

Descent 251

Chapter 251

Leonel entered the Abode Setting of the Segmented Cube. Without much thought, he made his way to the bath house and dove into a serene pool of water.

The soothing waters felt so good that a moan almost escape his lips.

Leonel floated in the waters, looking up at the beautifully crafted ceilings of the bath house. Whoever it was who constructed this treasure was a true genius. Leonel could hardly make crafts with five or so parts, he couldn't imagine the number needed to make a treasure of this level.

In truth, Leonel was quite used to the aches of his body. He was a student athlete, after all. Compared to others, he was far more ready for this new world order. He had always been in tiptop shape.

But... being a good sprinter didn't mean you were a good long distance runner, and being a good long distance runner didn't mean you could run the 400 meter race..

There were different aspects to being an athlete and not all forms of endurance were the same. Leonel thought himself to be a great athlete, but a single battle had completely shredded his body.

The good news was that Leonel felt that just an hour or two would be enough to recover thanks to this pool. The bad news was that he wouldn't always have time to recover.

Leonel activated the Nodes in the walls of his heart. His heartbeat quickened, causing the run of blood throughout his body to accelerate, thus speeding up his recovery process.

The blood was exceptionally important to recovery. Whenever one was injured, it would be the first responder in every case. This was the reason why bruises swelled and torn muscles reddened. After opening his Seventh and Eighth Nodes, Leonel gained access to this ability.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

'It should be safe in here...' Leonel thought to himself.

"[Minor Heal]..."

A rush of wind surrounded Leonel and a soft glow of light enveloped his body.

In just a few minutes, Leonel's body recovered to its peak state. Since he could recover so quickly, there was no need to wait. This situation was too dangerous to waste time in.

'Interesting...'

Leonel felt that his strength ticked up by a measure. In addition, his body also more thoroughly absorbed the Urbe Ore Essence he had been refining.

'So if I break down my muscles and use [Minor Heal] on them, I can train faster...'

[Minor Heal] was actually a One Star Magus Art despite its humble title. It was because of his ability to cast this that Lionus was so valued. If the prince knew that Leonel thought to use it just to enhance his training speed, who knows how he would react. PANDA NOVEL

'My mind is erratic and all over the place...'

Leonel stood up from the bath, cleaning himself off and putting on another robe. He didn't like the style of dress of this world very much, but he had no choice.

'I need a focus, a plan, a goal. If I keep going like this, I'll aimlessly wander around and fail to live up to my potential...'

In Leonel's life, there had never really been anything in his control. His profession was chosen for him, his meal plans and training schedule was set out for him, and he never truly figured out what he wanted to do in life.

It was no wonder he seemed to be going on aimlessly. This was the first time he had no choice but to take charge.

His mind was filled with bits and pieces of information, but he realized after battle today that this wasn't good enough. It was alright that he wanted to learn everything he could about this world, but what would he do with that information? How would he execute with this new knowledge? What goal was he trying to reach?

That feeling he had had before the battle begun, that stifling feeling that made him feel uncomfortable to the depths of his soul... It was the first time Leonel grasped on something he wanted for himself.

This wasn't about his father, this wasn't about Aina, this was something that he, Leonel Morales, wanted for himself. $\rho \int$

If he couldn't beat Lamorak into the ground, he would never feel at ease.

Leonel entered the Lab Setting. In this world, he had always had to be exceptionally careful about using the Segmented Cube so he had rarely entered it. If it wasn't because the Large Barracks were in turmoil, preparing for war, and as such had no time to mind him, he wouldn't have dared to even now.

Leonel cast a glance toward the snowglobes and frowned.

'Hm? Something feels off about this atmosphere...?'

After a moment, Leonel realized what it was. There was a density of Dark Elemental Force in the air.

Understanding this, Leonel didn't pay it anymore mind. The Border Region had a higher concentration of this energy. It wasn't surprising that the Segmented Cube which was always absorbing and purifying Force for Leonel's use would react in this way to such an environment.

Leonel sat at his Crafting Table. The more time he spent near it, the more he realized that this odd desk with different sized wells on its was most definitely a treasure in its own right. But, Leonel hadn't quite reached a level where he could dig out its secrets.

‘What I need is a focused structure. I’ve already learned all I can about Mage Arts. The only thing holding me back in that regard is the Crystallization of my Spirit Pressure.’

Though Leonel could cast Magus Arts now, their power was lacking in comparison to true Magi. This wasn’t something he could fix in a short time. After all, Magi spend decades meditating to crystallize their Spirit Pressure. It was something only time could do.

Of course, Leonel’s meditation was far more beneficial than one might expect. He suspected that it would only take a year or two to crystallize his spirit to an extreme. Once that happened, his combat prowess would be enough to run through this world unimpeded.

As such, Leonel made a decision.

‘After awakening the Wisdom Branch, I could split my mind six ways. After crystallizing my Soul Force a bit, I can do so eight ways now. I’ll save one to focus on meditation. As for the remaining seven...’

Leonel crossed his legs and closed his eyes. He used one of his eight minds to meditate, another to monitor the situation outside the Segmented Cube, and as for the remaining six... He sent them all into the Spear Domain!

Leonel’s mind appeared within the dark world. Rolling clouds thunders above his head and pale black-grey earth crunched beneath his feet.

At this moment, he stood at the peak of a large hill, a familiar black spear wrapped in chain before him.

The immediate surroundings of this spear was empty. As though showing reverence to its superiority, the other spears that dotted this hill were at least three meters away.

This was the first peak of Spear Domain that Leonel had conquered. But, he knew he hadn’t done so correctly.

One's spirit was only meant to be auxiliary in this world. The main strength should have been his Spear Force. If it wasn't for his awakening his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor, Leonel would have no right to stand in this place, and the spear before him seemed to understand this as well.

This standoffishness placed a veil between Leonel and the spear, making it more difficult for him to comprehend the secrets surrounding it.

Leonel smiled lightly.

“You're quite an arrogant spear. There are hundreds on your level in this world, yet you still have such pride...”

As though hearing the taunting nature of Leonel's words, the Spear vibrated slightly, but didn't do much else. It was as though it disdained to respond. But, Leonel didn't mind.

“There are 2879 spears that make up the foundation for your Spear Domain. I'll start at the bottom just like you want me to. It won't be long before you become obedient.”

With a thought, Leonel sent his mind toward the spears around the bottom of his Spear Peak, grasping out at six simultaneously.

At that moment, he entered six different worlds and experienced six different lives.

Chapter 252

The location was dark. It was difficult even to see one's hand even if it was placed before one's eye.

Up above, the place the moon should have been was completely shrouded by dark clouds that rumbled every so often. However, even this rumbling couldn't mask the heavy breathing that pervaded the atmosphere.

At that moment, a group of men and women ran with everything they had. But, their speed was slow. Whether it was because of the disadvantageous terrain or the fact they were at the end of their ropes, both were reasons.

The group of 30 or so wore bits of torn linen covered in dirt and mud. It was impossible for fugitives to appear in the Border Region. The only explanation was that these few consciously chose to discard their armor.

At that moment, one of them suddenly stumbled and fell..

“Kid!”

An older man snapped his head around, reaching beneath the arms of the fallen knight and pulling him up.

He was the only one who stopped. It wasn't that the others were callous, but rather that they were under expressed orders not to.

“Jejejejeje...”

An eerie laughter caused the blood of the group to run cold. They dug deep, pulling all the reserve strength they had left to power forward.

