

Descent 521

Chapter 521

The man looked massive, something that was inconceivable considering the level of security he would have had to live under for his entire life.

He wore a grey uniform with a single zipper that went from his collar to his crotch. On his left chest, a bright red tag shone: #D2901.

The air around this man seemed to grow solid, a palpable killing intent hanging heavily around him.

It shouldn't have been possible for even an A-grade Prisoner to become so large, let alone a Dark Prisoner. Their meals were perfectly measured to maintain health and prevent starvation, but it shouldn't have been enough to feed their strength, let alone growing to have such a muscular body.

There was no doubt that whatever ability this man had, his strength was related to it.

City Lord Hargrove's expression flickered.

'He doesn't know what The Empire is? Or who the Emperor is?... Interesting, it seems that we've underestimated just how villainous this Ascension Empire is''

Hargrove should have known. Any Empire that dared to name itself Ascension had to be arrogant without regard.
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There was a reason those of the Dimensional Verse described the evolution of a world as the Descent of a Dimension. It was supposed to represent a bestowal by the Universe. Whether it be the talent or potential of a world, it was all gifted. A world didn't grow to accept an evolution, rather an evolution fell upon a certain world.

This was the subtle difference. This was the core truth behind Dimensional Descent.

Yet, whether by coincidence or by a lofty purpose, Earth's Empire named itself Ascension. Arrogance didn't even begin to describe such bloviating. It almost made Hargrove laugh in rage.

As a man born in a world with such little talent, he understood this bestowal the most. Yet, this Earth, despite being lucky enough to be gifted such prospects, actually believed that they could snub their noses at it.

Hargrove raised his head, a billowing laughter leaving his lips. His long mustache caught a wind, whipping about wildly along with the rest of his hair.

His hands clasped behind his back, his chest standing wide and broad.

"We accept one and all!" PANDA NOVEL

#D2901 laughed when he heard these words.

His legs flexed, the ground beneath him cracking once again.

BANG!

He shot into the skies, crossing a 50 meter length in a single bound.

Just as he was making his way through, another group of prisoners charged out. Damian, Joseph and the others could no longer wait. This wasn't because they decided to trust these people, but rather because the appearance of this man had sent the guards into a frenzy.

The guards at their level of security was minimal. After the destruction of the prison, Damian could use his ability again. As a person who had an S-grade ability upon awakening, his ability had long since crossed into the Fifth Dimension now. So, defeating a few low level guards had been especially easy.

But, they weren't fools. They knew that the guards on the lower levels were no laughing matter. If they couldn't leave now, they might never leave. ¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶

As expected, the moment Damian, Joseph and the others bolted out of their hiding spots, running full speed for the city in the distance, the first guard appeared. Unable to wield their normal weapons any longer, they wielded cold weapons. However, their actions didn't seem awkward in the slightest. It seemed that they were most definitely well trained in the regard.

One prisoner after another poured out. It was clear that #D2901 had carved out a path for them all. The maddening howls of laughter shook the prison, causing a cold shiver to take hold of C and B-grade prisoners.

They had all heard stories about how insane the prisoners below were. It was impossible for them to spend so many decades within these walls and not see certain oddities. However, after seeing these men and women for themselves, they all realized one thing' ;

They were insane.

Many of them, clearly unused to walking on their own two feet, ran on all fours. Some rolled about as though they were balls rather than humans. A few chose to walk on their hands, shooting off toward Hargrove City in a mad dash.

The normal prisoners amongst them, wearing #C's and #B's across their chests had never felt such fear in their lives. They gathered into groups, hoping that they wouldn't lose their lives in a maddened assault.

A young acrobatic woman charged through the concrete on her palms. Her concept of the world were so shallow that she didn't seem to understand shame at all. Her prison garbs were completely unzipped and her small breasts hung out, jiggling about as she planted her palms one after another.

Her head peeked upward as she curiously observed the fear in the eyes of the normal prisoners by Damian's side. She had never seen such emotion before, she wondered where it was coming from. It looked like fun.

She effortlessly kept up with them on her hands despite the fact they were running with all their might. It was quite baffling, actually. Unlike Dark Prisoners, C and B-grade prisoners got to exercise everyday. By right, they should be more fit than she was.

The young woman looked curiously at a slightly obese man at the back of the group. He lingered behind the group, finding it hard to keep up.

The obese man seemed to feel something observing him. But, when he locked eyes on the vacant gaze of the woman chasing after him on her hands, he felt as though his heart had been thrown into an ice bath.

His throat constricted and his trouble breathing became even worse.

The young woman tilted her head, her speed not slowing in the slightest.

At that moment, her vacant expression twisted into a slanted smile. She looked as though she had never smiled a day in her life before. The facial muscles she should have been using only half worked, leaving her face somewhat crooked.

She suddenly pushed off the ground, her hands landing on the obese man's shoulders. Her breasts dangled atop his head. But, the scene that should have been one part erotic and another part comedic didn't feel like this for the obese man at all.

“Help! Help me!”

Damian and Joseph looked back, only to hear a giggle that shook their very souls.

The young woman slapped the chubby cheeks of the obese man, twisting into the air without letting go.

At first, the obese man's body followed her momentum. But, very soon, it couldn't. The result was a head being ripped from its body, its voice being cut off half way in favor of gurgling blood.

The young woman landed on the ground, still pushing off her palms.. But, the obese man's head, as though a soccer ball rather than part of a human's corpse, danced on the soles of her feet, hopping from one to the other.

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Damian and Joseph looked back in horror, their eyes widening in shock. What should have been a frail young woman suddenly became a monster in their eyes. There was nothing about her innocent expression that left them with any sort of ease any longer.

The amount of torque you would need to twist a human's head off, let alone from such an odd position, was enough to make them shiver down to their cores. This young woman looked no different from any other in her early 20's. Yet, the strength she displayed was beyond the realms of reason.

"Keep running!" Joseph barked.

The young woman continued to observe the running group, her breathing hiccupping into a bubbling giggle every so often. It was as though she had overexerted her body, but her brain had yet to register the fact. It short-circuited, trying to decide whether she should prioritise laughing or breathing deeply.

Damian and the others entered a state of high alert.

It was at that moment that the guards began to flood out of the cracked walls one after another, some quickly catching up to some of the prisoners who hadn't spent their time escaping but rather on other matters.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

But, it was then that the first arrows were released. It was so swift that it didn't even make a single sound beneath the chorus of excited roars and insane laughter.

A guard who had just snapped the arm of a prisoner while twisting their limb back suddenly found a bloody hole between their brows.

The prisoner blinked with curiosity, crimson splattering all over his face. His tongue whipped out, tagging the corner of his lip.

He spit out the blood as soon as he tasted it, finding it not too pleasing. Then, without much thought, he snapped his arm back into place and continued running with everyone else, curiosity lighting his eyes. Despite the fact he had just seen a person die for the first time in his life, he didn't seem to feel any particularly special way about it.

It was a complete slaughter. Every guard that stepped into the clearing was instantly sniped. The precision of the Hargrove City archers seemed to be even beyond the elite snipers of Earth. They acted as though in tacit agreement, not wasting a single arrow. PANDA NOVEL

Earth was very quickly finding out that there were some matters far more important than just talent. While the people of Earth were fighting to protect their home, the people of Terrain were fighting for their futures. Not just their own futures, but that of their families and loved ones. Losing ' ' Was not an option.

Hundreds of prisoners made their way across the clearing, their confidence growing with each passing moment. The efficiency of the archers gave them this very confidence to the point where many began to smile. They finally saw an end to their nightmare.

