

Dimensional Descent

Chapter 2281: An Ally of Mine

Leonel pretended as though he didn't see Simona's furious glare. His senses were focused on the battle around him, sharply directing the movements of his troops. He didn't have the time to baby the emotions of a young woman he hardly knew. The amount that he hoped to gain from returning her puppy beast to her had already been fulfilled; the rest would be decided on very different factors.

It was almost without suspense at all. His battle plan for the Pyius family had been the most robust, containing contingencies for Simona's paternal family, but it seemed that he had thought too much; they weren't actually taking action at all, and he strolled right up to the gates of the Pyius family's palace.

At that moment, Simona stepped out from the palace, her mother following to her side and a large number of Pyius Ancestors appearing with them. High in the skies, the starships rumbled, but Leonel didn't control them to fire.

With his Dream Domain still deployed, Leonel scanned every inch of the planet, not paying attention to the mother-daughter duo immediately. He seemed to be quite calm, and it didn't seem like he was fighting a bloody war at all.

The warriors of the Morales were already valiant, but without the fear of death looming over their heads, they seemed to become like monsters in human skin. Their spears sung, and the eagerness in their eyes was palpable.

This was the last battle Leonel was fighting; he had actually left it for last along with the Quarius family, splitting six of the twelve armies he had had Elder Kriss build toward each one of those families. So, these men and women had already experienced what it meant to fight with Leonel as their general; they had tasted the ease of victory, the thrill of fighting without the worry of death.

It was exhilarating.

The Ancestors thought that their appearance would dampen the spirits of the army they were facing considerably, but what they found instead was a pair of 60 million burning eyes, each one looking as though they would tear even them apart had Leonel not given the command yet.

It was shocking. They knew that the Morales would have high morale, but how could it possibly be this high? Their plan was always to dampen it, but it seemed that the Morales had acted far swifter than they had expected... and it all seemed to be due to this young man they had watched systematically dismantle their young geniuses one by one.

"Leonel!" Simona finally roared, unable to take the silence any longer. Her violet puppy had grown and barked with a raging moment, but it was still far too small to be intimidating. Even so, sensing Simona's fury, it too lashed out.

Leonel finally looked up as though he had finally begun focusing on the situation. "Hm? Oh, hello Simona, how've you been?"

Simona had always been a beauty with an ice-cold disposition, but when she heard these words, she nearly exploded. She grit her teeth hard as her puppy growled.

Simona's mother raised a hand, calling for her daughter to take a breath. This was no longer Leonel Morales, and her daughter didn't seem to have noticed this yet.

"Patriarch Morales, this action of the Morales is indeed a bit inappropriate. The Pyius family never has any intentions of taking action along with the other families. If you continue to press, we'll have no choice but to retaliate in full force."

"HUUUUU"!

The Morales army roared, slamming the butts of their spears into the ground. Their cries resonated and echoed, drowning out the threat in Matriarch Pyius' words as though she had never spoken at all.

Leonel raised a hand, and the roar came to an abrupt stop like a taut string cut cleanly right at its most tense point.

The Matriarch's pupils constricted, but she said nothing, waiting for Leonel's response.

"If you don't want me to attack, it's quite simple, don't you think?" Leonel asked with a smile. "Hand over your World Spirit and subordinate yourselves to the Morales, and you won't have to fight any battles today."

Simona's temper threatened to flare again, but her mother continued to speak calmly.

"Is it a tactic of the Morales to try and humiliate their enemies? That's unbecoming of a warrior."

"Humiliate?" Leonel blinked in confusion. "I was only telling you what you could do to avoid battle."

Matriarch Pyius fell into silence for a long while before she spoke again. "I see now how the Morales treat their allies, why would I place my family's fate in your hands? Prepare for battle."

This time, it was Leonel who laughed, and uproariously at that.

"So you want to use this line of reasoning, in that case, I will make something as clear as possible. Your daughter has never been my ally. She lost that right the moment she chose her life and death over being so. Don't think I forgot that Simona Pyius escaped the Heir Wars the moment the Omann family's starship appeared. You speak of the fate of your family as my ally, but why should I care for allies who vanish the moment the situation shows signs of going poorly?"

Simona's expression turned a blazing shade of red as her rage boiled over. Was she supposed to risk her life against a ship that could take an Ancestor's life in an instant for a mere Heir War?!

"But, truth be told, I don't care about this matter," Leonel's smile grew brighter. "The Heir Wars was a child's game to me, I never took it seriously, and none of your so-called geniuses ever stood a chance against me because even most of your Ancestors wouldn't."

"The real reason I choose to treat you as enemies and not as allies is because I don't have a fetish for being stabbed in the back."

"If today I left here, your Pyius family would wait on the sidelines, biding your time. You would face some pressure here and there as both sides tried to force you to choose a side, but you would ultimately resist."

"And then, when the time came, your true leader, the Godlen family-"

Matriarch Pyius' eyes widened.

"-Would take action at the most opportune moment, and I'd be caught with my pants around my ankles, now wouldn't I?"

Leonel grinned. "So, how about we skip all of that? And I crush you now?"

Matriarch Pyius took a haggard breath, her calm mask slipping somewhat. "I think that you've misunderstood something here, you aren't as clever as you think you are."

"Oh? Is that so?"

Leonel's smile faded, and the air solidified. The Morales began to slam their spears butts onto the ground once more, the roar of their Spear Force spiraling into the air.

High in the skies, the Constellation of the Pyius family seemed to flicker in and out of existence, a pressure weakening it considerably.

"Then, let me not mince my words so that we won't have any more misunderstandings," Leonel said lightly. "No family, no organization, no powerhouse that sat by and watched as the Human Domain was attacked and did nothing but sit on their hands..."

"Will be considered an ally of mine."

Leonel's voice rumbled.

"Attack."

Chapter 2282: Landed

The Morales army charged forward, not showing the slightest hint of fear toward the lineup of Ancestors. With a rush, a barrier formed over the palace, however the army seemed prepared. They closed the distance to just 50 meters and then came to a controlled stop.

Three groups of troops felt their bodies tremble as three large translucent shields appeared in the skies. They resonated with a clear power and prepared a perfect defense even before the canons of the Pyius family canons took shape and fired.

Leonel wasn't surprised by this. He only needed one army for 10 of the Constellation families because he had insider information. He knew about all of their formations, where they were located, and a general idea of what their weaknesses might be.

Against the Quarius and Pyiu families, though, he had no such information and was forced to compensate with larger numbers. However, "larger" was only relative. Charging into a Constellation family's territory with just 60 million troops was like trying to eat an elephant to death with just a handful of ants.

But that was Leonel's confidence.

The formation had only appeared for an instant, and the shields of the army had only been bombarded a single time, but Leonel's gaze had already flickered. He raised up a hand and another three troops trembled as their armors began to echo with a pulsing energy.

Leonel aligned his arms as though he was holding an invisible bow even as three large bows appeared in the skies. However, this wasn't the function of the armors. Rather, a large gathering of Spear Force took shape and settled into the bows.

Leonel's body pulsed with a light as a blinding golden wave came from his eyes. The three weak points shone to him like the stars in the sky, his heart thrumming with life and power as he released his fingers through the air.

SHUUUU!

Three spears streaked across the skies too fast to stop. At first, the Ancestors of the Pyius family thought it to be a worthless endeavor to even try, that was what their formations were here for. They would crush Leonel from here.

While they felt that they could fight this army on their own, they were wary of the starships in the skies. They could sense the danger locking onto them with every step. At the same time, the armies that Leonel was sliced through like butter were recovering. Soon, Leonel would find himself pincerred from the front and back, and by then, victory would only be a matter of time. However...

CRACK.

The first spear landed and the formation cracked. The second spear landed and it shattered. The third spear landed and the foundation of the palace was crushed, the quaking of the very core of the Pyius family territory being disrupted.

'There,' Leonel thought calmly.

The most difficult part about any of these incursions was finding the Holy Land. These were regions that seemed to be hidden away in a slice of space and they were even capable of hiding from Leonel.

However, there was a method he had found with some ease. Any formation built into the palace would also be among the strongest that the family could create. In order to do so, the process of building the formation would have to be incorporated into the building plans of the palace itself.

By the same token, the Holy Land was most likely hidden in this region as well, stored in the absolute safest place, the core of the family.

When one was disrupted, flaws would appear in them all for an instant, flaws that couldn't escape Leonel's senses at all. And when he found that flaw, he would take action.

Leonel took a step forward, a squadron of ten following him close in lockstep. Their movements were in sync, their faces and bodies hidden beneath dark black armor. With a single intention, their Force pooled together and began to swirl around Leonel like a whirlpool of water.

Leonel grasped at the air and his black rod appeared in his hands. He took another step and vanished from the center of the army along with his squadron of ten. He appeared in the midst of the Ancestors to their shock, his spear sweeping out.

A feeling of danger touched their hearts and a cold breeze sliced across their necks. They rushed backward, their hands subconsciously reaching up to their throats.

Leonel used the opening to step into the palace and smashed his foot down once. The whirlpool of Force around him roared and covered his leg in a tornado of energy. That single slam caused cracks to spread out in all directions, a sinkhole appearing right at the core of the most prestigious location of the Pyius family home...

A sinkhole right to their Holy Land.

Matriarch Pyius' eyes widened. She had retreated with her daughter the instant the battle began, the both of them still being in the Seventh Dimension and unable to make any large changes. But that didn't stop her from calling out.

"STOP!"

It was too late.

Leonel reached out with a hand and a violent suction force formed from the arm Little Tolly coated. With a rush, the World Spirit of the Pyius family was crushed in his palm.

The Morales roared as the Pyius felt a pressure on their bodies that could only come from suppression. It was clear that victory was theirs, but Leonel was focused on the hole below. It practically looked like it led to another world, and from within it, he could feel an overwhelming strength heading right for him.

Leonel leapt backward, his squadron moving in unison with him. As he did so, he just barely managed to dodge out of the way of a coming strike so powerful that it tore apart the world. Space tried to stitch itself back together, but it took a great deal of effort.

An old man with a grizzled beard that reached down to his belly button appeared in its place, robes of purple and green hanging loosely from his shoulders and revealing the equally greyed hairs on his chest.

His eyes flashed and they landed on Leonel.

- Chapter 2283: Cold as Ice

Chapter 2283: Cold as Ice

Leonel's gaze remained placid, but when he looked down at his chest, he found a thin line of red had formed. It was trying to eat him alive from the inside out, and if not for his powerful vitality, he would have already died from the small nick.

His Vital Star Force surged, and he was surprised to find that the aching feeling only slowed somewhat. This old man was powerful.

Unlike the other Overlords Leonel had seen, this old man didn't seem to have a foot in the grave. Judging by the World Spirit, it wasn't being used to sustain his life force either. This was either because this old man had only just become an Overlord... or he was an elite even among Overlords. In fact, saying that he was elite probably didn't do him justice, there was something else going on here that was going over his head.

If not for Tolliver, he had a feeling that snatching anything from this man would never be so easy.

The old man stroked his beard, seemingly surprised that Leonel had dodged, or so it seemed. It was hard to tell what his actual expression was as it was somehow both flat, and yet... cheery? He didn't look like he had just lost something important at all, but that didn't make sense either.

"Like father, like son, it seems," the old man spoke after a while. "Both doing stupid things that their elders have warned them against."

Leonel attacked.

His spear's tip trembled and an upswell of Spear Force seemed to coalesce from the surrounding air. His body shifted and his Tier 1 Divine Armor took shape. It clicked into place one by one, its pieces looking as though they had been pulled out from the void of space and glued to his body under a mysterious spectral Force.