The forest they ran in could hardly be called as such. It looked as though a blazing fire had charred everything to ash. Let alone having canopies of greenery, the various trees didn't even have branches, they were made entirely of blackened and battered trunks.pANDA-N0VEL.COM

It was one of the roots of these godforsaken trees that had tripped the young knight.

It was quite hilarious. Even as the young knight held back tears, unable to take his eyes off of the commanding officer who had come back to save him, he too found the humor in this situation.

He, a dignified Three Star Official Knight, had been beaten and battered to the point of tripping and falling. Not only that, but he had actually fractured his ankle and couldn't even walk on his own anymore.

"Captain, just leave me."

"Shut up, kid. You know how many sacks of potatoes twice your size I've carried in my life to reach my current strength? You're as light as a feather. Don't look down on a Grand Knight, rookie."

The young knight was speechless. In the end, he could only chuckle and shake his head.

The eerie laughter only grew with each passing moment. And, despite the blustering of the Captain, he was falling further and further behind the group ahead of him.

At that moment, the Captain felt a sharp wind assaulting his back. With his years of trained reflexes, he didn't even need to think before he jumped to the side. He had already reached a state of his mind and actions being as one.

At this point, the Captain knew that it was useless to keep running.

With a SHIIING, he unsheathed his long sword, setting down the young knight that hung next to his hip.

"Keep running kid. I'll hold these bastards back."

The young knight clenched his teeth.

Run? He probably could. If he used his Force to reinforce his ankle, he could probably last another half hour. Such a skill was something he had learned as a mere Apprentice Knight. The only reason the older knight hadn't allowed him to do so was because their Force was already running low. If used on such a technique, his likelihood of surviving would plummet with each passing moment.

“Kid, I’m going to go all out. When I engage him, turn back and run as fast as you can. Don’t stay here for some meaningless sacrifice.”

The old knight stepped forward. The means of a knight truly weren’t few. Amongst them, there were even techniques that could be used to overdraw one’s potential. It was precisely such a technique that the Captain was planning on using now.

He didn’t give the young knight a chance to respond. His aura blazed, his arm bulging with muscles and wildly pulsing veins.

In one motion, he hooked a hand behind the young knight, took a half spin, and sent him flying into the distance.

Though he had been just blustering before, that didn’t mean his words didn’t have a kernel of truth to them. As a One Star Grand Knight, throwing 200 pounds a few dozen meters away wasn’t a problem at all.

However, what happened next left the Captain stunned.

“Oof...”

The young knight should have been sent into the distance. But, just as he was passing between two trees, and before he could even pick up any true momentum, he rammed into something.

“Hey Captain... Your aim needs a little help...”

A light, awkward cough sounded. The trouble was that the old knight didn’t recognize the voice at all.

At first, he shuddered. Was there another enemy he hadn’t noticed? In this darkness, it truly was too difficult to see. But, even then, shouldn’t he have sensed an aura?

Anyone who could utilize Force had Internal Sight. It was a prerequisite. However, the Internal Sight of a knight was destined to be weaker than that of a mage.

That said, as a Grand Knight, how could the Internal Sight of this captain be so weak to the point of missing someone just meters from him? That was impossible... Unless...

This foe was just that much stronger than him?!

The captain felt a cold chill. He was already ready to die, but the direction he had thrown the young knight in was the direction the others had fled. Didn't that mean that this monstrous individual had already eliminated them all? And in that case, what was the point of his sacrifice?

However, just when he was despairing, words that shocked him were spoken.

“Who are you?!”

At that moment, the eerie laughter had come to a full stop. The shadow looked toward the voice that had caught the young knight as well for one simple reason... it too hadn't sensed another person until now.

The sound of soft footsteps sounded as a young man vaguely came into view.

“To think all these Light Elemental luminescence arts would actually come in handy...”

The voice muttered to himself, his words completely lost beneath the rumbling of the dark clouds above.

“#62 Demon Lord Maugrier, is it? Come taste my spear.”

Leonel grinned, the whites of his teeth shimmering beneath the night sky.

Chapter 253

“Hm? Running away? My combat strength is still lacking!”

Leonel was a bit dissatisfied with his performance. In truth, he could have caught up with the Demon Lord had he truly wanted to. The main issue was that the mission he was assigned was to bring these escapees back with him.

It had been about half a month since the battle at the Large Barracks. As Lancelot had feared, the Demons had indeed begun a large scale offensive. As a result, many of the Small Barracks had been taken out.

Due to this, the knights and mages that had been posted at these Small Barracks were forced into retreating, leading to the situation here today.

What was surprising, though, was that a Demon Lord had actually personally come to chase them. Leonel didn't know if this Demon Lord was just bored or if there was another reason, but he couldn't fathom a true reason why a Demon Lord would chase after a group of 30 or so like this. What was the point?

Leonel looked back to find the old and young knight looking at him with incredulous expressions.

How could they not be shocked? This was a Demon Lord they were talking about. Even battling one to a standstill was impressive, let alone forcing one into retreat. But, from Leonel's words, it sounded like he wasn't satisfied with this?

“Let's go, I'll bring you out of here.”

Leonel put away an ordinary wooden spear, facing the two knights. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

“Y-yes!”

The young knight managed to peek out.Â

Compared to his Captain, he was even more shocked. That was because he had been caught by Leonel earlier.Â

According to common sense, being thrown with such force and stopping so abruptly should have hurt at least one of them if not both. Even if Leonel's strength was beyond the point of allowing him to be hurt by such a thing, at the very least, he alone should have been hurt.Â

Yet, not only did Leonel fully stop his momentum without issue, but neither of them were injured. In the moment, he only felt that he was enveloped by a soft force. Then, he came to a stop and was rested on the ground.Â

Such a boundary of strength' ! he couldn't even comprehend it.Â

There were no limit to knights that could stop his momentum and leave unscathed. But' ! doing so while allowing him to remain uninjured at the same time' ! ?

Even his Captain was nothing but an ant before these things.Â PANDA NOVEL

The young knight blankly followed behind Leonel, his mind lost in the clouds.Â

"Captain!"

A group of knights ahead sighed a breath of relief when they saw their Captain return safely. Numerous thankful gazes landed on Leonel.

"There's no time right now." Leonel waved away their thank you's. "It's highly likely that there will be more enemies coming. I've cast [Silence] on our surroundings. Don't mind the noise you're making, just run with all you have."

Leonel spoke quickly.Â

'[Silence]? Isn't that an immobile spell? But the way this senior is talking about it, it's as though it will follow us around? How is that possible?'

The young knight was dumbfounded.Â

Though he was a knight, he had trained with mages many times before. After all, knights and mages needed to work together to defend the Barracks. A common spell like [Silence] that could be used by any Official Mage was definitely something he was familiar with. ρ??ϰ(???????)

Leonel didn't bother to explain. His Internal Sight had already stretched out. He realized that his previous speculations had been correct. This Demon Lord chased after this group alone for his own sadistic reasons, but now that Leonel was here, he had retreated to regroup with his men. It could be said that the true chase was only starting now.Â

"[Trace: Arrow]."

A surge of wind surrounded Leonel. Soon, a pale blue arrow was formed, hovering about his palm. In the darkness, it was particularly striking. But, it was also dim enough that it couldn't be seen from too far away.Â

"Follow this arrow and you'll be able to meet up with the others."

The Captain's expression changed at these words.Â

"But'!"

"I know what you want to say. You split up to begin with so that you'd be more difficult to find. But, you don't need to worry about this anymore. Sir Peirce is leading his troops toward the region of your #19 Small Barracks, so they won't be able to continue chasing you for long. I'm just the vanguard."