Of course, those smiling individuals weren't among the madmen designated with A's and D's across their chests. There were no small number of C and B-grade Prisoners who lost their lives at their hands.

"City Lord, is it really alright to let things continue like this?"

Every City Lord had a right hand man. For City Lord White, it had been the secretary, Niya. For City Lord Hargrove, it was an elder man who seemed even older than the skinny, greying City Lord. This older man, dressed quite like a butler, was known as Salnas. p??J?????

Hargrove continued to observe the situation, not answering immediately. In response, Salnas couldn't help but press again.

“There’s clearly a reason why Earth decided to lock many of them away. Though they’re clearly very powerful, they’ve all lost their minds. How can we expect to control them? They might end up being our downfall instead.” Salnas finished, his tone somewhat somber.

Though he spoke these words, in order to ensure that his actions wouldn’t dampen the morale of the men, he controlled his voice so that only the City Lord could hear him. After all, every small advantage they could grab a hold of was a plus. They couldn’t allow Earth the slightest chink in their armor.

“Salnas, I think it’s best you don’t ask for answers to questions you aren’t qualified to have.”

The sudden indifferent voice caught Salnas off guard. He felt as though a blade was suddenly firmly pressed against his back, prepared to take his life at the slightest sign of impropriety.

Salnas gulped, his frail old body shivering.

“ ‘| Yes, Young Heir Anared. I apologize, I’ve stepped out of line.”

Salnas struggled to speak through gritted teeth, the beating of his heart growing erratic. Even to now, he didn’t dare to turn around to face Anared who had most definitely appeared behind him. He simply lowered his head, trying to stop the trembling of his body.

‘When did this child grow so powerful?’

Salnas felt as though Anared could take his life whenever he pleased. But, logically, this young Heir who was nothing more than a little boy in Salnas’ eyes should have still been several decades away from displaying such strength.

However, when Salnas thought of a certain possibility, his trembling only became worse.

Hargrove frowned slightly and swept a gaze back in Anared’s direction. Something like reprimanding another’s subordinate was definitely crossing a line of respect. It was even worse that Anared had actually been listening in on what should have been a private conversation. In any other situation, this

would have led to a battle of City Lords. But, even Hargrove seemed to feel some trepidation when facing Anared now.

Just when Hargrove made the choice to swallow his pride and was about to try to alleviate the tension with some words, the ground quaked.

” | Are they finally getting serious?’

Hargrove turned his frown toward Dark Cloud Prison. He knew well that Earth wouldn’t leave this place unprotected. This prison was too much of a strategic point. In fact, even Terrain was aware of this or else Anared would have never been sent here.

The portions of the hexagonal prison that appeared above ground suddenly collapsed. No’ | They didn’t collapse, rather, they sunk into the ground, being swallowed beneath the concrete.

Just after this happened, the hollow center that the prison once surrounded opened, separating like the jaws of a hidden beast.

A platform slowly raised. At first, it was impossible to see anything atop of it. But, very soon, the shadows of men and women became clear.

By the time the platform’s gears grinded to a halt and appeared above ground, one could see a troop of over ten thousand warriors led by Lead Guard Garwin and Governor Duke Owen.

Joseph and Damian looked back after hearing the clicking of the gears. They had put their all into running and avoiding the A and Dark Prisoners around them, but hearing such a loud commotion, they couldn't help themselves.

When they saw the sudden appearance of the Dark Cloud Prison guards, and in such a large number at that, they felt as though their legs couldn't carry them fast enough.

There was just half a kilometer between them and the city gates. To well trained men like them, even before the Metamorphosis, this was a matter of a two or three minute run at most. Yet, these few minutes felt like the longest they had experienced in their lifetimes.

Escobar scanned the situation emotionlessly. It was as though he couldn't see the archers aiming their bows toward him.

His gaze landed on each and every one of the guards that had fallen, the billowing of his mustache becoming deeper with each passing moment. Even with the long cycles of his breath, it felt as though the wind around the Warden was kicking up, responding to his will in large swaths.

"Mow them down." He commanded coldly.

At that moment, the clicking of guns sounded.

City Lord Hargrove's pupils constricted. 'That's impossible.'

Heavy military boots stepped forward before they each kneeled, pressing their rifles to their shoulders. And then, the bullets rained. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

As quickly as the guards had fallen, the prisoners fell even faster. How could the fire rate of archers match the pace of semi-automatic weaponry?

"Shit!"

Damian growled, his feet stamping against the ground.

A surge of earth followed his command, peeling concrete jetting into the air to cover his back.

“Don’t panic! Those are normal gunpowder based weapons!” Joseph roared. “Keep running!”

Using the cover Damian gave them, Joseph and the others crossed the final remaining distance to the city, anxiousness clear in their demeanors.

“Dammit! Open the gate!”

Joseph roared through gritted teeth, but the doors of the city remained firmly closed. By now, the crowd beneath the city gates was growing and there were already more than a hundred that had made it this far while several thousand more were crossing the final distance. But, those of Hargrove City didn’t seem to hear what was going on below. PANDA NOVEL

Joseph’s heart was gripped with despair. Could this really be a ploy by The Empire?

No that, didn’t make any sense. Just what was going on?

Joseph no longer seemed to have the calm headedness he once displayed. His decision making became cloudy and he banged on the gates just like all the others, unable to think for himself. He was practically brought to the point of tears as though he could see his life flashing before his very eyes.

Hargrove watched this scene from above silently.

“It seems they understand their situation now,” He said coldly, “Lower the platforms.”

Finally, the warriors of Hargrove City began to move. But, they didn’t open the gates as many would have expected them to. Rather, they began to lower platforms from the top of the walls.

As a veteran of governance, Hargrove understood the truth of human nature, and it would be the truth no matter which world one was born in. If things came too easy, they wouldn't be appreciated. Very easily, a great boon could become bland, a lifesaving grace could be expected, and a savior could become just a person doing as they should.

When annexing such a large group of people, Hargrove needed them to understand who held the power and who didn't. As for the few who died in proving this point? Who cared. ρ??∪??????

Seeing the platforms descending, the group of prisoners that had been wailing below suddenly began to cheer. They didn't even consider the fact their lives would still be in danger or that many more could have been saved had Hargrove chosen a different method.

It was exactly as Hargrove expected. This was human nature.

“Down.” Escobar commanded coldly. “Shields at the ready. Charge!”

Governor Duke Owen didn't stay back. His aging body seemed even more agile than the youngsters, pouncing forward with vigor.

He realized that platforms presented an opportunity. It was impossible for the thousands of prisoners that had escaped to successfully climb upon those platforms before they crossed the remaining distance. From a cursory calculation, there was only enough space for a hundred people at a time and it took half a minute for a round trip to be completed.

Of course, Governor Duke Owen wasn't foolish enough to use these platforms to try and climb the city wall, that would be asking for death. However, the existence of the platforms would make breaching the gates much easier.

City Lord Hargrove might have wanted to teach the prisoners a pre-emptive lesson with his actions, but he seemed to have not considered the fact that it would be impossible to use the archers to stop their siege if the very platforms they were using protected the warriors of Earth from above!

Seeing such actions though, Hargrove sneered.

Dark Cloud Prison was a place with maybe the tightest security on Earth with the exception of the Royal Palace. It could be said that in order to become a guard here, you had to be an elite amongst elites. Even those who weren't handpicked for this job from the very beginning had been high ranking military officials before their placement.

This was all to say that the group of men and women that followed Governor Duke Owen now were all powerful combatants.

However' !.

They were all powerful combatants without the slightest idea on how to siege a city.

