

Descent 1401

[Chapter 1401 Tortoise?](#)

Leonel looked like an artillery unit, if artillery units came with one arm and humanoid forms, that is.

His entire body was strapped in countless daggers and needles. Just a cursory glance put the numbers well into the hundreds. They wrapped around his torso, his groin, his thighs, his calves, his ankles, even his neck! The only part of him that wasn't swamped was his left arm.

As though this wasn't enough, ten enormous javelin containers crashed into the ground, each easily over three meters tall and the javelins within them being even taller.

This was enough to make the crowd raise an eyebrow, but it was like Leonel wasn't satisfied with making a fool of himself only this much.

On the ground around him, several round shields lay.

"Is the Littlest Nova of the Morales family a tortoise or something?"

The individual who spoke was a prominent member of the sword factions, clearly uncaring about offending the Morales family. Plus, with Velasco gone, what did he have to fear?

A sputtering of laughter followed his comments. No matter how you looked at it, Leonel feared for his life so much that he had drowned himself in weapons he wouldn't even be able to use to their fullest potential.

Cross referencing his current appearance with all of the most successful individuals of the past, then seeing how each of Aina and Amery only had a single weapon each, it only made him look all the more pathetic.

Amery wielded a single wooden sword, just like he always did.

Ain wielded a single battle ax with a polearm taller than even her own body.

None of them even bothered to wear any armor. But then there was Leonel who would have probably drowned his face in weapons if he got the chance to do so.

"You've missed the big picture, Olfin."

"Oh? Enlighten me."

"Just look at him. He's so flustered he can't even tell the difference between a spear and javelin. Tell me, you think he thinks the more spears he has, the better he'll perform?"

The laughter of the sword faction bordered on exaggerated. It was as though they were venting all the stifling frustration Velasco had left them with. In just these few hours alone, the head butting between the sword and spear factions was quickly reaching a fever pitch and it only seemed to be getting worse.

Unfortunately, the spear faction couldn't even say anything in rebuttal. They had no idea what Leonel was doing. What did a Morales need so many daggers and needles for?! And could he really not tell the difference between a javelin and a spear?!

Javelins were lighter, had smaller heads, and were designed to balance in the air. A true spearman should be able to tell the difference with a single touch!

"Ha! I think you've overestimated his intelligence, Sarod. If he thinks so many shields will help him, he's already a lost cause. Look at him, he hasn't even opened his eyes yet and the simulation is already about to begin."

The laughter continued to ring, but in the skies, Cornelius stood with his arms crossed. His mind flashed with images he had seen just hours ago.

Still, even he was a bit confused. What was Leonel trying to do here?

...

Leonel's eyes remained closed, his mind entering a state of focus.

Within this Dream World, a perfect replica of his current state reflected in his mind. Then, one by one, the daggers, needles and knives dotting his body lifted up.

Numbers began to fly about within Leonel's Dream World, building a new Dreamscape in the blink of an eye.

Weight, balance, effective range, hardness, sharpness, even how well they accepted the flow of Force, everything was labeled and organized.

When Leonel's eyes opened, a deep sharpness split the space before them in two. At the very same instant, whether by coincidence or not, the growing peanut gallery surrounding the tower fell into silence.

The world of deep fog around Leonel rumbled.

Leonel didn't care if his right arm was useless. Today, he'd be sure to ploy through.

Leonel stepped on the shield before him. It was the only one that didn't have a round form.

It was a tower shield probably designed for someone much taller than him. It was a meter and a half wide and three meters tall. It had an intricate design and Force Art on its face, but it was ultimately just a Fourth Dimensional product, as were all of Leonel's other shields as well.

But that was exactly why he chose them. These shields weren't designed for protecting him.

The moment Leonel's second foot stepped onto the shield, it rose high into the air, soaring three meters up in the blink of an eye.

At the same time, the round shields scattered around him shot forward, scooping up the ten javelin containers and raising them into the air as well.

Leonel looked forward, feeling the rumbling of the first floor continue. And then, they appeared.

They were hulking beasts, monstrosities that seemed to lumber and yet had speed that could rarely be matched within the Fifth Dimension.

Chasm Flame Lions. They had manes of flickering black flames and claws that shimmered with silvery, starry lights. Even the smallest among them was three meters tall on all fours, the larger ones measuring in at five.

...

"He got a beast horde on the first floor? Unlucky," Cornelius mumbled.

The theme on the first floor was locked in from floors one to nine, with a 'Boss' waiting on the tenth. Beast hordes were often the most taxing to deal with and often became a huge stamina drain.

The events of the Void Tower were random to stifle preparation. However, as a result, it was impossible to make everything perfectly fair.

p "Let's see—" Cornelius' words caught in his throat.

...

Leonel didn't wait, his palm swiping at lightning speed and snatching three needles from his hip.

He stepped hard on the tower shield, a loud boom resounding as his left arms cocked back and his torso twisted explosively.

BANG!

The needles whistled through the air, a shockingly bright Bow Force following enveloping them.

The first three Chasm Flame Lions found their foreheads pierced through.

One could follow with their line of sight the trail of the three needles. Everywhere they passed by within the body of the lions, a violent bulge would take place until all three exited with just as much fierceness.

BANG!

The three lions imploded into a rain of blood and gore.

Leonel's fingers beckoned, causing the three needles to zip back even as he cocked his arm back once again.

A slaughter had begun.

[Chapter 1402 All Time](#)

Leonel's sharp eyes seemed to pierce through everything. Every time he threw, three would die, his Bow Force leaving blazing trailed through the black and foggy skies.

He soared through the skies, his javelin containers following in his wake.

The Chasm Fire Lions opened their mouths, sending beams of black fire shooting for Leonel. However, as though he couldn't see them at all.

His right foot stepped forward, his left arm shooting forward once again.

The needles whizzed by, bypassing the arc of flames that seemed to appear before Leonel in the blink of an eye.

Leonel didn't elevate too high off the ground. The moment he tried to, he felt a strong pressure. It was clear that the Void Trials wouldn't allow him to just easily cheat his way to victory by plucking them off from above.

In real life, just flying into the skies wouldn't be convenient. The air often had even more savage and primal enemies waiting.