Leonel's halo shifted from the top of his head, to the back. Then, its inner space flickered, forming a swirling portal of rainbow that eventually solidified into a glorious tree that seemed to uphold the very skies themselves.

The armor could only be described as gorgeous. Leaf-like vein patterns of black, gold and white covered it, crystals forming 25% of it, and a dense black, obsidian-like metal forming the remaining 75%. This time, when Leonel changed his spear from the black rod to a spear that looked wreathed in vines of gold and silver, its aura didn't seem to drop at all. In fact... he only grew stronger.

The old man's eyes narrowed as he leaned back a step, piercing out with two fingers flickering with a foggy green and purple energy. However, as soon as this Force appeared was as soon as it was dispersed under a powerful suppression.

Little Tolly filled the gaps in Leonel's armor, running through the veins of black, gold and white as though calling those places home. Vital Star Force erupted from Leonel and the Life Force in the region roared to life, suppressing everything that had the scent of death...

Except himself.

The old man's pupils constricted, but it was too late. Leonel's spear gathered the strength from his squadron and shredded the old man's fingers apart, then his wrist, and then his forearm. The old man almost lost his entire arm and just barely managed to dodge back in time.

Blood dripped from the stump of his elbow, his smiling expression having vanished, but Leonel hadn't come to a stop at all.

The old man seemed to stop taking things casually and a sickle with a curve like a crescent moon appeared in his one good hand. His chest hair seemed to stand on end, his robes fluttering more like silk bathrobes than formal robes a senior of his stature should wear.

The scent of death permeated the air, and this time, Leonel couldn't suppress it nearly as easily. However, Leonel's bloodlines thrummed. He could feel the roar of the Golden Tiger and pulses of white and gold erupted from his body, his armor becoming a cross of beast furs and metal that carried the elegant bearing of a Beast God.

The old man had never seen an armor morph so much and so fluidly. He had seen Leonel's Life Grade armor before, but it had never been on this level, and the suppression of this strength...

Little Tolly pulsed and Leonel seemed to grow an entire foot, his armor following with him. The halo to the back of his head followed suit and the tree upholding the skies grew more prominent as Leonel's Ten Stars appeared to his back.

Darkness descended and Light bolstered, playing off of one another, they supplemented and played like the Moon and Sun sharing the same sky. If everything was bright, then nothing was bright. If everything was dark, nothing was dark. Together they cared for another, forming the shadows and the light.

That was the Natural Light Realm.

Leonel's Void Star Force and Scarlet Star Force spun around one another, his [Star Fusion] entering [Combustion] in a single bound as his energy erupted to another level.

His spear blade met the sickle and the wrist of the old man trembled and then broke. Following suit, the sickle shattered as he attempted to solidify his arm with Force. And then soon afterward, he lost yet another arm.

Matriarch Pyius' eyes opened wide. Of all those here, only she knew who this old man was, and that was only because of her husband. Never did she think that she would see such a sight.

Armless, kneeling on the ground, bleeding out rivers of blood, the old man chuckled as Leonel descended from the skies. The only sight of Leonel's expression was the cold gaze behind his visor, it was clear he planned to kill this man on sight.

"How nostalgic. I'll remember this just as I remembered the last time."

A mysterious strength caused the planet to rumble and then the old man, Matriarch Pyius and Simona vanished as Leonel descended.

BANG!

A fissure blew clean through the palace, splitting Pyius City in two.

Leonel landed on the ground, his Divine Armor slowly fading and his expression cold as ice.

Chapter 2284: Leonel Morales

Leonel looked toward the Pyius Ancestor indifferently, but they were just as confused as everyone else was. His gaze changed focus and he looked down toward the Holy Land of the Pyius family, but he knew that it was a waste of his time. If they left so abruptly, so much so that even he couldn't quite figure out immediately how they had, then there was no doubt in his mind that there was nothing of use left. They wouldn't be that foolish.

He didn't feel any sort of satisfaction. He would have felt much better if that old man had just died, but next time they met he would know to watch his mouth. Not that it would matter much, next time they met, he'd have the man's head on a pike. Just because he had controlled his rage, didn't mean that it wasn't still there.

That man's words were clearly meant to taunt, and taunting an enraged Leonel was the last thing a person should do.

As for who that old man was, it was impossible to tell with the information he had. Even his talks about the Godlen family stabbing him in the back was nothing more than posturing. He had no idea what the Godlen family was or what their plans were. He was only just well aware that they were far more powerful than they let on.

He was far too sharp to be fooled by their acting, or what they thought was acting. The youths they had sent to the Heir Wars were far too arrogant to be from a Sixth

Dimensional family, and their Lineage Factor had far more potential than they were letting on.

This and the fact that Simona had abandoned Aina and his brothers in their time of greatest need was enough for him to act against the Pyius family. He wouldn't blame her for her actions, at least not to the point of punishing her for them, but he also wouldn't continue to treat her like some great ally. Wasn't that a joke? What had the Pyius family done for him in the Heir Wars? If a percentage were to be given, it wouldn't even be one.

Leonel slowly walked from the palace, his squadron following him. Then, he raised his spear.

The Morales army roared with victory and the Pyius Constellation seemed to almost flicker entirely out of existence.

It would take some time before all 12 territories were truly Morales. But every day that passed, every second even, and along with every new territory they conquered, the more furious that momentum became. Soon, the entirety would be their territory and no one in the Human Domain would be able to stop them.

BANG!

Matriarch Pyius watched in silence as the old man kicked at a mountain furiously, causing it to crumble practically to ash. It was just a false mountain, one created by the hands of man, but it was just as large and sturdy as a real mountain. It was just unfortunate that it had caused the ambience of this peaceful garden to crumble. It was even worse that the old man seemed to have done it with a smile on his face.

The old man exhaled as though he felt better and shook out his stumpy arms. "Find me something that can heal my arms, quickly. I can't walk around like a muppet."

"Are you really alright, Mauve?" Matriarch Pyius asked.

"Don't question me in front of the child, woman. You'll ruin my prestige."

"I think you've done plenty of that on your own."

The old man looked over. "You're lucky that you're Mendel's woman."

"I think we both know it has nothing to do with luck, and also I am not his woman, I am his wife."

"Whatever helps you sleep at night," Mauve said casually.

"Not all of us need to lie to ourselves to be at peace."

"There's no lying about it. I told the dumbass Velasco that he would die if he continued on his path, and did he not? I told his father before him too, and didn't he also die? Now his grandson, and his son, will follow the same path. I might kill him myself if he crosses me again."

"If? You're well aware that you can't kill someone so important," Matriarch Pyius said lightly. "As for whether or not he'll kill you because you can't control your tongue. Well... that would be another matter entirely."

Mauve didn't say anything.

"Also, you know well that the reason Velasco didn't listen to you is because you wanted him to spare the man responsible for his father's death."

"His father wouldn't have died at all had he just listened to me!" Mauve said with finally a bit of bite in his voice.

"I have a feeling that these... youths, these brats, these young men, as you so like to call them, might be far more insightful than you are. Every word out of your mouth is just yet another lie."

Mauve fell into silence again. Neither of them seemed eager to talk, actually, and it seemed that everything would come to a conclusion like this. But then, Mauve actually parted his lips once more.

"... The Human Race needs some who are willing to make a sacrifice. It can't be the weak, it has to be a sacrifice from the strong, and not just the strong, but the strongest of the strong. If they aren't willing, if they insist on being selfish, if they are so wrapped in their own designs, their own rage... their own grief, then we have no chance.

"The Human Race will be wiped out from the whole of Existence."

Matriarch Pyius didn't respond.

The news of the collapse of the 12 Constellation families, or rather the robbery of their World Spirits and the claiming of their territory by the Morales spread like wildfire. Though, this wasn't until weeks later, when messengers finally managed to get free of Leonel's suppressions, but by then, Leonel had already prepared the Morales for the next wave.

In a certain HQ though, a familiar Cross Elder Avan received the news. He sat in silence for a long time before he suddenly exploded to his feet. Grabbing his indestructible

desk, he roared and ripped it from the floor, launching it out of the glass window to his back.

He furiously bellowed. "LEONEL MORALES!"

Chapter 2285: Cross Elders

Cross Elder Avan was absolutely furious.

He remembered when he first met Leonel. He could have crushed that little shit immediately. Daring to steal the property of Shield Cross Stars, and such an important property at that, was unforgivable. To make matters worse, he had actually been a fugitive for so long. He deserved nothing but death.

What others didn't know was that Shield Cross Stars had been targeting Leonel ever since he exited the Camelot Zone. The failure to claim that Zone for them was an unacceptable loss, and it was felt that the best way to gain the benefits they wanted was through Leonel. Unfortunately, there was only so much that they could do while maintaining the same level of caution.

He had wanted to throw it to the winds, but he wasn't the only one making decisions. There were several other Cross Elders, each with their own factions and their own thoughts on the matter. And now look what happened.

He had wanted to launch a full assault on Earth the instant Emperor Fawkes had thrown him out of their territory, but he had gotten word from above that it was unsafe. He had wanted to strike to kill during the Heir Wars, but he once again received word that it was ill advised. He wanted to send a lone Ancestor to ensure that Leonel would die during the Human Domain Invasion, and yet he was once again rebuffed.

And now what? He was standing here, more than half of the most powerful forces of the Human Domain effectively crippled and fallen under the power of the Morales who were already gathering far too much power and it was already far too late to take any sort of easy, but drastic action.

Leonel had somehow already gained the ability to protect himself from Ancestors, even setting aside his armies, there were those modified starships, and even setting aside those modified starships there were still the reports that over a dozen Ancestors had died in battle... and yet there was no use that Leonel had made use of them yet.

The sight of Leonel resurrecting Ancestors of the foreign races and then slaughtering over 50 Ancestors under his own power was something that was burned into Cross Elder Avan's psyche. Now, Leonel had even more Ancestors than he had had back then, and they were a trump card in his back pocket that he could use at any time.

This news was as bad as it could be, or so it seemed. Because what came afterward was even worse than that.

This news was delayed, by several weeks at that. Leonel had immediately used the conquering of the World Spirits to restrict information moving in and out of the 12 territories. Although he wouldn't be able to use the full strength of those territories any time soon, this required almost no strain at all. If information wanted to get out, it had no choice but to move through more normal channels, and how long would that take?

How vast was the Human Domain? How many families were there? How many would fear what it would mean to betray Leonel by leaking this information? And these families, who were cut off from the outside world as well, how could they know that they weren't the only ones to suffer at Leonel's hands? For all they knew, they were the only ones to suffer and sending this news out would do nothing more than expose the fact that they had lost their World Spirits, making them vulnerable as a whole.

Ironically, then, those families actually helped Leonel keep a lid on his escapades for fear of what it would do to them until they confirmed that other families had suffered the same fate. No, not just until this, but until they understood that enough had suffered the same fate that it wouldn't be easy to target them all at once.

It was only then that they allowed the information to flow smoothly and it finally reached the ears of Shield Cross Stars. And that was precisely what set Cross Elder Avan off.

Each one of these territories had Shield Cross Stars branches within, but these powerful families didn't trust those branches as far as their youth could throw them. They were restricted to the outskirts, and Leonel had passed right through most of them without even attacking.

However, the same wasn't true on the way back.

Leonel left most of the outskirts of these territories unscathed. He used the expertise of the geniuses he had snatched to learn of the structure of their outposts and make it past them without any warning at all, and then he directly attacked their capital cities without any warning.

But he didn't do the same for Shield Cross Stars. It was like he was provoking them, like he was spitting in their faces.

He unceremoniously slaughtered them all, or so Cross Elder Avans thought. All he knew was that aside from strips of blood and flesh, their branches were deserted of people, strangled and practically wiped from existence.

