

Descent 541

Chapter 541

White City seemed to have a veil of darkness hanging over it.

This wasn't particularly unexpected. As far as the citizens of White City were aware, they had just lost the war.

The truth of the matter was that with how tight lipped the City Lords had been about this operation, the citizens of Terrain as a whole knew little about what was happening. It was only after they descended onto Earth that these matters were made known to the masses.

Unfortunately for some, not all of the citizens trapped here were even citizens of Terrain. Many had come from other worlds to sight-see and purchase various local delicacies and staples.

But now, for obvious reasons, the teleportation stations had been shut down. So, these tourists were stuck here in a war they wanted no part of. One way or another, these people would never benefit, so it could be imagined how aggrieved they were feeling.

That said, in such a high stakes environment, not many dared to make their displeasure known on a large scale. By the same token, though, those that did dare to voice out their demands most definitely didn't come from simple backgrounds.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

This only added to the underlying tension the city was under.

It was this situation that Leonel and Aina walked into. They looked toward the looming city gates in silence, their demeanors serious.

"Are you sure you want to do this? Why even risk it?" Aina asked. "It can't be for the money, right?"

Aina could easily see the value of White City. But, unlike the other nobles, Leonel didn't really have any background. As such, he didn't have subordinates in the truest sense. He didn't have anyone who knew how to manage or run a city, nor did he have anyone who could protect and maintain order.

Though he technically had those 250 geniuses including Nile, they had been recalled to the capital. In addition, they couldn't be truly considered Leonel's men. After all, he had only known them for a short while. PANDA NOVEL

That said, if those youths knew that this was Leonel's thinking, they would be greatly disappointed. Though they had only been with Leonel for a short time, the impression he had left on them was everlasting. They were more than willing to follow him if they were just asked.

But, Leonel hadn't thought so far ahead. He didn't plan on staying on Earth for much longer. The time for Valiant Heart Mountain's entrance ceremony was quickly coming up, so any thoughts of building up a faction on Earth was too far from Leonel's mind.

At that moment, the gates to the city opened as a familiar entourage of people walked out. Among them, there was Tyrron who seemed to have gotten a new pair of glasses. But, compared to the last pair, it was clear that this one wasn't a treasure, so Leonel didn't say anything about it.

Tyrron smiled lightly when he laid eyes on Leonel and Aina walking hand in hand.

"I'll be leaving this City in your capable hands, then, Prince Leonel." Tyrron smiled lightly. PANDA NOVEL

This was the first time Leonel had heard his voice. Even during the negotiations for Camelot, he hadn't breathed a single word.

Hearing it now, Leonel felt that his voice was quite soothing, almost too much so. Such a person had the right to treat their words like gold. It was simply too pleasing to listen to him.

Not only was his voice deep, but it came out with a certain smoothness that resonated with the heart. One would think you were being lulled into a land of dreams just being near him.

That said, while Tyrron's expression was amiable, the aids following him were quite obviously displeased. Leonel, didn't pay very much attention to them, though.

Leonel nodded lightly, a warm smile on his face as well.

"I'll have to thank you, then. Your efforts are appreciated."

Tyrron nodded in response, allowing Leonel and Aina to pass them by and enter the city. The clicking of the large gates caused the ground to tremble.

Tyrron and his entourage walked away, brandishing talismans of their own for their use to return to Earth. But, by this point, one of the women following behind him couldn't hold back anymore.

"Junior Grand Prime Minister, this is really too much!"

The blond young lady stamped her feet, feeling aggrieved. They had already slaved for the past week trying to get the City in tiptop shape. Just when it was finally about time for them to reap their rewards, some long lost Prince swooped in and stole all their hard work. How could she not be pissed?

To make matters worse, though some of them had suggested undoing the work they had done and causing some petty problems for Leonel, Tyrron rejected their thoughts in the end.

Ultimately, Leonel was handed a city on a silver platter and hardly had to do any work. At this point, his only task was to maintain.

Yet, their Junior Grand Prime Minister acted as though these matters had nothing to do with him, walking away with a light smile on his face that hadn't faded even now.

Seeing that Tyrron didn't explain, the blond young lady was practically blowing steam out of her ears. Her foot stamped the ground again, but her strength was so great this time that spider webs formed beneath her heels.

Somehow, though, her shoes survived the devastation, it was clear that they weren't normal by any stretch.

Still, this young lady had the right to be quite willful. At the very least, there were very few people who could reprimand her. Though she didn't have a title like Junior Governor Duke, her father and mother both were from Tier 9 Court Minister families. Her standing was even higher than a Junior Governor Duke as a result.

The untitled nobles of The Capital were more respected than out-of-Capital nobles by a large margin, especially Tier 9 Officials.

"This is just the way of the world." Tyrron replied with a smile. "The powerful do as they please and the weak move aside. Is there really any problem with that?"

A silence fell over the entourage, the sound of their footsteps resounding through the darkness.

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Leonel walked into the city to find it quite silent. It was clear that Tyrron and the others had done an excellent job.

By now, the patrolling troops had been replaced with officials of Earth, a stark change from the 500 youths that had been tasked with maintaining order previously. Though these men and women were less powerful, their training was more substantial and, most importantly, there were far more of them.

Seeing Leonel's entry, the Head of the patrol units came forward quickly, saluting respectfully.

"Prince!"

Leonel still couldn't quite get used to this form of address. But, he thought it would be a bit ridiculous if he asked them all to call him Captain, so he let it slide.

“The patrol –.”

Leonel shook his head. “It’s fine, you don’t need to explain these things to me. I’ll be headed to the City Lord’s mansion. Just be prepared to see to my orders. Here.”

Leonel handed the Head patrol guard a talisman that would make communication smoother. To Leonel, drawing such a talisman was as easy as breathing.

Though Leonel hadn’t had any formal training in talisman drawing and it could be considered a profession outside of Force Crafting, their roots were practically identical. In fact, Leonel was probably better than most low level Talisman Crafters thanks to his ability.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The profession relied on precision and accuracy, and these were things that Leonel was best at.

The Head patrol guard was bit taken aback by Leonel’s dismissiveness. But, he still respectfully accepted Leonel’s talisman and watched as the pair began to walk around the city seemingly without aim.

Every so often, the patrol units would come across Leonel and Aina. Without fail, each would immediately respectfully bow before continuing along their patrolling routes.