Both men looked toward one another as though they were looking at a fool. But, only a real clash would tell just who was right and who was wrong.

Unfortunately' !, whether or not that clash would happen would soon become an unknown.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Just when Governor Duke Owen had already crossed the halfway mark to Hargrove City, space solidified. Another swath of charging warriors froze, unable to move a single inch.

This wasn't out of fear, no' ! They were physically unable to control their bodies. As though they had suddenly been placed into a hardened mold of concrete, everything from their limbs even to their facial muscles didn't seem capable of budging even the slightest.

The central platform the guards and Warden Owen had just come from splintered into two.

Slowly, a group of prisoners, each with bright red #D tags on their chests made their way up.

The air around them seemed heavy beyond compared to the point where even the archers on Hargrove City's walls couldn't budge an inch.

At the head of these Dark Prisoner's, a lanky man with messy dirty blond hair stood. His back was hunched and his arms were still crossed in his straitjacket. From the front, it was simply impossible to see his facial expressions because his gaze faced the ground, allowing his hair to block whatever view one might have had otherwise.

His bare feet scraped along the ground, his legs barely raising as he walked forward.

Yet, even as this group began to move, no one else seemed capable of doing so.

A cold sweat began to bead down City Lord Hargrove's forehead. Even he struggled to move, even twitching his fingers felt as though he was lifting several tons of weight.

This ability.. Whatever it was'! It was the most powerful he had ever seen. No'! Even if he included those monsters he had heard of during his over a century worth of life'! None could compare to this'!

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There seemed to be only seven of them. No'! Eight? Nine?

The number kept changing. It should have been simple to conclude that one of them had a cloning ability, but through this thickening wall of space, let alone moving, even senses didn't seem to work properly anymore.

It felt as though one was trying to cast a net several kilometers away despite the fact the group was at most several hundred meters away.

As if this wasn't fear inducing enough, while a normal distance felt like forever to everyone else. To the group, it was barely a short stroll. Though they seemed to be walking normally, they covered large distances as though they were sprinting with all their might.

Not even a few seconds later, the group reached the vanguard of the Dark Cloud Prison guards. It was only then Lionel's steps suddenly paused.

In perfect unison, the group came to a pause with him. It was hard to tell what Lionel had promised these Dark Prisoners in not even half an hour since their attempted escape began to make them treat him like this. But, the reality was displayed before them all regardless.

“‘ I recognize you.”PANDA-N0VEL.COM

Lionel’s voice was quite striking in such a suddenly quiet environment. Unlike what one expected, it wasn’t deep and gruff nor did it have some evil air to it. Rather, it sounded like the normal voice of a teenage boy on the cusp of adulthood.

Yet’! One couldn’t help but feel an instinctive fear toward it. It seemed to seep into their ears and host the beating of their hearts. As though a master plucking at their strings, he was a controller of their fate.

“Ai, that’s right. You were there the day they took me away from my mother’!”

Lionel slowly walked toward Governor Duke Owen, his head still lowered to the ground. He painted quite an odd picture. Everything from his bare feet to his straitjacket seemed completely out of place.

Escobar’s gaze narrowed, his body still finding it difficult to move even the slightest bit. Despite the fact the boy’s face was lowered and the prisoner tag that should have been across his chest was covered by a straitjacket didn’t stop the Warden from recognizing Lionel immediately.

He didn’t say a word. Or rather, he couldn’t say a word even if he wanted to. Even moving his lips was difficult. PANDA NOVEL

Despite the fact Earth was new to this new world order, Escobar was still aware that such an indomitable ability shouldn’t possibly exist. All abilities should have limitations, weaknesses’! Something like locking down the space within several hundred meters should have been absolutely impossible unless one was a higher Dimensional being.

However, what the Governor Duke didn’t know was the fact there were indeed existences capable of such feats’! And they were known as Savants.

Savants were existences capable of breaking the limiters of their abilities. Whether it be the issue of stamina, duration or realm of influence, they didn't need to worry about any of this. This wasn't simply because they were able to rely on themselves, but rather because Universal Force naturally fueled their every action.

Whereas those like Leonel or the Warden would have to comprehend Universal Cycles in order to use Universal Force. Savants had no need for such a thing. They could make use of the Universe's strength as they pleased.

The result of this were abilities that seemed more like the act of Gods rather than mere mortals'! And, in fact, on some worlds'! These people were indeed known as Gods.

However, the price to pay for being a Savant wasn't non-existent either. Much like how mortal savants of Earth were only good at one particular task, the same could be true of the Savants of the Dimensional Verse. ρ??∫??????

Outside of their abilities, the talents Savants had were severely limited. Cultivating Force, comprehending Styles or Universal Cycles, even awakening Lineage Factors they might have been born with was all impossible.

But, with such power'! did they need such supplementary strengths?

Lionel's hair shook somewhat. It seemed like he was shaking his head or lamenting something, or maybe he was thinking through something. He didn't have any care to give, just silently standing there as though the world would wait upon his every whim.

"Where is my mother?"

Finally, Lionel settled down on these words. But, the cold sweat of Escobar's back only grew despite the stoicism of his face.

In the moments Lionel remained silent, he could feel the struggle of the youth before him. Lionel's every instinct screamed to kill him, yet, as though he was internally speaking to himself in attempts to calm down, he remained silent.

In the end, Lionel decided that he wanted to know about his mother more than he wanted to kill this Warden before him.

"Vice, it seems the man can't speak, release him." Lionel said slowly.

Within the group, a man who looked about 27 or 28 years old picked at his nose. Snot ran down his face, but he didn't seem to mind in the slightest. This man was none other than Vice, the wielder of the ability so many here feared so much.

Vice flicked a booger toward Escobar. Only then did the Warden almost collapse, finally able to move under the normal laws of physics.

"Speak." Lionel said plainly, his voice still as even as it always was. "Where is my mother? What did you do to her?"

Escobar coughed, feeling as though he could finally breathe normally. He pulled himself up to stand straight and tall.

When he stood to his full height, he was still quite a bit shorter than Lionel despite the fact the latter had his head lowered and his back hunched. But, Escobar's momentum didn't seem to dampen in the slightest due to this.

Escobar's palm flipped over, causing a spear to appear. In that moment, his momentum completely changed as wild energies began to flow around him.

Harsh winter winds. Fragrant spring air. Blazing summer heat. Cool fall breezes.

Beneath this presence, the pressure the other guards felt alleviated by more than 80%. Though their movements were still somewhat hindered, it most definitely wasn't as exaggerated as it had been before.

In the distance, Hargrove's pupils constricted into pinholes.

'Impossible!'

"Hold." Escobar's voice boomed when the other guards wanted to take action.

He looked toward Lionel seriously, the latter having seemingly not reacted to the sudden change.

"Your mother is dead. What do you plan to do with this information?"

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Lionel didn't say a thing for a long while. He continued to look at the ground, his arms strapped around his body beneath his straitjacket. For a moment, it seemed as though he hadn't heard a single word that was spoken.

However, a blood thirsty aura was slowly forming around him.

Lionel's head tilted upward. Through the strands of his hair, one could finally just barely make out one of his eyes. It was a vacant pale green that seemed to stare at nothing and everything at the same time.

The faint illusion of blood red wings spread to Lionel's back, the distorted image of a demon hanging around him.

In just a few moments, those red wings formed into the image of a female angel. Her red wings wrapped around Lionel, her arms holding onto him tightly.

It was just an illusion, but it seemed oh so real.

Tears of blood began to uncontrollably fall from the eyes of those around Lionel. With the exception of Escobar, they all seemed to be affected by the change.

