Dimensional Descent –

Chapter 1

Leonel barreled down a set of spiraling stairs. With a leap, he cleared the railing, foregoing the last of the steps to land in a living room. Jumping over a couch, he rounded a corner into the kitchen to snatch a bottle of foul green liquid.

"Thanks for the daily dose of cow shit, dad. Really appreciate it."

A middle-aged man looked up from his tablet, pushing his glasses up with a couple fingers. He was lounging behind the large glass doors that opened from the living room into the backyard when his son's usual defamatory statements entered his ears.

"In another rush toward failure?"

"I'll succeed this time!"

Instead of launching himself out the front door, Leonel actually made his way back up the set of spiraled stairs.

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Leonel didn't wait for his father's next sarcastic statement. He pushed opened the attic doors and swung himself out of the three-story high triangular windows. His actions looked no different from an attempt at suicide, but his hand just barely caught the ledge, swinging himself upward to latch onto a weakening water drainage pipe.

Like a spry monkey, the plastic lid connector of his bottle hanging from his teeth, he climbed to the roof, landing on the angled tiles with a practiced ease.

[Subject: Leonel Morales]

[Infraction Code 118.67.2 – Unauthorized scaling of a residential building. Under the Parkour and Freerunning Act of 2034, this is classified as a Type 1 Misdemeanor]

[It is advised that subject Leonel Morales immediately cease illegal activity to avoid charges]

Leonel ignored the beeping female voice emitting from his wrist, his eyes having locked onto his next target.

The suburb Leonel and his father lived in was decently well off and could be considered a part of the upper middle class. However, the location of their home could only be described as odd. Or, rather, the entire suburb community was out of expectations._{PANDA-N0VEL.COM}

The community existed on a large flying platform that orbited a main city below like the Moon did the Earth. These so-called Floating Paradises acted as a solution to the housing crisis of 2066, effectively fixing the problem by creating more surface area for housing.

Nowadays, only the obscenely wealthy could live on the surface. Leonel's destination happened to be this lofty surface world. Though, while most who lived on these Floating Paradises could only catch a glimpse from time to time, Leonel traveled down almost everyday.

'… 17 seconds.'

Leonel crouched on his home's roof. His and his father's home happened to be at the very edge of the Floating Paradise. Of course, there were several safety measures taken. But, that wouldn't stop Leonel.

Despite his vantage point, he couldn't see the backyard his father had been sitting in. In fact, his home looked completely empty from the outside due to a privacy setting.

He swung his head back, taking a big swing of his dad's green concoction. In that moment, not only did his tongue seemingly light on fire, but even his lungs burned. One would think he was breathing in a raging fire's smoke instead of drinking a smoothie.

"Agh… Really outdid yourself this time, old man."

Leonel suddenly took a leap. At first, it seemed that he wouldn't make it very far. He'd fall three stories and come out with a broken leg if he was lucky.

However, that was when a sudden gust of wind crashed into his body. If it wasn't for its sturdy straps, the backpack to his back would have been flung off entirely.

A fierce WHOOSH filled Leonel's ears as he was taken into the skies.

His arms and legs spread out, a refreshing smile playing his features as though he didn't realize that he looked no different from a madman to any sane observer.

He was a lone man above the clouds, free falling without a care in the world. His clothes whipped against his own body, revealing a hidden toned torso.

When it seemed that Leonel would be falling hundreds of meters to the surface below, his body tucked and rolled, bursting through a layer of white clouds that spritzed a refreshing dew across his face. His last bit of fatigue vanished without a thought. ᴘᴀɴᴅᴀ ɴ0ᴠᴇʟ

With a dull thump, he rolled across the hard ground. It only took a moment to realize that this wasn't in fact the ground at all, but rather the very top of a sky scraper that seemed to hold up the clouds.

"Perfect score." Leonel grinned, praising himself.

[Infraction Code 213.13.1 – Unauthorized entry to the surface. Under the Sky Island Act of 2071, this is classified as a Type 7 Felony]

[Subject Leonel Morales, 17, has been targeted for capture. It is advised that subject remain where they are to avoid added charges]

[Subject classified as a minor. Guardian Velasco Morales has been contacted]

[Error. Communication failure. Attempting reboot]

Leonel's grin widened. Having a retired Tier 5 government official as a father had its perks. For example, any crimes linked to a retiree of such prestige was directly handled by the Bureau of Intelligence and Protection, or BIP for short.

Since Leonel was a minor, all of his crimes were forwarded to his father to be vetted by BIP. With his father's name at his back, small crimes like this were directly ignored. Unfortunately, though, his eighteenth birthday was coming up soon.

Leonel popped up, grabbing a silver framed bicycle hidden in a corner. He leapt from the building's side, swinging his bike's seat between his legs just as he firmly landed on a cylindrical glass structure attached to the side of the skyscraper.

Due to the suffocating lack of space and the obscene price per square footage, almost every building on the surface was interconnected in some way. The skies were filled with glass tunnels, towering structures were sometimes no more than a meter or two apart, and personal vehicles were incredibly rare even for the rich who could afford to live here.