What none of them expected, though, was for this stroll of Leonel’s to last so many hours.

Initially, many of the patrol guards couldn’t help but compare Leonel to Tyrron. If one were comparing the two, it was obvious who was the better at administration. Leonel couldn’t even bother to listen to the layout of the City even to the point of not even asking for a map.

In truth, many of the patrolling guards thought that Leonel had lost his way to the City Lord’s mansion and was now far too embarrassed to ask.

But, as Leonel continued to walk around the city, the expressions of the patrolling guards only became weirder. Whereas before they thought that Leonel was aimlessly wasting time, now they weren’t so sure.

Even if someone wanted to waste time, shouldn't they do it with something enjoyable? PANDA NOVEL

Of course, Leonel was having great idle chatter with Aina. Every so often, her laughter would ring through the empty streets and catch the attention of the citizens peeking out their windows with hostile expressions.

But! Even if Leonel's goal was to enjoy his time with Aina, wouldn't they have been better suited in! a bedroom?

There wasn't even anything to see on the streets. By now, all the stalls were empty, the restaurants were closed, and the citizens were closed off in their homes without the option of stepping out.

Just what could there be to see?

Yet, Leonel obviously didn't explain himself. He walked down street after street, having a nice chat with Aina.

In truth, this had been the longest time Aina spent relaxing in a very long time. Though she felt one part guilty, she couldn't help but feel another part ease as well. This feeling was completely new to her, she couldn't help but enjoy it. Her hand felt very secure in Leonel's.

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“! I'm serious.” Leonel said sternly. p??J??????

“You're insane.” Aina rolled her eyes. “No person in their right mind would agree with you.”

“It's perfectly logical!” Leonel stood his ground.

Aina stopped walking, her gaze locking onto Leonel's.

“Only psychopaths put milk in first.”

“Oh come on! Think about it!” Leonel refused to back down, his eyes lighting with a wild light. “If you put in milk first, you can control the amount of cereal. If you put in the perfect amount of cereal, you can finish it all before it gets soggy. Then, you can incrementally add more cereal! You can savor your meal in peak condition!

“If you put in cereal first, then pour in the milk, unless you’re a speed eater, by the time you get to the bottom, you’ll have nothing but soggy cereal left! It’s practically science!”

“There’s nothing wrong with soggy cereal, it’s a way of life. Next thing you know you’ll be saying that peanut butter is more important in a peanut butter and jelly sandwich!”

“Well!”

Aina was stunned. “You’ve got to be kidding me. Pretend like you don’t know me.”

“Hold on!” Leonel protested. “Jelly is like the icing on a cake. Even though it’s good, you can’t just make a cake entirely out of icing, right? Peanut butter is the foundation! You have to have more of it!”

“I’m done with you.” Aina walked away, pretending to ignore Leonel.

“Aina! Don’t walk away! We need to seriously talk about this! Our children need to be educated properly!”

Aina turned back, a furious blush hiding behind her mask.

“Who’s going to have children with you!?”

Leonel grinned, his smile lighting up the night sky.

“Good, at least I’ve still got your attention. I’ll slowly teach you the right way to view the world. I can compromise on the PB&J, but I’m drawing a hardline at milk first. I’m trying to start a revolution!”

Aina shook her head, giggling. Seeing Leonel treat something so trivial so seriously made her oddly happy.

After pretending to be angry for a while, Aina eventually let Leonel take her hand again as they walked down the streets.

“Done.”

Leonel walked to a dead end with Aina by his side. By now, he had walked down every street the City had to offer and mapped it all in his mind. He hadn’t missed out on a single detail.

“Is it possible?” Aina asked.

“ ‘| It should be.” Leonel responded after a long while. “It will depend, though.”

“On what?”

“On how many spies Terrain left in this City.”

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“It seems that they’ve swapped out the City Lord. The name of this person is Leonel Morales. He seems to be one of the prime targets for the World Spirit hunt.”

In hushed tones, voices communicated back and forth within a residential area of White City. Oddly enough, despite the fact they didn’t try to lower their voices in the slightest, if one stood more than a half meter away from them, hearing their words at all would be a fool’s dream.

The people of Terrain weren't fools. It was an impossibility that they never considered what might happen should a city of theirs be captured. They were well aware that despite the fact Earth was a fledgling world, the threat they posed to a weaker world like theirs was astronomical.

As such, Terrain's goal was never to be perfect. Rather, they had planned for decades and as such had decades worth of contingency plans.

Just one of these contingencies were the spies left within the city. These people were regular residents. Not only had they not joined the war efforts, but they had even lived in this city for years now. Even if one interviewed every citizen of Terrain, it would be impossible to weed them out.

Not only had these people been deeply undercover for several decades, but they were highly intelligent and adept at hiding themselves. There was simply no chance at finding them with any sort of ease. Even Tyrron got a headache dealing with them all.

However' !. Leonel wasn't Tyrron.

'!PANDA-NOVEL.COM

With a flip of his palm, Leonel retrieved the other half of the communication talisman he left with the Head of the patrol units.

"Hello."

"Right, I have no idea what that Prince is' ! Ah! Yes! Prince! At your service!"

Aina giggled to the side as Leonel shook his head. If he had really wanted to, he could have been listening in on their conversation from beginning to end. It was just that he didn't have the mind to care about the thoughts of these patrolling guards.

Actions spoke louder than words.

“Prepare 38 tactical units. No single group can be made of less than 10 individuals. Prepare yourselves to be swift, decisive and safe.”

“Prince?” PANDA NOVEL

The Head of the patrol units was clearly confused. Where was all of this coming from? What were these units for?

“Don’t ask any questions. Speed is of the utmost importance. Ready yourselves now and go to these locations.”

When Leonel disconnected the call, the looming darkness over White City seemed to grow heavier.

Leonel stood silent before the City Lord Mansion, his eyes closed.

“Begin.”

The moment his words fell, the City descended into chaos. The sound of breaking doors, screaming women and children, and the loud badgering shouts and roars of men resonated.

Leonel sighed lightly. But, he didn’t make any moves to stop it. $\rho\int$

This was war. He had no doubt that of those he caught this time, a majority of them would choose to commit suicide. And, of those who failed to go through with it, their states wouldn’t be much better.