Due to this, it wasn't difficult in the slightest for him to be attacked. In fact, since he could only fly three meters up, his javelin containers seeming to be an exception as they could go much higher, it was still quite easy for even physical attacks to be launched at him.

BANG!

The beams of fire seemed to completely envelop Leonel.

But, when the air cleared, the fire had suddenly shot into a single palm, forming a concentrated ball of fire in Leonel's hand.

To try and play around with fire before him? It seemed that these lions overestimated themselves a bit too much.

What Leonel didn't know was that his actions had shocked those on the outside. No matter how high your affinity, you shouldn't be able to so easily snatch Force in the control of another being. And yet, Leonel had done it as though it was as simple as breathing.

This was a hidden power of the Mage Core that Leonel hadn't realized was so abnormal. But very soon, the entire world would know that those with Fire Affinity should steer clear of the Morales family's Littlest Nova.

His palm flared, the ball of fire splintering into a dozen controlled and concentrated javelins. Leonel's Spear Force and Bow Force surged.

With a wave of his hands, the javelins shot forward, all 12 piercing into the body of the largest Chasm Fire Lion.

A roar of pain and horror resounded as the lion was suddenly enveloped by its own fire, its body incinerating from the inside out.

In its final moments, it thrashed about, slapping some of the smaller lions to death.

Leonel didn't even pay attention to the death of the lion. He was systematic and cold. He attacked once. His confidence was such that he didn't need to double check.

He crashed into the first line of charging beast, tilting the tower shield he was riding upward and slamming down hard.

BANG!

The head of the lion imploded, but Leonel had already brought out a dagger from his thigh, whipping it to the side.

A lion whose mouth had opened wide to bite Leonel's head off found its throat greeted by a flying dagger laced with Bow Force.

The daggers shot through the back of its skull as though it was butter, spiraling through the air and curving through the head of a second lion.

At some unknown time, a needle had appeared between Leonel's teeth. His chest expanded, his eyes flashing as a belly full of air jetted out. A line of crimson flames and Bow Force followed, tearing a line through the lions that had tried to bear down on him from the front.

Three lions found themselves imploding one after another, their flesh as fragile as wet paper.

Leonel palm opened, his thrown dagger snapping back into place, only for another flick of his wrist to send it flying through another skull.

Leonel's wrist throws weren't as powerful as his full body throw, but what was undeniable was the fact they still had their own powerful strength, and how could they not? A spearman without powerful wrists was a weak spearman.

Barely several minutes had passed, but Leonel wiped the entirety of the first floor, standing unmoving.

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<Beast Horde Cleared – 00:02:31>

<New First Attempt Record Set>

There were several leaderboards that lined the outside of the Void Palace.

New records were divided into whether it was a first or later attempt. In addition, because of the randomness of the Void Tower, they were also divided into floor types.

There were clear records for single floors and tiers. Tiers referred to groups of ten floors, where Leonel was currently within the first.

The Beast Horde Leaderboard shifted. It was a list dominated by those who controlled large area of effect attacks and archers for obvious reasons. And yet, there was no clear on a first attempt faster than Leonel's own.

<1. Leonel Morales – 00:02:31>

<2. Sewell Tarius – 00:02:58>

<3. Alphon Pyius – 00:03:03>

<4. Milazor Ram – 00:03:09>

However, this leaderboard only contained those who were currently disciples of the Void Palace. There was always a duplicate leaderboard for all-time measurements. However, it was very rare for this

leaderboard to move. And, even if there were movements, it would be deep into the hundreds upon a leaderboard that only displayed a thousand to begin with.

Today, though, that changed.

<1. Reginalde Taurus – 00:01:42>

<2. Nozig Suaird – 00:01:48>

<3. Asce Morales – 00:01:49>

...

<58. Leonel Morales – 00:02:31>

Top 100. No one here could remember the last time there had been a change that high. The surroundings had fallen silent for quite a while now, but it seemed even more all encompassing than before.

However, this shock only lasted for a moment before it was overwhelmed by another.

The leaderboards moved again, but this time, it wasn't for the sake of Leonel.

And then, it shifted again, once again... not for the sake of Leonel.

Under the shocked gazes of those watching, the leader board for Forest Goblins and Stone Maze began to shift as well. Both Amery and Aina had set their own records.

However Aina's, being the only one of them without a single injury, set an eye popping number none were quite ready for.

Forest Goblins – First Attempt – All Time

<1. Treanna Viror 00:04:29>

<2. Aina Brazinger 00:04:32>

[Chapter 1403 Efficiency](#)

The shock was palpable. The Forest Goblin floor was exceptionally difficult not only because of the strength of the enemies, but more importantly due to their stealth. Just finding the targets took time, let alone dealing with their assault once they were done.

No one was sure how Aina did it. She seemed to just stumble onto her targets one after another, and even when most would have thought that the floor was cleared, she continued to attack and took out several more before finally putting down her ax.

In the end, she was only three seconds away from surpassing the previously long held record, and that was set by a person from a family so in tune with nature and greenery that the plants practically spoke to her. The idea that Aina would come even close to such a feat was baffling to the point of being difficult to accept.

However, it felt like today would be a day the world lost its logic.

Stone Maze – First Attempt – All Time

<1. Berouge Gemin 00:07:21>

...

<67. Amery Suaird 00:07:52>

Three youths, three new records, all set back to back to back. It was more than just a little difficult to accept, it bordered on ridiculous.

When they had said that there was something special about this generation, the truth was that only the older generations had taken it seriously. The youths, however, snorted at the prospect. They had been on the frontlines, slaving for the Void Palace everyday, why would they suddenly move to the side obediently so that these youths could take their spot?

In truth, most of them had just directly ignored the rumors. They felt that once their juniors stepped foot in this place, they would quickly learn their place and realize whatever genius they had on the outside wasn't worth much here.

However, now, they fell into silence. There were no longer any jeers, no longer any talks of beauty leaderboards, there was only a quiet brewing.

It seems that they would have to put some more effort into showing these juniors exactly where their place was in the hierarchy. What was a military without strict rules? What was a military without strict hierarchy? The sooner these juniors learned exactly how well they placed, the better.