"Get to school the normal way, boy!"

Leonel's laughter rang out as though there wasn't a several hundred meter drop beneath him.

"Screw off, Lenny. I'll start taking the tube the moment you agree to pay those ridiculous fees for me." ₚ□□↵□□□□□

"My name isn't Lenny!"

Leonel pedaled away to duck away from the old man's next round of nagging. He still didn't know how the old man always managed to know when he arrived and also had no idea where his voice was being projected from either, but he could only assume that he was sulking behind one of those one-way viewing windows.

Streaking across the high rises of the surface city, Leonel sped through the dense metal forest far faster than many thought possible. Eventually, the tall skyscrapers began to shorten and Leonel had no choice but to change his tactics lest he get caught by some busybodies.

Finding his usual back alley, he dropped three or so meters as a time, hopping his bike from glass tunnel to balcony to light post before eventually landing on the ground.

He took his backpack from his back, pulling out a pair of grey slacks, a recently pressed white shirt, and a navy blue blazer.

He quickly stripped himself of his sports wear. After leaning a mirror the size of a piece of paper again a large garbage disposal bin, he slicked his hair back with his accumulated sweat.

"Refresh."

A UV light swept over Leonel's body. In a flash, his accumulating body odor was killed off, replaced by a neutral, refreshing scent.

In a moment, he had put on his grey pleated pants, buttoned up his shirt, and slid on his blue blazer. After putting on his bag, he stood up to his full height of 6'3″.

He smiled toward his propped up mirror. It wasn't because he was overly satisfied with his own appearance, though he could be considered to be quite handsome. Rather, he was testing to see which smile came off the most charming.

His skin was a tanned bronze, his short hair swept freely in the wind with its dirty blond almost amber color, and his eyes were a pale green.

Leonel was not only tall and toned, but his frame was both lean and well-built. Despite this, he had a kind and inviting disposition. His presence made others feel comfortable.

In truth, if others knew he was practicing his smile, they'd think he was crazy. He was more than charming enough, was there a need to practice anymore?

Surprisingly, almost an hour ticked by before Leonel's watch beeped once more. Realizing he would be running late if he wasted anymore time, he hopped on his bike. But, his pace was much slower this time, not wanting to ruin his effort by sweating once more.

He didn't have long to go. The streets leading to his school were nothing like the congested communities he had passed through before. It was like entering a whole new world.

There was greenery all around, ancient trees vibrantly recovering from the winter months, and winding paths that led to beautiful architectural feats.

This place was the third ranked academy on Earth, a prestigious place only for the elites of the younger generation — Royal Blue Academy.

"Leo!"

"Good luck!"

"We have bets on you succeeding this time!"

Leonel grinned as he passed by a few groups of students preparing to head to their classes, waving in acknowledgment.

Soon, Leonel's gaze landed on a massive dome-like building. It stretched hundreds of meters in every direction and had several entrances just from the front.

Even among Royal Blue Academy students, there were different separations. To be able to step into this building, only the highest ranked seniors could do so.

However, even with such a masterpiece before him, Leonel's view was completely filled with the sight of just one young lady standing near the top of a wide set of white marble stairs.

She looked like a dainty fairy descended from the skies. Her long, flowing black hair gently waved in the wind, only resting at the small of her back every so often. Her eyes were a warm amber that bordered on gold, making her seem like a goddess separated from the world.

A small group of friends stood around her. Their banter caused her to smile a shy smile that gripped Leonel's heart and refused to let go.

When she looked up and met Leonel's gaze, he felt that the entire world aside from her had turned various shades of white.

Her delicate tanned yet fair skin, the small slope of her nose, the way the wind gently caressed her thigh-length dress, revealing the curves she so modestly hid.

Though not an inch over 5'7″, she had a presence that captivated the world, one larger than even Leonel himself believed he had.

The young fairy blushed profusely when she saw that it was Leonel, a crimson tide waded from her slender collarbone and up her neck, coating her soft cheeks.

"Aina…" Leonel's voice was powerful and filled with emotion as though this was the very first time he was doing this.

"Ah, he's here again." One of Aina's friends teased.

"Stop enabling him." A fiercer friend rebutted. "Poor Aina has been getting harassed to death by him for the last four years. Get lost!"

Leonel seemed used to this good-cop, bad-cop routine. But the truth was he couldn't even see or hear them. His senses were incomparably focused.

"I won't stop until I have a real answer from you." Leonel's gaze burned. In that moment, his pale green eyes seemed to gain a new light, becoming a green more vibrant than even the trees around him. "I must be your man. Will you have me?"

The surrounding students all simultaneously stopped as though collectively holding their breaths.

Aina's cheeks grew several shades of red darker, almost becoming as ripe as a tomato. Her small lips trembled before she turned and ran up the steps, disappearing into the Academy halls.

Leonel gained another glare from Aina's fierce friend before she and the much kinder young lady rushed after the embarrassed Aina.

In the end, Leonel could only sigh. Seemed that today was yet another failure.