He didn't respect them at all. He slapped each one of their faces and it was practically like he was taking a piss over their walls.

Cross Elder Avan's infuriated roar echoed through the capital of Shield Cross Stars and it was like a call that brought all of the Cross Elders together at once.

Some young, some old, they rushed into Cross Elder Avan's ravaged office as his eyes spit with flames... literally.

Cross Elders, men and women alike looked around. Some sneered, some were somber, some found the situation amusing, and some were serious.

It was clear by this meeting that the numbers given to the public for the number of Cross Elders was nothing more than a lie. In this room alone, more than three dozen had gathered, many of whom not a single soul in the Human Domain would recognize.

"Do you see what you've all done?! Do you see what you all have allowed?!" Cross Elder Avan barked, the temperature in the surroundings skyrocketing.

Chapter 2286: Arrogance

There was a slight silence as the roar brewed, until a man with a particularly chilly disposition chuckled.

This man was the Overlord of the Sith family. This wasn't a well-known face in the Human Domain, but this wasn't because he was unknown like the others. Rather, it was because he was the greatest assassin in the Human Domain. What assassin worth his salt would allow the world to know his face?

The Sith family led the assassination units of Shield Cross Stars. Leonel had met one of them before in Ronan, a man of the Void Palace that Leonel had once bought information from. He had also tried to stop Leonel and Aina from leaving the Void Palace when DiVincenzo had appeared, but Ronan was far more the man here.

Overlord Sith was like a touch of darkness and a slice of ice. His clothing was a dense black, his skin a pale white, his hair was even darker than his robes, and his eyes were a piercing ice blue.

Those that knew him realized that although his eyes could be said to be the only "beautiful" part of him, he absolutely hated them. They made his ability to be stealthy even more difficult than the whites of his eyes. But this was also why he was known as the Blind Sith... the Visionless Assassin. The number of deaths he had on his tally was enormous, and they included even experts of the other Domains.

"Laugh again, Sith, and I'll slice out that tongue."

"Please do," Overlord Sith said with another laugh. "It would be my pleasure to become a sightless and soundless assassin. I wonder if I would reach the true pinnacle of my path once I have done so."

Many felt a shudder down their spines when he said this, but Avan only grew more infuriated and truly seemed as though he was about to attack. He had two others here who were the only ones that didn't fear this man. But whether it was by ability, or by ignorance, it was hard to tell.

The other two were Overlord Veiga and Overlord Lela, both women, both middle-aged, and both beautiful, the latter with radiant blue hair much like a certain Vega, sharing more than just a similar name, and the other had shimmering black.

There were four factions of Shield Cross Stars. The Commanding Faction, led by Cross Elder Avan, the Dark Faction, led by Cross Elder Sith, the Logistical Faction led by Cross Elder Lela, and the Shield Faction, led by Overlord Veiga.

The Commanding Faction dealt with everything in the daylight. They were the ones that handled much of the politics. This sounded ridiculous, especially considering their leader was also the one with the worst temper. But leaders of these various factions weren't based on merit... they were hereditary, and if one wanted to take it from Cross Elder Avan, well... you'd have to step over his dead body.

The Dark Faction spoke for itself. They worked in the shadows, and to the public, they dealt with the enemies that normal armies couldn't deal with. If the Commanding Faction was the broadsword, they were the change weapon, the small dagger pulled out in a pinch. In reality, though, their work was likely far more... sinister than this, and they were responsible for the largest and most in-depth information network in the whole of the Human Domain. No, it was more accurate to say that they had spread even beyond the Human Domain. As for how deep they had gone, it was likely that Overlord Sith was the only one who had the knowledge to explain this.

The Logistical Faction did as its name suggested, much like the other two. They were the cleanup crew that acted after the Commanding and Dark Faction had finished up their work, and they also had the largest collection of healers, and the strongest of this kind, in the whole of the Human Domain. Healers weren't exactly a profession like Crafters or Force Pill Crafters, but they could be. Some were true professionals, and studied much like doctors did. But others simply had powerful Ability Indexes that didn't require such effort. The best of them had a combination of both. A point of interest was that the Viror family, led by their young genius who had once had a great deal of conflict with both Leonel and especially Aina for taking her spot on the rankings, had recently joined their ranks.

The Shield Faction was more... complicated than the others. Even many of the upper echelon of Shield Cross Stars didn't understand exactly what they did, but those here most definitely did. What could be said was that they both had the weakest authority of

those present, and at times... had authority surpassing even that of the Commanding Faction. As for their leader, Overlord Veiga, she was the quietest of them all.

Of the more than three dozen Cross Elders here, they were quite evenly distributed amongst the Factions... except for the Shield Faction, which both had the largest variety, and the largest number of them.

"That's enough," Overlord Lela said lightly. "I still stand by our earlier decisions. The child also hasn't done anything significance, and definitely nothing that relies on himself solely. The main power behind everything is the Morales family, and so long as they are dealt with, the child is still not a problem. Your demeanor is unbecoming of the head of the Commanding Faction."

"Speak to me like that again, woman, and see if I don't rip your head off." Avan snarled. "I am not worried about a child, but it's been three generations now, three generations of you all saying the same things. The second was already far better than the first and cost us countless losses, and now the third feels even more powerful than the second was, on top of the fact all monitoring attempts on the once unproblematic uncle has now failed as well.

"Do you still think that we have control? Your arrogance will be your death!" Avan spoke in a low roar.

Chapter 2287: Overlord Veiga

A silence fell, but Avan could tell with a single glance that none of these people had taken anything he had said seriously. And yet, instead of becoming more enraged, his lip curled into a sneer, a reaction that caught them off guard. They showed much more of a reaction to this than they had to anything else.

"King is dead."

The words hung in the air, and then suddenly rushed through them all at once.

"What?" Overlord Lela asked with a frown.

"Did I stutter, dumb woman? King is dead."

"Explain." Lela said coldly.

"I was contacted a week ago with this information."

"And why are you only telling us about this now?"

"Because I both wanted to see your stupid faces and understand what the fallout of that matter is. Also, in case you've forgotten, the head of the Commanding Faction is me, not you. When I'm contacted with information, it's up to me how it's divulged."

"How did he die?" Overlord Veiga, who hadn't spoken until now, suddenly asked.

Avan was surprisingly straightforward this time, without any fanfare. "Velasco killed him."

"WHAT?!"

"Oh? Now you all understand that I'm not just chatting horseshit? I told you all to take this matter seriously, and you refused to time and time again. I've not been fooled. The reason you all dragged your feet is because you feared him, and maybe you were right to. But now his brother is nowhere to be seen, and his son is rampaging across the Human Domain as the time approaches, and you're still dragging your feet.

"What, are you going to wait until he's as strong as his father before you act?"

Avan had a sneer of satisfaction intertwined with his words, he looked like he was on a high horse despite the fact this problem was one that was on his plate as well.

"The Cult is actually so useless," Overlord Sith said coldly.

"Oh? Is it the Cult's fault now? What happened to the mighty assassin, aren't you in love with a challenge? What better challenge would there have been for you if not that one?"

Overlord Sith remained silent, but the coldness in his blue gaze deepened as though he might lunge forward and attack Avan right this moment. But Avan only greeted the stare, hoping that the Sith really would attack. He had still not finished venting his wrath.

"We were placed here to monitor Earth, to gather its resources before they could be made use of by others and help the Great Families to stabilize their position and minimize the variables. We've failed on all accounts. Emperor Fawkes grew powerful on our watch, the greatest treasures of Earth are only partially under our control, and now the Lineage Factor of the Fawkes is flourishing once again."

Avan's brows jumped as he was not the one to speak. It was Overlord Veiga, and hearing such words, he couldn't help but become serious.

"The situation was going well, mostly so in the last 30 years. Over 95% of the greatest benefits that could be gained from Earth had fallen into the hands of the Great Families and there was nothing the Fawkes could do. But then, just two years ago, everything changed instantly.

"The established powers of the Great Families were eradicated to their last man. The territory of the Ascension Empire expanded wildly and without check. All of the branches of Shield Cross Stars, prepared and ready for the worst-case scenario were eradicated. Then, their borders were stabilized so quickly that future infiltration was deemed nigh impossible.

"Do you know what happened two years ago?" Overlord Veiga asked lightly. "Leonel Morales somehow reversed the schemes of the Cult and returned from the Vast Bubble."

A silence fell once more and this time, Avan could sense the seriousness in their expressions, a seriousness they had never given him.

"In those years, Velasco was occupied by the court, the Fawkes were restricted by his bindings, and there was no "war", there was only a systematic dismantling of everything that was left of our enemies. A single young boy reversed it all and the sacrifice the Cult had made was almost rendered all but useless."

"It wasn't useless, most of Earth's resources were taken."

Overlord Veiga gave Avan a glance and he suddenly felt like his throat was gripped, but his usual temper didn't allow him to back down and he met the woman's stare.

"As good as those resources were, they are nothing compared to what is being gathered now. This version of Earth, the one on the verge of the Eighth Dimension, contains the most valuable of the loot. Leonel Morales has already entered one, and he returned far stronger, stronger than should be possible for a Seventh Dimensional existence of this world."

Avan fell into silence.

"This is not a matter that can be taken lightly. I've never liked the Cult. Their views don't align with our own and the direction they want to take the human race is abhorrent. However, they, just like the rest of us, understand that these incomplete worlds are our final chance and nothing can be allowed to go wrong.

"The existence of Fawkes in this world has opened us up to a great deal of variables, and each one seems more dangerous than the last. The Cult's presence in this world has been ground to almost nothing, and those of the Dream Pavilion have yet to make their presences known.

"From this moment forth, I will be taking command of Shield Cross Stars and our next movements will be decided by me. All Commanding rights will likewise be handed over and the full cooperation of the Faction Leaders will be expected and required."

Veiga tapped the emblem on her lapel and the shield began to glow. The kilted skirt of the organization fluttered and the metal shin guards beneath shone.

The Overlords felt a flash of anger when they sensed what was happening, but soon an illusory chain constricted their hearts and their movements. Shield Cross Stars was now fully under Veiga's control.

Chapter 2288: Wait Here

Leonel sat in silent meditation. His expression didn't carry any hints of happiness, just focus. He had done nothing in these last several weeks other than meditate on his Vital Star Force. He gave it all the attention he had. Or, at least, this version of him had.

When he returned home triumphant, the Morales elders had nothing more to say. To use 120 million soldiers to conquer just one World Spirit of a Constellation Family was shocking enough, such a number was too far from the number of elites that were present in just one of these families. And yet, Leonel had used that number to take on 12.

If the status quo remained like this, in a year, the territory of the Morales would grow by more than 10 times, and there would be almost nowhere in the Human Domain that they couldn't go without having the advantage of suppression on their side. It was a realization that made them realize just what Leonel meant by saying that they were at an undeniable advantage.

But maybe the most shocking part of all of this was that they hadn't lost a single person. Some had died, but they had been revived just as easily. The Morales had essentially given up nothing but a sputteringly small amount of resources in exchange for the most valuable treasure of each and every family.

So, when Leonel gave them their next set of orders, they responded to them with sharp precision. When the third week came to an end, everything was prepared and Leonel slowly opened his eyes. As he did, the sight of himself reflected in his irises.

He didn't seem to be surprised by this, and why would he be? He simply touched his own hand and the two of them became one. All of the insights he had made into Vital Star Force came together as well, but unfortunately it still wasn't enough for a breakthrough, but he had expected this as well.