The Captain's eyes brightened along with his small squadron's. They thought they were finished. But it seemed that they had hope now.

There was one among them that only grew more and more shocked with every word Leonel spoke, though. And that person was the young knight.

'[Trace: Arrow]? That spell should only be able to work if the mage is present, but the way senior is talking about it, it's as though he doesn't need to be here at all.'

'The range of [Trace: Arrow] is extremely limited as well!'

[Trace: Arrow] was a tandem spell, meaning it had a partner. [Trace: Target] was a seal type spell that [Trace: Arrow] was able to home in on.

The issue was that the maximum range of this tandem spell was one mile. But the distance between the separated group was at least ten times that, or else what was the point in running separately?!

The young knight didn't believe for a moment that Leonel didn't know this.

'Just who is he?'

At that moment, the sight of several torches approaching from the distance lit the night skies.

"Go, now." Leonel said sternly.

His carefree demeanor had vanished. Facing just one Demon Lord wasn't a problem. But, facing one leading a squad of 50 or so was a completely different matter.

However, this was the kind of challenge Leonel wanted.

Without waiting for the knights behind him to respond, he shot forward.

In his hand an odd spear appeared. It was about two meters long, a normal length for such a weapon, albeit shorter than Leonel's Spear Peak black spear.

However, this wasn't the true oddity. Normally, a spear's blade would only be a small percentage of the length of the weapon. But, this spear was vastly different. Its blade was a third of the length of the spear!

Leonel brandished the spear, casting [Shining Eyes] on his irises.

In that moment, his vision and Internal Sight superimposed, giving him a clear vision of everything happening on the forest floor that night.

His gaze flashed with determination, his Dreamscape flashing with arcs of lightning as several spear styles began to coalesce in his mind.

Chapter 254

"Jejejeje... I've never understood humans, always doing such brainless things."

Maugrier was a bit stunned when he noticed Leonel running back toward him. He had suffered no small loss at Leonel's hands just earlier, he had even felt the scent of death. If it wasn't because this boy was too inexperienced in combat, failing to take proper account of their combat environment, he would have died here.

But, he could have never expected that Leonel would come rushing back after he was prepared. He had been gloomy previously, thinking that he would have long since lost track of Leonel. But it seemed like he would have his chance at revenge after all.

"Wall."

When Maugrier realized that Leonel hadn't even paused his steps, he grew serious. He had no intention of facing up against Leonel directly.

One shouldn't mistake Maugrier's reaction as fear... After all, he was an archer. It was only normal that Leonel would be able to force him to suffer a loss in close combat. Now that he was prepared, he could almost already see Lenoel's corpse!

What this #62 ranked Demon Lord didn't know that while he saw Leonel as easy prey, Leonel saw him as a fighting dummy, ready to help refine his skills.

While others could only see shadows in this place, Leonel saw everything reflected into his mind perfectly. He could see the shadow-like Maugrier sneakily drawing his bow, he could see the vanguard of shield warriors blocking his path, he could even see the dark insects crawling along the ground. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Nothing escaped his notice.

Leonel's Force bloomed.

BANG!

Seven shield warriors stood shoulder to shoulder, slamming their tower shields into the ground and blocking Leonel's path forward. At this moment, it became clear that Maugrier didn't care about the other escaping warriors. Killing one Leonel was worth far more than killing a thousand such knights.

Leonel's memories flashed.

In his mind, he saw a valiant man with dark blond hair that whisked along his face and jaw like the mane of a lion.

He wore heavy bronze armor, his every step causing the earth to quake. His heavy spear bent beneath the weight of its own blade, making it exceptionally top heavy. Yet, the valiant man outstretched it with a single hand, bearing the entire weight with his strong wrists. [PANDA NOVEL](http://PANDA-NOVEL)

Leonel could sense the overbearing aura of the man. Even if he stood against an army of thousand alone, he would face it with a jovial laugh.

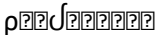
When this man walked, the earth shook. When he laughed, the clouds dispersed. When he attacked, the skies split.

Leonel's back flexed, his image and the image of the man in his mind fusing into one. The crackling booms of his tendons reverberated through the night sky. Maugrier didn't even have time to draw back his first arrow.

BOOM!

Leonel's body and spear drew a line in the air. For a moment, their momentum became one.

It was once again a pierce. However, compared to the fluttering speed of the primitive woman, this pierce was indomitable. It was as though it would sheer through any obstacle before it, not even pausing before the might of a God.

Leonel's spear tip tore into the middle tower shield. 

As though it was slammed by a canon ball or punched by a goliath, a massive dent appeared at its center.

The shield warrior cried out in pain as he felt the arm supporting his tower shield bend against the distorted metal. It was as though his arm was molded into a semi-sphere, grinded into complete mush.

A gap appeared amidst the shield warriors as their fellow soldier was sent flying. Like a bullet leaving a barrel, he tore through the night air, crashing into the reserve warriors by Maugrier's side.

Despite the shock, Maugrier was still a Demon Lord. He didn't hesitate to loose three arrows in quick succession when he saw that the situation was bad.

However, what Leonel feared the least were projectiles with predictable trajectories. The battlefield reflected in his mind. Before Maugrier even released the first arrow, Leonel already knew where it would land.

As though he was a ghost, Leonel shifted away with simple steps.

His memories flashed once more. He saw a woman of strong features. Despite the fact she wasn't the most beautiful, she had a charm that gripped the hearts of men. But, she also held a spear that took the hearts of men.

Her speed was so blinding that the last thing her enemies sensed before their death wasn't pain, nor the sight of her figure, but rather the fragrance of her fluttering hair.

A rich smell of apple. It assaulted Leonel's senses again and again as though she was right before him at this very moment.

Her spear was as light as a feather and as flexible as a whip. She reaped lives with a thought and traveled through the world unhindered.

Leonel's toe lightly descended to the ground the moment he dodged the last spear. For an instant, it seemed as though he would flutter to the ground like a leaf, but in the next instant, he vanished.

His movement speed was impossibly quick. His body shot forward like a streaking arrow, appearing before the line of protection before Maugrier.

He braced his spear against his body before sweeping it out horizontally from himself.

His spear became like the whipping tail of a mighty beast. It left an arc of blood in the air, sheering apart half a dozen demons at the waist. Such carnage was something even Leonel had never seen before.

In the past, he always killed his opponents with a simple pierce. The blood was minimal and the wound was small.

This was the most powerful attack of the spear currently in his possession. Its exceptionally long blade was purposely designed for this expressed purpose.

And now... There was no one but Maugrier before him.

Maugrier reacted quickly. In the face of death, his expression, hidden beneath his hood, remained calm. Demon Lords weren't fish on a chopping block. No matter how much improvement Leonel had made, it wasn't enough to treat such a character so casually — especially when it had only been half a month since his battle with Gorgo.

The twang of a bow string being continuously pulled and released caused Leonel's ears to twitch. Maugrier's actions were so fast that Leonel's eyes, even with the support of his Mage Art, couldn't keep up.

The distance between the two was just 10 meters. To take on the full barrage of arrows at this distance, anyone else would have had their deaths guaranteed.

But, while Leonel's eyes couldn't keep up, that didn't mean his Internal Sight was in the same situation. The trajectory of Maugrier's arrows had already been projected into his mind.

Just when Leonel was about to dodge just as easily, his expression change.

The trajectories he had predicted were off!

