

Descent 1241

Chapter 1241 Bestial Offensive

Leonel's expression flickered. Having these wings seemed cool, but it made the over kilometer long diameter of the arena seem far too small. To make matters worse, because Leonel had become used to them being nothing more than an illusion, having them become a sudden tangible part of him left him feeling awkward and uncoordinated.

He realized then that he definitely should have spent the last few days going over the Luxnix family techniques that helped use these enormous pair of wings instead of getting lost in his game of chess with Wise Star Order. But, as they say, hindsight was 20/20.

The coldness in Leonel's gaze returned. He had lost himself in having fun in this battle and he hadn't been his usual self. The battles he had fought in the Dimensional Verse until now all felt like a struggle of life and death so he never wasted time playing around. He would drown his opponent out in calculations and cut the simplest path to victory every time. Often, he didn't even have emotions or straying thoughts of his own, he was like an efficient machine, executing its orders.

At this point, feeling that he was very quickly running out of power ups to use, and simultaneously feeling that Myghell still had depths he had yet to expose, Leonel was tempted to revert to his usual battle style.

It was quite ironic just how perfect a reflection of Leonel that Myghell was. Though the latter didn't have the former's calculative abilities, most of Myghell's battles usually ended just as easily. With what Myghell had comprehended from Leonel's Innate Node, he had even been able to one shot the Patriarch of the Viola family.

Myghell hadn't used any of these comprehensions against Leonel, much like Leonel hadn't used his Ability Index much at all either. Of course, whether or not such comprehensions would be effective against Leonel was another matter entirely, but it was still the principle of the matter that truly counted.

Myghell felt he didn't need to use Leonel's talent to defeat him. He could do it on his own. From the very beginning, he was better.

The three pillars savagely fell, Leonel's head tilting up and a smile spreading across his face. It wasn't laced with madness nor was there a fiendish aura to it. All it carried was a childish excitement.

Leonel remembered well the first time he had experienced such a feeling. He was within Camelot's Zone facing an army of Demons. For the first time, the weight of killing others wasn't at the forefront of his mind. After all, what he faced weren't humans, they were cold hearted monsters ready and willing to tear him limb from limb.

That was the moment that apprehension, anxiety and guilt gave way, becoming the emotions that he had always felt, that he had always wanted to feel...

A giddy excitement.

It was clear that he had already made his decision.

'I'm not just a Knight. I can be considered a Mage too. It seems I won't be able to find out the limits of Combustion today... !'

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Everything collapsed. The arena began to sink, the golden barriers shattered to pieces, harsh screams and cries of terror called out as many feared for their lives, feeling as though in the next moment, they would no longer be among the living.

Alienor reacted just as quickly. She had originally used the same defensive mechanism Orinik had because she didn't think that things would need to go so far. But, it seems she had underestimated these two boys a bit.

It wasn't that their raw strength was so great, but their wills seemed to take tangible form, strengthening their attacks. They had already gained characteristics of the Sixth Dimensional God Path before even stepping foot into it.

Leonel with his King's Might... And Myghell with the odd power behind his words...

Alienor lightly tapped her foot, an enormous barrier forming. However, while her son's was a delicate violet color, her own was a vibrant green. In a moment, everything settled just... Just for an instant, that is.

BANG!

The three crystal pillars shattered to ash. Just as the gem shards shot out in all directions, an enormous pillar of violet Force shot into the skies, outlining Leonel's figure as several Force Arts began to be quickly drawn in the air.

The pupils of those who understood constricted. Most Force Arts were completely invisible to the naked eye as they were drawn by the ever so illusive Soul Force. For Leonel's own to take form and for them to even witness their drawing like this...

SHUU! SHUU! SHUU! SHUU! SHUU!

Arrows of earth, fire and light fell from the skies. But just as quickly as they formed, they evolved into spears and javelins, falling from the skies like a torrential rainfall.

Myghell's crystal constructs responded in kind, the skies becoming like the clash of fireworks, explosions of Force, rock and stone erupting and fluttering motes of light falling from their collisions.

On the ground, the two tore a path toward one another, one bathed in white and the other in violet.

BOOM!

Leonel seemed completely invisible when strengthened by his King's Might, and yet Myghell seemed just as much so. Every time Leonel dug deeper, he seemed to find a new ceiling, his strength climbing and growing. It was as though even when he said Leonel had awakened him, he was still in a deep sleep, slowly opening his eyes wider and wider with every collision.

Myghell open his mouth wide, biting at Leonel's spear, only to receive a swing of its butt to the side of the face.

His head spun to the side, but he easily used that momentum to his advantage, allowing his torso and feet to spin into two great slashes with his great swords.

Leonel also followed the momentum of his spear's blunt attack, carrying it over to place it in position to block both swings.

His feet sunk down into the ground, his body quaking beneath the impact, only for him to realize too late that Myghell had sent three attacks, not just two. A kick formed the third prong of the attack, colliding with Leonel's lower torso.

Myghell's wild almost bestial offensive style forced Leonel to eat a loss soon after he had.

Chapter 1242 Shiver

Leonel skidded backward against the force of the kick, but the blow was forcefully dispersed to the ground beneath him. His control over the Earth Element had skyrocketed to an even higher level after entering . It felt as though the entire planet itself was backing his fight.

His spear snaked forward, aiming for Myghell's head, throat and heart in quick succession. Every time he pierced it was as though a raging flood dragon followed his movements, his spearmanship becoming so pure and unabashed that it breathed like it had life of its own.

Myghell's swordsmanship was several time more wild and lacked structure or foundation. Compared to the technique driven style he had had while using his thin sword, and his ability to shift through one technique after another, always countering Leonel perfectly, he might as well have been a cave man now.

But, there was a special sort of air that was carried along by those simple strikes. They cut off all paths of retreat and thwarted deadly strikes with the greatest of ease, the explosive power that backed them feeling like they carried the weight of an entire world.

Before anyone could realize just what had happened, over a day had already passed, each still being just as relentless as the other and it feeling as though they had an endless amount of trump cards and rebuttals to thrust at their opponent.

However, it was slowly becoming clear that one had more to give than the other did.

In , Leonel could apply this self-created Knight technique he had formulated to amplify his Mage Arts. In addition, the drain on the Vital Star Force supply he had was much lesser as well as half the burden was taken on by his mind.

