fact Leonel's skin could be so hard without fully activating his Runes was definitely something they would be interested in.

Though it sounded like a great ability, it might still be regressive. After all, there were a ton of complicated variables at play. For all they knew, this mutation didn't allow Leonel's skin to grow any firmer beyond this point.

Still, if it was a mutation, it was valuable nonetheless. Every mutation represented the potential of evolving a Lineage Factor to an all new level and it was a chance to deepen one's understanding of the mechanisms that governed it as well. There was simply no family who would turn down such an opportunity.

"The second potential reality is that he isn't mutated but rather just hides it well. In that case, then he's a pretty decent genius of their family."

"Isn't that much worse?" Ganor's excitement dimmed.

Orinik sighed and shook his head. What was he going to do with this one?

"No. The competition has been raging on for so long already. Those that could be recruited have already long since been recruited and most of them are focused on grooming their faction to step into higher levels of strength.

"Someone who isn't tied to any of them and has good talent will always be worth something. Think about it, would you rather split rewards with others who will just leave and bring the benefits to their own families? Or would you rather split rewards with your own kin? If we sell this information to the right person, it won't be as lucrative as the first potential reality, but it will be good business either way."

Only after hearing this did Ganor's expression lighten up again.

"Finally, there's the third potential reality that he isn't part of that family at all. But, don't you think they'd be very interested in someone who has a body even stronger than their own...?"

Ganor's gaze glowed like twin torches

"It seems we'll need to find a way to figure out what the truth is."

Orinik smiled as though he could already see the dollar signs.

"The third day of the Selection might be a good chance to see what his limits really are."

Chapter 1190 Erupted Forth

Leonel was unaware of the thoughts of Orinik and Ganor, but even if he had known, he wouldn't have reacted much. Though the two were trying to profit off of him, they weren't necessarily doing anything detrimental, at least not on the surface, anyway. Even if they were coming with sinister intention, Leonel would be at fault if he was honest with himself.

Leonel had no idea just how rare his defenses were. Bodies that could match up to weapons in hardness didn't just grow on trees and most techniques and Lineage Factors that replicated such things had enormous drawbacks. Someone like Leonel who could have amazing speed, flexibility and dexterity, all while having a body practically immune to blades, was unheard of.

In the human race, there was only one family capable of such a feat, and that was without a doubt the Morales.

Unfortunately, Leonel's scope of the Dimensional Verse was still too narrow compared to young nobles and he never really hid his abilities at all. So, whether they were the ones to expose him or not, he would eventually end up exposing himself regardless.

Leonel was already far behind the other Heirs who had already build up their factions and were training in preparation for that day. His anonymity was practically the only shield he had, but it seemed like that wouldn't last for much longer.

...

The battles continued to rage on and the excitement of the crowd only seemed to grow with each passing moment. Previously, the numbers and auras were all muddled and no one truly understood exactly how things would shake out. But, as more and more battles occurred, a picture of the various groups and standings began to form in the mind of the spectators.

Upon grasping who was in which group and how the records were playing out, the excitement began to boil over.

Though the Void Palace wasn't here for the entertainment of the masses, their practices ultimately led to such a result regardless. After all, with everyone having to rely on themselves to treat their injuries, any large and clashing battle could make or break the chances of an individual.

While it was true that record wouldn't be the ultimate deciding factor of who received entry and who didn't, the more battles one fought, the more accurate those of the Void Palace would be able to be in their assessments. As such, as the battles continued, those that still remained undefeated were separated out from the masses and their battles became hotly contested centers of hype.

Fan clubs clashed with one another over which of their favorites would win and old, wizened men and women made their predictions in an effort to come off enigmatic.

The geniuses of Earth that remained continued to perform to the best of their abilities.

In the beginning, Arnold and Milan were practically neck in neck, but the more battles he fought, the more refined Arnold's style seemed to become. He improved in real time, steadily pushing his win percentage of barely 40-50%, upward toward 60.

Milan lagged behind, not sharing Arnold's talent in the use of Universal Force and as such performing the worst of them all. But, he didn't lose sight of his determination, managing to keep his head high and take his licks in silence.

Karolus, Elthor and Noah all performed extremely well from the very beginning. Elthor was a lot like Arnold, improving rapidly with every battle. He was the quintessential battle maniac, his blood boiling every time he stepped onto the arena.

When he was finally forced to use his Battle Form, morphing into an enormous, white furred wall of muscle with horns that pierced the skies, the furries in the crowd only seemed to go more wild.

However, what the crowd saw and what Orinik and Ganor saw were two completely different things entirely. While the former saw a wall of muscle, the latter saw Chaotic Particle Force.

"... What the hell is going on with this Sector? First there was a True State Universal Force wielder, then there was a member of that family, and now there's someone wielding one of the True State Elements?"

Orinik felt like his head was spinning.

"They all come from over there." Ganor said off handedly.

Though he had spoken those words casually, Orinik froze upon hearing them, his head turning toward the location of Earth's geniuses. He had been so busy analyzing how ridiculous it all seemed that he had completely missed the most obvious connection of them all.

His gaze went toward Earth's Geniuses and he immediately noticed something else. Not only were they all from this one place, they all seemed to look toward a singular young man for guidance. No matter which of them it was, even the Chaotic Particle Force wielder, after each of their battles, they would always go to him to hear his thoughts.

Just when Orinik's gaze landed on Leonel, he seemed to look up at the same time and smile. Orinik didn't know if it was a coincidence or not, but Leonel's gaze seemed to convey the message that he could see through his intentions quite clearly.

"A member of that family leading so many talents...? If I recall correctly, not a single one of them is above Tier 2 except for him, yet they didn't perform too badly. They're just too young..." Orinik thought aloud to himself, not shifting away from Leonel's gaze. "... Hey Ganor, I think the price for him just went up..."

A lone member of that family was one matter. But, a member who had a talented faction under him was worth even more.

Life in the Void Palace wasn't easy, you had to scratch and claw for everything. The idea of a payday that could come without him having to risk his life was something that made Orinik's blood boil and his heart stand at attention.

The billboard flickered once more, causing Leonel to finally break eye contact with Orinik.

Leonel Morales versus Isac Arundo.

The moment Leonel landed on the platform, a baleful killing intent that blanketed the arena erupted forth.