Chapter 255

Though it was only by a few centimeters, the overall result would be far different than what he anticipated.

Leonel's blood boiled and his spine ran cold.

In such a threatening situation, he grew more focused, his thinking speed accelerating so quickly that time seemed to slow.

In an instant, Leonel zipped through all of the potential countermeasures he had and responded with the best.

BANG!

His foot slammed into the ground, a swirl of wind and oppressive Spirit Pressure surging around him.

“[Earthen Wall]. [Layering Arts]. [Harden].”

It was impossible to cast a spell so quickly. Even for Leonel.

An arrow crossing ten meters was the matter of a blink of an eye. But, even Leonel’s fastest cast would take a full second. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

However... It was then Leonel’s Dreamscape flashed, sending out a branch of lightning.

In the core of it all, a book stood: ‘Fostering a Mage’s Battle Sense’. In fact, it wasn’t just the book, but a specific chapter by the title of ‘Spirit Pressure Storms’.

There were many things that could influence a mage’s casting. Depending on the environment, there were an infinite number of variables. One such variable was the so-called ‘Spirit Pressure Storm’.

When a high level Mage Art was cast, it would cause Force to converge. High concentrations of Force made it more difficult to control, especially when the concentration was of an opposing Force type to the one you were trying to use.

For example, trying to cast a large scale Water Elemental magic right after someone cast a Fire Elemental magic was several degrees more difficult.

If Maugrier's arrows weren't on Leonel's predicted trajectory, there was only one explanation: He had used Force to control their flight.

If Leonel took advantage of this and applied the concepts of 'Spirit Pressure Storms' here, he could disrupt Maugrier's control!

SHUUU! PANDA NOVEL

Leonel sucked in a cold breath as he felt two arrows tear through the skin on his shoulder.

Taking a step forward, he cut down on the last one, continuing to close the distance.

Maugrier's expression changed.

At first, he had sneered seeing Leonel's reaction. Though he had been surprised that Leonel was a mage, after a moment, he laughed in his heart. How could he not?

Leonel started to cast three different spells at once. Even the weakest, [Harden], should have taken a veteran mage two seconds to cast. To make it worse, [Layering Arts] was a high level auxiliary Mage Art that multiplied the strength of spells by stacking them.

[Layering Arts] alone would take a talented Magus upwards of ten seconds to cast alone. In such a situation, Leonel was bound to die.

Maugrier had thought that Leonel was simply a talented fool with no battle experience, but this situation completely upended his world.

The fact Leonel completely dispelled his attempted casting right after deflecting his last arrow told him all he needed to know. The truth shocked him to his core. ρ??∪??????

As a Demon Lord and a veteran of the battlefield, he obviously knew that high fluctuations of Force would disrupt techniques. But, this was the first time he had ever seen anyone use it in battle!

Maugrier's expression changed, he had laid his guard down when he saw Leonel's stupid attempt. He had been waiting to see a grand show, but now he had yet to draw more arrows while Leonel had already halved the distance between them.

"My Lord!"

Maugrier's death guards surged forward to try to protect him.

'If I'm blocked again, he'll have time to recover and pester me with more arrows. If I can't read the trajectory of his arrows, it'll be too difficult to dodge at such close range.'

Thinking to this point, Leonel had already made a decision. As much as he wanted to temper his spear skills here, this wasn't an appropriate occasion.

He stepped forward again. The trembling of the earth that matched his steps made the demons around him feel as though the world was collapsing.

Leonel's Spirit Pressure surged into the earth beneath his feet.

'Impossible!'

Maugrier's expression turned solemn. He had been too busy snickering at Leonel earlier to realize, but this boy was actually directly manipulating the earth.

Usually, mages would pull on free elements from the atmosphere. Using already existing elements was far more difficult and took far more Spirit Pressure than directly creating your own as counter intuitive as that might sound.

Mages who could manipulate the elements in their natural state were favored even amongst Childes. The disparity between them and normal mages was like the difference between clear waters and mud!

Even further, an Earth Mage who could do such a thing would be a bane to all warriors who called them an enemy. The reason was simple. Not every place had water or fire or strong winds, but any place there were humans there would be earth!

“[Earthen Tide].”

Leonel didn't even need to fully construct the Mage Art. He didn't need a tall tide. He just needed something that could quickly impede Maugrier's men. And that was exactly what he received.

The earth rose into a small rolling hill. It was barely half a meter tall and not usually enough to do much of anything. But, this was exactly what Leonel needed.

In a flash, Leonel appeared before Maugrier, his spear descending from the skies with an undying momentum.

Maugrier cried out in shock, raising his bow into the air to block. It was all he had on him, what else could he possibly use?

One might expect a bow to not last even a second in an exchange with a spear, but reality was much different. A loud clang was all Leonel needed to hear to know Maugrier had successfully blocked. But...

So what?

Leonel used his downward strike to gather up momentum, flowing into his next strike with a seemingly practiced ease. Though it still lacked the air of a true spearman, it was clear that Leonel was improving by leaps and bounds everyday.

Maugrier grunted. He was just an archer, how could he possibly match up to Leonel in strength? His claim to fame was his special telekinetic ability to control his Force, a power bestowed to him by Lord Modred. He didn't have the strong body of other demons. He was happy enough just to survive the first strike.

Unfortunately for him, while his body was weak, his close combat was even weaker. He had hardly registered what happen when a sharp pain came from his waist.

Maugrier felt the pain surging through his veins. It was the worst pain he had ever experienced in his life. He could faintly tell that when his pain reached such a threshold that... his life was truly finished.

He plopped to the ground before Leonel's frowning figure, unable to gather the strength to rise up.

'I didn't manage to cut him all the way in half. It's either my strength is still lacking or that my technique isn't perfect just yet...'

Leonel had only managed to cut half way through Maugrier's waist and he was seemingly disappointed by the results, causing the demons around him to shiver in fear.

Chapter 256

Leonel took a deep breath.

He managed to kill a Demon Lord without invoking his Metal Synergy Runes. This could be considered improvement, but he still wasn't happy with this result. He felt that dealing with Maugrier wouldn't have been a problem for him even half a month ago.

'I'm learning all these spear techniques, but chaining them together well is too difficult... I need a new direction...'

After steadying his breathing, Leonel looked up to find the remaining demons inching away from him. It was clear that if they weren't worried that Leonel would stab them in the back, they would have long since turn and run. They were all veteran warriors. They knew that with such a large disparity in strength, and especially since Leonel was a mage, they'd be finished unless they banded together.

However, what they never expected was for Leonel to do nothing to them. Even up until the point the first of them ran away, he didn't lift a single finger.

In Leonel's mind, he didn't benefit entering such a battle. Without a leader, these demons wouldn't be able to organize themselves to continue the chase. At best, they'd be able to regroup with another Demon Lord. But, by then, Sir Peirce would be in position and things would become much easier.

Instead of putting his life on the line fighting so many enemies alone, it was best to take advantage of their fear and allow them to run away. Leonel wasn't an invincible god. Fighting almost 50 opponents by himself was far too difficult. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Though he had feats beyond this in the France Zone, it had to be remembered that those were normal humans without special abilities. Leonel wouldn't play with his life like that in this place.

Leonel bent forward, picking up the bow Maugrier had dropped.

"Oh...?"

Leonel was stunned.

The bow had a sleek coldness to it that reminded Leonel of polished stainless steel. However, it was oddly both black and rough to the touch, almost like sand paper.