Unfortunately, having great stamina versus having the ability to endlessly replenish your own were two different matters. Leonel, of course, had the gold scaled koi fish, but he hadn't used its ability even once. Though he could probably say that it was his beast companion and get away with it, he didn't even think of doing so.

He wanted to see to the depths of Myghell's limits, to force him to give everything he had and still realize that there was a taller mountain beyond. But, it was becoming increasingly difficult to do so.

The gap was large. Some would even say too large. Leonel had more than held his own, especially considering he was still holding back even at this moment. But, Tier 4 was Tier 4 while Myghell was a half-step to the Sixth Dimension.

Leonel's smile didn't fade, he found himself to be amusing. He didn't just want to win, he wanted to win his way.

Leonel's spear blade swept along the ground, a massive wave of molten earth following it to attack Myghell.

A crystal whale construct formulated into the skies. It was over 50 meters long, carrying with it a weight that couldn't even be fathomed.

BOOM!

It dropped like an anchor before Leonel's attack, causing an explosion that took both at once. If it wasn't for the barrier formed by Alienor, there was no doubt that the destruction would have only been all the more violent.

Leonel let out a heavy breath, sparks of fire leaving his lips. Deep breaths expanded and contracted his chest, a few fractures that could be found littered throughout his body healing far more slowly than they had at the beginning of his battle despite the fact the Second Awakening of his Healing Branch was very much active.

In his moment of reprieve, Myghell had already closed the distance.

'Damn.'

Leonel's mind reacted quicker than his body, an enormous shield of earth blocking the swing of Myghell's blades.

The twin great swords burst through, finding Leonel's spear laying in wait. But, his defenses seemed weaker than usual.

Leonel found himself flying through the air, shaking his head inwardly.

He seemed to have been in a battle of equals with Myghell. But, whenever each brought out a new trump card, wasn't it always him who was sent flying?

This was exactly why he was so hesitant about bringing out all he had. If things were like this at this stage, shouldn't he find an opportunity to win before Myghell went all out?

Leonel laughed at himself.

'What a silly thought.'

He hadn't been using his mind much during this battle and he had actually let such a ridiculous conclusion to fester and grow to this point.

Why was it that he had allowed Candle and Vice to roam free? Wasn't that because he would have to defeat all the Savants of the Dimensional Verse one way or another? Why was it that he had kept his

mind in reserve during this battle? Wasn't it so that he could bask in the feeling of an enjoyable battle? So why was he suddenly doing something so contradictory to both?

A subtle feeling just within Leonel's grasp lingered before him. Sparks went off in his Dreamscape, a network he had begun to build to rectify Instinctual battling and Logical battling feeling just a step away. It was like having a word ready at the tip of your tongue, but easy ten times more infuriating.

'This feeling...'

Leonel closed his eyes, his breathing becoming steadier and steadier.

Wasn't he the one who had said it didn't matter? If he wanted to claim that position at the top of the mountain for himself, why should he be constantly worried about the progress and strength of others? As long as he, himself, was strong enough. What did the rest of it matter for? What did the rest of it count for...?

Nothing. Nothing at all.

The halo above Leonel's head began to glow a devastating brightness in that moment. As he flew through the air, it expanded to almost a meter in diameter, shooting down to Leonel's feet before slowly moving upward.

BANG!

Leonel landed and a cloud of dust shot in all directions. But in the next moment, a sight that none who had come this day would ever forget appeared.

Leonel's figure vanished from sight beneath the commotion, but space itself seemed to freeze over. Everything was suddenly encased in a cube of ice, space itself solidifying into a tangible plane. And then...

CRACK!

Everything splintered. As though space had become a sheet of glass, it shattered, and yet it all seemed to be held together by an invisible force.

The plumes of dust slowly began to clear, revealing a tall silhouette...

The temperature plummeted by several degrees, a cold shiver creeping up the spines of many.

Chapter 1243 Style

A harsh cold spread out in all directions, the air cracking at its seams as though a dome of glass had just been shattered and was now barely holding itself together.

Bright blues, deep purples and swirling blacks surged out in all directions, suddenly dispersing to reveal armor the likes of which those here had simply never before laid their eyes upon.

The Divine Armor was fitted with many plates, forming a complex and interlocking array of metals that made movement as smooth as fabric. It exuded a frosty aura, appearing as though a layer of beautiful blue, silver and black ore was coated with a thin and reflective layer of ice.

It spread out upon Leonel's wings without missing a single beat, flaps of metal sheets opening and closing as though it was breathing, releasing frosty steam that froze over space all the more.

The helmet that covered Leonel's head completely hid his gaze, but the shimmering golden spear upon his forehead and the bronze halo above his head told a story of their own.

Orinik's gaze narrowed. The Divine Armor technique was most definitely among the strongest of the Morales. But, not everyone could forge their own, let alone to do so at this level. In fact, of all his abilities, Leonel's Crafting was maybe the most untouchable.

Myghell found himself stuck within frozen space. As fragile and on the verge of collapse as the world around them now seemed, it was anything but. Just the tiniest movement made him feel as though all his strength was being snapped out, and the slower he moved, the more icicles formed along his skin, only slowing him even further.

Leonel's Dark Ice Divine Armor had stacked with the characteristics of his Warping Domain Divine Armor. The latter was a Fourth Dimensional Divine Armor Evolved to match a Fifth Dimensional one, while the former was the same for the Fifth and Sixth Dimensions. The result was a devastating ability even those well into the Sixth Dimension could not ignore.

Leonel's palm flipped over, his Kinetic Spear vanishing to reveal his Water Domain spear. It looked almost like a trident, its body covered in blue, sapphire-like scales and its head having one very prominent spear blade and two much smaller ones jetting off to the side at an angle.

Myghell roared even as Leonel shot into motion once again. The skies cracked, motes of sparkling space falling in all directions.

While Leonel himself shot through these falling shards of space as though they were nothing, Myghell was forced to dodge them as they came. Those that managed to touch upon even his Force froze it in time, space and functionality, rendering it completely useless.

In the a moment, it was like only half of Myghell's strength could be deployed, the rest of it being swallowed up by Leonel's Dark Ice Domain.

"Strength."

Myghell swung down, meeting Leonel's spear. But, behind it, he found a relentless, overflowing pressure.