He took a step out of his meditation room and found his squadron of ten waiting for him. But these ten weren't just any ten, he knew them all too well. Joel, Arnold, James, Milan, Raj, Franco, Drake, Allan, Gil, and the latest edition... Raylion.

These ten hadn't participated in many battles, and he had purposely had them hold back during the Heir Wars as he never had intention of going all out for that battle. Since then, they had only grown ever stronger.

They had benefited greatly from the rewards Leonel had gotten for winning the Heir Wars. Each and every single one of them was already in Tier 9 of the Seventh Dimension, but this was also because they had entered the Sixth Dimension using the Conventional Path. Progressing for them was as easy as absorbing more resources, what was difficult was making it so that they could absorb more resources for the same increase in benefits. This required changing their very foundations, something that was far easier than it should have been... now that they had died before.

When Leonel had resurrected Armand and the others of the Constellation families using Breathe, he had done so with an ore instead of the Silver Tablet. That was more of an experiment than anything, a successful one at that. What he had been testing was how much he could improve someone's talent through the use of his Lineage Factor.

The result was beyond his expectations because... it was far easier than it should have been.

In Leonel's views, this only proved one of two things. Either the Fawkes family Lineage Factor was just that powerful, or the people of this Incomplete World were simply that weak.

In reality, it was a combination of both. But at the same time, it was also in great thanks to Tolliver.

When it came to Armand and the Blood Diamond Ore, Leonel had just chosen something that was close enough and tested it out. However, when it came to his brothers, not only did he pick out such Ores, but he used Little Tolly's abilities to fuse them together, forming them into new ores that perfectly matched their paths.

Little Tolly could only create Sixth Dimensional Ores, but Leonel had realized after meeting El'Rion that Dimension was next to irrelevant. In fact, it probably would have been better the lower their Dimension was, it would only make it easier to reforge their foundations.

The stronger his Crafting became, the more perfect the Ores he would be able to forge with Little Tolly, and the stronger he could make his brothers. So long as they were willing to experience death and trust him with their souls, he could take them as far as he could go.

And now, while each one wasn't yet as strong as Junior Ancestors, together with their armor, they could kill as many came their way. Once they settled in with their new talent and their Force Manipulation caught up, even Junior Ancestors wouldn't be a match for them. And with him leading them...

Even Ancestors weren't their match.

"Let's go," Leonel said lightly.

They all vanished at once, and when they appeared outside the Segmented Cube, they found a sky filled with starships. It wasn't just one or two, it wasn't even just a few dozen, there were hundreds. In the whole of the Human Domain, even in the whole of the Dimensional Verse, the number of Ancestors didn't greatly surpass this number. And yet, just one of these starships could take out an army of them on their own.

Overlord Morales appeared by Leonel's side. No one knew who this old man was, and he even looked like Leonel's advisor to most. No one would guess that this man was one of the strongest of the Morales family.

"Are you certain?"

"Why risk the lives of the most valuable Morales?" Leonel asked.

"At this point, I think it's fairly certain that the most valuable Morales is you."

"I don't think you mean that," Leonel said with a smile.

"You're too clever for your own good, child."

Leonel's lip curled. "Wait here for news of victory."

Chapter 2289: Rude

Leonel stepped onto the head starship, his focused trained and his gaze sharp. He didn't rush this time, nor did he hide his movements. This time, they would be cautious, they would be ready. Trying to sneak around would have the opposite effect, it would dull the momentum of his army and scatter them unnecessarily.

No. This time they would be bold, direct, vicious and swift.

The scouts that the various families had placed around the territory of the Morales noticed the movement instantly and made their reports one after another. The entire Human Domain seemed to be lit on fire.

Many had speculated about what the Morales would do, even some smart strategists thought that it would be best if they took their time, waiting for the Constellation families to "bleed out," so to speak. The closer the Morales came to those territories truly being theirs, the less chance the rest of the Human Domain would have in dealing with them.

At the same time, they were the most powerful within their own territory, especially now that they had formed their own constellation.

But how could they know? The news of the Morales victories had only just disseminated to the public, but to Leonel, it had been a foregone conclusion for weeks already, and in these weeks, he had done nothing but prepare.

All the while, the first target was already decided. The Suiard family would crumble today.

The Suiard family, a family standing at the peak of the Human Domain, unsurprisingly had a long and storied history. Their mastery over the sword had begun long before the Sword Domain Ring landed in their possession, but it had only gotten stronger since then.

What was surprising, though, was that the Suiard family had once been a collection of Buddhist Temples. The Suiard temple, the Sina temple, and the Suave temple.

Most who would learn of this history would find it to be ridiculous. Buddhist monks practiced in the art of killing? And what of their secondary Lineage Factor? One that seemed steeped in the aura of demons and devils? What about them could be related to Buddhism and what had happened since then for them to be in this situation now?

To the Suiard family, though, these things were just a matter, of course. They were Buddhists who focused on the Art of Severing, to reach nirvana and escape suffering through severing all things that weighed down their lives, this was the way of the Suiard, Sina, and Suave families.

It was hard to say how many of these teachings remained, but what was more curious than that was how the Suiard family evolved to their current state from where they had begun. The God Path was an interesting one, but the Suiard family had once had their own path, only to conform to the ways of the rest of the Human Domain.

Was this by coincidence, or were there other reasons? Maybe only the Ancestors of the Suiard family would understand why it was that they had abandoned the path of their own. Or maybe that history would be buried on this very day.

"Ishmael, your grandson is as annoying as you were," an old man muttered.

This old man was Amery's grandfather, and he seemed far too unworried for a man whose grandson was still very much missing. Maybe he was well aware that Amery was still alive, but even so, this sort of nonchalantness wasn't what one would expect from a situation like this one, especially since news of the Morales charge had already reached him.

By now, the families knew that Leonel had used their geniuses to pry into all of their secrets. No amount of willpower would save Amery from the fate of having his thoughts and memories read like an open book.

Amery wasn't just a normal genius, he was the future of their family, the hope that they had placed everything in. There wasn't any part of the Suiard family that he didn't have perfect information for, he even knew quite a great deal about the Spiritual Religion too.

There was nothing that the Suiard family could do in a short time that would change the situation. Any tricks or trump cards they had were useless. There was no point in trying to hide them, and it was impossible to come up with anything even remotely as good or effective even given ten years, let alone the few hours they had.

However, even now, Maxx Suiard reclined in his rocking chair in the tallest tower of the Suiard family palace. He looked out over the approaching starships, his gaze unreadable.

A young man met his gaze. He had translucent, pale violet, short cut hair. His demeanor was quite sharp, yet subdued. His gaze, though, seemed to hide the tip of a spear, a blade capable of piercing through all things.

"Same annoying gaze, too," Maxx shook his head.

The brat had actually picked him out already, out of all the other things he could have been focused on, he was focused on this one in particular. He didn't know whether to be flattered or annoyed.

Maxx stood from his rocking chair slowly. His eyes were as black as night, and his robes looked like they were knitted of thick, off-white thread. His feet were bare, and he looked completely unadorned. There was no spatial device, no sword, not even a belt for his waist. He didn't look like he was heading out for a fight, and rather looked like he was going to bed.

And yet, when he seemed to still be taking his first step, he had already appeared before the Starship.

The lasers fired the moment his foot raised, but he had already passed them by as a searing hole was torn through the Suiard family palace. A flame sparked and Maxx's rocking chair was lit ablaze along with the rest of his room.

"That was rude, young man. Is this how you treat your elders?"

Chapter 2290: I See

Leonel looked toward this elder before him without much of a reaction. However, the calmness of his expression had nothing to do with how alert he was.

The starship had never failed up until this point, at least not in such close proximity, or what would be considered relative close proximity. Even El'Rion hadn't managed to dodge it. Though, granted, not only was the Pluto not harmed to the point of lethality, but he was also far closer to the strike.

Even so, the feat of dodging the starship's attack-and most importantly, the starship under the control of Leonel's skill-was absolutely ridiculous.

This person must be Amery's grandfather, Overlord Maxx Suiard.

Leonel had learned quite a bit about this man in recent days, or at the very least, he had learned everything that Amery knew about him, as much as a grandchild could know about his grandparent. That could either be quite a bit, or nothing at all depending on the temperament of the grandparent in question. And judging by the reaction of this old man, Leonel had a feeling that it was by far the latter.

"Don't be like that, I used to know your grandfather, you know. We could be considered good friends. Why don't you step out and we can have a chat?"

Leonel didn't say anything, continuing to look at the old man. The more he did, the more he felt that the words "old man" didn't really fit Maxx. He was too vibrant, too full of vitality. He seemed to have as much life ahead of him as a newborn. Comparing him to the older generation felt wrong.

Maxx sighed when Leonel had no intention of taking him up on his offer. There were quite a number of things that he couldn't talk about so openly, and this brat insisted on making things hard on him. What an annoyance, what an annoyance indeed.

Overlord Suiard took another step and he vanished. This time, Leonel saw it clearly. This man wasn't a Spatial Force expert at all, rather his attainments in the sword were so high that he might as well have been. Leonel was certain with a single glance that that Sword Force was, at a minimum, at the Impetus State.

He wasn't crossing space, his sword quite literally sliced reality apart, shattering any concepts of distance until his destination was just a single step away from him. To call this man an Overlord felt like an insult to him, he had already met the requirement to enter the Ninth Dimension, and the only reason he hadn't was likely because of the restrictions of this world.

By the time Leonel's mind had finished processing all of this, Maxx had appeared within the starship, sitting across from Leonel as though he had always been there. His expression was quite casual, until he seemed to realize that Leonel's was just as casual. But after a momentary gaff, he calmed down again.

"Has anyone ever told you that you're very annoying? I'm glad that you're not my grandson, I'd have to spank your bottom red every day just to vent a bit."

Leonel's gaze narrowed.

"Don't you have any refreshments here? Really. I'm sure your grandfather taught you better than this, you're just ignoring his teachings." Maxx shook his head. "Forget it, this is a waste of time. I'll keep things to the point. How much about this situation do you understand?"

Leonel didn't know how to respond to this question. He knew what Maxx was referring to, but how much of his assumption was correct, he didn't know. Also, this didn't seem like the kind of question this man should be asking him, he should have been on their side, no? Was he wrong about that?

Everything the Suiard family did seemed to side with them, most pointedly of which was marrying Amery off to the Spirituals Religion as though he was some damsel.

Suddenly, Leonel's pupils constricted. What was he thinking? What a stupid mistake. He had already learned that these Incomplete Worlds were set up by the humans of a Complete World in order to survive some sort of calamity. But he hadn't thought about something very important...

If this place was created for humans, then what did that mean for the other races in these Incomplete Worlds? What would happen to them? Would they be seamlessly integrated? That sounded very unlikely.

It was more likely that they would be pulled into slavery and forced into subordination, used for the purposes of the humans of the Complete World, and then... Well, if the humans had as poor of a position in greater Existence as El'Rion and Shan'Rae had made it seem, then they would likely get rid of these pawns as quickly as possible so as not to attract the ire of species and races far more powerful than them.

The Spirituals of this Incomplete World were already so powerful, what about the Spirituals in greater Existence? What about the Rapax? Or the beasts? Or the Nomads? And how would they react to knowing their Race of people was forced into submission by the humans?

Leonel only now realized just how much of a gamble this was. It wasn't just them gambling their future existence within these Incomplete Worlds, but if they dared to use the other races, even if they survived the first calamity, they might invite upon themselves countless more.

He was so used to humans being in the weaker position that he had almost neglected the fact that in this small corner of Existence, they were the ones in control, and as a

result, the Races that usually pinned them beneath their heels, were in a precarious situation as well.