But this wasn't what shocked Leonel. What truly caused him to pause was just how heavy the bow was. It weighed at least 50 pounds, and that was already about half the heft of his black spear. [PANDA NOVEL](http://PANDA-NOVEL)

'Now that I think about it, a huge part of the reason Maugrier was able to shoot and reload so quickly was because he didn't pull the bowstring back very far...'

Leonel replayed the battle in his mind. He clearly remembered that the cloaked Demon Lord's firing was almost like flicking a finger.

In the heat of battle, Leonel didn't think much of it. But now that he had the time, he realized that the only explanation for this must be because this bow was just that powerful. Even with such a small pull, it could have such power...

Leonel had always been good with long distance weapons. In truth, this was likely a large part of the reason why his Gene Assessment had set him as a star quarterback. He was very good at reading a target's intentions and pinpointing a throw in their direction. This was something he only got even better at after his ability awakened.

A large part of the reason Leonel chose an atlatl as his first ranged weapon was because the throwing motion was the same he was used to.

After that, his first craft was a pair of pistols. But, his strength was already beginning to leave those long barreled pistols behind to the point he rarely used them in battle anymore. It couldn't be helped, they were at most C or B-grade treasures to begin with and he didn't like having to constantly repair the nozzles like he did. ρ???(???????)

Leonel had never really thought about supplementing his long ranged abilities with a bow and arrow before. But now that he did, he realized it wasn't a bad idea.

An arrow would always be able to travel further than he could throw something. Though it sacrificed a bit of flexibility as a result, judging by how powerful this bow would be with just the flick of a finger, it might still be a good option.

'Hm... I'll keep it with me, I guess. Even if I can't take it out of this Zone, since I'll be here for such a long period of time anyway it'll still be of some use.'

Leonel put away his spear and tested the bow string.

"Ah...!"

Leonel sucked in a cold breath. He realized in that moment that had he not reacted quickly, he would have lost the tips of his fingers.

Why was this bowstring so sharp?

‘... It’s not that it’s sharp, but that it takes so much strength to pull that it exerts too much strain on my fingers... but if that’s the case, how did such a weak Demon Lord pull it?’

Leonel flipped over Maugrier’s corpse and checked his hands. Soon, he understood.

First, Maugrier’s hands were covered in coarse gloves made of an extraordinarily sturdy material. Not only that, but they were also thick to the point it made him look as though he had paws for hands.

However, even with that, Leonel could see deep grooves on Maugrier’s pointer and ring finger. It was clear that Maugrier likely replaced these gloves very often.

‘There’s also a lot of Force concentration on his fingers, it’s the combination of these factors that allowed him to do this...’

Leonel made up his mind. He was still a Force Crafter, after all though he hadn’t had time to design any new crafts recently. But, this position he took up on the border gave him a lot more flexibility and there were less eyes watching him. He could definitely make something better than this.

After making up his mind, Leonel took off Maugrier’s spatial brace. It covered about half of his forearm and had a total of six small spatial spaces within, five of which were filled with arrows of various kinds and the final of which had miscellaneous things.

‘Oh?’

Something caught Leonel’s attention within the last space. He quickly took it out.

The object was a crystal that very much reminded Leonel of the ones he had seen within the Magic Art Tower. After sinking his mind into it, he found exactly what he had expected. Or, not...

‘[Merlin’s Bestowal: Bowman King].’

“Wait, what?”

Chapter 257

Leonel was stunned.

This was the third time he was seeing Merlin's name in such an important setting. Though there were some legends about him in the Mage Academy Library, Leonel didn't really pay much attention to it. This was because those books were too low level. The information practically bordered on fairy tale.

However, things were a bit different now...

The first time Leonel saw his name was after entering the Joan Zone. Apparently those matters were related to a prophecy he had made in the past.

The second time he saw it was when he entered this Mythological Zone. Once again, it was related to a prophecy this Merlin had made in the past again.

This was now the third time Leonel had seen this name in a surprising capacity.. It could be said that this was the last thing he had ever expected to find.

At the same time, Leonel wondered why it was Maugrier was so weak with such an inheritance on him. How could he be ranked in the 60's amongst Demon Lords? But after a moment of thought, he realized that this might have been the wrong way to look at things.

It might very well be possible that the former Maugrier wasn't worthy of ever becoming a Demon Lord in his lifetime until he stumbled into this inheritance. If Leonel looked at things like this, then it was very possible.
PANDA-NOVEL.COM

If Leonel took it one step further, it had to be remembered that Merlin was a hero of the human world, not the demon world. To the demons, he should have been a great enemy. After all, he was responsible for the rise of King Arthur.

Since that was the case, such an inheritance might not be suited to demons for use to begin with. If that was the case, then the fact Maugrier made it so far with it just went to show just how special the inheritance in this crystal was.

‘Wow...’

Leonel felt like the crystal was an all new world. Unlike the crystals of the Magic Art Tower which only had a single Mage Art within them, this crystal was separated into several layers, each holding a different truth of the path of a Bowman.

There were spells for enhancing eyesight, for accelerating an arrow mid-flight, and there were even meditation techniques for knights and mages within it.

The meditation techniques of this Mythological Zone all had one purpose: to Crystallize Force. Or rather, what the people of this Zone called either Spirit Pressure or Internal Strength.

Spirit Pressure meditation techniques compressed the Soul Force in one’s Ethereal Glabella. Internal Strength meditation techniques compressed the Force within one’s Force Nodes. PANDA NOVEL

There were no limitations to meditation techniques, they could be used no matter which step of cultivation one was at. So, it was no problem for Leonel to start late.

However, there were obviously tiers of quality amongst meditation techniques. Some excelled in the degree to which one could compress and other excelled in the speed compression occurred, but those that could do both to perfection were rare.

The Mage Academy provided many types of meditation techniques. In fact, Leonel had dozens in his Dreamscape at this very moment. It was precisely because of this that he could see that Merlin’s meditation technique was far beyond anything he had ever seen before.

‘It pulls on the power of the stars? What a fantastical meditation technique...’

Leonel felt that this meditation technique resonated with him on a profound level. He felt that maybe this so-called power of the stars might be greatly beneficial to him.

Maybe there was a reason his Lineage Factor was named the Snowy Star Owl.

However, Leonel didn't immediately make this connection. This wasn't because he was stupid or that his Dreamscape was still lacking — though the latter might be part of the reason — but rather because he was a man of the modern era. $\rho \int$

To people of backward, medieval era places like this, stars were mysterious entities and sometimes even gods looking down on them. However, to Leonel, they were massive balls of flaming gas. What could possibly be special about them?

Though Leonel had this inherent bias ingrained within him, he also knew that any techniques that appeared in this world would be real. He also had to admit that in this new world, where there were Dimensions above the third and abilities he couldn't imagine, it wasn't appropriate for him to try to reconcile everything with his own limited knowledge.

'My main focus will still be the spear, but there's a lot of useful things in here. Since I'm talented in the bow, it won't hurt to take a look...'

With that thought, Leonel began to walk back, already drafting up plans for a protective covering for his fingers. He wanted it to be light weight and also not interfere with his spear wielding. If it could add special attributes to his arrows as well, that might be nice....

Leonel drafted tens of possible plans in his Dream World as he walked. Before he realized it, he had already walked out of the ash forest, finding an army led by Sir Peirce before him.

Sir Peirce sat atop his horse, his snake-like eyes observing Leonel curiously.

"... Demon Lord Maugrier is dead." Leonel finished his report under the astonished gazes of Peirce's death guards.