It was as though he was facing an ocean's tide. One wave came forth, only to recede and for a second to replace it, and then a third, then a fourth. By the sixth, Myghell's own strength had been completely eroded away, his arm turning numb as he was forced to take a step back.

Leonel's spear spun in the palms, a barrage of pierces, sweeps and slices. He chained them all into a combination of lethal strikes.

He could truly feel the essence of the Water Domain spear. Something within him had clicked.

All this time, he took up a spear, was flashed with the images of its previous owner, and forcefully grasped its Domain. But, he had missed something very important.

The Peak Spears that stood at the height of its grade never flashed him with any images of its previous owner. Only the sub spears that littered the base of its hill did so.

Then there was the Domain. Was it really something he had comprehended? Not really. Didn't his Divine Armors come with Domains themselves? He didn't have to 'comprehend' his Divine Armors, the ability just manifested due to its nature.

That was when it all snapped into place. The Spear Domain would exist with or without him. Whoever picked up this spear would be able to use this Domain, there was nothing special about him in the slightest.

All this time, he had thought that he was ignoring Instinct for the sake of gaining a deeper, personal understanding of his spear. He wanted to grasp it on his own, to not have his mind clouded by the comprehensions of others. But, in doing so, he had been diverted down the wrong path.

When Leonel first claimed his Duality Spear, it fought against him. Anyone would logically conclude that this was because the spear had a soul, but Leonel had conveniently ignored this. It wasn't because he couldn't accept that there were certain things he simply didn't understand yet, but it was rather because he didn't want to lose himself down the rabbit hole such an acceptance would lead him down.

While all of Leonel's stubbornness was in one part due to his endless pursuit of logic and understanding, another large part was just his ego. It wasn't just about pursuing logic, but it was also the satisfaction he felt knowing that he had ripped something apart to its bare bones and that it laid out before him, unable to hide any of its secrets from his eyes.

Leonel felt his heart pump, his spear technique becoming faster and more subtle.

He had never considered himself to be skilled in the spear. He forcefully integrated comprehensions he gained and sometimes relied on his Spear Domain Lineage Factor, but he had always been lacking in something fundamental.

Even back when he fought the branch members of the Luxnix family, he still admitted that their raw skill with their weapons was still beyond him despite the fact he defeated them with ease.

What was he missing? Why wasn't he a true spear master? Why did wielding his bow and his spear feel so different? Why did one come so naturally while the other moved along so slowly and so awkwardly...?

It was Style. Leonel had never breathed his own life in his spear.

Wise Star Order had said it quite clearly. Only someone who had their heads flooded with water would think that weapons could have souls.

Wasn't it obvious why the Domain Spears didn't have the memories of previous owners attached to them? It was because Leonel was meant to be the owner. His soul was meant to be their soul.

BANG!

A blinding golden light shot up into the skies.

Chapter 1244 Nothing

The golden spear hovering before Leonel's forehead suddenly grew a size. A ring of light formed on either side of it, wrapping around Leonel's helmet and forming a crown with a blinding golden spear as its centerpiece.

It and Leonel's bronze halo seemed to resonate, the two vibrating like twin pieces of precious metal.

In that moment, Leonel felt as though his eyes had suddenly opened wide. His Level 2 Spear Force trembled. From a neutral white color, it blossomed forth, suddenly becoming sprinkled with fleck of gold.

Leonel's gaze became hazy and unfocused, and yet his assault only grew more powerful. If before it had felt like Leonel's spear was a raging flood dragon, at this moment, it truly became one.

Water Force bent to Leonel's will without the slightest inclination of resistance. With every pierce, it would fused with Leonel's King's Might and his Level 2 Spear Force, forming a roaring eastern dragon that made Myghell feel as though he was being pummeled by a mountain.

Myghell sliced down with both his great swords, trying to behead the dragon roaring toward him. But, he suddenly found both his blades being rebounded away as though he had just collided with a blade and not two beast constructs.

SHIING! SHIING!

Leonel suddenly found that he could only use twice, but he didn't even blink a single eye.

His movements flowed seamlessly from one motion to the next. Whereas his spearmanship in the past had felt like a disjointed union of powerful individual moves, his calculative mind and skill seemed to have finally fused into one.

Each attack became like a sacrificed chess piece that set up the next. Each significant strike was like a fork of pieces on the board, one of which Myghell would have no choice but to sacrifice to move forward. Each combination led to another, then another, an endless chain and torrent of barrages that had no sight in end.

The beauty of roaring water dragons beneath shattered ice particles of space was too much to describe. It felt as though all those spectating had been transported to another world, only to experience the battle of a Deity of Ice and Water versus a Deity of Light and Darkness.

Myghell recovered from Leonel's sudden and enormous leap in strength as only a genius could. His fiendish grin only grew livelier.

"COME ON!"

Leonel's spear howled, the ring on his finger flickering with an imperceptible glow.

Every time it collided with Myghell, a shockwave would travel through the latter's body, jetting out from his back in powerful concentric circles.

At the same time, Myghell found his own strikes being severely weakened and sometimes entirely frozen by Leonel's Domain, only leaving him susceptible to stronger attacks. Had it not been for his tough elephant skin and its superiority in Dimension, he would have long since been littered with holes.

And yet, his laughter only became more resounding, his Force building up momentum as though it was endless.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Leonel's spear spun, wheels of water following its trajectory. Every time it did, he landed another strike, three falling in quick succession.

Myghell's inner organs finally couldn't seem to take it anymore, his mouth overflowing with a combination of trickling and jetting blood. Three large dents appeared in his tough skin exterior, Leonel's third blow nearly piercing all the way through and reaching bone.

Beneath his mask, Leonel's breath heaved, his face drenched in sweat. He was already nearing his limits before he put on his Divine Armor, but now he was only approaching them all the more. Even the ice cool nature of it couldn't seem to stop his body from overheating.

As for his Innate Node...? He never thought of using it even once.

The Luxnix seemed to believe that it would be in better hands if it was with Myghell. Leonel had no need to prove himself to them as he had the backing of both his mother and Wise Star Order, however, with this pride etched deep within his heart, that wasn't nearly enough.

That Innate Node was his own. Whether he cared to use it or not was none of the business of the Luxnix. But, right here and now...

He would show them just how wrong they were.