“I see’ | Since she’s dead, what reason do you have to keep living?” [pANDA-N0VEL.COM](http://panda-novel.com)

Under the astonished gazes of many, thousands of Dark Cloud Prison guards suddenly turned their weapons onto themselves.

BANG!

The sounds of several gunshots rang at once. But, from afar, it sounded like just a single gun had been fired. The actions were so smooth and in sync that even the pulling of so many triggers seemed to come from a single point’ |

Escobar’s gaze widened before gaining a tinge of red. In that moment, just as Lionel’s words descended, he suddenly felt an overwhelming will to spear his skull through. If he hadn’t bit his tongue, he really might have gone through with it.

His heart trembled. Just what kind of maddening ability was this?

The bloody angel hanging around Lionel only seemed to grow more corporeal as though being fed by the deaths of those around her.

Her visage became clearer, a dotting expression on her face as she lightly stroked Lionel’s hair. No matter how one looked at her, it seemed like she was a proud mother’ | Or rather, she would have been had it not been for the fact her eye sockets were filled with nothing but an endless void. [PANDA N0VEL](http://panda-novel.com)

The sound of collapsing bodies filled the quiet air. In an instant, over half of a ten thousand man army fell into a pool of their own blood, their weapons painted with their own life.

The scene was absolutely horrid and a metallic stench soon filled the air.

Escobar's grip on his spear tightened. He could still see Lionel's singular eye through the strands of his hair, looking at him curiously as though he was wondering why it was he hadn't died when he told him to. As for the other, it seemed to stay hidden behind a veil of darkness, lurking.

The Governor Duke could no longer hold back. He felt like this child had been wronged, so he gave him a chance and spoke the truth. However, he had never expected for his moment of soft heartedness to cost him half of his men in a single breath.

There was a limit to his understanding, to his sympathy. This was no longer the baby in those photos, this was a monster. A monster he had to kill.

"Die!"

Escobar's spear seemed to encompass the world. Its point became the origin and its shaft became purpose. $\rho \int \cup$

In the blink of an eye, the spear tip appeared before Lionel's brow. With just a half a foot more, the skull of this young man would be pierced through.

However, would things really be so easy?

A mirror suddenly manifested before Lionel. Escobar's spear tip hardly touched its surface before it was reflected back.

The Warden was sent flying, his spear wielding arm splintering in two. The horrid imagery of a forearm being split in half down its length etched itself into the hearts of all those who saw it.

Within Lionel's group, a young woman with disheveled hair bit at her fingernails to the point they bled. But, even then, she didn't seem intent on stopping. She looked toward Escobar warily as though she was the one who should fear him rather than the other way around. It was as though she was completely oblivious to how powerful she was.

Lionel stood in place indifferently. It was as though he couldn't tell that his life had been on the line. Or, maybe it hadn't ever truly been.

Escobar's face became a deathly pale. He looked toward his arm incredulously, unable to believe what had just happened.

He hadn't awakened a powerful ability. In fact, it was of the mere C-grade upon awakening. However, he had never cared much because his spear arts could more than make up for this. With the time he had spent with Leonel's father, it was doubtful that there was anyone on Earth who could match his comprehension of the spear.

So, how had he suffered so greatly just now?

It was at that moment that there was a sudden change to the battlefield.

Leonel and Aina led a charge out of the forest edge that surrounded Dark Cloud Prison. It had taken them several hours, but they had finally cleared out all the scouts and carved a path here. And, luckily, they had managed to avoid any casualties in huge thanks to Leonel's leadership abilities.

However, what they saw after they reached the clearing of flat lands astounded them.

A city fallen from the skies, a group of prisoners frozen in their attempt to climb its walls, and over 5000 dead guards, lying in a pool of their own blood.

The sight was horrid, but what left Leonel the most stunned was the appearance of a particular man.

Despite the distance of over 200 kilometers that separated them, with Leonel's senses, Escobar might as well have been inches from his face.

"Coach?" Leonel's expression flickered with confusion. What was Coach Owen doing here?

No matter how long passed, Leonel would never mistake that rat of a mustache for anyone else.

Seeing the state of Coach Owen's arm, Leonel's anger suddenly flared. If there were two people he had to pick as the duo he respected the most in his life, the first would be his father, and the second would be this man right before him.

In that moment, the battlefield suddenly gained a second blood thirsty aura, one that seemed to rival Lionel's without the slightest hint of losing out.

However, it was then that something completely unexpected happened.

Lionel looked toward the new arrivals with curiosity. But, when his gaze landed on Leonel, he was shocked.

“You’! You look exactly like me’!”

Lionel's head finally raised all the way, both of his eyes and his face finally becoming clear.

However, when Leonel saw this face, his brows furrowed.

This wasn't because Lionel looked like him, but because of the exact opposite.. They, quite honestly, looked nothing alike. What the hell was this person talking about?

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Lionel's face was exceptionally pale. One couldn't call him either handsome or ugly, but simply average. Though, it was a bit difficult to tell if this was the best he could do, or if it was simply because he was malnourished.

With how sunken his cheeks were, it was clear that he had never had enough to eat. So, though he looked quite plain now, he may very well look different if he finally began to receive enough sustenance.

However, this wasn't the reason Leonel felt he looked nothing like him. The truth was that with Leonel's senses, it was quite easy for him to fill in Lionel's features and extrapolate how the latter would look. But, even then, they were nothing alike.

Lionel's jaw wasn't as sharp as his own, his cheeks weren't as high, and his nose was far more prominent and pointed. In addition, Leonel was only just about two meters tall now or 6'6. He had grown a few inches since his last day at Royal Blue Academy. But, Leonel could tell that if Lionel stood straight, the latter would be over seven feet tall, a full head taller than Leonel.

Whether Lionel and Leonel looked the same was hardly relevant on any other day. But, when the first words out of Lionel's mouth was that they were identical. It left Leonel at a loss. Just what was that supposed to mean?

The truth of the matter was that other than the color of their eyes and the fact Lionel had the same messy, dirty blond hair Leonel once had before he activated his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor. They were quite literally nothing alike. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

And, as though to drive this point further, Leonel kept getting an uneasy feeling from the vacancy in Lionel's gaze. Lionel sounded so cheerful and his words even seemed to carry the hint of being pleasantly surprised... all while his gaze remained as deadpan as could be.

This reality only made Leonel feel more uneasy.

"Stay alert." Leonel said softly. His words were only heard by those to his back.

Lionel continued to observe Leonel curiously, a faint excitement that never reached his eyes dancing across his expression.

"Are we related? Are you my brother perhaps? A cousin who happens to look a lot like me? Are we? Ah, sorry, I forget the word. I think it starts with a 't'? Tweens maybe? Twines? Ah, forget it. My mother, do you know her?" PANDA NOVEL

Leonel's frown deepened.

'His social awareness is severely lacking. His expressions all seem to be slightly off. The only way he'd think we look the same is if he had never seen himself in a mirror before' ; But, even then, why would that be the conclusion he jumped to? Even if he had never seen himself in a mirror before, where would he get the thought that I was who he looked like? Where would he have seen me before?'

The more Leonel thought, the more he came to understand that Dark Cloud Prison wasn't as simple as he originally thought. The only obvious conclusion he could make was that these men and women before him were actually prisoners.

That much was obvious. After all, they all wore the same garbs so this wasn't a hard conclusion to come to. What was more damning was the fact that these prisoners acted as though they had never seen the light of day.

Leonel shook his head. It seemed he was too naïve. There was no way that The Empire' Prison would be as perfect as they tried to make it seem to be. ρ??∫???????