Peirce's eyes narrowed. He looked Leonel up and down for a long while, but didn't find anything off about him. Leonel didn't even look particularly tired.

The actions of the demons had been getting more and more aggressive over the past month. It could be said that the number of clashes between human and demonkind, likewise, increased exponentially.

Yet, in all this time, the number of high level figures that had fallen was zero. Unless... one counted the two Demon Lords that had both fallen at Leonel's hands.

The truth was that there were simply too many demons. There were many Demon Generals who rivaled Demon Lords in potential and strength but were never promoted for fear of the 66 limit. Even if Leonel killed them, there would probably be a new 66th ranked Demon Lord by tomorrow. But, even with this being the case, Leonel's feats were too shocking.

Since when were Demon Lords so easy to kill? There was definitely something about this child's calculative abilities and mind that were beyond expectations. Of course, there was also the factor his enemies underestimating him due to his age, but this didn't diminish the impressiveness by much at all.

Seemingly thinking of something, Sir Peirce opened his mouth to speak.

“Remember, boy, don't forget the rules of Camelot.”

Sir Peirce didn't elaborate on his words at all, but Leonel understood what he meant. Though rare, there was no small number of humans who had fallen to the darker path. Many of those humans started by picking up things they shouldn't have from the bodies of demons...

Leonel's eyes narrowed slightly, but he never got a chance to respond...

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Leonel suddenly felt a strong case of dejavu overwhelm him. Hadn't this exact same thing occurred on the Project Hunt Island...?

At that moment, the dark night skies were illuminated by a dull gray pillar of light in the distance.

What Leonel didn't know at that moment was that this wasn't a Force Eruption and... the true purpose behind the all out assault of the Demons was about to be revealed.

Chapter 258

Leonel was shocked by the sudden change, as was everyone else. However, Leonel had long since gained a habit of paying attention to everything going on in his surroundings at once. This wasn't only a method of training his Internal Sight, but it was also a method of protecting his life.

Due to this, Peirce's expression fell perfectly into Leonel's vision. The hint of surprise quickly followed by anticipation didn't escape him.

'He knows what this thing is?'

Leonel didn't think much of it. He knew too little about this world. It made sense that a veteran knight like Peirce would know more than he did. However, this only made Leonel more curious.

The reason was simple. While Peirce reacted in this way, none of his fellow knights or death guards did.. In that case, the most likely explanation was that this was very high level information. This was only made more obvious by the fact none of the books Leonel had read in the Mage Academy had the necessary information. If they did, his Dreamscape would have reacted.

Peirce's expression changed many times before it seemed he finally settled on a decision.

"Arrange the formation! We're retreating back to the Large Barracks!"

Peirce's roar called out, causing the knights who had followed him here to be stunned for a moment.

The reason they had gathered here was to counter attack the demons. While they thought the humans were all converging back toward the Large Barracks, they'd be caught off guard by the sudden appearance of an army.

Yet, instead of waiting to deal this blow, Peirce actually decided to retreat immediately. It could only be said that whatever that pillar of light was, it was extraordinarily important. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Leonel's gaze flashed, but he didn't say much. It could be said that the death of a Demon Lord was already a great result for this expedition. Even if it was easy for Modred to replace Demon Lords, they would still need time to acclimate themselves to their new strength.

'I wonder what's going on...'

...

Leonel knew that this matter would be a big deal, but he could have never imagined just how great of a matter it would be. It was to the point that even the core city of Camelot was stirred.

Whether it was the mysterious Grand Magi, the Knights of the Round Table, or even the lofty King and Queen of Camelot — Arthur and Guinevere — not a single one could sit still.

Before the sun rose on the horizon the following day, a single title had been ingrained in the minds of every human and demon across the Mythological Zone...

The Merlin Trials.

**

Leonel never expected he would have returned to Camelot so quickly. Of course, he had already mostly completed the mission he and Lionus had been assigned. They were only meant to be posted at the border regions for a single month and half of that time had already passed. PANDA NOVEL

“Merlin Trials...?”

Leonel sucked in a cold breath.

The moment he heard these words, his Dreamscape reacted, numerous arcs of lightning branching to cover dozens of books.

Without exception, all of these books touched upon King Arthur’s legend in one way or another. Despite not directly mentioning the Merlin Trials directly, Leonel came to understand something very important.

It was very likely that before the birth of Camelot, it was precisely these Merlin Trials that allowed King Arthur to gain the legacy he needed to rise to the top of this Mythological Zone.

If Leonel’s conjectures were correct, this meant that these Merlin Trials were even more important than he originally assumed. It was no wonder Peirce’s reaction was so fierce.

There was another matter as well, though...

The movements of the demons could have been considered to be exceptionally odd before the appearance of these trials. But, if the appearance of that pillar of light was taken into account, then it would explain everything.

The demons had forced the humans to retreat from the Small Barracks. The result of that was the humans losing the footholds they had gained around the trial location. Due to this, it was not only easier for the demons to enter, but it had suddenly become several times more difficult for humanity to do the same... ρ??(???????)

‘But isn’t Merlin a hero of the humans...?’

Leonel shook his head. Even if he was, just judging by how far Maugrier had gone with his Bowman King legacy it was obvious that the Merlin Trials should be beneficial to demons as well.

‘If this is all true, then why is it that I was recalled back to Camelot...? Shouldn’t we all be trying our best to reclaim the land we lost in retreat?’

As Leonel was lost in thought, the person he most wanted to see now came. He really couldn’t stifle his questions anymore.

What were the Merlin Trials really? Why were they recalled to Camelot if it was so important?

Leonel opened the doors to his residence only to find Elys on the other side.

He was a bit surprised. He had been certain that it would be Lionus, but it was Elys instead.

“The Prince was suddenly called by the Royal Court, so he sent me with his apologies for missing your meeting.”

“Oh?” Leonel nodded. “It’s not a big deal. You can come in, I do still have some questions.”

Elys smiled and accepted Leonel’s invitation.

She was surprised to see just how clean and meticulous Leonel’s room was. It was almost as though he wasn’t living in it at all. It couldn’t be said that she entered the room of men often, but she knew that even a woman’s room wouldn’t necessarily be so orderly.

Of course, what Elys didn’t know was that this was the product of his father’s teachings. It could be said that the only reason this side of Leonel didn’t show more was because of how odd the times were. He didn’t really have a place to call home on Earth currently unless the Segmented Cube was counted.

Every since Elys watched Leonel battle and kill Gorgo, she had become more reserved around him. Though she had known he was powerful after watching his battle with Lamorak, it was difficult to fuse the state he ended up in with a powerful persona.

“You can sit anywhere.” Leonel said casually. “Did you really only come here today to answer my questions? Or did you have another purpose?”

“Oh!” Elys snapped out of her thoughts. “Yes, yes. I wanted to say that you’ve gained a great number of merits. The death of a Demon Lord is already enough to be promoted to a Two Star Magus. But, you actually killed two. This falls just a bit short of enough to become a Three Star Magus...

“As long as you pass the standardization tests, you’ll be able to raise your standing in the Mage Academy.”

Leonel nodded, accepting the crystal Elys passed over to him. It likely held information about his merits and could be considered his proof.

“So about these Merlin Trials...”

Leonel tried to steer the conversation away from this topic. He wasn’t very interested in promotion right now. At most, he’d promote to a Three Star Official Mage so that he could read the Level Nine books within the library.

“This...” Elys’ eyes went dim for a moment. “... Since you’ve gained so many merits, it should be fine...