Leonel pulled back his spear once more, his Force surging throughout his body. He squeezed out the last bit of Vital Star Force he had, his gaze lighting up and bleeding with such a fierce light that they almost shone through his visor.

'<Dragon's Might>!'

Leonel poured the last of his strength into his Dark Ice Domain, increasing its strength to the point Myghell was truly frozen in place, shards of what looked like broken glass surrounding his body and his swords to the point he was completely unable to move.

The miniature humanoid fog of violet rose from Leonel's head, sitting above his spear crown with a lofty air and presence.

He wouldn't allow anything in this world to block his path. Even if it was himself.

The bellow that left Leonel's lips must have been heard all across Planet Montex. The will blanketed everything it reached, suffocating the spectators until they seemed to have lost the ability to think any thoughts... Their gazes were all focused on the very same young man. That was... Until he seemed to vanish.

The separation of Leonel and his spear seem to have gone up in smoke. Though logically they all felt that there must have been a human behind the supreme strike they were witnessing, their senses told them instead that there was nothing there at all...

All that remained was the strike in all its gorgeous beauty.

A flood dragon of water, transparent and clear to the point the spear within could be seen. Its scales were outlined by a sharp Spear Force as the sound of a blade gliding along a whetstone resonated throughout the surroundings.

And then, it collided with Myghell's torso, landing right upon the very same shallow wound Leonel had caused previously. But at this moment, everything seemed to pause for just a second.

Silence fell, space froze, and a hollow, soft wind glided by at a gentle pace. And then...

Myghell's outer skin was torn to shreds, the spear exiting through a bloodied hole much too large for its slim body.

Chapter 1245 10%

Leonel's breath came out in heaving swallows. His arm hung out, parallel with his piercing spear, his body not even having the strength to hold his other arm up.

Myghell should have been blown backward, but the Dark Ice Domain had forcefully kept him in place, forcing his body to take on the full brunt of the strike and tearing a hole the size of two fists all the way through his chest.

A wheezing cough left Myghell's lips, his body still being held up by shards of frozen space. Half of Leonel's spear had gone through his body, coating its sapphire scales with in a dense mass of thick, flowing blood.

Myghell's fiendish grin slowly faded, his gaze meeting Leonel's own.

"Maybe one day we'll have a real fight." Leonel said through his heavy breath.

Myghell didn't say anything in response, his eyes having lost their previous glow and expression going back to how it had always been. It seemed baffling that he had ever been that howling young man from before. But, even without more words than that, the two had come to quite a deep understanding of one another.

Leonel very much meant the words he had spoken. This Myghell he had defeated was maybe, at best, 20% of what his true strength was. In fact, according to Leonel's estimation, that was an overly positive view. This was probably closer to 10% of Myghell's true strength, most likely less.

On the surface, this seemed ridiculous. But, looking at things from Myghell's perspective, they likely began to make sense.

Myghell was an extraordinary talent, this was something that no one could deny. He was born only a few months ahead of Leonel, so their ages were quite negligible and in another life, they would probably have grown up to be as close as Leonel and James had once been.

With the talent he was granted, Myghell had made it to the Quasi Sixth Dimension years ago. However, he didn't have the background to allow him to enter the Void Palace outside of their Selections like those from more prominent families could have, so he could only stall in his own progress.

That said, this didn't mean that Myghell didn't improve at all. In fact, he had improved almost daily, leaping forward by unfathomable lengths... It was just that it was all reliant on Leonel's Innate Node.

Myghell could gain affinity with practically anything just by eating enough of it, but why would he divert his attention when such a powerful Force was within his body? There was no doubt in Leonel's mind that Myghell's comprehension of Scarlet Star Force was several folds beyond him, they couldn't even be compared.

When things are looked at from this perspective, you could begin to understand the problem. Myghell's entire battle style and form was predicated on Scarlet Star Force. Even without using the Force itself, just the comprehensions of Destruction he had gained and the numerous techniques he had formulated around it would speak for themselves.

Much like how Leonel had recently decided to build the foundation of his strength with his Scarlet Star Innate Node as the foundation, so too had Myghell reached the same conclusion. Except, unlike Leonel, he had the constant guidance of experts so he had made this logical conclusion much earlier on and had stuck with it.

The best analogy was that Leonel was battling a fish, and he had suddenly made that fish battle on land instead. The fact Myghell had pushed him to this extent while handicapped in this fashion spoke volumes not only about his talent, but also his deep seeded pride.

Leonel doubted that Myghell had even known the Innate Node within him wasn't his own until recently. Why would the Star Order Elders ever tell him such a thing? Even if they ultimately agreed with such a decision, there was no need to run their own names through the mud in the process.

Of course, there were probably benefits Myghell had gotten from the Scarlet Star Innate Node that couldn't be completely divorced from his current battle prowess. For example, he had likely only graduated from the Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor so quickly because he could gain the affinity boost from Leonel's Innate Node.

However, Leonel had a feeling that this wouldn't matter much. If he hadn't had the Innate Node, with the backing of the Luxnix, he could have just been force fed all sorts of high level Light Elemental Crystals and Pure Crystals. By then, the result wouldn't have been as exaggerated, but it would still be comparable. The largest difference would only become more obvious as he left the White Stone Elephant behind continued onward.

Leonel was even more certain that without his Innate Node, Myghell would have been able to build his combat prowess with a different foundation, and though he would also be weaker than if he used Scarlet Force, he would still be able to beat the current Leonel.

It was almost too obvious. The reason why Myghell's sword swings had all been so simple and wild was purely because all the techniques he had were purposely not used by him.

To put things in the most blunt way possible, even now, Leonel could not defeat a full powered Viola family Patriarch. But... Myghell had done so in a single strike.

All of this said, this battle was designed to be unfair from the very beginning. Had Myghell hoped to rely on his Destructive capabilities, he might have lost even sooner.

Leonel's current Innate Node only hurt him because it had grown too far out of his control. However, the Innate Node Myghell currently had was at a level where Leonel could not only easily bear it, but he was basically immune to it.

Still, Myghell had no idea that Leonel had regrown his Innate Node already and he was very much unaware of how Leonel would have countered him easily.

No matter how you looked at it, Myghell was an unfortunate loser in this situation.

Leonel took a deep breath and began to move, but Myghell had already done so.