Of course, while there were many with these thoughts, there were also a few Faction Leaders who licked at their lips, already communicating with their networks to see how many resources they could move around to pull these geniuses into their fold.

However, in that time...

<Second Floor Cleared – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:02:19>

<Third Floor Cleared – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:02:11>

When people were shocked awake by their thoughts, they were suddenly stunned to find that Leonel was actually getting faster rather than slowing down. They had been shocked by the appearance of Aina and then subsequently Amery, they hadn't even noticed that in the time it had taken them to clear the first floor, Leonel had already long since moved on and stepped onto the fourth.

Each floor should have been getting more difficult. No one could wrap their heads around why Leonel was only getting faster. Was it because he hadn't been trying earlier? Was he not aware that there were records on the line?

These leaderboards weren't just for show. Those that could enter the top three would gain equivalent resources for as long as they maintained it. These rewards were even more plentiful when it was the all-time leaderboard. For Leonel to be taking it easy wasn't 'cool', it was foolish.

What these people didn't know, though, was that Leonel really was unaware of the leaderboard. But, even so, he wasn't taking it 'easy'.

'He's... becoming more efficient.' Cornelius thought to himself.

This thought was the very same thought every individual in the crowd who had a calculative ability or mind concluded. And, the more they observed, the more lost they seemed to become in Leonel's art.

Leonel never used more effort than the last time. Yet his needles became faster, the arcs of his daggers became sharper, and when he finally brought out a javelin...

...

Leonel's chest expanded, his gaze lighting with a fiery light. His hips locked into place, his thighs bulging and his torso tightening to the point his body became a wall of steel.

His left arm cocked back, his wrist stabilized, his forearm flexing and his shoulder coming to a grinding halt as he reach back as far as his flexibility would allow.

He locked eyes on a towering red-scaled python slithering up 20 meters into the sky not even counting its coiled and stabilizing base.

And then the world seemed to split.

FUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!

BANG!

The javelin shot out from Leonel's grip like an iron ball out of a cannon. The air imploded and violent concentric circles of wind quickly formed, only to be left behind in an instantaneous blink.

BANG!

The scales of the python split before the javelin even landed. And, by the time it did, a hole with a three-meter diameter was blasted through its skull.

<Fourth Floor Clear – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:01:59>

Leonel broke the two minute mark, and yet he was completely oblivious. He had already moved up from 58th to 1st on two all time leaderboards, but his eyes seemed to still be calculating, spinning at speed most couldn't understand.

He wanted more efficiency, greater efficiency, and it wasn't without reason. These beasts had only ever been at the Fifth Dimension and Leonel simply didn't believe that things would continue like this. The Void Palace was far too sadistic to allow anyone to reach the Galaxy Rank while just displaying Fifth Dimensional strength. If he couldn't become efficient, he would quickly find himself ruined.

Just as advertised, the moment the horde of the Fifth Floor appeared, Leonel's gaze narrowed, his vision coming into very sharp focus.

It was another group of reptilian serpents, but they all had back like wings and spewed acid from their mouths.

However, this wasn't too much to accept. What was difficult, though, was that they were all outrageously fast and each and every one had entered the Sixth Dimension.

[Chapter 1404 All Out](#)

Leonel exhaled a breath. He tested the range of his elevation height again, just to see if he was locked into the same rules and quickly found out that the answer was yes.

That much was still fine. The point of the shield he was riding on wasn't to escape, the only purpose it served was to allow Leonel to maneuver and throw at the same time. It was easier to do it like this than it would be with his wings because it could counterbalance his downward force with upward thrust.

'The air pressure shifted, the atmosphere is different, the Anarchic Force concentration has raised...'

Leonel's mind began to calculate once more, adjusting his effective range, his throwing speed, and the output of Force that would minimize his stamina drain while maximizing lethality.

It was all completed in the blink of an eye. Leonel zipped forward in the next, his left hand reaching for his body once against and pulling out six long needles, nestling two a piece to three gaps between his fingers.

His gaze turned cold and the world seemed to be covered in numbers.

His arm whipped forward, releasing all six needles at once. But through the air, it truly looked as though there were only three. They flew so close together and so perfectly that they might as well have been flying as one. However, in a blink, one had surpassed the other, zooming forward with a burst of acceleration the other simply didn't have.

Even with this change, it looked just the same. Three streaks through the skies, each just as blinding and powerful as the other.

They arcs through the air as one, curving through the air until they hit their targeted three different flying serpents, each right beneath the jaw.

PENG! PENG! PENG!

The needles collided with their targets and then sprung away as though meeting steel walls. Leonel's Bow Force might as well have been a splash of water to them. However, just as quickly as this occurred.

PCHU! PCHU! PCHU!

The second line of three needles landed in the exact same spot, skewering the flying serpents.

However, Leonel only shook his head. With his sharp eyes, he could see that the needles had only penetrated a part of the way through, taking advantage of what had been a micro tear. But, the flying serpents were only knocked back for a moment and hardly felt the attack, let alone dying from it.

That was part of the reason despite his skill in throwing, Leonel always gravitated back toward a bow. The effort to power output of a bow was simply on an entirely different level. He had gone all out with that throw just now, but had barely pierced skin.

To make matters worse, in order to maximize his control of these shields and these throwing objects, he had chosen the former to be at the Fourth Dimension and the latter to be at the Fifth. Leonel obviously didn't have telekinetic abilities, he was using his Earth Variant Affinity to control these metals to do his bidding.

If he could only throw weapons, but not retrieve them, he would very quickly run out. And, holding all of these weapons wasn't nearly as good as having a single spatial treasure that only held arrows like he had seen this damned tower provide.

So, because his weapons were only at the Fifth Dimension, they had an even harder time piercing skin.

Of course, the Void Tower didn't allow you to just choose weapons of whatever Dimension you wanted. But, here, the Sixth Dimension was considered 'standard'. Leonel had to purposely demote himself to maximize his chances.

The Rapax had really done a good job of screwing him this time around. Leonel could only sigh.

'... There's only one way... I guess I have to stop worrying about stamina and resource consumption...'

Leonel swerved out of the way of a projectile of acid, his gaze glowing. Runes began to appear within his irises one after another. First one, then two, then four, then eight.