“The Merlin Trials have existed even before His Majesty King Arthur established Camelot. It has picked a great many heroes in its time but His Majesty was the one who traveled the furthest down this road.

“The truth is that the Merlin Trials are separated into Minor Openings and Major Openings. This is most definitely a Major Opening.

“Minor Openings find individuals to test while Major Openings are open to all. But, in return, Major Openings are several times more dangerous, not only because of the trials within, but also because of our fellow man...

“It could be said that all the major players of Camelot and Modred’s Demon Army have all benefited from the Merlin Trials in one way or another, so it’s not a chance anyone wants to miss...”

Leonel's brows knit. Could it be that Maugrier's Bowman King inheritance was the product of a Minor Opening?

"Are there any other differences between a Minor and Major Opening...?"

Elys shook her head. "It's too hard to tell. Normally, someone who benefitted from a Minor Opening wouldn't easily divulge this information. But, from what we do know, it should be impossible to gain the true core inheritances of Legendary Magus Merlin unless it's attained during the Major Opening..."

"However, there are some clues that point toward the idea that having benefitted from a Minor Opening makes doing the same in a Major Opening easier..."

"Some scholars believe that this is Legendary Magus Merlin picking out successors. He will first pick out individuals, then have them fight the masses to temper them.... 50 years ago, His Majesty King Arthur was one such person.

"The sword in the stone was his Minor Opening, and 50 years ago, he swept through the world of the Major Opening and established our Kingdom!"

Chapter 259

The more Leonel learned, the more confused he became. Weren't these Zones meant to be based on human mythology?

With this premise, one would assume that the most preeminent versions of King Arthur's tale would sit atop everything else.

Until now, things followed this logic. Whether it was Guinevere's betrayal, Modred's existence, the Knights of the Round Table, or even the mention of the sword in the stone, everything was as Leonel was familiar with.

However, if Leonel went a layer deeper than this, this world was still too different from what he was expecting. The existence of Lionus, the Magi, the existence of this world's magic system... None of these were things the tales of the past told of.

Leonel couldn't tell whether or not these were random things the universe was filling in as it pleased, or if there was another, deeper reason for this change.

Every time Leonel thought about such things, his mind would inevitably travel back to one idea... the future can influence the past...

If that was the case, could it be that these changes weren't random as Leonel thought? But maybe the result of changes to the legend future generations made?

When Leonel stepped on this path of thinking, he suddenly shuddered.. His mind had just landed on something that made his heart go cold...

The influence higher Dimensions had on lower Dimension was obscene. It might very well be possible that something a higher Dimensional being did on a whim would be more impactful than thousands of years worth of stories passed down in Leonel's world.

And, if that was true...

'... If someone from a higher Dimensional world wanted to change the legend of King Arthur... it would be exceptionally easy...'PANDA-NOVEL.COM

This alone was a benign thought. But, when it was combined with Leonel's subconscious thoughts of several months, it felt as though a bolt of lightning had gone off in his mind. And this time, rather than being the illusory bolts of his Dreamscape, this was a true arc of lightning accompanied by rolling thunder.

To this point, Leonel still had no idea what Joan's goal in the French Zone was. None of her actions made sense.

Back then, Leonel simply followed his heart and did his best to save as many people as he could. It was never more complicated than this for him.

But, if he thought about it... what would happen if Joan succeeded? Was Joan succeeding mutually exclusive with him completing the Zone?

Think about it for a moment. What would happen if Joan's purpose caused Leonel to fail?

Well, Leonel and Aina would have then likely had to spend the rest of their lives in medieval France, growing old together. The details aren't very important... but, what is important is what would happen after they died...

In that case, wouldn't the Zone reset, allowing a new group to enter and attempt to clear it?

If that happened, what would have been the point of Joan's mission? What reason would there have been for her to hinder Leonel's success?

If that was the case, then their purpose couldn't have possibly been to hinder Leonel. If Leonel foolishly thought the matter would be over as long as he cleared the Zone, he would be sorely mistaken.

The more Leonel thought about it, the less sense it made. Unless.... The matters that occurred in Joan's Zone were related to this Mythological Zone! PANDA NOVEL

Leonel felt as though a thumping drum was raging through his Dreamscape. His ability seemed to be screaming at him, as though trying to tell him something he couldn't quite grasp.

This wasn't because there was a connection Leonel had yet to make, but rather because of the most unfortunate weakness of his Dreamscape... He simply didn't have enough information!

Who were those people who almost turned Joan's Zone into a Unique Zone? How was Merlin's legend related to what they were trying to do? How was this Camelot Zone related to it all?

Leonel grew more and more serious the longer he thought. He didn't even realize that Elys had shrunk into a corner like a timid little mouse, unable to even steady her breathing.

Unfortunately, this matter was too important for Leonel to think about Elys' wellbeing.

Zones were inextricably linked to the future of Earth. Even though Leonel didn't have much ties to Earth remaining, his normal disposition wouldn't allow him to sit idly by as its fate was being toyed with.

Unfortunately, Leonel didn't take part in every Zone clearance. It was impossible for him to do so even if he wanted to. As a result, he had no idea if other instances like what he and Aina lived through had occurred elsewhere...

It was very possible that as Earth cleared one Zone after another, they were simply playing into exactly what some other entity wanted...

'According to Uncle Montez, Earth was among new worlds with the greatest potential even compared to the history of the universe. We have the talent necessary to become an Eighth Dimensional World. It's for this reason that so many Higher Dimensional worlds were invested in our progress and are even pooling together to give us rewards for the Zones we clear...

'But what exactly does this higher potential mean? I don't believe that it's only as simple as reaching the Eighth Dimension... ρ??∪???

'No, that's not the right way to think about it. I should be wondering exactly what benefits come with having such high potential....

'Potential... potential...'

Leonel's eyes flashed open.

Mythological Zones were the treasures of the universe. No matter where they appeared, countless powers would fight for them. Of course, that was under the requirement that they all had access to the same world.

Right now, Earth was in a protected state. It was difficult to travel from higher to lower Dimensions. This was a protection the universe gave not much unlike a mother did to a child in her womb.

However, that didn't mean it was impossible. Though someone from the Fifth Dimension couldn't descend, someone in the weaker levels of the Fourth Dimension could pay a heavy price to descend.

For now, all of this wasn't very important. All Leonel was thinking about now was the Zone he was in now...

Mythological Zones were already so highly sought after. But, what if on top of being a Mythological Zone, it was born in a world with infinite potential. If that was the case, just what kind of treasures would such a place birth...?

'So is that how it is?'

Leonel knew that he had only grasped a small part of the truth. He also knew that it was impossible that this was the only goal of those people.

With how many legends and folktales Earth had, who knew how many of them were able to form Zones of their own. And, if there were many, it was impossible for Leonel to be at and protect them all.

All he could do was focus on what he could control. As long as he was here, he wouldn't allow these higher Dimensional beings to succeed.

At the same time, Leonel caught a faint inkling of why it was necessary to appear in Zones like Joan's...

If it was a matter of entering a historical Zone, it was only necessary to plant someone in that timeline. Though that seemed impossible to the current Leonel with his limited scope of understanding, he felt that for a higher Dimensional being, this was likely not impossible.

However, how would one enter a Mythological Zone? It wasn't a true part of history, there was no place to 'return to'. It seemed the only way to enter was the Zone Gate itself, but Leonel could hazard a guess that the 12 who entered likely didn't have anything to do with these higher Dimensional beings.