Him assuming that the Suiard family was just like Shield Cross Stars or the Void Palace or the Three Finger Cult, all because they had sided with the Spirituals Religion was foolish. He had simply taken their being an enemy to be natural as they had always been the rival of the Morales, but he was only making false assumptions.

He also wondered... Just how much of these deductions could be translated to the hidden branch of the Morales as well?

"I see." Leonel spoke his first words. "Okay. Hand over your World Spirit and give me information about your cooperation with the Spirituals and I will handle the rest."

Maxx Suiard didn't even know what to say.

Chapter 2291: Losers

Overlord Maxx had asked his question perfunctorily. He knew, or at least he thought he knew, that Leonel didn't know the truth of the situation. But in just a few seconds, he watched Leonel pause, ponder, and then respond as though he had just seen right through him. It was a feeling that he had never experienced before, not even from Ishmael.

He truly didn't know how to respond because he was rendered speechless. He felt that he had underestimated this boy a bit too much. But he was still far too arrogant to-

Leonel waved a hand, and Maxx felt an uncontrollable force pull at his heart. He didn't realize that by entering the starship alongside Leonel, he had already sealed the fate of his World Spirit. There was no need for battle, no need for Leonel to find the location of their Holy Land, because what he wanted was right before him.

Overlord Maxx's expression changed, and he reached forward with a deft swiftness, but it was too late. The World Spirit landed in Leonel's palms, and he crushed it. In that instant, the Suiard family's world had been conquered, leaving much of the family stunned. Let alone them, even Maxx didn't really understand what had just happened.

The Overlord probably should have been enraged, but he didn't even know what emotions he should be feeling in the first place.

"This brat..." Maxx mumbled.

Unlike the others, Maxx wasn't a fool. He could tell that for some ridiculous reason, the Morales had actually let Leonel hold onto their World Spirit. Instead of fretting like the

others did, if he really cared about the World Spirit so much, then it would be as simple as killing Leonel and taking it.

Of course, there were some problems with that choice too. For one, this brat seemed to be far too confident. But in Maxx's views, Leonel understood too little about his own strength. If it wasn't for the fact that he was less hot-headed than the Morales men, Velasco wouldn't be the only one they were all intent on killing.

But that matter couldn't really be blamed on Velasco honestly. In Maxx's opinion, this was the case of the son paying for the sins of the father, and it seemed that that cycle was trying to replay itself here. He couldn't help but sigh.

"This isn't a worthwhile path," Maxx suddenly said. "Maybe it's hypocritical of me to say this because I'm not sure how I would react if I ever lost my wife, but hate me or not, I believe your grandfather was a fool. Your father after him was a fool. And now you're being a fool."

Maxx hoped to see some anger in Leonel's eyes, some rage, but he saw nothing at all, and it was precisely that that made him realize just how hopeless it was. Rage would imply some irrationality, some emotional instability, some lack of forethought or awareness toward the reality of the situation he was in. But the fact that Leonel showed nothing, and didn't show any signs of attacking him either, meant that he was of his right mind... and that only made it worse.

"All those years ago, your grandfather fell in love with the wrong woman. Honestly, if it wasn't for the fact that you have the Morales family Lineage Factor, I wouldn't even be able to say with any more than 10% assurance that you are your grandfather's grandson. In fact, even though you have the Lineage Factor, I still can't say it with any more than 50% assurance. I have no idea what that woman is capable of.

"He was arrogant, believing himself to be infallible, believing that it was only natural that such a woman would fall for him. And maybe had this woman been from this small world, it would have made sense. He was truly excellent for a person born to such disadvantages.

"I warned him many times, but he didn't listen. I had never known him to be a man infatuated by beauty, but you never know what a man is capable of when he falls in love. In the end, what was likely a childish game to her became a life and death situation for him. He offended those he shouldn't have, and turned far more attention to this world than he would have otherwise.

"Do your grandfather's love for that woman, the last bastion of the Fawkes family was exposed, the Cult entered this world, and Shield Cross Stars was infiltrated by another party. Right now, they've probably already taken control.

"In the end, he still didn't even blame her. He blamed himself, finally saying that he had overestimated himself, all for that worthless woman."

Maxx seemed to become more and more enraged as he spoke, but in contrast, his voice became more subdued. It was instead the Sword Force in the air that crossed and echoed like sharpening blades.

"A woman can help a man to do great things. A woman can also destroy a man, and sometimes that can happen whether she's a good woman or not." Maxx looked at Leonel. The latter could feel the blood vessels in his whites popping one after another, causing a stream of blood to stream down his cheeks, but he still didn't look away.

"I don't know how many female powerhouses lie with random men and have children with them. I can't say whether she was one such person, if I've misunderstood her, or whether she's a spawn of Satan. What I can say is that there's a cycle you have the chance to stop so long as you will it, and I would advise that you take that chance."

Silence fell. It was a long one, one that lasted upwards of ten minutes as the two met each other's gazes, one indifferent, and the other bleeding tears of blood.

"Alright, return my grandson to me," Maxx suddenly said.

Leonel just waved a hand, and Amery appeared, looking just the same.

"Useless brat," Maxx scolded, slapping Amery with a palm to the forehead despite the distance between them. Amery, though, didn't react to this. Even after his grandfather stood and pulled him up by the scruff of his collar, he still didn't react.

"If you can win, I'll consider supporting you. But I don't invest in losers," Maxx said as he turned and left with Amery in tow. "I would advise you to be careful, though. They've sent one more powerful than me."

Chapter 2292: A Warning

Leonel didn't say anything even after Maxx had left, but his senses relaxed somewhat and his hold on his brothers loosened. The reason he had insisted on not closing his eyes when he faced Maxx's stare was because he didn't want to be distracted for even a moment. Against such a person, even a split moment of distraction would mean death, and if Leonel died, there would be no one to bring him back to life.

He didn't miss any part of what Maxx had said, but that was less because he was listening for his advice, and more so because he was searching for clues about other matters. His grandfather's lover was one person that he needed to know more about.

Usually, this would be a person he directly ignored, but she had crossed his bottom line. Since she wanted to stand opposing him, then she would have to die.

Leonel didn't move immediately, though, even after the meeting had concluded. He had planned to spend quite some time on the Suiard family and he didn't quite know what it meant to let them go like this.

Until now, he had simply taken the World Spirit and left. In his opinion, that was all that was necessary for the "weaker" families, at least relative to the other powerhouses of the Seventh Dimension. However, the Suiard family was different. They were a true powerhouse, and the blow they could deal Leonel if he was caught off guard was heavy, especially if Maxx took action.

It was more difficult than not to leave them be like this. His finger had even twitched somewhat as he felt that killing Maxx here would be easier on him, he wouldn't have this constant lingering insecurity in the back of his mind. Letting him leave essentially barred some of the path he would have taken otherwise, but then again it opened up others.

By now, everyone assumed that he would be attacking the Suiard family. This was a move that would definitely surprise them as the Morales and Suiard had been battling one another for so many years that they should know just how evenly matched they were. They were widely known as the two most powerful families in terms of pure combat, so starting with them might not seem to be the smartest thing to do.

But now that they had, everyone would be expecting a battle that would rage on for days at the very least. Catching the off guard now would be even easier. However, the matter of who to catch off guard surprisingly stumped Leonel.

Should he attack the Spirituals Religion? But they were allies with the Suiard's and now he was in a tentative relationship with the latter. Did it still make sense to attack them? But then again, while he might have some reason to think that the Spirituals would stay on the sideline, what about the Religion? Could Maxx sway them to not?

If he didn't attack the Spirituals Religion then who should he attack? Shield Cross Stars? The Void Palace? It was difficult to choose.

Leonel seemed aimless right now, but that was precisely because this situation was so baffling to him. Originally, he planned to cut the Suiards down in about a week or so. Although he had cut right to their capital, he expected a very difficult battle, and he also prepared contingencies for being attacked from the back. He knew that it would only be a matter of time before the rest of the Suiard family's forces caught up and joined the battle.

In that time, he planned for his scouts to pay attention to the situation in the rest of the Human Domain and had at least three different maneuvers prepared for various situations. But now...

Leonel shook his head. He almost had half a mind to believe that Maxx had given up his World Spirit on purpose just to catch Leonel off guard, because he had never thought that gaining an ally would confuse him like this.

'This isn't a normal sort of confusion,' Leonel thought pensively.

He had felt something like this before. Or rather, it was similar, but not exact. When he had first thought of the Demoness, he could sense her gaze on him, and now he was feeling something similar. Someone could sense him thinking and was obstructing his vision.

Despite this thought clearing things up for him, it made things even foggier.

Leonel's gaze narrowed further. Then he remembered what Maxx had said. Someone even more powerful than him? Was this person powerful enough to know that Maxx had mentioned them? Because if they were, then the fact that Maxx had said anything at all could have alerted this person to what was happening here, and in the case they were alerted, that meant that any intentions he had of using a surprise attack had already failed.

Leonel's confusion lifted and his gaze glowed.

The Dream Pavilion... It seemed that whoever they had sent had the capability to use Dream Force on a far higher level than his own and it was likely that any schemes or plans he had prepared would all be useless.

But that also confirmed something else. Maxx was helping him.

He didn't believe that someone as powerful as Maxx would mention this person without reason, and it couldn't possibly be such a foolish mistake on his part. He had mentioned it hoping that Leonel would pick up on the problem.

Maxx was letting Leonel know that if he continued like this, he would fail, and he would fail miserably at that. The way that he had learned to wage war until now was playing around in a kiddie pool while the adults had been surging on raging tsunami-like waves for generations already.

'I see... This level of Dream Force is still out of my reach.'

Leonel tapped a finger on his arm rest, his gaze growing sharper and sharper.

He needed a method to protect his mind. Unless he could succeed in finding such a method, the only path forward would be brute strength. And right now... he didn't have nearly enough strength to succeed with that method, not outside the bounds of Morales territory...

Chapter 2293: Dream Force and Star Force

Leonel took a breath and closed his eyes, taking deep and slow breaths. He had spent all of this time completely focused on Vital Star Force and hadn't spared time for his other Force, but now it felt very necessary to do so. The trouble was that he didn't have a cheat this time like he had with his Vital Star Force.

Leonel was certain that the one who was obscuring his path forward was far weaker than that so-called grandmother of his.

For one, his person was in this Incomplete World with him, while the demoness most definitely was not. In addition, the demoness only allowed him to sense her out of sheer amusement, that was something else Leonel was certain about. If she didn't want him to know of her gaze, he wouldn't be able to sense a single thing.

This was to say that while the manipulation of this person that was opposing him now felt far more subtle and he wouldn't have noticed if not for Maxx's hint, it wasn't impossibly beyond him, he was just ignorant.

The most important thing he learned was that... Dream Force could be used in this way.

He fell into the trap of always thinking about Dream Force as an internal thing, and the fact that his Ability Index was designed the way it was made it even more difficult to break free of this thought. But it could be said that Dream Force was the most abundant Force there was, or at the very least, it was among the top few, sharing the spot along with neutral Force and Star Force.

Where there was life, there was Dream Force. It underlied the very fabric of reality, and it was probably the very foundation of the Second Dimension, the same way...

'Star Force is the foundation of the Third and higher Dimensions...'

When Leonel first learned about Star Force, he didn't understand what it was. What did it mean for there to be Star Force?

Light Force was straight forward enough, it was light. So was Dark Force. So was Earth Force or any other elemental Force. Most Forces made perfect sense to him, except for this one...

Stars emitted light, so why wasn't it a kind of Light Force? Or, what about the heat they emitted? Why wasn't it a kind of Fire Force? Why was there a need for a distinct and separate category, and why was it that all of the most powerful Forces seemed to have a foundation of Star Force within them?