The space around him trembled.

Leonel's fingers flicked backward, causing the three needles that had been knocked off course to rush back to his hands. He snagged them out of the air and threw them back with even more force than before.

This time, however, they left a trail of crimson in their wake, a burning inferno threatening to melt everything in its path erupting.

The three needles landed exactly where they had originally, driving into the butt of their stuck counterparts.

There was nothing the flying serpents could do to dodge this.

"SKKREEEE!"

BANG!

An enormous hole was ripped through their throats and out the back of their skulls.

Leonel exhaled a light breath, steam pushing out through his teeth and lips, red flickering within his irises. He had already pushed himself to the limit once today and managed to use <Instantaneous Recovery> to get back on his feet. But, since then, he had fought a battle with Amery, then used several hours to draw an array back to the Human Domain.

With the current state of his mind, sustaining eight Destruction Runes was a tall order. And, it only made it worse that once he used it, the object he had used it on would be finished and vanish for good.

Leonel had a few hundred throwing knives and objects, but facing beast hordes, he didn't know if it would last even three more floors, and he still wasn't sure exactly how far he had yet to travel.

But facing this opportunity, there was only one real path to take. He had to go all out.

Leonel's chest heaved, the daggers he plucked away from his hip already glowing a fiendish shade of red before he even finished imbuing them with his mark.

'You annoying spitting snakes put me in this situation, come die then.'

Leonel unleashed a barrage of relentless assaults, razing everything to the ground. There was nothing elegant and beautiful about his efficiency any longer. He saw a target, and he destroyed it from the inside out. Nothing more, nothing less.

<Fifth Floor Cleared – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:02:17>

<Sixth Floor Cleared – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:01:51>

<Seventh Floor Cleared – New Record – Leonel Morales 00:01:48>

[Chapter 1405 Ninth Floor](#)

<Eighth Floor Cleared – Leonel Morale 00:08:47>

Leonel breathed heavily.

His body was still fine, not having suffered any wounds just yet. But, anyone who had been watching him battle previously would notice quite a striking difference: you could actually see the skin tight black fabric that wrapped around him, making his arm sling and useless right arm all the more obvious.

Leonel had been right. By the end of the seventh floor, he had run out of flying daggers and needles, making his life a living hell on the eighth. It had taken him almost ten minutes to clear the whole of the eighth floor, and the ninth floor started off even worse.

The beasts from the fifth floor to this point had all been in Tier 1 of the Sixth Dimension, however they had all been relatively weak and easier to handle. If Leonel had to describe it, it wasn't quite like what fighting Sixth Dimensional experts from the Milky Way would feel like, but it was only barely a step above.

The difficulty of these towers obviously wasn't in quality, at least not for this version. It was more so in quantity... Until the ninth floor, that is.

Leonel was suddenly faced with a horde of blue furred, four armed apes. Runes flickered about their bodies, giving Leonel a sort of stifling feeling, as though no matter how hard he attacked them, he would never be able to break through their defenses.

Leonel didn't quite understand where these Runes were coming from, if they were similar to his own Destruction Runes, or something entirely different. But, once he stepped into the God Path, he would understand what these Runes represented and exactly why it was Conon had said stepping into the Sixth Dimension would help them all to close the gap between themselves and Leonel's Innate Node.

These were indeed Runes similar to Leonel's Destruction Runes, and they were, indeed, primed toward defense. And yes... That did mean that Leonel's task had suddenly become another living nightmare.

'... Shit.'

...

It was suffice to say that Leonel's record breaking streak had come to an end, they could all see it. But, they could also see the reasons why this was. No one knew the details of this year's True Selection, but it had caused a major commotion that resulted in even Void Senate members clashing heads.

Just looking at Leonel and Amery, it was clear that the both of them had taken this the hardest.

But, by contrast, Aina only seemed to shine brighter. Leonel had done the bulk of the work when it came to battling in the Rapax Nest, much to her dissatisfaction, so this was clearly one reason. But, the truth was that even if this wasn't the case...

Simply put, Aina's stamina was quite literally endless. And, even if she somehow ran into a wall, she could just snatch stamina from others.

When you could tap into your Life Force and the Life Force of others whenever you pleased, 'physical limitations' wasn't something you would ever face, at least not when you were in your right mind.

The 'Berserk' state that Aina's previously faulty Berserk God Lineage Factor sent her into was almost always the reason she spiraled out of control and over extended herself. Now that she was healed, that was nothing more than a problem of the past. If she needed to battle for months or even years without rest... she could do so.

...

Leonel was forced into a corner, unable to dodge as a fist half the size of his body crashed right into his chest.

Luckily, he managed to activate his Bronze Runes first, mitigating much of the damage. But, this was just yet another stamina drain that he now had to sustain.

Blood flew from his lips, his ribs threatening to crack as he was sent barrelling away. Maybe the worst part of the situation was that the only reason his ribs had managed to survive was because his right arm was slung across his body, forcing it to take the brunt of the hit.

The pain was like a fire lighting in his flesh and Leonel's mind threatened to go blank for a moment. If not for a timely use of Dream Sense, it might have really happened.

He crashed against the ground, managing to use the momentum to spring up and flip to his feet, his heel still grinding into the ground as he slid backward.

There was only one enormous ape left. He was certain that he had already shot well over the ten minute mark, but he wasn't even aware of a leaderboard to begin with, so these matters were the furthest thing from his mind.

'I guess... That's the only way...'

Leonel took deep breaths, wiping the blood from his mouth before his aura surged one more time.

The images of an enormous red-gold star appeared above his head. He pointed two fingers toward the sky, wild Spear Force forming and concentrating before shooting upward.

The blue ape had entered a mad charge, barreling toward Leonel on all fours as it lumbered over.

In that moment, the concentrated Spear Force began to swirl about the three-meter tall star, quickly forming the tip of a drill that spun faster and faster and faster.

Leonel breathed heavily, pushing his Universal Force to its limits as the ape entered a ten meter range.

His fingers descended from the sky, pointing right at the charging ape.

"Die."

The star shot forward, the golden drill before it acting as a vanguard as it tore through space, appearing before the charging ape in the blink of an eye.