In a move that stunned those watching, he pierced a hand into his own right hip, ripping out something that shimmered with a blinding red-gold light.

Then... He tossed it toward Leonel before the last of his strength wavered and he collapsed.

Chapter 1246 So Wh...

Leonel caught the Innate Node in a hand. Seeing how small it was, he couldn't help but sigh. All of this was caused by a small thing barely the size of a thumb nail.

That was right, the Innate Node within Myghell looked like a piece of a gem one might not even notice by a roadside if it wasn't for the blinding light it was giving off. It was completely unlike Leonel's own which was so large it had taken over his entire kidney.

At a glance, Leonel could tell that while Myghell had been able to adapt, he hadn't been able to do so perfectly.

For one, the Innate Node hadn't grown along with him. Though Leonel wasn't certain if it was meant to grow to the exaggerated size of his own, he was pretty sure that this was far too small.

Secondly, the aura that this Innate Node was giving off was only at the Fourth Dimension. Myghell was already a step away from the Sixth, and yet the Innate Node he had taken from Leonel had only crossed a single Dimensional barrier in all these years.

It was clear and obvious that the transplant wasn't perfect and if it wasn't for Myghell's Ability, it likely wouldn't have shown any progress at all. What was even more obvious was that the help Myghell had gained from this Innate Node to progress his Lineage Factor was far less than Leonel had originally assumed.

Realizing these things, how could Leonel not feel that things were practically comical at this point. All this commotion for this.

At the same time though, Leonel felt an apprehension creep up within his heart. His Innate Node was actually so powerful that proper comprehension of it had given Myghell so much strength...

Leonel suddenly coughed, his Divine Armor faded away as he fell backward.

'... I'm tired as hell...'

Leonel was asleep before he even hit the ground. He didn't even register that having lost the support of his spear, Myghell had fallen at the same time.

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Leonel's eyes opened slowly, finding himself staring at a familiar ceiling. He had been stripped down to his boxers again, though, causing his lip to twitch.

'I really need to talk to mom about this...'

Leonel was in the process of shaking his head when he smelt a familiar scent lingering in the air. That fragrance of apple was undeniable, and it definitely wasn't coming from him. At the same time, he was definitely alone in this room right now, so that could only mean...

'... Dammit.'

This time, nothing stopped Leonel from shaking his head.

'Hm?' Leonel looked toward his hand to find that his Innate Node was actually still in his palm. Then again, there were probably very few people who could hold a Scarlet Star Force Innate Node and not be affected by it. Whoever took it out of him the first time definitely suffered greatly, it was a miracle that Myghell even survived.

Leonel raised his hand up above his head, taking a good look at the Innate Node. It didn't seem as bright as it had before and even looked to be quite docile. It hummed with a steady rhythm as though it was feeling content and happy. Leonel didn't know if that was an illusion, or if it was real, but it was definitely the feeling he got.

"Hey, old man. Is there any benefit to having two Innate Nodes?"

"Do you take me for an encyclopedia?"

Despite the discontent in Wise Star Order's voice, he still didn't take long to answer.

"Yes. That's exactly what I take you for."

"I'm going to really enjoy killing you one day."

"Just answer the question."

"How the hell would I know? Regrowing an Innate Node is supposed to be impossible and being born with an Innate Node at all is an extraordinarily rare event. The only examples I know of individuals being born with two were cases where they were born with completely different Innate Nodes. I've never heard of the same person being born with two of the same."

"Oh? So there are people who've been born with two?"

"Yes, there are plenty of people born with far more talent than you, you arrogant little brat."

"When did I ever say that I was the most talented person in the world? Sounds like you're projecting, old man."

Wise Star Order only snorted in response.

"I've heard of a child born to the Spirituals born with Nine. A few of them were common, but three of them were True State Elements on the same level as yours."

"Didn't you say Spirituals were born without bodies? How could they have Innate Nodes? Doesn't that mean they just built a body with nine because they felt like it?"

"... I'm living with an idiot. Do you know anything about the body building process of the Spirituals? So why are you drawing conclusions so easily? Plus, do you have any idea of how finicky True State Elements are? You can't just take one because you feel like it."

Leonel chuckled. He often asked and made a lot of low level mistakes around Wise Star Order. These were deductions he could easily make himself, but the easiest way to get this old man to talk about what he knows was like this. He called Leonel arrogant, but which of them truly was more so?

The old man probably wasn't stupid enough to think that Leonel was so slow, but it could help in the long run regardless.

"So you're saying if this person had been born a regular human, they would have had nine Innate Nodes regardless? That's crazy. Does that mean he had 18 Nodes formed in the Third Dimension?"

"No, fool. It's because they were born a Spiritual that they could have such talent in the Elements. A human would never... Wait, what kind of nonsense did you just say? 18 Nodes? Get me out of here, I can't do this anymore. There's only so far you should take this retardation act of yours."

Leonel raised an eyebrow. "I actually wasn't trying to be stupid there. I have 10 Nodes."

"You have 10 Nodes, so wh..." Wise Star Order's voice trailed off. "... What did you just say?"

Chapter 1247 I'm Gonna Kill Him...

Leonel raised an eyebrow. This was the first time he had ever heard shock in Wise Star Order's voice. Even when he had been taken off guard by the fact Leonel's Innate Node had regrown itself, it had been marred by so much pain that it didn't shine through the way that it should have. And, quite frankly, if Wise Star Order had to decide what he was more shocked by, it was definitely this realization.

"What's wrong with you?"

"Wh... What's wrong with me?"

Wise Star Order didn't even have a witty comeback ready this time. He was caught between wanting to strangle Leonel to death, bashing his head against a wall, and praying to a non-existent god to explain to him if he had already died and entered the Gates of Hell.

Wise Star Order took deep breaths. His murderous thoughts would only end up harming himself. He had become used to controlling his impulses enough that he calmed eventually, shaking his head furiously.

"Say what you said one more time."

"I'm hungry." Leonel murmured.

He sat up, ready to ignore Wise Star Order to go and deal with that. But, he suddenly found a familiar table once again spread with food. However, this time, he hadn't been able to smell anything because it was all so perfectly packaged and ready.

Leonel blinked and walked over, opening the first container. When the aroma hit him, he felt his legs go weak. This food, it was Heaven sent. He had never felt such a strong need to stuff his face until his body imploded.