It was possible that the Adurna family or even the Slayer Legion was related. If that was the case, then Leonel would simply accept that his hypothesis was incorrect. But... in the case the Adurna family wasn't responsible, then that meant that all the actions these individuals had taken were precisely to find a path into an impossible to enter Zone!

The moment Leonel had this thought, his heart stilled. He felt that he had regained his peace and that he could finally breathe steadily once more.

Even he didn't realize it, but he felt so uncomfortable at the idea of some unknown person, thing or organization controlling his life that he nearly went mad for a moment.

This was the true Leonel, a man who wanted to control everything in his palms. It had always shone through on the football field... And the day he chose to display it in the real world, it was unknown what kind of monster would be born.

The discomfort in Leonel's heart seemed to stack. First it was Lamorak, now it was this. At every turn, it seemed that someone wanted to play the strings of his life without his consent.

Leonel's lip curled. It was an oddly cold smile, the kind he hadn't smiled in his entire life until this point. Seeing such a scene, Elys felt her soul crumbling.

Luckily, the expression soon disappeared, replaced by Leonel's usual appearance. Handsome, bright and kind.

"Sorry about that, Elys. I was thinking about some matters... So why is it that we were recalled to Camelot with such an important thing happening at the border?"

Elys patted her chest, wiping the sweat from her brow.

‘Is this the man I’m supposed to seduce...? How am I supposed to do that...?’ She bit her cherry lips.

“... To answer your question, the matter of the Merlin Trials is too important. Even our Grand Knights can’t guarantee maintaining order. The allure of such a treasured place is too much. Since we already lost the initiative, it’s better that we retreat so we can be selective about who goes. That way, we can eliminate other variables...”

That was how it was. Camelot wanted to control who could and couldn’t enter.

Leonel nodded slowly. ‘I hope that you won’t hold me back, Camelot. I would hate to become enemies with you all. But, if I have to choose between clearing the side missions and betraying you all, I will choose the latter...’

Though it was necessary to have good relations with Camelot to complete the side quests aside from killing Modred, it wasn’t necessary for the main quest. If Leonel had to choose, the choice was obvious. He just hoped Camelot wouldn’t force his hand.

Chapter 260

Elys ended up leaving without making any progress on her mission once again. However, Leonel didn’t have the mind to bother with her thoughts. He felt a slight urgency in his heart. The instant she left, he buried his head into his training.

He hardly touched his bow. To him, his talent in the bow was so overwhelming that he didn’t need to practice very much to bring it to a high level. Instead, he focused his entire being on his meditation and his spear.

By the time the news came down, he had almost gone through a hundred spears. But, compared to the over 2000 he had to master, he had hardly put a dent into his true goal. However, even still, he could feel his Spear Force being slowly refined over time.

Leonel was still at the very first level of Spear Force. However, according to the dictionary his father left behind for him, there were separations between the kinds of Spear Force one comprehended.. The

longer he could suppress his breakthrough while building and refining his Spear Force, the greater benefits he would gain in the future.

With a hidden sharpness in his eyes, Leonel left the Segmented Cube.

**

The Mage Academy was bustling, even more so than usual. The usually quite indoor garden around the Magic Art Tower was filled with the young and old. Everyone was waiting for a single announcement. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

At that moment an old woman with a head of dry, greying hair sat silently atop a platform, quietly meditating as though the happenings of her surroundings had nothing to do with her.

However, no one dared to snub this woman. Judging by her violet robes and the fiery red patterns that adorned them, this lady was a Two Star Fire Magus and very likely one of the Headmasters of the Mage Academy.

Suddenly, this seemingly frail old lady opened her eyes.

A resounding pressure singed with no small amount of heat suddenly pervaded the atmosphere. It felt as though all the moisture in the air was being sucked dry. Even the lush green grass beneath their feet looked as though they might wilt away at any time.

Without even having to say a word, silence took hold of the surroundings. The deterrence of such a magus, so infinitesimally close to the penultimate barrier, was too great. Who would dare to snub her?

Surprisingly, without even bothering to waste any time, she began to speak of the topic at hand. There was no introduction, no flowery words, just a cold and emotionless arrow toward the heart of the matter. [PANDA NOVEL](http://PANDA-NOVEL)

“The Merlin Trial Gates will open in two months. Only those at and above the age of 16 will be allowed to enter.

“Rights for entry will be decided on your merits.

“Those between the ages of 16 and 20 must reach the Two Star Official Mage standard. Those between the ages of 21 and 30 must be Three Star Official Mages. Those between the ages of 31 and 50 must be One Star Magi. Those older than this must be Two Star Magi.

“Those that meet this first requirement will be allowed to enter a round of selections.

“There will be 50 spots for those within the first age bracket, 25 for those in the next, and in the oldest there will be just 10 spots

“Those of you who will be part of the quotas given to your families will not be included in this total.
p??J??????

“The selection will begin in an hour within the core city. If you’ve been found to be lying about your credentials, the punishment won’t be light. So, think twice before you step through the teleportation formations. Prepare yourselves.”

The Fire Magus was short and succinct. Those in the vicinity didn’t even have the chance to process before her spiel was over.

An hour? There was no time to prepare? Some of them hardly had any idea what these Merlin Trials were, but now they were suddenly thrust into a competition for it?

It had to be known that not everyone was like Leonel. He had access to the Crown Prince and there was also Elys who seemed to have a special standing within the Mage Academy outside of being a lecturer.

Even then, Leonel hardly knew much at all. If it wasn’t for the fact he passed his Three Star Official Mage standardization test and was able to read the level nine information within the library, he would likely be even more clueless. Let alone these people who had even less access than he did.

Leonel remained expressionless, his Three Star Official Mage robes reflecting a deep blue embroidered by bronze. He stepped into the teleportation formation toward the core of Camelot, his mind mentally prepared for anything.

The truth was that with his combat prowess, the 16 to 20 year old bracket was nothing more than a joke to him. His attending should be nothing more than a formality, but for some reason, he was still on his guard.

Leonel's vision blurred. A moment later, he found himself in a large arena.

By all rights, such a large arena should have been bustling, filled from wall to wall with spectators. However, this wasn't the case at all. In fact... it was eerily silent.

Seats that could seat upwards of 50 000 were covered in black sheets as though to divert one's attention from the fact they were empty.

The stands weren't completely with people, though. That said, it was certain that the youths and older mages that stood around Leonel wished that they had been. Reason being... the characters silently watching them from above were simply too awe inspiring. Their presence alone made their knees weak.

There were no more than a hundred of them, but each and every one seemed to carry the weight of the world on their shoulders.

There were the seven Supreme Magi, the Knights of the Round table, the General Stars... One after another, their standing and strength seemed to only grow.

Even after all of that, there were still two individuals who made the mages around Leonel feel as though their hearts had stopped.

They both sat upon thrones, their strength so great that the air seemed to solidify around them.

One was a woman of exceptional looks. She had soft, wheat colored skin, flowing black hair and shimmering blue eyes. Her beauty was intoxicating to the point of drawing all who looked upon her into an illusion.

She wore a delicate blue dress and her neck and chest was wrapped by a soft white fur scarf. She embodied nobility to the greatest degree.

The second was a man. His blond hair was bright to the point of being blinding. His jaw was chiseled, his eyes deep and unfathomable, and his smile was charismatic and enchanting to the extreme.

His shoulders were broad and his presence was so tall that even his throne seemed too small for him.

There was no doubt that these two were the great Queen Guinevere and King Arthur.