The ape rose to its hind legs, its chest expanding and the Runes upon it glowing with a fierce light. It roared out, smashing two fists toward the rotating drill.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Sparks flew, a stalemate suddenly ensuing for just a moment... Until Leonel's Spear Force finally won out. Laced by his King's Might, it tore into the Runes of the ape, shredding them to pieces and eventually its entire body.

<Ninth Floor Cleared – Leonel Morales 00:17:39>

Leonel collapsed to a single knee, his chest heaving, but the environment around him had already begun to shift.

The world of black vanished, replaced by a resplendent white.

A young man stood in the distance beneath a small tree, his delicate hand reaching up to lightly touch a golden apple. He seemed too handsome for words, as though he shouldn't belong in this world at all...

...

'This kid really has terrible luck... How long has it been since one of the Spirituals Race has appeared in the Void Tower...?' Cornelius thought to himself.

[Important Announcement Below!!!]

[Chapter 1406 Adawarth](#)

Leonel took deep breaths, observing the scene before him. He couldn't quite understand what was happening. Since nothing had been explained before, he had headed into this completely blind. He had no way of telling what he should be doing, if this was an enemy, if it was a break room, or if he should be worried or not.

He had no way of communicating with Wise Star Order, even his Innate Node which had been beneath his tongue couldn't be felt by him any longer, let alone any of his other treasures. If it wasn't for this, Leonel wouldn't have had nearly as many problems using his Destruction Runes.

'I guess since this is the tenth floor it was due for a bit of a change. They must treat this a lot like a video game with a 'Boss' every tenth floor. But why is this environment so different, and why hasn't this man attacked me yet?'

Despite his thoughts, Leonel took every second he had to regain his breath. He couldn't do much about the drained state of his mind, but he could at least try to let his healing factor kick in a bit to help with his physical fatigue.

At the same time, he circulated his Force through his Nodes, allowing them to do the work they were meant to and quickly flood his body with oxygen.

Leonel looked around. 'No needles, no daggers, I used up the last of my javelins on those apes. It seems that all I've got now is myself...'

Leonel stood. He didn't understand what was going on but what he did know was that if this was an enemy, their patience wouldn't be nothing more than a detriment to him. He didn't believe that in such a trial, an enemy would be so nonchalant without cause or reason. This individual was definitely benefiting from his inaction somehow, or at the very least, this was the highest likelihood of what was otherwise a toss up.

Leonel liked to live his life based on probability, so knowing such a thing, he couldn't remain inactive.

The moment he stood to his feet, though, the young man seemed to 'finally' notice Leonel's presence.

The moment their eyes met, Leonel took an explosive step backward, his pupils constricting and his heart nearly leaping out of his chest. Any fatigue he had had seemed to be forgotten, allowing adrenaline to rush forward in its place.

'This is bad.'

Leonel didn't like his reaction just now at all. Adrenaline sounded nice, but the crash that came on the other side was very much real. It would have been better if he out put what remaining stamina he had left in a steady stream rather than releasing it all in a sudden outburst.

However, Leonel couldn't help it. Right then, his hairs had stood on end and his mind rang with blaring warning signs. He had quite literally felt as though his very soul was about to be pulled out of his body.

The feeling was similar to when Wise Star Order had tricked him into reading the protected technique of the Spirituals except a hundred times more potent. It was almost like a harpoon had latched onto him.

...

Leonel had not a single clue just the kind of commotion his actions just now had caused. Let alone others, Cornelius finally stood stunned, unable to speak a single word.

One of the most cursed objects of the Void Palace was the Void Tower. This was because so much of one's progress during a single run could be decided by good or bad luck, and definitely more especially the latter.

There were a few things, though, that went beyond just 'bad luck'. These chance events of the Void Tower were known by the students as 'drawing dead'. It didn't matter what happened, how prepared

you were, how good your run up until that point had been... So long as one of these events occurred, your run would be over.

One of these so-called 'drawing dead' events was the appearance of a Spiritual as a Boss.

The only way to combat a Spiritual in real life was to have a soul protecting treasure on hand. The Human Domain never did battle with the Spirituals without outfitting an entire army with them, and missions were never completed in Spiritual territory on the Void Battlefield without them either.

However, as one might have already guessed, it was impossible to bring treasures into the Void Tower and the only weapons available in the armory you got to choose from were very simple weapons without any special effects whatsoever.

So, what would you do in the face of a Spiritual without a soul protection treasure? Well, what else could you do but wait to die? There was nothing else you could do.

Some of the spear Factions had already begun to feel sorry for Leonel. After all, even though he didn't know it, they knew well that so long as he cleared this tenth floor on his first run, he would become among the few in Void Palace history to ever be directly admitted as a Galaxy Ranked disciple.

However, running into a Spiritual after having the bad luck of being given beast hordes to begin with... It could only be said that luck was truly not on Leonel's side.

According to the usual pattern, so long as you remained unmoving, the Spiritual would be too enamored by its precious tree to even bother with you. But, the moment you did, it would look at you and your mind would go blank.

Game over.

And yet, somehow, Leonel had risen up, moved, made eye contact, and still managed to explosively retreat, all without losing...? How was that possible?!

Within the crowd, a particular young man stood in silence. His hair was bronzed, his eyes deep and somber. His stature was large and his shoulders were broad. His presence was sharp as a spear and as sturdy as a mountain. Even now, there was no shortage of looks of admiration and respect being aimed in his way.

He was none other than the First Nova, Adawarth Morales.

He smiled to himself seeing this scene. Then, he turned on his heels and walked into the distance.

[Chapter 1407 Drawing Dead?](#)

At that moment, Aina exited the tower, followed a few moments later by Amery.

Aina had climbed to the 12th floor before running into some bad luck of her own. Well, she had technically run into said bad luck on the 11th floor where she was faced with a skeleton graveyard.

Without any Blood Force to take advantage of, strength at Tier 2 of the Sixth Dimension, stacked with God Path comprehension, was beyond what she could contend with.

In order to cross the 11th floor, she essentially drained herself of all her Life Force, knowing that it was a simulation. But, facing even more undead on the 12th floor, there was really nothing that she could do to contend, leading to her loss.