This time, he didn't control his impulses, immediately diving in. Just the first bite made his blood lap around his body, surging around at ungodly speeds and making his heart sing.

'This is so good...'

"You little bastard! Answer my question!"

"You didn't ask a question." Leonel spoke between muffled bites. "You stupidly asked me to repeat something you already heard the first time more than clearly enough. What's wrong with you, old man? Have you gone senile already?"

Wise Star Order's deep breaths got louder. Leonel thought about making a lewd joke, but he eventually refrained. This old man really seemed like he might explode any time now.

"Alright. Fine. Where are these supposed '10 Nodes' of yours."

"The first is in my brainstem, two down my spine, one for each of my lungs, one in my stomach, one for the outflow of blood through my heart, and one for the inflow. Finally, there's one in my left kidney, and my Scarlet Star Force Innate Node is in my right kidney."

Wise Star Order fell into silence for a very long time almost as though he had to go and confirm this for himself. Unfortunately, his perception was limited while stuck within the necklace so he could only vaguely make out that Leonel was, indeed, telling the truth. But, that only floored him all the more.

"... Why..."

Wise Star Order was a Savant so he had never had to form Nodes of his own. Or, more accurately, he couldn't. This was the trade off that came with being granted among the most powerful talent potentials in all of the universe. But, that didn't mean he didn't have a strong fundamental understanding.

Unlike other Savants, Wise Star Order could take over bodies. As such, he had certain methods to circumvent his limitations as a Savant. No body he had ever taken over had been in the Third Dimension, so he had never experienced it personally, but he knew exactly how important the foundation of Nodes in the Third Dimension could become in the future.

"Why? Don't you think that's the perfect set up for Nodes? Basically my entire respiratory system is boost by Force... Unfortunately, after my Innate Node regrew, I abandoned much of my initial goals for my Nodes. Most of my strength comes from either my raw body strength or external Force now."

"What?"

"Yeah." Leonel said absentmindedly, still devouring container after container of food. "Because all of my Nodes are connected and work in a feedback loop of sorts I have to be careful because of my Scarlet Star Force Innate Node."

"For example, when I take a breath, oxygen floods my lungs. That process is immediately amplified by my Nodes, and it facilitated the diffusion of oxygen into my blood stream. That blood will make it to my heart and be rushed out by yet another Node. Then there's the matter of my kidneys and stomach. My blood is constantly being passively purified, but not as much as it technically could..."

"Together, the system is efficient. But, because of the bottleneck of the weakness of my body, I can't make full use of it. If I let it all go and work like it was meant to, I feel like I would burn up from the inside out. If I wasn't limited like this, I would have probably reached the peak of the Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor a long time ago."

"..."

Wise Star Order found himself taking long breaths again. If he still had a heart and lungs, it would probably be leaping out of his throat right this moment. He really couldn't control himself any longer. If he heard one more nonsensical thing, he might completely explode.

"... Let me get this straight. You formed 10 Nodes capable of perfectly supplementing your body's strength in every way. But, because you were afraid of a Node you were born with as a baby, you put it under lock and key and continued like nothing was wrong?"

Leonel blinked, pondering for a moment as he swallowed a mouthful of rich soup. He wanted to describe it as liquid gold, but he was certain that gold wasn't anywhere near as appetizing. For a moment, he almost forgot to answer the question.

"... Well, it's not exactly like that. It wasn't the Innate Node I was born with as a baby. It's like a hundred times bigger than it was then and I hadn't had it all my life. That thing's dangerous."

"... I'm gonna kill him. I'm really gonna kill him."

Chapter 1248 Regulator

It took a long time for Wise Star Order to calm down. Or, more accurately, for him to stop writhing under the torture the necklace put him through to force him to calm down.

Even after he was heaving for breath for a reason beyond his anger, it still didn't seem to have faded.

For as long as he could remember, Wise Star Order had always hated stupid people. This was why his 'last life' was among the hardest to pull off, because he actually had to be nice to idiots. It was a torturous hell all to its own.

After his centuries of sacrifice didn't pan out like he wanted, he had reverted to his old self. No, he was even worse. If he hadn't been restrained, he might have really killed Leonel even if it meant never getting the answers he wanted.

"Do you have any idea how important your Nodes are to the foundation of your strength? How is it that you've even survived this long?!"

"Well, I have a pretty special magic system backing me. Thanks to my Mage Core, using atmospheric Force is pretty easy. So, ignoring my Nodes has always been pretty easy."

Leonel's Mage Core had blossomed into an enormous tree by this point in his Ethereal Glabella. It was covered in the same five colored leaves that had made up the original, but now there was a sixth slowly germinating and rooting itself. It had a radiant blue color and was sometimes misty, sometimes icy, and other times as free flowing as water.

From the very beginning, the Mage Core represented the true state of Camelot's magic. With it, Leonel didn't need a Spiritual Medium like a wand or a staff to use magic. As such, ignoring his own Nodes had been exceptionally easy.

Wise Star Order paused. He had been in Leonel's Ethereal Glabella before. Of course, he had been distracted by the Seven Stars, but there was no way he'd miss the Mage Core, especially after he had hidden the second half of his soul away.

Leonel's mother had a lot of new things he could learn about the Mage Core in the techniques she had left behind for him. But, he had yet to get to them just yet.

"... Do you have any idea what you've been doing to yourself?"

Leonel laughed. "Why don't you just explain instead of tiptoeing around everything so you can have more chances to call me an idiot?"

"Ignoring your own Nodes is like trying to breathe with your lungs clipped. It's like trying to speak without a tongue. It's like trying to eat without your fucking stomach, how could you be so stupid?"

Leonel shook his head. "You think I don't realize this is a problem? But what do you want me to do about it? The Innate Node Myghell took out of him was the size of a thumb nail. Mine is the size of a fist. Do you not understand my dilemma here?"

Wise Star Order was taken aback again. "What...?"

"It's. The. Size. Of. A. Fist. It's taken over my whole right kidney. If I don't restrict my Nodes, all of my blood would flow through it. If that happens, I'll literally burn from the inside out. You wouldn't even have a chance at taking over my body anymore at that point."

Wise Star Order was, once again, left entirely speechless.

An Innate Node the Size of a Fist? That was completely unheard of.