To make matters worse, these spies had long since settled down in this city. They had family, they had friends, they had wives, they had children’! In most cases, these family members wouldn’t even be aware of the hidden purpose of these spies. All they would see was the fact someone they loved was being dragged away and, in some cases, killed.

War was truly a cruel thing. Despite the fact Leonel got to stand here and didn't need to witness any of it personally, he still felt his stomach churn. The feeling was no different from the first time he killed a man. And somehow, he felt that this feeling was even worse in some ways.

"Are you alright?" Aina asked softly.

Leonel smiled somewhat bitterly.

"I'm not, but I will be." He finally replied with a sigh.

Aina squeezed Leonel's hand.

In truth, she didn't feel much from this matter. One would think that she, as a woman, would be more empathetic than her boyfriend. But, this wasn't the case. Compared to Leonel, Aina had long since seen the cruelty of the world.

In her opinion, Leonel's actions were even more benevolent than they would be had anyone else gone through with them. At the very least, he could pinpoint the exact spy. Aina was certain that if Tyrron was left to do this, he would simply wipe the entire family from the face of Camelot.

"Is that all of them?" Aina asked after another long while.

Leonel shook his head. "There's still one more group in this city that even Tyrron likely didn't suspect. Because if he did, he wouldn't have left them where he had."

"One more'!?" Aina's expression was confused for a moment before they suddenly lit up beneath her mask. "You mean?"

Leonel nodded. "That's right. This one, we'll have to do personally."

Leonel and Aina walked toward the City Lord's mansion.

In this place, there was a large military field out front, completely unlike other mansions. Whereas most would opt for lush gardens and maybe a few koi fish ponds, City Lord White hadn't bothered with any such pomp and circumstance.

However, compared to the past where these fields had been nothing but deep foot marks, sweat, and blade scars, it had been completely revitalized. Now, there were numerous luxurious homes, looking completely out of place.

Of course, these homes were recently built and may have even been the work of Tyrron and the others.

Leonel understood Tyrron's actions in this regard. But'! Just because he understood them didn't mean he accepted them.

With steady steps, Leonel strolled into this makeshift community of rich folk with Aina by his side. Considering it was late at night, other than a few flickering lights behind their luxurious curtains, there was nothing else to see in the streets at all.

Obviously, people of their standing wouldn't necessarily go to bed so early. But, though Tyrron had given them some advantages, he wouldn't go too far. So, these 'nobles' had to abide by a certain curfew.

It seemed that the sudden restlessness of the city had shaken these people, because they obediently followed these protocols.

At that moment, Leonel suddenly released Aina's hand and clapped his own together forcefully.

What did it sound like for skin as tough as Fourth Dimensional metals to slap together with such strength?

Well'! The moment Leonel's palms collided, it felt as though an explosion had erupted.. Without him even having to say a word, these 'nobles' scurried out of their homes, a mixture of shock, fear and confusion on their faces.

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In any other context, the sight would have been hilarious to behold.

Some ran out with shower caps and robes still on their bodies, others only had a single slipper on, and still yet some others had forgotten their pants.

If they were acting, Leonel had to admit that they were quite good. But, there were still a few people he managed to pick out that were different from the rest.

He indifferently waited for all of these 'nobles' to step out of their homes, the combination of his silence and the chaos of the city acting as his backdrop making those who definitely weren't acting gulp.

At that moment, a fat man practically waddled out from his door. Despite the time of night, thick chains, bracelets and rings could be found all across his body. Considering the sleep in his eyes, this man either really slept with such jewelry on, or he was really committed to always looking as rich as possible when he stepped into public view.

As for why he didn't take his body's size into account when portraying this image to the public, maybe only he knew.

The fat man looked around, and seemingly realizing that Leonel was in charge, his bubbling face turned red with anger. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

"What is the meaning of this?! Haven't I already explained who I am?! You dare wake me up in the dead of night?!"

Leonel indifferently watched this man go on a rant, but Aina furrowed her brows. There was nothing Aina hated more than those who flaunted their status. In fact, she felt a deep loathing for such people. If she didn't know better, she would cleave this man in two just to teach him a lesson.

“‘| You seem to be new so I’ll take on the labor of explaining it to you peons again! I am a One Star Black Merchant of the Milky Way Guild! You dare to treat me like this?!”

The surrounding ‘nobles’ seemed to be emboldened by the fat man and they began to rant one after another. Since another had taken the first step, their fear vanished and they began to brandish their egos and backgrounds as though they were true weapons.

“‘| I’ve said it before, I’m a citizen of Planet CrarsX10! Do you know how my government officials will react if they hear that a single hair on my head has been harmed?!”

“Right, right! And I’m a citizen of Planet SolvusX2!” pANDA n0VEL

The words seemed to layer atop of each other, bleeding into one another.

“Is there a reason their planets all have numbers behind them?” Leonel asked Aina curiously as though he couldn’t hear their frustration.

Aina looked at Leonel incredulously before shaking her head and giggling. Maybe only Leonel would be able to ask such a thing at this time.

“‘| The universe is big as it is. So, instead of giving each planet a world conquers a new name, they essentially add an alphanumeric code word to the end of the main world’s name as a suffix.

“X, Y and Z are the letter parts of the code. X means that this world is on the same Dimensional Plane as the main world. Y means that it’s a step below. Z means that it’s two steps below. As for three steps below, it’s not usually worth it for such a high level world to invest in such a planet, so there’s no designation for it.

“As for the numbers, they’re pretty self-explanatory. Just designates a number to the planet. The larger the number, the more planets a world has under its control. 10 is a pretty high number, honestly. Most are around two or three at this stage. Crars is a powerhouse of our quadrant’ ,” ρ??∪?????

“I see, I see.”

Leonel and Aina continued to chat as though the ravings of these 'nobles' had nothing to do with them.

By now, it was obvious that these weren't nobles of White City at all. Rather, they were the tourists mentioned previously. Each had an entanglement with another world and had come to Terrain for one reason or another.

Some came for business like the fat merchant, but there were others who had come for pleasure.

By extension, it should also be obvious why Tyrron had treated them so well and hadn't considered the possibility of spies being among them. Earth might be talented, but it was still a fledgling world. Simply put, they couldn't afford to enter the world of the Dimensional Verse with hostile entities on all sides.