It was only after meeting El'Rion that it clicked for Leonel, and it was due to a single like the Pluto youth had spoken...

Complete Worlds have just a single star, a single land, only Incomplete Worlds are so scattered.

It all made sense, and it was even more obvious by the fact the representation of Existence itself, was none other than a Star, the Northern Star.

Fire Force wasn't the representation of the spark of life like Leonel had thought. No, that was a Star Force. It was something even more fundamental than Fire Force, even more fundamental than Light Force as well. It was why there was no "Star Force" like there was Fire Force or Light Force, it was always accompanied by something else. And this wasn't because it was weak, but rather because it was the strongest, it was the very foundation of all that was.

After the big bang, there was an endless soup of energy, and it was only when these soup of hot energy organized into Stars that the planets that formed afterward could begin to teem with life. More accurately, without Star Force, there was no Life Force, and without Dream Force that came before it, there was no potential for Star Force to spark Life in the first place.

If Dream Force was even more fundamental than Star Force which represented all things, then why was he treating it so separately? Why was he treating it like his mind was separate from everything else? His mind was just one kernel in a sea of kernels, and his Dream Force wasn't as separate as he thought it to be.

Not being able to expel Dream Force out of his body didn't equate to it being separate, rather it just meant that his Dream Force didn't need to exhibit such skills to display its understanding of the wider world.

If he took an extremist view, his Dream Force was just a borrowed strength from this world. Dream Force was never separate, not at his level. Much like Star Force, it was always attached to others, always infused into a fabric, a fabric that existed within the Second Dimension, the fabric of everything, the Life State.

His Dream Force rippled out and he stepped past the Fourth Layer and entered the Impetus State. His thoughts seemed to enter a completely separate plane and within it, he could sense countless swimming minds, minds that seemed to immediately sense him and then attack.

Leonel felt a shuddering pain and his nose began to bleed. He pulled his mind back as quickly as he could, but still fell to a knee, coughing up a mouthful of blood. Looking inwardly, he saw a hairline fracture run through his Ethereal Glabella that left his gaze burning.

That Plane, he didn't know what it was, not exactly, but he felt that it was all too similar to the Shadow World of Shadow Sovereigns. He didn't think himself to be a Shadow Sovereign, or rather, a Dream Sovereign. But then again, wasn't this situation very similar?

Little Blackstar wasn't exactly a Shadow Sovereign, but rather received it as an Ability Index. Modred, however, was a true Shadow Sovereign as her Ability Index and her Shadow Sovereign abilities were separate.

Leonel was more like Little Blackstar, having an Ability Index that could tap into the abilities of a Dream Sovereign, but he seemed to have suffered for it.

His burning gaze became surprisingly cold and the temperature in the surroundings plummeted. He took a breath and a large amount of Dream Force from the surroundings flooded into him. And then, his Scarlet Star Force Stars began to rotate with a pulsing vibrancy and as his Ethereal Glabella was coated with Destruction Runes.

He wasn't a Dream Sovereign, but he was a Destruction Sovereign. He wanted them to dare to destroy his soul again, he would crush them.

Without hesitation, Leonel entered the Dream World again.

[Author's Note: Just two chapters today everyone, and no chapters tomorrow unfortunately]

Chapter 2294: Shortcut

This time when Leonel re-entered the odd plane, he came in like a blazing inferno. He could easily remember the energy signatures of all those that had attacked him previously, it might as well have been like looking at a face for him. But he realized almost instantly that those people were no longer around him.

He realized what the issue was soon. The movement in this odd plane was incredibly fast, but it was also a great deal restrained. The further he traveled the greater burden he felt on his Dream Force reserves, as though his soul itself was being stretched thin.

The more soul he had, the further it would be able to go from his current location, but if he moved too recklessly, he could find himself having killed himself before any of these people could get around to him.

However, what Leonel learned immediately after that was that it didn't seem to matter who was around him at all, or more accurately, he hadn't landed in the midst of a particularly sinister bunch. It instead seemed that everyone in this plane was a complete

jerk. He had only appeared for a few fractions of a second before he took everything in, and yet the new group of individuals around him had attacked without hesitation again.

It was as though they all had a keen sense for fresh meat and they wanted at Leonel immediately. But this time, they paid the price for it.

The Destruction Runes lit up, and a raging, violent aura shredded everything in its path.

"Sovereign!"

It felt like someone had roared this into his ears, and yet it felt instead like it had echoed out from his very skull. It was an odd and disorienting feeling, the kind that almost made him think that this was some sort of soul attack instead of what it actually was.

But more importantly than that, he was shocked. Someone had pinged him as a Sovereign immediately, but they didn't really say what kind. That was interesting, interesting enough that Leonel felt that he could make some extrapolations from it. In fact, Leonel believed that it might be the case that the only method of using a Force outside of Dream Force in this Plane was to be a Sovereign.

'If that's the case...'

Leonel tried to think in a more solidified way instead of the quick pictures and images he usually thought in, but the instant he did, his voice came out like a roar, even louder than the various souls around him.

His reaction was quick, and he stopped immediately, but the damage of doing so was even more devastating than his Destruction Runes had been. His voice blasted the surrounding souls away, and their Dream Force dimmed considerably. Some of them even became motes of light, floating into him.

Leonel was stunned. This...

He hadn't experienced this feeling since the last time he had killed an Invalid, so it had been quite a long time.

The more he integrated into the wider Dimensional Verse, the less Invalids there seemed to be, but this made sense. The powerful families that had managed to survive would have long since gotten rid of the Invalids that threatened them. As for Variant Invalids, well... the last time he had come across one was in the Rapax Nest, so they should be part of the Cult, but since then there had been nothing at all.

But why was this feeling so similar? He could even feel that his Dream Force had gotten not a small boost either, it seemed that whoever he had absorbed was quite decent. But what was even more shocking than that.

'They're memories?'

Leonel was rendered speechless once again as his voice roared out again. Just what kind of place was this? He could kill souls to increase his strength, and he gained their memories on top of that?

The Shadow World of the Shadow Sovereigns worked similarly... but it didn't directly increase their strength. From his understanding, as they defeated other Shadow Sovereigns, their Shadow World became larger and their Ability Index became stronger as well, but it wasn't a direct addition to their strength, at least not like this.

Is there a Destruction Plane like this Dream Plane? Or was this a unique thing? If this was something all Sovereigns had, then Aina would have found her own long ago, but she hadn't.

Leonel felt like he was sitting on the edge of something big, but he couldn't quite understand it. He chose to immediately go through and organize the memories he had gotten. He had just killed what should be seven people, and they were a jumbled mess of collected thoughts and feelings.

He created a new Dream ability on the spot and called it Dream Filter. He organized their memories into Dreamscapes first, and then used Dream Filter to pour out everything that was useless. He wouldn't waste his time on the thoughts and emotions of these people, what he needed was information, very specific information about what plane he had just tapped into.

Dream Plane.

Leonel got his information with a great deal of swiftness, and the more he assimilated, the higher his brows arched. He had long since left the plane and was still sitting within his starship.

The Dream Plane was a world that anyone who had entered the Impetus State could access. It was a Fold of Reality and represented the Second Dimension, and within it, at least in certain locations, it was practically a free for all.

Leonel was only in a corner taken over by Incomplete Worlds, it was known as the Incomplete Wilds and often experts of lesser worlds gathered there for quick power ups because it was their only option. If they stepped into the lands of the Complete Worlds, they would be shredded to pieces. This wasn't because they were far weaker, it could be said that anyone who had entered the Impetus State was a powerhouse.

The problem was the suppression and the rules, though there was one more thing...

Absorbing the strength of others, looking for quick shortcuts, had crippled many of them.

Chapter 2295: Obscure

'Crippled...'

It was something he probably wouldn't have thought of if not for these memories, but he was happy that he had. His Dream Force was the best ability he had; if he lost it, his combat effectiveness would take a huge plummet downward.

In reality, though, it wasn't that his Dream Force would become weaker. It would grow stronger, to a point. But after that point was reached, instead of growing stronger, it would instead grow faster. He would gain access to a larger pool of Dream Force, but the amount he could use in a single sitting, and the amount that could output in a single moment would remain the same.

It would be like restricting the funnel of his body, but this funnel would be toward the outside world. He wouldn't grow any smarter or sharper, and his Ability Index wouldn't increase either.

To make a complicated matter simple, he would be stuck in the Lower Impetus State for the rest of his life.

Interestingly enough, there wasn't a known reason for why this was, or more accurately, the memories of those he had absorbed had no real idea. It was hard to tell if this was because they were too ill-informed, or if it was the case that everyone was in the dark.

That said, there were a few theories, the best of which stood out to Leonel because it sounded like something El'Rion had warned him about. But interestingly enough, what El'Rion had said back then was related to Innate Nodes and not this matter, but Leonel's Dreamscape sparked with lightning and linked them.

Taking on the strength of so many people would weigh down his ability to progress into the future would hinder you far more than it would help you. You might benefit in the short term, but going into the future, you would find yourself weighed down by chains you didn't even know you were carrying.

Even though he had learned of this, Leonel felt fascinated by the Plane. The idea of being able to steal the memory of others and assimilate all of their thoughts was more intriguing than he ever thought it could be. Just a single soul absorption had been enough to heal the crack on his Ethereal Labella, and the remaining few had made him feel like he was already on the verge of breaking through again.

It was an intoxicating feeling, and he realized why those of the Incomplete Worlds took this path. They couldn't progress anymore due to the cap of their worlds anyway, so

why not search for other methods of strengthening themselves? Why should they resign themselves to being weak?

Leonel frowned. It had a strong pull for himself as well, but he likewise didn't want to cripple his future. He was willing to do it for Aina, but quite frankly, when it came to his Dream Force, he was supremely confident in himself.

Just a small clue from Max had allowed him the ability to enter the Impetus State. If he had had this much affinity with Vital Star Force, he would have already taken that final step. Unfortunately, he didn't.

He shook his head and focused. First, he would go through the rest of the memories to see if there was anything useful. Once he was done, he could begin investigating just how that hidden expert was confusing him.

He finished the first quickly, and he learned a great many things.

One of the seven he had killed came from an Incomplete World that Leonel believed was better than 70% likely to be among the several dozen under the control of the Vast Bubble. In addition, this person was actually aware of their state as well.

This wasn't surprising to Leonel. After the Spear Domain Trial, he realized that the other Incomplete Worlds that had become part of this simulation had unearthed their plight as well and were preparing for the other shoe to drop.

That made Leonel wonder if the Domain Rings were dropped into this world for that specific purpose. Was it the design of the Dream Pavilion? Or, maybe... It was the intention of the Fawkes family?

He wasn't sure. Either way, this man came from a family that had an Ax Domain Ring, and he had an illusion type Ability Index. Leonel was less interested in the Domain Rings these days as he felt that forming a Weapon Sovereignty on your own was much better. The rings were just glorified storage rings that only housed one type of weapon in his eyes, even the spears weren't as attractive.

Of course, there was one more thing the rings were good for... and that was their Lineage Factors. If he came across an Ax Domain Ring, he would be certain to try and get it for Aina.

'The Rader family...'

He took mental note of this.

This was only a side project for Leonel though. When it came to these memories, what he focused most on was the unique insights these men had toward the Dream Plane and their use of Dream Force.

It turned out that these seven only really used the Dream Plane to hunt. It was too risky to go after veterans, so they waited around for newbies like Leonel before taking action. Using the more complex functions of the Dream Plane took more effort and could be more dangerous depending on the situation.

The Dream Plane was something that linked all beings across the cosmos whether they were aware of it or not, much like how everyone had a shadow, but not everyone could access the Shadow World.