“ ‘! He's dangerous'!’”

Aina's voice drifted to Leonel's ears.

Leonel nodded seriously, his fists clenching.

In the distance, when Governor Duke Owen realized that it was Leonel who had appeared, his gaze flashed with a complicated light. He almost forgot about the horrible pain shaking his body.

However, Leonel no longer had the mind to pay to his Coach Owen. It wasn't because he didn't care about his life. In fact, there was no other person here who he cared more about with the exception of Aina. But, he had to take action now.

There was something odd about the atmosphere. It should have been a battle between Hargrove City and Dark Cloud Prison. But, somehow, this group, led by Lionel, had interfered and become the main enemy.

Leonel also felt like if he moved forward any further, a strong spatial lock would collapse around him. At the moment, it had been weakened considerably due to what seemed like Escobar's domain of Universal Force. But, considering the state of his coach at the moment, how much longer could he really hold out?

Leonel blinked, feeling somewhat disappointed.

“Why won't you answer me?”

In response, Leonel flipped over a palm, a pitch black spear appearing in his hand. The little mink seemed to awaken atop his head, the little guy's gaze locked onto the group before them.

“Maybe I didn't give you enough information?” Leonel wondered aloud to himself. “My name is Leonel Morales. As for my mother's name, I'm not sure. Do we share a family name?”

Leonel froze.

What the hell?

Aina's brows furrowed in confusion as well. Was there really such a coincidence in the world?

Believing that someone shared the same name as Leonel wasn't too surprising. Before the Metamorphosis, Earth's population was counted in the tens of billions, approaching a hundred billion. Back then, there were no shortage of people who shared not only the same first name, but even the same last name, and there were even more people who shared the same name pronunciation but differed in the spelling.

However, what made this instance particularly shocking was the fact that Leonel's first words had been that he and Leonel looked identical'. Could there be such a coincidence in this world?

Confusion colored Leonel's features. He had just steeled himself to attack, but now he questioned himself. Was this a practical joke? But why did it not seem like one?

What was going on here exactly?

Chapter 527

“Could it be a mind reading ability?” Aina communicated secretly with Leonel.

Leonel gazed toward the fading blood angel to Lionel’s back. After a moment, he steeled himself.

“Nika.”

“Yes, Captain!”

A young girl called out to Leonel’s back.

“Reconstruct the scene. Send the images to me. Don’t hold back.”

“Yes!”

Nika worked quickly. She was one of the few sensory types among Leonel’s troop, but her ability was unique.

She was able to reconstruct the cause and effect of a location, essentially simulating the past events of a place for up to 1 month. She could also transmit these images and deductions to another person.
PANDA-NOVEL.COM

At her abilities current stage of evolution, it had limited usage in battle. But, when it came to reconnaissance, she was second to none.

When Leonel felt Nika’s Dream Force penetrate toward him, he didn’t resist. Usually, Nika wouldn’t dare to do this with anyone else. Those with Dream Force affinity were incredibly rare and it would be too easy for one to get lost in the events she displayed.

However, Leonel was different.

When Leonel opened his eyes once again, he had a grasp of the entire situation, even down to the abilities Lionel's group had displayed.

"Leave this Leonel to me." Leonel said plainly, his gaze suddenly becoming cold and indifferent. "Stay within my Domain and do not leave, or else I can't guarantee your safety."

After seeing the past events, Leonel understood Lionel's ability. Such a person was too dangerous. He would defeat him first, then ask questions later.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

A black domain filled with illusory chains surged into existence around Leonel, covering a radius of just over 20 meters in every direction. PANDA NOVEL

Leonel immediately realized that this was his limit. He couldn't extend his Domain any further without sapping his stamina faster than he could get returns on. But, this size was just enough.

Brandishing his spear, Leonel pointed it toward Lionel, his aura stifling.

Those around Lionel immediately realized that Leonel was giving off a different feeling compared to the others.

On the Hargrove City walls, many were still frozen in place due to Vice's ability. Whether it was the raising and lowering of the platforms, the archers, or even Salnas himself, no one seemed capable of moving.

But, truthfully, though they feared Vice somewhat, they were more than willing to see the talents of Earth at each other's throats in this way.

Anared's gaze narrowed as he locked onto Leonel in the distance. But, the latter hadn't even spared the city a glance after the first look. It was as though he couldn't be bothered to care about it.

Inwardly, Anared was a bit shocked. He knew how many scouts they had deployed. How had a 250-man squad managed to come this far without a single one sending word back?

The truth was that Anared had already gotten reports from the North of the continent and there was currently a major battle going on over there. However, he didn't care to go and oversee those matters personally because taking in these prisoners was far more important to Terrain's overall plan. As long as Noah was stalled that would be far more than enough. ρ???∫???

Initially, when Anared didn't hear back from the South, he had thought that meant Earth only sent one squad. After all, according to their intelligence, Noah was the only acting commander of this troop of Earth's talents.

What he didn't expect, though, was for Leonel to have carved a path out of the South for himself.

" | Dealing with a Savant won't be so easy, yet you've chosen to antagonize such a large group of them on your own. You've signed your own death certificate.' Anared thought coldly.

At this moment, even he could hardly move. Though he had his trump cards to do so just like Coach Owen had, he didn't care to activate them just yet. Right now, he was content to lay back and watch.

However, Anared's expression when he observed the dome around Leonel couldn't help but turn serious. He didn't know what it was, but for some reason it left him feeling uneasy. He couldn't help but wonder if this was Leonel's ability.

When Lionel saw Leonel point a spear toward him, his voice trailed off, the excitement it once had fading. He couldn't seem to wrap his mind around why someone who had such a high chance of being his brother would treat him like this.

"Leonel, don't!" Coach Owen mustered all the strength he had left to shout out this warning. "Just run. This isn't your fight!"

Leonel paused, sending a glance toward his Coach.

“Hey Coach.” Leonel suddenly grinned. “Let’s make a deal alright?”

“No.” Coach Owen said firmly.

“Hey, hey. You haven’t even heard what I wanted to say just yet. Are you that protective of that dead rat you call a mustache?”

“Kid!”

The surviving guards of Dark Cloud Prison were stunned, especially Escobar’s right hand man, Garwin. None of them had ever seen anyone treat their Governor Duke like this.

Leonel laughed. “Just sit tight, old man. As long as I survive, though, you have to promise to shave that sad excuse for facial hair off.”

Leonel’s air of confidence hung over the battlefield, completely overshadowing Lionel’s bloodthirsty aura. The stark difference between the two men was apparent at a single glance.

Just looking at Leonel’s back and feeling the security of his Domain made the youths following feel a second wind hit their sails.

They had just fought a bloody battle over the course of several hours, how could they not feel tired? But now, they felt as though they could battle for several hours more.

PCHU!

The sudden sound caught everyone off guard. In such an atmosphere, it was the last sound one expected to hear. It was the kind of change that left everyone dazed.

Coach Owen looked down, only to find a bloody hole in his gut. Blood overflowed so densely that it almost looked like a waterfall of black, fusing into his dark military garb without a sense of how precious it was.

With a splutter, blood leaked out from Coach Owen's lips, running over his chin and down his neck. He felt his life quickly draining from him.

Lionel looked toward Coach Owen, a slight light illuminating his eye for the first time. But, this light held no humanity. Rather, it held nothing but madness.

“You’! You called him Leonel. Why did you call him Leonel? WHY DID YOU CALL HIM LEONEL?!”

Chapter 528

Time seemed to slow to a crawl.