There were already no shortage of individuals who were jealous of them. They couldn't also then proceed to antagonize these worlds further.

So, maybe it was more accurate to say that Tyrron likely thought of the possibility that there might be more spies amongst the people of these worlds, but didn't dare to act upon this speculation.

However' ¦ Once again' ¦ Leonel wasn't Tyrron.

"That's enough!"

Leonel's voice suddenly boomed. An oppressive might shook these 'nobles' awake.

"Let me make one thing clear." Leonel spoke, a cold edge gliding across his tone. "Earth indeed can't afford to offend all of your worlds."

A smug look resurfaced on the faces of the 'nobles' that had been scared witless once again.

“That said’ ¦” Leonel’s steely continuation made their sneers freeze on their faces, their hearts trembling beneath his presence. ““ ¦ You all should also understand that Earth is not a world that you can afford to offend either. We may be young, but we are no pushovers. If you think that you can use the status of your worlds to apply pressure on me, you’ll be sorely mistaken.”

Leonel’s gaze swept over them all.

“Now. Will you all step out and personally hand yourselves in? Or do you want me to take action personally? Because I promise you, if you choose the latter, your experiences will be much worse than them.”

Leonel hooked his thumb over his shoulder, pointing back toward the city behind them.

A silence hung over the ‘nobles’. At that moment, the shouts and screams of the city suddenly became several levels more obvious.

A sharp light lit the gazes of several within the crowd, a hesitancy causing their hearts to beat erratically.

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“I guess that’s your choice then.”

Leonel’s palm flipped over. Before anyone could react, his bow had been nocked with three arrows. Though his gaze was indifferent, a stifling killing intent loomed overhead.

“I’ll ask you one more time. Are you three going to step out on your own, or would you rather and arrow through the head?”

Leonel speaking out the exact number made those who had just been hesitating feel their hearts seize. How did he know this?

The worst part was that Leonel had come to them before they could even think of reporting these matters.

It was difficult to tell exactly what was going on in the city, so those who were spies could only rely on their abilities. But, before they got a good understanding of what was happening, Leonel had appeared here and startled them all awake.

“You aren’t even people of Terrain. Is money really worth your life?”

Leonel’s back flexed, pulling his bowstring back. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Tyronn wouldn’t make the mistake of taking these people at their words. If they were here, that meant that they most definitely were people of other worlds. As for how Tyronn knew this, Leonel wasn’t sure. But, Leonel himself could pick out the subtle differences.

Of course, a person from a world wouldn’t necessarily have the same appearances. This wasn’t a matter of how they looked, but rather about the way the energies around them behaved. People from the same world had subtle nuances about them that Leonel was able to pick out.

Just from a casual observation, Leonel was able to pick out these people with ease.

That said, there was no telling if Leonel was correct. It was always possible that these people had deeper ties to Terrain than it seemed. But, it was worth a try.

“Alright then. Die.”

Leonel’s gaze sharpened, landing on the first figure.

Just as his bowstring was about to be released, two figures dashed forward, quickly falling to their knees. PANDA NOVEL

“I surrender! I surrender!”

They both spoke in unison, their head lowered to the ground. It was clear that they were too afraid to even look up.

Before, they had thought that Leonel was just bluffing. But, after Leonel not only spoke out with the number of them that there were, but also locked his aura onto them, they felt as though they had fallen into the pits of despair. The only ways they could see to save their own lives was by surrendering.

“Hmph. Just a bunch of trash.”

When others heard this voice, they were surprised to find that the obese merchant was on the other side of it. This man who seemed to be all talk and no substance actually had the gall to say such a thing at this moment?

“You’re quite bold, brat.” The obese merchant snarled. “How did you manage to pick us out?”

Leonel gazed indifferently at the obese merchant who very clearly had no intention of begging for his life like the two before him. At the same time, though, Leonel also had no intention of explaining how he had done things. Since it was related to his ability, why would he expose such things about himself?

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The obese merchant snarled when he noticed that Leonel had no intention of saying anything.

“Even if you knew that we were responsible, you should have turned your head the other way, kid. Do you think that the Milky Way Guild is an existence you can afford to offend?”

The obese merchant began to speak of his background again. But, whereas last time it came off more like a spoiled brat talking about his rich parents, at this moment, it felt as though a mountain was weighing down on all those around him.

This was no longer an explanation. It was a threat.

“Since you’re a fledgling world, I don’t mind explaining. Earth is only located on a tiny little wing of the Milky Way Galaxy. Even if your technology was at its peak, you could at best travel to another wing if you spent your whole lifetimes on it.

“But, the Milky Way Galaxy has control of all the trade routes of this quadrant. It’s impossible for a –.”

Leonel suddenly held up a hand. With a thought, the little mink appeared, holding a familiar disk-like dictionary in his little paws.

“Who is the highest ranking member of the Milky Way Guild?”

The obese merchant sneered. What did this little brat think that he was doing? Were these matters something an infant world like Earth would know? Did he really think that his little informational treasure would be able to give him such information? Was this supposed to be a comedy skit?

[*Ping*]

[Replying to Seed, the highest ranking member of the Milky Way Guild is Augustus Ovilteen]

“And what’s his strength level.”

[*Ping*]

[Replying to Seed, Augustus Ovilteen, when last displaying his prowess, showed strength nearing the Sixth Dimension]

“What are the odds Augustus will care about a Fourth Dimensional One Star Black Merchant?”

The obese merchant nearly choked on his spit, his visage becoming deathly pale. Calling the President of the Milky Way Guild by his first name as though it was a non-issue? Just who was this kid? And what the hell is that disk?

The merchant had heard that Earth was a treasure trove of wealth, but seeing it with his own eyes made him feel as though he had lived his life to this point for naught.

[*Ping*]

[Replying to Seed, it depends on if matters are related to Earth or not]

Leonel nodded.

Earth was too much of a temptation. Even if this Augustus wouldn't normally care about the life of a One Star Black merchant, if it came down to it and he could use it as an excuse to stretch his hands toward Earth, he wouldn't hesitate.

In fact, considering there was a Merchant here at all likely meant that his sights were already locked onto their world.

Since this was the case' ¦ How should he deal with this matter' ¦ ?

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Leonel's bow disappeared, only to be replaced by an odd metal. Just looking at it, one couldn't feel anything special. It looked even less special when Leonel bent it in his hands as though he was pleating fabric rather than a metal bar.