In Incomplete Worlds, the Dream Plane would have various weaknesses. Usually, one could only enter the Dream Plane after forming a Life State Dream Force, or by being a Dream Sovereign. However, in an Incomplete World, you could do it from the Impetus State, and it also gave you great control and pull in your world.

You could use it to spy on the thoughts of others and read their intentions ahead of time, reading their thoughts and memories while they were unaware. Or...

You could obscure their vision and make their thoughts muddled and confused.

Chapter 2296: Ignorant

Leonel's Dream Force affinity was far too high. Even if one hadn't gained access to the Dream Plane yet, having high affinity would allow you to sense its pull even while unawares. Due to this, whoever was trying to mess with him had to be extremely subtle and couldn't just dig through his thoughts and memories as they pleased.

Of course, you could avoid this sort of probing in other ways as well. One way was through the use of mind protecting treasures, something that was far more common in Complete Worlds. In addition, you could avoid this by just being extremely powerful yourself and having a Force within the Life State.

Having a Life State Force made you more sensitive to the matters occurring in the Second Dimension and you could fight against them. That way, even without protective treasures, you could be immune to the probes of a Dream Force Master.

Of course, only those with Crafters of a certain caliber could hope to have such protective treasures. The likes of the Void Bubble had to buy such treasures from other Bubbles, and since they had been cut off from the wider world for so long, they had very few remaining and they were concentrated in the hands of the most elite.

That said, since Leonel wasn't in the Life State yet and was only in the Lower Impetus State, he was very far away from being able to affect the Dream Plane of a Complete World, even if it was a weak one.

Even so, this sort of understanding blew everything he had come to know out of the water. What was more important than that was that his own mind wasn't the only thing he had to worry about, there was also the minds of everyone else.

Luckily, Leonel hated explaining himself and usually kept his plans to himself aside from a few irrelevant tidbits. This weakened the possibility of others probing those around him for information considerably.

A thought flashed in the back of Leonel's mind.

Was this the influence of his future self again? Had he been aware of the pitfalls and grown to keep his thoughts within the only mind he could protect?

Leonel shook his head. He wasn't going to think about that person.

'You didn't need to give me that clue, I would have figured it out on my own. But this was indeed faster...'

Due to the demoness, Leonel was already familiar with this kind of probing. The moment he sensed the confusion in his mind, the odd, contradictory sort of confusion, the kind he had never experienced before, he would have realized that he was missing something.

Whoever was trying to mess with him had underestimated the level of confidence he had in himself.

The question now was, how would he counter?

He understood how to after reading the memories of seven experts. Each one of them had their own unique theories on how to manipulate Dream Force, and in an objective kind of way, each one was the pioneer of their own unique fields.

Being raised in an Incomplete World and making it to the Impetus State on their own made each one of the geniuses. Had they been born in Complete Worlds, they would have been high class experts without a doubt, and that sort of unique insight was invaluable. If not for the dangers of absorbing too much, he would have wanted to take more advantage of this.

There were clearly some unique paths in Incomplete Worlds that Complete Worlds hadn't thought of yet. There wasn't a gap in intelligence between the worlds, but rather a gap in time and resources. There might very well be some unique magic system or Style or Force Manipulation method that existed in an Incomplete World that Existence couldn't even fathom.

Leonel sat in silence for a long while, tapping his finger on his arm rest.

'I don't know who you are... But you just made this war a hundred times easier for me. I'll thank you with a swift loss.'

Leonel's mind reached out into the Second Dimension, taking advantage of the weakness of his Incomplete World. Then, he began to send messages to each one of his people.

They wanted to find a chink in his armor, right? Well, find away.

After he was done, he stood.

...

Countless galaxies away, a middle aged woman with flowing blue hair snapped awake from her meditation.

Anyone of the Shield Cross Stars organization would recognize her as Cross Elder Veiga.

Her blue eyes glowed radiantly for a moment before she calmed down. She closed her eyes once more then double checked, and then triple checked.

'This method of Dream Force manipulation is so crude.

Whoever this is only recently came into contact with the Dream Plane and their strength is weak. An Early Impetus State expert. Using an array of commands to try and confuse my sight?'

Veiga slowly shook her head. It was meaningless. In this world, there was no existence with Dream Force Manipulation better than her own.

She had felt Maxx warn Leonel the moment he mentioned her in passing. This wasn't because she was as sharp as the demoness, but rather because there were certain minds she always paid attention to, and the Overlords of this world were all on that list.

That list, though, had an odd entry that stood out as the only Seventh Dimensional existence on it, and that was Leonel Morales, and it seemed it had done her good.

That boy used a single offhanded and subtle clue to grasp the secret of the Dream Plane and now he was actually trying to use it against her. This sort of seedling was exactly the kind the Dream Pavilion would fawn over. Not even 30 years old and yet had entered the Impetus State and touched upon the Dream Plane, there were only two on par with him in the entire younger generation of the Vast Bubble...

Unfortunately, he had made the wrong choice.

Veiga waved a hand and several protective talismans appeared. Leonel had learned from the memories of the seven that protective treasures existed. What he hadn't learned was that there were other methods of protection, and one of them was a direct shroud by another expert who could enter the Dream Plane.

Toying with an ignorant boy was child's play.

Chapter 2297: Extremely So

The Human Domain's forces began to move around like pieces on a chess board. A complex and intertwined network, layered in the push and pull of politics, relationships, and benefits bent and twisted, all of them converging toward the Spirituals Religion.

Leonel sat silently in the cockpit of one of his many starships, his gaze somewhat lazy and his focus trained on the endless sea of stars before him. His fleet continued to move with great speed, reading and reacting to his organs as they slithered by one outpost after another. He didn't seem to feel the sense of looming danger that he should have, his expression as cool as a frigid lake.

Soon, he had made it into the airspace of the Spirituals Religion and the location could only be said to be bright and beautiful. The planets ahead all had gorgeous planetary rings that looked like angelic halos as though the asteroids had been dusted with gold eons ago when they had taken shape. However, there was a keen sense of danger hidden within that beauty, countless Force Arts hidden within.

The Spirituals Religion was ready, and their Force Arts were the strongest that Leonel had ever seen within the Human Domain, even the strongholds of the Morales didn't have such grand Force Arts or protective arrays.

"The Morales might be Crafters, but that didn't translate to all skills. There was quite some difference between Crafting treasure, concocting Force Pills, and drawing large-scale protective Force Arts. The Morales shared the title of best for the first with the Omann family, the Omann family was practically a lone wolf when it came to the second as far as he was aware, and as for the very last, he hadn't known of anyone who was truly a master of this Craft... Until now."

Leonel didn't place the large-scale Force Arts of the starships in the same category, honestly. Although many of them were truly large, they relied on Crafting as a foundation, and it was the strength of the treasure, not the Force Art itself, that gave it its strength. That was different from a Force Art that could be used to protect a planet, or even a chain of planets like this one. Unless, of course, one wanted to replace their planet with a forged treasure.

There were many reasons this wasn't done, though, the leading of which being the fact that Starships required too much power to use even on occasion, let alone as a permanent living arrangement. It was much smarter to rely on the resources of the wider world to provide you with what you needed.

And it was precisely because of that the Morales didn't have such high attainments in this sort of art.

Crafting treasures required taking control of the elements and bending them to your will. This was even more so for the Life Grade where you were practically giving birth to an item with its own sense of existence, at least in a more philosophical and tangential way.

"However, these large-scale Force Arts required working with the elements, not bending their will but rather understanding them and then working together to mold them along a particular path."

This was the feeling that Ryu got when he saw Natural Force Arts, and it was why just meditating upon them allowed one to feel and experience Auspicious Air. This was the beauty of listening to the insights of nature...

And who could be better at that than the Spirituals?

"Interesting..." Leonel thought to himself.

One of the seven minds that he had absorbed had some insights into this matter. He might have thought of it himself after seeing this scene, but knowing it ahead of time made him feel enlightened as though he had truly come to understand it himself.

There was no ability that could make one better at understanding the insights of nature than being able to enter the Dream Plane.

His real sight could see the majesty of the formations before him, he could feel their power. He still had the partial and incomplete Bow Domain Lineage Factor and even from so far away, he could lay eyes on it himself as though he was right in its midst.

"His Dream Sight-or what he had chosen to call it-could see the complex swirls of runes that swam among them. Usually these runes were in a jumbled mess, exposing the more erratic nature of the world and Existence, but under the care and attention of the Spirituals, they had to line up perfect, fitting into one another like the pieces of a puzzle or countless tiny dots spaced and shaded so perfectly that when one zoomed out..."

"Only a masterpiece remained."

It was truly gorgeous in a way that Leonel had never seen before, and the feeling of being able to see the world in this way made him smile involuntarily, his cool expression

giving way to a gentleness. He wished he had been able to see the world like this long ago.

"Go back from whence you came!"

"The voice was gentle, but firm, and it carried a power that made Leonel's heart skip a beat. He couldn't help but wonder just how many hidden powerhouses of this level there were in the Human Domain. First there was that man in the Pyius family, then there was Maxx of the Suiard family, and now there was this older woman who still managed to exhibit the air of a supreme beauty. Even though she was getting on in years, Leonel wouldn't be surprised if there were several young men who would be willing to fall at her skirt even to this day."

Her hair was a dazzling arrow of pink and lavender, her eyes matching the hues. Her skin carried slight wrinkles here and there, but they were often interrupted by patches of beautiful, smooth flesh that was no less elastic than a 20-year-old's. Her figure was hidden beneath a modest robe, but her exposed hands carried not the slightest hint of age and it made one feel that whatever was underneath was just as well maintained.

"But more important than all of that, she was powerful. Extremely so."

Chapter 2298: Devastating

Leonel didn't respond. Or rather, he didn't respond with his words.

Three laser beams shot out at once, their speed so great that the echo of the older woman's voice hadn't even faded before they appeared around her, pinching her in from all directions.

The Half Spiritual Overlord was taken off guard. She had been ready for the strikes, and she had been perfectly ready to dodge using a method not too dissimilar from Maxx's efforts earlier. But seeing them coming, and barely registering their speed at that, she realized that all of her efforts at dodging would be in vain. All of the angles she could use were cut off. Or more accurately, the ones that she could use with great enough speed were.

Her gaze turned serious, and a pendant on her chest danced as though a rush of wind had just passed by. The rising winds of Force echoed across the chain of ringed planets as the Force Art lit up, an overwhelming strength descending and forming a shield around the woman.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The shield of Force shuddered for only a brief moment. It showed no hints of cracking and it was sturdy to the point that even if Leonel concentrated the beams any more than he already had, it wouldn't make much of a difference at all.

The Spirituals Religion had managed to gather strength beyond that of the Tier 2 modified starships, and even the strongest Tier 1 starships in their home. In the whole of the Human Domain, they might truly have the most impenetrable walls.

The Half Spiritual Overlord took a step forward, and her hands caused the arrays around her to light up. The runes that were once invisible to the naked eye, only displayed before Leonel when he used the vision of the Dream Plane, solidified and became corporeal.

She looked gorgeous as she stepped forward, the laws of the world rotating around her like a second flowing dress.

This time, she struck out with a palm, and the energies of the world seemed to resonate, forming a half dozen palms that descended from the skies above.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Leonel could only watch as his starships were crushed to pieces, killing the several million on board.

He had modified the starships personally. Their defenses and their attack strength was only marginally weaker than a full-fledged Tier 1 starship. But they had been crushed like tissue paper, leaving no chance for those on board.