As for Amery, he climbed to the 10th, clearing it before he directly stopped. It was clear he knew things that Leonel and Aina didn't, so he hadn't even tried to go beyond.

Stepping out, he rose his head to the leaderboards, giving them a once over.

When he saw that Leonel was still inside, and facing a Spiritual at that, his gaze narrowed, an expression that only became darker when he realized that Leonel actually hadn't died.

Aina's attention had been on Leonel from the very beginning. When she realized the race Leonel was up against, her brows, too, shot up.

"Beauty! Beauty! How about you join my Morning Dew Faction! We'll give you a 100 Void Point daily spending quota and this big brother here will be your personal bodyguard!"

"Fuck off, 100 Void Points? Are you trying to entice a beauty? Or call up a common street whore? Piss off! Beauty! My Twin Rope Faction will give you a 10 000 Void Point monthly spending limit!"

The shouts instantly drowned out all the quiet, flooding the area with the bustling sounds of bids as though Aina was merchandise to be bought. No one bothered to try to entice Amery, knowing full well exactly who he'd join, there was simply no point. However, Aina was a different matter entirely and her performance had been simply outstanding.

"Shut up, all of you!"

An overwhelming pressure crushed the growing noise, the delicate voice that called out still somehow seeming like a clap of thunder.

Most almost immediately shut their mouths, moving out of the way as a beauty sauntered over.

They all recognized this woman quite well. There was no man of the Void Palace that wouldn't. Number three on the Queen Beauty rankings, Vega Quarius.

However, this identity of hers was most definitely the weakest, because she also happened to be the Faction Leader of the Limpid Touch Faction... Not just any Faction, but a Gold Grade Faction!

The Limpid Touch Faction was most definitely a front runner to soon become a Legacy Faction as it was well known that Vega would soon meet the requirements to become the part of a Party. As such, the current Limpid Touch Faction was in a sort of contentious time as Vega waited to choose her successor and the soon to be second Leader of the Limpid Touch Faction.

The trouble was that while the Faction was filled with talents, none were so greatly superior over the other that there would be no pushback toward her choice. Knowing all of this, Vega's purpose here was all too obvious.

Although Aina had only just appeared, the talent she displayed was unlike anything they had seen in a very long time. That along with the fact she was a beauty that lost out to Vega in no way, made Aina quite literally the perfect candidate.

Vega would have to slow her plans down a bit and push some things back so that she could groom Aina, but it would most definitely be worth it. It was like this present had fallen right into her lap.

The prestige of a Legacy Faction was something she had wanted for a very long time. Only by making the Limpid Touch Faction a Legacy Faction could it gain the foundation and strength to become a Party. Once that happened, she could return as its leader, making her a Party Head with some real weight and authority.

Such a thing, though, couldn't be accomplished with just a single astounding talent. There were many talents in her Faction, but the number on Vega's level was zero. If Aina was added, that number would tick up to one.

One pillar was shaky, but two pillars were a different matter entirely.

"Little sis, my name is Vega. If you join my Limpid Touch Faction, I'm willing to give you a million Void Point and ten Void Merit allowance a month. We'll also give you a free pass to any of our stores and libraries. Also—"

Vega's offers had already caused the crowd to suck in a cold breath. Many who had made offers previously could only blush in embarrassment, falling into hushed silence and scurrying into the crowd to escape from the jeers.

However, Vega still came to a pause, realizing that Aina wasn't actually paying attention to her at all.

Vega's cherry lips closed, her expression not faltering at all.

She was truly worthy of her title of Queen Beauty. Her blue dress, embroidered by gorgeous green and gold patterns, clung to her every curve. Her hair was a radiant and almost fairy tale like blue, her eyes shimmering a deep and vast emerald.

Even being ignored, her expression was calm and her small hands clasped to her front, following Aina's gaze to the screen above.

"Ah..." Aina looked back, seemingly feeling that someone was talking to her. "... I'm sorry, a moment please."

Then, she turned back to the screen, focusing her entire attention on it.

Vega had only rushed here after receiving a report from her subordinates and had only paid attention to Aina's screen from the very beginning. Her Faction only had women in it to begin with, and she also didn't have time to spend on juniors. If not for the insistence of some of her Faction, she wouldn't have come at all, and she was glad she had.

But, now finally paying attention to Leonel's screen, her gaze couldn't help but narrow.

Drawing dead?

[Chapter 1408 Lake Prison](#)

Leonel stood easily 50 meters away from the Spiritual, his brows locked into a deep frown.

'Is this man a Spiritual, then? Or is he a human with an ability to target souls? I don't think I've ever heard of the latter, but I've never seen Aina's Ability Index in a compendium either. It's possible that this is a uniquely evolved ability, I have seen those before and they can't be documented.'

Though Leonel thought this, he was more inclined to believe that this man before him was a Spiritual. He looked simply too... Perfect. It reminded Leonel a lot of Wise Star Order's appearance.

Souls tended to be extremely pure and more beautiful than the bodies they came from, according to Wise Star Order, anyway. This was because souls could be idealized thanks to their more intangible forms. In addition, a body had to undergo certain abuses a soul never would.

For example, nutrition, injury, environment, all of these things could negatively affect the perfection of a body. The soul, though, was protected by its shell of flesh and thus avoided this.

Of course, if this man was a Spiritual, what Leonel was seeing right now wasn't a soul, but rather the body it had created for itself, a body which, likewise, wasn't subject to the same harsh realities of a human's body.

Like Wise Star Order had said, Spirituals formed their own bodies after their births. Being able to mold themselves in their own image like this would obviously give birth to the same sort of overdone perfection.

'Well, I guess my Aina is an exception.'

If others knew that Leonel had wasted a thought for such a clarification, who knew how they would react.

Now that Leonel had calmed, though, he noticed several things. Well, several things outside the fact he was even more tired now than before.

The first was that this Spiritual wasn't in the Sixth Dimension at all, they were in the Fifth. Leonel had a feeling that if his soul was still in the Fifth as well, that attack just now would have most definitely killed him. The gap in skill was almost too much even for the Dimensional gap to overcome.

The second was that this man seemed to now be frowning a bit, almost as though he was surprised that Leonel was still standing.