But, when the two kneeling figures felt this metal wrap around their wrists and lock into place, they felt as though they couldn't exert any strength at all.

After he was done, Leonel walked to the obese merchant who was still sickly pale. He didn't seem to realize that the last response by the dictionary gave him some breathing room, likely because the pressure Leonel put on him was too much. Or, more accurately, it was Aina's pressure.

From the very beginning, Aina had had a bad impression of this man. So, the moment she found out that he was one of the spies, she no longer held back her killing intent.

Luckily, it seemed that this merchant was more adept at selling wares than battling. But, this only made sense.

After a world completed its first Metamorphosis, it would slow into a lull. By then, not everyone needed to be combatants any longer.

On the current Earth, practically everyone needed to know how to fight with the exception of a few. However, as things settled down more, it was likely that Earth may return to the previous days where the army and a regular citizen's life were kept separate. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

“You’! That’!”

Leonel didn't wait for the obese man to finish and simply locked his arms into place just like his colleagues.

This metal bar was the very metal used to line the walls of Dark Cloud Prison. With all the destruction, Leonel managed to snap a few pieces for himself with quite some ease. Now, he wouldn't have to worry about these spies using secret means of communication.

Though Leonel could easily see through more conventional communication methods, stopping abilities would be more difficult.

The reason he was able to weed out the spies to begin with was because White City simply made it too easy. Every spy, without fail, had communication Force Arts drawn into the foundations of their home. Not only were there communication Force Arts, but there were also Force Arts that made monitoring the City several times easier.

Of course, the obese merchant and his two accomplices were a bit different in this regard since their homes were only recently built. But, even then, seeing through them hadn't been very difficult. Leonel only had to pay attention for special talismans. PANDA NOVEL

Since the merchant and his men weren't citizens of White City to begin with, it was obvious that the people of Terrain would account for this, giving them more mobile options for espionage. For someone with senses as sensitive as Leonel's, seeing through these hidden mechanisms was simply too easy.

The main mistake White City made was that it didn't consider the fact that someone knowledgeable about Force Arts would even exist on Earth to this point and this could be considered their downfall.

In the end, Leonel chose to simply imprison the members of the Milky Way Guild. He could tell that this might lead to problems later, but he couldn't afford his plans being revealed, even if there was only a small chance.

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A long while later, the spies who survived the purge were group together and thrown into the White City dungeons. As a City, there was no surprise that White City would have such a thing, so it made things many times more convenient.

The patrol units looked toward Leonel in a completely different light. p??J???????

With their training, they could easily tell that Leonel had indeed picked out spies. If it was just an act, maybe their disdain would have reached another level. But, this was very clearly not that.

"Station a few to look over this area." Leonel said.

"Yes, Prince!"

Leonel walked away, not minding their change in attitude. To him, actions always mattered more than words. Now that all the spies were dealt with, he could really begin.

As for what he planned to do?

Well, the people of Terrain liked dropping Cities onto battlefields right? He might as well give them a taste of their own medicine.

**

On a secret location on Earth, there was yet another meeting taking place.

The war for Earth was reaching a new level. But, everyone knew that unless The Capital fell, Terrain would be left with nothing. Of course, Terrain had their own plans in this regard, but the truth was that they were making no progress on that front, at least on the surface.

This meeting, however, didn't include people of Terrain, nor did it include people of The Empire. Rather, each and every soul here was an upper echelon member of the Slayer Legion.

Among those present, there were several that Leonel would recognize. The first of which being Supreme Monet. Aside from her, there was even the angelic man who appeared that day to stop Hutch and there was even Hutch himself.

The old man lazed around as usual. But, compared to when Leonel first saw him, aside from having his feet up on the table, the old man also cradled a machete resting in an age-worn leather sheath.

His head nodded away as though he might fall asleep at any time. In fact, even though the conference table was practically packed to the brim, there wasn't a single soul within a meter of Hutch, it was as though they all tacitly agreed to stay away from him.

Still, though many avoided Hutch, their focus wasn't on him at all. Rather, they were all focused on a particular young man.

Despite the fact that he was the youngest in attendance, many looked toward him with awe and respect. Some gazed toward him with fear and still other looked upon him with admiration and ' anticipation as though he was a shining hope prepared to change their futures.

The young man had striking blue eyes and hair whiter than snow. Despite this, his skin was a deep shade of brown. It was a warm, gentle sort of brown that reminded one of a wizened oak tree.

The young man sat quietly, as though he was waiting for something. But, seemingly without cause or reason, he sat up slowly, his gaze brimming with vitality.

If citizens of Terrain had been present, they would have immediately recognized this young man.

He was none other than the first on their list of targets, the young man who cleared the Zones of Earth the second fastest.

Elorin.

Chapter 547

“If matters continue like this, Terrain will lose.”

Elorin’s voice held a certain sweetness to it. It was deep and reverberating, but it tickled the ears almost like a steady rhythm. It had a special cadence to it that dragged all those who heard it in. But, maybe his words themselves were more shocking than anything else.

According to Elorin, despite the state of the battlefield and the current semi-stalemate, Terrain had not a single chance of winning.

If the outside world heard such things, they would think that this man was insane. However, the members of the Slayer Legion only nodded as though this was obvious.

As the existences that had been battling The Empire for so long, they had a great understanding of their strength. If Terrain thought their pitiful planning was enough, they were sorely mistaken. The reality of it all was that Emperor Fawkes was simply unfathomable. As long as that man didn’t deem it fit to make a move, Earth was in no danger whatsoever.

However, that very man, at this moment, was more than content to leave this war as a training exercise for the youths of Earth. And, maybe the sad part was that Terrain had yet to realize this was the case either.

They simply weren't being taken seriously. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Of course, if one looked at this at a surface level, Elorin's words were already shocking enough. But, if one was aware of how many things he was aware of, they would be even more astounding.

"But, I'm sure you're all aware that it's impossible for things to simply continue like this. Those hidden families will not miss this opportunity to deal a blow to The Empire, they're only waiting for the opportune time. And, there's no guarantee that other worlds haven't already stuck their noses into our matters.

"So, the question remains' | What will we do about it?"

A silent hush fell over the Slayer Legion.