His expression became cold. He managed to follow the pathways of the descending palms and moved his starship out of the way, but he was only fast enough to calculate one trajectory and dodging path. While it was the case that entering the Dream Plane was a great boon to his senses, it also occupied much more of his minds and the effort in making use of his advantage in thinking speed was also strained.

He needed to form a better balance, one between the quantity of thought and another for quality. At the same time, he also came to understand that the strongest beings of Existence probably didn't just endlessly increase their number of split minds. They would gain access to the Dream Plane as well, and they would likely begin to tend toward quality as well.

He still remembered that lesson Wise Star Order had taught him when they first met. Wise Star Order only had one mind but Leonel already had thousands back then. He thought that he could hide his thoughts from Wise Star Order by jumbling up his minds and hiding his intentions in only one, but Wise Star Order had blown him out of the water.

His one mind back then was worth far more than thousands of Leonel's because the quality of his one was impossibly far beyond Leonel's at the time. He couldn't help but wonder if Wise Star Order had touched upon the Dream Plane as well, but now wasn't the time to think about such things. This was the greatest loss he had suffered since his campaign had begun, and he couldn't take it lying down.

He gave over 90% of his minds over to the Dream Plane, reading and analyzing everything happening in his surroundings. There was no longer a need to deploy his Dream World because it was completely and wholly inferior to what access to the Dream Plane gave him.

He needed to grasp the strengths and weaknesses of the Force Art ahead, target the latter, and avoid the former. Then, he needed to find an opportunity to shatter it.

The Segmented Cube was quickly deployed, and its various jigsaw puzzles fanned out and enveloped the starship. Then, the starship began to rapidly shrink, from a few kilometers in diameter to no more than a few meters.

This was a trump card he hadn't used just yet. The Segmented Cube wasn't a fortress, and it couldn't be used to attack either. But that didn't mean that he couldn't use Anastasia to integrate into his other creations, fusing the benefits of both into one.

One of Anastasia's fundamental abilities, and one that he often neglected because of how much of an open secret it was, was the ability to take large items and put them into a very small space...

So why not use that for his starship?

Suddenly, the speed of the starship blazed, and it became even faster. Leonel took manual control and whizzed by the attacks of the Overlord, inching closer until he suddenly vanished, appearing to her back.

A second one of Anastasia's fundamental abilities was control over time. Whether it was the suspended reality of the snow globes, the dilated inner world of the incubators, or even her ability to peer through the stream of time and even pluck out lives to resurrect, all of them relied on Time Force and Spatial Force.

Together, they were devastating.

Leonel shot through a weak point of the Force Art like a speeding light beam of his own. It was so fast that the Overlord couldn't even react, the long-standing Force Art of the Spiritual Religion crumbling right before their eyes.

Chapter 2299: Snapped

The surroundings seemed to explode with gold dust particles. As though a child had gone too crazy with their arts and crafts project, the depths of space was dyed with a sparkling tapestry. It was a gorgeous sight, unless you were a Half Spiritual, in which case it was probably the most devastating conclusion.

The fate of other races in the Human Domain wasn't always horrible, but it wasn't necessarily great either. And despite the words of Locke of the Suiard family, those Spirituals that impregnated humans didn't usually care for their families very much.

Though the term Half Spiritual was used, the reality was that most of those that were left behind in the Human Domain weren't even a quarter Spiritual. However, they managed to hold onto most of the power and were quite talented anyway, displaying the kind of strength Spiritual bloodlines had, though, Leonel had another guess for this.

In his opinion, there was probably some strong staying power in terms of the gene of the Spirituals that allowed the soul to be born separate from the body. As a result, even when the lineage had long diverged from the original Spiritual that had birthed it, the Spirituals, or rather Half Spirituals, born later still gained almost the same benefits as the original Half Spiritual in their line.

This, however, wasn't what was important now.

To form a power, especially one this strong, while having strong ties to another race was a very daunting task. To stand where they stood today, the Half Spirituals of the Human Domain had faced all sorts of adversity and their current strength didn't paint an accurate picture of where they had come from.

This was the reality of most other races that were a minority in the Domain they lived in, the Spirituals Religion just happened to be a success story in what was likely a sea of failures.

This was all to say that the Force Art that protected these lands was more important to the Spirituals than just the strength it provided. It was security, it was autonomy, it represented to them the hope to make their own choices and lead their own lives.

And now it was gone.

...

Off on a distant ship, Yuri stood in silence. She too was a Half Spiritual, and she didn't know much about her family at all. For all she knew, someone here was her parent, not that it mattered much. The only family she cared for now was Aina and her step father. Well... maybe she should include that big, lumbering brute too.

It was funny, though. She hadn't seen Aina in what felt like years, still not knowing what had happened to her sister. Her step father was just as absent. And now that big brute was off fighting with that annoying man up ahead.

Yuri shook her head, not quite understanding why she was feeling like this right now. It was more embarrassing than anything else. The fate of the Human Domain was on the line, and this was what she was thinking about?

"It's cruel, isn't it, what he's doing to your people?"

Yuri subconsciously nodded. Leonel really was too cruel. He didn't used to be like this. In the past, he was so compassionate, too compassionate. She had known that he carried a hidden sharpness within him, and had been hesitant about her sister falling for him as a result, but she had never thought that it would be so dark... so sinister...

As a Half Spiritual, she was quite sensitive to such things. As good as Leonel was at reading people, she was quite good as well, and her Soul Force affinity was exceptionally high.

Looking toward Leonel's back in the far-off distance, he just felt like a shroud of evil, wrapped in the cloak of a black dragon of sorts and carrying all of the creature's worse vices.

"Wrath. Greed. Pride."

He was the worst kind of leader. His charisma worked well on those he had been manipulating for a very long time, and it even worked well on those who were hyper intelligent but lacked the sharpness of EQ. But to a person who could read him like she could, he was just a blob of insecurity, of aimless fury... of malice.

She was quite powerful by now, no less talented than either James or that blade girl who turned out to be a Spark, or she guessed both of them were Sparks now. But Leonel never used her.

"He was quite vengeful. Only because she had treated him a little coolly almost a decade ago now, he never allowed her into the spotlight, never allowed her to help protect the only family she had left, never allowed her to display her strength."

The big brute told her that Leonel only made use of people he trusted, and that being used by him was actually a sign of respect and nothing less, but that just made her lip upturn into a sneer.

Raj had been manipulated by that man for too long. Since when was being used a sign of respect? Since when was it a sign of trust?

But she had grown tired of the argument. She realized that she truly did love Raj. She didn't like seeing the pain in his eyes every time she said something cruel about Leonel. Plus... if not for Leonel, that big brute would be dead, not just once, but twice over.

Yuri seemed to calm down from the odd voice in her subconscious pokes and prods. She did carry some animosity toward Leonel, but not enough to truly hate him. At worst, they were just on opposing sides and could learn to live with one another.

Plus, he had begun to use her now, right? Maybe this was a turn for the better.

She looked down at the controls before her. It should be about her turn to act now, right?

"Three..." she counted, "... two."

'How could she not take part in such an important mission? Where do you think she could be?'

Something within Yuri snapped.

"Aina is dead."

Chapter 2300: In the Eye

A sharp pang cut into Yuri's heart. Somehow, she inwardly knew that these words were the truth. Her sister had died, and that bastard couldn't even take the time to look her in the eye and tell her that he had failed to protect her.

Her eyes brimmed with tears, her chest felt like it was being ripped apart, and her blood felt like molten metal in her veins, pulsing about and making her organs feel as though they were being seared from the inside out. And yet, that feeling was only a reprieve from the heart-hollowing pain.

What was he doing? Couldn't he resurrect everyone else easily? Why hadn't he resurrected Aina? Was he truly that cruel?

Yuri grit her teeth so hard she felt as though her jaws alone might shatter this rattling mortal of hers.

The cruelty this man was capable of was beyond her expectations. Or was it? This was exactly what she should expect from him. She could still remember those callous eyes. She had known how Leonel would respond to Aina's outpouring before anyone else had; she could feel the darkness within him.

That day, on Planet Luxnix, when the Selection was taking place and Leonel was slotted to battle Aina, she had never expected that Aina would do such a thing, or else she would have done everything in her power to stop her.

In the past, she had never made an effort to stop Leonel's attempts at wooing Aina because she felt that they were people from two different worlds. One was a quarterback, and the other was a Five Star Health Profession. One had a father born to a world that the other couldn't imagine, and the other was a normal human boy who couldn't even live on the surface. One was a talent destined to bring the Brazinger family to their knees, and the other couldn't even fathom what a family like the Brazinger family was capable of.

In her views, he might even become an Invalid the moment the Metamorphosis descended, and it wouldn't be something to even worry about. But even when he didn't become an Invalid, his reaction at seeing Aina kill was all she needed to see.

Aina was too focused on revenge for her mother, and there wasn't time to care for all of these other things, especially not the coddling of the feelings of a grown man.

However, as time passed, she slipped further and further away, and the feelings of a high school crush she thought would fade with time instead became stronger.

It all culminated in that day when Aina told that man the truth, poured out her heart to him, described every secret little moment that she had kept to herself until that moment, secrets that she hadn't even told her own sister...

And how had that man responded?

So what.

Those were his exact words.

She could see it coming. She wanted to scream out for Aina to stop, to save those feelings for someone who was worthy, and yet it was already too late.

She had to stand there and watch as her sister's heart crumbled to ashes. And then, she watched as that night, she gathered herself up, cleaned away her tears, and put on a dress she didn't even like to wear, just to go and support the man who had ripped her heart out the very next day.

Yuri didn't have words for how furious that made her, didn't have the capacity to express exactly how filled with rage and fury she was.

She wanted him to die, she wanted his body to be ripped limb from limb, for him to withstand unimaginable torment and spend the rest of his wretched life kneeling before the grave of her sister.

The thoughts steamrolled as she imagined what could have happened to Aina. Why would she not be alive if the man had the capability? What cruelty had she experienced? Could he have lashed out at her in rage due to that father of his? Could they have gotten into another argument and he once again cut her off, not worrying for her life and death? What kind of torture had she experienced at his hands.

The wild thoughts just kept churning and churning until her entire body seemed to emit a dense, black fog, the Forces in her vicinity turning over with an almost solid darkness.

...

Leonel breathed heavily. In order to deal with an existence on the level of this Overlord, he had to lean on the Dream Plane to be able to read and react to her movements, but doing so while keeping a portion of himself lucid drained even his vast stores of Dream Force quickly.

The moment he had shattered the large-scale Force Art, he had felt a wave of fatigue collide into him like a truck. But he had to withstand the assault of the Spirituals right afterward.

The Segmented Cube in this state was an excellent Force Art destroyer, but its defenses still weren't any better. Having thrown himself into the thick of battle, and within the time to reverse knowing that the Overlord was already upon him, he had no choice but to stand out and take action himself, pulling on the strength of Raj and the others.

Now, he had to fight while protecting the Segmented Cube to his back. Although it would be easier to turn it back into a treasure he could wear as a finger sleeve like he usually did, if he did that he would be cut off from the strength of his squadron of ten, and by then, he would find himself dying in a single strike to this enraged Overlord.

But Leonel wasn't a fool, he had prepared for this exact thing.

With the Overlord occupied dealing with him, the rest of the Spirituals, or rather Half Spirituals, were vulnerable.

He didn't like relying on Yuri, but she was the only one under his command with the sensory capacity to do this. In addition, as a Half Spiritual he had yet to be exposed to be under his command, when she acted, the Spirituals Religion wouldn't even see him coming.

Leonel's ear twitched and he sneered inwardly. Here it came.

A beam shot over from the distance, and in the next instant, the confident Leonel froze.

He looked down at his chest, a blood hole the size of a bowl having formed.