Leonel had never expected for such a thing to happen. After being blown away by a mysterious mirror ability, his Coach Owen had flown back more than a hundred meters from Lionel. The distance that separated them couldn't be considered to be small. By any logic, it shouldn't have been possible to attack the Governor Duke without giving Leonel time to respond.

But, the facts were laid out before them all. Coach Owen's own spear shot through his belly, his blood painting its shaft crimson.

With a cough, Escobar slumped backward, his breathing growing incredibly shallow.

Aina's eyes widened. But in the next instant, her gaze snapped toward Leonel, flashes of worry lighting her irises.

Unfortunately, it was already too late for her to say anything. Whatever light Leonel's aura held vanished, being washed by an oppressive might that made those in his presence feel as though a hand was descending from the skies.

“TELL ME! WHY DID YOU CALL HIM THAT!”

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Leonel took a step forward, the ground beneath his feet groaning and whining.

The image of a majestic bird appeared to his back. It had beautiful feathers of gold and white, eyes filled with endless wisdom and a wing span that seemed capable of encompassing the world.

Leonel's next step seemed to blur, touching the ground both so lightly and with such speed that it left nothing but an after image in its wake. It wasn't until Leonel was already over a hundred meters away from the place of its descent that the concrete suddenly folded beneath the pressure. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Aina's expression changed, her head snapping back toward everyone else.

“Support him!”

Her voice held no less compulsion than Leonel's. It became quite clear quite quickly that the reason she didn't lead wasn't because she couldn't, but rather because she chose to defer to Leonel. But at this moment, there wasn't time for that.

Anared looked at this change with a curious light in his eye.

In truth, the only two that had a chance at shaking his position were Leonel and Aina. Since they had so graciously shown themselves...

The sword that hovered to Anared's back suddenly vibrated, resonating with a sudden will to battle. As though a road of air manifested before him, Anared casually stepped off the top of Hargrove city's walls.

His body seemed to resemble a sword streaking across the skies. He sliced the wind in two, intercepting Aina and the others before they could even think of supporting Leonel.

At that moment, Anared felt monstrous killing intent lock onto him. Even his heart skipped a single beat before his Sword Force reaffirmed his resolve in the next moment.

He couldn't help but frown. Nothing had shaken his heart so severely in decades. Just what was that?

"Leave him to me." PANDA NOVEL

The voice came from Anared's front, but it was clearly not aimed toward him. It took him just a moment to realize that it had actually been Aina's words for Leonel.

Anared couldn't help but internally sneer. Did this girl think that he was Jilniya? He could defeat someone on that level without even unsheathing his sword. Yet, Aina would have likely lost her life had it not been for Leonel's intervention.

However, Aina didn't pull out her great sword as Anared had expected. In fact, she tossed it to the ground as though it was worthless, reaching to the large curved package on her back.

With a thought, a massive golden-red ax appeared in her hand. Her aura completely changed, reaching a level of oppression that made Anared's indifferent expression frown.

'Four Seasons Realm...'

If that was all, maybe Anared could accept it. But, the ax in Aina's hand was also on the cusp of entering the Fifth Dimension. Let alone the fact Anared had hardly seen a Quasi Bronze treasure in his life, even among those he had, this was the most powerful!

A violent red aura surged around Aina, a slight hint of blood wrinkling the noses of those in its presence.

Veins popped up across the delicate hand she used to clench her battle ax's handle. The ax trembled with excitement, a thirst for reaping life humming its shining edges.

Aina was pissed. Anared actually chose this moment to step forward when all she wanted to do was support Leonel.

Even as her fighting spirit reached its peak, her eyes gave the sign of several warnings. She swore that if anything happened to Leonel, Anared and the whole of Terrain would follow him to the grave.

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Leonel's own emotions reached a peak as well. To this point, he hadn't hated anyone of Terrain. He felt as though they were simply doing what was best for their futures. This was the way of the world. Though he, of course, wanted to protect his world from invaders, he had never reached a point of doing it out of hatred.

However, now things were different. Not only had their actions put the life of his Coach on the line, but now they were even targeting Aina.

If Terrain wanted his fury so badly, they could have it.

Leonel appeared between his Coach and Lionel, his aura towering. The shocked guards of Dark Cloud Prison suddenly felt as though an immovable pillar stood before them all. Even if the sky collapsed, it would be there to catch it.

Lionel's expression became livid. Not only had this Warden not answered his question, now someone else had come to block his way.

"No..." Coach Owen mumbled weakly, trying one last time to force Leonel to run.

"Just die!" Lionel roared.

The bloody angel to Lionel's back contrasted the golden owl to Leonel's. It felt as though a clash of ages had suddenly erupted.

Leonel's hair blew back, but his cold, calculating gaze remained indifferent. He observed Lionel's hysteria without a hint of emotion, his eyes seemingly even more vacant than the latter's.



“The likes of you couldn’t possibly hope to take control of my mind.” Leonel said coldly. “Bind.”

Leonel pointed his spear forward. With a thought, chains surged, wrapping around Lionel’s body in layer after layer.

The Dark Prisoners to Lionel’s back panicked. It was clear they didn’t have much fighting experience, but how could they? This was the first time they had been in the outside world since they were toddlers. It was a miracle they even knew how to walk, let alone fight.

This alone was a testament to just how fearsome Savants were. It had been less than a few hours since this group even realized they had abilities at all, yet they were already so powerful. What would happen if they had time acclimate and grow? Would Leonel even be worthy of standing in their presence? It was difficult to tell.

However... they were completely lost without Lionel’s guidance.

Just when Leonel planned to squeeze Lionel to death in a fit of rage, he heard muffled, irrational rambling.

“It’s nothing but a dream, this nothing but fantasy, go away!”

Leonel didn’t have time to sneer even if he wanted to. Before his very eyes, his Chain Domain, arguably his most powerful ability, began to crumble piece by piece.

It wisped away like smoke in the wind, dissipating as though it really was nothing but an illusion, a fantasy... a dream.

“Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!”

Lionel roared into the skies, red tainting his vision.

The space around the madman began to collapse. No, it was worse than collapsing. It was as though every bit and piece of matter was slowly being erased.

A pit appeared below and above him as though the whole world was losing its color. Vacant darkness expanded rapidly, leaving Lionel's figure and his screams as the only tangible existences that remained.

Leonel's jaw clenched, finally realizing the kind of monster he was dealing with.

Lionel's ability was built upon Dream Force, but his use of it was beyond anything Leonel could imagine.

Leonel's ability was strictly internal. Even after he replaced his Soul Force with Dream Force, he was unable to turn it against his enemies and force them into an illusion the like Dream Abode had been able to. But, in return for this, his computational abilities were far beyond what even a machine could match, let alone what a human could do.

However, Lionel was the exact opposite. Though he could somewhat use his Dream Force to boost his computational ability, it was nowhere near the level Leonel could. But, in return...

He was able to manifest his consciousness into the world, playing with the fabric of reality as he pleased.

If he wanted you to die, you would die. If he wanted you to stab yourself with your own spear, you would do so. If he wanted to erase you from existence...

He could.

Lionel was a monster, masquerading in the body of a frail youth who wanted to see his mother again.

This realization woke Leonel from a dream he felt like he had been in from the very beginning. This world was nothing like the one he had come to know. In this world, a fairy tale like the stories of Arthur Pendragon could become real.... in this world, a madman with strength could destroy everything.

Leonel closed his eyes. For a moment, everything else in the world seemed to vanish. His breathing grew steady and his heart stilled, even his mind, used to running at impossible speeds, slowed. After a moment, even his thoughts became vacant.