Elorin stood from his seat. He wore a tracksuit that radiated a pure white color. Despite the casual nature of his dress, it didn't seem out of place in the slightest. In fact, it felt as though he was a monk looking down upon them from on high. Just his demeanor alone felt otherworldly.

"Not many know the history of the Slayer Legion and even less know that we are no less ancient than the Ascension Empire. However, we've been hiding in the shadows for a long time. Sometimes, I believe that even we forget what our true purpose is." PANDA NOVEL

Elorin swept a gaze over those before him, his demeanor completely unlike what his age would dictate. He commanded the room of such powerful individuals with ease. Well' | With the exception of a single man.

Hacker Hutch continued to nod away, mumbling beneath his breath as he whispered sweet nothings in his sleep.

Elorin smiled when his gaze landed on Hutch. He didn't seem irked by such a reality at all. In fact, he only shook his head as though he was observing his own grandfather napping at an inappropriate time. There wasn't a hint of animosity in his expression.

"Hutch."

The angelic man growled.

"Huh? Huh?" ρ??∫??????

Hutch shot up, looking around warily. When he realized where he was, he yawned.

"Oh, this meeting is still going on?"

The angelic man's fury reached a new level seeing such a display.

"Show some respect!"

"Respect?" Hutch picked at his ears. "You're all fawning over a brat who hasn't even grown hair in all the right places yet, and now you have the audacity to ask me to show some respect? The hell is wrong with you?"

Hutch yawned again, smacking his lips.

" '¡ I could do with some pizza' ¡" The old man mumbled beneath his breath.

By this point, not only was the angelic man fuming, but so were the others. This was especially so for Catris who had lost an arm to Hutch just months ago. The emptiness of his sleeve brought him to a boiling rage every time he thought of those events.

" '¡ Grandpa Hutch' ¡ I heard that Mayfly died?"

Hutch's gaze narrowed as he looked back toward Elorin.

The relationship between Badger and Mayfly might have been close, but compared to the relationship between Mayfly and Elorin, it was hardly worth mentioning. It could be said that Badger's emotions were unrequited while it was a completely different story for Elorin's.

This might have shed light on just the kind of man Elorin was. Despite all of these matters, he still didn't blink an eye when Mayfly and Badger partnered up so frequently. This was a man wholly confident in himself and his ability.

"It's been quite a long time since you've called me Grandpa, brat. But, to think that this was the situation you would do so in. It seems that you've gotten quite used to playing these political games. Maybe rather than my being the one who's forgotten the true purpose of the Slayer Legion, it's you all."

Hutch stood, his demeanor becoming completely different. It was clear that even Elorin became a level more serious.

"I hadn't made my decision before, but I'll have to thank my own grandson for pushing me in the right direction. It seems that I can no longer take a backseat to these affairs any longer."

By the time Hutch made it to the front of the room, his aura was towering. Whatever demeanor that Elorin seemed to have had was completely washed away in the presence of this old man.

Slowly, Hutch's skin seemed to become more elastic, his wrinkles fading somewhat. He became an inch or two taller and his aura sharpened, regaining a bloody edge that had disappeared long ago.

Even beneath the gazes of so many powerhouses, his aura seemed to wash over them all, suffocating them to the point it seemed they wouldn't be able to raise a single finger.

He was on a completely different level. It was only at this moment that they all understood the level of strength Hutch commanded. Even if he hadn't awakened such a rare Time affinity ability, even if he hadn't awakened an ability at all, he would still carry strength capable of forcing them all to submit.

This was Hutch. This was Old Man Hutch. This was Hacker Hutch.

“From this day forth, the sole decision maker of the Slayer Legion will be me.”

Chapter 548

Hearing Hutch’s words, those of the Slayer Legion were stunned. At first, they were too oppressed by Hutch’s aura to say much of anything. But, in the next moment, a few shot up, livid expressions on their faces.

“You dare to rebel, Hutch?!” Catris roared, slamming his remaining hand onto the table beneath him.

Catris hadn’t dared to confront Hutch before, but now he was most definitely in the right.

Wasn’t the point of the Slayer Legion meant to be to fight against the oppressive rule of The Empire? The Ascension Empire hid beneath a guise of democracy, but when there would always be one, undeniable ruler, what kind of democracy was this? This world was simply a Monarchy with extra steps, there was nothing revolutionary about it.

Just how many actions had the Fawkes family unilaterally taken over the years with no one being powerful enough to stop them? This was exactly what they were trying to avoid, yet, Hutch was actually trying to make the Slayer Legion the exact thing they were fighting against?!

It was unforgivable!

“Silence.”

A wave of Force surged through the room. Many felt as though their knees had gone weak, whatever thought of resisting they had had falling to negligible levels. Even now, they couldn’t believe how large the difference between them and Hutch truly was. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

“Brat, go sit down.”

Hutch looked toward his grandson, a commanding tone booming from within his chest.

Elorin looked toward Hutch, a partially cautious and partially curious light in his eye. But, in the end, he smiled somewhat unexpectedly.

“Alright, grandpa.”

It was simply too difficult to read Elorin. He really did seem like a kid trying his best to please his grandparent. But, just a moment ago, he was questioning his grandfather about the death of Mayfly.

Of course, there hadn't been any sort of edge to his tone back then. But, asking such a question in context most definitely seem to be combative. Yet now, Elorin pretended as though none of that had happened.

Hutch turned away from his grandson, looking back toward the crowd of Slayer Legion elites. By now, many of them had paled. Without Elorin's presence blocking Hutch, the aura they felt came like a rampaging tsunami, crashing into their minds and hearts with a relentless tempo. PANDA NOVEL

“Since you all seem to have forgotten the truth of our Slayer Legion, I will remind you.

“We weren't built to be rebels, we weren't built to help the common people, we weren't built to sit here and scavenge for opportunities to deal with The Empire.

“The truth of our existence is in our name.

“We. The Slayer Legion. Was built to kill.”

A bloodthirsty aura surged out from Hutch. The sound of crying blades sung through the air, sharpening beneath Hutch's aura as though it was their perfect whetstone. Not a single soul seemed capable of breathing, let alone moving. It felt as though their whole worlds suddenly revolved around this one man.

“We plunder. We kill. Then we sharpen our blades and do it all over again.

“This is the fundamental law that rules us, that rules me. ρ??∫??????