To put this matter into perspective, the fact Leonel had formed his regular Nodes out of 100 cells already placed him at the pinnacle of geniuses. What made Innate Nodes so special aside from the power of Force they held was the fact they were so large to begin with.

A finger nail compared to the size of a 100 cell Node was astronomical! If you also consider the fact that a 10 cell Node was already considered to be quite large, then the fact that most could only form one cell Nodes, and you'd understand just how exaggerated this matter was!

Wise Star Order couldn't even begin to wrap his head around what the hell a Node the size of a fist represented. In fact, his head felt light and he didn't even want to argue anymore.

"... Explain how you formed your 10 Nodes to me."

Leonel just gave Wise Star Order a casual explanation. He had felt like the only way to reach 100% compatibility with his Nodes was to form 10. It was the only way to ensure that he got both his kidneys as that everything would be balanced.

After listening, Wise Star Order fell into deep silence. Leonel could feel him calculating something, though he felt that his tools were more lacking than his were to do so? Was this how 'normal' people thought? It seemed... slow and inefficient.

Though, that conclusion was only considering Wise Star Order's raw soul strength. He still computed things faster than Leonel overall, he was just wasting his max potential. But, that could only be expected considering he didn't have Leonel's ability nor the higher level Dream Force.

"I see..."

By the time Wise Star Order had spoke, Leonel was already on his last container of food, the satisfaction he felt not wavering in the slightest.

"It should be a series of compounding factors. Trying to form both Nodes at the same time. Your father's concoctions. The fact that the locations you chose happened to mirror each other perfectly. The fact that one of those locations happened to be the exact location our Node had been birthed into in the first place... The fact you were actually stupid enough to try..."

"You really are a lucky bastard to be alive right now."

Leonel raised an eyebrow. "There's something you're still not telling me."

"It's not that I'm not telling you, it's that it's far above your paygrade. Why do you think there's a hard cap at Nine Nodes? What's regulating the limits? What's stopping people from forming 10, 11, 12, 50, even?"

"You basically stole energy from the Regulator of the Dimensional Verse and used it to do something that should have been impossible."

Chapter 1249 Better Analogy

Leonel placed down his final plate, his brows furrowing.

"Regulator?"

"You're not a complete fool when you decide so. Think about it with that head of yours."

"When a weapon reaches the Life Grade, it becomes a holistic whole, fusing to become something of complete oneness and becoming a unique existence. Across cultures, there are countless philosophies that follow that sort of mantra."

Leonel nodded. He could already think of one, and that was just Earth. The concept of one giving birth to two, and two to three, and three to one. A cyclical beauty. It seemed that the Life Grade was very much like this philosophy.

"Since you know, then the answer is both simple and complex. What is the bigger example of oneness than the entire Dimensional Verse itself?"

Leonel froze.

He didn't know if he was imagining it, but he felt as though a strong breeze had brushed against the back of his neck, sending a tingling sensation down his back.

Wise Star Order frowned. 'He understood?'

The Luxnix Ancestor hadn't expected this. Understanding this was both a blessing and a curse, and it was also the key to grasping the God Path far beyond the first step at the Sixth Dimension. But, the curse portion of this all weighed exceptionally heavy.

It was all speculation and even Wise Star Order had only heard tidbits and rumors about it... For once, he had harmed Leonel without even trying to do so. He had genuinely not expected Leonel to grasp anything from the words he had just spoken.

The difference between 'understanding' and truly understanding were two different concepts. It was like the difference between knowing that a car ran on gas and understanding how combustion engines worked. They couldn't be compared.

The fact that Leonel understood what he meant with just a single sentence spoke volumes about the kind of level his mind worked at.

"... Seems you screwed me this time, old bastard. You win another round."

Wise Star Order's lip twitched. 'He understood to that depth as well? I really didn't even do it on purpose this time. How could I think a fool like you could have a little bit of intelligence?'

What Leonel had understood was complex and multi layered, but he was fairly certain that his conclusion was correct.

'Everything is a matter of perspective...' He thought to himself. 'A weapon is considered to be an object, but how many metals is it forged of? And could it even be considered independent of its creators? And even if it entered the Life Grade, would it really, truly, be one existence? What about its atoms? What about the parts of its atoms? The parts of those parts?'

'Everything can be broken down into something smaller, technically. But, that also means that the larger your scope and the broader your sight, the bigger your definition of oneness becomes...

'A city, a country, a planet, a star, a solar system, a galaxy... On a large enough scale, even a universe can be counted as One.

'In that case, if a universe is a perfectly closed system, wouldn't it too be in the Life Grade? Maybe it would be at a level within the Life Grade we can't fathom, but it would still be at that level regardless. In that case... Could it too... have its own 'personality'?'

Leonel had concluded all of this in an instant and that comprehension made him feel like he had been marked somehow... As though he was now being constantly monitored...

It made his hairs stand on end.

SWOOSH! BANG!

Leonel's body increased by a size before being squeezed back down, the definition of his muscles seeming to only grow.

'... Tier 5...'

The Fifth Dimension should have been far slower than the Fourth, and in Leonel's case, it technically was. After all, he had leapt through the Fourth Dimension in a single bound. But, that was only because he had practiced Metal Body first, something it had taken Leonel months to years of effort to reach any sort of accomplishment in.

But, his pace through the Fifth Dimension felt blazing. He wasn't even relying on like he could have. His mind was constantly evolving on its own without even much conscious effort. Leonel had a feeling that this had to be related to his King's Might. Something about his will being tangible made breaking through these shackles feel exceptionally easy.

"... One way or another, you would have been marked by the Regulator. Your Scarlet Star Force Innate Node is basically a natural disaster waiting to happen. Just consider this an early initiation."

"I feel like we're missing the important topic at hand here."

"There's nothing more to say. Congratulations. You've learned about the glass ceiling. Feel free to feel despair, it'll give me some sorely needed entertainment."

"You've been stuck in a Bronze Tablet for years, I'm sure you can do with some boredom."

"What do you know? The Luxnix family estate is always filled with drama. You'd be surprised how much fun you can have peeking into everyone's private lives."

"If you're a pervert, just say so, old man."

"I'm not going to let an impotent virgin like you ruin my fun, brat."

Leonel's lip twitched. Virgin was fair enough, but when did he become impotent? He had a ceiling tile with a hole through it to prove his point.