In such a moment, what one should have been feeling was fear. Seeing such a monster before you, a man who was gifted with talent that others couldn't even hope to grasp, what choice was there other than to despair?

However, this wasn't the reality Leonel saw before him. Rather, he saw a path that had suddenly lit afire, blazing a trail that he hadn't noticed before. It was as though he had always been following the wrong path, completely oblivious to the right one that had always been in arm's reach.

In the outside world, everyone else could only see Leonel's Domain rapidly deteriorating. Leonel himself stood, completely unmoving. To his back, what remained of a once 10000 strong army shook beneath Leonel's presence. The only thing that separated them and such a monster was a seemingly frail teenage boy who was at the end of his rope.

Leonel's Domain was directly tied to his Ethereal Glabella and his mind. Every piece of it that faded took another piece of him. Even though Lionel didn't seem capable of taking direct action against Leonel with how strong the latter's Dream Force affinity was, this alone was enough to severely weaken Leonel.

As chain after chain disintegrated, Leonel's mind faltered and weakened. He should have been under an excruciating amount of pain, the kind of horrible, spine tearing torture that could obliterate one's resolve. Yet, Leonel stood, completely unmoving.

In the distance, Aina grew more panicked. She didn't have a detailed understanding of what was happening, but all she needed to see was the fact that the world around Lionel was crumbling.

Though she had managed to hold Anared back long enough for the remaining 200 plus young warriors to curl around them, before they could even manage to get into range to do anything, one of the Savants blocked their path, scratching at his rat's nest-like hair.

The good news was the Lionel's rampage had interfered with Vice's ability as well, allowing them to move even without the protection of Leonel's Domain. But, the bad news was that this unkempt man who the others called Monkey suddenly multiplied in number. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

In one moment, there was just one of him. In the next instant, there was two, then four, then eight. In the blink of an eye, over a thousand of him blocked the path forward, causing the troop of youths to come to a grinding halt, serious expressions on their faces. It suddenly became obvious why it was no one could tell the exact number of people Lionel had brought with him.

"Stay in your squads! Don't underestimate him!"

Nile took command of the situation, his gaze flashing with a hint of worry.

Things were quickly getting out of hand. These Savants had completely lost their minds. In fact, this Monkey individual hadn't even blocked their path at Lionel's order.

Nile could see the look in his eye quite clearly... it was boredom. He blocked them simply because he was bored of standing around.

Such an enemy... without logical goals or comprehensible aspirations... they were the most fear inducing.

Nile grit his teeth, sending a look toward Leonel. It seemed as though a struggle was unfurling. On one side, there was the enraged Lionel trying to erase everything that was Leonel. And, on the other side, there was the silent Leonel trying to protect his life. It was simply impossible to see it any other way.

Nile gripped onto his spear. He didn't know what he could do to help even if he made it through, but he knew he wanted to make it no matter what. PANDA NOVEL

He flexed the pole arm between his hands, letting the light of the setting sun reflect across the blade.

He shot forward into the crowd of clones, his will steeled.

Unfortunately, there were many things a strong will couldn't overcome.

As quickly as he came flying forward, Nile shot back. If it wasn't for the two squads of ten he led coming together to stop his flight backward, it was hard to tell just how far he would have gone.

Nile's arms trembled. Though he tried to hold it back, in the next instant, he coughed violently, a mouthful of blood flying from his lips.

Nile looked up, allowing his squads to help him stand.

Not more than ten meters away, the clone he had clashed with stood in a bloody mess, its head peeled open like a grotesque blooming flower of flesh and bone.

What shocked Nile wasn't the fact this had happened, but rather the cause of it. In the moment, the clone had head butted the point of his spear...! ρ??∪??????

However, what Nile couldn't understand was why the clones were that strong. Most of those with cloning abilities he had come across had strong limitations. Most of the time, the limitation came in number of clones or the strength of them.

But somehow, Monkey didn't seem restricted by either?!

What Nile didn't know was that Monkey's ability wasn't a cloning ability... Monkey had the ability to double almost anything. As for the limitations of his ability, it was hard to tell.

But, if Nile was aware of this, he would understand why it was he was sent flying back so easily. If Monkey could double himself ten times and form over a thousand clones, what would happen if he did the same with his strength? In fact, if it wasn't for the fact Monkey's flesh and blood was so frail, he would be able to exhibit far more of this strength before his body collapsed. In that case, let alone just getting flung back, Nile might have died in a single strike.

If Monkey was smarter and doubled the toughness of his skin and bone, or even if he just had a weapon... his level of strength would be impossible to fathom.

A grim expression took hold of Nile's visage. Even as Monkey's clone collapsed, dead, his heart didn't calm in the slightest. Looking at the over thousand that remained, let alone making it through to Leonel, he wondered if it would even be possible to survive.

When Nile saw the somewhat curious gazes of the Savants that remained, his heart plunged into despair.

He couldn't understand why these people were gifted with so much strength. And, all the while, their leader was losing his mind and roaring into the skies but they didn't even seem to notice in the slightest.

When Aina saw Nile get repelled so easily, her heart constricted. Any hopes she had of Nile, Nika and the others making it to Leonel before Lionel could harm him seemed to disappear.

Out of habit, Aina began to bite at her lips again, her anxiousness growing. At the same time, she felt a belly full of rage every time her battle ax crossed paths with Anared's sword. Even though she was just a margin weaker, the ferocity of her attacks only seemed to grow. Her every strike carried the intention to kill, her heart nearly bursting out from her ribcage under the exertion.

She didn't care about the stamina consumption. Every time she swung, she seemed to carry the weight of the world behind her. The clashes caused the surrounding air to explode, the temperature incrementally rising simply due to the heat coming off their blades.

Still, even as she pressed so hard, she knew it was impossible to make it in time. By now, Lionel's erasure had almost reach Leonel. What remained of his Chain Domain seemed to be on its last legs, dispersing into minute particles before vanishing into nothingness.

Aina's teeth drew blood from her lips, her anxiousness hidden beneath her mask.

'Come on, set faster... set faster...'

Aina anxiously looked toward the sun. But, its descent seemed to be ever so slow. By the time night came around, it would be too late.

Anared continued to indifferently parry Aina's strikes. It wasn't that he didn't want to defeat her right here and now but even he found it difficult to do so. There was no need for him to go all out. At this pace, she would simply tire herself out. By then, defeating her will be as easy as a single sweep of the sword.

Aina sent another panicked look toward Leonel, narrowly avoiding another sword strike.

“No!”

Aina's infuriated shout resonated through the battlefield. For a moment, a fear that was deeply hidden within all their souls seemed to surface. Even the Savants paused in their actions. With their inability to control themselves, the shock and horror was clearly painted on their faces. Even as Savants, they held none of the air true experts should have.

Anared's sword faltered, causing his fluid style to be interrupted. Without a choice, he could only retreat to avoid being bisected, a frown taking over his usually indifferent expression.

Coach Owen closed his eyes, an aching pain far greater than the stab wound through his gut taking hold.

At that moment, Lionel's domain of nothingness seemed to have reached Leonel. By all rights, it should have swallowed him whole. Even Lionel's madness gave way to a slight excitement as though he wanted nothing more than for Leonel to disappear.

However, Leonel's body remained completely unscathed. His body stood in the void of nothingness, completely indifferent, a serene expression on his face.

And then, his eyes finally opened.

When they did, the skies overturned, the darkening clouds of dusk dispersing and the raging winds of the battlefield slowing to a crawl.

Leonel's aura was like a raging tiger released from its chains. It commanded absolute respect within its territory.

"Chain Domain."