“Monet!”

Supreme Monet was shaken out of her fear-induced state.

“Y-yes!”

“What is the history of the Slayer Legion?”

“We’!” Monet grit her teeth and stabilized her breathing. “! We were once the spear of The Empire. However, we grew too dangerous and were thus abandoned and shunned. It was too difficult to control so many powerhouses at once, so the First Emperor of The Ascension Empire had us hunted down and killed.”

If others heard this story, they would have been shocked beyond belief. To think that this was the true origin of the Slayer Legion.

However, the words Hutch said next were even more shocking.

“Wrong.”

One by one, Hutch called out Supremes and former Supremes, forcing them to speak of the Slayer Legion’s history, yet, none of them could come up with an answer that could satisfy the old man. In fact, with every mistake, Hutch’s reprimanding only grew fiercer and harsher.

“So this is the hogwash that’s been taught?” Hutch looked toward his grandson. “What is the history of the Slayer Legion?”

Elorin cleared his throat, the simple action somehow seeming elegant. It was simply impossible to believe that a single man could have such a level of charm.

“We are the sacrifice. When alive, our wool keeps the people warm. On our death beds, our blood quenches the people’s thirst. After our death, our flesh keeps the people fed.”

Elorin’s words shook those of the Slayer Legion to their souls. It was no longer about the voice that spoke them but entirely about the words themselves. It felt as though they had suddenly pulled their heads out from a vat of water, gasping for breath and finally seeing the world for what it truly was. The simple sentences tugged at their heartstrings, forcing their blood to rage like flooding torrents.

However, Elorin still hadn’t finished’!

“We are the spearhead. Our shaft stands tall without us. Our head glistens beneath the sun when it is time and hides in the night when it is not.

“Do you understand?”

Though the members of the meeting felt that their blood was boiling, they couldn’t quite explain why. It was as though something hidden within them was slowly resurfacing, bubbling to the forefront of their minds.

However, no matter how hard they tried, they couldn’t quite understand what Elorin was trying to say. What sacrifice? What spear?

Elorin glanced around him, his expression calm.

“We are the Slayers. Our work is entertainment when the Emperor deems it fit. Our services are ostracized when He does not.

“DO YOU UNDERSTAND?!”

The upper echelon's expressions flushed red, their jaws clenching.

“The Slayer Legion is’!” Hutch began to speak in an even tone, his pace unhurried. “”! The hidden army of The Empire.

“In times of war, we join the battlefield to become their spearheads. In times of peace, we become their sacrifices.

“Now.. Sharpen your spears.”

Chapter 549

Hutch's words left a pregnant silence over the room. It was hard for the upper echelon to properly wrap their heads around this matter, but somehow also easy for them to accept.

The realization left them quaking internally. Just what level of manipulation and planning did it take to pull something like this off? Not only would it take the foresight necessary to realize that a nation could only be united when they had a common enemy, but it would also take a level of genius they could fathom to make those of the Slayer Legion accept this reality so long after their initial creation.

The upper echelon members had long since been taught of the true origins of the Slayer Legion, but it wasn't until this moment that they understood their true hidden purpose.

In truth, was this so different from their initial reality? Their main goal had been to protect the citizens of The Empire and to pave a better future for them. And now, their goal was the exact same’! It was just that their spears were pointed in a different direction than where they expected.

But now, they had another problem to face.

While the upper echelon were properly indoctrinated and could accept this news with ease, the same couldn't possibly be true of their lower ranking members. One just needed to think of existences like Big Buddha to understand just how much many of their people hated The Empire.pANDA-N0VEL.COM

No small number of their recruits were made up of those who loathed The Ascension Empire and wanted to live to the day it fell. But, this was precisely where the genius of the Slayer Legion lay' ! It was created for this expressed purpose. And, with all the most powerful members knowing the truth behind this, it was almost too easy to control how much progress the Slayer Legion made toward that goal.

This was the ultimate truth. Worrying about how those lower ranking officials would react' !? Who said they needed to find out at all?

**

Leonel sat in meditation, his Internal Sight stretching out over the City.

White City was over 50 kilometers in diameter. If Earth was still a Third Dimensional world, with his Fourth Dimensional Internal Sight, Leonel wouldn't have an issue covering this distance. But, after entering the Fourth Dimension, it was much more difficult for Leonel to cover such a distance. pANDA NOVEL

In such a fledgling Fourth Dimensional world, Leonel could at most cover ten kilometers at best and that was only thanks to his obscene sensory talents and in thanks to reaching completion in the Four Seasons Realm which seemed to have boosted him in all aspects.

However, even this wasn't enough to cover the whole city. This was why Leonel had had no choice but to walk around the city slowly.

His goal in traveling around the city had more to do with just finding the spies. Other than this, he also had to read the layout of the city and draw a map of the Force Art nodes littered throughout.

When Leonel saw Hargrove City teleport for a second time, a lightbulb went off for him. The only way for the City to have managed to do this was if there was a permanent teleportation Force Art drawn into its foundation. The reason for this was simple.

Take a talisman, for example. They were usually one time or limited use items. This was because the drawing of a single Force Art had many limiting factors whether that be the skill level of the one who drew it or the material it was drawn with. $\rho \int \sqrt{\rho \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho}$

The easiest way to visualize this was in comparing the Mage Arts of Camelot to treasures created by Force Crafters.

A Mage Art, once drawn onto the air, whether with no medium or with a Spiritual Wood forged wand, would only last long enough for a single attack. Even stronger spells would last for a few seconds at most, while the longest lasting spells like Leonel's bell defensive spell would only survive a few attacks at most.

By comparison, a treasure created by a Force Crafter was on a completely different level in terms of longevity. A well crafted weapon could survive decades, even centuries of continuous battle. There were some weapons that had even existed for millions of years without issue.

What was the main difference? The quality of material used to draw the Force Art!

Force Arts came in all different shapes, sizes and even languages. But, the one fundamental truth was that the medium used to draw them would always decide their longevity.

So what was the point of all this? Why was it important at all?

Well, it exposed one fundamental truth to Leonel, and that was that these cities weren't teleported here through one time use treasures. The very foundation of these cities were Force Arts!

One might think this wasn't very useful. Even if Leonel knew this, what could he possibly do about it? Even if he managed to use it, wouldn't it just be a teleportation Force Art? What was the use of bringing a city to a battlefield?