The third was the tree and especially the golden apple. Leonel hadn't really thought about it before, but why was it here? Was there something important about it?

It was then that he felt a subtle sort of connection between the man and it. But, almost as soon as he did, it was as though his Internal Sight had rammed into a steel wall, being rebuffed and knocked flying. Leonel almost subconsciously fell backward, only to realize it was only his mind that had been sent soaring.

'This...'

Leonel retrieved his Internal Sight, reining it in and sending it forward again, only for the result to be just the same. And then he tried again, then again.

Leonel's gaze narrowed, stepping forward, slowly. He closed the distance between himself and the young man. The rebuffing became more and more powerful, but every time it happened, Leonel seemed to get better at handling it.

'Do it again...!' Leonel thought silently to himself.

What he spoke about wasn't the Internal Sight sparring at all. He meant something entirely different.

Leonel eventually stepped to the very spot he had been in before when he explosively retreated and that was when he felt it. No, this time, with his Internal Sight deployed, he could almost see it.

It speared through the air, appearing before his forehead in the blink of an eye. It was so fast that it was almost impossible to dodge.

Almost.

Leonel's head tilted to the side, but he was still a step too late. The harpoon threaded into the side of his forehead, snagging at a piece of his soul and trying to rip it out.

For just a moment, Leonel didn't fight back against the sensation, feeling it pulling at him. The feeling was much less life threatening than it had been before, but he could feel that if he allowed it to happen, his mind would be irreparably harmed.

This wasn't the kind of injury you could heal. Leonel was certain <Instantaneous Recovery> wouldn't have even the slightest effect. However, this was just a simulation, Leonel felt that if there was any place he could toe the line like this, it was in this place.

Just when Leonel felt like his soul was truly about to be ripped out, his will flourished, his Dream Force pulling back and his Stars began to rotate faster.

The weak hold the harpoon had had on him weakened even further, snapping and releasing Leonel.

However, at that moment, Leonel's partially awakened soul seemed to have perked up more.

"Again." Leonel said, taking another step forward.

The Spiritual didn't need Leonel's input, he had already attacked again the moment Leonel moved.

Leonel's head shifted again, but this time, he purposely let himself get nicked.

Leonel repeated the process again and again. Slowly, from somewhere deep within the recesses of Leonel's body, his soul was slowly being dragged out from its slumber.

With each attempt, Leonel's Dream Force seemed to become thicker, his affinity deepening and his Ability Index trembling, creeping forward at a slow, but steady pace.

In an odd, unknown world, a version of Leonel stood. Its arms dangled forward limply, its legs pinned down to the ground and its head drooping, its expression impossible to spot.

All around it... A dense lake of crimson lay, its hands and feet bound within.

Black chains wrapped around it entirely, shackling its neck, its torso and its hips. However, the greatest anchor seemed to be the lake of red itself... What very much seemed to be a pool of blood.

Every time the harpoon nicked Leonel, it would stir, its head raising slightly. By the time Leonel had closed the distance to the Spiritual to just ten meters, its head had risen just high enough to see a pair of eyes just barely cracking open.

A chain snapped, the blood lake suddenly beginning to boil.

[Chapter 1409 Flood](#)

[Sorry to everyone who saw the earlier two day hiatus message... I guess I lied]

Leonel's body convulsed, the white of his eyes being taken over by a deep red.

Despite this, he felt oddly in control of his body, so much so that it was almost as though adrenaline had been injected right into his heart. Even still, he couldn't feel the needle.

Something snapped and his Dream Force rolled out in waves, the strength of his Internal Sight increasing tenfold and his Ability Index taking another enormous leap forward.

The world slowed and the complex Runes of his Scarlet Star Force almost felt... Simple. His Internal Sight only swept over it just a single time, but his number of comprehended Runes increased from eight to nine in the blink of an eye.

At that moment, the red-gold Runes snapped together as though pulled by a rubber band, forming a larger Rune that danced within Leonel's irises as though it had a mind of its own.

Leonel didn't even need to check. In that moment, he was absolutely certain that he had perfectly grasped Third Dimensional Scarlet Star Force. So long as he wanted to do so, using his Mage Core, he could rip it out of the atmosphere just like his Stars had done.

Of course, this didn't mean that these Runes were Third Dimensional. Even for Scarlet Star Force, using the Third Dimension to harm the Sixth Dimension was impossible. If this had been the case, then the use of his Runes against the Rapax would have only been a lesson in futility.

Rather, it was more accurate to say that grasping these Destruction Runes gave Leonel all the knowledge he needed to understand the foundation of his Scarlet Star Force and thus use its Third Dimensional form without harming himself or using an Innate Node as a medium.

However, this wasn't what Leonel was focused on at all.

His mind seemed to be boiling, spilling over with strength that seemed to come out of nowhere. It was almost too much, as though he was suddenly being overwhelmed with strength that he had no method of controlling.

It spilled over, rushing out of his body and into the surroundings.

The sudden change made Leonel's expression change. He had never been able to force his Dream Force out of his body before, it had never allowed him to do so. Everything he did with Dream Force was constrained within his body. Even when he drew Mage Arts using Dream Force, the process was internal, and yet had an effect on the outside world, similar to how Internal Sight functioned.

There was a reason Internal Sight had its name. Although it could be used to observe the outside world, its roots were internal, and its external influence was a sort of forcefield of sorts and not truly tangible, at least not in the most obvious of ways.

'What the hell?'

Leonel was so focused on himself that he didn't even notice the Spiritual sent forward another harpoon. But, before it could even get close, it became stuck in a swamp of Dream Force, before being crushed and twisted as though it had suddenly run into a heavy gravitational environment it didn't have the structural integrity to survive.

The Spiritual's brows furrowed, its gaze flickering with a hint of fear and apprehension. It wanted to retreat, feeling that Leonel was a danger, but every time it thought of doing so, it looked toward its tree and then back at Leonel, before turning back to the tree.

The truth was that Spirituals paid a price for their oneness with nature. Well, from a human perspective, it was a price. To a Spiritual, at least the one in question, it was a beautiful thing. To wider Spiritual society, though... It was a curse and a mental illness.