"You're one to talk. You couldn't even have sex with your own body even if you wanted to."

"Take that back!"

"Oh, did I strike a nerve? Oh my, I'm shivering in my boots."

"I'm going to enjoy killing you."

"Why, so you can have sex with my body? You really are a pervert."

Wise Star Order seemed to realize at this point that he was close to losing the war. How had he let Leonel catch onto one of his weaknesses like this? He had slipped up.

Without a choice, he forced himself to change the subject.

"Just stop holding back your Nodes, brat. The entire point of a Nodes is to connect with your others. At this point, you're like a constipated middle-aged woman on menopause. You need to release. And now that you've waited so long, it's going to hurt like hell."

"... Couldn't you have picked a better analogy?"

Chapter 1250 Basin

"I need you to understand how horrible what you've done to your body is. Have you never held in a fart for too long? I don't understand how you don't feel uncomfortable all over. Plus, do you never sleep? How did you even manage to keep this up?"

Leonel frowned. He had never felt uncomfortable. Plus, even if he did, what was a little discomfort compared to being fried to ash by his own Innate Node? A part of him still somewhat believed that Wise Star Order was trying to trick him again. But, he deduced that that was unlikely.

Also, it wasn't very difficult to manage this because he just set one of his minds to the task.

"You're pretty vulgar for an old man. Now that I think about it, I have two Savants under my wing. You can train them."

Wise Star Order had been too surprised today so he had begun to think a measure before he spoke. Still, hearing that Leonel had two Savants with him made him speechless again. Since when did his kind start to grow on trees? But, worst yet, what made Leonel think he could train them? He had his ability and they had their own.

Plus, wasn't he afraid that he'd use the Savants to mess with him? The relationship between Master and Disciple was pretty special and Savants could either be much harder or much easier to manipulate than a normal human. He was playing a risky game here.

"What makes you think I can train them?"

"Even if you don't have their abilities, I'm sure you have a deep understanding of what it means to grow powerful as a Savant. Plus, you've seen a lot."

"What are their abilities?"

"One has a spatial lock ability, the other has a defensive mirror ability. They both seem to be variations or mutations of known Ability Indexes, Vice with a Spatial Affinity Ability Index, and Candle with an Energy Shield Ability Index."

"... Lucky brats."

Wise Star Order was jealous. If he had those abilities instead of his own, he would have been able to do great things.

In the end, he shook his head. He wasn't naïve enough to believe that was true. If he had been born with another ability, not only would he have lost his long lifespan, but he might not have been able to keep his abilities a secret. By then, he would have become a weapon of war for the Luxnix like so many other Savants before him.

"Alright, I'll guide them. But don't blame me when they become more loyal to me than you."

Leonel chuckled. What choice did he have?

He was completely unequipped to care for Savants and the actions of his grandfather, though a risk mitigation measure, had made them only more unpredictable.

Wise Star Order definitely wasn't normal, and he had his quirks. But, he still functioned within realms of reasons to certain predictable limits. He was on a spectrum, but it wasn't to the point Leonel couldn't understand him.

Vice and Candle, however, were completely anti social and couldn't properly interact with the world. They needed a mentor like Wise Star Order if they would be Leonel's guards in the future.

Plus, what other option was there? At least he had a modicum of control over Wise Star Order. If he handed them to some teacher with unknown motives at the Void Palace, who knew what could happen?

Leonel stood, arranging the containers. After he was done, he thought for a moment before pulling out a large basin three quarters the height of a normal man. Then, he filled it up with Cleansing Waters.

He thought that he should at least do this here and like this. If he was really going to die, then hopefully his mom and grandmother would be able to stabilize the situation. If he was within the Segmented Cube, who knew what might happen?

"That... Don't tell me..."

"I've heard the spiel already. Just rip the band-aid off now. I use this water to flush my toilets. Good? Good. Now focus, I'm trying not to die here."

Leonel threw his boxers to one side and hopped in, a cool and refreshing feeling hitting him from head to toe. Even after so long, Sixth Dimensional Cleansing Waters would never not feel soothing to an extreme.

"... I need a new word for you. Idiot and fool doesn't seem to cut it... You have this kind of treasure and you don't even know how to use it... How are you supposed to use Cleansing Water properly if you've sealed off your Nodes?! It's through them you're supposed to take in the greatest benefits. Why are you using it like normal water?!"

Wise Star Order had reached the point of shedding tears. He truly couldn't take it anymore.

Leonel stopped listening to the old man. He had only brought out Cleansing Waters because they had an exceptionally high boiling point and its Specific Heat made regular water look like a highly conductive metal.

'No need to overthink it... Just... Just relax.'

Leonel slowly released control over his Nodes, allowing Force to flow through them naturally. He began very slowly, only going bit by bit. Even if this was the natural state of things, after so long doing things the wrong way, he didn't think that letting it go all at once would be a good thing.

But then... The pain came.

A heart tearing bloating began to push out from within him. Leonel grit his teeth, his skin beginning to glow a fierce red. But, just as that was happening, as though a sieve had been connected to the inside of his body, Leonel suddenly felt the Cleansing Waters around him drill into his pores and enter him.

His mind was suddenly on full alert, but the feeling felt so good that his inhibitions seemed to all be released at once, an involuntary moan leaving his lips.

Somehow, with timing blessed by the gods, the door to Leonel's Penthouse Suite opened at that moment.

Leonel's and Aina's eyes met across space, but the former's face was still contorted with pleasure. With most of his body being submerged under water, making it difficult to see much of anything outside the strong outline of his collar bone and upper chest, the situation was simply impossible to explain.

Aina blinked and smiled lightly. Without a word, she went to the table and scooped up all of the containers into her arms. Her steps were elegant and unhurried, a radiant beauty beyond words exuding from her. Just the delicate fragrance she released alone was more enticing than even she could imagine.

Her appearance only made it harder for Leonel to control how the Cleansing Waters were making him feel. For a moment, something within his lower belly truly did light on fire, though it was hard to tell if it was lust or his Innate Node trying to burn a hole through him.

To Leonel, this was even worse than getting caught snuggling with Joel. He couldn't even find the words to speak.

"I will bring you dinner later, you can focus on your relaxing."

With a click, the door closed.

'...'