From Terrain's perspective, this made sense because they were invading another's land. But, Earth already had many well established Forts and Cities that could put White City or Hargrove City to shame.

Beyond this, since Terrain had drawn in permanent Force Arts, who knew if they had a greater purpose for them? What if much like Hargrove City, Terrain had a method of snatching White City back? If that was the case, it might make Leonel's actions even more useless.

All of this said, Leonel didn't see these matters in this fashion at all for a few reasons.

Firstly, he believed his level of skill was beyond the Crafters Terrain employed to draw these Force Arts. Secondly, he had learned when he reconstructed Camelot's Mage Arts to amplify their strength that Force Arts could be considered complete sentences and paragraphs while the Runes used to draw them were the words. In that case, such a large Force Art, just how many of these words could he rearrange? And what kind of new sentences could he form with them?

But, the third was the most important.

With the sturdy materials used to draw this massive Force Art, Leonel felt that he could do something much better with all that wealth.

Chapter 550

After confirming his vision, Leonel immediately got to work. He shuffled around the city like a madman, seemingly running around without aim or purpose.

'This could work! No, that might ruin the nodes at that place! but if I'

Leonel's gaze glowed. Despite the fact he was quickly growing beaten and haggard, his vision only seemed to become clearer.

The truth was that Leonel's current body was still in a pretty terrible state, having not quite recovered from going all out just a few days ago. But, at this point, he didn't mind, he lost himself in a world of Force Arts, his mind functioning on a different plane.

Leonel had many complicated feelings about Lionel, but what he couldn't deny was the fact that Lionel had opened up an all new door toward improvement for him. What Lionel gave him wasn't as simple as a normal breakthrough, but rather a new way of viewing the world.

After shrugging these shackles off, breaking into the peak of the Four Seasons Realm was just the very tip of the iceberg.

Leonel jumped into and out of his Dream World, simulating the changes he wanted to make before quickly testing them out in the new world.

Odd swirls of Force seemed to manifest around White City, catching those with sharp enough senses off guard. But, it was hard for them to tell exactly what was going on. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

From within the City Lord Mansion, Aina watched as Leonel ran around, her smile tinged with a touch of worry.

'He's always like this' !'

Aina shook her head, not bothering to try to get Leonel to stop. She knew that it would be useless even if the words came from her. Though it seemed like Leonel hung on her every word, maybe Aina was the one most aware of the fact that Leonel was too good at drawing a line between his emotions and what he felt he had to do. He was quite the stubborn man in that way.

Taking a deep breath, Aina pulled out her great sword, brandishing it. Though much of the City Lord Mansion's military fields had been taken up by new residences, there was still ample room for Aina to take advantage of.

She slowly swung her sword, her muscles twitching beneath the strain as she slowed her swing to a crawl.

Aina had picked up the sword when she felt her comprehension of the battle ax had reached a bottleneck. Others might feel that this was a foolish thing to do, but Aina always trusted her instincts. When it came to the proper way for her to train herself, she was the very best at it.

She felt that there were secrets in the sword that could bring her comprehension of the ax to an all new level, so she began to diligently train in it. PANDA NOVEL

During her battle with Anared, that feeling she had grew even stronger. Though she was certain that Anared held back, he was still a master of the sword. His every action was infused with the air of a swordmaster. If Anared knew that his actions would help her break down a final barrier that had been holding her back, who knew how he would react?


'This is the feeling, '

Aina took a deep breath, her chest heaving in slow rhythms.

At that moment, something miraculous occurred. Despite the fact her sword swing remained incomparably slow, the blade left an afterimage in the air as though leaving a permanent stain of its presence in the wind.

The image shifted and slowed, waving about like illusions.

'That's it, '

Aina ingrained the twitch of every one of her muscle fibers onto her mind. Beads of sweat fell down her delicate brow, following the slope of her slender neck. 

Half way down, Aina threw her sword to the side as though it was trash. At that moment, she felt that she no longer needed it. Until the next time her ability spoke to her, she wouldn't need any other weapon.

Aina grasped out into empty air, causing her odd curved package to snap open. With a surge, a beautiful ax of golden-red shot into her hand.

"Ha!"

Aina swung down with a forcefulness.

At that moment, her aura completely changed. For those instances of time, her body exuded a mystique that demanded absolute obedience. The faint shadow of a woman more than half a foot taller than her seemed to envelop her body, causing the Forces in the air to sing.

A deep gash suddenly stretched out before Aina, even without her ax having completed its swing. Afterimages of golden-red tore through the wind, leaving a whistling resonance in their wake.

Aina's arms came to a grinding halt, a final bead of sweat falling from the tip of her nose to the ground below.

"Completion'!" She said softly.

If others knew that Aina had reached the completion stage of the Four Seasons Realm they would be shocked.

Of course, her completion stage was only for the ax while Leonel's was on a level that far transcended that. But, it was a feat that would shock an awe others to no end, regardless.

Aina smiled. 'My training is actually faster now'!

Aina felt that she had underestimated the value of a break on the mind. She had thought it would take her several more months to reach this stage, yet it had only taken a few more days. Now, she felt much more confident about entering Valiant Heart Mountain's Stage.

After basking in her own success, Aina's next instinct was to tell Leonel the good news. She didn't know why she had the compulsion, but after she opened up to Leonel, she felt the weirdest joy even telling him the littlest things, even though the tradeoff was learning that he was a milk-first sociopath.

However, just when Aina wanted to do so, she felt another shift in the Force surrounding the City.

This change was particularly different from the previous ones. Whereas the former surges originated from within the City, this seemed to come from outside of it.

“ ‘| What?”

Aina was shocked.

“Why does my body feel so sluggish?”

‘|

On a corner of Earth, dead bodies laid strewn about. Their blood pooled and boiled, bubbling forth like a death-laced stew.

To the side of this large pool, a familiar man stood, a placid smile on his face. If Aina had been there, it would have been no trouble to pick out that this man was none other than the Puppet Master.

But, what was maybe more sinister were the bodies and limbs floating within the bubbling concoction.

At that moment, a head with a peeling layer of skin floated to the top. On its face, a look of horror and regret was forever etched.

This was the face of former Vice Commander Joseph’s younger brother, Damian.