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

The instant the words left Leonel's lips, the crumbling domain around him suddenly resurrected, coming back in full force. No, to say full force would be to assume that it came back just as strong. But, the reality was very much different.

In the past, the Chains were illusory and their rattling rang hollow. But now, it looked as though real chains had manifested into the air, their bodies exuding a black fog that suffocated their surroundings.

However, just when it felt as though just these changes were shocking enough, the Domain began to change again.

Royal Blue Province was a tropical location that experienced Summer almost all year 'round. It never seemed to get too blistering hot and it never snowed. It could be said that the Spring and Summer should have been the Seasons Leonel was the most familiar with.

Still, even to this point, Leonel had failed to comprehend the Four Seasons Realm on his own. The reason was simple, he found it difficult to wrap his mind around the concept of the Seasons suddenly becoming a battle technique. Even if he knew it was possible, his mind couldn't cross an artificial barrier it put up for itself.

Even after experiencing the same Seasons everyday for all his life, Leonel couldn't cross the final step. How was he supposed to translate such gentle climate into a battle technique? It simply didn't make any sense. For that matter, how could someone with Fire Elemental Force ever hope to grasp the cold of Winter? Or how could someone with Ice Elemental Force ever hope to grasp Summer?

Leonel didn't know how long he would spend stuck at this barrier. However, what he never would have expected was for Lionel to break it for him.



To say that Lionel helped Leonel grasp the Four Seasons Realm was incorrect. Rather, Lionel taught Leonel the way he should look at this world.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Leonel was often bound by logic. He felt that everything should have a natural progression and that the world should have cause and effect. In fact, even now, he still believed this.

Leonel felt that there was no issue with his beliefs. Rather, there was an issue in the method by which he implemented them.

In order to understand cause and effect, one had to first grasp the rules of a system. Trying to understand what was going on in a sports game without first grasping the rules would only leave you lost.

To this point, Leonel was still using the rules of Modern Earth. In that world, such fanciful abilities couldn't be reality, science was the ruler, and something like a fairy tale character coming to life was nothing more than a joke.

These thoughts not only fueled him, but they restrained him, bogging down his mind and limiting his thoughts.

Simply put... it was foolish. But now, things were different.

Leonel thought that the only Seasons he was familiar with were Spring and Summer. As for Winters and Falls, though he had experienced them when traveling to other Provinces, his understanding of them could be considered to be minimal.

But was that really true? If Leonel was as logical as he claimed to be, he'd realize that Seasons were decided by the tilt of Earth and its location around the sun. A Season wasn't restricted by temperature, it was simply a cycle of time.

Leonel was so bogged down by his own preconceptions that he didn't even manage to remember such a simple concept.

The reality was that Leonel had experienced Winter once a year, every year, for his whole life. Just because it didn't get bone chillingly cold, didn't mean he hadn't. PANDA NOVEL

What did this mean? It meant that the Seasons were about more than just surface level conceptions. Temperature was irrelevant, climate was irrelevant, even the beautiful gradient of colors the Seasons shifted between were irrelevant.

In that case... what were the Seasons?

Everyone experienced them differently. In fact even if one shared the same planet, if you were located in different hemispheres, the cycles wouldn't even be the same.

So what was a Season? What was the Four Seasons Realm....?

Wasn't it just a journey around the Sun?

To the current Leonel, it wasn't even this. To him, the Four Seasons simply represented a cycle, an infinite loop dependent on countless factors. If he tweaked these factors as he pleased... he could make what he wanted out of the Four Seasons Realm.

On a large scale, the cycle encompassed an entire planet, its orbit, its tilt and its people. On a small scale...

All it took was one's own Domain.

The moment Leonel grasped this, his aura completely changed. The amount of Universal Force around him skyrocketed, reaching levels that dwarfed even the Savants.

When Leonel unleashed the shackles on his mind, what he had done wasn't as simple as understanding the Four Seasons Realm for a particular weapon or a particular Force Strengthening Deviation. Rather, he embodied the Four Seasons Realm. Everything within his Domain was under his control. p???

If Uncle Montez had been here, he would have laughed uproariously. It would have been the kind of laughter that shook the skies and forced the earth to quake.

This was the true Four Seasons Realm. Only by grasping it could Domains display their true strength.

The Four Seasons Realm. The Domain Realm. The Realm of Kings.

“Bind.”

Leonel’s voice came down like a command from on high. The Chains of his Chain Domain roared like flood dragons, surging into Lionel’s space of nothingness as though mythical creatures snaking through the skies.

At that moment, Lionel’s expression finally changed. Fear replaced the light of madness in his gaze as he retreated.

The Earth folded to Lionel’s will, the laws of reality bending and twisting. In one instant he was in front of the Savants, and in the next he was standing behind them, his expression trembling.

“Kill him!”

Lionel’s voice shivered, a trembling cadence clear within. The instant he felt like he no longer held the upper hand, his air of confidence crumbled. He held none of the resolve a man should have.

Hearing Lionel’s command, even Monkey was forced to turn back, giving the youth warriors some reprieve.

“Stay back.” Leonel commanded. “Leave them all to me. Go and support Aina. I don’t want to see Anared strutting around here any longer.”

Leonel's pupils flickered with a violet-red light, his aura growing heavier with each passing moment.

The youths hesitated. By now, they were beaten and bloodied, many of them were even on their last legs. But, it was precisely because of this that they couldn't fathom the idea of Leonel going against them all alone.

However, when Leonel looked back toward them, the look in his eye made them shiver. It felt as though a higher being was gazing upon them. The Bronze Runes that flickered into and out of existence all of Leonel's body radiated a palpable pressure. Even the space around him seemed to twist and bend.

Nile and the others gulped. They felt like even if they wanted to, it would have been impossible to disobey Leonel's orders.

"Yes, Captain!"

Before the youths realized what they were doing, they had already saluted and turned back, charging toward the battle between Aina and Anared.

Anared frowned. He didn't know what a Domain was to begin with. So, he understood even less about the changes Leonel had undergone.

'Regardless, facing even one Savant is suicide, let alone four.'

Anared retrieved his sword, retreating with light steps.

'Since you want to despair, I'll let you despair.'

Now that Vice had completely focused his abilities in Leonel's direction, those around Hargrove City had finally been released. It seemed that these fools had forgotten this was a war.

However, just as he was sneering, Anared felt a cold shiver down his spine. He instinctively looked in a certain direction only to see Leonel's cold gaze locked onto him.

A deep fear suddenly took root in his heart. Before, Leonel's complete indifference had left him feeling uncomfortable. But, this sudden attention made him feel as though a reaper had grasped onto his throat.

The look had a clear meaning. Even if you ran to the ends of the earth, you would still die.

Aina's shout had engraved itself onto Leonel's heart. If Anared thought he could get away with it, he was sorely mistaken.

Leonel turned his attention back to the Savants before him.

Monkey's thousands of clones, Candle's mysterious mirrors, Vice's spatial locks... Lionel's reality warping.

Even just a single one of these Savants would be enough to bring a world to its knees. Yet, with its talent, Earth had birthed four in just a single generation and Leonel was crazy enough to face them all alone.

The several hundred clones Monkey had remaining swarmed Leonel and suddenly doubled once again.

The sight was truly one to behold. A single man facing an army of monsters.

Leonel indifferently swept a gaze through them, his spear tip just barely grazing the cracked, concrete grounds.

"Piss off."

In that moment, countless chains wrapped around Monkey's clones.. Under the astonished gazes of those watching, hundreds of clones shattered into a rain of flesh, blood and bones, painting Leonel's Chain Domain in a dripping crimson.