Just as easily as a Spiritual could fall in love with another member of their species, it was just as likely for them to fall in love with a beast or a, in this case, a tree. Things wouldn't be so bad if the target of their affection could move, but in this case it couldn't, well... The Spiritual might refuse to move from a singular location all their lives.

In practice, this was actually quite rare. Most Spirituals would never end up feeling this sort of connection, and still some others, even upon feeling it, would choose to sever it entirely to maintain their freedom.

However, the trouble was that in taking the latter approach, said Spiritual would lose much of their oneness with nature and thus their affinity upon making such a choice.

Likely in order to make this boss fight more 'fair', the spawned Spiritual was anchored to a tree it was in love with. It was almost like an easter egg, an opportunity for easy victory.

So long as the tree was destroyed, the Spiritual would fall into despair and likely kill themselves, thus resulting in victory.

Unfortunately, things almost never worked out in this way. A soul attack was far faster than any physical attack, the only reason Leonel could even begin to dodge was because he sensed it coming before it was levied.

It was impossible to destroy the tree before the Spiritual killed you.

But, in this case...

Leonel's Dream Force continued to roll out of him, refusing to listen to any of his commands.

The Spiritual stood before his tree to protect it, unwilling for any harm to come to it. But, Leonel's Dream Force continued, coming out in wave after wave.

When the Dream Force made contact with the Spiritual, nothing seemed to happen at all. But, the Spiritual's eyes still widened.

Leonel's Dream Force was like a thick oil, latching onto his skin and blocking all of his pores. Even when the Spiritual tried to project his soul out again to attack Leonel and stop this madness, he found that his soul rebounded against its skin, being locked into his body.

Leonel continued to stand in silence, his mind still clear as he focused on trying to take control of himself again.

He couldn't decide whether what was happening was a good or bad thing. What was happening to him, exactly?

[Chapter 1410 So What?](#)

It was odd.

Dream Force was meant to be one of the most dangerous Forces in all of existence. As the arbiter of consciousness, having it in too large a supply was always a bad thing as those who didn't have high affinity for it would find the line between fiction and reality blurred, a lot like what a schizophrenic would experience.

Dream Force carried with it the power of perception and fundamentally, perception was often reality.

If someone had a dream about being invincible, they would wake up and this feeling would be gone. In addition, they would then be able to pick out all the oddities in the dream that should have made it obvious to them that it was one.

However, if the Dream Force was cranked up, suddenly the line wouldn't be so obvious. The dream would become too real, too tangible. Then, you'd suddenly have a person jumping out of a building as a mere mortal in the real world because they got it in their heads that they were invincible.

The effects went beyond dreams as well. Just things as simple as thoughts, inclinations, biases, etc, could easily become too real to ignore. Suddenly, an opinion would become objective fact, a day dream would be reality, a hope would become certainty.

Believe it or not, these would be the most benign effects of excessive Dream Force.

Beyond this, one might sink into a forever coma, believing their dreams to be the new reality. And, in the worst of cases, one's mind could collapse, forgetting how to function correctly and thus leading to the most direct cause of death.

Playing with consciousness was dangerous. Almost like playing with layers of irony, eventually if you went deep enough, you would lose the ability to tell where the joke started and where it ended.

However, somehow, despite all these dangers...

The Spiritual was fine?

It was like Leonel's Dream Force was in a benign state. Despite being able to come out of his body now, he still wasn't able to use it to attack people or harm them.

Leonel had known that his ability limited him in this way for a long time. In fact, even Lionel, who had reached Tier 5 and could project his Dream Force outward, couldn't use it to harm others directly either. He could only mold his Dream Force to shape reality and use said changes to attack his enemies.

However, Leonel couldn't do that. Not to mention the fact he was fairly certain he hadn't been born a Savant due to the existence of his Lineage Factors and his Innate Node, right this moment, he still couldn't even begin to control this Dream Force.

How was he supposed to manipulate reality if he couldn't even stop it from flowing outward?

'I need to change my approach, do something different.'

Leonel began to make a scan of his body, going through every vital sign and checking for any stages. But, before he could even get halfway through the analysis, he froze.

Whenever Leonel wanted to do in depth analysis, he would always enter his Dream World. Everything flowed faster there and he was in control of every single variable. His models were vivid, his mind seemed to work at twice the pace, and it was easy to visualize everything.

But, never. Never. NEVER... Had his thoughts appeared in the real world like this.

Leonel stood, stunned, a perfect replica of himself standing right in front of him. It was illusory and its skin was quite blue, but Leonel could see it, not with his mind's eye, but with his real eyes. His Dream Clone... it was standing right in front of him.

'... What the hell?!'

Leonel lost focus, causing the Dream Clone to waver and almost completely collapse.

'No, no!'

Leonel settled his mind, and the Dream Clone stabilized again. It felt as though he was looking right at a hologram, as real and tangible as such a thing could get.

He stretched out a hand, but his hand passed right through it, just like it would in his Dream World.

Leonel was baffled. His expression kept changing, trying to understand what this sort of change meant.

Had his Ability Index evolved? Could he make illusions now? Warp reality?

No, that didn't seem to be the case. Even when he tried to make himself more tangible than just a blue hologram, it didn't go very far. Even a toddler wouldn't be fooled by this image.

In addition, if he couldn't even make an illusion, warping reality was an even further away pipe dream. This was very clearly something else entirely.

If he had to describe it, it was like his Dream World had suddenly manifested into reality. He could do everything he had been able to do in there, or here now. But...

So what?

Leonel couldn't think of what use such an ability could have. If he really applied it, he could probably become one of the greatest teachers or professors to ever exist, and he would be pretty good at relaying his thoughts precisely and with ease. But, all of this felt a bit hollow.

Maybe there was something more? Something greater on the other side? If only he could just retract his Dream Force, so long as he could do that, he could try to get the Spiritual to work with him again, pulling out more of his soul.

Leonel was certain that the result of this change was related to the changes to his soul, so he just had to try to replicate it to the best of his abilities.

What Leonel didn't know, though, was that he had been frozen in place ever since those chains snapped. Everything that he had imagined himself and his environment doing, from the movement of the Spiritual, to the flood of his Dream Force, to the appearance of his Dream Clone, and even down to the movement of his hand through its hologram...

Had never happened at all.